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Gems & Jewellery

REVISITING **SUSTAINABILITY**

Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta investigates the changes to the responsible and ethical gem and jewellery movement over the last 25 years.





REFLECTIONS FROM THE LAS **VEGAS SHOW**

Olga González FGA DGA speaks to trade members about the impact of forthcoming US tariff policy.



Florian Van Den Brande FGA DGA recounts her visit to the gemstone cutting and carving hub.



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COVER PICTURE

The rings on our cover come from Alice Cicolini's Goddess collection. Both the Flora (top) and the Iris ring are made from 18K yellow gold, and were handcrafted in Geneva by Juan Sebastian Galan Bello. Photo © Agenda Brown.

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21 Ely Place, London EC1N 6TD

t: +44 (0)20 7404 3334

f: +44 (0)20 7404 8843

e: editor@gem-a.com

w: www.gem-a.com

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Editor-in-Chief:

Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta

Contributing Editor: Olga González

Design and Production

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Editorial and Advertising

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Gems & Jewellery

Summer 2025 Edition Featured Contributors

1. RACHEL CHURCH

Rachel Church writes and lectures widely on jewellery history and design. She is the author of Rings (V&A/ Thames and Hudson 2011 and 2017) and Brooches and Badges (V&A/ Thames and Hudson 2019), alongside many shorter articles and contributions to catalogues. She worked as a curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum for over twenty years and was part of the team which redeveloped the European Silver Galleries, the Sacred Silver and Stained Glass Galleries and in William and Judith Bollinger Jewellery Gallery. She is particularly interested in the social history of jewellery and is currently researching male jewellery. Since 2021, Ms Church has been a freelance lecturer and jewellery researcher, available for both private commissions and institutional projects. Her website, www.thelifeofjewels.com, looks at the stories and history behind jewellery.

2. CHRISTINE PULEO REIS

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 the Gemological Institute of America (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. Ms Puleo Reis enjoys writing about the diversity of Brazil's gem production and unique jewellery styles and periods, and is currently coordinating several Brazil-U.S. gem and jewellery projects.

3. THIBAU REYNDERS

Hailing from Lanaken, Belgium, Thibau Reynders is currently pursuing his studies in gemmology through Gem-A; his long-term goal is to earn his FGA certification and specialise in rare-gem sourcing. Mr Reynders' passion for precious stones and fine jewellery was ignited at a young age. He has blended his academic pursuits with hands-on experience by working at Jochen Leën's atelier, and at the associated Granada Gallery in Antwerp. Mr

Reynders oversees client relations and after-sales service, as well as he handling of rare gemstones and exquisite jewellery pieces. He manages display cases to showcase the maison's contemporary artworks. His enthusiasm extends beyond the studio; he engages with the global gem community through social media and industry events, sharing insights on sustainable practices and emerging trends in coloured stones. With a sharp eye for detail, a growing technical foundation and a genuine passion for the craft, Mr Reynders is representative of a new generation of gem professionals, who are working to bridge tradition and modernity in the world of high jewellery.

4. FLORIANE VAN DEN BRANDE

Floriane Van Den Brande holds both an FGA and a DGA, and is a member of the Federation of European Education in Gemmology. She has worked for two major gemstone dealers in London's Hatton Garden while teaching the Foundation Course at Gem-A's headquarters. Ms Van Den Brande recently moved to Sweden, where she is working at Kaplan's, one of Scandinavia's leading auction houses focused on jewellery, watches and fashion.

Special thanks to Alanna Archuleta, Alice Cicolini and Cristina M. Villegas.



From the CEO

Opinion and comment from CEO Cath Hill

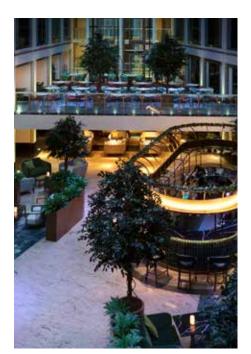
hope that this finds everyone enjoying the last days of summer and the first days of Autumn. I have very much enjoyed getting to know many more members of the gemmological community over the last few months. Gemmology has definitely captured my imagination. In fact, I am pleased and proud to have passed my Gemmology Foundation exam and have already commenced my Diploma studies!

On the topic of our educational offerings, I am delighted to announce that we will be starting to teach the Gem-A Foundation curriculum using our new Course Notes from September here in London and via Online Distance Learning (ODL) programme. Accredited Teaching Centres will also be able to use the new Course Notes; however, the existing notes remain current as we complete the transition to the new version and while translation takes place. The new Diploma in Gemmology Course Notes are well underway and will be launched next year, followed by new Diamond Diploma notes.

Gem-A's flagship Conference is heading to an exciting new venue

for 2025. The Leonardo Royal London St. Paul's, which overlooks St. Paul's Cathedral, London's iconic landmark, will be the centre of the Association's activities for the first two days of November. Our Honorary President, Richard Drucker, and Journal of Gemmology editor Brendan Laurs have once again pulled together an excellent programme of fascinating and inspirational speakers. This, combined with the opportunity to meet up with old friends and new in the gemmological

Gem-A's flagship
Conference is
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exciting new
venue for 2025.



The new venue for Gem-A's Conference is The Leonardo Royal London St. Paul's.

world, make this one of the 'mustattend' events of the year. I am very much looking forward to meeting many of you at our Conference, and at our Graduation ceremony, at which we will applaud and reward recipients of our Gemmology and Diamond Diplomas.

The Summer issue of Gems&Jewellery is no less engaging, with content that addresses a number of aspects related to our community. In our lead article, Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta reviews the industry from a responsible, ethical and sustainable perspective. She interviewed a number of members of the trade to gain a broad viewpoint of these matters. She discusses topics that have been mitigated since these ideas gained mainstream attention in the first decade of the twenty-first century, as well as issues that have cropped up in the intervening quarter-century.



A great focus of conversation at the late-spring Las Vegas shows was the tariff policies of the United States and how, once enacted, they might affect members of the trade. Olga González FGA DGA conversed with exhibitors across many shows to learn their perspectives. She found that, overall, the outlook was optimistic. Brands are preparing – or have already accounted – for these assessments as part of their procedures for running successful businesses.

Idar-Oberstein, Germany, has been known for generations as a centre of coloured-gemstone carving and cutting. With a major part of its population and economy comprising jewellers, dealers and gem artisans, the town has long been a destination for industry members and gemstone aficionados. Floriane Van Den Brande FGA DGA detailed her exploration of the town, taken in May 2025 with other members of the Gem-A staff, as well as her experience at the conference of the German Gemmological Association. Other topics covered include a look at the Granada Gallery, with its flagship location in Tucson, Arizona, and three sites in Belgium; a discussion of Young Diamantaires, a global community of young diamond professionals; a review of the Cartier exhibition at the V&A Museum; and a report from the ICA Congress in Brasilia, Brazil.

We hope you enjoy this latest issue of G&J, and look forward to seeing you in November at Conference.

Gem-A News

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

GEMFIELDS SELLS FABERGÉ TO AMERICAN INVESTMENT GROUP

ritish mining company Gemfields announced on 11 August that they sold Fabergé to SMG Capital LLC, an investment company in the United States, for \$50 million (~£36.88 million). Gemfields will be paid \$45 million when the sale is completed, expected on 28 August. The company announced that the remaining \$5 million will be paid through quarterly royalty payments at a rate of 8% of Fabergé's revenue. The sale is not expected to be subject to regulatory or any other approval processes. "Today's sale marks the end of

an era for us," said Sean Gilbertson, group CEO of Gemfields. "Fabergé has played a key role in raising the profile of the coloured gemstones mined by Gemfields and we will certainly miss its marketing leverage and star power."

In addition to Fabergé, Gemfields, which is well known for its mining of emeralds in Zambia and rubies in Mozambique, has collaborated with jewellers such as Goldsmiths, Rachel Quinn and Fenton. The company acquired Fabergé in 2013 for \$142 million (£89 million).



The Lilies of the Valley egg (ca. 1898) is housed at the Fabergé Museum in St Petersburg, Russia. It was commissioned by Tsar Nicholas Il for his wife, Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna. Gemfields announced the sale of Fabergé to SMG Capital LLC on 11 August 2025. Photo by Xeniia X/Shutterstock.

SUCCESSFUL EFFORTS TO RESTORE ENGLAND'S FRESHWATER PEARL MUSSEL POPULATION

The Freshwater Pearl Mussel Ark, a conservation effort of the Freshwater Biological Association (FBA) in partnership with the Environment Agency and Natural England, hit a milestone this summer. Set up in 2007 to breed freshwater pearl mussels (Margaritifera margaritifera) and release the resulting juveniles into the rivers from which their parents originated, the programme placed the five-thousandth mussel in the River Kent in July. This resulted in an increase in the river's mussel population from fewer than ten individuals to over one hundred animals.

Capable of living for up to 130 years, Margaritifera margaritifera is a slowgrowing mollusc that takes roughly 6-9 years to reach sizes large enough for release into the wild. In England, there are roughly a dozen rivers with freshwater pearl mussels, which have declined by 90% over the last century. In most of these rivers, the youngest animals are commonly over 70 years old, creating a very real risk reinforcements in the short term, and long-term habitat improvements

for extinction. Breeding and population and catchment-scale restoration,

are needed. The conservation of the molluscs also assists other freshwater species, as mussels remove bacteria that are threats to aquatic ecosystems; a single adult mussel can filter fifty litres of river water a day.

England's freshwater pearl mussels have also benefited from the £13 million Species Recovery Programme's Capital Grants Scheme, which ran from August 2023 to March 2025. As a part of this endeavour, Natural England invested in sixty-three different projects involving seventy-eight partners aimed at helping the recovery of 150 species, including that of the freshwater pearl mussel. Projects that were undertaken on behalf of the mollusc included the release of 2475 juveniles into streams in Cumbria, as well as the mitigation of 143 leaky dams that supported freshwater species, reduced flood risk and improved water quality. The results of the Scheme were published on 13 August, and can be found at www.gov.uk/government/ news/threatened-species-benefitfrom-multi-million-pound-investmentto-aid-their-recovery.



DE BEERS, ENDIAMA DISCOVER NEW KIMBERLITE FIELD IN ANGOLA

On 12 August, De Beers Group, together with Angola's national diamond company, Endiama, announced the discovery of kimberlite, the host rock for diamonds, in Angola. The joint venture successfully intersected

kimberlite in its first drill hole into a high-priority cluster of targets in July; these targets had been identified from the airborne surveys completed in March 2025. This is the first new kimberlite field identified by De Beers

Natural diamond seated in kimberlite.

De Beers and Endiama, Angola's national diamond company, announced the discovery of a new kimberlite field on 12 August 2025.

Photo by Bjoern Wylezich/Shutterstock.

Group in more than three decades.

Over the coming months, further drilling, ground geophysical surveys, and laboratory analysis will be conducted to confirm the kimberlite type and assess its diamond potential.

Al Cook, CEO of De Beers Group, said: "Angola is, in our view, one of the best places on the planet to look for diamonds, and this discovery reinforces our confidence. It is a powerful reminder of what can be achieved through partnership, and I commend President Lourenco and his government for all the work they have done to enhance transparency, adopt international best practices, and create a business-friendly environment, all of which has enabled us to return to Angola and seek new sources of supply. We are excited about the role De Beers can play in helping the country deliver on its huge potential, both below and above the ground."

MANX METAL DETECTORIST DISCOVERS VIKING-AGE GOLD

A rare fragment of a gold arm ring that belonged to a Viking, dating back to roughly dates to around 1000–1100 CE, was discovered on the Isle of Man in the spring. It was unearthed by Ronald Clucas, for whom this is the second find from the Viking period in fifty years.



The Viking Age on the Isle of Man began at the end of the eighth century and continued until 1266, when Magnus VI of Norway ceded the island to Alexander III, King of Scots, in the Treaty of Perth. During their time on Man, the Vikings had a dual economy, where goods and services were paid for in both coins and bullion (silver and/or gold). Viking gold discoveries are much rarer than silver from the same period; gold was usually used to create jewellery, such as the arm ring. Allison Fox, curator for archaeology at Manx National Heritage, explained that "Jewellery items such as this had several functions in the Viking Age both as prized personal possessions and visible displays of wealth. They were easily portable and were also used to cover costs in financial transactions."

Made by a highly skilled goldsmith using a specialised technique, the arm band consists of eight strands of gold rods plaited together. The piece was

Found by metal detectorist Ronald Clucas on the Isle of Man, this Viking-era arm ring can be seen at the Manx Museum in Douglas. Photo courtesy of Manx National Heritage. found folded in two and is around 3.7 cm in length (although it would have originally been around 7.7 cm long) and weighs 27.26 g. "This arm ring has been cut twice, indicating it has possibly been used for at least two separate transactions," Allison Fox noted. "One cut removed the terminal end of the arm ring, the other one cut the original complete arm ring almost in half. This fragment was buried in the ground until discovered. It may have been hidden for safekeeping, could just have been lost or may even have been buried as an offering to the Viking gods."

The arm ring has been declared a Treasure by Man's deputy coroner of inquests. It is currently on display at the Manx Museum in Douglas.

ERRATUM

In the Spring 2025 issue of *G&J*, the affiliation of Helen Serras–Herman FGA was listed as Gem Arts International. It should have been listed as Gem Art Center. We regret the error.

CHRISTIE'S MAGNIFICENT JEWELS AUCTION

olour ruled the day at Christie's Magnificent Jewels sale of 17 June, held in New York City. The in-person auction was 100 percent sold by lot and achieved a total of \$87.7 million (~£50.2 million). This was the highest amount ever garnered for a variousowner jewellery auction at Christie's in the Americas. The lots were notable for several reasons, including two pieces that were the subject of great anticipation.

The Marie Therese Pink is a 10.38 ct kite-shaped fancy purple-pink diamond purportedly owned by Marie Antoinette and definitively owned by her daughter (and the stone's namesake), the Duchess of Angoulême. The gemstone has been mounted in blackened platinum alongside round diamonds by acclaimed jewellery designer JAR. The ring sold for \$13.9 million (roughly £7.8 million) almost doubling the high end of its estimate range. The Blue Belle, a rare 392.52 ct sapphire produced in 1926 from what was then Ceylon, was mounted in an 18K white-gold

necklace with round and oval-shaped diamonds. It sold for \$11.335,000 (~£6.4 million), towards the higher end of the estimated \$8-12 million it was expected to fetch. The auction also sold three private collections, including a trio of Mughal necklaces that sold for \$14.7 million (~£8.4 million). Jewellery houses whose work was represented at the sale included Suzanne Belperron, Van Cleef and Arpels, Chaumet and Tiffany & Co.

In his comments about the Magnificent Jewels auction, Rahul Kadakia, Christie's International Head of Jewelry, stated, "This season's results highlight the tremendous demand for jewels of exceptional rarity, provenance and craftsmanship. In addition to the regal splendour of the Marie-Thérèse Pink diamond and the Blue Belle sapphire, private collections and superb jewels were met with enthusiastic and competitive bidding driven by our team's passionate expertise. These successes underscore Christie's global reach, market leadership and enduring commitment to delivering the best possible outcome for our clients."



Christie's Magnificent Jewels auction in June 2025 sold 100% of offered lots. These included the Blue Belle, a 392.52 cushion-modified mixed-cut sapphire surrounded by round and oval-shaped diamonds and set in a 18K white-gold necklace. Photo courtesy of Christie's.

for everyone, whether you're verifying

a family heirloom or cataloguing stock for an auction. There are other hallmark

databases, but ours is designed to be extremely user-centric. We've digitised

hallmark charts and built an interactive

guide, so you don't need to be an

expert to get an answer."

RING SPECIALIST LAUNCHES FREE BRITISH HALLMARK FINDER

Antique Jewellers Ltd has launched a free Hallmark Finder to help trade professionals and other interested parties identify British hallmarks. The new tool, available through the company's website, uses visual prompts to determine a piece's gold or platinum purity, locate the assay office where it was tested and pinpoint the exact year

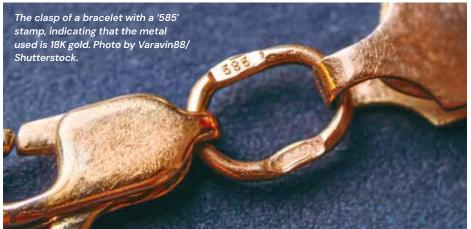
of its hallmark. If a user is unsure of a symbol, the interface allows users to browse through all possibilities.

Drew Llewellyn, managing director of Antique Jewellers, explained that "Decoding those symbols used to mean laboriously consulting hallmark reference books or charts. We wanted

It is a legal requirement within the United Kingdom to hallmark items that meet weight minimums for gold (1.00 gram), palladium (1.00 gram), platinum (0.50 gram) and silver (7.78 grams). to create a quick, accessible solution These thresholds are based on the precious metal's weight, not the total weight of the item. While hallmarking for metal purity began in England in 1300 under Edward I - and in Scotland in 1457 under James II - the page only offers general guidance on UK hallmarks from 1700 onward. Antique Jewellers recommends that anyone seeking

> should contact a certified jeweller or the UK Assay Office. The Hallmark Finder may be accessed at antiquejewellers.com/ hallmark-finder.

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A Tourmaline Inclusion in Morganite – A Frozen Story of Nature

The discovery of a tourmaline within a rough morganite from Afghanistan allows Muhammad Ayub to share his enthusiasm for gem inclusions.

any gemstone enthusiasts seek flawless, inclusion-free stones, believing them to be the pinnacle of beauty and value. However, for me, the true fascination lies within the inclusions those intricate, natural formations trapped inside a gem. Gemstone inclusions, when observed in detail, offer a glimpse into nature's artistry, revealing invaluable insights about the stone's chemistry, origin and formation history. Each inclusion is a frozen moment in time, a story etched within the crystal lattice. These features not only enhance the gem's uniqueness but also serve as essential markers in gemmological studies. They help distinguish natural gems from synthetics and untreated stones from those that have undergone enhancements. Some inclusions resemble familiar objects, evoking

curiosity and wonder, while others appear as abstract

formations - nature's own masterpieces.

My passion for gemstone inclusions has led me to explore and document them through photomicrography. The specimen featured here is a morganite containing a striking inclusion, confirmed by microRaman to be tourmaline. I sourced the rough morganite from Afghanistan in 2014 and specifically instructed my gemstone cutter to preserve the tourmaline crystal within the faceted stone. The cutter meticulously followed my request, ensuring that this rare inclusion remained undisturbed. Since then, I have observed this inclusion under the microscope countless times, captivated by its presence and structure.

Beyond their aesthetic appeal, inclusions hold immense scientific value. Studying these formations can help gemmologists understand the conditions under which the host gemstone was formed — pressure, temperature and the presence of various mineral components. Certain inclusions act as geological fingerprints, offering evidence of the stone's locality and even providing insight into the larger tectonic or volcanic events that shaped it over millions of years. Additionally, inclusions contribute to the growing appreciation of gemstones beyond conventional grading standards. While flawless stones are prized for their clarity, included

gems possess
a distinct identity
that is appreciated by
collectors, researchers
and those who see beauty in
nature's imperfections. The intricate
patterns and diverse inclusions found within
gemstones remind us that each stone has its
own history, making it as unique as a fingerprint.

This image is not just a scientific record; it is also a testament to nature's ability to create art at a microscopic scale. It stands as a reminder that beauty in gemstones extends beyond flawless clarity — sometimes, the most compelling stories are hidden within.

SUSAINE LITY

IN 2025

Jennifer-Lynn Archuleta considers the changes to the responsible and ethical gem and jewellery movement over the past twenty-five years.

n early June of this year, The Goldsmiths' Centre and Fair Luxury jointly hosted a one-day conference entitled The State of Sustainability in the Jewellery Industry. The eighthour event, which drew more than one hundred industry professionals, discussed the progress that has been made in the nine years since Fair Luxury's 2016 conference. Speakers, panellists and attendees related steps that they have taken in terms of traceability, transparency, environmental mitigation and reclamation as well as day-to-day business practices. They also discussed how to address continuing issues in the mining of gemstones and precious metals, human rights concerns and the impact of single-use objects and responsible marketing.

Such a conference would likely have been unexpected even thirty years ago, before conversations about sustainability and ethical practices in the gem trade were widespread. Some industry members have long had concerns about a more transparent trade. Brazilian jeweller Hans Stern (H. Stern) began certifying the authenticity of the materials in his pieces in 1949. He also opened his factories to the general public in the 1950s, so his clientele could watch the manufacturing process for themselves. While some industry actors were mindful of ethical practices as they began their journey, the move toward a more responsible, ethical and sustainable trade gained traction

in the early 2000s, with many of our respondents calling the years from 2004 to 2007 particularly relevant. A number of factors contributed to this development. The creation of the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, intended to keep what the process calls 'conflict diamonds' out of the mainstream gem and jewellery industry, brought the issue of diamond-funded rebel activity to the news. The release of the movie "Blood Diamond" raised awareness of conflict gemstones and created a larger market for conflict-free, ethically sourced



material. At the same time, the rise of the digital age and social media provided unprecedented access to information that previously might have been difficult or too remote to obtain. In response to this coverage, consumers began to invest in responsible choices, and members of the trade responded accordingly.

Where does this leave the sustainability movement in 2025? Has the industry addressed the concerns that were raised in the early part of the century? Are there new issues that industry members could not have anticipated in 2000? What remains to be rectified and mitigated? This article is not meant to be a thorough and comprehensive discussion of these issues. However, it does cover, in brief, certain aspects of sustainability and ethics in the industry as of 2025.

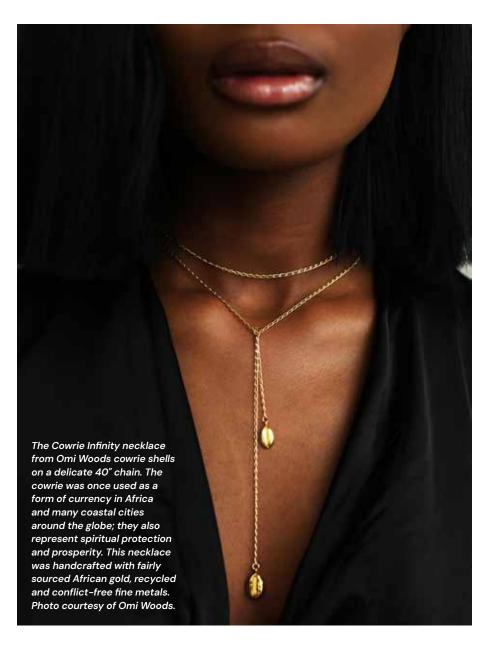
When speaking to a number of industry actors, from designer-makers to field gemmologists to specialists in the field of sustainability, we found that each voiced both concern and hope with regards to the work they have undertaken with such passion. We thank them for their time and contributions.

Alice Cicolini creates most of her jewellery, including this bespoke Story ring, in London. This piece is composed of 14K yellow gold, lacquer enamel and the client's own tourmaline. The ring was handcrafted in London by Jessica Bates, Theo Ioannou @ CAD-Man & Stanislav Reymer. Photo © Agenda Brown.

SUSTAINABILITY-RELATED ISSUES

Many of our respondents mentioned No Dirty Gold - a joint campaign of U.S.-based nonprofit Earthworks and nongovernmental organisation (NGO) Oxfam America that launched in February 2004 and still active in 2025 - as the spark that lit interest in responsible and ethical trade practices. Cristina Villegas, CEO and founder of private consultancy Nature's Wealth, pointed out that there were other factors at play in 2004. "The diamond industry was reeling from reports of 'conflict diamond' and the resulting consumer backlash. The group Ethical Metalsmiths - now called 'The Community for Ethical Jewellery' – was beginning to form (for more on this group, please see Summer 2022 G&J, pp. 10-13). The group would team up with an emerging group in Colombia that would eventually name itself the Alliance for Responsible Mining (ARM). Another key event were the attacks of September 11th, 2001. The focus on terrorism financing ultimately identified jewellery's materials - including gold, coloured gems and diamonds — as means for money laundering. The G7, among others, required additional due diligence and that has cascaded to into anti-money laundering (AML) and 'Know Your Customer' (KYC) aspects of responsible sourcing. Before these events, jewellery 'responsibility' was largely focused on the physical features

The move toward a more responsible, ethical and sustainable industry gained traction in the early 2000s, with 2004 to 2007 considered particularly relevant.



of gemstones, purity levels of metals and the marketing claims around them. The fundamental shift in the conversation about who and what was behind the materials came in the early 2000s."

An early occasion that raised the profile of responsible practices was the two-day Ethical Jewelry Summit, also known as the Madison Dialogue, which was held at World Bank headquarters in Washington, DC in October 2007. According to the conference's agenda, its objective was "To support and encourage small-scale miners, enabling them to responsibly produce precious gems and metals, which in turn can be responsibly marketed to consumers using terms such as 'fair trade', 'green', and 'ethical'." Topics covered at the

Madison Dialogue included certification, language and terminology and the challenges of a supply chain for ethical gemstones and precious metals. The event was noted as influencing attendees' sustainable and ethical practices. While the issues that were prevalent in the early 2000s are still active, many of them have been reduced or mitigated; these include issues raised during the Madison Dialogue.

Inventory, Traceability and
Transparency. Early conversations
about sustainability of course
involved the supply chain of ethically
sourced materials, including the
aforementioned No Dirty Gold
campaign. The intervening years



have seen great strides in establishing traceable and transparent supply chains for precious materials, whether for newly mined resources or recycled items. Many governments have created their own supply-chain due-diligence frameworks. A recent example is the European Union's Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CSDDD), which was entered into force in 2024 and applies to EU-based companies of over 1,000 employees that generate a net worldwide turnover of more than €450 million (and non-EU companies or non-EU parent companies of a group that generate a net turnover of at least €450 million within the European Union). It mandates

that these companies "identify, mitigate and address actual and potential adverse human rights and environmental impacts" in their global supply chains. This requires these companies to examine all the supply chains that lead to their products and services to ensure they are in compliance with the CSDDD. Noncompliance may result in civil liability and administrative sanctions (European Commission, n.d.). While jewelleryrelated businesses are not specifically named in the directive, any interests that fit the parameters would have to adhere to the directive, including jewellery houses, metal refiners and other trade-related businesses.

A number of third-party certification schemes have developed to confirm and certify these efforts; these include the Responsible Jewellery Council (founded in 2005), the London Platinum and Palladium Market Responsible Sourcing Guidance (2019) and SCS Global Services' SCS-007 Certification Standard for mined and lab-grown diamonds, launched in 2020 (please see the box on P18 for other frameworks). It is important to note that participation in these schemes is voluntary, and it is possible to have a responsible practice without being certified by a third-party organisation.

The ability to trace the mine-tomarket journey of a precious metal or gemstone is a remarkable achievement. Eric Braunwart of Columbia Gem House stated, "When I began in this industry fifty years ago, I always believed that understanding the full journey of a gemstone only deepened its value. So, twenty-five years ago, we introduced our own tracing protocols - long before transparency was a trend. At the time, we were met with scepticism, even criticism, for being so open about the origins and path of each stone. To see the industry today - not only



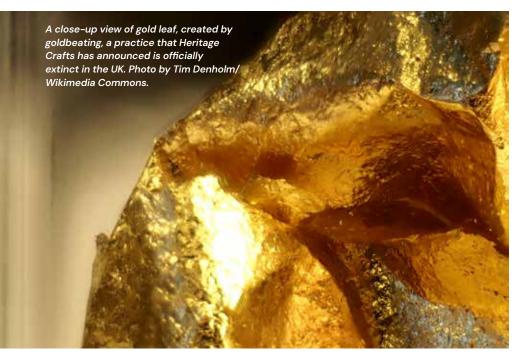
Eric Braunwart of Columbia Gem House (left, wearing glasses) in the early 1980s, sorting sapphire and garnet in Sri Lanka. Five decades after founding his own business, he only provides ethically sourced gemstones to his customers. His inventory includes untreated rubies and sapphires from Winza and the surrounding mining regions in central Tanzania (top). Photos courtesy of Columbia Gem House.

embracing traceability but demanding it at every level of the supply chain has been both gratifying and inspiring. It's been one of the most profound shifts I've witnessed in my career."

Diamonds. Alongside gold, diamonds were reconsidered through an ethical lens at the turn of the century. Generally extracted from the Earth via large-scale mechanised mining, with a history of human-rights issues and environmental degradation, the diamond sector has been subject to changes designed to address these issues. Perhaps the best known is the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), a platform sparked by the United Nations General

A multitude of efforts have been successful at mitigating matters of ethics, due diligence and supplier transparency in the diamond supply chain. The World Diamond Council. a collaboration between the World Federation of Diamond Bourses (WFDB), International Diamond Manufacturers Association (IDMA), and the World Jewellery Confederation (CIBJO), was formed in 2000 to coordinate industry-wide efforts against conflict diamonds. Their System of Warranties (SoW), introduced shortly after WDC's establishment, built upon the need for self-attestations of conflict-free material in the polished diamond and jewellery spaces. The SoW was revised

"The intervening years have seen great strides in establishing traceable and transparent supply chains for precious materials."



Assembly Resolution 55/56 in the year 2000 and established in 2003. The KPCS was enacted to prevent rough diamond purchases from financing violence by rebel movements against legitimate governments. In the first twenty years of the KPCS, the World Diamond Council (WDC) estimated that those rough diamonds that fit into the scheme's (rather narrow) definition dropped from roughly four percent of the rough diamonds on the market to considerably less than 0.1 percent (2020). As of 2025, over eighty countries are participants in the Kimberley Process (with the European Union counted as one 'country').

in 2018 to make firmer commitments to human rights, anticorruption and AML standards. And over the past decade, the availability of digital tools such as Tracr, Everledger and other blockchainbased tracking has enabled greater rough-to-retail transparency. Other emerging technologies, including laser inscriptions and microchips that assist in the verification of diamond origin and identity, are intended to ensure consumer trust in natural diamonds.

Environmental matters related to diamond mining have also improved to some degree. Many diamondproducing countries now require environmental impact assessments

(EIAs) or environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs), which incorporate public consultation and long-term monitoring, before new mines are approved for operation (in many cases, these assessments are one-time occurrences formalised in writing, leaving room for more frequent, consistent reviews). Indigenous communities are more often consulted in the logistics phase of these sites, from launch to closing (Shor and Weldon, 2016; Craig, 2017; Gold Fields, 2025). In response to the open-pit mining method by which many diamonds are extracted - and to lessen the soil erosion, deforestation and water pollution that are common to this type of mining - countries such as Canada, Namibia and Australia are engaging in reclamation and restoration projects once mining activities have ended (Shor and Weldon, 2016; Namdeb, 2024; Newman, 2024). Land reclamation restores the landscape to productive use via practical methods (e.g., replacing topsoil, contouring the ground to match the surrounding area, planting native plants). Remediation focusses on the removal or reduction of hazardous wastes or materials from the deposit and surrounding impacted areas. Other strategies include closedloop, or recirculating, water systems that prevent contamination while reducing use. Many such systems limit the amounts and types of pollutants that are released. Renewable energy has been put into use at many deposits, including the Venetia (South Africa) and ->



Diavik (Canada) mines. Finally, greater management of the tailings, or waste from ore processing, contains the risk of toxic spills and acid mine drainage.

Coloured Gemstones. When it comes to coloured gemstone mining, which is largely performed by artisanal and small-scale miners, the changes have been transformative. There is less of a negative environmental impact to be addressed with this form of mining, because no harsh chemicals are used in the extraction and early processing stages. Instead, the priority has been to address the needs of the people along the supply chain. According to Wim Vertriest FGA, a Bangkok-based field gemmologist with the Gemological Association of America (GIA), "The main focus should be to make sure that miners are making money with gem mining. This involves making sure that stones can keep coming out of the ground, thanks to proper mining licenses and other clear administration; more efficient mining through the use of tools and equipment; safer mining situations, which involves training and health and safety considerations; and support for basic needs in the community, such as food, water and housing." Once these requirements are met, ensuring that the gemstones can be efficiently converted into cash is key. Mr Vertriest confirmed that miners must have knowledge of fair pricing, which requires education and easy access to markets and platforms, along with convenient and transparent export procedures.

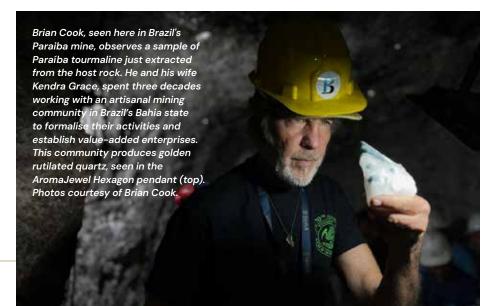
A number of projects have developed over the past twenty years that work in the way Mr Vertriest described, centring a miner's ability to make money while producing gemstones safely and efficiently. Nineteen 48, Virtu Gems and Moyo Gems are just three brands that maximise benefits to the miners that extract the gemstones for the market. The last of these initiatives, Moyo Gems is a project on which Cristina Villegas has collaborated with miners in East Africa (for more on the specific work of Moyo Gems, see Spring 2025 G&J, pp. 32-36). The programme's ability to support the miners of Kenya and

* Simply put, a 'carbon footprint' is the tons of carbon dioxide (or CO₂ equivalent) produced by one's actions, either directly or indirectly, per year.



Tanzania was sorely tested during the COVID-19 pandemic. "We faced the pandemic and an economic collapse in year two of Moyo's existence," Ms Villegas recalled. "All flights stopped, which means the global gem trade stopped. Most local mining stopped because no one was buying their materials for global markets. Miners were suddenly destitute and hungry. I remember very clearly the feeling of doom that washed over me when I realised the chain of events that was about to occur. In that situation, the biggest thing that the Moyo Gems programme was able to do that year was restart the local gem markets for the miners. That meant figuring out how to do it with no international visitors. We did it, and ultimately it has saved us a ton of money, brought down our operating costs, decreased our carbon footprint*, and elevated the roles of our partners: the women mining associations themselves. I call that a win."

Brian and Kendra Grace Cook are also familiar with the challenges faced by small-scale miners. They have collaborated with artisanal miners in Brazil since the 1980s, dedicating decades to a golden rutilated quartz community in Bahia State. The Cooks have assisted the miners in the formalisation of the community into a cooperative, consistently accounting for the connection between the local culture and the environment in understanding the stone's origin. This collaboration had led to cooperation and further transparency with a cooperative of emerald miners based in Carnaiba, Bahia, Brazil. They now bring this successful approach to other communities. The Cooks are currently involved with the Campos Verdes emerald district in Goias state. "Here, there is minor activity but with modern techniques, determination and geological interpretations," Mr Cook explained. "We met with three mine



owners, went underground 250 meters and participated as well as we could in the *garimpeiro* miner culture and the local scene."

All of these efforts are towards the same goal: providing a traceable and transparent inventory of gemstones for the larger market. "I see traceability and due diligence as adding value to coloured gemstones and diamonds, not taking it away," Cristina Villegas said. "Responsibility and sustainability have been with us for twenty years. The responsibilities for suppliers will only increase, and the smart suppliers will learn to adapt. If they do not, they will not survive."

Precious Metals. Since the early 2000s, responsible gold has become more available, in Fairtrade, Fairmined and recycled form, and other precious metals have followed suit. While the aforementioned No Dirty Gold campaign brought attention to the environmental problems that were, at that point, inherent to gold mining (resulting in the Fairmined initiative and other efforts), in recent years other metals, as well as gemstones, have been increasingly sourced via responsible means. In fact, several of our respondents mentioned this as the aspect where they believe the trade has made the most progress.

The Fairmined Standard, which confirms that gold comes from artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) interests that meet an extensive list of environmental and ethical requirements, is intended to support the sustainable development of artisanal and smallscale gold-mining communities. While sustainability movements in silver, platinum, palladium and rhodium - the latter three known collectively as the platinum group metals (PGM) - were not launched in the mainstream as early as that of gold, there has still been an increasing demand for these metals to be responsibly sourced. Fairmined certification has been expanded to include platinum and silver. Fairmined metals have been produced in a way that preserves the environments, invests in human dignity and helps to support its home community. Communities who wish to retain this certification must renew every year.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

We asked our respondents what they wished their colleagues and clientele knew about responsibility, sustainability and ethics in the gem and jewellery trade. Here is what they told us.

Emma Burgin-Fox: I wish that customers were presented with options on a more factual basis, rather than being told by a brand that they are picking the most sustainable option. This is often frustrating for us as a brand that is trying to do the right thing.

Laurent Cartier: The challenge for coloured gems – and also cultured pearls – is the fragmented nature of the business, and this might explain why some of the progress might seem slow.

Alice Cicolini: One of our greatest challenges is that so many master jewellers are of retirement age or have already retired. And many of these masters won't have trained people to follow in their footsteps. There is a kind of constant degradation from generation to generation that I think requires some kind of concerted and considered thought.

Brian Cook: The model we are creating for artisanal mining

communities in Brazil can serve as a template for coloured-gemstone mining communities around the world.

Susi Smither: If one can't ask the right questions, one cannot get exactly what they need to know, Education in trade-related matters is key so we can give correct information and not accidentally engage in greenwashing.

Greg Valerio: We must not look at an ethical practice as a perfect place to get to rather than a constant evolutionary process. Rather, it is more of an organic growth process. The Fairtrade and Fairmined standards are a good place to start, but a bad place to finish.

Wim Vertriest: People should educate themselves on stones: the places they come from and how the communities work, what the practices are, the issues that are prevalent there and what their needs are.
But also: Know what you don't know.
Everything is connected, and nobody knows everything.

There are other certification schemes, such as the London Platinum and Palladium Market (LPPM) Responsible Sourcing Guidance, launched in 2019, that helps to ensure that precious metals are sourced sustainably.

Single Mine Origin (SMO), founded in the UK in 2017 as a joint venture between Hummingbird Resources and the Betts Group (and now solely owned by the latter), offers gold that was not only responsibly and transparently sourced but fully traceable to a single mine, with reserves. These mines, based in the Ivory Coast, Mali, Senegal and Australia, are able to provide their gold at scale and without additional premiums. SMO's framework is based upon the World Gold Council's (WGC) 51 Responsible Gold Mining Principles

The impact of mining on the Earth, in terms of flora and fauna, terra and aqua, cannot be understated; however, efforts to recycle, reuse and remediate have come a long way.

VOLUNTARY ETHICAL FRAMEWORKS IN THE GEM AND JEWELLERY TRADE

FRAMEWORK	ESTABLISHED	FOCUS AREAS	KEY FEATURES	PARTICIPANTS
Responsible Jewellery Council (RJC)	2005	Environmental protection, labour rights, supply chain due diligence	Certification through Code of Practices (CoP); Chain of Custody (CoC) standard; aligns with OECD Due Diligence Guidance	Jewellers, manufacturers, refiners, traders, retailers
Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA)	2006 (standard released in 2018)	Environmental impact, fair labour, community rights, transparency	Third-party certification for mine sites; applicable to industrial-scale mining	Mining companies, jewellers (e.g., Tiffany & Co.)
OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals	2011	Human rights, conflict financing, traceability	Voluntary guidance for sourcing minerals responsibly from conflict-affected areas	Applicable to all mineral supply chain actors
Fairtrade Gold Certification	2011	Social and environmental sustainability in gold mining	Premium pricing for certified miners; strict environmental and labour standards	Small-scale miners, ethical jewellers
Fairmined Standard	2014 (updated from earlier Fairtrade Gold efforts)	Small-scale mining, fair wages, environmental safeguards	Certification of gold and silver from responsible artisanal and small-scale mines (ASMs)	ASMs, ethical jewellers

(RGMPs), as well as the Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA) and International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) principles. The chain of custody starts at the mine, continuing to a refinery approved by the London Bullion Market Association (LBMA), where it is refined in segregation under independent audit supervision before shipment to global manufacturing partners. A QR code enables consumers to track their purchase and to understand the environmental and social impacts of their gold. SMO supports annual assurance audits of their member mines to ensure their compliance with the company's environmental, social and governance (ESG) requirements. These mines produce gold that creates a positive impact and enrich local communities

through environmental, social, educational and healthcare initiatives.

Recycled metals continue to be a solution for jewellery designers and makers who are seeking to use metals without purchasing new production. In addition to gold and silver, platinum, palladium and, to a much lesser extent, rhodium are available in recycled form. Ashley Alexis McFarlane is the founder of Omi Woods. The brand celebrates Island and Africana culture through jewellery handmade with responsibly sourced African gold, fine metals and gemstones. In her words, "I think the most ground gained has been in the normalisation of the use of recycled gold. Many casters used to promote their gold as 'fresh' but have become open to recycled gold use, especially with improvements in refining processes."

Recycled metals do have their drawbacks. The lack of a clear and universally accepted definition of 'recycled', alongside overall weak traceability in the formal and informal markets, allows newly mined gold from illicit sources to be processed once and then sold as 'recycled gold' (IUCN NL, 2025). This is both unclear and unknown to well-meaning jewellery designers, makers and consumers, who believe they are purchasing a trustworthy product. A more responsible option is 'post-consumer recycled gold'. This material is reclaimed from old jewellery, but from industrial scrap and, in recent years, from electronic waste. This latter source contains approximately seven percent of the world's gold, and is the supplier of the luxury jewellery line 886 by the Royal Mint.

In addition to more 'traditional' sources of post-consumer recycled material, silver has been recycled by the Royal Mint for their 886 line, among others, from archival medical x-ray film retrieved from British and Irish hospitals by Betts Metals Group (which also runs Single Mine Origin). This product, called AgAIN Silver, allows for the metal to be used while keeping these items out of landfills. Susi Smither FGA JDT BSc, founder of The Rock Hound (see Winter 2021 G&J, pp. 24-25), also uses AgAIN Silver in her jewellery lines. She explained her choice, mentioning a problem that Canada-based NGO IMPACT reported in 2022. "You're taking one industry's waste - in this case, medical x-rays — and through clever salvaging, refining it back to sterling silver to create another usable product. That is true recycling. In a broad sense, you know, the jewellery industry has been scrapping metal for ages. But the problem is that new, freshly mined gold or silver can enter into that melting pot with conflct or otherwise problematic metals. You just don't know where this gold is coming from. There is no guarantee that it's kind of post-consumer jewellery. If we as an industry are confused, imagine how our customers are confused!" The use of AgAIN Silver is just one way that designer-makers and companies are able to further refine their sustainability practices.

Shared Knowledge. The ability to spread the word about materials, certifications and organisations that create or endorse sustainable methods was a significant driver in this movement. Dr Laurent Cartier FGA is the head of special initiatives at the Swiss Gemmological Institute (SSEF) in Basel, Switzerland, and a lecturer at the University of Lausanne. He is also the cofounder of the Gemstones and Sustainable Development Knowledge Hub and the Sustainable Pearls project. From his perspective, "sharing information and fostering education and knowledge in our trade is a vital component in advancing more sustainable practices." Without this passing-along of knowledge, many of the people currently working as ethical jewellers may have faced far more difficulty. Some members were even able to find out this information

Miners must have knowledge of fair pricing, which requires education, along with easy access to markets and platforms, along with convenient and transparent export procedures.

outside the industry, from people with experience in seeking out and sharing this knowledge. Ashley Alexis McFarlane related that "I was able to learn about Single Mine Origin and Fairmined gold from the sustainable fashion communities I was connected to in Toronto. If it weren't for my colleagues, I wouldn't have been aware of it early on. The media and fashion industry don't talk much about fair mining and equitable extraction processes. It's not top of mind. But there are organisations that do." Emma Burgin-Fox of Alex Monroe added, "The jewellery world has been made a much better place with the sharing of knowledge."

Informed consumption has also come a long way in the past quarter-century. With the maturity - both emotional and financial – of millennials and Generation Z, the cohorts accustomed to having almost-unlimited access to information at their literal fingertips, has come a

correlating change in purchasing habits. The newest generation of buyers is concerned with more than just what their newest jewel looks like. They want to know who made it, by what method and where the parts came from. While these consumers do more research into purchases than their older counterparts might, they also expect their salesperson to be able to provide that information. Saskia Shutt, a Brussels-based independent jeweller and goldsmith, noticed that customers sought more information about sourcing and practices once she was open about her own activities. "Before 2016, I did not have customers who asked me questions concerning provenance or working conditions of the miners. It was only when I started talking about Fairtrade, and later Fairmined, that customers came to me. They saw that it was also possible to buy or commission jewellery made from responsibly mined precious materials."





Jewellery designer Alice Cicolini said that "I feel that consumers are considerably more interested in these questions, and they do ask many more focused questions about the provenance of things. But at the same time, they want to know as closely as they can often where a stone is from or how their metal was mined. They are equally as interested in the storytelling behind the design and the making. And I think that comes from a very great desire to connect emotionally with jewellery. Perhaps this isn't new; it may be a kind of rediscovery of jewellery's meaning aside from its economic value."

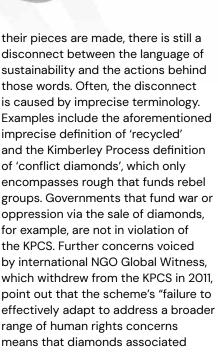
EMERGING ISSUES FOR THE TRADE

While the work to rectify ethical, environmental and social concerns in the trade has yielded many positive actions, there are issues that have materialised in their wake. Some of these issues were always of concern but have developed further; others have developed over the past few decades.

The Language of Responsibility.

While consumer knowledge has increased, allowing for more questions to be asked about the methods and materials with which

disconnect between the language of sustainability and the actions behind those words. Often, the disconnect is caused by imprecise terminology. Examples include the aforementioned imprecise definition of 'recycled' and the Kimberley Process definition of 'conflict diamonds', which only encompasses rough that funds rebel groups. Governments that fund war or oppression via the sale of diamonds, for example, are not in violation of the KPCS. Further concerns voiced by international NGO Global Witness, which withdrew from the KPCS in 2011, point out that the scheme's "failure to effectively adapt to address a broader range of human rights concerns means that diamonds associated with abuses are still contaminating global markets" (2013).



Greenwashing, a term coined in 1986, is also a matter of language camouflaging meaning. The term indicates that a company is deceptively using marketing tactics to persuade the public that their products and actions are environmentally friendly. The use of broad, unverifiable language has led to an erosion of trust between many conscious consumers and established brands. Quendi Lara of Quore Jewelry noted, "One of the hardest things to observe is the amount of greenwashing being used, with no real accountability or transparency. This often dilutes the power of the many people who have worked hard at creating change and impact and are truly doing the work."

In short, words cannot be more important than actions. "There is no ethical value in language like 'recycled'," explained jeweller and activist Greg Valerio. "To say 'reused' is more honest and virtuous, but it is still doesn't benefit the artisanal miners" who should be at the focus of such activities. Cristina Villegas agreed, stating, "There is a lot of confusion amongst almost everyone about the words used in sustainability and responsible sourcing. Consumers, jewellers and producers all seem to be scratching their heads. Those that want to put 'responsible' on almost anything, even if mineral origins are unknown, in order to impress the consumer. Those that want 'responsible' to be such a high standard that only the well-financed brand and mines with large staffs are able to achieve it. While there may be good intent, it only adds to the official costs of sustainability (e.g., more report-writing, more audits). It keeps out everyone else that are making sincere efforts or that are taking different, legitimate paths and who are possibly making even more positive impact than those hugging tightly to one chosen way or a chosen definition.



Betts Metal Group salvages sterling silver from medical x-rays discarded by British and Irish hospitals. The recycled silver is used by a number of jewellers, including The Rock Hound and 886 by the Royal Mint.

In the past
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Standards that are too high keep out those who do not speak the colonial languages and who cannot download and follow the lengthy 300+ page standards documents that even I can barely understand. It's important to keep our language simple and responsibility requirements inclusive given the enormous diversity of this beautiful sector." The best solution may be education about this language and terminology that stresses clarity and simplicity for all members of the supply chain and transaction exchange.

Environmental Issues. The impact of mining precious metals and gemstones on the Earth, in terms of flora and fauna, terra and aqua, cannot be understated. These have now been documented for decades. However, efforts to recycle, reuse and remediate have come a long way. This does not mean that longstanding issues such as climate change, declining land and water conditions, carbon

In another recent development, the increase in recent years of deep-sea mining to retrieve gold, silver and other metals can cause direct harm to marine life and ecosystems through contact with mining equipment and warm wastewater from the process. The impact on this biodiversity following mining activity could disrupt the ocean's carbon cycle and its role in mitigating rising global temperatures. While this can result in the elimination of species that are used as precious material, it may also affect food supply and security for populations that depend on fishing for their diets (World Resources Institute, 2025). Saskia Shutt voiced particular concern about this activity. "What worries me the most is the looming threat of deep-sea mining. The mining processes would disrupt the ocean floor and destroy its eco-system But with current leaders whose worlds are dominated by greed and who are money focussed, I fear for the worst outcomes."

Finally, there are those who focus on intractable problems or who are using supply chains to make positive social impact. In this last category, we find the pragmatists like me, who recognise that situations are very rarely simple, audits miss so much. Sustainability needs to be more inclusive in order to capture the diversity of people, legitimate efforts and social classes involved in our global supply chains."

However, there may be times that a company is unwittingly engaging in greenwashing. For instance, a wellmeaning jewellery designer might advertise that they are using recycled gold without understanding that not all 'recycled' gold is post-consumer product. In the words of Brian Cook, "Since consumers are demanding more information regarding the 'ethics' around our industry wishing to know their purchases do no harm, the conversations abound at every conference in the last years. On the downside, with this increased volume comes greenwashing, whether intentional or not." Here, it is not just those who inadvertently make errors that may lose out. Cristina Villegas noted "I've spoken elsewhere about how I believe the word 'sustainability' can be weaponised against the poorest people in the world.



emissions or pollution have been eliminated. However, the situations surrounding environmental degradation have changed. For example, artisanal diamond mining, and diamond-related activities in countries where government oversight is lacking and does not have consistent follow-up on their actions have seen inconsistent environmental improvements.

Lab-Grown Material and the
Environment. Emma Burgin-Fox
pointed out that "The topic of natural
versus lab-grown diamonds is one
of huge debate. We try to present
both the benefits of both options to
customers, so that they can choose
the option that resonates best with
them." Many people consider labgrown gemstones to be sustainable

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when compared to to mined material, as mass excavation or open-pit mining is avoided and there is less waste associated with production.

The mining contexts and methods can vary dramatically (e.g., dry savanna vs. rainforest settings; semi-mechanised mining vs wholly artisanal methods). But generally speaking, synthetic gemstones are likely to have a lower carbon footprint than mined material. While the methods used to create lab-grown specimens are fully traceable, it is important to note that the production of lab-grown gemstones still involves high water, electric and fossil-fuel consumption while creating a significant amount of e-waste. The consumption of these resources - and resulting waste - has risen accordingly with the increased demand for, and the subsequent higher production of, synthetics.

Human Rights and Labour Issues.

Of great importance to people concerned with the ethics of the industry are human rights, including forced and child labour. "A big part of when I started The Rock Hound and I was working with Levin Sources to do my code of conduct," recalled Susi Smither. "There are so many different areas that gem mining has an impact on, that you have to kind of put them in an order of what's most important to you. And at the top of that was always people. I don't want to know that my gems have come from a mine which has had bad health and safety practices,

which uses child labour, which exploits their workers. To me that tarnishes the gemstone. Once you know about these awful things that can happen, you can't just ignore it. You have to work that that into your sourcing protocol and create supply chains where you can find out this information."

The publication of the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the first edition of the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas (OECD Due Diligence Guidance), both in 2011, helped to identify some of the issues related to forced labour in supply chains. Even with raised awareness, ensuring the ethical mining of gemstones by willing and well-treated workforces remains a dilemma in search of a solution. The aforementioned CSDDD of the European Union accounts for this problem; it follows the frameworks of Australia (2023), Canada (2019) the United Kingdom (2015), which are all called the Modern Slavery Act in their respective nations. France and Germany instituted similar policies in 2017 and 2023, respectively; South Korea is in the legislative stages of creating their own system. These programmes are difficult to enact and enforce, but they are necessary in the pursuit of an ethical trade. In the words of Brian Cook. "'Sustainable' or responsible practice is about everyone participating in our industry being fairly and equitably compensated and treated with dignity.



The Wheel of Light necklace from Nature's Geometry, made with responsibly sourced materials, uses Paraiba tourmaline, rock crystal and 18K gold in its composition. Photo by Quendi Lara.

It requires the people and land are respected. We are a global community supporting millions of people. To be truly sustainable in the long run, we need to show the end-consumers we are doing the correct actions."

The Sustainability of Skill. A topic that has largely gone undiscussed is the sustainability of crafts that contribute to the trade. As Greg Valerio pointed out, "The jeweller, the real artisan, was always someone you went to visit. We need to make that connection again, and that's heavy lifting." Yet we are losing a great deal of the artisan talent that led to a thriving jewellery industry. In 2025 Heritage Crafts, which maintains a list of endangered and extinct crafts in the United Kingdom, has noted that diamond cutting and watchmaking are 'critically endangered', while gold beating, or the process of hammering gold into the ultra-thin sheets known as gold leaf, as 'extinct'.

Alice Cicolini explained, "We aren't necessarily facing a particularly rosy future for craftsmanship. It remains a struggle to encourage commentators on issues around sustainability to include the survival of the craft as part of the framework of that discussion. I suspect there's a kind of underlying assumption that high levels of master craft skill will always be available to the industry. But I'm not entirely convinced that that's true. Certainly in Hatton



Cristina Villegas of Nature's Wealth performs gold sluicing with a miner at an artisanal gold deposit in Liberia. Photo courtesy of Cristina Villegas.

Garden there are excellent masters who are training younger apprentices. But in England alone, we've lost a handful of our most significant jewellery courses. John Cass no longer operates their course; the Middlesex University that produced some of our most famous jewellers in the 1950s and 1960s no longer exists. It is one of my ambitions with my work to remind people that if we want to ensure the survival of these traditions, we have to support them. That requires journalists to write about independent brands who work with master craftsmen, or independent iewellers who have brilliant brands of their own. Much is written about some of the more established houses, but space has to be made for both." The loss of this talent, whether in the UK or in other parts of the world, may not be able to be recovered once lost.

Artificial Intelligence. The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) has had a tremendous impact on the trade, as in other parts of day-to-day life. Its benefits and drawbacks to the jewellery industry, ethical and sustainable or otherwise, is too large for the scope of this article. It will be the focus of an article in a future issue of *G&J*. However, it must be mentioned that AI has the potential to affect all aspects of the trade, from environmental footprint to final design and composition of a piece of jewellery.

PROGRESS, NOT PERFECTION

Depending on the part of the trade in which they work, our respondents have worked for years to develop their sourcing, knowledge or process. This has led them to an understanding of the roadblocks that can meet someone seeking to embrace sustainability in their jewellery practice. Greg Valerio noted that, in the past, "I got myself into a mindset of going for ethical perfection." Overwhelmingly, they wanted to stress that taking the steps towards a more ethical method of working is often overwhelming and confusing. No one company can achieve a perfect practice on the first attempt or, perhaps, ever. Emma Burgin-Fox explained that "we have to be realistic about what we can achieve, so don't be too hard on yourself and set impossible goals."

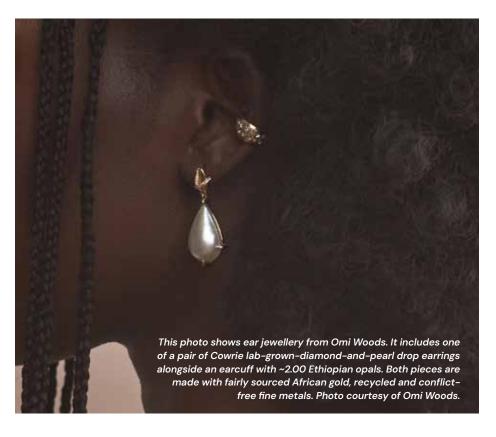
It is important, in other words, to not let missteps or an inability to have a fully sustainable system deter one from attempting to work towards a responsible, ethical jewellery business. This difficulty should not deter anyone from trying to make a difference through their work. According to Laurent Cartier, "Sustainability is a journey, and there is no 'one-sizefits-all' solution. There are multiple initiatives and approaches, and they should seek to be complementary. Certain companies and actors will focus on certain aspects of sustainable development. And that's okay!"

The sustainability movement has made great strides among members of the gem trade since the early twentyfirst century. Still, as some problems were mitigated, other issues arose that probably could not have been anticipated twenty to twenty-five years ago, when many of our respondents accepted the challenge of honing an ethical and responsible practice. Additionally, factors such as cost and lack of knowledge continue to be issues for interested parties. Dr Laurent Cartier reminded us that "It seems obvious that these are the right things to do, as we all want to leave a positive impact

or legacy. And yet sometimes it can be frustrating that change has not come at a faster pace. It's a long process; sustainability is a journey."

As we move into the next part of the twenty-first century, some of the issues discussed here will likely be mitigated or resolved, while others develop in their wake. Quendi Lara believes that "in the future there will be less tolerance for the methods of the past. Having meaningful, long-term partnerships is a very important aspect when thinking about sustainability. There is where the next generation of mining leaders have to be very authentic in their approach. There really is only one way forward and that is taking into consideration the impact to the environment and people along the entire supply chain."

However, concern over these issues should not negate the progress already made. After all, according to Saskia Shutt, "We are already making the impossible possible, and we need to continue moving forward in a responsible way, where living and working is in harmony with the environment. The more jewellers and consumers get onboard with this way of thinking and working, making it the norm, the more likely it is we will continue to head in a sustainable direction."



TARIFF TENSIONS & RESILIENT OPTIMISM

REFLECTIONS FROM THE LAS VEGAS SHOWS

Olga González FGA DGA speaks to trade members about the impact of upcoming U.S. tariff policy.

he annual jewellery shows in Las Vegas are always a time for anticipation, but this year, they arrived under a dense cloud of economic uncertainty. As the global jewellery trade gathered at venues like JCK, Couture and the Antique Jewelry & Watch Show, participants confronted not just the usual pressures of market performance, but also the real-time effects of the shifting trade policy of the United States. With tariffs on goods from China, India and the European Union looming (and frequently evolving), buyers and exhibitors alike were caught in a holding pattern, trying to plan and adapt while the rules were still being written. Yet amid the unease, something encouraging began to emerge: a shared resilience, a recalibration of expectations and a recommitment to craft and clarity.

According to a report from IBISWorld, "Jewelry Stores in the US - Market Research Report (2015-2030)," the U.S. jewellery retail market was valued at \$65.2 billion (~£52.0 billion) in 2024. The trade had grown at a modest 1.3% annualised rate over the previous five years. The wholesaling side, which is especially sensitive to global supply chains and trade policy, was estimated at \$58.6 billion (~£45.8 billion), but has seen more turbulence with revenue, decreasing 2.1% annually over the same period. At the same time, operating costs are also under pressure. Rising wage costs, raw material pricing and

regulatory burdens (such as tariffs) have contributed to industry-wide margin compression. According to another IBISWorld report on retail trade, profit margins for jewellery and watch wholesalers now hover around 3.3%, making tariff shocks particularly impactful. In the context of such volatility, the stakes are high, which was duly noted by attendees of the Las Vegas shows.

LIGHTER FOOT TRAFFIC. **SHARPER FOCUS**

A common refrain across the show floors was that traffic was down from previous years. Entire aisles that would have been packed in the past were noticeably less crowded. Some exhibitors scaled back booth sizes or skipped the shows entirely, citing costs, logistics or strategic refocusing. And yet, for those who remained, the consensus was clear: those who came were serious about purchasing. Buyers weren't there to browse; they were there to do business. "We were pleasantly surprised by how focused the buyers were," said Sweta Jain, president of Goshwara, who

exhibited at Couture. "We

ever." Several designers

that while sales quantity may have dropped, quality rose. Conversations were deeper and orders were more intentional, and brands that maintained production control or long-term client relationships were rewarded.

The Tariff Toll. Even as transactions took place, uncertainty around tariffs lingered in nearly every conversation. "Tariffs have been an ongoing concern for our business," said Vin Kothari, president of Precious Colors at AGTA GemFair. "The uncertainty has impacted our customers' sentiments. Regardless, we always maintain a long-term and optimistic view. We also realise that tariffs could provide us with a great



The Zelda ring by Laura Gallon is named for American socialite and novelist Zelda Fitzgerald (1900–1948), wife of author F. Scott Fitzgerald. The ring is composed of a 1.08 ct unheated purple sapphire from Madagascar, accented by 0.63 tcw blue sapphires and 0.34 tcw diamonds mounted in 18K white gold. Photo courtesy of Laura Gallon.



The ladder earrings from Goshwara's G-One line are composed of 9.86 tcw Australian opals and 1.65 tcw diamonds on French wire in 18K yellow gold. Photo courtesy of Goshwara.

opportunity to remain a leading source of fine gemstones and jewellery in the U.S., as our customers look to buy more domestically."

Lisa Nikfarjam, president of Lisa Nik, was blunter. "The tariff, gold price and exchange rate combined created a triple whammy," she explained. "Even with a ninety-day pause on some EU imports, we saw an instantaneous 40-45% increase to the cost of a gold item." For some, like Laura Gallon, CEO of Laura Gallon Joaillerie, tariffs shaped perception more than practice. "People are a bit worried when I say I'm based in France. They immediately think of the extra fees," she shared. "But I've been working with a U.S. manufacturing partner for years, so I send American orders to the U.S. workshop and European ones to France. That has helped limit the impact."

At B.P. De Silva Jewellers, which exhibited at Couture, the emphasis was on stability. "Understandably, U.S. partners have been more cautious about working with overseas brands until there's more predictability," said Lynn Phyo, the brand's general manager.

"We are on a fact-finding mission and reassuring partners of our support in the market and how we'll tide through the uncertainties together." According to Andreas Bentele, marketing manager of heritage Swiss watchmaker Fortis, the calculus was practical. "Tariffs will affect consumers, as we cannot absorb the increased costs within the margins we currently operate under," Mr Bentele shared. "We are adjusting our U.S. pricing strategy to reflect the added costs, but our approach to manufacturing remains centred around delivering the highest quality product."

Lisa Koenigsberg PhD, president of Initiatives in Art and Culture, offered a sobering assessment: "There is an atmosphere of deep concern in the jewellery industry, which is considering what actions to take in the face of constantly changing signals regarding tariffs — including measures that the average consumer is likely unaware of. Should higher tariffs take effect, at least some of the related increased costs for fine jewellery will be passed on to the consumer, whether on imported goods or on domestically manufactured jewellery that requires imported materials. At the highest levels, the cachet and other elements that combine to create a luxe purchasing experience may withstand higher prices. Yet there is also a broader

"The uncertainty has impacted our customers' sentiments.
Regardless, we always maintain a long-term and optimistic view."

swathe of goods that fall under the heading of 'fine jewellery', where the impact of heightened prices might result in delayed action by consumers. Additionally, more affordable costume or fashion jewellery made in China and elsewhere will also be subject to heightened tariffs, which could impact quality (resulting in lighter pieces, for example) while driving up prices. In sum, the experience for the average consumer will be negatively impacted, with the repercussions being felt throughout the industry, which ultimately sets the prices."



These earrings, from Viana by Precious, comprise 1.22 tcw emeralds, 0.25 tcw diamonds and 18K yellow gold. Photo courtesy of Precious Colors, Inc.



This necklace from Viana by Precious uses a 1.03 ct emerald-cut ruby alongside 0.17 ct diamonds in 18K white gold. Photo courtesy of Precious Colors, Inc.

Adaptation Without Compromise.

Many brands adapted their pricing or communication strategies, but remained firm in their creative ethos. "We haven't changed our design philosophy," noted Lynn Phyo. "Our pricing remains stable because we control the full supply chain, from design to sourcing and manufacturing. We pass that value directly to our clients."

She added, quoting B.P. de Silva's founder, "'We must be able to price it at the value we are willing to pay ourselves' - and that still holds true, 153 years on." Laura Gallon echoed that sentiment. "The new collection I presented at Couture - Dynasty - was extremely important to me. I didn't want to compromise. I had been working on it for a year before tariffs were even mentioned." At Goshwara, Sweta Jain made minor adjustments to her plans. "The only area where we felt a slight setback was in gold-heavy pieces especially pendants and chains. We started using more hollow chains where possible. But overall, we haven't made major changes to our manufacturing."

Sara Yood, deputy general counsel at the Jewelers Vigilance Committee (JVC), offered a broader perspective: "Virtually all of the components that go into jewellery - precious metal, diamonds and coloured gemstones originate outside of the U.S. Although most raw metals are exempt, finished jewellery and watches face duties. That means pricing increases or assortment changes are likely as businesses adjust." Ms Yood clarified a common consumer misconception: "Tariffs are paid by the U.S. importer, not the foreign exporter. Even a ten-percent tariff adds up quickly at the jewellery value scale."

COLOUR, CRAFT AND CUSTOMISATION

Despite the trade policy challenges, the shows were rich with creative innovation. Across Couture, AGTA and JCK, colour dominated. From Goshwara's pink opals and malachite inlays to Precious Colors' minimalist designs, the mood was one of joyful expression. "Colour is definitely in," said



Lisa Nikfarjam created this ring using a 29.20 ct hexagon-cut pink tourmaline, 0.54 tcw diamonds and 18K rose gold. Photo courtesy of Lisa Nik.

Lisa Nikfarjam. "Our collectors want something that makes them happy." Lynn Phyo introduced B.P. de Silva's new Duet collection, which explored the full range of natural sapphire hues. "People are amazed by the spread of colour that sapphires can have. It goes beyond the blue they're known for." Goshwara debuted a cushion-cut series within their Manhattan collection, building on the popularity of their emerald cuts. "The soft look of the cushion complemented our collection beautifully," Sweta Jain noted. "Pink opals were also a big hit; pink in general is trending." Laura Gallon's Dynasty collection, meanwhile, featured customcut stones, black opals, tsavorites and vibrant spinels — all crafted as an homage to a 1925 bracelet made by her great-grandfather, Georges Gallon. "His work is my greatest inspiration," she said. "These are pieces that required a high level of craftsmanship."



The Duchess Sapphire Ring by B.P. de Silva features a 4.95 ct cushion-cut natural blue sapphire, surrounded by 2.19 tcw diamonds and mounted in 18K white gold. Photo courtesy of B.P. de Silva.

Laura Gallon's Magma earrings use 4.43 tcw rubies and 2.04 tcw diamonds set in 18K yellow gold. Photo courtesy of Laura Gallon.

Designers across the board noted subtle shifts in consumer behaviour. Customisation, personal storytelling and legacy-driven purchasing have all grown more prominent. "Our customers come to us for pieces that will last generations," said Lynn Phyo. "Timeless designs and serious gemstones that will stand the test of time." Laura Gallon agreed, stating "More people are asking for one-of-a-kind or custom pieces." At the same time, a new generation of clients seeks both bold statements and discretion. "We see a blend of customers," said Sweta Jain. "Some want trendy, bold looks - others are loyal to classic silhouettes. Boutiques and department stores like Neiman Marcus and Saks gravitate toward the former, while traditional retailers lean into the latter." According to Fortis, the rise of 'understated luxury' is unmistakable. "More and more people are demanding 'no show-off' brands," Andreas Bentele shared. "Understatement is the new statement."

As of press time, the status of U.S. tariffs on various categories of jewellery and watches remains in flux. Trade policy is likely to remain both a political tool and a practical challenge. Still, if there is one thing the Las Vegas shows revealed this year, it's that



If there is one thing the Las Vegas shows revealed, it's that the industry is declining to stand still.



the industry is declining to stand still. Whether through transparent communication, careful price recalibration or unwavering design integrity, brands are adapting (and occasionally thriving) in uncertainty.

"Keep asking questions," advised Sara Yood. "Brands that have ethical sourcing really do want to tell you about it - and they'll be excited to share." In a landscape shaped by shifting headlines and policy pivots, the jewellery industry continues to lead with intention. As challenges mount, so do the possibilities for reinvention. As Albert Einstein once said, "In the midst of crisis lies great opportunity."

This article indicates the tariff policy of the United States as of early July 2025.



Natural History Meets High Art for Ten Years at the

GRANADA GALLERY

The leading gallery of the Tucson gem shows celebrates its tenth anniversary. Thibau Reynders gives *G&J* readers insight into the inner workings of this landmark.

ver the past ten years, the Granada Gallery has hosted a dynamic collection of gemstones, minerals, jewellery, fossils and meteorites. Founded by Alison and Rüdiger Pohl – with Belgian jewellery designer Jochen Leën partnering with them in 2019 - the gallery has come to stand for the highest quality and products that can be seen at the Tucson Gem,

Mineral & Fossil Showcase. In addition to the exhibitions they host, they have acquired their own excavation sites and cultivated connections with designers. collectors, museums and auction houses. The Granada team has expanded from its original site on Granada Avenue in Tucson, Arizona. They now have four locations in Belgium; three of these venues are in hotels, while the fourth

is in a upscale residential development. These installations bring the museum to the viewer, allowing for 'experiencebased hospitality'.

Gems&Jewellery spoke with gallery employee and gemmologist-in-training Thibau Reynders, who gave us some insight into the activities that make creating, and visiting, the Granada Gallery a unique experience.

How long has Granada Gallery been in operation? Where are your locations?

Alison and Rüdiger Pohl founded Granada Gallery in 2015; they are still actively involved in our daily operations. It is situated in the heart of Tucson, Arizona, on North Granada Avenue, hence the name. This gallery is open exclusively during the Tucson gem shows. We have been working hard on expanding Granada Gallery, though, and now we have four galleries in Belgium as well. These are located in Genk, Lanaken, Antwerp and Oostende.



What was the impetus to open the gallery?

Rüdiger Pohl's passion for fossils, gemstones and natural history was nurtured from childhood and then fuelled a life of art and adventure. His love for the natural world, combined with its boundless storytelling potential, inspired him and his wife, Alison, to found the Granada Gallery in 2015. This created a platform to share their vision and enthusiasm.

This ring, from Jochen Leën's Flying collection, includes a 6.18 ct colourless sapphire, 1.84 tcw Paraíba tourmaline and 0.04 tcw diamonds mounted in platinum.

What is the Granada Gallery's mission?

The Granada Gallery's mission is to blend high-end art with nature's wonders; to showcase rare fossils, minerals and contemporary design; and to inspire curiosity and promote knowledge through natural history and artistry. And, most importantly, to have fun doing it!

How did you become affiliated with the Granada Gallery?

I have been hooked on gems, minerals and fossils since I was little, all thanks to my uncle, Jochen Leën. At eighteen years old, I dove into the industry. I have learned so much about life and feel like I am ahead of the curve thanks to my time with the gallery. The trust and responsibility I have been given totally fires me up. Plus, I am traveling the world, meeting awesome people and loving every second of it.

How many visitors, approximately, do the galleries accommodate every year? What are your busiest times, historically speaking?

Tracking exact visitor numbers is challenging, but our hotel locations in Genk and Lanaken welcome over 70,000 visitors annually. These spaces are designed as natural historyinspired art galleries, curated with care, where our experts are always on-hand in the lobby to offer guided tours and share insights. Overall, though, our busiest period is during the Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase in January and February. This is a thrilling super-event we eagerly anticipate each year, one that



The 18K gold Oscilla glasses by Anne Vanaken use 4.23 ct pink sapphire and 2.30 tcw natural white diamonds in their design.

"The Granada
Gallery's mission is
to blend high-end
art with nature's
wonders, and to
have fun doing it!"

draws countless enthusiasts and professionals to our Arizona location.

How does the Granada Gallery differ from other galleries/ showrooms/spaces where gem and jewellery art and objects are exhibited? What are some exclusive experiences the galleries offer?

Granada Gallery is the ultimate allencompassing natural history gallery. We inspire through our vibrant community and strong ties with our hotels, reaching a wide audience with a dynamic and impactful setup. Our uniqueness shines through thanks to our vibrant, youthful team of passionate experts. Our team features gem enthusiasts as young as twenty years old, like myself. We are entrusted with immense responsibility, not only in curating exceptional pieces, but also in fostering trusted relationships with suppliers and clients. This freedom and trust leads to an unparalleled learning experience. At Granada, we are constantly inspired, traveling the world and working on extraordinary projects that fuel our passion for excellence every day.





What is an example of an experience one can only have at the Granada Gallery?

One such event that stands out was the successful creation of a 400-squaremeter lunar landscape, complete with moon craters, at the five-star La Butte aux Bois hotel in Lanaken, Belgium. We called this installation Hidden Odyssey. This immersive space allowed guests to explore the Moon and discover rare meteorites. We also partnered with local schools to offer educational lessons for children, fostering community engagement.

What is the process of acquiring an artist's work for exhibition? How long does the process, from contact to exhibition, take?

We actively look to curate artists with exceptional talent who have a focus on storytelling. We seek out and collaborate with acclaimed artists, designers and contributors from around the globe who share a passion for natural history, palaeontology, mineralogy and gemmology.

Granada Gallery identifies talent through events like the Tucson Gem, Mineral & Fossil Showcase, direct outreach or referrals, focusing on pieces that align with their natural history and jewellery focus. We negotiate terms, often on consignment and curate works for exhibitions. The process from initial contact to exhibition typically takes three to six months, depending on event scheduling, artwork readiness, and logistics.

How does the gallery use social media/Al to connect with visitors? Potential buyers? Jewellery industry members? Designers and cutters?

Granada Gallery posts to social media daily on Instagram (@granada. gallery). We use this platform to share our work, engaging visitors, buyers

Left: This pendant by Jochen Leën features a 328.45 ct heliodor beryl and 0.16 tcw natural yellow diamonds handcrafted in solid yellow gold on a yellow-gold chain.

Right: The Granada Gallery is known for its collection of rare gemstones. Among their inventory is this 5.58 ct kornerupine from Tanzania. "We actively look to curate artists with exceptional talent who have a focus on storytelling."

and jewellery industry members with authentic posts about our fossils, minerals and jewellery. We focus on interaction, not forced sales, to showcase our projects and connect with our community. Al is not used much; we keep it human-driven for a personal touch.

How does someone buy a piece that is on show at Granada? What is that process like?

We try to streamline the process as much as possible to the client so they can enjoy a relaxed and fun experience. When the client feels they are sufficiently informed and decides to go ahead with a purchase, we handle everything with a white-glove service, such as professional packaging, certification and shipping.

Does Granada Gallery have a responsible practices code? How does the gallery ensure that pieces on display are part of an ethical supply chain?

We are deeply committed to ethical practices, and maintain the highest standards in our industry. We conduct thorough Know Your Customer (KYC)





This necklace, by gallery co-owner and featured artist Jochen Leën, comprises 313.36 tcw pezzottaite, 11.00 tcw black diamonds, 5.63 tcw white diamonds and a 0.45 ct Paraíba tourmaline set in 18K white gold. Photo by Hugo Thomassen.

checks for every new individual or company we collaborate with, ensuring all parties adhere to strict ethical codes. This diligence safeguards the integrity of our work and fosters trust with our community, partners and clients.

Does the gallery engage in any community work with miners, cutters or other members of the supply chain?

Granada Gallery leverages a vast international network within the mining and cutting industries, but we prioritise collaborations with our trusted, long-standing partners. This selective approach ensures reliability and quality, as well as alignment with our commitment to ethical practices and excellence in natural history and jewellery craftsmanship.

The Granada Gallery is celebrating its ten-year anniversary in 2025. Looking back, what are some of the gallery's main successes?

Among our many successes was our very first show in Tucson in 2015, which featured work by Hendrick Hackl and the late Perry Brent Davis, as well as selected natural-history items from our collection. Other notable events include our 2018 collaboration with the Summit Series in Downtown Los Angeles, as well as several appearances during Art Basel Miami. We are also very proud of our installations at the hotels in Belgium, including the Hidden Odyssey exhibition. Our greatest success, however, may be the people who have become part of the Granada Gallery team over the past decade.

What does the future hold for the Granada Gallery? Are there plans for more locations or expanding the collection?

At Granada Gallery, expansion is not our sole focus; we let it unfold organically, guided by instinct and opportunity. Currently, we are channelling our energy into establishing our gallery at the Belgian seaside in Oostende, ensuring every step aligns with our vision. We have built a thriving B2B community and are exploring new horizons with shows in Denver and Dubai. Our ambition is to evolve into a globally

recognised gallery concept, but we're also cherishing the journey and where we stand today. For us, the ride is just as meaningful as the destination.

How would you advise someone entering the trade in 2025 to proceed with exhibiting their work at a gallery like Granada? How would you advise someone who is looking to open a similar space?

Starting such work begins with curiosity and consistent small steps, letting things fall into place naturally. Choose a location with strong foot traffic potential, and ensure a robust online presence paired with unusual, high-quality objects.

How is the Granada Gallery observing its tenth anniversary?

We are celebrating our tenth anniversary in 2025 with Archaeopteryx and the Aerial Wonders of Solnhofen, which is a callback to our first exhibition in 2015, as well as a retrospective, A Decade in Review, during the Tucson gem shows.

What is the best way for the general public to support the Granada Gallery?

Showing interest and understand what we do is pure passion and comes from the heart. ■



One of the European locations of the Granada Gallery can be found at the five-star La Butte aux Bois hotel in Lanaken, Belgium.

Gem-A investigates IDAR-OBERSTEIN

Floriane Van Den Brande FGA DGA EG documents the May 2025 staff trip to the coloured-stone cutting hub, including attendance at the DgemG conference.

was meant to visit Idar-Oberstein, Germany, in the autumn of 2020, but as with so many other plans, the COVID-19 pandemic got in the way. No opportunity for a visit presented itself until the German Gemmological Association (DgemG) announced a conference, to be held 23-25 May 2025, to celebrate 50 years of their education centre. I decided to join Gem-A's Dr Juliette Hibou FGA DGA EG, Judy Zhang FGA DGA EG and Gabriel Kleinberg FGA DGA EG on this trip, both to attend the conference and to visit the region.

Idar-Oberstein has long had the reputation of being one of the biggest hubs for coloured stone cutting and carving. The town is situated in the south-west of Germany, about two hours by train from Frankfurt. The abundant presence of

different types of quartz - supposedly discovered by the Romans - together with the town's location near the River Nahe providing easy access to a water supply, led to the development of a flourishing gemstone-cutting industry as early as the fifteenth century. Today, a high concentration of jewellers, gemstone dealers, carvers and cutters can still be found in Idar-Oberstein. Many of these artisans are part of family businesses that have been passing down their knowledge and craftmanship for generations.

We started our first day in the town by exploring the high street. To our delight, we instantly came across a number of mineral shops, each of which we felt the need to visit. Very quickly we noticed that gemstones are

woven into the fabric of the town, albeit in some rather bemusing ways. We passed houses with crystals and agates embedded in their façades, an 'Opal Hotel' and 'Amethyst Parking' and a gemstone vending machine with a large 'do not eat' warning sign.

Our next stop was the German Mineral Museum. which consists of four floors filled with an incredible array of different gem and ornamental materials. In addition to the precious materials, old wooden cutting equipment dotted



Very quickly we noticed that gemstones are woven into the fabric of the town.

around the museum gives some insight into how labour intensive and time consuming the cutting and polishing process used to be. Later in the day, we were able to visit the office of Ruppenthal, a gemstone wholesaler that has been doing business in Idar-Oberstein since 1890. There, the staff kindly indulged us as if we were children in a sweetshop. We walked past rows and rows of gem trays spread out over multiple floors. The gemstones are meticulously organised so that a single stone can be found in no time. I was



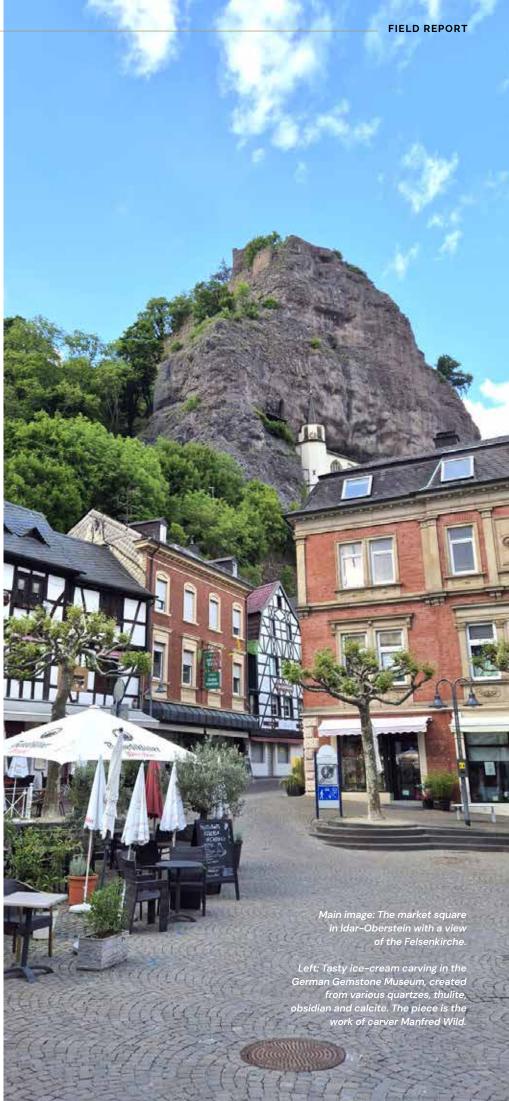
Floriane Van Den Brande FGA DGA EG, Dr Juliette Hibou FGA DGA EG, Gabriel Kleinberg FGA DGA EG and Judy Zhang FGA DGA EG in front of the German Gemstone Museum at the opening of the DgemG conference on 23 May. Photo courtesy of Gabriel Kleinberg.

mainly interested in their collection of coral and pearls, two of my favourite gem materials, while the others took a closer look at sapphires and tourmalines. The temptation was too much for us, and we all walked out with additions to our gem collections.

That evening, the DgemG conference was off to a wonderful start with a welcome reception at the German

Gemstone Museum. Attendees had the opportunity to walk around the museum and network with other guests while drinks and canapes were offered. The German Gemstone Museum, which opened in 1878 and moved to its current location at Hauptstrasse 118 in the Idar district in 1996, is one of the most impressive museums I have ever visited. A gemmologist's dream, one could easily spend a day, if not multiple days, admiring the collection. I was particularly mesmerised by the incredible animal carvings in the exhibition. Many of these were produced by members of the Dreher family, who have been carvers in Idar-Oberstein for many generations.







Old agate polishing equipment in the German Mineral Museum. The cutters would lie stomach-down on the wooden blocks with their feet on the floor in order to push the agates against the rotating sandstone wheel.

A gemmologist's dream, one could easily spend a day, if not multiple days, admiring the collection.

Saturday, 24 May, was filled with an impressive roster of speakers. While all interesting in their own right, I briefly want to mention some that stood out to me. Dr J.C. (Hanco) Zwaan (Naturalis Biodiversity Center, Leiden, Netherlands), Kenneth Scarratt (DANAT, Bahrain) and Dr Gaetano Cavalieri (World Jewellery Confederation, Milan, Italy) all put strong emphasis on the importance of honesty and diligent use of correct nomenclature alongside strong gemmological knowledge to ensure and increase consumer confidence. Shane McClure (GIA, Carlsbad, California) drew attention to the classification of green to greenish-blue beryls when the bodycolour is caused by chromium (Cr) and vanadium (V), which determine the

colour of emerald, as well as iron (Fe), which causes the colour of aquamarine. He discussed the debate over what establishes the line between the two beryl varieties when both sets of chromophores (Fe and Cr/V) are present. While I was working at the Hatton Garden gemstone dealer Marcus McCallum, I occasionally had just this discussion with other employees when new stock arrived. This long, but highly interesting day, finished with a welldeserved party at the DgemG teaching centre, where we had the pleasure to try a number of gem-inspired cocktails.

These ranged from the rather safe 'diamond' gin-and-tonic to the more adventurous 'paraíba', a bright blue Curação-based cocktail inspired by the tourmaline variety.

On Sunday, 25 May, we had the opportunity to see more of the teaching centre. Built in 1975 specifically for gemmological training, the teaching centre is a big building with impressive facilities and top-notch equipment. Besides the classrooms, the building also houses the DSEF German Gem Lab, also known as the German Foundation for Gemstone Research. We managed to join a tour of the lab by Dr Claudio C. Milisenda, which was an absolute highlight of the trip. It was insightful to see the various instruments up close that one reads about in course notes and journals, such as an ultravioletvisible near-infrared (UV-Vis-NIR) and Raman spectrometer, and getting a detailed explanation of what each one is used for on a daily basis.

Idar-Oberstein is well worth a visit by anyone with an interest in gemstones. The Gem-A team found it to be a sleepy town, but this only fuelled our imagination with images of thousands of cutters and carvers tucked away working on their next treasures. The DgemG conference was incredibly well-organised and a joy to attend, both for the knowledge we gained but also for meeting new people and catching up with familiar ones. I hope to have another reason to visit Idar-Oberstein again soon.



Cartier

at the V&A South Kensington

Rachel Church visits the first major British exhibition of precious objects by the jewellery house in nearly forty years.



The Mountbatten bandeau (1928), created in Cartier's Tutti Frutti style, features emeralds, rubies, sapphires and diamonds set in platinum. Photo © Victoria and Albert Museum, London.

artier at the Victoria & Albert Museum is the hotly awaited and comprehensive exhibition on the renowned Paris jewellery firm. Although Cartier has not been neglected by writers or short of display opportunities, it is the first major UK exhibition dedicated to the work of Cartier in almost forty years, since the British Museum's 1997 exhibition. Since that date, much archival research has been carried out and more historic pieces have been rediscovered. The exhibition was painstakingly created by designer Asif Khan, who also made soundscapes to enhance the experience of the show.

Major jewellery companies have increasingly taken an interest in their own history and make strenuous efforts to collect some of their most iconic pieces. The V&A's exhibition, with more than 350 objects on view, was supported by Cartier. Many of the

pieces are from the jewellery house's archive, which has been actively collecting since the 1970s. Drawing on this archive – alongside other museums as well as royal and private collections – allows the exhibition to be a roll call of the most famous Cartier designs alongside lesser-known or unexpected

Louis Cartier is said to have told his salesmen that they must make the client obsessed with stones.

objects. For example, a delightful letter from the firm records the gift of a diamond microphone-shaped charm to then-Princess Elizabeth on the occasion of her first radio broadcast, showing not only that the firm had close links to the royal family, but also a canny sense of publicity.

The exhibition is essentially thematic and includes objects from the most recent collections, but the main focus is on the first half of the twentieth century, arguably the company's golden age in terms of design and quality of execution. It opens with the Manchester tiara, shown in its own cylindrical case with a rotating light to set off the diamonds. The tiara is placed alongside a photograph of Alfred Cartier with his three sons, Louis, Pierre and Jacques. Together with prints of the three main shops in Paris, London and New York, it takes us directly to the moment where the



The Manchester tiara (1903), shown here from the back, was made for Georges Harnichard for Cartier Paris. It comprises diamonds, gold and silver; the C-scroll at each end is set with glass paste.

firm had thrown off its humble roots in the Paris Halles district to become a supplier of choice to the European aristocracy.

The Manchester tiara, in the delicate garland style which became Cartier's signature in the early 1900s, symbolises another change in British society. Consuelo Montagu, Duchess of Manchester, who commissioned it in 1903, supplied over one thousand diamonds from the Manchester family collection for its creation. She was born Consuelo Yznaga, and was one of the many American 'dollar princesses' who brought large dowries and a sense of style to rejuvenate the British aristocracy. Her commissioning of the tiara was representative of one of Cartier's successes as a company: their ability to follow the flow of wealth and fashion. The maison was able to transition from the European aristocracy of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to the growing number

of American customers such as socialite Barbara Hutton (one-time owner of an exquisite Burmese jade necklace created at Cartier Paris), to the fabulously wealthy maharajas of India and to the screen stars who gave the brand extra lustre. These connections are all apparent in the show at the V&A.

IN SEARCH OF A STYLE

The first room of the exhibition takes us on a world tour with the jewellery house. Each case shows a dozen objects, with associated designs or prints demonstrating how the Cartier brothers took their inspiration from global cultures. We begin with diamond-set jewels inspired by the eighteenthcentury ironwork balconies and railings seen in Parisian architecture.

These pieces were made possible by the influx of diamonds from South African mines as well as Cartier's experiments with platinum, which facilitated lightweight and almostinvisible mounts for the gemstones.

Jewels inspired by Islamic art and design relied on a sense of geometry and motifs taken from Owen Jones' Grammar of Ornament (1856). This volume was part of the Cartier collection of design books that workmen were encouraged to consult. Cases centred on Egypt, India, Iran, Japan, China and Russia include large, jewelled objects, such as the clocks inspired by an Egyptian temple portico or the curved gate of a Japanese Shinto shrine, alongside vanity cases and other small luxury objects.

A 1925 brooch made by the London branch recreates the open wings of the ancient Egyptian scarab beetle in a mosaic of gemstones, set in an invisible framework of platinum. The wings alternate faceted diamonds with cabochon-cut coloured gemstones to create texture and animation. These pieces echoed the 'Tutmania' of the 1920s that followed the discovery of the tomb of Tutankhamen. These pieces were snapped up by stylish women like Linda Cole Porter, wife of the songwriter, and Polish opera diva Ganna Walska.

CLIENTS OF CARTIER

When running a luxury business, success is as much about client relationships as it is the objects

This scarab brooch from Cartier's London branch (1925) uses blue-glazed Egyptian faience with rubies, emeralds, citrine, diamonds, onvx. platinum and gold. Photo by Nils Herrmann.



A diamond-and-platinum rose-clip brooch from Cartier London (1938). The piece was a favourite jewel of Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon. Photo by Vincent Wulveryck.

created. Part of Cartier's business model involved nurturing relationships with wealthy, aristocratic or royal patrons, then finding the right jewel for each customer or the right customer for a particular gem or creation. Cartier's client book included members of the high society of the twentieth century; they had particular success in collecting royal warrants and customers. The British royal family were long-term customers, from the Fabergé-inspired pastel enamelled objects favoured by Queen Alexandra to some of the fabulous pieces made for Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother. Queen Elizabeth II and Princess Margaret, Countess of Snowdon.

Princess Margaret, whose love of jewellery is well known, favoured a beautiful diamond-set rose brooch that was chosen by the museum as the exhibition poster image. Despite its monochrome aspect, the combination of baguette, single- and circular-cut

diamonds gives it liveliness and charm. She was given the jewel by the Union Steamship company in November 1952, when she launched their ship TEV Māori. The brooch was doubtlessly chosen from Cartier's existing stock as a charming gift for a young woman and to reflect her middle name, Rose. It was a piece of jewellery that Princess Margaret wore frequently, and which broke auction estimates when it was part of the 2006 landmark sale at Christie's London after her death (estimated to sell for between £15,000-20,000, it sold for £153.600).

Flowered jewels like the Rose brooch were a strong theme for the 1940s and 1950s; they were a particular strength for Cartier London's head designer, Frederick Mew. In 1943, Queen Elizabeth (later the Queen Mother) brought a group of diamonds and rubies to Cartier to make into a pair of clip brooches. The brooches are shown alongside a sheet of gouache designs by Mew, showing possible variations of their design. Although the Queen supplied the stones, it is curious that Cartier were able to make these jewels in the middle of the war years, during a period when jewellery materials were so heavily restricted and most workshops had turned to war production or export. The royal family's commissions also included a flower brooch centring around the rare fancypink Williamson diamond, discovered in Tanganyika in 1947 and presented by the geologist Dr John Williamson as a late wedding present to then-Princess Elizabeth.



One of Cartier's successes was their ability to follow the flow of wealth and fashion, from the European aristocracy, the growing number of American customers, the fabulously wealthy maharajas of India and the screen stars who gave the brand extra lustre.

Patiala necklace and diamond choker, which is still Cartier's most important commission. It was ordered as a lavish Indian-style bib necklace by Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala, who supplied nearly four thousand diamonds to create it; some of the diamonds were used in the necklace, while others to pay the huge jeweller's bill. The necklace's centrepiece was the 234-ct yellow De Beers Diamond, which was then the seventh-largest diamond in the world. The necklace and choker disappeared in 1948 during the turbulence following India's independence the year before. Its fate was unknown until 1982, when the De Beers Diamond appeared in a Geneva

auction. In 1998, a sharp-eyed Cartier associate recognised the platinum framework of the necklace in a London antiques shop, giving Cartier a basis for recreating the piece with synthetic stones and cubic zirconia. Even Cartier were not able to live up the standards of a maharaja from the early twentieth century. Although the exhibition shows the recreated piece alongside other magnificent Indian commissions, questions about the ownership of Indian cultural heritage and more recent controversies around the Patiala necklace go unexplored.

AN OBSESSION WITH STONES

Gemstones have always been key to Cartier's appeal. Louis Cartier is said to have told his salesmen that they must make the client obsessed with stones. His brother Jacques Cartier had a particular appreciation and sympathy for gems, which helped to build his relationships with Indian gem dealers and their wealthy maharaja clients.

Coloured gemstones were, thus, a vital element in Cartier's art deco jewels of the 1920s and 1930s. They became particularly important during the economic depression of the 1930s. Citrines, amethysts, peridots and many other varieties were pressed into service to make bold, but more affordable, statement jewels. In the room dedicated to gemstones is an aquamarine tiara made for the



The Patiala Necklace, from Cartier Paris (1928, restored 1999–2002), was commissioned by Bhupinder Singh, Maharajah of Patiala. It comprises diamonds, yellow and white zirconia, topaz, synthetic rubies, smoky quartz and citrine set in platinum. Photo by Vincent Wulveryck.

unexpected coronation of King George VI. after the abdication of his brother Edward VIII. This was the busiest year ever for the London Cartier tiara workshop. The tiara is topped with shapes reminiscent of art deco architecture, while the large central element can be removed and worn as a clip brooch. Coloured and carved stones also take centre stage in the Indian-inspired Tutti Frutti jewels, which emerged during the 1920s and 1930s. A notable example of the style is heiress

and author Daisy Fellowes' ambitious Collier Hindou, created in 1936 using her own collection of carved emeralds, rubies, sapphires and diamonds (the necklace was altered in 1963). The Mountbatten bandeau, commissioned in 1928 by Edwina Mountbatten to commemorate the birth of her daughter, Pamela, is also an exquisite example of the Tutti Frutti style.

Traditional notions of gemstone symbolism don't seem to have interested the artisans of Cartier, but one jewel is both deeply personal and symbolic. A small square brooch designed by Jacques Cartier, for his wife Nelly around 1933, shows the family in jewelled form. The large central amethyst represented Nelly, with the four children as diamond squares in each corner. A band of calibré-cut sapphires shows Jacques as the unobtrusive framework holding it all together.

PANTHERS, STAGS AND TIMEPIECES

Cartier's enduring fascination with the panther motif is commemorated with a long display case of panther-themed jewellery. The section begins with a wristwatch (ca. 1914) with a panther strap. The display also includes panther brooches made for Wallis Simpson (the Duchess of Windsor) and Daisy Fellowes. It also references the maison's explorations of the panther design in the 1980s and 1990s,



One of the installations at the Cartier exhibition, showing stunning examples of coloured-gemstone jewellery.

showing the creatures lounging in a ghostly white landscape. The painstaking work of making a panther jewel is shown by a brief accompanying film made in a Cartier workshop. The panthers are faced by the stag jewel designed by Jacques Cartier for his sister-in-law Lilian de Rethy, the queen of Belgium. Jacques considered the stag the most technically perfect jewel made by the London workshop.

Cartier's engagement with timepieces is evident through the exhibition. On show are several 'mystery clocks' in which the hands appear to float on a transparent rock-crystal disk. The wristwatches the maison popularised for men from the early twentieth century, as well as delicate jewelled bracelet-and-brooch watches favoured by the female clients, are also on view.



Created for the coronation of King George VI, this tiara features aquamarines and diamonds set in platinum. Photo by Vincent Wulveryck.

A LOST WORLD OF TIARAS

The exhibition begins and ends with tiaras. The final room is a spectacular array of tiaras dating from the late nineteenth century to the present day, organised into more cylindrical cases. Each case contains three tiaras, showing how much variety in materials and design can be presented in such a static form. One exceptional example is a magnificently geometric tiara set with huge black Australian opals. This tiara was made for Mary Alice Cavendish, Marchioness of Hartington, in 1937 for the coronation of King George VI. These headpieces offer a rich evocation of a lost world of debutantes and court balls.

If the exhibition has a fault, it is perhaps that the objects float gorgeously outside time and history. Cartier's fate followed the twists and turns of the twentieth century—revolutions, economic crashes, two world wars and the social changes of the 1960s and 1970s, which swept away formality and dress codes for many Cartier customers. These changes eventually forced the last family members to sell the firm in 1979. Nevertheless, the V&A's exhibition offers a rare opportunity to see some of the

The Panther display opens with this wristwatch, created at Cartier Paris in 1914. The watch is composed of onyx, diamonds, pink gold, platinum and a black moiré strap. Photo by Nils Herrmann.

most impressive gemstones and finest jewels created in the twentieth century brought together.



Jacques Cartier created this brooch (ca. 1933) at Cartier London for his wife, Nelly. The brooch is made up of a large amethyst, sapphires, diamonds and platinum. Photo by Vincent Wulveryck.

Cartier is on display at the Sainsbury Gallery of the V&A South Kensington until 16 November 2025. The V&A Museum is open Saturday—Thursday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:45 p.m., and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. (with some galleries closing at 5:45 p.m.). Entry to the exhibition is £27.00 on weekdays, and £29.00 on the weekend; members are admitted for free. For more information, visit vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/cartier | IG: @V_and_A

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Young Diamantaires Step Into a New Era

Olga González FGA DGA learns more about a dynamic global community dedicated to younger members of the trade.

n a world where heritage often dictates whose voice gets heard, the Young Diamantaires (YD) have carved out a bold new space for connection, education, and transformation in the diamond industry. What began in 2016 as a modest WhatsApp chat among early-career professionals has now matured into a global association, officially registered in Dubai under the operational name of the YD Association DMCC. The group's growth over the past decade reflects not only a shift in generational leadership, but also a deeper cultural realignment — one that prioritises collaboration over hierarchy, impact over prestige and integrity over inertia.

The spark came from Rami Baron, then-chair of the promotion committee at the World Federation of Diamond Bourses, who proposed a meeting of young minds during the 37th World Diamond Congress in Dubai. The goal was to build a bridge between seasoned leaders and the next generation of professionals, many of whom already had deep roots in

the industry but lacked a forum for influence. What followed was not just a networking group, but a movement fuelled by curiosity, shared values and a desire to see the trade flourish through inclusivity and innovation. From its earliest moments, YD emphasised access and authenticity. "The idea was to give the younger generation a meaningful way to connect — share ideas, build relationships and find community in a space that's often quite exclusive," recalled Christopher Zoettl (Designer Diamonds). Those first few months of digital dialogue became the foundation for something much bigger.

The message to young professionals entering the industry is clear: come as you are. Bring your curiosity, your ideas and your values. Most importantly, bring your desire to build something lasting. The essence of the Young Diamantaires experience lies not just in its programming or events, but in the unique culture that has emerged organically within the group. From the very beginning, YD has emphasised

The message to young professionals entering the industry is clear: come as you are. Bring your curiosity, your ideas, your values and your desire to build something lasting.

values like trust, mutual respect and open dialogue, elements that are often rare in an industry traditionally defined by close circles and unspoken rules.

The group's first formal gathering in Dubai was quickly followed by meetups at shows in Hong Kong and Las Vegas. However, one of its defining moments came in 2019, when twenty-five members travelled together to South Africa at the invitation of De Beers. Melissa Smet, executive director of the Syndicate of the Belgian Diamond Industry, remembered the experience vividly.

Part of the Young Diamantaires' trip to South Africa in 2019 included a visit to the Renaissance Secondary School in Messina (Limpopo province). The group has launched a project to fund the building of two additional structures that will house a library and a kitchen for the school's 1200 students. Photo courtesy of De Beers.





"Many of us had only spoken online, but now we were touring the Venetia mine, seeing the impact of the diamond pipeline on real communities." David Troostwyk, director of Salotro, echoed Ms Smet's sentiment. "We packed so much into a few days - conversations on a bus, tours of the mine, dinners under the stars. These trips aren't just educational; they remind us why we love what we do." This model has since expanded to include immersive visits to India, where YD toured factories in Surat and showrooms in Mumbai, and continues to grow as an integral part of the group's culture.

YD's approach is democratic and collaborative by design. Initiatives are often generated from within the group and are then developed through consensus. Shai Schnitzer, president of S. Schnitzer Diamonds, noted that "Passion drives participation.

If there's energy behind an idea, we move on it. That's how we've launched some of our most meaningful projects, like the Renaissance School fundraiser in South Africa. It started as a conversation by a firepit, and it became a global campaign." Melissa Smet remembered a young woman, an engineer, climbing into a mining truck nearly two stories high. The action wasn't just symbolic; it showed that transformation was happening, that "women were leading in places we didn't expect." These visits challenge assumptions, reframe narratives and turn abstract statistics about jobs

and impact into lived realities that members can carry forward in their work. Evenings during these trips are often filled with reflection. Gathered around firepits or during long bus rides, members share stories of how they entered the trade, the challenges they face in their markets and the questions they carry about the future. That campaign, which began with a commitment to build a kitchen, later pivoted to fund a science lab after pandemic-related delays changed the school's needs. "It wasn't just about charity," says Mr Troostwyk. "It was

YOUNG **DIAMANTAIRES**

about empowerment - helping the next generation dream beyond their circumstances."

A new member doesn't just gain access to networking. They are invited into a mindset of shared learning and inclusive growth. That culture becomes especially evident during the group's international trips. These are not simply factory tours or keynote-heavy conferences. Instead, they are immersive, often emotional journeys that take members deep into the heart of the industry. The trip to the Venetia mine in Limpopo, South Africa was one such moment. It was not just the sight of the massive mine trucks or

the engineering marvels that left an impression; the human connections observed during the trip made an impact. Seeing women in leadership positions at the mine, hearing their stories and witnessing the socioeconomic impact firsthand made the experience unforgettable.

During these quiet, unscripted moments, some of the most impactful initiatives have been born. David Troostwyk described one such night during the South Africa trip. "We had just left a school supported by De Beers and the local government. The principal

described how many students walked hours to attend class and lacked basic resources. It was a wake-up call. That night, a few of us sat and talked around a fire. That very night, conversations turned into ideas, and ideas into action. What followed was a member-driven

fundraising campaign that eventually raised hundreds of thousands of dollars to build a science lab at that school. It was a defining moment not just for the group's philanthropic spirit, but for its proof of execution."

The group's structure has evolved in parallel. A key strength of the Young Diamantaires lies in its diversity. Members come from dozens of countries and represent nearly every segment of the trade, from artisanal miners and digital platform founders to appraisers, manufacturers and media specialists. YD is now led by a diverse board of directors,

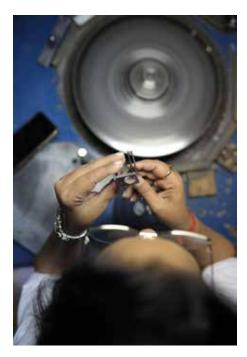


Christopher Zoettl (standing), a member of the Young Diamantaires Organizing Committee, speaks in the centre of a roundtable during the visit to India. Photo courtesy of Young Diamantaires.

one that includes representatives from countries such as the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Canada, Israel, the Netherlands, Belgium and the United Kingdom. Rather than being incidental, this diversity is intentional. It allows for richer conversations, more inclusive solutions and a global perspective that keeps the group agile and relevant. As Rachel Sahar (R. Sahar Diamonds) explained, "We've grown into a community that includes designers, gemmologists, miners, retailers, lab experts and influencers. We have representatives from leading industry organisations such as WDC, Responsible Jewellery Council, Natural Diamond Council, the Kimberley Process and others. We're not just diamond dealers anymore we represent the entire pipeline, from mine to market, from discovery to leadership positions that shape the future of the diamond industry."

Education and digital communication remain central to Young Diamantaires. YD has embraced technology to foster constant communication and collaboration. While webinars and virtual panels provide access to leading voices in the trade, the group's digital ecosystem includes three key WhatsApp groups. The primary group is where all members engage in general conversation, excluding business; the 'In Search Of' (ISO) group is a dedicated business channel, for members seeking specific goods or services; and the Member Sales Lounge (MSL) is where members actively promote their products and offerings. These are not just social spaces — they serve as dynamic business platforms where members exchange market intelligence, flag regulatory updates and build trust across borders. The ISO platform and MSL further expand this ethos, enabling peer-to-peer commerce in a transparent and secure environment. These tools are

more than methods of communication - they are foundational community infrastructure, designed to scale alongside YD's continued growth. "It's our digital town square," said Mr Schnitzer. "We debate ethics, share market trends and troubleshoot challenges together. The accessibility is what makes it so powerful." Melissa Smet added that "The group chat is constantly active — sometimes it's about sourcing, sometimes it's about strategy. And then there are the inperson moments, like our YD breakfasts in Antwerp, that strengthen those bonds."



This photo was taken at Hari Krishna's diamond factory during the YD trip to Surat, India. Photo courtesy of Hari Krishna Exports.

Kevin Vantyghem (Vantyghem Diamonds) emphasised the hybrid model of the group. "Digital tools are great, but nothing replaces faceto-face connection. That's why our meetups at major trade shows are so important." While traditional diamond businesses have historically depended on face-to-face interactions, Rachel Sahar describes the community as a feedback loop of empowerment. "We grow with our members. As they evolve into CEOs and founders, YD becomes more valuable, not less. We're not a stepping stone. We're a network that grows stronger the more you give to it. That philosophy has inspired the launch of a formal YD Alumni Network, set to amplify voices

A GLOBAL TIMELINE OF PROGRESS

Young Diamantaires' timeline is a testament to its rapid growth.

2016: First meeting in Dubai during the World Diamond Congress; launch of the WhatsApp group.

2017: Global meetings in Hong Kong and Israel.

2018: Local and international gatherings held worldwide.

2019: Group trip to South Africa with De Beers includes visits to the Venetia Mine and Renaissance School.

2020: Pandemic sparks digital expansion through webinars and Zoom.

2021-2022: Launch of South Africa school project.

2023: India trip, webinars, launch of "In Search Of" platform.

2024: Worldwide meetups, first Business Forum, DMCC incorporation as YD Association.

2025: Strategic planning, launch of Member Sales Lounge, development of YD Alumni and Mentorship programmes.

of those who have aged out but still want to give back."

One of YD's biggest milestones to date was the launch of the first YD Business Forum, held during the Dubai Diamond Conference. "We felt like we needed several more days," says Ms Sahar. "There's so much to share and learn when you gather this kind of talent and energy in one room." The group has also launched platforms such as ISO, where members can request goods and make business connections, and the Members Sales Lounge, which allows for crossborder commercial collaboration. "It's innovation that's built on trust." says Mike Asscher, president of Royal Asscher in the Netherlands. "We're not just creating efficiencies. We are changing how the industry collaborates - without politics, just partnership."

Commentary from Young Diamantaires leaders reveal a consistent ethos: focus on growth, integrity and collective empowerment. "Ask better questions," advised Shai Schnitzer. "Be curious, not just about the product, but about the people and systems behind it. If you bring your full self to this industry, there's space for you to shape its future." Rachel Sahar underscored that YD is not just a professional endeavour, but a personal one. "If you focus on giving first - helping others - you'll be amazed what flows back to you. That's the essence of real influence." Christopher Zoettl summed the organisation up by simply stating,

Rather than being incidental, the diversity of Young Diamantaires is intentional.

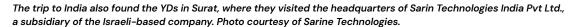
"Don't be afraid to help others; we're building a community, not just a career."

Young Diamantaires' vision for the future is ambitious, yet deeply rooted in continuity. In the near term, the group plans to introduce a formal alumni programme for members who age out of the 18-45 bracket, as well as a structured mentorship initiative that pairs emerging talent with experienced industry leaders. "We're not just passing the baton," explained Ms Sahar. "We're building a generational bridge that preserves and evolves our shared values and vision." She pointed out that, as YD members continue to rise into industry leadership roles - as CEOs, founders, board members or presidents of diamond exchanges and industry associations - the group only grows stronger. "YD is not a stepping stone; it's a lifelong ecosystem that gains strength through contribution." This guiding philosophy has led to the upcoming launch of the YD Alumni Network, designed to re-engage those who have aged out of the group's demographic but still want to remain active and give back. While the programmes have been in development for anywhere from one

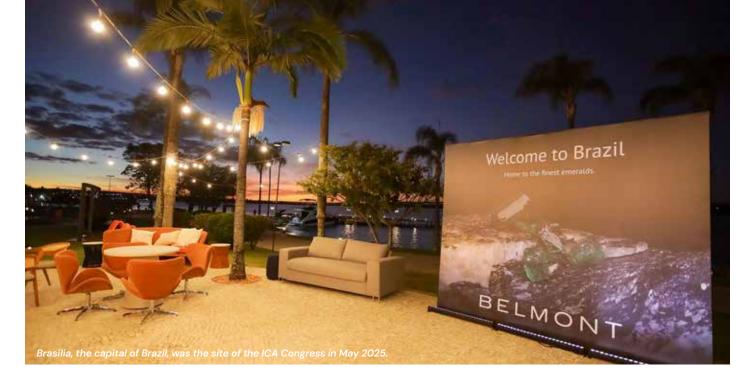
to three years, 2025 marks a year of strategic planning focused on formalising these initiatives and launching the Member Sales Lounge.

Longer term, Young Diamantaires sees itself as a catalyst for leadership transformation. "We want our members to move into boardrooms, to launch ventures, to sit at decision-making tables," explained Mr Asscher. "And we want them to do it with ethics and empathy." Kevin Vantyghem added, "The leaders of tomorrow will be those who combine innovation with tradition, and who understand that sustainability, transparency and global awareness aren't optional - they're essential." Indeed, as the diamond industry continues to grapple with challenges around traceability, consumer trust and digital transformation, YD has positioned itself not just as a witness to change, but as an active participant in shaping it. Through ongoing education, ethical advocacy and international collaboration, the group continues to elevate what it means to be a diamantaire in the modern age.

To learn more about Young Diamantaires, visit www.ydts.org.







Driving SUSTAINABILITY and INNOVATION at the ICA Congress

Christine Puleo Reis AJP GD provides a summary of the biennial conference, this year held in Brasília, Brazil.

n May, Brazil's capital city of Brasília - the political heart of the nation transformed into the epicentre of the global gem trade during the ICA Congress. Industry leaders, educators, jewellers and gemmologists from forty countries gathered for a three-day deep dive into sustainable business and innovation. Held 20-22 May (with a cocktail reception on 19 May), the conference drew influential voices from both industry and government. It helped catalyse crucial dialogues between policymakers and privatesector stakeholders, laying the groundwork for sustainable practices to become embedded in the very DNA of the industry. Officials from various government entities participated and heard requests and ideas for public policy support, particularly to reach sustainability goals.

The conference topic, 'Gems for Generations', was explored from many perspectives. Throughout the event, there was a strong focus on

long-lasting, sustainable business and environmental practices and long-term incorporation of responsible mining. The future of coloured gemstones, beneficiation of small-scale miners and communities and marketing to all generations of buyers were also considered. Acting as master of ceremonies, gemmologist and gem educator Rui Galopim de Carvalho FGA DGA opened the event and sparked dynamic conversation and real-world collaboration across every facet of the jewellery supply chain, from mine to market.

While Brazil's coloured-gemstone sector was a natural topic of interest, the insights shared transcended borders, offering a global blueprint for ethical sourcing, innovation and storytelling. ICA president Damien Cody opened day 1 of the conference; this was followed by a welcome by Roseli Duque, president of the Brazilian Gems and Jewellery Trade Association (IBGM), which co-hosted

the event. Ms Duque then moderated a panel comprising of Clarissa Franco (ApexBrazil); Minas Gerais senator José Silva Soares; Rodrigo Rollemberg, deputy minister for Green Economy, Decarbonization and Bioindustry; and Julevania Olgário (Department of Sustainable Mining Development). The group discussed how various entities work to promote technological innovation, sustainability, traceability and exportation of Brazilian material.

Marcelo Ribeiro of Belmont Emeralds, the event's main sponsor, followed the panel with compelling data on the industry in Brazil. He was able to illustrate the sheer scale and significance of the country's gemstone and jewellery industries, and noted that Brazil is a global reference for responsible mining of gemstones. It is the third-largest exporter of gems - first in diversity of coloured-stone varieties - and directly employs 300,000 people in this sector. A consideration of Brazil as a model

mining country was the focus of a diverse panel moderated by Manoel Bernardes, the vice president of education and innovation at IGBM. The speakers were Professor Adriano Mol (University of Minas Gerais); Professor Giorgio Tomi (University of São Paulo); William Freire, a Brazil-based lawyer specialising in the mining industry; and Brazilian-Armenian jewellery designer Ara Vartanian. Prof. Mol discussed the need to better highlight and market Brazil as a country that has a positive impact on gemstone mining. Prof. Tomi noted cooperative efforts for the 'Four Cs': capacity building to incorporate current technologies, co-existence - in which large-scale miners assist small-scale miners - certification and finally, access to credit. Mr Vartanian, the only jeweller to take the stage during the event, noted the need for collaboration and information sharing among jewellers; his Conscious Mining project, founded in 2019, aims at information sharing across brands.

Pivoting back to the global scenario, World Jewellery Confederation (CIBJO) president **Gaetano Cavalieri** – recipient of the ICA's Lifetime Achievement Award – covered

developments in all aspects of the trade over the past twenty-five years, both in terms of availability and supplychain logistics of coloured stones. The diamond and pearl sectors were also addressed, as developments in one segment impacts all other parts of the trade. Mr Cavalieri was followed by Wim Vertriest FGA, who is based at the Bangkok lab of the Gemological Institute of America (GIA). He discussed the critical role of field gemmology, especially in terms of origin, and urged the industry to promote a wide range of gem quality. Mr Vertriest noted that a rejection of treated gems may be doing a disservice to smaller miners, as treatment allows the industry to use much more rough material, as well as a range of gems in different price ranges.

Additional industry members spoke on day 1, including **loannis Alexandris**, jewellery historian and CEO of Gemolithos. He presented on Brazil's rich gemstone heritage; current market trends, including ethical mining practices; transparency and sustainability; future technological advancements; and global market expansion. Fifth-generation gem trader **Armil Sammoon** (Sapphire Cutters, Ltd.)



Roseli Duque (left), president of the Brazilian Gems and Jewellery Trade Association, alongside GIA CEO and president Susan Jacques, who announced the launch of GIA's Brazilian Alumni Chapter.

spoke on Sri Lanka's rich gem-mining and cutting industries, thanks to its location on the historic Silk Route, and indicated that the island nation would be at the centre of the trade by 2040. Brian Cook (Nature's Geometry) reviewed how investing in artisanal and small-scale mining (ASM) communities via education, value-added enterprises, land stewardship and other factors is an investment in the future of our industry. Çiğdem Lule FGA DGA (Association of Independent Jewelry Valuers) explained how an independent opinion of value and market information is beneficial to the global coloured-stone supply chain for a number of reasons, from extending third-party verification for responsible jewellery trading to communicating updated information from laboratories to the consumer.

Day 2 dove deeper into actionable global change. Key themes included the urgent need for regulatory reform and deeper support for artisanal miners, topics that were woven into various discussions, creating a cohesive call to action that spanned continents. These are significant challenges in an industry where 80% of output is produced by artisanal and smallscale miners. In the first session of the day, a panel of speakers consisting of Marcos Vale (ApexBrasil), Dr Stella Bijos Guimarães (Geological Survey of Brazil), Prof. Giorgio Tomi and Marcelo Ribeiro reflected on matters related to the Brazilian gemstone mining sector including regulatory considerations, attracting investors and enhancing supply chain transparency.

Key themes included the urgent need for regulatory reform and deeper support for artisanal miners.





Dr Çiğdem Lule FGA DGA with gem collector Evan Caplan and Miriam 'Mimo' Kamau Caplan of Mimo

Susan Jacques, CEO and president of GIA, emphasised the importance of scientific rigor and creating trust between the industry and consumers through rigorous identification, grading and traceability. She outlined GIA's training programmes across Africa for miners and producers, and noted that the Institute has educated 360,000 alumni over several generations. During her talk, she announced the formation of the GIA Alumni Chapter in Brazil, aimed at strengthening professional ties across the country. The chapter will include in-person events across the country, as well as online programming, which will be available for all alumni interested in learning more about the gemstone industry of Brazil. Tim Denning, director of the colouredgemstone division at Bonas Group, discussed how tenders, once the provenance of the diamond industry, are now heavily incorporating coloured stones. He explained how tenders can serve as a tool for small-scale miners who lack the volume and production for standalone sales events. Tenders offer these miners new markets and opportunities, as well as assistance with compliance and traceability.

The late morning was dedicated to showing real-life examples of community beneficiation, ethical practices and sustainability. Kenyan gemmologist, miner and gemstone dealer Miriam 'Mimo' Kamau Caplan,

Gianluca Maina (Fura Gems), Johanna Levy (GIA) and Brian Cook participated in panel on ethical practices and environmental responsibility in the trade that was moderated by ICA CEO Douglas Hucker. Another panel featuring Mr Cook, Mr Hucker and Ms Kamau Caplan, called 'Gems Keep Giving 2.0', immediately followed. The brainchild of Damien Cody, the Gems Keep Giving initiative is now a fully independent nongovernmental organisation that works to ensure that communities producing and fashioning gems are, in fact, benefiting from the trade. Ms Kamau Caplan showed video and testimonials of various critical actions - including bringing drinking water to a mining community in Kamtoga, Kenya – while Mr Cook offered real-world examples of community support in Brazil.

Johanna Levy then returned to the podium and outlined challenges to trade members, such as a demand for sustainably sourced components and upcoming European legislation. She offered thoughts on attracting attention and generating resilience in the face of increasing demand for transparent, environmentally sound and ethically sourced material among consumers, particularly millennial and Generation Z shoppers.

Andy Lucas (Guild Gem Laboratories) shared real-world trends from the market everyone is watching: China. He shared both anecdotal and qualitative evidence on how surging interest in new stones, such as violet sapphires and lagoon tourmaline, are driving up prices in the country. There is also a resurgence of interest in rubellite. Mr Lucas also demonstrated how influencers in China are reshaping demand through firsthand mine visits and livestreaming with compelling storytelling, which has had a measurable and significant effect on consumer preferences and growing sales. Dr Aaron Palke (GIA, Carlsbad, California) spoke about the colour treatment of sapphire by artificial irradiation, a topic within the trade for decades. He provided an overview of artificial irradiation and colour instability in sapphire as well as practical tools for identifying treated material.

Given the current and unpredictable tariff scenario, the talk by Sara Yood (Jewelers Vigilance Committee) was highly anticipated. She tackled the tangled web of tariffs across complex global supply chains. The situation is complex due to the International





Jewellery designer Ara Vartanian explained how jewellers must share information in order to affect change and support responsible practices.

Emergency Economic Powers Act (IEEPA), which lets the U.S. president impose tariffs during 'national emergencies' without standard public or legislative review. She highlighted practical impacts on the gemstone trade, including how to best determine 'substantial transformation' - a rule that defines a product's origin for legal purposes. She walked the audience through nearly a dozen scenarios, both hypothetical and from real life, involving origin and production across multiple countries. These situations prompted lively debate and fresh ideas - including the potential for

coloured gems like emeralds, tourmalines and aquamarines in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries—jewellery styles evolved in tandem, embracing increasingly vibrant and gem-driven designs. Mr de Carvalho provided essential context for understanding shifts in consumer tastes and design trends. He highlighted how cultural influences, economic developments and advances in mining and lapidary technologies shaped the market's trajectory.

The third and final day of the conference had a future-focused outlook. **Brecken Branstrator** (Gem

Brazil is the third-largest exporter of gems — first in diversity of coloured-stone varieties — and directly employs 300,000 people in this sector.

relocating cutting centres to mining regions to offset costs.

Finally, Rui Galopim de Carvalho returned to the stage to deliver an exploration of Brazil's storied gemmological and jewellery heritage. He traced the fascinating evolution of jewellery design in Brazil, beginning with the early colonial period when gemstone use was relatively modest. As Brazil's vast mineral wealth was gradually uncovered — from the gold rushes of the eighteenth century to the discovery of world-renowned

Guide) presented her perspective on various coloured-gemstone trends. She noted broader buyer preferences: an increase in the use of coloured-gemstone beads, perhaps as a reaction to the high price of gold; emerging use of hard stones for cocktail rings and other statement pieces; and a new acceptance of opaque ruby and sapphire. Even in the diamond stronghold of engagement rings, colour is coming to the fore, with 15% of engagement-ring buyers today seeking coloured material. She noted

that much of the industry's future will be determined by future economic policy and noted that in-country developments can have an unpredictable global effect, such as the case of an administrative shuffle in Kenya that halted the production of tsavorite garnet, and a ban on gemstone exports in Malawi.

Closing the conference with inspiration and vision, **Elle Hill** (Hill & Co.) urged attendees to embrace both innovation and tradition to create sustainable demand over generations. She sees the future as bright, and believes that meaning is what matters to buyers today, with an emphasis on sustainability and human connection. This is especially true among younger buyers, for whom value and uniqueness as the most compelling reasons to buy.

Other speakers on the conference's final day included Sumed Prasonpongchai (The Gem and Jewelry Institute of Thailand), who discussed initiatives designed to position Thailand as a global leader in a sustainable and transparent jewellery industry. Branko Deljanin investigated the provenance, gemmological traits and colour-grading systems of pink and red diamonds from around the world, including Canada, Russia and different sources in Africa. A special focus was provided for rare stones from Brazil and Australia's nowclosed Argyle Mine. Gianluca Maina reported on marketing strategies for responsible sourcing in the luxury industry. Finally, Vincent Pardieu (VP Consulting) has visited numerous emerald deposits over his 20+ years in the gem trade. In many cases, mining was initiated by people relying on simple artisanal tools and luck, with operations became more mechanised over time. He related how miners often seek investors and adopt advanced techniques to try to improve efficiency, productivity and profitability.

As the ICA Congress came to a close, many of the attendees left committed to working toward a more cohesive and responsible future for the entire jewellery field, relying on new technology, cohesive public policy and storytelling to engage modern consumers seeking authenticity.

All photos courtesy of IBGM.

CARTIER

Nature Sauvage: High Jewelry and Precious Objects

here have been countless books written about Cartier since the firm was established in Paris by Louis-François Cartier in 1847. Other volumes have been reviewed in previous issues of Gems&Jewellery, while the current exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum is covered in this issue (see pp. 35-39). Called "the jeweller of kings and the king of jewellers" by Edward VII, the maison's pieces has captured the imaginations and adorned the bodies of royalty, aristocracy, celebrity and, sometimes, even fortunate members of the general public.

Among other innovations, Cartier is known for its patented 'invisible setting' - where gemstones are set closely together without any visible metal, which creates a seamless surface of gemstones; its Tutti Frutti line that was inspired by Indian jewellery; and its representations of animals in precious materials. It is the newest twist on this latter signature work that is the focus

of Nature Sauvage: High Jewelry and Precious Objects. François Chaille, an expert on the history of art who has authored several books on the work of Cartier. documents this newest collection. The high jewellery line, introduced in 2024, breathes fresh

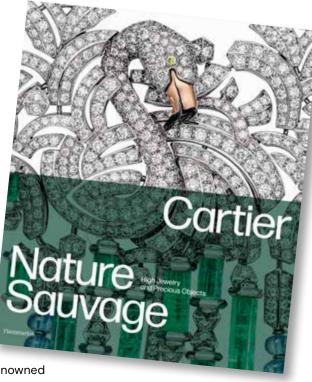
life into the maison's world-renowned fauna collection.

The introduction explains the historical context of depicting animals in jewellery. It notes that this motif has been used for millennia, from the earliest adornments in beads and shells in the Nile Valley, to the gem-embellished pieces created by the Sumerians, to a major theme in European jewellery starting in the early medieval period. The House of Cartier, therefore, not only maintained a longstanding tradition, but it was

also able to be innovative with the motif due to developments

> such as the recently discovered South African diamond mines and the ability to use platinum in jewellery. Under Louis Cartier (grandson of Louis-François), and his creative director Jeanne Toussaint known as 'The Panther' - the maison's bestiary as we know it began to grow. As trends changed through the decades, Cartier followed suit.

The Inagua ring comprises two cushionshaped morganites (22.57 tcw) along with brilliant-cut sapphires and diamonds set in rose gold. Photo © Maxime Govet.



By François Chaille, hardcover, 256 pp., illus., publ. by Flammarion, Paris, France, £85.00.

keeping the designs of their animal jewels fashionable, yet powerful. This led, in 2024, to the Nature Sauvage collection, in which "nothing seems to have tamed the creativity of the designers, who show unlimited freedom in inventing postures and landscapes to best display the character of each animal..." The collection is often playful, with animals in a variety of poses, yet they remain elegant thanks to the metal and gemstone choices and lapidary cuts, as well as the positioning of the finalised piece.

Following the introduction is an essay by Egyptologist Hélene Bouillon,

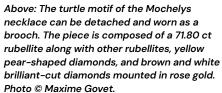
The high jewellery line, introduced in 2024, breathes fresh life into the maison's worldrenowned fauna collection

entitled "Between Symbolism and Aesthetics: The Art of Representing Animals." She discusses the dominant presence of animals in prehistoric cave drawings as far back as the Palaeolithic era. Further, she observes the presence of big cats as the guardians of rulers, and the importance of lion hunting in Mesopotamia starting in the fourth millennium BCE. Finally, she notes the representations from antiquity that gave animals human attributes, such as the ability to play musical instruments. During the medieval period, she continued, people assigned Christian morality to animals. Even today, Ms Bouillon noted, humans treat animals with a certain fascination and a sense of responsibility. This thought-provoking chapter gives way to the Cartier menagerie.

There are eight chapters depicting the Nature Sauvage collection; some of the pieces shown in the pages of the

book were still in production at press time; thus, the final carat weight of the gemstones in some pieces could not be verified. Each of the chapters opens with an explanation as to what defines its subject. For example, a note before the chapter entitled Sculptural explains that the maison had originally crafted their pieces by hand but, during the 1970s-1980s, they switched to lost-wax casting. This allowed Cartier to create a wider variety of poses for their animals. In 2010, they opened a glyptic workshop, allowing for the carving or engraving of gems and hardstone. A turn of the page then shows not only jewellery pieces, but a piece in the hands of an artisan, along with tools at a bench in the glyptic workshop. The Evocative chapter notes that the maison's artisans are able to arrange the rough materials into designs that communicate an aesthetic to the viewer without conforming to

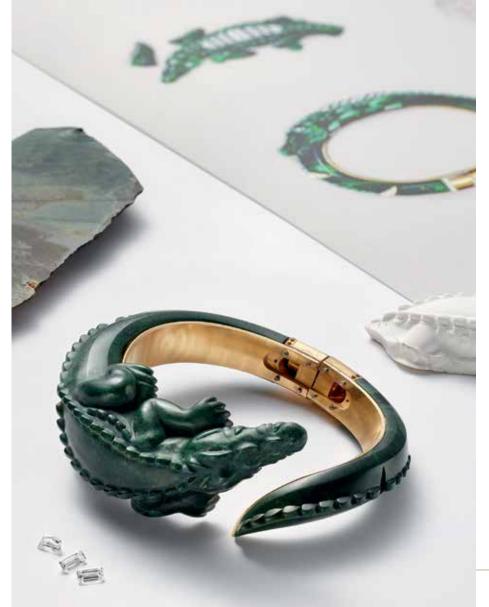




Left: Found in the Imaginary chapter, the Yacares bracelet (shown here with its sketch) is intended to resemble a crocodile. The piece uses a 1.51 ct emerald-cut diamond, as well as sculpted green jasper, emeralds and shield-shaped, emerald-cut and brilliantcut diamonds. Photo © Hugo Julliot.

a specific form. For instance, the Panthère Constellée wristwatch uses sapphires along the band to represent the panther's spots; in another piece, a necklace, white gold and white diamonds along with onyx conjures the idea of zebras.

The third of the eight chapters, Mysterious, suggests that Cartier embraced visual illusions that allowed them to "move on from naturalism to imagine abstract compositions that challenge our perceptions through the evocative power of their design alone." The platinum-and-rose-gold Celestun necklace – set with aquamarine, emerald, yellow and white diamonds and black lacquer – has a curve in the centre of the piece that is suggestive



The collection is often playful, yet they remain elegant thanks to the metal and gemstone choices and lapidary cuts, as well as the positioning of the finalised piece.

of a swan. The In Motion section pays homage to those animals that seem to be constantly moving, such as birds, dragonflies, moths and butterflies. The diamond-and-gold Amarata necklace is an example of a bird captured in flight. The chapter called Imaginary includes pieces from previous collections, including a dragon bracelet from 1929 and a beetle brooch from 1999. The Yacares bangle bracelet, part of the current collection, uses green jasper and diamonds to create a stunning crocodile over yellow gold.

The Amphista ring, which incorporates a snake into its design, has a 2.44 ct octagonal Colombian emerald surrounded by emeralds and square-shaped, baguette and brilliant-cut diamonds. Photo © Camille Blanchet.

The final three chapters are no less glamourous than their predecessors, and the bestiary that are rendered in the jewels are shown to incredible advantage in these pages. In Expressive, Mr Chaille documents those pieces where the animal's temperament seems to come through the design. The Panthère Indigo necklace features a panther's head - one with an expression of fierceness - as the centrepiece. Luxuriant, the penultimate chapter, introduces flora to the fauna by turning to the popular Tutti Frutti

The Amarata necklace

if in flight. The necklace comprises a 2.51 ct modified kite-shaped diamond along

Photo © Maxime Govet.

with yellow and white brilliant-cut diamonds set in white gold.

shows a bird's head with its wings spread as





The Panthère Constellée is found in the Evocative chapter, incorporating the sapphires that represent the cat's spots into the band of the wristwatch. The watch uses eighteen sapphires from Ceylon and Madagascar (21.08 tcw), along with additional sapphires, emeralds, onyx, brilliant-cut diamonds, quartz movement and white gold. Photo © Maxime Govet.

style that Cartier introduced a century ago. Throughout the chapter, we see the Big Three gemstones presented as leaves, berries and fruits, and in decadent arrangements with onyx, coral, chrysoprase, rubellite and, of course, diamond. It is a stunning lead-in to the final chapter, aptly named Flamboyant. The final part is filled with dynamic colours and unusual gem combinations. Precious materials used in the jewellery in this chapter includes turquoise, lapis lazuli, mother-of-pearl and coral. The Orman necklace/brooch uses chalcedony and amazonite in addition to the usual diamond, ruby and tourmaline. These stunning pieces are a lovely way to end this tour through Cartier's new collection.

As is usually the case with books of this calibre, the photography of the jewels takes centre stage.

Cartier's Orman necklace (which can also be worn as a brooch) includes 90.52 tcw chalcedony drops, along with additional chalcedony beads, ruby, tourmaline, amazonite and brilliant-cut diamonds set in white gold. Photo © Maxime Govet.



Full-page colour images allow the reader to see the intricate details of each piece. Interspersed throughout the chapters are illustrations or images of Cartier's artisans performing the intricate, painstaking work of assembling these jewels. It would have been lovely to have the backstory from the designers on some of the individual pieces that are found in these pages; however, this is a very minor criticism of an excellent book.

As noted at the beginning of this review, there are many volumes published on the work of Cartier; that is with good reason. The maison's commitment to excellence and creativity shines through in their jewellery lines and in the books that document that work. This latest volume by François Chaille is no different; Nature Sauvage: High Jewelry and Precious Objects is an essential addition to the Cartier archives. It is also a lovely addition to the bookshelf of any jewellery enthusiast.

All photos © Cartier, from Cartier Nature Sauvage, Flammarion.

The Case for **Local and Ethical Luxury**

Alice Cicolini considers sustainability and design in a post-industrial world.

n 2008, when I was living, working and beginning my jewellery practice in India, I was invited to write an article on the subject of sustainable design. "Exactly fifty years ago this year," I wrote, "Charles and Ray Eames were invited to India to recommend a programme of design training that would equip India for the challenges of the latter part of the twentieth century. The result... opened with the famous line: 'In the light of the dramatic acceleration with which change is taking place in India... we recommend that without delay there be a sober investigation into those values and those qualities that Indians hold important to a good life, that there be a close scrutiny of those elements that go to make up a Standard of Living." India was facing, they believed, a 'change in kind not a change of degree'."

The Eames's statement is no less powerful today than it was in 1958. In 2025, it is apparent that the era of fossil fuels, on which our economic growth has depended, is ending. At the same time, the environmental impact of industrialised life becomes ever more visible. Crucial for a new generation of designers is the idea that a 'change in kind' should be cause for everyone to scrutinise what constitutes a standard for living. How many disposable commodities, and how much power and water, among other resources, does one family need? Does it matter where things come from, and how (and by whom) they are made?

In the years since I wrote my article, the trade has taken significant steps to clarify what we mean by 'ethics' relating to mining and sourcing materials. Consumers have responded in increasing numbers; few corporate brands can afford to avoid the question of ethics within their supply chain. What rarely appears to be pondered is the sustainability of skill. One of the privileges of living in a nation like India is the ability to be surrounded by craftsmanship - at all levels, and within generational lineages



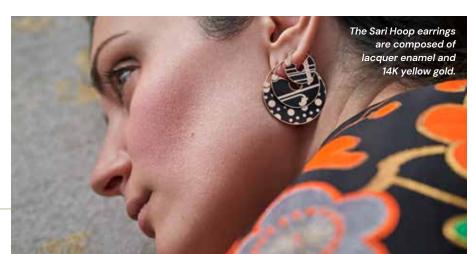
of practice. It is, quite literally, living tangible heritage. However, I learned whilst living there that craft skills take only two generations to be lost within a family. The meenakari master I collaborated with during the first decade of my practice has not taken on an apprentice, and this is a pattern that echoes across India.

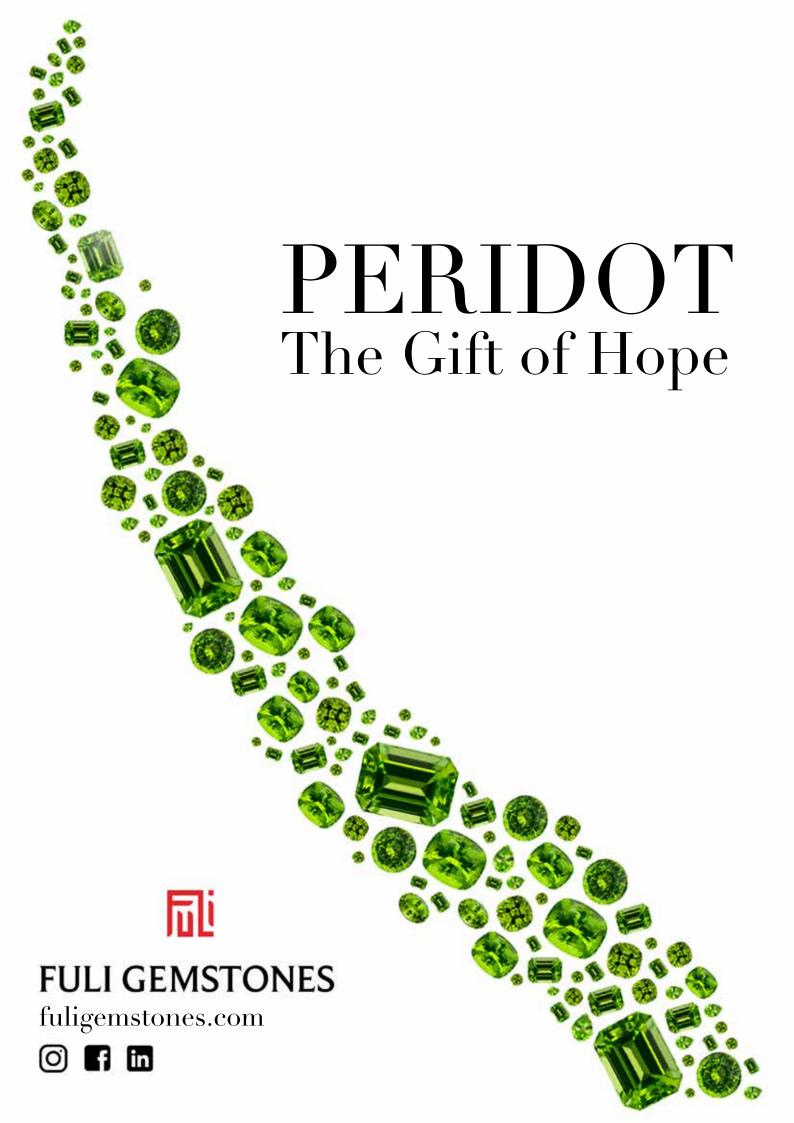
Back in London, where I now make most of my work with small-scale masters in the jewellery district, my goldsmith speaks sorrowfully about the loss of a oncethriving hub of refined craftsmanship. The Goldsmiths' Company does incredible work to house London's craft talent, facilitate an apprenticeship programme and promote superlative studio jewellers. But it cannot single-handedly stem a tide which has seen, since 2010, all of the city's undergraduate jewellerymaking courses close. Birmingham is the only place in the UK where someone can begin the journey of becoming a

maker, rather than a designer, of jewellery. In a landscape where pricing overrules determination to spotlight, invest in and communicate the power of the handmade object, these are critical times.

This is where the language of sustainability becomes powerful. What could, or should, sustainability encompass? The injection of ethical standards into the supply chain is important, but the materials themselves are meaningless without fine skill to craft them. One interpretation is the notion of a rebalancing between the global and the local. In turn, a recalibration of attention for huge brands and that of small-scale and individual makers, and the stores that retail them, is long overdue. This is a question of environmental cost, but also of social and cultural livelihood. Much of the design world remains in thrall to scale and brand, but there are a growing number of designers and design interventionists contemplating their roles as conduits for handmade items.

This is not a simplistic question of a 'burning of brands'; many are great champions of high craft. Rather, it is about consistently investing money in objects that have been made by highly skilled artisans with the intent to last. Pieces that age with beauty and resilience cost far less, over time, than their disposable counterparts, while humming with the energy of commitment and intention. It is time to reflect on the Eames's call to action, and by extension a flourishing lineage of practice with it.





SAVE THE DATE

Saturday 1 & Sunday 2 November

GemA Conference 2025

