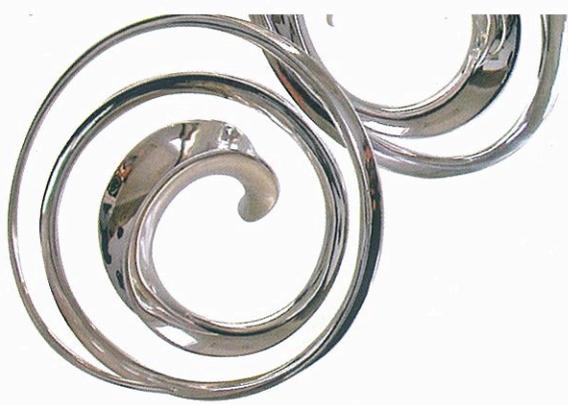


Clockwise from left: diamond necklaces from Aaron Basha; Snow-In-Spring jewellery from Scott Kay; bracelets by Barry Kieselstein Cord; silver earrings by Michael Good; Mikado Hollywood bracelet by Tamara Comolli; rings by Dizzler.



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give the appearance of bigger diamonds.

Lauren Kulchinsky of Mayfair diamonds and fine jewelry, which has locations in Commack and East Hampton, New York, is conscious of the change in spending patterns but is not altering her buying plan.

"Our goal is to hold true to what we stand for. We will continue to purchase from our core collections that sell well such as Antonini, Christian Tse and Stephen Webster. We will not suddenly start stocking sterling silver because our customer would not understand that move."

Kulchinsky admits that some consumers who might have made a \$20,000 purchase are now spending \$10,000 on a gift instead. "We have to buy smarter. We can't buy on passion alone because the consumer is more cautious."

**European success stories**

"Fresh, new and exciting jewellery is what motivates consumers to buy regardless of price," says Wolfgang Möckel. As the owner of KWM Exclusives, an

agent for some key European brands in the US including Tamara Comolli, Krieger and Dizzler by Bucherer, Möckel has his finger very much on the pulse of the US business.

"When the economy softens, it's especially important for designers and brands to keep their name out in the public through advertising and public relations."

"Consumers appear more prudent in their spending. But those buying high-end merchandise still demand quality and uniqueness," continues Möckel. He says that the new pieces have done especially well, including Krieger's larger, colourful Hornemann collection of rings and Dizzler's playful rings with moving diamonds.

Despite the weaker economy, he says Tamara Comolli is making inroads into the US market. Several Neiman Marcus

stores, among other prominent retailers, have bought the German designer's collection for the autumn, which has an average retail price between \$4,000 and \$15,000.

"People are beginning to recognise Tamara's name and style. She also advertises, which is especially important in the American market," Möckel points out.

Robert Lee Morris showed his prolific style presenting eight new collections for the second half of the year with a special focus on the self-purchaser. "Our new designs target the \$1,500 to \$4,000 retail price range. It's a magic price point," says the New York-based designer.

New items range from fashionable designs such as lariats, oversized hoops and colourful beads to sterling silver