

THE KIT



EXCLUSIVE
**SPRING
AHEAD**

Canadian designer
Tanya Taylor on
getting Beyoncé's
seal of approval
page 9



TORONTO STYLE SPECIAL

*Creative women of all ages showcase the season's
biggest beauty trend; your complete guide to
Fashion Week; meet our brightest Canadian designers*

PHOTO: ANDREW SOULE

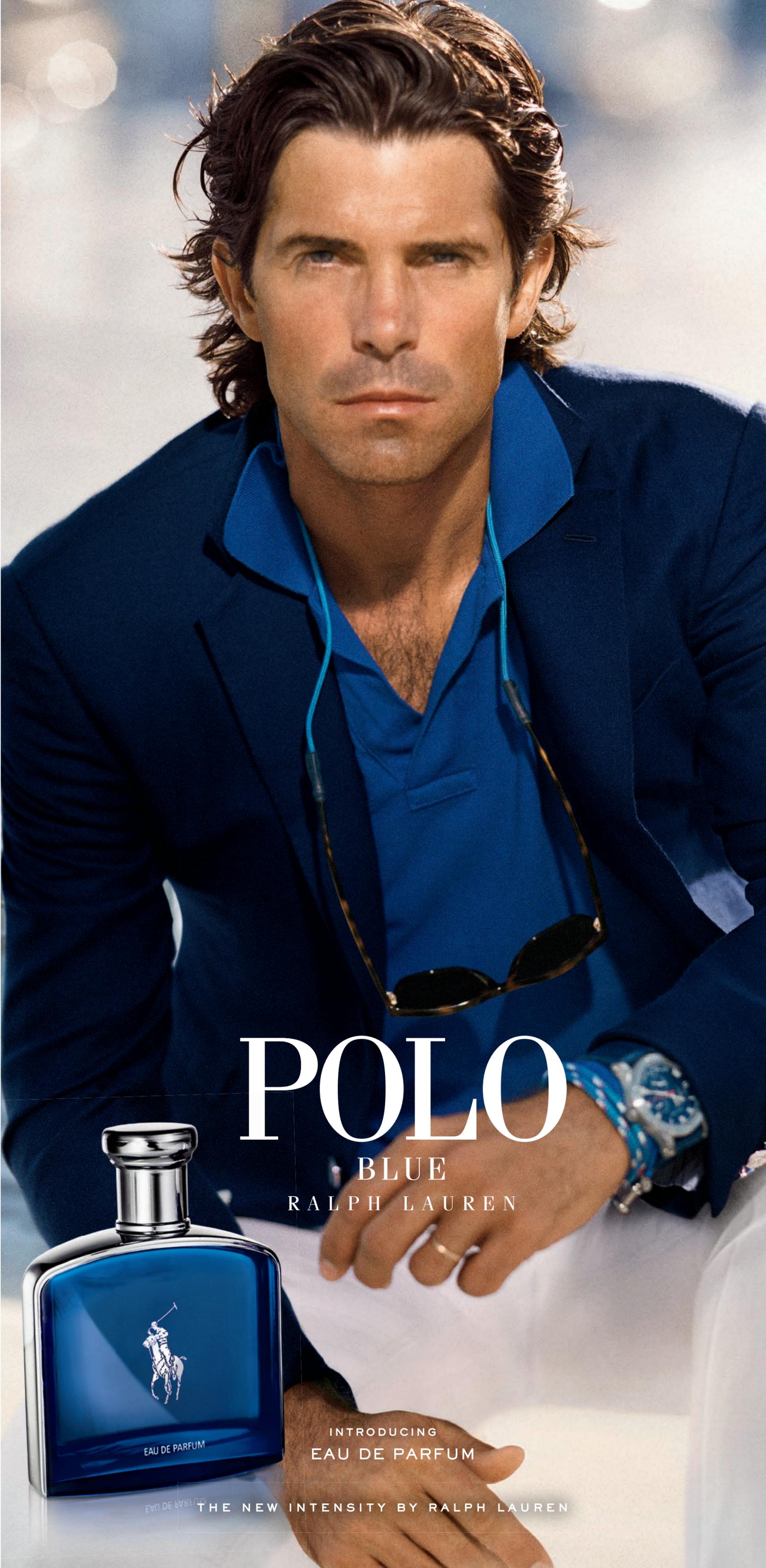
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INTRODUCING
EAU DE PARFUM

EAU DE PARFUM THE NEW INTENSITY BY RALPH LAUREN



Blue crush

Call it beauty's Blue Period: Splashes of cyan, turquoise, navy and azure made a modern mark on the spring runways. We asked Canadian women of all ages to showcase the trend's versatility and tell us what they love most about their own faces

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ANDREW SOULE | BEAUTY DIRECTION BY RANI SHEEN

KATHERINE HAMILTON, 46, *managing director of Devon Consulting*

On her cobalt blue lashes: "Being out of my comfort zone is not my favourite thing, but I jumped off a cliff once when I was on vacation and the feeling afterwards was amazing. It sounds weird, but this look is kind of the same thing: I took a risk and it's incredible." **On her own beauty:** "I grew up with sisters who were blonde and blue-eyed. I had curly hair and dark eyes. I felt that I was probably the ugly duckling in the family. My personality became a bit modest, and I just wished I looked a little more like everybody else. My mum would always say, 'You have beautiful features.' But when you're young, you don't know what that means—you just want to blend in. Now I'm grateful that my hair is thick. I'm grateful that I have fuller lips. I think you grow into your looks." **On her hair secret:** "I don't take care of my own hair. For the past three years, I've gotten a blowout once a week and it takes the stress out of my day. It's one less thing to think about. By day five or six, my hair may not be the greatest, but it's still better than what I would have been able to manage."

LINE SWEATER, \$599, LINETHELABEL.COM

"I have full lips and I've always been really shy about them. I had braces, so I used to curl my lips in. Now I think I've got big lips and a big mouth—and I'm not afraid to use it."



SHARLA FARRELL, 25, *PR coordinator at Holt Renfrew*

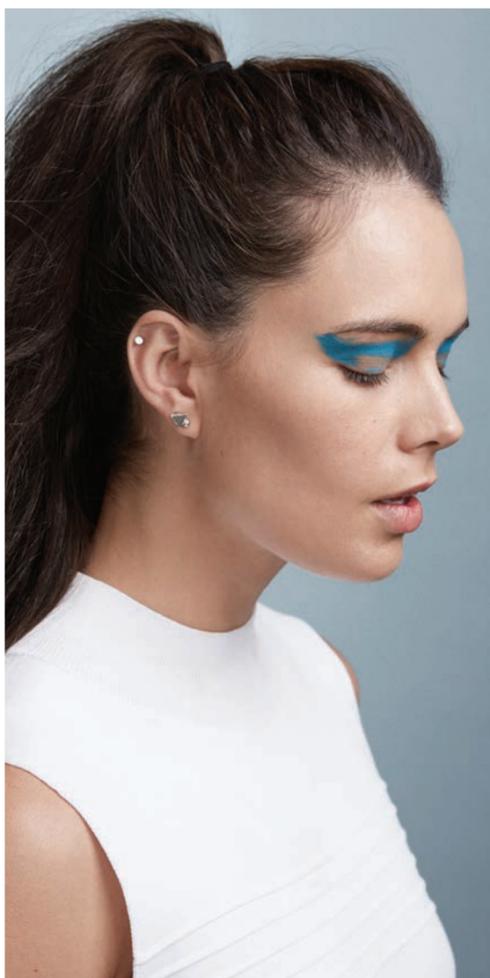
On her navy lip: "I'm not very risky with makeup trends, but I love this. I used to have short hair and wear bright orange or pink lips, but as I got older I figured I needed to tone it down a little bit. This brings me back to those days." **On her own beauty:** "I have full lips and I've always been really shy about them. I had braces during university, so I used to curl my lips in. Now I think I've got big lips and a big mouth—and I'm not afraid to use it."

TIBI DRESS, \$990, TIBI.COM. CUTLER AND GROSS GLASSES, \$560, CUTLER AND GROSS

AMY PATEL, 31, *Investment banking VP and fashion stylist*

On her sparkly blue liner: "I don't wear a lot of makeup, but I think that it's a beautiful art, so I'm excited about this look. I would style it with not a lot going on in my clothing because it's quite bold for me." **On her own beauty:** "I like the shape and colour of my eyes. There's a story behind your eyes. My grandmother and my mother both have big eyes like I do, so mine remind me of the women in my family." **On her routine:** "I think that less is more—I'm a minimalist. I tend to care more about skin oils and serums."

MIKHAEL KALE DRESS, \$2,295, HOLT RENFREW. ALYNNE LAVIGNE EARRINGS, \$69, ALYNNELAVIGNE.COM



LAUREN PIRIE, 32, *illustrator*

On her painterly aqua eyes: "I don't normally use a lot of colour on my eyes, but this might convince me to. I've been using brighter colours recently in my illustration work—it kind of goes hand in hand with my aesthetic in my home, in my personal style. I try to do something a little bit different, and fun with colour is that little something extra." **On her own beauty:** "I grew up being told, 'You can fill the gap in your teeth if you want,' but I grew to love it. When I was a kid, it was cool because I could spit stuff through it. Then, it just sort of became a trait. I still spit stuff through it sometimes, like water—or tequila." **On feeling different:** "I always kind of liked being different. I was born on Friday the 13th, and when people used to make fun of me and be like, 'You're a witch!' I'd just say, 'Yeah, I am!'"

TIGER OF SWEDEN DRESS, \$189, TIGEROFSWEDEN.COM. ALYNNELAVIGNE TRIANGLE EARRINGS, \$105, ALYNNELAVIGNE.COM



REAL
BEAUTY
SPECIALANNA COLLINS, 20, *ballet teacher in training*

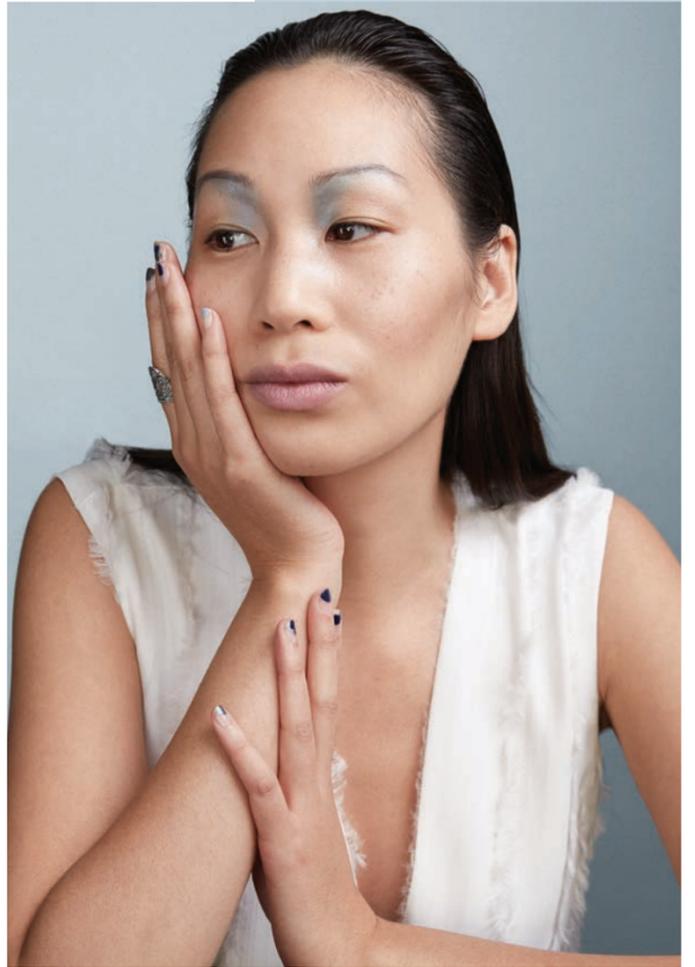
On her full-lid blue shadow: "It makes me feel like I'm in New York again with my sister [photographer Petra Collins]. I always feel like I can experiment with my look when I'm going out with Petra. It gives me *Boogie Nights* vibes." **On her own beauty:** "It's really sad because most young girls' insecurities stem from their appearance. As I get older, I get a lot more comfortable in myself. When I meet kids, they're like, 'You're so pretty!' because I'm really nice. Kids don't have influence from media yet. They think any nice person is beautiful." **On her influences:** "I look up to my sister and my mom. Even before my sister was doing all her photography work, I always admired her and thought, 'She's perfect.' I think they're beautiful because they're smart, independent women."

KAELEN TOP, \$690, KAELENNYC.COM

ANNIE WONG, 31, *artist*

On her steel blue inner-lid accent and abstract nail art: "It's very avant-garde. It's simple and it's not trying to be pretty, but it is making a statement about individuality." **On her own beauty:** "I've had to learn to love and accept my physical appearance. It wasn't until I turned 30 that I felt beautiful and like a woman; that's when I started wearing makeup. Now I feel like I can control how I look. I really learned a new understanding of what beauty is. It can be a spectrum of how you present yourself—you can have multiple looks." **On being feminine:** "As a teenager, I was intimidated by a very specific type of femininity that other girls were striving toward. I didn't relate to it. Now, there are so many different types of beauty that it's okay to experiment with more than one."

MULBERRY DRESS, \$1,990, MULBERRY. THOMAS SABO RING, \$129, THOMASSABO.COM

JUDITH BRADLEY, 70, *actor/model*

On her galactic navy nails: "I'm absolutely into nail art. I'm into anything that adds to the joy and beauty of life. My mother said, 'Sometimes people see your hands before they see your face, so make sure your hands are done.'" **On her skincare secret:** "I treat my hands the same way I treat my face—they're both exposed to the elements, so you have to. I put masks on them, I oil them, I massage them. I don't know why people are so concerned with their face having wrinkles, then forget about their hands." **On her go-to beauty look:** "A lot of times I just throw on lipstick—if you've got a tube of lipstick you're ahead of the game. Do I have a preferred shade? No. I try them

"The camera sees your soul. If your soul is on fire, the picture will be great—otherwise, you'll look like crap, honey."

all, darling." **On her own beauty:** "I've never found myself beautiful. I always knew I had this body at this particular time, but I wasn't just this. That to me was being *alive*. The camera sees your soul. If your soul is on fire, the picture will be great—otherwise, you'll look like crap, honey." **On getting a tattoo:** "I knew that I wanted a tattoo when I was three. My father was a barber in Chicago and there was a tattoo shop up the street. I'd go to my father every day and say, 'Can I get a picture on my wrist? Can I have a picture on my arm, please?' And he would say, 'No.' In those days, if you had a tattoo you couldn't be an actress. When I was twentysomething, when women were still not getting tattoos, I got a little tiny rose hanging on my wrist. It's stayed so wonderfully for 50 years." **On living in the moment:** "The Buddhists say that when you live in the present, you won't suffer a serious repercussion if you make the wrong move. It's sad when I see people around my age sitting around, talking about when they were 20—or when I see really young people sitting around talking about when they're going to be 40 and what their future is going to be like." **On wanting to look younger:** "Well, that's silly. We don't need to be younger, we need to be smarter."

LAURA SIEGEL DRESS, \$898, LAURASIEGEL-COLLECTION.COM. CUTLER AND GROSS SUNGLASSES, \$560, CUTLER AND GROSS

SHOP THE
TREND

Add these blue wonders to your makeup bag to get a jump on spring's major colour story



1. SHISEIDO SHIMMERING CREAM EYE COLOUR IN ESMERALDA, \$32, THEBAY.COM. 2. RMS EYE POLISH IN INSPIRE, \$35, THEDETOXMARKET.CA. 3. CND VINYLUX WEEKLY POLISH IN INDIGO FROCK, \$12, SALONS. 4. ARDENCY INN MODSTER SUPER CHARGED LONG PLAY LIP COLOUR IN BLACK IS BLUE, \$31, SEPHORA.CA. 5. URBAN DECAY HEAVY METAL GLITTER EYELINER IN AMP, \$29, SEPHORA.CA. 6. NYX COLOR MASCARA IN BLUE, \$10, NYXCOSMETICS.CA. 7. COVERGIRL INK IT! EYELINER IN AQUAMARINE INK, \$10, DRUGSTORES. 8. NARS EYE PAINT IN SOLOMON ISLANDS, \$31, HOLT RENFREW

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EASY BREEZY BEAUTIFUL

KATY PERRY

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A WHOLE NEW LOOK IN LASHES
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NEW **PLUMPIFY** MASCARA

LASH
LIFTING
BRUSH

50X
VOLUME
+
VERTICAL LIFT

#PLUMPIFY @ COVERGIRL.CA
Katy is wearing lash inserts.





COCKTAIL HOUR:
2 MINUTES
FROM THE TENT
The Ritz-Carlton,
181 Wellington St. W.
The swish hotel will create fashion-inspired drinks that riff on upcoming shows at the tents. Across the street, it knows what the style set are craving: Salads and shareable plates are always in rotation.

Who's who at the tent

Five days, 25+ shows and countless parties—Toronto Fashion Week takes over David Pecaut Square next week. Here, insiders share their survival secrets

BY VERONICA SAROLI | ILLUSTRATION BY TANIA HOWELLS



Nelia Belkova, blogger, styleblog.ca
"I limit myself to three nights of shows and try to wear comfy shoes, especially on days one and two. Don't wreck your feet early on, because the rest of the week will be hell."

digital influencers



Becca Lemire, street-style photographer
"I chase down whoever catches my eye, and make the composition as unique as possible. An authentic look and some 'tude never hurts. Be weird!"

SNACK BREAK:
1 MINUTE FROM THE TENT
El Caballito, 220 King St. W.
This taco and tequila joint is a go-to for TFW merrymakers. Plus, at midnight, everyone gets a free taco. (Fashion-Week fairy tales do exist.)

front row fixtures

Jillian Vieira
fashion editor, The Kit
"I feed off the excitement from the student volunteers and non-industry show-goers. They remind me how lucky we are to live in a world-class fashion capital."

Sylvia Mantella,
CMO, Mantella Corporation
"You need to be creative with your time. I see many familiar faces—other attendees, buyers, bloggers and press—and want to catch up with them all. This is where you learn to master the five-minute conversation."

Ainsley Kerr,
socialite
"I break out one of my grandmother's furs that I have redesigned. And I always make sure to pick my shoes ahead of time."

fashion week MVP

Michelle Easton,
senior account manager, Rock-it Promotions, Fashion Week's agency of record
"A bold lip helps me feel glam, even after running around for 10 hours without looking in a mirror! Also, I wear layers because you never know what the temperature will be in the tent."

runway stars

Karis Marcil, model
"After my first TFW, I learned that snacking and staying hydrated make it a much better experience." It's easy to get tired without realizing it when there is so much going on!"

Agnes Kudukis, model
"On the runway, always look forward, never look down."

ENTER HERE

#TFW HACKS:
Three steps to instant insider

Assume the "street-style-star position" by looking at your phone with a dreamy yet bored expression when entering the tent. Sitting front row? Be like Alexa (not Britney) and kick your legs to the side, before crossing at the ankle. Must-have acces-

sory: a battle. Because if D poses for you but your pre-post, di happen?

EXCLUSIVE

Money talks

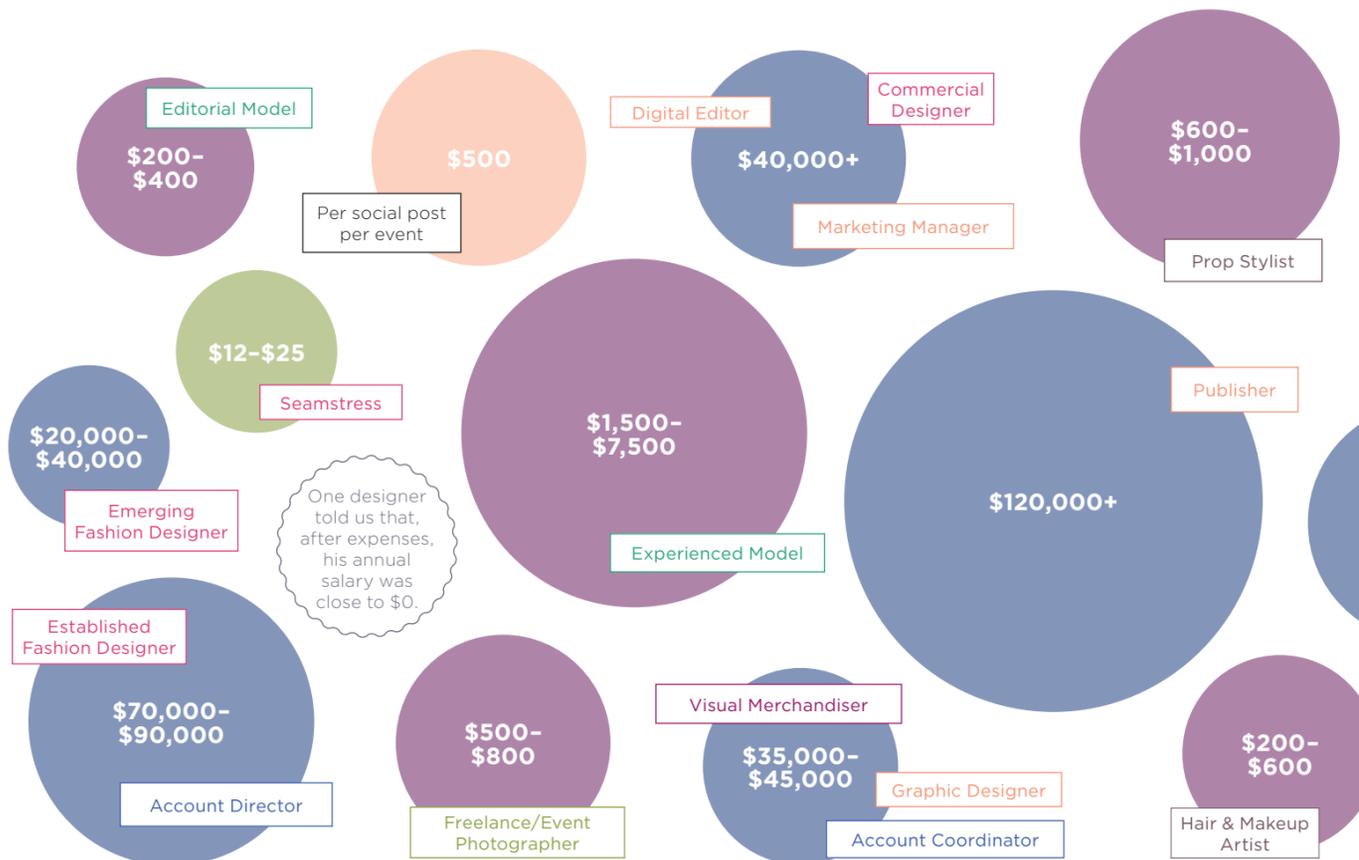
We asked Canadian fashion industry pros to share their salaries with us (anonymously, because we have many)

WAGE TYPE

- DAY RATE
- ANNUAL SALARY
- HOURLY RATE
- PER POST

INDUSTRY

- DESIGN
- MODELLING
- PHOTOGRAPHY
- CREATIVES
- PUBLISHING
- PR
- RETAIL
- BLOGGERS



SPOTLIGHT TOP EXPORTS

Five Canadian designers who are making a big impression at home—and abroad

BY CARLY OSTROFF



STEVEN TAI
Born: Vancouver **Based:** London
Master of the experimental, Steven Tai is known for his unexpected take on sportswear. Since his graduation from Central Saint Martins in 2011, Tai, who honed his craft at Stella McCartney, Viktor & Rolf, Hussein Chalayan and Damir Doma, has hit on something big. His sculptural silhouettes—and his affinity for both elegance and comfort—have taken him from new kid on the block to one of fashion's rising stars.

STEVEN TAI TOP, \$355, HOLT RENFREW



THOMAS TAIT
Born: Montreal **Based:** London
At 21, Thomas Tait was the youngest student ever to graduate from Central Saint Martins' prestigious MA Fashion program. The buzzed-about designer has become recognized for his sportswear-infused collections and expert tailoring. With high-profile supporters like Manolo Blahnik, Tait is just hitting his stride.

THOMAS TAIT TOP, \$879, FARFETCH.COM/CA



KAELEN HAWORTH
Born: Toronto **Based:** New York
Kaelen Haworth's namesake label is emerging to watch for masculine-meets-feminine staple, interning with Jenni Kayne and Stella McCartney studying at Parsons School of Design, Haworth her debut at New York Fashion Week in 2010. enrolled in this year's CFDA Fashion Incubator. this budding designer has already connected with clients like It girl DJ Hannah Bronfman.
KAELEN TOP, US\$650, PANTS, US\$1,185, KAELENNY



Grace Lee,
lead makeup artist, *Maybelline*
"I stay at the Shangri-La Hotel during the week. When I can fit it in, I go to the steam room and hot tub to unwind."

Jorge Joao, lead stylist, *Redken*
"Working with 70 to 85 models and doing over 20 interviews, things can get pretty crazy, pretty fast. I always keep a stash of protein bars under my station."

backstage bosses

Rita Remark, global lead educator, *Essie*
"In order to keep my sanity, I have to plan for everything: make meals ahead, take lots of vitamin C, prepare every outfit and, of course, always keep an extra iPhone charger handy."

TFW debut designers

Christopher Paunil, creative director, *Christopher Paunil*
"I sent Brian Bailey a message last week, and he just said to 'keep calm.' I'll definitely be channelling my inner Buddha leading up to the show."

Jennifer Torosian, creative director, *Jennifer Torosian*
"I make a point of wearing something from our collection every day. My go-to pieces are blazers, techno zip jackets, flared crop pants and culottes. And I have this amazing mohair coat that completes any look."

Mario Lavorato, head of business development, *Daniel Christian Tang Jewellery*
"Our uniform: a black V-neck, black pants and an open comfort blazer. Quite literally—that's what we wear to sleep even."

Na Irving, model
"Best advice I've ever received was to just be yourself." "I arrive the week before and will not doubt myself for a second."

every pack. "I broke my Snap, one dies and it even

TREAT TIME:
4 MINUTES FROM THE TENT
Sweet Jesus, 106 John St.
Because over-the-top ice cream works with any outfit, no matter the season.

CALENDAR
TORONTO FASHION WEEK BULLETIN

Check out these not-to-be-missed events happening between March 14 and 18



COOL DESIGNERS

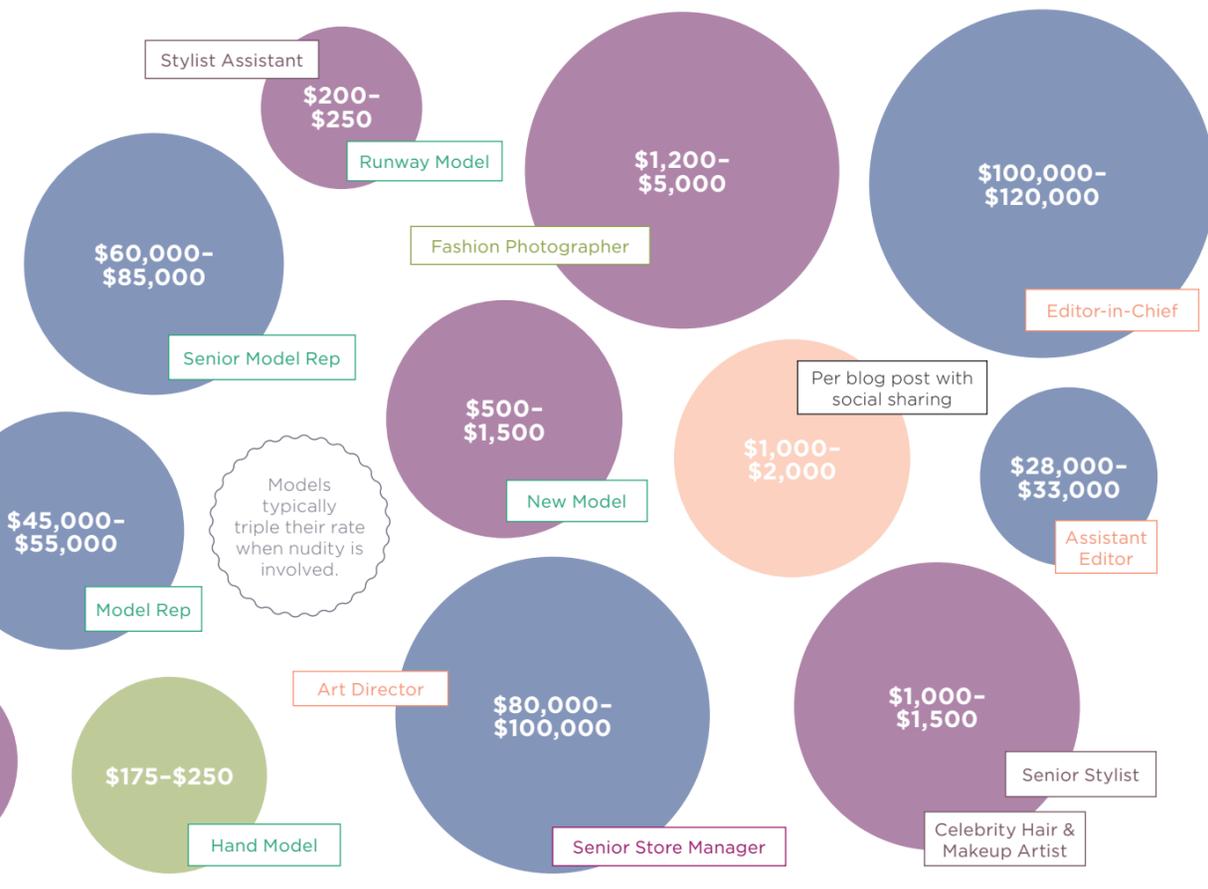
Don't miss the new labels showing at Fashion Week. Maram Paris is designed by Maram Aboul, who honed her skills at Pierre Balmain, Zac Posen and Oscar de la Renta; and Ellie Mae launched an eponymous jacket line last year (sketches above).



A SWEET DEAL

Take a break from admiring crepe fabric on the runways to indulge in straight-up crepes. Between 6 and 8 p.m. on March 14, Le Château will operate a Café du Monde Crêperie food truck on the south side of King Street West. Get a free treat by posting a photo with the hashtag #LeChateauTFW and @lechateau.

ers). You might be shocked by what designers are actually making



METRIC MANIA

During last season's show, Rudsak debuted a leather jacket designed in collaboration with Metric's Emily Haines. On March 14, the jacket—which comes with a genius detachable clutch—will hit select stores and rudsak.com. Bonus: On March 17, for every tweet and Instagram post using the #RUDSAKFW16 hashtag, the brand will donate \$1 to the children's music education charity MusiCounts (up to \$5,000).



OFF-SITE, BUT NOT OUT OF MIND

Mackage is showing off-site this season, but only a stone's throw from David Pecaut Square, at the CBC building on March 16. The outerwear brand will stage a winter-warrior-themed show produced by design duo Candice & Alison.



THE HOUSE THAT VANS BUILT

Vans is celebrating its 50th anniversary by taking over the west-side Hamilton Gears warehouse on Dupont Street between March 16 and April 2. Trekking to the House of Vans from the tents will be worth it to catch concerts (rapper Jazz Cartier performs on March 16), hit the skate park or get your shoes customized. VANS CHECKERED PAST COLLECTION, \$190-\$270. GRAVITYPOPE.COM —Veronica Saroli



AURORA JAMES
Born: Toronto Based: New York

Aurora James travels the world, sourcing materials and employing craftspeople in countries like Kenya and Morocco for her globally inspired footwear company, Brother Vellies. After winning the CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund in a three-way tie last year, the 31-year-old Ryerson grad put on an impressive debut showing at New York Fashion Week—earning her the support of some boldface names like Kanye West, who popped by her Spring 2016 showcase.
BROTHER VELLIES SANDALS, \$1,675, BROTHERVELLIES.COM



DAO-YI CHOW
Born: Montreal Based: New York

Raised in Queens, Chow studied at New York University and worked at P. Diddy's label, Sean John, with current business partner Maxwell Osbourne. Today, the pair—who have nabbed two CFDA honours—are the brains behind buzzy streetwear label Public School. Last year, the designers gained even more attention when they were crowned as DKNY's creative directors, bringing their fresh urban sensibilities to the iconic American brand.
PUBLIC SCHOOL TOP, \$577, NORDSTROM.COM

PHOTOGRAPHY: JASON ERICK HARDWICK (HEADSHOT AND LOOKBOOK); COURTESY OF KAELEN (KAELEN); CHRIS SO/TORONTO STAR (MACKAGE); GETTY IMAGES (TAT PORTRAIT AND RUNWAY, CHOW RUNWAY)



ICONIC, COOL AND UNDERSTATEDLY STYLISH, LET THE MUSES-OF-THE-MOMENT INSPIRE YOUR NEW DENIM WARDROBE

Iconic, cool and understatedly stylish – jeans are the ultimate wardrobe staple. We have called upon the ‘New Supers’ to help you decide which cuts to invest in this Spring Summer.

#meetyournewjeans

Sophia Ahrens shines a spotlight on the Leigh – these mid-rise jeans hit refresh on wearable denim and can be styled for every occasion. Steffi Argelich showcases Jamie, the ankle-grazing, stretch-skinny. Versatility at its coolest; this style works perfectly for all occasions. Looking for a more feminine take on the original boyfriend jean? Look to the Lucas as seen on Marga Esquivel. ‘90s street style is reimaged on Imaan Hammam – opt for the high-waisted, tapered Mom Jean and pair with a crop top and bomber jacket to conjure this fashion era. From on-trend straight leg, to classic skinnies and ‘90s-inspired Mom jean – Topshop’s signature fits tick every box

when it comes to beautifully cut, on-trend women’s jeans. Find your iconic jean look at Topshop today!

Have you found your perfect pair? For a chance to be featured across @TopshopCanada social channels, tag @TopshopCanada when posting your favourite iconic Topshop denim look.

Follow @TopshopCanada for inspiration on how to style your denim, encapsulate the latest trends, and for a chance to WIN a pair of denim jeans for you and two friends!

Did you know? We offer complimentary Personal Shopping services in store. Get the lowdown on all our denim styles and have outfits curated just for you. Book an appointment today with a Topshop Personal Shopper at these locations: Queen St., Yorkdale, Montreal Downtown, or Vancouver Downtown.



TANYA TAYLOR BLOCK STRIPED DRESS, \$795. FLORAL DRESS \$895, HOLT RENFREW



Clockwise from top left: looks from Tanya Taylor's Spring 2016 presentation; the designer in her studio; pieces from Resort 2016; models wear spring styles; Taylor's whimsical shoes; dresses from Spring and Resort 2016.

EXCLUSIVE Bright young thing

Canadian designer Tanya Taylor gives us a tour of her New York studio

BY CARLY OSTROFF

When print-happy designer Tanya Taylor decided to launch her namesake label in 2012, she went back to her roots. "Designing for different seasons is something that's innately part of being a Canadian," says the Toronto-born, New-York-based designer. Now with a host of industry awards under her belt, Taylor and her team are working year-round to turn out new collections for retailers like Holt Renfrew. Taylor's Spring 2016 collection—which was inspired by the saturated colour she encountered during a summer trip to Kenya, Tanzania and Morocco—is sure to be a hit with her celebrity clients, like Michelle Obama, Beyoncé and

Taylor Swift. Though Taylor, 30, worked with established labels like Elizabeth & James and trained at Parsons School of Design, she's aware that her relative-newcomer status is an asset. "We're really young, so we're always trying new things," she says of the design team behind her label. "I think that's the way that we stand out." And it's true: With colours and prints like Taylor's, there's really no way to miss her.

On her muse: "I design for a very confident woman who loves using colour and print to express herself. She's experimental and curious and likes a surprise. I also realized she's not defined by age."

On inclusive design: "I love how women with different body types like Lena Dunham or Taylor Swift are wearing the same dress. That's something that has been almost the most exciting part of growing the brand: seeing how many people it's touching."

"We have a sense of humour, we love colour, and we love a twist."

On the power of social media: "On Instagram, we have a sense of humour, we love colour, and we

love a twist. Our most liked post is a bunch of bananas that are half painted pink, and we got [1,356] likes on that photo. It's a recognizable item—but reinvented, and I feel like that's what we're doing with our collection."

On dressing Queen Bey: "I was hosting an event at Saks, and a stylist just walked in and said she had a client who wanted to wear some pieces. She was buying a lot, so I asked, 'Who's your client?' She said, 'Beyoncé.' I didn't really believe her until she wore it."

On participating in the Swarovski Collective 2016: "Swarovski picks 15 designers every year and sponsors

them through the collective, which is so cool. We don't really do evening-gear, so we did loose strands of crystals through knits, and crystals outlining prints and adding texture."

On the best career advice: "When I was at Parsons, Fern Mallis [the founder of New York Fashion Week] came to speak and she said, 'Be kind.' At the time, I thought it was lame. Now I think there's truth to that."

On getting input from Anna Wintour through the CFDA/Vogue Fashion Fund: "The consistency of having her opinion has been very helpful for us, to know what she's liking and what she thinks we should go further with."



The dapper players of the Polo Blue team.

TRAVEL DIARY SNOW DAY

The style set descended on Mont-Tremblant for two days of swish snow polo

BY VERONICA SAROLI

Bring up snow polo in a conversation, and the inevitable question is "What's that?" The answer may seem obvious—it's polo in the snow—but there's much more to the sport, as I found out last month while attending the Snow Polo Tremblant International tournament with Ralph Lauren. Think snow-globe-worthy conditions, champagne and handsome horsemen.

DAY ONE

10 a.m. After landing at Mont-Tremblant International Airport—which is basically

a cozy log cabin with a security check—I was reminded that outside Toronto, snow doesn't immediately turn to slush. Panic strikes: Did I pack enough turtle-necks?

3 p.m. Inspired by St. Moritz's posh annual match in the Swiss Alps, the tournament was supposed to take place on the frozen surface of Lac Tremblant but was moved to Gray Rocks airport due to warm weather. Spring temperatures, however, were nowhere to be found while we watched the Polo Blue team compete. After four seven-minute chukkas (polo-speak for periods) and extra time to swap horses (there are at least four per player), my rookie mistake was clear: flimsy socks. I should have taken cues from the seasoned fans, who sat elegantly swathed in layers of cashmere and fur.

4 p.m. Luckily, we were treated to a toasty helicopter tour of the hilly terrain and caught the match from 1,000 feet in the air. Cue squeals of excitement and

multiple *Bachelor* references (Will polo player and model Nacho Figueras give me a rose?). The views of Lawrence Stroll's mega-mansion and racetrack (he's the billionaire backer of Tommy Hilfiger and Michael Kors) made jaws drop.

DAY TWO

11 a.m. I take in the winter-wonderland views from my room at the Hotel Quin-tessence. Champagne before noon is okay if it's sipped next to a crackling fire, right? After putting on my thermal socks, I was ready to face the day.

5 p.m. The tense final round began at dusk—it's way harder than you'd think to hit a neon-orange ball with a mallet. An opaque curtain of snow didn't help, dusting the spectators' mink hats. Team Polo Blue took on team Holt Renfrew Ogilvy, ultimately tying and agreeing to share the win. Sportsmanship, snow and spectacle: What's not to like?

PROFILE

Almost famous

A rising star in fashion, Canadian designer Chris Gelinias wants to empower women with his Spring 2016 collection

BY CARLY OSTROFF

In the bright white space at The Room in Hudson's Bay, a display of mannequins and flowers is set up, waiting. Behind the scenes, Canadian designer Chris Gelinias is getting ready for his first trunk show with the retailer. "There's nothing more thrilling than watching a client put on a dress and float across the room at one of these trunk shows," explains the Windsor-Ont.-born, New-York-based designer. With two years under his belt at his label, CG, Gelinias is commanding the industry's attention with his expert craftsmanship and attention to detail. We sat down to talk about his new collection, his Kendall Jenner moment and making an impact in the Canadian market.

How did you get started in the industry? "Growing up in Windsor, you don't have much access to the industry. It was only what I knew in magazines or saw on TV. But I thought if I studied business, I could work around the industry. I went to Marc Jacobs as a buyer and found that I was staring less at my spreadsheets and more at the samples in the design studio. Arguably I wasn't the best buyer, but it did push me to go to Parsons."

Did you know how to sew? "I did, actually. Funnily enough, my grandmother was a seamstress, and I had taught myself how to sew on my great-grandmother's sewing machine in my basement and had a few very trusting friends as my first fit models."

When did you decide to start your own label? "After going to Parsons, I was at Proenza Schouler, and I decided I wanted to take the next few years to learn from as many people as I could. I went to Balenciaga in Paris, and then I came back to work for Olivier Theyskens. After six years, there was a moment I thought, 'I'll never stop learning, but I think I'm ready to make my own mistakes and hopefully have my own successes.'"

Can you tell me about your spring line? "I wanted to soften up and think about vulnerability—not as a weakness, but actually as a quite empowering trait—and give women different pieces that could, in a



controlled way, allow them to feel very delicate and very fragile. I thought about the idea of dressing and being undressed to bring an intimacy back between the wearer and the pieces."

You presented your collection in New York in a special way. What inspired you? "It was this beautiful space, which is basically a greenhouse in the middle of 10th Avenue. There were birds flying around and leaves falling from the trees... I think if you can create a moment of calm in the chaos of New York Fashion Week, then you've really achieved something. I'm nostalgic to a fault, and I want to go back to those times when a fashion show was really about having the time to go through everything, rather than this theatrical 10-minute extravaganza."

Kendall Jenner wore one of your dresses in Vogue. Was it surreal? "It was my first time experiencing a real fashion shoot, and Kendall's so lovely. Looking good in a dress is one thing, but feeling good in a dress just brings a different energy. To watch her dancing around the room and feeling so great in that piece was just so much fun."

Do you get nervous before trunk shows? "The people I love talking to most are the clients. I feel so touched—people are coming out to see something that you've done. It's something I hope never gets lost on me: People are taking the time to seek out and discover what I've put my heart and soul into."



"I think I'm ready to make my own mistakes and hopefully have my own successes."



Clockwise from top left: Chris Gelinias; up close with the collection; models prep for the trunk show; a fashionable coffee break; a model wears Spring 2016.



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