

# *christina debs*



# *Lebanese jeweller Christina Debs reaches back in time for inspiration from her ancestors the Phoenicians*

By Rachael Taylor

The Phoenicians were an adventurous bunch with a wanderlust that led them to trade throughout the Mediterranean, returning home with an enriched world view and a keen interest in adornment; not a bad line to descend from if you happen to be an aspiring jeweller.

The legendary tales of her forebears seized the imagination of **Lebanese jeweller Christina Debs**, who studied jewellery design in Paris before opening her own boutique in Beirut. This first love affair with history led her to wider studies of our species' obsession with adornment throughout the ages and fostered a deep appreciation of jewellery history's brightest lights. Debs singles out René Lalique, Pierre Sterlé and Carl Fabergé as jewellers nonpareil.

"What inspires me is the rich history of civilisation, and jewellery's ability to give us an understanding of ancient cultures," says Debs. "My studies have provided me with a rich and open mind. I have learned from, and soaked in, my cultural history, which has improved my creativity and has given free rein to my imagination."

As well as the little matter of the alphabet, the Phoenicians were also responsible for the creation of many techniques still used in jewellery today, including granulation, filigree and cloisonné.

They also had a passion for brightly coloured gemstones - mostly agate, lapis lazuli, carnelian and jasper - and it is an infatuation that similarly drives Debs. Her bold use of colour is especially potent in the Hard Candy collection, which clashes jade with ruby, and celebrates lesser-known kaleidoscopic gems such as mango agate, amazonite and pink jade.

"I love working with stones because they give so much colour and life to my pieces," says Debs. "We use more than 45 different coloured gemstones, all natural, and we always try to find new stones that we do not usually see in fine jewellery."

The Phoenicians have also left their mark on one of Debs' edgier collections, Skin Tattoo, inspired by the culture's love of body art. The gold and diamond-set rings have been designed to mimic finger tattoos when worn. It is a technique most effective when realised in striking black diamonds, and certainly less painful than the real thing.

While Christina Debs' inspirations are studiously rooted in history, her jewels are contemporary with loud pops of colour and fun detailing -see the Initials collection for your own personalised fine jewels. This is one designer perfectly qualified to bring us the best of the old and the new,



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Christina Debs ring set with a conch shell and white diamonds, topped with a gem-set pink gold ladybird, from the Mother Nature collection.



Christina Debs earrings with mango agate and brown diamonds in pink gold, from the Hard Candy collection.



Christina Debs earrings in rose gold with chrysoprase and diamonds, from the Hard Candy collection.



Christina Debs ring with hematite and silver diamonds in pink gold from the Initials collection, which can be personalised with the letter of your choice.



Christina Debs earrings with brown diamonds in rose gold, from the Deer collection.



Christina Debs pearl earrings with brown diamonds in rose gold, from the Candy Pop collection.



Christina Debs earrings with red agate and brown diamonds in rose gold, from the Sunshine collection.



Christina Debs earrings with sapphires and white diamonds in pink gold, from the Crystalline collection.



Christina Debs ring with black diamonds in white gold, from the Skin Tattoo collection.



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