



STORIES & INSIGHTS

Meet Julie Cohn



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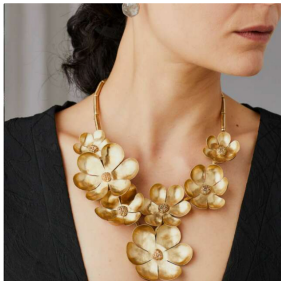


We recently connected with Julie Cohn and have shared our conversation below.

Julie, thanks for taking the time to share your stories with us today We'd love to hear about a project that you've worked on that's meant a lot to you.

Throughout my creative life I have studied artists who are multi-disciplined. They make their art but also foray into the design of everyday objects, architecture, set design, and other collaborations. Collaboration is at the root of my creative process.

Two years ago we were approached to design a collection of jewelry inspired by the work of mid century designer/artist/sound artist/jewelry designer etc. Harry Bertoia for a retrospective of his work at the Nasher Sculpture Center in Dallas. The themes in his work often dealt with natural forms which mine do as well. Collaborating with my staff on this project was like jamming with a beloved musician.



Julie, before we move on to more of these sorts of questions, can you take some time to bring our readers up to speed on you and what you do?

I always grew up with the assumption that I would be an artist. I had very few interests other than making things. I collaborated with my sister doing embroidery and other craft projects.

I went to art school and got my BFA and MFA in painting and printmaking and during those years began to study bookbinding and box making to house my finished editions. Because collaboration is part of my DNA, a friend and fellow artist and I decided to form a business making custom books and boxes called Two Women Boxing. This business eventually eclipsed my art career and lasted for 15 years. We sold a line of decorative books and boxes to high end stores around the world. We also worked closely with photographers, architects, and other designers to create custom portfolios for their work. This skill, coupled with my interest in graphic design lead to perfecting the subtle art of branding through presentation.

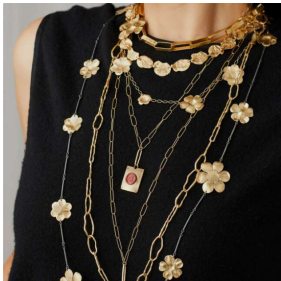
After I closed that business, there were a number of realizations that I had about where I wanted to go with my creative path. I wanted to design a much wider range of products for the home but needed to collaborate with bigger companies to make that happen. I branded myself as a designer of dinnerware, textiles, wallcovering, rugs, decorative hardware and other things in addition to seeking out collaborations with architects, artists and participating in public art projects.

In 2008 an economic recession changed my path. Through my prototyping in hardware I developed an interest in sculpting jewelry. With very little actual jewelry skill, I spent the next 2 years simply making and exploring motifs from my previous creative endeavors. My infatuation with mid-century design and nature inspired forms lead to a small collection of bronze jewelry. Informed by my knowledge of branding and presentation and a specific artistic point of view I was able to launch a jewelry collection with the help of other talented craftspeople and a very wise business partner. We have established a

niche position in this industry that includes, museums, galleries, high end gift stores and clothing stores.

What do you find most rewarding about being a creative?

Making things is my reason for getting out of bed everyday. I make what I want to make and try to be unaffected by trends and influencers. Being able to inspire other people to also want to express themselves is part of collaborating and mentoring in my company. I have forged my own path for my entire life.



We'd love to hear the story of how you built up your social media audience?

Social media is like a dark art. I never wanted to have to rely on it to tell my story or make people buy my jewelry. With that being said, once I realized it was a way to talk about my craft and artistic influences I began to make peace with it. It is a way to create an image of how I want to be perceived in a sea of sameness. I only post beautifully thought out photos and text that position me in a top tier of the handmade marketplace. Everything I put out on social media, my website, messages to my customers and stores is always of the highest caliber to hopefully reflect what my work is. Personally controlling the image of your company distinguishes you as an original designer and creative voice. The world does not need more landfill. Social media is like junk mail unless you use it thoughtfully.

Contact Info:

- Website: juliecohndesign@gmail.com
- Instagram: [@juliecohndesign](https://www.instagram.com/juliecohndesign)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/JulieCohnDesign>
- Youtube: <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/549368273>
- Other: <https://www.pinterest.com/juliecohndesign/>

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