

Style Setter: Cathryn Collins



My long-time friend and a KIC Style Setter, [Amanda Ross \(2\)](#), has been telling me for years that I should meet her friend Cathryn Collins, a woman who makes the most amazing cashmere knitwear. After meeting Cathryn at her office/showroom downtown and then at her Beekman Place home last month(3), I'm sorry I waited so long. I don't know her well but I can tell that she is a complex, free-spirited and passionate person.

First, she does make *gorgeous* cashmere sweaters, jackets and scarves, along with fur pieces vests with custom printed-silk linings (7), old military coats lined in mink, which can be bought and custom ordered at her showroom [I Pezzi DiPinti](#). (I have my eye on many pieces.) She is a global nomad and spends about six months a year traveling. Since I met her she has been to Russia, Paris, 3 weeks in India where she does a lot of her work and manufacturing, etc.

In her other life, she recently completed a documentary on the imprisoned Russian oligarch Mikhail Khordorkovsky and has served on a conservation board in Nepal for years.

Oh, and then there is her style. She might reside in a tony neighborhood and be married to one of New York's premiere plastic surgeons-but she is naturally stunning (she credits her husband's skincare line) and cites Mick Jagger as her fashion icon. To me, she defines cool.

Style motto: Dress it down when you are dressing up, dress it up when you are dressing down.

Style icon: Somewhere between Mick Jagger (10) and Keith Richards.

Best style advice: Find a uniform that works for you and stick to it. Wear as little makeup as you possibly can, or none. (Think Mick and Keith.)

Go-to outfit: Either a **Dipinti** midnight blue Swakara reversible gilet over a **James Perse** cotton tank and custom Kition cigarette pants or an old Tom Ford suit jacket from his Gucci days over a Dipinti tank with **Genetic Denim** skinny jeans. A Lanvin ballet flat (5) or Alexander Neel over-the-knee suede boots. And to dress it up, always my **Munnu** mine-cut diamond cross (6).

Weekend uniform: A custom tie-dyed Dipinti slouchy jewel-neck sweater (8), skinny jeans and barefoot. In the summer, an **Eres** bikini, beaten-up custom white linen shirt from Sartoria Caprese in Capri, also barefoot.

You can never have too many: Dreams

On your wrist: An antique cuff and collections of satin ribbons with bone tete-de-morts (skulls).

Three essential knits every woman should have in their closet: - The perfect black short jewel-neck cardigan. -Black tank - Navy jewel-neck pullover. All cashmere of course.

Bag you're carrying and contents: (9) Black Hermes Atlas (9), **Hermes** tassel keyring in blue jean, Hermes wallet, Blinde wraparound glasses, a tape measure, a flash drive, my Iphone and Blackberry Pearl, mint Tic Tacs, lemon hand wipes, **Jouer Cosmetics** lip gloss (11), a plastic rosary given to me the day I had breast cancer surgery 10 years ago.

Never leaves the house without: My Codognato tete-de-mort gold and diamond ring [a renowned Venetian jeweler] and my Dipinti hand-painted cashmere Blossom shawl.

Designer dream: To have Helmut Lang (the person not the company) go back to designing jeans (white, please) and Tom Ford, now that he has resumed, to promise to continue to design women's clothing for as long as I am around to wear them.

You can tell good cashmere by: How a garment responds to washing and how long it lasts. Good cashmere should last a lifetime.

Cashmere care: Cashmere LOVES water. Wash by hand with gentle soap, lay flat to dry (never wring). Store folded with acid-free tissue.

Hostess gift: Raspberry preserves made from our Blackcap Farm raspberries by my husband.

Lunch spot: La Fontelina, Capri (12).

Favorite night out: The River Cafe, London. With my husband, with friends....alone. Always The River Cafe.

Stationery: **Benetton Graveur** in Paris. I'm waiting for my black panther motif cards with pale mulberry borders.

Scent: Jasmine 17 from **Le Labo**.

Home scent: Blooming paper whites.

Collects: Antique textiles and cuffs (4).

3 Beauty essentials:

- **Dr. Gerald Imber's Youth Corridor (1)** Anti-Oxidant Boost Serum. [Imber is Collin's husband.]

- Hair color by Reynald Ricard at **Red Market** (and NEVER blow drying my hair.) To ensure my hair looks like it was created by nature, not nurture.

- Run cross-country as often and as far as I can.

A house is not a home without: Pets, flowers, books and good linens.

Favorite way to entertain: Cooking at home for friends surrounded by our animals, tons of flowers, and my husband teeing up the music and vino.

On your nightstand: Roses from the garden when the season permits, a little 18th c. gilt bronze lion, and most recently my Kindle.

On your Ipod: Mozart's Requiem, Aretha Franklin's Amazing Grace, Love from Jaipur.

Fave sites: www.heifer.org, www.swoond.com, www.amazon.uk

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ACTIVATING MINI LIP GLOSS SET

Favorite home away from home: **Hotel de l'Abbaye** in Paris.

Three fave Paris shops: **Masion Fabre** for gloves in the Palais Royale, the florist Baptiste chez Hermes at 17 rue de Sevres and antiques from Anne Jaudel, 5 rue de l'Universite.

Favorite cause: My recently completed documentary film **VLAST** (POWER) about the imprisoned Russian oligarch Mikhail Khordorkovsky and the absence of rule of law in Russia.

Can't go one day without: Fresh citrus and espresso.

One week without: Eating artichokes and arugula.

One month without: Crossing the pond.

Always searching for the perfect: Next idea for a film....

Portrait courtesy Cathryn Collins; photographed by Alexandra Penney