

http://www.laduenews.com/style/features/closet-confidential-susan-barrett/article_9f6a0f68-61f9-51de-be82-17e1a72d5869.html

Closet Confidential: Susan Barrett

Julia Christensen Jan 7, 2016

Susan Barrett lives at the intersection of fashion and art.

Barrett, who played an integral role in 2013's "A Queen Within" fashion exhibit at the World Chess Hall of Fame, owns local company Barrett Barrera Projects. With one of its focuses – along with Central West End creative venue projects+gallery – representing interdisciplinary artists, the aesthetically pleasing plays a huge role in this St. Louisan's life, inside and outside of her closet.

"I'm lucky to have my own company, Barrett Barrera Projects, which includes projects+gallery, a gallery that features artists who merge various disciplines including fashion and art – no (wardrobe) pressure there!" Barrett says. The fashion is inescapable, in the most stylish of ways. projects+gallery is currently hosting Fantich & Young's "APEX PREDATOR | DARWINIAN VOODOO," a fashion presentation of sorts with an "alpha" theme showcased through primarily hair and teeth. While Fantich and Young's dental-soled cowboy boots may be more for staring and less for wearing, Barrett says the work is able to impact her attire. "I have a great excuse to dress up and match outfits to artists' exhibit openings," she adds. "A typical day is far less glamorous and could involve unpacking art like today, (which means) jeans and high tops!"

So where does one working in such a creative field shop? Secondhand, of course. "I love the thrill of the hunt: Finding something unusual or vintage or something that no one else will have," Barrett explains. "I love shopping vintage, especially the ScholarShop or Rung – their missions are so great, it's hard to feel guilty! I love flea-market or antique-mall shopping, too – anything where I might find something I never knew I needed."

Barrett describes her style as eclectic, calling herself a mood dresser. "My favorite thing is to pull together an outfit and run out the door," she says. "Someone famous and tasteful once said to take the last thing off when putting together an outfit. The less-is-more approach may work for some, but I never understood that editorial process. More is joyfully more!"

Much of Barrett's wardrobe takes a cue from the art of the screen, with fictional characters Holly Golightly ("especially dressed in those fabulous Givenchys!"), Carrie Bradshaw and Endora from "Bewitched" as a few of her style icons. Other personal favorites include nonfictional personalities Phyllis Diller, Iris Apfel, Daphne Guinness and Isabella Blow.



Photo by Michael Jacob

[Buy Now](#)

A wardrobe is never complete without the tried-and-true staples. When it comes to timeless treasures, Barrett’s list – albeit lengthy – has something like a motif: “High tops, jeans, oversized rings, vintage kaftans, vintage dresses and vintage sunglasses from my mom. Did I mention vintage?”

In fact, wardrobe mainstays aren’t the only fashionable topic that keep this fashionista with more than a few answers – accessories draw an equally engaged and detailed response. “I’m a complete shoe fanatic,” Barrett says. “I also love hats, though I don’t wear them as much as I’d like to. Oh, I love jewelry, too. Is there an accessory I don’t like?”

With a job like hers, why not add another accessory? She may be the only woman in St. Louis with a place to wear everything.

Julia Christensen

More Features articles.

📷 +2



Suit Yourself: Lori Coulter Swimwear

📷 +3



Make a Statement: Floral Jeans



Best Face Forward: Cleaning the Tools of the Trade

📷 +11



One Look, Two Ways: French Connection Chicago fur vest