

Annoushka

Art at Annoushka

Throughout 2011 Annoushka Ducas will collaborate with creative forces at the forefront of London's contemporary art scene to produce a unique exhibition series displaying cutting-edge art works adorned with her spectacular fine jewellery.

Annoushka Ducas will stage three exhibitions displaying original art works integrating jewels and semi-precious stones from her eponymous fine jewellery collection over the course of 2011. *Art At Annoushka*, as the series of three shows is known, will be staged at Annoushka's 41 Cadogan Gardens, London flagship and include an ambitious range of daringly beautiful embellished mixed media pieces which Annoushka has conceived with three gifted London-based artists.

Precious, the inaugural, month-long exhibit, will commence in June 2011 and display 16 "exploded art works" by Bouke de Vries. He has created these sculptures from reclaimed broken ceramics. Arriving on the aspects of nature and spirituality which inform the pieces and, adorning them with butterfly and dragonfly pendants, garnets, pearls as well as drusy stone, proved an organic, free-form process for Bouke and Annoushka. "There was no brief," concedes Annoushka. "As we started to work together, I discovered there were a lot of elements present in Annoushka's work that are also present in mine, such as butterfly and dragonfly motifs - so it was a good fit," adds Bouke.



Love-a-duck by Bouke de Vries

However, the aim of *Precious* - along with the two further exhibits which will debut in early September and mid October 2011 - is to "display jewellery in a totally different way and remove it from its traditional milieu - from the glass case in the boutique and then, from the glass case into somebody's jewellery box," explains Annoushka. "I've always felt that it is such a shame that jewellery is put away

into a cupboard and then comes out on special occasions, when, actually, because of the detail, the thought and the time that it takes to make a piece of jewellery, it should be displayed and seen, yet - not just as a static, decorative accessory - but as art.”

Born in Utrecht, the Netherlands, Bouke de Vries obtained degrees in two dimensional design and textile design at the Design Academy Eindhoven and at Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, respectively. After working in fashion - for Zandra Rhodes, milliner Stephen Jones and John Galiano - he studied ceramics conservation and restoration at West Dean College. Restoring ceramics for the National Trust and Grayson Perry, the pottery artist who received the 2003 Turner Prize, he began to create sculpture from broken fragments of porcelain. Kay Saatchi, the curator and collector, selected three of Bouke’s sculptures to be displayed at *murmurART*. In July 2009 an exhibition at Selfridges Department Store showcased new art produced by “rising stars, including Bouke’s work. Recently, Roland Mouret commissioned Bouke to make a sculpture of “exploding birds” which now hangs above the mantle at Maison Mouret, his Carlos Place, Mayfair boutique.

Annoushka discovered Bouke’s work, along with that of the two artists with whom she will collaborate throughout the year, with the help of Samir Ceric and Zoe Knight. This husband-and-wife team are founders of Debut Contemporary. A ‘business academy for the art world,’ Debut Contemporary develops the careers of up and coming painters, photographers, sculptors, video, performance and alternative artists. “It was a natural partnership,” reflects Annoushka of working with Ceric and Knight, whose early careers were guided by John Ayton, her husband, as part of Walpole Brands of Tomorrow. Ayton, director of Walpole, formed Brands of Tomorrow to mentor the British luxury sector’s best emerging talent. Debut Contemporary also places art work in off-site locations and so Annoushka’s Cadogan Gardens flagship was the natural space for the three 2011 shows. “It is beautifully designed and has the scale for displaying art,” explains Ceric. “It has that gallery feel that not all shops actually do.” Reflects Annoushka: “I always knew that I wanted to use the boutique as a gallery space and designed it to display the work of artists.”

In May 2010, Annoushka launched her first artistic collaboration - Manuela. This art jewellery collection was jointly conceived by Annoushka and the sculptor Manuela Zervudachi. The limited edition 18 carat gold and diamond micro pavé jewels are based the organic forms of Manuela’s sculpture and were exhibited alongside the artist’s maquettes and sketches at Annoushka’s flagship.

And so *Art At Annoushka* fuels the creative spirit of collaboration which has defined Annoushka’s sought-after fine jewellery brand since its launch in July 2009. It will also further the aim of Annoushka to add a sense of self- expression to the world of fine jewellery. A limited edition, numbered, jewel will be created by Annoushka and her 2011 artistic collaborators to commemorate the three exhibitions. An 18 carat rose gold ‘Apple Core’ amulet, embellished with cognac and brown diamonds is the piece Annoushka and Bouke De Vries have jointly conceived for *Precious*.

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