



# HELLO, QUEENIE!

GIVEN ONE THING AND ANOTHER, THIS MAY JUST BE A REALLY GOOD TIME TO BE A QUEEN

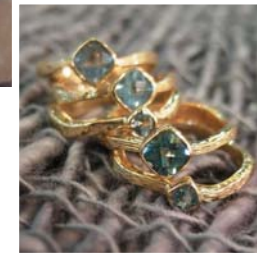
## YOUNG VICTORIA

Forget "We are not amused"; our young Princess Vicky was a hot little schitzel, which she amply demonstrated when she married her cousin Albert – those nine children of theirs weren't found under any royal cabbage plant. *Young Victoria* is a luscious film co-produced by Martin Scorsese and stars Emily Blunt as the youthful queen, who will make you forget the dour, bad-tempered dumpy little widow she turned into later. Victoria speaks perfect, plummy English in the film, neat trick since the thoroughly German Victoria's first language was, er, German. German was the language of the royals at home, a tradition that continued through the reign of George V. But never mind – lovely costumes, usual thrilling, swelling soundtrack, drop dead gorgeous jewels. Here 21 May.

**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP** Tiara, Cartier Paris, special order, 1914. Blackened steel and platinum, with pear-shaped, round old- and rose-cut diamonds, faceted and calibre-cut rubies; Design for a vanity case, Cartier Paris, 1926; 14 x 11.4 cm; pencil, India ink, and gouache on beige transparent paper. Executed in gold, enamel, coral, emeralds, sapphires, moonstones, and diamonds; Programme for the seventh season of the Ballets Russes in 1912, featuring *Afternoon of a Faun* by Claude Debussy. Vaslav Nijinsky danced the lead role. The sets, costumes and posters were the work of Léon Bakst; Brooch-pendant, Cartier Paris, 1913. Platinum, with single- and rose-cut diamonds, sapphire cabochons, one natural pearl, turquoise cabochons, nine hinged jade plaques; Pendant, Cartier Paris, special order, 1923. Platinum, with single-cut diamonds, two sapphire cabochons (one, supplied by the client, weighing 121.02 carats), one carved 32.20 carat emerald and one carved 16.82 carat emerald bead.



PHOTOS OF CARTIER COURTESY OF NICK WELSH © CARTIER & ARCHIVES CARTIER © CARTIER. PHOTO OF BALLETS RUSSSES PROGRAMME COURTESY OF © ARCHIVES CHARMET/BRIDGEMAN GIRAUDON



## CHOO ON THIS

Sustainable Luxury was the theme of a conference sponsored by the International Herald Tribune in New Delhi in March; it's also the focus of young Singaporean Choo Yilin, now based in Thailand. The founder and principal designer of an artisanal jewellery label with explicit themes of sustainability works with hill tribe artisans, a traditionally marginalised group, in order to preserve their centuries-old cultural art-forms. This also helps to generate income and employment for these artisans who would otherwise have to leave their villages to seek work. Yilin translates their work with sapphires, rubies and other assorted gemstones; the result is a fusion of old-world hill tribe culture and her interpretation of modern luxury. [www.chooyilin.com](http://www.chooyilin.com)

## THE FAMILY JEWELS

The new Russian blockbuster film is *Taras Bulba*, which opened last month in Russia to massive acclaim and wild displays of emotion, with young male viewers giving themselves impromptu Cossack haircuts. While the Ukrainians argue that the heroic Don Cossacks were really Ukrainian, we suspect the dispute will dissolve in a vodka-fuelled Pan-Slavic lovefest.

Experts say the economic crisis may cause Russia to turn inwards again; the Russian Empire, which once stretched from the Mediterranean to the Pacific, could never quite decide if it was European or Asian. Pan-Slavic movements came and went (see Ivan Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*); the years before the Bolshevik Revolution saw a great resurgence of interest in Russian folklore and mythology. Operas like *Prince Igor*, plays like *A Life for the Tsar* and ballets like *Le Sacre du Printemps*: *Tableaux de la Russie* *Païenne* explored the Russian identity crisis.

It was in the midst of this cultural ferment that Cartier opened an outpost in St Petersburg, where the firm went head to head with Fabergé, maker of fabulous jewels for the court. An exhibit of Cartier historical jewellery at the Kremlin Museum in Moscow recently brought together European influences and the at times almost primitive expressions of what it meant to be Russian then – and perhaps now.

## AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Ben & Bear, owned by the intriguingly named Raewyn du Toit, use old inner tubes, second hand clothes and belts found in Bangkok markets to create their eco handbags. Every bag is individually designed using a one-off material and belt combination to find the best match of colours, textures and patterns. At Quintessential, Pacific Plaza. ■

