



SHOT ON LOCATION AT DESIGN TONIC IN LOS ANGELES

Jennifer Üner

Story by AIMÉE BAKSHANDEHPOUR // Photography by BRADLEY MEINZ

Jennifer Üner wants people to take LA more seriously—LA’s fashion, that is. As the founder and producer of the *LA Fashion Awards*, the Regional Director of Fashion Group International of Los Angeles and an integral part of *FashionWeekLA.com*, Üner is working hard to elevate the reputation and awareness of Los Angeles fashion.

LA Fashion Week has made great strides in recent years, gaining more media attention than ever before. Üner’s belief in and support of LA fashion designers has been instrumental to this growth. Üner contends there is a freedom of expression and diversity in LA that breeds a unique creativity in Southern California designers. She argues that, because of this, LA design is actually more original than some of the other more prominent “fashion cities.”

“LA is about showing your individual style, being yourself, less about wearing a big label,” she offers.

When pressed to list her favorite or the most influential LA designer, Üner retracts; she could not possibly give an answer. It’s almost as if I’ve asked her to pick her favorite child. “That’s what the *LA Fashion Awards* are for,” she says. “I’m just the producer, not a judge.”

Üner has always been a big supporter of designers. In 1998, she created *The Edge at MAGIC*, providing a platform for new, smaller and progressive designers and opening up the fashion trade show to more than just the mega brands.

Although the California native is quick to declare, “I’m simply not a fashionista,” it’s safe to say that after 15 years in the fashion industry, she does know style. When asked to define “good style,” she quickly replies, “It’s self confidence, attention to detail, awareness of a trend without being subject to it, being comfortable in your passions.”

“Integrity and authenticity are the two main ingredients,” she says resolutely. This, she says, encompasses *real* LA style. And for a town otherwise bogged down by stereotypes of plastic surgery and, sometimes, plastic personalities, the version of LA style that Üner promotes sounds almost revolutionary. □

ITEMS

» ÜNER’S 5 MUST-HAVES FOR A STYLISH FALL:

1. Leggings for layering
2. An oversized, delicious knit sweater
3. A neat, clean, classic handbag
4. Tickets to Dubai
5. Fresh jewelry