

CLOSET *confidential*

CARYN FRANKLIN

*After 33 years in the business,
the fashion legend and
activist's closet is less wardrobe,
more style wonderland*



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Show me a fashion-loving kid growing up in the 1980s or 1990s, and I'll show you someone who spent their Sunday evenings glued to *The Clothes Show*. Favourite presenter? It had to be the outspoken, never-knowingly-under-accessorised Caryn Franklin.

She knew her onions, interviewed everyone from Giorgio Armani to Alexander McQueen, and had her own inimitable style - remember the hats? The dangly earrings? 'People say they grew up with me, and it's lovely,' Franklin tells us at the north London home she shares with her film-maker husband Ian Denyer and her two daughters. 'Christopher Kane and Gareth Pugh have both told me they grew up with nobody to talk to about fashion, and they lived for *The Clothes Show*. I was their "fashion mum".'

And today, she's Team ELLE's fashion mum, slicing the malt loaf she's baked for us and laughing that the MBE she received last year, for her

services to diversity in fashion, is the one thing that her daughters, Mateda, 21, and Roseby, 14, are definitely *not* allowed to pinch from her wardrobe.

After 33 years (really!) on the fashion frontline (12 of them on *The Clothes Show*), the 55-year-old describes herself as a fashion commentator/activist. 'I've always been interested in the ethics of fashion. If my job was just about trends, I'd be bored,' she says. In a nutshell, Franklin does a lot of Very Good Things. She's co-founder of All Walks Beyond The Catwalk with Erin O'Connor and former fashion editor Debra Bourne. The charity lobbies the fashion industry to embrace different body types and skin colours. For the past 20 years, she's been co-chair of Fashion Targets Breast Cancer. Then there's her new Sizing Up Britain - The Future Of Fit campaign to demystify high-street sizing. Using body-mapping technology, the project aims to help shoppers find clothes that fit properly.

Franklin's own closet functions as a potted history of late 20th-century style:



Caryn's closet is an archive of 20th-century style



Words: Kerry Potter; Photography: Laura Allard-Fleischl.

Caryn's London vintage hotspots: 1. Rellik, Westbourne Park (relliklondon.co.uk) 'My go-to store for discerning designer cast-offs.' 2. Stables Market, Camden