



Simple
The *EDIT*

A WELCOME FROM MAGGIE

In 2012 we published our first Semple magazine and for the next five years, we presented thoughtful comment and beautiful images on topics pertinent to women. As the readership of each magazine grew so did our ambitions but this year we took a bold step: rather than focus on an even bigger magazine we decided to explore content inspired from our existing and future clients. And this is how the Semple Edit was created.

In this first edition we take you to The Foundling Museum in London where client Caro Howell shares her Autumn/Winter cultural must see's, and we offer a trend forecast based on our visit to Morocco. The question of what is ethical fashion still concerns client Roper Cleland and given that Semple is obsessed by the customer experience, it is unsurprising that Vanessa Jacob from Restory agreed to be interviewed. Finally, Ruth Cooper-Dickson, Semple client and ambassador gives five tips for wellbeing.

I hope you enjoy The Semple Edit and it would be great to receive your feedback.



November 2017

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Front cover: Frances wears Semple in royal blue wool crepe with sleeves and neck detail
Back cover: Carien wears Semple in royal blue wool crepe with V neck

WHAT IS ETHICAL FASHION?



“While fast-fashion retail almost certainly raises ethical concerns, spending more doesn’t necessarily mean brands adhere to better practices.”

Interview with Roper Cleland

About a year ago I became interested in ethical fashion. Following Instagram feeds and fashion blogs, I quickly became familiar with often-posted image “Five ways to build a more ethical closet”. Another frequently-circulated post is Vivienne Westwood’s quote, “Buy less, choose well, make it last”. But on further research I realised that these guidelines are less straightforward than they seem: especially “choosing well” and “supporting ethical fashion”.

Firstly, while fast-fashion retail almost certainly raises ethical concerns, spending more doesn’t necessarily mean brands adhere to better practices. Many designer labels are less transparent than their high-street counterparts, possibly because they haven’t had the same level of public scrutiny and criticism. And EU regulations only require that an item is finished in a country in order to get the “Made In...” label, creating a loophole as recently exposed by Louis Vuitton making shoes in Romania and adding the sole in Italy. Given the constant drive to push costs down, and availability of cheaper labour elsewhere, it’s likely other European “Made In” brands are undertaking similar practices, especially if they aren’t transparent in their supply chains.

Secondly, it is important to consider what is behind ethical brand claims. There are some notable leaders in the field such as Patagonia and People Tree, but not all brands clarify how they define and approach ethical practices, or verify claims. Do they consider both environmental and social aspects? And how rigorous are their methodologies for minimising environmental impact, ensuring a living wage and safe working conditions?

We offer an especially strong word of caution for any brand taking a philanthropic-only approach. For example, the “buy one, give one [to someone in need]” model has come under criticism for being palliative rather than a solution to the root causes of poverty, and possibly even depressing local clothes and shoes markets. Even donations to credible aid funds don’t address the negative impacts of the brand’s own practices. Suffice to say, a philanthropic approach does not result in meaningful or sustainable improvement.



*“Buy less.
Choose well.
Make it last.”*

- VIVIENNE WESTWOOD



Whether choosing well or choosing ethical, indexes such as those produced by Fashion Revolution and Project Just are making some headway in defining and measuring ethical credentials, but to a certain extent, retailers and consumers are still working it out for themselves.

For retailers, this should mean a public commitment on how the business defines and meets its responsibilities, along with annual reports analysing performance, and verification by independent third parties.

For consumers, this means giving thought to “choosing well”. If shopping mainstream brands (and arguably, until they change, ethical fashion will remain niche), this means advocating for more transparency and questioning labour and environmental impacts. If shopping ethical brands, fantastic, but don’t assume all claims stand up to scrutiny.

A year on, and we would suggest the following to anyone aiming for an ethical closet: ask questions. There aren’t straightforward answers, but asking questions moves the conversation forward.

5 ways to build a more ethical closet



Semple talks to CARO HOWELL

Shorter days, uninspiring weather and premature Christmas marketing are all good reasons to retreat indoors and escape into different creative worlds this Autumn Winter. To help inspire, The Foundling Museum's Director, Caro Howell gives Semple an insight into the season's best cultural going-on's...



Must read:

I am currently working on a project for 2018 to celebrate the centenary of female suffrage, which involves remarkable women who are notable for being the first woman in their particular field. Using the Museum's collection, we're looking at women's contribution to British society and culture, and uncovering the deliberate, unwitting and careless erasure of female voices from history. So, I am keen to read *The Unwomanly Face of War* by Svetlana Alexievich. Published in 1985 but only recently available in translation, Alexievich documents Soviet women's experiences in the Second World War as soldiers and medics on the front line, with oral testimony gathered over many years.

What to watch on the stage:

My theatre choice involves more political comedy; James Graham's new play, *Labour of Love*. Starring Martin Freeman and Tamsin Greig it covers 25 years in the life of the Labour party from Kinnock to Corbyn, and follows the career of an MP and his constituency agent from the party's traditional northern stronghold. In the current political climate, the 'how did we get here?' question seems to become more urgent with each passing day. So, while I'm not expecting a definitive answer, some witty reminders would be welcome.

What to watch on screen:

I am a huge fan of Armando Iannucci's political satire. *The Day Today*, *The Thick of It* and *Veep* all have me weeping with laughter even as I feel the chill of recognition and likely reality. Therefore, I can't wait to see *The Death of Stalin* which documents the aftermath of the dictator's death and the reactions of his scheming, dysfunctional and brutal court. Paddy Considine, Andrea Riseborough and Simon Russell Beale star as some of the scary monsters and super creeps.

Must see exhibit:

There are many intriguing exhibitions opening this season, but I am particularly looking forward to is the sensory-overload promised by *Opera: Passion, Power and Politics* at the V&A, which explores the development of opera from the sixteenth century to the present day. Aside from glorious music, the exhibition also considers the contribution of avant-garde artists like Wassily Kandinsky, Paul Klee, Oskar Kokoshchka, David Hockney, Marc Chagall and William Kentridge to the development of opera design.



Caro is wearing her Semple dress in Bianca, midnight blue shantung silk

TREND FORECAST

From here to Morocco: Trend Report

Fashion, it has to be said, is a ravenous beast. Digesting the 'now' in its fickle jaws, it drives on in its unquenchable quest for the 'new' and with every changing season emerges a desire for something innovative and inspiring. Fashion always looks forward, making it important for designers to seek out inspiration in places they might not have looked before. With this in mind, when a trip to Morocco presented itself we took it as the perfect opportunity to scout out new trends. Taking inspiration for our Semple collection from a place that celebrates colour, texture and intricate detailing has allowed us to develop concepts that feed perfectly into the coming seasons ideals, but which buck the generic throw away elements our clients rejected. Drawing on the richness of Morocco, looking to the catwalk and by ultimately understanding our clients needs, we have been able to create trend themes that can be incorporated time and time again within the Semple wardrobe.

Autumn/Winter 2017

Unlike seasons past AW17 will not be a minimal one. As the world grey's over and it becomes easier to just blend into the backdrop, fashion is going big and bold. Think vibrant colours, statement pieces, texture and volume, frills and feathers - details that do not hesitate in their endeavor for attention. AW is all about standing out and having fun with fashion in a space that seems otherwise fraught with social and political problems. Silhouettes stay chic as ever, but the injection of colour, embellishments and of juxtaposing materials makes AW17 the season of the 'Magpie'.

Spring/Summer 2018

Summer has always been the time to experiment with our clothes; the warmer weather and brighter days lend well to trying something new and while we are used to seeing colour play a part, we are far less used to the addition of sparkle. But SS18 is all about the shine – think high gloss silks that catch the light, bright jewelled accents, pops of blues and hyper-real prints borrowed from nature. SS18 is the season of the 'Chameleon'.



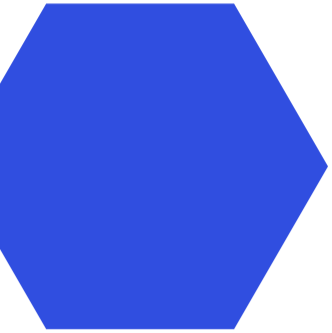
AW17

Trend Forecast

Red to Toe

Keep your palettes bold and electric, and wear them from head to toe for the ultimate stand out style. Marni, Roksanda, and Aalto all showed paint box bright, proving they are fashion's biggest AW17 tool for generating confidence. From scarlet to claret, red is really having its moment in the fashion world.





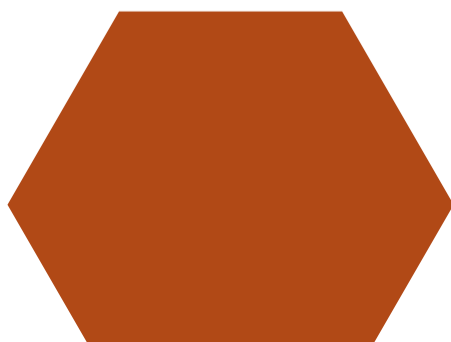
Embellishing the Story

More is most definitely more this season! It's time to get tactile and adorn pieces with glimmering trinkets, think marabou, lace, bows, ruffles, glitter and jewels. This voluminous embellishment sees AW17 take a sumptuous turn, offering up a sense of luxury escapism.

Favouring touch-me textures over flat prints is the key to this trend.

Caped Crusader

Previously consigned to outerwear, Capes are coming into their own for AW17. Gone are the muted tones, practical tweeds and heavy wools of bygone seasons and in their place, are capes with lace, pearls, gems and tassels. As intricately decorated as the tiles of Morocco these Capes are a work of art in themselves.



SS18

Trend Forecast

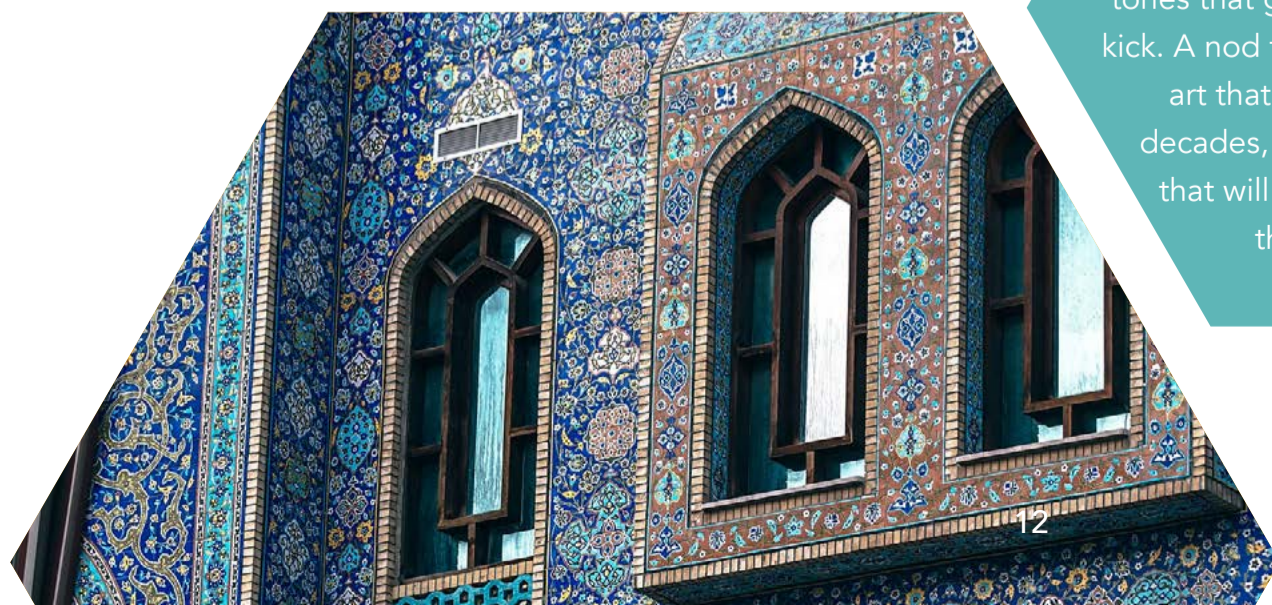


Shine Bright

Sparkles are no longer only reserved for the festive season, as thanks to SS18 sequins, jewels, gems, glitter and all things bright will reign supreme. Both on the catwalks and the high-street sparkling gowns, jackets, turbans and even crystal-embellished hosiery will make their way into wardrobes.

Blue Moon

Colour is still in favour come SS18, but while AW saw red rule, SS18 covets blue. Think cobalt and cerulean tones that give primary blue an electric kick. A nod to the Abstract Expressionist art that has inspired fashion for decades, colour blocking is a trend that will stick around throughout the warmer season.



Psychotropical

An emerging trend for SS18 and a subset of the psychedelic movement 'Psychotropical' is defined by vibrant palettes, vivid tropical patterns and prints rendered by digital engineering. Think warped visual cues borrowed from nature which create a hyper-real perception when viewed up close.



SEMPLE TALKS TO THE RESTORY

“I couldn’t help but wonder why the experience of buying luxury items was so far removed from the experience of looking after them”



Interview with Vanessa Jacobs, Founder of the Restory

Q: Can you tell us the story of how The Restory was born?

A: When I first moved to London from NYC a high street cobbler made an unapologetic mess of what should have been a simple heel tip replacement. It was this experience, and subsequent one's like it, that convinced me that something had to be done. If I was going to fix my bag or shoes, I couldn't help but wonder why the experience of buying luxury items was so far removed from the experience of looking after them.



Q: Where do you stand on fast fashion? Are you a fan or do you prefer to pay more for investment pieces?

A: I personally don't like to own a lot of things, with a business and two small kids I want to simplify things as much as possible, so I de facto buy well and less. But like most people I also get the desire or the need to refresh/update my wardrobe and it doesn't always have to be with a new 'investment' piece, sometimes a Zara dress does the trick. That said, I think we are all becoming more aware of just how polluting fashion (and everything really) can be and so I do think it's important to be more mindful and not indulge in so much retail therapy.

“In NYC, you don't get away with dirty shoes”

Q: In your opinion how important are quality accessories to your mindset, career and confidence?

A: It depends how much what you wear impacts your personal sense of wellness and confidence. If I feel good in what I'm wearing and everything looks clean and cared for - from my shoes to my nails - I feel great too. In NYC, you don't get away with dirty shoes, scuffed up rumpled bags or chipped nails. I guess I never let that part go.

Q: Is the environment and a move towards a more ethical outlook on fashion a main factor for The Restory?

A: It's inherently backed into what we do, but we view ourselves more as an extension of the buying experience; which I think is becoming increasingly more circular. We don't just buy and dispose anymore. We buy, we rent, we resell, we repair, we re-fashion and we're proud to be part of that cycle. We do our best to be mindful; wasting as little as possible, being aware of how we dispose of chemicals, reusing as much as possible, using biodegradable/recycled materials, paying our people well, partnering with charities, the list goes on!



“We don’t just buy and dispose anymore. We buy, we rent, we resell, we repair, we re-fashion”

Q: Tell us more about the training programme you have in place for the next generation?

A: This industry has neglected itself over the years and let its skills get stale and the talent pool dry up. Our focus is to consistently develop new techniques as well as redefine aftercare to be an enjoyable experience for our clients.

We have several very skilled artisans and together with our Head of Atelier, Thais, they have designed an exclusive training and apprenticeship programme involving classes and practical working. Additionally, we are blueprinting everything we do, down to every email we write, to ensure a consistent experience however you encounter us.

Q: As well as restoration services, you also offer hints and tips via case studies, blog posts and interviews in the journal. Are there any other areas which you are looking to branch into in the future?

A: We've got grand plans from editorial to service extensions. It's all documented and being executed methodically every day...some of it you'll see and some of it won't be obvious for some time, but we're never resting.

Q: You claim to "challenge, disrupt and innovate [your] craft in order to develop the most advanced solutions for you clients". Could you tell us more on how you've done this in the past and what innovative plans you have for the future?

A: We have a culture of experimentation and innovation. We don't settle and we almost never say "not possible". We are always trying new techniques, materials, colour formulas etc. Our team is very international so we naturally bring a lot of different ideas to the mix, but we also travel and work with artisans and technicians from other countries and other disciplines to see what could be applicable to our clients' needs. For example, we've gleaned techniques from ceramics artists and chemical processes from luxury auto-detailers.



5 tips for wellbeing

By Ruth Cooper-Dickson



1

Be active

One of the cornerstones in maintaining your positive wellbeing. This doesn't have to be a weekly gym routine; walking the dog, riding your bike with the kids or gardening are all great forms of being active – even better when your outside in the fresh air. Go on, get the heart rate pumping and a little bit sweaty!

4

Get your ZZZ's

Whether you are a 6-hour or 9-hour a night person, having a regular sleep routine allows you to maintain your optimum performance. Studies show that lack of sleep contributes to poor performance, motivation and mental ill-health. Remember to power down those electronic devices early and move them away from the bed to avoid temptation.

2

Adopt a self care routine

Find your go to self-care routine for when you are stressed out, not feeling on top of the world or your energy levels are a little bit low. This could be watching your favourite box-set, curling up and reading your latest book, or a long soak and pamper in a hot bath. Adopt your routine once a week to practice some quality "me" time...and learn to relax.

5

Unplug

Have a technology free day once a month and reconnect. Log off social media and emails. Connect with those around you, do something fun and be fully present in the moment. It's amazing the small things you notice when you are not head down rushing from one place to another.

3

Hydrate, hydrate, hydrate

Most of us don't drink enough water and instead rely on tea, coffee and soft drinks to get us through the day. Water helps to flush out toxins, keeps our skin looking amazing and helps our bodies function well – we forget the human body is made of 60% water! A little tip to get the much needed H2O is to drink a glass of warm water on waking with some slices of lemon, for a calming to start your day.



GET IN TOUCH

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