



Meadowlark designer duo Claire Hammon and Greg Fromont unveil the magic behind their sought-after jewellery

Whether it's the glint of sapphire in their opulent Venus Ring or the intricate carvings of their playful Proteger Hoops; each Meadowlark piece offers a unique playfulness and thoughtful craftsmanship that sets them apart in the jewellery world.

With hard work and dedication to craft, Meadowlark's made-to-order jewellery has risen to international attention from the humble origins of their New Zealand-based atelier. From global superstar Rihanna to Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern; everybody wants a piece - literally - from one of their coveted collections. But while brushes with fame will certainly shine a spotlight, it's designer-duo Claire Hammon and Greg Fromont's commitment to authenticity and understated cool that's made them one of the most sought-after brands in recent years.

With designs inspired by their formative years in the 90s, the husband-and-wife pair behind Meadowlark have managed to create something truly unique, yet timeless, in a world where fast fashion and mass production reign supreme. With 'meaningful design' in mind, the Meadowlark collection is predominately made to order in their own in house atelier. Each piece is created using luxurious high-grade metals, precious and semi-precious gemstones.

Though you'll readily find delicate engagement rings and classic pearl earrings in their collections, a Meadowlark piece always comes with an edge of originality. With atypical design motifs such as daggers, snakes, eagles and fangs, they continue to subvert any expectations of straight-up 'traditional' fine jewellery. Put simply, they create "tiny artworks to be worn."

As they set their sights on Australia with a showcase at the Discover New pop-up in Melbourne's fashion capital of Chadstone, Claire and Greg speak to the core ethos and inspiration behind their inspiring brand.

When did your interest in jewellery and design begin?

Claire: I can't remember a time when I didn't love jewellery, I remember making beads as a kid and selling them at primary school. I am not a jeweller but I did a silversmith course as a teenager and also commissioned a few pieces of jewellery I designed when I was in my twenties.

I had a fashion business and then moved into graphic design before meeting Greg. We decided to combine our skills to make a little collection. We never envisioned having such a great business or a big team.

Greg: My path to jewellery started when I was a kid really. I had a few hobbies, influenced by my brothers who were becoming engineers. Later when I was in high school, skills from technical drawing and printmaking all fed into what I do now. When I started art school I thought I was going to be a printmaker, but I was more obsessed with the print block than the print, and that made an easy transition into making jewellery.

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discover new



You established Meadowlark in 2006 - was it a big leap of faith to create your own brand?

Claire: Starting Meadowlark came very naturally to me, we started it with no real expectations, we just wanted to make cool things.

Greg: In the early days we were just doing what we loved to do, whilst working part-time elsewhere. It was perseverance that has made it into a business, which is a kind of long, seemingly unending leap of faith.

A brand's name is integral. Can you tell me of the significance behind the name?

Claire: When we started we couldn't find a name that was quite right that we both agreed on. We came across a wordsmith called Ambrose Bierce and a quote that summed up what we were thinking at the time: "The metallic note of the Meadowlark suggests the clashing of vibrant blades."

Greg: It's from a satirist who was around at the turn of the century. It's from a short story which is pretty weird and tragic, actually.

In your opinion, what sets Meadowlark apart in the jewellery world?

Claire: We see ourselves as making tiny artworks that can be worn. We take a fashion view inspired by our formative years in the 90s, which I think comes through in everything we do. We predominantly make to order in our own atelier, which allows us to make things in all sizes. Being made in-house also allows us to do a certain amount of customization to our designs, which a lot of other jewellery brands don't have the ability to do.

Greg: I think we create a personal representation of a symbol of strength and life. I would hope that it resonates with people out in the world, helping them to get through their sometimes challenging lives or providing them with the perfect thing to give someone else to do that for them.

Can you tell me about your personal style and craftsmanship?

Greg: It's a strange kind of relationship we have with our creations. It's like trying to see yourself truly as other people see you. I think we are often trying to create an unexplored composition, or trying to strike a visual chord that rings through us. Somehow the craftsmanship is almost like a recipe that, if followed through accurately, unlocks a piece's hidden voice. It should draw you to itself.

Claire: It's important to us that each design is fully considered from all angles before going out into the world. For me, the meaning jewellery holds for people informs our style and when it comes to craftsmanship, quality is everything.

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It's the age-old question but, where do you find inspiration for your pieces?

Claire: Everywhere! But mostly from the materials themselves. I love to bring in a new stone and let that guide the way a collection goes. Most recently we have been looking back at our own archive and taking inspiration from past designs we are most proud of and expanding them in new ways.

Sometimes I see things incorrectly, maybe only the negative space of an image or object and it's not at all what it actually is, it's my eyes playing tricks on me. Sometimes this accidental view means I see a design for jewellery.

Greg: I take inspiration from wherever I happen to be, if something strikes me as curious or fits within a certain composition. It's like I have a filter for spotting things that may be usable later, so I'll take a photograph and hope that it captured whatever I had in my brain in real life (it often doesn't, and I can't figure out why I have blurry pictures of flowers later). For us, being creative is like feeding our brains holistically, with all sorts of images and processes, and then paying attention to our surroundings. Then, hopefully, it comes out as a reasonably usable idea.

Do you have a favourite style or iconic piece that you think signifies the brand?

Claire: My favourite piece is the Revival Hoop Earrings – inspired by 80s punk and piercings, I love that they look like a series of loose rings but are actually one solid piece. They also mark a point of success for us – they were picked up by Colette in Paris and the way they were presented there was an absolute dream.

Greg: I was going to say the same piece, so I guess I'll choose the more recent Aphrodite pieces. They're the piece that gets me excited every time I see them on the jewellers' trays, or in the showroom.

You've shared an extensive responsibility segment on your website, outlining your design integrity and commitment to people and the planet. How do you embrace sustainable practices day-to-day and why is it important to you?

Claire: Caring for the planet has always been important to me, I can't recall a time where I haven't been mindful of the planet and my own footprint and reducing waste. To grow up surrounded by 'support NZ made' and always know of the clean and green reputation of our country, it just feels ingrained to want to take care of our world.

For many years at Meadowlark, we have composted all food waste and we recycle everything we can, including soft plastic packaging. We run on renewable energy and our team is fully aligned with making improvements. In 2020 FYE we became carbon positive, which means we measured our footprint and offset more than we output. We are excited to reduce this even more.

We are always working to make improvements here and we don't believe our brand can be truly sustainable, but we are constantly working towards full traceability in our supply chain and ethical sourcing.

What is the most important thing you would want people to know about your brand?

We are a small team that truly cares about our work and our customers. We are driven by art and design and feel as though we are giving little pieces of our soul out to the world to be treasured forever.