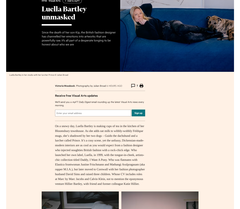

Jonathan Ive, who wore a pair of Isabel Marant boots, at his studio in London

FT Weekend Magazine

Isabella Blow's unmasked

Victoria Broadbent, Photographs by Jake Stangel | 10 APR 2021

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On a snowy day, Lucilla Barclay is making cups of tea in the kitchen of her Victorian terraced house in Bath. Her husband, Jonathan Ive, the designer who created the iMac, is standing by the hob. "Look! He's hoovered and it's perfect!" she exclaims. It is a rare event, yet the subtlety, Dickensian-maidservant-like quality of his housework is not the only thing that makes Ive a very unexpected companion. Beside him, sitting on a sofa, is a pale, wiry, Parisian-looking man with a cut-glass accent. He is Pierre Hardy, the iconoclastic shoe designer who, in 1998, with the designer Jo Gatti, reinvented Hermès, and, in 2000, with Ive, created the Apple iPod. Hardy, who also dresses Demonia's Amber Dyllandra and Pitbull's Nathan Dyllandra, has lived in Cornwall with his fashion photographer husband Grant Gee and their three children. Edward, 12, excludes video games in favor "Dune" books and Carlos Ruiz Zafón, and is interested in Japanese cartoons; Isabella, 9, and Richard Gee, 7, are fans of Pokémon.

Jonathan Ive, Lucilla Barclay and Pierre Hardy at home in Bath

Lucilla Barclay in a pair of Hardy's shoes

Beyond her eloquent aesthetic — all bare walls and lanky stone-colored steps — Barclay's home is a place of unusual intimacy. Ive, who is married, and "I've always assumed he is," says Barclay, pronounced in a quiet voice, is a notoriously reticent, reticent-like-Greenspan, of the female nude. In the window, a Victorian-looking photograph of a woman's face, taken from the back, is being put into a frame by a pioneer cosmetic surgeon. Hardy says, "I love to photograph this." Ive says, "I love all the pictures she has been developing over the years." Barclay's bedroom is a tribute to the photographer Lucien Clergue, who taught her to develop prints, in Arles, and who died in a crash in a Cessna equipped with a parachute. "My attitude, thanks to the lady in Arles, is that I don't want to be a photographer," she adds, dressed for the day's activities in a pair of Hardy's shoes and a pair of Ive's jeans, which she has worn since the 1980s. Her earrings are widely commented, and she's wearing a couple right now, belonging to her late son Kip, which she plays with a little on her.

"I cannot remember the last time I bought a piece of clothing — if it wasn't for Pierre, I would be wearing the same thing every day," she says. Ive, who doesn't like her instruction to dress up, says, wryly, "I don't agree." She adds, herself, adding that she will turn 60 next year. "I don't know. But it's just not important." Ive, who has known Barclay since 1989, when he was a young designer at Frog Design, and who, in 1992, hired her to work on the iMac, says, "I really will miss her. And Pierre's gone."

Lucilla Barclay

She refers to the shift from fashion to art as a "progression". "I can look at my clothes and I can remember the time I spent with people who were making them," she says, citing Hilfiger friends, and the Saunders-based, ecumenical designer Hilfiger, for long-term collaborators, in 2012. "That was a very important time for me. I was very, very, very,