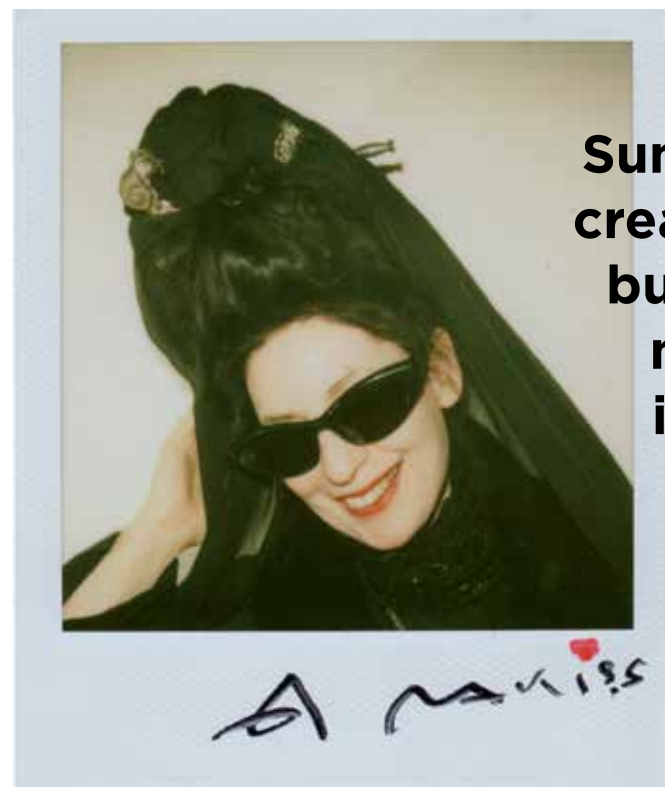


DIANE --- PERNET

Fashion, costume designer, critic, curator, talent scout, filmmaker. Diane Pernet is credited as the first fashion blogger; her festival, A Shaded View On Fashion Film, to have lit the way of the genre. Here's a glimpse of Diane's far-seeing world, by way of her signature cat-eye frames

words Silvia Bombardini





“
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Shades name your blog, your film festival, now one of your perfumes too. It's your vision, literally and figuratively, that runs through them all.

What has A Shaded View come to mean to you?

All of the above, and a play on the word 'shades' and clearly my point of view. It is a platform for all forms of creativity. I always say 'shaded' never 'jaded'.

To the many interviewers who ask about your style, you answer that you started wearing black as a designer, because black neutralises, like Margiela's lab coats. Does this apply to shades too, and was it around the same time that you began to always wear them as well?

I'm not sure exactly when I started wearing them day and night, but probably the end of the 80s when I was still living in NYC. I like the distance it gives between me and the rest of the world. I am an open and easily approachable person but none the less I like to set certain boundaries.

It's funny how dark shades can go, at least in popular culture, from something one wears

not to be recognised to something one gets to be recognised by. Like an aura of mystery as a personal trait. Does that idea suit you?

I suppose it could. I never wear them to be noticed, maybe it is more to block out a lot of things I would rather not see. And like I said, to keep a bit of a distance and not encourage people to come too close physically and personally. I suppose sunglasses do create mystery but that was never my intention.

Perfect frames seem to resist seasonal trends: when someone finds it, the pair they no longer can live without, it becomes as much essential to the image they have of themselves as it is of how others see them. What's your own favourite pair, and how did you find it?

Now I am honoured that my favourite eyewear designer has designed a pair just for me, my name is on the inside of the arm of the frame. It is based on the iconic cat eye that Alain Mikli first designed in the mid-eighties. I discovered them when I was in Tokyo for my collection and went to the Alain Mikli

showroom there, and put the iconic glasses on all of my models. I kept the pairs and wore them throughout about 27 years. About four years ago I was in Italy and I met a young eyewear designer behind the brand Ozona and he was up for the challenge to create the perfect frame for me. It was an interesting experience. He made 11 different fronts until we agreed on the perfect pair. I visited him and he took pictures of me, front, side, etc. When Alain Mikli was relaunching his brand he sent me a note that I was 'disloyal'. It was all in good fun, but he said 'I guess now I have to create a pair just for you'. I'd been loyal for 27 years with the few years in between with Ozona. Other eyewear designers had tried to work with me, but for me it was just copying a master and making them a little different but not better. They told me that I would never be happy unless it was Alain Mikli, not exactly true as later I worked with Ozona, however if I want Mikli I'd go to Mikli not another brand to make 'Mikli'. Anyway I'm super happy with my custom Mikli's, and perhaps in the future we will collaborate on a limited edition group of frames.

We've briefly mentioned Shaded, one of four fragrances you've developed together with Intertrade in 2014, that are now selling at Liberty. Is a line of shades by Diane Pernet something you're really thinking about?

I am very open to proposals of just that. I spoke with Alain Mikli on the eve of the opening of ASVOFF, my fashion film festival, but seven months have passed since then and we have yet to collaborate on a small group of frames, but I would love that. Let's see what the future holds.

As an expert on the matter, how would you say one should go about choosing shades? Should it be a more objective endeavour, thinking for instance of what frame would look better with their cheekbones, or a more emotional meeting, like love at first sight?

I think it has to be both. Of course the structure of your face and your colouring will affect your choice. If you have a small face a big frame will be over powering. The choice is very personal and emotional as well, but cannot be made without serious consideration as to how that particular frame works on your face. It is such an important accessory after all.

Glasses can tell us something about the personality of those who wear them, or at least that's what cinema teaches us, from Groucho Marx to Lolita. Which brings us to talk about the festival you've mentioned, A Shaded View On Fashion Film, taking place yearly at the Centre Pompidou. Now heading toward its ninth edition, what are some of your favourite films that you've featured over the years?

Le Dernier Cri by Erwin Olaf, *She Said She Said* by Stuart Blumberg, *Headpieces for Peace* by Jessica Mitrani, *Hungry for Love* by Justin Ambrosino, *Holi Holy* by Manish Arora and Bharat Sikka, *Hors d'oeuvre* by Monica Menez, *I Want Muscle* by Elisha Smith Leverock, *Kitchen* by Tim Yip, *Jumper* by Justin Anderson... I could keep going on but I'll stop here.

Lastly, what's right now on your shaded viewing list?

Heart of a Dog by Laurie Anderson, *Anomalisa* by Charles Kaufman, *Author: The JT LeRoy Story* by Jeff Feuerzeig and *La Chambre interdite* by Guy Maddin.