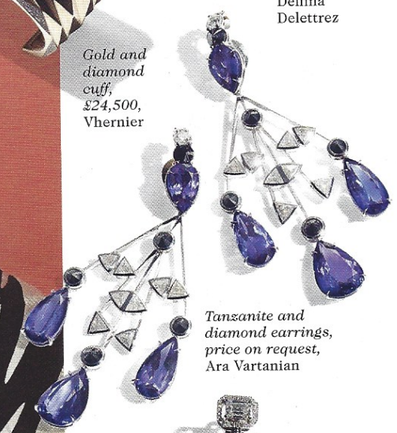
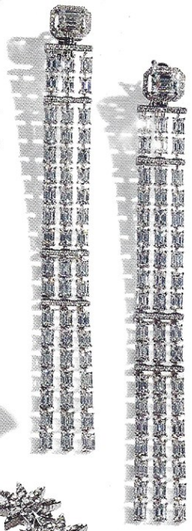
Diamond hoop earrings, £4,400, Patcharavipa

Pearl and diamond earring, £1,625, Delfina Delettrez

Gold and diamond cuff, £24,500, Vhernier

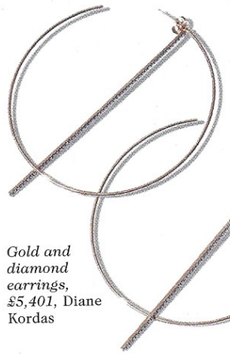


Tanzanite and diamond earrings, price on request, Ara Vartanian



Diamond earrings, price on request, Messika

White-gold and diamond cuff, £12,600, Tiffany



Gold and diamond earrings, £5,401, Diane Kordas

Gold and diamond ring, £3,950, Bee Goddess, *at Harrods*

What constitutes a classic jewel? Certainly, it isn't defined by its precious nature, nor by fashion; iconic pieces aren't ephemeral or created for a season, they endure. Every so often we are captivated by a design that is repeated time and again, reimagined for different eras and styles, worn by women of every age. Coco Chanel's Bijoux de Diamants collection was a dazzling inspiration for women during the Depression – a call to look up at the stars. "I wanted to cover women with constellations," she explained in 1932. And still she does – 86 years on. Meanwhile, Van Cleef & Arpels' Alhambra design, inspired by a four-leaf clover, was first unveiled for the new society of the 1960s: bohemian girls with a free-spirited attitude, who dressed in Ossie Clark, wanted a new type of jewel to wear day and night. There are moments for a show-stopper, but as Van Cleef & Arpels knew, a woman will always be searching for the faithful jewel that will never leave her. ■

BEN TOMS, MITCH PAYNE