

# DRIES



# VAN NOTEN

Dries van Noten speaks with care and reserve, like someone well aware of his privileged position in the fashion industry. In Dries' case this is a standing that has been deftly and meticulously carved over the years, a feat which, in the eyes of many, makes it even more well deserved. For someone who started designing under his own name when few in the business envisioned that fashion could come from Antwerp, let alone pronounce Belgian brand names, the

the next, the next – you don't have time to look back'. Why is it good not to look back?

**DRIES** It is good to look back, but I don't want to be nostalgic. I don't see the point of dressing up in clothes from the past; there's a reason why fashion changes with the times.

**ANJA** But nostalgia seems to have become a very important element in contemporary fashion – why is that do you think?

**DRIES** People think that things were

## On Avoiding Traps, Trickery and Other Shenanigans

success and rave reviews that Dries is currently enjoying have been a long time coming. Today he is one of the few remaining independent designers, an accomplishment that makes his brand somewhat of an anomaly in the contemporary fashion industry. Nevertheless, Dries, as the designer himself coyly intimates, has to start thinking about his future. Could it be that another of the enduring bastions of fashion sovereignty is about to end up in the hands of a business conglomerate?

**ANJA** In an interview you once said that 'The good thing about fashion is that you always go ahead, the next,

easier or more pleasant in the past, but that's not the case. My team and I often have discussions about this. It's interesting because I'm an older guy now and they are all very young. When we talk about the 1970s for instance, they think about ABBA as one of the icons of the decade. They don't know that ABBA at the time was considered to be *extremely* bad taste – vulgar and completely unfashionable. ABBA was still wearing platform shoes when everyone else had already moved on. What I mean to say is that it's not always the best versions of the past that live on.

**ANJA** How do you negotiate the conflict between, as you've been known to