



**TEAM SUNO**  
Erin Beatty  
& Max  
Osterweis

# *The* **SUNO,** *The Better*

MEET THE DYNAMIC DUO WHOSE PASSION FOR PRINTS TURNED THEM INTO THE INDUSTRY'S NEW STARS

**PHOTOGRAPHED BY JASON SCHMIDT**  
**STYLED BY KUSUM LYNN**

Floral swirls of mustard and ice blue...violet ikats...geometric patterns in vivid orange. Over the past few seasons this N.Y.C. label has achieved what many might have thought impossible: convincing legions of minimalist fashion fans to ditch head-to-toe black and embrace a riotous mix of color and texture.

When Max Osterweis conceived of Suno in 2008, he was actually thinking more about fair trade than fashion. The former filmmaker's goal had been to create a sustainable business in Kenya by having local tailors make clothing from the exuberant African kangas he'd collected. He hoped that selling the one-of-a-kind pieces would help jump-start the country's garment industry. Once he saw how enthusiastic retailers were about his samples, he realized he'd need a partner with design experience and turned to Erin Beatty, who had logged time at Gap and Donna Karan. In short order, Suno became a fave of Sofia Coppola's and Blake Lively's. Still, in a list of big moments, one stands out: "Michelle Obama wearing Suno at the White House on the Fourth of July 2010 was huge," Osterweis says.

Today, Suno produces a full collection and employs artisans in India and Peru, in addition to Kenya. "We've been carrying the line since its first season, and it has grown exponentially," says Olivia Kim, a vice president at retailer Opening Ceremony. "We're selling out and have waiting lists."

As one would expect from a pair who weren't discouraged by the impediments to doing business in a developing country (patchy Internet service, traveler's diseases), "There's always an optimism in our designs," Osterweis says. Adds Beatty, "It's feminine but with a catch. I like the idea of everything having something that's just a little bit screwed up. That's what makes people beautiful."

—MEGAN DEEM

All women's apparel, Suno; openingceremony.us. All shoes, Loeffler Randall for Suno; sunony.com. All jewelry, Lizzie Fortunato Jewels for Suno; sunony.com.  
HAIR: SEIJI  
MAKEUP: BENJAMIN PUCKEY