

# ELLE

OCTOBER 2008

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# beautiful dreamer

FROM ART TO MUSIC AND THEATRE, **GABRIELLA WRIGHT'S** LIFE IS A VIBRANT CANVAS OF ACHIEVEMENTS. AND SHE'S STILL HOPING TO DO MUCH MORE

PHOTOGRAPHER PRABUDDHA DASGUPTA  
FASHION DIRECTOR MOHAN NEELAKANTAN

**m**ulti-talented. Check. Stunning. Check. Super-smart. Check. Gabriella Wright is that rare woman who makes all this seem effortlessly simple. ELLE met her during Couture Week in Paris and came away suitably impressed. In this exclusive feature, she is dressed in selections from Dior's Fall/Winter 2008 and Cruise 2009 collections.

**ELLE:** Modelling, acting, singing, writing – you've done it all, but how would you describe yourself?


**Gabriella Wright:** As a student of the world. Honestly, I don't think about who I am or what I do; I just create and, depending on the moment, the medium changes. My main focus is acting, but sometimes I need to write and use different senses to anchor my character.

**ELLE:** Your father, Paul David Wright, is a sculptor, painter and multimedia artist. Has his artistic background been a big influence on you?

**GW:** Yes, very much so. From him, I have inherited the need to communicate through art. Being brought up in his world – with large paintings, video art screens and live performances – my reality has been based on art and that has been my way of reflecting upon the world. I suppose it must be in my genes.

**ELLE:** Having grown up in London and the French countryside, you are fluent in both English and French, but which language do you think in?

**GW:** I think in whatever language I am using at that present moment. Being perfectly bilingual, I have problems translating the languages and therefore, I think in French when I am in France and in English when I travel to the US or England. Other than that, I speak Spanish and am learning Hindi. I love learning new languages.



Embroidered silk dress,  
by John Galiano, for  
Christian Dior  
Fall/Winter 2008

elle**belle**

and the handkerchief  
will certainly make up  
for the rest of the  
look.

Silk dress with matching  
stole, by John Galiano,  
for Christian Dior  
Cruise 2009



Embroidered silk blouse,  
printed organza Jaguar  
palazzo pants; both  
by John Galiano, for  
Christian Dior Cruise 2009

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**ELLE:** You play the piano as well as the trumpet – did you train in classical music?

**GW:** No, I didn't train; I am self-taught. It's a way of self-expression and a wonderful tool to experience life with. I feel that music has a certain freedom attached to it and it allows you to explore many inner landscapes.

**ELLE:** You were also part of a trip hop band – obviously music is a pretty big part of your life?

**GW:** Yes, it goes alongside acting. Singing is an amazing way to connect with so many people. When you write your own lyrics and music, you own your song. I also love researching the characters I play in terms of music – what music would they listen to – or even find a tune that matches their personality.

**ELLE:** Given your love for the theatre, especially the Shakespearean tradition, which would you say are your favourite plays?

**GW:** I must admit I love Shakespeare's tragedies, especially *Othello*. And I also like *Electra*, the classic Greek play by Sophocles. I love the cathartic nature of such plays.

**ELLE:** You've acted on stage, in a television series as well as in films. Do you have a favourite or do you see this as a natural progression?

**GW:** It could be called that. I love acting and if there's an inspiring role with a great script and story, I will take it no matter what the medium is. What matters is the writing and the story.

**ELLE:** You were part of *One Dollar Curry*, a 'crossover film' that had an Indian director and actors. What was the experience like?

**GW:** It was actually my first lead role and it was great. The film was made on a small budget and I enjoyed every minute of it. It also introduced me to India – I went to Mumbai, Goa and Delhi on the promotional tour.

**ELLE:** Aside from this film, how much has India been a part of your life, if at all?

**GW:** I am in love with the country and try to visit at least thrice a year. I've been to many places, including Bodhi Gaya, Punjab and Kerala.

**ELLE:** *The Tudors*, the television series you've been a part of, has earned a lot of acclaim and attention. What was it like for you, researching and playing the part of Queen Claude? And playing opposite Jonathan Rhys Myers, one might add.

**GW:** It was an amazing experience. I loved researching the role, listening to Bayeux (the music of the time) and working with the new generation of English actors. Not to mention stalwarts like Sam Neil and Jeremy Northam. Jonny was lovely and the role – being surrounded by women – was perfect for him.

**ELLE:** Learning in the best theatre schools, under the best teachers, working with the industry's biggest names and going on to have your work

selected for the likes of the Venice Film Festival and the Golden Globes – does it still feel novel, being amongst the best?

**GW:** Yes, it's all still a novelty. And I feel that it's just the beginning of a long, exciting journey – there are so many dreams to fulfil, roles I want

to play and ideas that need to be written. Life is a long journey, don't you think?

**ELLE:** You have co-authored a book called *In Search of the Sacred Sin*. Can you tell us what it is about?

**GW:** It all started when some actors and directors were asked to write short stories on the relationship they share. The writer/director Vijay Singh knew I write and asked me to participate. *In Search of the Sacred Sin* is based on the inexplicable bond between writers and directors; it's fictional, but emphasises the magic of the relationship.

**ELLE:** What's next for you, professionally? Is there something you're very excited about?

**GW:** Yes, I am working on a film called *The Whisperers*, based on a graphic novel, and directed by a British Indian director, Jas Mann. It's a unique project dealing with spirituality and existentialism. I am also going to work on the soundtrack with Jas and am sure that will be a great journey. □

Photographer Prabuddha Dasgupta; Make-up and Hairstylist Bamee

Fashion Director Mohan Neelakantan

Location Courtesy Hotel Costes K, Paris.

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