

Kathy Shayna Shocket: Get the inside scoop on Arizona's social scene and celebrity news.



This week: Which celeb is babbling about the soon to open Barneys Scottsdale...?

"Never, Neeever, Never," says **Simon Doonan**, creative director of the New York based Barneys, referring to those pricey freebies given to celebrities to don on the red carpet, etc. He's shaking his head to emphasize another "Never!" "Celebrities love to shop at Barneys and it's where they actually spend their own money," he stresses with that charming English accent. Simon is celebrating 23 years as the imaginative force behind Barneys' infamous window displays. We chatted about the Barneys' brand and its newest location set to open on Oct. 15 at Scottsdale Fashion Square. Yes, the department store with its signature red awnings and iconic black shopping bags, is planning a big to-do grand opening. And Simon, a fashion maven packed with personality- is the perfect Barneys ambassador of sorts.



Now a celebrity himself, he's a well known face on New York red carpets, and his resume boasts appearances on VH1 and America's Next Top Model, a provocative column in the New York Observer and author of four books, including his autobiography "Beautiful People" which has been turned into a television series, for BBC. It's set to run on the Logo channel in the U.S.

Even the way Simon slides his sunglasses down his nose, just a pinch, and adjusts his eyes just over the top of the lenses- has so much cache and personality. You know there's a lot going on in the, as he describes it, filing cabinets of his mind.

"Barneys is known as the place to go for new designers. Our buyers at Barneys are the best, they are authoritative, they edit out all the drek," he says using the Yiddish word which means trash- something worthless.

Simon who grew up in Redding, England, isn't Jewish, but Yiddish expressions are an assimilated part of his unique articulate way. Not just because he's been working in the schemata (clothing) business most of his career, but his partner of 14 years, **Jonathan Adler**, is Jewish. Adler is an acclaimed interior designer and potter, has ten Jonathan Adler stores across the country.

The couple was married at City Hall in California in 2008, however, the current battle over gay marriage legislation, has thrown their legal status into ambiguity.

Simon's autobiography, by the way, "Beautiful People," is reflective of his effortless wit. It's the delightfully written story of his mad cap family, and his "deranged fixation" of the beautiful people, and his journey into London where they lived.

Now, along with Barneys he'll journey into the Scottsdale fashion scene. Some Scottsdale shoppers are anxious to see how the window displays at the new store will take shape and are awaiting the much talked about massive shoe department planned here.

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