

FINANCIAL TIMES how to spend it

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Swellboy on... Victoire de Castellane

Showcasing the jewellery designer's sparkling talent

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In the physical pages of How To Spend It I have written on the phenomenon of the world's major luxury brands moving from the shop vitrine to the museum showcase, as what was the merchandise of years ago becomes the museum exhibit of today. And with this in mind, I was pleased to note that this trend is now trickling down to creative jewellers working today.

A couple of weeks ago, I dropped by the Gagosian Gallery, the one next to Cipriani across the street from Udeshi and Dunhill, for a private view of the jewellery of Victoire de Castellane. I like Victoire – she is an original in an increasingly standardised world and it reflects well on M Bernard Arnault that, as well as pursuing the muse with jewellery, she signs with her own name. She is also the creatrix at Dior fine jewellery.

Anyway, this was Victoire's second gallery show; she had first received the benediction of Mr Gagosian with a show at his Paris branch. It was a charming exhibition of exquisitely wrought pieces, and what I liked about it was that Victoire had also thought to create the socles on which these were displayed. It is this sort of thoughtfulness that appeals to me in particular as, alas, I cannot really wear more jewellery than I do already; but with Victoire's creations matched with their individual socles and placed under glass, each one suddenly metamorphosed into a piece of miniature sculpture in precious stones and costly metals.

Given that M Arnault is a noted collector of contemporary art, could it be that Victoire is preparing herself for a major retrospective at the Musée Bernard Arnault (or whatever it is called) in the Bois de Boulogne?