



■ These are a few of her favorite things, below: Victorian silver and enamel scent bottles, her mother's golden heart pendant, the Edwardian watch she wore at her wedding and some of her earlier designs – mabe pearl earrings and brooch, cross and pearl flower brooch and cobweb rings.

Kelis Wong learns about the jewelry business from very determined businesswoman

Her jewelry business is literally going down but it's a good sign. "Moving down means you're moving up in the retail world," said Tayma Page Allies, a Britain-born designer who has had a shop on the second floor of Prince's Building in Central for 12 years.

That changes this weekend, when her relocated shop opens its doors alongside some of the first-tier jewelers in the city. It's timely, given her silver jubilee in the trade.

For the pieces she bestows upon women are all about exclusivity and longevity. Apart from culturally-rich names like Dim Sum, Hong Kong Skyscraper and Mahjong, Page Allies also injects shimmer into her designs with gemstones sporting exotic colors, mounted by local goldsmiths.

"If you are my age and wear your grandmother's jewels, you will look like a grandmother. That's why a lot of women want jewelry that have a more contemporary look," the 58-year-old said.

Page Allies' love for colorful jewelry comes from her international upbringing, marked by living by the sea. Her father Jonathan worked for the NCR Corporation installing cash machines. His job required the family to travel with him to Malta, Trinidad in Cuba and Lagos in Nigeria.

Her mother Louise, although a housewife,

had a creative soul. "My mother was the classic 1950s housewife. She could sew, paint, cook, do dinner party – she could do everything. She started a successful bridal business in her 50s."

She also left her daughter a collection of gems, such as a beautiful aquamarine cocktail ring that she would wear with a long patio dress when hosting English garden parties.

After finishing university, Page Allies found a job as an English teacher in Britain and Nigeria. Her first career lasted only four years, but she saved enough to put herself through postgraduate school, and majored in language education and psychology.

"It took me a long time before I could say I am a jewelry designer rather than a teacher. I still feel at heart that I am teaching because I am always explaining about gemstones, reading and researching a lot," she said.

The British expat relocated to Hong Kong in 1985 and worked for a conference company. She was sent to Beijing, where a blue-eyed blonde like her was an unusual sight back then, to compile the first telephone directory of foreign businesses there.

The experience was nerve-racking. "I had to go and knock on stranger's doors in hotels and say to people: 'Excuse me, who are you? And who do you work for?' It was quite scary,"

Two years later, her boss requested Page Allies go back to Britain but she decided to stay because she loved living in Hong Kong.

She quit her job and – with only a return ticket, one navy blazer, a suitcase – she ventured into jewelry. She started with a HK\$10,000 bank overdraft, a sketch of three stackable cabochon ruby and sapphire rings and two orders from friends. This was how she started the business 25 years ago.

She now counts businesswomen and celebrities among her clients. Some are buying for the beauty, but also increasingly, as a legacy or as an investment.

Rare and high-quality gemstones, such as rubellites, paraiba tourmalines and aquamarines, can sometimes be more expensive than diamonds, she said.

"The mining, manufacturing and distribution of diamonds is a very organized and guarded market, trading mostly through De Beers. If there are too many diamonds flooding the market, the price gets too low, they will bring the release back," she said.

"Colored gemstones have no organizers so it's all about supply and demand. And many mines are located in difficult countries – like Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Iraq.

"That's why rare colored gemstones are more like a wild card."



■ Snapshots from Page-Allies' album include, from top: graduating from the University of Leicester in 1979, left; family time with mother Louise, father Jonathan and sister Elise in Nigeria and Trinidad; and her 50th birthday bash on The Peak.



EXHIBITION STARTS TODAY

FRI 5TH – SUN 7TH JUNE 2015 | 11AM - 7PM AT THE LANDMARK

Tian & Di Room, 7/F, Landmark Mandarin Oriental Hotel, 15 Queen's Road Central, The Landmark, Central, Hong Kong

A CULTURAL NEW ISLAND NEIGHBOURHOOD
4 MINUTES* FROM CANARY WHARF.
WAREHOUSE-INSPIRED APARTMENTS,
METICULOUSLY DESIGNED BOTH INSIDE
AND OUT.

- Underground station is 2 minutes* away with access to the Jubilee Line and DLR. 4 minutes* from Canary Wharf.
- Private residents' club with heated outdoor pool, spa, cinema, gym & residents' lounge.
- A blend of lush, green landscaping and vibrant cultural quarter.
- First retailer secured "The Grocer" providing local produce including a delicatessen, coffee shop and wine bar.

PRICES FROM £325,000*

Contact: Mandy Wong
-852 2846 5782
mandy.wong@ap.jll.com



6/F, THREE PACIFIC PLACE,
1 QUEEN'S ROAD EAST, HONG KONG
TEL: +852 3799 0999
FAX: +852 3798 1028
LICENCE NO. C-029468

*Prices and details correct at the time of going to press. Working times and travel times are approximate. Source: walk.com and www.11.gov.hk. Please be aware that the property details are intended to give a general indication and should be used as a guide only. The developer reserves the right to alter these details at any time. The contents herein shall not form part of a contract or be representative of a contract. Readers are advised to make their own enquiries to verify such information. Our sales representatives for overseas properties work exclusively in relation to properties outside Hong Kong and are not therefore licensed under the Estate Agents Ordinance to deal with Hong Kong properties.

ECOWORLD
CREATING TOMORROW & BEYOND

BALLYMORE

A JOINT DEVELOPMENT