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## Jeweller hits a high in London skyscraper

By Isabelle Aron

Local artist Vicki Ambery-Smith has been making jewellery and ornate boxes inspired by architecture around the world for nearly 30 years. Recently she was commissioned to create the jewellery line for London's newest skyscraper, The Shard.

The line includes earrings, cufflinks, pendant necklaces, and brooches. "For a brooch it works nicely as an elegant shape which is quite abstract; you wouldn't necessarily realise it's The Shard."

The pendant earrings are most recognisable as The Shard, and while there's no ring in the range ("They asked me to think about a ring, but what on earth could I do for a ring?!") The Shard was very busy on Valentine's Day, which meant a good day for business for Vicki. "They had no fewer than 23 couples who got engaged up at the top. The shop did really well that day."



Vicki wears her Shard-inspired brooch.

Photo by Isabelle Aron

Although she's the jeweller to The Shard, Vicki doesn't limit herself solely to jewellery. "I don't really do diamonds and pearls," she says. "It's small-scale 3D that I'm interested in."

### Intricate boxes

She also creates small boxes, which can function as condiment sets. The weirdest piece she's ever made was a condiment set inspired by the A4 Westway flyover, commissioned as a gift for a man who'd worked on the development for 30 years but was retiring. This was slightly less glamorous material to work with than The

Shard. "It wasn't a promising start," she says, "but it worked out all right in the end!"

As well as famous London landmarks, and buildings around the world, Vicki has also created pieces based on local architecture, inspired by Edwardian houses in the area, from brooches of the stained-glass front doors to delicate boxes that replicate the houses as a whole.

Vicki's Shard-inspired jewellery can be found in The Shard shop, and you can find out more online, at [www.vickiamberysmith.co.uk](http://www.vickiamberysmith.co.uk), about where else her work is exhibited.

## Circus comes to town

There's no need to run away with the circus when youngsters can learn acrobatics, trapeze, tightwire and juggling right in the heart of East Finchley.

Airborne Circus have been teaching circus skills to children aged 8 to 19 at Finchley Youth Theatre for the last 18 months and now classes are being extended to take children aged 5-7.

Sessions are run by Finchley resident Adam Cohen, a leading youth circus teacher in the UK, who says they give youngsters an exciting and alternative way to develop their physical, mental and social skills.

He says: "Young people improve physical fitness including strength, flexibility, coordination and balance, as well as social and emotional skills like their ability to focus, problem solve,



Youngsters try out their skills with Airborne Circus



cooperate and communicate."

Airborne Circus's classes run on a Monday and Wednesday afternoon at Finchley Youth Theatre. They also have two Friday morning classes for children aged 5+ who are home educated and taster workshops for adults who just want to have a go and try it for themselves.

Find out more at [www.airbornecircus.com](http://www.airbornecircus.com) or contact Adam by email at [adam@airbornecircus.com](mailto:adam@airbornecircus.com)

## New number for health

### care services

A new NHS 111 phone line launched last month for patients in Barnet to access unscheduled healthcare.

While 999 remains the number to call for serious emergencies, the new NHS 111 phone number gives patients a single point to access the most appropriate care when the need is urgent but not life threatening.

NHS 111 operates round the clock, 365 days a year; calls to the number from both landlines and mobile phones are free.

NHS 111 is staffed by trained advisers and supported by clinicians, who will ask callers questions to assess their symptoms, give them the healthcare advice they need and direct them to the right local service as quickly as possible.

Services that callers will be referred to can include their GP surgery, another doctor, urgent care centre, walk-in services, community nurses, emergency dentist or late-opening pharmacies. The new NHS 111 number will be linked up to the emergency services so if patients do need an ambulance, one will be called for them.

You should call NHS 111 if it's not a 999 emergency but you still need help fast and you don't think it can wait for an appointment with your GP.

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