

STYLE

Âme Jewelry Opens L.A. Flagship to Showcase Lab-Grown Diamond Designs



Zendaya, Amber Heard, and Jada Pinkett-Smith have all adorned themselves with the fine jewelry, on display in the new shop in glass pods, each accompanied by an orchestral soundtrack scored by DJ and musician Mimi Xu who has worked with Prada and Marni.

Jewelry brand Âme wants to shake up the diamond industry, beginning with Los Angeles' star-studded scene. Following its L.A. launch party last December at Eric Buterbaugh Gallery (where guests included Zendaya, power stylist Elle Strauss, and Natalie Joos, among others), the luxury lab-grown diamond brand officially opened its flagship at high-end retail destination Westfield Century City.

Creative director Elinor Avni teamed with diamond industry veteran and Moscow Diamond Bourse president Alex Popov (previously the chairman of the World Diamond Mark Foundation) to launch Âme, which focuses on ethically conscious diamonds — a growing trend also championed by companies such as De Beers and the Leonardo DiCaprio-backed brand Vrai & Oro.

Âme tells *The Hollywood Reporter* that the brand is "all about wearing diamonds every day.... When I design, I design comfortable pieces. I want women to feel empowered and wear it to work, and then to go out to a gala without having to change."

Those empowered women include Zendaya, “who was absolutely breathtaking and so engaged” at Âme’s L.A. launch soirée, says Avni, a former interior designer who previously designed the architectural jewelry line Noritamy, among other fashion ventures. “She’s beautiful and she’s kind and she has good energy, so it was a really good match and we were very happy to see her wearing our jewelry.”



Stefanie Keenan/Getty

Alex Popov, Zendaya and Elinor Avni attend an Âme Jewelry Launch Event in Los Angeles.

The brand’s geometric designs have also been worn on the red carpet by Amber Heard (who sported the Totem bangle at this year’s Golden Globes), Jada Pinkett-Smith (who donned the High Helix ear cuff to the *Hala* premiere at this past Sundance Film Festival) and Meg Donnelly (who wore the Helix ear cuff and the Chain Cocktail Ring to the *Captain Marvel* premiere).

Âme is taking a multifaceted approach for its first permanent retail store in L.A., which offers its four debut collections (\$1,000 to \$20,000) in a futuristic fortress-like setting befitting an intergalactic Marvel superheroine. The Totem range — a clear favorite among the Hollywood set — encompasses Avni’s “obsession with totem poles and shapes,” while the playful Q collection has “a humorous point of view [inspired by] the questions we ask ourselves every day: ‘Why this, why that, why do I do this.’”



Located on level two (near Nordstrom and Din Tai Fung) the immersive 1,075-square-foot space was designed by Tel Aviv-based architecture firm Baranowitz + Kronenberg and houses custom-made glass pods that display 18k white and yellow gold rings, cuffs and bangles, statement necklaces and mix-and-match earrings — each accompanied by an orchestral soundtrack scored by fashion world-beloved DJ and musician Mimi Xu (who's worked with Prada and Marni). Hanging capsules showcase Âme's cutting-edge sparklers, such as the entire [Angle collection](#) that could complement the modern armor of any industry powerhouse.

London-based textile designer Anne Kyyrö Quinn created 3D felt wall panels to contrast the mirror-like stainless-steel ceiling and walls, while the cement flooring features steel inlays inspired by Âme's hexagonal accoutrements. Rounding out the multisensory experience is a signature scent whipped up by celebrity-faved British perfumer Azzi Glasser (Helena Bonham Carter, Jude Law, Orlando Bloom and Johnny Depp are fans), who created a fragrance specifically with the store's "monochromatic forest"-inspired theme in mind.

Though Âme is firmly rooted in design, it's not shying away from its stance to create conflict-free, everyday pieces. "I don't want jewelry to be a burden," says Avni. "The fact that we chose lab-grown was a very conscious decision because we were thinking about the environment. It's the only way to go now and it's such an easy choice," she notes, pointing out that man-made and earth-grown diamonds are chemically identical.

Now that it's planted on the West Coast, the label will unveil a New York store later this year near its existing pop-up shop in SoHo.

Âme Jewelry at Westfield Century City, 10250 Santa Monica Blvd.; 888-285-3935