

# Fewer carats, more emotion

*London is host to a series of eclectic exhibitions featuring precious jewels. By Carol Woolton*

Something extraordinary happened in central London recently: a host of celebrities, from Sting to Sharon Osbourne, opened their jewellery boxes to the public. The occasion was an exhibition at Browns South Molton Street called *My most treasured...*

And the objects ranged from a purely sentimental piece lent by Paul Smith to earrings from Trudie Styler that required a security guard. As a group, says Joan Burstein of Browns, the jewels showed that "it's what a piece means to someone that makes it priceless to the owner". Jewellery is not just about carats, but emotion.

"I think there has been a loss of connection between the person who buys jewellery and the people who create it," says Harry Fane, owner of Obsidian, a private gallery in London. It is this disconnect that a spate of recent exhibitions, including the one at Browns, have been attempting to redress. Last week, for example, Fane began a series of exhi-

bitions, called *At the Table*, to introduce the work of lesser-known jewellers to his clients. "I don't mind if it's plastic or diamonds, as long as they are nice things to have," he says. "I'm saying I like the stuff and I believe in what I'm showing."

First to be invited to sit at Fane's table was US designer Peggy Guinness, who specialises in flamboyant "day" jewellery. Prices range from £900 to £10,000 and a percentage of sales will go to the Kartika Soekarno Foundation, which works to improve the prospects of Indonesian children. She will be followed in September by British-born William Westead, whose pink spinel Lotus rings, emerald drops on chains, old cut stones and beads are sourced in Jaipur.

"It's elegant to meet with

clients and talk about the jewellery," Guinness says. "In New York the big shoppers don't have time - they get everything delivered."

The up close and personal element of next month's Tiffany & Co travelling exhibition of 25 fine jewellery pieces made by the architect Frank Gehry will be a glimpse of the first-ever Gehry building in England, a wooden and glass pavilion designed for the Serpentine Gallery. Gehry's architecture resonates in his jewels (priced from £6,500); his clunky wooden drops, fluid chicken-wire earrings wrapped around uncut diamonds or "crinkly" silver cuffs.

Van Cleef & Arpels is also getting more intimate, bringing its

new L'Atlantide collection as well as vintage pieces worn by Maria Callas and Jacqueline Onassis to show alongside a group of Old Master paintings at the London shop Partridge Fine Art. It may be an antiques store, specialising in English and Continental furniture from 1720-1840, but this month they've showcased the most exciting jewellery on Bond Street, including (besides Van Cleef) the exceptional designs of the late jeweller Andrew Grima, Britain's grandfather of contemporary jewellery.

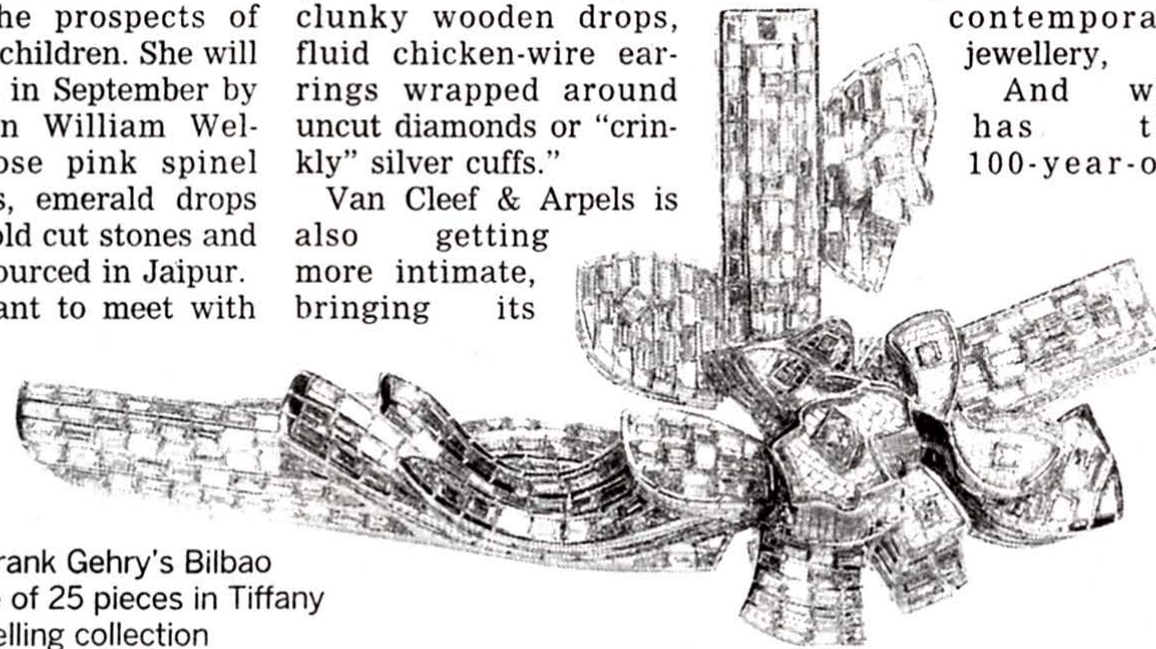
And why has the 100-year-old

Partridge's suddenly discovered diamonds? "They are all precious things that appeal to the same people," says Mark Law, chairman of Partridge.

It's a sentiment shared by New York-based Prince Dimitri of Yugoslavia, who this month also brought 30 one-of-a-kind pieces boasting important stones richly layered with cultural references to the antique dealer. Prices range from \$80,000 to \$250,000, for pieces such as an African-inspired necklace and a Paisley brooch encrusted with rubies, garnets, emeralds and dia-

monds. "All beautiful things relate," Prince Dimitri says - especially when they touch.

*Carol Woolton is jewellery editor of Vogue*



**Personal** Frank Gehry's Bilbao brooch, one of 25 pieces in Tiffany & Co's travelling collection

## Details

Frank Gehry's exhibition is at Tiffany & Co, 25 Old Bond Street, London, July 1-31 and The Wonder Room, Selfridges, August 1-31  
[www.harryfane.com](http://www.harryfane.com)  
[www.vancleef-arpels.com](http://www.vancleef-arpels.com)  
[www.partridgefineart.com](http://www.partridgefineart.com)  
 Prince Dimitri of Yugoslavia, 5 East 57th Street, New York tel: +1 646 747 2526

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