

# SEANKELLY

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THE CUT

## How a High-powered Gallery Owner Dresses for Work



*Photo: Gabriela Herman*

When Lauren Kelly was a child, her father, Sean, operated a gallery out of their New York City apartment. Featuring works by the likes of Marina Abramović, Robert Mapplethorpe, and Joseph Kosuth, Sean Kelly Gallery is now a powerhouse in the art world, with an expansive space in Hudson Yards. Kelly joined the family business after college. Her job as director involves tasks that range from the high-level to the hands-on — she does everything from scouting new talent to traveling to fairs across the globe to physically unpacking pieces of work.

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The Cut caught up with Kelly in between business trips to talk about why she loves curve-hugging sweater dresses, how Instagram has helped push her style boundaries, and why she's embracing headbands.

On the shoes she wears every day: In the fall, it's my Vince suede sneakers — they slip on easily when I'm running out of the house, but they're stylish enough to wear to work. If I'm going out after work or have a special client visit, then I'll do a statement shoe like my sparkly Gucci loafers. And once it gets colder, I'll swap into my studded Chloé boots or this new gray snakeskin Marc Fisher pair.

**On going out after work:** I rarely change unless I have a formal gala. However, the one thing I'll do is swap out of my more comfortable shoes into something higher, snazzier, and more statement-worthy. I tend to wear really classic pieces to work, so I'll jazz things up with fun shoes or belts. Most recently I've been getting into headbands.

**On what she wears to big meetings:** This time of year, I love a formfitting knit dress or sweater-and-skirt combo. It's a classic silhouette that shows off my curves. My favorite is by Rachel Comey; I'll wear it with a blazer and I'm power-pose ready.

**On traveling for work:** Most of my travel is for art fairs, so I need to choose outfits that can go from working the booth during the day to dinner with artists and clients. The first day is usually fancier since that's when our VIP clients come. Once that's over, I'll wear minimal fashion sneakers like the ones by Feit. We're on our feet most of the day so they've become our art-fair uniform — even my father, who founded the gallery, will wear them!

**On post-pregnancy style:** Pregnancy and postpartum is a roller coaster of what fits and what feels good on any given day. I had my baby four months ago, so now I'm focused on being comfortable and presentable at work while also wearing clothes that function well for nursing and pumping. I've been relying on clothes that are stretchy and forgiving, hence my love of knits. Now that we're entering sweater weather, I have way more options than when I was 9 months pregnant in the summer. One thing I didn't know was how much your feet change. At four months postpartum, I'm slowly getting back into my heels, as most of them didn't fit.

**On the last three things she bought:** I just got a pair of gray Marc Fisher snakeskin boots for fall and I put a [Veronica Beard blazer](#) on hold — I've been coveting it for a while. I also bought a christening dress for my daughter. And because headbands are my new thing, I bought a gray plaid one.

**On the pressure to look flawless:** There's always pressure to look perfectly put-together in the art world — more so when you're not a sample size. With age and maturity, I've come to embrace my curves and select outfits that celebrate

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rather than hide my shape. [Universal Standard](#) is one of my go-to brands for size-inclusive, elevated essentials, I also shop a lot at 11 Honoré because they partner with high-end designers. When I need a special outfit, it's the first place I look.

I'm also a big fan of designers like [Rachel Comey](#), Derek Lam, and Daniella Kallmeyer. They select fabrics and silhouettes that are super flattering, so even if my exact size isn't available, I'll find other options. The ability to walk into a store and be able to select something off the rack is a privilege that a lot of people take for granted. While a lot of brands are becoming more conscious of offering a wider range of sizes in stores, there is still a lot of progress to be made — I'm looking at you, Zara.

**On her style evolution:** I've become more confident and learned to embrace styles outside my comfort zone. As the fashion world slowly evolves, so, too, have my options. Online shopping has been a tremendous resource, but I want to be able to shop things in person. I remember the first time I left Gucci with a belt that fits. I couldn't believe that I'd been able to buy a luxury item in store without having to special order! It was empowering and one of the reasons I love shopping for fun accessories. One day I'd like to be able to walk out with the dress to match; that's true progress.

**On the power of Instagram:** A lot has been said about the negative effects Instagram has on self-esteem, but it's the opposite for me. While I might not see curvy women in magazines, they're all over my feed and they push me to be more experimental. Seeing fabulous curvy women that don't play when it comes to fashion — like [Katie Sturino](#), [Paloma Elsesser](#), and [Gabi Fresh](#) — really inspires me.