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## Independent Designers Get Creative With Capsule Collections



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Watches & Jewelry

*I write about modern and antique fine jewelry.*



Michelle Fantaci's Button lariat hanging down the back of a model. MICHELLE FANTACI

Independent Designer often look to different forms of art, references from antiquity and other mediums to create innovative and intriguing jewelry collections. Here, three designers have introduced capsule collection or expanded upon already existing designs, based on everything from utilitarian elements historical symbolism fashion fastenings and mosaic tiles:

Samantha Jackson of **Heavenly Vices** recently launched a brand new capsule line based on her original collection of one-of-a-kind and re-imagined Victorian Love Tokens which she aptly named 'Love Stories' The new group picks up on the motifs and the sentiments of the authentic love tokens with a spin: they are locks that can be worn alone as a necklace or along with her pendants or any meaningful pieces in your jewelry collection. She has created continuity for her customers by calling this new capsule 'Lock Stories'. When launching her collection in 2017, Jackson had already amassed 2000 rare coins. As she explained in an article ([here](#)) "Love tokens are actual coins in different denominations in sterling silver, 22 karat gold and copper which were ground down on one side and engraved to customer's specifications to give as a token of friendship, familial or romantic love." Her passion for hunting down the most beautifully executed engraved initials, heartfelt, playful and surprising sayings, mottoes and rebus coins led her to frame them in exclusive bezels and halos or hang them from sparkly bales or both, creating a new life and turning them into one-of-a-kind pendants.

She then cast some of the more popular motifs and saying into gold so she could re-produce them with different bezels for the women who loved the originals that were sold. These have solid plain backs and were no longer coins but could be engraved with names, dates, and other personal significant messages for the wearer.



Heavenly Vice's Lock Stories Lockes ALAIN SIMIC

Jackson has now carried that concept to the locks, featuring some of the most recognizable talismans and symbols from the Victorian era. The result is a three-sided combination lock with each side representing the same sentiment in a different language - the Roman alphabet, Victorian symbols, and Braille (which was also created during the Victorian era.)



Revealing the secret messages on each side allows the lock to be opened - Luck written in the Roman ... [+] ALAIN SIMIC



The secret messages scrambled secure the lock on the wearer's neck. ALAIN SIMIC

Says Jackson , “I've wanted to add something fresh to my collection for a long time, but it was important that it made sense in the context of my love token collection so it took a while to come up with something that connected thematically. Love tokens were a communication vehicle in an era when open expression of feelings was frowned upon, and I liked the idea of having a secret message in the locks – the four sections of the lock rotate and only open when the words/ theme are lined up.” She continues, “I decided on using Braille as the third side as it was invented in the Victorian era, and really loved the idea of creating something blind people could connect with, as jewelry is traditionally a visual medium and this is so tactile and fun. No one should be deprived of the joy of jewelry!”



Revealing the secret messages on each side allows the lock to be opened - Love written in the Roman ...

[+] ALAIN SIMIC



The secret messages scrambled secure the lock on the wearer's neck. ALAIN SIMIC

Her initial capsule collection revolves around three themes which Jackson notes are universal themes that will resonate with a wide demographic: luck, love and being a mother. Future additions to the collection include additional themes, a vertical version of the lock and an option to create something completely custom.

**Michelle Fantaci** is another designer who has added a capsule to her collection. Hers is called “Threads” and it features 20 pieces that are inspired by the details of fashion which is in keeping with a trend toward fabric inspired jewelry. Fantaci’s is a bit different than what we are seeing in fringe, embroidery, mesh. She has created highly wearable pendants, lariats and rings which are inspired by “methods of connecting components in clothing. “This group focuses on elements such as stitches, buttons and buttonholes, cords and eyelets, the basic elements of these mechanics starting with needle and thread.



Michelle Fantaci Button single strand necklace CHAD JOHNSON AND THE COMMERCIAL ART LAB

To achieve the look she desired, “cast pieces are used in conjunction with chainmail as toggle closures, and a pivot hinge developed in order to preserve the integrity of the component pieces of a bracelet.” Although these types of fastenings are traditionally static in clothing, Fantaci has found a way to imbue her pieces with movement and fluidity in certain pieces. The buttons act as toggles together with the buttonholes in lariats. “In other pieces, I wanted this functionality but had to attach the buttons to the buttonholes so that the piece as a whole worked better. The button threader earrings have needles on the chains that can thread through the holes in the buttons and shorten the chains as well as add extra security.”



Michelle Fantaci Shirt Cuff Bracelet CHAD JOHNSON AND THE COMMERCIAL ART LAB

Fantaci's pieces are designed in 14K gold. All of the pieces relate and merchandise well together and can be worn in several combinations with each other and can be easily mixed with other pieces in an existing jewelry wardrobe.



Michelle Fantaci Stiche Heart CHAD JOHNSON AND THE COMMERCIAL ART LAB

Fantaci add, “The button and thread theme is universal. I think it will appeal to a broad demographic. Many of us have grandmothers or other family members who kept a sewing kit or those Danish cookie tins full of buttons, that these everyday objects have potential for sentimentality or nostalgia.” This is truly appealing in a time when we are looking for pieces that feel familiar in uncertainty yet offer a different take on jewelry.



Michelle Fantaci Ruby Button Large Signet CHAD JOHNSON AND THE COMMERCIAL ART LAB

**Berlinger** has expanded the Diamond Mosaic Collection™ Unlike the other designers mentioned in this article, it started out as a ring capsule, designer Michelle Berlinger evolved the rings to include pendants and earrings. Her entire collection gives a nod to antique jewelry from the Victorian through Art Deco time periods.



Berlinger group of The Diamond Mosaic Collection™ BERLINGER

The Diamond Mosaic Collection™ was originally based originally on the geometric shapes and diamond cuts of the Art Deco period but consumer demand and the creativity that goes into each limited edition or one-of-a-kind piece has revealed a designer whose style is distinctive to her brand. Outer shapes such as octagons, shields, round and elongated ovals are intricately created by assembling like a puzzle of different fancy cuts of marquise, baguettes, princess and trillions into a work dazzling diamond art that allude to tile work and the most graphic of architectural facades.



Berlinger Diamond Mosaic Collection™ Kite Shaped Pendant BERLINGER



Berlinger Emerald shaped center multiple cuts The Diamond Mosaic Collection™ ring BERLINGER

Each of the mosaic patterns is designed around an antique or modern cut center diamond. “It’s more about the compositions than the bling that traditionally is associated with multiple diamond pieces. These are designed with a more subdued gracefulness and juxtaposes the graphic with the feminine, dimensional in look yet lightweight on the neck, ears or fingers.”



Berlinger Diamond Mosaic Collection™ round pendant BERLINGER