

OK!

PAKISTAN
FIRST FOR CELEBRITY NEWS

ISSUE 88, JANUARY 2022

**ZARNISH
KHAN**
RISING
STAR

**TOM
HOLLAND**
OPENS UP
ABOUT
SPIDER-MAN

ZENDAYA
ON FILMS,
LOVE &
TOM HOLLAND

A LEAGUE OF THEIR OWN

SHAAN SHAHID & KIRAN MALIK ON THEIR
UPCOMING FILM ZARRAR & REACHING A
NEW MILESTONE FOR PAKISTAN'S
ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

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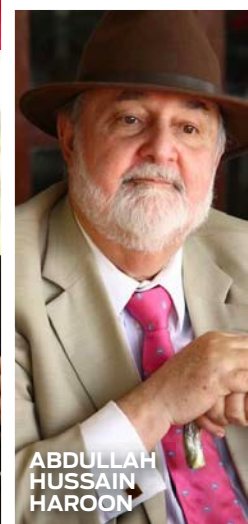
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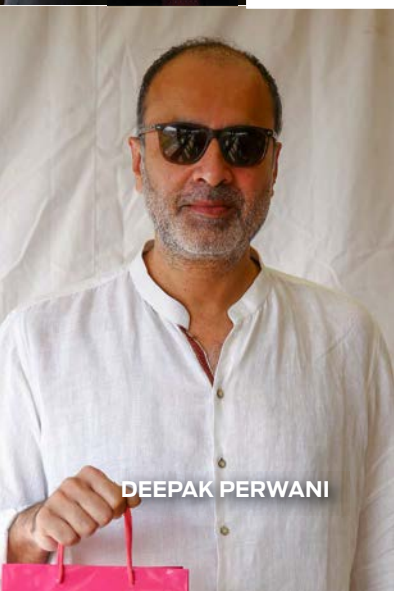
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KARACHI

Ringing in 2022 with the stars

Freiha Altaf hosted a New Year's Eve party with a real eclectic mix of young people, celebrities fashionistas & socialites!



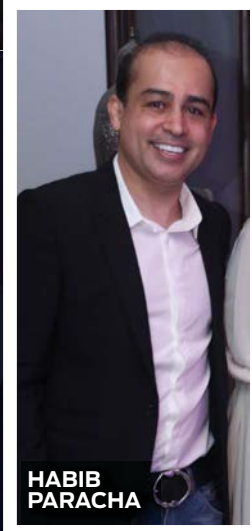
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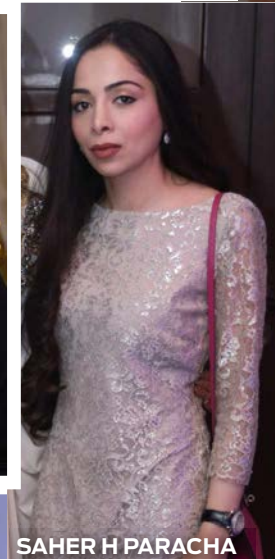
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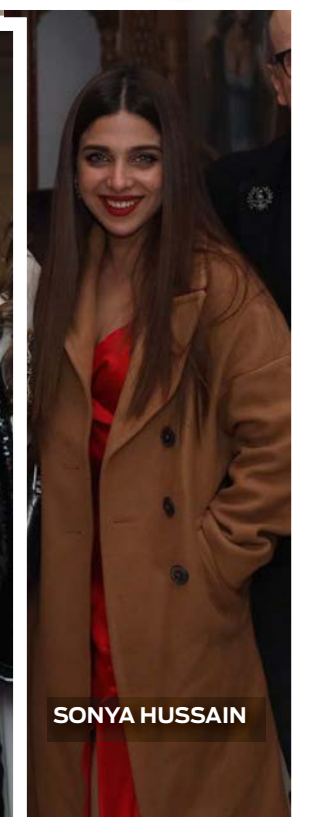
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RAISING THE BAR WITH *ZARRAR*

SHAAN & KIRAN

Shaan and Kiran on their upcoming film *Zarrar*, and reaching a new milestone for Pakistan's entertainment industry



The much delayed yet anticipated spy thriller *Zarrar* is slated for a release this March. Starring Shaan Shahid and Kiran Malik in pivotal roles, the feature film is helmed by a team of ace professionals, and is shot in multiple, scenic locations. Shaan makes his return to film in almost five years since *Arth 2*, while Kiran Malik joins the project as the female lead, essaying the character of a journalist. Joining the ranks of Shaan and Kiran are Nadeem Baig, Shamooin Abbasi and Hajra Yamin. As our cover stars, Shaan and Kiran discuss their forthcoming movie, *Zarrar* and give us many reasons why we should watch their film!

SHAAN SHAHID

Shaan, since *Arth 2*, which was released almost five years ago in 2017, we haven't seen you do many projects. Why is that?

SHAAN SHAHID: I am planning to take up production seriously, which is why it took me a while to return since *Arth 2* and now, *Zarrar*. The latter project will be released on 23 March, and after that, we will be releasing other new projects. I just finished a beautiful script with Bee Gul. It is a love story. So, hopefully, by mid-March, we will be in London filming again.

Do you plan to venture into television? If not, what are your reasons? And why do some of our established actors refuse to experiment with small-screen projects, considering that our television industry creates far more compelling dramas than films?

SS: I would love to venture into the new Over the Top (OTT) platforms. It is a great opportunity to

“I have given my 200 percent to *Zarrar*!”


— Kiran

do good work and connect with fans. As far as television goes, people are doing decent work, but the scripts are more geared towards women. I have nothing against that, but we need to change our scripts a little. Plus, there should be some form of boundary for artists to not expose themselves on-screen to draw the audience. Overall, television seems to be a good medium but personally speaking, I am made for films. By March, we also plan to undertake a few OTT productions.

You have been vocal in the past about not wanting to work in Bollywood, expressing your desire to focus more on Pakistani cinema. Although that is important, our cinema is still struggling after all these years. Where is the progress lacking, in your view?

SS: Well, there are many reasons not to go to Bollywood. First of all, the Pakistani industry needs to recover, and all my talent and hard work are needed here. I can't just jump the ship and think of my career only. I have to look at everything in its totality.

Unfortunately, the Pakistani government does not realize the power and soft image that ►

A man with a beard and short dark hair, wearing a black leather jacket over a white shirt, is shown from the chest up. He is gesturing with his right hand, with his index and middle fingers extended. His eyes are closed or looking down, and he has a serious expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

**“I take a stand
against human
rights violations
in India.”
– Shaan**





UNPLUG WITH KIRAN MALIK

Three words that best describe you?
Resilient, optimistic and forthcoming.

Favourite restaurant and cuisine?
La Petite Maison; French cuisine.

The one thing you cannot live without?
My Imaano.

Words of wisdom or favourite quote?
“When you write the story of your life, don’t let anyone else hold the pen.”

Any book you would recommend?
“After the Prophet” by Lesley Hazleton.

Favourite song?
Nowadays, Clandestina Radio Edit.

A piece of advice that changed your life?
My father always advised me to set achievable goals and go all out to fulfill them.

Favourite luxury brand or item you own?
Chanel.

Best holiday destination?
Paris.

Favourite designer?
Tom Ford.

Most inspirational people you know?
My parents.

Your most memorable experience?
Performing *Umrh* with my daughter.

One thing that you love about Pakistan?
The hospitality of our people.

“*Pinky Memsaab* was a breakthrough project for me.” — Kiran

carry. They are not putting a lot of effort in our industry. As far as India is concerned, it is heartbreaking what they are doing to the Muslim community, and other minorities including ethnic cleansing of many. My stand is not a big stand but it does make a difference. So, I take a stand on human rights violations being carried out in India.

A lot of people say that there are no boundaries for actors when it comes to work. They are at liberty to go work anywhere they want. Well, I would ask them right now to try and apply for a visa to work in Bollywood films. Indians would make sure that they see that boundary.

Talk to us about your forthcoming film *Zarrar*, and your character profile in the movie?

SS: *Zarrar* is a great film. I loved directing, writing and working in it in its totality. It was lovely collaborating with such great actors. Kiran and sir Nadeem were amazing, including the British cast. *Zarrar* is the first spy, action-thriller film that will come out of Pakistan's entertainment industry. I had a great team to work with, from technicians to producers. The music and action sequences of the movie are great! You don't really get to know about my character in the first half of the film. However, the latter half reveals more information about him as you learn his reasons for being silent in the first place. We shot the project in numerous locations including Lahore, Karachi, London, Turkey and the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. It was a good team effort, and hopefully, the film will do great at the box office!

To conclude, anything you would like to say about bringing hope into the new year?

SS: 2022 is here, and we, as a country, need to come together and unite for a greater purpose, and that is Pakistan. We must put in our efforts and bring Pakistan on the forefront of the entertainment world. We are going through tough times right now, but tough times don't last; tough people do. As a country, we have been through so much, from corrupt politicians to all the restrictions that were put on us by the West.

We are still struggling, but hopefully, we will reach a new milestone for Pakistan's entertainment industry. I am hoping that the country comes out of its troubles. Our overseas Pakistanis are of great help, too! What they can do for Pakistan, wherever they are, is more than what we can ever do living here. If they can unite and support Pakistan through any platform, that'd be of great help!

KIRAN MALIK

How would you describe yourself?

KIRAN MALIK: I am a go-getter. I always plan at least five years ahead to work towards a goal. I am also a very positive person. I take my family and friends' opinions very seriously, but the end decision I ►





UNPLUG WITH SHAAN SHAHID

Three words that best describe you?

Patriot, passionate, dreamer...

Favourite restaurant or cuisine?

Italian. No restaurant beats my brother's Italian cooking.

The one thing you cannot live without?

Family.

Words of wisdom or favourite quote?

"Decisions determine destiny..."

Any book you would recommend...

"The Alchemist".

Favourite song?

Anything by Abida Parveen ji, Rahat Fateh Ali, Shafqat Amanat Ali and Atif Aslam.

A piece of advice that changed your life?

Keep learning and keep changing.

Favourite luxury brand or item you own?

Porsche 911.

Best holiday destination?

Been there, seen all. Home!

Favourite designer?

Tom Ford.

Most inspirational person you know?

My mother.

Your most memorable experience?

Falling in love at first sight with Aminah...knew she's the one!

One thing that you love about Pakistan?

The potential.



**“Personally, I am
made for films.”
— Shaan**

settle on is mine. I am someone who knows exactly what I want to achieve in life.

How did you start out in the entertainment business?

KM: I am an HR consultant by profession. A lot of people don't know that. I started modeling 14 years ago and have worked with all the big names in Pakistan and abroad. I recall hosting a ball when HSY came up to me and requested that I open the show for him as a model. Once I did that, I came back to Lahore where I met Ather Shahzad and started working with him. There was no going back! The credit really goes to HSY, who saw the potential in me to contribute to the fashion industry. I joined the film business six years ago. I haven't done any dramas yet, but all my work so far has been relevant to films.

How are you navigating the world of show business since Pinky Memsaab?

KM: *Pinky Memsaab* was a breakthrough project for me acting wise. Before that, I did *Zarrar*, and as you already know, it didn't get a release date back then. *Pinky Memsaab* was a semi art film, and a lot of people didn't expect that models could act. That project, in a way, changed the viewers' perspective around models' ability to act. I received great feedback after the film, and have since done great work!

I also did a film with Faysal Quraishi titled *Money Back Guarantee*. Then I did a song for Adnan Siddiqui's film, another song for Atif Aslam and a campaign with Fawad Khan. I will say that *Pinky Memsaab* has surely taken my career many steps ahead because no one knew I could act prior to the film's release.

You play a journalist in your upcoming film Zarrar. How did you land the role?

KM: *Zarrar* for me was a surprise. I met Shaan in Karachi and had a fan moment with him. I recall vividly that it was at a café. A very dear friend of mine was with Shaan and that was the time when he began observing my body language or the way I was conversing with him. In less than 24 hours, my friend called and said that Shaan wanted to offer me a role in a film.

Shaan narrated the story of *Zarrar* on call. I really liked it but wasn't sure if I could do justice to the role or make myself comfortable enough in the film. I had no background of acting, and fashion is a completely different world. However, the credit goes to Shaan for providing me with a sense of comfort and support. I hope you all like *Zarrar* because I have given my 200 percent!

What preparations were necessary to bring a journalist to life in a project like Zarrar? Did you study any specific journalist to bring more nuance in your character?

KM: It took me a while to convince myself that I could do justice to the role. When I finally decided to do the film, I sat down with Shaan many times and went through the script. He wanted me to watch all the current affair shows to observe the body language of journalists. I also started reading up on journalism a bit! Shaan has really been a mentor for me when it comes to acting! **OK!**

INTERVIEW: HAIDER RIFAAT
STYLING & COORDINATION: RAO ALI KHAN
JEWELLERY: MIRAS BY MISBAH
PHOTOGRAPHY: AABROO HASHIMI
MAKEUP: MARAM AZMAT
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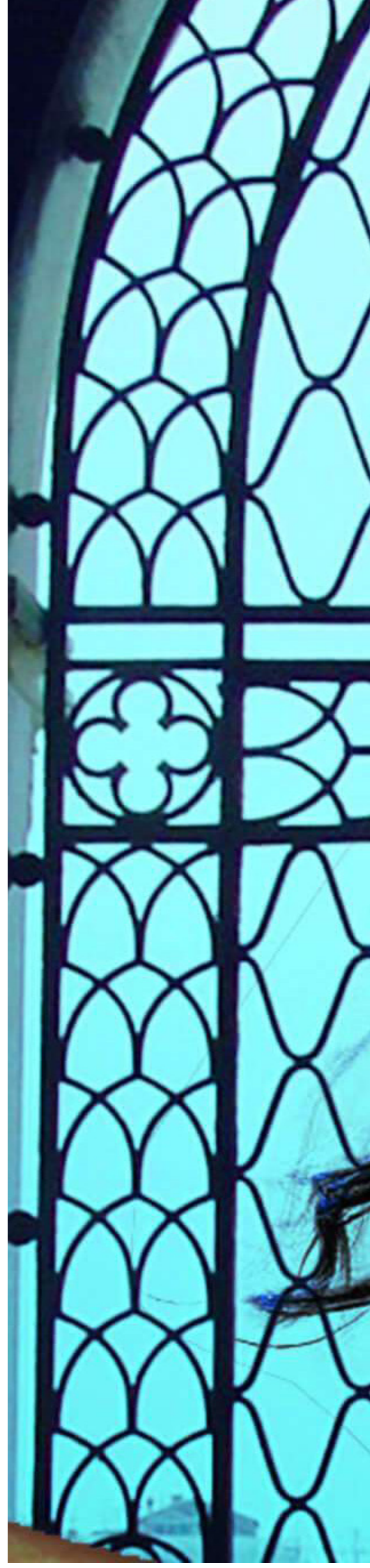
WHITE STUDED OUTFIT BY MERITA MERJA



**"I think loving
someone is a sacred
and special thing"**

ZENDAYA

**Zendaya on work, being a
role model for young women,
creating her own safe space, and
being romantically involved with
Tom Holland...**







It's been a spectacular year for Zendaya, the supremely talented former Disney princess who has emerged as one of Hollywood's top female stars. On the heels of her bravura, Emmy-winning performance in the TV series *Euphoria*, earlier this year she delivered a stunning performance in *Malcolm & Marie*, a very adult look at a crumbling relationship. More recently, she enjoyed a small but key role in the hit blockbuster film *Dune* that offers audiences a preview of what to expect when she stars in the sequel that begins filming next year.

Today, however, her worldwide fan base - including 110 million Instagram followers - is raving about her appearance in *Spider-Man: No Way Home*, which opened in UK theatres on Dec. 15th. Zendaya returns as M.J. Watson opposite Tom Holland as Spider-Man/Peter Parker in the third and possibly final installment in this latest reboot of the superhero franchise.

"It's pretty special to have grown up all together," said Zendaya earlier this year. "It was so much fun to do No Way Home but also kind of bittersweet because we don't know if we're gonna do another one."

"But we were all just absorbing and taking the time to just enjoy the moment, being with each other and being so grateful for that experience."

Another layer to the on-screen drama is the recent revelation that Zendaya, 25, and Holland, 28, are also romantically involved in real life. In an interview with the U.S. edition of *GQ*, Holland

confirmed that they "love each other very much." Zendaya, however, admitted that in an ideal world she would have preferred to have kept their love affair as secret as Spider-Man's identity.

"It was quite strange and weird and confusing and invasive," she said. "The equal sentiment we share is just that when you really love and care about somebody, some moments or things, you wish were your own I think loving someone is a sacred thing and a special thing and something that you want to deal with and go through and experience and enjoy amongst the two people that love each other."

The tall (5'10") and lithe Zendaya (full name Zendaya Maree Stoermer Coleman) grew up in Oakland, California where her African American father and mother of German/Irish ancestry work as schoolteachers. She currently lives in Los Angeles.

This has been an extraordinary year for you. How have you dealt with the pressures and responsibilities that comes with this level of success?

ZENDAYA: I've been very careful not to get distracted and lose my way. I love my work and I'm completely dedicated to learning as much as I can with every role and every project. I've grown so much working on very emotionally and psychologically demanding projects like *Euphoria* and *Malcolm & Marie*.

I want to keep challenging myself like that, knowing that I have so many dear and wonderful friends who support me and give me their love and encouragement. I've created my own safe space where I can preserve my little bubble of normality.

You won an Emmy last year for *Euphoria*. How did that make you feel?

Z: I was grateful and happy that I was allowed to be in the company of such incredible talents whom I all adore. And then winning the Emmy too was crazy. But I wouldn't give it back! It's a shame that because of COVID restrictions in September 2020 we couldn't all be in the auditorium, but I was able to be at home and have my entire family around me, and my dog, who ran away because he couldn't take the screaming anymore after my name was mentioned!

You've developed a close working relationship with Sam Levinson, who created *Euphoria* and also wrote *Malcolm & Marie* for you?

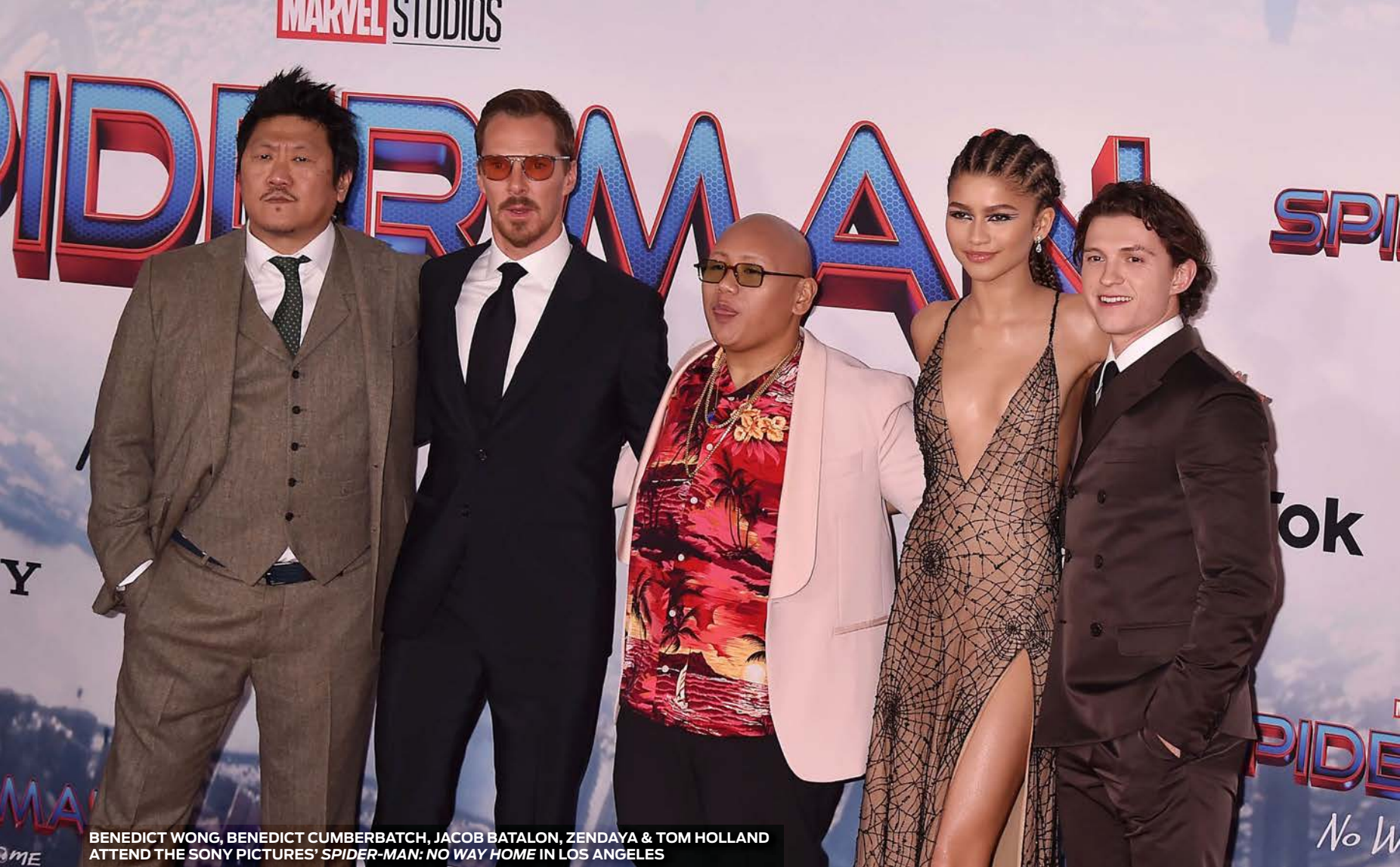
Z: Yes, Sam and I are very close friends, we talk every day. During the quarantine, it was also a kind of creative lighthouse for me. He knows me inside out from our work on *Euphoria*. He's seen me on my worst days, and my best days. He's seen me in my most vulnerable moments and my strongest. My conversations with him are what led to *Malcolm & Marie* when I was so anxious to be able to work on something even with the pandemic shutting everything down. ►



“I love my work!”



“ I’ve been very careful not to get distracted and lose my way. ”



BENEDICT WONG, BENEDICT CUMBERBATCH, JACOB BATALON, ZENDAYA & TOM HOLLAND ATTEND THE SONY PICTURES' SPIDER-MAN: NO WAY HOME IN LOS ANGELES

How do you see yourself as a role model not only for young black women but for young women everywhere?

Z: I take that responsibility very seriously. I feel I owe it to all those people and especially the young women who have followed me and supported me during my career from the time I was starting out on Disney...I want to continue to be a woman who paves the way for other young women.

How did you get started in show business?

Z: I started going to auditions with my father. He quit his teaching job to accompany me to Los Angeles whenever necessary and that was a significant financial burden for my family. As you know, teaching is one of the most important but least paid and least appreciated professions. My mom, who worked two jobs to keep us financially afloat, was very skilled in looking for low-cost hotels to spend the night before the audition. And the next morning I would go back to school. Then, dad and I found ourselves a small apartment in Los Angeles to make it easier for me to work for the Disney Channel. But it took quite some time before I became financially independent and could help my parents. I am so grateful and proud to have reached this point and I couldn't have done it without the total support of my family.

What was it like for you being raised by two teacher parents?

Z: It was the best kind of upbringing that you can have. My parents educated me in a very open and honest way and I am convinced that this is the best way to raise children. Whenever I asked them a question - no matter what subject - I was always given an honest answer.

If you mask reality too much, you prevent your children from knowing and understanding the real world that they have to live in. Being overprotective

as parents is counterproductive, I believe, and inevitably it leads young people unable to deal with what the world throws at them.

You were once as famous for your singing as for your acting. Did your parents ever push you in one direction or the other?

Z: No. They both wanted me to simply pursue my creativity and talent in whatever form gave me the most satisfaction. It's very hard to imagine having parents who could have done any more or have been more encouraging of me to reach my artistic potential.

And like so many actors of different generations I owe so much to Disney which allowed me the opportunity to work in several successful series

“I’ve created my own safe space.”

which led to working on big films such as *The Greatest Showman* and *Spider-Man*.

You’ve also indicated that you would like to direct at some point?

Z: Absolutely! Although I still find that scary, because that's the most difficult job on a set. You have to make so many decisions from the moment you arrive on set until you leave. And afterwards you're often working on the next day's scenes.

That's why working on *Euphoria* has been a big help to me when it comes to learning a lot about camera work and the visual composition of a shot. That's where I began asking a lot of questions to understand more about camera placement and studying how a director approaches each.

This is also a good time for women to get behind the

camera and we're seeing more female directors and producers in the industry as well as screenwriters. My father always told me that there's "nothing a man can do that a woman can't do."

You have over 100 million followers on Instagram. Is it sometimes difficult to manage your account knowing that you're communicating with such a large audience?

Z: I have a very complicated relationship with social media. I try to limit the amount of time I devote to that because it's easy to get consumed with it and that can also put a lot of pressure on you. There will always be times when you post something or a photo and then you immediately wish you hadn't posted it!

I also like to live very much in the present and enjoy the company of my friends in person even though the pandemic has made that more difficult. I don't like to spend hours on my phone talking or texting. On the other hand, social media is an important part of my life and my work and it serves as a connection to the fans who are the reason that I've enjoyed the kind of success that I've had. I'm very, very grateful for that and I will never forget my fans. But I'm also not someone who wants to post photos of what I'm eating and I'm not one of those celebrities who hire someone else to post photos or messages for me. Everything that's posted on my social media accounts is really mine. My main rule is I post to express myself, and do it for myself, and not do it so other people will like me more. That's not who I am. **OK!**

The above comments by Zendaya were made on during the course of her appearance at the Venice Film Festival where her new film Dune was making its world premiere. With previous comments from a January interview she gave for Malcolm & Marie. Her comments have been condensed and edited for length and clarity.

INTERVIEW: JAN JANSSEN (WENN.COM)
PHOTOGRAPHS: WENN, SHUTTERSTOCK



**“ I am a very simple
person who believes in
herself ”**

ZARNISH KHAN

*Learn about Zarnish Khan
and her views on workplace
harassment, mental illness
and body positivity in an
in-depth feature with OK!
Pakistan*



Give her a mic, and she will sing her heart out. Give her a script, and she will act her heart out. Zarnish Khan exudes brilliance as an entertainer in every project she undertakes. Her recognizable performances in *Laa*j and *Ishq Zahe Naseeb* are testament to her conviction as a solid actor. Since the onset of the pandemic, Zarnish withdrew from the spotlight to spend quality time with her family. We will now see her in a new short film and other untitled projects.

Zarnish, we haven't seen you much on television lately. Why is that?

ZARNISH KHAN: When COVID-19 went viral, I thought it best to be around my family; to take care of them and to have them take care of me. As soon as the situation got better, I came back and started to work again. So, now you will get to see more of me!

How has this year been rewarding for you, and why?

ZK: This year has been great for me because I got to spend time with my family. As many people know me, I am a very family-oriented person. I made a lot of new memories. One thing I immensely enjoyed was that a lot of my hidden talents came out during this period like painting, sketching, music, singing and cooking, too! So, the biggest reward for me has to be my time with family.

Tell us more about your life away from the spotlight. How have you been spending time with family?

ZK: My family is super crazy, super fun. I am in heaven whenever I am home! There are many crazy things that we do. During the peak of COVID-19, we were insanely into board games. I would cook for my family and on alternate days, my husband would cook for me. People would get together

for potlucks, and we would also have musical, jamming sessions. So, my time with family has been quite playful and a lot of fun.

What new projects are underway?

ZK: I am working on a couple of projects that will air soon. There is a very interesting short film that is coming out as well. Then there is *Kashmir Beats*, too. Many other exciting things happening right now that I cannot speak of yet, but yes, definitely lots to look forward to!

What kind of narrative do you wish to see associated with our female characters on television?

ZK: I do want our women to be depicted as strong personalities, however, I want them to adhere to our cultural and religious boundaries. We should show the international community that we are part of an emerging world where women are coming

“ I am a very family-oriented person. ”

forward, and it is only for the best. We should give them all the courage and power possible, but at the same time, our women should learn and make their daughters learn how to stay grounded and not get carried away by freedom.

These are the kind of characters I would like to play myself, and I would want to see more of on-screen. A headstrong woman who is career-oriented but is also a great mom, very respectful towards her family, her in laws and her husband. That is how I feel a women should be. This also holds true for men. They should be equally respectful and

supportive.

Earlier this year, #GiveRoyaltiestoArtists made waves on social media. In light of the late Naila Jaffri's cancer treatment, actors demanded that they received residual payments for their work aired on-screen again. What do you make of this as an artist?

ZK: It is a great initiative and I would like to thank the people who spoke up not just for themselves but for all the artists working in the industry. I also happen to be a part of the group and quite recently underwent a surgical treatment that was entirely taken care of by the health service. I am very grateful and appreciative of the fact that our fraternity considered the issue at hand.

Why is workplace harassment in our entertainment industry a sidestepped issue?

ZK: There is a constant fear of losing work and not being able to get ahead, which is why I feel that people who face harassment stay quiet. The big guns who happen to manipulate, exercise their power over victims of harassment. Personally, I think if anyone goes through such an experience, they should talk about it. We have the power of social media. A lot of cases are being noticed. Times are changing and we need to take advantage of that.

What other sidestepped issues prevalent in our entertainment industry do you feel passionately about?

ZK: I happen to be one of the luckiest people because I never opted for this industry but still got the chance and made it big. However, I see young talent that wishes to be part of the industry but there are no set criteria of casting in our drama and fashion industries. There are different ways of manipulating people that thwarts true talent from prospering. ►



“ I want our women to be depicted as strong personalities who adhere to our cultural and religious boundaries. ”



Unplug with Zarnish Khan

What is your idea of a perfect weekend?

Candlelight dinner with my husband, packing a picnic, watching a movie with pizza or ordering food. That would be my perfect weekend!

Two things you cannot live without?

My husband and my family.

Social media — bad influence or a good business tool?

Both! In the end, it is how you choose to use social media. I wish that people would not wind up becoming superficial or unbearably annoying through social media. We are losing ourselves every day, and are becoming another person just because social media puts so much pressure on us. Not everything out

there is meant to be done. By the end of the day, it is a choice you have to make, and you need to be wise while you make one.

The most important characters you have played so far in your career?

Those would have to be Zainab in *Laaj* and Donia in *Ishq Zahe Naseeb*.

A role you hope to play?

Someone like Chammi in *Aangan*. The drama was a period play, and I felt that I could have pulled off the traditional hairdos and attires. The character would have suited me a lot. It was such a fun role with so many shades! I would love to play a character like that!

A quote you live by?

It is my own. "The world seems bitter when you are bitter, so just learn to be a better version of yourself every day."

Also, I have seen many women from our industry voicing support for justice and women empowerment, however, they are the biggest culprits who end up tearing down other women. I think our artists need to be less insecure and have more faith in Allah. Just work hard and do what you are best at and let other people work as well. We are a small industry, and if we don't work together, we will never be civil, and able to grow.

Why is mental illness not talked about so openly in your line of work? Why is there so much stigma and shame associated with mental illness?

ZK: I don't agree with that. People have started to talk about mental illness and have taken it seriously, which is a positive sign. However, there is still some stigma attached to it. People assume someone experiencing mental health problems is insane. When we use such words, we push that person further down, which is not the appropriate way to deal.

In and outside the industry, people are talking about mental illness. What they are not doing is working towards subsiding it. What we are doing instead is pulling others down, making comments about their personalities, and showing how far they could have gone in life but have been unsuccessful. This is what we are doing on a daily basis. We are killing each other's vibe all day long.

Simply talking about mental illness on social media will not solve the problem. Finding a concrete solution to it is far more important. Everyone knows that all of us are experiencing depression during this time. Why is that? Because of us.

With emerging technologies and new media, the global entertainment industry is evolving. However, Pakistan's film business has been struggling for decades. As an industry, we are also not up to date with the latest, emerging technologies that mainstay entertainment centers of the world including Hollywood and China have tried and tested. What is the way forward considering these major technological loopholes that eventually reflect in our film productions?

ZK: The reason we are not evolving with the rest of the world is because of budgetary constraints. The technological tools that Hollywood or China use consume a lot of money, which is where Pakistan falls behind. We have a budget of about four crores to produce a film. If you talk about Hollywood and Bollywood films, their budget is in millions.

We need to increase our finances, and that can only happen if we make more money. How do we make money? When people collectively go out and watch our films in local cinemas. We also don't have enough cinemas to generate that kind of money. It is not that we lack talent or don't know how to use equipment, it is just that we can't afford these technological tools. Financial constraints seem to be a major issue, and we need a solution for it.

How do you cope with work stress?

ZK: Music, for one thing. I take short breaks and go for a quick drive. I would sometimes have milkshake or coffee on the way. That really helps. Getting along with the crew is also very important because you are spending more time with them than your own family. I try to make everyone comfortable on-set. Perhaps people admire my work because when I am happy, that energy eventually translates on-screen.



How do you perceive body positivity?

ZK: I feel that you really need to be comfortable in your skin. It doesn't matter if you are fair, dark-skinned, tall, short, thin or fat as long as you are a confident person and feel comfortable with who you are and how you look. Some people are visibly beautiful but others are way more intelligent. Allah has given different people, different skillsets, and you should recognize those capabilities. Always be grateful for your individual self because that is very precious. You should really admire the fact that you have a unique personality. That person is only you. All you need to do is dig deep into your personality and bring out the best in you. The key is confidence and being comfortable with yourself, and the world will accept you however you are.

What is your unfulfilled wish?

ZK: To travel every corner of the world, and to bring back my mom somehow. Actually, the latter is my unfulfilled wish.

Give our readers something to take away from this interview.

ZK: Well, you know me a lot better than before, I tell you that! I am a very simple person who believes in herself and everything pretty around her. I choose not to look at the negative side of life or people. It is better to just shut your eyes at things that are unpleasant. That is who I am as a person. **OK!**

INTERVIEW: HAIDER RIFAAT
MAKEUP: NABILA'S SALON
PHOTOGRAPHS: SHAKIR KHAN

**"I've done some work I'm
really proud of"**

TOM HOLLAND

It's been a great year for Tom Holland. *Spider-Man: No Way Home* marks the British actor's third solo appearance in this latest reboot of the venerable Spidey franchise. Also, Tom Holland and his co-star Zendaya recently confirmed that their long-rumoured romance is real...





This has been a very big year in the life of 25-year-old British actor Tom Holland, aka Peter Parker, aka Spider-Man. His latest turn as the anguished web-slinging superhero took place last month when *Spider-Man: No Way Home* was released in the UK and around the world.

Holland's previous Spider-Man movie, 2019's *Far From Home* earned over \$1.1 billion at the box-office, making it the most successful installment in the history of the franchise. That's raised the stakes even higher for *No Way Home*, directed by Jon Watts and co-starring Zendaya as Peter's love interest, MJ. Zendaya is, of course, the other reason that this has been a glorious year for Holland. The pair recently confirmed that their long-rumoured romance is real and that they are, in fact, a loving couple. Not only does this make them one of Hollywood's dream pairs but it should also bring in more viewers anxious to see how their on-screen romance evolves. Holland is deeply proud of his time with the franchise.

"We've been making these films for five years now," Holland said. "We've had such an amazing relationship, the three of us. We've been with each other every step of the way. We've done every single film, every single press tour. So in this one scene, we didn't know if this would be the last time we were all working together. It was heartbreaking but also really exciting because we're all moving into the next chapter of our careers. So sharing that moment with them was maybe the best day I've ever had on set. I don't think I've cried like that ever."

While promoting *Spider-Man* at an advance premiere in London, Holland reiterated his appreciation of how Zendaya has been a source of support: "Two friends coming together, experiencing this world, going through the same problems at the same time, having a shoulder to cry on, has

been a huge thing for the pair of us, and with Jacob [Batalon] as well. We really are a family." But despite this and some of Holland's hints that *No Way Home* might mark the end of his time as the human arachnid, Sony Pictures' studio chief Amy Pascal has announced that he will indeed be back for another Spider-Man trilogy.

"This is not the last movie that we are going to make with Marvel — this is not the last Spider-Man movie," said Pascal. "We are getting ready to make the next Spider-Man movie with Tom Holland and Marvel... now we're going to go onto the next three. *No Way Home* is not the last of our MCU movies."

The eldest son of British comedian Dominic Holland and photographer Nicola Frost, Tom Holland began dancing in the family living room at the age of six to songs by Janet Jackson and his talent was such that

“The luxury of playing Peter Parker is that he’s a hero, but he’s also a kid...”

his mother decided to enroll him in dance classes. Tom was only 12 when he made his stage debut in 2008, landing the title role in *Billy Elliot: The Musical* at the Victoria Palace Theatre, a production that ran for three years. He then made his film debut opposite Ewan McGregor and Naomi Watts in *The Impossible* (2013).

Earlier this year Holland starred in *Cherry*, a dark drama directed by *Avengers: Endgame* filmmakers Joe and Anthony Russo and based on the true story of an Army medic suffering from PTSD who becomes a bank robber.

What are your impressions of *No Way Home* and its place in your Spider-Man odyssey?

TOM HOLLAND: We all kind of grow up in this film and the nice thing is that this time we get to do it together. That's what Jon Watts has done so well as a director - he's strategically planned these three arcs (Peter Parker, MJ, and Ned) that they kind of grow at the same time especially with the relationship [between Peter and MJ] where they're first friends and then [become] lovers.

How do you look back on your time as Peter Parker/Spider-Man?

TH: It's interesting to be able to play a character like this who's dealing with a lot of basic issues that someone who's 17 and struggling to make his way in the world is going through. We all ask ourselves those questions at his age and even as we grow older, and I'm just fortunate that I look young enough to have been able to play him over the last five years.

You've done a tremendous amount of press over the years and now again this year. How do you handle all the stories and often twisted accounts of things that you've said?

TH: I told a story the other day on *The Graham Norton Show* and the Graham Norton YouTube [channel] made some bullshit clickbait thing about the story. The story is essentially saying that the guy I was up against in *Spider-Man* was really good-looking and the clickbait they put up was that Tom Holland explains how he wasn't good-looking enough to be Spider-Man? How does that make any sense? I am Spider-Man. It drives me insane...

Although you've made your mark in Hollywood with the Spider-Man films, how do you see ▶



“I’ve always been optimistic about my career.”





your career going forward?

TH: I've done some work I'm really proud of. I did this film *Cherry* with the Russos and I've just finished work on *Nathan Drake* with Mark Wahlberg... The luxury of playing Peter Parker is that he's a superhero but also a kid and you get to explore being the clumsy, juvenile, happy, innocent young man. *Nathan Drake* is very different. It was a lot of fun for me to step into the shoes of a commanding young man and someone who can hold himself in tough situations.

But I've always been optimistic about my career, even before *Spider-Man*. But I know that this is a difficult industry and you have to know what you want to do and be very resilient. You have to be aware that failure is part of being an actor and not just think that everything will always work out the way you want it to.

You recently appeared in the film *Cherry* playing a man suffering from PTSD and addicted to drugs. There must have been some very trying and emotional moments for you while you were working on that?

TH: There were moments where I sat down with my brother Harry and I was like, "I don't think I could do this. I don't think I can come to work tomorrow. I'm like a shell of who I am."

The scene of me in the car where I'm sort of losing my mind and I'm stabbing myself and I'm banging my head against the seat, I remember doing it for the first time, and it was like I wasn't myself. I remember them saying cut and I was like, "Don't cut!" And I was like, "Whoa, whoa." I went way too deep into it then and I sort of took myself out of the situation, and was like, "What have I become?" And then of course the directors Anthony and Joe Russo go, "Right, we need to go again." And I'm like, "You

want me to do that again?"

What led you into acting?

TH: I have simply always loved theater and cinema and I inherited a passion for the stage from my father, a brilliant actor and a writer for film and TV. I also had a very happy and active childhood. I developed a lot of different interests mainly because my mother is a professional photographer and she taught us to look at and study the world.

“This is not the last Spider-Man movie!”

What are some of your other interests apart from acting?

TH: I love graphic art, I like to study and read. And apart from film and theatre I also love musicals. I consider myself to be a pretty good dancer and I got my start in the theater in *Billy Elliot* which is one of my favourite musicals. Music is one of my passions, from Chopin and Ravel to Sir Elton John, whom I can proudly say is a friend of mine.

Who are some of the actors you've admired the most while you were aspiring to become an actor yourself?

TH: Tom Hardy is someone I respect a great deal. He is very serious, committed, and authentic. I've also been a fan of Marlon Brando and I really admire Leonardo DiCaprio's career. Having grown up in England I'm also very proud of some of our greatest actors - I'm thinking of Michael Caine and above all, of Sir Laurence Olivier and Albert Finney who is one

of my favourite actors of all time.

It must be a source of considerable personal satisfaction and vindication for you to have achieved so much so early in your career, especially after you were bullied by your schoolmates growing up?

TH: Most 15-year-old boys are generally idiots, and I wasn't like that. I think that's why they harassed me at school. I was different, I was more mature at that age and I already had a career by that point. I would practice dancing at recess even though the other kids would make fun of me. But I didn't care, I was very focused on what I was doing because I had already had a lot of experience working in a professional environment. I was used to working hard.

You're also interested in directing films at some point in the future?

TH: My brother Harry and I are avid film fans and we want to one day be directors and stuff. So we're trying to educate ourselves and watching films, and broadening our horizons by watching different types of films. We've been watching lots of foreign films at the moment, we watched Bong Joon-ho's *Memories of a Murder* the other day, which we really enjoyed.

While working on *Spider-Man*, we formed a cinema club and the cast would get together at the screening room at the studios and we would pick a film that none of us had seen before and watch it... We were just working our way through films that I would never normally watch, but I was definitely learning to love them. **OK!**

INTERVIEW: JAN JANSSEN (WENN.COM)
PHOTOGRAPHS: SHUTTERSTOCK, WENN

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OK! FASHIONISTA

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SETHI**
WHAT SHE
TOTES AROUND
IN HER BAG

OK! SPOTLIGHT
**ZEB
BANGASH**

TRAVELLER'S TALE
**ANOUSHEY
ASHRAF**

RISING STARS!
FEATURING WORKS OF AIFD'S GRADUATING DESIGNERS



RISING STARS!

Evoking powerful emotions, the graduating class of AIFD's (Asian Institute of Fashion Design) thesis collection displays talent like no other! The collection through the combined efforts of students – Aimen Farooq, Alishba Nadeem, Bakhtawar Ayub, Faiza Perwaiz, Manahil Raees, Mareeha Khan, Marina Khan, Sherbano Saifuddin, Zulekha Chandio, Laraib Zia and Ujala Sohail – shows applaudable mastery in skill and craftsmanship & here are the designs that resonated with us!

PHOTOGRAPHY: SALMAN AHMED
MAKE-UP & HAIR: NARJIS TAQI
MODELS: GAU BEO, TRINETTE LUCAS & MARIA UNERA















DAKOTA JOHNSON



ALLURE BY MHT
Acis Earrings,
PKR 13,500



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Not just for minimalists, neutrals will be perennially chic throughout the year! Invest in nudes to make your wardrobe staples last for seasons to come.



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High-Waisted
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Leggings,
PKR 5,000



ZARA
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Coat,
PKR 20,000



AQUAZZURA
Valois Boots,
PKR 180,000



H&M
Knit Dress,
PKR 8,500



BOTTEGA VENETA
Jodie Mini Tote,
PKR 350,000



NOHO
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PKR 1,900



MANGO
Satin Pleated Skirt,
PKR 8,490



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High Waisted
Jogger Pants,
PKR 8,800



MANGO
Ribbed Knit Dress,
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Woody Slides,
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Dress,
PKR 100,000



ESFIR
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Earring,
PKR 11,115

GUCCI
Ellis Boots,
PKR 210,000



TAMARA KALINIC

PHOTOGRAPH: WENN

OK! *Red* CARPET



The Duchess of Cambridge dazzles in an embellished gold Jenny Packham gown.



Zendaya pays tribute to iconic 90's supermodel Evangelista in a Vintage Valentino gown.



Nicole Kidman sparkles in a fully sequined geometric gown by Etro.

ROCKSTARS



Nicky Hilton looks glamorous in a black sequined gown paired with Mach & Mach heels.



Dua Lipa puts on a stunning display in a glitzy sheer lime dress with cutout detailing.



Priyanka Chopra Jonas makes a dazzling appearance in a sequined gown at *The Matrix Resurrections* premiere.



LILY COLLINS

Lily is the most coveted star for style with her newest show *Emily In Paris*, which leaves everyone watching, looking and learning what style tips and tricks to try (or not!). Here are some of our favourite looks of the star off show.

GET THE LOOK



REESE
Gold belt,
PKR 3,500



DEREK LAM
Pleated white top,
PKR 26,768



GUCCI
Multi coloured
skirt,
PKR 10,420



PAT MCGRATH
Nude lipstick,
PKR 6,711



MAC
Emerald teal eyeshadow,
PKR 3,708

BOLD & TEXTURED!

Style maven, Mohsin Ali Tawasuli, is the epitome of sleek mixed with bold. Carry textures in bold colours like he does for a statement this season.



GUCCI
Square-Frame
Sunglasses,
PKR 55,000



DINERS
Autograph Shirt,
PKR 3,890



A BETTER MISTAKE
Cocoon
Coat,
PKR 90,000



GUCCI
Princetown
Shearling-
Lined Backless
Loafers,
PKR 150,000



BOTTEGA VENETA
Brushed
Knitted Coat,
PKR 600,000



MANOLO BLAHNIK
Miriomu
Loafers,
PKR 130,000



ZARA
Velvet Shirt,
PKR 19,000



JW ANDERSON
Leather
Loafers,
PKR 85,000



ALEXANDER WANG
Velvet Track
Pants,
PKR 75,000



OUTFITTERS
Grunge Graphic
Trucker,
PKR 6,990



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Suede Loafers,
PKR 150,000



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New Wave
Sunglasses,
PKR 60,000



MANGO
Cotton Shirt,
PKR 10,990

STOCKISTS: A BETTER MISTAKE, ALEXANDER WANG, AMI, SAINT LAURENT, SIR. www.farfetch.com; BOTTEGA VENETA, GUCCI, JW ANDERSON, LORO PIANA, MANOLO BLAHNIK www.mrporter.com; DINERS www.diners.com.pk; H&M www.hm.com; MANGO www.mango.com; OUTFITTERS www.outfitters.com.pk; ZARA www.zara.com; prices are approximate

LOUIS VUITTON
Luxor Earrings



MATTHEW CAMPBELL LAURENZA
Enamel & Sapphire Bracelet



PIAGET
Ruby & Diamond Earrings



VAN CLEEF & ARPELS
Ruby & Diamond Necklace



AVAKIAN
Citrine, Onyx & Diamond Earrings



DAVID WEBB
Chevron Ring



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Maharaja Necklace



TIFFANY & CO.
Platinum & Diamonds Necklace



NIKOS KOULIS
Emerald & Enamel Earrings



CARTIER
Tutti Frutti Bracelet



CARTIER
Timken Necklace



TIFFANY & CO.
Masterpieces Diamond Necklace





What's IN HER BAG?

Celebrated author and actor Mira Sethi shares the contents of her bag...



The bag itself- a black leather handbag my mother used to carry in the 90s. The zips are broken and it's old and fading but I love it!



A coiled elastic ponytail - every woman needs a hair accessory!



Headphones - for the love of music and podcasts!



Mask - never leave home without it!



Lavender-scented hand sanitizer that I picked up in a cute shop in San Francisco



My sunglasses - the best handbag accessory!



Lots of old, smelly notes of money :)



Hand Sanitizer - post 2020 must haves!

My credit card - goes without saying, this is a necessity!

A strip of panadol - its always better to be prepared.



OK! Beauty EDIT

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This new compact is the ultimate handbag essential. Perfect for when you're on the go. It's infused with caviar water to improve your skin's texture, while also giving an added protection against UVA rays. It has a buildable medium coverage for a natural-looking finish.



ESPECIALLY FOR YOU

If the number of 90s boy bands getting back together is anything to go by, everyone loves a comeback – and this is one we bet will have you Spinning Around with excitement. Pop icon Kylie Minogue has brought back her Darling fragrance, from PKR 5,275 – a fun combination of floral, fruit and woody notes – 15 years after it first hit shelves. Is it too much to now hope for a reunion with Jason Donovan? We should be so lucky...



OOH LA LA!

Netflix's ultimate lighthearted lockdown viewing, *Emily In Paris*, returns for a second series next month and to celebrate, the hit TV show has teamed up with another French icon: Lancôme. The limited-edition six-piece make-up collection, from PKR 5,300, contains everything you need to create that effortless beauty look that Parisians are so famous for – flawless skin, defined lashes and a knockout red lip. Très chic!

BEAUTY *Essentials*



NUDES REPORT

Struggling to find your perfect shade of nude lip? It may be to do with the base. Traditional nude lipsticks are created around a yellow oil – but L'Oréal Paris's Color Riche Les Nus, PKR 2,400, uses transparent oils. It gives a true colour finish that complements your lip tone, while the curvy shape hugs contours perfectly. It's your lips but amplified.

SUPERMARKET CHIC

The September collection: no, not last season's big fashion moment, but the latest bargain supermarket skincare line to launch, this time at Morrisons. Consisting of skin, hair, body and fragrance, all Leaping Bunny approved and in aesthetically pleasing packaging, pick up the products from just PKR 1,000 in store or at september-beauty.com, where you'll also find beauty routines.



TIME TO SHINE

Glitter isn't just for Christmas, and I'm certain that Dear Dahlia's four Mezmerising Moment Palettes, PKR 11,750 each, will be on organised rotation in and out of my daily make-up bag well into 2022. As a self-confessed colour-phobe, I love how all the palettes are very natural and wearable, and the powders are beautifully blendable and buttery-soft.



THE LIFE OF SUMBUL TABANI

The fashion and travel influencer, and CEO of shoe brand L'Amour shares it all with *OK! Pakistan*



Favourite travel destination?
South of France.



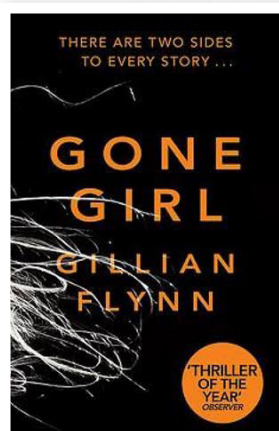
Signature scent?
Lavender, leather, rose oud (dypique perfume), Jo Malone.

Skincare essentials?

I don't believe in an extensive skincare routine - skincare needs to be quick and simple. A good moisturizer goes a long way and I always keep a water bottle with me.

Last book you read?

The last book I read was *Gone Girl*.



Last show you binge watched?

Midnight Mass.



Favourite designer's?

My taste in fashion keeps evolving with time and so do my favourite designers. I'm all about supporting the local industry and Amna Chaudhry's collection has a special place in my heart.



Most exciting celebrity encounters?

I bumped into Leonardo DiCaprio outside NYU in New York who happened to be on his bike right next to the pedestrian track. I was so excited to see him that I was literally screaming in his face haha!



Guilty pleasure?

I have a major sweet tooth, so dessert is definitely a guilty pleasure. But if I really have to pick, I'd say dark chocolate.

What's your instant mood lifter?

Nothing makes me happier than a delicious meal after a long day with my two sons.

Current song on repeat?

Obsessing over our local music these days. Young Stunners and Hasan Raheem are my current favourites.



All time favourite film?

One day, Anne Hathaway.

Getting in shape or couch potato?

Staying active is very important to me. I always thrive to be stronger and fitter.

Favourite restaurant in Karachi?

Okra.

Three things you can't live without?

My family, creative expression and hope.



ENTERTAINMENT

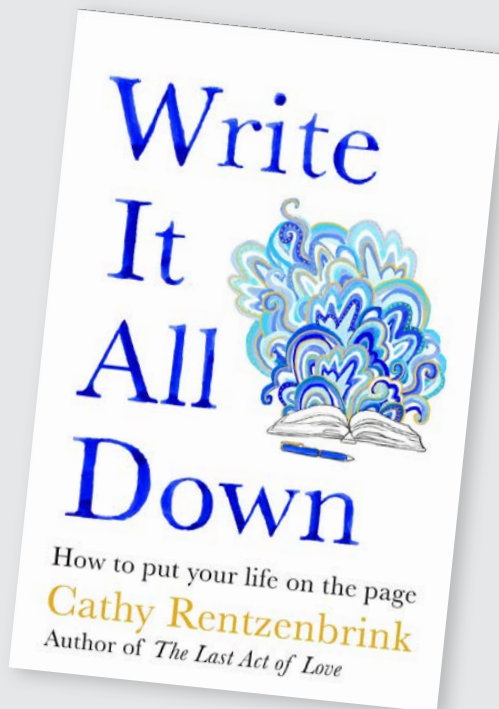


MOVIE

HOUSE OF GUCCI

A LEGACY WORTH KILLING FOR

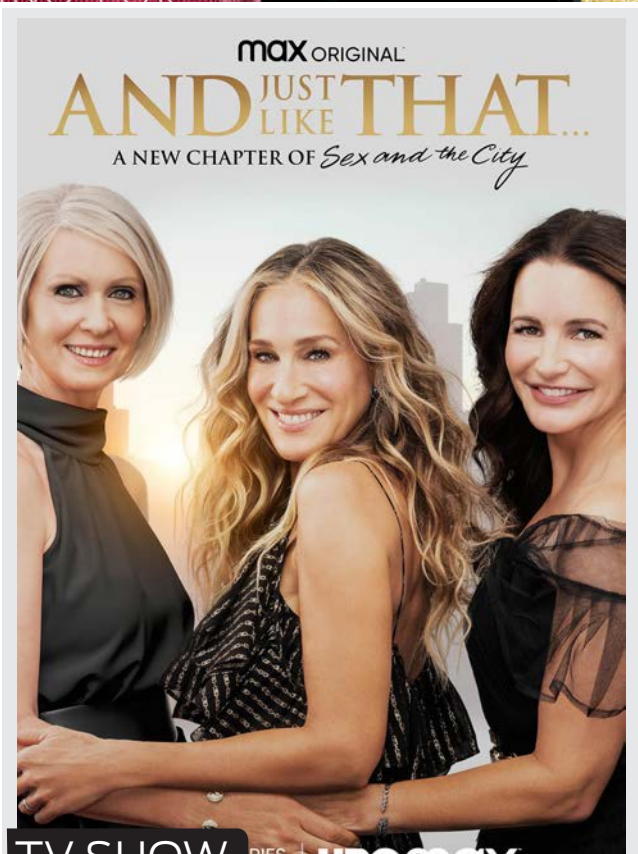
The film is a biological crime drama based on a 2001 book with the same name. When Patrizia, an outsider, marries into the Gucci family, her unbridled ambition begins to unravel their legacy and triggers a reckless spiral of betrayal, revenge, and ultimately murder. Inspired by a true story of the famous Italian fashion brand, this is a must watch!



LITERATURE

WRITE IT ALL DOWN: HOW TO PUT YOUR LIFE ON THE PAGE BY KATHY RENTZENBRINK

With a rating of 4.31 out of 5 on GoodReads, this book is high up on everyone's list and it is perfect for seasoned writers, amateurs, and everyone in between. The book is an intimate conversation as well as an invitation to share your story, helping you deal with whatever it is that is coming in the way, whether it is writer's block or worrying what people will say.



TV SHOW

AND JUST LIKE THAT

The new chapter of *Sex & The City* is finally out! In the highly awaited mini series, the women are back from the friendship they had in their 30s to a more complicated and real friendship in their 50s. With COVID on the rise yet again, this is perfect for binge watching during a night in and reminiscing about the good old *Sex & The City* pre COVID days.

PLANT POWER

SERVE UP DELICIOUS VEGAN FOOD THAT'LL MAKE AN IMPACT
WITH THESE QUICK AND EASY DISHES

Mini pancakes

**MAKES 16
PANCAKES**

INGREDIENTS

- 300g self-raising flour
- 1 tbsp caster sugar
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 400ml almond milk
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil for cooking
- 2 ripe bananas
- 4 tbsp maple syrup

1. Mix together the flour, sugar, baking powder and vanilla extract in a bowl. Slowly pour in the almond milk and whisk everything until you get a smooth, thick batter.

2. Heat the oil in a non-stick frying pan over a medium-low heat. Drop 2 tbsp of batter into the pan at a

time to make small, round pancakes.

3. Cook for 3-4 mins until the edges begin to set, then flip the pancakes and cook for another 3 mins until golden and cooked through. You will need to do this in batches.

4. Slice the bananas and scatter over a stack of pancakes. Drizzle with maple syrup.



Fragrant red Thai curry

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 red onion, finely sliced
- 2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- Thumb-sized piece of ginger, finely chopped
- 4 tbsp vegan red Thai curry paste
- 800ml coconut milk
- 200g Tenderstem broccoli
- 1 small aubergine, sliced into half-moons
- 175g baby sweetcorn
- Juice of 1 lime
- 4 lime leaves
- 1 tsp brown sugar
- Small handful of coriander
- 1 red chilli, finely sliced (optional)
- Jasmine rice, to serve

1. Heat the oil in a large pan. Add red onion, garlic, ginger and Thai red curry paste and fry for 3 mins.

2. Stir in the coconut milk with 100ml water, bring to the boil. Add the broccoli, aubergine and sweetcorn, turn down the heat and simmer for 10 mins.

3. Add the lime juice, lime leaves and sugar. Simmer for another 5 mins until the vegetables are tender.

4. Scatter the coriander and red chilli (if using) over the top and serve with jasmine rice. ▸



Warming chickpea stew

1. Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the garlic, onion, paprika and chilli flakes and cook gently until soft and translucent.
2. Add the tin of tomatoes, sun-dried tomatoes and balsamic vinegar and bring to the boil, stirring occasionally. Then turn down the heat to a simmer.
3. Drain the chickpeas in a sieve and rinse under cold water. Add them to the tomato mixture and return it to a simmer. Continue to simmer gently for 8-10 mins until cooked through.
4. Divide between bowls and serve hot.

SERVES 4

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 large red onion, chopped
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp chilli flakes
- 400g tin tomatoes
- 140g sun-dried tomatoes, chopped
- 1 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 400g tin chickpeas



Tangy lemon tart

SERVES 6-8

INGREDIENTS

For the shortcrust pastry:

- 155g plain flour, plus extra for dusting
- 75g vegan plant butter
- 3 tbsp coconut sugar
- 1 tbsp cold water, if needed

For the lemon filling:

- 420g coconut cream
- 100g caster sugar
- Juice of 4 lemons
- 35g corn flour
- 3 tbsp coconut oil

To serve:

- Fresh raspberries



1. Preheat the oven to 180°C/160°C fan/gas mark 4. Grease or line a 20cm loose-bottomed tart tin.

2. Mix all the ingredients for the pastry in a large bowl until it becomes a pliable dough. If the mixture is too crumbly, add a little water.

3. Roll out the pastry on a floured surface into a thin circle about 5mm thick.

4. Transfer the pastry to the tart tin and press it against the base and sides to form a crust. Trim off the excess. Prick the pastry base with a fork (to let the hot air escape when baking).

5. Bake for 10-15 minutes, or until the pastry is a light golden colour. Allow the pastry to cool in the tin.

6. Add all the filling ingredients to a

medium-size saucepan and mix together.

7. Heat on a medium-high heat for 5-10 minutes while whisking constantly until it is glossy and has thickened to the consistency of double cream.

8. Pour the mixture into the baked pastry shell and allow it to set in the fridge for at least 2 hours.

9. Serve with fresh raspberries. **OK!**

OK! SPOTLIGHT

ZEBUNISSA BANGASH

The singer and songwriter shares her musical journey, inspirations, and so much more...



Zebunnisa Bangash, popularly known as Zeb Bangash is a renowned Pakistani singer and composer. The talented singer has appeared in five seasons of *Coke Studio* since 2009, giving us landmark hits like *Aja Re More Saiyaan*, *Roshe*, *Dilruba Na Raazi* and *Chal Diye*. Since then, Zeb has performed songs across borders as well including her solo song *Ajnabi*, which was featured in the Bollywood film *Madras Café*, Sooha Saha in the film *Highway*, and *Haminastu* in *Fitoor*. Back home she has lent her voice for iconic hits like *Sambhal Sambhal* from *Verna*, *Bekaraan* from *Superstar* and *Moray Saiyaan* from *Parey Hut Love* as well as the multiple award winning OST for the drama serial *Diyar e Dil*.

What is your musical background? Do you have a musical family or did you just fall into songwriting on your own?

Zebunnisa Bangash: We are not a musical family in the professional sense but we are huge music lovers. So yes! I grew up exposed to a diverse palate of music and saw a ton of live performances as a child. My earliest childhood memories involve music, and making songs. I also recall having no qualms about performing my 'masterpieces' to my family. My father really nurtured my interest and I had a musical teacher wherever we got posted. The real shift happened when we moved to Lahore though and I got exposed to and started training in classical music. That's when music became a serious interest.

Where do you usually gather songwriting inspiration?

ZB: The inspiration doesn't come from any specific thing or event. If I'm feeling good and centered,

I'm more likely to write a song I like, which is weird because a lot of people write when they are going through difficult times. I've done that too but it all depends on whether my thoughts and feelings are flowing well. I can't write when I'm confused or overwhelmed.

How can you sing in so many different genres and languages?

ZB: It comes quite naturally to be honest. I'm drawn to languages, always have been. It could be because I've always loved to mimic and I tend to keep an ear out for inflections and phonetics pretty

“ I usually just ask people to take a listen and accept what they say it is. ”

much all the time. Above all, my vocal training has really helped me in singing in varied styles since it gives me a certain flexibility and range; when you develop the skill to do different things with your voice, it's easier to hear the peculiarities and also include them in your singing.

What is your usual song writing process?

ZB: It's mostly melody first for me – I've increasingly

started collaborating with poets for lyrical content because I love good Urdu expression in songs, which I feel is not my forte. I have the concept/idea on what the song should say and a sketch of the melody and then I take it to a lyricist/poet to finish the song work. Sometimes poetry comes first, like for *Farz Karo*, *Awaara* and a bunch of songs Michael and I made for *Sandaraa*. In that case the meaning of the words and the rhythm of the poem dictates the melody.

Which five artists are on your recently played list?

ZB: My playlist today has Natalia Jimenez, Javed Ali, Patrick Watson, Anderson Paak, Selda Bagcan, Fatoumata Diawara, Thundercat and Bill Withers.

How do you describe your music to people?

ZB: I never really know how to answer that question. I usually just ask people to take a listen and accept what they say it is.

Who would you say are some of your favourite or most influential musicians?

ZB: That's a very tough question and I could ramble for a long time. I grew up with a lot of music, many different kinds of music, and all of it has added to my style and approach.

My biggest musical influence ever since I heard him 15 years ago is my teacher Ustaad Naseeruddin Saami. Others that I grew up with include Muhammad Rafi, Sezen Aksu and Ajda Pekkan from Turkey, Madam Noor Jehan, Lata Mangeshkar, Googoosh from Iran, Fairouz from Lebanon, Tufail Niazi, Iqbal Bano... the list goes on!

What is the hardest part for you when it comes ►





“ We are not a musical family in the professional sense but we are huge music lovers. ”

a songwriter and a singer. If I'm collaborating with someone and I hit a road block I'll let the other person contribute and I'll bring my own expression in through my singing. I'm happy to say I'm quite easygoing in collaborations.

Do you think online music will play a large part in where the industry heads in the future? Does this technology work for or against someone in the music industry?

ZB: Online music is the present and it's great because it gives access to a lot more music to a lot more people. The only flip side to that is that sometimes listeners get overwhelmed and really focusing on artists and sounds that you like can be tedious amidst the noise. Also sometimes traditional music and musicians get left behind because they're not as savvy with the digital space.

What are you working on now and where do you feel your music is headed?

ZB: This year has been the year for international collaborations. That music should be coming out next year. More Punjabi Vehra songs are also on the way and finally a song with Haroon Shahid, which should be out before the end of the year. In playback, singing the OST for *Sinfe Ahan* has been really special. I'm so proud to be part of this project.

Texting or talking?

ZB: Voice notes.

Favourite day of the week?

ZB: Sunday.

Last song you downloaded?

ZB: Adele – *To be Loved*.

Favourite holiday?

ZB: Choti Eid (Eid ul Fitr).

On a scale of 1 to 10, how good of a driver are you?

ZB: 2.9.

Fill in the blank: Taylor Swift is _____.

ZB: Fantastic.

Invisibility or super strength?

ZB: Invisibility.

Cake or pie?

ZB: Pie.

Place you most want to travel?

ZB: Iceland. **OK!**

to staying motivated to keep practicing, writing and singing?

ZB: It's more and more about lifestyle choices. The basics, which include eating healthy, exercising, and having peace and quiet keep me in a peaceful and creative state of mind. It's more of a struggle when my routine shifts around but I still manage because ultimately I love what I do and that is the biggest motivator.

What do you like the most about song writing specifically?

ZB: It's a great way to communicate a lot in relatively few words and little time.

When you are writing a song are you focused on it being a hit and creating something people really want to listen to or are you more focused on the content and how it makes you feel?

ZB: I make music because I love it. I also love it when people love the music I make but even if they don't I'd still love it. As far as I know there is no magic formula to make a song a hit. However I

do know that when one thinks too much about the outcome of a song one can self-censor and lose conviction. So I try to do the opposite of catering my music to other people's tastes; not because it doesn't matter but because it doesn't really help.

When did you feel like you really made it as a musician?

ZB: I don't think I've ever felt like I've truly made it yet. There's so much that I still want to do!

Have you ever written a song that's really personal and what did it mean to you?

ZB: I've written a few very personal songs, but as a vocalist you can also have songs that you don't write yourself but you still connect to intimately. For instance, *Roshe* isn't an original but I feel like it's my own.

Do you ever experience writer's block? How do you overcome it, especially when working on a collaboration?

ZB: I'm lucky because I'm comfortable being both



CALLING TIME ON ANXIETY

BID FAREWELL TO YOUR WORRIES WITH THESE FAST FIXES

Hear beating a little too quickly? Horrible feeling in your tummy? Anxiety is our body's natural response to stress. It's a feeling of fear or apprehension about what's to come, whether it's a first date, a bad situation at work or opening up a difficult chat with a loved one. Yet it can creep into life when we feel we have no particular reason to, and it can become overwhelming.

According to the NHS, a staggering 1.69 million people were referred for therapy in England from 2018-19.

It can take weeks of therapy to train our brains to combat anxiety – but what if there was a quicker, easier way to combat our daily woes?

"Everyone has the same glitches, but some are better at getting over them," reveals Hazel Gale, resident hypnotherapist at hypnotherapy app Clementine. "In order to make meaningful changes in our lives, we need to speak our minds' language. peak our minds' language. "Over time, and with some practice, you'll become a master of little tools and learn to reframe your brain. Before you know it, life genuinely does start to feel more manageable."

And it needn't take as long as you'd think. Here, Hazel shares her quick fixes to avoid negative thoughts and feel happier faster.

Trick 1:

Get yourself excited

Crippling anxiety can take the joy out of daily life, whether it's travelling, work or even parties. Hazel has a surprising solution.

"Did you know anxiety and excitement are on the same biological level? Both cause blood to rush to our fingers and our minds begin to race. "To make the switch from anxious to excited, just tell yourself 'get excited' – the effect is magical. Instead of being fearful, our mind goes searching for things to be excited about. If we give those things our attention, something that once seemed a threat can look like an opportunity. "Anxious about going back to the office after the pandemic? Find a 'micro joy'. What about getting a coffee from the barista you've missed, or popping on your lippy for the first time in a year? "These may seem like tiny, insignificant things, but I promise they will make your mindset change."





Trick 2:

Learn habit-stacking

When we feel anxious, it's because we feel out of control. Instead of focusing on the things we can't control – usually the source of the stress – we should respond to it.

Hazel says, "We all have routines and controlling them will banish anxiety. But there's no need to live like a Buddhist monk – gruelling abstinence followed by a shameful fall from grace? I don't think so."

"Try 'habit stacking' – tweak your routine moments to boost your confidence or keep you calm. Whether it's during your commute, coffee stop or loo break, these are ideal times to repeat personal mantras, try a breathing exercise and change your body language."

"Over time, you become a master of these little tools – you'll learn to control your breathing and reframe any negative thoughts on the fly."

Trick 3:

See another perspective

Apparently all of us have imposter syndrome – feelings of self-doubt and incompetence despite your success – but if you

view yourself from someone else's perspective, you'll see just how brilliant you are

Hazel says, "The only way to avoid imposter syndrome is by being a bona fide psychopath – not a preferable alternative! It's so easy to get stuck in your story like a broken record, but if you step outside yourself you'll see your skills and strengths in a whole new light. Make it a habit – it'll transform your self-image for the better."



"for the first time, I'd Been able to relax"

Former world champion kickboxer and hypnotherapist Hazel reveals how hypnotherapy helped to reduce her anxiety:

"I was working towards a world title as a kickboxer in 2009 when I had my first hypnotherapy session to tackle stress and anxiety – and it blew my mind. "In a hypnotherapy session, a therapist uses words to guide you into a deep state of focus. It's not a magic trick, it's just how the brain works. It's not mindfulness, either. It's about perspective taking and seeing your life in a new and positive light."

"They'll help you think through metaphors, visualisation and curious questions to get a slightly different, and hopefully calmer, overview. Hypnosis teaches you to relax, one of the most important skills we can ever learn."

"In that initial session, I felt like I'd blinked and



come to, but as I opened my eyes 45 minutes later, the whole world felt different. For the first time, I'd been able to relax.

"Hypnosis helped me overcome illness, injury and stress. I was so impressed, I retired as an athlete and trained as a hypnotherapist." **OK!**

WORDS: KIRSTEN JONES
PHOTOGRAPHS: GETTY, SHUTTERSTOCK

CARIBBEAN DREAM

HANKERING FOR A DOSE OF WINTER SUN? THE ISLAND OF BARBADOS IS CALLING YOU!

WHY GO

Rich with vibrant culture, incredible cuisine and sun-soaked shores, the tropical hot spot is toasty all year round, enjoying an average temperature of 30°C in the dry season (December-April). Boasting 80 pristine white-sand beaches, each coastline is infused with its own unique personality.

The west side, or the “platinum coast”, is famed for its luxurious hotels, buzzing restaurants and calm, azure Caribbean seas. Take a 30-minute drive east and you’ll discover the idyllic fishing village of Bathsheba where the quieter beaches are punctuated by dramatic limestone rock formations. The ocean is a lot wilder here, so it’s a haven for surfers, but locals enjoy taking a dip in the shallow inshore pools carved out of coral – it’s rather like lounging in a hot tub full of balmy sea water.

WHAT TO EAT – AND DRINK!

Rum, which was originally called “Kill Devil” by the Bajans, is at the heart of this beautiful island. There are over 1,500 brightly painted rum shops – with a population of 300,000, that’s one rum



BRUNELLI'S
LOOKS OUT ONTO
THE ATLANTIC



intimate rum-inspired dinner which includes cocktails infused with homegrown syrups and mint from the on-site garden. A delicious way to discover the stories behind the spirits.

Of course the island's most favoured rum is the iconic Mount Gay Rum. Founded in 1703, it's the oldest, most storied rum in the world, and expertly crafted using sugar cane and coral-filtered water native to the island. Over time, it has earned its title of "the rum that invented rum" and the locals are extremely proud of this. We headed down to the Mount Gay distillery where we took part in a tour that involved a tasting session paired with a fabulous traditional Bajan lunch.

WHERE TO STAY

For a rejuvenating island escape, the all-inclusive Waves Hotel

water aerobics classes are also on offer and for thrill-seekers there's water sports at the beach. A short distance from the star-studded Sandy Lane Beach, you'll find one of Waves' six sister resorts on Barbados, Treasure Beach. Culture vultures can discover the island's creative hubs with the hotel's guided "art crawl" tour or, for foodies, there are tasting sessions courtesy of award-winning chef Javon Cummins and the interactive Chef's Table experience.



shop for every 200 residents!

We went in search of a more luxurious rum experience at the Colony Club Hotel, which houses a Rum Vault holding over 150 bottles from across the world, each with its own distinct taste and history. Savour rum-and-chocolate pairings and tuck into an

& Spa, on Prospect Bay on the south-west coast, is ideal for honeymooners and those, like us, looking purely to unwind. An array of treatments are available, either at one of the hotel's four on-site spas, or in-room. We enjoyed the Good To Go massage and the Waves Express facial – both were divine. Complimentary yoga, Pilates and

WHAT ELSE TO DO

No trip to Barbados is complete without taking in the hustle and bustle of the island's capital, Bridgetown, with its patchwork of local markets and shops. We joined a walking tour – The Characters Of Town – to learn why it was once one of the busiest and wealthiest port cities of the 19th Century, with points of interest including St Mary's Church and Jubilee Gardens, the former central market. Another way to soak up the island's scenery is by boat. Calabaza Sailing Cruises offers private or group trips throughout the day or at sunset. It was an unforgettable experience exploring the ocean's shipwrecks and swimming with turtles before relaxing on board with lunch accompanied by glasses of rum punch. **OK!**

WORDS: EMMA HAWKINS
PHOTOS: GETTY, DEREK LATTA

TRAVELLER'S TALE

ALASKAN ADVENTURE

Anoushey Ashraf shares highlights from her recent trip to Alaska





Where did you go?

Anoushey Ashraf: I travelled across Alaska in a car. All the way From Karachi to the Arctic Circle.

What made you go here?

AA: I just wanted to go on a crazy adventure. I wanted to see something different in life and experience something that very few people have experienced. I suggested this to my friends and they were on it. They were already in the USA so we all got together and made a little group, and we decided to go.

What did you pack?

AA: So for this trip I packed a little differently. I had my sneakers, my trekking shoes, my hiking sticks, lots of sunblock, jackets for the cold, and little snacks to eat on trails, hikes and treks. It was more like an outdoorsy backpacking trip. I saw the tips on the internet and packed literally all those things you may need on a trekking/hiking trip.

What was favourite meal/restaurant?

AA: The halibut is a local fish that you get everywhere and I had it a lot. This fresh halibut was the best seafood I have ever had in my life and it is super healthy.

What was the biggest highlight of your trip/most memorable moment?

AA: It was just getting to Alaska and experiencing it so fully. We saw wildlife, whales and beavers - just

amazing stuff. Indulging so much in wildlife and nature was probably the biggest highlight. Camping out there and staying in the middle of the Denali National Park and being physically present in the Arctic Circle was amazing. There were so many highlights.

Favourite shopping destination?

AA: There was not much shopping in Alaska - I just liked the souvenir stores. There's a main road in Anchorage where the shops would close by 7:00 pm. I would just run in and get my family and friends dream catchers or something or the other.

Some sights worth seeing?

AA: Every sight in Alaska is worth seeing. I would definitely recommend a cruise to see the wildlife

and the whales. A cruise would be fun and of course staying at the Denali National Park. It's a once in a life time sort of experience.

What are some spots for a night out?

AA: This would include indulging in nature or sitting outside on a mountaintop with glaciers around. Of course there were some nice places to go out and eat and stuff, but I think it's the kind of place where you could just step out and be happy looking at nature and the sun. The sun wouldn't set actually - it didn't set for 24 hours.

Travel essentials?

AA: Sun block, good walking shoes, warm jacket, mosquito repellent, bear repellent and a good perspective of things. Being in a good place mentally is important in order to enjoy some of the challenges you face on a trip like this.

Any travel tips you would like to share?

AA: I think one needs to be in a positive state of mind. You will miss flights or have late check ins or jet lags and it sometimes sounds more fun than it actually is. But the growth that comes with being in a new culture with new people is remarkable. So always try to keep a positive perspective. Try and enjoy each and every moment. **OK!**



OK! WORLD IN ACTION



OVER A 1,000 VEHICLES BECAME STRANDED AS WOULD-BE TOURISTS RUSHED TO VIEW THE WINTER SNOWFALL IN THE HILLTOP TOWN OF MURREE. AT LEAST 21 PEOPLE TRAGICALLY DIED AFTER HEAVY SNOW TRAPPED THEM IN THEIR VEHICLES



FIREWORKS LIGHT UP THE SKY OVER SYDNEY'S HARBOUR BRIDGE AND OPERA HOUSE IN AUSTRALIA TO MARK THE START OF THE NEW YEAR



A RESCUED SNOW LEOPARD IS FARING WELL AFTER HAVING BEEN RELEASED INTO THE WILD IN NORTH CHINA. SNOW LEOPARDS HAVE BEEN FACING THE EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE, AND CAN NO LONGER FIND FOOD IN THEIR MOUNTAINOUS HABITAT



AN INSTALLATION ENTITLED TOGETHER, BY LORENZO QUINN, IS DISPLAYED CLOSE TO THE GREAT PYRAMID OF GIZA IN CAIRO IN OCTOBER. THE EXHIBITION, FOREVER IS NOW, FEATURED SCULPTURES AROUND THE GIZA PLATEAU, WITH WORKS BY EGYPTIAN AND FOREIGN CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS

HOROSCOPE & TAROT

IT'S WRITTEN IN THE STARS!

CAPRICORN

Dec 22 – Jan 20



There will be a sizzle in your love life and you will have many opportunities to connect with your partner, crush or loved ones. Try not to overthink these relationships, as that will most definitely lead to having less fun. Remain present and enjoy the positive energy coming your way.

TAURUS

Apr 21 – May 21



You will be aware of the injustices and struggles that you have been working under for the last few months. You will find yourself leading your colleagues to success and stand up for everyone's rights at work. The focus is on better conditions and pay for your coworkers and yourself in the months to come.

VIRGO

Aug 24 – Sep 23



You may feel like you need a break from the trials and tribulations of your mundane life, however, you will not be able to break free and get a moment to yourself until the end of January. You may have errands and to do lists even then, so don't wait to take a break when the workload decreases because the sooner you rest, the better your productivity will be. Time off will prove to be extra essential.

SAGITTARIUS

Nov 23 – Dec 21



You will realise your excessive expenditure that will make you rethink your spending habits. There will be buyer's remorse from your last spending spree and may return things that you no longer want or need. If you are tempted to shop, check out sales and discounts.

AQUARIUS

Jan 21 – Feb 19



You will undergo a chance to reconnect with your roots and core beliefs. There will be an internal journey in which you will rebuild your foundation, learning that instead of merely focusing on material possessions or monetary value, energy needs to be given to your heart, mind, and spirit as well.

GEMINI

May 22 – Jun 21



A great opportunity is presenting itself at work. You may be tempted to accept the position, however, you may realise that this may not be a job that will work out for the long term. Take time to figure this out, as it will be best to know now instead of later while you are in the thick of it.

LIBRA

Sep 24 – Oct 23



You may be very tempted to take up a redecorating project, however, you should try to resist the urge because there will be a lot of confusion regarding your choices that may leave you feeling rather disappointed. Therefore, it is highly recommended to take up creative projects in February instead when you have clarity.

PISCES

Feb 20 – Mar 20



It's difficult to find friends who will always stand by you no matter what. This month you will discover who your true friends are. You will have the opportunity to put an end to toxic friendships and find those who will love you unconditionally. Get ready for an upgrade of your squad.

CANCER

Jun 22 – Jul 23



You are finally allowing your partner or crush to see the real you underneath all those layers. However, you may not be comfortable with them showing you their true colours. It will be difficult for you to accept their flaws, as it is no longer as easy for you to accept others as it was before. Bear in mind, once you get them a chance you will realise how much you appreciate them along with their differences and quirks. Don't forget: no one is perfect.

SCORPIO

Oct 24 – Nov 22



Holding on to past feelings of disappointments and hurt from your previous relationships is affecting your current relationship. You will realise this now more than ever, when your insecurities and fears are being awakened this month. There will be an opportunity later this month to heal the past and the moment you let go, you will finally be able to move forward with others.

ARIES

Mar 21 – Apr 20



There is a lot of relationship drama this month. There will also be some communication with exes. You will get the push you need to explore your desires including old flames.

LEO

Jul 24 – Aug 23



It is not always necessary to be the center of attention, especially when working in a group setting. There will be some huge changes in the professional environment, transforming the current vibe at the office. Learning to collaborate with coworkers including those you do not have the best track record with will not be easy but it will definitely be necessary.



ZAYN MALIK
JANUARY 12, 1993



SAJAL ALY
JANUARY 17, 1994

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