

# Delve Deeper into *Iris*

A film by Albert Maysles

**This list of fiction and nonfiction books, compiled by Penny L. Talbert, MLIS, and Rebecca Lawrence of Ephrata Public Library, provides a range of perspectives on the issues raised by the POV documentary *Iris*.**

*Iris* pairs the late documentarian Albert Maysles (*Grey Gardens*, *Gimme Shelter*), then 87, with Iris Apfel, the quick-witted, flamboyantly dressed 93-year-old style maven who has had an outsized presence on the New York fashion scene for decades. More than a fashion film, the documentary is a story about creativity and how a soaring free spirit continues to inspire. *Iris* portrays a singular woman whose enthusiasm for fashion, art and people are her sustenance. She reminds us that dressing — and indeed, life — is nothing but a grand experiment. "If you're lucky enough to do something you love, everything else follows."

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## ADULT NONFICTION

**Boman, Eric. *Rare Bird of Fashion: The Irreverent Iris Apfel*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2007.** As the art critic Roberta Smith commented in *The New York Times*, 'Before multiculturalism was a word, Mrs Apfel was wearing it.' More than ninety sumptuous colour plates, photographed by Eric Boman, show off a selection of extraordinary outfits on wittily posed mannequins, styled by Iris Apfel as she would wear them, while detailed captions describe all elements of the ensembles, including their designers, fabrics and accessories.

**Cohen, Ari Seth. *Advanced Style*. Brooklyn, NY: powerhouse Books, 2012.** Replete with grace and style, Cohen provides readers with contemporary images and succinct biographies of everyday fashion icons over the age of

60. His text is a refreshing reminder that art, creativity and style occur at any age.

**Cohen, Gene D. *The Creative Age: Awakening Human Potential in the Second Half of Life*. New York, Avon Books Inc., 2000.** A practical text for families, aging individuals as well as clinicians, Dr. Gene Cohen, the former editor in chief of the *American Journal to Geriatric Psychology*, reveals "how-to" steps to discover and sustain one's creative potential late in life.

**Julavits, Heidi. Shapton, Leanne. Heti, Sheila. *Women in Clothes*. New York: Blue Rider Press, 2014.** A conversation among hundreds of women of all nationalities—famous, anonymous, religious, secular, married, single, young, old—on the subject of clothing, and how the garments we put on every day define and shape our lives.

**Halbreich, Betty. *I'll Drink to That*. New York: Penguin Books, 2015.** Eighty-six-year-old Betty Halbreich is a true original who could have stepped straight out of Stephen Sondheim's repertoire. She has spent nearly forty years as the legendary personal shopper at Bergdorf Goodman, where she works with socialites, stars, and ordinary women off the street. But, Halbreich's personal transformation from cosseted young girl to fearless truth teller is the greatest makeover of her career.

**Vreeland, Diana. *D.V.* New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2011.** D.V. is the mesmerizing autobiography of one of the 20th century's greatest fashion icons, Diana Vreeland, the one-time fashion editor of Harper's Bazaar and editor-in-chief of Vogue, whose incomparable style-sense, genius, and flair helped define the world of haute couture for fifty years.

**Delbanco, Nicolas. *Lastingness: The Art of Old Age*. New York: Grand**

**Central Publishing, 2011.**

Delbanco curates a selection of stories of poets, architects, visual and performing artists that achieved and or sustained creative prominence late in life. Stories and examples of artistic production from John Updike, Claude Monet, Grandma Moses, Thomas Hardy, Georgia O'Keefe and others are presented in an accessible narrative.

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## ADULT FICTION

**Didion, Joan. *Play It As It Lays*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1970.** At age 81 the former editor of *Vogue* became the fashion face of luxury brand Céline in 2015. Model turned actress Maria Wyeth struggles with life in Hollywood society in the 1960s in this nihilist novel. Clothing and loss appear as themes throughout Didion's writing. *Play It As It Lays* was listed as *Time Magazine's* best 100 books in the English language since 1923.

**Kalman, Maira. *My Favorite Things*. New York: Harper Design, 2014.** A playful collection of illustrated objects from personal and museum collections reminding readers of the value of art and design in everyday life from fabric designer and children's book author Maira Kalman.

**Norwich, William. *My Mrs Brown*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2016.** During an estate inventory a modest 66-year-old Rhode Island woman sets on a quest to acquire a garment designed by Oscar De La Renta and subsequently changes her life.

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## NONFICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

**Amoruso, Sophia. *#GIRLBOSS*. New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2014.** #GIRLBOSS proves that being successful isn't about where you went to college or how popular you were in high school. It's about trusting your instincts and following your gut; knowing which rules to follow and which to break; when to button up and when to let your freak flag fly.



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**Barcella, Laura. *Fight Like a Girl: 50 Feminists Who Changed the World*. San Francisco: Zest Books, 2016.**

By providing a brief history of feminist activism in the U.S., Barcella introduces readers to the icons that played an important role in shaping the feminist cause. The book includes short biographies of a diverse group of women, including the stories of trans, black, Middle Eastern, Native American and many other women.

**Collins, Petra. *Babe*. New York: Prestel, 2015.** A collection of photographs by female artists, curated by Petra Collins of the online collective *The Ardorous*. Includes forward by Tavi Gevinson.

**Gevinson, Tavi. *Rookie Yearbook One*. New York: Razorbill, 2014.** This compilation of both fun and serious feminist literature includes contributions from Lena Dunham, Zoëy Deschanel, David Sedaris, and more. By addressing the issues that many young women face—from love to street harassment—this book provides an alternative to the destructive advice that young women often get.

**Selby, Todd. *The Selby Is in Your Place*. New York: Abrams Books, 2010.**

Conceived when fashion and interiors photographer Todd Selby began taking portraits of dynamic and creative people—authors, musicians, artists, and designers—in their home environments and posting them on his web site. Nosy by nature, he wanted to see how personal style was reflected in private spaces. Each profile is accompanied by Selby's watercolor portraits of the subjects and objects from their homes, and illustrated questionnaires, which Selby asks each sitter to fill out.

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## FICTION FOR YOUNGER READERS

**Ashburn, Boni. *I Had a Favorite Hat*. New York: Abrams, 2015.** The narrator of this charming picture book loves her summer hat, but as the seasons change, her hat isn't always appropriate for every occasion. She must use her crafting skills to turn the hat into a work of art, perfect for every season and holiday.

**Goetzinger, Annie. *Girl in Dior*. New York: NBM Publishing, 2015.** Through the fictional account of the rise of a young woman in the house of fashion icon Dior post WWII, Goetzinger's graphic novel reveals the history behind Dior's first fashion show in 1947 and the changing shifts in Parisian culture. Goetzinger previously worked in fashion design before becoming one of France's most notable female cartoonist and graphic novelist.

**Matthews, Elizabeth. *Different Like Coco*. Somerville: Candlewick Press, 2007.** Gabrielle "Coco" Chanel was always different. And she vowed to prove that being different was an advantage! Poor, skinny, and orphaned, Coco stubbornly believed that she was as good as the wealthier girls of Paris. Tapping into her creativity and her sewing skills, she began making clothes that suited her (and her pocketbook)—and soon a new generation of independent working women craved her sleek, comfortable, and practical designs. Now an icon of fashion and culture, Coco Chanel continues to inspire young readers, showing just how far a person can come with spunk, determination, and flair.

**Morton, Camilla. *Diane von Furstenberg and the Tale of the Empress's New Clothes*. New York: Harper Collins, 2005.** London based fashion editor partners with Diane von Furstenberg in her adaptation of *The Emperor's New Clothes* to

inspire and provide confidence to young girls.

**Spinelli, Jerry. *Stargirl*. New York: Scholastic Inc., 2000.** Stargirl, a teenage girl, enters high school after years of being homeschooled, but she is quickly shunned by her peers for her nonconformity. In this book, Spinelli explores issues of peer pressure, individualism, loyalty to oneself, and love.

**Yolen, Jane and Heidi Stemple. *Not All Princesses Dress in Pink*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2010.** Written by mother and daughter, this children's book stays true to the book's given title empowering young girls to express themselves through different forms of fashion.

