



PRETTY LITTLE THINGS



FROM TALISMAN STACKING RINGS TO TOTEM PENDANTS
CRAFTED WITH SACRED SHAPES AND INLAID WITH PRECIOUS
GEMS, EACH SCENE-STEALING PIECE BY FINE JEWELRY DESIGNER
LAUREN HARWELL GODFREY IS RICH WITH MEANING.

By Keri Bridgwater

Tricia Turner Studio



Lauren Harwell Godfrey



"I'm kind of a stone hoarder,



so if I see something I like, even if I don't have a plan for it, I will buy it and hold it until I find something to do with it. The stone often inspires the work," says Lauren Harwell Godfrey, the art-director-turned-designer behind her self-titled fine jewelry line, Harwell Godfrey. After debuting at Paris Fashion Week in 2017, just four short years and several collections later, Harwell Godfrey's exquisite creations have been touted as "heirlooms in the making" by the likes of *Vogue*.

Channeling an inherent eye for design into a successful ad agency career that spanned more than 15 years, she swapped creating campaigns for culinary school, followed by an externship at SPQR and stage at fabled Bar Tartine. After she did not quite find her voice in the food world, crafting sculptural fashion pieces for friends from leather and crystal later served as the creative outlet that charted Harwell Godfrey's course as a jewelry designer. "The idea of making jewelry engaged me, but fine jewelry especially appealed because of the beautiful materials you get to use. So, I reached out to an old friend, Randi Molofsky (co-founder of brand development agency For Future Reference), who took me under her wing. And the rest is history," she says.

Lauded for maximalist style and bold color language, sacred geometry and African textile patterns are Harwell Godfrey signatures. Anchored by totem pendants and eye-catching earrings inlaid with emeralds and black onyx and studded with diamonds, the Cleopatra's Vault collection is an elegant nod to the queen of ancient Egypt. Perhaps the ultimate symbol of feminine empowerment, crescent moon medallions delicately finished with mother-of-pearl and turquoise, among other gems, from the Valley of the Moon collection were inspired by the birth of Harwell Godfrey's son and subsequent November 2016 supermoon.

"For me, fine jewelry has a specific point of view that's a little more effeminate and lovely. I think my work can reflect that, but it's definitely got a bit more of an edge to it." As a woman of color, Harwell Godfrey also notes that while her designs often draw influence from the African diaspora, she always puts her own interpretation on mystical motifs she finds empowering. "At the start, I looked around to see what was going on. What was being designed and what didn't exist yet. I become my own muse sometimes, too, and design things

I would want, and then I find that other people come to want them as well," she says.

Working with small gem dealers who ethically source stones from around the world, lately Harwell Godfrey has been favoring tanzanite (only found in northern Tanzania) along with diamonds from ethical mines in Botswana and Muzo emeralds from a sustainable mine in Colombia. "I spend a lot of time at the Tucson gem fair and like looking for stones there and talking to people. It's interesting and part of what I love about this world — the constant learning," she shares.

Harwell Godfrey's first diamond-only collection, Stardust, launched in April as an homage to the "night sky and roaring '20s", but when pressed on her current go-to, she says the Charity Heart pendants have been on heavy rotation.

"This collection is a favorite right now because it's doing something good, and they are all just so pretty," she says of the four heart-shaped talismans that come in rainbow gemstone, black onyx, malachite and chalcedony (and sales of which have raised more than \$174,000 combined for the Human Rights Campaign, NAACP, World Central Kitchen and Futures Without Violence). Another fan? Vice President Kamala Harris, who wore the black onyx heart to the D.C. Pride parade in June.

With ideas and designs constantly in the works, Harwell Godfrey says her latest and greatest include two capsules that debuted at the COUTURE fine jewelry trade show in August. A "very HG" maximalist collection of rings, bracelets, pendants, necklaces and earrings featuring beadwork and faceted stones alongside a gender-neutral collection in 22-karat gold with no gemstones and a more minimalist aesthetic.

Also new is the Harwell Godfrey atelier, which opens this month in Corte Madera. Primarily serving as a workspace, it will also be open to clientele by appointment. She tapped Bay Area designer Noz Nazawa and artist Caroline Lizarraga, celebrated for creating eclectic interiors and custom wall treatments, to conceptualize and craft this dazzling new "Harwell Godfrey universe" where special events and trunk shows will be the hottest ticket in town.

The Harwell Godfrey Atelier is coming to 211 Corte Madera Avenue, Corte Madera.

Tricia Turner Studio



The designer modeling her own jewelry.