

## Advanced Style: the fashion blog that is putting older women first



1) "Your body is your best friend in the entire world," says Ilona Royce Smithkin, a flame-haired nonagenarian fashion icon and one of the stars of the new film Advanced Style. Royce Smithkin has many opinions about clothes – and many more about life. "I think people expect too much of themselves, and that's not for happy-making," she explains from her tiny West Village walk-up. "In trying to be perfect, you miss half of your life."

2) The documentary in which Royce Smithkin appears is the brainchild of photographer Ari Seth Cohen and filmmaker Lina Plioplyte. San

Diego-raised Cohen founded the blog Advanced Style in August 2008, and it quickly became a sensation for showcasing one of fashion's most unjustly overlooked demographics: women over 60. 中略

3) "What I present on my blog is very positive," says Cohen, who is 32. "I don't really show the negative aspects of ageing, because that's already in the media. But in making the movie we definitely wanted to show the struggles." He becomes quiet. "It's something that we usually don't have to think about when we're young – losing friends."

4) Cohen, a bespectacled graduate of the University of Washington, has had an interest in the elderly since childhood. He says if he hadn't done Advanced Style, he'd be working in a nursing home, and his grandmothers, Bluma and Helen, had a big impact on his early life. He describes himself as "in awe of" Bluma, a retired librarian, as a kid. "We would watch old movies together and I would try on my grandfather's clothes and play in her cupboards," he says. Helen, meanwhile, dressed every day in Escada suits and gold jewellery. "We used to go to Los Angeles and people would ask if she was a movie star." 中略

5) Although the film showcases its subjects' diversity – the women have very different lifestyles, they come from different ethnic and class backgrounds, and their personal styles range from colourful and anarchic to sedate and classic – common themes emerge across the seven stories. Financial struggles. Family relationships. Dealing with ageing and loss. One of the subjects – the 95-year-old style icon Zelda Kaplan – died during production. Kaplan fainted in the front row of the Joanna Mastroianni show at New York fashion week and was rushed to hospital. She never regained consciousness. Another subject, Lynn Dell Cohen, was hospitalised after a ruptured gallbladder.

6) In the US, as all over the west, the population is ageing. There are now more than 57 million Americans aged 60 and older, according to census data, and the fastest-growing segment of the senior population is people aged 85 and over. According to a 2012 Nielsen survey, Baby Boomers alone are responsible for 49% of purchasing decisions in America, but less than 5% of advertising is currently directed at them. 中略

7) Ageing has, for these women, brought with it a kind of liberation. "We all want some kind of approval," says Lynn Dell Cohen, "but I think you have to like yourself first." "I am not afraid," says Carpati warmly. "That's what age can do for you. It gives you a freedom! I don't care. I must sound outrageous to you, do I?" she says. "I'm free."

8) One of the documentary's most memorable scenes depicts Royce Smithkin in Provincetown, Massachusetts, with Karen, her friend of 55 years. Karen is suffering from dementia, and the two sit in beach chairs holding hands and belting out show tunes. Karen, says Royce Smithkin, passed away last winter. "When you get older, you don't have to have everything," she says. "You don't have to go to every party. Life goes on just the same. When I was younger, if there were six parties, I thought I had to go to every one or I'd miss something. But now, every day living is a party."【May 3, 2014/ the guardian】

flame-haired nonagenarian: (燃えるような)赤毛の90歳代 walk-up: 米略式 (エレベーターのない) アパート brainchild: 頭脳の所産、発明品 showcase: 展示する unjustly: 不公平に overlooked: 無視された demographics: 人口統計 struggle: 苦闘 bespectacled: 眼鏡をかけた awe: 畏敬 emerge: 現れる anarchic: 無秩序の sedate: 落ち着いた ruptured gallbladder: 胆嚢破裂 census: 国勢調査 segment: 部分 outrageous: 突飛な、逸脱した dementia: 認知症 belt out: 大声で歌う show tune: 映画のサントラ

### ★Ice breaker for active discussion★

1. What's your impression when you see the women in the picture above?
2. What is your preference when it comes to fashion? What are your considerations when choosing clothes?
3. When you get very old, how do you imagine your fashion would be?
4. Recently, men pay more attention to fashion compared to before. What is your opinion about it?
5. The movie Advanced Style originated from blogs. Do you have a blog? Do you have a favorite blog site?
6. Make sentences using the following words: brainchild, overlooked, demographics, struggle, awe, emerge, anarchic and outrageous.