

BAZAAR

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AUSTRALIA

Rachael
TAYLOR
EMBRACING
THE FUTURE



The Siren

Grey's Anatomy. Charlie's Angels. Rachael Taylor is determinedly scaling the heights of Hollywood, but on her own terms. *JENNY COONEY CARRILLO* meets the very down-to-earth girl with a soaring career. Photographed by *BENNY HORNE*



Rachael Taylor wears **Emilio Pucci** orange and brown dress, price on application; **Christian Dior** beige jacket, \$4700; **Gucci** orange and gold shoes, \$1060; **Dion Antony** pendant, price on application, worn on **Tiffany & Co.** gold chain, \$520; **Tiffany & Co.** gold lock pendant, \$5200, worn on **Tiffany & Co.** gold chain, \$520. Styled by **Christine Centenera**.



Taylor wears **Wrangler** jumper, \$100.
Opposite page: **Wrangler** jumper, \$100; **Hermès** bustier, \$5555, dress, \$10,190, and boots, \$2070; **Dion Antony** ring, price on application.
Hair note: **ghd** Sea Spray.





Boss Orange jacket, \$869;
Salvatore Ferragamo dress,
price on application; **Gucci**
shoes, \$1060; **Dion Antony**
pendant, price on application,
worn on **Tiffany & Co.**
necklace, \$520; **Tiffany & Co.**
lock pendant, \$5200, worn
on **Tiffany & Co.** necklace,
\$520; **Salvatore Ferragamo**
necklace, \$220; on Taylor's
left hand: **Dion Antony** ring,
price on application; on
Taylor's right arm: **Bulgari**
bracelet, \$1370; **Tiffany & Co.**
bracelet, \$2950, and
rings, \$405 each.



Stella McCartney
jumpsuit, \$2245;
Dion Antony pendant,
price on application, worn
on **Tiffany & Co.** necklace,
\$520; **Tiffany & Co.** lock
pendant, \$5200, worn
on **Tiffany & Co.** necklace,
\$520; on Taylor's left
hand: **Dion Antony** ring,
price on application.



Lanvin bodysuit,
\$1760, skirt, \$2970;
harness, \$1205,
and brooch, \$1365.



Dion Lee for Cue jacket, \$450; Hussein Chalayan dress, \$850; Dion Antony pendant, price on application, worn on Tiffany & Co. necklace, \$520; Tiffany & Co. lock pendant, \$5200, worn on Tiffany & Co. necklace, \$520; on Taylor's left hand: Dion Antony ring, price on application.



Morrison cardigan, \$199; Ralph Lauren dress, \$8000; Hatmaker hat, \$330; Tiffany & Co. necklace, \$520; Tiffany & Co. necklace, \$520, and ring, \$1800; Jordy by Jordan Askill ring, \$220.

Rachael Taylor got her first full-throttle Hollywood experience in 2006, when she was cast in the Jerry Bruckheimer blockbuster *Transformers*.

"I was 21 and it was a pretty big thing to step into after only having done two years of [Australian series] *Headland*, which was pulled off the air for being a disaster," the actor admits over lunch at the Peninsula Hotel in Beverly Hills, Los Angeles. Her reps originally booked the far more "industry" dining room downstairs, but Taylor moved

us to the casual poolside cafe on the rooftop, where she digs into a crab salad and herbal tea to fight off a cold, and declares cheerfully, "This is more my style — much less Hollywood".

The 26-year-old actor from Tasmania knows a lot about Hollywood after experiencing all the hype that accompanies such a franchise film, which also launched the careers of Shia LaBeouf and Megan Fox.

"I found the experience of shooting that film straightaway ultimately rewarding but totally discombobulating," she reflects. "I'm grateful for it, but I'm also glad that period is over because you can go a certain distance on the idea of 'heat' in Hollywood, but then you have to back it up and go back to the grindstone and fight for a body of work. I have this great perspective now that I didn't have back then," she adds, "because back then, they would tell you, 'You're going to be a big star', and they'd make you think everything lives and dies on that one movie and I remember thinking at the time 'If that's true, then I don't care!'."

Taylor followed up *Transformers* with the movie *Bottle Shock*, with Chris Pine and Alan Rickman, and the horror film *Shutter*, with Joshua Jackson. But she also returned to Australia to make films such as *Cedar Boys*, *Summer Coda* and two upcoming films: *Red Dog*, with Josh Lucas, and *25*, co-starring her new beau, Josh Lawson.

Taylor is now filming the hit medical drama *Grey's Anatomy* for eight to 10 episodes, playing Callie's (Sara Ramirez) new baby doctor, Lucy Fields, and she's about to start shooting the highly anticipated TV pilot for the new reboot of *Charlie's Angels*, produced by Drew Barrymore and co-starring Minka Kelly and Annie Ilonzeh as her gun-toting cohorts.

"It would be remiss of me to say I don't want a career in the US or I wouldn't be here," Taylor says between bites of salad. Her hair is loosely pulled back in a bun and she's wearing jeans and a T-shirt under a Carl Kapp-designed metallic-coloured jacket, with a Tibetan good-luck charm around her neck on a red string blessed by the Dalai Lama; a gift from her close friend, Aussie actor Dichen Lachman. She looks surprisingly relaxed given the "heat" that's found her once again, but that's because she knows what she wants this time.

"I think the only way to do it is the way all great actors did it before me, like Nicole [Kidman] and Naomi [Watts] and Rachel [Griffiths] and Toni [Collette]," she explains. "You just do the work and slowly build it up over the years so people can see the work supports you as an actor and an artist."

Taylor grew up in the outer Launceston suburb of Trevallyn, and describes her childhood as idyllic. "We lived on top of this mountain overlooking a gorge and my parents were incredibly

invested in me and gave me everything to have a great life," she recalls. The only child suffered from a stutter and a lisp when she was young. She recovered with speech therapy but was encouraged by her mother to get into community theatre to overcome her shyness. "And I was off and running," she acknowledges with a grin.

The grin remains as she describes her role in *Grey's Anatomy*. "I must be a genius," she brags, "because I'm a 26-year-old internal fetal medicine fellow at Seattle Grace Mercy West, so I'm the smartest, youngest doctor ever to walk the earth."

Taylor is a fan of the long-running medical drama starring Ellen Pompeo and Patrick Dempsey and was flattered when a casting director she knew mentioned her to creator Shonda Rhimes, prompting the TV mogul to write her into the show.

"It's been incredibly rewarding to work with this great group of cast and Ellen Pompeo, in particular, is someone I look up to and admire so much," she says. "She still cares what she's doing after seven years and still pushes and wants the scene to be good. She also gave me advice about shooting *Charlie's Angels* that was really helpful."

The script for the *Charlie's Angels* pilot is still under wraps so Taylor apologises for her uncharacteristic silence on that topic, except to admit she's working hard to get in shape for her role described by *Access Hollywood* as "a skilled con artist and Krav Maga (martial arts) expert".

"I love the action/comedy genre and I wanted to do TV because I was getting frustrated with playing the 'girlfriend of' or the 'best friend of' in feature films at my level," she says. "So it just seemed like a good time in my career to go hang out on a show where the girls get to kick ass."

Taylor does embrace one aspect of Hollywood's glamorous side: fashion. She's almost drooling when asked about the clothes she wore for our shoot earlier in the week.

"They were devastatingly gorgeous, from Prada to Stella McCartney," she gushes. "I'm a real girl, so I love to play dress-up and I think of it as an extension of the creative process. I wish I could tell you otherwise," she admits a little sheepishly, "but if I had the money, I'd be wearing lovely designer garments all the time."

The down-to-earth actor is so chatty and open about this new chapter in her life and career, it's hard to believe it was only last August that she took out an apprehended violence order against her then-boyfriend Matthew Newton after an alleged assault at a Rome hotel that preceded their breakup. She gets serious for a moment and gently acknowledges she's still not ready to go into the details.

"I feel like the only message I ever wanted to say — although later I may change my mind and want to talk about the intricacies of being in a violent relationship — is that violence against women is not to be tolerated," she says firmly. "So the minutiae and gossip and how I feel about it and how my family feel about it and anything else tabloid only dilutes the core thing, which is that it cannot be tolerated."

But her smile quickly returns when she's asked about boyfriend Josh Lawson, who is currently filming his own Showtime TV cable network pilot, *House of Lies*, with Don Cheadle and Kaitlin Bell in New York. "We met making a movie [25], which is a cliché but a good story," she says, beaming. "He's very hard-working and disciplined as an actor and incredibly generous as a person and a real gentleman," she adds. "So I've found a good man and I'm really happy." ■

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Rick Owens grey dress, price on application; **Portmans** grey and black skirt, \$100; and **Zimmermann** black skirt, \$375 (worn underneath); **Dion Antony** pendant, price on application, worn on **Tiffany & Co.** gold necklace, \$520; **Tiffany & Co.** platinum lock pendant, \$5200, worn on **Tiffany & Co.** gold necklace, \$520; on Taylor's right arm: **Bulgari** gold bracelet, \$1370; **Tiffany & Co.** gold bracelet, \$2950; **Melissa Harris** gold bracelet, \$395; **Tiffany & Co.** ring, \$1800; **Jordy by Jordan Askill** ring, \$220. In this portfolio: hair by Renya Xydis for ghd; makeup by Kara Yoshimoto Bua at Tracey Mattingly; manicure by Carla Kay at Cloutier Agency. See Buylines for details and stockists.

