

Gems & Jewellery

Summer 2024 / Volume 33 / No. 2



MULTIGENERATIONAL
GEM TRADE BUSINESSES

BRAZIL'S CRUZEIRO MINE

BONHAMS' HISTORY OF
JEWELLERY AUCTIONS

COUTURE 2024



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Great Britain

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Gems & Jewellery

SUMMER 2024

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY

A look at companies with multiple generations working together to find out the joys and challenges of working with family.



THE CRUZEIRO MINE

Brazil's Cruzeiro mine, the world's largest producer of tourmaline, has stayed true to its family values, mine-to-market model and green practices for three generations. Christine Puleo Reis AJP GD watched as stones moved from extraction to final production.

A QUICK LOOK AT BONHAMS

Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta spoke with Jean Ghika, global director of jewellery at Bonhams, about the British-owned auction house's successful history.



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COVER PICTURE

Our cover shows a ring created by Philipp Munsteiner. The 20.81 ametrine has been faceted with Mr Munsteiner's Dragon Egg cut; it is alongside a 0.15 ct round-brilliant diamond and set in 18K yellow gold. Photo courtesy of Atelier Munsteiner.

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Gems & Jewellery

Summer 2024 Edition Featured Contributors

1. NICOLE AHLINE

Nicole Ahline FGA completed her undergraduate studies in geology at Cornell College before enrolling at the Gemological Institute of America (GIA) for the Graduate Gemologist (GG) program, followed by the Gem-A Gemmology Diploma programme. In 2016, she was hired by GIA as part of their gem identification department, where she is now a senior staff gemmologist. While at GIA she has been a frequent contributor to gemmology journals and has given talks on numerous topics. Miss Ahline's current research interests include origin of colour in coloured diamonds and geographic origin of corundum and emeralds.

2. KARINA BREZ

A first-generation Ukrainian-American, Karina Brez earned the title of Miss Florida USA in 2012. She was inspired to design a jewellery collection after fellow contestants were impressed by the design she created for her own pageant dress. A horse enthusiast with a passion for gemstones,

Ms Brez has completed the GIA Graduate Gemologist program and is also an appraiser. She advocates for non-profits introducing children to the healing power of horses. Her signature fine jewellery collections include Huggable Hooves, The Garden Collection, Fearless Feathers by Dani G. and Cowgirl LUV. Ms Brez opened a retail flagship in Palm Beach, Florida in 2021; her work is available in retailers throughout the United States and Canada.

3. CHRISTOPHER DOBRANSKI

Originally a wood carver and sculptor from Edmonton, Canada, Christopher Dobranski was introduced to jade and the World Jade Symposium in 2011. Currently located near Idar-Oberstein, Germany, he is a former student of world-renowned master gem carver Alfred Zimmermann. Mr Dobranski is constantly working to learn new techniques and hone his craft. Among his accolades is the World Jade Symposium People's Choice Award in 2014. Mr Dobranski's work has been featured in books, galleries

and museums around the world. His carving in quartz of his cat, Spartacus, is currently on display at the German Gemstone Museum in Idar-Oberstein.

4. CHRISTINE REIS PULEO

Christine Puleo Reis is a New Yorker currently living in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Her career has always focused on Latin America, following studies in anthropology at Dartmouth College and journalism at Columbia University in New York. She holds an AJP and a Graduate Diamonds diploma from GIA. Prior to moving to Brazil, she worked with Kentshire Galleries, the antique jewellery shop located at the top of Bergdorf Goodman in New York City. She enjoys writing about the diversity of Brazil's gem production and unique jewellery styles and periods, such as Brazilian Creole and Brazilian Modernist jewellery, and is currently coordinating several Brazil-U.S. gem and jewellery projects.

Special thanks to Alanna Archuleta, Philipp Munsteiner and Beth West FGA DGA.



Straight from the heart

Opinion and comment from CEO Alan Hart FGA DGA

I recently made the decision to end my tenure as the chief executive officer of Gem-A. As I write this, my last introductory letter to *Gems&Jewellery*, I want to reflect on my time with the Association and the changes that we, as a group, saw over the past eight years – a time of enormous change, both in the larger world and within our community. Projects within the Association included an infrastructure overhaul, a brand refresh and new website, the launch of our GemIntro online short course and, to debut in the near future, a Membership portal. Together, we at Gem-A Headquarters weathered the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with our Members and Students. We adapted to the needs of our Students under lockdown, offering the same high calibre of training, service and expertise that we have been known for since the early twentieth century.

So much of what makes the field of gemmology special is the human element of our work: how much passion we have for the subject, how much we connect with each other in the service of the trade and how much information we exchange with others in the spirit of gemmological advancement. I have experienced this repeatedly at our annual Conference, and at the trade shows and other events where

I represented the Association. I have appreciated the opportunity to develop relationships with Members, Students, Alumni and Board Members, and I would like to thank the entire Gem-A extended community for making this such a memorable period in my career.

I would like to thank the entire Gem-A extended community for making this such a memorable period in my career.

The Summer 2024 *G&J* is filled with content about many facets of the field. Our lead article introduces our readers to trade-related businesses operating with multiple generations of the family working together. Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta spoke to members of these companies, who reported on the advantages and challenges of working closely with family. These companies reflect the dynamics noticed in family-women assuming leadership roles, a sense of community involvement and a feeling of hopefulness about the future of their companies.

The Cruzeiro tourmaline mine in Minas Gerais, Brazil, has been run by the Neves family for three generations. It is the largest tourmaline mine in the world by size and production; while it is well known for its rubellite, it also extracts material in other colours. Christine Reis Puleo AJP GD visited the mine and observed the extraction process. She also spoke to the four members of the



Neves family who serve as company partners, learning about their history and their long-term plans for mining the Cruzeiro deposit.

Founded in the late eighteenth century, Bonhams is the world's oldest auctioneers and the only privately owned international auction house under British leadership. The company credits its success its live and online sales platforms, bespoke service and promotion of artist-jewellers. Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta spoke with Jean Ghika, global director of jewellery, about Bonham's successful history in the field of jewellery auctions. Ms Ghika also shared stories about significant sales that took place through the auction house.

Also within these pages is a look at the exclusive COUTURE show, held every spring in Las Vegas. There is also a conversation with Shelly Sergent, curator of the privately owned gemstone and jewellery collection Somewhere in the Rainbow, and a recounting from gem carver Christopher Dobranski of the creation of his Parliament of Owls series. There is something for everyone to appreciate in these pages.

Though I am looking forward to the next stage of my career, I am eager to watch the next chapter of the Gem-A story unfold. I wish everyone in our community all the best in the future.

Alan Hart FGA DGA



Our lead article covers multigenerational family businesses, including Columbia Gem House (CGH). This collection of gemstones with CGH's signature GeoCut, created by Eric Braunwart and his cutting team to echo natural crystal structures. Photo courtesy of Columbia Gem House.

Gem-A News

A round-up of the latest industry news from Gem-A

COMPANY UNVEILS 75.33 CT LAB-GROWN DIAMOND AS WORLD'S LARGEST TO DATE

In collaboration with RockRush of New York City, Indian-based company Ethereal Green Diamond has unveiled a 75.33 ct lab-grown diamond, called the Celebration of India. This specimen, fashioned into a square-emerald cut, is believed to be the world's largest lab-grown diamond to date. Ethereal Green Diamond has also introduced with a unique 30.69 ct ring-shaped specimen, called the Infinity Ring, which the company stated was developed from a single rough crystal via the chemical vapor deposition (CVD) method. "At Ethereal Green, we are constantly innovating, adopting new technology and creating

benchmarks," said company director Hirav Virani. Both pieces were analysed and graded as type Ila specimens with excellent polish and symmetry by the International Gemological Institute (IGI).

The Celebration of India took an estimated 270 days to grow to 190 carats; another 30 days were needed for cutting and polishing. The Infinity Ring took approximately 146 days to grow and roughly 90 days to complete what the company refers to as its 'freeform modified shape'.

Both the Celebration of India and the Infinity Ring are currently on display at the RockRush store in New York City's SoHo neighbourhood.



Ethereal Green Diamond has announced the creation of two lab-grown diamonds that were subsequently analysed and graded by the International Gemological Institute. The 75.33 ct Celebration of India (top) is the largest lab-grown diamond known to date; the 30.69 ct Infinity Ring (bottom), was crafted from a single rough crystal grown by the CVD method. Photo courtesy of the International Gemological Institute.

NEW SERVICE AVAILABLE FROM GÜBELIN GEM LAB FOR SMALLER GEMS

In late June, the Gübelin Gem Lab announced its new Gem Passport, a document designed to accompany gemstones in smaller sizes. Powered by its AI-driven software, Gemtelligence,

the Gem Passport — which differs from a standard Gübelin Gem Lab Report — is available for unmounted blue sapphires, rubies and emeralds weighing up to 3.00 ct.

While the Gem Passport provides the main identification features of an examined gemstone, such as species and variety, country of origin and a simplified disclosure of the treatment status, it does not contain any quality or rarity additions (e.g., no trade colour call, appendix or rating document). According to Daniel Nyfeler, managing director of the Gübelin Gem Lab, "We believe that the Gem Passport is a highly attractive and affordable service for stones which so far were not accompanied by a testing document from a globally respected lab, giving peace of mind also to brands and retailers."

The Gem Passport service is available at all Gübelin lab locations. For more information, visit gubelingemlab.com/en/gemlab/gem-passport.

The Gübelin Gem Lab's new Gem Passport service is available for unmounted emeralds, rubies and blue sapphires weighing up to 3.00 ct. Photo courtesy of Gübelin Gem Lab.



SOTHEBY'S TO AUCTION JEWELS OF DAME SHIRLEY BASSEY

As part of their Fine Jewels biannual auction, to be held in Paris on 10 October, Sotheby's will offer over seventy pieces of jewellery from the collection of Dame Shirley Bassey. She has selected pieces in a variety of styles that represent particular moments and performances during her seven-decade career, which has generated more than 140 million record sales. The majority of the jewels offered feature diamonds – the gemstone synonymous with the Welsh-born singer since she first sang the theme song to the James Bond film *Diamonds are Forever* in 1971.

Proceeds from the sale of her jewels will benefit Dame Shirley Bassey's chosen charities.

Sotheby's Paris will auction a selection of jewels from Dame Shirley Bassey in October 2024, including a ruby-and-diamond parure (bottom). The petals of the ear clips and brooch, as well as the bracelet, are invisibly set with calibr -cut rubies and enhanced with brilliant-cut diamonds. The parure on top is composed of a necklace, a ring and a pair of ear clips. Alternating navette-shaped links set with fluted coral and accented by brilliant-cut diamonds connect to coral-and-gold circular links. Photos courtesy of Sotheby's.



PERUVIAN EMBASSY HOSTS PANEL FOCUSING ON INDUSTRY CHANGE

On 30 May, the Peruvian Embassy held a panel entitled 'Forces of Nature: Working for Impact in the Jewellery Industry.' This was a collaboration between the Embassy and Rachel Sweeney's boutique/atelier, Cox & Power, which recently hosted an exhibition of the work by Peruvian jeweller Andrea Jose (Casa Collab Global and Andrea Jose Designs). In addition to Ms Sweeney, the panel featured Ms Jose and Susi Smither (The Rock Hound). They discussed how, through their personal initiatives and perspectives, to provoke change in the industry.

The conversation focussed on the role of women and the need to support education across the supply chain, particularly within artisanal and small-scale mining, in order to address current information asymmetry and disparity. In both of her ventures, Ms Jose works closely with a group of artisanal gold miners in the Madre de Dios region in miners in the Amazonian Basin in Peru.

Closing remarks were made by Peruvian ambassador Ignacio Higuera Hare.

Beth West FGA DGA

OBITUARY

Bernd Munsteiner (1943–2024)

Gems&Jewellery is saddened to announce the passing of award-winning gemstone cutter and innovator Bernd Munsteiner on 6 June 2024. As the third generation of the Munsteiner carving family (see pp. 10–17), and founder of Atelier Munsteiner, he is remembered not only for his revolutionary approach to gem carving, which led to the creation of the modern-day fantasy cut, but for his charm and generosity.

Mr Munsteiner began learned the art of gem carving under his father at the age of 14, later graduating from Germany's Pforzheim School of Design. With his wife, Hanne, he set up his own business in Neuenb rg, near Pforzheim, in 1966. He built the present-day Atelier Munsteiner, with a gem-cutting shop and a goldsmith's workshop, in Stipshausen between 1970 and 1973. He became known for an angular style and concave cuts made on the back of gemstones. These techniques, which eventually developed what became the 'fantasy cut', broke away from conventional gem-cutting methods and revolutionised the trade. Mr

Munsteiner won the first award of his illustrious career in 1968 at the age of 25; he would later become the recipient of multiple became an honorary member of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths and the American Gem Trade Association in 1983 and 1996, respectively. His work is featured in *Somewhere in the Rainbow* (pp. 30–35) and can be found on exhibit in museums around the world, including the Alfie Norville Gem & Mineral Museum at the University of Arizona (Tucson, Arizona) and the Hermitage Museum (St Petersburg, Russia). Mr. Munsteiner may be best known as the carver of the Dom Pedro (p. 11),

a 10.363 ct aquamarine from Minas Gerais, Brazil, that is now housed at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC.

Bernd Munsteiner was preceded in death by his sons, J rg and Tom Munsteiner. He is survived by his wife of nearly sixty years, Hanne; his grandson, Philipp; and his daughter-in-law, Jutta. He also leaves behind a legacy of dedication and genius; according to a post on the Atelier Munsteiner Instagram account, "Bernd's vision, passion and excellence enables us to look to our future with confidence and pride." G&J sends the Munsteiner family our sincerest condolences.



Turquoise, the Gemstone of Timeless Frontiers

Jewellery designer and gemmologist Karina Brez explains turquoise's connection to the American Southwest and its impact on her Western-style jewellery.

Turquoise [$\text{CuAl}_6(\text{PO}_4)_4(\text{OH})_8 \cdot 5\text{H}_2\text{O}$] is a hydrated phosphate of copper and aluminium that usually occurs in massive forms, nodules or as veins in host rocks. This material can be discovered in a spectrum of colours ranging from pure blue to greenish-blue and even yellowish hues. It can include unique natural matrix patterns that provide a particular aesthetic appeal. The most prized variation is 'Persian blue' or 'robin's-egg blue', a vibrant and uniform blue with no matrix. Greenish hues are attributed to the presence of iron impurities, while the classic blue colour is due to copper content. The opaque gemstone is a triclinic crystal system, ranking 5 to 6 on the Mohs hardness scale. To enhance the durability and colour of the material, turquoise may be subject to treatments such as impregnation and dyeing.

Noteworthy deposits are in Iran (historically considered the finest source, with a pure blue colour and lack of matrix); China; the Sinai Peninsula and, in the American Southwest, the states of Arizona, Nevada, Colorado and New Mexico.

While it has a long history of appreciation in historical civilisations such as Ancient Egypt, Persia and pre-Columbian Mesoamerican societies, in the modern era, turquoise has become associated with the American Southwest. Of the modern-day mines for turquoise, Arizona and Nevada are particularly renowned for high-quality levels, often featuring striking matrices.

The recent resurgence of the Western aesthetic in jewellery has propelled turquoise into the limelight. In part because of the location of the American deposits, turquoise is often used in the Western-style jewellery and accessories that are part of current cowgirl fashion. Its blue (or green) hue adds a pop of colour to

outfits, complementing other Western elements like leather and silver. At its core, the cowgirl spirit is about a fierce determination to conquer challenges, a love for wide-open spaces, and a commitment to taking care of one's horses and cattle. It is an attitude of self-reliance and grit, with a deep connection to the land and horses.

Turquoise, as a gemstone, is symbolically associated with protection,

luck and abundance — the inspiration behind its use in the pieces shown. I have designed these pieces, with turquoise as their major component, to capture the essence of places cowgirls roam and ride, allowing wearers to carry a piece of their adventurous spirit wherever they go. The use of turquoise allows me to pay homage to the rugged beauty and untamed spirit of the American West. ■

Below: This 92.00 ct turquoise nugget (42 mm x 27 mm) is from Arizona's Sleeping Beauty mine. Image courtesy of JTV (Jewelry Television).

Opposite page, clockwise from left: the Dallas Diamond and Turquoise earrings feature 1.76 tcw turquoise and 0.35 ct diamonds set in 18K yellow gold. The Montana Diamond and Turquoise earrings comprises 0.69 ct turquoise, 0.22 ct diamonds and 18K rose gold. The Whitney Stackable Turquoise ring uses 0.33 ct turquoise in both the top and bottom stacks, and 0.14 ct diamonds and 0.08 ct pink sapphires in the center stack, all mounted in 18K white gold. The Cowgirl LUV Destiny Pendant uses a 10+ ct quartz, 0.11 ct diamonds, 0.58 ct natural turquoise and 18K rose gold (chain not included). Photos and jewellery courtesy of Karina Brez.







Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta reached out to companies with multiple generations currently working together to find out about the challenges and joys of working with family.

A significant number of businesses around the world are family owned, or multigenerational, although there is no one definition for what constitutes a 'family' business. Any company in which two or more family members are involved, with the majority of ownership or control within a family, may be considered family run. According to a 2024 podcast by McKinsey and Company, such businesses contribute to more than seventy percent of global gross domestic product (GDP) and sixty percent of global employment. Family Business UK reported in 2023 that in the United Kingdom alone, family-owned businesses make up ninety percent of all private-sector firms and employ almost fourteen million people. Such businesses tend to be more resilient than non-family-owned companies and have a greater sense of responsibility towards their communities (Family Business UK, 2023; Carvalho, Leke and Vickery, 2024).

Representatives of these companies voice hopefulness about passing along traditions and hands-on knowledge to future generations; at the same time, conventional dynamics and gender roles in these companies are changing. The SC Johnson College of Business at Cornell University reported that almost 60 percent of all family businesses have women in executive positions. Further, almost one-third of such companies reported that the current leader's successor is female.

The gem and jewellery industry is a field wherein businesses are founded, maintained and passed on among multiple generations of the same family. We spoke to members of five companies in different areas of the industry to find out what it was like to work as part of a family-owned business in this niche trade. We found that these businesses reflected larger, general observations made about family-owned operations: many were founded or co-owned by women; they are concerned with ethical issues and responsible treatment of their communities; and they are hopeful about the companies they hope to hand off to future generations. We thank all of our participants for their time and enthusiasm.

ATELIER MUNSTEINER

Jutta Munsteiner,
Master Goldsmith and Designer
Philipp Munsteiner,
Journeyman Gem Cutter



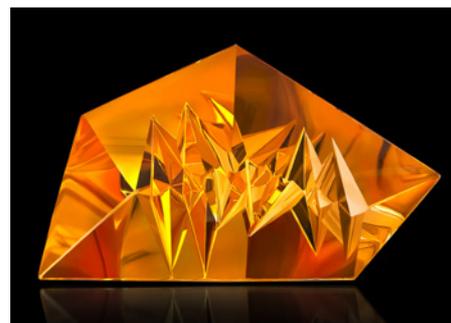
A gem-cutting company established by Albert Munsteiner in 1898, Atelier Munsteiner was opened in Stipshausen, Germany, in 1973 by his grandson, Bernd Munsteiner. Jutta Munsteiner currently runs the business along with her son Philipp, the son of Tom Munsteiner and the grandson of Bernd Munsteiner and himself a prospective master gem cutter. Atelier Munsteiner primarily sells gemstones fashioned in a modern design in their in-house cutting shop; they also make jewellery from unique stones.

How long has your family been in the gem and jewellery trade? How long have you, personally, been involved?

JM: Albert Munsteiner began in the trade as a gem cutter in 1898. I joined the company in 1997, while Phillip began his work in the business four years ago, making him the fifth generation in the Munsteiner family of gemstone cutters.

Who are your customers? Why do you think they seek you out?

JM: Our customer base is made up of people who love art, gemstones and jewellery. We have many customers in the United States and Japan. People



Philipp Munsteiner's Griffin cut has been applied to this 53.68 ct citrine.



The Aurora ring, a collaboration between Jutta and Tom Munsteiner, uses 5.87 ct tanzanite, 2.65 ct tourmaline, 0.08 ct diamond and platinum.

seek us out because they are looking for a special gemstone or piece of jewellery that is made especially for them.

How do you think your status as a family-run/multigenerational business factors into your success?

JM: We are creative people who work together to create our enchanting cuts. We all share a great passion for gemstones. We have many friends in Brazil and in African countries, where we also buy rough stones. To work with this natural material is the greatest fulfilment for all of us.

PM: In 2015, I went to Brazil for the first time with my parents to buy rough stones. This was an unforgettable and important experience for me. Getting to know other cultures and countries is very exciting and inspiring for me.

What is your ten-year plan for yourself and your family from a business perspective?

JM: We want to develop many new ideas while keeping the tried-and-tested ones. The greatest success for us is the smile of our customers when they wear our jewellery.

PM: I feel confident about the future; I am looking forward to introducing people to my gemstones and my work.

What advice would you give to the next generation of your family (the one that is not involved in the business yet, but might become active when they are of age)?

JM: A positive attitude and putting your heart and soul into your hard work is a good recipe for a family business.

Always follow your heart, that will keep you on the right path. The joy of work and inspiration is the most important cornerstone.



The 10,363-ct Dom Pedro aquamarine (above), was created by third-generation gem carver Bernd Munsteiner. Photo by Donald E. Hurlbert, courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of Natural History. The Mantis (left), by his son Tom Munsteiner, uses a 1,066.55 ct citrine.

COLUMBIA GEM HOUSE

Natasha Braunwart, Brand & Corporate Social Responsibility Manager
 Based in Vancouver, Washington (USA), Columbia Gem House was founded in 1975 by Eric Braunwart. It is staffed today by multiple generations of the Braunwart family, as well as close friends who are 'chosen family'. It is primarily a coloured gemstone cutting and wholesale business with a strong commitment to responsible sourcing. They also have a finished-jewellery manufacturing team at their Washington State headquarters. As part of their vision 'to create a world where responsibly sourced gems are the rule, not the exception', they have helped to redefine the standards by which coloured



Columbia Gem House's 'Team Tradeshow' includes family members and longtime friends of the Braunwarts. From left: Natasha Braunwart, Eric Braunwart, Mark Sprague, Pam Workman, Kathe Braunwart, Tod Braunwart and Joe Orlando.



Eric Braunwart, founder and president of Columbia Gem House, with his wife Kathe, the company's co-owner and jewellery designer.

gemstones are brought to market through the implementation of their in-house authored Fair Trade Gems Principles & Protocols.

How do you think your status as a family-run/multigenerational business factors into your success?

I believe we can make quicker decisions and fund projects that align with our mission and vision, even if they aren't always the most profitable choice. Our family-run dynamic enables us to approach decisions with a familial mindset rather than your typical business-transaction mindset. We prioritise this aspect over the bottom line. To us, it's more important to create an equitable supply chain and do something positive with our work than it is to make the most money. I can confidently say this perspective has been ingrained in me by my family, and I don't think it would be viable to operate or make decisions in this way in a corporate setting.

Are there specific challenges to working as a family that are specific to this niche field? Please explain what they are.

This is a fun question! I think lots of people assume I have the same 'brain' as my parents, and somehow all their knowledge has magically made its way into my head. If I am asked a question and I don't know the answer, I get a lot of weird looks. I don't think the typical 'let me find out and get back to you' is always accepted, because many assume I should just know the answer. This industry has traditionally been very opaque, and a lot of the knowledge and expertise can only be learned through experience, not necessarily through a formal education structure. My parents have been in this industry for fifty years; I've been in it for four percent of that time. So, I have some catching up to do if I want to uphold the reputation my parents have built.



Pomme Ruby, mined in keeping with Columbia Gem House's Fair Trade Gems Principles & Protocols, is found in a community of apple and rice farms in Madagascar. Pomme is the French word for apple, as well as the root word for apple in Malagasy.



A selection of rings from Columbia Gem House's Stackers collection.

“Our family-run dynamic enables us to approach decisions with a familial mindset rather than your typical business-transaction mindset. We prioritise this aspect over the bottom line.”

I think as the next generation coming into any family business, it can also be hard not to self-intimidate or put pressure on yourself to excel at everything in fear of disappointing your family or not living up to the expectations of your customers.

If you have a family business that started before your own generation, what challenges might exist for someone who would want to start a jewellery business that did not exist when your family's business started?

When my dad first started out, essentially every transaction or business relationship was done face-to-face. There was never a need for individual part numbers to upload to the web, let alone the need to have our gems viewable without us there to physically show them. That's something we are working through now – organising fifty years of inventory to be uploaded to the web. This is just one example that illustrates how my generation, growing up with the internet and cell phones, filters information through a very different lens.

What is your ten-year plan for yourself and your family from a business perspective?

While I know my dad will never fully step away from the business (he

just loves it too much), I would like to see the business adapt so he has the opportunity to only work on the ‘fun’ things that he wants to work on. Outside of that, my ten-year plan is to continue running the business under our Fair Trade Gems Principles & Protocols, evolving them as we grow, and to work with the rest of our team to capture their knowledge and expertise so the next generation can confidently learn their specialty and work to fill

their shoes as well. I also plan to get our entire inventory uploaded online, reintroduce our finished jewellery manufacturing and grow our team to continue building what my dad set out to do forty-eight years ago.

What advice would you give to the next generation of your family (the one that is not involved in the business yet, but might become active when they are of age)?

Come into the business when it's right for you. Don't do it for anyone else or on anyone else's timeline. Ask as many questions as you can and remember what it is that you bring to the table. Ask yourself how you can apply your skills to support the continued growth and adaptation of the business so it can evolve into something that you are proud of while still celebrating the legacy of where things started and who they started with. Don't lose sight of that.



Columbia Gem House is known for its gem-cutting work. Here, a 1.38 ct bicolour sapphire from Montana has been fashioned into a hexagonal cut.

DRUTIS JEWELLERY

Dana Drutis, Co-Founder

The motto of Drutis Jewellery, a mother-daughter team helming a Ukrainian brand with a Western presence, is "Jewellery that moves... You." They are very much a Ukrainian brand with a Western presence. Prior to the upscaling



Elena and Dana Drutis, the mother-daughter team behind Drutis Jewellery.

of the Russo-Ukrainian War, Elena Drutis lived in Odessa, Ukraine; her daughter, Dana Drutis, resided in London. Elena has since joined Dana in London. Their production proudly remains in Ukraine, with a strong and committed small team of jewellers, model makers, computer-aided designers and setters.

What is the mission of your family business?

To create jewellery that resonates with the creative streak in our customers' souls, that awes them and makes them feel like a kid again. While our pieces are not simple at all, we simply want to create jewellery that moves you, jewellery that moves, jewellery that creates joy for the wearer and jewellery that stands out.

Who are your customers? Why do you think they seek you out?

Our customer has no age restriction, which is something we have learnt first-hand in our business. They are

someone that appreciates something unique, doesn't chase after huge brand names for the sake of recognition. Rather, they choose something that is high quality, long lasting and timeless, but also creative, unusual and pushing the boundaries of what everyday jewellery should look like and do. They are excited by our jewellery that is more than meets the eye, that moves, transforms, carries meaning and functionality and makes them feel like an excited child.

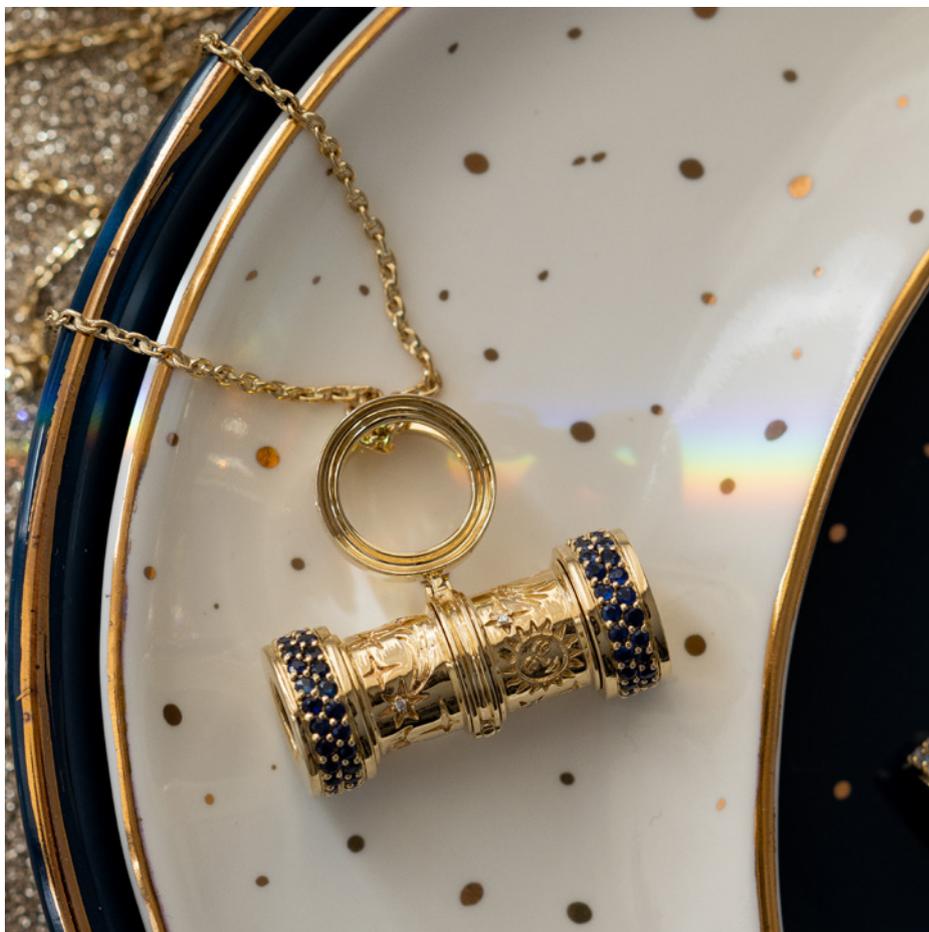
How do you think your status as a family-run/multigenerational business factors into your success?

I consider us to be very much a young family-run business with huge amount of potential for growth, development and learning. I believe our biggest successes are still ahead of us. However, I would say that it's our unorthodox roots of not coming from a jewellery business background and not going through the formal route of jewellery education that makes us harsh judges of our own product.

Our familiarity with jewellery as a customer and our joint consumer lens makes us consciously choose to only produce unique one-of-a-kind jewellery that stands out in a world saturated with beautiful, well-crafted, high-end jewellery. We really felt like if we are going to do this we should produce something that has not been seen before! And that is what we still aim to achieve with every design, whether big or small.

Is there anything about being a family-run enterprise that you think would surprise our readers? Please share.

Honesty is key, and honesty runs through the veins of a family-run enterprise much more so than you would expect, versus a more classical business concept. If a piece doesn't inspire, awe and make us both giddy, it does not make it to production. We test — sense-test, practice-test, wear-test and pressure-test — our pieces until we are both thrilled with them. It is a high standard to live up to, but we are a biased mother-and-daughter duo.





Above: A selection of wearable kaleidoscopes from Drutis Jewellery. Left: The Cosmic Kaleidoscope – Starry Night kaleidoscope has stars (embedded with 0.12 ct diamond), moon and sun engravings on its 14K yellow-gold body, with sapphire adorning the sides. The colourful effect inside is created by ruby, fuchsite, blue sapphire, emerald and opal.

What is your ten-year plan for yourself and your family from a business perspective?

We do not aim to be something that everyone loves and wants.

We are unique, we are unusual and funky and creative, and certainly not for everyone. We hope 'our' customers – described in an earlier answer – find us!



One of the kinetic rings offered by Drutis Jewellery, the Solomon's Ring (shown here in 9K white gold) features freely moving, lab-grown ruby cabochons alongside an equally movable platinum pebble. It is engraved with the words 'Full of Love'.

Our ten-year plan is at least fifty more kaleidoscope designs, a handful more of Solomon's Ring designs and ten more kinetic jewellery pieces with countless iterations of each. We would love to be present in the United States, Europe, the Asia-Pacific and Middle East-North Africa regions, and we aspire to open a Drutis Jewellery store. We hope to be able to provide a platform within our store for other brands to be discovered, opening a multi-brand section for up-and-coming emerging designers and trailblazing the path for future talent. The Drutis Jewellery store will have only two criteria – be authentic and be unique!

We are sure, amongst all of our goals, there will be peaks and troughs, successes and failures, spot-on designs and those that do not make it. We hope to forever continue making our pieces in our workshop in Ukraine, which will no doubt grow in the years ahead, and our jewellers will create, inspire and produce in a country full of peace.

"Honesty is key, and honesty runs through the veins of a family-run enterprise."

H.J. JOHNSON JEWELLERS

Rachel Nield PJ Dip FGA, Director

The Blanshard family first entered the gem trade in 1926, when John Blanshard opened and established wholesale diamond company Tidy & Blanshard in Hatton Garden. In 1972, his son Philip Blanshard FGA DGA purchased a jewellery shop in Devizes, which had been established in 1866 by Mr. Henry Joseph Johnson. Now in its fourth generation of trade-related work, the family continues to operate H.J. Johnson Jewellers Ltd. Their mission as a small, family-run operation is to give customers confidence through friendly and warm service that comes with many years of experience and knowledge, and to evolve and move with the developing jewellery industry.

How do you think your status as a family-run/multigenerational business factors into your success?

I think our position as a family-owned business factors in our success in many ways. The wealth of knowledge that has been passed down the generations from a young age and the importance of the structure of running a business, quality of service and products, professionalism and customer service – these values will continue to be passed down. There is a vested interest in the business for every generation in our family, and that will always make the respect, customer satisfaction and products we offer of utmost importance in building a family legacy for a successful future business.

The pride that comes with working in a multigenerational business encourages me to want to work harder and achieve more, both for the



The three generations of H.J. Johnson Jewellers — Ruth Blanshard, Philip Blanshard and Rachel Nield PJ Dip FGA — with their Gem-A Diplomas.

success of the company in the future and for my children to, hopefully, one day come on board.

Are there specific challenges to working as a family that are specific to this niche field? If you have a family business that started before your own generation, what challenges might exist for someone who would want to start a jewellery business that did not exist when your family's business started?

I would say that challenges include the ever-changing information, such as technology, and the many variables in this trade. Everything my grandfather learnt about gemmology and jewellery all adds to the quality of our knowledge. However, with so many new gemstones and new lab-grown materials, we are constantly training and must be open to learning every day.

Challenges for someone starting a jewellery business that did not exist when ours started could include building a longstanding loyal customer base, purely because this can take a very long time. Having this foundation helps to keep a good flow of custom through the door, even in tough times. Also, building such an in-depth knowledge of this industry takes many, many years, as there really is so much to learn about, both from a practical and theoretical standpoint.

What is your ten-year plan for yourself and your family from a business perspective?

Our ten-year plan for our business as a family is to continue with our success and our ever-growing customer patronage.

What advice would you give to the next generation of

“The pride that comes with working in a multigenerational business encourages me to want to work harder and achieve more.”

your family (the one that is not involved in the business yet, but might become active when they are of age)?

The advice I would give to my children about our business – among many things – would be to keep the values previously mentioned as top priority. If they have a passion for this business and the industry, they will go far.

LOTUS GEMOLOGY

E. Billie Hughes FGA
 Co-Founder and Gemmologist
 A Bangkok-based laboratory founded by the Hughes family in 2014, Lotus Gemology exclusively tests coloured gemstones, with a focus on identification, treatment and origin determination. All three founding members are passionate about the beauty and rarity of natural coloured gemstones, and we try to share this love with the world by providing high-quality testing reports. By educating the public, they help others appreciate these natural treasures.

How long has your family been in the gem and jewellery trade? How long have you, personally, been involved?

My parents (Richard Hughes and Wimon Manorotkul) and I are all founding members of Lotus Gemology, which we opened together in 2014. That means we all participate in both



The H.J. Johnson Jewellers shopfront many decades ago (left) and as it appears today (right).



All photos on this page courtesy of H.J. Johnson Jewellers.

LOTUS
GEM-ology



The cover of a Lotus Gemology lab report.

the business side of the operations, as well as the gemmological side. They previously had many decades of experience in the industry but were working with other companies.

While most people that I know in family businesses joined several years after the founding of the company, my path was a little different in that I was present to start the company alongside my parents. This has been a great opportunity, as it has given me a chance to have input from the start, as well as to benefit from their many years of experience.

My parents are both gemmologists, and have each been involved in this trade for over thirty years. Because of their background, I grew up around the trade and visited my first gem mine in Thailand when I was just a toddler. While I was still in university at the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), I had the opportunity to join my dad and our friend Vincent Pardieu on a field trip to Madagascar during my summer holidays. This is when I started gaining a better understanding of the importance of field gemmology. I got my FGA in 2013, which is when I started looking at stones in the laboratory, which is how I became interested in gem testing and photomicrography.

Who are your customers? Why do you think they seek you out?

Our clients come from all over the world, and encompass everyone from wholesale gem dealers, private collectors and auction houses and internationally recognised jewellery brands that are household names. From the feedback we've received, our clients seek us out because our philosophy of sharing our love for gems resonates with them and their audiences. They also tend to be familiar with our publications, research, and experience, and so they trust us to test their stones.

How do you think your status as a family-run/multigenerational business factors into your success?

There are definitely some advantages to this type of business. Because

"I was present to start the company alongside my parents. This has been a great opportunity, as it's given me a chance to have input from the start."



The Hughes family of Lotus Gemology – E. Billie Hughes FGA, Richard W. Hughes FGA and Wimon Manerotkul FGA – in Mozambique. Photo courtesy of Lotus Gemology.

my parents have been working for several decades, we benefit from their considerable experience and the relationships they have built over the years. At Lotus, we're certainly more well known especially because of things like my dad's *Ruby & Sapphire* books.

On the other hand, it's also an advantage to have someone from the younger generation like myself involved, to bring new ideas to the table. One of my biggest projects has been our Hyperion inclusion database of over 1,600 photomicrographs, which is available on our website. This has been a very popular tool with our audience.

Are there specific challenges to working as a family that are specific to this niche field? Please explain what they are.

I think it's always challenging to work in a family business. Because of our close ties, we may tend to be less filtered with one another, which naturally creates conflict. But this can also be a source of strength. What is important is that we all believe in the same overall goal, which is to deliver the highest quality of work for our company and for our clients. ■

References available upon request to the Editor.

This photomicrograph of an apatite in sapphire (field of view 6.0 mm) was taken during the examination of the host gemstone at Lotus Gemology's Bangkok lab. Photo by E. Billie Hughes.



The mine welcomes visitors to journey down dozens of metres to verify the mine's responsible practices. Photo courtesy of the Cruzeiro mine.

THE CRUZEIRO MINE

Brazil's Cruzeiro mine, the world's largest producer of tourmaline, has stayed true to its family values, mine-to-market model and green practices for three generations. Christine Puleo Reis AJP GD descended into the mine and watched in real time as stones moved from extraction to final production.

The Cruzeiro mine is located in Minas Gerais, Brazil. More specifically, the site lies in the municipality of São José de Safira, or 'Saint Joseph of Sapphire', in honour of the blue gemstones that drew miners to the region. However, a more appropriate name may be 'Saint Joseph of the Tourmaline', as many of the stones considered sapphire were very likely tourmaline. Today, these hills, which contain the world's largest pegmatite formations (known as the Eastern Brazilian Pegmatite Province) still host blue tourmaline. Copious stores of black and green tourmaline are also found there, as well as the pink and red material known as rubellite; the mine is well known for this latter material.

The world's largest tourmaline mine by production and size, the Cruzeiro mine has produced, on average, hundreds of kilos of tourmaline annually over four decades, and spans 3,500 hectares. Of this total, however, just 50 hectares have been explored to date, with 25 kilometres of galleries

mapped, and 118 years of useful life remaining within some 2,220 metres of pegmatites. The mine and production are vast, but the company is small. Four partners, Douglas, Diego, Beatriz and Antonio Neves, lead the company. Douglas and Diego are the sons of José Neves, who purchased the mine along with his brother Antonio in 1982. Beatriz is the widow of Antonio; Antonio's Jr is his son. With the arrival

of Antonio Jr.'s son Ian at the Cruzeiro offices, the mine is now officially a third-generation family business. The family also employs a mining crew that ranges from 50 to 100 people, depending on production needs, plus a small administrative staff, a geologist and a mining engineer.

The Cruzeiro mine is most easily reached by helicopter. The trip is just over an hour from the nearest metropolitan area, Belo Horizonte, and takes us over Cipó National Park, with an endless vista of rolling green hills and mountaintops. From the air — or even if approaching by land — the mine is barely a blip on that landscape; a small doorway is all that heralds the site of the world's largest tourmaline mine. Further up on the hill stands a corrugated steel structure where the mine's production arrives by conveyor belt for washing and separation.



A small sampling of the day's production: green, pink and watermelon tourmaline. Photo by Christine Puleo Reis.

MINERAL LANDSCAPE

Just steps from the door, the journey begins: a multicoloured mineral labyrinth with formations of all shapes and sizes. Pegmatites are rich mineral assemblages, and the mine's variety does not disappoint, thanks to high concentrations of lithium, boron, beryllium, niobium and copper, to name a few. Garnet, quartz, aquamarine and morganite are visible (and in some cases, gem quality), in addition to tourmaline crystals of nearly every hue, which nearly tumble out of pockets and which we remove with our bare hands. Green tourmaline accounts for the majority of tourmaline production at 30%. However, manganese, the mineral that gives rubellite its coveted red colour, appears to drip down vast swaths of wall; in fact, the mine is known for its fine-quality rubellite. The most striking example of the mine's legendary production is the aptly named Legend Pocket. Discovered in 2012, the small cave contained nearly two tons of rubellite. Just a few years later, another was made. This time, the find was made at the direction of the mine's general engineering manager, Marcelo Vieira Campos, who has been in his role for three decades. The haul: a gem-quality rubellite crystal weighing more than 70 kilograms.

More than 60 metres down the mine, local eucalyptus trees shore up tunnels and doorways. There are just a handful of miners at work with hand tools, and the mood is relaxed, but the pulleys are in constant activity. A heaving sound proceeds the loads, which swiftly travel up and down the distance in iron tubs. Douglas Neves explained, "The speed of mining is a factor in sustainability. Not only does Brazilian legislation limit mining to six hours a day, but we also work to ensure that the extraction is done as responsibly and as carefully as possible." Once a pocket is opened, hand tools are used to get the job done, and the only element used in extraction is water, which is then decanted over a period of months. Adding to the green factor: the mine itself is part of a *Reserva Legal* or 'Environmental Reserve', a government effort that requires landholders to protect the landscape and ecology of these regions.

The Cruzeiro mine has produced, on average, hundreds of kilos of tourmaline annually over four decades.

Directly up the hill sits the aforementioned separation operation, which is the destination of the day's haul. While there is some gravel in the mix, what is striking is the constant stream of coloured tourmaline along the belt, much of it gem grade, mostly green and black, then pink, red and watermelon. One staffer is entirely responsible for gravity separation, quickly processing stones through the water-density process. The production is then bagged and sent to the Cruzeiro offices in Governador Valadares, about 100 kilometres away.

HISTORY

Evocative names are the rule here. The hillside at the mine is also known as Resplendent Mountain, a reference to the sheets and bits of mica on the ground surface that sparkled under the sun's rays. In fact, Cruzeiro's history starts here. Exploration of the mine began to be explored around 1936, and peaked during WWII, when Americans descended upon the region to mine the mica for military use, primarily as an insulator in vacuum tubes. Production and interest slowed in the 1950s, but now it was tourmaline's time to shine.



The author examines a green tourmaline crystal she easily pulled with her bare hands. Photo by Christine Puleo Reis.



Cruzeiro mine workers expertly identify tourmaline rough through water-density separation. Photo courtesy of the Cruzeiro mine.

In 1968, Jules Sauer, the French-born, Rio-based jeweller, came to the mine to buy green tourmaline in bulk. He was so pleased with the product that bought not just the stones, but the mine as well.

Sauer realised quickly enough that local knowledge was needed to make the mine a success. He began a long and close working relationship and friendship with a young *garimpeiro* (artisanal miner) who had the deep knowledge of the local landscape and customs that Sauer lacked. The *garimpeiro* just

happened to be José Neves, the father of Douglas and Diego, who was later joined by his younger brother, Antonio (husband of Beatriz and father of Antonio Jr.). After more than a decade of successful collaboration with the brothers, however, production stagnated, and Sauer offered the mine to the Neves brothers. Following long and protracted conversations, an agreement was reached, with the brothers pouring their life savings into the deal. With this, in a rare reversal of fortune, independent artisanal miners were transformed into mine owners.

The following decade was a busy one, and the family's hard work was rewarded in 1989 with 250 kilograms of high-quality rubellite, including a 26-kilogram crystal. Despite advances during the decade, the family continued to live and work very simply. Douglas and Beatriz – who comes from a family of mica miners – gave us a tour of the original house, a rustic one-room structure with no plumbing, but with original household items and tools. Here, Douglas sometimes worked and slept alongside the family on mattresses fashioned from leaves. It is just a few feet from the original, tunnel-like mine entryway and old iron wheelbarrows, which are no longer operational but open to view and remain a reminder of decades past.



A ring by Fizman Jewel featuring a 6.62 ct elongated baguette green tourmaline and two 0.79 ct green tourmaline sugarloaf cabochons set in 18K gold. Photo courtesy of Fizman Jewel.

However, yet another reversal of fortune came in the early 1990s, this time a tragedy. In January 1992, just a decade after taking over the mine, both brothers were killed when their private plane crashed; the crash also claimed Douglas and Diego's mother Marlene, the pilot and a family friend. Immediately following the crash, Douglas, then a teenage student in Boston who was home for the holidays, took over operations. "The accident happened on a Friday. On Monday I was at work, thinking to myself, how can I do this?"

Focus On Sustainability. With Douglas at the helm, with his surviving family by his side, he began to call on international experts to enhance production – which rebounded by 1994 – taking on a more methodical approach to their already-established ethos of sustainability. During these years, the mine continued

Cruzeiro tourmaline is sought out by some of the world's best-known jewellers.

to modernise with expertise from international mining engineers, geologists and gemmologists, as well as sustainability consultants. In 2016, the mine changed its focus from working with wholesalers and Chinese buyers to broadening its actuation to encompass all internal processing and to building the mine-to-market model that continues today.

Working on the land where they were born, it is no surprise that the partners have made sustainability the foundation of their modernisation. The mine remains an artisanal cut-and-fill mine with minimal tailings, shored up by local wood that reduces emissions. It is fuelled by energy from 100% renewable sources. Downstream from the mine exit lies a small pond, which is not an ornament but a biological control, where decanted water makes its final stop before being returned to the municipal water supply.

“All water used in extraction is contained and decanted over a period of several months before it arrives at the pond, which serves as a biological control, before heading back to the water supply,” noted Fernando Pifano, the mine’s geologist engineer.

MINE-TO-MARKET MODEL

The following day, we visited the next stop on the mine-to-market journey, the office in Governador Valadares that houses sorting and all lapidation functions. Here, Douglas Neves works alongside the three other partners: his brother Diego, cousin Antonio Jr. and aunt Beatriz. The impact of Jose and Antonio Sr. is still very much present in the day-to-day at Cruzeiro; they even preside over the offices in the form of two massive oil paintings hanging at the offices.

The ground floor is dedicated to large specimens, primarily quartz, that are to

be sold to crystal enthusiasts. Upstairs is a hive of gem-related activity. Here, on the second floor of the offices, the richness of Cruzeiro’s production is just as evident here as in the mine. A room nearly the size of a soccer field contains a team dedicated to refining hundreds of mineral specimens. Most of the massive crystals – typically hosted in feldspar, quartz, muscovite and cleavelandite – are nearly intact. But small pieces do inevitably break off during extraction, and the careful puzzling together and rebuilding specimens from a store of thousands of crystal fragments is painstaking work. The international mineral collectors’ market is a typical destination for these decorative pieces, explains Douglas Neves, as he works to piece together a massive rubellite specimen with deep red terminals. He confirmed that any reconstruction of specimens is disclosed to buyers.



The author with Douglas Neves, CEO of the Cruzeiro mine. Photo courtesy of Douglas Neves.



A lapidary determines the best strategy for cutting dozens of pink tourmaline and rubellite crystals at his bench. Photo by Christine Puleo Reis.

Brazil’s Ouro Preto Museum and the Gerdau Museum of Mines and Minerals currently display Cruzeiro’s mineral specimens. Other sorters work through countless bins of smaller stones. In another room a team of lapidaries, some with the mine for three decades, are intently focused on cutting a series of 10-carat rubellite.

The final stop is the main office, where Douglas and Diego Neves displayed dozens of trays of finished gems, many of them enormous blue-green tourmalines and rubellites. This is where the Neves family collaborates directly with designers to create pieces that make their way to some of the world’s most iconic retail locations.

With a proven supply of 118 years in just 50 hectares alone, the mine’s future was already assured. So what then motivated the family to so significantly broaden its activities?

“We are doing this to build our brand, and to give our stones the value they deserve. We want consumers to go and ask not for tourmaline, but Cruzeiro tourmalines, because they know the quality of our production and the responsible practices that are involved,” Douglas Neves explained. “It is also gratifying to work directly with jewellers in the process of creation, to work in partnership to create the pieces that best showcase



This bracelet from Fizman Jewel bracelet uses 102.20 tcw of elongated baguette bicolour rubellites and 3.50 tcw diamonds mounted in 18k gold. Photo courtesy of Fizman Jewel.

our stones, and even end-consumers that come to us directly."

Cruzeiro tourmaline is sought out by some of the world's best-known jewellers, including Brazil-born designers Silvia Furmanovich and Ana Khouri. Other jewellers who collaborate directly with Cruzeiro include Ara Vartanian, Prasi, Kika Alvarenga, Verachi and Carol Kauffman. Then there is Richard Fizman of Fizman Jewel, who creates stunning pieces from bicolour rubellite as part of his sustainable Heritage Collection in partnership with the mine. "I am incredibly honoured to have as my partner Cruzeiro mine, a renowned tourmaline leader and home to most exquisite bicolour rubellite gemstones," Mr Fizman stated. "Furthermore, our mutual commitment to sustainability has inspired me to enhance my expertise and abilities, resulting in the creation of the Fizman Jewel x Cruzeiro Mine collaboration. This partnership celebrates exceptional design and upholds the utmost quality of the gemstones, treating them as genuine masterpieces of art."

In early 2024, Fizman and other Cruzeiro designers were welcomed by the high temple of fine jewellery, Bergdorf Goodman, to display and market their jewels as part of the store's Conscious Curation collection. With this, the evolution from humble industrial mica

These Fizman Jewel earrings use 7.84 tcw pink tourmaline sugarloaf cabochons, 19.33 tcw rubellite sugarloaf cabochons and 0.55 ct diamonds in 18k gold. Photo courtesy of Fizman Jewel.

mine to luxury gemstone and jewellery provider is complete, with the supply chain verified every step of the way.

Silvia Furmanovich, who regularly uses the mine's gems in her pieces, gave her reasons for working with the Neves family. "Cruzeiro's commitment to sustainability and responsible practices is a significant reason why we choose to work with them. Their artisanal approach ensures minimal environmental impact, which aligns very well with our values. Beyond this, the mine's dedication to treating employees well and providing fair working conditions is commendable and crucial to us. This, coupled with the stunning quality and vibrant colours of the stones they produce, makes them an ideal partner."

Although the family is steeped in tradition, it also keeps an eye on the



future, and is investing in ways to verify and prove its traceability. "Blockchain seems set to be the standard traceability technology of the future, and this is just one of many levels of certification that we believe in," Douglas Neves stated. For the past two years, it has been in the testing phase of the Gübelin Provenance Proof blockchain platform, and the mine believes the technology could be applied to all of its gem production. "We are working with Gübelin specifically, because we recognise that it is spearheading advances in our industry, in addition to supporting sustainability and social issues," he added.

Coloured stones comprise the most complex and opaque side of the industry, making it impossible to



Jewellery designer Richard Fizman of Fizman Jewel (left) and Cruzeiro CEO Douglas Neves worked together to create the stunning and sustainable Heritage Collection bicolour rubellite pieces displayed at Bergdorf Goodman in New York City. Photo courtesy of the Cruzeiro mine.

apply a one-size-fits-all standard or even solution to improve sustainability and ethical conduct. As the industry struggles to solve the thorny problem of provenance with new technologies and regulations, one cannot help but note that while the future is seeking to ensure sustainability for the industry, the past is an advantage that sets Cruzeiro mine apart. Careful family stewardship of its prodigious production, especially of its green tourmaline, and above all, unusually rich stores of coveted rubellite, is part and parcel of the mine's past, and no doubt, its future. ■

Instappraise Unveils Game-Changing Appraisal Report Format

Olga González FGA DGA describes the customisable trifold brochure now available to small and independent appraisal businesses.

Instappraise, a cloud-based jewellery and watch valuation software platform, is pushing the boundaries of innovation with the launch of its latest offering: a sleek, customisable trifold brochure designed to revolutionise appraisal reports for small businesses. This development underscores Instappraise's commitment to leveraging technology for seamless user experiences while elevating the presentation of appraisal reports to new heights. Raphael Boivin, founder of Instappraise, explained that "With our innovative approach to technology, we are democratising access to premium resources, empowering businesses and individuals alike to elevate their valuations processes with ease."

Traditionally, the luxury of customisable, printable brochures has been limited to larger operations, leaving smaller businesses and independent appraisers yearning for similar accessibility. Mr Boivin acknowledged this unmet need. "At Instappraise, we've heard these desires loud and clear, and we're proud to announce that we're making this premium format available to the entire industry. This marks a significant shift in the landscape of jewellery and watch appraisals, as we bring to fruition what

the industry has always dreamed of: the ability to create professional-quality brochures from any printer supporting double-sided printing."

The introduction of Instappraise's trifold brochure format, which may be generated by any printer that supports double-sided printing, represents a pivotal moment in the evolution of the appraisal industry. Crafted with meticulous attention to detail, the premium layout sets a new industry standard by combining functionality and design. Users have the flexibility to choose the paper type, thickness, consistency, stock, weight and finish that best suits their preferences, resulting in professional-grade materials without the need for costly professional services. Tailored to the specialised needs of point-of-sale appraisals for both watches and jewellery, the application ensures compact yet comprehensive reports.

While technical excellence in software and interface design remains paramount for enhancing user experience, Instappraise also recognises the importance of extending satisfaction beyond the digital realm. The trifold appraisal layout retains essential informational elements while

enhancing the overall report, which spans retail sales, personal ownership, and insurance assessments. The reports are compliant with the National Association of Jewelry Appraisers (NAJA) or Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP) requirements; they also allow for the import of pricing data from GemGuide, Gemval, IDEX and Rapaport.

Additionally, Raphael Boivin emphasised the brochure's compatibility with the plastic sleeves commonly provided with original grading reports from the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), stating, "This compatibility ensures convenient storage and protection of valuable appraisal information alongside other essential documents."

Instappraise's premium trifold format proves particularly suitable for insurance appraisals for fine jewellery and luxury timepieces. For watch appraisals, the innovative design incorporates crucial details such as model specifications, properties, calibre, movements and high-resolution images from various angles, alongside retail replacement or fair market value. Similarly, for fine jewellery assessments, the format integrates detailed item descriptions, diamond and gemstone grading scales, diamond plots (where necessary) and up to four high-resolution images, along with customer contact information and details of the appraisal process.

Mr Boivin asserted, "Our trifold brochure isn't just a leap forward in accessibility — it's a testament to our commitment to quality, innovation and technology. By harnessing the power of digital, we're making comprehensive appraisal resources accessible to everyone, regardless of their size or resources." ■

For more information on Instappraise, please visit instappraise.com or email info@instappraise.com

Instappraise's new offering allows small and independent businesses to create customisable, professional-quality appraisal reports from their own printers. Photo courtesy of Instappraise.





A shopper ponders a selection from Jewels by Grace, a Los Angeles-based boutique jeweller specialising in vintage and antique engagement rings, including bespoke pieces reusing old-cut diamonds.

Breaking the Mould with the **NYC Spring Jewelry and Object Show**

Olga González FGA DGA observes how gem and jewellery show clientele and promoters are changing the face of exhibition logistics and execution.

In the ever-expanding world of jewellery shows, it often feels like a new event opens every week. With so many options available, it can be a daunting task for businesses to determine which shows are truly worth their time and investment. Amidst the sea of exhibitions and presentations, the NYC Spring Jewelry and Object Show (NYCJAOS) stands out as a beacon of innovation, bringing generations together to celebrate and enjoy the beauty and riches of fine, antique, vintage and contemporary jewellery in one place. After an initial

run with thirty-one vendors in the autumn of 2023, NYCJAOS unveiled their spring show from 18 to 21 April 2024 at the Metropolitan Pavilion in Manhattan's Chelsea neighbourhood. Over 4,800 visitors took in the merchandise on display from from seventy-one exhibitors, ranging from intricate Victorian brooches to heirloom-inspired contemporary designs. The show took the opportunity to target a demographic that is both elusive and indispensable to the trade: the next generation of self-purchasing women.

In an industry that has long been dominated by traditional marketing strategies and catered primarily to an older, more affluent clientele, the emergence of a new generation of consumers – one that includes a population of customers that are traditionally not considered – has forced businesses to adapt their targets or risk being left behind. Self-purchasing women, often millennials and members of Generation Z (those people born between 1997–2012), represent a seismic shift in the jewellery market that cannot be ignored. What set the NYC Spring Jewelry and Object Show apart was its deliberate focus on capturing the attention and loyalty of this demographic. There was a large and notable surge of interest and enthusiasm from younger attendees, particularly women in their twenties and thirties with self-purchasing power. This new crowd has created a community within the jewellery industry for younger women, further inspiring exhibitors with their potential reach to younger generations.



Rings offered by Courtville Antiques & Jewellery of Dublin, Ireland.

Unlike other shows that claim inclusivity and diversity, NYCJAOS purposely creates an environment that resonates with the modern consumer. "I started the show with a vision to reignite the passion for vintage and antique jewellery, while fostering a welcoming environment for both budding collectors and seasoned enthusiasts," explained show founder Konstantinos I. Leoussis, who is also a renowned antique and vintage dealer and bench jeweller. "I wanted to create a space where individuals could experience the magic of vintage pieces firsthand, without intimidation. Our show is designed to be inclusive and inviting, encouraging attendees to explore, learn and indulge in the rich history and exquisite craftsmanship of timeless treasures."

Beth Bernstein, who is a jewellery author and journalist as well as an avid collector and dealer in antique jewellery, noted that "Some visitors who were purchasing for themselves came with very specific pieces in mind. Many requests were bridal related – to find an unusual wedding band, a pair of earrings to go with the wedding gown – which I found particularly interesting to encounter at a show. To me, it means the end-consumer is more educated and has a strong desire to see all that they can before deciding on their purchases. This might be a little overwhelming, but ultimately it is why a show like this is so important."

In a departure from traditional industry practices, KIL Promotions shows have a direct-to-consumer model, while also being trade friendly. Through the show, attendees have unparalleled access to diverse jewellery, from rare antiques to contemporary



An assortment of pieces from New York-based jeweller Alex Streeter on display at the NYC Spring Jewelry and Object Show.

The show focuses on the customer experience, bridging the gap between sellers and collectors.

creations, while fostering genuine connections between buyers and sellers. Many pieces exhibited at the show were one-of-a-kind, passed down from generation to generation, making this an exceptional opportunity to view and shop. Dealers were free to negotiate trade pricing amongst themselves and retail buyers.

The show has emerged as a major destination for the collection of antique and vintage watches and jewellery. It captures a large selection of vintage and contemporary pieces and focuses on the customer experience, bridging

the gap between sellers and collectors. The contemporary jewels are curated to emphasise the heirloom aesthetic of the show while offering modern interpretations. Designed to be accessible to a wide range of buyers, with reasonable and competitive pricing, the NYC Spring Jewelry and Object Show allowed seasoned collectors, the trade and enthusiasts to explore and acquire beautiful pieces.

In the landscape of shows and exhibitions, it is easy for the needs of exhibitors to be overlooked. However, NYCJAOS ensures that exhibitors not only feel valued, but also thrive within the vibrant ecosystem of the event. While the show's primary demographic may be young women with purchasing power, the organisers recognise that without exceptional exhibitors, the experience falls flat. Therefore, from



Women are a growing client base for the jewellery industry, particularly millennial and Generation Z-aged women. They attended – and made purchases at – the NYC Jewelry and Object Show in impactful numbers. Here, they are shown browsing at the Jewels by Grace booth.

EXHIBITORS SHARE THEIR THOUGHTS ON NYCJAOS

"The NYC Spring Jewelry and Object Show created a fresh space for collectors, connoisseurs and admirers to have access to some of the most diverse, unique and rare jewellery collections available. Indeed, our collection of exclusively antique jewellery travelled all the way from Ireland and was received with anticipation from our American clients. Most sought after was our Victorian yellow-gold jewels ranging from carved half-hoop rings, serpent bracelets and quirky oddities."

Alyce Ketcher

Courtville Antiques & Jewellery,
Dublin, Ireland courtville.ie

"Attendees were particularly interested in learning about my museum-quality

pieces – the rarer collectibles – yet I found when it came to what they were buying, it was based on trends that are running concurrently in the antique/vintage and contemporary markets: gold chains in necklaces and bracelets, old-cut diamond earrings and charms and pendants they could wear collectively with what they already own."

Beth Bernstein

Jewellery author, journalist and collector/
dealer in antique jewellery, New York,
New York beth-bernstein.com

"The NYC Spring Jewelry and Object Show brought together an incredible group of exhibitors, as well as a diverse range of attendees, from serious collectors and dealers to the more casual

jewellery lover. The team at KIL worked hard at making us as exhibitors feel valued and like part of a big family. We also loved seeing the younger generation of buyers appreciating vintage and antique jewellery at this show!"

Stephane Lee

Alpha & Omega Jewelry, New York,
New York Alphaomegajewelry.com

"KIL Promotions put on an amazing show and went out of their way to bring in dealers from the West Coast and abroad. I think it was an extraordinary opportunity for New York show goes to experience a really diverse curation of jewellery and objects."

Alison Barry

Duvenay, Los Angeles, California
duvenay.com

the moment vendors set foot on the show floor, they are greeted with an unparalleled level of customer service. With top-notch support for exhibitors, the vendors have consistently praised the kindness and helpfulness of the staff, who are on hand to swiftly address any needs or concerns that arise. Whether it is assisting with setup and breakdown, providing technical support, or simply offering a friendly ear, exhibitors know they can rely on the dedicated team behind the scenes.

In addition to outstanding customer service, vendors are treated to amenities designed to make their experience as comfortable and enjoyable as possible. For example, meals and snacks are provided throughout the day, ensuring that vendors have the sustenance they need to stay energised and focused. Another significant benefit for exhibitors comes in the form of strategic partnerships with media and influencers. In the lead-up to, during and after the show, organisers work tirelessly to maximise the presence of exhibitors and amplify their message to a broader audience. Through targeted promotions, social media campaigns and curated content, exhibitors receive invaluable exposure that can significantly impact their sales and brand visibility.

After the success of the April show in New York, KIL Promotions is poised to make waves on an international scale with the launch of the Tokyo Jewelry and Object Show this autumn. Building on the momentum of NYCJAOS, KIL Promotions aims to bring the same level of innovation and excitement to Tokyo, offering exhibitors and attendees alike a unique opportunity to engage with the global jewellery market. At the same time, the company is gearing up for an expanded iteration of the spring show this autumn. The show will feature various panels and talks with industry

leaders, providing attendees with invaluable insights and opportunities for professional development.

By prioritising the exhibitor experience and forging meaningful partnerships while also drawing the attention the next generation of buyers, the NYC Spring Jewelry and Object Show is redefining industry standards and setting a new benchmark for excellence. As the event continues to evolve and grow, KIL Promotions hopes to foster a thriving ecosystem, where exhibitors and attendees can thrive and flourish. ■



A necklace offered by Keyamour, a dealer of antique, rare and vintage jewels.

A QUICK LOOK AT BONHAMS

Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta spoke with Jean Ghika, global director of jewellery at Bonhams, about the British-owned auction house's successful history.



Founded in 1793 by Thomas Dodd, Bonhams is one of the world's oldest auctioneers. It is also the only privately owned, international auction house under British leadership. Known for its bespoke service and expertise in the arts, Bonhams has not only been the choice of high-profile clients seeking to sell their jewellery collections, but has actively promoted wearable art as well as the work of 'artist jewellers'.

We spoke with Jean Ghika, global director of jewellery at Bonhams, to find out some of the secrets behind the auction house's successful history.

Bonhams calls itself 'Auctioneers for the 21st Century', but in fact the auction house was founded in Covent Garden in the late eighteenth century. How has Bonhams managed to stay relevant to the auction community for more than 230 years? What is the company's mission, and how does it relate to the company's longevity?

Bonhams has a heritage and reputation for connoisseurship and bespoke service known throughout the world. We are the sole remaining international auction house that is privately owned and in British hands. However, we do see ourselves as a global auction house, with the largest number of international salerooms, offering the widest range of collecting categories and selling at all price points. Our bespoke service and dedication

Jean Ghika, global director of jewellery at Bonhams.

to local market relationships is enhanced by a global platform.

With fourteen salerooms, Bonhams presents over 1,000 sales annually, across more than sixty specialist categories, including fine art, collectables, wine and spirits, collector cars and, of course, jewellery. The company has representatives in more than thirty countries and operates flagship salerooms in London, New York, Paris, Los Angeles and Hong Kong.

In 2022, Bonhams added four international auction houses to its network: Bukowskis in Stockholm; Bruun Rasmussen in Copenhagen; Cornette de Saint Cyr, in Paris and Brussels; and Skinner, Massachusetts. The success of the company's global strategy is a result of recognising the shift in growing intercontinental buying and increased digital engagement.



American media personality Barbara Walters offered this engagement ring from Merv Adelson, among other pieces, to Bonhams for auction. The ring was set with an emerald-cut 13.84 ct diamond with D-colour and VVS₂ clarity, flanked by brilliant-cut diamonds (1.46 tcw), in platinum.

How many jewellery auctions does Bonhams hold in a year? What is the process of bringing a piece of jewellery to auction at Bonhams? What would cause Bonhams to unequivocally reject an item?

In 2024, Bonhams will hold eighty-nine dedicated jewellery sales, both online and live, across our global network. We are trusted experts who can offer a free and confidential auction estimate. Potential sellers can request a valuation by completing an online form to contact a local Bonhams specialist. Once the jewel is viewed, the specialist will provide an auction estimate and advise on next steps for consigning property with Bonhams. The jewellery will then be marketed to our global network of collectors ahead of the auction.

Our breadth of online and live auctions allows Bonhams to consider jewellery that varies in both price and design. Our entry-level requirement to be considered for sale at auction is from £500 upwards.

When did Bonhams start taking online bids and running online auctions, and how (if at all) has this affected the way the jewellery department oversees the auction process?

We held online sales prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, but the global



This ring, mounted with a 35.00 carat LEVIEV emerald-cut type IIa diamond, with D-colour and VVS₁ clarity, was sold at a 2023 auction.

outbreak saw a decisive shift in consumer behaviour: confidence grew around making jewellery purchases online. Post-pandemic, Bonhams has continued to increase the volume of online auctions, enabling further engagement with Bonhams digital consumers.

During 2023, the number of jewellery sales held across the Bonhams global network increased by 50% compared to 2022. In total we staged eighty-seven dedicated jewellery auctions (twenty-nine live auctions and fifty-eight online sales) across seven sale locations, resulting in 13,900 individual lots of jewellery being sold globally.

The auction house is known for promoting the work of artist-jewellers. What qualities

would jewellery need to have for Bonhams to curate the work of a jeweller-designer? What characteristics would make the designer themselves worthy of Bonhams' notice?

Bonhams looks for stylish pieces by leading artists from the post-world era that are works of wearable art and fuse the connection between jewellery, modern art and sculpture. We have held multiple sales featuring creations by leading artists and designers, with a cross-section of important and beautiful twentieth-century artist jewellery from expert makers. Featured artists have included Pablo Picasso, Charles Loloma, Art Smith, Betty Cooke and William Spratling. Many of these rare jewels were collected by private collectors, including Robin Leach,

Judith Ledford and the Jill and Byron Crawford Estate.

The categories we consider include Jewellery by Fine Artists (Picasso, Max Ernst, Jean Arp), American Modernist Jewellery (Art Smith, Betty Cooke, Sam Kramer), Scandinavian Jewellery (Georg Jensen, Björn Weckström), Native American Jewellery (Charles Loloma, Jesse Monongya) and Taxco Jewellery (William Spratling, Antonio Pineda). With Artist Jewels, the emphasis is on the design as opposed to the materials that the individual pieces are crafted from, as many are created from copper and non-precious stones.

With a long and storied history in London, Bonhams has been the auction house of choice for celebrities and has broken world records for prices-per-carat sales. What are some of the notable pieces that have passed through Bonhams?

On 24 May 2022, a rare Cartier emerald and diamond bracelet, ca. 1926, was sold at the Bonhams New York Jewels sale. The bracelet has a graduated row of seven rectangular and octagonal step-cut emeralds (~101.00 tcw), spaced by baguette-cut diamonds. The sides are set with baguette and old European-cut diamonds. This exceptional bracelet sold for US\$3,240,375 (~£2,529,760).

Our breadth of online and live auctions allows Bonhams to consider jewellery that varies in both price and design.



Bonhams sold this rare Cartier emerald and diamond bracelet (ca. 1926), at a 2022 auction. The bracelet has a graduated row of seven rectangular and octagonal step-cut emeralds (~101.00 tcw), spaced by baguette-cut diamonds. The sides of the bracelet are set with baguette and old European-cut diamonds.

Also at Bonhams New York, during the Barbara Walters: American Icon sale, (6 November 2023), we sold Ms Walters' Harry Winston platinum diamond ring, which was an engagement present from Merv Adelson. The design featured an emerald-cut 13.84 ct diamond with D-colour and VVS₂ clarity, flanked by brilliant-cut diamonds (1.46 tcw). The ring sold for US\$699,000 (~£545,709).

The Perfect Jewelry Box: Jewels from an Impressive Southern California Collection achieved exceptional results on 8 March 2023. It was a 'White Glove Sale' with 100% of the pieces sold. The top lot was a magnificent ring with a 35.00 carat LEVIEV emerald-cut type IIa diamond, with D-colour and VVS₁ clarity, which sold for US\$2,700,375 (~£2,108,182).

Can you share one or two stories about jewellery pieces that Bonhams auctioned that were meaningful to you?

There have been so many wonderful jewels I have seen over the years at Bonhams, but notable lots that captured the imagination include one jewel from the beginning of my career, along with a sale that took place recently, both with exceptional stories and provenance.

The first was a historic carved emerald-and-rock-crystal brooch by Cartier (ca. 1912) that was the property of Lady Vita Sackville-West, daughter of the 3rd Lord Sackville. The brooch, which Bonhams sold in 1994, was part of a set that was included in her extravagant wedding gifts when she married diplomat Harold Nicolson in 1913. Twenty-five years after that sale, in 2019, Vita Sackville-West's granddaughter contacted me to sell the necklace that matched the brooch; the necklace had been in the Sackville

family for more than 100 years. It was incredible to be able to see and sell this jewel, as it was an important and early example of Cartier's 'Indian' jewels, with design motifs that were inspired by a trip to the East in 1911.

The other notable jewel was sold in 2023 at our New York Jewels sale and was arguably one of the most enduring design legacies from Chanel. This piece was an exceptionally rare 1930s Chanel gem-set and enamel 'Maltese cross' cuff attributed to Verdura for Chanel. The cuff was originally owned by the "First Lady of American Theatre," actress Helen Hayes MacArthur (1900–1993) and came to market for the first time, having remained in the same family since its creation. The rare

design was set with a variety of stones, including a 13.40 ct sugarloaf amethyst and 10.40 tcw cabochon emeralds, as well as multiple round and oval-cut sapphires, diamonds and rubies. The cuff sold above its pre-sale estimate, yielding US\$432,300 (~£337,453).

What would you like the general public to know about Bonhams that they might not guess?

Bonhams is an approachable auction house with a breadth of reach. That means we can offer items for sale wherever the pieces will attract the strongest interest and keenest bidding. Matching the item to the sale is an art in itself — and Bonhams are the experts at this art. ■



A meaningful piece to Ms Ghika, this rare 1930s Chanel gem-set and enamel 'Maltese cross' cuff is attributed to Verdura for Chanel and was once owned by actress Helen Hayes MacArthur. The cuff is set with a 13.40 ct sugarloaf amethyst, 10.40 tcw cabochon emeralds, and multiple round and oval-cut sapphires, diamonds and rubies.

All photos courtesy of Bonhams.

Falling Under the Spell of

SOMEWHERE IN THE RAINBOW

Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta spoke with Shelly Sergent, collection manager at Somewhere in the Rainbow, about the collection's history, acquisitions and goals.

First created as a private jewellery assemblage that developed into an educational platform for the general public, Somewhere in the Rainbow is a privately owned gemstone and jewellery exhibition that has been exhibited in multiple museums, trade shows and high-end retail outlets. The owners of the collection, whose identities have been kept confidential, parlayed their gemstones and love of learning into a programme to educate and benefit the gemmological community. Shelly Sergent helped the private buyers curate what began as a single purchase in 2008 into what eventually became an award-winning collection. She sat during the 2024 Tucson gem shows to talk about the exhibition's roots, mission and focus.

How did you start out in the trade?

When I was sixteen years old, one of my mother's friends ran a jewellery store at the local mall, and she asked me to be a gift wrapper for the Christmas season. I was going to be there for six weeks to gift wrap and clean the glass; those were the only two things I was allowed to do. I loved people taking time to choose meaningful gifts, I loved watching people leave, happy and I loved the intimate moments that a piece of jewellery could create.

Forty-two years later, I am curating one of the most beautiful gem collections in the world. In the intervening time I started in sales and went into corporate management.

From there, I held remount shows for Dave Downey's Designs, based out in Indianapolis, and got exposed to a lot of different types of clients. I then found myself in the world of design by working for a design house in Scottsdale, Arizona.

There, I found my passion for colour and really came to understand the power of design. This journey eventually led to Somewhere in the Rainbow.

So you fell into the world of design and fell in love with colour. What was the seed for Somewhere in the Rainbow? What launched that?

Well, I didn't really launch that. I was working in a design house and a client came in to buy a birthday gift for his wife. I showed him both a heat-treated and unheated sapphire, and he said, "Wow the price difference is astronomical, tell me about that." We talked about rarity, and Mother Nature and what she does, and what man does after that. He ended up buying the unheated sapphire.



Above: This Victorian-era antique quahog pearl brooch also features diamonds and black and white enamel. The upper pearl weighs 13.50 ct, while the lower pearl is about 4.00 ct. Acquired in 2023 from Carlos Chanu and Antoinette Matlins.

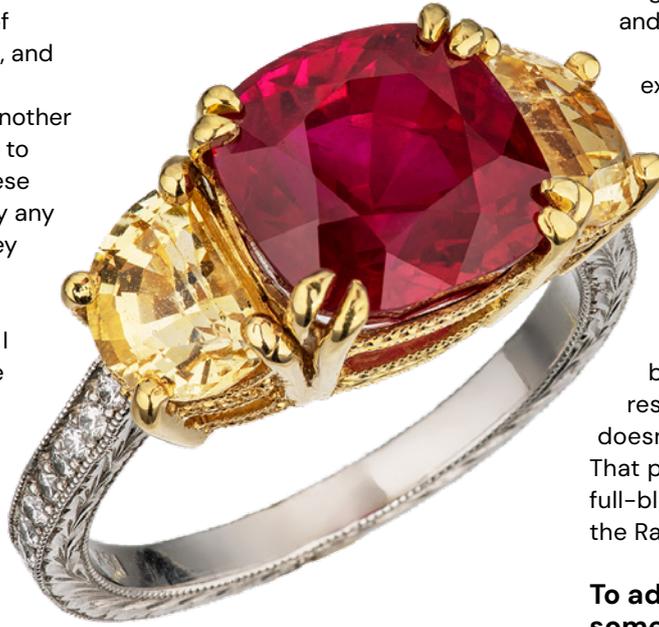


Left: Da Vinci, a 177.8-mm tall green beryl from the Ural Mountains, carved by Alfred Zimmerman of Idar-Oberstein, Germany. The goldwork was crafted by American designer Henry Dunay.

But the information was really fascinating to him, and he said, "Give me another gemstone, let me study another gemstone." So I gave him alexandrite. I chose the gem purposely, not only because it is rare, but because his daughter was getting engaged to a man from Russia. I knew it would take them down a journey through the history of alexandrite. I contacted Evan Caplan, who was with Omi Gems at the time, and said, "Bring me some alexandrite, let's give this client an experience," and we did.

At the end of that day there was a 10.50 ct, 4.50 ct, and 15.00 ct tanzanite

laying on the table. They bought the stones to make beautiful pieces of jewellery. Then he called me again, and said "This is so much fun, give me another gemstone, let me study another gemstone." The collection started to grow, one stone at a time. And these were not gemstone aficionados by any stretch of the imagination. But they got 'bit', just as all of us in the industry who fall in love with this work get 'bit'. So Greg Lynch, who I had known for decades as well, he started the appraisals for their pieces. He gave them the best advice: "Never buy the biggest of anything, buy the best of what you can afford."



This ring features a fine 5.17 ct Burmese ruby flanked by two yellow sapphires.

"We dive into the stories of each piece because it creates more provenance and more relevance to our mission."

That is incredible advice, because it is so basic, yet so true.

Yes, and I think we have consistently returned to that message since 2008. Are there bigger, finer Paraiba tourmalines out there than ours? Yes, probably. But ours likely rank with the best of them. And then there are other people out there with the goal of collecting the biggest gems, or to collect only oval cuts or only phenomenal stones. But that was not our goal — and at this point we weren't building a museum collection or an education collection.

In 2011 their collection had grown substantially, to the point where we had to decide what to do with it. We could have stored it in vaults like many collectors do, but the mission of our owners was to allow people to

experience the beautiful gemstones and the talent of the artisans of the world. And that's when we formed the idea of Somewhere in the Rainbow.

In 2014 we were introduced to the University of Arizona through a birthstone exhibit that was left to my discretion to design. So I set up all the different months: all of the colours of garnet, all of the colours of sapphire, all of the alexandrite, along with pearls and moonstones. A couple of weeks later I came back and saw kids at the museum interacting,

talking about how "that's my birthstone, and my birthstone is really pretty."

But through that birthstone exhibit there was a major increase in visits to the downstairs area, because kids would go home and talk to their parents and drag their parents back to the museum. That exhibit, which was supposed to last a year, lasted two-and-a-half years, because people loved it and they responded well to it; after all, who doesn't love shiny and sparkly things? That particular exhibit grew into a full-blown exhibit of Somewhere in the Rainbow in the upstairs gallery.

To admit that you don't know something and are willing to learn, to demonstrate a thirst for knowledge — and to then make that knowledge accessible to other people — is so impressive.

Well, our mission to make this accessible was initially met with a lot of trepidation from the industry; it has taken over a decade of twists and turns. No one believed that anyone would acquire material at this level and then not resell it. It was also hard to find an insurance company to insure us, because we wanted to put the collection out in the world and that creates moving parts, which of course establishes risk.



Shelly Sergent, collection manager of Somewhere in the Rainbow. Photo by Kevin Schumacher/© GIA.

How do you choose what will be part of Somewhere in the Rainbow? Is there a certain amount of pieces that are accepted every year? Is there a rolling acceptance process?

There is a specific budget every year; the biggest part of the budget is typically set aside for the Tucson shows. I say the word 'budget' very loosely, because when you have a collection like ours, sometimes a piece comes along that's absolutely going to kill your budget, but you only have one chance to acquire it.

We love supporting the miners, the young up-and-coming lapidaries. You know, the pieces by lapidary students are probably some of our favourites in the collection. We have people that have cut stones for us at age 12. And we have master cutters that have been at their work for seven or eight decades.



The 15.00 ct Paraiba tourmaline, from the original Brazilian mine, known as 'the Queen'. The acquisition of this gemstone was a crucial point in the development of Somewhere in the Rainbow.



The 20.20 ct Scorpion King tsavorite garnet, mined by Campbell Bridges in Kenya.

At this point the criteria really is to pinpoint where the holes are in our collection. We have curated roughly 3,000 pieces since 2008. Now it is about taking what we have done and putting it to use in the field, and maintaining that collection to continue to fulfil the mission. So while we are an actively growing collection, I am much more selective now.

For example, I have been seeking out a really fine Melo pearl for a long time. I don't have a really fine piece. And I kick myself, because one was brought to us a few years ago, and we passed on it. So there is always something that we're looking for. But we do acquire less, because

now our current goal is to maintain the education component.

When we have a piece of jewellery made, typically the artists are invited to our offices. They spend a whole day going through lists and loose-gemstone boxes to choose what speaks to them. Because if I choose a stone for as a designer, they will design a piece, but if they don't connect with the stone, it won't be their best work. Well, we want your best for Somewhere in the Rainbow. I want to show your best effort, and to show what inspired you to create something that's unique. We follow the same process when obtaining gemstones.

You don't require rough material?

The only 'rough' that we require is synthetic sapphire. I do a cutting event every year; Bernd Stephan (Stephan Gems, Idar-Oberstein, Germany) gives me beautiful, big pieces of synthetic

sapphire boule. We break it up into twelve pieces and we invite twelve cutters to take a piece of the boule and interpret it in their own way. It is a great way to show the public and to the industry how twelve artists can start with the same 'canvas' and end up with a very different gemstone.

How do you choose those gem cutters?

I watch them online. I watch their involvement in the gemstone community, in lapidary communities and how they interact with others. I consider how they put forth their work for others to learn from or to grow from. Sometimes I will ask this year's cutters to refer somebody for the following year.

When we think of great cutting, we immediately think of the houses of Idar-Oberstein. But America is producing some of the best lapidaries that we've ever seen. We are able to showcase the work of these cutters, some of them

“It doesn't matter if you've been cutting gems for two years, it matters how you interact with your community.”

who are just starting out, while others are very well known. So when you mix those together, you find that the up-and-coming cutter is now learning from the master carver, and all of their works come together in one collection. So it doesn't matter if you've been cutting gems for two years, it matters how you interact with your community. And to me, that's really important.

There are pieces that you may have acquired during meaningful periods, or where you had unusual experiences acquiring them, so you might think of them first when people talk to you about Somewhere in the Rainbow. Can you describe some of these pieces?

Well, the 15.00 ct Paraíba tourmaline necklace – we call her the Queen – she's pretty impressive. Her procurement was something of a turning point for the collection. Acquiring the Queen meant that we were no longer creating a personal collection of beautiful jewellery; we were going in a very serious direction. The gemstone was set in a necklace, and we actually kept it that way because

the whole piece was just beautiful. It wasn't until I showed her at a gem show that a gentleman approached our booth to tell us that his father wrote a PhD dissertation on our tourmaline. We found pictures of it as a crystal, we got pictures of it when it was cut. We now know the entire history behind this piece, and we formed a beautiful relationship with the man who brought us the information. And suddenly, the significance of the Queen grew.

I also love the Scorpion King. It's a 20.20 ct tsavorite garnet that was mined by Campbell Bridges from the Scorpion mine in Kenya. We acquired the stone in 2013 with the permission of Judy Bridges. It has Campbell Bridges' signature on the girdle; it is titled 001, because it's still the finest and largest specimen from that run. Again, it's not just the gem, it's the story of the stone. It's the Campbell Bridges story, the Judy Bridges story and the Bruce Bridges story. It is about overcoming life-and-death obstacles and showing that, through adversity, the love story continues. And that, for me, is, I think, one of the richest stories we can tell.

There are also transitional pieces in the collection that are really important

“We have curated roughly 3,000 pieces since 2008.”

to me. There are pieces that we bought at one specific stage, or the artist's life has transitioned to a new place, or our collection has shifted to a new place. So that piece takes on a different meaning, and the collection evolves; it's constantly changing and growing.

Can you elaborate on the North Carolina emerald necklace?

That necklace actually came to us from the Bolick family, who own the emerald mine. Eric Fritz introduced us to the Bolicks and gave us the opportunity to acquire this necklace. It is a beautiful necklace from the 1970s, designed by Martha Anne Gilchrist, one of the first women to receive a design award in America.

Glenn Bolick was going to sell the piece, and the buyer told him, “I cannot wait to take the emerald out of that necklace to tear the piece apart.” Well, she had no idea that the necklace was a gift to his wife, Kathleen, or he had named the piece the Marie necklace, after his wife's middle name. Or that the necklace, which had undergone amazing amounts of cutting and reforming of the settings, was featured in a lapidary journal. There is this fabulous, fun history attached to the necklace. For somebody to tell him that all she really wanted was the emerald was a deal killer.

When Mr Bolick came to us, he said, “I want you to promise that you will never take this apart.” I told him that I can't imagine tearing up the necklace and destroying its history. And I think that is something that Somewhere in the Rainbow does exceptionally well. We dive into the family's histories, the miners' histories, the cutters, the designers and look into the science-focused people that are involved. We look into the stories of each piece because it creates more provenance and more relevance to our mission.

Necklaces made with natural turquoise from the Sleeping Beauty mine in Arizona (17.5 mm x 23.5 mm).



Has the collection evolved as styles have changed? Presumably you are going to see different pieces from 2008 and 2024, even though some aspects may stay the same.

Many museums around the country focus on the historical pieces, and so we leave those gems and jewels to those museums such as the American Natural History Museum and the Smithsonian Institution.

I like to look at our collection as a way to *observe* history. I love the modern jewellery movement. I think that there's a period of modern masters, especially American modern masters, that will never be duplicated again. Starting with Henry Dunay and Jose Hess and the founding of the American Jewelry Design Council, and the coming together of a group of artists at that time that were considered very avant garde, yet today their works are considered very modern. One of my goals is to have a time period dedicated to these designers, just like the Art Nouveau or the Art Deco periods.

It is exciting to see the next generation — like Adam Neeley (Adam Neeley Designs) and Jack and Lizzie Gualtieri (Zaffiro) producing really fabulous works of art. I look at the Zoltan Davids and the Victor Velyans, who produce some of the most avant garde, brave and soulful pieces, because they're unafraid. Eddie Sakamoto has more pieces in our collection than any other artist; I think we have about sixty-two pieces. His work is so recognisable, even to people who do not know his name; they know his style.



A 34.34 ct Imperial topaz from the Ouro Preto region of Brazil is the centrepiece of this stunning pendant — which also uses 10.50 tcw diamonds, 18K gold and platinum — by designer Eddie Sakamoto.



An 18.55 ct Tanzanian red spinel.

I think Somewhere in the Rainbow has evolved, thanks to a better understanding of these objects as pieces of art, and an appreciation for more art or carvings. Our growth comes from new artists and new ideas.

What is the long-term goal for the collection?

My current concern for Somewhere in the Rainbow is to see what we're going to acquire in Tucson. I would like to see the collection spread into more museums and into more gemmological organisations. We would love to do hands-on education with guilds. We

wait for the opportunity, and then we see if it makes sense for us. Is there an educational component to the idea that's been presented to us? In Tucson, I've had no fewer than forty different opportunities. Some of those are fabulous and we're going to follow up and see where they lead; others don't really fit what we do. But I love the fact that people trust me enough to tell me and present me with their ideas. ■

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EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCE OF COUTURE



Although the show is not open to the public, registered buyers reportedly flocked to this year's COUTURE Show in pre-pandemic numbers. Photo courtesy of COUTURE.

Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta spoke with the show's organisers, as well as exhibitors, to learn more about the show's history and logistics, as well as to find out what was popular among attendees.

Every spring, members of the trade descend on the Wynn Las Vegas to discover the latest in luxury offerings and emerging trends. This year was no exception. Now in its twenty-ninth year, the annual COUTURE show in Las Vegas is the destination for members of the industry seeking its curated combination of heritage jewellery, luxury timepieces and design. The B2B show provides retail buyers with exclusive access to the launches of new collections as well as contact with up-and-coming brands and designers. From 30 May to 2 June, roughly 4,000 attendees visited the different exhibitors that fall under the umbrella of COUTURE.

Overall, this year's show was well attended by people who were up to the task COUTURE set before them: to enjoy all the products the show had to offer. According to jeweller-designer Jenna Blake, "People definitely came to buy this year. They arrived with clear intentions and were prepared to fill their stock based on metrics from previous years." Ms Blake, along with our other

respondents, noted that the show's visitors expressed definite preferences: a desire for unique pieces, a demand for green gems, and an inclination for gold over other precious metals.

Originally held in Scottsdale, Arizona, COUTURE moved to Phoenix before relocating to Las Vegas upon the opening of the Wynn in 2005. Publicity is cultivated via traditional streams such as business-to-business trade publications, both domestic and international. Organic social media efforts through platforms such as Instagram have also been enormously successful, as has simple word-of-mouth communication. Exhibitors are proud to promote their presence at COUTURE, bringing their own clientele and other retailers to experience the entire show. The COUTURE Design Awards, once a simple addition to the show, now garners attention in its own right, with artists working on their submissions throughout the year. According to Gannon Brousseau, COUTURE's director, "We strive to create an atmosphere that is conducive

to relationship building and shared experiences, resulting in a strong sense of community that we foster throughout the year."

This atmosphere is accomplished through a number of value-added benefits that COUTURE provides to its exhibitors throughout the year. This includes open communication with the entire team, rather than just a sales representative, across the exhibition experience. COUTURE helps with topics from merchandising to salon layout to wardrobe selection. Marketing assistance is also available, stated Mr Brousseau. "Through our website and our social media channels, we offer complimentary marketing opportunities throughout the year, such as our monthly Brand Spotlights, themed editorials and Day in the Life series, as well as through our podcast, the COUTURE Podcast. Additionally, we have a robust offering of paid-partnership opportunities, both throughout the year and on-site during the event, that designers and brands can take advantage of to promote new



Participants at COUTURE tend towards original artistic expression, a primary reason LORD Jewelry has exhibited there for seven years. Left: This ring from the Wonderland collection features a 3.710 ct Australian boulder opal, 0.450 tcw diamonds and enamel. Right: From the same collection, this ring comprises a 1.780 ct cabochon spinel, 1.020 tcw diamonds and enamel. Both rings use 18K yellow gold. Photos courtesy of LORD Jewelry.

product launches or simply to boost awareness of their brand.”

Invitations to join COUTURE are carefully considered. “After giving right of first refusal to our returning brands, we take a look at all of the designers and brands who have expressed interest in exhibiting with us and determine who might be a fit within our overall curation of brands,” Gannon Brousseau explained. The show’s team takes an interactive approach, observing designers on social media and attending industry events around the world to interview possible



Show visitors expressed a desire for unique pieces, a demand for green gems, and an inclination for gold over other precious metals.

vendors in person. Should a retail partner provide a recommendation, a COUTURE team member will reach out to the potential exhibitor to see if partnership would be a mutually beneficial arrangement. Design Atelier, created to promote a ‘distinctive aesthetic from some of the industry’s most promising emerging designers’ is a three-year commitment.” Each year, we will have a handful of spaces that open up; new designers are selected through an application process and committee review to ensure they are, first a foremost a fit aesthetically, and that their businesses are set up to maximise their success,” Mr Brousseau said.

Businesses who exhibit at COUTURE appreciate the added touches and attention their participation earns them. Suzanne Kalan, whose eponymous company has had a presence at COUTURE for more than five years,

recognised that this was the right venue for her business when she transitioned away from working in fashion jewellery. “We recognised that COUTURE was the premier venue to showcase our collections,” she noted. “The elevated and exclusive nature of the show aligns perfectly with our brand’s vision and commitment to quality, making it the ideal platform to introduce our fine jewellery to a discerning audience.” Similarly, Lena Agdere, CEO and director of LORD Jewelry, felt that the show was the right outlet for her business because of its audience’s appreciation for craftsmanship. “We saw this as an ideal platform to showcase our collections to buyers who share our passion for artisanal excellence and innovative jewellery concepts.”

Ms Agdere, who keeps LORD’s client base interested in her work by continuously introducing new and surprising elements into her lines, including use of colour. She noticed that “many people gravitated towards our statement pieces, showing a strong interest in eye-catching designs.” Indeed, artistic innovation — including in use of colour, unusual design and unexpected materials — is one of the key concepts attendees to the show seek every year, and 2024 was no exception. Jewels that captured



Attendees seemed most interested in gold over other precious metals. Above: The 14K yellow gold Waterfall Necklace by Rainbow K, made for the COUTURE Show, won Best in Gold at the COUTURE Design Awards. Below: This bangle from Rainbow K’s Satin collection comprises 14K brushed gold and 0.720 ct diamonds. Photos courtesy of Rainbow K.



COUTURE SHOW

In addition to looking for gold, COUTURE's audience sought out colour. Main picture: Pieces from Suzanne Kalan's Classic Diamond collection. The ring, bangle bracelet and necklace shown here use diamonds and white, yellow and rose gold. Right: A selection of necklaces from Ms Kalan's Beaded collection. Photos courtesy of Suzanne Kalan Jewelry.





the imaginations of visitors ranged from the antiquity motif carried by multiple exhibitors, to the Western-style jewellery of Karina Brez (see pp. 8–9), to the beach-inspired and animal-related pieces by Parisian designer Yvonne Léon.

While there were a wide variety of styles and niches on display, there were other commonalities that vendors noticed among those who came ready to buy. As was noted in previous shows (see Spring 2024 G&J, pp. 12–17), green gemstones were in high demand. Jenna Blake of Jenna Blake Jewelry



noted, “Emeralds are a constant in my work and so naturally they are in high demand. We have also seen an uptick in interest in other green stones, such as malachite. The colour is always flattering on the wearer and often reads like a neutral. I particularly love emeralds paired with turquoise, as well as with diamonds; both combinations resonate with our clients.”

Visitors also seemed to overwhelmingly prefer gold jewellery over other precious metals. Parisian brand Rainbow K, who are in their second year of showing at COUTURE — and who took the COUTURE Design Award for Best in Gold with their Waterfall necklace — found that their new brushed-gold collection, called Satin, was very well received. They noted that the pieces from this new series “add a touch of elegance to your outfit, whether for a special evening or to complete your daily look. We are happy to see that our pieces were loved.” Yvonne Léon, who works with both 9K and 18K gold, indicated that there was a greater call for the

Green gems, such as emerald, malachite, tsavorite and turquoise garnered a great deal of attention at this year’s show. The turquoise version of Jenna Blake’s Squash Blossom charm (left) also uses diamond and 18K yellow gold; her Trophy Ring (shown on the right in malachite) features 4.000 ct of diamonds set in 18K yellow gold. Photo courtesy of Jenna Blake Jewelry.

latter type. And Suzanne Kalan, who works with white, yellow and rose gold — sometimes combining the three — said that “This year, we observed a significant demand for gold, particularly yellow gold, paired with diamonds. This classic combination has a timeless appeal and continues to be a favourite among our clients, symbolising elegance and longevity.”

Since the show’s formation three decades ago, COUTURE has excelled in bringing exclusivity, originality and quality its audience. While the trends may change from year to year, the show’s focus on a tailored experience for attendee and exhibitor alike will not. “We will continually work towards providing our community with an exceptional experience and implement any changes, big or small, that may be necessary to enhance our event,” Gannon Brousseau remarked. “This applies to the time we spend together in Las Vegas, as well as the ways in which we stay connected and enhance our clients’ and partners’ businesses throughout the year.” ■



COUTURE staff looks for designers, such as Yvonne Léon, who have a ‘distinctive aesthetic’ to grace the show.

Left: Ms Léon’s Paradise Island pendant is composed of 3.000 tcw tsavorite garnets, 0.330 tcw diamonds, 0.170 tcw brown diamonds, 0.006 tcw black diamonds, 0.160 ct blue sapphires and 0.010 tcw rubies, all set in 18K yellow gold. Right: The Watch Ring comprises 1.180 ct diamonds, nacre and 18K yellow gold. Photos courtesy of Yvonne Léon.



CREATING THE PARLIAMENT OF OWLS

Gem carver Christopher Dobranski explains the inspiration and process behind his recent collection, based on his love for an endangered species of owls.

The idea for the owl carvings came from a species of owls, called burrowing owls, that live in Canada, North America and South America. Their Latin name, *Athene cunicularia*, is derived from Athena (the Greek goddess of wisdom) and Cunicularia, which means miner or burrower. These birds, which are an endangered species, are social animals that live in the burrows created by rabbits and ground squirrels, in order to provide security for their family units.

Burrowing owls are very close to my heart; I have researched them, and I am familiar with their behaviour. Whether watching them in person or via video,

it became obvious that each bird has comical, individual traits that give them their own temperament.

A group of owls is called a *parliament*, providing the name of my collection. I wanted to produce a series that represented what I knew and what I was capable of producing, with similar materials that belonged together as in a family. I also wanted to show my ability as a carver and artist, that I could produce more carvings of equal calibre and that I am not a 'one-hit wonder'. This series took five years to design and complete in assorted types of high-quality quartz, including citrine and smoky quartz, from various parts of the world. The series was



The Watcher is carved from natural Brazilian citrine (365.20 g) from Minas Gerais. The eyes are crafted from Madeira citrine and gold while the beak, legs and claws are 18K yellow gold. The Watcher stands on a base of Brazilian quartz with snow-quartz inclusions.

presented to the public for the first time at Idar-Oberstein's Deutsche Edelsteinmuseum in August 2023.

All the owls have their own personalities and have been carved and finished to the highest quality of work that I could produce. It was the start of a wonderful project.

The first owl to be carved was the Little Professor (in German, *der Kleine Professor*). This piece was made from a single crystal of light smoky quartz, from the mountains of Switzerland. During the development and carving of the Little Professor, I was training under master carver Alfred Zimmermann. Using the knowledge I acquired from working with Alfred

Four of the five carvings in the Parliament of Owls series by Christopher Dobranski (from left): the Little Professor, the Commandant, the Artist and the Watcher.



and my own technique, the carving transformed into a wonderful wise owl with a clear disposition.

I used Madeira citrine, gold and acrylic to make the eyes in the style I am known for. This brought the spark of life to him. When crafting the legs, claws and base, made from 18K gold, I ensured that he stood perfectly on his feet so that he did not require a base for mounting. He was now finished and on his own.

The Little Professor was not only the first of this collection to come to fruition, but it was also the way I found my personal style of carving that people recognise today. It was also the last object that I had finished in the workshop of Alfred Zimmermann before he fell ill.

During this period the designs for the other members of the Parliament

accent one another so that when looking at the owl from top to bottom, the viewer saw one complete object.

The completed Commandant is composed of a rich champagne smoky quartz from the Minas Gerais region of Brazil. The beak and legs are made from 18K yellow gold, carved as one piece with the stone. The eyes, comprising Madeira citrine and gold, made him come alive. In the base, which was created from a piece of Brazilian quartz, with snow-quartz inclusions, I carved individual footprints inlaid with 24K gold to demonstrate the Commandant marching with purpose. The base was polished, fused with a mirror to bring light into the object and then framed by silver and 18K white gold with palladium. It is supported by 18K yellow gold feet.

As my designing progressed, I thought that every parliament should have someone to make sure the group was in order. So came the Watcher (*der Hingucker*). Made from citrine mined from Minas Gerais, I cut the details deeper into the stone to make her feathers look windblown. This gave her a distinct personality; she was serious, elegant and strong, and under her watchful eyes all goes as it should with the other owls. I used Madeira citrine and yellow gold for her eyes to match the other owls; her beak, legs and claws were also crafted from 18K yellow gold. She was also perched on a base of Brazilian quartz with snow-quartz inclusions.

Now that I had a teacher, a commander and an observer, I thought about what my Parliament was lacking. →

This series took five years to design and complete in assorted types of high-quality quartz from various parts of the world.

in the works. When I started the Commandant (*der Kommandant*), I felt I had no restraints on my technique; in fact, I wanted to push my process to the limit to see what I could do and how much detail the stone could hold. The Commandant was to be a test of my carving. I wanted to portray a marching soldier, one who was focused on a purpose. To make it possible I had to portray motion in an inanimate object.

The first part of the process on this carving was to consult with my best friend, goldsmith Volkmar Juchem. I needed more than just gold pieces stuck to the carving, I needed the gold to be a continuation of the entire carving. All parts – eyes, legs, beak – all had to



The material for the Commandant, a champagne smoky quartz (502.45 g) is from Minas Gerais, Brazil. Like the other owls in this series, the eyes are made from Madeira citrine, and details such as the beak and legs, are worked in 18K yellow gold. The base of the carving uses quartz from Minas Gerais (558 g), and incorporates 18K yellow gold and sterling silver in its design. The owl's footprints are made with 24K yellow gold inlay.



Christopher Dobranski looks at the Artist (above) as a self-portrait. The owl's head position (shown in close-up below) shows how Mr Dobranski considers the world from all points of view. The owl is carved from a Brazilian champagne smoky quartz (~680 g), with Madeira citrine used for the eyes. Details in the eyes as well as the beak and legs/claws are crafted in 18K yellow gold. The base is Brazilian quartz crystal (~1,185 g), with 18K white gold with palladium at the peak and the feet of the base.



I felt that the group needed an Artist, or *Künstler*. I decided to do a self-portrait in owl form. This carving would show how I look at the world from every angle.

At this point I was very comfortable with reading, plotting and carving the stone. I watched as my hands worked effortlessly to transform the specimen into the next member of the Parliament.

The Artist was cut from another champagne smoky quartz from Minas Gerais, Brazil. Perched high on the 'cliff' of a Brazilian quartz – itself topped by a peak of 18K white gold mixed with palladium – *der Künstler* stands on a base on 18K white gold feet with palladium. As with the other owls, his eyes are made from Madeira citrine with gold; the beak, legs and claws are all carved from 18K yellow gold. He balances on one leg with his head turned around, looking at the world from all points of view, a metaphor for the way I look at things and analyse them. When I finished the Artist, I could see myself in the carving.

As the Parliament progressed, my confidence in the high-detail carving of gem material became apparent. Originally, I planned to have only four owls in this series. But while working on the owls the COVID-19 pandemic began, and many orders were cancelled, bringing much of my work to a standstill. I had started working on a fifth owl at this point, and I was too stubborn to put him down. I had to finish.

This fifth owl of this series, the Philosopher (*der Philosoph*), is my most, is my most ambitious – and perhaps my best – carving to date. While all the owls I carved used the finest smoky quartz and citrine specimens I could find, the Philosopher was to be made from high-quality optical quartz from Madagascar. Alfred had gifted me a piece of this very white, very clean material left over from polar bears we had carved years before. I knew exactly the personality of the owl that was to be carved from this material. A sage, deep in thought while balancing on one leg like a Shaolin monk.

The COVID-19 lockdown was a strange time. I walked to my workshop every day without seeing a soul or



The Little Professor was the first of the owl carvings to be completed by Christopher Dobranski, who created the body of the bird from a light smoky quartz (424.12 g) from Switzerland.

Madeira citrine and 18K yellow gold were used for the eyes; 18K yellow gold was also used for the beak, legs and claws.

car on the street. I worked alone all day with no interruptions, and total concentration. This allowed me to fully focus and immerse myself in the Philosopher.

I pushed myself to the breaking point, experimenting with and developing new techniques in order to bring this owl to fruition. During the process I coordinated with my goldsmith and friend, Volkmar Juchem, on how to go about working to make his job easier and have the gold be the perfect fit for the carving. We threw ideas at each other as the Philosopher took shape.

I designed and cut the base, of black Siberian obsidian, with my colleague and onetime teacher, Juergen Christmann. With Volkmar's assistance, we designed a mirror from 18K white gold with palladium to project light

upwards and through the owl. It was also the only way to see my initials carved on the underside of the owl.

When he was assembled and I was able to look at my work, both individually and as a group, I realised what I had accomplished with the Philosopher, and the collection as a whole. This is, as of this writing, my best technical and artistic work in gem cutting.

To see all five together, the complete Parliament of Owls collection, is very impressive. I still have to shake my head when I realise that I created these beauties. From start to finish, the process was a work of love and dedication. ■

All photos by Daniel Hoffmann unless otherwise indicated

This fifth owl of the series, the Philosopher, is my most ambitious – and perhaps my best – carving to date.



The last of the owls to be created, the Philosopher (left) is composed of Madagascar white optical quartz (671 g) for the body; Madeira citrine for the eyes; and 18K yellow gold for the eyes, beak, legs and feet. The base comprises 386 g of black Siberian obsidian and a mirror designed with 18K white gold with palladium. The feathers of the Philosopher are shown in detail on the right.



Design for a corsage brooch with laurel leaves and butterfly, Joseph Chaumet, drawing studio, ca. 1890, pen and black ink, gouache and ink wash with gum arabic on grey tinted paper.

Chaumet: Drawing from Nature

Reviewed by Nicole Ahline FGA

Anything that is created starts off as an idea. For jewellery, that idea, or inspiration, sparks a drawing that develops into an exquisite end result — marvellous jewellery. *Chaumet: Drawing from Nature* by Gaëlle Rio, with botanical input from Marc Jeanso, showcases the visions the designers of Chaumet have had since the maison's founding in 1780, shedding light on how the Parisian jeweller became the luxury brand that it is today.

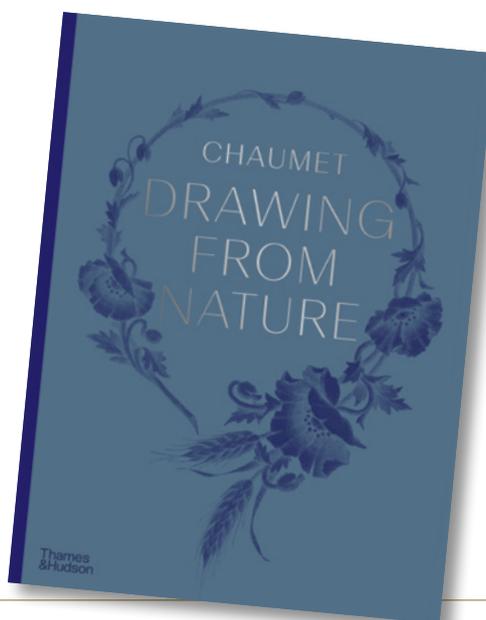
This volume provides details on the art of jewellery drawing alongside the history of Chaumet, and the most influential motif depicted throughout their collections over the centuries — nature. Over the last two-and-a-half centuries, Chaumet has amassed over 66,000 art pieces in its collection. They include jewellery designs of stomachers, brooches, aigrettes and, most importantly, importantly, tiaras. The last of these may be what the jewellery house is best known for. *Chaumet: Drawing from Nature* allows the reader to step into Chaumet's archives. Much of the art is from 1890–1930, with a few modern-day pieces.

Drawing jewellery provides a guideline of sorts, one that shows what the finished jewellery piece should look like. Rio dives deep into the different

techniques and mediums that represented the designers' objectives. Shading or highlighting emphasise relief and colour depicts different gemstones and materials. The mediums used ranged from pencil and watercolour paint to gouache (a thicker, more pigmented paint than watercolour). The artist often produced their designs on tinted or translucent (tracing) paper. These methods are illustrated throughout the book.

Many jewellery pieces had more than one drawing; as the ideas that sparked the piece evolved, the resulting art become more comprehensive

and thorough. Another goal of the final rendering was to win over the buyer, and/or wearer, of the piece. The drawings could show the piece from various angles. It might also indicate the gemstones that were intended for the jewellery, along with their carat weight, cut and colour. Once the design was no longer in use for assembling and selling the jewel, it was a way to preserve the history of the transformative designs of Chaumet. According to Rio, "Even when pieces are sold and worn, their corresponding drawings continue to belong to Chaumet. They represent a formidable archive of treasures that can often no longer be traced... By capturing the very first ideas behind a piece of jewellery, a drawing establishes itself as a work of art; by sometimes becoming the last vestige of the finished creation, it also serves as a heritage item. Moreover, the 'paper museum' formed by this incredible collection of graphic art provides an inexhaustible resource for the drawing studio by forging links between the creativity of yesterday and that of tomorrow."



By Gaëlle Rio, with botanical text by Marc Jeanso, hardcover, 256 pp., illus., publ. by Thames and Hudson, London, UK, 2023, £65.00. Cover photo courtesy of Thames & Hudson / © Chaumet, Paris.

The founder of Chaumet, Marie-Étienne Nitot, gained recognition in 1804 when he worked on Napoléon Bonaparte's coronation jewellery. He then became the official jeweller to the French court, creating many elegant pieces for Empress Joséphine, who shared a fondness of flowers and animals with Nitot himself. Nitot created a quite a collection for Joséphine that harmonised the two things they loved, jewellery and nature. Napoleon and Joséphine's marriage was annulled in 1810, but during this time Romanticism – a movement that, among other themes, recognised and idealised nature – was spreading through Europe. This was a boon for the House of Chaumet. Marie-Étienne Nitot's son, François-Renault took over the maison, followed by Jean-Baptiste Fossin, the Nitots' foreman. Fossin, in particular,

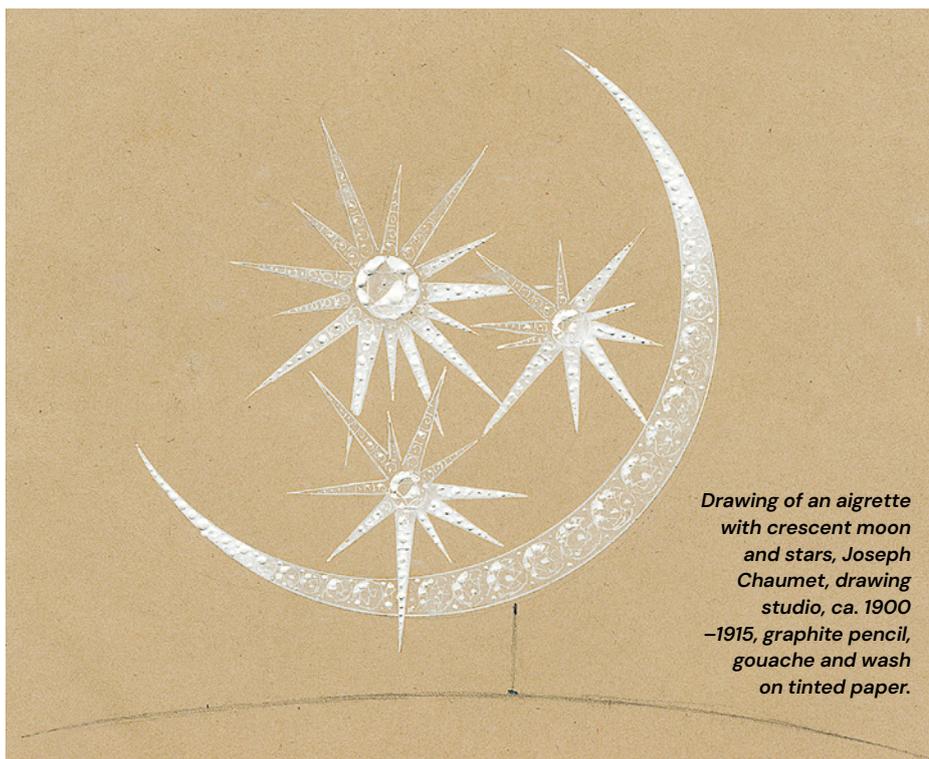
focused on making the jewellery under his tenure as realistic as possible.

In the late nineteenth century the Romanticism movement transitioned to Art Nouveau. During this period, in 1885, Joseph Chaumet became the maison's director. Under Chaumet – who ultimately gave the jewellery house his name – the designs were still inspired by nature, but pieces incorporated bolder materials and grandiose designs that featured both plants and insects. The start of the First World War and the rise of art deco – which trended from the 1910s through the 1930s – led to designs that were more geometric than delicate. The influence of nature was not as apparent during this period, remaining in the background until the late 1940s. During this period, the hair clip and brooch became incredibly popular, and flowers were the go-to



Drawing of a double-row necklace with floating gemstones and floral motifs, Joseph Chaumet, drawing studio, ca. 1890, graphite pencil and gouache on translucent paper.

“By capturing the very first ideas behind a piece of jewellery, a drawing establishes itself as a work of art... it also serves as a heritage item.”



Drawing of an aigrette with crescent moon and stars, Joseph Chaumet, drawing studio, ca. 1900–1915, graphite pencil, gouache and wash on tinted paper.

for the maison's design inspiration. Coloured gemstones were heavily used to depict the area of colours for roses or daisies.

The jewellery created by Chaumet has continued to evolve through the present day, thanks to the wide variety of material available, including platinum, rose gold and gemstones. The maison's designers still draw inspiration from nature, but they combine that theme with modernism. Necklaces are in greater demand than tiaras; insect designs have been overshadowed by panther pieces.

Following the narrative on the role of nature in the history of the jewellery house, *Chaumet: Drawing from Nature* dives deep into the archives to look at examples of such designs, which are divided into sections titled Flowers, Trees and Plants, Bestiary and Universe. The diversity and range of complexity in the drawings is breathtaking. Photos include captions describing the piece of jewellery the item and how it integrates the concept of 'nature'. Some pieces explain what gemstones were used in the arrangement of the item and what mediums were utilised in the artwork.

Rio and Jeanso explain that flowers have a 'visual impact' that could provide a range of different mediums. Historically, they were a symbol of female beauty and were one of the few pleasures in life



Above: Design for a peacock-feather aigrette, Prosper Morel, drawing studio, ca. 1870, graphite pencil, grey ink, gouache and brown ink wash on tinted paper.

Right: Design for a hellebore corsage brooch, Joseph Chaumet, drawing studio, ca. 1890, gouache and wash on translucent paper.

that were accessible to all social classes. This made flowers an obvious subject for the nature-oriented maison, which prominently featured orchids, chrysanthemums, peonies, poppies and other blossoms in their jewels. The first drawing in the Flowers section is a brooch of hydrangeas (ca. 1890) created from gouache and wash on translucent paper. The delicate details, from the petals of the flowers to the ribbon on



the stem, lend a dainty appearance to the brooch. Other highlights of the Flowers section include a daisy-and-wild-rose aigrette (a jeweled headpiece depicting or suggesting a plume or tuft of feathers), and a double-row necklace with floating gemstones and floral motifs. The authors discuss in detail the tiaras Jean-Baptiste Fossin created, particularly those decorated with ivy or water lilies, and the use of rubies and diamonds to depict geraniums. One of the contemporary designs showcased, from 2023, is of an iris necklace in white gold with sapphires, spinels and diamonds. The artist makes the neck of the model transparent, allowing the viewer to take in the elaborate clasp of the necklace.

Following Flowers is the section on Trees and Plants. The House of Chaumet has brought the same diversity in the depiction of plants that they bring to their floral pieces. Inspiration was drawn from flora such as oak and palm trees, ferns and holly, laurel and vines — with artists drawn to the plants' 'aesthetic qualities'.

When perusing this section, two types of jewellery pieces are prominent: tiaras, which the house built a reputation on, and hair combs. There are tiaras decorated with leaves, wheat ear, ivy, bulrush, redcurrant berries and more. One of the more notable pieces is a tiara that reproduces palm tree leaves, documented on tinted paper with gouache and graphite pencil. Also of note is an oak-leaf tiara drawn in graphite pencil, gouache and wash on tinted paper; the artist used shading to make shadows from the curved leaves. Next to this latter drawing is a black-and-white photograph of an oak-leaf-and-acorn tiara. The photographed tiara doesn't appear to be influenced by the drawing, but seeing the original drawing next to the completed jewel shows how the piece developed from the original creative spark.

Bestiary, the inspiration from animals both real and imaginary, is the third section. Chaumet has covered a wide range of animals throughout their 240 years, including various birds, insects and reptiles — particularly snakes, which Jean-Batiste Fossin used often to symbolise endless love — even dabbling in sea animals. When reading

this section, one cannot help but notice the striking use of colour, especially when observing the maison's peacock pieces. The feathers have vibrant blues and greens with various shaped and faceted gemstones. One aigrette clearly shows faceted gemstones with sharp lines, while a tiara has cabochons that utilise the white of the circular stones to showcase reflected light. There are numerous aigrettes of wings in blues, greens and reds. Other pieces include coiled snakes with rich yellows and greens, spiderweb chokers and bold panther necklaces.

The last portion of the book is art pieces influenced by the universe. The authors start with a quote by the poet Théophile Gautier: "It is sweet to observe the glowing star, a speck of gold embroidered on the canopy of the firmament." These lines embody the vastness of the universe and the possibility of the days. The designers

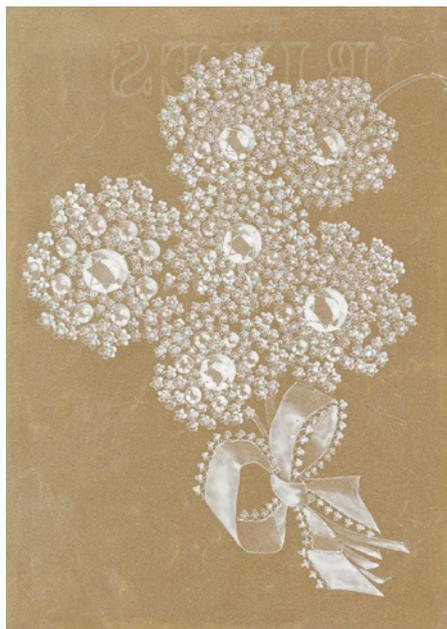


Illustration of a brooch in the form of a bouquet of hydrangeas with ribbon, Joseph Chaumet, drawing studio, ca. 1890, gouache and wash on translucent paper.

at Chaumet, including Joseph Chaumet himself, incorporated astronomical themes such as stars, the Sun and crescent moons into various pieces.

The jewellery designs in the Universe section are complex, to say the least. There are sunburst aigrettes that have numerous sharp lines of various lengths, with and without gemstones. A particularly beautiful aigrette combines a crescent moon with three dazzling stars. Other pieces include rainbows and invoke flames. The drawings account for the potential of phenomenal gemstones, including a star sapphire and pearls with orient.

Nature is the most influential aspect in the work of the House of Chaumet; yet there is so much diversity in these pages. Chaumet has over 66,000 jewellery designs in their archives, and the authors used the perfect array to showcase their history and the skill set of the artisans from past and present. The choices Rio and Jeanso made in assembling the book brought attention to pieces both long forgotten and newly designed, but all highlight why Chaumet is the high-end jewellery house that it is today. ■

All photos © Chaumet Collections, Paris unless otherwise indicated.

Seeing the original drawing next to the completed jewel shows how the piece developed from the original creative spark.



Depiction of a palm-leaf tiara, Joseph Chaumet, drawing studio, ca. 1900, graphite pencil and gouache on tinted paper.

Innovative GEM CARVINGS inspired by CLASSICAL FIGURES

Philipp Munsteiner of Stipshausen, Germany, whose work is featured on our cover, discusses the inspiration behind his inventive techniques.

I am the fifth generation in a family of gemstone cutters; I grew up in the family business in Stipshausen, Germany. I cut for the first time (in wood) at the age of five with my grandfather, Bernd Munsteiner; I cut my first gemstone, quartz, when I was eight. Between 2020–2023, I completed a gemstone-cutting apprenticeship in my parents' business with great success. Tom and Bernd Munsteiner were excellent teachers with a lot of passion and patience.

In 2022, I won the Sponsorship Award for the Arts and Crafts of Rhineland-Palatinate with the Dragon cut (shown here in both the citrine ring and amethyst carving). At the time of the competition, the jury stated that "With his Dragon cut, a technique that uses many sharp cuts and accentuated matting, Philipp Munsteiner succeeded in exposing the heart of the dragon." In creating these



The ring on the left features a 16.53 ct citrine, displaying Philipp Munsteiner's award-winning Dragon cut, set in 18K yellow gold. The amethyst carving (right), which uses the same cut, weighs 557.89 ct. Both gems were sourced from Minas Gerais, Brazil.

pieces I used a corundum wheel and a lapidary disc, classic tools that served me well during the cutting process.

One of my favourite cuts is the Dragon Egg cut; this is not the same as the Dragon cut, as the incisions made in the stone are different. It was with the Dragon Egg style that I won second place in the Young Talent Competition



Philipp Munsteiner's Dragon Egg cut was inspired by the fantasy tale Eragon. From left: A 1,483.50 ct rutilated quartz, a citrine weighing 1,324.76 ct and a 399.00 ct amethyst.



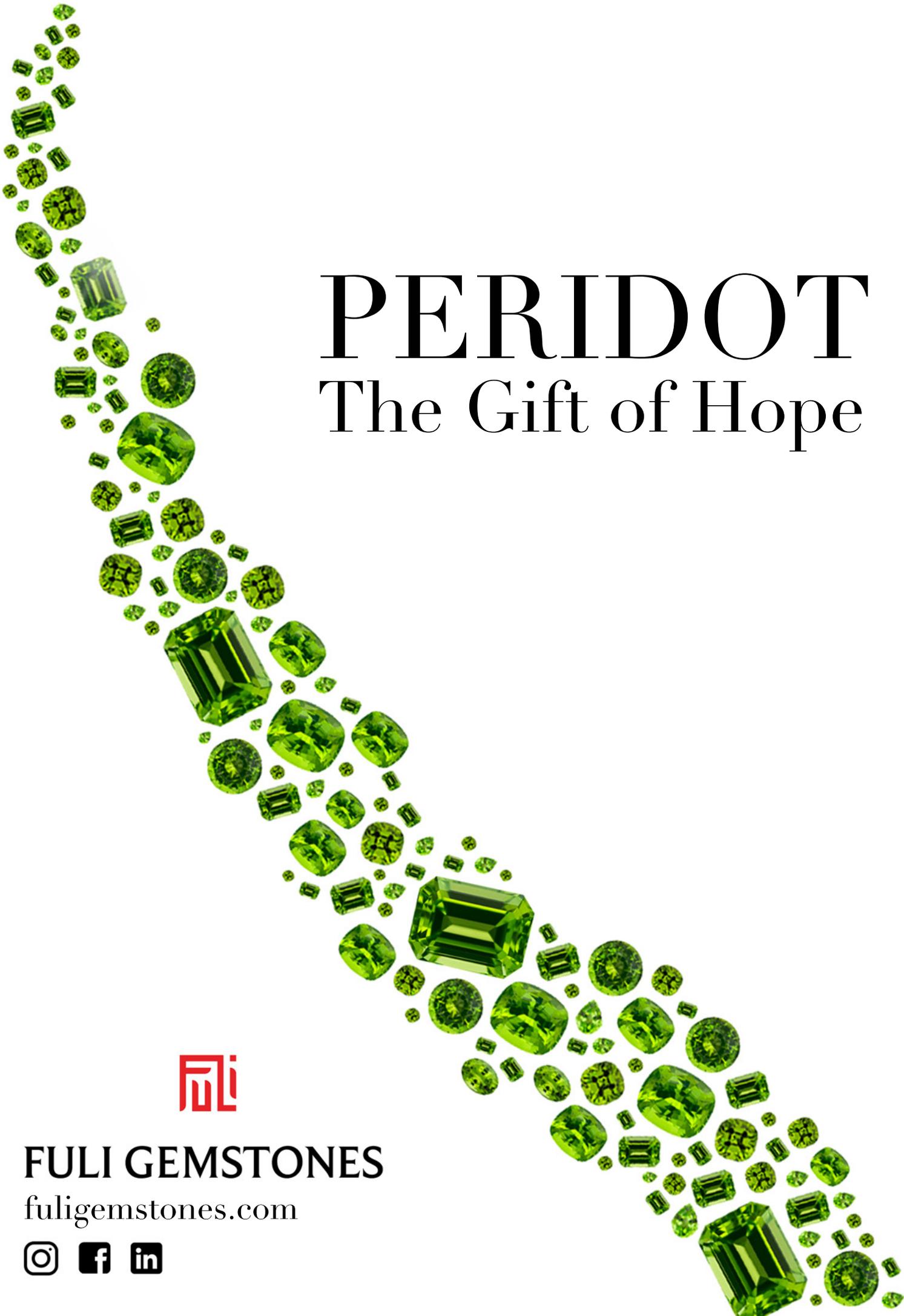
The Griffin sculpture, made with Philipp Munsteiner's cut of the same name, uses a 290.23 ct rutilated quartz.

in Idar-Oberstein's German Jewelry and Gemstone Prize in 2022. The inspiration for the Dragon Egg cut was from a mythical creature from the fantasy story *Eragon* by Christopher Paolini. In the story, the dragon chooses its rider while still in its shell, and only hatches when it has found the right rider. Fascinated and inspired by this, I came up with the idea of grinding 'dragon eggs'. When the gemstone moves, the growing dragon inside – created through the cutting – is revealed. Teeth, claws and scales are revealed in all their primeval beauty in the light. They seem to ask, "Who will be the chosen dragon rider?"

My sculpture, made from rutilated quartz, uses what I have named the Griffin cut. The idea for this cut comes from the mythical creature of the same name, which has the body of a lion and the head of a majestic eagle. The griffin digs for gold and precious stones with its powerful claws. The cuts in the quartz symbolise the traces of the claw marks made by the eagle and lion. This look is achieved by the structures cut into the back, which makes the carved material 'glow' from within. The Griffin sculpture took two full workdays to complete.

I am very grateful for the positivity and purpose I feel from the fusion of my passion and my profession. I truly enjoy creating fascination in the viewer and opening up the magical world of gemstones. ■

All photos courtesy of Philipp Munsteiner.



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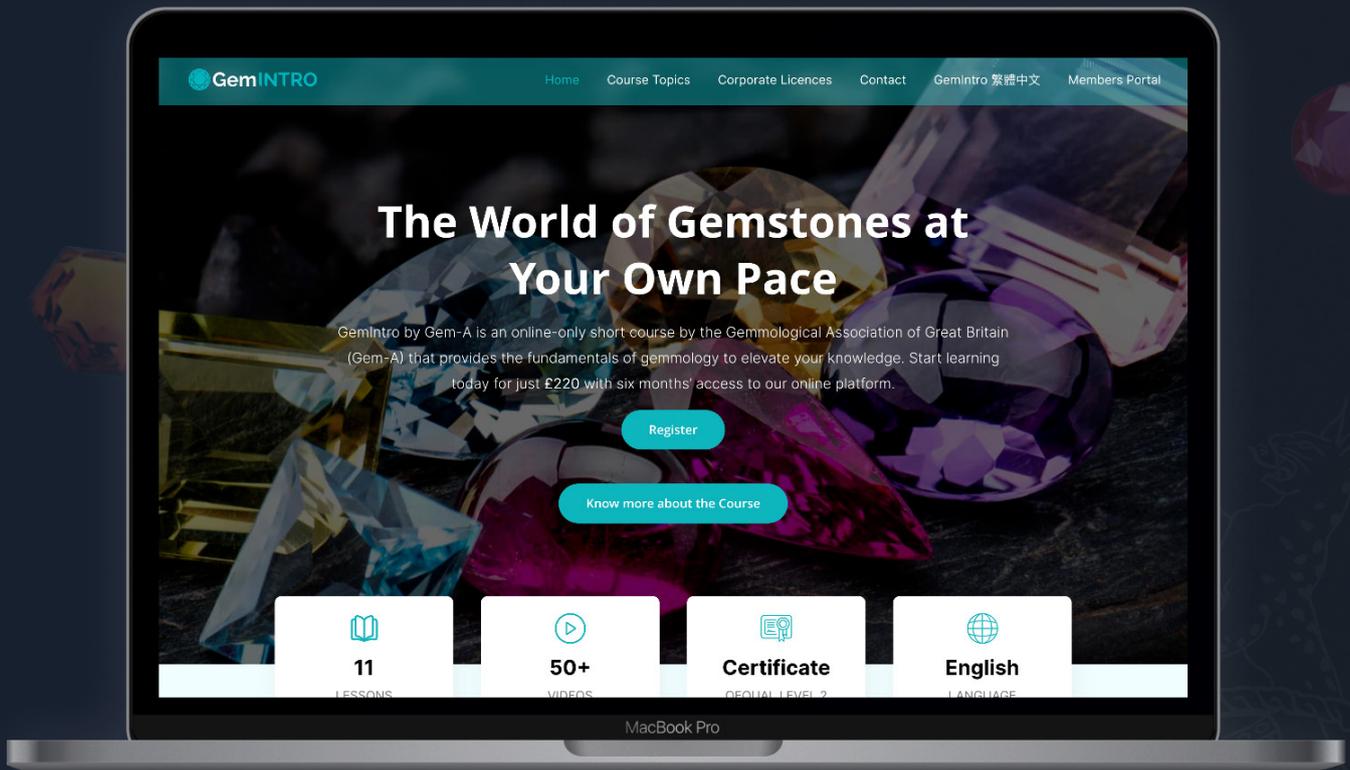
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