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Featuring: Chameleon rings and Mythology pendants and discs



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Lucia loves...





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Jewellery with a difference

Annoushka Ducas was the spirit behind Links of London. Way back in 1990 she had the bright idea of creating a line of small, charming but affordable silver pieces: spoons (I remember a delightful one with a little bird on the end of the handle), cufflinks, charm bracelets. Exactly the sort of thing that most of us are endlessly looking for to give as christening or birthday presents.

From those beginnings she and her husband, John Ayton, built Links of London, which they sold a few years ago. Is she resting on her laurels? Of course not. For the past two years she has been working away at a line of her own jewellery, called simply Annoushka.

Yet again, she has hit upon some great ideas. I love the concept behind the line that she calls Chameleon. It offers the buyer the chance to design an opulent cocktail ring of their own, what Annoushka calls demi-couture. There are 23 different stones to choose from (London blue topaz, amethyst, chrysoprase, rose quartz, to name a few),



Above, Chameleon cocktail rings. Top, gold from Annoushka

eight different diamond mounts and a choice of yellow or white gold, with 1,500 permutations.

The stones come in two signature shapes — the octagon and the oval (which looks very dramatic set crossways across the finger). But there are a few other shapes as well. Prices range from £800 to £2,700, depending on the stone, and the ring will be delivered to you in 14 working days.

Chaps — look no farther if you're looking for something for your nearest and dearest.

You can buy the rest of the collection online at annoushka-jewellery.com. But if you're after Chameleon, you'll have to go to the store, which opens at Harvey Nichols, London SW1, on Wednesday, July 29, when the website also goes live.

There are lots of other treats, though. Eclipse rings consist of 18-carat white or yellow gold and micropave diamonds in black, brown, yellow, pink and white. They can be bought singly (from £150) then added to through the years to make a gorgeous stacking collection.

Sheila Pickles, meanwhile, was the energy and spirit behind the beautiful perfumery of Penhaligon's. She has also been taken with the world of jewellery, but with an entirely different focus. She has created objetsdartjewellery.com, an online shop, selling jewellery that has a story, an artistic reference behind each and every piece.

It was "born out of my passionate love of

great art, the artists and their work", she says. "My inspiration comes from the great masters, the painters, sculptors, writers and their heroines, the cultural icons through the ages."

On the website, click on the artist of your choice (Monet, Vermeer, or architect (Gaudi) or writer (Shakespeare)) and up will come the images of the pieces that they've inspired. You may find a glittering bangle of silver set with semi-precious stones, its curving lines evoking Gaudi's idiosyncratic architecture. Click on Shakespeare's *Othello* and you'll find a Desdemona pendant — the black pearl for *Othello*, the white one for *Desdemona* and the green stone for *jealousy*.

Some of the jewels were commissioned by museums. Other ideas came from architecture, gardens, nature and the elements, or from the designer's imagination.

It all seems to me extraordinarily well priced. Gorgeous amethyst and pearl earrings, for instance, from the Cheapside Hoard (exact replicas of earrings found in a hoard of Elizabethan and Jacobean jewellery found by workmen in Cheapside in 1912) are £72, the Desdemona pendant is £58.50, Vermeer earrings (pearl, citrine and lapis lazuli) are also £58.50.

So two very different enterprises — but each, it seems to me, with something special to offer. They are well worth a look.

Lucia van der Post