



Commitment? Art project? OCD? Five New Yorkers who wear only one color all day, every day (and it's not black).

One Is the Loveliest Color

BY JOANNA GODDARD

Valeria "ValBlu" McCulloch

SHOE DESIGNER.
YVES KLEIN BLUE.

Why blue? In college, I majored in color theory. Blue was the most interesting color, historically. Germanic tribes wore it to ward off enemies; Christians used it to denote divinity. Wearing blue for me is being in a dream all day.

Do you make your own blue shoes? I go to leather fairs and have the factory make me shoes. I also buy white Chanel and Christian Louboutin shoes, and I color them blue with custom-ordered electric-blue Sharpies.

Do you wear blue makeup? I wear YSL No. 3 mascara, Chanel Blue Satin nail polish, and blue Lancôme lip gloss, which looks clear when you put it on. And my bathroom products are blue, like my toothbrush.

Does the color reflect your personality? Blue signifies loyalty, and I'm very loyal. It's hard in this industry, but I'm a humanist.

There was a lot of electric blue in recent seasons. It's getting trendy. When it hits "mass," it's a turnoff.

What do your friends think? My friend studied photography, and I was part of her thesis. She did a color study and took photos of me.

What color is your apartment? My living room is neutral, but just go into my bedroom. I have a blue Nintendo, bedside table, suitcase, pillow, BlackBerry. And I collect blue gemstones. People once believed that sapphires had healing properties.

How does blue make you feel? Blue is a peaceful color. The U.N. has a blue flag; all the presidential campaigns have blue. It touches every realm of life, from cosmic to future.

Photographs by Tina Tyrell



Rebecca Turbow

FASHION DESIGNER. *60%*

Why gray? I actually wore turquoise for eight years, but last September, I switched to gray. I'd had a bad year and needed to get out of it.

That's a big switch. I like everything to be clean, and gray is clean. Gray is between black and white, so it's a noncolor, almost. I feel messy and unclean if I wear other colors.

Where do you shop? I make all my own clothes. I can't wear anyone else's.

What about shoes? That's hard because even the soles of my shoes have to be gray or white. I get annoyed if the soles are black.

Do you ever miss turquoise? When I was in turquoise, people would stare at me everywhere I went. It's still the color of my clothing line, so my business cards

and stickers are turquoise. But I've separated myself from it, so I'm separated from my work.

Is that a good thing? Gray is refreshing. My boyfriend says it looks classy. Sometimes he'll wear black, and I'll wear silver. I like that; we match.

Does it bother you when other people wear mixed colors?

I like mixed colors on other people. I just can't wear or make them. I work for the singer of Of Montreal, and he lets me make him wild, monochrome outfits.

Will you wear gray for the rest of your life? My mom thinks I should branch out, but I can't imagine that. I don't know if it's a condition; I've always wondered if there's a name for it.



Karim Rashid

INDUSTRIAL DESIGNER. *50%*

HALF THE TIME.

HALF THE TIME,

Why white? In college, I was obsessed with wearing all white. I felt angelic and free. But then, in the early eighties, I started wearing black. That was status quo in the avant-garde. If you were interesting—a designer, an architect—you wore all black.

How long did that last? I went to Rome to do my master's in '82. I wore all black, with pink hair. But that was considered Fascist. I had to tone down my dress.

Why didn't you return to black back in New York? Every profession has dress codes. In 2000, I was on a panel with nine architects, and I wore a white suit. Everyone was wearing black except me. I felt detached from the incestuous profession.

Now you also wear pink. Why? Sometimes I think it's because my mother dressed me in pink when I was a child. She wanted me to be a girl.

How do people react to a grown man in pink? I make them smile. They say, "You make me happy."

What about underwear?

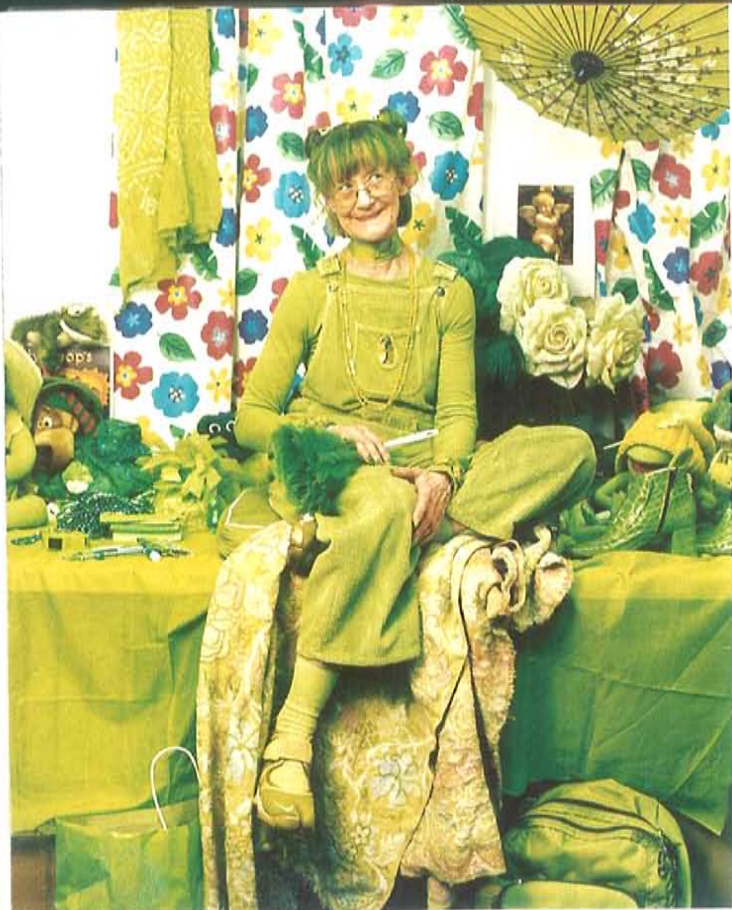
The only place in the world that sells men's pink underwear is American Apparel.

How do you keep your clothes clean? I carry Tide to Go. If I spill red wine, I just rub it off. I should write a book about wearing white.

Do people try to convince you to wear other colors? I was shopping in Europe with a couple friends, and they talked me into trying on a black shirt and black jeans. If you look good in white, you look really good in black.

But you didn't buy the jeans?

My statement is, *Be who you are.* Do what turns you on.



Elizabeth Sweetheart

FABRIC DESIGNER. *KELLY GREEN.*

Why green? I'm from Nova Scotia, where green is in your surroundings. I missed nature when I moved to New York. I started wearing green nail polish, and it spread all over me.

When did you move here? I hitchhiked down in 1964. I had long braided hair; I was a beatnik.

Where did you live? We used to live on the Lower East Side. A hippie gang was on our block, and you had to know them to get down the street. They had weapons and chains. They babysat for our son.

What's your son up to these days? Sam is a mentalist, a magician. It's classic mind-reading; he'll memorize a deck of cards. He's our one and only.

How long have you been married? Forty-one years. Every Saturday morning, we'd say, "Maybe we'll make it to City Hall this morning." We missed a few because we slept late. Finally, we

went and got married. We didn't have a ring, so my husband, Robert, made one out of paper.

Do you have any grandchildren? No, but I have a grand-puppy. My son asked me to babysit him, and I airbrushed his tail green. Sam flipped out.

Tell me about your style. I always wear overalls. I have 30 pairs. I buy children's sizes from GapKids and Chadwick's. And I dye everything—my Nike sneakers, my underwear. I can't fall asleep unless I'm wearing green.

Do you wear green to work? Every day. I've been in the design business over 44 years.

How do strangers react? Many people say, "Oh! That's my favorite color." On 42nd Street, tourists ask to take my photo. I take the F train and know everyone on it—kids, Japanese girls with green in their hair, all the junkies. I've never had a negative experience.



Stephin Merritt

SINGER-SONGWRITER. *BROWN.*

Why brown? Years ago, I did a photo shoot with my dog, Irving, for *Esquire* magazine, where they had various celebs wearing fake eighties clothing. They put me in a preposterous outfit. Blondie was also part of the shoot, and they gave me advice: Just say, "Sorry, I only wear black."

So why didn't you start wearing black? Unfortunately, black at this point tends to make you look like a French tourist in Soho. It also makes me look ill. I look ill enough; I really don't need to call attention to that.

But brown is good? I have brown hair and eyes, and I believe in matching.

It must be hard to clash when you wear all brown. Impossible. The great thing about brown is when it fades, you can't tell what color it originally was. There's no sense of the "right" color saturation.

What else do you like about it? Brown shows absolutely nothing. You'd have to spill some

fuchsia paint. If you wear black, dandruff is horrific and lint is a nightmare—and dog hair, in my case, is a particular problem.

What color is your dog? White and beige with a little brown nose. He's incredibly cute.

Are there any downsides to wearing brown? I've been invited to two events that required black tuxedos, so I didn't go. I always said I'd wait until I'd been asked to three tuxedo events before I accepted. So I'm in danger of needing to wear a tuxedo.

What were the events? The first was a party at an embassy; the second was a wedding. I don't know why tuxedos were necessary. But obviously I've never been to a tuxedo event. Maybe it's glorious fun.