

The London Magazine

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100 YEARS OF
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Daniel Mays
One of London's best
actors hits the big time

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Circle of life

FROM COLOURED JEWELS TO ANTIQUE CUTS, THE RING IS CONSTANTLY EVOLVING IN DESIGN AND WEAR, WRITES TALLULAH RUSHAYA

A beacon of beauty, the ring continues to endure as a timeless jewellery piece. Its perfect circle is attributed to the Ancient Egyptians. Multifaceted, rings possess a myriad meanings across cultures whether for matrimony, family, friendship or daily wear. From the simplicity of iron and gold bands from the Romans to the splendour of Renaissance craftsmanship and sentimental nature of Victorian trinkets, today's jewellers can draw on history when embedding their own style.

For Nada Ghazal, the personalisation of rings goes beyond their design, but how her clients arrange their rings. "Initially, we saw a trend for wearing a single pinkie ring, which then evolved into stacking pinkie and ring-finger rings together," says the Beirut-born jeweller, whose sculptural brushed-gold collection can be found in Liberty (nadaghazal.com; libertylondon.com). Her intricate designs, with many featuring her signature pavé diamond details, have drawn clients to specifically request rings for stack styling, "sometimes with two, three, or even four together as special engagement rings".

As they create rings as "companions", Tania and Dima Nawbar, sisters and creative directors of L'Atelier Nawbar (lateliernawbar.com), love seeing how wearers mix and match their statement pieces. With designs for every finger, they're guided by specific shapes and lengths, with common L'Atelier Nawbar themes including the cross motif.

Inspired by Art Deco, designer Gee Woods (geewoods.com) has noticed more matching

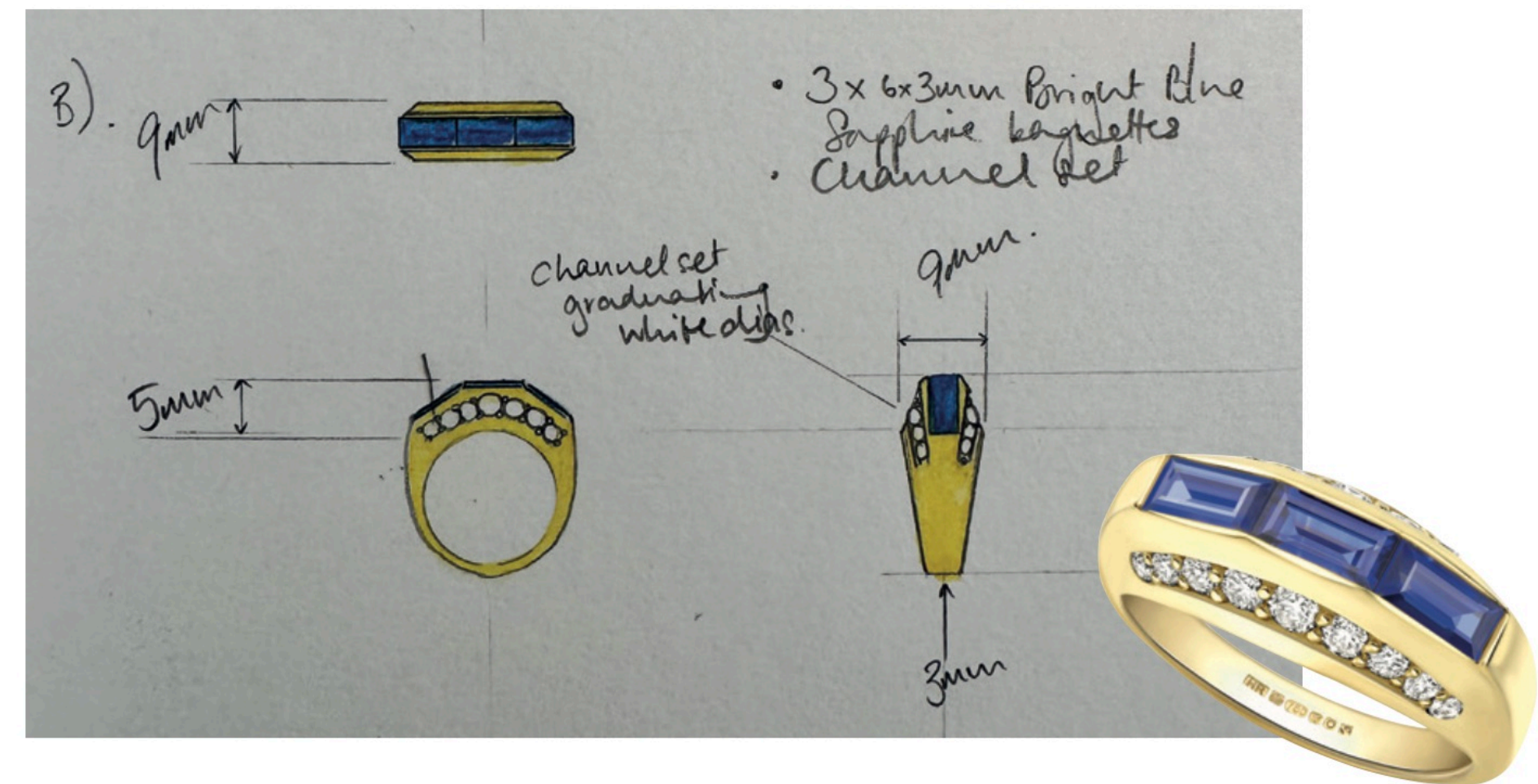


IN THE LOOP

Opposite: The model wears an 18kt yellow gold Door of Healing ring set with 0.55ct champagne diamonds and 0.10ct pink sapphires, £6,436, a hand-brushed 18kt yellow gold Arch ring £2,090, and a hand-brushed 18kt yellow gold Arch ring set with 0.90ct pink diamonds, £2,265 all by Nada Ghazal. **Above:** a 18kt yellow gold double-band Cassian engagement ring set with a brilliant-cut antique 3.55ct grey fancy diamond £27,000, Rachel Boston



ROCK BANDS Clockwise from left: 14kt yellow gold and platinum Wave trilogy ring set with lab-grown diamonds, £8,985, Lylie; 9kt white gold Walker ring set with emeralds, £625, Westnedge London; 18kt yellow gold Beryl ring set with a 1.64ct teal sapphire and brilliant-cut diamonds, Gee Woods; 14kt recycled yellow gold Atahensic Twin ring with an aquamarine and a peach zircon, £2,790, Lebrusan Studio; platinum Elysian ring with lab-grown diamonds, £9,765, Lylie



DIVORCE RINGS ARE A GIRL'S BEST FRIEND

Amelia Milne discovers why remodelled rings can be empowering and positive

sentimental pieces, sometimes inherited from family with new jewellery. “Worn all together”, her clients are seeking to tell a story with their collections, beyond wedding bands and engagement rings. Gee further forecasts that simpler styles paired with an “eye-catching coloured gemstone” will become popular, with spinels in particular “having a moment”.

Also inspired by the glamour of Art Deco, Rachel Boston’s (rachelboston.co.uk) latest collection Antique & Reclaimed shines bright. With jewellery fans becoming increasingly interested in the provenance of stones, the pieces are set with diamonds hand-sourced by Rachel. Translating unworn diamonds into wearable pieces, the range of rings melds old-world charm with the characteristics of Rachel’s designs.

While clients of Lylie (lylies.com), founded by Eliza Walter, are often drawn to antique cut-diamonds (examples include old-European, old-mine and cushion cut styles), she has observed a shift towards sculptural designs which embody personal expression. Eliza cites



the brand’s Aphrodite solitaire band, Wave Trilogy ring, soon-to-launch Beyla design and Florence ring as examples.

Edward Westnedge (westnedge.london.co.uk) foresees clients adapting classic styles for a modern era, from varying chain rings, including plain ones and those adorned with bespoke pendants or charms for a personal touch. When it comes to engagement rings, he thinks “emerald cut will have a bit of a moment”, and while the popularity of the solitaire ring is eternal, he anticipates unique interpretations with side stones, and the use of half-moon diamonds, trapezoids, kites and his personal favourite, epaulettes.

Arabel Lebrusan (lebrusanstudio.com) has also seen the adaptation of engagement rings, with clients widening the margins of traditional rings and bands. Moving towards symbolic “commitment jewels”, it broadens wearers’ interpretations. A chunky and contemporary twist on the popular toi-et-moi style, Arabel recommends its new Atahensic Twins ring.



Garrard’s design and development director Claire Scott reveals that their 1735 oval cluster first commissioned by Prince Albert in 1840, “still rules above all else” for women’s bespoke jewellery (garrard.com). Noting a rise in requests for three stones with “fancy shapes in the centre”, Claire notes that Garrard’s something-blue sapphires flush-set on the inside of engagement ring bands are a popular additional detail with special meaning. “We’ve seen a few bespoke requests recently for men’s engagement rings – which we haven’t seen for a while – all diamond set or with a single stone in a heavy band,” says Claire.

As men continue to wear more rings, Edward Westnedge is incorporating coloured stones into designs. Whether a new take on a signet style with a diamond or tsavorite or an emerald eternity ring, it’s all about a modern interpretation for Edward, who made bespoke bands for himself and his mother. ■

THE ULTIMATE RESET Above clockwise: From sketches to final product, a look at how Hattie Rickards transforms engagement bands; Susie Bradley’s symbolic ‘divorce rings’; Philippa Herbert customises rings to solidify moving on; Emily Ratajkowski changed her toi-et-moi engagement ring



Divorce rings are growing in popularity and I should know, because I’m getting divorced. Once separated from your spouse, it no longer feels right to wear your old rings, dazzling like ghosts from the past. But you don’t want to say goodbye to these expensive heirlooms altogether.

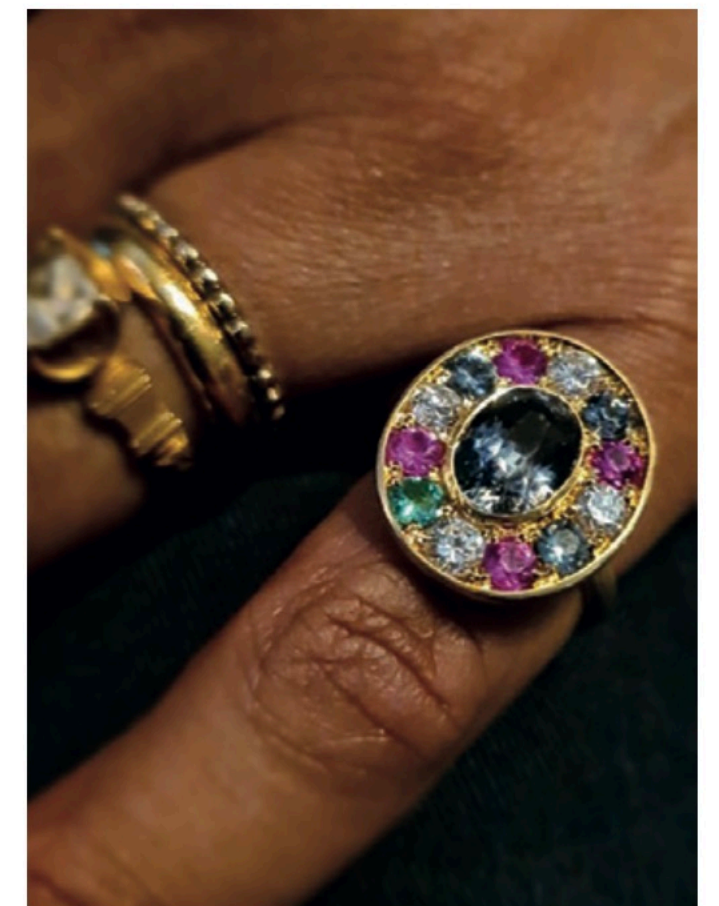
Hollywood, naturally, came up with the answer. The model-actress Emily Ratajkowski repurposed her toi-et-moi engagement ring into two divorce rings, saying: “I don’t think a woman should be stripped of her diamonds just because she’s losing a man.”



The process requires the sympathy of a skilled jeweller. Sally Herbert of the Battersea Power Station-based Philippa Herbert (philippaherbert.co.uk) says they remodel engagement rings into “power rings”. The new rings “empower women”, reclaiming a negative experience into a positive one after you’ve “been through the wringer!”.

Divorce rings shouldn’t look like engagement rings; they should be bigger and better than their former selves. The Philippa Herbert sapphire-and-diamond Starburst Phoebe ring, at £3,265, is an uplifting example.

Hattie Rickards makes beautiful Art Deco-style rings (hattierickards.com). When her clients are “at a point where they feel mentally strong enough”, she is able to give a once-loved stone “new life”. It’s a cathartic and transformative experience. Prices start at £5,000. Jeweller Susie Bradley (susiebradley.com) has an organic approach, often



melting “buttery 18kt gold” male and female wedding rings into “something brand new and symbolic”, with prices for these keepsakes starting at £750.

As to the question of which finger? There’s no right or wrong finger to wear your divorce ring on. If your new ring gives you renewed hope, then you can wear it whichever way you like. ■