



Seaside

ISSUE IX

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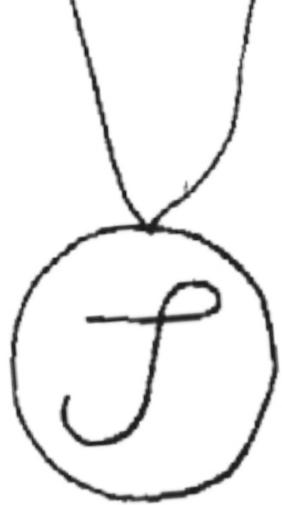
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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

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We find ourselves in a world consumed by the external, as superficial judgements become a customary by-product of our vanity driven existence. We've fallen through the looking glass so hard and fast that everything is no longer as it seems. But far from bowing to the pressures and stigma of society, Semple Magazine aims to unearth inner beauty and rejoice.

As ever we unpack pressing, current issues and ask the questions that are often thought but never voiced. From the worrying lack of diversity and inclusion within the modelling industry (pg65) to inspiring not for profit projects (pg21) and our controversial attitude towards self care (pg29).

Beauty is self worth, acceptance and confidence; it's recognising flaws and imperfections and wearing them with pride. The mirror's image is imperfectly perfect and that's just fine by us.

Jenna



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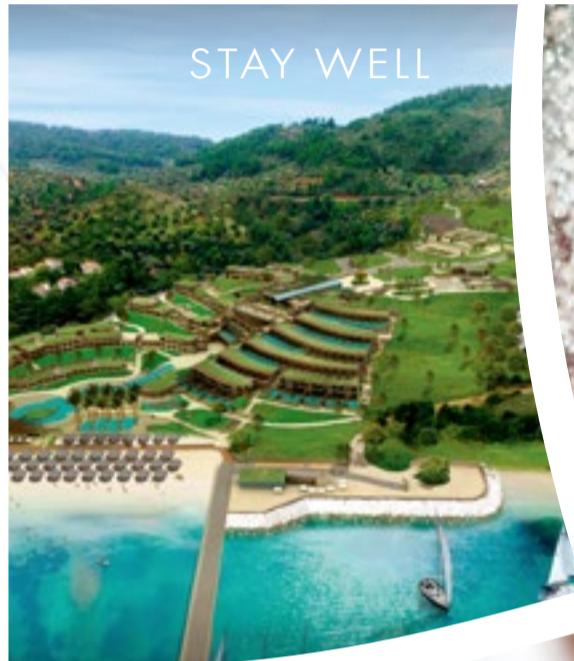
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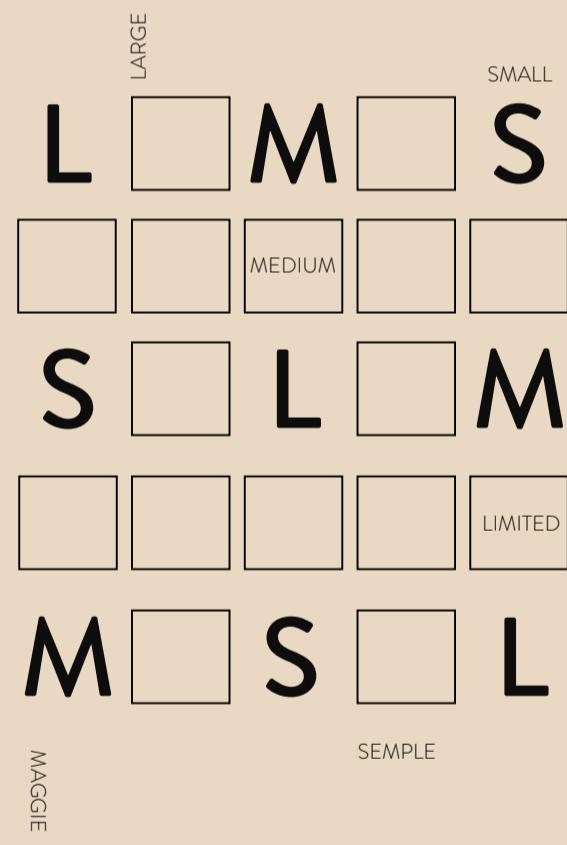
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“Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world.  
Today, I am wise, so I am changing myself.”  
- Rumi, 13th Century Persian poet and Islamic scholar



# MEASURING WOMEN'S ASPIRATIONS

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MAGGIE SEMPLE

I am in the business of looking at women and their bodies. I am not a doctor, personal coach or stylist. I measure women's aspirations and turn the centimetres into lovingly made, beautiful classic dresses.

I have a very simple story that acknowledges a truth. No two women are physically the same and while many of us make choices about what we wear, not enough of us pause for a moment to really consider how we can match the dream of ourselves to reality. At Semple when we measure women's bodies we also measure their aspirations.

Aspirations are thoughts, hopes and ambitions. They are often private and shared among close loved ones and friends but rarely do we find occasions to make our hopes public, but imagine if this were more widely available, expected, normal.

At Semple we have three strands through which women share their aspirations: Women, Fashion and Stories. Women are inspired by each other at our exclusive events programme. Fashion – our dresses that we believe are like reliable friends, they will not let you down. And our publishing enterprise captures thousands of Stories a year through commissioned books, daily blogs and our bi-annual magazine that comments on our past, present and future. When I whisper Women, Fashion, Stories in the same sentence, I hear inner confidence, power and celebration.

We care about women, about what they feel on the inside and what they represent on the outside. We believe that we improve women's lives and receive confirmation of this regularly. One of our clients recently posted on social media: "For the first time in a long time I can look in a full length mirror without contorting myself into unlikely positions and feel pleased by what's reflected back. Thank you Semple."

I hope that you will join Semple so we can measure your aspirations. Together we can change the world and ourselves all at the same time. ■





# Beauty And...

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Jenna Jones



# “Gazelli understand that everyone’s skincare needs and requirements are different and not only are they catered for, they are celebrated”

Comforted by the homely, luxurious decor my senses were heightened by the sounds, smells and tastes of Gazelli House, Gazelli Skincare’s latest venture. But as I sat, gold plated pen in hand, sipping my grapefruit infused mineral water I soon realised I was about to be outed as a fraud, as I attempted to answer a range of in depth questions about my distinctly not so ‘in depth’ skincare regime. In its current state my routine consisted of a dab of micellar water and the occasional wet wipe; needless to say that said routine was a far cry from the skincare practices preached at Gazelli House. I had a lot to learn.

Nestled down a quiet tree lined backstreet in the heart of Kensington, Gazelli’s perfectly formed beauty oasis is revolutionising the way that men and women approach skincare. By stepping back and looking at the bigger picture, Gazelli House is promoting a pioneering practice, encompassing the mind, body and soul. In her own words, co-founder of Gazelli, Jamila Askarova, describes the Gazelli movement as an outlook that reaches beyond the expected conversation.

“We wanted first and foremost to bring a positive and informed attitude to skincare, and also offer consumers a brand founded on the important principles of honesty, education, care and emotional support. It’s our belief that to deserve the loyalty of the modern customer, we must offer not only powerful and innovative formulations, but also an educational approach with a strong and trustworthy philosophy and ethos.”

And yet despite this serious and well educated approach I was not once judged or made to feel inadequate due to my novice approach to skincare. Armed with their wealth of superior knowledge I was invited to lay my cards on the table and open up about worries, fears and ambitions. I was no longer sitting in a treatment room discussing products with a facial expert, I was opening up to a friend in a tranquil setting that felt familiar yet new and refreshing all in the same breath.

“We wanted the house to feel like a home, and this was very important when designing the look and feel of the space. For us, a home is where you feel most comfortable, and this is what we wanted to achieve decoratively for our guests. When you’re at ease, you’re more likely to open up and address what’s really going on in your life. This interaction between the space and our guests reinforces our philosophy to support, inspire and empower people in every way.”

The key to Gazelli House, and what sets them apart from the rest, is the overriding sense of understanding and acceptance. We so often go through life ticking boxes and filling out forms to determine which ‘category’ we fit into within society. But at Gazelli House I had the comforting sense of being an individual. They understand that everyone’s skincare needs and requirements are different and not only are they catered for, they are celebrated. And through this encouragement I felt inspired to begin my journey.

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For Jamila, true beauty and wellness can only be achieved through finding an attainable and realistic road to your goal and supporting it with your full commitment and dedication. “To obtain a beautiful mind, body and soul, it’s important that people address themselves and their lifestyle as a whole. That’s why we house Skin Experts and Practitioners who specialise in physical and mental wellbeing. Gazelli is there to provide you with specialists that care and listen and that will help you build that road, stone by stone, and walk behind you until you reach that goal.”

By extending the parameters of what skincare means, Gazelli have managed to re-evaluate the concept as a whole - encompassing our mindset into their innovative vision. For Gazelli co-founder Dr Hamzayeva the dream was to apply her extensive research into the effects that emotions, hormones, and lifestyle can have on the body, and lead a shift in the way we think not only about skincare, but also our cultural attitude towards beauty and wellbeing.

Put simply, we would be naive to believe that products alone can amount to healthy and happy skin; no matter how high the price tag or which celebrity it’s endorsed by. For Dr Hamzayeva a person can only achieve a beautiful health and glow once they are balanced, fulfilled and confident; a mindset that cannot be attained through purely superficial means.

It is the importance placed on wellbeing that means that Gazelli’s treatments and products, while incredible in their own right, become just another piece to the skincare puzzle. It is the relationship between guests, practitioners

and the House that is of utmost importance to Gazelli; encouraging and building a sense of community. For Jamila, the collaborative environment would be non-existent without the dedicated House team.

“They are there to help guests map out their journey within the House, and in the same way a friend does, they can recommend the best treatment for you, or perhaps a workshop that they think will uplift and motivate you to achieve your specific goal. It’s all about conversation and a two-way relationship, and in many ways our guests shape the House and help it to evolve.”

Thoroughly preened, pampered and relaxed I departed with a sense of acceptance, a wealth of knowledge and a better understanding of myself. And while I may well have walked into a house, I walked out of a home. ■



# DEAR EVE,

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ROSIE MORGAN

You're not the most popular of people, are you? Even your 'daughters' arguably have reason to hate and resent you; your example has been used to subjugate and judge us for hundreds of years. You lead Adam astray, you tempted him into committing the same sin that you had been tempted into, your influence denied him paradise too. Poor, blameless Adam. All because of that one decision you made in the garden of paradise, to pluck and consume the fruit of knowledge under the advice of the serpent that whispered in your ear. You're not even given the credit of being an evil mastermind, you were just a fool. Naughty, foolish Eve.

Except, what if it wasn't a mistake? Ignorance is bliss, it's an old adage that few can argue against. It's true, after all. Did your mother just die? Take this pill and you'll forget you even had a mother at all; no mother, no grief, no loss, no pain. I often envy the ignorance of others as they shout out their racist, sexist and prejudiced opinions. How lovely it must be, to be so utterly unaware of your own evils. Evils which you apparently let in, you silly woman.

But, whilst ignorance can indeed be blissful this does not mean that it is preferable. I don't think it is, Eve. In fact, I like to think that most of us would choose as you did when you were presented that decision in the garden; you could live in innocent ignorance for all eternity with some all-powerful deity lusting over your naked body as you run around a pretty garden, or you could expand your mind, become self-aware and examine the meaning of your existence. Human beings may be flawed and terrible in many ways, but our curiosity and wonder about the world around us is perhaps our best quality. We search for truths, we ask how things work, how we can be better people, how things can be improved and what everything is made of. We have the ability to know who and what we are.

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"You were curious, you opened a door within your own mind whilst rejecting a paradisiacal yet mindless existence"

# “There was a tree right there. A tree of beautiful, vital and electrifying knowledge, right there. Why wouldn’t you have taken a bite of that fruit?”

Of course, the most fanatic areas of Christianity have focused on the consequences of your action, Eve. They still point out all the sins, the pains and the hardship that you and Adam suffered after God expelled you from his garden.

There was a tree right there. A tree of beautiful, vital and electrifying knowledge, right there. Why wouldn’t you have taken a bite of that fruit? Why would God have put that tree there in the first place if it wasn’t your right to have the option, to have that decision waiting for you once you chose to take it? Hell, if you’ll forgive my language, the human race went on to invent electricity. You tell me that that would have happened otherwise?

So, I think you get a bad deal. You were curious, you opened a door within your own mind whilst rejecting a paradisiacal yet mindless existence. Not a mistake. Not a folly. A choice. Because of it, we know the thrilling light

of attraction, the livening experience of fear, love under difficulty when hunger and cold are more common than warmth and an abundance of comfort food. We love, we explore, we poke at things and say “What’s that? How does it work? Let’s find out!” We laugh at crude jokes and silly things. We are vital. We live.

A sacrifice can’t exist on its own, there has to be something you gain in return for a greater good. So let the zealots pine over Eden and that blissfully ignorant existence. I’d rather have a meaningful life. ■





SeeMe

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Jenna Jones



The beauty of a hand crafted piece of jewellery is second to none and something that no price tag or designer name could ever replace. And knowing that your purchase has not only helped to empower the lives of female victims of violence but will also continue to help train and sustain more women like them is true beauty in itself. I sat down with SeeMe Founder, Caterina Occhio, to see how her inspiring brand is continuing to spread the love, one heart at a time...

#### **Tell us the SeeMe story, how did it all start?**

SeeMe was born while walking through the souks of Tunis, the slums of Ankara, and the streets of Beirut. After almost two decades of reporting on women's conditions in the MENA region I decided to take matters into my own hands. Through my reports and travels I, unsurprisingly, discovered that being a single mother in the region equals being unsuitable for work, marriage and society. SeeMe was therefore born as a safe haven, training centre and work place for women otherwise deemed lost.

#### **How are your female workers trained as artisans?**

With the help of master artisans - two goldsmiths who had been working for a renowned French jeweller and became unemployed when said jewellery brand decided to relocate because of the Arab spring happenings - a first workshop was set up on the outskirts of Tunis. There, the SeeMe women learn the craft of jewellery making, following ancient Tunisian techniques. Therefore, while fostering their country's traditions they also secure a workplace for themselves. To ensure SeeMe women's personal and financial independence, after a period of training they are employed by the brand.

#### **Why is the fair trade movement so important to the brand and how is SeeMe managing to bring luxury and fair trade together?**

Fair luxury is a mix of fair trade and luxury and implies that beautiful, first-class products can be produced in a fair environment; creating items that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also full of history and well doing. Honestly,

fair trade is merely an expression of SeeMe's core ethical values. After building SeeMe's model and working within the fashion industry, all the while staying loyal to certain values, we realised that the 10 Principles of Fair Trade represented a lot of what we were already doing and some of what was desired.

#### **Each SeeMe creation features a beautiful heart design, can you explain the significance?**

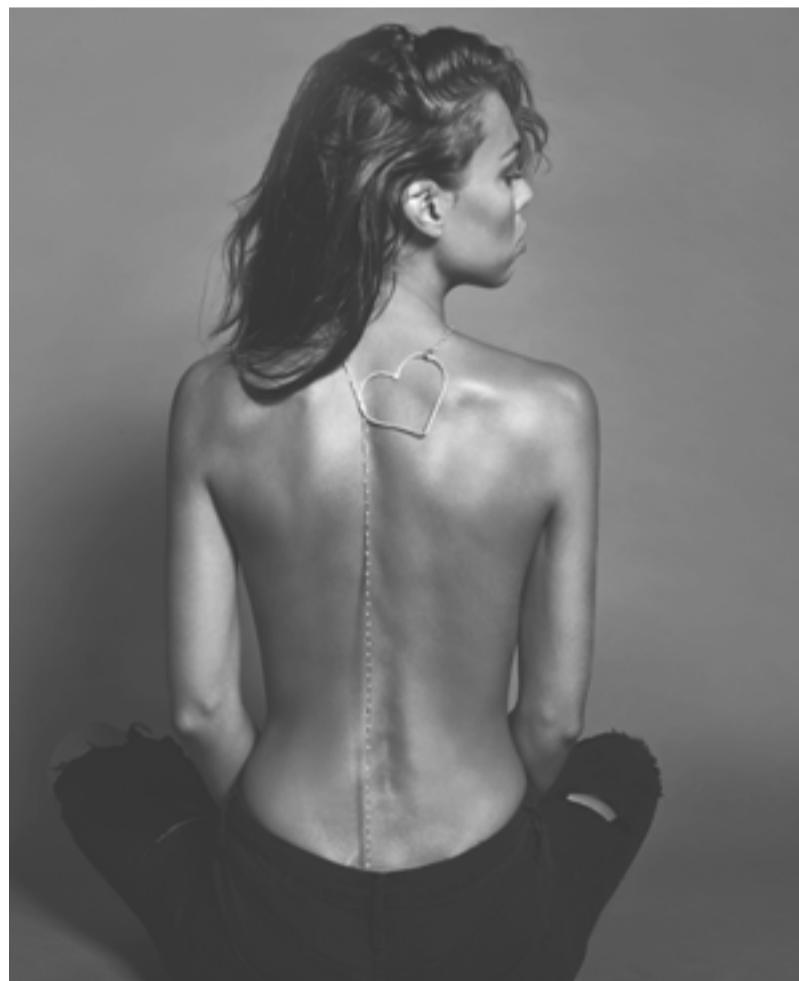
The heart symbolises the love replacing the violence that previously permeated the SeeMe girls' lives. The brand aims at breaking the circle of brutality and hopelessness through work and optimism.

#### **How did the #heartmovement come about? And how important is social media to the growth and outreach of the SeeMe brand?**

SeeMe has given birth to what is known as the heart movement recognised by celebrities, socialites and the press alike. To this day, people meet by wearing their heart, they gift a heart, they talk about the heart. A real love chain that is growing and making the lives of so many people that much better.

Although most of our PR is still done the old fashioned way, i.e. in person, social media is still essential in its own right. It helps us reach different heights, allows us to stay connected with our followers as well as our business contacts, and also helps us to share the inner life of a social enterprise. We're definitely working on garnering a larger following on social media as we hope to not only increment sales but also spread the message and spread the love.





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Photography courtesy of SeeMe



**“To this day, people meet by wearing their heart, they gift a heart, they talk about the heart. A real love chain that is growing and making the lives of so many people that much better”**

**SeeMe have collaborated with some big designer players including Karl Lagerfeld and Missoni. How did these collaborations come about and are there any more in the pipeline?**

Through a mix of good PR, interesting design, heart warming story and a good dose of luck, I managed to secure great collaborations and coverage for SeeMe. Beside past collaborations with Karl Lagerfeld, Missoni and Tommy Hilfiger, SeeMe is now working on a project in collaboration with the United Nations (UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women), but the details are still top secret...

**What advice could you give to other brands to encourage them to embrace a more fair-trade approach to their business?**

Working with disadvantaged but culturally rich communities, leads to what SeeMe calls a ‘win win’ business situation. In fact, by adopting local craftsmanship and cultural practices, luxury brands can add a dimension to their designs while ensuring that those practices do not die out. At the same time, and for obvious reasons, communities also benefit from being fairly employed by luxury empires. Hence, the win win.

**What's the next chapter in the SeeMe story?**

SeeMe in the world. We'd love to scale up the model and replicate it elsewhere, everywhere. This could also be done by expanding the brand into lifestyle and having specialised ateliers around the world. Creating employment for women in need while fostering local handicraft and tradition is what SeeMe stands for. There is so much to explore out there, so watch this space! ■



“Caring about your outward appearance  
breeds self worth, acceptance and  
confidence: it can make you powerful”

# THE BEAUTY OF SELF-CARE

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SOPHIE BERRY

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a woman in possession of a manicure must be in want of a brain. (Clumsily) paraphrasing Jane Austen, rather succinctly conveys the way many people feel - subconsciously as well as consciously - about the act of caring for oneself. The lurking sense that thinking about the way you look is vain. That wanting to look nice is shallow. That being conscious of the way you are visually perceived, and wanting to control the way that others view you is not something that should occupy the thoughts of an intelligent woman. But how is being told *not* to care about your outward self any different than being told to care about your outward self? How is one less arbitrary than the other? It's a complex issue to unpack.

We can't deny that society's obsession with the superficial, and the value that is placed on appearance can veer into unhealthy territory. Self worth should not be determined by how strangers feel about your appearance. Instagram likes are not metrics with which to measure your success as a person. But a person is a whole person. A person is a multifaceted thing; made up of ideas, feelings, achievements, and weaknesses. Made up of features and flaws.

A few years ago I interviewed founder of Semple Magazine, Maggie Semple, for a feature. We spoke for a long time, and we covered a lot of things. One of the things that we spoke about for the longest, and that we shared a passionate belief for, was the idea that caring about your outward appearance breeds self worth, acceptance and confidence: it can make you powerful.

The small acts of self-care that we practice every day are myriad, and it is easy to get bogged down with where necessity ends and vanity begins. Tooth brushing? Fine. Moisturising your skin? Okay. Dyeing over grey hairs? Hmm, watch it. If it's okay to cut your nails, why should it be frowned upon to have a manicure? Are we supposed to be bargaining with ourselves, trading one act of self-care off against another?

Maybe if we care for ourselves with a focus on how it makes us feel, rather than how it makes us look, our inner beauty - the type that belongs truly to ourselves - will be more able to shine. Caribbean-American author, civil rights activist and radical feminist Audre Lorde once said: "Caring for myself is not self-indulgence, it is self-preservation, and that is an act of political warfare."

Caring for yourself is not a guilty secret to keep hidden. Let's reclaim it. Let's get comfortable with feeling powerful. Let's start a war. ■

# IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEANNE DIXON











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Earrings, as before; Shirt, as before; Suit, as before;  
Shoes, Chasing Secrets Vintage



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Earrings, Nadia Minkoff; Top, Thread Man Walking ;  
Shorts, Zeus Vintage







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**Kimono**, as before; **Two Piece**, Modes and More; **Earrings**, Good Intentions Flower Jewellery;  
**Necklace, Ring, Bracelet & Belt**, stylist's own











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**Headdress**, stylist's own; **Top**, Modes and More;  
**Earrings & Purple Necklace**, Am Kooi; **Silver Necklaces**, Shrieking Violet











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**Blazer**, Thread Man Walking; **Shirt**, Absolute Vintage;  
**Trousers**, Thriftionary; **Earrings**, Glitz Secrets; **Belt**, Absolute Vintage







# Social Distortion

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Hannah Alley



# “Time after time, social media platforms find a new way to develop the façade of external self, instead of nurturing the personal development of the internal”

Memories are a by-product of an incident, life event or situation that has had an impact on our persona; happy, sad, shocking or tragic these snippets of our past life build up our bank of memories. And it is often the shocking events that leave the most lasting effect, either sparking a reaction or inspiring change. Rewind the clock to 2006, the year that Dove released its ‘evolution’ video, and the moment that my perception of beauty changed as I watched a young woman become totally transformed by the art of makeup and Photoshop. Little did I realise that this was only the beginning of the world’s never ending obsession with perfection.

Ten years later and an avid user of every social media platform available, I feel as though I have watched the internet morph women’s mindsets into a place I could never have conceived possible. From inducing body dysmorphia in young girls to promoting unreachable expectations within relationships, social media has distorted our reality of the truth.

Since the launch of Twitter and Instagram in 2006 and 2010 respectively, both social media sites have grown enormously. Whilst the way they both influence how we connect with each other has been in the most part positive, there have been some negative impacts too. Instagram could be accused of promoting a warped self-perception in women, due to the proliferation of unattainable beauty standards, highlighted all over our

news feeds. Twitter is sadly home to a large group of male users who body-shame overweight girls with cellulite, or contrastingly, men who shame slimmer sized women, tweeting statements like “men prefer more meat on their bones”. Meanwhile Facebook has become the platform to inform us when an old school friend has lost 20 pounds in a month, as said friend shares a long, emotive status complete with body comparison images.

The most recent app to the digital table is Snapchat. Born in 2012, the popular social media platform allows users to share live ‘stories’ with their friends. It was clear that this new form of social media was soon to become another way for men to shame women. As opposed to other platforms Snapchat’s ‘live’ capabilities allow men to shame women by comparing their flattering online selfies to their ‘live’ Snapchat feed, where they supposedly look dramatically different.

Time after time, social media platforms find a new way to develop the façade of external self, instead of nurturing the personal development of the internal. Focusing on what’s on the inside is surely more beneficial to a society which historically moves forward, and while fully aware of how cliché this statement may sound, it ceases to make it any the less true.

Social media’s ability to invite us into the lives of celebrities has also unfortunately had a damning effect on the self esteem and life choices of young adults as cosmetic >



Images courtesy of - Megan Burges Photography

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surgeries such as lip injections become a viable answer to vanity concerns. Since Kylie Jenner's transformation from a young fresh faced girl to a very adult-seeming, fuller lipped woman, there has been a shocking 70% increase in lip injection demand. What is this telling us? And more importantly, what message does it portray to the impressionable young when the most influential figures in their world are inadvertently promoting that lips should be fuller, breasts should be bigger and waists should be slimmer. I know I may not speak for every female reader, but the constant proliferation of unattainable beauty standards really can lead to a lack of self esteem in many of us. Incorporate into the mix the persistent bombardment of voiced opinions from men who state that women with small breasts are "essentially men", and that "tiny lips are unkissable" and you have, frankly, quite a frightening outcome.

On a weekly basis we hear about the dramatic increase in cosmetic surgery procedures, with a jaw-dropping 17% rise in surgical procedures in 2013 according to figures from the British Association of Aesthetic Plastic Surgeons. However, in quite shocking comparison, cosmetic surgery popularity declined in 2014 and has plummeted ever since. But why?

Surgery replacements have emerged as the market attempts to cater for the high demand for perfection that the nation continues to crave, regardless of social status or income. So while liposuction and lip injections are still popular options, less dramatic alternatives are also on the rise. Powerful distortion apps such as The Plastic Surgery Simulator are allowing users to manipulate their selfies with a click of a finger instead of having the real life procedure done. Trying to exceed society's expectations of curvy hips, a slim waist, a bigger bottom and large breasts, users are

now shrinking their bodies and uploading these photos to their social media outlets. It seems so quick and easy, but the disheartening feeling of using an image manipulator will last long after the upload.

The beauty industry is also providing the answer to real life quick fixes with affordable surgery alternatives such as bottom pads and non surgical lip enhancers such as Full Lips Lip Enhancers, a small red device that promises to plump lips. Out go surgical procedures and in come YouTube beauty tutorials flooding the internet with vloggers explaining exactly how to increase your lip size; and it doesn't stop there. Since 2015, contouring has become the ultimate beauty trend. But what are we actually doing when we contour our faces? We're aiming to shrink the sizes of our noses through shadowing effects and creating high cheekbones and arched eyebrows through the art of highlighting. We are essentially altering our faces through makeup because we have an urge to change our facial features, and it's all because the industry says so. Or could it be argued that these quick fixes are a better, less damaging and cheaper alternative to surgery that should in fact be applauded?

I want to leave you with a statistic. According to a study conducted by the University of Salford, 50% of the 298 participants said that the use of social networks make their lives worse. I fervently hope that the survey isn't quite as accurate as it seems and that we can all learn to love the body that we're in as we only get one, no matter how hard we try and change it. ■



# A CELEBRATION OF SELF

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TASHA ARTWELL

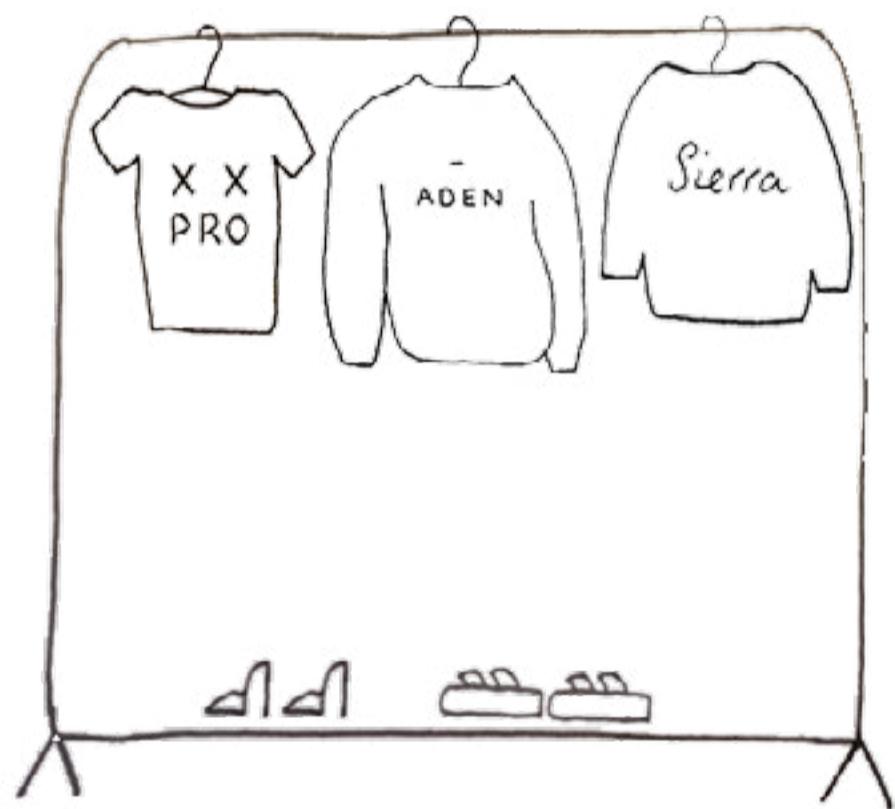
Some will make the cut and some won't. To "take a selfie" is now a term as universally known as it is practised. Getting the right angle with the best lighting and at just the right time can be a meticulous art that many of us have mastered. One aspect and point of interest about the selfie is what it can denote. Our own interpretations of beauty ideals and standards, plus social and cultural influences come into play when we decide what looks good and what doesn't.

A simple click on our self-facing camera phones can, at times, be just that, but at others that one click can hold many more complex layers. It's what goes through our minds between taking, uploading, and post-loading the selfie, that makes the concept a multifaceted one.

Our online identities can be vastly different to our real life identities. Our online selves are what we want people to see, they are images not tainted by the sometimes complicated aspects of our very real, everyday lives – our reality. Although selfies are essentially pictures of ourselves, are they more about how we wish to be perceived at that time? Becoming a social signature, the selfie is something that is recognised as a modern spectacle. It's a way in which we show part of ourselves to our onlookers. With the selfie comes control. We can use filters to enhance, or hide, our self-proclaimed 'flaws'. There are apps specifically designed to smooth the skin that gives an appearance of an almost doll-like image, tools that can change the shape of our body and features that enhance certain aspects of an image. We are now in control of how we allow other people to view us.

Unlike disposable cameras of days past, we now have the ability to have complete ownership of how we portray ourselves to our online audience.

This means the classic 'caught off guard' images, the photos with our mouths ajar, or one eye open and one eye closed, no longer have to be developed into anything more than a mistake. A couple of clicks and the evidence is deleted and you have the chance to retake the photo until you are happy with the outcome. >



# “Our online identities can be vastly different to our real life identities”

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Beauty trends continuously change and many of us like to keep up with the latest makeup looks or newest innovations, but when it comes to the selfie are we adhering to specific attributes that define what we know as 'beauty' at that specific time? When a list of names under a selfie turns to numbers a lot of us sigh with relief, but what does this say about the significance of validation when it comes to images of ourselves?

It's rare to open up some form of social media without seeing a close up of another person's face. If I search under the hashtag 'selfie' on Instagram I find a number of hashtags that follow; #likeforlike and #followforfollow are just two of the tags that frequently marry up to accompany the selfie hashtag.

Receiving compliments is always nice. When we're feeling good within ourselves it shows on the surface, and when that radiance is noticed by others it feels great. But does the unsubtle need for validation that comes with posting a picture of ourselves not then turn the selfie into a vehicle which quenches our desire to feel accepted by a mass of peers, strangers and onlookers? Or is it a reflection of how we see ourselves, as apposed to our social audience?

If a picture gets over 30 likes, for example, does that constitute a higher level of beauty as opposed to a picture only getting 3? Is it seen as an official acknowledgement of acceptance by others? And god forbid what worries may ensue if a picture does not meet our expectations.

We could be told that we are beautiful a thousand times a day and it may make us feel temporarily happy and confident, but would that provide a lasting sense of happiness. If we don't truly feel good within ourselves then all we are doing is chasing a temporary high, a quick fix.

This is not to say that the selfie only has negative connotations, far from it. I am yet to come across someone

who has not taken a picture of themselves, whether that be because they have had their hair done, want to capture a moment that is meaningful to them, or maybe we just feel good about ourselves. It's healthy to love who we are and to do so unapologetically and if that selfie is an expression of that then all the more power to us, but, with the pressures of sometimes unrealistic beauty standards and ideals, it is also equally important to do so in a way that your self-worth is not determined by others opinions, but rather from within.

The selfie is now a concept that is recognised and encouraged by brands with PR stunts that encourage us to send a selfie and tag @brandnamehere. Kim Kardashian, one of the most notoriously known selfie takers, has literally published a 445-page book with a collection of her selfies. According to Publishers Weekly the book sold just under 14,000 copies in its first ten days of release and was placed at number 13 in the adult non-fiction list. With over 60 million followers, and counting, there is no doubt that her selfie taking is welcomed by many.

Taking a selfie is a wonderful expression, it's just making sure that we truly recognise, understand and prioritise the benefits of our self-worth, self-love and self-belief before we click that button.

And remember, you're beautiful in real life, too. ■



Illustration credit - Iris van Gelder



# Model Life

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Ruth Cooper-Dickson



Photo credit - Oliver Morris

# “We hear about ‘real women’ but all women are real”

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February 2016 saw London celebrate its 63rd Fashion Week as a host of designers, from the established to the up and coming, showcased their AW16 collections to the UK, international press and buyers. The fashion industry is a high value key contributor to the UK’s economy with fashion contributing £26 billion directly to the UK market according to the British Fashion Council. The consumer statistics are even more compelling, as in 2015 there was 27 billion pounds worth of womenswear sales and 29% of our total spending online in the UK is reported to be on clothing and footwear.

Statistics from the AW16 Runway Diversity Report found that the big four fashion weeks held a total of 312 fashion shows, with 8,727 models used across the four major cities. However, out of all the models booked only 24.75% were women of colour and London was the only city that was actually less diverse in Fall 2016 as apposed to prior seasons. This is without taking into account models that were not included due to their ‘perceived difference’ such as age, disability, body diversity and gender identity. So this begs the question why does an industry built around the consumer experience, and known for its forward thinking and individualistic behaviours, then display a distinct lack of diverse models?

The business case for diversity has already been articulated and hammered out. Clarifying that connecting with diverse and integrated consumers should be a central pursuit for brands, or else risk customers going elsewhere based on a company’s lack of diversity and inclusiveness. Customers who evangelise a brand’s diversity offering are able to connect with the brand on a deeper and more personal level, and the diversity ‘return on investment’ is now hard to ignore.

This ethos was encapsulated by casting director James Scully, who after seeing the lack of diversity at Balenciaga posted on Instagram: “So if you’re the designer the whole world is looking to right now, how great that your message is one of exclusion which is never in fashion. It must feel like a slap to all of the people of [colour] who line up to

buy your clothes that your message to them [is that] you don’t see them in your world.”

One organisation that is taking a stand within the modelling industry to campaign for change is the not-for-profit agency, Models of Diversity (MoD). Their mission is to change the face of fashion and modelling through various avenues including using the public - who after all are the clients for those industries, and working with great professionals who share the same ethos, such as photographers, designers, make-up artists, and stylists. Plus using traditional media outlets in the form of their well received documentary on models with disabilities.

I asked Angel Sinclair, founder of MoD, what she foresees as the biggest barriers and challenges to achieving inclusion within the modelling industry: “Change is so slow. The younger designers and new media companies share our ideas, but to grow their success feel they need to comply to the traditional way of thinking, which is so ironic considering how fashion is all about change and the latest ideas.”

Add to this how LFW AW16 compared with previous years Angel feels like sometimes companies or designers do experiment but then they feel like they’ve ‘done’ diversity so revert back to their comfort zone.

So in Angel’s opinion what is the best approach for a modelling agency to become more inclusive and start to attract diverse talent? “Firstly actively seek out older models, plus size, petite models, models of colour and models with a disability. At every opportunity ask yourself how would this work with a different kind of model? Can an unusual look bring something special to this project? But then back it up with the same level of support for all - do you have stylists who are experienced in working with black women’s hair for example?”

The Runway Diversity Report also claimed that body diversity or plus-sized models lagged behind racial



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inclusion with only 6 plus-sized models booked across all AW16 fashion weeks, a fact which sadly proves the need for the Models of Diversity movement. In particular Angel explains the situation as a basic need for more representation. “We hear about ‘real women’ but obviously all women are real. It’s about not being afraid to show a wide range of healthy models, men and women. Some argue that unhealthy models might encourage pursuing unhealthy lifestyles, but that’s not what we’re calling for. A size 14 or 16 model on the catwalk is something many women will identify with and hopefully encourages them to think more positively [about] themselves. Besides, what counts as ‘plus-size’ in the industry is nothing like what counts as unhealthy outside of it,” says Angel.

In my experience as a diversity and inclusion specialist, many of the companies I work with tend to tackle one diverse strand at a time as part of their inclusion strategy. I wanted to understand if it was better for modelling agencies to focus on a specific character of difference e.g. disability or race, or is it more about inclusion as a whole and changing the cultural shift. I ask Angel her views: “I don’t think it has to be one way or the other. I’m sure the larger agencies are best placed to have a full range of human beauty available and really, why wouldn’t that be what they do already. But there is certainly space for niche agencies and perhaps, until diversity is commonplace, they are a necessity.”

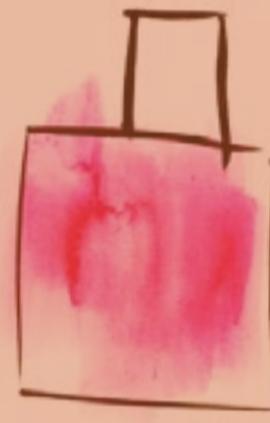
So just as within the corporate world the modelling and fashion industry still has a long journey ahead if it is to become more inclusive. If the designers valued diversity

amongst their models this would be reflected both on and off the runway, challenging and providing a new perspective on what the media and public perceive as ‘normal’. Consumers would deeply value the brands they choose if they feel that they are inclusive and representative of them as individuals and in turn this would lead to more sales and a greater consumer following for the fashion designers and their Houses. ■

# NEW BEAUTY

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HANNAH ALLEY



Just when you think you're abreast of the latest 'on trend' beauty brands and you've finally managed to master the art of heavy contouring, along come a host of new brands and a plethora of beauty regimes to get your head around. In a bid to keep you in the beauty loop here's an overview of the must have brands and talked about trends on the agenda for 2016...



## BAGSY BEAUTY

Let me introduce Bagsy Beauty, a chic, original brand that focuses wholly on handbag must-haves that are just as gorgeous as they are practical. With British born Bagsy being new to the scene after working for global beauty brands for years, you never have to worry about applying your makeup on-the-go again. Their smartly crafted collection of small, everyday beauty essentials is truly refreshing.

## DAMES & DIMES

If you're on the hunt for natural products then Dames and Dimes is the place to shop. Founded in 2015, this brand has just recently hit the big time. Their products are passionately handmade in a small workshop, containing natural butters and oils and some organic ingredients, tailored towards sensitive skin. The impressive collection has a fun feel whilst retaining a retro kitsch edge. With their aim being to provide products that improve the skin, are fun to use, and make people smile, I couldn't think of a better brand to support.

## LIVE LOVE LONDON

If there's one thing I think London lacks in the beauty world, it's drugstore brands. A brand new and exclusive beauty range now being stocked in BHS, Live Love London is affordable and certainly one to watch. Offering highly pigmented products in a range of beautiful colours, the collection is refreshing and feminine. Offering up that personal touch, each Live Love London palette is individually personalised with the words "Live, Love".



## FEELING BLUE

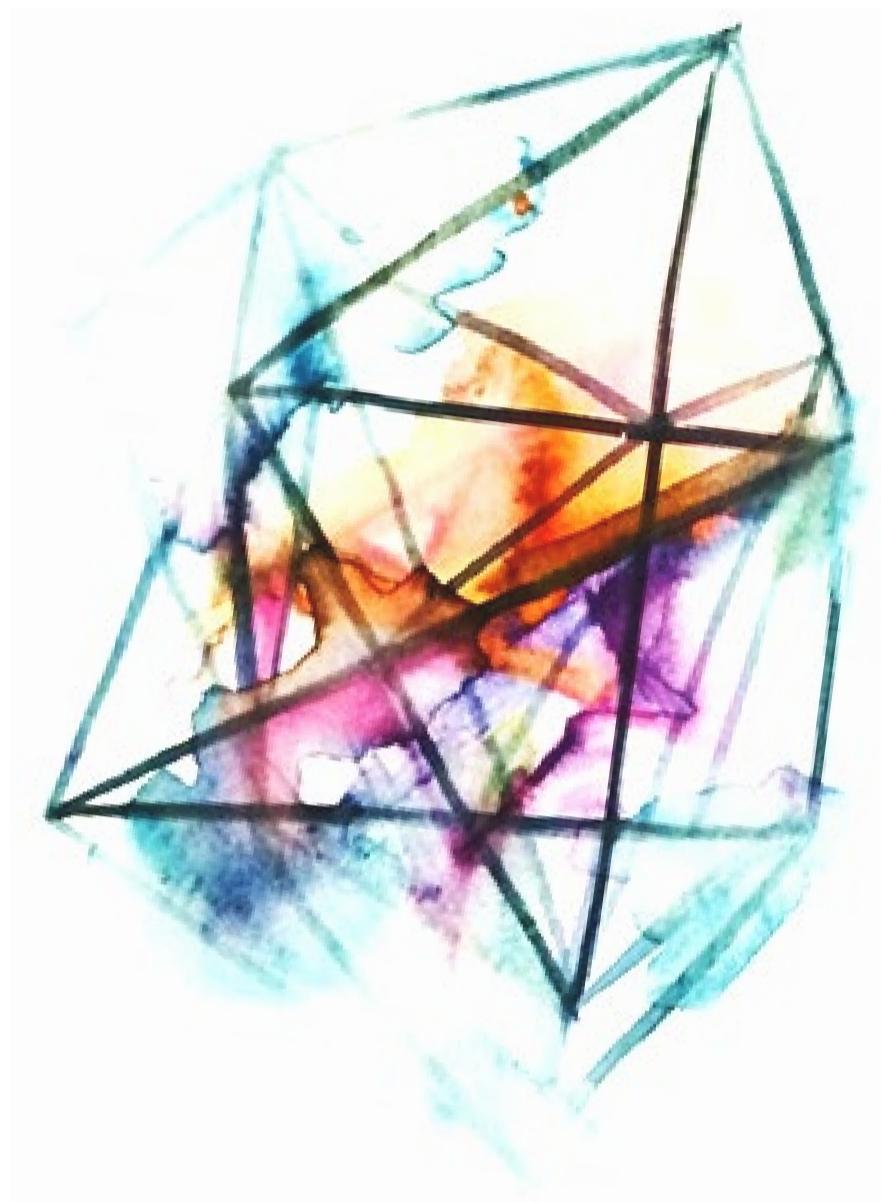
This new blue beauty trend will simply blow the contour and coconut oil craze cobwebs away. From dark navy and cobalt to metallic azure and all that's in-between, blue makeup has graced the faces of many A-listers this year. To perfect the look, place an inexact line of pigment along the inner corners of the eyes just like Marc Jacobs' Francois Nars did, or create just a subtle hint of colour by using blue liner along the lower lash line.

## GLOSSY SKIN

Often paired with a swish of contouring across the cheek bones, the haute-sweaty look seems to be the craze especially after seeing the dewy faced models on Alexander Wang's runway. Simply applying balm such as Vaseline to the nose, cheeks, eyelids and cupid's bow, beauty lovers everywhere will have a chance to join in on the trend as glistening highlights go mainstream.

## FANCY FRENCH MANICURE

A French Manicure is so 2012, right? Wrong. While we may have waved farewell to the classic white design in its place we're seeing colourful geometric tips ranging from crocodile green and silver to orange crescents and bright blues. As seen on the catwalks of Cushnie Et Ochs, sharp, striking oxblood tips are a prime example of an interesting trend likely to adorn our talons for the duration of summer.



“Just imagine living in a world without mirrors. You’d dream about your face and imagine it as an outer reflection of what is inside you. And then, when you reached forty, someone puts a mirror before you for the first time in your life. Imagine your fright! You’d see the face of a stranger. And you’d know quite clearly what you are unable to grasp: your face is not you.”

- Milan Kundera

# THE MIRROR'S IMAGE

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JENNA JONES

I recently found out the devastating news that my nan had gone blind, an overwhelming prospect that consumed my thoughts for days. She will never see my niece grow older than she is right now, nor the frost on a crisp winters morning or the first blossom in spring ever again. The view on her world has been frozen for all eternity, leaving nothing in its wake but memories of the precious sights from days gone by, sights which we all take for granted, every second of every day. Family, friends, places and pictures are no longer part of her existence as sounds, smells and touch become her normality. She will never see us again, she will also never see herself. But what if we all never saw ourselves?

Inner beauty. A term preached by so many but practiced by so few. We've become a nation obsessed by the way the world sees us. We buy makeup, artificially alter the colour of every visible orifice, and scrupulously distort our self image through technology until we are happy with what we project. But what if we took away the mirrors; how would our lives be different? Or what if those mirrors never existed at all...

Just imagine it. Insecurities spawned from outer imperfections are eradicated, and in its place is the embodiment of our internal depths. Reflection becomes a projection of one's inner beauty; our hopes, dreams and ambitions, our thoughts, feelings and fears. Internal becomes external as superficial appearance becomes just that, superficial. You become the new you.

Nights spent in front of the mirror, obsessing over every last pore, freckle or blemish become a thing of the past. The outer you no longer determining your fate. No more underestimating your ability or importance due to the reflection that stares back at you, the reflection that makes you question your self worth and threatens to crush your dreams.

You imagine your face as a canvas. A canvas that is built upon each day of your existence; enriched and made more beautiful with every kind word spoken or inspiring book that you've read. Every obstacle that you overcome or dream that you achieve becomes a brush stroke on the painting that is your reflection.

To be beautiful is to be kind. A world where our bodies are strengthened by our flaws and imperfections because they are no longer what matters. We talk more, listen harder, love stronger and live unashamedly. We embody our inner self and shun our outer insecurities. We wear our hearts on our sleeves as we look forward to our future, never back into a mirror. Outer ugliness, replaced by inner beauty. ■

# Stockists

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AM KOOI

[etsy.com/shop/AmKooi](https://www.etsy.com/shop/AmKooi)

MODES AND MORE

[modesandmore.com](https://www.modesandmore.com)

GOOD INTENTIONS FLOWER JEWELLERY

[goodintentionsflowerjewellery.co.uk](https://www.goodintentionsflowerjewellery.co.uk)

ABSOLUTE VINTAGE

[absolutevintage.co.uk](https://www.absolutevintage.co.uk)

ZEUS VINTAGE

[zeusvintage.co.uk](https://www.zeusvintage.co.uk)

CHASING SECRETS VINTAGE

[chasingsecrets.co.uk](https://www.chasingsecrets.co.uk)

NADIA MINKOFF

[nadiaminkoff.com](https://www.nadiaminkoff.com)

THREAD MAN WALKING

[etsy.com/uk/shop/threadmanwalking](https://www.etsy.com/uk/shop/threadmanwalking)

THRIFTIONARY

[etsy.com/shop/thriftionary](https://www.etsy.com/shop/thriftionary)

GLITZY SECRETS

[glitzyssecrets.com](https://www.glitzyssecrets.com)

SHRIEKING VIOLET

[flowerjewellery.co.uk](https://www.flowerjewellery.co.uk)



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