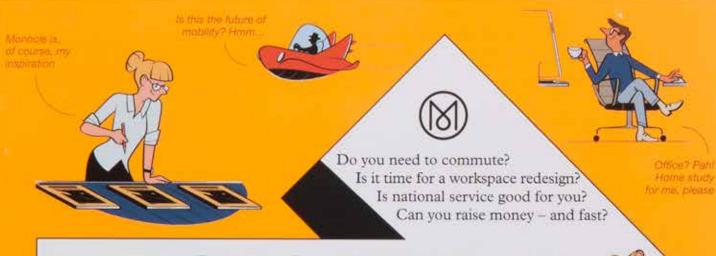
MONOCLE

INSIDE: MUSEUM MAKERS THE BIG OAT MILK LESSON ACE LUGGAGE, JAPAN DOES CROWDFUNDING WORK?

(A) A to F AFFAIRS: The ambassador's party BUSINESS: A media HQ hot off the press CULTURE: Ten things to do this month Y: How to build a better office ENTERTAINING: Explore Spain's next food region FASHION: Start your own clothes brand



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Bring online into line Gerbase, London

"We're starting to feel information fatigue," says Paula Gerbase, founder of womenswear label Gerbase. Launched in June, the London-based brand sells made-to-measure suits, knitwear and jewellery. "I'm craving a return to a sense of mystery. When everything is so readily available we lose a certain sense of expectation and curiosity."

Gerbase knows about desirability: she's also the artistic director of British footwear label John Lobb and the founder of unisex brand 1205, which she closed in 2017 in the wake of the Brexit referendum result. Now she's back with her new label, which has fewer than 1,000 followers on Instagram and no website to speak of. And that's the point. "In today's over-stimulated world, being overexposed seems to be the only strategy that exists. I would gladly exchange hype for a return to a sense of mystique."

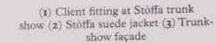
Today e-commerce is a reality of running a brand but Gerbase is one of a handful of firms doing something different with their online presence. Parisian womenswear label CristaSeva operates its e-commerce site like a pop-up shop: it's only open for a handful

> "I'm craving a return to a sense of mystery. When everything is so readily available we lose a certain sense of expectation and curiosity"

of days every season. "We don't have the desire to be sold everywhere and available all the time," says co-founder Cristina Casini.

The brand's e-shop products are ready-made and ship straight away. The temporary format reduces the risk of overproduction and means the brand never goes on sale. "Like any young business, we are always busy. Running a physical or online shop 24/7 adds more work," says Casini. "But the pop-up experience allows us to be surprising."

If used in a certain way, Instagram can be effective. New York's The Row has more than one million followers but, rather than clothes, its grid is a mood board of art and design. "A brand's aesthetic is so visible in the shop but how do you put that across without a physical space?" says Charlotte Lewis, founder of kaftan brand Ven Store. "Mood-boarding expresses the vision of a brand. You can say a lot without having to post three times a day. A brand doesn't have to shout the loudest to be noticed." - GC







Do trunk shows, not runway shows Stôffa, New York

roving, temporary by-appointment not based in our home location." showrooms - are more effective (if not quite as glamorous).

York menswear brand Stoffa. "It's an opportunity for the client to interact with our team, as our product specialplete collection and fabrications."

holds monthly trunk shows in London, are likely to result in purchases). as well as events in Paris, Stockholm, LA and San Francisco; most run for two to five days. "Technology has enabled our



Catwalk shows and presentations business in so many ways but it can't held during fashion weeks can cer- replace the in-person experience," says tainly create buzz around brands. Yet Madan. "The trunk-show model has for many smaller players, trunk shows allowed us to engage clients who are

Trunk shows are a sensible model - for all types of brands, whether "A trunk show is more than they specialise in made to measure or a pure marketing exercise," says ready to wear - because brands can Agyesh Madan, co-founder of New deal with end consumers directly and guarantee there is sufficient customer interest before committing to the event. Atelier Saman Amel is hosting ists can walk clients through the com- its next show in New York and, as of July, was fully booked (with 25 to 30 Stoffa is based in Manhattan but appointments, the majority of which

> The Swedish brand works with a small property agent that sublets gallery spaces and conference rooms in London and New York to secure superior locations at good prices. "Classic tailors book a large room in a hotel but we want to have an environment that's more clean, more professional and more like a showroom," says co-founder Dag Granath.

Atelier Saman Amel has a team of five; it sends along two members of staff to host each trunk event. "It's a cost, absolutely," says Granath. "But we've never had a trunk show that we didn't make quite a bit of money from." - ISW