

Seayle  
The *EDIT* II



#pressforprogress

IN CELEBRATION OF  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2018

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## A NOTE FROM MAGGIE

Building on the success of Issue 1, this Edit's content is focussed on our clients telling their stories about their lives. I think you will find their articles insightful and thought provoking particularly as this year's IWD theme of #pressforprogress serves as a reminder that there is still much to do and much to celebrate about women in society.

We always strive to have engaging content and compelling imagery in our magazines and this Edit is no different. I asked Dulcie, my Creative Director what influenced her graphic choices for Issue II and she talked about Barbara Kruger whose work she has admired for many years. Kruger, a US artist uses the techniques of mass communication and advertising to explore a number of themes including, politics, gender and identity.

I hope you enjoy reading Edit II and I look forward to receiving your feedback.



March 2018







26



20



29



4

IN CELEBRATION OF  
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2018



8



16



22



Photo Credit : Leanne Dixon



Tracey wears her **Simple** dress

## TRACEY NORBURY

Tracey Norbury is a Leadership Development Consultant, with a business psychology background. With over 25 years' experience, she has worked across a range of FT-SE 100 companies, particularly those who recognise the value of effective leadership and the power of inclusion.



## HERE ARE MY TOP TIPS AND ADVICE I'D GIVE TO MY YOUNGER SELF AND OTHERS:

### GET A SPONSOR - NOT A MENTOR

Before I met Sylvia Ann Hewlett, I used to subscribe to the commonly held view that if you had a mentor, then you were set up for success. Typically they were female, who would share their expertise and act as a sounding board. Sylvia Ann's book "Forget a Mentor Find a Sponsor" encouraged me to rethink my approach.

Once I'd located my business sponsor it made all the difference. He introduced me to a wide range of influential people, made sure I was on their radar and promoted my capability. This meant that I had access to far more exciting opportunities than if I relied just on my hard work to get noticed. My current sponsor is amazing too, she is always there for me in a professional sense and I am currently working on a new assignment based on her recommendation.



"I've recently become a Strengths coach so I can inspire others."

When will you discover your strengths?"

### PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS

We are often advised early on in our career, to identify our weaknesses and focus on overcoming these. Over the years I felt I made little progress. I then discovered Strengths based development (Clifton Strength Finder) when I attended a Consulting Women's programme [www.consultingwomen.co.uk/](http://www.consultingwomen.co.uk/).

Identifying my strengths and being more mindful around how I deploy them has given me a renewed sense of energy and purpose. I'd describe myself as an achiever who is intellectually curious (like Maggie) who likes to get the job done to a high standard by working inclusively with others.

## ***BELIEVE IN YOURSELF***

Many women I've worked with have commented on how they have suffered from a lack of self-confidence. Much has been written about the "imposter syndrome" (H Ibarra (1998), who described this as a "fear of being exposed as a fraud" and results in lacking confidence and undermining achievements. Therefore before important occasions, I remind myself I have a right to be at the table and believe in my capability. If I don't, why should anyone else?

You'll be amazed at what you can achieve when you do.



## ***BE INCLUSIVE BY TREATING EVERYONE AS AN INDIVIDUAL***

***D&I is now much more in the public awareness. We can all make a difference and the way I do this is by:***

- Acknowledging when those stereotypes kick in and remain open, seek to understand their perspective before making a judgement.
- Recognising that D&I is more than "gender differences"- it includes diversity of thought, judgement and decision making and working across cultures.
- Treating everyone as an individual and adapting my approach.
- Being a role model by treating people with respect.
- And as a practitioner, finding ways to highlight what actions we can all take to make progress.

## ***INVEST IN YOUR NETWORKS AND SHARE GENEROUSLY***

I've been fortunate to work with so many inspirational and thought provoking women. Networking has to be done authentically and is a 2-way dialogue. It's not about how many connections you can collect and post on your LinkedIn profile. I've been struck by the generosity in my own network when someone has reached out looking for help and I've made some introductions. Nurture your networks and find ways to give something back as well as keeping in touch.

## ***BE INTERESTED AND BE INTERESTING***

Be interested in others and intellectually curious. At the same time, don't assume your hard work speaks for itself. People will want to work with you when you are more than just a person doing a professional role. Ask yourself what makes you interesting and be prepared to share this with others when the time is right. My interesting encounter is trying to chat up Refus Swell before he was famous and failing miserably!



## *PLAN YOUR CAREER TRANSITIONS AND MAKE INFORMED CHOICES*

Experiment in your 20's. If this means changing profession, direction or company that's ok.

During your 30s it's all about consolidating your expertise and gaining experience. You need to be credible and start building your reputation, so others know who you are and what you stand for. If you are still figuring out which career profession you should be in, there is a danger you may get left behind by your peers and be seen as a Jack of all trades.

In your 40s (and onwards), if you are not already doing so, this is the time to lead in your field and share your expertise with others. Don't forget to start planning your legacy, what you want to be remembered for.

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## *WOMEN WHO'VE INSPIRED ME*

Maggie Semple of course. Her energy, her commercial acumen and her ability to inspire intellectually curious women.

Jane Austen as her writing is more than love stories with happy endings. Having recently attended a Cambridge University Conference, I realised she was an author ahead of her time, signposting women's predicament. Many women had to marry in order to survive by becoming "a man's property" or remain single and depend on their family's charity. I realise on International Women's Day, how far we have moved forward.

Nigella Lawson, especially her "Feast: Food that Celebrates Life" book. She encouraged me to see that food is more than fuel, it's the glue that brings friends and family together in good and challenging times. Everyone remembers a home cooked meal made with love.





## *CINDY YENDELL*

Cindy Yendell is the CEO and co-founder of Unspun, a London based consultancy firm that helps CEO's connect their people and their culture to their strategy, ensuring there is no disconnect between what 'they say' and what 'they do'.



# Q&A

*What makes you passionate about reaching gender equality, and what do you do to 'press for progress'?*

I have been moved and inspired this week listening to the nominations of influential British Women, on the BBC Radio 4 Today programme. It is incredible how many women have had such a positive impact on our lives, many against the odds. I have a young daughter who is insightful and has great spirit. The thought of her and other girls not having a voice and unable to make a difference is unthinkable. I think about the loss to society.

*International Women's Day was first marked in 1911, over 100 years ago. Why do you think the day is still relevant?*

International Women's Day began with a group of strong, determined, inspiring women marching through the streets of New York City who were demanding their right to vote and for better pay. Today the pay gap between men and women is evident across all industries and after 107 years there are still countries that do not give women the right to vote.

*“Today the pay gap between men and women is evident across all industries and after 107 years there are still countries that do not give women the right to vote.”*

# Q&A

***What do you want everyone to know on International Women's Day?***

While it would be amazing if we didn't need an official day to champion women, the original aims of IWD have not yet been realised. Around the world, women still don't have full gender equality.

***What barriers have you faced, as a woman, in becoming successful in your field? How did you overcome them?***

I am fortunate that most of my barriers were self-made i.e. in my head (a small, young looking, dyslexic female). I was very lucky that in my early thirties I had a CEO that saw potential in me and gave me opportunities way off my personal radar and took me out of my comfort zone.

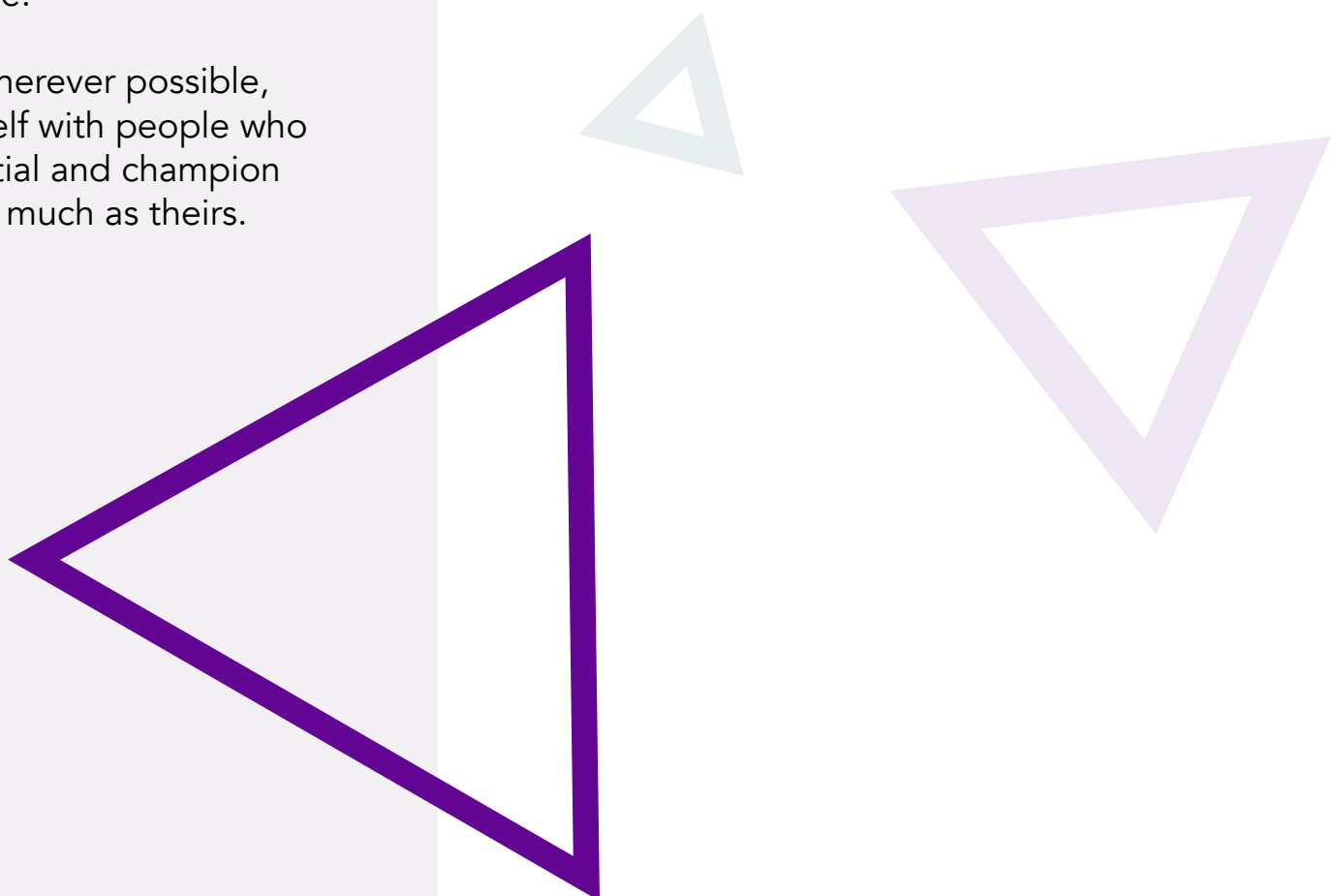
My advice is, wherever possible, surround yourself with people who see your potential and champion your success as much as theirs.

***Please tell us something people might not know about you. Is there another project you're involved with? How do you spend your time? What matters to you?***

I started my career as a nurse and have a huge amount of respect for those who work in the National Health Service. Acts of selflessness and human kindness move me to tears.

I am a member of Women Advertising and Communications, London (WACL), a club for women leaders and our purpose is to accelerate gender equality in communications and marketing. We focus on three things: Inspiration, Support and Campaigning. We provide inspiration to aspiring female talent via Gather, our annual conference, and our quarterly mentoring sessions, and offer training bursaries via our Future Leaders Award to aid women in achieving their potential. We also come together to inspire and help each other, and regularly hold prestigious speaker dinner events and activities for the enjoyment of our members and their guests, and in support of our purpose.

I spend as much time as possible with my family as they are such a source of pleasure and pride. Otherwise you will find me either running along the river or eating, drinking and laughing with good friends.







Q:

**What does gender  
equality really mean  
to you?**

*“A person’s gender should have  
zero influence on how people think  
about them or treat them. It is about  
being fair on every level; equal opportunities,  
recognition and support. We all need to be aware  
of our unconscious biases”*



**Consider this:**

*The United Nations reports that only*

**22%**

*of parliamentarians  
globally are women.*

*That’s a lot of men  
making decisions  
on our behalf.*

# THE COLOUR *PURPLE*

*Pantone, the go to colour trendsetters, have announced that 2018s 'Colour of the Year' is **purple**; ultra violet to be exact.*

The idea that one single colour can dominate an entire year is an odd notion, and one that we often merely think of as dictated by fashion. However, it's not until you truly understand the history of a colour, research its meaning and its connotations that you can begin to understand the theory and reasoning behind the choice.





*The colour purple combines the stability of blue and the energy of red; giving it both cool and warm properties. Throughout history it's a colour that has been associated with royalty and nobility.*

Purple's rich depth creates an impression of luxury, wealth and extravagance and therefore has often been used to portray rich powerful kings and queens, leaders, magicians and even sorcerers; owing to the colour's mystical and cosmological connotations. It's become a popular colour for brands too, with Cadbury being one of the most notable to adopt the opulent purple colour for their confectionary items.



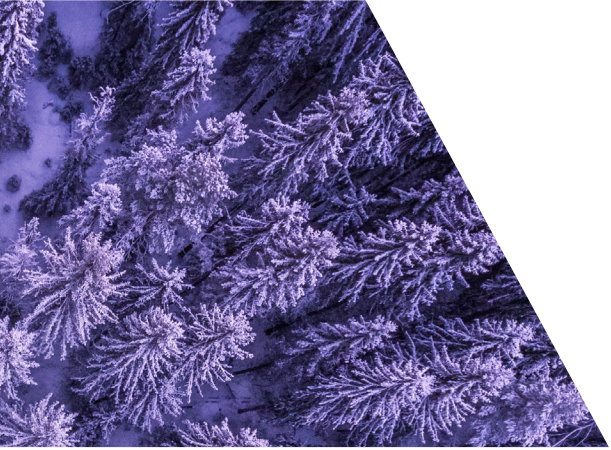


*Purple has a richness and quality that demands respect. Ambitious and confident – it is a leader amongst colour and exudes power.*


Too much of the colour though can promote or exacerbate depression and moodiness due to intensity. Juxtaposed, purple's lighter side promotes harmony of the mind and the emotions, contributing to mental balance and stability, and a link between the spiritual and the physical worlds. These properties of the colour make it a popular and widely used hue in meditation and yoga.







Purple is also historically associated with efforts to achieve gender equality. It was first used alongside green and white as the colours of the Women's Social and Political Union, the organisation that led Britain's women's suffrage movement in the early 20th century.



Leatrice Eisenman, executive director of the Pantone Color Institute, claims that when it comes to choosing a certain colour to hold the accolade, fashion might be a starting point. There is in fact far more to it than what we are currently wearing. "Fashion's definitely a large part of it, [but] we also have to justify naming a color by seeing it in other places as well." From art to technology to cinema and politics, Pantone look to the much wider world when it comes to picking their colour.

*According to the book 'Women's Suffrage Memorabilia' purple represented "The royal blood that flows in the veins of every suffragette," while white stood for purity and green for hope.*


Later on during the 60s and 70s the colour purple was revived by feminists to represent the Women's Liberation movement as a tribute to the suffragettes.

This year's pick has been chosen in a bid to communicate "originality, ingenuity and visionary thinking that points us towards the future." Ideas that fit perfectly with this year's International Women's Day #PressforProgress campaign; which highlights feminism and international efforts to achieve wide-scale gender parity.



*"The colour to symbolise achievements gained and achievements yet to come."*

In 2018 the colour choice is a fitting follow up to a year in which gender-based workplace harassment took centre stage. The Hollywood scandal and the #MeToo social media frenzy has drawn attention worldwide and cemented the colour purple as the colour to symbolise achievements gained and achievements yet to come.





Heather wears her **Simple** dress

Photo credit : Katherine Anne Rose, CMI

*MAGGIE INTERVIEWS**HEATHER MELVILLE, OBE*

When I had the opportunity to interview Heather, I was delighted that she said yes. She is the director of Strategic Partnerships and Head of Business Inclusion Initiatives at the Royal Bank of Scotland. She serves on the board of The Chartered Management Institute (CMI) leading its diversity and inclusion work and is a board member for Enterprise Enfield, a UK Government initiative to help female entrepreneurs.

And that's not all. Heather has recently become an advisory board member of a global consortium of 60 banks which is looking at diversity and inclusion procedures and practices. She is also an advisory board member of an innovative company WeAreTheCity that focusses on the progression of professional women including the pipeline of future talent.



# Q&A

*International Women's Day (IWD) began over 100 years ago and celebrates the scientific, political, economic and social achievements of women.*

*In your experience as a successful woman, what is its significance and why is it still relevant today?*

It's relevant today because we still don't have enough women in the most significant roles in society and therefore there is still so much work to do. I think the reason why IWD sticks in my mind is that it allows me to look back on how far we've come and the challenges women have had from being mothers, wives, daughters, sisters to being Chief Executives of organisations or wanting to carve out a career where they can pay their own way and survive.

I think it's really important to hold on to that information because that's our history and it helps us when we discuss where we want to go next. My advice is that if anyone is thinking of launching any kind of network or having any event choose 8th March because it's a date that doesn't change.

*"I remembered my Mother saying "You can do this, don't let anyone tell you, you can't", I became stronger."*

*What barriers have you faced in becoming successful? How did you overcome them?*

If I'm really honest, I think the main barrier was myself not having the confidence and self-belief that I could do something. It's about owning that barrier before projecting it on to others. Once I realised this and remembered my mother saying "You can do this, don't let anyone tell you, you can't", I became stronger.



Photo credit : Heather's photo album

*What does gender equality really mean to you?*

I've been thinking about this a lot lately as there has been huge media attention surrounding the subject and believe it or not the TV programme Celebrity Big Brother has raised awareness of the debate. For me gender equality is about everybody having a fair and equal opportunity to be the best that they can be and not discriminated against because of their gender.



Photo credit : Heather's Twitter account

*“Life at this stage is really about waking up and being grateful for all the lovely things around me and the people in my life.”*

**What do you do personally to ‘press for progress’?**

What don't I do I should say! This is something that I eat, live and breathe. I have 5 granddaughters and this makes me think about what tomorrow will look like for them. I think it is important to be a role model and I do this by visiting schools to talk about my journey. In my personal time I mentor a number of professional women who work, for example, in the police force and the legal sector.

I continue to speak with senior men in the private and public sectors helping them to understand what it really feels like to be a black woman working in the UK. I absolutely love the work that I do with CMI because our initiatives are provocative and brave. For me, the next ten years are going to be exciting.

**How do you spend your free time?  
What matters to you?**

I spend time with my family because that's really important but probably not as much as I'd like to because they are all busy trying to do their own things and have very little time to fit their mother and grandmother in! I also spend time with entrepreneurs setting up businesses - that's my passion particularly in the fashion space, helping, supporting and showcasing them and introducing them to other people. I like driving fast cars, sticking to the regulated limits of course!

Life at this stage is really about waking up and being grateful for all the lovely things around me and the people in my life. I love to shop and travel and I really love my clothes so Semple really is special to me in helping me achieve that.

*“I think it is important to be a role model and I do this by visiting schools to talk about my journey.”*



Photo credit : Heather's photo album

### Can you tell us about a female role model who has inspired you?

That's a hard one because my mother is predominantly the main role model in my life but over the last couple of years I have met some amazing people too.

Oprah Winfrey is absolutely my role model. I look at her humble beginnings and the challenges that she has faced and how she's taken those challenges and become one of the world's richest women.

I'm also privileged to know some ordinary people who have been absolutely extraordinary. I look at women like you Maggie, who have gone through a range of different careers and have excelled in each of those careers, being the best that you can be at all times but also having a generosity of heart/passion to drive that mental thought forward.

I'm going to end by saying my eldest granddaughter, who is 18 and has sickle cell anaemia, an awful debilitating disease which many people don't know about. She continues to make me feel proud every day as she excels in everything she does. This last year she achieved 3 A levels, all A's and I am the most proudest person.

For me all these people for different reasons inspire me.

### What three skills do you think are essential to be a great leader?

1. A good listener: keep your ears to the ground and your eyes open.
2. Be a wonderful communicator: think carefully about how you communicate to a diverse audience in a consistent and honest way.
3. Strong values: people don't leave organisations, they leave people and if you're not a great leader with core values they'll be no-one to lead because everyone would have left!

### And lastly, what do you want everyone to know on International Women's Day?

That I'm beautiful.



# GO FOR IT GIRL!

## JACQUI O'DONOVAN

It's 1987 you're 19, you're a woman and you've lost your father just two years previous. Now, along with your three siblings, you are thrust head first into an industry you know little about, with no guidance, to run the family business in the wake of such trauma. A tall order for a young woman who always thought she'd finish school and then perhaps become a childminder.

Today that 19-year-old has grown up and accomplished more in her professional career than she ever dreamed possible. Today Jacqui O'Donovan is the long-standing MD of O'Donovan Waste Disposal; the very company her father left behind and which now holds, under her female reign, the accolade of being one of the largest and most successful waste disposal companies in London.

No biggy!



*"I truly believe that women can multi task, think outside the box and have an emotional attachment to the role which means more goes into the tasks and the better the results!"*



A male dominated industry at its core, with little opportunity for its female counter parts, waste disposal is not a field many women find themselves in, let alone heading up. But Jacqui didn't shy away from the challenge of successor and instead decided to follow in her father's foot steps, a man she cites as a 'legend' and with him as her only driving force and no other role models to speak of, Jacqui took the company under her wing.

With a 'get on with it' attitude Jacqui would restructure the business and focus on building a more inclusive company. "Being a woman in a man's world is very important and I always try and persuade women to be bolder and enter the industry. I truly believe that women can multi task, think outside the box and have an emotional attachment to the role which means more goes into the tasks and the better the results!"

***“Women need to want to be role models, they need to be hungry for the success, too often women lie down and take it, get up and fight for it – it's out there, go for it girl!”***

Taking the helm was no easy feat and not without its hurdles but it was Jacqui's determination, thirst for knowledge and her ability to listen to those around her that meant she was able to take O'Donovan Waste Disposal to new heights.

In terms of gender equality Jacqui has been a success story; managing to pave her own way in an industry that responded more favourably to a masculine energy. Yet she recognises that despite shifts in power and her own personal success there are still great challenges facing women today. "We are great and that fact should be celebrated and shouted from the roof tops" she states, "but women need to want to be role models, they need to be hungry for the success, too often women lie down and take it, get up and fight for it – it's out there, go for it girl!"

When Jacqui is not busy running her multimillion pound company, she's a single mum and can be found on the sidelines at a rugby match cheering on her son – in fact she's never missed a game! Accolades, success and money aside for Jacqui her son is her "proudest achievement to date".



# INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN IN TIME

From groundbreaking designers, explorers, political activists, artists, writers, feminists and celebrities, throughout history women have had to fight to assert themselves as individuals and experts within their fields. Today we honour just a few of the many inspirational women we are proud to call our sisters.

## MAYA ANGELOU

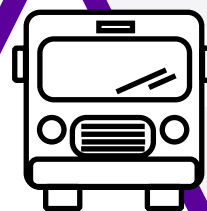
A celebrated poet and award-winning author Maya was an active voice in the civil rights movement. Best known for her 1969 memoir, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, which made literary history as the first nonfiction best-seller by an African-American woman.

“NO”



*“I believe we are here on the planet Earth to live, grow up, and do what we can to make this world a better place for all people to enjoy freedom”*

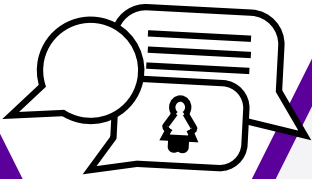
ROSA PARKS



When she refused to give up her seat to a white passenger on a city bus in Montgomery, AL, in 1955 Rosa was arrested and lost her job. But her act of disobedience inspired a boycott and the following year the Supreme Court declared segregation on buses to be unconstitutional.

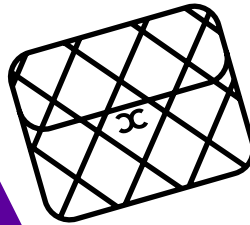
## LUCRETIA MOTT

In 1848 Lucretia Mott, a Quaker, became a pioneer of the women's rights movement when she organised and help lead The Seneca Falls Convention, first women's rights convention.



*“The world has never yet seen a truly great and virtuous nation, because in the degradation of woman, the very fountains of life are poisoned at their source.”*

Coco Chanel didn't just challenge the gender norms of the time through her own personal life and career – her clothes set the female body free and redesigned it's sillhouette.



COCO CHANEL

*“The most courageous act is still to think for yourself. Aloud.”*

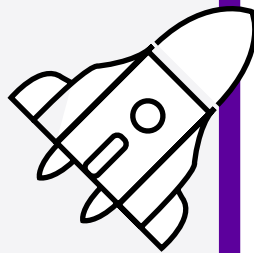
The first Black woman to win the Nobel Prize in literature Toni Morrison's work is varied and diverse, but two themes always stand out: the realities of race and of gender.



TONI MORRISON

*“Passion is never enough; neither is skill. But try”*

## VALENTINA TERESHKOVA



Valentina Tereshkova was just a textile worker from the Soviet Union until she became the first woman in space, orbiting the earth forty-eight times. Putting to shame the previous four, all male, American astronauts who's combined total was just thirty-six.

*“If women can be railroad workers in Russia, why can’t they fly in space?”*



## NORA EPHRON

Responsible for one of the greatest rom-coms of all-time: ‘When Harry Met Sally’ Nora Ephron battled gender inequality in an industry that still misrepresents women in front of the cameras and behind the scenes too. With the latest Hollywood scandal ever present Ephron is a reminder that there is still so much to be done.

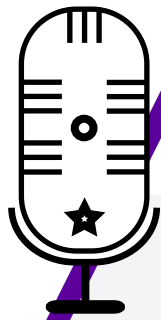
*“Above all, be the heroine of your life, not the victim.”*



*"The greatest contribution  
you can make to women's  
rights, is to be the absolute  
best at what you do."*

## OPRAH WINFREY

Born into poverty and raised by a single mother Oprah experienced a great deal of hardship and abuse during her formative years. Today she's the best female talk show host in the U.S. and one of the richest black women in the world.



When a gunman boarded Malala Yousafzai's schoolbus in Pakistan and shot her three times in the head for speaking out about education for girls Malala went from teenage girl to overnight stateswoman for equal rights.

## MALALA YOUSAFZAI

*"I don't want to  
be remembered  
as the girl  
who was shot.  
I want to be  
remembered  
as the girl who  
stood up."*

## DIANA, PRINCESS OF WALES



Noted for her humanitarian and charity work, Diana may never have been Queen but she will always and forever remain the queen of our hearts.

*"I don't go by  
the rule book;  
I lead from  
the heart,  
not the head."*

# *THE PALACE COAT*



On Maggie's visit to Buckingham Palace she wore the *Semple* 'Palace Coat' made from fine mohair wool.

# MEMORIES FROM BUCKINGHAM PALACE

*Maggie was awarded an OBE by Her Majesty The Queen in 2001. She asked some of her clients to recall their memories of being honoured.*

## Uma Mehta, CBE:



I received my CBE in 2015 for Services to Children. It was an incredible feeling to receive an honour for something that I am passionate about and that I was able to give back for the years of investment in me by a whole host of family, friends and colleagues. What I remember was that it was a truly surreal experience, walking through the gates of Buckingham Palace together with my loved ones and people that mean so much to me. It was fantastic for all of us to share magical, sparkling moments! We all felt proud to be at the Palace and were bathed in the Palace's history and beauty with stunning classical music being played by an orchestra in the background. Unforgettable champagne moments that will remain with me forever! They are my feelings and my abiding memories.

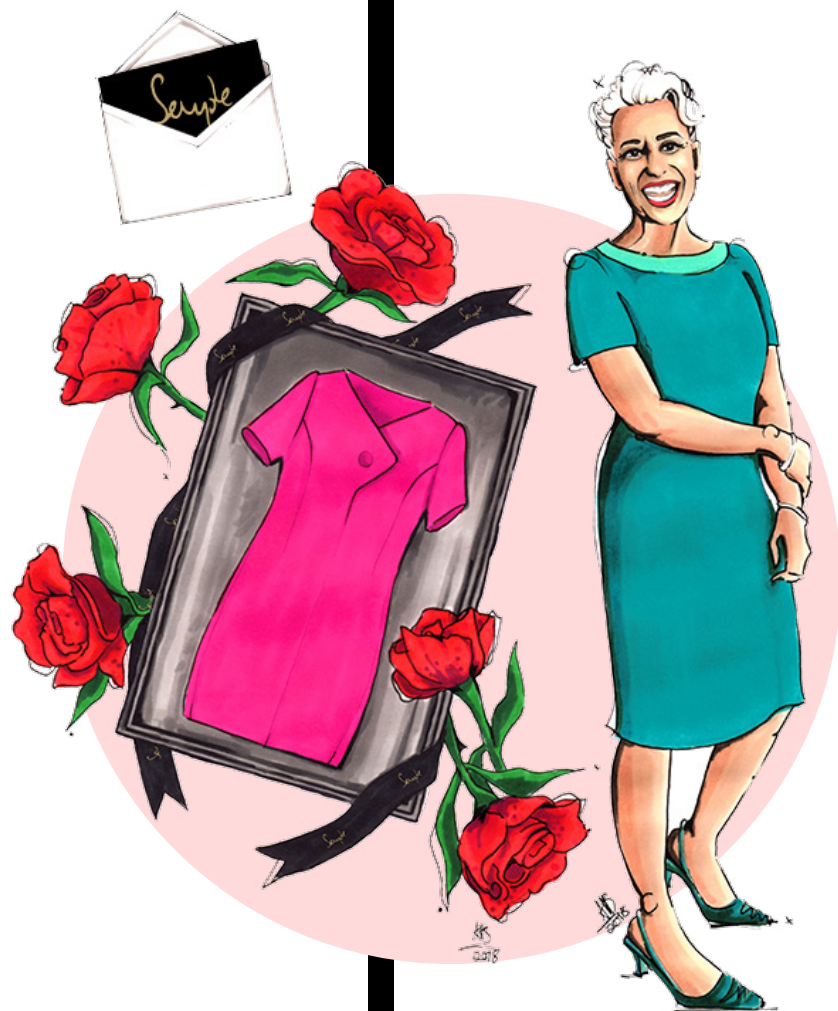
## Diane Lees, CBE:

I have always considered myself a public servant, so to be recognised for my contribution to the Museums world was incredible, it felt like a validation for 32 years in the business trying to make a difference. My investiture was amazing as my Mum had just recovered from a major brain injury and it was so great to share it with her. She was hugely impressed and proud, I am not sure she realised what I really did until that moment!





# The *SEMPL*E GIFT EXPERIENCE



Finding the perfect gift doesn't have to be hard. Treat a loved one to a luxury present that is guaranteed to please: a bespoke Semple dress designed and made to measure in our Covent Garden atelier in London.

A gift that is both thoughtful and unique without the worry of the wrong colour, style or size.

Let us do all of the hard work for you. We'll send you a beautifully packaged miniature dress complete with a personal message to give to a loved one.

Then we will be in touch to book the initial consultation and start her Semple journey. It doesn't matter where you are in the world - our local Ambassador will ensure that she receives a VIP experience.



## **Emerald Experience**

£500

Bespoke dress and consultation



## **Sapphire Experience**

£850

Bespoke dress, consultation and exclusive invitation to a Semple event



## **Ruby Experience**

£1400

Bespoke dress, consultation, exclusive invitation to a Semple event and a mentoring hour with Maggie

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www.maggiesemple.com

Chantal holds her award with husband James



*I was really delighted when it was announced and especially to receive the very first in the category of “Services to Chocolate Making”*

## Chantal Coady, OBE

I could not have more surprised to receive an official brown envelope, that looked like a parking ticket, which announced the nomination for the OBE - I actually thought it was a spoof, and refused to even look at it properly. Finally I was persuaded by my husband James to read it and return the paperwork. This bit all takes place months before the actual list is published, so you have to keep very quiet. I was really delighted when it was announced and especially to receive the very first in the category of “Services to Chocolate Making”. I am aware that without the help and support of my long suffering husband, family, and good chocolate people I have met along the way, the OBE would never have happened, so I am humbly grateful to all of them.

The trip to Buckingham Palace was a magical day, and following the advice of fellow honourees, I made sure that it was properly celebrated, with small parties at both lunch & dinner. Prince William was the Royal on duty at my investiture, and I managed to make him burst into laughter over my answer to his question “How did you get into chocolate?”. I cant actually remember what I said. It felt very grand driving into the Palace, and made my taxi driver’s day!





Pim with her OBE award

## Pim Baxter, OBE

Receiving an Honour is the most thrilling recognition ever, I had to keep 'pinching myself' as I couldn't quite believe it. When I think back on the moment when I first opened the letter, I still experience the same frisson of excitement and emotion. It is an Honour that was made possible by all the wonderful and talented people I have worked with over the years across the arts.

Everyone said 'you will have an amazing day at the Palace', and how right they were. You are made to feel so special from the moment you arrive at the entrance, everyone is incredibly happy for you, and meeting those individuals also receiving Honours that day is a fascinating and humbling experience.

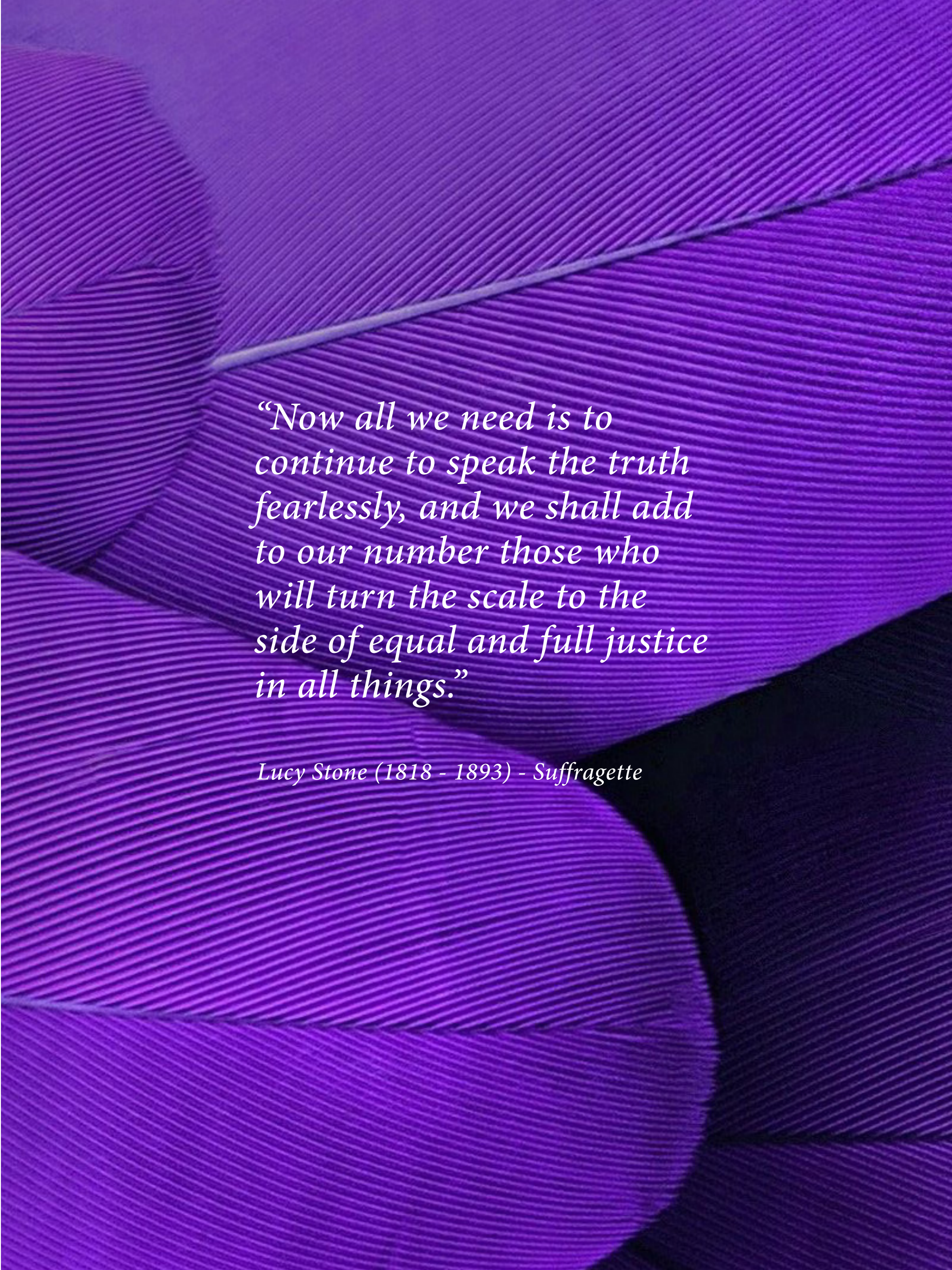
## Heather Melville, OBE

I think the most special thing it has made me do is reflect on all the experiences I've had in my life that got me to that day. It's taken me to a place where I now stand quite confidently in everything I do and say. I don't question myself anymore because I think actually, I have been recognised for what I do. I don't let any negative chatter into my head because I'm past all that now. And the thing for me is to use that honour and use that recognition to create other opportunities for others.



Heather wears her Semple dress to her OBE award ceremony



The background is a deep purple color with a series of concentric circles and a diagonal line intersecting them, creating a geometric pattern.

*“Now all we need is to  
continue to speak the truth  
fearlessly, and we shall add  
to our number those who  
will turn the scale to the  
side of equal and full justice  
in all things.”*

*Lucy Stone (1818 - 1893) - Suffragette*



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