

VANITY FAIR

SEPTEMBER 2020

On Jewellery

*Poised
AND
Principled*

MEET ROYAL
BALLET STAR

*Quest for
the Quirky*

THE OBSESSION WITH
RARIFIED SOURCES

EXCLUSIVE

A Peek Inside
Jessica McCormack's
Heirloom Chest

Francesca HAYWARD

Photographs by
LIZ COLLINS

Raw Emotion

JACQUELINE RABUN'S
SCULPTURAL ART

PLUS!

Elizabeth Gage,
Celeste, Hannah Martin,
High Jewellery's
Kaleidoscopic Allure

ALSO... The Age of Peril
for Coral & Pearls



Loud and PROUD

SARAH ROYCE-GREENSILL is back with a bang, rounding up the great trends of 2020. First up: big, bold and beautiful

During times of uncertainty, hemlines plummet and lipstick sales skyrocket. The jewellery world's reaction to the current state of affairs is to go bigger, bolder and ballsier than ever. Designers are moving away from the barely-there pavé diamonds that have dominated for so long, and towards more substantial pieces that make an impact.

"My clients are editing down and want to invest in very special pieces. They want to find that bold, noticeable statement piece that will become their signature," says **Brent Neale**, whose new *Splash* collection of gemstone-studded clam shells have cartoonishly bulbous silhouettes.

Diane Kordas, a designer known for her knife-sharp pavé pieces, this year released *Animal Kingdom* rings that blanket the fingers in glossy rose gold, adorned with an animal of the wearer's choice. "Shifting away from a previous inclination towards daintier layering, I wanted utterly modern statement pieces," she explains. "The rings symbolise shield-like protection; like armour adorning the hands."

In these hyper-connected times, the desire to own something unique and meaningful has never been stronger. "People have had enough of wearing the same jewellery as everyone else—there is a return to a real

appreciation of quality and thoughtfulness," explains **Theo Fennell**, a long-time proponent of the power of a single statement jewel over a collection of tiny trinkets. "People with style and a creative mind want something beautifully crafted and original: a piece they're emotionally involved in, rather than a host of baubles."

Bolder shapes allow more room for expression—and designers aren't afraid to share what's on their mind. Whether it's "I Heart Boys" or "OFG" (zero f***s given), Los Angeles-based brand **Established** makes a literal statement in pieces imbued with a '90s nostalgia.

Retrouvai is renowned for gobstopper-style rings that combine hardstones and ribbed yellow gold, while lauded American jeweller **David Webb**'s weighty cuffs and domed cocktail rings, so popular in the 1960s, are appreciated by a new generation of jewellery lovers.

Just one of David Webb's bejewelled rings outdazzles an infinite number of stacking pieces, while on the neck, it's less about an artfully curated assortment of delicate pendants, and more of a pile-it-high mishmash of chains, charms and beads that together make one hot #neckmess. The chunkier the chains, the better: look to **Lauren Rubinski**, **Deborah Pagani**, **Ippolita** and

Pomellato for pieces at a variety of price points. British jeweller **Pragnell's** Cuban chains come in three gauges: choose the heaviest rose gold variety for the most modern take on this '90s staple.

Weightier jewels carry a heftier price tag and it's no coincidence that the return to larger forms coincides with a move towards buying less and buying better.

Italian house **Vhernier** is the go-to for design cognoscenti who value innovative design over flashy bling. Its voluminous new rose gold and titanium *Trottola* ring is statuesque yet sensuous; a balance perfected in the Milan atelier.

Whether it's down to discerning spend or a desire to rally against the chaos with accessories that pack a punch, today's high-end jewellery is unapologetic in its individuality. Fine, fun and fierce: three f-words we can all get behind.



1. Established Zero FG ring
2. Brent Neale Large Clam Shell ring
- 3, 4 & 5. David Webb Kunzite ring, Vienna ring and Kunzite Stud ring
6. Retrouvai Yin Yang ring
7. Vhernier Trottola ring
8. Diane Kordas Animal Kingdom rings
9. Pomellato Tango necklace
10. Lauren Rubinski Lucky Links bracelet
11. Pragnell Cuban bracelet

MAKE NEWTON (KORDAS RING)

Gilt TRIPS

Embrace the most covetable pieces in precious metal, chic designs and storied symbols

GOING FOR GOLD

Spandau Ballet called it: gold—in its purest, unadorned form—is something to sing about. In their bid to better the goldsmithing skills perfected thousands of years ago, today's jewellers are finding inventive ways to celebrate this precious metal.

Louis Vuitton's LV Volt collection sees the L and V of its logo interlinked as chains and knitted as mesh. A bandana-like necklace comprises over 1,400 elements, hand-stitched together for fabric-like fluidity. It took two years to develop **Fope's** new Panorama design: a web of smooth gold grains, which stretch and snap back with mind-boggling ease—the result of the house's patented Flex'it technology.

Almasika's Berceau ("cradle") range fuses



1. Louis Vuitton LV Volt collection
2. Fernando Jorge Flame earrings
3. Deborah Pagani Honey ring
4. Fope Panorama Flex'it bracelet
5. Alice Cicolini Goddess ring
6. Almasika Berceau ring

together glossy 18kt gold bands, and **Deborah Pagani's** Honey rings are like pure gold beehives.

Alice Cicolini's new gold Goddess rings are the canvas for Parisian artist Charlotte Gastaut's whimsical illustrations of Grecian deities, hand-engraved by Colombian goldsmith Juan Galan Bello. After experimenting with diamonds for

the past few seasons, **Fernando Jorge** has returned to the sensuality of naked gold in his latest collection, Flame, a blaze of golden embers that lick the fingers and gleam across molten earrings. "Plain gold jewellery is an essential part of a jewellery wardrobe," Jorge says. "Exploring the metal alone, without layering other materials, lays the design itself bare."

My Big Fat Gypsy Ring

In the 19th century, travellers would disguise their valuable gems by setting them flush into thick bands of gold. Today, "gypsy rings" are booming in popularity. **Brent Neale** spearheaded the trend, resetting stones into ultra-modern three-stone rings. The Gypsy is one of **Bear Brooksbank's** signature engagement ring styles while **Jessie Thomas's** plump, diamond-set rings take inspiration from her master goldsmith father's 1970s designs. Antique jewellery specialist **Hancocks** has been making gypsy rings since 1849; its new range gives old diamonds and coloured stones a fresh lease of life.

1. Jessie Thomas 2. Hancocks
3. Bear Brooksbank 4. Brent Neale



EYES Wide Open



Jewellery's talismanic properties have never been more desired. Ancient protective symbols, once worn as fun holiday trinkets, carry more weight as we look to our jewels to help ground and reassure us. The latest lucky charms are more precious than ever. The eye motif, believed to ward off the evil eye, appears in diamonds and gemstones at **Annoushka** (1), **Tabayer** (4), **Suzanne Kalan** (8) and **Messika**, and is rendered in enamel by **Diane Kordas** (5) and **Lito** (3). The Opening Eye ring by **Theo Fennell** (6) lets the wearer choose whether or not to reveal the hardstone eye hidden behind gold lids. The Hand of Hamsa also appears in many guises, from **Amrapoli** (7) to **Sydney Evan** (2), whose Luck and Protection earrings summarise what the world is craving today.



Chain Gang

There's no escaping the chain necklace this year, but there are plenty of less ubiquitous takes on the industrial-chic trend. **Jemma Wynne** (3) miniaturised the bestselling *Toujours* range into rings, where chunky chains wrap around coloured gemstones, and earrings, where they dangle with gems. Solid Siam gold chains by **Patcharavipa** (4) form rings and hoop earrings, sometimes adorned with one-of-a-kind gemstones, sometimes trailing a fringe of finer links. **Sophie Bille Brahe** (1) adds a luxurious touch to her chain earrings with pavé diamonds, while Milanese brand **Eéra** (2) supersedes each link, mixing neon and metallics with gold and diamonds for clients to snap together to their hearts' content.



SOFT AND SLINKY

Quite how a cowboy's lasso gave rise to one of the sexiest pieces in a jewellery box isn't clear, but the lariat is unashamedly sensual. Traditionally, lariats are long single strands looped around the neck, or pinched together at the sternum, leaving strands hanging against the décolletage. **Piaget's** new Possession lariat features a diamond-set slider to adjust the fit, while **Jade Trau's** brushed-gold chain lends an industrial feel. **Anita Ko's** 18ct rose gold lariat leaves a trail of marquise, oval and trillion-cut diamonds, and **Nikos Koulis** takes inspiration from nautical knots in his Feelings lariat, which sees gold snake chain and black enamel looped together through a geometric diamond fastener. Wear with a tuxedo or silk shirt—and little else.

1. Jade Trau Betty necklace
2. Piaget Possession sliding pendant
3. Nikos Koulis Feelings necklace
4. Anita Ko Seven Stone lariat

Venerable Beads

How to evoke immediate summer vibes? Fling on a coloured bead necklace.

Carolina Bucci's Forte Beads were inspired by bracelets she'd make with her sons on holiday; the precious hardstones can be combined with rondelles, letters and flowers in her signature Florentine Finish gold. **Diane Kordas** finishes rosaries of malachite, amethyst, turquoise and tiger's eye with diamond-pavé crosses, while L.A. jeweller **Jacquie Aiche** taps into the energy of gemstones in weighty beaded pieces. **Harwell Godfrey's** 32-inch strands of multicoloured beads can be finished with charms or medallions to create a personal piece that will outlive any tan.



1. Boodles
2. Nina Runsdorf
3. Jessica McCormack

Sautoir, So Good

The word itself evokes elegant insouciance. Reminiscent of flapper girls and Coco Chanel, modern sautoirs are best worn casually. **Jessica McCormack's** Paper Chain necklace lends itself perfectly to her jeans-and-a-tee approach to diamonds, while **Nina Runsdorf's** long string of brown briolette diamonds wears its preciousness lightly. Pearls are a staple in sautoirs, and **Boodles' Bellflower** necklace, in which they're interspersed with rose gold buds, is one of the prettiest around.



The UNDEFINED

Then there are the necklaces that defy categorisation. **Ara Vartanian** suspends a Colombian emerald from a ladder-like frame of black and white diamonds, and Greek jeweller **Theodoros** suspends 137 carats of old-cut diamonds from a geometric, staircase-like structure of carré-cut stones: neck adornment in a league of its own.

1. Theodoros flexible diamond necklace
2. Ara Vartanian necklace with emerald



1. Symbolic & Chase Viking torque
2. Annoushka Garden Party choker
3. Kamal Diamond Choker Torc
4. Cartier Juste un Clou necklace

Torque of the Town

One of the oldest necklace designs, torques closely wrap the throat in a rigid ring of metal. The British Museum boasts examples from the Iron Age, while antique jewellery specialist **Symbolic & Chase** offers a Viking torque comprising twisted strands of yellow gold. **Cartier's** Juste un Clou necklace is a modern-day take on a torque, and **Annoushka** pays homage to the popularity of the style in the 1970s and '80s with her Garden Party necklace, which sees a topiary-inspired pendant hanging from a springy gold hoop. Lebanese architect and jeweller **Dina Kamal** was interested in how these ancient neck rings affect a woman's posture, and therefore state of mind. Her custom-made, brushed gold Torc is set with pared-back emerald-cut diamonds and is precisely engineered to fit like a second skin.

SOURCES of Wonder

Cool modernity meets science and sustainability: this season's covetable new collections are ripe with the fruits of a tantalising sense of wanderlust

MINERAL ENGINEERING

We've long gone beyond the "big four" (diamonds, emeralds, rubies and sapphires)—and now semi-precious stones, including amethyst, aquamarine and spinel, and hardstones (lapis lazuli, turquoise et al), are commonplace in fine jewellery. So jewellers are seeking out weirder and even more wonderful minerals for their unique creations.

Yowah opals, tree opals and Paraiba tourmalines are just some of the stones to feature in **Nina Runsdorf's** new Tree of Life collection, while **Brooke Gregson** searches for the most aesthetically pleasing trapiche emeralds for her enamelled pendants. **Cartier** sourced luminous amazonite, a little-known Brazilian mineral, for its limited-edition Clash capsule collection, and **David Morris** has set diamonds into dumortierite. **Andrea Fohrman** trawls international gem fairs for chrysocolla, hematite, cobalto calcite and pietersite to turn into celestially inspired jewels. With sphene—also known as titanite—featuring in **Alice Cicolini's** latest work, and **Diane Kordas** championing howlite and larvikite, it's a reminder that jewellery is as much science as art—and there's always more to discover.



1. Diane Kordas 2. Brooke Gregson
3. Cartier 4 & 6. Andrea Fohrman
5. Nina Runsdorf 7. David Morris



1. Missy ear piece
2. Delphine ear cuffs

Ana Khouri's EARTH MANIFESTO

New York-based jeweller Ana Khouri has worked with Fairmined and recycled gold and responsibly sourced gemstones since she launched her brand in 2013. But her eco-credentials have garnered less attention than the avant-garde, sculptural designs that have seen her become a lauded member of the high jewellery community. The Brazilian native has revealed her Earth Manifesto, in which she shares the sustainable principles that guide her. "The planet is a gift—one that must be nurtured, protected and passed on," she writes. "Sustaining this gift involves a fundamental realignment of our relationship with it... each of us has a unique responsibility to change and the power to alter our future." Her multicoloured sapphire earrings and rainbow-hued Delphine ear cuffs demonstrate that sustainability and style can be the most blissful of bedfellows.

Enamel Magic

For the last decade, **Alice Cicolini** has celebrated the Indian art of meenakari enamelling in her covetable, contemporary jewellery. Working with one of the last master craftsmen in Jaipur, alongside London-based enamel "genius" Stanislav Reymer, Cicolini helps to preserve this ancient technique for a new generation. Her latest collection, High Sari, comprises seven one-of-a-kind rings, each designed around a rare gemstone—from dusky pink spinel to rich amber hessonite. Each stone is enveloped by a jacket of painstakingly patterned enamel: florals, geometric motifs or painterly marbling, with the artist's touch evident in every handcrafted millimetre.

"The collection is an homage to the expertise of Rta Kapur Chishti, one of India's foremost sari experts, who I was lucky enough to meet in Delhi; and also to the sari itself," says Cicolini. "The marble pieces are inspired by

the swirls of colour that adorned the insides of many of the books which surrounded me in my childhood. Stanislav has echoed the beauty of these patterned papers for me, using a new technique he has perfected."

Olivia Cummings, founder of **Cleopatra's Bling**, melds east and west in designs that evoke a delicious sense of wanderlust. She draws inspiration from the four corners of the globe, including India: her 22ct gold pinkie rings are hand-enamelled in Jaipur and depict

the lotus and arka flowers—symbolic motifs, realised with appropriate reverence.

Noor Fares' work is imbued with eastern spirituality. A keen believer in the power of yoga and meditation, her new Prisma collection taps into the healing offered by an alternative state of consciousness. Large, hand-faceted gemstones including lavender quartz, trapiche aquamarine and tourmaline provide a mesmerising play of light that transports the wearer to another realm.



1. Alice Cicolini High Sari Maheshwari Triple ring

2. Cleopatra's Bling Kamara ring

3. Noor Fares Twilight ring