The new edition of THE FASHION BOOK takes a fresh look at the fashion world and the people who created and inspired it. Spanning nearly two centuries, the whole industry is represented; pioneering designers Coco Chanel and Issey Miyake are joined by new figures such as Alexander Wang and Phoebe Philo at the vanguard of the industry today, alongside influential photographers from Richard Avedon, Helmut Newton, Mert & Marcus and Terry Richardson. Filled with iconic and inspirational images, it is an A–Z guide of over 570 clothing and accessory designers, photographers, stylists, models, editors and those key figures who instigated or symbolize a whole fashion movement. It cuts through the usual classifications by creating juxtapositions that make fascinating and unlikely partnerships: the exotic Lady Gaga sits opposite Christian Lacroix while Tom Ford and wunderkind Nicola Formichetti rub shoulders. Each entry is accompanied by an image which illustrates a key aspect of their work, alongside a short text that includes essential information about the creator and their influence. In addition, THE FASHION BOOK uses a comprehensive cross-referencing system and index that highlight the many collaborations and connections across the fashion industry, that singular business that lies between the history and tradition of the past, is constantly being pushed into the future by the avant-garde.
Joseph Abboud makes clothes for men and women that are an unusual combination of American sportswear and North African colours and textures. In the 1960s Abboud collected Turkish kilims and these have inspired his natural palette and the stylized symbols that recur in his work. He began his career as a buyer and in 1981 joined Ralph Lauren, later to become associate director of menswear design. He emerged four years later with a similar philosophy to Lauren: that clothing is as much about lifestyle as it is about design. In 1986 Abboud launched his own label and found a niche for his understated clothes with their rich colours and unusually crafted textures.
Ackermann Haider

Beckoning like a languorous odalisque in a Lord Leighton tableau, the model in this photograph creates a delicious air of exotic luxury, very much in keeping with mood of Haider Ackermann’s spring/summer 2011 collection presented at the Palazzo Pitti in Florence. A Silk-Road fantasy seen through a pipe-smoke haze, male and female silhouettes alike featured in rich silks and satins, dhoti pants and kimono collars. Born in Colombia, Ackermann had a peripatetic childhood, growing up in cities across Europe and Africa. Now based in Antwerp, his collections are often informed by a strong sense of place and what the designer describes as ‘errance’ – a kind of wandering sensibility. His garments for women are prized for their expert draping in soft leather and napa, heavy satin, jersey and silk, and for the sensual androgyny of his silhouettes, beautifully typified by the actress Tilda Swinton with whom the designer’s style is strongly associated.

► Demeulemeester, Margiela, Owens, Swinton

Adolfo

This impromptu snap of society figure Mr and Mrs Wyatt Cooper is one of Adolfo’s favourite pictures, and not just because both are wearing his refined clothes. He says, ‘Getting dressed and going out is fun only because we don’t do it often – it’s good to feel glamorous once in a while.’ But his glamour never strays into the realms of vulgarity. Adolfo worked first as a milliner, then trained at Chanel and Balenciaga, before setting up his New York salon. There, Adolfo provided his famous knitted suits, one of which is worn here by Gloria Cooper (aka Gloria Vanderbilt). Inspired by Coco Chanel’s jersey sportswear and iconic suits, they were bought by New York’s old society. When his salon closed in 1993 his clients were distraught, not least Nancy Reagan, who had worn Adolfo’s clothes for two decades. She, perhaps more than anyone, embodied his assertion that, ‘An Adolfo lady should look simple, classic and comfortable.’

► Balenciaga, Chanel, Galanos, Vanderbilt

Adolfo (Adolfo Sardina). b Havana (CU), 1933.

Mr and Mrs Wyatt Cooper. Photograph by Bill Cunningham, American Vogue, 1972.
Adrian Gilbert

Jean Crawford wears Adrian’s famed ‘coat hanger look’—a suit with padded shoulders and slim skirt that produces an ‘inverted triangle’ silhouette that has since intermittently returned to fashion—not least in the 1980s. Here, that shape is exaggerated further by triangular lapels that reach over the shoulders and taper, pointing at the waist. As Adrian told Life magazine in 1947, ‘American women’s clothes should be streamlined in the daytime.’ He is also known for long, elegantly draped dinner gowns, like those he designed for Joan Crawford in Grand Hotel (1932), and for his silver satin bias-cut dresses for starlet Jean Harlow. As a costume designer at Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in the 1930s and 1940s, Adrian—born Adolphus Greenburg—found a vast audience for his work and became an influential fashion designer. In 1942 he retired as a costume designer to open his own fashion house, continuing to create his trademark suits and gowns.

► Garbo, Irene, Orry-Kelly, Platt Lynes

Gaby Aghion

Chloé, a name synonymous with femininity and modernity, was conceived by Egyptian-born designer Gaby Aghion, establishing the label in 1952 with her business partner Jacques Lenoir. With a free spirited and independent heroine in mind, Aghion rejected the structured silhouettes of the time, approaching ready-to-wear with the finesse and detail of haute couture. Despite a succession of notable designers—Karl Lagerfeld, Stella McCartney and Phoebe Philo—Chloé retains an ethereal, youthful femininity. With Lagerfeld at the helm from 1965 to 1983, Chloé came into commercial recognition, while keeping with the flower-child mood of the era. Stella McCartney, as head designer from 1997, offered a playful femininity in her design approach. Chloé is now an international brand owned by Richemont with a diffusion line and perfume range. With Clare Waight Keller joining in 2011 as creative director, the brand continues to grow.

► Bailly, Lagerfeld, McCartney, Paulin, Sitbon, Steiger