

Jessica Bridal Couture



Manufacturer of three of her own lines — Jessica Couture, Miss Chloé and Atelier Wu — and an agent for five global ranges, bridal designer *Jessica Wu* lives and breathes romance.

“Let me share a story with you,” says bridal designer Jessica Wu. “Every year, I go back to my hometown of Wenzhou, China and visit my grandparents, who are in their eighties. My grandmother’s very quick-thinking and efficient and wants everything done yesterday, while my grandfather’s the opposite — a gentle, calm maths teacher — yet somehow when they come together, it works. They bicker for days on end, but always sweetly hold each other’s hand when they take their walks. People say this sort of ‘true love’ is missing in our modern times, but the bridal industry tells a different story. I’m a constant witness to love, which makes what I do very special. I often think of my grandparents and their everlasting love, and that’s what’s imbued in the work I do.”

That work has seen Wu at the helm of her eponymous brand, Jessica Bridal Couture, since 2006, after her own wedding made her realise her calling was in the bridal business.

TJ: What have you been focusing on recently?
JW: This season, I launched Atelier Wu, my high-end bridal line, and exhibited at the National Bridal Market in Chicago, which has been the biggest international development of late. We have a few stockists in the US and are looking forward to expanding.

The Jessica Couture SS 2020 Eternal Elegance collection has been a highlight for me, as a designer. I try always to listen to my inner voice and do what I believe is right, but my inspiration is my brides. I love spending as much time with them as possible to really understand their needs, then combine their vision with the aesthetic of the brand to create something completely unique.

TJ: How is Jessica Couture different from Miss Chloé and Atelier Wu?

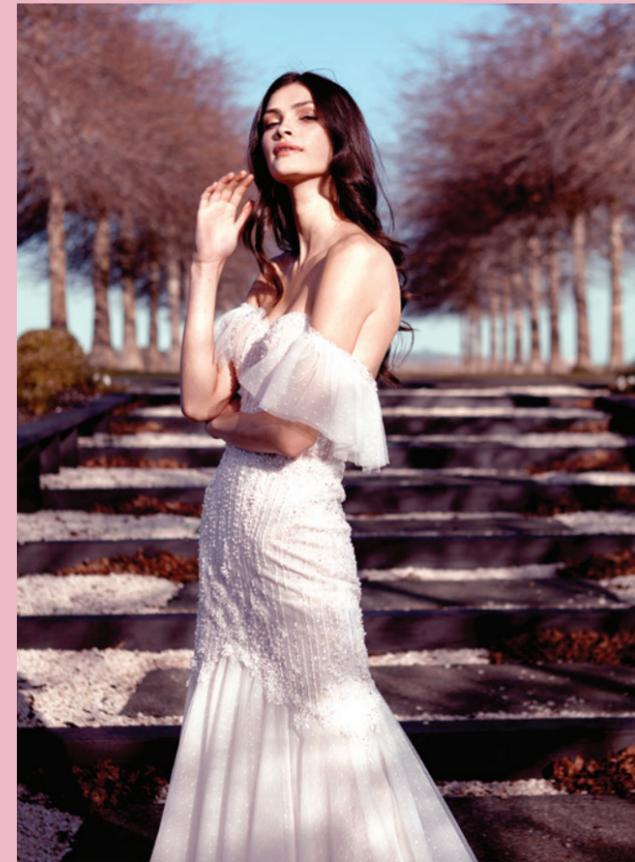
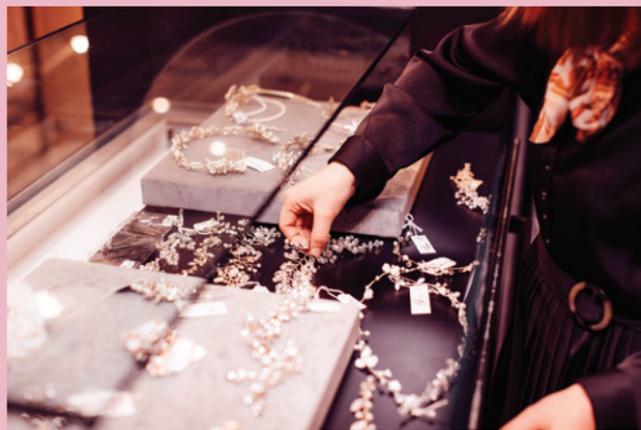
JW: Jessica Couture is defined by classic elegance, with attention to detail and an understanding of international bridal and couture trends. Miss



Portrait Photography—
Erica Jane

Editorial photography—
courtesy of Jessica Bridal
Couture

Words—Philippa Prentice



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Chloé is a younger, more accessible line that's whimsical and playful. In opulent fabrics for the glamorous bride and with just six designs per season, Atelier Wu is our luxury collection, combining cutting-edge fashion trends with traditional couture techniques.

TJ: You also stock gowns by other brands?

JW: We're the New Zealand agent for Cizzy group, which consists of Cizzy Bridal, Wedding Societe, White April, Zavana Bridal and Zavana Couture. These labels have something to offer every bride, whether her style is classic, luxury, boho, modern or fashion-forward.

TJ: What size ranges do you carry?

JW: Most of our styles are available in sizes 2 to 26. We're also in the process of developing a Jessica Couture line of wedding dresses for curvier brides.

TJ: What fabrics do you favour?

JW: For the current Jessica Couture collection, I used printed silk organza. I adore the texture

the print adds to the fabric. It's so luxurious and feminine and requires great care, attention and love. I source most of my fabrics internationally and try to recycle most of our excess. We've even used it to produce ballet costumes.

TJ: Who are some of the talented people on your team?

JW: Lead designer Fritz Botha is my right hand. He has exceptional couture technique and an understanding of a woman's shape that ensures our designs fit impeccably. He's also a big pop music fan, which inspires his work! Multitalented business development manager Grace Liu is my second right hand – in this business, you need more than one! And Milena Raskovic looks after our marketing and PR. She has a decade of experience in fashion and luxury.

TK: What's the best thing about your job?

JW: The dresses that really stand out are the ones on which I get to do the sewing and handwork myself. It's special for me with all the dresses I touch.