

ARTIST INTERVIEW

Official Website: yunayang.com

Designing Fashion, Designing Life

Yuna Yang is making waves in the fashion capitals of the world



Yuna Yang.

Photo by Melissa Murphy



YUNA YANG SS14 collection

Photo by Charles Roussel



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Asian-American designers are making big waves in the New York fashion industry today. Since Vera Wang, Anna Sui and Vivienne Tam became household names in New York in the 1980's-90's, the sudden rise of new Asian-American designers has been remarkable. Doo-ri Chung, Richard Chai(*both Korean-Americans), Alexander Wang, Jason Wu, Phillip Lim, Derek Lam, Peter Som, Prabal Gurung and Thakoon Panichgul have emerged as leading fashion designers in New York. At the same time, fashion schools in New York are experiencing an influx of Asian-American students. No doubt, we will see more AA (Asian-American) designers in the future.

Among this recent wave in the fashion world, Yuna Yang, 36, is worth watching. Ms. Yang had a long journey looking for her life-long career, from Seoul to Milan, London and finally New York, the fashion capital of the world, where she launched her own label, YUNA YANG, in 2010. Ms. Yang's collection interweaves the aesthetics of East and West, classical and modern, fine art and fashion.

Born in Seoul in 1978, Ms. Yang studied fine arts at Ewha Woman's University. Before she decided on her professional career, she moved to Milan, where she experienced first-hand the art of Leonardo da Vinci and Italian opera. There she found fashion, which became her destiny.

When she debuted her Fall/Winter 2010 Collection at New York's Fashion Week, Women's Wear Daily welcomed Ms. Yang with a cover story, praising her as "a sure winner just out of the gate with her charming Louise Brooks-inspired first collection of lacy frocks, beautifully tailored cashmere coats and perfectly draped silk jersey sheaths." Her Spring/Summer 2011 Collection was featured in New York Magazine in the story "Nine Designers to Watch." Her Spring/Summer 2014 Collection, titled "1920's Shapes Meet Modern Art," was inspired by three contemporary artists: Hong Seung Hye (Korea), Richard Artschwager

(USA) and Karl Haendel (USA), Yuna Yang is at the crossroads where art meets fashion. Her venture is surely armed with passion.

Q: You studied fine art in college. What triggered you to be a fashion designer?

A: I started my career as an artist at age 5. My mom encouraged me to learn many different activities, everything from piano and painting to skating. My drawing teacher thought that I had talent and encouraged my parents to support my career in art. I won a couple of national and international art competitions and, naturally, went to college as a fine art major. But in my senior year of college, I started to question a career in art. I decided to move to Italy to learn about a different culture, really another world! I chose Italy because of Leonardo da Vinci, who I idolized as a child. In Milan, I had a life-changing experience!

Q: What was the life-changing moment in Milan?

A: In Milan, one of the fashion capitals of the world, I ran into a technician who worked with Valentino for 30 years. She showed me the atelier. That was the moment! I realized that "Fashion is Art," and that I wanted to be a designer. So I applied to a one year course in Fashion Design at Istituto Marangoni, founded in 1935. I graduated with the highest grades in my class and then worked as a designer for 'Prima classe Alviero Martini'. This is how I started my career in fashion. Then I moved to London and received my degree at Central Saint Martin.

Q: What do you like about fine art and what do you like more about fashion?

A: I love both art and fashion. The biggest difference is, with art you need to first convince yourself, and you hope that people understand you. In fashion, it is more of a direct "conversation" with your audience, as your try to communicate your vision to them. What I love most about art is the freedom. You use any method you want - paint,

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2D, 3D, sound, video, word - to express whatever you believe. In contrast, while art is individual freedom, fashion is an industry, a collaboration. You work with pattern makers, sales persons, fabric agents and so on. I feel proud that my little talent can help give a little work to all of these industries as I make my collection.

Q: Who was your role model in fashion design and why?

A: I admire many designers. Valentino, of course, Christian Lacroix and so on. But my role models are Dries Van Noten (his collections are so consistently excellent) and Azzedine Alaia (his works are masterpieces). Alaia does not follow rules; he makes the rules in fashion! As a leader of the entire fashion industry, I admire Diane Von Furstenberg. She enthusiastically supports young talents. My career goal is founding a "School of Art & Design" for children from low-income families, who have big dreams and big barriers to breaking into fashion.

Q: Having studied in Milan and London, why did you decide to have your business

in New York?

A: I lived in Europe for almost 10 years. I spent my 20's in Milan & London. But to start my own business, New York was the best option. I love the energy in New York's Garment District. For a young designer who has a smaller budget, it was just perfect.

Q: There are many prominent Asian-American designers today. Doo-ri Chung, Alexander Wang, Richard Chai, Derek Lam, Jason Wu, to name a few. What do you think about the Asian sensibility in the mainstream fashion industry?

A: Because of the growing Asian economy, the fashion industry is always looking at Asia now, especially China, Japan and South Korea. I feel lucky that I started my brand with this good timing.

Q: And how important has it been for you to have those successful Asian-American designers ahead of you?

A: It is great to see more Asian-American designers be so successful these days. It encourages me a lot. No one is surprised anymore to see talented young Asian-American

designers doing well in fashion.

Q: What is the most challenging aspect for a young designer to make it in such a competitive business of fashion?

A: Everything is difficult! The business side is more difficult than designing the collection. I'm creative director... and CFO, COO and CEO! I do everything from the seasonal concept, marketing, sales, to presentation... all the decisions for every single step of my business.

Q: What inspires you to create your collection?

A: My inspiration comes from everywhere but often from what I read. I read a lot and it always inspires me.

Q: How has your study of fine arts affected you as a fashion designer?

A: I believe the process of creating 'Art' is very similar to creating a Fashion collection. Because my background is from Art, I love bold colors and textures and I seek unexpected shapes for my collection. I'm well-known for my colorful collections and interesting materials.

Q: What defines the Yuna Yang collection?

A: Classic with Modern Touch.

Q: Can you tell me about your 2014 F/W collection?

A: I am personally excited about the Fall/Winter 2014 collection's concept - 'The Butterfly Mother'. It is the first time I have a collection inspired by Asian culture. 'The Butterfly Mother' is a collection inspired by Miao Culture in southwest China, known for their embroidery, weaving, paper-cutting, batik and jewelry casting. The collection is inspired by traditional Miao culture. A modern Fashion take on simple art with great colors, drawing on the Miao spirit in which everything is alive: mountains, rivers, trees, and inanimate objects are also born and have spirits.

By Sukie Park

Cooking Time - Korean Food

Source: JOGYE ORDER OF KOREAN BUDDHISM CULTURAL CORPS OF KOREAN BUDDHISM (KoreaTempleFood.com)



Kimchi Memil Junbyung

(Kimchi rolled up with buckwheat pancakes)

- INGREDIENTS -

1/4 of Well-fermented kimchi, 5 shiitake mushrooms, 2 green chili pepper, 1 red chili pepper, 1 cup buckwheat flour, 2 tbsp soy sauce, 1 tbsp sesame oil, For cooking oil: 3 tbsp perilla seed oil + 3 tbsp vegetable oil

- DIRECTIONS -

1. Brush kimchi seasoning then chop kimchi and squeeze juice.
2. Chop shiitake mushrooms and season with soy sauce and sesame oil. Lightly cook in a skillet over medium heat.
3. Dice green and red chili peppers and pat dry.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together buckwheat flour, water and soy sauce until evenly mixed.
5. Oil large nonstick skillet with cooking oil (mixed with vegetable oil

Dr.Bliss Health Column - Acne, Facial Rejuvenation

blissacuclinic.com

Look into the internal cause first Traditional Korean Medicine



Bae Eun-kyung L.Ac.

A rising use of Acupuncture developed over centuries of time is applying it to skin rejuvenation and acne treatment. While skin rejuvenation and acne treatments can be costly, painful and sometimes inconceivable, Acupuncture provides an alternative method that is less abrasive and relatively painless. Unlike western practices in which acne is the condition, TKM (Traditional Ko-

rean Medicine) asks why acne is occurring within an individual. In the case of acne, within TKM community, it is considered a symptom for a deeper imbalance within the body.

For example, many find themselves to be more prone to acne during high levels of stress and treat the acne with topical spot treatments and antibiotics. However, TKM will see that stress causes gastro-intestinal problems that will then raise the body's "toxic heat" levels. This toxic heat will then irritate the oil glands around the face thus resulting in a sudden break out of acne and inflammation. Rather than attempting to dry out the oil glands, something that is found naturally in our body, like most western dermatologist do, Bliss Acupuncture targets the internal cause for the acne by trying to rid the body of the toxins through Acupuncture and herbal medicine.

Acupuncture can also be used to reduce signs of aging and rejuvenate the skin through a series of non-abrasive, calming treatment sessions. Unlike abrasive facelifts, which can be painful, costly and

require long recovery time, Traditional Korean Medicine targets the Qi in our body, to ensure that the whole body receives and maintains the rejuvenation rather than just the face.

Unlike western methods of skin rejuvenation in which there is one or more abrasive surgical procedure, skin rejuvenation through Acupuncture is carried out through a series of non-abrasive, calming treatment sessions. Acupuncture is a good alternative for those who are trying to avoid the side effects correlated with surgical facelifts. Bliss Acupuncture can erase wrinkle lines, sagging skin and laugh lines through the skin rejuvenation techniques that have evolved from Traditional Korean Medicine, the true anti-aging secret.

Bliss Acupuncture Wellness Clinic

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