

Artist Isabella Huffington Delves Into Fashion With Two Items for Bo Guo's Designow Web Site

On April 28, Huffington will open an exhibition at Rebecca Minkoff's gallery adjacent to the designer's Melrose Avenue store. The artist has another show opening May 3 at Anastasia Photo on the Lower East Side about women and politics.

By [Rosemary Feitelberg](#) on March 21, 2017



Isabella Huffington and Arianna Huffington
Andrew H. Walker

OUT OF THE FRAME: In keeping on track to make **art** more accessible, Isabella Huffington has a two-item collaboration with Designow and two upcoming exhibitions.

While her paintings can be “kind of intense, colorful, bright and a bit overwhelming,” she decided to translate a “very light one” called “Chrysanthemum” for the dress and scarf that will be sold on Designow’s site starting March 30. The artwork’s floral motif is actually a collage made of found objects like books and magazines. With clothing, you’re thinking about the consumer and you’re thinking about yourself, so it’s much more like an architect. You want to be authentic but it also has to look good on the person.” Huffington said of the \$250 long-sleeve knee-length dress with a tapered waist. “You could wear it to a party but you could also wear it to work at 20 or at 40. I’m really interested in making **art** that has mass appeal.”

There is also a scarf with an artistic box that is geared for gift-giving or for a younger shopper who might not want to wear a dress. Huffington said of her fashion debut, “This is the first dip in the water but I’m definitely interested in pursuing this further. A lot of people don’t think they have interest in art or access to art so I love the idea of bringing art into the everyday.”

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An admirer of Japanese artists Yayoi Kusama and Haruki Murakami, Huffington said a lot of Japanese artists, and American ones too, are collaborating outside of fine art so she’s looking to what they’re doing for cues. Even buying flowers in Japan calls for almost “artlike wrapping,” she said. “We’re almost missing that in the States because art is very much seen as something that is reserved for the elite. Even with Trump trying to cut [the National] Endowment for the Arts, it’s just not seen as a priority. But people who need art most almost don’t have access to it. I love being in a country where art is so much a part of the culture.”

Huffington said she has been really lucky to have her mother Arianna’s encouragement for years. “Since I’ve been a kid, she’s basically let me completely destroy my entire bedroom. I put paint on the walls and colored. At one point, I glued sponges so she really let me experiment. That really was my introduction to art,” Huffington said. “The best lesson my mom ever taught me, it’s especially [good] for my generation, was if something doesn’t work out it’s very easy for us to get discouraged. My mom basically said, ‘You have to knock on a lot of doors before things work out.’ So you just keep going. It’s like a task. A bunch of tiny things will lead to a big thing. It’s not one thing that changes everything. So you have to do a million different things before the right thing comes along.”

In other Designow news, the first Collective x Designow fashion show will be held April 2 with 28 students from FIT, the New School’s Parsons School of **Design** and Pratt Institute. The event at 526 West 26th Street is part of a competition.