

Interview with Sabine Seymour for DE:BUG magazine

Sabine: *What is MOI?*

Despina: MOI is a wearable accessory representing a moment of magic. A reaching for frivolity. Everyone who buys a MOI has a story to tell. It is a sparkle that creates a trail. A gift.

S: *How did you derive the name?*

D: Initially MOI was for the French Me since it is what people want it to be and how they want to express themselves. Then it turns out that in Pacifica it means Rex, King and in Finish "hello", and then in Flemish the pronunciation meant "pretty". All these positive connotations wrapped in one word, one light...

S: *Explain the design process? What's the idea behind MOI?*

D: We have been working in the area of wearable computing for 8 years. We always wanted to develop a product that encapsulates our relationship to technology, communication, people and which shows how technology can be magical, frivolous, flexible. We also wanted to develop something that was simple enough that we could finance ourselves without seeking outside capital.

S: *How would you describe MOI in the context of fashion meets technology?*

D: MOI is the first product that I know that uses technology as part of fashion but when people look at it, or talk about it they don't think about technology. They think of it as a special accessory that adds a certain element of cool and unexpectedness in their outfit. And it is this inert relationship that allows people to express themselves as opposed to being burdened or defined by technology.

S: *Is MOI a wearable jewelry?*

D: MOI is also wearable jewelry. MOI is whatever people want a light to be.

S: *What are your inspirations?*

D: Looking at people. Old costumes. The archeology of gestures and expressions. Wim Wenders and "Until the End of the World" was one for a long time. Animals.

S: *What are the technical components of MOI?*

D: MOI is the simplest instance of technology possible: a super bright LED, two wires, a circuit board and a battery. Although it is so simple the way the battery and the LED work without a resistor is quite interesting in itself.

S: *Do you have examples of how to wear it? Did you come across people that used MOI in ways you've not considered?*

D: We have some examples of how to wear MOI on our website, and obvious ways are around the neck like a pedant, peaking out of a pocket, coming out of a button hole. I saw once a girl putting it on the top of her head and pulling the light on her forehead so it looked like an illuminating bindi. I saw another girl in a club putting it in her jeans pocket so it dangled as she was dancing. A guy wrote to us saying that his cats love following the light as he moves it around them. We have absolutely no idea what most people end up doing with MOI.

S: *Where can you buy MOI?*

D: MOI is available at our website at www.moinewyork.com and at Felissimo Design House (56th st. between 5th and 6th) in NYC. We will be adding more stores in February.

S: *What's your next venture?*

D: Since we launched MOI the response has been incredible. We will continue to develop similar devices and explore ways that we can use technology as both a passive and active communication channel.