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KEEP CALM IN THE COLOR DEPARTMENT

Save the high-contrast look for black-tie affairs and fill your closet with enigmatic colors that speak (softly) to one another.

Styler: David Laundy (0207) by
Mark (0207) by David Laundy (0207) by
David Laundy (0207) by David Laundy (0207) by
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January / February 2017

Fashion



Coach

Dark/light brown weather leather jacket, £1,495, red/black checked henley collar polo shirt, £195, black wool trousers, £204, all by Coach

100

January / February 2017

Fashion



Photograph by
Pelle Crépin

Fashion by
Chris Bennis

Storm trouper

Seen next on screen as a pilot in *Rescue One: A Star Wars Story*, here he showed us just how this winner's weather-beating jackets and coats

Dior Homme

Black striped wool jacket, £1,495, red/black checked wool T-shirt, £195, black wool suit trousers, £695, all by Dior Homme, black leather trainers, £175, by Russell & Bromley

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January / February 2021

Fashion



Gucci

Red/black/blue cotton double-breasted coat, £1,800; light blue cotton shirt, £145; multi-colored stretch jersey trousers, £225; multi-colored sequined loafers, £100, all by Gucci.

100

January / February 2021

Fashion



Louis Vuitton

Classic fur-trimmed hooded parka, £1,400; brown metallic silk turtleneck jacket, £1,440, both by Louis Vuitton.

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Fashion:



Belstaff

Dark brown suede leather overcoat
 priced £3,000, by Belstaff

100

As you look on warms, confirmation comes the Donald Trump is to be the 45th President of the United States of America. In profiles of actors, current affairs, sports figures and Ali Ahmed is a big screen star who isn't afraid to say what he thinks.

Born in northern London in 1976 to Muslim Pakistani parents, Ahmed grew up in a difficult, regularly hostile environment. Acting wasn't so much an ambition as a necessity. He was, he says, "kind of acting every day just to survive and get by socially". The profession shaped his future. It's a scholarship in Merchant Taylor's school in north London before heading PPE at Christ Church, University of Oxford, and then on to the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, which he left early to appear in Michael Winterbottom's 2005 film *The Road to Guantanamo*.

"You never learn as much as you do on the line [in]", Ahmed says, "and working on an improvised script like this was going to be the best real". Ahmed's subsequent work has often subverted racial stereotypes, in films such as *Four Lions* (2010) and *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* (2012). There is also a music career: independent rapper the MC, he's played Glastonbury, had tracks featured from Jay Z and Kanye, and is currently in partnership with collective from RapLife.

It's a writer, too, and he's been understood his view on the industry, and his disquiet about racism in *The Good Immigrant*, a collection of essays about race and immigration published earlier this year. The actor evidently puts his journalistic mind to his work.

"I guess because I played a real person in my first film, I always take that approach. I wrote up notes and try to build up the character's life story through interviews. The research side of it, that journalistic element, I've always taken on it," he says.

This studious preparation proved useful for Ahmed's recent role as Saad Khan, the protagonist in BBC's mini-series *The Night Of*, a reimagining of the 2002 BBC series *Criminal Justice*. It's the story of a Pakistani-American student who, after an ill-fated night out, finds himself on trial for a grisly murder he thinks he didn't commit.

J Crew

Light grey wool coat, \$550; grey/white/leopard print chunky knit turtleneck jumper, \$100; dark green corduroy trousers, \$75; all by J Crew. White leather sneakers, £85, by Balenciaga. Dark green corduroy vest, \$14, by Poshmark

But can't be certain. The story is gripping, but it has a tangible critique of racial profiling in the US justice system at its heart.

"It was the most challenging job I've ever had," Ahmed says. "I felt a sense of weight and responsibility, which I related to. I related criminal defence attorneys, who seemed at first to be in Queens and spent time in a Bronx high school."

Starting in an unassuming "Innocence" 1982 series might be enough for some, but not for the rest of his life. He's been everywhere, working alongside that Darden in the latest episode of the *House* franchise, and very soon we'll see him in a new series film which, chances are, will prove rather popular.

"The guys were gigantic," he says of the *House* spin-off *House of Cards* (2013). "And most of it was 1980s. They wanted this world and you were really plunged into it." As he points out, you can't interview an independent print before filming starts, but preparation (and love for the franchise) began many years ago when he saw the original movie as a child. "The Empire Strikes Back [1980] was real," he remembers.

When *House of Cards* director David Fincher suggested he put on a audition on tape, Ahmed replied with as in three days. He was attracted by the potential independence that that would come from the director of *Blade Runner*, whose *Blade Runner* got him excited. And, of course, if Ahmed was going to be in a blockbuster, it would be one that promised to be darker, more and more twisted than its predecessors.

Shortly after Trump's win had been confirmed, Ahmed tweeted to his followers: "Can't sleep! Don't put it. It's OK. Wake up. And wake up everyone around you. We can't afford to sleepwalk any further in this case."

In light of his newly announced role as Khalid in the new series, one might think Ahmed's word got it. But will he, as he says, keep with American signed up for at least four years of Trump, it's hard to see that happening. At the best, a magazine order to move him to the other side of the Atlantic. **B**

Charles Trevelyan

House of Cards (2013) is not on
 5 December



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January / February 2007



Moncler

Gray wool quilted jacket, £120, by Moncler.
Orange cashmere turtleneck sweater, £100,
by Glavin & Rowland

100

January / February 2007

Fashion



Moncler's winter collection is a mix of classic and modern styles. The jacket is made of high-quality wool and is quilted for warmth. The turtleneck is made of soft cashmere and is a vibrant orange color.

Mackintosh

Dark olive hooded wool coat, £180,
gray wool vest, £100, white
cotton shirt, £100, all by Mackintosh

100

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IF THE JACKET FITS...

Correction: when the jacket fits, because whether you're talking about some wrap-up double-breasted velvet blazer or this here leather baseball number, your jacket should always be carefully tailored (and distinctively detailed). Anything else would be unmanagable and unbecoming, and that, *mon frere*, is no way to go through life.

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