

## She's really comfortable telling me what she thinks

She was fresh out of university, but we were lucky in that someone advised her that when she finished, rather than going into a studio, she should get some experience working in a jewellery business. She showed enormous potential and was offered a design space in the Jam Factory in Adelaide, but she chose to come and work with us. I saw that her work was fantastic; incredibly innovative.

She started with us and the first week she was here she enrolled in a Diploma of Gemmology Studies. It's hard work and it showed that she was dedicated.

Cara and I work Saturdays together in the shop and when it's quiet we'll discuss ideas. It's a two-way thing. Cara brings in a lot of books and is constantly looking at different things for inspiration. She used to be quite nervous about sharing her thoughts — I think she thought I might eat her. But now, she's really comfortable telling me what she thinks. I had an idea for a range and I showed it to her. She looked at it and said: "Melbourne, late '90s." I knew I had to go back to the drawing board. She never would have said that at the start.

**GENEVIEVE LILLEY**



**Cara Rieberg and Genevieve Lilley**



Soon after starting the jewellery line Venerari two years ago with her husband Kingsley Wallman, architect and jewellery designer Genevieve Lilley needed a junior designer. Cara Rieberg's impressive portfolio convinced Lilley and two years later, she has proved her worth.

**INTERVIEWED BY AIMEE BROWN**

## The amount of knowledge I've taken from her is amazing

I started working here almost two years ago. I'd finished my degree a few months before and it was my first job as a designer. It's fun working here because it's not like Genevieve is setting down boundaries. I can push the limits. Jewellery design is like mini architecture for her. The amount of knowledge I've taken from her is amazing. I didn't know a thing about architecture. There's always something to learn. Genevieve has this worldly knowledge that I admire.

I am considering going overseas and I had a conversation with Genevieve about it. She said, "I know, at some stage you will want to go overseas and that's fine." It's fantastic that she's supportive, but I know that wherever I am, I'm still going to be a part of Venerari. To me, it's not a job, it's fun — the other day I was told to stop smiling so much. I just love the environment, everyone is so supportive, it's something you can't describe.

A lot of designers in the industry want to do everything — they want to make the jewellery as well. But Genevieve steps back from the other aspects of the industry so she can give all her attention to the design.

**CARA RIEBERG**