

STYLE

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Amy Allen and Mimi.



ATTITUDES

Story HEIDI YEO

Lifestyle:Read

RHYME REVOLUTION

Does *This Little Piggy Went to Prada* sound familiar? Yes, it's a nursery rhyme — given a wickedly wry twist by new mum Amy Allen in a beautifully illustrated book.

Amy Allen was born and educated in Britain. After working at a number of multinational companies including Burson-Marsteller, DDB Needham, McCann-Ericson, AD-media and Leagas Delaney, she settled in Singapore with her family and founded her own event company, Bespoke Concepts.

So, are you a Shopaholic, Fashion Diva or a Label Queen?

None of the above. I shop like I eat — I binge and fast. I guess that would make me a shopping bulimic! I do love to shop but there is nothing more disappointing than going shopping and finding nothing one wants to buy. It's not just clothes and shoes. I love bookshops, chemists and supermarkets too. Is that sad?

What are your five fave brands?

Champagne Jacquesson — simply the finest champagne in the world. Aston Martin — everyone needs

something to aspire to! Teuscher champagne truffles, Smythson everything and Hermès.

Why did you choose to rewrite rhymes?

Mimi, my daughter, is two. When she was born, I tried reciting nursery rhymes to her but could never get beyond the first two lines of any rhyme. So I started to make them up as I went along. I figured, since she had no idea what I was talking about anyway, it didn't really matter.

Why the consumer slant?

That wasn't intentional. Though, thinking back, Mimi was given some extremely extravagant pressies when she was born, from Dior baby boots to Kenzo outfits! I remember thinking at the time, "Gosh, she has a better wardrobe than I do and she's only three months old!" There are some shocking baby outfits out there — bows and ribbons and fluffy bunnies. So when you see something simple and beautifully designed, you have to appreciate that it exists, even if it carries a hefty price tag.

How did you choose the rhymes?

The obvious place to start was with ones I at least knew a little. As the first few rhymes developed, I actually bought a book of traditional nursery rhymes and took it from there. Some lent themselves more easily to being paraphrased — either because they had a good metre to work with or because the rhyming patterns came naturally.

What did you sing your child to sleep with?

I can't sing. If I attempted even to sing Mimi to sleep, she'd have nightmares! She's a bit big to rock, now, but when she was a baby, we used to play Mozart and Brahms to her at bedtime.

What's your top glamma-mummy tip for dealing with baby puke and tantrums?

Tantrums — pretend the child has nothing to do with you and look around in a concerned fashion as if looking for its rightful mother! Baby

puke — either don't feed your kid so much that it pukes or wear leather. It can be wiped clean!

Which nursery rhyme character would you want to be?

I don't identify with any traditional nursery rhyme character, which is one of the reasons I wrote *Piggy*. I don't think many people now know what pease pudding is. As for Dr Foster — who's he? And why he went to Gloucester, I have no idea! I guess if I had to be someone in *Piggy*, I might chose to be Mummy in *Hickory Dickory Dock* — she got 5 carats from Graff — a very beautiful thing!

If you were a designer must-have, what would you be?

Gosh, that's a hard one. Maybe a Kelly Lakis bag from Hermès. It's

well constructed, practical, a little bit classical with a modern twist and just a little bit expensive!

Give us a rhyme about shopping in Singapore?

[Sung to If You're Happy And You Know It (Clap Your Hands)]
Oh I'm happy and you know why? It's the sales!

The Link, Club 21 invites in the mail! To shop in Singapore Is like Heaven's open doors. It's the norm that people just don't pay retail!

Get *This Little Piggy Went To Prada* from Wild Child, 94 Club Street, tel: 6227-3163; The Tango Mango Bookshop, #03-11A Tanglin Mall, tel: 6835-3895; Vanilla Home, 48 Club Street, tel: 6325-6206; Cho-Lo, #01-76/68-43 Jalan Merah Saga, tel: 6473-7922; Kinokuniya bookstores. For each copy sold, a donation will be made to Action for Aids Pregnant Mothers' HIV Fund.

Favourite rhyme

"This Old Man. It was the most fun to work on and was long enough to get my teeth into.

*This old man, he played one,
Off to St Tropez for sun,
In her Gucci, Pucci,
Mummy needs to tone;
Time to get the trainer home.*

*This old man, he played two,
Wait-list Sergio Rossi shoes,
In her Gucci, Pucci,
Mummy's in the know;
Pre-paid at his Autumn show...*"

Name Dropping

CHAMPAGNE JACQUESSON — NAPOLEON BONAPARTE'S FAVE BUBBLY, FROM A CHAMPAGNE HOUSE FOUNDED IN 1798.

ASTON MARTIN — NOT JUST JAMES BOND'S FAVOURITE CAR (BEFORE BROCCOLI PRODUCTIONS TURNED TO BMW), IT'S A CLASSIC RACING CAR BRAND.

SMYTHSON — TWO CENTURIES OF STATIONERY SUPPLIES IN LONDON.

PUCCI — ITALIAN DESIGNER WHO HAD AN INTERESTING RELATIONSHIP WITH COLOURS AND PRINTS.

SERGIO ROSSI — GORGEOUS, GORGEOUS SHOES, HONEY!

DR FOSTER — SUBJECT OF A RHYME "DR FOSTER WENT TO GLOUCESTER". YES IT DOES RHYME, THE CITY'S NAME IS PRONOUNCED "GLOSS-TER".

GRAFF — DIAMOND JEWELLERS WHOSE WEBSITE CLAIMS "THE MOST FABULOUS JEWELS IN THE WORLD".

KELLY LAKIS — YOU KNOW THE KELLY BAG. WELL, IT'S BEEN GIVEN A GENDER TWIST, AND DESIGNED FOR MEN. THE GUY WHO INSPIRED THE BAG WAS NAMED LAKIS.

