

MASQUERADE

NOVEMBER / DECEMBER
2013



A Palatial Dream: Marrakech's Royal Mansour
Deconstructing Chaos: Beirut's Reconstruction
Alice Temperley and Her Grown Up Dresses
Artistically Redefined: Net a Porter's Art Capsul
Taymour Grahne's New York Space

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ELLEN PEARLMAN reports on the opening of Taymour Grahne's eponymous space in New York's Tribeca area as well as the gallery's exhibition of works by Iranian artist Nicky Nodjoumi (page 148). A two-time finalist for the Andy Warhol/Creative Capital Arts Writers Grant, she helped establish The Brooklyn Rail, winner of the Andy Warhol/Creative Capital Publishing Grant. She is a member of The International Association of Art Critics and in the current edition of *Who's Who in America*. She has written for *Time Out Beijing*, *Yishu Magazine of Contemporary Asian Art*, *Art Asia Pacific*, *Sculpture Magazine*, *Hyperallergic*, *Leonardo Magazine* and *Furtherfield.org*.



London-based author **HENRY HEMMING** reviews Saudi artist Abdunasser Gharem's show at Ayyam Gallery's London space in *A Saudi Arabian Trickster* (page 152). Hemming is the author of four books including *Misadventure in the Middle East*, *In Search of the English Eccentric* and *Abdunasser Gharem: Art of Survival*. He has written for *The Times*, *The Washington Post*, *The Economist* and *The Financial Times*. henryhemming.com



In *The Art of Detox* (page 130) **LAURA SNOOK** travels to Palace Merano in Italy to review their renowned detox program. Formerly a public relations and marketing accountant for Rawaj International, Snook is now a dedicated freelance writer focusing on health, travel and luxury hotels around the world. She is also the founder of Laura Kate Australia, a workout that blends yoga, Pilates and dynamic exercise. Snook has also contributed to *Haute Living*.



Born in San Francisco and of Iranian origin, in *From Chador to Fancy Clothes: Iranian Women's Search for Identity* **MOJGON DAVARI** writes on the enforced Iranian chador and how Iranian women are making it more fashionable (page 44). In 2003, Davari obtained a Bachelors degree in Fine Art from the Tehran University of Art and Architecture. She later obtained a Masters degree in Middle Eastern Studies from King's College in London. A trained painter, Iranian artists such as Manouchehr Motabar, Hossein Maher and Shabboo Dejpour have taught her throughout her studies. Davari was formerly a news writer at Iran's Press TV and her writing has been published on presstv.com. She's currently Assistant Director of JAMM Art Gallery in Alserkal Avenue in Al Quoz, Dubai.



London-based journalist **FRANKIE ROZWADOWSKA** covers several topics regarding the psychological and physical benefits of a good night's sleep (page 138); *The Power Of Positive Thinking* (page 140), the popular 5:2 Diet (page 136) and fitness beauty products to assist one's daily workout routine. Rozwadowska graduated from the University of Nottingham before working for the beauty department of Tom Ford. Now a freelance beauty writer, her work has been published in *1883 Magazine*, *Hip & Healthy*, *Beach Tomato* and *Condé Nast's Tatler* magazine. She has also worked as a stylist for beauty shoots and high-end editorials.



In *Discovering Central Asian Art* (page 160) **LEMMA SHEHADI** explores the region's burgeoning landscape for Contemporary art. The article is the result of her exploration in the region this summer when she road-tripped across Central Asia to explore the region's art scene. Shehadi obtained her MA in Pan-Romanticism from the University of Warwick. She regularly writes for *Apollo* magazine's online publication in addition to *The Independent* and other publications in the UK and Middle East.

Also writing in this issue are Annabel Treon, Sarah Bladen and Robert Codero.



THE NEW FRAGRANCE

the EDITOR'S LETTER

In his Critique of Pure Reason, Immanuel Kant wrote that "All knowledge begins with experience. An experience, whether it is positive or negative, becomes a driving force for our everyday actions and interactions with others. While we often condone what is bad and upsetting, it is often through what is ugly and uncomfortable that we develop and become more aware of our true selves. What often appears as failure might be seen as half a success - for without this experience, we'd be farther away from forging the way to achieve our goals. As Thomas Edison once wrote, "Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." Failure is thus a part of succeeding and our experiences are what drive us to reason with what does and doesn't work.

Experience is also about confronting the unknown. The highlight of this issue's photo shoots is Marrakech. A city of contrasts, the dirt and the glamour of this intriguing North African metropolis are constantly juxtaposed. One walks down a dusty street full of hustling vendors, their colorful djellabas often tarnished with a bit of sand as they sell trinkets, food and other miscellaneous items, while just a bit away are the glistening towers of stunning Moroccan palaces full of an Oriental richness that one reads of in books. Western pop music can often be heard in contrast with popular Arabic songs signaling once again a vibrant contrast between what is modern and traditional.

The rough and chaotic scenes that one experiences in Marrakech can be just as repelling as they are intriguing. The edginess of the city can easily give rise to feelings of instability and bewilderment as the traveler finds him or herself in unfamiliar and uncomfortable situations. But this is part of the city's charm. Once one learns to embrace the madness that is this vibrantly

beautiful metropolis and the experience to be gained within, they can accept the beauty that comes from its perpetual contrasts. We incorporated the grace of warm and colorful coats, sleek dresses and garments from the latest fall and winter fashions into the streets of Marrakech, while rich and elegant fabrics further accentuated the opulence of the majestic Royal Mansour hotel.

Experience comes when contrasts meet. This idea can also be found in features such as Deconstructing Chaos, which explores Beirut's reconstruction - an ongoing process that seeks to maintain the city's historic buildings, often despite their references to the country's many wars, as well as build modern high rises. It is also explored in an article regarding the Iranian chador that investigates how designers in Iran are making this compulsory headdress more fashionable thus turning what is seemingly an object signaling restraint into something beautiful. The creations of designers such as Alice Temperley, Paul Ka and Emirati Madiyah Al-Sharqi illustrate our fashion pages and provide us with a glimpse into their artistic vision influenced by a variety of eras, cultures and contemporary culture. They ultimately strive to replicate how to dress the modern woman - one who is confronted with the task of playing many roles, more so than ever before.

Experience is preserved by memory. These uncomfortable contrasts, difficult situations and edginess that we all confront are encapsulated forever in time by how we remember. After all, the truth of an experience lies in how one perceives it - in how one reacts to it. And so, the knowledge that Kant wrote of, is solidified through experience. Positive or negative, it all becomes just a memory - a moment in life's journey.



R.A. Proctor

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LETTERS to the EDITOR

DEAR EDITOR,

I enjoyed reading about Ahd Kamel's film *Sanctity*. I don't speak Arabic so I wouldn't be able to understand the film but I am interested in women's roles in Middle Eastern society and it sounds like this has made a big impact. Thanks for keeping us in the loop! *Emma, London*

DEAR EMMA,

We're so glad that you enjoyed reading about this outstanding film. At *Masquerade* we love to feature the most inspiring stories from both East and West to bridge cultures and build mutual understanding. We'll definitely keep you updated with future initiatives!



DEAR EDITOR,

I was pleasantly surprised to see the article about in vitro fertilization in your last issue. Difficulty conceiving is an issue faced by many couples in this region but due to the private nature of local culture, it is not talked about much even if the attitude towards the procedure is becoming more accepting. It is nothing to be ashamed of and I was happy to see *Masquerade* was initiating a discussion on the subject matter. *Sara, Dubai*



DEAR SARA,

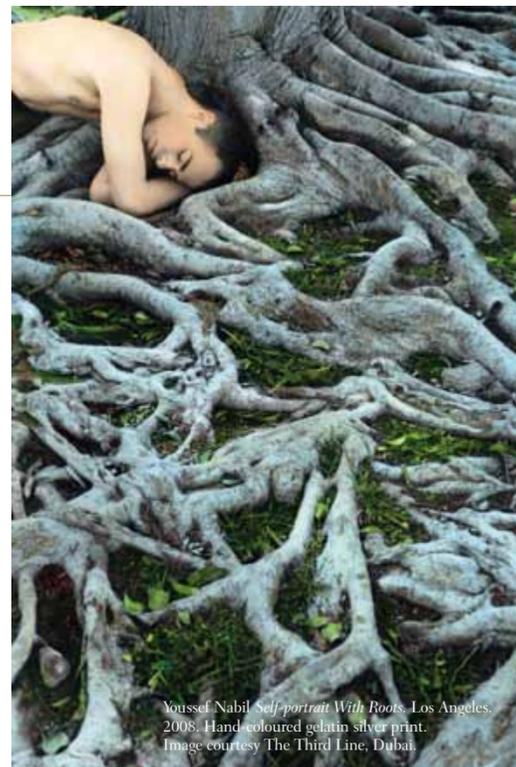
As you mentioned, difficulty conceiving is a problem faced both in the Middle East and abroad, and we hope that by shedding light on procedures offered locally we can inform readers of options they may be wondering about but are too shy to discuss publicly. Although IVF is not for everyone and is known as a quite controversial procedure, it offers the possibility of having the baby many so desperately seek.

DEAR EDITOR,

I read your article on Youssef Nabil on the *Masquerade* Magazine website. Nabil's words hit home to me as I am a Syrian artist residing in the US. I found many parallels between Nabil's mentality and my own. Syria is always present in my work. Especially within the context of the current conflict, death is a subject that constantly reappears in my painting. Thank you for highlighting artists from the region. *Samir, New York*

DEAR SAMIR,

Thank you for your words. Youssef Nabil is an inspirational artist whose work encompasses many poignant subjects from his experiences inside and outside of Egypt. Personal transformation is a theme that is applicable to us all as is death. We are constantly changing and adapting to the world around us and with this we are also learning to come to terms with the meaning of our own existence.



Youssef Nabil *Self-portrait With Roots*. Los Angeles, 2008. Hand-coloured gelatin silver print. Image courtesy The Third Line, Dubai.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY KRISTIAN SCHULLER



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FRONT COVER
Dress VIONNET at Saks Fifth Avenue
Necklace VENNA at Sauce
Shoes JIMMY CHOO

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GOOD LUXE: FURLA FOUNDATION MADE IN ITALY

بازار

LUXE LIST

Our selection of inspirational items.

By Cassidy Hazelbaker



2013 VESPA 946

Many Middle Eastern cities are known for their traffic congestion but with the limited edition 2013 Vespa 946, you can zip through traffic the Italian way. A quintessential Italian icon, the Vespa is both a means of transportation and a piece of art. Designed with reference to the earliest prototypes with amenities such as ABS braking, ASR traction control and a 4 stroke 125cc monocylinder engine, the Vespa touts low consumption and reduced emissions.

vespa.com

VALENTINO GLOVES

With autumn and winter comes traveling to cold weather climates, and these Valentino gloves are just the trick to keeping your hands warm in cool temperatures. Crafted from fine black and beige leather, these 'rockstar' gloves are at once provocative and feminine. The studded straps fasten with an adjustable buckle to make sure they fit snugly and keep the cold out.

valentino.com

MARC BY MARC JACOBS UMBRELLA

Winter raindrops don't stand a chance against this chic Marc by Marc Jacobs umbrella. Featuring a durable dome covered in an uplifting geometric pattern formed from soothing shades of blue, the umbrella conveniently pops into place with the click of a button on the handle. The collapsible umbrella closes into a portable pouch that can easily fit into a handbag.

marcjacobs.com

LONGCHAMP POIS CLUTCH

The Longchamp Pois clutch adds a pop of 60's-inspired retro color to any outfit. Composed of a velvet cotton body and trimmed in patent calfskin, the clutch is lightweight, with a black nickel snap fastening the upper flap. The graphic design is loud and bold, with layers of overlapping black, white, cream and either fuchsia or cumin colored dots endlessly filling the bag's exterior.

longchamp.com



ATKINSONS PERFUME RANGE

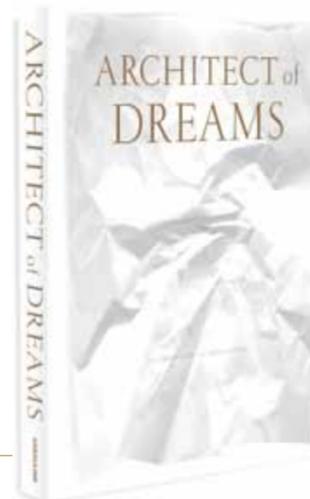
For over 200 years, Atkinsons has been perfecting perfumes for the highest echelons of British society. Influenced by the quintessential English manners, traditions and heritage, the Emblematic, Legendary and Home collections feature striking fragrances fit for a queen. For the first time, this olfactory genius is available in the Middle East, with a range of products from perfumes, eau de toilettes and candles.

Available at Bloomingdale's Dubai

ARCHITECT OF DREAMS

Architect of Dreams, written by Jeromine Savignon and Gilles de Bure, is a recently released volume from luxury Publisher Assouline. It chronicles *La Mode en Images*, the firm which produced many of the luxury world's most imaginative and complex fashion shows and events, from Dior to Yves Saint Laurent to Cartier. The book follows the creative process from design dreams through to implementation.

assouline.com



JARRE AEROSYSTEM ONE BY LALIQUE SPEAKERS

After four years of research and development, Jarre Technologies has devised a unique, studio-quality state-of-the-art sound system for use at home. The speaker unit is composed of two directional speakers and a box beam, and accepts all digital formats. It is compatible with iPhones and iPods and also contains a USB port. The exterior of the speaker is decorated by Lalique crystal that features the iconic Art-Deco style Masque de Femme motif.

jarre.com



CHARLOTTE OLYMPIA GLITTER KITTY HEELS

These flats are the most stylish sparkling shoes since Dorothy's red slippers. Charlotte Olympia's iconic kitty motif is incorporated into this flat, which features a small heel to put a little spring in your step while remaining ultra-comfortable. The pink glitter motif makes these a great conversation starter, and are a chic way to update your daytime ensemble or a fun alternative to heels at night.

Available at Harvey Nichols Dubai



CARRERA Y CARRERA SERPIENTE BRACELET

In honor of 2013, year of the snake, Carrera y Carrera has introduced a new bracelet to its Bestiario collection. The Serpiente bracelet portrays the battle of two golden snakes, intricately intertwined and differentiated only by the line of white diamonds running the length of one snake while brown diamonds line the back of the other. The bracelet is a tribute to the sculptural origins of the brand.

carreraycarrera.com



EBEL QUARTZ WATCH

EBEL recently introduced the oversized 36mm Onde timepiece, which is sophisticated, feminine and simple. The newest addition to the Onde family, the watch is set in polished stainless steel and features a Swiss quartz movement. The mother-of-pearl dial is protected by anti-reflective sapphire crystal, while the crown is set with 18 diamonds. Additionally, the watch is water resistant to 50 meters.

ebel.com



MESSIKA MAHARADJA NECKLACE

Messika's statement-making Maharadja necklace has been redesigned, without the pear in the middle. The necklace is composed of seven pendants, aligned gracefully around the wearer's neck. Each pendant contains small pear-shaped diamonds, with a rim of delicate diamonds encircling them. The collar is crafted from white gold and contains 66.21 carats of diamonds in total.

messika-joaillerie.com

IVANKA TRUMP METROPOLIS BRACELET

Inspired by New York City, where Ivanka grew up, this bangle is part of the Metropolis line, the first of four within her new Journey collection. Designed with 1920's art deco in mind, the sleek band of the bracelet is made in 18-carat yellow gold and slips elegantly onto the wrist. Small diamonds line the rim of the bangle and come together in the middle, forming the Greek key IT symbol which is the trademark of the collection.

Available at Bloomingdale's Dubai



VERSACE BRIGHT CRYSTAL PERFUME

Contained within a bottle showcasing the brilliance of cut glass, Versace's newest fragrance Bright Crystal is made for a poised and bold woman. The scent is at once crisp and floral and features notes of pomegranate, lotus, magnolia, peony, and yuzu. A final note of amber and musk add a delicate oriental dimension.

versace.com

TOD'S LIMITED EDITION SUNGLASSES

Tod's new limited edition unisex sunglasses channel the elegant simplicity which is iconic of the brand. A sleek, contemporary take on a design from the 60s, the glasses are made from acetate with glass lenses. They are available in tortoiseshell brown, mustard yellow and light blue, and come with a color coordinated case to keep them safe and scratch-free when being stored.

tods.com



AKILLIS PUZZLE TOI & MOI RING

At once creative and elegant, the Akillis Puzzle Toi & Moi ring is a new take on the quirky between-the-finger ring. Featuring two puzzle pieces - one in polished white gold and the other encrusted with small pavé diamonds set in white gold, the pieces adorn the hand without touching each other. This missing piece may be the right fit in your jewelry collection!

akillis.fr



LOUIS VUITTON W BAG

Louis Vuitton's latest design, the W bag, has a three-part body which recalls the angles of the letter W. The geometric shape is both elegant and trendy. Contrasting fine leather with the traditional and iconic Louis Vuitton monogram, the bag is a youthful take on a great classic. The interior contains multiple pockets in which all your daily accessories can be organized.

louisvuitton.com



MCM BAG

One of latest releases from MCM, this blue satchel is the perfect accessory for the business woman on the go, with both handle and shoulder strap available to carry it as you like. Textured leather and gold metal hardware update this classic style in a modern way. Its light weight ensures it won't burden the wearer, even when filled with papers or accessories.

mcmworldwide.com



MILLER HARRIS ROSE EN NOIR CANDLE

Throw yourself full force into autumn with this deep, dark fragrance from Miller Harris. Heavy notes of Turkish rose, pepper and violet dominate the base of ambrette, patchouli and tabac noir, and are complemented by light notes of coriander and cummin. Utterly oriental, this mysterious and charming perfumed candle will scent your home and provide cozy candlelight by which to dine or relax.

Available at Bloomingdale's Dubai



ALBERTO MORETTI 24-CARAT GOLD SHOES

Presented at the Monte Carlo Grand Prix, the first ever 24-carat gold and velvet high heels have arrived in the Middle East and are available exclusively at Level Shoe District in the Dubai Mall. These unique pumps are designed by the Tuscan Alberto Moretti in collaboration with shoemakers HORO, and consist of simple, elegant lines to complement the gold coat.

albertomoretti.com



VALENTINO SUNGLASSES

Add a touch of dark mystique to your ensemble with the new rockstud sunglasses from Valentino. These shades are vintage-inspired and give a punch of attitude as well as an intriguing texture to any stylish outfit. The rouge version is crafted from red acetate and features 464 small red crystals and two larger studs on either side of the frames, while the noir version is made from black acetate and contains 300 small crystals and 277 studs.

valentino.com



MUST HAVE:

RALPH LAUREN SOFT RICKY BAG

By Cassidy Hazelbaker

Ralph Lauren's new take on its iconic Ricky bag retains the elegance and simplicity of the original while incorporating an updated and softer element.



Autumn sees a return to routine after the carefree, relaxed summer holiday. An accessory to brighten the shorter, darker days is the timeless Ralph Lauren Soft Ricky bag, which is the more comfortable, lightweight, slouchy update to the classic Ricky bag. Made from supple, durable nappa calfskin, the bag also features custom-crafted hardware. The top rim of the bag softly arcs, with a sturdy handle that allows the tote to be hand-held or worn on the shoulder. Two buckles on either side can secure the side panels for a sharper look, or left unfastened to lean out on either side, giving the bag its soft form from which its name is derived.

Either way, the bag is a reliable staple for the autumn and winter months. It is available in fuchsia pink, clementine, lime green, red and lemon for those who like bright accessories, and white, navy, and gold for those who prefer more neutral tones. ♦



ralphlauren.com

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GUCCI'S CHIME *for* CHANGE

By Cassidy Hazelbaker

Crowd funding is all the rage these days, and Gucci has chosen it as the motor behind their latest philanthropic venture, Chime for Change. Cassidy Hazelbaker investigates.



Crowd funding: a platform that allows individuals to donate small amounts of money to a cause which interests them. The idea is that when spare change, which is nearly inconsequential to an individual, is collected *en masse*, it can become a meaningful amount in support of a cause. Gucci has undergone a more traditional approach to fundraising and has adopted this dynamic and modern method to further their philanthropic ventures. "Gucci has a long history of supporting women, and we know that the solutions exist all around us. There are hundreds of credible, dedicated organizations around the world actively supporting the advancement of girls and women," said Frida Giannini, Creative Director for Gucci. "My vision for Chime for Change was

funding platform dedicated to women. People can simply go online and choose from a variety of education, health and justice-oriented projects, choosing from 28 sub-topics such as child brides, maternal health or human trafficking to find a project that resonates with them. All projects have been carefully screened by Catapult to make sure they are legitimate and sound. Each project has a goal amount of money and followers can track the percentage of progress towards the project's goal amount. Once an initiative has been funded, the project provides follow-up reports to donors who can then see the change their projects have made within the local community.

Fully funded projects include the Afghanistan Institute for Learning's reproductive health workshops, which educates women who then relay the information to their families and communities, for which over \$3,000 was raised between four supporters, and Awakening: Women on the Frontlines of the Arab Spring, an initiative to fund a documentary about women who were involved in protests, for which \$50,000 was raised between five supporters.

There are many initiatives focusing on the Middle East. Some initiatives focus on urgent aid, such as funding for the Doctors of the

Other strategic partners working with Gucci to ensure the project goes forth are the Kering Foundation for Women's Dignity and Rights, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Hearst Magazines, Facebook, and The Huffington Post, among others.

In order to involve more people in the Chime for Change campaign, Gucci organized The Sound of Change Live charity concert, which took place on 1 June at London's Twickenham stadium. Beyonce, Ellie Goulding, Florence and the Machine, Jay Z, Jennifer Lopez, John Legend, Mary J Blige, Rita Ora, Timbaland and many others performed. The 50,000 attendees were able to donate the cost of their ticket to the project of their choice. Overall a total of \$3.9 million was raised through ticket sales, online donations and mobile giving, supporting 210 projects in 81 different countries.

Many luxury philanthropy ventures depend on celebrities and corporate sponsors to raise funds at big events, or require purchasing a luxury item in order to give back. Gucci's Chime for Change allows anyone to get involved, as there is no minimum requirement for donations. The online donation method is straight-forward and highly accessible, making it very simple to chime for change in the world. ♦



to facilitate further awareness and fundraising by bringing together a global community to support the important work that is already happening."

Chime for Change was established in February 2013 by Salma Hayek Pinault, Beyonce, and Frida Giannini, with a mission to promote education, health and justice to every woman. Gucci partnered with Catapult, the first crowd

World office in Qah, Syria, which provides medical services to Syrian refugees, while some focus on long-term approaches, such as Rights in the Aftermath of the Arab Uprisings, which supports a conference and workshops for Islamic feminists and activists who want to preserve women's representation and gender equality in post-uprising governments.

All images courtesy of Gucci. Gucci's Chime for Change is an ongoing effort; visit Catapult.org to donate to your project of choice. chimeforchange.org

FURLA FOUNDATION: MADE IN ITALY

By Cassidy Hazelbaker



Above: Picture of people laying on reclining chairs performing the Abramovic Method. Photography by Laura Ferrari. Image courtesy Fondazione Furla.

Giovanna Furlanetto speaks about Furla Foundation's influence in the art scene, its various initiatives, and the influence aspiring artists have on established luxury design houses. Cassidy Hazelbaker reports.



Marina Abramovic sits in a white long-sleeved blouse, speaking evenly in measured phrases. The Serbian-born 'grandmother of performance art' describes the experience between a performance artist and observers in a documentary titled *The Abramovic Method*. The screening of this documentary on 30 August at the Venice Days section of the 70th Venice Film Festival was the latest initiative put forth by Fondazione Furla, the philanthropic branch of the Italian luxury design house Furla.

Established in 2008, the Foundation furthers and supports the Furla Art Award, which was created in 2000. Giovanna Furlanetto, the President of Furla, set up the foundation in order to further promote cultural projects in Italy and abroad. As an Italian, art and design were always important to Furlanetto on a personal level and as part of her heritage. When asked about the state of art and the situation of emerging artists in contemporary Italy, Furlanetto replies, "unfortunately our country doesn't invest in art, as it should, especially considering its time-honored tradition and cultural richness. Italy doesn't really reflect the precious history of patronage and commitment inherited from the past. Today, above all, the independent activity of companies, institutions and private foundations represents the only way to support contemporary artists and talents who would otherwise have very few opportunities to emerge and express their creativeness." Furla Foundation and the Furla Art Award thus fill a void in the promotion of the arts in Italy. "Through this initiative I try to do something useful and beautiful for a country that has given so much in the past and where the success of the company itself is deeply rooted," she continues.

The foundation is comprised of several initiatives: The Furla Art Award, various exhibitions and events, Accademie Eventuali, and the Furla Talent Hub. The Art Award, which is a collaboration between Unicredit Group, Querini Stampalia, MAMbo gallery and Furla, is given every year to promote an emerging artist who works in any of a variety of mediums, from photography to painting to performance.

Furla Foundation has sponsored a variety of exhibitions and events through the years. In addition to *The Abramovic Method*, 2013 has seen the exhibition *I Did Not Say Or Mean 'Warning'* by Chiara Fumai and curated by Stefano Collicelli Cagol, in order to explore the absence of the feminine subject in history through video performances and was located at Fondazione Querini Stampalia.

The Accademie Eventuali is a workshop project focusing on fine arts students from Italian academies. A joint effort between Furla Foundation, Carisbo Foundation, MAMbo gallery and Xing, the workshops take place in Palazzo Pepoli Vecchio and allow selected students to learn from renowned artists to explore the dynamic city around them through various artistic mediums.

The Furla Talent Hub project promotes aspiring designers by giving them the opportunity to create their own collection under the Furla brand. Up-and-coming designers see their line displayed in a top luxury design house, while Furla profits from the fresh ideas of new designers. Many of Furla Foundation's projects are joint collaborations with other influential organizations in the fields of art and design, which increases the foundation's ability to reach artists from different fields.

Influential in the Furla Foundation alongside Furlanetto is Chiara Bertola, who is the curator of both the Furla Art Award and Querini Stampalia. "She has a wide artistic and cultural knowledge and she's very close to young and emerging talents. Since the very beginning, we have worked side by side at this initiative to promote and support the Italian Contemporary art scene at the international level," says Furlanetto.

Furla as a brand is based in Bologna and takes pride in its commitment to being 100 percent Italian. Characterized by its uncompromising quality and craftsmanship, the brand is entrepreneurial and forward thinking. Leveraging its rich heritage, Furla is a global example of elegance, refinement and style. Though Furla is a key player in the luxury goods market, the Furla Foundation creates a bridge on which aspiring artists and designers



who are struggling to find backing can cross in order to establish themselves on the art scene. "I think the exchange between art and fashion offers precious ideas and inspiration that can be translated into design. Creativity, inventiveness and originality are what really matters and young artists have a much more far-sighted and dynamic vision of the future compared to the fashion system players," says Furlanetto. "What was born as a pure patronage initiative also became a new chance for the company in terms of talent, and we greatly benefited from the perspective and aesthetic of the artists." A win-win situation for everyone involved. Benissimo! ♦

Furla is available in the UAE at Mall of the Emirates, Mirdiff City Centre, and Galeries Lafayette, The Dubai Mall.

For more information visit fondazionefurla.org



Above & Below: Portrait of Maria Abramovic. Photography by Laura Ferrari. Portrait of Giovanna Furlanetto. Both images courtesy Fondazione Furla.

UNMASKED

BEHIND THE VEIL:
AN ORIGINAL DISPOSITION
AVANT-GARDE ABAYAS
FROM CHADOR TO FANCY CLOTHES
DECONSTRUCTING CHAOS

سُفَا فَيَة

BEHIND THE VEIL

AN ORIGINAL DISPOSITION

By Al Meem

Al Meem discusses the complexities and risks of creative imitation.



View of woman with head cover viewing Sheikh Zayed grand mosque.
Photography by Grant Faint. Image courtesy Getty Images.

It has been said that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery, but what's sincere about imitating an individual to the point where you strip them of their own originality? What happened to flattery being direct and clear? I believe some people use that as an excuse to justify their weak act of imitation. Flatter someone by listening to their opinions and by understanding and appreciating them, by asking them for help. Not by taking away what makes them their original self and applying it to your own personality. Be direct, perhaps inspired, but do not think, justify, or mistake any act of imitation as flattery.

All of us are actively trying to reach the goals we set. However, each individual has their own way of achieving success. As humans, we need to know that we have reached a place that fills us with pride. We work, think, write, create art, and go through our daily lives hoping for something at the end of the line. That makes me think, is success contagious? If one person becomes successful, do others feel intimidated by that success? Maybe the success of one person puts a target on their back to be imitated. It seems like the easy way out, and some imitators achieve quick success by copying someone and possibly editing out the mistakes.

Having been in the art and design world for a few years now, I have gained insight into the motives of imitators, and believe me, it is an easy lifestyle. It seems that imitators are those who fail in finding their own sense of self and are looking for the easiest way out: by copying other people. It begins by finding someone they admire, someone who has spent a fair share of their own time discovering them, understanding and appreciating their own being, and ends in imitation. Imitators step on other people for their own personal improvement; they start by imitating personal traits, specific behavior, style, looks, and even specific works! They do not consider what efforts, thoughts and passion each individual puts into their work. Through this insight, I found that imitators are divided into two kinds: those who mistake imitating and copying with inspiration, and those who choose to imitate aiming for personal success regardless of their knowledge and neglecting the damage to be caused in the process.

It seems that most of the imitators are what we call nowadays "inspired people." There has always been a vague line between "inspired" and "copied." Nowadays, many people do not understand the difference. Being inspired can lead to great works, amazing outcomes, and unlimited creativity. Inspiration can be found in every single aspect of our daily lives, whether

it be a clear morning, an angry conversation, or a glimpse of a stranger crossing the street. Inspiration is there, everywhere, why does it have to be coming from or limited to a certain person's work?

In the art world, we started by learning the basics; painting a master study and admiring the techniques of the great minds that came before us. We were eventually taught to look up to those who made great changes in our current art world; the daring, the conceptual, and the unusual artists. We were asked to find inspiration in what they did, their techniques, their concepts, and the impact they left in Modern art. But no inspiration ever crossed as complete imitation, instead we understood their works, and created something that was completely original. To be inspired by someone, is to hold their individuality in great respect.

Individuality begins with understanding yourself, appreciating your differences and delving into the uniqueness that you own. Who are you? Think about your beliefs, personal opinions, and actions towards anything you come across; think about what makes you who you are. Let go of all the people you want to be, the people you consider as idols, and concentrate on yourself. No two people are the same. I truly believe that every person is an original, a creative soul, which may have lost its way seeking perfection. People need to understand that perfection is not an ideal thought or a simple place to reach. Perfection is obtained by accepting what makes you different and celebrating it.

The best way to avoid imitation is to find the courage to deal with life as it comes. Wake up in the morning with a little bit of ambition, some determination and a lot of dedication. Believe in yourself and the beauty you can bring to life, whether it was in a creation of art, a beautiful letter, the way you dress, or a successful career in design. One needs to focus on a path of their choice, start at a slow pace and follow through. Admire the success of others, be inspired by their devotion and passion and concentrate on how successful you can be. There is no need to be distracted by others: stop comparing. In most cases comparing yourself to others could lead to the desire to imitate. Leave aside the comparison and come up with something new, innovative and original. There is no need to fear criticism, it only makes you stronger. Challenge your mind into being innovative and original by being yourself. ♦

Share your thoughts by dropping me a line at almeem@masquerademag.com

AVANT-GARDE ABAYAS

By Rebecca Anne Proctor

Sara Al-Madani's abayas merge western modernism with the classic design of the female Islamic dress. At once edgy and seductive, Al-Madani's abayas are determined to marry the traditional with the progressive. Rebecca Anne Proctor meets Al-Madani in Dubai to learn about what it means to take a fashionable risk.



A principle part of Arabic cultural and religious dress, many sources date the appearance of the abaya to pre-Islamic times in the 3rd century AD. Traditionally a long black robe-like garment worn by women in the Arabian Peninsula and many parts of the Islamic world, today many Arabic designers are giving the abaya a more contemporary and feminine look. Emirati Sara Al-Madani is one such designer. Her graceful silhouettes and refined lines are combined with more edgy components of leather, lace and risqué cuts endowing her abayas with an avant-garde character that liberates the wearer.

Al-Madani's infatuation with fashion began when she was a teenager. Creative and determined, the designer, now 27, was raised to believe that if you want to achieve something, you must do it for yourself. Encouraged by her parents, she set out to start her own business. In 2005, her hard work paid off and she launched her own fashion label, Rouge Couture. The name of her brand reflects the bold style of the women who wear her creations. "I wanted a name that would be appealing to women and the word 'rouge' is catchy and familiar in every language," she explains. "It means red in French, but also 'lipstick' - it's very feminine and alluring." Bold and fiery like the color red, Al-Madani's couture designs are about mixing eastern and western fashion tendencies. "I wanted to mix tradition with modern fashion in a different way, a way that will make a woman look trendy and fashionable while wearing traditional and modest pieces," she says.

The beginning wasn't easy. She initially had a Chinese partner who would often go abroad and sell electronics to get extra cash, while Al-Madani sold several items that she owned. "I sold my own stuff to start the business," she says. "But in just a few months we managed to get 20-25,000 AED." This was just enough to rent a small place in Sharjah. "It was in the middle of nowhere - in a construction area, but it was a start," she recalls. "Our income was very

little; we just barely made enough to cover the rent." She and her Chinese partner would go to clients' homes to take their orders and would then come back to their rented space and design the clothes.

THE NEW ABAYA

Al-Madani explains how in the beginning, she and her partner were just taking orders and creating as they went along. "We started with a few clients and then the circle grew," she says. By the second year, she stopped taking orders and began creating her own trends instead of just listening to the demands of other women. The business grew to around 35 staff and three branches. Her avant-garde designs became much sought after.

Even so, it is hard to create something global while also retaining the heritage and the tradition of the Islamic female dress. Al-Madani's abayas incorporate leather belts, metal spikes, elaborate head dresses, masks and rich embroidery - many elements of which have never before been incorporated into an abaya. She has often been called the "abaya engineer" in the market for the meticulous ways in which she creates her designs. "I just do abayas, nothing else," she says. "But they are not your traditional abayas. My designs marry the history of the abaya with modern fashion. This has been very hard to do."

Al-Madani doesn't have a degree in fashion. Her studies were in film making. "Fashion is also a film," she says. "It is also about imagining something and giving it life - enabling it to move." The creation of her designs involves first drawing and sketching. She then makes what she calls "the first draft" followed by the final piece. The process can take anywhere from several hours to days of work. "I love drawing something and then bringing it to life; I love being a trendsetter," she says. "Being a part of the fashion industry itself is just as amazing as it fun and challenging." Her favorite designer is unsurprisingly, Alexander McQueen. One can



"I wanted to mix tradition with modern fashion in a different way, a way that will make a woman look trendy and fashionable while wearing traditional and modest pieces."

Sara Al-Madani





“I want to take religion out of the equation. It’s not about religion at all, I create something and how someone wants to wear it is up to them.”

Sara Al-Madani



see the resemblance of the late artist’s edgy yet elegant creations mirrored through her own work; he also took fashionable risks. “He is a true creator and my mentor,” she says.

PUSHING BOUNDARIES

Her abayas push cultural boundaries in an often uncomfortable way. Al-Madani has often received criticism for damaging traditional Islamic dress. “I’m not,” she protests. “These people think that the abaya is a religious symbol and it is not. Religion is about covering the hair and the body. What you cover yourself with has nothing to do with it.” Such adamant beliefs come at a time when the Gulf is undergoing rapid development. There seems to be a constant fight to converse one’s cultural heritage, while also modernizing to mirror the progression of the region. Such new takes on women’s cultural and religious dress are often difficult to swallow for those desiring to fight for things to stay the same. “I want to take religion out of the equation. It’s not about religion at all,” says Al-Madani. “I create something and how someone wants to wear it is up to them.” A case-in-point was when she saw someone wearing one of her transparent dresses meant to cover a wedding dress out in Dubai over other clothes in a more seductive fashion. “This was the woman’s choice,” she says.

The young designer thus takes the traditional black of the abaya and tries to make something creative out of it. “The culture and personality of the abaya is black; it can never be another color,” she says. “I don’t like colors, so I stick to cuts,” she says. Every month Al-Madani creates a new collection while most designers create only three collections per year, for the seasons of winter, summer and Eid. Her creativity leads the way; it is her drive as is her desire to give back to her culture through something that opens the way to fashionable innovation.



Al-Madani’s accomplishments go beyond the realm of fashion. She has been elected as an ambassador to represent the Sharjah Business Woman Council. She was elected as an example to women who aspired to start their own business and who possessed a desire for entrepreneurship. Al-Madani has also been honored as the Brand Ambassador for Natura Bissé in the Middle East, a luxury skincare spa brand from Barcelona, Spa. Her key task in this role is once again to educate young women about the importance of self-confidence in order to achieve business success. Other awards include L’Officiel’s Young Designer of the Year Award in 2012 and Emirati Entrepreneur of the Year Award from SME Stars of Business Awards in 2011. She continues to be a guiding source of inspiration for women in the UAE eager to foster their creativity.

The avant-garde designs of Al-Madani come at a time when Dubai is gaining ground in the international fashion industry. The young designer is harsh in terms of what the region needs in order to get to the next level. “What we are lacking are the fashion critics,” she says. We need constructive criticism in order to grow.

If we can set a healthy set of standards, then Dubai surely can become one of the leading capitals for fashion in the world.”

The future looks bright for Al-Madani. Her great hope is for her brand to be distributed worldwide. “I want my designs and the abaya tradition to be accessible to people around the world,” she says. Creating something is never easy. “Fashion is a challenging industry. You either make it, or you’re pushed aside and forgotten,” says Al-Madani. “It’s a jungle and you need to survive through your art.” Rouge couture, like Al-Madani, is about “daring to wear” - it is about crossing boundaries, mixing heritage with modernity and not being afraid to wear what you feel - and this is the message that is transmitted beautifully through her fashion designs. ♦

“Fashion is a challenging industry. You either make it, or you’re pushed aside and forgotten. It’s a jungle and you need to survive through your art.”

Sara Al-Madani



For more information visit rouge-couture.com

FROM CHADOR TO FANCY CLOTHES

By Mojgon Davari

The enforced Iranian chador has become a way for women to express themselves. Mojgon Davari explores the chador's political origins and how Iranian women are vying to make it more stylish.



Women entering Sheikh Loftollah Mosque in Imam Square Esfahan, Iran. Photography by Bruno Morandi. Image courtesy Getty Images.

T

he Islamic establishment in Iran may be intensifying a campaign of imposing more restrictions on the dress code tolerated by the hard liners, but women in Iran are facing a challenge of their own: bright colors, chic clothes, high heels and fanciful jewellery - in what can be deemed as a silent revolution of dumping the black, featureless, head-to-toe chador covering the whole body except hands and face, and manteau introduced in the 80's, and replacing them with vibrant and design outfits in the course of the past decade.

The radical change is seen as an unwelcome guest for the regime, but it is not unprecedented for Iranian women who in the past 100 years have been forced to remove their 'hijab' - a cover envisaged as mandatory by hard line clerics - and also forced to observe it.

In the late 1930's, Reza Shah sought the elimination of the practice as part of a plan to modernize Iran. But it was met with opposition from the clergy, as well as many Iranians who traditionally stand up for their customs and religious beliefs. The opposite happened in the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution of 1979 as the theocratic government enforced the mandatory hijab. Although the rule was drastically tightened during the Iran-Iraq war of 1980-1988, the regime loosened its grip on the society in the 90's as well as its enforcement of the law, particularly after the election of Mohammad Khatami, a pro-reform cleric, as President in 1997.

In the past decade, however, Iranian women have faced a new challenge in a unit called 'Morality Police' - frequently patrolling the streets in Iran, even in the hotter seasons, to ensure women are properly covered.

Many have been arrested for not doing so, though they are usually released shortly after. The usual suspects are young girls who worry more about their appearance, and thus are more into looking fashionable. Bitter incidents have

also been reported when women resist arrest, provoking female police officers to drag the culprits into security vans, and then take them to police stations.

Tina, 27, says she was arrested in 2007 in a main square in central Tehran even though she was accompanied by her family. "I was wearing a medium-length manteau and very light make-up. I thought I was safe hijab-wise," she says. "A woman with a black chador jumped out of the van and told me to get in. I was shocked. I asked her to explain what exactly was wrong with my attire, but she did not answer and instead tried to force me into the van. When I resisted, she called her colleague to help her drag me in the van," Tina said. But that was not the end of her shocking experience. "Then a policeman came and tried to grab my arm. I was surprised because I didn't really think that a policeman is allowed to touch a woman. But he did and finally pushed me into the van."

It is noteworthy that the forced removal of the hijab 70 years ago, and its forced observance today, have been opposed by the population.

On 4 September 2013, a local website reported that a senior cleric was beaten by a man in northern Iran after the cleric told his wife to properly cover herself. In two separate incidents in Tehran in July this year, two women, known in Iran as "promoters of virtue and preventers of vice", were beaten by two young women after they told them to observe the hijab. Such physical quarrels often follow verbal arguments between the two sides. In a rare incident, a woman removed her headscarf in public after being approached by the morality police, drawing much attention on social media.

These incidents illustrate the frustration that many Iranian women feel over the forced observance of the hijab. However, many young Iranian women try to find ways to incorporate their desire to be fashionable with the need to observe the hijab.

In the past decade, however, Iranian women have faced a new challenge in a unit called 'Morality Police' - frequently patrolling the streets in Iran, even in the hotter seasons, to ensure women are properly covered.



Sarah, 31, says what is called fashionable in Iran is different from the Western world, but she knows many who are stylish in their own way and observant of the hijab as well. "The dress code in Iran prevents the people, especially women, to follow their tastes in fashion but it's still possible to be chic and fashionable even with hijab," she said.

It would not be an exaggeration to say that the Iranian women have silently revolutionized the fashion industry under their garments. Even in the early years after the revolution, most Iranian women preferred the manteau over the chador. It is through the manteau's gradual transformation that Iran's fashion industry redefined itself. "I believe among Muslim countries, Iranian women care the most about how they look and how fashionable they dress up while also observing the hijab. The number of manteau designers we have in Iran should say it all," says Serina, 30.



“As a young Iranian girl who lives in a society with a lot of restrictions, the main factor for me in beginning my work was to design clothes that would be both beautiful and practical.”

Farnaz Abdoli



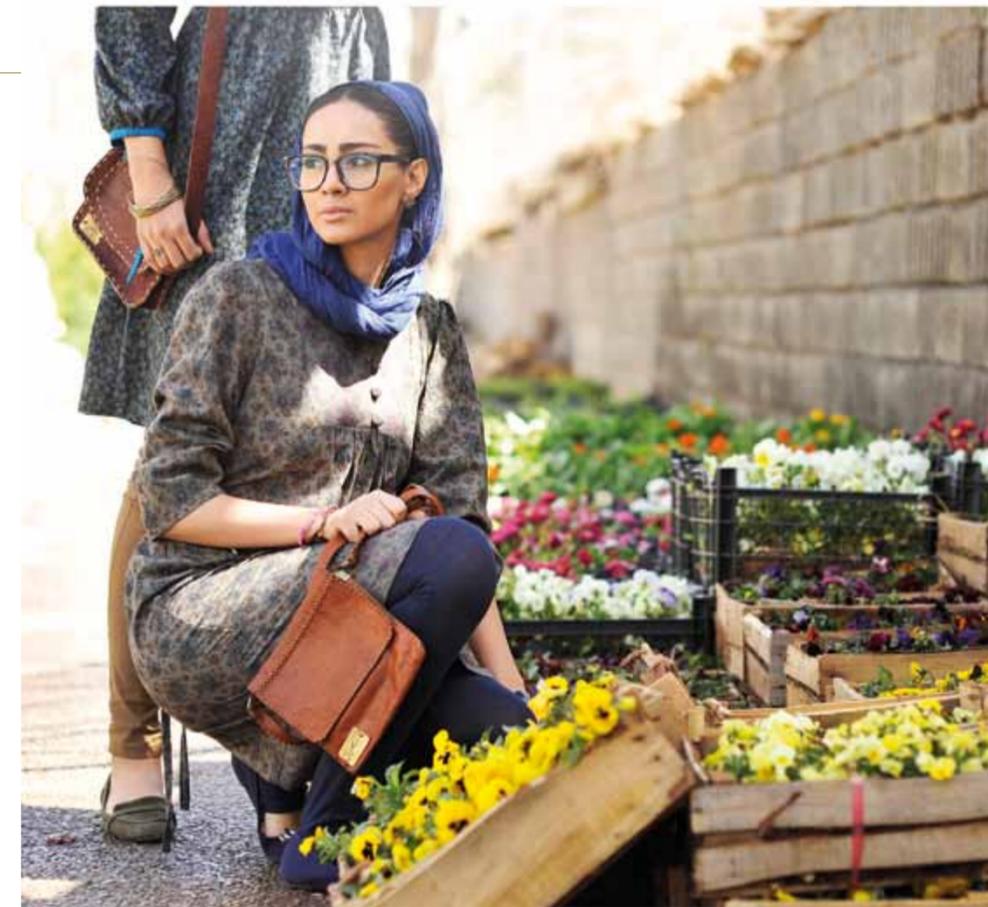
Farnaz Abdoli, the famous designer of “Poosh”, says she has tried to design clothes that correspond to current social norms in Iran. “As a young Iranian girl who lives in a society with a lot of restrictions, the main factor for me in beginning my work was to design clothes that would be both beautiful and practical. In other words, I wanted to design clothes that could be worn in the streets of Iran,” she says. “I looked at it from my own point of view, from the point of view of a girl at my age who has a high taste and wants to wear something which is beautiful, different and practical.” Abdoli says some designers who only copy Western styles often fail because they simply become unusable.

Some women meanwhile believe being fashionable innately contradicts the hijab - as some think the hijab in Iran is meant to attract no attention whatsoever. Raha, 31, says the Islamic establishment does not want women to be attractive to the opposite sex - even if hair and body curves are totally covered - when out on the street. “What they want is for women to remain uniform by wearing loose, dark clothes with no identity like the chador, rather than wearing colorful, fashionable clothes,” she said.

This is what Poosh has tried to challenge. The brand has helped women to distance themselves from uniformity, to find their individual identity and find a way to express themselves with their clothing. They have put innovations into their designs through bright colors, avant-garde cuts and fabrics while abiding by the norms and restrictions that they face in their work, such as the length of sleeves and shirts and the collar width. This might seem difficult in the beginning, as Abdoli says women entering her shops were worried that their choice of clothing might draw too much attention; however, she says they slowly realized they could wear the clothes without trouble as a collective courage flourished by seeing other women wearing them.

In order to keep up with the fast development of the fashion designing industry in Iran, the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance has organized fashion and clothing festivals in the past two years. The next regime-tolerated exhibition is scheduled for 2014.

The event has been welcomed, but many young women still prefer dresses similar to those designed by Poosh. However, the hard line establishment always focuses on loopholes, to disallow what attire was once allowed. “Being a woman in Iran means there is a constant struggle in being stylish and beating the restrictions. But



the problem is, every now and then, they change their rules. What you wear today might not be acceptable tomorrow. There is no easier target than women for them to scare and pressure,” says Forouzan, 45.

The most recent attacks have been directed at “leggings”, which have become very popular in recent months. These tight-fitting stretch pants are frequently seen in the designs of Poosh.

A Facebook page called “I Hate Leggings” was created in August 2013 where supporters come to condemn women wearing them. “I created this page to confront the cultural attack by Western countries that have trapped young Iranians through leggings,” says the administrator of the page. Similar disapproval can also be seen in many hard line blogs and websites.

On the other hand, there are many Facebook pages in support of leggings. One page has more than 76,000 followers. “Most of the pictures seen in this page have been sent by the girls who wear leggings,” according to the page’s description.

Many believe that the issue and the crackdown on improper hijab has growingly become a matter of personal opinion, with supporters arguing that there is no definite set of rules to make clear what clothes can and what cannot be worn. Rana, 31,

says even different organizations have different dress codes. “I’m not a fashionable girl, but the worst thing about the hijab in Iran is that it depends on people’s taste to some extent. I wear a manteau and scarf, and I go to Azad University,” which is a private university.

“Nobody there tells me anything about my hijab. I wear the same outfit at government universities and they prevent me from even entering the compound. The only thing they all seem to prefer is the chador,” said Rana.

With the failure of the chador and even the unfashionable manteau, the struggle between the Islamic-approved dress code and chic, trendy outfits have entered a new phase. And with the hardliners having a lot of sway within the regime to enforce the observance of the hijab, Iranian women are fighting back by introducing more alternatives by designing fashionable clothing. The battle is far from over. ♦

This Page & Facing Page: Images courtesy of Poosh, Spring / Summer 2013 Collection. pooshdesign.com

DECONSTRUCTING CHAOS

By Cassidy Hazelbaker

The magical city of Beirut contains many layers within its architectural make-up. Cassidy Hazelbaker explores the city's fascinating structure and what is being done to restore it after countless years of destruction.



Sunday summer morning in Beirut: the glow of sun rays illuminates a block of buildings, whose cream-colored facades reflect the light onto the worn streets below. Here and there, a lone tree tenaciously holds its ground between two high-rises. A sidewalk is formed from little gray square tiles; some are chipped and dirtied with age, others buckle slightly around growing tree roots, but still, the walkway is resiliently more or less intact. Somewhere in the distance the call to prayer floats into the breeze; contrasting but not clashing with the cross of a nearby church which looms overhead.

Elsewhere in the Middle East the work week has begun but Beirut clings on to the standard European weekend, a nod to its French-mandated past. The last day of the week thus becomes a time for family gatherings, beach-going, and power shopping in the city's assortment of malls. As the clock ticks closer to noon, the city awakens; car engines stir to life and the cacophony of car horns begins. Some families drive towards the hills, seeking the cooler temperatures of their family villages. Others stop by the neighborhood bakery, selecting freshly-made sweets to serve to visitors later in the day. Tradition, energy, and spirit meld to form the magical place that is Beirut.

Beirut is architecturally as diverse as the people who reside within it. Ottoman style houses reflect Lebanon's past under Turkish rule while ornate French details recall Lebanon's European influence. Many of the structures within these eclectic streets are deteriorating due to neglect and abandonment. Also prevalent within the city's streets are the marks of destruction; ever-present reminders of the darkness of civil war which Lebanon underwent for fifteen years, from 1975 to 1990. Shiny post-war buildings sit side-by-side with bullet-riddled edifices. The remains of bomb-blasted homes slowly crumble with the elements, their metal skeletons protruding from piles of concrete rubble.



Real estate developers stand to profit from the valuable real estate. It is easy to tear down a dilapidated building, replace it with a modern structure, and sell it. Even historical buildings, with their significant places in Lebanese history, hardly receive any protection from the government, which takes little initiative to preserve these buildings. Citizens have become activists, doing all they can to promote the preservation of their city's historic buildings. One such group of activists is the Association for the Protection of Lebanese Heritage (APLH). "I grew up in the heart of Beirut, in a 1930's house, surrounded by even older houses, with their gardens, iron gates and elegant stonework. Then those houses started disappearing... so I opened a Facebook group to gather like-minded people. With a small core of committed members, we took the Facebook group from online activism into a full-fledged NGO," explains Pascale Ingea, President of APLH.

"Never have so many traditional buildings been destroyed- in Beirut more than 100 were counted in the past two years," laments Ingea, referring to the corruption rife within the government which easily sways those within the Culture Ministry to sign off on the demolition and dismantling of heritage buildings. "We transferred our energy from the street due to the futility of it, and took matters to court, the

result being much more effective in making promoters and the ministries behind them think twice before issuing a demolition decree." Though activists who campaign to save Beirut's heritage buildings are passionate, they are few in numbers. International assistance in this field is usually given only to government institutions, which makes it difficult for an NGO such as APLH to receive exterior support. "Nowadays in Lebanon the activities of a 'private' NGO like APLH are for the protection of 'public interest' against a 'public institution' like the Ministry of Culture, which favors activities within 'private interests,'" says Ingea.

The frustration is echoed online, in groups such as Save Beirut Heritage, which functions as an alert system to properties that are at risk of demolition. Members share photos, maps and news articles documenting the destruction, criticizing the lack of government support to preserve the city which they all proudly love.

ARCHITECTURE IN A POST-WAR SOCIETY

Many residents of cities that have seen conflict find it therapeutic to completely tear down and rebuild, symbolically wiping away the painful memories of destruction. In Beirut this has been the case in the downtown area, which was effectively razed, rebuilt and rebranded



“To me this fight was one of survival: I want to live in a human city and the heritage clusters in Beirut give me that. I was fighting for the Beirut I wanted my children to grow in, to love and respect.”

Mona Hallak



“When history, identity, and collective memory are weighed against money, money wins in a mercantile society with no civic belonging,” says Hallak, musing on both the real estate situation in Beirut and Lebanese society in general. “The Lebanese have not since the end of the civil war engaged in a serious nation-wide attempt at reconciliation. People have not forgiven. People want to avoid remembrance but in effect they are actually falling into the trap of fighting again.”

This desire to preserve Beirut’s historical buildings and to make a statement within Lebanese post-war society led to the establishment of the Beit

be transformed into a cultural center, museum of the city of Beirut, and an urban planning meeting place. Beit Beirut seeks to be a neutral community meeting space that promotes the love of Beirut to all visitors, regardless of which community they belong to or in which area of Beirut they reside. The building’s restoration should provide a place for meeting and reconciliation, a space for memory so as not to be swept up by amnesia. Contrary to what some call a wound still too raw to touch, Hallak says, “I think that human feelings unite, loss unites, pain unites, and people who lost beloved ones find relief in other peoples’ stories about their own loss. I think going down to the essential human experience of a human soul during war will present a memory to share and build upon rather than numbers and dates and names to fight upon. It is time to look at the war as a whole, to try to assimilate it, accept it and forgive, or else we might fall into its trap again.”

BEIRUT’S ARCHITECTURE IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

Though appreciation of Beirut’s rapidly disappearing historic buildings is increasing, there remains much work to convince many Lebanese that this architecture is worth saving. In a delicate post-war society that is slowly healing its civil wounds in the midst of regional sectarian conflict, a topic which unites members of different religious and social groups is a valuable tool. “Architecture is a common trait of the people and normally when something threatens this, it is enough reason for the people to stand up to this common threat,” observes Ingea. “The problem is that not all Lebanese feel this is a threat. Many simply welcome this ‘newness’ because they would rather have towers and malls than historical buildings. We differ as Lebanese, by how we view culture, history and tourism. Many of us don’t identify with historical buildings.”

Beirut (Beirut House) project in 2003, after six years of tireless campaigning for a decree of expropriation for the Barakat building, which Hallak finally received. “The loss of Downtown Beirut to Solidere had its toll on many preservation activists who became convinced that we stand helpless against real estate greed. I personally never was discouraged. To me this fight was one of survival: I want to live in a human city and the heritage clusters in Beirut give me that. I was fighting for the Beirut I wanted my children to grow in, to love and respect,” explains Hallak.

The Beit Beirut project involves the restoration of one of the most damaged buildings along the Green Line, Damascus Street, which used to be a sniper post during the war. The building will

into über-luxurious shopping, dining and office spaces by the development company Solidere. Though many supported the move, others did not. Some critics claim that downtown Beirut has lost its soul and is no longer accessible to the average Beirut, while others cite that by erasing all vestiges of war, Lebanese are ignoring and glossing over their past without addressing lingering social, religious and political discord.

The demolition of downtown Beirut was a shocking sight to Lebanese architect Mona Hallak, who recalls “the sight of the Burj Square being flattened by bulldozers was too painful and my first reaction was that we lost our downtown to a real estate company; we have to save the rest of Beirut’s heritage.”



Image courtesy of APLH



“Usually the younger generation is more enthusiastic about heritage preservation as they feel the need to have a better urban environment and have come to appreciate the qualities of heritage clusters in many areas like Jemmayze and Achrafieh where most heritage buildings have turned their charming ground floors to restaurants and pubs,” adds Hallak. Young Lebanese are highly active on social media, providing a powerful platform to spread the word about Beirut’s rich heritage and beautiful historic buildings that are at risk.

Recently, Minister Selim Warde formed a committee of architects and urban planners to review demolition permit applications and also decline those of unique and important buildings. “The pressure from owners is huge and it is a brave step in the absence of a law for heritage protection,” says Hallak. “The last draft of a law was approved by the government in 2006 and sent to parliament, where it rests in a drawer ever since.”

Citizens should keep Facebook posting, tweeting, and holding candlelight vigils for their treasured heritage. Perhaps with enough pressure, politicians will reopen this drawer to prioritize Beirut’s historical preservation. The fate of Beirut’s older buildings ultimately depends on government legislation. Until then, Beirutis will continue to go about their lives, spending time with family and friends, enjoying their country’s beautiful mountains and beaches and tensely awaiting regional developments. The sun’s rays will still illuminate the Mediterranean skyline of Beirut as the sun rises and sets, as new days begin. Ingea and Hallak, in addition to others, will continue their campaigning for change. ♦

All images courtesy of the author unless otherwise specified.



DECADENCE

WATCHES: FAIRYTALE SPARKLES

FANTASY JEWELS

TREASURE TROVE

AN ARTISTIC FUSION





Blancpain



Rolex



Omega



Glaschutte

WATCHES:

FAIRYTALE SPARKLES

By Cassidy Hazelbaker

Found in silver, gold and white with lots of diamonds, these timepieces are elegant and dreamy creations.



Among them is Blancpain's Fifty Fathoms Bathyscaphe diving watch for ladies, which simple and elegant in crisp white, drawing on the vintage collection for inspiration while incorporating the latest modern calibres to ensure correct time keeping whether under the sea or on the land. Omega's De Ville Prestige timepiece features a mother of pearl butterfly with a patterned face and encrusted with 50 sparkling diamonds around the white gold bezel and a diamond-pavé butterfly between seven and eight o'clock. Glaschutte's Pavovina warms the wrist with its elegant red gold cushion-shaped face marking each hour with a dazzling diamond. Rolex's Oyster Perpetual Lady-Date Just Pearlmaster features a slightly larger 29 millimeter case, which glitters with large diamonds set in rose gold around the bezel. Van Cleef & Arpels' Charms Watch in Rose Gold completes the set, showcasing a plethora of pavé diamonds around the bezel and the band, complete with a diamond-encrusted alhambra charm. *Über*-feminine and elegant, these sophisticated timepieces bring out the princess in each modern woman. ♦



Van Cleef & Arpels



Silver rings, plated in trichlorite or rose gold and containing amethyst, citrine, leucite, quartz or fancy quartz.

FANTASY JEWELS

Inspired by deep-sea exploration and wild African safaris, our selection of Fantasy Gems transports the wearer to unknown adventures.

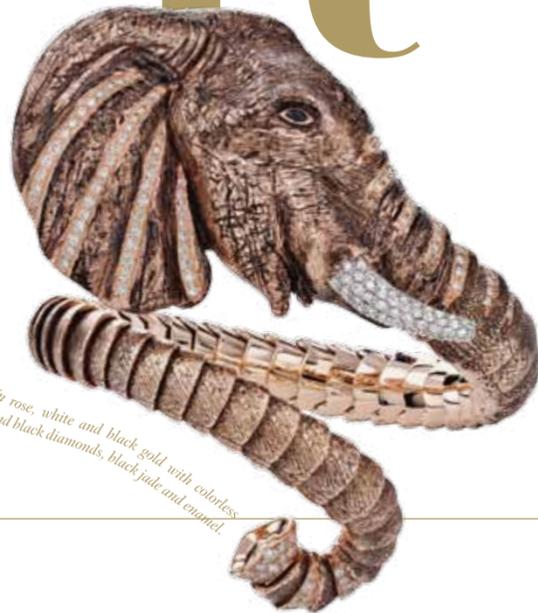
Bon voyage!



Silver bracelets and ring, plated in rose or yellow gold, malachite or fancy chocolate.

R

Roberto Coin's pieces transition from sea to land as elephants and lizards come alive through flashing gems. The geometric design of the 5.10 collection recalls the shrubbery found in the arid plains of south of the Sahara.



Band in rose, white and black gold with colorless and black diamonds, black jade and enamel.



White gold ring with diamonds, blue sapphires and tsavorites.



Pendant and earrings in rose gold, diamonds, and South Sea pearls.



Earrings in white gold, spondylium and Tahitian pearls.

Utopia's assortment of marine-themed pearl jewelry recalls crustaceans, coral, an octopus and miniature clams, parting their diamond-encrusted halves to reveal the dazzling pearl inside.



Rings
Top Left: Rose gold with ivory color enamel, diamonds and a golden South Sea pearl.
Right: Rose gold with black color enamel, diamonds and a South Sea pearl.
Bottom Left: Rose gold, diamonds and a Tahitian pearl.



IRIS Jho Jho earrings in 18 K Rose gold and diamonds.

H

H Stern continues the aquatic enchantment with more whimsical interpretations of clams and squid, wrapping their tentacles around exquisite gemstones. Cast in H Stern's signature noble gold and set with white diamonds, this is the best kind of hidden treasure.



IRIS Pompilius ring in 18 K Rose gold with nude topaz and diamonds.



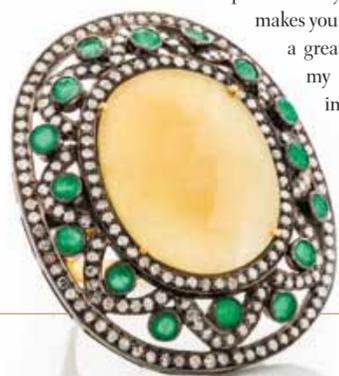
IRIS Mya Mays earrings 18 K Rose gold and diamonds.

TREASURE TROVE

By Cassidy Hazelbaker

Roberta Calarese's Kanzi Jewels merge her Italian origins with the Emirati heritage of her husband thus transforming cultural differences into startling jewelry creations.

Cassidy Hazelbaker meets Calarese to learn the secrets.



C

onfident and poised, Roberta Calarese wears a chic black abaya as she greets me at Harvey Nichols, Dubai. The Italian-born founder of Kanzi Jewels has much to be proud of- her brand first launched on 4 September showcasing three different collections. The designer seems to fit in effortlessly with both the local Emirati culture, into which she is married, as well as her traditional Italian heritage, transitioning from one to the other and blending them together to create a persona every bit as elegant, unique and dynamic as her new jewelry line.

Born into a traditional and conservative Italian family, she spent the first 19 years of her life in one of the most beautiful and artistically rich countries of the world before moving to London, where she joined the fast-paced and male-dominated world of investment banking. Her career brought her to Dubai in 2000, which was a pivotal time for Dubai's financial sector. "I have had opportunities to work with top people from around the world," she says. "I was in the right place at the right time."

Calarese has proven to be a superstar in the financial scene; she is currently the Chief Legal Officer of the DIFC Authority, the DIFC Data Protection Commissioner and the Secretary of the Board of Directors. Contrary to what some people may assume about a woman working in finance in the Middle East, Calarese elaborates, "I feel very appreciated here. Women here have incredible opportunities, if [they] are capable and have the right support." Of her own experience, she states, "exposure to any culture enriches you; makes you a better person. I have a great capacity to adapt to my surroundings. It's important to respect the culture you're in. As they say, when in Rome...!"

The idea for Kanzi came along after discussions with her cousin, Chantal Sassoli de Bianchi, who moved to Dubai a few years ago. Seeking a creative outlet from the finance world, Calarese discussed the concept with Sassoli de Bianchi, who is now the Design Director. "We wanted to do something out of the box. We asked ourselves, what are the things that we love?" recalls Calarese. "We wanted our jewelry to be wearable, fashionable and statement-making, but also elegant. Elegance is key!" she declares emphatically.

The cousins aimed to not launch just another jewelry brand, but instead create pieces that could become means of expression for the wearer. "Emirati women are very unique. They are individualistic, creative and they love to express themselves boldly in color. They love to make a statement!" she observes. "We have designed Kanzi for these women. We want our jewelry to fulfill the different parts of a personality; we want our clients to express their moods through their jewels," explains Calarese. "Emirati taste in jewelry is still very traditional but it is evolving towards more trendy pieces."

Kanzi's three collections are distinctly different but all retain the elegance that is such an integral part of the brand. 'Vintage' is characterized by bold, geometric pieces in more neutral, earthy moonstones, emeralds, and geodes. 'Rose e Confetti' is, true to its name, full of über-feminine pink quartz and white agate set in pink gold. The settings and details are remarkably delicate; many of the rings have pink gold and diamond detailing that wrap around the stones, recalling a lovely garden in which vines twist around a garden trellis. 'Les Exclusives' is the most fantastical of the three collections, comprising whimsical shapes and a plethora of vibrant gemstones, including red ruby cabochon, orange spessartite, pink, blue



and green sapphires, blue tanzanite, mother of pearl, and pink opals. All three collections feature diamonds prominently through nearly all of their pieces, notably as sparkling little accents in the settings.

It is a wonder how Calarese juggles her roles as a mother, successful executive and now jewelry designer. "Kanzi is a hobby for me. I don't mind spending my free time doing it. The tradeoff though is time for myself, which is zero!" she laughs. The busy businesswoman is always on the go, whether dashing between meetings or traveling abroad to source gemstones. Her family is always close to heart and she combines her passions by incorporating her children into the creative process, taking their opinions on new designs. Even her husband has contributed, by proposing the brand's name. 'Kanzi' comes from Arabic and means 'my treasure.' Calarese found it an exotic and accurate description for the jewelry line. Treasure it is, indeed! ♦

Kanzi Jewels are available exclusively at Harvey Nichols Dubai.



Facing Page Clockwise from Top Left: Earrings containing 18 carat white gold, diamonds with pink quartz roses. Ring containing 18 carat white gold, white diamonds with green calcite cabochon. Ring containing 18 carat yellow gold, diamonds, sapphires and grey, pink and white pearls. Earrings in 18 carat gold, silver, gray and black diamonds. Ring containing 18 carat rose gold, diamonds and blue topaz. Above: Kanzi founder Roberta Calarese. Below Left to Right: Ring in 18 carat gold, sapphire, emeralds and white diamonds. Earrings containing 18 carat white gold, diamonds with mother of pearl stars.

AN ARTISTIC *fusion*

By Rebecca Anne Proctor

Swiss fine jeweler Adler now has boutiques in the world's major cosmopolitan metropolises. Apart from its unique artistry, what distinguishes the brand is its unique relationship with Istanbul and special vision of beauty. Rebecca Anne Proctor reports.

Beauty is especially what you don't see."

Carlo Adler

Precious gemstones, an intriguing use of natural materials and a fervent desire to always stay in tune with the times - these are all elements that have allowed Swiss fine jewelry Adler to make its mark. But besides the brand's unique artistry, what has set it apart from other jewelers is its special relationship with the East.

The story of Adler began in Istanbul in 1886, when Jacques Adler, a Viennese-trained goldsmith, moved to the city to establish a workshop producing jewels that were soon bought by royalty around the world. This was a time when Istanbul was known as one of the major capitals of jewelry - an ideal place for artistic dialogue and exchange between prominent and inspiring jewelers. In 1972, nearly a century later, Jacques' grandson Franklin Adler, transferred the company to its now headquarters in Geneva. Since then, the Adler family has been personally involved in the trade from all aspects of the business - from buying and polishing gemstones to design and crafting its jewelry items as well as running an exclusive network of boutiques around the world.

"We are multi-cultured," says Carlo Adler, the brand's president, who left his job in commodity trading to join the family firm. "We were born in Turkey, but went to school in the UK and moved to Switzerland. Obviously having been born in a place like Turkey and being surrounded by beautiful things has influenced our jewelry and our lives."

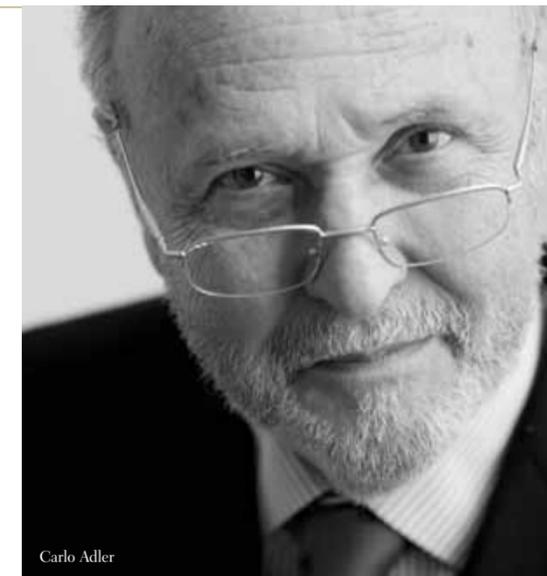
What is pivotal to the nature of Adler is its unique marriage of Western and Eastern artistic traditions. A quick look at Adler's advertising campaigns over the last 40 years reveals a brand that sees a jewelry piece in tandem with the artistic expression inherent in a theater performance or architectural creation. From 1985 to 1993 the brand bridged artistic disciplines with its 'Building Campaign' creating advertisements of Adler jewels crafted to replicate the lines of iconic buildings. The campaign drew attention

to the similarities between the architecture in buildings and that found in jewelry. Both art forms focus on the incorporation of varying textures, materials and have the potential to become icons that stand the test of time.

Other innovative campaigns over the last several years include "Memoires de Femmes, Memoire du Monde Campaign." This was the brand's longest running campaign and it was dedicated to women of the world. Revealed in a series of powerful and dream-like images of women in sepia photography, the campaign cleverly referred to a time when more and more women began to obtain professional and entrepreneurial jobs. This allowed for an increase in buying precious jewelry, hence Adler's advertisements that would place the needs of the contemporary women at the forefront of their jewelry production.

During the 1980s, the brand also began incorporating steel, wood and silk into its designs. These materials were then combined with sapphires and emeralds into creations that took a daring new approach to conventional jewelry. "We realize that jewelry is not just about gold and diamonds," says Adler. "We are a firm that spends a lot of time in research and development. We were the first to try non-precious metals. We started by using wood and then later we tried titanium and in the last few years we have been experimenting with carbon fiber."

In December 2013, the brand will open its renovated flagship store in Geneva as well as a shop-in-shop in Doha, Qatar, Adler's first commercial presence in the region. The house has been presenting its jewelry in Qatar since 1988 and has now decided to have a permanent presence in the country through their local partner, Amiri Gems. Adler's shop-in-shop will be located in the heart of Doha's luxury district. From December 2013, the



Carlo Adler

brand will have six boutiques through which to welcome their global clientele including Geneva, Gstaad, London, Hong Kong, Tokyo and Doha and Adler's haute joaillerie jewels will travel among the boutiques.

Adler is increasingly spending more time in the Middle East region. "Traditionally the Middle East has been great consumers of jewelry," says Adler. "There is a great history there and today the consumers in the region for high class jewelry are very educated and know exactly what they want." Adler comes to the region twice a year and feels that each time is a way to better "test" the market and observe the trends that are being promoted in order to see if they will fit with Adler's vision. For example, the brand's latest collection is about promoting carbon fiber - a material usually connected with industry. "It is very challenging to work with carbon fiber, but it is an extremely interesting material," he explains; "It has a unique grain and sensibility. We love working with different textures."

Ultimately, the result of such explorations is to make something beautiful. We aim to make beautiful jewelry," says Adler. "But in order to obtain beauty, one must be able to master all things people don't see - the polish must be perfect as does the technique in which the jewelry piece is made. Beauty is especially what you don't see." ♦

Facing Page: Rings from the Cameleon Collection. Above: Sail rose cut diamond earrings. Below: Paradise blue ring. All images courtesy Adler.

For more information visit adler-joailliers.com



CITY STYLE

ANIMAL INSTINCTS

By Sarah Hassan

Animal prints have returned to rule on the runway this season, with designers heeding the call of the wild from the catwalk to the sidewalk.

Safari-ready ensembles, calf-hair spotted separates and shimmering tones for evening appeared from New York to Paris, as fashion returned to time-honored staples of leopard print with ethnic-inspired accessories and classic shapes in black and white.

Whether sleek and spotted in the office, casual in neutrals on the weekend or sexy and shining in the evening, take a cue from queens of the jungle and own the cat's walk.



*Young woman with a cheetah on a leash.
Photography by Brad Wilson.
Image courtesy Getty Images*

LION

BLACK PANTHER

66



OFFICE

Silk Blend Top CARVEN
Leather Pencil Skirt TORY BURCH
Pumps GIANVITO ROSSI
Cat Eye Glasses PRISM



NIGHT

Dress HALSTON
Sandals RENE CAOVILLA
Bracelets ISABEL MARANT



WEEKEND

Sunglasses ROLAND MOURET
Dress TOMAS MAIER
Bag CHLOE
Clio Calf Hair and Leather Sandals

67



OFFICE

Quilted Leather Skirt ROBERTO CAVALLI
Top TEMPERLEY LONDON
Glasses ILLESTEVA



EVENING

Open-Back Gown BURBERRY PRORSUM
Pumps GIANVITO ROSSI
Clutch ANYA HINDMARCH
Earrings KENNETH JAY LANE



WEEKEND

Leggings LES CHIFFONIERS
Draped Top HELMUT LANG
Suede Wedge Sneakers GIUSEPPE ZANOTTI
Black & White Clutch PROENZA SCHOULER

LEOPARD

BENGAL TIGER

68



OFFICE

Skirt ROLAND MOURET
Suede Pumps JIMMY CHOO
Blouse HELMUT LANG
Bag MARC BY MARC JACOBS

EVENING

Dress PREEN BY THORNTON BREGAZZI
Printed Calf Hair Clutch LANVIN
Pumps CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN
Leather Gloves LANVIN
Earrings LULU FROST

WEEKEND

Silk Bomber Jacket EQUIPMENT
Jersey Top THE ROW
Denim Skinny Jeans FRAME
Loafers KATIE GRAND LOVES HOGAN

69



OFFICE

Bag MARC JACOBS
Belted Silk Jacket MARNI
Dress ALEXANDER WANG
Earrings HERVE VAN DER STRAETEN

EVENING

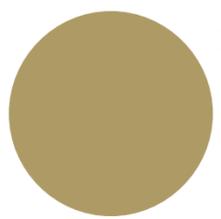
Silk Jersey Jumpsuit ISSA
Sandals CHARLOTTE OLYMPIA
Necklace KENZO

WEEKEND

Skinny Jeans KENZO
Sweater EQUIPMENT
Studded Clutch VALENTINO
Sneakers COMMON PROJECTS



ALICE TEMPERLEY *and her* GROWN-UP DRESSES



British designer Alice Temperley's exquisite dresses have become popular with celebrities worldwide. Annabel Treon speaks with the designer in London on her imaginative designs, Middle Eastern presence and furthering the world of Temperley.



Alice

By Annabel Treon



*"Luckily I am
always inspired and
my mind works overtime
in this department!"*

Alice Temperley



Soon to be in its 14th year, Temperley London has become an integral part of the British Fashion landscape. Renowned for feminine silhouettes and exquisite dresses, the brand has won the hearts of fans across the globe, from Keira Knightley to Emma Watson, Pippa Middleton to Anna Wintour. As creative director for the brand, Alice Temperley is real and down to earth; humble and unassuming. She is a breath of fresh air in an industry that can often be daring and attention-seeking. Temperley's consistent passion for creativity and femininity has been at the heart of her success. A quintessential Brit, she is charmingly delightful and real, with a warm reminiscence of a mischievous country girl behind the smart exterior of a highly successful business woman.

Temperley grew up in rural Somerset on her parents' cider farm where her creative streak was evident from a young age. "I was always making things," she recounts. "I was fascinated by patterns, sewing, painting, cutting things up to make textile pieces or clothing - I remember being in trouble for constantly breaking my mother's sewing machine. I had a real urge to create and would spend hours drawing and making things that I would sometimes sell at local village shops." Temperley later left sleepy Somerset for a faster pace of life at Central Saint Martin's College of Art in London followed by

a Master's degree at the Royal College of Art. To support herself, she used all the fabrics she made to create dresses and sold them in shops in London and Los Angeles. Therein a passion for the fashion business was born.

As her business grew into a brand, Temperley started to draw inspiration from everywhere, making sure to document her findings. "Luckily I am always inspired and my mind works overtime in this department!" She laughs. "I take my inspiration from life, travel, interiors, old films, screen sirens from old Hollywood and my library. Everything and anything can inspire so I collect things and references all the time."

She describes her design process as "organic and fluid." Her collections are well thought out and underpinned by thorough research. "My research is an organic process that changes seasonally," she explains. "I am constantly looking for inspiration and ideas and often refer to my treasured archive which I began as a child. Since then it has taken on a life of its own with additions being made from my travels and different periods of my life. I know that I can sift through the rails and chests and invariably come out with a concept for a new print, shape or texture. It is so important to record one's findings, as often the inspiration isn't tangible but rather a moment in time, a view or an idea. I have a wonderful studio at my home in Somerset in England, a beautiful bright room with views of the greenery outside. This room is the perfect environment for creativity and also where I store some of my archive pieces so I can work here without any disruptions for hours on end."

Her inspiration has translated neatly into commercial success as her business has gone from strength to strength with presence in now over 40 countries, stand-alone stores across several

continents and a number of collaborations. Temperley's recent presentation of her upcoming spring 2014 collection at London Fashion Week was well received by fashion critics. "My SS14 collection is very much Temperley dipped in heady, ethereal romance," she says "I dreamt about celebrating life in a rich, full and fragrant Sicilian adventure, dressed in luxurious fabrics with detailed textures and delicate patterns and prints. The look is of fresh, effortless luxury with new trapeze shapes and rich voluminous silhouettes with minimal accessories, in a warm and gentle color palette of burgundy, pink, blush, lilac, black, mint and white." As with most of her work, all in all, it is a celebration of femininity.

Temperley carefully co-ordinates this theme throughout her Alice by Temperley and Temperley Brides lines as well. "Whatever I design, I design with the aesthetic I believe in," emphasizes the designer. "All three lines are a part of me and true to who I am and how I dress; fantasy and femininity, practical and unpretentious, approachable luxury. I am a woman designing for women. I know how we want to feel - elegant, feminine and timeless, but also the best version of ourselves. I never believe a dress should wear the owner; the dress should only but compliment her."

This year has seen Temperley with her hands full from launching a new website, moving to a new Mayfair HQ and a second Somerset collection for John Lewis, to photo shoots in Dubai's deserts, appointing a new CEO, launching a new store in Doha and setting up a blog. All this while running business as usual as well as being a devoted mother to her young son, Fox. "I started with two collections a year and now do about 16 (1000 items) so my timetable is relentless and extremely organised," says Temperley of her extraordinary schedule. "I know what I have to

do every week of the year and have two people to help me organize it. I also am a quick decision maker and have a fantastic team around me that makes everything possible."

To date, Temperley recognizes career highlights ranging from the opening of her first ever shop under her flat in London's Notting Hill, to being chosen by Anna Wintour to represent designers in their 20's in a large feature shot by Annie Leibovitz for American Vogue in 2004. She was awarded an MBE by Her Majesty the Queen at Buckingham Palace in the 2011 New Years Honours and is proud of the fact that she has been able to stay independent. Even when faced with financial crisis, Temperley has found ways to weather the storm and connect with her consumer, embracing technology and innovation. Temperley has also been chosen to present her collections online rather than over the catwalk. The designer personally curates her favorite selections on the Temperley London website.

Temperley attributes her success to simple, honest hard work. "We have worked incredibly hard to get to where we are in a tough environment and it has used every single bit of energy and drive humanly possible," she says. "Over the last year we have restructured our business and are looking forward to the next phase in growth with our new CEO Ulrik Garde Due and my strong team that has taken me ten years to build. I also have very supportive friends and a great team." She credits her family for helping her develop the capabilities required to be successful in her business. "My mother has always encouraged my creative side; she is very free spirited, talented and creative with everything she applies herself to - from mud building to etching. My father has always done things for himself and has a hard work ethic. We are all fiercely independent as a

result." Part of a close knit family, Temperley works with all of her three siblings in different capacities. For example, her sister Matilda does all the photo shoots while her brother Henry works on the Temperley film content.

Temperley's motivation is simply put - her passion. "I love what I do, if I didn't it would be impossible," she professes. "It is such an honor when someone wears your clothes, famous or not. I like to see any woman in Temperley, if it is someone in an airport somewhere or someone walking down the street. It is as flattering as seeing someone in the public eye." She prefers not to use specific muses, describing the Temperley Woman as one who cannot be pinned down to one person, nationality, age or personality; she is independent, strong, appreciates her femininity, pays attention to detail and "appreciates investment pieces."

From concessions in stores such as Saks Fifth Avenue and standalone presences in Dubai and Doha, the Middle East is becoming an increasing focus for the brand. "The Middle East has always been very supportive of what we do and a natural customer - some of my first private clients were from Saudi - and it continues to be a strong area of growth for us commercially." Temperley London have partnered with the Salam Group in Doha, working on their store concept together. "Both of my stores, at the Gate Mall in Doha and The Dubai Mall in Dubai, have been designed in a decadent way. I oversaw all the interior design for both stores so it is completely bespoke with white marble flooring throughout and black marble detailing. It also has lovely touches such as changing rooms featuring Temperley's own print wallpaper and individually sourced antique mirrors and chandeliers. I had my fine

artist friend Frederick Wimsett travel over and paint incredible golden peacocks on the walls."

Indeed the region has grown to be their third largest market after the UK and USA. Temperley believes that the brand is well suited to the Arabic market. "The way Arabic women dress in private is very expressive - they are not shy to dress up for an occasion and make a statement. We are known for our dresses, especially our long occasion wear, which the Arabic customer really responds to, and our details and embellishment. I find the Arab customer very fashion savvy and well informed and I love designing for their sensibility." A frequent visitor to the region, Temperley is currently working on bringing in some limited edition kaftans and is exploring the potential to incorporate Abayas into her range.

But Temperley's ambitions do not end here. "The past thirteen years seem like a lifetime on one hand, and on the other it just like the beginning," says the designer. "There are so many things I would still love to do, a children's range, home ware, perfume. I want to transform Temperley into an all-encompassing - a World of Temperley lifestyle... ." She is certainly on her way. ♦

Alice by Temperley & Temperley London are available at Saks Fifth Avenue Dubai & Bahrain. temperleylondon.com



PAULE KA
TAKING
A BOW

By Rebecca Anne Proctor

French ready-to-wear brand Paule Ka is renowned for its modern and elegant attire boasting classic, geometrical shapes and colors. Rebecca Anne Proctor speaks with the brand's founder and designer Serge Cajfinger about his artistic influences and how the little black dress remains at the heart of his creations.



Symmetrical contrasts of black and white with flashes of monochromatic pastel tones that vary from season to season. This sounds like the palette of a painter eager to reflect life's everyday vicissitudes onto the canvas. It also describes the creations of Serge Cajfinger, designer and founder of the Parisian fashion label Paule Ka. Simplistic and refined lines have been at the heart of Cajfinger's work ever since the brand opened its first boutique in 1987 in the heart of Paris' Marais. But more than anything, it is the little black dress that was and continues to be the defining source of inspiration for the brand.

Born in Lille, France, Cajfinger spent his childhood in Brazil with his family. He returned to France during the late 1960s and began his immersion into the world of fashion. "By the age of eight I already knew that I wanted to be a designer. During the holidays, my family often went to New York. I remember being fascinated by fashion and especially by department stores such as Bergdorf Goodman," he says. "I remember a unique pair of trousers, black and

white and very graphic (very Paule Ka) that I bought when I was young." In 1974, Cajfinger opened up a multi-brand store in Lille with his mother and aunt whose name was "Paule"; the surname "Ka" is a reference to "Cajfinger." The shop carried designers who have now become pivotal names in fashion including Alaïa, Montana, Mugler and Kenzo. "The influence of these Parisian labels as well as my relationship with various clients sharpened my knowledge of the female form and what women ultimately desire to wear," explains Cajfinger. In 1987, he left Lille to begin an adventure of his own and set up the Paule Ka label in Paris. The brand now boasts its headquarters on rue Saint Honoré in Paris and has around 55 boutiques worldwide, including a recently opened store in New York.

THE LITTLE BLACK DRESS

The story of Paule Ka ultimately begins with the little black dress. This evening or cocktail dress, cut simply and often quite short, returned to favor during the 1950s in the post-war era and



during a time of sexual conservatism. Cajfinger was attracted to the garment's strength and simplicity, especially when it was worn on the era's style icons, such as Jackie Onassis Kennedy, Audrey Hepburn and Princess Grace Kelly. "As a kid, I was fascinated by the elegance and strength of Jacky O all dressed in black at the burial of her husband," recalls Cajfinger. "The timeless little black dress she was wearing has become the most elegant piece of any woman's wardrobe. The period of the 50s and 60s was very positive. Women were so optimistic and it is for this reason that this era still influences me today."

Today, Cajfinger continues to reinvent and rework the little black dress. The garment can be found in a peplum style, with long and short sleeves, collars and in a slim-fit for seductive eveningwear. The garment, as are the rest of Paule Ka's designs, is also greatly influenced by Cajfinger's interest in visual art and architecture. "At the origin of my creativity are aesthetic encounters," says the designer. "These

are found in the curves of a piece of furniture by Paulin, the grace of a building by Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, the solid colors of a canvas by Mark Rothko and the kinetic sculptures of Alexander Calder. Through the Paule Ka collections I constantly desire to harmonize these various artistic compositions. My work is a representation of my imagination as well as the ideals of elegance and modernity."

The geometric forms found in modern Brazilian architecture are a pertinent reference within the designer's work. "I have always been very sensitive to Brazilian architecture, such as that of Niemeyer, which marked my childhood in Brazil, or even that of Marcio Kogan today," he explains. "Niemeyer's constant research for new forms is something that I inspire to through my designs." Given the brand's lack of embellishment and artful decor, the artistic form of Cajfinger's creations is one of the principle characteristics of his work. The jewelry pieces created for the brand's Fall/Winter 2013 collection are another case-in-point. A tribute

to Salvador Dali and Jean Cocteau, Cajfinger's desire was to offer women an imaginative jewelry line filled with poetic fantasy - much like the artist's work themselves. Shape thus says it all. It can signify strength, femininity and elegance - all principal tenets of Paule Ka.

THE BOW

For Paule Ka's latest Spring/Summer 2014 collection, the bow has once again proved itself to be a defining creative trait. Bows were found on cropped blouses made out of short shirt sleeves in a manner that extended both sides just enough so that they could be tied. It was a clever way to revisit one of the brand's staple characteristics. Bows were also found with a tromp l'oeil effect on the bodice of cocktail dress; the two sides of the bow had been disjointed so that it barely resembled a bow. These dresses were laden with a print inspired by the ceramics of Vallauris - also seen on other evening dresses in a graphic black and white pattern as well as an abstract flower print - references that pay tribute to the designer's artistic inspiration.

The way in which Paule Ka creatively reconfigured the classic bow says it all. This is a brand that constantly revisits traditional forms in order to redefine what is classic in the present day. In such a way, Paule Ka goes beyond the conventional means of fashion design and breaks down stereotypes of what form and function should be. All the while, the brand continues to reflect the grace and Hollywood glamour that is not easy to find in today's contemporary fashion circuit. Celebrities including Eva Longoria, Rihanna, Sarah Jessica Parker and Selena Gomez are just some of the names that have worn Cajfinger's dresses. Paule Ka is about elegant versatility. "Whether or not you're a celebrity, every woman wants to feel beautiful and elegant while also remaining true to themselves," he says. "And this is what my creations are all about." ♦

"At the origin of my creativity are aesthetic encounters, these are found in the curves of a piece of furniture by Paulin, the grace of a building by Brazilian architect Oscar Niemeyer, the solid colors of a canvas by Mark Rothko and the kinetic sculptures of Alexander Calder."

Serge Cajfinger





EDGY AND EXPERIMENTAL: MADIYAH AL-SHARQI

By Sarah Bladen

One of Dubai's most sought-after designers, Sheikha Madiyah Al-Sharqi, talks to Sarah Bladen about her breakthrough moment and her head-turning Autumn/Winter collection.



Being the daughter of the ruler of Fujairah, Al-Sharqi grew up surrounded by haute couture. From an early age, the 23-year-old Emirati watched tailors create lavish custom-made gowns in her palatial family home in Fujairah. And by the time she reached her teens, Al-Sharqi had fallen head over heels in love with the design process - the fashion world was her intuitive calling.

While studying at the prestigious French fashion university, Esmod, she interned with the renowned Lebanese designer Abed Mahfouz. "It was an amazing experience watching Abed," says Al-Sharqi. "I gained so much insight from him about the whole creative process. What I learned was priceless."

When the Emirati designer launched her eponymous label, her first collection was snapped up by Boutique 1 and Symphony - two of her favorite stores. "Seeing my pieces hanging next to major international designer labels was a huge breakthrough for me. It was such an enthralling feeling," admits Al-Sharqi.



"It's important to remember that fashion is very much a business. There is a lot to understand and learn about that side of the industry."

Sheikha Madiyah Al-Sharqi

The designer says that her own sense of style reflects that of her fashion collections. "I would describe my taste as young, feminine and experimental. I like to have fun with fashion and push the boundaries."

It's perhaps no wonder then, that Al-Sharqi cites the British contemporary artist Tracey Emin as one of her key creative influences. "Emin's art work was so fresh when she first burst on to the scene, but today, her pieces still feel original. The timelessness of her art is incredible. And I find her neon text art particularly intriguing," she admits.

Maybe there was a touch of Tracey Emin in the Emirati designer's last collection, which featured pops of neon as well as ladylike lace and wonderfully louche silhouettes.

This fall, Al-Sharqi has taken a darker, edgier approach, influenced by the Art Deco period. Her Autumn/Winter collection showcases several scene-stealing pieces created from a range of sumptuous fabrics. "My Autumn/Winter collection has jewel tones. And I mixed heavier fabrics like leathers, furs and jacquards with light crepes," she says.

Al-Sharqi's other inspirations shine through in this collection too. "I'm constantly in awe of

bygone eras. I love how Marie Antoinette used to dress. I like the look that air hostesses had in the 1960s. I also adore the architecture and lifestyle that existed back in the day - the Palace of Versailles really inspires me and the era of the Enlightenment does too."

In her upcoming spring 2014 collection, Al-Sharqi has chosen a softer pastel palette with stunning embroidery and her usual gorgeously feminine silhouettes. "I can't give too much away, but it's gearing up to be my favorite line yet."

Unlike many designers who have a wish list when it comes to dressing celebrities, Al-Sharqi says she hasn't given Hollywood stars much consideration. "Of course, it would be a compliment for someone famous to wear one of my designs, but I haven't really thought about it much. I'm always delighted seeing any woman wear a Madiyah Al-Sharqi outfit. I want to give women everywhere a feeling of self-confidence in their femininity, as well as a feeling of being comfortable enough to step outside their comfort zone."

When the stylish designer isn't poring over patterns or flying over to Paris to soak in the fashion week shows, she loves dining at the Argentine steak restaurant, Gaucho located in

the financial district of Dubai. She also tries to find time for photography, horse riding and travelling - she especially likes relaxing in her family home in London.

Keen to make her label an international sensation, Al-Sharqi displays a level-headed savvy business sense. "It's important to remember that fashion is very much a business. There is a lot to understand and learn about that side of the industry - it's certainly not just about beautiful fabrics and stunning photo shoots. Personally, my fashion education was crucial, it's one thing to be creative but if you don't know how to technically master these creative ideas, it is really going to hinder your success."

Besides dreaming of owning her own boutique one day and taking on the rest of the world, the Emirati designer hopes to expand her product range to include accessories and shoes. "Let's see what will happen, it's been an amazing journey so far," says Al-Sharqi. We imagine this fashion princess will go a long way! ♦

Madiyah Al Sharqi is available at Symphony, S*uce and Mahani in Dubai and Cream in Jeddah. For more information visit madiyahalsharqi.com

DIARY of a FASHION BUYER

By Indre Rockefeller

Indre Rockefeller, Moda Operandi's Director of Ready-To-Wear gives us her impressions of the September shows - the biggest month in the fashion calendar.

Delpozo captured my imagination in New York. The collection was such a sophisticated version of femininity and the craftsmanship was impeccable.

Paris is always such an invigorating end to fashion month. It's beautiful everywhere you turn!



Kenzo made a big splash with their ocean-themed SS14 show, held in a large film complex on the outskirts of Paris.



Leading up to Fashion month, I always feel both excited and apprehensive. While I am eager to see the work of the many designers I admire, I know the long hours that I face in the coming weeks. Yet despite all of this, when I look back I am always deeply appreciative of the experience and moved by the immense talent I have the privilege to work with.

The greatest part of my job is working closely with the talented designers we carry on Moda Operandi. This season I attended shows, appointments, presentations, meetings, dinners and parties in New York, Milan and Paris. Some of my favorite shows were Proenza Schouler, Delpozo, Rosie Assoulin, and Prabal Gurung in New York; Aquilano Rimondi and Marni in Milan and Rochas and Valentino in Paris.

NEW YORK FASHION WEEK: SEPTEMBER 5-12

It is always great to kick off fashion month on home turf in New York and to set the stage with some of my personal favorites. I loved Proenza's metallic pleated skirts and dresses - both elements that ended up being big trends. Delpozo was oozing with sophistication and femininity, while Rosie Assoulin in only her second collection managed to stake her claim on utterly wearable elegance.

Right before flying to Europe I attended the New York City Ballet's Gala. This was a treat for me because as a former professional ballet dancer I welcome every opportunity to see New York City Ballet. But it also presented me with the perfect occasion to wear one of my favorite looks from the Delpozo SS14 runway.

MILAN FASHION WEEK: SEPTEMBER 18-23

In Milan it was the beautiful embellishments that caught my eye on the runway. Marni stood out with floral *appliqués*, while at Aquilano Rimondi it was the rich jewel tones and beautiful embroidery that caught my eye.

While in Milan, I had the opportunity to interview Francisco Costa, Women's Creative Director of Calvin Klein. He walked me through his spring 2014 collection and we had the opportunity to discuss the inspirations behind

Francisco Costa put out his 10th anniversary collection for Calvin Klein this season. Incorporating the concept of found, organic materials. One of the most stunning pieces was this printed snakeskin coat that included strips of old movie posters!

this collection as well as his 10 years as Women's Creative Director of Calvin Klein.

PARIS FASHION WEEK: SEPTEMBER 24 - OCTOBER 2

Paris is an amazing city with which to end Fashion month. It's visually stunning and presents some of the most elevated collections, all of which set the tone for this season.

The Rochas collection felt magical as the models swept down the runway in luxurious metallics. Valentino also featured a beautiful collection inspired by the Roman opera, drawing out elements such as stately robes, ornate gold jewelry, and comprising a rich color palette.

I also loved seeing Daniela Villegas' stunning jewelry collection in Paris. Many of her pieces integrate real insects, feathers, porcupine quills, as well as pebbles or wood, into the metal and stones, drawing attention to the need for balance and respect in nature. Her nature-inspired one-of-a-kind jewels are nothing short of magical.

One of my favorite evenings in Paris was at the CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund and Tommy Hilfiger hosted Americans in Paris Dinner at Monsieur Bleu that I attended with Wes Gordon.

When in Paris, I love staying in the First Hotel especially in early fall when the city is bustling with energy. Time to myself is rare during fashion month but it's wonderful when I can start the day by taking an early morning walk in the Tuileries. ♦

For more information visit modaoperandi.com

Marni's blossom-filled SS14 collection was embodied in beautiful three-dimensional floral appliques on skirts and tops.



Christopher Kane's amazing cotton-candy like fiber tops looked like beautiful works of art up close in the showroom



Thom Browne always presents his collections in a very theatrical manner making it one of the highlights of New York fashion week.



Rochas (above) was one of my favorite SS14 collections in Paris. It was almost magical.

Rosie Assoulin (left) is one of my favorite new designers. For the second season in a row she has produced a collection of timeless, easy-to-wear pieces that are certain to be long-term staples in my closet.



A SIMPLISTIC TURN

By Rebecca Anne Proctor

There seems to have been a paradigm shift in luxury this season. Instead of opting for garments with a lot of fluff and accessories, many designers presented ensembles that were minimalist and simple in nature, returning to a more classic style. Rebecca Anne Proctor reports.



Ralph Lauren



CLASSIC EDGE

Ensembles with a more classic edge were found at Tory Burch, where the designer incorporated her interest in travel with American wear reminiscent of the 1960s. This was seen through Capri pants and shift dresses imbued with the designer's bold prints and combined with an Upper East Side polish of simple cardigans and just-above-the-knee flared skirts. At Victoria Beckham the focus was on the silhouette. The designer's high hemlines and fitted dresses featured a specific cut and were accompanied by minimal accessories. Even Diesel, a brand known for its street and casual wear, simplified things in a few outfits by staying clear of too much décor and sticking with the basics. One look showed a white skirt incorporating additions of mesh-like laser cut fabric coupled with a white blouse and cardigan. The outfit added a certain lightness, ease and minimalism to the collection. Other brands such as Helmut Lang and Rebecca Minkoff similarly brought things back to the basics with simplified outfits, monochrome colors and not too much décor. Carolina Herrera injected a lot of diversity into this season's collection. Her pristine elegance was exemplified in an ivory suede shift, beautiful blouses and a full skirt of organza - sophisticated and classic with a slightly modern edge.

GLAMOROUS SPORT

Glammed-up athletic attire has been found across the runways for several seasons, but this time even more designers took to the trend. Luxurious athletic wear featured a dress code that was at once comfortable, sporty, elegant and assuredly feminine. Windbreakers, track pants and racer backs were found at DKNY's show, while at Vera Wang sporty chic was seen with crop tops, the use of mesh and also zip-up track jackets. While Tommy Hilfiger is known for his more boyish wear, his sporty ensembles were dosed with elegant slim-fitting pants, crop tops and tapered racing jackets. Sporty vests were worn on top of short evening dresses at American Dennis Basso's show - as if to state that even an elegant dress can be combined with something more down-to-earth.



Dennis Basso



THE CROP TOP

One of the latest trends of the season is to bare some skin and show one's midriff! New York Fashion Week witnessed lots of shrinking crop tops, bra top and even guests who picked up on the trend and wore tiny tops showing a nicely toned stomach. At Tibi, Elizabeth and James, Alexander Wang, Rachel Zoe, Tommy Hilfiger, Derek Lam, BCBG Max Azaria and DVF, among others, the crop top made a continuous appearance. The item came in all shapes and forms - from a typical shell-shaped crop top as seen at Richard Chai Love, layered under an oversized jacket, as was seen at Rag & Bone, with a zipper, such as spotted at Helmut Lang, or snugly hugging the torso as was found at DVF. At BCBG Max Azaria, the designer chose to forgo the skin-hugging silhouette and opt for a more voluminous shirt in a cropped style with larger trousers slightly gripping at the waist. Also seen were more sporty styles at Lacoste and Tommy Hilfiger. The crop top gives off an obvious bold gesture - baring one's skin is almost an act of defiance and self-assuredness against a more universal trend. It is both strong and sexy and here to stay for spring and summer.

BCBG MAXAZARIA



THE FAIRY PRINCESS

Gowns popped up in several designer shows this season in what appeared to be a revisit of the 18th century ball gown. Madrid-based label Delpozo showcased ball gowns with elaborate embroidery. While still a niche luxury brand, Delpozo's designs were all the rage and much talked about in New York for their fanciful looks and elegance. Ethereal gowns were also found at Marchesa, where models sauntered in romantic, princess-like dresses. Chiffon gowns were embroidered with blue and green flowers and decorated with vintage lace details. Dennis Basso's show also included ball gown ensembles - one in particular was strapless and hugged at the torso while featuring a bold black and white floral print. Ralph Lauren's show boasted a mod line-up of vibrant shades, illustrated by his cobalt blue silk gazaar gown worn by Karlie Kloss who walked down the runway in confidence and grace - an enrapturing sight indeed. ♦



Marchesa

MODERN WARES for MODERN WOMEN

By Robert Codero

Spring / Summer 2014 collections at Milan Fashion Week revealed designs for an increasingly bold, busy yet always feminine modern woman. Robert Codero reports.



Modern life requires women to play many roles. She's a mother and entrepreneur, a gallerist and a blogger, or a politician and a master yoga instructor. Whatever their activities may be, Milanese designers collectively created clothes for today's hyperactive women. If we were to characterize the Spring / Summer 2014 season's muse, she's an athletic architect who loves to work and play.



ARCHITECTURAL MARVELS

With a design process similar to taking flat, two-dimensional blue prints and turning them into habitable structures, many say that fashion, at its highest creative level, is architecture for the human body. Since the brand's inception in 1978, Gianfranco Ferré has been known as the house that the tenets of architecture built. Thirty-five years later, now designed by Federico Piaggi and Stefano Citron, the house's design codes are still largely intact. They are in the form of outsized folds of long wrap skirts, loose angular tops and origami-like belts that resembled well-considered design flourishes of modern Japanese buildings. But to court a younger audience, they paraded these architectural clothes with devil-like hair-and-makeup, which was inspired by Gia Carangi, the beautiful yet troubled American model from the 1970s and 1980s.

While Piaggi and Citron took a structural approach, Tomas Maier's softer sensibility at Bottega Veneta yielded geometric textures from layering, panelling and intricately tucking fabric, which were winning in a variety of voluminous skirts and gorgeous cocktail dresses. Maier has a penchant for using deep saturated colors, which in Fendi's colorful collection took somewhat of a backseat. But Karl Lagerfeld still managed to capture striking gradients by layering light, silk chiffon fabrics in various shades of red. Giorgio Armani also took the ethereal route with painterly hues in skirts and blouses and silk pastel shawls that were folded about the shoulders allowing the fabric to move mellifluously through the air as the models walked. Ferragamo folded skirts to create asymmetrical shapes and hemlines, Missoni gave fringe effects in one number by vertically slashing a series of white silk fabrics worn over a black shift, and Versace layered wide elastic panels in bodices that anchored drop-waisted skirts for its rock and roll themed outing.

ATHLETIC ACCESS

In fashion, to be sporty and stylish was once an oxymoron. This season, however, many designers conveyed that women could look active and chic at the same time. Arguably, the most influential show was Miuccia Prada's defiantly loud and utterly confident collection for Prada. Although much of the clothes didn't veer much from the bankable easy-to-wear silhouettes she is known for, what she lacked in form she made up with a masterful mash up of materials for the powerful, modern woman's wardrobe. This season, those signature knee-length shifts now come with shiny paillettes, outsize rhinestones, striking mural-inspired prints of faces and rib knit details. Coats were worn with sports bra-inspired tops and Mary Jane shoes were bejeweled and coated with rubber, which were paired with colorful tube socks worn by athletes from the past. And those bags, in delicious colors and prints, were as covetable as ever. Other blue-chip houses also got into the sporty game. Amid a sea of the brand's signature graphic prints, Peter Dundas at Pucci showed a sweatshirt with leather gym shorts and a jumpsuit in shocking orange of parachute silk. At Gucci, it was decidedly relaxed with transparent blouses revealing underwear with seam details that resembled tennis dresses. Marni's minimal, yet experimental looks were topped off by visors, striped belts and rubber sole platform sandals, and Aquilano. Rimondi's sophisticated and lustrous dresses had sweatshirt-inspired stitching details. If these stalwarts were courting a younger customer, then Philip Plein, a young, Milanese upstart designer, is cultivating his. Plein's outing had more than a whiff of urban wear with baseball caps, net tops, black and white referee shorts and metallic and leather varsity jackets.

WORK AND PLAY

Moschino, a storied Italian label celebrating its 30th anniversary, sent clothing down the runway fit for various professions like cheeky uniforms for maids and nuns. The label, however, also offered gingham prints in dresses, perfect for country outings. At Tod's, Alessandra Fachinetti's strong collection of neutrals featured an enticing array of simple, yet über sophisticated workwear clothes including powder blue and maroon men's inspired power suits, which were also found in several collections including Emporio Armani (worn with culottes) and Trussardi. But Fachinetti's eyelet blouses and dresses were perfect for a sunset dinner in Mykonos. At Dsquared2, the overwhelming number of swimsuits and straw hats suggested a saucy beach outing. Dolce and Gabbana's glamorous dresses have always been a go to for a vacation-loving Saint Tropez set. This season, the collection featured photographic prints of ancient Roman columns worn with gladiator belts, which has all the makings to be hits at retail. Alberta Ferretti also mined her roots with a nod to the south of Italy. Ethereal, yet delicate lace dresses and flirty eyelet skirts were adorned with ribbon trimmings and floral embroideries strategically placed around the waist. Speaking of florals, vaguely Hawaiian prints of petals were seen in a number of relaxed, cotton pieces all over MSGM's highly graphic collection. But the most winning take on florals were by No.21. They used the tropical pattern as cut outs in a salmon jacket, which look delightfully decayed. ♦

A FASCINATION with the faraway

By Rebecca Anne Proctor

A return to something more natural, subdued and organic was seen at Paris Fashion Week. Gone were the rich embellishments and digital prints that have dominated the runways for many seasons and in came a new form of decoration: exotic culture and fine art. Rebecca Anne Proctor reports.



Nina Ricci



ARTSY

The worlds of fine art and fashion have always had an interesting relationship. There's Yves Saint Laurent's famous Mondrian dress, Schiaparelli's work with Jean Cocteau and Salvador Dali, among other artists, and most recently, the collaborations Marc Jacobs initiated for Louis Vuitton. And here it was once again - fashion inspired by art was a key trend for the Spring/Summer 2014 collections.

Chanel went to great lengths to state its artistic reverie in Paris, with Lagerfeld turning the Grand Palais into a giant art gallery. Each piece on display was laden with references both to real works of art as well as the creations of Mademoiselle Coco. This included an installation of two oversized Chanel 2.55 bags, with one situated on the wall and the other on the floor wherein guests that carried similar bags could take pictures. The clothes themselves referenced visual art through graffiti totes and backpacks, brushstroke prints and colorful camellia knits and accessories in the form of sketchbooks.

At Celine, garments were inspired by Brassai's photographs of Parisian graffiti. Knitted tunics and coats worn with gauze skirts featured lots of primary colors. Similarly at Prada, illustrations by the likes of Jeanne Detallante, Gabriele Specter and El Marc were found printed on looks and also on the walls. This new trend promises a spring and summer wardrobe laden with painterly accessories.

FLORAL

While flowery patterns certainly seem to be a recurring theme in the realm of fashion, this season took floral to new heights. A romantic air filled with poppies, roses and camellias was found on wonderfully flowing shift dresses, skirts and pants. At Balenciaga, Alexander Wang presented a set of floral pieces made with leather embroidered with thread and then printed into a swirling motif onto pants, shorts and cardigans - a design only to be made via expert tailoring. Nina Ricci's motif of flowers was seen on ethereal dresses reminiscent of Monet's rich landscapes. Lebanese designer Elie Saab also picked up on the motif with white dresses and pant suits splashed with what seemed to be a colorful bouquet of flowers, adding a romantic touch to his feminine designs.



Balenciaga



THE BIKER JACKET

The Biker Jacket was reborn this Paris Fashion Week. This tough leather item has become the new must-have of the season, replacing the long popular boucle tweed cardigan. For his last show at Louis Vuitton, Marc Jacobs gave the biker jacket an elaborate makeover and decorated it with everything from flowers, feathers and precious gems. At Saint Laurent, a brand now known for its elegant grunge style, the leather jacket was found in a sleeveless version worn in a carefree manner with shorts and short skirts. Elsewhere, Jean-Paul Gaultier showed the piece in a corset-style, enhancing its more seductive appeal. It was also seen at Balenciaga with rounded shoulders and coupled with stiff, high-waisted shorts. At once bold, modern and now distinctly feminine, the biker jacket is the new modern classic.



Louis Vuitton

TRIBAL TENDENCIES

The allure of faraway, exotic cultures was captured on the runway this season. From Africa to Latin American and the Asian continent, the Spring/Summer 2014 collections were rich in references to folklore, indigenous cultures and tribes. This was seen through the incorporation of rich embroidery, drapery, graphic prints and tribal jewelry in shows by Alexander McQueen; the late designer was often said to have turned to National Geographic for his creative inspiration. The McQueen outfits were laden with references to African headwear, Celt knits and Zulu-type cow tails in what seemed to be a nod to the history of ethnic fashion. Similarly, Givenchy and Valentino picked up the trend, with the latter emphasizing African tribal embroideries in turquoise and coral colors on capes, paneled skirts and ponchos. At Givenchy, designer Riccardo Tisci presented a spring and summer show also with tribal-inspired designs seen through bronze fitted dresses and an earthy palette reminiscent of indigenous African tribes. Inspiration for this Paris Fashion Week thus seemed greatly to be drawn from afar - uniting an ever-increasing globe-trotting culture through contemporary fashion. ♦



Valentino



FALL TRENDS SIMPLISTIC GLAMOUR

By Sonia Abdulbaki

Must-haves for the Fall/Winter season of 2013 reflect a season of ladylike nostalgia intertwined with modern aesthetics. Characterized by simple, retro, bold print and ultra-feminine styles, the new womenswear trends reveal a woman who can take retro, lady-like styles and immerse them into contemporary femininity. This is someone who can easily go back to the basics and create an outfit by layering it for chic creativity and personal interpretation. Looks come with clean finishings, are flawlessly cut, cropped and oversized tees. The styles also include floral, which represents the classic beauty of a woman with a luxurious and refined touch.



This season's conservative approach might be mirrored by the global economic turmoil, empowering the lady-like fashion icons such as Michelle Obama and Kate Middleton. It is inspired by Baroque and Victorian dimensions yet presented with a modern structure. A color palette choice from the collection is white, representing the season's fashion contrasts.

All items are available at Saks Fifth Avenue Department store in Dubai and Bahrain.



Left to Right Top to Bottom:
Carolina Herrera, Oscar De La Renta,
Lanvin, Donna Karen, Ingie Paris,
Biyon, Ruthie Davis, Andrew GN,
Balenciaga, Chloe



All items are available at Saks Fifth Avenue Department store in Dubai and Bahrain.

FASHION

ROYAL SERENADE
NORTH AFRICAN ADVENTURE
CINEMATIC TALES

موضة

A woman with dark hair is sitting on a wooden chair with a white and black floral patterned seat. She is wearing a black lace long-sleeved top with a feathered collar and a long, flowing gold silk skirt. Her legs are crossed, and she is wearing gold high-heeled shoes with red soles. The background features a wall with intricate Moroccan tilework and a large, ornate wooden frame. The floor is covered in a patterned rug with a repeating geometric design.

ROYAL SERENADE

Extravagantly patterned dresses in rich fabrics of silk, velvet and meticulous embroidery are showcased amidst the colorful tiled walls, majestic gardens and majlis areas of the Royal Mansour. This is where Moroccan extravagance meets high fashion.

Photographer NICOLAS MENU
Fashion Stylist SANTA BEVACQUA
Fashion Assistant GABRIELA SENA
Make up CORINNE GUES @ B-AGENCY
Hair VINZ @ B-AGENCY
Model STEFANIA IVANESCU

*Long Silk Dress GUCCI
Gold Leather Shoes CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN*



Silk Coat, Silk Dresses with Fringes & Silk Embroidered Trousers
DRIES VAN NOTEN



Silk Strapless Dress Covered with Sequins DOLCE & GABBANA
Shoes CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN



Brown Silk Dress with Sequins PRADA



Velvet Shirt & Silk Embroidered Skirt With Sequins D2 SQUARED
Shoes RENE CAOVILLA



Velvet Dress ALBERTA FERRETTI



Silk Embroidered & Sequined Knee Length Dress ELIE SAAB
Shoes CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN



Embroidered Wool Mini Dress VALENTINO



Jacket & Trousers GUCCI

NORTH AFRICAN ADVENTURE

Vibrant street scenes and market places make up a backdrop laden with extreme contrasts in Marrakech. Warm fall and winter coats, elegant boots and seductive robes further enlighten this otherworldly North African abode.

PHOTOGRAPHER Nicolas Menu
FASHION STYLIST Santa Bevacqua
FASHION ASSISTANT Gabriela Sena
MAKE UP Corinne Gues @ B-Agency
HAIR Vinz @ B-Agency
MODEL Stefania Ivanescu

*Cashmere Sleeveless Coat VICTORIA BECKHAM
Cuirssards CELINE*



Cashmere Coat SONIA BYKIEL
Cuiassards CELINE
Bags from Marrakech Bazaar



Mustard Wool Coat BOTTEGA VENETA
Cuiassards CELINE



Wool Coat with Fur Sleeves and Collar PRADA
Cuisseards CELINE



Lace Body AGENT PROCATEUR
Shoes CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN



Cashmere and Wool Coat PAULSMITH
Cuirassards CELINE

CINEMATIC TALES

A subdued and dimly-lit private cinema in the opulent Jumeirah Zabeel Saray hotel serves as the location for our Dubai photo shoot.

Through images akin to the luscious texture of an oil painting we showcase a seductive selection of spring and summer gowns, leather attire and light shimmery fabrics.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY
Greg Adamski

STYLING BY
Dresscode by Farah

MAKEUP BY
Toni Malt

HAIR STYLE BY
Eddie Sanyer

MODEL
Aida @MMGEventz



*Python suit GUCCI
Belt worn as necklace CHANEL
Pumps CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN*





Necklace MARNI
Dress & Ring in hair NINA RICCI



Dress BALENCIAGA at Harvey Nichols
Earrings RANJANA KHAN at Saks Fifth Avenue
Shoes CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN



Dress GUCCI
Shoes CHRISTIAN DIOR



Dress MARC JACOBS
Necklace LOUIS VUITTON



Dress ANDREW GUN at Boutique 1
Boleto as necklace NINA RICCI
Gloves MARNI



Dress JENNY PACKHAM at Boutique 1
Earrings CHANEL
Hat Stylist's own



Tail coat BALENCIAGA
Skirt DONNA KARAN at Saks Fifth Avenue
Bangle KENNETH JAY LANE at Harvey Nichols



Top and trousers CATHERINE MALANDRINO
Earrings OSCAR DE LA RENTA at Saks Fifth Avenue
Pumps CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN

BEAUTY BAZAAR *fitness*

After a summer of sumptuous holidays, excess and indulgence, fitness fever is firmly taking hold. So ensure you invest in these power products that not only work alongside your workout, but also guarantee to keep you looking gym-bunny beautiful.



By Cassidy Hazelbaker

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THIS WORKS MUSCLE THERAPY

Your own personal massage therapist in a rollerball, this unique blend of herbs, spices and essential oils works to soothe aches, pains and stiffness and eases the burn of daily exercise. Containing Marjoram (a natural painkiller and muscle relaxant), Black Pepper (stimulates circulation) and Clove (to relieve muscular aches and swellings), its spicy scent stimulates the mind and calms the senses while comfort and agility are restored to worked-out muscles.

thisworks.com

SHISEIDO REFRESHING CLEANSING SHEETS

These handy face wipes will work wonders when you need a quick cleanse or to freshen up fast. Ultra soft, they help maintain the skin's natural balance while unclogging pores and cleansing you of impurities, makeup and excess oil. They also help combat shine and ease stressed skin with instant refreshment. Perfectly packaged to fit in your wash bag or gym kit, they're a sure fire way to spruce up skin.

Available at Paris Gallery



KIEHL'S SUPERBLY EFFICIENT ANTIPERSPIRANT & DEODORANT CREAM

This is no ordinary deodorant. This is an antiperspirant cream that protects against sweat and odor for an impressive 24 hours while soothing and conditioning skin with its unscented, gentle formula. Made with orange, lemon and linseed extracts, it also contains witch hazel to purify with anti-free radical properties. No residue or white marks - just instant absorption for untarnished under-arms.

Available at Kiehl's Dubai Mall, Bloomingdales & Harvey Nichols

MAC PREP + PRIME BB BEAUTY BALM COMPACT SPF 30

Skin needs to breathe and rid itself of toxins, so piling on thick, heavy products before you exercise is not a good idea. Instead try this compact, cream formula beauty balm, which offers a light coverage while still creating an even, flawless complexion. Creamy emollients and optical pearl pigments blend with powerful SPF protection to leave skin looking natural yet protected and perfected.

Available at all MAC Counters



DETOX DELIGHT BEAUTY SHOTS

These shots may be small, but they pack a serious punch. Loaded with vital vitamins and minerals, they're perfect pre or post workout. For the morning there's Liquid Sunshine, with protein rich wheatgrass to remove toxins, aid fat burning and stimulate the metabolism. At midday try Summer Glow - anti-oxidant rich acai and beta-carotene rich carrots strengthen immunity and protect against damage and aging. Then Detox Boost in the evening - with super-food spirulina (rich in protein, calcium, iron, magnesium and Vitamin B12), and coconut water, which aids detoxification and replenishes essential electrolytes lost through sweat. It's beauty in a bottle.

Available at detox-delight.ae

CLINIQUE HIGH IMPACT WATERPROOF MASCARA

Forget the panda-eyes with Clinique's latest lash lover - a smudge and waterproof mascara that gives you dramatic lashes for 12 hours. Lightweight lubricants provide an easy, smooth application, and flexible polymers condition to leave lashes luscious and soft. Intense color, long length and instantaneous volume - it's high impact perfection.

Available at all Clinique Counters



YVES SAINT LAURENT ROUGE PUR COUTURE VERNIS À LÈVRES GLOSSY STAIN

This revolutionary, pout-perfecting product is the perfect way to get a touch of color that won't budge. Combining the texture and shine of a gloss with the long-wear of a stain, its lightweight texture melts onto the mouth for an intense, glossy color that will stay put for up to six hours. That's one way to keep smiling during your spinning session.

Available at all YSL Beauty Counters

LA PRAIRIE SOOTHING AFTER SUN MIST

Even if you haven't been sweating it up outside, this soothing spray is the ideal way to cool down and rebalance skin that feels hot, red and dehydrated. It helps to replenish and rehydrate while calming and moisturizing - offering rapid relief to rescue stressed skin in need of some refreshment.

Available at Harvey Nichols Dubai Mall



L'OCCITANE SHEA BUTTER FOOT CREAM

Don't let your feet be forgotten, especially after you've pounded the pavements or scrubbed them on the sand. This handy travel sized Shea butter can easily go with you to the gym or your beach boot-camp, making it the perfectly portable way to relieve tired, achy feet. Moisturizing Shea butter works alongside soothing lavender essential oil and anti-inflammatory Arnica Extract to soften soles and tend to tired toes.

Available at all L'Occitane Counters

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URBAN DECAY DE-SLICK SETTING SPRAY

Sweat = shiny skin, not quite the glamorous glow one would hope for. Put a stop to the sweat with this super setting spray - a weightless wonder that prevents makeup meltdown. It controls oil, deflects surface shine and prevents smudging, sliding or fading while keeping skin looking beautifully matte. Simply spray over makeup to keep it in place to ensure that you stay shine free and fabulous.

Available at Sephora

ELEMIS MUSCLEASE ACTIVE BODY OIL

Part of the Elemis Body Performance range, this aroma-therapeutic body oil gives a new lease of life to tired limbs. Made from a medley of marine extracts, including sea buckthorn, sea fennel and maritime pine, combined with rosemary essential oil - it is perfect for people who exercise regularly as it relieves muscle tension and stressed joints. Warm between your hands before massaging it into muscular areas for a rejuvenating release.

Available at Bloomingdales The Dubai Mall & Debenhams Mirdiff City Center



LANCÔME EFFACERNES LONGUE TENUE CONCEALER

We all want to look our best while working out, and this long-lasting concealer is the secret to sweat-proof perfection. Boasting 12 hours of staying power, it is enriched with light defusing technology to create natural looking coverage with a matte finish, concealing dark circles, fine lines and shadows while creating an even-looking skin tone. No matter how hard you hit it in the gym, this concealer won't end up sitting in lines on your skin - ensuring you stay exercise exquisite.

Available at all Lancôme Counters



KÉRASTASE TOUCHE FINALE

Free yourself of frizz and fly-aways with this lightweight locks lover. A high-shine polishing serum, it not only protects against humidity and UV rays but against environmental and oxidative damage too - perfect if you prefer getting fit in the great outdoors. Giving maximum hold with flexible movement, your hair will stay smooth and styled with a high shine finish.

Available at all L'Oreal Professionnel accredited Salons



BURBERRY BODY MIST

For an uplifting scent that will leave you feeling fresh and fragrant (even if you've skipped the showers), this light body mist is a gym-bag beautifier. Delicately scenting skin and hair with a floral bouquet of natural Rose Absolute, Iris and Freesia, and with subtle warm tones of sandalwood and a base of creamy vanilla, sensual amber and musk, it will awaken your senses whatever the workout. Simply spritz and mist to smell sublime.

Available at Areej



PHILIP KINGLSEY SWIM CAP

Swimming may be a sure-fire way to long, lean limbs and toned torsos, but there's no doubt it can wreak havoc on hair. So if you're a water-baby, this swimming superhero is for you. Protecting the hair and scalp, its nourishing formula protects against UV damage, discoloration and damage caused by chlorine, salt water and wind. With Castor Oil and Olive Oil to hydrate, and Elastin to boost stretchability, hair is left looking and feeling healthy. So dive in for luscious locks.

Available at Harvey Nichols Dubai Mall & Mirdiff City Centre



MOLTON BROWN SILVERBIRCH THERMAL MUSCLE SOAK

The ultimate way to treat tired muscles, these deeply scented bath salts will relax aches and pains while relieving you of any stress and tension. Containing vitamin c rich silverbirch extract to invigorate, cumin oil to warm weary muscles, and bergamot and cedar wood to create a woody, inviting smell - simply pour one or two capfuls under running water, inhale and submerge.

Available at Molton Brown Dubai Mall & Faces

LANCASTER SUN SPORT SPF 30

If you bust your body on the beach or swimming is your slimming savior, then a waterproof, sweat-proof SPF should be your exercise essential. This non-sticky, transparent mist has been formulated for use on wet skin, meaning no white streaks - just invisible protection for workout perfection.

Available at Faces, Sephora and Paris Gallery



BLISS FATGIRL SCRUB

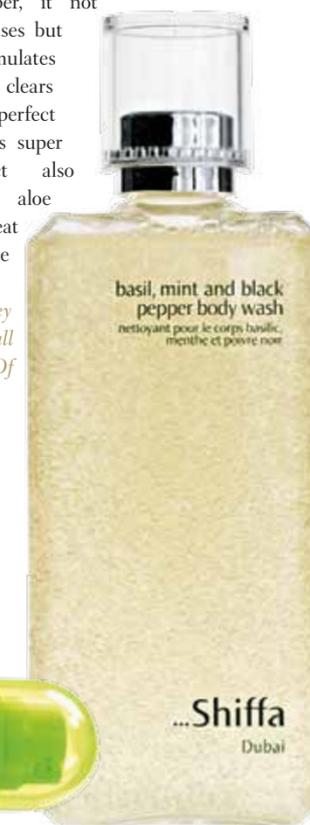
Scrub off dead, sweaty skin while toning and firming with this fierce Fatgirl Scrub. Enhancing circulation with red algae (which also helps to diminish the appearance of excess fluid retention), this scrub also contains grapefruit extract to provide refreshing, anti-oxidant protection and peppermint extract to invigorate and cool the skin's surface. Not forgetting the Himalayan pink salt which exfoliates, re-mineralizes and detoxifies. What better way to buff yourself beautiful?

Available at Debenhams

SHIFFA BASIL, MINT & BLACK PEPPER BODY WASH

If you're looking for the perfect pick-me up to get you in the mood to move, this refreshing and invigorating body wash is the answer. A heady, herbal bouquet of Basil, Rosemary, Peppermint and Black Pepper, it not only deeply cleanses but purifies, stimulates circulation and clears the mind. Or perfect post-training, this super shower product also contains cooling aloe vera and wheat protein to soothe and tone skin.

Available at Harvey Nichols Dubai Mall & Sephora Mall Of The Emirates





THE ART OF DETOX

By Laura Snook

Can a detox really be life changing?
Laura Snook experiences the famed Chenot Detox
at the Palace Merano, Italy to find out.



Many places claim to be 'life changing' - typical marketing jargon seemingly designed to draw in poor individuals who don't bother to scroll down the pages of Google. I was thus left a bit dubious when researching Palace Merano and its various 'life changing' reviews.

As an avid health devotee, a 'detoxing getaway' is probably not the first idea that springs to mind when considering long-term health solutions. However, after three years of living in Dubai, my daily rituals of blueberries, water fresh from the coconut, and a gastronomic selection of organic delights muddled with 4.5 liters of water, I was still feeling like something just wasn't quite right. So, without too much procrastination I decided to give Palace Merano a chance and see what all the raving reviews were about. After all, how difficult can meridian clearing in the mountains of Italy really be?

And so my journey to the ultimate detox destination began. As I drove away from the Verona Airport, I passed by a roadside billboard covered with a gorgeously buxom blonde. Not

the famed Miss Upton, but something of the sort. The epitome of the classic bombshell - a shining beacon of hope. "Welcome to Italy," announced my driver Fabiano in his thick accent. Indeed I thought, as I questioned whether detoxing could perhaps create such a work of art as the woman I had just seen. On my way to experience what Tatler and Conde Nast have labeled as the "Most Life-Changing Spa in the World" along with "The Best Medical Thermal and Natural Spa," I guess I was about to find out.

The entrance of the Palace Merano exuded a neoclassical opulence through columns of marble and endless rows of chandeliers and gold. I had arrived casually dressed in Reebok tights and trainers and started to wonder if I was a bit out of place.

This thought was quickly over-ruled when guests clothed in crisp, milky-white robes began to emerge. They wore no designer hand bags, no haute couture garments and no expensive jewels - there were just individuals and their robes,

ready to be subjected to this prized rigmarole of Palace Merano's Chenot Detox.

What is it that attracts guests to the acclaimed detox of this luxury hotel? I soon discovered that the majority of guests were all avid followers of Henri Chenot. A French expert in Chinese medicine, naturopathy, and a pioneer of bio-energetic psychology, Chenot created the method of Biontology - a philosophy that aims to rebalance our meridians, return us to our optimum weight and combat accelerated ageing. I was definitely intrigued.

At 8 o'clock the following day my daily detox treatments began, consisting of massages, hydro-mud therapy, energy treatments, doctor visits, dietetic assessments and the infamous detox diet. I was visiting for only five days, even though a standard Chenot Detox usually lasts for seven to 10 days.

From your initial program, you are welcome to make additions, dependent on your needs. These are thoroughly discussed with your own

Entering the Palace Merano, its grandeur and neoclassical opulence immediately confirmed this was where the A-Listers and jetsetters of the world come to cleanse and renew.



personally assigned doctor. I was recommended to have additional treatments of osteopathy, colon-hydro therapy and oxygen-ozone therapy. It was also suggested that I include the extra-curricular activities of Pilates, Nordic walking and the esteemed Dominique Chenot cooking class, a one hour interactive tutorial dedicated to teaching guests the philosophy behind the Hypo-toxic Purifying Diet along with the different cooking methods employed.

After the first day, I soon fell into a delightful rhythm. I'd wake up early, pull back the curtains and step out to my grand balcony overlooking the continuous unfolding of the Italian hills beyond. I would then trundle down for my detox breakfast with a skip in my step, always to be welcomed by the pleasant rings of the waiter's 'buongiorno signora!'

From there I would head down to the Spa zone, whereupon my massage therapist, known as the 'Marvelous Margherita', would work her magic. Blissfully indulgent, each daily session was dedicated to eliminating my body's energy blocks using cupping glasses while moving what seemed to be an imaginary channel underneath my skin.

This hour-long massage was always followed by what is referred to as the Hydro-Energetic Cure, a daily treatment that acts on the body's lymphatic and blood circulation and involves being lathered with algae and clay, then left to marinate before being hosed down with an almightly powerful hydro jet.

The rest of the daily program was dedicated to receiving energy treatments, maintaining the strict detox diet, and completing any other extra-curricular activities I had chosen.

Something I particularly enjoyed about the Chenot Detox was the level of analysis and thorough investigation that is conducted prior to commencement. From bone tests to body composition analysis, blood tests, hormone tests, urine samples and energy evaluations, a team of top medical professionals and dieticians determine exactly how your body is performing. Specialists thus discover what your body requires in order to achieve the ultimate cleanse and rebalance. This is not a mass-produced, one size fits all program; rather every individual is treated on a case-by-case basis, and provided with a program and treatments specific to their needs.

Armed with the confidence that I was in fine health and just needed a little tweak here and there, I was yet to find out why my lifestyle back in Dubai had me often feeling so lethargic. My personalized evaluation soon revealed that my kidneys were in overdrive. It turns out that drinking 4.5 liters of water a day might have been a bit much for them to handle!

Additionally, a 3D graphical analysis of my organs' energies highlighted that the right side of my brain was completely white. Apparently the color white means an overactive level of activity. This reading meant that I'm anxious, emotional and over think things- something that I surely need to change.

After spending five days at Palace Merano I began to uncover what sets Chenot's Biontology Philosophy apart from other detox methods. In short this is where the best of the best reside. Chenot and his wife have dedicated over 40 years to creating the optimal cocktail of disciplines including: Anthropology, Philosophy, Chinese Medicine, Bio-Energetic Psychology, Naturopathy, Psychology and Human Sciences. Looking at Henri's wife, Dominique Chenot, who is in charge of the Aesthetic and Dietetic Biontology Department, this was not a philosophy to be challenged.

Combining the principles of Chinese medicine with the most advanced methods in Western medicine, the idea behind Biontology is to create a balance between mind and body, yin and yang, to minimize the problems brought on by modern living: stress, tiredness, toxicity and their consequences. The result of this is the elimination of toxins and, consequently, the stimulation of cellular regeneration.

It was the daily portions of food that really astounded me. These included dishes such as spelt ravioli with vegetables and walnuts, and pearls of tapioca with orange and poppy, all of which were presented with artistic beauty. Admittedly, the portions were 'tinkerbellishly' small, but the taste and the sight compensated for the size and had my senses in overdrive.

The Dietetic Biontology Department of Chenot has undergone years of culinary trial and error to create what is referred to as the Hypo-toxic

Purifying Diet, a diet that uses no salt, no sugar and is enriched with nutritious ingredients. "When detoxing, we need to look at food first," explained Dominique Chenot. "35 years ago, Henri gave me a list of 'allowed' foods. At the time, his favorite was seaweed, and so I started to experiment. We ended up with our entire kitchen covered in it. Reels and reels of it. We learned very quickly that it expands with water!" But why are the portions so small? I pondered. "It's this deprivation that helps to stimulate the detoxing process," she explained. "The body reaches into its own resources, furthermore drawing on stored energies, of which it begins to excrete." Right, so the famed 'less is more' concept is in fact very true to its word.

As I neared the end of my stay I began to reflect on the question I set out with: Is Palace Merano really life-changing? I now boasted a leaner frame, slimmer thighs and was filled with healthy knowledge. I had learned invaluable lessons about how to maintain the quality and nutrition of food as well as theories behind digestion and how best to absorb a food's nutrients. Yes, Palace Merano was life-changing. ♦

For more information visit palace.it



But why are the portions so small?
"It's this deprivation that helps to stimulate the detoxing process."

Explains Dominique Chenot



A NEW JOURNEY IN SCENT

By Rebecca Anne Proctor

Roberto Cavalli has launched his first scent for men - Just Cavalli for Him. The new fragrance plays off the idea of strength, virility and grace. Rebecca Anne Proctor speaks to Cavalli about his new launch, Italian heritage and his continuous admiration for the city of Dubai.

"My beloved Florence, the love for the tradition of fine Florentine leather craftsmanship and the passion that is breathed through the artisanal workshops of my city have consistently been a source of inspiration for me."

Roberto Cavalli

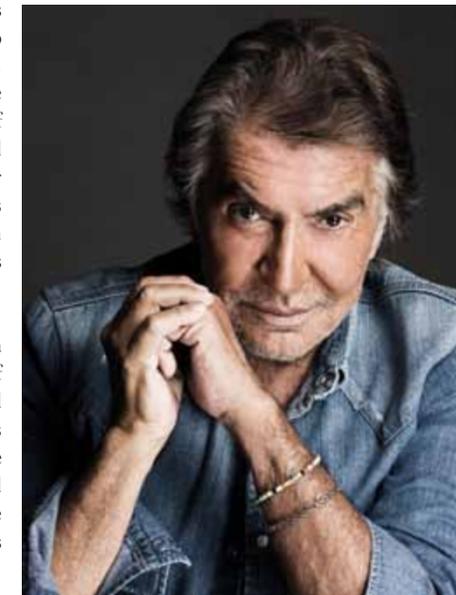


With a long list of enrapturing women's perfumes, acclaimed Italian designer Roberto Cavalli has finally launched one just for men. 'Just Cavalli for Him' is a leather fragrance with a top note of pimento, a middle one of vetiver and a base note of leather. Alluring and instinctively familiar, the scent is created for a man who is self-assured, charming and acts without restraint or inhibitions. This is a man who is at once bold and spontaneous and takes life as it comes to him.

Like Cavalli's distinctive designs, this is a perfume that will exude the innate personality of the wearer. The scent opens with a note of wild pimento symbolizing seduction and virility. This is closely followed by a sophisticated central note of vetiver wood, which provides an earthy and smoky quality to the perfume. The rich base note of leather heightens the depth and voluptuous quality of the fragrance.

Perfume making is just one of Cavalli's creative ventures. "I've always loved exploring different artistic avenues," says Cavalli. "And I love the processes involved in making fragrances. I wanted to give my clients something young and irresistible and the 'Just Cavalli for Him' perfume is exactly the epitome of that as well as the idea of love for life itself." The fragrance was conceived by master perfumers Domitille Bertier and Clément Gabarry of the International Flavors and Fragrances Company (IFF). "The process to find the right scent was very long," explains Cavalli. "We had many trials, but as soon as I smelt this particular fragrance I fell in love with it."

Moreover, the perfume's character is revealed through an evocative campaign shot with rising young Brazilian model Marlon Teixeira. The face of the new Just Cavalli for Him, Teixeira exudes a casual elegance and natural sense of style. The 'Just Cavalli for Him' man is a contemporary and



artist by discipline, Cavalli trained at the School of Fine Art in Florence. Given the variety of areas within the fashion industry that Cavalli's work has covered as well as his own artistic upbringing, it is of no surprise to learn of his appreciation of the visual arts and the result they have had on his designs. "I have always liked all forms of art and have consistently been fascinated by the visions of different artists," he says. "I love seeing how they are able to transform reality into fantasy."

The ability to transform reality into fantasy is certainly inherent in all of Cavalli's creative endeavors. The designer's mark on the city of Dubai is a particular case in point. In 2009, he opened the Cavalli Club, a hip nightclub known for its opulent interiors, Italian cuisine and jet-set guests. His presence in the UAE now includes stores in Falcon Tower, Mall of the Emirates and The Dubai Mall. He has also recently opened a 'junior' store in the Mall of the Emirates that offers merchandise for children and teenagers up to the age of 16. "The Middle East today is one of the most strategic markets and Dubai represents the 'window to the Middle East.' I believe greatly in the potential of this market," he says. Cavalli can regularly be spotted in Dubai partying at his eponymous club where he recently hosted a birthday party for his wife Eva. The Middle East continues to be a source of inspiration for his work. "I have many expansion plans for the Middle East. But I love surprises and I do not want to unveil them just yet! You'll just have to wait and see." ♦

elegant man with a strong personality," explains Cavalli. "He is fearless." The ad print was shot by Mario Sorrenti and envisions the embrace of two lovers after what seems to have been a passionate chase for reconciliation imbued with the trademark Cavalli animal print, while the TV campaign shows the pursuit of the two lovers in a way that is remarkably Cavalli in vision and style - at once earthy and serendipitously seductive.

Since his foray into fashion forty years ago, Cavalli has consistently attained new creative heights with his label while also remaining true to his Italian heritage. "My beloved Florence, the love for the tradition of fine Florentine leather craftsmanship and the passion that is breathed through the artisanal workshops of my city have consistently been a source of inspiration for me," he says. "Florence, and the unique character of Italian craftsmanship, will always be among my biggest inspirations. Such inspirations can be found in each one of my collections." A visual

All images courtesy of Roberto Cavalli. The Just Cavalli for Him fragrance is available at all Sephora outlets in the Middle East. For more information visit cavalli.com or sephora-me.com

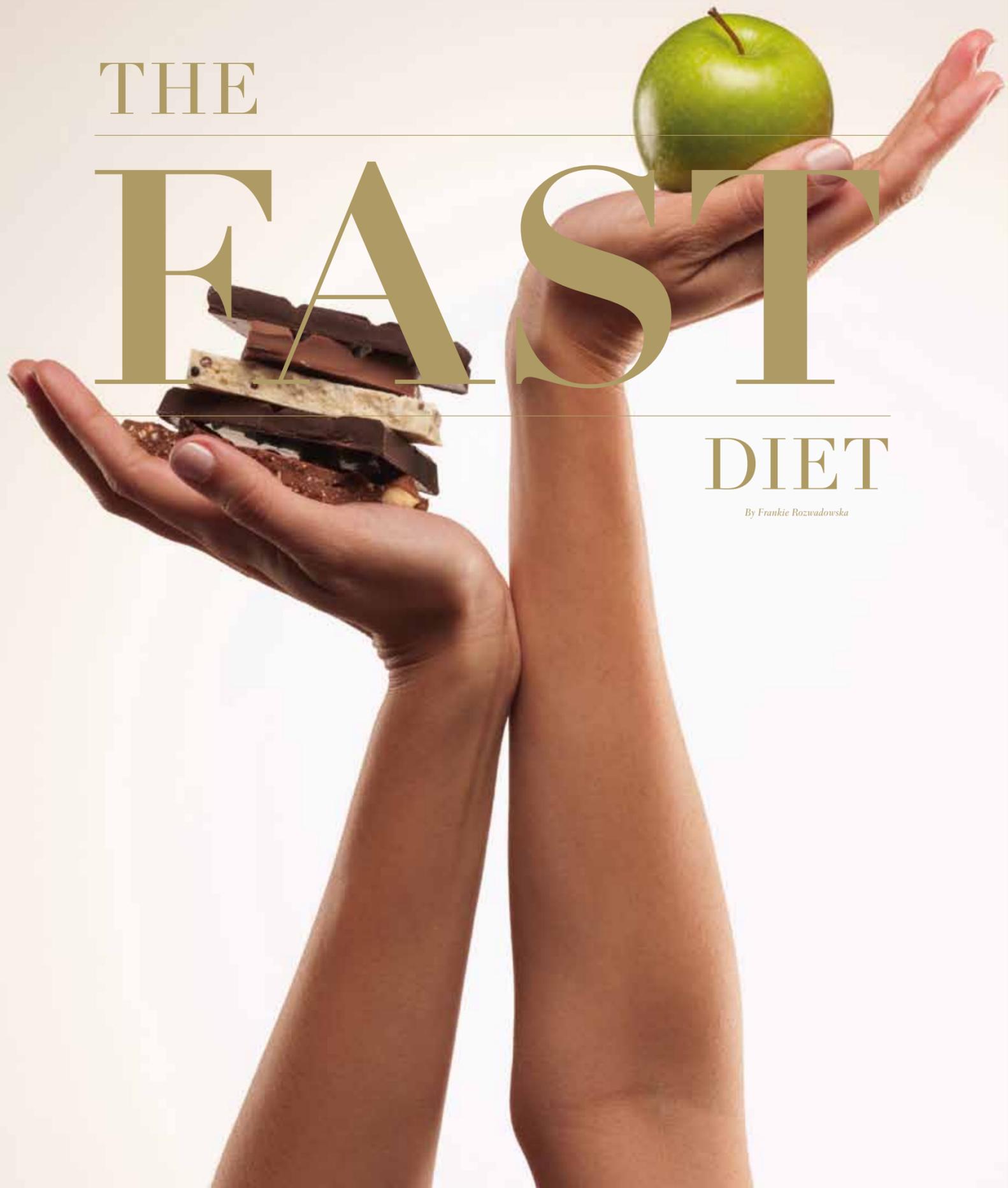


THE

FAST

DIET

By Frankie Rozwadowska



Quickly becoming one of the most popular diet trends, the Fast Diet sheds pounds and supposedly has a ton of health benefits. Frankie Rozwadowska tries it out herself.

Forget Atkins, Dukan, The South Beach Diet and surviving off cabbage soup - there's a new weight-loss plan in town, which not only promises to rid you of those excess pounds, but also boasts a staggering list of health benefits. The idea is that for two days a week you 'fast', eating one-fourth of your daily calorie intake (500 calories for women, 600 for men) and on the other five days you can eat what you want. That means cakes, chips and chocolate - if you really want it. And let's be honest, who doesn't? Hailed as the diet for foodies, it's revolutionized the way people eat and think about food, simply by dedicating two non-consecutive days a week to 'fasting'. The Fast Diet book has topped the UK's bestseller list and word is rapidly spreading around the world of its success. It's even reported that stars like Beyoncé, Jennifer Lopez, Forget Atkins, Dukan, The South Beach Diet and surviving off cabbage soup - there's a new weight-loss plan in town, which not only promises to rid you of those excess pounds, but also boasts a staggering list of health benefits. The idea is that for two days a week you 'fast', eating one-fourth of your daily calorie intake (500 calories for women, 600 for men) and on the other five days you can eat what you want. That means cakes, chips and chocolate - if you really want it. And let's be honest, who doesn't? Hailed as the diet for foodies, it's revolutionized the way people eat and think about food, simply by dedicating two non-consecutive days a week to 'fasting'. The Fast Diet book has topped the UK's bestseller list and word is rapidly spreading around the world of its success. It's even reported that stars like Beyoncé, Jennifer Lopez and Hugh Jackman are fans of intermittent fasting. So is the 5:2 for you? Well, I decided to give it a go and see if I really could have my cake, eat it, and lose weight too.

What drew me to the diet wasn't just the obvious weight loss, but the other ways it's said to boost your body and health. Yogis, monks and numerous religions have recognized the benefits of fasting for centuries, and it's used in Indian Ayurvedic medicine, Chinese Medicine and South American Medicine to aid the detoxification and cleansing processes. It's therefore no wonder that after health tests revealed Dr. Michael Mosley, an award-winning British medical journalist, wasn't in the best of shape, he decided to investigate fasting further - testing the theory that drastically cutting back on calories can affect your health. Not only did he lose a lot of weight (one stone in five weeks), his post-fasting test results were staggeringly different. His blood glucose levels (which had been borderline diabetic) were back to normal, his cholesterol levels (previously high enough to warrant medication), were down to a healthy range, and his IGF-1 levels (insulin-like growth factor hormone) stayed low. This is vital for being slim and

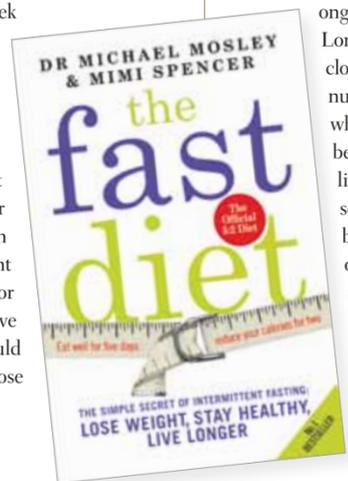
"There are no complicated rules to follow; the strategy is flexible, comprehensible and user-friendly."

Mimi Spencer



healthy because, as its name suggest, IGF-1 has growth-promoting effects on almost every cell in the body, keeping cells constantly active. It's important to have sufficient IGF-1 levels when you are young and growing, but in later life high levels lead to accelerated aging, diabetes and diseases - including cancer.

At the University of Southern California, ongoing research by Professor Valter Longo (whom Dr. Mosley worked closely with) has also shown that a number of repair genes switch on when IGF-1 levels drop. So to look better, cut your risk of illness and live longer - intermittent fasting seems to do the trick. It lowers blood pressure, reduces the risk of Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome, asthma and mental illnesses (including Alzheimer's and Parkinson's), while increasing focus, concentration, mental clarity and, of course, fat burning.



I was still a little reserved, worried that on my 'fasting' days I would turn into a food obsessed demon, foaming at the mouth while dreaming of donuts but with no energy to actually go and get one. So I caught up with Mimi Spencer, a top London journalist and Dr. Mosley's co-writer of The Fast Diet book. 45 years old, she looks like she's in her 30's, and is lean and slim having lost 23 pounds since starting the diet in October last year. In fact, she's lost so much weight that she now only fasts once a week to maintain her fabulous figure. After trying (and failing) numerous diets (ring any bells?), she was attracted to the idea of only watching what she ate for two days a week instead of denying herself her favorite foods all the time - the main reason she thinks The Fast Diet has proven so popular. "The success lies in compliance - the idea that you are not dieting all the time, so it's psychologically far easier to do than a traditional long-haul diet regime. There are no complicated rules to follow; the strategy is flexible, comprehensible and user-friendly. There's no daily slog of calorie control - none of the boredom, frustration or serial deprivation that characterizes conventional diet plans. It's part-time, so you never feel serially deprived, and you will still enjoy the foods you like - some of the time. Tomorrow is another day - when you eat normally without worrying about calorie counting."

She advised I fill up on lots of nutrient rich proteins and vegetables on my fast days, as this satiates hunger and won't cause a peak in blood sugar levels. Also, it is crucial that I listen to my body. Some days you just won't feel up to fasting. Don't stress, do it the next day. That's the beauty of it - you can pick and choose the days that work for you.

So that was that. I've now been on the 5:2 diet for just over two weeks, and although my first 'fast' was by no means easy (do not use it as an excuse to consume everything in sight the night before, bad idea) I've realized that hunger is easily managed, the pangs pass and on my 'feed days' I (amazingly) am not tempted to binge. Herbal tea, miso soup and carrot sticks are saviors, as is The Fast Diet Cook Book, where they've kindly counted the calories for you. I've lost four pounds, am able to go about my daily activities with the same, if not more, energy than before, my cravings for junk food are decreasing, and I'm becoming more aware of how I eat. I'd almost go so far as to say I look forward to my fast days. Maybe. It's early days, but so far The Fast Diet and I are fast becoming friends. ♦

For more information visit thefastdiet.co.uk

SLEEPING BEAUTY

By Frankie Rozwadowska

“Sleep that knits up the raveled sleeve of care,” said Shakespeare’s Macbeth. And sleep does to care of us when we are unraveled. And yet so many of us have trouble getting enough sleep. Frankie Rozwadowska reports on how necessary sleep is for our overall mental and physical wellbeing.

It is not just a saying or an old wives’ tale - sleep really does make you more beautiful. Heidi Klum gets 10 hours a night, while Penelope Cruz clocks up 12 - and Eva Mendes claims she would get the gold medal if sleep became an Olympic sport. Those glorious hours when we are dreaming of magical lands or far-away places are when our skin goes through vital processes of restoration and repair, and when our metabolic rate rises to replenish dead cells at the surface. Today sleep is seen as a luxury and not a necessity, and a whopping one in three people suffer from sleep problems. The result? We’re turning into a world of puffy-eyed, energy-less zombies, surviving on sugar and Starbucks to make it through the day. Not a pretty sight.

A lack of sleep can lead to a startling array of health issues, from depression and anxiety to weight gain, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes and memory loss. Most of us need an average of eight hours of sleep per night, but this can range from 6-10 hours depending on the individual. If you wake up feeling groggy and are in need of a nap come the afternoon, it’s safe to say you are not getting enough shut-eye and we all know what that feels like. It’s hard to concentrate, you have less energy and motivation to do anything, you feel more emotional and irritable and you are less likely to want to exercise. If just one night of too little sleep can have this effect, you can imagine the damage repeated sleep loss can have on your mind and body. Sleep boosts immunity and gives your cells time to repair themselves as it’s when our growth hormone is secreted. This hormone is anabolic, meaning it helps to build up proteins needed to repair cells and tissues. Sleep also allows your brain the time to ‘reorganize’ thoughts and emotions, keeping us mentally balanced and physically healthy.

A ‘normal’ night’s sleep is divided into three main parts: Quiet Sleep (sometimes called deep sleep, which is divided into stages 1-4 with each stage becoming more deep), REM Sleep (rapid eye movement sleep - the time when the brain is most active but the body is still), and short periods of waking, which normally occur for 1-2 minutes. Each night we experience 4-5 periods of quiet sleep, alternating with 4-5 periods of REM sleep. Every two hours or so we will also have several short periods of waking, which occurs more frequently as we are nearing the end of our sleep cycle. Sounds simple, but unfortunately more and more of us are suffering from sleep problems. Over ten million sleeping pill prescriptions are written each year!

I asked Dr. Khaldoun Mozahem, a Neurology Consultant and a sleep expert at Dubai’s American Center for Psychiatry and Neurology, why so many of us experience sleep problems, and he believes the biggest causes are “the busy lifestyles we lead and the impact of technology,



electricity and electronics.” This means watching TV or checking your emails before you turn out the light. Even sending a text message or a quick tweet can impact your night’s sleep, as electronics and technology stimulate the brain - switching it on, not off. Artificial light prevents the release of the sleep-promoting hormone, melatonin, and enhances alertness, not exactly what you want when you’re about to go to sleep. Dr. Khaldoun strongly advises avoiding these activities, replacing them with relaxing experiences like having a warm bath, reading a book or listening to music - allowing both our bodies and minds to slow down and start the resting process.

Dr. Khaldoun also believes diet plays a key factor in how we sleep. In a world of processed, sugar-laden meals and coffee shops on every corner, it’s little wonder that what we are putting in our bodies is affecting how we are turning them off. Before bed avoid sweets and caffeine, but also heavy, fatty meals. Consuming a big stodgy meal at night means your digestive system goes into overdrive - likely to lead to a disturbance in sleep. Dr. Khaldoun’s top tip is to have a light meal, early in the evening. Think yoghurt, fresh fruit and vegetables. A glass of warm milk is also said to have a relaxing effect, as do foods rich in magnesium - so eat lots of green leafy vegetables, pumpkin seeds, whole grains and almonds. Or a particular favorite of mine is a big cup of chamomile tea - a herbal healer renowned for its calming effect. Other natural remedies include lavender, lemon balm and valerian root, so look out for products containing these sleep-inducing saviors in your local health store.

Lack of sleep not only makes you feel lousy, but it puts extra stress on the body. Increasing levels of stress hormones means one thing - wrinkles and lots of them. Instead of battling nasty environmental factors like pollution and sunlight, at night our systems focus on repairing damage caused during the day, and without this key time period skin becomes more sensitive and irritated. During the day, the sympathetic system is in control - keeping blood flow near

the core of the body. But while you’re dreaming away, the parasympathetic nervous system takes over - directing the flow of blood to the skin. This increase of oxygen in the skin’s cells allows receptors in the blood vessels to obtain amino acid molecules, which help drain toxins and fluids whilst building collagen. This means no puffiness and instead, supple, smooth skin. Not enough shut-eye also means higher levels of stress hormones, which cause increased inflammation and the acceleration of aging and worsening of blemishes. It also reduces the skin’s ability to stay hydrated, making for a dull, lackluster complexion.

So shut down, turn off and get some shuteye. You’ll feel better, look younger and be healthier for it - turning you into a Sleeping Beauty fit for a fairy-tale. What a dream. ♦

A session with Dr. Khaldoun Mozahem costs 600AED. For more information visit americancenteruae.com

Try these sleep-inducing products for the ultimate way to drift off.

A couple of hours before bed, light NEOM’s new Tranquillity Candle and fill your room with a scent made for sleep. A heavenly blend of pure English lavender essential oil, sweet basil and jasmine - it’s made with the highest possible level of essential oils to maximize its peace-inducing power. It not only smells like a dream, but will ensure you have plenty of them too. Available at Nstyle, Boutique 1, Burj Al Arab & Zighy Bay

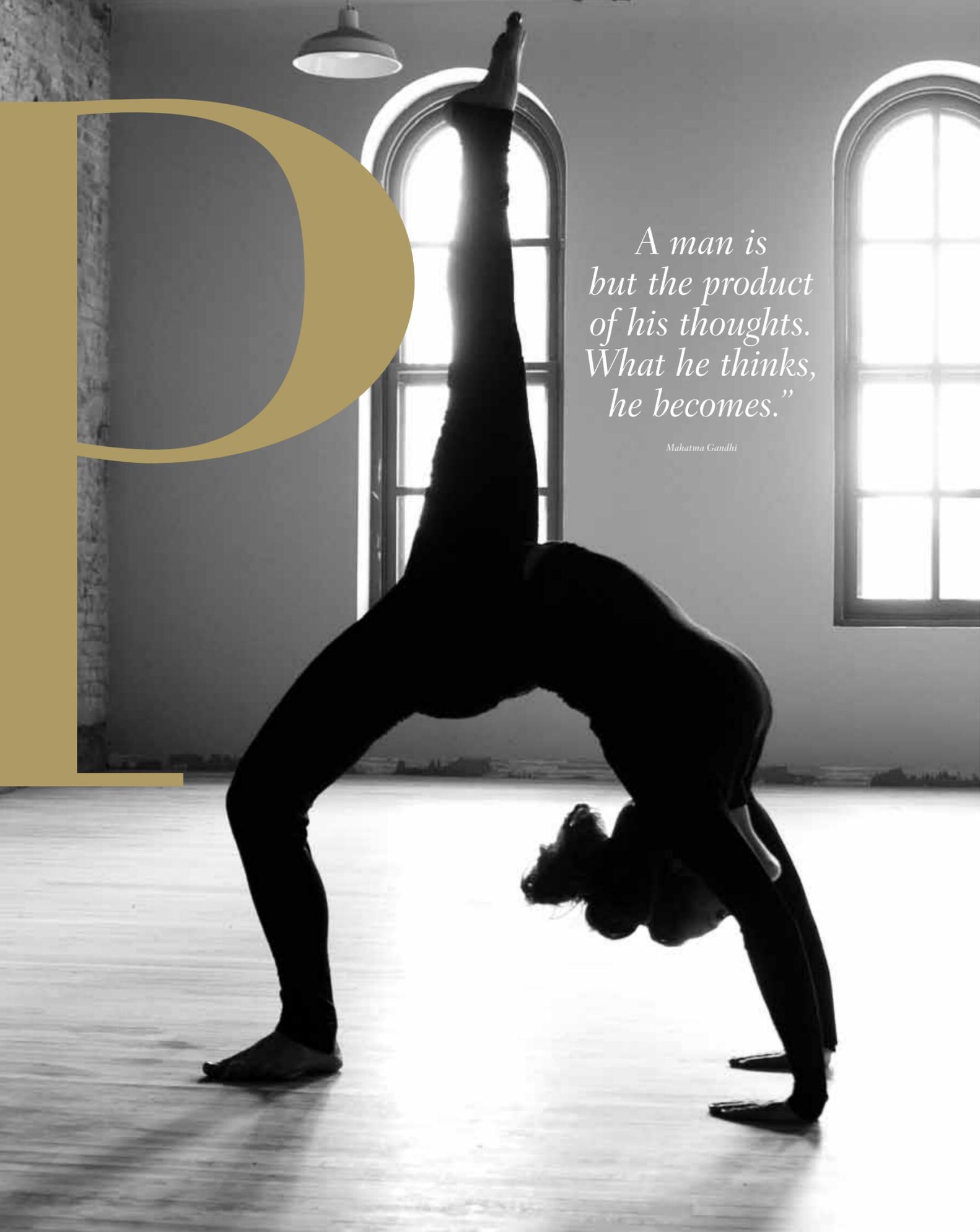
For a sleep-filled night, soak in a bath of Aromatherapy Associates Relax Deep Bath & Shower Oil. Just one capful will release the aromatic oils of nature’s most calming plants (chamomile, sandalwood and vetivert) to instantly create a deep sense of peace and tranquillity, and the coconut oil will leave you with soft skin. Perfect if you’re feeling overtired, exhausted or in need of a night of unbroken sleep. Available at The Product House and selected spas

Moroccan cedrus oil blends beautifully with olive oil, Bulgarian Lavender and evening primrose oil in Molton Brown’s Sleep Cedrus Body Oil. Deeply fragrant, its restful aromas aid relaxation and help your senses to unwind while your body is cocooned in a calming and nourishing oriental oil. Available at Molton Brown Dubai Mall & Faces

For a perfectly perfumed pillow guaranteed to send you into a sublime slumber, try the L’Occitane Aromachologie Pillow Mist. A blend of 100 percent natural essential oils, including lavender, tea tree, and geranium. It also contains softening lime blossom extract to calm, soothe and ease away anxiety and stress - helping to promote a peaceful, repairing sleep. Available at all L’Occitane Boutiques

Part of the award-winning This Works Deep Sleep Range, the Deep Sleep Dream Cream is, quite literally, a dream cream. Designed to soothe tired hands and feet and to encourage a good night’s sleep, it combines a powerful, therapeutic blend of aromatherapy oils, including provençal lavender to calm, wild chamomile to soothe and vetivert, known as ‘the oil of tranquillity.’ There’s also organic crambe oil to restore hydration and repair damaged or dry skin, and Omega 3 rich cemelina oil to improve skin elasticity and suppleness. You’ll be left feeling smooth, soft and superbly sleepy. Available at thisworks.com

Roll on the remedy with this nighttime treat. A balancing blend of essential oils, including lavender, geranium and bergamot, it is easily applied to pressure points to help relax the body and mind. Providing a sense of wellbeing for weary worriers, it also helps ease stress and reduces feelings of exhaustion. Available at Neal’s Yard Dubai Mall



*A man is
but the product
of his thoughts.
What he thinks,
he becomes.”*

Mahatma Gandhi

THE POWER OF POSITIVITY

By Frankie Rozwadowska

‘Modern day life is filled with constant stress. We often forget the power of our thoughts to channel positive energy to get us through difficult situations. Frankie Rozwadowska explores how necessary it is to train our minds to focus on the good in order to combat the bad.



Is the glass half full or half empty? We all answer ‘half full’, but is that because we know that’s what we should say? The reality is, the majority of us would say ‘half empty’, but we know that how we answer this question is a strong reflection on how we look at life. Negative thoughts act as a barrier - an inhibitor that stops us from seeing and experiencing new things while preventing us from dealing with and adapting to everyday situations or coping with stress. They also affect our health, with research proving that positive thinking creates lower levels of distress and depression, reduced risk of illness, and longer life expectancy. So why don’t we want to say ‘half full’? Can we re-train our minds to become more positive? We can if we want.

The brain is extraordinarily powerful, responsible for everything from keeping our hearts beating and our limbs moving to managing thoughts and emotions. There are numerous sayings suggesting the power of thought, for example ‘mind over matter’ or ‘you can do anything you set your mind to.’ If our mind controls everything, and we control our mind - then we hold the key to our happiness. It’s all about The Law of Attraction, the principle that ‘like attracts like.’ If you think positively, positive things and people will generally come your way. Likewise negative thoughts bring about negative people and experiences.

Yet the challenge is that positive thinking is easier said than done. We get stuck in a rut, picking up bad habits and allowing stress or negative people to affect our state of mind. Noora Kobty, a Counseling Psychologist at the German Neuroscience Center in Dubai, advises that to change our way of thinking we must assess our ‘self talk’, our everyday thoughts. “It’s how you see yourself and things around you. If you realize you’re a pessimist, then that’s where to start - learning to change your self thoughts.” This is something we are all guilty of, and according

to Noora, a big reason why “social media and technology impacts our everyday lives. Social media allows us to compare our lives to others. It’s easy to look in the mirror or a magazine and tell yourself you aren’t good enough, that you’ll never be that pretty or that skinny. When we constantly compare ourselves to others we enter into a vicious egotistical cycle; we constantly feel the need to achieve more, change ourselves instead of focusing on what we have. This will never prove self-satisfying.”

It’s in these situations that positive thinking can radically change how we feel about ourselves and, consequently, about our life. Instead of focusing on the negative in a situation, focus on the positive. Noora uses the example of someone who discovers they didn’t get their desired job. “The positive thinker is more likely going to think of ways he can do better and resolve the situation, whereas a pessimist is likely to dwell on the situation and do nothing to help himself.”

By adapting our attitudes in this way, we subconsciously open the door to many new and exciting opportunities. Sabina Christensen, a Personal Development Consultant at LifeWorks Dubai, strongly believes that “the benefits of positive emotions don’t stop after a few minutes of good feelings subside. In fact, the biggest benefit that positive emotions provide is an enhanced ability to build skills and develop resources for use later in life.” Therefore, negative thoughts shut you off from the world, limiting what you see, altering your perception of the good in any situation and the options available to bring about beneficial change. “For example, when you’re stressed out about everything you have to get done today, you may find it hard to actually start anything because you’re paralyzed by how long your to-do list has become. Or, if you feel bad about not exercising or eating healthy, all you think about is how little willpower you have, how you’re lazy and don’t have any motivation. In

each case, your brain closes off from the outside world and focuses on the negative emotions of fear, anger, and stress. Negative emotions prevent your brain from seeing the other options and choices that surround you.”

Both Kobty and Christensen believe meditation is one of the most effective ways to channel positivity and clear out negative thoughts, especially in difficult or stressful situations. It helps us focus on learning to be in the present moment. As Christensen says, “very often we are going around at 100 kilometers an hour, not even conscious of our thoughts or how we’re doing in any one minute. Meditation and mindfulness slows us down, making us aware of the now - allowing us to live in the present and not in the past or future.” If you are new to meditation, Kobty suggests starting with a simple process, “all it takes is for you to relax and allow peaceful thoughts to enter your mind. Use words or sentences that are meaningful to you, for example ‘I am a good person’, ‘I have people that love me.’”

Kobty also suggests making a list of the things in your life that cause you stress according to the level of anxiety they cause. This helps you recognize what you find difficult and to focus on positive ways to overcome them. Christensen recommends writing down positive experiences every day. A study published in the Journal of Research in Personality showed that those who wrote about a positive experience every day, for three consecutive days, versus those who wrote about a control topic, had more positive experiences and better mood levels. So set aside some time for yourself, surround yourself with people who believe in you - and soon you will too. When you’re faced with a tough or stressful situation, use the power of your mind and positive thoughts to get you through. Soon that glass won’t just be half full - it will be overflowing. ♦

ENCHANTMENT

ARTISTICALLY REDEFINED
COMING OF AGE IN NEW YORK
A SAUDI ARABIAN TRICKSTER
FROM LES RUSSES WITH LOVE
A CENTRAL ASIAN FIXATION





ARTISTICALLY REDEFINED

Contemporary art and fashion come together once again for Net-a-Porter's Art Capsul, a project that invited some of the biggest names in the art world to create bespoke garments exclusively for the fashion website. Rebecca Anne Proctor reports.



The intimate relationship between fashion and art has long been noted. From Schiaparelli, Salvatore Dali, Coco Chanel, Jean Cocteau, Marc Jacobs, Louis Vuitton and many others, fashion and contemporary art seem to be more closely joined than ever before. In recent years, we've seen a host of luxury powerhouses sponsor contemporary artworks and projects around the globe. These include Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama's collection for Louis Vuitton last year, Christian Dior's collaboration with Chinese artists and most recently, Damien Hirst and Miuccia Prada's Doha desert juice bar. Now we have another fruitful collaboration between the two artistic genres: revered online fashion retailer Net-a-Porter has enlisted some of today's most celebrated artists including Marina Abramovic, George Condo, Terence Koh, Vik Muniz and Mickalene Thomas to envision bespoke garments that will be available on a unique, made-to-order basis, exclusively on the fashion site.

exhibitions alongside visual artists, such as Terence Koh.

While the premise of Art Capsul is inspirational, what is perhaps even more pivotal is why an online fashion retailer such as Net-a-Porter wanted to launch such an initiative. "We wanted to bring artists and haute couture together to create wearable artwork," says Holli Rogers, Net-a-Porter's Fashion Director. "Our customers are always our main source of inspiration, and with this limited edition collection, we've been able to showcase these garments in an exhibition context, bringing our customers together with collectors and people from the art world." Moreover, the pieces that were created were each specially-crafted in resemblance to the best of haute couture. "We also wanted to help produce really extraordinary pieces; thousands of hours of craftsmanship went into the making of these garments," adds Rogers. The garments showcased elements found in the artists' best-known works. For example, you can expect gold leaf from Marina Abramovic, pearl motifs from Koh, silk screens from George Condo, photographic prints from Vik Muniz and Swarovski crystals from Mickalene Thomas.

The Art Capsul is part art exhibition and part capsul collection. Curated by Stacy Engman, a curator based in New York and known for her work bridging fine art with other art forms, including music and film, the Art Capsul showcases elements found in the artists' most renowned artworks. "Art Capsul celebrates originality, vision, and uniqueness inherent in the forms and traditions of haute couture and art," says Engman. "Artists give life to their artwork through their own distinct vision, and this special art project series celebrates this as an extension of their existing vision and practice." The project is very much an extension of Engman's work, which has presented fashion designers, such as Karl Lagerfeld and Marc Jacobs, in her

The artists themselves were selected on the basis of their work and what they could bring to the aesthetic of an haute couture garment. "The aim was to select different artists who work in various primary mediums and for each to bring their own unique and personal aesthetic to their piece," explains Rogers. "Stacy selected the following artists based on this brief; Condo is mostly known for his paintings, Muniz for his composed photographs, Abramovic for her performance work, and



Opening Page: Elle gown designed by Mickalene Thomas.
This Page, Above to Below: Peau d'Anne Gown by Vik Muniz.



Koh, a multimedia artist, works in sculpture and installations.” Thus the staple elements in each artist’s *oeuvre* ultimately were reflected in the clothes that were created.

Abramovic’s Energy Clothes are a case in point. Using 100 percent silk taffeta parachute fabric in seven colors with seven magnets per piece, Abramovic created seven parachute silk jumpsuits, inspired by the seven phases of the moon.

Each jumpsuit includes seven pockets, each containing a small magnet to denote energy points in the body. The garments effectively coordinate each day of the week with planetary coloring, while also emphasizing the relationship between the colors that we wear and their influences on our emotions and every day actions. “Energy clothes are the simplest and most lucid expression of the theme of energy I have ever presented,” says the artist. “Magnets, colors and body sites transpire as conductors of light, lucidity and energy.” Abramovic’s outfits create a systemic relationship between everyday garments and the cycles of the universe.

An artist who is highly ornate in artistic vision and craft, Koh’s work spans a variety of artistic genres from epic operas to complex installations and sculptures, incorporating a wide range of influences including Medieval and Gothic as well as contemporary street culture. For the Art Capsul, Koh created the Pearl Bomber Jacket. Made from 100 percent sustainable cotton and 20,000 hand-stitched and applied faux pearls from Swarovski, Koh has created the jacket in his signature palette of white as tribute to his sculpture *Boy by the Sea*, a self-portrait that was initially installed by the ocean in Yokohama. The jacket is inspired by the contemporary bomber jacket popularly worn on the street, while it is at the same time heavily embellished with Swarovski pearls to reflect a highly fetishized luxury item.

Brazilian-born artist Vik Muniz’s *Peau d’Âne* Gown - meaning “donkey skin” in French - references the 1970 cult film *Peau d’Âne* starring Catherine Deneuve. In the film, a princess asks for gowns to be made that are seemingly impossible to create, in order to get rid of an unwanted suitor. Her demands are fulfilled. Muniz’s gown depicts a floral scene with hummingbirds in high-resolution print set on duchess satin. The appliqué technique he used reflects that which he incorporated in his *Retratos de Revista* series. Similarly, here he layered cutouts of the same fabric on top of the entire surface of the gown.

Renowned for his oil paintings, Condo’s piece is entitled *Opus 1 (Babydoll, Park A)* and draws inspiration from his *Nannies* series. The garment alludes to a Swiss chalet nanny and is in the form of an urban parka jacket from the back, while on the front it is a silk-chiffon baby doll dress that is almost transparent and trimmed with fox fur. The title is significant as it marks the artist’s first foray into fashion - *Opus*, meaning “work” in Latin, and the number designating it as the first work.

Working primarily in photography and collage, Thomas’s *oeuvre* is consistently preoccupied with the subject of beauty. She is known for exploring notions of femininity and identity within contemporary culture and the inherent beauty that can be found within everyday scenes of popular culture. For *Art Capsul*, she created *Elle*, her first textile pattern in a digital vector image file. The piece was inspired by the fabric of a dress that her grandmother gave her as a child. The pattern has been superimposed onto a duchess satin gown that Thomas hand-sculpted, before she added paint strokes to the underskirt. The gown is encrusted with Swarovski rhinestones.

Net-a-Porter’s *Art Capsul* epitomizes the marriage of art and fashion. Perhaps the most distinct difference between the two realms is that a fashion item is functional - it has an everyday purpose, whereas the art object, as innovative and creative as it is, serves solely for the pleasure of our eye. Here are artworks that have become functional as fashion items - a true marriage of artistic disciplines. “Both fashion and art are forms of creative expressions, which can influence and depend on one another,” says Rogers. “We wanted to get involved, as our customers are increasingly interested in finding forever pieces, and these garments are truly an occasion.” These exclusive items are truly one-of-a-kind and the type of fashion items that Net-a-Porter shoppers will cherish. As stated by Alison Loehnis, President and Managing Director of Net-a-Porter, “These unique, bespoke works are covetable, fashionable and highly collectible.”

The *Art Capsul* was announced by Net-a-Porter at a private reception at The Upper House during Art Basel Hong Kong in May 2013. The luxury fashion online retailer then revealed garments during an exclusive preview during Paris Haute Couture Week this past July. The items have surely made history and add to the ongoing tale of the collaborations between the worlds of fashion and art. ♦

All images courtesy Net-a-Porter. *Art Capsul* by Stacy Engman is available on a made-to-order basis exclusively via Net-a-Porter.com’s Personal Shopping team.



“Art Capsul celebrates originality, vision, and uniqueness inherent in the forms and traditions of haute couture and art.”

Stacy Engman

Opposite Page: Energy Clothes by Marina Abramovic.

Left to Right Top to Bottom: Terence Koh, *Opus 1 Baby Doll Parka* by George Condo, *Pearl Bomber Jacket* by Terence Koh, Close up of the *Elle* gown designed by Mickalene Thomas, Mickalene Thomas and Stacy Engman.



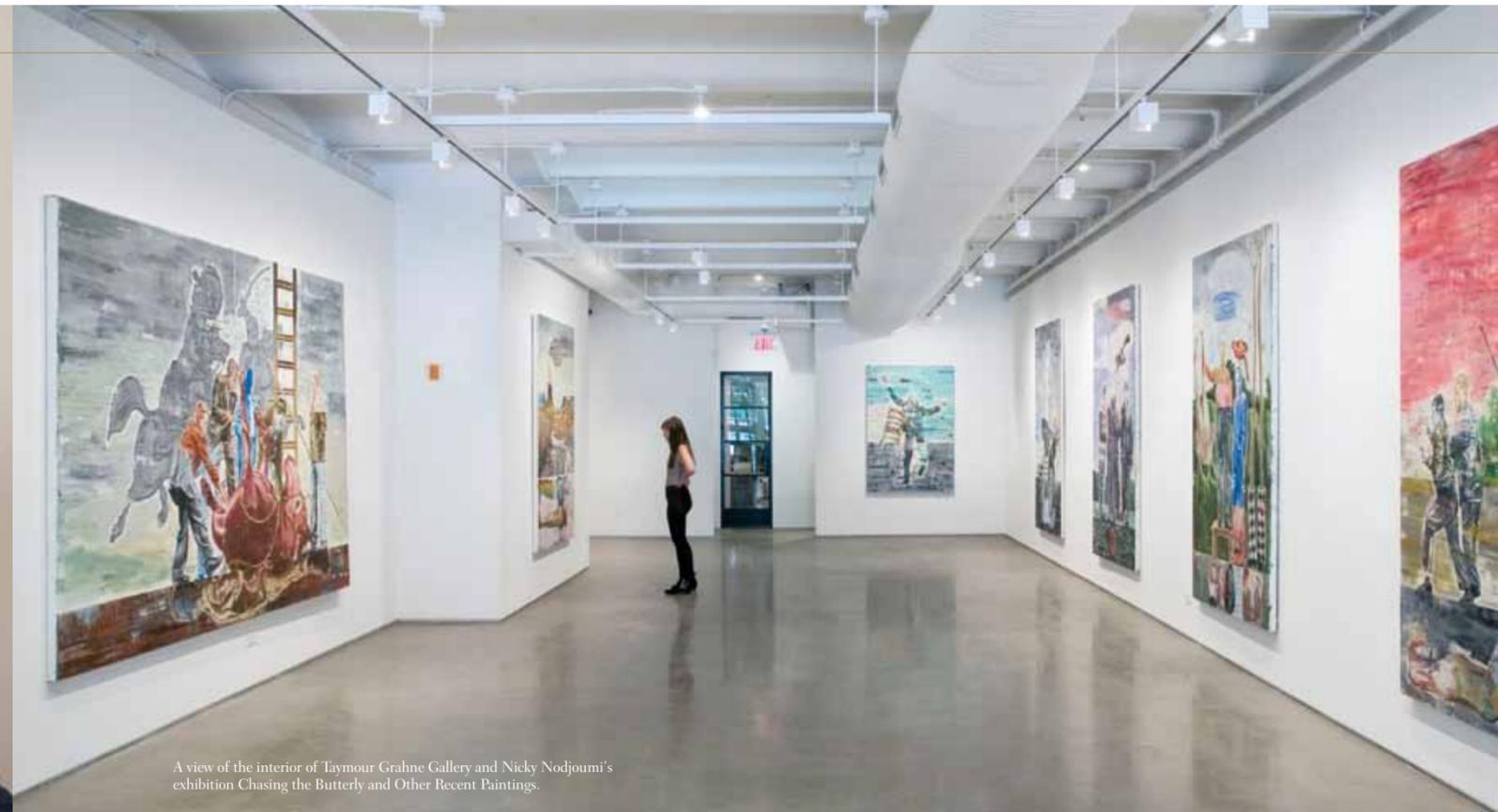
coming. of age in NEW YORK

By Ellen Pearlman

Taymour Grahne has opened his eponymous gallery in New York City's Tribeca district with a startling show of works by Iranian artist Nicky Nodjoumi. Ellen Pearlman reports on Grahne's new space and Nodjoumi's artistic Renaissance.



Taymour Grahne in his New York space.



A view of the interior of Taymour Grahne Gallery and Nicky Nodjoumi's exhibition *Chasing the Butterfly and Other Recent Paintings*.

Taymour Grahne recently opened his new 4,000 square foot split-level Taymour Grahne Gallery in the Tribeca district of Manhattan. It includes a main exhibition space upstairs, and a project space downstairs. Grahne, born in London to Lebanese and Finnish parents is the well-known blogger of Art of the Mideast, a website devoted to a dialogue about Middle Eastern Art. Convinced the time was ripe to exhibit artists neglected by the discourse of Eurocentric art, he combined his aesthetic instincts with his practical side, earning an MA in art business from Sotheby's Institute of Art. The result was so successful in 2012 he was named as one of Modern Painter's "50 Most Exciting Art Collectors under 50."

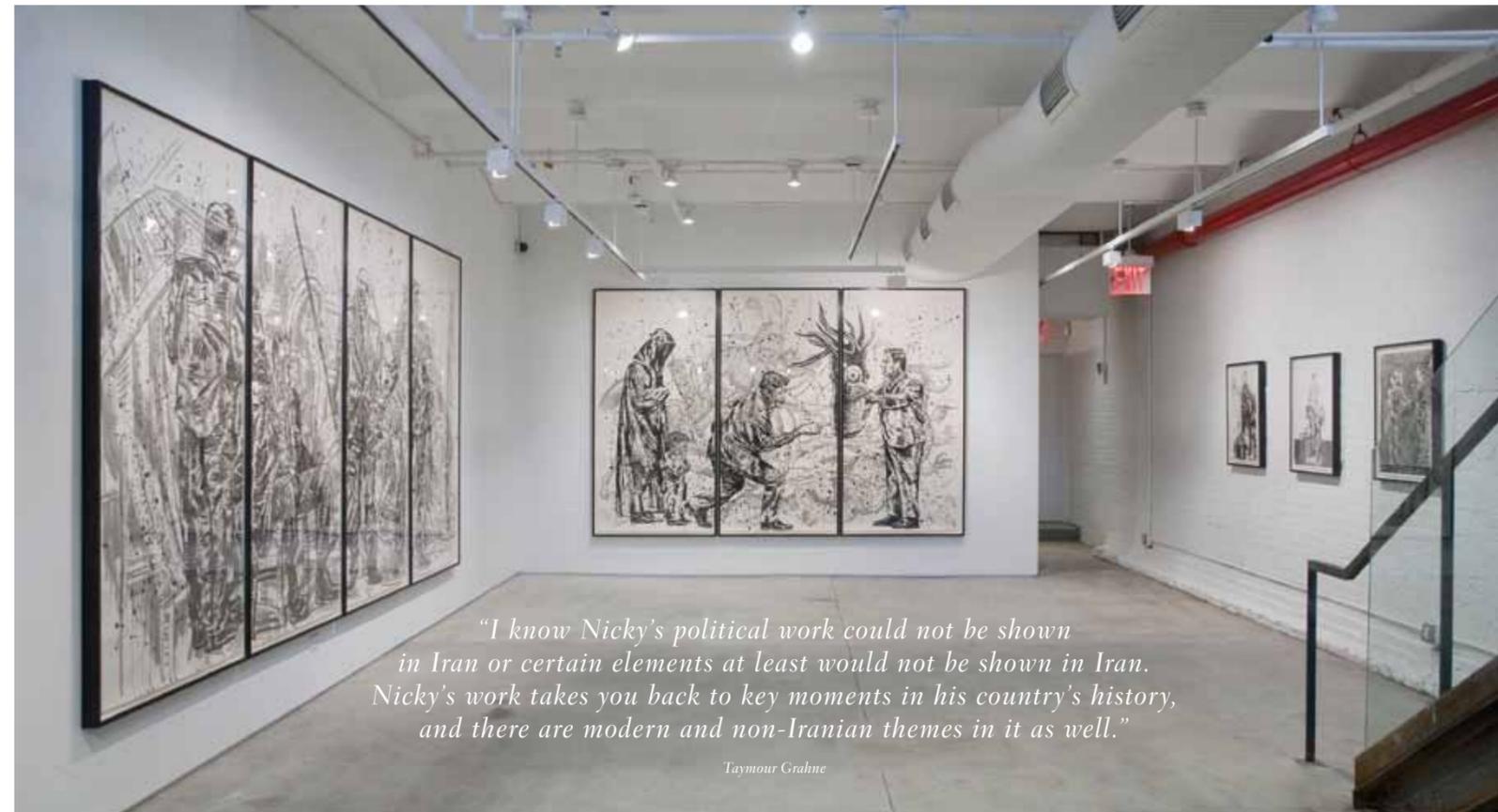
Starting with works from the Middle East and North Africa, Grahne is expanding to include South Asian and Central Asian artists. His track record is impressive; four of his artists were part of the 55th Venice Biennale: Tarek Al-Ghoussein for Kuwait, Mohammed Kazem for the United Arab Emirates, Camille Zakharia for Bahrain, and Albert Yonathan Setyawan for Indonesia. The gallery presents public programming, panel discussions, artist and curator tours, film screenings and lectures. Each exhibition has its own catalogue or monograph with essays written by leading curators and scholars.

American interest in art from these regions is growing, as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Los Angeles Contemporary Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York are all acquiring key pieces. When asked if certain topics are taboo, Grahne replied, "There are certain things you can't show in museums but collectors do collect 'controversial works.' The collectors have a very open mind." Though deeply interested in groundbreaking art, he does draw the line at provocation for provocation's sake.

The inaugural exhibition for the gallery is Iranian artist Nicky Nodjoumi's *Chasing the Butterfly and Other Recent Paintings*. Grahne admits he is drawn to artists who delve into their past using historical, cultural and political elements. He says, "I know Nicky's political work could not be shown in Iran or certain elements at least would not be shown in Iran. Nicky's work takes you back to key moments in his country's history, and there are modern and non-Iranian themes in it as well." Nodjoumi, an Iranian-American who studied in Iran, has lived for decades in Brooklyn, and is therefore representative of the gallery's global emphasis. It also helped that Grahne opened his gallery the same week the Asia Society's seminal Iran Modern show launched, featuring two of Nodjoumi's political paintings from 1976.

NICKY NODJOUMI

Nicky Nodjoumi was born in Kermanshah, Iran in 1942. In 1974 he earned his MFA from the City College of New York, after which he returned home to Iran. He discovered that SAVAK, the secret police under Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi had files of all of his activities in New York. Interrogating him, SAVAK concluded he was not fit to teach, but could exhibit once a year. In 1980, after the Islamic Revolution, the Museum of Modern Art in Tehran mounted a retrospective of Nodjoumi's work. An article appeared in Jomhuri-e Eslami, the official newspaper of the Islamic Republican Party. Written by Mirhossein Mosavi, an artist, architect, and chief editor who later became the Prime Minister of Iran, it denounced the show as anti-revolutionary, anti-Khomeini, and pro-Western imperialism. Nodjoumi recounts that the article "warned people to not look at this painting, it is so convincing you will think what is happening is true but it is not true it is an allegorical painting, but in my experience I found it did have some power." Two weeks later, tipped off that there would be trouble if he stayed in the country, he left everything behind and fled to New York. Yet his allegorical, figurative works did not fare well with the conceptual and minimalist styles in vogue at the time, and he spent years honing his process until attaining his first show.

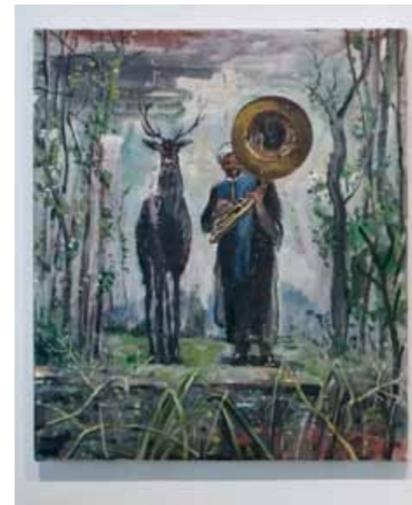


"I know Nicky's political work could not be shown in Iran or certain elements at least would not be shown in Iran. Nicky's work takes you back to key moments in his country's history, and there are modern and non-Iranian themes in it as well."

Taymour Grahne

Nodjoui creates his painting by beginning with small sketches, drawings and studies using images garnered from newspaper clips and photographs of people in power. The images range from Persian metaphors, snatches of Iranian iconography and apparitions plucked from his imagination. They are laid out as if taken from a scene of some absurd theatrical production.

After putting them together in a collage-like manner, he paints large-scale figures onto a canvas that can then confront the viewer in a decidedly Neo-Expressionistic style. His animal or human characters are often sliced in half and reassembled in an odd disjointed way atop one another. Nodjoui says this disruption is a reference to images of dismembered bodies from the American-Iraqi war. The top sections represent known reality, while bottom reveals a hidden aspect that creates an unstable discourse between two opposing points of view. The



background is often empty, and the images are slapped against the horizontal line of the canvas, thus forcing the human body to loom large in the pictorial plane by dint of its "monumentality." His black and white ink drawings are subtler and more spacious. The 2012-13 series of large diptychs, triptychs and four paneled pieces on display at Taymour Grahne are slathered with broad strokes, de-saturated ink washes and splattered dots, freeing the tension between background and foreground so that one blends into the other.

Nodjoui had a few paintings lying dormant in his studio for over 30 years that he was not able to take to Iran. They were, he says, "too radical. The red color, showing a Communist, was not allowed... (but) in the U.S. they (the art world) didn't care about it (the paintings)." Curators, in preparation for Iran Modern at the

Asia Society wanted to see those canvases but he "doubted they would take it...it showed it was not a rosy situation." Those pictures now form the cornerstone of the Iran Modern exhibition.

Nodjoui is deeply aware of "the power of the image to endure," and muses that "these people are so scared of it and will do anything to prevent it from being seen." Now, with this gorgeous solo show at Taymour Grahne, and his inclusion in Iran Modern, he is fielding requests from museums around the world, guaranteeing that his images will, indeed, endure. ♦

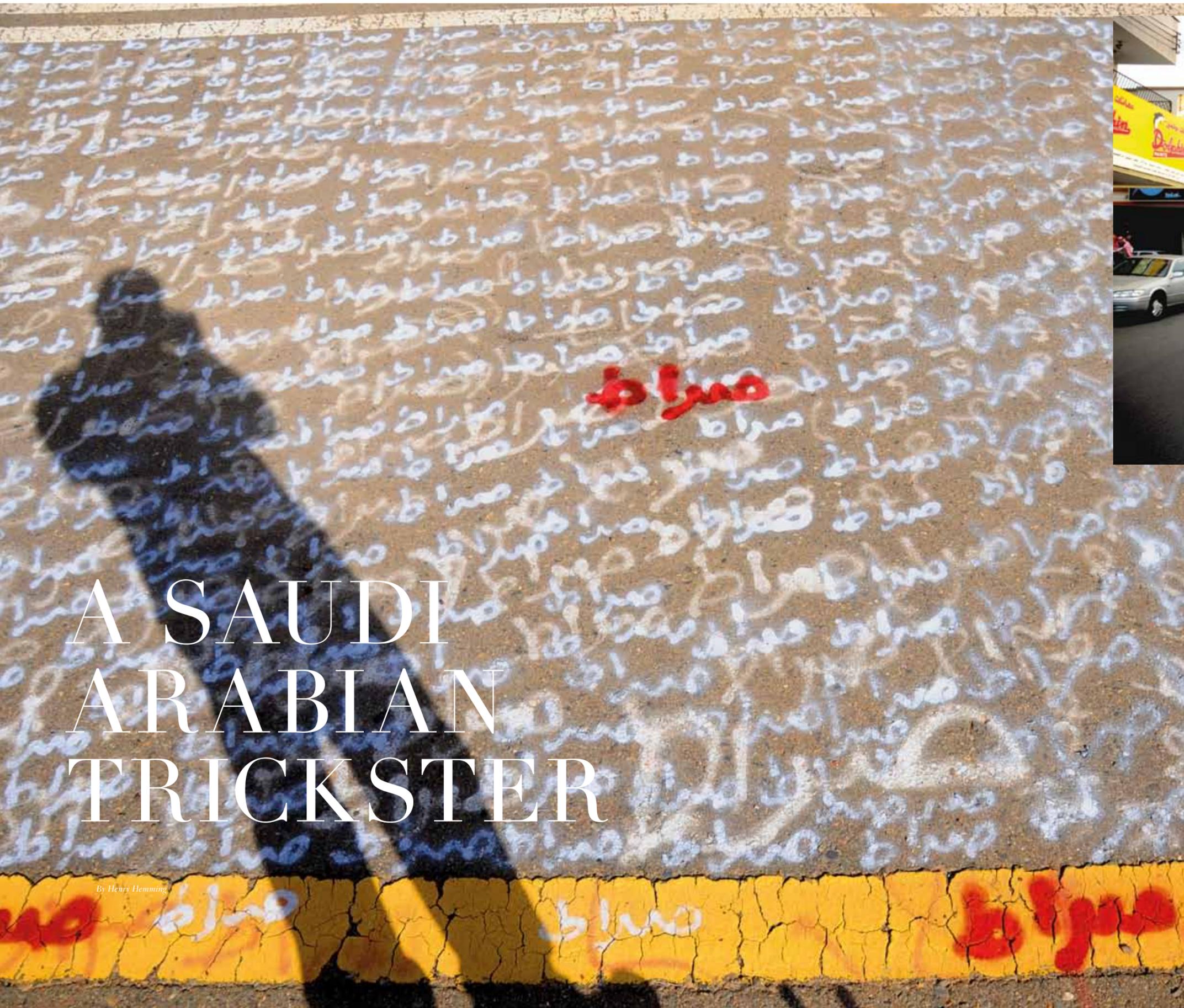
Opposite Page: Nicky Nodjoui. *Caught in the Game*. 2011. Oil on Canvas. 182.88 x 127cm.

Above: Gallery view including the artworks all Nicky Nodjoui: *The Accident*. Four Panels. 2013. Ink on Paper. 85 x 168 inches. *Intriguing Gesture*. Triptych. 2013. Ink on Paper. 85 x 126 inches. *Untitled*. 2013. 28.5 x 22.5 inches. *Study for Time to Pray*. 2011. Ink on Paper. 28.5 x 22.5 inches. *Study for Tear Gas and Butterflies*. 2011. Ink on Paper. 28.5 x 22.5 inches.

Left: Nicky Nodjoui. *The Inauguration of New President*. 2013. Oil on Canvas. 38 x 33 inches.

All images courtesy of Cary Whittier and Taymour Grahne Gallery, New York.

Chasing the Butterfly and other Recent Paintings ran until 19 October. For more information visit taymourgrahne.com



A SAUDI ARABIAN TRICKSTER

By Henry Hemming



Renowned Saudi artist Abdulnasser Gharem's first solo show in London reveals some of his most popular works as well as several poignant new ones. Henry Hemming reports from London.



They stand in line, unaware that they are being filmed. To begin with, these men look alike in their regimented white thobes (an ankle-length white garment worn by men in the Gulf) and the effect, as you can imagine, is impressive. We are hard-wired to be impressed or afraid by the sight of a near uniform group acting as one. Yet look a little closer at this group, part of a video installation in the London exhibition of Saudi artist Abdulnasser Gharem, his first solo show outside the Gulf, and an alternative picture will emerge. As the video develops it ceases to be a portrait of unthinking unity, but of endless and endlessly subtle variations. The men are of different heights and ages, some of them boys not much older than ten, others not actually in thobes, there are those too old to kneel when required while no two beards or moustaches are alike. But it is in the keffiyehs (a cotton headdress worn by men in the Gulf) that you see the most

detailed intersection of tribal and individual identities within the setting, and in this case the setting is the key. The men lined up in prayer are at the Riyadh Book Fair, which despite its prosaic-sounding name, has become one of the most controversial and tense cultural events anywhere in Saudi Arabia.

"Everyone is just waiting for something to happen," explains Gharem. "The book fair is now like a cultural war, which for me is interesting. In my country you have two kinds of ignorance. The first is holy ignorance when everyone follows what the holy men say. The second is an established ignorance. This is when people have just one way of thinking. Books can change this. Praying in public reminds us of the power of the holy men, it's like a performance. At the Book Fair you have both of these things."

Left: Abdulnasser Gharem. *The Path from the performance of The Path*, 2007.

Above: Abdulnasser Gharem. *Portrait of the Artist from the Performance Flora and Fauna*, 2007. Digital print on limited arch archival Gicleé Da Vinci paper, 60 x 85 cm.

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Abdulnasser Gharem



Yet Gharem is not out to make a partisan point. "I'm not on one side. I'm a witness," he says. As with so much of his oeuvre he engages with modern Saudi history and the politics of now to present what he calls 'an unofficial history', the leitmotif of his upcoming exhibition in London. Taking place at the Edge of Arabia space in south-west London, in partnership with Ayyam Gallery, the exhibition will include many of Gharem's best known works along with new pieces such as the Riyadh Book Fair installation and one recently shot in Medina.

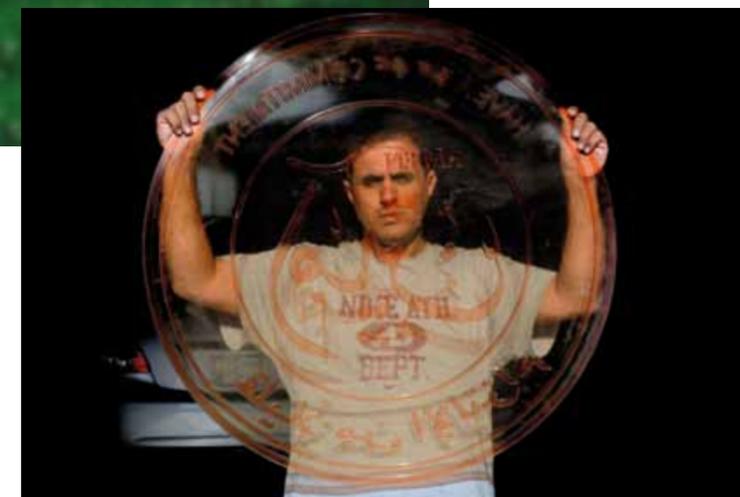
Riyadh Book Fair is typical of Gharem's new direction. He has recently found a position at the cutting edge of the accelerating cultural evolution within Saudi Arabia and now collaborates with groups like the Saudi comedy collective Telfaz11. Together they set up earlier this year the Amen Art Foundation. For many young creatives in Saudi Arabia Gharem is a pioneer, and much of that is down to the struggle he has endured over the years which has consequently opened up the Saudi art scene.

Gharem first came to the world's attention in 2011 when his sculptural installation Message/Messenger sold at Christie's Dubai for \$842,500 (including the buyer's premium), one of the highest prices paid for a work of art by a living Arab artist. From a distance this represented one man's sudden arrival. Yet for Gharem it was no more than a milestone after a decade of producing art.

With no formal training - there are no art colleges in Saudi Arabia - Gharem spent the years after completing his military training learning about art in his spare time. By the late 1990s he began to order in as many art books as he could afford and otherwise scoured the embryonic internet for more information. He taught himself English and produced and occasionally exhibited groundbreaking work alongside a handful of other young Saudi artists such as Ahmed Mater and the poet Ashraf Fayadh.

Yet the problem they faced was one which remains to this day in Saudi Arabia, even if it is reduced. Every work put on display required a complex negotiation between what the artist was after, what his family might think, how it would reflect upon his tribe and what was acceptable at that historical moment in the eyes of the Ministry of Culture and Information as well as the local religious police. These worries even followed him abroad when in 2008 Gharem was selected to take part in the first Edge of Arabia exhibition in the Brunei Gallery in London's School of African and Oriental Studies.

In the days before the show opened Gharem had various works removed. Part of his response was to produce an over-sized wooden stamp emblazoned with the words 'Have a Bit of Commitment' and to fly out to London and stamp it onto the walls of the gallery, thus authorizing everything in the show.



Here is a refrain which plays out through his work. His London solo show will contain a series of three enormous hand-carved stamps made by Moroccan craftsmen, each one a direct descendant of that original stamp. There will also be stamp prints on paper such as The Stamp (Inshallah) and The Stamp (Moujaz). In each Gharem challenges our notions of formal bureaucratic approval, the power that goes with a stamp and to what ends these objects are used. The last of these pieces is also timely.

"In Arabic 'Moujaz' means 'in accordance with Sharia law,'" he explains. "Many Saudi banks use this slogan to bring in new customers. People want their bank to be approved by Sharia. But recently some of these banks were exposed for breaking the rules. They were not Sharia." Over the summer of 2013, when the twitter hashtag #الاجرة_لا_تغني_لراتب took off (it translates roughly as #salaryisnotenough), generating millions of tweets and becoming an outlet for a frustrated Saudi youth, these banks and their use of the word 'Moujaz' became a target.

Otherworks in the exhibition include a photograph of his famous Flora and Fauna performance in which he spent an afternoon living inside a

sheet of plastic surrounding a tree. Another is a concrete block covered in small rubber stamps and positioned at the entrance of the gallery. Visitors are forced to take a detour. 'For me the recent history of the Middle East is like this. We are asked to take a detour. We are told things will be fixed soon. But really you must never put your faith in concrete.'

Yet perhaps the most poignant work in this new exhibition is Manzoa, part of an ongoing series to emerge out of a chance encounter with a group of impoverished fishermen. They had been bought out of their homes by the government but had since spent most of the money on qat. Over their houses the word Manzoa was daubed, which means "to be demolished." On seeing it, Gharem improvised a performance by painting the same word onto his shirt and moving around the shantytown. Since then he has documented

the lives of these people, seeing them as refugees from their home. "You look at the news in Syria," he adds, "and there you see the same thing. Empty homes, demolished homes and refugees; really, I want to be a witness to this, to make people look at these things in a new way." ♦

Abdulnasser Gharem ran from 9 October to 8 November 2013 at the Edge of Arabia space. For more information visit edgeofarabia.com

Above Left to Right:
Men At Work from the Series Restored Behaviour. 2010.
The Path from the performance of The Path. 2007.
Road to Makkah (Detail). 2012. Industrial Rubber Stamps on Plywood.

Installation view of The Capitol Dome at #COMETOGETHER, Edge of Arabia, London. 2012.
Abdulnasser Gharem with The Stamp (Amen) II. Date 2011

All by Abdulnasser Gharem. Photography by Alex Maguire.

All images courtesy of the artist and Edge of Arabia, London.



FROM LES RUSSES WITH LOVE

By Sarah Marie Hassan

Leon Bakst. Variation of the original set design from Scheherazade. After 1910. Watercolor, metallic paint and graphite on paper. 73.82 x 103.51 cm. Image courtesy McNay Art Museum, San Antonio. Gift of Robert L. B. Tobin.

BAKST



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Serge Diaghilev's legendary Ballets Russes were a catalyst at the turn of the twentieth century for a marvelous interchange between the artistic disciplines of dance, music, visual art and theater. The fruits of this incredible time are explored in the National Gallery of Art's Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes: When Art Danced with Music. Sarah Marie Hassan reports from Washington D.C.



In the early twentieth century, in the span of twenty years, Serge Diaghilev, the grand Russian impresario from Perm who claimed no true gifts of his own, changed the course of dance, art, music and theater. His ingenious recognition of potential and talent in others led him to forge some of the most successful collaborations between choreographers, composers and painters seen on the world stage through his legendary company, the Ballets Russes.

Much has already been written. History has invited the constant re-telling of the Russes tales, from the scandal-driven opening night of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, to the fiery affair between Diaghilev and his prized danseur noble, the tempestuous and troubled Vaslav Nijinsky, to the miles traveled, costumes lost, funds drained and stars made in between the fruitful years of 1909 and 1929. The Ballets Russes acted as an eyewitness to vastly changing cultural and societal norms, interpreting the latest trends in art and music from Traditionalism to Romanticism, Exoticism, Modernism and Cubism. Diaghilev challenged his company and the artists he employed to constantly 'astound him' - a demand he first famously made to Jean Cocteau according to the French artist's journals - and this challenge was accepted in many forms, from *Prince Igor* to *Scheherazade*, *Petrushka*, *The Afternoon of a Faun*, *The Rite of Spring*, *Parade* and countless other productions. Acting as a post script to the Victoria and Albert Museum's monumental 2010 exhibition, Diaghilev and The Golden Age of the Ballets Russes 1909-1929, the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. has staged their own tribute to Les Russes with Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes: When Art Danced with Music.

Pared down from its London predecessor, *When Art Danced with Music* is a jewel-box of an exhibition that allows the visitor's eye to wander a bit slower. For its presentation, the V&A, which houses the largest collection of Russes material in the world, made use of its inventory almost overwhelmingly so with everything from business ledgers, blood-stained toe shoes, receipts for wigs and dancer's passports on display. The National Gallery took a different approach. "There was a decision to use core material in order to give a unique perspective of the evolution of art in the 20th century," explained Sarah Kennel, Associate Curator in the Department of Photographs at the National Gallery of Art. "The Victoria & Albert was able to highlight the strength of their collection and explore the process of putting on a performance, and we wanted to do something different - I was more interested in how to present the company chronologically through its ballets and the artistic movements each one paralleled."

This desire is echoed at the beginning of the show with the placement of the coronation robe from *Boris Godunov*, a staple in the Victoria and Albert's costume collection. Intricately stitched and lavishly beaded, this opulent example of Russian costume design for the opera's title role seduces the viewer upon entry and speaks to the company's Russian origins. Quick to move onto the Russes first productions, which laid the groundwork for Romanticism and Classicism, the show explores the folkloric costumes from *Prince Igor*, the breathy tulle and winged ensemble for Lydia Lopokova in *Les Sylphides*, and then to the drawings and set designs for *Petrushka*, whose menacing curtain of a city at twilight with ghouls flying overhead designed by Alexandre Benois is recreated on the painted walls. Each room - and



there are many across multiple floors - evokes a different mood based on the ballet it presents: the primary colors of *Petrushka* contrast with the hothouse hues of the Orientalist *Scheherazade* before you wander into the golden, pastel world of *Daphnis & Chloe* and *Afternoon of a Faun*, and further into the jarring, angular landscape of *The Rite of Spring*, the now-infamous woolen costumes designed by Nicholas Roerich circling a platform in front of a screen playing the Joffrey Ballet's recreation of Nijinsky's failed ballet set to Stravinsky's unsettling score.

Though Diaghilev famously refused to have his performances recorded, the exhibit does rely on film to beautifully supplement the material objects - faded, sweat-stained costumes can only speak so much on their own. Performances by legendary dancers in roles first created by the Russes - such as Rudolf Nureyev as the faun in *Afternoon of a Faun* and Mikhail Baryshnikov as the titular role in *Prodigal Son* - allow the contemporary viewer to entrench themselves in the productions, and the thrill of seeing an original costume paired with a film of the work in which it first appeared is available throughout the exhibition. This allows for one of the most important aspects of the Ballets Russes to shine through: how Diaghilev relentlessly reinvented his company to appeal to and premeditate

the public's taste. One can see the blending of stage design with interior decorating - Bakst's sets for *Scheherazade* - costumes paired with high fashion - Coco Chanel's sporty swimsuits for *Le Train Bleu* - fine art with performance - Picasso's designs for *Parade* and countless other innovations that allowed the Ballets Russes to be at once cutting edge and highly traditional. "You can have many exhibitions on the Ballets Russes, but you are not going to have the same exhibit twice," Kennel explained. Her words ring true. The Ballets Russes was opulence, educated opulence on a historical scale and stands as one of the greatest cultural achievements by any country in the twentieth century - even though Russia never had the chance to experience the fruits of Diaghilev's labors first-hand. The sheer depth and breadth of material left behind by the Russes makes for a daunting legacy to interpret generation after generation, and with the current age of novelty when it comes to the media and artistic expression, perhaps that is the most legendary contribution of all: whatever we may think we have done, whatever topic we may cover in the here and now, one only has to search the repertory of a company who never performed in the country whose name they bore during the turn of the century to realize how behind the times we might really be. ♦



Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes, 1909-1929: *When Art Danced with Music* ran at the National Gallery of Art in Washington D.C. until 6 October.

For more information visit nga.gov

This Spread Left to Right, Above to Below: Natalia Goncharova. Design for the back cloth for the final *Coronation scene* from *The Firebird*. 1926. Watercolor. 57.5 x 78.5 cm. Image courtesy V&A, London.

Léon Bakst. Costume for title role from *The Blue God*. c. 1912. Tunic made from mixed fabrics, braids, embroidery, sequins and paint. Image courtesy National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

Giorgio de Chirico. Costume for a Male Guest from *The Ball*. 1929. Mixed fabrics with painting and appliqué medals. 163

x 59 x 40 cm. Image courtesy Artists Rights Society New York/ADAGP, Paris and V&A, London.

Aleksandr Golovin. Costume worn by Fyodor Chaliapin in the title role in the *Coronation Scene* from *Boris Godunov*. c.1908. Silk, metal, glass & pearl beads, fur and paint. 200 x 165 x 70 cm. Image courtesy V&A, London.

Léon Bakst. Costume for *Nymph* from *The Afternoon of a Faun*. c. 1912. Silk chiffon, lamé, metallic ribbon, cotton. Image courtesy National Gallery of Australia, Canberra.

Valentin Serov. *Anna Pavlova from Les Sylphides*, poster for the first Russian season. 1909. Color lithograph. 256.2 x 201.5 cm. Image courtesy V&A, London.

Diaghilev and John Brown, New York. 1916. Photograph by Bain News Service. 10.16 x 15.24 cm. Image courtesy Ms. Anna and Mr. Leonid Winestein.



A CENTRAL ASIAN FIXATION

By Lemna Shehadi

For this year's Marker section, the curated section of Contemporary art galleries that focuses on a specific region, Central Asia will be the highlight. Lemna Shehadi explores the burgeoning art scene in this increasingly popular region.



In recent years there's been a notable growth in the market of Contemporary Central Asian art. "People often ask, why Central Asia? A better question is: why not?" says Payam Sharifi, part of the collective Slavs & Tatars, artists who will be curating Art Dubai's Marker section in March 2014. Curated by artists for the first time, the annual international art fair's Marker series highlights a different emerging art scene or region every year. The focus will be on the Caucasus and Central Asia, and having toured three countries from the latter this summer, I am anxious to hear Payam's - or Slavs & Tatars' - take on the region.

Slavs & Tatars may at the outset appear as enigmatic as Payam himself, but their message is very clear. Focusing on what is known as Eurasia,

they reveal cultural links that have been shadowed by history and the media. Their most recent book *Friendship of Nations: Polish Shi'ite Showbiz* (Sharjah Art Foundation, 2013), looks at the historical relationship between Poland and Iran.

If that sounds crazy to you, then Slavs & Tatars have succeeded. "We bring together things that appear antithetical or mutually exclusive. What do Iran and Poland have to do with one another?" Such questions are important in an age of buzzwords, where "Iran" is more typically associated with "nuclear weapons" and "America" than it is with countries like Poland and the Central Asian cities of Bukhara and Samarkand. "Central Asia and the Caucasus have generally become obscure to Western audiences. If you talk to Americans about Uzbekistan you might

as well be talking about Klingon," he quips. "But the region has been at the center of world history for over two millennia".

"For most of the art world these places are still a mystery," says Antonia Carver, director of Art Dubai, but a growing art scene is slowly being acknowledged. She points to the increasing presence of Central Asia and the Caucasus at international art fairs like the Venice Biennale. The Laura Bulian Gallery in Milan regularly exhibits and represents Central Asian artists. This year, Sotheby's selling exhibition *At the Crossroads* was the first selling exhibition of Contemporary art from both regions to be held by an international auction house. Curator for Contemporary Arts of the CIS, Suad Garayeva says the sale "exceeded expectations."

Marker's main achievement has been to "create a network between regions," Carver explains. "A lot of plans and collaborations come out of Marker. The Yasayan Biennale 2013 in Yogyakarta, Indonesia focused on the UAE and Saudi Arabia thanks to a connection made at our Indonesia Marker section in 2011. Since our West Africa Marker in 2013, shows by West African artists in Dubai have increased."

Guiding Slavs and Tatars' approach to Marker in 2014 is Central Asia's pivotal role in Islamic history. "It is a blind spot that is particularly relevant to the Muslim world." He points to cities like Bukhara and Samarkand, which were once historic centers of Islamic learning and culture. "It's shocking that the Middle East has forgotten about this region."

Slavs & Tatars have looked at Central Asian Islam before. Their 2012 show *Not Moscow Not Mecca* at Vienna's Secession looks at what Payam called the "syncretic"

Islam of Central Asian countries, including Western China - a hybrid of different religions and customs. "This is relevant to the Gulf today which has a reasonably modern and homogeneous view or religion and nationhood," explains Payam.

The show included a bowl of inflatable watermelons on a steel Ottoman table. The fruit reflects three ethnicities that once ruled Central Asia: its biggest exporters are Iran and Turkey, but it is also a popular fruit in Russia, where it grows along the Volga River. All three countries continue to have an impact on the region today. With its emphasis on color, pattern and ornamentation, this zany show mirrors the region's long history of craft and artisanship, an important theme for Slavs & Tatars as they prepare for Marker 2014. "Craft continues to play an important role in the Contemporary arts of both the Caucasus and Central Asia," says Carver. This is seen in the work of Kazakh artist Almagul Menlibayeva, among others.

Through religion, craft and also language, the historic ties between Central Asia and the Gulf are numerous. "We hope to make those connections between the regions and Dubai visible," adds Carver.

Meanwhile, it is difficult to ignore the cultural and political influence of the Russian settlement in the region, which continues to shape Central Asian countries today. For instance, I drank Russian lemonade in Almaty, and lounged



by the beach with Siberian tourists at the Issyk-Kol lake of Kyrgyzstan.

Also prominent are remnants of a Soviet past. In Bukhara, I found an abandoned Soviet vending machine among the city's minarets and sumptuous mosaics. In Tashkent, a toy shop is frozen in time: "Savplastjal" or Soviet Plastics is a small kiosk with plastic toys, closed since the early 90s, where it remains unchanged.

This overwhelming Russian presence is felt in the Contemporary art of the region. An exhibition of Contemporary Kazakh artists at the A. Kasteev State Museum in Almaty reveals this. Alexander Ugay's 2011 series *Workers in Emptiness*, shows cut outs of Kazakh construction workers against a white background. These surreal images, devoid of perspective, echo and subvert social realism, the art form that dominated throughout the Soviet Union. They are also reminiscent of the 1932 work *Lunch at a Top a Skyscraper*, the iconic American photograph of workers on a scaffolding overlooking New York City, demonstrating the artist's outlook towards the West.

Also at the exhibition were photographs by video and performance artist Almagul Menlibayeva. Along typical Kazakh landscapes such as the Steppe, she photographs and films herself wearing local textile in addition to colorful and finely woven silk tapestries. Her 2010 work at the State Museum, *Madonna of*



Facing Page: Almagul Menlibayeva. *Madonna of The Great Steppe*. 2010. 70 x 107 cm. Lambda print on alu-dibond. Image courtesy American-Eurasian Art Advisors LLC.
This Page Above to Below: Kasmaliev & Djumaliev. *Hotel*. 2007. C-print. 60x100 cm, Kasmaliev &

Djumaliev. *Spring#2*. 2009. C-print. 60x90 cm.
Kasmaliev & Djumaliev: Spring#3. 2009. C-print. 60x90 cm. Kasmaliev & Djumaliev. *Spring#4*. 2009. C-print. 60x90 cm.

All images courtesy Laura Bulian Gallery.



the Great Steppe shows a young girl in a white dress, wearing giant horns while holding a baby goat. In the background is the vast and golden Steppe, with its clear blue sky that is depicted in the Kazakh flag and passport. What is typically an iconic Western image, the Madonna with her child, is here placed within the context of nomadic Kazakh rituals and culture.

Though they reference Western culture and an international art practice, the emphasis on local craft and landscape in the works of Menlibayeva and others echoes depictions of the country by modern Russian and Kazakh painters of the 20th century. Russian intellectuals and painters who moved to Kazakhstan from Tsarist Russia onwards depicted the vast expanse of the Steppe, the mountains above Almaty and the lives and customs of the nomadic Kazakh people. These motifs were in turn used by Kazakh painters of the 50s and 60s, who, echoing the rise of nationalist sentiment, harked back to their pre-medieval way

of life that was ended by collectivization of the 1930s.

In *The Aral Beach #2*, a model stands barely clothed in front of a rusty ship in the Aral Sea. Like the abandoned toy shop I saw in Tashkent, the former USSR is here represented as an age of decay, a wasteland in the desert. The Aral Sea was once one of the world's largest lakes. A failed irrigation project by the Soviets caused the water to recede, leaving a desert seabed considered to be one of the world's worst ecological disasters of the 20th century. Menlibayeva humorously turns this dismal setting into a fashion shoot.

In Uzbekistan, Vyacheslav Akhunov, a contemporary artist and self-proclaimed philosopher uses humor to subvert power. Hiding his work from the authorities in the 70s and 80s, most of it is confined to musings and drawings in a notebook, including a drawing of empty pedestals intended for the monuments of



leaders. "Humor [in art] is a way of disarming people without being dogmatic," says Payam, as we talk about Akhunov's work. I particularly like his Lenin fly-swatters, which he took to protests in the 70s, disguised as pro-regime placards.

In such works, power and control are exposed as artifice, a lesson Akhunov might have learned at an early age. He was born in Osh, a predominantly Uzbek city made part of

This Page Above to Below: Before the Before, After the After (installation view). 2012. Industrial foam, concrete, water-resistant paint. 145 x 72.5 cm.
"Not Moscow Not Mecca" (installation view). 2012. Seccession. Vienna. Both images courtesy Seccession / Oliver Ottenschläger.

Facing Page Above to Below: Kasmalieva & Djumaliev. Racing. 2007. C-print. 24x35 cm. Image courtesy Laura Bulian Gallery.
 Almagul Menlibayeva. *Aral Beach #2.* 2011. 91 x 122 cm. Duratrans light box. Images courtesy American-Eurasian Art Advisors LLC.

Slavs and Tatars, PrayWay (installation view). 2012. Silk and wool carpet, MDF, steel, neon. 390 x 280 x 50 cm. Photography by Patricia Staffa. Image courtesy Künstlerhaus Stuttgart.



Kyrgyzstan in the 1920s, which to this day is the scene of clashes between its Kyrgyz and Uzbek inhabitants. Osh had been placed by Stalin in Kyrgyzstan, as a way of weakening nationalist unity within the Soviet republics.

The 2006 video installation *A New Silk Road* by Gulnara Kasmalieva & Muratbek Djumaliev documents the contemporary Silk Road in Kyrgyzstan. No longer with nomadic traders exporting textiles by caravan, the road accommodates industrial trucks transporting mass produced goods. Having done the trip myself, on a 13 hour car journey from the capital to the Uzbek border, I found the work particularly evocative of the Kyrgyz social and physical landscape: a grim, decaying urban existence contrasts to the idyllic mountain nomads.

These artists, among a handful of others including many from Tajikistan, have received worldwide critical attention. A New Silk Road travelled to galleries across the globe, and the artists were featured

in the first Central Asian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2005. This year's Pavilion included Akhunov's work who also participated at DOCUMENTA (13), the prestigious art event in Kassel, Germany last year. Meanwhile, Menlibayeva's work was recently acquired by Louis Vuitton, and MOMA PS1 screened her short film *Transoxania Dreams* in June.

Though participants for Marker 2014 have not yet been selected, the artists cited give an outline of Contemporary art practice in Central Asia. Often conceptual, they draw on influences that shaped their countries today: their Islamic and nomadic pasts, the Eastern Bloc and their current international outlook. With *Slavs & Tatars'* innovative approach to the region, this may be one of the art world's highlights of 2014. ♦

Art Dubai will take place from 19-22 March 2014. For more information visit artdubai.ae



SERENDIPITY

A PALATIAL DREAM
JET SET MARRAKECH
KYOTO CALLING
ON TRUTH

استلقاء

PALATIAL DREAM

Rebecca Anne Proctor

Commissioned by the Moroccan Royal family, the Royal Mansour in Marrakech is an architectural wonder presenting the best in North African art, design and culture. Rebecca Anne Proctor reviews the hotel and marvels at some of its secrets.

One arrives at the Royal Mansour after a quick drive through the bustling city of Marrakech. The colorful culture and rich contrasts found in this North African city quickly dissipate as soon as the ancient honey-colored city walls of the hotel open, welcoming the newcomer into an aura of calm, stunning Moroccan architecture and enrapturing gardens. The first thing that moves guests is the smell of jasmine which fills the air, offering a sweet and serene scent - a reminder of the tranquility of this special place. As soon as I entered this marvelous abode, friendly staff took my belongings while I was treated to dates and cool buttermilk - the traditional refreshment served to travelers in the desert.

An incredible silence fills the air of the Royal Mansour. It is paradise for one who is worn from days of flights and car rides - a site that resembles what one has always envisioned North African palaces to be: a mirage of opulent Arabian courtyards. Every inch of the hotel is made with exquisite workmanship. There are acres of intricate *zellij* mosaics, a terracotta tile work covered with enamel in the form of chips that are then set into plaster; cedar ceilings and geometric painted wood - all elements representative of the North African ambiance in which the hotel is situated. The furnishings found throughout the hotel are equally lavish and include Suzani embroideries from Bokara, suede cushions and throws, and lots and lots of silk. Such rich accompaniments further enhance the intimate and highly artistic character of the hotel.

At the heart of the Royal Mansour is the central courtyard. An area for waiting, rest and leisure, it is open to the sky and features bronze suspended lamps, Andalusian cabinets made in Cordoba, banquettes inlaid with mother-of-pearl and stunning tile mosaic and marble fountains. This is an incredible dream world that one might fantasize about after reading *A Thousand and One Nights*. During my stay, I sat here several times in silence and delighted in the calming sounds of trickling water from the nearby fountain.



MAJESTIC RIADS

One passes through several Andalusian courtyards lined with fragrant trees boasting ripe fruit until they reach their own *riad*, a three-storey building set around a colonnaded courtyard. I was escorted to my *riad* by a butler who proceeded to guide me around each of my three floors explaining how everything worked. He also pointed out the specially-designated butler entrance from what appeared to be a hidden door on each floor. From this entrance, he would enter in order to serve breakfast, lunch and dinner as well as help with whatever else was needed. Over the third floor was a charming terrace where I could sunbathe as well as view a magnificent skyline of the rooftops of Marrakech. This was much more than a hotel - it was as if I had been given my own private abode. And then, as if by magic, my friendly butler seemed to disappear into thin air. At first it was a bit alarming and took me by surprise; how could he have been so present and then so quickly leave and in such silence?

It takes about a day to realize that the Royal Mansour is filled with secret passageways and underground tunnels that make this magical coming and going so effortless. The hotel premises constitute a city itself. There are quarters for the staff, several kitchens and many storage facilities in order to equip the impressive 3.5 hectare estate comprised of 53 two and three-storey *riads*. Within the *riads* one finds swimming pools, dining rooms, a roof top terrace, magnificent bedrooms and kitchens.



The king of the *riads*, the *Riad d'Honneur*, would be equivalent to a Presidential Suite in any major luxury hotel. It boasts two pools, gardens, a private spa and underground cinema. Golf carts make it easier to move quickly from one place to the next.

The Royal Mansour serves as a way to keep Moroccan ancient crafts and traditions alive. Moreover, it emphasizes the country's tradition of royal patronage. During the 1990s, Hassan II, the father of the present King Mohammed VI, constructed a mosque in Casablanca. The Royal Mansour was the reigning King's project and he oversaw every aspect of the estate, which was entirely built in three-and-half years and involved around 1,400 craftsmen who worked on the hotel every day during the first year of construction. It opened in July 2010. The detail and care that have gone into the creation of the Royal Mansour ensure that it is not just another luxury hotel to be found in Marrakech's burgeoning landscape of glamorous abodes. The hotel is a landmark of Moroccan culture. It effectively brings together the architecture, cuisine, hospitality and art that make this North African country so rich. Within each *riad* are artworks in the form of sculptures and paintings - many of which are made by Moroccan artists. For example, in the cigar lounge there is a bronze *appliqué* frieze made by the British-born Moroccan artist Yahya. Such details reveal the unique care that the hotel has invested in the Moroccan cultural arts, thus preserving the country's heritage as much as it emulates it.

OPULENCE FOR THE SENSES

The sheer beauty of the Royal Mansour's stunning architecture and surroundings are even further enhanced when one pays a visit to the spa or eats in one of the hotel's three top-notch restaurants. La Grande Table Française, which has been rated the best French restaurant in North Africa, the slightly less fancy La Grande Table Marocaine and the all-day dining

venue La Table, which serve both French and Moroccan cuisine, are all overseen by Michelin-starred chef Yanick Alléno and boast the most fragrant and colorful dishes as well as impeccable service.

The spa is a wonder of its own. Bathed in natural light, the Royal Mansour Spa is enclosed within an impressive white glazed pavilion encircled by a moat. It houses 13 treatment rooms, including three private spa suites. Treatments range from ancient holistic rituals using all natural Moroccan products to the latest anti-aging facials from Chanel, Sisley and Dr. Hauschka. At the heart of the spa is an authentic hammam that provides guests with a traditional Moroccan bathing ritual combining the hot sauna, fragrant steam room and cold plunge pools. There is also a manicure and pedicure suite readily available as well as a hair salon for a full range of treatments from Leonor Greyl. Other facilities include an indoor swimming pool, Watsu bath area and fitness center.

It is paradise for one who is worn from days of flights and car rides - a site that resembles what one has always envisioned North African palaces to be: a mirage of opulent Arabian courtyards.



Feeling calmed and revitalized after a hectic travel schedule, I sadly parted ways with my impressive *riad*. In just three days I had become accustomed to its grandeur and the friendly staff who silently came and went from my quarters. The Royal Mansour recreates another world - you feel as if you've stepped back in time or perhaps more accurately, into a culture that is quite foreign from what we are used to. It's a hotel fit for kings and queens as well as everyone else who desires to know Marrakech and Morocco through and through.

After it all, one is driven back through the haze of bustling Moroccan streets and the Royal Mansour seems to be but a dream in the midst of so much madness. Perhaps such an extreme contrast is all the more reason why such a palatial structure seems so luxurious - it prompts us to dream even more. ♦

All images courtesy of Royal Mansour.

jet set MARRAKECH

By Cassidy Hazelbaker

For decades Marrakech has been a symbol of oriental luxury. Its red buildings and palm trees surrounding opulent palaces have attracted some of the world's most refined characters. Cassidy Hazelbaker reports on Marrakech's glamorous lifestyle throughout the ages.





Every street scene is a window onto a traditional past mixed with a vibrant present.



For many, the mention of 'Marrakech' conjures up images of camels crossing caramel sand dunes towards an adobe-style city. The tradition and authenticity captured within such an image, peppered with some colorful glamour, is in many regards an accurate portrayal of the city. Along with Fes, Meknes, and Rabat, Marrakech was one of the four former imperial cities of Morocco. Its grandeur has been maintained throughout the centuries and heightened over the last several decades with the appearance of foreigners lured and inspired by the exotic charm of the city.

MARRAKECH IN HISTORY

Founded in 1062 by the Berber chieftan Abu Bakr ibn Umar, Marrakech quickly became a hub for trade, culture and religion, as travelers from Sub-Saharan Africa, the Maghreb and Andalusia crossed paths in the ochre city. Many mosques and Quranic schools, known as *madrasas* in Arabic, were established, promoting study and dialogue between religious scholars. The techniques employed by architects and craftsmen from Andalusia blended with Sub-Saharan forms resulted in the creation of a distinctive architectural style filled with domes and arches prevalent throughout the city. An irrigation system installed in the 12th century enabled the construction of many gardens and orchards, which attracted writers from Andalusian Spain and further promoted cultural exchange and

contributed to Marrakech's reputation as a beautiful place of culture and learning. From the 13th to the 16th centuries, Marrakech went through an unstable period as rivalries and disputes between various clans and families resulted in the destruction of many parts of the city. Glory was restored to the city in the 16th century with the arrival of the Saadian dynasty, whose wealthy sultans constructed opulent palaces and restored heritage buildings and landmarks that had previously been damaged. Marrakech once again became a thriving hub for travelers from the Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa and the Mediterranean.

GOLDEN ERA

The 1960s and 70s saw contemporary Marrakech soar to fame in the glamorous jet-set circle of the era. From fashion to music and culture, the who's who of the day could be found in lavish villas, spending the days and nights enjoying extravagant parties and frolicking around the Medina. The 'anything goes' atmosphere of Marrakech at the time was alluring and contrasted with more regimented social codes that, though slowly breaking, were still present in Europe and the United States.

The Beatles and The Rolling Stones both found inspiration and refuge in the exotic city. In Marrakech they could roam the streets wearing hooded *djellabas*, blending in with the crowds

perusing the shops in the souk - an anonymity unavailable to them in Europe. The opening line of John Lennon's song 'Child of Nature,' which was intended to go on The Beatles' 1968 self-titled album, begins with "On the road to Marrakech..."

John-Paul Getty Jr., son of the Founder of Getty oil company, was another big personality of the time who found Marrakech to be a place of wonders and delights. An enormously wealthy philanthropist, he and his second wife Talitha spent a significant amount of time in the city. An iconic photo of the couple posing on the roof of their villa, John-Paul clad in a hooded *djellaba* while Talitha wore billowing white harem pants and was draped elegantly with a richly colored silk kaftan, was later published in *Vogue* and further perpetuated the idea of Marrakech as a blend of hippie-chic. The Gettys were known for their sumptuous and decadent parties, hosted at Le Palais du Zahir, the palatial villa they had purchased while on their honeymoon in 1966. It was in Marrakech that Yves Saint Laurent crossed paths with the enchanting Talitha. Saint Laurent was once quoted as recalling, "I knew the youthfulness of the Sixties. Talitha and Paul Getty lying on a starlit terrace in Marrakech, beautiful and damned, and a whole generation assembled as if for eternity where the curtain of the past seemed to lift before an extraordinary future."

Saint Laurent spent considerable time in Marrakech, restoring the Majorelle Gardens that had been planted and designed by artist Jacques Majorelle in the 1920s and 30s, when Morocco was under the French protectorate. Bleu majorelle, a special shade of cobalt blue that was used extensively throughout the gardens, fascinated Saint Laurent and always remained a special shade to him. Saint Laurent often travelled to Marrakech to find inspiration and refuge. In 1980, he and his partner Pierre Bergé purchased the gardens. After Saint Laurent's passing in 2008, his ashes were scattered in the Majorelle Gardens, with Bergé stating "...one day I will join you under the Moroccan palms."

Patrick Guerrand-Hermès, great-great-grandson of the founder of Hermès, Thierry, is another notable aristocrat who has left his mark on Marrakech. Stationed in Morocco as a cavalryman in the 1950s, he developed an intense interest in oriental art and horses. Guerrand-Hermès later became a president of the Federation of International Polo and a notable art collector, and in 1984 he purchased and redeveloped Ain el Kassimou, a villa built for Leo Tolstoy's daughter, Olga. The villa is now part of the Polo Club de la Palmirie and houses Guerrand-Hermès' art collections.

MARRAKECH TODAY

Visitors from all over the world continue to

flock to Marrakech, drawn to its oriental allure, unique architecture, and historical significance. Once a prime stop on the hippie trail, Marrakech now regularly appears in the repertoire of the world's most glamorous globetrotters. A plethora of luxury hotels and *riads* offer travelers a deluxe experience in one of the world's most vibrant cities. The Royal Mansour, La Mamounia, Taj Palace, Four Seasons and Delano, among others, offer visitors the warm oriental hospitality and comfort for which the region is known. Traditional dishes such as lamb tagine and couscous can be found on the menus of top-quality restaurants throughout the city, while a cup of Moroccan mint tea with a honey-flavored sweet in the courtyard of a traditional *riad* is a memorable moment.

The city of Marrakech is composed of narrow alleys and wide streets, with pedestrians and donkeys sharing the roads with cars and motorcycles. Every street scene is a window onto a traditional past mixed with a vibrant present. There are quite a few sights to see. First stop on the must-see traveler's list is the Jemaa el Fnaa Square- the main square and market place in the old city. By day, snake charmers, souvenir stalls and juice vendors crowd the square, in which tourists and locals alike gather. By night, food vendors sell local dishes to the lingering crowd. Marrakech also contains a traditional souk, where everything from carpets to spices to leather goods

can be found. The Bahia palace is set on two acres of gardens and boasts magnificent courtyards. The Majorelle Gardens house the Museum of Islamic Art, and many visitors enjoy this dose of culture and tranquility within the high-paced city. The Museum of Marrakech and the Museum of Moroccan Art provide more insight onto the craftsmanship and traditions which make up the city's heritage. Perhaps Marrakech's most prominent mosque, the Koutoubia mosque, with its striking minaret punctuates the city's skyline. The Kasbah mosque is another centrally-located place of worship, from which the call of prayer streams forth five times a day, beckoning worshippers.

This incredible city for cultural exchange continues to mystify the traveler. For centuries Marrakech has been a crossroads of people and places, as Mediterranean, Asian and African cultures intersect to shape this ever-evolving city. Marrakech has appealed to traders, scholars, artists, writers, designers, entrepreneurs and travelers, all drawn to the magnetism of this great North African city. It comes as no surprise that some of the greatest musicians and designers of our time have left their hearts in Marrakech; such a city will surely continue to charm all who pass through its majestic gates for decades to come. ♦

Images Left to Right: Medina Marrakech, Morocco, image courtesy Magnus Manske. Marrakech Majorelle image courtesy Luc Viautour. Medina of Marrakech, image courtesy Russavia



KYOTO

calling

By Cassidy Hazelbaker

Today Tokyo is Japan's vibrant and bustling capital, but for more than one thousand years, Kyoto was the country's imperial capital. The city remains the cultural heart of contemporary Japan, and its residents are fiercely proud of their city's history and traditions. Cassidy Hazelbaker reports.



Sleepy and jet-lagged, I arrived in Kyoto to find a crisp autumn breeze and a woman in a kimono awaiting me. "Welcome to Kyoto," she said as she performed a respectful bow, the first of many I was to see in the coming days and an act that I later learned to execute myself. This dainty woman was called Tomoko and had a short haircut, sweet smile and a heart as big as Japan. Any trace of trepidation I faced towards being in a foreign culture surrounded by a language I knew nothing of was quickly erased by this woman's kindness and reinforced by the many personalities with whom I subsequently interacted.

After a 90 minute car ride from Osaka airport, I arrived to the Hotel Granvia, which is located directly in front of Kyoto Central station, making it an ideal sleeping spot for those taking the bullet train to or from Tokyo. Unlike many large cities around the world, the area around the station is clean, pleasant and energetic. The ten-story Isetan department store is next to the

hotel, while the iconic Kyoto Tower is across the street. Sleek and modern, Hotel Granvia is a shiny glass structure, reflecting the high rises which surround it. A glass atrium covers the communal walkway connecting the hotel, department store and train station, providing light and a sense of space to the packed walkway underneath.

The hotel lobby echoes traditional minimalistic elements of Japanese design while maintaining a comfortable atmosphere. My room's décor is mostly composed of neutrals and warm beiges while the white fluffy bedding is a welcome sight after my long flight. My room offers a beautiful vista of the cityscape and the Toji temple (the tallest pagoda in Japan) with majestic mountains in the background.

Hotel Granvia contains a plethora of dining options with cuisines from all around the world, near and far. My favorite is the authentic bento box served in Le Temps Restaurant, containing

small bites of a variety of Japanese dishes such as shrimp tempura, fresh vegetables, baked fish, Kobe beef, glutinous rice, salad, and miso soup. After dinner I retire to the Sky Lounge at the top of the hotel. With live music in the background, it is a great place to enjoy an after-dinner drink and watch the twinkling lights of this ancient and still vibrant city.

First stop on my list is one of the myriad of temples found in Kyoto. I am greeted at the entrance of Kiyomizu Dera Temple by the resident Buddhist monk. He is tall and quite striking, wearing white garments topped by a black robe complete with a golden sash. Exuding an air of tranquility, he accompanies the tour around the temple complex. The temple was first built in the 8th century halfway up the Otowa Mountain, but faced several fires and was thus rebuilt in the early 17th century. The construction was orchestrated by the Shogun (lead Samurai) Tokugawa Iemitsu, and was built using a special method that doesn't use a single

nail to hold all the boards and pillars in place. Instead, all the building components fit together like a puzzle. Designated by UNESCO in 1994 as a historic monument of Kyoto, the main hall is an open room that leads onto an enormous terrace which juts out over a hillside and offers panoramic views of the city. Popular legend during the Edo period said that if you jump from the terrace, which stands at a height of 13 meters, your wishes will come true. The practice is now prohibited but the ancient legend has inspired a modern-day Japanese idiom - to 'jump over the veranda of Kiyomizu Temple' means to undertake a daring adventure. Wrapping back around to the entrance, I bid goodbye to the monk. I admire the three-tiered pagoda and the niomon gate that stand guard to the temple, and turn around for one last glimpse of the monk, only to see that, in the blink of an eye, he has vanished into the bright colors and intricate details of Kiyomizu.

Omnipresent in Kyoto is green tea - whether flavoring various dessert items or being consumed by locals in cafes. In order to truly grasp the significance of the beverage to Japanese tradition, I meet with a tea ceremony master. An occupation open to men and women, masters study and train between 10 to 15 years before achieving certification. I observe the complex process of brewing and filtering the tea, which involves quite a line-up of pottery, ladles, bowls, napkins and a bamboo whisk. The final result is a neon-green foamy tea, with a thick consistency and a surprisingly smooth taste. Drinking the tea involves a precise rotation of the tea bowl, which must be turned halfway before consumption and then returned to its original position after completion. Tea is accompanied by namakashi sweets, which usually are composed of a semi-sweet dough with a red bean filling.

Of the many delicious meals I enjoyed during my stay in Kyoto, one stood out: a lovely lunch created by Chef Patron Inoué Téroo of the Restaurant Pontocho Misoguigawa. Chef Téroo studied with a three star Michelin chef in France and subsequently fuses French Belle Époque cuisine with the Japanese Kaiseki style. Téroo uses fresh, local ingredients and fine French imports to produce course after course of innovative gourmet delights. Among the highlights is aubergine mousse with caviar and poached shrimp, lightly-grilled Kobe beef in a demi-glace sauce, langoustine au gratin, and a

pistachio-nougat dessert topped with a tender fig. Even after living five years in Paris, I can safely say I rarely have eaten so well.

One of the highlights of Kyoto is a visit to an okiya- a Geisha boarding house. I am granted the opportunity to speak with a maiko- geisha in training- which allows me a glimpse into what is traditionally a private and quite secretive element of Japanese society. The boarding house 'mother' greets us, explaining that the teenage maiko is under her sponsorship, taking classes to master the great Japanese traditional arts, while as the sponsor she provides food, lodging and exquisite kimonos- a very expensive part of a geisha's life.

As the maiko enters, one cannot help but to stare. White face, pursed red lips, and elaborate coiffeur, she is captivating. But a girl of 18, her poise and confidence are those of a distinguished lady. She glides rather than moves; not once does she make a sudden, swift movement. Every turn of her head or twirl of her feet is deliberate and measured as she expertly performs a traditional dance and plays a song on the koto, a large stringed instrument.

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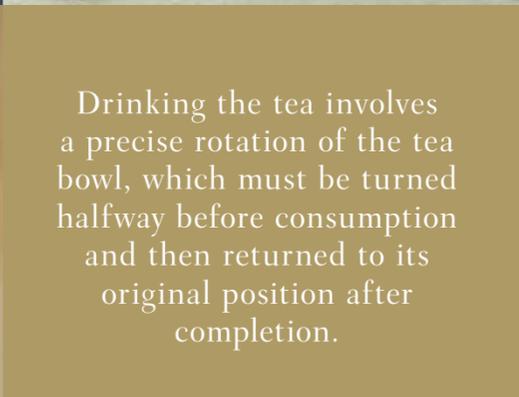
After, she sits to speak to us about her life path. I grappled to fully comprehend how it must be to grow up in contemporary Japanese society, attending school, laughing with friends, shopping in malls, and then to break away from it all at 15 to pursue the very structured, mature and private life of a geisha. Was she still able to keep in touch with her former classmates? Was she able to see her family? Did she ever wear western clothes and go into the city? I wanted to know how it is to exist in a traditional way in such a modern world. Her eyes twinkle as she explains her profession. The only time she can be truly anonymous is once every few weeks, when she undoes the elaborate coiffeur to wash her hair. Like any teen, she dons jeans and a top and heads to the cinema. She sees her family

twice a year, during holiday times, and speaks to her friends occasionally though they're very busy with exams at the moment, she explains. Asked if she had seen the film *Memoirs of a Geisha*, she giggles that she watched it on Youtube. Perhaps the biggest surprise is seeing her eyes light up at the mention of Justin Bieber and the girly giggle that she cannot suppress. Perfectly at home in the classic world of a geisha, there is also room for modernity within her - symbolic of the historical city in which she resides.

To have a more traditional and authentic Japanese experience, I checked into the Yoshidasanso Ryokan. The ryokan (traditional inn) was constructed in 1932 as a residence for the Emperor of Japan's uncle and was transformed into an inn 16 years later. Built from beautiful cypress wood, the ryokan contains six bedrooms, each comprising elegant futons and furniture. All the rooms have full-length windows looking onto the beautiful garden that surrounds the house, and one even has a terrace overlooking the surrounding hills and a nearby pagoda. The tatami floor is smooth and silky to touch, and the embossed wall coverings shimmer in the sunlight. A chrysanthemum motif, allowed only to decorate royal residences, is prevalent throughout the house and is a reminder of the ryokan's imperial connections. The entire space is the definition of tranquility.

Reputed to be one of the most luxurious ryokans, Yoshidasanso is as respected for its accommodation as for its gourmet kaiseki-style cuisine. Sitting down to a candle-lit table, I am treated to multiple courses of traditional Japanese dishes such as pumpkin soup, grilled barracuda with chestnut, and scallops with sweet petit potatoes. The presentation is impeccable- mini bites arranged artistically on handmade pottery plates, while rice and soup were served in traditional Japanese lacquered bowls. Tomoko, who had greeted me at the airport, is the daughter of the owners of Yoshidasanso and is our hostess for the evening. Her warm hospitality makes the dinner and the entire stay very personal. Wearing the flower-patterned kimono that is provided in my room, I feel right at home.

Kyoto is a destination worth many weeks of a traveler's time. Whether in search of high culture, cuisine, hospitality or history, the city has it all and more. Unlike so many cities grappling to preserve the old while embracing the new, in Kyoto the comforts and conveniences of modernity coexist harmoniously with some of the world's most regimented and respected cultural traditions. The most important product of my visit to Kyoto, however, is the desire to return- to experience more of the city's wonder. ♦



Drinking the tea involves a precise rotation of the tea bowl, which must be turned halfway before consumption and then returned to its original position after completion.

ON TRUTH

“
THE TRUTH
IS RARELY PURE
AND NEVER SIMPLE.
”

Oscar Wilde



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