

# Donna Chambers Designs Perfection In Pearls

By Irene Ericsson-Houston

The expression "diamonds are a girl's best friend" was probably started centuries ago, and, almost certainly, was a promotional slogan begun by a marketing rep in the diamond business. Lucky for him that Donna Chambers and her beautiful pearl creations were not around at that moment in time. The expression "aside from Donna Chambers' pearls, diamonds are a girl's best friend" would not have had the same impact.

Raised in Ossining, New York, Donna attended Pratt Institute from 1968 to 1972, where she majored in Fashion Art Design. As the recipient of the Hattie Carnegie Scholarship and George Neuman Scholarship, she graduated Cum Laude and began working in the fashion industry as a "Seventh Avenue Fashion Designer." During this time, Ms. Chambers worked with several designers, including Oleg Cassini, and was especially noted for her flair with style and textures and for her extraordinary work with leather.

In 1976, Donna began experimenting with jewelry and started doing repairs. She became so adept at fixing whatever needing repairing that she began using these newly acquired skills to gradually move into jewelry designing. The blend of experience, expertise, an eye for fashion, bold expression, and her unique and creative use of materials soon brought her recognition in the jewelry design arena. Ms. Chambers has the distinction of being one of only two Black women exhibitors with the prestigious Jewelers of America show, has received the International Pearl Design Contest Award, and was honored by the Women's Jewelry Association with their Excellence in Manufacturing Award.

Jewelry trade shows take Donna from coast to coast where she sells her

creations to major department stores and jewelry chains across the country. Her work has appeared in magazines such as Jewelers' Circular Keystone, Modern Jeweler, Jeweler's Quarterly, National Jeweler, and popular magazines such as Bride's.

Ms. Chambers' latest venture has been referred to as a marriage of history and style. With imagination and undeniable talent, Donna has taken 18th Century Chinese gambling chips, themselves works of art fashioned out of Mother of Pearl, some dating back more than 250 years, and combines them with 14 karat gold, fresh water pearls, mabe pearls, diamonds and other precious stones for a winning combination in earrings, bracelets and matching pins/pendants that echo the past.

Donna now resides in Elmsford, NY with her daughter Cori, and operates Donna Chambers Designs, Inc. from White Plains.

Each creative venture that Ms. Chambers has undertaken has captured the spirit of an adventurous style that combines shapes, textures and motion in handcrafted delights. Maybe, before long, we'll all be saying "pearls are a girl's best friend."



S. A. Napolitano

Donna Chambers