Spotlight: Stacey Tank on Big Business, Balance, Bruce Springsteen and Breast Cancer Early Detection

'Orange Is The New Black' Adorable Kitten Parody

Lena Dunham's Interpretive Dance to Sia's 'Chandelier' Is a Work of Art

Lady Day's Audra McDonald and Her Fantastic Female Feat

Spotlight: Jenn Pesce on Brand Identity, Female-Powered Business and the Beauty of Giving Back

Brilliant New Subscription Box Brings 'Month-for-Month' Feminine Products to Girls In Need

FEATURED, SPOTLIGHTS

Spotlight: Jenn Pesce on Brand Identity, Female-Powered Business and the Beauty of Giving Back

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It takes a Saltie to know a Saltie, and we're proud to say this week's Salted Spotlight is one-of-a-kind AND one of *our* kind! She's a delightful ball of pretty-pantied energy whose multi talents extend across marketing, brand identity, teaching yoga and bringing light and positive vibes to any situation she encounters. An orange sock-clad superheroine, Jenn Pesce, exemplifies what it's like to be doing what you love and making a difference in the world while you're at it.

SALTED SPOTLIGHT: Jenn Pesce

So, what do you do for a living?

For the past decade, I've been part of a great team at Shobha, a growing, woman-run, indie beauty brand that specializes in hair removal services and products. We have four locations in Manhattan and one in Washington, D.C. Currently, I am the Brand Director, in which I work on the PR/Marketing/Social Media side for both our products and salons.

When did you start at Shobha? Why were you drawn to working there?

I began working at Shobha shortly after college. At the time I had no real clue about (proper) hair removal – especially not threading, as was evident by my disastrous brows (thankfully, they made a pretty impressive recovery in a short amount of time). I was drawn in by the idea of being part of a small, but growing company, where I could see how my efforts could make an impact in the day-to-day operations of a business, while improving the lives of others, including my team mates and those in the community at large – plus, our clients and team are a lot of fun, and I like fun.

What's the toughest part of your job? What's the most rewarding?

Ah, the toughest part, might actually be the most rewarding – do they have to be mutually exclusive?! As we grow, scalability is definitely a challenge, but also the most rewarding. We are also looking for ways to provide great one-on-one service for every single client at all of our locations – all of the time. When we do it, it's the best reward, or what I often refer to as 'hairless happiness,' however, life, personalities, acts of god (e.g., snowstorms, hurricanes, etc.) and typos can sometimes derail that – hence making it tough too.

What does work/life balance mean to you and how do you manage it?

I'm not sure I would describe it as a balancing act or even agree that I manage it well; my days are not really that Goldilocks' path straight down the middle. I think acceptance and not beating myself up about what I choose to prioritize in my life, is becoming more and more evident. Working hard and long is in my DNA, so I have accepted that I will always do that, as a result I do try to take the time to do 'non-work' things, like wine club with my girlfriends, random walks to get out of my own head and see what's going on in the world around me.

One little tweak that has made a huge difference is changing the settings on my phone so that I don't automatically receive emails after 7pm and before 9am – so if I do check it, I have to make a conscious choice, rather than respond to an icon that pops up on my screen. In addition to working full-time at Shobha, yoga is an important part of my life, I find that when I am able to dedicate a piece of my personal time to my own practice, everyone benefits.

Shobha is involved with sponsoring education for women and girls in India through the Shobha's Home for Girls & Women. Can you share more about the mission?

Since Shobha Tummala (our founder and CEO) began the company back in 2001, helping woman and children has organically grown into more and more of a focus for us – a means for us to pay it forward, to make a difference beyond the hairless happiness we can provide for our clients. As a result, we are dedicated to empowering women through education and employment.

We have sponsored the college education of ten women in India and have contributed to the School-on-Wheels Program (which converts old buses into mobile classrooms in Mumbai and Pune for street children), offering them an alternative to begging and teaching them that education is a way out of poverty. Shobha's Home for Girls & Women stemmed from wanting to be able to make this bigger impact at an earlier age. Currently, the Home supports 80 girls and young women whom range from pre-school to college age. The Home is run by two retired professors who value education. They welcome orphan and semi-orphan girls from deprived families and provide the necessities for living and support to ensure they are able to attend school. The girls receive a free education, including English classes that start as early as nursery school, while the women are taught a trade in which they can make a living.

And of course we have to ask…We know you're a fan of and participant in the No Pants Subway Ride, so…solid or printed panties?

I guess there is no getting around denying the photos that are already out there on the interwebs….Definitely printed, they are more fun – this year I wore pink and with orange polka dots to color coordinate with my orange Shobha socks, of course.

Coming up Wednesday, June 11th, 2014, 7pm – 10pm Shobha is holding feel-good event to benefit Shobha's Home for Girls & Women at their Financial District location. For more information on tickets or to make a supportive contribution head over to the Shobha website.

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Raised as a savvy shopper with an understanding of the importance of natural foods and ingredients (her mom was a crunchy-granola, home-ec teacher), Jennifer began her exploration of natural hair removal options rather early and has always been on the prowl for natural and innovative beauty treatments. Jennifer received a Bachelor's Degree in Marketing Management from Baruch College in New York City and found the perfect fit early in her career at Shobha, NYC's celebrated hair removal expert. She began her position at the ground level, working at the front desk and offering client care while really getting a firm foundation in her hair removal roots. Since her start in 2004, Jennifer has grown with the company and now is Shobha's Brand Director, in which she is involved in the development of new products and services, public relations and market trends. Jennifer resides in NYC and is also active in the yoga community.