

## what's NOW!

### BEST HANDMADE

BRIANA SMITH FOR B. THALLE



"Those are leather strands with hair still attached," says Smith, 29, whose creations are made by hand in her Primrose Hill, London, studio. This bag took a whopping 50 hours to complete—and left Smith in a shaggy situation: "I looked like I'd been rolling around with cats!" \$3,500; [bthalle.com](http://bthalle.com).

### BEST USE OF SWAROVSKI ELEMENTS

AIMEE KESTENBERG



Inspired by  
Australia's Blue  
Ring Octopus



"I love to push design to the limit," said the 23-year-old Melbourne native, who was moved by one particularly brightly hued cephalopod to use 10 different colored Swarovski crystals in various sizes to embellish her outrageous, one-of-a-kind evening bag. \$28,000; 212-966-3322.

### MOST INNOVATIVE

Inspired by Mark

MICHELLE VALE FOR MICHELLE VALE



Awarded by Mark, the beauty company devoted to multifunctional, customizable goods, this honor went to an N.Y.C. designer with a complementary sensibility. "The straps are convertible," says Vale, 35, "and the removable hardware can be swapped out for silver or gold, depending on your mood." \$895, \$40 for extra hardware set; [michellevale.com](http://michellevale.com).

### InStyle FAN FAVORITE

VERONICA SUAREZ FOR EXEX  
HANDBAGS BY VERONICA



"My parents are jewelry designers, so I've been around art and fashion my whole life," says the 21-year-old University of California, Los Angeles, student. (She received more than 63,000 votes on [InStyle.com](http://InStyle.com) to earn her Fan Fave title.) "This bag has a lush, suede-like interior and comes with a removable gold-tone chain for wearing over the shoulder." \$198; 714-427-3939.

## A Past Champ Soars

After scoring the first IHDA for Best in Overall Style and Design in 2007, KATHERINE KWEI has made a name for herself with her signature Chinese Eternity knot-inspired creations. "Winning not only helped me gain exposure," says Kwei, "it gave me a confidence boost and validation that my designs weren't crazy!" You can spot her knotty little bags on stars like Blake Lively and Jennifer Lopez, and on the shelves at Saks.

\$645;  
[katherinekwei.com](http://katherinekwei.com).

Fergie with  
Kwei's lambskin  
Donna clutch.





# InStyle

**600** PAGES OF

# FALL FASHION!

**BEST NEW TRENDS & HOW TO WEAR THEM**

*Hilary Swank*  
**On Style,  
Men & Fame**

**DO THEY REALLY WORK?**

**19 Miracle Beauty Products Tested**

**WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU SHOP**  
**117 Smart Tricks & Tips**

**Your Perfect Fall Makeup**

SEPTEMBER 2010 INSTYLE.COM

InStyle

\$4.99US \$6.99CAN 09

0 70992 10645 5