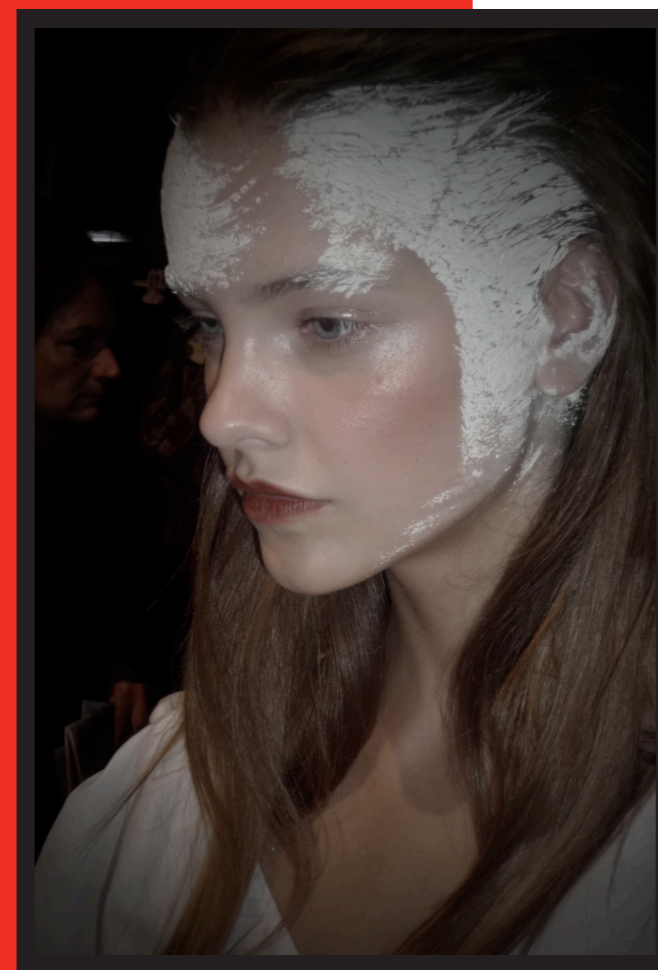
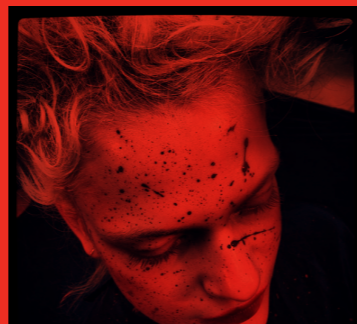


THE MAKEUP CAN CHANGE DIRECTION AT ANY MOMENT



YOU'VE DEFINITELY DONE MANY RAW IDEAS AT VIVIENNE WESTWOOD'S SHOWS.

It's always quite childlike makeup at Vivienne's. There was a Gold Label show in Paris where Vivienne and Andreas [Kronthaler] said, 'We really don't want any makeup; we want to feel the skin. We're feeling Frida Kahlo, but the charity-shop version and she's a bit of a nomad, pilgrims from different places all coming together. She's futuristic but she needs to look weathered, dusty, soft porn, glitter, dirty.' So I listened to these words and thought, 'OK, they want to feel the skin, they want to feel the beauty, so what we're going to do is incredible skin, and we're going to give them a little flush. It's going to be this pinky blush, like she's fresh from orgasming or she's been running – she's a bit athletic and I'm thinking, running, panting. But she needs to look innocent.' So I thought, 'Vivienne said raw and dusty, so what's my take on this?' And then I thought, 'I've got it! She's running for the number 93 bus in South London and on her way into town. And she's running, running, running, so she's a bit out of breath and she's a little bit moist, but she stops, puts her hand out for the bus and then a big old truck goes by and she gets splattered with mud.' And that was my take on the makeup for that show.

DO YOU EVER EXPLAIN IT LIKE THAT TO THE DESIGNER?

It's best not to, because invariably what happens is **THE MAKEUP CAN CHANGE DIRECTION AT ANY MOMENT**, and something like a Westwood show is a journey – you won't know what it looks like until it comes out on the catwalk, as it may even change after the rehearsal, or in the lineup. This sounds like beauty coming out of chaos. Vivienne loves chaos, and chaos is great. I don't even know what Sam is doing with the hair usually, and he doesn't know what I'm doing with the makeup. It's a journey and that's just great. Another example of raw at Westwood is where Sam did very simple hair and I did a very beautiful face by sort of rubbing on the lip and a tiny bit of cheek, like a little Lolita cheek, and some highlighter. It all looked incredibly beautiful, but I thought, 'I've got to fuck it up somewhere to make it feel more like Vivienne and Andreas'. So we got clay face masks and I just painted them around the edges of the face and it kind of went into the hair a bit. We didn't know how it was going to look, but we left it there during the whole four-hour run-up to the show. And just before the show I made the models make faces and I sort of put my hands onto it so it cracked a bit and I really liked that – you know, that peeling-off, cracking, decaying thing – and then inside there's the beauty, like a butterfly, the beautiful nucleus of her.



**'THE FOCUS WITH VAL IS
ALWAYS, "I DON'T GIVE A
SHIT, AS LONG AS IT LOOKS
AMAZING." THERE'RE NO
RULES WITH HER. THERE'S
NO, "OH, THAT'S NOT COOL
ENOUGH." OR, "THAT'S NOT
WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW.'"**

SØLVE SUNDSBØ



TELL ME ABOUT THE W COVER OF KEIRA KNIGHTLEY.

This was one of a series of covers I did with Steven. We had different actresses on the shoot, like Scarlett Johansson, Rooney Mara and Mia Wasikowska, and Steven wanted to make each one into a character. So Luigi put a blonde wig on Keira and I thought, 'How can we make it look different?' Keira, who I had worked with a number of times, was amazing and said, 'OK Val, you can do whatever you like, but you are not bleaching my eyebrows'. And so really what I've done here is quite normal, beautiful makeup, but what's raw about it is the attitude, and also I don't think we had ever seen Keira like that before.

**OK VAL,
YOU CAN DO
WHATEVER
YOU LIKE,
BUT
YOU ARE NOT
BLEACHING
MY EYEBROWS.**



CROSSING THE LINE

Val's graphic work hits you like an adrenaline shot, then stares you down, snarling 'Look at me, but don't get too close'. This is powerful, dynamic, dramatic makeup – often about the simplicity of a single, bold gesture – that elongates eyes to create a menacing allure, pronounces mouths to render them too dangerous to kiss, and sharpens cheekbones to a point where there will be blood.

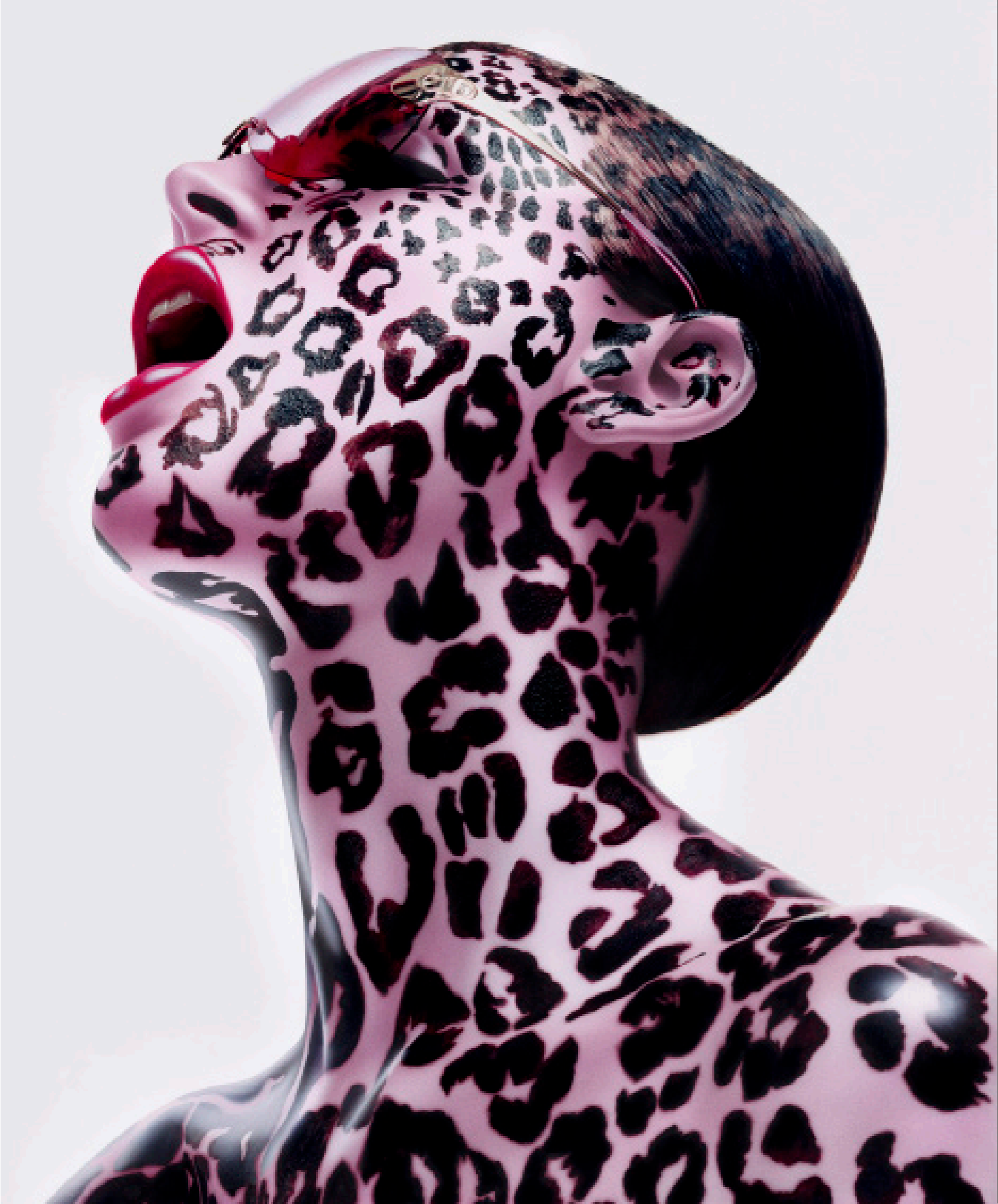
Val's graphic makeup has its roots in punk. It is essentially about attention, power and drama, and how a graphically made-up face has always acted as an aloof 'fuck you' to the world. The punks of the seventies utilized makeup graphically to demand attention, via a feline eye or a vampire lip. And punk gave us possibly the most graphic beauty statement ever – taking an image of the Queen and piercing her stiff upper lip with a safety pin in protest against hypocrisy in the British establishment.

This chapter is about pure makeup drama. But dramatic gestures in makeup are Val's forté, like creating the face of a broken clown – as full-on as Pavarotti in *Pagliacci* – then wiping away the greasepaint with typical reverie, leaving only the graphic outline of the makeup in order to (in Val's words) 'let your imagination fill in the spaces'.

As with much of Val's work, there is an influence – albeit abstract – of art and artists. So in her graphic work we can see the influence of the lurid, graphic vulgarity of eighties Athena posters and album covers; the elongated, sweeping flamboyance of American illustrator Antonio Lopez; and the club-kid-gone-couture, almost geisha-like work of French photographer Serge Lutens. All have influenced Val with their caffeine kick of daring artistry – and none more than her muse, the 1960s supermodel Veruschka, who was much appreciated by graphic, tribal body-paint artists, as seen in the radical art book *Trans-figurations* by photographer Holger Trülzsch.

And so it was a post-punk, anarchically inclined Val who entered the world of fashion in the nineties, at a time when 'graphic' was exploding on all levels. It was an era that witnessed the birth of Adobe Photoshop and saw the rise of graphic designers like Neville Brody and Phil Bicker of *The Face*, Peter Saville, the creative Svengali of *Factory Records*, and the American graphic design legend David Carson of *Ray Gun* – figures that were all so achingly cool it hurt. None of this was lost on the fledgling Val as she took to makeup with her own ideas on what was cool, so with a graphic swipe at the 'no makeup' mantra of grunge, she began working on and creating more conceptually orientated shoots for magazines like *Dazed & Confused* – her way of ignoring what was otherwise a rather dull party.





'I LOVE MAKEUP WHEN IT'S TRANSFORMATIVE. I DON'T HAVE A STRONG OPINION OF THE COLOUR OF RED, OR THE LENGTH OF THE LASHES, OR THE COLOUR OF THE BLUSH. BUT I LOVE IT WHEN IT'S TRANSFORMATIVE. I LOVE WORKING WITH VAL BECAUSE SHE'S CAPABLE OF DOING IT, WHICH VERY FEW PEOPLE ARE. AND SHE LOVES DOING IT. SHE LOVES THAT TRANSFORMATIVE PROCESS. BUT SHE'S WILLING TO GO MUCH FURTHER.'

SOLVE SUNDSBØ

This was a story about surrealism, so everything was going to be Antonio Lopez-ed. A technique was used where something was put over the photograph to make it look like an illustration, and Sølve was really worried that I'd be offended that he'd taken my makeup and completely artworked it, because when you saw it in the magazine, although I had done the leopard spots by hand, it could have been done by a digital artist. But I wanted to do it myself so that he had something to photograph, rather than a green screen. She's kind of been turned into a mannequin in the digital manipulation and her lips are like super 'Coca Cola perfect'. Everything here has been retouched to within an inch of its life and they've plasticized the leopard markings. It was a different type of good before they did the technique.

This was the only shot in the story where you saw Liberty as a porcelain statue. The rest of it was the lips that I'd done, they cut them out and floated them in the sky. It was all supposed to look like modern, pop surrealism. I remember saying to my agent at the time, 'I want to put that as the last picture in my book', and they were like, 'Well you can't because it's not real'. And I said, 'Well, it is real, and I did do it.'



*OBVIOUSLY LIGHTING PLAYS A HUGE PART
IN YOUR WORK, AND THE TECHNIQUES USED
SEEM SO VARIED.*

Yes, this was another occasion where the photographer was using projections onto the face. The makeup was in fact relatively simple; it was just the way the makeup reacted with the projection that made it quite a cool beauty story. Because, as I've said, it's not always about the makeup: it's about, would you want to look at it again? The relationship between photographer and makeup artist determines how graphic it looks. You can do the most incredible makeup and if it's not lit right, you can't see it – or it's softened, or more pronounced. In fact, when I go into a shoot or show, the first thing I need to know is what the lighting is going to be like.



IT'S NOT ALWAYS ABOUT THE MAKEUP





RIOT

IN A PAINTBOX

When the experimental psychologist Timothy Leary wrote *The Psychedelic Experience* he wasn't thinking about makeup but he was considering mind-expanding colour, and in this chapter Val takes us on her own, at times hallucinatory, trip through the infinite spectrum of beauty.

When asked to define her more colour-orientated work, Val often uses the term 'colour chaos'. This description is true to a point, as in fact much of her work here has been applied with the freeform, almost stream-of-consciousness style that is her trademark. However, what is also clear is how much Val elevates colour in her work, bringing it to a heightened level of artistry. This is not makeup intended to inspire an Instagram response of flowers and unicorn emojis.

Colour in art can suggest the life force in nature, or our anxiety towards a frightening modern world, and Val's use of colour in her makeup art provides a direct insight into her own emotions and moods. Think of Jackson Pollock's feverish drip paintings, the spray-painted art pieces of Marco Rea and the dreamy darkness of Instagram artist Unskilled Worker: anyone who sniffs at the idea that makeup can be considered a true art form should take note: in many of the images here, Val is not selling us anything – she is, like many true artists, being unbridled and expressionistic for the sake of creating a great image, and clearly her work can hold its own.

As Vivienne Westwood once said, 'Val is hyper-artistic'. And she should know.

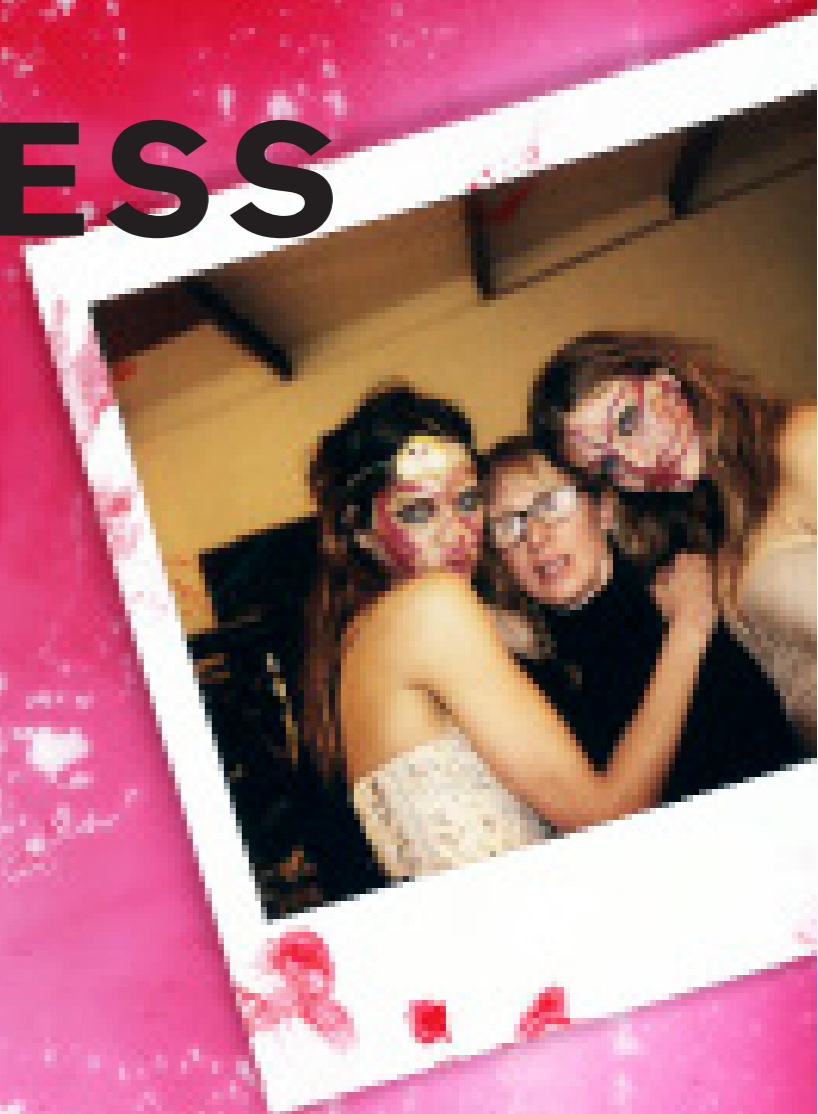
Much of Val's colour world is a psychedelic one, and her influences in this chapter shift like the glittering particles of a kaleidoscope: imagine an eighteenth-century powdered and rouged courtesan who has time-travelled to the set of eighties punk movie *Liquid Sky* via the free-love orgy of a sixties commune of Flower Children and you get the drift.


One would like to imagine that by sometimes detaching line from colour, Val is perhaps showing an almost nebulous move towards a new creative renaissance in beauty – leading us away from the grey, linear and increasingly Orwellian world in which we presently live. And while we would expect nothing less of Val, it should be noted that in the self-conscious, ever commercialized worlds of fashion and beauty, daring ventures into colour are only travelled by the brave. So here, Val reveals a portal to a world of colour and beauty that we would never have imagined, had she not opened up the doors of our perceptions.

Nick is always fascinated by what goes on in the hair, makeup and styling room, and on this particular day he came in and said, 'Look, I want to shoot in here. I want to shoot among all the madness and mayhem.' So we all thought, 'What can we do?' We did various things, and then I said, 'Why don't we give the girls some makeup and get them to draw on themselves?' Which is what they did. In other parts of the shoot the girls looked gorgeous and glam, and then to do this one moment of madness just really worked.



ONE MOMENT OF MADNESS





'EVERYTHING IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE THE SAME, MORE CONFORMITY, AND THEN YOU HAVE SOMEONE AS UNIQUE AS VAL. MAYBE UNIQUE IS A BETTER WORD THAN DIFFERENT, BUT I ACTUALLY LIKE THE WORD DIFFERENT MORE. I THINK 'DIFFERENT' IS HEALTHY. LIKE THE WAY THAT LEE MCQUEEN WAS DIFFERENT, JOHN GALLIANO IS DIFFERENT, NICK KNIGHT IS DIFFERENT, SO

VAL IS DIFFERENT

I THINK YOU CAN TAP INTO THAT SOURCE, AND HAVE A FAR MORE SPECIAL EXPERIENCE THAN IF YOU JUST SAY "OH I'D LOVE A SEXY GIRL".'

SOLVE SUNDSBØ

IT'S OBVIOUS THAT PEOPLE REFERENCE YOUR WORK A LOT, BUT AFTER SO MANY SHOTS DO YOU FIND YOU EVER REFERENCE YOURSELF?

Yes. This was from a shoot with Sølve and I actually used this image as a reference for the Mission magazine shoot with Erin. For me this is a great beauty picture. You can't see everything, but I don't think you need to. We were doing different beauty looks, but we decided that the makeup I had done on this model maybe didn't fit with everything else we'd done, so I thought, 'How can we save it?' I put a clear mask over it and said, 'What do you think of this?'

Sometimes as makeup artists we do things in editorials or on a catwalk and people go, 'What the fuck is that? How can I wear that?' But the thing is, we're not creating 'everyday' moments, and hopefully we are giving people something to aspire to. I'm more inspired by the finished painting. You know, the photograph becomes the painting.



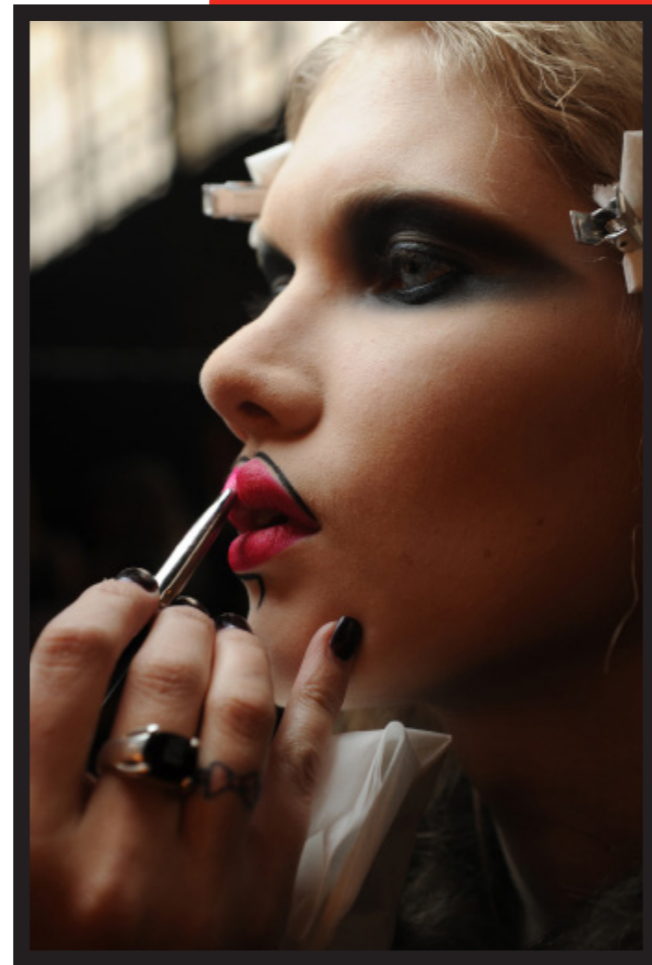
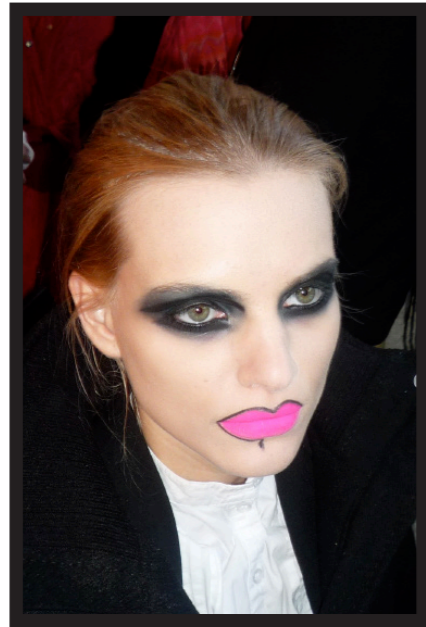
'THE HALLOWEEN AFTER THIS SHOW WAS AMAZING. ALL THOSE DRAG QUEENS! SINCE WE'VE BEEN WORKING WITH VAL, EVERY HALLOWEEN THIS IS ALWAYS THE MOST COPIED MAKEUP LOOK.'

GARETH PUGH

'BETWEEN MALCOLM AND VAL, NEITHER WANTED TO TAKE THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BALD CAP. MALCOLM'S LIKE, "IT'S A MAKEUP THING." AND VAL'S LIKE, "IT'S A HAIR THING."

GARETH PUGH





**'I CAN'T JUST SAY
"WELL, SHE'S THE BEST",
BECAUSE THAT WOULDN'T
BE FAIR ON OTHER
PEOPLE. BUT SHE IS.
AND WHAT I FIND REALLY
REMARKABLE IS THAT I
SUSPECT SHE'S MORE
CRAZY THAN I AM.'**

VIVIENNE WESTWOOD

