



ISSON EYEWEAR

TEN YEARS OF SETTING TRENDS

Words by **Tosha Cole Clemens**

Emerging designers dream of one day having their designs grace the runway, to be on display in prestigious retail stores and acquire the admiration of customers worldwide. Being a designer is one small part of the puzzle to creating a successful brand. Most designers have a keen eye for fashion and the innovative process of conceiving a product. However, to obtain global success takes knowledge in the business side of the fashion industry. The industry is constantly evolving with new trends surfacing daily. It is fundamental that a designer establishes their own niche. ISSON Eyewear is a part of a distinct few that has accomplished just that.

In 2003 Eye Candy Optics launched sunglass brand ISSON. Today the company celebrates its 10th anniversary, for which they created a collection that introduces fashion forward designs fitted with flat aspheric sun lenses. ISSON stands by the motto of creating excellent quality products with an unconventional approach to design. In addition to custom-made hinges, we can identify a unique selection of textures and patterns. Significant to note is the diverse collection of architecture-inspired frames. ISSON eyewear is able to appeal to a wide range of customers, offering a design for nearly every style imaginable. Due to this success, ISSON is available in over 26 countries.

Catherine Federici, designer and company director takes us behind the scenes of creating ISSON.

How did you start your company?

My husband Marco supported my idea and we started the business together in 2002. His involvement has been just as vital as mine, and equally instrumental in its success.

What is your company about?

To anyone who has ever made something from scratch, "Imagination Rules the World" means a lot. Every day my team and I are compelled to think in this way, to stay competitive, relevant and unique.

When I loosely sketch ideas, they are raw, kooky, playful and in most cases, not *manufacturable* – it's from this place that I start designing and most likely why Napoleon's words "Imagination rules the world" resonate with me. I could be more constrained, but where's the fun in that? So, I let my imagination rule, knowing that sometimes I'll get it wrong, but it's more rewarding and fun than being unoriginal and right all the time. I would describe my eyewear designs as left of centre, unpredictable yet wearable, intriguing, pieces that are fashion based but with a unique twist making them timeless, guaranteed to get a reaction and for people who are comfortable in their own skin and know who they are.

To learn more about ISSON go to www.isson.com.au Overall, creating ISSON or any brand takes time and vision. Those designers that are determined and passionate will persevere.



ALEJANDRA G. SHOE COLLECTION

FOR THE DARING, BOLD, PLAYFUL & FUN!

Words by **Tosha Cole Clemens**



What we wear should represent who we are, what we stand for and how we want others to perceive us. Whether we realize it or not, we are judged within the first 5 seconds of meeting someone. If your personality is bold, fun, daring and adventurous, Alejandra G. is the perfect fit for you!

Alejandra G. is a brand that seeks to empower the woman, for her to feel confident, and be the center of attention when she enters a room. The style is feminine with a sophisticated yet girly feel. The colors are bold, designed to be the main accessory of your wardrobe. Alejandra G. has captured the attention of celebrity fans such as Raven-Symone, Taryn Manning, Tamera Mowry and Carly Rae Jepsen.



“ALEJANDRA IS BECOMING A NAME IN THE FASHION INDUSTRY, BEING KNOWN AS THE SHOE FOR THE FASHION FORWARD WOMAN.”

So who is the girl behind this brand? Alejandra has always loved being creative. Her past experiences include being a part of a music group and being a TV producer. While she was producing, she had the opportunity of connecting with people in the fashion industry. That experience sparked the vision to pursue the dream of designing shoes. Alejandra's first step in going after this dream was attending one of the top shoe design schools in the world, Ars Suttoria in Milan Italy.

After graduating, she came back to Los Angeles and went full speed ahead creating Alejandra G. Today the company operates with a full sales team, a PR firm and assistants. Alejandra is becoming a name in the fashion industry, being known as THE shoe for the fashion forward woman. With styles ranging from studded sandals to platform pumps, this designer-to-watch has surely made a lasting impression with bold designs. By launching her first collection in 2011, Alejandra G has created attention-grabbing pieces that make an unforgettable statement when paired with any outfit. Alejandra tells *IN Magazine* more about the process of creating her wonderful designs.

“I DO LOVE FOLLOWING THE RUNWAY FASHION OUT OF EUROPE. I AM ALWAYS INSPIRED BY THE RUNWAY SHOWS.”

What are some of your top sources of inspiration?

My inspiration is always eclectic. I can't pinpoint anything specific. When I design, I get inspired by things I am feeling at that moment. I do love following the runway fashion out of Europe. I am always inspired by the runway shows.



What is a typical day like?

Everyday I'm running my company. Returning emails, calling everyone from my Alejandra G team making sure everyone is handling their duties on time, I do business with my factory out of the country and I basically just think a lot. I plan and map out my next moves. I want my brand to be a household name and for every woman to own a pair of my shoes so I have to work hard and stay focused.

I LOVE ART AND ANYTHING YOU CAN BE CREATIVE WITH. I LOVE MY CUSTOMERS AND SEEING A WOMAN IN MY SHOES.

What are the best and worst things about being a business owner?

It is very stressful and time consuming. My life is all about my company. I have to overlook every aspect of my company and make sure everyone is doing their job. The perk of being a business owner is that I can lay in bed all day with my laptop and do work if I want to. I am my own boss and sometimes that's exactly what I want to do. Just lie in bed and do business from home.

What are the things you like most about your career?

Being able to express myself like an artist on a shoe. I love art and anything you can be creative with. I love my customers and seeing a woman in my shoes. It's the most amazing feeling for people to be excited over what you created.

“I HOPE TO MAKE IT AN EMPIRE OF DIFFERENT THINGS FROM CLOTHES TO JEWELRY, HANDBAGS, PERFUME AND MEN'S SNEAKERS. ANYTHING I CAN GET CREATIVE WITH; I AM DOING IT.”

What's your philosophy of life?

Do what you love and what makes you happy so you never feel like you are actually working. And once you are doing what you love, go hard or go home. The outcome of what you receive determines how much you put into it.

What are some of your greatest accomplishments?

I would say starting my company. I jumped into this not knowing anything about running a company, especially a fashion company. I am very impressed with myself on how quickly I put it all together. I hope to make it an empire of different things from clothes to jewelry, handbags, perfume and men's sneakers. Anything I can get creative with; I am doing it.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Tosha has over 10 years of experience in fashion. Consisting of styling, trend forecasting, production, product development, design, and sourcing. She has represented top companies that include, BEBE, Wet Seal, Fredrick's of Hollywood, and Fox Racing. She provides consulting and also is a contributing fashion writer for several magazines and the founder of www.NittyGrittyFashion.com.