

Victoire de Castellane's Bejeweled Garden, Now Growing at Gagosian Gallery



Last night, Dior's head of haute joaillerie, the ever-fantastical, ever-inspired Victoire de Castellane, celebrated the opening of her independent show *Precious Objects* at Gagosian's Madison Avenue gallery. The exhibition, she explained, looked to the limits of the natural and artificial. "The idea is to show the extreme two possibilities that I can create: the more extravagant and the more maybe classical—because I play with precious stones like emeralds, diamonds, sapphires," said the Parisian, who has been incorporating sculpture into her fine-jeweled creations since 2007. "It's a mix of my inspirations, so it's a mix of nature, of the feminine universe, of romanticism, and how we live together and how we manage to succeed to live together."



This wide-reaching set of influences came together in a series of bright flora- and fauna-referencing baubles—pulled from the animalvegetablemineral exhibition and 2011’s hallucinogenic-inspired *Fleurs d’excès* range—that rested on raw geode sculptures. A blooming acid pink and emerald green flower holds a gold-encrusted diamond in *Crystal Shocking Pink Baby*, while a glistening, teal-blue snake wraps around a sparkling iridescent lacquer in *Lunae Lumen Holly Colorum*. Thanks to their magnetic color palette and whimsical, girly names—*Honey Florem Peach Frutti*, *Lunae Lumen Glitter Blue*, etc. —the pieces feel like an artist’s reimagining of nature fused with yesteryear’s Lisa Frank. “They are like little treasures!” exclaimed De Castellane from the side of the gallery. “It’s important to wear them like treasures,” she added of her artful, magical, and undeniably wacky creations. “I also wanted to show what happens when you don’t wear the jewels. It’s a bit ‘How to Enjoy Your Jewels When You’re Not Wearing Them.’ [Jewelry] is a language for me, and I want to continue to create, to express myself.”

Precious Objects will be on view through April 5.

—Ashley Simpson

Victoire de Castellane, *Amanita Satana Diabolus*, 2010, Lacquered Silver, white gold, yellow gold, opals, colored sapphires, mandarin garnets, spinels, diamonds, petrified wood, 5 x 12 1/4 x 8 1/4 inches.

Victoire de Castellane, *Cana Bisextem Now*, 2010, Lacquered silver, yellow gold, white gold, diamonds, emeralds, garnets, cucumber jasper, 3 1/8 x 5 1/4 x 4 1/4 inches.

Victoire de Castellane, *Vitam Industria Abstract Multi Candy [Earrings]*, 2013, White gold, multicolored sapphires, rubies, emeralds and fine stones, 3 15/16 x 4 5/16 x 4 5/16 inches.

Victoire de Castellane, *Lunae Lumen Satine Baby Blue*, 2013, White gold, sapphire, diamonds, colored lacquer, 2 3/8 x 1 9/16 x 1 9/16 inches.

Victoire de Castellane, *Crystal Shocking Pink Baby*, 2013, Yellow gold, diamonds, colored lacquer, 3 1/8 x 3 9/16 x 3 9/16 inches.

All images: Vito Flamminio / Courtesy of Gagosian Gallery New York