

FIFTIES & FABULOUS

We're in love with *And Just Like That ...* and it hasn't even started, writes **Kerry Parnell** (who's still in it for the shoes)

It's 23 years old but still breaking taboos. As *Sex And The City* sequel *And Just Like That* hits the screen this week, it is still going where other TV shows have failed to tread – all while wearing Manolos.

SATC debuted in 1998 and back then Carrie, Miranda, Charlotte and Samantha broke new ground by tackling plots that would scare their New York neighbour Jerry Seinfeld into celibacy.

It was so hilarious, naughty and stylish, it was in a class of its own.

Back in the day, I enjoyed a ritual of watching it every week, sipping on a Baileys, until the evening my other half choked on his Irish Cream at the notorious episode with Samantha's funky you-know-what storyline. Declaring the series, "for ladies", he took himself to bed in disgust. I poured another drink.

Truthfully, I was mainly in it for the shoes – and still am.

All the good and bad sex, relationship highs and lows, weddings and divorces aside, what SATC really was, was a love letter to New York, female friendships and fashion. Fabulous, beautiful, fashion – masses of it.

Patricia Field's genius styling turned the show into a TV catwalk, before it was a thing. She's now working on *Emily In Paris* with the same result. Field began endless trends – I attached huge flower corsages to my dresses, wore a silver name necklace and briefly enjoyed a designer shoe addiction to rival Carrie's before I became a mother and had to spend all my cash on kids' school shoes instead.

But as they say, all good things come to an end and in 2004, our favourite quartet packed their Louis Vuitton



Cynthia Nixon, Sarah Jessica Parker and Kristin Davis in *And Just Like That*, the sequel to *Sex And The City*.

'I attached huge flower corsages to my dresses, wore a silver name necklace and briefly enjoyed a designer shoe addiction'

luggage and relocated to the big screen, with one fun film and one frightening one and an off-screen bust-up between Sarah Jessica Parker and Kim Cattrall.

And that was that. Except, like real life, it wasn't.

It used to be that actresses faded away once their heroine days were over, before re-emerging playing grandmothers, while their male counterparts were simply cast against younger and younger women.

But if ever there was a group of women who were not going to disappear post-50, it was Carrie and co. Not for them the fate of the "invisible woman". You can't miss them. They're back, better than ever.

"And just like that, after all the years and all the changes, you're still you," Carrie says in the new trailer that dropped on Tuesday, before opening her walk-in shoe closet and declaring, "hello lovers".

"They're so old!" came the inevitable online comments when the first shots emerged of Carrie, Charlotte and Miranda striding through New York in YSL, Aquazzura and Celine heels, without a pair of wide-fitting orthopaedic footwear between them.

How absurd: SJP and Kristin Davis are 56 and Cynthia Nixon, 55. What do we expect them to look like?

That is the biggest taboo AJLT is breaking – scripting a

TV show around women over 50 who are still living life, loving fashion and enjoying themselves whether they have grey or dyed hair and have or haven't had work done on their faces. It's absolutely fabulous. If only they had cast Joanna Lumley.

Despite the omission of Field, who like Cattrall is missing from the reboot, the shoes still have it, thanks to Field's protegee Molly Rogers. Charlotte is still in her frocks, Miranda in her tailored slacks and Carrie's rocking a bird fascinator. It's full of references to the original series, from Carrie's name necklace to her corsages.

While some of the original SATC plots inevitably didn't age well, here's hoping AJLT continues to march fearlessly into "virgin" comedy territory that's more bespoke than woke. Like life, it looks as though the remaining trio has evolved – there's speculation Miranda has started dating women and Carrie is seen kissing actor Jon Tenney.

While nobody could ever replace Samantha, who had some of the best lines, AJLT creators have also addressed the bust-up head-on.

According to reports, Samantha has relocated to London, which is the New York equivalent of Neighbours packing Scott and Charlene off to Brisbane, and the writers have explained she doesn't keep in touch with Carrie because they fell out.

According to insiders, by the end of the series, Carrie "extends an olive branch" in the hope of reconciliation – in the show and real life. If it works, maybe Samantha and Kim's resolve might melt ... Just Like That.

AND JUST LIKE THAT PREMIERES ON BINGE ON THURSDAY

Carrie (Sarah Jessica Parker) has not lost her love of designer shoes and spectacular outfits in the new series.

Bum note to the crowning of Queen Rihanna

Calling Rihanna the new Queen of Barbados, after the nation ditched the monarchy and became a republic this week, is frankly absurd.

Rihanna is no queen – she's an absolute goddess.

It was impossible to take your eyes off her at the ceremony in the Caribbean island on Monday night.

Rihanna, who was declared a National Hero during the event, was resplendent in an orange silk goddess-style Bottega Veneta gown. She looked truly magnificent and certainly dazzled Prince Charles, who was positively beaming behind his mask, as he was snapped clasping her hands and having a chat. Look, if there was anyone you'd be



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happy to hand over the reign to, it would be Rihanna.

At the Pride Of Nationhood ceremony in Bridgetown, Prime Minister Mia Mottley told the billionaire pop star and

fashion and beauty mogul, "May you continue to shine like a diamond and bring honour to your nation by your works, by your actions," which you can bet her speechwriting team high-fived themselves about and Rihanna has heard 563 times this year already. But no matter.

Rihanna, who was born Robyn Rihanna Fenty and grew up in Barbados before moving to the US, is the 11th person to be given the honour and only the second woman – joining 19th Century activist Sarah Ann Gill. She can now call herself the Right Honourable Rihanna. Quite right, too.

Meanwhile, poor old Prince Charles was in a Right Honourable state on Monday,



Rihanna at the midnight ceremony in Barbados.

as he attended the midnight ceremony and was spotted dropping off in the middle of it at one point. The 73-year-old

must have been shattered what with a mix of jet-lag, humid heat, late-night and long speeches, but he executed a tremendous recovery as he did an ignominious head nod, jerking back into action and pretending to peruse his pamphlet. I feel there should have been some sort of award for that.

Charles should have had a word with Queen Rihanna, as she could have loaned him some of her new pyjamas, if only she'd known HRH needed a nap.

Her new Savage X Fenty jimjams come in a tartan print and the star modelled them on Instagram Stories last weekend. The sleepwear set looks super-cute from the front, until she turns around

and you realise the pyjama bottoms have no bum. Or a lot of bum, depending on your perspective.

The Tied Up Tartan Open-Back PJ Pants are "a spin on classic holiday pyjamas" with "an open bum to show off what you want, Savage style," according to the website blurb. It gives a whole new meaning to getting up at the crack of dawn to open your presents.

They won't exactly protect the crown jewels, but they would have been just the thing to pep up Prince Charles with a bit of Bajan breeze. I'd like to think Rihanna gifted him some in the VIP goody bag at the Barbados Leaving Party.

Queen or not, as long as she doesn't Take a Bow while wearing them, it's all good.