

FLIP THIS ISSUE FOR THE BEAUTY REPORT

HOLIDAY 2017

marie claire

BRAVE NEW YEAR

HOW TO
THROW THE
BEST PARTY
EVER

PLUS
200 STYLISH
GIFTS FOR
EVERYONE
(ESPECIALLY
YOU!)

HOLIDAY
TRAVEL
GUIDE

WHERE
TO GO,
WHAT TO
PACK

Gwen!

ON GETTING HER GROOVE BACK
& HOW LOVE SAVED HER

HOLIDAY

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POP ICON GWEN
STEFANI ROCKS THE
HOLIDAYS

DRESS price upon request, *Gucci*; gucci.com for stores. BRA \$148, BRIEFS \$154, *La Perla*; laperla.com. NECKLACE & CUFF prices upon request, *Hoorsenbuhs*; (888) 692-2997. CHAIN BRACELET \$275, *Shay*; shayaccessories.com. RINGS prices upon request, *Cartier*; (800) CARTIER. TIGHTS \$28, *Capezio*; capezio.com. BOOTS \$1,410, *Casadei*; casadei.com.



BEHIND THE COVER
GWEN STEFANI
 THE SINGER/SONGWRITER
 HITS ALL THE RIGHT
 NOTES AT HER L.A. COVER SHOOT

HOMETOWN: Anaheim, California. **CURRENT RESIDENCE:** Los Angeles. **DRESS REHEARSAL:** "I just shot in Milk Studios yesterday for my sunglasses line, so I'm warmed up and ready for you guys!" said Stefani. She arrived in distressed Prps Goods & Co. blue denim overalls, a red tank top by Isabel Marant, Gucci slip-on sneakers, and her signature red lip. **ROCK OUT:** The day's soundtrack included "Wild Thoughts" by DJ Khaled featuring Rihanna and Bryson Tiller, and "Thunder" by Imagine Dragons. **BEAUTY ROUTINE:** "We all love Veruschka von Lehndorff's '60s vibe, so I wanted to re-create that by defining Gwen's eyes and softening the lips," says makeup artist Gregory Arlt. After perfecting Stefani's skin with matte foundation, Arlt swiped peach shadow on her eyelids and intensified the creases with a deep navy hue. Using liquid eyeliner, he created a bold cat eye to widen the eyes and then applied faux lashes and a generous coat of mascara. Pale nude gloss completed the timeless look. **FOLLOW:** @gwenstefani.
 —Sara Holzman and Taylore Glynn



ON POINT
 Gold spikes and crystal studs put this patent heel on center stage.



David Koma dress

ATELIER VERSACE

- 1. DRESS \$295, Acler; modaoperandi.com for similar styles. 2. BAG \$1,450, Sacai; net-a-porter.com. 3. CLUTCH \$1,295, Edie Parker; net-a-porter.com.
- 4. SHOES \$1,875, Dolce & Gabbana; modaoperandi.com for similar styles. 5. NECKLACE price upon request, Tiffany & Co.; (800) 843-3269.
- 6. SHOES \$1,190, Gucci; gucci.com for stores. 7. BAG \$1,930, J.W.Anderson; net-a-porter.com. 8. WATCH price upon request, Van Cleef & Arpels; (877) VAN-CLEEF.

FOR EXCLUSIVE BEHIND-THE-SCENES FOOTAGE, GO TO MARIECLAIRE.COM/GWEN-STEFANI

HOLIDAY

2017

CHARGE AHEAD

+ GWEN STEFANI IS ON TOP OF THE WORLD

+ SPARKLING ACCESSORIES TO LIGHT UP THE SEASON

+ LOLA KIRKE IS A DOUBLE THREAT

+ GET YOUR HOLIDAY PARTY ON

COAT \$1,295, NORMA KAMALI; NORMAKAMALI.COM. BRA \$148, BRIEFS \$154, LA PERLA; LAPERLA.COM.
RINGS PRICES UPON REQUEST, CARTIER; (800) CARTIER. TIGHTS \$28, CAPEZIO; CAPEZIO.COM.

SHE'S JUST
RELEASED HER
FIRST HOLIDAY
ALBUM, SHE'S
ON A CREATIVE
HIGH, AND
SHE'S CRAZY IN
LOVE—THE
INIMITABLE
POP ICON
GWEN STEFANI
HAS EVERY
REASON TO
FEEL JOY THIS
SEASON

By KIMBERLY CUTTER

Photographs by KAI Z FENG

Sinema

GOLDEN RULE

“ONE THING I FOCUS ON, EVEN DURING THE REALLY HARD TIMES, IS BEING GRATEFUL,” SAYS STEFANI. “IF YOU’RE GRATEFUL, YOU PRETTY MUCH HAVE PEACE AND YOU CAN BE HAPPY”

DRESS, \$2,530, DAVID KOMA; EARRINGS, \$695, SAINT LAURENT BY ANTHONY VACCARELLO; RINGS, PRICES UPON REQUEST, CARTIER.

ON LIPS: REVLON SUPER LUSTROUS LIPSTICK IN BARE AFFAIR. ON HAIR: L’ORÉAL PARIS ADVANCED HAIRSTYLE BOOST IT HIGH LIFT CREATION SPRAY.

FASHION EDITORS:
ROB & MARIEL

Stefani

Gwen Stefani believes in miracles.

Like actual, physical miracles. Which sounds weird until you think about her life over the past few years. “The whole thing has been crazy,” says Stefani, shaking her head with a bemused smile. “I mean completely, totally crazy.”

Sitting upstairs at Milk Studios in Los Angeles after a photo shoot, the singer is curled up on a velvet sofa, Francesco Russo stilettos kicked off and legs tucked under her, long platinum ponytail falling silkily over one shoulder like a stole. She’s friendly and chatty, almost guileless, her big chocolate-brown eyes spiked with mega lashes, her black Oscar de la Renta cardigan with sequined monkeys sparkling in the afternoon light.

By “whole thing,” of course, Stefani is referring to the wild ride that began with her very public 2015 breakup with Gavin Rossdale, her husband of 13 years, amid allegations of his infidelity, followed by a *Rocky*-worthy career comeback in which the 48-year-old—after years of being blocked creatively—channeled the pain of divorce into her first number-one solo record, *This Is What the Truth Feels Like*. Then there was the little matter of falling head over heels in love with fellow *The Voice* judge/country crooner Blake Shelton on national TV, to the delight of viewers everywhere. And, finally, there’s the fact that two years in, Stefani and Shelton seem more truly, madly, Instagram-tastically crazy about each other than ever.

“He’s my best friend,” says Stefani simply, and though she claims not to want to talk about their relationship “too much,” she really doesn’t have to. Both her Instagram feed and the media feature a veritable bonanza of Blake and Gwen. Here they are hanging out at the *Billboard* Music Awards, celebrating his birthday with a cake decorated with an armadillo, wearing camo at Shelton’s 1,200-acre ranch in Tishomingo, Oklahoma. Here’s Shelton carrying Stefani’s 3-year-old son, Apollo, around Disneyland. Here’s Stefani promoting her new album, *You Make It Feel Like Christmas* (featuring guest vocals by Shelton), with a red satin bow on her head, or walking around Beverly Hills wearing custom Vans with Shelton’s face printed on the fronts. The whole thing could be a bit much if the couple didn’t seem so clearly like two people who’d been through hell before they finally found each other.

“For a long time, I could not understand why I’d had so much heartache in my life,” says Stefani, who’d been in only two serious relationships before Shelton—one for seven years with No Doubt’s Tony Kanal, the other for 20 years with Rossdale, the father of her three boys. Both men broke her heart. “I have parents who are still married and in love,” she says. “I had such loving role models. I didn’t understand it.”

Although Stefani had already secured her place in music history (having sold 30 million-plus solo and No Doubt records to date) and parlayed her rock-star status into a multitentacled brand—including fashion lines L.A.M.B., GX (which just added sunglasses and children’s eyewear), and Harajuku Lovers, and the animated series *Kuu Kuu Harajuku* on Nick Jr. and companion toy line with Mattel—plus her recent role as Revlon brand ambassador (“I love makeup; I would wear makeup if no one was looking”), she describes the years between roughly 2007 and the fall of 2014 as a “bad, blurry time.” “I was quite lost creatively,” she says. “I had lost a lot of my confidence. I didn’t feel healthy, physically. I went through a really bad spell during the time when I was writing the last No Doubt record. Meaning, like, completely depleted. That record took three years to make.”

Which isn’t so surprising when you consider the fact that Stefani had given birth to two kids, released two solo records (*Love. Angel. Music. Baby.* and *The Sweet Escape*), done two world tours, and put out two clothing lines in the years preceding it. “As soon as the baby [second son Zuma] was born, everyone was like, ‘We can get inspired. Let’s go on tour. You need to lose 70 pounds,’” says Stefani of the members of No Doubt, who were eager to get back to work. “And I was like, ‘OK ...’” Stefani went back on tour and did 60 shows, but, as she says, “When I came off that tour, I think I almost was dead. It was like, life was crazy, and I was out on the tour alone with two kids. You know, everybody else had their wives. I didn’t have a wife ... I felt like I was going to die, like really physically die, a lot of nights.”

To make things worse, when No Doubt’s long-awaited third album, *Push and Shove*, was finally released in 2012, it didn’t connect with audiences. There was no tour. And Stefani was disappointed in the work they’d produced. “I wasn’t focusing on the right reasons to write,” she says now. “I was doubting everything about my gift. I didn’t recognize that I had a gift. I couldn’t remember what sounded good; I didn’t know if something sounded like a chorus. Everything I did was like, *Am I trying to copy somebody else?* And I was trying so hard, because everybody’s lives were at my fingertips and my voice, and it was just horrible.”

When the offer to be a judge on *The Voice* came in 2014, Stefani leaped at it like it was a life preserver—largely, she says, for the opportunity to be around Pharrell Williams, with whom she’d collaborated on her monster hit “Hollaback Girl” in 2004. “I literally said yes not knowing at all what I was about to get into,” she says. “I was sitting at



DIVINE INSPIRATION

THE HYMNLIKE SONG
"CHRISTMAS EVE"
CAME TO HER DURING
A "PRAYER RUN," AND
SHE RECORDED IT
ON HER PHONE SO SHE
WOULDN'T LOSE IT

BUSTIER, \$1,524, LACE
TOP, \$860, OFF-WHITE
C/O VIRGIL ABLOH;
SKIRT, \$395, 3.1 PHILLIP
LIM; EARRINGS,
STEFANI'S OWN.

ON EYES: REVLON MEGA
MULTIPLIER MASCARA.

home, and my lawyer was there. And my parents were there, and my niece was there. And my manager called. She was like, 'Hey, Christina [Aguilera, a *Voice* judge] is having a baby. Would you ever think you would want to fill in for her?' I hung up the phone, and I was like, 'I got the weirdest call right now.'" Stefani's lawyer told her, "You've got to do it," but Stefani's parents were more circumspect. "They watch

"I did [exercise] a lot, and that didn't get me anywhere. Yeah, you need to do it, but spiritual exercise got me somewhere."

the show, and I think they were worried, like, *How could she do that?*—because it was like nothing I'd ever done before."

The beginning, Stefani says, was awkward. Particularly with Williams. "I was scared, you know? I respect him so much, and even in the studio, I would always be intimidated by him, because he's just such a loving, lovely, creative guy. I look up to him." But Stefani found the creative energy on *The Voice* hugely inspiring. "Being around music in that way and playing the role that I got to play was so interesting," she says. "Because there's so much talent, and I was open to so many genres of music that I'd never listened to, styles of singing, watching people having to conquer their fear, having to be responsible for people and the decisions they're going to make; it was just so creative."

It also got her thinking that maybe writing songs didn't have to be the lonely one-woman slog it had been in the past. Although Stefani had always written from personal experience (No Doubt's 1996 smash "Don't Speak" was inspired by her breakup with Kanal), she says it never occurred to her that her stories might actually be helping other people. And that realization proved critical. "What I learned was that my heartbreak was supposed to happen, that it was my purpose to write about and share my story," Stefani says. "And I know that my record helped people. I saw them; I talked to them; they told me. I met at least 50 to 100 people before each show on my tour and got to hear that my truth and my story were translated, and I feel very lucky and honored knowing that."

Soon enough, Williams was knocking on her dressing-room door, saying, "I have one for you," and the pair started cowriting 2014's "Spark the Fire," which Stefani thinks of as the beginning of her "refueling period."

By the time *This Is What the Truth Looks Like* came out in 2016, Stefani's entire life had transformed. Her marriage had ended—an event that she says forced her to her knees, both creatively and spiritually. In the wake of her divorce, Stefani, who was raised Italian Catholic in Anaheim, California, found herself praying for guidance daily. "Everyone always wants to know about my exercise," she says. "I did a lot, and that didn't get me anywhere. Yeah, you need to do it, but spiritual exercise got me somewhere. Some people like to meditate, do yoga, or just take quiet time, but for me—instead of how you talk to yourself, you pray. You surrender and ask for guidance. It's not all about you."

Shelton, who was going through a divorce at the same time, was also leaning in to his spiritual side. "We became best friends during that time and saved each other," Stefani says. "Even though it was the worst time of my life, it was sort of the best time of my life at the same time."

As it turned out, the two had a lot in common. Though Stefani has always been an edgy, outspoken performer, she also has a distinctly good-girl, almost Southern side to her. (She still goes to church with her family on Sundays in Los Angeles, then spends the afternoon getting her hair and nails done. Even her accent has a slight country twang to it.) Shelton seems to bring this part of Stefani to the fore. She's never

done drugs or been much of a drinker. She's always had a taste for sparkle. When you see her and Shelton singing "You Make It Feel Like Christmas," you can sort of imagine them 20 years from now, like Johnny and June Carter Cash, singing together onstage in Nashville, Tennessee. (Fellow *Voice* judge Adam Levine has called their relationship "a beautiful thing," and Williams has likened it to "kind of like a miracle.")

Stefani had always wanted to do a holiday album, and while she was at Shelton's ranch

last year, she went for a run: "I'm going to pray this whole run, this is going to be my time," she recalls telling herself. "Then I started thinking, *If I did write a Christmas song, what would it be?* And literally the whole chorus of ["Christmas Eve"] came into my head. I was singing out loud as I'm running. Not just the melody, but the lyrics, everything. It's the craziest thing, because you have nothing, and then all of a sudden, it's just there." The holidays were always a big deal in the Stefani family, with a focus on faith and music. (She remembers listening to Emmylou Harris' Christmas album, *Light of the Stable*, growing up.) Her own album, recorded with live musicians and heavy on horns, "turned out to be a lot of fun and joyful, and I'm proud of it," she says. "It feels like a No Doubt record but feels very traditional in a way."

Stefani's love of tradition means she may never get used to certain aspects of her new life, like sharing custody of her kids. "It's really weird to be a mom [with] your kids gone half the time," she says. "It's the worst thing ever. If I am home alone, I sometimes get in my head a little bit much, and I get lazy. I just want to lie in bed and watch *Say Yes to the Dress* all day long and feel like a loser."

Those days seem few and far between. Stefani joins Shelton regularly at his ranch for weekends and vacations, bringing her boys and other Stefani family members along as often as possible. "It's very tribal," she says. "Blake has a sister, and she comes with her kids. We cook and get muddy and dirty. There are ATVs. Being a mother of three boys, it's kind of the perfect place. There are no gates; there's a lot of fun stuff to do: hunting, fishing, horse riding. The boys want to do all of it. They want to try everything."

The main thing, though, Stefani says, is that she's finally found "the truth" with Shelton: "Everything is real now, whereas before, things didn't seem so real."

It's impossible not to wonder if the pair plans to get married, and Stefani looks relaxed when I ask her about it. "That's a good question," she says. "I don't know. I've obviously thought about it. But who knows? It's all out of my hands." Ditto on the question of child number four. "I wish I could, but it's pretty far down the road for that," she says wryly. Nevertheless, Stefani admits she'd love it. "My mom had four, so that was always my number."

Professionally, she says she's increasingly interested in collaboration. She'd love to do another season on *The Voice*; she'd love to write a musical. "I would love to do something like that, just be part of a writing thing, because that confidence has come back now, and I know I have something to offer. It used to be such a stress; there was so much doubt in me—now it's like," she says, smiling, "Well, just go write a song." **mc**

JINGLE BELLE

STEFANI WROTE THE TRACK "WHEN I WAS A LITTLE GIRL" ON HER HOLIDAY ALBUM ABOUT "HOW LOVE CAN BREAK YOU AND SAVE YOU ALL AT THE SAME TIME"

SWIMSUIT, \$490, SCARF (WORN AS BELT), \$560, HERMÈS; PANTS, \$1,065, PREEN BY THORNTON BREGAZZI; EARRINGS, PRICE UPON REQUEST, DAVID WEBB; BRACELETS & PANTHER RING, PRICES UPON REQUEST, CARTIER; SHOES, \$675, CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN.

ON HAIR: L'ORÉAL PARIS ADVANCED HAIRSTYLE LOCK IT FINE CONTROL HAIRSPRAY.

FOR STORES, SEE SHOPPING DIRECTORY.

HAIR: DANILO AT THE WALL GROUP
MAKEUP: GREGORY ARLT AT EXCLUSIVE ARTISTS MANAGEMENT



marie claire

**Gwen
for**

**the
holidays**



FLIP THIS ISSUE FOR MORE GWEN!

HOLIDAY 2017

marie claire



special
beauty
issue
200

ideas for
party
makeup,
good hair
days every
day & how
to rock your
#bestlife
this year

OH.
MY.
GWEN!

How America's pop icon became
America's **sweetheart**

Introducing
My Beauty Chat
on Alexa,
p.8 for more