



By Amy Tratenberg

Signature Streetwear

Carolyn Paxton, owner and designer, Chi WOW WOW, talks about the inspiration behind her one-of-a-kind designs.



The Pet Elite: How was Chi WOW WOW established?



Carolyn Paxton: Near the end of 2004, I went into a pet store and ended up adopting Elvis, a sick Chihuahua. I had to buy him clothes to keep him warm—a concept that was so foreign to me at the time. It became a mis-

sion to find the right clothes for him. I knew how to sew, so I ended up making him a shirt out of an old Captain America tee I'd had since I was little. Someone saw Elvis in the shirt and offered me 50 bucks for it. That led to the website. In July of 2004, my designs were in L.A.'s Luxe Showroom, which launched everything into another level. I went from selling one shirt here and there, to filling large orders for boutiques.

TPE: What makes Chi WOW WOW stand out among other dog apparel companies?

Paxton: We make one-of-a-kind merchandise. The uniqueness of the grungy, edgy, vintage aspect is what first got us attention. In my own collections, I try to maintain the feel that people are still getting something unique and different.



TPE: What inspires you to design the custom graphics?

Paxton: I look to do something that's not out there, at whatever cost. I wore vintage tees growing up. I'm reliving what I liked when I was younger and creating that for dogs. I'm also inspired by the imagery I see on a day-to-day basis.

TPE: What have been some of your best-selling items?

Paxton: The Vintage Hoodie Sweatshirts and the Chi WOW WOW signature Sling-over Carriers. I've had people buy them two at a time.

TPE: Tell me about the Elvis Fund.

Paxton: The Elvis Fund was created because I wanted to give back. The Pasadena Community Foundation manages a fund in my and Elvis' name. This year, we are awarding a grant to the Pasadena Humane Society. The ultimate mission is to support people who are working hard to help reduce the number of homeless animals.

TPE: Are there any new collections in the works?

Paxton: In an upcoming collection, I'm going to license art from independent artists who got their names doing skateboard graphics. Within the existing collections, we're working on carriers and dresses.