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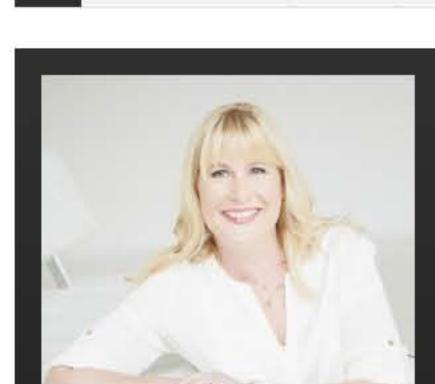
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Redefining Mom: Carla D'Angelo Designs Accessories that Give Back

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ON NOV 22, 13 • BY AMBER STROCEL • WITH NO COMMENTS

Carla D'Angelo is redefining motherhood and fashion by creating beautiful accessories that give back, drawing inspiration from First Nations artists...



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Carla D'Angelo is helping others see more clearly, and looking great while she's doing it. She's the founder and designer behind Claudia Alan, a company she launched to create accessories and eyewear that make a difference. In the process, this Vancouver mom of two is redefining fashion and motherhood on her own terms. We recently connected with her to find out more.



From Vancouver to Australia to Entrepreneurship

Carla shares, "I was raised in Vancouver and Australia. I lived my childhood in two different places, and so I had some interesting experiences in Australia growing up with art and music. I went to school for fashion. I actually had parents that had their own businesses, so I came from an entrepreneurial family. They manufactured shoes and clothing so it's kind of in the blood. I always knew that I wanted to start my own thing, but wasn't sure when that would happen."

She found herself working for a large eyewear company, and ended up quitting that job when her husband got a job offer in St. Louis. While she was living there, she experienced a redefining moment of her own when her first child was born. She says, "At that point I started planning my business. I thought, "I loved what I was doing before, how can I continue and work collaboratively with all of the people I enjoyed working with before in a non-competitive way?' I decided I wanted to create beautiful and unique products that make a difference. It was important to me not to just be throwing product out there on the market, but to really do something with more meaning."

Redefining Motherhood, Fashion and Business

Today Carla has two children - Chloe is nine and Harrison is seven. They live in North Vancouver. She shares, "Having my own business, working out of my home, is just so fantastic. I get to juggle having all the entrepreneurial experiences along with having children. From a mom perspective it took me a long time to have my kids. It took me nine years to have Chloe and a fortune in different treatments, and so I really value the time that I have with them now." When it comes to her business she says, "You want to grow big, but you don't want to grow too big."



Carla created her company's iconic line of eyewear, called AYA, after returning to Vancouver. She explains, "I had been exposed in Australia to aboriginal art, and coming here and appreciating the Pacific Northwest art, I thought it would be really fun to play with the idea of incorporating the two. It took me a while to find an artist that I wanted to work with. I finally

picked an artist because she did this beautiful furniture work. I also picked her because she just gave off a really good energy. I liked her as a person and what she stood for. We launched the line in 2008 and it was well-received. It was positioned in art galleries and museums across Canada."

Corrine Hunt has a Secret

One morning in 2009 Carla sat down with a newspaper and discovered that Comine Hunt, the artist she'd been collaborating with, had a secret. She explains what happens when she opened the paper. "The Olympic medals were on the front page, and I see that the artist I've been working with for a year had been working on the Olympic medals but she couldn't tell me because she had signed a non-disclosure. Talk about keeping a secret."

Carla's business has continued to grow since then, and she's taken her commitment to making a difference seriously. She shares, "We're now in the Smithsonian in Washington, DC, so now the glasses are in New York, and it's exciting. Through that we've raised over \$80,000 now for a breakfast program that we collaborate with called ONEXONE." Carla donates to ONEXONE's First Nations School Breakfast Program, and Carla serves as a member of its Advisory Board. The group serves 19 First Nations communities across Canada and provides nutritious meals to over 3000 students each year. She's working right now to visit one of the communities served by the program.

Thank you so much to Carla for taking the time to share how she's redefining motherhood, fashion and business!

Claudia Alan

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Carla D'Angelo

Claudia Alan

fashion

redefining mom

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Amber Strocel is a writer, editor, podcaster, suburbanite, wife and mom of two. She believes strongly in the power of the Internet to connect people. You can often find her knitting, sewing, dreaming big dreams, working in her garden, and sneaking chocolate when no one's looking. When she's not serving as the Managing Editor for VancouverMom.ca, she blogs at Strocel.com.

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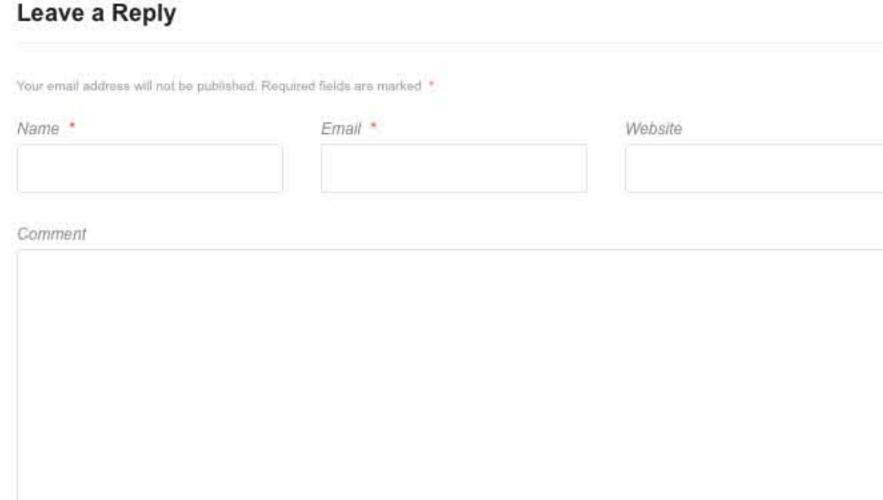
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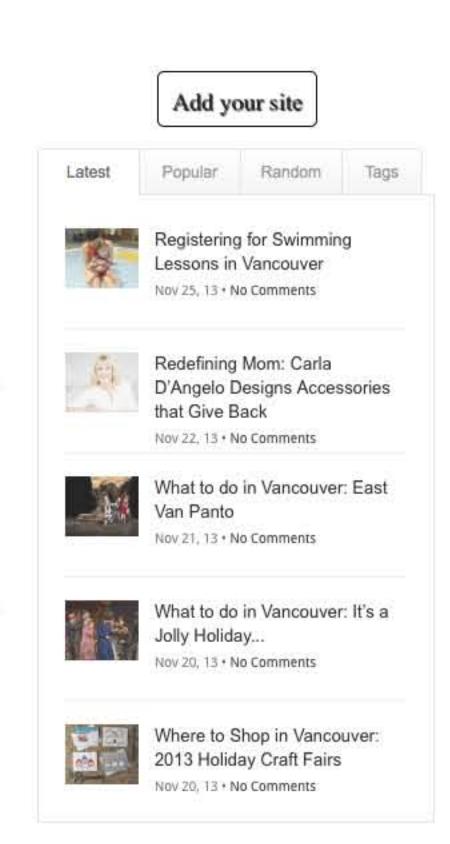
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