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10 Minutes With Christine Marchuska: Eco-Fashion Designer & Founder of cmarchuska

by mariethacker Posted on March 25, 2009 - 2:30am

Christine Marchuska

City: New York City

Profession: Eco-Fashion Designer

Claim to Fame: cmarchuska hunter scarf rumored to be worn by Brad Pitt

Website: www.cmarchuska.com (<http://www.cmarchuska.com>)

Twitter: twitter.com/marchuska (<http://twitter.com/marchuska>)



How did you get your start in the industry?

I always have had a strong passion for fashion, style and the environment. So when I was laid off from my finance job in May'08, I decided to go after my dream and launch a chic, sustainable clothing line. I took numerous sewing classes in New York's garment district, networked with everyone and anyone I could in the garment/fashion industry, took a fashion crash course and read several books, magazines, blogs, etc in order to ramp up on knowledge. Finally in November '08 I launched my own line, cmarchuska, which consists mainly of stylish dresses and unisex scarves made with the finest organic, sustainable and/or recycled fabrics available. All of my clothing is manufactured domestically in New York City with fair trade/fair labor.

Who is your dream client and why?

My dream client is Natalie Portman because she is so passionate about the environment yet incredibly chic. She has an amazing classic style. I think she would be a perfect fit for my clothing and vision since I pride myself on creating timeless pieces that are also versatile and fun.



Without naming names, tell us about your nightmare client.

I really haven't had a nightmare client yet, but I would assume a nightmare client would be someone who would constantly be changing the design and vision of my pieces.

What's your favorite trend this season?

Scarves!!!! I LOVE scarves – hence why I continue to create different scarves with each season/collection of my line. They look fabulous on men and women and are the perfect accessory for any outfit. As my adorable French intern, Elisabeth, would say “scarves are tres chic!”

What 3 beauty or fashion mistakes do women commonly make?

1. Wearing too much makeup – looking natural is always better.
2. Buying clothes too small because they want to fool themselves into being a smaller size than they are. You should always buy what fits and looks good on you – don't worry about what the numbers say. Sizing is all inflated and based on society anyways – I learned that in my sewing classes when we used patterns that didn't even have a size 0 or 2 option.
3. Avoid mixing prints or patterns.



Above, from a recent Manhattan Trunk Show (see the video below)

Can you share some of your secrets for looking good on camera?

I wear more makeup when I know I am going to be photographed, but I always try to keep it natural looking, along with soft natural hair. Do a pose that you know works for you. Keep your smile natural – too big can look awkward. Last but not least, be confident – there is a reason they are photographing you ;)

What are 3 things women can do to update their look on the cheap?

1. Buy basic pieces that you can dress up with accessories. I always spend more on basic classic pieces, such as the christine dress or sylvia dress from my collection, that will last many seasons and then accessorize with reasonable earrings, necklaces, bags, etc., that you can get at street fairs and trendy stores.
2. Mix up your makeup. Try doing smoky eyes with pale lips or natural eyes with red lipstick. Playing around with different makeup will totally change your look without having to spend lots of money on expensive clothes. Most makeup counters at department stores offer free makeovers even if you don't buy a product - so play around with this and have fun! You would be surprised how changing up your makeup can totally update your look – this is a trick that is used frequently in photo shoots.
3. Experiment with different hair styles. Just like makeup – wearing your hair differently can offer a new updated look without spending lots of money. Try straightening your hair if it's curly or doing soft waves if you always wear your hair straight - again – just a simple way to update your look without breaking the bank.



Above, from a recent Manhattan Trunk Show (see the video below)

What's the most surprising thing you've learned in your profession so far?

That behind all the glitz and glamour, fashion is a tough industry and looks can be deceiving.

Many designers who are in the limelight could be on the brink of bankruptcy due to their costs associated with product development, so you need to be smart and consider designing pieces that have mass appeal. Overall, though, I really love being a part of the industry and meeting with so many amazing and talented individuals. This has been a dream of mine and I am happy to finally be living it out.

If you had to choose another profession, what would it be and why?

Right now I cannot imagine choosing any other profession. I guess later on I might want to teach and talk about my experiences, but right now I am perfectly content being an eco-fashion designer.

Any words of wisdom for those trying to break into your profession?

Do your research!!! Don't jump in before mapping out a plan for yourself. I think now is a great time to break into the industry since there are so many changes going on out there, but definitely take your time and do it right.

Check out video from cmarchuska's recent Trunk Show in Manhattan...

Video courtesy of JMZ Productions

Learn more about Christine Marchuska and her eco-friendly clothing line at www.cmarchuska.com (<http://www.cmarchuska.com>)



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