
THE ART of EXPRESSION

PHOTOGRAPHER **JESSICA ANTOLA**
FOCUSES HER LENS ON FASHION AND
STYLE AROUND THE GLOBE.

HUMAN BEINGS, WHEREVER WE ARE, have creative urges for self-expression,” says Brooklyn-based photographer Jessica Antola, who has spent the last 10 years capturing images of people from all over the world in their traditional dress. In 2004, Antola visited the mountainous Chin State of Burma, where she encountered women with facial tattoos who wore bright woven tunics. At the time, the country was still cut off from tourism and outside influence, and Antola wondered how local traditions—

and the fashion that accompanies them—might change when the borders opened up. “In the back of my mind, I had the feeling that this was not how it was always going to be,” she says. Since then, Antola has traveled from the highlands of West Papua, Indonesia, to the villages outside Kaolack, Senegal. She’s most interested in places where new materials and ideas are mixing with existing customs to create fascinating frontiers of fashion. “This is a color study, an identity study, a study of where I’ve been,” Antola says. —*Serena Renner*



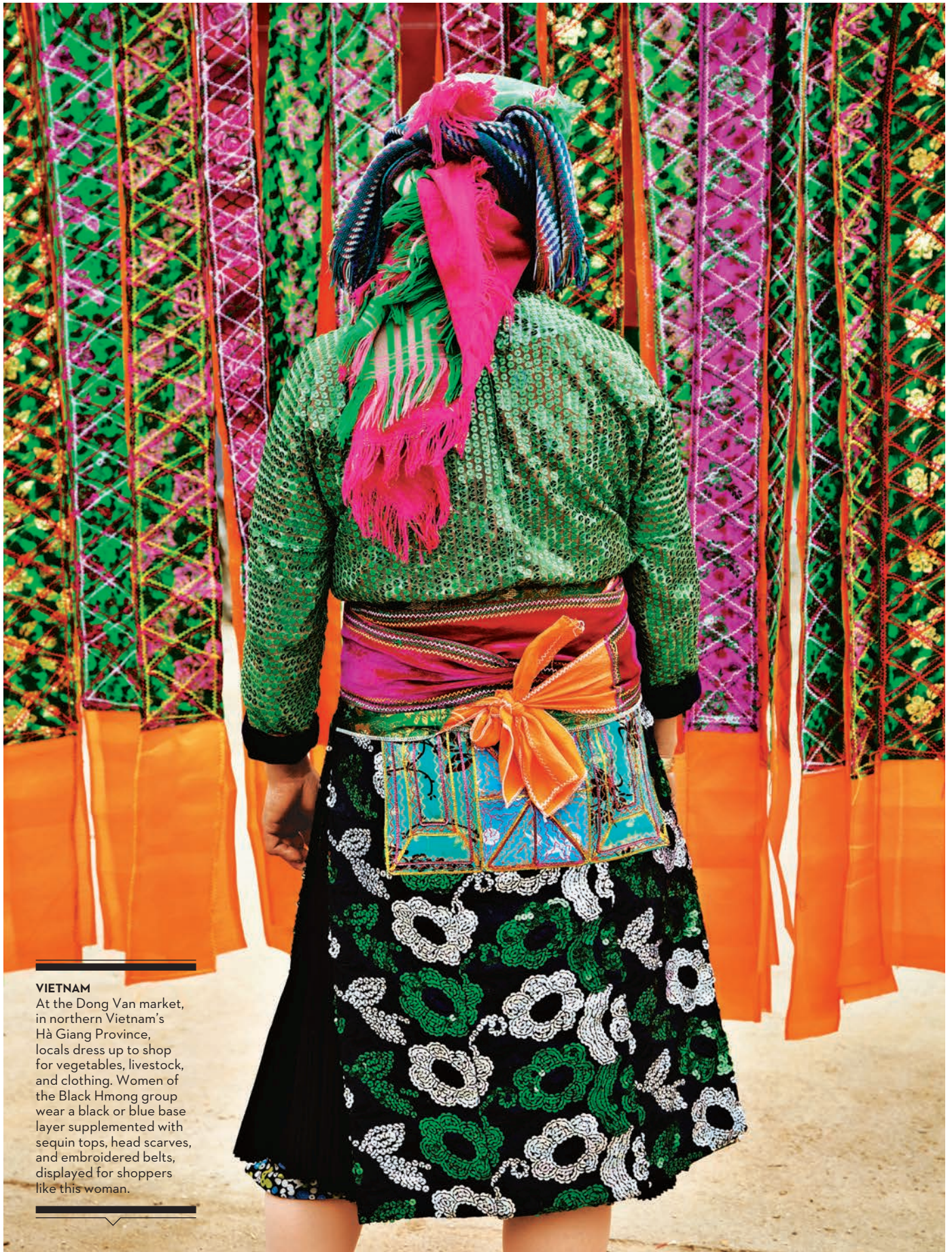
SENEGAL

"The people of Senegal are beautiful spots of color," says photographer Jessica Antola. Women wear dresses and headpieces made of Dutch wax fabric, a shiny material decorated with repeated patterns. Today, such images as cell phones and diamond rings appear in the fabrics, which were first introduced to West Africa in the 1800s.



ETHIOPIA

A country almost twice the size of Texas, Ethiopia is home to more than 80 ethnic minority groups and many distinctive styles of dress. The Arbore people live in the Omo Valley in southwest Ethiopia, and women adorn themselves with bright beaded necklaces, watchband links, and light shawls to cover their heads, which are shaven to symbolize virginity.



VIETNAM

At the Dong Van market, in northern Vietnam's Hà Giang Province, locals dress up to shop for vegetables, livestock, and clothing. Women of the Black Hmong group wear a black or blue base layer supplemented with sequin tops, head scarves, and embroidered belts, displayed for shoppers like this woman.



BURMA

A chief and his wife in the Chin State show their ceremonial attire of handwoven textiles and accessories made of cowry shells. "Many women, like the chief's wife, had their faces covered in tattoos," Antola says. "Historically, women did this to protect themselves from slavery. It's incredible that traditions like this still exist."



WEST PAPUA

“Meeting the Yali people of Indonesia felt like meeting ancient humans,” Antola says. The *koteka* gourds men wear over their genitalia and the rattan hoops around their waist function well in their environment. In the past few decades, missionaries have introduced Western-style clothing and accessories such as the baseball cap adapted by this man.
