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The tsunami may be over, but the suffering of countless victims continues. Now you can help with your purchase of this exclusive L.A.M.B. T-shirt, **DESIGNED SPECIALLY FOR MARIE CLAIRE READERS BY GWEN STEFANI**, for only \$14.95

WE'RE JOINING FORCES WITH GWEN Stefani and L.A.M.B. to support tsunami victims' recovery efforts. "When *Marie Claire* asked me to design a shirt for tsunami relief, I was inspired by the song 'Long Way to Go' on my album," Stefani says. "It's about interracial relationships, and one line asks, 'What color is love?' I thought that would be a good message for the world. The colors on the shirt are like a rainbow—and at the end of the rainbow, there's always sunshine." All proceeds from the shirt—designed by Stefani exclusively for *Marie Claire* readers—will go to the Duang Prateep Foundation (DPF).

When the tsunami struck on December 26, 2004, the DPF was among the first relief groups to arrive. Founded in 1978, it has found that art therapy, especially after a traumatic experience, is key in helping children communicate and feel positive. Now, it aims to reach the thousands of orphaned tsunami children through programs such as their Children's Art Project, which includes activities, a puppet theater, and a mobile toy library. To learn more, visit its website at www.dpf.or.th.

TO GET YOUR EXCLUSIVE L.A.M.B. T-SHIRT, call (800) 727-1274; all major credit cards accepted. Or, send a check for \$14.95 (plus \$4.95 s&h) made payable to *Marie Claire* June Fund-Raiser. Specify size: S, M, L, XL. Mail it to: *Marie Claire* 6/05 Charity Offer; Dept. MC605; Item no. MC009S (for small), MC009M (for medium), MC009L (for large), or MC009-XL (for extra-large); P.O. Box 10799; Des Moines, IA 50340-0799. **100% of proceeds (\$14.95 per shirt) will go to the DPF.** No returns. Allow six weeks for delivery.

GREG DELVES: HAIR: DANILO FOR L'ORÉAL; PROFESSIONAL PLATINUM LIGHTENING SYSTEM @ THE WALL; GROUP MAKEUP: KATHY JEUNG @ MARGARET MALDONADO.COM; MANICURE: ELLE FOR ARTISTS BY TOTHYRIANO.COM; JEANS: L.A.M.B.; BELT: MARC JACOBS; BANGLES: YOSHI HARARI; FINE JEWELRY: LINK BRACELET, MOUAWAD; RING: NANCEY CHAPMAN



GWEN STEFFANI:

Gwen Stefani's own brand of sexy-cool has made her a style icon. With her first solo album and a line of clothes she's designing herself, Stefani races into the future. Here, the songstress talks about staying true to herself through the firestorm of fame, her hope for a baby, and the real reason she wears those big, baggy jeans

"I'M A VERY DIFFERENT

GIRL

THAN I USED TO BE"

BY SUSAN SWIMMER PHOTOGRAPHED BY GREG DELVES



» After years fronting the Grammy-award-winning band No Doubt, Gwen Stefani decided it was time to branch out. She says she's "on fire right now," and who can argue? Her first solo album, a hip hop-inspired dance fest called *Love. Angel. Music. Baby.*, was released in November 2004 and has already gone platinum; she's just completed a European tour; the clothing line she designs, called L.A.M.B. for short, is wildly successful; and a line of

"... BECAUSE I NEVER REALLY LIKED MY LEGS AND BUTT."

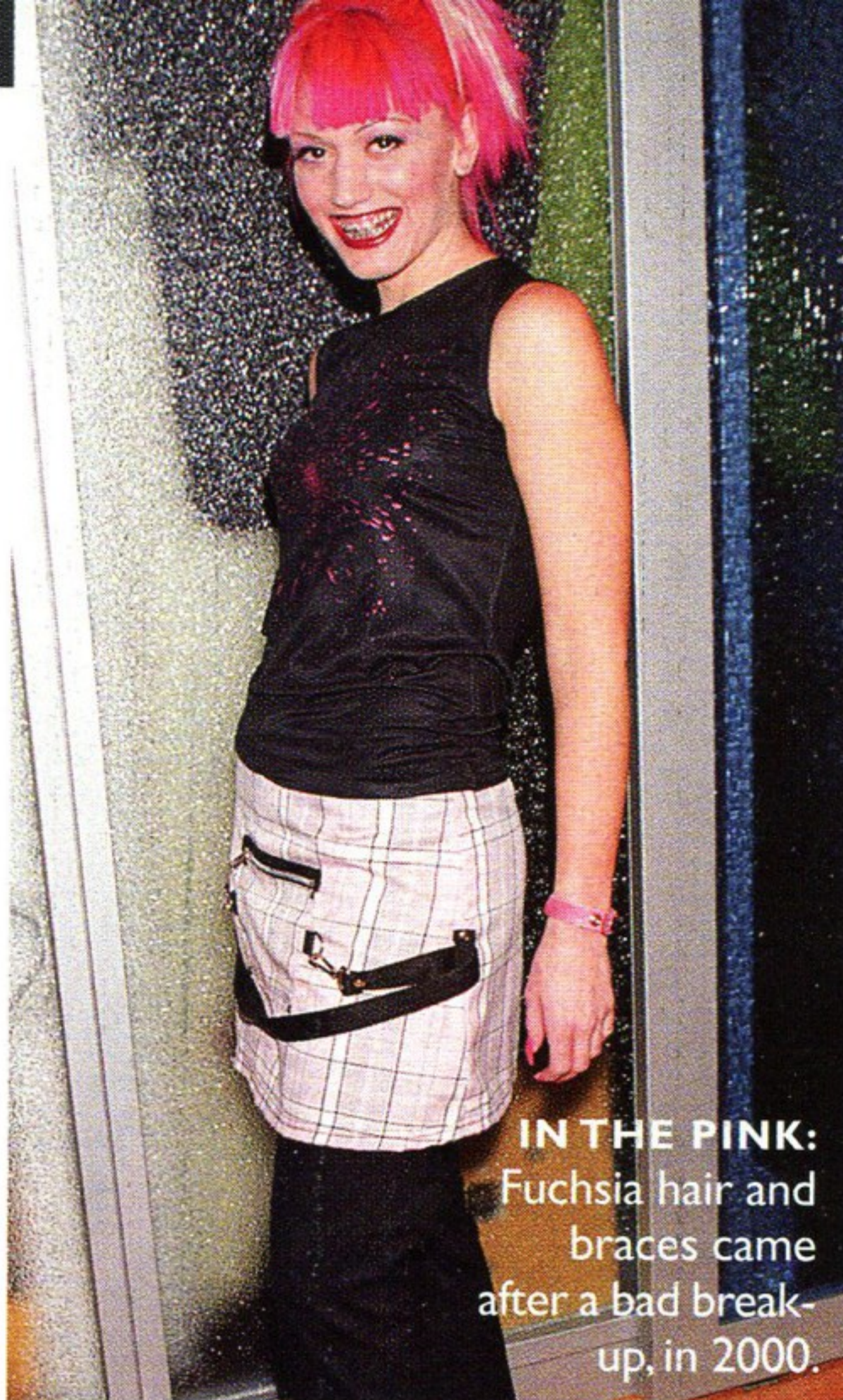


accessories and T-shirts called Harajuku Lovers—directly tied to her album—is set to launch this fall. It's no wonder Stefani's quirky sense of cool is now the backbone of her very own fashion empire—her sexy-sweet, gender-bending looks have inspired everyone from mall rats to rap moguls, changing the way the world thinks about style. For Stefani, life doesn't just imitate art; her life *is* her art.

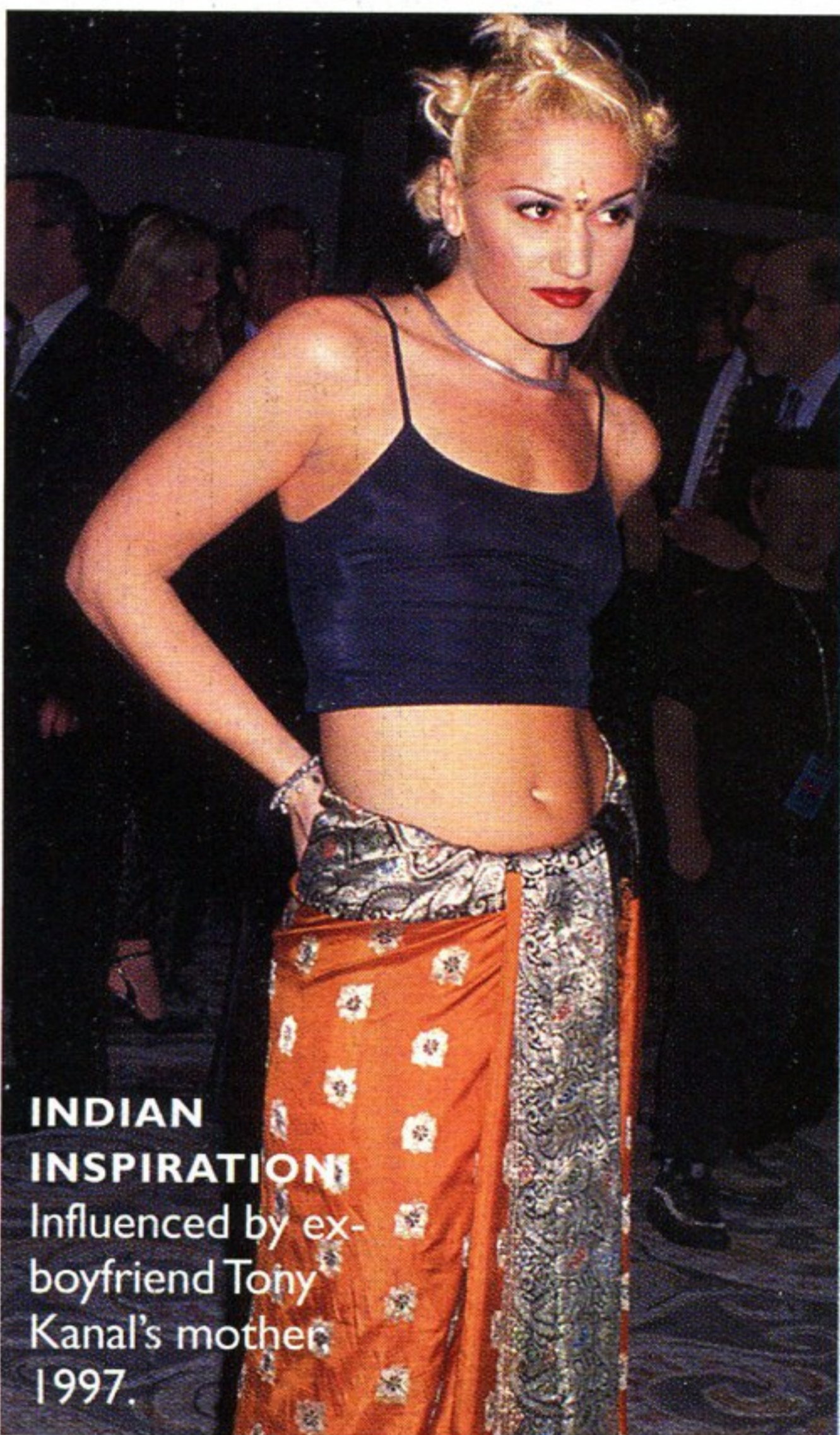
Girly Grunge

BY HER OWN ADMISSION, STEFANI'S look is an ever-changing obsession that started long before she made it to the top of the charts. "Growing up in Anaheim, CA, I always made my own clothes," she says. "In the beginning I'd go to thrift stores, or places like The Wet Seal and Contempo Casuals, and try to find something weird. Then I'd take it home and remake it. I had a sewing machine in my room; it was the danger zone. It was, like, pins and needles *everywhere.*"

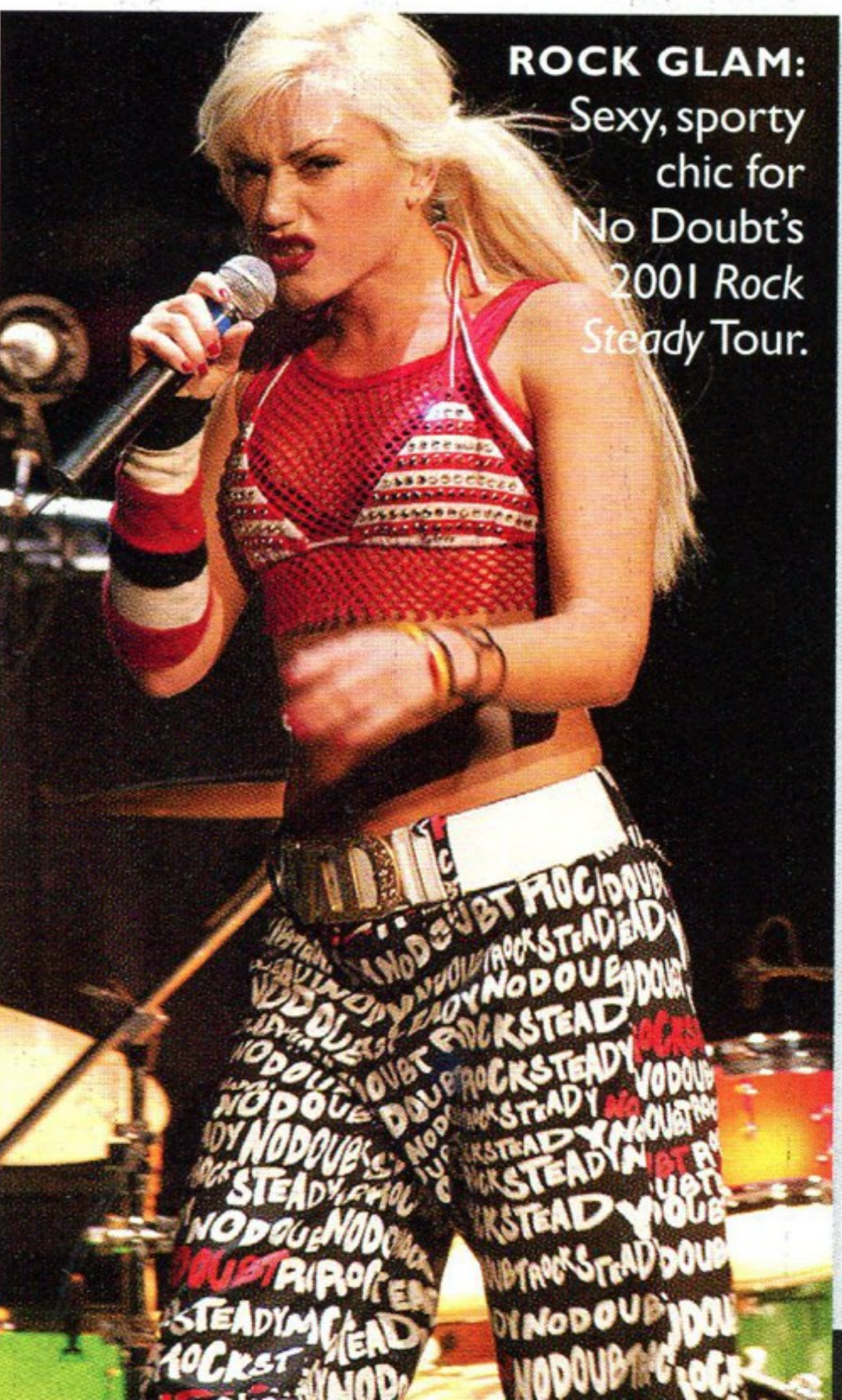
Stefani's brand of girlish grunge soon developed a small, cult-like following among the Gen X-ers who loved ska music. "My girlfriend and I went to every single Sears and JC Penney's and bought out every single child's extra-large T-shirt and tank top. We printed pink No Doubt logos



IN THE PINK: Fuchsia hair and braces came after a bad break-up, in 2000.



INDIAN INSPIRATION: Influenced by ex-boyfriend Tony Kanal's mother, 1997.



ROCK GLAM: Sexy, sporty chic for No Doubt's 2001 Rock Steady Tour.

on them and sold them at our concerts." Stefani paired her T-shirt with super-baggy pants culled from the boys' section of thrift stores, "because I never really liked my legs or butt," and her fans went wild. By the time the band started to make it nationally, there were legions of Gwen-itators.

Searching for ... Something

LOOKING AT STEFANI NOW, IN THE studio for *Marie Claire's* cover shoot, it's hard to believe it all started with something so homespun. She is surrounded by racks and racks of brightly patterned couture clothing, and her trademark platinum hair cascades in curls half-way down her back. Stefani wears big, baggy jeans, torn and faded to perfection, and neon-green bra straps peek out from underneath a ribbed white tank. As our talk turns to her career, Stefani's near-encyclopedic memory of every look worn, every lyric sung, and every concert played, is scary.

I flash Stefani a photograph of herself with fuchsia hair, circa 2000, and her face falls. "My boyfriend and I had just broken up," she says of the time she and now-husband Gavin Rossdale almost called it quits. "You can tell by my style that I was searching so hard. I was 29, and I was like, Fuck it, I'm going to dye my hair pink. And I had braces, the one thing I bought when I got rich."

Stefani admits the drastic look wasn't just about a breakup. After two wildly successful albums, expectations were high for No Doubt to hit again. "It was a really hard time for me," she says now. "I thought, I gotta become a great writer, I gotta be someone, I gotta live up to who I want to be." It was during this time that Stefani wrote some of her best lyrics. "I really define myself as a songwriter. It's pure torture, but it's magic when it happens. When I realized I could write songs, that's when I discovered myself. Before that, I didn't feel I was good at anything. I'm a very different girl now than I used to be."

The Bindi Boom

STEFANI SAYS THE GIRL SHE USED TO be had no direction. "I had a hard time learning in school. I didn't know what I was going to do," she says. »

» She was taking art classes at a local community college, toying with the idea of working as a makeup artist, when the band got offered a European tour. Performing gave Stefani an outlet for the visual experimentation she loved—whatever inspired her got worked into her wardrobe—and she had an innate knack for crashing styles. “I went out with [No Doubt bassist] Tony Kanal for eight years. He’s Indian, and I grew up watching his mom. She’d get all made up, with her sari and her jewels on, and I thought she was so glamorous. I bought those stick-on earrings and started wearing them on my forehead as bindis.” When Stefani wore one in the “Just A Girl” video paired with sporty workout wear, it typified her fashion-blender sensibilities.

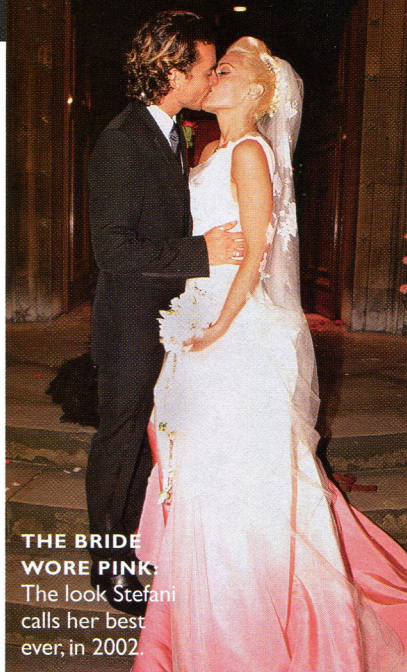
Girl Power

NO DOUBT’S POPULARITY GREW exponentially with each successive release, and Stefani rode the wave of huge sales and glowing reviews. When they released *Rock Steady*, their fifth album, Stefani says it was one of the best times in her life. “Our egos were gone,” she says of her bandmates. “We were just so in love with each other and so proud of the album. It was like, ‘This is crazy, how’d we get so far?’”

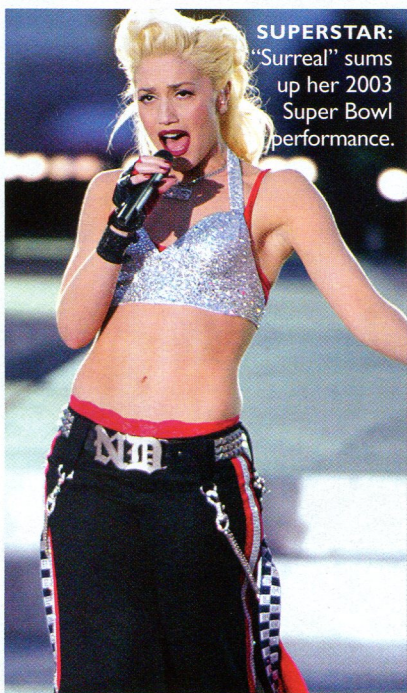
"A GREAT DAY FOR ME IS NOT GETTING OUT OF BED."



Stefani felt strong and confident, and the look she honed for the tour was a sort of edgy, sexy, urban chic. “I was inspired by a trip to Jamaica,” Stefani says of the mesh top she wore under a barely there bikini top in 2001. “I wore black graffiti pants that looked like a mock-up of the album-cover artwork, and I had just done this Pussycat Dolls [burlesque] show with these big ponytails, and I was like, I wanna do ponytails.” Stefani’s body, which she admits takes a lot of



THE BRIDE WORE PINK: The look Stefani calls her best ever, in 2002.



SUPERSTAR: “Surreal” sums up her 2003 Super Bowl performance.



HOLLYWOOD HOT: Stefani channeled Rear Window for her 2004 Golden Globe moment.

work to maintain, was ab-fab. “Having to work out sucks, but once you get me on the treadmill I’m happy,” she says. “I fight getting there, like everybody. It’s one of those love-hate things. It’s always been something I have to work at and earn.”

Dream Dress

IN 2002, STEFANI MARRIED LONG-time love Rossdale in a traditional ceremony in London. “That was one of my best looks ever,” Stefani gushes. “I felt very beautiful. John Galliano did my gown. I talked to him on the phone and showed him pictures of things I liked. He sent drawings over, and the bottom of the dress was all pink. I was like, Is that a shadow, or is that really what he’s going to do? I never told him to make it pink.”

Stefani’s workload has been non-stop ever since the nuptials, and she credits her husband for “balancing me and reeling me in.” With a schedule like hers, it can’t be easy. “A great day for me is not getting out of bed,” she allows. “I like to see how many snacks I can eat there, how many crumbs I can drop, and how many really bad TV shows I can watch. I also like the Discovery Channel, and shows about makeovers or babies being born.”

Clearly, motherhood is on her mind, and at 35, Stefani wrestles with the possibility of soon or never. “I’ve always wanted to be a mother,” she says. “I was hanging with my nephew the other day, and he’s like a frickin’ Twinkie he’s so delicious. But it’s kind of not up to me. I’ve been on this journey, and I don’t want to be too greedy about what’s going to come next. I’ll be really happy when it happens.”

You Know You’ve Arrived When ...

IN 2003 NO DOUBT WAS TAPPED TO perform at the Super Bowl, an honor she calls one of the best moments in her life. What’s more, Stefani shared the stage with Sting, whom she had long adored. “I actually met him for the first time when I was 16,” she says. “My dad worked for Yamaha motorcycles, and he got me backstage after one of The Police’s concerts. I was really fat and totally puberty-stricken, and my dad»»

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» was like, 'Ask him for his autograph.' So I did, and he was really mean. But I still loved him." Stefani laughs at the memory. "When I met Sting years later, I told him that story, and he was like, 'Oh man, I was such a dick back then,'" she says. "But he's such a great guy."

**"IF I DID WHAT
PEOPLE SAID
I SHOULD DO,
I WOULDN'T
BE HERE."**



Stefani's skyrocketing status opened unlikely doors, including Hollywood's Golden Globe ceremony in 2004. "I felt very much out of my element there. I wore a very simple vintage Valentino gown, with my hair up in a French twist. The whole thing was inspired by Hitchcock's *Rear Window*. I felt so sophisticated. The press kind of worked me over for that look, but then a year later they said they liked it. *Whatever.*"

Stefani has learned to live with the bad reviews. "It's not like it ever discourages me from doing



TUTU SWEET:
Stefani in 2005
in her own titillating take on a
Japanese trend.

something I want to do," she says. "I really don't care what people say. If I'd followed what people said I should do, I wouldn't be here right now."

East Meets West

STEFANI'S MOST RECENT STYLE incarnation—sporty Lolita meets French maid—is actually her own take on a trend she saw in Tokyo's Harajuku neighborhood. "I was really inspired by the kids there," she says. "They were all about self-expression through fashion, and this whole ping-pong match between Eastern and Western and how we steal each other's ideas."

Stefani says the idea of adding four Japanese backup dancers to her show came to her in a dream. Studying a 2005 red-carpet picture of herself with the girls, Stefani is loving the poufy crinoline skirts paired with neon knee pads that pop off the page. I pull out one last photo. It's a picture of a brunette Stefani wearing almost the exact same crinoline skirt, circa 1989. "Do you see that?" she squeals. "It's like the same look for 20 years. That's so crazy! I feel like I've come full circle." And with that, Stefani disappears through the racks of clothes.



FLASHBACK:
Stefani, true to
herself, first
loved this look
in 1989.

FROM TOP: J. FURNISS; B. KING; BOTH WIREIMAGE.COM; OPENING SPREAD: HAIR: DANILLO FOR L'ORÉAL; PROFESSIONAL PLATINUM LIGHTENING SYSTEM @ THE WALL GROUP; MAKEUP: KATHY JEUNG @ MARGARETHALDONADO.COM; MANICURE: ELLE FOR ARTISTSBYTIMOTHYPRIANO.COM; STYLIST: ANDREA LIBERMAN @ MARGARETHALDONADO.COM; DRESS: STELLA MCCARTNEY; BELT: MARC JACOBS; BANGLES: YOSHI HARARI FINE JEWELRY; CHAIN: BRACELET; MOUAWAD