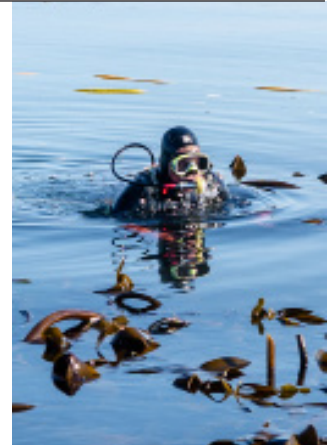




Diamond divers in South Africa. **Below:** local diamond sorters separate Raw Ocean Diamonds from gravel; SMO gold and Ocean Diamond Union rings, paired with Milestone wedding bands, by **Roxanne Rajcoomar-Hadden**; a local expert assesses a Raw Ocean Diamond.



Liquid ASSETS

Sourcing stones retrieved from the sea bed marks a milestone for Roxanne Rajcoomar-Hadden

By Tanya Dukes

HOW MANY PIECES of jewellery does it take to capture a lifetime of memories? London-based designer Roxanne Rajcoomar-Hadden can do it with just one. Her Milestone engagement ring collection marks all the significant moments that come along after a wedding ceremony. The rings can be embellished with additional diamonds and coloured gemstones at each corner of their octagonal silhouettes when an occasion that warrants special recognition arises.

The designs sprang from a slim band Rajcoomar-Hadden created for herself. Her private clients seized upon it too, updating their jewels for reasons that held personal significance, from adding birthstones when children were born to blue sapphires to honour the efforts of the NHS during the pandemic. “It’s almost like having a house you decorate over time, or an eternity ring that you don’t fill straight away,” says Rajcoomar-Hadden.

Beyond “telling stories through the jewellery”, her goal is to do it with “the most responsible gems and diamonds”. Like the rest of the world, she found what she was looking for on Instagram. “They followed me,” she says of Ocean Diamonds, the source of the stones in the engagement ring collection. The fortuitous follow led her to a source of easily traceable diamonds found in an unconventional fashion.

Ocean Diamonds collaborates with professional divers in Namibia and South Africa who retrieve diamonds from the ocean floor, ensuring the stones are cut and polished in South Africa so that local artisans benefit from the diamond industry. Founder Robert Goodden thinks the unique story of the gems has a “romantic pull”, which is heightened by “the guarantee that they come from a known source, without being handled by anyone else”. Each



stone from Ocean Diamonds has a certificate of provenance and identification number that gives the details of its country of origin.

The rings have sentimental, ethical and aesthetic charms. The bezel-set solitaires, in emerald, round, oval or baguette cuts, perch neatly along the top edge of their bands, giving them a modern profile that’s built to flatter. “The design makes fingers look long and elegant. And when you see them from afar it looks like a diamond is simply floating there,” says Rajcoomar-Hadden. What’s more, the straight, flat silhouette of the engagement ring fits seamlessly against a coordinating wedding band, making the two virtually inseparable—as the best-matched pairs always are. ■

OCEAN DIAMONDS (DIVING AND DIAMOND IMAGES); 100% DIGITAL (RINGS).