



“Rosamund has these looks you can’t quite get at,” says David Fincher, director of *Gone Girl*, “and I wanted that – for her character to be unfathomable.”

Cream ribbed wool poloneck, £845, Alexander McQueen. Gold earring, *throughout*, from £265, Jennifer Fisher.

Hair: Anthony Turner.

Make-up: Lucia Pica.

Nails: Jenny Longworth.

Production: Ragı Dholakia.

Location: Deerhurst Road.

Set design: Poppy Bartlett.

Digital artwork: Output London

# HEAD GIRL

Rosamund Pike, the reserved star of one of the most anticipated films of the year, talks to *Christa D'Souza* about privacy, anarchy and learning to channel her dark side. Styled by *Kate Phelan*. Photographed by *Alasdair McLellan*

**H**ad Rosamund Pike not made it as an actress, she might have become a doctor. Things medical have always fascinated her – the more grisly the better. The process of embalming, for example, which she learnt all about while visiting the Museum of Death in Los Angeles. “Oh, you must go when you’re next there,” she enthuses, “they give you this initiation by showing you the longest arm in the world... that is, bits strewn across the road after a fatal car crash. Actually, the first time I went, the guy asked if I wanted to see something worse than death, which were two conjoined terrapins endlessly, desperately, swimming in opposite directions. Oh dear, I’m going to sound so macabre, aren’t I?”

It is a muggy Saturday afternoon in central London, and the pair of us are sitting in J Sheekey before going to the theatre – a plan B, after our plan A (to visit the Black Museum where Scotland Yard

stores all its criminal memorabilia) was scuppered because it’s not really a museum, and the Met is rather particular about who visits it. Pike, 35, has chosen *Privacy*, the sellout play by James Graham on how social media has so perniciously and inescapably invaded our lives. Not that it has invaded hers, particularly. Twitter, Instagram, even Facebook will always slightly elude her. “I mean, *can* one actually go on Facebook as someone entirely different from yourself?” she wonders, for a split second reminding me of Helen, the brilliantly blank socialite she played in *An Education* and who, to many people’s minds, stole the show.

Tell a taxi driver you’re going to interview Rosamund Pike and chances are he or she will have a little think before being able to place her. Between being a Bond girl and Tom Cruise’s love interest in *Jack Reacher*, her career trajectory feels a bit blurry. If you compare her with that other Oxbridge-educated Brit-done-good Rachel Weisz, or Keira Knightley or even Carey Mulligan – a virtual unknown when the three of them were in *Pride & Prejudice* together – she’s not what you’d call a box-office draw. But that was before David *Social Network*

Fincher cast her opposite Ben Affleck in his latest epic head-wreck of a thriller, *Gone Girl*, based on the bestselling novel by Gillian Flynn. Charlize Theron, Natalie Portman, Emily Blunt, even Reese Witherspoon (who actually snapped up the rights to the book in 2012) were supposedly up for the part. But Fincher wanted Pike, “the relative unknown”.

“I think he saw my dark side,” offers Pike. “And I think he wanted someone who hadn’t explored that before. To see if they had the balls to go through with it...”

And then, out of nowhere: “You’ve got something in your nose. There... I think. No, not there, there.” Ooh, she’s a one is Ros (though don’t ever call her that, as a colleague who made the mistake of doing so discovered – she goes only by the name Rosamund these days).

Tall, blonde and yes, unbelievably beautiful in a languid, faintly aristocratic way, Pike is dressed today in a little black flouncy sheath (“from Maxfield’s in LA, that’s all I know, I swear”), black lace-up brogues and bare legs. In one ear she wears a gold safety pin and spread across her fingers is a fierce-looking knuckleduster by Elena > 315

Votsi – Mitford sister meets metalhead, if you like. Her big, red-leather-framed sunglasses from Armani add a nice geeky touch, as does the teeny camera case she wears cross-body, again provenance unknown. If she'd thought about it, she would have been wearing one of the Rosamund Collection, the line of bags she designed for LK Bennett (all of which, apparently, are selling like hot cakes).

Over a pint of prawns – “I can never resist them here” – she tells of how she and her partner, Robie Uniacke (by whom she has a son, Solo, two, and is pregnant with their second child), went to see *Nine Inch Nails* at the O2 last night. Frontman Trent Reznor worked in collaboration with Atticus Ross on the soundtrack for *Gone Girl* (as they did Fincher's *The Social Network* and *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*). To get a flavour of what *Gone Girl* is going to be like, check out the trailer on Youtube, which features the creepiest-ever rendition of Charles Aznavour's “She”, as sung by Richard Butler of the Psychedelic Furs.

For those who haven't read it (and, frankly, how on earth did you manage that?), *Gone Girl* tells the tale of Nick Dunne, a washed-up journo (played by Ben Affleck) and his perfect blonde wife, Amy (Pike), who mysteriously goes missing on their fifth wedding anniversary. Did he hate her enough to kill her? Or is she the witch from hell? And don't think you know the answer. Flynn, who wrote the screenplay, has changed the last third of the plot. Thankfully, it looks to be as deliciously nasty as the novel, if not more so.

“Nasty. Hmm...” Pike says, mulling over the word in her careful, scholarly way. “Yes, that probably would be the way to describe it. People who think of it merely as a bestselling thriller might not recognise the absolute toxicity of these two people.”

Pike considers the character of Amy. “She's a good actress, one of those girls who plays the best version of herself in early courtship,” she continues, “staying up until dawn, eating burgers, staying a size two, liking dirty jokes – until there comes a point in the relationship where she's not going to be doing that any more. What I think is brilliant, and people don't always focus on this bit in the book, is how relaxed

she feels while playing that version of herself. How she feels liberated. How she doesn't care about conning her husband.”

The role was hard-won. Pike describes doing rigorous readings for Fincher before he gave her the part. The “auditions” were conducted via Skype at a local gym in Glasgow where she was filming the comedy *What We Did on Our Holiday* with Billy Connolly and David Tennant.

“They each took about four hours, I'm not even joking,” she remembers. “I had to talk quite graphically about sexual harassment and rape, and I remember it would get to be 9.30 in the evening and there'd be this very timid knock on the door going [Pike does an impeccable

can't quite get at and, ultimately, I wanted that. I wanted Amy to be unfathomable.”

Fincher had a very specific list of requirements for the role. “We saw her as a kind of Carolyn Bessette Kennedy. Somebody who has that kind of power over every decision they make and how that will communicate to a room full of strangers. Rosamund obviously had the carriage for that, the question was whether there was anything underneath it that could help with the hidden side of Amy – that could play the desperate narcissist she is.”

“One feels like [David] is peeling you like an onion,” says Pike, “with these layers falling away. He's technically demanding, too. Being on set with him is a bit like being in

an operating theatre. *Forensic* is almost the word I'd use to describe the way he works...

“When I got the part I remember being convinced I'd been foisted upon him,” she admits. “It wasn't until I was waiting in the airport in Glasgow to get on the flight to St Louis that I saw this email from him headed ‘For your eyes only’ that my heart properly flipped and I thought: ‘My God. This is real.’ I still don't know if we hit it off. God knows what he thought, it seemed such a long shot and, when I look back on that first meeting with him, in the bar of the Four Seasons in St Louis, I feel so horribly naive.”

“I do remember,” says Fincher, “a good six months into the movie, I was walking on to the set and I overheard her speaking with Ben after this particularly diabolical scene and her asking him: ‘What do you think David saw in me? What made him think he'd want me for this?’ And Ben smiling and saying: ‘I have absolutely no idea...’” Famous for doing scores of takes before getting his shot, Fincher's methods can be challenging. But the director is full of praise for Pike's commitment. “She can definitely go there,” he says. “You know, after 25 takes or something, you've got to be prepared that nine or 10 of them you never want to see. You have to be prepared to fail. And she had that. She wanted it. She was ready to look at that side of herself.”

“I would say David works extremely hard,” agrees Affleck, “and asks the same of those who work with him. He works – and I think this is what Rosamund is referring to – in a very meticulous way. Maybe the >



From left: wearing Erdem to the 2014 Empire film awards; with Robie Uniacke at a Bafta party, 2011; in Louis Vuitton at a gala at the New York Met, 2014

Glaswegian accent here], ‘I'm tay-ribly sorry, but we're closing now.’ I don't know what they must have thought, but whenever David would hear this, he'd go, ‘OK, your therapy session is over now.’”

“I knew in my gut I needed an only child,” says Fincher from LA. In the novel, Amy is the cherished only daughter of two child psychologists; Rosamund is the cherished only child of two opera singers. “I needed someone who didn't have any siblings, who didn't have that understanding of being given a wedgie by an older brother, someone who was more of an orchid, a hothouse flower, who was sorta out of step.

“What I also loved about Rosamund is that she's oddly ageless. Alongside having one of those Faye Dunaway faces – she's truly fantastic to look at, like a beautiful sculpture – she's also got those looks that you

word forensic sprang to mind because of the time she spent as a corpse.” (Not a spoiler – this can be seen in the trailer.)

“I found her to be extremely focused,” Affleck adds, “[but] because the nature of our relationship in the movie was complex, and there is little time for socialising on David’s set, she and I never tried to get to know one another in any real sense. It was enough to figure out what we were doing in the movie.”

“Oh, Ben is perfect,” says Pike fondly. “There’s a shot in the teaser of him being interviewed where he blinks which still gives me goosebumps when I watch it. He is *such* a man under fire. He was so funny, too. He used to bring this big dog on set and, for some reason, it became this running joke that instead of him having a dog, he became the dog. And as the story got more and more twisted, and his character came more and more under fire, he started calling himself ‘broke dick dog’ and saying to David, ‘I know why you didn’t hire Brad, you wanted me to look like a meathead...’”

Twenty minutes from curtain-up, and we are ducking and diving through the plodding crowds to the Donmar, Pike deftly leading the way. Her choice of play, *Privacy*, is telling: she has become increasingly obsessive about guarding hers. And who could blame her, after her very public break-up with her ex-fiancé, director Joe Wright (who called the whole thing off only weeks before the wedding), or the fuss the press made when another of her exes, the actor Simon Woods, announced he was in a relationship with Christopher Bailey. She is the first to admit the paranoia can sometimes get to her: when she was pregnant with Solo, for example, on the set of *Jack Reacher*, she’d have scans under a false name.

The press has barely any snaps of her and Uniacke together. The one that the *Daily Mail* did get of them both, soon after she had given birth to Solo, was so appalling she had it framed as a joke. (“But, please,” she implores, “don’t let *Vogue* use it.”) It is, she admits, becoming increasingly tricky to travel by Tube. “Although, funnily enough, when I’m with Solo, I feel immune to any staring. I feel strangely protected.”

Brought up in a two-bedroom mansion flat in Earl’s Court, spending a lot of her

early life sitting around in rehearsal rooms and “listening to Verdi and Stockhausen”, Pike never wanted to be anything other than a performer. Neither did she query being sent away to school (she won a scholarship to Badminton girls’ school in Bristol) because, by going there, she could attend National Youth Theatre. “Besides, we were such a little team, me and my parents, that whatever facilitated one person to perform, you just did. I completely got that if I went to boarding school, my parents could tour.”

After getting turned down from every stage school she applied to, she was accepted to Oxford to read English at Wadham College and became heavily involved in the drama department, at one point playing Bianca opposite Rory Kinnear’s Petrucchio (he was at Balliol) in *The Taming of the Shrew*. But it was only when she started going to auditions during a year off (having signed up at a temp agency to pay for living expenses) that she was cast, aged 21, opposite Pierce Brosnan in *Die Another Day*. “The only reason I ended up being a Bond girl was because I didn’t get a job at Waterstones,” she jokes.

Pike has described herself in the past as being a bit of a university nerd, but not everyone saw her that way. “She was always terribly self-aware and also quite self-contained, quite detached from the whole Oxford experience,” says a former male contemporary. “For some people it was the most breathtakingly important thing that had ever happened to them. But to her, one felt it was quite a small pond.”

“I’ve always been an outsider,” she shrugs. “Most actors tend to be. We can pretend to be part of the in crowd, but we never really are. Acting was my passion, and I was looking forward to meeting like-minded people who could see the thrill of getting to be someone else. It’s why I still do it...”

I first met Pike in the early Noughties, after she had split up with Woods and before she fell in love with Wright. She came across as super-bright, staggeringly beautiful and maybe just a touch more eager to please, more fallible – or is it gullible? – than she does now. Everyone was talking about her performance in Terry Johnson’s *Hitchcock Blonde* at the Royal Court (in which, you may recall, she simulated orgasm and took off all her

clothes). It seemed such a cool, counter-intuitive career move to go from Bond girl to a theatre job for which she got paid less than £400 a week. At around the same time she turned down a lucrative contract with Revlon. “Yes. I don’t know why I did that – it would be useful now,” she jokes. “But no, money has never attracted me. I do like lovely things, but I never went into this business to make a fortune, I don’t think...”

This rings true. She and Uniacke (53, an Old Etonian and ex-City boy) appear to live in relative non-grandness in Primrose Hill, which she likes because the local residents tend not to have seen her films and therefore leave them in peace – unlike Notting Hill, where she used to live. The couple got a television licence only recently, love shopping on Ebay and trawl reclamation yards for house fixtures – doorknobs and the like. They never accept invitations on a Wednesday night because that is their special night to be alone. When they lived in Los Angeles, during the filming of *Gone Girl*, they’d often go to biker hangouts and rundown ping-pong clubs – “Not at all like the super-cool one Susan Sarandon has opened, proper old-school places. Not pretending we belong, but enjoying feeling out of place. I suppose the optimists in us are always thinking there must be something for us to discover...”

Pike, who “longs to be far more anarchic than I am”, lists two of her most risqué moments as a) when her bikini came clean off in the pool at the Mandarin Oriental, and b) when, at the *Vanity Fair* Oscar party, she had a waiter take an In-N-Out burger meant for her to Joan Collins instead. Uniacke, however, whose profession she describes as “mathematical research, and that’s about as specific as we are going to be”, seems very much the real deal. Just see his book of anarchic symbols, which he has had graffitied on to a number of Solo’s Babygros: “Political slogans other anarchists would pick up on,” Pike explains. “There’s one in particular, with the yen, the pound and the dollar, that they all recognise.”

The familial arrangement is, she offers, “a very modern set-up”. Both Uniacke’s ex-wife, the interior decorator Rose Uniacke, and Rose’s husband, the *Harry Potter* film producer David Heyman, are friends – they were sitting on her sofa in the flat when she came home from hospital after giving birth to Solo. “I thought, well, surely it can’t get any better than this,” says Pike.

*Privacy* over – she liked it and, rather naively, didn’t see the twist at the end coming at all – we’re now in the Ivy Club drinking, on her suggestion, hot > 358

“I’ve always been an outsider. Most actors tend to be. We can pretend to be part of the in crowd but we never are”

He is enjoying this moment and pleased to be in harness. "I am a Taurus. And you?" he asks. "Taurians apparently like habits. I like everyday work." On a day at home in Paris ("there is no usual day") he has a healthy breakfast of pomegranate juice, maybe some muesli or toast and works out "if I wake early. But early is not early," he jokes. "I love being a morning person when I'm jet-lagged. But early for me is eight."

Since joining Vuitton he has changed the way he approaches the day. "I used to be a control freak with my schedule. I was looking at everything I was doing a week before and thinking about it a lot. And I've stopped it completely. Honestly, it's much better. I have more spontaneity and I'm more relaxed, because before when I was planning everything I was more stressed. Now everything is planned for me. But I am super-happy to follow." He does appear relaxed today, just as he did at Le Voltaire, tucking into his tomato and crumbled goat's cheese salad as he says he always does, and telling me about the birth of a new nephew and how vital it was to give the cruise collection its own show (in Monaco in May) because, although it is difficult for the fashion press to cover so many shows, the retail uptake after them is huge.

Ghesquière travels a lot. In his gap year between the two jobs he spent time in Japan where he has what he describes as a kind of family that he is particularly close to. "It's where I rest the most. Last year, I was alone. Everyone was working. It was the first time in my life I was that alone but my friends, my Japanese family, were there. It was so good for me. To step back."

He makes the most of the opportunities granted by jet-lag and long-distance travel to watch the same things as the rest of us – *The Killing*, *Game of Thrones*, *Homeland* – and to read. Unlike the rest of us, he uses cultural references to feed into his fashion, which he wants to be both of his time and just ahead of it. "I think my role is to project. To say to people, 'Look, it's going to be like this. In a short time. In six months.'" He delivers the opinion with a knowing humour, aware of the grandiosity of this soothsayer behaviour, but there is no denying the conviction behind it. "To say, 'You don't know, but I think I know what it is going to be like in your future. Buy it or don't. But in six months it is going to be like that.'" With the mix of his compelling vision and the clout of Louis Vuitton, chances are he's absolutely correct. ■

chocolate. Because she is pregnant, because she has slight indigestion (and because she lives with a recovering heroin addict), alcohol is not really on the agenda these days. "But I'm not a puritan," she says, those heavy-lidded, almost oriental eyes peering myopically over the rim of her cup. "Not too long ago I woke up with that horrible hungover feeling and saw that my other half had very sweetly taken a photograph of me just before I went to bed and scratched a heart into it, knowing I'd want the assurance of not having said anything too embarrassing, that I was just having a good time."

Every time Uniacke comes into the conversation her composure softens a little. It is quite heartening to see how truly, madly, deeply she is still in love. She's in love with motherhood, also. "I like being connected to people as a mother rather than actress," she says. "I love that feeling of being in the same boat, being able to ask frank advice. Sometimes I wish actresses could be like mothers, being able to share insecurities like that. I mean, we must all have them, right? I do have close girlfriends, yes, but none of them have the same life that I do. I would so love a good female friend in the industry..."

When you consider what a victim she was painted as, after being so meanly jilted by Wright; when you consider the leaner moments of her career – when she had time, as she wryly puts it, "to check my Ebay rating" – things are very, very good. She has three films coming out: *Gone Girl*, *What We Did on Our Holiday* and *Hector*, a sweet little comedy about how to be happy, alongside her friend and *The World's End* co-star Simon Pegg. And she is pregnant. She adores being pregnant. ("The love I felt for my other half when I was pregnant with Solo was strong," I remember her telling me. "The idea of having a bit of him inside me, that I was making something.")

Perhaps she will pick up again on the screenplay she started a year or so ago (and halted because the producer wanted to take it in a more "palatable" commercial direction). Perhaps she will pursue the idea she has about a documentary on body image – "wiring your body up to see if your heart really does swell or stomach flip, when you have those feelings". Or maybe she'll do nothing at all. "Being pregnant does absolve me from making decisions about what to do, work-wise. I can sort of release it to the world, put it into the melting pot and see what comes out. It takes less time to make a film than it does to make a child. That's always sort of put things in perspective." ■  
"Gone Girl" is released on October 3

thermal boilersuits for her and Daniel to zip over their clothes. But despite what her slight frame and alabaster skin might suggest, Juliet is suited to living at Lypiatt. Her bedroom is like the rest of the house, without either the clutter or fluff you'd expect from a woman her age. And while she says that shortly after she gave birth to Eva, at 24, a couple of months before her wedding, she did occasionally dream that "I was in a club smoking or drinking with all my friends", when she woke up, "I was always so grateful I was here. I've learnt so much from being a parent and looking after the house. I feel much more grounded."

And yet the family hardly live in isolation; their talk is full of friends who live nearby or who have visited from London. But during the week, both artists work – and hard. They rise with the dawn (one advantage of no curtains) and after the school run they go to their separate studios. From an easel in a whitewashed attic, Juliet designs wallpaper in transfixing, William Morris-esque detail. It's a romantic space, with a sofa in the centre for Daniel to sit on when he visits. Soon he is going to build Juliet her balcony from the studio's central window.

Daniel's studio is very different. From the outside it looks like a hangar; inside, big machinery is covered in fine dust. As he shows me round, he spills forth ideas, from cool geometric Perspex rings (which he just needs to get round to selling) to the Chadwick Oven that cooks pizzas perfectly in four minutes (within the year a Chadwick Oven pizzeria will be up and running in Stroud) to slick neon backgammon sets and even a design for a solar-powered taxi. His art is the romantic application of science. He once made something that nearly escaped the warehouse. "I caught it, though," he says gleefully, before going some way to explain how "his mobiles as solar-powered organism pieces are simple systems of autonomous mechanical devices which act together to form something like a lifeform. They live, they wake up, go to sleep and can be unpredictable."

There he stops, perhaps comprehending that he has entirely lost his audience. He tries again. "I make art because I want to move people, and make something moving." And before the pun can settle, like his art he is off. Back to the cutting table, to draft something even more fanciful, probably fluorescent but doubtlessly fascinating. ■  
*Daniel Chadwick is exhibiting at "Crucible 2" in Gloucester Cathedral until October 31, and at "What Marcel Duchamp Taught Me" at the Fine Art Society, W1, from October 9*

*“Being on set  
with David  
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Forensic is the  
word I’d use”*



Satin and lace top,  
£1,900. Lace skirt, £1,925.  
Both Christopher Kane,  
at [Matchesfashion.com](http://Matchesfashion.com)  
and Colette, Paris

"I long to be far more anarchic than I am," says Pike – although her safety-pin earring has more than a hint of the rebel.

*Opposite:* charcoal wool top, £475, Barbara Casasola, at Joseph. Black wool trousers, £850, Victoria Beckham.

Brass bracelet, £80, Fay Andrada, at Mouki Mou.

*This page:* sleeveless wool coat, £2,300. Wool trousers, from £800. Both Dior



