

Europe's No. 1 Style Magazine

Volume 13 Issue 2 May 2020

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# From the **EDITOR'S DESK**

avigating fashion content with a pandemic playing outside your window is a tricky path to tread, which is why our May digital issue talks about a plethora of issues – from examining what the future of our industry will look like to building on a bit of escapism – after all, fashion is meant to inspire. As a brand, *Grazia*'s content goals have always been in sync with its digital medium, and this temporary outbreak further highlights that relevance. Having said that, have you been regularly checking out *grazia.co.in*?

For this issue, we've also got a curated list of several talented folks to share their illustrated versions of what our cover would look like in the age of a pandemic. The results are not only beautiful creatives but also mini essays of hope and resilience. Meet a few #CovidCrusaders and read up on an account from a survivor. Load up on at-home fitness and fuss-free skipcare, and if post-pandemic is a time you'd rather fastforward to, then we're getting you prepped for that too.

Being positive and optimistic in challenging times can be a chore but staying alert and taking precautions can't be that tough. Stay healthy, stay well.

Until next month,

Meher Mehernaaz







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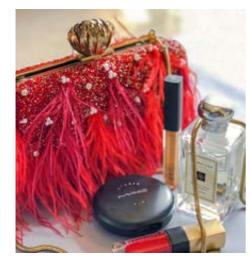
#### Have you logged onto grazia.co.in yet?

Our website is our complementary arm, combining the best of what the magazine offers with its own flavour and take on current events around the world. Fashion news haute off the press, beauty product reviews, DIY hacks, and previews and reviews of the biggest dos around the country – we've got it all covered in easy reads.

**GRAZIA ADVT** 

ALE:









# STYLE SPOTLIGHT

Teesta's handbags and clutches are the new wardrobe staple to make you stand out

Ithough considered synonymous, fashion and style are two completely different things. Take for example the sharp business suit you bought for yourself some time ago – it's trendy and smart, and so, it's fashion. But the confidence with which you wear it is your style. While the former is temporary, the latter is eternal. The founders of Teesta, Akansha and Pallavi, started their journey rooted in this belief, along with a mutual love for French vintage style. We say, if fashion is a neverending pursuit of style, then Teesta is what happens after you've found it.

Home to a curated collection of handcrafted accessories that speak the language of finesse and grandeur, the brand offers you products with a superior design and quality. Each bag adds a certain oomph to all your outfits, giving your persona an edge it may have lacked earlier. What we love most about Teesta is that it's a brand born fully online. With no middlemen to invest in, you get the best possible quality at affordable prices.

Do you remember that feeling you get when you walk into a party and someone else has the same bag you're proudly carrying? Teesta makes distinctive products in small batches with an impeccable attention to detail, so that you can



truly stand out. As opposed to churning out bags in a factory, the brand thoughtfully crafts each product so that it can tell a unique story. And in the process, they also manage to reduce the waste.

So, if you're looking to invest in a handcrafted stunner that will take you from a school drop off, a business meeting, to a luxurious evening event and everything in between, you've just hit jackpot. What's more? You won't have to say goodbye to your favourite bag after a few months of use – we guarantee you'll be growing old in it and with it.

Instagram handle: shop\_teesta Akansha: 9137204253 Pallavi: 9619748731

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## THE SOCIAL CHANGEMAKER

Industrialist and philanthropist Dr Aneel Kashi Murarka is a man who believes in going above and beyond the need of the hour

" believe community is a really important catalyst for social change. Getting people together to create change and learn from each other will definitely make a world of difference," says Dr Aneel Kashi Murarka. He believes that it's not enough to have the intention to do something good - the same must be translated into action. He begins by identifying a specific problem or opportunity to tackle, and having the strong drive to change it for the better. But it doesn't stop there for him, he keeps trying until he has made an impactful change. As a young business tycoon and the Managing Director of Mirachem Industriies, he not only pursues success, but also social change, through an innovative approach and the willingness to go the extra mile.

> There are various organisations and community models Murarka has studied, which create and support communities of change in varying ways. He is a keen learner and stays actively connected at different social levels with people. He has taken every step possible to create a more sustainable environment and a tolerant society over the last three decades or so. Through his renowned social enterprise, Ample Missiion, he has been involved in serving the society and mankind. Along with his son, Sidhaant Murarka, he has "been spearheading a range of various social upliftment programmes.

These include educational initiatives for slum children through weekly coaching, tribal upliftment activities ranging from medical care to employment creation through 'warli art', talent hunt camps for tribal kids, and other initiatives to promote redevelopment among the adivasi youth. Ample Missiion also conducts hunger elimination for the urban poor by distributing free meals to the homeless, offering the transgender community various opportunities to showcase their talent, creating livelihood options for acid attack survivors, and through many other signature campaigns.

Individuals like Murarka believe in diving deep into the issues related to marginal communities, through unique programs of empowerment and inclusiveness. "Just living your lifestyle based on your own values and ethics can be a form of social activism. Every aspect of your lifestyle can be adjusted to speak volumes and influence others to make a change in their own little ways," he says.

His efforts entered the world of fashion at the Times Fashion Show 2019, marking a never seen before approach to inclusion in the industry. The opening ramp show was walked by models from the transgender community, with activist Laxmi Narayan Tripathi and trans queen Navya Singh as the showstoppers, along with Murarka himself. "There is no manual for ground realities," he expresses. "We must focus and be open, firm and



Dr Aneel Kashi Murarka



accepting of the urgent realities of mankind. Let us strive to live in harmony with our fellow beings and take action towards a more sustainable future. It's time to live with nature and learn the wisdom of mother Earth's limited resources. We have taken the environment for granted for far too long, and have indulged in practices that are slowly destroying the planet, in the name of development. Every day holds a new lesson for me and there is a lot left to do with very little time on our hands, before we bid farewell," he asserts.

## <u>GRAZIA</u> CONTENTS







#### ON THE *GRAZIA* COVER

Clockwise (from left to right): Gaurav Gupta, Ritu Kumar, Rahul Mishra, Manish Malhotra, Anamika Khanna, Sabyasachi Mukherjee, Anita Dongre and Palak Shah.

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## Europe's No 1 Style Magazine

GRAZIA MAY 2020 VOLUME 13 ISSUE 2

## NEWS

#### 8 10 HOT STORIES

In this issue, we make our predictions for post-pandemic style, ask a burning question: Is fashion photography via FaceTime the new normal? and understand why leggings have become the unofficial uniform of lockdown.

## FEATURES

- 24 THE GOOD FIGHT We salute the everyday heroes of the pandemic.
- 28 FROM THE ARCHIVES Heirlooms can help us preserve family memories.
- 32 UNDERNEATH IT ALL How social media challenges are helping people stave off cabin fever while in lockdown.
- 34 THROUGH THEIR EYES A round-up of *Grazia*'s collectors' edition digital covers.

## FASHION

- 42 THE REAL DEAL Five women try the coolest S/S 2020 runway trends – indoors.
- **48 ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL** Future-proof workout gear you should invest in.





### BEAUTY & HEALTH

- 50 'LOCK'ED IN Quarantine hair care 101.
- 54 HIT SKIP

We're now taking the 'less is more' approach when it comes to skincare.

56 WORK(OUT) FROM HOME The many ways in which Covid-19 will change our relationship with the gym.

## LIVING & LEISURE

- 58 FUTURE NOSTALGIA
- 60 GOING BANANAS The unofficial baked good of the pandemic, explained.
- 62 IN THE FRAME
- 66 MONTH IN MONTH OUT Our top picks of things that got us talking this month.
- 68 SHOPPING GUIDE

# HELLO **RETRO**

As we indulge in all kinds of nostalgia, retro fashion makes a comeback with this stunning collection



Ave you ever stood in front of the mirror and wondered if the dress you had on was really you? According to designer Akshi Jogani, psychology is deeply rooted in fashion. What you wear is a reflection, in a sense, of who



you are. Her indo-western, demi-couture namesake label is a womenswear delight for anyone that likes to wear their personality on their sleeve. Being multi-functional, you can style each piece differently, according to your mood and aesthetic. The brand offers you the freedom and creativity to truly be you.

The brand's latest collection,  $R\bar{E}TR\bar{O}$ , plays on the element of nostalgia to escape the harsh realities of today or the uncertain future that lies ahead. With gorgeous retro pieces that take you back to simpler times, the collection gives you a chance to revisit the olden days. The vintage colour scheme is a unique concoction of hues of ivory, lemon, peach, pink and blue. You can expect floral prints, luxurious fabrics, and elegant frills in a range of saris, blouses, coats, pants, gowns and more.

One of our favourites from RĒTRŌ, this aqua blue cold-shoulder gown is reminiscent of beach days spent lounging, laughing and drinking. The breezy dress comes with a thigh high slit, making it equal parts comfortable and sexy. Don't forget to accessorise this look with a floral print bandana to unlock the real retro vibe.

Shot at Palazzo Versace Hotel, Dubai, the campaign shoot captures the essence of the collection: When you wear a retro piece, you carry the history of those who wore it before you. But the real treasure lies in adding a piece of you to the outfit, where it stays entwined within the fabric, forever.



AKSHI JOGANI







KANELLE

ANITA DONGRE

## Pause & Pivot

The view ahead for the fashion industry isn't perfectly clear right now, but hopefully the pause will go a long way to create a community that will be mindful of its consumption and respectful of the environment

Words MEHERNAAZ DHONDY

he optimist in me goes back to a familiar story of how a new fashion order emerged from the embers of World War II. The iconic 'New Look', as Monsieur Dior's 1947 collection was dubbed, in a sense re-looked at fashion in a post-war society that was emerging from a period of austerity. "We were just emerging from a poverty-stricken, parsimonious era, obsessed with ration books and clothes coupons. It was only natural that my creations should take the form of a reaction against this dearth of imagination," Monsieur Dior, in a quote from Dior by Dior (wonderfully visually essayed at the Dior 'Couturier of Dreams', which showed

at Paris's Musée des Arts Décoratifs and later

at London's V&A Museum). While Dior's story is that of rethinking the relevance of fashion at that time and the emergence of a brand and a dream, what happens globally and in India in this post-pandemic climate has become the subject of many webinars; the inference is tinged with uncertainty. According to *The State of Fashion 2020 – Coronavirus Update released by The Business of Fashion* and McKinsey & Company, "once the dust settles on the immediate crisis, fashion will face a recessionary market and an industry landscape still undergoing dramatic transformation; fuelled by a lull in spending and a decrease in demand across channels."

#### RESET

The questions we have, are many, the answers far and few. In an industry obsessed with seasons, spring/summer, fall/winter, resort and pre-fall are going to be left in the cold, post-Covid is literally going to be the only new season we're going to encounter in the fashion cycle. "As of today, there is no part of the fashion process that hasn't been hit, from design to manufacture to retail, as well as our artisans in villages who cannot work without the construct of community. Every part will require a rethink, especially in how to keep people safe as they produce or consume fashion. This situation requires all of us to be fluid. It's hard to make plans right now because the scenario is diverse and unknown," says Anita Dongre, who heads a total of five brands under House of Anita Dongre. Breaks and changes in the cycle are inevitable - men's fashion weeks in London, Paris and Milan (to be clubbed with the women's S/S showing in September as last announced) have been cancelled or moved, as have the Paris Haute Couture week shows. Last seen and heard, YSL announced that the brand would not present its collections in any of the pre-set schedules for 2020 and would prefer to "lead its own rhythm". Some of the derailed events are opting for online platforms and digitised showcases. Designer Rahul Mishra, who made his Paris Haute Couture Week debut in January earlier this year, says that he personally believes that

fashion should be independent of trends, seasons and marketing patterns that are constructed, such that they create more demand amongst the consumers. "It should be an expression of creativity that is driven by a larger purpose than just infinite sales for the company," says the designer, adding: "For us, that purpose is the employment of artisans, weavers and embroiderers across the country." Tina Tahiliani Parikh, executive director at Ensemble, is also of the opinion that the breaks in the cycle may see designers doing smaller capsule collections that are not season-specific and which can be worn through the year. "We started with two seasons and fast fashion gave us 52 seasons. This will reduce I hope," she says, "since digital and e-commerce sales will become important, I can see a lot of designers doing diffusion lines that are more accessible in terms of price points." Interestingly, Ensemble just launched their e-com website (www.ensembleindia.com) last week.

#### REDEFINITION

"On the other side of this pandemic, however, is the hope that the Indian consumer will develop nationalistic pride and choose more

> Indian brands. This will boost Indian retail. We could use the help," says Dongre. Most designers predict a tide that runs in favour of buying local, including Mishra, "I do believe that it is important now, more than ever, to consume local as by doing so, we will empower a larger section of the society. When you employ a craftsman, along with their

family, you support the livelihood of all those connected to them - such as the local milkman, shopkeeper, and other entrepreneurs in their village. This is the beauty of buying a piece of craft." Cecilia Morelli Parikh, co-founder of Le Mill, Mumbai, opines that in the end, a good product, and the right product, trumps all. "If local brands offer better and more economical propositions to the international ones, they can win", she says, "I hope that we can all take this pause to rethink these deliriously silly fashion cycles. I dream of an industry where we produce less, but better, and where customers buy less but at full price. I dream of an end to the senseless short shelf-life of products and our society's addiction to buying often but on sale. This model is not sustainable, both economically and environmentally. Stores have an important part to play in this – specifically by buying less but better, listening to their clients and earning their trust."

#### REVISITING

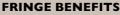
While remaining as optimistic and flexible as they can, Dongre says that safety measures across stores and workspaces will be of great importance, and an added emphasis will be put on ensuring online orders are fulfilled safely, "Particularly now, our sustainable practices become more important than ever before." Tahiliani Parikh points towards a three-pronged process: Companies will need to reimagine themselves and their interaction with clients. Hygiene and store protocols will have to be strict. Digital communication will become very important and out-ofthe-box solutions will need to be found for interactions that were once taken for granted before. Secondly, demand. "It's going to be interesting to see how this pans out. I know China has had revenge buying but Indians tend to be much more circumspect about wasting money, especially at a time when almost everyone has taken a financial hit. India has a festive season coming up post-September, and there will be a lot more clarity about how people

approach this." And thirdly, she talks about piled up inventory. "We will have to think of creative ways of getting customer traction to lower the burden due to inventory. Collections for A/W 2020 may end up being more capsule in nature." Morelli Parikh chimes in, "I think that for the next 18 months, the wedding industry, in particular, will be severely affected. Occasion dressing, gowns and sequins or embroidered dresses will also suffer. Buyers will be much more cautious, and unfortunately that means that small brands will suffer as customers take refuge in better known labels. Brands must start the digitisation process and move online to survive, and be sensitive to the new environment. Not acknowledging social distancing is a mistake. And at the same time, fashion must still help us dream and escape."

#### **SENSE & SUSTAINABILITY**

"I recently read some wonderful literature on the idea of desire, and how it is manufactured. I don't think that we can turn that tap on and off," Morelli Parikh explains that since people are so consumed with worry and fear, they are in no mood to shop; however a healthy, affordable and realistic return to buying what we need and love, instead of just what we want right now, should return in the coming months. The fact that we won't be able travel for a while will also help the local customer, who has been accustomed to binge shopping abroad and at exhibitions, which itself doesn't lead to a thoughtful, considered approach to shopping, she says. Mindful habits go beyond just the way we consume fashion though. "We have turned away from a very Indian culture of living with what we have and turned towards a passionate chase of greed," says Dongre, "This concept of choosing quantity over quality, producing waste and turning a blind eye to the impact of our consumption choices is a pattern that I hope this pandemic will help us all break out of. My fervent hope is that this will start with the food we eat -a recognition that the sustainable way of life - in clothes as well, is a choice worth paying a little more for." As a designer, Mishra believes that fashion that is based out of values of authenticity and pure craft is going to survive; as the consumer grows more aware of the role that sustainable fashion can have in helping create a better future, the demand for naturally produced textiles, intricate artisanal hand-work and mindful luxury would see a rise. "A demand for transparency in the supply chain that had originated in the past, will find more space around the world and many brands may have to respond to it. After this long halt that the crisis has created in our processes, I do hope that we are able to re-examine ourselves and move towards the future with more consciousness and compassion for the planet."

PÉRO



BURBERRY

What better way to reflect our fraying mental state than with reinvented fringe? Bottega Veneta presented a fringed tunic paired with soft-like-butter summer leather + their OTM noodle heel + XXL tote, while Prada did a carwash-style fringe skirt paired with a sweater vest. Whether you choose to go all glam or traditionally bohemian, our only advice: Be careful not to get tangled.

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# FORWARD

All the trends you need to get your hands on – post pandemic

ood things come to those who wait. And we've been incredibly patient. While all our free time, pre-coronavirus, was usually spent on shopping websites, adding to cart, deliberating and then re-adding to cart, we're now feeling major new trend shopping withdrawal. So, as you lounge in your PJs and imagine your first real #OOTDs post lockdown, here's some inspiration from A/W and prefall runways to help you get a headstart on planning your fall wardrobe.

#### LADY OF THE HOUSE

Classic 40s-style dresses, that feel demure with just the right amount of feminine flair, are on the radar for the upcoming season. These casual frocks reminiscent of the era, with more of an elongated silhouette and an occasional poof shoulder, give a neo-noir feel, as seen at Rodarte. Go the extra mile and style yours with a veil, mesh gloves and an itty bitty beaded bag. We won't judge.

BOTTEGA VENETA

Ribbed, Rag & Bone, price on request



Cashmere Michael Kors Collection ₹ 55,000 approx

**VESTED INTERESTS** Say hello to the sweater vest. The sleeveless knitwear staple that has been long derided as the uniform of grandmothers in hill stations (worn over their saris, of course) or seen sported by our country's lauded cricketers is now poised to become fashion's

next sleeper trend. Wear yours with a midi skirt or to work when normalcy resumes – to protect yourself from the

Arctic-style, sub-zero office

AC temperature.

#### WALLPAPER EFFECT

Carpets, tapestries, quilts, and upholstery fabrics cropped up in collections from Marni, Marine Serre, Erdem, and Fendi. While for some, this trend might elicit #PTSD symptoms of having been in lockdown for so many weeks, we're looking at it this way: There's no better way to enjoy the comforts of home wherever you go.



Woollen, Maison Margiela at www.net-a-porter.com, ₹ 45,915 approx





Printed blouse, **Gucci**, price on request

Crepe mini dress, **REDValentino**, ₹ 59,455 approx

#### ANIMAL INSTINCT

MSGM

For some of us, animal prints have slowly evolved into new neutrals. But, the sighting of an actual animal motif on the runways in the past has been few and far between. From Alexander McQueen's cat-emblazoned graphic suit to larger-thanlife renditions of tigers at Kenzo and MSGM's feline-friendly overshirts – there's been a resurgence of animal motifs on the catwalks, ranging from cute home pets to jungle kings. Mix them with your trusty animal prints for a maximal OTT effect. MARNI



## WRITING'S ON THE WALL

The fashion industry needs journalists to keep up with a new platform transition

hank you, coronavirus, for redefining normalcy. Thank you for quarantining a bunch of socially awkward people who only know how to be social on social media. But most importantly, thank you for giving us the time to come to terms with a new reality. I was recently asked: "Why would you want to work in a dying industry?" that which they were referring to - fashion journalism. I spent the better half of a lazy Saturday afternoon explaining to this peer of mine how it is not a dying industry, but an evolving one. Social media being the future of fashion journalism, and journalism in general, isn't a possibility, it is absolute. So, I decided to turn to an expert in the field, lifestyle editor and sustainable activist Bandana Tewari, to find out how we as a community of writers can adapt to the new normal.

GRAZIA: The lines between print and digital are becoming increasingly blurred. Is it important to start with the story first – and think about the platform or channel later? BANDANA TEWARI: I think the story is infinitely more important than the platform. A good story comes from the inner rumblings of the writer. When a writer is writing, to paraphrase novelist Louis L'Amour, the "faucet is turned on" and the story must be written. Where and in what format it will appear is irrelevant at the time of creativity.

#### G: How can our community of writers brace for this new competitive and digitally-focused reality?

**BT:** I think writers should rise to the occasion and use the various digital platforms to pen even more engaging stories. Personally, I feel that I am able to express more freely, write without the constraints of didactic rules that were ingrained in me for so long. I use the digital platform to be



firmer in my opinions, and definitely more irreverent in style.

## G: How do fashion journalists find a middle ground between writing for digital and print?

BT: There is no middle ground. A writer is a writer, whether you pen a poem on a napkin, prose on Instagram, or write a best-selling book. The platform is simply a medium of dissemination of the story, not the story itself.

G: Do you think there will be room for greater improvisation on social media? BT: Absolutely, yes. I love the way creativity has blossomed online during Covid times. There's extraordinary storytelling that is helping us navigate this grim moment in history. There is great humour and heart as well as sadness and joy in so much of the writing I read online today.

G: Is it safe to say that there's wider scope in viewing uncertainty as an opportunity to exercise even greater creativity in how we put out a story? BT: Uncertainty is a time for opportunity. It can be seen as a time where the soil of creativity is fertile with possibilities. We should explore them and more importantly, harness it to break some hard-nosed rules of writing.

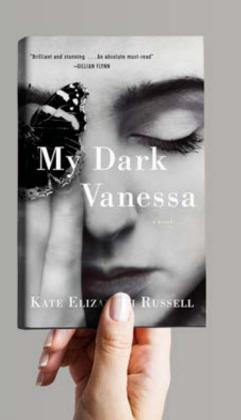


## ON THE Radar

Meet the author of 2020's most controversial book

here are a few characters who linger with you long after the last page, almost as though you can feel the afterglow of them in the room with you. Vanessa Wye, the protagonist in Kate Elizabeth Russell's debut novel, *My Dark Vanessa* (published by HarperCollins), is that sort of a character. From the first few pages only, her story lures you in and doesn't let you go. Here's an excerpt from an interview with Russell, who answers pretty much every question you might have after devouring this oddly fascinating novel.

GRAZIA: Is it safe to say that your debut novel is about damage, not love? KATE ELIZABETH RUSSELL: I think that's a fair reading, though I also think the way that we practice and conceptualise





romantic love can often be damaging, so I don't consider the two to be mutually exclusive. For much of the novel, Vanessa frames her relationship with Strane as a love story, and the reader sees how much work it takes for her to mentally write that narrative. I think part of what makes that so difficult for the reader to witness is that it probably feels familiar, as so many of us do what Vanessa does – tell ourselves the stories we need in order to survive.

G: It often comes across that Vanessa feels dissociated from her own story. Is that an accurate observation? KER: Yes, I think so. While writing the novel, I viewed Vanessa's dissociation as a symptom of trauma, a coping mechanism the brain uses to distance itself from a situation that is too overwhelming or frightening to process properly. The moments in which Vanessa dissociates are the moments in which she is fearful, or rather "should" feel fear, but her brain kicks into gear and protects her from that feeling. But this results in a heartbreaking paradox, as the dissociation her brain performs to protect itself ends up numbing Vanessa to the abuse, alienating her from her own lived experiences.

## G: Does her narrative offer something distinct about the mental aftermath of teenage trauma?

**KER:** I'm not sure. In some ways I'd like to think so, though it's also important for me that Vanessa is seen not as an outlier but rather as a character others can relate to and see themselves in. I hope the close first-



person narrative of the novel offers readers unfamiliar with adolescent sexual abuse insight into that experience of adolescent sexual abuse, while offering readers who are familiar with that kind of trauma some solace and a chance to recognise themselves.

## G: Strane comes across as a textbook predator, was that intentional?

KER: I wrote Strane in a way that allows him to be interpreted as a clear predator, though I don't think this is the only possible reading of his character. There's a moment during the present day timeline when adult Vanessa is speaking with her therapist and she argues that when a man is accused of being a paedophile, everything he says and does is interpreted through that lens, so that even innocuous behaviour is seen as sinister. I think it's tempting to interpret Strane as such, to view everything he says and does to Vanessa as calculated and cruel. It's much more challenging and uncomfortable to consider him as a flawed but complex human being.

#### G: Vanessa is an immensely difficult person to spend time with. Is she a valuable one, in the end?

KER: I don't see "difficult" as a characteristic that has much to do with value. Vanessa's perspective is valuable in the way all perspectives are valuable. I wrote her as a character who is complex, and victims of sexual abuse are often not afforded complexity. So often, characters who have survived what Vanessa survives are depicted as either pitiful and helpless, or as hardened and abusive themselves. Vanessa doesn't fit either of those tropes, and likewise she doesn't follow the redemptive and/or tragic trajectories that characters in her position so often follow. Readers who approach her story with assumptions regarding who she should be and where she should end up might end up viewing Vanessa as frustrating or disappointing, but as a writer, I think those emotions are more interesting ones for a character to evoke in a reader than comfort or satisfaction.

# **5** ON POINTE

This coming-ofage film about two male ballet dancers tugs at the heartstrings

arry, want an escape?' As Mumbai braced for the first day of the Covid-19 lockdown in March, the subject heading of a new email in my inbox seemed enticing but ominous at the same time. An escape from what? From the physical restrictions imposed by the lockdown? From the threat of a lethal pandemic? Or, from the impending gloom of a devastating economic recession? As I opened the email and images of popular cinematic icons materialised on screen, the rather innocuous message became gradually apparent: It was a local streaming service reassuring its customers that the new programme would 'get us through' the next few weeks. Among the many movie titles I was presented

with, one stood out: *Yeb Ballet* (the Netflix original movie directed by Sooni Taraporevala that was, at the time, a few weeks old and had already garnered favourable reviews.) What struck me was the fact that I had just interviewed the boys a few days ago, but had not watched the movie in its entirety. I decided to give in; after all, I had free time to spare.

I was longing for popular culture to provide me with an escape. So why would it be wrong for a media provider to explicitly articulate that proposition? There's a scene in *Yeb Ballet* where the protagonists, Asif (Achintya Bose) and Nishu (Manish Chauhan) meet for the first time at the Mumbai Dance Academy to audition for the temperamental chief instructor, Saul Aaron (Julian Sands), and immediately, the tension and competitiveness is palpable. The boys, who are at first disdainful of one another and compete for the attention of their ballet teacher, become great allies. While both Asif and Nishu are disciples of dance, their approach is vastly different. Nishu's initial sincerity and candour is striking in a film filled with cynics. Asif, on the other hand, is funny, animated, resilient. He's scared at one moment, hopeful the other – identifiable qualities during a pandemic.

The message that the movie, which follows all the beats of an underdog story, seeks to drive home is evident: Where you come from doesn't define where you'll be going. It is a breakthrough in the sense that it defeats stereotypical Indian masculinity and shows that boys can actually be dancers, and particularly, ballerinos as long as they're in it for the long haul. "It was tough training for the film. You've got to do jumps, turns and you've got to make it look easy," said Bose, when I interviewed him on the last day of February. He also revealed that prior to the film, he had no formal training in the form.

#### FINDING FORM

While it was challenging for Bose to learn ballet, it was an equally uphill climb for Chauhan (whose character is modelled on himself) to forget his training and become a novice again. "Sooni kept telling me to perform badly," he recalls. "She kept telling me that 'you can't stand straight', or, 'you can't do this or that'. But it is muscle memory built over years of practice," he says. "The moment someone mentions dance, the posture, by default, comes."

And while Chauhan believes that it is hard to unlearn something, he feels fortunate enough to have relived that part of his life again through the film. "You don't get that chance very often," he says. "While I was unlearning ballet, I was learning how to act. It's interesting to watch how a movie is made, how you have to repeat the same process over and over again to get a shot right, how

From L-R: Manish Chauhan and Achintya Bose







continuity is maintained, and so many other things."

For Bose, too, the film was a learning curve. But the biggest lesson came from the story of Chauhan. For a person who has enjoyed more privileges than him, it was amazing to recount his story. "I had seen him when Sooni was shooting him before he went to Oregon," he says. "And although I was new, I could see the finesse in his performance. It was challenging, to say the least, to match up to his standard."

Bose and Chauhan's earnest performances stay with you long after the credits roll. Don't hit play expecting a traditional inspirational flick that exploits emotion and circumstance. Expect something a bit more real – after all, most art cannot entertain, some art needs to just be seen, especially when visual escapism is all we have in this moment.





Are virtual shoots our new reality? Photographer Alessio Albi weighs in

eparated by the coronavirus pandemic, we've all never been more physically apart. But this hasn't put a stop to creative processes. On March 18th, photographer Alessio Albi, who was quarantined at home in Italy, shot actress Alice Pagani, virtually. Although they were separated by 200 kms, it didn't hinder Albi from creating stunning visuals that were then posted to his Instagram page, accompanied by the caption: "Social distancing doesn't mean stopping creating. We are lucky to live in an era that offers all the resources needed. Stay in. We're in this together." Soon, the photographer began to trade in his exotic outdoor locations and fancy gear for simpler tech to shoot models around the world and across different time zones. We caught up with him, mid shoot, to get the lowdown on how this works.

## GRAZIA: What inspired you to start shooting on FaceTime?

ALESSIO ALBI: I knew that I wanted to spend my time in quarantine in a creative and productive manner. Also, I've always believed that it isn't all the expensive gear that makes a good photograph, and everyone has the tools they need to express themselves in the best possible way; this was the confirmation I needed.

#### G: In these cases, is the shoot more about the location or the subject? AA: Usually both come together to create a unique situation, which inspires me. For the specific FaceTime project, I would say

that the subject is way more important, also given the impossibility of being in the same place physically.

G: What is the kind of preparation involved for this kind of a shoot? AA: Very little to none. I usually ask the model to show me the house she's living in to check out the most interesting spots, especially in terms of good lighting. Then we decide a simple look to use and everything that comes after is improvised and spontaneous.

### G: How different is the process from a regular photoshoot?

AA: Not that different as people tend to think, in terms of method. Of course it lacks a lot of the human aspect, which is so important to consider. Things seems in a way less 'real' and more 'digital.'

### G: Do you have a favourite FaceTime shoot?

AA: Probably the shoot I did with my friend and actress Alice Pagani. Because it was the first one, it was a literal jump in the darkness for me as I didn't know what to expect, and the reaction it would get.

### G: Do you think this is the future of fashion photography?

AA: I think this is one of the ways forward in the immediate future (let's say 2020), but I hope it won't stay as the only solution. I'm a fan of the good old way of working and I'd prefer it if we were able to go back to normal – even on shooting jobs.

Alessio Albi

G: These kinds of shoots are now becoming the norm around the world. How do you feel about starting a trend? AA: Flattered and grateful. I don't think I invented anything, but if people are inspired by my method, and it helps them spend this difficult time in a pleasant way, it makes me immensely happy.



While his trip to New York, which was scheduled for April, was cancelled – Albi captured the city via FaceTime

# I WILL SURVIVE

Actress Zoa Morani shares her account of battling Covid-19



just knew the virus had hit me. Everyone at home began yelling at me for repeating the same thing over and over again, but the symptoms were there. I couldn't pretend otherwise, and it definitely wasn't psychosomatic. I was showing off the day my sister fell ill (just a day before I realised I'd contracted the virus), piggybacking on my strong immune system. I thought I'd be impervious to the virus, considering I'd built a regular yoga practice over the last six years. I spoke too soon. Here's the funny bit: I was the worst affected in my family.

Within a week, I was showing most of the symptoms. I spent two uncomfortable days lying on the floor of my bedroom, not being able to go to the rest room. I had a dry cough and was also contending with fatigue, fever and a raised heart rate. On some days I felt perfectly fine, like nothing had happened, while on the others, I was unbelievably sick. I hadn't been unwell in over six years, so to suddenly be this weak was terribly scary, exhausting and challenging

My heart would suddenly start racing (this started a few days before I got to the hospital) and I wasn't sure if I was just scared or I was truly getting palpitations. It all feels like a blur. By the time I was admitted, it almost felt like the worst was over. Being in the capable hands of my doctor was a relief. He suggested that perhaps the palpitations could be a virus symptom and recommended I get an ECG done. The beeping sounds of that machine were terrifying, but I also felt at ease knowing I was being monitored and in safe hands. That night, lying in that hospital bed, I prayed. I didn't want to die. I really wanted to live and experience life.

Through this experience, I had to put on a brave front, which came easily to me most of the time, but there was one person I could show my fear and vulnerability to. And for him, I am eternally grateful. I had a shoulder to cry on (virtually) – as I couldn't show signs of weakness to my parents or my sister. He's my best friend, my love, my teacher - there's no name to really describe our relationship. He's the one who was privy to the three breakdowns I had over the 25 days of fighting the virus. The first meltdown took place on the day I was told I was Covid-19 positive. Soon after, two nights later when the excessive palpitations wouldn't stop, I thought I was going to have a heart attack and die, we both cried together on FaceTime. I asked if I would be okay and if they would be able to cure me, he would reassure me. Looking back now, I can't believe I experienced all those emotions - it feels so surreal. Almost like a film script!

After the first three days, a sense of routine set in, I was feeling a lot better and so much affection was pouring in from loved ones. I enjoyed the simple hospital food, and the good chai was a wonderful and surprising bonus. It came as a major relief when I was given the go-ahead to return home. I began self-isolating in my room, which somehow felt cuter and more appealing than it ever had.

Contracting the virus and overcoming it has taught me to live in the present and be cautious. The enemy is invisible, and you never know where it's lurking. This entire episode has taught me how important it is for us to be our own best friend, to be able to talk yourself through anything, and to truly be able to enjoy your own company. I'm so thankful for the habit of practicing yoga and *pranayama*. I believe it protected my lungs from getting severely affected. I'm grateful that I didn't require a ventilator. The best bit? I can now donate my plasma to help others recover from this illness.





## SILVER LININGS

Bored at home with nothing to do? All your favourite brands are coming to the rescue

#### LIVE STREAM

Curated by the brand's creative director, Felipe Oliveira Baptista, this is a series of weekly programming on Instagram with the aim to inspire optimism and creativity. #StayHomeWithKenzo comprises live takeovers, including live music sets from high-profile DJs, curated playlists from popular artists, art workshops (freehand drawing, upcycling, tape collages, to name a few), plus weekend conversations with Kenzo's friends and community.



✓ ith their stores shut and operations on pause due to the coronavirus, fashion brands are

communicating with their consumers in new ways, keeping them busy during this period of forced self-isolation at home by making them feel part of a community. Social platforms, once cluttered with products, are now giving way to the idea that we are all alone but still connected, as brands interact with followers via quizzes, online conversations, styling challenges, cooking and fitness classes, and even invitations to colour, draw or write letters.



Time to brush up on your illustration skills. Thanks to Jimmy Choo's new contest, your next shoe sketch could have the opportunity be brought to life, produced and sold in an upcoming collection. The brand is inviting fans to sketch and submit their 'ultimate fantasy' shoe, which creative director Sandra Choi will narrow down to 10 before Instagram users vote on the five that will be designed for an exclusive capsule – the proceeds of which will be donted to charity.

BACK TO SCHOOL

Bottega Veneta has launched a multi-platform concept with the aim to "share strength, positivity and creativity across the globe" aka the 'Bottega Residency' – a weekly itinerary covering everything from music to art, food and film. Each week, the brand introduces a new 'resident' who share some of their favourite things – ranging from art and books to film. Weekends are for live music, recipes from rising-star chefs as well as a movie night on Sundays. The series kicked off with Daniel Lee himself, who shared his cultural diet on the brand's Instagram Stories for a whole week.

Meyn

EVERY DAY.

#### FROM THE ARCHIVES

Florentine luxury fashion house, Salvatore Ferragamo is banking on its own heritage and rich storytelling to engage with its audience on social media. To entertain its community, the brand launched a trivia digital project inviting users to rediscover and test their knowledge of the brand's history and key products via anecdotes and quizzes.



Launched with the idea of creating uplifting content that is interactive - 'Chloé Voices' is the brainchild of Natacha Ramsay-Levi. The series showcases singular talents who share inspiring content, live interactions and performances across the brand's social media channels. Some of the names include Ellie Goulding, Kate Bosworth, artist Rithika Merchant and LA-based musician sisters HAIM - reassuring us that all these creative talents are, of course, all certified #chloegirls. From hair styling tutorials, live music (dubbed as the 'Chloé Club') and lighthearted coversations with poets and photographers, there's a little something for everyone.

Introducing Chloé VOICES



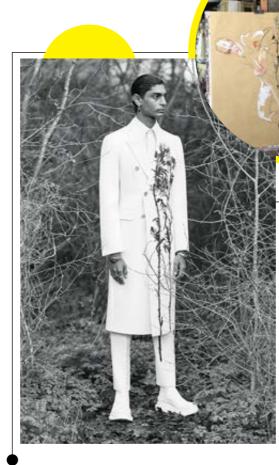


#### MOVE YOUR BODY

Even though you're stuck indoors, Italian brand Missoni doesn't want you to waver from your fitness goals. Launched by Jennifer Missoni, #StayHomeStayFit is a series of yoga lessons and techniques that you can easily follow at home, even with space constraints.



Marc Jacobs' has enlisted a team of illustrators to lead a series of guided drawing sessions called 'Drawn Together'. Thousands of aspiring artists tuned in to draw live with illustrator and FROW favourite Jenny Walton, who set up a still life at home, featuring the iconic Marc Jacobs tote, a gorgeous bouquet of flowers, and a pile of books as she offered followers sketching tips and tricks that she's picked up along the way.



#### ART PARTY

The luxury fashion house has set up a project titled #McQueenCreators in order "to inspire and initiate creative conversation", thereby encouraging fans of the brand to get crafty in this time of isolation. Here's how it works: Every week, a new creative concept and prompt is unveiled, connecting followers and fans with McQueen's team of collaborators – all virtually, of course. These collaborators put on a series of digital tutorials based on the prompt of the week and participants are urged to create their works of art from the comfort of their homes. Ruched skirt, Tommy Hilfiger, ₹ 4,499 ₹ 47,000 approx

Printed dress, Blumarine at www.luisaviaroma.com,

Midi skirt, United Colors of Benetton, ₹2,499

## THE LAST SUMMER

With fashion week showcases for S/S 2021 having been cancelled, coupled with the possibility of having to practice social distancing until next year, S/S 20 could be the last of the summer shows we see for a bit. But that doesn't mean we can't make the most of the season's trends appropriate for indoors

#### MAXIMALIST ENERGY

Like that morning cup of coffee, you're going to need a power-print pick-me-up on some days. With giant florals and clashing colours becoming mainstays on summer runways, there's no such thing as too much. You'll also be able to wear these on your first postcorona holiday.

Windbreaker,

Nike x Off-White, ₹ 15,995

Paperbag-waist skirt,

Lee Cooper, ₹ 1,899

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3.1 PHILLIP LI

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Woven jacket, Alanui at www.farfetch.com, ₹2,12,700 approx

> Upcycled necklace, Anavila,

price on request

NOTEN

DRIES VAN

Mirror-work shorts, Ashish at www.matchesfashion.com, ₹75,500 approx

#### DRAWSTRING EVERYTHING

Turns out all anybody wants during a lockdown is a good pair of sweats, and we're riffing off that energy to invest in drawstring pieces that will adjust with our posture at the work desk or on the bed. By no means are drawstrings a new phenomenon, but we have a new-found appreciation for them. Whether sitting at the top of shorts, at the waist of jackets, or all over... we're into it.

SELF PORTRAIJ

Photographs IMAXTREE, Junior Fashion Editor SURBHI SHUKLA

SUPRIYA LELE

Linen dress, 11.11, ₹ 11,900

VALENTINO

Button-down dress, **Starch**, ≹ 11,900

#### **BUTTON DOWN**

In keeping with our theme of minimum effort and maximum effect of looking like we have everything put together, we present: The shirt dress. Because there is no point in trying to make two separate items of clothing match if we're indoors and our co-workers only see our upper half during VCs.

Denim dress, Mango, ₹ 3,590

Shirt dres

H&M,

₹`2,999

Ruffled bustier blouse, De La Vali at www.net-a-porter-.com, ₹ 16.600 approx

MAXWELL

NDON

Bustier blouse, **www.topshop.com**, ₹ 1,500 approx

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ZIMMERMANN

#### TOTALLY TUBULAR

What's hot, you ask? The weather of course, and if reading that took you back to *The Simple Life* days of Paris Hilton and Nicole Richie, then you know exactly where we're going with this. Tube tops are making a comeback. Style the 90s staple with a tiered skirt or a pair of hot shorts, depending on how you're feeling that day. Throw on a bandana for good measure as you clean your apartment.

> Ruched tube top, Forever 21, ₹ 1,299

SAKS POTTS

Ruched tube top, GAP, ₹ 1,999\_

STAUD

OFF-WHITE

# **LEGGIN' IT**

Ditch your trousers and jeans for S/S runway-approved leggings

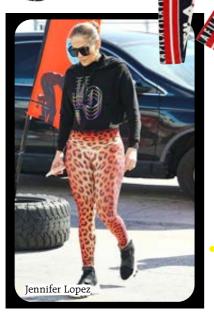
hances are, you own about a dozen pairs of leggings. And why not? They're comfy, and our fave A-listers like JLo and Gigi Hadid wear them on the regular, making a strong case for its versatility outside of the gym. Now that all you see are the four walls of your home, there's no excuse to experiment with your style. While trusty black or safe navy is always a winner, we'd suggest you mix it up with 80s styles in animal prints and metallics to lift your mood. For your at-home #OOTD, wear yours with everything from an oversized sweatshirt or a tank top to a button-down blouse along with chunky sneakers and XL hoop earrings to complete the retro vibe.



Zebra print, **Zara**, ₹ 1,790

Leopard print, Twin Fantasy at www.net-a-porter.com, ₹ 36,230 approx

> 'Zahra' printed FILA, ₹ 2,399



Gigi Hadid

Photographs IMAXTREE, Fashion Stylist OJAS KOLVANKAR

Hologram print, Junya Watanabe at www.matchesfashion.com, 2,2,600 approx

> Scult Lux Dri-Fit, **Nike**, ₹ 6,790





# TAKE A BOW

For content creator Rohit Gupta, comedy and acting go hand in hand

Sick of the lockdown blues? Content creator and comedian Rohit Gupta's on-point mimicry will have you shedding tears of laughter. At a time when the whole world is struggling to keep negative thoughts at bay, Gupta is out there creating hilarious content to remind you how important it is to have a sense of humour, even during a global pandemic. He's known for his ability to prank just about anyone by mimicking every A grade celebrity in the book. How does he do it? We sat down with him to take some notes.

## GRAZIA: How did you get into the field of comedy and mimicry?

ROHIT GUPTA: When I was doing my nine to five job, I used to mimic a lot of actors and call up random people to prank them. After I put up these snippets online, I started getting a lot of viewership. That's how I got into it, by slowly phasing out of my job and beginning to do this full time.

## G: Tell us about your favourite prank till date.

RG: My favourite prank has to be the one I pulled on Nora Fatehi. T-series wanted me

to promote *Batla House*, and I came up with an idea to do so by pranking Fatehi as Sanjay Dutt. My training as an actor helps me a lot in mimicking different celebrities.

#### G: These days, social media has become the main means to stay in touch with the outside world. As a content creator, what are the changes you have noticed in the sphere?

RG: These days, it's much more difficult to get say, a million views, as the number of content creators are multiplying. There's something new out every second of every minute and the competition is unreal.

### G: How have you been spending your time during the lockdown?

RG: I've been making a video every single day. I feel like I'm more connected with my fans. They send me a ton of sweet messages, and that motivates me to keep going. Plus, making a video typically takes me three to four hours to prepare for, so it's also a great way to kill time.

G: Who are some of the comedians you look up to?

#### **GRAZIA SHOWCASE**



RG: I look up to Johnny Lever. As a kid, I would listen to his cassettes and learn how to imitate different characters. I also admire Russell Peters and Danish Sait, who are both amazing comedians.



## GRAZIA | FEATURE



Meet some of the men and women who've stepped up to keep Mumbai going during the coronavirus outbreak

Words SAADIA S DHAILEY

s the world fights against the Covid-19 pandemic, we've new frontline heroes. They don't wear camouflage. These are bravehearts, some with coats, some without, who are on the ground despite great risks.



#### SHIKHA MALHOTRA, ACTRESS AND NURSING OFFICER

Until the night of lockdown, Shikha was an actress. Her last film – *Kaanchli*, with Sanjay Mishra – released only a few weeks before we

were besieged by Covid-19. "When Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced the nation-wide lockdown, I strongly felt the need to do something. That night, I brought out my nursing degree and certificates, and took off in the morning to join a hospital as a nurse." Two days later, on March 27th, Shikha joined the nursing team at the Covid ward of the Balasaheb Thackeray Trauma Care Municipal Hospital and is working there pro bono. "My mother is a senior nurse in Delhi. She's on Covid-19 duty and is due to retire in July. This is for her," says Shikha. It took a while for the nursing staff to warm up to her. "Initially, they couldn't fathom why an actress would want to step out and risk herself every day," she shares. Now they rely on her for tricky procedures. She's also a favourite of the patients and has forged many bonds meant to last beyond this pandemic. "My first patient was Mohammed, a seven-month-old. When all this is over, he is among the first people I'll be visiting to give a warm hug," says the 25-year-old.

## FEATURE | G R A Z I A

#### **KIRAN DIGHAVKAR,** ASSISTANT COMMISSIONER, G/NORTH WARD

He's the man overseeing the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation's efforts to tackle the virus spread in one of the most densely populated areas of the world - Dharavi - along with Mahim and Dadar. "During the pandemic, my role as a ward head means overseeing the wellbeing of these people in all aspects," he says. Contact tracing, transport management, waste management, quarantine arrangements, food supply, coordinating with the police and fire department - he's in charge of this and more. Since mid-March, Kiran has been at work all days of the week, 13 hours each day, many of which are spent with seniors, Indian and international reporters and his ward populace. "My ward has a population of about 12 lakh people, and by now about 50 per cent of them have my number. Everyone is scared; I get calls with complaints like 'I heard my neighbour cough'," he shares. His most daunting task is containing the situation in Dharavi. "It's a multi-faceted challenge. About nine lakh people live in 2.5 sq km. It's impossible to practice social distancing where 10-15 people live in each



house or are queuing up for community toilets. Sanitisation efforts are paramount, besides taking care of patients and contact tracing. Their basic survival is also under immense strain. Everyone here is a daily wager, living hand to mouth. I have to ensure rations for each one of them," says the 38-year-old. Constant duty is taking a toll, but he knows he must press on. "My sons feel left out, as they hear of their friends' dads spending time with them at home during lockdown. They also worry for my safety. Every time I am on TV without gloves or my mask down for a moment, I get frantic calls from my family," he says. "The most important weapon against this is a strong immune system. Follow a good diet and exercise. I take out one hour for myself and do stretches and exercise. It's become my hour of positivity," he says

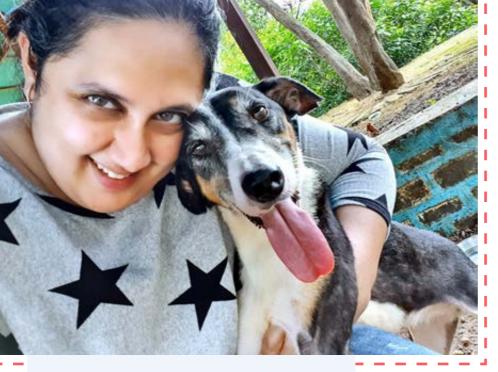


RUBEN RICHARD MASCARENHAS, TECH CONSULTANT AND SOCIAL ACTIVIST

Wearing a face shield, an N95 mask, a full sleeve shirt and sturdy shoes, Ruben Richard Mascarenhas is on the streets every day leading "People were going hungry...something had to be done," says Ruben. He and his teammates from the Litmus Test Project (a collective of changemakers) set things in motion to sign up dormant kitchens, raise funds and work out logistics. Looking for a simple name, they decided on Khana Chahiye. "It's what we ask our loved

a team of volunteers to distribute food packets in various parts of the city. The 32-yearold is the co-founder of Khana Chahiye, an initiative that's distributed 1.5 million meals since the lockdown.

ones, right? We wanted to remove the veneer of formality," he explains. They also set up a website - khanachahiye.com - to generate a crowd-sourced hunger map of the city. "One of the first people I met on the streets was a guy named Munna. He hadn't seen food for two days and broke down when he saw me. He wasn't the last one. In Kurla, we saw a 2-km line of migrant labourers desperate to go home, it was heart wrenching," he recollects. The team has been evolving their packages as per the needs on the ground. "We started a banana for every child. Soap was added for people on the streets without it. Access to drinking water is an issue we are working on," he says. Mindful of people fasting during Ramadan, they're now giving fruits, too. "The pandemic has brought about a greater realisation of my own privilege," he tells. "Our work has also reiterated what my mother believes in; you need a will to do charity; money finds its way. My mother's cooking is the only thing that's kept me going in these times, but I'll be moving out of my home this week so that I don't put my aged parents at risk," says Ruben.



#### SANAM MANCHANDA, CHILDBIRTH EDUCATOR AND FRIEND OF ANIMALS

Stray cats and dogs in the city have also been hit hard by the lockdown, with no regular pet-givers checking up on them, and no food in bins near restaurants to scavenge from. Aware of this distress, Sanam Manchanda and her friends have been running a feeding and rescue network. "We've managed to mobilise volunteers and funds, and are feeding about 600 strays every day. A friend, who has a food truck, helps ferry 100 kg of pet food every few days. We then distribute it among feeders," says Sanam. She has stocked food in the trunk of her car and feeds strays on her way to work or when running errands. "Where I can, I've also signed up with local grocers to feed strays in the vicinity," she adds. Besides this, she oversees rescue efforts and also steps out to treat sick dogs in her neighbourhood. "Every time I am out, I keep my eyes open for cases that may need attention, even birds. We see many of them fallen on the road due to dehydration. In the case of dogs, with no people to check on them, a major crisis has been severe maggot wounds. Just last week, we rescued two strays with severe infection; one of them didn't make it," she tells us. In some cases, Sanam administers medicines herself, but for more serious cases, she's the designated driver to ferry an MBBS doctor friend for help. Last week, she was on the road in the middle of the night by a dog's side, waiting for an animal ambulance. It's not been the only one. Overstretching herself between her work as a doula and lactation consultant, time with her toddler and rescue ops hasn't been easy. "My husband is worried for my safety and our son's. There are fights, but my son then tells him, 'dogs are hungry, let mumma go'," shares Sanam.

#### **ISHWAR KAMBLE,** *FIRE STATION OFFICER*

In his 12-year-career, senior station officer Ishwar Kamble has seen some ferocious fires and taken risks to douse them without much fear. "Fire, we understand: Covid-19 is different. This, we are scared of," says the 37-yearold. In charge of the Nariman Point outpost of the fire department, he leads the team on sanitation operations on the premises where coronavirus cases are detected. "You know that the place is infected, you still have to go in. It's part of the job," he shares. These ops are intense; it requires mapping of every single thing an infected person may have touched. "We have to ensure we disinfect every potential contact point on the premises. All this while ensuring my safety and that of my team from the virus and also the chemical we use to sanitise," he explains. Since March 22nd, he's led about eight such ops. "Now, we've a better hold on our emotions, and are more familiar with the drill," he says. But his family is still on tenterhooks. "My father, a retired fire officer, knows the risks and fears better than anybody in the family. He's always worried. Eventually, I had to stop telling him when I go for sanitising ops. At home, my older son, who's eight, is very observant. A stray cough from me, and he becomes tense; he'll ask me 'baba, are you okay?' I've been talking to him about all the precautions I take and the protective gear I wear to allay his fears," says Ishwar. Following the coronavirus statistics diligently every day, Ishwar knows it's going to be a long fight. But when this is over, the first thing he wants to do is visit his parents. And his sons? "Well, they want to catch a movie," he says.



#### **GRAZIA SHOWCASE**

M: I always like to keep things fuss-free, so my go-to look would comprise: My Air Jordan 1 sneakers, jeans and a check shirt. I've also accepted that I'm bound to have a few new hairstyles en route. So, if my hair is grown out, I usually tie it up or tuck it under a cap. But, if my hair is at a manageable length, I'll style it.

#### G: Are you also hopping onto the pandemic beard bandwagon? What are your three basic quarantine grooming tips?

M: Well, not intentionally, but my beard has grown out in lockdown; and, I've let my hair grow out, too. But, the minute I return home, it's all going to go because I still have a few days of shooting left for *Hungama 2*. So yes, my post pandemic look will comprise short hair and a stubble. I think maintaining basic hygiene during this period is important. I make it a point to trim the bottom half of my beard, the nape of my neck and sidelocks, once every few days.

## G: Pre-lockdown, what was your idea of relaxed formalwear?

M: My idea of relaxed formalwear would include straight-cut pants (nothing too tight though) with a plain shirt tucked in. The balance looks great. Personally, a mainstay for me would have to be boots over trainers when I'm wearing formals.



# THE SIMPLE LIFE

Actor Meezaan lets us in on his WFH style, and how he's staying productive in lockdown

s self-quarantine has become a reality around the world, millions of people have had to rethink the hows and whys of getting dressed every morning. And even under a global lockdown, it's possible for us to still get out of bed each morning, open up our closets, and give it our best shot. Just ask Bollywood star Meezaan, who has starred in Sanjay Leela Bhansali's Malaal, and will be seen in veteran filmmaker Priyadarshan's next, Hungama 2. The actor's been quarantining with friends at a farmhouse near Mumbai, and while he's using this time to work towards his fitness goals, farming and learning to play the guitar, he let us in on his homebound style. Like most of us, Meezaan has adjusted to a new reality in sweatpants, but is also taking advantage of the pure joy and solace clothing can provide.

### GRAZIA: What's your work from home style quotient?

MEEZAAN: I haven't worn a pair of jeans or trousers since quarantine started. I'm the cliché that puts on a Tee for Zoom meetings with directors and producers, but is only wearing shorts with it. It's a far cry from my work or event attire, but not too dissimilar to my gym or weekend at home vibe. I really underrated how good comfort was before.

#### G: What's the one piece of clothing from your wardrobe you can't wait to wear again, post lockdown?

M: I'd have to say my navy blue check shirt. As a side note: I can't wait to put on sneakers again.

G: Are you a big fan of the basics? What's your go-to look?

## GRAZIA | FEATURE

what your commute has been reduced from bed to sofa and desk, you could use the spare time to tackle some life admin. First up? Your wardrobe. Whether it's overflowing or just needs a quick reorganisation, there's no time like the present to spring clean (and deep cleanse). And sometimes, a thorough wardrobe cleanse could help you reconnect with your past through heirloom pieces you probably forgot all about. These creative folks prove that decluttering can be a cathartic and, dare we say it, fun process, especially when you dig up something with sentimental value.

"There is something about a piece of clothing that you know you respect, as much as it respects you. It's like an understated armour or shield, a statement of your revered values. This meticulously handstitched khadi jacket from 11.11 by Cell DSGN is an item I admire – it's made with love, and every bit is personalised. The creator of the label, Mia Morikawa, surprised me with hand-embroidered notes and poetry on the lining of this jacket - and it brings me so much joy to know that every thread is crafted with hands for me, and supports artisans and their crafts. I wear it at home, I wore it to my last TED Talk, I had it while I was living in a Buddhist monastery, it has travelled with me from Tokyo to Kathmandu to Bali, and beyond - it's literally been with me through all the spiritual, defining moments of my travels, and life. Since I'm always on the go, this piece is the closest I feel to 'home'."

- Mukul Bhatia, documentary photographer and sustainability advocate

The new prophylactic life has confined everyone to their homes, allowing us time to reflect on our choices and relationships to items acquired over time

From The Archives

Words OJAS KOLVANKAR



## FEATURE | G R A Z I A



"In the spirit of sustainability – not hoarding, as some who know me well might point out - I preside over a small excavation site in my wardrobe that often yields amazing artefacts. I've always had my trusty fossil brush ready; nowadays, another important tool to work with: Time. During the lockdown, I unearthed this cool-ugly handshaped rhinestone bag I bought at Bombay Electric - the loveliest fashion store Mumbai ever had – a little over a decade ago. It has enough bling to blind haters, and its open palm has blessed many weddings over the years, including my own. A shiny talisman that fits a lipstick and a credit card; a bag to go with Dorothy's ruby slippers (how much room does courage, a brain and a heart need?); and a regular Liza Minnelli in the spotlight. When people point out that a few of the rhinestones are missing, I wonder if Ms Minnelli still has all her teeth."

- Kanika Parab, co-founder, Brown Paper Bag

"The reason this piece of jewellery is so special to me is because it's the only piece that my mother and I have been left with by my paternal great-grandmother. She was the most stylish woman I knew. She would travel on cruise ships and bring back several trunks containing couture, shoes, handbags, and jewellery. She was immaculate and was ahead of her time. When I was born, she gifted this necklace to my mother, and it has been with us since. There were other pieces of jewellery that my great-grandmothers passed on to us but most of it was stolen during a robbery. This one, however, has stood the test of time."

- Shaana Levy Bahl, actor and filmmaker



## GRAZIA | FEATURE

"The most sentimental piece of jewellery I have is my *mangalsutra* (a religious necklace worn by married Hindu women). I had a low-key wedding ceremony at the registry in my husband's Belgian village with just our immediate families. Along with exchanging rings, the *mangalsutra* is the one traditional ritual I wanted to incorporate, and so my mother had this one designed for me – it's an exact copy of her Kerala-style one. This piece honours the partnership I have with my husband, and my heritage. It's my favourite piece of jewellery and I've worn it almost every single day for the past decade."

- Rithika Merchant, artist





"When I would visit my grandparents in Patna, while growing up, I would always ask my grandmother if she had any old items of clothing to give me. Perhaps a family heirloom, jewellery, or an old sari - anything that was symbolic of my ancestral heritage. Sadly, most of the jewellery my grandmother possessed was either melted down, donated to the less fortunate or simply thrown away. She did not share the same enthusiasm I had for 'vintage items' and always gifted us 'new things'. So when she finally did give me something that had been in her possession for a number of years, I was elated. It was her silver wedding kamardhani (cummerbund) which had been cinched around the yellow sari she wore on her wedding day. I make it a point to wear it at least once or twice a year with a sari. In this picture, I belted it around a vintage banarasi that I had purchased in Hyderabad."

- Rashmi Verma, designer

### FEATURE | G R A Z I A



"In the early 50s, my mother went to London to study law and that's where she purchased this red coat. She passed on three such coats to me when I was moving to Europe. Over the years, I find that the red coat has become a go-to piece of clothing of mine. I wear it over a sari, a skirt or even with trousers. When I put on the coat, it cheers me up immensely; I felt sophisticated and cocooned in it when I first wore it (which has remained a constant). It always made me think of home when I was overseas. Besides, the silhouette is timeless, well-tailored, and falls on the body elegantly."

- Aradhana Seth, visual artist, scenographer and filmmaker

"My mother passed this skirt on to me when I was a teenager. There was a trunk at home with all her vintage clothes that didn't fit her anymore, which I always rummaged through. I held on to this skirt for years, but never got down to wearing it. My mom used to be an actress in *Tiatr* (a type of musical theatre popular in Goa) and this skirt was handstitched and hand-embroidered by her elder sister for one of her performances. My daughter has already called dibs on it when she saw me photograph it. For me, it's not just a piece of clothing, it's got memories of her and how I got drawn closer to the idea of making do with what I have instead of purchasing something new."

- Tania Fadte, fashion stylist



## GRAZIA | FEATURE



## UNDERNEATH ITALL

Covid-19 carries a monstrous amount of loneliness with it, and to beat it, getting innovative is the only alternative left

#### Words PEONY HIRWANI

he world has come to a halt due to the novel coronavirus outbreak. Numerous countries, including our own, are under an official lockdown with all occupants being asked to observe essential guidelines of self-isolation, social distancing, and work from home. During these tough times, social media (to be progressively explicit, Instagram) has been consistent in conveying genuinely necessary diversion. Yup, people are coming together from all over the world to nominate each other and taking up extremely random yet heartwarming challenges to stay connected.

It all began earlier this year when thousands of teenagers around the globe started posting candid photos of themselves on their feeds with the puzzling caption: "Until tomorrow." The trend required anyone who liked the photos, which are intended to only stay up for 24 hours, to receive a message from the user daring them to do the same. This trend was trailed by a bunch of more trends with people sharing their creative side and skills like art, painting, dancing, singing, bodybuilding, yoga, and fashion.

One of the most creatively curated fashion challenges was the #HomeCouture challenge – a trend sweeping every fashion lover's Instagram feed that involved taking





## FEATURE | G R A Z I A



high-end runway looks and recreating them with bits and sways people have lying around the house. The trend took off when fashion journalist George Serventi (@skipdin) took to Instagram to share his recreation of the hot pink Molly Goddard runway look worn by Rihanna using pink tissue paper, and one of Comme Des Garçons runway looks using bin bags. "During quarantine, many of us may find ourselves in a glum. It is important for individuals to find activities to engage in to preserve their mental health and keep entertained," says couturier Rahul Mishra. He added, "Creative expression to me is the best way to ventilate and uplift oneself and I believe light activities such as this particular trend may give people just the right boost of positivity."

Serventi's drive and new trend propelled numerous others to give a shot to their own #HomeCouture looks and inspired progressively inventive trends and challenges like the #QuarantinePillowChallenge, which includes taking one or more large cushions and fashioning them into a minidress through a belt around the centre, and the #MuseumChallenge, which circulated around the web after the Getty Museum in Los Angeles approached its online supporters to reproduce well-known fine art with household items. "I think the reason why the #MuseumChallenge is so popular is because it's fun escapism that doesn't link to Covid-19," says Manchester-based special education consultant Hannah Emily Glennon.

Melbourne-based model and presenter Tess Shanahan told *Grazia*, "With the popularity of apps like TikTok, it's assumed that people will re-create off the back of another user's content, which is fostering a



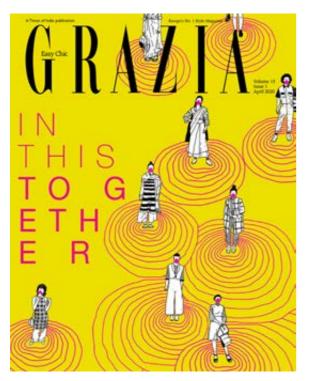
beautiful sense of inclusion in our online communities." She added, "People generally have more time to be creative now and I believe they are enjoying seeing their ideas and inspirations be shared and developed." Self-isolation has unquestionably made individuals check into their internal identity, and the viral trends and challenges have gone about as significant promoters for everybody to share an innovative side that doesn't normally surface. "Art fixes people, and it is forever," says Russian artist and costume designer Maria Motorova. She added, "For me, art is higher and stronger than wars and epidemics and that's why it's so nice and pleasant to participate in all these wonderful challenges on social media."

"Energy goes where it flows and at this time when the conditions are so heartbreaking and chaotic, it is very positive to see people creating good energy, sharing it, and helping each other keep up the spirit to get through these tough times," says fashion designer Reynu Tandon. With everybody being home, Internet-based life has gotten more significant than any other time in recent memory, as a method for association and correspondence to the world while we're locked in. "Instagram challenges are a powerful way to expose yourself to a lot of people all around the world through a common trend - in this case, a viral one," savs social media influencer Oliixio.



# GRAZIA | FEATURE Through their eyes

We asked various homegrown illustrators to design digital covers that capture the myriad moods of this period of self-isolation and in turn acknowledging the uniqueness of our situation. Each cover is a reminder that we're not stuck in a loop – and that everyday is still a new day



#### SAMEER KULAVOOR

"Six Degrees of Separation – the existential premise that everyone in the world is connected to everyone else in the world by a chain of no more than six acquaintances. Community spirit used to be about coming together; now it's about staying apart. But despite the varying degrees of separation and disparity, let this serve as a reminder that while we might be alone, we are in this together."



#### PIA ALIZÉ HAZARIKA

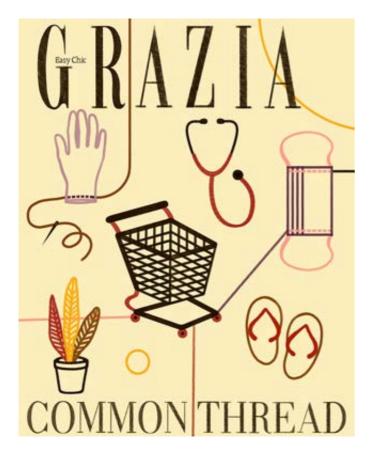
"We've been in lockdown for over a month now. We're part of an unprecedented global crisis – one spanning countries, generations, and a first for most. It's changed the way we live our lives, interact with people; it has upended the economy and is making 'isolation' the new normal. We're also witnessing a disparity that was always present, but is now taking centre stage. We're learning about how essential the services we took for granted are – that there isn't a 'one size fits all' solution that can apply to all classes and minority groups. There is a need for us to come together as a community, to work collectively – with empathy and generosity – and to use our privilege to extend the rights, resources and securities that help some of us through this crisis to those who don't have the same opportunities."



#### **GAURI SAXENA**

"We seldom break away from our bectic circuit to take a step back and ponder. Humankind has been given the opportunity and freedom to heal the mind, body and soul. To be one with ourselves. It's a much needed reset, restoring balance between the Earth and mankind. While nature works its own magic, we stay safe at home, sit back and relax. We spend time with ourselves, we do more of what makes us happy. We breathe. We heal."

## FEATURE | G R A Z I A



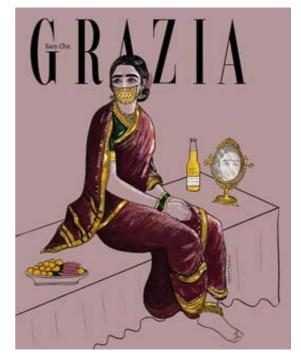
#### **AVINASH JAI SINGH**

"The home brew, quarantine special. A good cup of coffee takes its own sweet time to brew, and in the end, your patience is rewarded with a strong, intense, unique tasting cuppa with a great texture. Let your love be like coffee, it'll be as good as you make it. Give it some time, Let LOVE brew, and by the end of quarantine, may it wake you up in the morning or keep you up all night, just like coffee does. Stay home, stay in love and take all the time in the world to brew together."



#### NAMITA SUNIL

"The global pandemic has introduced a new meaning to luxury – now found in commonplace items that one would have once been easily overlooked. The subsequent standstill and isolation has also forced us to weigh the importance of human connection in these divisive times, and it is now more important than ever for a gentle reminder that there is a common thread binding all of us."



#### **JAYESH SACHDEV**

"This illustration, titled 'all dressed up and nowhere to go', is a depiction of the dystopian reality of a utopian world – how the current circumstances affect all walks of human life, and how this experience is in some way a social leveller. All your pretty drapery and jewels won't help your cause. The fragility of time and human appetite for selfish survival is evident in our greed for stocking up. The mandate for safety is all that matters. We can wait and reflect upon better times, hoping for a better tomorrow."





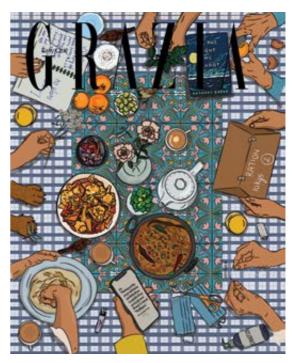
#### **HEY DOODE STUDIO (ANIRUDH KADAR)**

"We salute the dudes who are on frontline duty. We are in awe of their selflessness even as they safeguard us all. All we can do, as a mark of respect, is to stay indoors. Our little act will ensure that this is over soon, giving our heroes the chance to return home and rest their capes (at least for a while.)"



#### WALDIA AND COMPANY

"Enjoying strawberries while looking at her solitary reflection, a woman is drenched in ennui and the moonlight. I want this to be a picture of hope, but also one of individual introspection. As external systems crumble around us, individuals, especially those in places of privilege, can use this time to identify toxic beliefs that need to crumble within each of us too. Interpersonal apathy and systems of capitalism, patriarchy and racism have kept us divided long enough. Will this solitude unlock a deeper acceptance of the self, and ironically unlock a deeper appreciation of love and community? Our collective existence is a bewildering fishbowl of subjective realities and non dualities – this relatively 'slow' pace feels like a call to go back to appreciating the few objectively simple, pure, beautiful and true facets of human existence - love towards others, especially the 'other'; love towards the self; love for Mother Earth."



#### **STUTI UNIYAL**

"What's on the table? It's not just hard to stay positive in the face of uncertainty, but draining to think of possibilities and to look for something more positive. However, this pandemic is changing the way we've been looking at life. The definition of necessity has changed, so has human interaction, which is limited to just a few family members or even oneself, in some cases. As each day progresses, it's less about the expansion of wants and more about helping each other out of this situation. How do you partake in offering something while sitting at home in isolation? Let's look at it this way -a huge dinner table been laid out and you enter as a guest to this potluck dinner. What you offer is not limited to food, but comes with a generous serving of empathy, awareness, kindness, self-care, or compassion towards yourself and others in your own way. What's keeping us apart is what brings us closer to overcome these testing times together. Together we are trying to adapt to reality and make the most of it. If not today, we try tomorrow."

# FEATURE | G R A Z I A



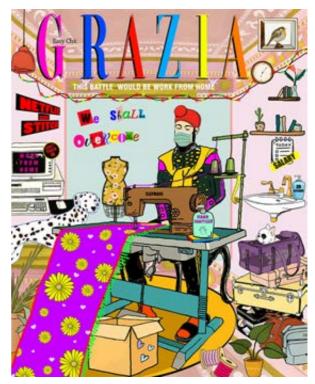
#### NAMRATA GOSAVI

"Now's the time to come together in the fight against the coronavirus pandemic. We shouldn't only leave it to our medicos and the police force to fight bravely on the frontline. We can do our bit by staying at home. We are doing this for us, together. We are in this together."



#### **PARAM SAHIB**

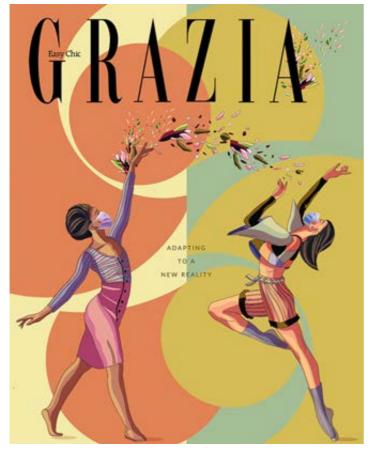
"The situation right now is like testing waters for existing and upcoming fashion brands alike. A lot of workers (skilled and unskilled) and their families are probably migrating right now and their means of livelihood have been severely affected. I hope all the local brands in the country survive this unfortunate closure and use this time of uncertainty by maneuvering their strategies in order to sustain themselves as well as for those working for them. Hopefully in the future, buyers will appreciate more homegrown brands and invest in items that have a lot more value in terms of art, culture and heritage – things that would be more special in the long run – and of course, help these labels flourish to make up for time lost right now."



#### NAMRATA VANSADIA

"Zoom birthday: There is comfort in connecting with others, even if the format is unconventional. Knowing that everyone is grappling with this new reality, of course, some more privileged than others, this cover visualises how we are trying to adapt and find moments of joy and normalcy in these very stressful times."

# GRAZIA | FEATURE



#### **RACHNA RAVI**

"With a global pandemic plaguing our lives like never before, everyone is understandably scared and confused. The loss of physical human connection stands out as a very jarring and surreal feeling to most of us. As time passes, I've been trying to adapt to this new reality just like everyone else, and I've tried to render the same in my cover."



#### THOUGHT OVER DESIGN

(Art direction: Anushka Sani Illustrated by: Anisha Sirur and Ganesh More)

"As we enter Week 4 of being home-bound, activity has become a crucial part of staying healthy for some of us – physically and mentally. It's inspiring to see how people are using technology at this time – teachers are offering free or discounted lessons, Zoom has become a verb and doing jhadu is almost like an arm workout. Lastly, in these unusual circumstances, not everyday will feel productive. And that's okay. Instead of stressing about staying in shape, trying a new workout or diet, or becoming the best new chef on the 'gram, let's cut ourselves some slack. Stop trying to control the situation always, and let go."



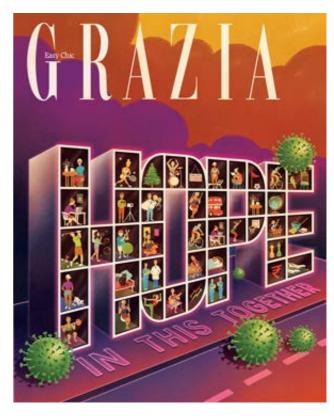
#### **ANJALI MEHTA**

"As we continue to battle this global pandemic, two sides of the story emerge. One, where we find ourselves at home, trying to keep it together, staying sane, and adjusting. The other side belongs to those who do not have this option, and those who don't have access to bare necessities imperative for survival in isolation. The least we can do is complain less about being home-bound and instead, redirect our energies to strengthening the relationship we have with ourselves. Being able to stay at home and relax is a privilege that not everyone has in these trying times. Use this time to introspect, better yourself, and help those in need. They say – "You cannot give from an empty cup" – and this world needs you more than ever right now, and will continue to, long after this is all over. Try to help in whatever little way you can, even if it means by simply staying at home."



#### SHWETA MALHOTRA

"The thought behind this cover was essentially – distanced yet together or together apart. We're in this together, it may not be physically, but in isolation or even socially distanced. That's the only way to be safe and flatten the curve. We stand together in isolation."



#### **JEZREEL NATHAN**

"As we stay home, distance ourselves from one another and do the best we can with the information we have while grappling with the Covid-19 pandemic, our efforts paint a picture of a 'collective hope'. In times like these, when there are so many unanswered questions, I turn to the Bible to dig deeper. My inspiration for this piece comes from Zechariah 9:12 – "Return to your fortress of peace, you prisoners of hope." When we consistently choose hope in the face of despair, and choose to be rooted and bolstered in that hope, we become prisoners of hope. Today, I am a 'prisoner of hope' both literally and figuratively as there is no better vantage point from which to uplift and strengthen one other and fight this battle."



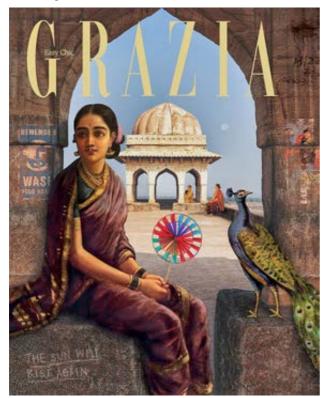
#### **ROHAN HANDE**

"With the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic, we are experiencing changes, or at least the need for a change in public services, international politics, and in our professional and personal lives. The isolation has forced some of us to introspect and rediscover ourselves, learn to put our differences aside and work as a community. The virus has shown how alike we all are. As we enter a new reality together, it is important to remember that in the end we can only look after ourselves, if we look out for each other."



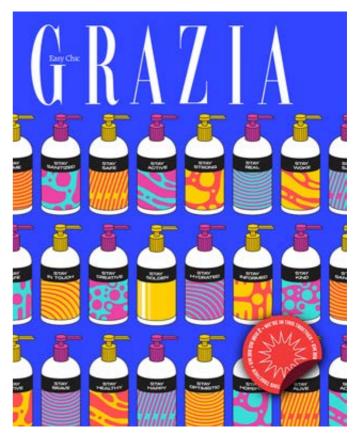
#### **RAHUL MATHEW**

"The sun will rise – if there is one thing that has made the world look brighter, salvaged humanity and kept hope alive, it is art. While we face this virus, we must not forget that it's our unity in protecting each other that will help us stay healthy. Let's fight the common enemy of Covid-19 together for a better world by staying indoors together, and we shall overcome."



#### **SMITHA ALVA**

"My illustrations usually have a whimsical yet informative tone to them. In this time of uncertainty, I feel that humour can help keep morale high and give people a reason to laugh. This piece of work is inspired by vintage Art Deco style, and takes a visual spin on the line 'let's face it together'. "



#### **TANVEER SINGH**

"With the sanitiser becoming the season's must-have essential, and all emails ending with 'stay safe and sanitised', it's important to remember that your mental health is as important as your physiological health, especially in the midst of a global pandemic. If only staying sane was as easy as staying sanitised. That's what I've tried to convey with this artwork. While keeping your hands clean is important in the wake of this crisis, we shouldn't lose sight of all the other aspects of our well-being. At the end of the day, we're all in this together but it's important to remember that we can't pour from an empty cup." A STAR BOBRON At 18, Shannon K is a musical legend in the making

hannon K's journey with music began way back into her childhood. As the daughter of the famed Bollywood singer, Kumar Sanu, she was exposed to the very best of music right from the start. While her father was the undisputable voice of his generation, Shannon is increasingly becoming that of the newer one.

After studying at the Royal School of London, she released her debut single, *A Long Time*, written and produced by Jason "Poo Bear" Boyd. To put things in context: Justin Bieber's hit tracks such as *What Do You Mean* and *Despacito* owe their genius to Poo Bear. As you can guess, Shannon's single went on to become a huge success, garnering over 40 million views on YouTube.

But if you look closely, you will see Shannon as more than just a rising pop star. Her songs seek to do more than just entertain. The lyrics, the melody, and everything in between is crafted to resonate with the listener. Take for example her anti-bullying anthem, *Give Me Your Hand*, a song based on the young singer-songwriter's own experiences

through the years. Authentic, relatable and brutally honest, the track went on to win the award for the best original song with a social message at the Hollywood Music in Media Awards.

But that's not all. Apart from being an advocate of anti-bullying practices, she has also been very vocal about animal equality, cancer awareness and other issues. When she was only 12 years old, she donated her first salary as well 40 inches of her hair to a cancer charity in the United Kingdom. She chose to celebrate her 18th birthday by sponsoring the complete education of two girls in India.

Closer to home, Shannon has collaborated with Bollywood singer Sonu Nigam on

a track titled *OMT*. You will also hear her voice in *Tik Tok*, a song to be featured in the upcoming movie *Happy Hardy and Heer*. Having made a mark globally with her musical genius, she is all set to win over her own country. And we can't wait to see what the future holds for the young star.

# **GRAZIA** | **FASHION**

We got five women to try the coolest S/S 2020 runway trends - indoors

Fashion Stylist GARVIKA KHANNA

Il this free time, wardrobes full of pieces dying to be worn and having nowhere to go doesn't really need to dampen your spirits. We challenged five women with distinct sartorial styles to recreate some of the most popular S/S 20 runway trends at home. From new age colour blocking, polished athleisure to head-to-toe nude, print clash and boudoir dressing, here's how to wear these trends IRL – work from home wardrobe now, real life wardrobe post pandemic.

MSGM



Photographs IMAXTREE

STELLA MCCARTNE

MIU MIU

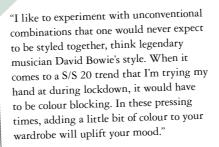
SALVATORE FERRAGAMO

# FASHION | G R A Z I A

Crew socks,

Simple Habits,

₹ 399



Poornamrita Singh, founder & creative director, SubCulture

#### CRAYOLA Party

STAUD

If you are looking for a sudden pick-me-up without much effort, look no further as colour blocking is here to save the day. Only experimented in traditional colour combinations (red, blue, yellow) earlier, the trend is now moving to vivid paint-box hues this season. Designers are painting the town not just red, but in hues of tangerine, lavender and highlighter green, too. It's certainly the serotonin boost we could all use right now.



ROKSANDA

Panelled satin dress, Stine Goya at www.net-a-porter.com, ₹ 28,300 approx

BALMAIN

Knit dress, United Colors of Benetton, ₹ 5,999

> 'Bolide 1923-30' handbag, Hermès, price on request

# GRAZIA | FASHION

Cut-out tank, **Off-White** at

www.net-a-porter.com,

₹ 38,000 approx

A.L.C.

"Experimenting with athleisure is far from my usual style but I was drawn to the idea of it's polished, refined feel and decided to challenge myself. It took hunting deep into my closet but I'm quite happy with the result. For recreating this S/S20 trend, I stuck to different tones of the same colour and paired a chic structured jacket with sporty track pants and finished it off with pristine white sneakers".

Antara Motiwala Marwah, fashion consultant & style curator

HERMÈS

Belted vegan leather trousers, Nanushka at www.matchesfashion.com, ₹ 41.895 approx

#### **GYM CLASS HEROES**

Blame it on the fitness resolutions sparked by the start of a new year, or the revival of 90s-inspired sportswear, but the athleisure movement doesn't seem to be slowing down any time soon. However, its refined, grown-up update for S/S 20 has our attention. What once was all about functionality has now become the new cool. Be it Jacquemus' sporty tank paired with low slung trousers, Ferragamo's version with a prim linen blazer or Lacoste's fuss-free oversized polo Tee, pleated skirt and loafers combo, there's inspiration everywhere.

'Sonic RS-X' sneakers, Puma, ₹ 9,999 Playsuit, Tommy Hilfiger, ₹ 6,299

'Baby G' digital watch, **Casio**, ₹ 5,995





LACOSTÈ

# FASHION | G R A Z I A

Cashmere turtleneck Baserange, ₹ 41,100 approx

> 'Sherrie' patent pumps, Steve Madden, ₹ 7,999

KATE SPADE



"I've always believed – less is more and adore the minimal aesthetic. When it comes to my style I draw inspiration from the French fashion icon Lou Lou de la Falaise. Most of the pieces in my everyday wardrobe are mostly monochromatic with a dash of emerald green. So it was no surprise that I would go for a head-to-toe nude look. I paired a classic long sleeve with tailored trousers and very OTM naked sandals to complete the look".

Aishwarya Nair Mathew, fashion designer, Aligne Studio

MAX MARA

C

detail, **Zara**, ₹ 1,890

#### NEUTRAL TERRITORY

Call it ecru, khaki, cappuccino, camel, sand, nude or beige, the hue, once considered boring is having a major fashion moment. Burberry brought the beige-onbeige look back to the runways in A/W 19 and since then we've seen tonal spin-offs on multiple 'It' girls. From basics like tailored trousers, a polo tee or even layered with a classic trench, dressing up in shades of your morning latte couldn't get easier.

> Wide-leg trousers, Uniqlo, ₹ 2,990

SABEL MARANT



Kensington' cotton gabardine trench coat, **Burberry** at www.farfetch.com, ₹ 1,58,065 approx

# GRAZIA | FASHION

Woven pumps, Christian Louboutin,

price on request

"One look at my closet and you will know that I'm obsessed with Hawaiian prints. I trace my fashion inspiration back to the rockabilly style of the 50s, or to the late jazz musician Amy Winehouse. To recreate this print-clashing look from the S/S 20 runways, I borrowed my husband's shirt. During quarantine lately, I've been opting for more comfortable fits in oversized styles."

Arpana Rayamajhi, artist & jewellery designer

. . . . . . . . . . . .

Printed jacket, **Yavi**, ₹ 14,000



PACO RABANNE

Belted shorts, Desmond Dempsey x H&M, ₹ 1,299

ERDEN

#### **PRINT SPLASH**

An easy way to get into vacay mood while being stuck at home is with an explosion of colourful prints. The S/S 20 prints are inspired by wildflower gardens, tropical jungles mixed with abstract art and polka. This trend has us reminiscing about the summer holiday that we thought we'd be on. Throw caution to the wind and channel your maximalist spirit with print on print (on print) while you sip icy-cool piña coladas in your living room.

Midi skirt

Vero Moda, ₹ 1,999 Printed boiler suit Mother, ₹ 23,300 approx



VAN NOTEN

## FASHION | G R A Z I A

Printed slip dress, The Attico at Le Mill, price on request

> 'Mayfield Avenue' beaded dress, **Myla**,

₹ 1,37,630 approx



Lace slip, shorts, Hunkemoller,

₹ 2,499 and ₹ 2,699

"Boudoir dressing, I believe, has always been associated with self-care and fantasy, and that is also why it's been stuck behind closed doors but thanks to Rihanna and Beyonce, these styles are finally being pushed out. I feel this trend is as romantic and edgy as it is comfortable so it's a win-win situation. Being a lover of monotone dressing, I chose an all white ensemble – a lacy sheer slip, flared trousers and a beautiful embroidered pullover that I accessorised with the Lynx necklace from my upcoming collection".

Kaabia Grewal Shah, jewellery designer, Outhouse

Embroidered sliders, Charles & Keith, ₹ 5,499



#### **BEYOND THE BED**

DION LEE

ERMANNO SCERVINO

From slinky slip dresses with romantic lace and satin or structured bustiers with boning, lingerie is taking centre-stage this season. Moving from the confines of the bedroom, designers have found a way to effectively work boudoir elements into easy daywear dressing. The traditional chemise is undoubtedly our favourite – easy to transition from day to night, its sheer comfort has our vote. If you're still a traditionalist and showing off your intimates is taboo, light layering is your best bet.

'Antonia' slip dress, **Rat & Boa,** ₹ 18,490 approx



From HIIT to yoga, here's the future-proof workout gear you should invest in, even if it's for your living room

hanks to live streaming services, you can bring your favourite instructors and fitness studios into your living room. The enthusiasm to get creative with home workouts can only last so long. Get your hands on some new gear to keep the momentum and endorphins flowing.

Yoga socks, HRX, ₹ 499



#### YOU GOTTA YOGA

Whether you're new to yoga and want to look like a pro, or you're a full-fledged yogi and need to update your garb, we highly recommend a jumpsuit that will move with you no matter which way you bend or stretch.

Quilted yoga mat, Ayurganic by Lecoanet & Hemant, ₹ 6,499 Jumpsuit, **Nike**, ₹ 4,995

Jumpsuit, Earnest Leoty at www.net-a-porter.com,

₹ 26,900 approx

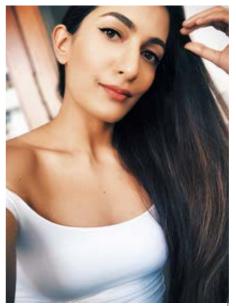


Junior Fashio Editor SURBHI SHUKLA, Photographs IMA XTREE.COM



## GRAZIA | BEAUTY







# Lock'ed

Put down the scissors and take notes as these women tell you how to reconnect with your hair in lockdown

Words HENA DESAI

ur relationship with our hair has always been complicated. It's a lovehate journey, punctuated with a series of cuts and colours that are definitive of our moods and personality. But as our beauty regimes go fully DIY through weeks of quarantine, it's getting harder to tame our tresses to perfection, so maybe now's a good time to step back, take a break and accept your hair the way it is - complete with overgrown bangs, grey roots and frizz. Through a series of self-portraits, five women let us in on how they're learning the importance of letting their hair just be.





# BEAUTY | G R A Z I A



My pre-quarantine hair was curled into waves, drenched in Ouai Wave Spray. While it looked good, the downside of this is that it made it super dry. During quarantine, I'm going back to my Malayali roots, as I experiment with braids and use more coconut oil than I normally would. I have the luxury of leaving a coconut oil hair mask on for 3-4 days, switching between hairbands with braids and a middle-parted slick bun. My hair has outgrown its original lob, so now's a great time to get over the awkward phase."

Natasha Sumant, creative director & founder of Gundi Studios

I'm actually enjoying just leaving my hair alone while in lockdown. As a TV presenter and emcee, heat styling tools were a big part of my daily life. While I really miss work and I'm anxious about the future, a small silver lining to the present situation is that my hair gets a break from heat damage. No more straightening my hair every day, no more teasing and styling; I've just been letting it do its own thing. There is some frizz, and a few greys are starting to show, but I'm okay with that. For me, being under lockdown has been a real lesson in re-evaluating what's truly essential. It has revealed the incredible non-essentialness in much of what we used to do every day."

Leeza Mangaldas, TV presenter and emcee



# GRAZIA | BEAUTY







Like most people, the lockdown hasn't been the easiest for me. I chopped off a few inches of my hair right at the start of it, and now I'm just allowing it to breathe and repair. I'm not using any products or heat, letting them loose in their wavy state or in a bun. In fact, I'm enjoying my natural texture for the first time in ages. Luckily, I don't have greys yet but if I did, I'd happily embrace that too. If there is anything that this lockdown has taught me, it is to stop, breathe and know that the Earth and sky are just fine without us – so when we come back we need to remember we are its guests and not its masters."

Nauheed Cyrusi, actor and model



I usually do nothing to my hair. I'm patiently waiting it out – I got a proper short bob before the actual lockdown was announced, because I knew I wanted to grow it out. Apart from a regular hair care routine, I don't do much. I'm actually glad that heat styling has come to a standstill so my hair can breathe and grow happy and healthy."

Kayaan Contractor, fashion influencer



I decided to get bangs during my annual end-of-the-year breakdown in December, and fortunately, it was the best thing to ever happen to me. Two months later, my signature look and I are in lockdown, my bangs permanently clipped to my head. They're overgrown, covering my eyes even when blow-dried through this sweaty summer. I've thought about trimming them but for what? Instead, I'm using this time to try various detoxes; I tried going "no poo", replacing shampoo with water or apple cider vinegar. But I couldn't bear it. So now I'm switching from shampooing every alternate day to once a week, hoping that my hair becomes less oily naturally. While I wait for that to happen, my bangs can firmly remain in their clip jail till lockdown ends and a professional can cut it down to size."

Nirali Shah, content strategist

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# Stay Indoors. Stay Safe.











Move over 10-step routines – we're now taking the 'less is more approach' when it comes to skincare

C. Gunnada S.



urveys conducted by online e-tailers over the last 2-3 years in the US have thrown up a fascinating statistic: The average woman uses around 16 beauty products each day. If that sounds like a lot, here's what the yearly price tag of all that looks like – a whopping ₹ 2,22,800. Looks bad, doesn't it? As a beauty journalist, I'm guilty of always having too many products on my nightstand and my face too, but now more than ever, I'm forcing myself to reassess my choices to understand if I really do need so much to take care of my skin. As the days of lockdown drag on, I've figured that the only bright spot in all of this is finally understanding how little we need to get by we've transitioned so quickly from excess to just the essentials, and there's no better time than now to apply this to our skincare routines too. Enter the 'skipcare' routine.

#### THE NEW NORMAL

Skincare junkies will understand when I say that I'd happily trade in my morning breakfast for an extra 10 minutes to focus on my skincare routine. After all, there's a long list of products involved - toners, essences, serums, moisturisers, sunscreens and more - that must go onto the face before we even get to the make-up. But, I'm trading this rather laborious process for what is known as the skipcare routine - a strippedback, no-nonsense regime consisting of efficient, multi-tasking products that cut down the steps without sacrificing the results. Funnily enough, this practice comes from Korea, the land that originally gave us the 10-step routine as a means for time-pressed millennials to fight tedious and unnecessary beauty norms.

#### **ARE YOU OD-ING ON SKINCARE?**

"The most common issue of using too many products without expert help and not applying it in the right order is that you may be using things that don't really address your skin concerns or even suit your texture. You can over-dry or sensitise your skin. Not to mention, artificial and synthetic fragrances can wreak havoc on your skin without you knowing," explains Dr Geetika Mittal, dermatologist and founder, ISAAC Luxe.

Here's the other thing: When you use too many products, you tend to make your skin complacent. By layering creams and moisturisers, you could end up tricking your skin into thinking it doesn't need to do much on its own. Maybe that's why Instagram trends like every day masking, for example, may not be the best thing to try. Dr Simal Soin, dermatologist and founder, AAYNA Clinics, agrees: "While social media can help you keep up with things, be careful of the suggestions you imbibe in real life. Using a face mask is not recommended every day, since your skin loses its natural ability to repair damaged cells by itself." As it depends more on external hydration, your skin's own natural water retention capacity, for example, could go down. And not just that, your skin could start producing more sebum and clog pores resulting in more acne, inflammation and even pigmentation. A random layering of ingredients without the right research and technique could render them ineffective altogether, resulting in no benefits at all. And, "If you are continuously experimenting with new products, you may develop allergies, irritation and permanent discoloration," explains Dr Soin. Instead of achieving dewy, glassy skin, you could be left with a dull complexion, and your skin may stop responding well to formulas too.

#### **DOING IT RIGHT**

Skipcare is more than just a lazy girl's dream come true; you're basically learning to streamline your regime to ensure you use less, yet reap more benefits. With better research and technology, we now have access to fastperforming, targeted skincare products that pack several benefits in one jar. This means that instead of reaching out for four different products, you're only putting on one, and it takes care of everything from moisturising to brightening, ageing and even controlling acne. It doesn't necessarily mean that you have to go down the Marie Kondo route on your skincare closet and toss out everything that doesn't "spark joy". You need to remember that your skin changes with different seasons, shifts in lifestyle etc, so you may still need to keep switching products, but not overdo it at one go.

So how exactly do you design a pared-down routine? For starters, choose skincare products as per your skin type and need and observe what works for you, advises Dr Soin. "Read the label, speak to your dermat (opt for online consults if needed) and build a customised skincare routine that suits your skin," advises Dr Mittal. "Start by assessing your age, skin type and concerns, then get help accordingly. Opt for a skin analyser tests if you need help with this. If you're above the age of 25, you should use a pH balanced face wash, hydrating cream, sunscreen and an active, and build from there," she says. A big part of this stems from personalisation, which is all set to be the next big trend in the beauty industry. Invest in brands that design multi-functional products





that are specifically tailored to your needs, and you're basically set.

Simplifying your daily beauty routine is a great idea at a time when we've all adopted a slower, more mindful lifestyle (it'll also come in handy post quarantine, when you're back to your busy, break-less lives). For some, skipcare can be a great way to detox the skin, with results like those that intermittent fasting brings for the body. For others, it works well to save time, money and effort. Your transition from being a junkie to a 'skinimalist' comes with its own 12-step programme - think about what you need, gradually cut your dependence on what's unnecessary and reintroduce what's effective. You'll come out of it with more money, more time and glowing skin - now what's not to love about that? (

# GRAZIA | FITNESS

# WORK(OUT) FROM HOME

The many ways in which Covid-19 will change our relationship with the gym, forever

Words RADHIKA AGRAWAL

he treadmills are gathering dust, the barbells lie forgotten in a corner, and the pain of leg day is a distant memory. As we enter the second month of lockdown, people all over the globe are finding alternatives to hitting the gym for their daily workouts. In modern-day India, the idea of fitness has been closely linked with going to the gym. From middle-aged women in salwar-kurtas and running shoes to bulked up bros in tank tops, everyone associates the sweat shop with losing weight, gaining muscle and achieving the dream body they've always wanted. But now that the possibility of stepping out has been taken out of the equation, newer and – one might argue – more effective means of staying fit are popping up.

SUPERDRY SPORT

# FITNESS | G R A Z I A

#### YOURS VIRTUALLY

Fitness is the need of the hour. Not only does a daily workout help keep you in shape and build your immunity, it also relieves stress and anxiety. And so, content around fitness has shot through the roof on social and online media to help beginners as well as seasoned fitness enthusiasts stay on track with their goals. From handstand challenges to online classes, everyone is partaking. "Virtual fitness services are no longer looked at as an alternate method of working out. They have, in fact, become the 'new normal'," says Jayam Vora, co-founder and COO of Fitternity.

It's a great time to be a fitness blogger with a social media presence. Instructors have been taking both free and paid personal and group classes through Instagram Lives, Zoom and other such portals. "Necessity is the mother of all inventions. I encourage my students to make the most of their home space by incorporating sofas, chairs and kitchen shelves in their workout challenges," says fitness and lifestyle coach Sudipta Mondal.

Videos of actors like Katrina Kaif working out virtually with their trainers – Yasmin Karachiwala, in this case – have flooded the Internet, giving us a longer than usual peek into celebrity workouts. And with all this information out there, it's up to us to keep up. "With a variety of workout options to choose from and guidance provided by industry experts and trainers, virtual fitness acts as a boon to individuals who want their fitness services uninterrupted and from the comfort of their homes," says Vora.

Home workouts have also opened up the age-old debate of bodyweight workouts vs. strength based ones, with a newfound fan base for the former. With no option but to ditch the bulky weights and machines, people are discovering the benefits of doing different variations of functional exercises such as pushups, pull-ups, handstands, squats, burpees, and more. "Body weight training is foundational for one to start one's fitness journey, but it's not only for beginners. Advanced students can take on more challenging movements and workouts without the use of expensive equipment," explains Rahul Kaul, fitness instructor and founder of BoxFit.

That's not all. According to Mondal, the benefits of this type of training are threefold. "Firstly, you don't have to depend on anyone or anything. Secondly, the chances of injury are



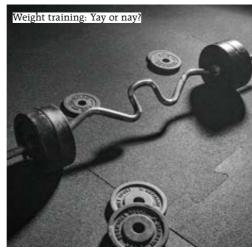
significantly reduced. And lastly, you end up developing muscle mass the right way," she explains.

#### THE WAY FORWARD

So, will people flock to the gym once the lockdown is lifted? Vora believes that the fate of physical gyms is tied with the discovery of a vaccine for Covid-19. And once we've closed the chapter on this disease, a two-pronged fitness model will arise. "In a futuristic world, both the engagement models between users and gyms/studios will co-exist, leading to higher revenue and more footfall both virtually and offline," he explains.

What this basically means is that you will finally be able to make informed choices about your preferred means of working out. Signing up for a gym won't be the only way for you to embark on a journey of fitness. "There will be a clearer distinction of people who will go out for their fitness needs and those who will bring fitness equipment into their homes," says Kaul.

I don't know about you, but I'm rooting for a world where a holistic approach to health and fitness has no room for gym selfies and 'bro science'.







# GRAZIA | TRAVEL





#### **ASHIESH SHAH, ARCHITECT**

#### WOULD LIKE TO VISIT: MILAN

"I visit the city every year for Salone del Mobile in April, and it's unfortunate that it had to be called off this year. 2020 would seem incomplete without a trip to the city that's close to my heart."

ostalgia

Holidays might be off the cards for a while, but we can still plan ahead

Words BARRY RODGERS

e're all facing different challenges at this time – maybe it's the agony of being cooped up at home, or the worries that come with ensuring your loved ones are all fed when supermarket stock is scarce. And while there are far more important things to worry about, we've decided to give you a break from all the Covid-19 headlines and, instead, transport you to some of the places we're dreaming of visiting when this time passes. For this, we turned to a few individuals to help you plan your post-pandemic travel itinerary once the world is back to normal.



#### TARANG ARORA, JEWELLERY DESIGNER AND CREATOR

#### WOULD LIKE TO VISIT: VIETNAM

"My wife and I have been wanting to visit Vietnam for quite some time now. We were planning to go this year before Covid-19 brought everything to a standstill. Vietnam is a must-visit for all nature lovers. The maze of rivers and mountains, coastal lowlands, and dense tropical forests are breathtaking. The solemnity in the comfort of nature is a beautiful treat to humankind."

## TRAVEL | G R A Z I A



#### SIDDHARTH KASLIWAL, ENTREPRENEUR

#### WOULD LIKE TO VISIT: THE GALÁPAGOS ISLANDS

"The islands house a large number of exotic native birds and animals that are unique to this destination. The birds and the the famous Galapágos turtles are what I'm most excited to see, as they are the rarest in the world. Due to the increasing threat to these species, Ecuador is reducing the number of tourists allowed to travel to this wonderful destination."





#### **KRESHA BAJAJ, CREATIVE DIRECTOR**

#### WOULD LIKE TO VISIT: KOMODO, INDONESIA

"My husband and I have a trip planned to Komodo in August, along with 20 other divers aboard the Gaia Love yacht. It's a trip that we planned in November 2018, when we were in Raja Ampat. Komodo is known for its diving and underwater life as well as the famous Komodo dragon. I'm hoping things settle down by then but if not, I would be keen to try and plan a trip there sometime in the future."

#### TANISHA RAHIMTOOLA AGARWAL, FASHION ENTREPRENEUR

#### WOULD LIKE TO VISIT: RWANDA

"Being indoors has made me realise that I need to step out of my comfort zone, and I have never coveted an epic adventure more than I do now. That puts Rwanda at the top of my travel bucket list. One second you're bushwhacking through thickets of bamboo inside the Volcanoes National Park, pulling yourself up a steep lava slope, toehold to toehold. The next minute, you turn a corner and sunlight streams through the canopy to illuminate a matted clump of black against a curtain of rainforest green. Seated, perhaps, 30 feet away will be one of the roughly 900 mountain gorillas remaining on Earth. So, gorilla trekking would make for a mind-blowing new travel experience."

# GRAZIA | FOOD



ooking back at the past one month, there have been different phases of quarantining. It all began with panic shopping for hand sanitisers, surgical masks and gloves. Phase two: There was the need to stay connected with family and friends via Zoom happy hours and hangouts. And then phase three: The banana bread craze. Are you even self-isolating if you haven't made banana bread yet? Somehow, it's taken pride of place as the unofficial baked good of Covid-19. In fact, research for this story threw up some interesting statistics: Searches for 'banana bread' started to surge on Google the week of March 22 – soon after the government-imposed lockdown began. Trends data on Pinterest shows a similar surge in user interest for banana bread recipes starting on March 24. And that's not all: Food tech company Chicory also reported, in a press release, that engagement with banana bread content exponentially increased across its recipe network during lockdown, with views of all banana bread recipes surpassing one million just in the week of March 29 through April 4. The bottom line: People really, really want banana bread.

# FOOD | G R A Z I A



But this upsurge in the trend got me thinking in an entirely new direction: Why would someone deplete their already scarce baking supplies on something that isn't necessarily a fancy tea-time treat? I can't really picture myself slaving in my kitchen over a fruit that's quite divisive: I know at least three people who can't stand the sight of a banana, let alone stock up on it. And while it might seem that I've been thinking about it a lot, I decided to dig a little deeper to find out if there was a serious explanation to justify the banana bread craze by reaching out to three experts in human psychology.

#### **FINDING CONTROL**

Shalini Newbigging, a friend who holds a masters in counseling degree and works with victims of sexual trauma, weighed in: "Right now, our worlds have turned upside down. There's very little that we can predict, and little that we can control. The coronavirus pandemic has forced us to reassess what our new normal looks like. And as humans, we're looking at ways to bring meaning to this reality. We want to find ways to connect. We want to find ways to have control. We're doers, solution finders and workers, especially in a city like Mumbai where we're constantly on the go. I personally think that the overarching need to engage in baking could possibly stem from the fact that for now, that's the one thing we can control in our lives. I know that if I put these ingredients together, something delicious will come out of it and I can enjoy it for days to come. We may not be able to control what's going on around us, but we can definitely control the bake through dials and the works. There's a sense of satisfaction, achievement, and completion all rolled into it, and I get to control the outcome. And guess what, that's totally fine.

#### **FOLLOW THE PACK**

Counsellor Abhilasha Rawat believes that there are various factors involved here: "Firstly, we as humans are social creatures and we tend to connect with those in our 'pack'. With connectivity comes the



#### Check on your friends baking banana bread.



It's 2063. My grandchildren ask me "what did you do during the quarantine? Did you help save lives? Were you considered essential? Were you a hero?" I stare into the distance. I look back at them. "I baked banana bread."

responsibility to fulfil each others' expectations, so if, for example, a friend engages in baking banana bread, I might feel the urge to do the same." Rawat also believes that this trend could also stem from something she refers to as the 'influencer effect', where we are often compelled to do something that could set others off in the same direction – to reassure ourselves that we have what it takes to inspire someone to follow suit. "The latter could very well hold true for those who are either living on their own, or are searching for ways to connect through different mediums in order to stay calm and to feel recognised," she says.

Another mental health expert, Sunitha Joseph, tells me that with the banana bread craze, what we're witnessing is an an example of an adaptive coping strategy. "For example, if an individual is obsessively making banana bread at home, then it would tantamount to maladaptive behaviour. But how do you define obsessive behaviour in this regard? If the frequency of making these dishes is every single day, and in large quantities, then there's probably an underlying issue that needs to be addressed. But, experimenting with something new could be a positive coping skill. It's also crucial to remember that the choice of one's coping skills depends a lot on socialisation, childhood memories, family background, peer pressure, social media influence and so on. Some find cooking relaxing while others find it very stressful."

So, if you've been inspired to bake after reading banana bread around 100 times in this article, I wouldn't blame you.

# GRAZIA | FEATURE

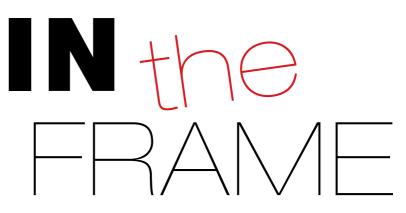


#### YASHASVI sharma

"I often take pictures on the go, on my phone. The time between work and home; spontaneous, sometimes abstract and random. Since the lockdown began, I find myself with a lot more time to toy around with abstracts and still life (apart from taking pictures of family, of course). I considered capturing the hand washing process as I went about documenting what is a recurring, and now essentially a more intently-performed, act through the day."



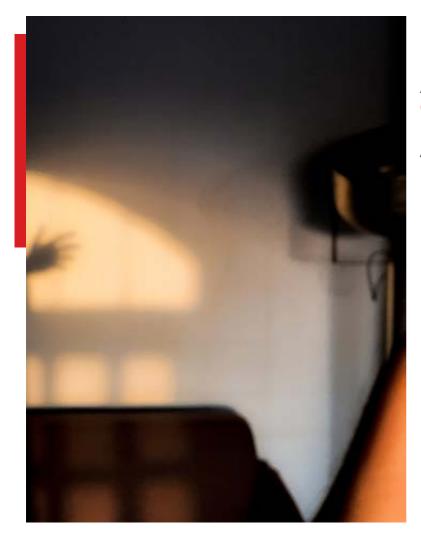
"I always go back to this image. For me, there's something very warm and inviting about it, it feels familiar yet distant."



As we find ourselves isolated with loved ones because of the coronavirus pandemic, tensions can run a bit high, and finding joy in moments of panic becomes harder each day. So, we decided to enlist the help of some of the country's best photographers who, willingly, dug into their archives and pulled out images that reflect the times



# FEATURE | G R A Z I A





#### NAMAN saraiya

"I hope this time brings out the best in people, but who am I kidding? Society as we know it is changing right before our eyes and I, for one, am not so hopeful of the other side."

#### AKSHAY gill

"We have never reached out for one another the way we are doing now. We are all alone, together."



#### ANAI bharucha

"The art of self-love: Life is made up of feelings, experiences and small moments. In the end, it's not money, your job or anything materialistic that will make you happy. Maybe a little, but not substantially. In most cases, it's the small things – like looking upwards while floating atop a calm sea, the feeling of walking barefoot on fresh green grass, or just embracing a friend in an envelope of warmth. Until then."

# GRAZIA | FEATURE

#### GORKEY patwal

"Being productive in a lockdown can be difficult, and with no one around to shoot and film, it all comes down to going back to the basics and trying new things. I believe everyone can learn something new with the time we have."



#### NISHAT fatima

"The home has always been my inspiration. As a freelancer, I spend a lot of time in it, and am startled time and again by the things whose beauty catches your eye suddenly. Sometimes you have to pay attention, at others; the most ordinary things – like laundry – light up and hit you on the head with its transformation. The home can be an unending feast."





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"My home is my safe space, my sanctuary. I live alone, and these flowers are my family. They go about their existence, as I go about mine. We silently care for each other, in a way that only old lovers can. Sharing memories and mirth like only old friends can. Ever so often, they perish – for that is their way of life. Ever so often, I bring home a fresh set – for that is mine. Living in isolation isn't exactly a novel concept for me, but it's the little things that really get to you. In a few days, these flowers will be dead and, yes, I will feel truly alone. Yet the fact that they have stood this tall for this long fills me with nothing but hope that I can survive this. That we can survive this."



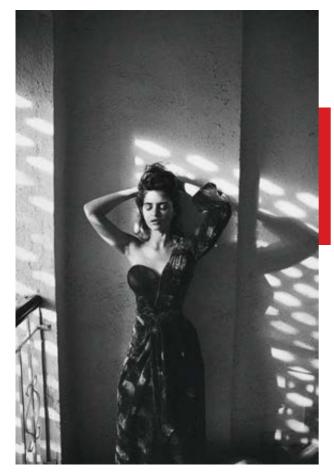


#### ASHISH chandra

"There was a cleanliness drive taking place at the time, and people had creatively woven mythology and folklore into sanitation. In this photograph, you can see a dusthin shaped like a demon at Rock Beach, Puducherry."



"The last frontier of a public space in Mumbai, Juhu beach was especially crowded. Like the city, the crowd was dense with diverse groups. There were young families searching for a spot to sit and share a meal, lovers canoodling, distracted toddlers struggling to escape the eyes of their mothers, young boys holding hands and beach photographers trying to sell them a memento. So much laughter and joyous cacophony that it drowned the sounds of the Arabian Sea. Even as a storm started brewing on the horizon, the tide rising with every passing minute and the first drops of rain announcing itself, the celebration of life fluttered, defiant as ever. It is hard to imagine that what once felt normal and usual – a diverse, carefree congregation – now seems impossible and as if from a different life."



#### TARAS taraporvala

"Isolation and uncertainty are upon us, society will now reflect. As time stands still, will we be pushed further into the darkness or through this pause, like in a photograph, can we begin to see a new light?"

## GRAZIA | FIRST LOOK



# MONTH IN MONTH OUT

MOVIES, ART, BOOKS, AND MORE, HERE ARE OUR TOP PICKS OF THINGS THAT GOT US TALKING THIS MONTH



# INDIE CRED

This lo-Fi rock band from Delhi could (possibly) be the next big thing

an.Goes Human, a four-person indie band, started its journey in mid 2012. With Sharan Gulati on the guitar, Shitij Gulati on bass, Akshat Pathak on drums, and Kaprila Keishing leading the vocals, the band is known for its earnest lyrics, emotive vocals, and unique sound. They experiment with various genres such as rock, blues, psychedelic and ambient. And after eight years of making music, touring different parts of the world, and participating in various events, they have reached a turning point in their journey. One of their songs, No See, has been featured in Netflix's Extraction, starring Chris Hemsworth. The road to Hollywood took them to Thailand, where the movie was shot. We sat down with the squad to find out what their journey has been like, and what they hope lies in store.

GRAZIA: What has been some of the main highlights of your journey so far? MAN.GOES HUMAN: What started off as a hobby has materialised into us getting featured in a Hollywood film! In these eight years, we've toured Vietnam, Thailand and Singapore. We've played festivals like Ragasthan, NH7 Weekender, South Asian Bands Festival, and over 200 shows across cafes and corporates.

G: Tell us a little bit about your track, Nø See, and the inspiration behind it. MGH: We had made the melody earlier for this song – it was part of our first album. Our guitarist, who made this melody, woke up one day and couldn't quite see clearly. That's all there is to it, though we did give it a twist to fit it into the album, which was based on finding your true self amidst the chaos. G: What was it like to be on the sets of *Extraction*? Tell us about your BTS experience from the shoot. MGH: We were cast in a scene that was based in a cafe, with at least a hundred extras. The effort that goes into one shot is worth applauding. We were awestruck by the professionalism and humility of the entire crew. From our make-up, hair, costumes, to our personal vanity van, every single detail was taken care of so effortlessly.

G: How do you think Covid-19 has impacted the indie music scene? How are bands like yours coping? MGH: It has definitely put a big dent in the Indie music scene. With all the venues physically closed, all events postponed and skepticism riding high among the general public, we have no clue how much time it will take to recover. However, a lot of platforms are doing live sessions and gigs to support the scene. We had another tour of North East India and a music festival in Vietnam planned before the lockdown, which had to be cancelled. But we're taking this time to promote our Netflix venture and to think about our strategy and sound for the coming year.

#### G: With the boom of social media, independent music is on the verge of becoming mainstream. How do you make sure your music stands out against the competition?

MGH: Social media is big for us, not only when it comes to promoting our material, but also to reach audiences. Most of our tours are DIY, and we scrutinise a lot of festivals and venues in various countries every year. There's enough space for good music out there, despite the competition. We keep trying to reach new audiences every year, and the word spreads in the process. Come to think of it, had it not been for our Thailand tour, we may not have landed this film either.

# LAUGHING MATTER

The comedy star is all set to break the Internet with his newest stand-up special



was in school when Kanan Gill first became a viral sensation. Now, this is less a ploy to make him feel old and more a means to assess how far he has come. It has been an interesting ride for the 30-year-old, who in 2014, teamed up with fellow comic Biswa Kalyan Rath for the YouTube series *Pretentious Movie Reviews*. He has since made appearances on shows like *Comicstaan*, and created a mildly popular comedy sketch, *Sketchy Behaviour*. You might argue that he hasn't been around as much as you'd have thought, based on the love and support he got early on in his career.

Words RADHIKA AGRAWAL



But all that's about to change, because Gill is back with a new stand-up special, this time on Netflix. In *Yours Sincerely, Gill* the comedian talks about the goals he had set for himself as a teenager, while contrasting the expectation then with the reality today. And he does so with a bag full of charm, hilarity and endearment.

#### GRAZIA: You were one of the first Indian comedians to go viral on the Internet. How do you think it has evolved since then, with the onset of OTT platforms?

KANAN GILL: There are a lot more creators now. It's amazing that now you can get the kind of content you want in the language you want, all from India. OTT platforms in India are at a place where TV usually is in other countries. It's the next step for players of the self-shot self-produced field.

G: Tell us about the latter that was the inspiration behind your new special. KG: I wanted to talk about what drives us and why, and how it feels like to look back on what used to be important to us. I think a lot of us laugh at the dreams we used to have, but are still completely serious about our current dreams.

G: You talk about your health – both physical and mental – in your special.

How do you think comedy can be more involved in conversations around mental health?

KG: I really only joke about my own experience of physical and mental health. That was a difficult part of the show to write. But I tried to be fair only to my own life and feelings. Of course, it had to be wrapped under many layers of contrivance, but that's just what I do.

G: What's the one thing you'd want viewers to take away from the special? KG: I think there's a variety of things people can take away. I don't really want to force an interpretation on people. But yes, it would be nice if everyone came out of it less stressed out.

G: How is your on-stage personality different from your off-stage one? KG: My on-stage personality is that of a professional comedian who will make you laugh, because you are an audience member who bought a ticket. My off-stage personality is to be a ticket-holding audience member of the world and demand fulfilment. I'm quiet, boring and I space out easily.

G: Who or what makes you laugh? KG: Really lame jokes. Weird, odd things. I've found this to be true of some the best comedians and artists I know. They all have the oddest sense of humour.

















An initiative by Home & Design TRENDS magazine, D/code is India's first curated luxury living show presented by the Times Group. Redefining the way we experience the luxe life, D/code brings together the best of design under one roof to create a platform that celebrates and recognises creative thought.

D/code 2020, presented by Classic Marble Company, with Plusch as partners was once again curated by Krupa Zubin and Zubin Zainuddin of ZZ Architects. In its third edition, D/code showcased over 50 luxury design brands, specially curated events and power talk sessions. Here, we give you a glimpse of D/code 2020 held at Dome NSCI, Worli.

 Amit Shah of Classic Marble Company, Editor in Chief Ronitaa Italia, Subodh Shah of Classic Marble Company, Sunil Wuthoo, Business Director, Worldwide Media 2. Sukriti Sharma of Plusch Living, Architect Krupa Zubin, Rati Sharma of Plusch Living, Architect Zubin Zainuddin, Rupal Maru of Plusch Living 3. Editor In Chief Ronitaa Italia, Amit Shah of CMC, MasterChef Sarah Todd, Architect Xerxes Talati 4. Yogesh Chaudhary of Jaipur Rugs 5. Miti Jhunjhunwala of MJ Label 6. Sunil Wuthoo, Business Director, Worldwide Media, Kekin Shah of C. Bhogilal West-End, Sanjay Arora of D'Décor 7. Chef Pallavi Nigam 8. Hazel Wolf, Editor In Chief Ronitaa Italia, Sonal Das, Project Head, D/code, Jurgen Wolf, Managing Director, Häfele 9. Guest with Falgun Shroff of Sources Unlimited, Architect Krishna Murthy, Aamir Fruitwala of AK International 10. Artist Radhika Rawat Chopra, Khanakh Sharma, Jal Sharma, Abhimanyu Chopra 11. Architect Ahmad Furniturewala, Architect Noshir Talati, Architect Xerxes Talati 12. Mandeep Singh of Emery Studio with guests 13. Architect Rooshad Shroff, Designer Ravi Vazirani, Architect Rajiv Parekh, Architect Annkur Khosla, Designer Iram Sultan, Editor in Chief Ronitaa Italia 14. Guest, Dhruv Chandra of The Carpet Cellar, Purav Mehta of Sources Unlimited, Subodh Shah of CTG 15. Architect Zubin Zainuddin, Kekin Shah of C. Bhogilal West-End, Architect Krupa Zubin with guests 16. Iram Habib, Designer Aakif Habib, Sonal Das, Project Head, D/ code 17. Sanjay Arora of D'Décor 18. Hamendra Sharma of Plusch Living, Editor in Chief Ronitaa Italia 19. Designer Kawa Chawla, Falgun Shroff, Sources Unlimited, Kekin Shah 20. Guests at the VIP Iounge

































 Sunil Wuthoo, Business Director, Worldwide Media, Editor In Chief Ronitaa Italia, Designer Shantanu Garg 2. Guests at Trends Excellence Awards 3. Designer Iram Sultan, Architect Rajeev Thakker, Artist Arzan Khambatta, Architect Anand Menon 4. Architect Nozer Wadia 5. Architect Husna Rahaman, Architect Zubin Master, Architect Annkur Khosla, Architect Rajeev Parekh, Designer Iram Sultan 6. Architect Shimul Javeri Kadri 7. Architect Abha Narain Lambah 8. Architect Seema Puri 9. Architect Zarir Mullan 10. Designer Shabnam Gupta 11. Architect Nources Sampat 12. The Design Corridor curated by Home & Design TRENDS 13. Jaipur Rugs 14. D'Décor Blinds 15. Valcucine 16. C Bhoglial West-End 17. Sources Unlimited 18. Title Sponsor Classic Marble Company 19. The Souk of Emotions, curated by Designes, Orvi Surfaces, Credo Planters, Chopra's, Attitudes Deco. 20. Amit Shah of CMC, Falgun Shroff of Sources Unlimited, Kunj Shah of Sources Unlimited 21. Sameer Wadekar, Architect Zaki Sheikh, Designer Jannat Vasi, Meghna Jain of Orvi Surfaces, Designer Shantanu Garg, guest, Designer Fenny Ganatra, guest, Designer Neesha Alwani 22. Designer Shantanu Garg, Designer Iram Sultan, Kunal Maniar 23. Title Sponsor Classic Marble Company 24. Partners Plusch Living



















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# WHERE TO FIND IT

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ADIDAS Linking Road, Santacruz, Mumbai

ALANUI available at www.farfetch.com

ALCIS Phoenix Marketcity, Kurla, Mumbai

ANAVILA Linking Road, Khar West, Mumbai

APL ATHLETIC PROPULSION available at www.shopbop.com

ASHISH available at www.matchesfashion.com

ASICS Linking Road, Khar West, Mumbai

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CHARLES & KEITH Phoenix Marketcity, Kurla, Mumbai

CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN Horniman Circle, Kala Ghoda, Mumbai

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DE LA VALI available at www.net-a-porter.com

EARNEST LEOTY available at www.net-a-porter.com

FILA Kala Ghoda, Mumbai

FENDI DLF Emporio, New Delhi FOREVER 21 Phoenix Marketcity, Kurla, Mumbai

GAP Oberoi Mall, Goregaon, Mumbai

GUCCI Hotel Trident, Mumbai

H&M High Street Phoenix, Lower Parel, Mumbai

HERMÈS Horniman Circle, Fort, Mumbai

HRX JVPD Scheme, Juhu, Mumbai

HUNKEMOLLER Palladium, Lower Parel, Mumbai

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LEE COOPER Seawoods Grand Central, Navi Mumbai

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MAISON MARGIELA available at www.net-a-porter.com

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TOMMY HILFIGER Palladium, Lower Parel, Mumbai

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ZARA Palladium, Lower Parel, Mumbai

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