

# STARCENTRAL

June 2024

## FASHION WEEK '24

HOW TO GET FASHION WEEK READY  
**IN 2024**

GET TO KNOW  
**RINA MOUSAVI**  
ONE OF THE RISING STARS TO WATCH OUT FOR IN 2024

**CAN OXYGEN BOOST METABOLISM?**  
*Exploring the Science*



**THE ROADMAP**  
YOUR GUIDE TO ENTERING THE ENTERTAINMENT WORLD:  
HOW TO SUCCESSFULLY BREAK INTO THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY

INTRODUCING

# LACHEL

## STARCENTRAL'S JUNE COVER STAR

OUTSIDE IN event @ Lincoln Center in NYC (Photo credit: Michael Elliott Photography / Wardrobe Credit: Simone Miller silver dress)



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Find out more about one of the rising stars to watch out for in 2024



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OPENING REMARKS



Our latest StarCentral cover star is none other than Lachi, the globally acclaimed singer and songwriter known for her incredible talent and dynamic stage presence. Lachi's influence in the music industry is unparalleled, and her feature in our magazine will undoubtedly captivate and inspire our readers. In addition, we are delighted to announce our upcoming participation in Sydney's Best Dressed 2024. We are currently in the planning stages, ensuring every detail reflects our commitment to excellence and fashion-forward thinking so we hope you can join us. Thank you for your continued efforts. Together, let's make Sydney's Best Dressed 2024 an unforgettable event!

Mike Ilagan  
Managing Director

12 **Rising Star Spotlight**  
Find out more about the beautiful and talented Rina Mousavi



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EDITOR'S NOTES

Welcome to the June 2024 issue of StarCentral Magazine!

We are thrilled to feature the incredibly talented Lachi on our cover this month. Lachi is not only a globally touring singer and songwriter but also an award-winning social entrepreneur, a GRAMMYs Chapter Board Governor, and the host of PBS' American Masters series 'Renegades.' Her remarkable journey and multifaceted career continue to inspire and captivate audiences worldwide. In our exclusive interview, Lachi shares insights into her music, her philanthropic endeavours, and her vision for the future.

This issue also brings you a dazzling showcase from the Met Gala, where Swarovski stunned with five unique couture looks designed by their Creative Director, Giovanna Engelbert. These masterpieces were brought to life by the Spring/Summer 2024 campaign cast and friends of the House, including supermodels Karlie Kloss, Irina Shayk, Imaan Hammam, and Anok Yai. The glamour and artistry of these outfits are not to be missed!

Additionally, don't miss our in-depth movie review of "Back to Black," a compelling film that delves into the life and legacy of Amy Winehouse. Our review explores the film's poignant storytelling and exceptional performances, providing a thoughtful critique of this much-anticipated release.

Thank you for joining us this month. We hope you enjoy the vibrant stories and exclusive content we have curated for you. God Bless.

Victoria Abella  
Editor-in-chief

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## IN PICTURES: SWAROVSKI ON THE MET GALA RED CARPET

Swarovski dazzled on the Met Gala red carpet recently with five unique couture looks designed by Creative Director Giovanna Engelbert. These stunning outfits were showcased by the Spring/Summer 2024 campaign cast and friends of the House, including Karlie Kloss, Irina Shayk, Imaan Hammam, and Anok Yai.

Swarovski's rich history in haute couture began in Paris in the 1890s, with its crystals adding shimmering allure to some of the Met Gala's most memorable red carpet moments. This year marks the first time the Austrian house has crafted couture gowns specifically for the event.

Giovanna Engelbert embraced the 'Garden of Time' dress code with five distinctive ensembles inspired by elements of nature from JG Ballard's enchanted garden short story. Showcasing the 129-year-old brand's artistry and expertise, the couture creations were adorned with hundreds of thousands of precision-cut crystals, intricate jewels, and embroidery. Each look reflected one of Swarovski's vibrant house colors—green, pink, yellow, blue, and white—complemented by exquisitely crafted jewelry pieces from its signature collections, seamlessly integrated into the bejeweled gowns.

Giovanna Engelbert commented: "My vision was for our muses to embody elements of nature found in the enchanted crystalline garden and for their gowns to merge with our jewellery – they metamorphose, becoming one. I wanted to bring the same level of artistry and creativity to the looks that we bring to our jewelry and to capture nature's beauty and joyful spirit as well as the elegance and extravagance of Swarovski at this important moment for fashion and pop culture."

Karlie Kloss personified the crystal Flower that enchants the Garden of Time. She wore an embroidered pink gown adorned with jewels from Swarovski's Floreere and Millenia collections, seamlessly blending into its matching floral jewelry pieces. Irina Shayk embodied Air in a crystal mesh couture gown that required 200 hours to create. The form-fitting design created the illusion of light skimming her body, capturing the fluid and ethereal essence of the element. Anok Yai personified Water in a futuristic tulle catsuit adorned with sparkling ice blue, sapphire, and aquamarine crystals. Imaan Hammam embodied the Sun in a golden two-piece ensemble featuring a crystallized cape inspired by Swarovski's Gema collection and a satin column skirt adorned with a blend of gold crystals. Giovanna Engelbert embodied Nature in a meticulously beaded emerald green silk satin gown, drawing inspiration from a landscape by Viennese artist Gustav Klimt.

At the after-party, the Swarovski muses donned stunning crystal mesh mini dresses in the brand's signature hues of green, pink, yellow, and blue, perfectly complementing their Met Gala ensembles.



Anok Yai attends The 2024 Met Gala Celebrating "Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion" at The Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 06, 2024 in New York City. (Photo by Dimitrios Kambouris/Getty Images for The Met Museum/Vogue)

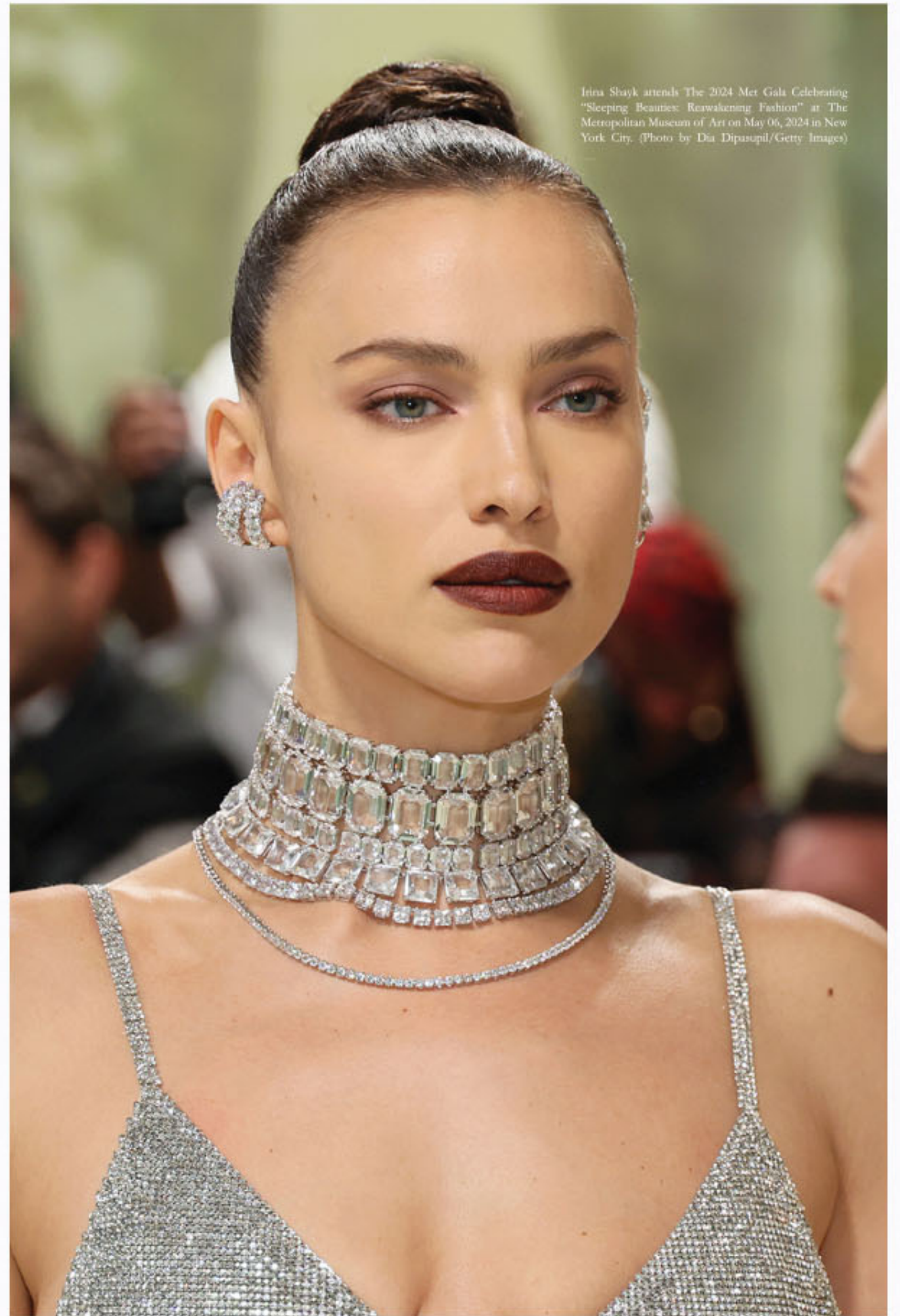
Anok Yai personified Water in a futuristic tulle catsuit adorned with sparkling ice blue, sapphire, and aquamarine crystals. Crafted from sheer silk tulle and embellished with 98,000 crystals to create the illusion of jewels shimmering directly on her skin, the ensemble took a team of eight artisans over 130 hours to complete. Her look was accentuated by a dramatic, one-of-a-kind showpiece necklace from Swarovski's Galaxy fine jewelry collection, featuring 1,050 lab-grown Swarovski Created Diamonds in seven different cuts, totaling 156.62 carats.





Imaan Hammam embodied the Sun in a golden two-piece ensemble featuring a crystallized cape inspired by Swarovski's Gema collection and a satin column skirt adorned with a blend of gold crystals. A team of seven artisans took 14 days to create the cape, embellishing it with 3,456 crystals in six different cuts and five shades. The satin skirt was embroidered with 100,000 crystals. Imaan's radiance was further highlighted by a suite of intricate Gema jewelry in a palette of golden hues.

Imaan Hammam attends The 2024 Met Gala Celebrating "Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion" at The Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 06, 2024 in New York City. (Photo by Dimitrios Kambouris/Getty Images for The Met Museum/Vogue)



Ima Shayk attends The 2024 Met Gala Celebrating "Sleeping Beauties: Reawakening Fashion" at The Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 06, 2024 in New York City. (Photo by Dai Dapasupi/Getty Images)





Karlie Kloss attends The 2024 Met Gala Celebrating "Sleeping Beauties: Resawakening Fashion" at The Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 06, 2024 in New York City. (Photo by Dimitrios Kambouris/Getty Images for The Met Museum/Vogue)

Karlie Kloss personified the crystal flower that enchants the Garden of Time. She wore an embroidered pink gown adorned with jewels from Swarovski's Florere and Millenia collections, seamlessly blending into its matching floral jewelry pieces. The silk jersey gown featured 180,000 light rose crystals and required 225 hours of work by a team of seven artisans. Its hourglass silhouette was highlighted by an intricate jeweled corset adorned with garlands of pink flowers and petals. This corset, lavishly embellished with 60,500 crystals and 75 Florere jewels, took a team of five artisans 1,600 hours to complete.



Giovanna Engelbert attends The 2024 Met Gala Celebrating "Sleeping Beauties: Resawakening Fashion" at The Metropolitan Museum of Art on May 06, 2024 in New York City. (Photo by Dimitrios Kambouris/Getty Images for The Met Museum/Vogue)

Giovanna Engelbert embodied Nature in a meticulously beaded emerald green silk satin gown, drawing inspiration from a landscape by Viennese artist Gustav Klimt. The bustier was adorned with rows of green dégradé Millenia crystals, while the dress featured embroidery with green Gema jewels transitioning into crystal mesh in peridot green. It required over 900 hours for a team of artisans to embroider the gown with 20,000 crystals and 35,000 bicone beads in various shades of green. Giovanna's ensemble was complemented by matching crystallized gloves and jewelry pieces from Swarovski's Sublima collection.





## RISING STAR SPOTLIGHT: FIND OUT MORE ABOUT

# RINA

StarCentral Magazine is proud to present an exclusive feature on the amazing journey of actress Rina Mousavi, whose unwavering dedication to her craft has propelled her to the forefront of the entertainment industry.

Rina Mousavi's passion for acting burned brightly from a young age, igniting a lifelong commitment to the art form. In 2018, she embarked on a transformative journey, undergoing an intensive 10-month mixed martial arts (MMA) training regimen for her lead role in the short film *The Society*. This immersive experience not only honed her physical abilities but also opened doors to new opportunities.

Mousavi showcased her newfound MMA skills in the ABC/BBC TV series *"Itch"* Season 2, captivating audiences with her dynamic performance. Her seamless integration of martial arts prowess into her acting repertoire showcased her versatility and marked her as a talent to watch.

The following year marked a significant milestone in Mousavi's career with the completion of her first feature film, *"Alexander."* The film's acceptance into nine festivals, including Fringe World Perth, served as a testament to Mousavi's talent.

In early 2021, Mousavi once again proved her mettle with her lead role in the short film *"The Gunslinger,"* directed by Rachel Fitzgerald. Her captivating portrayal earned her a nomination for the prestigious Best Actress Award at the Atlanta Comedy Film Festival and secured acceptance into 28 festivals worldwide, further solidifying her reputation as a rising star on the global stage.

Continuing her upward trajectory, Mousavi's journey reached new heights with her involvement in the critically acclaimed film *"Shayda,"* directed by Noora Niasari and executive produced by the legendary Cate Blanchett. Premiering at the 2023 Sundance Film Festival, *"Shayda"* captured the hearts of audiences, earning the coveted Audience Choice Award and emerging as Australia's entry at the 96th Academy Awards. The film's exceptional quality was recognized with nine nominations

at the 2024 Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) Awards, including a win for the Best Casting In Film. In an exclusive interview with StarCentral Magazine, we caught up with Rina to gain insight into her extraordinary journey. Here's what went down:

### Can you tell us more about yourself?

I'm an actor with a dancing background, and I love pretty much every outdoor activity. I also have a Fashion Design background, and after doing 10 months of mixed martial arts training for a TV series, I find myself back in the dojo every now and then. I'm a huge animal lover! I can also do a pretty good impression of Britney Spears.

### How did you get started in the entertainment industry?

I've wanted to be a performer for as long as I can remember and was involved in drama classes throughout school. However, I was worried about disappointing my parents and felt like there wasn't room for me in the industry. After working full-time as a garment technician in the fashion industry for five years, I decided to take an acting class and pursue my passion. It's been the best decision.

### What do you like most about acting?

I love so many things about my job, so it's hard to pick just one... I get to be someone else. I create this new character and give them life. Actors have the ability to empower and move the viewer. As a kid, characters inspired me, and I used their strengths to do better. I don't even want to talk about the magic of being on set and in costume with your scene partner.

### How different is acting in a movie from acting in a TV series? Which one do you prefer?

They are both very special to me, and I don't really have a preference. You have more time on a film set vs a faster pace approach on a TV series, but both processes are rewarding.





**What are your weak points when it comes to acting? How do you try to improve them?**

I also need to remember to pursue other interests and hobbies and to allow myself just to be. I've recently started learning to speak Spanish, which I've wanted to do for so long! I've purchased my first set of roller skates and hope not to break any bones while learning roller skating. It's hard to find the time to fit everything in, but it's important to take care of myself in order to be a better actor.

**What have you learned from the directors that you have worked with throughout your career?**

I've been fortunate to work with incredibly talented directors who are passionate about the production's vision. They've taught me to let go and stay present. With every redirection, I've explored different emotions, allowing me to remain free and focused on my given circumstance. To me, having a good relationship with my director is crucial. If our visions align, then we create something beautiful that reads so loud and clear on screen.

**What are some of the difficulties of the acting business?**

I have a fashion background, so I've been through the rejections and long hours since I was 16, but if you are not used to that, then it can be a little hard to navigate. I've learned to remember why I love what I do every time it gets hard. There are also not enough roles out there for the number of actors, so it can get very challenging when you're trying to make a career out of just acting. It's important to remember that nothing good comes easy.

**What's challenging about bringing a script to life?**

This part isn't so hard when you have the role because you are given the opportunity to ask all the questions you need to bring the script to life. You have rehearsals with the writer and director, so you have lots of opportunities to figure out how to approach the character. The real challenge is when you are auditioning and you are given very little information. I do as much research as possible on the subject, script, and period, and I focus on giving it my own take on what I think it should be. I think of the "challenge" as investigating – I feel like a detective sometimes!

**What do you do when you're not filming?**

I mainly work on honing my craft and watch as many films and TV shows as I can. I have Spanish to learn, and hopefully, I will become fluent soon! I also train with my acting coach as much as I can. My first acting coach once told me, "Athletes don't stop training when they have made it. They train even harder to become even better."

**What has been the most memorable experience of your career so far?**

Attending The Sundance Film Festival 2023 with the film I was in was such a surreal experience. It all sunk in after I got home, though, and I couldn't believe how incredible it was. I met some amazing filmmakers and learned so much about the industry while I was there.

**Who have been the most interesting people you've met so far?**

Honestly, I find everyone I meet interesting, and I know this is a cliché answer. We all have such incredible stories and backgrounds that I find myself drawn to meeting new people. I also like to analyse and utilise the characteristics and behaviours of people for my next role so that my character is more relatable and authentic. Pretty much every role I've booked has had a portion of its personality drawn from someone I've met.

**What are your future plans? Inside your career or out of it.**

I want to be involved in productions that inspire and empower and that tell a compelling story that resonates with the audience for years to come. I want others who have doubts about having a place in the industry to take a chance and believe in themselves. However, it will also be so much fun to be in an action movie where my tomboy side can really come out and play!

**If there is anything else interesting, you can tell us?**

Once I overcome my fear of being eaten by a shark, I'll take another surf lesson. I did a lesson last year, and I walked away with the most euphoric feeling! I speak fluent Farsi, but I can't read or write, so that's on my bucket list – learning a new alphabet is so hard though!

Photo Credit: Sezgin Aygun





MARISA  
ABELA  
IS  
AMY  
WINEHOUSE

HER MUSIC. HER LIFE. HER LEGACY.

# BACK TO BLACK

A FILM BY  
SAM TAYLOR-JOHNSON

SCREENPLAY BY  
MATT GREENHALGH

IN CINEMAS APRIL 11

Check the Classification

## MOVIE REVIEW: BACK TO BLACK

*Back to Black* offers an evocative and poignant homage to Amy Winehouse, one of the most iconic and sorely missed talents of the 21st century. The film chronicles her extraordinary journey, capturing the vibrancy of the Camden streets she called home while delving into the complexities of her fame and personal demons.

The narrative begins with a heartfelt portrayal of Amy's early years, emphasising her close relationship with her grandmother, supportive yet complicated family dynamics, and deep love for music and performing. These initial scenes establish a foundation for understanding Amy as a young, vulnerable girl brimming with potential. Marisa Abela's portrayal of Amy is nothing short of remarkable. Her performance exudes authenticity, with vocals that come impressively close to Amy's own, allowing audiences to feel the singer's raw and fragile essence.

The film is not a documentary-style biopic but rather a unique and sympathetic interpretation of Amy's life. Critics may have their reservations, but *Back to Black* masterfully balances the bittersweet aspects of Amy's story, making it an engrossing watch. It combines moments of joy and triumph with the inevitable descent into tragedy, reflecting the dual nature of Amy's existence.

Eddie Marsan and Lesley Manville deliver stellar performances as Mitch, Amy's father, and Cynthia, her grandmother. Their characters represent the conflicting forces in Amy's life: family love and guidance versus her rebellious spirit and quest for independence. Amy's relationship with her father, in particular, is depicted with nuance, showing the tension between his advice and her determination to forge her own path.

A significant part of the film explores Amy's tumultuous relationship with Blake, played by Jack O'Connell. While the movie doesn't shy away from suggesting Blake's influence in Amy's downfall, it also acknowledges other contributing factors, such as relentless media scrutiny and inadequate management. This multi-faceted approach provides a broader context, aligning Amy's story with those of other tragic music legends.

One of the film's strengths is its unflinching examination of the modern fame mechanism. It lays bare the pressures and isolation that come with global fame, offering a powerful commentary on the industry's often exploitative nature. The narrative doesn't just recount Amy's life; it dives deep into her emotional landscape, revealing her desperate longing for love, her profound loneliness, and her struggle to maintain her identity amidst the chaos of her stardom.

The cinematography is visually compelling, capturing the gritty reality of Amy's world and the moments of beauty and inspiration that defined her music. The script is well-crafted, and the supporting cast delivers uniformly strong performances, ensuring that no scene falls flat.

In conclusion, *Back to Black* is a heartfelt tribute to Amy Winehouse. It encapsulates her essence as an artist and a person, celebrating her talent while also acknowledging the personal battles she fought. Marisa Abela's portrayal is deeply moving, making Amy's story resonate with authenticity and compassion. This film is a must-see, best experienced on the big screen, where its emotional depth and visual splendor can be fully appreciated. Go and watch it; it's a cinematic journey worth taking.



# HOW TO LAUNCH A CAREER IN THE *Entertainment* INDUSTRY

The allure of the entertainment industry, with its glitz and glamour, has captivated many aspiring individuals over the years. Whether your passion lies in acting, music, filmmaking, or any other creative field, building a successful career in entertainment requires dedication, resilience, and strategic planning. This article aims to offer a thorough how-to manual for navigating the entertainment industry's competitive landscape and building a long-lasting, rewarding career.

## Self-Discovery and Specialization

Before diving into the entertainment industry, it's crucial to identify your strengths, weaknesses, and unique talents. Reflect on your passions and interests to determine which specific area of entertainment aligns with your skills. Whether it's acting, singing, dancing, filmmaking, or another discipline, finding your niche will help you stand out in a crowded field.

## Education and Training

Although innate ability is important, formal education and training can provide you the abilities and information you need to succeed in your chosen industry. Consider enrolling in reputable schools, workshops, or training programs that offer specialized courses in your area of interest. Networking with industry professionals during these educational experiences can also open doors to valuable opportunities.

## Build a Strong Portfolio

Create a portfolio that showcases your best work and demonstrates your range and versatility. For actors, this may include a professional headshot, resume, and demo reel. Musicians can create a portfolio with samples of their music, while filmmakers can showcase their best projects. An impressive portfolio is a powerful tool when approaching agents, casting directors, or potential collaborators.

## Networking

Making connections is essential in the entertainment sector. Attend industry events, film festivals, and networking mixers to meet professionals and fellow aspiring artists. Use social networking sites to establish connections with business insiders, join relevant groups, and participate in conversations. Networking can lead to mentorship opportunities, collaborations, and invaluable advice.

## Gain Practical Experience

Internships, apprenticeships, and entry-level positions provide hands-on experience and insight into the industry. Many successful entertainers started with small roles or internships that eventually paved the way to more significant opportunities. Be willing to start at the bottom and learn from every experience.

## Develop a Strong Online Presence

In today's digital age, having a strong online presence is crucial for visibility and self-promotion. Create a polished portfolio or website to display your work, and leverage social media platforms to share updates, connect with fans, and engage with industry professionals. Consistent online activity can attract attention and create opportunities.

## Persistence and Resilience

The entertainment industry is known for its highs and lows, and rejection is a common part of the journey. Develop resilience, learn from setbacks, and persist in pursuing your goals. The ability to bounce back from disappointments is a key factor in long-term success.

Establishing a career in the entertainment industry requires a combination of talent, education, networking, and perseverance. By honing your craft, building a strong network, and staying resilient in the face of challenges, you can navigate the complexities of the industry and pave the way for a rewarding and enduring career in entertainment.



## Unveiling StarCentral's June 2024 Cover Star

# LACHI

### Meet the trailblazer shaping the future of music and culture

Introducing StarCentral Magazine's June 2024 cover star, Lachi - an extraordinary figure in the music and social entrepreneurship sectors. Lachi is a globally touring singer and songwriter, an award-winning social entrepreneur, a GRAMMY's Chapter Board Governor, and the host of PBS' American Masters series 'Renegades.'

Born legally blind, Lachi leverages her platform across music, storytelling, and fashion to amplify identity pride and Disability Culture. As the founder of the U.N.-recognized organization RAMPD (Recording Artists and Music Professionals with Disabilities), Lachi has driven disability-inclusive initiatives in collaboration with industry giants like Grammys, Netflix, Tidal, and Sony Pictures Entertainment.

Lachi's distinctive style, highlighted by her bejewelled glam canes, has been a standout feature at New York Fashion Week and major LA movie premieres. Her performances, including powerful ballads on TEDx stages, integrate her disability identity seamlessly into her art, making her a beacon for Disability Pride in mainstream discussions.

As the founder of RAMPD, Lachi has forged partnerships with top-tier companies to promote disability-inclusive programming and create career opportunities for music professionals with disabilities, neurodivergence, and chronic and mental health conditions. In 2023, RAMPD received significant recognition and funding, including a Music Business Association award and support from Borealis Philanthropy, for its efforts to bridge the inequality gap in the music industry.

Lachi also holds governance and advisory roles on the GRAMMY's New York Chapter Board, the National Independent Venue Association, the Songwriters of North America, and the Audio Engineering Society DEI Committees. Her influence and advocacy have earned her spots in national ads, discussions with the White House, and features in prominent publications like the New York Times, Billboard, Forbes, and USA Today.

Beyond her artistic and entrepreneurial achievements, Lachi is a sought-after consultant, keynote speaker, and performer. She collaborates with top music entities and institutions, such as the White House, the UN, BBC, Lincoln Center, and Google, to advance disability, identity, and culture. Her advocacy work has been featured in Essence, Vogue, and the LA Times. She has been listed in Cranes Business 40 Under 40, received a Social Justice Award from New York City Nightlife United, and was recognized in JPMorgan Chase's "100 Women to Know," USA Today's 2024 "Woman of the Year" and AfroTech's "Future 50 Changemakers." StarCentral Magazine recently caught up with Lachi to discuss her journey in the industry, and here's what went down:

**Can you share your journey of how you started in the music industry and how you've navigated your career as a legally blind artist?**

Music has always been in my life, from listening to my favorites to understand the big, scary world through their eyes to creating music to express myself fully as a quiet outcast kid. Taking to the keys, the pen, and the pad has been the guiding force that has led me to embrace the parts of myself that society had long urged me to conceal.

Throughout the late 2010s, I found myself in bigger and better rooms in the Dance music space for my vocals, toplining, and writing. I did all I could to hide my vision loss, to code-switch, to fit a mold. It wasn't until COVID-19 that I began to make my home studio accessible for my own needs and pace. I veered away from writing cookie-cutter lyrics to fit someone else's story and began exploring my own. And in so doing, I quickly began to realize it was not my condition that was the problem but society's conditioning. I began to advocate for self-acceptance, disability pride, neurodivergence, and mental health awareness. By 2022, I was releasing songs that celebrated all parts of myself, like "Black Girl Cornrows" with Black Caviar, Yvie Oddly and QuestionATL, Shorty Award-Honoree "Lift Me Up" with James Ian and Gaelynn Lea, and performing songs like "Dis Education" co-created with apl.de.ap. From performing songs about my experience on the TEDx stage to showing up on red carpets with a bedazzled glam cane to putting together our new album, Mad Different, I incorporate my advocacy into all aspects of my art and art into all aspects of my advocacy.

The GRAMMY's, Los Angeles 2023  
Wardrobe Credit: NILAMAR Dress  
Photo credit: Lachi Music LLC





**What inspired you to create your organization RAMPD, and how has it impacted the music industry so far?**

I found that I wasn't the only professional artist in real spaces afraid to disclose my disability, condition, or neurodivergence for fear of being viewed as non-competitive. As I navigated virtual space throughout the pandemic, I spoke to more and more folks who were in my situation—professionals making money, making hits, touring, navigating the corporate industry ladder—who felt the same way. I began to wonder, how are there so many of us feeling isolated? I hadn't known yet how irrevocably strong the power of community truly is.

After a public panel discussion with the Recording Academy, it was brought to light that not enough was being done to support music professionals with disabilities, from artists to industry-side folks. After that discussion flew across the music verse, people began to inbox me, asking about the coalition that they had spoken with the Recording Academy about and how they could join. At first, I was reluctant to begin founding an organization, building a platform, or heading up a movement. I was just an artist who loved to sing and write songs. But as the momentum continued to build in the wake of that panel discussion, the acronym RAMPD (Recording Artists and Music Professionals with Disabilities) popped into my head like a light switch flicking up, and it was a wrap.

**Your song "Lift Me Up" has gained significant recognition. Can you tell us about the inspiration behind this song?**

Judy Heumann was a disability rights legend who fought for key legislation, such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. I first learned about her through a 2018 episode of *Drunk History* on Comedy Central, where they highlighted the story of a Sit-In she co-organized. A few years later, Judy reached out to me and asked if she could use a song of mine to introduce her podcast, and I was like, "Wait, you're the same badass Judy from the TV who single-handedly changed my life, right?" We became great friends and co-mentors. She really instilled in me the power to lift up the community.

I was shocked by her passing in 2023. Writing "Lift Me Up" was my way of processing my grief while paying tribute to her influence on me and countless other people, including my co-artists, James Ian and Gaelynn Lea. The song was released by RAMPD Records, and the music video—featuring top viral sign language performers, Tony winner Ali Stroker and diverse, queer, and disabled crew—debuted on MTV.com and found support from folks like Google, Coldplay, and BETSoul. We had no idea it would go viral and become a disability pride anthem of sorts, screening on Diversity Day at the Cannes Festival, being honored with a Shorty Award, winning two International Songwriting Competition awards, and finding tons of coverage. It is a song about lifting up our communities, and through mainstream exposure, it got a lot of folks thinking and talking about disability, just like the episode of *Drunk History* had done for me.

**As a GRAMMYs Chapter Board Governor, what initiatives are you most passionate about promoting within the organization?**

I've thoroughly enjoyed serving on a number of music industry Boards and Committees, including the National Independent Venue Association, Songwriters of North America, the Audio Engineering Society, and others. Sitting as a GRAMMYs Board Governor on the New York chapter, I serve on the Advocacy Committee and the Songwriters and Composers Wing. I am super proud to have spearheaded the New York Chapter Diversity Equity and Inclusion Taskforce in 2022, where we focus on amplifying and fostering community for the many identity groups contributing to today's music ecology.

**You've worked with major companies like Netflix and Sony Pictures Television on disability-inclusive solutions. Can you share some examples of these collaborations and their outcomes?**

RAMPD does two things really well: equipping the music industry with inclusive solutions—programming and people—and connecting music professionals with disabilities, neurodivergence, and other conditions with community, resources, access, and opportunity. We work on programs that amplify Disability Culture, bring awareness to our contributions, and promote equitable inclusion within the industry while working to shape the way folks with disabilities, neurodivergence, and other chronic conditions are viewed—from inspirational or tragic to talented and competitive. We've had the honor of working with some great organizations, firms, labels, and educational institutions (later recruiting some of those folks to be on our Advisory Board) on everything from workshops, panels, and market research think tanks to ads campaigns and performance lineups, to event or venue accessibility and belonging consultations. RAMPD has been very busy, and we are super proud of our work's impact on the industry.

**What was it like hosting PBS' American Masters series "Renegades," and how do you select the stories you feature on the show?**

It was an honor working on the series, traveling the nation, and working with the different teams, all led by filmmakers with disabilities. Aiming to debut Fall 2024, the five-episode series highlights five American rebels and revolutionaries with disabilities who've helped shape America, and five teams of disabled filmmakers produced, directed, and wrote each episode—the episodes. When series creator and FWD-Doc co-founder Day Al-Mohamed, who served as Director of Disability Policy at the White House, tapped me to host, I jumped in. It has been a transformational experience deep-diving into these renegades. I look forward to the world learning about these unsung American heroes and to what's to come. This is an impactful opportunity to have disability-centered in front and beyond the camera, in the director's chair, and hosting.

The LUM, Lima Peru 2023  
Photo credit: Rodrigo de Quesada - Lachi singing in Chio Lecca Dress



"I found that I wasn't the only professional artist in real spaces afraid to disclose my disability, condition, or neurodivergence for fear of being viewed as non-competitive."



*“Every successful career begins with honing your craft. Be authentic. Lean into your strengths, what you love, and who you are, and infuse that unique part of yourself.”*

**Your bejeweled glam canes have become a fashion statement. How do you use fashion to make a statement about disability pride?**

I consider my glam canes a means to combat erasure and eviscerate stigma. For so long, and as well today, so many people, disabled, neurodivergent, or non-disabled alike, do all they can to pretend disability does not exist. My canes—bejeweled with different color rhinestones to match my evening gowns—are an extension of my authentic self, boisterousness, high fashion, and disability pride. So often, folks view disability as something to pity, help, or save, but not Lachi. When people see me walking down the street with 6-inch heels and a matching bedazzled cane, they dive out of the way as all of their stereotypes come crumbling down. We now sell the glam canes online and watch as all types, from young Swifties to men in suits, send over pics of their newfound confidence. It's one of my most flagrant and widely impactful methods of advocacy. And I don't have to say a word.

**Can you discuss a memorable moment or achievement you're particularly proud of in your advocacy work?**

Outside of being deemed USA Today's 2024 Woman of the Year? It would have to be our GRAMMY's red carpet takeover! At the 2024 GRAMMYS, we at RAMPD worked diligently and were able to get a host of our members onto different carpets, including the official GRAMMY's Red Carpet. We had wheelchairs, prosthetics, and glam canes all up and down the press line, getting photographed by the press, speaking to outlets on different disability issues, and really celebrating Disability Culture for the non-disabled and disability communities alike to see, join, and amplify. Our community partnership with the GRAMMYS is one we at RAMPD hold dear, as the Recording Academy was a very early supporter of our mission to bring disability inclusion to the music industry.

**What advice would you give to aspiring artists and musicians with disabilities who are looking to break into the industry?**

Stay ready. You don't have to get ready if you stay ready. That means investing in being undeniable at your craft, infusing your talent with an authentic personal brand, and showing up. Whether it be hours learning from YouTube, rehearsing, taking lessons, or interning, every successful career begins with honing your craft. Be authentic. Lean into your strengths, what you love, and who you are, and infuse that unique part of yourself—the thing that makes you stand out—into your art and/or your personal brand. And, of course, show up! Virtually or in person, get out there. Network, scope out, and support your colleagues in the industry. Then rinse and repeat.

April Lockhart photoshoot, NYC 2024 — (Wardrobe credit: Hannah Howard)

*“I consider my glam canes a means to combat erasure and eviscerate stigma. For so long, and as well today, so many people, disabled, neurodivergent, or non-disabled alike, do all they can to pretend disability does not exist.”*





Zara Al Ali

Photo Credit: Tony Palliser of Studio 49



studio **49**  
 photography





HOW TO LEAVE A LASTING IMPRESSION AT THE 2024

# Australian Fashion Week

Australian Fashion Week stands as a beacon of creativity and innovation in the global fashion landscape. As the Asia-Pacific region's largest and most influential fashion event, it provides a platform for established designers and emerging talent to showcase their vision to a global audience. For designers aiming to make a lasting impression at this prestigious event, strategic planning and execution are paramount. Here are some tips to stand out and leave a mark at Australian Fashion Week:

## Craft Your Unique Identity

Defining your unique style and aesthetic is crucial in a diverse and vibrant fashion scene. ForbesStyle recommends designers embrace their individuality and showcase their distinctive voice through their collections. Whether they draw inspiration from Australian landscapes or infuse designs with cultural elements, sticking to their brand identity allows them to stand out in a crowded field.

## Embrace Sustainability

With the fashion industry facing increasing scrutiny over its environmental impact, prioritizing sustainability has become imperative. ForbesStyle advises designers to incorporate eco-friendly materials and ethical practices into their collections. By responding to the rising need for eco-friendly clothing, designers can position themselves as forward-thinking leaders in the industry.

## Harness the Power of Social Media

StarCentral magazine underscores the importance of leveraging social media as a platform for brand interaction and promotion. Designers are encouraged to utilize platforms like Instagram and TikTok to build anticipation around their collections and exchange behind-the-scenes material with their audience. Collaborating with influencers and industry insiders can further amplify brand visibility leading up to Australian Fashion Week.

## Network Strategically

Australian Fashion Week presents networking possibilities for designers to meet industry experts and possible partners. StarCentral suggests that designers approach networking strategically, seeking out meaningful connections and partnerships that align with their brand values and objectives. Building relationships with influencers, media, and buyers can open doors to future opportunities and collaborations.

## Prioritise Attention to Detail

In the competitive environment of Australian Fashion Week, StarCentral emphasizes the importance of meticulous attention to detail. From runway presentation to styling and accessories, every aspect of the showcase should reflect the designer's commitment to craftsmanship and excellence. Paying close attention to the finer details sets a designer apart and leaves a lasting impression on attendees.

## Tell a Compelling Story

StarCentral encourages designers to infuse their collections with compelling narratives that resonate with audiences. Whether inspired by personal experiences, cultural heritage, or social issues, storytelling adds depth and meaning to the designs.

## Stay True to Your Vision

Amidst the whirlwind of Australian Fashion Week, ForbesStyle reminds designers to stay true to their creative vision and values. While seeking inspiration from trends and industry influences, maintaining authenticity is paramount. Designers are encouraged to trust their instincts, push boundaries, and showcase their unique perspective on fashion.

In conclusion, StarCentral emphasizes that success at Australian Fashion Week is not merely about showcasing the latest trends but about making a memorable statement that resonates with audiences.





## CAN OXYGEN BOOST

*Metabolism?*

As beauty professionals, we continuously search for advanced treatments that not only enhance our offerings but also improve our clients' overall wellness. This article delves into the considerably revolutionary Slimyonik Air Bodystyler, an advanced beauty tool combining oxygen therapy with pressure massage to optimise body styling treatments. This system uses scientific principles to assist clients in achieving weight loss through an accelerated metabolism. Oxygen plays a crucial role in intensifying metabolic processes.

Furthermore, we'll introduce the Byonik facial machine. The Byonik laser tailors skin rejuvenation treatments to each client's unique heartbeat, providing assistance in anti-aging solutions. Both systems are available on Beauty Technology, which founder Phil Willmann claims is a platform to find "medical-grade treatments that achieve great results for customers, earning you loyalty and 5-star reviews in the process". Together, these technologies offer a potent combination for professionals looking to expand their treatment repertoire to include holistic solutions for body contouring and skin health.

Can oxygen help you lose weight?

Well, as we know, oxygen is essential for many bodily functions, but especially for metabolism and fat burning. Oxygen facilitates the metabolic process by helping to break down food molecules to release energy. Oxygen is also an integral part of fat oxidation.

In a 2014 study, Researchers from the University of New South Wales, Prof. Andrew Brown and Ruben Meerman, demonstrated that the majority of weight loss is actually exhaled as carbon dioxide. This insight corrects our common misconception that fat converts directly into energy or heat. Instead, according to this insight, excess dietary carbohydrates and proteins transform into triglycerides, which consist of carbon, hydrogen, and oxygen atoms and are broken down via oxidation, which is then breathed out. In the same paper, the researchers studied the fact that for every 10 kg of human fat oxidised, approximately 29 kg of oxygen must be inhaled, producing 28 kg of CO<sub>2</sub> and 11 kg of H<sub>2</sub>O.

So what does the Slimyonik do?

Well, the Slimyonik suit increases the body's intake of oxygen, thereby aiding this oxidation process. It also combines personalised pressure massage treatments with computer-assisted pressure wave massage, which converts body fat into water and carbon dioxide – a natural by-product of metabolic processes – using oxygen to enhance fat breakdown.

The system introduces oxygen-rich ambient air into the body's tissues, simulating the effects of physical exercise. This innovation provides a non-invasive method of improving physical well-being by increasing the body's oxygen levels by up to 40% – vital in an environment where sedentary lifestyles and pollutants often reduce tissue oxygen levels.

In addition to increasing the body's oxygen uptake, the suit's integrated pressure therapy and oxygen-enriched air activation significantly improve lymphatic drainage, enhancing the body's natural detoxification processes.







The system also supports fat reduction, boosts circulation and aids in detoxification. It enhances skin health by aiding in cellulite reduction, skin firming, and reducing puffiness and swelling. The benefits are tangible, as seen in Slimyonik before and after images and Slimyonik reviews from users who report significant improvements in body contour and overall health.

A Slimyonik treatment can equate to a 5km Nordic-walking pace in terms of calorie burn and metabolic activation, with clients potentially burning up to 400 calories within 24 hours of a session due to the increased oxygen flow. This makes Slimyonik an excellent choice for those looking to enhance their silhouette, reduce water retention, and eliminate lactic acid, offering a relaxing, massage-like experience with the benefits of a sports massage.

Expanding beauty services with Byonik

Adding the Byonik Pulse Triggered Laser to your services complements the Slimyonik Air Bodystyler by offering a comprehensive beauty experience. This unique facial laser machine is one of the world's only systems that tailors skin repair and rejuvenation to the individual's heartbeat, offering personalised treatment that combats ageing at the cellular level.

The Byonik treatment uses a cold pulse-triggered dual-wavelength, 658nm red light and 806nm near-infrared light diodes laser that synchronises with each client's heartbeat to optimise energy delivery and enhance the absorption of antioxidants in the Byonik hyaluronic acid gel used during treatment. This ensures maximum benefits from each session, providing immediate and long-lasting hydration, lifting, and lightening effects.

The Byonik pulse triggered laser operates at a deep cellular level, enhancing enzyme activity and electron transport. Utilising dual-wavelength laser technology, the Byonik machine improves signs of ageing, skin firmness, and texture by stimulating collagen and elastin production. This comprehensive approach renders Byonik ideal for addressing a variety of skin conditions.

The treatment is painless, operates at body temperature without heat, and is non-ablative, allowing clients to resume normal activities immediately post-treatment.

In the evolving landscape of beauty technology, Slimyonik and Byonik stand at the forefront of non-invasive treatments that blend science with wellness. By integrating these systems, you can offer not just treatments but transformative experiences tailored to individual physiological needs. Slimyonik's body contouring through enhanced oxygenation and lymphatic drainage complements Byonik's targeted skin rejuvenation, providing a holistic solution to wellness and beauty.

Together, these technologies empower beauty professionals to deliver outstanding results and enable clients to adopt self-care routines that promote long-term health and aesthetics, ushering in a new era of personalised beauty treatments where technology and human touch converge to redefine beauty care possibilities.





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