



Diane Gagne poses in The Apartment, which is Holt Renfrew's by-appointment-only private shopping area, wearing a jacket and blouse by Alexander McQueen and wide-leg pants by A.L.C.

PHOTO BY KK LAW

# A Life in Fashion

Diane Gagne has “been in fashion forever,” but she loves it so much that she hesitates to call it a job. Her artistic tendencies, combined with a love for the *Elle*, *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* magazines she grew up with, led her to be a make-up artist, and from there her height and striking looks caused her to fall “totally sideways” into being a model. Soon she started producing and styling the shows she was in, and from there a career in fashion-show production and personal styling began.

For the last three years, Gagne has been working as a personal stylist at Holt Renfrew (page 23), which means she helps shoppers find anything from a last-minute gown for a black-tie gala to a whole new wardrobe after a major life

change. She likens it to a treasure hunt, sifting through the store's three floors of clothing, footwear and accessories to find the right pieces. Her favourite moment? Seeing a client “sparkle” when trying on the perfect outfit.

Many of Gagne's clients travel frequently. She prefers black clothing for travel, since it's easy to coordinate, but suggests bringing an above-the-table statement piece such as a fabulous scarf or necklace. Her other main advice is relevant for any garment you're considering buying: “You have to love it.” She laments closets overstuffed with lacklustre pieces. Instead, search for that “sparkle.” Seems like sound advice, in any area of life. **BY SHERI RADFORD**