

JEWELRY

Carole Shashona on growing her eponymous jewelry brand

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Carole Shashona is a jewelry designer

By **Daniel Hodges**

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Carole Shashona is an iconoclast. Her rebellious spirit and insatiable curiosity led her to explore the world in search of beauty and a higher purpose and meaning in life.

Indeed, she has been painted by Andy Warhol, dressed by Valentino and given the honor of Grand Master in Feng Shui after her time as a designer in Hong Kong. But this is all just part of her journey.

Ms. Shashona has truly lived an extraordinary life, by design. She launched her **jewelry line** as a way to bring positive energy into her clients' lives.

Influenced by Ms. Shashona's own spiritual journey, **the label's** gold and sterling silver pieces feature revered motifs such as stars, the Evil Eye and Buddha. **Barneys New York** carries Carole Shashona jewelry.

We sat down with Ms. Shashona in Venice, Italy for this exclusive interview. Please read on:

How do you define your role as founder surrounded by professional management?

I have an incredible team that helps me handle all of the business and marketing and allows me to focus on being an artist and designer.

Of course, I am involved in the overall brand, but I allow my team the autonomy to do what they do best.

I believe if you know your people and allow them to do what they do best, you will have a strong team that will allow for continuous growth.

You have to believe in your team and they will believe in you.

When did your journey into the world of design begin?

I was raised around fashion royalty.

My mother was in fashion and we were surrounded by icons like Oscar de la Renta and Valentino growing up.

My grandmother taught me about precious stones at a young age and I eventually started designing my own jewelry for myself. It caught the attention of a lot of people.



Carole Shashona Lighten Up pearl bracelet, price \$7,000

What are your plans for this year and next for your brand?

My current collections are limited edition, limited production, artisan style, only making a few unique handcrafted pieces of each style per collection.

As my team has grown and we are starting to expand internationally, I am now open to more partnerships and collaborations so that I can bring my jewelry to more markets and affect more people.

It is an exciting time with so many opportunities.

I am just looking for the right people that understand my brand.

With the changes you see in Saint Laurent and Valentino adopting more of this rebel spirit that I have always loved, it makes me really optimistic for the future.

How is your customer evolving in her shopping behavior?

In this digital age, I am able to have a much more global reach than when I started.

I have people that find me from all over the world now. They are very savvy and know exactly what they want.

What role does marketing play in luxury and fashion?

Marketing to me has always been about getting my message out to the right people.

I want to make a difference in the world and create designs that are fashion forward, stylish and meaningful.

I grew up around designers in luxury and love working with the finest materials and felt there was a real need for luxury designs in jewelry that were more than just a beautiful design.

Being able to reach that audience that craves this kind of jewelry is powerful. It means that I am able to find people that want pieces that can be passed down from one generation to the next, providing those same blessings.



Carole Shashona Serpent D'Esprit Libre bangle, price \$9,700

If you go back to Cleopatra, the Greeks and the Romans, jewelry was always making a statement. What is the statement you are making?

With a background not only as an artist but the first female American Grand Master in Feng Shui, I have always integrated meaning into all of my pieces.

I design jewelry as a compass for those that walk the road less traveled, using symbols of protection and empowerment that act as reminders that anything you want is possible in life, and to move forward without fear and live the life you want, by design.

Where do you get your inspiration?

My inspiration comes from the world around me.

I design based on the world I see through my eyes.

I have had the opportunity to be painted by Andy Warhol and surrounded by artists most of my life, and find that I see life much in the same way. It can be through my global travels, everyday life or even a memory of my past.

My canvas is my jewelry.



Carole Shashona Cannabis earrings

How do you stay in touch with the trends that going on in the marketplace?

I have never been one to follow trends.

I always tend to go my own way and create my own path.

My jewelry is for those individuals that do the same.

What advice do you have for young designers?

To follow your dream and believe in yourself. Be uniquely you.



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