

INTERVIEW BASTIAAN VAN SCHAIK

“I only speak up
when there's something
worth saying.”

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Stylist and fashion curator Bastiaan van Schaik has been appointed editor-in-chief of the revamped Avant Garde. Starting in October, he will lead the relaunch of the legendary magazine, which is returning to the Dutch market after an absence of nearly fifteen years.

BIG NEWS: AVANT GARDE IS COMING BACK, AND YOU'VE BEEN NAMED EDITOR-IN-CHIEF.

Bastiaan van Schaik (BvS): “Yes, I’m very happy to return to the title where I once started a long time ago. The relaunch of Avant Garde couldn’t have come at a better time, if you ask me.”

...BECAUSE THE MAGAZINE HAS BEEN OFF THE MARKET FOR 15 YEARS?

BvS: “Yes, and because it’s been so long since we’ve seen any new magazine launches in the Netherlands. There’s a renewed creative energy in the air—something I haven’t felt in a long time. Avant Garde should once again become a platform where Dutch talent, alongside big international names, can truly express themselves.”

BUT THE NEW AVANT GARDE ISN'T THE SAME MAGAZINE IT USED TO BE.

BvS: “No, and nor should it be. The new edition isn’t just aimed at women—it’s also for men. And it won’t be published monthly, but twice a year as a thick, luxurious glossy. Magazines have taken on a new meaning. You turn to social media for news, but real depth and context in fashion, design, art, and lifestyle—you’ll find that in the printed Avant Garde.”

THE FASHION WORLD HAS CHANGED DRAMATICALLY AS WELL.

BvS: “Absolutely, and possibly even more rapidly in the past six months than in the fifteen years before that. Where fashion media used to be obsessed with brands, now there’s much more focus on quality, production methods, and personal style. Readers and followers have become a lot more critical.”

SO HOW WILL AVANT GARDE MEET THOSE EXPECTATIONS?

BvS: “By filtering what truly matters. And by always looking ahead. Avant Garde was known for scouting talent and spotting trends before other media caught on. It played a crucial role in the growth of the Dutch fashion scene in the ’80s, ’90s and 2000s, and even helped launch Amsterdam Fashion Week. That kind of relevance is what Avant Garde will reclaim.”

WITH YOU AS THE FACE OF THAT MOVEMENT?

BvS: “I’m not as attention-hungry as some claim. You only hear or see me when I actually have something to say. That constant craving for the spotlight—regardless of your message—that’s really passé. Who, nowadays, honestly still cares about which shake some influencer is having for breakfast? I certainly don’t.”

SO, IS SOCIAL MEDIA A BIT FAKE?

BvS: "No, it's actually extremely realistic, goal-oriented and commercial. But I want to get people dreaming again. About that beautiful woman or man, and that one Chanel bag that costs €10,000. Just because you can't afford it right now doesn't mean you can't fantasize about it..."

AND YOUR AUDIENCE DOES THAT?

BvS: "You shouldn't think in terms of demographics, but in interests. Avant Garde is for anyone between 25 and 100 with taste. And for creatives in fashion and art looking for a new platform to showcase their work. I'm looking forward to so many exciting collaborations."

WHEN WILL THE RELAUNCH OF AVANT GARDE BE A SUCCESS FOR YOU?

BvS: "I'm always pushing my own limits and I'm not easily satisfied. But I'll be very happy when I finally have that first issue in my hands and can share it with the world."

NOTE TO JOURNALISTS

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