

ENTRE NOUS

JETTE

Have a coffee with the multifaceted designer

JOOP

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N Magazine: Jette Joop, if you could treat yourself to something very special now, what would it be?

Jette Joop: I would love to go on holiday for 10 days or so – and I mean a real holiday! I do go away for the weekend every now and then or when there's a public holiday, but I always take boxes full of magazines with me to find inspiration and those few days off tend to be very busy, with my family, my dogs and so on...

N: Ms Joop, you were 29 years old when you founded your own company. You became a mother in the same year – 1997 was a year of dramatic changes for you! What was your driving motivation? How did you manage it all – were you signing major contracts with your baby in tow?

Jette Joop: That was indeed an exciting year! Only shortly before, I had clashed with my father's partners because we couldn't agree on a strategic direction for the company. I had always considered Joop a long-term project. However, things kept changing all the time. At one moment I was going to take over the creative direction, then suddenly I was out of the picture. A very exhausting period. Then I got pregnant and when my daughter was born I said to myself: That's it, I've had enough of all these conflicts. I'll start my own company and build my own world, for myself and my daughter.

N: Your company is called Jette, no Joop there. Was that a flight into independence, escaping from your father's shadow?

Jette Joop: It's quite simple, really. Joop is a brand that I cannot control. The same goes therefore for Jette Joop. Jette, on the other hand, is my very own baby. When I decided to leave Joop behind, some people prophesied disaster – wrongly, as it turned out.



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N: You have recently launched your second fragrance, and very successfully, too. By now the name Jette can be found on jeans, eyewear, knitwear, blouses, skates, watches, shower partitions and even on a house. How can one recognize Jette at first glance?

Jette Joop: My work is strongly influenced by my having studied car design. I find it very easy to think in three-dimensional terms. Thus my work always has a certain weight or, more exactly, a certain volume. For me volume and shape are maybe even more important than colours. My perfume flask almost feels like a hip flask. The tactile sensation is very important for me. A combination of sharp edges and soft shapes, of glamour and austerity. With textiles my rule of thumb is to use the best materials available and create a simple, good product. The simple things are so often the best. They don’t need any extra gimmicks.

N: Car design has a very technical ring to it. It is determined foremost by functionality..

Jette Joop: No, it’s not! Car design is very sensual, unless one is working on the technical side alone or developing a motor. It’s mostly about the emotional impulse and takes much of its inspiration from the animal world. Consider how a car’s shape mimics a leaping panther. Quite sensual, isn’t it?

N: So there is really no difference between arriving at fashion from car design or vice versa?

Jette Joop: Of course there is. A fashion designer usually sees things in two dimensions only and deals mostly with the exterior. Car designers are better inside-out thinkers – they take the dimensions more into account, like architects do. It’s no coincidence that there are so many architects among fashion designers. They simply have a different understanding of bodies and volume. For me perfume flasks are like modern sculptures.

N: Design has become a mass movement and one often hears the term “design generation” these days. Are you a child of this generation?

Jette Joop: I think I have a different attitude, maybe because of the time I spent in California; I tend to think in other cycles. What matters to me is that my creations endure. That’s an attitude that helps me with the gentlemen’s collection that is currently in preparation, for instance. I often ask myself: how will this pair of trousers be regarded 20 years from now? Real men don’t really want anything excessively fashionable. I’m talking about genuine masculinity, sexual preferences aside. It has to do with responsibility – whether one is prepared to answer for something, to accept responsibility for someone else. For me that is masculinity’s deciding factor.





“I could eat cream pies all day long but it is considerably more important for me to maintain my looks. This is how I approach everything in life – analytically, strategically. It is important to prioritize!”

N: You have been in design for 15 years. Have you been able to make out anything like evolution over the last years?

Jette Joop: Yes, there are two megatrends that I believe in. One is a trend towards simplification, a general and long-lasting development. And then there's another very exciting development whose total impact is yet to be seen: the development of completely innovative materials. This could be the development of plants that grow in shapes that will allow us to dress truly “organic”. Or the creation of artificial skin that is almost natural. There is also a theory that some products will be able to grow themselves, which is all the more important as so many of the earth's raw materials are being depleted.

N: In your youth you would spend summers with your aunt in Potsdam, in what was then East Germany. The world has changed a lot since then. What are the first three things that come to mind if you think back to the days of your childhood and the changes that have happened since?

Jette Joop: One obvious thing is that the smell of those days is gone. There was a very special smell, a mix of coal, linoleum and a few other “ingredients” that has completely vanished. Back then, everything used to be so much more in the family. The absence of consumerism and variety made people spend so much more time with each other than today. My happiest times were spent there, with my family. Material things were not so important. And the bread was wonderful! It was all somehow enchanted, especially the castle of Sanssouci which was always empty – there was never anyone around.

N: Speaking of magic – if I were to grant you a free hour right now, what would you do?

Jette Joop: I would go to a splendid hotel and look at all the rooms. I love hotels. They are the most marvellous places to observe things. The Ritz here in Paris is such a place.

N: Have you already had an espresso today?

Jette Joop: Yes, of course! A Latte macchiato at 5 a.m. I always need my Latte macchiato in the morning. It helps get the day started on the right note. I ordered it last night already as a kind of wake-up call, for this morning before my flight to Paris.

N: And what is definitely not your cup of coffee?

Jette Joop: Being served lukewarm coffee. And what annoys me most of all is laziness. I don't understand people who lack initiative and motivation. I can't even understand how anybody can be bored. I am constantly busy and if I do have a free moment, I think of all the things that I could be doing. It is too bad that I can't really get away from it all. I've given up all attempts at yoga and meditation. There is only one thing that slows me down and that is exhaustion. ☹️