

Amanda Pinson Jewelry

1110 Market St.
Chattanooga, Tenn.

A former discount shopping center, Warehouse Row has evolved into the hottest space in Chattanooga for indie designers to showcase their goods. After the buildings opened three years ago, jewelry retailer Amanda Pinson relocated her eponymous store from the Baggage Claim Building in Southside to her current minimalist downtown space. The chic Southern owner prides herself on creating personal relationships with her customers and offering one-on-one touches such as free stylist services: “We try to work with women on coloring, hair length, earring size,” Pinson says. “You can show people infinite ways to wear jewelry.” —*Kristin Luna*

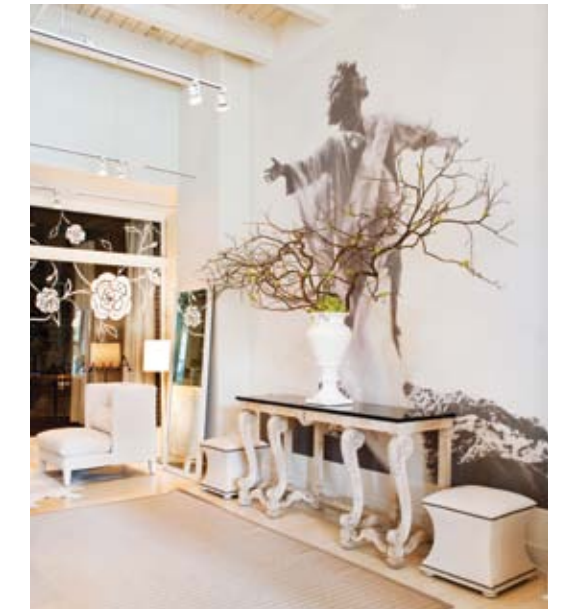


FEMININE TOUCHES

In 1995, she started designing jewelry out of her Nashville home; five years later, she and her husband moved to an industrial loft in downtown Chattanooga. “It’s been a real kick to have something so different happen,” says Pinson, who administered bar exams in Nashville before becoming a stay-at-home mom and later a bench jeweler. The stark space is punctuated by inviting sitting areas designed by Rodney Simmons, owner of neighboring home décor shop Revival, and hand-painted flowers on the facade. “The store is an expression of a side of me that, with five boys, I could never express: clean, white, and ultra-feminine,” she laughs. The oversize drawing of Greta Garbo on the wall—which came from an image in a Cecil Beaton book, a gift from her grandmother—describes the “leap of faith” she took to start her business.

THE STONE AGE

“My first love is colored stones. I’m really drawn to aquamarines and tourmalines,” Pinson says. The store stocks a bevy



of gems from H.Stern, Irene Neuwirth, and several Italian vendors. While Pinson personally shies away from earrings and never wears silver (“I am *not* fond of white metal.... I think 90 percent of people look better in warm metals”), she sports a mash-up of stones and gold on her neck and hands: an inexpensive statement necklace, Cartier bangles, a chunky Elizabeth Locke ring. “Women my age should mix faux with real. You can get a little set-looking if you’re not careful,” she says.

DODO DEALER

One of Pinson’s most popular lines is DoDo, a Pomellato-designed component collection composed predominantly of gold and gemstone creature charms priced from \$195 to \$1,485. On DoDo’s website (dodo.it), customers can design bracelets and take an elaborate quiz to learn the animal they most identify with. Pinson herself is a crab—“shy and introverted,” she

sighs, which she seems to find accurate despite her warm, friendly demeanor. The best part of DoDo, she says, is the wide net it casts: “The demographic is all over the map. We do things for children; we do things for 80-year-old women. It’s just a really fun line.”

HER GRAND FINALE

An art student during college, Pinson realizes how lucky she was to discover her true passion later in life. “I’m just so pleased to be able to do something I love during my second act,” she says. As for her third act... “That’s a good question. I don’t know yet—perhaps I’ll return to painting. Whatever it is, it will definitely be something solitary.” Spoken like a true crab. ■

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