



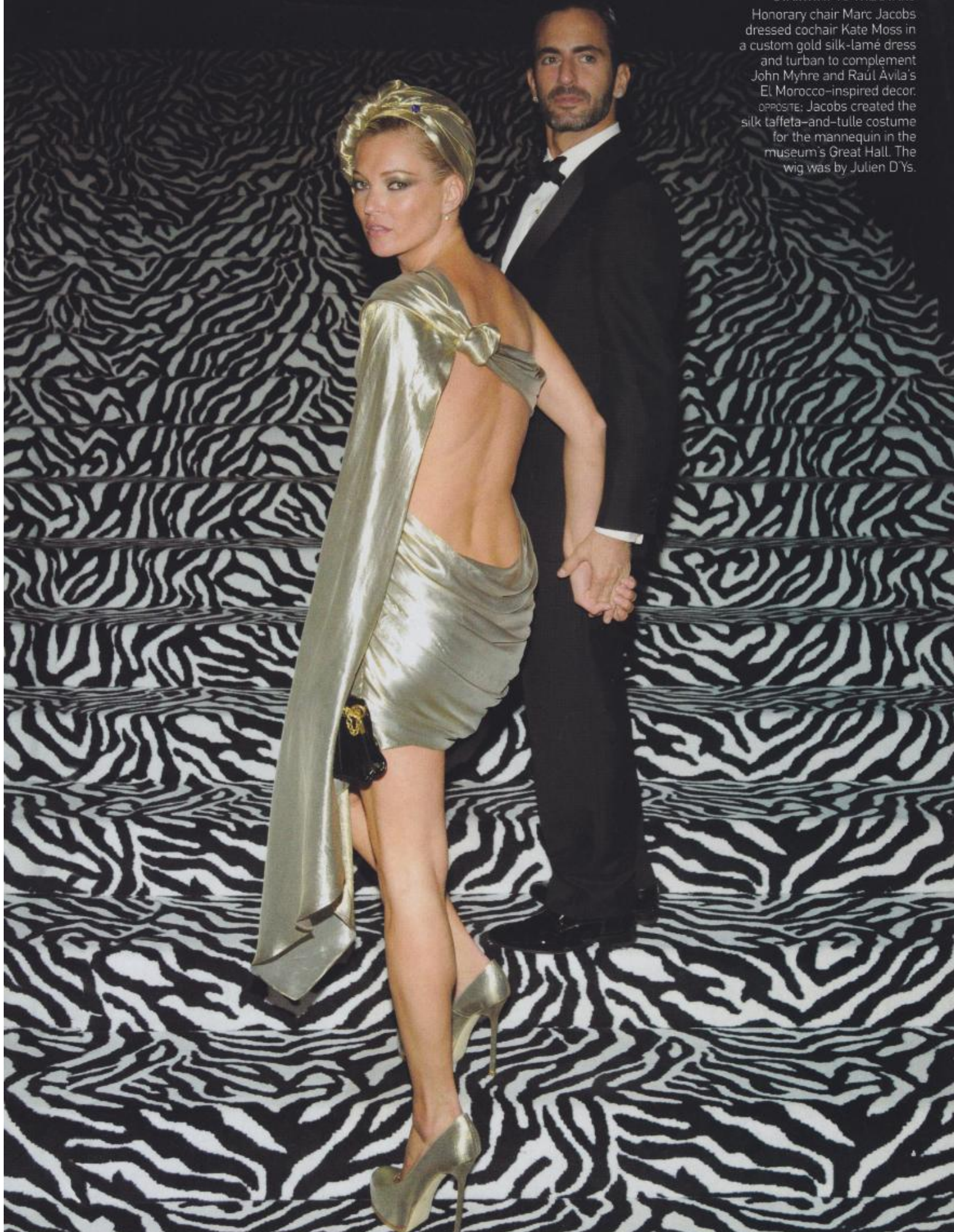
*Fearless fashion  
dominated the  
red carpet at this year's  
Costume Institute gala.  
William Norwich delights  
in the risk-takers—  
and the rising hemlines.*

# the wild bunch



# STAIRWAY TO THE STARS

Honorary chair Marc Jacobs dressed cochair Kate Moss in a custom gold silk-lamé dress and turban to complement John Myhre and Raúl Ávila's El Morocco-inspired decor. OPPOSITE: Jacobs created the silk taffeta-and-tulle costume for the mannequin in the museum's Great Hall. The wig was by Julien D'Ys.





Just as “a good model can advance fashion by ten years,” as Yves Saint Laurent once famously remarked, so, too, can a good party. And since tonight’s party is launching an exhibition about the defining influence of models on fashion in a cultural institution as eminent as the Metropolitan Museum of Art, there will be great expectations. No wonder Marc Jacobs is nervous as he arrives at this year’s Costume Institute gala, which he is cohosting with Kate Moss and Justin Timberlake. Wearing a custom gold lamé turban and dress the designer lovingly wrapped around her earlier, Moss, who is a longtime friend of Jacobs’s, rushes up the Met’s red-carpeted staircase pursued by a Vesuvian eruption of paparazzi lights. As a complementary touch, each of their outfits incorporates blue sapphires—Moss’s eighteen-carat gems from Harry Winston pinned to her headpiece and worn on her fingers, Jacobs’s a vintage

What is Jacobs’s concern? Isn’t the evening a guaranteed success, since it has already raised \$5.4 million for the museum, a winning amount in this Great Recession, when nonprofit institutions everywhere are struggling to survive? “One of the things about being a host,” Jacobs later explains, “is worrying whether people are going to enjoy themselves.”

But even before the 650 guests visit the impressive exhibition (“The Model as Muse: Embodying Fashion,” on view through August 9, curated by Harold Koda and Kohle Yohannan and designed by Academy Award-winning art director John Myhre, with murals and wigs by Julien D’Ys), dine in the Temple of Dendur with its “El Metropolitan” supper-club vibe, hear Bono introduce Kanye West, and then go over the moon as West is joined onstage by Rihanna for duets of “Say You Will” and “Live Your Life,” Jacobs sees early signs that a good time is being had by all. The initial evidence? The many striking fashion choices—lots of elegant short dresses, some long dresses, asymmetrical short-and-long looks, tuxedos on

women, you name it—which are freer in spirit than at any other red-carpet event in recent memory.

“I am really happy people are taking more risks and chances and what they are wearing is more an expression of themselves and their style rather than falling into that boring, mundane red-carpet mermaid dress,” Jacobs says. “I think about all the years I have been coming to this party, since my days at Perry Ellis 20 years ago, when people dressed as they pleased and they liked to show up and make a statement or a splash. That’s what New York is all about for me, a place to express yourself and not fall into a formula.”

Madonna arrives with business partner Guy Oseary and current boyfriend Jesus Luz—she didn’t “pick him for his name,” she is given to joke. Even though she is a longtime New Yorker, this is only her second Met gala. Her outfit? A blue Louis Vuitton pouf dress, thigh-high boots, and taffeta rabbit’s ears. Madonna had

no difficulty deciding what to wear. “I just did the Vuitton ad campaign, and this was my favorite look.”

Rihanna, on the other hand, debated her many options. “I knew everyone would be in a dress, and I thought this”—her Dolce & Gabbana tuxedo—“would be more unexpected, a bit more rock-’n’-roll.” Her interest in fashion is considerable, as anyone who watched her rehearsing this afternoon at the Temple of Dendur in viciously sexy Givenchy leather pants could tell. “I would love to design,” Rihanna admits. “I’m thinking about starting my own fashion line.”

“Fashion is a funny thing,” says Timberlake. “A lot of the time I think starlets, or whatever you call them, are subject to seasons, and I don’t necessarily believe in that. To use a sports analogy, on nights like this you throw a Hail Mary. Tonight is theater, and you don’t underact; tonight is a stadium concert, and you



#### SHOWSTOPPING

Cochair Justin Timberlake (in custom William Rast) and Jessica Biel (in Atelier Versace).

Cartier bracelet he bought for his birthday two years ago.

Sweeping past Raúl Ávila’s cascade of white roses and John Myhre’s towering, almost seven-foot-tall mannequin-topped urn in the Met’s Great Hall, the two take their place on the receiving line by another magnificent expanse of stairs, this one flanked by two long rows of attendants and covered in a zebra-print carpet inspired by the evening’s decorative theme, the sexy, urbane oasis El Morocco, café society’s club of choice that was founded during the Great Depression.

Soon Jacobs and Moss are joined by Timberlake, wearing a custom suit from his own William Rast label, while his girlfriend, the actress Jessica Biel (who, by the way, plays Sister Sarah in a production of *Guys and Dolls* later this month at the Hollywood Bowl), mingles with friends in a splendid asymmetrical design by Atelier Versace.





#### THE SHAPE OF THINGS

ABOVE: Rihanna (in Dolce & Gabbana) joins the evening's performer, Kanye West, for a surprise duet.

LEFT: Aluminum dresses from 1966 by Bernard Baschet, François Baschet, and Xavier de la Salle. Set design by John Myhre.





# FLIGHT OF FANCY

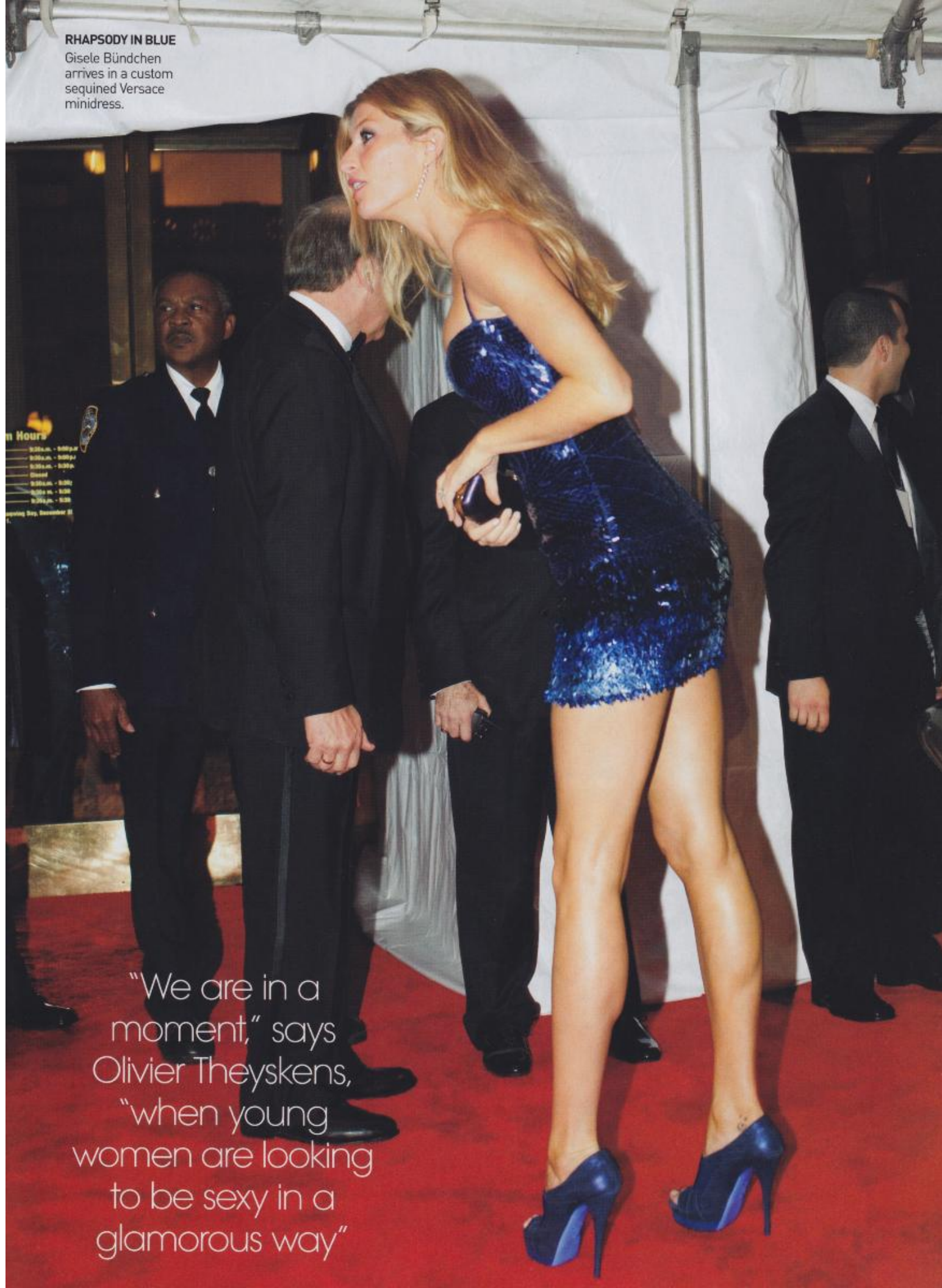
Attendants look on as Julie Macklowe (in floor-sweeping Oscar de la Renta) and Amber Rose (in wasp-waisted Carolina Herrera) climb the grand staircase, carpeted in zebra stripes.





# RHAPSODY IN BLUE

Gisele Bündchen arrives in a custom sequined Versace minidress.



"We are in a moment," says Olivier Theyskens, "when young women are looking to be sexy in a glamorous way"









Daphne Guinness in Oscar de la Renta with the designer.

John Galliano and Marion Cotillard (in Dior).



Jessica Stam in Rodarte.



Carmen Dell'Orefice (in Jackie Rogers).



Karen Alexander (in Ralph Lauren), Cindy Crawford (in custom Versace), and Eva Mendes (in custom Calvin Klein Collection).



Oluchi Onweagba (in Oscar de la Renta) with Doutzen Kroes (in 3.1 Phillip Lim) and Anne Vyalitsyna (in Peter Som).



Twiggy and Agyness Deyn (both in custom Burberry Prorsum) with Patrick Robinson.



Anne Hathaway in Marc Jacobs.



Alek Wek in Emanuel Ungaro.

Caroline Winberg (in Emilio Pucci) and Bradley Cooper.



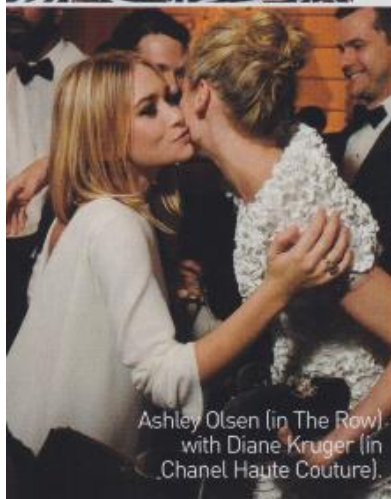
Maryna Linchuk (in Rag & Bone) with Sasha Pivovarov (in Giambattista Valli).



Lou Doillon (in Nina Ricci) with Olivier Theyskens.



RIGHT: Kristen McMenamy (in Givenchy Haute Couture by Riccardo Tisci) with Erin O'Connor (in Jean Paul Gaultier) and Julien D'Ys.



Ashley Olsen (in The Row) with Diane Kruger (in Chanel Haute Couture).



Iman (in custom Donna Karan) and Marisa Berenson (in Dior).



Michael Kors with Lauren Hutton (in a dress by the designer).



Claudia Schiffer (in Atelier Versace) with Eva Herzigova (in Dolce & Gabbana).



have to reach all the people in the back.” He laughs. “That’s at least three different analogies for what to wear tonight.”

(At which point I ask Biel, “What’s it like being married to such a very fashionable gentleman?” and immediately wish I could take back the slip that might launch a thousand tabloids into overdrive if anyone had been eavesdropping. “Call it whatever you want,” Timberlake says, smiling in Biel’s direction.)

Since the Costume Institute’s “Party of the Year” began in 1948, interest in what people wear to the event has risen exponentially. This year, style.com saw more than 18,000,000 page views for images of the Met gala in the days immediately following the party. Many such visitors want to be inspired and take direction from what the glamorati are wearing, while others in the media sit in the bleachers to boo independent-minded women who take fashion risks. Who needs a Moral Majority when you already have a Fourth Estate that views social life as a scolding schoolmarm might?

“Some people love what I wear, and some people hate what I wear,” says Victoria Beckham, in Marc Jacobs. “I was just saying to Marc earlier that I think this is great. If what I am wearing tonight is good enough for him, then it is good enough for me.” Beckham is escorted tonight by Lorenzo Martone, an advertising executive and Jacobs’s significant other; the gentlemen have been planning to marry this summer at the Cape Cod home of Jacobs’s business partner, Robert Duffy.

The mood of every Met party, Beckham further points out, is influenced by the host and sponsor (the “Model as Muse” exhibition and gala were underwritten by Marc Jacobs International). “Last year, I was a guest of Mr. Armani, who sponsored ‘Superheroes,’ so I wore a very long dress that was a lot more classic. This year is more Marc, I think,” she explains, extolling the virtues of her dress, short in front with a sort of bustle-back train behind. Is the use of less fabric a nod to recessionista chic? “Perhaps,” Beckham says.

Olivier Theyskens is a great advocate, and creator, of these peekaboo dresses with their asymmetrical hemlines. “I love showing legs, and I love having a train,” says Theyskens’s date, the actress Lou Doillon. “This is the perfect match for me.”

The look appeals to “lots of young women today,” explains Theyskens, as the world transitions from “the Old Economy to the New Economy. We are in a moment when young women are looking to be sexy in a glamorous way. When the dress is too long and too full in the front, sometimes they feel too old, but when it is short in the front and long in the back, they feel sexy.”

At which point model Karolina Kurkova sails by in an extremely short Richard Chai dress and declares, “No train, no strain.”

Call it “Thigh Society,” a coven of the glamorous that includes model Raquel Zimmermann, wearing Proenza Schouler. “Short dresses like this have so much intelligence to them,” says Zimmermann. “I feel very dressed up and not understated because they have details that feel like couture.” Carmen Kass, in short Michael Kors, adds, “I don’t ever like being told what to wear, long or short. Short is more fun. I feel great. I’m not sure that everyone in a long dress feels as great as I do.”

Certainly not Natalia Vodianova when someone steps on the hem of her vintage Fortuny.

Blake Lively, recently returned from a month of travel in Asia with boyfriend Penn Badgley, satisfied her penchant for wearing a range of lengths with a teal Versace dress

with a dramatic slit up the side, one sleeve long and the other short. Lively, who doesn’t work with a stylist, finds her dresses at style.com. “We’re always filming *Gossip Girl* during Fashion Week, so at night I go on style.com and look at all the shows. When I saw this, I thought it would be perfect for the Met.”

Twiggy, in a Burberry tuxedo and a veiled hat she “bought in a funny shop in Paris,” is clocking all the short skirts on the young models. She is reminded of her mini-wearing days, an era that will be chronicled in an exhibition of all things Twiggy at the National Portrait Gallery in London in September, timed to her sixtieth birthday.

“Miniskirts were amazing,” she says. “They revolutionized the times.”

How old is too old for a mini?

Twiggy laughs. “To wear a mini you have to be young and thin—and I was.”

Like swans with wings up, a group of models glides by in short skirts. “Short is the new cool way of doing

evening,” observed Jason Wu. So will we be seeing his star patroness, First Lady Michelle Obama, in the New Short soon? No comment.

Speaking of swans, here is Carolina Herrera. Concerning the liberating social agenda of Thigh Society, no, her refined sensibilities are not in the least bit offended, but she does suggest reading one’s party invitations closely before throwing the etiquette book out with the ball gown. “If you are asked to a ball, wear a ball gown; if you are asked to dress ‘black tie,’ you can go short or long.”

For anyone keeping score, here is the order in which guests are swept to their feet when Kanye West begins singing: Iman first, then Eva Mendes, followed by Gisele Bündchen with husband Tom Brady on one hand and John Galliano on the other, Jessica Seinfeld and Marc Jacobs, Amber Valletta and Shalom Harlow, Ashley and Mary-Kate Olsen, and Stella McCartney with Kate Moss.

(continued on page 132)



#### BACKWARD GLANCES

Runway royalty Shalom Harlow (in vintage Bob Mackie) and Amber Valletta (in vintage James Galanos) take in the exhibition.





# **BARE NECESSITY**

John Myhre's set design  
juxtaposes William  
Claxton's photograph of  
Peggy Moffitt wearing  
Rudi Gernreich's  
1964 "topless" bathing  
suit with the original.  
Wig by Julien D'Ys.  
Photographed by  
Steven Klein.



(continued from page 131) Valium drip, which freed me from all pain while I was under sedation, that a few weeks later, when I had to undergo a serious root canal for which I would need to be sedated again, I couldn't wait.

Desperate, and now a new mother, I visited a top neck specialist in London. Despite the agony I was living in, MRI scans showed that there was nothing wrong with my back. The only slight difference between myself and anyone else was that my back and neck muscles were "very thin." Being tall as I am, the strain of holding me up was too much for my weak back muscles, and they were constantly stressed, which caused inflammation and so the endless pain. The specialist told me frankly that the only way I would get better was with exercise to strengthen the muscles. He suggested Pilates but said it must be combined with physical therapy if I were really to crack the problem. He also told me that the biggest danger for me was writing at the computer. Over time, sitting for long stretches weakens your core—the muscles that should hold you upright—and leads to far too much pressure on your back muscles. I finally accepted that the days of marathon, twelve-hour writing sessions were over. The physical therapist had not been talking nonsense.

I started Pilates. Within two months my lower back was much better because Pilates strengthens your core abdominal muscles extremely fast. I soon became hooked. Pilates is not only strengthening, it is addictively relaxing and energizing. With my life split between New York and London, I went to private classes at re:AB in NoHo. I had one-on-one lessons with Madonna's Pilates instructor in London, James D'Silva. I joined Clay gym on West Fourteenth Street, which has excellent Pilates teachers, no loud music, and the bonus of seeing Jon Stewart working out there most mornings. I noticed a happy by-product: My legs, arms, and stomach

started to look toned, rather than the old-style me of just skin and bones.

Still, my shoulder and neck were not improving. Necks and shoulders are tricky things, and I needed serious rehab to progress. In London, I discovered the Practice, a studio that offers "Clinical Pilates"—that is, Pilates that rehabilitates people with injuries. All the teachers are qualified in physical therapy as well as Pilates. In New York, PhysioArts, in midtown, a favorite of the city's injured ballerinas, offers a similar approach. Finally things started to improve. Now, two years on, I am far stronger and generally free of pain, but constant maintenance is required. I do two Pilates sessions a week and ride my horse twice a week (horse riding is excellent for strengthening the core, legs, and arms). I never sit at a computer for more than 30 minutes without standing up and stretching. I have hired an assistant who types while I dictate. It all costs a fortune, but it's still cheaper (slightly) to be well than sick.

Now, when I look at my back in the mirror, instead of seeing a flimsy, weak structure, slouching and with shoulder blades jutting out at right angles like chicken wings, I see smooth, flat shoulders that sit tight on my back, held there by newly strong trapezius muscles. I can wear as many backless dresses as I want, but the best thing is being able to pick up my two-year-old daughter without wincing and walk the streets with her hanging round my neck, squeaking, "Cuddle, Mummy! Cuddle!" □

## THE WILD BUNCH

(continued from page 118)

The event is at full gallop now, wild and exuberant. It's nothing the ancients who celebrated at the real Temple of Dendur wouldn't recognize, but the gods and goddesses have changed: Madonna and Jesus are making out. Tom and Gisele are kissing; the honeymoon tour continues. Justin and Jessica are sharing a tender,

private moment, dancing romantically off to the side of the temple.

Iman is looking everywhere for Twiggy, whom she has never met, and heads into the ladies' room—now transformed into some kind of giggling, smoky Prohibition speakeasy—where she finds her among Josh Hartnett holding court, a dashing madcap John Galliano, and makeup artist Stéphane Marais touching up model Coco Rocha.

Alexander Wang is asking all "the girls" to autograph his copy of the book *Model as Muse* from the gift shop. Kate Hudson, Liv Tyler, and Kate Bosworth are gossiping and comparing summer plans; Hudson is off to Colorado for the twenty-third birthday of her brother Wyatt ("He's gorgeous," she says), and then on to Europe, she hopes. Then Rag & Bone designer Marcus Wainwright receives a red alert; he rushes to his wife's side, her water has broken and before you can say "after-party," she delivers a baby boy.

When the music ends and guests gather themselves for another drink before heading off to assorted late-hour fetes (including Marc Jacobs's at the Monkey Bar), Moss comes face-to-face with one of her muses, the model Lisa Taylor, who is chatting with photographer Arthur Elgort.

"Oh my God, oh my God, Lisa Taylor," Moss exclaims, literally bowing before Taylor, a gesture that amuses the Los Angeles mother of two. In further homage, Moss re-creates some of Taylor's most historic poses in photographs by Helmut Newton.

It was a marvelous party, Moss says. Even standing in a receiving line to greet 650 guests was a pleasure for this otherwise silent star of fashion. "Actually, it reminded me of when I met the queen," Moss recalls. "What do you do?" Her Majesty had asked Moss. "I'm a model," she replied. "Oh, it must be a very difficult job," commented the queen. Moss smiles as she prepares to leave the Met gala. "No, ma'am, it isn't," she'd said. "Yours is." □

## IN THIS ISSUE

**Page 20 (cover look):** Silk dress, \$1,495; exclusively at Calvin Klein Collection, NYC, (212) 292-9000. Handmade multicolor metallic jet bead necklace, \$7,200; to order at Barneys New York; ninaricci.com. **Life with Andre 38:** Book, \$1,750; Archivia Books, (212) 570-9565. Cast-aluminum garden chair, \$650 (including small matching table); (212) 861-4390. Bird, \$26; (212) 988-8800. **View 43:** Printed silk dress (\$1,595) and silver necklace; Emilio Pucci boutiques. Fendi boots. On Peter Dundas: Calvin Klein Underwear micro-modal T-shirt, \$36; cku.com. Calvin Klein Collection wool pants, \$395; Calvin Klein Collection,

NYC; (877) 256-7373. Tom Ford scarf. Calvin Klein shoes. **44:** Hand-embroidered and beaded camisole dress, \$5,345; also at barneys.com. **47:** On Hamilton: Hamilton-Paris marble-print dress, \$985; collection at Kirna Zabête, NYC; Susan, Burlingame CA; Satine, Los Angeles. Bottom: leather bag; also at A.P.C., West Hollywood; apc.fr. **Beauty 52:** On Love: Hanii Y top. Aene shorts, \$249; lagarconne.com. Sophie Mallet belt. H&M shoes; hm.com. Bottom, left: goggles; Marni boutiques. Bottom, right: running shoes; shopadidas.com. **PATA 54:** Silk-faille dress with embroidered hem, \$5,925; Kirna Zabête, NYC.

## THE SPECTRUM'S END

**60:** Chain necklace, \$1,288. Monogram paillette mini bag, \$966. Cancan suede shoes with resin-pearl heel, \$1,270. Clothes and accessories; louisvuitton.com. **61:** Ralph Lauren Collection turtleneck, skirt (\$8,000), and silk-faille gloves (\$155); ralphlauren.com. Prada heels. **62:** Dress (\$6,065), lambskin, resin, and metal belt (\$915), and Upside Down shoes (\$1,150); (800) 550-0005. **63:** Dress, \$5,895. Tights, \$435; Miu Miu boutiques. Shoes, \$585. **64:** Skirt, \$8,620. Blouse and skirt to order at John Galliano, Paris; 011-331-5535-4040. **65:** Jacket and skirt also at