

budding beauty

BEAUTY SPRING 2007

The actress Paula Patton



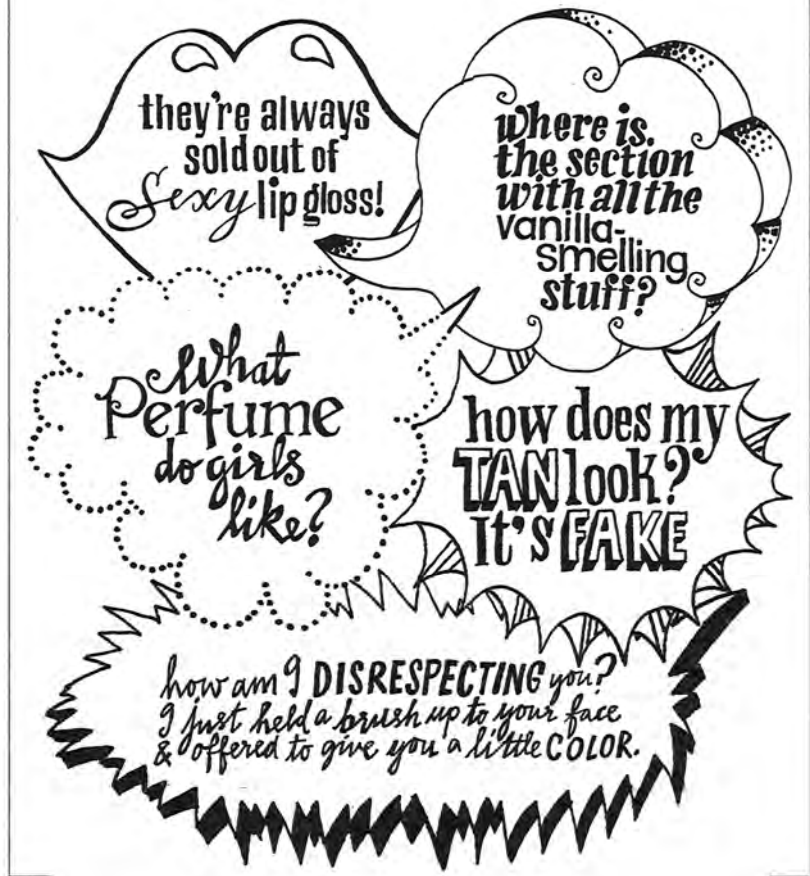
Chic? Hmm

Is Ségolène Royal a gazelle, air hostess or France's next Joan of Arc? Since this 53-year-old became the presidential candidate for France's Socialist Party, opinions have remained divided. "She just looks so bourgeois for someone left-wing," says Marisa Berenson. The designer Martine Sitbon, on the other hand, finds her "pretty well dressed." She adds, "By wearing a skirt, she's avoiding that frumpy trouser-suit look so prevalent amongst female politicians." The shoe designer Christian Louboutin describes Royal as "physically, great" and someone whose appearance has "dramatically evolved since working for Mitterrand in the 1980s." Pictures show a rounder person with big glasses and hair untidily tied back. Now it's cheekbones, chiseled jaw, perfectly coiffed hair and contact lenses. "And two years ago, she replaced her Dracula fangs with caps," says Lucien Pellat-Finet, the cashmere expert. "In France, we call it the presidential smile." Terry de Gunzburg, the creator of By Terry cosmetics, is impressed by her "naturally perfect" complexion and how "she never looks tired." The hairstylist Odile Gilbert refers to her do as "classic," but because her hair is fine, he says she has no choice. Still, in terms of clothes, Gilbert thinks she could be "more jeans and cool, à la Hillary." (Hillary cool?) Pellat-Finet is horrified that she favors Paule Ka, the staid French label inspired by Jackie O. He criticizes her red jackets, knee-length skirts and white coats for their "terrible" proportions. Louboutin likens her round-toed shoes to Minnie Mouse's but appreciates her "terrific legs and ankles." And apparently the mother of four is a fantasy figure for certain French men, says Louboutin: "They dream of having Ségolène as a mother."

NATASHA FRASER-CAVASSONI

OVERHEARD AT THE MAKEUP COUNTER

Deep thoughts? Marisa Meltzer pans for gold.



CASE HISTORY | SHU UEMURA LIPSTICK

Sometimes it takes a sense of history to come up with a futuristic design. When the New York architects Tsao & McKown were asked to design a case for Shu Uemura's Rouge Unlimited lipstick — which has 17 vivid new shades for spring — they found inspiration in the company's original clear refills. Calvin Tsao explains, "We always thought the transparency was important, but thought, Let's make that the packaging." Changing the case from one meant to be thrown away to one meant to be shown off wasn't easy: eliminating the lipstick's metal pan (which would have shown through the plastic) took a year, during which time, Tsao notes, "We built a 15-story building."

PILAR VILADAS