



glam girl Monica Graves Jewelry designer

When Monica Graves first walked into a bead store 15 years ago she felt thunderstruck. "It was like I had beaded in another life," says the Burlington-based jewelry designer and president behind the glam label. Today, a dedicated consumer fan base around the globe wears her colourful, feminine jewelry. And thanks to her appearances at the Much Music Video Awards Gift Lounge for the past three years, Graves has acquired a definite celebrity following. Her distinctive creations have been spotted on the necks, wrists, fingers and earlobes of a growing list of celebrities including Amy Lee of Evanescence, Nelly Furtado, Vanessa Minnillo, Paris Hilton, Jilly Black, Vivica A. Fox, Fergie of the Black Eyed Peas, CHUM FM personality and host of *Shop Toronto* Taylor Kaye and Amber Mariano of *Survivor* and *Amazing Race* fame. This success has enabled Graves to leave her 18-year career in the corporate world to pursue her true passion full-time. Her entrepreneurial spirit started when a teenaged Graves launched a line of hand-painted T-shirts, later branching out into mural painting for corporate and private clients. Once the bead bug bit, the 38-year-old vivacious brunette abandoned painting and threw herself into creating her trademark designs using combinations of high-quality glass beads, crystals and semi-precious stones from around the world. Graves says glam appeals to women who want to express their individuality and feel good about themselves. "It's very rewarding for me to help women release their power," she says from her New Street studio. The glam line is available at more than 110 retail locations nationwide including Joelle's in Burlington. Visit www.glamjulz.com for more information.

—Claudia D'Souza