

Interview

## LORI WEITZNER

**LORI WEITZNER DESIGN**  
EST. 1986, NEW YORK CITY

Through her singularly stunning jewelry collection, Lori Weitzner delights in creating wearable works of art that are also culturally sustainable. Working with artists in India to craft “textile-infused” pieces, she aims to preserve handmade designs by cultivating an appreciation for the talents and techniques of the makers.

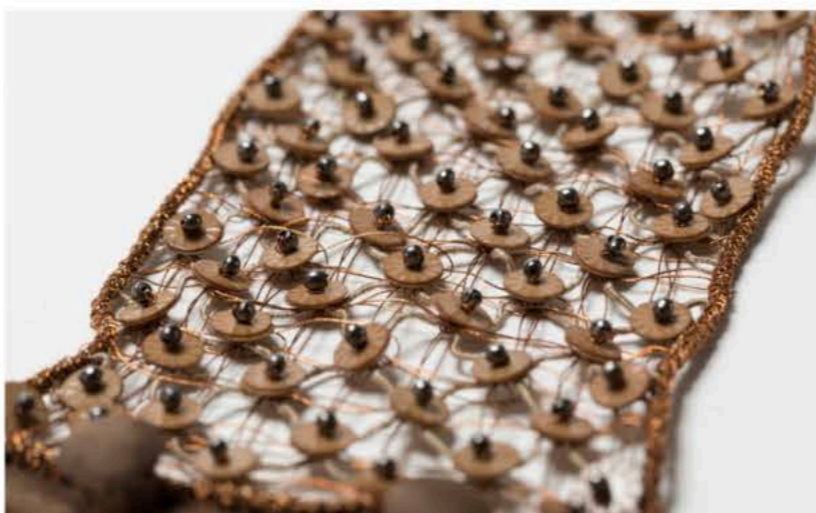
### Tell us about how you became a jewelry designer.

My initial major at Syracuse University was in painting. After some time in the program, my professor shared with me that he felt I would not “make it” as a professional painter—a jarring thing to hear, to say the least. However, commenting on what he saw as my exceptional use of color and composition, he urged me to consider textile design as a major. I did, and I never looked back. I revel in the role textiles play in our lives. We wear them, walk on them, sit on them, and sleep on them. They are ever-present, and therefore play a major role in how we live.

After years of designing textiles for interiors, I became interested in translating the techniques and materials I used in textile design into jewelry. The same hand-embroidery, beading, and craftsmanship that make textiles exceptional are applied to my “textile-inspired” jewelry. It is versatile and lightweight, mixes traditional and modern elements, and reflects the talents of the



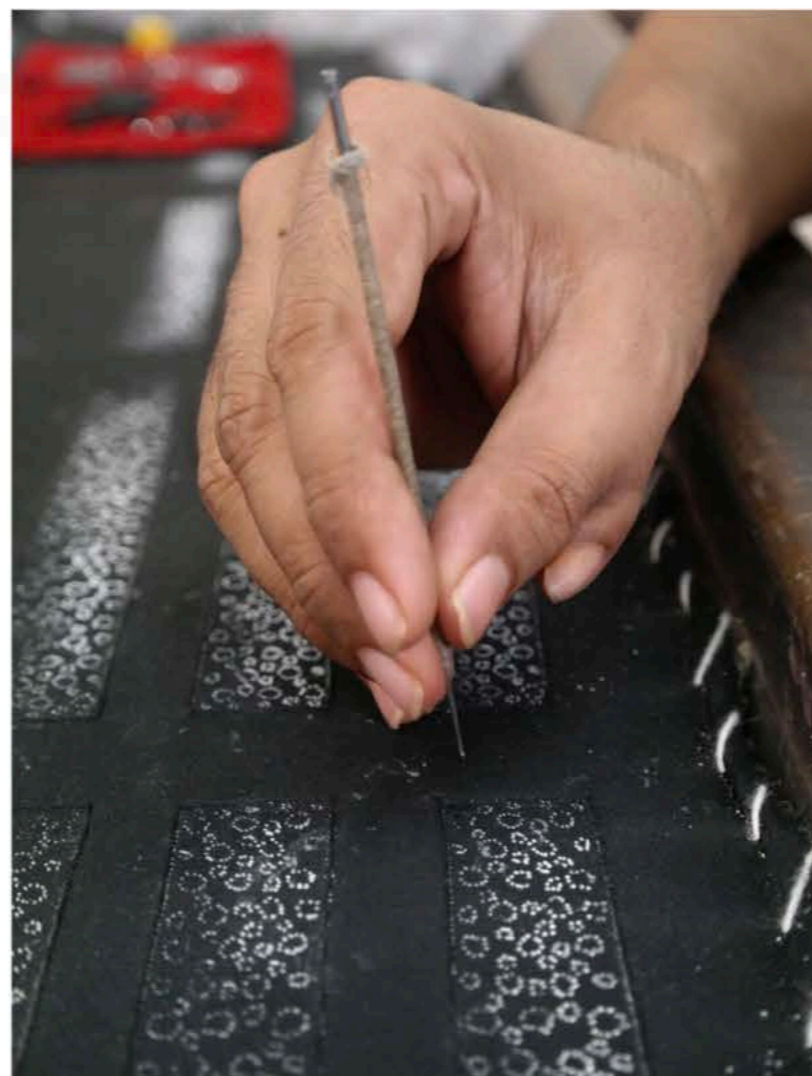
Lori visiting the studio and working with the embroiderers behind her line



The Ceres Bracelet: sequins topped with beads on a bed of metallic threads



Hand embroidered, beaded, and wrapped jewelry and accessories



An artisan preparing suede for the Penelope beaded bracelet

amazing artisans who handcraft it.

### Tell us about your design and development process.

Jack Lenor Larsen, with whom I was privileged to work, taught me the value of identifying and working with artisans from around the world. Each artisan community has its own unique skills, which leads the way to innovative collaboration and design work. As for inspiration more broadly, it comes from everything, from leaves to architecture to music.

### How do you find the balance between contemporary design and traditional craft?

I am fascinated with handcraft in general, but especially traditional Indian beading and embroidery—which is magnificent. Playing with color, scale, and other design elements allows us to blend the traditional with the contemporary in a way that highlights both.

### What is your favorite jewelry material to work with?

I am partial to hand-beaded silk, as well as sequined mesh for the drama and elegance they impart. Our Ceres and Holda bracelets showcase those materials.

### What codes of conduct do you/your suppliers follow?

Free trade, good working conditions, and artisan contentment are the critical components in our relationship with artisan communities around the world. Before Covid, we visited them often to assure that those requirements were being met.

### What key sustainability standards do you adhere to?

We work with trusted suppliers with whom we develop relationships, many of them long-term. We visit them, get to know the management and the workers, and confirm that the conditions we require are being met.



An artisan working on the Ceres bracelet in Copper



The embroidered and beaded Athena handbag



An artisan beading the floral details of the Dalia Bracelet



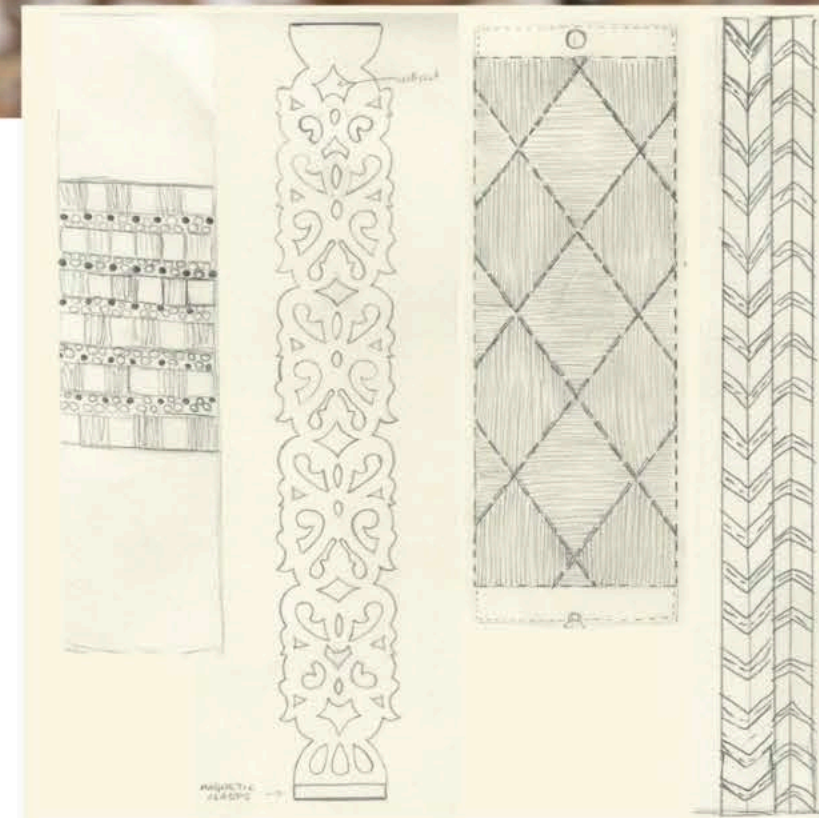
The Ceres cuff bracelet



An artisan embroidering the Penelope bracelet



Detail of the Penelope bracelet



Lori's jewelry sketches

***“In my experience, no machine or other mechanized form of textile production has ever been able to replicate the beauty, richness, and unmistakable uniqueness of handmade.”***

Lori Weitzner, Lori Weitzner Design