

VOGUE



How a New Generation of Designers Is Shaking Up Storied Fashion Houses

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photographed by MIKAEL JANSSON

In 2018, a fashion house is not a home—not unless the designer living there is able to transform it so that it reflects our lives and times rather than some vainglorious past. A respectful reverence for the way things once were is one thing, but no one wants (or wants to wear) a timid tiptoe through a house's greatest hits.

Thankfully the last couple of years have seen houses taken over by designers who aren't interested in just blithely looking back. It's a big world out there—show that you actually live in it and put out work that's both personal and real. The appearance of [Alessandro Michele at Gucci in 2015](#) kick-started a revolution in the industry that's still being felt. Michele was an unknown studio stalwart of two-plus decades who manned up—in bejeweled brocades and masses of rings—to take on a label that was threatening to lose its luster. His riotous celebration of outsider beauty and embrace of diversity didn't just give us all some thrilling stuff to wear; it provided a gorgeous, sparkly,

gender-defying brew that was a delicious corrective to the challenging and oftentimes nasty narratives coming at us from elsewhere.

In the space of a mere two years or so, there has been a remarkable number of names arriving at some of the most storied houses, and we celebrate them this month by photographing their spring 2018 collections on an equally compelling cast of characters. Some of these designers are further into their respective home renovations than others, yet they all share the viewpoint that we can't be shackled to the old way of doing things. (And expect more of that when, later this year, Hedi Slimane arrives at Céline.)

Raf Simons, a conceptually inclined, couture-trained Flemish provocateur, left Europe for the New World and Calvin Klein in 2016 and quickly held up a mirror to America. Demna Gvasalia at Balenciaga (2015) and Francesco Risso at Marni (2016)—raw, uncompromising young talent brimming with vigorous ideas—arrived to question all our assumptions on luxury and status, the twin underpinnings that fashion has always held dear. What they do is still beautiful—you simply have to behold it differently.

A troika of fantastically assured women—Maria Grazia Chiuri at Dior (2016), Natacha Ramsay-Levi at Chloé, and Clare Waight Keller at Givenchy (the last two both 2017)—put the boys' club on notice and infused their labels with a feminist approach, which added serious substance to their street-inflected style.

Lastly, a young man got the gig of a lifetime nearly two years ago. The Belgian Anthony Vaccarello took over Saint Laurent from Hedi Slimane and brought sexy, and diversity, to YSL again. Vaccarello's spring collection was presented in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower, which dramatically lit up the minute the show started. High-stakes theatrics, for sure—but also a brilliant reminder that if you're going to take on a house today, you'd also better light the way forward.



Minaj in a Calvin Klein 205W39NYC dress (\$4,900) and shoes; Calvin Klein, NYC. Hair: Kim Kimble; Makeup: Sheika Daley; Manicure: Maria Salandra.

Photographed by Mikael Jansson, *Vogue*, March 2018

Nicki Minaj

The 35-year-old songwriter, producer, and philanthropist (last year, she tweeted to fans that she'd cover college tuition for any of them with straight-A report cards) is no stranger to reinvention. The Jamaica, Queens-raised prodigy has changed—and opened up—the rap world by being fearlessly adaptive in her ascent to the top of that game (and with the upcoming release of her long-awaited fourth album seems destined to remain there). She's inhabited a male alter ego, Roman Zolanski, and a cyborg speed demon with pale-pink braids that whip the floor; she's played a more delicate Barbie type while simultaneously proclaiming herself the "King." "Transforming, to me, means changing for the better based on your experiences," she says. "I'm equipped to be a better boss now."

Margaret Qualley

This year brings a pair of new films for Qualley, 23, who's played everything from a mutant socialite (in Spike Jonze's *Kenzo* shoot) to a nun-in-training (in Maggie Betts's *Novitiate*), along with a regular role on HBO's *The Leftovers*. In *Adam*, a quirky comedy centered on the LGBTQ community in New York, she plays a lesbian whose brother comes to town to visit. Things then go . . . awry. "It shows the opportunity of being away from home—everyone can be very confident about their sexual identities," she says. In *Donnybrook*, a fight-to-the-death noir, Qualley is the hardscrabble sister of a man who bare-knuckles it for a chance to win \$100,000. It's the sort of lane-switching that has proven her an entirely charming actor—and a natural-born chameleon.

Haley Bennett

In our age of Insta-stories, dog-tongue filters, and geotags, Bennett, while only 30, somehow exudes the glamour of a golden-era Hollywood star, her open features and soft-spoken, eccentric manner befitting a character more at home on the silver screen than on an iPhone. That's not to say she isn't tough. This year sees her starring alongside Chris Evans and Ben Kingsley as a Mossad agent in *The Red Sea Diving Resort*, which depicts a 1980s operation to rescue persecuted Ethiopian Jews via the premise of a falsified hotel. "It was sort of acting within acting," says Bennett of her role as Rachel Reiter. "Her cover was that she was a German woman." Back in Brooklyn Heights with her rescue dog, River, Bennett's personal goal is about "transforming and decorating my house. I have 60 pairs of shoes—and no forks."

Vittoria Ceretti

The Brescia, Italy–born model, nineteen, had a big 2017, shooting campaigns for everyone from Chanel to Loewe (along with a cavalcade of runway shows). Her particular magic: Ceretti can switch easily between downtown tomboy and uptown sovereign—a transformative look that, unsurprisingly, has garnered admirers industry-wide. And while she intends to continue modeling full-time, Ceretti would like to try acting next. "I don't know if I'm going to be good at it!" she says with both hope and humor. "But I want to try."

Lily Collins

The British-born actress and author, 28, is set to have an especially metamorphic 2018: This month, the paperback edition of her book, *Unfiltered: No Shame, No Regrets, Just Me*, is released, while she just wrapped a new film, *Tolkien*, a biopic of the late *Lord of the Rings* author. "It's a British period drama—and the hair was crazy every day," she says, laughing. "It tells a relatively unknown story about a man behind stories that everyone knows." On top of all that, she's now filming a feature in which she plays a girlfriend of the serial killer Ted Bundy. "It's called *Extremely Wicked, Shockingly Evil and Vile*. Just so you know."

Bella Hadid

Campaign after campaign, runway after runway, Hadid, 21, is continuing to, well, crush it. But this year, she says, is all about wellness: Her aim is to focus more intently on that ever tricky work-life balance—and for someone as much in the public eye as she is, that dance is inevitably all the more intense. Before her rise to fame, though, Bella was a competitive equestrian show-jumper; recently she, her sister, Gigi, and their mother, Yolanda, bought a farm in Pennsylvania, not too far from New York City, and the place has become something of a family retreat. "Riding is the best thing Gigi and I do together," says Bella. "We get up in the morning and feed the animals—it's a fully operational place!" *Beauty note: Keep your scarlet strands vibrant. John Frieda's Hair Care Radiant Red Red Boosting Shampoo and Conditioner protects, preserves, and enhances your color.*

Gigi Hadid

With her megawatt beauty—a combination of pouty lips and sparkling doe eyes—winning her an extensive list of campaigns and catwalks as well as lucrative collaboration projects, Gigi, 22, is on her way to becoming not only the supermodel of her era but a fashion mogul to boot. Her number-one priority (which doubles as an intuitive coping strategy): to be receptive and reflexive—to not be too worried about things beyond the moment. “It’s important to always be ready, and when you come to work being inspired by things outside the fashion industry, it makes the work better.”