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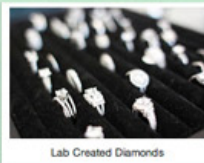
Anna-Meike Anderson- The Grass Roots of Green Diamonds

Welcome to the third sustainable jewelry digital storytelling review. There are many paths to creating a more sustainable world. Let this blog entry inspire your involvement toward building a better future for all!



Mia-Donna & Co.

I have to admit that if I would have known who I was calling when I called Mia-Donna Diamonds, I'd have been much more nervous. Luckily, Anna-Meike took my call and was really warm and generous with her time, though she has very little to spare these days. I learned a lot on that initial call with Anna-Meike, like, it is probably a good idea to have a storyboard draft ready to send to potential film participants. Especially those that grew up on on film sets.



Lab Created Diamonds

After our first phone contact, I sent her over a storyboard draft, which she approved and then I made arrangements to come to the Mia-Donna Headquarters in Beaverton to do our filming. Meanwhile, I started researching Anna-Meike a bit further and realized that she was the CEO of Mia-Donna Diamonds and the founder of *The Greener Diamond*, which is a humanitarian organization helping those affected by the blood diamond wars, to rebuild their communities and take back their lives.

Although I had interviewed other participants for the film, I was really nervous before working with Anna-Meike. After getting further information about her through my research, I realized that her company was quite well known and that she was not your typical local sustainable jeweler. Infact, Anna-Meike isn't a jeweler at all. She is a young, sophisticated Australian woman who got engaged a while back and when her Father asked her where she got her diamond engagement ring, she told him that her fiancé got it at a local jewelry store. Her Father persisted, which planted that first seed of wonder in her head.

Not long after the conversation with her father, Anna-Meike began tracking where her diamond engagement ring actually originated. As she got further into her research, she learned of the horrible realities behind the mining of diamonds in Africa and immediately took off her engagement ring. Feeling extremely guilty for being ignorant to the situation in Liberia, she decided to sponsor a child at a local orphanage, who's family was destroyed by the 'blood diamond' industry. After a year of receiving haunting letters from the boy she sponsored, Anna-Meike began researching diamond alternatives for herself and other women. She was dumbfounded, as she found no good alternative. She did, however, discover soon after, that lab grown gems and man made diamonds were a possibility.

With this new information, Anna-Meike vowed to put all of her time and energy into building a sustainable jewelry business. To this date, she has done that and a lot more. Not only is Anna-Meike the CEO of *Mia-Donna Diamonds*, but she also oversees both the headquarters in Beaverton, Oregon and the manufacturing studio in New York City. She is the founder of *The Greener Diamond*, a foundation that helps employ ex-soldiers in Liberia, to farm local food crops. This gets them out of the blood diamond business, by teaching them new ways of providing for their community, while also helping to grow local agriculture. The farm in Liberia employs many workers and provides the community with a positive alternative livelihood.

It was such a honor to meet Anna-Meike and learn how her Father's question, turned into a quest for a better world. Anna-Meike is dedicated to continuing on this journey to create positive change for communities affected by the diamond mining trade. She has also graciously offered me footage for my digital storytelling project from the farm in Liberia, for which I am incredibly grateful. I believe that this story is so very important and the footage from Liberia, is imperative to exploring the depths involved.

You can find out more about Anna-Meike by visiting:

www.miadonnadiamondblog.com
thegreenerdiamond.org/

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About Me

[Traci Cushnr](#)

I am a student at Prescott College, studying Art and Healing for Social Change. I am in love with hunting for and collecting vintage, worn and re-usable treasures to create one of a kind jewelry pieces. I also enjoy creating mixed metal, rustic chic jewelry with metal clay.

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