

Colour Us Happy

Dopamine dressing is the mood booster we all need right now

BY SHERI RADFORD

Whether it's Zendaya decked out in hot pink, Blake Lively in eye-popping orange or Anne Hathaway in polka dots, celebs have adopted a mood-boosting style of dressing this year. "Pinterest predicted that 2022 would be the year of 'dopamine dressing' as people embrace fashion trends that make them feel good," says Alexandra Nikolajev, global senior lead of creator content and partnerships at Pinterest. "It's all about incorporating vibrant colours into outfits and creating bright colourful palettes."

From rainbow dresses to electric-blue prints, bright-green blazers and fuchsia dresses, it's no wonder so many people are seeking sartorial serotonin, after two-plus years of non-stop catastrophes dominating the news cycle. Garret Louie, brand manager at Taikan, explains, "As people move on from a challenging and chaotic time, our desire to be happy, social and positive is being expressed with mood-boosting clothing in bright and happy shades." Taikan's gender-neutral bags, tees and shorts are available in some jaunty new colours, like mellow yellow, cool blue and moss green.

"The ... trend is calling us to walk a little lighter, to stand a little taller, to smile and laugh," says Ashley Freeborn, founder of Smash + Tess—the romper brand that, earlier this year, partnered with Mattel to produce a limited-edition capsule in Barbie pink. "Although we know the world continues to be a challenging place, dopamine dressing adds some sunshine into our wardrobe and a little pep in our step."

Examples of the trend abound everywhere you look: whimsical purses by Coach and Furla, colourful rings by Pandora, fun footwear by Hunter, Vans and Ecco. Altitude Sports carries sandals in striking shades. Aldo stocks sky-high

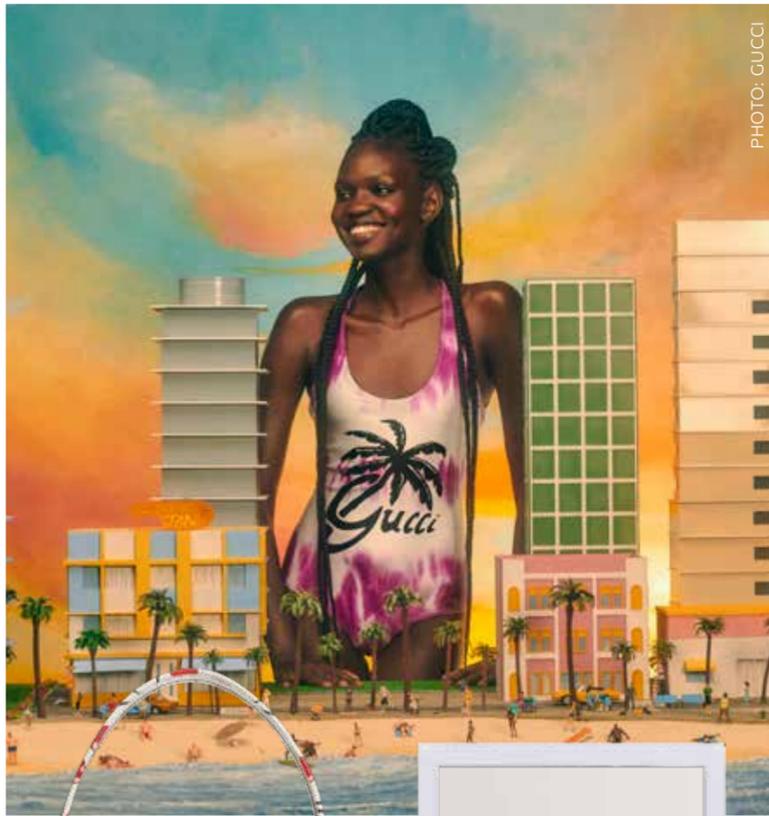


PHOTO: GUCCI



gum-pink hair. For her, dopamine dressing isn't a flash in the pan. "It seems like something we do naturally," she says.

Ready to try it? First, ditch the neutral navy and basic black and seek out ultra-saturated colours, or adopt a cheerful mix of polka dots, plaids and stripes in feel-good colours. The key is to wear something bright and fun that makes you feel confident and happy—even euphoric. For inspo, look on Pinterest or search for a hashtag such as #colorcombo on TikTok. "I think as long as your colours are bold, you can't go wrong," advises Freeborn. "Don't be afraid to mix that pink with that orange, or a bold Kelly green. The more vibrant, the better!"

For those still feeling unsure, Louie has some advice: "To embrace without looking like a fashion disaster, keep it simple by using the three-colour rule, wearing a maximum of three colours in the outfit to ensure it all matches. Balancing with a neutral will also work. If the pants are wild, maybe the rest in neutral. Start there until you feel more comfortable with it all."

Of course, the most important thing is to wear outfits that spark joy. Nikolajev sums it up perfectly: "I believe fashion mirrors our attitude, and you can feel the joy radiating off this trend." ▽

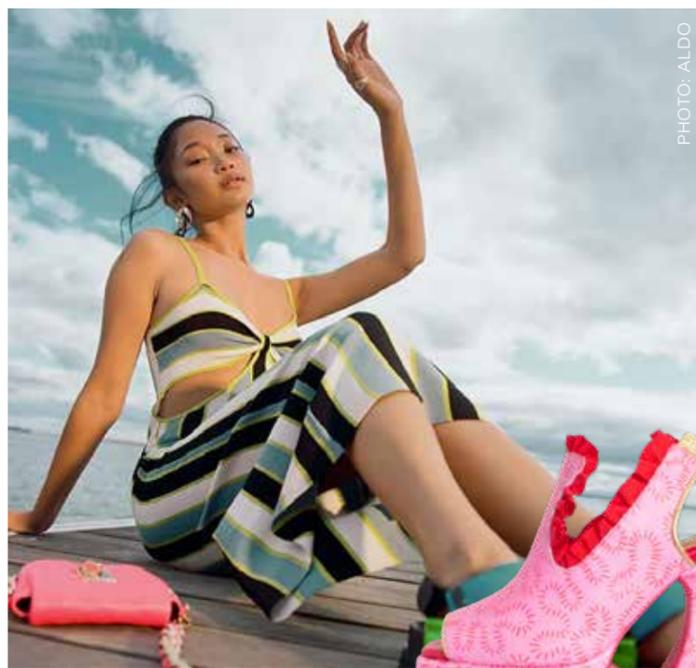


PHOTO: ALDO

heels in hot hues. Labels like Ba&sh and Azur Fit have endless options in mood-boosting colours and prints, while Gucci's latest lines overflow with bright bursts of colour. Chloe Claus, director of brand partnerships for Brunette the Label, talks about shades like hot pink and cobalt blue that Brunette rolled out for spring and summer. "These bright tones, combined with our signature uplifting and positive messaging, are the hit of dopamine we all need after a long and cold winter."

For some labels dopamine dressing isn't a trend—it's baked into their DNA. Native Shoes makes lightweight footwear in an array of bright colours and joyful prints. Herschel Supply supplements its core of neutral-coloured backpacks and totes with brighter seasonal colourways, such as the playful pieces in recent collabs with The Simpsons and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts. And then there's the master of dopamine dressing, John Fluevog; the Vancouver-based footwear master explains why his creations have always been wonderfully wacky. "You don't get lost in the crowd. I think it's about honouring our creativeness and ourselves."

Fluevog recently teamed up with Dame Zandra Rhodes—whose clothing has been worn by the likes of Princess Diana and Freddie Mercury—on a capsule of five madcap shoe styles. "I've always worn bright colours. I find bright colours are just as practical as wearing black," says Rhodes, who sports bubble-



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