



**SHOPPING:**  
I find beautiful  
kitchen stuff at  
Maison Galeries  
Lafayette.

Photographs by  
**SANDRA  
SEMBURG**

**EATING:**  
Hôtel Costes,  
Le Duc in the  
14ème, and  
Caviar Kaspia.

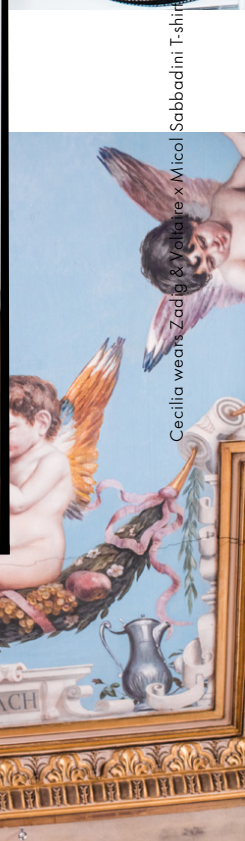
Words by  
**BIBBY  
SOWRAY**



# MY WORLD

CECILIA BÖNSTRÖM

**LISTENING:**  
I use Shazam a  
lot and listen to  
anything, from John  
Barry to Beyoncé.



Cecilia wears Zadig & Voltaire x Micol Sabbadini T-shirt for Every Mother counts charity



WORKING  
OUT:

I do a mix of  
dance, yoga  
and Pilates.

CECILIA BÖNSTRÖM IS A WOMAN who knows when to make a move. She was 15 years into a successful modelling career, shooting campaigns for Hermès and Clarins, when one day she woke up and decided it was time for a career pivot. She discovered it in the early Noughties, in Paris, where she had moved from her native Sweden in 1989. 'I got a shock when I saw this new proposition for French fashion – Zadig & Voltaire,' she says. 'It was appealing, the white stores with the drawers. It really spoke to me.'

On that day in 2003, she called up the brand and asked for an internship, putting her modelling career to bed. She was in her 30s. 'It's funny: I was happy, I had children and I thought I knew where I was heading,' she explains of the life-changing decision. The gamble paid off: three years later, she was installed as the brand's creative director.

She draws a parallel with Voltaire's *Zadig Ou La Destinée*, the philosophical novella from which the brand takes its name. 'The protagonist realises that life is not a straight road, it has its ups and downs and there are both good surprises and bad surprises. Weirdly enough, my choice that day really changed my life into something totally different,' she says.

Almost 15 years on and now 47, her story continues in a grand apartment in Paris, where she lives with her three sons, Victor, 17, Nils, 15, and Emil, 6, and husband Thierry Gillier, founder of Zadig & Voltaire.

Once the home of Baron Haussmann, the mastermind of the 19th-century renovation of Paris, the space has been their home for five years. Enviously located overlooking the leafy Parc Monceau and just five minutes from the Champs-Élysées, it's frankly majestic – but it wasn't love at first viewing.

'It was painted black and brown with very heavy decoration. It took a second visit to realise we could create something more contemporary,' she says. They painted the

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ment-playing cherubs in the living room (opposite, top left).

'An apartment is more powerful when it's as empty as possible, when you let the light work and breath,' she says. 'But that's easy to say because we have an amazing art collection, so you don't need as much decoration.' Indeed, all it takes is two huge dark blue velvet sofas and two Christian Liaigre tables piled high with art books to make the room feel like home. 'For me, as a Scandinavian, it's about less is more.'

The same goes for her personal style. 'My closet is black, navy and white,' she says. She wears her own collection, but mixes in other designer pieces. It's black blazers that are her weakness, though. 'I have a huge collection,' she admits, 'from Comme des Garçons to Dior Homme to Céline.' It's a clear look, just like her home.

walls white and incorporated their impressive art collection, including pieces by Jean-Michel Basquiat, Damien Hirst, Richard Prince and Rudolf Stingel, which she calls 'a daily inspiration'. A few faithful relics of the home's historic past remain, like a grand ceiling mural of instru-



## VISITING:

We go to  
Galerie Kamel  
Mennour, and  
Larry Gagosian.

