



LAPIDARY JOURNAL[®] JEWELRY ARTIST

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Trends

By Deborah Yonick,
jewelry style expert



Cynthia Renée
Phoenix Earrings
Kingman turquoise, plume agate, coral,
freshwater pearls, 18K white gold
PHOTO: COURTESY CYNTHIA RENEE



Original Designs Inc.
Love is Contagious Sun Pendant
Diamonds, gold
PHOTO: COURTESY ORIGINAL DESIGNS INC.

POWER OF PRESENCE

Imbued with memories and emotions, jewelry is marker of human experience

WHILE JEWELRY MAY NOT BE essential to our sustenance, it has been an essential part of our identity since humans first roamed the planet. More than just a fashion accessory, jewelry is an intimate keepsake, a part of our personal armor.

Jewelry can stir up memories of people, places, and events, providing moments of mindfulness, comfort, and joy. Giving and wearing jewelry has been, throughout time and cultures, an important part of the human experience.

With so much uncertainty surrounding this new and dynamic situation we're all living through with Covid-19, buying jewelry may not be top of mind for folks — unless it contains hand sanitizer, transforms into a face mask, or comes with an ample supply of toilet paper.

But during a time when we cannot be together to celebrate a milestone or moment like we have in the past, jewelry is an even more compelling marker of our human condition.

PSYCHE OF CELEBRATION

Commemorating special occasions has been a part of who we are as humans since at least several millennia B.C., when ancient Egyptians celebrated things like the annual harvest with festivals. Research shows that celebrating even the smallest things is good for body, mind, and soul.

Page Sargisson, a Brooklyn, New York-based jewelry artist, says many customers are buying themselves nice jewelry for their birthday. "Since they can't have a party or anything,

they want something special to remember this time.”

In fact, Sargisson says she has never had as much communication through Instagram messenger as she has had recently, a platform on which she maintains a strong following. “I’ve had tons of people reach out to me with pictures that they had taken of a piece of mine that they hadn’t bought but now want it — a pair of diamond earrings or a ring they had seen at a store.”

Sargisson says people who’ve put off things are no longer waiting, telling of a woman who contacted her wanting a new band to replace her engagement ring, which catches on everything. “She said she has been married for 20 years, and it took a pandemic for her to finally deal with it and email me.”

In times of crisis, research shows that people will engage in comfort-seeking experiences that bring them a sense of control, like buying things. Consumer market analysts like Pam Danziger, president of Unity Marketing, say that long term people may be predisposed to make choices based on their underlying sense of identity — running the gamut from choosing environmentally conscious brands (a growing trend) to luxury purchases significant to their self-esteem.

TRENDS ON TRACK

Trends forecasters, pre-Covid, called 2020 the year of wearable fashion. Styles you can wear day in and day out were predicted key in fashion. Relaxed shapes, fluid drapes, comfortable fabrics, and a casual dress code — talk about spot on.

In jewelry, popular silhouettes are elongated, sometimes voluminous, with negative space to keep it light and easy to layer. Trendsetting designs offer flexibility and adaptability — think stretch bands and bracelets and flex hoops, as well as items with special clasps and links to connect and re-imagine designs.

Stephanie Gottlieb

I Am Bracelets and Slider Bangles String, diamonds, 14K yellow gold
PHOTO: STEPHANIE GOTTLIEB

Favorite colors channel power and peace. Remember, Pantone’s Color of the Year is Classic Blue, hue of sea and sky that keeps us both grounded and reaching for new heights. Multi-color designs in particular have been trending, with rainbow patterns just what the doctor ordered to make us feel happy.

Many trends reports have identified celestial motifs like the sun, moon, and stars, particularly the North Star and constellations, resonating with folks looking for guidance in an uncertain world. No surprise that Sargisson finds her constellation charms bestsellers.

The use of iconic motifs like crosses, hearts, and other symbols of hope and love remain a significant

trend. Some designers and brands are doing things specific to the times. The NY manufacturer Original Design Inc., for example, has been working closely with its retail partners to develop jewelry that celebrates love, hope, and the frontline heroes working to keep us sustained through this crisis. The Love is Contagious Collection is designed to inspire people to spread love, awareness, and gratitude to a hero. ODI will donate a portion of the sales to the Covid-19 relief organization of the retailer’s choice.

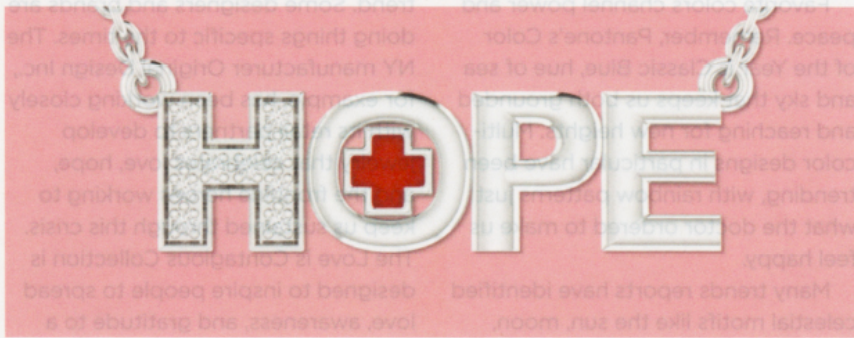


Page Sargisson

Ring
Ruby, sapphire, 18K yellow gold
PHOTO: COURTESY PAGE SARGISSON



Trends



Original Designs Inc.

Spread Hope Necklace
Sterling silver, diamonds, enamel

PHOTO: COURTESY ORIGINAL DESIGNS INC.



Cynthia Renée

Gem Dealer and Designer Cynthia Renée holding an exceptionally large sapphire crystal in Ratnapura, Sri Lanka.

PHOTO: COURTESY CYNTHIA RENÉE



Stephanie Gottlieb

Stretch Rainbow Gem Bracelets
Diamonds, assorted gemstones, 14K gold

PHOTO: STEPHANIE GOTTLIEB

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JEWELRY TALKS

Designers who understand the mindfulness of jewelry help their customers tell their own personal stories. Take for instance the I Am bracelet collection, launched last fall by Stephanie Gottlieb, a NYC web-based jeweler and designer.

Each bracelet features a 0.09-carat diamond bezel-set with clasp in 14K yellow gold on nylon in colors that represent positive affirmations in a simple piece that easily mixes with other bracelet styles. I Am Compassionate (purple), Brave (yellow), Strong (red), Fearless (blue). And Gottlieb engages her #SGTribe on social media to share their own stories.

Gifted at telling compelling stories about the gems she works with

and the jewelry she creates, custom jewelry artist Cynthia Marcusson of Cynthia Renée in Cary, North Carolina, tapped into the times with her own corona tale.

"It dawned on me," she shared mid March in an e-newsletter, "I have an earring design called Corona. In Spanish, corona means crown. I created a whole marketing story about the Corona Collection, how the small coral beads surround the [Coral Sea turquoise] gem drop like a crown. Sometimes even the best stories have to be changed. We will all have a 'corona story.' Part of our collective corona stories will be how we become aware of the changes we want to bring to our lives." The first for her was the name of the collection, which



Page Sargisson
 Constellation Charms
 10K gold, diamonds, peridot
 PHOTO: COURTESY PAGE SARGISSON



Original Designs Inc.
 Love is Contagious Star Ring
 Diamonds, sterling silver
 PHOTO: COURTESY ORIGINAL DESIGNS INC.



Cynthia Renée
 Wedding Ring Set
 Platinum, 8.50ct diamond eternity band,
 11.50ct blue sapphire
 PHOTO: COURTESY CYNTHIA RENEE

is now Phoenix, as in rising from the ashes, and she's donating a portion of the sales to Global Giving.

Marcusson's ode to Earth Day video in April was especially poignant as it relates to the power of presence jewelry brings to one's life. She tells what her company slogan, "Inherit the Earth," means to her: "Inheriting the power, beauty, history, magnificence, and energy of the earth by wearing her gems and metals." She muses how wearing a gem is as "close to touching eternity" as you can get and underscores how the wearer adds her own story to the piece.

"Going through life our jewelry becomes imbued with our memories, feelings and experiences," she tells. "Many of us then pass [our jewelry] on to light the way for those who come after. It's a continuum, a chained melody, we're all connected, and these jewels carry the hopes and dreams of the wearers down the chain like messages in a bottle."

Jewelry's ability to be that for us, especially during our most challenging times, is timeless.

DEBORAH YONICK has been writing about jewelry and fashion trends for more than 25 years for trade and consumer publications and online, and has loved both for much longer! With roots in New York, she presently lives and works in York, PA.

Stephanie Gottlieb
 I Am Bracelets and Slider Bangles
 String, diamonds, 14K yellow gold
 PHOTO: STEPHANIE GOTTLIEB

