

Wildlife Shoulders back

Having languished for nigh on 20 years in style Siberia, that mainstay of 1980s power dressing, the shoulder pad (glance right and then realign your jaw) is back with a vengeance. Meaner, pointier and more terrifying than ever before, shoulder scaffolding is the latest form of non-invasive body augmentation, likely to outstrip boob jobs in the popularity stakes.

Unlike those other 1980s staples, leggings, puffballs and jangling earrings – which have been revived several times – shoulder pads have never again seen the light of day. Till now. Scorned in hindsight for their absurdly masculine silhouette, square-shouldered jackets were cast off as soon as women realised no amount of dressing like a fella would secure them corporate success.

No longer weighed down by the post-feminist crusade, shoulder pads are now purely ornamental and shaped like pagodas. Gone is the American football-style broad-shouldered pad. In its place an angular pad now underpins scrawny A-listers' sculpted jackets and angular evening dresses. Heading this noughties revival is the French fashion house Balmain, whose spring collection swam with encrusted shoulders on jackets and space-age spangled frocks.

One thing the shoulder pad has not discharged since the 1980s is status. The pointier it is, the better your fashion credentials (Posh nabbed a scarily priapic leather jacket in March). You'll certainly be the centre of attention at a party, if only for the amount of space you occupy. A word of warning: go big, go small, but for heaven's sake don't go *Dynasty*. **Katherine Levy**



Wide choice 1 Joan Collins enjoyed an endless wardrobe of excessive outfits for her role as Alexis in *Dynasty* from 1981 to 1989: 'I suddenly became the poster girl for small hats and massive shoulder pads.'

2 Diana, Princess of Wales, somehow looked elegant even when sporting rugby-style shoulder pads for a 1985 royal tour of Australia. **3** 'I have a lot of vanity,' the singer Grace Jones recently told Jonathan Ross. The fierce diva, pictured here in 1985, favoured the androgynous, with extreme shoulder pads and a 1980s music tour, 'A One Man Show'.



Sharp dressers 8 Shimmering in a sculpted Balmain number at London's Altitude bar in April, Kate Moss looks as though she is ready to be beamed up on to the *Starship Enterprise*. **9** As ever, Victoria Beckham is a slave to what is *en vogue*, wearing an Alexander McQueen sleeveless, shoulder-padded dress while out to dinner with her husband, David, in Milan in March.

10 Sienna Miller showed off a jazzy angular number by Jonathan Saunders at the ShoWest film awards gala at the Paris Hotel Casino in Las Vegas in March.



Launch pads The autumn/winter 09 ready-to-wear collections shouldered each other off the catwalk: **11** At Givenchy bright-hued shoulder pads took centre stage, just visible beneath lace. **12** Alexander McQueen's sadomasochistic shoulders teamed with Leigh Bowery make-up for eerie drama. **13** Dolce & Gabbana's spring/summer show was an architectural triumph of oriental brocade. **14** Balmain, king of the revival, seduced any celebrity worth her sartorial salt.

Sprouting imitators 4 At this year's Brit Awards the singer Estelle was unimpressed when told they had only child sizes left in her dress of choice. **5** Gangly, glamorous Jennifer Connelly rocks this sequined Balmain dress at the February premiere of her 2009 film *He's Just Not That Into You*. **6** In a gravity-defying tuxedo, pop star Rihanna had the air of a misplaced dummy in need of an obliging ventriloquist at the opening of 'The Model as Muse' at the Met in New York in May. **7** Burlesque vamp Dita Von Teese worked an exaggerated 1940s silhouette at last month's Britweek Designer of the Year Fashion Show and Awards in Hollywood.

