

COCKPIT ARTS 3 YEARS

Ornella Iannuzzi
- Jeweller



Ornella Iannuzzi is an award-winning fine art jeweller who creates mainly one-of-a-kind sculptural pieces, often designed around a particular gemstone. In 2015 she made *Professional Jeweller's* Hot 100 for the second year running and won the prestigious Goldsmiths' Company Gold Award for The Uprising ring. A regular at Goldsmiths' Fair, she has recently launched a prêt-à-porter diffusion line of jewellery, which she sells through select stockists including Fortnum & Mason.

Ornella arrived at Cockpit Arts in 2007 straight from graduating with a Masters Degree in Jewellery from the Royal College of Art. She had won the Cockpit Arts/Bellhouse Foundation Award, which gave her a year's free studio space in Cockpit's Deptford incubator. "I started from absolutely nothing. I didn't have the basis to set up a business, so for me that award was invaluable," she says.

Free business support was included in the award, allowing Ornella to tap into workshops and one-to-one coaching with the Business Development Team. "[When I arrived at Cockpit] I had no idea how to run a business," she says. "At college it was all about art and experimentation. When you start a business the reality hits you." She worked closely with Abigail Branagan, then Business Development Manager at Cockpit, on all aspects of running a business, including press, marketing and communications which she admits she had no idea about. She found the biannual Open Studios especially good in the early days for selling her work and attracting new clients. And it was at Cockpit Arts that she was introduced to business mentor Nigel Rust, a manufacturing specialist who continues to advise her today.

Ornella works with amazing focus and intensity. She carves her sculptural forms in wax, using a powerful microscope to work in intricate detail. Each bespoke piece takes a minimum of 30 hours to make; she estimates that the award-winning 'Uprising' ring took about 200 hours. She needs total peace in order to concentrate, and admits that in the end, she found the larger, shared studio spaces offered at Cockpit Arts Deptford didn't suit her style of working; that, and the fact she needed to be much closer to the Hatton Garden jewellery quarter in central London, where she gets her hallmarking, setting, plating and lasering done, as well as buying findings and tools.

She moved out of her Deptford studio in 2012 and for a couple of years worked from home. Although she found this much more convenient (no more commuting from Streatham to Deptford each day), it proved impossible to separate work and play. "I just ended up constantly working," she laughs, "and that was no good either."



She currently rents a single unit in Panther House, a building housing artists studios just off Grays Inn Road. Sadly the building is currently up for redevelopment, so she once again finds herself looking for a suitable workspace.

Despite this setback, Ornella remains singularly focussed on her work, constantly setting herself new design challenges. She has her sights set on the global jewellery market, taking her designs to Paris Fashion Week and Couture Las Vegas as part of British Fashion Council's Rock Vault. With the launch of her prêt-à-porter collections, her jewellery now appeals to a much wider audience, particularly as she recently secured Amazon.co.uk as a stockist. Ornella Iannuzzi is a fine jewellery brand that is definitely going places.

www.ornella-iannuzzi.com

Photos: www.aluncallender.com