

# THE MAYFAIR

JANUARY 2016 • ISSUE 052 • £5.00

MAGAZINE



Into  
the wild

Succumb to wanderlust  
and experience the  
extraordinary in 2016

## Flights of FANCY

Photographer Cathleen  
Naundorf on how a passion  
for travel inspires her work





L'ARCHE DE NOÉ XXXIII  
BY CATHLEEN NAUNDORF  
DESIGNER: ELJE SAAB



PORTRAIT OF CATHLEEN  
NAUNDORF

# Flights of fancy

Ahead of the photographer's first solo exhibition in New York, **Annabel Harrison** takes a closer look at the career and creations of the widely travelled and globally renowned Cathleen Naundorf

As Mr Einstein once said, "Logic will get you from A to Z; imagination will get you everywhere". This sentiment couldn't be more apt when considering the fact that Cathleen Naundorf's career has taken her from photo-reporting on Indian tribes in Amazonia and shamans in Siberia to shooting runway shows in Paris for Condé Nast, and subsequently the world's top couture houses, via spending time with the Dalai Lama (of all people). "My photographs are a reflection of my imagination," said Naundorf earlier this year, "and that's where the narratives come from... I find inspiration everywhere when I travel. I was a photojournalist for a long time, so a curiousness for discovery is in my blood."

This is not hard to believe. The French-German photographer's oeuvre comprises images that are all, to varying degrees, fantastical and eccentric, while at the same time being opulent and exquisitely composed. Working with a large-format camera, Naundorf's distinctive technique is inspired by photographer Horst P. Horst, who she met in the early '90s. He became both a mentor and a friend, inspiring her initial move into fashion in 1997; by 2005, she was working on a series called *Un Rêve de Mode*, with six couture houses, including Chanel, Lacroix, Dior and Valentino. She was given access to gowns from their

archives for her elaborate, theatrical shoots and the results can be seen in her book *Haute Couture: The Polaroids of Cathleen Naundorf*.

The eagle-eyed among you may recognise this issue's cover image, shot by Naundorf; it was on show at Mayfair's Hamiltons gallery earlier this year in an exhibition entitled *Noah's Ark*. "The umbrella (which is for protection against the sun, not the rain)," Naundorf clarifies, "is from Burma. I travelled through the southern part of the country for one month via the old English train from the 1940s. Along the way, I discovered these amazing handmade paper umbrellas... On my last day, a local I had befriended brought me a present to take home, and it was one of these umbrellas! When the opportunity to shoot the *Noah's Ark* series came up, I chose a hand-painted background of the sky and one of the umbrellas I had found on my travels."

If you love this image, get in touch with the gallery; although it is among the selection for Naundorf's upcoming solo exhibition in NYC at the Edwynn Houk Gallery, it is still available for purchase through Hamiltons, and we expect to see more from Naundorf in Mayfair over the coming months; drawn by the "positive energy and dynamism, British humour and eccentricity [of this] multicultural, open-minded city", Naundorf liked it "so much that I moved here!"

*Selected photographs from the Haute Couture series will be exhibited at Cathleen Naundorf's first solo exhibition in New York from 14 January to 27 February 2016 Edwynn Houk Gallery, 745 Fifth Avenue, NY 10151 (houkgallery.com)*

*Hamiltons, 13 Carlos Place, W1K (020 7499 9493; hamiltonsgallery.com) (cathleennaundorf.com)*



MY PARADISE BIRD I BY  
CATHLEEN NAUNDORF  
DESIGNER: CHANEL