

# AUDI

# DY

THE ASIAN AMERICAN LIFESTYLE MAGAZINE

12th anniversary issue!

## AIMEE SONG

THE FABULOUS  
LIFE OF THE  
SONG OF STYLE  
BLOGGER —  
JUST ASK HER  
2 MILLION+  
FOLLOWERS

SUMMER  
2015





*Steven Khalil ballerina dress,  
Cartier bracelet, Saint Laurent Heels.*



# JUST ONE LOOK

Fashion blogger Aimee Song  
is taking the social media world by storm,  
one (gorgeous) outfit at a time.

story Teena Apeles  
photos Jack Blizzard

makeup/hair Noseph Trinh  
styling Aimee Song

venue Broadstone Candara at Hancock Park

# Can

an outfit change your life? For Aimee Song, the answer is two million yeses and counting. The outfit in question was worn around Halloween of 2008 when then-college freshman Song, who was studying interior design and architecture in San Francisco, went for a job interview at a design firm. And though very green — literally and figuratively — she landed the position.

Song recalls that there were about 25 people interviewing for the job, and a woman at the firm approached her saying she loved Song's outfit: a plus-size Forever 21 green-and-black patterned top worn as a dress, belted, with Steve Madden ankle boots. "I didn't even realize that she was the vice president," says Song. "I really did stand out compared to everyone else who was wearing black shirts, button-up skinny jeans and ballet flats. I didn't have that much experience compared to the other people, but I think that the woman liked my enthusiasm and my style, and then I was hired."

But it's what Song did after the interview that perhaps was more important: She documented the look on her Song of Style blog that she had just registered days earlier. "My very first post was an interior design post, because that was what I had intended to do," she says. "But I also posted my outfit from the job interview, since I got the job because of it." Just a few years later, that simple act of sharing her outfit online would essentially become the job of her dreams — that of a jetsetting, trendsetting fashion blogger and interior designer.

## THE COVER GIRL

Fast-forward to April 2, 2015, a beautiful sunny day in Los Angeles, and the 29-year-old Song is shooting the summer cover for *Audrey* at the Broadstone Candara apartments, fresh from a relaxing jaunt on the beaches of Palawan in the Philippines, sponsored by All Nippon Airways. As a prominent blogger, this is Song's everyday life: traveling all over the world for a variety of events, dressed to impress and inspire. She makes appearances at fashion shows, boutiques, parties and even music festivals, care of different brands or companies. And, of

course, she's documenting these moments, wearing her favorite mix of high and low fashion in stunning, colorful ways on her social channels, to share with her millions of followers.

But her work doesn't stop there. With such a captive audience of fans, product lines were inevitable — Song works in design, after all. So Song of Style Jewelry was born, featuring her bracelet designs, which are sold at Bloomingdale's and on her site, and with younger sister Dani, she launched a T-shirt and sweatshirt line called Two Songs that reflects their different styles. She's proud to say that both are manufactured in Los Angeles, where she was born and raised. Oh, yes, and she even has a book in the works, to be published by Abrams in 2016.

"Aimee is a force to be reckoned with within the blog world. She really has broken from the pack to create a brand that is internationally recognized and growing rapidly," says Jaclyn Johnson, founder of the annual Create & Cultivate conference that recently had Song as a keynote speaker. "She is a fascinating case study in the transition of the role of blogger to business mogul — and she is nice to boot!"

Nice she certainly is, and easygoing, which, Song shares, people are often surprised by. "When people meet me in real life, they say, 'You are so different from what I thought,'" she says. "They think I am more serious, but I am really, really goofy. And really funny."

The native Angeleno does not travel with a big entourage for the shoot, but keeps things simple with just her best friend, Jennia, in tow, who also helps manage Song of Style. Song reveals a little of her playful side over the course of the afternoon, dancing a bit between shots, though she doesn't shy away from telling the photographer what shots she prefers ("I don't like close-up shots of me with my hair up," Song tells him courteously), and she jokes with the crew that her neck and arms are "too fat" (she's most definitely not) for the lacy red dress she's wearing, because she can barely move her arms. But no one notices because Song moves so gracefully from room to room in it, and this is what she does so well: She brings clothing to life, and she genuinely enjoys being in front of the camera. Plus, she walks in five-inch heels like she was born in them. It makes one think of Carrie Bradshaw and how she

*Chloé white lace dress, Cartier bracelet, Sophia Webster heels.*







**“WHEN PEOPLE MEET ME IN REAL LIFE, THEY SAY,  
‘YOU ARE SO DIFFERENT’ FROM  
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Parker navy sequin dress,  
Cartier bracelet, Lionette bracelet.

“WHAT I THOUGHT.  
GOOFY. AND REALLY FUNNY.” — AIMEE SONG

always lived in heels like they were flats — but Sarah Jessica Parker could never pull off this outfit with a septum ring at the same time. Song can.

While this is her first magazine cover, it is far from her first turn in print. She's appeared in major international magazines, but she really hopes to shoot more video for her site and move into television after a recent turn as a fashion correspondent for the American Music Awards. “It was such an amazing opportunity,” she says. “I had zero background in hosting anything. I have never done anything TV-related. The network believed in me, and it was live, too!”

We're catching Song on one of the few days she's in town, as she's rarely here for long — usually just three days at a time. When she is, her schedule is always packed before she's off flying to another city or country. Coming up are trips to Indio for Coachella, Chicago, the south of France, London and Paris. She shares that she wakes up early most mornings and spends an hour in bed answering a ridiculous number of emails, ranging from fan mail to collaboration opportunities, which she forwards to her manager. In the last two years, this has been her life, and she really has no complaints. “When you love something that you do, it doesn't feel like work,” she says.

Even when Song's on vacation, like the recent one she took to Mexico for New Year's, it doesn't mean she takes a break from her fans. “I still like to take photos and share them with my followers on Instagram,” she says. “I remember some people asked me, ‘You are on vacation; why are you on your phone?’ But I said, ‘If you see something nice, and you are on vacation, don't you want to send photos to your mom or your sister?’ You do that anyways. My followers are like my friends and family, so obviously I want to share with them.”

## HOW SONG BECAME A HIT

When asked if she could pinpoint the moment that she emerged as a major influencer, Song says, “There wasn't one moment when it was like, all of a sudden I have so many followers. It was gradual. I have been doing this for close to seven years. Each day I just got more followers and more recognition. And more job offers.”

Song recalls her first paid gig while she was still studying in San Francisco

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## “SHE IS A FASCINATING CASE STUDY IN THE TRANSITION OF THE ROLE OF BLOGGER TO BUSINESS MOGUL — AND SHE IS NICE TO BOOT!”

— JACLYN JOHNSON, FOUNDER OF THE  
ANNUAL CREATE & CULTIVATE CONFERENCE

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and how surprised she was that she could make money just being herself and showing her sense of style. Clothing and accessories line Fossil had approached her two or three years into the blog to style some looks for their look book. “They offered to fly me out to Texas, and I thought, ‘Oh, you are paying for my hotel fee and for my flight? Awesome,’” she says. “And they also told me to fill out a tax form because they needed to pay me. And I was like, ‘You are paying me?’ And to me, that was mind-boggling and amazing.”

Then she was booking jobs like that all the time, flying every weekend to either Los Angeles or New York, and then going back to the Bay Area. When she shot with Fossil the second time, the team laughed at her because during breaks she was working on her final project for school. Eventually, Song had to decide between the two. “I was booking so many jobs and traveling to Los Angeles literally every week that I decided to not finish school,” she says. Though she still has one semester left, she has no plans to finish — in between styling and blogger-related gigs, she still takes on interior design jobs (though with her schedule, she has to be picky about which clients she takes on and is working with only one now). “I knew that I didn’t even need a degree to pursue what I wanted to do. I was getting

way more experience than everybody who was going to grad school. Even if I look at anybody who graduated school now and where I am at, I am way ahead. Because I have designed so many projects whereas they are still working at a firm as an assistant.”

In terms of her fashion influencer status, she very much understands the value she brings to a brand. “The difference between hiring me and a model is that I get to be myself,” she says. “I am not a model, and I am not a spokesperson.” At the heart of her success is, of course, a unique sense of style, but also this “be myself” attitude she brings up often in conversation. If you read one of her posts, you’ll understand what she means, talking to her audience as if they’re intimately part of her life. “People feel like I am their best friend or younger sister, older sister. I am somebody close to them, like they really know me,” she explains. “So I think that is one of the strong features I have compared to most bloggers. I think I am a little bit more approachable. I think one of the biggest things I learned about this industry is it is best when you are yourself, when you don’t aspire to be somebody else, because everybody else is taken obviously.”

Song also understands how such influence can be a very powerful thing. In one of her videos, she talks about how when she was growing up, there

weren’t a lot of images of women who looked like her. She believes that’s definitely changing because of the Internet and blogs like hers. “Thanks to influencers and just timing, I keep seeing more minorities or women of color or people who aren’t the typical standard of beauty,” she says. “You’re not just seeing the tall, white blonde. I see so many different body types, skin colors, eye shapes, and I think that is amazing. And I think it is really good to see all the change. Social media has a big part in it, because people are voicing their own opinions, and everybody is listening. They’re talking to each other.”

Johnson of Create & Cultivate concurs: “The Internet is truly democratic, and I think (and hope) that it becomes more of an equal playing field for ladies of color [and different] shapes and sizes.”

So what’s next for Song? “I talk to some of my friends and their goal is to be married, whereas my end goal isn’t to get married,” she says. “My end goal is probably to just be happy with whatever I am doing, whatever work I am doing. I am in the position where I could influence so many girls, and I want them to know that is OK.”

And what became of that pivotal outfit from 2008 that possibly changed her life? “When I was in college, I actually sold the shoes and the dress, too, because my dog was sick, and his vet bill was \$1,100, so I just had to sell things,” she says. These days she sells her outfits for very different reasons. “I have been selling a lot of my clothes and donating 100 percent of the proceeds to different charities. I want to use my platform to raise awareness, whether it is cancer or the current water crisis.

“There are so many people and so many bloggers, and I think, why me?” Song continues. “Why do I have such a following? I feel like God probably wants me to use it to do good.”

Indeed, it seems that one outfit has the potential to change many lives — as does one Song.

### AIMEE SONG AT A GLANCE

Aw-mee pronunciation of her first name 2008 the year she started her blog 1,500–2,000 emails received each day  
2 million+ Instagram followers 200+ pairs of shoes currently in her closet 20% of jobs she’s offered she takes  
Dog brand sponsorship weirdest request Name-dropping her pet peeve, though label-dropping is the nature of her business ;)  
Clare Waight Keller for Chloé designer of the moment Kendrick Lamar’s new album what’s she’s listening to  
Sister Dani favorite collaborator

A medium shot of a woman with long, dark hair and a warm smile. She is wearing a black and white gingham wrap dress with a belt. She is leaning forward, her hands resting on the glass surface of a foosball table. The table is filled with white and black foosball players. In the background, there's a window with a white frame and a dark wall.

*Diane von Furstenberg wrap dress,  
Cartier bracelet.*

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