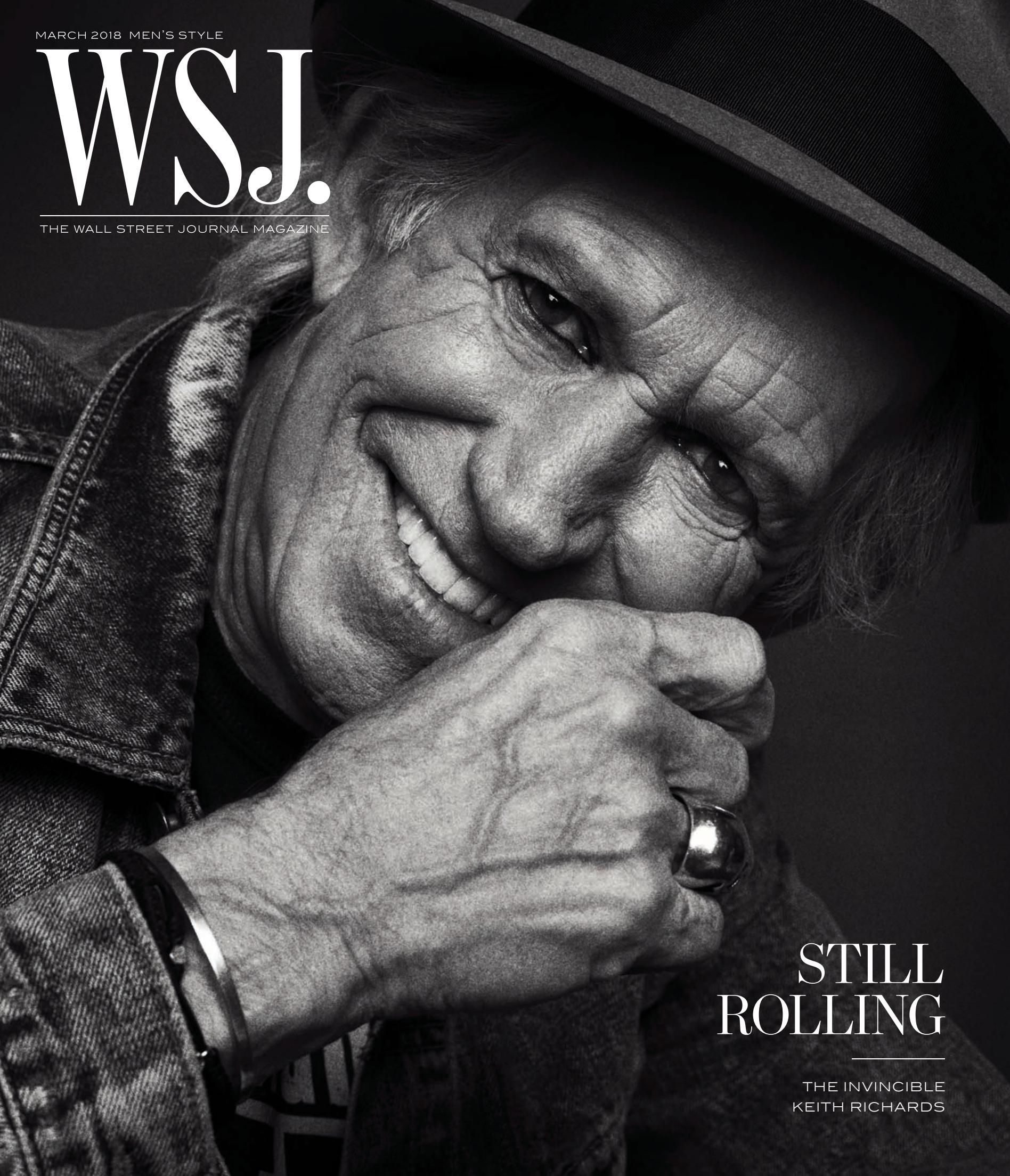


MARCH 2018 MEN'S STYLE

# WSJ.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL MAGAZINE



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# WSJ.noted | EVENTS

PEOPLE, PLACES & THINGS WORTH NOTING

## DE BEERS NEW YORK | 1.31.18

WSJ+ members enjoyed a private evening at The Home of Diamonds. Guests previewed Lotus, the latest haute jewelry collection from the brand, and enjoyed an intimate conversation around diamonds and personal style from legendary fashion icon Iris Apfel and Daniela Balzano-Hull, veteran director of the De Beers New York flagship store. Following the discussion, attendees were treated to a personal meet-and-greet with Ms. Apfel and private chauffeured shuttle service provided by BMW.

*Photos by Arialsadora.com*



Iris Apfel



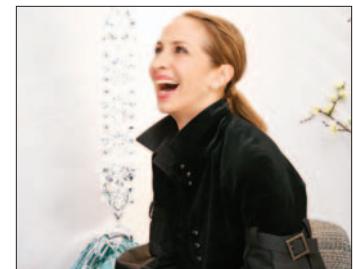
Anthony Cennane, Sidonie Robert-Degove



WSJ+ Members



Lotus



Daniela Balzano-Hull



Ana Patricia Botín



Gisel Kordestani



Heather Bresch

## WEF DAVOS | 1.23.18 - 1.26.18

The World Economic Forum annual meeting in Davos brings together the most influential academics and political and business leaders from around the globe to shape international, regional and industry agendas. The Wall Street Journal lounge hosted six events in three days and welcomed 700 unique visitors during the week of WEF.

*Photos by WSJ*



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Rufus Norris, Matthew Hancock, Martin Sorrell, Liam Fox

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By Isaiah Freeman-Schub  
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Styling by Julie Ragolia

**ON THE COVER** Keith Richards, photographed by Inez & Vinoodh, in his own jacket, T-shirt, hat and jewelry.

**THIS PAGE** Zesty Meyers (left) and Evan Snyderman, founders of design gallery R & Company, at their new space in New York City, photographed by Jeremy Liebman.

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ULTIMATE  
SHOWCASE  
OF OUR  
BRAND  
UNIVERSE."  
—VIPP CEO  
KASPER EGELUND



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By Christina Binkley  
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- 92 IT'S ONLY ROCK 'N' ROLL (BUT HE LIKES IT)**  
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- 120 THE ART OF REDUCTION**  
At home, Fabien Baron and Ludivine Poiblanc's gift for editing makes for easygoing elegance.  
By Sarah Medford  
Photography by François Halard

Clockwise from left: An interior from Fabien Baron and Ludivine Poiblanc's home in New York City, photographed by François Halard. Paint tests at the Chimney House in Copenhagen, the third hotel from design brand Vipp, photographed by Felix Odell. Giorgio Armani bags, sweaters, pants and shoes, photographed by Maciek Pozoga and styled by Julian Ganio. For details see Sources, page 125.

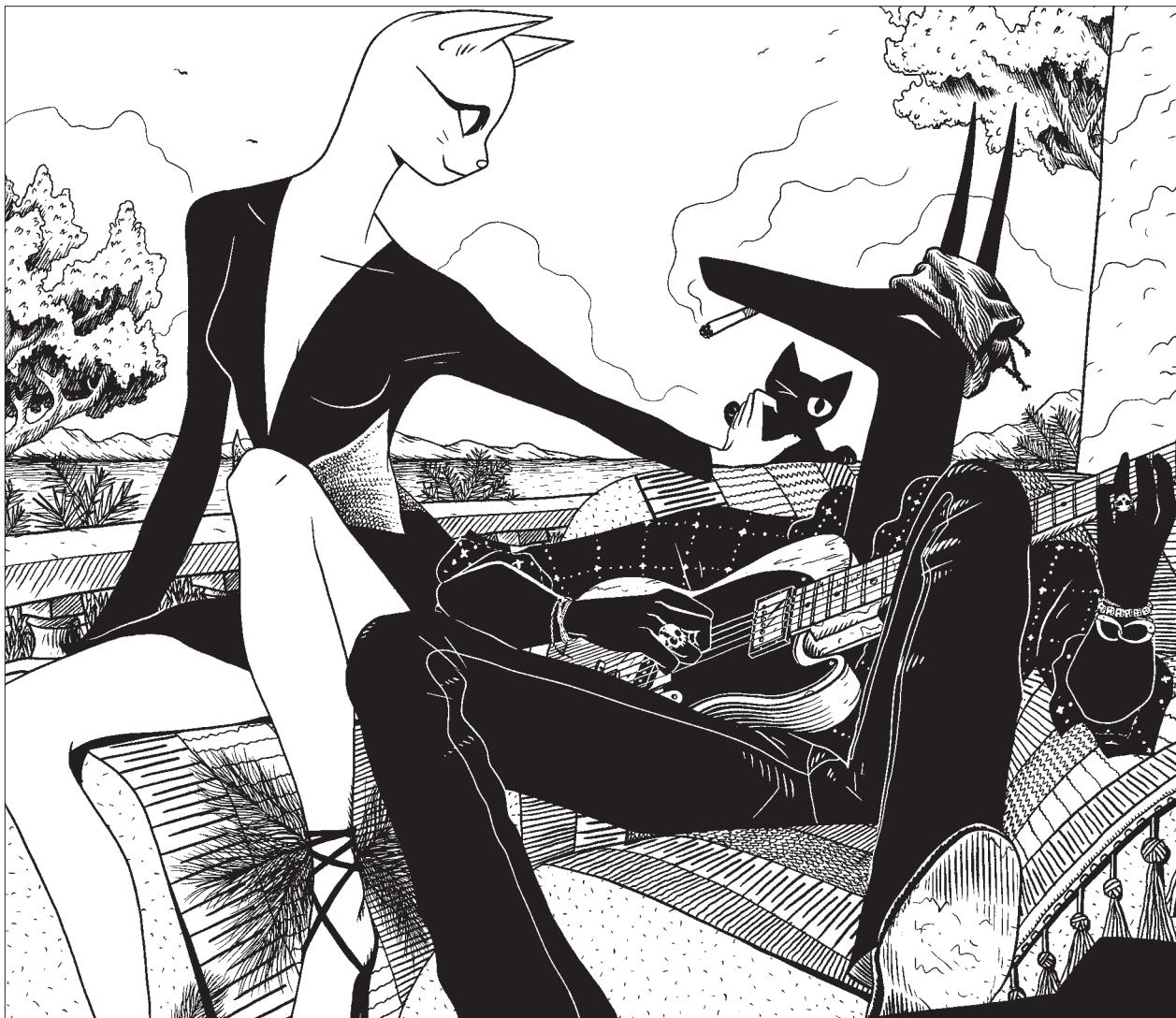


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# STRIKE A CHORD

ILLUSTRATION BY ALEJANDRO CARDENAS



**GUITAR HERO** Bast listens to Anubis (both in Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello) strum about life in the crossfire hurricane.

**O**UR MARCH MEN'S Style issue features people unapologetically true to their own natures, places where mind-clearing expansiveness is an everyday occurrence and, throughout, a spirit of indomitable individuality.

On our cover is a legend few readers will fail to recognize: Keith Richards, the charismatic guitarist and songwriter for the Rolling Stones. In our profile of the 74-year-old style icon, it's clear that some things have hardly changed since the band debuted in 1962 ("Writing songs, you don't get a minute off," says Richards), while others have shifted quite a bit ("We've really gone into grandma and grandpa mode," says his wife of 34 years, Patti Hansen). With a new album in the works and

another tour to plan, Richards is just as hungry for rock 'n' roll excellence as he's ever been.

In this issue, we're also pleased to publish a photographic portfolio adapted from Frédéric Lagrange's forthcoming monograph, *Mongolia*, which Italian publisher Damiani will release this fall. Taken over the course of 17 years and a dozen trips, the images depict the vast openness of the steppes and the hardy souls who live there, far from the bustling economy of the country's capital city, Ulaanbaatar. "Mongolia haunts a visitor as few other destinations can," Pico Iyer writes in the accompanying article, a sentiment beautifully distilled by Lagrange's lens.

Thom Browne is the sort of designer who brings

the world around to his point of view, rather than the other way around. When he first launched his fashion line, he wasn't shy about giving advice to Bergdorf Goodman about how to display the clothes. And while the signature truncated silhouette of his suits initially raised a few eyebrows, his maverick sensibility soon spurred a revolution among style-conscious men. "I want people to love or hate something," says Browne, whose fashion shows often resemble performance art. "I never want people to just like what I do."

Kristina O'Neill  
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# CONTRIBUTORS



## ALAN LIGHT AND INEZ & VINOODH

IT'S ONLY ROCK 'N' ROLL (BUT HE LIKES IT) P. 92

In 1996, with the help of a friend at a Los Angeles record label, writer Alan Light snuck into a studio session at which the Rolling Stones were cutting a song with the blues singer B.B. King. Over two decades later, for the cover story of this month's issue, Light abandoned his low profile when he and the Stones' lead guitarist, Keith Richards, discussed the musician's memoir, his complex relationship with Mick Jagger and, of course, Richards's style. "Keith Richards has always exemplified the ideal of a rock star not driven by money or fame but by a sense of freedom and independence," says Light. "Obviously that's led him into excess and extravagance, but there's always been a notion of purity to Keith that's different from his peers." At the portrait shoot, in a New York City studio, photography duo Inez van Lamsweerde and Vinoodh Matadin also captured a tableau of Richards's everyday accessories, pictured above: a vodka lemonade, cigarettes and a pocketknife. "Keith not only has his innate sense of style, but he's also smart, open and full of humor," the photographers agree. "People say you should never meet your heroes, but Keith lived up to and beyond any expectations we had."

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MARCH 2018

## CONTRIBUTORS

### TONY IRVINE & GREGORY HARRIS

LIFE IS BUT A DREAM P. 80

For their fashion shoot at Myakka River State Park, in Sarasota, Florida, photographer Gregory Harris (far right) and stylist Tony Irvine (near right) sought inspiration from 1970s album covers. "We wanted fashion that almost contradicted the environment," says Irvine. "The nod to the '70s came through the colors and shapes of the clothing." Model Benno Bulang braved the wetland elements in looks from Dries Van Noten, Marni, Gucci and others. "Gators—they were everywhere," recalls Harris before joking, "We're pretty sure we lost a styling assistant to one."



### MATTHEW KRISTALL & LESLEY M.M. BLUME

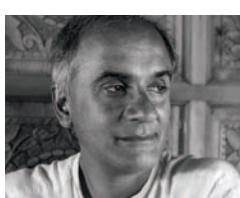
HONEY, HE SHRUNK THE SUITS P. 106

"There are contradictions at the heart of the Thom Browne enterprise," says writer Lesley M.M. Blume (near left), who profiled the fashion designer for this issue. "Namely, the extreme restraint and uniformity of much of his apparel versus his lavishly madcap presentations." Case in point: On the day of the interview, which took place in his immaculate New York City studio, Browne showed his unconventional side by wearing a shorts suit as snow blanketed the town. Photographer Matthew Kristall (far left) sensed Browne's paradoxical nature as well. "He is refined but also offbeat," says Kristall. "His presence, stance and features are uniquely compelling to photograph."

### PICO IYER & FRÉDÉRIC LAGRANGE

UNDER MONGOLIAN SKIES P. 98

When writer Pico Iyer (near right) left the Mongolian capital of Ulaanbaatar to explore the vast, sparsely inhabited steppes, he was struck by the contrast between the country's pastoral simplicity and its eagerness for modernity. "Nowhere else I've been offers miles of nothingness and a lesson in how humans can live off the land," says Iyer. "Mongolians are seizing the future, but only because the past never leaves them." Photographer Frédéric Lagrange (far right), whose 17 years of images of the country will soon be published as a book titled *Mongolia*, has been influenced by the spiritual character of the place. "Mongolia has the effect of bringing one back into the moment," says Lagrange. "It's timeless."



### FELIX ODELL & NATALIA RACHLIN

VIPP SMART P. 72

On a frigid December morning in Copenhagen, writer Natalia Rachlin (near left) met with Vipp CEO Kasper Egelund, who had cycled 12 miles from his home to the worksite of Vipp's latest project, the Chimney House. "A very Danish approach!" recalls Rachlin, who also interviewed Egelund's mother and sister—together the three run the Danish company. "They're quite the trifecta," says Rachlin. Photographer Felix Odell (far left) was met with the challenge of capturing the unfinished environs, soon to be a hotel. "They'd cleared the space [for the shoot], so when I arrived it was quite empty and cold," says Odell. "But soon the light found its way in, and things started to get into place." —Sara Morosi



MICHAEL KORS

# THE COLUMNISTS

WSJ. asks six luminaries to weigh in on a single topic. This month: Control.



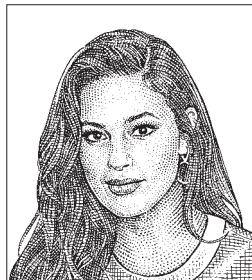
RITA  
MORENO

"I was married for 46 years, and my husband, it turned out, was a very controlling person. Control in a man often sounds cruel and awful, but in this case it was not that at all. He was a terrific man and parent, but he thought of me as his little tropical bird that needed him to do everything. In his perception, he was helping. Sometimes people who fall in love and want to be together unwittingly collude in this way. Women of my generation were brought up to believe that they needed to be taken care of, that they needed a guardian. My husband once told me how to slice a banana! The troubles began when I wanted to do some 'growing up.' [When he passed] I suddenly felt liberated and free; I remember feeling so guilty about that. For the longest time I didn't know what word to paste on our relationship, but it was about control."



MICHAEL  
SCHWARTZ

"My role as a chef has changed dramatically over the years, and a lot of that has had to do with surrendering control. I've had to learn to direct people in ways that convey my intentions and expectations, especially as we continue to open more restaurants. When I was coming up, chefs were not very good at mentoring and nurturing. They just did everything themselves. You had these supremely talented individuals who were content with staying at one restaurant because they had control over it; conversely, you had chefs that tried to expand and failed because they never mastered the art of letting go. That dynamic has changed as chefs want more—they've had to change their approach. The sooner you resist the urge to control everything, the better you become at delegating and mentoring and creating better employees and chefs."



ASHLEY  
GRAHAM

"For years my agents had control over everything: my projects, my contracts, my schedule. I was told that I would never be an editorial model. I was called the 'cash cow catalog girl.' My life and career changed once I realized I had control over my future. I've been able to work with some of the best people, and I always value their input—after all, they're artists! But I make sure to let them know, 'Here's my line, and we're not going to cross it.' I remember being on set for a magazine cover shoot. I got to look over the pictures and say, 'Please don't airbrush my cellulite out.' I had a bit more control. I'm so passionate about the #BeautyBeyondSize movement. Along with other women advocating for various types of diversity, I am using my platform to change the industry. We can't let it control us—and I don't mean just models. As women, we must say what we want."



DAVID  
ADJAYE

"To be a successful architect is to understand and embrace the limits of your control. Every place in which you work is circumscribed by a very powerful set of conditions: a specific geography and climate, a complex network of histories and a confluence of cultural forces. Architecture that denies this reality becomes oppressive, even violent. My approach is never to try to control these forces, but rather to respond to them in a way that offers new opportunities to understand and frame the narratives of that place. But inevitably, people respond to architecture in unexpected ways and find unanticipated uses for the space. To me, that unpredictability is the magic of the craft. Leaving room for self-determination in design—allowing users to feel control over their environment and their relationship to it—is incredibly important for resonant architecture."



LYNNE  
TILLMAN

"To some extent I don't want to be in control at times. I don't want to feel that I can't let myself go. I used to do coke in the '80s—back when everybody was doing coke—and whenever I did I would try to give my possessions away. If we were snorting lines I'd say, 'Do you want my coat? How about this teapot?' That was kind of out of control. And there are people who fear this loss of control. They want to control things they can't, so they often end up focusing on the little things—it's a hedge against reality. But I do apply self-control in fiction. It has to do with leaving out the self. One of the reasons I love writing fiction is to inhabit an intelligence that's not mine and to get the pleasure from those differences. I really feel that if I, Lynne Tillman, enter the story too much, it doesn't leave space for the reader to experience something more interesting."



MOBY

"The story of human history is one long effort to exert control over everything, from food to temperature all the way down to our genome. The very survival of our ancestors depended on control—humans have been very good at it. My friends think of me as remarkably disciplined because I'm sober, I'm a vegan, and I work 10 hours every day. But it's about finding the middle ground between authoritarianism and anarchy. In the course of my life, when I've been compulsively consumed with trying to exert control—whether it's about my relationships or career or health—the end result has never been great. It comes down to balance, external and internal, between evolution, heredity and personal subjective experience. And remembering that sometimes giving up control yields amazing results."

*Moreno is an actress. She stars in Netflix's One Day at a Time, which returned for its second season in January.*

*Schwartz is the chef-owner of the Genuine Hospitality Group. His newest restaurant, Amara at Paraiso, opened in Miami in January.*

*Graham is a model, designer, author, body activist and judge on America's Next Top Model.*

*Adjaye is an architect.*

*Tillman is a writer. Her new novel, Men and Apparitions, is out this month.*

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STYLING BY JULIAN GANIO



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Models, Anis Ayoub and Kaissan Ibrahim at Success  
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makeup, Anna Sadamori;  
prop styling, Sophie Durham.  
For details see Sources,  
page 125.



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# WHAT'S NEWS.

**TWO'S COMPANY**

Zesty Meyers (left) on a 1950s Martin Eisler chair and Evan Snyderman on a 1950s José Zanine Caldas lounger at R & Company's new Tribeca gallery. The wall installation is by Jeff Zimmerman, and the stool is a 1968 design by Pietro Derossi, Giorgio Ceretti and Riccardo Rosso.



## THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

Celebrating 20 years of their Manhattan design gallery, R & Company founders Zesty Meyers and Evan Snyderman look to the future with an expansive new space.

BY STEPHEN WALLIS PHOTOGRAPHY BY JEREMY LIEBMAN

**I**T WAS THE FIND of a lifetime, even for a pair of enterprising New York design dealers who made their reputation shining light on the overlooked and underappreciated. The 8,000-square-foot, three-story space that Zesty Meyers and Evan Snyderman found in a 19th-century cast-iron building, just a block north of their influential Tribeca gallery, R & Company, was the perfect setting for the new space they were envisioning. "When we got our first look inside, it just blew our minds," says Snyderman, who spotted the for-sale sign on a lunchtime stroll. Meyers agrees: "Right away, we knew it was something we'd never find again."

This year marks R & Company's 20th anniversary, and to celebrate the milestone, Meyers and Snyderman are expanding dramatically. The new location, opening this spring, will allow the partners to better showcase the diversity of their roster, which ranges from historic designers such as Verner Panton, Greta Magnusson Grossman and Sérgio Rodrigues, to later-career talents like Renate Müller and Wendell Castle (who died earlier this year), to younger, boundary-pushing artists like Thaddeus Wolfe, Katie Stout and the Haas Brothers. At the same time, Snyderman and Meyers often collaborate on shows with architects, collectors and other tastemakers—like the presentation last fall of French interiors star Pierre Yovanovitch's furniture—only now they'll have much more square footage to play with.

In addition to the street level, which has 16-foot ceilings and fluted cast-iron columns, the space has two downstairs floors, the lower featuring brick columns standing directly on Manhattan schist. The coup de théâtre comes at the rear: a three-story atrium backed by a 40-foot-high wall of windows.

For the renovations, Meyers and Snyderman tapped one of their past collaborators, architect Kulapat Yantrasast, whose Los Angeles-based firm, wHY Design, is known for its work with cultural institutions. "I knew they weren't looking for another beautiful showroom but something with a complex identity," says Yantrasast.

On the street level, which is devoted mostly to exhibition space, Yantrasast devised movable walls that can be configured "to present multiple shows with multiple artists at the same time," the architect explains. The middle floor houses offices and a library for the gallery's extensive archives, while the bottom level is "the surprise floor," as the architect puts it, "because it goes deep into the earth

and will feature immersive installations." The first of those installations will be glass artist Jeff Zimmerman's massive Vine chandelier, his largest work to date, set to fill the entire atrium. It's just one of the pieces created for the 20th-anniversary exhibition that will inaugurate the new space.

The goal is for the gallery "to be a place for the design world to come together," says Meyers. "We want to have a new level of programming that goes well beyond selling something." The current space, meanwhile, will remain open, serving as a showroom for inventory and less-formal installations of new work.

It's a long way from the days of the B Team, the glass-blowing and performance group Meyers founded in the '90s and Snyderman later joined. Soon after, they started a sideline in vintage furnishings, stalking estate, yard and garage sales and selling their finds at the Chelsea flea market. "It was the magic moment when midcentury stuff was starting to hit the market," Meyers recalls.

Trips to northern Europe and, later, Brazil yielded containers full of then-affordable modern treasures that they shipped back to their Brooklyn warehouse. In November 1997, the pair opened their gallery, originally called R20th Century, in Williamsburg and then moved to Tribeca in 2000. From the outset, their approach combined eye-catching presentation with serious research, whether they were showing midcentury Brazilian masters—they almost single-handedly made Sérgio Rodrigues and Joaquim Tenreiro into market stars—or offbeat contemporary work.

The gallery's early years coincided with the maturation of the design market, reflected in the emergence of fairs like Design Miami, with Meyers and Snyderman playing a prominent role. "Evan and Zesty are true leaders in the movement that made limited-edition contemporary design collectible, putting it side by side with historical work," says Craig Robins, the Miami-based collector and chairman of Design Miami. "There are very few galleries that are as strong and dynamic in both categories."

Lately Meyers and Snyderman have started taking cues from art galleries as well. This month, R & Company is exhibiting for the first time at the Armory Show, one of New York's top contemporary and modern art fairs. "We're at the crossroads of all these worlds coming together—fine art, design, craft," says Snyderman. "We can be at the forefront of that."



## "WE KNEW IT WAS SOMETHING WE'D NEVER FIND."

—EVAN SNYDERMAN



## SHORE THINGS

Life's a beach in spring's bright Hawaiian shirts.

From top: DSquared2, 3.1 Phillip Lim, Ami Alexandre Mattiussi, Louis Vuitton, Paul Smith, Coach. For details see Sources, page 125.



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## THE DOWNLOAD

# KEVIN LOVE

The Cleveland Cavaliers center and NBA standout shares what's on his phone.

**Strangest autocorrect mishap**

When a friendly but not overwhelming "haha" autocorrects to "hahahahaha," and you come off way overeager.

**Favorite Instagram photo filter**

None. Never use them.

**Most-used app**

At home I use Savant, which controls all the A/V: lights, my home-theater system, speakers, etc.

**Favorite emoji****Person you FaceTime most often**

My girlfriend, Kate Bock.

**Craziest place you've left your phone**

At the restaurant Chez L'Ami Louis in Paris. I got all the way to my hotel before realizing and had to sprint back.

**Alarm settings**

Since I don't have a traditional 9 to 5 job, I like to think of it as game days, 8 a.m.; off days, 9 a.m.; off-season, 6 to 7 a.m.

**Number of contacts in phone**

915.

**Favorite podcast**

*The Art of Manliness*. The host talks to all sorts of celebrities about being a modern man, their backgrounds, what they've learned along the way and more.

**App you wish someone would invent**

One that can teleport, *Star Trek* style. Isn't that what everyone wants?

**Most-surprising app you depend on**

SimplyRain for sleep. The app is just rain sounds, white noise that I fall asleep to every night. Kind of silly, but it works.

**Are there times when you try to stay off your phone entirely?**

I try to adhere to the 50-minute rule—when you wake up, wait at least 50 minutes to check your phone, and at night, take your last look at least 50 minutes before you go to sleep.

**At what battery percentage do you feel compelled to charge your phone?**

50 to 60 percent. I'm a bit of a perfectionist, so I never let it get too low. I have the battery-pack case so that I'm never stranded.

**Funniest text message of the week**

Anything in the Cavs group chat.

**DRY GOODS**

Weather rainy days in style with this season's slick pieces made to brave the elements.



LOUIS VUITTON



LOUIS VUITTON



LOUIS VUITTON



LOUIS VUITTON



LOUIS VUITTON



LANVIN

**SHIELD TRIP**

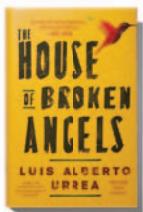
Clockwise from top right: Alexander McQueen belt, Z Zegna bag, Raf Simons umbrella and boot, Hermès pants, Bally jacket. For details see Sources, page 125.

**STAGE MIGHT**  
Jack Thorne at London's Palace Theatre, the original venue for *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*. Photograph by Robbie Lawrence.



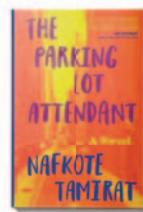
## CLOSE READING

This season's most highly anticipated novels, from established and emerging authors alike, masterfully survey the borders of family—those we're born with and those we make for ourselves. —Thomas Gebremedhin



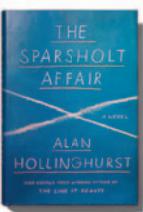
### The House of Broken Angels

Luis Alberto Urrea depicts a Mexican-American family's history and heritage. (*Little, Brown; March*)



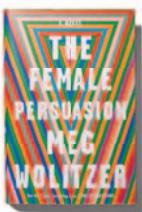
### The Parking Lot Attendant

Nafkote Tamirat's debut is the coming-of-age tale of an Ethiopian-American girl. (*Henry Holt; March*)



### The Sparsholt Affair

Man Booker Prize winner Alan Hollinghurst returns with a book that chronicles two generations of gay men. (*Knopf; March*)



### The Female Persuasion

Meg Wolitzer's layered narrative looks at the lives of an ambitious trio over the course of a tumultuous decade. (*Riverhead; April*)



### Motherhood

Sheila Heti's latest novel follows one woman's journey as she decides whether or not to have a child. (*Henry Holt; May*)

## CREATIVE BRIEF

# HOT SPELLS

As *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* comes to Broadway, playwright Jack Thorne reflects on bringing the wizarding world to life.

JACK THORNE was still a teenager in 1997 when *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, the first in J.K. Rowling's now-classic series, was published. "I was a proper Potter fan, a Potterhead," says the London-based writer, 39. "I was in awe of [Rowling's] storytelling. The longer you spend with her books, the cleverer, denser and more fulfilling they become."

Now a writer for both stage and screen, Thorne has gone on to enchant legions of Potterheads himself with his play *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*, developed from a story he conceived with Rowling (or Jo, as she's known to friends) and director John Tiffany. Nearly two years after it premiered on London's West End, the production makes its U.S. debut when it opens on Broadway this month.

It was Tiffany who brought Thorne on to the project, after the two worked together on a stage adaptation of the Swedish vampire novel and film *Let the Right One In*. A continuation of

Rowling's storyline, *Harry Potter and the Cursed Child* picks up 19 years after the last book, with a new generation of students—including Harry's son, Albus Potter—preparing to board the Hogwarts Express.

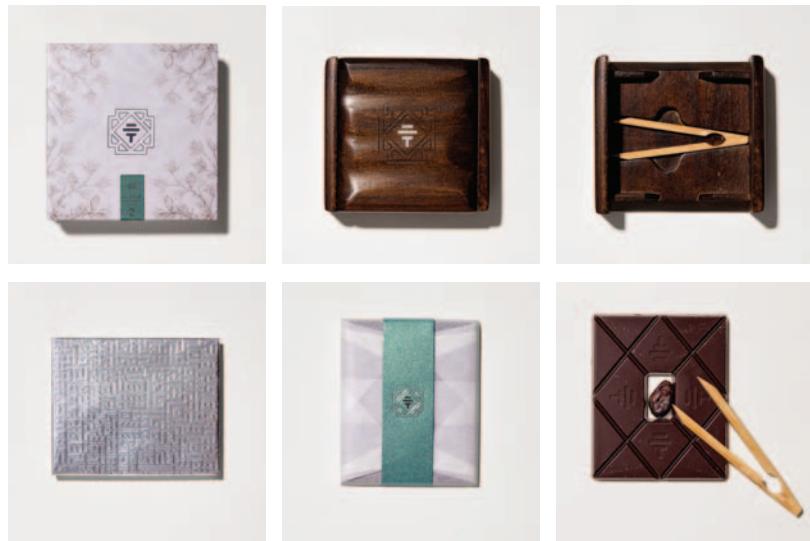
It's an action-packed theatrical experience, bringing to life the talking paintings, flying brooms, moving staircases and wand battles from the books. Despite the fireworks, the play has at its core human drama and multidimensional characters. "Jo always managed to provide a window into someone's soul while taking them on an amazing journey," Thorne notes. "We followed the template she set."

Thorne readily admits that writing a new Harry Potter adventure, populated with familiar and intensely loved characters, was terrifying. He avoided total creative paralysis, he says, by thinking small: "We were just trying to tell a fascinating story. And make a play that had some magic in it." [harrypottertheplay.com](http://harrypottertheplay.com).

—Darryn King

WHY DOES IT COST SO MUCH?

## THE \$355 CHOCOLATE BAR



Ecuador-based chocolate maker To'ak sources its cacao beans from just 322 trees of the 5,300-year-old Nacional species, which was thought to be extinct until 2009, when To'ak's co-founders, Jerry Toth and Carl Schweizer, and harvest master, Servio Pachard, found a grove of the trees deep in the Piedra de Plata valley. Each vintage of the chocolate is aged in wood for at least two years and comprises a limited 100-bar run. Every bar comes in a Spanish elm box with wooden tasting utensils. Newly released, the 2015 bars aged in single-malt Islay casks (shown) are \$355 each, while the 2014 cognac-barrel edition is \$385. [toakchocolate.com](http://toakchocolate.com). —Ari Bendersky

box with wooden tasting utensils. Newly released, the 2015 bars aged in single-malt Islay casks (shown) are \$355 each, while the 2014 cognac-barrel edition is \$385. [toakchocolate.com](http://toakchocolate.com). —Ari Bendersky

## L.A. GLORY

In *Wilshire Blvd*, photographer and WSJ. contributor Adrian Gaut captures the entire L.A. thoroughfare's architectural gems, from an Art Deco theater to a 1986 LACMA addition (right). Designed with help from WSJ.'s Magnus Berger, the book is launching April 5 with a show at L.A.'s Casa Perfect. [august-editions.com](http://august-editions.com)



### HOT LINE

To celebrate its 130th anniversary, Smythson of Bond Street is introducing the historically inspired Bond collection. Included is a set of desk accessories, such as the key tray at left (\$495), featuring founder Frank Smythson's animal sketches, first published in a 1902 catalog. [smythson.com](http://smythson.com)



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## THE LIFE OF PIE

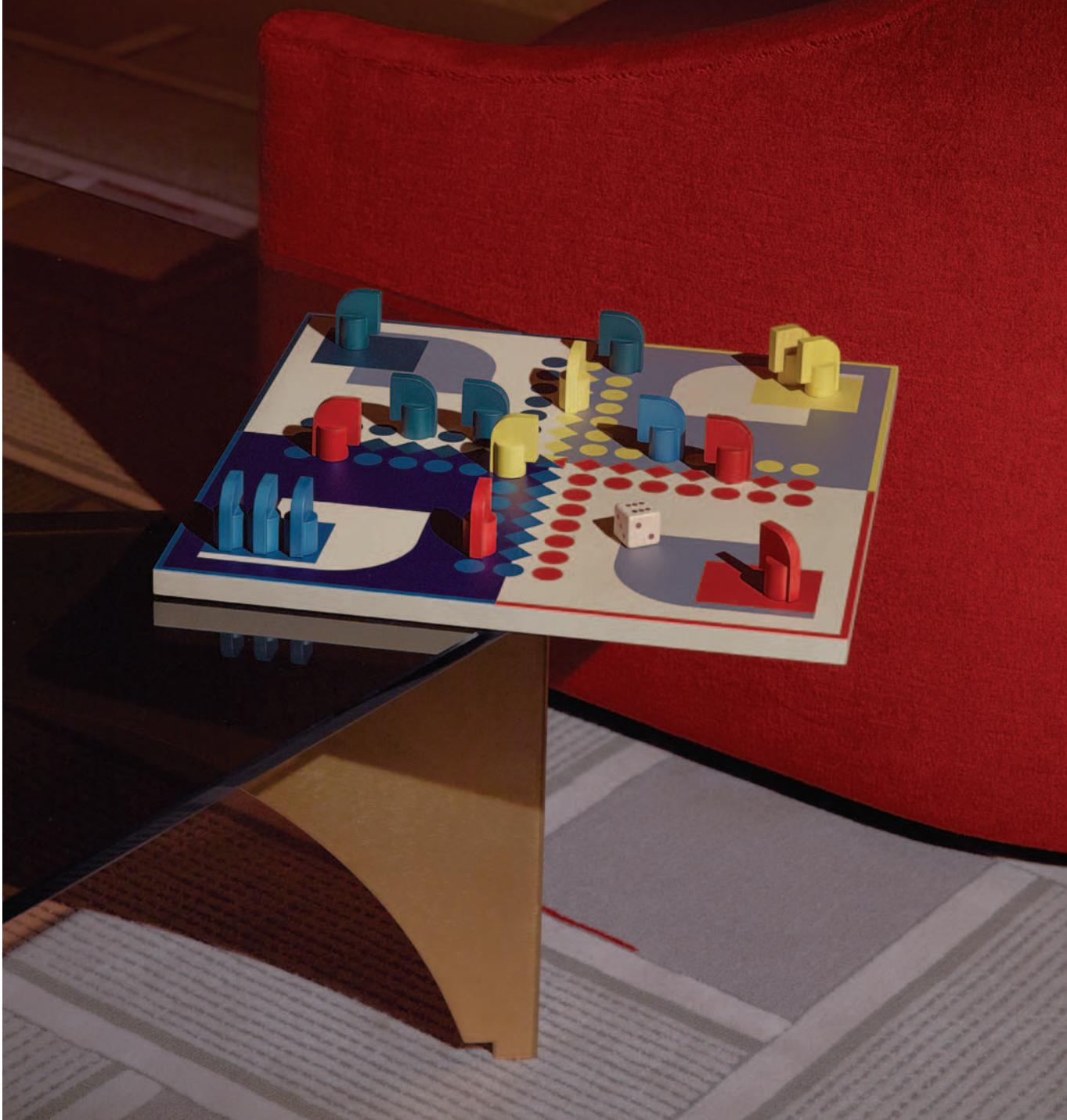
A BELOVED PIZZERIA RETURNS TO MANHATTAN IN COLLABORATION WITH A PAIR OF MICHELIN-STARRED CHEFS.

**T**HOUGH chef Jeremiah Stone is certainly a fan of the carefully considered food at his New York restaurants Contra and Wildair, he admits to loving pizza "more than anything." Yet the pizza Stone loves most eluded him for nearly a decade after its creator, Anthony Mangieri, moved his cult pizzeria, Una Pizza Napoletana, from New York City to San Francisco in 2010. Recently, Stone and his partner, Fabián von Hause Valtierra, who have one Michelin star for Contra, were contemplating opening a third Lower East Side restaurant. They wondered whether they might lure Mangieri back. "I approached Anthony and he said yes!" says Stone. The result is this spring's New York relaunch of Una Pizza Napoletana, with an expanded menu of small plates and desserts from Stone and von Hause. "I learned about balance and amplifying subtle flavors from Anthony," says Stone, who considers Mangieri a major culinary influence. "He's the best pizza maker in the country." [unapizza.com](http://unapizza.com). —Howie Kahn

OBJECT OF DESIRE

# WINNING FORM

A classic French board game takes the lead in an elegant new edition from Hermès.



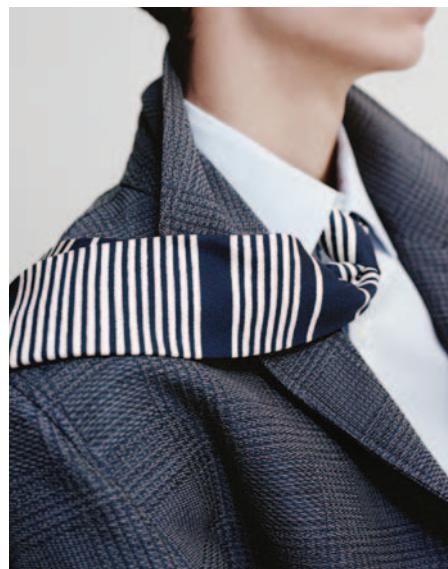
Drawing on its equestrian legacy, Hermès has created a high-style version of what French schoolchildren know as *le jeu des petits chevaux*, or “the game of little horses.” With a roll of the die, done in wood marquetry, players race their horses—equine sculptures inlaid with engraved-steel saddle nails—around the colorful solid-maple board to the finishing post. Think Parcheesi with aristocratic flair. \$2,875; [hermes.com](http://hermes.com). —Christopher Ross

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIAXI & ZHE

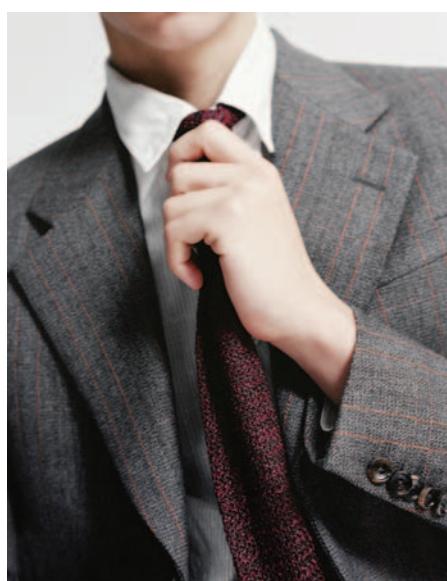
## TREND REPORT

# BUSINESS CASUAL

Neckwear diversifies its portfolio this season, loosening up in vivid colors and graphic patterns.

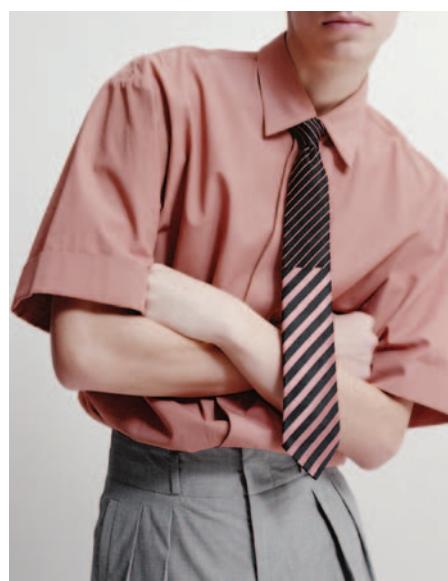


**KNOTTY AND NICE**  
Top, from left: Kenzo tie and pants, Dior Homme shirt and Dunhill jacket; P. Johnson tie, Michael Kors shirt and Stella McCartney coat. Middle, from left: Marni tie and shirt and MHL by Margaret Howell pants and belt; Giorgio Armani tie and Wooyoungmi sweater and shirt.



**FANCY FREE**  
Left: Boglioli tie, Gucci jacket and Brunello Cucinelli shirt. Right: Bottega Veneta tie, Dries Van Noten shirt and Boss pants. Model, Damien Medina at Red Model Management; grooming, Christyna Kay. For details see Sources, page 125.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JODY ROGAC  
FASHION EDITOR ISAIAH FREEMAN-SCHUB



SPERRY

Gold Cup

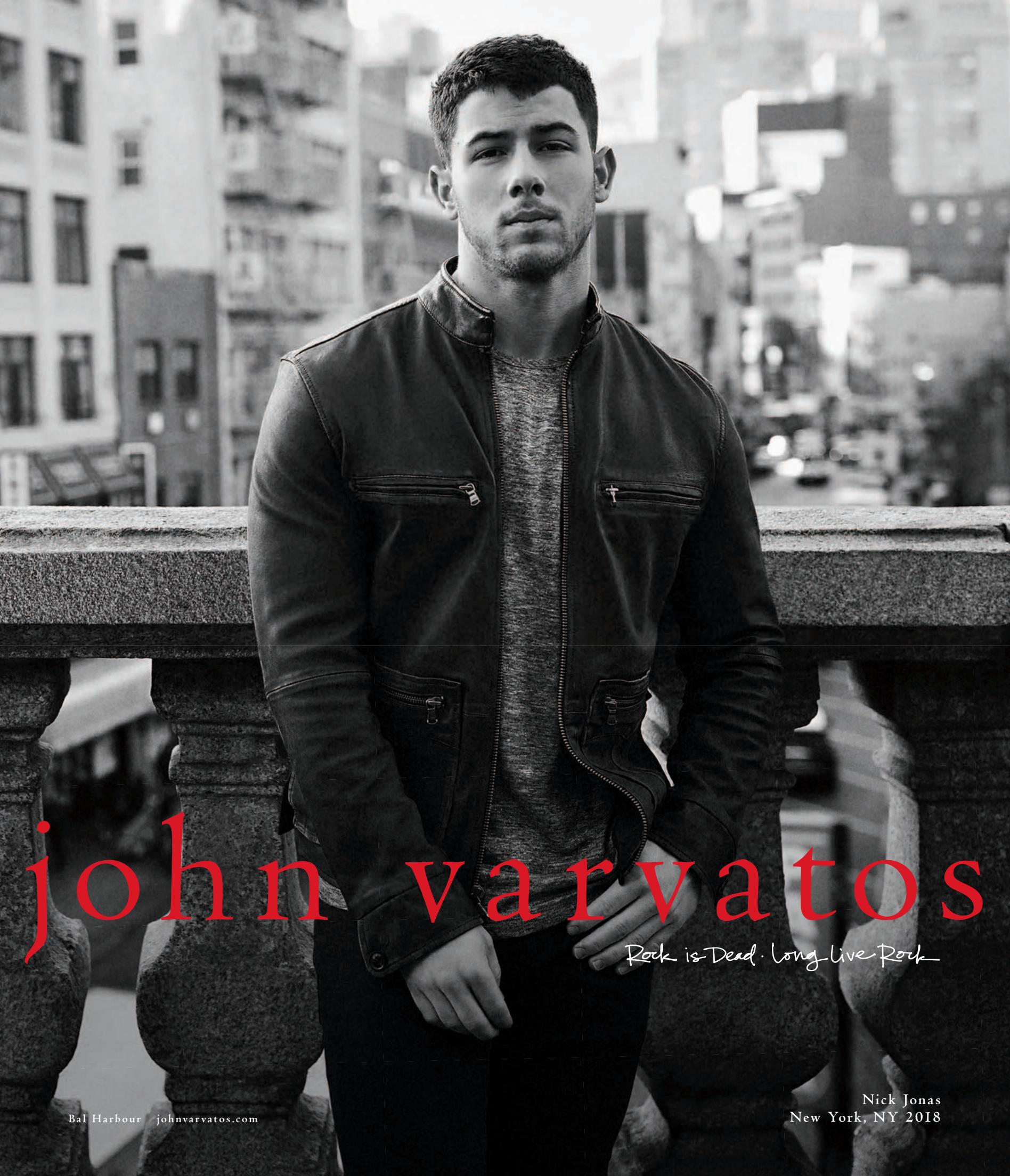
Gold Cup Authentic Original Boat Shoe



Available at [Sperry.com](http://Sperry.com)



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# john varvatos

*Rock is Dead. Long live Rock.*

MARCH 2018

# MARKET REPORT.

## INTO THE CLAY

New York ceramist Cody Hoyt takes his time making colorful pieces in transfixing geometric patterns.

BY ISAIAH FREEMAN-SCHUB  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY DHAM SRIFUENGFUNG  
STYLING BY JULIE RAGOLIA



### NEW FACES

Self-taught in ceramics, Hoyt, 37, has honed a battery of methods to manipulate his material, experimenting with marbling, extrusion, tiling and slip-casting to achieve his faceted motifs. Bell & Ross BR S-92 Blue Steel watch and Tod's jacket.



**TOOLING AROUND**  
“I was seduced by a new material,” says Hoyt of his pivot to ceramics in 2011, four years after graduating with a degree in printmaking from Massachusetts College of Art and Design. “I came into the studio and had a rapid-fire succession of ideas of what I could do with clay.” Top left: Patek Philippe Ref. 5140P watch and Loro Piana sweaters. Left: Vacheron Constantin Traditionnelle watch.

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**STANDING ORDER**

Hoyt begins by creating a flattened, "exploded" version of a piece, consisting of a series of slabs that he then joins together using Sheetrock frames. "When it comes to my process, I still feel like

I'm living in a two-dimensional world," says the former printmaker.

"I'm finding a voice in three-dimensional form." Blancpain

Villeret Ultralplate watch, Hermès coat, tank and pants and his own sneakers.



**STARTING BLOCKS**

Hoyt, who shows with New York's Patrick Parrish gallery, was selected to create a site-specific installation for last year's Exhibit Columbus. The citywide series in Columbus, Indiana, challenged designers to create an interactive experience evoking the city's rich architectural history and exploring the role of design in daily life. For his piece, called *Theoretical Foyer*, Hoyt replaced 2,500 sidewalk bricks on a corner of a main street with the colorful casts seen here. Omega Seamaster Aqua Terra 150M watch and Berluti jacket.



#### FORM AND FUNCTION

"Making the work is about achieving some kind of facility over the clay," says Hoyt.

"I've intentionally picked a medium that is very finicky.

It withholds so much the whole way." Right:

Tank Louis Cartier watch and Salvatore Ferragamo jacket.

Below: Audemars Piguet Royal Oak Offshore chronograph and Ralph Lauren jacket.





**IN THE STACKS**  
Hoyt frequently turns to an eclectic mix of books for inspiration. Volumes of fantasy paintings and compilations of album art from artists like Roger Dean and Barney Bubbles line his studio shelves. Top right: Tag Heuer Autavia Heuer-02 watch and Brunello Cucinelli jacket. Left: Rolex Cellini Time watch and Etro shirt.

---

#### STRETCH THE RULES

Occasionally employing digital tools, Hoyt works mostly in an analog mode, often beginning with stream-of-consciousness drawing to imagine compelling shapes and colors. "It's about connecting dots that the universe has already put there," he says. "Whatever identifying language I have is because I've chosen to find the form organically." Zenith Heritage 146 watch and Bottega Veneta sweater. Grooming, Christyna Kay. For details see Sources, page 125.





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# THE EXCHANGE.



**CAMERA READY**  
Ronnie Fieg (right) and  
football player Victor  
Cruz post videos of Fieg's  
Timberland winter boot  
collaboration to Instagram.

TRACKED

## RONNIE FIEG

The streetwear mogul broadens his ambitions with a new activewear collection.

BY HOWIE KAHN PHOTOGRAPHY BY CLÉMENT PASCAL

**R**ONNIE FIEG started working in retail when he was 13, stocking shoes in a warehouse for his second cousin's New York City store, David Z. Mostly, he hauled boxes up and down a ladder. "Two months in, the ladder rolled out from under me," Fieg says. "I was hanging from the top shelf by one arm, screaming for my manager." The manager never came. Fieg fell. That night, his cousin confessed he hadn't expected Fieg to last even a day on the job and transferred him, moving him into the store. There, Fieg rose from stock boy to buyer, working with clients like Tupac and Jay-Z. He also began collaborating on sneaker designs with Asics, Adidas and Converse. "When I went out on my own," he says, "I already had those relationships."

Now 35, Fieg reigns over his own label, Kith. Launched in 2011 as an annex inside another store,

Atrium, whose founder, Sam Ben-Avraham, was Fieg's sole initial investor, Kith has grown into both a brand and a retail mecca, with outposts in New York, Miami and, as of last month, Los Angeles. Kith Treats, a snack bar selling ice cream mixed with cereal (Fieg loves cereal), appears inside most locations and as a stand-alone venture in Tokyo. Much of the Kith hype depends on limited-release collaborations with other brands, including Nike—for which Fieg recently teamed up with his friend LeBron James—Moncler and Coca-Cola.

"You're watching me in super-OCD mode," Fieg says one recent afternoon, settling into his new office, which is located near the three-story Kith flagship he opened in Manhattan last October. He rearranges a series of casted, all-white Air Jordan sculptures by the artist Daniel Arsham (Arsham's

architecture firm, Snarkitecture, designs all of Fieg's stores) before hanging a camouflage Kith x Timberland hoodie on a coat rack, styling it for a potential Instagram post. "Dropping product has become part of my persona," Fieg says. "Controlling the brand is the biggest challenge."

This month, Kith releases a collection assembled with five other brands: G-Shock watches, Tumi luggage, Adidas sneakers, Oakley Blades and Columbia sportswear. To debut the new suite of products, Fieg has bought out Utah's Amangiri resort, where rooms run \$1,400 and up per night. He makes a few calls; he's flying 50 of his friends to Utah to test his wares in surroundings he feels are germane to his work. "The brand needs to sit in a one-off kind of setting," Fieg says of the exceptionalism he's striving to create. "I can't be sitting with anybody else." >



**8:45 a.m.**

Fieg's vast sneaker collection at his townhouse in Williamsburg, Brooklyn.



**10:33 a.m.**

Drives to the office while listening to DMX.

**12:39 p.m.**

Kith Treats at the Manhattan flagship. Fieg stops by to sample a new recipe.



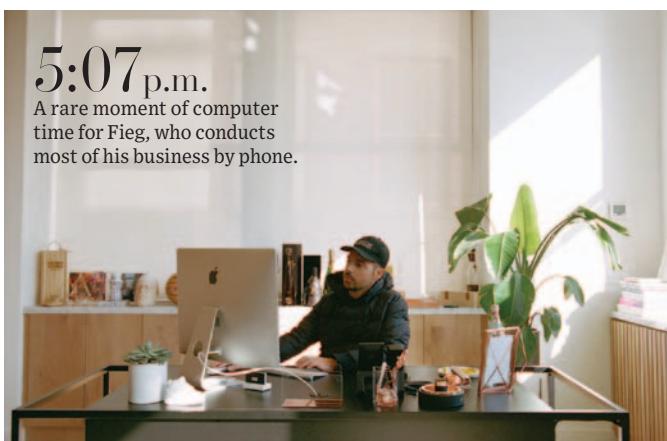
**5:07 p.m.**

A rare moment of computer time for Fieg, who conducts most of his business by phone.



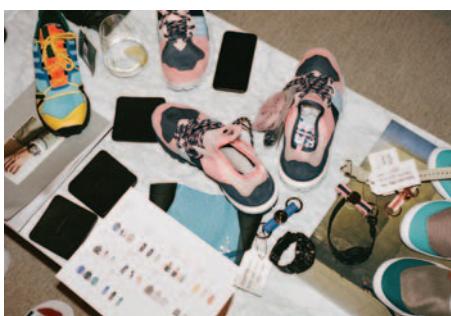
**3:22 p.m.**

Fieg visits artist Daniel Arsham's studio in Long Island City, Queens, to discuss Kith's new L.A. store.



**6:04 p.m.**

He leads a product meeting about this month's multibrand collaboration.



**7:40 p.m.**

Dinner with his wife, Shir, at 12 Chairs Cafe in Williamsburg.



**1.2 million**

Kith's following on Instagram. Fieg himself has over 625,000 followers.

**294**  
sneakers

The number of shoes on display at the Kith flagship in New York City.

**6**  
months

The amount of time it took Fieg to pay off Sam Ben-Avraham's investment in Kith.

**170**  
employees

The full-time staff at Kith.

**\$2.75 million**

Cost of the new L.A. store.

**100+**  
collaborations

The multibrand projects that Kith has executed since launching in 2011.

**70+**  
pieces

The items in the latest Kith collection, releasing this month, a collaboration with Adidas, Tumi, Oakley, G-Shock and Columbia.

**6**  
units

The storage spaces spread across multiple states containing the bulk of Fieg's sneaker collection.

**17**  
stops

The length of the subway ride he took to work as a 13-year-old going from Jamaica, Queens, into Manhattan. •

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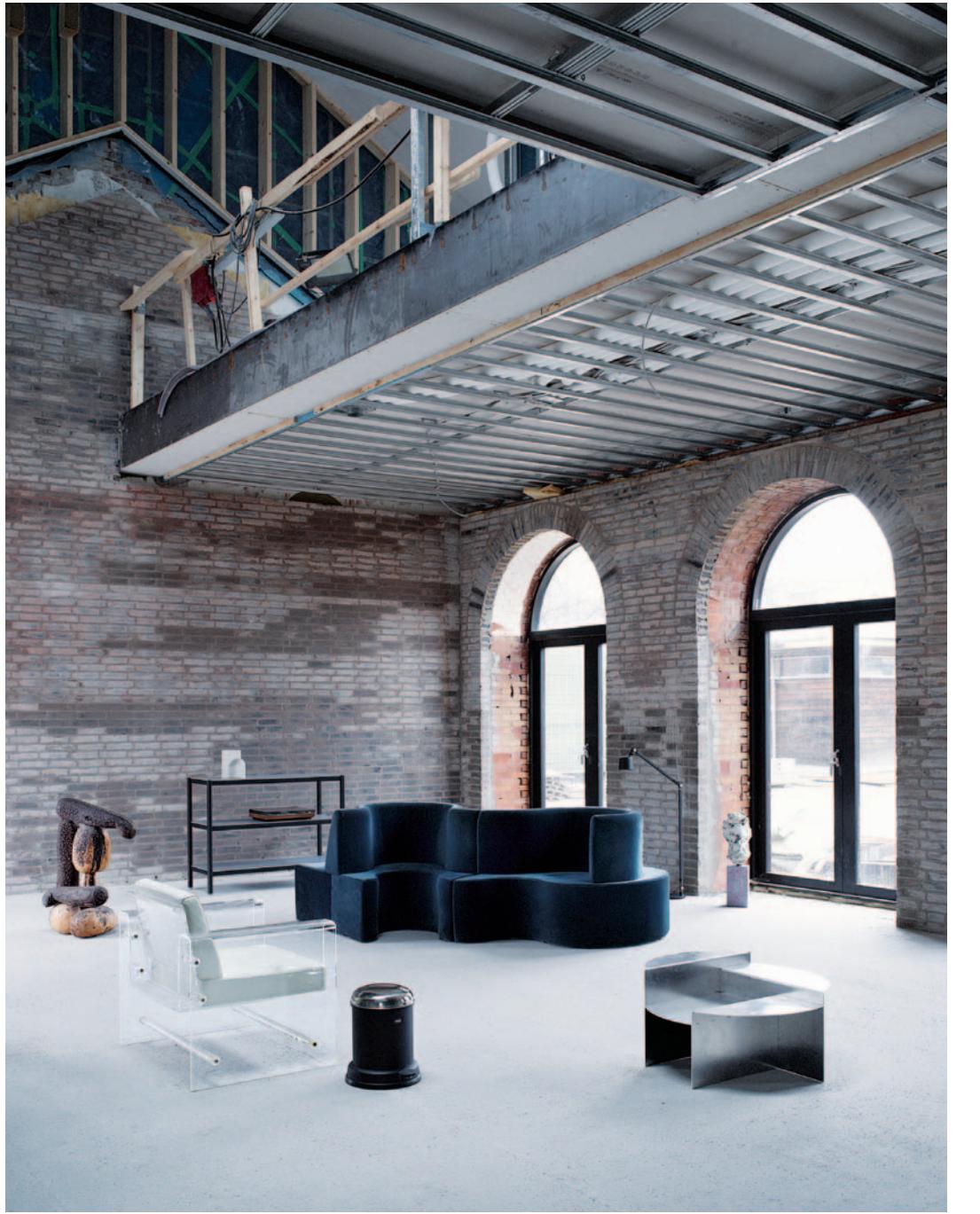
HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL  
TEACHING HOSPITAL

STUDY IN DESIGN

# VIPP SMART

The Danish brand that started out selling one product—a hair salon trash can—has become a design phenomenon thanks to the hard work and uncompromising vision of the Egelund family.

BY NATALIA RACHLIN PHOTOGRAPHY BY FELIX ODELL



**SPACE PROGRAM** The Chimney House, on the northern edge of Copenhagen, opens this month as the third hotel from Danish brand Vipp. Here, the interiors, still under construction, showcase Vipp products—a shelf, a floor lamp and the iconic trash can—alongside pieces that provided inspiration for Studio David Thulstrup's design, including a Verner Panton sofa, a vintage Lucite chair and an aluminum Jonas Trampedach table.

**S**PARKS FLY through the air, thick with a sawdust haze, as a workman solders a joint at the top of a makeshift staircase, inside an old red-brick building on the northern outskirts of Copenhagen, near the coast.

Kasper Egelund, the CEO and third-generation co-owner of Vipp—the 79-year-old Danish design company best known for its iconic trash can—climbs the rickety flight to survey the scene. Floodlights illuminate raw floors, stray wiring and unfinished walls below, and a recent roof extension overhead. The bones of the building are good, its proportions handsome; nevertheless, this is a construction site with quite a way to go.

"I realize it requires some imagination at this stage," says Kasper, 43. "But soon enough this will be the ultimate showcase of our brand universe."

This March, the Chimney House, named for the outsize stack that sprouts from this former water-pumping station's roof, will become the third outpost of Vipp Hotel, a series of Vipp-styled spaces meant for short-term stays. Designed in collaboration with one of Copenhagen's buzziest young architecture practices, Studio David Thulstrup, this two-bedroom addition to Vipp's portfolio will allow visiting aesthetes the chance to live an idealized version of Danish life.

"Traditional retail seems to be losing its power, but what is not losing power is our desire to see or do or read about something interesting," says Kasper. He sees the Chimney House as "the experience economy coming alive."

Alongside several custom Thulstrup-designed pieces, a substantial selection of Vipp products will furnish the Chimney House, part of a lineup that today includes home accessories, furniture, lighting, bathroom units, a modular kitchen system and even a prefab home. The 1,800-square-foot space will be living proof of Vipp's evolution: What began nearly 80 years ago as a humble bin business has become an international lifestyle brand with big ambitions and a strong point of view.

"Our second product was a toilet brush," says Kasper's mother, Jette Egelund, 68, later in the day, at the company's Copenhagen headquarters. "I actually designed it myself, and we released it in 1996. It proved to be very popular."

Since taking over the company in 1992, when her father, Vipp founder Holger Nielsen, died, Jette has held just about every role in the company, from product designer to CEO. She handed over the reins to Kasper in 2011, and today she is the chair of Vipp's board. Both Kasper and his younger sister, Sofie Christensen Egelund, 40—currently the brand's communication and concept director, based in New York—officially joined Vipp in the early '00s. Together the three Egelunds are the sole owners of the business, one built on transforming mundane, often unglamorous household trivialities into attractive tools to be both used and admired.

From a \$79 dishwashing brush to a \$12,000 leather-and-aluminum daybed, there is an aesthetic and intrinsic confidence that pervades the Vipp collection, which has grown to include more than 50 products under the stewardship of the brand's chief

designer, Morten Bo Jensen. Quality craftsmanship, impeccable finishes and the frequent use of rubber and steel create a strong industrial look and feel. This self-assurance extends to the fact that each of Vipp's product categories is most often defined by a single, hyperfunctional option.

"The first thing I always tell someone about the kitchen is that they can have it in whatever color they want," says Kasper. "As long as it's black."

Launched in 2011, Vipp's kitchen—a design that ranges from \$40,000 to \$100,000—is indeed available only in one somber hue. There are no alternative handles, finishes or countertops. The only variables are how many modular units are required and how they are configured. In the lucrative and highly competitive kitchen market, which tends to be all about customization, this take-it-or-leave-it approach seems particularly daring.

But there have been plenty of takers. The first U.S. customer to get a Vipp kitchen was Marcus Wainwright, the co-founder and CEO of fashion label Rag & Bone. Photographer Douglas Friedman installed one in his second home in Marfa, Texas, and Vipp also counts the skin-care brand Aesop as a repeat client.

Since 2015, Sofie and her husband, Frank Christensen Egelund, 47, have run Vipp's stateside operations, working out of a Tribeca "showroom" that's also their home. "Over here the kitchen seems to have particularly clicked with people in fashion and advertising, artists and architects," says Sofie. "The creative community has been the majority so far."

Sofie notes that in the time she and Frank have been in New York, the business has tripled its U.S. sales (the company does not publicly disclose details of its financials). Of course, there's still plenty of room for the brand to grow in this big, new market. "Sometimes over the phone you try and get through to a potential client, and they say: 'Vipp? Sorry, how do you spell that? Never heard of it.' That can be humbling, as back home we're now quite well known," Sofie says. "But it also makes us hungry to tell the story of my grandfather's product and all that has happened since."

In 1992, when Jette Egelund took over Vipp, the company was based in her hometown of Randers—a former industrial hub on Denmark's Jutland peninsula—and was making just two products, both trash cans with flip-top lids. (The name *Vipp* was inspired by the Danish verb *vippe*, meaning "tilt.")

Holger Nielsen, who was trained as a metalworker, had developed his first bin as a one-off for his wife Marie Axelsen's hair salon. There, the wives of local doctors and dentists noticed it and recommended it to their husbands. Over the decades, the bin became a favorite of Denmark's medical professionals, and a small but sustainable business developed as Vipp saturated the clinical market.

Jette recalls her first decade at Vipp as an uphill battle. She was happy to have left behind careers in social work and HR, but in the early days of managing the company, she still had to take on odd jobs (singing in a choir, among them) for extra income, after divorce left her financially unsettled, with two teenagers to raise. Yet she was intent on making the bin known beyond a professional context, and she slowly

## FAMILY AFFAIR

From left: Sofie and Frank Christensen Egelund, Jette Egelund and Kasper Egelund.



**PROGRESS REPORT** Above: The Chimney House under construction. A new story in steel has been added to the original 1928 building. Below: Vipp founder Holger Nielsen and his wife, Marie Axelsen, in 1960. Nielsen first designed the Vipp bin for Axelsen's hair salon in 1939.



**DYNAMIC RANGE** Clockwise from above: The Vipp Shelter, in rural Sweden, now part of the company's hotel series; the Vipp15, which is nearly identical to Nielsen's original 1939 model; a Vipp kitchen with Vipp homewares on the back-wall shelving.

ART TALK

# BEYOND WORDS

Incorporating collage, cultural criticism, poetry and video, Adam Pendleton's work defies categorization. That's only part of what makes it so appealing to collectors and museums alike.

BY TED LOOS PHOTOGRAPHY BY CARLOS CHAVARRÍA

**W**HEN AN ARTIST captures a cultural moment just so, it's like a lightning bolt—there's a crackle in the air, a blinding flash, and the clouds part. At just 34, Brooklyn-based artist Adam Pendleton has proved himself capable of generating such phenomena.

Over the past decade, Pendleton's conceptual take on race in America has drawn attention and stirred discussion across the country. Last year, he had solo shows at the Baltimore Museum of Art, Museum of Contemporary Art Cleveland and Pace Gallery in Palo Alto, California.

This year, Pendleton is showing a body of work that demonstrates the range of his artistic practice: a video project at MIT's List Visual Arts Center, a multiwork exhibition at Manhattan's Lever House on view until June and an especially powerful new private installation in the offices of Emerson Collective, the philanthropist Laurene Powell Jobs's nonprofit. "Adam is a kind of citizen-poet," says Powell Jobs, one of his many influential advocates. "His work has beauty, power and raw energy."

Over coffee near his studio in the Sunset Park neighborhood, Pendleton shows the kind of interest in language you'd expect from someone who deploys words as a tool in his art, which frequently takes the form of graphic, collage-based paintings in black-and-white. If you mention that there are a lot of high-profile African-American artists dealing with race right now, he will politely but firmly correct you: "Everyone's talking about race." But he's not doctrinaire about his project, or art making in general. "When someone I don't know asks me what I do, I often say, 'I make things that go on the wall,'" he says. In fact, Pendleton's gift is partly his ability to digest and transmit ideas that are already out there.

Pendleton first came to notice at Performa, the New York performance art biennial, in 2007. He delivered an impassioned soliloquy about politics and language accompanied by a live gospel choir, moving some to tears. He was 23 at the time. The next year, he embarked on a body of work called Black Dada, still the framework and source of his art to this day.

Black Dada began as a series of paintings and as an old-fashioned manifesto, in the form of a witty, 13-page epic poem, that references some of his touchstones, including the slain activist Malcolm X and the conceptual art icon Sol LeWitt. "Black Dada is a way to talk about the future while talking about the past,"

he writes. Pendleton doesn't think he invented the conversation that he's a part of. "It is a continuum," he says, "but it doesn't only move forward; it moves backwards and sideways, too."

Though he works in many media, much of his visual work starts as collage, and he has a canny eye for juxtapositions that recalls one of his idols, Jasper Johns. "Already in his incredibly youthful career, he has managed to land on a graphic language that is unimpeachably his own," says Christopher Bedford, the director of the Baltimore Museum of Art. The museum tapped him for its board, making him among the youngest museum trustees around. "He bides his time, reaches a conclusion and then commands the room" is Bedford's summation of Pendleton's approach in meetings.

For the Emerson Collective commission, Pendleton designed a floor-to-ceiling panel for the main space at the headquarters in Palo Alto, California. Unveiled in January, the project is covered with pages from Malcolm X's famous 1964 "The Ballot or the Bullet" speech. On top of that, Pendleton placed 11 dense and layered works, whose words and letters collide and mix—somewhat mysteriously, inviting the viewer to engage and decipher them—punctuated with culturally resonant images like an African mask or a page from a monograph of the Dada movement. Powell Jobs, the widow of Apple's Steve Jobs, loves the way the brainy work energizes the workspace at Emerson: "Adam creates an environment to dream what's possible."

These days, Pendleton works almost exclusively in black-and-white, which might make the casual observer think that the choice is meant to evoke racial categories. "That's not how I arrived here," he says, now standing in his studio and looking down at images of collages on the floor, which will eventually turn into silkscreens. (The actual collage work he does in a separate room, away from his two assistants.) "I found that color was becoming a distraction."

Pendleton grew up in Richmond, Virginia. His mother was a schoolteacher who had a library with books by Adrienne Rich and Toni Morrison; his father was a contractor who played jazz on the side.

As a young teenager he spent hours in his basement, painting with cheap materials from Home Depot. "I was sort of always preoccupied with projects that I would create for myself, which is exactly what I do today, you know?" he says, laughing.

Being gay and black gave him a useful outsider's perspective. "When you're sort of off to the side, you supply yourself with something that long term is ultimately more productive," he says. (Pendleton is now married to a food entrepreneur, and they live in Brooklyn's Fort Greene.)

In 2002, he completed a two-year independent artist's study program in Pietrasanta, Italy, but he doesn't have a bachelor's degree or an M.F.A. as so many young art stars do today. "He's not an academically trained artist," says Laura Hoptman, a curator at the Museum of Modern Art who was an early champion of his work when she was at the New Museum. She thinks it's part of why he speaks to everyone: "The nonparochial nature of it is what makes his work so great."

Hoptman says Pendleton's "masterpiece" is the video *Just Back From Los Angeles: A Portrait of Yvonne Rainer* (2016–17), the same piece that was recently presented at the List Center. As he often does, Pendleton approached the project with radical simplicity: He sat down in a diner with Rainer, the pioneering dancer and choreographer, and just talked. "The chemistry they had as strangers, that was so moving," says Hoptman of the mind-meld that resulted despite the differences in age, gender and race.

Pendleton adds, "It was an unlikely encounter with an unlikely outcome that neither of us planned. We had a sincere interaction with each other on different levels, a strange brew that by luck, by chance, got captured." Luck helps, but *Portrait* owes its success to Pendleton's gift for harnessing such moments, and his cultivation of conditions that encourage them to thrive.

Collectors have taken notice. At Christie's New York auction last fall—in the same sale that became famous for selling a Leonardo da Vinci for an all-time-record price of \$450 million—a 2012 Pendleton piece, *Black Dada (K)*, got the prestigious first-lot position and sold for \$225,000, almost four times its high estimate.

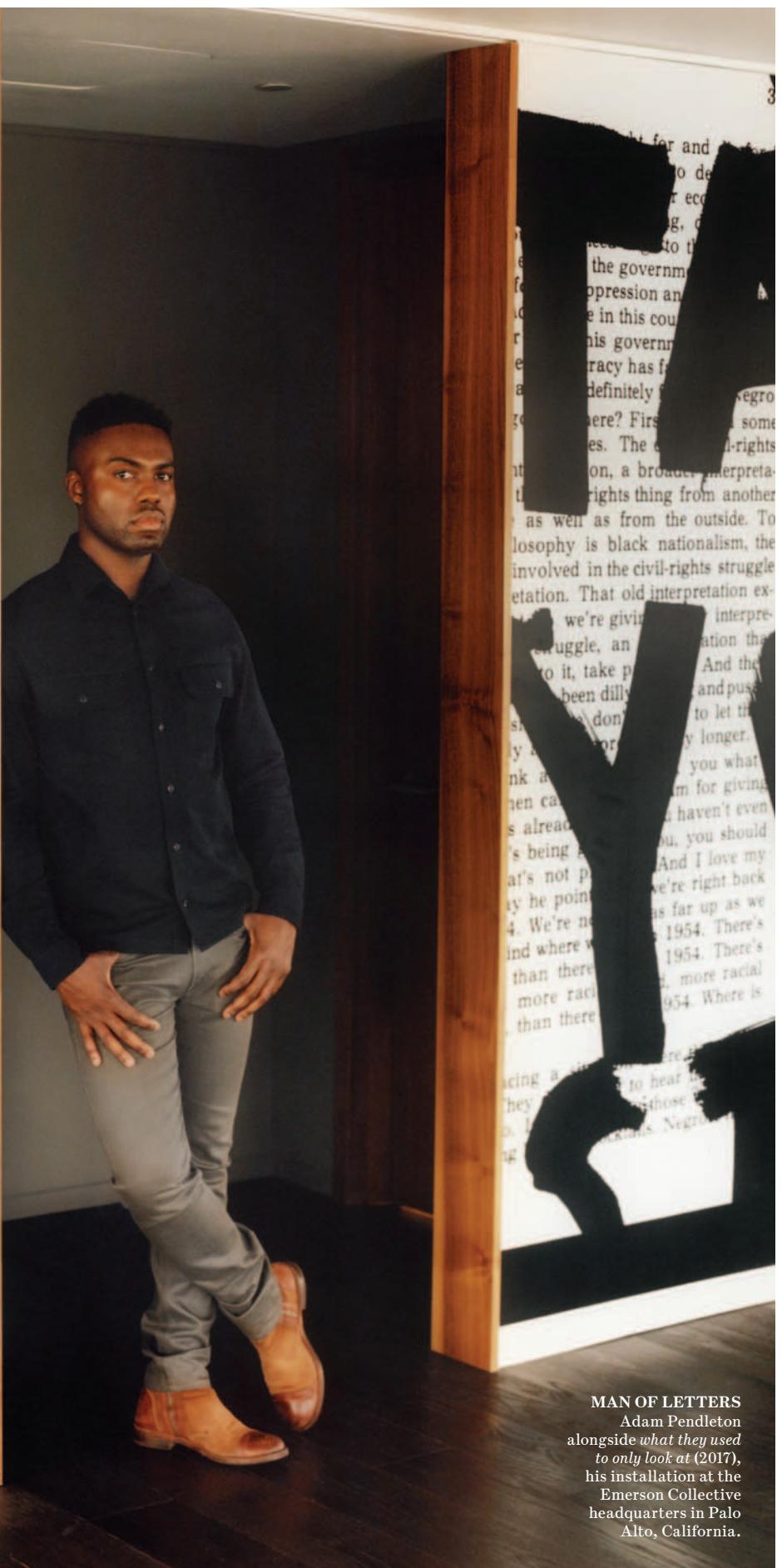
Pendleton is conscious that he has a platform that was denied to black artists of previous generations who are only now getting their proper due, such as Alma Thomas and Jack Whitten. "They are people who continued to make work even when no one was looking," he says. "In my work, there's this attitude of 'take it or leave it,' but also 'take what you need,'" he adds. "I think it gets lost that a lot of what I actually do is look and listen, rather than scream and shout." •

lose its power. It would cease to be powerful. When you see the amount of power that the Democratic Party if it were to lose or branch, or element, you can see what interests of the Democrats to give voting rights in states where the Democrats have been and authority ever since the Civil War long to that party without analyzing it.

I say again, I'm not anti-Democratic Republican, I'm not anti-anything. I'm their sincerity, and some of the strategies used on our people by promising them don't intend to keep. When you keep power, you're keeping the Dixiecrats in my good Brother Lomax will deny Democrat is a vote for a Dixiecrat. That's it's time now for you and me to become mature and realize what the ballot is supposed to get when we cast a ballot; a cast a ballot, it's going to end up in we're going to have to cast a bullet, or a bullet.

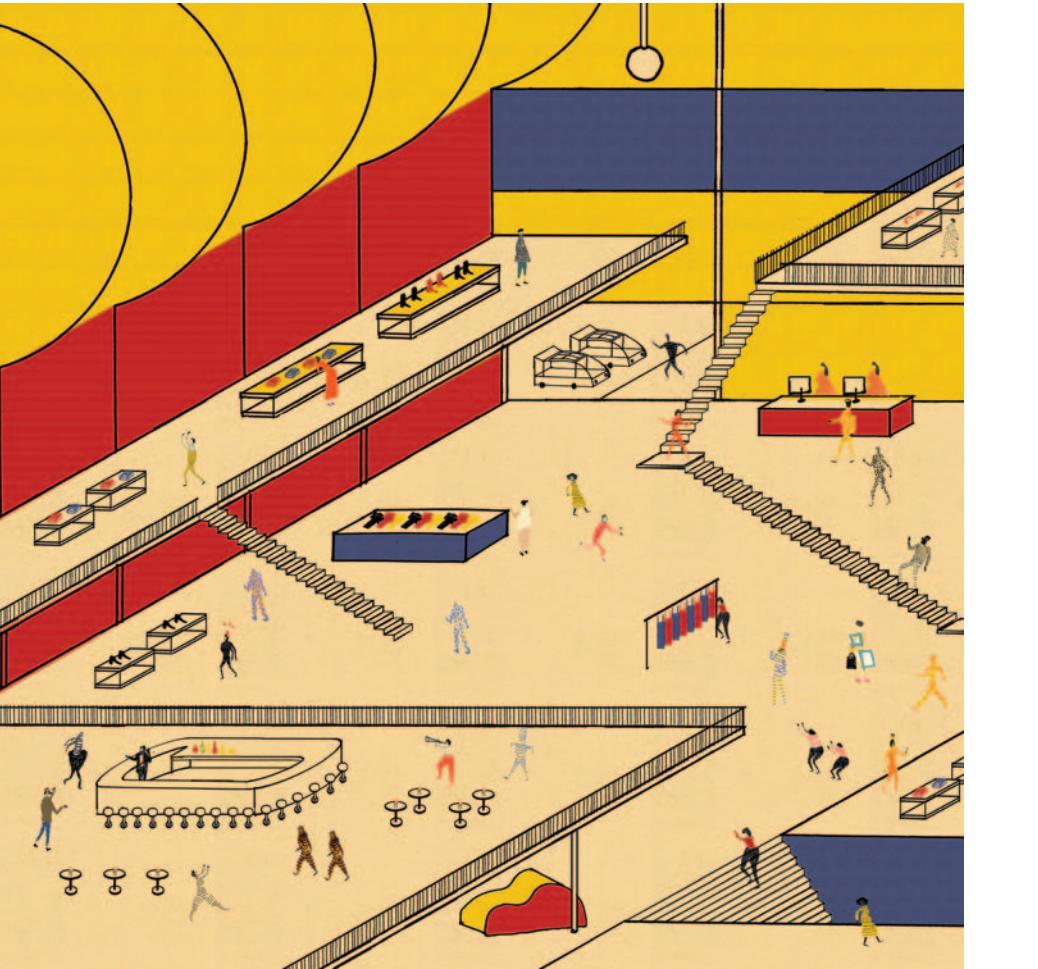
In the North, they do it a different system that's known as gerrymandering means. It means when Negroes become concentrated in a certain area, and begin political power, the white man comes across the district lines. You may say, "Why does the white man?" Because it's the white man who hasn't ever seen any Negro changing this. And usually, it's the white man who most, and pats you on the back, and your friend. He may be friendly, but he

is this: You and I in America are facing a segregationist conspiracy, we're faced with a conspiracy. Everyone who's filibustering, that's the government. Everyone who's in Washington, D.C., is a congressman—that's the government. You don't have anybody putting blocks people who are a part of the government."



#### MAN OF LETTERS

Adam Pendleton alongside *what they used to only look at* (2017), his installation at the Emerson Collective headquarters in Palo Alto, California.



STOREFRONT

## THE RACK PACK

As the internet turns fashion retail upside down, Nordstrom is going big on brick-and-mortar stores in New York City. Will the century-old family-run company succeed?

BY CHRISTINA BINKLEY ILLUSTRATIONS BY RYAN PELTIER

**I**N A RENTED warehouse in the Seattle suburbs, Nordstrom Inc. executives have built a life-size mock-up of each floor of their latest men's department store. It is furnished with a blend of actual shelving and dummy plywood tables, creating a surreal retail theater 45 minutes from Nordstrom's downtown headquarters. The real thing is set to open in New York City in April, on Broadway between 57th and 58th streets.

On a tour of the mock-up store in January, merchandising teams puzzled over what customers should encounter at the store's entrances: the millennial-bait tech bar, laden with Beats headphones; the denim embroidery station, where shoppers can tattoo their Balmain jeans with a custom embellishment; or a

Comme des Garçons boutique with a full assortment of some of the most fashion-forward menswear available. Wandering the aisles of the imaginary store—the first Nordstrom has ever undertaken—the crew was keenly aware that any decision will contribute to an essential first impression.

"If we're going to be successful in this country or globally, we need to be successful in Manhattan," says Blake Nordstrom, 58, co-president and great-grandson of the company's co-founder, John W. Nordstrom.

Nordstrom is one of the last bastions of old-fashioned department stores in a business that is being walloped by e-commerce, fast fashion and the changing demographics that have young people splurging on spin classes rather than clothes.

Family-managed, though publicly traded with a market cap of more than \$7.7 billion in early February, the company clings to the service values it was founded on 117 years ago. Forged in the Pacific Northwest, Nordstrom now operates 366 stores in 40 states, including 122 full-line stores, 232 Nordstrom Rack stores and seven Trunk Club "club-houses." But it has never before had a marquee store in New York City. The company's decision to build in Manhattan's saturated retail market presents a concerted risk. New Yorkers are inundated with apparel options, including a new Neiman Marcus that is rising in the Hudson Yards, so success will require stealing market share in an environment of fierce competition. Male shoppers are particularly sought after as one of the fastest-growing segments in apparel. While Saks Fifth Avenue, Neiman Marcus and Barneys New York have specialized in luxury goods and events, Nordstrom has doubled down on a democratic shopping experience, selling everything from \$10 Topman T-shirts to Lanvin tuxedos.

Nordstrom has been building its arsenal with an enviable client base. With an average age of 43, Nordstrom shoppers are a decade or so younger than the norm for U.S. department stores. Nearly 40 percent are the heavily pursued age group under 45 years old. And among Americans with household incomes of \$300,000 or more, 62 percent shop at Nordstrom, the company says. Armed with those demographics, Nordstrom is hoping to storm the city with its 47,000-square-foot, three-floor men's store this April, followed by a 320,000-square-foot women's store across the street in 2019.

Nordstrom isn't arguing that size matters: Saks Fifth Avenue's flagship dwarfs that at 660,000 square feet. Instead, the company plans to subvert department store tenets. At the men's store, windows will open directly onto the sales floor, which will be bathed by day in natural light, in a dramatic departure from the traditional elaborate displays. Instead of siloing high fashion away in upper-floor shop-in-shops, Nordstrom will eschew hard partitions, using see-through floor-to-ceiling lengths of industrial chain mail to separate brands. Plans for a storewide liquor license will enable shoppers to roam with a tumbler of single malt from a second-floor bar called Clubhouse. VIP dressing rooms will be available for those who wish to linger, while those in a rush can order goods online through a concept called "Reserve & Try In Store" and find them waiting in a dressing room located conveniently near an exit.

Defying rivals' efforts to shift upstream, Nordstrom will offer affordable Topman accessories as well as the priciest Gucci, but the New York store will shed less edgy, mainstream labels that sell well in other markets. There will be no Tommy Bahama, for example, says Paige Thomas, general merchandise manager. But there will be the Comme des Garçons offerings, in a coup staged by Olivia Kim, 39, Nordstrom's vice president of creative projects, who was formerly at the downtown New York boutique Opening Ceremony. She has been given carte blanche by the Japanese brand to display its six avant-garde menswear labels as well as pieces by Russian

streetwear designer Gosha Rubchinskiy. "We're thinking about it as an art exhibition," says Kim. "So people who may think they know who we are will say that we are a fashion store."

"From concept to design to selecting the six collections, this will all have been overseen by Olivia and her team," says Comme des Garçons CEO Adrian Joffe. "We totally supported her vision for seeing it realized within Nordstrom's universe and codes."

The New York stores are the linchpin in a strategy that Nordstrom has been testing in Seattle, Vancouver and Los Angeles. In 2017, 26 percent of Nordstrom sales were online—a number the company expects

"IF WE ARE GOING  
TO BE SUCCESSFUL  
IN THIS COUNTRY,  
WE NEED TO  
BE SUCCESSFUL IN  
MANHATTAN."  
—BLAKE NORDSTROM

The impact of this is so dramatic that Jamie Nordstrom, 46, Pete's cousin and the president of stores, says Wall Street's traditional metrics that exclude online results—sales per square foot, comparable same-store sales (which increased a meager 1.2 percent in November and December)—are irrelevant. "That is not the math you do anymore," says Jamie. "You say, 'How do we get more people to buy clothes from us?'"

To that end, Nordstrom is trying to loosen the old rules. For example, in the Seattle store, it is experimenting with "visual moments" that combine brands, like the Nordstrom x Nike area, where a mannequin displays a \$50 hoodie by Melody Ehsani over a women's \$595 Public School dress with a pleated skirt and \$110 Nike Air Huaraches—another brainchild of Kim's. The idea, says Pete, is to accustom brands to being displayed in the high-low mix that drives sales today.

Meanwhile, returning merchandise, a necessary evil to many retailers, presents an enticing opportunity. Two-thirds of people who shop at nordstrom.com return merchandise at a store rather than shipping it. Once in the store, they often shop some more. So Nordstrom is encouraging in-store returns by placing desks near store entrances. In Seattle, shoppers are greeted by two cheery sales associates wearing dark aprons that say "YES!" and there are similar plans for New York. There will be automated returns for people who want to drop and go and manned desks for those who want a receipt, and anyone may return items anywhere in the store.

Nordstrom also sees opportunity in its 1,328 staff tailors. It will soon announce plans to allow shoppers to bring any clothes, regardless of where they were purchased, to be tailored at their nearest Nordstrom. While they wait, they can be shopping. Says Jamie, "We think it can be a competitive advantage."

John W. Nordstrom, a Swedish immigrant, founded Nordstrom in Seattle in 1901 as a shoe store with his business partner, Carl Wallin. It grew from a single

outpost into the multibrand apparel giant it is today, with \$14.5 billion in annual revenues in 2016. John's sons, Elmer, Everett and Lloyd, passed the management on to their children, including Everett's son, Bruce, 85, who co-chaired the company for more than three decades and is known as Mr. Bruce.

The Nordstroms running the company today are young enough to anticipate being around for a while. Bruce's sons, Blake, Pete and Erik, who is 55, have shared the title of co-president since 2015. "We're not much for titles," explains Blake. They sit on the board of directors, earn the same salary and hold roughly the same stakes. Their sixth-floor

offices in Seattle sit in a row. Eliminating the chief executive title avoids friction, says Phil Satre, Nordstrom's chairman of the board. "If you had one person with the title of CEO, paid more," he says, "ultimately, I think that would create a fracture in the family ownership and the family."

Looking like members of a Swedish basketball team—lean, tall, blond and strong-jawed—the Nordstroms

can be hard to distinguish from one another in conservative suits that would be unremarkable in any accounting business. Blake, though, plays a role much like a CEO, overseeing many corporate functions as well as the off-price Nordstrom Racks. Erik oversees the Nordstrom brand, digital, Trunk Club and customer care. He switched jobs several years ago with Jamie, who now runs the stores. (At an executive meeting, "someone said, 'Gee, would it make sense if you two switched jobs?'" Erik recalls. "We chewed on it for a while and said yeah.") Mr. Bruce officially retired in 1995, but still walks the several blocks to work every day.

The business is way bigger than any of us individually," says Pete, who started working at Nordstrom at 16 because it was a better job, he jokes, than mowing lawns; he now interfaces with the fashion brands. "We don't want to be known as the generation of Nordstroms that screwed this thing up, so that weighs on us."

When he recently announced that he wanted to take an unusual monthlong nonworking vacation in Hawaii with his wife and children in January, his siblings and cousin teamed up to make it possible.

The Nordstroms' willingness to experiment is behind deals that have brought a broad range of products to the stores. In a bid for younger consumers, Nordstrom purchased the online subscription styling service Trunk Club in 2014 and has brought in direct-to-consumer brands such as Everlane. In 2012, after Blake mentioned he had a phone number for Sir Philip Green, chairman of Arcadia Group, owner of the British fast-fashion chain Topshop, Pete made a cold call to ask him to put Topshop fashions in Nordstrom. "So we hooked up, and that was the beginning of the romance," Sir Philip says, adding

with a chuckle that he enjoys being in the same store as Chanel. "It's given our brand a lot of awareness with a good customer."

High fashion has become an unexpected success for Nordstrom; 20 years ago, Pete argued that Nordstrom needed to get into the luxury game to gain a bigger share of customers' wallets. He told his father, "I think we can do a lot more business in this type of stuff." They gave him a shot. "And he's been to every fashion show ever since," says Jamie.

Pete has become a well-known figure among fashion editors as he folds his 6-foot-7 frame into tiny chairs alongside runways in Paris and Milan. A graduate of the University of Washington with a straight-shooter attitude, he suffered years of skepticism from European brands and rivals who scoffed as he worked to establish relationships. Pete recalls exiting Christian Dior's offices 15 years ago as Burton Tansky, then chief executive of Neiman Marcus, walked in with his team and asked what Nordstrom was doing there. "Well, we're trying to get some distribution with Christian Dior," Pete says he replied. Tansky shot back, "We do more in markdowns than you guys do in business with those guys."

"It was motivation," Pete says. (Tansky said that he has no recollection of the incident.)

Over the past decade, designer luxury apparel has been the fastest-growing segment of Nordstrom's business, rising at double-digit annual rates. When Pete once griped about the travel demands of attending fashion shows and attending buying appointments, his father told him to delegate. "I can't do that, Dad," Pete said. "It's about being supportive of the business, being engaged." Now those relationships are bearing fruit: For the past year, Hermès has tested a wholesale concept at the Seattle Nordstrom store, selling its silks and fashion jewelry on the first floor next to contemporary shoes. (Says Pete, "A large percentage of sales are from people who have never bought Hermès before.") And last December, in a collaboration dubbed

Chanel x Nordstrom, Chanel sold its 2017 cruise collection for two weeks in an elaborately staged boutique there.

Looking ahead, the Nordstroms are preparing for a future that may not involve them in management positions. The fifth generation is as yet too young to be involved: "They show great promise," Pete jokes, but notes without a hint of dismay, "It likely ends with us in terms of leadership of this company run by someone named Nordstrom."

That said, they would like Nordstrom to be wholly family owned again. The family, which controls 31 percent of the publicly traded company, spent much of 2017 attempting to raise the capital necessary to take the company private. They failed to strike a deal, yet pledge to keep trying. "We didn't manage it in 2017," Pete says. "We'll see about 2018."

One thing is sure: While Nordstrom is moving into Manhattan, the Nordstroms will not. As the opening neared, they discussed spending more time in the city. But none of them, says Erik, are planning to buy even a part-time home there. "It's very expensive," he notes. "Too rich for our blood." •

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MARCH 2018 MEN'S STYLE

# WSJ.

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL MAGAZINE



WHATEVER FLOATS  
YOUR BOAT

Get the drift of the newest styles. Ermenegildo Zegna jacket and pants,  
Brioni shirt, Kika NY belt, Falke socks and Dries Van Noten shoes.

# LIFE IS BUT A DREAM



Get lost in a reverie  
of spring style,  
with a nostalgia  
for slim silhouettes  
and jewel hues.

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PHOTOGRAPHY BY GREGORY HARRIS  
STYLING BY TONY IRVINE



#### FIELD DAY

There's a sentimental feeling in supple cuts. Balenciaga jacket and pants, Giorgio Armani shirt and Kika NY belt. Opposite: Giorgio Armani shirt and pants and Kika NY belt.



**SUNSHINE STATE**  
Plaids, velvets and linens recall a romantic era. Fendi jacket and pants, Hermès shirt, Salvatore Ferragamo belt, Falke socks and Dries Van Noten boots.

Opposite, from top:  
Cerruti 1881 jacket and pants and Joseph shirt;  
Bottega Veneta top.







**WATER MARK**

Make an impression in fluid suiting. Brunello Cucinelli jacket and pants, Joseph shirt and Isaia tie. Opposite, from top: Dries Van Noten jacket, pants and boots, Marni shirt and Anderson's belt; Bottega Veneta coat and shirt, Marni pants and Dries Van Noten boots.



**LEAVES OF GRASS**

Return to a muted palette  
and softly notched lapels.

Gucci jacket, shirt and  
pants. Opposite, from top:  
Calvin Klein 205W39NYC  
jacket and pants, Giorgio

Armani shirt and  
Florsheim boots; Dries  
Van Noten jacket, pants  
and boots, Joseph shirt  
and Anderson's belt.





## UMBER WORLD

Earth tones are a natural choice. Berluti jacket, Comme des Garçons Shirt shirt and A.P.C. pants. Opposite, from top: Éditions M.R top; Y/Project jacket and shirt, Marni pants, Anderson's belt and Dries Van Noten boots. Model, Benno Bulang at Tomorrow Is Another Day; grooming, Joey George. For details see Sources, page 125.





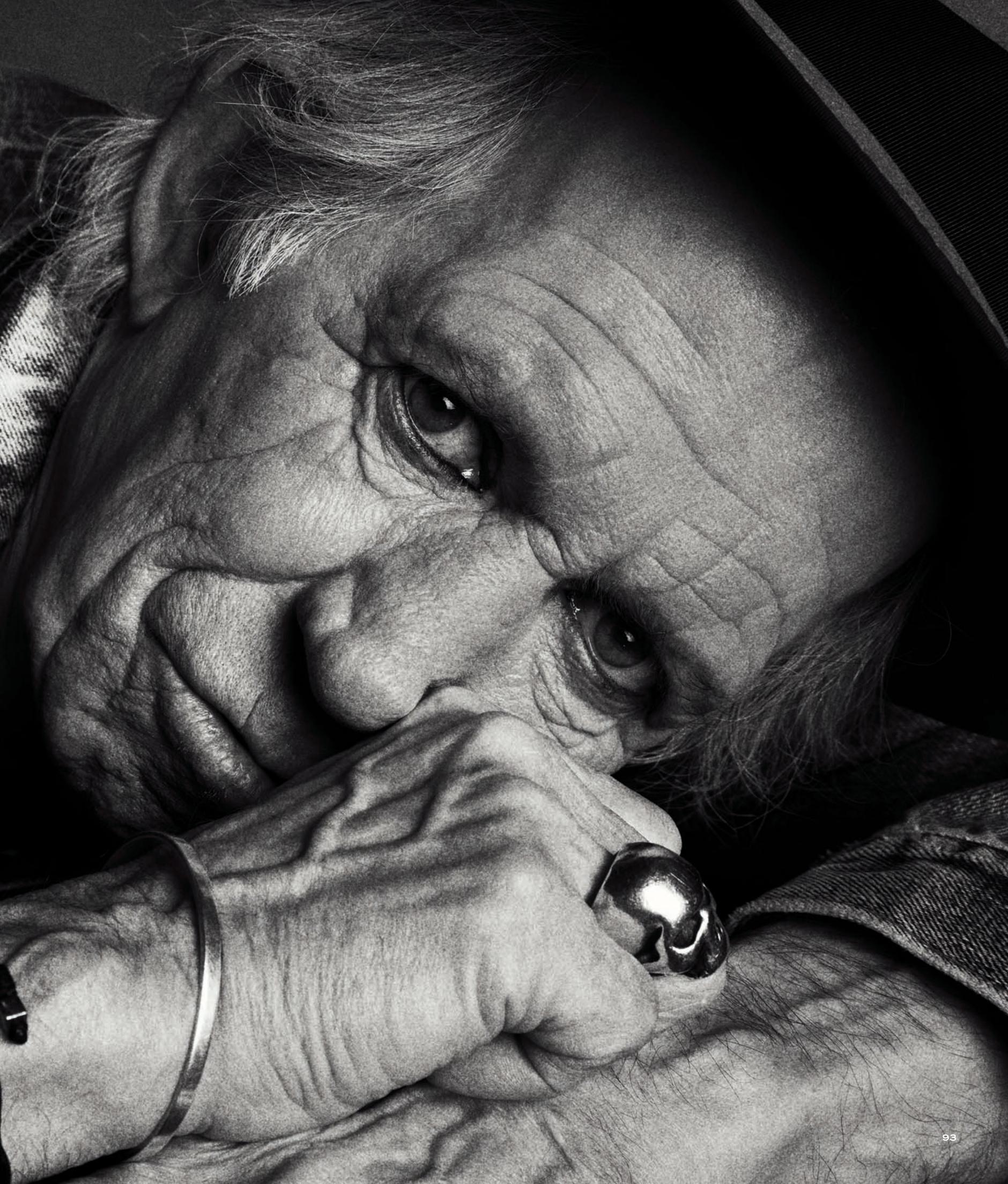
Photographies retouchées





# IT'S ONLY ROCK 'N' ROLL, (BUT HE LIKES IT)

At 74, Keith Richards is still a style icon. And although he's aware that at some point the music must stop, for now there's a new album to finish and a tour to plan.





#### SWAP MEET

"I think most of the reason that people think I have style is because I wear my old lady's clothes," Richards says. "Patti and I wear the same size, so I take this one and this one." Nili Lotan vest and his own hat, jewelry and Saint Laurent by Anthony Vaccarello shirt. Previous spread: His own jacket, T-shirt, hat and jewelry.

I AIN'T GONNA BE around forever—not even me!"

Keith Richards, shrouded in an ever-present cloud of cigarette smoke, wheezes a laugh when it's pointed out that many observers, based on evidence to date, disagree with his sense of his own mortality. "Well, yeah," he says, "it's between me and the roaches."

It's a few days before his 74th birthday. Patti Hansen, his wife of 34 years, is away visiting family, so Richards is home alone at his Connecticut estate with Sugar, a French bulldog, and Ruby Tuesday, a white Maltese. "I'm just here dog-sitting," he says. "That's my job today."

The Rolling Stones guitarist sits at a simple table in the corner of a glass-enclosed room off his kitchen. He's wearing an open black shirt covered with lightning bolts, draped over a black T-shirt, with jeans tucked into Ugg-style boots. He makes no attempt to hide his wrinkles, but he looks fit, focused, in good fighting shape.

The stuff scattered in front of him could be a Keith Richards starter kit: a pack of Marlboro Reds; playing cards, dominoes and a buck knife; stacks of CDs, including box sets of Mozart and Chuck Berry; and a copy of James Norman Hall's 1940 story collection *Doctor Dogbody's Leg*, in which a Royal Navy surgeon spins a series of tall tales about how he lost his leg during the Napoleonic Wars.

It's a placid domestic scene for the most celebrated outlaw in rock 'n' roll history—the swashbuckling "Keef" swigging from whiskey bottles, snorting and swallowing drugs that would kill a weaker man, running from the law, writing the "(I Can't Get No) Satisfaction" riff in his sleep; the earthshaking songwriter and musician who confirmed most of his infamous mythology in 2010's best-selling, no-holds-

"I THINK THE BAND IS SOUNDING BETTER THAN IT EVER HAS. DOES IT MATTER? TO US, IT DOES."

—KEITH RICHARDS

barred memoir, *Life*. Writing the book almost wrecked him, he says, but it didn't mark the end of the road. In fact, Richards claims that the group's most recent performances—12 European stops last fall—were as good as they've ever been in the Stones' unprecedented 56-year career. "I think the band is sounding better than it ever has," he says. "Does it matter now? To us, it does.

"There's a certain thing in this band, which I find really weird, is that they just want to do it. Some nights we're better than others, of course, but all I know about this damn band is that they always want to make it better than the night before. And that's one of the things that keeps us going. I actually wanted four or five more shows—it stopped just as we were peaking." (The next tour dates are assumed to be a U.K. run later this year.)

Perhaps even more notable for the band's multiple generations of fans, the Rolling Stones have been working on a new album off and on for more than two years (over that span, according to producer Don Was, they've spent about three weeks total in the studio). It would be their first record of original material since

2005's *A Bigger Bang*. Richards seems pleased with the direction it's headed, though he presents no real sense of urgency—he expects that by the time everyone regroups after the winter holidays, it will be months before they get back to work.

"I'm going to sound like Trump—"It will happen; don't worry about it"—but it's in the early stages," he says. "We have some stuff down, which is very interesting," but he then adds that travel with their respective families during the winter holiday season means he and Mick Jagger will not be in contact for a while. "It's more difficult for us to write together the further apart we are, but it also has its benefits in that we come back to it from a different angle."

Don Was, who has worked with the band since the '90s, expresses enthusiasm over what they've done so far. "The songwriting that Keith and Mick did last year was really something to behold," he says. "The three of us sat in a room, with them facing each other, five feet apart, with guitars, and there's something magical that happens that's still as fresh as when they started."

Whether the Rolling Stones are recording or not, Richards says that his songwriter's brain is always engaged. "Writing songs, you don't get a minute off, not even to sleep," he says. "You wake up in the middle of the night with a couple of notes in your head, and you've got to get out of bed and figure it out. It's like being incontinent—either you've got to take a pee, or you've got to lay this little line down."

"So you get up, go to the piano or the guitar and hope it sticks. I don't record shit. If I don't remember it, it's no good. I'll wait for the wife or one of the daughters and see if they start to sing it without knowing it."

He is well aware, though, that it's a long way from the '60s, when the Stones were chasing the Beatles up

He does single out one younger performer from those who joined the Stones onstage during a U.S. tour a few years ago. "Lady Gaga's good; she's got real talent," he says, comparing her to another recent favorite, Amy Winehouse. "Hey, if Tony Bennett likes her, how are you going to argue with Mr. Bennett?"

THE RICHARDS HOME, about an hour-or-so drive from Manhattan, sits behind two sets of gates; as you climb up the driveway, you pass various outbuildings before the main house rises out of the woods. Richards built the structure he's referred to as Camelot Costalot in 1990, and it would be classified as a traditional, old-school Connecticut manor were it not painted in Mediterranean hues of orange, pink and blue.

Inside, the rooms are a range of dramatic colors. The walls are covered with photographs of Richards and supermodel Hansen at work, and many family portraits; in addition to the couple's daughters, Theodora and Alexandra, Richards has a son, Marlon, and a daughter, Angela, from his relationship with the late Anita Pallenberg, and the clan now includes five grandchildren.

The house and three generations of Richardsons are very much the center of his life today. "We've really gone into grandma and grandpa mode," Hansen later tells me by phone. "It's very relaxed. We love being in Connecticut, with each other, having the family around all the time and enjoying this time of our life."

Though the last full-scale Rolling Stones tour, from 2005 to 2007, is the second-highest-grossing tour of all time (it was subsequently surpassed by U2), since then the band has structured its outings into shorter, more localized bursts—a few weeks at a time in South America or Europe or Australia. With these more manageable hops, whatever debauchery a Stones tour might conjure, both Richards and Hansen now talk about the road as an opportunity for them to be with each other.

"It's more time with the old lady," he says. "She's always with me—I can't let you out by yourself! I need all the support I can get, and the old lady is numero uno support."

"It's probably more fun now because it's just Keith and me and the dog," says Hansen. "The kids are all older, so we don't have to deal with school and all that. Touring now is just time for us to be together."

This bond between the couple even extends to Richards's signature visual style, the ragged-but-right, heavily accessorized patchwork that inspired his friend Johnny Depp's vision of Jack Sparrow's attire for the *Pirates of the Caribbean* series, landed Richards a spot in a Louis Vuitton campaign and prompted designer Hedi Slimane to create an ensemble of "Keith" pieces for Saint Laurent. The guitarist offers a simple explanation for his look.

"I think most of the reason that people think I have style is because I wear my old lady's clothes," he says. "I've always done that—'Oh, he's so stylish!' Patti and I wear the same size, so I take this one and this one."

"Around the house, we're always wearing each other's pajamas, silks and satins and comfies," says Hansen. "He's definitely the flamboyant one in the family. He can make anything work—he finds a piece of ribbon lying around and knows what to do with it."

Adorned with the famous skull ring, various bracelets and bangles, and a multicolored headband (though his thatch of hair, now gone fully white, is too thin to hold the trinkets and baubles that used to be braided into it), Richards denies giving too much thought to matters of fashion. "It's totally unmanufactured; that's the thing," he says. "Improvisation—that is style, in all things. I honestly admit that I look to see what the other guys are wearing and wear the opposite. If they're dressing up, I dress down. But I never thought about it; it was only other people that pointed out to me, 'That's a great look.' So maybe style is unconscious."

In the 21st century so far, Richards's greatest accomplishment—maybe more than the music, though the latter-day Stones records tend to be underrated—was the publication of *Life*. Somehow the book (which he and author James Fox worked on for five years) managed to both enhance his reputation as the hardest-living, freest spirit in rock and also reveal the thoughtful, well-read man behind the myth. Reviews were ecstatic, it topped the *New York Times* bestseller list, and the audio version (read in part by Johnny Depp) was named audiobook of the year by the Audio Publishers Association. *Life* even received the prestigious Norman Mailer Prize for biography.

"Writing that book almost killed me, man," says the author, lighting another cigarette. "By the time I'd gone through the entire career, I felt like I'd died twice. You don't realize—you think, 'Oh, yeah, I'll tell you this, and then that happened, and dah dah dah,' and at the same time, you actually relive it all yourself. It took me a couple of years to recover from that."

"The book recalibrated a lot of people's thinking about who he is," says drummer Steve Jordan, who has worked with Richards since the '80s and co-produced his last solo album, 2015's *Crosseyed Heart*. "There's such a preconceived notion about his persona—he's been misrepresented for a long time, and the book gave a sense of what he's really like and what a brilliant guy he is. I think he saw that he was appreciated, and that put him in a good place—he's a lot more relaxed since then."

"It took a big weight off his shoulders to get that done," says Hansen. "It was very heart-wrenching, bringing all that up, and Keith doesn't really like talking about himself."

"I'm glad to get a lot off my chest, and I was amazed by the response that it got," says Richards. "I like the way that it worked out. But it's a hell of a thing trying to tell your story and still trying to protect your friends and neighbors at the same time."

"I could be really cute and say I'm thinking about a second one. But I ain't gonna go through that again."

**I**N DECEMBER 2015, the Rolling Stones went into British Grove Studios in London, a space in which they had never worked before, to start on the new album. "I knew Mick had a couple of songs, and I had a few," says Richards. "But it was a new studio, so I called Ronnie Wood and I said, 'Get down this Little Walter track called 'Blue and Lonesome'—we'll have that in our pocket in case the new stuff isn't working out in the new room.'

"Sure enough, we get there and the new stuff is not working out in the new room—we're still looking

for the sound. So I said, 'Ron, "Blue and Lonesome." Suddenly the room comes alive and we have a take. Then Mick turns around and says, 'Let me try this Howlin' Wolf one.' And in five days, we'd cut the whole damn thing."

The result was an album they titled *Blue & Lonesome*, the first time the Stones made an entire record dedicated to the Chicago blues that initially inspired them. The spirited, spontaneous performances captured a side of the band that many fans thought had long been lost, and it sold well (for a project so decisively not aimed at a pop market) and in January won a Grammy in the best traditional blues album category.

"The success of the blues album went beyond anyone's expectations," says co-producer Don Was. "I think it brought back an awareness that when they do something great, people really respond to it."

"The blues record I'm really, really proud of," says Richards. "It was something that had to be done—it took the Stones full circle. This is a f—ing blues band, and the height of our ambition was to be the best blues band in London. We were just trying to turn London on to the blues, and believe it or not, we turned America back on to the blues. Everything else is basically gravy, because we brought the music back from somewhere else and sent it back home."

After the sessions, though, the music on *Blue & Lonesome* wasn't the problem; the issue was convincing the lead singer that they should release it, which took several months. "Mick is a great performer, but can he pick the wrong ones," says Richards, rolling his eyes. "He said, 'Oh, we shouldn't put out a *blues* album.' So it took a bit of arm-bending. It's funny when guys are so good at what they do—he's a genius harp player, a genius blues singer. Because it just comes off

right.") But from this friction comes the spark that drives the most definitive rock 'n' roll band of all time.

"They're two really different guys, and that's what makes it so powerful," says Was. "It's like a rubber band pulled really tight. When you release it, it goes flying—that creative tension is what makes it so enduring. They understand that something special happens when the two of them get together. The cognizance of that magic that only comes from the two of them can be frustrating, but also really powerful."

Whatever differences exist between the Glimmer Twins, whatever fights still arise five decades later, Richards makes his allegiance to his group crystal clear. "It's been up-and-downhill," he says, "but if I'm talking about the Rolling Stones, there ain't a frontman like Jagger. Don't matter how many bones you want to pick out of him, he's amazing to work with."

"I find it an interesting challenge to write for Mick," he continues. "There's no point in my giving him a song that's beyond his range or that he's not comfortable with. What I really like to do is write a song where Mick goes, 'Yeah, right, I'm in!' That's what I try and do, because I'm writing for the lead singer of the Rolling f—ing Stones, and that is my job—to give him a riff that he leaps on and goes, 'Right, I know what to do with this!'"

"Keith loves his band," says Steve Jordan. "He's very proud of his band; he feels it's the best band in the world, and he's still very committed to it. And I think he's even better now. His writing keeps evolving, and that's what you hope for when you're an artist."

No band has lasted as long as the Rolling Stones. Every day they go on, they are creating a new blueprint. In the late '80s, their record-breaking concerts behind the *Steel Wheels* album were widely mocked as the "Steel Wheelchairs" tour; incredibly, that jaunt

**"WE'VE REALLY GONE INTO GRANDMA AND GRANDPA MODE. WE LOVE HAVING THE FAMILY AROUND AND ENJOYING THIS TIME OF OUR LIFE."**

—PATTI HANSEN

of their hip like that, they think nothing of it. Talent is one thing; recognizing you've got it is another."

now falls in the first half of their career.

Richards thinks about how it all started, when he was just a kid dreaming of getting out of his London suburb. "I had no idea I was a songwriter," he says. "I wasn't sitting down and trying to be Gershwin. I can't read a note of music. It's all in the ears and from the heart—that's all it is. I can't believe I pulled it off, really."

"I've been so lucky, I don't believe it," he continues. "I'm sure I'm going to pay in the next life. Hell is really going to be hell for me. I don't know why I've been given all this. You couldn't dream it up, man, you couldn't write it."

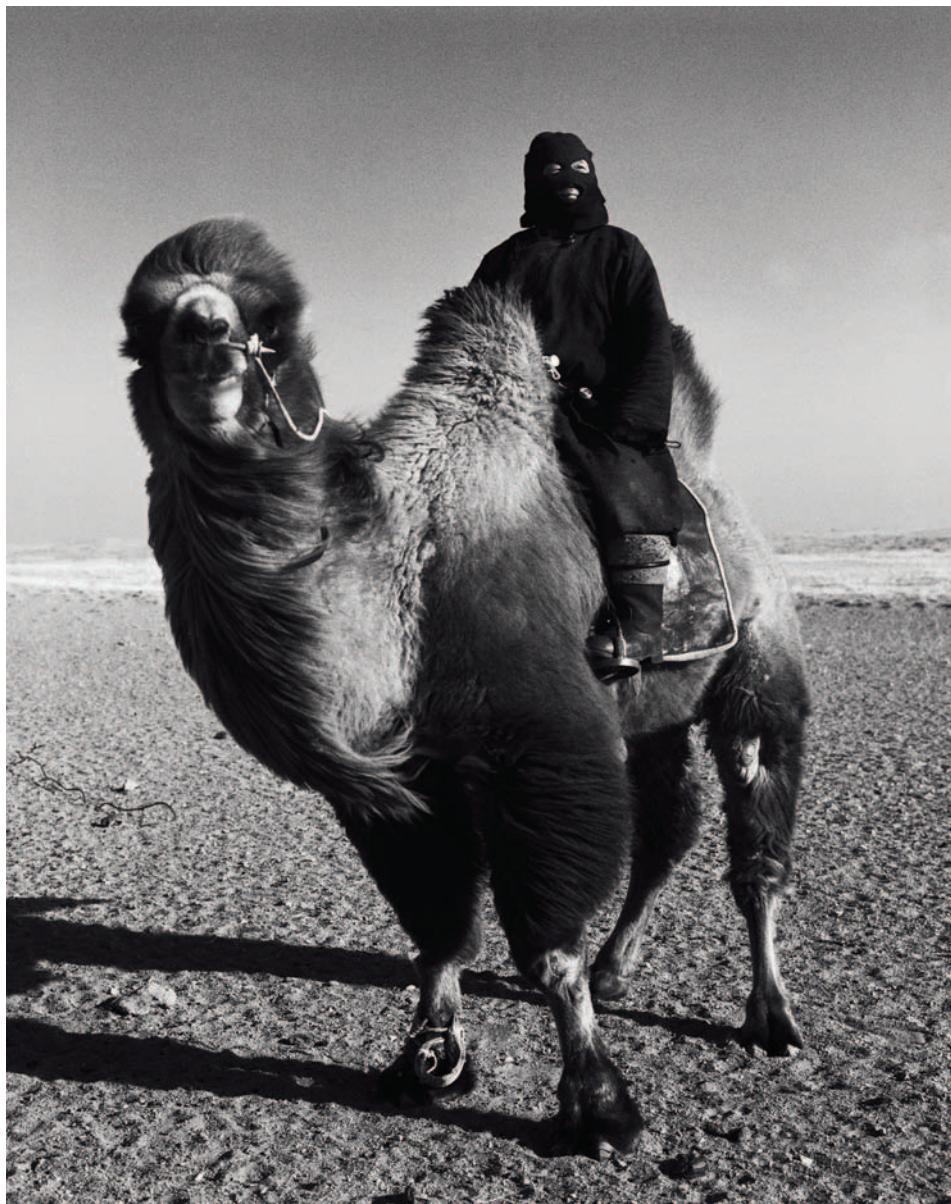
And soon, back to work. More shows to play, more songs to chase. The Rolling Stones must go on, for the generation that grew up with them and the generations that don't know a world without them.

"Now, there's the air that you breathe, there's the water you drink, and there's the f—ing Rolling Stones," says Richards. "We've been here forever—that's the weirdest thing, 'Oh, they've always been there.' Wait till they're gone, pal." •

**CROSSROADS**  
"I've been so lucky,"  
Richards says. "I'm sure  
I'm going to pay in the  
next life. Hell is really  
going to be hell for me."  
Nili Lotan vest and  
his own hat, jewelry  
and Saint Laurent  
by Anthony Vaccarello  
shirt. Additional  
styling, George Cortina;  
grooming, Tina Heart  
Montalbano; set design,  
Marla Weinhoff.  
For details see Sources,  
page 125.



# Under Mongolian Skies



Mongolia has a bustling economy and a capital city filled with BMWs, karaoke bars and luxury fashion. But the vast emptiness of the steppes tells a quieter story.

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BY PICO IYER  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRÉDÉRIC LAGRANGE

**STILL WATERS**

A full moon rises over a pond near Bur Lake in eastern Mongolia, near the Chinese border. Opposite: A herder on camelback in the Gobi Desert.







**U**PON ARRIVING IN the huge, landlocked country of Mongolia—more than seven times larger than Great Britain—you may be taken aback by the runaway developments in the capital city of Ulaanbaatar. Ever since some of the world's largest gold and copper deposits were discovered, some within 70 miles of the city, Mongolia's economy has taken off like a rocket. BMWs purr along the broad Soviet boulevards of the capital, past karaoke parlors, sushi bars, stores advertising Burberry and Vuitton and glassy, high-rise office blocks across whose windows flash the latest figures from the Nasdaq index.

But then you hear that more than half of the 1.4 million people in the capital still live in settlements dominated by *gers* (a traditional style of yurt, like a domed felt tent), sometimes in shockingly simple conditions. You learn that when the global economy sputters, many Mongolians head back into the countryside to become pastoralists again. And you gather that the majority of the country's paved roads crisscross the capital—which means that everywhere else is startlingly unpaved.

As soon as I ventured out of the city and began bumping across the level, otherworldly steppes of Mongolia, in fact, I realized that nothing I'd seen in 40 years of traveling across Asia could compare with its great, heart-clearing stillness. Within 30 minutes of the hyper-malls, herders will welcome you into their *gers* to share a feast of marmots, roasted sheep and freshly boiled goats' heads, much as they might have done in the time of Genghis Khan, the warrior who masterminded the Mongol Empire in the 13th century. If the horsemen who rode all the way to Europe to extend that empire were to return to their ancestral spaces next week, they'd feel right at home.

Part of the special beauty of rural Mongolia is that it redefines everything you thought you knew. A road, I realized as soon as I was jouncing past Bronze Age burial mounds, is a red-dirt scratch

across the void; a sight is a jeep the size of an ant, inching across the horizon. A town in the steppes could pass for a subway station almost anywhere else; once, after hours of nothingness, I stopped at a *ger* camp to find that it also served as a meditation space, a car-repair shop and a leather-tanning workshop. No wonder. Gazing out miles and miles in every direction, I could catch nothing but emptiness—vast enough for the mind to go anywhere (or nowhere at all)—and the sound of the wind, whipping in my ears.

I've been talking to the Dalai Lama for 44 years now and been lucky enough to witness the massed chants and flickering candles of his tradition everywhere from Lhasa to Ladakh, but I've never seen Tibetan Buddhism practiced with the rowdy exuberance visible at every turn in Mongolia. For 70 years, under Soviet control, all signs of belief were kept, literally, under cover—stashed in attics and secret altars. But as soon as the country regained its autonomy in 1990, depictions of Buddhist deities and prayer wheels came bursting out of the shadows. With them came the local alphabet, now taught again in schools, and the natural sophistication that accompanied the largest contiguous land empire ever seen. (As early as the 13th century, European visitors to Mongolia described encountering a Parisian silversmith, a Greek doctor and a man called Basil.)

It was the Mongols, I was constantly reminded, who conceived of the title Dalai Lama (*dalai* being the Mongolian word for “ocean”). When the Dalai Lama visits these days, his bodyguards tell me, scores of burly Mongolians throng around him, eager to press his flesh, get his blessing, lay hands on the man whose tradition is imperiled at home.

MY DAYS IN MONGOLIA were wild with elemental intensity. Along with a local guide and a Kalmyk-Mongolian businessman I know from New Jersey, I drove across the Gobi Desert for hours on end, passing almost nothing but the occasional upland buzzard, a

**SHELTERING SKIES**  
Opposite: Sunset over the village of Bayandalai in the Gobi. Above left: A stone statue of the Buddha lies facing the direction of the sunrise in eastern Mongolia. Above: A woman from Gurvan Saikhan.



#### ON THE TOWN

Local boys in a desert village in Dariganga, which takes its name from nearby Ganga Lake, where from late September to mid-October thousands of migrating swans congregate.



**SCENE AND HERD**  
Above, from left: Boys on their way to school in Erdenetsagaan; a herd of camels in the Gobi Desert. Opposite: Cars at a rest stop on the road from Dalanzadgad to Ulaanbaatar.

sudden clutch of Bactrian camels, a shaman stone under color-field canvases of turquoise and gold. Once, when we stopped, we found ourselves next to a leather-skinned old woman herding a hundred horses in the middle of nowhere.

Rivers are sacred here, our guide said, because they are home to spirit-filled fish. In the rural area where he grew up, squirrels are taken to be “really honest and loyal disciples of the Buddha” because their paws, when they’re eating, seem to be joined in prayer.

This sense of being intertwined with an all-pervading natural network is—not surprisingly—everywhere in a land said to have emerged from a liaison between a blue wolf and a fallow doe. One day, as the morning’s first colors seeped across the horizon, my guide and I drove through a narrow box canyon and, when the road gave out, scrambled up on foot to an unworldly silence. On two crags, local herders had devoted years of time and money to erecting a retreat space for a lama, from which he could look out across the emptiness and root himself in the truths of wind and sand.

“You aren’t worried that all of this will get lost amidst the \$2 million condos and fashion shoots?” I asked my new friend as we stared out across the openness.

He wasn’t. “In Genghis Khan’s time,” he said, “all the goods were coming from Europe and Asia, and Mongolia was the thoroughfare.” His country, in short, had long known how to take in foreign influences without losing its soul. The Silk Road, he went on, was “the New York Stock Exchange of the 13th century.” Even the most modern developments, for him, were simply part of a country that might have coined the term *global nomad* eight centuries ago.

I remembered then how, near the great collection of temples at Erdene Zuu, we’d bounced down from another lonely meditation hut up in the hills and seen stones on the ground marking out a sacred

space. “A taboo is better than a rule,” said the young, English-fluent lama who’d been showing us his retreat. “Because people will listen to spirits more than to government officials.”

By the time I returned to the capital, and the copies of *Kardashian Confidential* on sale in the State Department store, I realized that part of what makes Mongolia so distinctive is that its new is so much newer than in most places, and its old much older. Driving across Patagonia or Namibia or Wyoming, I’d felt I was moving into a past where nature was sovereign and people were almost incidental; in Mongolia, there’s no doubting that its sumo-champion citizens know how to live with the whims of the “eternal blue sky” they’ve long worshiped, adjusting to droughts and following the seasons, even now, every two months.

And as I’ve watched, over the past 30 years, South Korea, Taiwan and China enjoying furious economic development, I’ve often wondered whether they’re losing their deepest inheritance. In Mongolia, this is seldom in doubt, as a hardy people used to outliving most of history’s bumps stands ready, at every moment, to leave a city still governed by a huge image of Genghis Khan etched into its hills and return to the traditions their leader stood for.

Mongolia haunts a visitor as few other destinations can. After I’d returned home, the power of stepping out of my luxury ger in the Gobi to be met by a 74 million-year-old volcanic outcropping, the eeriness of knowing that dinosaur bones were all around, had gotten inside of me, like a shared dream I couldn’t shake.

In a world flooded with distractions, Mongolia returns one to something ancestral. The clock has little meaning here. Days turn into an ageless cycle of random moments, scanning of the heavens, simple meals, long journeys. Often I didn’t know whether I was traveling into the past or the future. I could simply tell that this was a place that everybody would recognize, if only because it’s somewhere lost inside most of us, lodged like the people we once were and might one day again become. •



# Honey, He Shrunk the Suits

Welcome to the topsy-turvy world of fashion designer Thom Browne, in which jackets are worn small and shows are staged like grand operas.

BY LESLEY M.M. BLUME  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATTHEW KRISTALL

**T**HE ENTRANCE HALL to Thom Browne's New York headquarters is austere: Gray marble walls gleam under a runway of fluorescent lights; white blinds obscure glass doors to the offices beyond. A small, dustless vintage desk and chair stand at the corridor's end.

"What does this look like to you?" asks Browne, 52, as he ushers me in. It is snowing out, but he's clad in trouser-style shorts of his own design that expose his bare knees, black socks pulled to the top of his calves, a shrunken cardigan and a narrow black tie. His question seems like a test of sorts, one that the uninitiated are bound to fail. Is the hallway supposed to resemble a bank? Perhaps an accountant's office?

It's clear that neither is correct—it is supposed to evoke mid-century Italy, he reveals—but Browne takes it in stride and opens one of the glass doors to reveal the bustling studio. Every employee inside is wearing Thom Browne. Fridays are Navy Day at headquarters, while Mondays through Thursdays are strictly Gray Days. Gray has long been a signature color for Browne, whose narrow suits, with their boys' department proportions and cropped hems, rocked the world of menswear after he launched his brand in 2001.

He may strike some as an unlikely influencer, yet the Thom Browne look effectively started a sartorial revolution. "There are few people who can say that they created a shift in the way people dress," says Steven Kolb, president and chief executive officer of the Council of Fashion Designers of America, which has awarded its menswear award to Browne three times in 11 years. "The uniquely and specifically shrunken silhouette of a Thom Browne suit: That wasn't a trend that came and went; it was something that spread across all designers."

The word *specific* comes up relentlessly in conversations about

Browne. "His aesthetic is, in fact, very, very, *very* specific, and I think it rests on a lot of archetypes: the nerd, the IBM 1950s office manager, the suburban conformist," says Simon Doonan, creative ambassador at large for Barneys New York, which sells both Thom Browne menswear and womenswear (added by the designer in 2011). "But he turns these archetypes so completely and utterly on their head."

Browne walks into his office, trailed by his miniature wire-haired dachshund, Hector, who is also clad in Thom Browne apparel (in this case, a tidy red sweater). In an office nook, six oversize painted panels have been propped up against the walls; they resemble, at first glance, abstractions depicting brick walls and patterns of Pac-Man-esque dotted lines. Yet Browne reveals that the paintings, which are his creations, are actually design road maps, giving proportion instructions for one of his collections. If you squint at them, the silhouettes do appear: an Amish-style hat, wide shoulders, narrow hips.

As the staffers come and go, one gets the sensation of having been admitted to a benevolent cult, comprising eager Ivy League prepsters with a surrealist twist. Browne once chided an employee for wearing pink socks: "You are ruining the message," he told him. He is unapologetic about such micromanaging, saying he is "trying to establish a strong, very rigorous image. It's important that we stay true to that message."

"There is so much individuality in uniformity," he adds. "It's more interesting when you see someone and don't recognize what they're wearing. You see more of *them*." There is a catch, however: When someone is wearing Thom Browne, attention is drawn to the clothes; they can't be ignored. "In some ways, [the look] is identifying a group or tribe," says Kolb. "It represents someone who stands apart a little bit, but stands among others that stand apart—in a very specific way."



#### FITTING IN

When Thom Browne, pictured here in his New York headquarters, first began wearing his own designs, "People would ask, 'Why does it look like your clothing doesn't fit you? Do you need a tailor?'"

**T**HOM BROWNE'S headquarters represents the buttoned-up restraint of his operation, his fashion presentations are its fantastical release—akin to teasing open an elegant clock and watching the springs explode out. The scenarios for his shows vary wildly: One season, there was a nightmarish circus set, complete with models bound as mummies or sent down the runway adjoined in a Siamese twin suit; another presentation mimicked an elaborate, ghoulish funeral. At another, models relentlessly hammered away at a wooden house frame for the duration (a “mock Amish barn-raising,” the *New York Times* said afterward).

Transported to Browne's peculiar universes, audiences can recognize glimmers of references—a hint of Moscow here, Belle Époque Paris there—but for the most part, the *mise en scènes* tend to be completely Brownean, distorted to his singular vision. He has dispatched models dressed as black-lipped geishas, *Blade Runner*-worthy punks, plastic-masked robots, satyrs and Communists with gilded lips.

“I’m always slightly palpitating,” says Doonan. “Thom’s a performance artist. To say that he’s a showman isn’t the right word; there are always somber elements. There’s that French quote: *Live like a bourgeois, create like a madman*. That’s what I always think about Thom.” (For the record, Browne says he has no objection to being called a showman: “I love it, actually. And if I wasn’t able to do the shows I do, I wouldn’t be interested in fashion.”)

Browne has long shown his men’s collections in Paris, and this past fall, he presented his spring 2018 women’s collection there for the first time. It was a symbolic yet risky move: “When you take a brand to the motherhood of Paris, you can never be certain that you’re going to hold your own among those legacy brands who’ve been around for decades,” says Kolb. It was a similar gamble when Browne launched womenswear seven years ago: Would the same elements that proved influential in the world of menswear resonate in worlds beyond? He was banking on the idea that women appreciate the almost-obsessive craftsmanship of his designs; he says that even his ready-to-wear is constructed like couture. While womenswear comprises only 30 percent of his current overall business, he’s had encouragement from high places: Lady Gaga, Laura Dern and Solange Knowles have been clients; Michelle Obama wore a gray-and-black Thom Browne coat and dress to President Barack Obama’s second inauguration ceremony in 2013.

Staged at Paris’s grand Hôtel de Ville, this latest show featured extravagant confections of brightly hued, knitted tulle; models also sported oversize costumes, transforming them into rotund yet delicate creatures from another realm. As a finale, Browne sent out two models, clad in diaphanous white tulle with gauze bubbles encircling their heads, leading a life-size, loping unicorn puppet. The audience gasped and went silent; even the most jaded attendees seemed moved by the spectacle. “Your hair stood up on the back of your neck,” recalls Valerie Steele, the director of the museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology. “There are very few shows where you start to cry. A couple of McQueens, a couple of Rei Kawakubos. I can only compare it to hearing a soprano who’s really triumphing.”

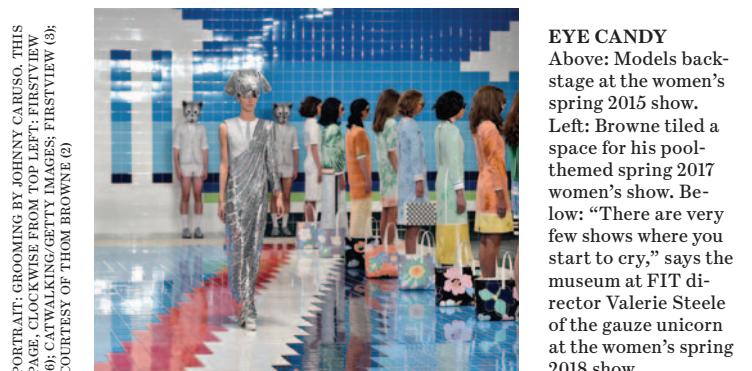
For days after the show, photos and videos of the



**OUT OF THIS WORLD**  
“With the presentations, I want them to transcend fashion,” says Browne. Left: Models dressed as astronauts at the men’s spring 2011 show. Below: Wild headgear for men’s fall 2014.



**DEFT PUNK**  
Right: Streetwise preppy looks from the men’s fall 2012 show. Below, from left: Japanese-inspired images adorn a men’s spring 2016 suit; models stage an avant-garde barn-raising for a men’s fall 2013 presentation.



**UNUSUAL BUSINESS**  
Left: Reimagined gray suiting embellished with hundreds of buttons at the men’s fall 2017 presentation. Right: Platform heels that mimic ice skates from the women’s fall 2017 show.



**FAIRY-TALE ENDINGS**  
Left: A Japanese schoolgirl-inspired show for spring 2016. Above: Couture-style details on a dress from spring 2014.



unicorn went viral on social media. The brouhaha pleased Browne. “With the presentations, I want them to transcend fashion; I want them to cross the art, entertainment and fashion worlds to become one experience,” he says. Yet when pressed about the symbolism behind the unicorn—which is currently enjoying a less-than-pastoral retirement, residing in several boxes back in New York—he withdraws. “It came from a simple, sophomoric idea about two little girls playing,” he says. “It was just a fantasy that came out of my head.”

**L**ITTLE ABOUT Thom Browne’s own childhood portended his current world. Born in Allentown, Pennsylvania, in 1965 to two attorneys, he was raised with his six siblings on an all-American diet of Lands’ End apparel and competitive sports. From age 6, Browne trained as a swimmer: “Six hours a day; there were earaches, backaches; I was always cold. I remember at my last meet in college, I thought, ‘I’m never going to have to jump in the water again.’” (He now runs daily instead.) He took art classes as well, but says he didn’t particularly distinguish himself: “There were definitely kids who were way better than me.”

Browne attended his father’s alma mater, University of Notre Dame, where he studied economics but realized he had no interest in business or law school. If Browne’s eventual trajectory made him a black sheep in his family, they supported him—with a caveat. “My parents were competitive,” he says. “Their attitude was ‘You can do what you want, but you should try to be the best at it.’”

After college, Browne moved to Los Angeles to pursue a career in acting. “I was a horrible actor,” he admits. “I took classes and went to millions of auditions and got no work.” Perhaps his lowest point: an audition for a Hot Pockets commercial. “You get to a point where you say, ‘I can’t believe I’m doing this.’ In the end, only 5 percent make a living at it. And looking at the other 95 percent, I thought, I don’t want to be that.”

It proved a crucial chapter, however, for Browne began a flirtation with fashion during his brief Hollywood tenure (95 percenters couldn’t afford new clothes). He started buying vintage suits for himself and began experimenting with the proportions with the help of his local dry-cleaner-based tailor. Sleeves and pants were made shorter; everything was made narrower.

He eventually abandoned Los Angeles for New York City, where he landed a receptionist gig at Giorgio Armani; he later rose to the sales department before moving to Club Monaco as a designer. It became increasingly clear that he had an unusual vision, and in 2001, he launched his own collection with five made-to-measure suits. By 2003, he had a store on Little West 12th Street in the Meatpacking District. He became his own best model, wearing his suits to breakfast each day at Pastis, a popular brasserie up the street. “People would ask, ‘Why does it look like your clothing doesn’t fit you? Do you need a tailor?’” recalls Browne. “And once, when I was passing by this school on the Lower East Side—I used to buy my fabric nearby, on Orchard Street—there were all these kids

laughing and saying, ‘Look, it’s Pee-wee Herman!’”

If some beholders ridiculed Browne’s looks, well-placed people in the industry began to take notice. Bergdorf Goodman came and bought his first collection. Determined to control the context in which his clothes were displayed, Browne instructed the department store on how to best showcase his clothes. “I insisted on a 10-times-bigger space, with gray marble and vintage furniture,” he says. “I wanted it to be housed the way I wanted to live myself. And they did it. They were very visionary, and really took a huge chance.” How did it go over with customers? “It didn’t sell so well,” Browne admits. Yet luminaries like David Bowie and Richard Avedon became clients. When Bowie came to visit in 2005, Browne says that he was “painfully, embarrassingly nervous” as he worked with the musician, who nevertheless left with a gray herringbone suit, a shirt, a tie and wingtip shoes.

Browne asserts that he never grew discouraged or wavered in conviction about his aesthetic. “I always knew that the classic part of my work could be understandable to a lot of people,” he says, “and would give me the luxury of doing the conceptual part of what I do. I want my business to be as big as it can be. I feel like, if you’re going to do something, why settle?”

He and his team, including CEO Rodrigo Bazan, are ambitious for the company. Thom Browne garnered over \$100 million in revenue in 2016 and is growing at 20 percent annually. The company has more than 300 wholesale accounts and 29 flagship stores in the U.S., Europe and Asia; five more store openings are planned for 2018. (Browne also designed collections for Brooks Brothers and Moncler for eight years.)

Much of the expansion is taking place overseas, especially Asia, where Browne’s homage to Americana is proving popular, according to the company. Browne says that he revels in being an American designer and, what’s more, a New Yorker. He and his partner, Andrew Bolton, the curator in charge of the Metropolitan Museum’s Costume Institute, live on Manhattan’s Upper West Side. The disciplined Thom Browne aesthetic governs their apartment, which can be a challenge for Bolton, whose natural habitat is more dusty library than austere bank vault. Hector the dog delights and chagrins them in equal measure. (“He’s always up to no good,” says Bolton. “Once we were at Azzedine [Alaïa’s] place in Paris, and Hector was quiet for an hour. It turned out that he had quietly been eating one of Azzedine’s fur coats.”)

The couple insist that they’re boring after-hours, eating Chinese takeout from Shun Lee or fare imported uptown from the West Village’s Morandi. They watch movies; Browne says he likes Fellini and Visconti, but is also a sucker for *Working Girl*. He borrows film references for his collections, although studio mood boards are bereft of scene screengrabs. “I never give my team a picture,” he says. “If you do, you fall into the trap of re-creating that. With a lot of designers, you get overly referenced collections, which I think is not always so interesting.”

“I love to be provocative,” he concludes. “I want people to love or hate something; I never want people just to *like* what I do. When I’m backstage at a show, and I look at the people [in the audience], everyone’s so deadpan. It’s like, ‘Come on, guys. Why aren’t you laughing? Why aren’t you crying?’” •



## THE NEW NORMAL

Reimagined classics like vests, trenches and topcoats give new life to workaday wear.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY THOMAS LOHR  
STYLING BY TOM VAN DORPE



### FRESH TWIST

Add unexpected punch to polished pieces. Prada coat and jumpsuit, Dior Homme shirt and Brooks Brothers Red Fleece tie.  
Opposite: Filson vest, Dior Homme coat, scarf and pants, Bally socks and Asics sneakers (worn throughout).



**INDUSTRIAL ZONE**

Rough things up with utilitarian items. Michael Kors coat, Carhartt overalls, Marni shirt, Giorgio Armani tie and Ahlem glasses.  
Opposite: Jil Sander vest and coat (worn around waist), Carhartt jacket, Lemaire shirt and Dior Homme pants.





#### GRAY AREA

Sporty accessories add spark to office looks. Ralph Lauren coat, jacket and shirt, Hermès tie and Carhartt hat.  
Opposite: Hugo coat, Filson vest, Matthew Adams Dolan shirt and tie, Dior Homme pants and Michael Kors bag.



**VESTED INTERESTS**  
Find liberation in sleeveless styles. Lemaire vest, shirt and pants and Salvatore Ferragamo tie.  
Opposite: Burberry coat, Lemaire shirt, Carhartt vest, Hermès tie and Dior Homme pants.





**PUFF PIECE**  
Make room for oversize shapes. Balenciaga coat and shirt, Hugo jacket, Drake's tie and Dior Homme pants. Opposite: Dolce & Gabbana jacket, Carhartt overalls, Matthew Adams Dolan shirt and Salvatore Ferragamo tie. Model, Samuel Wilken at Click Model Management; grooming, Sabrina Szinay. For details see Sources, page 125.

# The Art of Reduction

Fabien Baron and Ludivine Poiblanc are minimalist tastemakers. At home, their gift for editing makes for easygoing elegance.

BY SARAH MEDFORD  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANÇOIS HALARD



**A**S PEAK experiences go, it was a little on the quiet side. "I went to Marfa and I slept in Donald Judd's bed, and I was very happy," says art director Fabien Baron. The year was 1995, and Baron was working on a Calvin Klein ad campaign set at the minimalist artist's Chinati Foundation in the grasslands of West Texas. Judd had died the year before, and Baron was in fact put up at the Arena, one of the buildings sometimes opened to guests, because hotels in Marfa were scarce at the time. What he remembers most, he says, was Judd's careful positioning of the mattress in the middle of the floor—and the empty space.

In today's maximalist era, Baron, 58, remains a connoisseur of emptiness. He learned at the knee of the masters: Klein and Giorgio Armani, for whom he's directed ad campaigns; as well as architects John Pawson, who designed a rural Swedish farmhouse for him, and Deborah Berke, his collaborator on a downtown New York City loft. Before meeting his partner of 10 years, Ludivine Poiblanc, 42, Baron came within a hair's breadth of buying a former garage in West Chelsea and converting it into a meditative sanctuary of his own. "One bed in a room—that's it," he says. "I could live like that."

Instead, he and Poiblanc are ensconced in the relative comfort of a four-story, five-bedroom, Federal-style townhouse on the Gold Coast of Greenwich Village, just north of Washington Square. They moved in five years ago following a two-year renovation. The redesign brought the place into harmony with their tastes, which are classically rooted and distinctly French (she was raised in Paris, he in a southern suburb), and their sensibilities, which their professions have sharpened to a razor's edge. (Poiblanc is a freelance fashion stylist and former editor at French *Vogue* and a contributor to *WSJ*. "I came from Paris 11 years ago," she says. "People still ask me, 'Are you visiting?' So, I guess I still have a bit of an accent.")

On a chilly afternoon, the couple, both in black sweaters, are seated at one end of a walnut dining table in their luxuriously spare kitchen with a pot of tea as their 6-year-old daughter, Louise, does homework. "Ludivine really likes things beautiful, warm, cozy," Baron says, glancing up at a wall of cabinets whose rift oak doors, uninterrupted by handles, inscribe the faintest of outlines. *Cozy* is a relative term in this rigorous house, but the more time you spend here, the more you begin to see things their way.

The couple share a gift for editing down material gestures to absolutes that convey a lot with a little: the living room shelves, for instance, which are blades of satin-finished stainless steel; the wall panels of calacatta gold marble that function like paintings and complement Baron's own photographs of sea and sky; the bedside tables cut from curbstone-height blocks of gray limestone; the immense nickel-plated door hinges; the ebony-colored stair rails that race up through the house like piano keys.

Back in 2010, the idea of stairs, and a house to contain them, was a new one for Baron. "We were coming from something super-sleek, modern—a Herzog & de Meuron loft on Bond Street," he says. Poiblanc was pregnant, and when she suggested they look at townhouses, he dragged his feet. "I was always hesitant

#### RIGHT ANGLES

Baron's office displays photographs by Steven Klein amid classic modernist furnishings by Jean Prouvé (the Compas Direction table), Hans Wegner and Mareel Breuer (the chairs) and Édouard-Wilfred Buquet (the desk lamp). Opposite: Ludivine Poiblanc, Fabien Baron and their daughter, Louise, in their living room, with a wall-mounted lamp by Prouvé and a Richard Serra oil-stick drawing.





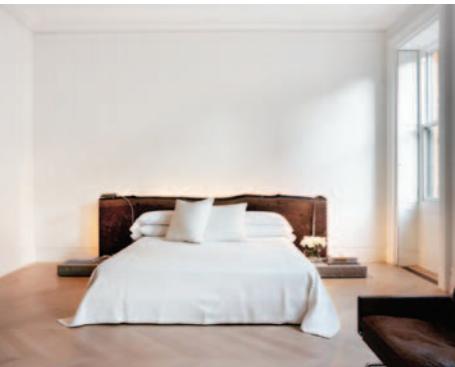
#### LIGHTS ON

Top row, from left: In the living room, a 1968 Fabricius & Kastholm Grasshopper lounge chair and a Bernard-Albin Gras lamp. Prouv  chairs surround a walnut BDDW table and Lindsey Adelman Branching Bubble light in the kitchen. A sitting area off the kitchen gives onto the garden; the lamp is by BDDW.



**"THERE'S NOT ONE THING... THAT HASN'T BEEN CHANGED EXCEPT THE FRONT DOOR."**

—FABIEN BARON



**GRAY MATTERS**  
Bottom row, from left: Baron's own photographic diptych on a living room wall; the stainless-steel table is his design, and Poul H ndevad stools. The couple's bedroom, with limestone-block bedside tables. In Baron's office, a vintage Prouv  C te bed, Gras task lamp and Breuer low table.



about brownstones—narrow, dark and no views,” he says. “Then we found this one, and it’s actually quite bright. The condition was fine. We thought, ‘Maybe we just replaster.’ He casts a glance at Poiblanc. “We changed everything! There’s not one thing in the house that hasn’t been changed except the front door. That’s it. That is it.”

Hand an art director with a minimalist streak an old house and ample funds, and it’s almost a given that he’ll return with a lunar landscape. The scenario was a bit different here because Poiblanc glimpsed the potential for a sort of Beaux Arts classicism in the building’s confectionary moldings, marble mantels and hardwood floors. These features were improved upon in ways that honored the mid-19th-century period of the house while striking a more elegant, Whartonian note. Baron spent months researching moldings, building a new vocabulary for the rooms distinguished by crisp edges and sharp reversals, like the serif typefaces that have become his professional signature. After a deep dive into parquet floor patterns, Poiblanc gravitated to Haussmannian chevron, which suited the building’s era and its 21-foot width.

To help the couple strike a balance between old and new, Baron turned to architect Jean-Gabriel Neukomm, who’d designed his downtown office in 2006. A frequent collaborator of John Pawson’s in the U.S., Neukomm had worked on Calvin Klein’s flagship store on Madison Avenue and several projects with Ian Schrager. Baron’s office project prepared him for what was to come with the townhouse. “We redid it down to the garbage pail,” Neukomm says of the residence. “We obsessed over all of that. When you’re done, it’s supposed to look effortless.”

They decided to keep the general floorplan of the house’s interior: garden-level kitchen, living room on the parlor floor above, a third level that holds bedrooms (for Louise and visiting siblings—Baron has three older children) and offices for the couple, and a master suite on the top floor. The biggest change introduced during the renovation is also the least visible: extending the ground-floor and parlor levels by four feet, an insignificant-sounding alteration that made a profound difference. On the ground floor, they gained a spacious living area giving onto the garden. Upstairs, the former “cigarette balcony” off the parlor floor became a planted terrace. Landscape designer Miranda Brooks spun both spaces into potent evocations of nature’s grandeur, the garden in particular recalling Paris’s Palais Royal—a favorite of Poiblanc’s—with its columns of boxwood framed by white gravel beds, a perimeter of woven-hazel fencing and pleached *Cercis siliquastrum*, or Judas trees, which bloom a deep pink in the late spring.

The tranquillity is echoed inside, where floors of pale oak meet white plaster walls with pleasing clarity. Positioned like statuary are the 20th-century European furnishings Baron has collected for over two decades: trophies by Pierre Jeanneret, Marcel Breuer, Charlotte Perriand, Jean Prouv  and Poul Kj rholm, as well as lesser-known pieces that resonate with the more iconic forms. In the living room, a pair of linear wall-mounted shelves with sliding metal doors is a favorite; Baron remembers the rush of finding the unsigned pieces in Paris. They’re clear cousins of his Jeanneret cabinet, which was made for a public

library and is “super rare,” he believes: “When I saw it, I had to get it.” It’s currently in his home office, and he has stocked its cubbies with wooden printing blocks, relics that recall his father’s profession as a newspaper designer in the French capital.

Baron himself made his name by recapturing the drama of black type on a white background. In his late-’80s layouts for a reimagined Italian *Vogue*—followed by *Harper’s Bazaar* in 1992, *French Vogue* in 2003 and now *Interview*, where he’s done three stints and returned as editorial director in 2009—he’s made a hero of negative space, allowing letters to drift around on the open waters of the page like so many elegant pool floats.

“Fabien sees things very precisely,” says Karl Templer, his longtime lieutenant and currently the creative director at *Interview*. “That’s why [his work is] so imitated. Roots and tradition, but he makes it modern.” At his own branding agency, Baron & Baron, he has worked with top photographers and stylists to shape identities for brands including Givenchy, Fendi and Michael Kors, and across platforms, from TV and digital media to product and packaging. Poiblanc is a frequent collaborator and has worked with Dior, Jason Wu and Thierry Mugler.

Despite a lack of color or even much decoration in the townhouse, the pervading atmosphere is not one of absence but presence. “There’s a warm feeling, which is a bit new for Fabien—maybe it’s Ludivine’s taste,” says fashion photographer Mikael Jansson, a longtime friend, of the interior. Over the years Jansson has become their de facto real estate broker, finding a buyer for Baron’s Swedish retreat and tipping them off to their house after deciding it was too much for him. “Fabien’s last place was modern and sleek and a bit cold for me. This one is super, super nice.”

On a tour instigated by Louise, Poiblanc pauses in the entrance to the living room, where an oil-stick drawing by Richard Serra featuring a bar of white sandwiched between two black planes fills the facing wall. The double parlor is pinched like an hourglass by a shelf-lined passageway at its center; tightly dressed white sofas and low stools that pull up to gargantuan coffee tables—designed by Baron—echo one another on either side.

“We call this the museum, because we don’t go so often,” Poiblanc says. “Louise came up with that name,” adds Baron, with a laugh. “She always says, ‘You can’t touch this, and you can’t touch that—it’s Papa’s things.’ She makes me feel like the bad guy.”

Five years into townhouse living, he still resents the three-story climb after a forgotten phone charger or a pair of sneakers—Poiblanc has been known to chase them down for him—but he’s coming around. When morning light suffuses the master bedroom, Baron admits to lying in bed and “watching the drawings” made by the windows’ rippling restoration glass on the walls and the floor. “It feels like France,” he says. “It feels like something that’s been around for a long time.”

His pride is understandable, given the reconsideration of every wall, hinge and corner. The front door may have remained the same, but Baron made his mark here as well: Dropped into the marble floor of the vestibule are two polished-nickel street numbers. The serif font is custom. •



# Secrets of Wealthy Women

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**MODERN TWIST**  
Color blocking piques interest.  
**Margaret Howell tie,**  
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WSJ. MAGAZINE

**STYLE & DESIGN**

ON SALE  
APRIL 7, 2018



STILL LIFE

## BASIL TWIST

The esteemed puppeteer shares a few of his favorite things.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY FRANÇOIS HALARD

**I WAS TURNED ON TO** Japanese silk 15 years ago. I use silk often in my work, like the red piece on the left. Japanese silk is like gold to me because it's so difficult for me to get in New York. My now-broken Rollerblade—an Italian black leather boot with removable wheels—is below. I went everywhere in New York on those things. I could roll into a revolving door and come out the other side with the wheels off and walk into an elevator. In front of that is a fairy face I sculpted for the Lincoln Center Festival's showing of *La Bella Dormente nel Bosco* (*Sleeping Beauty in the Woods*). The box to the right is a model of the set for my show *Symphonie Fantastique*. It was made for

me, with such loving detail, by one of my puppeteers years ago when I was quite sick and in the hospital. *Symphonie Fantastique* will remount this spring at HERE Arts Center in New York. The ivory elephant miniature was my grandmother's, whom I was very close to. The theater where *Symphonie Fantastique* first played in 1998 is named after her—Dorothy B. Williams. She cut the ribbon when the theater opened. The framed caricature in back, of my grandfather, Griff Williams, was done by Xavier Cugat; they were both big-band leaders. To the right is my Jackie Award for best new artist. Jackie 60 was a fabulous club in the Meatpacking District, a downtown phenomenon

in the '90s that became my initiation into a world of artists; it's where I met friends I still have today. The festival bell lying in front is from my last trip to Kyoto, Japan, to attend the Gion Festival. There's a sense of reverence and ceremony in Japanese culture that infuses every aspect of life. Hanging above is a puppet that I built 25 years ago when I was in puppetry school in France. A Brazilian master taught me how to carve it, and a Swedish master taught me how to string it. It's one of my most-used puppets. I'll bring it out in a small environment—at a dinner or a campfire—and people become absolutely rapt. I'm always amazed at how powerful puppetry is." —As told to Sara Morosi

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