

## Black Tie

May 12, 2020 | Josie Gealer Ng

When working with photographer [Emily Stein](#) and stylist Janine Eveson on our previous series for Getty Images [Saree](#), I loved the conceptual nature of uplifting and energetic portraits mixed with beautiful intricate styling. So when they approached me with the idea of creating a coming-of-age 'prom' shoot encapsulating vintage style with bold and modern casting I immediately wanted to collaborate. For the concept we collated many archival old prom photos and created a brief of our favorite moments and styles, mixing candid moments with staged and awkward formal portraits.

Black Tie is aimed to be a delightful portrayal of one of the most memorable moments of adolescence - when teenagers go through the rite of passage in dressing up like adults for coming of age ceremonies. This moment of transformation from casual teen dress to black tie transcends cultural, socioeconomic and social barriers. In some societies it is linked with the onset of sexual maturity; with others it is associated with religious responsibility, and in western cultures it is more often than not connected to legal conventions developing more freedoms as adulthood approaches.

In our present circumstances it has made us view this series a little differently - as we know teenagers finishing exams have been put on hold and their lives thrown into isolation. Teenagers may very well be finding self-isolation the hardest of any age group, away from their intense friendships, first loves and social connections. At a time when they want more control over their lives, they've suddenly got less - pushed back into the heart of their families, whether they like it or not.

One of the themes we wanted our story to portray was nostalgia, and maybe in encapsulating these fun adolescence milestones, it will bring some joy in knowing this situation will come to pass and times of togetherness and celebration will return.