JAKE GYLLENHAAL, “Natalie Portman,” Page 104
In Jim Sheridan’s remake of the 2004 Danish film Brothers, Jake Gyllenhaal takes on the part of a black-sheep sibling who must care for his sister-in-law, played by this month’s cover subject Natalie Portman. Brothers doesn’t hit theaters until December, but in the meantime, Gyllenhaal—who has just finished filming the epic Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time—will soon begin production on Love and Other Drugs, a critique of the pharmaceutical industry, opposite Anne Hathaway.

KAWS, “Michael Jackson,” Page 156
KAWS, aka Brian Donnelly, has garnered comparisons to Jean-Michel Basquiat and Keith Haring for turning his idiosyncratic brand of “vandalism” into master works of art. In the past, his mix of graffiti and graphic design has landed him international exhibitions and his own line of collectible toys. We asked KAWS for a fitting visual to accompany our tribute to Michael Jackson, and it didn’t take much time for the artist to find his point of reference. “As soon as I got the assignment, I instantly thought of Michael’s glove,” he says. Next up for KAWS is a solo museum show at the Aldrich Contemporary Art Museum in June 2010.

CRAIG McDEAN, “Gimme More,” Page 112
Too much. That’s the idea behind this month’s fashion feature dedicated to designers who have taken self-expression to the extreme. A heap of hot pink fur, gravity-defying boots, and exaggerated body-morphing geometries are all part of the shock-scape that photographer Craig McDean shot for us. McDean, who won the 2008 ICP Infinity Award for fashion photography, has shot advertising campaigns for the likes of Christian Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, and Armani; and regularly contributes to magazines like W and American, French, British, and Italian Vogue.

VIK MUNIZ, “Peter Marino,” Page 140
Vik Muniz is as prolific in photography and oil paints as he is with more perversely materials such as dust, peanut butter, and caviar. The work of the Brazilian-born artist caught the attention of architect Peter Marino years ago, and they have since become good friends. Still, it took a visit to Marino’s New York office a while back for the artist to discover that Marino was one of his biggest collectors. “I was shocked,” Muniz remembers. “Peter can be very subdued sometimes.” Muniz is currently working on a project in China that involves photographing 1,000 people at the same time.

DAVE MULLER, “Ari Marcopoulos,” Page 100
For much of his career, Dave Muller has been fusing formal painting practices with his own personal obsession with rock music. Earlier this year at Blum & Poe gallery, the Los Angeles-based artist incorporated everything from acrylics to liner notes from the Beatles' Sgt. Pepper album. And at another recent exhibit, at the Gladstone Gallery in Brussels, Muller assembled installations of paintings, used-record collections, musical taxonomies, and set lists. This knack for finding inspiration in intimate passions—particularly music—is one he shares with photographer Ari Marcopoulos, whom he interviewed for this issue.

LUDIVINE POIBLANC, “Diane Kruger,” Page 144
“I am impressed by the charisma of Diane Kruger,” says stylist Ludivine Poiblanc, who created the model-turned-actress’s military-inspired look for our shoot with photographers Mert Alas & Marcus Piggott. Poiblanc’s take on the character Kruger plays in the Quentin Tarantino WWII film Inglourious Basterds turned our to be a bit more S&M than Saving Private Ryan. “She seemed delighted to be portrayed in such a drastic and transformed way,” Poiblanc says. The fashion editor has collaborated with photographers such as Patrick Demarchelier, Terry Richardson, Craig McDean, and Willy Vanderperre, and has styled campaigns for Hermès, Givenchy, and YSL.

ANDREW RICHARDSON, “Chace Crawford,” Page 130
Clean-cut Chace Crawford hardly screams ’50s rockabilly, but during Crawford’s photo shoot, fashion editor Andrew Richardson took the opportunity to toughen up this Gossip Girl guy. “We wanted to give him a slightly harder image,” explains Richardson, who applied fake tattoos to Crawford’s neck, hands, and arms. “Chace was really keen to do something that broke the mold a little bit.” Richardson’s personal work could also be described as mold-breaking. As the editor in chief of Richardson Magazine—his “post-porn sex magazine”—the New York-based stylist mixes art, luxury, and erotica. The next issue, #4, will be available in Spring 2010.

SOLVE SUNDSBØ, “Chace Crawford,” Page 130
Making Chace Crawford look anything other than wholesome was a challenge for photographer Solve Sundsbø. But perhaps the most memorable—and tricky—part of the shoot was the presence of Crawford’s mother, who remained on set all day. Sundsbø remembers that when the team starting applying the fake tattoos, Mom looked “slightly worried.” But the Norwegian-born, London-based photographer is a pro even under the pressures of parental guidance. Sundsbø, who has contributed to publications like Dazed & Confused, i-D, W, and V, is currently working on a series of landscapes for publication.
When Michael Jackson died in June at the age of 50, he left behind one of the most complicated legacies of any artist in his time. He changed the way people both listened to music and looked at pop stars. But it was an accomplishment that became obscured by the difficult array of obsessions, addictions, and emotional and legal problems that he wrestled with for most of his life. Interview chronicled Jackson’s journey from shy kid in a band of singing brothers to self-proclaimed King of Pop to conflicted, enigmatic icon—as his struggle increasingly became our struggle to reconcile the man in the music with the man in the mirror.