

GOTHAM

Who Are NYC's Most Influential Women?

BY DIANE CLEHANE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY ERIC RYAN ANDERSON
STYLING BY FAYE POWER

Meet the women changing the power dynamic in the city. Leveraging their positions and smarts, these movers and shakers are redefining how business gets done in New York.

Jane Gol



18k yellow-gold plated laser-cut cuff, [Aurélie Bidermann](#) (\$845), 265 Lafayette St., 212-335-0604. Jealous sandals, Tamara Mellon (\$795). [Bergdorf Goodman](#), 754 Fifth Ave., 212-753-7300. Dress and necklace, Gol's own

Jane Gol, president of [Continental Ventures](#), is a rara avis in the real estate world—a female developer who has been shaping the city's landscape for over 25 years. She is currently developing several hotly anticipated spaces, including luxury residences at 52 Wooster Street and Barn & Vine in Bridgehampton. A former commissioner on the New York City Planning Commission under Mayor Bloomberg, she helmed the transformational rezoning efforts that led to The High Line, Hudson Yards, and Downtown Brooklyn revitalization.

POWER VERSUS INFLUENCE: "Power and influence are intertwined. Influence is needed in every aspect of real estate development. It involves convincing sellers, communities, lenders—everyone who has impact on the project—to buy into one's vision. It demands emotional flexibility, knowing when to be tough and when to be soft, what I would call a very high emotional IQ."

SELLING NEW YORK: "It is a great time to be in real estate in New York City. The field is burgeoning, and companies are looking for experienced and talented people."

BREAKING THROUGH BARRIERS: “New York real estate was known as a boys’ club and was predominantly based on generations of fathers to sons. Many developers started out in construction and related fields—industries that have historically attracted few women. Today we see fathers to daughters—many women have taken the helm of their family businesses.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF ENGAGEMENT: “We live in an interconnected world where the possibility of success is closely tied to our ability to work with others, friends and adversaries alike. To take a strategic position and lead people to follow your vision, and to be a good listener, so that others can contribute, are very important in today’s professional landscape.”

EMBRACING CHANGE: “New York City is constantly reinventing itself, and hence so does the development industry.”

Dina Habib Powell



Dress and earrings, Powell’s own

Dina Habib Powell serves as president of the [Goldman Sachs Foundation](#), and is head of the firm’s impact investing business. In this role, her focus is on programs that bring together education, capital, and mentoring to create jobs, grow revenues, and improve communities.

POWER VERSUS INFLUENCE: “Influence—because it suggests genuine buy-in and that people believe in the mission. In New York City [since 2001] we’ve committed close to \$2 billion in 100 projects across all five boroughs in affordable housing, healthcare, community spaces, and job creation. One of the greatest ways to impact communities is through the private sector. These kinds of impact investing programs really make a difference.”

WORLDLY WISE: “I was born in Cairo, Egypt, and my family immigrated to this country when I was young. I’ve been given a real gift to come to the United States. That is both an enormous gift and a responsibility.”

BEST ADVICE: “Never be intimidated to have people better than you working for you. I’m truly fortunate to have an outstanding team. A leader can only do a couple of things—work hard to set a vision and a strategy—but having the best people is the smartest thing you can do.”

Lydia Fenet



Top, **Calvin Klein Collection** (\$995). 654 Madison Ave., 212-292-9000. Siesta pants, **Max Mara** (\$575). 813 Madison Ave., 212-879-6100. 18k gold Albion diamond earrings, **David Yurman** (\$1,100). 114 Prince St., 212-343-7918. Cape Cod Tonneau watch, **Hermès** (\$4,050). 691 Madison Ave., 212-751-3181. Step sandals, Tamara Mellon (\$795). **Bergdorf Goodman**, 754 Fifth Ave., 212-753-7300

During her 15-year career at **Christie's**, Lydia Fenet has gone from college intern to visionary within the company. She ushered in a new era at the venerable auction house when she created the Strategic Partnerships program, whose mission is to foster global partnerships with symbiotic luxury brands. As Christie's highly visible benefit auctioneer, she is the face of the company to the outside world as well. Fenet has helped raised millions for some of the country's top nonprofits, including the Clinton Foundation, amfAR, and the Joyful Heart Foundation.

ON SUCCESS: "The reason I've been successful is because I take every opportunity and push it to be something else. When I put forth the idea for strategic partnerships, people thought: We trust her and she has the best interest of the company at heart and no one knows the Christie's brand as well as the head of events."

ON WHAT MAKES HER JOB UNIQUE: "To have an entrepreneurial job within a traditional company that's been around for almost 250 years is very exciting."

NEW YORK AND THE NEW CORPORATE ETHOS: "New York is the perfect canvas for the art world. People have a love of art and business, and we're the perfect intersection of those two. For what I do, every company has some presence here and is either looking to enhance or collaborate with an auction house or some vehicle in the art world to make itself seem well-rounded."

ON OUTREACH: "In the world we live in I don't think it's okay to be in one silo anymore. Today, in the art world there has to be a corporate social responsibility element—that's what we're all charged with in business these days."

FEAR FACTOR: "My toughest challenge was launching strategic partnerships. It was a leap of faith. It was a point in my career when I very much knew what I was doing. I had a couple of thousand events under my belt. I was definitely scared when I first started. It kept me up at night in a good way. If you're not scared, you not really trying, right?"

Shiba Russell



Dress, [Yigal Azrouël](#) (\$890), 1011 Madison Ave., 212-929-7525. 18k gold Albion diamond earrings, [David Yurman](#) (\$1,100), 114 Prince St., 212-343-7918. Large Viti tube cuff, Pluma (\$402), [Atrium](#), 644 Broadway, 212-473-9200. Phoenix pumps, Paul Andrew (\$895), [Bergdorf Goodman](#), 754 Fifth Ave., 212-753-7300

Emmy Award–winning journalist Shiba Russell coanchors [NBC 4 New York](#)'s noon and 5:30 PM weekday newscasts. She brings a broad range of reporting experience to her audience, having covered many of the region's defining stories, from 9/11 and Hurricane Sandy to the Newtown tragedy.

THE POWER OF INFLUENCE: "In journalism, there is power in information, power in the role of a free press in the way that journalism can effect change. I believe that with influence you have the potential to leave a legacy. There are so many little things you can do in a day that can affect someone's character, development, or behavior in a positive way and perhaps be remembered for a long time because of it.

TOUGHEST ASSIGNMENT: "Covering 9/11 and the funerals that followed. Covering the massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School and trying to keep it together on the air. It was tough for this mother of a 10-year-old daughter to do. My tears finally took over on the 11 PM broadcast that night."

GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT: "Winning an Emmy for a story that shined a spotlight on the problem of childhood hunger in the city through a feeding program that my daughter's school supported, and anchoring and reporting in the number-one market—my home market."

BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR THE FUTURE: "Keeping viewers engaged; getting the younger generation interested in the news. New York helps because this market is always on the forefront of new ideas and new ways of bringing viewers in. This is a proactive, not a reactive, market."

GIVING BACK: "I influence budding journalists as a mentor and by getting out in the community and working with several organizations such as the Children's Museum of Manhattan and the Harlem Educational Activities Fund."

ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN THE CITY: "I think it's tough for women to achieve a work-life balance no matter where they live. You need to be vocal about the importance of family."

Jean Shafiroff



Dress, **Valentino** (\$2,690). 693 Fifth Ave., 212-355-5811. 18k gold Albion diamond earrings, **David Yurman** (\$1,100). 114 Prince St., 212-343-7918. Cape Cod watch, **Hermès** (\$3,300). 691 Madison Ave., 212-751-3181

Philanthropist Jean Shafiroff is an active board member of several of the city's top nonprofits including **The New York Women's Foundation**, and on the advisory board for organizations like **Lighthouse International**. Dedicated to giving back, Shafiroff, a highly visible fixture on the Manhattan charity circuit, has chaired many fundraising events, including this year's gala for New York City Mission Society.

GETTING INVOLVED: "I'm on eight different charity boards. The reason I'm on so many is because I think I can be useful to them. I'm not afraid to go on [the boards of] some of the smaller charities that need help. I like to be where my ideas will matter and I can have a bigger impact. That's harder on very large boards."

CAUSES TO CELEBRATE: "I love The New York Women's Foundation. It's a cross-cultural board seeking to empower women out of poverty that gives grants to women groups. I'm also very involved with New York City Mission Society. We are raising money for the city's most underserved children."

FINANCIAL FINESSE: "I worked on Wall Street for three years, which has been invaluable for what I do. There is a social component, but this is very serious business. The experience and knowledge I've gained over the years has been very helpful and made the work a little easier, but raising money and organizing people is still a challenge. When the economy changes, we have to follow the lead. For example, if banking is hard hit but real estate is still doing well, I will focus on that area. You just have to be more creative."

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: "Rejection. When people say no. I've learned that a no today could be a yes tomorrow. It can be discouraging, but then something positive will happen."

GIFT OF GRATITUDE: "It's never been easy for the middle class to live in New York. My father was a schoolteacher, and we had to move out of the city. I was raised in Hicksville on Long Island. I feel so blessed to be able to do this work—to have the time and resources to help. It offers so much to my life."

Carmen Tal



Harden dress, **Sportmax** (\$975), 450 West Broadway, 212-674-1817. Oxidized silver plated laser-cut cuff, **Aurélie Bidermann** (\$665), 265 Lafayette St., 212-335-0604

In just six short years, Chilean-born Carmen Tal, cofounder of **Moroccanoil**, went from Montreal salon owner to helming her own multimillion-dollar beauty empire, a journey that started with a single product inspired by her experience in a Tel Aviv salon. Today, Moroccanoil Treatment is sold in more than 60 countries and is coveted by celebrities (including Reese Witherspoon and Naomi Watts) and stylists everywhere. Moroccanoil's recently released "Inspired by Women" ad campaign, whose short film, *Inspired*, was directed by Bryce Dallas Howard, highlighted five women influencers empowering the underserved and needy around the world.

JUST DO IT: "I went to school to learn English to become a translator and work in tourism. Because my [language] skills weren't that good, I had to make a new career. I went into the fashion industry and learned management by being in the field. Sometimes when you see an opportunity, you just have to go for it and then make it happen."

RUNNING A BUSINESS FROM NEW YORK: "You have everything you need here to succeed. You can find inspiration by simply walking down the street."

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: "When we founded the company, introducing Moroccanoil was tough. It was an oil treatment at a time when oil treatments were not recommended, but once the stylists tried it they were amazed."

THINKING GLOBALLY: "Our [social media campaign] "Inspired by Women" features passionate and courageous women who work outside the beauty industry. It gave me an opportunity to see what drives them. Today you cannot just be about creating an amazing product; business is about making a contribution to the community and the world."

FACING THE FUTURE: "The possibilities are infinite in the next 10 years. There are new technologies, materials, and brands being introduced every day, which makes it an exciting time to work in the beauty industry."

Dr. Eva Andersson-Dubin



Dress, necklace, bracelets, and ring, Andersson-Dubin's own

Dr. Eva Andersson-Dubin learned firsthand how important integrated medicine and coordinated care are to patients dealing with breast cancer. After her own diagnosis in 2003, she and her husband, Glenn Dubin, cofounder of Highbridge Capital Management and principal of Dubin and Company, established the [Dubin Breast Center of the Tisch Cancer Institute at Mount Sinai](#), a facility for women at risk of developing breast cancer and those undergoing treatment.

POWER VERSUS INFLUENCE: “At the Dubin Breast Center we are trying to influence healthcare where the whole person is being cared for—psychological, dietary, genetic, cosmetic, and integrated medicine.”

BIGGEST ADVANTAGE TO WORKING IN NEW YORK CITY: “Exposure to brilliant people and their research. Most of the cutting-edge research today is focused on identifying actionable genetic targets specific to individual tumors, so that they can be treated with specificity and precision.”

GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT: “The Dubin Breast Center. It was a vision and a passion of mine. I had a hard time coordinating everything when I was diagnosed, and I’m a physician. I wanted to have everything a patient needs under one roof. Today the Center is thriving, with more than 80,000 patient visits since we opened four years ago.”

MODELING TO MEDICINE: (Andersson-Dubin’s first career was as a model; she was also a Miss Universe finalist.) “It was not an easy transition, as you can imagine. I had to reengage my brain in a very different way. But after six months at medical school, I felt back in my comfort zone.”

PROGNOSIS FOR THE FUTURE: “The search for the cure is bigger than the Center. It’s not around the corner, but big things are happening. At the Center, we’re looking for more targeted therapy like seed localizing treatment for surgical patients and groundbreaking research in triple-negative breast cancer using avatars.”

Rachel Sterne Haot



Top, **Bally** (\$695), 628 Madison Ave., 212-751-9082. Skirt, Donna Karan New York (\$895). **Saks Fifth Avenue**, 611 Fifth Ave., 212-753-4000. Veronica five-row pointed cuff, Paige Novick (\$370). **Jennifer Miller Jewelry**, 972 Lexington Ave., 212-734-8199. BB pumps, Manolo Blahnik (\$595). **Bergdorf Goodman**, 754 Fifth Ave., 212-753-7300

Having served as New York City's chief digital officer under Mayor Bloomberg, Rachel Sterne Haot now heads up the state's digital strategies by developing products and policy that are modernizing government and supporting New York's fast-growing tech sector.

ON WORKING FOR THE STATE VERSUS THE CITY: "We are spanning a much bigger geographic area and serving an even wider, more diverse public. [Working for Mayor Bloomberg] I learned a lot about effective management and the importance of data and measurement in decision making. The mayor would always reference the quote, 'In God we trust, everyone else bring data.' That's been a helpful maxim to me."

THE TECH ECONOMY: "There is not only a thriving tech sector in and of itself in New York, but so many industries—from real estate to finance, fashion, and media—are all transforming, and we're seeing tremendous growth as a result."

GREATEST ACHIEVEMENT: "The birth of my son last year. Professionally it's been the overhaul of the state's website, which had not been updated for 15 years. We were able to do this in less than 10 months—a very streamlined timeline in a government context. Our mobile traffic has tripled and our overall traffic has more than doubled."

BIGGEST CHALLENGE: "We need to make sure our services are as accessible as possible because that's the expectation now. You see it in the private sector. You certainly should see it in government."

BEST ADVICE: "Your career is not linear. It's entirely possible the job you'll have in the future hasn't been invented yet."