

Initiatives

in Art and Culture

WHITE: PALETTE, PRISM, POSSIBILITY

19TH NEW YORK FASHION + DESIGN CONFERENCE

FRIDAY – SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 10 – 11, 2017

Romney Mueller, *Portrait of Bethann Hardison*, New York, 2011.



Hisano Shepherd "little h," *Dream Necklace* from the Grotto Collection, 14 kt white gold, freshwater pearls, Akoya pearls, reclaimed blue topaz 8.13 ctw.



Shaun Leane and Daphne Guinness, *Contra Mundum Worn by Daphne Guinness* (detail); pavé diamonds set over 18 kt white gold. Photo Nick Knight.



Ralph Rucci, "Vibration" jacket. Photo: Dan Lecca.

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Why White? *Because* it contains—and hides—multitudes. *Because* it tricks us into thinking that there is no color where in fact there is nothing but. *Because* it is the repository of hope and change.

In this, the 19th Annual Fashion + Design Conference, Initiatives in Art and Culture seeks to reveal these multitudes,

whether in the work of

contemporary designers of clothing and accessories, of leading jewelers, or in the materials with which they work their magic. We explore and unravel the significance and power of white, taking a fresh approach to precious substances, natural fibers, and the processes by which they are transformed into objects and garments. At the same time, we look anew at the ways in which society consumes, communicates about, and validates those materials.

The white wedding dress, an icon continually reinvented. More modest garments, the white tee and the white dress shirt, for example, are equally iconic and, in their distinct ways, equally powerful. Even when subtle, white maintains its authority: there would be no denim without its white weft.

It is no accident that white figures so prominently among precious substances, whether diamonds, pearls, or platinum, each a symbol of power, of eternity. White is essential to the allure of faceted diamonds, our most valued prisms, while pearls require no cutting or polishing to exert their hold; their beauty is entirely intrinsic, and we are awed by their luster.

White is complex, at once the color of celebration and of mourning, the color of refinement and of origins. Indeed, white is the color of beginnings: the white canvas awaits the brush, the blank page the pen. As the color of beginnings, white becomes a potent symbol for social and environmental responsibility and ethical clarity, the bedrock of the society we strive to shape and of a better future and a better world.

The Lena and Louis Minkoff Foundation is gratefully acknowledged for its generosity.

Initiatives in Art and Culture expresses sincere thanks to Kaltex, to the Hilldun Corporation, to the Diamond Manufacturers & Importers of America (DMIA), to Jewelers Mutual, and to UNLEASHED for their generous sponsorship, and to Shinola for its generous support (as of September 29, 2017)



Gianfranco Ferré, *White Shirt*, *Vogue* (September 1993); *White Blouse*, featured in "Glamour of Italian Fashion," Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Photos: Irving Penn.



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Friday, November 10

Formal sessions take place at The Graduate Center, City University of New York, 365 Fifth Avenue (between 34th and 35th Streets).

- 7:45 – 8:30 a.m.

Registration and continental breakfast
- 8:30 – 8:40 a.m.

Introduction. Lisa Koenigsberg.
- 8:45 – 9:25 a.m.

50 Shades of White: Exploring the Color.
Donald Kaufman.
- 9:30 – 10:10 a.m.

Positive Exposure: Genetic Difference and Beauty. Rick Guidotti.
- 10:15 – 11:00 a.m.

To Make New Again: Women Designers as Advocates for Sustainability and Style.
Gary A. Wassner in conversation.
- 11:00 – 11:20 a.m.

Break and book signings
- 11:25 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.

Changing the Landscape: How Design Reshaped Urban History. Jacques Panis in conversation with Mickey Alam Khan.
- 12:30 – 1:00 p.m.

The White Shirt: an Icon Reinvented. Zac Posen in conversation with Dennita Sewell.



Rick Guidotti / Positive Exposure, "Redefining Beauty," *LIFE* Magazine (1998). Photo: Rick Guidotti; courtesy, Positive Exposure.



Zero+Maria Cornejo, *Ensemble*; Spring/Summer 2016 Ready-to-Wear Collection, New York.

- 1:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Lunch (on your own) and book signings
- 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Blinded by the Light: Why Diamonds Matter.
John Hatleberg, John King, Benjamin Zucker; moderator, Jack Ogden.
- 3:05 – 4:00 p.m.

Warp and Weft: the Impact of White on the Fabric of Our Lives.
Mercedes R. Gonzalez, Keith Hoover, Wendy Waugh, Barbara Zeins; moderator, Walter T. Wilhelm.
- 4:00 – 4:25 p.m.

Break and book signings
- 4:25 – 5:25 p.m.

White Noise. Penetrating Social Media Today. Mary Orton, Robert Verdi, Julie Zerbo; moderator, Gary A. Wassner.
- 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Reception at Shinola Flagship – Tribeca

177 Franklin Street
New York, NY

Remarks by Jacques Panis, President.



Zac Posen, *White Shirt*, Zac Posen Resort 2018.

Saturday, November 11

Formal sessions take place at The Graduate Center,
City University of New York, 365 Fifth Avenue
(between 34th and 35th Streets).

9:15 – 9:45 a.m.

**Continental breakfast and
book signing**

9:45 – 10:30 a.m.

Diversity on the Runway.
Bethann Hardison in
conversation with Ebonee Davis.

10:35 – 11:20 a.m.

**Contra Mundum: Creativity
and Collaboration.**
Shaun Leane in conversation.

11:20 – 11:40 a.m.

Break and book signings

11:40 a.m. – 12:25 p.m.

Sustainably Exquisite: Revolutionary Pearl Design.
Paula Crevoshay, Talila Gafter, Hisano Shepherd; moderator, Hedda Schupak.

12:25 – 1:40 p.m.

Lunch (on your own) and book signings

1:40 – 2:35 p.m.

**“Here Comes the Bride ...”:
Imaging and Imagining the Bride.**
Darcy Miller, Charlie Scheips, Mara J.
Urshel; moderator, Rachel Leonard.

2:40 – 3:35 p.m.

**“With this Ring ...”: The Changing
Landscape of Commitment.**
Wendy Brandes, Rachel Leonard, Jean Z.
Poh, Ronnie Vanderlinden; moderator,
Hedda Schupak.

3:35 – 3:55 p.m.

Break and book signings

3:55 – 4:35 p.m.

White-Out. Ralph Rucci.

4:40 – 5:30 p.m.

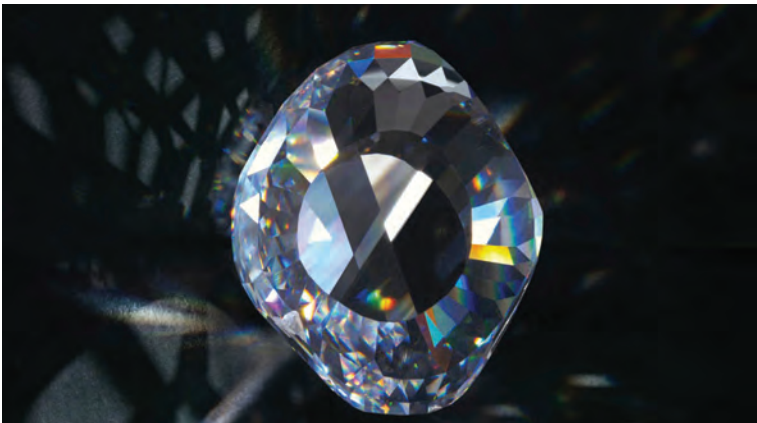
Snap Shot: Creating the Iconic.
Harry Benson in conversation with Chris Whipple.



Ebonee Davis as Nina Simone for *The Cut*. Created and styled: Lindsay Peoples Wagner; hair: Lacy Redway; makeup: Samantha Lau. Photo: Ricardo Rivera.



Paula Crevoshay, *Pearl Ring With Tarnishes and Opal*, Photo: courtesy, Crevoshay Studio.



John Hatleberg, *Replica of the Original Koh-i-Noor Diamond for the Natural History Museum London and The Tower of London*. Photo: Tony Pettinato.

Presenters

Lisa Koenigsberg, conference director and President and Founder, Initiatives in Art and Culture; formerly, she served as Advisor to the Dean for Arts Initiatives, and Director, Programs in the Arts and adjunct professor of arts, NYU School of Continuing and Professional Studies. She established the series of fashion conferences which explores fashion, materials, and process. Former positions include: Assistant Director for Project Funding, Museum of the City of New York; Executive Assistant, Office of the President, American Museum of Natural History; architectural historian, New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission; and guest curator, Worcester Art Museum and Yale University Art Gallery. Her writings have appeared in books and journals, and she has organized symposia and special sessions at universities, museums, and professional organizations.

Hannah Becker, CEO, Diamonddoodles; after graduating in 2011 from Bard College with a BA in Art History, Becker worked in branding and social media. She then attended the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) as part of the first Jewelry Design and Technology class and earned her Graduate Gemologist certification there. She worked as a production assistant for a diamond jewelry company while beginning to build her Instagram-based business, Diamonddoodles.

Harry Benson, photographer; Benson has been witness to a great many major political and social events in modern history. His iconic subjects range from world leaders to pop stars, all portrayed with an immediacy and naturalness that speak of a mutual confidence and rapport between sitter and photographer. Born in Glasgow, Scotland, Harry traveled to America with The Beatles in 1964 and never went back. Forty solo exhibitions and 17 books later, in 2009 Harry was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) by Queen Elizabeth II. Twice named NPPA Magazine Photographer of the Year and twice awarded the Leica Medal of Excellence, in 2013 Benson was named an honorary Doctor of Letters from The University of St. Andrews, Scotland, and in 2009, an honorary Doctor of Letters from Glasgow University and The Glasgow School of Art. He is as well an Honorary Fellow of The Royal Photographic Society in London. He is the subject of a 2016 documentary *Shoot First*, and his book, *Harry Benson: Persons of Interest*, will be published in November 2017.

Wendy Brandes, jewelry designer; her 18 kt gold signature line—inspired by the true stories of powerful women—is known for its fierce designs, attention to detail, and “covert luxury,” including hidden gems and surprising mechanical elements. Supermodel Christy Turlington captured the spirit of the collection when she called Brandes’ Empress Wu dragon ring “a bit scary, but really a cool piece of art.” Brandes’ designs have been featured in publications such as *InStyle*, *ELLE*, *W Magazine*, *Paper*, and British *VOGUE*, and spotted on celebrities including Rihanna, model Bella Hadid, Britney Spears, and Grammy-nominated singer/songwriter Skylar Grey. Brandes received the Women’s Jewelry Association (WJA)’s Award for Excellence in Design (2017) and Fashion Group International (FGI)’s Rising Star Award for fine jewelry (2012), and her work has also been recognized in the American Gem Trade Association (AGTA) Spectrum Awards, JCK’s Jeweler’s Choice Awards, and the American Jewelry Design Council New Talent Competition. Brandes led the luxury goods industry into social media when she launched her blog in 2007, and the playfulness she displays online is also seen in her diffusion line. Before becoming a designer, Brandes spent over a decade as a journalist at *The Wall Street Journal*, CNN and *People* magazine. She received a BA in English from Columbia University.



Wendy Brandes, *Gravity Heart Ring*; unisex platinum and diamond wedding band. Photo: SquareMoose Photography & Design.

Paula Crevosshay, jewelry designer, known for her striking sense of color and her application of fine art principles to jewelry design. Crevosshay also studied anthropology, especially symbolism, and her work is characterized by modern expression of artistic archetypes – echoes of cultures past. Today, Crevosshay enjoys the patronage of art connoisseurs and avid jewelry collectors throughout the world. The focus of the exhibition “Illuminations: Earth to Jewel” which took at place the Musée de Minéralogie in Paris (November 2016 – February 2017) and the subject of an accompanying publication, her work has been exhibited in many museums and is on display at the GIA, The Carnegie Museum of Natural History, and in the National Gem Collection of the Smithsonian Institution. Among the most recent of the numerous awards she has received are the 2015 WJA Award for Excellence and the 2014 AGTA Spectrum Award for Best Use of Color. Her work appears in many publications, among them *Masters: Gemstones: Major Works by Leading Jewelers* (M. LeVan, Lark, 2008).

Ebonee Davis, model and activist; her editorial credits include *Glamour*, *Office Magazine*, *Teen Vogue*, and *Sports Illustrated Swimsuit*. She has been featured in campaigns for Calvin Klein, L’Oreal, Adidas, and Urban Outfitters, and walked in Yeezus Season 4. An advocate for change in the fashion world to help create more authentic opportunities for women of color, Davis expressed her experiences of exclusion and systemic bias in an open letter to the fashion industry published by *Harper’s Bazaar* in 2016. She was then invited to give a TED Talk at the University of Nevada. Davis regularly speaks to young girls, encouraging them to educate themselves and speak their minds, and serves on the board of directors of Via Seattle, an organization of Seattle natives involved in philanthropic endeavors across the country.

Talila Gafter, PhD, has worked side by side for decades with Ella Gafter who is recognized as one of the world’s leading pearl jewelers. This career has given Talila a unique perspective from which to describe what could be called a “pearl artist”: someone who understands through experience the capricious nature of the pearl as raw material, and who has learned how to transform that capriciousness into a creation full with aesthetic pleasure.

Mercedes R. Gonzalez, founder and Director, Global Purchasing Companies (GPC); Gonzalez, a native New Yorker, has been developing and implementing retail strategies in fashion for nearly 20 years. Gonzalez grew up in fashion, working at her uncle’s apparel manufacturing company in the heart of the New York City garment district. After earning an economics degree from New York University, she went back to work full-time with her uncle, restructuring his company and ensuring a stronger bottom line. Soon after, she embarked on a fashion career as a buyer and proceeded to establish her own buying office. Today, GPC is hired to consult to domestic and international companies in fashion and retail, and influences over \$100 million in annual purchasing decisions.

Rick Guidotti, an award-winning photographer and founder and Director, Positive Exposure, an innovative arts, education, and advocacy organization. Positive Exposure uses visual arts to impact the fields of genetics, mental health, and human rights, and Guidotti has spent the past 18 years collaborating internationally with advocacy organizations, medical schools, universities, and other educational institutions to effect dramatic change in societal attitudes towards individuals living with genetic, physical, behavioral, or intellectual difference. His work has been published in newspapers, magazines, and journals as diverse as *Elle*, *GQ*, *People*, the *American Journal of Medical Genetics*, *The Lancet*, *Spirituality and Health*, *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, and *LIFE* Magazine. The Positive Exposure photography exhibition premiered at the People’s Genome Celebration, June 2001, at the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of Natural History, and has since travelled internationally. Positive Exposure is also the subject of the critically acclaimed documentary, *On Beauty* (Kartemquin Films, 2016), which as been termed “quite simply, a masterful example of how cinema can serve as a humanizing force in the world.”

Bethann Hardison, model, producer, fashion advocate, and Founder. Bethann Management Co.; a groundbreaker in the world of fashion, Hardison has helped guide the careers of some of the most prominent models of color, and is the founder of a watchdog/charity/networking group of models called the Black Girls Coalition. In 2013, Hardison also founded the Diversity Coalition to promote diversity in the fashion industry and challenge accepted notions of beauty. A New York native, she began her modeling career in the late 1960s as Willi Smith’s fitting model, and soon did runway and print work for Smith, and designers such as Anne Klein, Calvin Klein, Perry Ellis, Issey Miyake, Oscar de la Renta, and Ungaro, becoming one of a handful of trailblazing black models in the early 1970s. In 1988, Hardison changed her focus from modeling to activism; after working at Stephen Burrows, Valentino Couture, and Click Model Management, she founded her eponymous company, counting Veronica Webb and Tyson Beckford as clients. She has received the BRAGG Business Achievement Award (1996), the first-annual Vibe Style Award and the Magic Johnson Foundation Distinguished Service Award (both 1999); the Lifetime Achievement award from the Black Alumni of Pratt (2003); the Woman of Power Legacy Award from *Black Enterprise* and Jaguar’s Diversity Influence Award (both 2011); the Frederick Douglass Award (2013); and the Council of Fashion Designers of America (CFDA) Founder’s Award (2014). She was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on July 15, 2013.

John Hatleberg, the world’s best counterfeiter of famous diamonds for their owners; currently he is completing a three-year commission for the Smithsonian, creating replicas of the Hope, French Blue, and Tavernier diamonds. For the last 12 years Hatleberg has grown diamonds out of roses for private clients. He believes these Eros Rose Diamonds are the most romantic diamonds in the world.

Keith Hoover, senior apparel and retail executive with "guru" status in the area of color management; Hoover has led multi-national brands and retail in the development and adoption of digital Color-Logic technology and process improvement. He has extensive hands-on manufacturing experience and expertise in material creation, dyeing, and finishing. His previous positions include Vice President, Manufacturing Innovation, Material Process and Color, Under Armour; Director of Quality and Testing, Global Color & Fabric Innovation, JCPenney; Senior Manager, Design Resources, Lands' End; Senior Manager of Color Resources, Target Corporation; Color Technologist, Polo Ralph Lauren, Polo R&D.

Donald Kaufman, founder, Donald Kaufman Color; working with his wife and partner, Taffy Dahl, Kaufman has developed and applied unique paint colors in residential and commercial spaces for more than 30 years. Colors are formulated one at a time, to capture each hue's individual character. Their methods allow miniscule particles of pigment suspended in skins of paint to exhibit a spectral subtlety; the effect is one of color luminosity, of light coming from within. *Architectural Digest* noted: "When faced with 150 shades of white... finding the perfect hue seems like an impossible task. Donald Kaufman, color guru to top designers and architects, has been helping clients navigate this sea of white for over 30 years."

Mickey Alam Khan, founder and editor-in-chief, *Luxury Daily*, the world's leading luxury business publication. He was also founder and editor-in-chief of *Mobile Marketer* and *Mobile Commerce Daily*, leading publications in the mobile space. He was previously editor-in-chief of *eMarketer* and *DM News* and, prior to those stints, a correspondent for *Advertising Age*. He is based in New York.

John King, Chief Quality Officer, GIA Laboratory, Gemological Institute of America since 2008, a position in which he oversees global technical quality and communication of grading standards between GIA and the diamond industry. He began his career at GIA in 1978 as a diamond grader. From 1991 – 2005, he was a laboratory projects officer, focused on color appearance in gems and on developing techniques and equipment to enhance grading, reporting, and identification. From 2005 – 2008, he was technical director of the New York lab. Throughout, he has been one of GIA's team of graders, involved in grading many of the world's most important diamonds, among them the Hope, the pink Agra, the yellow Tiffany, the Incomparable, the Centenary, and those in the Smithsonian's 2003 "Splendor of Diamonds" exhibition. King has written a number of articles for the GIA's quarterly, *Gems & Gemology*, most notably, "Color Grading of Colored Diamonds in the GIA Gem Trade Laboratory."

Shaun Leane, jeweler; Leane began his career training at the bench in London's jewelry quarter, Hatton Garden. While working as a goldsmith, Leane began a long-standing collaboration with the late Alexander McQueen, creating provocative catwalk jewels that have become icons in the art of couture jewelry; this collaboration catalyzed Leane's burgeoning desire to blend technical perfection with creative freedom, and in 1999 he launched the first collections of Shaun Leane Jewellery. Leane has since been responsible for creating a new genre of jewelry: precious, poetic, with a sense of eternity, yet relevant to today's world. The powerful, emotive, and often poignant beauty of Shaun Leane jewelry also taps into the history and heritage of jewelry. Shaun Leane has also worked on one-of-a-kind projects with, among others, artist Sam Taylor-Johnson, musician and poet The Hon. Daphne Guinness, fashion house Givenchy, and Parisian master jeweler, Boucheron. His creations have been described by Sotheby's as "antiques of the future" and have received, for the House of Shaun Leane, recognition across the globe including winner, on four occasions, of U.K. Jewellery Designer of the Year, Walpole Best British Luxury Craftsmanship, Best International Jewellery Designer at the 2015 Andrea Palladio Jewellery Awards and, most recently, Fine Jewellery Brand of the Year at the 2016 UK Jewellery Awards. As his themes and impeccable hand-crafting skills continually evolve, liberating creativity, so Shaun Leane is evolving from an individual artist-jeweler into one of the world's most innovative luxury jewelry houses.

Rachel Leonard, Editorial Director, The Bridal Council, a professional organization whose membership consists of designers, journalists, retailers, and industry professionals whose goal is to provide content, trends, and insight to further consumerism and awareness as it relates to the bride in the marketplace; after working at Honeybee for five years, Leonard joined *BRIDES* in 1986 as Creative Coordinator, becoming Fashion Editor in 1998 and then Fashion Director in 1997. As Fashion Director, she ran the magazine's fashion department and styled and conceptualized photoshoots for

covers and fashion spreads, sought out young designers, brought international front row and backstage coverage to the magazine's audiences, contributed to digital content and overall online editorial growth on Brides.com and social media channels, and set trends, influencing the bridal market and overarching wedding industry. She holds a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design.

Darcy Miller, author, illustrator, professional memory-keeper, and self-professed confetti addict; over the course of more than 20 years as the editorial director of *Martha Stewart Weddings*, and now as editor-at-large, Darcy has become a leading celebrations expert. She is the author and illustrator of *Celebrate Everything!* (William Morrow, 2016) and *Our Wedding Scrapbook* (William Morrow, 2004). Known for her ingenuity, creativity, and distinctive drawings, Darcy is committed to making life a celebration and is known for throwing a party you'll never forget—and creative ways to document it so that you'll remember it forever. Though she's worked on parties in every size and style, her favorite fêtes are the ones she's hosted for her husband and three daughters at home in New York City.

Jack Ogden, internationally renowned jewelry historian, diamond authority, and jewelry industry veteran; Ogden has carried out new research on several of the "famous" diamonds, including the Agra, the Pigot, and the Idol's Eye, and his book on the early history of diamonds and diamond cutting is soon to be published by Yale University Press. While Secretary General of CIBJO, the World Jewellery Confederation in the 1990s, he worked with gem labs and was part of the team drafting an international standard for diamond nomenclature and grading, published as International Standards Organization (ISO) Technical Report (TR) 11211. More recently, as the gem expert for the British Standards Institute, he was closely involved in developing and drafting ISO 18323:2015 "Consumer confidence in the diamond industry," which provides a nomenclature for natural and synthetic diamonds to best create an agreed and uniform terminology in the trade. He was CEO of the Gemmological Association of Great Britain (2004 – 2012) and since then has returned to his work as an independent consultant advising clients primarily on the authenticity of ancient and historic precious metal objects. He is an elected fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, has the Diploma of the Gemmological Association of Great Britain with distinction, and a diploma in Art Profession Law and Ethics from the Institute of Art Law, also with distinction. His doctorate from Durham University was awarded on the basis of his thesis on Egyptian jewelry.

Mary Orton, co-founder and President, Trove; Trove is a mobile style and shopping platform that streamlines the consumer's path between inspiration and checkout. Orton is also the founder and editor of popular style blog, *Memorandum*, which she began while working for several years on Wall Street. A graduate of Georgetown University's School of Foreign Service, she resides in New York City.

Jacques Panis, President, Shinola; Panis joined Shinola in 2010 to lead the company's product development and strategic brand direction. Prior to Shinola, Jacques oversaw the interactive division for ReelFX, a Dallas-based animation studio owned by Shinola's parent company. While at ReelFX, he was a founding member of Webosaurs, a children's online gaming platform. Panis resides in Detroit and is an active board member of The Detroit Institute of Arts and The Detroit Children's Fund.

Jean Z. Poh, founder and CEO, Swoonery; a luxury e-commerce experience, Swoonery provides customers with access to over 74 international fine jewelry brands and a wide array of unique, impeccably crafted, fine jewelry offerings using proprietary, taste-based recommendation technology that facilitates discovery and personalizes the online shopping experiences. Poh is the fourth generation in a family of high-jewelry professionals and collectors. She began investing in start-ups at the age of 28 during her first career as a venture capital attorney. She later left law to work with her father in the jewelry industry, earning a graduate degree in diamonds from GIA, apprenticing with a famous jewelry master, studying jewelry history, and teaching herself to design and render jewelry. She began designing one-of-a-kind pieces for private clients and funded the establishment of her jewelry atelier by designing jewelry for established brands, brokering international diamond and gem transactions, and consulting for an overseas jewelry conglomerate, helping them set up their first flagship store in Manhattan. Poh started Swoonery to address the difficulties and inconveniences consumers faced when trying to shop for jewelry and the challenges that designers are confronted with in an outdated and inefficient industry. Her love of fine jewelry compelled her to create a platform allowing people to connect with exquisitely crafted pieces and experience the true beauty and integrity behind the art of jewelry-making.

Presenters

Zac Posen, designer; Posen launched his eponymous collection in 2001, with a vision of modern American glamour that married couture technique with striking innovation. Raised in New York, Zac began his design training early. He attended London's Central Saint Martins University in the womenswear degree program. In 2004, he was awarded one of fashion's most prestigious honors, Swarovski's The Perry Ellis Award for Women's wear by the CFDA. In 2015, Zac Posen was also awarded Designer of the Year by *Women's Wear Daily* and *Variety Magazine*. He is known throughout the world for his artisanal craftsmanship, anatomical construction, and textile manipulation. Worn by Uma Thurman, First Lady Michelle Obama, Gwyneth Paltrow, Naomi Watts, Claire Danes, and Rihanna, he has become a staple on the red carpet. His collections have grown to include Zac Posen, ZAC Zac Posen, and Truly Zac Posen, with offerings in handbags, accessories, bridal, eyewear, and fine jewelry. In Fall 2014, Zac Posen was announced as Creative Director for the Brooks Brothers signature women's collection and accessories which is available worldwide. Additionally, he serves as a judge with Heidi Klum and Nina Garcia on Lifetime's "Project Runway," currently in its 16th season. He recently partnered with Delta Air Lines to re-design its iconic uniforms. The documentary, *House of Z*, chronicling Posen's career, premiered at the TriBeCa Film Festival in April 2017, and is available for rent on Vogue.com. His latest project is a cookbook entitled *Cooking with Zac* (release date, October 10, 2017).

Ralph Rucci, designer; Rucci has been continuously inspired by Far Eastern asceticism, Flemish and High Renaissance art, architecture, African scarification, Japanese basketry, and modern artists such as Cy Twombly, Francis Bacon, and Joseph Beuys. Great inspiration has also been drawn from Balenciaga, Mme. Grès, Charles James, Gianfranco Ferré, Halston, Givenchy, and Galanos. Rucci's garments are known for his trademarks: textiles imprinted with the images of his own paintings, "worm" stitches, and the suspension, vibration, and thread-of-life techniques. Born in Philadelphia, Rucci studied philosophy and literature at Temple University, then attending Fashion Institute of Technology. After graduating, he apprenticed with Halston before showing his first collection in New York in 1981. After developing a select clientele, in 1987 Rucci's business succumbed as a result of the stock market crash; however, many of his clients remained, and work continued. In 1994, he reopened, under "Chado Ralph Rucci" and in 2002, the *Chambre Syndicale de la Haute Couture* invited him—as the only American in history to show under his own name—as part of the official Couture calendar. He showed for five seasons, returning in 2007 to present a ready-to-wear collection. Rucci has been the subject of exhibitions at Kent State University Museum's Costume Institute (2005 – 2006); The Museum at FIT (2007); the Philadelphia Museum of Art (2007); and the Costume Institute at the Phoenix Art Museum (2008). He received the Star Award from FGI (2005); the Artistry in Fashion award from the Couture Council, The Museum at FIT (2006); the Award of Excellence from the Costume Council, Los Angeles County Museum of Art (2006); the National Design Award from the Cooper-Hewitt Smithsonian Design Museum (2008); the Soaring Spirit Award from Live Out Loud (2011); the Award for Design Excellence from the Costume Council, The Chicago History Museum; the André Leon Talley Lifetime Achievement Award from the Savannah College of Art and Design (2012); and an honorary doctorate from Drexel University's College of Art and Design (2015). In 2011, he was inducted into FGI's Walk of Fame. Rucci's work is in the permanent collections of The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, London's V&A Museum, the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco, the Phoenix Art Museum, Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art, and the Texas Fashion Collection. Films on his life and work include David Boatman's, *Ralph Rucci: A Designer and His House* (2008) and Christian Leigh's *The Quiet American: Ralph Rucci & Paris* (2010). Books published about him are *The Art of Weightlessness* (Steele, Mears, Sauro, 2007), and *Autobiography of a Fashion Designer* (2011, photographed by Baldomero Fernandez).

Charlie Scheips, curator, art advisor, writer, and cultural historian; Scheips, who in 2015 became the consulting Project Director for creation of the Elizabeth Taylor Archive for The Elizabeth Taylor Trust, served as picture editor and consultant to the blockbuster traveling exhibition "Jacqueline Kennedy: The White House Years" for The Metropolitan Museum of Art (2001 – 2004). The founding Director of



Tiffany & Co., *Corsage Piece*, 1880 – 1895, silver, gold, diamonds, ¹³/₁₆ x 6¼ in. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, gift of Susan Dwight Bliss, 1941, 41.84.20a–f.

the Condé Nast Archive in New York, where he served for a decade, Scheips was Worldwide Director of Photographs for Phillips de Pury auction house. Contributor of articles to publications such as *Harper's Bazaar*, *Architectural Digest*, *Vogue*, and *Vanity Fair*, Scheips is the author of *Elsie de Wolfe's Paris: Frivolity Before the Storm* (Abrams, 2014), *American Fashion*, (Assouline, 2007), and *Andy Warhol: The Day the Factory Died* (2006). Scheips has helped organize exhibitions at Hearst Tower in New York and was guest curator for *Luxe Life*, an exhibition of masterpieces of American jewelry at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Featured in Randall Wright's recent documentary *Hockney* and in Julie Checkoway's *Waiting for Hockney*, Scheips served as the artist's chief assistant in the 1980s and has been a director of The David Hockney Foundation (UK) Ltd. since 2008; he curated "David Hockney: Fleur Fraiches: Drawings on the iPhone and iPad" (2010 – 2012) for the Fondation Pierre Bergé-Yves Saint Laurent in Paris.

Hedda Schupak Editor, *The Centurion Newsletter*; while examining the trends, nuances, and dynamics of the luxury jewelry market for the weekly e-newsletter and webzine serving the high end of the jewelry industry, Schupak also serves as a market analyst, consultant, and speaker on the

industry at large. Prior to joining the Centurion team, Hedda was the editor-in-chief of *JCK* magazine. She spent over 10 years as director of JCK's fashion and luxury publications before taking over editorial management of the entire JCK Publishing Group. Under her leadership, the Group won multiple awards for excellence in journalism and consistently ranked #1 in readership studies. A member of the board of the Diamond Empowerment Fund and of the 24 Karat Club of the City of New York, she was a 20-year member of the WJA national board of directors. She was named one of Pennsylvania's Best 50 Women in Business in 2003. In 2004 she was named the Trade Press Editor of the Year by the Jewelry Information Center, and in 2006, she was inducted into the WJA Hall of Fame.

Dennita Sewell, Curator of Fashion Design, Phoenix Art Museum; she received her MFA in Design from the Yale School of Drama and BA in Textile and Apparel Management from the University of Missouri. Prior to Phoenix, Sewell was Collections Manager at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute. At the Phoenix Art Museum she has organized exhibitions on topics ranging from motorcycle jackets to contemporary designers drawn from the Museum's comprehensive collection, international fashion houses, and private collections. Sewell curated "The White Shirt According to Me: Gianfranco Ferré" and "Gianfranco Ferré Designs" (2015). Sewell is also Professor of Practice at Arizona State University where she is heading up a new BA Fashion program.

Hisano Shepherd, little h designer; Shepherd launched her collection in 2011. She specializes in creating intimate, delicate jewelry through thought-provoking and innovative pearl designs. With an appreciation for the delicacy required to work with petite pearls and the organic shapes of baroque pearls, the designer's goal is to break the stigma and preconceived notions surrounding the gem that they are meant for just special occasions or "women of a certain age," and create new, modern ways to style the pieces. Her most recent collections, *Geode* and *Finestrino*, use pearls and gemstones in a way never before seen, earning Shepherd the 2014 – 2015 Orient Award for compelling design aesthetic from the Cultured Pearl Association of America and the Design Excellence Award in MUSA's 2015 Vision Awards competition. Each one-of-a-kind piece uses the most luxurious and sought after pearls in the world—Soufflé, Tahitian, and South Sea—that are sliced down their access, bored and polished to a smooth concavity filled with carats of colorful gemstones including natural-color sapphires, rubies, peridot, amethyst, seed pearls, and black and white diamonds. The effect is a stunning interpretation of a natural-forming geode. Spotted on such celebrities as Taylor Swift, Olivia Wilde, Elizabeth Banks, Selena Gomez, Anna Sophia Robb, and Emma Roberts, little h has also been featured in top-tier publications such as *InStyle*, *W*, and *Teen Vogue*. The collection can be found online at littlehjewelry.com.

Mara J. Urshel, owner and President, Kleinfeld Bridal; during Urshel's 20-year tenure with Saks Fifth Avenue, she served as senior vice president and general merchandise manager. Recognized as an innovator in her field, Urshel is credited with identifying and

introducing many designers, among them Isaac Mizrahi, Donna Karan, Perry Ellis, and Michael Kors. Since Urshel purchased the Kleinfeld Bridal boutique with Ronald Rothstein and Wayne Rogers, the store has enjoyed surging sales and success under her hands-on management. Urshel, who manages the business with Rothstein, was involved in all aspects of planning, building, and launching the 35,000-square-foot Kleinfeld flagship store in Manhattan One of the best-known and respected executives in the retail apparel industry, Urshel directs all merchandising, sales, marketing, and advertising at Kleinfeld Bridal which emphasizes unparalleled customer service. Urshel plays a leading role in *Say Yes to the Dress*, an American reality television series on TLC that follows events at Kleinfeld Bridal in Manhattan.

Ronnie Vanderlinden, President, Diamex Inc; he began his career in the diamond industry working as a diamond sawyer in 1977, broadening his training by joining a privately held firm in New York in 1980; after almost 10 years of increasing responsibility, he founded his own business in 1990. Well-known for his knowledge of both rough and polished diamonds, he now travels extensively in the US, the Far East, Canada, and Eastern and Western Europe to purchase diamonds as well as consult with key industry leaders. Deeply involved in all aspects of the industry, he holds positions in national and international organizations, among them Diamond Manufacturers & Importers Association of America (DMIA) and the United States Jewelry Council (of which he is president), the International Diamond Manufacturers Association (of which he is president as well). He also serves on the boards of the 24 Karat Club, the 47th Street Business Improvement District, and the Jewelers Vigilance Committee.

Robert Verdi, entrepreneur, celebrity stylist, and television personality; Verdi has become one of the most recognizable faces in the world of fashion and design; his credits include his eponymous network show *The Robert Verdi Show* *Starring Robert Verdi, She's Got the Look, Surprise by Design, Brides Gone Styled, Full Frontal Fashion, and Fashion Police*. A style expert for *E! Entertainment News, The Wendy Williams Show, The View, The Today Show, Martha Stewart, and CNN Headline News*, he has had cameo roles in *The Devil Wears Prada* and *September Issue*. Verdi has worked with celebrities including Eva Longoria, Hugh Jackman, Terrence Howard, Kathy Griffin, Kristen Wiig, Joy Behar, Ana Ortiz, Sandra Bernhard, Mariska Hargitay, Bobby Flay, Fantasia, Joely Fisher, Bethenny Frankel, and Sami Gayle. He also makes waves in the media, both on-line and in-print, profiled on the cover of *The New York Times Style Section, The Daily, The Wall Street Journal, the New York Post* and featured frequently in publications like *OK! Magazine, Life & Style, US Weekly, and InStyle*. In 2015, Robert Verdi launched Great Bag Co. and his signature series, The Model M., which was named an "It" bag by *The New York Times* and a "must-have" by Oprah. In 2016, BET announced its new series *Wendy's Style Squad* which covers the industry's red carpet fashions, and is co-hosted by Verdi and Wendy Williams.

Gary A. Wassner, CEO, Hilldun Corporation; Hilldun, known as the company behind many of Seventh Avenue's most prestigious fashion companies, has provided financing and factoring for many of America's most iconic designer labels. Derek Lam, Peter Som, Jason Wu, Maria Cornejo, Yeohlee, Alexander Wang, Nanette Lepore, Rebecca Taylor, Naeem Kahn, Zang Toi, Vivienne Westwood, Chris Benz, Thom Browne, Betsey Johnson, Marc Jacobs and Alexis Bittar are among those who have benefited from his acumen. Recently named one of Fashionista's 50 Most Influential People in Fashion, Wassner is a member of the CFDA Advisory Board, a mentor for the Chicago Fashion Incubator, an advisory board member of Fordham Law School's Fashion Law Institute, an instructor for the Design Entrepreneurs NYC program, a member of Senator Gillibrand's Fashion Industry Working Group and of Mayor De Blasio's Fashion Working Group, as well as a supporter of the Save The Garment Center movement and all causes related to the fashion industry in NYC. In 2014, Wassner became a founding member and Chairman, Interlux Holdings LLC, partnering with Lee Equity to purchase equity stakes in luxury, designer, and contemporary apparel and accessory brands. He has since made a personal investment in Cushnie et Ochs alongside of Farol Investment Management, and serves on Cushnie et Ochs' board of directors. A respected fiction writer and children's book author, he donates 50% of the proceeds from *Isabella Cucharella, Fashion Designer Extraordinaire*, to the CFDA Fashion Incubator Fund. The fifth and final book in his sci-fi, fantasy GemQuest series, *When Monsters Call Out The Names of Men*, was released in 2016.

Wendy Waugh, Senior Vice President, Merchandising and Development, Fast Retailing (Theory and Helmut Lang); she was previously Theory Division Vice President, Cygne Design, Inc (1986 – 1995).

Chris Whipple, writer, documentary filmmaker, journalist, speaker, and CEO, CCWHIP Productions; he is the author of *The New York Times* best-seller, *The Gatekeepers: How the White House Chiefs of Staff Define Every Presidency* (Crown, 2017), the first in-depth, behind-the-scenes look at the men who have been the president's closest advisers, whose actions—and inactions—have defined the course of our country. Unelected and unconfirmed, the chief serves at the whim of the president, hired and fired by him (or her) alone, the person the president depends on to execute his agenda. A multiple Peabody and Emmy Award-winning producer at CBS News *60 Minutes* and ABC News *PrimeTime*, Whipple is the writer and executive producer of *The*

Spymasters: CIA in the Crosshairs, airing on Showtime. For this groundbreaking film, Whipple conducted, for the first time ever, more than 100 hours of exclusive interviews with all twelve living CIA directors and their top operatives.

Walter T. Wilhelm, Chairman, WWA Advisors LLC (WWA), a boutique consulting firm that focuses on the softgoods industries (apparel, footwear and home), helping retail and brand clients refine processes and implement technologies from design to the initial bulk order; Wilhelm is recognized as one of the most innovative and "connected" executives in the

softgoods industry, and one of the pioneers in creating and implementing technology to streamline the product design and development processes. He has held senior positions in retailing, manufacturing, and technology sales and development. Wilhelm has extensive experience domestically as well as internationally, having opened six offices in Europe and four in Asia. He co-founded Microdynamics and Wilhelm–Leslie Associates, founded and served as President/CEO of Walter Wilhelm Associates, and served as President, Animated Images (Ai) and General Manager, Hughes Aircraft Company's Apparel & Footwear Automation Systems.

Barbara Zeins, President/COO, Gerson & Gerson, New York; after working as a costume designer in the Midwest, Zeins moved to New York as a designer of children's wear. She joined Gerson & Gerson more than 25 years ago and has held positions as President, Bonnie Jean division and as COO of the corporation. Gerson & Gerson currently manufactures in the United States, El Salvador, Colombia, and the Philippines, and throughout SE Asia. Ms. Zeins is one of the most "hands-on" executives in the apparel industry; she knows her products, the consumer, and the retail needs of her clients. Zeins looks for technology solutions from traditional vendors but if she can't find one that meets their needs she doesn't hesitate to invest in developing software internally. With degrees in Economics and Costume Design from Macalester College and Kansas University, Zeins also has Executive MBA from Columbia University.

Julie Zerbo, founder and Editor-in-Chief, *The Fashion Law*; the creator of one of the leading sources dedicated to the field of fashion law and the business of fashion while in law school, Zerbo was profiled by *The Wall Street Journal*, MTV, NBC, and Reuters, and is now regularly cited by *The New York Times*, NBC, *Forbes*, the *New York Post*, and various editions of *Vogue*. Zerbo authored a chapter in and assisted in editing *Fashion Law: A Guide for Designers, Fashion Executives, and Attorneys*, the principal fashion law textbook in the US, as well as *Navigating Fashion Law: Leading Lawyers on Exploring the Trends, Cases, and Strategies of Fashion Law and Essays in Economic & Business History*. A member of the advisory board of New York Law School's Fashion Law Initiative, Zerbo is a frequent speaker at industry events, educational institutions, and in the media on fashion law, business, intellectual property at large, and pop culture, and writes *Women's Wear Daily's* "WWD Law Review," a weekly feature.

Benjamin Zucker, authority on precious stones; a third generation New York gem merchant born on the French Riviera; after attending Yale and Harvard Law School Zucker followed his father and grandfather into the family gem business. Among his more recent publications are *Gems and Jewels: A Connoisseur's Guide* (2003), as well as the novels *Blue* (2000), *Green* (2001), and *White* (2008) in which precious stones play a vital role in the lives of the protagonists. Among his other publications are *A Green Diamond* (1998) and *Islamic Rings and Gems* (1984). He has assembled the Zucker Family Collection, widely regarded as the best American private collection of antique rings, on long-term loan to the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, and exhibited in "Bedazzled: 5,000 Years of Jewelry." His latest book, co-authored with Diana Scarisbrick, is *Elihu Yale: Merchant, Collector & Patron* (Thames & Hudson, 2014). He has lectured widely, appears in the media, and was profiled in *Art & Auction* (September 2008).



Shinola's Tribeca Flagship. Photo: courtesy, Shinola.

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Hubert de Givenchy, *Wedding Dress*, worn by Audrey Hepburn in the film *Funny Face*, 1957.

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Harry Benson, *Frank Sinatra and Mia Farrow at Truman Capote's "Black and White" Ball at the Plaza Hotel, New York, 1966*. Photo: Harry Benson; courtesy, Staley-Wise Gallery.

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