

# Vintage Shopping Guide

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**Meet Lori Sutherland**, event planner for NYC Opera. In my e-book, *How to Make Money Cleaning Out Your Closet*, I devoted the first chapter to donating to charity. Most people are familiar with the concept of getting a tax deductible receipt for donating your unwanted items to charities. However, when I spoke to Lori Sutherland she opened my eyes to a whole other world of charity events surrounded by vintage fashion and interiors and furniture! She has worked in many different facets of the vintage business that most people don't think about. I think you will enjoy reading about her life of giving. ---MSR



## **Beauty changes lives at Housing Works...**



I started out as a volunteer [with the Housing Works Thrift Shops in NYC], and then realized my calling was to work there. It was an extraordinary store that was merchandised so lovingly with such imaginative details that you were amazed to understand that it was actually serving a mission to provide housing for homeless men and women living with HIV and Aids. Through my experience in fashion and my humanitarian background, I carved out a new position to fundraise and cultivate relationships with fashion and

interior/home furnishing designers to receive their donated goods as well as to produce fashion and home furnishing events. I spent 6 amazing years doing this; the first three working closely with the founder and my mentor, Jerry Harmyk, who was the genius mastermind and merchandiser who created Housing Works Thrift Shops.

I was deeply moved and inspired to participate in the creation of an organization where donating beauty and fashion goods could be used to provide a desperately needed service to an untouchable part of society in a way that could speak to people about an unspeakable subject in the early 90's. I learned how to become an activist for the first time in my life and what it feels like to passionately support an important cause, bear witness and become passionately involved in creating change. I also got to experience firsthand how powerful and important beauty and fashion is in creating beneficial change in the world.

### **Fabulous treasures given & given away...**

I have numerous stories of favorite finds, and I have numerous stories of favorite finds that I have given away, which I love to do! I don't like to keep much around. It is more fun for me to keep it evolving and revolving and re-thrifting, however, my top current 3 are:

1. My handmade python Italian vintage cowboy boots from the 70's in perfect condition sold to me by my favorite flea market crush on my birthday for \$20 bucks. These are certainly my top possession!!!
2. My black wool jersey early '80's Geoffrey Beene long sleeved mini dress w/ a self attached belt and double black zipper that I have worn over 20 years in perfect condition. It is a perfect Beene dress and it always looks brand new.
3. And then when Beverly Sills passed away, City Opera Thrift Shop received some of her gowns and I found one designed by Bob Mackie which I gave to my beautiful opera singer friend Julie Nelson and it fit her perfectly....not one alteration was needed and she was absolutely blown away by the thrill of wearing a Beverly Sills/Bob Mackie gown when she sings.

### **Opera is calling...or singing rather...**

I was invited by Lorry Newhouse, who was the president of Housing Works Thrift Shop, and a very talented creative director Clair Watson. They were creating some very exciting projects with City Opera Thrift Shop through a series of highly imaginative fundraising events, chaired by Hamish Bowles, Amy Fine Collins and Lorry Newhouse and wanted me to be part of it.

For the past 10 years, I have been involved in cultivating donations, consulting and producing fashion and home events for them, and it has been so much fun! I have been privileged to work with amazingly talented designers, fashionistas, stylists, collectors and very original individuals who adore thrift vintage and couture as well as fabulous home furnishings that are so outrageously cool that only a first class thrift shop could show a customer that it is not about the designer nor the how much...it is how you present it....that action creates attitude!

For the past 3 years we have created 2 of these fabulously fun events [called Divas Shop for Opera], both chaired by Patricia Field, and both filled with extraordinary vintage thrift and couture and new designer donated goods. And of course, there is

always live opera to experience and incredible food and drink and you cannot imagine the genius selection of clothes and accessories we collect over the entire year.



### **Give your goods Give your time. Just give...**

Housing Works Thrift Shops and City Opera Thrift Shop are excellent venues for donating. At City Opera, you receive reimbursement for your taxi ride, tax deductions, and if you are a corporate donor, free opera tickets! [If you are interested in volunteering] just walk in and introduce yourself to the manager on duty. They are always looking for new volunteers who want to learn more about fashion and design! At City Opera, Jay Thompson is the best manager who has an extensive background in fashion and merchandising; a very inspiring person to be around especially for young designers and students interested in design.

### **Choosing favorites...**

My favorite designers currently are Ralph Rucci and Sylvia Heisel, both avid opera fans and donors to City Opera. I appreciate several time periods. I guess I tend to more classic looks that transcend time. I am not actually a big name dropper, but I do swoon over Valentino. He is a true designer for a sensual woman, and he created my favorite expression about fashion that I strictly adhere to: "Only wear clothing that make you feel alive."

I like to collect a little of everybody. Valentino I adore. Geoffrey Beene is amazing. Yves St. Laurent- everything is so divine. I just picked up the coolest Rifat Ozbek leather vest from the 80's, and I have numerous pieces that are ultra cool without a name. My black jersey floor length button down skirt is ageless and so fun, and my polyester floor length caftan will be with me forever! And I honestly don't have a huge collection of clothing since I live in a NYC apartment. I truly enjoy re-donating my clothing back to City Opera so that I can keep a lean clean closet. Always keeping a little more room for more is a good way to conjure a must have piece and then gratefully know you have the space for it before you bring it home!

I really enjoyed reading and hearing about Brooke Astor; her life as a humanitarian, her incredible energy and her love for life, and her perfectly accessorized hats, white pearls and gloves that she loved to wear while visiting one of her many charitable organizations. I also love Zandra Rhodes (I finally got one of her pieces!) because she lives and creates from another planet! Her freedom and energy is boundless and she is

always creating new projects. I also had the honor of working with her back in the '80's and she was a larger than life, very lovely woman to work with and observing her brilliance and endless creative capacity is something I will treasure all my life.

### **Inspiring ones soul...**

I have been so fortunate to be around great style over the past 25 years and through my training as a certified pleasure coach, and my love of styling, it was made clear to me by one of my clients, Regena Thomashauer, founder of Mama Gena's School of Womanly Arts, that I style for the soul. That clicked immediately and I set out to create a program that exposes a woman to her true desires of what she wants to look like. Through inspirational images of icons who have influenced their soul in some way throughout their life. Then conjuring that in a very effortless and pleasurable way regardless of her size or her pocketbook.

[I would like t be remembered] as a woman who was devoted to turning women on to their full glorious selves through the internal practice of pleasure for external and eternal beauty to cause revolutionary change and as a mother, wife and friend who knew how to have fun!

\*\*\*We hope that you have enjoyed reading about Lori Sutherland. If you would like more information about Lori's program for styling your soul please visit [www.damelori.com](http://www.damelori.com). For more information on Housing Works please visit [www.housingworks.org](http://www.housingworks.org). For more information on NYC Opera please visit [www.nycopera.com](http://www.nycopera.com).

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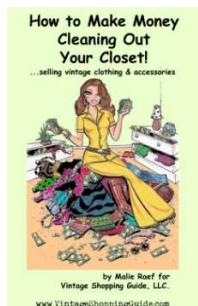
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