For each photograph featured in *Harper’s Bazaar*, dozens were styled, shot, and considered. The final, published image was a collaborative effort.

These two photographs are similar, but subtle differences determined which one appeared in the magazine. The ocean backdrop, the presence of a camera, and the model’s sideways gaze in the image on the left combine to tell a story that is missing from the other version.
Vreeland covered the American market for *Bazaar*, which brought her into contact with designers such as Carolyn Schnurer, an early advocate of sportswear-influenced fashion. Schnurer’s resort clothes frequently incorporated culturally inspired motifs. For example, the embroidered elephants on this loose-fitting cotton top reference her trip to Ghana (then known as the Gold Coast). Vreeland styled the top, which was intended for beach wear, with what she described as “heavy Zulu necklaces and bracelets.”
Pierre Balmain’s elegant polo coat, reminiscent of an officer’s greatcoat, is an example of military-inspired fashions of the World War II era. Snow’s determination to help revive the Paris couture led her to travel there in December 1944, just four months after the city’s liberation.

Dahl-Wolfe said Snow was “responsible for making the Bazaar . . . much more interesting, and less conservative, than Vogue.” Snow, whose office nickname was “Bossy,” didn’t hesitate to publish content her well-heeled readers might find objectionable. These included Walker Evans’s photographs of New York City housing project residents and a first-person account by a domestic servant who described her job as “human slavery.” Bazaar contributor Janet Flanner called her “an extraordinary editor.”
*Bazaar* attributed this “flower-massed cap” to Adolfo of Emme, but Dahl-Wolfe remembered Vreeland constructing the headdress from French silk flowers. The magazine’s description likens it to “Primavera’s crown,” an allusion to Botticelli’s painting *Primavera*. Vreeland often incorporated references to art history in her styling.

Vreeland styled model Dorian Leigh in a Claire McCardell ensemble—described by *Bazaar* as “revolutionary”—for the photograph below, taken in the basement stairwell of Dahl-Wolfe’s country house in Frenchtown, New Jersey. The copy claims that the “adventurous hood” evokes the costumes of superheroes such as Flash Gordon. McCardell developed this signature close-fitting hood from her own skiwear, and incorporated it into many of her designs, ranging from bicycling ensembles to wedding dresses.
It is likely that two sets of copper plates were needed to complete this spread from a 1939 beauty editorial. A diagonal line cuts across the photograph, indicating where the spine of the magazine would fall when it was bound and published.

Statuesque fashion models towered over Louise Dahl-Wolfe. She is seen in the image at left standing on a stool to take the photograph at right. Due to her petite stature, this was her preferred method of working. Luxury materials were lacking in post-war Paris, which forced the fashion industry to improvise. What appears here to be a coat made from ocelot is actually dyed rabbit fur.
To print each of Dahl-Wolfe’s color proofs, four meticulously etched copper plates were required, one for each primary color and an additional plate for black. The final prints were used as guidelines for the magazine’s printer. Dahl-Wolfe’s reputation as demanding stemmed from her insistence on being involved in the printing process. “She drove the press-men mad with her perfectionism, at times, pulling proof after proof in pursuit of the perfect balance of shades,” Snow recalled.
Vreeland’s vision of what women should wear at desert resorts differed sharply from the tropical-patterned dresses and high-heeled shoes advertised in the January 1942 issue. She preferred dramatically pared-down clothes and her signature flat Grecian-style sandals, choices that harmonized with the landscape. Vreeland wrote of Arizona, “It’s a land not only to bring things to, but to bring things back from . . . this is the way all fashion is born.”

Dahl-Wolfe and Vreeland created this image on a deserted film set near Phoenix. Where Dahl-Wolfe was methodical, Vreeland was flamboyant, but both were committed to getting the perfect shot. When model Bijou Barrington developed heatstroke, Vreeland stepped in to replace her without compromising the success of the shoot.
Bazaar’s copywriter described model Bijou Barrington as gazing “straight into the face of the sun through her smoked lenses, no make-up, no artifice—just a dash of bonfire red across her lips.” The original blues of the sunglasses, shawl, and sky were altered to create an image with greater color contrasts. Dahl-Wolfe and Vreeland shared a strong color sense—which Vreeland called “perhaps the most exceptional gift I have.”

“We have never had better or more beautiful [photographs] from Paris,” Snow wrote in a 1951 telegram to Mary Jane Russell, one of Dahl-Wolfe’s favorite models. Russell would often travel with Dahl-Wolfe and Snow to Paris to be photographed wearing the latest couture creations. The photographs taken on these trips, such as this one of Russell in front of an 18th century map of Paris, are among Dahl-Wolfe’s most recognizable.
Dahl-Wolfe said that Vreeland could “liven up” a picture with “additions,” such as the coral earrings that appear in three of these photographs from "Bazaar’s" March 1953 issue. Three months prior to this issue’s publication, "Life" magazine photographer Walter Sanders documented Snow editing its pages by laying them out on the floor. Snow preferred this method of working so that she could see an issue in its entirety. “I often found myself deciding to make changes in the book as my conscious or unconscious mind studied the issue,” she said. Some of these pages can be seen in their published formats below.
Many bathing suits of the 1940s had structured interiors that molded the body. Claire McCardell’s scandalous jersey suit, which she designed with a coordinating skirt, had neither lining nor padding. Vreeland and Dahl-Wolfe underscored the suit’s uncomplicated elegance by posing the model to emphasize her athleticism and tanned, toned limbs. The photograph, one of a series taken in Brazil, was shot at the stables of an estate near Rio de Janeiro.
Carolyn Schnurer
Playsuit
Cotton with wool embroidery
1952

The Museum at FIT, 82.153.79
Gift of Mitch Rein

This photograph was taken at an “enchantingly decorated” Hindu temple in Trinidad, the motifs of which are echoed in the model’s sinuously shaped earrings and red lips and nails. Trained in Paris as a couturier, Tom Brigance found his niche designing sportswear on Seventh Avenue. In 1939, the Duchess of Windsor helped establish his reputation by buying several outfits from his first collection. His specialty was sophisticated beachwear, a penchant he shared with Carolyn Schnurer.
Claire McCardell
Dress
Cotton
1952

The Museum at FIT, 98.110.1
Gift of Gerta Harriton

Claire McCardell was inspired by the serape, a Latin American shawl with a pattern that resembles that of the cotton she chose for this dress. Her signature brass hook-and-eye closures fasten the dress, which is shirred along the armholes to create volume, making the waist seem smaller. As the model’s pose suggests, McCardell insisted on comfort in her designs. Although Dahl-Wolfe took the photograph in the studio, it was part of a story shot on location in South America.
Snow immediately grasped the importance of Christian Dior’s debut collection in February 1947. Officially called Corolle, the collection soon became known by the name Snow gave it: the “New Look.” Its influence, seen in the coat’s full skirt and narrow waist, extended into the 1950s. Dahl-Wolfe was so captivated by Dior’s designs that she ordered a suit. The model poses in front of the Château de Malmaison, former residence of the Empress Josephine.
Mainbocher
Ensemble
Wool
1948

The gray suit was a mainstay of women’s wardrobes during the post-war period and appeared frequently in *Bazaar*—often, as this photo suggests, as a travel outfit. Mainbocher, who began his career as a fashion illustrator for the magazine, cut the suit jacket to flare over the hips without padding. The ornamental scrollwork that anchors the collar is an example of the exquisite piecework for which his house was known.
Charles James received no formal training as a designer, instead developing his idiosyncratic techniques for handling fabric from his millinery experience. James draped this evening gown’s curvaceously shaped skirt in the round. It has two zippers—one at the side of the bodice and a second that follows a curving seam along the back of the skirt. The model’s theatrical gesture emphasizes what Bazaar’s copywriter called “a dramatic dress of superbly massed cerulean satin.”
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Printed transparency
Evelyn Tripp wearing B.H. Wragge on a New Jersey beach
Unpublished image, circa 1954

*Museum at FIT, 78.84.150*

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Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Evelyn Tripp wearing B.H. Wragge on a New Jersey beach
*Harper’s Bazaar*, December 1954, p. 96

*Museum at FIT, 74.84.150*

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Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Jean Patchett wearing Carolyn Schnurer
*Harper’s Bazaar*, December 1952, p. 116

*Museum at FIT, 74.84.558*
Carolyn Schnurer
Top
Polished cotton with Schiffli embroidered elephants
1954

*Museum at FIT, 82.153.78
Gift of Mitch Rein*

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
*Carmel Snow, Paris*
Posthumous digital reproduction from original negative
Circa 1940

*Louise Dahl-Wolfe Archive, Center for Creative Photography
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John Chillingsworth
Carmel Snow at Dior show
1955
Bound volume
“2196 Families are living in the Williamsburg and Harlem River Housing Projects.”
by Katharine Hamill
Harper’s Bazaar, August 1939, pp. 100-103, 132

Bound volume
“Your Obedient Servant” by Mae Morrissey
Harper’s Bazaar, January 1944, pp. 57, 90-91

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Model wearing Pierre Balmain on the Left Bank of Paris
Harper’s Bazaar, November 1946, p. 228
Museum at FIT, 74.84.136
Louise Dahl-Wolfe

Suzy Parker in Dior Hat, Tuileries, Paris
Original print
1950

US.NEFIT.SC.354
Fashion Institute of Technology|SUNY
FIT Library Dept. of Special Collections and FIT Archives

Louise Dahl-Wolfe

Diana Vreeland
Posthumous digital reproduction from original negative
1949

Louise Dahl-Wolfe Archive, Center for Creative Photography
©1989 Arizona Board of Regents

Richard Avedon

Diana Vreeland styling Doe Avedon
1946

Photograph by Richard Avedon
© The Richard Avedon Foundation
Louise Dahl-Wolfe  
Dorian Leigh wearing Claire McCardell at Louise Dahl-Wolfe’s home in Frenchtown, New Jersey  
*Harper’s Bazaar*, October 1944, p. 88  
*The Museum at FIT, 74.84.657*

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Claire McCardell  
Hood  
Wool  
1944  
*The Museum at FIT, 76.33.7*

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Louise Dahl-Wolfe  
Ivy Nicholson wearing hat by Adolfo for Emme  
*Harper’s Bazaar*, April 1958, cover  
*The Museum at FIT, 74.84.128*
Louise Dahl-Wolfe

Toni Hollingsworth on a boardwalk in Boca Raton
*Harper’s Bazaar*, June 1945, p. 49

_The Museum at FIT, 74.84.75_

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Louise Dahl-Wolfe

Self-portrait

Circa 1945

_Louise Dahl-Wolfe/ Courtesy Staley-Wise Gallery_

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Press pass

Reproduction of original object

1939

_Louise Dahl-Wolfe Archive, Center for Creative Photography_

©1989 Arizona Board of Regents
Louise Dahl-Wolfe photographing Ludmila Feodoseyevna in Paris Circa 1946

Louise Dahl-Wolfe/ Courtesy Staley-Wise Gallery

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Ludmila Feodoseyevna wearing Mad Carpentier in Paris
Harper’s Bazaar, November 1946, p. 225

The Museum at FIT, 74.84.185

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Liz Gibbons and Bijou Barrington wearing ensembles from Bonwit Teller & Co. on a rooftop in the Andes
Harper’s Bazaar, May 1942, p. 62

The Museum at FIT, 74.84.64
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
*Harper’s Bazaar*, July 1939, p. 60
*The Museum at FIT*, 74.84.33

Copper printing plates
June 1953
*The Museum at FIT*, 74.84.269

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Jean Patchett wearing Givenchy in Granada, Spain
*Harper’s Bazaar*, June 1953, p. 71
*The Museum at FIT*, 74.84.269
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Selection of four photographs
Test shots of Mary Jane Russell
Circa 1951
*The Museum at FIT*

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Reproduction of Dahl-Wolfe’s working notebook
Circa 1953
*The Museum at FIT*

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Bijou Barrington wearing Jay Thorpe at
Frank Lloyd Wright’s Rose Pauson house
in Phoenix, Arizona
*Harper’s Bazaar*, January 1942, p. 41
*The Museum at FIT, 74.84.355*
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Bijou Barrington wearing eyewear from Ga-Ga-Gogs in Arizona
*Harper's Bazaar*, January 1942, cover
The Museum at FIT, 74.84.60

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Diana Vreeland wearing ensemble from Henri Bendel on the outskirts of Phoenix, Arizona
*Harper’s Bazaar*, January 1942, p. 38
The Museum at FIT, 74.84.329

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Diana Vreeland wearing Jay Thorpe at Frank Lloyd Wright’s Rose Pauson House in Phoenix, Arizona
*Harper’s Bazaar*, January 1942, p. 40
The Museum at FIT, 74.84.356

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Reprint from color proof
Bijou Barrington wearing eyewear from Ga-Ga-Gogs in Arizona
*Harper’s Bazaar*, January 1942, cover
The Museum at FIT, 74.84.60
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Unpublished images, circa 1941
Alternate poses for the cover of the January 1942 issue of Harper’s Bazaar
The Museum at FIT, 74.84.60

Claire McCardell
Sunglasses
Plastic
Circa 1955
The Museum at FIT, 2016.56.3
Gift of Abel Rapp

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Diana Vreeland styling a model in Arizona
Posthumous digital reproduction from original negative
1941
© 1989 Center for Creative Photography
Arizona Board of Regents
Louise Dahl-Wolfe

Diana Vreeland styling the model for the January 1942 cover of Harper’s Bazaar
Posthumous digital reproduction from original negative
1941

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Photographer Louise Dahl-Wolfe at bedside of Carmel Snow reviewing contact sheets
1953

Life magazine

Carmel Snow working with Louise Dahl-Wolfe and model Suzy Parker in Paris
1953

Life magazine
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
*Plan de Paris*
Gelatin silver print
Mary Jane Russell in Christian Dior in Paris
1951

US.NFIT.SC.354
Fashion Institute of Technology\SUNY
FIT Library Dept. of Special Collections and FIT Archives

Walter Sanders
Reproduction from original
Carmel Snow and Diana Vreeland laying out the
March 1953 issue of *Harper’s Bazaar*
1952

© Getty Images

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Georgia Hamilton wearing Ben Zuckerman
*Harper’s Bazaar*, March 1953, p. 170

The Museum at FIT, 74.84.649
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Mary Jane Russell wearing Adele Simpson
Harper’s Bazaar, March 1953, p. 171
The Museum at FIT, 74.84.578

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Models wearing Bellciette
Harper’s Bazaar, March 1953, p. 172
The Museum at FIT, 74.84.140

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Evelyn Tripp wearing Frères
Harper’s Bazaar, March 1953, p. 169
The Museum at FIT, 74.84.263
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Georgia Hamilton wearing Willi at the Museum of Modern Art
*Harper’s Bazaar*, September 1952, p. 196
*The Museum at FIT*, 74.84.641
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Mary Jane Russell wearing Jerry Parnis
*Harper’s Bazaar*, April 1952, p. 176

*The Museum at FIT*, 74.84.504

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Georgia Hamilton wearing Toni Owen at the Catedral de Ciudad Vieja in Guatemala
*Harper’s Bazaar*, June 1952, p. 81

*The Museum at FIT*, 74.84.490

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Inga wearing Original Modes
*Harper’s Bazaar*, January 1947, p. 125

*The Museum at FIT*, 74.84.488
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Mary Jane Russell wearing Carolyn Schnurer posed with paintings by artist Franz Kline

*The Museum at FIT, 74.84.555*

Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Natalie Paine wearing Claire McCardell in Hammamet, Tunisia
*Harper’s Bazaar*, June 1950, p. 64

*The Museum at FIT, 74.84.439*

Film Clips
Running time: 2:36

*The Eye Has to Travel*, 2011
Written and directed by Lisa Immordino Vreeland, Frédéric Tcheng, and Bent-Jorgen Perlmutter
Gloss Studio

*Painting with Light*, 1999
Directed by Tom Neff
Produced by Tom Neff and Madeline Bell
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Betty Bridges wearing Claire McCardell in Rio de Janeiro

*Harper’s Bazaar,*
May 1946, p. 99

*The Museum at FIT, 74.84.571*
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Color proof
Jessica Ford wearing
Tom Brigance at a
Hindu temple in Trinidad

*Harper’s Bazaar*,
June 1957, p. 62

*The Museum at FIT, 74.84.172*
Arthur Rothstein and Bob Sandberg
Reproduction from original
Carmel Snow and
Louise Dahl-Wolfe with model Lisa Fonssagrives
1947

From the Collections of the Museum of the City of New York
Accession# X2011.4.10246.60
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Model wearing
Claire McCardell

*Harper’s Bazaar*,
January 1952, p. 91
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Mary Jane Russell
wearing Handmacher

Harper’s Bazaar,
August 1949, p. 83
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Model wearing Christian Dior at the Château de Malmaison, Paris

Harper’s Bazaar, November 1947, p. 175
Louise Dahl-Wolfe
Betty Threat wearing Charles James

Harper’s Bazaar,
April 1947, p. 175