



So how is yours different to other man-made alternatives out there?

The MiaDonna Diamond Hybrid® starts with a porous crystal core. We then infuse the core with crystallised carbon – aka diamond. Since it's made with diamond, its refractive index is closer to an earth-mined diamond than any other simulant. We are also able to get it to a D to F in colour, a VVS1 to VS2 in clarity and in larger sizes, up to 6.0 carats. Every stone is cut by hand, for quality that only one in 1000 earth-mined diamonds will ever achieve. Many other companies just sell cubic zirconium with hype and marketing. This is new and improved technology. **It's obviously been a huge success. Stars such as Britney Spears own them, and you've also been on *The Tyra Banks Show*. How does all that hype make you feel?**

This is going to sound ridiculous but none of that really means much to me in terms of what I'm trying to do. The really exciting coverage has been from those interested in the Greener Diamond.

Tell us about Greener Diamond.

This is the company I founded which works in tandem with MiaDonna to repair some of the damaged lives and land impacted by the unethical diamond industry. I have sponsored a boy in Liberia for years and his accounts of what was going on in his country inspired us to help. We also try to raise awareness of the impact of conflict diamonds on communities and the environment so consumers can

make informed choices. When women realise there are small African children involved, they understand why this has to stop. They love knowing the money spent on their jewellery is feeding back to those who need it most. **[N]**

See www.miadonna.com and www.thegreenerdiamond.org for details.

Anna-Mieke Anderson

Hastings-born Anna-Mieke, 32, based in Portland, Oregon, creates ethical diamonds that celebrities adore

How did you end up founding a jewellery company?

I went to work as a makeup artist in the States when I was 20. I met my American husband and when we got engaged, my father came over from Australia and asked me if I knew anything about where my engagement ring came from. I did some research and realised there was a good chance it was a blood diamond, considering the time and place it was bought.

Why man-made diamonds?

The thought that my ring could have helped fund war and been mined by African people in inhumane conditions was too much for me. I was haunted and took the ring off. Understandably my fiancé wasn't

overly impressed that I wasn't wearing it, so I tried to find an alternative. Problem was, there wasn't one. So I started researching how to make a diamond alternative that was not only ethical and environmentally friendly, but also beautiful (and affordable!). Thus MiaDonna & Co was born.