

Joseph, Rebecca Hossack, Nicky Haslam and Jimmy Choo are four London taste brokers who have a honed eye for a look. Each has reached the top of their field and their names have become synonymous with an individual style. Here, each of them casts their eye towards the affordable end of the market and suggests what to buy, where to find it, and selects items to produce a great look that need not cost a fortune

For Joseph, the high-fashion retail baron, shopping on the high street is like switching channels on TV. 'It is full of choice, you can find wonderful buys and failures. If one is disciplined it is quite simple to build a wardrobe, but most people make a nightmare of it. Cheap clothes must be simple. Colour works much better on expensive fabrics. Prints can be nice, but at a cheap price you must expect to see millions wherever you go.' He suggests that with a limited budget it is best to go for 'neutral things which do not make a real statement'.

Working with £150, Joseph's approach is to mix high street with smarter garments. 'I love the contrast of something which is mass-produced, matched with something artisanal.' Joseph's capsule wardrobe would include a pair of good trousers, a well-made white shirt, a good cashmere sweater ('because it lasts for life'), a couple of cotton bodies and the inevitable blazer. Lavish expenditure should, however, be considered for accessories. 'You have to spend money on belts and bags: Chanel or Prada,' he chuckles. 'There is always a clever little bag in those names. A good bag is something which will make a sweater of £40 look like £200.'

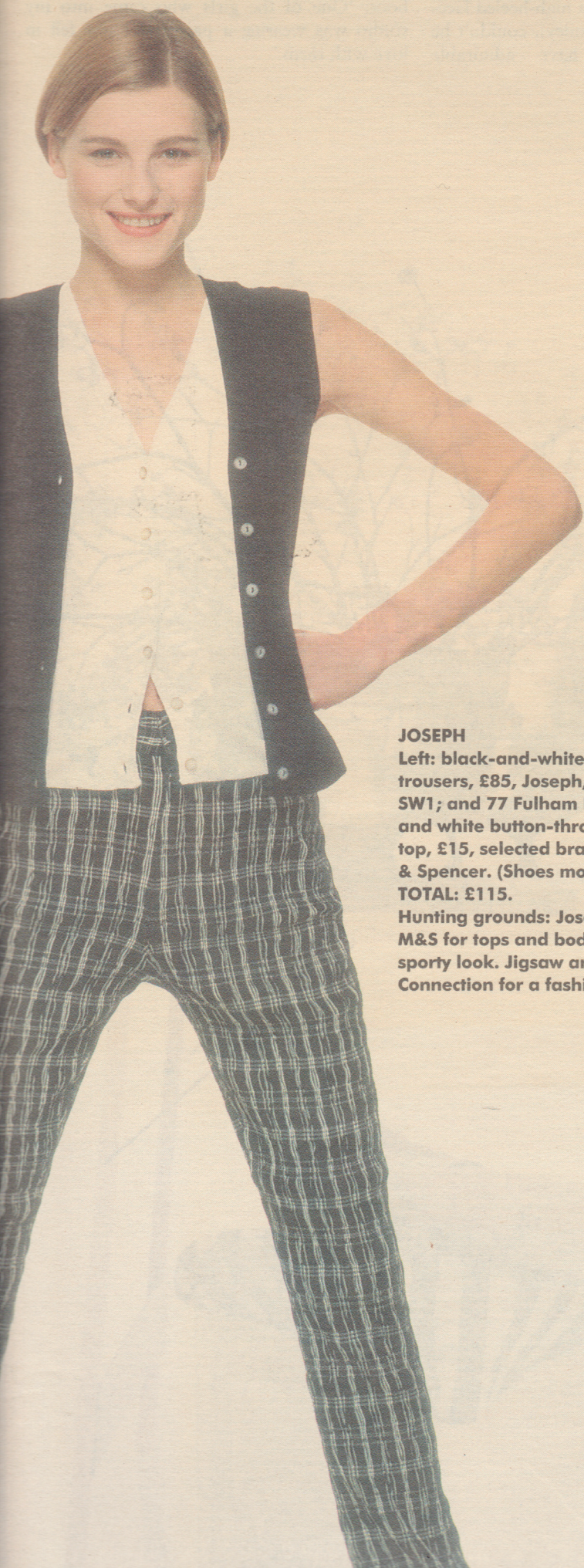
The look he has put together for *ES* is deliberately simple: checked stretch-crepe hipster trousers, worn with black and white sleeveless cardigans from M&S. 'It doesn't have to be overloaded; simplicity is the basis of building up a wardrobe.' The total cost is £115. 'Whatever is left over should be spent on the hair.'

'It is really bad the way that art prices are so inflated. It is becoming increasingly difficult to assemble a collection without a great deal of money. By becoming over-cerebral, art has lost its ability to touch the spirit.' Gallerist and reformed antipodean lawyer Rebecca Hossack has fairly salty opinions about the state of the art market. 'I feel we have run out of ideas. I am interested in British artists who go to non-Western sources.' Such work also tends to be more reasonably priced – take, for example, the yellow feathered mandala by Simon Costin, which costs £800 and, in Rebecca's words, is 'fantastically joyful'.

Aboriginal artefacts also form part of Rebecca's artistic repertoire. A 100-year-old spear thrower that looks like an attractively etiolated sycamore seed costs £200. She feels it has the air of a Brancusi and a pleasingly naturalistic feel. Those not tempted by, or unable to afford, conventional canvases could, says Rebecca, look at ceramics instead; she admires the work of Bill McCulloch, a poet, potter and calligrapher who works from Greenwich. Also worth looking at are artists' books, a discreet and personal way of enjoying art. 'Art has become such a commodity that people want to flaunt it rather than get quiet enjoyment from it. They should rethink the idea that art has to be obvious and go on the walls.'

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REBECCA HOSSACK

Right: yellow feathered mandala by Simon Costin, about £800, Rebecca Hossack Gallery, 197 Piccadilly, corner of Church Place, W1; and 35 Windmill Street, W1.

'Mother Tongue' red-and-orange oil on canvas by David Austen, about £950, Anthony Reynolds Gallery, 5 Dering Street, W1. TOTAL: £1,750.

Hunting grounds: October Gallery, 24 Old Gloucester Street, WC1, for British artists in a non-Western tradition. Stephen Stuart-Smith, Enitharmon Press, 36 St George's Avenue, N7, and the Serpentine Gallery, Kensington Gardens, W2, for artists' books. Rebecca Hossack, as before, for Aboriginal artefacts.

JOSEPH

Left: black-and-white checked crepe trousers, £85, Joseph, 16 Sloane Street, SW1; and 77 Fulham Road, SW3. Black and white button-through sleeveless top, £15, selected branches of Marks & Spencer. (Shoes models own.)

TOTAL: £115.

Hunting grounds: Joseph for trousers. M&S for tops and bodies. Gap for a sporty look. Jigsaw and French Connection for a fashion look.

