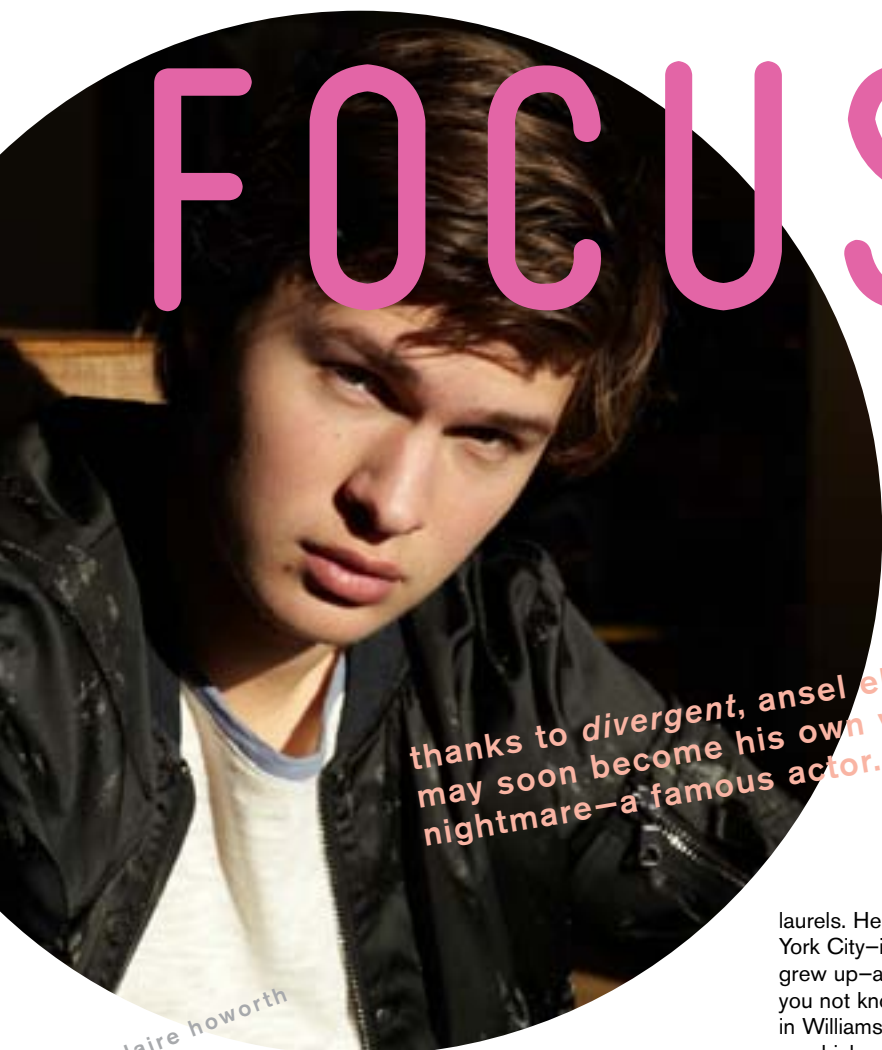


# SOFT FOCUS

photographed by alexander wagner



thanks to *Divergent*, ansel elgort may soon become his own worst nightmare—a famous actor.

by claire howorth

Practically speaking, Ansel Elgort is ready to hit the rock-climbing gym this afternoon, where he likes to dangle and swing from handhold to handhold. Metaphorically, the 19-year-old actor is straddling a rapidly narrowing chasm between relative anonymity and mega-stardom. After playing sensitive prom king Tommy Ross in last fall's *Carrie* remake, his first screen gig ever ("no TV, no student films," he claims), Elgort appears in this month's *Divergent* as Caleb, brother to protagonist Beatrice, played by Shailene

Woodley. Then, in June, Elgort will star as Augustus Waters in *The Fault in Our Stars* (again with Woodley, this time as her lover). By the time Jason Reitman's *Men, Women, & Children* comes out later this year, Elgort just could be the next cult-worshipped heartthrob.

Elgort seems aware that widespread notoriety could be just around the corner, but he's not interested in fame for its own sake—he wants the

laurels. He's distinctly New York City—it's where he grew up—and he'd rather you not know exactly where in Williamsburg he lives, or which gym he's headed to, just in case you decide to show up outside the door one day. He's worried about coattail riders and vampires of fortune, and resolutely surrounds himself with anti-Hollywood matter, like a DJ roommate and a girlfriend whose name he refuses to supply. If Elgort is impossible to star-strike, it's in part because he grew up among them. His father is the renowned fashion photographer Arthur Elgort, and his mother, Grethe Barrett Holby, is a new-wave opera composer. Ansel's older brother Warren is a film director, and his sister Sophie, the eldest sibling,

is a photographer.

Familial support has meant everything to Elgort, he says, and his father is the source of the single best piece of career advice he's received to date. "He told me, 'Work hard at what you love and the money will follow.'" That could mean tracing a career path similar to one of Elgort's idols: Christian Bale, Tom Hardy, Matthew McConaughey, or Ryan Gosling. "I like to find an arc," he says, "and I love leading men who can character act." Elgort's role in *Divergent* appealed to him because, he says, Caleb is so dynamic.

But the potential pitfalls of screen glory occupy the better part of a long walk around SoHo in 12-degree weather. Elgort's reticence seems genuine; he doesn't read the tabloids and he doesn't care what his colleagues are up to outside of their work.

"There's something wonderful about having a normal life as a human being," says Elgort, who claims he has yet to be recognized on the street. But 145,000 people (and counting) follow him on Twitter, and another 8,400 are fans of @ansolo\_music,

his EDM persona. House music is on Elgort's short list of creative-arts talents. At LaGuardia High School, from which he graduated in 2012, Elgort dabbled in everything, and still does. Music, theater (two years ago, he starred with Alexis Bledel in *Regrets*, off-Broadway), dancing ("I didn't really love it"), and miniature painting. Not itchy bitsy bowls of pears, but painstakingly colored creatures, which then become gamepieces. On the Internet you can find pictures of the little monsters that Elgort has dreamed up.

And you can also find the name of his girlfriend—although there's nothing scandalous to report. "I hope I never have a relationship that's in the tabloids. It would cheapen it. What does fame have to do with loving someone?" asks Elgort. "You see couples who are geared toward being publicized. I want the world to see my work, but I don't care about the world knowing who I'm in love with."



ansel elgort: stylist: mitsuru tsuchiyā, grooming: amy komarovski at celestine agency using axe hair, jacket by diesel, black gold, shirt by vince, foxes: hair: shiori takahashi, make up: anne sophie costa.

# FOXY LADY



by alice price-styles, photographed by nuria rius

from a small town in england to pop domination, louisa rose allen is ready to woo the world.

"She was a hot mess," says Louisa Rose Allen, setting her mug down with enough force that some coffee sloshes over the rim. She lowers her voice, as if revealing a dirty secret: "Thing is, I kind of enjoy how she was just a bit unhinged." Allen, better known as Foxes, the Bambi-eyed electro-pop phenom behind such hits as "Youth" and "Let Go for Tonight," is seated at a small round table inside Café Oto in London's lively Dalston district. She's describing Jenny from *Forrest Gump*, a film she claims to have watched hundreds of times over the course of her 24 years.

Like Jenny, Allen dreamed of escaping her small town to become a singer, and while growing up in Southampton, U.K., she jokes that she was "that annoying kid who ran around the house singing Disney songs." Thanks to some steering from her mother and older sister, this fandom evolved into a serious appreciation of artists like Patti Smith and Björk. At age 18, Allen considered following her friends to cosmetology school, but again, her sister stepped in and convinced her to attend music school in London instead.

Taking a chance as a teenager is now paying off big-time for Allen, who first rose to fame for her emotive vocals on Zedd's Grammy-winning "Clarity" and Fall Out Boy's "Just One Yesterday," and then her own euphoric single "Youth." Her debut full-length album, *Glorious*, is out March 3. "I feel so ready to jump in," she says. "I remember Pete Wentz saying to just make sure you take every moment in. You've got to enjoy it while it's happening, as it might not happen tomorrow." But behind her seemingly meteoric ascent were "loads

of setbacks," the singer admits. "When you achieve success in the end, though, those moments make you appreciate it more." And in spite of her increasing fame, talking to Allen is like talking to one of your best friends, indulging in *Girls*-style rants about modern life: "Recently, I've tried to take a bird's-eye view down instead of being stuck inside my own head," she says. "But it's such a hard thing to do."

High emotions run throughout *Glorious'* electro-ballads, which were all penned in a bedroom in Kentish Town in northwest London. "Everything I write is coming from something that happened to me," she says. "I try to keep it honest." The title track is about "not giving up and the ability to see beauty and the positive in things," she says. "It was the last song I wrote, and in a way it summed up the whole process. A lot of creative people have something a bit broken about them. But I think that's actually the beautiful part."

It's clear that the girl from Southampton who wanted to see the world is doing just that. She shares a recent story about visiting California's Venice Beach: "I was holding a bottle of vodka and getting, like, three tattoos at once. It felt so free and fun." But most of all, she's just thrilled to be living her dream. "If I was playing on the side of the street, getting pennies," she says, "I would still do it."

come karaoke with foxes on nylon tv!