

D'HUMIÈRE



COLOMBE D'HUMIÈRES in conversation with OMAIMA SALEM
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Styling BERENGER PELC
Hair Miki Matsunaga
Location Colombe's Studio, Paris



necklace 137
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Omaima arrives at Colombe d'Humières' new shop in the 10th arrondissement. Inside she finds MARFRIEND Berenger talking about Tantrism with the jewelry designer. Berenger explains how his last session resulted in unexpected pleasure from a stranger touching his neck and shoulders. The interview begins promptly after

BERENGER What's your first memory that involved shiny jewels?

COLOMBE Me breaking a glass jewel of my mum's. I remade it out of Fimo, though it was a very, very bad, ugly object, but I knew that she couldn't get mad because it was sweet.

BERENGER And that led you down a path of more creation?

COLOMBE I started making my own stuff after that. Horrible stuff made from mother of pearl buttons - I hate that name, mother of pearl - but anyway, I used to buy the buttons, engrave and post them on my Skyblog page. I was not selling any, but I would pretend I was.

OMAIMA Does the page

still exist, can we see it?

COLOMBE Yes! And it says the date and all - 2005.

Colombe finds her childhood social media page, and everyone laughs as the website loads up

COLOMBE I can't delete it, even a tech guy said it's not possible. I was like, «It's very bad for my business!» But no.

BERENGER Oh dear... You work a lot with upcycling then?

COLOMBE Yes. To be honest, I work with metal. If you think about metal as beautiful, it's still a dirty material. It comes from mines in developing countries, and it uses loads of water and pollutes rivers. It's bad. The French Government is actually trying to open a gold mine in Guyane, but I don't think it will happen because it's bad for nature and people, it destroys everything. They want to open it on a sacred mountain. Usually, with mines where there is gold, it belongs to that area's populace. This project would be government looting.

OMAIMA Is that why you don't work with gold?





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COLOMBE Yeah, the main reason, but I don't like it as a symbol either. If we keep on using it, people won't realise there's actually a problem. Personally, I think all gold extraction should stop. Most jewellery brands talk about «ethical extraction» these days, but I don't believe there's such a thing. There have been enough materials extracted already throughout history, we just have to make recycling more profitable. My experience of this issue is that for my caster - the person who transforms my wax carved moulds into metal - it's more expensive to buy recycled metal than to buy newly-mined. It's nonsense.

BERENGER Mmm.

Colombe rifles through her memory bank for a pertinent statistic

COLOMBE However, a good statistic to remember is that approximately 50% of the gold extracted is used for jewellery and the rest is for industry. We have to change in many ways.

OMAIMA You said to me your plan was to use metals from discarded computers in your work.

COLOMBE I realised it's

going to take ages, but I would love to take metal components from phones and electric circuits that are thrown away and create a new metal with it that jewellers can use. The problem is the metal has to be transformable in an optimal way. For now, it may be possible but you have to be working in factories, you have to have 1 million sensors to differentiate the metals. I'm speaking to engineers, chemists and so many other people about it, though.

BERENGER What about gems, what's your favourite stone?

COLOMBE Tombstones... haha. No, I'm fond of laboratory stones really, the ones where your ashes are transformed into a diamond after you die.

BERENGER Do you ever try and transmit energy into your pieces?

COLOMBE Of course. When I lived in London, I wasn't in a good place, and I'd put bad energy into them, or I'd take things so personally that I'd try and put a spell on someone if they took off my jewellery. Now I am in a much better place, I love and feel loved and only put positive energy into them.

OMAIMA Ah! So you came from black magic and made it to white magic! Well done. And what about working with others?

COLOMBE When I was doing the jewellery for Kanye, for Yeezy, I was working with students from a French luxury school owned by the jewellery maisons. I gave them a hammer to bash necklaces with, and they were like, «Are you sure? A hammer?» And after, they couldn't stop, they were so happy.

BERENGER And how would you resolve our society's obsession with gold?

Omaima fiddles with her necklace

COLOMBE I'd love for everyone to be able to make gold like they can cakes, that would destroy the economy for it.

OMAIMA But don't you think people would find something rare that they would all want instead? I think one of the reasons why gold has value is because it lasts, but another is definitely because it's rare.

COLOMBE It's not that it's rare, it's the meaning we put on it that makes it so important.