

Bohemian Modern: ace&jig

Description

We start our Bohemian Modern series with a company whose clothes we have completely fallen in love with, and it all started with overalls! We first discovered them whileâ?? wandering the streets of Williamsburg and stumbled across a tiny boutique called Beautiful Dreamers (which you can read more about in our next feature). What struck us was the amazing way they used linen for these overalls â?? they were perfectly shaped and super-soft with a completely modern design. Suddenly we needed to know everything â?? see all their pieces and find out who was behind the brand, which led us to Cary and Jenna.â??

Stylish friends Cary Vaughn and Jenna Wilson met more than ten years ago as fashion interns and instantly bonded over their shared love of antique textiles. Both stayed in the fashion world, became roommates and bridesmaids in each others weddings and then founded luxury clothing brand LaROK in 2004 before leaving three years later to start families. After Cary gave birth to daughter Alice and Jenna had her son James they decided it was time to come together again and create a casual and sustainable brand using special textiles â?? ace&jig.





Cary and Jenna showed their first collection in 2010 and timelessness was a main focus for the them: â??Å?At ace&jig, weâ??re not chasing trends, we want to make special pieces that you can wear year after yearâ?•Â•. Their first pieces were classic silhouettes made with special fabric to be worn season in and out and they find they still have people emailing them for things from their first collection because of this.

Each season their colors and silhouettes shift, but each collection is anchored by the stripe, either through alternating textures or pops of saturated color. They find their stripes are an iconic and timeless medium and an endless source for reinvention. The SS13 collection featured their typical woven prints in bright colors â?? oranges, turquoise, lime green and deep blues contrasted with neutral beiges. Each piece is perfect for comfortable weekend wear or to

pack for a lazy vacation thanks to these cheery colors and special textiles.

Most designers buy their fabric, but Cary and Jenna do everything from scratch to ensure all their garments are authentic. From the start it was important to them to find the perfect textile manufacturer, one that understood their values and was as meticulous as they were. Their search led them to India where, through friends, they found their current team and are able to create fabric thatâ??s very specific and technically difficult to weave â?? their textile guru even uses ancient wooden hand looms. It means they can make the process fun and inspiring, getting fully immersed in the process during their frequent trips there.



Their Indian partners also practice the holistic kaizen philosophy of continual improvement, provide free childcare for their workers and use reclaimed water to grow organic produce for them. Cary and Jenna describe it as a â??Å?very atypical factory environment. Itâ??s open-air, they reclaim the water and the workers eat in the garden and sit with their kids for lunchâ?•Â•. It was really important to them that the factory be ethical, have their sense of values and a feeling of soul.



There are the typical less glamorous aspects of the process â?? production, fittings and quality control â?? and they usually develop fabric for the next season at the same time as working on the one thatâ??s about to ship. But the factory and the team they work with are now like family to them and the beautiful surroundings of India provide inspiration for the pair as well as a production site. After each trip they bring back memories of color, incredible food and glorious beaches as well as countless treasures to hoard: jewellery, sandals, textiles, gifts for their children.



Based in Brooklyn, the pairâ??s children influence everything they do and their main focus is on this family lifestyle. Theyâ??ve found that having kids means that everything they wear has to have pockets, be laundered easily and pulled over your head; when youâ??re pressed for time, buttons and zips take up precious moments. Their children have also been behind the brandâ??s expansion and while childrenâ??s wear was always something they considered, Caryâ??s second pregnancy meant they created pieces for children much sooner than anticipated. Now both have two children each and are testament to the possibility of running your own business and having

small children too! As working mothers they say the most essential thing is balance â?? theyâ??re now lucky enough to have separate work and home spaces so they can juggle the two more effectively.

The introduction of their childrenâ??s wear marked the end of a super growth year for ace&jig â?? their Spring â??12 season was a hit and their runway show with GenArt brought about a sudden rush of orders, which grew their business substantially. Prior to this season they shipped everything from the factory themselves so they had to get a warehouse, a computer system and their very first employee! They describe growth as a great challenge to have â?? Cary and Jenna took a measured approach initially, taking small steps and making sure their lines were as good as they could be before thinking about expansion.

ace&jig has gone from strength to strength in its relatively short existence â?? each collection has been well received and their designs can now be found internationally in huge retailers like Anthropologie and Barneys as well as independent boutiques like Beautiful Dreamers. Cary and Jenna are unsure whatâ??s next for them, but as their story is one of textiles it could take them anywhere. Weâ??d love to see them expand into home products, but whatever the direction, weâ??re excited to see what the future holds.

If you want ideas on what you can create with linen, ace&jig is definitely a brand to investigate for wonderful inspiration as well find unique pieces sewn from beautiful fabrics â?? take a look at their website and let us know what you think!

Next week we explore Williamsburg boutique Beautiful Dreamersâ?¦

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1. TUTORIALS

POST TAG

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Date Created
March 6, 2015
Author
julia-good