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THE OFFICIAL LUXURY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

SUMMER 2017

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A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

For many, the enduring appeal of the luxury industry is that it remains a bastion of old-world values. 'Considered', 'timeless', 'artisan' and 'prized' all define what luxury is in the mind of the editorial team here at *IN London*, and it is a view that has come to underpin the very ethos of the magazine. Our remit over recent years has been to champion the capital's best craftspeople and shine a spotlight on brands that deliver exceptional experiences – indeed, this has become *IN London's* raison d'être. But, when an individual or a company comes along and questions the status quo, bringing with them an entirely fresh perspective, we are quick to sit up and take note.

As you'll discover in the following pages, this edition is dedicated to those who have disrupted the world of luxury. From artists reimagining fragrance in sculptural form to the subversive side of fashion, for an industry often criticised for its perceived resistance to change, interesting times are ahead. One company at the very heart of a desire to shake things up is Black Tomato. Dubbed 'the next big thing in luxury travel', the London-based travel agency has launched

Blink, a highly personalised and bespoke camping experience where nothing is off limits. What can be more appealing than securing your own slice of paradise in a far-flung destination, surrounded by all the creature comforts you could desire safe in the knowledge that the experience is yours and yours alone? Sam Rogg celebrates Blink's trailblazing dynamic on page 72.

Although he'd undoubtedly hate to be referred to as such, another groundbreaker is the artist Grayson Perry. Despite working in various disciplines, Perry is perhaps best known for his colourful, narrative-filled tapestries and pots. Often autobiographical, his work seeks to deal with questions around issues of class, identity, gender and taste and he is not afraid to tackle the heavyweight subjects of the day, such as politics, consumerism, sexuality and religion. This summer, the Serpentine Gallery hosts new work from the artist in an exhibition entitled *The Most Popular Art Exhibition Ever!*, a loaded title that has piqued the interest of Lois Bryson-Edmett. Turn to page 24 to read her musings on what to expect from a man who isn't afraid to ask the difficult questions.

Kathryn Conway, Group Editor

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THE GUEST LIST

ANDY BARTER



The technical art of still-life photography is beautifully showcased in this edition through the work of Andy Barter. With a style that takes simple subjects and pushes them into abstract, surreal forms, Barter's imagery is both dramatic and arresting, a fact keenly felt on page 28. His skill behind the lens has helped give life to *IN London's* edit of the must-have accessories of the summer, where light and shade dance artfully on the page.

SAM ROGG



Having spent the past decade forging a career in food and culture journalism, Sam Rogg recently turned freelance and willingly took up our challenge of investigating a new travel service. By taking customisation to the next level, Blink provides clients with travel experiences that are utterly unique and unreplicable. As we see on page 72, this means going off-grid in barely explored destinations, but with the option of a hot tub on site – genius!

LUKE SINGLETON



As a freelance writer and features editor for *Wylde* magazine, Luke Singleton spends his days commissioning and contributing work on fashion, art, theatre, social and cultural affairs, as well as interviewing leading figures in film and the creative industries. Ahead of a major exhibition at the V&A, Singleton explores the legacy of designer Cristóbal Balenciaga and finds a man whose revolutionary shapes continue to inspire to this day. Turn to page 36.

THE OFFICIAL LUXURY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE FOR LONDON

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BEYOND THE WATERFALL WITH SAM BOMPAS AND HARRY PARR © CHARLIE SURBEY

THE EXPERIMENTALISTS

Kathryn Conway celebrates 10 years of Bompas & Parr’s game-changing multi-sensory exploits



When Sam Bompas and Harry Parr arrived on London’s food scene they quickly made a name for themselves as architects of incredible sculptures crafted from jelly. Ten years on and these Willy Wonka-like foodsmiths have conjured enthralling experiences that have seen guests step into a cloud of breathable cocktails and

enjoy a secret sensory supper in a former Masonic temple. From June 19-22, in celebration of their 10th anniversary, Bompas and Parr are opening up their studio in south-east London to the public. At *Temple of the Tongue* visitors will be treated to a behind-the-scenes, immersive view of the duo’s mind-bending universe.



The Iconic Sweetie Bracelet

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LONDON



SENSORY SCENTS

Perfume pioneers enjoy the
spotlight at Somerset House



This summer, the work of 10 contemporary olfactory masters is being celebrated in an exciting new exhibition at Somerset House. In *Perfume: A Sensory Journey Through Contemporary Scent* (from June 21), visitors can peruse installations that reflect the artistry and inspirations of scents such as Charcoal by Lyn Harris or Geza Schoen's Molecule 01. The science behind scent alchemy will also be revealed as scents are created from scratch in the exhibition's on-site perfume laboratory.

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POPULAR

One of Britain's best-known contemporary artists is aiming to bring art to a wider audience with his latest exhibition. Lois Bryson-Edmett explores Grayson Perry's mass appeal



Despite the art world's dependence on group consensus (a collective thumbs up from curators, collectors and dealers still establishes the value of most artists), it enjoys a complicated relationship with the word 'popular'. Popularity can win an artist funding for their next show or a gallery the all-important footfall it needs to attract investors, but it can also serve as a pejorative, a euphemism for an artist appealing to the lowest common denominator, or as Grayson Perry punned in the name of his 2014 book, *Playing to the Gallery*. No doubt Perry had this tension in mind when he conceived the title of his upcoming Serpentine Gallery exhibition *The Most Popular Art Exhibition Ever!* (opening June 8), which Perry has said, "Will have ideas about popularity hovering around it. What kind of art do people like? What subjects? Why do people like going to art galleries these days?"

Popularity seems an apt theme for an artist who was not born popular (an early life as a transvestite in suburban Essex cast Perry as something of an outsider), but had popularity thrust upon him when he was awarded the Turner Prize in 2003 after more than 20 years in relative anonymity. At the press conference that followed the ceremony, a journalist famously posited to Perry the question of whether he was, "Simply a lovable character or a serious artist," to which Perry, resplendent in a satin babydoll dress, replied, "Can't I be both?" Since then, Perry's relationship with his audience has developed into a prominent theme of his work, depicted across ceramics, prints and tapestries that intermingle the artist's own life experience with wider social issues including class, gender and sexuality.

The inequalities of British society (which play out in microcosm within the moneyed art world)

DEMAND







hold particular fascination for Perry, who has made a point of adapting wealthy status symbols such as tapestries to depict the narratives of normal people, weaving boy racers in souped-up hatchbacks, tattooed cage fighters and suburban neighbourhoods into spaces where royalty once postured. Following in the spirit of Duchamp's urinal, Perry recontextualises everyday objects as profound symbols of our age by bringing them into the art gallery. A sea of 21st-century flotsam, from McDonald's fast-food wrappers to plastic bags snared in trees, was strewn across his 2009 *Walthamstow Tapestry* – a 15-metre-long modern epic that travelled through the seven ages of man, from his bloody birth to his pale, withered death. Accompanying him on his journey was a liberal smattering of familiar brand names – talismans for the contemporary everyman.

PORTRAYING THE EVERYDAY

For Perry, a working-class artist in an industry dominated by middle-class voices, making art available to every section of society, both in content and accessibility, is a key tenet. At the start of his artistic manifesto *Playing to the Gallery*, Perry stated that, "I firmly believe anyone is eligible to enjoy art or become an artist – any prole, any citizen who has a vision they want to share." To this end, Perry's 'popular' art serves as an edict for inclusivity in his own industry, rendering the concerns of 'average' people and the forces that shape their lives in exquisite detail across his work. Perry's decision to work in traditional, labour-intensive media such as ceramics or bronze, handcrafting everything himself, serves as an act of devotion to the often overlooked everyday stories he depicts, an echo of the religious Renaissance art Perry draws much inspiration from.

The results are affecting for their marriage of common realities with beautiful craft. *Memory Jar* (2014) portrays a couple's struggle with Alzheimer's and the slow theft of the husband's memories of their shared life. Perry imagines the disease as a vengeful demon armed with scissors, slicing through family photos which explode into shards across a pot. For his 2016 television documentary *All Man*, Perry also drew on time spent with a gang from the Lancashire town of Skelmersdale, designed as a utopian 'New Town' in the 1960s, which has since descended into poverty and widespread unemployment as industry has deserted the area.

Perry's tribute to the competitive, violent masculinity he observed was *King of Nowhere*, inspired by African power figures that communities honour by piercing with nails. Similarly, Perry's figure stands with blades thrust into his chest, symbolic of the knife crime that has proliferated among local gangs, and the deification the young men hope their

violence will earn them in their community. Perry exhibited the piece in 'Skem's' most notorious council estate, inviting the community to interact with his portrayal of their lives. Younger residents interpreted the statue as a celebration of their fearless appetite for violence, while Stewie, an older gang member and ex-prisoner who had lost an eye in a claw hammer attack, recognised the futility of the violent turf wars that Perry had identified, commenting, "It makes me think, was it worth it?"

REFLECTING SOCIETY

"Part of the reason Perry has become popular is because so many people are able to see themselves in his work," explains Rebecca Lewin, curator of Perry's upcoming exhibition. "Perry has always been fascinated by the people he lives among. He has actively tried to observe, engage with, understand and represent those who make up our complex society." With British society at its most divided in the wake of the vote to leave the European Union, Perry has resolved to address the brewing tension head on with two Brexit pots. Representing the two sides of the political debate, each has been designed, says Perry to, "Stand on the mantelpiece of Britain."

The general public on both sides of the divide have contributed to the pots by submitting photos of themselves to the artist via Twitter, and Perry is also travelling the country meeting communities at different ends of the political spectrum for a television programme, scheduled for broadcast on the anniversary of the referendum. "What is exciting about the content of Perry's upcoming show is that it reflects an increase in political engagement and awareness generally," explains Lewin. "We hope this exhibition will serve as a reminder that art has always been a place where contemporary concerns can be debated."

Unafraid to confront social and political tensions directly (a practice that began in Perry's early life with dressing publicly as a woman), Perry often uses his outsider status as a platform from which to observe the rest of society. In his 2016 book *The Descent of Man*, Perry commented that, "Coming from a working-class background and being an artist and transvestite, I have enough cultural distance from the towers of power. I have space to turn around and get a fairly good look at the edifice." What Perry has observed within our current social landscape remains to be seen, but for an artist who has confessed to constantly seeking out areas of discomfort in the art world, the revelations promise to raise some fascinating questions about the role of art in modern society, and whether artists should aim to be popular among an art world elite or the general public. Invariably, Perry's response is likely to be the same as 14 years ago: "Can't I be both?"

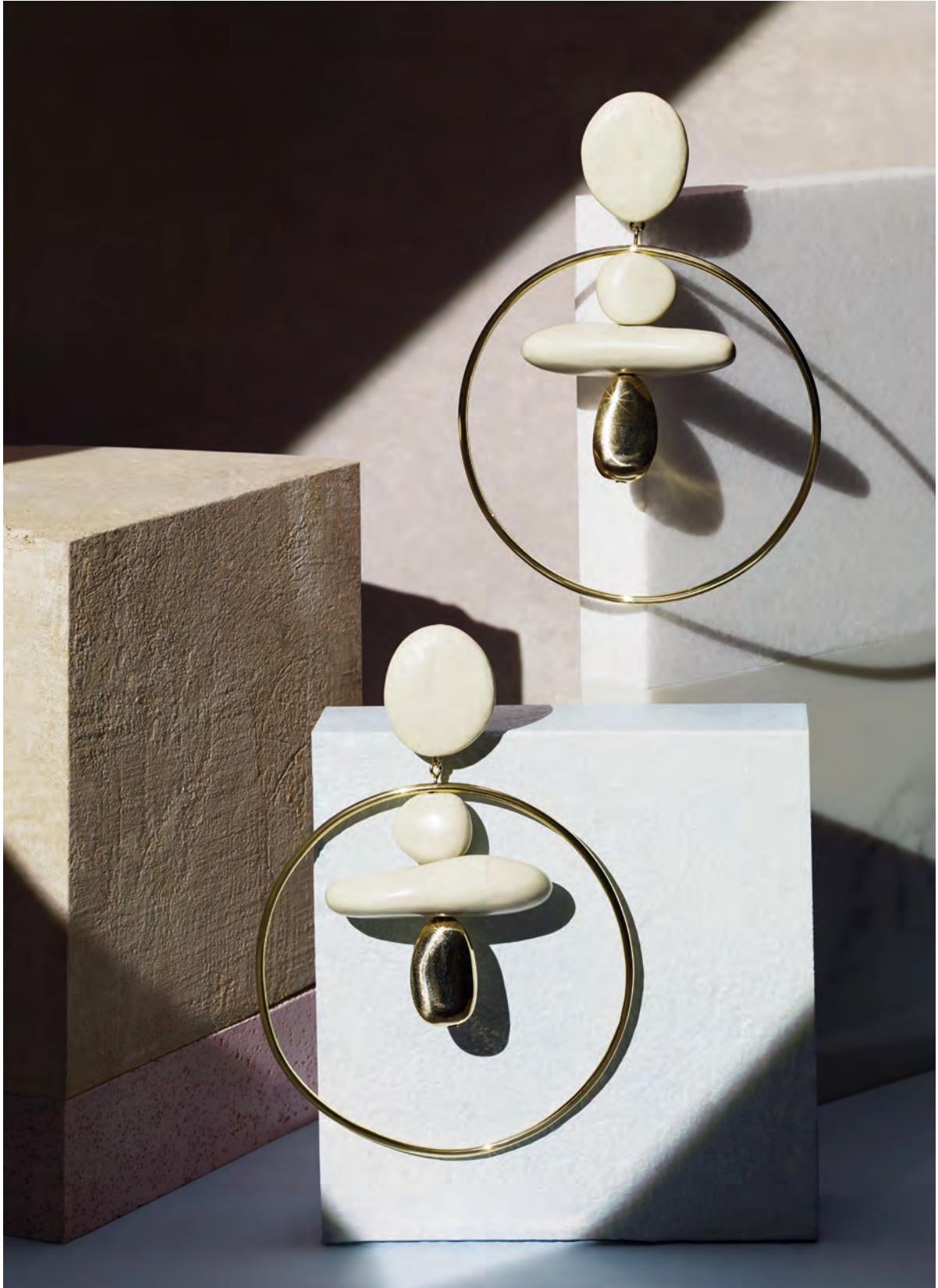
MOST WANTED

*Photographer: Andy Barter • Stylist: Thea Lewis-Yates
Stylist's assistants: Amy Ryall & Ashley Collis*





Rodeo Queen pump by Louis Vuitton



Pebble hoop earrings by Dinosaur Designs

Fortune leather shoulder bag by Loewe at Matches Fashion





Achilles pebble-grain leather sneakers
by Common Projects at Mr Porter



Full-grain leather messenger bag by Mulberry at Mr Porter

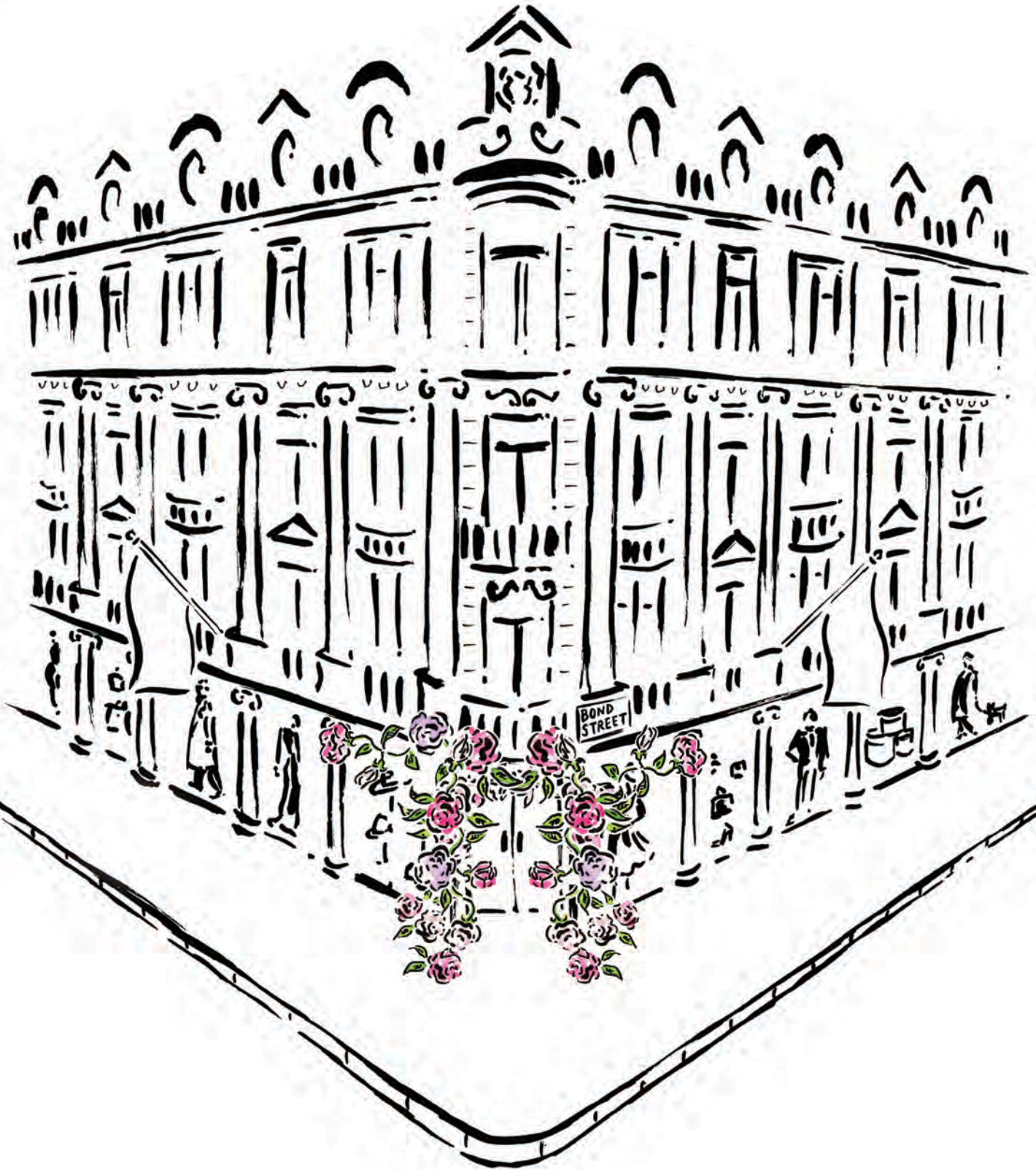


Mandarino Di Amalfi Acqua fragrance by Tom Ford



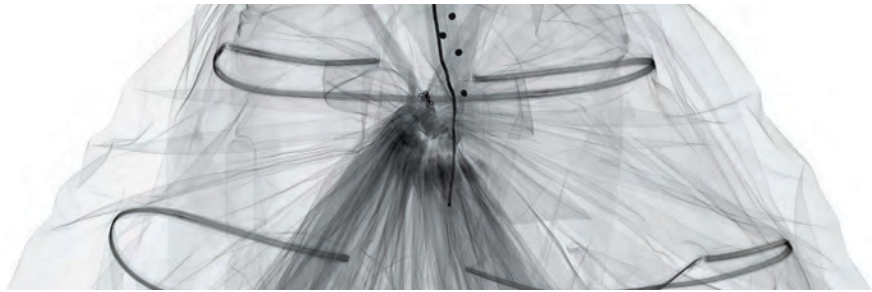
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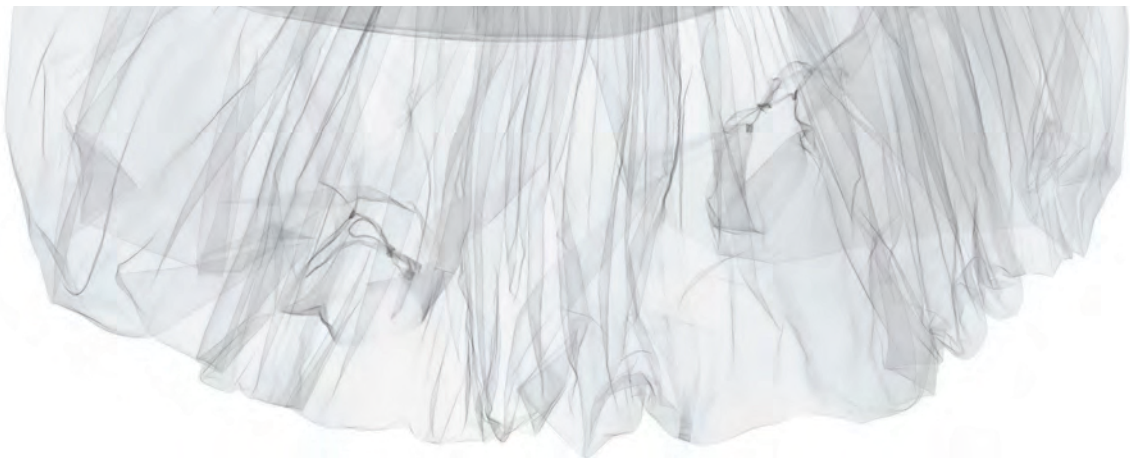
FASHION'S



REVOLUTIONARY



FORCE



Ahead of the first major exhibition in the UK of the work of Cristóbal Balenciaga, Luke Singleton considers the renegade spirit of a designer who Christian Dior called “the master of us all”



Fortune favours the brave. In today’s multi-trillion-dollar global fashion market, every player is resolute in his or her pursuit of success. Rarely does a fashion house close at the height of its fame, leaving critics, customers and ardent fans beside themselves with amazement. Cristóbal Balenciaga was the master of his own fate when he unrepentantly ended his own career, shutting his neo-classical salon on Avenue George V in Paris with immediate effect in 1968, an audacious move entirely characteristic of his ebullient verve. Fierce integrity and a perceived sense of morality permeated his convictions as well as his pre-eminent designs. In light of his profound cultural imprint, Balenciaga’s unequivocal authority retains its potency, 45 years since his passing.

Following the groundbreaking *Alexander McQueen: Savage Beauty* show of spring 2015, *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion* opens at the Victoria and Albert Museum on May 27, showcasing more than 100 garments and 20 hats, archive sketches, patterns, fabric samples, photographs and catwalk footage.

“London is a world centre of creativity and fashion design talent, making it an ideal place to stage revelatory fashion-focused exhibitions. The revival of Balenciaga’s aesthetic can be seen in the minimalist

work of J.W.Anderson and the voluminous designs of Molly Goddard,” says Cassie Davies-Strodder, the exhibition’s curator.

Balenciaga’s innovative, emotional clothes celebrated modern life, imitating with sincerity the profundity of cultural riches that were happening around him. Progressive designs like these are perfectly suited to contemporary times; they echo the architectural enormity of modern cities, and evoke an electric atmosphere of opportunity. Contrary to popular view, Balenciaga never sought to distort clichéd perceptions; instead his clothes mirrored the surrealism of everyday life, and were an outlet for his humanist principles.

FORGING HIS OWN PATH

Preferring not to pander to superficial beauty ideals like so many couturiers of the period, there was no requirement for women to be beautiful in order to wear Balenciaga’s fashions. Models who walked the pink and white marble floors of his Parisian salon were known at times to be androgynous, sometimes with conspicuous eccentricities such as harelips or a limp walk. The desired effect was always very matter of fact: little flourish, no smiling. The designer courted

the attention of powerful women and wives of heads of government, earning loyalty from patrons such as Carmen Polo, the Duchess of Windsor, Gloria Guinness, Pauline de Rothschild and Countess Bismarck, subverting their finicky preconceptions with his exemplary use of shape, fabric and colour combinations. Many of Balenciaga's colleagues remember a restless perfectionist, sometimes picking up coloured threads from his workroom floor, dreaming up new colour palettes, always querying in the pursuit of ideas.

He listened attentively to his advisers, many of whom were female and savvy to shifting social dynamics influencing women's wardrobes. By the 1950s, Europe had begun to churn with buoyant post-war fervour, Paris in particular, and tradition and distinction were losing fashionable status among a younger, more capricious clientele of socially mobilised women. His architectural designs from this modern period of the 1950s and 1960s could be perceived as an emotional response to the changes happening within the industry he so adored.

Valiantly, they exemplified the antithesis of *au courant* fashion trends, notably Dior's renowned *La Ligne Corolle* (later dubbed the 'New Look'); Balenciaga's patterns cut away from the physique, rather than contouring it, establishing an entirely foreign dynamic between the cut of clothes and the feminine form. This was his most acclaimed period of dynamic haute couture: the era of the balloon dress, the cocoon silhouette, the tunic and the lucrative sailor smock. American *Vogue* wrote in 1962: "Whatever it takes to hold vast numbers of women in the palm of your hand year after year, Balenciaga has it. Not that his clothes are particularly easy to wear; on the contrary, they could hardly be more demanding – of elegance, wit, of real clothes authority." Proving to be a convincing match for Balenciaga's mould of restrained exoticism, the house appointed Demna Gvasalia, another powerful communicator of original ideas, as creative director in October 2015.

The *New York Herald Tribune* wrote in 1966: "Balenciaga's collections [are] a far cry from most of the rest in Paris. There is no youth craze in his clothes. The fashions are all believable for real women and their lives." This was a half-truth: behind the scenes, Balenciaga patronised and mentored many of the youthful, avant-garde designers of the day, including Emanuel Ungaro, André Courrèges, Frédéric Castet and Hubert de Givenchy. Oscar de la Renta's career also began in the Spanish studios of Balenciaga. One senses Balenciaga's influence in the work of many modern-day greats, from Alexander McQueen's exploration of indigenous tribes, to John





Galliano's sublime reiterations of global culture while at Dior. The connection here is one of heritage: the quest for authenticity.

PRIVACY AND PURISM

Design prodigies such as Balenciaga, or McQueen or Galliano, are often isolated figures within their industry. Given Balenciaga's humble beginnings, he was never entirely seduced by the world of luxury that he became so intrinsically part of. Originating from a remote fishing village in the Spanish province of Guipúzcoa, he learned the art of sewing at his widowed mother's knee. The Basque culture, which informed Balenciaga's childhood, perhaps explained his distrust of bureaucracy and industry unions, including the *Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture* itself. In 1963, Parisian newspaper *Le Figaro* wrote of Balenciaga: "He has never been part of the designer fraternity, [he] has always been separate, raised as it were on a pedestal."

As the fashion industry burst at the seams to expand and multiply, Balenciaga became increasingly controlled over his image. He frequently closed his doors to the press, restricting fashion magazines to only two published photographs from each collection, not excluding British *Vogue*. Known to retreat from the pandemonium of his shows and the fashion circus at large, he demanded privacy, something designers so often waive the rights to today. Balenciaga openly

disparaged what he perceived as bourgeois greed, once memorably proclaiming: "Don't waste your energies in society." If wealthy socialites attempted to buy his collections in their entirety, he occasionally interfered with negotiations of those who weren't personal acquaintances. Standing alone in much of his scepticism, his peers seldom found the pluck to follow in his footsteps. When Coco Chanel went to Hollywood in the 1930s to work for Samuel Goldwyn, Balenciaga looked askance at his fellow designer with a mixture of curiosity and disgust. By today's standards, Hollywood offers a level of celebrity that no brand can financially afford to resist, propagating the image of Balenciaga as a devout fashion demigod.

The advancing dawn of the post-modern era brought about a dichotomy for Balenciaga: his complex patterns didn't translate to ready-to-wear factory machines. Compared to the expanding empires of rival houses, Balenciaga had duly ignored the blandishments of populism. He closed the curtain on his final collection in the summer of 1968, signalling the imminent death of an indelible period in post-war European history. Symbolically, his house's closure fell on the centennial of the institutionalisation of haute couture, in 1868. If it's true that most artists become aware of their destiny at an early age, few become such an impetus for change, and fewer yet wipe out entire infrastructures with their departure.



Thomas Sabo

JEWELLERY

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SELFRIDGES, 400 OXFORD STREET, W1C 1JS
HOUSE OF FRASER, 318 OXFORD STREET, W1C 1HF
WESTFIELD LONDON, ARIEL WAY, LONDON, W12 7SL



White coat and dress by Simone Rocha;
earcuff by Venyx at Averture; ring
by Delfina Delettrez at Averture

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*Photographer: Anya Holdstock
Stylist: Thea Lewis-Yates
Model: Kristin Zakala
at Premier Model Management
Make-up: Adele Sanderson
using Sisley Paris skincare & cosmetics
Hair: Gow Tanaka
Stylist's assistants: Ashley Collis,
Yamine Daaboul & Nicole Robinson
Set design: Ben Clark*



Pink tulle dress by Molly Goddard at Browns Fashion; earring by Sara Gunn

Silver lace dress and pale blue
trousers by Sharon Wauchob;
Travesty top by Phoebe English;
white pointed kitten heels by Tibi;
Ruined Omelette earring by All
Blues; ring by Cornelia Webb



Dress and bra by Dior;
jeans by AGOLDE;
heels by Malone Souliers;
earring by Delfina Delettrez;
ring by Dinosaur Designs





Green overalls by Shrimps; white lace top by Racil; earrings by Aurélie Bidermann



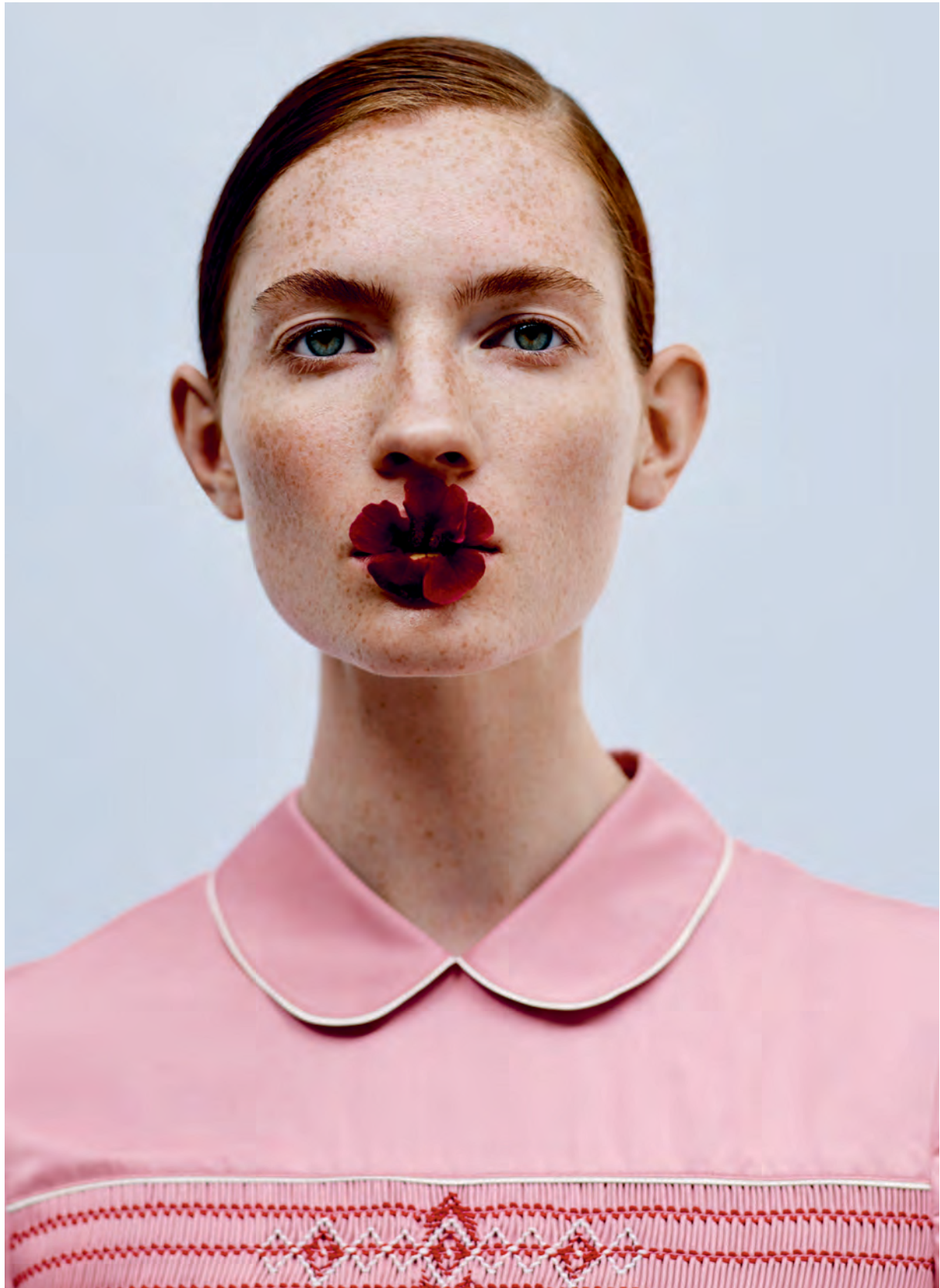
Dress by Erdem; earring by Delfina Delettrez at Auverture; ring by Fernando Jorge at Auverture

Dress by Gucci at Browns Fashion;
jeans by Ellery at Matches Fashion;
white shoes by Tabitha Simmons;
rings by Cornelia Webb





Drawstring-sleeve floral dress
and earrings by Marni; silver
Turbojet slippers by Dorateymur



Smocked long-sleeve shirt by Miu Miu at Browns Fashion



Blush lace dress and slip by Chanel; earrings by Sara Gunn; rings by Dinny Hall; silver shoes by Robert Clergerie

White knit jumper and
skirt by Mother of Pearl;
earrings by Becca Jewellery



THE ULTIMATE LIBRARY

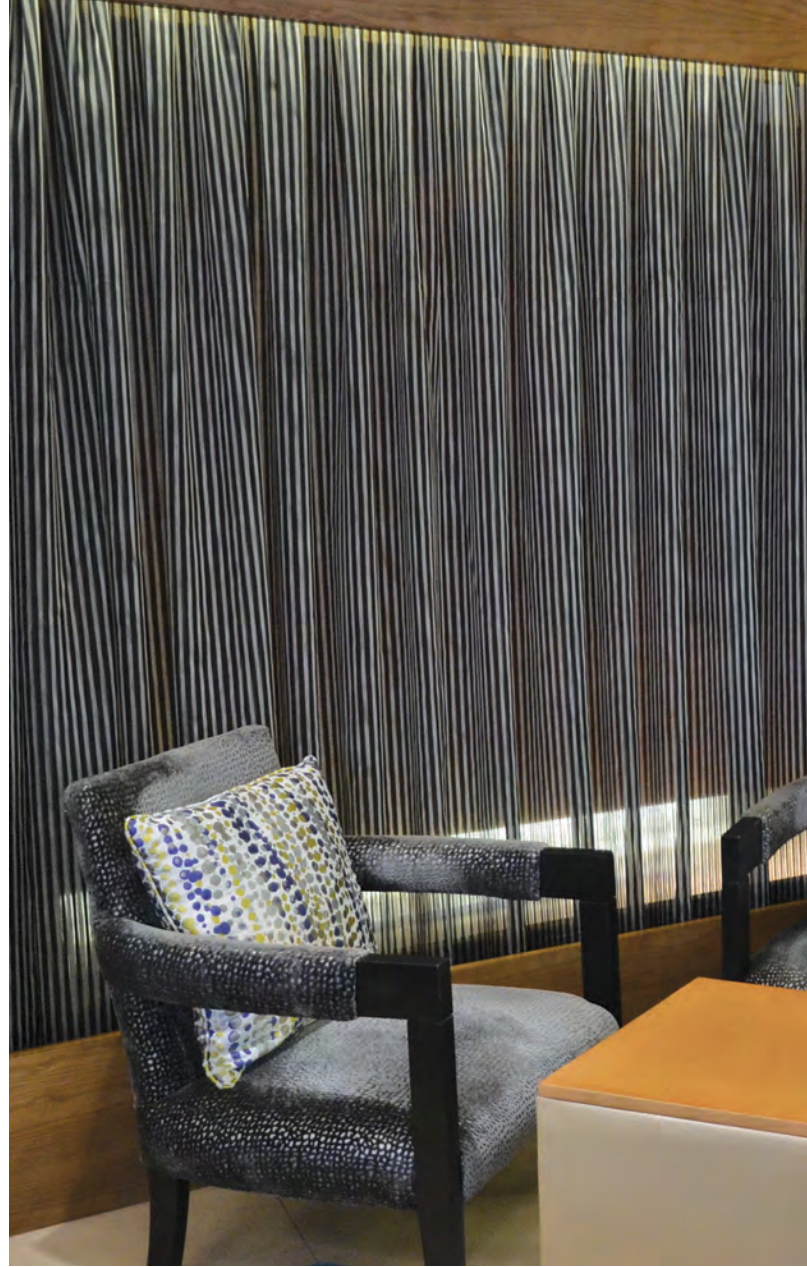
As Kathryn Conway discovers, Albert Einstein had it right when he said “the only thing that you absolutely have to know is the location of the library”



Retreating to the pages of a good book, it is widely acknowledged, can provide the reader with a welcome escape from the stresses of the world. It is an aid to making sense of the chaos, and it seems that in today’s climate, against a backdrop of economic uncertainty and political upheaval, the life-affirming power of reading has never been so vital. It is no coincidence that book sales rose by

eight per cent to £3 billion in the UK last year, reportedly the highest level since 2012 – people are looking for authenticity, the reassurance of the familiar. Indeed, in spite of the seemingly inexorable march of new technology and all the advances that have been made in the digital sphere, our emotional attachment to the tactility and smell of a weighty tome is not to be underestimated.

“Physical books are back,” agrees Philip Blackwell, a man who was perhaps predestined to be a learned bibliophile. “We’ve been through the cycle of ‘oh, it’s going digital’ and there is now a whole biophilic movement afoot, one that is driven partly by modern technology and partly by the world we live in today. We are in a time of great uncertainty, where people are questioning governments and big businesses, and when people feel worried, they often turn in on themselves and tend to look back.”





Blackwell argues that the growing appeal of farmers’ markets, of the foraging of food and the sourcing of ingredients, of the resurgence of vinyl and our current predilection for bare wooden floorboards and exposed materials in interiors, is a statement about the current state of the world. And given that we spend much of our lives poring over digital screens, communicating in a virtual bubble, is it any wonder that we crave the antithesis of this?

“The touch, the smell, the full engagement of the senses provided by a physical book is deeply satisfying. I tend to look at it in terms of, if you want to read something and you want a very rational approach, an immediate approach, you might go to your digital device. But, if you want to take a more considered approach, you would pick up a physical book,” says Blackwell. “In the same way that when you get home tonight and sit down to supper, you

might light a candle – it provides that authenticity and subtlety that is absent in harsh, overhead lighting.”

A LIFE IN BOOKS

Blackwell’s bias is perhaps understandable given his family’s connection to books. Set up in 1879 by Philip Blackwell’s great-grandfather, Blackwell’s in Oxford has faithfully served scholars as an academic and specialist book retailer for more than 150 years, establishing a room in its basement that has been accredited as housing the world’s largest single display of books. The Blackwell family is still involved in the business, although Philip himself stood down as CEO of the bookselling arm in 2006. Put on two years’ gardening leave, Blackwell decided to travel and it was while luxuriating in some of the most amazing hotels in the world that the entrepreneur hit upon his next business idea – Ultimate Library.



“Travelling is about curiosity,” says Blackwell. “Everything is so alien, it’s such an assault on the senses; being able to read about and see a place through the lens of fiction and other people’s experiences, whether real or fictionalised, really brings your environment into sharp focus.”

This was keenly felt while Blackwell was in Egypt and *Daniel Martin*, a novel by John Fowles in which the eponymous protagonist takes a cruise down the Nile, was recommended to him. For Blackwell, he found that the observations of the river provided by the prose amplified and heightened his own experience of this ancient body of water. “One of the great skills of a writer is the power of observation,” Blackwell acknowledges. “Their power to observe and capture in words what they see can not only be enhancing, but it can also take a black and white world and transform it into a kaleidoscope of colour.”

PROVIDING A SENSE OF PLACE

Fascinated by the ability of authors to provide their readers with a sense of place, Blackwell began to hunt out such literature in the libraries of hotels he was staying in and ended up sorely disappointed. With that, the seed for Ultimate Library was sown, and the company now helps hotels, resorts, private residences and retail spaces build bespoke book collections that reflect their local neighbourhood.

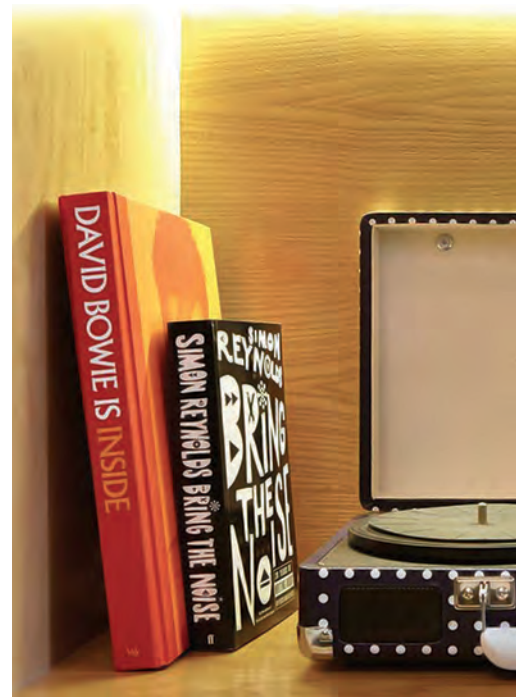
“Our job for a hotel or resort client wanting a library of 500 books is to find the 500 that will

educate, entertain and inspire their clients, to create a sense of place and take them on a journey,” says Blackwell. “If you like detective fiction and you’re in Bangkok, for example, why read Elmore Leonard, P.D. James or Lee Child, when you could read John Burdett? He will take you, with the same sense of excitement and all the same values, to the seamier side of Bangkok. Perhaps it’s a side you never want to see, but, boy, the insights it will give you into the way the city works, into the way the Buddhist mindset works, will enhance your experience. It’s a great stimulant.”

Blackwell has worked with a number of London hotels – the Savoy, Ham Yard Hotel, K West Hotel & Spa among them – and says that the capital is evoked by any number of authors. “One thinks of Samuel Johnson, there’s Dickens if you want historical, there’s Martin Amis in his day, or Zadie Smith is fantastic for gritty, contemporary London life,” he says. “But the book I love most is called *London Stories*. It’s a brilliantly edited collection of great stories set in London and it’s a beautiful little book that brings the city to life.”

INTELLIGENT LUXURY

Of the many millions of books in print today, whittling down the selection to just a few hundred seems an incredibly difficult task. “It’s actually very enjoyable,” Blackwell assures. “It’s a privilege for somebody to say ‘find me 500 books that say something about me or my property’, or just



'find me a nice shelf of books that have been intellectually selected'. For private clients, a book collection is a window into their soul and therefore, for those people who care about these things, it's a statement."

To ensure that a book collection makes the correct statement and reflects what Blackwell likes to call 'intelligent luxury', Ultimate Library ensures that a percentage of the books it provides are used or second-hand. Not only does this add an air of authenticity but, as Blackwell points out, there are great books that are no longer in print which can only be bought second-hand.

"You don't want any book collection you create to look like somebody went shopping with a credit card in the local bookshop on a sunny Thursday in April – you can tell immediately," says Blackwell. "The approach needs to be considered, which is why we use a network of specialist dealers."

However, Ultimate Library doesn't purely curate a considered, bespoke book selection. It also advises on shelving design, aesthetics and lighting to ensure the collection looks its best whatever the time of day. "You've got to light the books," says Blackwell, "but you've also got to consider the light on an individual, chosen book, so we work with a specialist lighting partner to get this right." Part of the work of Ultimate Library also lies in "explaining the rules of engagement," says Blackwell, particularly in hotels and resorts. "I've been to many places where people don't know that they have

permission to engage. So, we provide book plates in the front of every book and signage that can be anything from the very formal 'these books are here for your enjoyment. Please leave them behind for the future enjoyment of other guests', to 'choose me, read me, leave me'."

GIVING BACK

One final particularly pleasing aspect of the business is that Ultimate Library also engages on a philanthropic level, working with hotels and resorts to identify schools and projects in their local community that might benefit from a donation of books. It is a scheme Blackwell is keen to extend to the private clients he works with, offering those who are cash-rich but time-poor an opportunity to give something back in a meaningful way.

"Part of the premise is that, despite technology, books are still the fundamental building blocks of education, they are part of that discovery process. So, if by donating books we can help raise the overall educational standard, that in turn creates opportunity," says Blackwell. "It is my fondest wish that, one day, somebody will walk into Blackwell's in Oxford in 20 years' time and say 'do you know, the first books I read were in my Maasai village or on my Maldivian island, and that inspired my love of literature and learning. It was the catalyst, and now I'm here, studying at Oxford'."

A noble dream perhaps, but one that, given the growth of Ultimate Library, seems entirely achievable.



DESIGN WITHOUT BORDERS

A remarkable polymath, designer
Kia Utzon-Frank can turn her hand
to anything, from product design
and sculpture to patisserie.
Lois Bryson-Edmett unpicks
her unique creative process





“People are surprised that I continuously change my perspective,” says Kia Utzon-Frank, a London-based designer and the driving force behind the multifaceted KUFstudios. A vessel for Utzon-Frank’s diverse passions and interests, KUFstudios is reimagining the format of the modern design studio, moving away from a focus on one area of design to a borderless approach that intersects all genres. This open-minded ethos has seen Utzon-Frank create everything from beautiful string structures that web between the corners of buildings, to intricately engineered jewellery that unfurls in response to the movement of the wearer. “I really like working on a diverse range of projects as it keeps me on my toes. I enjoy blending several different worlds together,” she explains.

This pioneering approach fits with a career that has defied convention throughout, from Utzon-Frank’s unusual route into design (she originally trained as a goldsmith) through to her working process, which, instead of beginning with a detailed brief, involves making a model of absolutely anything and seeing where it leads.

“It started out as a way of combating the fear of the empty paper, or in my case, the empty table,” explains Utzon-Frank. “I was studying at the Royal College of Art and I had become tired of writing briefs. I was generating elaborate narratives about the things I make to justify making them. In actual fact, a lot of my decisions were based on the fact that it looked good – I don’t have a deep explanation for

why I chose blue. So from that moment on, that became my brief – whatever looks good, is good.” To this end, in the remaining three months of her RCA course, Utzon-Frank resolved to reverse the traditional design process and simply craft a model each day with no definite outcome in mind.

THE POWER OF EXPERIMENTS

The unorthodox process unleashed a flood of exciting results, ranging from intricate, twisting paper sculptures that danced in circles when spun, to a physical rendering of Utzon-Frank’s thought process, featuring a web of string threading from one page to the next, gradually refining from a complex mesh into a single point, representing how a diverse network of influences and ideas distil into a final outcome. For Utzon-Frank, this new, experimental working method hasn’t just helped to generate fresh ideas, but has also unlocked new ways of thinking. “Some of the complex string structures can take 15 hours to make,” she explains. “That time becomes quite meditative and your brain begins to wander off. In that moment, you come up with your next idea.”

This open-minded approach to design enables Utzon-Frank to venture beyond the labels of ‘product design’ or ‘architecture’ to create pieces that intersect all categories of design. From this, Utzon-Frank developed a model featuring a cube of black strings with a plate, which as it moved from top to bottom transformed the strings from organised straight lines into a web of chaos. This



then developed into a second model that swapped the strings for ribbons of fabric, which twisted from flat to side-on as the panel moved. “I showed the model to my professor and he told me to put it in a box and head straight to InnovationRCA to file a patent,” she explains. From this, KUFTwist was born, an innovative system with the potential to be adapted into anything from window blinds or a room divider to an interactive art installation.

The latest incarnation attracted considerable attention at the Saatchi Gallery last year, where Utzon-Frank teamed up with textile designer Fay McCaul to create a large-scale KUFTwist screen, featuring dichroic acrylic rods that added a shimmering, iridescent glow to the ribbons. Soon an audience was compulsively sliding panels up and down, observing how patterns emerged as the ribbons smoothed from twisted to flat.

“It’s fun to see their minds explode with ideas as they play with the piece,” says Utzon-Frank. “When I was a child I couldn’t enjoy museums and exhibitions because I wasn’t allowed to touch anything. So for me, people interacting and exploring my pieces is really important. It also initiates some fascinating conversations which often inspire what I make next.”

A SENSE OF PLAY

This interest in hands-on interaction runs as a theme through Utzon-Frank’s work, which appeals to a primal instinct to explore with our hands – pushing, folding and manipulating. The kinetic energy of the audience is often the final ingredient that brings each

KUFstudios piece to life. The origins of this design ethos can be traced to Utzon-Frank’s training.

“My goldsmith master taught me how important it is that all jewellery is connected to the body, and to keep it in mind when you design,” she explains. “All my early jewellery adapted to the movement of the wearer, and I just scaled that up to what I do now. I believe you’re designing for people, so you should have people in mind.”

This people-orientated approach to design informs Utzon-Frank’s unique ability to pique an audience’s curiosity, as evidenced by her remarkable sculptural cakes. Presented as slabs of geometric marble, expectations are subverted as they are sliced open to reveal concentric layers of sponge cake and ganache. Applying a designer’s eye to a realm usually only occupied by chefs, Utzon-Frank has even developed gradient flavours, a technique used in Terence Conran’s birthday cake, which progressed from almond and sloe gin to damson plum flavours as one munched through it.

Maintaining a flexible attitude to design has enabled Utzon-Frank to think about her craft not as one discipline to be developed singularly, but as a continuous thread of inspiration, which weaves through all categories of design. “I’m currently working on folding sculptures created from stone paper for Clerkenwell Design Week, I’m also developing cocktail cakes with a mixologist and looking to create more bespoke KUFTwist pieces for private clients,” she explains. The potential for where KUFstudios ventures next seems limitless.



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THE STORYTELLER

While her style is often described as rock'n'roll romanticism, a retrospective of the work of Anna Sui reveals that the designer's aesthetic is much more difficult to define, says Kathryn Conway



It's remarkable to think that *The World of Anna Sui*, which opens at the Fashion and Textile Museum in Bermondsey on May 26, will not only be the first UK retrospective of an American fashion designer, but the first globally to be dedicated solely to the work of Anna Sui. Fiercely independent, a feat in a world where so many designers have sold controlling interests to luxury conglomerates, Sui launched her first collection in 1981 and spent the next 10 years building her business, gaining patronage from the likes of Naomi Campbell, Linda Evangelista and Madonna through her good friend, photographer Steven Meisel.

Sui's first runway show at New York Fashion Week in 1991 won her international acclaim, but it was her spring/summer 1994 collection that put the designer on the map. Against a backdrop of grunge, at the height of bands such as Nirvana and the Smashing Pumpkins, Sui sent her supermodel cast down the catwalk in baby-doll dresses, accompanied by frilly pop socks, feather headdresses and floral-embellished bags. "It was my moment. If grunge music was an alternative to stadium rock, the kind of clothes that

I designed were my alternative to power dressing," said the designer of her seminal collection.

Looks from the collection comprise the 100 head-to-toe ensembles that form the exhibition, which has been arranged thematically to showcase the recurring motifs that have weaved their way in and out of Sui's collections. A roll call of characters – rocker, schoolgirl, punk, goth, bohemian – have intertwined at various points with fairy tales, fables, Victoriana and Americana to create Sui's aesthetic, and her collections always express the latest tangent of her obsessive curiosity. "Sui is an inspirational woman whose designs embrace the history of American pop culture and popular art movements, and thereby offer a fascinating way to explore national identity through fashion and textiles," says Celia Joicey, head of the Fashion and Textile Museum.

The exhibition will also demonstrate how Sui, long before it became popular to do so, developed creative partnerships and collaborations with the likes of jeweller Erickson Beamon and knitwear designer and milliner James Coviello that helped add another dimension to this designer's uniquely multi-layered world.

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THE CULTURE DIARY

THE PINK FLOYD EXHIBITION: THEIR MORTAL REMAINS

To October 1

As one of the most influential bands in music history, Pink Floyd permanently shaped the cultural landscape of Britain and beyond with their experimental approach to art of all genres, from music and graphic design to performance. Now, the Victoria and Albert Museum celebrates 50 years since Pink Floyd released their first single with a major retrospective. More than 350 artefacts will shed light on the mechanics behind the band's experimental sound, as well as the artistic brains behind Floyd's distinctive visual aesthetic.

Victoria and Albert Museum,
Cromwell Road, SW7 2RL.
020 7942 2000. www.vam.ac.uk

CANALETTO & THE ART OF VENICE

To November 12

After moving to Italy in around 1700, English merchant (and later British Consul in Venice) Joseph Smith went on to build a hugely significant collection of Venetian art, featuring work by Giovanni Antonio Canal (better known as Canaletto), alongside other giants of the 18th-century Italian art scene including Sebastiano and Pietro Longhi. In 1762, King George III purchased Smith's entire collection, which is now on display at The Queen's Gallery, providing a wonderful snapshot of Venetian life.

The Queen's Gallery,
Buckingham Palace Road,
SW1A 1AA. 0303 123 7301.
www.royalcollection.org.uk

THE WIND IN THE WILLOWS

June 16–September 9

Kenneth Grahame's much-loved children's classic *The Wind in the Willows* is leaping off the pages of the book and on to the West End stage. First published in 1908, Grahame's tale of Rat, Mole, Badger and the inimitable Mr Toad has endured for more than a century, depicting the animals' courageous fight to save Toad Hall from an evil army of weasels. This production, which is transferring from a successful run in Manchester, promises to be a high-spirited depiction of the tale, adapted by *Downton Abbey* writer Julian Fellowes.

London Palladium, Argyll
Street, W1F 7TF. 0844 874
0665. www.windinthewillows.com

SOUL OF A NATION: ART IN THE AGE OF BLACK POWER

July 12–October 22

Exploring the significant and often overlooked contribution of black artists to the American art world, this exhibition showcases work by a range of names including Romare Bearden, Norman Lewis, Betye Saar and Lorraine O'Grady. Capitalising on the momentum of the Civil Rights movement, many black artists created their work as a means of speaking out against oppression, using their era-defining art to challenge stereotypes and confront the racism of a predominantly white art world.

Tate Modern, Bankside,
SE1 9TG. 020 7887 8888.
www.tate.org.uk



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MIXING THINGS UP

With his “live off the land” mantra, Kathryn Conway visits the mixologist behind a bar that is determined to do things differently

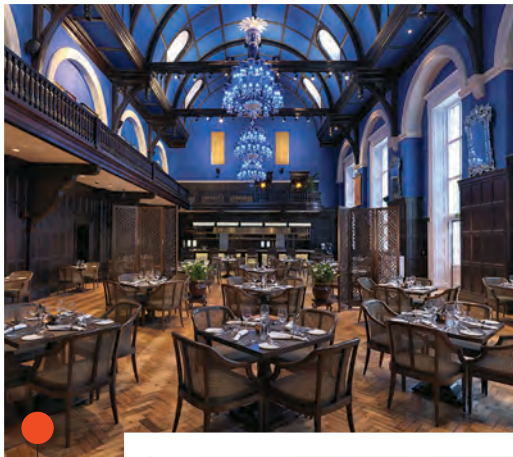
The capital has been undergoing a quiet food revolution of late, one that has seen awareness of sustainability and food waste grow traction. Led in part by consumer demand, it has given rise to the Slow Food London movement and the Sustainable Restaurant Association and has seen top-name chefs such as Skye Gyngell take action with concepts such as *Table*. This pop-up four-day event at Gyngell’s restaurant Spring, running from May 17-21, gives pride of place to a menu featuring dishes made from excess produce donated by Spring, as well as partnering restaurants and farms. It’s about creating beautiful, tasty food and working with ingredients in new ways – think pickle made from beetroot leaves, for example.

Gyngell isn’t the only one putting food waste on the agenda, however. At Scout, a recently opened cocktail bar in Hoxton, owner Matt Whiley is breaking the mould by taking seasonality from the kitchen to the bar and using the best of British ingredients with minimal wastage. Scout’s finely tuned menu features just 10 cocktails, five house ferments, five beers and a small selection of natural wines,

and is set to change and adapt according to the availability of seasonal produce and foraged ingredients. “If it’s not in season in the UK, we won’t buy it,” Whiley says. “There’s really no need to fly produce all over the world when we have an incredible bounty of fresh ingredients right on our doorstep.”

At the time of writing, cocktails formed of sea buckthorn, rhubarb and beetroot have taken pride of place on the list, with concoctions such as caramelised parsnip, brown butter and bourbon proving an innovative twist on the classic cocktail, the old fashioned. More compelling still is the fact that the ingredients that might have otherwise gone to waste in the creation of Whiley’s intriguing libations have been deployed in the development of Scout’s snacks. So, vegetable skins are fried and doused in house seasoning, while rhubarb is pickled and served with dill sugar and crème fraîche.

For those who really want to get an insight into the concept and see food and drink being developed for future guests to enjoy, pull up a pew at The Lab, Scout’s 10-seat private area in its basement, and enjoy the show.



BALUCHI

Situated within The Lalit London hotel, Baluchi is a pan-Indian restaurant offering exotic dishes from Kashmir, Bengal, Kerala, Goa, Rajasthan and Delhi. Take a seat in the restaurant, which is set in the Grade II-listed former Assembly Hall of St. Olave's Grammar School, and choose from a comprehensive menu of authentic dishes such as the Kashmiri roganjosh, a signature dish at The Lalit Grand Palace Srinagar hotel. Accompany it with bread from the 'Naan'ery' bar, then finish with a saffron panna cotta – and you have the recipe for a perfect meal.

181 Tooley Street, SE1 2JR.
020 3765 0000. www.thelalit.com

MERE

After making her name as a judge on *MasterChef: The Professionals*, Monica Galetti has teamed up with her sommelier husband David to open their first joint venture in Fitzrovia. Influences of Galetti's New Zealand childhood can be found throughout the menu in options such as pork 'boil up' – a traditional dish given a contemporary twist, featuring ham hock terrine topped with a watercress dumpling, bathing in a light broth. The 200-strong wine selection is also exemplary, with a bespoke Champagne blend created by the Galettis in France.

74 Charlotte Street, W1T 4QH.
020 7268 6565.
www.mere-restaurant.com

108 GARAGE

A former garage has been given a new lease of life in the form of a fine-dining experience. Head chef Chris Denney's experimental approach to food, and an eclectic range of influences (which includes his formal training in fine art), provide exciting flavour combinations and theatrical flourishes. Crab meat poached in butter sits under slices of pickled turnip, while pasta parcels encase a ragu of braised lamb heart, surrounded by vegetable broth. Enter with an open mind and be amazed.

108 Golborne Road,
W10 5PS. 020 8969 3769.
www.108garage.com

LORNE

Chef Peter Hall and sommelier Katie Exton (who met while working at Mayfair's The Square) have combined their talents to create a menu of seasonal modern British dishes, paired with an expertly curated wine list. The emphasis is on an approachable, relaxed dining experience where flavour and quality of produce are king. Expect dishes such as rabbit terrine alongside a radish salad with pickled carrots and dandelion, and poached rhubarb with vanilla custard, sprinkled with pistachios.

76 Wilton Road, SW1V 1DE.
020 3327 0210.
www.lornerrestaurant.co.uk



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The capital has a long history of pushing boundaries and presenting new ways of thinking. Cue summer 2017, as a host of exhibitions, performances and gastro experiences offer up the finer things in life in new and unexpected ways...



THE REVOLUTIONARIES

Galleries and museums debut exhibitions featuring gamechangers in the worlds of luxury and high culture. The V&A celebrates a trailblazing fashion icon with *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion*, while Grayson Perry's *The Most Popular Art Exhibition Ever!* at the Serpentine Gallery takes on modern society and culture. Go on a sensory journey at Somerset House with 10 fragrance provocateurs - *Perfume* opens on June 21. Kensington Palace introduces *Enlightened Princesses: Caroline, Augusta, Charlotte and the Shaping of the Modern World*, which explores the lives of three German princesses who would go on to shape women's roles within the British royal family.

UNEXPECTED EATERIES

Sample the latest food pop-ups and quaff the summer's must-have cocktails across the city's range of alternative roof-tops. Pergola on the Roof completely

transforms the space crowning Television Centre, while Peckham institution Frank's delivers gastronomic delights in a pared-down setting (atop a car park). Mondrian London's recently revamped Rumpus Room redefines the hotel bar with its botanical-infused interiors and sumptuous lounge area. Back on ground level, London Wine Week (June 5-11) is a laid-back affair - Oval Space in Bethnal Green will be transformed into a picturesque vineyard.

ALL THE WORLD'S A STAGE

This summer, theatre and performance buck tradition by taking on bold new productions and breaking free from auditoriums. The National Theatre's eclectic River Stage returns Thames-side for weekend shows, while over at Shakespeare's Globe *Twelfth Night* and *Much Ado About Nothing* receive a unique reworking. Regent's Park Open Air Theatre returns for another summer of alfresco entertainment in a truly remarkable setting.



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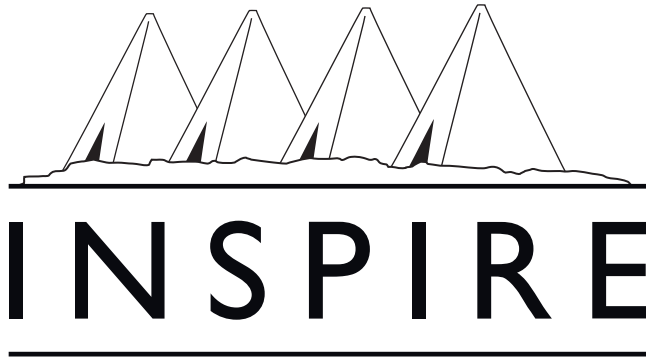
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Lois Bryson-Edmett and Sam Rogg
showcase disruptors in art and travel





INSPIRE

PARADISE FOUND

Glamorous camping – or ‘glamping’ – is taken to new extremes in the latest service from London-based travel agency Black Tomato.

Sam Rogg meets the team capable of marooning you almost anywhere, in a way that only you will experience



Finding a piece of paradise to call one’s own is not always easy in today’s well-trodden world. Once-untouched beaches are now lined with resorts, animal safaris team with 4x4s – not even deserts can be relied upon to be completely deserted any more. It doesn’t matter how exhaustively you affix the words ‘secret’, ‘hidden’ or ‘off-the-beaten track’ to online searches – if you’re reading about a location on the web, you can be sure that others are too. And if you do happen to stumble across a corner of unspoilt beauty in this world, it’s often not possible to stay there overnight without roughing it and sacrificing the comforts of a five-star hotel. Or is it possible?

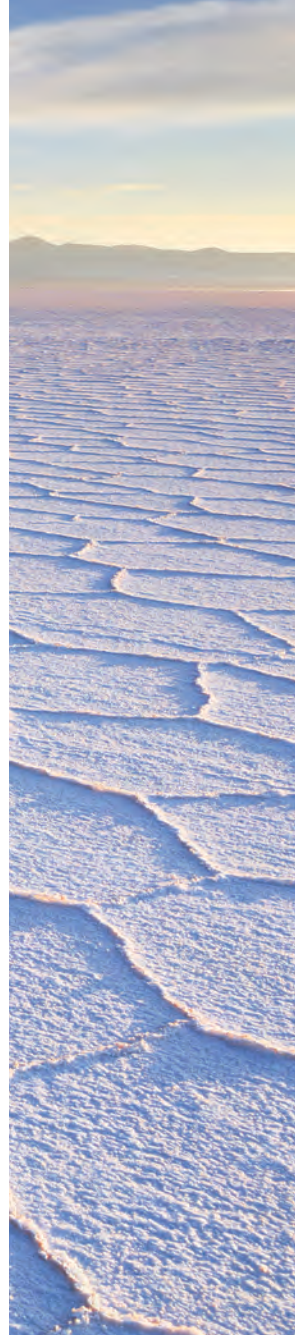
“A luxury accommodation experience that can exist and be enjoyed for a brief moment, never to be replicated again” – this is the challenge Tom Marchant, James Merrett and Matt Smith set their award-winning travel agency Black Tomato last year after noticing a rise in the number of people seeking highly personalised experiences in remote locations. It’s a brief that many operators would likely bypass, given the difficulty in finding areas of natural beauty not yet colonised by the travel industry. Then there’s the logistics of creating complex campsites in isolated areas that blend seamlessly with the natural surroundings, while providing guests with all the creature comforts and activities they

desire. But Black Tomato is not your average travel agency and its latest service, Blink, is proof of just how unique, private and customisable paradise can be.

TAILOR-MADE TRAVEL

Launched almost a decade ago when the travel-loving trio – all friends – turned their backs on the corporate world, Black Tomato specialises in tailor-made experiences for clients worldwide, with offices in London and New York. “We didn’t want to go about things like everyone else in the travel world,” says Marchant of his company, which has since spawned a handful of similar travel brands with different sub-specialties, such as Epic Tomato for expedition-led adventures. “The aim from the very beginning has been to play the part of a good friend who also happens to be in the know and ahead of the game regarding where to go and what to do.”

It’s this approachability that makes a service like Blink, introduced at the end of 2016, not only possible but irresistibly easy and undeniably fun: clients fill out an online room service-style menu then sit back while the expert team puts together ideas for a perfect trip. Perhaps you already have a location in mind that you’d like to visit or the kind of tented accommodation you’d be most comfortable in – for many guests, the allure of Blink is in the bespoke nature of every detail, from the type of





cuisine, bedroom layout or lighting they'd prefer on site, to the view they want to wake up to and the sort of experiences they want to have while they're away. And for those who wonder how luxurious a campsite cut off from the rest of the world can be, the optional extras don't end with WiFi – on-site spas, private yoga instructors, wellness gurus, sommeliers, mixologists and chefs can all be incorporated to make your stay more enjoyable. The hardest part is choosing where to go.

OFF-THE-GRID SITES

“Whether it's positioning your tent in an exact location to see the sunrise from a particular sand dune in Morocco that's never been camped on before, or setting up a luxury camp on a fjord in Iceland that's barely been explored – Blink aims to get clients off the grid for a one-of-a-kind travel experience,” explains Marchant.

Of course, not everyone knows the precise site, country or even hemisphere they'd like to visit. For some, it's more of an abstract desire to be ‘stranded in a forest’ or ‘somewhere by the sea’. It's with these clients that the team can flex their intrepid ambitions, inspiring guests with a selection of already handpicked

secluded locations around the world, from deserts and glaciers to jungles and lakes.

Imagine waking up inside a traditional Mongolian yurt in the middle of the Sajama National Park in Bolivia, or falling asleep under the starry skies of Chile's Atacama Desert inside a partially transparent bubble tent – two examples the team like to call upon, with prices ranging from £8,800 to £23,800 per person (based on a group of six staying three to four nights). “Blink is available anywhere in the world where we can transport the tents and materials, while offering true remoteness and a place that only that individual will enjoy in that way,” says Marchant.

At the end of your stay, the campsite is packed away, leaving no trace of your time there to ensure that the natural environment remains in its perfect state. Your Blink experience is yours and yours alone, says the team, never to be offered in the same way to anyone else. Is this the ultimate luxury in today's heavily commodified world of travel?

Marchant believes so. “As people constantly search for or seek to redefine what the definition of true luxury is, Blink, in our eyes, represents what it should be,” he says.



SOMETHING EXTRAORDINARY EVERY DAY™

Just 46 minutes from London Marylebone, Bicester Village is home to more than 130 boutiques including Bally, Marni, The White Company and Temperley London. Indulge in fabulous food at the Village restaurants, with local specialities at farmshop restaurant & cafe from Soho House & Co and delicious pastries at Le Pain Quotidien Restaurant, as well as a selection of services including tax-free shopping, Valet Parking, Personal Stylist and Hands-free Shopping. Find your fabulous at Bicester Village.

To find out more, visit BicesterVillage.com



EUROPE BICESTER VILLAGE LONDON | KILDARE VILLAGE DUBLIN | LA VALLÉE VILLAGE PARIS | WERTHEIM VILLAGE FRANKFURT
INGOLSTADT VILLAGE MUNICH | MAASMECHELEN VILLAGE BRUSSELS | FIDENZA VILLAGE MILAN | LA ROCA VILLAGE BARCELONA
LAS ROZAS VILLAGE MADRID | CHINA SUZHOU VILLAGE SUZHOU | SHANGHAI VILLAGE SHANGHAI

© Bicester Village 2017 04/17 3904



INSPIRE

A GROWING TREND

Invest in property with green appeal, says Kathryn Conway



THE BEACON

Dubbed 'the world's most sustainable residential tower', The Beacon is blazing a trail in eco-friendly property development. Situated in Hemel Hempstead, just outside London, residents will enjoy a 70-80 per cent reduction in heating costs thanks to innovative mechanical ventilation and heat recovery systems, while solar photovoltaic panels, rainwater harvesting, ground-source and air-source heat pumps and electric car and bike hire schemes only add to the green features. Terraces with winter gardens, hot tubs and electro-glass should please investors in the premium Skyline apartments, but a communal roof sky garden ensures that the benefit of outside space is available to all.

GASHOLDERS LONDON

Positioned canalside in up-and-coming King's Cross, Gasholders London sees a trio of Grade II-listed cast-iron gasholder frames take centre stage. The historic structures took more than two years to refurbish and their restoration has resulted in a series of truly unique buildings. Boasting full-height triple-glaze windows with panoramic views across the area, apartments offer access to a private balcony or terrace, while the picturesque roof gardens designed by Dan Pearson Studio (gold medallist at last year's RHS Chelsea Flower Show) provide tranquil botanical oases.

WARDIAN LONDON

Having recently released details of its 12 luxury penthouse apartments, now is the perfect time to invest in Warden London. This botanically inspired scheme in Canary Wharf features private sky gardens – spacious garden terraces – that allow a seamless transition between internal and external spaces, and access to The Gardener, a landscaping service tailored to the lifestyles of individual residents. Providing plant packages and garden maintenance, the service ensures that the flora and fauna of each penthouse is maximised.



www.thebeacondevelopment.co.uk
www.gasholderslondon.co.uk ■ www.wardianlondon.com



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AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO CONNAUGHT VILLAGE

Travel and lifestyle blogger @Poppy_Loves_London
explores London's prettiest village
#ConnaughtVillage





IMAGES: FROM LEFT TO RIGHT: CONNAUGHT STREET; MENSWEAR BUYERS CLUB; MUD AUSTRALIA; CONNAUGHT STREET; ME+EM

I recently spent a lovely day in Connaught Village, nestled just a short walk from tourist hotspots such as Marble Arch, Lancaster Gate and Hyde Park. The 'village' is a collection of streets lined with pretty boutiques and shops denoting timeless charm and a strong sense of community.

A perfect oasis in the heart of London, you can spend an afternoon there, meeting a friend for an artisan coffee in Markus Coffee, Assal Patisserie or Abasto, enjoying a drink in the sun outside the Duke of Kendal, or getting your nails done at Fé Hair and Beauty. You can also make a long, leisurely day of it, beginning with breakfast in the sunshine followed by shopping at the plethora of boutiques.

LUNCH

Enjoy a delicious lunch at one of the restaurants, from Italian at Stuzzico to Persian at Pardis, there is something for every palate. The casual setting and

Argentinian sharing plates at Casa Malevo also make the perfect lunch. For something lighter, pop into Le Pain Quotidien for a savoury pastry or Colbeh to nibble on a Middle Eastern meze platter.

DINNER

Bombay Palace is well worth a visit; its moreish thali is one of the best Indian dishes I have ever eaten. For something different, Kurobuta serves up a medley of classic Japanese dishes alongside modern innovations: think pork scratchings with yuzu kosho dip and wagyu beef sliders. Traditional Iraqi stews and grilled meats from Al Maskoof and Le Chef Masgouf will tantalise your tastebuds, or if you are looking for something more local, head to Salt and Honey for fresh fish from Billingsgate Market.

EXPERIENCE

The thing that makes Connaught Village extra special is that you can meet most of the founders of the



shops and get their expert advice. I loved wine tasting at Connaught Cellars and was impressed that the owner hosted the evening himself. I learnt so much about the different varieties, especially some British wines that have now become my wine rack essentials. Buchanans Cheesemonger supplies cheese to many prestigious restaurants and locals. I was given a wonderful masterclass of taste sensations and his knowledge was incredibly extensive.

FASHION

Find yourself a new pair of summer sandals from Lucy Choi and Marion Ayonote or a unique ensemble from Kokoro, ME+EM, Viola or The Place London (for women) founded by ex-chief executive of Browns, Simon Burstein. Discover vintage gems from The Dresser, occasion wear at Eliza Jane Howell and fine jewellery from De Roemer. If you are getting married, pop in to wedding dress specialist Ritva Westenius.

For the sartorial man, I spied great boutiques such as The Place London (for men) and Menswear Buyers Club.

INTERIORS & GIFTS

Mooch around specialist art galleries and dealers, appreciating collections of South Asian Art, rare jewellery, antiques, clocks and watches from William Mansell and Contemporary Middle Eastern Art at The Park Gallery.

If you are staying nearby or live in the area and want to find a few new home accessories, head to Mud Australia for a unique collection of porcelain in summer pastels, a favourite among high-profile chefs and celebrities. You can even pick up a matching summer bouquet at Prewett Miller Flowers.

A little bird told me that several new occupiers will be joining the village community shortly and if they are of the same calibre as the existing occupiers I for one will be making the return trip.



MAP COURTESY OF TIM BENTON

DIRECTORY

FASHION

- Connaught Jewellers** Porchester Place
- De Roemer** Porchester Place
- Eliza Jane Howell** Connaught Street
- Kokoro** Connaught Street
- Lucy Choi London** Connaught Street
- Marion Ayonote** Porchester Place
- ME+EM** Connaught Street
- Menswear Buyers Club** Connaught Street
- PDN** Kendal Street
- Ritva Westenius** Connaught Street
- The Dresser** Porchester Place
- The Place London for Men** Connaught Street
- The Place London for Women** Connaught Street
- Viola** Connaught Street

ART & LIFESTYLE

- Bourlet** Connaught Street
- Mud Australia** Porchester Place
- Rosewood Gallery** Connaught Street
- The Park Gallery** Connaught Street
- William Mansell** Connaught Street

HEALTH & BEAUTY

- Daniel Mikhael Hair and Beauty** Porchester Place
- Fé Hair & Beauty** Kendal Street
- Medicetics** Connaught Street

FOOD & DRINK

- Abasto** Connaught Street
- Al Maskoof** Porchester Place
- Assal Patisserie** Connaught Street
- Bombay Palace** Connaught Street
- Buchanans Cheesemonger** Porchester Place
- Casa Malevo** Connaught Street
- Colbeh** Porchester Place
- Connaught Cellars** Porchester Place
- Duke of Kendal** Connaught Street
- Kurobuta** Kendal Street
- Le Chef Masgouf** Connaught Street
- Le Pain Quotidien** Kendal Street
- Markus Coffee** Connaught Street
- Pardis** Connaught Street
- Stuzzico** Kendal Street

VILLAGE ESSENTIALS & SERVICES

- Crispins** Kendal Street
- Hogg & Son Pharmacy** Kendal Street
- Prewett Miller Flowers** Connaught Street
- Walters Newsagents** Connaught Street

For more information or to register for the newsletter, please visit connaught-village.co.uk

Twitter: @ConnaughtVil

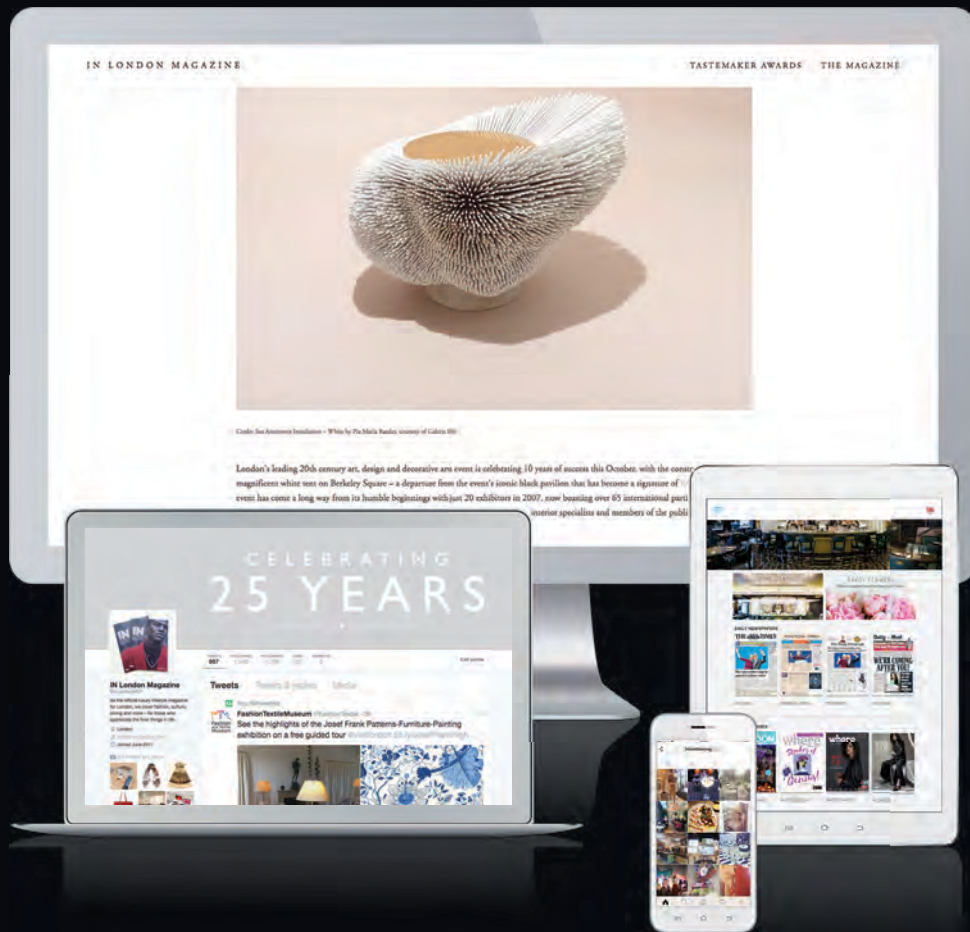
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IN

LONDON

THE OFFICIAL LUXURY LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

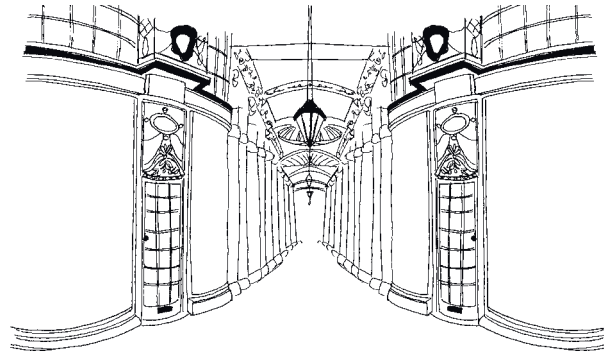


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SHOPPING

With its famous streets and pretty arcades,
the capital is a haven for retail theatre

MAPS

KNIGHTSBRIDGE | CHELSEA
SOUTH KENSINGTON
SW1X | SW3 | SW7



BOSS

From dressing Hollywood A-listers to providing suits for Premiership football teams, Hugo Boss has become synonymous with impeccable tailoring. And while an off-the-peg Hugo Boss suit should be a staple in every man's wardrobe, the BOSS Made-to-Measure service is the pinnacle of the brand's tailoring expertise. Make an appointment at the Sloane Square boutique for an initial consultation in its Made-to-Measure suite.

35-38 Sloane Square, SW1W 8DL.
020 7554 5700.
www.hugoboss.com
📍 Sloane Square



WATCHES OF SWITZERLAND

Housing the largest Patek Philippe in-store boutique in the UK, the Watches of Switzerland showroom on Brompton Road is a must for any watch fan. With a reputation for stocking world-famous brands, this store is also offering names such as Clerc and L. Kendall. Visit the VIP suite on the second floor to view the new collections at your leisure.

47-51 Brompton Road, SW3 1DE.
020 7581 7037.
www.watches-of-switzerland.co.uk
📍 Knightsbridge



Titchmarsh & Goodwin
Vivienne Westwood
Eskandar

PETER LAYTON LONDON GLASSBLOWING



Photo by Ester Segarra

5 minutes from The Shard
londonglassblowing.co.uk

Icosphere
Tim Rawlinson

MAPS

MAYFAIR | PICCADILLY | ST. JAMES'S | WESTMINSTER | W1 | SW1



CHANEL

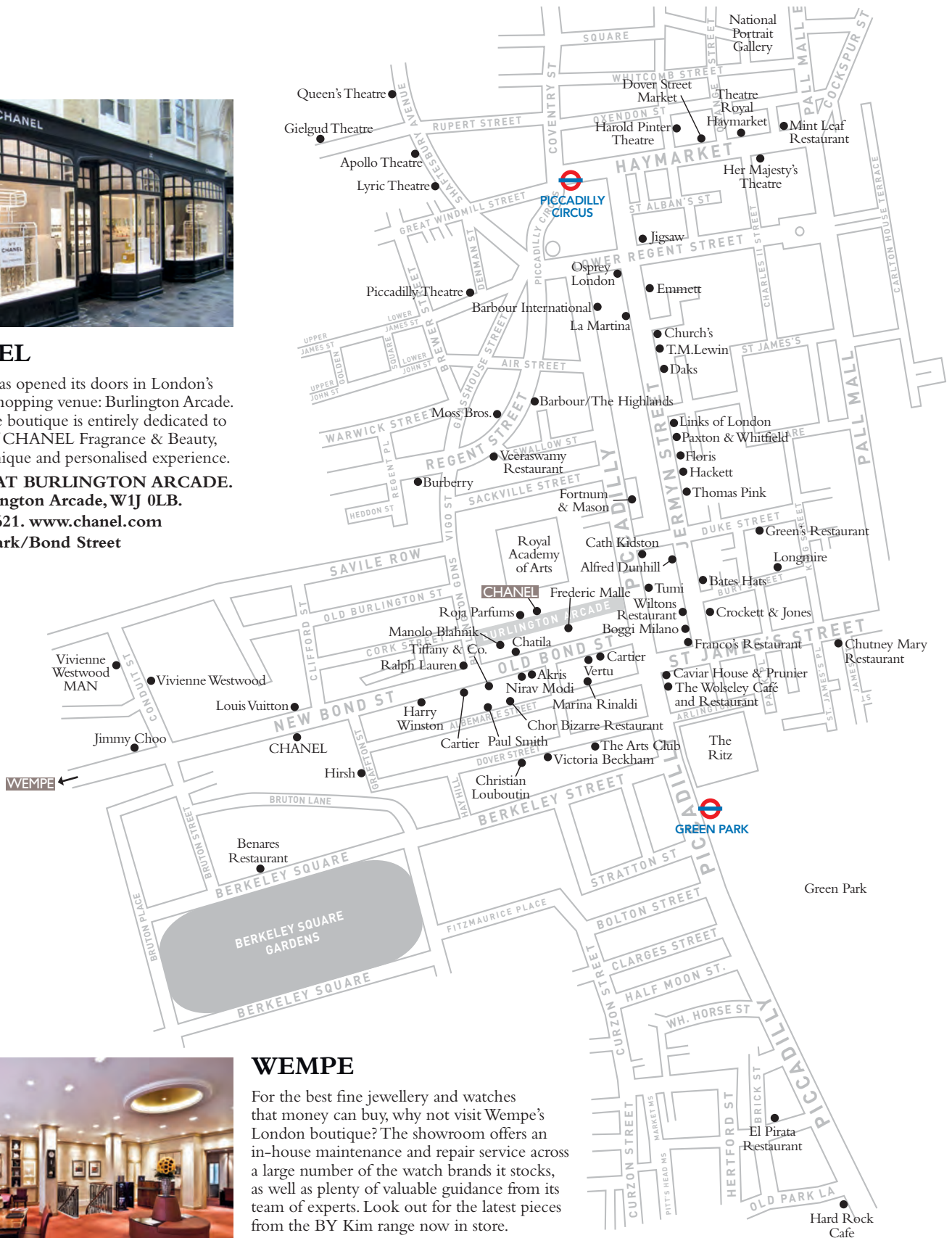
CHANEL has opened its doors in London's prestigious shopping venue: Burlington Arcade. The intimate boutique is entirely dedicated to the world of CHANEL Fragrance & Beauty, offering a unique and personalised experience.

CHANEL AT BURLINGTON ARCADE.

54-55 Burlington Arcade, W1J 0LB.

020 7629 7621. www.chanel.com

🚶 Green Park/Bond Street



WEMPE

For the best fine jewellery and watches that money can buy, why not visit Wempe's London boutique? The showroom offers an in-house maintenance and repair service across a large number of the watch brands it stocks, as well as plenty of valuable guidance from its team of experts. Look out for the latest pieces from the BY Kim range now in store.

43-44 New Bond Street, W1S 2SA.

020 7493 2299. www.wempe.com

🚶 Bond Street



EXPLORE MONTBLANC

Rediscover Montblanc's Bond Street boutique



For more than a century, Montblanc has created the finest writing instruments, timepieces, jewellery and leather goods, turning groundbreaking innovations such as the iconic Montblanc Meisterstück into timeless classics. Inspired by its positioning as the 'Maison of Fine Lifetime Companions', Montblanc unveils a new concept at its flagship Bond Street boutique that offers a dynamic and elegant retail environment.

Striking a balance between contemporary design and classical elegance, between its pioneering spirit and the traditions of craftsmanship, this boutique at the centre of Mayfair offers customers a multi-sensory experience, inviting them on a journey of discovery into the heart of the Montblanc universe. Through the eyes of designer Noé Duchaufour-Lawrance, the immersive retail environment is reminiscent of the Art Nouveau era that saw the birth of the Montblanc Maison, but with a distinctly contemporary twist.

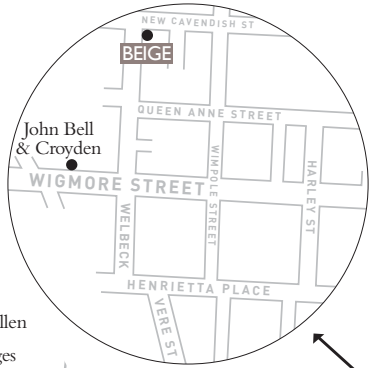
Cursive handwriting associated with the Montblanc fountain pen is the starting point for the overall design. The curve gesture that gives shape to the retail space evokes calligraphy and the culture of writing. The emblem, inspired by the snowcap of Mont Blanc and a symbol of the highest standards of perfection, triggers emotions and creates an atmosphere that is uniquely Montblanc, evoking both the Maison's dynamism and trajectory as it keeps evolving with the times to deliver products of perfect modernity and functionality.

On entering the space, the customer is invited to explore the Montblanc story on his or her own terms, to discover the diversity of the product offering in areas dedicated to each category, and to learn about the Maison's longstanding heritage by interacting with each piece. Join us in-store to see our new collections, including Summit, the Montblanc Smartwatch, in this beautifully crafted space.

119 New Bond Street, W1S 1EP. 020 7629 5883. www.montblanc.com

MAPS

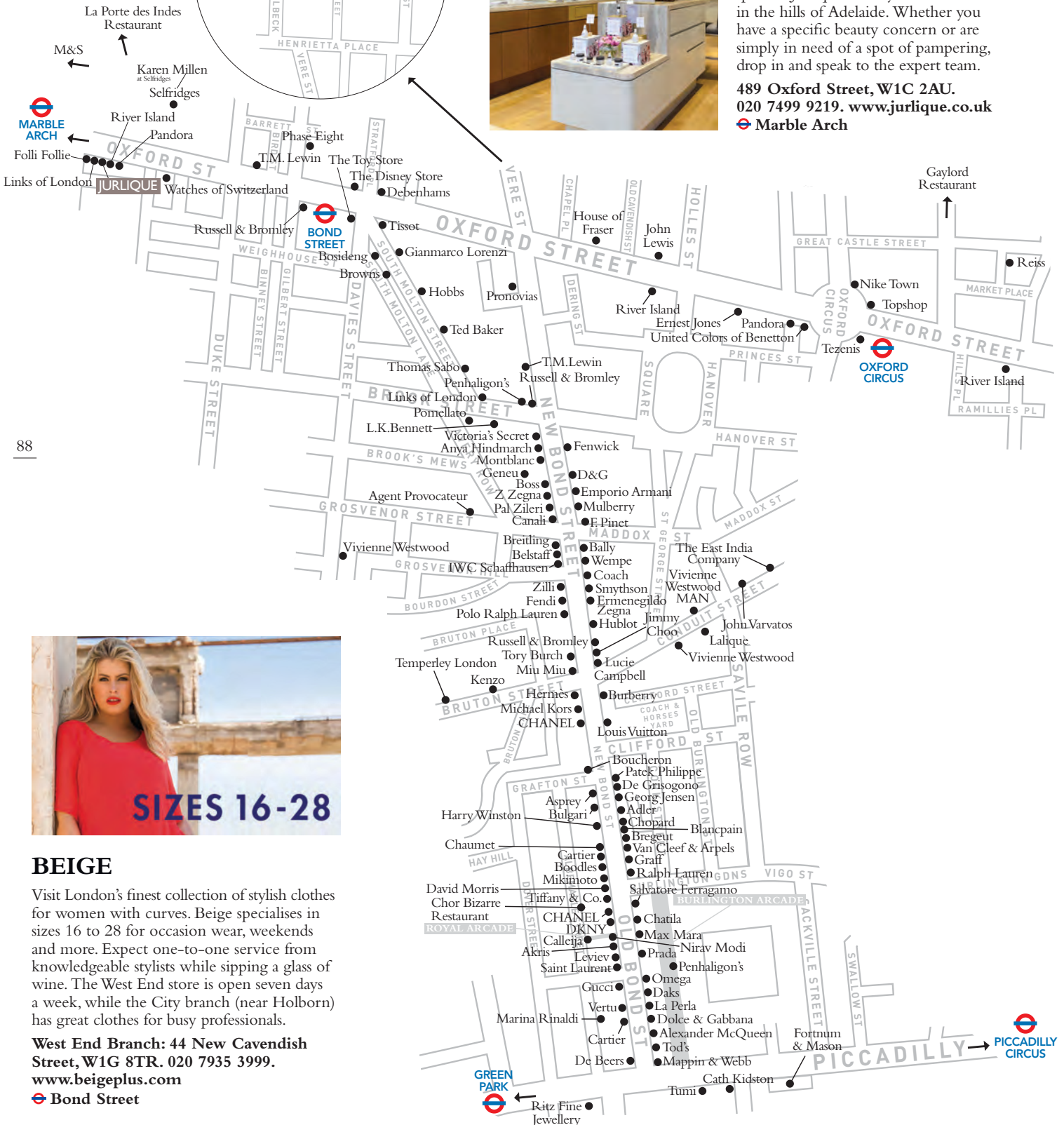
OXFORD STREET & BOND STREET | WI



JURLIQUE

This premium Australian skincare brand recently opened the doors of its first UK-based flagship store, offering an exciting array of products and spa treatments that capture the spirit of Jurlique's biodynamic farm in the hills of Adelaide. Whether you have a specific beauty concern or are simply in need of a spot of pampering, drop in and speak to the expert team.

489 Oxford Street, W1C 2AU.
020 7499 9219. www.jurlique.co.uk
Marble Arch



BEIGE

Visit London's finest collection of stylish clothes for women with curves. Beige specialises in sizes 16 to 28 for occasion wear, weekends and more. Expect one-to-one service from knowledgeable stylists while sipping a glass of wine. The West End store is open seven days a week, while the City branch (near Holborn) has great clothes for busy professionals.

West End Branch: 44 New Cavendish Street, W1G 8TR. 020 7935 3999.

www.beigeplus.com

Bond Street



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BEIGE

beigeplus.com



COACH

Coach House, the recently opened Regent Street flagship from the purveyor of modern luxury fashion and accessories, is a haven for fans of a more personalised Coach look. Head to the Craftsmanship Bar on the ground floor to monogram your purchases in a rainbow of colours and fonts, or make for the lower ground floor to partake in the creation of a one-of-a-kind Rogue Varsity Patch bag at the Made to Order Bar.

206 Regent Street, W1B 5BN.
020 7734 8472. www.coach.com
🚶 Oxford Circus

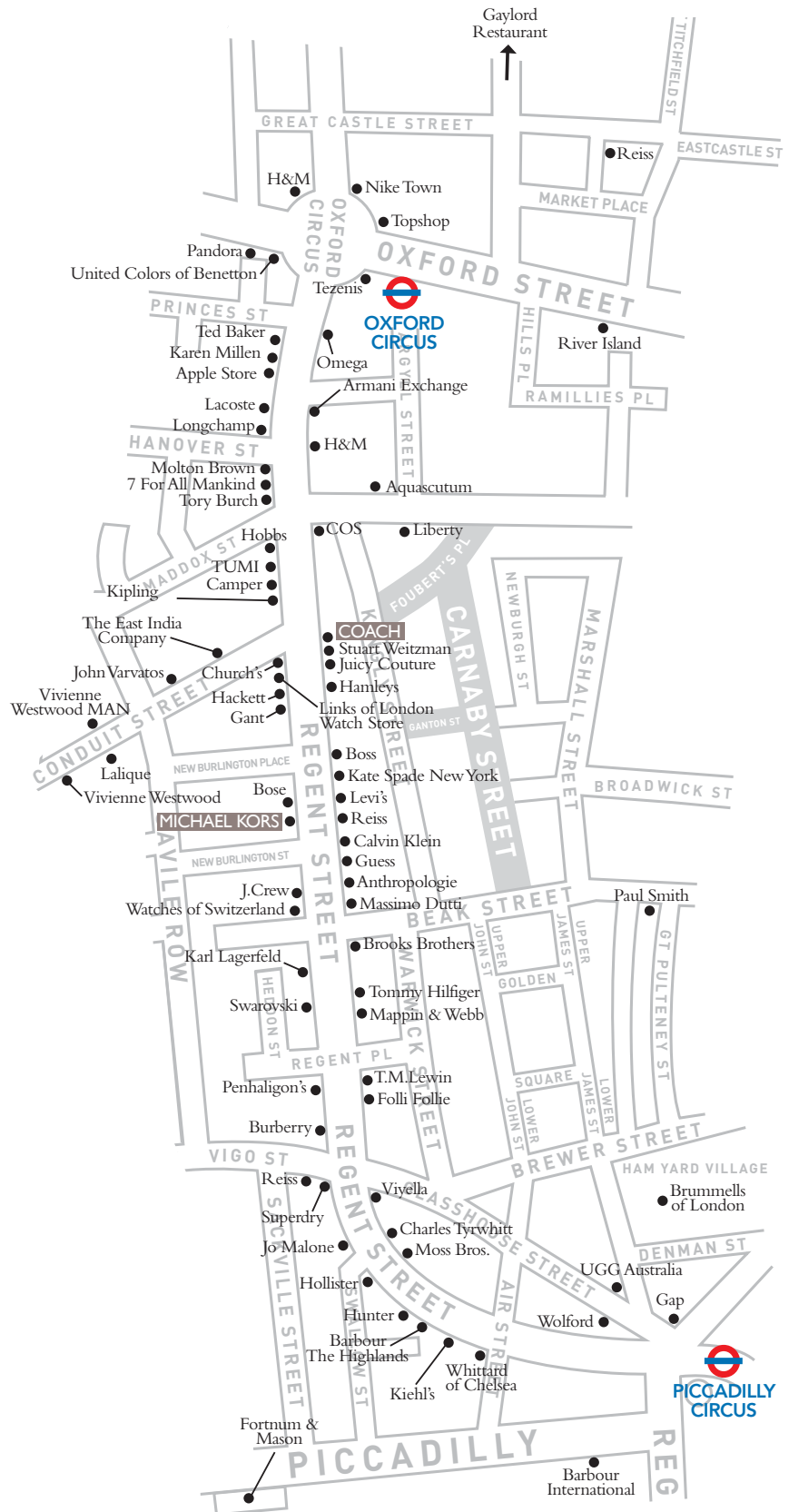
90



MICHAEL KORS

Regent Street now plays host to the largest Michael Kors store in Europe. Behind the historic façade lie three floors dedicated to modern glamour, offering an opportunity to discover the complete world of the Michael Kors brand in one stylish location. Browse, shop and enjoy the exceptional personal styling and service.

179 Regent Street, W1B 4JQ.
020 7659 3550. www.michaelkors.com
🚶 Oxford Circus/Piccadilly Circus



MAPS
COVENT GARDEN | WC2



CHANEL

Experience a range of services from leading Makeup Artists, Nail Technicians and Fragrance Experts inside the unique, avant-garde beauty boutique located at the heart of Covent Garden. Discover 58 square metres dedicated entirely to the world of CHANEL fragrance and beauty, with exclusive previews of the latest beauty trends direct from CHANEL.

**Unit 6a, Covent Garden Market,
WC2E 8RA. 020 3077 1198.
www.chanel.com**
 Covent Garden

MOUNT STREET & SURROUNDING AREA | W1



OSCAR DE LA RENTA

While fans await the unveiling of the work of Oscar de la Renta's new creative directors, Laura Kim and Fernando Garcia, there is much to enjoy in the brand's SS17 collection. Overseen by the studio team, pieces remain true to Oscar de la Renta's feminine aesthetic. Peasant-style dresses in ivory cotton and lace and gowns in embroidered tulle and lamé are among the highlights.

**130 Mount Street, W1K 3NY.
020 7493 0422. www.oscardelarenta.com**

Bond Street



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Global Blue



GEORG JENSEN

Georg Jensen is a Danish design house renowned for artistic boldness, superior craftsmanship and creative collaborations with some of the foremost designers of the past century – and today. Founded in 1904 by master silversmith Georg Jensen, its collections include silverware and flatware, fine jewellery, watches, accessories and a home collection. Visit the Georg Jensen flagship store located at 89 Mount Street for a complimentary glass of Champagne and to discover iconic Scandinavian jewellery, watches and homeware.

www.georgjensen.com

STOCKISTS



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T: 020 7823 1166

E: amaya@realindianfood.com

Private dining room seats 14



CHUTNEY MARY

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Open for breakfast from Monday to Friday; lunch and dinner from Monday to Saturday.

73 St James's Street, London SW1A 1PH

T: 020 7629 6688

E: chutneymary@realindianfood.com

Two private dining rooms seat 30 and 16



VEERASWAMY 1926

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Open for lunch and dinner seven days a week.

Mezzanine Floor, Victory House, 1st floor
99 Regent Street, London W1B 4RS

T: 020 7734 1401

E: veeraswamy@realindianfood.com

Private dining room seats 24

EL PIRATA

London's finest classic Spanish tapas bar and restaurant. According to two leading restaurant critics: "El Pirata offers me everything I look for in a restaurant. Fine food, excellent choice, comfortable surroundings, marvellous service and a bill at the end that doesn't give me indigestion!"... "A feast of tasty dishes. Starting with cold tapas, we nibbled huge prawns, juicy chorizo and ham, seafood and Russian salad. Then we received an array of hot tapas dishes which kept coming. Mmmm!" Add to this its award-winning wine list, and you will appreciate what makes this one of the capital's finest tapas bars and restaurants, as evidenced by the accolades it has received from three renowned guides, *Zagat*, *Harden's* and *Square Meal*.
 Mon-Fri 12pm-11.30pm, Sat 6pm-11.30pm, Sun Closed.


5-6 Down Street, W1J 7AQ.
 020 7491 3810/020 7409 1315.
www.elpirata.co.uk
 Green Park/ Hyde Park Corner



MANGO TREE

Mango Tree, situated in the heart of Belgravia, offers exquisite Thai cuisine and world-renowned hospitality in a modern and stylish environment. Its innovative yet classic cuisine is made from the finest ingredients. Enjoy genuine Thai dishes from the four main culinary regions: rich and mild dishes from the north, spicy food from the east, mild, Chinese-style dishes from the central region, and hot and spicy food from the south.

Mon-Wed 12pm-3pm, 6pm-11pm; Sat 12pm-2.30pm, 6pm-11.30pm;
 Sun 12pm-10.30pm.

46 Grosvenor Place, SW1X 7EQ
 (also in Harrods: 87-135 Brompton Rd, SW1X 7XL).
 020 7823 1888. www.mangotree.org.uk
 Victoria



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 CAMDEN, 25 PARKWAY
 ISLINGTON, 80 UPPER ST
 SOHO, 9 MARSHALL ST

INFO@MASALAZONE.COM
MASALAZONE.COM

PARTING SHOT



Defying gravity to push the boundaries of ceramics, Emily Gardiner is an innovator in her field, creating pieces that subvert expectations and inspire curiosity. Her *Deliverance* series uses incisions in oxide-loaded black clay to release a flowing, viscous white glaze. Precise positioning in the kiln and gentle manipulation of heat during the firing process enable Gardiner to suspend the glaze in motion, providing each piece with its own unique form and character.



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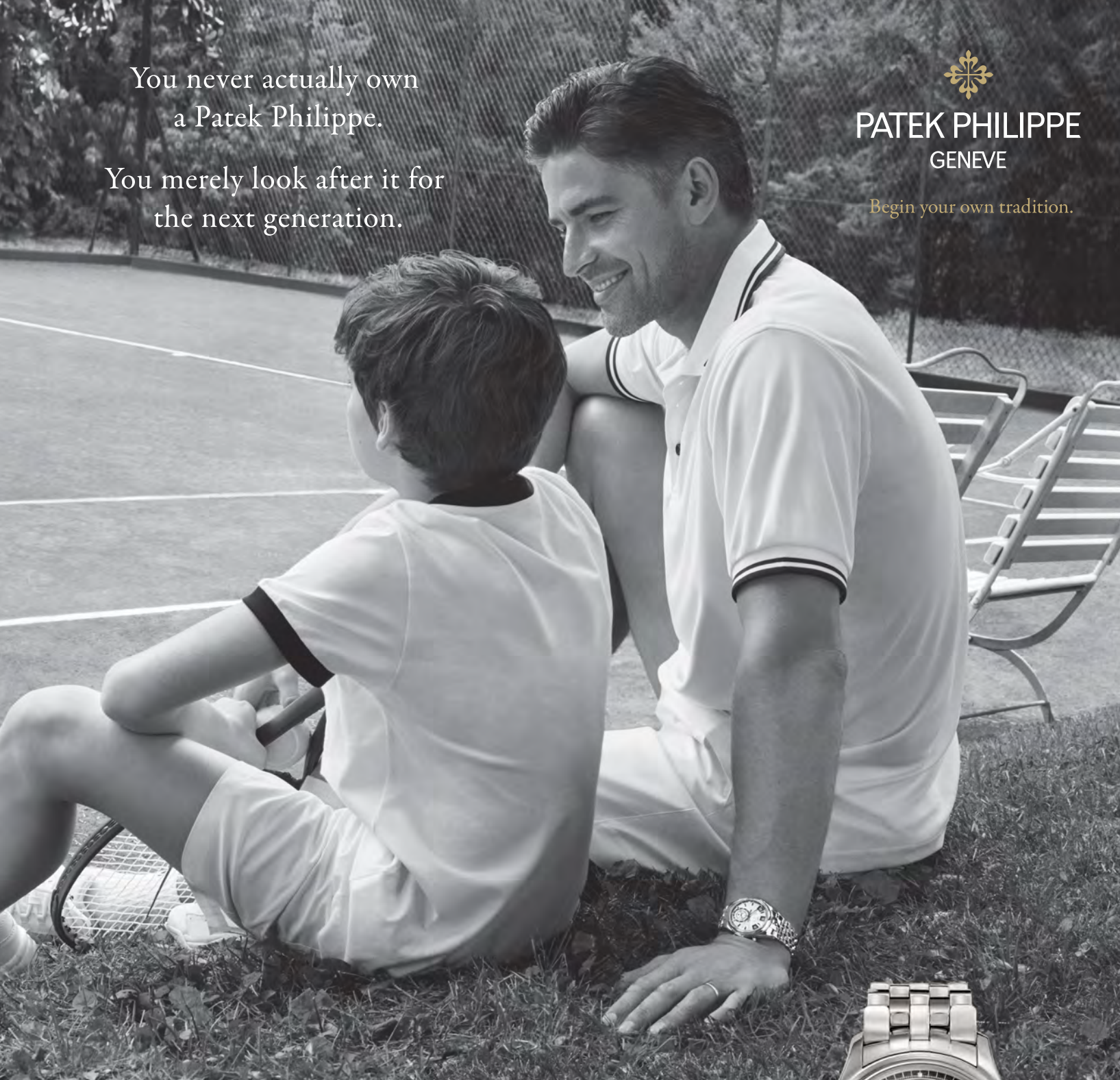
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