

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a red strapless dress and large diamond earrings, is the central focus. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera. Behind her is a large, vibrant bouquet of flowers, including sunflowers, pink lilies, and white flowers. The background is a light-colored, textured wall.

SOCIAL LIFE

AUGUST 26, 2016

in the hamptons with
**JEAN
SHAFIROFF**

FASHION, BEAUTY
TRAVEL, ART
GALA PHOTOS

FEATURES

JEAN SHAFIROFF





Black and pink gown by Oscar de la Renta
Pink earrings by Oscar de la Renta

JEAN SHAFIROFF

A LIFE OF GIVING

BY JAMES BERSTEIN
PHOTOGRAPHY BY MICHAEL PANICCLA

I met with Jean Shafiroff on a sweltering mid-August afternoon at her Southampton home, where she was planning her hectic schedule: she had a series of charity events planned for the evening, and for Shafiroff that meant work, but this is what she loves — giving and raising money for important causes. And, she was organizing a trip to Nicaragua, traveling with her daughter Elizabeth and her friend Lindsey, to rescue dogs abandoned on the streets and bring them to New York, where they will find forever homes, as well as to support and raise awareness of animal rights internationally.

This is Jean Shafiroff: a calm presence, a genteel charm, with a whirlwind life of planning and doing — all on behalf of others.

On a recent Saturday, Jean participated in the prestigious Authors Night at the East Hampton Library to celebrate her first book, *Successful Philanthropy: How to Make a Life By What You Give*. In many ways, Shafiroff's book summarizes the essence of her life. "We are not put on Earth to work with the intention of only giving to ourselves," Shafiroff wrote. "Good fortune is a gift and with that gift comes the important responsibility to use our resources to better society. This is a true personal achievement."

Her go-to personality is summed up by one of her favorite expressions: "I have no plans for slowing down on philanthropic work. I believe there is a great need for what I do. That mission is important." Shafiroff is recognized as being at the forefront of a new movement of modern philanthropy, where giving goes beyond financial contributions and emphasizes giving of time, knowledge and experience. Her book contains an introduction by Georgina Bloomberg, a leading

equestrian and the daughter of former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, and the book's contents explain in stylish and simple detail the ways people can help those who are less fortunate by actions in addition to donating money. The book is a practical and comprehensive guide packed with useful information for aspiring and seasoned philanthropists.

With such tireless enthusiasm, it is easy to see why Shafiroff eagerly serves on seven philanthropic boards, including New York City Mission Society, New York Women's Foundation, French Heritage Society, The Couture Council (Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology), and the Jewish Board of Family and Children's Services. She is on the honorary board of the Southampton Animal Shelter and has chaired that shelter's gala for the past five years, raising several million dollars for animal care. The shelter is a favorite of hers because of the excellent work it does. She has chaired the gala for the Southampton Hospital three times, raising \$5.4 million. Shafiroff has been honored by the American Heart Association, the American Cancer Society, and several other organizations. She also is involved with the Ellen Hermanson Foundation, which raises money for breast cancer research and care. In New York City, she has hosted, underwritten, and chaired countless charity events. Her philanthropic work never stops.

What people find remarkable about Shafiroff is the length she will go to accomplish her goals. She has previously traveled to Nicaragua, Costa Rica, and Panama to seek out homeless dogs and bring them back to New York. Her trips not only save animals' lives, but also help to guide and support the work of people who work for the rights of animals.



Model: *Michelle Williams*
Stylist: *Michelle Williams*
Hair: *Michelle Williams*
Makeup: *Michelle Williams*
Location: *Michelle Williams*

The expansion of Shafiroff's philanthropic outreach includes a formidable presence on television and radio, and at speaking engagements, including a recent talk at the prestigious Princeton Club in Manhattan. In addition to being honored by numerous organizations and nonprofit foundations, Shafiroff has become something of a standout in the media world. For her style, she has been on a number of "Best Dressed" lists. A few years ago she was ranked as the fourth most-photographed woman in New York City. She has been on the covers of several publications and has been a featured speaker at an array of news conferences to talk about the importance of philanthropy, her book, and several other topics.

Shafiroff learned the practice of working hard and giving from her parents, growing up in a small Long Island town, and she tries to pass along what she has learned to others. "I believe that philanthropy must be learned from a young age both at home and in schools," Shafiroff said. "Classes on philanthropy and the importance of helping those in need should be required courses starting in kindergarten or even nursery school."

Shafiroff has been featured in many publications including the *Wall Street Journal*, the *New York Times*, *New York Social Diary*, and the *Huffington Post*, among others. She was friendly with the legendary fashion photographer Bill Cunningham, who once came to her Manhattan home to take pictures for a social event. Cunningham fondly called Shafiroff and others he photographed "children." He appreciated her sense of fashion and taste in clothes.

Shafiroff admired the gentle nature of the renowned photographer and will always remember him fondly.

Shafiroff encourages and seeks to empower all individuals to become philanthropists so that they can enrich their lives through the fulfillment of giving. She is a volunteer fundraiser, leader, and spokesperson for a wide range of charitable causes, which include improving the lives of under-served populations, women's rights and wellbeing, health care, animal welfare, and resources for children in need. This past spring, U.S. Representative Carolyn Maloney introduced Shafiroff at a gathering and declared her "one of the fore-

most fundraisers for charitable causes for children, people with challenges, and animals who are injured and homeless."

Needless to say, Jean Shafiroff has plenty to keep her busy fundraising in the Hamptons and elsewhere. As she states in her book, "Selfishness does

not bring happiness. Few of us will be remembered for the businesses we created or for how many vacations we took. To be fulfilled, we must be engaged in helping make society stronger."

But what's next for Shafiroff? As one might expect from this busy woman, a great deal. She is planning to write another book, make more international trips to rescue homeless dogs and spread the word about treating animals humanely, represent needy children and women, and raise more money for philanthropic causes.

"I will never be finished," Shafiroff said. "There is always so much more that needs to be accomplished."

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Photography: Michael Panicia

Hair: Henry de la Paz of Warren Tricomi

Makeup: Kamara Annert

Flowers: Felan Florist

Red and black flowered gown, made to order by Viviane d'E. Souza
Black earrings by Octopussy Paris

