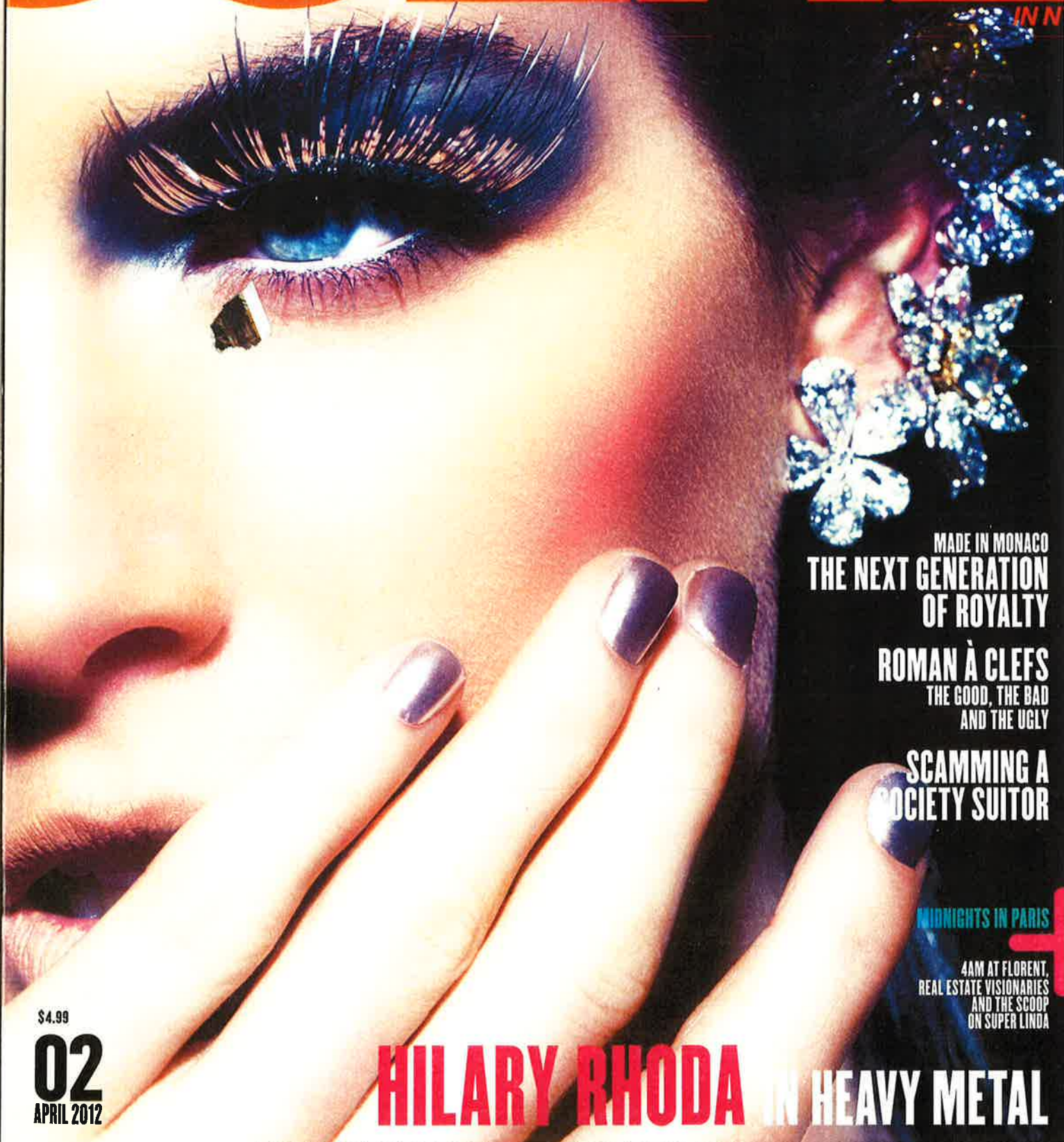


# SCENE

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# The Broker's Dance

**NEW YORK HAS ITS FAIR SHARE OF BROKERS, BUT FEW HAVE A STORY LIKE PRUDENTIAL DOUGLAS ELLIMAN'S MANAGING DIRECTOR FRANCES KATZEN. RAISED IN THREE DIFFERENT CONTINENTS, THE SOUTH AFRICAN BEAUTY LISTS DANCING THE CHOREOGRAPHY OF THE FAMED GEORGE BALANCHINE AS ONE OF HER MANY ACCOMPLISHMENTS. SCENE SPOKE TO THE BUSY BROKER TO HEAR MORE ABOUT WHAT MAKES A BALLET DANCER DITCH THE LEOTARD FOR A SUIT AND HOW SHE DOES MORE THAN HOLD HER OWN IN ONE OF THE CITY'S MOST COMPETITIVE MARKETS.**

**You have a great story. Tell us about what brought you to New York?**

I was born in Cape Town, South Africa, but due to the apartheid issues there, my family and I moved to Sydney, Australia when I was a child. Growing up in Australia was amazing but when I turned 14 the time came for me to make a decision regarding my career as a ballet dancer. The Australian Ballet offered me a job but I really wanted to dance with Mikael Baryshnikov, the director of the American Ballet Theater at the time, so I asked my mom if I could audition for his school. That was in 1991 and when the ABT school closed, I decided instead to audition for the School of American Ballet under the direction of the late George Balanchine. I was accepted and that's what brought me to New York!

**What brought on your change of career and your desire to work as a real estate broker?**

I had always wondered what it would be like to be a businesswoman. The ballet world is a very patriarchal system with one master ballet director who chooses between you and the other dancers for every role. The idea of becoming an independent woman with my own business was very exciting to me after being subservient to someone else for so long. I became a broker to put myself in control of my creative path.

**You've earned a reputation as one of the city's top brokers. How has your background contributed to your success as a broker?**

Drive, focus, passion and straightforwardness with people were all qualities that served me well. I tend to be a perfectionist—as most dancers are—and am totally committed to a task until it is completed. I care a lot about making sure people are taken care of and getting them what they want is a priority for me. I have been accused of caring too much, but I take that as a compliment!

**Do you have any fun anecdotes on your experience as a broker?**

Oh boy, where do I begin? Suffice it to say, being a broker is never dull.

**Who are some of your celebrity clients?**

I prefer not to discuss the clients that I deal with; but I have met some truly wonderful people from the worlds of fashion, business and acting that I would have otherwise never have met.

**What are some of your favorite listings currently on the market?**

Part of what I love about my job is finding a way for others to see what is it that makes an apartment special. Whether it be a multi-million dollar townhouse on the Upper East Side or a small studio apartment downtown, I know how to make the best out of the listings I represent.