

it's in the BAG

ZOE'S BAG

Dupioni Silk embroidered with metallic thread and pearls. Fringe made from 22-carat gold beads, Swarovski crystals, Japanese seed beads, and Czech fire polish beads.

Dress by Cynthia Blue Couture



In a time when most everything around us is mass-produced, it's a **rare** and wondrous thing to encounter a **one-of-a-kind** item, crafted lovingly by the human hand. Designer Shannon Presson of the Elegant Bag appreciates this sentiment, and for the last two years has poured her own **sparkling** humanity into a line of handbags, custom-designed for brides and special occasions.

Working with **specialty** fabrics and a studio full of beads, Shannon stitches each of her signature drawstring-style purses herself. She might use chiffon, satin, embroidery, beading or other embellishments, but the final product reflects the **individuality** of her clients. Shannon questions every one of them about her dress and the colors for the event, but she also delves much deeper, asking: Who is this woman? What's important to her? What is her **sense of style**? The responses are what set one patron apart from the next, and for Shannon, it's those personal details that facilitate the creative process. "I see the handbag as my contribution to the **special day**, so I put a lot of thought into each bag," she explains. "I really focus on who I'm making it for."

When a client decides to go with an Elegant Bag, she has nearly **limit-less options**. "A bride can choose a design I've already made, use that pattern as a starting point, or come up with an entirely new idea," says Shannon. "If she requires a particular color or has her own fabric or wants embroidery to **match her flowers** or bridesmaids' dresses, I can work with anything on her wish list."

The results of Shannon's flexible and **artistic** approach are never less than stunning. Over and over, she fashions glittery, **eye-catching** handbags for any kind of celebration. In her hands, exquisite fabrics combine with **stylish** beads and fringe to become a practical accessory and a true memento.



CYNTHIA'S BAG

Beaded lace with Swarovski crystal fringe. Custom design for *Cynthia Blue Couture*.

And whether she's produced a delicately fringed silk pocketbook or a dazzling beaded number, Shannon insists on adding an element that makes her evening bags **truly unique**: inside every Elegant Bag, she monograms the name or simply the initials of the individual for whom it was made. Not only do customers receive a **gorgeous** purse designed just for them, but this intimate and sweet layer of personalization identifies it as theirs forever.

Shannon ultimately hopes that her bags will have a life that extends far beyond the day—or even the women—for which they were originally fabricated. “I would love it if my purses could be remembered and touched and perhaps **handed down** to a daughter or favorite niece,” she says. “There’s that sense of tradition to my creations and their style is **timeless**, so they could become heirlooms. The idea that someone is going to wear this handbag and get pleasure out of it and then maybe pass it on makes me really happy.” ●



SARA'S BAG

Embroidered black satin with pewter, sterling silver, hematite, and crystal beadwork.