

JEWELRY

Shalini Kasliwal – Luxury Woman to Watch 2018

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Shalini Kasliwal, jeweler and president of North America, Sanjay Kasliwal

By STAFF REPORTS

Shalini Kasliwal

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Jeweler and president of North America, **Sanjay Kasliwal**, New York

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What do you most like about your job?

There are two main aspects of my job that keep me motivated and enthusiastic about what I do.

First of all, the opportunity to carry on my family's legacy as a world-renowned jewelry company with a 200-plus-year history. I am basically the ambassador for The Gem Palace in the United States, which means I work to spread awareness for our brand through trunk shows, retail partnerships, client experiences and other marketing vehicles.

Building a presence for The Gem Palace here has been exciting, not only because it is our main market outside of India, but also because of the fast-paced environment and its incredibly diverse population.

Indeed, the second reason is the opportunity to meet clients, who often turn into friends, from all over the globe. I love learning about all of the different cultures and helping people tell a story through their jewelry.

What is the biggest challenge in your job?

It's funny, the thing that I like most about my job is actually my biggest challenge.

There is a major responsibility that comes with being the first woman to take control over a brand with such a rich history, and one that was previously male dominated.

I actually started my career as an attorney, and I think my experience has given me a unique perspective on running the business. I am very attuned to the nuances of the operation. It has to be equal parts creativity and business savvy.

I also find it challenging to keep creating new pieces without abandoning our iconic Indian techniques, such as the enameling, the rose-cut diamonds or the filigree features. That is the identity of The Gem Palace and it must always

remain the focus.

What is your work priority for 2018?

In 2018, I want to focus on creating one-of-a-kind pieces on the high-end, as well as some more on-trend, everyday jewelry to meet the growing demand for accessible product.

With my background my mother is Italian and my father is Indian and all of the travel I do, I'm constantly sourcing inspiration for our collections.

We just came up on the third anniversary of our New York boutique and it is already a benchmark for our clients, many of whom have also visited our Jaipur flagship store.

They are true Gem Palace aficionados, they trust our brand and they can instantly recognize our designs. However, I feel the need to create something unique to the New York store, to define a new style that encapsulates the essence of both India and America.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

What sets us apart is the customized approach I bring to my clients.

As we create and sell unique items, I want the purchasing experience itself to be unique as well. I believe this is something that is often missing in the bigger, established jewelry houses where the purchasing process is too standardized. Luxury should be exceptional.

For instance, I often style my clients for special occasions and even red carpet events. I actually feel honored when they rely on me for the whole outfit, not just for the jewelry.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2018?

Next year will be all about the rediscovery of old techniques and traditional workmanship with the ultimate goal of creating exceptionally crafted products.

This trend will encompass several areas other than jewelry, such as cuisine, art and fashion. Indeed, I am working on a small clothing collection that would ideally complement our jewelry.

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