



MEL C. AND GERI

No pot to
piss in?

Spicier



GINGER AND SCARY

'I wish we'd never
done that sex tape!'



**TOO POOR
FOR TP!**



GERI AND MEL. B:

- SPICE GIRLS COME FORWARD TO ADDRESS ABUSE ALLEGATIONS
- CRACKING UNDER THE RELENTLESS PRESSURE



**WHO'S BABY'S
BABY DADDY?**

Bringing back the Spice Girls' iconic first ever interview from May 11, 1996!

KEY 103 FM

WITH FORD BURGESS



Meet the Spice Girls!

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR...

Dear reader,

Welcome to the first Spicier issue! And please accept my apologies if I've fooled you with my cover filled with thrilling (I know), but fabricated stories.

To be quite honest, I didn't think for one second, when I first started this project, that the Spice Girls would lead me to what it did. I didn't choose to create my zine around them out of passion. I've never been a fan of their music, and despite the affinity I've grown for these women as I researched and got to understand them, I must confess that I still can't listen through any of their songs without failing to resist my urge to skip. My impression of them was to be a fun, light-hearted band, and that it would thus lead me to angle my writing this way. Boy was I wrong.

Reflecting back, I probably could've guessed that there was way more happening behind the seemingly superficial facade of the Spice Girls. I mean, they didn't become this world phenomenon out of pure luck. I just didn't realise the extent of it when I first started planning out my articles.

From the Riot Grrrl, to the psychological phenomenon of celebrity magazines, to the Spring/Summer 2024 runway, my research took me way beyond the funky, camp image the world thinks of when talking about the Spice Girls. There is so much more to understand about the sociological, political complex around this girl band that started off as an industry plant not much different than the rest. "Spicier" is a condensed glimpse into the rabbit hole of discoveries and information I went down of.

I would like to end my editor's letter by saying that I want to dedicate this zine to women. Researching the Spice Girls and talking to the incredible women I had the privilege to interview made me remember how incredibly lucky I feel to be a woman, but it also reminded me of the hardships only us face and understand as deeply as we do.

Enjoy your reading, and I hope you'll walk away having learned a thing or two. I sure did!

Leelou xx



BABY



SPORTY



SCARY



POSH



GINGER



THE *Spice Girls* SUBTERFUGE

REALLY

A SIMPLIFIED TIMELINE OF FEMINISM AND MUSIC IN THE 90S



1991: Beginning of the Riot Grrl movement, Bikini Kill Zine #2 "Girl Power" is published



The ladettes show women a new way of "being female" - Louise Donovan



1996: The Riot Grrrl movement comes to an end



However, the Spice Girls are "too camp to be taken seriously." (Sara Marcus) "They don't equip young women to be secure in their feminist ideas. (Lucy O'Brien)

The 80s: society enters an era of POST-FEMINISM

1994: Chris & Bob Herbert create the SPICE GIRLS!

Politics become intertwined with religious conservatism. Feminists are described as "men-hating, socialists who leave their husbands"

The Spice Girls' catchy feminism is part of the mainstream. Most women associate "Girl Power" with the band



MANUFACTURING FEMINISM

On March 4, 1994, hundreds of girls rallied at the Danceworks Studios in London to audition for an ad that was published in "The Stage", in the hope of being part of the next big thing. A month later, Victoria, Geri, Mel B, Mel C, and Emma became the Spice Girls.

Racing full speed through the desert in a 1970 Dodge Charger to frenetic synth lines, the Spice Girls set the electrifying scene for their "Say You'll Be There" music video.

In a captivating performance of the catchy pop song, the five members transform into sensually intrepid cartoon-like creatures. The message is clear: they are more than the fun girls we saw in the "Wannabe" video, running around the former Midland Grand Hotel in their playful outfits. Dressed in black mini skirts, latex co-ords, and leopard bustiers as they emerge from the vintage sports car, we're presented with five women - NOT girls. Immersed in a fictional universe heavily inspired by Russ Meyer's sexy exploitation movie "Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!", the girls take turns up close and personal with the camera, as the other bandmates give a sultry performance of their own in the background.

The Spice Girls were all about "Girl Power", and, on a surface level, that is what they were promoting. There is no denying that these were the true intentions of the band members, although, despite technically being a role model for an entire generation of women, Geri still described feminism as "bra-burning lesbianism" in an interview with The Guardian 2007. (Apparently, the message didn't really stick there either.) There are thus some key elements to factor in when reflecting on the legitimacy of their message - the

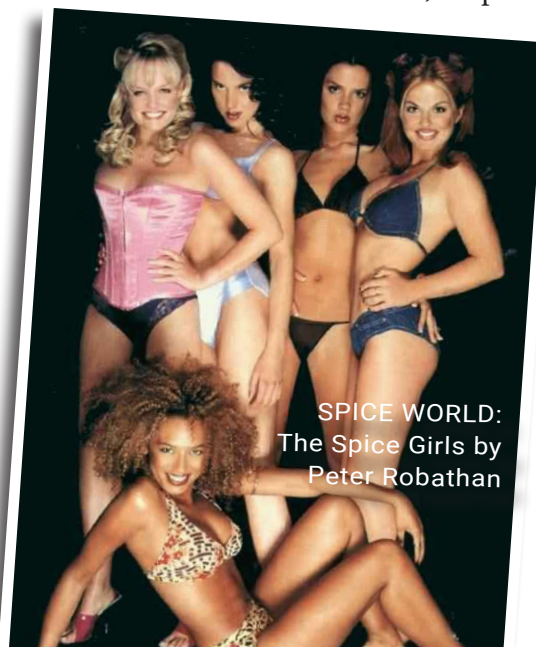


The Spice Girls in leather and latex

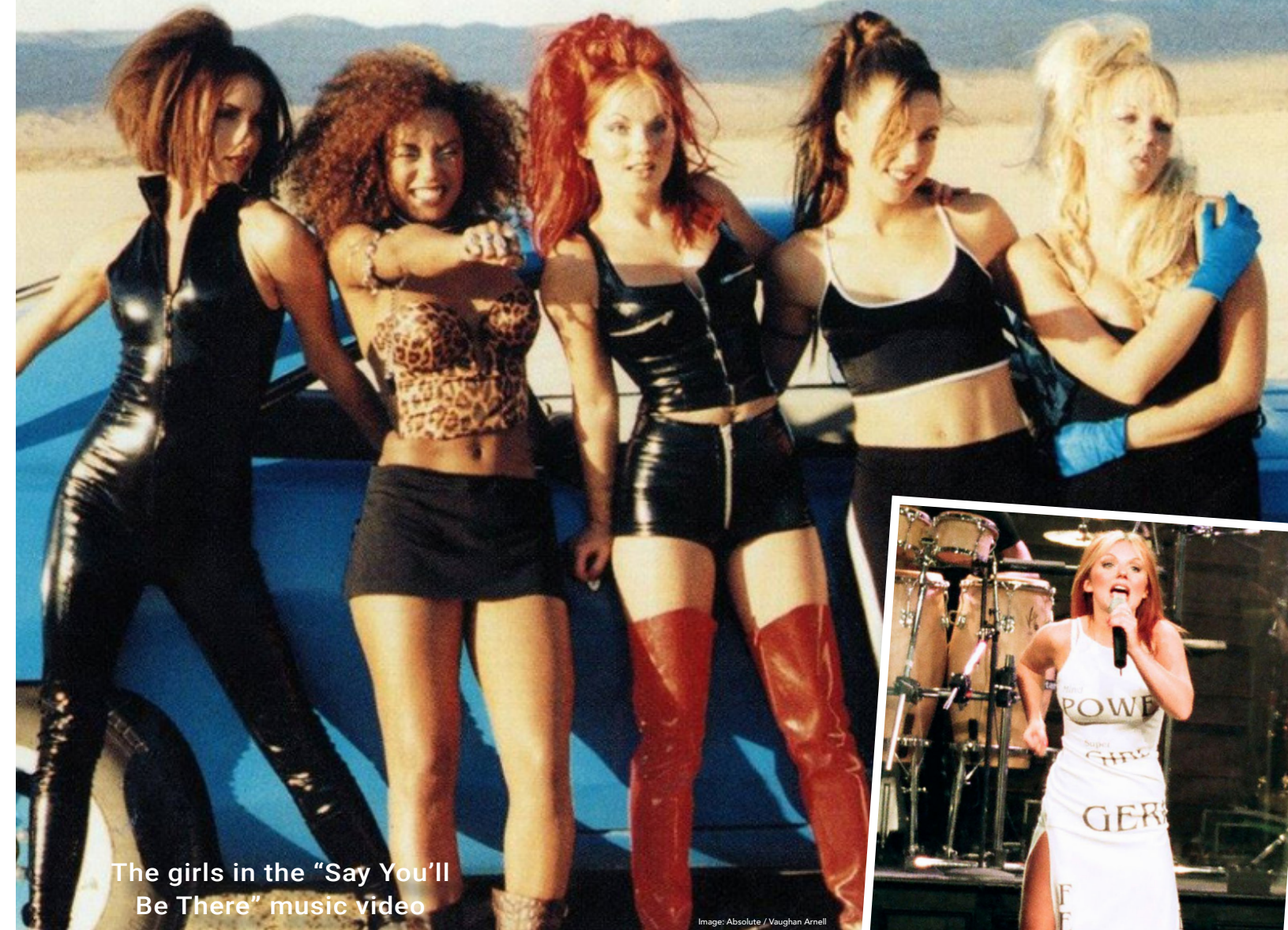
most important being that the band originally was an industry plant created by men. We come to question its authenticity especially when being confronted with music videos such as "Say You'll Be There", which deliberately reduced their strong, powerful personas to over-sexualised fantasies gratifying the male gaze. "The Spice Girls' approach to feminism didn't have much substance. I found that my students who were from that generation didn't feel secure in solidarity with other women, and that they hadn't really learned the implementation of boundaries", says author and journalist Lucy O'Brien, whose work focuses on women in music.

Before the Spice Girls, feminism and female empowerment were mainly endorsed by the Riot Grrrl movement, and rebelliously loud female punk bands who, despite their fighting spirit, resonated with

only a small niche of the population. Conventionally pretty girls and catchy slogans were far more effective in infiltrating the mainstream, and conveying a message which perhaps wasn't 100% theirs. "At the time, their 'Girl Power' certainly felt like it was being manufactured. Since then, I look back and think they were a little more than that in the excitement they created around being strong, feisty women,"



SPICE WORLD: The Spice Girls by Peter Robathan



The girls in the "Say You'll Be There" music video

continues Lucy. "They definitely registered their presence in that way."

SEXUALISATION

When the Spice Girls first entered the music scene, society was drifting further and further away from feminist ideals. As pop musicians were progressively reduced to entertainment objects, their wardrobes evolved accordingly. Dresses got shorter, tops got sheerer... Yet, women had to preserve some kind of untouchable innocence. In David Sinclair's book "Wannabe", ABSOLUTE pop writers and producers Paul Wilson and Andy Watkins described the girls to be "all like little Lollitas". This perverse fetishisation is perfectly characterised by Emma, aka Baby Spice. "She looked about

16," continued Watkins. With her pigtails and big, blue, innocent eyes, the Spice Girl represented the ideal "woman-child". Adorned in lingerie-inspired baby blue tops and lacy midi dresses, her trusty pair of Buffalos protected the fragile equilibrium between seductive attire and child-like attributes.

Baby's and the rest of the band's youthful energy didn't escape the attention of the media, as the press took malicious pleasure in scrutinising any change in their bodies or potential wardrobe malfunctions. Some might remember when Geri made all the front pages when she wore her Jessica Rabbit-inspired sequin dress at the 1997 Brit Awards, and photographers caught an unfortunate nip slip on camera.



Geri wearing a "Girl Power" dress

As the group was pushing their famous "Girl Power" persona, imparting ideas of feminism, empowerment, and sisterhood to their fans, their simultaneous intense sexualisation and behaviour created a complex paradoxical combination implying that, in order to be "empowered" and embrace feminist ideals, a girl had to sexualise herself.

You don't wanna fight with us!



‘I king-dared Geri to kiss Prince Charles!’

From Britney to the Spice Girls, the makeup artist behind the looks of our favourite celebrities exclusively talks to Spicier about the reality happening behind the glamorous facade of fame.

Leelou Reboh: What does makeup mean to you?

Karin Darnell: I believe makeup is everything for women, no matter the role they're in. It's their mask, their shield, their confidence, their bravery. It makes you into somebody, and gives you strength. Sometimes, you only need a little bit of red lipstick or some lipgloss to look finished off. As a makeup artist, especially when working in celebrity, the glam room is the area you walk into with your normal life and troubles, and you come out looking and feeling like a star.

LR: And what about the Spice Girls? Did you have meetings with the band's management?

KD: No. I had nothing. I was just told it would be for this new band, and that there'd be three girls. Other than that, I went in completely blind. It was 5am in London, in a TV studio, for a low-key breakfast program to get them started. I arrived to set up and was bombarded with 5 girls. Geri was first in the hot seat. I made her up, and

she just went "Alright girls! I love her! In you go". It honestly was so chaotic that I didn't look up from my makeup table once. All I remember from that day is Melanie C doing a backflip.

LR: What was your creative process when building their looks up?

KD: When you working with any top artist, the schedule is relentless. You haven't got the time to reflect and think about what to do or what to change. You've always got to think on your feet! That's how we got the looks for the girls. We also didn't have any input from the record company, so it was very much down to me and them, what we felt like trying, and our limitations on the day - these being: the location, the time, the audience, or the way their skin felt. It was a true partnership. You've probably got it by now that they couldn't be controlled by anybody anyway. There also was no retouching back then, and when you're building up an image for this amazing, lovely band, people don't want them to look pretty. The paparazzi would always come along to

try and tear them down. There's a few times when I really got worried that their makeup wouldn't translate well through the camera.

LR: What was the atmosphere like when you were getting them ready?

KD: It always was utter chaos. We laughed and we cried. I remember splitting up with a boyfriend and the girls wiping my tears as I was making them up in a random hotel bathroom in a random city in America. We'd often end up piled up into my room, someone sitting on the toilet so I could get them ready. I'd be constantly rushing to get them ready on time, and then we'd travel to the next place. That was our everyday. We never ever stopped. I have to say, the girls were really great though. They'd keep a lot of their troubles to themselves. Our makeup area was our little haven. It's how we got through endless shoots and shows, and where we lifted each other up. We were so tight-knit, it's almost unbelievable now that I think back.

LR: What does "Girl Power" mean to you?

KD: First, to me, "Girl Power" is humour. We laughed so much and dared each other a lot. It got us through our days and dissipated pressure. It also means also never being afraid to speak up, or stand up for your rights. Mel B stood up to people so much that sometimes she could've made enemies. It was to her own detriment, but she was actually coming from a really good place. They all were. They never were disrespectful. This is also what "Girl Power" is: getting what you want done, always by treating people properly. No matter who they are, from the lowest to the highest. Lastly, and that's something I tell my kids now, "Girl Power" means being yourself. Never be afraid to go for it, because your life is your dreams and you might actually achieve it!

LR: What's your favourite anecdote

from working with them?

KD: There's so many, but my favourite one, I'd say, is everything that happened the weekend Geri kissed Prince Charles!

We were backstage in Manchester, and I "king-dared" her to do it. "King-dare" was part of our makeup room banter: it was the ultimate dare. I literally loaded her lips with so much lipstick. To this day I've never put so much lipstick on someone in my life! Her lips were literally dripping with the most red engorged glossy lip you could possibly imagine. And she bloody did it! That made all the front pages! Right after that show, we flew to Cannes for the film festival where they were performing. We were on a couple of boats, and suddenly we got surrounded by speedboats. It was The Sun and all the red top papers, and guys in black suits and headsets. It looked like a movie chase on the water! I remember thinking "What the hell?! This is like a movie set!"



‘It was always utter chaos’

What am I doing, a normal girl from London, in a boat chase in Cannes, with the world's paparazzi on speedboats?" That's the kind of funny moments that happened quite a lot.

LR: What's your relationship with them now?

KD: I am still in touch with all them. I'm actually seeing Emma next week! We can't quite believe the years. We've all got kids now, we've all grown up. I think you can't really go through something like we did and not have an invisible tie. You never think of yourself as their friend because you're not. You're employed. However, you create this very special relationship with them because it's a very intimate job from the beginning. You really touch each other's souls. It was amazing but I'm not sure I could do it all again though. I'd probably go crazy!

**“I’m smiling on the
inside but feel I have
a responsibility to the
fashion community.”**

- Victoria Beckham to Vogue.com on why she's always pouting.



'Girl Power was 100% true'

In conversation with Spicier, former hairstylist for the Spice Girls Jennie Roberts reminisces about her time working with the band, feeling safe in a creative environment as a woman, and favourites.

Leelou Reboh: Did you have an initial meeting with the girls to get to know them and their style preferences?

Jennie Roberts: That's a great question! The way I fell into the Spice Girls was very unique, because another hairdresser was supposed to work with them. He had meetings with their management and the record company, he met the girls... But on the first day he was supposed to work with them, he was sick! So I was a stand-in. I'd literally never seen them. I mean, I'd seen them on TV, and I'd thought "What a nightmare they are! I could never work with them!", because Geri and Melanie B. were just interrupting each other all the time. Next thing, I got a call asking me to do the

SmashHits Awards. I turned up with my kit, without knowing them or anybody on the team! They sent Mel C. to me first to test me out, and I did her hair slightly differently from how she'd normally do it, a bit warrior-like. That impressed them I think, and so they were all like "Yeah okay, she's alright, go on, go to her!". We got along very quickly, and the guy that was initially supposed to do their hair never got a call back!

LR: Did they trust your choices?

JR: They did. We had 100% trust. I kept them within their looks, because my role, as I understood it, wasn't about changing them. They liked how they all had their own identities, and how none of them crossed over. We were always careful about not doing things that looked like another girl's style. We just amplified what they already liked. It was their look on steroids sometimes!

LR: What was their attitude when they'd come into the dressing room to get ready?

JR: I have to say, hand on my heart, they were some of the most professional people I've ever worked with. They were on time, they'd discuss between them who'd go in the chair first each time. They didn't all show up at once. We knew who was going in the

makeup chair, and who was going in the hairdressing chair. They'd always bring their kits back to me everyday, or their hairbands. They also kept everything between them private, and I am very thankful for that. I had no idea if there was a fuse going on, or if one was pissed off with the other. That allowed me to just be neutral and get on with my job. I've worked with lots of other bands since, and it becomes really difficult when members start to confide in me. At the end of the day, I'm just there to do the hair! There's this one thing I used to do to tease them though: I would look at their hair and whisper in their ear "Oh I love it so much, it's my favourite". I'd do it loud enough so that they could all hear me, and I'd do it to all of them as well. We thought it was hilarious! That was our little inside joke.

'THEY GAVE ME THE POWER TO BE MYSELF'

LR: How do you feel looking back on the work you did with them?

JR: Well, I'm happy people are saying they actually like them, because I just look at it and think "Oh my God, did I do that?". Not in an egotistical way, but because I could do so much better now! But

that's experience for you, isn't it?

LR: What's your favourite anecdote from working with the Spice Girls?

JR: I don't know if this is anecdote, but looking back, it was probably one of the safest environments I've worked in. Not that I feel unsafe at work, but in the fact that, as a woman, I was heard. That "Girl Power", it was absolutely 100% true! They were oozing it. They gave me the power to be who I am. It's only as you get older and work in different situation where lots of people want to diminish you that you realise that. They never did. That was really fabulous, and that's why I love them all so much still.

LR: Who was your favourite member?

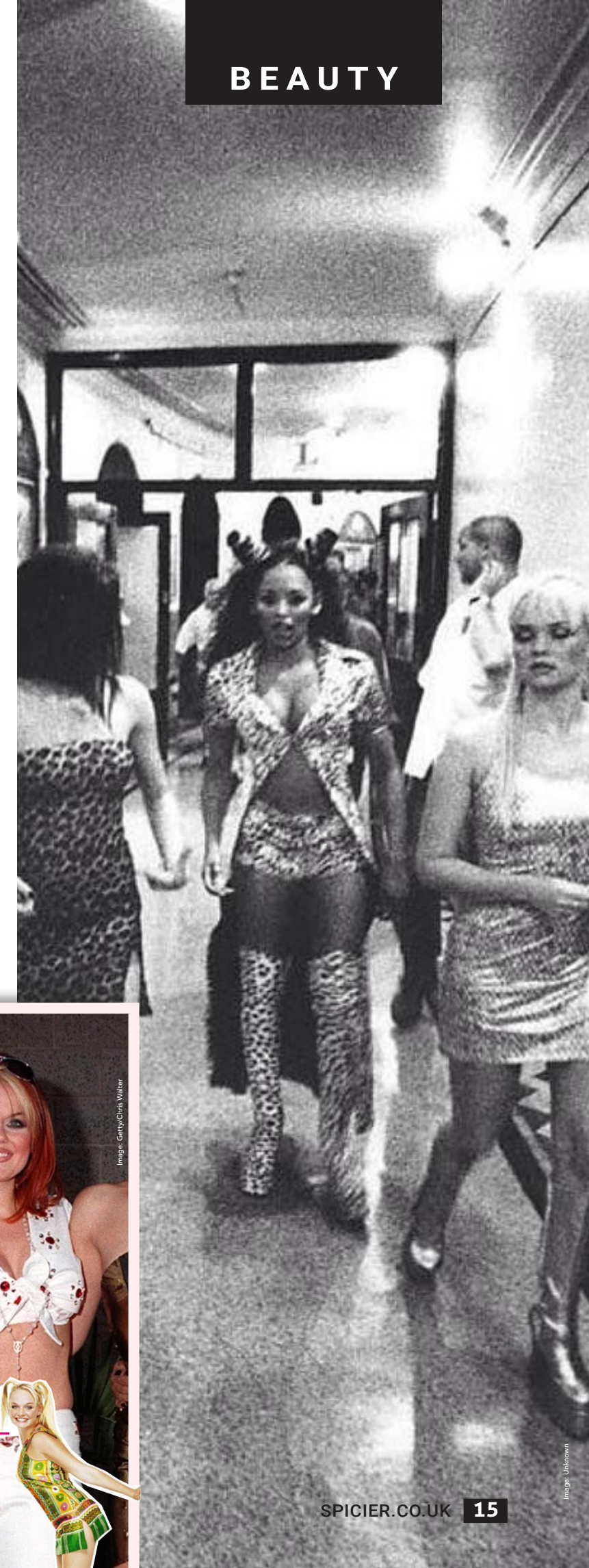
JR: That's like asking who your favourite child is! Honestly, I didn't have favourites. I loved the energy from all of them. The way I think about people is: could I go out for dinner, and have a conversation with them just by ourselves? And I could honestly do it with all of them. But I'll say this: when they split up, the person that reached out to me first was Melanie C. She napped me as her personal hairdresser, and I went on to work with her for the next couple years. So I became closer to her, and we're still in touch! I don't think I've got anybody else's number in my mobile anymore, just hers. If I ever saw any of them again, though, it'd be like meeting old friends!



Jennie touching up Victoria's wedding hair



Mel C. and Geri before the band's first ever show



FROM GLOSSY TO TRASHY

Exploring the social impact of celebrity journalism.

What celebrity on the front cover of the most glamorous magazine hasn't seen themselves become the leading story of weekly tabloids? Fame and sensationalism don't exist without one another. They are different sides of the same coin. We've put these people on pedestals for their PR-manufactured perfection, yet created celebrity magazines to indulge our thirst for gossip.

Don't be offended. I'm guilty too.

As Dr. Sephen Benning explained to Christine Byrne for *Everyday Health Magazine*, "sharing gossip can bond people socially." We love to engorge ourselves on a juicy, exquisite, painfully dramatic piece of gossip, because it reminds us that we are not alone in life. That

no matter if we try to hide behind a filtered facade, we all experience the same pains and grief. Celebrities have become a reference point for us to gauge our own success. We use them to assess our own relationships, our own ways of living. "We are fascinated by odd stories," says Brooke Pollock, journalist for *Heat*, *Okay!*, and *Closer* amongst others. "Celebrities have been in the public eye for so long, and so, when all of the sudden, an unexpected story comes out, we start wondering why it hasn't come out sooner, or if anybody else knew".

Tabloid journalism was once rooted in remorseless voyeurism. It destroyed marriages, families, lives. We still remember the blazing headlines from the early naughties, when celebrity reporters especially seemed to be particularly

vicious towards women. Victoria Beckham will probably always be haunted by the tabloids asserting that she was "too posh to push" as she was about to welcome her first child into the world via c-section. "Times have changed. Shaming women for being relatable, or having normal bodies isn't in vogue anymore," explains reporting journalist Daisy Hall. "Heat, for example, doesn't do that anymore. Back in the day, we used to be awful. There was a shaming circle that was very disgusting and has been taken out. It's made a genuine effort to change to way it writes about celebrities, especially women."

Yet, the stories we see on the covers of celebrity magazines are still almost exclusively about women. The *Sun* continues to write about its "Page 3 girls", *Closer* still rejoices in

pitting women against one another, and *OK!* Magazine carries on pinning heartbreaking divorce stories as the tabloid of the week. All that without forgetting to top it all off with the traditional malicious catchy headline. "It's just all a massive game," Hall says. "Everybody knows how the system works. Sources know that by giving us a juicy line, we're going to put them in the magazine. That's going to be a headline, and we're going to get readers from it."

Embellished drama perhaps, but embellished by whom? Who do we truly hold accountable for what we read? "You might not always be comfortable with what you write, but it's not always about your morals. It's money, it puts food on the table. At the end of the day, it's what your editor wants," says Brooke. "It's not always the journalist's fault, but



'It's just all a massive game'

journalism. People who don't work in journalism tend to forget that there's a hierarchy." In this calculated exchange of information, the uncanny nature of the stories entices the ego of every willing participant, even ours. There's Schadenfreude in reading about the decline of the people we believe to be untouchable.

So is the aim of celebrity magazines only to appease our appetite for intricate productions of exaggerated melodrama? Daisy believes "they help people form opinions on what they're already talking about. We can all read about what's going on with celebrities on Instagram now. However, to know how to think about it, readers need information on their background and from sources detailing why these things have happened."



You're literally so obsessed with us!

5 SPRING/SUMMER 2024 TRENDS

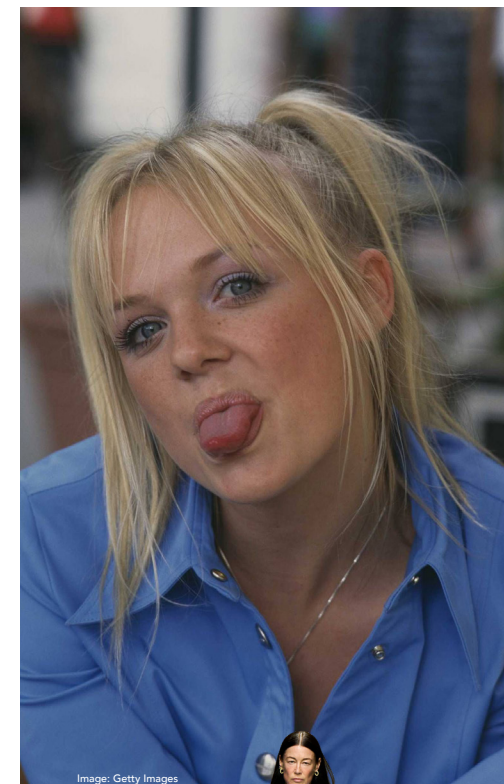
THE SPICE GIRLS WORE FIRST

GET HER LOOK

MONOCHROMATIC ELEGANCE

There's one thing Posh probably loved doing more than matching with Becks, and it was rocking a monochrome look that screamed quiet luxury - on a budget! The Spice Girl surprised us all when she revealed that the little black dress that had everyone convinced to be Gucci, was actually Miss Selfridges. So, what was her trick? An eye for understated, luxurious-looking garments she found on the high street that elevated her style from simply basic, to fashionably iconic. Designers fought thread and needles to emulate Victoria's art of stealth wealth this season. The Row proved that the Olsen Twins were still at the forefront of understated elegance with their relaxed tailoring looks, and Sa-

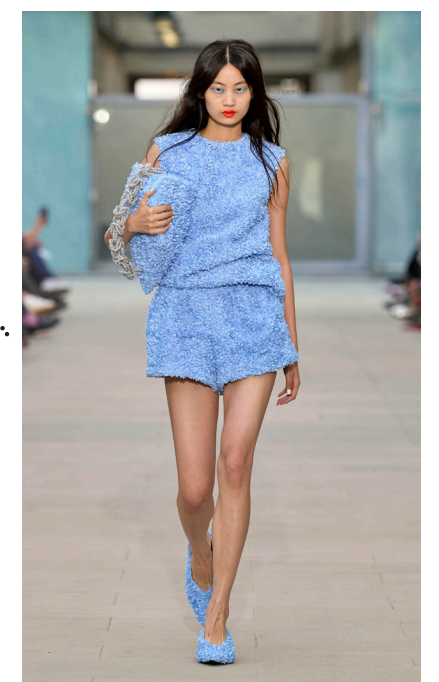
bado de Sarno brought back the actually-Gucci-this-time's timeless LBDs for a truly ironically iconic Posh Spice moment. At Acne Studios and Atlein, classic silhouettes were revisited to create modern looks to the satisfaction of edgier dressers.



IN THE NEWS...

BABY BLUE FOR YOU

Baby Spice's signature colour had fashion in a chokehold this season. A multitude of pastel blue variations went down the runway in the fashion capitals. Baby, powder, or ice blue, you name it! At Givenchy, blue was used to add a subtle pop of colour to neutral looks. Stella McCartney and Versace caught everyone's attention by bringing playfulness to meticulously tailored silhouettes. Others like Akris and AZ factory showcased mesmerising textures to add some dimension to their monochromatic looks, and Proenza Schouler and Benetton were all about blue transparency.



Givenchy

AZ Factory

A WHOLE LOTTA TEXTURE

Known for her bold, show-stopping red and sparkly outfits, Ginger didn't shy away from texture either. Mixing and matching leather and fur, or jersey and latex, the Spice Girl was the epitome that your outfit can never go wrong with a little bit of confidence and a lot of mismatched materials.

Designers love to play around and layer fabrics of all kinds these days. Dries van Noten interpreted this with silk button-downs under sheer robe-like cardigans, topped with knit briefs to go along with this season's favourite "no pants" trend. There were lashings of leather sets at KNWLS and Iceberg, and students of the Parsons New School of Design proved the power of a flannel/tie-died leather combo. Even Saint Laurent ventured into layering textures, with juxtaposed sheers and satins.



Image: Alamy Stock Photo



Saint Laurent



Dries van Noten



Kim Shui



Parsons the New School of Design



Iceberg



Etro



Fendi



Issey Miyake



Stella McCartney



Y/Project

STYLE CRUSH: MELANIE C.



Image: Wengler Agency for "Spice Girls: The Movie"



Coperni



Ferragamo



Y/Project

Sporty chic

To all fashionable sports enthusiasts, spring/summer 2024 was the season to unabashedly be YOU! Designers made comfort a point of honour, as Miu Miu and Coperni elevated sweatpants from lazy to luxury, and models walked down the Valentino catwalk in gradient sporty catsuits. Fashion's obsession with elevated athleticwear might have been reignited, but Mel C. always knew sporty could be chic. Sporty Spice proudly wore the unmistakable Adidas three-striped tracksuits, paired with one of the many colourful Nike Airs from her collection, whether that be in the street, for a shoot, or even on a red carpet! Designers were all about emulating the Mel C. easy dressing, as the halter neck made several swanky appearances at Ferragamo and Supriya Lele, and iridescent waterproof jackets stole the spotlight during the Y/Project show.

CRAZY FOR PRINTS

Fearless in prints - back then, Scary might've terrified some of us with her unlikely combination of colours and patterns. However, the SS24 runway might as well have taken inspiration straight from her wardrobe, as we notice a rising trend of experimental prints and graphics. Etro showcased an array of multicoloured baroque-inspired prints, while Stella McCartney experimented with decorative maximalist cut-outs sewn onto mesh body-suits. Matching printed tights and dresses were at the rendezvous chez Issey Miyake. Roberto Cavalli held onto its legacy of surreal exoticism, and undefined skin-like patterns made an appearance at Fendi.

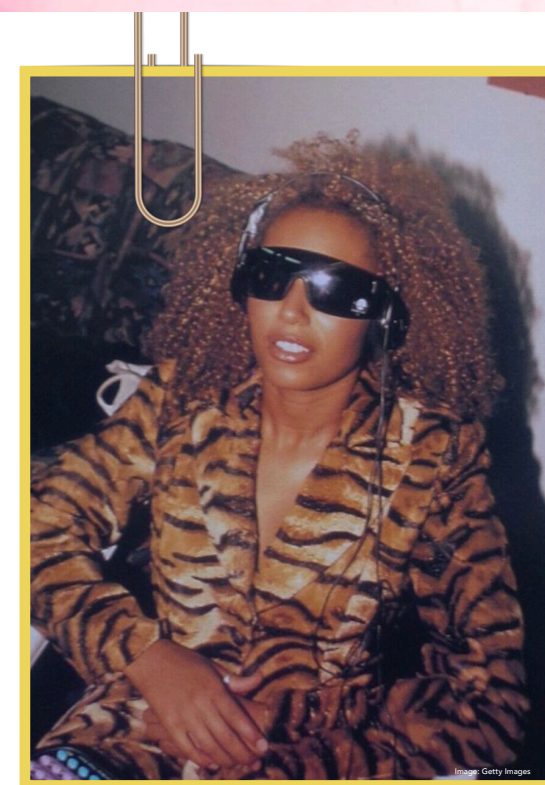


Image: Getty Images

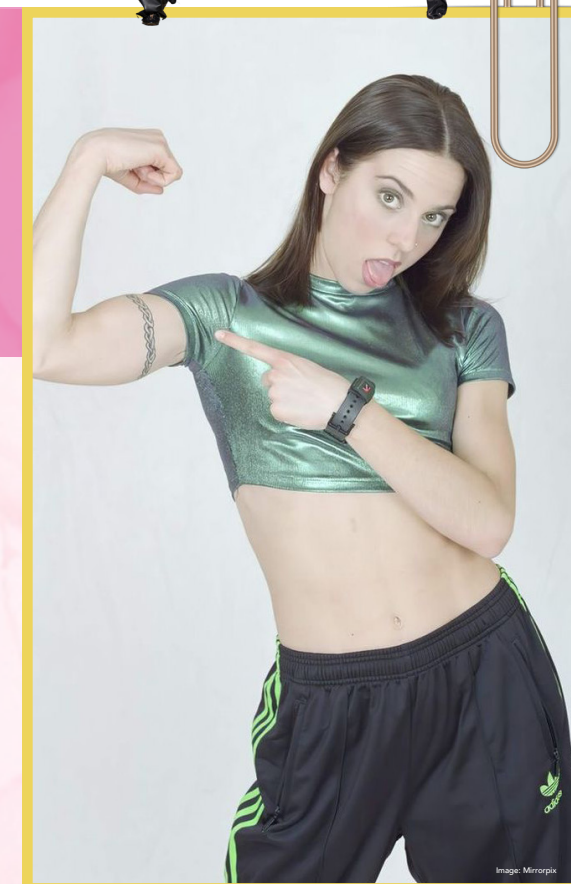


Image: Mirrorpix

"MY BOYFRIEND ALWAYS
MATCHES MY STYLE"
- Jennifer Aniston

"I GET HIM TO WEAR THE
SAME OUTFITS AS ME"
- Victoria Beckham

Style Essentials

THE MOST FASHIONABLE
ACCESSORY A GIRL CAN
HAVE IS A 90S BOYFRIEND

"HIS BLUE EYES COMPLIMENT
MINE SO WELL!"
- Elizabeth Hurley

"HE SINGS ME R&B LOVE
SONGS WHENEVER I WANT"
- Emma Bunton

"HE REALLY MAKES ME STAND
OUT IN A CROWD"
- Uma Thurman

"HE'S THE PERFECT ADDITION
TO SHOW OFF AT A PARTY"
- Geri Halliwell

Spicier Bloopers



Spotted smoking !!!



Kisses from the girls !



Thank you for reading Spicier! I hope you enjoyed flipping through these few pages, and that you learned something from it. I sure did! And thank you to my beautiful models Ford, Elise, Luna, Tilly, and Freya for their gorgeous faces and their time. They're truly what makes this magazine look fabulous. Working with people that support you and your projects is always the best feeling in the world!!