

SECTION II

WWDACCESSORIES

in the mix

ALL IN THE DETAILS

AS AN ARCHITECT, LOS ANGELES NATIVE

Elena Coleman was always focused on the tiniest details, a trait that would serve her well in her second career as a jewelry designer.

"I'm obsessed with geometry and angles and I love making models," Coleman said.

After working for architecture firm Marmol Radziner in Los Angeles, Coleman moved to New York, where she worked at Roman and Williams. During her spare time, she began making necklaces from vintage chains, which landed in the online newsletter Daily Candy.

"All of a sudden, stores were calling to place orders," said Coleman. "Eventually, I knew I had to choose."

Coleman took jewelry-making classes to supplement the soldering, water-jet and laser-jet cutting skills she acquired in architecture school and moved back to Los Angeles last year, where she launched her first TomTom collection for spring. The fall line has evolved from a feminine layered look into bold yet light metal pieces inspired by Pre-Columbian and Mayan warrior armor, body paint and pyramids. The geometric pieces come in gunmetal, brass, oxidized silver or 18-karat gold-plated silver finishes, some accented with wood and dark crystals. The collar necklaces are pieced together individually to allow each part to lie comfortably on the body and have a sense of movement.

"They are statement pieces, but they are also very easy to wear," Coleman added.

Retail prices range from \$90 to \$350. TomTom is available at Ten Over Six, Milk and Vieve in Los Angeles; Eva, Old Hollywood and Hayden-Harnett in New York, and Selfridges in London.

— Marcy Medina

A necklace and ring from TomTom.

ANNA E ALEX'S ARTISANAL APPROACH

THEY MAY HAVE SPENT THEIR FORMATIVE years, professionally speaking, at one of the world's most famous jewelers, but when Alessandra Sales and Anna Neri decided to set up their own business, Anna e Alex, they looked far beyond precious gems.

Sales, a former external relations director at Bulgari, and Neri, a former international marketing coordinator at the luxury jeweler, chose instead to focus on traditional artisanal techniques such as *passementerie* and materials like vintage crystal drops, semiprecious stones and Murano glass beads.

"To us, luxury is about having an authentic piece made by artisans," Sales said.

Much of the Anna e Alex collection is based on *passementerie*, the art of making ornamental trimmings from braid and cord. Over the centuries, *passementerie* was traditionally used for home furnishings — such as chandeliers, lamps or sofas — and is still used to make the gold braiding for military uniforms and embellishments for couture clothing.

Sales and Neri rely on small workshops near their Rome design studio to do the *passementerie* work, which they later embellish with gold, silver or beading. Their color palette is bright and varied, using some 300 shades, including 25 different reds, and will personalize designs for customers.

The jewelry sells on the company's Web site, annaalex.com, and through about 70 retailers in Europe, including Luisa via Roma in Florence, Spazio Del Cima in Milan and Eleven Monte Carlo in Monaco. This summer, they began testing Anna e Alex in the U.S. at Carleen Ligozio in Southampton, N.Y., and Laureen Gabrielson in Sag Harbor, N.Y.

Prices range from 180 euros, or \$225 at current exchange, for a pair of earrings, to 600 euros, or \$750, for a customized necklace. Sales and Neri, who founded the company in 2006, recently opened a showroom in Milan on Via del Gesù and are looking to expand internationally over the next few years.

— Samantha Conti

Anna e Alex's Ventaglio earring.

CHAIN REACTION

DESIGNER FANNIE SCHIAVONI, KNOWN FOR HER LINE OF TOUGH BODY JEWELRY AND ACCESSORIES, might have been based in London for the past five years, but she still draws inspiration from her hometown, the Swedish island of Gotland.

The techniques she's used to work up her collection of chain-mail gloves, capes made from metal feathers and cagelike body adornments are modeled on the methods used by a museum in Gotland that re-creates the armor medieval soldiers wore when the island was invaded by Denmark in the 14th century.

While she may be looking to the past for inspiration, her fans are decidedly modern. Lady Gaga was shot for the British music magazine *Q* this year wearing piles of Schiavoni's chain-mail necklaces and body harnesses, and the designer has also made pieces for Rihanna, including the chain-mail leggings and harness the singer wears in her "Rockstar 101" music video.

"It's really interesting when you see how [artists] wear the pieces," said Schiavoni, who studied fashion design technology at the London College of Fashion. "When [the collection] is onstage, it comes to life. The chains have a great gravity to them and they drape really well."

Alongside accessorizing pop divas, Schiavoni is also working on her own spring collection, which she plans to show during London Fashion Week in September, after receiving sponsorship from the British Fashion Council's New Generation support project.

"I'm experimenting with electrolyzing — when you color aluminum using electricity," said Schiavoni, who noted that her studio resembles a workshop more than an artsy designer's space. "I don't have a jewelry education, so it's always an experiment."

Schiavoni has also added a line of men's necklaces and gloves for fall.

— Nina Jones

Fannie Schiavoni's chain necklace.