



HIGH PROFILES

Cameos made their first appearance in Hellenistic times, when they were chiseled into small pieces of stone to immortalize leaders and mythical heroes. More recent versions, like these above, enshrine anonymous women who were graced with the most desirable traits of their day; the two beauties with light-peach backdrops are from 19th-century Italy. Often carved in shell, they were sold to Victorian travelers on European tours, who'd bring them home to wear as status souvenirs. The trend caught on:

By the early 1900s, less-expensive glass ones were cast en masse to meet demand—that's why you can find vintage ladies, in a range of colors and prices, set into nearly every form of jewelry. We like the pins and pendants for their versatility: String one (or a few) on a necklace, or go all-out prim-chic on a dress or the collar of a blouse. These nods to history always turn heads.

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