

Crafting a Career

By Andrea Brent, Linden '98

As students at Linden, we are taught to push ourselves not only academically, but creatively as well. During my time at Linden, way back in the 1990s, I was very passionate about art class. I thought of it as my forte and I naturally wanted to pursue it after high school.

That path led me to fashion college, then to the Fine Arts Cultural Studies Program at York University, and finally to the Publishing Program at Ryerson, where I parlayed my knowledge of the arts into a career as an editor of scholarly material in the visual arts. I found this work to be challenging and rewarding, but I also felt that something was missing; I longed for the sense of creativity I felt during my time in fashion design. Despite being surrounded by art, I needed my own creative outlet and so I turned to my lifelong hobby—jewellery making.

I emptied my savings account to buy some supplies and I started off with the easy stuff—the types of pieces that I had already been making for



A sample of some of the materials Andrea likes to work with when making jewellery.

my friends and family with wire and beads. I then began working with chain and different types of metals, taking my cues from the vintage jewellery that I had admired on my mother, my grandmothers and in old fashion magazines. I began entering craft shows to sell my work, and I decided to call my line Covet Originals.

That was three years ago; I am now a full-time jewellery designer. Covet Originals is available in stores across the city, at craft shows, and online. I work with many vintage and repurposed materials, creating something new out of something old. I find my work satisfying and very fun but there is also the serious business side, which involves a lot of math, patience, hard work and exhausting self-promotion. I have had to learn how to be my own photographer, graphic designer, public relations representative and advertiser. That being said, I am doing something that I love and I know I can do well, and I can take great satisfaction in the knowledge that I make my customers happy.

Want to check out some of Andrea's jewellery? Visit her website at www.covetoriginals.com