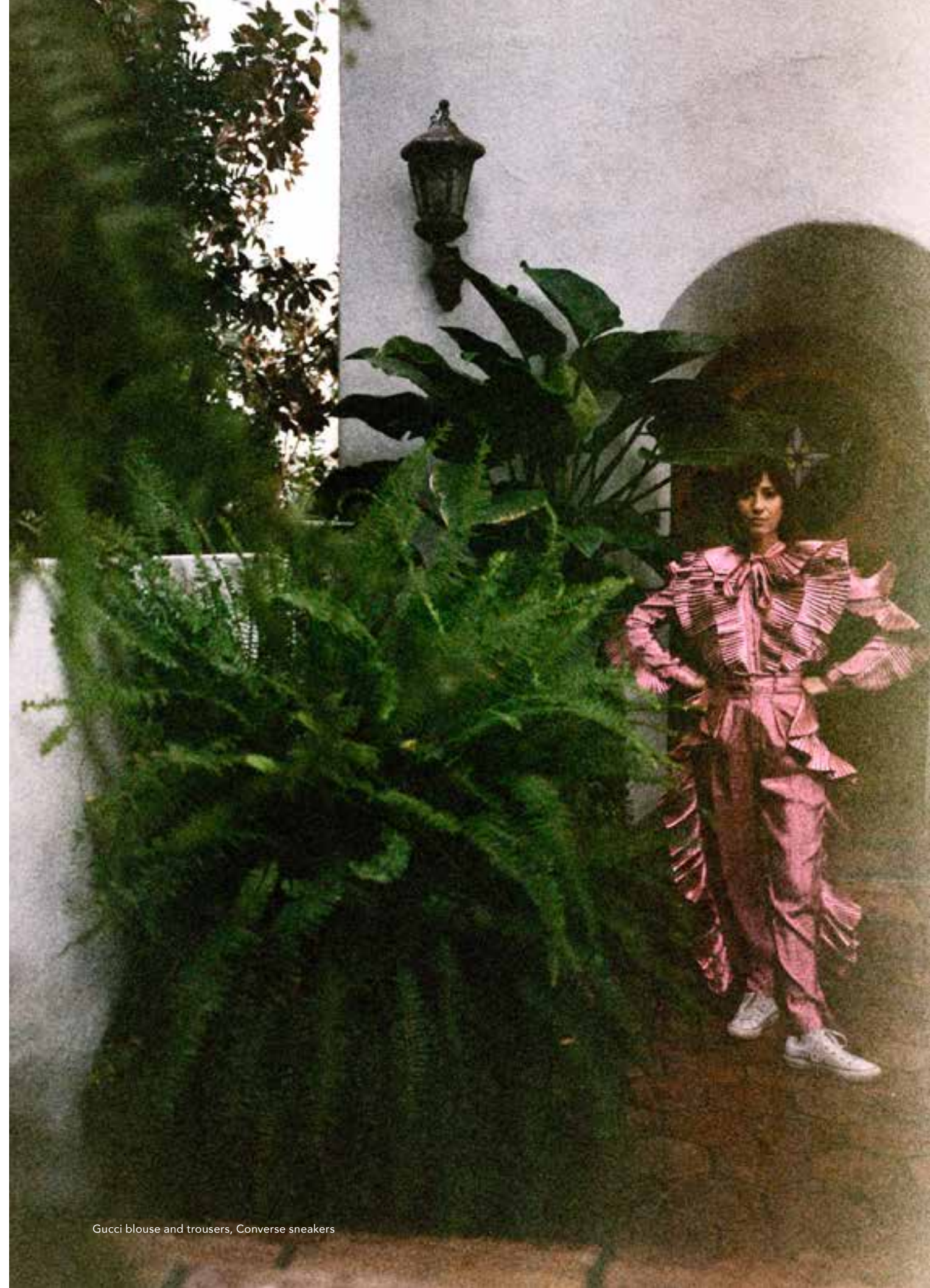


Whether she's reworking Greek myths or telling tales of suburban America, Gia Coppola's ethereal and authentic style lends her work a captivating sensitivity. Though a self-confessed introvert, she has a subtle self-assurance and mastery of her craft that charms audiences like Orpheus himself. We caught up with her to speak about her film and fashion work, the language of music in movies, and snuck in a few questions of the feline variety too.

# Master Gia

Photography: Christy Bush  
Styling: Jordyn Payne  
Words: Gemma Lacey



Gucci blouse and trousers, Converse sneakers



Gucci dress, Adidas sneakers

**You work primarily in film but you've said previously that photography was your first love. Can you tell us a little more about how you got into it and what you like about the medium?**

I jumped into photography because I was fascinated by it. I was such an introvert, and that was a mode of self-expression for me as an observer. I had such a hard time in school, figuring out what my medium was. I picked that up casually, but I went to art college to study with Stephen Shore and just learning with him gave me such an excitement to do so in many different fields. I wanted to read and expand my mind, and photography was a stepping stone for me to get excited about challenging myself creatively. After I completed studying with him, I guess I just wanted to challenge myself further, but I wasn't sure how. I needed to try something totally left field and random to figure out what that next chapter would be to incorporate or inspire my photography. It just so happened film was an extension of that. I got to play with all the things I love about photography and make it come alive even more.

**What was your first experience of making a film after college?**

After I finished college and got an apartment, I needed a job to pay my rent and so I was bartending. Meanwhile, I worked on my aunt's movie and through that, I met this really talented director who was shooting behind the scenes. His name was Kahlil Joseph; he asked me to be in a video he was doing for a clothing company. I didn't want to be in it because I'm awkward in front of the camera but he said, "Ok no problem, just go and make your own." I was like "whoa, ok sure!" so I got some friends together and we made a little video with some of the clothes they lent us. Then we threw it on the internet, shared it with friends, and it caught on. Then Zac Posen saw it and Opening Ceremony. For them it was

## Master Gia

a good way to advertise clothes and make a little narrative, and it didn't cost too much to make. I later found out I was gonna make this movie with James Franco, but in the meantime I was taking these opportunities of practising and challenging myself to prepare for things like that.

**What do you find most challenging about film for you personally?**

I think I felt so comfortable with photography and being behind the lens, that I was so scared about working with actors and that aspect of making a movie. I felt comfortable in my work to let the cinematographer do what they want and create a collaboration, but I felt most nervous about working with actors. I guess, watching how my family would approach that and then trying to figure out what worked for me, be vulnerable and honest, and talk about what the scenes meant to me and what they meant to the actors are the most challenging aspects. I think it's about figuring out a way to find honesty.

**Would you say you grew up surrounded by creativity? If so, what aspects of that had the biggest impact on you and why?**

Yeah, I guess I did. I mean, one would assume so but I don't have anything to compare it to though! For me, even cooking feels creative. There are some things for me such as hearing stories about my dad, and understanding his interests and seeing how that provoked my own interests. I like seeing what my family likes as a nostalgic, sentimental thing; those discoveries are something that feels inspiring.

**Your family, or at least your mother, are also huge cat lovers too. Is that what sparked your love of cats?**

My Mom is a crazy cat lady! I did have cats as I kid and I loved them. She had one called Monster that loved carbs- especially waffles. As I got older, I got a chihuahua, but I didn't get a cat until recently. She taunted me with cute baby kitten pictures of them, and then I couldn't resist.



Gucci blouse & trousers



Hanes t-shirt, Gucci track pants

**Can you tell us a little more about your cat Pluto?**

Growing up, I remember my aunt having this particular breed of Bengal cat that I was really taken with- honestly, he was so wild and crazy that I just thought it was the funniest personality, and I always talked about wanting that cat. Less so because they're beautiful, but more because of their personalities. They're semi-related to Bengal tigers, so there's a bit of wild predator in him, but he has much more of a dog personality - kind of a lot of work. Those breeds need a lot of attention and taking care of, so I didn't know what I was getting into until my mom surprised me knowing that I love these cats so much.

**Do you think growing up in California has a big impact on your work too?**

Yes, I guess I just feel like a California Girl at heart! I tried living

in New York and I lived in Upstate New York for school, but I like space and I like to drive. That's my place to be in my own head and listen to music and when my ideas spark. So living in New York didn't work well for me - I felt I couldn't see beyond the tall buildings. Also, that sense of light, and how important it is to me, I had that then, so I need sunshine. In LA, even when it's gloomy, I love it - maybe it's the palm trees. I think I just need some space, and to drive, then I'm good.

**Your aesthetic is very light and beautiful. Do you think that was influenced by California too?**

It's funny you say that, I feel like I'm always drawn to light. Maybe because of my photography background and I feel very conscious to light. Wherever I live, I need to make sure I have a good amount of light or else I get sad. I have a fascination with light: it feels very intuitive.

**In terms of art forms and expression, you've done some very diverse projects. Did you expect to be making the type of work you are now, and what are you excited about next?**

There're a lot of stories I want to tell. There are movies I want to write but I can get very in the way of myself- nervous and feeling like nothing ever feels right. I just have to remember that you just gotta jump off the cliff, so do it and then know you tried your best. I'm trying to work on my self-confidence lately. I feel I went through a phase of feeling very excitable about so many ideas and now I'm just trying to focus on one and finish it. The goal is finish things, move forward and not juggle so many things at the same time.

Make Up: Molly Paddon  
Hair: Jamal Hammadi at Art Department



Vintage Mardi Gras cape, capezio leotard, Wolford tights, Gucci shoes