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## The new ring guards: the rise in popularity of antique rings with symbolic meaning

Late 18th and early 19th century sentimental rings with poignant meanings, secret messages and motifs evoking love and friendship are favourites among the new generation of antique jewellery...

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13 June 2015



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By Beth Bernstein

For the new generation of antique jewellery collectors, rings have become what charm bracelets dangling with significant motifs were to our mothers and grandmothers - the new cherished talismans and conversation starters, which offer an intimate glimpse into the wearer's life, beliefs and passions.

[Read more about collecting antique jewellery here \(http://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/collecting-antique-jewellery-defining-styles-typified-eras/\)](http://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/collecting-antique-jewellery-defining-styles-typified-eras/)

Used as visual celebrations of the most memorable moments and emotional meaning/) connections in a woman's life, rings commemorate birth, betrothal, friendship and mourning. In recent years, antique rings (18th and early 19th century styles) with symbolic or sentimental meaning have become one of the most collectible antique jewellery categories, coveted by both established connoisseurs and millennial enthusiasts alike.

According to Greg Kwiat, CEO of [Fred Leighton](http://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/brand/fred-leighton/) (<http://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/brand/fred-leighton/>), younger collectors gravitate mostly towards Victorian rings: "There is a great deal of symbolism and romanticism in the designs, which is also very modern and timeless." It is not surprising then that antique rings are attracting new audiences at a time when authenticity and the story behind the jewellery piece have become two of the main attributes.

[Read more about victorian vintage rings here](http://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/victorian-engagement-rings-antique-vintage/) (<http://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/victorian-engagement-rings-antique-vintage/>)

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In March 2015, the allure of antique rings influenced sales at Manhattan's Antique Pier Show, where a treasure trove of rare, museum-quality rings could be found. London-based Pat Novissimo of Lowther Antiques has become a go-to dealer for novice and seasoned collectors when exhibiting at US shows. "The tales behind various periods provides instant identification and leads to a conversation that will be passed, along with the ring, through generations." Novissimo explains.

In addition to the US and UK's small but well-stocked dealers, stores such as Fred Leighton and FD-Gallery in Manhattan, as well as [Bentley & Skinner](http://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/brand/bentley-skinner/) (<http://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/brand/bentley-skinner/>) and Sandra Cronan in London, provide the magic and history of period and provenance. "One of our top selling styles for new generation clients are double gem-set heart rings entwined with a bow or a knot, emblematic of two hearts tied together as one," says Omar Vaja of Bentley & Skinner.

Collectors with set budgets have become regulars at Erica Weiner. Weiner, the namesake of the two Manhattan stores, and partner Lindsay Salmon says, "We cater to a younger clientele who want the unique personality that antique engagement rings possess. If the history of a certain ring resonates, they relate on a deeply emotional level."



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Scouring shops, shows and markets is not the only way to get your antique ring fix. Surfing the web, checking out the many online auctions, and visiting sites such as Ruby Lane and [1stdibs](#) (<http://www.thejewelleryeditor.com/jewellery/retailer/1stdibs/>) is another way of scoring your antique rings. Shopping online and social media tend to go hand in hand for the millennial generation of collectors.

Danielle Miele, a certified gemologist whose blog Gem Gossip is going into its seventh year, has reached 35,000 followers on Instagram, where her well-stacked fingers and hashtag #showmeyourrings has earned a cult following. She has contributed to generating a community of emerging and established “ringophiles”. These women from around the globe are eager for the meaning of myriad motifs, and share photos, desires, stories and knowledge. Once a woman slips a piece of history on her finger, it starts to take on her own narrative and evokes an energy that makes her feel it was meant solely for her.

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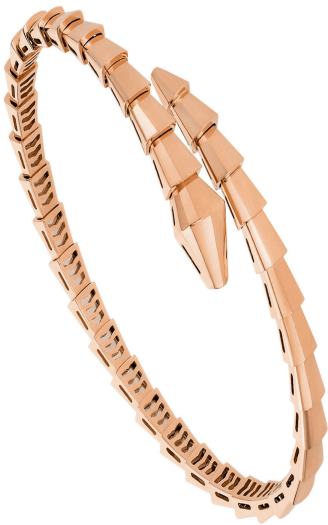
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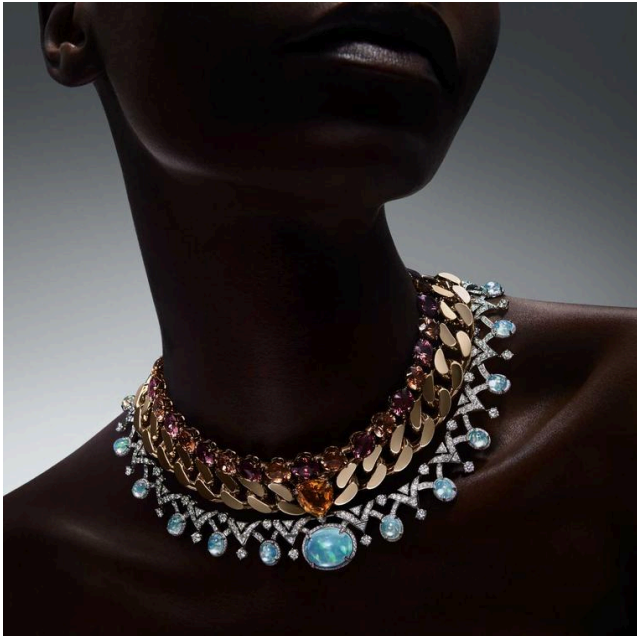


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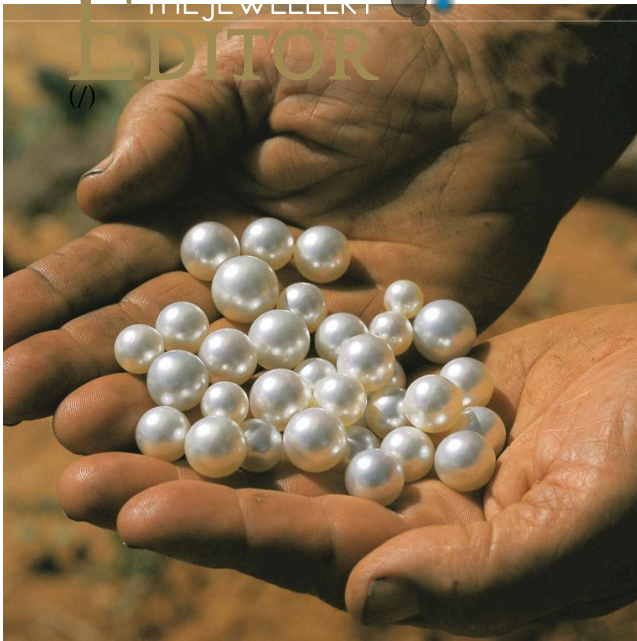


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