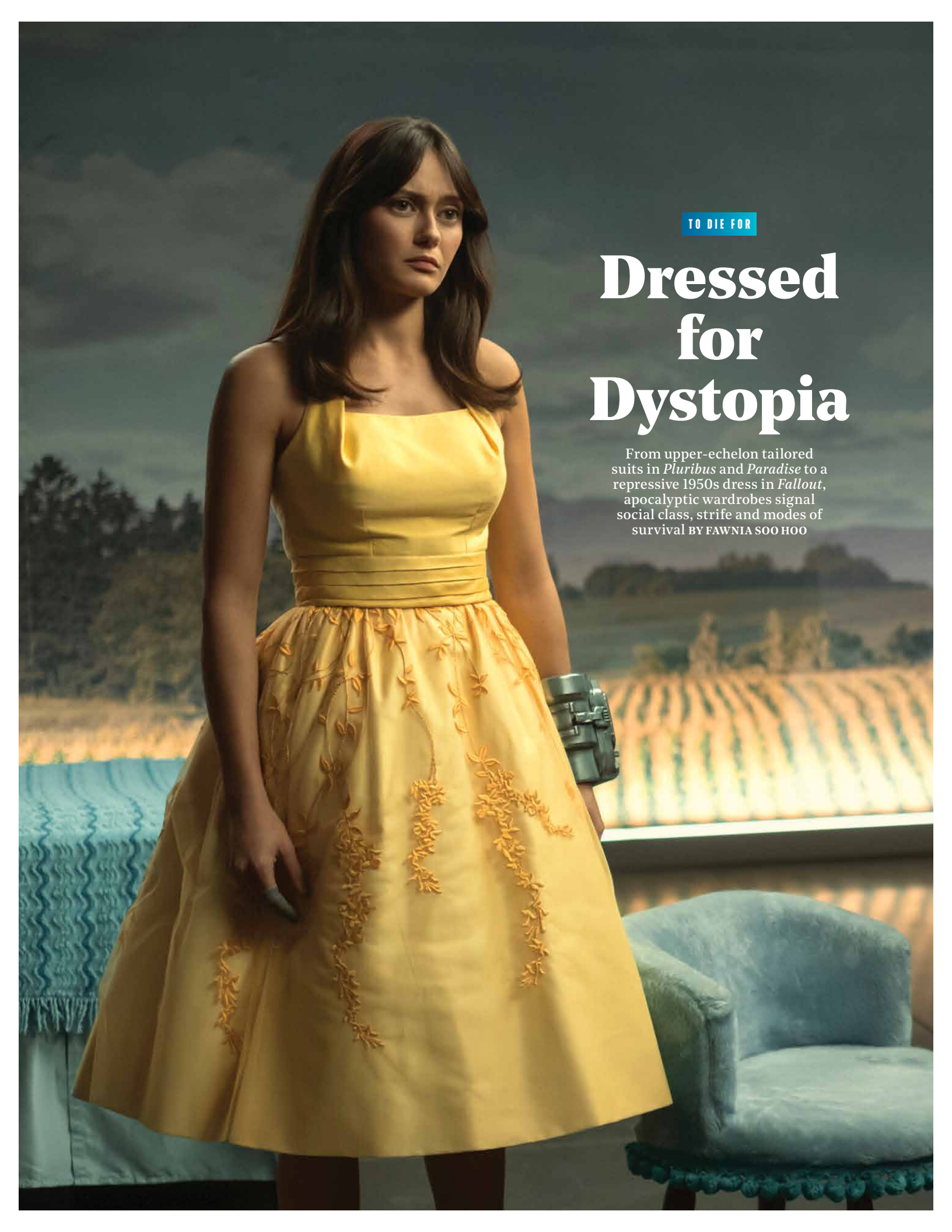


A woman with long brown hair, wearing a bright yellow, off-the-shoulder, knee-length dress with a wide waistband and vertical floral embroidery, stands in a dystopian landscape. She is holding a small, dark, rectangular object in her right hand. In the background, there is a dark, cloudy sky, a field of golden-brown crops, and a blue, textured chair in the foreground. The overall mood is somber and futuristic.

TO DIE FOR

Dressed for Dystopia

From upper-echelon tailored suits in *Pluribus* and *Paradise* to a repressive 1950s dress in *Fallout*, apocalyptic wardrobes signal social class, strife and modes of survival BY FAWNIA SOO HOO



In *Pluribus*, an alien virus has tethered the world's population into a peaceful, polite and compliant hivemind — all except 13 people, including the impeccably dressed Mauritanian playboy, Mr. Diabaté (Samba Schutte). He's reveling in his best life, free of the financial worries, societal boundaries and prejudices he would have faced prior to The Joining.

"He is very hedonistic and pleasure-driven, so when he realizes that he can have anything he wants, he's not thinking about world peace," says *Pluribus* costume designer Jennifer L. Bryan. "His idea is, 'Every fantasy and wish is going

to be granted unequivocally, so I want to dress the part of a dandy, a pleasure-seeking guy.'"

For Diabaté's elaborate bespoke suits, show creator Vince Gilligan's go-to costume designer looked to the Congolese Sapeurs, whose dandyism — rooted in colonial influence and reframed as postcolonial self-expression — centers on vibrant, designer label-filled sartorial rebellion. In contrast, unless The Joined's hivemind humans are performing one of Diabaté's dream scenarios, they rely on shared, reused clothing — regardless of style or culture — for functionality and survival.

Ensconced in Elvis Presley's



Left: *Fallout*'s Lucy MacLean (Ella Purnell) rejects her father's governance by adding combat boots to a dainty yellow dress he picks out for her. Above: Julianne Nicholson and Thomas Doherty's characters' wardrobes in *Paradise* exemplify the class divide between the bunkered wealthy and scavenging renegades.

actual Las Vegas penthouse suite, Diabaté assembles The Joined to bring his ambitious *Casino Royale* vision to life. In a vintage white tuxedo, he runs the table, while a cast of cosplaying characters, including a *Breakfast at Tiffany's* Audrey Hepburn and The King, fulfill their glam '60s-era caricatures: decked out in mod minis, glittering gowns and all the accoutrements. When Diabaté has had enough, The Joined abruptly stop, obediently remove all their jewelry and costumes, and begin cleanup duties. "The curtains close on the fantasy," says Bryan.

Diabaté's not the only one thriving in dystopia. In *Paradise's* climate disaster-caused global collapse, a select group of elites, essential

personnel and billionaires — who funded one massive, self-sustaining underground bunker — all dwell in seemingly idyllic, made-for-TV neighborhoods.

"The billionaires were the only ones who could send trunks of clothing and everything they'd need for their postapocalyptic life. They're the only ones who are still sharp, elegant, precise and tailored," says season two costume designer Coxy, breaking down the stronghold's hierarchical dress code. (Season one was designed by Sarah Evelyn.) "Whereas everyone else has more of a vintage look, even if they're inside 'paradise.'"

The inhabitants who are lower on the totem pole go through the motions of normal

life in recycled pre-bunker-era clothing, but oligarch Samantha "Sinatra" Redmond (Julianne Nicholson) calls the shots in formidable pantsuits.

"She wears very nice suits, indeed, a mix of Saint Laurent and Céline. It was definitely on the higher-end vibe," says Coxy.

When a genius quantum physicist, Link (Thomas Doherty), and his ragtag armada of nuclear reactor-disarming academics — outfitted in scavenged survivalist gear — knock on the bunker door, Sinatra power-plays in classic Ralph Lauren pinstripes. "That cashmere gray suit is in her comfort zone where she still feels protected and shielded," says Coxy.

In *The Testaments*, set in the theocratic Republic of Gilead, exacting wardrobes also delineate a rigid social order under a brutal patriarchal regime. At Aunt Lydia's (Ann Dowd) premarital prep school, tightly controlled, color-coded uniforms enforce hierarchy among privileged yet subjugated young women. Costume designer Leslie Kavanagh meticulously custom-dyed various textured fabrics for cloaks, skirts, blouses and demure cardigans for the daughters of elite commanders as they are groomed to become wives.

Agnes (Chase Infiniti), daughter of a top commander, and her friends are Plums, teenagers on the cusp of menstruation, before progressing to Greens. The younger girls project innocence as soft Pinks. Kavanagh also differentiated the characters through nature-referential details to represent "blossoming," such as florals and feathers, on their pivotal Green gala gowns.

"I paid attention to showing where all of our girls are in the pecking order within Gilead," says Kavanagh, who also costume designed the final



two seasons of the preceding Margaret Atwood adaptation, *The Handmaid's Tale*. "Agnes is our most privileged Plum, so she had 100 percent beautiful silk. The fabric draped so beautifully — it was like liquid. It moved and flowed wherever she did, and that was, of course, the goal."

Becka (Mattea Conforti), Agnes' best friend, is afforded Plum status at Aunt Lydia's only because her father, Dr. Grove (Randal Edwards), is the dentist to the commanders and their wives. So she's held to a different standard.

"Becka is constantly afraid to step out of line with her uniform," says Kavanagh, who



From top: Purnell in MacLean's vault suit; in *Murderbot*, characters wear uniform gray space suits. Opposite: Mr. Diabaté wears a vintage white tux when enacting a *Casino Royale* fantasy in *Pluribus*; costumes in *The Testaments* depict "the pecking order within Gilead."

PHOTOGRAPH BY FALLON LORENZ; SET DESIGNER FROM FALLON LORENZ; SKETCH COURTESY OF AMAN; PARADISE: PHILIP MARCHAND; PLURIBUS: COURTESY OF APPLE TV; PLURIBUS SKETCH: JENNIFER BRYAN; TESTAMENTS: DISNEY; STEVE WILKE; TESTAMENTS COSTUME COURTESY OF DISNEY



"HIS IDEA IS 'EVERY FANTASY AND WISH IS GOING TO BE GRANTED UNEQUIVOCALLY,' SO I WANT TO DRESS THE PART OF A DANDY."

JENNIFER L. BRYAN, ON MR. DIABATÉ IN *PLURIBUS*

kept her in pristine, full Plum regalia. "But if Agnes had her bolero off, Becka might, because it seems like the appropriate moment. She's just always mindful that she doesn't have the same privileges as the other girls who are actual commanders' daughters."

In the year 2296, *Fallout's* former Vault 33 golden girl Lucy MacLean (Ella Purnell) roams the nuclear war-ravaged Wasteland in her increasingly battle-worn, company-issued vault suit in search of her father, Hank (Kyle MacLachlan). Once a trusted community leader and doting father, Hank abducts her to a secret bunker reserved for the operation's ultra-elite





management. “You’ll be my little girl again,” Hank tells a disillusioned Lucy. He attempts to reassert control over their fractured relationship by pressuring her into wearing a golden-yellow halter dress with soft tulle layers and delicate floral vine embroidery.

“We’re juxtaposing it with her vault suit,” says season two costume designer Dayna Pink, who reimagined and custom-designed the intricate dress based on the video game. (Amy Westcott was the costume designer for season one.) “I wanted it to be pretty and feminine and to really read as a period piece.”

The retro-futuristic 1950s silhouette evokes patriarchal domesticity and presentation, while reinforcing Lucy and a suit-clad Hank’s elite status in contrast to the dust-covered denizens of the former Las Vegas above ground. They carry on in reclaimed hotel uniforms and showgirl feathers. A defiant Lucy begrudgingly dons the Stepford-esque dress but keeps her rugged combat boots to reject her privilege and her father’s control — and to fight the next battle.

“[The dress] was Hank’s fantasy of what would be,” says Pink. “The boots did the opposite and grounded it. So, his idea and her idea.”

Those dynamics merge in *Murderbot*, where recycled clothing becomes a form of resistance to the oppressive, dehumanizing corporate supremacy in an interstellar, hyper-capitalist dystopia. To the Preservation Alliance team, led by progressive empath Dr. Mensah (Noma Dumezweni), sustainability is a way of life, along with universal health care, education for all and no forced labor. Still, the PresAux crew acquiesces to a corporation-mandated SecUnit (Alexander Skarsgard), a sentient blend of cloned human tissue and advanced robotics, who initially deems them “a bunch of hippie scientists” in “handmade clothes.”

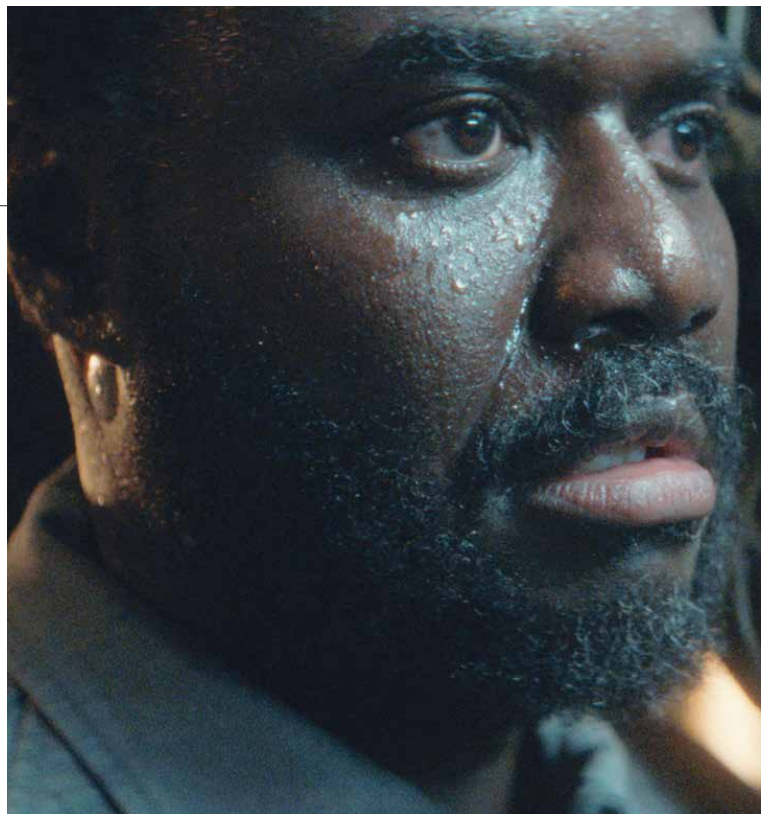
“Just in terms of fighting the capitalist status quo, they’re wearing a lot of repaired clothing,” says costume designer Carrie Grace, who collaborated closely with the *Murderbot* specialty suit designer Laura Jean “LJ” Shannon.

Grace emphasized natural fibers in the PresAux civilian wear, as well as upcycling. Gurathin (David Dastmalchian) arrives at corporate headquarters in a “pieced-together” cashmere sweater, while Bharadwaj (Tamara Podemski) armors up in a quilted jacket crafted from bedspreads, both created by Toronto-based slow-fashion designer Diana Coatsworth.

To reach their interplanetary destination, the PresAux team dons homogenizing gray space suits for a prolonged wormhole journey. Along the way, the creative advocates of self-expression personalize their uniforms, which Grace designed as modular components — jackets convert into vests with zip-off sleeves and jumpsuits transition into rompers.

“They added little bits and pieces of their own flair,” says Grace, referring to textile art on biologist Arada’s (Tattiawna Jones) skirt and lawyer Pin-Lee’s (Sabrina Wu) vest, and graffiti line work on wormhole expert Ratthi’s (Akshay Khanna) shirt and cropped pants.

“That told such a story about their state of mind and worldview,” continues Grace. “It’s a way to show that without actually speaking those words.” **THR**



LET IT ROLL

Summoning Stanley Kubrick

Keeping in line with epics of the sci-fi horror genre, earned close-ups and as few cuts as possible is how editor Regis Kimble approached *Alien: Earth*

BY JAMES HIBBERD

Writer-director Noah Hawley has a style he’s developed over the past 16 years working with editor Regis Kimble across their FX shows *Fargo*, *Legion* and, now, *Alien: Earth*: What is the lowest number of cuts they can get away with?

“Noah’s totally into trying to tell the story with the least amount of cuts,” Kimble says. “He likes to give the audience an opportunity to extract what they want from [a scene], instead of force-feeding people

coverage.” Another stylistic preference: holding wide shots and rarely indulging in close-ups. “We stay wide in a lot of places and sit in shots for quite a long time,” he explains. “We do use close-ups, but they’re earned by the time we land on them, rather than having every line of dialogue in a close-up.”

It’s a style that’s somewhat similar to that of Stanley Kubrick, as well as the Coen brothers (the latter whom, of course, created the original theatrical version of *Fargo*). It’s also quite suitable for an outright

ALIEN: EARTH COURTESY OF FX; FARGO COURTESY OF APPLE TV+