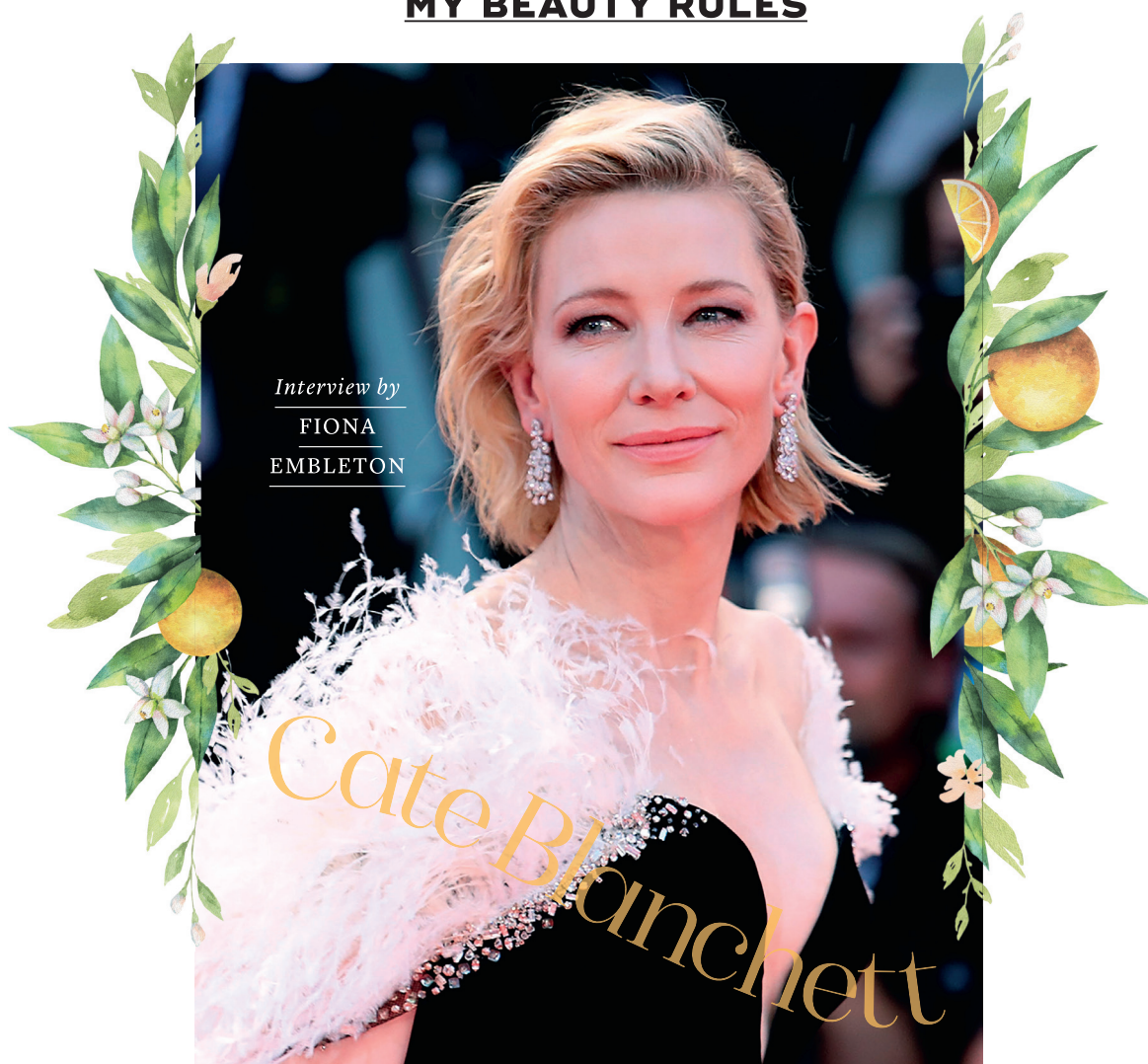


MY BEAUTY RULES



The two-times Oscar winner talks celebrating flaws, learning to say no and why beauty is a feminist issue

Fragrance was my pathway from girlhood to womanhood. I couldn't tell you exactly what scent my mother or grandmother wore, but I saw it as some sort of conduit. It's what you aspire to be. Perfume is also [part of] your morning ritual, so when Mr Armani approached me and said he wanted to call his signature fragrance Si ['yes' in Italian], I thought what an extraordinary, positive way for a woman to enter the day. **A scent describes the spirit of a woman, not her physical attributes.** What I love about all the Giorgio Armani Si fragrances is that they have a really sensual chypre as a base note, which I always gravitate towards. Even though Si Fiori [£74 for 50ml EDP] has mandarin and neroli, and it's very energetic and wicked, it still has that base gravitas. The perfumes have a sense of duality. They are about the complexity of being a woman, not just the so-called feminine or masculine end, but smashing all of those elements together.

I love the way perfume transports you back in time and to a place. It's usually something to do with the natural world – a forest, walking in long grass or in the wind – that stems back to my childhood. I was a latchkey kid and a real tomboy. My weekends would involve having a tennis lesson on Sunday morning, then I'd be off down by the river on my bike. **Today, women are no longer seeing themselves as rivals or competitors, we're collaborators.** I'm preparing to play Phyllis Schlafly, [a conservative, anti-feminist lawyer] who defeated the Equal Rights Amendment in America in the 70s. It's amazing going back to that era – a lot of men were frightened of giving up ground for female freedom and equality, but it behoves everybody and you think, 'Oh my god, these conversations, the demonstrations, it could be the Women's March from three years ago.' It's astonishing how little we've moved on. I'm very ►