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GEORGIA KOVANIS

## Accessorize to your heart's content at Royal Oak's Annex

BY GEORGIA KOVANIS • FREE PRESS COLUMNIST • AUGUST 24, 2008

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The Annex, a new accessories shop in Royal Oak, has a selection of jewelry that includes necklaces made from vintage religious charms, chunky cuff bracelets hand-molded by the artist with the fingerprints to prove it, and purses galore.

The aim of the store, which consists of two nouveau Gothic rooms and a total of about 1,500 square feet, is to provide men and women with arty accessories they won't find at area department stores.

Much of the jewelry comes from Los Angeles-based jewelers -- including Nash, which makes the necklaces out of vintage charms. (Nash jewelry is created by Nina Segal, daughter of retailer to the stars Fred Segal, and her design partner Ashleigh Cohen.)

Prices at the store start at about \$35 for a pair of wood-and-enamel earrings that say "I Love Me"; the word "love" appears as a heart.

Jewelry and bags go into the hundreds.

One of my favorite items?

A checkbook-sized wallet of rustic leather decorated with lace. It's \$89 by Rebel.

This is the first venture into retail for Annex owners Annie LeBlanc, a 28-year-old former kindergarten teacher, and Doug Schwartz, a 36-year-old real estate developer, who live in Ferndale.

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Leather and lace wallet by Rebel, \$89 at the Annex.



Clay sun from La Roche Artifacts, \$12.

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A plump, friendly, white English bulldog named Frankie, who is just eight months old, is the Annex mascot.

If you look closely, on the walls, you'll see Frankie's photo in some of the frames that are on display.

The Annex is at 738 S. Washington, Royal Oak. Info: 248-808-6843.

### Let the sunshine in

As summer wanes, I am determined to hold onto the sunshine for as long as I can.

So, I bought this clay sun at La Roche Artifacts in Royal Oak. It'll look great near the back door of my house.

If you haven't been to La Roche, you must go.

It's full of garden statues and plaques and household ornaments, many made in Mexico.

Ceramic and cement statues are made locally and are priced reasonably; you'll see small bunny statues starting at around \$20.

As for my sun, it cost \$12.

La Roche Artifacts is at 509 S. Washington, Royal Oak. Info: 248-543-2770.

### The eyes have it

It is back-to-school season, which means it is likely you will cry -- because you've dropped off your baby at kindergarten or been dropped off at college by your parents.

And whether they are tears of sadness or joy, you do not want your mascara to run.

So let me tell you about Clinique's newish Lash Power long-wearing mascara.

It's cry-proof.

It's also sweat-proof, rainproof and humidity-proof.

The only way to get it off is with warm water.

It's available in two colors -- black onyx and dark chocolate. \$14 at department stores or [www.clinique.com](http://www.clinique.com)

### You too can smell like a gerbil

Is it worth wearing perfume that smells like a gerbil cage if men like it?

That's what I was trying to figure out.

It all started when a bottle of the new Yves Saint Laurent fragrance Elle, which is supposed to smell floral yet woody, crossed my desk.

According to promotional materials, the fragrance also is "unpredictable and

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unique" as well as "the essence of femininity."

A tester on [www.makeupalley.com](http://www.makeupalley.com) -- a fabulous Web site full of makeup news and product reviews -- says she's discovered that men are partial to women who wear Elle.

I sprayed on the perfume.

Then I read comments from other testers who say Elle smells like a gerbil cage.

And I understand why they say that -- at first spritz, the perfume really does smell like wood chips from a gerbil's cage.

Yet all I needed to put it in my permanent perfume rotation was for one man to tell me I smelled good.

But as it turns out, none of the men I asked to smell me found me or the scent especially appealing; perhaps they never had gerbils.

A one-ounce spray bottle of Elle perfume is \$61. Available at department stores, including Nordstrom and Macy's. For specific locations, or to shop on line: [www.yslbeautyus.com](http://www.yslbeautyus.com).

Contact **GEORGEA KOVANIS** at 313-222-6842 or [gkovanis@freepress.com](mailto:gkovanis@freepress.com).

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