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FABULOUS AT EVERY

From the Pilbara mines to the worlds of politics, sports, fashion and business, the women inspiring *BAZAAR* in 2017 are as diverse as they are talented. Here, in association with Estée Lauder, we celebrate their remarkable work, distinctive style and innovative approach. *By GEORGINA SAFE*

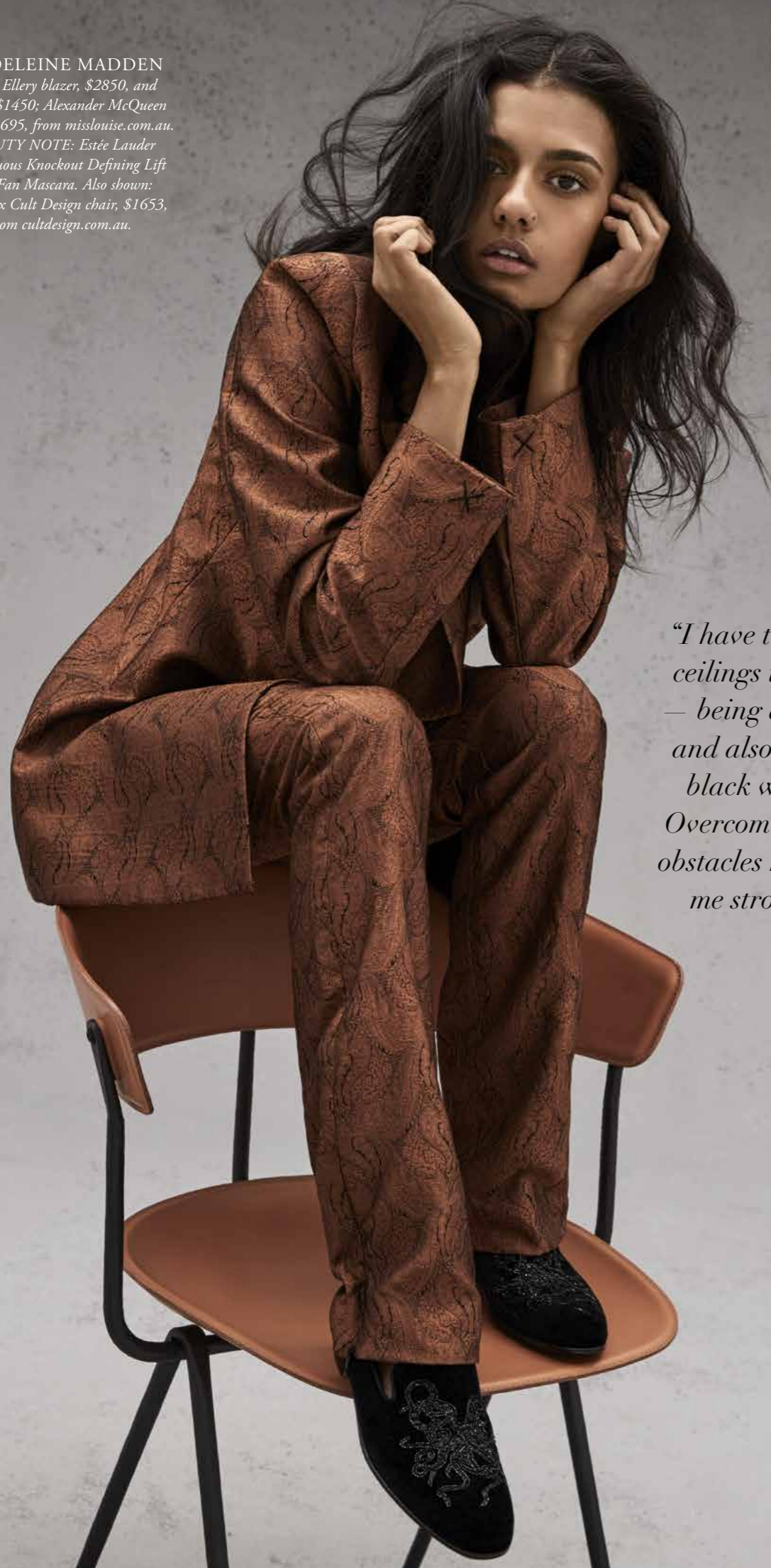
IN ASSOCIATION WITH
ESTÉE LAUDER

MADELEINE MADDEN
wears Christian Dior dress, \$15,000,
brief, \$1250, and choker, \$530.
Styled by CAROLINE TRAN



Photographed by STEVEN CHEE

MADELEINE MADDEN
wears Ellery blazer, \$2850, and
pants, \$1450; Alexander McQueen
shoes, \$1695, from misslouis.com.au.
BEAUTY NOTE: Estée Lauder
Sumptuous Knockout Defining Lift
and Fan Mascara. Also shown:
bassike x Cult Design chair, \$1653,
from cultdesign.com.au.



*“I have two glass
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Overcoming those
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FABULOUS AT EVERY AGE



Natasha Liu Bordizzo

actor, 22

Underestimate Bordizzo at your peril. Born in Australia to a Chinese mother and an Italian father, she might not seem like someone who could fight off an assassin bare-handed, but the actor has a black belt in taekwondo and has also trained in kempo karate. “I started it

as a hobby because I found it calming to focus all that pent-up energy you have as a teenager,” she says. “But I took it way further than I thought I would because I’ve always had a competitive edge.”

The urge to win served her well when Bordizzo showed up for an open-call audition for *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon: Sword of Destiny* as a 19-year-old law student with “no acting experience whatsoever”. She impressed director Yuen Woo-ping with her unique mix of martial arts skills, Asian looks, fluent English and instinctual acting ability, and snared the part of Snow Vase, one of the principal roles in the film. It premiered on Netflix to millions of subscribers in 2016, prompting Bordizzo to move to Los Angeles for pilot season.

She will next be seen in Michael Gracey’s *The Greatest Showman*, a musical drama starring Hugh Jackman as showman/businessman P.T. Barnum. “The best advice I’ve received is to follow your gut and make decisions based on what you want, not what you’re scared of,” she says.

Madeleine Madden

actor, 20

“I see myself as a vessel for stories, and with my career I have the opportunity to live different lives, see different worlds and jump back and forth in time. I just finished my last day of shooting for *Picnic at Hanging Rock*; I think this adaptation will really resonate because we dived deeper into the story of these women. In the film they are these ethereal girls, but we show how women were being suppressed and objectified at the time, and that’s something that is still happening today when we are told what we should wear and what we should and shouldn’t do. Not much has changed — we are still not equal. “[In *Picnic*] my character’s father is a white judge and her mum is Aboriginal, and the curve-ball they threw me is she’s also a lesbian, so it’s been the chunkiest part I’ve been able to throw myself into.

“As the granddaughter of Charlie Perkins [the Aboriginal activist], I’ve found we’ve never shied away from politics at the dinner table. I have two glass ceilings to break: being a woman and also being a black woman. Overcoming those obstacles has made me stronger and that’s why I’m passionate about being an actor — I’m an advocate for breaking down those barriers onscreen. Hopefully I can use my platform to inspire others.

“I want to keep championing diversity onscreen, but I also would like to begin work with Indigenous youth affected by substance abuse and look at ways we can address alcohol and drug dependency. I think we can get our kids involved in the arts and using art as a medium to self-medicate and address social and emotional struggles rather than turning to other substances.”

**“Make decisions
based on what you
want, not what
you’re scared of.”**

— NATASHA LIU BORDIZZO

Stanislava Pinchuk

artist, 28

When Pinchuk, who works under the pseudonym Miso, connects with *BAZAAR*, the Melbourne artist is in the Scottish Highlands on a remote artist residency. “Right now, I feel like I’m in front of so many conflicting directions and interests, and I love that challenge of trying to reconcile them,” she says. “I just go to this very isolated residency program with a few months to develop and do that.”

Pinchuk’s signature works are made by creating pinholes on paper, a technique that is both delicate and time-intensive. Of late she has applied the technique to charting the topography of global zones of disaster and conflict, including the landscape of the Ukrainian civil war and the site of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster. “I genuinely can’t imagine doing anything else and being as interested and challenged,” she says.

Pinchuk has also worked with companies including Tiffany & Co., Chanel and Qantas. “Artists have a really wide depth of what they get to experience in the world,” she says. “I get to go from working in a war zone to Paris fashion week. I can’t think of many other jobs that let you see quite as much, and I don’t think I could ever give that up, as surreal as it sometimes is.”

Alexandra Dandie

Rio Tinto superintendent
of maintenance, 28

With a job overseeing all of the maintenance activities and mobile and electrical assets at Rio Tinto’s Port Hedland operation in remote Western Australia, Dandie finds

her work as challenging as it is isolated. But she relies on a positive attitude and continually pushing herself to be a better leader, rather than on the approval of others, in her Pilbara-based role overseeing heavy mining machinery and an exceptionally diverse workforce. “My driving force is myself — I aspire to be a better version of myself every day,” she says. “I had a yoga teacher once tell me, ‘The only thing you should focus on is what is happening on your own mat.’ So I try to apply that to my life.”

A mechanical engineer who has risen to the top of her field, Dandie is also vice chair of the Hedland Women’s Refuge. “What I’ve learnt through the refuge is that gender inequality is a key factor in domestic violence, so I encourage everyone to break down those barriers so we don’t even need to have this conversation,” she says.

As for her role in a male-dominated industry, Dandie says: “It doesn’t define me. I don’t walk around thinking ‘I am woman’ all the time, but, having said that, there is so much opportunity to break down stereotypes and challenge the status quo.”

Pip Edwards

P.E Nation co-founder and creative director, 37

"I love all newness. I love new artists, new art, new landscapes, new buildings, new runway shows, new brands, new trends. I am constantly searching for new ways, new techniques and new applications and approaches to doing things. Despite the daily challenges of the grind and new obstacles that present themselves from every angle, I live and breathe what I do and wouldn't have it any other way.

"I am doing what I have been doing for 15 years [working in the fashion industry, previously for Ksubi, sass & bide and General Pants Co.], but now I have earned the right to do it for myself and the buck stops with me. Every step I have taken in my career has been a conscious decision to get me here, right now. I am meant to be doing this.

"I would love P.E Nation to be a household name. My goal is to keep going until we are represented in every corner of the world, and then work on getting greater penetration into all those markets.

We are currently working on expanding our swim offering and launching a whole category dedicated to denim. So there is a lot happening and it keeps us all very busy but very inspired and very motivated."

Alyce Tran

The Daily Edited co-founder, 31

"The fear of failure drives me," Tran says. "I am literally in my dream job, so I never want this to end. It's the fear that it might that motivates me."

Failure is not a word that springs to mind, however, when considering The Daily Edited, the personalised accessories label Tran co-founded in 2014 with fellow lawyer Tania Liu.

The brand swiftly made a name for itself embossing monograms on handbags, pouches and stationery, and in March 2017, Tran and Liu sold a 30 per cent stake in the company for \$4.5 million to the Orotan Group, which valued their business at almost \$15 million. But despite the big business deal, Tran still works the floor of her standalone retail stores and concessions in David Jones. "It is so much fun to create beautiful products other people love, and I love seeing customers' reactions to our products, which is why I don't at all mind working the floor in our stores — although I'm not as good a salesperson as some of my staff," she says with a laugh.

Next on Tran's horizon: introducing The Daily Edited to America. "I know it takes hard work and a lot of schlepping, but if it pays off it will all be worth it," she says. "And in any event, it's fun to be giving it a go."

"I am literally in my dream job, so I never want this to end. It's the fear that it might that motivates me."

— ALYCE TRAN

Emma Isaacs

Business Chicks CEO, 38

Each time Isaacs has another child, she is driven to push herself further professionally.

"It's funny, but every time I have a baby — and I'm about to have my fifth — I get a surge of ambition and this fundamental desire to get back to work to show them what's possible and to be a role model for them," she says.

As the head of women's networking organisation Business Chicks, Isaacs has been leading by example since she acquired the business just over a decade ago and built it into an expansive offering of conferences, events and workshops spanning two continents and 11 cities. "I'm passionate about helping women remove the roadblocks that stand in the way of them getting anything they want from their lives," she says.

While Isaacs' little black book includes the likes of Gloria Steinem, Richard Branson, Arianna Huffington and Dr Jane Goodall, it's connecting with local participants at her events that she finds most rewarding. "I've met some of the world's most successful business people and celebrities and visionaries, but what I enjoy the most is usually a heart-to-heart conversation with someone who has found the courage to leave a job, a business or even a relationship that wasn't serving them after something they learnt through Business Chicks."

Erin Phillips

Adelaide Crows women's football team co-captain, professional basketball player, 32

Being a solid role model for her twin boys, Brooklyn and Blake, given birth to by her wife, Tracy Gahan, in 2016, is what drives this dual-sports star. "I want them to look up at me, see someone who is a good person, hard-working, confident and healthy, and learn that you can be anything you want to be," Phillips says.

She has also become a role model for people in same-sex relationships since opening up about her marriage to Gahan. "I have been overwhelmed by the amount of support from people, not only in same-sex marriages, but also people in heterosexual relationships, who simply appreciate me for just being me. I have had so many people reach out to me telling me that they finally have the courage to be who they are because they had someone to look up to and know that it is possible to love who you want to love."

Life for the Adelaide co-captain, who was best on ground in the Crows' 2017 premiership victory and winner of the league's best-and-fairest award, is now going from strength to strength. "I love it — it makes me happy," she says of her career. "My goal now is to do my absolute best to raise my kids to be kind, happy and healthy."



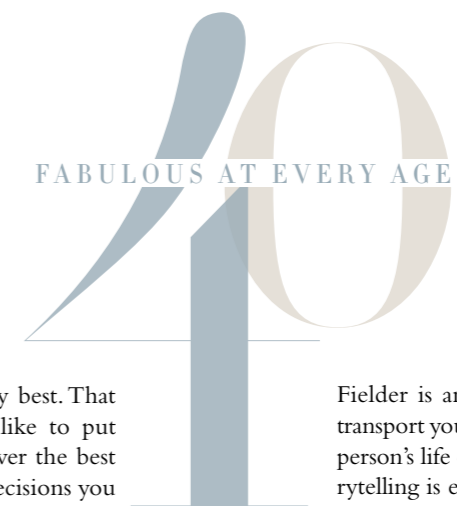
PIP EDWARDS
wears Miu Miu jacket, \$3080,
and jeans, \$870; Cartier bracelets,
\$9550 each; her own rings.
BEAUTY NOTE: Estée Lauder
All-In-One Brow Kit.

"Every step I have taken in my career has been a conscious decision to get me here, right now."



GLADYS BEREJIKLIAN
wears Tome dress, \$1980;
Christian Louboutin shoes, \$1495;
Tiffany & Co. earrings, \$1400,
and bracelet (top), \$2500;
Dinosaur Designs bracelet, \$750.
BEAUTY NOTE: Estée Lauder
Modern Muse Nuit eau de parfum.
Also shown: Hay stool, \$482,
from cultdesign.com.au.

*“The responsibilities of my
role weigh heavily on me,
which is why it’s important
for me to put everything
into what I do.”*



FABULOUS AT EVERY AGE

Gladys Berejikian

New South Wales Premier, 46

“My driving force is the need to always do my best. That doesn’t always have the best outcome, but I like to put a million per cent into everything I do to deliver the best outcomes possible. I believe the positions and decisions you take today have the potential to have a positive impact on at least a few generations, and I’m always mindful of that.”

“The responsibilities of my role weigh heavily on me, which is why it’s important for me to put everything into what I do. One of the biggest challenges is not to be distracted by the day-to-day, so I’m always very careful not to lose sight of my vision for the medium and long term.”

“I love meeting and talking with ordinary citizens who have such interesting and inspiring stories, and I especially love visiting schools. I like how enthusiastic the children are and it reminds me of why I’m here as a decision maker: to make sure their future is bright and with a greater quality of life than generations before them. Whether it’s children or adults, if you take the time to listen you always learn from people, and I think it makes you a better decision maker.”

“I’m passionate about supporting those who are less advantaged, and also creating a peaceful society and reducing conflict. Without showing off, I reckon I’m a phenomenal time manager; I’m extremely organised, and that’s helped me no matter what I’ve done in life. If you manage your time well you can fit more in your life, including more time with family and friends. What I’ve learnt is to always do your best and always be yourself. Don’t try to change who you are, but rather be real about your own strengths and weaknesses and be proud of and confident in who you are.”

Clare Cousins

*Australian Institute of Architects (AIA) president-elect;
Clare Cousins Architects director, 41*

As the newly elected head of Australia’s peak architecture body, Cousins will represent 11,000 members and foster a culture of design excellence aimed at improving the way we live in our cities. “A misconception exists that architecture is an elite service,” Cousins says. “I want good design to be available to all.”

Under the aegis of the AIA’s stated mission — “To make the world a better place through architecture” — it is Cousins’ job to advance contemporary architecture practice and advocate for architects across Australia. “Good architecture is about people,” she says. “It’s engaged and it can transform communities.”

Cousins juggles her AIA role with her own practice, Clare Cousins Architects. “Seeing a building come together onsite is the reward for months, sometimes years, of work,” she says. “As the structures start to look like a building, there is a great sense of excitement, and I love seeing clients’ anticipation transform into delight.”

Cousins is passionate about advocating for the compulsory use of architects to design quality medium- and high-density residential buildings. “In order to cater for the additional six million new housing units needed nationally over the next 35 years, our cities need thoughtfully designed sustainable-living communities where the occupants’ needs are considered before profit and speed,” she says.

Angie Fielder *film producer, 42*

Fielder is an ardent storyteller. “I love that stories transport you to another place, another world, another person’s life or perspective,” she says. “Sometimes storytelling is escapism. And sometimes it’s the opposite — sometimes stories catapult you into someone else’s reality with such a visceral authenticity that you feel

like you are walking in their shoes. I think the desire to both tell and consume stories is what drives me in my career.”

Lion, Berlin Syndrome and *Wish You Were Here*, which premiered in 2012 on the opening night of the World Cinema Dramatic Competition at the prestigious Sundance Film Festival, are among the credits the award-winning producer and co-founder of Aquarius Films has amassed over a career devoted to cultivating collaboration and creativity. “A lot of people think that producers are just the money side of things, but that’s just one small part of the role,” Fielder says. “I collaborate creatively and directly with pretty much every single person who works on a film, and I work very closely with the writers and directors of my projects to develop the script and vision.”

Fielder believes moving-picture stories are as important as those on the page, and urges more Australians to embrace the medium. “Cinema and TV are incredibly powerful [and] allow us all to explore and experience the human condition in a very deep way,” she says. “And understanding ourselves better helps us to evolve.”

*“Understanding ourselves
better helps us to evolve.”*

— ANGIE FIELDER

Carla Oates

*The Beauty Chef founder
and director, 44*

Having suffered eczema and allergies into her teenage years, Oates consulted a naturopath and later began making ingestive products in her kitchen in a bid to improve her skin health. “There weren’t any products that catered for my own skin issues and I didn’t believe in the status quo of the beauty industry — it was unhealthy and one-dimensional,” Oates says.

The result was *The Beauty Chef*, which Oates founded in 2012 with a focus on healing skin through the digestive system with fermented foods and probiotics. A bio-fermented *Inner Beauty Powder* for gut and skin health is the cornerstone of the range that has expanded to include topical skin-care products and other powders, and is stocked by the likes of *Net-a-Porter* and *Gwyneth Paltrow’s Goop*.

With a mantra of “Beauty begins in the belly”, Oates has also authored a cookbook as part of her ongoing campaign to encourage consumers to look after their skin from within.

“I wanted to make healthy products that not only helped improve skin health, but also enhanced overall health and wellbeing,” she says. “It has been very exciting for me to see a paradigm shift in the beauty industry over the last couple of years, where health has become such a big part of one’s beauty routine — and to be part of this shift is very rewarding.”

Kathy Kelly

Thomas Kelly Youth Foundation
co-founder and director, 56

With husband Ralph Kelly, Kathy formed the Thomas Kelly Youth Foundation following the death of their 18-year-old son, Thomas, who was the victim of an unprovoked one-punch attack in Sydney's Kings Cross in July 2012. The foundation was established to foster a healthier drinking culture and more responsible behaviour among young people. Just four years later, the Kellys were dealt a second blow when their younger son, Stuart, took his own life, also at the age of 18. Despite suffering unimaginable loss, Kathy takes comfort from her daughter, Madeleine, and continues to advocate for a safer community, as part of which the NRL will host a day of remembrance for Stuart at ANZ Stadium on July 23, raising awareness for the Stay Kind initiative launched in his name.

"When we got that phone call from St Vincent's Hospital [about Thomas], it was like being completely destroyed, and then we quickly realised we would have to fight every step of the way to find justice for our son," Kathy says. "Initially the foundation began advocating for justice, because we were told we'd be lucky to see the offender get 0–5 years for taking Thomas's life, so we started to fight for changes to criminal sentencing. Out of that came the one-punch law with a minimum of eight years [sentencing], and that family impact statements could be taken into account when passing a sentence. But we also wanted to have preventative measures in place to assist our youth to get home safely, and education in school to give kids the power to make responsible decisions. We work to create behavioural change in young people through education and our initiatives Safe Space and Take Kare, and our vision is ... ultimately a safer, healthier community so everyone can enjoy our streets without fear or undue peer pressure and crime."

Never one to shy away from a challenge, Professor Simmons chose the field of quantum physics for its complexity and her wish to "push things to their limits". She has done just that by developing ultra-fast quantum computers: extremely small and powerful machines that could solve certain problems in 10 seconds, compared with many thousands of years for today's computers.

In March 2017, Professor Simmons won the \$150,000 L'Oréal UNESCO For Women in Science Award in the Asia-Pacific region for her breakthrough research in quantum computation, as part of her ongoing quest to "gain a deep understanding of how the world works and explore this with other enquiring minds".

Professor Simmons's pioneering work has focused on the transistor, the main component of all computers. The classical transistor was invented in 1947, but Professor Simmons's work means it is now possible to create transistors at the atomic scale; in 2012 she and her team set a world record when they created a transistor made from just one atom. "I am passionate about making sure we are constantly building knowledge and understanding the world at the atomic scale," she says. "It's fair to say that every day we learn something new, and for me that's incredibly exciting."

Michelle Simmons

Scientia professor, quantum
physicist, University of
New South Wales, 50

FABULOUS AT EVERY AGE

"It feels like such an incredible privilege to sit at my desk each day making up stories and calling it 'work.'"

— LIANE MORIARTY

Liane Moriarty *author, 50*

What drives Moriarty to produce her best-selling novels? "The deadline," she says. "The terror of missing one. I worked for many years as a freelance writer, so I would have lost my job if I hadn't met deadlines."

That fear of not filing on time has helped her sell more than six million books worldwide, often featuring "ordinary people who are transformed into superheroes in times of crisis", she says. Her titles include *The Husband's Secret*, *The Hypnotist's Love Story* and *Truly Madly Guilty*, which *USA Today* described as "like drinking a pink cosmo laced with arsenic".

Her ability to capture suburban sex, lies and social issues with an edge has made her a literary superstar, and seen her book *Big Little Lies* made into an HBO series starring Nicole Kidman and Reese Witherspoon. But Moriarty is most content at home in Sydney, in front of her computer. "I'm happiest when I'm about two thirds of the way through my latest novel," she says. "At that point the writing is flowing, I know and understand my characters and they're generally behaving themselves, the ending is in sight, and it feels like such an incredible privilege to sit at my desk each day making up stories and calling it 'work'."

Shelley Simpson *Mud Australia founder, 53*

Simpson's handmade porcelain, combining clean lines with bright colours, achieves that very rare thing: being understated yet instantly recognisable; minimalist yet functional. "Our porcelain fits into any interior, providing a minimalist alternative to mass-produced ceramics," she says. "People are drawn to our product because it's got a real honesty to it that you can't replicate with machines."

Since Simpson founded Mud in 1994, the tableware range has amassed a cult following around the world and now spans six stores including outposts in New York, London and LA, where a Mud store opened in June. "We've got a great following in LA, as the California lifestyle is similar to Sydney — fresh colours, alfresco dining and similar obsessions with healthy food," Simpson says. Each piece is made from Limoges porcelain from France, tinted with pigment to deliver the brand's signature colour pops when fired. "I love the reveal when we open the kilns each morning and see the combination of colours transformed through the firing process," Simpson says.

Despite the recent global growth, all Mud pieces are still made by hand in a factory in Marrickville, Sydney, as part of Simpson's commitment to manufacturing in Australia. "By keeping production under one roof we've been able to stay consistent in our process and keep the integrity and identity of the product."

KATHY KELLY
wears Victoria Beckham dress,
\$3207, from mytheresa.com;
Christian Louboutin shoes,
\$1295; Tiffany & Co. bracelet,
\$2500; her own rings.
BEAUTY NOTE: Estée Lauder
Re-Nutriv Ultra Radiance
Makeup SPF 15.
Also shown: Gubi chair, \$969,
from cultdesign.com.au.

"We quickly realised we would have to fight every step of the way to find justice for our son."

KERRI-ANNE
KENNERLEY wears
Carla Zampatti dress, \$799;
Saint Laurent shoes, \$1295,
from misslouisie.com.au.

BEAUTY NOTE: Estée Lauder
Pure Color Envy Sculpting
Lipstick in Rebellious Rose;
stockist: 1800 061 326,
esteelauder.com.au.

Prices approximate. In this
portfolio: hair by Renya
Xydis at Talentland; makeup
by Peter Beard at The
Artist Group; manicures by
Lauren Borenstein at Jocelyn
Petroni. Steven Chee
is represented by DLM.
See Buylines for stockists.



*“If you can
embrace change
in life, you will
be better at life,
more content,
and you will
achieve more.”*

FABULOUS AT EVERY AGE



Renata Kaldor AO

philanthropist, Andrew & Renata
Kaldor Centre for International
Refugee Law co-founder, 69

As the daughter of parents who fled Prague in the 1940s, Renata Kaldor knows first-hand the struggles faced by refugees. “My parents, like most refugees, had a difficult life,” she says. “Their sacrifices allowed me the opportunity to have the life I have now, and I want to help other people who lack the opportunity I had.”

To this end, Renata and her husband, Andrew Kaldor, founded the Andrew & Renata Kaldor Centre for International Refugee Law at the University of New South Wales in 2013. The world’s first research centre dedicated to international refugee law, it aims to provide quality research to assist in public policy and legislative reform, and was established decades after Renata’s family fled Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic) and Andrew’s family escaped war-torn Hungary. “The courage of refugees is totally underestimated by those of us who have had no experience of that sort of hardship,” she says. “I feel a great need to give back to my society. I recognise how lucky I have been in my life. My energies are fully engaged in our refugee law research centre, which is already having such an impact at such an important time in Australia and globally.”

Margaret Pomeranz AM

Foxtel film critic, 72

“As a naturally slothful person, I’ve learnt not to put off anything but to get stuck in and just do it, and out of that came a real enjoyment from hard work,” Pomeranz says. Not that anyone could accuse her of being a sloth. Over 28 years she co-hosted the ABC’s *At the Movies* with David Stratton, before returning with two new shows on Foxtel — *Screen*, featuring her new onscreen partner, Graeme Blundell, and *Margaret Pomeranz Presents*, in which she delivers a curated selection of films for Foxtel audiences.

Her driving force over the duration of her career has remained constant: to promote Australian and international cinema as an art form through which we can learn more about ourselves and the world we live in. “My passion is the power of film to change the world,” she says. “And, let’s face it, it could do with a few changes.”

Following the publication of *Let’s Eat: A Cookbook Celebrating Film, Food & Family* in 2015, Pomeranz is now part-way through her first novel, which she is juggling around her Foxtel commitments. “I’m a third of the way through,” she says. “I’d like to find the time to finish the damn thing so I can go back and see how terrible it is and then set about a major rewrite.” ■

Kerri-Anne Kennerley

television presenter, 63

“I’m driven by curiosity because if you are a curious person you will never be bored of life. What inspires me personally is looking after my husband [John Kennerley, who suffered severe spinal injuries after falling off a balcony at a golf course in 2016]. He is a huge source of inspiration to me, and it’s a whole new world of learning different things to make sure everything goes according to plan each day.

“I love the adventure of live television — when I was writing my upcoming book, I worked out I’d done more live TV than anyone in the country, including Bert Newton. I started in 1981 and basically didn’t stop! I love talking to people and being able to extract new information that people haven’t heard before and making a guest feel relaxed enough to want to be even more interesting than they thought they could be.

“I’m starting to do some fundraising for neurostimulation, a new treatment for paraplegics and quadriplegics to give them movement. It is absolutely brilliant and it’s the work of Professor Edgerton at the University of California, Los Angeles. It’s coming to the University of Technology in Sydney as a treatment, but it’s starting first with trials.

“Not all of us are super blessed with great intellect or physical strength. Most of us are just normal people doing the best we can. But as Charles Darwin said, it’s not the strongest or most intelligent of the species that thrive — it’s the ones that are most adaptable. If you can embrace change in life, you will be better at life, more content, and you will achieve more in life. I’ve found that invaluable, because the one certainty in life is change.”

Diana Watson

artist, 71

As an only child, Watson was happy in her own company growing up and spent endless hours drawing, painting, learning to sew and making tiny sculptures. “I am driven to paint, to work or to create something that has meaning,” she says. “Being creative is who I am.”

That childhood creativity led to an art education under eminent West Australian artist Robert Juniper. Watson then launched her own art career after working for several years in fashion. “I had a boutique that provided a wonderful necessity to travel to Italy regularly,” she says. “This was the major influence on the painting I am doing now.”

That painting comprises exquisitely melancholic still-life ruminations on nature, flowers, death and renewal. Evoking a sense of romance and abundance akin to the early masters, Watson’s paintings have made her one of Australia’s most popular still-life artists, with numerous exhibitions to her name, and work in private collections in the UK, Italy, Germany, Hong Kong and America. “I capture and record the fleeting beauty of everyday life,” she says. “There is a need to share this beauty in a world that is not without its foreboding. My hope is that this imagery provides the viewer with a sense of hope and peacefulness.”

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— MARGARET POMERANZ