

The arrival of Elsa Peretti at Tiffany & Co. in 1974 signaled a revolution in the world of jewelry design. Her collections of organic, sensual forms seduced the world with their elegant simplicity. A masterful artisan, Peretti explored nature with the acumen of a scientist and the vision of a sculptor, though her preferred title was “craftswoman.” Peretti had said her designs were dictated by common sense. “For me, good line and good form are timeless.”

“Elsa has been one of our most beloved and important designer collaborators for nearly 50 years,” said Anthony Ledru, Chief Executive Officer, Tiffany & Co. **“Her designs are as modern today as ever. This is a true testament to her artistic vision and genius.”**

Elsa Peretti is celebrated around the world for her groundbreaking designs and innovative jewelry. Powerfully feminine with an effortless ease, the Bone cuff is one of those designs that has been revered for decades. Formed in the shape of a wrist bone, the iconic cuff embodies the organic sensuality of Peretti’s aesthetic vocabulary. Her revolutionary Diamonds by the Yard® collection combines fine, fluid chains and bezel-set stones that forever changed the role of diamonds in fashion. “If diamonds are mounted like this the light is different,” she explained. “They look like drops of light, like a stream—very modern.” Bean® design, Open Heart and Bottle collections reflect her unique ability to give designs a fluid and tactile quality. Peretti’s Snake, Scorpion and her quintessential Mesh jewelry are a testament to how her jewelry effortlessly drapes and contours with the body.

Born in Italy and educated in Rome and Switzerland, Peretti eventually returned to Rome to pursue a degree in interior design. By 1969, she had established herself as a fashion model in New York and Barcelona and was also beginning to design her own jewelry. American fashion designer Giorgio di Sant’Angelo used a few of her pieces in a fashion show, which were an instant success. It was during this time that she met legendary designer Halston, who became her longtime friend and frequent collaborator. Among her notable collaborators was renowned fashion photographer Hiro. “I have been inspired by Elsa’s magnificent designs for over 45 years,” he says. “They are organic and sensual; you can feel the life pulsing through them.”

In the early 1980s, her collections for Tiffany were expanded to include china, crystal and sterling silver designs for the home. Like her jewelry, these designs were praised for their fluid shape and tactile quality. “Touch is important. I get lots of my inspiration from tactile things,” she said. Peretti believed they represented a life well-lived, the warmth of a generous host and the idea that beauty and utility should always be as one. Her longtime friend, William Chaney, Chairman of the Board of Tiffany & Co. from 1984 to 2003,

expressed his view that “Elsa Peretti, through her aesthetic genius and her consistent pursuit of design perfection, has earned recognition as the world’s most respected and most successful jewelry designer.”

In 1999, Elsa Peretti celebrated her 25th anniversary with Tiffany & Co. In recognition of her remarkable career, Tiffany established the Elsa Peretti Professorship in Jewelry Design at the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) in New York City—the first endowed professorship in the venerated institute’s history. In 2001, the designer was presented with an honorary Doctor of Fine Arts degree from FIT. In further tribute, the Elsa Peretti jewelry case at the House’s Fifth Avenue flagship store was designated a Tiffany landmark. Peretti received other awards, including the 1971 Coty Award for Jewelry, followed by the Rhode Island School of Design President’s Fellow Award in 1981. In 1996, the Council of Fashion Designers of America named her Accessory Designer of the Year. Elsa Peretti was also awarded the prestigious Leonardo da Vinci Lifetime Achievement Award for Jewelry and Fashion Design in 2019, which was presented during the Florence Biennale event.

Elsa Peretti’s designs are available at Tiffany & Co. stores worldwide and are also in the permanent collections of the British Museum in London, The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, Massachusetts and the Museum of Fine Arts in Houston, Texas.

Elsa had always been inspired by nature and lived her life dedicated to giving back to the world from which she drew so much inspiration. She believed that taking care of and protecting our planet is a duty of all of humanity, “We could do so much better. I’m trying to do something good.” Elsa said. As the president and founder of The Nando and Elsa Peretti Foundation, dedicated to the memory of her father, Elsa was committed to supporting the environment, social welfare, human rights, as well as the preservation of arts and culture.

Today and forevermore, Tiffany & Co. celebrates the life and work of legendary designer Elsa Peretti, who passed away at age 80 in 2021. Famed designer for the House and member of the Tiffany family since 1974, Elsa revolutionized the world of design and forever changed the way women wore jewelry. Her legacy will remain a constant inspiration for generations to come.

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