

InStyle

the gift guide issue

STYLE 100

THE YEAR IN FASHION HITS, MISSES & HASHTAGS

5 NEW HOLIDAY BEAUTY IDEAS
BYE-BYE, SMOKY EYE!

176 FABULOUS PRESENTS
And We've Seen Everything

YOUR WINTER WARDROBE FORMULA

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Gwen

THE EMPRESS STRIKES BACK
Top of the Charts. Booming Fashion Business. And Her Boys by Her Side

InStyle

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GWEN STEFANI photographed on the cover and at right by Jan Welters. This page: Valentino Haute Couture dress, headband, and belt.



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GWEN STEFANI

With a heartbreaking year in the rearview mirror, the *Voice* star is back to feeling hella good. Bursting with renewed energy, she brings us up to speed on her new solo album, multiple fashion collaborations, and life at home with her three boys. **BY SARA MESLE**

URBAN DECAY

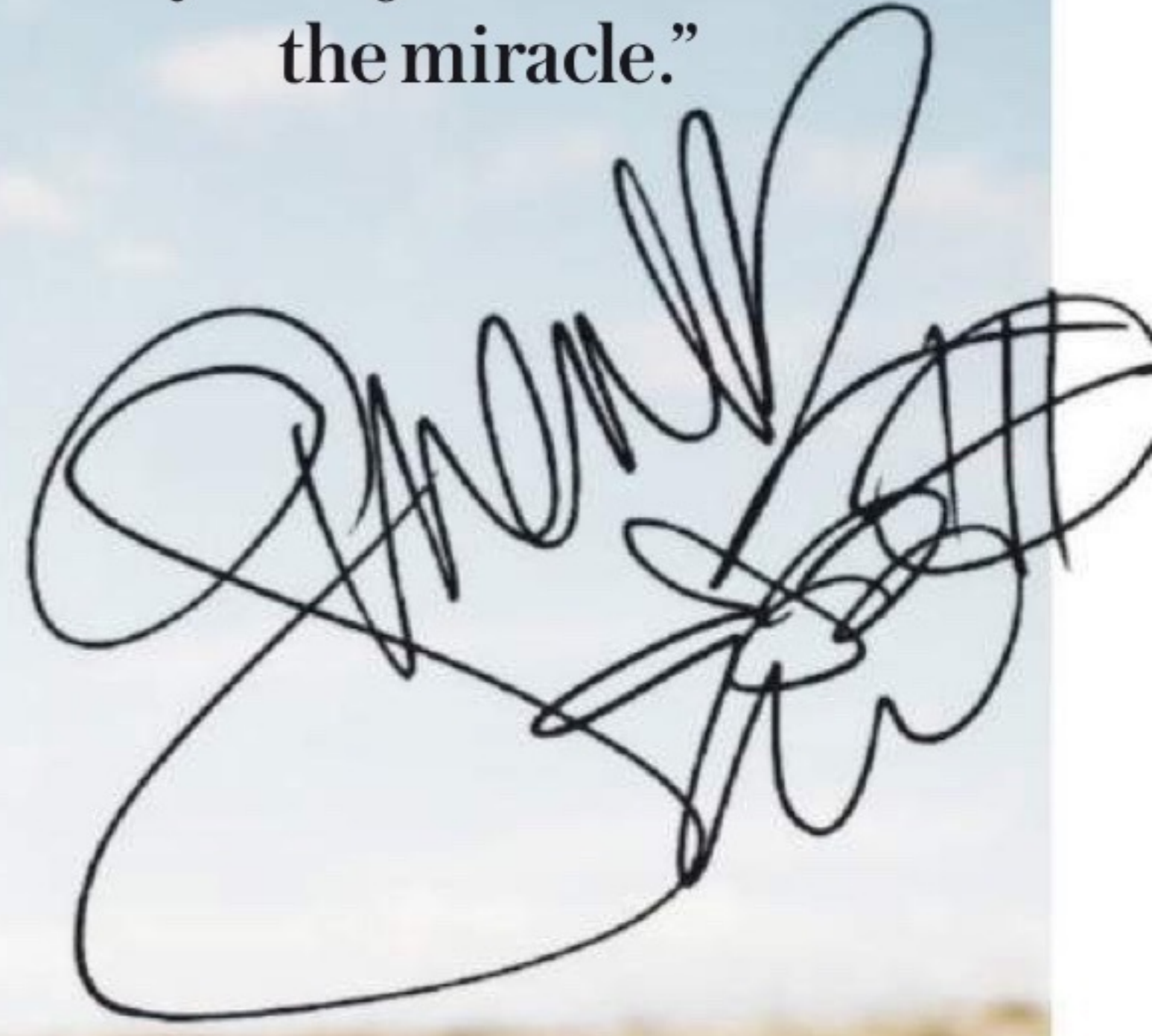
Gwen introduces her ultimate eyeshadow collection.
From her 15 can't-live-without shades to the super-luxe case,
Gwen designed and developed her perfect palette.
(And that's only the beginning.)

AVAILABLE AT SEPHORA, ULTA BEAUTY, SELECT MACY'S STORES, NORDSTROM.COM, URBAN DECAY FASHION ISLAND AND URBANDECAY.COM

December 2015

InStyle

“Songwriting is like giving birth. When it happens, you’re just in awe of the miracle.”



Dior Haute Couture dress with gilet and sandals.

JAN WELTERS



blue skies ahead

You might think the highly publicized dissolution of her 13-year marriage to Gavin Rossdale would slow down this rock-star mom.

But with a darling 22-month-old son underfoot,
a new album bubbling up, and a booming fashion
empire that just keeps expanding (chew toy, anyone?),

GWEN STEFANI is marching bravely forward in her stilettos

by **SARAH MESLE** *photographed by* **JAN WELTERS** *styled by* **JOANNE BLADES**

MAISON
MARGIELA
'ARTISANAL'
DESIGNED
BY JOHN
GALLIANO
Handpainted silk-lined
evening dress with
detachable handpainted
neoprene mesh coat.



**ATELIER
VERSACE**

Silk georgette and silk chiffon dress with Swarovski crystal, silk chiffon, and vinyl floral embellishment. Hand-cut silk chiffon floral headband with Swarovski crystal embellishment.

GX by Gwen Stefani
faux-stingray and suede sandals.



**CHANEL
HAUTE
COUTURE**
Silk chiffon, silk lace,
and silicone dress
and satin heels.

Gwen Stefani is cleaning out her closets. At the moment, she's prying open a crate labeled "archives." It's overstuffed and stuck closed; her long, white-painted nails slip on the latch, and she breaks into a wry, red-lipsticked grin as the satiny contents spill out. Everyone has old boxes full of memories. But not everyone's are full of 20 years' worth of iconic costumes. The bags and boxes

crowding Stefani's design studio are a testament to the many phases of her career: first as the lead singer of the band No Doubt, then as a solo artist, a judge on *The Voice*, and ultimately as a fashion designer. "Look!" she says, leaning over and pulling out a pair of sequined shorts. "This is from David Letterman. And this [grabbing a white-boned corset] is from 'Rich Girl.'" She points to piles of maternity clothes, old "*Voice* stuff," a costume from the American Music Awards. "I just did a shoot," she says, gesturing toward a pile of designer duds that would make most women quiver in their Manolos. "And they gave me the clothes afterward."

There's a lot to be excited about in this box, but Stefani seems reluctant to dwell on the past—it's almost as if there's something in there she'd rather not let out. Closing the lid and standing up, she projects a kind of defiantly confident glam-rock vibe. Her high-waist J Brand skinny jeans and strappy L.A.M.B. high heels exaggerate her tall, slim figure, while her faded black tank (an "old favorite," she says) reveals glossy blue bra straps. Her famous platinum locks are twisted into a severe topknot; her signature red lipstick is carefully in place. "I just feel like I've been in this cocoon," she says. "And now I'm ready to burst out with all these new creations."



**VALENTINO
HAUTE
COUTURE**

Wool cape with velvet inlay, silk and tulle gown with velvet motif, and gold-toned headband and necklace.

Cartier tsavorite garnet, onyx, and 18kt gold ring.

Christian Louboutin calfskin peep-toe heels with fringe.



**VALENTINO
HAUTE
COUTURE**

Silk tulle and silk organza dress and gold-toned headband.

HAIR: DANILO FOR THE WALL GROUP. MAKEUP: GREGORY ARLT FOR EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS MANAGEMENT. DRESSER: ROB & MARIEL AT THE WALL GROUP. MANICURE: KATT HASSAN FOR OLIVE & JUNE. SET DESIGN: BETTE ADAMS FOR MARY HOWARD STUDIO.

Stefani has certainly undergone a period of transition. In the past three years, she's had a third child, Apollo (her older sons, Kingston and Zuma, are 9 and 7, respectively), joined *The Voice* as a judge, and thrown herself into mogul mode, launching a series of new fashion lines: bags, eyewear, shoes, watches. She's almost finished recording a new solo album. Most dramatically, of course, she has filed for divorce from her husband of 13 years, singer Gavin Rossdale.

Stefani's marriage to Rossdale was a high-profile mix of romance, family bliss, and then, still, tabloid drama. For the past few years, media coverage has alternated between snapshots of the happy-seeming couple doting on their adorable children and other images hinting at marital tension. Just this spring, Stefani made headlines after her appearance on the *Today Show*, during which she spoke emotionally of the pride she took in her marriage. "We both want the same thing—to be married, to be good parents," she said at the time.

Fast-forward several months and it's clear the brave front she put on was sometimes that—a front. Though she refuses to discuss exactly what caused her marriage to crumble, she has been using her songwriting to work through her emotions. In October, she released a new single, "Used to Love You," which painfully documents her slippery slide from love to hate. She sings, "I don't know why I cry / But I think it's 'cause I remembered for the first time. / Since I hated you / That I used to love you."

In person, she has the almost overzealous energy of someone who has suffered through a tough decision but is determined to come out stronger. When Stefani mentions Rossdale in conversation, there's no animosity or ill will, just a suggestion that their union wasn't always easy. "I didn't tour at all," she says of the years leading up to her divorce. "But I did record the No Doubt album, which was super-hard. I was torn the whole time. Every day I would take the kids to school, drive to Santa Monica, work on the album, and then I'd think, Oh my god, if I don't leave by 2:30, I'm not gonna get home in time for dinner. And Gavin being on tour... I'm not gonna say there weren't some incredible moments making that album. But it was a lot of knocking my head against the wall. A lot of struggle."

Stefani still lives in the house that she and Rossdale once shared: a luxurious but unpretentious modern home in a gated Beverly Hills neighborhood high above Los Angeles. At the moment, the house is full of vibrant activity. Tonight Stefani is launching her line of high-end

children's clothing, Harajuku Lovers for Chasing Fireflies, and teams are on hand to organize the show and prep Stefani's look. In the midst of the hubbub, Stefani's cherubic 22-month-old son toddles comfortably, trailed by a babysitter. The mood is one of excitement, not anxiety. She refuses to take credit for the positive mood, but it's clear her attitude is giving it shape. "I beat them if they're not happy," Stefani says jokingly.

Tucked away from the noise is her playful design studio. Hovering over a heavy stone table and low benches are five oversize ceramic Harajuku girl statues mounted on pedestals. Today the "girls," as Stefani calls them, appear to be overseeing a cheerful riot of glamorous clutter; past and present blend together in racks of costumes and clothing samples, glasses, and shoes. On the wall hangs a white board with possible set lists for an upcoming show.

Looking around, Stefani is practical about the mess. She points to three overflowing garbage bags on the floor and rolls her eyes. "I had 15 minutes, so I decided I should go through my closet and pull out everything I'll never wear again. That was a month and a half ago!" She nudges a large white box with her toe and looks up with a shrug. "That's my wedding dress."

If the iconic pink ombré Dior gown registers to her as anything other than another big box to be filed away, you wouldn't know it from her unfazed demeanor. She casts about for a place to sit down, but every surface is covered. Good-humoredly, she starts clearing debris off a bench. Finally, she relaxes, long legs uncrossed and sprawled, trying to explain how her life has turned around recently. She credits Apollo

at least partly for the positive change. "Getting pregnant, which wasn't planned and was such a miracle, has put me in a whole new spiritual place." But it added pressures too. "I was trying at that time to do more music with No Doubt. Then I got pregnant, and I was like, OK, well, what am I gonna do now? I need to make some changes. There's only so much energy."

Initially, she chose designing. "I wanted to really focus on the brands," she says. But then something unexpected happened: the offer to judge on *The Voice*. "I'd never considered doing that, and just out of nowhere, all of a sudden, I was on it." The call came when Apollo was only 4 months old, "and three months later, I was doing it."

For Stefani, *The Voice* offered a much-needed musical jolt. "I got so much out of that first season that I didn't expect, creatively, from being around so much music." Working with producer and singer Pharrell Williams,

"I've never considered myself SEXY. I think of myself more as a TOMBOY with lots of makeup on."

with whom she had collaborated years earlier on hits like “Hollaback Girl,” helped snap her out of a creative funk. “I did songs with him before, but I was never close to him in the way I am now. When we started working together on *The Voice*, he was going through this rebirth, having three huge hits at age 40. He helped me with a lot of stuff. I was in a closed-off period before that—I couldn’t write, and I didn’t feel confident.” Stefani chooses her words deliberately, clearly not wanting to sound embittered. “There were hard times before the baby, personally, that were just not good. And then having Apollo, and being on the show, and being refreshed—it was just like, *Whoa!*”

The transformation wasn’t easy, and the emotions she went through during that period were complicated. “Filming the show [and mentoring all those singers] was so amazing,” she says. “I cried every day I was there. It was so intense. But I’m in a really positive place now.”

Stefani is astonished by her creative energy and says she’s channeling all of it into her writing. “In June I knew I was ready to make a record; I just wanted it. Every single time I went into the studio, I wrote a song. Every time. That’s never happened to me before. Songs don’t just come out. And now I think I have the whole record.”

The musician, who collaborated on a collection of nail polish with OPI and a makeup line with Urban Decay, has been equally prolific in her design ventures. In addition to bags, eyewear, kids’ clothes, shoes, and watches, she launched Harajuku Lovers dog gear (catch a glimpse of her growing empire, opposite). Perhaps her favorite launch? The lipstick she is wearing today—a bright, classic Stefani red with a shiny finish from her Urban Decay set. “You do have to be a little careful with it because it’s not matte, but since I’m a professional lipstick wearer, it’s not a problem for *me*.”

Looking at Stefani, one can’t help but wonder how she reconciles this impossibly glam persona with her identity as a mom. “In the beginning,” she admits, “I didn’t want to think of myself as a mother. I was like, Wait a minute. Ain’t no hollaback girl is who I am!” Stefani leans forward and points at an imaginary audience as she chants her most recognizable lyric, showing off the athletic charisma that made her a star. But she quickly relaxes again into a reflective pose. “I had to learn how to accept it. Being a mother and having a career—those are just different roles you play. You’re still the same person you were before, but now you’re more because you’re a mother too, with a lot to do.”

As if on cue, a makeup artist calls from down the hallway; it’s time to prepare for tonight’s event. Stefani disappears and returns an instant later with Apollo swept up in a tight snuggle. She grabs a pair of sunglasses from the table and strikes a knowing pose. The bold black frames from her new eyewear line are emblazoned with words that capture the moment to a tee: “I am,” they say, “modern motherhood.” ■



Gwen
there,
DONE
THAT!

“All I can say is dreams do come true. The entire L.A.M.B. eyewear collection surpassed every hope and expectation I had!”
Cellulose acetate sunglasses,
L.A.M.B., \$159; tura.com for stores.



"This Harajuku Lovers party dress reminds me of the dress Liesl wears in *The Sound of Music* when she sings 'I am 16 going on 17.'"

Polyester, bouclé, satin, and tulle dress, Harajuku Lovers for Chasing Fireflies, \$94; chasing-fireflies.com.



"I love this cross-body bag for a night out when you don't want to carry a clutch."

Leather bag, L.A.M.B., \$298; zappos.com.



"These Harajuku Lovers accessories add pop to any warm-weather vacation outfit."

Polyurethane and resin watch, Harajuku Lovers, \$50; macys.com.

"Possibly the cutest dog toy I've ever seen in my entire life. My pup Chewey is getting this for Christmas!"

Polyester squeaky dog toy, Harajuku Lovers, \$7; petco.com.



"The colors are so amazing. I have used it every day since I got it and already need a replacement!"

UD Gwen Stefani Eyeshadow Palette, \$58; urbandecay.com.



"The new Burton collection is the coolest. I cannot wait to rock it this winter."

Polyester, satin, and taffeta jacket, L.A.M.B. for Burton, \$280; burton.com.



"My mind is blown when I look at these new Harajuku Lovers fragrances. The design is off the charts, and the scents are the best we've ever done. Everyone on my list is getting one."

Harajuku Lovers Pop Electric Fragrance: Love, \$40/30 ml; harajukulovers.com.