

CLOSET confidential

NATASHA ZINKO

From canary yellow *Vêtements* dresses to a motley crew of Japanese toys, the lawyer-turned-designer has a home that's as grand, cheery and upbeat as her personal style

Words **Bibby Sowray** Photography **Victoria Adamson**



Standing outside designer and street-style star Natasha Zinko's grand Regency home on one of Mayfair's most polished streets, it's easy to feel intimidated. Until you step inside, that is. Zinko's vivacious personality is as welcoming as her capacious-yet-cosy entrance hall with its sweeping staircase and walls studded with works by the likes of Ukrainian-born French artist Sonia Delaunay.

The 38-year-old lives a seemingly charmed life in a beautiful five-bedroom house, making and wearing beautiful clothes (her closet is filled with Dior, Chanel, Mary Katrantzou and *Vêtements*, to name just a few) and socialising with fellow beautiful people (hello, Miroslava Duma). But when you meet her, it's hard to begrudge her for it - she exudes a warm, approachable happiness from every pore.

'Some people always want better but sometimes what you have is already a lot,'

she says. 'I'm lucky that I have the love of my life [her husband, Vladimir, 46] and my son [Ivan, eight],' she says.

She's lived in this palatial home with her family for three years but has resisted undertaking any drastic redecoration, preferring instead to let its ornate moulding and elevated ceilings do the talking.

'It's very classical, but I've put in some funny pieces to make it more relaxed,' she says, pointing out the various cheery trinkets and toys picked up in Tokyo or during shopping trips with her son that are dotted around her home, hinting at her playful personality.



Born in Odessa, Ukraine, Zinko moved to London in 2005 with dreams of studying at Central Saint Martins (CSM), leaving behind a four-year career as a lawyer.

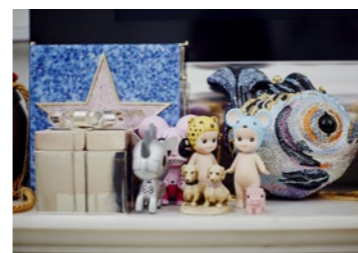
'I don't know why but I was so sure I had to try something else,' she says, describing a lightning-bolt moment she had. 'I read about CSM in a magazine and it described how they turn your way of thinking upside down. I thought, "That's what I need - something to push me."'

She spent her first year in the city completing a foundation course at Chelsea College of Arts before enrolling at CSM to study jewellery design.

In 2011 she founded her eponymous brand, selling her delicate but unapologetically fun fine jewellery out of her flagship Maddox Street store before eventually expanding into womenswear.

Her first ready-to-wear collection was snapped up by hip Moscow store TsUM in 2012 and a pack of street-style-savvy fans including blogger Leandra 'Man Repeller' Medine soon followed.

Medine and her ilk are exactly the type of women Zinko designs for. 'People who love experimenting, who love fashion,' she explains. 'She can wear the clothes with'



These make me so happy! I love small, fun objects. I just buy them when I see them. Some are from Tokyo but often I find them when I'm shopping with my eight-year-old son, Ivan. When I buy toys for him, I buy for myself too.'

WOVEN IN TIME
'I really support Mary Katrantzou and love a lot of what she designs. This dress has a simple shape with fun embroidery.'



NATASHA'S RÉSUMÉ
2015-present
London Fashion Week
Designer

2011-present
Natasha Zinko
Ready-To-Wear
Founder and designer

2011
Natasha Zinko
Jewellery
Founder and designer

2007-2009
Central Saint Martins
BA Hons Jewellery
Design

2006-2007
Chelsea College of Arts
Foundation Art and
Design

FIX UP, LOOK SHARP

'I love to shop in men's stores; this is a Dior men's suit with signature snowdrop embroidery. When everyone bought the Gucci military coat recently, I bought the men's version. It has a bigger shoulder and it looks more effortless on me.'



@NATASHAZINKO



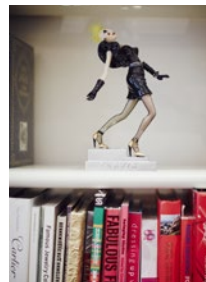
Natasha's London hotspots : 1. Dover Street Market (london.doverstreetmarket.com): 'The new store on Haymarket looks amazing. They know exactly what I like.'

2. The Arts Club (theartsclub.co.uk): 'It's nearby and always fun.' 3. Browns Focus (brownsfashion.com): 'My favourite shop when I first came to London. I could live there.'



KEEP IT CANARY

'I love Vêtements stuff. I also have the black dress with the roses, but I have seen everyone wearing it. I think there weren't as many of the yellow ones made. I have the platform boots, too.'



LEATHER AND LACE

'These SS16 lace-up Gucci boots look like antiques. Dover Street Market called me the day it received them because it knew I would like them. The same day it sent them to me, I had to wear and Instagram them!'



EXCESS BAGGAGE

'Some are presents from my friends; some are very old. I love Chanel bags, the cool ones that are like objects, such as the giant pearl. My current favourite is a tiny Mark Cross bag. Before, I loved big bags but now I'm into really small ones.'

small, neat room attached to her bedroom - proves this mindset perfectly, running the gamut from iridescent metallic leather trousers by Loewe to a pair of Gucci's sell-out shoes.

She adores clothes and shopping, a fact made abundantly clear by a second wonderland-like room stacked with her lesser-worn designer finds, everything from fringed Saint Laurent leather to a rainbow of Hermès bags. The woman has many wardrobes.

She doesn't shop online - 'I love to touch with my hands. It's the same with fabrics, I select them all myself' - and you'll never catch her undertaking a Marie Kondo-style clear out (the Japanese art of decluttering, currently popular in the fashion world).

'I cannot give my clothes to somebody. It's my treasure, and I know in five years I'll come back to this dress and want to wear it,' she says. 'It's already happened so many times.' And with a collection like hers, it's easy to see why. ●