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Interview with Designer Coye Nokes



When industry convention seems to dictate that women be limited to design or management, it is empowering to see a strong-minded woman take on all aspects of a brand. Flying in the face of unwritten rules, *Coye Nokes* launched her eponymous line of footwear in 2009. With a background in strategy consultation for European luxury companies, Nokes presents a determination to combine quality workmanship with attractive, modern designs made for the Carrie Bradshaw set. Nokes' devoted customers are self-assured trendsetters making an impact in the working world. Known for her clean, architecturally designed shoes that pair unusual combinations of materials, Nokes creates pieces that make playful-yet-professional statements of capability and control. As an up-and-coming luxury brand that already has a strong grip on the world market, Coye Nokes offers the perfect aesthetic for metropolitan women who prefer to carve their own niches in the well-worn business world.



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In conversation, Nokes told me that she is constantly inspired by the metropolitan street style found in the two cities she splits her time between: New York and London. With her customers as her muse, Nokes has established a self-replenishing cycle of design that ensures freshness and excitement in her work. Her immediate boutique success may be explained by shrewd corporate intuition and a genuine love of footwear—qualities that have helped her brand stand out among less conceptualized luxury lines.



Nokes thoroughly researches materials, drawing from artistic and architectural influences. Her dedication to combining unique materials—sumptuous fabrics, suedes, feathers, sequins—adds dimension and depth to her designs. Nokes' choices effectively act as a fashion barometer for upcoming seasons. Evolving the brand with every new collection, she refuses to let her designs become stale.



Nokes keeps a fascinating scrapbook-style blog of influences on her site, coyenokes.com. With a firm base in modern architecture as her template, Nokes uses her blog ("Journal") to delve deeper into her strong and sometimes unconventional sense of aesthetics. Nokes keeps seasonal motivations at arm's length—never straying from her brand's core, but allowing interesting themes to penetrate pieces throughout her collections.

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Nokes' passion for finding inspiration in her customers and her readiness to broadcast seasonal influences to a virtual public indicate that feedback is essential to her process. She embraces the age of digital accessibility for the betterment of her brand, while giving consumers the ability to make a personal connection with her concepts and ideas. This permission and encouragement of growth is also reflected in Nokes' philanthropy. The company supports several non-profits that focus on female liberation and self-exploration.



Nokes shows no sign of ebbing into irrelevance, with plans to expand the line and embark on new ventures soon. Already well-known to intrepid fashionistas and acclaimed by critics, Coye Nokes has the substance to succeed that most buzz brands lack.

For more of Coye Nokes, visit <http://www.coyenokes.com/>