

Spiritual Jeweler



When Rachel Brown walks into a room she immediately make you think she came out from Rue Cambom, legendary headquarters of Chanel in Paris.



It was only a few years ago, on the occasion of the Jewish holiday of *Purim*, that I was introduced to her through a common friend from Nashville at the *Kabbalah* Center in New York. She was working at that time as a real estate broker in

Manhattan. I rarely saw Rachel again due to my intense traveling and our different courses and schedules at the center.



Last week, just before going to my usual Tuesday *Zohar* class, I was at Barney's when I suddenly bumped into her. (very common these days) We found each other talking at the same time without really hearing one another. Then, for a second, my attention was struck by the gigantic set of three Hebrew letters she was wearing as a charm on a long Chanel-style chain that looked more like a belt than a necklace. "Wow!" I said, "Where did you get that?"



She answered, "Joelle? Was that you or was it your sister I saw this morning at the *Zohar* class at the center?"

"It's my sister, my dear. I know, everyone gets confused. We apparently look very much alike..."

"Well you won't believe it," she says. "She asked me the same question about my necklace and gave me your card, saying I should absolutely show you my jewelry. She said you'd appreciate it. I've never seen your sister before and I thought I was talking to you!"

"Your jewelry?" I reply, "Aren't you in the real estate business?"



"Well Joelle, it's a long story. Please come next week for a cup of tea at my studio. I'd love to show you what I am so proud of, my jewelry collection inspired by the wisdom of *Kabbalah*, I am eager to tell you all about it."

Whenever anyone mentions the words "Wisdom of *Kabbalah*" my world stops instantly and, like a little robot, I switch my direction to where these words come from. It has been like this for years, and once more I was having an opportunity to explore the magic topic which, my entire life, has been the sustenance of my spiritual core and the understanding in my most challenging moments, the so-called "game of life."



The "studio", it goes without saying, is an elegant pre-war apartment belonging to her parents and used sporadically as a *pied-a-terre*. It's a winterish rainy day. I leave my umbrella in an entrance hall upholstered with pretty flowered red wallpaper. Rachel opens the door. She's wearing a pair of low waist blue jeans, a burgundy cashmere sweater tight to her waist, and this magnetic and gigantic golden charm tightened on a chain belt.



Atop a painter's table near windows of the high-ceilinged apartment, on black velvet fabric, lies a collection of numerous necklaces, stones, rings, bracelets and belts. Rachel invites me to sit in one of the chairs which, together with a small round table covered by an old green and burgundy paisley shawl and a similar chair, are the only pieces of furniture in the whole room.



Before I even have the time to take out my Belkin Voice recorder and my vintage *Aurora* fountain pen, Rachel starts talking in a flow of stories, concepts, reflections, insights and personal memories. I am hesitant to interrupt this flow to try to reconstruct a little bio with the things she's telling me, without even bothering to take a break to breathe.. She's transported, enthusiastic...she's traveling into a realm that, fortunately for us, I can reach.



I understand Rachel has always considered herself an artist, even if at young age her parents discouraged her from going to art school. "You will not make money," her mother, a very talented Washington interior designer (but unsuccessful business woman) would say. As a consequence, Rachel attended business school, where she got an MBA that lead her to "Smart Wall Street for a few years." As smart as the environment was, Rachel was not happy.

All along the way, in her spare time she would redesign vintage clothing, fur coats for dogs, and had other small creative activities that "Never really succeeded that much for not having enough cash flow." There was a certain point Rachel could never get beyond. She always struggling, but realized one very important factor: She felt immense joy in the creation of a new design.



It was about eight years ago that her life dramatically changed “in a beautiful, and fabulous way” when she attended a *Kabbalah* class at the center for the first time. Inspired by the Kabbalistic meditations and feeling that they were a great deal of help, she started visualizing the pieces she would later create, but had no idea yet how she was going to make these things. She thought, “I have to make this happen, I must find funding.” She applied for loans and was turned down because she had nothing to show. A sample line would require a minimum investment. Looking at other jewelry designers’ creations, she was constantly feeling a deep pain, recognizing certain similarities but at the same time being limited in her ability to manifest the creations that were so clearly visible at that moment in the world of her own mind.

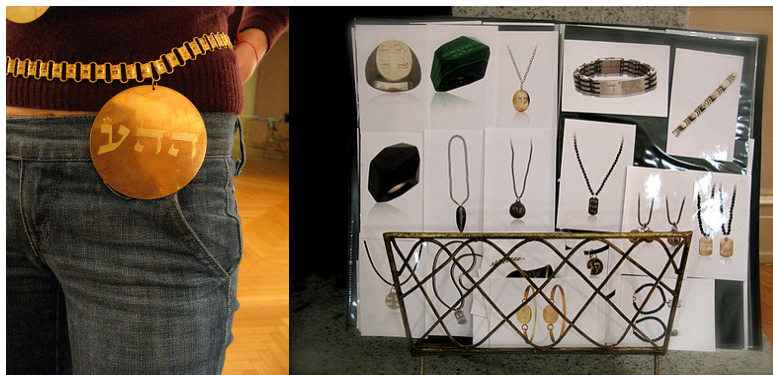


Attending *Kabbalah* classes improved all aspects of her life, and an imperative desire to share the knowledge she was acquiring with the people she cared for grew into a strong and motivating sense of personal mission.

As a reformist Jew, she realized that the spiritual teachings of *Kabbalah*, (related to Judaism) are universal, and are supposed to be passed on through “Spiritual technology”- a concept widely elaborated at the Kabbalah Center as *Technology for the soul*”. She felt she also was a messenger for “helping people’s unconditional love and souls to work on themselves and connect with the Hebrew letters of the 72 names of God” To be the inspiration for people’s opening towards this would make her happy.



She decides to quit the Wall Street world, manages to find a job for a period of time in the Jewelry department at Christie's where she's advised to take a course in Gemology and get acquainted in a world of different commodities. Fascinated by that world, she feels she needs to explore something new. As a sales and marketing manager and account executive at David Yurman she learns more about the business but she felt she was helping that company to manifest something that was not hers. Finally Rachel takes off for a new adventure; her own



Over the years and after several broken promises of investments, Rachel was consumed by her ardent passion and will to be successful in her endeavor. She put a plan loosely into place, working as a real estate broker and raising the funds she needed for her sample collection, still looking for investors that never seemed to appear. "It's my *Tikkun Olam*," she tells me. "I am catching my breath, but Wow! I came through as I know this is how I was supposed to, earning it, in this life."



Here I am, confronted with this large sample jewelry line, licensed by The International Kabbalah Center. Hebrew letters whose fonts were taken from Kabbalist Ari (Isaac Luria) writings and engraved on iron, hematite, bone, cameos, silver, and gold coins will connect me to the energies of Power of Prosperity, Global transformation, Absolute Certainty, Self-Esteem, The Big Picture, Fear-less, Sexual Energy, Revealing the Dark Side, Eradicate Plague, Fertility, Victory Over Addiction, Dialing God, Unconditional Love, Protection From The Evil Eye, Heaven On Earth, Miracle Making. Oh, I forgot...all with a French Chanel touch and a trendy mystical ethnic look.



Rachel elaborates on the different letters. She talks about the several contracted craftsmen from Providence, Rhode Island and their connection with the light coming from scanning the Hebrew letters that are nothing less than secret compositions of mystical teachings of our existence, wrapped in a precious book called the Zohar. The Zohar collection of books are on a shelf, together with a photo of the matriarch Rachel's graveyard in West Bank near Bethlehem in Israel, with followers praying around it.

I thank Rachel for the lovely and enriching afternoon....



I look at my watch in the elevator on this grey, rainy day. It will soon be the Jewish holiday of *Hannuka*, , the holiday of lights and miracles. I will be lighting my candles one by one, every day, from right to left for eight days.
“...You delivered the strong into the hands of the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the wanton into the hands of the diligent students of Your *Torah*...”



For we, are isolated as a people, surrounded by enemies dedicated to our destruction, both physically and spiritually. We must know that no matter how dark it may get, the light will burn and never be extinguished.

My kabbalistic meditation will fly safely from New York to Jerusalem, to you dear Rachel and to all that believe in the power of the light ! *Hag Sameah*

Joelle's Tips:

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