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APRIL 2024 ISSUE 62

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SHE'S BACK...

Ashton
WOOD

FROM BODACIOUS BEACH BABE TO MATCHA MOGUL - SHE'S GOT IT ALL!

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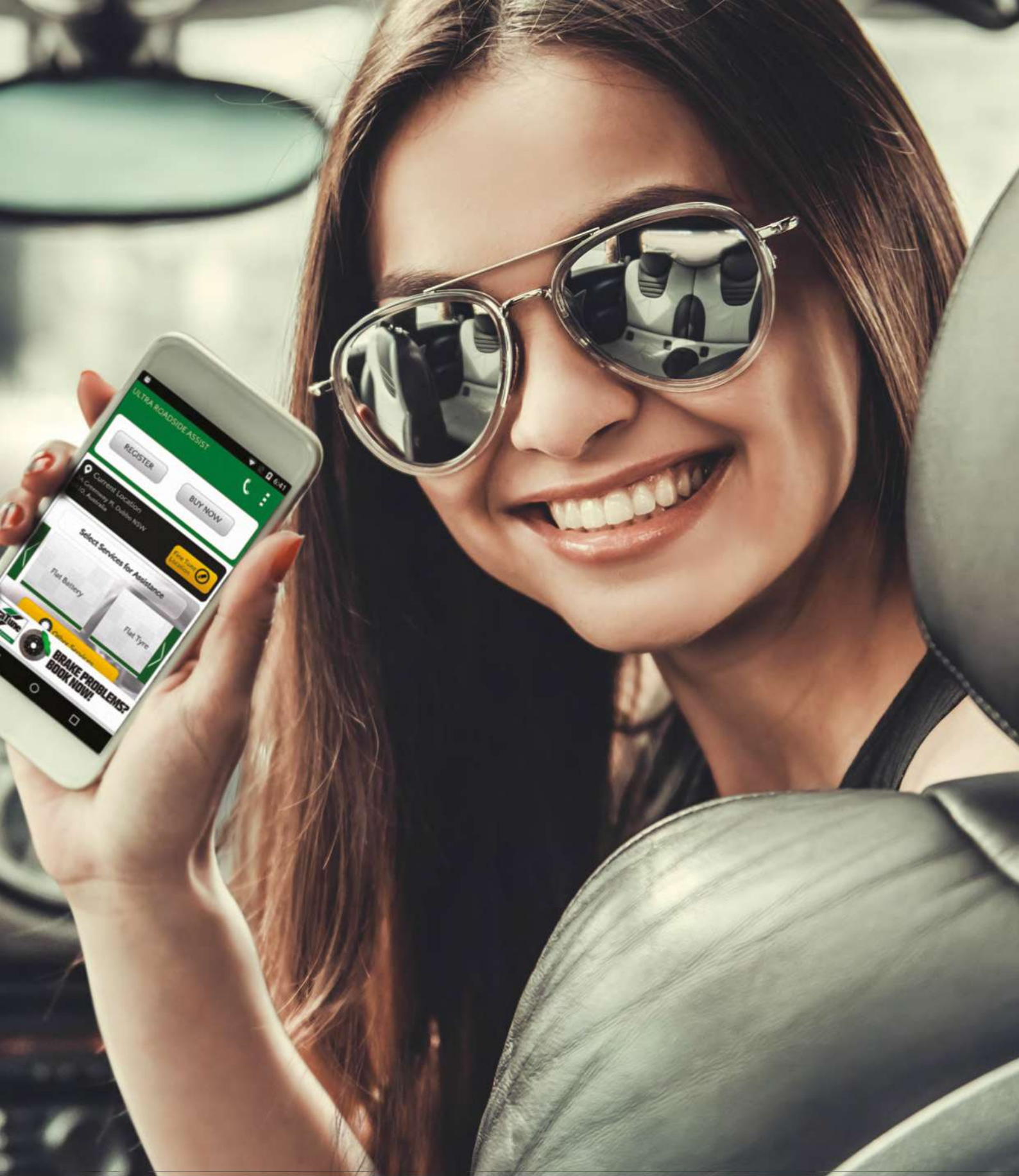
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NEW ZEALAND



FRONT COVER

ASHTON WOOD

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
NEIL DIXON

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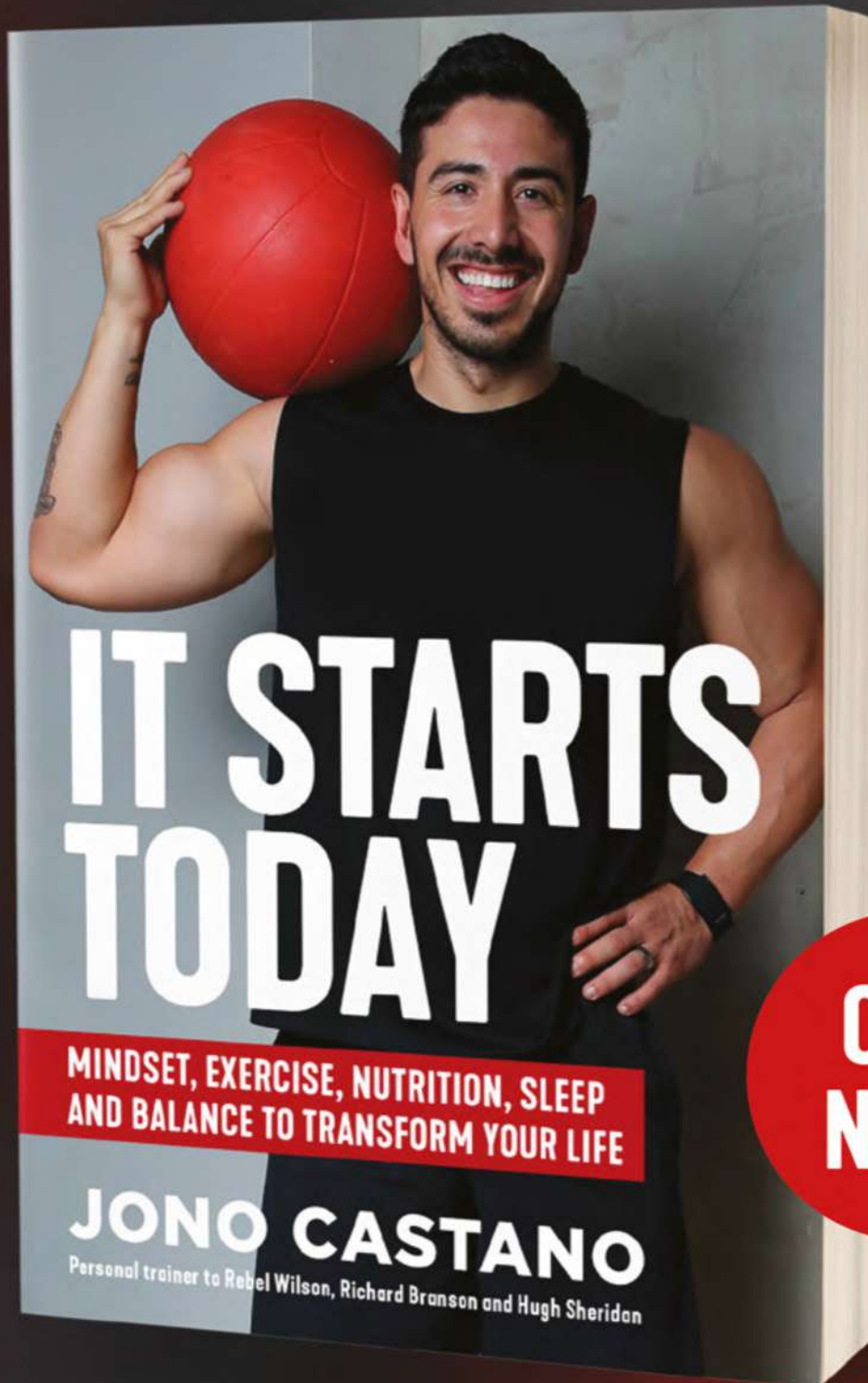
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UNVEILING THE ZENVO

This bespoke powerplant is a 90-degree hot-V configuration, mid-mounted behind the cockpit...
By BILL VARTIMETIS



Named after the Northern Lights, specifically the Aurora Borealis, the 2025 Zenvo Aurora is a perfect example of lightning in a throttle. Unveiled at the Monterey Car Week in California, it's the most powerful offering yet from the hypercar specialists – and is as extreme as unmodified road cars can get.

There are two versions: the Aurora Tur, a road tripper; and the Aurora Agil, a track attacker. Despite being on different missions –

both are equipped with a hungry V12 monster.

Zenvo design boss Christian Brandt borrowed from the company's past but also looked to its future, deploying classic simplistic Danish philosophy into a 'skeletal' form to showcase as much of the chassis, engine and suspension as possible. Both are wrapped around the same carbon monocoque suit (30% coverage), with the end result looking both scary and sexy. Into this exposed chassis goes that 6.6

litre V12 quad-turbo developed by Mahle Powertrain and mounted to a 7 speed gearbox.

The Agil can punch out a cool 1081 kW on its own while revving to 9,800rpm and boasts 880 kgs of downforce at 249 km/h. That comes via more aggressive aero everywhere around the car, including a massive rear wing with an air brake. Inside everything has been stripped, to record a kerbweight of 1,300 kg.

In the Tur, there's an additional pair of electric motors (one on each front wheel) for four-wheel-drive and the absolutely ballistic



DUALITY OF THE A U R O R A



1379 kW and 450 km/h. Despite being heavier (1450kg), its less complex shape helps enable that 450 km/h top end – and that 1379 kW of course. Inside there's a higher level of comfort: purposeful materials, better soundproofing and the GT plush.

With production set to begin in 2025, Zenvo will limit volume to just 100 cars – 50 apiece. No wonder then, the Aurora project is described as an equilibrium of extremes – delivered on every level imaginable. ■



ZENVO AURORA

ENGINE: 6.6 litre V12 quad turbo
TRANSMISSION: 7 speed
POWER: (Tur) 1379 kW
(Agil) 1081 kW
TORQUE: (Tur) 1700 Nm
(Agil) 1400 Nm
TOP SPEED: (Tur) 450 km/h
(Agil) 365 km/h
0-100 KM/H: (Tur) 2.3 seconds
(Agil) 2.5 seconds
PRICE: \$6.1 million (approx)



TRIUMPHANT RETURN

The TR2 gets zapped back to life, with scissors and shades...

By BILL VARETIMIDIS

It's been a while since Triumph has trended, but now the inactive British marque just got an electric makeover. The legendary Triumph TR2 model has been converted – and now zaps and slaps as the TR25 Roadster concept.

The Dr Frankenstein here, however, wasn't Triumph. That credit goes to Makkina, an independent design company from London.

Based on the iconic 1953 'Jabbeke' Triumph TR2, which broke speed records (200 km/h) and is now retired in a museum – it's a sly nod to yesterdays speed demons.

Before Makkina made plans, they had to get BMW to sign off the rights, which they did. Autograph taken, they now had BMW i3's electric powertrain and underlying chassis at their disposal.

Once the final design was

To improve on aerodynamics and eliminate passengers, it was converted into a single-seater by using a metal cockpit cover.





approved the TR25 was born – the '25' signifying Makkin's 25th anniversary.

To improve on aerodynamics and eliminate passengers, it was converted into a single-seater by using a metal cockpit cover. While the rest of the body panels are entirely carbon fibre, the overall design is a classic/futuristic trope. Its rounded fenders and bug-

eyed headlamps are nods to the TR2, while its 21 inch alloys, scissor doors, and LED tail lamps are concept car touches.

Unlike the original there is now a reversing camera, and the weather protector screen above the dash is so tiny you have to replace your sunglasses with aerial goggles. The rear-mounted electric motor makes the same 135

kW as an i3 S, but with a quicker 0-100 km/h time (5.2 seconds) thanks to the TR25's lower weight of 1,095 kg.

All it took was an idea, a year, and a lot of foam to model the TR25. It's a nice hat tip to the Triumph legacy, injecting British charm into an era obsessed with battery packs and food delivery. ■



PININFARINA'S PURA VISION

Proof that electric cars can be both stylish and powerful...

By BILL VARETIMIDIS

If you're going to build an electric SUV, have it go after the big dogs, right? Pininfarina created this electric luxury utility vehicle called the 'Pura Vision' (Italian for pure) to poke the Ferrari's Purosangue – hopefully off its podium.

Italian through and through, the low front end and flared out arches are a nice nod to the iconic Cisitalia 202, a design so distinct it lives in the New York Museum of Modern Art.

The Vision's interior is all about space and functionality, kinda like a luxury yacht – minus the sea sickness. The floating front seats, wavy rear bench, and low roofline give you the luxe experience, but with a supercar flare.

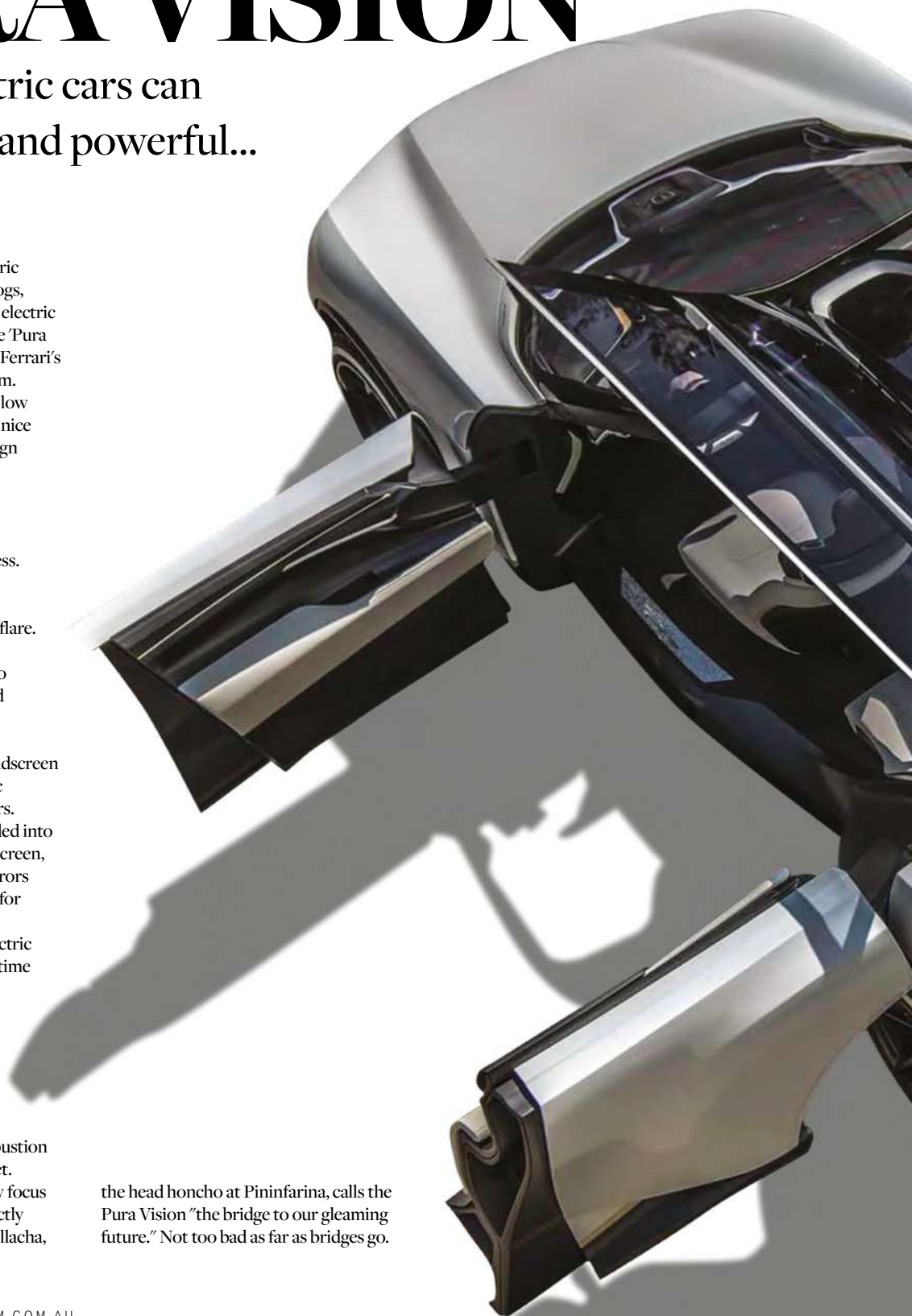
Don't forget the glass roof setup, 'borrowed' from the 1953 Alfa Romeo 6C 3000 Superflow concept. Instead of your standard frame, it features a fixed centre known as the Biscotto (not the biscuit), which links the windscreen to the tailgate and creates a nice sync between passengers and the outdoors.

Inner tech sees speakers embedded into the headrests, a rising central touchscreen, and tiny cameras in place of side mirrors – there's even an inbuilt wine cooler for sour grape juice aficionados.

It is speculated that a 745 kW electric powertrain will give it a 0-100 km/h time of 3.0, top speed of 300 km/h, and a range of about 550 km. Reason being, Pininfarina did the same with its Battista model which was sourced from Rimac (1380 kW). But even if the Pura came with half that noise, it would still monster over any internal-combustion production-ready SUV on the market.

The company plans to eventually focus on high volume models that are directly influenced by this concept. Paolo Dellacha,

the head honcho at Pininfarina, calls the Pura Vision "the bridge to our gleaming future." Not too bad as far as bridges go.



Italian through and through, the low front end and flared out arches are a nice nod to the iconic Cisitalia 202.



Take Flight

Ditch the traffic, channel your inner bond: the Jetson One takes flight – and maybe your breath away...

By BILL VARETIMIDIS



Starting off as a jetpack, this Swedish-made flyer is the brainchild of Peter Ternstrom and Tomasz Patan; who have finally perfected a flying car to awaken the James Bond in all of us. From concept in 2018, to commercial consumer-friendly version, they've delivered a personal aerial vehicle that offers the convenience of an Uber – in 24/7 flight mode.

Known as the Jetson One, their electric VTOL is an octocopter with four arms stretching from its fuselage. Power comes from the four rotors that produce a combined 88 kW, fed from a lithium-ion battery. Best of all, this personal air taxi is categorised as an

ultralight aircraft in many countries, so you don't need a license to fly this thing, just massive kahunas.

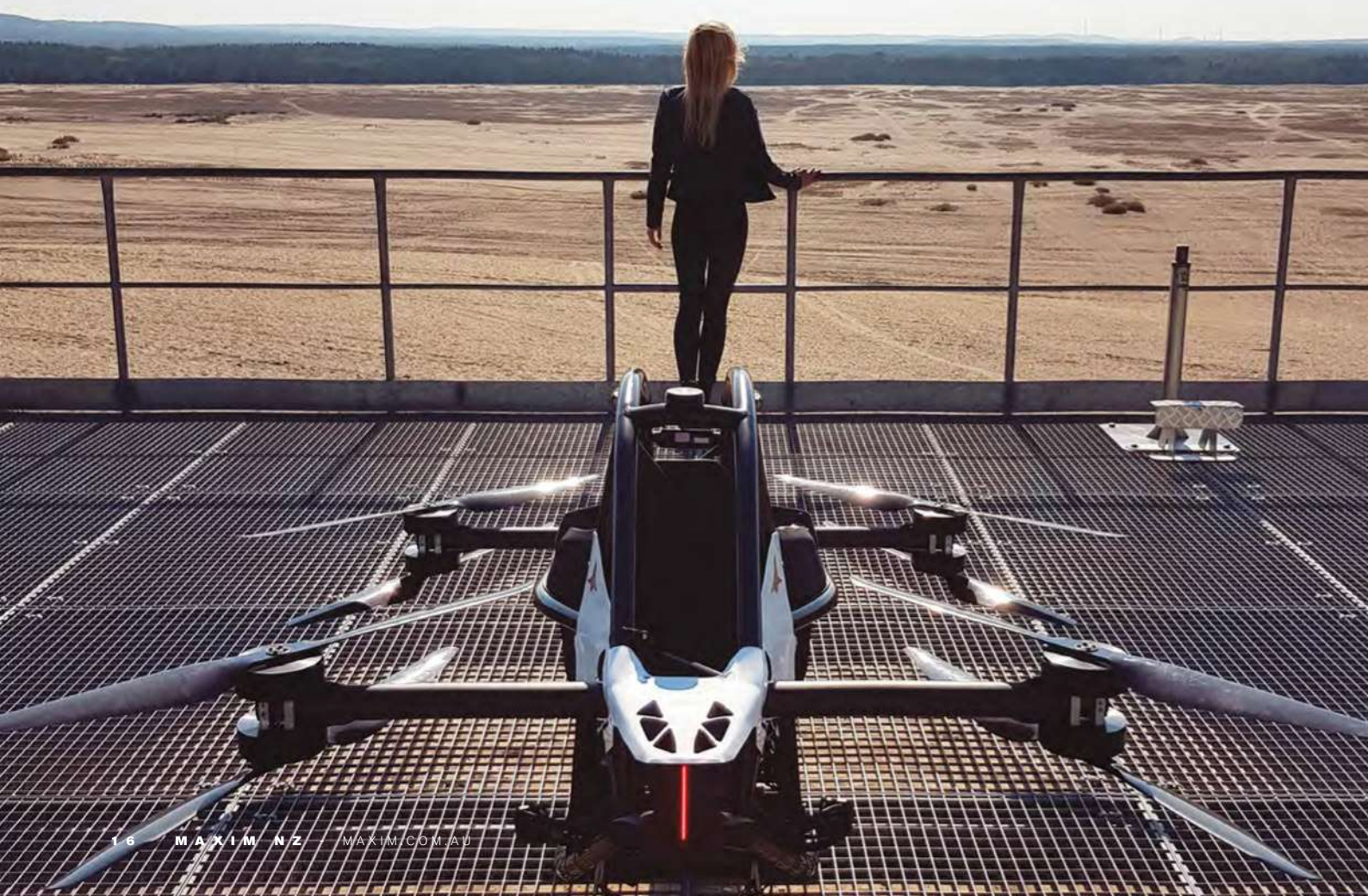
With a simplistic 3-axis joystick and throttle lever at your control, you can easily dominate the skies, while remembering the times you were stuff in traffic. Up above you can hit a top speed of 102 km/h, with a max range of 34 km - but only if you make the weight. At the moment flight time is limited to a short 20 minutes with a 95 kg pilot – so you may need to skip those dessert courses.

The onboard computer ensures stability during flight, but in the case of turbulence or worse, the One can fly on just three of its

rotors, and is equipped with Lidar sensors-driven terrain tracking and obstacle avoidance. It also has a hands-free hover feature and a ballistic parachute should things literally go downhill.

For a complete machine, you'll need around \$92,000, although it comes as a partially assembled kit including motors, propellers, aluminum frame and assembly guide. From there, get your Ikea on.

The Jetson One is similar to concepts from companies like Opener and SkyDrive. Although many are in the game, not all are currently taking orders. Currently, Jetson's entire 2023/24 production is sold out – nuff said.



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SHARK-GILLED SPEEDSTER

Buckle up for a glimpse into the Eleuthera, a megayacht that blends supercar sleekness and sea creature inspiration...

By BILL VARETIMIDIS



To the envy of males worldwide, Juan Cayo Azcarate has the cool distinction of being both yacht designer and professional racing driver. Not surprisingly then, his latest nautical concept reflects both work environments.

Named after the Bahamas island Eleuthera, this 364 foot megayacht concept was heavily influenced by supercars and sea creatures – as evidenced by the vertical windows that resemble shark’s gills and the exhaust that mirrors a stingray’s fin.

Eleuthera’s interior gets its swag thanks to architects Gian Paolo Nari, Alejandro Crespo Daroca, and Cristiano Mariani.

The living quarters are made up of 11 staterooms for 22 guests, cabins for 31 crew, lounge with grand piano, a top tier gym, and of course, an indoor cinema.

All impressive, but the huge 235 square metre owner’s suite on the upper deck is really, well, decked out. The designers have gone all out to make the owner feel the royalty in an open opulent space complete with balcony, private bathroom, and private spa.

The exterior decks don’t skip on the swank either. The massive stern platform can transform into a saltwater pool or beach club, while the huge marble pool on the main deck can be turned out into an open-air

dance floor or outdoor cinema. At the other end, the foredeck is home to an at-sea man cave featuring a jacuzzi, garage and helipad. Being a racer lad he designed the garage with enough space to house a 12 metre speedboat and three other tenders, naturally.

Juan also gifts us with superyacht performance with triple MTT engines that power it to a killer cruising range of up to 13,000 km and maximum speed of 50 km/h – expect nothing less.

So whether you’re cruising the open ocean or navigating shallow waters, the Eleuthera is your vessel of choice – from the Bahamas to the Mediterranean and back – all without refueling.



MINI SUPERYACHT

Sunbathing, speeding and stag parties: the Jet Capsule (almost) does it all...

By BILL VARETIMIDIS

Developed by a team of Italian designers, the Jet Capsule is either a mini superyacht or huge water toy – we're still deciding.

Back in 2010, Lazzarini Design set out to create the missing mini piece of the yachting world. The initial result was the Jet Capsule in its early conceptual stage; and by 2014, a prototype was presented at the International Monaco Boat Show which caused a mini wave of fandom.

Automotive engineer Pierpaolo Lazzarini, wanted to show that big doesn't mean better (don't we all), and went on to create a vessel powerful enough yet easy to control by less experienced sailors.

Based on a variable powerboat hull, the Jet Capsule measures 7.5 metres and comes with a purposeful body made entirely of carbon fibre. On the roof a useful little sunpad is accessible by steel ladder, and come night time the colourful interior and underwater lights impress as much as Vivid ever could.

Whatever it lacks space wise, it more than makes up for by looking cool. It's small enough to reduce high docking costs but large enough



Above: The different set-ups of the Jet Capsule left to right: limousine, taxi, private and classic

for your mates to enjoy a stag party cruise. Depending on user configuration, the Capsule can seat up to nine passengers, and include sofas, a small kitchen, or private bathroom – the possibilities depend on your imagination, cash flow, and local marine laws. There has been a model developed for lifeguards, a water taxi, and even an armoured army version. The base model comes with a 240 kW Yanmar diesel

engine coupled to a Hamilton waterjet which delivers a top speed of 45 km/h – other models may hit 65 km/h. Sure, it's a bit slower than a Jet Ski or a Sea-Doo, but way more comfortable and versatile.

With basic units selling for \$235,000, and the top trim at \$390,000, the target niche are young millionaires looking for a convenient micro yacht to tour the Greek islands on dad's allowance.





Above and left: Jet Capsule LX series (long) measures 9.5m in length and are available in hybrid and full-electric modes, with dual engine up to 1100 hp. Specifically developed for public water transportation, the LX platform offers various customisations and layouts: from a "private jet" vessel to one that can accommodate up to 20 passengers, or 16 passengers plus toilet and wheelchair space. The body of the watercraft is made from a combination of carbon fibre and fibreglass. The front is equipped with a water surface scanner in order to prevent debris, and the navigation features are absolutely cutting edge, including autopilot, 3D sonar, night vision, augmented reality interactive sea charts.

Siesta *in* Style

The Mangusta Neoprene yacht where relaxation meets speed... *By* BILL VARETIMIDIS



Described as the girl your mother shouldn't meet, the Neoprene from Mangusta is a 108 mega vessel as long and impressive as a Boeing 737. She is built for three things: speed, sunbathing and watersports – and can easily fulfill all of the above.

Featuring an exterior design by Italian studio Stefano Righini Design, with naval architecture by Overmarine, she sails at 46 km/h but can also cut through waves at a choppy 60 km/h thanks to the onboard twin 5,500 horsepower (4045 kW) M90 diesel engines.

The foredeck offers three massive sunbeds that are the perfect size for anyone looking to relax, tan, or siesta in the Mediterranean sun

– shade canopies at the ready. At the rear of the yacht, her tender garage can be converted into a beach club, providing the ultimate water's edge experience next to fishing.

The interior matches the clean finishes of the outer, although with a more contemporary style with neutral tones that contrast the dark exterior. Designed by Barth in Italy, the space was decked out with only the finest quality furnishings, accessories, and silk carpets used – all without a trip to Ikea.

Ten guests are comfortably accommodated in the staterooms and master suite. With a king-size bed, walk-in wardrobe

and an on-suite bath, the suite is a perfect haven after a tough day lazing near the water. She also has accommodations for five crew members in three cabins if you allow peasants on board.

The storage for the water toys on the Neoprene is next level, able to house 5 sea scooters, 2 kayaks, 1 inflatable kayak, 2 paddleboards, and a lazyboy pontoon. Also, something not seen on a boat of this size, calibre, or reputation – there are side cabinets specifically built to hold the jetskis. The Neoprene will always be vacation ready with many getaway options at the ready.



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Fumes to FOMO

The Aura Aero Era electric plane promises faster charging times than your phone...

By BILL VARETIMIDIS



Unless you've been asleep for the last five years, you'd be well aware of the abundance of electric cars by now. They're quiet yet torquy, and really stick it to fossil fuels, but what about their aero equivalent? French startup Aura Aero have a contender – a shiny new sky toy known as the Era. Launched at the Paris Air Show, this flyer comes in both 9 and 19 seat layouts, ensuring that you're never stuck next to someone with bad breath or bad small talk.

Just as electric cars have fewer moving parts than their petrol ancestors, the Era promises low maintenance – low enough

to slash energy costs by 50% and emissions by 80%, compared to the current gen of conventionally powered aeralials.

An eight engine setup, two turbo-generators, and four electric battery packs should be enough to give you a flight experience that rivals any electric supercar outing. Running low? A brief half hour in the pits, and you're back sky high.

While airlines like Pan Europeenne Air Service are keen to switch to electric, and Afrijet are set to become the greener airline in Africa, the Era is poised to lead the charge – literally. Aura Aero have been dubbed the Tesla of aviation with good

reason. They recently started production in the South of France, where they will manufacture the Era as well as a light two-seater called the 'Integral E' – wonder what the 'E' stands for?

While the prospect of electric flights is coming sooner than an interest rate cut, it'll be a while before the Era will be heard across the airways. It's expected to perform its first flight in 2026, enter commercial service in 2028, and rollout circa 2030.

Over 300 orders are already in the books, and with Airbus throwing its weight behind it too – it's like having Ferrari sponsor your go kart. ■

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From Beach Babe to Matcha Mogul: Unveiling the Multifaceted Life of

ASHTON WOOD

Photographed by NEIL DIXON





T

tell us a bit about your shoot - where, when, the idea behind it, etc...

Neil and I have shot together a few times now and I was visiting Australia over the summer so we HAD to shoot together again and create some magic. It was just before Valentine's Day so we decided to shoot something inspired by love. 'Loves me or loves me not?' was a shot with fake sun shining through a window on a neutral backdrop while picking petals off of a rose. In other looks we went more edgy and played with lighting and shapes to create some more 'sexy' looks wearing Mugler x HM + many more.

Give us a little more background about yourself and your life story so far.

I am 30 years old, from Australia and moved to London two years ago to change things up and expand in my career. I am a social media influencer, the host of a podcast called 'Common Chaos' and also a model. I am also in the process of launching my Matcha brand with my best friend and business partner, Cartia Mallan. I love travelling, experiencing life to the fullest and cherish my friends and family with all my heart.

When do you feel sexy and why?

When I have been in the sun or beach all day, feeling sunkissed and salty with freckles, a tan and wavy hair.

What is your best asset? Physically and otherwise.

I love my eyes, I feel like they are the story teller of the soul. When I am happy I have been told I have a sparkle to my eyes. My non-physical best asset would be my positive energy. I pride myself on always bringing a high vibrating energy into a room and it comes so naturally to me, I have always been a really happy person!

What would people be most surprised to know about you?

Probably my age when they meet me. Everyone is shocked when I say I am 30. Haha! My energy is very young and fun and people think I am 22 or something.



*“I love my eyes,
I feel like they
are the story
teller of the
soul.”*

*“My energy
is very young
and fun &
people think
I am 22 or
something.”*



How would you describe yourself in five words?

Youthful, fun, loving, empathetic, silly!!

What have you learned about men over the years?

Oh, I love this question... I have learnt that men mature at a much later age to women and one day they wake up and decide to get serious about finding a partner. Meaning, it is all about timing for a man when finding a wife... it is who he happens to meet at that time where he is ready to get married.

What's one thing men should always know about women?

If you are in your healthy masculine energy, it allows us women to step into our divine

feminine energy which creates a really healthy dynamic in a relationship. Also women still love romance no matter what stage of the relationship you are in. Never let the romance die!

What do you look for in a man?

Kindness, good sense of humour, enjoys life, confident, passionate, driven, humble, emotionally intelligent... I can keep going forever. Haha.

Describe your ideal date.

I love a good old dinner and wine date, somewhere with a romantic yet buzzy atmosphere then continue the night by meeting up with friends to have a drink and boogie after!

What can we get you at the bar?

I love an Aperol Spritz or Tommy's Margarita.

Who is your girl crush and why?

Em Rata because she is absolutely gorgeous and love how she uses her voice for feminism. I also crush on Madison Beer, I think she is so talented and really embodies a divine feminine energy.

What is your motto in life?

"You are always on time for your own life." This helps remind me that I am exactly where I need to be and to realise societal pressures.

What's next for you? Any exciting projects on the horizon you can share with us?

As I mentioned briefly before, I am very close



“I love travelling, experiencing life to the fullest & cherish my friends and family with all my heart.”

to launching my matcha brand called 'Highline Matcha' which I am extremely passionate about. My business partner and I are matcha experts and have been testing different powders for over a year to bring you the best tasting matcha we can find! Stay tuned for launch date...

Finally, where would you like to be in five years?

I would love to be married to a European man (wish me luck), with my second child on the way, living somewhere beautiful and surrounded by people I love. I also would love my matcha brand to be stocked across hundreds of retail stores and be successful online as well. Maybe own another brand or two. I'd hope to also be continuing my modelling and influencing career as well as hosting big events and movie premieres, etc.. As you can see I am a big dreamer! ■





*“As you
can see, I
am a big
dreamer!”*

**STATUS
UPDATE**

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PROUD TO BE A PROBLEM

Aussie MMA star and UFC light heavyweight **TYSON PEDRO** has teamed up with streetwear legends Geedup for the cult label's most provocative collection yet...

By REILLY SULLIVAN

For Geedup clothing founder Jake Paco, there is nothing wrong with being a problem. "At first glance there's a negative connotation but a 'problem' is someone who moves against the grain," he explains to MAXIM. Paco founded his label back in 2010 out of a garage in Western Sydney with the goal of harnessing the area's gritty reputation to create a streetwear brand with global appeal. If Shawn Stussy was the first to bring California surfer culture to streetwear, then Jake Paco is the first to turn the cultural diversity and sports fanaticism of Western Sydney into hype-worthy drip.

It's only natural then, that for Geedup's newest Proud To Be A Problem campaign, Paco wanted a star who "was speaking the same language". Enter Tyson Pedro, legendary

MMA artist and UFC light heavyweight champion. "Tyson's a proud Western Sydney boy and he's fought tooth and nail, so it seemed only right for the collection," Paco says. The two men knew of each other growing up in the west but the new collection marks their first official collaboration. "It's 15-plus years of growing up, somewhat friends," he adds.

"The alignment couldn't have been more perfect," Tyson agrees. "Not only do I love their gear, but the boys were born and raised from the area." Evoking Geedup's humble beginnings, the campaign was shot against the backdrop of backyards and garages in Sydney's west. The shoot was a family affair too, with the UFC fighter posing alongside his beloved father John Pedro.



STYLE

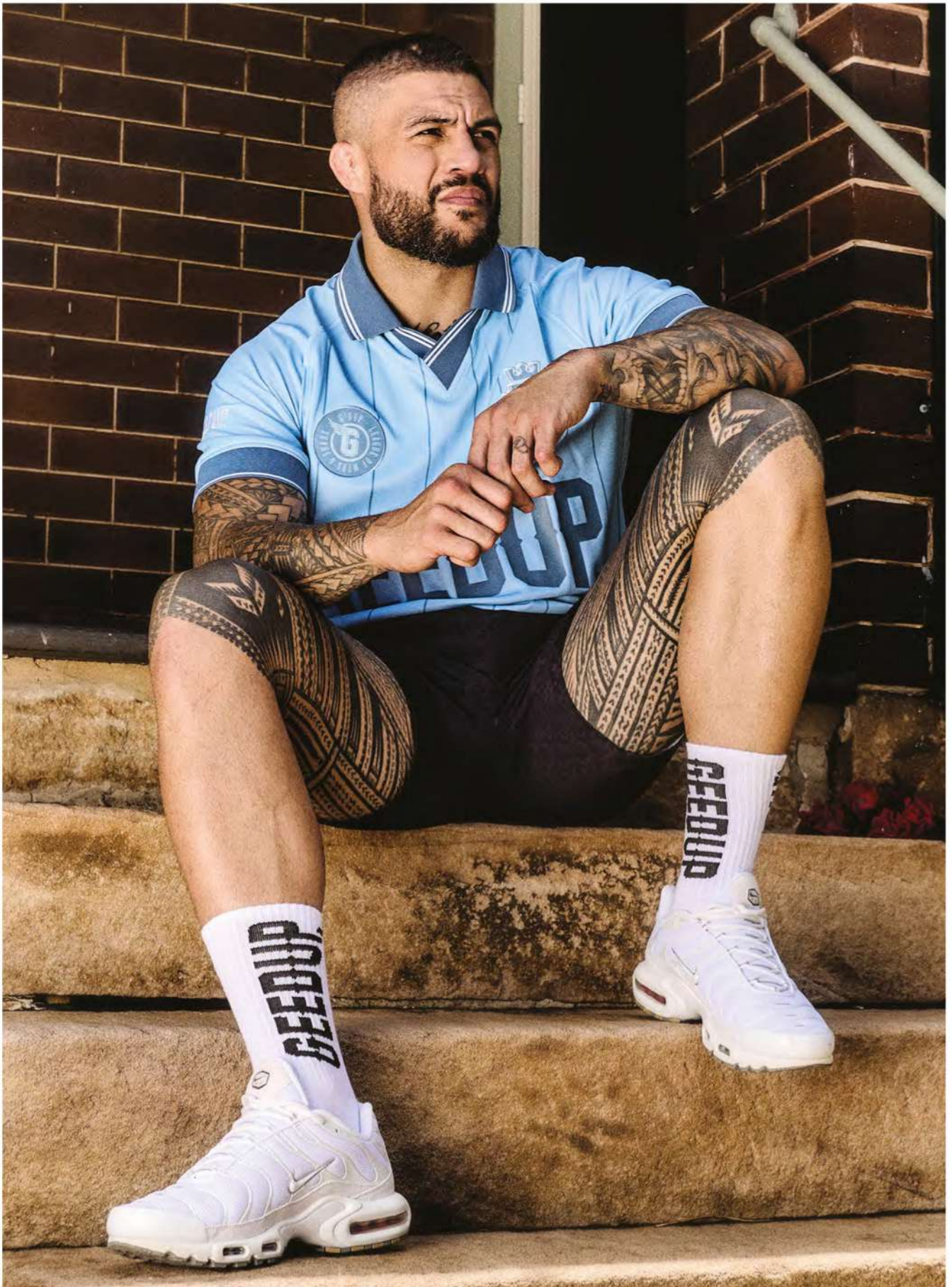
Geedup's latest offering consists of 19 pieces, including premium tees, jerseys, shorts and technical apparel. Still proudly based in Western Sydney, the label has amassed a global cult following with overseas offices in Los Angeles and London. In the process, Paco has reportedly amassed a personal fortune of about \$60 million. Most streetwear brands have the lifespan of a pair of kicks, but Geedup has managed to maintain a genuine fanbase for over a decade by resisting the urge to become too many things to too many people.

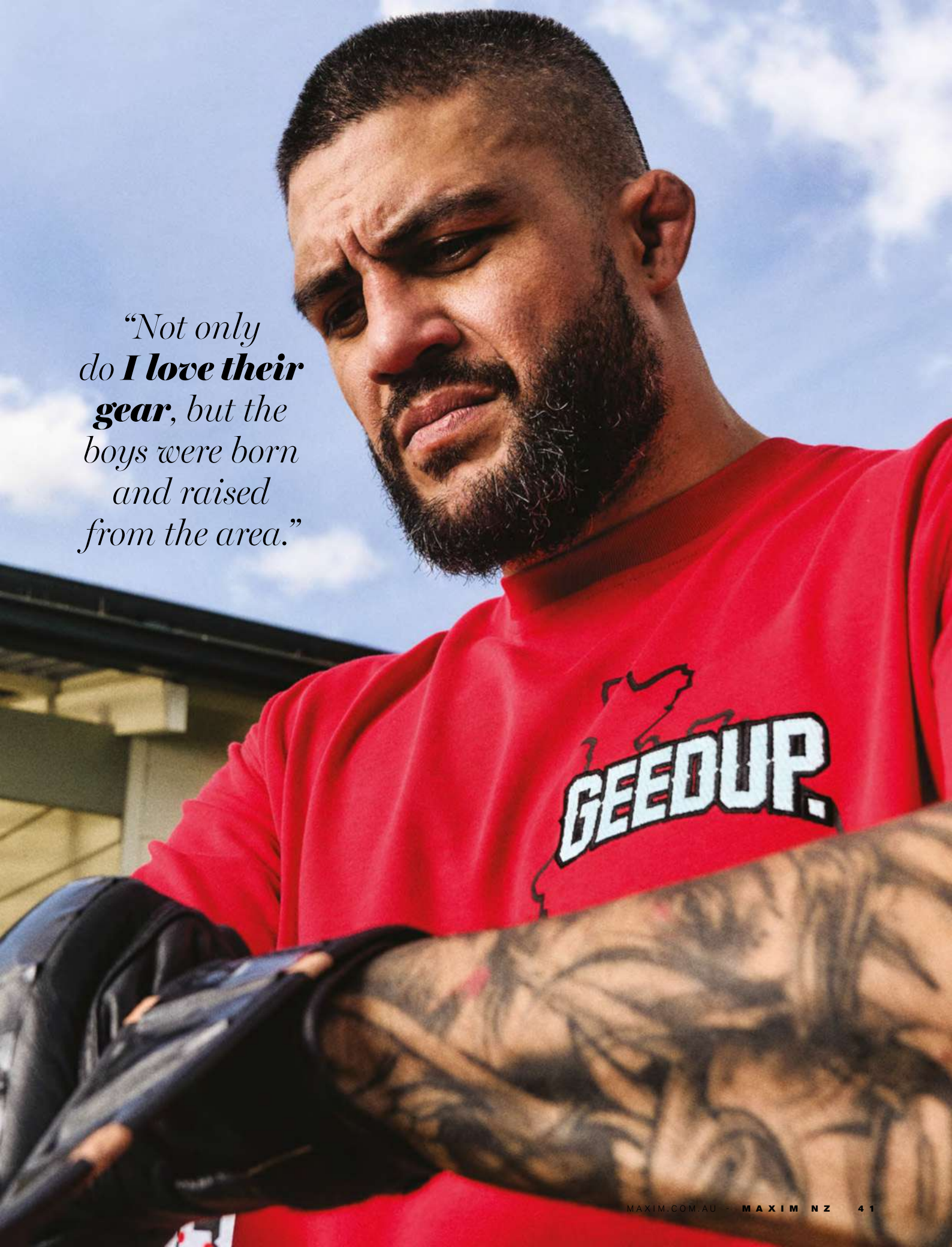
"It's anyone that the brand speaks to, and it doesn't speak to everyone," Paco says of Geedup's continued success. This philosophy has also inspired the label's unique distribution model, which is largely direct-to-consumer via their website through a series of drops. Customer loyalty is essential for Paco so his most treasured clients get early access to new collections. The founder is also obsessed with

"He's fought tooth and nail, so it seemed only right for the collection."







A close-up, low-angle shot of a man with a short beard and intense expression. He is wearing a red t-shirt with the word 'GEEBUP' printed in white, bold, block letters with a black outline. Above the text is a small graphic of a map of Queensland, Australia. His right arm is heavily tattooed with intricate designs. He is wearing a black, worn-in leather motorcycle glove on his right hand. The background shows a clear blue sky with light clouds and the edge of a building's roofline.

*“Not only
do **I love their
gear**, but the
boys were born
and raised
from the area.”*

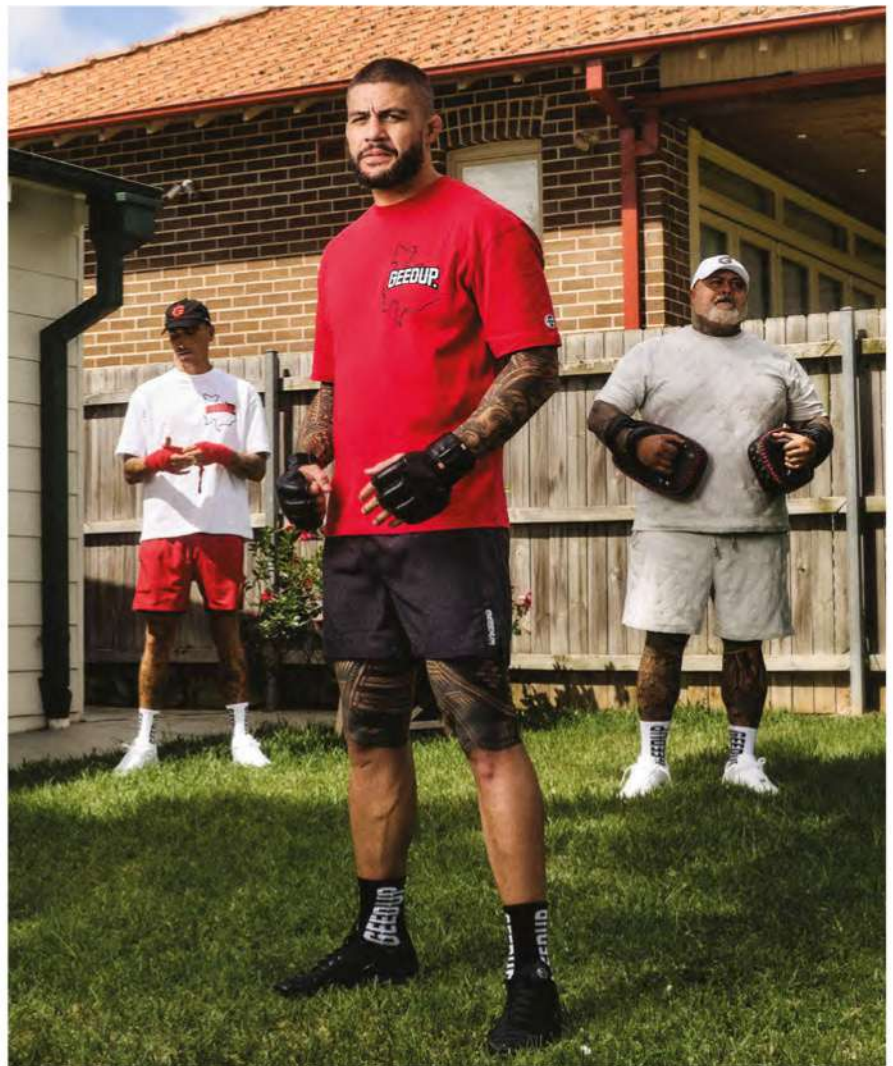


*“At first glance there’s a **negative connotation** but a ‘problem’ is someone who moves against the grain.”*

the intangible but unmistakable feeling of “authenticity”. To drown out the temptations of trends, the designer often retreats to his farm near Bathurst to create his coveted jerseys and hoodies that will be worn by fans from Venice Beach to Tokyo. “We’ve done collabs with no financial or brand gain purely because of their personal brand and their craft,” Paco explains.

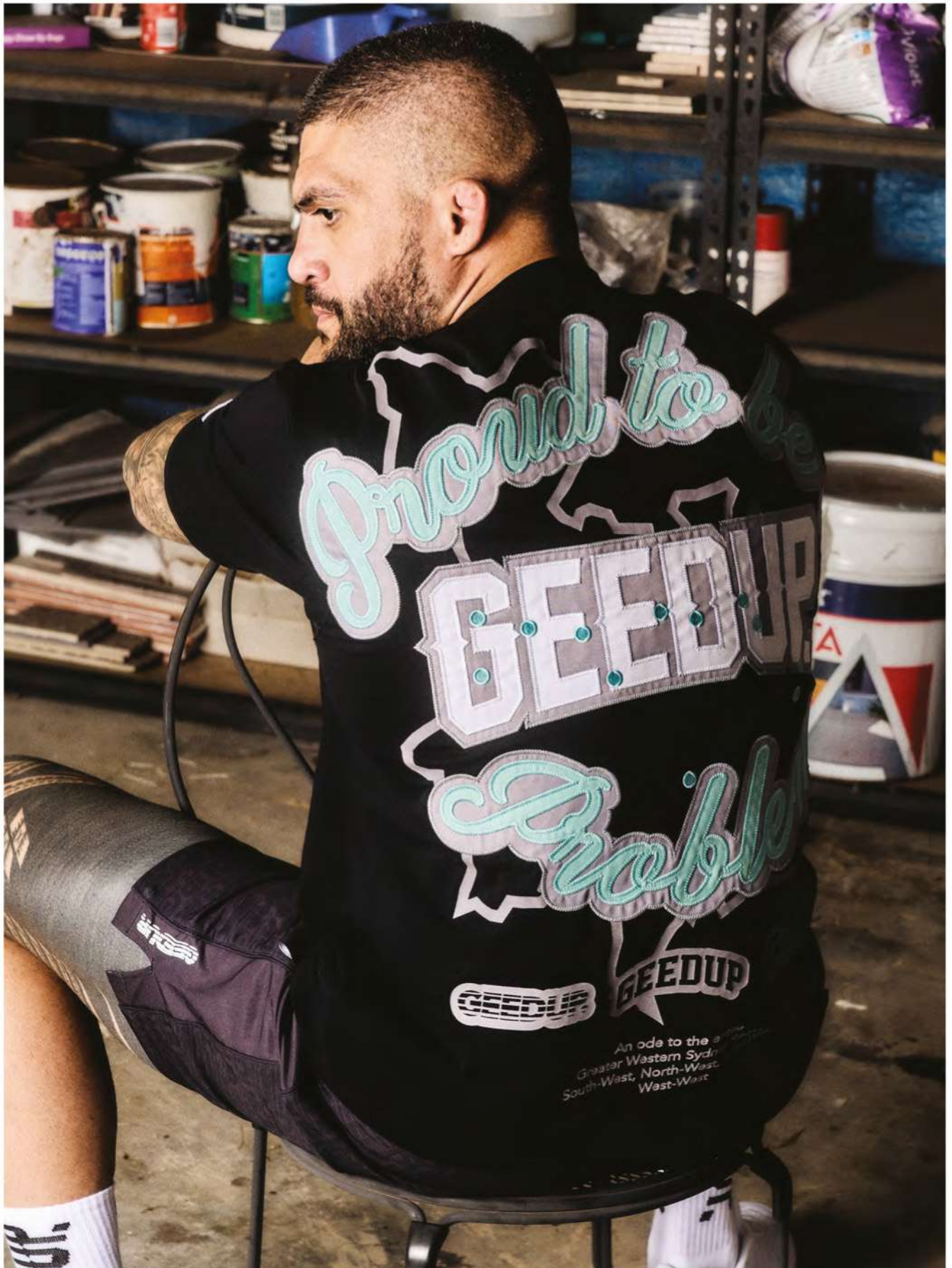
What’s more, the similarities between Paco and his latest campaign star are many. Most of all, the two blokes share a healthy defiance of the establishment and the guts to push boundaries.

“Geedup is for those who have faced closed doors and dead ends, only to break their way into the building and take over,” says Paco proudly. “More than just clothing, Geedup is a collective for those who have taken the road less travelled, or better yet, those who are carving their own path unapologetically.” ■



*“Harnessing
the area’s
gritty
reputation
to create a
streetwear
brand with
global appeal.”*





Shop the hottest styles from Geedup at www.geedupclothing.com

MAXIM FLASHBACK

RICKI-LEE

C O U L T E R

To celebrate the release of her first album (*On My Own*) in 10 years, we throwback to Ricki-Lee's magnificent military-themed MAXIM cover photo shoot from November 2011. Here's some of what she told us all those years ago – she hasn't changed a bit!

Interview by BEN MCKELVEY *Photography by* WAYNE DANIELS



What's the deal with the hot military theme, Ricki-Lee? I just had this picture in my head of military garb. There's nothing sexier than a woman in a military uniform.

Would you ever do a tour of Afghanistan and entertain the Australian troops?

I'd love to. I've been asked before but it got cancelled at the last minute because things got a little volatile.

If you went over, you may be offered the opp to fire some rounds. Would you do it?

Absolutely! With guns, it's a case of the

bigger the better. I grew up on a farm, so I've played with smaller guns before, and I went to Thailand and shot a .44 Magnum. But I'd love to shoot a serious combat rifle.

Keeping with the combat theme, word is you like watching a bit of the old punchy face?

I love combat sports – we get all the Pay-Per-Views. For my boyfriend's 30th, I took him to Vegas and got him floor seats for UFC 126, where Anderson Silva fought Vitor Belfort. Fight Night in Vegas can't be beaten.

That's one of the best presents ever.

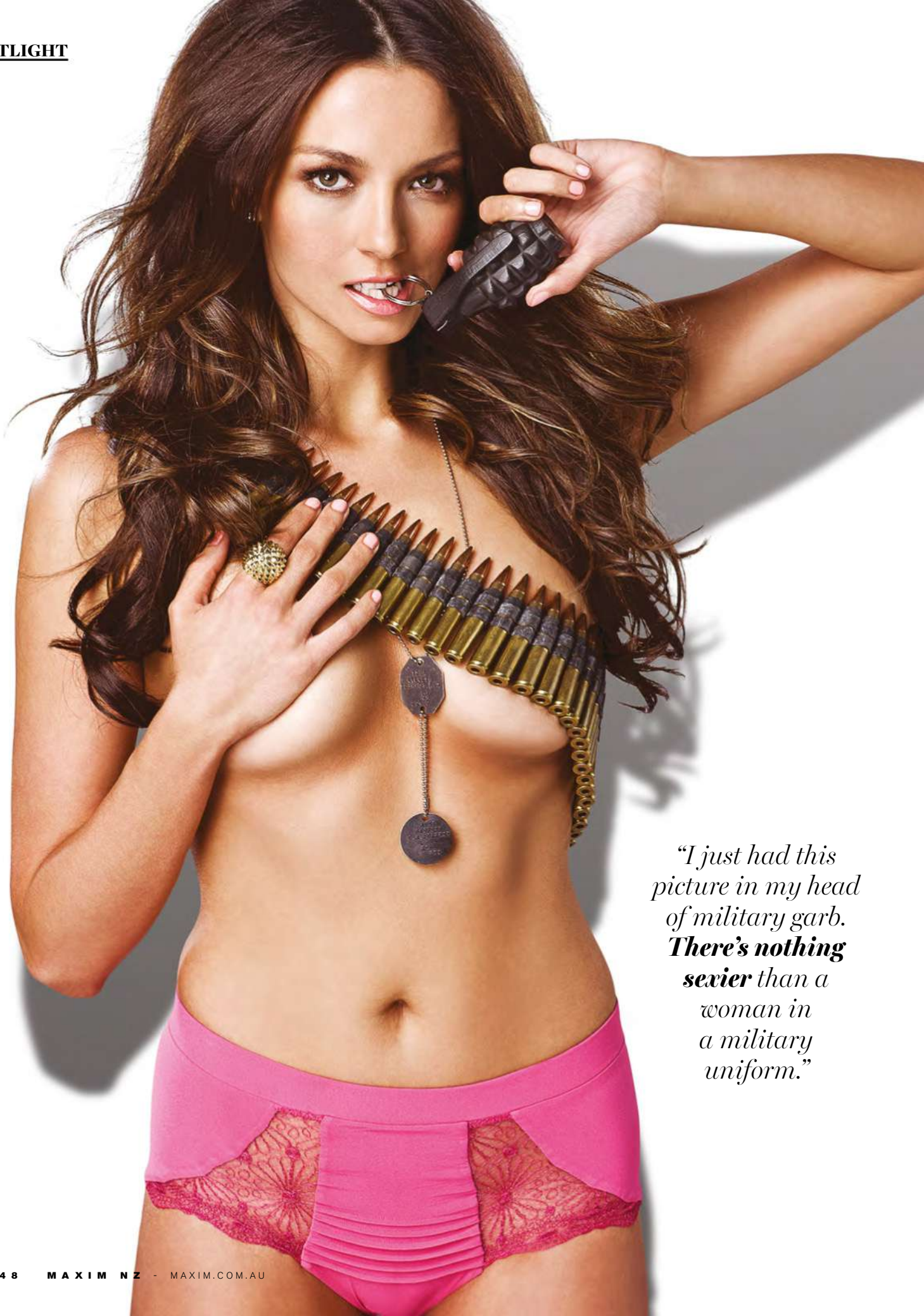
I think I enjoyed it more than he did. I love

boxing, love UFC, love the V8 supercars and love rugby. I'm no girly girl.

Your man seems to have it pretty amazing. How can we meet a fight-watching, gun-toting, lingerie-wearing lady?

We met through a mutual friend, actually. I'd been single for a year and I may or may not have nudged my friend and said, "C'mon, you have to have some single, attractive friends." They had someone in mind and we met at the Espy [Esplanade Hotel] in Melbourne after a day at the footy. I'd just ordered a jug of beer and it was that time of night where I was bypassing the glass and drinking straight from the jug. This incredibly hot guy walks in and he was laughing, not reeling in disgust. He grabbed my hand, we got some shots, and yeah, great start. ■



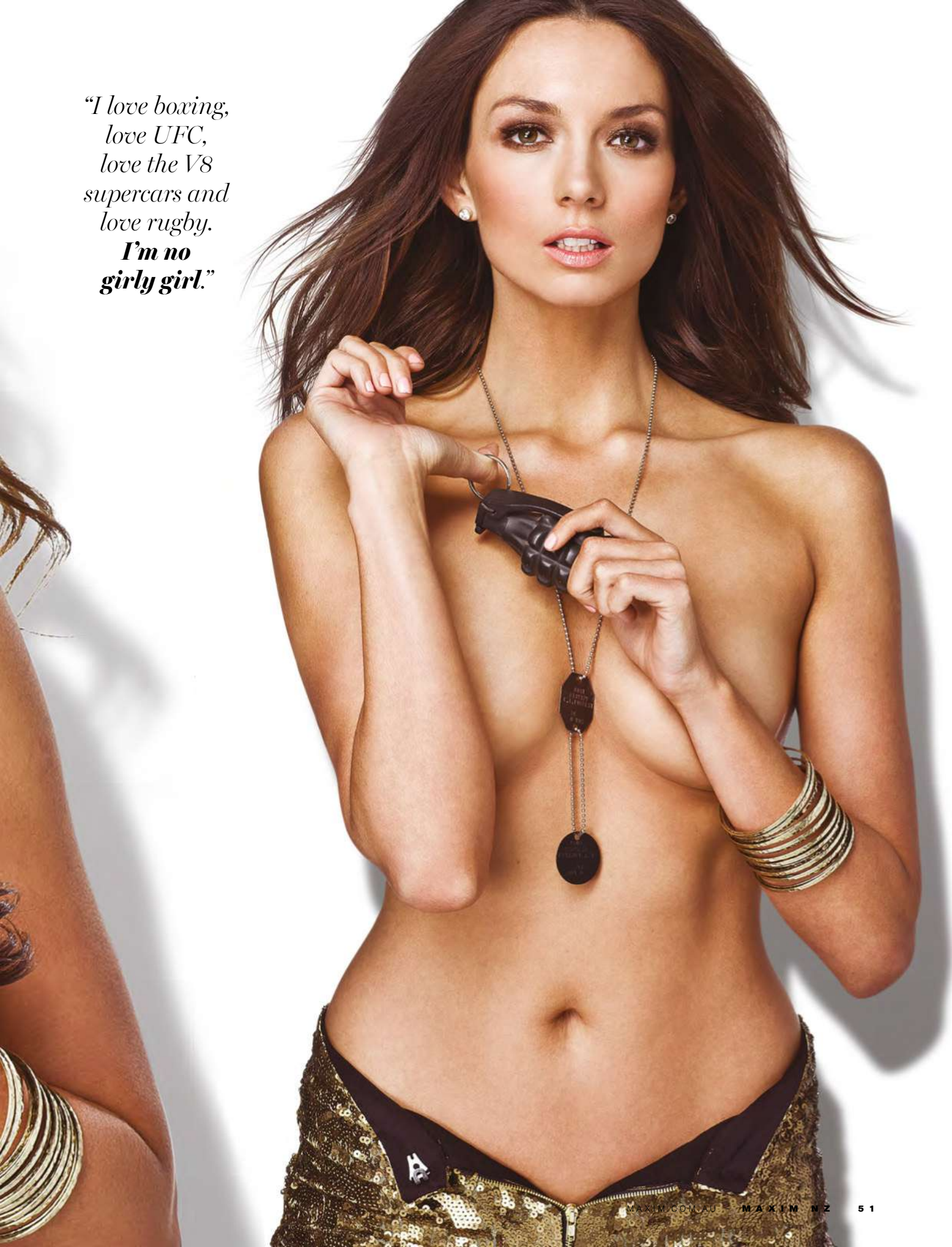


*“I just had this picture in my head of military garb. **There’s nothing sexier** than a woman in a military uniform.”*





*"I love boxing,
love UFC,
love the V8
supercars and
love rugby.
I'm no
girly girl."*



6

WAYS TO A SIX-PACK

Celebrity personal trainer, ALEXA TOWERSEY, shares her top tips on how to get those elusive rock-hard abs...





Contrary to popular belief, your “abs” and your “core” are not one in the same. The abdominal muscles that you’re probably more familiar with are the superficial ones that are primarily worked by flexing the spine – think sit-ups and crunches. However, the core includes all of those abdominal muscles in addition to all of the muscles of the pelvic girdle, lower back and glutes.

To train the core in its entirety, you need to include a variety of exercises that address all the key components – flexing the spine, extending the spine (back extension and reverse hyperextension variations), extending the hips (glute bridges and hip thrust variations), twisting/rotating the torso and holding the spine still. This way, you’ll help prevent back pain, boost your agility, increase your flexibility and look good naked.

For the purpose of this article, I’ve stuck to the abdominal region only, so you can *feel the burn*. Here are my top tips to help you speed towards that six-pack, and I don’t mean the one you bought at the bottle shop.

The abs are composed predominantly of fast twitch muscle fibres. This means they have the potential to grow quickly with volume and consistency (this doesn’t mean a couple of sets of 10 reps at the end of each workout), and they respond best to an 8-12 rep range with a time under tension (TUT) of 30-40 secs per set.

The best way to blitz them is to do giant sets. Take minimal rest between the individual exercises and a longer 45-60 secs rest at the end before repeating for three sets in total – aim to perform three times a week for six weeks. Think about drawing the bellybutton to the spine throughout to help brace the midsection and support the lower back.



15X REVERSE CRUNCH

Lie on your back and bring your knees in towards your chest until they're bent to 90 degrees. Contract your abs to curl your hips off the floor, reaching your legs up towards the ceiling, then lower your legs back down to their original position without letting your feet touch the floor.

20X BICYCLE CRUNCH

Lie on your back with your hands behind your head, and your legs raised and bent at 90 degrees. Curl your head and chest up so you're resting on your shoulder blades. Bring your armpit towards your knee on one side while lengthening the other leg away from you, pause in the contracted position, then alternate sides. Minimise any rocking of the pelvis by keeping this slow and controlled.

10X SWISSBALL PIKES

Assume push-up position with your hands on the ground and shins on the ball. Keeping your legs straight, draw your hips up to the ceiling lower the legs back to plank. Regress the exercise to a knee tuck by bending the knees.

15X JANDA SIT-UPS

Lie on your back with your knees bent and hands placed behind your head. Dig your heels into the floor, contracting your hamstrings, whilst performing an ordinary crunch – if the hamstrings are “on”, it helps turn the hip flexors off, so you get more work through your abs. You can pop a weight plate between your butt and your heels to pull against, to help with engaging the hamstrings.

20X WINDOW WIPERS

Lie on your back with arms out to the sides and legs up at 90 degrees. Rotate the legs to one side to graze the ground, whilst reaching out through the opposite shoulder. Use your abs to draw the legs back to centre then rotate to the other side. For an extra stretch through the upper spine, place heavy kettlebells on your hands to weight the arms down in the crucifix position. Regress the exercise by bending the legs.

10X PLANK WALKOUTS

Assume a straight arm plank position. Your body should be a straight line from your head to your heels. Slowly walk your hands forward as far as you can without losing the brace in your spine, pause for one count, then walk hands back underneath the shoulders.

TOP TIP:

It's not just the ladies that have pelvic-floor muscles – guys also have them. They're important not just for bladder control as you get older but also for erectile function – think harder for longer. If you're into a bit of dirty talk, while you're performing your set, think about pulling your balls away from your anus because that's the most common cue.

Once you've sculpted your six-pack, you need to shed the fat on top of it, because abs generally aren't visible unless you're under 10% body fat (15% for a female). You can do this by:

KISS KEEP. IT. SIMPLE. STUPID.) — at its most basic level, fat loss comes down to energy balance. Expend more energy than you consume.

BE AS STRONG AS YOU LOOK — once you're physically prepared

to stabilise the trunk through heavy multi-joint exercises, tighter abs will come from performing squats, deadlifts, pullups and Olympic lifting variations.

SPRINT FINISH – incorporate High Intensity Interval Training Sessions into your program three times a week. Studies have shown that one of the most effective protocol for torching belly fat involves eight seconds ALL-OUT sprints followed by a 12-second rest, repeated for a total of 60 intervals.

That's ONLY 20 mins of work!

STRESS LESS — research shows that there is a direct correlation between belly fat and prolonged exposure to stress. Stress isn't just having a spat with your missus or cursing a cab driver for cutting in front of you, it includes food intolerances, dehydration, over training (or under recovering) and poor sleep. And just so we're clear lads, a training session doesn't count as a date #justsaying. ■



ABOUT ALEXA

“Action Alexa” is an internationally published sports model, celebrity trainer and nutrition and lifestyle coach with over 15 years’ experience in the health and fitness industry, and has worked with NZ’s world champion rugby team, the All Blacks. She has qualified for the Ironman 70.3 World Champs and was named as one of the Five Toughest Trainers in Asia during her seven-year stint in an MMA gym in Hong Kong.



IS SLEEP REALLY THAT IMPORTANT?

Clinical Nutritionist
and Naturopath
**BROOKE BENSON
CAMPBELL** (BHSc)
dives into the world of
brain health to discover
why improving your
performance and
wellbeing could be
as simple as catching
a few extra Z's...



We spend about one-third of our life either sleeping or attempting to do so. By the age of 90 we will have spent an accumulated total of 33 years in bed. In this respect, sleep seems less about relaxation and more about wasting vital time. So the question remains: is sleep really that important? Allow me to present seven surprising reasons why your slumber matters.

1 SLEEP BOOSTS MEMORY

Sleep facilitates the brain's consolidation of information, moving the day's learnings from short-term to long-term storage. Skip sleep and your ability to remember things will suffer. In a study where individuals were sleep deprived prior to being given new material to learn, there was a 40% decrease in their ability to form new memories and retain information. The takeaway: a late night out before that important meeting can be the difference between nailing the statistics and confusing your KPIs with your KPOs.

2 SLEEP IMPROVES FINANCIAL DECISION-MAKING

Investors and finance experts beware! In a fascinating study of two groups, people were asked to choose each day between receiving a set sum of money or taking a riskier option in which they would either receive a greater sum of cash or none at all. This experiment ran for five weeks, during which one group slept for eight hours a night and the other for five hours per night. As the weeks wore on, the sleep-deprived group were more likely to gamble the money and choose the riskier option (without self-awareness of the fact). Another study of volunteers kept awake for 24 hours found they were more excited at the prospect of rewards from risk-taking and less emotionally affected by the losses. Results suggest that sleep deprivation poses a threat to financial competence, changing areas of the brain associated with risk processing and emotional reward. In short, sleep interferes with your ability to make logical decisions regarding money. A responsible saver can become a reckless spender overnight – to count your dollars, counting sheep is essential.

**BY THE AGE
OF 90 WE WILL
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TOTAL OF 33
YEARS IN BED.**

3 SLEEP KEEPS WEIGHT IN CHECK

One of the interesting findings to emerge from the world of obesity science is that people who sleep less tend to weigh more. Compared to their well-rested selves, people who pulled an all-nighter suffered a sharp decline in the 'appetite-evaluation' region of their brain. They weren't just hungry, they also experienced a huge increase in the desire for high-sugar, high-calorie foods. We know that sleep deprivation results in bad food choices and an increase in portion size. What does this mean? In lunch terms, the right amount of sleep could be the difference between a kale salad and KFC. Weight control is as simple as a little shuteye.

4 SLEEP LOWERS THE CHANCE OF HUMAN ERROR

Mistakes ranging from the mundane to the catastrophic (including Chernobyl, the Exxon Valdez oil spill and the Challenger explosion) have been linked to sleep deprivation and the cycle of late-nights and early-mornings. Lack of sleep is also a leading cause of car accidents and work mishaps, because when the brain is deprived of sleep it becomes particularly difficult to perform prolonged, repetitive tasks like driving and data collection. In fact, studies show that drivers who slept five to six hours per night were twice as likely to crash as those who slept seven to eight hours; those who slept four hours or less were four times more likely to cause an accident. In the case of motor function, it seems driving a car with lack of sleep is the equivalent of driving in a *Bird Box* challenge... i.e. blindfolded.

5 SLEEP EASES PHYSICAL PAIN

Studies show that sleep acts as a natural painkiller to manage and lower pain levels – 230 participants recorded their nightly hours of sleep and corresponding pain levels the following day over the course of a few days. Results suggested that simply losing 30 minutes of sleep per night accompanies noticeable increases in pain response. Lack of sleep has a serious impact on your next-day quality of life and bodily function, meaning that sleep may be more beneficial than magnesium and anti-inflammatories in muscle recovery and chronic pain. Hit the hay as hard as you hit the gym and reap the rewards.

6 SLEEP BALANCES YOUR MOOD

Mood and sleep use the same brain chemicals and neurotransmitters for regulation. When these neurotransmitters are disrupted by sleep loss, chemical changes in the brain can also result in manic feelings and behaviours similar to bipolar disorder – high highs and low lows. MRI studies show that brain activity after periods of sleep loss

mirrors the brain activity indicative of anxiety disorders. Simply put, the brain's stress response is heightened when we haven't slept enough. Emotional reactions of anger, anxiety and frustration result from sleep deprivation. But it's not all bad news because the link between anxiety and sleep is so strong researchers have started to implement 'sleep therapy' to treat anxiety disorder. Feeling on edge? Take 40 winks.

7 SLEEP IMPROVES RELATIONSHIPS

Research shows that a lack of sleep not only makes us more reluctant to interact with strangers, but also makes our brains less likely to respond to situations with empathy and understanding. Just one night of sleep loss affects the way our brain recognises subtle facial cues of happiness and sadness in others, making the act of teamwork or partnership nearly impossible. Missing vital signs of emotion in others limits our ability to read work colleagues and friends, affecting our relationships and workplace results. Snore your way to professional success and snooze your way to intimacy. Nighty night! ■

ABOUT BROOKE



Brooke Benson Campbell (BHSc) is a **Clinical Nutritionist and Naturopath, speaker, writer and presenter with a passion for all things health, beauty and wellbeing. Follow Brooke at her Instagram @the.b.b.c**

SLEEP INTERFERES WITH YOUR ABILITY TO MAKE LOGICAL DECISIONS REGARDING MONEY.



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How To... UPGRADE YOUR WORK PERFORMANCE

If you're motivated to improve, it doesn't have to be complicated. **BROOKE BENSON CAMPBELL** (BHSC Nut Med), is here with a few simple tips on utilising your brainpower to boost performance and productivity...

RESPECT CHANNEL CAPACITY

There is a concept in cognitive psychology called channel capacity, which refers to the amount of space our brain has for certain types of information. In his book *The Tipping Point*, Malcolm Gladwell describes human limits to the amount of information any one individual can absorb at any one time... and one is the magic number when it comes to learning.

To boost levels of performance, we need to respect our hard-wired cognitive limitations; that is, a person should never aim to learn or improve

more than one thing at a time. In order for this learning to be transferred to long-term storage (and become habit), it is essential to honour the concept of channel capacity. So, next time you are overwhelmed with new information, employ the strategy of "Ask and Chop" instead.

Firstly, force yourself to ask the question: "What is one thing I really want or need to improve?". Then, break the task or information into manageable parts. Chop the improvement into single steps, and only focus on the first or next necessary step of action to begin the march toward improvement. Focus on modifying ONE thing at a time to upgrade performance and





transfer learning to long-term storage. “Ask and Chop” your way to positive change.

Interestingly, studies have also shown that humans have a limited ‘social channel capacity’ of around 150 people. That is, an individual can forge a genuine relationship with no more than 150 people at once. For this reason, many workplaces now cap their size at this number to achieve greater cohesion and success.

YOU CAN’T MULTITASK, SO STOP TRYING

Multiple studies have shown that not only is multitasking inefficient and unproductive, but it reduces cognitive skill ability. Based on over 50 years of brain science, we know that multitaskers are less productive and confuse information. It takes around 15 minutes to re-orient to a primary task after a distraction (such as an email or social media post), causing efficiency to drop by up to 40% (and the average number of times an office worker stops to check their email inbox: 30 times per hour – a scary statistic!).

Specifically, long-term memory and creativity is reduced when we multitask. In fact, researchers tested 300 Michigan State students on their ability to persevere through interruptions while taking a computer test. The interruptions came as pop-ups on the screens that stayed for as little as 2.8 seconds. With a 2.8 second interruption, the students made double the errors when they returned to the test. Furthermore, in a different form of multitasking, University of Utah professor David Strayer confirmed that talking on the phone whilst driving is as dangerous as driving while intoxicated. Reaction and attention decreased by 50% and drivers studied missed seeing half of the things they’d normally see, like billboards... and pedestrians.

The evidence is clear: multitasking just doesn’t work. So why do we continue to try to master the skill? Simply put, most of us suffer from action addiction. Every time we complete a new task (such as checking our inbox), we receive a reward – a naturally-produced neurotransmitter hit of dopamine linked to addiction. We receive instant gratification that makes us feel good, so we do it again, and again under the guise of ‘productivity’.

How to solve the modern problem of multitasking: single task. Single tasking is not having eight browser tabs open at once, it is not checking email every 10 minutes and it is not a chat window open on your desktop. Single tasking is one task at a time, no distractions. How to begin? Strategically handle your distractions: Install Anti-Social or StayFocusd software on

your computer to block websites like Facebook for periods of your choosing; silence your phone and turn off notifications from phone and web apps; close your email. Single task to upgrade work performance and boost productivity.

CONTROL YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT

Studies show that office temperature and lighting significantly contribute to performance and productivity. In one research project, scientist Mirjam Muench compared two groups of people, those being exposed to daylight, the other exposed to artificial light over the course of several workdays, and showed that cortisol levels are significantly altered by artificial light. Heightened cortisol levels cause an increased stress response and changes to sleep rhythm, and can also affect fat-storage and memory retention levels, and artificial light is one of the key drivers of this. Where possible, utilise natural light – work near windows

Researchers also found that those employees who maintain a sense of control over their space by personalising it maintain a sense of ownership and control that decreases stress levels, and maintains focus and mental cognitive performance. Personal items such as photos, posters, toys and mugs work to balance cortisol levels at a subconscious level, thus maintaining sense of purpose and mental energy. Decorate your space to boost performance.

EMPLOY ULTRADIAN RHYTHMS

When it comes to the average workday, most of us simply attempt to power through (with the help of caffeine) from start to end. However, in the 1950s, sleep researcher Nathaniel Kleitman discovered that the human body tends to move through 90-120 minute cycles, and for maximum performance, these cycles should be utilised effectively. These cycles, known as Ultradian Rhythms, account for the ebb and flow of energy.

Heart rate, hormonal levels, muscle tension and brain-wave activity all increase during the first part of the cycle, and with it, alertness and attention. After an hour or so, these levels begin to fall, and somewhere between 90-120 minutes, the body requires a period of rest and recovery. Focus lacks and memory consolidation decreases. In short, your body was designed for sprints rather than marathons.

Interestingly, scientists think the electrolyte balance between sodium and potassium governs these cycles. Brain cells require sodium and potassium to send signals and when you are working hard and are alert, you eventually disrupt the sodium/potassium balance. The brain notices this and focus and cognition decrease. Once the brain has time to rest, and sodium/potassium levels are restored energy increases and focus returns.

To upgrade work performance, build your day around these rhythms. Instead of plowing through the day at the same speed, you’ll be more effective if you have periods of deep focus followed by short periods of total rest. Work on an important task for 60-90 minutes. When you find your concentration beginning to decrease it’s a sign that you need to take a break from the cognitive, so take a walk, meditate, grab a coffee, have a conversation with a colleague, and let your brain switch off for 20 minutes. It is crucial that you’re really resting your brain during this time and that you are highly focused without distractions during your periods of energy (so shut down all communication channels, social media and email during these times). Focus on

30 TIMES:
*the average number of times
an office worker stops to check
their email inbox per hour.*

or in open meeting rooms to lower stress levels and boost performance. And keep an eye on the office thermostat.

Another amazing study from Cornell University tested different office temperatures at a large Florida insurance company and found that when temperatures were low (20C or below) employees made 44% more mistakes than at optimum room temperature (24C). When we are cold the body uses a large proportion of energy to keep warm, rather than using that energy for cognition, creativity and focus; keeping body temperature at the perfect level is less about comfort and more about concentration.

Interestingly, it is not just temperature and lighting that can alter performance – the office layout is also important. Studies have found that open office layouts can negatively impact employee performance. Environmental noise and interruptions can become distracting, and employees in open offices have been found to have higher levels of stress and emotional exhaustion and lower levels of concentration and motivation than those with private office space.

However, if a personal corner office isn’t on the immediate horizon, don’t despair.

pockets of natural energy by employing ultradian rhythms.

TRY NATURAL NOOTROPICS

By definition, a nootropic is a substance that improves mental function and cognitive ability, while doing no harm. Natural nootropics work on many levels to increase circulation and oxygen to the brain, provide precursors to important neurotransmitters, reduce brain inflammation (a byproduct of daily use), stimulate formation of new brain cells, and increase resilience to stress. Natural nootropics can be your secret performance weapon when used correctly

and effectively.

For calm focus, use L-Theanine. Found in high concentrations in green tea, L-theanine is also available in supplemental form, and works to increase alpha-brain waves linked to creativity and alert concentration. It easily crosses the blood-brain barrier within 30-40 minutes of consumption, while boosting neurotransmitter levels of serotonin, dopamine and GABA (responsible for regulation of mood, emotion and sleep), and inhibits cortisol activation, to lower levels of stress. Furthermore, a systemic review found that L-theanine has acute effects on cognitive function and mood that are enhanced by combining it with caffeine.

One study found that combining 250mg

of L-Theanine and 150g caffeine worked to accelerate working memory reaction time, increased accuracy and boosted alertness; one cup of coffee to every two cups of green tea has a similar function and will boost brain performance throughout the day. For resilience to both physical and emotional stress, try Rhodiola. An adaptogenic herb, studies have found that Rhodiola works to improve mood and decrease feelings of burnout in both anxious and highly-stressed individuals. It increases energy, stamina and can increase attention to detail-oriented tasks by improving concentration over a prolonged period. The herb also helps in neurogenesis by repairing and growing new neurons and brain cells, and protects existing



brain cells from oxidative-stress induced cell death, and its effect lasts between four to eight hours from consumption.

A recent study of 101 people concluded that 'Rhodiola extract at a dose of 200mg twice daily for four weeks is safe and effective at improving life-stress symptoms to a clinically relevant degree', while a Belgian study of young athletes concluded that acute Rhodiola intake can improve exercise capacity in healthy young men". For a physical and psychological performance pick-me-up, try it.

BECOME A CRAFTSMAN

In his book *So Good They Can't Ignore You*, Cal Newport, an assistant professor at Georgetown University, suggests that people wanting to improve performance and individual ability develop a craftsmen mindset, where the focus is on what value you're producing in your current job, rather than foster a passion mindset, where the focus is on what your current job offers you. He argues that the best work tends to be rare and valuable, and to secure it you will need exceptional skills or career capital.

Career capital are the skills you have that can be leveraged in defining your career, and basic economic theory tells us that if you want something both rare and valuable, you need something rare and valuable to offer in return.

In his words, this is "supply and demand 101".

A craftsman mindset asks you to abandon concerns about whether your current job is 'perfect', and instead encourages you to put your head down and work at becoming really damn good at it regardless. In other words, by focusing on building skill through deliberate practice, stretching yourself and constantly improving, you will achieve the dream job. Musicians, athletes and chess players all perform deliberate practice to hone their skills. This is the craftsman approach. When you develop this approach, passion and performance follow.

BREAK BAD HABITS

Nothing sabotages productivity like a series of bad habits. Bad habits decrease accuracy, make you less creative and limit performance, so getting control over these habits is essential, and not just for office success. Clinical studies have also found that people who exercise a high degree of self-control tend to be much happier than those who don't, both in the short and long-term.

And in the words of Shaun Achor, "Happiness inspires productivity". We've come full circle. Consider eliminating these common bad habits to upgrade performance today:

● **YOU ARE A PERFECTIONIST:** Author Jodi Picoult summarised the importance of avoiding perfectionism: "You can edit a bad page, but you can't edit a blank page". Most perfectionists will happily spend hours or days chasing the concept of perfection to the detriment of productivity and time-frames, but this tends to have a snowball effect: start changing one thing and you find a number of

When temperatures were 20C or below employees made
44% MORE MISTAKES
than at optimum room temperature (24C)

other things that need tweaking too. Suddenly, timeframes have been extended, a project is delayed and anxiety sets in. Instead of aiming for perfect, aim to get the project to 90% and then launch, release or present. You can alter and tweak as you go, but a blank page is a waste of vital time and resources. Perfectionism in the workplace leads to infinite delay.

● **YOU PUT OFF TOUGH TASKS:** Each of us has a limited amount of mental energy, and as this energy is exhausted, so is our capacity for productivity and accurate decision-making. This is called decision fatigue. When you put off tough tasks until late in the day, you're saving them for when you are performing at your worst. To beat decision fatigue, you need to tackle intimidating or complex tasks in the morning when your brain is fresh. As Mark Twain said, "If it's your job to eat a frog, it's best to do it first thing in the morning... And if it's your job to eat two frogs, it's best to eat the biggest one first." In other words, first thing in the morning, complete the most unwanted, important and intimidating task you have on

your list first (the frog); the rest of your day will be a breeze in comparison, and 'failure to execute' will be a thing of the past.

MAKE TECHNOLOGY WORK FOR YOU

The average commute is 38 minutes each way, which adds up to approximately 316 hours per year – time that we could otherwise invest in workplace productivity. However, new academic research suggests that the attitude we adopt to our commutes play a role in how satisfied and productive we are at our jobs.

The best way to use our morning commute to our benefit is to strategise. Think about what you have to do, identify your most pressing tasks and mentally structure your day. Studies found that people who display this form of self-control and planning (called 'goal-directed prospection') perform at a higher rate during their workday and have lower levels of stress in the evening following their busy day. Thankfully, this is one area where technology has come to the rescue – a large number of apps can make your commute a well-spent time of productivity, rather than an excuse to watch grainy cat videos on repeat.

● **WUNDERLIST:** this app syncs between your mobile devices and computers and allows you to drag and drop tasks between days and categories, allowing you to set due dates and reminders. You can also share notes/lists with others: shopping lists with your flatmate, work deadlines with your team, this app makes communication easy.

● **POCKET:** use this app to save articles in one place for easy reading. Save content directly from your browser, emails or from more than 500 apps like Twitter. Bookmark everything you need and want to read, and get it in one place. This is an essential for work-related travel.

● **HOOTSUITE:** a social media management app that allows you to update your company's Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and LinkedIn pages from the same screen – without the need to log in to each individual platform. You can reply to posts and schedule every post you plan to make for the next week, month or three months, and then simply monitor your accounts as the software automatically posts content. Easy. ■

WEIRD & WONDERFUL

Meet **MICHA STAINES**, the cheeky Pommy event manager, and self-proclaimed weirdo, who now calls Australia home...

Photographed by
CHADI SABSABI



ENGINE ROOM
BILGE PUMP

“I have a huge heart I share with all of those around me. I’m unapologetically authentically myself and a bit of a weirdo.”



ello, Micha, tell us a little more about yourself.

Hello, I am a vivacious, adventurous and passionate English event manager living my dream as a Bondi Beach babe in Sydney, Australia. I'm traditionally a countryside girl, riding horses and walking the dogs to the pub, then I thrived in the hectic London life running around festival fields as an event manager. Then four years ago I moved to the other side of the world chasing new experiences, challenges and the beach lifestyle – it's been the scariest but best decision of my life.

What do you love most about yourself?

I love that I have a huge heart I share with

all of those around me. I'm unapologetically authentically myself and a bit of a weirdo... OK, a huge weirdo.

What is the first thing you do when you get up in the morning?

I always drink a big bottle of water then head out for a walk or a reformer Pilates class – I'm obsessed with Pilates.

What is one of your weird quirks?

Honestly, it's hard to choose. I am one big, weird quirk in general. It would probably have to be that I constantly talk in different accents and impressions.

What's the first thing you notice when it comes to the opposite gender?

Gorgeous eyes and smile – I'm a sucker for those blue eyes and cheeky smile.

What's the most attractive quality in a man?

Humour, for sure – you must be able to make me laugh.

Describe your ideal boyfriend.

Family orientated, funny, hardworking, kind and ready to settle down soonish.

What impresses you on a first date?

When a guy is confident enough to actually ask me out on a first date in the first place – and in real life and not through a dating app.

What advice would you give a man?

Be authentic and genuine, confident and caring – most girls these days are sick of this fake bravado rubbish.

What words do you live by?

I've decided I'm in my "I don't give a f—k era. I'm old enough to know who I am and what I'm about, and I don't care if people aren't a fan of me anymore. You can't ever be content and happy constantly people pleasing.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Any reality TV shows – I'll watch them all happily!

What is something new happening in your life right now?

I'm visiting home very soon to see all my fabulous family and friends – the countdown is on! ■



STATUS UPDATE

NAME:
Micha Staines

BORN:
April 5

HOMETOWN:
Bondi NSW

FIVE-WORD SELF

DESCRIPTION:
"Wonderfully weird,
loving, hilarious,
fabulous."

INSTAGRAM:
@michastainess



*“No matter what,
I keep going and
working hard
to create the life
that I want for
myself.”*



Sanity OVER Money

From studying law and classical music to modelling and content creating, **ISABELLA EDSTRÖM** is living life to the fullest...

Photographed by CHADI SABSABI

Give us a little more background info about yourself, Isabella.

I'm a Scandinavian-English model who grew up in UK and moved to Australia two years ago. I studied classical music and law and never saw myself in a different career, but I'm now modelling for MAXIM, Playboy and others, and also a content creator. We only get one time on earth and it's for living and enjoying, so I couldn't be happier that I've created an amazing life for myself where I get to have so many amazing experiences and live in a different country. Outside of work I pride myself on my health and fitness, love hiking and the outdoors and spend most of my spare time travelling.

What do you love most about yourself?

I love my determination and ambition. There are a lot of situations in life where it would have been easy to give up or hold onto resentment and instead, I know that no matter what, I keep going and working hard to create the life that I want for myself.

Do you have a weird quirk?

I can seem very reserved when you

first meet me but after a bit, you'll soon discover I get super hyper when I'm excited and will be bouncing off the walls.

What's the first thing you notice about a man?

Something that always catches my attention is somebody who carries themselves with confidence, whether that's in the way they walk, make eye contact or dress. I find it really attractive when a man is well groomed and puts effort and attention into their appearance, from haircut and beard to a nicely put together outfit.

What's the most attractive quality a guy could have?

Ambition is the most attractive quality for a man, somebody who knows what they want in life and works hard to achieve it.

What one piece of advice would you give to a man?

Don't be afraid to put yourself out there and court women. The art of dating has been lost a little with the instant gratification of dating apps, whereas I would much prefer a man had the confidence to approach me in person for a date. Being a

gentleman and taking charge is so much sexier than the f—kboy tendencies taking over the modern dating world.

What's your guilty pleasure?

Watching trashy romance reality TV – I got so addicted to Love Island this year.

What words do you live by?

My life motto is "sanity over money." Working in the entertainment and modelling industries, I'm always extremely busy and surrounded by all types of people. Every time I'm considering whether to take a job, I evaluate whether it's going to keep my peace and if not, then I choose sanity over money.

Lastly, what's something new happening in your life right now?

I've booked a big trip to Europe, so I'm really excited to go and see some new countries I haven't been to yet, including Greece, and also go back and visit my family. I've been doing a lot more work abroad recently, so it'll be a great opportunity to get some new online content in different locations. ■





*“Being a gentleman and **taking charge** is so much sexier than the f—kboy tendencies taking over the modern dating world.”*

STATUS UPDATE

NAME:

Isabella Edström

BORN:

June 6

HOMETOWN:

Birmingham,
England UK

FIVE-WORD SELF

DESCRIPTION:

“Classy, glamorous,
assertive,
independent,
outgoing.”

INSTAGRAM:

@bellxedstrom

SNAPCHAT:

@bella.edstrom

MAN UP

Australia has some seriously amazing men who have broken new ground, stood up for their beliefs, achieved incredible things and defied stereotypes. Featuring cool and contemporary illustrations from Aussie artists, *High Five to the Boys* is a classic, uplifting read celebrating the achievements of many brilliant Australian blokes. In this edited extract we honour five of them...



Extracted from
High Five to the
Boys published by
Penguin Random
House, penguin.
com.au

Kurt Fearnley

When Kurt Fearnley was born, he was diagnosed with lumbar sacral agenesis, meaning he was missing the lower portion of his spine. Doctors thought he might survive for only a week. But even as a baby Kurt defied all odds.

Fast-forward 14 years and Kurt competed in his first race, on his school's grass oval in an everyday wheelchair. He was hooked. By the time he was 17 he was competing at an elite level in a specialised racing chair.

At 19 Kurt competed in the Sydney 2000 Summer Paralympic Games and in demonstration events at the Sydney 2000 Summer Olympics. He's competed at the Athens 2004, Beijing 2008, London 2012 and Rio de Janeiro 2016 Paralympics, and holds three gold, seven silver and three bronze medals. But his superhuman feats are not confined to the wheelchair. In 2009 Kurt 'crawled' the gruelling 96 kilometre Kokoda Trail with his family to raise funds for Movember and beyondblue. He has also won the London, Paris, Seoul, Sydney, Chicago and New York marathons.

Kurt is a passionate disability advocate and teaches physical education in high schools around New South Wales. His feats on and off the sports field saw him awarded 2009 NSW Young Australian of the Year. In between teaching, training at the NSW Institute of Sport, meeting Queen Elizabeth II, advocacy work and spending time with his wife and son, Kurt published an autobiography. Does this man have no limits?



Samuel Johnson

Samuel Johnson is an Australian actor, radio presenter, voiceover artist and philanthropist. As an actor Samuel is probably best known for his turn as Molly Meldrum in the miniseries *Molly* or as Evan in *The Secret Life of Us*.

Both roles attracted awards from the Australian Film Institute and the Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts, and he won his very own Gold Logie. Even so, where Samuel really shines is in his achievements as a philanthropist. When his sister, Connie, was diagnosed with cancer, Samuel threw himself into a personal campaign to make a real difference. Together, Samuel and Connie created the charity Love Your Sister to raise money and create further awareness of this all-too-common disease.

In 2013 Samuel began riding his unicycle on a nonstop journey around Australia. One year after setting off, he returned to Melbourne, having travelled 15,955 kilometres, raised more than \$1.4 million in donations for much-needed research and with a Guinness World Record under his belt for good measure.

Samuel was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia for services to cancer research support organisations in 2016, and he was the Victorian candidate for the 2018 Australian of the Year for his tireless and selfless efforts.

Sadly, Connie died in late 2017. In a moving interview on *The Project* Samuel declared that he would keep striving in her name to raise funds and fight breast cancer. It's hard to think of a better person to take on the good fight.



JAMES FOSDIKE is an illustrator based in Adelaide, Australia and the creator of indigenous-themed comic *Deadly* plus a host of other titles under his Visualante alias. His warm-hued, '70s-inspired illustration is always richly emotive and expressive, lending itself to a wide range of applications spanning from editorial to conceptual. Having worked as a professional illustrator for over a decade, Fosdike is most well-known for his work for Australian and international comedians and we're pretty sure he holds the current world record for drawing comedian Wil Anderson.

Hamish and Andy

Funny men Hamish Blake and Andy Lee met as students at the University of Melbourne. Twelve months later, they'd landed their first radio show. They've been taking us along for an incredible ride ever since with their conversational, muck-around style that makes us feel like we're part of their family.

They've written for and appeared on shows such as *Rove*, *Spicks and Specks*, *The Project* and more. But it's their own personal content that we love so much. On radio, *The Hamish and Andy Show* achieved unparalleled success, injecting fun into the lives of more than two million listeners. Via radio and TV, they've taken us on their adventures – together we've sailed a tall ship to Tasmania, caravanned around Australia, found 'Australia's best bloke', taken a gap year all over the world, and shared our true stories with them too.

Lots of comedians depend on cutting wit but Hamish and Andy have always had a different style. Their relaxed humour and dedicated friendship stands out for both audiences and critics. They've won numerous Australian Commercial Radio Awards, ARIA Awards for their compilation albums, and finished their radio careers (for now) with a sell-out crowd of over 6,000 people who turned up to watch them perform a single song.



HAMISH & ANDY



FAMISHED & DANDY



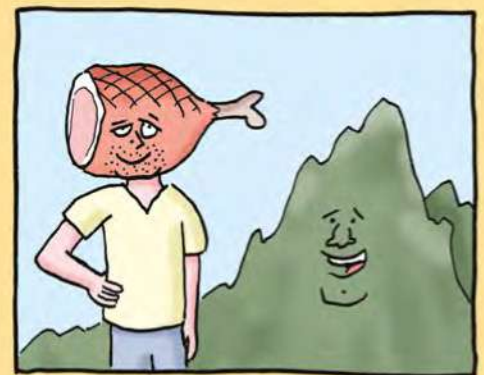
DANISH & BANDY



RAKISH & HANDY



CRAYFISH & SANDY



HAMMISH & ANDES

ANDREW WELDON

is a Melbourne-based cartoonist. His cartoons have appeared in publications in Australia and overseas, including *The Sydney Morning Herald*, *The Age*, *The Australian* and *The Big Issue*. He is the author and illustrator of children's books, including *The Kid With The Amazing Head* and *Clever Trevor's Stupendous Inventions*.

Mick Fanning

Mick Fanning learnt to surf at the age of five, but it wasn't until he was 12 and his family moved to northern New South Wales that he really started to focus on the sport. Before long he was carving his way up the Australian surfing scene, turning pro in 2002. The year ended on a high with Mick finishing in fifth position and being awarded the Association of Surfing Professionals (ASP) Rookie of the Year award.

Mick's surfing career suffered a near wipe-out in 2004 after a bad hamstring injury took surgery and six months of rehab to overcome. The hard work paid off in 2007 when Mick won the ASP World Title. He dedicated the win to his beloved brother who tragically passed away when Mick was 16. Mick then went on to win the 2009 and 2013 World Titles.

Mick is also known for his encounter with a shark during the J-Bay Open finals in Jeffreys Bay, South Africa, in 2015. He fought off the shark and made international headlines. But it's the way Mick uses his celebrity status out of the water that truly deserves to be front page news: among other things, he's an ambassador for the Starlight Children's Foundation and has made generous donations to shark attack victims. Mick's surfing achievements and charity work were recognised in 2017 with a Medal of the Order of Australia.



TOM JELLETT is an Australian illustrator based in Sydney. Tom has been an editorial illustrator for News Limited, working on *The Australian*, *The Weekend Australian* and *The Daily Telegraph*. He has also illustrated a number of books for children, including *Australia at The Beach* by Max Fatchen, *Why I Love Footy* for Penguin Books, *The Gobbledygook is Eating A Book* by Justine Clarke and Arthur Baysting, *My Dad Thinks He's Funny* by Katrina Germein and the follow up *My Dad Still Thinks He's Funny* for Walker Books. Tom has also been included in the Editorial and Book category for Illustrators 57, exhibited at the Society of Illustrators, New York in 2015. He was also included in Communication Arts Illustration Annual 2012, 3x3 Children's Show No. 9 and was also Highly Commended in the 2013 Illustrators Australia Awards.

Adam Goodes

The name Adam Goodes is synonymous with the red and white of the Sydney Swans – the talented footballer played 17 seasons with the club. An Adnyamathanha and Narungga man, Adam spent his early years in South Australia and played soccer, but after moving to country Victoria he took up Aussie Rules and began to show huge potential in the game. He was scouted by the Swans at age 16, and during his career Adam was a two-time Premiership winner, a two-time Brownlow Medal winner and a member of the Indigenous Team of the Century.

A jack-of-all-trades on the field, off the field Adam is an anti-racism campaigner and a passionate advocate of the importance of education for young people. It is this charity and community work that led to Adam being named Australian of the Year in 2014 – the first footballer to have won the prestigious award.

Adam's charitable work has focused on the GO Foundation, which he established with fellow Swans player Michael O'Loughlin in 2009. The charity provides scholarships to Indigenous kids to help them further their education, dream big and achieve their goals. Adam hung up his boots in 2015 but the accolades have continued. In 2017 he was made an honorary Doctor of Health Sciences by the University of Sydney for his contribution to Australian society. ■





CHRIS NIXON

is an illustrator and designer based in Perth, Western Australia. His work is influenced by surf, skate, music and contemporary pop culture with an emphasis on the hand-drawn form. Accompanying his commercial work, Nixon has created several large scale artworks which have been installed around the state. In addition to his commercial illustration, Nixon has been published in over 10 children's books. In 2011 Nixon was named in the top 100 New Creatives by CMYK magazine.

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The
CHILDREN

OF GOD

Inside The Dark And Disturbing Sex Cult...

By JONATHAN J MOORE

For hundreds of years seers and prophets have used the *Bible's Book of Revelations* to whip up hysteria and fear. The last book of the New Testament declares that all but the true believers will be wiped off the face of the earth and doomed to eternal suffering; only those who follow 'the word' will survive the coming apocalypse. In his chilling book, *Doomsday Cults*, author Jonathan J Moore reveals how notorious cult leaders such as Charles Manson, David Koresh, Marshall Applewhite, Ervil LeBaron and David Berg declared that they were God's representative on earth and promised their followers that only through their teachings could the cult members survive doomsday. Monstrous crimes were committed in God's name and each cult experienced its own horrific Armageddon. This edited extract takes a look inside the bizarre and disturbing world of David Berg's Children of God sex cult...

Revelation — Book 7

15 Therefore, 'They are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will shelter them with his presence.' 16 Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat down on them, nor any scorching heat.

The Children of God sect is a particularly secretive and difficult to access organisation. This is for a reason. Its founder, David Berg, was determined to use the word of God and the threat of nuclear annihilation to satisfy his paedophilic urges. A mysterious inner circle known as 'The Unit', consisting of Berg and his most trusted followers, roamed the world, staying one step ahead of governments and worried parents.

Even though they were rarely glimpsed, this inner sanctum exercised an iron control over the cult members. Day to day activities were rigidly monitored and behind a glossy exterior of evangelical joy, members endured a grim reality of unrewarded, unremitting labour and rampant child abuse. The Children of God were given other names, such as e Family, Family of Love and The Family International. For simplicity's sake, here we will refer to the cult as The Children of God.

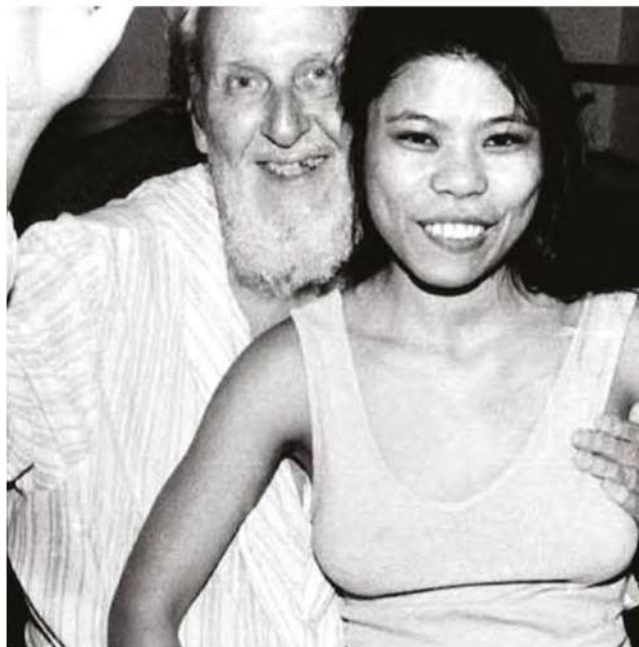
Berg was no newcomer to the evangelical scene. He came from a long line of snake oil salesman and knew how to manipulate those who came in search of religious and sexual freedom. The emotional and psychological scarring experienced by the young cult members continues to leave a trail of murder, suicide and mental illness in its wake. Despite the best efforts of the modern day Children of God – The Family International – to disassociate themselves from the cult's dark past, many questions remain.

ARMAGEDDON

The Teens for Christ and Children of God movement began life as a celibate cult where the members were encouraged to 'get the victory' for Christ. When Berg realised that there was a bevy of beautiful young woman around him willing to satisfy his every urge, he decided that his spiritual teachings should be altered to justify his lecherous longings.

This started harmlessly enough. In the early '70s he began promoting the Law of Love. He took a few lines in the *Bible* and interpreted them less as a platonic love of mankind than as an encouragement to 'share'. It was not right, the *Mo Letters* [a series of more than 3,000 publications – compiled into over a dozen volumes – consisting of writings by Berg or transcriptions of his speeches] said, for single members of the cult to feel lonely. It was important that married members share their partners and allow them to sleep with other cult members (as long as they were of the opposite sex). Lovemaking was, in Berg's view, a symbol of God's love.

Many members embraced this ideal and it was during this time that the Children of God gained a new name – they were dubbed the 'Love Cult' by the press. The communes became rife with extramarital, free-for-all sex. 'Aunties', 'uncles', 'brothers' and 'sisters' would engage in intercourse at any hour of the day and in any location. Children would be exposed to this lovemaking and there was no attempt to hide the



THE LEADER: David Berg was known as 'God' or 'Moses' by his followers. He used his cult to promote paedophilia



ABOVE: 'Love Cult' – The Children of God during the 1960s and '70s. Behind the smiles was a cult based on fear and exploitation;
OPPOSITE: *The Beast* by Albert Dürer who released his series *Apocalypse with Pictures* in 1498.
In panel 14 'The Beast' emerges to do battle with 'The Righteous'

activities from them. Children came upon adults groping in the hallways, or having loud orgies in the lounge rooms and dormitory bedrooms.

Mo Letters began to espouse the new ideology and it was common for children as young as four to spend 'Word Time' poring over images of men and women having sex in fields while a benign and bearded 'grandpa' looked down upon the copulating couple.

Not all were enamoured with the new directives and several left the cult. Even some who stayed behind were uncomfortable. A man could express his willingness to bed a cultist's wife. No matter how physically repulsive they found the proposal, neither partner could refuse. To do so would see them labelled as selfish and a note would be made in the *Open Heart Reports*. Partners could be shamed publicly or even separated and sent to different compounds to learn humility.

In 1975 Berg had a revelation. The Unit had fled the USA when authorities took too much interest in their activities, and he had taken his close circle with him to London. These included several of his wives and some of the most attractive women in the cult. He began 'witnessing' in London nightclubs (always a good excuse to combine drinking with proselytizing), and he noticed that young men were keen to talk to his wives and the fashionably dressed acolytes. Strangers seemed more receptive to his heavenly message while gazing into the mascaraed eyes of the young women. Berg realised that he could use the women within the sect to go 'flirty fishing': they could solicit donations by exchanging sex for cash, or use sex to recruit new members into the cult.

It took a while to hone the techniques and approaches that constituted 'FF', but by 1976 *Mo Letters* explaining what was required were being sent to his communes throughout the world. Children and adults had a good set of clothes for when they went 'witnessing' in the outside world. This was stepped up a level for women engaged in flirty fishing. Whole posses would dress up in the latest low-cut fashions and the nicest make-up and head into town to enrapture and ensnare

unsuspecting men. Many of the young women took to it with a will. They were already following Berg's 'law of love' in the cult compounds, so it wasn't much of a step to take it into the real world. The attractive young women could still pick and choose who they wanted to bed and it was good to bring in cash for the Children of God's coffers.

In line with all of his other operations, Berg ran it as a business. He leased large houses and effectively turned them into brothels. The girls had to write reports detailing who they had talked to, what sexual acts they had performed and how much they had earned. They were told to keep their eyes out for particularly well-heeled marks or men who seemed to be spiritually vulnerable. Berg would identify the best targets and a succession of FFs would 'love bomb' the mark to either bring him into Berg's fold or extract as much cash as possible.

Powerful government officials were also targeted; they could hardly move against cult communes if they had been bene beneficiaries of targeted 'loving'. Berg gave himself a new name: The Fisherman. The women called themselves God's Whores. The *Mo Letters* issued telling them exactly how to behave included titles such as 'God's Love Slave' and 'The FF Explosion'. Posters were stuck up in communes showing a scantily clad woman writhing on a fishing hook with the caption 'Hookers for Jesus'.

Eventually, Berg was so enamoured with his new project that he had his disciples sign up with local escort agencies. The advantage of this technique was guaranteed income, although it meant that the FFs couldn't pick their marks and had no right of refusal. Some questioned this arrangement, because it placed women in a vulnerable position and subject to violent attacks. Berg was not concerned. He compared the women to the Christian martyrs. They should take any injuries or trauma on the chin, for Jesus.

There were several other consequences. Berg's ban on contraception meant thousands of children were born into the cult, most without



fathers. There was also an outbreak of STDs. But the program was bearing fruit. Berg could claim thousands of compounds throughout the world. Some had as many as 400 people while others were living in houses as family units, carrying out Berg's 'good works'.

In 1982 a new and disturbing trend arose: institutionalised child abuse. Berg had great plans for his stepson. In 1982 the cult published a work entitled *The Book of Davidito*. This set the young man up as the future leader of the cult, destined to fight on God's side in his chariot at the end of the world. It placed the young man in many different scenarios and became a seminal teaching aid for the youth growing up in the cult.

There were several disturbing chapters where his 'Aunt' Sara describes masturbating the boy even as he was an infant. This sex play extends through his youth and he is invited to watch and even partake in adult activities. Sara gave birth to a daughter and encouraged her and the Prophet Prince to carry on as adults and develop a sexual relationship even though they were not yet teenagers. This 'revolutionary sexuality', as Berg liked to describe it, was soon being promulgated throughout the cult.

Mo Letters with DAR written on the cover were distributed, urging adults to have sexual interaction with children. Glossy covers showed adults lying in bed with children, or children standing in fields witnessing adults copulating. Graphic illustrations of women 'spooning' with or masturbating young boys were some of the milder images. Second generation cultists were encouraged to experiment with their friends and stimulate sex acts even if they were not capable of intercourse. Videos, showing girls as young as four performing provocative striptease acts, were sent to the compounds with the request that they produce similar pieces and send them back to the Unit.

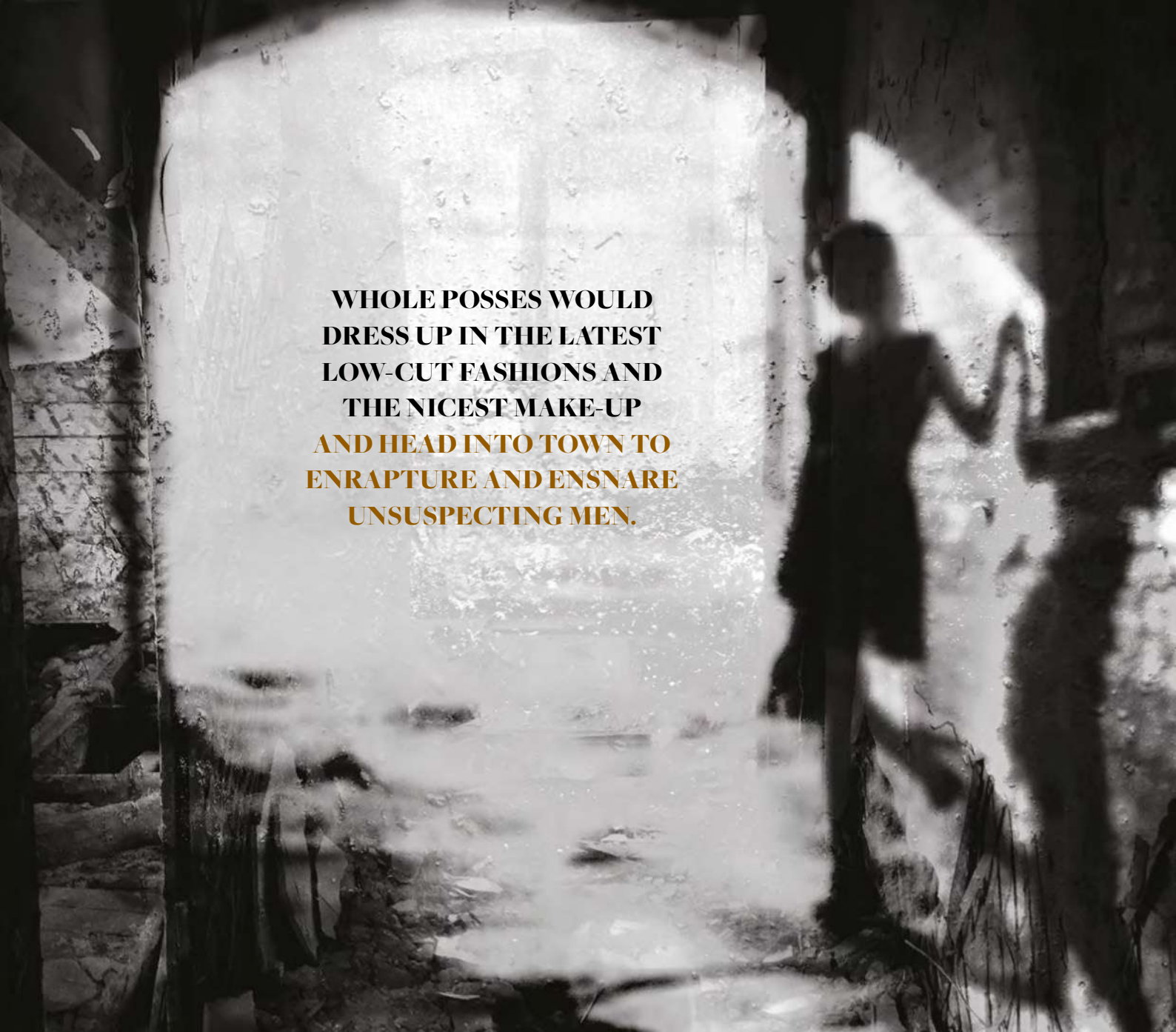
Children were ordered not to demonstrate any of these behaviours in front of systemites. The ongoing corruption of the young was to be a closely held secret. Predatory men and women used the new license given to them by Berg to move on young children and perform unspeakable acts. Children who are sexually abused are often reluctant to discuss the horrific acts perpetrated upon them with their parents or guardians due to shame and fear. Within the Children of God there was a whole new level of control, urging children to fight against their instincts and accept what was happening. Children that were removed from their families were particularly vulnerable as 'aunties' and 'uncles' gained sexual satisfaction by exploiting their young charges. Even within smaller units, children were routinely abused when cult members visited or boarded with the permanent residents.

Many adult members left the cult when they realised what was going on. Sadly, many did not, preferring to turn a blind eye to the abuse in order to maintain their standing within the organisation. Many survivors tell how innocent functions would turn seedy when 11 and 12-year-old children were asked to perform stripteases in front of adult audiences. Literature targeted children. Titles such as the *Basic Training Handbook* sought to educate prepubescent teens in the arts of love, and *My Little Fish* showed photos of a grown woman and a young boy embracing.

There is a clear correlation with the 'Terror Teens' and the rise of sexual abuse impacting the children of the cult. Seeking to escape the horrific conditions, children would act up, try to flee or descend into madness. As usual with the Children of God, Berg was at the centre of the exploitation. His granddaughter began, like Davidito, as an example to the cult's children, but after years of abuse at her grandfather's hands she became difficult and rebellious. Repeated beatings could not expel

BELOW: Apocalypse - Viktor Vasnetsov's *Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse*, 1887. The lamb at the top of the image observes while Death, Famine, War and Conquest wreak vengeance on humanity





**WHOLE POSSES WOULD
DRESS UP IN THE LATEST
LOW-CUT FASHIONS AND
THE NICEST MAKE-UP
AND HEAD INTO TOWN TO
ENRAPTURE AND ENSNARE
UNSUSPECTING MEN.**

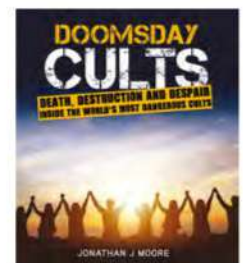
the 'demon' that took up residence in the 13-year-old girl's body. A lengthy spell at several Victor camps led to her total breakdown.

Many second generation cultists fled as soon as they were legally old enough to do so. But this has not ended the torment. Many experienced, and still suffer from, what can only be termed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. They have difficulty forming relationships, are not equipped to operate in the outside world and often descend into lives of petty theft, substance abuse and prostitution. They are the lucky ones. At least 25 children from the cult have committed suicide. Some have leapt off buildings, others have taken overdoses and some have gassed themselves in cars.

'Davidito' Ricky Rodriguez left the cult. Years of abuse had turned the one time Prophet Prince into an extremely angry young man. Ricky was determined to take revenge and execute his mother, Karen Zerby, who by that time had taken over the cult following Berg's death. Ricky lured 'Aunt' Sara to his at in Tucson, Arizona, on January 5, 2005. The

Prophet Prince was hoping that she would reveal the whereabouts of his mother. She did not do so and was stabbed multiple times. Sara bled out on the floor of the cheap rental apartment. Ricky drove for 24 hours, stopped at an industrial lot near Blythe, California, and committed suicide with a gunshot to his head. He would no longer be able to fight the Antichrist at the side of God. ■

**DOOMSDAY CULTS: DEATH,
DESTRUCTION AND DESPAIR INSIDE
THE WORLD'S MOST DANGEROUS
CULTS** by Jonathan J Moore is
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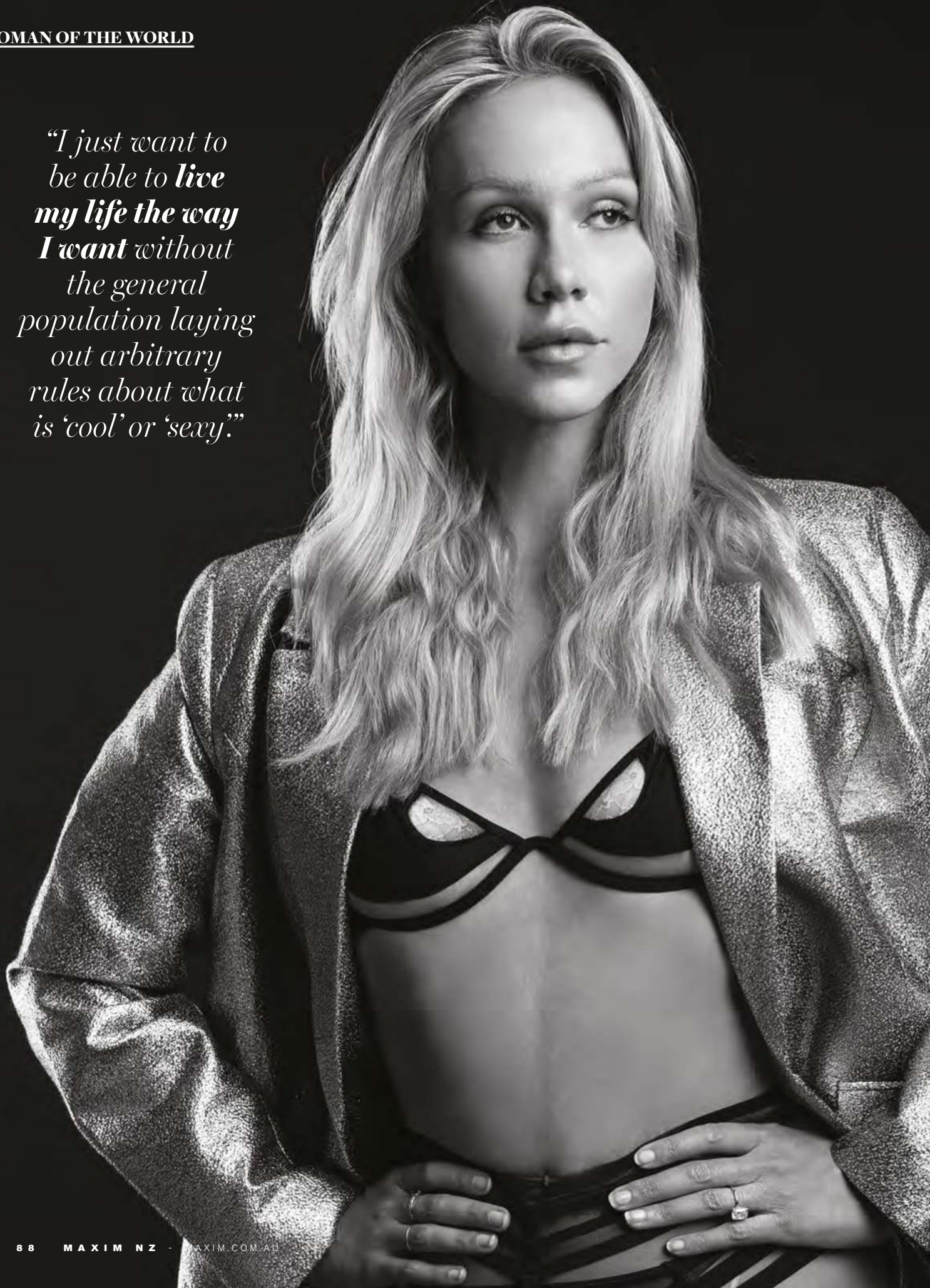
Model, humanitarian,
clinical nutrition
expert, and co-owner
of an accounting
firm – yes, meet all-
round talent **DEVYN
RAMNARAIN...**

Interview by
PARIS RAINE
Photographs by
RANGE OF VIEW
PRODUCTIONS

ES

*“I just love being
in my skin,
through all its
changes. I have
a cool soul.”*

*“I just want to
be able to **live**
my life the way
I want without
the general
population laying
out arbitrary
rules about what
is ‘cool’ or ‘sexy.’”*





T

Tell us a bit about yourself, Devyn.

Hey! I'm a model, humanitarian, clinical nutrition expert, and co-owner of a 13-person CPA Firm. I graduated with my master's degree from USC in the US in 2022, all while building up my accounting firm and working on the board of directors for the American Red Cross. I love swimming and the gym, Thai food, and alternative and trip-hop music. I will become a registered dietitian this year, after mostly healing from a spinal injury held me back from sitting for the exam.

What would people be most surprised to know about you?

I'm mostly Irish, which is probably visually apparent, but I'm also a small part Egyptian.

What is your best asset?

My mind is my most important asset. I'm always eager to start new ventures and build things up, and doing so would be a lot harder if I wasn't naturally pretty smart. I thank my parents for being huge nerds, like me! My kindness and patience are probably my favourite assets, though. I have the patience of a saint, even though I can come off like a shot of whisky at times. I love deeply and spend a lot of my time thinking of better ways to care for my loved ones and my community.

When do you feel sexy?

Honestly? All the time. I have always felt good about myself – maybe I'm just delightfully delusional. I used to weigh 80kg more, and people would treat me like I shouldn't feel good in my own body, but I dressed up and thought I was beautiful – I just wasn't healthy. Now, I'm fit but not more beautiful – at least not to me. I just love being in my skin, through all its changes. I have a cool soul.

What have you learned about men over the years?

Men are just as complex as women, with just as many emotions and just as much of a need to nurture their loved ones. They may go about it differently, but women and men really aren't that different. I think a lot of men are becoming upset with the way the world is changing right now, but I think if they realise the current system isn't benefitting almost any of them either, they will come back to society and help us build it stronger than it has ever been.

What's one thing men should always know about women?

Men should keep in mind that women are, psychologically, not that different in what they want and how they think. I can't speak for all women, but I just want to be able to live my life the way I want without the general population laying out arbitrary rules about what is "cool" or "sexy" or whatever else. Men, you feel like you're unique and not like every other person, right? You are, and so is every woman. Get to know us as individuals and stop lumping us into some sort of hive mind.

Describe your ideal date.

Oh, man, going to the beach and walking around with some coffee, followed by shopping at a vintage shop, some sort of adventurous meal, and then a show at some divey venue. Lots of kissing. We'd ideally go home after and listen to records while falling asleep. Perfection. It would be all day, ideally.

What can we get you at the bar?

I'm a sucker for a Tom Collins. I've always been a gin girlie. I love the way it tastes like Christmas tinsel smells. I also love a good merlot. It makes me feel like a wizard mulling over spell books in an old library.

What is your motto in life?

Do whatever you want in life BUT be sure you are 100 percent comfortable with any and all possible consequences before you do it.

With so many things on your plate, what's next for you?

I will hopefully have my RDN certification this year, and then I will be a Registered Dietitian! I have a tonne of nutrition experience and absolutely cannot wait to provide clinical intervention to patients and clients alike. Keep an eye out! ■

*“I have the
patience of
a saint, even
though I can come
off like a shot of
whisky at times.”*



STATUS UPDATE

NAME:

Devyn
Ramnarain

BORN:

April 17

HOMETOWN:

Naples, Florida USA

FIVE-WORD SELF

DESCRIPTION:
"Love your life
out loud!"

INSTAGRAM:

@devyn_ramnarain

Nicole Rokitka

The MAXIM Australia/NZ Women of the World Official 2024 Calendar is the perfect gift for you and your mates. Featuring 13 gorgeous international models, this month we give you awesome January beauty Nicole...



STATUS UPDATE

BORN

April 20

LIVES

Chicago,
Illinois USA

HOMETOWN

Los Angeles,
California USA

FIVE-WORD-SELF

DESCRIPTION

"Sweet, resilient,
spontaneous,
creative,
ambitious."

LIFE MOTTO

"I'm down!"

INSTAGRAM

@keytonikita



The MAXIM Australia/NZ
Women of the World Official
2024 Calendar is available
in newsagents RRP \$19.95



MORNING GLORY

Men love to shag at the break of dawn, and that's a fact, yet most women prefer to shag at dusk. However, there are some things women will never understand about men and "the morning f—k". So, listen up, and help us understand...

By VANESSA DE LARGIE

What exactly is it with men and morning sex? I'll be having a nice peaceful sleep and I'll feel a boner jabbing into my back. I'll be having a nice peaceful sleep and I'll feel my buttocks and breasts being groped – and a hand playing with my vagina! "Men build up testosterone overnight, which boosts their coital instincts in the A.M.", says Ph.D. and sex-therapist, Tammy Nelson. That's great guys – you want to unload – I totally get it. However, there are a few factors, women don't fully understand, to take into account. Like...

MORNING BREATH

Why don't men care about morning breath? It's the million-dollar question that all women want to know. Shouldn't it concern you that our mouths smell like we've just licked a ceiling? Obviously not. Whilst you might not care about butt-breath, let me tell you, women do! Can't you at least wait until we've cleaned our teeth or grabbed some mints from the bedside table? Sheesh! If you can't wait to get it in, I suggest the spoon-dog position – this will make your partner feel a whole lot more obliging, trust me! Plus, it's a sure-fire way to give her a G-spot orgasm. Now that's my definition of breakfast in bed.

THE WIZZ

Dear, Men, I realise you've just woken up and your penis is at full attention. I also realise there's a woman's vagina lying next to you, that you'd like to place it into. Bravo. But wait a sec – you've just woken her up but she's busting for a piss. Yes, women wake up with a full bladder in the morning. "The same muscles necessary to stop urinary flow are the muscles that control orgasm," explains Tammy Nelson. So, yeah, be a gentleman and let the poor woman urinate before you jump on her.

CAFFEINE

Can somebody tell me what the rush is with blokes and their morning shag routine? I've literally woken up with a penis thrusting inside of me on many occasions – I actually thoroughly enjoyed it, but that's not the point! Can't you wait 10 minutes? Like, until we wake up... and have some caffeine? Or do you guys like to have sex with a Zombie Starfish? Which leads me to my next point...

NO GYMNASTICS BEFORE

10A.M. Many a man believes he can wake up a woman for morning sex then expect her to be a contortionist or show him her gymnastic skills. Here's a tip – it's NOT happening, buddy! You want to f—k her before coffee, before a shower and before minty breath? Well, then, you have to settle for Zombie Starfishes and low-key, low-energy positions like spooning. Yep, that's all you're getting – be grateful.

KEEP IT CLEAN

Obviously, morning sex is very primal for men. So, worrying about cleanliness or the fact that your female partner has just opened her peepers is the last thing on your mind. No offense, guys, but women like to feel confident about themselves when they have sex. You know? Sexy! We don't feel very sexy when our eyes are sewn together by sleep-crust and, like Homer Simpson, we've been drooling on our pillow all night. Allowing us a quick shower to freshen up would be much appreciated but hey, you seem to have the inability to wait for some reason. Again, I advise the spoon-dog. In conclusion, morning sex can be a great start to the day for both men and women – with just a little bit of compromise.

Vanessa de Largie is an Australian actress, sex columnist and freelance journalist



@MAXIM_AUS @CASABLANCAGOLDCOAST

LOVE AFFAIR

WE TAKE YOU INSIDE THE MAXIM 2024 VIP VALENTINE'S DAY PARTY ON THE GOLD COAST...

Orchestrating a spectacle of opulence and allure, the MAXIM Valentine's Day event cast its spell over Queensland last month at iconic venue Casablanca Gold Coast. Against a backdrop of shimmering lights and panoramic views, the stage was set for an evening of unparalleled glamour and excitement, as celebrities, influencers and socialites gathered to celebrate love in its most extravagant form. A venue synonymous with elegance and refinement, with its grandiose architecture and lavish interiors, Casablanca provided the perfect canvas for MAXIM to weave its VIP party magic, transforming the club into a realm of fantasy and indulgence.

As the sun dipped below the horizon, the event kicked into high gear, with guests arriving in droves. Party host and radio presenter Bianca Dye was joined by enigmatic tobacco tycoon Travers "Candyman" Beynon, reality TV stars from Married At First Sight, Big Brother and FBoy Island, plus a constellation of stars from Australia's modelling and social media scenes including the Maddison Twins and Boho Sisters, to name a few.

By WILL STOLK

As the night unfolded, the atmosphere crackled with energy as guests mingled and danced with abandon. From intimate conversations in secluded corners to exuberant displays of affection on the dance floor, every moment was infused with the heady intoxication of love and desire, creating an atmosphere that was as intoxicating as it was irresistible. Sponsored by esteemed brands such as South Ave – Australia's favourite alcohol brand – Oden Ice Baths, Becks Legal and Radio Metro, each partner contributed to the overall experience in their own unique way.

From signature cocktails crafted with precision to gourmet delicacies that tantalised the taste buds, every detail had been meticulously planned to ensure maximum enjoyment for all in attendance. Suffice to say, guests departed the bash with their hearts full of memories and anticipation for the next spectacular MAXIM affair that will no doubt transcend the ordinary.



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<i>Rosé All Day</i>	Tuesdays & Paella Ladies Night from 7 pm
<i>Ibiza Bliss Brunch</i>	Saturdays
<i>BBQ by the pool</i>	Sundays

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