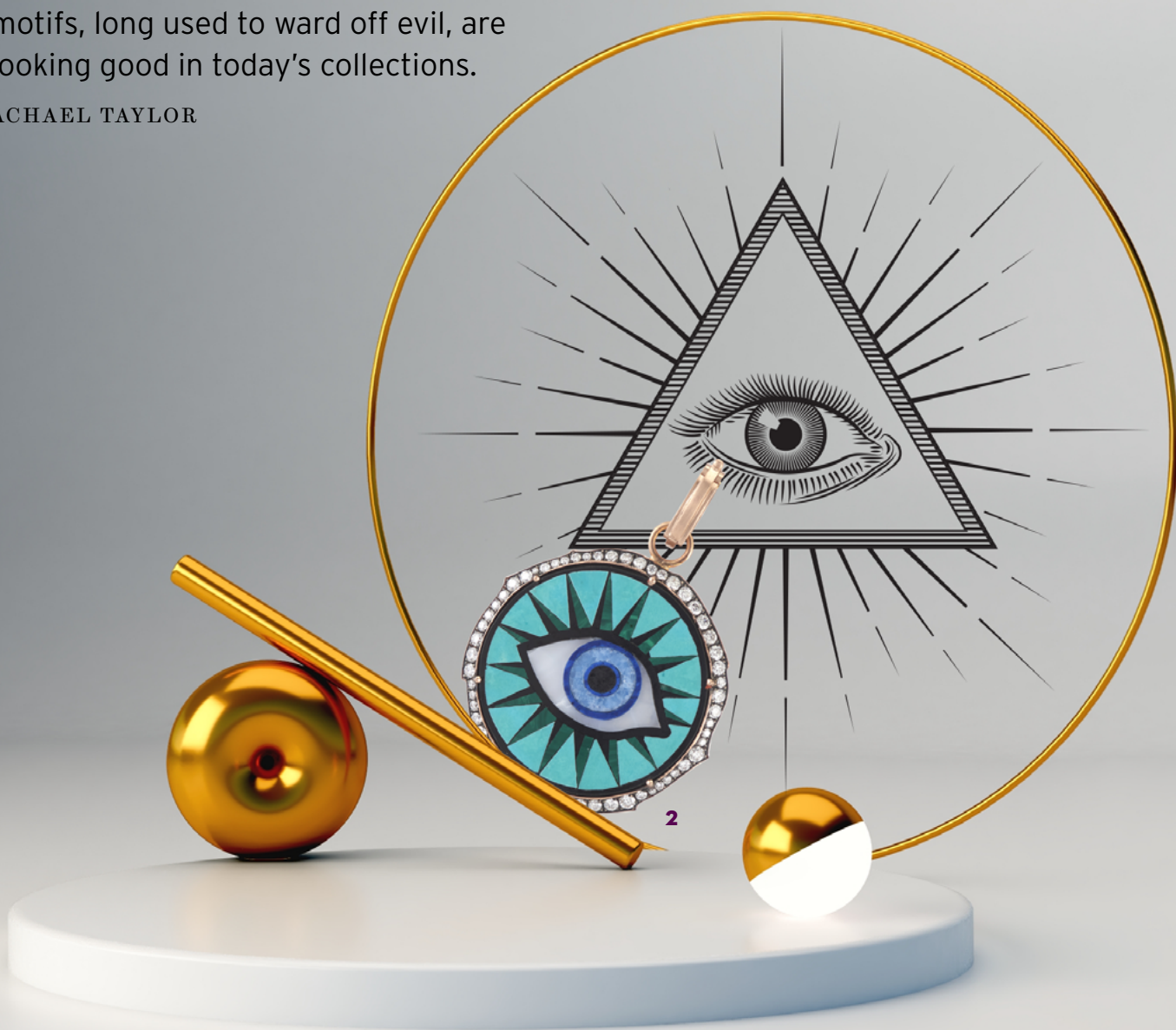


OPTICAL ALLUSIONS

Eye motifs, long used to ward off evil, are still looking good in today's collections.

BY RACHAEL TAYLOR



Protection, superstition, religion, fashion. There are many reasons to acquire an eye motif, and this classic talisman is recapturing our imaginations in these tumultuous times.

Gucci has emblazoned its current homeware collection with an illustrated eye surrounded by a cosmic blast of stars and lightning bolts that evoke an image of sideshow mystics. In fashion, too, the eye is returning, with designers such as Sandy Liang and Zimmermann using glistening manga-style eyes and heavy-lashed lids disguised as flowers in their Fall/Winter 2020 collections.

Jewelry, however, is where the evil eye really thrives. Traditionally, people have worn the motif to ward off jealousy-fueled malicious stares, which were thought to bring the recipient bad luck — though today's consumers are more likely to seek one out to attract exactly the type of looks they were designed to discourage.

Modern evil-eye jewels can vary hugely, from a simple elliptical outline of diamonds with a single gem for the iris — often a sapphire or emerald — to more elaborate and realistic designs. Enamel is a great way to sate the color craving that's sweeping through jewelry right now, and the tantalizing blues that artists so often select — including stones such as turquoise — are irresistible.

Whether they're hyperrealistic or abstract, colorful or understated, worn on the finger or the lobe, there's no denying the power and protection these jewels offer. ■



1. TABBAH
Signet ring in 18-karat gold featuring an evil eye decorated with diamonds, turquoise, cat's eye and onyx. tabbah.com

2. SYLVA & CIE
Pendant in 18-karat gold with diamonds surrounding a gemstone marquetry eye of turquoise, lapis lazuli, onyx, quartz and malachite. sylvacie.com

3. ADINA REYTER
Evil Eye studs in 14-karat yellow gold with channel-set baguette diamonds and a blue-diamond center. adinareyter.com

4. ZEEMOU ZENG
The Eye cocktail ring in 18-karat yellow gold with diamond pavé, a round amethyst and a central yellow diamond. zeemouzeng.com

5. ILEANA MAKRI
Evil Eye pendant with a glass cabochon eye motif surrounded by diamonds in oxidized 18-karat white gold. ileanamakri.com

6. SYDNEY EVAN
Eyelash Evil Eye earrings in 14-karat gold with black and white pavé diamonds and gold chain fringing. sydneyevan.com

IMAGE: SHUTTERSTOCK