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No. 6 1.2018

MERCEDES

Alondra de la Parra Jil Sander Amber Valletta The new A-Class

No. 6

MERCEDES

1.2018

She's

*Alondra
de la Parra*
*This woman
sets the tone*

+

*Amber Valletta
Jil Sander
Li Edelkoort
Barbara Bestor
Whitney Wolfe Herd*



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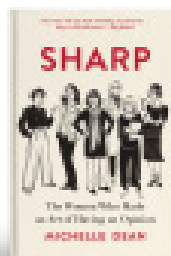
The past few months have given women a long-awaited sense of hope, as shown by the increasing number of empowering initiatives and women in leadership roles – even in male-dominated industries. Networks like ‘Women Who Code’ and ‘Women in Engineering’ are already at work recruiting the next generation of women in these fields, proving that we’re experiencing the emergence of a new, powerful drive to cooperate. Women are in the process of effecting radical social change; they are doing this boldly, confidently and in solidarity. We are also witnessing the dawning of a new era for women, as even Li Edelkoort, one of the most important trend forecasters of our time, recently affirmed. We would therefore like to dedicate this issue to all of the women who are helping to usher in this new era. *“For women who choose to lead”* – this is the credo of the new She’s Mercedes magazine. After a comprehensive overhaul, we are proudly presenting the magazine in its new look: the larger format and more opulent and elegant layouts serve to highlight the sophistication of our interview partners and illustrate their thoughts and words. Take the cover story, for example: star conductor Alondra de la Parra fills us in on how she manages to set the tone in the world of classical music. Or the manifesto on the future of fashion by Amber Valletta, one of the most influential proponents of sustainable luxury fashion. Or the thrilling piece with Ellen Lohr, the first female DTM champion, who accompanied the Dakar Rally in South America on our behalf. We hope you enjoy reading this issue – and that you find yourself energised and empowered.

THE EDITORIAL TEAM

... we’re already looking forward to:

Coming up

Thanks to the success of the me Convention in September 2017, in Frankfurt, Mercedes-Benz and South by Southwest® (SXSW®) will be hosting the next conference in Stockholm from 4 to 6 September 2018 to address digitalisation and the future. me-convention.com



Strong minds

Susan Sontag, Joan Didion, Hannah Arendt: a tribute to the pioneering women who helped shape our world. The hardcover is available from groveatlantic.com.

Casual

Christopher Bailey leaves Burberry with a combination of the classic chequer pattern and the rainbow stripes of the LGBTQ+ movement.



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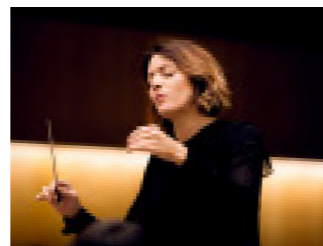
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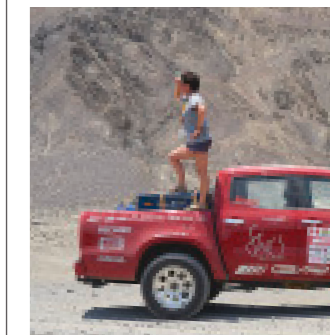
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South America left quite an impression on the only woman to have won a DTM title

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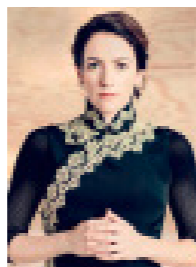
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*Alondra de la Parra
is the music director
of the Queensland
Symphony Orchestra.
Born in Mexico,
she currently lives
in Brisbane with
her family.
We met in Berlin for
an interview.*

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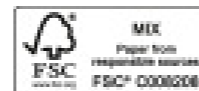
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Contributors

Our reporters were in South America and Los Angeles, and also delved into some historic archives for this issue



Judy Born
The author is responsible for the design topics in the magazine and, thanks to Li Edelkoort, is full of hope. **Page 12**

After spending years searching for the perfect yellow coat, she was thrilled to hear that the world-famous trend forecaster is predicting a great future for this colour. She feels vindicated in view of the flat shoe trend and the fact that the days of normcore are numbered.



Christine Kruttschnitt
Our reporter in California interviewed architect Barbara Bestor. **Page 24**

Purely by chance, it came to light in the interview, that Barbara Bestor has been a YouTube star ever since her husband – a well-known filmmaker – uploaded the wedding song he had composed himself: ‘I fell in love with an architect’. Anyone familiar with Bestor’s designs will know where he’s coming from.

“In *Dakar* terms, my trip in the X-Class was actually quite *luxurious!*”

Ellen Lohr
The racing driver and world’s first female DTM winner accompanied the Dakar Rally in the X-Class – this time as a reporter. **Page 40**



Roland Rödermund
The film ‘The Post’ inspired the journalist to create a tribute to Katharine Graham. **Page 30**

Our author was astonished at how Katharine Graham stuck to her guns and made the right decision under immense pressure, despite all the contrary advice she was given and all the malice and criticism she experienced in what used to be a male domain. He believes that Graham’s life story should be compulsory reading for all journalists in 2018.



Kava Gorna
The photographer went to South America for us and observed the rally through the Andes. **Page 40**

The trip brought with it a whirlwind of emotions: she was touched when Bolivia’s capital La Paz came to a standstill to escort the drivers through the streets, shocked when one of the cars rolled over just before the end of one leg and landed back on its tyres. Thankfully no one was injured!

PHOTOS ANNA ROSE, DANIEL LATHWESEN, PRIVATE (2)



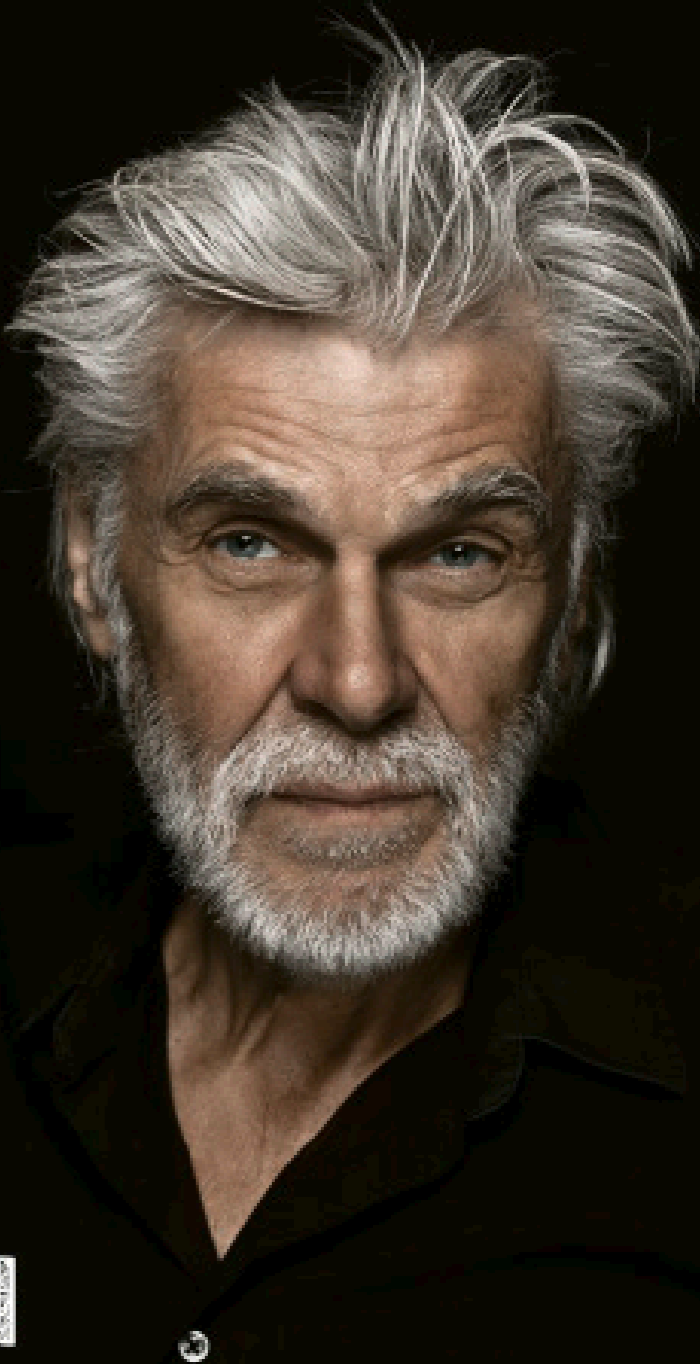
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Spearfisher Kimi Werner dives in camouflage off the coast of Hawaii, doing what she loves to do



“When I’m *underwater*,
I feel *truly alive*”



I’m thrust into the here and now as soon as I dive into the depths of the ocean, harpoon at hand. The noise in my head falls silent, and I’m alone with my thoughts. I’m held captive by the ocean’s beauty. Weightless, I can feel myself floating in rays of sunlight as they penetrate the water. And yet I’m in a state of heightened awareness. After all, I’m here to hunt, not relax. I’m a spearfisher, and I don’t intend to return empty-handed. I focus all of my concentration on what’s swimming in front of me, and nothing else. Like the full-grown emperor red snapper. These fish can weigh up to 30 kilogrammes and call 20-metre-deep coral reefs home. I hold my breath the entire time I’m under. I can do this for up to five minutes, but I resurface every two minutes when I’m fishing. I want to save my energy for any

challenges the hunt may present and be best prepared should I get tangled up in something or encounter a shark. I learned to spearfish from my father. As we had so little, this was his way of providing for the family. Today, I just love being in the water. When I’m underwater, I feel truly alive. There’s nothing to distract me down here; the present moment is the only thing that matters and my entire body is engulfed in a wave of bliss. And my passion for diving makes me a happier person on land, too.

Spearfishing
More information about Kimi Werner can be found at mbmag.me/myelement

PHOTOS JUSTIN TURKOWSKI

Sense and sensibility

Trend forecaster Li Edelkoort is predicting a return to nature



You advise your students to go to museums rather than fashion shows. Why?
There's an old proverb that goes: if you want to shape tomorrow, you have to know about yesterday. If you want to make trailblazing fashion, you have to know what type of fabric was used when, and understand the significance of the textiles in various epochs. **Does the same apply to craftsmanship?**
Absolutely. Old techniques like felting and weaving velvet are back in demand. However, it isn't only the revival of historic materials that's important. You also have to know how to modify and transform them

with the help of new techniques. **Is this what you mean when you say "hi-tech meets slow craft"?**
Not just that. I also mean the mixture of cutting-edge technology and traditional handicraft. Hybrids will define the future. **You are promoting both synthetic materials and a return to nature. Which is more important?**
They're equally important. Firstly, there are natural, regenerative materials such as wool, felt, linen. Secondly, we should dispense with real leather and furs; there are synthetic alternatives to both. Then there are

synthetic fibres, hi-tech materials, and textures that are still totally unfamiliar to us. **What will we be definitely be wearing in 2018?**
Wide, opulent sleeves, brown instead of black, and of course yellow.

Lidewij Edelkoort
The Dutch-born trend forecaster has spent the last four decades anticipating what we will be wearing and buying and how we will be living in the years to come. You can read about her predictions for the coming year here: edelkoort.com



Earrings make a comeback
US designer Annie Costello Brown uses the ancient craft of hammering to make her striking, handmade statement earrings. anniecstellobrown.com

Less is more
Mini bag with enough space for the basic necessities. It can be carried at waist height, over the shoulder, or as a clutch. shop.wandler.com



More than a flash in the pan
The future will see women wearing a variety of hats, like this handmade headgear from Prada. The light-blue grosgrain ribbon adds a vibrant note. matchesfashion.com

PHOTOS THIRZA SCHAAP, ANNIE COSTELLO BROWN, FRAMA CPH, IITTALA, MATCHESFASHION, WANDLER, MYTHERESA

Contrasts are in
Opposites attract – this is the motto of Danish design laboratory Frama. The same is true of their unisex fragrance, which combines powerful, earthy notes with light, natural freshness. framaph.com



Harmonious pleating
Finland meets Japan, Scandinavian meets Asian design. Cushion covers with a subtle sheen from Issey Miyake, the master of pleating. iittala.com

“We have so much hi-tech in our lives that our need for the feel of textures is growing”

Yellow is the new pink
After years waiting in the wings, shades of yellow will be taking centre stage in 2018. Made of velvet, these Moroccan babouches by Acne are bang on trend. Weaving will also be experiencing a revival this year. mytheresa.com



She’s agenda

Looking for inspiration? Here are our event tips for spring through autumn

On show until 6.5.2018

3,000 m² of purism
Jil Sander helped define the modern woman with her timeless aesthetic. The “Queen of Less” has put together her first solo exhibition, which can be viewed in Frankfurt, Germany. museumangewandtekunst.de/en/



9–11.5.2018

Celebrating women in music
Amazing female artists like Mariza, Morcheeba and Lisa Stansfield will grace Frankfurt’s city centre stages for four days of diverse styles and powerful voices. Featuring solo acts and full bands. w-festival.de

19.5.2018

Formula E for girls
After a number of successful events in the UK, the Dare to be Different initiative is inviting girls between the ages of eight and twelve to Berlin to witness Formula E live backstage with former racing driver Susie Wolff. daretobedifferent.org



10.6.2018

Powerful women
More than 10,000 female runners are expected to show up to this year’s Pink Running Day in Rotterdam, the Netherlands. All proceeds go to Pink Ribbon, an initiative committed to fighting breast cancer. ladiesrunrotterdam.nl



3–5.6.2018

Networking economically
Roya Mahboob (Digital Citizen Fund, Afghanistan) will be one of more than 60 speakers at the Global Female Leaders forum in Berlin. globalfemaleleaders.com

15.6.2018

Specialists wanted
Women, we need you! In art, science, technology, maths and engineering. The Wonder Women Tech conference will also feature a career fair to find the next wave of female experts. Both will take place during London Tech Week. wonderwomentech.com



29.8–2.9.2018

Latin style
Take note, art enthusiasts! Some of the most renowned designers and artists will meet in São Paulo in late August to present their work at one of the biggest shows in Latin America. designweekend.com.br



18–19.6.2018

Summit of inspiration
Women from a range of sectors, including politics, business and entertainment, will be attending the Forbes Women’s Summit in New York. The small summit (only 300 guests) provides an excellent opportunity for in-depth exchange. forbes.com/forbes-live/event/womens-summit-2018

19–21.6.2018

In Africa
Creative women who are interested in technology and have a feeling for business will be meeting at the African Women in Technology conference in Nairobi to network at an international level. africanwomenintech.com

28.7–5.8.2018

From the dog to the cobra
Are you ready for the crow, camel and frog? Kundalini yoga harmonises and strengthens body, mind and soul. Come to the 3HO Yoga Festival in Val de Loire and spend eight days practising asanas. 3ho-europe.org

4–6.9.2018

Creative visions
Pioneers of creative work, business and technology will meet for the second me Convention, this time in Stockholm. The initiators Mercedes-Benz and South by Southwest® (SXSW®) will inspire attendees with an exclusive programme consisting of panels and workshops. me-convention.com

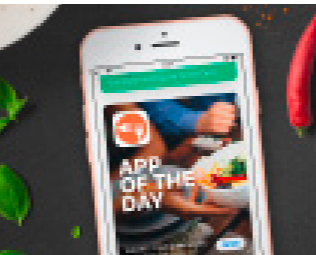
From 11.9.2018

A new look at old pieces
Wow, what a show! The American filmmaker Wes Anderson and his partner, the author and illustrator Juman Malouf, will be presenting their favourite pieces from the collection at the Vienna Museum of Art History. khm.at/en/

11–12.10.2018

Women in tech
Ada Lovelace was the world’s first female programmer and is today the namesake of a festival in Berlin for women who are crazy about tech. wiwo.konferenz.de/ada/en/

APP RECOMMENDATION



Airbnb for foodies

Shop at Tokyo’s markets, learn to cook in Paris, dine in Mexico City: the platform ‘Eatwith’ works in much the same way as the popular online accommodation marketplace Airbnb, only that it doesn’t offer quite the same level of worldwide coverage ... yet. The app is worth downloading for your next visit to a new city. (For iOS and Android) eatwith.com



“The best day of their lives”

How former racer Susie Wolff gets girls excited about the sport

You founded the Dare To Be Different initiative, which aims to get girls involved in motor sport. What keeps you going?

At the end of my career, I wanted to give something back to motor sport and to young girls in particular. The sport needs more women, and I figured I might be able to help with that. I want to show these girls how thrilling and exciting racing can be.

Why are there still so few girls in the sport?

Because they don’t have enough women role models. If 1,000 young boys want to become racing drivers and only 20 girls, it will be a lot harder for them to reach the top.

How do you get girls involved?

We organise events at which girls between the ages of eight and twelve can become acquainted with the world of racing. They can drive go-karts, work in the pit and even operate the camera as journalists. If they’re interested, they can connect with women from motor sport in our online community.

What do the parents think?

They love it because we give their daughters a technical understanding and get them

interested in engineering. We also often hear that the girls go home and rave about their day at the track, calling it the best day of their lives, and that they seem more self-confident after our events.

What is your vision for motor sport?

I think we’ll soon see more and more women on the racetrack and in the pit who will become role models for future generations. This will make the sport more diverse and more interesting.



Susie Wolff

Hailing from England, Susie Wolff enjoyed considerable success as a racing driver. She competed in the DTM from 2006 to 2012 for Mercedes-Benz, and later became a Formula 1 test driver for the Williams Team. susiewolff.com

Da Capo

Calling the tune is Alondra de la Parra's vocation. The Mexican conductor is a phenomenon in the world of classical music. She tells us how she goes about directing an orchestra

TEXT: INA BRZOSKA





Clear vision
Born in New York, raised in Mexico. Today Alondra de la Parra is music director of the Queensland Symphony Orchestra in Brisbane, and a brand ambassador for Mercedes-Benz.

“I love the *beauty* that is created when everything *comes together*”

Saturday morning in Berlin’s Hilton Hotel. Alondra de la Parra quickly crosses the marble floor, wearing her wet hair combed back off her face, a large bag slung casually over her shoulder. We’re in Berlin, hot spot for lovers of classical music, giving the Mexican conductor an opportunity to catch up with her musical friends. She’s spent a lot of time in Berlin before, conducting musicians like those in the Radio Symphony Orchestra. She likes it here. It’s such a sophisticated place, she says.

She’s: Ms de la Parra, street musicians are everywhere in Berlin. As one of the best conductors in the world, what do you think when a busking violinist is playing an ambitious piece but not quite hitting the right notes?

Alondra de la Parra: I’m happy if onlookers are enjoying the music, and they often do. When I take a taxi, there’s often classical music playing on the radio, and I’ve had many lively discussions about composers with taxi drivers.

How much of a perfectionist are you when it comes to your own work?

Well of course, perfection is always the ultimate goal for conductors. But it’s also unattainable, because an orchestra is made up of people, not machines. We all make mistakes, and that’s a good thing.

Is classical music forgiving of errors?

Of course. We all breathe, we all have different temperaments. That’s what I love about my job: it can be so unpredictable and it’s all about people.

What do you find is the biggest challenge in conducting an orchestra?

I would say creating a common understanding of the music and a sense of coherence. To me, achieving a feeling of unity is important – ensuring that the musicians

interpret the composition in the same way and the orchestra pulls together.

And how do you do that?

I try to motivate each member of the orchestra to do their best. But at the same time, I also have to continually reinforce that sense of coherence. Time is an important consideration too; I have to manage and set priorities. I talk to the public and even defend the orchestra at times. As a conductor, one must wear many hats and take on different roles.

It sounds like a job for which you need a lot of experience.

It is. That’s why it takes time for a conductor to become really good. You have to grow into this job and its challenges.

You are now 37 years old. When did you realise that you wanted to be a conductor?

Early on. I come from a very artistic, musical family. When I was 13, I would obsessively listen to Shostakovich, Stravinsky, and Bartók, and I’ve loved symphonic music ever since. I had a very good musical ear, which led my father to ask me one day if I wanted to become a conductor. It sounded like an absolutely crazy idea to me, but exciting too.

A musician’s personality also contributes to how they interpret a piece. So how do you achieve the unity you are looking for?

The leader must make decisions which relate to how things are to be played. One establishes a type of architecture of the music of how to build the sound. One communicates it to the musicians and makes sure it’s done with one idea in mind.

Is conducting about power?


No, for me it isn’t about power.

What then?

I work in pursuit of unity. I love the beauty that is created when everything comes together.

But what if everyone isn’t pulling together?

That’s where communication is key. For a long time, many conductors saw things differently, but I think it’s important that communication flows in both directions. It isn’t about everyone following me, it’s about providing a stimulus so that we can grasp a common idea. Sometimes I have to give something to the —



“It’s about providing a *stimulus*
to better grasp a *common idea*”

Enthralling
Alondra de la Parra
conducted the
Tonhalle Orchestra
in Zurich. They
performed composi-
tions ranging from
Igor Stravinsky to
Wolfgang Amadeus
Mozart.

“It’s always
a dance
between
leadership
and *trust*”

musicians, while at other times I have to simply let them be. I believe it’s essential to develop a feeling of trust. I trust them to do their best, and they have to trust me to make the best possible decisions and not to control everything. It’s always a dance between leadership and trust.

No doubt that’s a difficult balancing act. How do you stay calm if the orchestra steps out of line?

I’m very passionate about this, and I present my ideas as convincingly as possible – it’s important that everyone agrees to the idea. Sometimes that doesn’t happen, but nevertheless, as the conductor, I have to keep pushing for it. It isn’t important whether people like, understand, or praise you. Your task is to have an idea and make sure that everybody brings it to life, which I think is hard to do. You want everybody to be happy, but sometimes that isn’t possible.

Is that a problem for you?

I just have to get on with it.

Is that easier or more difficult for women?

It doesn’t matter whether the conductor is a man or a woman, we all have to cope with challenges and conflicts. This kind of leadership has to be learnt. We all have masculine and feminine traits. I could never do what I do without my masculine side, but I enjoy drawing on my feminine side too. I see the same thing in male conductors. They are often very feminine and use this feminine side to their advantage.

But is there a “glass ceiling” in the world of classical music, a point past which women can only move forward with a lot of effort?

Yes. I can’t think of any woman who has ever had a top international career like that of Karajan or Bernstein.

You are one of the woman conductors to have broken

through the glass ceiling. How does that feel?

I often liken it to mountaineering. All you can see are your own feet, the rock in front of you, and the next step – you don’t look down and you don’t look back.

And have you ever felt dizzy from doing that?

Not dizzy, no. It’s more like a feeling of loneliness. A lot of people don’t like you when you hold a leadership role that requires you to make hard decisions. That’s something you have to come to terms with. I sometimes feel lonely; often it’s so tough that I wish I could do something completely new. But then, a day later, I’ll be standing on the podium and feeling the energy emanating from the musicians. I let the sound soak in; in those moments there’s nowhere else I would rather be.

How exactly do you deal with loneliness?

In my job you have to be vulnerable and stay human. You have to open yourself up. And that’s not always easy. How can I be open and authentic without collapsing under all the weight? In my position, I often find myself moving between protecting myself and opening up. And when I feel lonely in the process, I focus on things that are far more important.

Your family?

Yes.

With a two-year-old son, Luciano, and another baby on the way, motherhood is another role you have taken up. How do you bring your professional and family life into balance?

It’s not easy. I have a very regimented schedule that requires a great deal of discipline. But I think that it’s good for children when their mother does what she loves to do for a living. I can really see how much my son, Luciano, enjoys coming with me to rehearsals and concerts – he sees how excited I get, how happy it makes me. My love for my job is something that brings us together, not something that separates us.

Concert calendar

Alondra de la Parra conducts the best orchestras from Paris to Brisbane. You can find more info about her and her current concert schedule at alondradelaparra.com

Balanced

The conductor’s job is often a balancing act. Alondra de la Parra had to grow into the role. How does she keep everything in balance? This is the question that drives her forward.

PHOTOS FELIX BROEDE (3), PAGES 20–21: FRIEDMANN DÜRSCHNABEL/TONHALLE ZÜRICH



“I’m *mad* about pop culture!”

Is there such thing as “female” architecture? Barbara Bestor is one of the most successful architects in the United States, and she says no. But why, then, is her own style so playful?

TEXT:
CHRISTINE KRUTTSCHNITT

Mid-century modern
This room at the ‘Ashes & Diamonds’ winery in Napa Valley is flooded with light.



PHOTO BRUCE DAVONTE



Barbara Bestor
The 49-year-old architect from California goes for bold colours and graphic patterns.



Home base
The white flat-roofed building in Silver Lake, where Barbara Bestor's office is located (above).

Coffee break
Hollywood's Beachwood Cafe lights up with bright tiles and blond wood furnishings.



John Lautner original
The Jules Salkin Residence in L. A., redesigned according to the old blueprints from 1948

Her unique interpretation of classic style combined with a charming hippie flavour is reflected in her residential buildings, cafés and co-working spaces, and has led the likes of 'Architectural Digest' – the industry's bible – to cite Barbara Bestor as one of the most innovative designers in America. She beams warmly welcoming visitors through the glass door of her tiny office. From here she sees her young employees and the colourful kitchen, where the whole team holds a weekly cooking session every Friday.

Ms Bestor, how come your buildings are so colourful?
Funnily enough, it's because of my children. I used to stick to more "masculine" colours: black, white, natural tones. But now I work with pink! My role as a mother has given me a new, more creative vocabulary, and I'm more comfortable experimenting with new things now.

Do you think about your daughters when you work on your designs?
Yes! I often consider how best to build for a life with children: Where's room for the whole family to sit together in this

house? Where are the kids going to play? Will the adults be able to see and talk to the rest of the family while they're in the kitchen or on the computer?

Do you think that women build differently to men?
No. Gender roles are a social construct, not something that we're born with. However, there is a certain style that I like to call 'architecty' – overconstructed, monumental, muscle-flexing design, lots of dark wood and metal.

You mean erected buildings, like towers?
That's one way to put it. I don't

like towers: they're all about plastering material on a shaft, to be blunt. I am not interested in urban chunks, or in monumentality. I build on a relatively small scale; grandiosity doesn't really do it for me.

Are you more of a feminine character in a professional sense, then?
To be honest, I'm rather macho. I like making decisions, I like to be in charge. And like all architects, I love form and structure. Our society perceives that as a more "masculine" quality. In fact, I used to take a very rigid approach to building – the architectural vocabulary I used

was straightforward and clear.

How would you describe your current style?
I have a motto for that: everyone should experience strange beauty every day. Every house that I build and every kitchen I renovate should offer a unique experience. By that I mean that a detail needs to be included which either makes the occupant smile or which is totally peculiar. It might be a pattern, a colour, or an unexpectedly large window. This philosophy allows you to see everyday, mundane things in a new light. It's my own version of the defamiliarization effect known from the

world of performing arts.

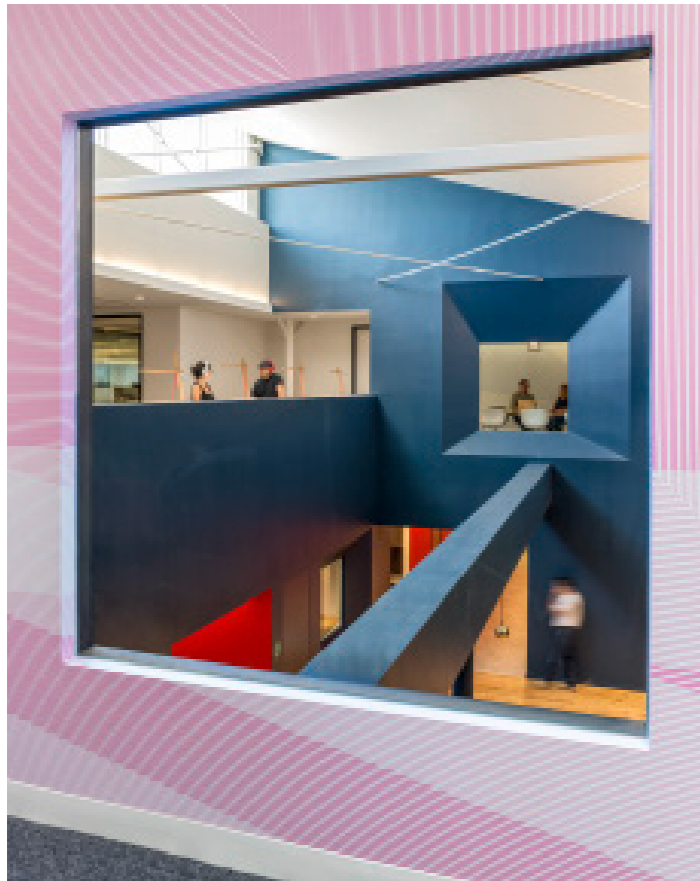
Have you always wanted to become an architect?
I knew it when I was twelve. I've always liked to build things and do crafts. My summer vacations were often spent visiting my Grandma in Bad Cannstatt, a district of Stuttgart. We would go to the spa park and I would sail homemade boats there.

So your roots are German?
My mother is German, but I grew up on the East Coast, in Cambridge, near Boston.

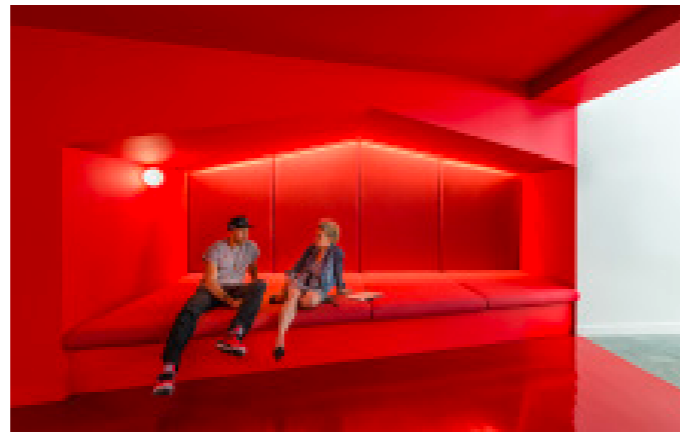
Many of your clients are artists and Hollywood people ...
Yes, I have a lot of street cred in the music industry. I love

pop culture. I try to keep up with contemporary films, music, and apps. Architecture is only relevant if it relates to issues of today and how people live today.

How did you come to work for the Beastie Boys and the Red Hot Chili Peppers?
It's because of my children. I met Flea from the Red Hot Chili Peppers through their school – my step-daughter and his daughter are in the same theatre class. He might look a bit crazy with his red hair, but he's a really nice dad. He founded a private music school that I built – that was a cool project. —



Walk-in pop-art
Sightlines, intertwined crossings: the company headquarters of rapper Dr. Dre



Beastie Boy turns Beach Boy
For rapper Mike D, a beach bungalow (above) became a single-family home.

Energizer
Dr. Dre had this red island of creativity built for employees to relax.

How come there are not more successful female architects like you?

Many women I studied with, started families in their thirties. They go into academia; they don't build things, but life is easier. With two children from your first marriage and two more with your second husband, the filmmaker Tom Stern, how did you manage to build a career? Back when I first started, you would mostly get service-oriented jobs in the architectural firms, not the big commissions.

It quickly became obvious to me that I wanted my own firm.

How do you set yourself apart from the competition?

I have left my stamp clearly on everything I have built.

It's been said that a Californian healer was involved in boosting your career...

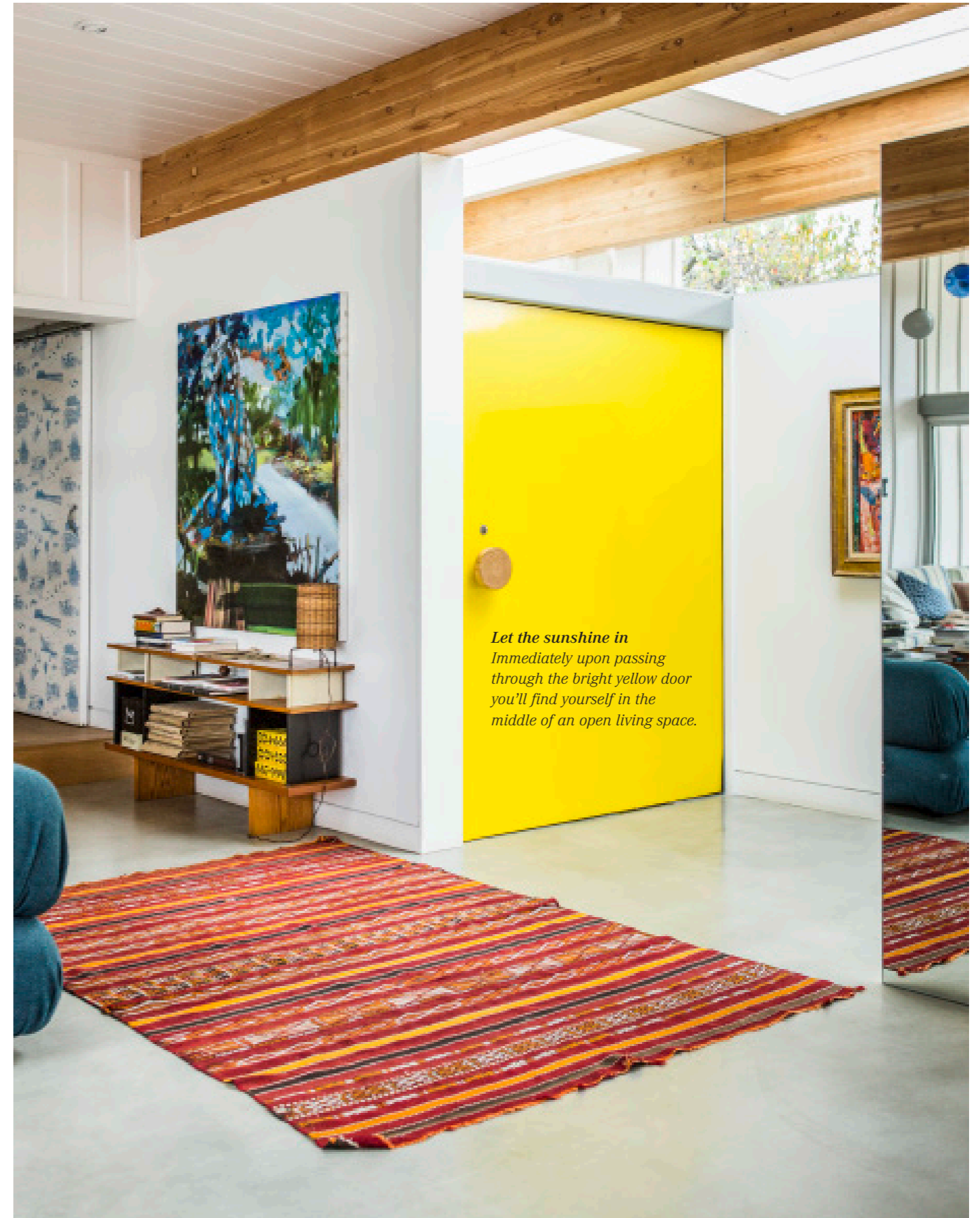
My hippie friends in Los Angeles talked me into visiting a spiritual healer after my husband had left me. There I was with my small children and I was so angry at my life. The healer brought everything back into order.

You have to tell us more about that!

Well, he gave me a massage and asked me how I pictured my future. I didn't have an answer. Then on my way home, I got lost and passed a small house for sale in Echo Park – on some intuition I bought it the next day. It was in a dismal state, but little by little, I fixed it up, and in the process I rediscovered my love for architecture, which I thought had disappeared along with my first husband.

A bohemian architect

Barbara Bestor grew up in Cambridge, on the East Coast of the United States. She studied visual arts at Harvard before transferring to an architectural school in London in the mid '80s. She currently lives and works in Los Angeles, where she has designed and built a number of well-known restaurants, cafés and bungalows. Her clients include Dr. Dre, who relied on Bestor's creativity and expertise for his 'Beats by Dre' headquarters, which received the National AIA Honor Award for Interior Architecture in 2015. bestorarchitecture.com



Let the sunshine in
Immediately upon passing through the bright yellow door you'll find yourself in the middle of an open living space.

PHOTOS JASPER SANDAD (2), TREVOR C. TONDRO, LAURE JOLLET

She's legend

Katharine Graham long stood in the shadows of journalists Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward. This year, Steven Spielberg shifted the spotlight to her in his film 'The Post'. Here is our tribute to the true heroine behind the exposing of the Watergate scandal

TEXT: ROLAND RÖDERMUND

Katharine Graham
(née Meyer)
* 16 June 1917
in New York City;
† 17 July 2001
in Boise, Idaho

Everything can change in an instant. When Katharine Graham gave the go-ahead for the Pentagon Papers to be published, ultimately leading to the downfall of Richard Nixon's presidency, she made a life-altering decision from which a legend was born. This year, director Steven Spielberg told the story of a woman who put everything on the line. And in the leading role: Meryl Streep.

The young editor Katharine Graham was soft-spoken, guarded even. At the Washington Post, she mostly covered lighter subject matter. Katharine's father, who purchased the 'Post' at an auction in 1933, would sooner pass the publishing house down to her husband, the media entrepreneur Philip Graham, than her. But then a family tragedy changed everything: Phil shot himself in 1963, and, at age 46, Katharine found herself stepping into the role of publisher at the Post – against the advice of her closest friends and despite her own doubts about being the right person for the job; she was an unlikely candidate to engage in a seemingly hopeless battle against the 37th President of the United States of America.

"Let's go! Let's publish!" she barked into the receiver in 1971, when, after many a sleepless night, she made the decision to move forward with releasing top-secret Department of Defense documents about the Vietnam War to the world. Never once did she cave, not even after a federal court injunction was issued, forbidding the New York Times to publish the papers. Katharine Graham risked going to jail and destroying her family's business over the story. But her unwavering faith in freedom of the press – which, at the end of the '60s, was in jeopardy in the United States – served as Katharine Graham's guiding light, leading her to make the decision. She recalls the events with a sober clarity in her biography: "What I essentially did was to put one foot in front of the other, shut my eyes and step off the ledge. The surprise was that I landed on my feet."



An iconic director
Brilliantly executed by a perfect cast: director Steven Spielberg pays Katharine Graham, the behind-the-scenes heroine of the infamous Watergate scandal, a Hollywood tribute in his film. In the leading role: Meryl Streep in top form. Our must-see for 2018.

PHOTOS: GETTY IMAGES, PIERO OLIOSSI/POLARIS/LAIF



More please!

Girls who enjoy maths, programming and tinkering? This will be commonplace in future. We've asked four successful female tech entrepreneurs how to get girls interested in computers and software development

Tabitha Goldstaub
The co-founder of London-based CognitionX advises companies on how they can use artificial intelligence.



“Girls often perform *better than boys* in maths and computer science, yet are *paid less* in tech jobs later on. This has to change”

Girls need people to look up to. With the exception of people like Sheryl Sandberg of Facebook and Marissa Mayer of Yahoo the visibility of women remains low in the industry. This lack of role models makes it hard for girls to imagine a similar career for themselves, even though they often perform better than boys in maths and computer science. What we need is more initiatives and workshops to get girls and women excited about programming or starting careers in tech, but we also need to be mindful of our most fatal error: how poorly we treat women when they finally do get a tech job. After all of their hard work, they still earn less than their male counterparts. This is unfair, and certainly no way to show our appreciation.

Verena Pausder
The founder of the gaming app development company Fox & Sheep hosts digital workshops to give kids a taste of the world of coding.



“Girls don’t get frustrated easily, and they learn to program best in their *early years*”

Programmers are the digital architects of tomorrow. They will design the products we buy and the software we use, and play a role in shaping our professional and private lives. We therefore cannot allow programming to remain a strictly male domain, and should introduce girls to the field by the time they are six years old. This way, they will develop the same level of natural curiosity and passion for it as the boys. And because they don’t get frustrated as easily and are less likely to give up quickly, they may well prove themselves better at learning the ropes. What’s more, they’ll be tenacious about getting to the roots of problems, and more inclined to help each other out along the way.

Purnima Kochikar
As the director of Google Play, Kochikar promotes the recruitment of women in tech at Google.



“We need to be saying to girls more often ‘*You can do it! Get in there and solve that problem*’”

Computer science education has yet to depart from static teaching practices. Emphasising the creative side of software development would make it more appealing to girls. But there’s another factor involved: their upbringing. I observe time and time again boys being given more support than girls. As teenagers, girls are expected to be reserved and cute. Clever, confident girls are still seen as having an attitude. I also notice that girls often go home after school and talk about their problems in maths. Instead of providing encouragement, the parents often tell them they should concentrate on languages instead. I think this is a wrong approach. We need to be saying to girls more often, “You can do it! Get in there and solve that problem.”

PHOTOS DLD CONFERENCE/PR, KIM KEIBEL, WEINBERG-CLARK PHOTOGRAPHY, PR

Anne-Marie Imafidon
The mathematician founded the STEMettes initiative and is committed to showing girls how to become programmers.



“Girls need a space *free of judgement*, without boys. This way they can better *come into their own* and act more boldly”

When it comes to coding and developing apps, young girls need a space free of judgement, without boys. I’ve noticed that this allows them to better come into their own and act more freely and boldly. This is how we get girls excited about coding. Only by having fun and taking note of their own accomplishments will they begin to believe in themselves and develop a lasting interest.

Career tips and inspiration
Want to read more about the experiences of women in the tech world, successful female entrepreneurs and artists? In-depth interviews can be found here: mbmag.me/inspiration



Ladies first

With the dating app Bumble, women have to make the first move. But is that actually romantic? For founder and CEO Whitney Wolfe Herd, there's no question about it

TEXT: ROLAND RÖDERMUND
ILLUSTRATIONS: QUENTIN MONGE

*I*t didn't take long for Whitney Wolfe Herd, 28, to develop her dating app Bumble and turn it into a global corporation with 20 million users. Today, she is considered to be one of the most successful and bold young female CEOs in America. Because Bumble requires women to make the first move when meeting their suitors, Whitney Wolfe Herd is being celebrated as a digital feminist. But are platforms like Bumble really the way to true love?

Ms Wolfe Herd, does romance still have its place in 2018?

Of course it does! You should never give up hope of finding true love. Romance shouldn't be an illusion, it should be something you actively pursue.

How can Bumble's female users do this?

If two potential partners find one another attractive, they get a match. Women have 24 hours to write to a man with whom they have matched, and they have to make the first move.

Is it important for women to make the first move in love, too?

I think this is hard for many women to do at first. We've been taught since childhood to hold back, and if we hope to change this, we have to radically change the way we think.

Perhaps some people don't see any romance in that...

I don't think that's the case. In fact, I'd say that people who are actively in search of and are firm believers in love are the most romantic. The internet opens up many ways to meet people who we might have never otherwise crossed paths with, though there are also many users who say they probably would have run into the people they meet over the app at some point in real life. In this way, technological advancements can serve to accelerate romance.

Do dating apps cause us to forget how to flirt and really connect with people?

I totally disagree with this way of thinking! (laughs) Many female users have told me that Bumble taught them how to approach men with confidence – both over the app and in real life. By leaving it to women to initiate the conversation, they also have the power to decide which direction it goes in. We've also noticed that the pressure is taken off men too. In a way, it helps balance the dynamic between men and women.

What words pop into mind when you think about romance?

Respect, friendliness, spontaneity.

Many female users have grown wary of online dating, and several have been victims of cyber bullying.

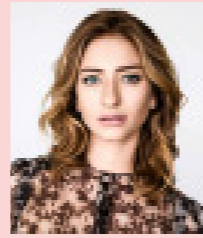
That's why I set out to create a space in which people are encouraged to be friendly to one another. In my experience, friendliness and respect towards women is something online dating has always lacked. That's another reason I founded Bumble: to restore women's faith in the benefits of virtual dating. The most-read articles on our Bumble Blog are success stories from couples who managed to find true love over the app.

Success stories?

The stories about how a match led to a romantic date, a romantic date to a relationship, and a relationship to a marriage. Since its inception, Bumble has been responsible for over 75,000 engagements and weddings and more than 10,000 babies. We're also seeing more and more pictures on social media of people dressed as bumble bees – our mascot – for Halloween.

You met your husband, Michael Herd, the analogue way, during a ski trip, and celebrated your dream wedding last year in Italy. How do you keep romance alive in your own life?

We like to travel together. Experiencing new things, going on new adventures – for me, that's romance at its best. And because of its history, its food and its wine, Italy has always been a romantic place for me.



The power of female entrepreneurs

Whitney Wolfe Herd founded the Bumble app in 2014 to place control in the hands of women and to ensure much-needed respect in online dating. The professional networking app Bumble Bizz has since been introduced to complement the dating app.



PHOTO JORDAN DONER

Dating. Friends. Networking

Women use Bumble to find friends, business partners and – just maybe – true love. Are you curious? The first download is free from the App Store and Google Play. More information can be found at bumble.com



“The finishing line? *Always out in the pampa!*”

Ellen Lohr, the only female DTM champion to date, experienced the Dakar Rally from an unusual perspective: as a reporter travelling with the X-Class. She came back from South America with some fantastic impressions

REPORT: EVA DOROTHÉE SCHMID
PHOTOS: KAVA GORNA

It was Ellen Lohr's 13th Dakar Rally. The 53-year-old took part in the race four times while it was still being held in Africa. Since the rally moved to South America, she has attended it eight times in the role of team manager and team coordinator – but this was her first time as a reporter.



“I really enjoy difficult situations, when we get to places where our entourage doesn’t go”

*E*ven the taxi ride from the airport to the hotel in Lima is an adventure: I need a whole hour just to travel five kilometres. There are traffic jams everywhere, you see ten cars trying to travel side by side along three lanes. An Italian journalist tells me I was lucky; his trip took four hours because his shuttle bus was involved in an accident and a fight broke out between everyone at the scene.

Lima in a state of emergency. The 40th Dakar Rally will be starting here, in the Peruvian capital. More than 300 vehicles will be taking part in the race: cars, trucks, motorbikes. Then there are the service vehicles, which include our Mercedes-Benz X-Class. For the next two weeks, I'll be travelling through Peru, Bolivia, and Argentina. There are 10,000 kilometres ahead of us. We will be accompanying one of the toughest rallies in the world. Passes 5,000 metres above sea level, deserts, mountains, steppes. Temperatures ranging from zero to 45 degrees Celsius.

The first stage is a simply endless journey through sand dunes, far away from any roads. On one occasion, our X-Class gets stuck fast in sand because we were too lazy to let any air out of the tyres beforehand. Four locals help us get clear. It sounds ridiculous, but it's moments like these that are the most fun. I really enjoy difficult situations, when we get to places where our entourage doesn't go. For me, this is a real adrenalin rush. I'm there when one of the rally favourites, Nani Roma, crashes his Mini into a sand dune and rolls over. He manages to cross the finishing line, but that's the



Ellen Lohr spends the nights in a tent next to the X-Class (above). During the breaks, she interviews and takes photos of the rally drivers – only one in two will make it to the end.

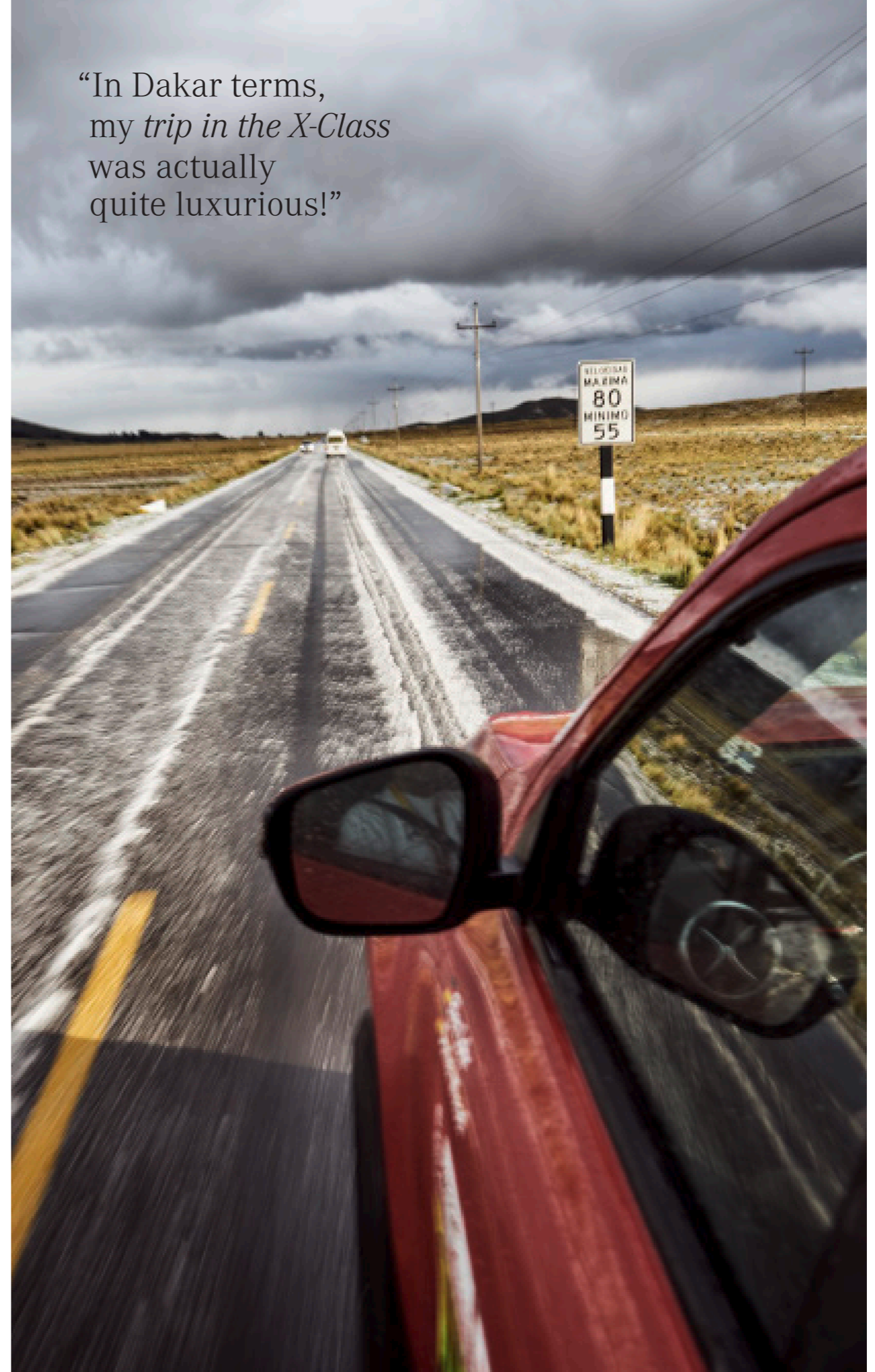
end of the rally for him. The best way to wind down after a desert marathon? For me it's an Inca Kola. It's deep yellow and tastes nothing like a Coca-Cola. But it's interesting. A local policeman tells me that he knows all the drivers here in person; he uses first names when giving traffic offenders a warning.

We reach the Peruvian city of Arequipa, where the rally drivers are greeted with incredible enthusiasm. When we leave the city, there's an Arequipa sticker on the windscreen of our X-Class. Our team travels on to La Paz, Bolivia. This stage isn't so easy – we have to cross the Andes. Like all the others, lack of oxygen makes our engine lose up to 50 per cent of its output at altitudes higher than 4,000 metres. I too am suffering from altitude sickness. Coca tea is said to help. In Peru, you can get the leaves on every corner for just a few cents, while in Argentina they are banned.



Rally fever
Schoolchildren and indigenous women
boldly have their photo taken with
Ellen Lohr and her X-Class. Now and again,
a motorbike speeds past.

“In Dakar terms,
my *trip in the X-Class*
was actually
quite luxurious!”



Tour of the Andes
The 40th Dakar Rally started in Lima in January and continued for two weeks through Pisco, San Juan de Marcona and Arequipa to the Bolivian city of La Paz. From here, the rally continued through Uyuni and Tupiza to Argentina, where it ended in Córdoba. 335 vehicles took part in the spectacle.



Many of the locals stood along the route until long into the night and cheered on both the drivers and the service vehicles.

When we cross the border to Bolivia, I feel like I'm in a spy film: hundreds of traders all around me pushing their wares backwards and forwards on donkey carts. One of my colleagues drives the last few kilometres to La Paz, as he is coping with the altitude better than me. Once in La Paz, I go to the hotel to rest. You get there in a cable car of the type you see at ski resorts, because the city is 3,200 to 4,100 metres above sea level. Our Mercedes, whose engine has held up really well, is also allowed to take a rest and is given a quick wash – so that it looks better in all the selfies being taken with it. No matter where we go, we are immediately surrounded. Everybody wants to have their photo taken with the X-Class, because it's the first pick-up with the three-pointed star. A real attraction!

Most of the Bolivian women, however, don't want me to take their photo; they are very superstitious. They

think that photos steal their souls. Naturally I respect their wishes. In some ways, the people here live in a completely different world to us. I use my smartphone to take a photo of a small boy in a street restaurant. I show him the photo. He is absolutely shocked to see himself; he has obviously never had his photo taken before.

It's also astonishing to see how busy it is at night. We have to dodge thousands of onlookers on foot or on bicycles without lights as well as any number of animals: cows, donkeys, llamas, coyotes, armadillos and desert foxes. Near Uyuni, there is a salt lake which I visited two years ago. I was so impressed that I promised myself before the journey that I would go back. So we make a detour and give a local a lift. This year, however, there isn't much salt to be seen at the salt lake; there has been too much rain. I drive right out into the water – and nearly get stuck, but only nearly. Right after the border between Bolivia and Argentina, we treat ourselves to some private accommodation. The bivouac where we planned to put up our tents is completely uninhabitable, a sheer pool of mud. Even more rain is forecast during the night. However, our hopes of a hot shower are dashed – but then you probably shouldn't expect too much for 20 euros a night.

Wine and the romance of the Wild West

Most nights, we sleep in the tents stowed in the X-Class's spacious truck bed next to our bags and boxes. Our next bivouac will be in the Argentinian city of Salta. The journey there takes us through a Wild West landscape dotted with cactuses, past colourful cemeteries decorated with plastic flowers. This campsite is the best of the rally: fairgrounds with decent toilets, tepid showers, and fantastic Wi-Fi. I use this opportunity for a video chat with my loved ones at home.

A little later, the spectators wave wine bottles to get us to stop. Here the enthusiasm for the X-Class is even greater: pick-ups are extremely popular. Our "Bomberos Camionetta", as it is called, our fire brigade pick-up, attracts new admirers at every set of traffic lights. We finally reach Córdoba, our destination. But we still have to wait for that longed-for hot shower: the Dakar Rally doesn't let you go that quickly.

More info online

Spectacular videos, image galleries and all the results of this year's 40th Dakar Rally are available at mbmag.me/xclass2018

PHOTOS PAGE 43/ ABOVE RIGHT: JÖRG SAND, PAGE 44/ ABOVE RIGHT: ELLEN LOHR ILLUSTRATION PAGE 45: CAROLIN EITEL





*Less is more
Amber Valletta's
modest style brings
out her elegance.*

Care about *what you wear* Amber?

Amber Valletta has been a fashion industry stalwart for almost 30 years. Today, she is among the industry's most influential fashion sustainability activists. A top model herself, Valletta calls for radical change in the way clothes are manufactured, and for such change to be led by luxury fashion labels – who, after all, are often the makers of global trends. Her nine-point manifesto

TEXT: EVA DOROTHÉE SCHMID
PHOTOS: CHRIS COLLS

With her high forehead, Amber Valletta looks like she just stepped out of a Botticelli painting. Back in the '90s, she was one of THE supermodels, walking the catwalks for the likes of Armani and Versace, and raking in advertising contracts worth millions. Today, the 44-year-old American still walks the catwalks and graces major campaigns, but she has changed. Valletta is now mother to one son and committed to living a sustainable lifestyle. She drives an electric car, powers her home with rooftop solar panels, and uses chemical-free cosmetics. "At a certain age, you realise that you need to live according to your values. I couldn't just carry on earning money from the fashion industry, I needed to do something meaningful," she explains. "Today, I see it as my job to inform consumers and to urge the major labels to finally become more sustainable." Valletta is one of the most influential champions of fair fashion. She criticises mass consumption, poor working conditions within apparel manufacture, and the lack of role models among luxury fashion brands. "I talk about all these things," she says "although I know many in my industry would prefer me to keep my mouth shut." Valletta's activist nature runs in the family; her mother, who was a vocal opponent of nuclear power plants, is her most important role model. Amber Valletta makes the following case for sustainable fashion:

Amber Valletta, 44, is a model, actor, and environmental activist. Among the organisations she supports is the marine protection organisation Oceana. In 2013 she founded Master & Muse, an online shop for sustainably manufactured high fashion. She showcases the best and most sustainable labels on her Instagram account. As an advocate for electric mobility, she can be seen promoting the Mercedes-Benz Concept EQ in the #mbcollective Fashion Story. masterandmuse.com

“Outfits that last, can be *recycled* or even be given a *second life* are smart and cool”

1 Fashion should last. The way the fashion industry operates is no longer sustainable. Today, it's not just about what you eat, but also about what you wear. Food manufacture has undergone so much change in recent years. Why can't we develop means of using less resources in clothing manufacture, too? And we should be less trend-focussed. It's way smarter and cooler to have nice outfits that last a long time, that are recyclable or can even be given a second life.

2 Let's think in a circular way. The fashion industry wields enormous power. It can change society, it can motivate and inspire people. Every year, we witness just how innovative the industry is. I call on the major labels to think in an environmentally-friendly way. By that I mean that they should think more sustainably about everything they design and produce. The fashion industry has a role-model function. It has huge influence around the world.

3 Production conditions must change. My concerns in this respect are not just about the environment, but also about the people employed within the fashion industry. We've all seen the images from Pakistan, India, Bangladesh. When we buy ourselves new clothes, we need to show consideration for the people who make them. We must insist on socially sound contracts, on better conditions in factories, on fairer wages. Because only if we as consumers sharpen our awareness of these things and demand that they be implemented can we change production conditions outside Europe and the US.

4 Luxury labels have a special responsibility. There are lots of new sustainable labels on the market, which I think is great. But luxury labels, too, have a key responsibility in terms of driving change. This is because, while they may not produce as much clothing as the fast fashion companies, they set global trends. In doing so, they have a special responsibility in terms of how they produce and sell clothes. They can, of course, incorporate this responsibility into their marketing campaigns, but don't necessarily have to. The main thing is that they finally get active.

***Focussed**
Today an influential champion
of sustainable fashion,
Amber Valletta knows what's
important to her.*

5 We need fair working conditions. Recent years have seen the fast fashion companies that produce lower-priced clothing begin to improve their sustainability. The problem here is that they produce too much, often at very low quality. Reducing this output a little, increasing their prices just a bit, and making working conditions in their factories fairer would be revolutionary! A lower supply leads to increased demand. And this would benefit us all. It would benefit companies, who could then produce more prudently. It would benefit consumers, who could then buy more intelligently. And it would benefit the factory workers, who could then be paid higher wages. Moreover, if prices increase slightly, so do profit margins. Studies of this field have long shown that, over the long term, sustainable production saves money.

6 We consumers have influence. We all consume fashion. So we should all make the effort to find out about the conditions under which our clothes are made, and about the impact of textile manufacture on the environment. Too many people are still very unaware in this respect. Only when more people develop a sustainable awareness for fashion will the fashion companies themselves change. We consumers have enormous power in that we decide where and what to spend our money on.

7 Do I really need this? The best way to reconsider our consumer behaviour is to ask ourselves, "Do I really need it? Don't I already own lots of nice dresses?" We would all do well to ponder this whenever we want to buy something. I often used to see consumption as a way of compensating for something. It would be a real step forward if more people would contemplate why they buy things. I believe we all buy way too much stuff.

8 Fashion is freedom. We use it to express our personalities, to show our creativity. Of course, fashion is also there to make women feel good about themselves, and no one is seeking to change that. But this shouldn't come at the expense of other people's health and well-being, or our planet's welfare. Surely we don't just want to look good in our clothes; we also want to be able to wear them with a clear conscience.

9 Small steps are better than none at all. Companies should be scrutinising their business models, asking themselves: "What are we selling to people and why?" Small steps are better than nothing! Fashion companies don't need to be perfectly eco-friendly. They need to be transparent, own up to their mistakes, continuously try to improve how they do things. This makes them authentic, and people love authentic brands!

My *two* worlds

Asami Ueno comes from Japan but has spent many years in Germany. She currently lives in Tokyo, where she works as a manager at Mercedes-AMG. How does she get to where she wants to be these days?

INTERVIEW: JÖRG HEUER
PHOTOS: JAN VAN ENDERT

Asami Ueno calls to say she's running a bit late. Two minutes later, the 36-year-old steps out of her company car. "I'm ready," she says. We're in the Setagaya district of Tokyo, at the world's first independent Mercedes-AMG location – complete with a showroom, workshop, and offices.

Ms Ueno, your voice sounds an octave higher when you talk in your native language than when you speak German. Why is that?

It has to do with the way we're raised, for sure. Japanese women are typically quiet, reserved; they want to seem cute. That might have something to do with why we speak higher in Japanese.

Your German is very good ...

Danke. My family moved to Germany when I was six. My father was a television correspondent in Bonn, and I went to kindergarten and primary school there. Later on I spent two semesters studying in Berlin.

How have your years in Bonn and Berlin shaped who you are now?

They gave me confidence and a certain degree of worldliness. They have also made me stronger, perhaps.

Do you remember who your first role model was?

My primary school teacher in Bonn. She knew how to motivate us children.

But you didn't become a teacher...

That's true! But guess what I studied?

German literature?

Not quite – German language. I studied in Tokyo for four years and in Berlin for one year, between 2000 and 2005.

Some people say that the Japanese are the Germans of Asia. Do we really have that much in common?

“I love German *directness*. If there’s a problem, they’ll *make sure you know it*”

There are certain similarities: Japanese people and Germans are both well-organised, disciplined and reliable.

What’s the biggest difference between the two nationalities?

Germans are more straightforward in the way they talk and the way they give criticism. If there’s a problem, they’ll make sure you know it, while in Japan, it’s rare for anyone to take the direct route.

Why do you think that is?

I think it has to do with our values. It’s about preserving tradition and saving face.

Do you like travelling between the East and West – between two very different worlds?

Yes, I attend races on every continent. And of course I also travel to Affalterbach – the birthplace of AMG – for business several times a year. It’s a lot of fun. I like travelling, especially in Germany.

Was that a factor when you were deciding what you wanted to do for a living?

While I was studying I didn’t really have a plan – that’s quite a typically Japanese thing. The only thing I knew for sure was that I wanted to have something to do with Germany.

So you began applying for jobs at German companies after you finished studying?

At some of the most renowned firms: Mercedes-Benz, Bosch, Siemens...

And Mercedes-Benz gave you a chance?

I did an internship with them first. They were my secret favourite. I was proud to have got my foot in the door. Mercedes-Benz is a truly great brand. Everybody has heard of it.

Let’s pick up the pace now. I’ll ask three questions, and you only have a second to think before you answer. OK?

Sure. I’m fast.

Sushi or steak?

Steak.

150 or 550 horsepower?

550.

Child or career?

Career.

Isn’t it common for women in Japan to study, marry and then have children?

Yes. And unfortunately not much has changed in that respect, even in recent years.

When did you decide to take a different route?

I knew when I was a student that I wanted to get my career off the ground before starting a family. It’s not as though I don’t want to get married at all, or don’t want to have a child. I’m just not in a hurry. All of that is still possible in your late 30s, even early 40s – and in Germany that’s totally normal.

Are you often asked when you’ll get married and have kids?

In Japan yes, but never in Germany.

Can you tell us about your start at Mercedes-Benz?

I had a lot of responsibility, but also a lot of support. At a lot of Japanese companies you would start off filing or making coffee. I joined Daimler at the same time as two other women and three men, and everybody was treated the same. It was great!

How did you come to be a manager?

I think of myself a bit like a chess piece within the company – that’s also a very Japanese way of thinking.

Which piece?

A pawn, because pawns are placed wherever they can do their job best.

But surely after becoming AMG brand manager in 2013 you would be upgraded to queen?

I still see myself as a pawn. I’m comfortable in this role.

AMG is a very masculine brand...

... making the challenge that much greater. Seventy per cent of our customers are men, and if not for the AMG A 45 that number would be a lot higher. Of course I asked myself at the beginning if I was really the right person for the job of AMG brand manager.

What are some of your best traits as a manager?

I look ahead, I listen; I’m innovative, attentive and strict – with my employees and with myself.

What is your least Japanese trait?

My directness. If it looks like we might lose some customers, I pick up the phone and call Germany. Thankfully most of my suggestions prove to be fruitful. My directness can catch some of my Japanese bosses off-guard – they tell me in a roundabout way not to be so outspoken.

And how do you respond to that?

Well I’m Japanese too, and I can absolutely understand their scepticism. If AMG were an Italian or American company, I wouldn’t feel as secure to do it. But I understand how my German colleagues in management positions work, so I have a big advantage.

Do you see yourself as a forerunner of the next generation of women in Japan?

Yes and no. Yes, because I’m an example of how women have the same career chances as men at global corporations. No, because I’m in my mid 30s and still don’t have a child or a family.

A display of horsepower in Tokyo

With a completely novel sales concept, Mercedes-AMG has opened its first independent AMG showroom in Japan’s capital. mbmag.me/amg-tokio1



On the go in Tokyo: the AMG brand manager loves her home town – and her job. Asami Ueno is constantly in motion. She makes decisions on the phone, eats at traditional restaurants, and enjoys accessories like the four-wheeled USB stick in the AMG showroom in the district of Setagaya.



We made it

TEXT: INA BRZOSKA

An intriguing product: this year will see the introduction of the new A-Class, a car that understands the needs of its driver. Designing a car with this capability requires bright minds, a great deal of empathy, and the will to cooperate. Three women behind the A-Class talk here about how they came together to design a car that will excite the customer

Katrin Miethe
of Saxony, Germany initially came to Daimler AG for an apprenticeship as an office manager. She completed a degree in business administration on the side and now works as a product manager for the new A-Class. One of her favourite features of the car is the ambient lighting – especially when it lights up in pink.





PHOTOS CHRISTIAN BORTH (2)

Tanja Steinert

“We want the drivers of the A-Class to *understand intuitively* how to use any given feature”

Tanja Steinert completed her bachelor's degree in interaction design in Schwäbisch Gmünd, Germany. She currently works in Daimler's User Interface Design unit. The 26-year-old is fascinated by MBUX, the digital system introduced with the new A-Class. Its purpose is to not just excite the customer, but to provide everyday assistance.

Ms Braun, as a designer, what do you like most about developing a new model?

Claudia Braun: The opportunity to make something new is always appealing. I just love immersing the first exterior and interior models in colour and seeing how form, colour and material all come together. Design is becoming more and more important – it's how we shape our brand's image for the future. That's truly an amazing responsibility.

Ms Miethe, as product manager, you must also have concrete ideas. What's your role in this phase?

Katrin Miethe: We take the customers' feedback and incorporate it into the follow-up model. Some of the features we keep, others we improve. For the A-Class, we optimised the boot. Of course, we also advocate for the things that are important to the customer.

So you go to Development and say, “This is something you have to somehow work in”?

Miethe: Each vehicle has a performance profile with various criteria that are especially important. For the A-Class, it's the design. We look at these criteria to determine the features we want to see in the vehicle. These can include things like special paint or decorative elements that lend the car a high-end look and bring out its sporty character.

Ms Braun, do you ask your colleagues in Product Management what they would like to see from the designers?

Braun: Of course we communicate and exchange ideas. As designers, we have an excellent feeling for colours and trends, and we can think of many new ideas. Usually, we have a clear idea of what will be appealing to the customer in the future. We then come up with some suggestions and workshop them with the

product managers. We live and work in the future, so we're always concerned with things that will be relevant down the road. Our collective goal, however, is to always develop the most attractive cars for our customers.

Surely there are many different competing ideas at play. How do you cope with this?

Miethe: There are a lot of departments involved in the development of a new vehicle. It's always good for each department to have a clear vision. Making the case for the best argument is when it gets exciting. We have to be careful to present our ideas in a very positive light without becoming too rigid.

Does compromising always lead to the best design?

Braun: It's always important to question the result of a compromise and to continuously work to improve it. Our main consensus is to place the focus on the needs of the customer.

How do designers know what drivers will like?

Braun: We take note of trends in other industries. The Milan Furniture Fair is one place we look. Or the fashion scene, where fashion bloggers and street-style photographers show trends in a much more democratic way than they used to.

Which trend influenced the development of the new A-Class?

Braun: Connectivity, which currently plays a major role in fashion and design. Applying a trend like this to a vehicle is incredibly exciting. In the interior of the new A-Class, the focus is on the widescreen. Because there is no mount, it appears as if it were floating – it truly is an innovative feature. The car's form and colour design allows it to keep up with digitalisation and social trends.

“Design is becoming more and more important – it’s how we shape *our brand’s image* for the future”

Claudia Braun

Ms Steinert, as a designer for the Mercedes-Benz user interface MBUX, you are responsible for the usability of these displays. How do you step into the customer’s shoes?

Tanja Steinert: We think about the specific applications for various target groups – the businessperson who uses the car as an office, the technologically adept millennial who grew up with mobile communication and the internet, somebody in their mid-60s who is simply trying to find their favourite radio station. We consider a range of scenarios and come up with the appropriate features.

How do you transfer this to a car?

Steinert: We create digital prototypes as well as illustrate and animate the various applications we come up with. We then take the ideas that the MBUX team approves of to the customers. We sit with them in the car and observe the interaction between driver and vehicle. A range of experts – including psychologists, engineers, programmers and designers – are then involved in the implementation after we have evaluated the results. Even our executives assess the MBUX through the eyes of the customer.

Ms Braun, if a developer has an idea for the interior, would that clash with the design team’s ideas?

Braun: I would say they complement each other. The ambient lighting and the illuminated nozzles in the interior in particular are examples of a successful collaboration between the development and design teams. They saw technology being perfectly integrated into an attractive design.

Is there a feature in the new A-Class that you personally advocated for?

Braun: Yes – the vibrant exterior paint. I’m personally a fan of the classics like black, silver and white, but I

wanted to include some more intense colours for the new A-Class as well.

How did sunshine yellow come about?

Braun: Yellow has been making a comeback in the past couple of years. I find it bold, extroverted, sporty. We spent a while to find just the right shade. The interior will also feature new colour schemes, like black-grey with orange accents. The equipment concept is quite bold and modern.

Ms Miethe, what type of customer did you have in mind for the sunshine yellow A-Class?

Miethe: The expressive customer who ups the ante on their A-Class’s sportiness with additional features like the large wheels.

Ms Steinert, what was the most important lesson you learned from the development of the new A-Class?

Steinert: Our customer tests show again and again that it’s the system that’s responsible for errors, not the customer. One of our main objectives is for drivers to intuitively understand how a given feature in the A-Class works. The hard part is displaying complex information in a comprehensible way without taking any control away from the driver. The car must make suggestions without being overbearing, and the settings must be customisable.

And what if the driver simply wants a bit of peace and quiet while driving?

Steinert: That’s no problem – the interface now features a ‘Subtle’ mode, which was the result of us pondering the scenario ‘driving home after a stressful day’. In this mode, only the most important information is displayed to the driver. Everything else is quiet and dimmed. That’s what we call digital luxury.

Claudia Braun, 40, studied textile design at the Stuttgart State Academy of Art and Design. She now heads the Colour and Material Design department at Daimler. In her private life, she prefers a more minimalistic style: she drives a black Mercedes-Benz with a black interior.

Have we piqued your interest in the new A-Class? Turn to page 64 to find out more about the new features, or configure them yourself at mbmag.me/a-class-2018

PHOTO DAIMLER AG



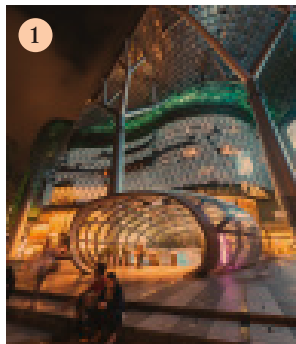
My hot spots

Actress Rebecca Lim reveals her favourite places back home in Singapore



Rebecca Lim

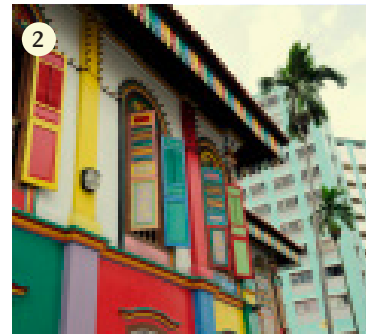
The sought-after 31-year-old film and TV actress, a Mediacorp artiste, has been a Mercedes-Benz brand ambassador since 2014. She is also a multi-instrumentalist, playing drums, guitar, saxophone and piano.



1

Shopping in style

From Prada to Gucci, top designers display their collections at the ION Orchard shopping paradise, at the end of Orchard Road.
ionorchard.com/en



2

Full of diversity

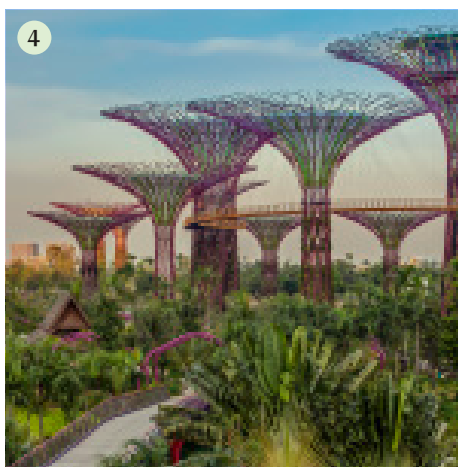
With people from several nations living peacefully along side one another, Singapore shows just what a multicultural city state can look like. Chinatown and the neighbourhood of Kampong Glam, which has a strong Muslim community, are both rich in history, while the most stunning saris are for sale in lovely Little India.



3

Local treats

Satay, laksa and black pepper crabs are prepared in full view of patrons at StraitsKitchen. Don't miss out.
singapore.grand.hyattrestaurants.com/straitskitchen



4

"Gardens by the Bay is a great place to relax. Everything is splendidly green and an exotic fragrance fills the air"

gardensbythebay.com



5

A festival of lights

The city will be lit up in a marvellous display of colours during the Singapore Night Festival, 18-26 August 2018. nightfestival.sg



The A-Class –
the dawn of a new era

The top 8 *in the new A-Class*

It offers significantly more space than before and understands you. It's even sportier, even classier, and adapts itself to meet your needs. Look forward to a new, revolutionary driving experience!

Colourful

Are you feeling tired or stressed? The ambient lighting reacts to your mood with a whole rainbow of colours – there are 64 to choose from.

Articulate

This compact car talks to you – and understands you in any number of languages. Even in certain dialects

Personalised

Your favourite songs and most important daily calls: the new A-Class quickly learns your habits and uses this knowledge to make your everyday life easier.

Floating

Fully digital cockpit with completely free-standing touchscreen as standard



Spacious

There's more space for your shoulders, head and elbows – and plenty of room for a stroller or racing bike in the 370-litre boot.

Cool

Extremely laid-back interior: air jets made to look like turbines, real wood trim and sporty leather seats

Comfortable

If you say “I’m cold” or “It’s getting hot”, the new A-Class will adjust the heating accordingly. The massage function in the front seats provides an additional touch of comfort and luxury.

Far-sighted

The Multibeam LED headlamps ensure the road ahead of you is brightly and precisely lit, making sure you spot hazards even more quickly.

All information about the new A-Class from Mercedes-Benz can be found online: mbmag.me/a-class



The success story of Mercedes-Benz's family of compact cars began in 1997 with the market launch of the A-Class. Since then, well over five million customers have opted for an A-Class, B-Class, CLA, CLA Shooting Brake or GLA. The A-Class is particularly popular with young drivers – the most recent model update in 2012 saw the average age of Mercedes-Benz customers throughout Europe drop

by around thirteen years. With the new generation of A-Class models, Mercedes-Benz strikes an even better balance between sporty performance and significantly enhanced comfort. The A-Class is rolling off the production lines at the Mercedes-Benz works in Rastatt and the Hungarian city of Kecskemét, and at the production site of Finnish contract manufacturer Valmet Automotive.



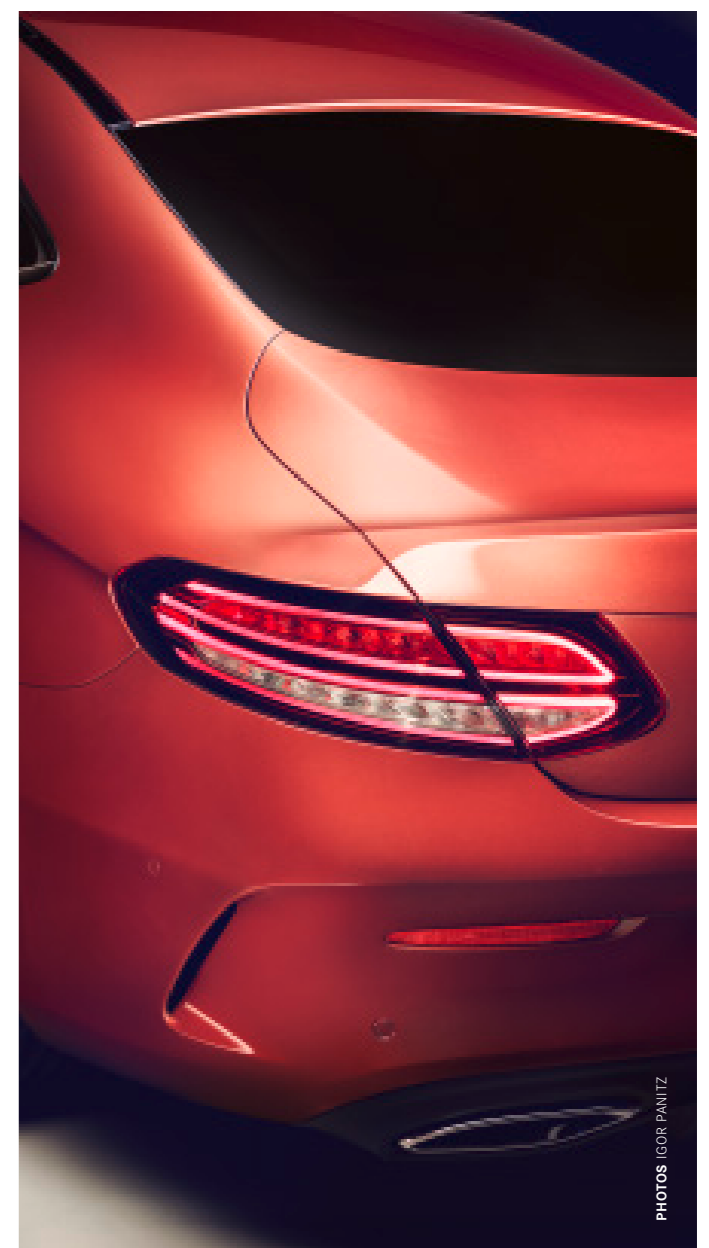
Sporty. Charming. The new C-Class!

Two dream cars, two dazzling new looks. The C-Class Coupé (photos on this spread) and the Cabriolet (photos on the following spread) now exude even more style and dynamism, and are safer to boot. On the occasion of its 25th birthday, the C-Class has indulged itself by

undergoing numerous improvements. Among these are its fully digital instruments and its larger media display, all of which are as intuitive to use as a smartphone. The new C-Class is also equipped with the cutting-edge, S-Class-level driving assistance systems —

*The Multibeam
LED headlamps
are brighter,
more precise and
more intelligent
than ever before.*

*The C-Class Coupé
with more strongly
accentuated
LED tail lamps*



PHOTOS IGOR PANITZ

Active Distance Assist and Steering Assist, and boasts a range of brand new features such as a 64-colour ambient light system and Energising Comfort, which with its range of wellness programmes helps to significantly improve car occupants' sense of well-being. What's more, the Coupé and the Cabriolet are now available in the two new colours Mojave silver and Graphite grey. These especially sporty C-Class siblings stand for exclusivity and unadulterated driving enjoyment. Irrespective of whether you're driving in the city or in the countryside, on

motorways or rural roads. For the sun worshippers among us: the Cabriolet's soft top can be opened and closed in a matter of a few seconds, and while driving at speeds of up to 50 km/h. The sun-reflecting seat leather heats up only minimally, even in high summer. The neck-level heating system and fully automated wind deflector mean that, with this car, almost every day is a day for open-top driving. All new C-Class models are also available with the even sportier AMG Line equipment package, and will naturally soon be available as Affalterbach AMGs.

*A year-round
cabriolet
with sun-reflecting
seat leather
and a neck-level
heating system*

*As intuitive
as a smartphone:
multifunctional
steering wheel with
Touch Control
and fully digital
cockpit*

All information about
the new C-Class
from Mercedes-Benz
can be found online:
mbmag.me/c-class



PHOTOS IGOR PANITZ

She's events

From San Francisco to Seoul – these were the highlights of the She's Mercedes initiative



1 Argentina
Elegant kick-off for She's Mercedes in Buenos Aires

The She's Mercedes initiative was launched in Buenos Aires in November 2017. Guests could expect a diverse programme featuring rounds of golf, test drives and make-up sessions by Chanel. Showing off her collections and speaking with brand ambassador Iván de Pineda, designer Jazmín Chebar was a star of the evening.



2 Austria
A snowy adventure in the Kitzbühel Alps

She's Mercedes and EMOTION magazine invited women to Kitzbühel for a weekend of action. The 24 participants had a thrilling offroad experience, hit the slopes, and enjoyed the après-ski. In a workshop, psychologist Stephanie Schorp analysed the women's strengths so that they could use them to their fullest potential.



3 USA
Exclusive DLD lunch in San Francisco

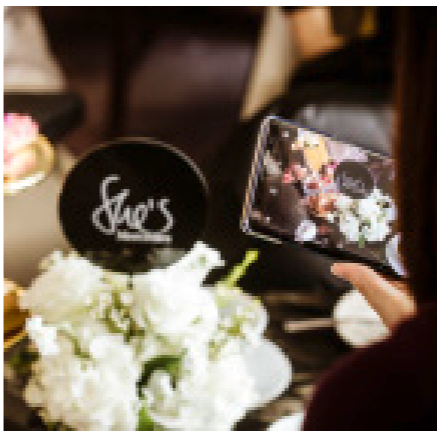
On the occasion of the DLD Salon in Silicon Valley, DLD founder Steffi Czerny and She's Mercedes invited 50 female makers and shakers in the tech, start-up and communications sectors to the private members club The Battery. They talked about the roles artificial intelligence, mobility, leadership & creativity, and work will play in the future.



PHOTOS DAMLER AG, CHRISTIAN BORTH ILLUSTRATION CAROLIN EITEL

4 South Korea
Networking in Seoul is best over a good tea!

She's Mercedes extended an invitation to an afternoon tea in Seoul, a common activity here. Two hundred guests accepted the invitation to learn more about the many activities offered by the She's Mercedes initiative and to find out about new Mercedes-Benz products. Live musicians and DJs created a pleasant atmosphere for the evening.



Support
There was a palpable sense of solidarity among the women in Dubai.

5 Dubai
Moving discussions: what women from the Middle East have planned next

Dubai is considered to be a hub of innovative ideas. For the first time ever, UBS Unique and She's Mercedes teamed up to throw an event. Here, the 60 guests talked passionately about the topics that are currently inspiring them. The popular Saudi Arabian television host Muna Abu Sulayman interviewed Judith Griggs-Paterson, the former CEO of the F1 Australian Grand Prix Corporation. The two talked about financial independence and working on one's own terms. But the event also addressed topics like creativity and education, for instance how design is accelerating social change or how education can be improved for women to give them better social and economic prospects in the region.



Enter the She's Mercedes Lounge!
Are you looking for suggestions, people to talk about your ideas with, or opportunities for development? The She's Mercedes Lounge features exciting articles in the areas of business and lifestyle as well as various webinars and other exclusive benefits. It has already connected around 2,000 women. Become part of the community!
lounge.mercedes.me

I did it my way

Fashion designer Jil Sander explains how she discovered her aesthetic



“It’s about
seeing what
could be”

TEXT: JIL SANDER
PHOTO: PETER LINDBERGH

Generally speaking, I’m a fearless person. Maybe I get that from my mother, who used to say, “No dog would dare to bite me.”

That’s a good attitude to have. My childhood in Hamburg really shaped who I am today; it was a time of development. There wasn’t much that people could fondly look back on. Shortages dominated daily life, so you could dream of things that didn’t exist.

I experienced some eye-opening moments in the 1960s, when I worked as a fashion editor. I asked the manufacturers to make some changes to their pieces because I didn’t think the existing ones were photogenic enough for the shoots. When they subsequently asked me to design some collections for them, it became clear to me that there was a general need for contemporary fashion. All I needed was some designers who were confident enough to work with a new aesthetic. My notion of innovative fashion hasn’t changed: new materials combined with an original design idiom, pared to the essentials. The idea was for it all to be as effortless as possible. I was mostly influenced by aesthetic developments in contemporary art and architecture as I was searching for the right form.

My eye is well-trained: it can judge and select uninterrupted. I see myself as the medium of the zeitgeist. Visions and inspiration weave in and out of one another. Even the simple act of perception is productive: it’s about seeing not only what is, but what could be. In this sense, creative vision is work fed by many sources. It is then up to me to decide how to contain these influences. I trust my intuition and my feeling for quality.

My advice for entrepreneurs is to never compromise on their ideas. They should look to the best of the best for inspiration, focus on their product, not let communicative networks lead them astray. They should be bold. And serene. Serenity is a major asset when working with people with whom you share your vision. And to make sure they see their own vision reflected in yours, you also need a degree of gentleness and empathy. I’ve always been vocal about my mission, and missionaries tend to be rather affable people – even in tumultuous times. Separating from a design process that has went on for years is never easy, but life goes on. And because I never do things half-heartedly, nor can I stand being idle, there’s always something for me to do.

Meet Jil Sander

The Hamburg-based fashion designer is considered the most influential of her generation. Her first-ever solo exhibition, ‘Jil Sander. Present Tense’, runs until 6 May in Frankfurt, Germany, at the Museum Angewandte Kunst. museumangewandtekunst.de/en/museum/exhibitions/jil-sander-present-tense.html

This iconic shot from the year 1991 is one of the star German photographer’s most famous portraits.