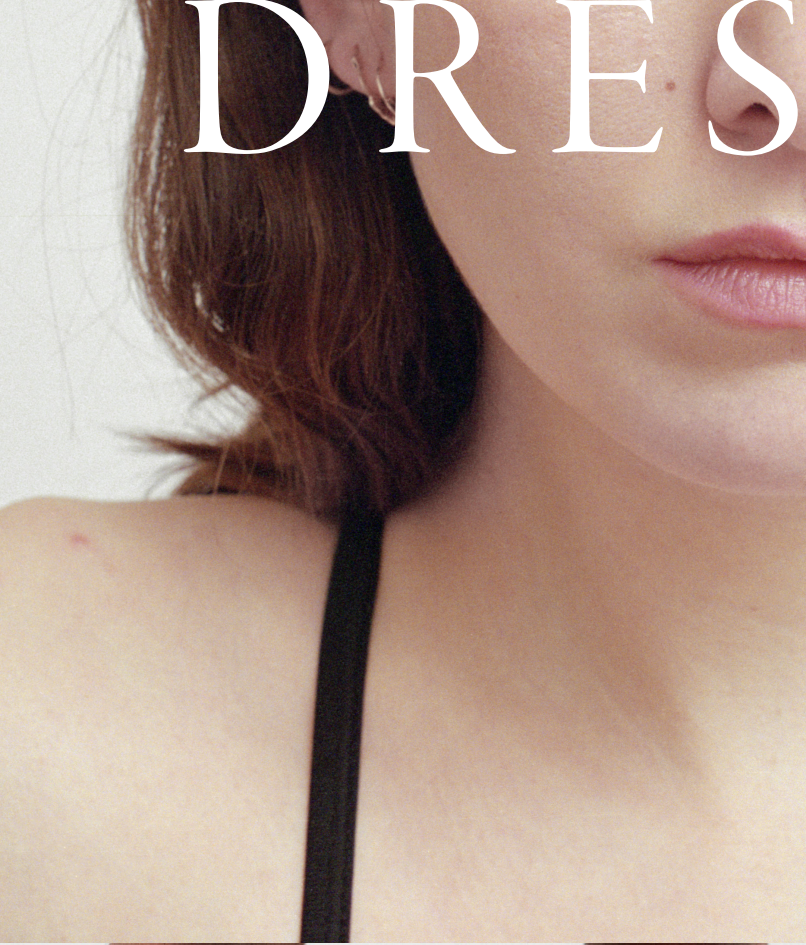


DRESSING



PAPERS

Fall 2025 / Issue 001 - On dressing and undressing



DRESSING PAPERS

Editor's *Letter*

In fashion, success often seems to hinge on anticipating the next big thing. The fashion zeitgeist constantly reflects on the most recent trends only to prepare for future ones. Fashion today is often explored through superficial statements, synonyms of excess and futility. Yet fashion is not just about tomorrow. It has always been, shaping our movements, attitudes and the way we perceive one another. Dressing and undressing are intimate rituals so familiar they have become insignificant; rituals shared by everyone, the pull of a sleeve, the fastening of a button; reflecting how we present ourselves within the world.

Dressing Papers focuses on dressing and undressing, using clothes and makeup not only for practicality but as a form of expression, work and armour. Could the smallest gestures, so ordinary they became invisible, be the start of us? The first issue explores those intimate moments, putting clothes on our body and taking them off. Whether it is to keep people at a distance or drawing them closer, what is everyone thinking when getting ready?

We have dressed these pages with experiences, senses, textures and interpretations; with everything that turns fabric into feeling so you could reimagine routines, understand environments or channel creativity. Through the juxtaposition of stories and images that may not make sense as a whole at first, we invite you to make this magazine yours, pairing it with your experience of fashion and of yourself. To understand society, we must first trace the seams that hold it together, the clothes that shape, conceal and reveal us. To understand ourselves, we must also understand the clothes we choose and what they choose for us. This is our attempt to unfold a corner of that world.

Good reading,

*Raphaëlle
Bergamo*



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Greta is a young photographer from Lithuania whose work often explores fashion narratives and the creativity of emerging designers. With her latest project, she returns to her roots, reflecting on the importance of personal space as a means of self-expression. Her photo series, *I Am Where I Am*, delves into the intimate relationship between identity and the bedroom – a private world where individuality unfolds away from the gaze of the public. Through her lens, Greta captures young women in their most authentic environments, surrounded by objects and details that quietly reveal who they are. The images are tender and sensorial, evoking the textures, moods and atmospheres of private life and highlighting how a room becomes both a mirror of the self and a stage for personal growth.

I am where I am

“The inspiration for this project comes from my own experience growing up in Lithuania, where I never had my own bedroom. I needed to share not only the room, but that private space with my mother. Even if all the items in the room were mine, I still didn’t feel that the room belonged to me. When I got my own room, I felt like I was discovering my new self through personal space. That’s when I started exploring people’s relationship with their environments and rooms.



In the end, we all get ready in the same way, even though we are all different. I have worked with more than 15 people and I see glimpses of the same routine in every place. But at the same time, everyone keeps their space personal and unique. I have a favourite quote: "A woman must have money and a room of her own if she is to write fiction" (Woolf, p.6). Individuals need to have their own room; it is a space where one can be themselves and express who they want to be. You wake up in the morning and you can decide what happens that day, how you look and how you dress. This helps shape your personality. Not only can fashion and clothing reflect identity, but the little things you use to decorate your room also speak about who you are; they are statements in themselves. A room is a space where an individual grows. As an individual myself, I can feel the difference between having my own bedroom and the time when I didn't, I can feel the influence of the environment."

Antonia







Ele









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Morgan



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Olivia





The Aesthetics **of Corduroy**

by Peter Knobler
Photographer Ed Gallucci

I'd known about corduroy pretty much all my life, but the knowledge had been transitory.

I was born and raised in Greenwich Village. I never learned how to play the guitar, quite simply because everybody else did. While the Long Island Rail Road mismanaged ramshackle millions shuttling my friends to the asphalt pastures of Washington Square Park, I was dying to run on the suburbs' junior-high-school baseball fields. The ecstatic feeling of grass under my sneakers (Converse, of course—at the time the pros' favorite, the soul shoe) was second only to the heart-satisfying “pong” I heard when my “Spaldeen” Hit the Point (that sharp angle where vertical meets horizontal) playing stoopball in the street. It was a city life, and I must have looked like a city kid.

One year I wore my sneakers, my “Verses,” from September through June, interrupted only by high school dances and the occasional date. I was a fanatic about it. There was a ballgame any minute and I couldn't risk missing the start. My black Levis were worn to a faded grey, matched like a swatch by the shade of sooty asphalt my street showed in the spring. A bright yellow sun brought out the recessive filth in both of them.

I'd known about corduroy pretty much all my life, but the knowledge had been transitory. My baby overalls were a deep chocolate cord—thick, soft, supple—with large round buttons at each shoulder. With a miniature green turtleneck, I was a bohemian's delight. This, in 1949.

My cotton corduroys got cuffs later on, got baggy, even got help from suspenders, which I took for granted—too young to have seen W.C. Fields, too thin to have a belly to stretch them. Suspenders held up kids' corduroys like Howdy Doody's Clarabelle resisted a schpritz: with great and inconstant difficulty.

By the time junior high school came around I was wearing blue, white or black jeans. Corduroy, I figured, was kid's cloth; jeans stood up on the block. You'd generally do in a pair of Levis and your season's second pair of Converse at about the same time, if you didn't outgrow them first.

Then suddenly, as the '60s were becoming a thing, my life was transformed; senior year I danced in the bridal party of Clark's Desert Boots and corduroy, the perfect marriage. I was still into sports but by then had a recent past filled with work shirts and folk music (the two are synonymous), and thin-wale cords were both appropriately austere and exquisitely sloppy-funky. I had found my style.

If anything was ever not neat, it was corduroy...and me. (Neatness was a major parental concern back then.) Yet when I matched a solid yellow button-down Oxford shirt with beige cords, a brown belt and my Desert Boots, and went out in semi-innocence looking for funky women—theyself in denim and solid pullovers, long hair parted in the middle ala Joan Baez, and all the words to “Springhill Mining Disaster” in their heads—I walked the very thin line between ersatz-bohemia and the look of casual wealth. Corduroy wouldn't accept a blue blazer; it transformed a white shirt into a cosmic statement, slummed with sneakers and gave what may have been a generation an alternative to madras.

And corduroys remember. I had sand in my pockets for weeks after a particularly meaningful episode with a young love at the beach. Grass stains spotted my knees like a scorecard from April through October from those wondrous moments I got to play shortstop on real grass. Sit on chewing gum and it left a scar. Cords were my diary.

But, like most of the trappings of those innocents who quite unsuspectingly pick up on hints before they become trends, corduroys have gone commercial (the most damning folk epithet). The selection is now immense, styles from high-waisted to low-hipped, colors from good to garish. They've lost their significance, their specificity, their soul. They're no signal anymore, no step outward, no beacon, no big deal.

It's a pity. Corduroys were proletarian pants—beatniks wore them On the Road, workers wore them baggily at home, and union organizers used them for almost symbolic admission into the working class. Who, a few years from now, will look back on his/her old pre-fab psychedelic/mod/freaky-fashionable polyester-blend clothing and feel a union with history? Woody Guthrie wore corduroys, I'll bet you. Bob Dylan certainly did. Me too.

Will the fire-fast fashions hopping on and off fresh legs have the same transcendent beauty, the same glorious hint of fading innocence, the same personal feel to them as my beloved chocolate cords? Will each swaggering hitch still recall the first time they came so hesitantly, carnally down? Will they hold you? Will they love you? I think not.

Corduroys, on the other hand, live.

Clowning, an act of *exposure*

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with Cailin and Sally



Sally and Cailin are artists and clowns who met five years ago at Slade School of Fine Arts. Both were already using performance in their practices, but it is through a common friend that they found their way into the world of clowning. Their trio "Hotwood" quickly became a duo: "Plowman and Cummins". Clowning, for Cai and Sally, has something to do with negotiating the worlds of art and performance. It's an act of exposure. As they explain to me in their studio in Bethnal Green, clowning is a practice of listening: to the room, to the laughter (or silence) and to the performer's own shifting state of mind. One way they describe it is as a process of peeling back layers, revealing something raw and human beneath the costume. Of course, there are endless theories about what it means to be a clown. But for them, the work is rooted in that balance: honesty, risk and the absurd beauty that comes from holding both at once.

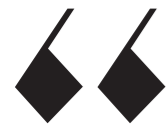


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Sally in her clown drag.

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One of the fundamental things about being in costume is that it changes your mindset.



Sally

What is your favourite thing about your clown costume?

Cailin

One of the fundamental things about being in costume – and most performers say this – is that it changes your mindset. I think we both feel the same way about this, you put it on and you snap into a different zone.

Yes.

As Jacques Lecoq famously said, the red nose is the smallest mask. In clown workshops, you're often told never to let the audience see you put it on, because witnessing the transformation breaks the magic.

Right, a lot of clown performers we admire have that one element that snaps them into clown mode. For example, Julia Massey's bowling shoes.

I think for me it would be a chunky high heel. When costumes change the way you move.

And that ties into how they shape identity and persona. In our duo, we often talk about power, who feels like the boss, and the costume helps decide that and reflect our different energies as clowns.

The bagginess of my costume makes me feel like Justin Bieber. That little bit of cheeky swagger is important.

Bieber is essential to our duo.



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Even if no one else sees the resemblance, it changes how I feel. But as the costume maker of the duo, what do you enjoy more? Making them or wearing them?

Probably wearing them because as you said, it gets me in character. Something about the shoes and the fingerless gloves I always wear makes me feel like a ruffian about to do something naughty. And I am. But I also love making costumes. I used to make historical costumes professionally, which influence my work now. I am trying to reimagine clown costumes for women. Historically slapstick and clowning have been dominated by men – the Marx Brothers and Buster Keaton – and often misogynistic. I don't want to be sexualized, so I like to remove myself as a woman when performing.

Which often means being androgynous, essentially looking like a man. For women in comedy, the challenge is how to be neutral without just copying that canon.

I think that's why I like wearing my big frilly petticoat with a dress over it that gives me a bell-like shape. The froufrou is quite feminine but my shape is completely concealed. There's tension in wanting to disappear from being read sexually while also enjoying femininity. Men can escape being read through gender in a way women can't. So I think a lot about this when making the costumes, I want us to be funny but also visually striking. Maybe that's the artist in me.

Exactly. Sometimes I'll wear the big pink gown you made. It's incredibly feminine, almost princess-like. But then we do grotesque actions in it. That counterbalance is powerful.

And our differences in costume and the way we approach gender also highlight our different energies as performers.

Which is the heart of clowning: how we actually feel onstage. Funny, powerful.

Funny, powerful, interesting. Or what's the thing?

I think it is captivating, interesting, funny.
Do you think our costumes are as important for the audience as they are for us?

Because we make our own costumes and props, they draw the audience into the world of the show. We want the audience to have deep faith in us to really get immersed into our universe. I think the costumes create a visual language, everything is familiar but slightly wrong. A beautiful gown that's absurdly large, trousers that are tailored but drag on the floor. That slight distortion is the same thing we're doing with behaviour: taking etiquette of everyday interactions and twisting them until they become nonsense.

Right. What would a clown wear to work? How would a clown cut hair? That's where your ruffled hairdressing capes came from. So impractical but funny, normal objects made ridiculous. And as a hairdresser, I can tell you this would be really impractical.

And as a hairdresser, what about hair and makeup?

Hair and makeup work the same way. Different wigs completely change the character, they are both props and costumes. I made a lot of new wigs we need to try because ours have become so disgusting.

[Laughs] Every ruined wig tells the story of the amount of times they've been thrown on the floor, spayed in water, covered in shaving foam.

And hair as a concept is so integral to people's representation of themselves, they have strong opinions and attachment to it.

I think they also help us stay neutral. My real hair helps me feel beautiful and connected to myself as a woman. Onstage, it almost feels too beautiful, too revealing. A bald cap or ugly wig frees me from that.

And it helps us distinguish ourselves too. We're the same height, with similar hair and wigs and makeup creates contrast. Our dynamic needs to be visually clear.

People read contrast into a duo, even if they're the same. At first, we didn't wear any makeup and didn't have a red nose. But the reason why clowns use them is that it amplifies facial expressions. The clown Ella the Great told us that makeup helps the audience read expressions from afar.

Each clown should emphasise the features they use most. You rely on your eyebrows, I use my mouth.

But we also have to think critically about the racist roots of certain clown traditions, blackface minstrel influences on exaggerated mouths for example. That's a history we want nothing to do with.

Exactly. We draw inspiration from tradition but classic forms of slapstick are really imbued with a lot of awful things and racism.

Hair as a concept is so integral to people's representation of themselves.

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What is your favourite memory as a clown?

Can I talk about a wardrobe malfunction?

I think I know which one... Go ahead.

We once performed as horses in a stand-up night, a last minute performance. We were wearing beautiful costumes with enormous horse heads but as we were in a basement, the ceiling was so low we couldn't stand up and kept hitting our heads.

Oh God, that was the worst we have ever done on stage.

It was dead silent you remember? Someone had their head in their hands, it was really embarrassing and the costume made it worse. That's the risk of clowning, you're already in a ridiculous position so when it fails, it really does.

And you actually feel like a clown.

I think we all just lost faith. The costumes then become disconnected from the way you're performing and the way you're feeling.

Yeah, it was a bit weird. Anyway, that was maybe our worst memory then.

Not the best but a funny one.

Wigs made by Silly in their studio in Bethnal Green, London.



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Who's your style icon?

“
*It was really embarrassing.
 The costume made it worse.*”

Maybe Andy Pomerico.

I thought you were going to say me.

Well, obviously, Sally Plowman. The artist Sally Plowman. And a big cake. A blancmange is my style icon. Oh my God and Harpo Marx.



Style icon. And Pauline Lenoir.

Pauline Lenoir, of course. I think I like to go big. I feel good when I'm taking up space because it really brings me out of myself.

Style icon, cake.

Maybe I'm just hungry. I just watched the movie *Daisies* where they eat loads of food and wear really beautiful dresses. It's on my mind. And I like 1830s to 1860s fashion. But that's kind of irrelevant to Clowning. Or is it?

I don't think it's irrelevant. I think nothing is really irrelevant because it's in there.

No, you're right. And what do 1830s to 1860s dresses look like? Cakes. And you? Who's your style icon? I know the answer already.

Justin Bieber. I just think he's got a lot of... swag. He has real clown energy in his clothes, always wearing 20-sizes-too-big trousers.

He sure activates his inner clown. Do you think there's any kind of freedom in dressing as a clown, exaggerating, breaking rules that everyday fashion doesn't allow?

I definitely feel more confident experimenting, even in normal clothes.

Costume forces you to figure out what makes you feel good because feeling insecure kills the comedy. I also love the contrast between being in a clown costume and changing back into my everyday clothes after a show. That shift makes me feel amazing.

Do you want to look at some of our costumes?

Dressing Papers: Yes, please.”



Kate getting ready in the morning



Chasing authenticity: Fashion's paradox

Addison Rae promotes her album in stilettos and a bare face: a high-gloss anti-makeup ad. Meanwhile, Charli XCX has embodied a new cultural archetype with BRAT: the feral 'It Girl'. She's excessive, uncontrollable, and she parties in thigh-high boots and micro shorts. The real statement isn't in the clothes but in the refusal to conform. They resist the pressure to appear composed in a culture that worships order, but is this a genuine break, or just another trend cycle in disguise?



What's in my bag?

“What's in My Bag?” draws inspiration from the curated transparency of social media influencers and celebrities and the pressure to reveal yourself. Today, audiences seem to expect more than just a glimpse of what's inside a bag; they crave access to the person behind it. But can we truly know someone who reveals only what they choose to share?

This project is looking into what is deemed essential in our day to day lives and the content used to share amongst audiences. It examines our fascination with public figures, how we follow their recommendations, buy what they wear and navigate those parasocial relationships. At the center of this concept is an ice purse sculpture, slowly melting to expose its contents. What can be real when the facade dissolves?

Photographer Sammi C Wong
Creative Producer Liya Yang
Ice sculpture Emery Gluck
Designer Raul Vela
Stylist Nuha Hussain
MUA Dennese Rodriguez
Hair Nadya Vlasova
Talent Jess Hu
Lighting assistant John Kim
Assistant Alan Phan





Fashion has always toggled between concealment and revelation, shaping not only bodies but social hierarchies. Before the French Revolution, aristocrats flaunted luxury fabrics and jewels to distinguish themselves from commoners. When the codes cracked, clothing became political; a hat could signal allegiance as much as taste. Authenticity itself became revolutionary, an antidote to artifice. That impulse hasn't disappeared. Today's messy eyeliner, undone bun, or chaotic outfit carries the same refusal: a pushback against the airbrushed perfection that ruled Instagram's first decade.

The double bind, however, remains. Women in particular are expected to be "put together," from public life to private rituals. I remember being forced into dresses at family gatherings while my brothers ran free in pants. The explanation was blunt: you're a girl. Fashion history abounds with these silent binds—like the crinoline, a literal cage disguised in fabric. As sociologist Angela McRobbie notes, fashion and beauty culture now function as a subtler patriarchy: women appear to choose perfection, discipline, and body-consciousness "for themselves," even while cultural codes script those desires. Energy spent curating the self is energy diverted from the voice.

And yet, fashion is not frivolous. Clothing can be resistance, passion, or art. What matters is intention. To dress only for seduction or conformity is to serve others' expectations; to dress as self-expression is to reclaim one's own convictions.





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The early 2020s belonged to the “clean girl”: slick bun, glowy skin, immaculate nails. She promised that perfection was achievable through discipline. But aspiration is heavy. To look effortless requires endless effort. No wonder the pendulum swings toward chaos again. Beauty now seeks imperfection: smudged eyeliner at dawn, an outfit thrown together in haste, a look that feels alive. It Girls like Gabriette, chain-smoking in black on the sidewalk, or Alex Consani, twisting supermodel glam into TikTok parody, embody this shift. They refuse to be only beautiful. We want beauty unruly, authenticity visible—even staged.

◆◆ *Yes, authenticity will be commodified; rebellion will become uniform.* ◆◆

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The hunger for transparency extends beyond fashion. Brands reveal ateliers and backstage processes. Food packaging highlights origins. Influencers cry on camera. The “behind-the-scenes” is no longer a bonus; it is the product. In an unstable world, authenticity—real or performed—offers closeness and reassurance.

But here lies the paradox. Addison’s bare face still markets a record. Charli’s chaos is still choreography. What looks spontaneous is carefully chosen. Mess is now marketable; flaws are aestheticized. Gen Z knows this better than anyone: every micro-style, from Clean Girl to Office Siren, is instantly named, archived, consumed. When everything is branded, how do you create something truly your own?

Irony may be the answer. Not concealing the mask, but wearing it knowingly, laughing at it. Because the paradox never vanishes: the more we reveal ourselves, the more we build masks. Acknowledging this becomes its own form of honesty.

Fashion has always mediated distance and proximity, surface and depth. Today’s consumers wear their values just as revolutionaries once wore their politics. Perhaps what we’re seeing is not simply a trend cycle but a deeper shift: a desire to connect not through polish, but through vulnerability. Yes, authenticity will be commodified; rebellion will become uniform. But naming the mask grants agency. Maybe the revolution lies in playing with it openly—admitting we want to look good, admitting we want to be seen.



Dressing

*in
the
Dark*

This morning, Solange and Lucien argue again. This time about the garden: he insists plants must be watered daily, she counters that two or three times a week is more than enough. She leaves the room, annoyed and muttering under her breath. Moments later, Lucien calls her back. He wants to go for a walk around the house and needs help with his trainers.

Without hesitation, she comes back and starts helping him with his socks, reminding him of the precautions the doctors emphasized for his walks.

When couples bicker, you find their love in body language, in the unconscious choreography of shared space. Solange and Lucien have been together for decades, 67 years to be exact, and to say that nothing has changed would be naive. Everything changes constantly. They moved around, had kids and grand kids, saw them grow and leave, got sick, recovered and got sick again. And they fight, a lot, about everything. Yet, you couldn't imagine one without the other. Solange runs the household with an iron fist, her heels matching her accessories. She maintains order in their shared spaces while delivering a steady stream of commentary about Lucien. Because of his illness, his mobility is reduced and he cannot do much by himself.

However, his mind remains sharp and uncompromising. He knows exactly what he wants and feels no obligation to soften his requests, a directness that never fails to exasperate her. His physical limitations have created an inevitable dependency that neither of them discusses explicitly but both navigate with practiced efficiency. So many years spent side by side tend to erase tender gestures.

Yet, the intimate ritual of dressing and undressing, Solange's patient assistance and wordless communication, hands knowing exactly where support is needed, may be their deepest and most intimate love language. Sometimes, words are replaced with gestures; sometimes it would be useless to express when you can prove. These moments, behind closed doors, reveal what endures when everything else has been worn out by time: deep care manifesting itself through the most basic human acts of helping another body move through the world.

Clothes evolve beyond their primary role and serve as means for connection. To dress another is to witness them at their most vulnerable. To be dressed by another is to entrust them with the self.

It is not merely about the garments themselves, but about the ritual of putting them on. Fabric and touch become markers for trust.

Dressing and undressing become the proof that if the years can alter things,
love remains in rituality.



*Lucien and Solange at Circuit Paul Ricard in 1992
Lucien and Solange's archive*

Buttoned Up!



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Rowan is a young artist who incorporates the use of buttons into her artistic practice. She believes "buttons have spirit" and elevates her pieces by mismatching them, creating something new from fairly basic objects.

"I inherited a biscuit tin of buttons by hanging around at portobello market at pack up time on a Friday," she recalls, "I wanted a job from Andrew who sells fabric there, but all he gave me was bits and pieces he hadn't sold that day. I gave away the majority of it to a friend, except the buttons that I kept and put in the dishwasher when I got home. I love when sewing feels like cooking. » she explains.

Rowan's fascination with buttons pushes back against the anonymity of contemporary fashion. Today, the buttons on ready-to-wear garments are designed to disappear – neutral, discreet, unremarkable. But history reminds us that they were never meant to be silent. Buttons have long carried the power to signal personality and status.

In high fashion, they still do. For Schiaparelli, accessories and buttons are widely part of the brand's visual language. For his first ready-to-wear collection as creative director of the house, Daniel Roseberry transformed the button from a mere fastener into an emblematic detail; golden nipples and sculptural closures that became not just functional elements, but bold signatures of the brand.

Bone, wood, metal, plastic, beads... The possibilities are endless and not new. History has seen many of them. In the Middle Ages, with the invention of the buttonhole, they became markers of wealth and status, often made with precious metals and stones. By the 17th and 18th centuries, buttons had turned into luxuries. Handcrafted and elaborated, they became the ultimate status symbol, sometimes worth more than the actual garments worn by nobility. Later, cufflinks would inherit that role. They emerged during the 15th century as an elegant replacement for ribbons and lace in securing shirt sleeves. Called "sleeve buttons" in French, they serve the same functional purpose as traditional buttons, but with elevated formality and sophistication, and play the role of status symbol in menswear.

The military, too, codified meaning into buttons. An anchor, an eagle, a star: each fastening can convey hierarchy, culture and identification. Each service has its distinctive buttons: for example, the US army has worn eagle buttons since 1808 while Navy buttons traditionally feature anchors. Even their number, material and placement on the garment can serve as visual identifiers, and each country has its set of traditions.

Yves Saint Laurent

I love gold buttons, for me they are, a woman's daytime jewellery.

But at their core, buttons are still the simplest and most accessible form of closure. Our fingers know them instinctively, are able to find and fasten them in the dark. Online, people are sharing tutorials and inspirations to sew buttons onto basic pieces. Yves Saint Laurent once said that "buttons are a woman's daytime jewellery" and it seems that a lot of people, just as Rowan is, are rediscovering this truth. When fashion seems stuck in a loop, a way of reimagining our dressing rituals might reside in the simplest objects. As Rowan explained, "the buttons are pretty plastic and tacky individually but they look precious when they're all together."





Photographer Ale Pérez Torres
Model Jude James-McKay
Talent Agency Northern Soul Agency
Styling Assistant Jimena Martinez



The Personal Uniform

Lynn Yaeger's signature bow-shaped lipstick. Anna Wintour's iconic bob framing a pair of dark sunglasses. Karl Lagerfeld's fingerless gloves. Each cultivated a visual signature so distinctive it became inseparable from their identity. But the hunger for relevance, the urge to fit in sometimes feels stronger than the search for personal style. In our age of microtrends, where algorithms dictate what fills our closets and sidewalks, having a strong sense of style might be exactly what we need. Indeed, these people understood something we've forgotten: that when everyone else is wearing the same thing, true originality might be wearing the same thing as yourself, every single day.

By definition, the uniform marks belonging; to an organization, a school, a group of people. But personal uniform is a self-authored code, a curated consistent style adopted by one that strip down the routine and extract identity. Have you ever wondered why cartoon characters are so memorable? Probably because of their one (very recognizable) outfit.

Uniforms are often associated with an idea of restraint and imperative. In reality, the brilliance of building a personal uniform lies in its paradox: by limiting choices, it actually amplifies individual expression: a repeated silhouette doesn't erase personality; it amplifies it. When individuals establish consistent style parameters, subtle variations become more meaningful precisely because they occur within defined boundaries. Perhaps it is time to stop reading repetition as monotony and start reading it as identity. A personal uniform is not a prison. It is a signature.



Redefining the uniform

Kade is 25 and works in charity. His wardrobe only revolves around a strict trio of colours: black, white and red. For him, the uniform isn't about blending in — it's about creating a distinct silhouette and rhythm that make him feel most himself: "It has always felt personal. And that's what I'm interested in, curating something consistent and recognisable, even if it only matters to me." Even shopping becomes an intentional act rather than a frantic search for novelty, it is a quiet bind that holds everything together and challenges his creativity. "This palette has bled into other areas of my visual life, everything in my room follows the same rules: books, trinkets and tchotchkes, music equipment, flower preferences. I even settled on the job I have now because the lanyards match the holy three," he says, "It's both a streamlining process and a challenge. I never have to think about what I'm wearing; everything goes together by default. Fortunately, it forces me to be more adventurous in other ways: working with proportion, texture, and layering in ways I don't remember doing before."

Stories like Kade's remind us that uniforms are not prisons, but signatures — small daily acts of self-definition. Perhaps it is time to stop reading repetition as monotony and start reading it as identity.

By definition, the uniform marks belonging; to an organization, a school, a group of people. But personal uniform is a self-authored code, a curated consistent style adopted by one that strips down the routine and extract identity. Have you ever wondered why cartoon characters are so memorable? Probably because of their one (very recognizable) outfit.

The psychology of consistency

"Encloded cognition" refers to the effect of clothing on our mental and emotional processes, how we think and perceive ourselves. The American social psychologist Adam Galinsky suggests that encloded cognition depends on both the symbolic meaning of the garment and the physical experience of wearing it. Society's perception plays a role, just as the way one takes possession of a piece does: it is a deeply personal yet cultural experience. A lab coat not only protects but confers authority. A blazer can turn hesitation into confidence. Building a personal brand grounds you, it is the foundation of your activities and the extension of your personality. The artist Austyn Weiner echoes this sentiment when she reflects on her own practice in a Vogue interview from 2019: "Albert Einstein, Andy Warhol, Karl Lagerfeld and Steve Jobs were all artists in uniform, they minimized their attention to vanity to maximize creative output." She says, "In the studio, I have a ritual of wearing the same pants every day. I like seeing the paint build-up, and the texture rises from the fabric. It becomes a map of my labor, the palette and the combat of it all." The personal uniform is not a retreat from creativity, but a framework through which selfhood is expressed and protected.

Consistency is not about fear of change but clarity. It is a testimony of confidence, an affirmation of personality. Trust follows assurance, creating a sense of reliability that extends beyond the wardrobe. Visual consistency becomes a metaphor for character.

Uniforms in culture

As military uniforms historically served to create shared identity and foster unit cohesion, the psychological power of uniforms lies in their ability to transform individual identity into collective belonging. A beret on a beatnik, a biker's leather jacket, a hippie's tie-dye haze: clothes speak, sometimes louder than words. They draw borders, they signal belonging, they shout belief. For subcultures, clothes create the border between them and the masses. Real electricity comes in the twist, when a shared code is bent, stretched and made personal. That's where the pull between blending in and standing apart is the strongest. The tension that exists in twisting a uniform creates powerful forces in shaping who we are, both as individuals and as part of groups. The personal uniform isn't about giving up creativity — it's about channeling it more intentionally. Within a broader cultural shift, it takes on new significance. Acknowledging how clothing shapes our social interactions and cultural meaning is creating new spaces for expression. In a world where individuality is being erased for the sake of trends, consistency starts to feel radical. A steady silhouette becomes not the style but honesty, a quiet resistance in a noisy world.



01



02



03



03

THE PERSONAL UNIFORM
 Sasha Smithie *getting ready for the day.*
 Styling Raphaëlle Bergamo
 Creative Direction Raphaëlle Bergamo
 Photography Raphaëlle Bergamo
 Assistant Lina Levein

Resurgence in *crisis*

Today we find ourselves in a constant state of crisis: when it seems that the world is making progress, a new catastrophe (or world leaders' bad decisions) make the headlines. When social emergencies are closer to home than ever, when it takes a couple of minutes for a crisis to reach our screen and get lost between ephemeral trends and humoristic videos, finding an anchor becomes crucial. Everything seems fragile, from the job market to housing situations, and we don't need to add decision making to our routine. For the American street photographer Bill Cunningham, "Fashion is the armor to survive the reality of everyday life". It is a form of empowerment that can allow us to reclaim ownership of ourselves. A routine, something stable and repetitive, enabling individuals to transform actions and thinking into a mechanical process. Some are dreading it, others are working for it, but routines can free the mind while boosting productivity and creativity. Getting ready becomes part of your routine and your routine becomes part of your outfit – what makes you feel safe, stable and good. Routines serve as psychological anchors precisely because they create predictable patterns in an unpredictable world. When external circumstances feel chaotic, internal consistency becomes a form of resistance against overwhelm. The routine, the self and the way you present yourself to the world are all part of a symbiotic relationship. And reinforcing identity is about creating enough stability to navigate change with confidence, to handle evolving circumstances.

To build a uniform is not to buy ten of the same T-shirt. It is to set a palette, a shape, a rhythm and work within them. It is to resist the noise of endless trends and cultivate a vocabulary of self. Not to be mistaken with restrained creativity, it can be the beginning of new possibilities. In a world addicted to novelty, authenticity speaks louder in consistency and when trends fade away, style remains. It is when the rules have been set that they are the most interesting and fun to break.

*

I've never really understood why women are so timid. For me, only someone with a powerful look –

Diana Vreeland, say, or Minnie Mouse – is a person worth emulating.

Because – and here is a big secret – if you construct an eccentric look and make it your own, you will be forever insulated from the world of fashion, a place where, let's face it, you can never be lissome enough, your hair never curly (or straight) enough, your chest never full (or flat) enough.

And here's an added bonus:

Truly wacky style doesn't date, so all those worries about wrinkles leave you blissfully unaffected.

*





Photography Alejandro Perez Torres

Art Direction & Styling Raphaele Bergamo

Talent Mayowa Adeniji
Talent Agency Models1 Agency

Is there a way to properly take off clothes?
Mayowa is getting undressed for *Dressing Papers*.









Joan Didion's

packing list

A poem, an order: TO PACK AND WEAR.

The soft violence of routine, a life reduced to a list. In 1979, Joan Didion scanned and included in her book 'The White Album' her packing list. It was for her reporting trips, when the novelist and journalist who inspired a generation of writers needed to be light-footed and quick-minded to decrypt both America and her own personal life. She refers to California as "a hologram that dematerialises as I drive through it". As we read through her packing list and notes, it's us who get to dematerialise our personal belongings, stripping them to their utility. In her work, she touches upon culture, politics, family and grief through essay collections and memoirs that she explores by making room for thought, by keeping the noise out.

I think of the list often, not only when I pack, but when I feel scattered, overwhelmed. There's a discipline to Didion's simplicity, an unspoken ethos: to travel with the self, not away from it. It's easy to mythologize Joan. The dark glasses, the white Corvette, the bone-thin silhouette. But the list strips the myth back to the marrow, to leave only her cutting sentences. You can do a lot with a few good shirts, she seemed to say. You can even make sense of America.

Back and Wear:

- 2 skirts
- 2 jerseys or leotards
- 1 pullover sweater
- 2 pair shoes
- stockings
- bra
- nightgown
- robe
- slippers
- cigarettes
- bourbon

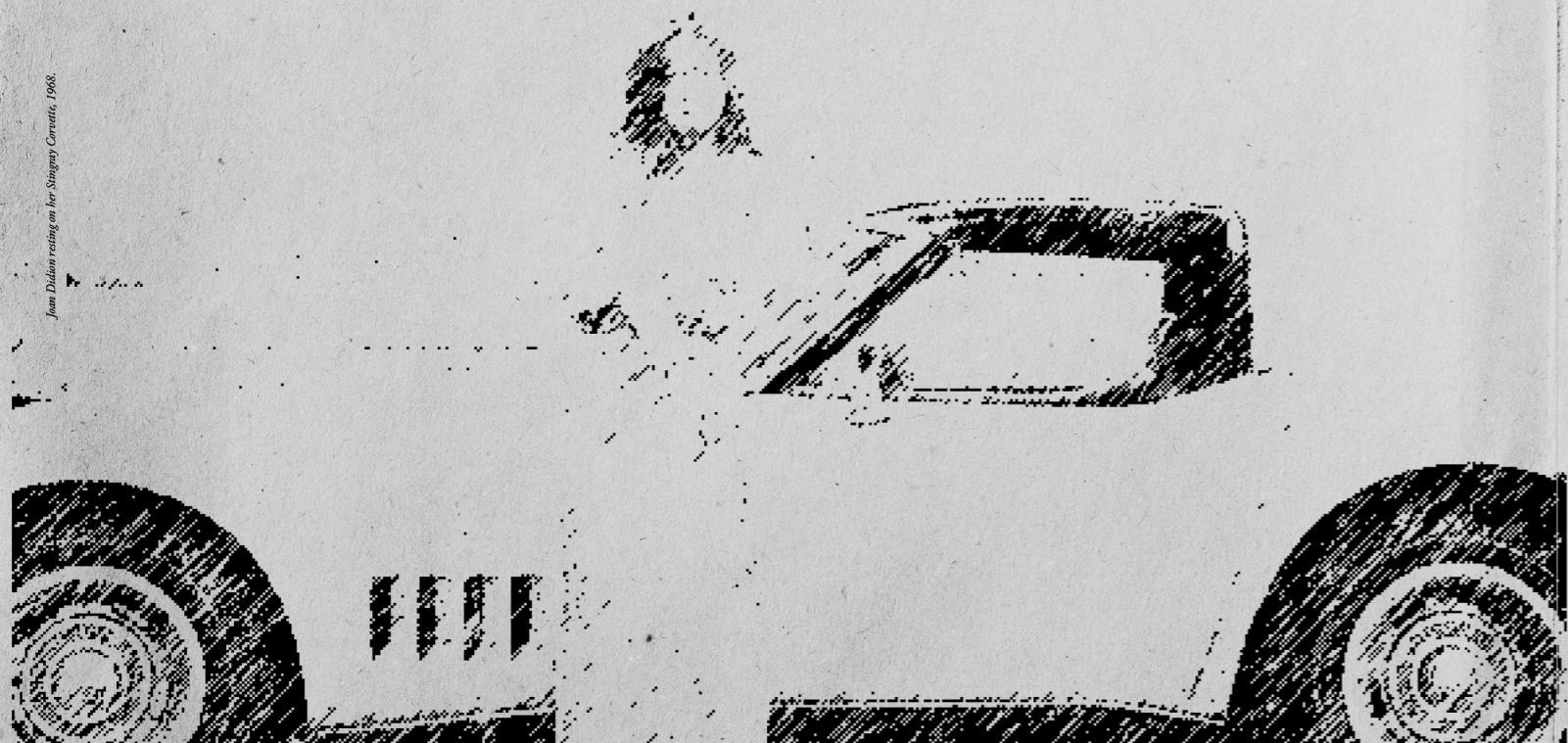
Bag with:

- shampoo
- toothbrush and paste
- basis soap
- razor
- deodorant
- aspirin
- prescriptions
- Tampax
- face cream
- powder
- baby oil

To Carry:

- monair throw
- typewriter
- 2 legal pads
- pens
- files
- house key

This is a list which was taped inside my closet door in Hollywood during those years when I was reporting more or less steadily. The list enabled me to pack, without thinking, for any piece I was likely to do. Notice the deliberate anonymity of costume: in a skirt, a leotard and stockings, I could pass on either side of the culture. Notice the monair throw for trunk-line flights (i.e. no blankets) and for the motel room in which the air conditioning could not be turned off. Notice the bourbon for the same motel room. Notice the typewriter for the airport, coming home: the idea was to turn in the Hertz car, check in, find an empty bench, and start typing the day's notes. It should be clear that this was a list made by someone who prized control, yearned after momentum, someone determined to play her role as if she had the script, heard her cues, knew the narrative. There is on this list one significant omission, one article I needed and never had: a watch. I needed a watch not during the day, when I could turn on the car radio or ask someone, but at night, in the motel, quite often I would ask the desk for the time every half hour or so, until finally, embarrassed to ask again, I would call Los Angeles and ask my husband. In other words I had skirts, jerseys, leotards, pullover sweater, shoes, stockings, bra, nightgown, robe, slippers, cigarettes, bourbon, shampoo, toothbrush and paste, basis soap, razor, deodorant, aspirin, prescriptions, Tampax, face cream, powder, baby oil, monair throw, typewriter, legal pads, pens, files and a house key, but I didn't know what time it was. This may be a parable, either of my life as a reporter during this period or of the period itself.



Wearing the uniform

with Christophe Coulin



Uniforms are both the bone structure and the shell of the people who wear them. They hold the body, but they also hold meaning. From uniformity to recognition, they create a dimension that leaves somewhere between practicality and symbolism. Christophe spent 23 years in the GIGN, France's elite intervention unit. His uniform was never just clothing. It was a tool, a shield, a mindset. Now it hangs in a wardrobe, still carrying the weight of memory, still shaping the way he moves through the world.

by Noah Ulrich





"There were no specific outfits for our intervention group at first. The outfit evolved with the technological progress of the materials. We were looking for resistance to shock, to abrasion, to fire. The uniform then became the norm, more practical, more protective, more efficient. It serves to identify us among ourselves, but also to others. With badges and insignia we can signify our function, units and rank. It is crucial during an operation, especially a sensitive one such as a hostage-taking. In the smoke and confusion, reflective elements made it possible to immediately know who was a colleague and who was not.

At school, the uniform erases social differences, in a restaurant's kitchen, it protects and identifies. For us, it is both. It puts everyone on the same level, it suppresses one's individuality for the sake of the collective. It creates anonymity: the opponent doesn't know your identity, doesn't see the difference between you and another. But to me it is not a loss of identity, it is an addition. A voluntary anonymity, yes, but also a sense of belonging. It means representing a prestigious unit, which brings pride. In a sense, it is a moral protection that stems from respect. When you wear a uniform, you represent an institution and there is an image, an aura that goes with it. Your duty is to live up to it because uniforms command respect, but fear as well. They require impeccable behaviour, because you represent more than just yourself. And many citizens respect the uniform, while others, on the contrary, mistrust or reject it, but that's part of the game. The important thing is to be aware that you represent something that transcends the individual.

The uniform is a strong symbol, we used to call it the 'light suit'. It marked very important moments: the awarding of certificates, ceremonies, departures. It was charged with emotion. For me, it was more than just a piece of clothing, it was a collective memory, a symbol shared with all those who had worn it. It's a virtuous circle: the uniform gives you a lot, and the more you give, the more the unit shines. You're part of it, so you shine with it. And it becomes a part of you, it changes your behaviour, even unconsciously. Even though I clearly distinguish between my private and professional life, I remain aware that we always represent something. I have become so accustomed to respecting the clothing I wear in relation to what it represents that I continue to do so today. In my current job, I pay attention to the image I project just as I did when I wore a uniform. I learned to respect the rules, and that remains with me. *That was my belief for 15 years; my attitude towards the uniform is linked to my loyalty to my profession.*

For me, it's a period of fulfillment and I don't feel any sense of loss. I've turned the page without nostalgia. I have no particular frustration about having hung up my uniform because it also corresponded to my operational activity. Today, I have other projects, but the rigour and respect I learned in uniform continue to guide me. I kept my uniform. It's a powerful reminder, a tangible trace of commitment. I don't wear it anymore, of course, but it represents a part of my life and the values will always stay with me. High standards, respect, a sense of community. It's a way of being that never goes away."

Aunt's blazer



Gingham



Grandma's dress



Today's jewellery



How fashion *changed* my way of comprehending the world

92

Written by Olympia Dairaine Grimaux

Cousin's tiny shoes



Pattern skirt



Autumn shoes



Hippie pants



As a kid, I remember not having any skills or passions. It felt like I wasn't good enough at anything, despite my strong sensitivity to art and culture. Later in life, during my teenage years, I discovered the power of garments. Coming from a feminine family composed of fashion icons, it wasn't hard to find my path in that field.

As the youngest in the family, I was lucky to collect all the old clothes from them: a long flowery dress from my grandma, a crazy python bag from my mom, an oversized blazer from my aunt, and of course the wildest shoes you've ever seen from my cousin—the only one whose size was as tiny as mine.

Since then, I cannot imagine my life without this passion for fashion. As an introverted girl, garments allow me to express myself. They are also a way to communicate and transmit. Clothes reveal one's occupation, feelings, beliefs, and culture.

Several years ago, I noticed that people often stared at me when I entered a room. At first, I felt disturbed by those stares, until I understood that people were simply surprised—or amazed—by how I dared to dress. Then I realized that dressing "funny" was not for everyone. Indeed, some people prefer classic cuts and colors, avoiding too many risks in their wardrobe. And God knows you have to be daring when it comes to fashion.

Through my outfits, I expose my feelings to others: sometimes joyful and colorful, nostalgic with autumn shades, sensual in a mid-long tight dress, or hippie when I crave freedom. Everything has meaning—pearls, textures, colors, shapes. The way you dress can say a lot about your personality without a single word. That's what I love in art: when visuals speak louder than words. Fashion is that mirror. Fashion is my voice. I don't speak out loud or feel comfortable when surrounded by too many strangers, but somehow clothes give me confidence from the outside.

My special twist is necklaces. I have a collection that I change every season to match not only my mood but also my desires and goals. I'm also a pattern girl, who loves playing with fabrics and colors to spread joy and hope in this dark world.

Through this association of colors, jewelry, and textiles, I embrace myself fully. Every outfit I choose is a new version of myself, ready to be delivered to the external world. It's like playing a new role every day while still keeping my main character alive. Therefore, I would define my style as rock-hippie: audacious, colorful, sensual, casual.

I'm mostly inspired by the women I've met in real life and on screen: pop stars, businesswomen, androgynous icons—they all carry a message in their outfits, screaming for liberty and independence. That is my way of perceiving fashion as a woman: a voice for freedom.

The last thing I'd like to add is this: money should never be an obstacle in your vision of dressing. Upcycle, transform, customize, thrift, support local artisans, create—there are a million ways to attire yourself. You just have to find your voice and identity. Don't be afraid of judgment, and embrace who you are fully—it feels good. Clothes are a medium, like many others, that you can play with. Clothes are also a door you can take to enter new territory. Be yourself, but be flexible! :)

“On holiday, I went home with a guy after a night out. I was wearing one of those halter-neck dresses you tie at the back. My friend had tied it so tight that I couldn't undo it – not exactly what I had pictured. In the end, I just had to let it hang from my neck like a cape. I went home like that and only managed to untie it the next morning, still laughing at the whole absurd story.”

- *Olivia Miller, 24, Producer*

“While on vacation abroad, I asked the motel concierge if there were any nude beaches. He gave me directions, and off I went. I spotted a sign on a restaurant that said ‘Nudist Area,’ so naturally, I stripped and jumped into the sea. After my swim, I went up to the restaurant still naked, ready for a drink — only for the waiters to burst into laughter. Turns out, someone had put up the sign as a prank. Safe to say, I gave them the entertainment of their day.”

- *John Thevenot, 34, Waiter*

“I was at the doctor's office and she asked me to ‘show her my pubic area.’ I must have taken that way too literally because I pulled my boxers all the way down. She screamed, ‘Oh no, not like that!’ I wanted the earth to swallow me.”

- *Louis Mayer, 27, Engineer*

“I do cosplay and one time my boyfriend wanted to have sex while I was dressed as a magical cat girl. The tail had a little bell on it that jingled the whole time he was undressing me. It turned into a full-on comedy sketch until we both burst out laughing. Mood: completely gone. Tail: still jingling.”

- *Maria Torres, 25, waitress*

“A few years ago, I had to get a breast exam for a lump. I was already nervous, but when I got to the doctor's office, he didn't even look up from his phone. He was shopping for garden furniture online. He told me to undress, still scrolling, and examined me with one hand on my breast and the other still scrolling. Then he told me I was fine, took a screenshot of a patio set, and sent it to his wife. I don't think he looked at me once.”

- *Alice Pinel, 23, Student*



“Apparently, on some jet skis, you’re supposed to start the engine on your knees and only sit once you’re cruising. I must have missed the part about ‘gradually accelerating’ because I floored it, clinging to the handles for my life like a cartoon character. And somewhere between the wind, the water and fate itself... my bathing suit disappeared. To this day, I still don’t know what exactly made it fall off; and honestly, I’m not dying to find out.”



⁹⁶
- *David Jabert, 53, engineer*

“One summer as a kid, I was enrolled in 2 different sailing clubs. Going from one to the other everyday, I would change back into my underwear in between to stay dry. One day, I forgot to put my bathing suit back on and, when everyone else started undressing to get ready to sail, I stripped too — forgetting I was only in my underwear. My friend whispered, ‘You’re naked!’ and I bolted, mortified, straight into the life jacket shed.”

- *Lila Peddicord, 24, Film director*

“The first time I went for a bikini wax, I was a little nervous. The esthetician told me to get prepared and I naturally took off all my clothes and stood there completely naked. When she came back in, she laughed so hard I wanted to disappear. Lesson learned: always ask before you strip!”

- *Julie Chevalier, 28, Brand manager*

“I feel my sexiest in that moment right before I’m fully naked — just standing there in my underwear with all the anticipation. That’s my peak confidence. The total opposite? Being half-naked in a medical office in front of strangers. Same anticipation but with dread instead of excitement. I had so many tests this year that I had to get used to it fast – which I suppose counts as character growth.”

- *Violette Alpen, 23, Student & Journalist*



Undressing

Everyday of our lives, we are getting ready for something. Whether it is a job interview, a lunch, a party or to go to bed, we wonder how we are presenting ourselves to the world. But how are we getting ready for our death? Can we be ready? Some people have started to think about it years in advance, some are scared, some are indifferent, but it is going to happen to all. Marci Joergens has been a funeral director and embalmer for 30 years. At 4, she cried when realizing her mom was eventually going to die. At 18, she knew it was her drive.

After a meeting in Louisville, Kentucky, she calls me to undress the process of getting someone ready for their final presentation and the way people approach it in very different ways.

Death



Dressing Papers

What does it mean to be the last person to ever take care of someone?

Marci Joergens

My profession covers everything from taking the first call when someone dies. I go to the hospital, the house or the nursing home and bring them back to our care, to the funeral home. From there, I do whatever preparation of the body needs to be done. I like being with the families and taking care of their needs and necessities. Preparing a body is making sure they're prepared for their relatives to have that last time with them. I feel like the families have given me a responsibility and tremendous trust to be able to take care of their loved one, whether it is a child, their grandparents and everything in between. I feel respected and trusted more than anything in that task.

What does it mean for the families? How do you see the importance of your work in their eyes?

Most people don't go through a funeral except for two or three times in their lifetime. My idea is that people view me as a place of comfort, guidance and professionalism, helping them go through the complete unknown. Whether they expected the person to die or it's sudden, they are left in limbo and don't know what to do next. And sometimes they have not accepted death. It can be the first time they are seeing their family member in a casket, cold to the touch. You need to come to this realization, especially when it is a child or unexpected. If they have not seen the person since the last time they spoke, they may have viewed their loved one as someone who is simply out of reach or unavailable this whole time. And when they see that person in the casket, the reality finally hits them. I see both parts of it.

How do families make decisions about how their loved one should be presented at the funeral, particularly regarding clothing and appearance? What do these choices reveal about who the person was?

That really intrigued me hearing about Dressing Papers because I've dealt with people of all economic backgrounds and all statuses, from someone who didn't have any money to someone who had so much they didn't know what to do with it. I've run the gamut and everyone has a very specific approach to this.

Most men have the idea of what they want to wear – typically a suit. It's what they wore, who they were, what they have accomplished in life. The women's family members usually want them to look like they used to – hair and makeup done like they are going to a party. I guess in a way, depending on your culture and your religious preference, going into the afterlife may be a welcoming party experience. And most people who bring in outfits usually have a story related to a celebration – a wedding, an anniversary – a special event where they felt and looked good. So in a way, dressing the deceased becomes part of the celebration too. They just can't be there fully; but the spirit of it is the same.

For some people, religion plays an important role in what they must wear. For example, in parts of the Jewish religion, you are bathed and shrouded in a linen shroud without any artifice. And the Mexican families I was taking care of in Chicago were immigrants or first generation. They wanted to show what they achieved in life and for them, the biggest achievement was being in the United States – in the nineties, a lot of the Mexican families were dressing their loved ones as their favorite saints. And sometimes I help families realize they don't need to change their loved one's appearance in death. The one I'll never forget was a five-year-old boy who died of cancer. His parents were crying because they didn't want to put him in a suit and thought they had to. But why would you dress him any differently in death than he would in life? I told them to bring the clothes that made him feel special and they brought cowboy boots, jeans and a shirt with his name on the back – that helped them see their son again.

So the idea of clothing and death has so many different meanings to everyone. All of these people, when they come in, go through a closet and try to decide what looks good. And then there are people who've had an outfit ready for years. One man brought in his military uniform and said, "Don't move a thing." He's healthy and works out every day, but he's ready. I think clothing in death says something about who the person really was.

Help Meek is a week-long commemoration preceding Easter in the Christian tradition, getting on the final day of Pass. In Mexico, it is a tradition of bringing the body of the deceased to a solemn and dance in the street. Photography: Noah Ulrich



I think clothing in death says something about who the person really was. they just cant be there fully, but the spirit it is still the same. Why would you dress any differently in death than you would in life? I guess it depends on what they imagine afterlife to be. Some people want to be seen as who they were in life. they know to be any one else.

Is the ritual of preparing for death a reflection of the one in life?

It depends. I think the people who are very religious – Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, the Catholics that were getting dressed as their favorite saints – are presenting themselves ready as they would want to be presented when they meet with their maker or whatever their belief system is. Some other people want to be seen as who they were in life. I guess they want to be seen that way when they arrive wherever they arrive, or maybe they don't believe in an afterlife, but this is who they were, and they have worked so hard to be that person that they don't know how to be anybody else. And the funny thing is, men have the exact same reaction that women do when it comes to their outfits, they have them set aside too. So it's not just a man versus woman. It is both. It is everybody.

I guess some people want to dress for themselves while others want to be dressed for others. Maybe that's the end of it?

Yeah. And I guess it depends on what they imagine the afterlife to be, if any.

And how is your work changing your own relationship with self-presentation and how you see yourself among other people?

When I'm off, I'm usually in jeans and a t-shirt. I keep a clear line between work and personal life when it comes to clothing – I go to work with my work clothes on and when I go home, I take them off. I try not to mix the two. You know, it is just like theater: at work, it's my uniform and I want people to know that I am a person outside of it, I am very protective of my personal time. I love when I see people that I've taken care of out, and the funny thing is a lot of them will walk away without even saying hi. They also recognize that boundary. And I'm that person that has made death reality and they maybe don't want to see me. I'm not wearing that dark cloak, but I represent that.

Is it your way to separate both and protect your intimacy and yourself?

I do my job 24 hours, seven days a week. Even if I'm not on call, my phone still goes off and notifies me of something and you mentally start preparing. Wether I know them or not, I try to be as nondescript as possible. I love jewellery, but when I'm sitting with a family, they don't need to be hearing the bracelets. I am still the person that takes care of other people but my private time is when I can chew my gum loudly, swear or be at home and just relax.

We are always getting ready for what comes next, even when nothing really comes next, right? When you dress in the morning, it's for the day, it's not for what happened months before.

And I guess when you're going into a new situation, you want to put your best foot forward and look as good as you can no matter what it is or be very comfortable, right?

How to dress a table

by Raffaella Bergamo

cal. They're merely guidelines meant not to intimidate but to elevate the experience.

The setting begins with precision: each guest's plate rests at the center, flanked by cutlery which signals the beginning of the meal. Forks gather to the left, the knife – honored as the “noble” instrument – stands on the right. Above them, glasses rise in order of use, like a crystalline staircase: water first, then red wine, then white. Champagne flutes, if required, sit discreetly at the back, while dessert glasses wait for their debut with the final course.

Beneath it all sits the charger plate, a decorative stage on which the dinner and soup plates are arranged. The napkin, puffed or folded, often holds the bread roll at the guest's left. Between place settings, small salt cellars and carafes of wine or water alternate to create a continuity across the table. Prestigious bottles are never plunked down among the dishes but rest gracefully in a basket or bucket nearby.

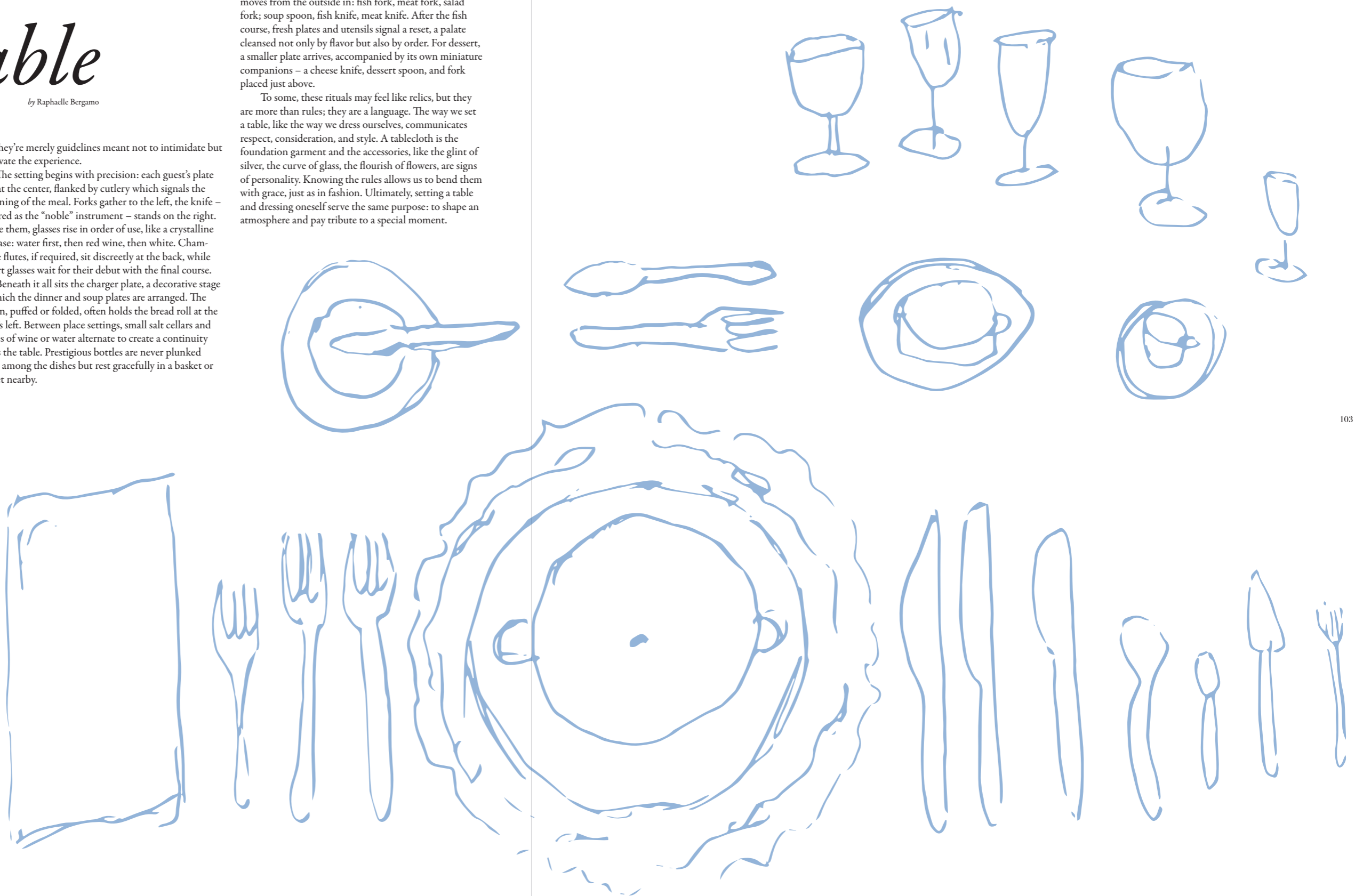
Just as a person dresses before stepping into public view, a table too deserves to be clothed before it welcomes guests. You wouldn't greet company in your underwear, and in the same way, a bare table feels unfinished. Both the body and the table are canvases – flexible, adaptable, and capable of transformation depending on the occasion.

Throughout history, tablescaping and dining etiquette have evolved to mirror shifts in society. In India, many still eat with the right hand as a way to truly feel your food and connect with it more than just out of necessity. In East Asian cultures like Japan, chopsticks and bowls are used to dictate a particular rhythm and intimacy of eating. This article, however, explores the French table, where centuries of ritualized dining have shaped one of the most detailed and codified traditions in the West.

At first glance, it may seem like a fussy formality reserved for gilded households, but once you understand the logic, the rules reveal themselves as surprisingly practi-

Cutlery follows the choreography of the meal. It moves from the outside in: fish fork, meat fork, salad fork; soup spoon, fish knife, meat knife. After the fish course, fresh plates and utensils signal a reset, a palate cleansed not only by flavor but also by order. For dessert, a smaller plate arrives, accompanied by its own miniature companions – a cheese knife, dessert spoon, and fork placed just above.

To some, these rituals may feel like relics, but they are more than rules; they are a language. The way we set a table, like the way we dress ourselves, communicates respect, consideration, and style. A tablecloth is the foundation garment and the accessories, like the glint of silver, the curve of glass, the flourish of flowers, are signs of personality. Knowing the rules allows us to bend them with grace, just as in fashion. Ultimately, setting a table and dressing oneself serve the same purpose: to shape an atmosphere and pay tribute to a special moment.



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COVER TOP LEFT, INSIDE COVER AND BACK COVER
Designer Osorio Design
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