

ONE-ON-ONES

Why Each Bead on Pamela Roland's Gowns Are Applied in NYC

Friday, July 12, 2013, by [Tiffany Yannetta](#)

Pamella DeVos, CFDA member and president/designer of high-end label **Pamella Roland**, produces all of her collections in New York City—which means that each layer of silk chiffon and each individual bead is hand-applied in the Garment District, an accomplishment she proudly declares on a label inside her gowns and separates.

We chatted with her recently about what goes into producing each collection, what she tells her own daughter about the quality of clothing, and how **Hillary Rodham Clinton** feels about the line.



MIDTOWN WEST/HELL'S
KITCHEN

CFDA

ONE-ON-ONES

PAMELLA DEVOS

PAMELLA ROLAND

COMMENTS

Like 0

Could you tell us where you usually manufacture your collections? Is it in the Garment District?

Yes. We manufacture everything here in New York, which we've been doing for years now.

Can you talk a little bit about some of the challenges you might encounter producing locally, if any?

We have a great team with us. We're very high end and we need that specific talent that we have in the United States. I've had so many people talk about how well things are constructed. That's part of our brand—to make sure everything is constructed well. and I think you can only really get that in the United States.

What's your typical timeframe? How long might it take for one of your more elaborate designs?

It's different with every piece because you're waiting for beading or you're waiting on fabric. We do our chiffon—it's a silk chiffon that we do manufacture in New York, and it's one of our best sellers—very quickly. That's one thing that a lot of our retailers love. But definitely so much of it depends on how long the beading takes, and that can take a while.

The thing is, we do a lot of handwork that does take a while. We compete against the same price point of people who don't manufacture in the United States and don't have that handwork, and we're really proud of our own back room and our own work room because we have some really high quality people that I'd compare to anybody in the world. They're fantastic.

Do you find that having a high price point and being a higher end brand plays to your advantage when manufacturing here, in that there are less items per collection than maybe a more contemporary retailers?

I'm very proud to produce in America, and because we're Americans I think that's important. I don't know if it's more beneficial than I can sell the quality of it. We don't have the time zone issue, we don't have the problems with language. Sometimes we do have a bit of problems with language in the back room, but overall we don't have the communication issue. It's right there and if there's a problem we can look at it and solve it.

Otherwise, if you have it overseas, you might not know about a problem until it's too late. Obviously there is an issue with cost, but we take that and don't put it onto our customers because we really want to be out there and compete against everybody.

Do you think there might ever be an occasion where you would manufacture abroad? And if you did have to do that and decided to do so, how would you go about selecting where and what facilities to use?

I haven't looked into it, because like I said, it's pretty important to us to produce in the USA. I'm really proud of that, but I'd have to do some research. If I did go outside the United States, it would have to have the quality and craftsmanship that we can do in the United States. I'd have to really make sure that it would be something I'd be proud to put out there.

What advice or argument might you have to offer to why it's worth spending more to buy something made locally?

First of all, I can say more than anything: support your country. But if you want to get into the whole thing about quality, I think something that's made well is going to stay together better. I have some time explaining it to my daughter. She'll say, "Oh look, I got this dress..." Well good luck washing it.

You can spend a lot of money on an item and if it's made poorly and you'll never wear it again. I think that's the biggest thing you need to explain to somebody: "Don't you want to wear this again, don't you want something to be made well?"

This might be a bit of a hard number to pinpoint, but can you think of how many artisans and manufacturers you have working for you in a given season—how many people are doing beading, or how many are doing more basic construction?

It depends on what I'm making. If I make chiffon, we have the pattern and the fabric, we'll bring it to a factory that has made it over and over again, maybe someplace in the Garment District. If I'm doing beading, that comes in from India, and usually that's more hand done in our backroom. So it depends on the garment again.

If someone watched us work start to finish on a beaded dress, they would understand why it's so expensive. [As for the construction process], someone does the hem work, someone does the fine work around the neckline, or somewhere else on the dress. And if you look at most of our dresses, we always have some special work, that's what we're known for—something creative or special, or beading or embroidering. We take time to do that.

I had an interesting thing happen the other day with **Hillary Rodham Clinton**. Long story short, I told her I was a fashion designer, and right away, she said, "Where do you manufacture?" She was so happy when I said New York. She took such an interest in it because it was such an issue when she was senator. She spent a lot of time on that, it was very important to her.

We're very proud of our tags that say that we are made in NYC underneath our designer logo. There are a lot of people out there that are proud of that, and I wish there were more. When all those gals are on the red carpet, saying that they're wearing their European designers, I just want to say, "Support your Americans!"

· [Pamella Roland \[Official Site\]](#)