



A Story In A Globe

Thanks to Carrie Bradshaw, Leah Andrews creates awe-inspiring, bespoke snow globes for her list of growing clients.

by Danielle Renda

Leah Andrews was having a quiet afternoon to herself, enjoying one of her favorite TV sitcoms, HBO's *Sex and the City*. In the episode, Andrews watched as the pint-sized, bubbly and ever-so fashionable New York columnist Carrie Bradshaw (played by Sarah Jessica Parker) shook a large, dazzling snow globe of Manhattan. The scene, Andrews explains, foreshadowed changes—the “shaking up” of things in Bradshaw’s relationship. Little did Andrews know that it would soon symbolize change for her, too.

The snow globe wasn’t like anything Andrews had seen before. “I was captivated by the globe, as it was quite beautiful and bigger than most globes I’d

seen before,” she says. Curious to see what other exquisite globes were on the market, she surfed the web, only to find the results turned up short. “Most of my searches returned those kitschy, cheap, travel globes and plastic domes. I was quite disappointed!”

Looking to pursue a new creative project, and with the underlying drive to become her own boss again (years earlier she owned two businesses in different industries), Andrews ordered a simple snow globe-making kit. The rest, she says, “is history.” Some eight years later the “Queen”—a nickname that jibes with the name of the company, Queen of Snow Globes—continues to run her business,

which produces bespoke snow globes for famous and not-so-famous clients around the world.

Over the years, Andrews has designed personalized pieces for Steve Martin, Channing Tatum and Kurt Russell. Her work has been at the heart of media celebrations, like her Best Fiends snow globe, created to celebrate the success of a smartphone game with more than 80 million international players; a *La La Land* snow globe to promote the musical’s Blu-ray release; and custom globes for the pop duo Daft Punk and the cast and crew of *Priscilla, Queen of the Dessert, The Musical*; Quentin Tarantino’s *The Hateful Eight*; the Netflix series, *Narcos*; and Tim Minchin’s *Matilda The*



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Musical. She’s also designed globes for philanthropies, like Convoy of Hope and the Pacific Whale Foundation in Hawaii, and occasionally, she receives requests for engagement gifts and wedding favors. Andrews also offers custom, glass-blown Christmas ornaments for her clients as well. Two years ago, she got into the promotional products industry and exhibited at her first PPAI® Expo.

PPB What are some of the campaigns your snow globes have been a part of?

I’ve been truly honored to work with some incredible corporate and high-profile clients. I have honestly enjoyed every single project I’ve worked on, but there have certainly been some rather exciting requests I’ve received. The first one that blew my mind was when actor/comedian Steve Martin asked me to make snow globes that he would give to his friends and colleagues at the AFI Awards ceremony, where he was inducted into the Hall Of Fame in 2015. Steve gave those globes to such luminaries as Tina Fey, Amy Poehler, Lily Tomlin, Mel Brooks, Dan Aykroyd and many more entertainers I have huge admiration for. Talking to Steve on the phone was a career highlight for sure, and something I’ll never forget.

PPB Tell us about your professional background.

Straight out of college, I trained to become a professional makeup artist. In order to earn money to start my own business, I started working at a very respected musical instruments store in Melbourne, my home city. I never made

it into the makeup world, as my career remained in the music products industry for the next 25 years. As a singer and multi-instrumentalist, I loved the industry and found myself progressing through the ranks of sales to support, product management and eventually higher-level marketing for companies like Yamaha Music Group. However, I have always had an entrepreneurial spirit and whilst I made a good employee, I was always destined to be my own boss and I made a much better businessowner.

PPB How do your snow globes move from conception to completion?

When a client first contacts me, usually I suggest production of a digital design, which I do with no obligation and before anything has been agreed to. This allows the client to get a better visual of how their design might come to fruition. From there, once a project is confirmed, my team uses the visual, along with many other images and detail, to hand-sculpt the inner setting. At every stage, clients can request changes at no cost until we confirm the sculpture, which is then made into a mold for producing the quantities. After that, every single piece must be hand-painted and hand-assembled. Snow globes are really quite a traditional product requiring a ton of hard work; most of it can’t be automated. To me, this gives each piece a charm of its own that doesn’t exist with more stock-standard products.

PPB What do you enjoy most about your business?

Without question, the customer relationships—

everything I do is driven by making my customers happy, and I’m very lucky that I get to produce a product whose sole purpose is to make people smile.

PPB If you could offer advice to someone who’s just beginning to pursue their passion, but who is hesitant about the challenges that lie ahead, what would it be?

The truth is that I spent many years learning about business before my success with Queen of Snow Globes. I started two businesses in my younger years that folded for various reasons, and leading up to starting this business, I was experimenting with gazillions of ideas, only knowing that ultimately I wanted to be my own boss. Every day driving in to work, I would listen to podcasts about online business and marketing, and I just kept applying things I’d learned over and over. Making snow globes was a happy accident that I stumbled upon just looking for something creative to do—it only turned into a business when I applied all my growing knowledge to something I felt truly passionate about. My advice, based on all of that, would be to never stop learning. There is so much free information out there on running a successful business, that there’s really no excuse for not being educated. My No. 1 recommendation is a man named Pat Flynn who runs a website and podcast called “Smart Passive Income.” And yes, I’ve also made a snow globe for him! **PPB**

Danielle Renda is associate editor of PPB.