



# PORTER

Winter 2018  
Issue 01

FASHION  
to LOVE

'60s Chic

'70s Romance

'80s Sexy

## Iris

Fabulous, unique  
forever young...

*Hell yes!*

WHAT MAKES A  
MODERN DAY  
ICON?

Porter's Fall  
cover -story

# bold & beautiful

CELEBRATING THE INCREDIBLE WOMEN of 2018

*Emma Gonzalez, Sandra Bullock, Meghan Markle, Victoria Arlen, Michelle Poler,..*

WINTER 2018

# PORTER

ISSUE 01



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ALEXANDER  
MQUEEN

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GUCCI

# style icon

Why does everyone adore Iris Apfel? “She’s a true original.” From design projects to appearances in ad campaigns, Apfel (96) shows no signs of slowing. Personal style really originated with Iris Apfel; she has always espoused the virtues of not just dressing for yourself, but being who you are and doing it unapologetically, which is perhaps why she and her messaging and aesthetic have resonated. “She is a forever transcendent icon!”

Photographer Mario Testino  
Fashion Editor Miranda Hobbes



Givenchy red "fur" coat  
\$2500; original Iris  
reading glasses, \$400;  
Jewelry Iris Apfel  
Original Collection

**G**reat is one of those terms that gets thrown around a lot. To use it in reference to the documentarian Albert Maysles, who died earlier this year, is to invest the word with its full significance: Maysles was great in spirit and great in artistry, and he joined those two qualities in the creation of films indelible and truly, well, great. Perhaps the greatest work in his oeuvre is *Grey Gardens*—that frank yet sympathetic portrait of Big and Little Edie that's so particularly revered by fashion folk. Maysles' fans in the industry ought to find it fitting that his final film sees him turning his vérité lens on another style icon brimming over with personality: Iris, which premieres tonight in New York City, is the tale of Iris Apfel—her history, her long and loving marriage, her *sui generis* approach to getting dressed, and her late-breaking emergence as a “geriatric starlet.” That’s Apfel’s phrase, by the way, and here she delivers a few more bon mots as she talks to PORTER about the movie that bears her name. “Nothing I ever did I expected to do,” Iris Apfel, the eclectic New York style icon, explains in *Iris*, the documentary. “It just kind of happened.” At 93, Apfel has become our leading ambassador for the fashion of chance: the idea that good taste isn’t aspirational but realized on the fly, that more can be done with well-layered costume jewelry and a one-of-a-kind poncho than with all the season’s must-have fare. “I like to improvise,” she confesses near the start of the film, which assembles footage from her life in fittingly kaleidoscopic patterns. For Apfel, getting dressed is a creative act—like playing jazz, she says—and the unexplored expanses of the world are a sourcebook to fill her closets. It’s a sartorial safari seen through round, rose-colored glasses, and it looks, most of the time, like wild fun. Shortly after her marriage to her husband, Carl—“He was cool, he was cuddly, and he cooked Chinese, so I couldn’t do any better,” she said—the couple founded Old World Weavers, an interior-design firm that redecorated the White House under presidents Truman to Clinton. To source the unique art and fabrics for which they were known, they traveled widely. Even since retiring, Apfel continues to make rounds close to home. We learn how she arranges mannequins in her own image (layered jewelry, pattern contrasts) and sells accessories on the Home Shopping Network. (“Color can raise the dead!”) Most of all, we start to understand the mind behind the brazen taste. Where other style icons are sometimes prescriptive and arch, Apfel finds beauty in individuality, however offbeat. Real fashion isn’t about pleasing the people around you, she says, but about pleasing yourself: “It’s better to be happy than to be well-dressed.” In her documentary, Apfel discusses smart phones, social media, her style, and her frustration with the fashion industry. On some of the extraordinary experiences that have shaped her life... “I just go with the flow. I always feel like a sponge. I’m always absorbing something even if I’m unaware of it.” When I was putting my first museum show together, I didn’t know I new all the things. I’ve been going to museums and everything for so long I just absorbed so much that I didn’t know I did. I’m so sad for the young people because they don’t have many experiences anymore they just press buttons. On smart phones... People are acting like smart phones are their brain and they’re not. In the States it’s become a substitute for many youngsters and I think it’s pitiful. On social media... I don’t do Instagram, didn’t even know I had a page. Somebody does it for me and it’s so extraordinary because it’s done by a charming young woman in Vienna, Austria. I don’t like social media at all, I think so much of it is unnecessary and I think so many people use it so badly. They use it in lieu of doing something themselves. So many youngsters have no inner life at all. On her frustration with the fashion industry... I think the ridiculous focus on youth and making dresses that cost thousands of dollars for bodies that are 18 years old is so ridiculous. They can’t afford them, and all the women who can afford them look ridiculous if they wear them – it doesn’t make any sense.

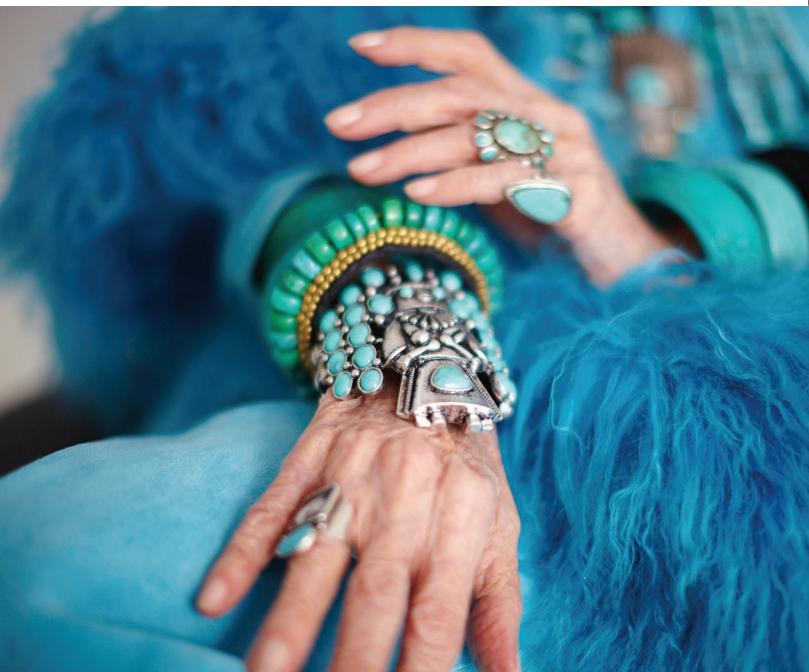




### Iris Apfel Shares Her Secret of Style: “Attitude, Attitude, Attitude”

It's rare to find a woman who fills up every inch of her skin, who soaks up life so fully, and yet doesn't take anything from anyone else. She stands in her own light, and doesn't take anyone else's light from them.

Givenchy sky blue  
fur coat, \$1200  
: original Jewelry  
Iris Apfel Original  
Collection : watch  
Swarovski \$1300





At 96 years old, style icon Iris Apfel is a self-described “geriatric starlet” with a flair for fashion, design, and combining what’s cheap with what’s chic. Apfel’s creative endeavors have ranged from her career as a textile designer to working as an interior designer for the White House, and producing of her own jewelry and clothing lines. Apfel was an under-the-radar style force until the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York dedicated a show at the Costume Institute to Apfel’s collection of clothing and jewelry in 2005. As inspiring as Apfel’s personal style is her decades-long love story with her husband Carl. The couple spent almost 70 years together, during which time they created their own textile company, starred in a documentary together, and maintained a romance that only seemed to grow stronger over the years. Iris Barre was born in Astoria, Queens, New York on August 29, 1921. She was an only child and was raised on a farm by her parents and grandparents, according to The Guardian. Even as a kid, Iris had a passion for style. “At that time you could ride the whole subway system for a nickel, so each week I would take a different section of New York—Chinatown, Yorkville, Harlem, Greenwich Village. And I really fell in love with the Village,” Iris told The Guardian. Apfel went on to amass a collection of hundreds of unique pieces from around the world—and she started that process early. “The first piece I ever bought was in Greenwich Village,” Apfel recounted in her 2015 documentary Iris, which is available on Netflix. “I was about maybe 11, 12 years old. There was a little shop in a basement of one of those old-fashioned kind of tenement houses. His name was Mr. Darris, and he was threadbare but elegant. He always wore spats and a monocle and I always tell everybody he treated me like a mini duchess.” I came in and he’d never seen a kid be so interested in all this junk before. I fixed on a brooch. I just thought it was the cat’s pajamas,” she said. “And I really lusted after that piece. We haggled a little bit over the piece. I thought it had been gone, but fortunately for me it was still there.

## “I don’t have any rules, because I’d only be breaking them.”

Anyway, I bought it for the magnificent sum of 65 cents. He gave it to me. I was so thrilled, my God.” Apfel eventually went on to study art history at New York University and attended art school at the University of Wisconsin. She later used her knowledge of fashion and bold sense of design in her work as a copy editor at Women’s Wear Daily. After two years of marriage, Iris and Carl cofounded Old World Weavers textile company, which specialized in restoring furnishings for homes. “We never intended to go into the fabric business,” she said. “Nothing I ever did I intended to do. Everything just kind of happened.” Iris, who had completed an internship with interior designer Elinor Johnson in the past, had a knack for sourcing the materials and fabrics necessary to restore antique pieces. “She had a very big decorating business,” Carl said in Iris. “I would go along with her. I’d take my little toolbox, hang the pictures. And I got a kick out of watching her make something beautiful.” Iris was well into her retirement from the interior design industry when Harold Koda, the curator of the Met’s Costume Institute, contacted her in hopes of showcasing her unique fashion sense in an exhibit.

What resulted was Rara Avis: Selections from the Iris Apfel Collection, an exhibition that was unlike any other for two reasons: it was the only show of its kind at the Met that had focused on a living female who wasn’t a designer, and secondly, it was styled by Apfel, who dressed the mannequins according to the irreverent ways she wore the garments. The response was unprecedented. “I don’t know if there’s been any other show that’s relied so much on word-of-mouth,” Koda recalls. People loved Apfel’s wacky combinations, and virtually overnight a new fashion star was born. Ten years on from that exhibition, Apfel’s career has never been more current. Last spring she was the face of two collections: one for Kate Spade, alongside the Victoria’s Secret model Karlie Kloss, and the other for jewellery designer Alexis Bittar – a campaign that saw her appear next to 19-year-old blogger Tavi Gevinson. Despite two hip operations – she underwent one after tripping over the hem of an Oscar de la Renta dress at a fashion shoot in Paris – she continues to grace countless fashion-magazine covers. Although her outward crankiness and droll humour might tell you otherwise, Apfel says her twilight career has been a lifeline. “It’s been a godsend, in all honesty, because when I retired my social life was cut to shreds.” But grateful though she is for the attention (“It is lovely to be fussed about like this in my dotage”), she doesn’t necessarily believe her success – or rather the way she has been embraced – has anything to do with age. Her appeal, she believes, is a glamour that’s missing in modern life. “I go by the phone calls and the letters I receive from my fans, which are all kinds of people: six-year-old girls, young women, guys. And not just the gay guys, although I am what the gay guys love. But lots of straight guys, too. It’s interesting with the guys, because they tell me that they see things in the way I dress that they don’t see in their wives and girlfriends.” Like what? “Oh, fantasy,” she waves a hand. “Glamour, fantasy, humour, whimsy,” she decides, and then taps at my notepad. “Are you writing this down?”

But Apfel also thinks a large proportion of her fanbase isn’t even concerned with fashion. She shrugs, chomping on her chewing gum. “I think some people like me because I’m different. I don’t think like everybody else. People are so

tied up in the worst parts of technology these days. They live a life pressing buttons. They don’t use their imaginations.” In the many pages of dedications to her “Irisisms” on the internet, Apfel is loved for her no-nonsense attitude: the wisdom and humour she has gathered over the decades; the unsugared truths. Some of her most interesting views, centre on ageism in fashion, an epidemic she dubs “insane”. Her main beef, she says, is that designer clothing is being made for 16- to 18-year-olds in the first place. “I mean, designers have dug their own graves,” she groans. “It’s demented, all these dresses for thousands of dollars, and the kids that age can’t even afford them. In America it has been proven that the bulk of spending money is in the hands of women between 60 and 80, so it’s so stupid. The people who do have the time and money to shop are either retired or empty-nesters.” She sighs. How can an older woman relate to a little kid running up and down the runway? As she continues explaining her viewpoints and fashion choices, she takes out her chewing gum, invigorated by the rant. “Excuse me,” she apologises, “but the gum is what usually keeps me awake.”



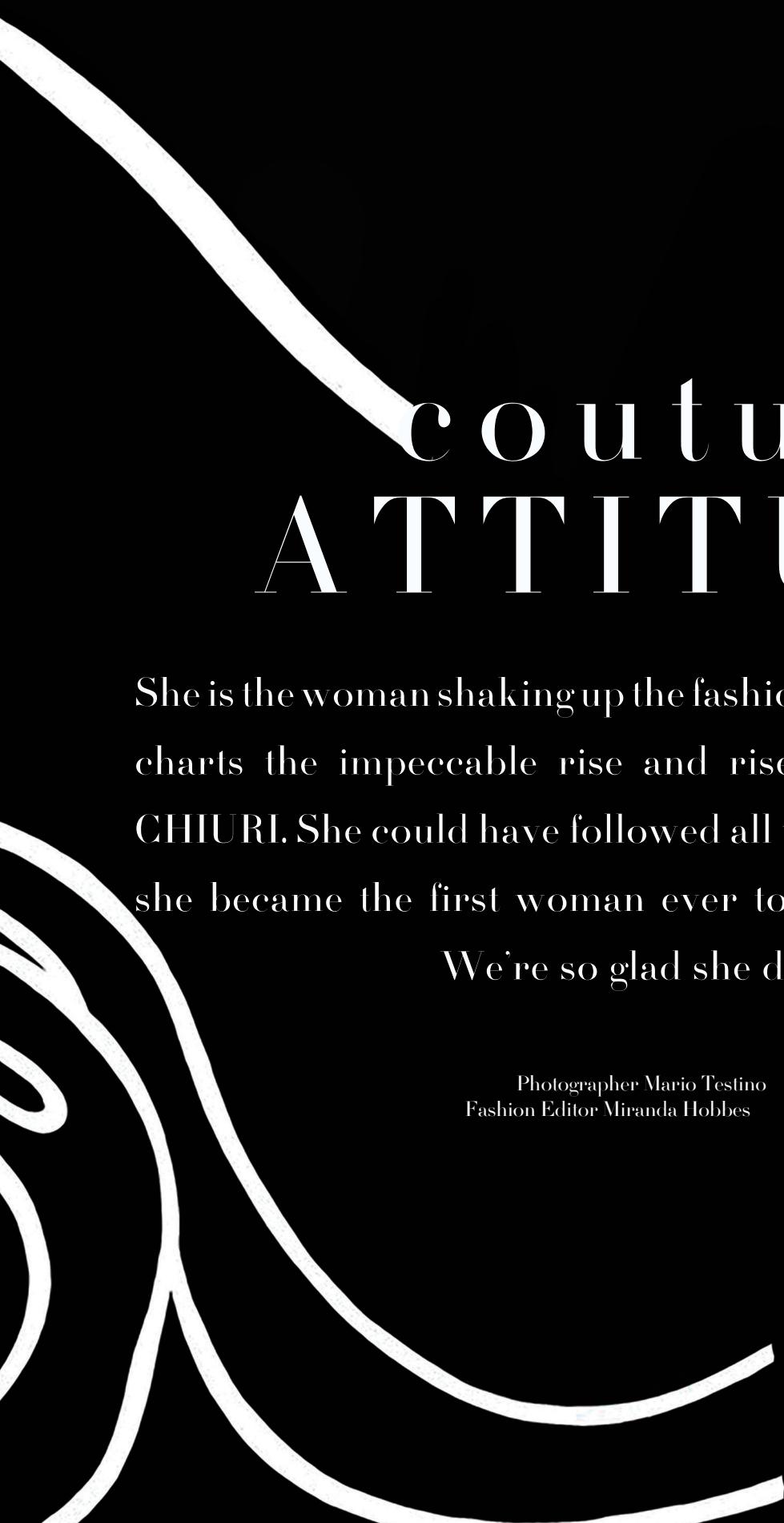
GIVENCHY

A fashion advertisement featuring two women. The woman on the left has long blonde hair and is wearing a brown and black animal print jacket with a white leather cuff. She is looking towards the right. The woman on the right has dark hair and is wearing a light-colored jacket with a large collar and a zipper. She is looking directly at the camera. The background is dark and moody.

NICHY



DIOR, \$900 C'est  
NON NON NON pul-  
over by Maria Grazia  
Chiuri SPRING  
2019, at Net-A-Porter



# couture ATTITUDE

She is the woman shaking up the fashion world. Clara Barron charts the impeccable rise and rise of MARIA GRAZIA CHIURI. She could have followed all the fashion rules when she became the first woman ever to helm Christian Dior.

We're so glad she didn't.

Photographer Mario Testino  
Fashion Editor Miranda Hobbés



From left to right : Dress,  
\$16,500, Dress \$20,005,  
Dress, \$14,000, Dress  
\$25,000, Dress \$25,000, all  
five by Christian Dior House  
designed by Maria Grazia



If fashion houses were run by committee, the latest iteration of Dior would probably never have made it to the runway. Imagine the pitch: Let's take one of the world's largest luxury brands and tweak it so that, where it was once known as the most demurely feminine of houses, it is now the most outspokenly feminist. How about bandolier bags and revolutionary berets? How about making striped marinière shirts that say WHY HAVE THERE BEEN NO GREAT WOMEN ARTISTS? and then handing out the art historian Linda Nochlin's 1971 essay of the same name to guests at a show? Great idea, huh? Many people would have thought not, but according to Maria Grazia Chiuri, the first and only female creative director in Dior's 71-year history, the transformation was a no-brainer. When I arrived, everybody said to me, 'Oh, Dior—Dior is a feminine brand,' she recalled when we recently met in Paris. "Honestly, I said, 'Okay, but I think we can find something more than a flower.' This traditional idea of 'feminine' was, for me, just a little bit too old, and so I say, 'I completely agree with this value, but we have to speak about women today.' It was this philosophy that led PORTER to pair the Italian feminist artist Libera Mazzoleni with Chiuri for this story. Mazzoleni, who was born in Milan in 1949, has spent decades exploring the female form and female sexuality. "I searched for news on Maria Grazia and read two interviews she gave about the fashion world, the female condition, the contradictions of existing," Mazzoleni said. "The acuteness of her analysis and her intelligent humanity deeply impressed me." After a meeting during the haute couture collections, Mazzoleni and Chiuri got together at Paris's Quartier Général studios. It was sweltering July-in-Paris-with-no-air-conditioning weather, but Chiuri looked thrilled, even wearing a wool sweater, to be in front of Mazzoleni's lens. Mazzoleni then shared the images with the writer Graziella Longoni, who wrote captions for them, uniting reality and myth, image and text. Dior hired Chiuri in 2016, after several years of personnel turmoil that John Galliano set off with the anti-Semitic drunken rant that led to his firing in 2011. A native of Rome, Chiuri started her career at Fendi, where she was part of the accessories team that designed the legendary Baguette It bag. She spent the following 17 years working quietly and successfully at Valentino, eventually becoming co-creative director with her longtime design partner, Pierpaolo Piccioli. Together, the two turned out hit after hit, including the lucrative Rockstud collection of shoes and bags. Despite her solid résumé, a low-key 52-year-old Roman woman was not the obvious choice for such a historically high-drama maison as Dior. "It's a strange industry," Chiuri told me. "The clients are women, a lot of workers are women, but everybody was surprised when I became the creative director of Dior." A mischievous smile came over her face as she repeated, "It's just a little bit strange." Chiuri, who taught herself English at night in her 40s, knew that she needed to learn the house codes. She went to the archives for her education. There, she found confirmation of her intuition that her Dior had to be about female empowerment. "Dior comes out of a desperate moment," she said. "Sometimes we think Dior—sorry!—made just the New Look, but after World War II, Mr. Dior gave all of Paris the idea that there was a future, and that was political." She was thinking of our current moment—terrorism, nativism, environmental depredation—as a different kind of wartime. Chiuri said she didn't encounter much corporate resistance to her plan to inject a social conscience into Dior. (The material actually proved trickier than the message, with Sidney Toledano, Dior's chief executive until the end of last year, declaring, at one point, "Dior is not a T-shirt brand.") She continued, "I don't think you can think about the audience. I think people understand if you do something that is honest with yourself."

But even if she had, she would have persisted. “Probably, people want to dream, people want to do something fun, but you have to express what you feel,” she replied when I asked why she had chosen engagement at a time that could seem ripe for escapism. “There is this idea that fashion has to be the dream, but fashion is something very close to the people. It speaks about bodies, about women and men.” She continued, “I don’t think you can think about the audience. I think people understand if you do something that is honest with yourself.” Fortunately for Dior, Chiuri’s instincts have resonated with the public. Last year, her WE SHOULD ALL BE FEMINISTS shirt—a plain black or white tee with the title of the Nigerian novelist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie’s manifesto—became a sensation after Rihanna, a Dior ambassador, posted a picture of herself wearing it on Instagram. Despite its not-so-egalitarian price of \$710, an unspecified portion of which went to charity, the shirt became the sellout item of the season. It has been so knocked off that you can now find a \$12.95 version on Amazon, a phenomenon with which Chiuri professes to be pleased. The success of the shirt, which one can safely posit a male designer never would have made, proves a meta point. It is a perfect example of why diversity is good business; of why we all—even the bean counters at multinational conglomerates—should be feminists. In late February, Chiuri showed her most overtly political collection yet. At the Rodin Museum, in Paris, a gallery had been transformed into the world’s largest bulletin board, with old newspaper articles, placards, and graffiti plastered in a 360-degree collage. I AM WOMAN, the runway read. The slogan WOMEN’S RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS appeared on several walls. The youthquake theme was perhaps a little heavy-handed, the references too obvious. But when the lights went down and the first model emerged wearing tinted glasses and a black hat that might as well have been a balaclava, it became clear that no one would be able to accuse Dior’s feminism of being humorless: C’EST NON NON NON NON ET NON! read her intarsia sweater in dark green and cream. At the end of the show, Chiuri, wearing lug-soled boots and baggy jeans, hobbled out to take a bow. (A few weeks earlier, she had broken her femur in a fall.) You couldn’t help but feel you were witnessing the cracking of fashion’s highest, hardest ceiling. Even if some of the clothes struck you as hokey—the patchwork duster coats, the peace-sign logos—you had to applaud Chiuri’s ability to read the signs of the times, to foresee where things were going. Just two weeks earlier, New York State prosecutors had announced that they were filing a sexual harassment lawsuit against Harvey Weinstein. Dior’s clients probably weren’t at the barricades in May 1968, but this was the spring of 2018, and they weren’t missing out on the #MeToo movement. Call it the New Thought. Divorce, if you can believe it, wasn’t legal in Italy until 1970.

The law that enabled it was so controversial that, four years later, it was put to a referendum, which upheld its legality. Chiuri was 10 years old at the time. Four years after that, in 1978, Italians voted to make abortion legal. “I think that the patriarchy is something that is very close to me,” she said. “We try not to feel this reference, but we were born with this reference.” Chiuri’s father was in the military; her mother was a dressmaker. They weren’t especially political, but they were progressive. She describes them as part of a generation that wanted to throw off the strictures of family and Church. “My mother and father were a young couple who believed that it was important to give people the opportunity to choose for themselves,” she recalled, adding, “My father was so supportive. He never asked me, ‘When are you going to find a man? When are you going to get married?’” Chiuri knew early on that she wanted to do something in fashion. Her first retail job was at a toy shop, during the Christmas holidays. She remembers selling little pianos by performing demos for shoppers.

When she was 15, her brother was born. Around the same time, she participated in her first protest: lobbying the administrators of her Catholic school to loosen the dress code. “I didn’t want to wear the uniform,” she recalled. “But, at the same time, sometimes it’s good to have something you want to protest against. If life is too easy, it isn’t good.” The risk of bringing politics into fashion is that people are going to ask you about yours. If you answer honestly, you’re inevitably going to alienate some people;

“But, at the same time, sometimes it’s good to have something you want to protest against. If life is too easy, it isn’t good.”

you don’t, you’re hawking radical chic at its hollowest. At times, it was difficult to get a concrete sense of where Chiuri stands, amid the feel-good slogans. When I asked her what she thought of seeing Melania Trump in Dior—in a scarlet Bar jacket and skirt in Paris; in a white pantsuit at the State of the Union Address—she was more or less diplomatic. “She go in the store and she buy it,” she said. “We are living in this kind of world where you do what you want.” It wasn’t until I asked about when she had felt the power of the patriarchy that I understood the source, and the strength, of her convictions, how her feminism comes from an emotional as much as an intellectual place. “When you took the job at Dior, did you inquire about equal pay?” I asked. “Did you say, ‘Will I be paid equally to the male designers that have gone before me?’” “No, I never think about that because, in my mind, I want to be paid the right price for this job,” she replied. “And not in reference to other people, but in reference to the job that you have to do.” “When Rachele became 16 years old,” she replied, “I realized that nothing has changed.” These days, Chiuri’s is trying to understand what young girls want to wear, outside of stereotype.

Clockwise from the right:  
Christian Dior Feminism  
spring 2019 collection street-  
wear; bottom right Libera  
Mazzoleni photography with  
Maria Grazia designs for  
Dior; bottom left, Maria  
Grazia working on Spring  
2019, collection, red skirt.



# M

MISSONI

