



1 Arati Sharma

For many women, self-confidence is the key to changing (or not changing) their lives. Canada’s angel investor of the year shares her lessons for mastering the art of self-belief

There’s a poster that hangs on the wall of Arati Sharma’s home office. “You’re not an imposter. You are for real,” it reads in cursive script. When Sharma bought the poster in 2017, she was heading up a new marketing team at Shopify, the Canadian tech start-up that is now valued at more than a billion dollars. Fast-forward a few years and Sharma’s life looks a little different. She’s the co-founder of Backbone Angels, a venture capital collective that she started with an all-female team of 10 early Shopify employees with a mission to fund the historically underfunded, a.k.a women and non-binary people. (Even in the post-Girlboss/side hustle era, only 4 per cent of venture capital goes to female founders.) In just over a year, Backbone Angels has backed 42 companies and invested more than \$3 million in those businesses.

The industry is noticing: Last year, Sharma was named Canada’s Angel Investor of the Year by the National Angel Capital Organization. Sharma also started Ghlee, a ghee-based skincare brand with her brother Varun and sister Deepika. By any measure, she’s a success. Still, the message on that poster—which remains at eye line from Sharma’s desk—resonates.

“It’s such a good reminder that you belong, because especially as women, and women of colour, you always feels like an imposter,” says Sharma. “Society hasn’t created those spaces for us.”

Sharma and her team called the company Backbone Angels because they believe that women like them, often working in under-celebrated roles like HR or marketing, generally form the backbone of tech companies, despite getting little of the glory a male founder might. There’s a second meaning, too: They were proud to have the backbone to stand up for themselves and fight for what they believe in. As Sharma says, “So much of being an investor is being able to say no.”

We asked Sharma for her advice on strengthening that backbone, whether to build something world-changing or to simply feel more in control of your future.

YOU HAVE TO BE THE ONE TO BUILD YOUR DREAMS

Sharma’s self-confidence is rooted in the example of her father, who was never afraid to go against the grain. “It’s hard being a South Asian woman,” says Sharma. “There’s a lot of preconceived notions that are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

The Kit Changemakers

In this special issue, we celebrate 10 extraordinary Canadians. These entrepreneurs, journalists, filmmakers, athletes, artists—and a very special science student—are united in courage, conviction and a belief in a brighter future

2 Lisa LaFlamme

The legendary journalist on why it still matters to fight for change

For 35 years, journalist Lisa LaFlamme has been covering the news—last month, she found herself making it. In August, senior execs at CTV announced that it was prematurely ending her contract as the chief anchor and senior editor of CTV National News. In a video posted to Twitter, LaFlamme said she was “blindsided” by her firing. The top brass insisted it was a “business decision,” but the public smelled a rat: LaFlamme was beloved, respected and highly decorated, plus her show was the top-rated in Canada. Then word leaked that some of those same execs had questioned who “approved” LaFlamme’s pandemic decision to let her brown hair go grey in front of the cameras.

Such blatant ageism served against a Canadian icon? The outcry was instantaneous. Women wrote movingly about their own, less high-profile experiences with ageism and a double page open letter in support of LaFlamme ran in the *Globe and Mail* signed by luminaries such as Heather Reisman, Lloyd Axworthy and Roméo Dallaire. Brands got in on the action, too: Dove Canada encouraged women to greyscale their profile pics, while Wendy’s turned its mascot’s famous red braids grey with the caption: “Because a star is a star regardless of hair colour.”

Throughout, LaFlamme has maintained a dignified silence; at press time, she’s in London as a special correspondent for CityTV to cover Queen Elizabeth II’s funeral. We were honoured that she agreed to speak with us about her storied history as a changemaker.

The way that journalists report on issues has the capacity to create positive change. What stories have you worked on so far that you’re most proud of in this capacity?

“Over 35 years of reporting on everything from city council to global conflict it’s tough to know precisely what stories have created positive change—daily news doesn’t leave a lot of time for reflection. However, on a personal level, I keep coming back to Afghanistan. The fallout of that war remains with me today, and the people I have met have given me a deeper perspective on tragedy, challenge and the strength of the human spirit to triumph over adversity. Most recently, being part of the jour-



PHOTOGRAPHY: GEORGE PIMENTEL

nalistic drive that helped hundreds of Afghans escape the Taliban—an effort that is still underway. I am proud to have played a role in reuniting so many families on Canadian soil. They are a great addition to our nation. Change only comes through awareness, and in the end, that’s a reporter’s job: to shine a light because truth and progress die in darkness.”

This is a time of immense change—political, cultural, climate. As a journalist, how do you respond to, and navigate, change?

“I’m not sure who said it first, so I’ll quote Anonymous: ‘Change is the only constant.’ We navigate it every single day in big ways and small. For me, the most damaging and challenging change is the rise in misinformation. I have long believed that in a society of information and misinformation overload, media literacy should be as important as math. It should be taught in classrooms as soon as kids carry smartphones. Consuming news today still comes down to the old adage: Consider the source. It’s more important than ever.”

You’re one of Canada’s most respected journalists. What would your advice be to young women who are interested in pursuing journalism today?

“My advice to young women is straightforward. If journalism is your passion, follow it. If writing is your weakness, strengthen it. If history is your shortcoming, research it. Most importantly, if you face sexism or racism, expose it. You can’t effect change by cowering in a corner. Be brave.” —Laura deCarufel



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We need to
pave the path
for the next
generation of
women.

CONTINUED FROM COVER

placed on us by society and our culture,” particularly, she says, when it comes to an “obsession” with marriage and weddings. “My dad would always say, ‘You can get married, do whatever you want, but first, you have to stand on your own two feet. At the end of the day, you’re the one who’s going to support you—and you have to build your dreams.’” He also constantly pointed out women who were leaders, like Marie Curie, Sharma’s childhood idol. “He always instilled a lot of confidence in us,” she says.

SOMETIMES IMPOSTER SYNDROME MEANS YOU’RE AT THE BEGINNING OF SOMETHING

“Right now, so much of culture and social media wants you to be an expert, and share all these opinions,” says Sharma, pointing to our obsession with those “10 things I learned about X”-style Twitter threads, which are particularly endemic to tech. “It feels like everyone knows more than you, when the reality is that you might just be at the beginning of a new journey, and it’s okay not to know everything.” In fact, says Sharma, it shows you’re a person with a growth mindset, a concept introduced to Sharma by an executive coach. “When you get older, and farther into your career, you can forget that with every new step you take, you’re entering a new box—which means you have to learn and acquire experience to get to that next level.”

JUST START THE DANG THING

Sometimes, confidence comes after action, not before. “If you get started and do a little bit each day, you’re going to get more confident in what you do,” says Sharma. “As someone who can procrastinate, I like to break big things up into very small steps.” When Sharma and her siblings started their beauty brand, the first step was coming up with the name. “The smaller the steps, the more achievable they will be.”

RIDE THE EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER

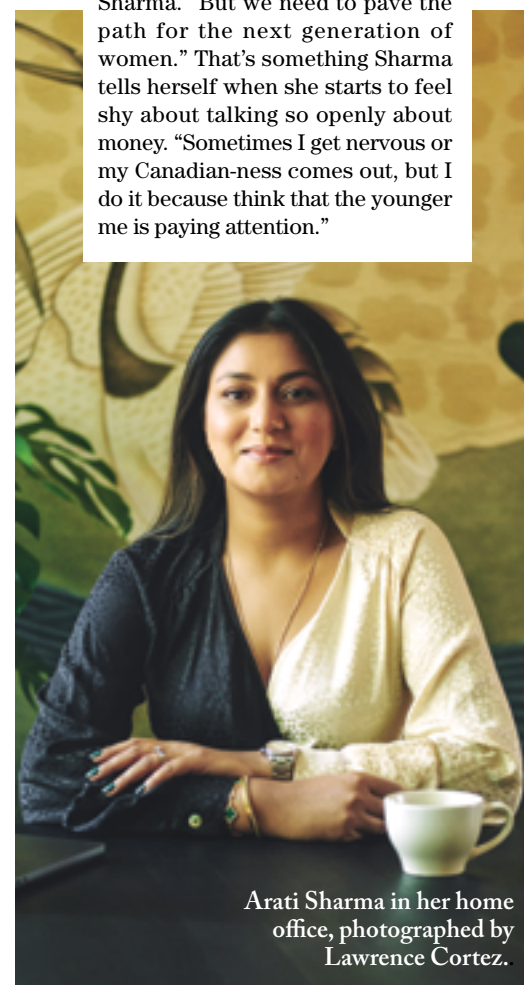
Struggle is normal. So is having your confidence waver when things get tricky. “Even if you do have a great idea, there are days that are amazing, and there are days that are really hard,” says Sharma. “When you’re working on something new, or you’re trying to be a changemaker, it’s a roller coaster.” Keep perspective and persevere.

KEEP GOING, BECAUSE THE NEXT GENERATION NEEDS YOUR EXAMPLE

“Your first solution isn’t going to be your last,” says Sharma, referring to the fact that in most things, whether that’s founding a company or being a parent or solving world peace or becoming your best self, you’re endlessly going to be iterating on whatever you’re building.

“It’s tough out there, and [as women,] we don’t have the same success stories to look at,” says Sharma. “But we need to pave the path for the next generation of women.” That’s something Sharma tells herself when she starts to feel shy about talking so openly about money. “Sometimes I get nervous or my Canadian-ness comes out, but I do it because think that the younger me is paying attention.”

PHOTOGRAPHY: O’SHANE HOWARD (NIA AND JUSTICE)



Arati Sharma in her home office, photographed by Lawrence Cortez.



“Greatness is fuelled by hope,” write Nia (left) and Justice Faith.

Nia and Justice Faith

In this open letter, the sisters and the co-founders of cutting-edge inclusivity platform Révolutionnaire, make the case for believing that we can all make a difference

Dear Canada,

We are in critical times. The pandemic has challenged our mettle, forced us to engage in deep reflection, and examine our lives and contributions. Amid our confusion, doubt and despair, we are now called on to believe that our collective voices can make a difference.

Answering that call requires hope—bold hope. Hope, rooted in past failures, present difficulties and future promise. This is the panacea in periods of uncertainty.

Hope, dauntless and resilient. Hope whispers that, despite being shaken by the past, and with no evidence that what is ahead will be better, change is possible.

Throughout history, our communities have been driven by dreamers,

Sometimes that difference meant sitting around the dinner table, passionately engaging in political and philosophical debates. Many of these discussions concluded with, “So, Justice and Nia, what are *you* going to do about it?”

We grew to understand that daily actions matter and that idle acceptance of current circumstances constitutes complicity in present and future disasters. It is that belief that compelled us to found Révolutionnaire, and its social network for changemakers with the hope that if given access to the necessary community, tools and information, young people can harness their power to make a lasting impact across causes.

Every day, through conversations with young changemakers, action on

sion and despair. Hope is the harmonic melody that comforts us when the noise of the world becomes too loud. Hope is the spark of change. And it is the solid foundation on which those of us with a dream of making our communities and countries a better place, stand on. And every now and then, hope is that reassuring voice that says to us, “Today did not go so well. Try again tomorrow.”

Hope gave Harriet Tubman the bravery to escape slavery and the audacity to create a network through which she reached behind and liberated scores of others. Hope inspired generations to march together and challenge oppression and injustice.

Our story relies on, and is reflective of, so many changemakers—past and present, recognized or unknown. Our collective experiences inspire us to dream of a better world, hoping that our actions can make a difference.

As sisters, we are hopeful for the future and have always been intentional about change—just as our parents taught us. Just as their parents taught them.

And from Women’s Suffrage to Black Lives Matter, and all movements in between, we have learned that, in moments of challenge, we are effectively called on to create a blueprint for the next generation. Do we want to be seen as people who merely existed during these critical times? Or do we want that blueprint to illustrate that we showed up, with tenacity, tenacity, determination and hope?

The answer, like the story, is ours to shape.

Sincerely,

Nia Justice

Hope is the voice in our heads that reminds us that we are worthy.

doers and disruptors, who have dared to dream the impossible and imagine that better is merited. And on those broad backs, we sometimes need to stand, to challenge the status quo and lay the pathway for progress.

Greatness is fuelled by hope, and a recognition that within us lies the power to effect change.

Growing up, our lives were defined by service, advocacy and how we show up in the world as young Black women. Our parents hoped that, through exposure, we would be enlightened to make a difference, big or small. Sometimes that difference meant participating in protests. Sometimes that difference meant preparing meal baskets for others during the holidays, instead of us receiving Christmas presents ourselves.

our social network, and the service and advocacy initiatives that Révolutionnaire leads, our hope is renewed that change is possible.

From following the 11-day snowshoe journey of one young activist to raise awareness for his petition on Révolutionnaire to working with hundreds of young people to pack meals and hygiene kits for unhoused individuals to volunteering in community gardens to fight food insecurity, we see—and are a part of—the positive impact of a growing community of individuals dedicated to taking action, and trading in hope.

Hope is the voice in our heads that reminds us that we are worthy. It is the torch that illuminates our pathway in darkness. It is our paintbrush when we are confronted by the canvas of confu-

Top shelf

A memoir can change how you see the world—and your place in it. These 2022 titles top our fall reading list



Can't Help Falling: A Long Road to Motherhood
“People told us to relax—it would happen,” writes Sarah Schwartz about attempting to bounce back, post-miscarriage, in her best-selling account of trying to have a baby. Schwartz’s journey is by turns heartbreaking and infuriating, and always beautifully told.

\$22, CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA



Run Towards the Danger
Sarah Polley’s searing collection of essays traces “the most dangerous stories” of the actor and filmmaker’s life so far, “the ones I have avoided, the ones I haven’t told, the ones that have kept me awake on countless nights.” For more on Polley, turn to page 4.

\$35, CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA



My Privilege, My Responsibility: A Memoir
In 2012, journalist Sheila North started the hashtag #MMIW to create conversations about Canada’s missing and murdered Indigenous women. As she writes in this gripping memoir, for her, the violence was personal. An unmissable read.

\$25, CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA



Next Time There's a Pandemic
In this generous-spirited book, artist Vivek Shraya shares her own experience of the pandemic—which she describes as “an anxiety-ridden ordeal”—and asks whether it had to be that way. It’s a fascinating exploration of very recent history.

\$13, CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA

4 Leylah Fernandez

A future where women’s sports get the recognition they deserve? This rising tennis star is playing for keeps

Tennis phenom Leylah Fernandez, 20, should rank high on any list of “ones to watch.” Admire the Montrealer’s ascendant career (she placed second at the US Open last year), sure, but also pay attention to what the BonLook ambassador wants to bring to her audience: the thrill of sport. What does she ask in return? Overdue respect for women athletes and their sports.

How do you want to disrupt tennis?
“On court I’ve always tried to showcase my own personality, which is always happiness. I want to be able to have fans watch me play and say, “Wow, this is exciting, this is so much fun.” And hopefully with my game, I can bring more and more fans to watch women’s tennis because there’s so many great tennis players who are coming up in the WTA Tour. I just hope that one day we can all, the whole organization, work together to make this actually grow. Because that’s what Serena [Williams] has been doing. She did so well when she played in the very beginning, and that has helped us, the younger generation, do better now. So hopefully we can do that for the next generation.”

What changes do you want to see for women in sports?
“I’d like to see a view shift. You know, women, we work hard just like men do. We put on a good show just like they do. I would love to see more fans come and watch women play, not only in tennis, but in every sport, because it’s so exciting. You see so many women trying to do something different in the world, they try to change the world. And it’s exciting to see these strong women doing so well in their respective fields.”

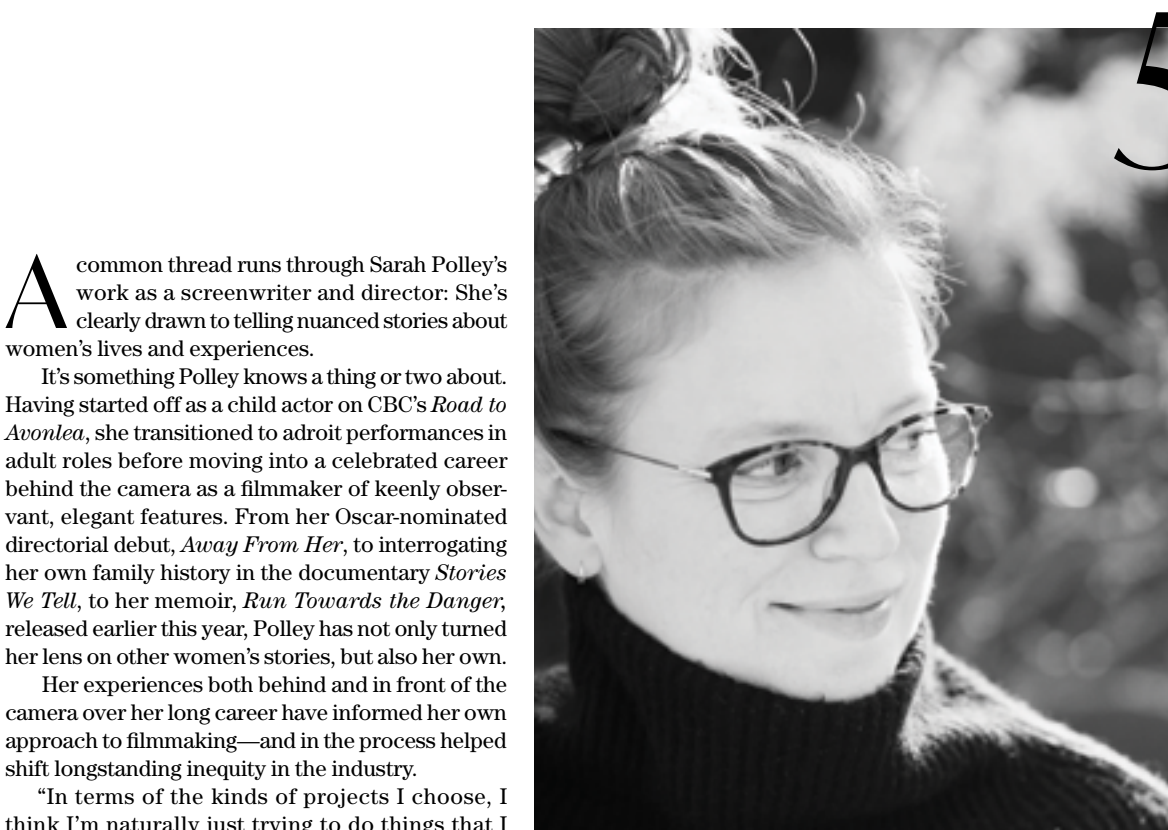
What do you wish someone had told you when you were starting out?
“I think I’ve always wished that someone would have told me that I wouldn’t be spending time with my family as much. My family is extremely important to me. But sometimes I’m travelling alone or with a few other girls for weeks or even months and I’m not able to see them. I’m just extremely happy that technology has been an option, that we’re able to FaceTime, text and call because I would sometimes miss birthday parties, family activities, and it was hard for me. So, I wish someone had told me that. I don’t think it would have changed my decision to play tennis, it just would have prepared me a little bit more.”



Women put on a good show just like men do.

How much do you think your family’s sacrifices affect the way you approach your sport and your life?
“My family has done so much for me. They sacrificed a lot, which has helped me achieve my own dream. Every time there’s a tough moment on court or even outside the court, I always try to remind myself of those sacrifices, because that gives me strength. I see the strength that they give for me—and not even for their own dream but for me. That gives me confidence that they believe in me. I try to surround myself with people, like my family, who believe in me. All their sacrifices give me motivation to keep going in my path.”

Who’s a changemaker you admire?
“I’ve always admired Serena and Venus Williams. Of course, I love Billie Jean King and her story. I recently read her book and it was inspirational. But I grew up watching Serena and Venus, and just to see them, where they came from and all of the hurdles that they had to go through on and off the court. They showed what fighting is, what strength is, what confidence is and also independence. They really inspired me and my sisters to be stronger and to keep going for my dreams, even when things aren’t going the best way.” —Eden Boileau



5 Sarah Polley

The filmmaker shines a light on women’s experiences in all their complexity

each other in so many ways,” she recalls. “I’d obviously done so much thinking around telling a story like this one. And what was important to me in terms of how to tell it was the aftermath of it—how it’s grappled with, and moved alongside and through.” While critics and colleagues laud Polley as a changemaker in the film world—McDormand recently said *Women Talking* “represents a shift in our industry”—Polley would rather focus on others moving the needle on better representation onscreen and in decision-making roles.

“I think we’ve made a lot of progress, but I don’t think we’ve made quite as much as we think we have,” she says. “But I think it’s good; we’re headed in a certain direction. I’m really encouraged to see movies like *The Woman King* coming out. It’s hugely exciting—that’s a radical shift, and a conversation about feminism in the hands of those women is something I’m super excited to see.”

As for what needs to happen next? “I’d like to see more women in positions of power in the film industry,” Polley says. “And I’d like to see more inclusion and intersectionality in feminism in general—being more open-minded about what a conversation about feminism looks like, and who’s included in that conversation.” —Tabassum Siddiqui

Highlight reel

Upgrade your screen time with fall films lensed by Canadian directors



THE YOUNG ARSONISTS directed by Sheila Pye
Fans of Sofia Coppola’s *The Virgin Suicides* will be drawn to this gothic drama set in 1980s rural Canada. The film follows four teenage girls—all suffering from trauma—over a summer. It’s not simply the adolescent quartet element that inspires comparisons to Coppola: Director Sheila Pye is also a visual artist and her ability to imbue the film with haunting imagery adds depth among the despair.



NORTH OF NORMAL directed by Carly Stone
Sarah Gadon as a headline, rapturous reviews at TIFF—everything’s coming up golden for *North of Normal*, the second feature from Toronto filmmaker Carly Stone. The movie is based on the bestselling memoir by Cea Sunrise Person about her unconventional childhood in the Canadian wilderness, including living in a tipi in Alberta, and leaving her family behind at 13 to pursue a modelling career.



THIS PLACE directed by V.T. Nayani
V.T. Nayani is one of our most empathetic storytellers, and she reaches new heights in this coming-of-age LGBTQ+ love story. Nayani is also a co-writer of the film, with additional writing credits going to rising talent Golshan Abdoulia and *This Place*’s star, Devery Jacobs (currently lighting up *Reservation Dogs*). As Nayani puts it, the movie explores the experience of “living in the liminal space between cultures.”

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES (FERNANDEZ); LLC-MONTPELLIER (POLLEY); COURTESY OF TIFF (FINA STILLS)

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MAKE MOVES

Working out means different things to different people, but one universal truth is that whatever you choose to wear during a sweat-inducing activity—or however you choose to move your body—you should feel comfortable and confident. That means your performance-enhancing goods should be made of technical fabrics that work to wick moisture away, dry quickly and support your body in all the right places. And of course, they also need to look stylish!

Enter H&M Move, an accessible version of sportswear, redefined as movewear. Its goal? To celebrate that everyone on the planet is already a mover, no matter their age, gender, fitness or ability level.

With this new line extension, the international fashion brand aims to empower women, men and non-binary people with its inclusive and expansive approach to activewear. In fact, they've come up with a

whole new term for the category: Movewear. "We're here to celebrate movement and invite the world to move. Removing barriers to sport is very much at the heart of our purpose, starting with democratizing sports apparel," says Simon Brown, general manager of H&M Move.

Using four exclusive materials—like sweat-wicking DryMove and stretchy SoftMove—the new offering has been manufactured to be gentler on the planet. Today, almost 85 percent of H&M Move products are made from recycled materials or sourced in a more sustainable way with a long-term goal of achieving 100 percent sustainability.

This first drop includes a variety of Move Essentials (think super-soft leggings, tops and bras), alongside training and running gear—with plenty more categories on the way. But how does Movewear perform? To find out, we enlisted five Canadian trailblazers to test-drive the new launches and share what movement means to them.



Cherise Munkoh, 22, personal trainer

When you're not working with clients, what are some of your favourite ways to move your body?
"Strength training is definitely my favourite way to move my body! I love being able to lift heavy, feel and look strong and see my progress week by week. In November, I started doing spin classes at SpinCo, and I'm obsessed with the instructors, the energy and of course, the themed rides. Recently, I've started to also go to drop-in Pilates classes at my friend's studio, Nice Day Pilates. I'm always up for trying new ways to move my body!"

For folks that are just getting into fitness and perhaps don't own much in terms of performance wear, what are the essential items they should look for and why?
"I would definitely suggest bottoms that are made from a sweat-wicking material! Some people find sweat embarrassing, but we're all human; it's natural and rather than feel ashamed of your sweat, you should feel comfortable in it. Finding bottoms that will leave you feeling dry and cool after a sweaty workout is key! I would also recommend looking for a high support sports bra that will make you feel secure during any movement."



Christa Couture, 43, musician, writer and mother

What has your experience been with activewear and adaptive designs?
"Activewear has been one of the best areas for adaptive style—things like elastic waists, tear-away pants, those features are already designed for ease, so they've got a head start on being more widely accessible. Some brands are taking that next step further and adding additional adaptive features like hooks and Velcro for folks who don't have typical use of their hands or who use wheelchairs or other devices. What's very important in creating inclusive activewear is remembering that disabled bodies are also active bodies. The fitness world can be focused on only a certain type of body, and while I may not move in typical ways, I still love to be active, and I still need the right outfit for it!"

What's one way you celebrate your body every day?
"Having a disabled body in this particularly ableist culture meant it took a long time to come to first accept my difference, much less celebrate it. But getting the "flower leg" (my floral prosthetic leg) totally changed how I see my disability. I used to try and hide it, but now making my disability visible has been a daily choice to elevate and celebrate my difference. The flower leg is my favourite accessory!"



Five powerhouse women test-drive the new "Movewear" line shaking up sportswear



Luciana Silva, 30, emergency medical dispatcher with Toronto Paramedic Services

The nature of your job puts you in a lot of difficult situations, both mentally and physically. What helps you healthily deal with that stress?
"Staying active—and therapy! I know therapy is still stigmatized, but, in all honesty, when hiking with my dog and dancing doesn't cut it, I talk to someone. Speaking to a counsellor or therapist has helped me discover my strengths, learn life-long coping skills for difficult

situations and improve my stress levels."

How do you bring activewear into your everyday wardrobe?
"I love activewear, and I would say it makes up about 70 percent of my wardrobe. I like high-waisted leggings that have nice coverage over the stomach and lower back area and tops that aren't too cropped but aren't super long either. Support and comfort is key for me! I also try to keep up with the latest trends and look for items that I can wear in the gym and in casual settings, like the brown set I wore for this shoot!"



Tavia Christina, 25, professional dance artist and choreographer

As a professional dancer and choreographer, what do you look for in clothing when you practice and rehearse?
"I look for comfort first, over anything else. I need something that will make my body feel its absolute best while rehearsing to physically deliver my best moves and execution of choreography. Of course, I also value aesthetics. I want something that makes me feel like me, because dancing and choreographing is a personal expression of my artistic voice, experiences and who I am as a human. I need my wardrobe to reflect that too."

What are your thoughts on the H&M Move picks you wore for the shoot?
"First thing that caught my eye was the colour, wow! I love how the set bottoms are high-waisted and the bra top is more like a fitted tank top. As someone with a short torso and longer legs, I think the set accentuated my body type well! It felt so good on my body; it is super soft with some added ribbed fabric texture, which I couldn't stop touching! The shoes are super chic, lightweight and comfortable, easy to dance in or do some movement and stretching."



Harshita Jha, 22, art student and model

Does stylish activewear motivate you to go to the gym or move your body?
"They say that if you look good, you feel good! That holds true here, and a cute activewear outfit gets me motivated to show up for myself. I've come to learn that I can bring my own style into how I dress when I'm working out. This helps me feel stylish and ready to take on any physical challenges ahead of me."

What do you like most about the outfit you are wearing today?
"I really like the colour of this outfit, and my favourite pieces are the shorts and tank top that I'm wearing. The shorts are lightweight, and the high waist fits me really well. The tank top has a built-in bra and it's so stretchy and comfortable! Overall, this outfit looks and feels great, not to mention it's made from recycled materials, which is amazing."



We were the next healthy generation. We were the next step.



The women on the All My Relations basketball team range in age from 17 to 40. "Together, we learned how to be in relation to other people," says Joleen Mitton (fifth from left). Photography by Lawrence Cortez.



7 Caroline Huang

Meet the 17-year-old high school student committed to changing the world, one single-celled organism at a time



Girls have a lot to offer. Change is coming and it starts with us.

and shared her ideas for how to ensure girls and women are better represented in places of power.

"The problem of gender equality is systemic, and it boils down to girls not seeing themselves in these positions," says Huang with an eloquence that would be impressive in someone twice her age. "Being in the program gave me even bigger aspirations for my future, because when you look at the people leading these companies, they're not female, and it's intimidating when you don't see yourself represented." Still, the chance to be heard by those executives was empowering. "Girls have a lot to offer. Change is coming, and it starts with us."

While having more women in the C-suites of multinationals matters, Huang believes it's important that girls have role models in their own communities, the "remarkable women leaders" who are already there, but might be "too humble" to share their wisdom and accomplishments in a way that their male counterparts don't think twice about.

For Huang, whose parents are both in STEM, representation is the key. "It's not an intentional thing, but when you don't see your friends in classes, you're less likely to sign up with them because you want to be with that community. It starts from there." (It also doesn't help, she points out, that the high school curriculum is structured in such a way that if you don't take certain prerequisite courses, you can be shut out of studying STEM at university because you didn't, say, take chemistry in grade 10.)

In her own immediate future, Huang is getting ready to apply for university, majoring in biotechnology. She also has a side dream to create an innovation hub, where people come together to tackle issues such as resolving the power imbalance the green agricultural technology revolution has exacerbated between the developed and developing world.

"I've also got the idea of policy-making in the back of my mind," she says. "Like, how can I use the STEM I'm learning in my degree to create social good, and inspire social justice, and really use them to change policy, which will in turn ripple through different societies in the world?"

We can't wait to see how Huang answers that question. —Sarah Laing

PHOTOGRAPHY: LAWRENCE CORTÉZ (HUANG)

Taylor Lindsay-Noel

When she was 14, Taylor Lindsay-Noel knew exactly where her life was headed. She was going to the 2012 Olympics as a gymnast, then to UCLA to study sports medicine, and finally, to start her career as a doctor. Then, in a split second, everything changed. During gymnastic training, Lindsay-Noel's coach pushed her to try a move that had never been successfully completed before. Lindsay-Noel fell, and the accident instantly paralyzed her from the neck down. On that day, as a young teenager, Lindsey-Noel began what she calls her "second life."

Now 28, Lindsay-Noel is a boundary-pushing multi-hyphenate. She's an entrepreneur, whose loose-leaf tea brand, Cup of Té, was chosen as one of Oprah's Favourite Things in 2020, as well as a vocal disability activist. Lindsay-Noel's viral TikTok account "Access by Tay" reviews restaurants, bars and events for their accessibility. She's also an Instagram poet, with 30,000 followers.

Here, Lindsay-Noel shares her story in her own words.

"After the accident, I was upset with God, with the universe. Like, why me? I felt like I was a good person, and I couldn't understand what I had done that was so horrible at 14 years old. What helped me get through, to be honest, was being a bit delusional. I don't think I understood for the first year how badly I'd hurt myself.

"The doctors were telling me, 'You're not going to walk,' but I was like, 'Yeah, but I'm an athlete so I can train really hard and I'll beat the odds.' When that didn't happen, that's when the depression came. It was life-changing, and I didn't know what the rest of my life was going to look like. I had no idea who I was outside of a sport. It was really scary.

My whole life, I've grown up drinking tea in the morning. I'm Caribbean, and you're taught you need to have something hot to start your day. My house was the one where people always gathered, and we'd always have good conversations over a cup of tea. In university, I started a podcast called *Teatime with Tay*. When I wanted tea brands to sponsor me, none of them got back to me, so I was like, 'I'm going to make my own tea brand.' It took over my life. Four years later, we've been in Oscars and Grammys gift bags, and I'm opening my first store very soon.

I've been in a wheelchair for 14 years and going out has always been an 'event,' in the sense that there's lots of pre-planning and anxiety around it.

As a teenager, Lindsay-Noel had her sights on an Olympic medal. Now, her dreams are even bigger

My friends and I love to be social, and we'd find ourselves always going to the same few places because we knew they were going to be accessible. I didn't have to freak out that we'd have to change places mid-way [because the first place wasn't accessible]. Often, I'll call a place, and they'll say it's accessible when it's not. Most of the time, there's no concrete information online.

My friend suggested that we start videoing our outings, which led to my Access By Tay account. It's about accessibility, but it's also about getting access to what an accessible life looks like. It's not just about restaurants—it's about transit, it's about sidewalks. I'm happy to share my life with people to hopefully educate them. The goal is to show why things miss the mark.

Accessibility should be proactive, not re-active—and it's not just for people in wheelchairs. If you're blessed enough to grow old, one day that could be you, where you'd prefer to have a ramp to go up rather than take 20 flights of stairs.

If I were to have listened to society, a Black, female, disabled business owner isn't supposed to be successful. If I'd let that stop me from venturing into any of the things that I've done, I wouldn't have done anything. I could have easily rolled over and given up, but I was like, 'I'm going to ride this ride until the wheels fall off, no pun intended.'

I want to prove to people that a fulfilled life doesn't have to look one way. People who are disabled live full lives. We are part of society, we love to go out and have fun. I hope that my example can show people that there's so much life to live."



Accessibility should be proactive, not re-active—and it's not just for people in wheelchairs.

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Briannah Daniel
Direct advertising inquiries to:
Interim Associate Publisher
Erin Begg,
eb@thekit.ca

Operations Director,
Digital Media
Kelly Matthews
Collab Specialist
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THE KIT X BANANA REPUBLIC

SEASON OF STYLE

We're going all in on elegance this fall



It's time to start getting dressed up again, and there's no better place to do it than Banana Republic. The brand's latest fall collection is the height of elegance thanks to dressed-up options like occasion-ready silk blouses, bold dresses and high-quality, tailored pieces that look like they were handmade just for you. Even more exciting? Banana Republic is relaunching its shoe and bag collection with an array of functional-yet-stylish, investment-worthy items with timeless silhouettes and sharp details. These covetable pieces are going to be the closet staples you turn to again and again to round out your fall looks.

Read on to discover a few of our faves from the new collection.

1. THE CLASSIC ONE
Honestly, every well-rounded closet needs a cross-body bag. Featuring Banana Republic's signature buckle, Italian leather, contrast stitching and asymmetrical details, this mini version is so luxe and versatile that you'll want to pair it with all your fall looks, including the season's sleekest corduroy suit.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE MINI GIA CROSSBODY BAG, \$520, BANANAREPUBLIC.CA

2. THE TREND-FORWARD ONE
We're calling it now: Edgy lug boots are going to be the footwear item of the season. We love the slanted lines and contrast stitching of this leather pair, which are as comfortable as they are stylish and look excellent when styled with a cozy chunky knit.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE HUDSON SUEDE CHELSEA BOOT, \$330, BANANAREPUBLIC.CA

3. THE EVERYDAY ONE
If you're anything like us, you probably find yourself gravitating towards your fave fits-it-all bucket bag, whether you're running around the city on errands or off to a weekend getaway with friends. This oversized version of the brand's Medium Bucket is made in Italy and features a comfortable shoulder strap that'll help you take on the day in style.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE OVERSIZED VIDA BAG, \$680, BANANAREPUBLIC.CA

4. THE ELEVATED ONE
With the holiday season just around the corner, we know that means many dinner parties and gatherings are in your future. This irrelevant, asymmetrical take on a typical pump will be perfect for those occasions. It's made with black Italian leather and boasts an easy-to-wear back zipper closure. Wear them with wide-leg trousers for an understated yet elevated silhouette.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE VALAIS HAIRCALF LEATHER HEEL, \$435, BANANAREPUBLIC.CA

5. THE BOLD ONE
If you prefer a little more flash for your holiday looks, opt for this stunning leather clutch. Made of the softest Italian leather, its timeless design features contrast stitching and a fun slanted strap for an easy way to add an edgy statement to your evening outfits. Pair it with a jet-black leather shirt jacket to create an ultra-cool monochromatic look.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE STELLA CLOUD CLUTCH, \$530, BANANAREPUBLIC.CA

6. THE PLAYFUL ONE
If you were loving the posh tennis looks of the summer, you're definitely going to want to carry the preppy vibes into fall. This squared-toe, made-in-Italy pair are both classic and modern, and will seamlessly work with everyday outfits or going out moments. Best of all? You don't have to be going back to school to sport these. Pair them with a silk shirt dress for an eye-catching day-to-night look.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE LUZ SUEDE LOAFER, \$310, BANANAREPUBLIC.CA



THE FUTURE OF REUSABLE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS IS HERE

It inserts with ease, is effortless to remove and feels like nothing

“Welcome to the maxi pad!” says Janeane Garafalo’s character Vicky to Ethan Hawke’s Troy Dyer in the iconic 1994 movie *Reality Bites*. But she could have easily been saying this to me when I got my period just before my 13th birthday. I stuck with bulky, uncomfortable pads until my early 20s, when I finally summoned the courage to use tampons. In my 30s, looking for a more eco-friendly option, I switched over to organic tampons, but by my early 40s I started hearing from friends about another option: menstrual cups.

At first, I couldn’t wrap my head around the idea, but about five years ago, after another friend made the switch, I took the plunge. Getting the insertion and removal right was the biggest learning curve: You have to make peace with the fact that you’ll get a little blood on your fingers. But once I mastered how to get it in and out, I’ve never looked back. In fact, I’ve cursed myself for not getting on board sooner. It’s a relief to know I am no longer contributing all that waste to landfill every month, and it’s amazing (and budget-friendly) to not have to constantly replenish my stock of tampons.

Traditional cups, like the classic DivaCup that so many of us started with, are bell-shaped, and sometimes, if I didn’t get insertion quite right, I could feel it. They can also be tricky to insert because you have to fold the cup in half while also pushing it up. So I was excited to try a brand new innovation from Diva—the best known brand for menstrual cups, with 20 years of experience making them—the Diva Disc.

My first impression is that the Diva Disc is thinner and more flexible than most menstrual cups, which makes folding it so much easier. Made from medical-grade silicone, it’s not bell shaped but designed more like a basin, and meant to be pushed back behind your

cervix where it sits tucked out of the way behind your pubic bone. That also makes it one size fits all, which is excellent.

My period arrived and as I expected, insertion was a breeze. I pinched it slightly on the sides to make it more narrow and pushed it back (not up) toward my cervix. This one also comes with a pull tab for easy removal, so I ensured that was positioned at the front of the disc. When it came time to empty it, the tab made removal seriously simple. You just “bear down” as the instructions say and then grab the tab, which is really easy to reach even if the disc ends up moving back a little farther. I still got a bit of blood on my fingers—honestly, periods just are a little messy sometimes, there’s no way of getting around it, and using a disc definitely helps you get comfortable with your body’s natural processes.

There’s also a small shield along the top of the disc to prevent spilling, called a Leakproof Shield™ (it’s the only disc that has this), and the way the disc sits at an angle means the fluid stays level in there to prevent leaks. A caveat: I have very heavy periods. I didn’t leak on day one, which was great, but I still wore period underwear on day two, my heaviest day, to catch any stray drips. I have yet to encounter anything that can contain my flow completely, and I’m fine with using period underwear for extra protection on my heaviest days. Having said that, I’m confident the disc alone would be enough to contain a light or medium flow.

Throughout my period, insertion and removal continued to be effortless. Above all, I felt absolutely nothing while it was in. In fact, near the end of my cycle, I forgot it was even there.

If you’re new to reusable period products, or are just curious about this innovative design, the Diva Disc is the one to try because the insertion and removal is so easy. And it’s hard to overstate how far superior it is to maxi pads. See you next month, Diva Disc.



5 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE DIVA DISC

IT’S GOT DESIGN CRED

The Diva Disc comes courtesy of Diva—makers of the original, long-beloved DivaCup—which celebrates its 20th anniversary of making periods better this year!

IT’S MADE TO DEFEAT LEAKS

This is the only disc on the market with a Leakproof Shield™ which protects against unwanted dumping when you’re going to the bathroom or working out.

IT’S PERFECT FOR NEWBIES

Soft and super easy to fold and insert, this is a great intro to the world of menstrual discs—plus the handy finger tab makes for stress-free removal.

YOU CAN HAVE INTERCOURSE WHILE YOU’RE WEARING IT

That’s right, period sex without the mess. Because the disc sits high above your pubic bone, it won’t get in the way.

IT’S BETTER FOR THE PLANET

Eco-friendly and reusable, the Diva Disc helps you divert countless pads and tampons from landfill.



Recent work by Winnie Truong: “False Eyes of A Reliable Witness” (left) and “Woman’s Whord.”

9 Winnie Truong

With her seductive and subversive work, this Toronto artist inspires us to see feminine bodies and beauty in a whole new way

When you allow your eyes to linger on artist Winnie Truong’s work, you find yourself drawn into a parallel reality—one that’s beautiful, close to natural and ever so slightly creepy.

From the drawings and cut paper that Truong assembles in 3-D collages emerge swamps, ponds and forest clearings where nothing is quite what it seems. The petals of a flower reveal themselves to be more like female organs or body parts; leaves sprout from distinctly human-looking hands.

These eerie landscapes are inhabited by “femme beings” that live and thrive within them. “I imagined them as women creatures that exist just beyond our scope for biological and scientific possibility,” the Toronto-based artist explains. “A lot of them are giving birth to their own environments, or they’re budding in different directions—part flora, part human.”

the boundaries of the feminine experience. Her indelible “Overgrowth” series of drawings focused on hair, and on “the space that exists between beautiful and ugly and what the line is that when you cross it, it suddenly becomes abject.” In those portraits, hair grew and flowed from different parts of the body, just as in her newer works plants meander in and out of orifices and flesh and folds. “It really straddles the line between what is beautiful and what is uncomfortable.”

These are world-shifting concepts woven into the minute folds and strokes of her ultra-detailed works. “Things don’t have to always be grand gestures in order to be change-making,” says Truong. “This creative work happens on such a small, detailed scale, but I don’t think that makes it less important. Every little bend and fold of the paper makes a very large difference.”

She attributes some of this enhanced attention to detail to her son, Artie, who just started kindergarten. “Being a parent to a young child is about learning to observe the minutiae of the world,” she says. “When you think about how a small human learns language and begins to be interested in the natural world—or outer space, in my child’s case—it really refocuses a lot of what is important and what is interesting.” Here, becoming a parent doesn’t just coexist with work, it enhances it. “Re-experiencing things that we take for granted really adds to the artist experience.”

Along with more representation of thriving Asian women artists—she describes having to actively seek them out herself as she came out of art school in 2010—the “artist mother” is something Truong would like to see represented more in the art world. “I’d like to know that it’s not a barrier in terms of success and being considered for opportunities. That could look like art shows in the middle of the day, and inclusion in residencies and other milestone aspects of artistic careers.”

Truong, who has exhibited consistently around the world for more than a decade, from New York to Copenhagen, and joined residencies from Norway to Japan, has been working to make that happen, presumably paving the way for artist parents to come. “I’ve brought my child to residencies and I plan to do it again next year,” she says, adding that it involves being able to ask for what you need, like bringing your partner along, or asking for accommodations for children. “That’s a bit of a sea change, I think, just to not be excluded.” —*Rani Sheen*

Her aim is radical: reimagining a world where the problems and restraints of female bodies and experiences do not exist.



As we watch these beings frolic, move or rest, they rarely look back at us—if they do, it’s with hollowed, alien-like eyes. “I’m allowing myself to build these worlds where it’s exclusively feminine and without the male gaze. For me, it’s about averting the gaze—giving these women the agency of not returning the gaze.” They’re unknowable, allowed their mystery—though as Truong points out, they aren’t romanticized “Earth goddesses,” fertile and magical; they’re just unbothered. “They’re interacting with their environments, unfettered. A lot of the tensions and the joys don’t exist, and they’re just doing their own thing.”

Her aim is radical: reimagining a world where the problems and restraints of female bodies and experiences do not exist. “I’m starting anew from a different primordial goo.”

This latest body of work is part of “Herbaria,” Truong’s show this past summer at Patel Brown gallery. But for years she has been exploring

women artists—she describes having to actively seek them out herself as she came out of art school in 2010—the “artist mother” is something Truong would like to see represented more in the art world. “I’d like to know that it’s not a barrier in terms of success and being considered for opportunities. That could look like art shows in the middle of the day, and inclusion in residencies and other milestone aspects of artistic careers.”

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Julie Kalinowski (top) and Angela Pastor in The Fitzroy, photographed by Lawrence Cortez.

giving the garment new life over and over again.

“We loved the idea that it’s a win-win for all—you get access to these garments you maybe wouldn’t necessarily buy, or wear more than once,” Kalinowski says of that nascent business idea. “You don’t need a formal dress sitting in your closet all the time. You just don’t. They’re one-time wear pieces.”

Working in fashion, Kalinowski saw firsthand how wasteful the industry could be. “We didn’t like being on the ‘sell, sell, sell, buy new, buy new’ side of business,” she says. The textile industry accounts for more CO₂ output than international flights and shipping combined. In the U.S., it’s estimated that 2,150 pieces of clothing are thrown out each second—yes, second—and the average person throws out the equivalent of 70 pairs of pants each year. The new business started as a slow burn: a single rack of dresses reserved for rental in the duo’s pop-up boutique. Soon the rack grew to two, then 10, until the whole store was rentals, bar a small shelf of merchandise.

In October 2016, Kalinowski and Pastor shut down retail entirely and their business was reborn as The Fitzroy. (It’s named after a painfully cool neighbourhood in the Australian city of Melbourne.) “We never looked back,” says Kalinowski.

At their current Junction location, women can drop in to try on one of the dresses they have on offer, each available in its full size range—a welcome, inclusive point of difference. The duo also ships hundreds of dresses across Canada each week.

“We call them ‘magical pieces,’” says Kalinowski of the dresses they stock, bought directly from cult-fave designers like Self Portrait, Narcres and Rixo.

When Kalinowski and Pastor shop for the business, they look for durable fabrics, silhouettes that work for different body types, and dresses that can be repaired by their in-house seamstress. (Once a year, they sell off their “retired” rentals.)

Kalinowski says it’s The Fitzroy’s in-store experience—during which a stylist works directly with customers to pick the perfect dress for their event—

that truly sets the business apart. “People come in and maybe they’ve gained weight over COVID, or they’ve just had a baby, or they’re going to an event where they’re going to win an award. There’s so much stress and anxiety around dressing for these ‘special occasions,’ so we’re here, as much as possible, to alleviate that,” she says.

There’s one customer in particular, who Kalinowski always thinks of, a mother-of-the-bride who came into their store “so defeated,” having tried on seemingly every other dress in town. “She came in very negative, expecting there to be nothing for her,” Kalinowski remembers. “You could suddenly see the smile on her face when she came out of the changeroom. She was excited, and she ended up renting two dresses.” Unsurprisingly, word of mouth has been the biggest driver of the Fitzroy’s business.

Which brings us to “dress rental magic,” a term Kalinowski and Pastor coined to describe the halo of happiness that comes with renting a dress another woman has worn. “The pieces go out on such happy occasions—they go to weddings, they’ve been at the Oscars—so we feel like they have such great energy,” says Kalinowski. “It’s that whole ‘travelling pants’ thing: Women passing on good vibes to each other.” —*Sarah Laing*

One customer came in very defeated, but you could see her smile when she came out of the changeroom.

Twilly Eau Ginger
the sparkle of the Hermès girls





1 Arati Sharma

For many women, self-confidence is the key to changing (or not changing) their lives. Canada's angel investor of the year shares her lessons for mastering the art of self-belief

There's a poster that hangs on the wall of Arati Sharma's home office. "You're not an imposter. You are for real," it reads in cursive script.

When Sharma bought the poster in 2017, she was heading up a new marketing team at Shopify, the Canadian tech start-up that is now valued at more than a billion dollars. Fast-forward a few years and Sharma's life looks a little different. She's the co-founder of Backbone Angels, a venture capital collective that she started with an all-female team of 10 early Shopify employees with a mission to fund the historically underfunded, a.k.a women and non-binary people. (Even in the post-Girlboss/side hustle era, only 4 per cent of venture capital goes to female founders.) In just over a year, Backbone Angels has backed 42 companies and invested more than \$3 million in those businesses.

The industry is noticing: Last year, Sharma was named Canada's Angel Investor of the Year by the National Angel Capital Organization. Sharma also started Ghlee, a ghee-based skincare brand with her brother Varun and sister Deepika. By any measure, she's a success. Still, the message on that poster—which remains at eye line from Sharma's desk—resonates.

"It's such a good reminder that you belong, because especially as women, and women of colour, you always feels like an imposter," says Sharma. "Society hasn't created those spaces for us."

Sharma and her team called the company Backbone Angels because they believe that women like them, often working in under-celebrated roles like HR or marketing, generally form the backbone of tech companies, despite getting little of the glory a male founder might. There's a second meaning, too: They were proud to have the backbone to stand up for themselves and fight for what they believe in. As Sharma says, "So much of being an investor is being able to say no."

We asked Sharma for her advice on strengthening that backbone, whether to build something world-changing or to simply feel more in control of your future.

YOU HAVE TO BE THE ONE TO BUILD YOUR DREAMS

Sharma's self-confidence is rooted in the example of her father, who was never afraid to go against the grain. "It's hard being a South Asian woman," says Sharma. "There's a lot of preconceived notions that are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

The Kit Changemakers

In this special double issue, we celebrate 10 extraordinary Canadians. These entrepreneurs, journalists, filmmakers, athletes, artists—and a very special science student—are united in courage, conviction and a belief in a brighter future

2 Lisa LaFlamme

The legendary journalist on why it still matters to fight for change

For 35 years, journalist Lisa LaFlamme has been covering the news—last month, she found herself making it. In August, senior execs at CTV announced that it was prematurely ending her contract as the chief anchor and senior editor of CTV National News. In a video posted to Twitter, LaFlamme said she was "blindsided" by her firing. The top brass insisted it was a "business decision," but the public smelled a rat: LaFlamme was beloved, respected and highly decorated, plus her show was the top-rated in Canada. Then word leaked that some of those same execs had questioned who "approved" LaFlamme's pandemic decision to let her brown hair go grey in front of the cameras.

Such blatant ageism served against a Canadian icon? The outcry was instantaneous. Women wrote movingly about their own, less high-profile experiences with ageism and a double page open letter in support of LaFlamme ran in the *Globe and Mail* signed by luminaries such as Heather Reisman, Lloyd Axworthy and Roméo Dallaire. Brands got in on the action, too: Dove Canada encouraged women to greyscale their profile pics, while Wendy's turned its mascot's famous red braids grey with the caption: "Because a star is a star regardless of hair colour."

Throughout, LaFlamme has maintained a dignified silence; at press time, she's in London as a special correspondent for CityTV to cover Queen Elizabeth II's funeral. We were honoured that she agreed to speak with us about her storied history as a changemaker.

The way that journalists report on issues has the capacity to create positive change. What stories have you worked on so far that you're most proud of in this capacity?

"Over 35 years of reporting on everything from city council to global conflict it's tough to know precisely what stories have created positive change—daily news doesn't leave a lot of time for reflection. However, on a personal level, I keep coming back to Afghanistan. The fallout of that war remains with me today, and the people I have met have given me a deeper perspective on tragedy, challenge and the strength of the human spirit to triumph over adversity. Most recently, being part of the jour-



nalistic drive that helped hundreds of Afghans escape the Taliban—an effort that is still underway. I am proud to have played a role in reuniting so many families on Canadian soil. They are a great addition to our nation. Change only comes through awareness, and in the end, that's a reporter's job: to shine a light because truth and progress die in darkness."

This is a time of immense change—political, cultural, climate. As a journalist, how do you respond to, and navigate, change?

"I'm not sure who said it first, so I'll quote Anonymous: 'Change is the only constant.' We navigate it every single day in big ways and small. For me, the most damaging and challenging change is the rise in misinformation. I have long believed that in a society of information and misinformation overload, media literacy should be as important as math. It should be taught in classrooms as soon as kids carry smartphones. Consuming news today still comes down to the old adage: Consider the source. It's more important than ever."

You're one of Canada's most respected journalists. What would your advice be to young women who are interested in pursuing journalism today?

"My advice to young women is straightforward. If journalism is your passion, follow it. If writing is your weakness, strengthen it. If history is your shortcoming, research it. Most importantly, if you face sexism or racism, expose it. You can't effect change by cowering in a corner. Be brave." —Laura deCarufel



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comes
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As we celebrate 150 years of beauty innovations for a better world, Shiseido is proud to partner with The Kit to celebrate Changemakers. Through their joyful spirit and commitment to positive change, each honoree is making Canada — and the world — a better place.

Like each extraordinary Changemaker, our hope lies in helping to create a world that realizes the important truth: All life is beautiful. Together, we honour their contributions to a brighter future for all of us.

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GINZA TOKYO
#ALIVEwithBeauty

We need to
pave the path
for the next
generation of
women.

CONTINUED FROM COVER

placed on us by society and our culture,” particularly, she says, when it comes to an “obsession” with marriage and weddings. “My dad would always say, ‘You can get married, do whatever you want, but first, you have to stand on your own two feet. At the end of the day, you’re the one who’s going to support you—and you have to build your dreams.’” He also constantly pointed out women who were leaders, like Marie Curie, Sharma’s childhood idol. “He always instilled a lot of confidence in us,” she says.

SOMETIMES IMPOSTER SYNDROME MEANS YOU’RE AT THE BEGINNING OF SOMETHING

“Right now, so much of culture and social media wants you to be an expert, and share all these opinions,” says Sharma, pointing to our obsession with those “10 things I learned about X”-style Twitter threads, which are particularly endemic to tech. “It feels like everyone knows more than you, when the reality is that you might just be at the beginning of a new journey, and it’s okay not to know everything.” In fact, says Sharma, it shows you’re a person with a growth mindset, a concept introduced to Sharma by an executive coach. “When you get older, and farther into your career, you can forget that with every new step you take, you’re entering a new box—which means you have to learn and acquire experience to get to that next level.”

JUST START THE DANG THING

Sometimes, confidence comes after action, not before. “If you get started and do a little bit each day, you’re going to get more confident in what you do,” says Sharma. “As someone who can procrastinate, I like to break big things up into very small steps.” When Sharma and her siblings started their beauty brand, the first step was coming up with the name. “The smaller the steps, the more achievable they will be.”

RIDE THE EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER

Struggle is normal. So is having your confidence waver when things get tricky. “Even if you do have a great idea, there are days that are amazing, and there are days that are really hard,” says Sharma. “When you’re working on something new, or you’re trying to be a changemaker, it’s a roller coaster.” Keep perspective and persevere.

KEEP GOING, BECAUSE THE NEXT GENERATION NEEDS YOUR EXAMPLE

“Your first solution isn’t going to be your last,” says Sharma, referring to the fact that in most things, whether that’s founding a company or being a parent or solving world peace or becoming your best self, you’re endlessly going to be iterating on whatever you’re building.

“It’s tough out there, and [as women,] we don’t have the same success stories to look at,” says Sharma. “But we need to pave the path for the next generation of women.” That’s something Sharma tells herself when she starts to feel shy about talking so openly about money. “Sometimes I get nervous or my Canadian-ness comes out, but I do it because think that the younger me is paying attention.”

PHOTOGRAPHY: O’SHANE HOWARD (NIA AND JUSTICE)



Arati Sharma in her home office, photographed by Lawrence Cortez.



“Greatness is fuelled by hope,” write Nia (left) and Justice Faith.

Nia and Justice Faith

In this open letter, the sisters and the co-founders of cutting-edge inclusivity platform Révolutionnaire, make the case for believing that we can all make a difference

Dear Canada,

We are in critical times. The pandemic has challenged our mettle, forced us to engage in deep reflection, and examine our lives and contributions. Amid our confusion, doubt and despair, we are now called on to believe that our collective voices can make a difference.

Answering that call requires hope—bold hope. Hope, rooted in past failures, present difficulties and future promise. This is the panacea in periods of uncertainty.

Hope, dauntless and resilient. Hope whispers that, despite being shaken by the past, and with no evidence that what is ahead will be better, change is possible.

Throughout history, our communities have been driven by dreamers,

Sometimes that difference meant sitting around the dinner table, passionately engaging in political and philosophical debates. Many of these discussions concluded with, “So, Justice and Nia, what are *you* going to do about it?”

We grew to understand that daily actions matter and that idle acceptance of current circumstances constitutes complicity in present and future disasters. It is that belief that compelled us to found Révolutionnaire, and its social network for changemakers with the hope that if given access to the necessary community, tools and information, young people can harness their power to make a lasting impact across causes.

Every day, through conversations with young changemakers, action on

sion and despair. Hope is the harmonic melody that comforts us when the noise of the world becomes too loud. Hope is the spark of change. And it is the solid foundation on which those of us with a dream of making our communities and countries a better place, stand on. And every now and then, hope is that reassuring voice that says to us, “Today did not go so well. Try again tomorrow.”

Hope gave Harriet Tubman the bravery to escape slavery and the audacity to create a network through which she reached behind and liberated scores of others. Hope inspired generations to march together and challenge oppression and injustice.

Our story relies on, and is reflective of, so many changemakers—past and present, recognized or unknown. Our collective experiences inspire us to dream of a better world, hoping that our actions can make a difference.

As sisters, we are hopeful for the future and have always been intentional about change—just as our parents taught us. Just as their parents taught them.

And from Women’s Suffrage to Black Lives Matter, and all movements in between, we have learned that, in moments of challenge, we are effectively called on to create a blueprint for the next generation. Do we want to be seen as people who merely existed during these critical times? Or do we want that blueprint to illustrate that we showed up, with tenacity, tenacity, determination and hope?

The answer, like the story, is ours to shape.

Sincerely,

Nia Justice

Hope is the voice in our heads that reminds us that we are worthy.

doers and disrupters, who have dared to dream the impossible and imagine that better is merited. And on those broad backs, we sometimes need to stand, to challenge the status quo and lay the pathway for progress.

Greatness is fuelled by hope, and a recognition that within us lies the power to effect change.

Growing up, our lives were defined by service, advocacy and how we show up in the world as young Black women. Our parents hoped that, through exposure, we would be enlightened to make a difference, big or small. Sometimes that difference meant participating in protests. Sometimes that difference meant preparing meal baskets for others during the holidays, instead of us receiving Christmas presents ourselves.

our social network, and the service and advocacy initiatives that Révolutionnaire leads, our hope is renewed that change is possible.

From following the 11-day snowshoe journey of one young activist to raise awareness for his petition on Révolutionnaire to working with hundreds of young people to pack meals and hygiene kits for unhoused individuals to volunteering in community gardens to fight food insecurity, we see—and are a part of—the positive impact of a growing community of individuals dedicated to taking action, and trading in hope.

Hope is the voice in our heads that reminds us that we are worthy. It is the torch that illuminates our pathway in darkness. It is our paintbrush when we are confronted by the canvas of confu-

Top shelf

A memoir can change how you see the world—and your place in it. These 2022 titles top our fall reading list



Can't Help Falling: A Long Road to Motherhood
“People told us to relax—it would happen,” writes Sarah Schwartz about attempting to bounce back, post-miscarriage, in her best-selling account of trying to have a baby. Schwartz’s journey is by turns heartbreaking and infuriating, and always beautifully told.

\$22, CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA



Run Towards the Danger
Sarah Polley’s searing collection of essays traces “the most dangerous stories” of the actor and filmmaker’s life so far, “the ones I have avoided, the ones I haven’t told, the ones that have kept me awake on countless nights.” For more on Polley, turn to page 4.

\$35, CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA



My Privilege, My Responsibility: A Memoir
In 2012, journalist Sheila North started the hashtag #MMIW to create conversations about Canada’s missing and murdered Indigenous women. As she writes in this gripping memoir, for her, the violence was personal. An unmissable read.

\$25, CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA



Next Time There's a Pandemic
In this generous-spirited book, artist Vivek Shraya shares her own experience of the pandemic—which she describes as “an anxiety-ridden ordeal”—and asks whether it had to be that way. It’s a fascinating exploration of very recent history.

\$13, CHAPTERS.INDIGO.CA

4 Leylah Fernandez

A future where women’s sports get the recognition they deserve? This rising tennis star is playing for keeps

Tennis phenom Leylah Fernandez, 20, should rank high on any list of “ones to watch.” Admire the Montrealer’s ascendant career (she placed second at the US Open last year), sure, but also pay attention to what the BonLook ambassador wants to bring to her audience: the thrill of sport. What does she ask in return? Overdue respect for women athletes and their sports.

How do you want to disrupt tennis?
“On court I’ve always tried to showcase my own personality, which is always happiness. I want to be able to have fans watch me play and say, “Wow, this is exciting, this is so much fun.” And hopefully with my game, I can bring more and more fans to watch women’s tennis because there’s so many great tennis players who are coming up in the WTA Tour. I just hope that one day we can all, the whole organization, work together to make this actually grow. Because that’s what Serena [Williams] has been doing. She did so well when she played in the very beginning, and that has helped us, the younger generation, do better now. So hopefully we can do that for the next generation.”

What changes do you want to see for women in sports?
“I’d like to see a view shift. You know, women, we work hard just like men do. We put on a good show just like they do. I would love to see more fans come and watch women play, not only in tennis, but in every sport, because it’s so exciting. You see so many women trying to do something different in the world, they try to change the world. And it’s exciting to see these strong women doing so well in their respective fields.”

What do you wish someone had told you when you were starting out?
“I think I’ve always wished that someone would have told me that I wouldn’t be spending time with my family as much. My family is extremely important to me. But sometimes I’m travelling alone or with a few other girls for weeks or even months and I’m not able to see them. I’m just extremely happy that technology has been an option, that we’re able to FaceTime, text and call because I would sometimes miss birthday parties, family activities, and it was hard for me. So, I wish someone had told me that. I don’t think it would have changed my decision to play tennis, it just would have prepared me a little bit more.”



Women put on a good show just like men do.

How much do you think your family’s sacrifices affect the way you approach your sport and your life?
“My family has done so much for me. They sacrificed a lot, which has helped me achieve my own dream. Every time there’s a tough moment on court or even outside the court, I always try to remind myself of those sacrifices, because that gives me strength. I see the strength that they give for me—and not even for their own dream but for me. That gives me confidence that they believe in me. I try to surround myself with people, like my family, who believe in me. All their sacrifices give me motivation to keep going in my path.”

Who’s a changemaker you admire?
“I’ve always admired Serena and Venus Williams. Of course, I love Billie Jean King and her story. I recently read her book and it was inspirational. But I grew up watching Serena and Venus, and just to see them, where they came from and all of the hurdles that they had to go through on and off the court. They showed what fighting is, what strength is, what confidence is and also independence. They really inspired me and my sisters to be stronger and to keep going for my dreams, even when things aren’t going the best way.” —Eden Boileau



A common thread runs through Sarah Polley’s work as a screenwriter and director: She’s clearly drawn to telling nuanced stories about women’s lives and experiences. It’s something Polley knows a thing or two about. Having started off as a child actor on CBC’s *Road to Avonlea*, she transitioned to adroit performances in adult roles before moving into a celebrated career behind the camera as a filmmaker of keenly observant, elegant features. From her Oscar-nominated directorial debut, *Away From Her*, to interrogating her own family history in the documentary *Stories We Tell*, to her memoir, *Run Towards the Danger*, released earlier this year, Polley has not only turned her lens on other women’s stories, but also her own. Her experiences both behind and in front of the camera over her long career have informed her own approach to filmmaking—and in the process helped shift longstanding inequity in the industry. “In terms of the kinds of projects I choose, I think I’m naturally just trying to do things that I hope will have some impact, or forward some part of the conversation that maybe hasn’t happened yet,” Polley says in an interview during the Toronto International Film Festival, where *Women Talking*, the first film she’s directed in a decade, screened to major buzz. “As I get older and less and less patient, I want to make films that are having a more rigorous, vital and alive engagement with things that we’re grappling with in our society.”

There’s no better example of that than *Women Talking*, Polley’s adaptation of Miriam Toews’s 2018 novel about a group of Mennonite women who come together to wrestle with the repercussions of systemic sexual assault by the men in their community. “The book asked these articulate questions around violence against women and structures of power. I was also taken by its insistence on thinking about what it is we want to build—not only what we want to destroy—and the project that these women have to try to imagine something other than what they’ve lived,” Polley says. “It really shook and inspired me and made me feel strangely hopeful.” Starring a powerhouse cast of female actors, including Rooney Mara, Claire Foy, Jessie Buckley and Frances McDormand, with plenty of women behind the scenes on the crew, *Women Talking* will hit theatres in December and is already garnering discussion about a possible Oscar nod for Polley for best director. But telling honest stories about women’s experiences can come with a cost. That’s something Polley explored in her memoir through frank essays detailing the risks associated with speaking up, staying silent or refusing to play along. Making the film at the same time as completing her book proved fitting, Polley says. “They were kind of speaking with

5 Sarah Polley

The filmmaker shines a light on women’s experiences in all their complexity

each other in so many ways,” she recalls. “I’d obviously done so much thinking around telling a story like this one. And what was important to me in terms of how to tell it was the aftermath of it—how it’s grappled with, and moved alongside and through.” While critics and colleagues laud Polley as a changemaker in the film world—McDormand recently said *Women Talking* “represents a shift in our industry”—Polley would rather focus on others moving the needle on better representation onscreen and in decision-making roles. “I think we’ve made a lot of progress, but I don’t think we’ve made quite as much as we think we have,” she says. “But I think it’s good; we’re headed in a certain direction. I’m really encouraged to see movies like *The Woman King* coming out. It’s hugely exciting—that’s a radical shift, and a conversation about feminism in the hands of those women is something I’m super excited to see.” As for what needs to happen next? “I’d like to see more women in positions of power in the film industry,” Polley says. “And I’d like to see more inclusion and intersectionality in feminism in general—being more open-minded about what a conversation about feminism looks like, and who’s included in that conversation.” —Tabassum Siddiqui

Highlight reel

Upgrade your screen time with fall films lensed by Canadian directors



THE YOUNG ARSONISTS directed by Sheila Pye
Fans of Sofia Coppola’s *The Virgin Suicides* will be drawn to this gothic drama set in 1980s rural Canada. The film follows four teenage girls—all suffering from trauma—over a summer. It’s not simply the adolescent quartet element that inspires comparisons to Coppola: Director Sheila Pye is also a visual artist and her ability to imbue the film with haunting imagery adds depth among the despair.



NORTH OF NORMAL directed by Carly Stone
Sarah Gadon as a headline, rapturous reviews at TIFF—everything’s coming up golden for *North of Normal*, the second feature from Toronto filmmaker Carly Stone. The movie is based on the bestselling memoir by Cea Sunrise Person about her unconventional childhood in the Canadian wilderness, including living in a tipi in Alberta, and leaving her family behind at 13 to pursue a modelling career.



THIS PLACE directed by V.T. Nayani
V.T. Nayani is one of our most empathetic storytellers, and she reaches new heights in this coming-of-age LGBTQ+ love story. Nayani is also a co-writer of the film, with additional writing credits going to rising talent Golshan Abdoulia and *This Place*’s star, Devery Jacobs (currently lighting up *Reservation Dogs*). As Nayani puts it, the movie explores the experience of “living in the liminal space between cultures.”

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY IMAGES (FERNANDEZ); LLC-MONTPELLIER (POLLEY); COURTESY OF TIFF (FINA STILLS)

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Bold and Beautiful

1.



2.



3.



4.



12.



11.



Here's a bright idea: do your Fall look a favour and find your passion for colour that's brilliant and bold. Meet your match with BV's edit of the season's wardrobe makers; a hero piece with personality, wit and charm galore.

5.



6.



1. Crivelli ring, **BERANI JEWELLERY DESIGN**
2. Smythe blazer, **ANDREWS**
3. Goal Digger purse, **BROWNS**
4. Sneaker, **STUART WEITZMAN**
5. Eyeshadow, **MAC COSMETICS**
6. La' Ros top, **HONEY**
7. Smythe coat, **ANDREWS**
8. Pants, **BANANA REPUBLIC**
9. Gianni Renzi pump, **BROWNS**
10. Diane Von Furstenberg dress, **ANDREWS**
11. Guerlain lipstick, **SHOPPERS DRUG MART**
12. Chrome Hearts sunglasses, **SQUINT EYEWEAR**

7.



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9.



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Julie Kalinowski (top) and Angela Pastor in The Fitzroy, photographed by Lawrence Cortez.

Angela Pastor and Julie Kalinowski

Style rules. So does sustainability. The duo behind Fitzroy Rentals is changing the way we shop

"I love this, but I'll only wear it once."

That's the wistful refrain that Julie Kalinowski and Angela Pastor used to hear all the time in their Toronto pop-up shops. A customer would fall in love with a dress only to demur on the grounds of practicality or price tag. Or she might buy the piece anyway, and it would sit in her closet gathering dust after its single (hopefully memorable) wear.

At the same time, Kalinowski and Pastor were constantly hearing from content creators who asked to borrow their clothes for a shoot or an event. Then it hit: "We put those two things together and thought, 'Why don't we just rent the pieces?'"

Kalinowski and Pastor—lifelong friends who met in kindergarten—envisioned a model similar to the one popularized by Rent the Runway: Women rent a dress when they need one, then return it to be rented by someone else, giving the garment new life over and over again.

"We loved the idea that it's a win-win for all—you get access to these garments you maybe wouldn't necessarily buy or wear more than once," Kalinowski says of that nascent business idea. "You don't need a formal dress sitting in your closet all the time. You just don't. They're one-time-wear pieces."

experience—during which a stylist works directly with customers to pick the perfect dress for their event—that truly sets the business apart. "People come in and maybe they've gained weight over COVID, or they've just had a baby, or they're going to an event where they're going to win an award. There's so much stress and anxiety around dressing for these 'special occasions,' so we're here, as much as possible, to alleviate that," she says.

There's one customer in particular who Kalinowski always thinks of, a mother-of-the-bride who came into their store "so defeated," having tried on seemingly every other dress in town. "She came in very negative, expecting there to be nothing for her," Kalinowski remembers. "You could suddenly see the smile on her face when she came out of the changeroom. She was excited, and she ended up renting two dresses." Unsurprisingly, word of mouth has been the biggest driver of the Fitzroy's business.

Which brings us to "dress rental magic," a term Kalinowski and Pastor coined to describe the halo of happiness that comes with renting a dress another woman has worn. "The pieces go out on such happy occasions—they go to weddings, they've been at the Oscars—so we feel like they have such great energy," says Kalinowski. "It's that whole 'traveling pants' thing: Women passing on good vibes to each other."

Shop Canada

Buy better, feel better: These three homegrown brands serve up artistry and authenticity



HILARY MacMILLAN
The Toronto designer has been serving up sartorial freshness since 2013, when she launched her eponymous brand of elevated separates. Since then, MacMillan has also launched home decor, swimwear and, most recently, a (joyfully pink) collab with Barbie. In addition to the pomp and polish of the pieces themselves, an important part of the brand's appeal is its commitment to progressive values: The womenswear lines are size-inclusive (available from XS to 4X) and cruelty-free, forgoing silk and wool in favour of vegan materials. "I derive so much excitement from starting conversations and speaking to a person's values as well as their aesthetic preferences," says MacMillan.

HILARY MACMILLAN
TRENCH COAT, \$325, HILARYMACMILLAN.COM



OBAKKI

Founded in Vancouver by Treana Peake, Obakki is a purpose-driven direct-to-consumer retailer of home decor, jewellery and a sprinkling of fashion. Peake is a true ethical shopping pioneer: She travels the world (she's been to Africa more than 70 times) to discover—and surface—artists. It's the platform's built-in respect for the work that makes Obakki so singular. As Peake told *The Kit*, "I want to break down misconceptions, such as the idea that just because something is made in Mexico it should be cheap. That person studied that one craft for eight years, just like the candlemaker in Japan. There is the same level of skill, craft and dedication."

ALMA NUEVA VASE, \$1,495, OBAKKI.COM



HEIRLOOMHATS

A special feeling comes over you when you enter Heirloom Hats, a tiny Montreal boutique-cum-atelier. The pieces, of course, are exquisite: a mix of sculptural felt fedoras, straw boaters with satin ribbons and felted bucket hats in rich jewel tones. Then there's the studio in the back, where you can see the hats being made by hand—and with love, thanks to the passion of Heirloom's founder, Samantha-Tara Mainville. That spirit extends to the vintage shop-within-a-shop, where a curated selection (heavy on dresses) awaits. Heirloom also ships all clothing in compostable or recycled mailers.

HEIRLOOM HATS COWBOY BEBOP IN TOBACCO, \$375, HEIRLOOMHATS.COM

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Direct advertising inquiries to:
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Eve Segy
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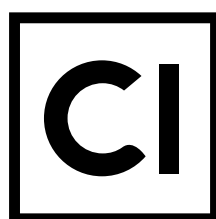
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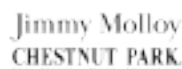


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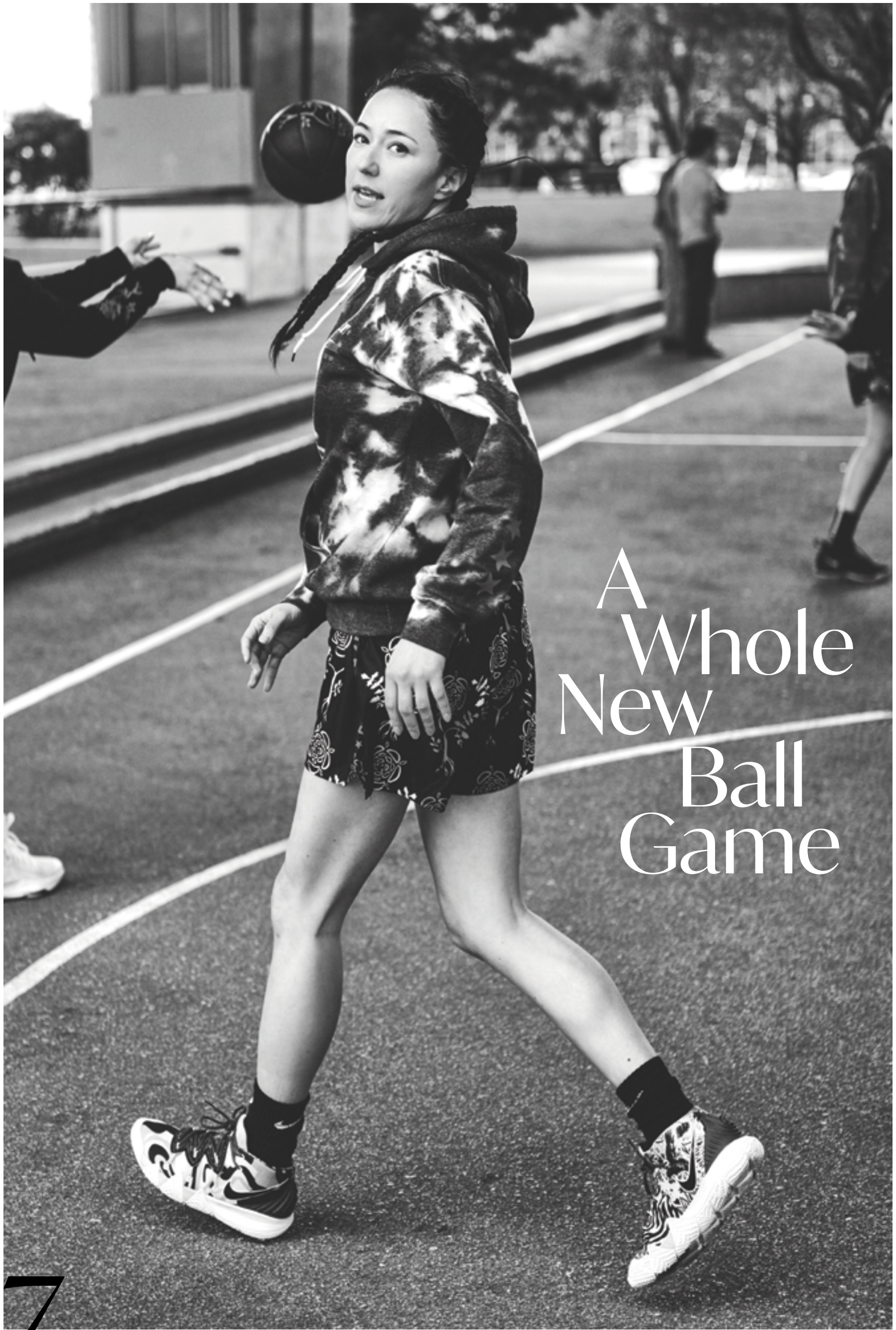
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THE KIT

Changemakers



A Whole New Ball Game

7

Joleen Mitton

The multi-hyphenate—athlete, model, entrepreneur—is a baller in every sense of the word. From trauma, she built community—with a little help from her team

Joleen Mitton's first time at All Native, the Indigenous basketball tournament, was a trip—literally. In Vancouver, Mitton and seven other players packed themselves, their jerseys and their balls into a pickup truck and made the treacherous 20-hour journey north along the so-called Highway of Tears. Mitton says she showed up with only a few pairs of socks and underwear: "I didn't even bring a jacket," she recalls with a laugh. "I didn't know what I was in for. I didn't know that time would change my life."

Mitton grew up in East Vancouver with her mother, a survivor of the Sixties Scoop and the residential school system. "We had a lot of inter-generational trauma in our family," says Mitton, who describes herself as "a pretty shut-down kid." When she turned 14, she started playing basketball. At home, she held in her anger; on the court, she released it in fiery, competitive play: "To be able to put my trauma into something was really beautiful," she says. So were the relationships she developed with her teammates, who were, like her, navigating family addiction and violence. "We're all from different nations, but we stuck together through the pain," says Mitton. "Together, we learned how to be in relation to other people. We were a ragtag group of teenagers wanting to be better. We were the next healthy generation. We were the next step."

Then, a curveball: In 1999, when Mitton was still in high school, she travelled to Asia to become a model. She lived in Thailand, Hong Kong and China, among other countries, and ended up staying until 2008. "It was the golden age of modelling—the photographers still took Polaroids to check the light." She worked for Vivienne Westwood and Clinique. It was exciting, but her focus remained unclouded: "I was there to make money, not to feel important." Coming home to visit was tough. Her family, especially her grandmother (her kookum), was proud of her, but the time away had brought into sharp relief how shabbily Indigenous people—and Indigenous culture—was treated in Canada. "It's a beautiful thing to have a melting pot of all different cultures, but when you're trying to find yourself and all you see of your own culture is pain—well, that's heartbreaking."

As Mitton considered her next move, she remembered how anchored she felt at those basketball tournaments up north, from the hilarious late-night chats with her teammates ("my sisters") to the beauty of the all-Indigenous Opening Ceremonies. "Growing up in Vancouver, you didn't see Indigenous people gather and have that pride in ourselves. Seeing that for the first time was mind-blowing."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



THE FUTURE OF REUSABLE MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS IS HERE

It inserts with ease, is effortless to remove and feels like nothing

“Welcome to the maxi pad!” says Janeane Garafalo’s character Vicky to Ethan Hawke’s Troy Dyer in the iconic 1994 movie *Reality Bites*. But she could have easily been saying this to me when I got my period just before my 13th birthday. I stuck with bulky, uncomfortable pads until my early 20s, when I finally summoned the courage to use tampons. In my 30s, looking for a more eco-friendly option, I switched over to organic tampons, but by my early 40s I started hearing from friends about another option: menstrual cups.

At first, I couldn’t wrap my head around the idea, but about five years ago, after another friend made the switch, I took the plunge. Getting the insertion and removal right was the biggest learning curve: You have to make peace with the fact that you’ll get a little blood on your fingers. But once I mastered how to get it in and out, I’ve never looked back. In fact, I’ve cursed myself for not getting on board sooner. It’s a relief to know I am no longer contributing all that waste to landfill every month, and it’s amazing (and budget-friendly) to not have to constantly replenish my stock of tampons.

Traditional cups, like the classic DivaCup that so many of us started with, are bell-shaped, and sometimes, if I didn’t get insertion quite right, I could feel it. They can also be tricky to insert because you have to fold the cup in half while also pushing it up. So I was excited to try a brand new innovation from Diva—the best known brand for menstrual cups, with 20 years of experience making them—the Diva Disc.

My first impression is that the Diva Disc is thinner and more flexible than most menstrual cups, which makes folding it so much easier. Made from medical-grade silicone, it’s not bell shaped but designed more like a basin, and meant to be pushed back behind your

cervix where it sits tucked out of the way behind your pubic bone. That also makes it one size fits all, which is excellent.

My period arrived and as I expected, insertion was a breeze. I pinched it slightly on the sides to make it more narrow and pushed it back (not up) toward my cervix. This one also comes with a pull tab for easy removal, so I ensured that was positioned at the front of the disc. When it came time to empty it, the tab made removal seriously simple. You just “bear down” as the instructions say and then grab the tab, which is really easy to reach even if the disc ends up moving back a little farther. I still got a bit of blood on my fingers—honestly, periods just are a little messy sometimes; there’s no way of getting around it, and using a disc definitely helps you get comfortable with your body’s natural processes.

There’s also a small shield along the top of the disc to prevent spilling, called a Leakproof Shield™ (it’s the only disc that has this), and the way the disc sits at an angle means the fluid stays level in there to prevent leaks. A caveat: I have very heavy periods. I didn’t leak on day one, which was great, but I still wore period underwear on day two, my heaviest day, to catch any stray drips. I have yet to encounter anything that can contain my flow completely, and I’m fine with using period underwear for extra protection on my heaviest days. Having said that, I’m confident the disc alone would be enough to contain a light or medium flow.

Throughout my period, insertion and removal continued to be effortless. Above all, I felt absolutely nothing while it was in. In fact, near the end of my cycle, I forgot it was even there.

If you’re new to reusable period products, or are just curious about this innovative design, the Diva Disc is the one to try because the insertion and removal is so easy. And it’s hard to overstate how far superior it is to maxi pads. See you next month, Diva Disc.



IT’S GOT DESIGN CRED
The Diva Disc comes courtesy of Diva—makers of the original, long-beloved DivaCup—which celebrates its 20th anniversary of making periods better this year!

IT’S MADE TO DEFEAT LEAKS
This is the only disc on the market with a Leakproof Shield™ which protects against unwanted dumping when you’re going to the bathroom or working out.

IT’S PERFECT FOR NEWBIES
Soft and super easy to fold and insert, this is a great intro to the world of menstrual discs—plus the handy finger tab makes for stress-free removal.

YOU CAN HAVE INTERCOURSE WHILE YOU’RE WEARING IT
That’s right, period sex without the mess. Because the disc sits high above your pubic bone, it won’t get in the way.

IT’S BETTER FOR THE PLANET
Eco-friendly and reusable, the Diva Disc helps you divert countless pads and tampons from landfill.



We were the next healthy generation. We were the next step.



The women on the All My Relations basketball team range in age from 17 to 40. “Together, we learned how to be in relation to other people,” says Joleen Mitton (below). Photography by Lawrence Cortez.



I was healing myself and trying to heal the team at the same time.

CONTINUED FROM COVER

So Mitton came home. She became a doula for at-risk Indigenous women—“You can lose your mind in the modelling industry; this was real life”—and she started hitting the court again. A few years later, she formally took over her basketball team and called it All My Relations. “Every Indigenous person, at the end of a prayer, says ‘all my relations,’ so this was a way to connect us, all of us, even though we come from so many distinct nations,” says Mitton, who is Plains Cree and Dane-zaa. “Rather than it being all about basketball, we brought an Indigenous lens to what we were doing.” She pauses. “I was healing myself and trying to heal the team at the same time.”

That meant introducing a less hierarchical approach and bringing in a new coach, Pam Baker, who Mitton says was instrumental to the team’s success. After “17 years of losing,” All My Relations started to win. Then, this past April, in the ultimate sports movie climax, the team clinched the championship at the All Native tournament. “It was pretty magical,” says Mitton, with a big grin, remembering. “It was such a journey to get there.”

Along the ride, Mitton has launched other successful ventures, including Vancouver Indigenous Fashion Week, which premiered in 2017 and featured some of her teammates on the runway (“Hey, basketball players are tall!” she says with a laugh), as well as an inclusive modelling agency.

But Mitton says her biggest accomplishment is helping bring out the best in her community. “I think I’m good at that,” she says, with hard-earned confidence. “I’ve made a lot of people proud of who they are.” —*Laura deCarufel*



8 Caroline Huang

Meet the 17-year-old high school student committed to changing the world, one single-celled organism at a time



Run the world
There are more orgs than ever before helping girls realize their potential. Here are a few of the best

JEAN AUGUSTINE CENTRE FOR YOUNG WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT
If you’re looking for a mentor, you could hardly do better than Jean Augustine, the first African-Canadian woman elected as MP to the House of Commons. In 2014, Augustine founded this Toronto centre, which prioritizes mentoring opportunities for girls age 7 to 17.

JUSTICE FOR GIRLS
Teenage girls who live in poverty can often be invisible. Justice for Girls, a Vancouver-based registered charity, aims to shine a light on their experiences and give them the tools to navigate their daily lives.

CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR GIRLS IN SCIENCE
At CAGIS, the focus is on learning through doing: visiting field sites, studying the chemistry of cooking, even building a flashlight. In recent years, CAGIS has added expert virtual programming, including coding a script to calculate how old you’d be on Mars.

Girls have a lot to offer. Change is coming and it starts with us.

Most recently, Huang became an ambassador for Plan International Canada, joining its “Girls Belong Here” youth leadership program. She spent time with top executives—including those from the Body Shop and IBM Canada—and shared her ideas for how to ensure girls and women are better represented in places of power.

“The problem of gender equality is systemic, and it boils down to girls not seeing themselves in these positions,” says Huang with an eloquence that would be impressive in someone twice her age. “Being in the program gave me even bigger aspirations for my future, because when you look at the people leading these companies, they’re not female, and it’s intimidating when you don’t see yourself represented.” Still, the chance to be heard by those executives was empowering. “Girls have a lot to offer. Change is coming, and it starts with us.”

While having more women in the C-suite of multinationals matters, Huang believes it’s important that girls have role models in their own communities, the “remarkable women leaders” who are already there, but might be “too humble” to share their wisdom and accomplishments in a way that their male counterparts don’t think twice about.

For Huang, whose parents are both in STEM, representation is the key. “It’s not an intentional thing, but when you don’t see your friends in classes, you’re less likely to sign up with them because you want to be with that community. It starts from there.” (It also doesn’t help, she points out, that the high school curriculum is structured in such a way that if you don’t take certain prerequisite courses, you can be shut out of studying STEM at university because you didn’t, say, take chemistry in grade 10.)

In her own immediate future, Huang is getting ready to apply for university, majoring in biotechnology. She also has a side dream to create an innovation hub, where people come together to tackle issues such as resolving the power imbalance the green agricultural technology revolution has exacerbated between the developed and developing world.

“I’ve also got the idea of policy-making in the back of my mind,” she says. “Like, how can I use the STEM I’m learning in my degree to create social good, and inspire social justice, and really use them to change policy, which will in turn ripple through different societies in the world?”

We can’t wait to see how Huang answers that question. —*Sarah Laing*

MAKE MOVES

Working out means different things to different people, but one universal truth is that whatever you choose to wear during a sweat-inducing activity—or however you choose to move your body—you should feel comfortable and confident. That means your performance-enhancing goods should be made of technical fabrics that work to wick moisture away, dry quickly and support your body in all the right places. And of course, they also need to look stylish!

Enter H&M Move, an accessible version of sportswear, redefined as movewear. Its goal? To celebrate that everyone on the planet is already a mover, no matter their age, gender, fitness or ability level.

With this new line extension, the international fashion brand aims to empower women, men and non-binary people with its inclusive and expansive approach to activewear. In fact, they've come up with a

whole new term for the category: Movewear. "We're here to celebrate movement and invite the world to move. Removing barriers to sport is very much at the heart of our purpose, starting with democratizing sports apparel," says Simon Brown, general manager of H&M Move.

Using four exclusive materials—like sweat-wicking DryMove and stretchy SoftMove—the new offering has been manufactured to be gentler on the planet. Today, almost 85 percent of H&M Move products are made from recycled materials or sourced in a more sustainable way with a long-term goal of achieving 100 percent sustainability.

This first drop includes a variety of Move Essentials (think super-soft leggings, tops and bras), alongside training and running gear—with plenty more categories on the way. But how does Movewear perform? To find out, we enlisted five Canadian trailblazers to test-drive the new launches and share what movement means to them.



Cherise Munkoh, 22, personal trainer

When you're not working with clients, what are some of your favourite ways to move your body?
"Strength training is definitely my favourite way to move my body! I love being able to lift heavy, feel and look strong and see my progress week by week. In November, I started doing spin classes at SpinCo, and I'm obsessed with the instructors, the energy and of course, the themed rides. Recently, I've started to also go to drop-in Pilates classes at my friend's studio, Nice Day Pilates. I'm always up for trying new ways to move my body!"

For folks that are just getting into fitness and perhaps don't own much in terms of performance wear, what are the essential items they should look for and why?
"I would definitely suggest bottoms that are made from a sweat-wicking material! Some people find sweat embarrassing, but we're all human; it's natural and rather than feel ashamed of your sweat, you should feel comfortable in it. Finding bottoms that will leave you feeling dry and cool after a sweaty workout is key! I would also recommend looking for a high support sports bra that will make you feel secure during any movement."



Christa Couture, 43, musician, writer and mother

What has your experience been with activewear and adaptive designs?
"Activewear has been one of the best areas for adaptive style—things like elastic waists, tear-away pants, those features are already designed for ease, so they've got a head start on being more widely accessible. Some brands are taking that next step further and adding additional adaptive features like hooks and Velcro for folks who don't have typical use of their hands or who use wheelchairs or other devices. What's very important in creating inclusive activewear is remembering that disabled bodies are also active bodies. The fitness world can be focused on only a certain type of body, and while I may not move in typical ways, I still love to be active, and I still need the right outfit for it!"

What's one way you celebrate your body every day?
"Having a disabled body in this particularly ableist culture meant it took a long time to come to first accept my difference, much less celebrate it. But getting the "flower leg" (my floral prosthetic leg) totally changed how I see my disability. I used to try and hide it, but now making my disability visible has been a daily choice to elevate and celebrate my difference. The flower leg is my favourite accessory!"



Five powerhouse women test-drive the new "Movewear" line shaking up sportswear



Luciana Silva, 30, emergency medical dispatcher with Toronto Paramedic Services

The nature of your job puts you in a lot of difficult situations, both mentally and physically. What helps you healthily deal with that stress?
"Staying active—and therapy! I know therapy is still stigmatized, but, in all honesty, when hiking with my dog and dancing doesn't cut it, I talk to someone. Speaking to a counsellor or therapist has helped me discover my strengths, learn life-long coping skills for difficult

situations and improve my stress levels."

How do you bring activewear into your everyday wardrobe?
"I love activewear, and I would say it makes up about 70 percent of my wardrobe. I like high-waisted leggings that have nice coverage over the stomach and lower back area and tops that aren't too cropped but aren't super long either. Support and comfort is key for me! I also try to keep up with the latest trends and look for items that I can wear in the gym and in casual settings, like the brown set I wore for this shoot!"



Tavia Christina, 25, professional dance artist and choreographer

As a professional dancer and choreographer, what do you look for in clothing when you practice and rehearse?
"I look for comfort first, over anything else. I need something that will make my body feel its absolute best while rehearsing to physically deliver my best moves and execution of choreography. Of course, I also value aesthetics. I want something that makes me feel like me, because dancing and choreographing is a personal expression of my artistic voice, experiences and who I am as a human. I need my wardrobe to reflect that too."

What are your thoughts on the H&M Move picks you wore for the shoot?
"First thing that caught my eye was the colour, wow! I love how the set bottoms are high-waisted and the bra top is more like a fitted tank top. As someone with a short torso and longer legs, I think the set accentuated my body type well! It felt so good on my body; it is super soft with some added ribbed fabric texture, which I couldn't stop touching! The shoes are super chic, lightweight and comfortable, easy to dance in or do some movement and stretching."



Harshita Jha, 22, art student and model

Does stylish activewear motivate you to go to the gym or move your body?
"They say that if you look good, you feel good! That holds true here, and a cute activewear outfit gets me motivated to show up for myself. I've come to learn that I can bring my own style into how I dress when I'm working out. This helps me feel stylish and ready to take on any physical challenges ahead of me."

What do you like most about the outfit you are wearing today?
"I really like the colour of this outfit, and my favourite pieces are the shorts and tank top that I'm wearing. The shorts are lightweight, and the high waist fits me really well. The tank top has a built-in bra and it's so stretchy

and comfortable! Overall, this outfit looks and feels great, not to mention it's made from recycled materials, which is amazing."



Recent work by Winnie Truong, clockwise from top left: "False Eyes of A Reliable Witness," "Woman's Whorl," "Silverlight of Two Moons" and "Noxious Game."

9 Winnie Truong

With her seductive and subversive work, this artist inspires us to see feminine bodies and beauty in a whole new way



When you allow your eyes to linger on artist Winnie Truong's work, you find yourself drawn into a parallel reality—one that's beautiful, close to natural and ever so slightly creepy. From the drawings and cut paper that Truong assembles in 3-D collages emerge swamps, ponds and forest clearings where nothing is quite what it seems. The petals of a flower reveal themselves to be more like female organs or body parts; leaves sprout from distinctly human-looking hands.

These eerie landscapes are inhabited by "femme beings" that live and thrive within them. "I imagined them as women creatures that exist just beyond our scope for biological and scientific possibility," the

exploring the boundaries of the feminine experience. Her indelible "Overgrowth" series of drawings focused on hair, and on "the space that exists between beautiful and ugly and what the line is that when you cross it, it suddenly becomes abject." In those portraits, hair grew and flowed from different parts of the body, just as in her newer works plants meander in and out of orifices and flesh and folds. "It really straddles the line between what is beautiful and what is uncomfortable."

These are world-shifting concepts woven into the minute folds and strokes of her ultra-detailed works. "Things don't have to always be grand gestures in order to be change-making," says Truong. "This creative work happens on such a small, detailed scale, but I don't think that makes it less important. Every little bend and fold of the paper makes a very large difference."

She attributes some of this enhanced attention to detail to her son, Artie, who just started kindergarten. "Being a parent to a young child is about learning to observe the minutiae of the world," she says. "When you think about how a small human learns language and begins to be interested in the natural world—or outer space, in my child's case—it really refocuses a lot of what is important and what is interesting." Here, becoming a parent doesn't just coexist with work, it enhances it.

"Re-experiencing things that we take for granted really adds to the artist experience."

Along with more representation of thriving Asian women artists—she describes having to actively seek them out herself as she came out of art school in 2010—the "artist mother" is something Truong would like to see represented more in the art world. "I'd like to know that it's not a barrier in terms of success and being considered for opportunities. That could look like art shows in the middle of the day, and inclusion in residencies and other milestone aspects of artistic careers."

Truong, who has exhibited consistently around the world for more than a decade, from New York to Copenhagen, and joined residencies from Norway to Japan, has been working to make that happen, presumably paving the way for artist parents to come. "I've brought my child to residencies and I plan to do it again next year," she says, adding that it involves being able to ask for what you need, like bringing your partner along, or asking for accommodations for children. "That's a bit of a sea change, I think, just to not be excluded." —Rani Sheen



Her aim is radical: reimagining a world where the problems and restraints of female bodies and experiences do not exist.

Toronto-based artist explains. "A lot of them are giving birth to their own environments, or they're budding in different directions—part flora, part human."

As we watch these beings frolic, move or rest, they rarely look back at us—if they do, it's with hollowed, alien-like eyes. "I'm allowing myself to build these worlds where it's exclusively feminine and without the male gaze. For me, it's about averting the gaze—giving these women the agency of not returning the gaze." They're unknowable, allowed their mystery—though as Truong points out, they aren't romanticized "Earth goddesses," fertile and magical; they're just unbothered. "They're interacting with their environments, unfettered. A lot of the tensions and the joys don't exist, and they're just doing their own thing."

Her aim is radical: reimagining a world where the problems and restraints of female bodies and experiences do not exist. "I'm starting anew from a different primordial goo."

This latest body of work is part of "Herbaria," Truong's show this past summer at Patel Brown gallery. But for years she has been

Art of the possible

On now: four exciting exhibitions, featuring the boundary-pushing work of Canadian women artists



"Wanda Koop: Lightworks"
At 70, Winnipeg artist Wanda Koop continues to push her work in new and unexpected ways. This solo show aims to define the meaning of colour and light by stripping both away, then building them back up.

MONMICAL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION, UNTIL NOV. 20, 2022



"Victoria Mamnguqsualuk"
This exhibition spotlights the work of the late Inuit artist Victoria Mamnguqsualuk: captivating prints and tapestries steeped in myth. Mamnguqsualuk was particularly fascinated by Kiviuk, one of the oldest figures in Inuit oral history and an eternal nomad. Until she reached her 30s, the artist was a nomad, too: She grew up hunting with her family—including her mother, the artist Jessie Oonark—in the Northwest Territories before settling in Nunavut in 1983.

ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO, UNTIL JAN. 2, 2023



"Shary Boyle: Outside the Palace of Me"
One of our most visionary contemporary artists, Toronto's Shary Boyle confronts what it means to be human during our increasingly surreal times. This exhibition is her boldest yet: a multi-sensory installation that reimagines the gallery as a performance space, complete with two-way mirrors and a coin-operated sculpture. Here, Boyle's primary themes are technology and identity, and the disturbing ways they intersect.

MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS, UNTIL JAN. 15, 2023



"Uninvited: Canadian Women Artists in the Modern Movement"
The first thing you notice about this exhibition? Not many landscapes. Instead, the 200 works of art on display—painting, photography and sculpture—tell more intimate, urban stories grounded in the female experience from the 1920s to the '40s. Of particular note: the arresting oil paintings of Prudence Heward (above).

VANCOUVER ART GALLERY, UNTIL JAN. 8, 2023

PHOTOGRAPHY: PATEL BROWN GALLERY (TRUONG); MONMICAL CANADIAN ART COLLECTION (KOOP); ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO (MAMNGUQSUALUK); MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS (BOYLE); VANCOUVER ART GALLERY (HEWARD).

Taylor Lindsay-Noel

As a teenager, Lindsay-Noel had her sights on an Olympic medal. Now, her dreams are even bigger



When she was 14, Taylor Lindsay-Noel knew exactly where her life was headed. She was going to the 2012 Olympics as a gymnast, then to UCLA to study sports medicine, and finally, to start her career as a doctor. Then, in a split second, everything changed. During gymnastic training, Lindsay-Noel's coach pushed her to try a move that had never been successfully completed before. Lindsay-Noel fell, and the accident instantly paralyzed her from the neck down. On that day, as a young teenager, Lindsey-Noel began what she calls her "second life."

Now 28, Lindsay-Noel is a boundary-pushing multi-hyphenate. She's an entrepreneur, whose loose-leaf tea brand, Cup of Tè, was chosen as one of Oprah's Favourite Things in 2020, as well as a vocal disability activist. Lindsay-Noel's viral TikTok account "Access by Tay" reviews restaurants, bars and events for their accessibility. She's also an Instagram poet, with 30,000 followers.

Here, Lindsay-Noel shares her story in her own words.

"After the accident, I was upset with God, with the universe. Like, why me? I felt like I was a good person, and I couldn't understand what I had done that was so horrible at 14 years old. What helped me get through, to be honest, was being a bit delusional. I don't think I understood for the first year how badly I'd hurt myself.

The doctors were telling me, 'You're not going to walk,' but I was like, 'Yeah, but I'm an athlete so I can train really hard and I'll beat the odds.' When that didn't happen, that's when the depression came. It was life-changing, and I didn't know what the rest of my life was going to look like. I had no idea who I was outside of a sport. It was really scary.

My whole life, I've grown up drinking tea in the morning. I'm Caribbean, and you're taught you need to have something hot to start your day. My house was the one where people always gathered, and we'd always have good conversations over a cup of tea. In university, I started a podcast called *Teatime with Tay*. When I wanted tea brands to sponsor me, none of them got back to me, so I was like, 'I'm going to make my own tea brand.' It took over my life. Four years later, we've been in Oscars and Grammys gift bags, and I'm opening my first store very soon.

I've been in a wheelchair for 14 years and going out has

always been an 'event,' in the sense that there's lots of pre-planning and anxiety around it.

My friends and I love to be social, and we'd find ourselves always going to the same few places because we knew they were going to be accessible. I didn't have to freak out that we'd have to change places mid-way [because the first place wasn't accessible]. Often, I'll call a place, and they'll say it's accessible when it's not. Most of the time, there's no concrete information online.

My friend suggested that we start videoing our outings, which led to my Access By Tay account. It's about accessibility, but it's also about getting access to what an accessible life looks like. It's not just about restaurants—it's about transit, it's about sidewalks. I'm happy to share my life with people to hopefully educate them. The goal is to show why things miss the mark.

Accessibility should be proactive, not re-active—and it's not just for people in wheelchairs. If you're blessed enough to grow old, one day that could be you, where you'd prefer to have a ramp to go up rather than take 20 flights of stairs.

If I were to have listened to society, a Black, female, disabled business owner isn't supposed to be successful. If I'd let that stop me from venturing into any of the things that I've done, I wouldn't have done anything. I could have easily rolled over and given up, but I was like, 'I'm going to ride this ride until the wheels fall off, no pun intended.'

I want to prove to people that a fulfilled life doesn't have to look one way. People who are disabled live full lives. We are part of society, we love to go out and have fun. I hope that my example can show people that there's so much life to live."

Accessibility should be proactive, not re-active—and it's not just for people in wheelchairs.

THE KIT X BANANA REPUBLIC

SEASON OF STYLE

We're going all in on elegance this fall



It's time to start getting dressed up again, and there's no better place to do it than Banana Republic. The brand's latest fall collection is the height of elegance thanks to dressed-up options like occasion-ready silk blouses, bold dresses and high-quality, tailored pieces that look like they were handmade just for you. Even more exciting? Banana Republic is relaunching its shoe and bag collection with an array of functional-yet-stylish, investment-worthy items with timeless silhouettes and sharp details. These covetable pieces are going to be the closet staples you turn to again and again to round out your fall looks. Read on to discover a few of our faves from the new collection.

1. THE CLASSIC ONE

Honestly, every well-rounded closet needs a cross-body bag. Featuring Banana Republic's signature buckle, Italian leather, contrast stitching and asymmetrical details, this mini version is so luxe and versatile that you'll want to pair it with all your fall looks, including the season's sleekest corduroy suit.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE MINI GIA CROSSBODY BAG, \$520, [BANANAREPUBLIC.CA](#)

2. THE TREND-FORWARD ONE

We're calling it now: Edgy lug boots are going to be the footwear item of the season. We love the slanted lines and contrast stitching of this leather pair, which are as comfortable as they are stylish and look excellent when styled with a cozy chunky knit.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE HUDSON SUEDE CHELSEA BOOT, \$330, [BANANAREPUBLIC.CA](#)

3. THE EVERYDAY ONE

If you're anything like us, you probably find yourself gravitating towards your fave fits-it-all bucket bag, whether you're running around the city on errands or off to a weekend getaway with friends. This oversized version of the brand's Medium Bucket is made in Italy and features a comfortable shoulder strap that'll help you take on the day in style.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE OVERSIZED VIDA BAG, \$680, [BANANAREPUBLIC.CA](#)

4. THE ELEVATED ONE

With the holiday season just around the corner, we know that means many dinner parties and gatherings are in your future. This irreverent, asymmetrical take on a typical pump will be perfect for those occasions. It's made with black Italian leather and boasts an easy-to-wear back-zipper closure. Wear them with wide-leg trousers for an understated yet elevated silhouette.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE VALAIS HAIRCALF LEATHER HEEL, \$435, [BANANAREPUBLIC.CA](#)

5. THE BOLD ONE

If you prefer a little more flash for your holiday looks, opt for this stunning leather clutch. Made of the softest Italian leather, its timeless design features contrast stitching and a fun slanted strap for an easy way to add an edgy statement to your evening outfits. Pair it with a jet-black leather shirt jacket to create an ultra-cool monochromatic look.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE STELLA CLOUD CLUTCH, \$530, [BANANAREPUBLIC.CA](#)

6. THE PLAYFUL ONE

If you were loving the posh tennis looks of the summer, you're definitely going to want to carry the preppy vibes into fall. This squared-toe, made-in-Italy pair are both classic and modern, and will seamlessly work with everyday outfits or going out moments. Best of all? You don't have to be going back to school to sport these. Pair them with a silk shirtdress for an eye-catching day-to-night look.

BANANA REPUBLIC THE LUZ SUEDE LOAFER, \$310, [BANANAREPUBLIC.CA](#)

Twilly Eau Ginger
the sparkle of the Hermès girls

