



MANICK METALS:

Unique Design, Unbelievable Talent

By Charlotte Tallman

I'm a pretty big fan of jewelry, but I have never loved a piece of jewelry as much as I love the items created by a sister duo who combine talent, metals, glass, stones, buttons and a great bit of their personality into each piece they produce.

Nicki and Mandy Swinehart of Ohio (Sister Gretchen is an NMSU Alumna) started Manick Metals in late 2008 after turning Nicki's garage into a studio.

With a degree in fine arts (emphasis on glass) from Ohio State University, Nicki has taken classes in enameling (glass on copper) at the Columbus Cultural Arts Center, but it wasn't until Mandy returned to Ohio from New York City and taught her silversmithing that she really became interested in creating jewelry. Mandy studied at the School of Visual Arts, the Fashion Institute of Technology and the 92 Street Y in New York, as well as at the Columbus Cultural Arts Center.

Using silver, copper and glass enamel, the sisters set stones like sapphire, onyx and peridot as well as buttons and other 'found' objects to create one-of-a-kind pieces that range from \$12-\$100. Complete sets can be created based on preference and new pieces of jewelry can be created out of old ones that might be outdated or broken.

In each piece the sisters create, their personality – filled with a zest for an exhilarating life, pop culture interests and a vintage ardor – comes alive. Whether in earrings, necklaces or bracelets, there is always a certain sense of individualism and remarkableness.

"I usually create my designs on a whim," Nicki says. "I will make one piece and then get ideas as I go along for another piece and so on. Occasionally I will have a stone or a gem I want to use and I will sketch a design for that particular stone, but for the majority, they are designs I dream up in my mind."

Creating made-to-order pieces are easy for Nicki and Mandy, since no one piece is the same as another.

"A lot of customers prefer a specific stone or have an item they want included in a piece," Mandy says. "Many of our clients like the idea of being able to work with us to get exactly what they want."

If you are fortunate enough to own a Manick Metals piece, you might find Nicki and Mandy created something you never even knew you wanted, but will never want to live without.

Manick Metals

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