

SPECIAL ISSUE

allure



ARIANA
GRANDE

"You can never
have enough
music—or
makeup." (Now
She's Bringing
Us Both.)

BEST *of* BEAUTY TURNS 25

WITH 316 AWARD-WINNING MASCARAS,
LIPSTICKS, CURL CREAMS, SERUMS & MORE

PLUS: IRRESISTIBLE STEALS AND
AMAZING BREAKTHROUGHS

OCTOBER 2021

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BEST OF BEAUTY TURNS 25

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FAIRY TALE

For Ariana Grande, makeup is just another way to tell stories. Michael Schmidt dress. Jennifer Fisher earrings. Sarah Hendler ring.



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ON THE COVER

Jisoo Baik top. Lorraine West and Sarah Hendler earrings.

Makeup by r.e.m. beauty.

Photographed by Zoey Grossman. Fashion stylist: Arianne Phillips. Hair: Evanie Frausto. Makeup: Ash K Holm.

Manicure: Thuy Nguyen.

Set design: Bette Adams.

Backdrops: Schmidli. Production: Crawford & Co Productions.

We're always testing. Clockwise from top: beauty editor Paige Stables; staff editor Jihan Forbes; yours truly getting feedback on skin-care results from my seven-year-old; senior commerce writer Sarah Han; beauty assistant Talia Gutierrez.



swatch what happens

The first-ever Best of Beauty Awards was launched five years into a great experiment that was an all-beauty, all-the-time magazine called *Allure*. It was 1996, an election year, and the introduction to the inaugural Best of Beauty winners list referenced Bob Dole, Bill Clinton, and the power of the voting process. “We field-tested amber waves of lipstick, purple mountains of nail polish, and fruited plains of fragrance,” we wrote. “Now we’re talking America the beautiful.” Winners were categorized into the “Moist Wanted” (Clinique Dramatically Different Moisturizing Lotion, Prescriptives Flight Cream) and “Tautest of the Town” (Chanel Firming Eye Cream, Biotherm Cellulite Smoothing Concentrate). Chanel Vamp and Crème de la Mer were honored; so were Cetaphil and Vaseline (those latter two are also 2021 winners).

Innovation has flourished in these 25 years, but the alchemy that makes a beauty product a winner has largely stayed the same. “America the beautiful,” however, looks very different. Once-rigid standards of the sizes and shapes, the colors and contours of what make a person beautiful have crumbled—for good, with any luck.

There’s never been a better, freer, more wonderful time to love beauty and try on its many forms. But as a consumer, there’s also never been a more overwhelming one. A billion (give or take) new products arrive on the scene daily and how do you choose the best among billions? After a quarter century, *Allure* has it down to

a process of swatching and slathering and so, so many spreadsheets (we only hire candidates with advanced degrees in eyeliner and Excel). We’ve tasked ourselves with cutting through the clutter and confusion to lead you to the products that deliver—the ones that don’t just do what they say they’ll do, but do it better than anything else.

This is my sixth year helming the Best of Beauty process and I can tell you this: *Allure*’s testing is rigorous and regimented, and ultimately comes down to the expertise of our staff—the women, men, children, and furry creatures (check out this year’s first-ever pets category!) who spend months lathering and blending and swiping. And then rinsing. And repeating. We take our jobs and our responsibility to you (and your wallets) extremely seriously. We’re excited for the innovations that the next 25 years may bring, and however America the beautiful continues to evolve, so will we. The curious, committed, conscientious team behind Best of Beauty is, if I may say so, one in a billion.

Jenny Bailly,
Executive Beauty Director
@jbailly



of the Smithsonian National Museum of American History as an example and celebration of female entrepreneurship.

4. BAREMINERALS COMPLEXION RESCUE TINTED HYDRATING GEL CREAM

Number of wins: 4

Here's why: When this won best mineral foundation in 2017, we declared that it "deliver[s] luminous color that moisturizes as well as a lotion." Four years later, the reviews are still glowing.

Little-known fact:

Developers turned this formula inside out—encapsulating the pigments in water instead of the other way around. The resulting cream provides a burst of moisture that also helps color blend seamlessly—"a unique technology that sets them apart from ordinary tinted moisturizer," says cosmetic chemist Marisal Mou.

5. COLOR WOW ROOT COVER UP

Number of wins: 8

Here's why: This tinted powder's zinc particles cling to wiry grays and overgrown roots, so our hair color looks fresh and even until our next shampoo.

Little-known fact: The formula wasn't discovered to be waterproof until the sister of the brand's CEO reported that the powder hadn't budged after a full day of swimming.

6. ST. TROPEZ SELF TAN EXPRESS BRONZING MOUSSE

Number of wins: 3

Here's why: When this quick-dry self-tanning foam won in 2019, we wrote "one editor with a self-described 'graduate student pallor' agreed to test it. The toasty, believable results could fool a Ph.D." Sold!

Little-known fact:

Approximately 110 bottles are sold around the world every hour—that's nearly a million per year.

winner's circle

Our Best of Beauty awards have been called the industry's highest honor (we're too humble to say so ourselves, but hey, people talk), which makes these multi-time winners the beauty product equivalent of Viola Davis or Meryl Streep. And the Hall of Fame award goes to...

—BY DIANNA MAZZONE

1. AVEENO POSITIVELY RADIANT DAILY MOISTURIZER SPF 30

Number of wins: 5

Here's why: This is one of the first moisturizers with SPF that we fell for—and even though there are now more options than Netflix shows, this formula still "offers the reassurance of serious sun protection while lightening any spots that are already there" (as we proclaimed on the occasion of win number one, 15 years ago).

Little-known fact: Soy, it's not just for lattes: In skin

care, some soy extracts, like the kind that play a starring role in this lotion, have natural pigment-inhibiting properties that help fade dark spots.

2. TANGLE TEEZER THE ORIGINAL DETANGLING HAIR BRUSH

Number of wins: 4

Here's why: This palm-size tool has taken home top marks for its ability to (gently) un snag strands in a single pass.

Little-known fact: Celebrity fans include Emma Watson, Blake Lively, and...

Chewbacca, whose yeti-like mane was styled with this brush on the set of *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.

3. BEAUTYBLENDER ORIGINAL

Number of wins: 10

Here's why: We love this "squishy genius" (as we called it in 2013) for its pointy tip (perfect for blending foundation around the nose) and round base, which works best for all-over buffing.

Little-known fact: The egg-shaped sponge is in the permanent collection

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BEAUTY REPORTER



Hairstylist Guido Palau attached a chain of beaded pearls along the center part with the help of hair extension glue.

pearls of wisdom

In a marble stadium as old as history itself, beneath Athens' wine-black sky, Dior presented its 2022 Cruise collection. Models marched under fireworks, their eyes glinting from the display—or from their pearl eye makeup, hard to say for sure. That's because makeup artist Peter Philips gave us a whole new level of highlighter by adhering actual pearls next to the eyes (with a dot of lash glue). Philips was going for a surreal take on the *matiasma*—Greek for evil eye—with a little “punk insolence.” While there are few things more punk than gluing objects to one's face, the end result—balanced with fresh skin, a wash of pink on lips, and a string of pearls down the center part—was perfectly ethereal, almost holy. —BRENNAN KILBANE



make a statement

PILE ON BARRETTES OR FACE GEMS—AND THEN ADD A FEW MORE. IT'S TIME TO EMBRACE EXCESS.

The beauty of a hair accessory: "It changes a look completely without any skill level required," says hairstylist Justine Marjan. Play with bold colors and shapes (like the kelly green Kanel barrette [4] or the Lelet NY Gemma Clip [5]) to sweep hair to the side, or "use pins and clips as an unexpected pop at the base of a ponytail," adds Marjan. Try Area's Crystal Bow Clip [3] or Gucci's Crystal Hair Clip [1]. If you're really working against the clock, a delicate, embellished headband (like the pearl Jennifer Behr Iris Headband [2]) has the power to make even bedhead look chic.

—PAIGE STABLES



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K-pop and *Euphoria* have helped artful makeup trickle into the mainstream, but gluing on jewels and painting kitschy designs around your eyes can leave you with dwindled patience—and a colorful mess. New decals make high-impact makeup incredibly easy: You simply peel and stick. Simihaze Eye Play Sticker Book Rave Pack [7] is a collaboration with K-pop's Blackpink. Place a sticker along the lash line for an instant neon

8



cat eye. Donni x Face Lace Eye-Lectric and Spiked! face decals [8] were created by *Euphoria*'s head makeup artist, Doniella Davy. We like stacking a few for a holographic effect. Or randomly place E.L.F. Cosmetics Face and Body Gems in Iridescent [6] around your eyes like confetti. No matter which look you choose, zero manicures will be ruined in the process. —DEVON ABELMAN



get red-y

Swiping on lipstick after lipstick, rubbing your mouth raw with makeup remover in between, and ultimately eyeballing it...In our experience, finding the perfect shade of red isn't an exact science. But Clinique begs to differ. Each pink-y and orange-y and bluish-red bullet in the brand's Pop Reds collection is specifically designed to balance the most common mix of undertones found in different complexions. First, Clinique had to figure out what those undertones were, so they enlisted a team of engineers and data scientists to analyze more than 10 million faces, using artificial intelligence. Next, images of the faces' undertones were fed through an algorithm to determine what ratio of, say, white to pink pigments would look most harmonious with yellow tones in the skin. At this point, you might be wondering, what does an algorithm—

even one with 4,000 data points, like Clinique's—know about lipstick? Clinique says its algorithm is based on the Golden Ratio, a mathematical relationship that defines harmony and symmetry. (Before lipstick, it was applied to art and architecture and has been used to explain why the Mona Lisa and the Taj Mahal are so captivating.) The seven red lipsticks the algorithm generated are based “strictly on a mathematical equation,” says Janet Pardo, senior vice president of product development at Clinique. The devil was in the details, she says, adding that though some of the shades may look similar, it's the subtleties of each red's pigments that satisfy the nuances determined by the algorithm. (Each red corresponds to a few different shades of Clinique Even Better Foundation, so it helps to know your foundation shade in order to get your red.) Since red lipsticks are notorious for transferring to teeth and bleeding around the edges of lips, Pardo chose a special “hugging” polymer that helps the formula adhere—that part, at least, is universal. —DIANNA MAZZONE



exclusive

TOO GOOD

Too Faced thinks sex is great. But the brand has always thought its mascara is better. (And maybe it is? Too Faced Better Than Sex mascara is the number-one selling prestige mascara in the U.S.) Now Too Faced is claiming its new fragrance is too. To create Better Than Sex the scent (the brand's first), Too Faced cofounder Jerrod Blandino wanted to bottle an olfactory vision he'd been having: musky sweat and a blown-out bedside candle mingling with one lover's woody fragrance and another's floral scent. He gave the job to perfumer Frank Voelkl (the nose behind Le Labo's cult-favorite Santal 33) and the result is a spritz that has a strong, flowery aroma (jasmine, rose) before quickly melting into something softer and smokier (cedarwood, musk, patchouli). Blandino and Voelkl went back and forth on various scents for a couple of years (if something's going to be better than sex, it can't be premature) until they landed on an “almost perfect” fragrance, says Voelkl. “We don't want you to identify every single note in there; that keeps sparking the interest.” And that's sexy. —NICOLA DALL'ASEN



Allure Beauty Box alert! **SHADOW PLAY**

Kaja's eye shadow tower is barely bigger than a Hershey's Miniature, but the powders inside have big-time color payoff. For a glam look on the quick, I flip open the Beauty Bento Eyeshadow Trio in Chocolate Dahlia and blend Brown Sugar (a matte chocolate deep enough for my dark skin) into my creases before dabbing Cool Khaki (a matte tan) over my lids. Then it's time for my personal favorite: Crushed Pearl. I dust it around the inner corners of my eyes for a reflective, rose-gold highlight that makes this so much cooler than the average smoke show. —GABRIELA THORNE

The October Allure Beauty Box includes Kaja's Beauty Bento Eyeshadow Trio in Chocolate Dahlia along with six other products (\$23 per month). Go to allure.com/beautyreporter to subscribe to the Allure Beauty Box by October 31 and get this eye shadow trio (while supplies last) and more delivered to your door.

EDITORS' FAVORITES

SURE, YOU DON'T NEED ANYTHING. BUT IF YOU'RE LIKE US, THIS IS THE STUFF YOU REALLY, REALLY WANT.



1. Liis Rose Struck.

With energizing notes of matcha tea and tangerine, this perfume is zippier than the usual floral—making it a delight even for foes of classic rose.



2. Keys Soulcare Sage + Oat Milk Candle.

The next-best thing to having Alicia Keys sing you a lullaby is lighting this calming sage-spiked candle (made with vegan soy wax) from her new line.



3. Rose Inc. Softlight Luminous Hydrating Concealer.

The word “concealer” is a misnomer when the coverage looks this natural. The lightweight liquid (in 20 shades) melts into skin without any caking.



4. Kjaer Weis Im-Possible Mascara.

With marula and sunflower seed oils, this volumizing mascara should slide right off. Right? Wrong. It doesn't budge—and when we finally do remove it, all those oils leave our lashes feeling silky soft.



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5. Ceremonia Guava Leave-in Conditioner.

Rake a dollop of this avocado and safflower oil-infused repair cream through damp hair to get an instant whiff of summer. If this tropical, guava-scented, leave-in hydrator had a theme song, it'd be “Kokomo.”



6. Neutrogena Rapid Firming Peptide Multi Action Eye Cream.

This lightweight eye treatment is a better communicator than most of our exes: Its peptides tell skin cells to create collagen, which helps lessen dark circles.



7. Burt's Bees Squeezy Tinted Balm in Mandarin Granita.

Like your favorite pair of “dressy” sweatpants, this lip tint—made with shea butter—is ultra-comfortable to wear, but still makes you feel pulled together.



8. Meloway Your Way Eyeliner + Remover.

We've purposely overdone a cat eye just for the satisfaction of touching it up using the remover-soaked tip on this dual-ended liquid liner.



9. Dr.Jart+ Cicapair Tiger Grass Cream.

The green-tinted formula counteracts redness, and centella asiatica treats it over time. But what really impresses us is that during October 100 percent of the purchase price goes to the Breast Cancer Research Foundation.

long story short

Before the millions of Instagram followers and the *Queer Eye* empire, Jonathan Van Ness's entrée into hairstyling wasn't exactly a fairytale. "I didn't feel confident about the way I looked, and I think that's because there was such a strict idea of what a man was supposed to look like. I don't want people to feel bad about themselves ever again and that's so much of what moves me about doing hair," says Van Ness, who just launched a line of hair care, JVN, an extensive range of shampoos, conditioners, treatments, and one low-key styler, Complete Air Dry Cream. "You don't need to do anything with your hair because you're a certain gender, a certain age, a certain this, a certain that," says Van Ness. "I want everyone to feel entitled to their version of beauty."

On getting into hair styling: "When I was three, I got kitchen scissors and cut an aggressive baby fringe on myself—just the teeny-tiniest little Betty Boop fringe on my big, curly toddler hair. It was a look. I always knew I wanted to be a hairdresser. Then it was a matter of

convincing my family. Vocational schools and creative lines of work are just not seen as this goal—and for me, it was *such* a goal. My family was saying, 'You've got to figure out how to pay for it then—do not pass go, honey.' So that's what I did, taking out my first loan."

On aging well: "I'm getting tons of gray, which I love. I'm honored to be 34, to be married, to have five cats and two chickens and a dog. I'm trying to make my hair look as big and curly and luscious as I can for as long as I have it. When I was 18, 19, I started to lose my hair, and my doctor [suggested Propecia, an oral medication]. I take it nightly. It's been a part of my hair journey."

On beauty routines as self-care: "It's almost turned into a mini yoga practice for me. It's 10 minutes of listening to your breath, and I can realize, Is there anxiety? Is there doubt? When you're focusing on something methodical, putting on your skin care or doing your hair, you

can get curious about what's going on for you, and then you can be more intentional with how you treat yourself."

On fiction's greatest beauty icons: "Does Blanche Devereaux count? Actually, it's a conglomeration of all the *Golden Girls*, because I love Bea Arthur's salt-and-pepper, I love Blanche's confidence, but then I also am obsessed with Betty White's everything."

On beauty regrets: "One time in hair school, I had this crazy, multicolored, tropical fish-toned faux-hawk, and it was everything. But my grandma came to town and I needed to color it brown because I didn't want her to have a breakdown about me having 27 different colors of hair. Then I was just feeling so not cute and un-zhuzhed, so I

rehighlighted everything. It was a triple bleach in three weeks. It was gnarly. One night I came home from a long shift at Applebee's and couldn't find a lighter, so I turned on my stove [and] bent over to light a cigarette, and my hair was so fried, the flame literally leapt two feet onto a big, smoky-lavender chunk in the front. It singed all the way to my root, but I was attached to my little asymmetrical fringe, so I just had this missing chunk in the middle for three weeks."

On beauty rules worth breaking: "Every piece of gender-specific advice that I've ever gotten—anything that started with, 'Men do...' Anything that started with those two words."

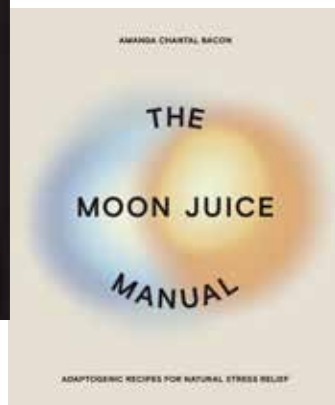
If JVN were a beauty look, it would be: "An effortless lob. That's kind of my vibe."
—ELIZABETH SIEGEL



From left: JVN Complete Pre-Wash Scalp Oil, Complete Instant Recovery Serum, Complete Air Dry Cream (use it to tamp down flyaways on dry hair too), and Nuture Deep Moisture Mask—"I know I'm not supposed to have favorites, but this is it," says Van Ness.



Two of Van Ness's go-tos: Dieux's reusable eye patches "create less waste in this world" and Herbivore Coconut Milk Bath Soak "is great after a long day."



book club

REQUIRED READING (OR PICTURE-GAZING) FOR THE BUDDING AESTHETICS SCHOLAR.

HISTORY: MISS DIOR

Justine Picardie visited Dior's archives to write a biography of the house's namesake designer, but found herself drawn to the tale of his sister and muse, Catherine. The book shares stories, such as when she joined her brother at the launch of Miss Dior. "Christian was musing about what the perfume should be called, when Catherine walked into the room," Picardie writes, and his friend cried out, "'Tiens! Voilà Miss Dior!'"

HOW TO: TRUE COLOR

All blondes go to heaven... but first they stop at Mèche, the L.A. salon where Tracey Cunningham has lived and dyed for nearly a decade. (Her origin story: She nannied for Bette Midler, and gave her impromptu blowouts.) Cunningham's "essential hair color handbook" dispenses wisdom in varied formats: a glossary of terms, and advice like "Colorist Career Lesson #2: Be the Best Assistant Who Ever Lived."

ART: PERSONA

Though he's more well-known for his eponymous makeup line, François Nars is probably one of the most gifted portrait photographers of our time, argues Marina Schiano. Nars is capable of capturing subjects—Marc Jacobs, Tilda Swinton, Kanye, Kim, and, yes, Bette Midler—as they've never been captured, or made up, before. Collect it for the famous faces; treasure it for the beauty inspiration.

FOOD: THE MOON JUICE MANUAL

When wellness guru Amanda Chantal Bacon scored a two-book deal, she knew how they'd read. The first would catalog recipes from her Venice Beach "adaptogenic" smoothie shop (it sold like ashwagandha root hotcakes); the second, out this fall, combines "comfort foods," like brownies, with advice on how stress manifests in the body. It's food for thought, and everything tastes good.

HAUTE TIPS

It is one of the world's most recognizable colors and can turn a gift box into an heirloom. It goes by the technical name of Pantone 16-1448, but you know it as Hermès Orange and—why didn't they think of this sooner?—now we can paint it on our nails. Orange Boîte (French for orange box) is one of 24 shades in Hermès' new nail polish collection. It's joined by other heritage colors, including the brownish-burgundy Rouge H (the color of a leather Hermès has used since 1925) and Brun Bistre, the deep brown that runs the borders of each Hermès box. There are also refined reds, flattering neutrals, splashes of color (yellow, violet, green), and a branded orange nail file. You can buy each polish on its own (for \$45), or seriously splurge on the entire collection packaged in a three-tiered leather hatbox, called the Carousel, for \$28,500—yes, that's more than classic Birkin bags. —PAIGE STABLES




COURTESY OF BRAND

thirty & *thriving*



BREAST CANCER ISN'T ALL PINK RIBBONS. IT'S REAL PEOPLE, WITH REAL LIVES. TAKE IT FROM THESE YOUNG WOMEN. THE WORD "STRENGTH" HAS A DIFFERENT MEANING FOR EACH OF THEM, YET THEY ARE ALL THE EPITOME OF IT—AND THEY ARE ALL *LIVING* WITH GRACE, HOPE, AND PERSEVERANCE IN THE FACE OF METASTATIC BREAST CANCER.

BY PAIGE STABLES



It's rare for young women to be diagnosed with breast cancer. "It's still 5 to 6 percent of all incidents for someone under the age of 40," says Dorraya El-Ashry, chief scientific officer of the Breast Cancer Research Foundation. "But even given that, it's the most common cancer among younger patients."

A recent study found there has been a significant rise of stage four breast cancer in young women: The number of 25- to 39-year-olds with metastatic breast cancer increased 32 percent between 2009 and 2015. And just this July, a study found that annual costs associated with metastatic breast cancer among women in the United States will more than double between 2015 and 2030 due to an increase in cases among younger women.

The thought of stage four breast cancer in your 20s or 30s seems unimaginable...until it happens.

In March, I celebrated being three years cancer-free, my heart bursting with gratitude. I was playing tennis, running, taking on a leadership role with a nonprofit, The Pink Agenda, and planning the Italian wedding of my dreams with my fiancé. In April, I found out my breast cancer had metastasized in my right femur.

Truly, in a moment, my worst nightmare became my reality. That's because all I ever knew was the negative connotation of the word "metastatic." Terminal. Incurable. Tragic.

But as it turns out, that isn't the only meaning of this devastating diagnosis.

Life is about perspective, and positivity has always been my shield. I couldn't change my diagnosis, but I could control my mindset. Though heartbreaking, I have always said breast cancer would never define me. This stage four diagnosis is no exception. So I have refused to skip a beat.

There might not be a cure (yet!), but there is always hope. Today,

tomorrow, and every day after. I trust in research and new treatments, and I trust in the timing of my life.

In June, my doctor gave me some advice—two simple words: "Celebrate life." I've done so every day since: champagne in Central Park; savoring days spent at the beach; saying goodbye to the walker I needed after having surgery on my leg; girls' nights with my best friends; watching the sunset along the Hudson River; late-night trips to Van Leeuwen ice cream; dressing up, just because; running on the treadmill for 10 minutes during physical therapy I never thought I would need; going on business trips; and taking a spontaneous vacation to the Amalfi Coast to celebrate my 30th birthday in July.

I've continued to live my best New York City life, cherishing every moment with my loved ones, enjoying the job of my dreams, and seeing beauty in everything—just as I did before.

In these past few months, I've realized I'm surrounded by inspiring women doing the same thing from Los Angeles to New York, nationwide, and around the world. This isn't just about me. Women living with metastatic breast cancer are called "thrivers" for a reason: Nothing can stop us from living our lives to the fullest.

Here, in their own words, are some of their stories.—P.S.

RIDING THE WAVE

SUSAN, 31

Young women get a lot of, "You're too young." Or, I heard repeatedly, "It's definitely stage one," before my staging had been done.

I was diagnosed at age 30, "de novo," meaning I was diagnosed stage four from the start. It had already spread to my spine. It felt strange because I was the healthiest I'd been in my entire life.

When I found out that it was metastatic—and before I had done more research—I was devastated. I was crying and screaming. I was inconsolable. I couldn't believe it. From what I understood, it was terminal. A death sentence. It felt like so many of my hopes and dreams of the future came crashing down.

Since then, I've learned there's way more to it than when you just google "metastatic breast cancer." You can really live a full life. It doesn't

have to be a whole part of me. Every day, I try to maintain 90 percent of me, and then 10 percent of me is dealing with this cancer journey.

I am not unrealistic about this disease. But just like there is the possibility of a shortened life span, there are possibilities of wonderful things too. I want to stay myself—and I've realized that I *can* stay myself and it doesn't have to be this huge part of my thoughts. I don't even think about it all the time anymore. And I'm still in heavy treatment.

I have changed my lifestyle a lot since diagnosis: I eat way more fruits and vegetables, stopped drinking, prioritize moving my body, and cut down work and family stress by meditating and saying mantras. In a lot of ways, I actually feel better than I did before.

I am fully living my life. I have joy. I love to dance. I'm super active. I love surfing. Pre-diagnosis, I was surfing three hours every single day, five or six times a week. You couldn't get me out of the water. I had to start wearing a watch because, otherwise, I would just stay out there all day, surfing and watching dolphins.

I just went surfing and caught this beautiful wave—fully bald—in Montauk, New York. I fell off and worried that I hurt myself, so I had to stop for a little bit. My doctors put me on probation [laughs].

But I am still working out. I worked out four to five days a week during chemo to feel like myself. When I lost my hair and my eyelashes and my eyebrows, I felt like I was watching myself fall off. Everything that made me *me* was going away. And I was like, If I can keep using my body, I'm going to keep using my body.

It takes so much mental and physical strength to get up every day and say, "I'm going to keep going, even though there's no bell to be rung or finish line necessarily to be crossed." I remain hopeful for the future but grounded in the present. I know anything is possible for the future, good and bad. Right now, I am optimistic.

I want people to know that we are still living humans. We don't have an expiration date. Nobody knows how long they have to live. I want people to remember that we're the same people that we were before, in spite of this disease. I'm not a cancer patient. I'm me.



BOTH SIDES NOW

NATALIA, 37

Every morning I look in the mirror and tell myself things like, “I’m healed,” or “I’m alive.” Sometimes it feels like I’m dying all the time, but I remind myself that part of that is just being alive. I have to remind myself I am alive right now—and remember that.

People who know you personally don’t want to face the possibility that you might die. People don’t like to talk about progression or having stage four breast cancer. I mean, that’s what everyone’s trying to avoid.

Sometimes I feel like the end is coming, and I need people to realize that’s okay for me to feel. It’s not giving up. Because other days I feel like I’m thriving and I can live with this for a long time. A good example is now: The meds are working and there’s no progression.

My body feels better than it has in a long time. So I think, like, Fuck yeah, this is great! I’m going to be living with cancer for a long time and be able to see my two kids grow up. However, when things do progress or I have symptoms from medications, if I express this outwardly, people think I’m giving up on this “fight.”

But it’s not a fight. I can’t choose what I’m going through. I want to live my life the way I want to, not as others want me to do.

That gives me a lot of strength to say on my bad days, “I don’t feel optimistic.” And then on my good days, I feel awesome at living. It doesn’t have to be one or another. It doesn’t have to be black and white.

I feel more mentally healthy than I have in a long time. I’m part of a podcast called *Our MBC Life*. It has helped me understand my cancer better than I probably could have going to support groups.

I don’t know if it was in my wheelhouse before, but getting involved in the community can be empowering because you feel like you’re doing something for someone else to avoid going through what you already have.

STRENGTH TRAINING

ALEXIS, 38

When you see someone with metastatic breast cancer, often they look fine. It looks like nothing is wrong. You really live a double life. I have my hair back now and you’d never know. You deal with side effects, fertility, your mortality, your femininity. But you also have to keep on going. You don’t have a choice.

It’s been a whirlwind. When I found out I had stage four breast cancer, I thought I was going to black out. I thought, Oh, my God! I’m 33 and going to die. In my mind, I thought I had done everything right. I had lived a healthy lifestyle, did yoga, went to work every day, and paid my taxes. I couldn’t believe this was happening. The first few weeks and months were the hardest—I had no idea what was ahead.

And then you have to go, Okay, I didn’t do anything wrong, but this is my reality. And I made peace with it.

I have a sticky note on my desk that says, “You can’t wait until life isn’t hard anymore before you decide to be happy.” I look at it when I’m having a tough day and remind myself that being happy is a choice.

When I came out of chemo, I wanted to get stronger. I started weight lifting, went to the gym, and did heavy squats. I documented it on Instagram, and that gave me an identity after going through the initial stages of chemotherapy. But as time has gone on, I don’t really identify as much physically with that person.

I wanted my body to be strong. I wanted to show other people I could be strong. But it’s morphed into something else. What I think of as strength isn’t physical anymore. I wanted to be a better version of myself than I was before. Now I don’t feel that pressure.

You look fear in the face. After such an extreme experience, you’re not as afraid. That’s also a benefit from it. The worst thing that’s going to happen has already happened. I recognize that I can get through very difficult things, things that I never thought I could because I don’t have a choice—and I manage to find joy. I get up every day and do the best I can.



ON POINT

MAGGIE, 30

Ballet has always been my first love. I love the rules of it. If it’s right, it’s right. And if it’s wrong, it’s wrong. There’s no in-between.

But you can also still show your personality. Ballet dancers aren’t all robots. A tendu—or leg extended in front—can be beautiful. And it’s the simplest movement in the world. It’s not a flip. It’s not a turn. The simple steps are beautiful.

I’ve been a dancer my whole life and dance is my life. I was on the path to becoming a professional ballet dancer—dancing at the Joffrey Ballet Concert Group in New York—and got the news I had metastatic breast cancer.

I went in knowing nothing about it at age 23, and it took me a good year and a half to really understand what metastatic breast cancer was—and to understand that it’s *not* terrible. I have a short life expectancy, but I’ve accepted it.

It’s been seven years and my mind-set has changed. Every year, new treatments come out and something new is discovered. It keeps me hopeful that maybe the next time I need to switch treatments, the next drug could be the one that keeps me alive for 10 or 15 more years. I’m hopeful because you never know what’s around the corner.

Anytime I’m in the studio, I put aside what’s happening outside that door and am in the moment. Whether it’s teaching, dancing myself, or taking class, it’s like therapy for me—I can release everything. Even if I’m not dancing at the level I was before, I’m able to do the basics, and that’s therapeutic for me. Instead of talking to someone, I can dance my feelings away.

I remind myself of a Dolly Parton quote: “If you want the rainbow, you gotta put up with the rain.” There’s always a hard time before a good time. There’s always something beautiful about a negative. I’ve had wonderful moments in the past seven years that I wouldn’t change for the world, and I’ve just had to go through something really horrible to get a lot of those moments.

—THRIVER STORIES AS TOLD TO PAIGE STABLES

For a guide to the best practices for self-exams, go to allure.com/story/breast-self-exam-steps.

ASK THE BEAUTY EXPERT

TO CELEBRATE THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF BEST OF BEAUTY, 25 OF OUR BEST (PRESENT AND FORMER) SHARE THEIR TOP BEAUTY TIP OF ALL TIME.

LINDA WELLS

FOUNDING EDITOR IN CHIEF, 1991-2015

"When you're using a serum, especially one with vitamin C, don't try to stretch out the life of the bottle. Use it lavishly. The active ingredients in most serums start to degrade the minute they're exposed to oxygen. One tip that has no expiration date is kindness. It might sound corny but it's true. Joy, smiling, generosity—they're all more effective than anything in a bottle or jar."

MICHELLE LEE

EDITOR IN CHIEF, 2015-2021

"A life-changing beauty tip doesn't have to be complicated: If you have short, straight lashes like I do, always use waterproof mascara. You'll get upturned lashes...that actually stay that way all day."

PAUL CAVACO

CREATIVE DIRECTOR, 1999-2016

"Instead of splashing water on your face before cleansing, put cream cleanser on dry, then work it in before rinsing it off. I find it leaves my face much cleaner."

JENNY BAILLY

EXECUTIVE BEAUTY DIRECTOR, 2013-PRESENT

"When you look at your face in the mirror, try to look at it the way you would someone you love very much—with openness and appreciation and affection. Second-best beauty tip: Four to five drops of SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic massaged in before sunscreen every morning will transform your skin."

RACHAEL WANG

FASHION DIRECTOR, 2016-2017

"By watching countless makeup artists on shoots over the years, I learned to apply tinted brow gel by first brushing the brows downwards to coat the top side of the hairs and then brushing them upwards to coat the bottom side for that Brooke Shields-fluffy brow effect. The same can be done with mascara."

MEIRAV DEVASH

ARTICLES EDITOR, 2004-2008

"After putting on lipstick, place your (clean) finger in your mouth and pull it out. Do you look like you're shooting NSFW content at the dinner table? Maybe, but it beats lipstick on your teeth."

SOPHIA PANYCH

DEPUTY DIGITAL BEAUTY DIRECTOR, 2010-2019

"If you wear foundation or concealer and you want to apply powder-based bronzer or blush on top, make sure to dust on a thin layer of setting powder first. This keeps the creamy base products from eating away at your blush or bronzer, ensuring it will last longer. Makeup artist Tom Pecheux gave me this tip backstage at fashion week, and I've used it in my own routine every day since."

RAJNI JACQUES

FASHION DIRECTOR, 2017-2021

"Moisturize, moisturize, moisturize. I am not just talking about your face, but your whole body from the arms to feet, and elbows to heels. Supple skin makes you look fresh. My go-to is all-natural shea butter and coconut oil."



LIANA SCHAFFNER

ASSOCIATE EDITOR, 2005-2010

"During a shoot waaay back in 2010, the makeup artist suggested mascara wasn't about enhancing your lashes, but enhancing your eye shape. It was a minor revelation. I stopped gobbing the stuff on and just started applying it to my outer lashes for an elongated, wing-y effect. I've never looked back."

TALIA CUTIERREZ

**EDITORIAL ASSISTANT,
2019-PRESENT**

"Take the time to find a facial cleanser you absolutely love. That way you'll never skip taking your makeup off before bed."

BRENNAN KILBANE

SENIOR WRITER, 2017-PRESENT

"I believe it was makeup artist Isamaya Ffrench's advice to use brow products that have gray undertones, so you paint both the brow and a shadow beneath the brow at the same time for a more natural look. I do this on my mustache too. It's very faux Freddie Mercury!"

DANIELLE PERCAMENT

EXECUTIVE EDITOR, 2000-2018

"If you have to cut your own bangs, use fingernail clippers held vertically. They're small enough that you can't really mess up and it gives your hair a sexy, lived-in vibe."

JESSICA CHIA

**EXECUTIVE BEAUTY EDITOR,
2016-2019**

"Bring a crystal file to nail appointments: It helps lessen the rough, frayed edges you get from cheaper files and prevents breakage."

AMY KELLER LAIRD

**BEAUTY DIRECTOR,
2004-2011**

"The best way to enhance loose waves for a beachy-cool texture: Choose flexible-hold mousse, apply it in marble-size dabs around your head—at the crown, in the middle of the hair shaft, and near the ends. Finger-comb it all through, scrunch... and then *don't touch it* until it's dry. It's so hard not to futz with your hair as it's drying, but when you do, it stirs up frizz. Once dry, blast dry shampoo an inch down from the roots and through the underside of hair, massage, and go."

JOAN KRON

**CONTRIBUTING EDITOR AT LARGE,
1991-2016**

"A must, in my opinion, before injections or facelift consultations: Don't go with overgrown brows. Get your eyebrows waxed or tweezed professionally so the doctor can see where your eyebrows really are. Otherwise the injector or surgeon may raise your brows too high."

LORI SECAL

RESEARCH DIRECTOR, 2008-2021

"When you're in a pinch and rushing to go out, dab a shimmery neutral eye shadow at the inner corners of your eyes. It works wonders for looking more bright-eyed and awake, even without mascara."

PAICE STABLES

BEAUTY EDITOR, 2019-PRESENT

"To carry your fragrance with you always target exposed pulse points like your wrists or neck, and then also spritz your hairbrush with perfume and run it through your hair. It's unforgettable—for you and everyone you meet."

ELIZABETH SIEGEL

**DEPUTY BEAUTY DIRECTOR,
2010-PRESENT**

"Right after you put on hand cream, press the palms of your hands against your cheeks—it's facial-level dewiness on your way out the door."

ANGELIQUE SERRANO

BEAUTY EDITOR, 2010-2011

"A makeup artist once told me to apply my blush high atop my cheekbones—just below the outer corners of my eyes—to give my entire face a more lifted look. It absolutely works. I find that cream or liquid blush make for the easiest blending."

KRISTIN PERROTTA

EXECUTIVE EDITOR, 1996-2016

"I call this 'The Sloppy Painter's Pedicure.' If your nails look like a toddler did them, let them dry, then take a shower and scrape any polish off your skin with a finger as the water rains down. You don't run the risk of taking polish off your nails like you do by touching up with polish remover."

PATRICIA ALFONSO TORTOLANI

BEAUTY DIRECTOR, 2003-2014

"I've applied sunscreen with a foundation brush for years. It's great for adults and *amazing* for kids. I keep the brush in my beach bag."

JESSICA CRUEL

**CONTENT DIRECTOR,
2019-PRESENT**

"For a dewy glow that doesn't disappear, I like to apply a face oil to the high points of my face. Then, I slather on a cream highlighter and apply my foundation, concealer, blush, and contour. Finally, I add a layer of highlighter powder on top."

SASHA CHARNIN MORRISON

FASHION DIRECTOR, 1999-2006

"I think I landed my job at *Allure* because during my interview with Linda Wells, she commented on how spot-on my eyeliner was and asked how my hand was so steady. My tip: no caffeine until after liner application!"

LINDSY VAN GELDER

CHIEF WRITER, 1991-2009

"If you have superfine hair that looks gunky or flat after conditioning, condition and rinse out *before* you shampoo."

LAUREL NAVERSEN GERAGHTY

ASSOCIATE EDITOR, 2001-2002

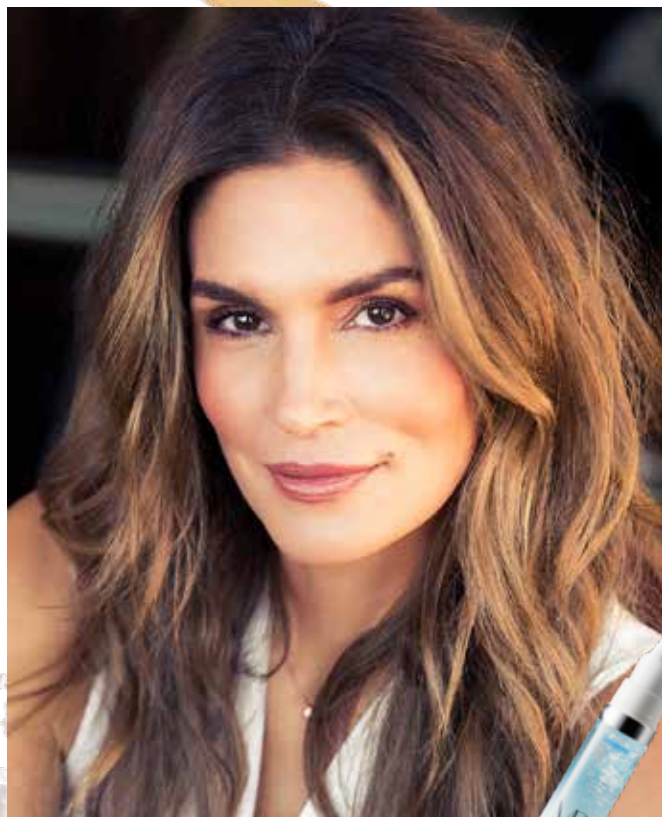
"Skin health boils down to one thing: sunscreen, sunscreen, and more sunscreen. If all you ever do for your skin is protect it from sunshine by wearing broad spectrum SPF 30+, you are doing far more for it than any night cream." We *all* agree on this one. But Geraghty went on to become a dermatologist after her tenure at *Allure*—so take it from her!



Cheeky, lippy, and eye shadow-y advice, courtesy of *Allure's* editors. Send your burning (or itching, or otherwise inflamed) questions to beautyexpert@allure.com.

cindy crawford

When you're a supermodel by the name of Cindy, your beauty routine starts in an outdoor Jacuzzi with views of Malibu's coastline where you recite positive affirmations to center yourself for the day. And somehow it gets even better from there. By Talia Gutierrez



"Oxygenetix Foundation [1] looks as if you're not wearing foundation [Crawford's shade is Walnut]. I love Chantecaille Cheek Gelée in Happy [4]. It's a tiny kiss of color with a sheer glow. Charlotte Tilbury Film Star Bronze & Glow [6] is for when I'm going out. I'll use the [highlighter] on my eyes [as well]."



"My lips are not even. I do a slight correction using VeryTerri Beauty Stay Put Lip Liner in S'more [7]. It stays on, even if you put gloss, [like] 111Skin Meso Infusion Lip Duo [2], over it."



"Taking a bath for me is a ritual, a 'take me away' moment. Ahava Mineral Bath Salt in Calming Lavender [5] has a beautiful smell. I've been a fan of the Eleemis Body Brush [3] for years. I love dry brushing before I get in the shower. It's invigorating and a great way to exfoliate."



"I love things that give you instant [results]. Meaningful Beauty Youth Activating Smoothing and Refreshing Eye Serum [9] smooths fine lines for that instant effect, but also firms over time." (Crawford is the founder of Meaningful Beauty.)



"As you get older, your skin definitely gets drier. I use Footlogix Cracked Heel Formula [10] at night because it's not greasy and doesn't stain your sheets. No one ever talks about your hair aging [or] getting thinner. Meaningful Beauty Restorative Scalp Treatment [8] protects your scalp, which literally is at the root of hair health."

TALKING BEAUTY WITH...

the *backstreet boys*

TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AFTER THEIR FIRST ALBUM, THEY'VE STILL GOT IT GOING ON.



Together: the Backstreet Boys. Separately, from left: Brian Littrell, AJ McLean, Nick Carter, Kevin Richardson, and Howie Dorough.

DENNIS LEUPOLD

An early holiday gift from the Backstreet Boys to you: 12 shows in Las Vegas comprising A Very Backstreet Christmas Party. To celebrate, the Backstreet Men (now aged 41-49) took a beautiful stroll down memory lane, finding hair extensions, MAC foundation, and plenty of sage advice.

Howie Dorough: Do you guys remember when we performed at SeaWorld Grad Nite? [Editor's note: This was in 1993, three years before their first album, *Backstreet Boys*, led to fame, frosted tips, and so much merch.] We had biker leather jackets and jeans and white T-shirts, and that was our first "look."

AJ McLean: [And] the Channel 6 News appearance. I'd had Nick's mom relax my hair so that it could be straight and long because my hair is naturally curly. It was an awkward phase.

Kevin Richardson: We did all these shoots so magazines could use the photos throughout the year. They were helping us get out there and be visible because we didn't have the internet back then. There was one shoot in the U.K. where we were all in silver, shiny shirts, holding disco balls, and we had way too much makeup on.

Nick Carter: The makeup was a very key component to those shoots. The one we got really dolled up for was the second rendition of the "I'll Never Break Your Heart" music video. I wanted to look like an anime character.



The Boys in Miami Beach, 1997. From top, left to right: Richardson, Dorough, Littrell, McLean, Carter. Below: a 1998 performance.



Brian Littrell: In the early days, all five of us had more hair than we do now. Looking at old pictures and seeing my hairline...I used to wear my hair straight back in the early days; they called me "Slick Rick." Then I went into the Caesar look. [See top image, center.]

Dorough: We've all at one point in our career had Caesar haircuts.

McLean: All five of us. It's very short and basically a straight line of hair right across the front. It's combed forward...almost like a bowl cut, except it's not all the way around.

Dorough: It was our version of Jim Carrey in *Dumb and Dumber*.

Richardson: For one photo shoot,

they flat-ironed my layers and it looked like I had paintbrushes coming out of my hair—like an artichoke.

McLean: One of my favorites is when I shaved my head and did leopard print. The hairstylist bleached my hair, then she took her thumb and put a bunch of black spots all over my head. Then, with a brush, she put a darker blond around it to give it some depth.

Dorough: Being half Puerto Rican and half Irish, I have a head of hair that has a mind of its own. After my Caesar cut, I saw Ricky Martin being really popular at the time with his long hair, so I figured the half Puerto Rican side of me was somehow going to be able to grow my hair out like

BOY STUFF

1. Aveeno Skin Relief Moisturizing Lotion
2. Ava Dean Beauty Nail Polish in Ursula
3. MAC Studio Fix Fluid Foundation in NW30
4. Olaplex No. 4 Bond Maintenance Shampoo, No. 5 Bond Maintenance Conditioner, and No. 8 Bond Intense Moisture Mask



Ricky Martin. But I came to realize that mine wasn't as thick as his, so it looked more like a stringy mop. I had to have some extra hair help, so they would put extensions in, which was not fun to do with all the glue and stuff. I learned how to use a flat iron, which was not something I thought was very manly at the time. But it finally grew out to a point where the guys thought I was going for a *Jesus Christ Superstar* look.

McLean: Losing my hair is something that I have personally struggled with for a long time. I ended up going to the straight Pitbull look where it's just bald, and since then I've had hair surgery. I did it right before I got married, which will have been 10 years ago in December. I'm going back under the knife again this year. I had gotten to that place where I was shaving my head all the time because it was easier to maintain and it happened to look good with my tattoos. But once I had [the surgery] done, I posted pictures on my socials. I wasn't ashamed because I totally accept whatever anybody wants to do to make themselves feel better, to boost their self-confidence.

Dorough: At this point, we're not 20 years old. Every so often I get a HydraFacial, use moisturizer, and use sunscreen. We are like wine: We're getting better with time, but you've got to massage those grapes and keep them good and juicy and plump.

McLean: The hell are you talking about?

Dorough: Yeah! Getting juicy and plump. That's what you've got to do.

Littrell: I like Aveeno lotion because the skin on my face is tough, but it can also get irritated at times. I use Olaplex on my hair. I got into that seven or eight months ago, and I've already got hair in places that I didn't have hair, which I think is exceptional.

Carter: I'm a big fan of Le Labo Santal 33. My wife sprayed it on me one day and I just didn't stop wearing it.

McLean: I wear foundation every day; I have for years now. MAC NW30. Maybelline mascara is my number one choice for coloring in my mustache and whatnot. But what everybody knows me for is my nail polish. I've been wearing nail polish for 25 years now. Never in a million years did I think I would have my own company [Ava Dean Beauty], which was inspired by my daughters. Our

daddy-daughter dates are at the nail salon. It's the best.

Littrell: If I could give my younger self beauty advice, it would be to sunscreen up. I've actually had several cancerous spots removed from my body.

Richardson: HydraTint Pro Mineral Broad Spectrum from Alastin is a tinted moisturizer, but it's got crazy sunscreen in it. As we're getting older, I get a little bit of hyperpigmentation on my face. Don't

get into a tanning bed, ever. Looking back, the tanning bed was not the way to go.

Carter: Just feel comfortable in your skin. I've always tried to be in touch with my feminine side. Even though you're a guy, you can be beautiful as well. And maybe just drink a little bit more water. —AS TOLD TO NICOLA DALL'ASEN

A Very Backstreet Christmas Party opens at Planet Hollywood Las Vegas's Zappos Theater on November 11.

Below: In 1996, the Boys went to London and brought a bouquet of hairstyles with them.





The floor's marbled colors are given psychedelic new life when refracted in Bleach London's metal color bar. Every element is intentional and designed to tickle your brain.



the punkest little salon in *beverly hills*

BLEACH LONDON, THE MOTHER OF ALL HAIR COLOR, PLANTS NEW ROOTS STATESIDE. THEN COMES THE PEROXIDE. BY MARIE LODI

Think of pink and how much changes between its hues. In *Steel Magnolias*, Shelby (Julia Roberts) was adamant that her wedding colors were “blush and bashful,” and not “pink and pink.” Raise your eyebrow all you want, but the fact is a muted rose embodies an entirely different energy than that of a playful bubblegum. Bleach London, the British hair-color salon, understands this even better than Shelby herself. This is a place where “blonde” doesn’t exist; it is a gradient that spans from Ice to Butter.

In 2010, Bleach London brought loud hair back in style, and its colorists’ inventive applications—shadow roots, dip-dyed layers, colorful money pieces, slime-green roots—have gone on to become era-defining trends. Bleach has three locations in London and a client list that includes FKA Twigs, Halsey, and Harry Styles. This summer, the operation extended west, opening doors in Los Angeles’s Beverly Grove. “When you think about movements in youth culture, they live on social media, and social media lives here,” says Alex Brownsell, one of Bleach London’s original founders, of the decision to land in L.A. Georgia May Jagger, model and friend-muse of Brownsell’s, is a co-owner of the new location.

There are four salon chairs in the space, a very deliberate operating decision: Colorists see only two clients a day and are with them throughout the entire hair-color journey. That means a consultation, the color itself, whipping up custom products for at-home maintenance, touch-ups for any fades or fixes, and a direct line of access to your colorist for post-dye-job questions. Brownsell, who has worked with fashion houses including Gucci, Celine, and Vivienne Westwood, will also be on the floor, taking new clients for the first time in more than a decade.

Hair color is the only thing on the menu. The colorists are more like magicians who can make electric green and pink leopard-print dye jobs look elegant and that’s a premium service: Rates begin at \$500, and Brownsell’s hands can be rented for about double. Bleach London’s premixed, at-home hair color is displayed on a reflective-metal table and includes a literal rainbow of shades (Twisted Lemon, Bruised Violet)—and then some (Rosé, Tangerine Dream). The wash stations are carved from a single piece of Mexican obsidian and look like pieces of abstract sculpture. The all-pink bathroom models what Brownsell



Clockwise from top left: A Bleach London customer goes prismatic pink. Have you considered stepping into the Slime Light? Pieces of the monolithic obsidian wash stations were imported from Mexico and reassembled in California. Owners Jagger (left) and Brownsell at the launch event.

describes as “visual overload,” and provides a backdrop for fresh-dyed selfies. (The floor, paved in reflective black tile, supplies the most photogenic lighting conditions possible.)

Brownsell is also a big fan of autonomous sensory meridian response, or ASMR, which is triggered by soothing sounds and videos. She projects installations that evoke “what it’s like to be hair,” she says—images of combs, cuts, and dyes set to the sounds of water bubbling down a drain. “The tactile

moments of hairdressing are really therapeutic,” says Brownsell. “Being touched, stroking hair, washing hair... They’re meditative moments.”

For the July opening of the salon, Brownsell dyed Jagger’s hair a muted rainbow to match her outfit: a vintage, baby-blue Thierry Mugler dress and chiffon rainbow cape. “The reference was Barbarella eating Fruit Roll-Ups in the swamp,” Jagger joked. Considering Brownsell’s knack for starting trends, we have every expectation Fruit Roll-Up hair will momentarily be sweeping the nation.

THE FACE CHART WITH
phyllis cohen

Cohen, a longtime makeup artist (she worked with David Bowie), is the creator of Face Lace, a range of stick-on makeup decals. This October, Allure readers can get 10 percent off Face Lace Reptalien Play Sheet in Chrome (which Cohen used to create the look here) by entering code FLALOCT during checkout on Face-Lace.com (limited quantities available; while supplies last).



"The Swiss artist H.R. Giger's works are mesmerizing and beautiful but terrifying at the same time—perfect for Halloween. [He is known for airbrushed images of humans mingling with machines and won an Oscar for special effects in *Alien*.] The designs around the eyes are inspired by the creepiness of the squirming insect shapes and reptile exoskeletons found in his work. I used makeup in earth tones (coal, ochre, rust) to contrast with the futuristic chrome of the shapes."

Get the look: Glossier Futuredew, Dior Backstage Glow Face Palette, Danessa Myricks Beauty Dew Wet Balm, MAC Powder Blush in Raizin, Senna Cosmetics Earth Pigment Palette, LH Cosmetics Infinity Deep Palette, Face Lace Reptalien Play Sheet in Chrome, Haus Laboratories Makeup by Lady Gaga Eye-Identify Gel Kohl Eyeliner, Pat McGrath Labs Lust: Gloss in Flesh Fantasy.

the BIG BREAKTHROUGHS

MASCARA AND SERUM, SURE—BUT ROCKET SCIENCE, MAGNETIC FIELDS, AND PREDICTIVE TECHNOLOGY? NOT EXACTLY WHAT YOU'D EXPECT TO FIND IN A BEAUTY ROUTINE. THE MOST FORWARD-THINKING BRANDS PUSHED BOUNDARIES OVER THE PAST YEAR, BOTTLING SCIENTIFIC ADVANCEMENTS BOTH ELEGANT (PERSONALIZED SKIN CARE THAT KNOWS YOU BETTER THAN YOUR EX) AND VALIANT (A DEVICE THAT COULD SAVE BILLIONS OF GALLONS OF WATER A YEAR). BY JESSICA CHIA



Upneeq eye drops:
When they're not
doubling as art
(here), they deliver
a lid lift that lasts
eight hours.





Upneeq

A flick of white eyeliner. A pump of an eyelash curler. These are noble ways to look more awake, but Upneeq, a prescription eye drop, makes them seem like child's play. Upneeq temporarily lifts eyelids that have drooped due to acquired ptosis, a detachment of the eyelid muscle that can happen with age. The condition is most common after 40, but some oculoplastic specialists are seeing it in younger patients, which some think may be caused by the constant strain of staring at screens.

Unlike the bulky skeletal muscles in your biceps and quadriceps, your lid's aptly named levator muscle is small, smooth, and atrophies rather than strengthens with overuse, says Raymond Douglas, an aesthetic reconstructive and oculoplastic specialist and global head of scientific affairs for Upneeq. "Once the muscle weakens and the lid drops, it does not restore to the previous level," he explains. Though a so-called Botox brow lift can help approximate a more wide-awake appearance, the only method to truly lift lids before Upneeq's FDA approval last year was ptosis correction surgery. This involves shortening the lid's muscles, may or may not need to be paid for out of pocket, and may or may not require general anesthesia—costs and risks that can be unappealing, particularly if you're only dealing with slight drooping. (Severe cases of ptosis impact vision and can be dangerous for activities such as driving. It is likely that surgery would still be called for.)

"Upneeq is, in my opinion, the best nonsurgical solution for acquired ptosis," says Bruce Moskowitz, an assistant clinical professor of ophthalmology at Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai in New York, who has been prescribing it for over six months. (Iopidine, a glaucoma medication, has already been used off-label for Botox-induced ptosis—a temporary condition in which Botox migrates from the forehead or "11 lines" to the eyelid muscle—but was hampered by "limited availability and the large incidence of red eyes associated with its use," he says.) Upneeq's active



ingredient, 0.1 percent oxymetazoline hydrochloride, stimulates receptors on the eyelid's muscles, which trigger a contraction. "It has been safely used for decades for nasal decongestants, although the concentration in Upneeq is far less," says Moskowitz. In clinical trials of once-daily use, patients noticed an improvement in as little as five minutes, with full results kicking in in two hours and lasting for about eight hours. "We fully expect that someone would be able to potentially use it again after eight hours, but we haven't studied dual dosing yet," says Douglas. The treatment has an extremely low incidence of side effects, says Moskowitz: general irritation, dryness, redness, or sensitivity in less than 5 percent of patients. Upneeq lifts the lid's muscles from 1 to 3 millimeters—a difference that can be eye-opening. Lena Leit, a 45-year-old event producer and mother of three in Los Angeles, began using the drops regularly after noticing a new, heavy-lidded look: "My eyes look wider, brighter, and overall more open now."

Atolla

Remember those choose-your-own-adventure books? Well, imagine if one grew up, went off to engineering school, and became a choose-your-own-adventure skin-care series. It would look a lot like Atolla: Take a quiz with more than 50 possible paths—which you are led down depending on how you answer each question—and you'll receive a customized routine (cleanser, serum, moisturizer). If you're prone to breakouts, you will go down one track. If you're pregnant, another. And so on.

Each question is designed to gather a battery of information—enter your zip code and Atolla pulls info on the water quality, pollution, humidity, and wind and sun exposure you face daily. "The online questionnaire goes above and beyond what other customized services ask," says Heather Woolery-Lloyd, a dermatologist in Miami. "The questions are clinically relevant and well thought out." Atolla's algorithm maps your answers onto more than two million data points to choose your best mix of 64 possible ingredients (there were three actives in every

formula I received). The sheer number of data points allows the model to be predictive of which ingredient combinations are most helpful for your skin, says cofounder Meghan Maupin, an engineer who started the line after graduating from MIT with an unhappy complexion. As more people take the quiz, the data points shift: "The power of machine learning is clustering different types of data," Maupin says. "Patterns [emerge] so our predictive models continue to get more refined and more granular."

Your routine is shipped to you along with four paper strips for measuring your skin's pH, oil, and moisture levels. After finishing each month's routine, you place the strips onto your cheeks and T-zone, and they change color. "You take a photo of the paper strips and a computer vision algorithm reads the ratio of light to dark and translates it to a numerical percentage of oil or moisture levels in your skin," Maupin says. Atolla then reformulates next month's products according to your evolving needs. "Including ways to track how well the skin care is doing. That makes Atolla unique," says Woolery-Lloyd.

But blind deference to artificial intelligence this is not: Atolla's Skincare Manager Tool allows you to tinker with its recommendations (you can choose from 12 textural options, including gel moisturizers and lotions) and gives you tips on incorporating products from other brands.

Allure's most veteran editors, including deputy beauty director Elizabeth Siegel, were "seriously impressed" by the Atolla formulas they received (in a matter of days, no less). "My skin went from dry and blotchy to soft and radiant in a week. The shift was so noticeable, my mom asked what I was using," says Siegel. "And you get cards that tell you about your ingredients." Cosmetic chemist Ni'Kita Wilson was struck by the level of customization: "You are using diagnostic tools that touch your skin. This level of 'touch' is important to get the most accurate results. The more data collected, the better the end result. I haven't seen any other products that are this comprehensive for consumer use at home."



Neutrogena Hydro Boost Night Pressed Serum with Hyaluronic Acid

Take a deep breath. Close your eyes. Let your thoughts melt from your head. (They'll be back when we finish our skin-care meditation.) Now imagine you're in a drugstore aisle—the shelves are empty, except for one cheery blue jar. In your mind's eye, open the jar. Its contents are the exact color of a cloud. If you could touch it, it would feel cool, smooth, and bouncy. If you could smooth it on your face, your skin would feel drenched on contact—but, curiously, it would leave your skin with a soft glow, rather than looking wet or shiny. Now open your eyes. The bright blue jar is still there: It's Neutrogena's new Hydro Boost Night Pressed Serum with Hyaluronic Acid, and it has made this list because, simply, it pushes the boundaries of what a serum or night treatment can look and feel like.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, it's hard to cobble together an accurate description of this pressed serum because it's not like anything we've experienced before. That was no accident. Neutrogena set out to create "the next form of hyaluronic acid" with a "unique texture that is delightful to use. Something that could be lightweight, but really provide a skin benefit at the same time," says Star Walsh, associate director of Neutrogena R&D. The pressed serum is cool and squishy like a putty, smooth and rich like a jelly, and translucent and hydrating like, well, a serum. "The concept is similar to the 'pressed serums' of Korea, but created in a different way, using polymers," says cosmetic chemist Ginger King, who explains that this enables Neutrogena to

deliver a cushiony feel without an uncomfortably high price tag. "You don't see those kinds of textures in mass markets."

What does it take to rethink skin care to this extent? More than 100 tries. Behind those 99+ failures were 99+ problems, such as: Putting two hydrating heavyweights (hyaluronic acid and glycerin) in one formula means major risk of stickiness, unless you add skin conditioners. But when you add skin conditioners, it changes the formula's texture, and the point of this one was to have a cool texture.

At long last, after 24 months of trial and error, you hit the right ratio and mix of ingredients to deliver a texture like nothing you've produced before: Polymer chains form a 3D matrix that's dense in the jar but breaks apart when applied to skin, so you get two textures in the span of seconds. But the same quality that gives the polymer its unusual feel—it is springy in the jar and melts on skin because of its special reaction to applied force—is nearly impossible to work with. The formula must be mixed in giant tanks for large-scale production, and the amount of force applied in the lab—where you first got your formula to work—"is different from when you go to a manufacturing site and now your scale batch is about 1,700 times bigger," Walsh says. So much so that the production process has to be tailored to the pressed serum's specifications. The timing of the product's release from the tank, the filling line in each jar, "all of those steps needed to be adjusted somehow to account for this unique polymer that we were dealing with."

In the end, Walsh's team successfully engineered a bouncy, hydrating, changes-before-your-eyes texture. "They created something that performs like an ointment—it is intensely hydrating and seals moisture into skin—but without the drawbacks. It won't clog pores and it's light and breathable," says Doris Day, a dermatologist in New York City, who often recommends the formula to patients who battle oiliness and breakouts. For my part, I found its hydration felt weightless but was paradoxically long-lasting: The longer I used it, the dewier my skin looked around the clock—almost like it had just taken a few long, deep breaths.



GHD Unplugged Styler

This compact, cordless flatiron does for hair straightening what WiFi did for work: It makes it possible to get it done wherever in the world you are. But it took a *lot* to make styling at a stoplight (more on that soon) a reality: Over the course of 10 years and 560,000 hours of testing, researchers at GHD's labs in Cambridge, England, went through eight iterations and analyzed 400 million (yes, million) hinge operations to make sure you can open and close (and open and close, and open and close) your iron without issue. It all led to a 6-inch, 11-ounce wand that offers 20 minutes of continuous styling at a constant temperature of 365 degrees Fahrenheit, no outlet needed. (You can charge it using a USB-C on your laptop or car dashboard or plug it into a regular outlet. Either way, it takes about two hours to fully charge.)

This is not the first cordless iron in existence, but it is the first we've tried that is small enough to truly use anywhere. (We've tucked it into beach bags, clutches, and carry-ons.) And it is the only one we've used that performs as well as a traditional flat iron, meaning the last section you press will look as smooth as the first. Other cordless flatirons have struggled with that while operating via batteries alone. So GHD teamed an efficient co-lithium battery technology with a custom heating element. That is a mouthful, but basically it provides a fast conversion of energy into consistent heat so the plates are constantly being warmed so their temperature doesn't wax and wane as heat is lost to the hair and surrounding environment during a styling session, explains Richard Gregory, head of mechanical engineering at GHD.

After spending a full decade developing this technology, researchers spent another two years putting the final product through grueling tests. More than 800 GHD Unplugged units were switched

on, heated up to temperature, and cooled down 650,000 times each. The product was also sent to more than 300 people in the U.K. and Asia, who attested to its efficacy on different hair textures—and its practicality for life outside of a lab.

Speaking of: "I take it on every location shoot. It's a game changer," says DJ Quintero, a hairstylist at Serge Normant John Frieda Salon in New York City. We asked Quintero to test the iron for us. He now uses it when he's styling hair outdoors (on the beach, in a jungle), in the back of a car en route to an event, or even in the studio, where holding up the entire production to touch up a model's hair at his station is rarely an option. "It is definitely the smallest and best cordless iron I have ever seen and used," he says. I turned on my own some 36,000 feet in the air, and landed at LAX with a sleek, swingy look—no small feat considering the bedhead I had when I

took off. I charged it on my laptop.

"It's not easy to do what they did," one electrical engineer at a prestige semiconductor manufacturing company told us. "When you make a wired product wireless, you bring in a lot more complexity. You're bringing in batteries, a certain type of circuit for battery applications, a fuel gauge, and everything [needs to be] shrunk down so it can all fit inside." Most engineers, he explains, spend their working lives trying to make their devices efficient, which means making sure they give off as little heat as possible. This device of course is meant to heat the hair, so by its very design it's going to lose energy, but it needs to be efficient in its power loss. The engineers behind Unplugged achieved that by providing an extremely fast transfer of energy into heat from the batteries. "Add to that the fact that you're trying to deliver the same exact temperature the entire time. That is some serious engineering."



COURTESY OF BRAND



Benefit Cosmetics They're Real! Magnet Extreme Lengthening Mascara

"Have you seen the staple trick?" I have not. Benefit's Maggie Ford Danielson (her mother and aunt founded the brand 45 years ago) disappears from our Zoom. A few moments later she is back, breathless, with a candy-pink stapler. She shakes the staples into her palm. Then, like a motion played in reverse, the staples start floating up and off of her hand, rising, and then clinging to a mascara wand she is dangling just above them.

The wand is not magic; it is magnetic—a mascara novelty that makes for more than just a fun party trick. Benefit's research and development teams were looking for a way to make a lengthening mascara that would somehow stand out from all the other lengthening mascaras. It had to deliver a jaw-dropping lifting, elongating effect. They experimented with new ratios of standard

ingredients, then reexamined what a mascara could be, considering some unusual sources of inspiration. "We looked at rulers and string and gum and spaghetti and all these things," says Kate Helfrich, senior vice president of global product and service innovation. When a formula inspired by quick-dry nail polish didn't pan out (Helfrich recalls it made lashes look scary, chunky, and spidery), the team became intrigued by the unique pull of magnetism, "the

way you can draw something across the floor, across the table," Helfrich says. "It was kind of an insane idea. Nobody had done it."

But how, exactly, could a magnet make lashes longer? It's thanks to ferromagnetism, a fancy term for the way in which certain materials—like iron—are attracted to magnets. See, iron oxides are a type of powdered pigment that come in many colors (yellow, red, black), and they're already commonly used in mascaras, blushes...just about any color cosmetic you can think of. But magnets aren't flying off your fridge onto your eye shadow palette because iron oxide pigments are not typically used in high enough concentrations to interact with other magnetic objects, explains cosmetic chemist Ginger King.

But if you *did* really pack a mascara formula with iron oxide pigments, you'd get impressive lengthening effects. "It's like adding fibers," King says. "The particles will automatically volumize and lengthen the eyelashes." The challenge is getting enough of the pigments from the tube to lashes—and that's where the magnetic eureka moment comes in. The Benefit team embedded a small, rod-shaped magnet within the mascara wand's brush to attract the iron oxide particles and let you carry them where they need to go. This part was frustratingly hard to pull off, Helfrich admits. There were (many, many) magnets too weak to interact with the mascara formula; another was so strong it ended up pulling mascara right off the lashes. Further complicating matters, the plastic combs that worked for other mascaras often blunted the magnet's force. After some 75 tries, the team found a perfect match: a not-too-weak, not-too-strong Goldilocks magnet teamed with a comb created out of a thin, flexible plastic. "They got it just right," says King. "You get better payoff and lashes are coated more evenly so they look longer."

The result: a satisfyingly (not clumsy) thick formula that cleanly combs through lashes. I, for one, find it to be a godsend for my thick, downturned outer lashes. I watch as they are lifted by the comb, and they are so well coated that the formula holds them there—a first for me without a curler. Some oily-skinned testers reported that it was on the smudgy side, but staff writer Nicola Dall'Asen says it was "hands-down the best mascara I've ever used." So maybe it is a magic wand after all.





L'Oréal Water Saver

You know when people say “it’s not rocket science”? Well, this kind of is. L’Oréal’s in-salon device helps conserve water using the same principles rockets do when launching. Gases (hydrogen, oxygen) are forcibly collided until they become smaller, faster, and ultimately propel the rocket into the stratosphere. Here, water molecules (instead of gases) slam into each other until they are micronized and shoot out at a higher velocity. It lets you wash hair with less water, but you still get the satisfaction of strong water pressure, says Guive Balooch, global vice president of the L’Oréal Technology Incubator. (Mechanical engineers, sustainability researchers, chemists, hairstylists, and more from the incubator and Swiss environmental technology company Gjosa created L’Oréal’s Water Saver together.)

But I didn’t totally understand why making water droplets smaller would save water, so I called Robert Urban, a doctor of pharmacy, who consults on cancer drug clinical trials at ZS Associates in California. It turns out micronization is a commonly used tool in pharmaceuticals, typically to help with drug absorption, so he’s happy to break it down for me. “If you wanted to cover the floor with balls, you’d want a lot of little balls instead of bigger ones, because smaller balls will have more contact with the floor and involve much less material.” It clicks: Smaller droplets of water can cover the surface of your hair just like big ones do, but without wasting all the water that isn’t touching your hair.

“This results in up to an 80 percent reduction of water. So if you have it in 10,000 salons, you can save 1 billion gallons of water per year,” Balooch says. The Water Saver (which is currently in hundreds of salons and will roll out in thousands next year) attaches to the spigot at a wash station with space to plug in up to three bottles (shampoo, conditioner, and treatment). Their contents get infused with water,

enabling them to be more evenly and efficiently distributed along the hair strand. “It helps control the amount of product used, and I was happy with the multiple pressure settings for rinsing different hair textures,” says Hayde Georgakis, a hairstylist at Cutler Salon in New York City (he is not affiliated with L’Oréal). “I was excited to try something that could help preserve water—our shampoo basins are running from the time we take our first client to our last.” And that’s a problem: The United Nations estimates that 1.8 billion people will suffer water scarcity by 2025, and almost half of the world’s population will deal with “high water stress” by the end of the decade. Areas in the American Southwest already have physical water scarcity.

“I think it’s a brilliant and highly innovative idea, as it creates a major water reduction and improved experience,” says global recycling leader Terracycle’s Tom Szaky (L’Oréal is a global client of TerraCycle, which had no involvement in Water Saver). “It provides innovation opportunities in how shampoo and conditioner packaging can be more recyclable and reusable [since] it just has to plug into this machine, versus squeezed into one’s hand.” L’Oréal is exploring waterless powders that can be infused into the device and plans to release an at-home water-micronizing showerhead as early as 2023.



Agency Future Formula with tretinoin

Prescription retinoids firm, smooth, and brighten, so why aren’t we all walking around with gleaming, baby-bottom skin? Well, there are a few reasons you might not have an Rx: These retinoids are notoriously capable of stirring up side effects (dryness, flakiness, redness, burning) and they’re not that easy to get. A prescription requires a trip to the dermatologist and for more than 42 percent of the U.S. population, that’s

not an option, according to a paper on areas underserved by dermatologists in *JAMA Dermatology’s Archives of Dermatology*. (Retinols are available over the counter, but tretinoin, the gold standard for addressing fine lines, is not.)

Agency is the first virtual-consult service we’ve seen that enables you to get a tretinoin prescription while in your living room, and in that respect “it’s providing a dermatologist visit for those living in ‘dermatologist deserts,’” says Mona Gohara, a dermatologist in Connecticut. A visit, and then some: Because Agency isn’t doling out standard prescriptions, if you are a candidate for tretinoin, you’ll get a customized formula with one of four percentages, plus four complementary ingredients, such as brightening niacinamide or calming azelaic acid. That’s a boon because attempting to layer tretinoin with your own skin care ups the risk of irritation: “It’s not an ingredient that can play nicely in the sandbox with a lot of other active ingredients,” says Gohara. “It’s like the queen bee.”

Before mixing tretinoin with other actives, “we tested over 2,500 data points,” says David Lortscher, the dermatologist who founded Agency, which offers newbies unusually low percentages (including 0.003% tretinoin). If you’re new to tretinoin, a low percentage can make it possible to tolerate it, though any amount has the potential to irritate, says Gohara.

When cherry-picking a client’s formula, providers take into account three makeup-free selfies and a questionnaire. After you get your personalized formula, you’ll have access to dermatologist check-ins as often as you like. If your skin acts up or results plateau, Agency’s dermatologists can adjust your next formulation. All of this customization and concierge-y-ness will run you \$30 per month (traditional tretinoin Rx cost \$50 to \$250).

“This is the way to get people the guidance they need—no, not need, deserve,” says Gohara. “Access is so important.” One of our beauty editors, Devon Abelman, has been using Agency for four months (her current formula: 0.035% tretinoin, 1% dexpanthenol, 5% tranexamic acid, 4% niacinamide) and it’s helped quell her cystic acne and dark spots. And Agency has saved her time and stress shuttling to and from appointments during an unpredictable pandemic. “This made me so at ease with my skin journey,” Abelman says. “It puts everything my skin needs—over-the-counter and prescription ingredients—in one simple bottle.”

Left: Chanel jacket and pants. Cherry Vintage top. Mega Mega and Mizuki necklaces. Makeup colors: Saie Slip Tint and Westman Atelier Super Loaded Tinted Highlight in Peau de Pêche. Right: Chanel blazer. Beeb Bella necklace. Makeup colors: Ilia Liquid Powder Chromatic Eye Tint in Glaze. These pages: Fashion stylist, Herin Choi. Hair: Eric R. Williams. Makeup: Mariko Hirano. Models: Laura at Elite, Cory at New Pandemics, Aalyah at IMG.



the BEST CLEAN BEAUTY

WHEN ARE YOUR BEAUTY CHOICES CLEAN AND SIMPLE? WHEN YOU PUT PRODUCTS IN YOUR CART THAT MEET ALLURE'S RIGOROUS STANDARD OF "BEST" AND OUR RIGOROUS STANDARD OF "CLEAN" (MORE ON THAT ON PAGE 80). BY LIANA SCHAFFNER

photographed by jacq harriet

HAIR

cleanCEREMONIA
GUAVA LEAVE-IN
CONDITIONER.

The addition of guava gives our hair heavy-duty antioxidant protection; the delicate texture won't weigh down the finest of strands (says one editor with the finest of strands).

BRIOGEO DON'T
DESPAIR, REPAIR!
SUPER MOISTURE
CONDITIONER.

Brimming with amino acid-packed marine algae extract, the silky cream delivers all the moisture our dry, damaged hair craves.

UHAI INTENSIVE
DEEP CONDITIONER.

Intensely hydrating with a whipped, almost fluffy texture, this omega-rich treatment buoys curls while boosting softness and shine.

ADWOA BEAUTY
PROTECT + SHINE
OIL BLEND. Infused
with essential oils and
spearmint, this lupine
cocktail calms the scalp
and adds luster to kinks,
coils, and curls.LOVE BEAUTY AND
PLANET VOLUME
AND BOUNTY
2-IN-1 SHAMPOO &
CONDITIONER BAR.

A heart-shaped bar that pumps coconut water into our hair, this one-step formula makes cleansing and conditioning an actual piece of cake.

Marc Jacobs dress.
Mega Mega
necklace.





SKIN *clean*

PAI LIGHT WORK ROSEHIP CLEANSING OIL.

A superhero trio of oils (olive, sunflower, castor) clings to the natural sebum produced by your pores, whisking away dirt and makeup without relying on surfactants that strip skin dry.

**INDIE LEE
RESTORATIVE EYE
CREAM.** The antioxidant equivalent of eight hours of sleep, this soothing cream tightens and brightens undereyes with a potent blend of plant extracts and licorice root.

**HONEST BEAUTY
CALM & HEAL
MELTING BALM.** This comforting salve delivers salvation to chapped, cracked skin with allantoin (a skin protectant) and anti-inflammatory ingredients, like rice bran.

**KINSHIP SELF
REFLECT PROBIOTIC
MOISTURIZING
SUNSCREEN ZINC
OXIDE SPF 32.** Good, clean sunscreen—this mineral formula has a pearly tint that helps it adapt to your skin tone, blending into an invisible sheen.

**HUMANRACE
LOTUS ENZYME
EXFOLIATOR.** Pharrell knows how to create a

winning track—and, as it turns out, winning skin care. Glycolic acid, fruit enzymes, and ultrafine rice particles work in concert to dissolve roughness and slough away dullness, revealing noticeably smoother, brighter skin.

**KORA ORGANICS
TURMERIC GLOW
MOISTURIZER.** Balm-thick and banana-yellow, this pigmented mix of turmeric and rosehip oil transforms skin into glowing perfection.

The refillable glass jar transforms our bathroom into #shelfie material.

**ÉMINENCE ORGANIC
SKIN CARE
MANGOSTEEN GEL
MOISTURIZER.** This gel-cream hybrid keeps skin dewy and pliant while it perfects, blurring pores with a soft matte finish.

THE ALLURE CLEAN STANDARD

Products that meet the Allure Clean Standard are formulated without the following ingredients: parabens, phthalates, sodium lauryl sulfate and sodium laureth sulfate, cyclic silicones, polyethylene and polypropylene (microbeads), aluminum salts, hydroquinone, PEGs, triclosan, talc, mineral oil, petrolatum, formaldehyde, toluene, and chemical sunscreens (such as oxybenzone, avobenzone, and octinoxate).



Makeup colors:
Merit Clean Lash,
Tower 28
BeachPlease
Luminous Tinted
Balm in Rush Hour,
and Gucci Rouge
de Beauté Brillant
Glow & Care Shine
Lipstick in My
Cousin Rachel
(from Best of
Beauty Splurges).



MAKEUP

clean

TOWER 28 BEACHPLEASE LUMINOUS TINTED BALM.

The only acceptable way to achieve natural color (in our book), this plant-based balm (it comes in six shades) bathes cheeks and lips in shimmer-free, sun-kissed warmth.

JONES ROAD THE BEST PENCIL. Drawn precisely along the lash line or smudged into a smoky haze, the ultra-dense, ultra-intense pigment adds seamless definition.

ILIA LIQUID POWDER CHROMATIC EYE TINT.

This water-based formula bestows a wash of gleamy color that won't sink into creases or fade into oblivion.

MERIT CLEAN LASH.

Ideal for everyday use, this carbon-black mascara lifts and defines lashes while leaving their ends elegantly clump-free.

WESTMAN ATELIER SUPER LOADED TINTED HIGHLIGHT.

Sleek and weighted, the palm-size compact has the polished feel of a river stone. Blended onto cheekbones, the luminous cream seems to transform the landscape of our face.

SAIE SLIP TINT. The tinted fluid feels like nothing on your skin but does everything you could want: evens out discoloration, eliminates dryness, and undoes dullness with brightening ingredients, like licorice root.

BEAUTYCOUNTER SKIN TWIN CREAMY CONCEALER.

Suspended in avocado butter, the rich pigments seem to float over fine lines, diffusing shadows while erasing crepiness.

BODY

clean

THE RIGHT TO SHOWER BAR SOAP.

A soap that raises the bar in every respect: Proceeds from this wholesome cake support an initiative that brings mobile showers to our fellow humans living on the streets.

GLOW RECIPE WATERMELON GLOW PINK DREAM BODY CREAM.

This pale pink pump puts the "treat" in "treatment." Scented with watermelon extract and packed with skin-brightening AHAs, the weightless lotion leaves every inch supple and luminous.

We loved Glow Recipe Watermelon Glow Pink Dream Body Cream at first blush.

HENRY ROSE WINDOWS DOWN.

The fragrance version of driving off into the sunset: Notes of Earl Grey and orange flower are invigorating out of the gate; musk and amber settle into a smooth, dusky trail.



Theophilus jacket.
Judy Turner top.
Hirotaka and Ursa
Major necklaces.
Makeup colors:
Byredo Eyeshadow
5 Colours in
Sciomancer.



the

BEST

SPLURGES

THESE SUPREMELY ELEGANT, WONDERFULLY EFFECTIVE, DIVINELY SCENTED BEAUTY PRODUCTS CAN BRING YOU MOMENTS OF CALM AND JOY. WHO SAYS MONEY DOESN'T BUY HAPPINESS? BY LIANA SCHAFFNER



BODY

splurges

\$125 ELLIS BROOKLYN MARVELOUS CBD EXTRA RICH BODY CREAM.

Positively packed with a megadose of CBD (the nonpsychoactive cannabinoid in marijuana), this buttery emulsion helps chronically tight skin turn over a supple new leaf.

\$38 HANNI THE WEIGHTED RAZOR.

The hefty handle applies the perfect amount of pressure as you shave, taking the onus off of your wrist. And because the sustainable design is made to last (and last), it takes some weight off of the planet too.

\$368 FOR 50 ML TOM FORD LOST CHERRY.

This luscious scent captures the sometimes wholesome, sometimes carnal aspects of a black cherry. Glossy, juicy, and voluptuously smooth, it begs to be bitten (er, sniffed) near the curve of the neck.

\$165 RÉVIVE SOLEIL SUPÉRIEUR BODY BROAD SPECTRUM SPF 50 SUNSCREEN

PA++++. This extravagant sunscreen makes our skin feel so insanely smooth, it's become the step we most look forward to in our morning skin-care routine (perhaps the first time this has ever been said about sunscreen application?).

\$158 SISLEY PARIS VELVET NOURISHING BODY CREAM WITH SAFFRON FLOWERS.

Infused with saffron flower extract—an amped-up anti-inflammatory—this decadent cream melts away rough patches while it extinguishes redness, turning prickly skin pliant.

Puppets & Puppets dress. Louboutin shoes. Hirotaka, Mega Mega, and Mizuki necklaces.



SKIN

splurges

\$295 CLÉ DE PEAU BEAUTÉ PRECIOUS GOLD VITALITY

MASK. An indulgent infusion of 24-karat gold, ginseng extract, and amino acids, this luxurious treatment enhances your skin's ability to restore its own moisture barrier—basically making it independently wealthy.

\$235 SK-II SKINPOWER CREAM.

Like a personal trainer for your face, this velvety emulsion provides a constant buffer against environmental stressors and everyday pressures, giving tired skin the power to bounce back and keep on glowing.

\$95 LANCÔME CLARIFIQUE

ESSENCE. Similar to a martini mixer, a few shakes of this tapered bottle blend the primary ingredients (glycolic acid and grapeseed oil) to perfection, giving your skin an instant aura of refinement.

\$295 SKINMEDICA TNS ADVANCED+

SERUM. The growth factors in this serum are amazing at building elastin, which is amazing at smoothing lines and firming droop.

\$245 LA MER THE EYE CONCENTRATE.

Containing omega-rich marine algae, this potion from the ocean penetrates delicate under-eye skin, diminishing the appearance of fine lines and crepiness.





WAKE UP

splurges

\$145 FOR 50 ML VICTORIA BECKHAM BEAUTY CELL REJUVENATING PRIMING MOISTURIZER.

A primer with a higher purpose, this hydrating formula helps speed cell turnover as it plumps and perfects, encouraging radiance from the inside out.

\$42 GUCCI ROUGE DE BEAUTÉ BRILLANT GLOW & CARE SHINE LIPSTICK. Sleeved in a case inspired by vintage brooches, this creamy hybrid of tint and moisture feels like the rarest of finds. (Shout-out to My Cousin Rachel, a tawny pink with a rosy sheen.)

\$56 GUERLAIN TERRACOTTA THE BRONZING POWDER. Laced with naturally derived light reflectors and nourishing argan oil, this compact produces the most believable bronze under the sun—but without, you know, the sun.

\$70 BYREDO EYESHADOW 5 COLOURS. This posh eye palette is a sight to behold—even before you open the compact. Shaped like a gilded oyster shell, each case houses a spectrum of five powders. We love the renegade shades inching from orange to emerald in Sciomancer and the quieter progression of violet to denim in Syren.

\$77 HERMÈS ROSE HERMÈS SILKY BLUSH POWDER. Available in a bouquet of rose hues ranging from the palest pink to the deepest damask, these exquisitely silky powders allow you to build your ideal blush: sheer and fragile or bold and vibrant.

HAIR

splurges

\$549.99 DYSON AIRWRAP STYLER COMPLETE. This streamlined device costs a pretty penny (54,999 of them, to be exact). But when you consider it does the work of an entire styling arsenal (blow-dryer, waver, curling iron) without relying on extreme heat, it feels like a steal (that's our two cents, anyway).

\$68 ORIBE IMPERIAL BLOWOUT TRANSFORMATIVE STYLING CRÈME. It took a few centuries, but someone finally realized that evolution is the solution to sticky fixatives that clump strands together. This styling mousse becomes an oil in your hands and a featherlight powder in your hair, delivering touchable volume and flexible hold.

\$53 CHRISTOPHE ROBIN CLEANSING VOLUMIZING

PASTE WITH PURE RASSOUL CLAY AND ROSE EXTRACTS. This is the ultimate grand gesture when you want to pamper your hair in the shower: The thick clay melts into an airy foam that polishes roots, softens ends, and smells intoxicatingly of roses.

\$52 KÉRASTASE CHRONOLOGISTE THERMIQUE RÉGÉNÉRANT BLOW DRY PRIMER. A heat protector, shine serum, and treatment all in one, this lightweight lotion yields the sleekest blowouts this side of the salon. And the floral scent is so dreamy, it doubles as our favorite hair fragrance.

\$36 CROWN AFFAIR THE DRY SHAMPOO. This dry shampoo is a dead ringer for a loose face powder. Shake the jar and dip the brush into the chiffon formula. Applied directly to roots, the translucent particles absorb oil and add fullness—without a hint of grittiness.

Guerlain's Terracotta is the gold standard for an exquisite golden glow.



Loewe top.
 Makeup colors:
 Flower Beauty The
 Skinny Microbrow
 Pencil and Revlon
 ColorStay Ultimate
 Suede in Couture.



the BEST

STEALS

EVERYTHING ON THIS LIST IS BEYOND COMPARE. (AND TRUST US, WE DID A LOT OF COMPARING.) EVERYTHING IS ALSO UNDER \$11.

BY LIANA SCHAFFNER



MAKEUP *steals*

\$10.99 REVLON COLORSTAY ULTIMATE SUEDE IN COUTURE. Creamy in texture, crammed with moisture, and unwilling to fade or feather, this lush cherry bullet checks all the boxes on our fantasy lipstick Bingo card.

\$7 E.L.F. BIG MOOD MASCARA. The oversize brush has more than 200 bristles (we consulted the company) that work to inflate every last lash (we consulted the mirror).

\$10 FLOWER BEAUTY THE SKINNY MICROBROW PENCIL. The precise tip delivers such fine strokes, it's impossible to tell where the pigment ends and your brows begin—which is really the entire point.

\$8.99 MAYBELLINE NEW YORK LIFTER GLOSS. This formula, packed with hyaluronic acid, provides intense moisture and shine. When the gleam fades, the suppleness stays for hours.

\$9.99 COVERGIRL CLEAN FRESH SKIN MILK FOUNDATION. The delicate fluid is made with coconut milk and aloe vera and disappears the second you start blending, creating an even canvas with a dewy finish.

\$4.99 ESSENCE FIX & LAST 18H MAKE-UP FIXING SPRAY. This setting spray keeps your makeup looking fresh and newly applied for up to 18 hours—that's the length of a flight from New York to Singapore—for roughly the price of a round-trip subway ride.



MSGM top. Mega Mega necklaces. Makeup colors: CoverGirl Clean Fresh Skin Milk Foundation and E.L.F. Big Mood Mascara.

SKIN

steals

\$9.35 CETAPHIL DAILY FACIAL CLEANSER. It was on the first-ever Best of Beauty winners list in 1996 and it's still here for a reason: hydrating ingredients gentle for sensitive skin but powerful enough to remove makeup. (One thing that's different, though: The 2021 formula is paraben-free.)

\$7.99 POND'S REJUVENESS LIFTING & BRIGHTENING EYE CREAM. Buffered by vitamin B and cushioned in glycerin, the retinol in this formula goes easy on the eyes as it smooths fine lines and crepiness.

\$4.39 BURT'S BEES RESCUE BALM. Filled with antioxidant turmeric and natural butters, this unassuming tube delivers the relief of the goopiest salve—with a texture to rival the smoothest satin.

\$9.99 THE INKEY LIST RETINOL. We all know about retinol's ability to diminish wrinkles—and its reputation for irritating skin. This lightweight serum releases the molecule at a deliberately slow rate, delivering all its magic while minimizing the abrasive side effects.

\$6.49 BIORÉ BRIGHTENING EXFOLIATING SCRUB. Any humble scrub can polish skin. This Japanese-inspired cleanser elevates exfoliation to an art form with yuzu lemon (to brighten tone) and dragon fruit (to refine texture).

\$6.99 ST. IVES SOLUTIONS ACNE CONTROL SPOT TREATMENT. Second only to exiling your zit to an Alpine retreat, this cooling medication works at a brisk clip, quelling redness and reducing swelling with icy menthol and salicylic acid.



BODY

steals

\$5.99 BAYLIS & HARDING GOODNESS ROSE & GERANIUM HAND WASH. A sink-side staple with the presence (and essence) of a fancy guest soap, this formula coddles skin with essential oils and a dewy, floral scent.

\$6.19 ALBA BOTANICA ACNEDOTE FACE & BODY SCRUB. Containing anti-inflammatory ingredients and 2 percent salicylic acid, this scrub is versatile enough to use on both your face and body, leaving no pore unpurged.

\$5.79 NIVEA BREATHABLE BODY LOTION. With shea butter and oils, this remarkably lightweight lotion is like a deep inhale for your skin, leaving it more supple and refreshed. (We can't get enough of the Tropical Breeze scent.)

\$5.99 JERGENS ULTRA HEALING+ HAND & BODY CREAM. Hydrating enough to bolster your moisture barrier and light enough to slather on your hands, this nongreasy moisturizer keeps limbs silky and screens pristine.

OGX Blonde Enhance + Purple Toning Shampoo keeps your blonde looking like a million bucks (for less than nine of them).

HAIR

steals

\$4.99 EACH, TRESEMMÉ KERATIN REPAIR SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER. When hair looks fuzzy and dull, tiny breaks in the cuticle are to blame. The proteins in this keratin-rich duo restore sleekness by plugging up those microscopic holes—for a microscopic fee.

\$4.98 EACH, SUAVE SMOOTH PERFORMER SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER. The conditioner's amino acids are amazing at repairing damage; the sulfate-free shampoo is equally gifted at building lather.

\$8.99 OGX BLONDE ENHANCE + PURPLE TONING SHAMPOO. Plenty of factors contribute to brassiness in blonde hair: sun exposure, minerals in tap water, styling products. The purple pigments in this wash get to the root of the problem by neutralizing yellow undertones.

\$5.99 HERBAL ESSENCES ARGAN OIL & ALOE BOTANICAL REPAIRING MASK. This bouncy botanical treatment adds softness and luster without dragging down curls or flattening fine hair.

\$6.99 PANTENE PRO-V INTENSE RESCUE SHOTS. Applied once a week in the shower, the perfectly measured dose of lipids, glycerin, and amino acids boosts moisture, seals split ends, and inoculates hair against future damage.

\$7.99 HASK TEA TREE OIL & ROSEMARY 5-IN-1 LEAVE-IN SPRAY. Mist on this lightweight elixir to calm your scalp, polish flyaways, undo tangles—the list is staggering, the price isn't.

\$4.99 AUSSIE MIRACLE COILS STRETCHING CREAM. With a texture that falls somewhere between a pomade and a lotion (a potion!), this leave-in cream organizes curls and elongates tight spirals.

BEHIND *the* SCENES

WE PRIDE OURSELVES ON OUR FORWARD THINKING. BUT TO APPRECIATE HOW FAR BEST OF BEAUTY HAS COME IN ITS 25 YEARS, YOU'VE GOT TO TAKE A PEEK AT ITS PAST.

Best of Beauty debuted in 1996, along with the Spice Girls' "Wannabe" and Nintendo 64. At the time, it was a novel concept to elevate a single product above the rest, but if anyone was qualified, it was *Allure*. That year we awarded Neutrogena sunscreen, Essie nail polish in Ballet Slippers, and Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair—all of which are still considered the cream, soft pink, and Advanced Night Repair of their crop. How do we do what we're doing, and how has our doing been done? Excellent questions. Answers await.



Cindy Crawford appeared in our first Best of Beauty issue in 1996, with fellow supermodel Niki Taylor on the cover. You'll also find Crawford in this issue. (Get thee to page 32!)



PICTURES PERFECT

For Roger Cabello, who shot Best of Beauty's swirls and scribbles for 15 years (above is one of his 2014 creations), every scratch is a story.

I started my career at *Vogue* magazine, shooting about 100 accessories a week, like every, every week—watches, glasses, every designer. Then I took a year and a half off and realized I wanted to try shooting cosmetics, using the pigments as the components. I started to study Abstract Expressionism. For the first two years I was shooting, I'd go into a meeting and everybody would be like, "Do you know Mark Rothko? We want that." I took some Chinese calligraphy classes because I wanted to learn different gestures, different brushes. We used sculpting tools. Sometimes I used an airbrush to make explosions.

Best of Beauty was a marathon. It would be about 11 days of shooting. The assistants would set everything up, the products and the lighting and the tools. And then, most of the time, I shot by myself at night. In the morning, the assistants would send the pictures to the art department and [design director] Deanna Fillipo and I would go over the results. And after the second shoot, she would send the images to [editor in chief] Linda Wells to review. Usually the last shoot was nail polish because of the smell. But did you know if you blast a glob of nail polish with air it makes the perfect splash?

our *big* break

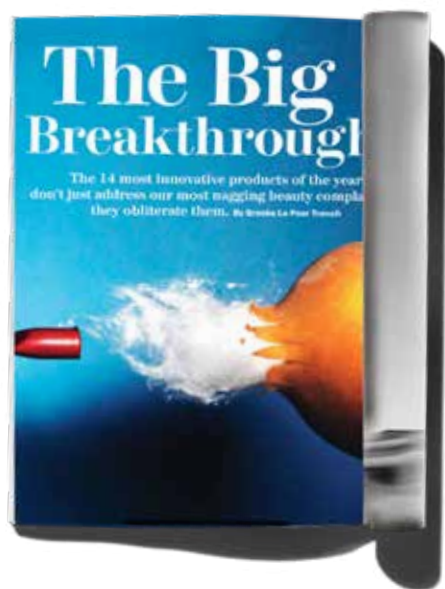


STAMP APPROVAL

In 2002, design director Deanna Filippo was given an assignment: Symbolize the best of the beauty industry.

Fresh out of college, my first job was for the launch issue of *Allure*. I was responsible for designing the Reporter section. To give the pages a sense of urgency, I used a vibrant color palette—fire-engine red and sunshine-yellow tabs—and created these circular, stamp-like logos, which ended up inspiring the Best of Beauty seal. I chose a red that couldn't go unnoticed and a round design that was easy to place in any format—on a magazine page, on a product. Classic design with a sense of urgency and importance.

Number of magazines with seals of approval for beauty products in 2002: 2. (Good Housekeeping had us beat by about a century.)
Number of magazines with seals of approval for beauty products in 2021: 27—and counting.



What's the difference between a Best of Beauty winner and a Best of Beauty Breakthrough winner? Both must perform beautifully, but the latter has to truly transform our beauty routines with a new ingredient, technology, or design.

The designation doesn't come lightly. We spend months poring over submissions: asking tough questions of brands (and demanding straight answers), sifting through clinical data, and employing the advice of a panel that includes independent dermatologists, hairstylists, and cosmetic chemists.

As technology advances, the ante gets upped: In 2002, our debut Breakthrough winners included a gentle eye-makeup remover and a streak-free self-tanner. This year, a cordless flatiron, custom-blended skin care, and a magnetic mascara made the cut.

We wouldn't go so far as to call ourselves beauty oracles, but winning a Breakthrough award does often indicate that a product has a bright future. Consider these cases in point: Crest Whitestrips Premium (2004), Clairol Nice 'N Easy Root Touch-Up Kit (2005), Neutrogena Sunscreens with Helioplex (2006), Latisse for eyelashes (2009), Sally Hansen Miracle Gel (2014), and Fenty Beauty Pro Filt'r Foundation (2018).

BY THE NUMBERS

The funnest factoids from the past quarter-century.

803

Breakthrough nominees submitted by beauty companies in 2016, a particularly inventive year.

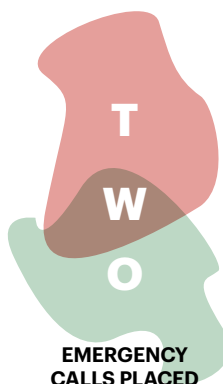
\$795

Price of the most expensive winner in 2016: 50 nectary milliliters of Clé de Peau Beauté night cream. This year, a \$550 hair tool took the prize.

208

Total number of Best of Beauty categories in 2020.

(If you need further proof that the beauty marketplace has mushroomed: We had 73 in 1996.)



EMERGENCY CALLS PLACED TO A DERMATOLOGIST DURING TESTING IN 2014. (ANOTHER WAS PLACED TO A PLUMBER. THERE WAS IN-SHOWER BODY MUD INVOLVED.)

THREE HUNDRED TEN

Number of highlighters submitted for testing in 2017; a ginormous leap from **FORTY-FOUR** the year prior.

473

The most beauty products tested by a single staffer: our executive beauty director, Jenny Bailly, in 2018.

ace of *base*

The year was 2014. The face was Cara Delevingne. Some of the best-selling beauty products in the country happened to be makeup removers, but Yadin—the makeup artist appointed to paint Best of Beauty—poured it on thick anyway.

I was looking through some old Irving Penn images and there was one that I'd known for a long time—a close-up beauty shot, but with milk poured over the model's face. I thought, What if we did it with foundation? I had a bottle of MAC Face and Body Foundation, and we were going to put it in Cara Delevingne's hairline and let it drip down. So I prepped her skin, and then [hairstylist] James [Pecis] asked me how I wanted the hair, and I thought it should be pulled back so it didn't distract from the foundation, the motion of it. We kind of had one try to do it and get it right. And we got it.

It was pretty spontaneous. And actually quite quick. What's funny is I didn't even open the bottle cap. I took the cap off entirely and let [the foundation] pour down her face, and we took a bunch of shots. The whole process—from the time we got her in front of the camera to when we got the picture—took, at most, three minutes. We had some shots later on with more of her face covered, but we really liked how it looked when it was earlier in the session and not all the way dripped down. It was a happy accident. And Cara was such a sport. When I told her what we were going to do, she was like, "Cool, let's do it." She was not at all bothered by it. She's a professional, which made everyone else's job easier.



COMING CLEAN

Figuring out what "clean beauty" means to us was a dirty job, but someone had to do it.

Any toddler will tell you: Cleanliness is subjective. And beauty products offer no exceptions. The buzzword "clean" has been floating around the industry for years, but there's still no universally agreed upon definition of it. So in 2019, *Allure* decided to establish our own clean standard and accompanying Best of Beauty seal. Coming up with the criteria for it involved consulting toxicologists, dermatologists, and chemists—and *Allure*'s research manager Amber Angelle was at the nucleus of it all:

When you're talking about cosmetic ingredients and safety, there are so many factors that make it difficult to say anything definitive—research is ongoing, reports of side effects vary, and there are so many unknowns. So the challenge is diligently looking at the available studies and talking to as many different experts as possible to get a real understanding of what these ingredients are and why

someone may want to avoid them.

I came in on the back end to assess all the reporting, studies, and interviews that were done to make sure everything we were writing was accurate and clear. So that meant doing things like reviewing the Food and Drug Administration's proposal on sunscreen safety, rewording language about ingredient absorption for clarity, looking at literature reviews on PubMed about parabens, scrutinizing Environmental Protection Agency reports about formaldehyde and toluene, following up with dermatologists about how an ingredient affects cells at a certain concentration...

I think having a standard adds clarity to what the word "clean" means, especially when it's so often used as a marketing term. I studied pharmacology in graduate school and never thought I'd be reading more scientific papers now than I did then. But it was worth it.

take-home test

In March of 2020, Best of Beauty season had commenced on schedule. Then some other things happened. Since then, product testing has occurred remotely and relied on the domestic networks of Allure editors. The most discerning critics of all: total strangers.



Fur editor Sushi Mazzone was the final bark on brush softness; news editor Nicola Dall'Asen had an armful of red at all times.

"Do you want to try one of these?" the stranger said, gesturing to the 140 fragrances on his kitchen table. The glass menagerie stood still, like puppies on adoption day. A few bottles winked in the afternoon sun.

The stranger was me and my audience was any person who entered my apartment during the three months in 2020 when I was testing personal fragrances. Do you know how many different perfumes you can spray in your home before you pass out? Neither do I, thank God! And thank Michael, who helped install my A/C unit and gave a blistering review of an entire capsule collection of [redacted] samples. (Mike actually called them "losers," but I'd never say that.)

Under bygone circumstances, my coworkers and I would gather together in a huge room with excellent ventilation to spray perfumes on Post-its and hold them to our noses. We'd laugh and sometimes choke. Last year, we discovered that it was not totally impossible to assemble comprehensive beauty awards without ever gathering in one room. Via Zoom, we were not at a loss for insights, which were even sharper now, thanks to our newly

THANK YOU NOTES

We couldn't have done it without you. Our gratitude to the Best of Beauty 2021 expert panel for lending your brains, faces, and client-colorist relationships.

Colorists Rachel Bodt and Nikki Ferrara; cosmetic chemists Ginger King and Ron Robinson; cosmetic dentists Marc Lowenberg and Lana Rozenberg; dermatologists Doris Day, Mona Gohara, Amy Wechsler, and Heather Woolery-Lloyd; hairstylists Vernon François and DJ Quintero; makeup artists Robin Black and Fiona Stiles; manicurists Holly Falcone and Miss Pop; perfumer Mandy Aftel; oculoplastic surgeon Bruce Moskowitz; sustainability experts Anna Cummins, cofounder and executive director, 5 Gyres, and Tom Szaky, CEO, TerraCycle.

clay-mask-appropriate work settings and significant others who were curious about volumizing shampoo.

But something was missing. I felt relief anytime somebody showed up at my door to drop off a package or deliver mapo tofu. "Do you want to try one of these?" I would say, and they'd always say "yes," and they'd always be honest. —BRENNAN KILBANE

THE FUTURE

We asked our editors to imagine the products that might take home a Best of Beauty award in our 50th-anniversary year—2046. The future is looking...slightly apocalyptic and influenced by the Disney Channel.

JENNIFER HUSSEIN, COMMERCE WRITER

"I've always wanted the hair wand in *Phil of the Future*. His sister waves it over her hair and it straightens it in seconds."

NICOLA DALL'ASEN, NEWS EDITOR

"It might be a niche 2000s dream, but I've always wanted the automated, hands-free blow-dryer from *iCarly* to be a thing."

TALIA GUTIERREZ, BEAUTY ASSISTANT

"A sunscreen that protects all day. No more reapplications every two hours."

JENNY BAILLY, EXECUTIVE BEAUTY DIRECTOR

"A chic, fireproof bonnet that will protect our hair from the flames that will surround us at all times in 2046."

SARAH KINONEN, ASSOCIATE BEAUTY DIRECTOR

"Contact lenses you put in once...and then never have to remove because they give you perfect vision! Also, an electric toothbrush with built-in toothpaste."

KARA McGRATH, DEPUTY EDITOR

"A self-toning bleach that is somehow activated by the sun so your hair never

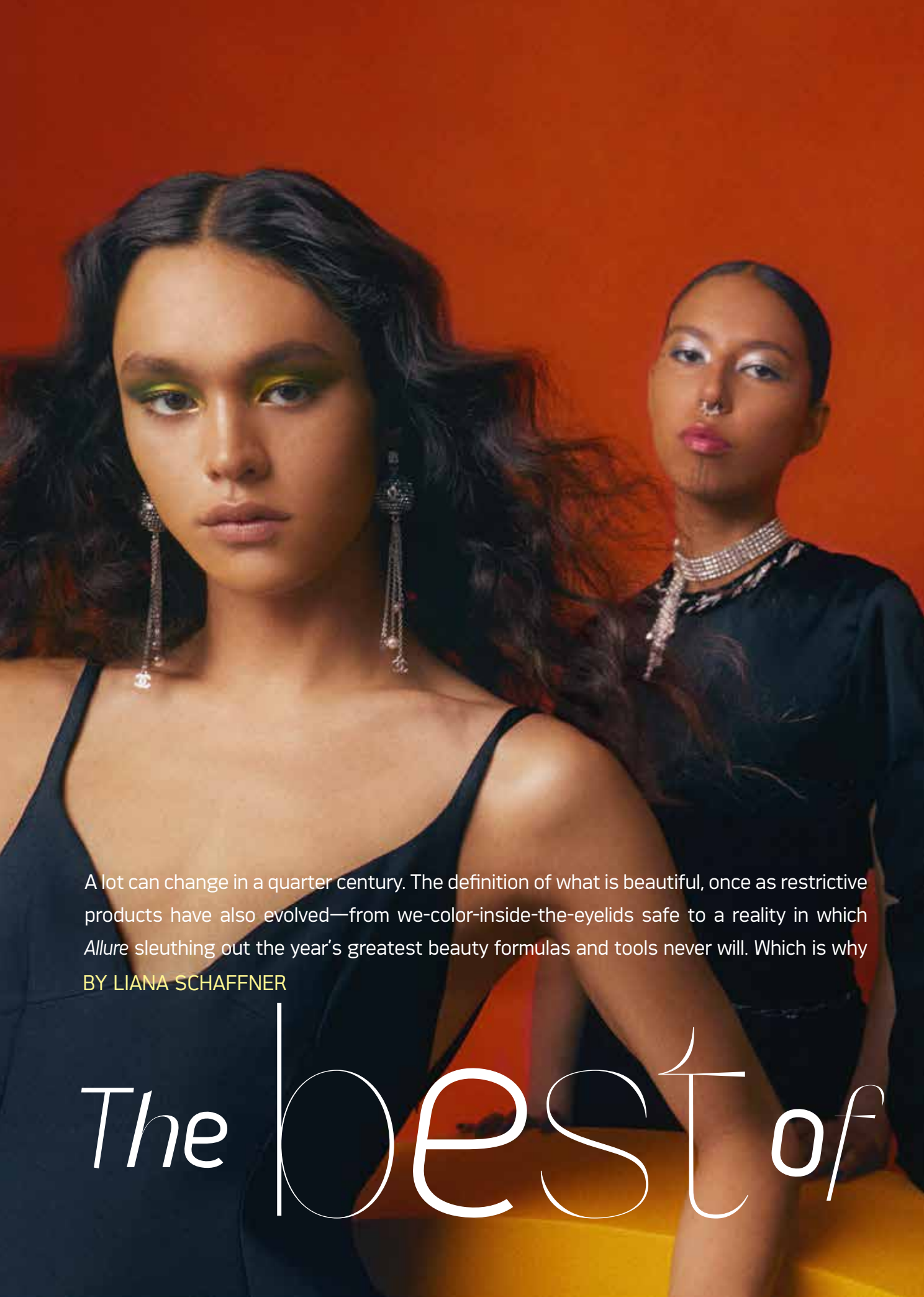
goes brassy." [Editor's note: Those ever-present flames could be helpful for this.]

BRENNAN KILBANE, SENIOR WRITER

"I'm sure whatever Blue Ivy Carter's future daughter's lifestyle brand is selling will be fabulous. And I can't wait to write some captions about it."

DIANNA MAZZONE, SENIOR BEAUTY EDITOR

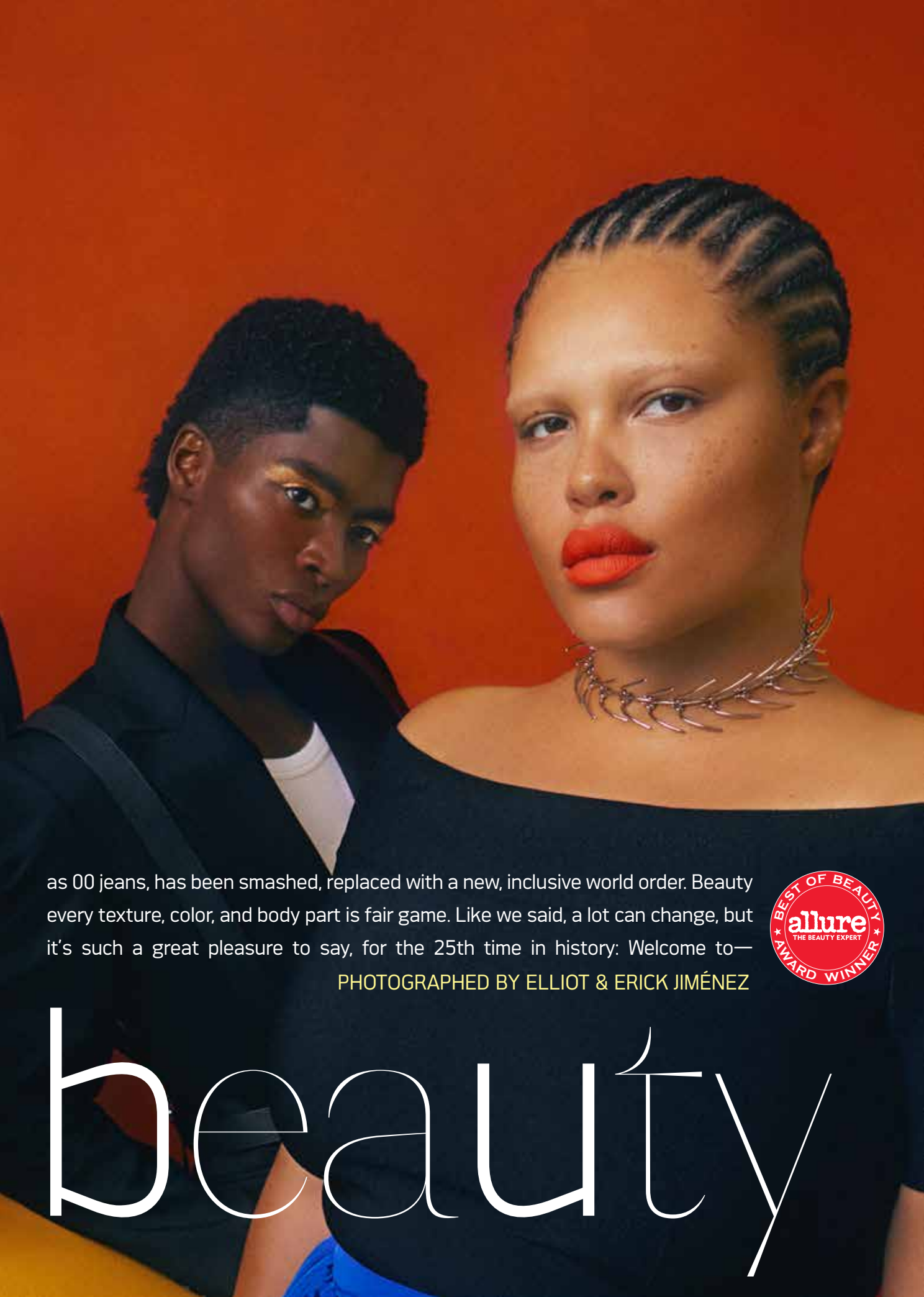
"An at-home robot that cleans your dirty makeup brushes and sponges. Or better yet, a same-day laundry service for them that also offers pickup and delivery."



A lot can change in a quarter century. The definition of what is beautiful, once as restrictive products have also evolved—from we-color-inside-the-eyelids safe to a reality in which *Allure* sleuthing out the year's greatest beauty formulas and tools never will. Which is why

BY LIANA SCHAFFNER

The best of



as 00 jeans, has been smashed, replaced with a new, inclusive world order. Beauty every texture, color, and body part is fair game. Like we said, a lot can change, but it's such a great pleasure to say, for the 25th time in history: Welcome to—

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ELLIOT & ERICK JIMÉNEZ



beauty



MASCARA

VOLUMIZING. YSL Beauty Radical

Volumizing Mascara has more than one trick up its slim, golden sleeve. Supple oils and a slightly tapered brush allow us to build maximum volume and target minuscule areas, so we can have doe eyes one day and cat eyes the next.

DRAMA. Maybelline New York Falsies Lash Lift Ultra Black Mascara concentrates color at the roots and curls our ends to the high heavens, mimicking the surreal appeal of fluttery strips.

LENGTHENING. Infused with oils, CoverGirl Lash Blast Clean Volume Mascara glides to the extreme tips of your lashes for an elongated fan with no end in sight.

WATERPROOF. Maybelline New York Lash Sensational Sky High Mascara has the bustier of brushes: Flexible and conical, it lifts, sculpts, and defies Mother Nature with weatherproof, budgeproof color.

TUBING. Similar to swim floaties, Blinc UltraVolume Tubing Mascara forms a water-resistant sleeve of pigment around each lash, creating the illusion of girth. When it's time to remove, the airy formula slides off without tugging.

COLOR. With an adjustable brush that tilts to a right angle (literally, 90 degrees), Meloway Your Way Mascara in Mint Crème or Cherry Cola lets you coat every last lash in unexpected color—cool pistachio and deep violet, respectively.

PRIMER. The vitamins and conditioners in Lancôme Cils Booster XL Super-Enhancing Mascara Base form a glossy base that resists clumping, stiffness, and flakes, even if you're an overzealous applier of pigment.

EYELINER

PENCIL. Neutral pencils that fade into the background are kind of...pointless. With creamy depth and built-in richness, Kulfi Beauty Underlined Kajal Eyeliner provides noticeable, eye-opening definition. And when we want to shift far out of neutral, Gucci Stylo Contour Des Yeux Khôl Liner comes in shades like Bordeaux, Amethyste, and Céleste, a dreamy powder blue.

LIQUID. Stila Stay All Day Dual-Ended Waterproof Liquid Eye Liner is capable of drawing the finest of lines and the fattest of flicks in the blackest of mattes. And Deck of Scarlet Dual Drama Liquid Eyeliner comes in an iridescent array of colors (plum, teal, violet, bronze). One stroke of the super-narrow brush bestows a supernatural gleam.

BROWS

CLEAR GEL. When control is the goal, Charlotte Tilbury Brow Fix organizes unruly brows and holds rogue hairs in place with a thin coating of translucent gel.

PENCIL. Leave it to Lady Gaga to engineer the ultimate brow tool. With its rounded tip and buttery texture, Haus Laboratories The Edge Precision Brow Pencil is equally gifted at filling gaps and sculpting arches. The range of 13 shades guarantees a pitch-perfect match.

TINTED GEL. The tinted, plant-based microfibers in Kosas Air Brow Tinted Volumizing Treatment Gel create heft by adhering to hairs; conditioners give brows a natural sheen.

WAX. The ridges built into the rim of every pot of Benefit Pomade make it impossible to overload your brush. The tinted formula makes it impossible to believe you ever over-tweezed.

POWDER. Available in four shades, Joey Healy Luxe Brow Powder accentuates the natural shape of your brows with a believable, featherlight finish.

CONDITIONER. We had to go back and count how many times in a row RevitaLash Cosmetics RevitaBrow Advanced Eyebrow Conditioner & Serum has nabbed an award (hint: it rhymes with "great"). The potent peptides strengthen brows, erasing evidence of past damage and protecting against future missteps.

EYE SHADOW

CREAM. A case of love at first sight, Wander Beauty Double Date Eyeshadow Duo pairs the perfect chestnut cream with a shimmery champagne powder for extra sheen. Depixym Cosmetic Emulsion brings out our inner Bob Ross with a range of opaque shades in aluminum tubes. Brushed across lids or traced along lash lines, the vibrant colors resemble an art project gone terribly, terribly right.

POWDER. Whatever your mood, there's an Urban Decay 24/7 Shadow for that. Vegan in formula and velvety in finish, the 25 hyperpigmented shades won't sink into creases or drift toward your cheekbones.

LIQUID. About-Face Daytripper Matte Fluid Eye Paint performs a sort of mini metamorphosis right before your eyes: The creamy fluid transforms into a powdery wash, draping lids in pastel color with an intense matte finish. One swipe from the doe foot of Danessa Myricks Beauty Twin Flames delivers a holographic, multidimensional gleam.

PALETTE. ColourPop Fade Into Hue Palette delivers so much saturated brightness and unadulterated joy, it's as if a Care Bear stared it into existence. When you're feeling more down to earth, Sweet Street Cosmetics L.A. Lady Eyeshadow Palette contains a spectrum of silky and glimmery neutrals—plus the perfect matte black to seal the deal.

Opposite page: Bottega Veneta blazer.
Makeup colors: Pat McGrath Labs Skin Fetish: Ultra Glow Highlighter and ColourPop Fade Into Hue Palette. Previous spread, from left, on Charlie Nishimura: Christian Dior dress. Chanel earrings.
Makeup colors: Danessa Myricks Beauty Twin Flames in Obsession and Soulmate. On Quannah Chasinghorse: Chanel top and skirt. Christian Dior necklace. Makeup colors: Depixym Cosmetic Emulsion in #0102. On Alton Mason: Alexander McQueen jacket, tank, and harness. Makeup colors: Urban Decay 24/7 Shadow in Overdraft. On Alva Claire: Alexander McQueen top and skirt. Mugler choker. Makeup colors: Nars Powermatte Lip Pigment in Light My Fire. These pages, fashion stylist: Rachael Wang. Hair: Nikki Nelms. Makeup: Frankie Boyd. Manicure: Eri Handa. Set designer: Jenny Correa. Production: Marcos Fecchino @ MF Studio.

eyes

Alton Mason

Full disclosure: This is the most makeup Mason has worn in his life—and he's into it. "I love the expression that it gives and the fluidity," says the Arizona native, who was scouted on Instagram and flown to New York to walk in his first show, Yeezy at Madison Square Garden, in 2016. After that, he was summoned to Italy and cast as a Gucci model. And he's only getting busier, specifically with a nascent acting career. He's playing Little Richard in Baz Luhrmann's *Elvis* biopic. "I got to do a lot of history on how he—and Prince, André 3000, and Michael—would wear makeup," he says. "And I thought that was just so fly. I want [more men] to be creative and have fun with it."

—BRENNAN KILBANE





Alexander McQueen suit.
Makeup colors: Haus
Laboratories The Edge Precision
Brow Pencil and Makeup by
Mario Soft Pop Powder Blush in
Mellow Mauve.

Quannah Chasinghorse

You might not think of fighting for social and environmental justice as a direct line to a modeling career, but in the case of Chasinghorse you'd be wrong. It was the media attention she received for her advocacy work that caught the eye of a casting director at Calvin Klein. Chasinghorse, who lives in Alaska and is a member of the Hän Gwich'in and Oglala Lakota tribes, is now an advocate for Indigenous land and climate preservation and a model. Her traditional face tattoos are an homage to her ancestors' legacy: "I was the first youth [in my tribe] to get my face tattooed in over a century," she says. "One way to realign ourselves with who we are as a people is to start reclaiming parts [of our identity] that were taken and lost." —DIANNA MAZZONE

scent



tools

CITRUS. A fragrance that contains notes both sunny (bergamot) and sensual (musk), **Maison Francis Kurkdjian Aqua Vitae Colgone Forte** is practically prismatic. And the vibrant bouquet of orange zest, neroli, and cedarwood in **NEST New York Seville Orange Perfume Oil** is as multi-tiered as a flamenco dancer's skirt—and every bit as expressive.

FLORAL. Creamy-soft and waxy-smooth, **Estée Lauder Beautiful Magnolia** gives a literal interpretation of the summer bloom it's named for. Redolent of jasmine and rose, **Chanel Coco Mademoiselle L'Eau Privée** is the perfume equivalent of a moonlight tryst in the Tuileries.

HERBACEOUS. **Boy Smells Cologne de Parfum in Tantrum** is the coolest meltdown we've ever encountered. The initial explosion of mint and green peppercorn settles into a dry, leafy base.

EARTHY. Patchouli is perfume's chameleon; it assumes different aspects of the notes that surround it. The peach in **Bulgari Allegra Fantasia Veneta** coaxes patchouli into a brighter version of itself, creating an impression of colorful warmth.

GOURMAND. Inspired by the smooth essence of cognac, **Angels' Share by Kilian Paris** is a masterful blend of oak wood and tonka bean. And the refillable flacon, designed to resemble a crystal glass, exudes the bonhomie of a Paris speakeasy.

HOME FRAGRANCE. Poured into a beige glass votive, the soothing notes of matcha and clary sage in **LAFCO Retreat Signature Candle** allow us to escape our everyday cares—without traveling beyond our end tables. And although **Hyascent Urban Tomboy** is shaped like a chic hourglass, the reed-free diffuser releases an earthy infusion of bergamot and suede that endures for six long months.

ESSENTIAL OIL. Not to sound all New Agey, but the five rollerball scents in **Saje Mindful Pocket Pharmacy** have become one with us. The portable case goes where we go, providing instant calm when applied to our pressure points (wrists, temples, jawline, neck).

MAKEUP BRUSHES

FOUNDATION. Densely packed and slightly angled, the bristles of the **Merit Brush No. 1** cozy up to your bone structure, buffing away streaks from hairline to jawline.

CONCEALER. The airy tips of the **Laruce LR105 Short Shadow** blur shadows and fine lines under your eyes. The curved head hugs nostrils and navigates the base of any blemish.

POWDER. Insanely soft and feathery, the **Zara Beauty Large Powder Brush** skims the face and diffuses powder for the sheerest-possible coverage.

CONTOUR. Apply the fanlike bristles of the **Patrick Ta Major Sculpt Contour Brush** to the contours of your face and ta-da! Cheekbones you never knew you had.

BLUSH. Compatible with liquids, creams, and powders, the fluffy **Sephora Collection Pro Blush Brush #96** swirls pigment over the apples and builds color along the cheekbones.

HIGHLIGHTER. Roughly the size of our fingertips (but way more dexterous), the **Sigma E40 Max Tapered Blending Brush** concentrates glow on high points of the face.

BROW. No gap is too narrow for the **Tweezerman Dual Ended Angled Brow Brush** to target. Switch to the spoolie on the other side to help brows achieve their fullest potential.

EYE SHADOW. Wide enough for sweeping on shadow and thin enough for adding definition, the **Merle Norman Cosmetics Makeup Artistry Eyes #2 Brush** accommodates lids and creases (and pros and amateurs).

MULTIPURPOSE. Blending, highlighting, sculpting, diffusing...is there anything the **Monika Blunder Beauty Hybrid Cream Brush** won't do? "Yes," answered one editor. "Shed."

MAKEUP SPONGE

Plenty of makeup sponges have the ability to make streaks disappear. The **BioBlender by EcoTools** can make itself disappear too—it will almost entirely decompose in a home compost bin in six months.

TWEEZERS

At this point, **Tweezerman Slant Tweezer** should be an honorary *Allure* editor. The precise stainless steel tips were fine-tuning our brows back when we were still editing with ink.

EYELASH CURLER

The icon of eyelash tools (and a must-have for monolids), **Shu Uemura Iconic Eyelash Curler** accommodates every eye shape, giving even downward-facing lashes a robust bend.

LASHES

The wispy tips and staggered lengths of **LoveSeen** strips mimic the pattern of your natural lashes—if your natural lashes dusted your brows. And **Glamnetic XoXo Vegan Magnetic Lash** gives dramatic effect with zero effort. Just draw the magnetic liner along your upper lids and these lashes snap into place.

HOT TOOLS

BLOW-DRYER. If you think the airy, ergonomic design of **Drybar Reserve Ultralight Anti-Frizz Blow Dryer** ups your bathroom's Insta game, just wait till you see what it does for your hair.

BRUSH DRYER. The **T3 AireBrush Duo** has two interchangeable brushes, five heat settings, and three different speeds—adding up to sleekness and volume in one pass.

FLATIRON. The sensors in the **GHD Max Wide Plate Styler** monitor heat 200 times per second to keep it at the perfect hair-smoothing (but not hair-damaging) 365 degrees.

CURLING IRON. The rotating barrel of the **CHI Spin N Curl Compact** does all the work, producing big, bouncy curls at the push of a button. And for shorter styles, the slim **Kristin Ess 1" Curling Iron** gives bobs, lob, and pixie cuts a generous serving of tousled texture.

WAVES. Place the **Trademark Beauty Babe Waves** against your hair to sculpt perfect mermaid ripples. The three ceramic barrels leave an undulating impression—effortlessly.

HAIRBRUSHES

PADDLE. The airy cushion and ball-tipped bristles of the **Y by Yusef Cushion Paddle Brush** deliver luxurious shine and a blissful scalp massage. For fragile hair, the supremely flexible **Manta Healthy Hairbrush** molds to the shape of your palm and scalp, reducing tension to prevent damage.

ROUND. The **Conair Hairbrush Advisory Frizzy Hair Blow-Dry Porcupine Round Brush** polishes roots and sculpts our ends into a full-figured curve.

DETANGLER. The **Goody Total Texture Oil-Infused Detangler** distributes a light veil of oil as you brush, so bristles glide without snagging and knots practically undo themselves.

EDGE STYLER. The **Kitsch Dual Edge Brush and Comb** has soft nylon bristles on one side and a mini comb on the other so you can lay down baby hairs and get artsy with your edges.

HAIR PICK. We've combed through the competition. **Pattern by Tracee Ellis Ross Hair Pick** is The One for fluffing, shaping, and elongating tight textures.



PRIMER

One thin layer of **Make Up For Ever Step 1 Hydra Booster Primer** locks in moisture for a luminous, poreless effect. And the oil-absorbing powders in **Shiseido Synchro Skin Soft Blurring Primer** seem to airbrush our T-zones away.

FOUNDATION

POWDER. A buildable powder with an invisible finish, **One/Size Turn Up the Base Versatile Powder Foundation** lets us control the intensity of our coverage.

STICK. Packing rich pigment into a dense bullet, **BLK/OPL Skin Perfecting Stick Foundation** goes on creamy and blends seamlessly.

LIQUID. Estée Lauder **Double Wear Sheer Long-Wear Makeup** blurs pores and obscures fine lines with the lightest finish in the game. For medium coverage, **LYS Beauty Triple Fix Serum Foundation** uses hyaluronic acid to keep skin dewy while it diffuses imperfections. And the airy, mineral-based pigments in **BareMinerals Original Liquid Mineral Foundation** hover over creases instead of settling into them; a few drops conceal everything—and feel like nothing.

CONCEALER

There's more to **Laura Mercier Secret Camouflage Concealer Brighten & Correct Duo** than meets the eye. The dual-ended stick blurs, brightens, and hydrates for a wide-awake look you've got to see to believe. And the elegant pigments in **Bodyography Professional Cosmetics Skin Slip Full Coverage Concealer** blend so beautifully, you'll almost regret having to squander them on a zit (almost).

BLUSH

POWDER. **Makeup by Mario Soft Pop Powder Blush** is saturated enough to create a gorgeous flush—and fine enough to let your cheeks peek through it.

CREAM. With the richness of a balm and the stay-put-ness of a stain, **Rare Beauty Stay Vulnerable Melting Blush** imparts a wash of color that's indistinguishable from your own skin.

HIGHLIGHTER

LIQUID. For the frost-averse, **Pixi +Rose Radiance Perfector** delivers dewy warmth with a subtle rose tint and hydrating ceramides.

POWDER. The only reasonable alternative to swallowing a light bulb: **Pat McGrath Labs Skin Fetish: Ultra Glow Highlighter** seems to illuminate skin from within using finely milled, high-wattage shimmer.

CREAM. Like a cushion of air, **Stila Heaven's Hue Highlighter** yields to the warmth of your fingertips and melts into skin, creating a weightless veil of light.

STICK. Our editors had to test the entire 10-shade spectrum of **Joah Beauty Crystal Glow Tinted Luminizer Stick**. It's a tough job, but someone has to look like a walking advertisement for glass skin.

BRONZER

A lush stick with a soufflé texture, **Em Cosmetics So Soft Multiface Play** glides over the high points of the face, depositing warmth right where you want it.

CONTOUR

We love anything that's well edited, especially if it's going on our face. Containing one sculpting cream and one bronzing powder, **Patrick Ta Beauty Major Sculpt Crème Contour & Powder Bronzer Duo** defines in the most refined way possible.

MULTIUSE STICK

It takes a single **Live Tinted Huestick** to do the work of an entire makeup bag. In Perk, Balance, Rise, Origin, and Found, the creamy crayon disguises dark circles, protects with antioxidants, and drapes lips, cheeks, and eyelids in sheer color.

POWDER

PRESSED. A sweep of **Giorgio Armani Beauty Luminous Silk Glow Setting Powder** instills radiance and erases shine—because it's brilliant enough to know the difference.

LOOSE. Colorless and weightless, **Mary Kay Translucent Loose Powder** is like a real-life filter for your face.

FACIAL SELF-TANNER

The genius of **Coco & Eve Sunny Honey Bronzing Face Drops** is that it piggybacks on your normal routine for hassle-free color. Add a few drops to your daily moisturizer for a light tint; mix in a few more for a deeper bronze.

SETTING SPRAY

A quick spritz of **XX Revolution Quick FIXX Mattifying Setting Spray** minimizes shine for the long haul, so you can set your makeup and then forget your makeup. And for a luminous finish that refuses to quit, **MAC Fix+ Magic Radiance** keeps skin plump and pliant while it perfects.

Opposite page, makeup colors: Shiseido Synchro Skin Soft Blurring Primer and Joah Beauty Crystal Glow Tinted Luminizer Stick.

b
a
s
e





Aha Claire

It began in fits and starts: Claire was working small-time, fashion-y jobs, modeling blue streaks in her hair for Vidal Sassoon and assisting stylists. "People would say things like, 'There's something about you,' but there was no box for me to fit in [as a model]," she says. Claire was 18 when she stumbled across an article about plus models in a London magazine and thought, Why not me? One decade and a few agencies later, Claire is fronting campaigns for MAC and walking the runway for Versace. "When somebody says, 'I've really enjoyed today with you. Thank you,' that always gets me," she says. "I feel like I've done a good day's work if people enjoyed my company." —B.K.

body

Opposite page: Rhui bodysuit. Makeup colors: Gucci Stylo Contour Des Yeux Khôl Liner in Céleste and Dior Dior Addict Lip Glow Oil in Cherry.

BODY WASH

LIQUID. By eliminating 99 percent of bacteria and reducing dryness, **Dove Care & Protect Antibacterial Body Wash** is as close as we're ever going to get to living in our own little bubble.

BAR. For persnickety skin, **Type:A Moisturizing Bar Soap in The Darling** unleashes a heap of lather that's coddling enough for everyday use. And the bamboo-powder buffers in **Glossier Body Hero Exfoliating Bar** tackle dullness (with a supple assist from sunflower seed oil).

BODY SCRUB

True Botanicals Pure Radiance Sugar Scrub is like an all-inclusive retreat for your skin. Organic sugar, sandalwood powder, and kaolin clay work in concert to polish rough spots and detox pores, while an invigorating orange scent helps circulation get its groove back.

BODY LOTION

LIGHT. Silky and coconutty, **Summer Fridays Summer Skin Nourishing Body Lotion** disappears into skin, delivering a powdery finish that feels more liberating than a long weekend.

RICH. **Fenty Skin Butta Drop Whipped Oil Body Cream** is exactly what it sounds like: a decadent, buttery emulsion. The lightweight finish, however, defies explanation.

EXFOLIATING. In lieu of alpha hydroxy acids that can irritate sensitive skin, **Cetaphil Daily Smoothing Moisturizer Rough & Bumpy Skin** gently dissolves dry patches with urea, a moisture-boosting emollient.

OIL. A drizzle of **Keys Soulcare Sacred Body Oil** turns moisturizing into a ritual. Scented with sage and rich with fatty acids, the delicate elixir soothes skin, calms the senses, and bestows an outer glow to match those beautiful souls.

RINSE-OFF. **Olay Rinse-Off Body Conditioner + Shea Butter** cocoons skin in shea butter while you're still in the shower, stopping dryness and tightness before they start.

SPOT TREATMENT. Because "feeling the burn" shouldn't apply to the skin on our thighs, **Megababe Thigh Rescue** glides on to prevent chafing. **Vaseline Jelly Stick** attacks chap wherever it occurs (lips, cuticles, knees)—and it now also comes in cooling menthol (Refreshing) and a beachy glow (Cocoa Shimmer).

BODY SUNSCREEN

MINERAL. If we didn't have to reapply sunscreen every two hours, we'd forget all about **Blue Lizard Australian Sunscreen Sheer Lotion SPF 50**. The zinc sunscreen goes on without a trace (said testers with all different skin tones).

CHEMICAL. We honestly can't tell if **Neutrogena Invisible Daily Defense Sunscreen Lotion SPF 30** is a broad-spectrum sunscreen parading as a weightless moisturizer or a weightless moisturizer parading as a broad-spectrum sunscreen. The antioxidant-rich formula is that light and comfortable.

SELF-TANNER

TRADITIONAL. You can't botch **St. Tropez x Ashley Graham Ultimate Glow Kit**, even if you tried (and, believe us, we tried). The velvety mitt distributes the airy foam for an immediate, uniform glow that dries on contact and continues to deepen over eight hours (rinse off earlier if you want less color).

GRADUAL. A gradual bronzer with the soul of a moisturizer, **Bondi Sands Pure Gradual Tanning Lotion** transforms skin into dewy, glowy perfection with hyaluronic acid and a subtle tint.

BODY BRONZER

Packed with fine shimmer and natural oils, **Elaluz Stick Bronzer with Camu Camu** produces a luminous sheen that warms our skin—and has never stained our clothes.

BATH PRODUCT

The satisfyingly coarse crystals in **Kneipp Goodbye Stress Water Mint & Rosemary Mineral Bath Salt** release essential oils and a herbaceous scent as they dissolve, making our skin feel smoother and our breathing feel deeper.

DEODORANT

With its stainless-steel case and compact size, **Dove 0% Aluminum Refillable Deodorant** feels like a small piece of sculpture in our hand—and puts a generous dent in our carbon footprint.

ANTIPERSPIRANT

An invisible gel in a squeezable tube, **Secret Derma+ Fragrance Free Antiperspirant** goes on clear and keeps skin bone-dry for up to 48 hours.

HAIR REMOVAL

SHAVING CREAM. **Skintimate Bloom Shave Gel** lathers up into a luxurious, floral-scented whip that feels so darn good, you'll actually look forward to de-fuzzing (no, really).

RAZOR. The five tightly spaced blades of **Gillette Venus Deluxe Smooth Sensitive Razor** glide over skin and slice through stubble with minimal pressure, resulting in a nick-free shave.

LASER. Using the same technology wielded by dermatologists, **SmoothSkin Pure IPL Hair Removal Laser** permanently reduces unwanted growth by targeting the pigment in your hair follicles and disabling the root. The device automatically adapts to your skin tone, producing results that last a lifetime.

HAND CREAM

The orange-derived stem cells in **AVYA Skincare Nourishing Hand Treatment** boost collagen and fade dark spots over time. The greaseless formula absorbs in half a snap.

HAND SANITIZER

Dove Nourishing Hand Sanitizer in Deep Moisture is so hydrating, you'd never guess the gel also obliterates over 99 percent of common germs with over 60 percent ethyl alcohol (the CDC-recommended amount).

TEETH WHITENER

Whitening treatments used to require fooling with sticky strips and laying low for at least 30 minutes. **Crest Whitening Emulsions with Wand Applicator** makes all of that seem like ancient history. The minty gel-like formula contains a potent form of hydrogen peroxide that absorbs in seconds, removing stains while you do...whatever it is you want to do.





hair

SHAMPOO AND CONDITIONER

CURLY HAIR. Pumped full of silk proteins, **Nexus Curl Define Shampoo and Conditioner** reinforce your curls' natural structure, exaggerating the bounce you were born with.

KINKY HAIR. The **Mane Choice Manetabolism Rejuvenation Solution Extra Healthy Shampoo and Conditioner** coddles kinks, hydrating and reducing breakage to encourage softness and fullness all over.

FINE HAIR. Never in all our flyaway days did we expect **Pantene Silicone Free & Fragrance Free Pure Clean & Clarify Shampoo and Conditioner** to deliver so much polish with so few ingredients. We've seen the light.

DRY HAIR. Parched hair takes to the tropical-smelling **SheaMoisture Papaya & Neroli All Day Frizz Control Shampoo and Conditioner**, which smooth rough patches and restore calm, like a toddler to a juice box.

COLOR-TREATED HAIR. The blue pigments in **John Frieda Blue Crush for Brunettes Blue Shampoo and Conditioner** neutralize the brassy and rusty tones that dull dark hair, while **Matrix Total Results So Silver Shampoo** rids cool blondes of unwanted warmth.

DAMAGED HAIR. The hair-care system of the future, **Olaplex No. 4 Bond Maintenance Shampoo and No. 5 Bond Maintenance Conditioner** contain a novel set of molecules that buffer against breakage, making damage a thing of the past.

DANDRUFF. Infused with cooling menthol and a hefty dose of selenium sulfide, **Head & Shoulders Clinical Strength Dandruff Defense Intensive Itch Relief Shampoo** banishes flakes and soothes itchiness after one wash.

CLARIFYING SHAMPOO

The mild surfactants in **Carol's Daughter Wash Day Delight Water-to-Foam Shampoo with Rose Water** behave like mini magnets, attracting buildup without stripping hair.

CO-WASH

Consider **Kristin Ess Ultra Hydrating Curl Co-Wash** the smartphone of co-washes: It automatically locks moisture in and impurities out, so curls practically style themselves.

SCALP TREATMENT

SCRUB. Remember the most luxurious scalp massage you ever received? Here it is, in a jar.

A dreamy concoction of sugar and coconut oil, **Ouai Scalp & Body Scrub** boosts circulation and enhances calm.

MASK. The plant-based polymers in **Aveda Invati Advanced Intensive Hair & Scalp Masque** plump and fortify individual strands, adding renewed body and fullness.

TONIC. The tingly blend of zinc and peppermint oil in **Royal Oils by Head & Shoulders Nighttime Scalp Tonic Lotion** relieves dryness and lifts away buildup to prolong the life of protective styles.

LEAVE-IN CONDITIONER

The holy grail of detangling, **Pantene Miracle Rescue 10-in-1 Multitasking Spray** bestows a staggering list of shine-boosting, frizz-busting benefits. Let us spray.

MASK

For kinks and curls, **TPH by Taraji Mask On** delivers softness without compromising springiness. And even those with fine hair will find **ColorWow x Chris Appleton Money Masque** richly rewarding; the decadent formula rinses clean, leaving behind nothing but shine.

STYLING PRODUCT

CURL MILK. **Mielle Organics Avocado Moisturizing Hair Milk** cushions curls and locks in luster with a rich cocktail of omegas, proteins, and plant extracts.

CURL DEFINER. **Intelligent I-N Bell-Curve Curl Cream** provides weightless hold and lasting definition. And **The Doux Big Poppa Defining Gel** makes curls pop without a bit of stiffness.

CURL REFRESHER. Did you know your curls have a memory? **Mizani CoCo Dew Pre-Styling and Restyling Spray** revives their shape and perfects their pattern with coconut extract. They won't forget to thank you.

VOLUMIZER. An ultrafine powder that vanishes on contact, **Joico Rise Up Powder Spray** gives roots a substantial boost. And **Verb Volume Dry Texture Spray** adds the sort of tousled, piecey texture that used to require a curling iron—or surfing lessons—to achieve.

WAVE ENHANCER. The moisture-repelling molecules in **Living Proof Curl Enhancer** form a sleeve of sleekness around your waves, producing languid bends with a glossy sheen.

DEFRIZZER. Unlike heavy formulas that kill volume along with frizz, **NaturAll Club Avocado Curl Custard** keeps tight kinks intact. For looser spirals, **Living Proof Curl Moisturizing Shine Oil** disappears into hair, deflating puff while preserving curves.

FINISHING OIL. Packing the moisture-rich goodness of shea butter into a lightweight elixir, **Fekkai Shea Butter Intense Oil** glazes over flyaways and disguises split ends without dragging hair down.

BLOWOUT CREAM. Laced with fatty acids and CBD, **Calm SexyHair Wetflick & Chill All Style Dry Crème** is essentially a dispensary of fullness and shine.

MOUSSE. **IGK Big Time Volume and Thickening Mousse** delivers full-on girth in an airy fluff, while **Rucker Roots Texture Styling Mousse** provides just enough moisture and hold to give your styling tools a major assist.

TWISTING CREAM. It took a whole lot of testing to find a formula capable of sculpting elongated spirals. **TPH by Taraji Twist and Set** gave us stand-out twist-outs every time.

EDGE TAMER. They may be wispy-fine, but baby hairs are essential to our style. **African Pride Moisture Miracle Edge Styling Wax** gives them the respect they deserve with aloe (to condition) and coconut water (to strengthen).

POMADE. The artfully faded denim of stylists, **Jillian Dempsey Roadie Hair Pomade** provides offhand texture with a cool, semimatte finish.

HAIR SPRAY. Either **R+Co Bleu Featherlight Hairspray** is made from the wings of Pegasus, or someone discovered a molecular complex that provides hold *and* promotes swingy-ness. Yeah, we're going with Pegasus.

DRY SHAMPOO. A blast of **L'Oréal Paris Elvive Dream Lengths Air Volume Dry Shampoo** delivers immaculate roots. And a silky finish. And impressive volume. And a delicious scent. Other than that, it's totally undetectable.

HAIR COLOR

PERMANENT COLOR. **Madison Reed Radiant Hair Color Kit** arrives at your door with all the stuff you need for multidimensional color, and none of the stuff you don't (ammonia, PPD, phthalates). You have to fill out a lengthy questionnaire before the pros at **eSalon Custom Hair Color Set** formulate a box of dye for you, but the results really do approximate a salon visit—minus the visit.

GLOSS. Apply **L'Oréal Paris Le Color Gloss** straight from the tube to enhance color and shine through at least five shampoos.

ROOT COVERAGE. The tiny, tinted zinc particles in **ColorWow Root Cover Up** cling to wiry grays and won't let go until we shampoo. And **dpHue Root Touch Up Kit** is totally intuitive. After mixing, paint the formula directly on roots for seamless, goof-proof color.

RAINBOW. In shades like Add to Cart (powder blue) and Binge Watch (retro red), **Good Dye Young I'm Bored Hair Makeup** offers a temporary break from the ennui of everyday hair color.

HAIR TOWEL

Volo Hero Towel hugs our hairline without tugging on baby hairs and absorbs dampness without ruffling cuticles, cutting drying time—and damage—in half.

TURBAN/BONNET

Designed with two layers of satin and a sleek perimeter to protect edges, **Glow By Daye Premium Satin Bonnet** reduces friction and moisture loss. Bonus: The drawstring ensures a snug fit, whether we're turning over in bed or going about our day.

FOR FURRY FRIENDS

Those who confuse **Ouai Fur Bébé Pet Shampoo** with a human shampoo aren't exactly barking up the wrong tree. Packed with aloe vera, the hydrating formula leaves hair and coats of every breed soft and shiny. When you're done, the bendy bristles of the **Tangle Teezer The Ultimate Detangler Hairbrush** gently glide through long coats, reducing stress for your pet and tumbleweeds on your floor.



charlie nishimura

Growing up in New York City was both very *Gossip Girl* (“I definitely sat on the Met steps”) and whatever the opposite is of *Gossip Girl* (Nishimura got their start posing for educational textbooks). “I know what it feels like to be a late bloomer,” says Nishimura, whose big break came in the form of a *Vogue Italia* story shot by Harley Weir in 2018. Since then, more editorials in more *Vogues*: Mexico, España, Teen. While Nishimura believes a career is not built on a stack of magazines alone, they are enjoying the journey: “I’ve been on some really great sets recently. Especially when there are queer and trans people in front of the camera, that’s really special. It’s just the dolls hanging out, you know?” —B.K.

Mugler bodysuit. Kenneth Jay Lane earrings. Almasika ring. Makeup colors: Stila Stay All Day Dual-Ended Waterproof Liquid Eye Liner in Intense Black, Sweet Street Cosmetics L.A. Lady Eyeshadow Palette, and CND Vinylux Long Wear Polish in Bordeaux Babe.



NAIL POLISH

DARK RED. One coat—really, just one—of **CND Vinylux Long Wear Polish in Bordeaux Babe** yields the deepest berry with the quickest drying time. Case in point: Our color set while we were typing this sentence.

BRIGHT RED. **Essie nail polish in Not Red-y For Bed** is what would happen if you crossed a cherry with a chili pepper: bright, glossy, and a little bit saucy.

SOFT PINK. **Sundays nail polish in L.O1**, a pink so pale it borders on white, has the tender appeal of apple blossom.

BRIGHT PINK. A bright pop of bubblegum pink, **Zoya Professional Lacquer in Tweedy** practically asks to be snapped.

CREAMY BEIGE. A cuddly neutral, **For Tmrw Non-Toxic Nail Polish in For Later** is the color you'd get from pouring extra milk in your tea—and spending extra time with a nail buffer.

BLACK. Smooth onyx with a mirror-like gleam, **Mischo Beauty Nail Lacquer in Run the World** is honestly more opulent than some jewel tones we've tried.

GREEN. **Jinsoon Nail Lacquer in Palma** glazes our nails in vibrant, verdant green; built-in UV filters act like fronds to shield our color from sun damage.

BLUE. The barely perceptible shimmer in **Sally Hansen Good Kind Pure nail polish in Crystal Blue** gives powder blue more dimension than we ever thought possible, while **Mischo Beauty Nail Lacquer in #NYFW** cloaks nails in the velvet blue of a midnight sky.

ORANGE. A dazzling tangerine that reflects every kind of light, **OPI Nail Lacquer in PCH Love Song** is like brushing on the sunset.

GLITTER TOPPER. Suspended in translucent lacquer, the rainbow flecks in **Butter London Patent Shine 10x Nail Lacquer in All You Need Is Love** turn your run-of-the-mill manicure into bona fide nail art.

Opposite page: Y/Project shirt, coat, and pants. WWake rings. Makeup colors: Charlotte Tilbury Brow Fix, Rare Beauty Stay Vulnerable Melting Blush in Nearly Apricot, and Sally Hansen Good Kind Pure nail polish in Crystal Blue.



PRESS-ONS

Nails of LA Press-On Extensions transform stubby nails into perfect ovals, while each **Crowned and Polished nail kit** mimics salon acrylics—minus the price tag, light cure, and time commitment.

WRAPS

Some nail-art projects involve canceling your plans, fiddling with doodads, and making a big old mess. Not **ManiMe's** stick-on gels. The cushy strips fit like a glove, stick without ripples, and last up to 10 days.

BASE COAT

Sally Hansen Color Therapy Beautifiers Strengthening Base Coat imparts a protective barrier and the rosy glow of a vigorous buffing, making polish a bonus—not a necessity.

TOPCOAT

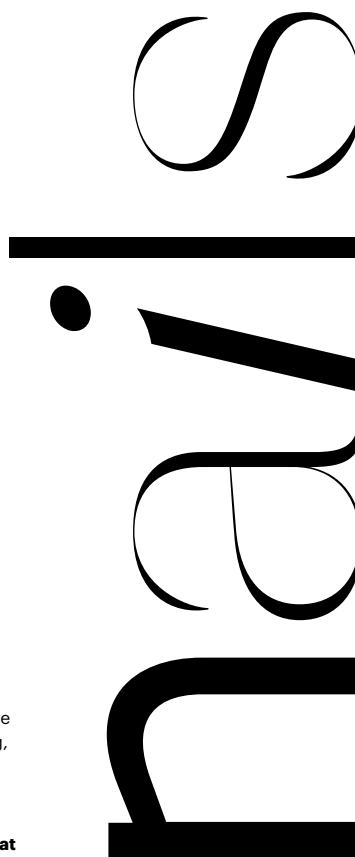
The bouncy finish of **Essie Gel-Setter Top Coat** resists dings and gives nails a rounder, fuller, beautiful-er silhouette.

CUTICLE CARE

We used to hydrate our cuticles because...well, just because. **Naturally London Hydrating Cuticle Oil** turns the typical chore into a luxurious treat with aloe, lavender, and rose hip. Some of us actually used the word "fun" to describe **Tweezerman Mini Cuticle Nipper**, which says a lot about its pinch-free design—and our social life this past year or so.

NAIL POLISH REMOVER

Well, that was easy: Dip your finger into the acetone-free **Olive & June Nail Polish Remover** pot and pull out a spotless, bone-dry nail. And now the cap also has a built-in sponge for erasing enamel on toes.



! i P S



Opposite page, makeup colors: Gucci Rouge de Beauté Brillant Glow & Care Shine Lipstick in Virginia Scarlett and Vantine Fuchsia (from Best of Beauty Splurges).

LIPSTICK

YOUR LIPS BUT BETTER, LIGHT. The satin lingerie of lip color, **L'Oréal Paris Les Nus in Nu Confident** produces the sheerest-possible wash of rose.

YOUR LIPS BUT BETTER, MEDIUM. A dusty pink that melts into a comfy stain, **Lipsax Liquid Matte Lipstick in Selfie** seems to become a part of your lips.

YOUR LIPS BUT BETTER, DARK. Straight-up cocoa with a powdery finish, **Maybelline New York Color Sensational Ultimatte Slim Lipstick in More Truffle** enrobes lips in richness and warmth.

CLASSIC RED. One swipe of **Pound Cake Cake Batter in Maraschino Cherry** delivers instant opacity—and a hint of badassery—with shine-free carnation color.

DARK RED. Creamy in texture and matte in finish, **Mented Cosmetics Red Matte Lipstick in Red Rover** is a saturated burgundy that goes on smooth.

BRICK RED. You've got to kiss a lot of frogs to find a glossy red that stays put. Infused with hyaluronic acid and steadfast pigments, **Imayla Beauty The One Hydrating Cream Lipstick in Cérise** is, well, a real prince.

BRIGHT PINK. Brighter than rose and quieter than coral, **Dior Rouge Dior in Actrice** is that most enigmatic shade of pink: the exciting kind.

CORAL. A vibrant hybrid of red and pink, **YSL Beauty Rouge Volupté Shine Lipstick Balm in Rouge Studio** bathes lips in dewy brightness.

PLUM. One layer of **MAC Satin Lipstick in Cyber** delivers an edgy sheen; several swipes impart blackberry darkness.

BERRY. Packed with cocoa butter and potent color, **Bite Beauty Power Move Soft Matte Lipstick in Mulberry** gives lips a hydrating, raspberry hug.

LIP BALM

Biossance Squalane + Rose Vegan Lip Balm provides so much plumpness and suppleness, you'll be tempted to skip the lipstick (although it does make color gleam). And we swear our lips gave a sigh of relief when we smoothed on **Dr. Pawpaw Overnight Lip Mask**. The velvety salve diminishes lines with aloe vera and olive oil.

LIP OIL

With translucent color and succulent cherry oil, **Dior Dior Addict Lip Glow Oil** lays down a glaze that enhances the shape of your lips.

LIP CRAYON

Maybelline New York SuperStay Ink Crayon unleashes our inner makeup artist. The creamy texture spreads beautifully; the tapered point defines effortlessly; the range of shades has "ombre" written all over it.

LIP GLOSS

The boss of all glosses, **Fenty Beauty Gloss Bomb Cream Color Drip Lip Cream** delivers intense pigment and a vinyl shine in one perfectly dosed stroke.

LIP STAIN

The shockingly bold pigments in **Pure Theory Love X Life Lip Tint** have serious longevity, while the airy texture seems to defy gravity.

LIQUID LIPSTICK

The slinkiest matte we've ever smoothed on, **Nars Powermatte Lip Pigment** adapts to our lips like a second-skin, while **Revlon ColorStay Satin Ink** gives us crisp color with a luminous sheen.



FACIAL CLEANSER

OIL. Fans of botanicals will love the silky evening primrose and lavender oils in **Mario Badescu Skin Care Cleansing Oil**. Everybody else will marvel at the petal-soft results.

GEL. The gentlest of gels, **Garnier Green Labs Pinea-C Brightening Gel Wash** dissolves makeup and eradicates dullness with vitamin C and a water-thin feel.

BAR. Packed to the edges with kaolin clay, each **Freeman Beauty Cleansing Mask Bar** does your skin a solid, purging pores while lifting away dirt and oil.

CREAM. The generous dose of aloe (a hero humectant) in **Alpha-H Balancing Cleanser** melts into skin and locks moisture in place.

POWDER. A face wash that goes against the grain, **Tonymoly I'm Rice Exfoliating Enzyme Cleanser** turns into a milky emulsion that polishes without scratching.

BALM. Add water to transform a scoop of **Clinique Take the Day Off Cleansing Balm** into a delicate oil—and dry skin into silk.

FACIAL SCRUB

The cushy little buffers in **Bliss Well Yes! Healthy Glow Multivitamin Scrub** (they're made of cellulose) dislodge flakes without disrupting your skin's protective barrier; a bevy of B vitamins boost hydration.

TONER/ESSENCE

HYDRATING. Replete with lipids, **Hourglass Cosmetics Equilibrium Restoring Essence** restores the skin barrier that some cleansing surfactants can strip away, helping off-kilter

skin regain balance and on-kilter skin keep its composure.

EXFOLIATING. With a water-based formula, a no-joke dose of vitamin C, and fruit acids, **No7 Radiance+ Vitamin C Glow Toner** imparts instant gleamy-ness.

FACIAL MIST

It turns out tea is balm for the soul *and* the skin. Infused with hard-core antioxidants and hydrating ingredients, **Innisfree Youth Enhancing Serum Mist with Black Tea** repels free radicals and steeps your face in dewy moisture.

FACIAL SERUM

ANTIOXIDANT. Think of **SkinCeuticals C E Ferulic Serum** as the antioxidant equivalent of a parasol: The silky layer of protection reduces environmental damage, present and future.

RETINOL. Containing the purest and most potent form of vitamin A, **L'Oréal Paris Revitalift Derm Intensives 0.3% Pure Retinol Serum** turns over cells at a clip, visibly smoothing lines and reducing wrinkles in weeks.

RETINOL ALTERNATIVE. For those who can't tolerate even a pea-size drop of retinol, the plant-based alternative in **BareMinerals Ageless 10% Phyto-Retinol Night Concentrate** diminishes lines without redness or irritation.

HYALURONIC ACID. Similar to notes on a scale, the trio of hyaluronic acids in **AHC Aqualuronic Serum** penetrate skin at high, medium, and low levels, tuning your moisture barrier to perfection.

AHA. The high percentage of lactic acid in **Drunk Elephant Protini Power Peptide Resurf Serum** dissolves dull surface cells, basically giving skin no choice but to reform its look and feel.

FACIAL MOISTURIZER

LIGHT. The duo of hyaluronic acid and super lotus extract in **Fresh Lotus Youth Preserve Moisturizer** boost suppleness by binding water to skin and strengthening the skin barrier. Our oily-skinned testers loved the gel formula of **Function of Beauty Custom Facial Moisturizer**. Light and bouncy, it plumps skin without smothering pores.

RICH. The minuscule peptide molecules in **Olay Regenerist Collagen Peptide24 Moisturizer** penetrate skin to give collagen-producing cells a helping hand. **Murad Intense Recovery Cream** is sort of like a seaweed wrap for your face. The velvety emulsion cradles skin, calms redness, and relaxes stress lines with microalgae and mirabilis jalapa plant extract.

OIL. Equipped with a click-button pen and rollerball tip, **Milk Makeup Sunshine Oil** dispenses liquid radiance (vitamin C and olive-derived squalane) wherever we want it (face, chest, cuticles, and flyaways).

EYE CREAM

LINE SMOOTHING. Packed with 21 line-smoothing peptides, **Peter Thomas Roth Peptide 21 Wrinkle Resist Eye Cream** is the next-best thing to getting carded. And the vitamin A in **RoC Retinol Correxion Line**

Alison Lou earrings.
To get the looks: Milk Makeup Sunshine Oil and Biossance Squalane + Rose Vegan Lip Balm.

Smoothing Eye Cream relaxes creases without irritating the tender eye area.

DEPUFFING. Undereye bloat is the result of excess blood flow. **Isdin K-Ox Eyes** strengthens tiny capillaries to regulate circulation and reduce puffiness.

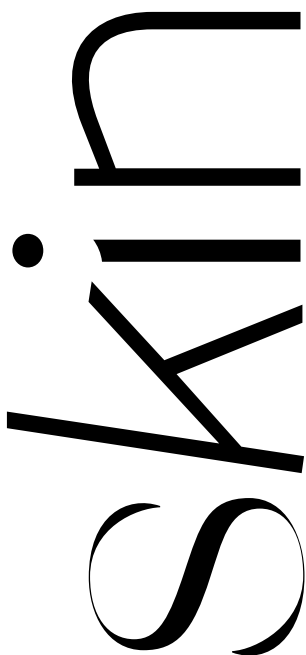
BRIGHTENING. The high concentration of vitamin C in **BeautyStat Universal C Eye Perfector** fades shadows and crepiness over time; hyaluronic acid and plant extracts smooth and illuminate on the spot. For treatment *and* coverage, **Trinny London BFF Eye** disguises dark circles like a concealer (it comes in 12 sheer tints), while peptides firm and vitamin C brightens.

MASK

CLARIFYING. Sourced from the Amazon River, the clay in **Kiehl's Rare Earth Deep Pore Cleansing Mask** explores every pore, drawing out gunk from depths unknown.

HYDRATING. **Philosophy Nature In a Jar Skin Rehab Balm with Wheatgrass** does not, in fact, come in a jar. But the salve (in a tube) does contain a vegetable patch of nourishing greens, plus coddling glycerin.

SOOTHING. Calming and cooling, the anti-inflammatory herbs and humectants in **Dr.Jart+ Cicapair Tiger Grass Sleepair**





Intensive Mask deliver a moment of zen—and lots of moments of luminous skin.

BRIGHTENING. A real glow-getter, **GlamGlow Brightmud Dual Action Exfoliating Treatment** fits every imaginable brightener (AHAs, BHAs, vitamin C, pumice particles) into one elegant formula.

SHEET. Our new bedside-table staple, **I Dew Care Straight Chillin' Cooling Aloe Sheet Masks** are steeped in moisture and packed like tissues into an easy pull-out box. For an instant glow-up, **Eve Milan New York Brightening Vitamin C + CoQ10 Sheet Mask** brightens and tightens with antioxidants and daisy extract.

EYE AREA. Laced with strawberry extract and resveratrol (the same antioxidant found in red wine), **Patchology Serve Chilled Rosé Eye Gels** smooth, brighten, and generally take the edge off the day.

OVERNIGHT. Loaded with hyaluronic acid, **PCA Skin Hyaluronic Acid Overnight Mask** dives into skin while you drift off to sleep, shoring up your moisture barrier.

FACIAL SUNSCREEN

CHEMICAL. There's a texture for everyone! Ideal for anyone on the oily side, **Black Girl Sunscreen Make it Matte SPF 45** is a weightless gel that renders a primer-like finish. We know you know sunscreen is non-negotiable, but did you also know **Sun Bum Original Face 70 Sunscreen Lotion** is a cream that didn't leave a greasy or chalky finish on any of our testers? You do now.

Formulated for and by people with melanin-rich skin, **Melê No Shade Sunscreen Oil SPF 30** is a translucent serum that provides a sheer veil of coverage, while **Shiseido Clear Sunscreen Stick SPF 50+** makes invisible broad-spectrum protection swipe-able.

MINERAL. Unlike some mineral formulas that leave a whitish cast, **EltaMD UV Restore Tinted Broad-Spectrum SPF 40** adapts to every skin tone for a dewy, naked look. For touch-ups, we love **Colorescience Sunforgettable Total Protection Brush-On Shield SPF 50**, a brush-on powder that blurs imperfections and helps block UV rays.

PEEL

One of the most powerful peels we've tried this side of the doctor's office, **Paula's Choice 25% AHA + 2% BHA Exfoliant Peel** gives us the brightest tone we've seen this side of 35.

ACNE

CLEANSER. **CeraVe Acne Control Cleanser** treats and prevents pimples with salicylic acid, while niacinamide and ceramides exert a calming influence.

ALLOVER TREATMENT. **Differin Gel Acne Treatment** contains a prescription-strength dose of adapalene, a retinoid that penetrates pores to stop breakouts before they start.

SPOT TREATMENT. **Vichy Normaderm S.O.S. Acne Rescue Spot Corrector** shrinks blemishes and soothes skin with sulfur and niacinamide. For a more targeted approach, affix **Florence by Mills Spot a Spot Acne Patches** to zits and let salicylic acid and tea tree oil do their antimicrobial thing.

HUMIDIFIER/AIR PURIFIER

With its compact size (think stylish soda can) and USB portability, **Hey Dewy Portable Facial Humidifier** emits a hydrating mist that goes where sheet masks can't (think Zoom meeting).

HAIR REMOVAL

There's a four-letter word for uneven makeup: f-u-z-z. **Finishing Touch Flawless** glides over the contours of your face, removing unwanted hair so products blend seamlessly.

SKIN DEVICE

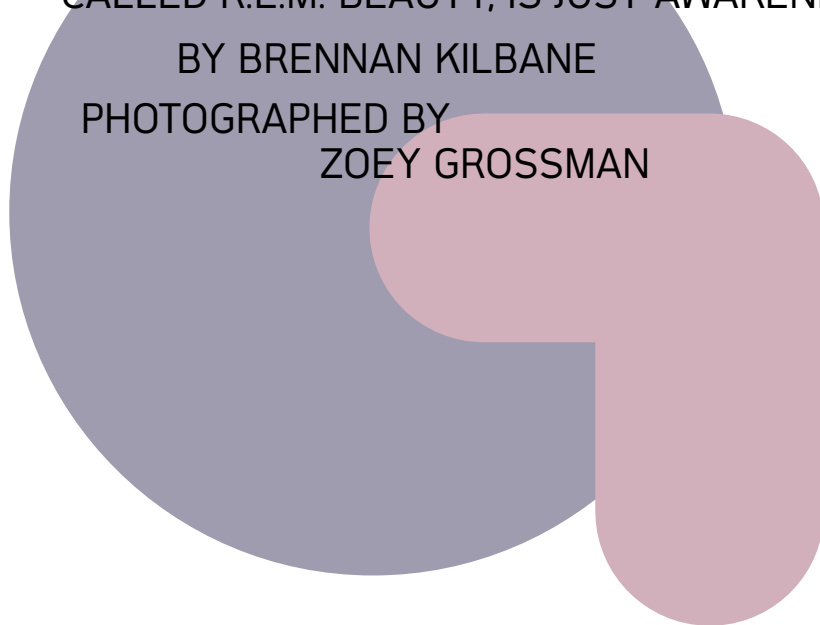
NuFace Trinity uses metal spheres to channel low-level current to facial muscles, painlessly zapping skin into a tighter, smoother, more toned-looking state.



P E R C H A N C E T O D R E A M

SMALL IN STATURE BUT COLOSSAL IN AMBITION,
ARIANA GRANDE DOES NOT LET HER PASSIONS
SLEEP. HER LATEST PROJECT, A MAKEUP LINE
CALLED R.E.M. BEAUTY, IS JUST AWAKENING.

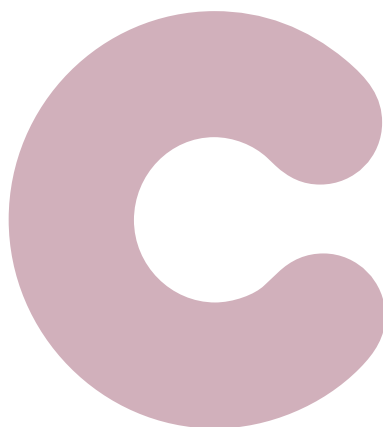
BY BRENNAN KILBANE
PHOTOGRAPHED BY
ZOEY GROSSMAN



Under Her Eye

Noir Kei Ninomiya dress.
Cartier earrings. These
pages: Makeup by r.e.m.
beauty. Fashion stylist:
Arianne Phillips. Hair:
Evanie Frausto. Makeup:
Ash K Holm. Manicure:
Thuy Nguyen. Set
design: Bette Adams.
Backdrops: Schmidli.
Production: Crawford
& Co. Productions.





“Can I ask one really important question?” Ariana Grande says. Her voice lilts up and down with every word, like it’s navigating the Amalfi Coast, which is simply how someone with a four-octave singing voice speaks. This is a question she asks everybody she can, and she’s observed that people tend to begin answering before she’s even finished asking, which is proof of the question’s excellence.

Her voice could be a wonder of the natural world, if it wasn’t clearly evidence of the sublime. It is almost shocking to reconcile her physical form—barely over five feet tall, teetering on platform heels—with the sound she produces from her vocal chords. In 2015, she performed for the Obamas at the White House, and when she began riffing along with the opening chords of Whitney Houston’s “I Have Nothing,” people in the audience literally gasped. And this was before the first lyrics were sung! When it ended, Patti LaBelle gave her a standing ovation.

Grande’s albums have all gone platinum, except for the ones that have gone double platinum; most are studded with platinum singles. Commercially speaking, her discography is a Harry Winston’s inside a diamond mine. The International Federation of the Phonographic Industry recently named Grande one of the Top 10 recording artists of 2020, two spots ahead of Justin Bieber. She was Spotify’s most streamed female artist of the past decade, a fact that no doubt surprised her since she debuted three years into that time frame.

Now, Grande springs her question: “If you were a soup, what soup would you be?” Then she answers it: “I’m a tie. I’m either miso or butternut squash soup.”

This is the business of being Ariana Grande: Making connections wherever you go. It occurred to her to start raising her makeup game after people began walking up to her at Whole Foods and asking for photos. “Maybe I can just pop a little blush on or a little mascara to feel more...” Her voice flattens. “Ready to make friends. In public.”

Lately she’s been taking a break from recording to explore what she calls “new versions of storytelling.” She’s working with an acting coach who trains leading ladies. She’s set to be a judge on *The Voice*, where she will serve as a soprano shepherd to tomorrow’s pop voices. She recently performed a live concert in the

digital realm of the online game Fortnite. She’s also creating makeup products. I was the first civilian allowed to test them—after Grande, her mother, her dancers, 15 of her closest friends (“They’ve been to the lab more than I’ve been anywhere,” she says), two of her closest friends who are also fans, the wonderful team at Forma Brands, and my boss Jenny.

“Coveting the secret for the past two years and having testers and samplers in my purse, and people asking me, ‘Oh, I love your highlight, what are you wearing?’ And me being like, ‘I don’t know, sweating,’” Grande recalls. Her singing voice tends to blur the edges of her speech into one gorgeous mass, but her speaking voice, it should be noted, employs supernaturally precise diction down to the letter. “It was so hard to keep a secret for this long.”

One sultry day in July, a small package arrives at my door, including a return address I do not recognize. There is no note inside, just a large Ziploc bag of factory-packaged makeup products, warmed to the temperature of a Brooklyn summer.

The project had been conceived two years prior. Grande met with Forma Brands, a beauty incubator born from the extremely successful cosmetics brand, Morphe. Forma has also collaborated on lines with Emma Chamberlain (Bad Habit skin care) and the TikTok sisters D’Amelio (Morphe 2). Alex Alston, Forma’s vice president of brand, remembers being impressed with the amount of references Grande brought to the initial meetings: educational magazine ads for Revlon cosmetics from the ‘50s and ‘60s, space warriors of legend, mist-covered landscapes, blush-tinted stills from her music videos, a single, silver throw pillow. The brand’s official name, r.e.m. beauty, conjures the dream state—the rapid eye movement stage of slumber—but also smuggles in Grande’s nickname, Ari. The name is also a track on her album *Sweetener*. Pharrell Williams originally wrote the demo for Beyoncé, but Grande reworked the verses to be about a relationship she manifested. “Last night, boy, I met you when I was sleeping” she sings on the opening, “You’re such a dream to me.”

In the manner of a streetwear brand, r.e.m. beauty itself will manifest in a series of “drops.” The first focuses primarily on the eyes—“our main gateways to our



Double Take Michael Schmidt dress. Jennifer Fisher earrings.





Frill Seeker

Iris van Herpen dress

dreams, our emotions, our everything,” Grande explains. “They’re our main storytellers and sources of communication,” she continues. “I feel like you can emote more with your eyes than you can articulate sometimes.” To that end, there are fine-point eyeliner markers, liquid eye shadows in a range of matte shades, glittering toppers that sparkle like nebulae, and at least one mascara. There are also lipsticks that feel like butter and glosses that tingle upon application, calling to mind DuWop’s Lip Venom. “That was the reference!” Grande exclaims. “I feel like this is as tingly, if not tinglier than Lip Venom. I was like, ‘Oh, my gosh, is this a little too intense?’”

Grande’s dream was to manufacture her dreams—the formulas she fell asleep thinking about. Does she have any musings for those who may see another musician-fronted makeup brand and think...

“That it’s crowded?” she says. “I’ve thought a lot about this, of course, because I don’t want to just hop onto any bandwagons ever. I think that...I wear my peers’ makeup as well, just like I listen to their music. I’m not going to say, ‘Oh, there’s too many female artists.’ I love and I’m [a] huge fan of my peers that do both, and I think that it’s just another way to tell stories. Because you can never have enough makeup, just like you can never have enough music.”

It comes down to having a point of view, Grande says. At the end of the day, she has developed a tightly edited line of cosmetics that are specifically suited to her preferences and desires. After years cutting up her lash strips into feline dimensions, she’s producing a range of her own, to be released in a forthcoming drop. “I always am very picky when it comes to that,” she says. The lip glosses are more like dewy lip stains, because Grande wanted something that would be long-wearing. Despite their existence, which suggests they are already perfect for her, she is ravenous for feedback. “Do you like the tingle of the gloss?” she asks.

“I do!” I mention, though, that I wish it was a little bit tinglier, which was perhaps a mistake.

“Oh!” she gasps. “Maybe they sent you the wrong one, because I couldn’t [make] it tinglier if I tried...” She eventually contemplates bringing a new tube directly to my door.

A few days later, I’m awakened in the morning when my apartment buzzer goes nuts. I shuffle downstairs in my robe to find another warm package, this one containing a single lip gloss. Who dropped it off? I like to imagine that it was Grande herself, slipping through the vestibule to make the delivery, and then fluttering away on the wings of an oversize hoodie. The doe-foot applicator slopes so perfectly to the contour of my lips, it’s like coming home. This time a tingling sensation begins instantly. My lips involuntarily pucker.

When she was growing up, Grande wanted her hair out of her face. “I would wear either little headbands or...

my family used to call them schmattas, little tie-around things, because I always wanted it out of the way." She grew up in Boca Raton ("Florida" is how Grande pronounces the state) and lived there until 2008, the unofficial launch of her career. After an open casting call, Grande was cast in *13*, a Broadway musical with a mostly teen cast and pit orchestra. When she moved from Boca to New York, loose, umber curls rained onto her shoulders.

She shared a dressing room with Elizabeth Gillies, who eventually costarred with her on Nickelodeon, and the two learned how to do their show makeup together. "I think we went with our moms to Saks or something and shopped at the counter, and the lady was like, 'Oh, this is the perfect thing. This is the right thing.' And they sold us on everything and we bought it and we just threw it on and went onstage."

Grande once said that boys taught her how to do makeup—one of the artists who worked on her at

crown of her head. *Dangerous Woman* briefly introduces a fetish-y bunny mask. The pony remains unchanged, but in the context of latex, it feels like progress.

Grande's transformation for *Sweetener* is her most dramatic to date. She appears upside down on the cover, in her own Bizarro World. The discreet elements of her ponytail are all pushed to their logical opposites. Her hair is ice blonde, factory-straight, and tied at the nape of her neck. Her promises to potential partners mature as she does, culminating in *Positions*, her most recent album. The title track describes various acts of service, both carnal and domestic, Grande might perform for a life partner. Her hair follows the music; the ponytail is pumped full of volume and looks like it might smell of Elnett.

It occurs to me that Grande, at 28, is approaching another ascent, from world famous pop star to something even greater. She's now set to occupy a space with Rihanna (Fenty Beauty generated an estimated

"You can never have enough makeup, just like you can never have enough music."

Nickelodeon was male, and some of her earliest singing gigs were in drag bars. But it was her mother who taught her how to wear it. "Joan Grande is not Joan Grande without a fierce, charcoal-black eyeliner situation," her daughter says. (Joan has self-identified as "goth before goth was goth.") The littler Grande adapts the look for herself whenever she is seen in public, in the form of two small wings she draws out from the corner of her eyes.

Can you think of a musician with a more (to use an overworked word more intentionally than I ever have before) iconic look? On the matrix of pop references, she places herself somewhere between Nancy Sinatra and Barbarella, at the corner of nostalgia and futurism. She maintains a Bardot-like commitment to the eyeliner, which sometimes gives the impression that she is a time-traveling lounge singer floating through the contemporary music industry. "I've always sort of gravitated towards the '50s and '60s and '70s for glamour references," Grande says. "I've always pictured myself in a different time period. I've always wanted to wear that makeup, wear that hair, wear those outfits, be those performers."

The ponytail is an aesthetic event she constantly reimagines and refracts, like Kusama and the polka dot. You can see its evolution clearly across Grande's album covers, which all feature a portrait of her. On the cover of *Yours Truly*, her first album, it was a half-up, cheer-captain style, with spiral curls that suggested heated machinery. (On the song "Tattooed Heart," she asks her varsity lover to wrap her in his jacket.) Gradually, the pony tightens; the curls loosen throughout *My Everything*, now gathered completely at the

\$570 million in 2018), Jennifer Lopez (fragrance revenues upwards of \$2 billion), and Beyoncé (whose management company also maintains, among other streams of revenue, a clothing line with Adidas)—a foggy Olympus where it becomes difficult to separate the person herself from the revenue she generates year over year. Ariana Grande is a person, but she is also a brand, and her success hinges on being able to blur the distinction.

Grande is superlatively grateful, a sentiment she expresses 14 times over two hours, for the career she has and the opportunities that career has offered her. Occasionally, she finds herself bewildered when her work reaches far enough around the globe to tap her on the shoulder.

During a recent, rare moment of downtime, she was watching HBO Max's new *Gossip Girl* and found herself confronted by her own singing voice halfway through the episode. She was so excited. "Excuse me!" she shouts, recalling the experience, and startling her dog Toulouse nearby. "Does anyone want to warn me when fucking titles are going to come in and Kristen Bell's voice is going to start saying *Gossip Girl* stuff and my song's going to be in the background? Does anyone want to just warn me? Because I had a heart attack. You know, like, I was a young girl watching *Gossip Girl* religiously growing up. And then I'm sitting here..."

This kind of thing happens not infrequently to the most streamed female artist of the past decade, whether in grocery stores or the solitude of a *Gossip Girl* viewing experience. But it always makes Grande emotional, though not for long. "I sort of smile," she says, not smiling, "and keep going."



Tiny Dancer
Rick Owens jumpsuit.
Sarah Hendler earrings.

LOC STARS

WOMEN WITH LOCS HAVE OFTEN BEEN TYPECAST AS BEACH BUMS OR EARTH-LOVING HIPPIES. (WE ALL REMEMBER THAT RED-CARPET "PATCHOULI" DIG.) BUT LOCS ARE SOPHISTICATED, MULTIFACETED, AND WONDERFULLY EXPRESSIVE. LOCS MEAN BUSINESS OR PLEASURE, AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN.
BY JIHAN FORBES

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
LELANIE FOSTER





Life's a Picnic

Locs (originally known as dreadlocks) acquired their name from a racist put-down of the look as "dreadful." Today they can signal luxury, individuality, identity, and unity. Here, loctician Sherelle Holder created an updo with a twist, ending in a burst reminiscent of a blooming flower.

Versace dress worn over a Fendi dress. Jimmy Choo shoes. Uncommon Matters earrings. Loren Nicole, Page Sargisson, and Versace rings. To create a similar makeup look: Infallible Pro-Last Waterproof Pencil Eyeliner in Black, Colour Riche Monos Eyeshadow in Acro-Matte, True Match Lumi Glotion in Deep, and Age Perfect Makeup Radiant Satin Blush in Berry by L'Oréal Paris. These pages: Fashion stylist, Rasaan Wyzard. Hair: Sherelle Holder. Makeup: Mariko Arai. Prop stylist: Kate Stein. Models: Mari at The Industry and Omega at JAG.

No Limits

Locs can be as versatile as any other style. "When a client comes to me, sometimes they don't necessarily have to show me a hairstyle they saw on someone else with locs," says Holder. "They can show me a braided hairstyle or a hairstyle [on straight hair], and I can recreate it." Here she fixed a high ponytail wound with gold wire and a skyscraping beehive.

From left: Missoni dress. Carolina Bucci earrings. Loewe dress. Carolina Bucci earrings. To create similar makeup looks: Eyes to Kill Designer Liner in 1, Lip Power in 602, Neo Nude Ecstasy Balm in 1, and Neo Nude Melting Color Balm in 50 by Giorgio Armani.





In the Loop

Locs can be curled and coiled into many different patterns using rollers or even pipe cleaners. This puff was created by pinning hair into numerous loops.

Gucci T-shirt. AWAKE Mode skirt. Versace belt bag. Page Sargisson earrings. Castlecliff necklace. To create a similar makeup look: Bite-Size Eyeshadow in Berry Bad, Bite-Size Face Duo in Pomegranate, and Hydrating Core Lip Shine in Joyful by E.L.F.





Ties That Bind

Holder wanted to create a style that was a physical manifestation of how Black women connect with each other (seen on the opposite page). “We’re all connected [by the beauty of] our natural hair,” she says. On this page, Holder used a classic basket-weave pattern to create a topknot.

Saint Laurent top. Schiaparelli earrings. To create a similar makeup look: Nude of New York Eyeshadow Palette and Color Sensational Ultimate Slim Lipstick in More Scarlet by Maybelline New York. Opposite page, from left: Chloé dress. Khiry earrings. Loren Nicole, Page Sargisson, and Foundrae rings. Proenza Schouler dress. Castlecliff earrings. Dinosaur Designs cuffs. Page Sargisson and Loren rings. To create similar makeup looks: Hypnôse 5-Color Eyeshadow Palette in Rose Fusion and Le Crayon Khôl in Black Ebony by Lancôme.



strokes of genius

“We couldn’t believe our eyes,” went our review of Giorgio Armani’s Eyes to Kill Mascara, in 2009, when it debuted. It had just won its first *Allure* Best of Beauty award in a relatively new category called Splurges, introduced in 2007, which was about the same time editors at this magazine began asking themselves: What should a mascara cost? Some of the finest beauty products in existence are born and raised at the drugstore (hence Splurges’ sibling category, Steals), and there is no evidence to suggest that increasing one’s makeup spend improves one’s chances of evolutionary survival. Yet to splurge is human. We are occasionally transfixed by an object enough that we’ll spend twice, thrice, quadruple what we normally would to have it for ourselves. It sounds dramatic, but so is Eyes to Kill: The asymmetric bristles are ideal for separating, while a cocktail of hard and soft waxes bulks up lashes without making them stiff. Which is why it won a Best of Beauty award again in 2010—and again and again, placing it firmly in our Hall of Fame. Sometimes, it’s refreshing to say, you can believe your eyes.