

# platinum™

september 1999

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Let's face it — not everyone is a risk-taker. Many of us have experienced the emotional and mental torture of getting through college, then realizing that our degree has prepared us for a field we don't want to be in. Who would think that a degree in Occupational Therapy could lead to a jewelry-making career? Kristina Pitaniello did.

At 27, the native of upstate New York owns her own jewelry line with a name that carries her Italian heritage with simplicity and pride: Pitaniello. Upon graduating from the University of New Hampshire, Pitaniello interned at Newton-Wellesley Hospital for a total of four days. She then quit, bought herself a torch, melted slabs of metal, and allowed her hands and natural talents to take over, creating unique pieces of jewelry from her South End studio at 46

Waltham Street. Pitaniello is definitely a risk-taker.

I met the young jeweler in her studio. With mellow music playing in the background, a calm, confident Kristina sat down to talk to me about her career. "I don't know if one ever really decides those things," she said. "I was about 22. It kind of just sucked me in."

Kristina is proudly self-taught and strongly believes in learning from one's mistakes, "because what you come out with is a really raw and uninhibited style." One of the only reasons she signed up for a jewelry-making class was to get some questions answered. "All I needed was a little doorway." And that she got!

From manufacturing to shipping orders, Pitaniello does it all. Her list of clients includes the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, the Museum of Contemporary Arts, Chicago, and the Sundance Catalog. "I want to hit everyone. I really believe that diversifying is very important. To say that I am obsessed with this would be an understatement. I *live* it!" While Kristina is strongly influenced by antique jewelry, most of her inspiration comes from "industrial objects," including, among others, mechanical tools, coins, and even bones.

What does the future hold? "It's hard to say," she says. "But I don't ever want to quit being at the bench."

Kristina can be reached at 617.292.3094.