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FROM

The Editor



What have I learnt recently? Well, as it happens, quite a lot. The NAJ Summit in June and the GIA Career Fair in July were chock-full of insights and information (my report's on page 14), so I have a plethora of facts stored away. Some will come in useful for future features and industry chats, and others are rather more random, with less immediately obvious applications.

Always carry a notebook (obvs, it's my job) and remember to smile in interview situations (tick, unless a camera is pointing at me) are two examples of arbitrary advice I like. My favourite snippet of insider knowledge, though: should you find yourself in a party of people climbing down a tricky mineshaft or Colombian mountainside, you, the inexperienced climber (let's assume), will go first, so if you fall, only you perish. Harsh... but fair.

I shall be – pen poised – expecting more golden nuggets of wisdom at the forthcoming Jewellery Show (see my preview on page 24) and UK Jewellery Festival (page 34); both offer the chance to listen to and learn from industry experts during their two-day events in September. Plus, there are many new brands, designers and collections to discover, so fitting everything in will, as ever, be the challenge. Add autumn buying group events from the Houlden Group, Hallmark Jewellery Group and the Company of Master Jewellers (p38) and it's going to be a busy month.

Ahead of these shows, a visit to Goldsmiths North in Sheffield's Cutlers Hall earlier this summer gave me the chance to meet a great many talented designer makers in one splendid spot. A few of my highlights from this much-admired shopping opportunity are on page 46. While in that beautiful part of the country, I also paid a visit to CW Sellors' work in progress – a grand, unique jewellery design and creation centre on the banks of Carsington Water in the Peak District. Learn more about this ambitious project on page 56.

Who doesn't want (or need) to learn more about diamonds? The hot topic was central to panel discussions at both the Summit and the Career Fair (and will feature at forthcoming trade fairs, too). If you want to catch up on some diamond news now, see page 18, which is followed by an interview with the president of the London Diamond Bourse, Alan Cohen, who describes his industry journey.

We also wanted to learn more about the NAJ's recently appointed CEO, Ben Massey, so he goes under the spotlight on page 8. Finally, on page 64, for a truly deep dive into a jewellery life, I'd recommend *A Touch of Gold*, the reminiscences of antique jewellery specialist Geoffrey Munn – it's a lovely, riveting read. And, of course, there's loads to learn.



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Autumn buying group events



Belinda Morris, Editor

The National Association of Jewellers

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Chair's Foreword



As chair of the National Association of Jewellers, I find June and July are my busiest time – and arguably the most fun. With the Association's AGM and our three-day annual conference, the NAJ Summit, just days apart, it's a packed schedule, but an excellent opportunity to speak face-to-face with members, understand their challenges and identify the role the NAJ can play in helping them succeed.

Annual General Meeting

Much has happened in the past 12 months. New challenges have arisen for our members and the wider jewellery trade. A war, the cost-of-living crisis and the ramifications of Brexit on business continue to test us all. However, these demanding few years have proved, beyond any doubt, the resilience and professionalism of our members and the importance of an industry-wide Association to support the trade through these external challenges.

In my first address as chair at last year's AGM, I announced the Association's new strategy to help shape professional excellence for our members and industry. The framework grows from our three core pillars of compliance, profit and responsibility. Each foundational block builds on the last, ensuring a robust, legally compliant, profitable business that can plan for the future. The strategy is a framework for the Association and our member businesses.

We are confident this strategy puts everyone in a stronger position to meet whatever challenges arise. And given the external forces we have all had to face over the past five years, preparedness has never been so crucial.

This strategy has helped us deliver success across the NAJ, including growth in membership and a record-breaking year for the education department. Despite the very real-world squeeze on finances we all feel, personally and professionally, the members clearly understand and appreciate the benefits of the NAJ's support as we continue to improve our retention rate. This year, we have seen an impressive retention rate despite the financial climate, and we have also seen an increase in new members by 18 per cent.

As important as retention and recruitment is to a successful and healthy Association, it is equally important we uphold the Honesty, Integrity and Professionalism of every single member. For the greater good, the integrity of the trade and peace of mind for consumers, it is essential all our members abide by our code of conduct. This is why we have had to expel two businesses when they fell short of the standards we all expect and demand. A third member has recently been removed for refusing to participate in the complaint mediation process, laid out clearly in our code of conduct.

NAJ Summit

I won't spend too long talking about this year's NAJ Summit (you can find a much more comprehensive look at the event on pages 14 to 20), but on a personal note, I would like to thank everyone involved for making it such a fantastic, informative and entertaining weekend.

From the speakers who gave their time and knowledge so generously to Team NAJ and the many people behind the scenes who helped organise and run the event as well as all the attendees across the three days, you all played your part in making it the most successful NAJ Summit to date.

If there is one thing I've learned during my time with the NAJ, it is that the Association never stands still. The team is already in detailed discussions to improve the event next year, and we look forward to unveiling more information and dates in due course.

And finally...

With the winners revealed at this year's NAJ Awards (see page 10 for details), attention now turns to the Chair's Award. It recognises a business or individual who has shown long-term dedication and service to the industry. As has become tradition, the winner will be revealed in December, at The Benevolent Society Christmas Charity Ball, and we are now officially opening it up to the trade to share their recommendations for the award.

If you think somebody deserves recognition for their service, please email **marketing@naj.co.uk with your recommendations.**



Heather Callaway, NAJ Chair

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The NAJ Awards 2023 winners



Ben Massey – all you need to know

Announced at the NAJ Summit in June was Ben Massey's appointment as chief executive officer of the National Association of Jewellers. We thrust him under the spotlight...



Please tell us about your career journey

I'm now a decade into membership organisations, with most of those years leading on marketing and communications, with stakeholder relations thrown in. It's a far cry from the sports science degree I left Chester with in the late 2000s. After championing the student voice and then the university voice nationally and internationally, the British Pest Control Association recruited me to lead its marketing and communications. The issue of standards was a serious risk to the sector – the difference between professional and amateur needed greater definition.

Headhunted, I joined the Association in 2019, and my time here has been progressive. My marketing and communications role required me to position the Association strongly in the industry and to communicate more effectively with members and supporters. Covid was certainly challenging, but it stress-tested us where we needed. We exited Covid with a new strategy and set our sights on professional standards and the phrase 'we've got your back.' By then, I was stretching outside of the day job and took the principal officer title, then worked up to CEO.

I want to pay tribute to the team that supported me, the National Committee for backing and trusting me and now Heather Callaway, David Doyle, Gary Wroe and Adam Jacobs. on our Executive Committee, who I work very closely with.

What has challenged you most at the NAJ?

To be frank, most, if not all, of my time with the Association has been challenging, but particularly the first 12 months. The sector needed positive change, but operationally, the dots weren't joining up. During Covid, we made progress as an Association, about understanding where the jewellery industry needs the NAJ, and where we're aligned to deliver upon those requirements.

As a team, we've worked hard to establish the strategy and build a better picture of what the NAJ stands for, and what we deliver for members and supporters – which continues. We're only getting started, and our eyes are very much on the future.

Who has had the biggest influence on your career?

I lost my dad relatively young, and that changes your outlook on life. He was a carpenter who worked for a small sub-contractor in the Midlands... so early mornings and late nights. With his passing, I learned that sitting around waiting for things to happen isn't in my playbook and neither is continuing to do things just because they've always been done – if it isn't going to drive a better outcome then why continue? But it's important we define what better is.

I'm lucky to be surrounded by some great people at the NAJ. David, Gary and Anna Blackburn particularly have had a huge influence on me, as well as members who take the time to share their business challenges, especially skills and people related.

Tell us something few people know about you.

I'm a twin.

If you could chat with anyone in the jewellery industry, past or present, who would it be?

As people in our industry pass away, I've learned about the positive change they were able to drive forward in their time, and there are those I'd really value a conversation with. Harry Levy is one, and I wish I could have sat down with Johnathan Payton-Smith as well as Michael Hoare.

Happily, The Benevolent Society Ball in December provides a wonderful opportunity for great conversations.

What three words describe you best?

I'd like to think I'm determined, enthusiastic and fair.

As CEO, what do you hope to achieve over the next few years? What are the main challenges the jewellery industry faces and how can the NAJ help?

Together with the team and our community of volunteers, I want to awaken the Association. We've started this last 12 to 18 months to really deliver on our collective strategy, and we're determined to push on, to continue to grow our membership base and provide good value.

We're in the midst of our code of practice development to set clear professional standards for members, and this will evolve as the levels improve. In essence, it's what the NAJ member logo stands for – that each business will meet the required professional standards of Honesty, Integrity and Professionalism.

Education is a massive NAJ success story – it's not just professionalism in businesses we're affecting, but our people's commercial confidence, too. Skills development and attracting and progressing people through careers will continue to be a challenge unless we work together.

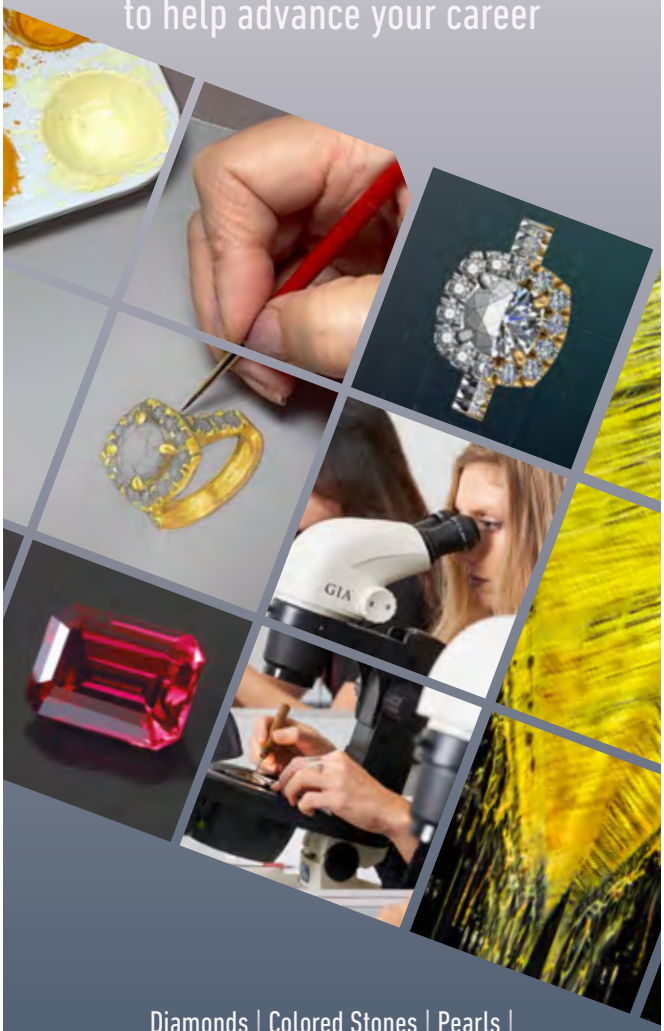
We want to ensure the jewellery, watches and silverware markets are buoyant and members profit – but for this to work, we need to influence the barriers and, where possible, remove them, wherever they are on the supply chain.

The jewellery and allied trades together represent many segments, and, collectively, we can achieve more – especially in the outside world. The trade has been invisible for far too long; there's a proud story to tell, so let's start telling it.

Are you interested in getting involved with the National Committee or one of our many standing and working groups? Email **ben.massey@naj.co.uk**

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GIA Career Fair

The Career Fair, powered by GIA, is the gem and jewellery industry's largest annual recruiting event. This year, a record number of attendees met recruiters from prominent industry businesses. The NAJ and Belinda Morris were also there.

This year's event, in Goldsmiths' Hall in London, began with a confident and inspiring keynote address by Bianca Miller-Cole, an award-winning entrepreneur and personal brand expert, and a 2014 finalist on *The Apprentice*. From building your story, building visibility and the importance of LinkedIn (and how to make the most from it) to entrepreneurial (and intrapreneurial) thinking and building a network, she offered seven steps to follow to make a dream a reality. Number one: get a notepad. Tick.

Following this talk was a State of the Industry panel discussion with Joanna Levy, vice president of Environmental, Social and Governance Programs, GIA; Mark Adlestone, chair of Beaverbrooks and Howard Levine, founder of Diamnet. Unsurprisingly, after an initial comment from Adlestone about the growth in online business and premium goods, the conversation shifted to issues of sustainability and then to laboratory-grown diamonds. Questions from the audience on both matters (with inevitable crossovers) came thick and fast.

Bringing the discussion round to matters of recruitment, Adlestone was asked what advice he would give to potential employees. In relation to Beaverbrooks, he explained the values the company lives by are critical; they recruit against those values, so doing your homework is key. "Be smart, be punctual, think about your body language, make eye-to-eye contact and give clear answers," he advised. "And smile – we can't train you to do that."

The rest of the day was devoted to hugely well-attended career coaching sessions – carried out in a speed-dating-like manner and encompassing a cross-section of industry careers. The likes of valuers Anna Rogers and Barrie Sullivan and gemmologists Kerry Gregory and Julia Griffiths were kept busy giving answers and advice. Meanwhile, other attendees talked to recruiters from jewellery organisations and businesses.

NAJ Awards 2023
these are the champions!

The winners of the 2023 NAJ Awards, supported by headline sponsor Curteis, were announced during the Association's annual conference – the NAJ Summit on June 25th at the Park Regis Hotel in Birmingham.

The NAJ Awards champion extraordinary talent in the UK jewellery industry and highlight the business owners, teams and professionals going above and beyond for the trade and their customers. This year, we added three new categories to celebrate the hard work and innovations across the industry.

Ten category sponsors joined Curteis in supporting the awards and the 50 finalists shortlisted for recognition – TH March, RWK Goodman, Ti Sento, At The Bench, Autumn Fair, Windiam, Inova Collection, Stirland Paterson Group, VM + Events, and the Responsible Jewellery Council.

Ben Massey, NAJ CEO, says, "What an amazing evening, and what an incredible group of finalists! Congratulations to all the award winners, shortlisted businesses and individuals who impressed us with their innovation and professionalism over the past year. Thank you to our amazing sponsors and also to our award supporters, including Sheffield Assay Office, who generously donated the trophies, and to Alan Bick and the Jewellery Show."

Claire Davies, operations director of headline sponsor, Curteis, adds, "We are proud to support this year's NAJ Awards and congratulate all the amazing winners who walked away with trophies on the night. It is a real testament to the breadth of talent in our industry, and we thank the NAJ for putting on another wonderful evening."

This year's NAJ Awards also included a special Supplier Showcase during the drinks reception. Six specially selected suppliers exhibited their latest products and jewellery collections: Curteis, QuayStones, deutscheCraft, Artisan, Liz Crow London and Fischer Trauringe.

THE 2023 WINNERS:

Corporate Social Responsibility Initiative of the Year

- **Cooksongold, WINNER**
- **Moyo Gems, Highly Commended**
- John Pass Jewellers
- Lebrusan Studio
- Shakti Ellenwood

SPONSORED BY: RESPONSIBLE JEWELLERY COUNCIL

Designer of the Year

- **Julien Riad Sahyoun, WINNER**
- **Andrew Geoghegan Highly Commended**
- Collette Waudby
- EE Chan
- QuayStones

SPONSORED BY: rwk goodman

Jewellery Retailer of the Year

- **Bradley's Jewellers York, WINNER**
- Baker Brothers
- Jessica Flinn Fine Jewellery
- Titcombe Bespoke Jewellery
- Wongs Jewellers

SPONSORED BY: TI SENTO MILANO

Marketing Campaign/ Event of the Year

- **Daniella Draper, WINNER**
- **Bradley's Jewellers York, Highly Commended**
- Bailey & Sons
- Birmingham Assay Office
- Company of Master Jewellers

SPONSORED BY: VM + Visual Merchandising + Events

Rising Star of the Year

- **Chris Lewis (Created by Chris), WINNER**
- **Evie Day (Daniel Christopher Jewellery), Highly Commended**
- Katie Hughes (Wongs Jewellers)
- Liz Crow (Liz Crow London)
- Louis Yaxley (Austen & Blake)

SPONSORED BY: The Bench ONLINE JEWELLERY TRAINING



Above - Cookson Gold Right - Julien Riad Sahyoun Above - Kay Bradley Right - Chris Lewis

Left - The NAJ team
Below - Daniel Christopher team





Petra Marcinkowska, Jeremy France

Ben Parry, Wongs

Salesperson of the Year

- **Petra Marcinkowska (Jeremy France Jewellers), WINNER**
- **Peter Kane (Flinn & Steel) Highly Commended**
- Aneesah Shahid (Austen & Blake)
- Sophie Mishiku (Daniel Christopher Jewellery)
- Violeta Gjini (River Mounts)

SPONSORED BY:

AUTUMNFAIR

Store Design of the Year

- **Flinn & Steel, WINNER**
- **Jewellers Guild, Highly Commended**
- Diamond Heaven
- Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery
- Jessica Flinn Fine Jewellery

SPONSORED BY:

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Supplier of the Year

- **Hockley Mint, WINNER**
- **Sierra Consultancy, Highly Commended**
- Artisan
- Pursuit
- River Mounts

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Team of the Year

- **Daniel Christopher Jewellery, WINNER**
- **Wongs Jewellers, Highly Commended**
- Daniella Draper
- Hockley Mint
- Lily Arkwright

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Workshop Professional of the Year

- **Ben Parry (Wongs Jewellers), WINNER**
- **Scott Stevenson (Daniel Christopher Jewellery), Highly Commended**
- Abbie Hulkes (Jeremy France Jewellers)
- Alireza Rahimoff (Hockley Mint)
- Ellie Inglefield (Weston Beamor)

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Left - Flinn & Steel

Above - Hockley Mint team

Photography: John Owen

Prepare, Protect and Promote



Three Ps to take your business further.

No matter your membership type, the NAJ has a suite of tailored benefits to keep you compliant, protect your assets and promote your business.

No longer a game of guess who

A fool and his money are easily parted, so the saying goes. In today's highly sophisticated and connected world, even the most intelligent and prepared risk falling foul of fraudulent and dishonest activities. The NAJ is now working in collaboration with business intelligence experts at Creditsafe to safeguard our members from making these costly mistakes.

Creditsafe offers members tools to help them remain legally compliant and avoid expensive defrauding from potential customers. Later this year, the NAJ will release a code of practice on anti-money laundering (AML) regulations to ensure all members understand their legal obligations. To support this, members can also access Creditsafe's AML Checks, providing real-time screening that cross-references over 300 data sources to manage and mitigate risk. Checks meet the standards outlined by the Joint Money Laundering Steering Group (JMLSG) guidance, ensuring peace of mind that your due diligence is fully AML compliant.

If you need to go further with instant ID checks of customers, especially when dealing with high-end and high-ticket items, Creditsafe can ensure you are KYC (Know Your Customer) Compliant with Digital Identity and Document verification. When customers provide their identity information, Creditsafe conducts a rigorous verification process, which includes biometric, document and database checks, ensuring the customer's identity is genuine and preventing fraudulent activities. The platform instantly generates a detailed customer due diligence (CDD) report, providing an audit trail for your business.

Designs for life

Design fraud is a worry for many members. Time, money and considerable talent go into producing jewellery pieces. The last thing anybody wants is their designs copied by unscrupulous businesses wanting to make a quick profit from somebody else's hard work. Protecting your work with a paper trail is increasingly important, especially when designs can be discovered and reproduced quickly and at scale.

We have partnered with the patent agent Barker Brettell to develop Copywatch – a copyright deposit scheme available to all NAJ designer members. Members can submit up to 25 designs for free per year and receive a certification of registration.

As a member, you can benefit from an additional layer of protection in case of design fraud and infringement. Although it is not a legal document, our deposit system offers clear evidence of the existence of your design on a specific date, as well as information on when it was first available for purchase. This creates an audit trail if you need to pursue a matter related to your design.

To download the Copywatch forms, visit our member benefits page and search 'design protection' – www.naj.co.uk/benefits

For further intellectual property advice, our IP partners, RWK Goodman, offer members a free 20-minute assessment, followed by up to three hours of consultation at a discounted rate of £150 per hour.

Show business

As many pages of this issue attest, we are fast approaching trade show season. Whether you're a retailer looking for next year's must-have jewellery or a supplier promoting your latest collection, the autumn industry trade fairs are a great way to both discover and be seen.

This autumn, between buying group events and the larger industry-wide shows, there are more opportunities than ever to buy and sell. Thanks to our close relationships with the major UK and international trade shows, members can take advantage of exhibitor discounts, making attending such events a more cost-effective proposition. The NAJ has exclusive arrangements with many of the largest domestic trade shows, including Spring and Autumn Fair, The Jewellery Show, Pure London and Scotland's Trade Fair, with generous discounted rates available to all NAJ members.

Check out our jewellery calendar to see all upcoming events in the UK and further afield, www.naj.co.uk/whats-on



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NAJ Summit Success

Yes, we say this every time... but if you weren't at the NAJ Summit in Birmingham this summer, you really did miss out!

Our annual conference, the NAJ Summit, was a hit with attendees and organisers as jewellery professionals gathered for an extended weekend in June to learn and connect.

Bringing together all sectors of the jewellery trade, the Association welcomed over 300 eager and engaged attendees to the Park Regis Hotel, Birmingham. With a new, more accessible venue and a revised programme, the Summit's refinements were warmly received. At this year's Valuers' Conference, hosted by the Institute of Registered Valuers, international experts – including CIBJO President Dr Gaetano Cavalieri – shared their wisdom and stories.

On the second day, delegates attended a packed schedule of workshops and masterclasses, delving into everything from CAD software and valuing pearls to hunting gemstones in Afghanistan. Finally, a lively diamond panel discussion brought together senior figures from both sides of the natural and laboratory-grown debate.

On Sunday evening, guests mingled in the curated Supplier Showcase during the drinks reception, followed by the presentation of NAJ Awards (p.10) ... then party! On Monday, business leaders joined the Retail Jewellers' Congress, hosted by the JET Business Network, for talks and interactive sessions.

"The NAJ team has carefully considered all aspects of the event, from top to bottom, to ensure the best possible experience for delegates," says NAJ CEO Ben Massey. "Given the positive feedback over the three days, it's clear these changes have been welcomed," he says. "We look forward to continuing these improvements for 2024 and thank everyone, from attendees and speakers to sponsors, who generously gave their time and knowledge, and without whom the Summit wouldn't be possible."

The Valuers' Conference

The two-day programme broadens attendees' knowledge and expertise, whether valuers or not. On Saturday, we kicked off with the **Main Presentations**, each one as attention-holding and inspiring as the next.

The first speaker, **Richard Drucker**, publisher of the GemGuide, outlined historical gem pricing for 40 years and beyond. His whistlestop tour took in nomenclature, beryllium diffusion and opinion on origin. He also looked at current gem trends, such as responsible sourcing, traceability, sustainability, certificates and, of course, prices themselves.

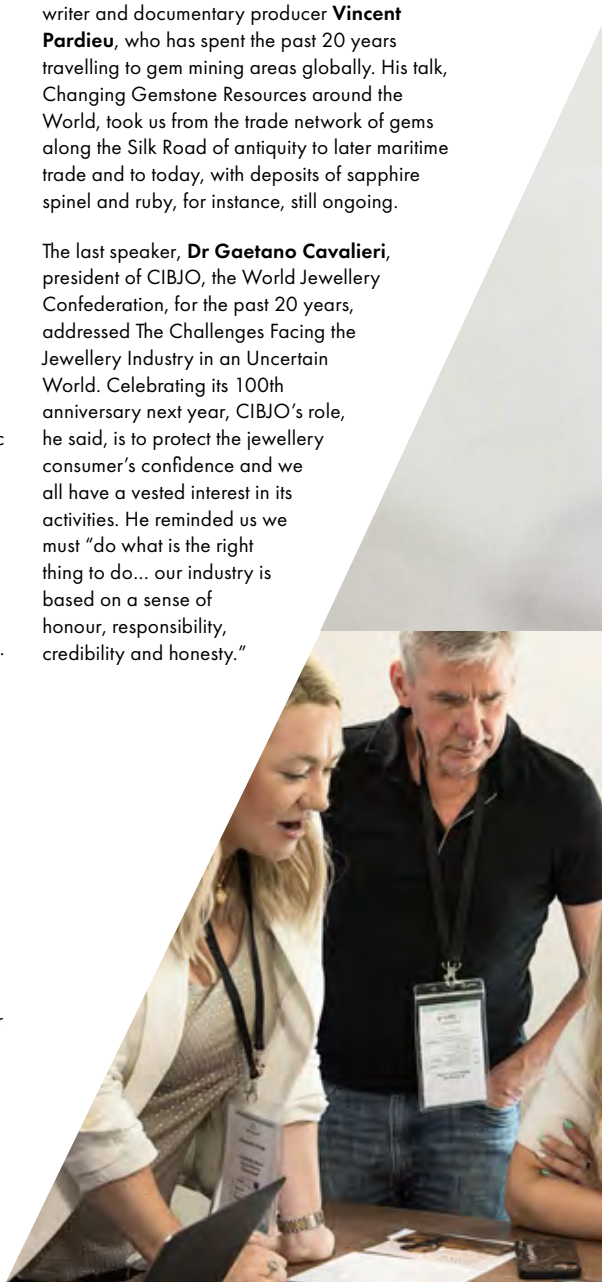
Craig O'Donnell BA, FGA SafeGuard jewellery valuer, silver specialist and curator of the Birmingham Assay Office, romped through Styles of Jewellery from 1800 to the 1930s. Explaining that 1880 saw the widening appeal of gemmology and is regarded as the beginning of modern jewellery, his talk led us from the Aesthetic Movement, Gothic Revival, Art Nouveau, Arts & Crafts, Garland Style, the different aspects of Art Deco and finished with the jewellery-world-changing invention of cultured pearls.

Bonhams' **Emily Barber**, jewellery director and **Jonathan Darracott**, global head of watches (and watchmaker) shared tales from auction sales. The jewellery market at auction is booming (worth $1bn) thanks to the internet, buyers not just being collectors, the market for antique jewellery being strong and prices having jumped. Images of notable sales accompanied the data. The current market leader for auctioning watches, with 25 years of watch experience, Jonathan described influences on sales, from rarity and provenance, to condition, complications and the modern Rolex factor. Italians, it turns out, are the biggest drivers in the watch-collector market.

'What does the origin of a gemstone teach us?' asked gemmologist and educator **Beth West**. Her passionate talk explained how geological origin and geographical location became conflated, origin became construed as fact and how microscopic analysis gives key information on origin. Tectonic plate theory illustrates how trace elements and inclusion features can make it hard to determine where a stone came from. Fascinating!

Picking up this theme was field gemmologist, writer and documentary producer **Vincent Pardieu**, who has spent the past 20 years travelling to gem mining areas globally. His talk, Changing Gemstone Resources around the World, took us from the trade network of gems along the Silk Road of antiquity to later maritime trade and to today, with deposits of sapphire spinel and ruby, for instance, still ongoing.

The last speaker, **Dr Gaetano Cavalieri**, president of CIBJO, the World Jewellery Confederation, for the past 20 years, addressed The Challenges Facing the Jewellery Industry in an Uncertain World. Celebrating its 100th anniversary next year, CIBJO's role, he said, is to protect the jewellery consumer's confidence and we all have a vested interest in its activities. He reminded us we must "do what is the right thing to do... our industry is based on a sense of honour, responsibility, credibility and honesty."



Masterclasses and Workshops

Giving a taster of just a few of the hands-on sessions and study groups, three satisfied delegates report back:

Rupert Huddy: Hallmarks – Help or hindrance? Relevance and identification. Fake or forgery?

To begin, Rupert defined the terminology for identifying silver (from *An Illustrated Dictionary of Jewellery* by Harold Newman):

Original: the real thing

Fake: a genuine article altered or added to for the purpose of enhancing its market value

Reproduction: a close copy of a genuine article made with no intention to deceive

Forgery: an article made to falsely represent, its value dependant mainly on the workmanship, age and/or materials it imitates

Grey area: during the colonial period, when demand for British-made silverware outstripped the supply from Britain, colonial silversmiths copied the marks of British-made items for the local market.

Once those definitions were understood, we received 21 pieces of silverware and jewellery to identify, using the marks on each piece, which categories they belonged to. This was much harder than it sounds (I got a very low six out of 21!).

Many items had marks I'd never seen, such as Bureau of Indian Standard marks and Safeguard marks, which can be misleading. Copies of British hallmarks by the colonial silversmiths, while never intended to deceive, become more deceptive as time goes by. There were poorly stamped marks, overstruck or double struck marks, foreign marks in non-British standard places and some with no marks at all.

This eye-opening workshop revealed practices of past times and of modern crooks and con artists and the lengths they go to for an easy profit. A very hands-on, informative workshop, it highlighted the lack of awareness of non-standard hallmarks, and how easy it is to misread what's right in front of your eyes.

Jules Proctor, Biagio the Jewellers







Richard Drucker: Coloured Gem Grading and Pricing Workshop

Having attended several Summits since starting my registered valuer studies, I've found the workshops and masterclasses to be wide and varied. It's difficult to pick the ones to take – they all look so interesting.

This year, Richard Drucker's topped my list. While most of my work involves diamonds, coloured stones still feature heavily and, in recent years, have become even more prominent, so making sure I'm fully up to date on how to grade and price them is always important.

Richard's knowledge and passion for his subject came across from the start. The workshop was well prepared, with equipment and materials laid out, so we could fully use the time learning and gaining new skills. After an informative overview and detailed step-by-step guide of how to use the World of Colour Chart and GemGuide, Richard gave tips and tricks for using them in a practical everyday environment. Each segment of learning was interspersed with demonstrations, which made taking the information on board much easier.

After the session, Richard generously answered further questions and explained where we could find more information. During the class, I'd fully refreshed myself on grading and pricing coloured stones and certainly learnt some new skills – particularly in pricing fine and extra-fine stones. I'd highly recommend this workshop to any valuer or jeweller.

Seth Solomons, Solomons & Rose

Sammantha Maclachlan: Identifying Synthetic and Simulant Materials Using Standard Testing Equipment

Despite being a last-minute addition to the conference, this was a very well-presented workshop, with a large selection of materials to view. After an informative presentation with very detailed images of the telltale signs of treatments and synthetics, we examined these using stones Sam had brought. Using standard gemmological testing equipment and microscopes, we had almost every type of synthetic gemstone to study – think hydrothermal emeralds and verneuil flame fusion corundum. There were also a great many treated stones, including beryllium diffused padparadscha-type corundum and opal triplets.

This workshop was very useful – so often synthetic gem materials can be difficult to differentiate from their natural counterparts. It's extremely helpful to observe the inclusions that identify a synthetic material rather than just read about them or look at images, especially as many have very similar optical properties to their natural counterparts, making the inclusions the key to identification. Not being a registered valuer, I was surprised by how inexpensive these synthetic materials are, which highlighted the pitfalls of misidentifying them as natural gemstones.

Treated stones, such as glass-filled ruby and garnet-topped doublets with a clearly visible lustre difference on the surface and laser drilled diamonds, were quite easy to spot once we'd been told what to look for, and these treatments can affect materials' value drastically.

Jules Proctor, Biagio the Jewellers

Ken Massow: How to Spot Fake Watches the Easy Way

For those attending Ken's workshop, the opportunity for learning started ahead of the Summit – he provided a suite of handouts in advance, for use during the session and as supplementary reference material afterwards. During the session, those with some knowledge of watches partnered with those who had little to none. In this way, the watch novices (like me) could feel more confident about handling the timepieces Ken brought with him.

We focused on watches from the inside out and began with a slide presentation to learn some components of watch movements: basics, bridges and cocks, then free sprung balances and regulators. We learned to identify the components in luxury watch movements and those that are not.

Next, we turned our attention to a real-life watch. To help us identify the telltale components that do not belong inside a luxury timepiece but are present in fakes, Ken sent around a watch movement with the parts neatly colour coded.

Armed with our loupes and this new knowledge, we worked through the assortment of watches brought for inspection – examples from Rolex, Chopard, AP, to name a few. As we worked, he described the valuer's correct process, step-by-step, when working with any client's watch for valuation, up to and including the point of considering the need to open a watch. We also heard, critically, when we should absolutely not open the back of a luxury timepiece – also vital information for any valuer.

The attendees at the workshop benefitted from Ken's expertise in and passion for the subject and went away having learned a great deal.

Shelley Keating FGA DGA, gemmologist and valuer









Retail Jewellers' Congress

Hosted by the JET Business Network (JBN), the Congress, which celebrates its 14th year, brought jewellery retailers together for a series of talks, panel discussions and exercises to advance businesses with actionable advice and inspiring experts. This year's theme was Attract and Retain – Customers and Team. On page 62, JBN facilitator Michael Donaldson follows up speaker Rebecca Robins' theme of Attracting, Recruiting and Retaining Staff.

Others giving presentations and sessions were Heather Horton, Ecrubox; Phil Rush, Heteronomics; DS Vanessa Eyles, West Midlands Police and West Midlands Cyber Resilience Centre; Mark Sandum, JBN member, and Michael Donaldson, who shared headlines from a recent JBN Marketing Expenditure survey.

"The JBN Congress was a great success – how do I know? The delegates and speakers told me so!" Michael says.

"We apply the golden rule of business every time we plan and deliver Congress: listen to your customers (delegates) and engage your suppliers (speakers). Together, they made Congress 2023 a success, and the exit feedback from both was brilliant."

"A well-organised insightful day, reigniting my motivation to return to the business and apply my newfound knowledge and skills."

Will Powell

"Wish I had joined the JBN sooner. I have gained so much and have enjoyed my first Congress."

Jackie Benson

"The JBN Congress should be in every retail jeweller's diary if they are serious about improving their business."

Ian Cookson

"It's wonderful to have the opportunity to sit down with other members of our industry and to build each other up, support each other and nurture our businesses; to share and learn from each other."

Alexis Dove

"An excellent, inspiring day, as always. Even the presentations I thought might be boring were very interesting. Great to have such a varied day."

Nicola Vern

"JBN is indispensable for our business, and Congress is a pivotal part of this process."

Oliver Welch







Photography: John Owen



Diamond panel at the NAJ Summit

Natural and synthetic diamonds – you pays your money...

Laboratory-grown diamonds continue to provide endless trade discussion and deliberation. An update on the market throws some light on the subject.

Diamond Panel Discussion

Held during this summer's NAJ Summit and hosted by Valuers' Conference committee member Dr Richard Taylor FIRV, the diamond panel discussion provided a market update for both natural and synthetic diamonds and gave delegates the chance to learn, educate, debate and challenge.

The panellists included CIBJO president Dr Gaetano Cavalieri; Lisa Levinson, the Natural Diamond Council (NDC); Joanna Park-Tonks president of International Grown Diamond Association (IGDA) and Howard Levine, managing director of Diamnet, who works with both natural and laboratory-grown diamonds. It was a lively discussion on what is clearly an emotive and commercially important topic.

Under scrutiny was promoting both types of diamonds in the right way; the decrease in value of laboratory-grown diamonds; whether a diamond report is a commoditisation certificate; the pollution of fraudulently mixing natural and laboratory-grown diamonds; how to eliminate misuse; reliance on trust; using correct terminology; steering clear of the ethical argument; avoiding confrontation between natural and laboratory-grown diamonds and, ultimately, protecting the consumer.



The Natural Diamond Council busts industry myths

Earlier this year, the NDC issued an analytical report – Diamond Facts: Addressing myths and misconceptions about the diamond industry – to address misinformation about both natural diamonds and laboratory-grown diamonds. The report tackles common misconceptions about the diamond industry, for example:

Laboratory-grown diamonds can be detected from natural diamonds

- All laboratory-grown diamonds can be detected using professional verification instruments
- Mass-produced in just a few weeks, unlike the billions of years it takes for a natural diamond to form under the Earth's surface, laboratory-grown diamonds exhibit specific growth-related features and patterns

Not all laboratory-grown diamonds are sustainable

- Laboratory-grown diamonds replicate the natural diamond creation process, which requires a mass amount of electricity, mostly from the national grid
- Over 60 per cent of laboratory-grown diamonds are mass-produced in China and India where 63 per cent and 74 per cent of grid electricity comes from coal
- The manufacturing of laboratory-grown diamonds can require temperatures similar to 20 per cent of the temperature of the Sun's surface

Laboratory-grown diamonds have experienced significant price depreciation in recent years.

- From 2016 to 2023, the average price of a 1.5ct laboratory-grown diamond has decreased by over 74 per cent
- While the natural diamond prices have also fluctuated, over the last 35 years, on average, they have risen by 3 per cent per annum

Natural diamonds benefit the countries from which they originate – the industry supports 10m people worldwide.

- Up to 80 per cent of rough diamond value remains with local communities in local purchasing, employment benefits, social programmes, investment in infrastructure as well as the taxes, royalties and dividends paid from the industry to respective governments
- For NDC members, 85 per cent of all procurement is local
- In Canada, the natural diamond industry contributes to 24 per cent of total GDP in the Northwest Territories, $17bn went toward (NWT) businesses and $7.5bn to Indigenous owned (NWT) businesses

These findings derive from a thorough review of a wide range of secondary research conducted by globally respected third-party organisations. Industry experts and independent sustainability advisors were also consulted on the topics covered.

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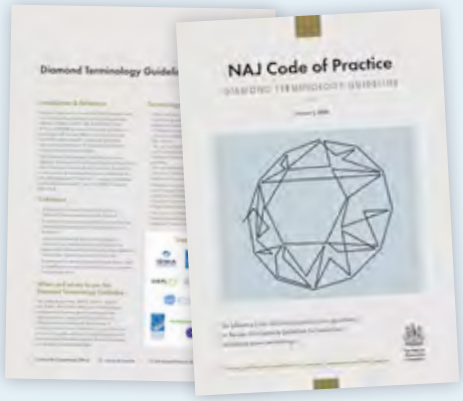
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NAJ Code of Practice – Diamond Terminology Guideline

The NAJ and nine of the leading diamond industry organisations (AWDC, CIBJO, GJEPC, IDI, IDMA, NDC, RJC, WDC and WFDB) endorses the present guideline to encourage full, fair and effective use of a clear and accessible terminology for diamonds, synthetic diamonds and imitations of diamonds by all sector bodies, organisations and traders. This guideline serves as a reference document for the diamond and jewellery trade when referring to diamonds and synthetic diamonds. It is built on two internationally accepted standards: the ISO 18323 Standard (Jewellery – Consumer confidence in the diamond industry) and the CIBJO Diamond Blue Book.

Definitions

- A **diamond** is a mineral created by nature and always means a natural diamond
- A **synthetic diamond** is an artificial product with the same physical characteristics as a diamond
- An **imitation diamond**, also named a **diamond simulant**, is an artificial product that imitates the appearance of diamonds without having their chemical composition, physical properties or structure

Terminology

- When referring to synthetic diamonds, use an authorised qualifier: synthetic, laboratory-grown or laboratory-created. Do not use abbreviations, such as lab-grown or lab-created
- Do not refer to cultured diamonds and cultivated diamonds, which are exclusively for organic/biogenic products
- Do not use real, genuine, precious, authentic or natural as they apply exclusively to natural minerals and gemstones (a diamond is natural by definition)

View diamond terminology guideline: **https://www.naj.co.uk/Advice/Buying-Diamonds**

The Gem Academy Report – the laboratory-grown diamond industry

This three-part report offers key insights into the important elements of laboratory-grown diamonds: volume, size, quality, shape and price. They give a clear overview of the laboratory-grown diamonds that have entered the wholesale market in spring 2023.

These reports use multiple resources and focus on 300,000 stones and data from one major online wholesaler. Here are some highlights from reports one and two.

- There are 329,450 laboratory-grown diamonds on one major wholesale platform
- Most laboratory-grown diamonds listed on wholesale platforms weigh over 1ct
- The most common size range for laboratory-grown diamonds is 1.00-1.99ct. This size range accounts for approximately 40 per cent of laboratory-grown diamonds on the wholesale market (excluding melee)
- There are 47,000 laboratory-grown diamonds weighing 3ct and over. This is three times more than the number of natural diamonds above 3ct
- There were 586 laboratory-grown 10ct+ diamonds recorded on a different wholesale platform in mid-March 2023. In 2015, only one laboratory-grown diamond above 10ct existed
- HPHT and CVD production are responsible for near equal numbers below 1ct weight. Of all the 10ct+ stones, the vast majority are CVD produced
- The qualities of laboratory-grown diamonds are increasing every year. 65 per cent of laboratory-grown diamonds are equivalent to D-E-F colour grades
- Most CVD laboratory-grown diamonds are treated post-growth to remove colour (from brown to more colourless)
- 90 per cent of all laboratory-grown diamonds on the wholesale market have a clarity grade equivalent to VS and above. The most common is VS1
- The most common shape available is round brilliant, followed by oval and pear cuts

CIBJO and International Grown Diamond Association collaborate to protect consumer confidence

The World Jewellery Confederation (CIBJO) and the International Grown Diamond Association (IGDA) have agreed to work together to protect consumer confidence in both jewellery products and the jewellery industry, by developing transparent standards, operating principles and terminology. On 25th June, during the NAJ Summit, the agreement was formalised, as a Memorandum of Understanding, signed by CIBJO president Gaetano Cavalieri and Joanna Park-Tonks, president of IGDA.

As part of the agreement, IGDA, represented by Ms. Park-Tonks, will become a member of CIBJO's Laboratory Grown Diamond Committee. The committee, chaired by Wesley Hunt of De Beers, has developed a Laboratory Grown Diamond Guidance document, with the goal of defining universal trading and handling practices for laboratory-grown diamonds, safeguarding their identity and enabling consumers to make informed purchasing decisions.

"We're delighted to formalise IGDA's association with CIBJO and the work we do," said Dr Cavalieri. "We have had open lines of communication for some time already, and IGDA participated in the public review before we released the Laboratory Grown Diamond Guidance document in 2021. Over the past several years, the laboratory-grown diamonds sector has grown into a large and a prominent part of our industry, and we all have a vested interest in each other's success. That definitely will be enhanced by having the IGDA as a permanent part of the discussion and the decision-making process."

"IGDA is thrilled to be so warmly welcomed by Dr Cavalieri, and we'd also like to thank the committee chair, Mr Wesley Hunt, for his deep industry insight, diplomacy and expertise," said Ms. Park-Tonks. "This sends a clear signal to the global jewellery industry to set personal agendas and egos aside, placing the consumer and their best interests at the heart of our work. We all agree that a strategy of deriding natural diamonds or laboratory-grown diamond products is not conducive to consumer understanding of either sector. Together we're stronger, and we jointly acknowledge the necessity of communicating clearly, honestly and transparently."

"We are sensitive to the issues of greenwashing, which can mislead consumers about the environmental impacts of LGDs, where these claims are not substantiated by evidence," said Vivien Johnston Glass, IGDA's sustainability chair. "In aligning on how we present sustainability accurately and uniting to deliver a better future for planet and people, we can maximise the positive impacts in the jewellery industry and build strong consumer trust in laboratory-grown diamonds."



Joanna Park-Tonks, IGDA and Dr Gaetano Cavalieri, CIBJO

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A brilliant career

Alan Cohen, the president of the London Diamond Bourse (LDB) talks all things diamond with Belinda Morris.



Please describe your diamond business career.

My diamond journey started in South Africa almost 50 years ago where I learnt to sort both polished and rough diamonds. I worked as a diamond broker until I moved to the UK in 1974, when I set up my own trading company. I became a member of the London Diamond Club in 1974 and the Bourse in 1976, (they merged in 1993) and I've been a member throughout.

Over the years, I travelled and lived all over the world, seeking new opportunities to buy and sell diamonds. In early 1990, I was offered an opportunity to work in Russia, which I eagerly took. That led me on an amazing 16-year journey that took me from working for someone to owning and running my own diamond polishing factories. This lasted till 2006 when I left Russia and returned to the UK. Looking back, I'm grateful for the opportunities the industry has given me. It's been a fascinating and rewarding journey.

Has anyone had a major influence on your career?

Interesting question. I've met many of the greats in the diamond business, but Milos Vainer probably had the greatest influence on me. He was the Indiana Jones of the diamond world, with stories of water-skiing across the Congo River to see a rough diamond in Brazzaville when there was no other transport to get from Kinshasa, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to Brazzaville in the Republic of the Congo. He was incredibly knowledgeable about diamonds.

He was the first government valuer for Botswana and was the government valuer for Australia and many other countries. He was always incredibly helpful and taught me much about rough diamonds. I was very fortunate to work and learn in his team in Angola in the mid 1980s. He passed away in 2008. Two of his sons, Richard and Martin, still run the business in London and abroad.

What are the major changes you have seen in the diamond industry – and in the LDB – over the years?

The major change over the last 50 years has been the shift of the manufacturing industry from its centres in South Africa, Belgium and the USA to India. Before the turn of the century, the bulk of the Indian polished diamonds would have been melee and stars, now over 90 per cent of all diamonds, of all sizes, are polished in India. With the implementation of modern technology, planning and polishing rough diamonds has changed the manufacturing side completely.

As far as the LDB is concerned, the bourse, in the past, was very insular – most of the trading was dealer to dealer. We still trade among ourselves, but as a bourse we try to enable all our members to trade more easily everywhere. We give them access to the latest gem-testing equipment, LightBox photography equipment, regular shipments to the GIA and the DeBeers Laboratory and WhatsApp groups for buying and selling margin items or sourcing items.

One of the strongest reasons for becoming a member is the depth of knowledge among our members and the opportunity to draw on this knowledge. There are experts in all fields of the trade.

Did you have specific aims when you took on the LDB presidency and have you achieved them?

My only aim was to represent the bourse as well as I could on the international stage and to try to modernise it domestically. To a greater or lesser extent, with a lot of help from our COO and the council, I think I have achieved what I set out to do. This will be my last year as president; I will step down in May next year.

Laboratory-grown diamonds have clearly altered the diamond landscape. What is your view of them?

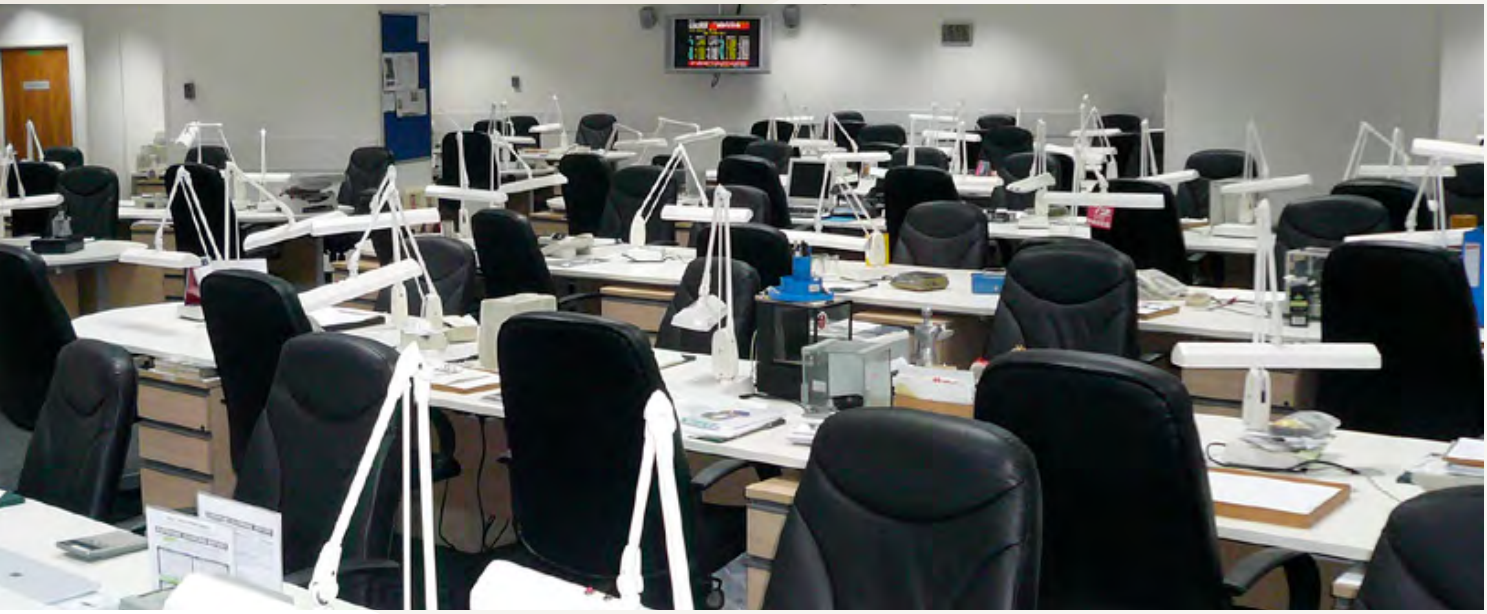
From the outset of synthetic diamonds coming on to the market, I made it quite clear that as long as the seller declared it was a laboratory-grown product, I had no problem with it. We have traders in laboratory-grown diamonds in the LDB.

I think they should be in the costume jewellery aisle, but I can fully understand why people are dealing with them – it comes down to one word: profit. During these challenging economic times, synthetics give jewellers a chance to make a good margin.

The wholesale price of synthetic diamonds is tumbling – I don't think this is reflected in the retail price yet, but as the stockpile gets larger, the urge to move the goods will be reflected and the price will drop. There is also the false sense of making a profit that has to be questioned. I'm reminded of a sign I saw many years ago in a large diamond dealers office: 'Doing turnover with no profit is like eating soup with a fork, it keeps you busy but you stay hungry.'

What are the most pressing challenges the diamond/jewellery industry faces currently? And what do you see people in your position contending with in five years?

There are many challenges. Consumer confidence is crucial for the industry. There's a greater demand for ethically sourced diamonds and gemstones, which puts pressure on the



London Diamond Bourse trading floor

industry to ensure responsible mining practices and supply-chain transparency. Consumers are becoming more aware of the environmental and social impact of their purchases. It's one of the reasons I'm a strong proponent of the World Diamond Council's Updated System of Warranties.

Another problem facing the industry is regulatory compliance. Compliance requires significant efforts and resources, which can be particularly difficult for small businesses. This is one of the reasons it's become very difficult to open bank accounts for new businesses and a number of established businesses have had their accounts closed. Our business – diamond/jewellery/precious stones – is flagged in the banking sector. And even after talking to the compliance departments in the banks, we're unsure what we need to do to fix this.

And looking forward five years, I turn to Niels Bohr: 'Prediction is very difficult, especially about the future.'

I think in the short-term, traceability in diamonds will be the biggest problem until rational thought brings it round to provenance being of equal value. But, of course, I could be completely wrong. There's also the problem of unintended consequences; the supply chain is extremely complicated, and any small decision made by one country can drastically affect the livelihood of people in another country.

How does the LDB work with the World Diamond Council (WDC)?

Since 2003, all members of the diamond sector must, by law, make a statement on their invoice regarding the source of their diamonds – UN resolution 55/56 on Conflict Diamonds as defined by the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme – System of Warranties (SoW). The WDC represents the diamond trade in the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. It has three executive officers and 20 board members (four for each sector of the trade: Extraction, Manufacturing, Wholesale, Retail and At Large*).

I sit as one of the board members, representing the World Federation of Diamond Bourses (WFDB). The WDC has updated the SoW to take into account labour laws, human rights, anti-money laundering and anti-corruption and is working in the Kimberley Process to get the definition of conflict diamonds broadened. The updated SoW will become mandatory within the next three years for polished diamonds and one year for rough diamonds.

We urge our members to register now and update their warranty statement.

**At Large sector has three permanent seats appointed by their organisations: World Federation of Diamond Bourses, International Diamond Manufacturers Association, World Jewellery Confederation (CIBJO) plus one other free choice member to be elected by the WDC members*

How can NAJ members access and use the London Diamond Bourse?

The only way they could access the bourse is for them to become members. We have tiers of membership, the highest being a full-time, five-days-a-week seat in the bourse and two lower levels of three days a week and one day a week access to the trading floor. We also have a tier with no access to the trading floor but use of the private viewing rooms and invitations to join in many of the events we arrange for the members. Along with running polished diamond education courses, we hope to start a new course on rough diamonds very shortly. We're also starting a mentorship programme for those wanting to enter the industry. More information is at www.londondiamondbourse.com or email info@londondiamondbourse.com

> "One of the strongest reasons for becoming a member is the depth of knowledge among our members and the opportunity to draw on this knowledge. There are experts in all fields of the trade.
>
> **Alan Cohen, president of the London Diamond Bourse (LDB)**



Testing machines at the bourse



The Jewellery Show 2023



In its second year, this premium trade event for retailers, buyers, manufacturers, designers and suppliers of fine jewellery returns to ExCeL London 20th and 21st September 2023.

The Jewellery Show is an international hub for fine, luxury, silver and contemporary designer jewellery, as well as loose precious stones and retail technology and solutions. Over 100 leading national and international suppliers will be exhibiting. Approved attendees will also have a seminar programme covering the latest trends, challenges and opportunities in the sector.

Among the new features at the show will be the New Designer exhibition of designer jewellery with a contemporary twist. The Podium will display fresh pieces from young businesses throughout the show, and at the Bullion Bar, visitors can network over a complimentary drink.

In the Innovation Theatre, the conference programme introduces industry thought leaders, who will share sector updates, trends, best practices and solutions and practical ideas businesses can adopt. Among the topics for discussion:

- precious metals – a market outlook
- laboratory-grown diamonds outlook and trends
- greenwashing and new legislation
- natural diamonds outlook and trends
- how AI will drive the future of the jewellery industry
- highlights of magnificent jewels sales







SARAH ALEXANDER JEWELLERY

This large collection of 925 silver and high-end gemstone jewellery will include new pieces focusing on current trends for chunky chains, mixed metal and statement rings. Expect a wide selection of natural gemstones – malachite, amazonite, larimar, violet jade, carnelian, lapis jade and rhodochrosite. New matching necklace, bracelet and earrings sets use rough cut gem beads. The colour palette blends greens with aquamarines and blue tones, peaches, pinks and creams, orange and sienna with blue, and soft violets with strong purple.

TVRRINI

This fine jewellery brand, founded by mother and daughter Bibi and Katerina, comprises sculptural jewels inspired by Mediterranean and Asian cultures, drawing elements from mythology, the natural world and art masterpieces. The new Regal Fantasy collection features whimsical jewellery resembling fairy-tale characters that juxtapose an organic look. Each meticulously detailed silver piece has coloured gemstones decorating its textured surfaces.





HERBERT MARX

A leading manufacturer/importer and wholesaler of gold, diamond, gemstone and pearl jewellery, Herbert Marx has extensive core collections, a recent addition to which is a handmade gold and silver chain collection of 200-plus styles in various sizes and lengths. Its gold earrings are a staple every jewellery and gift business should stock for their timeless appeal and popularity.

TI SENTO MILANO

Light up the Darkness is a very commercial collection that echoes the celestial beauty of the cosmos – inspired by the sky, stars and moon and celebrating the freedom of self-expression. A new hexagonal shape for AW23 incorporates either created malachite, pearl and amethyst details or mother-of-pearl, nude and white CZ. This shape symbolises majesty, wisdom, love and harmony, with a variety of rings, bracelets, necklaces, pendants, earrings and ear-charms in the family.



DONNS

The Manchester-based family-run business approaching its 130th year in the jewellery trade will be launching a new range of coloured stone and diamond jewellery set in both 9ct and 18ct gold, with an increased emphasis on yellow gold. Many of the new styles will feature matching pendants, earrings and rings, from the traditional to more modern designs, with prices starting at £150.



ANGEL WHISPERER from Engelsrufer

Jewellery created to protect and accompany the wearer's life journey – lucky charms to give strength, trust and love. These unique products are elaborately handcrafted in 925 sterling silver and rhodium plated. Collections are also available in 9ct yellow gold,18ct rose and yellow gold plated and stainless steel.



LOX @ Goodman Bros ^

The new Colour Collection combines a vibrant range of colours with Lox's renowned earring-back locking technology. The collection comes in a two-pair pack, and acrylic point of sale displays arrive with first orders. Also new are LOX Precious Metal earring backs – 24ct gold or palladium plating over sterling silver and stainless steel, perfect for fine earrings and presented in a bespoke one-pair box.

LA PERLE BLANCHE >

Established in 1987, this pearl company caters to high-end jewellers, with a collection of pearl earrings, pendants and rings and over 200 models of pearl clasps in plain gold, diamond set and silver. A full range of freshwater, Akoya, Tahitian and South Sea pearls is available in strands and loose pearls, as well as pearl findings like rondelles, bars and inserts. Nucleated freshwater pearls are an accessible alternative, as are on-trend silver necklaces, blending freshwater pearls with gemstones.



PERMA JEWEL @ Goodman Bros >

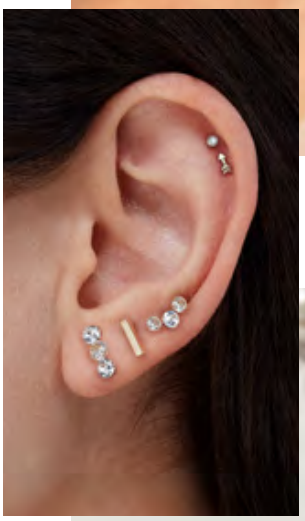
Discover Goodman Bros' new service – welded permanent jewellery in precious metals. Offering the permanent jewellery service will drive footfall, attract new customers and increase revenue. The process is quick, easy, non-invasive and painless. Goodman Bros provides

- the pulse-arc welding machine (with full training and support)
- quality chain in a variety of styles and metals
- add-on charms in assorted metals
- shop-in-shop furnishings
- marketing material



INVERNESS PIERCING @ Goodman Bro >

A standout feature of the Inverness piercing system is its emphasis on safety. The system uses single-use pre-sterilised cartridges for each piercing, eliminating the risk of cross-contamination and ensuring a sterile environment for every client. This protects the health and wellbeing of customers and instils confidence and trust. Inverness is offering jewellers a free piercing business set-up worth over £400.







GEORGIA WANG <

By simulating the sensation of magma flow, Georgia's design incorporates hues of gold, black and silver to depict the diverse rocks that crystallise during the eruption and cooling of underground magma. The spinel enclosed in metal symbolises the rarity of stones that form in molten magma.

LONDON PEARL ^

With the price of Japanese Akoya and South Sea pearls skyrocketing, London Pearl is benefitting from its large stock and offering a very wide selection of loose pearls at the show, as well as 18ct and 9ct gold and silver jewellery. It says the extreme multicolour range sells faster than the business can produce the necklaces.



ILONA BIGGINS <

Ilona Biggins is a UK-based supplier of good quality coloured gemstone beads and freshwater pearls for the jewellery industry, designers and craft market. The 30-year-old family-run business is happy to source unusual items for customers. It sources all the beads and pearls directly from the factories and farms in China – and the buyers have recently returned from a buying trip. There will be lots of new beads, plus old favourites, at the show.



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DEIL JOSEPH <

The Milanese company presents its new collection of rings and bracelets, all handmade in Italy in 18ct white, yellow and rose gold and set with natural diamonds, natural emeralds, natural multicolour sapphires and other natural-coloured gemstones.

DKM ⌄

Daniel Kennedy-Martin will launch his new UK-made contemporary menswear fine jewellery brand. It uses recycled 18ct gold, silver and vitreous enamel, fusing CAD/CAM production technologies with traditional benchwork for boldly masculine, retro-futuristic pieces. Kennedy-Martin has received a bronze, silver and gold award for 2D jewellery design at the Goldsmiths Craft and Design Council Awards. Besides his own collection, he is design director for Mazi+Zo NYC.





TISH LYON >

The body jewellery brand will launch 70-plus new designs, including space- and retro-inspired pieces of 14ct solid gold threadless attachments, for initial and upgraded piercing curations. The ranges will be even more accessible with perfected bundle sets – making piercing upgrades and ear styling easy for businesses and customers. All bundles have information for buyers and POS educational material to help customers find what they need for their piercings. Tish Lyon will also launch the new website, designed for retailers and piercers.



LUCY QUARTERMAINE <

Lucy Quartermaine will unveil its Jewellery Style Quiz to retailers – quick, fun and easy to take, it lets the jewellery choose the wearer. The new line highlights simplicity and clean symmetrical lines, drawing attention to the quality and movement of the pieces of silver and gold vermeil. Expect also an update on the brand's relationship with the Ripple Africa charity and how the partnership has supported regeneration and sustainability – together they've planted 15,000-plus trees in Malawi already and will add more in the coming months.



RE MORRISH >

This family-run British jewellery manufacturer – with over 7,000 creations – specialises in antique reproduction pieces, from Roman to Art Deco periods and many more styles, including gents signet rings, solid patterns, CZ ranges, Celtic and contemporary. Its workshops in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter make everything.





CLARITY JEWELLERY ^

This manufacturer of contemporary and vintage style platinum and 18ct gold jewellery – with new ranges launched for spring and autumn – will showcase suites comprising rings, earrings, pendants, bangles, bracelets and necklaces. As well as a choice of three diamond qualities, Clarity's pieces are set with top-quality gemstones – predominantly sapphire, ruby and emerald. Bespoke services are available.



BREUNING <

Since 1927, Breuning has built its reputation for fine pieces of jewellery in gold – set with diamonds and gemstones, such as these new sets. The oval, which curves slightly inwards, is on a bed of emeralds. The intensity of the deep green gemstone harmonises with the yellow gold in 14ct, underlined by diamonds. A set in red gold features gemstones and diamonds, arranged to create an exciting gradient.

SIF JAKOBS ^

The striking Ellisse and Ellisse Carezza collections are the highlight of the Sif Jakobs' new stories. Ellisse showcases styles designed around the elliptical shape – luxurious rings, sophisticated earrings with coloured zirconia and elegant bracelets with delicate design details. Also new is Felline Concavo, a revival of the Felline line, with a concave profile and, for the first time, a play on gradients and delicate tones using blue and white zirconia stones.

COEUR DE LION ^

Coeur de Lion promises fresh and powerful colours. Bold magenta, cool blue, subtle apricot and a range of greens create a feel-good palette that exudes joie de vivre. And the elegant design in bicolour, classic black and with sophisticated fresh-water pearls adds a touch of glamour for all occasions.

The Jewellery Show – need to know

20th to 21st September 2023
Opening times: 20th 9am to 5pm
21st 9am to 4pm

ExCeL London

Free to attend for trade professionals

https://www.thejewelleryshow.co.uk/NAJ

Forging Ahead in Hatton Garden

Not content with having a successful jewellery design and making business, Amanda Mansell wanted something more – not purely for herself, but for the wider industry. Earlier this year, she founded FORGE.

"I'd been involved – along with Gary Williams at Mastermelt – in various Hatton Garden initiatives, such as the Council and the BID, to put Hatton Garden on the world stage. I also worked with other craftspeople on the first London Jewellery Week in 2010. I like connecting with people, and I like to be able to connect people." FORGE is the realisation of Amanda Mansell's passion.

Much more than the gallery-style shop that it might appear to passers-by in bustling Leather Lane, FORGE offers affordable co-working space for established and new artisans, jewellery making and skills improvement workshops for all levels and experiences, demonstrations, talks, networking, social events... and unique jewellery collections by independent designer-makers.

Bench space is available in membership packages, from annual memberships with the practitioner's own dedicated bench space to flexible packages giving access to the FORGE workshop and equipment by the month or even the hour. There are also pop-up retail packages in-store and online, for those just looking to showcase their work.

It's quite a lot to fit into what seems to be a fairly compact (OK, small) space – until you realise that Amanda's creativity extends to very clever interior design and inspired problem solving. What was once a rather dark and cramped home to an engraving business (now happily ensconced in larger premises along the road) is now two light, airy, spacious floors, purpose-built for various uses. Glass cabinets line the walls of the ground floor at the back of which is an open-plan mezzanine-level office space, complete with sofa.

The centre of the room – on my first visit – has an eight-person work bench and stools for classes and demonstrations. By the door is a long counter. So how does she find room for party people? No problem – all the furniture is on wheels, and the bench effortlessly slides through low double doors under the mezzanine, while the counter moves to the back of the room and becomes a drinks bar. Job done! "I had so many ideas for the space. How it looks is exactly how I visualised and designed it," Amanda says.

It was the vision and the potential of the space that kept her going in the lead up to the opening of FORGE. She came up with the concept around two years before Covid, and needless to say, the pandemic added to the challenge. A BID grant allowed her to re-fit the basement, giving affordable, impressively fully equipped co-working space, with nine benches and a meeting pod.

"Camden Council is very supportive of the jewellery industry," she explains, "but I then needed to raise the rest of the money to refurbish the ground floor." Eventually, after writing a comprehensive business plan, equity crowdfunding proved to be the solution. "It was very challenging – my vision and the potential kept me going."

That and sheer hard work and determination, plus, presumably, the encouraging support of the trade. Following an initial soft opening – a gem fair hosted by Stuart Pool of Nineteen48, during which Amanda met marketing and project manager Emma Perry, who offered help with the launch and jewellery presentations – FORGE has held monthly showcase events.

Each has a different theme: during May the space was part of the London Craft Week and Clerkenwell Design Week trails, with work by designers such as Susi Hines, Chris Boland, Daphne Krinos and Amanda herself occupying the FORGE cabinets.

In June, a recycling, sustainable theme allowed designers such as Deborah Beck, Bea Jareno and Sarah Ruddock to exhibit their work. As we go to press, a Great Outdoors theme is planned for July, followed by Forging Futures, which will welcome new designers, for August.

Unsurprisingly her enterprise has left Amanda with very little time to spend in her own workshop. "My business is on hold; there's too much to do here," she admits. "But I'm not missing it too much – there are so many creative opportunities here to keep me happy."

www.theforgespace.com



Forge workshop benches and store front





Amanda Mansell, left











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HAYES & LAKE >

Hayes & Lake will showcase laboratory-grown diamond jewellery and explain how "every jeweller can stock it as it stands on its own merits – laboratory-grown diamonds can be easily differentiated from natural diamonds. Lower prices mean the metal plays a more significant role in the price of our laboratory-grown diamond jewellery, removing the risk of stocking the product. The story and collateral of the line makes selling easy, without harming natural diamond sales." Also showing will be a new line of top-quality laboratory-grown coloured stones – blue sapphires, rubies and emeralds.

The UK Jewellery Festival 2023



Returning for its third year, the UK Jewellery Festival will be even bigger, now taking place over two days – 5th and 6th September 2023.

Held once again at the Hilton Metropole in West London, the Retail Jeweller-hosted show gives visitors the opportunity to view the latest collections and products from top jewellery and watch brands and suppliers in a relaxed environment.

They will also have access to content to help their business, plus the chance to catch up and network with other industry professionals – perhaps while enjoying the complimentary catering and Champagne reception at the end of the first day. The event is free for retailers and buyers and will finish with the prestigious UK Jewellery Awards on the 6th.

NTINGA ^

Ntinga will showcase a gemstone collection of statement dress rings with complementing gemstone and diamond double halo settings. Also new are three stone collections with pear shape, octagon sides and round sides set into rubover and claw settings. The interest in emerald, sapphire and ruby sees new designs set with these stones, while pinks, greens and bicolour are still popular. The company will also launch its new website.

ROTARY WATCHES >

The Commando range now includes the quartz Field watch, with its sandblasted case finish – stylish as well as practical. The dial is easy to read, with standout Arabic hour markers and miniature 24-hour numerals, plus an inner minute track. The durable 37mm stainless steel case is water resistant up to 100 meters, and it has four dial colours: black, white, matte green and matte cream.



THOMAS SABO CHARM CLUB <



The new As We Dream collection features aliens, UFOs, astronauts and rockets, taking its owners on a journey through the galaxy. Many of the intricately crafted 3D charms glow at night, and the attention to detail is in filigree engravings and movable elements in violet, gold, silver and dark blue. And spreading the Christmas spirit is the As We Enjoy collection, featuring stylised icing, gingerbread and candy canes.



THE BETTS GROUP <

(the Jewellery Festival headline sponsor)

The Betts family name has been linked with the precious metals industry since it was established in Birmingham in 1760, making the company the oldest refiner in the UK. One of its proudest achievements to date is Single Mine Origin – every ounce of its gold can be traced to specific mines, selected because they are accredited with the highest responsibility standards, while also providing vital social, environmental and cultural support to the communities they operate in. The Betts Group offers a wide range of services: metal refining, bullion trading and jewellery manufacturing supplies, diamond setting, polishing, metal casting and engraving.



RIVER MOUNTS ^

Alongside its Tiara and Vintage Bridal collections, River Mounts presents its Value range. With over 100 durable and affordable designs, in stock and readily available, it is the company's fastest selling collection. The show will also preview the new retailer hub, which goes live later in the year.



HOCKLEY MINT ^

Hockley Mint's hidden halos – a modern twist on a classic diamond ring – give subtle sparkle to enhance the centre stone. The collection also includes matching pendants and earrings in similar shapes and styles. Wedding rings can be diamond cut with precision using traditional methods, with reimagined classics also in the line. The bespoke design service – using CAD software – enables a lifelike render of a design before the physical piece goes into production.

IBB LONDON ^

IBB London has a vast range of gold, silver, platinum and diamond set jewellery with a core collection of classic chains, bracelets, earrings, pendants and necklaces. In addition to its more design- and trend-led products, it responds to the needs of a wide customer base. IBB despatches orders placed through its website, by phone or with one of its agents for next-day delivery.



MARK MILTON >

Mark Milton is launching some exciting pieces inspired by nature and simple curves and forms – all manufactured from recycled yellow, rose or white gold as part of the Sustainable Gold Collection. In the line are a filigree leaf brooch, pendants, bangles and a torque, with some pieces set with a diamond.

SIF JAKOBS <

Felline Concavo is a reworking of the Felline line that features a concave profile with plays on gradients and delicate tones using blue and white zirconia stones. Also new is a collection around delicate elliptical shapes, featuring pure white CZs as well as bold, glamorous colours.



STUDEX <

Studex will showcase safe, gentle and hygienic piercing systems, offering free demonstrations and advice on introducing the service, with the benefits of being a Studex Piercing Partner. The team will discuss tailored programmes for all retailers, from launch to ongoing forecasting and supply. As a manufacturer, its range includes 9ct, 14ct and 18ct gold, titanium and base metals as well as diamond packages.



Silhouette



Eugen Ruehle

DEUTSCHECRAFT > ^

Jan-Christian Bostelmann shares collections from his portfolio of five fine jewellery brands from Germany: Silhouette, Helene Apitzsch, Beulling, Quinn and Eugen Ruehle. With a strong emphasis on gold, the offering encompasses a variety of handmade and machine-made chains, jewellery sets featuring gemstones and Flex pieces.

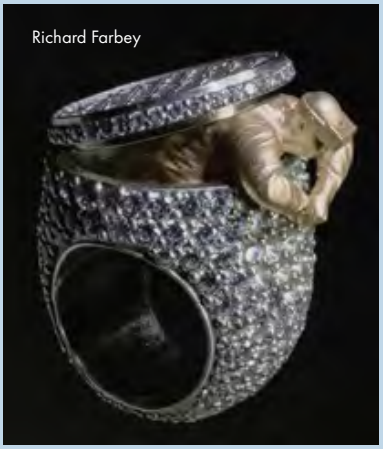
Buelling



Quinn



Hanjie Kong (Bright New Gems)



Richard Farbey

BRIGHT NEW GEMS

The six winners of this industry-supported initiative, now in its 18th year, will display their work at the Jewellery Festival. This successful annual programme nurtures new talent and gives the winners their first commercial platform. The competition is open to current year BA/BSc and MA graduates.

The successful 2023 cohort are **BA:** Campbell Hadden (Jewellery Design Central St Martins); Isabella Bedlington (Silversmithing and Jewellery, Glasgow School of Art); Shum Ling Yin (Jewellery Design, Central St Martins) and Richard Farbey (Jewellery Design, Central St Martins). **MA:** Heather Blake (Jewellery Design, Central St Martins) and Hanjie Konge (Design (Jewellery) Central St Martins). Special mention goes to the MA runners up – Wanshan Huang and Naireeta Paul (Jewellery and Metal, RCA).

This year's award includes a stellar lineup of judges, an increased bursary of £400 provided by The Benevolent Society, participation at the Jewellery Festival and the opportunity to design an exclusive demi-fine jewellery collection for sale in flagship John Lewis stores and online. New for 2023, Pearls & Pomegranates, the online marketplace for independent jewellers, is awarding each winner a free one-year subscription to the site.

"Bright New Gems is the only competition of its type and long may it continue," says Susi Smither of The Rock Hound, one of the five judges. "For the students to have industry recognition as they step into the jewellery market really helps give them a leg up. Following our graduates' progress fills me with pride, so the time feels right for The Rock Hound to become a sponsor and help support this vital creative initiative."



Heather Blake

MEMBER
The National Association of Jewellers



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GERMAN JEWELLERY DISTRIBUTION



RAW PEARLS >

As it regularly receives rave reviews from UK trade customers – largely independent and small group retailers – Raw Pearls will be focusing on the promotion of its brochure. Praised for being extensive, comprehensive and user friendly, the quality A4 book presents the entire Raw Pearls offer, with all items numbered and different colourways given where applicable. Created to make life easy.



LAUREL JEWELLERY <

Watford-based Laurel Jewellery will showcase its extensive gold and silver fine quality necklets, bracelets, bangles, earrings and coloured gemstone-set pendants. The team looks forward to welcoming existing partners and hopefully meeting some new customers, too.



PARIFY <

Beyond retail design, jewellery lighting is Parify's obsession, and it provides lighting for all environments, from in-cabinet lights to recessed downlights, undershelf, stalk, strip LEDs, track lights and more. It will exhibit its Expo 42 Light Bar – which provides the perfect level of illumination to a table showcase at any event. Parify will also present its packaging supplies – jewellery boxes, gift bags, tissue paper, gift wrap stickers, receipt wallets, gift cards and more.



GOODMAN BROS ^ >

The service and jewellery brand company specialising in jewellery services and solutions will showcase five brands, including all-new Perma Jewel. The permanent precious metal jewellery service (quick, easy and non-invasive) is supplied with welder, training, chain, charms and marketing.

A standout feature of the **Inverness** piercing system is its emphasis on safety. The system uses single-use pre-sterilised cartridges for each piercing, eliminating the risk of cross-contamination and ensuring a sterile environment for every client. Inverness also offers earrings from classic to current trends.

The **Lox** locking earring backs line now includes a vibrant Colour Collection as well as Precious Metal backs – 24ct gold or palladium plated over sterling silver and stainless steel. **Connoisseurs** cleaners – formulated to clean every type of jewellery safely and effectively – are renowned for product innovation, transforming the jewellery care industry with Jewellery Wipes and Diamond Dazzle Stik.

The **Angel Whisperer** lucky charm jewellery collection – available in 925 sterling silver rhodium plated as well as 9ct yellow gold, 18ct rose and yellow gold plated and stainless steel – is created to give strength, trust and love. Protective companions for a lifetime.

THE CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

TUESDAY 5TH SEPTEMBER

Defining and consistently delivering a differentiated customer experience

In partnership with Pursuit, **Andrew McMillan**, former head of customer experience at John Lewis, on the importance of a customer service North Star. He'll consider the key components of customer experience, weighted and blended to create a business personality.

Essential strategies to grow your sales and brand visibility

Fashion and jewellery brand consultant **Danielle Gerry** will work with jewellery retailers, brands and designers to consider the importance of developing a strong brand strategy to ensure a business gets noticed. Key topics: why USP matters, how to present a proposition authentically and creating a simple marketing strategy.

The longevity of laboratory-grown diamonds

The panel considers the longevity of laboratory-grown diamonds in the jewellery sector and where/how they may fit in future alongside natural diamonds. Speakers: David Sutton, Nivoda; Nikolay Piriankov, Taylor & Hart; jewellery journalist Rachael Taylor, Stuart Stanley, RING Jewellers and Jamie Amelia Patel, The Diamond Lab.

In Conversation: Disrupting the jewellery market

Launched in 2022 as a new way to buy and invest in gold and platinum jewellery, **7879** prices are based on a piece's weight and driven by real time bullion markets. Within a year of launch, it reported a 977% sales increase. Sarah Jordan speaks to co-founder **Sach Kukadia** about success and why he believes this pricing model is the future for jewellery sales.

WEDNESDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER

The great sustainability debate

Making informed choices about the products we use is morally right and a financial imperative for a successful business. The panel debates how retailers and suppliers can engage with material provenance and how to communicate this to the consumer. With Charlie Betts, The Betts Group; Jos Skeates, EC One, May Garland, Retail Jeweller; Melanie Grant, RJC and Stuart Pool, Nineteen48.

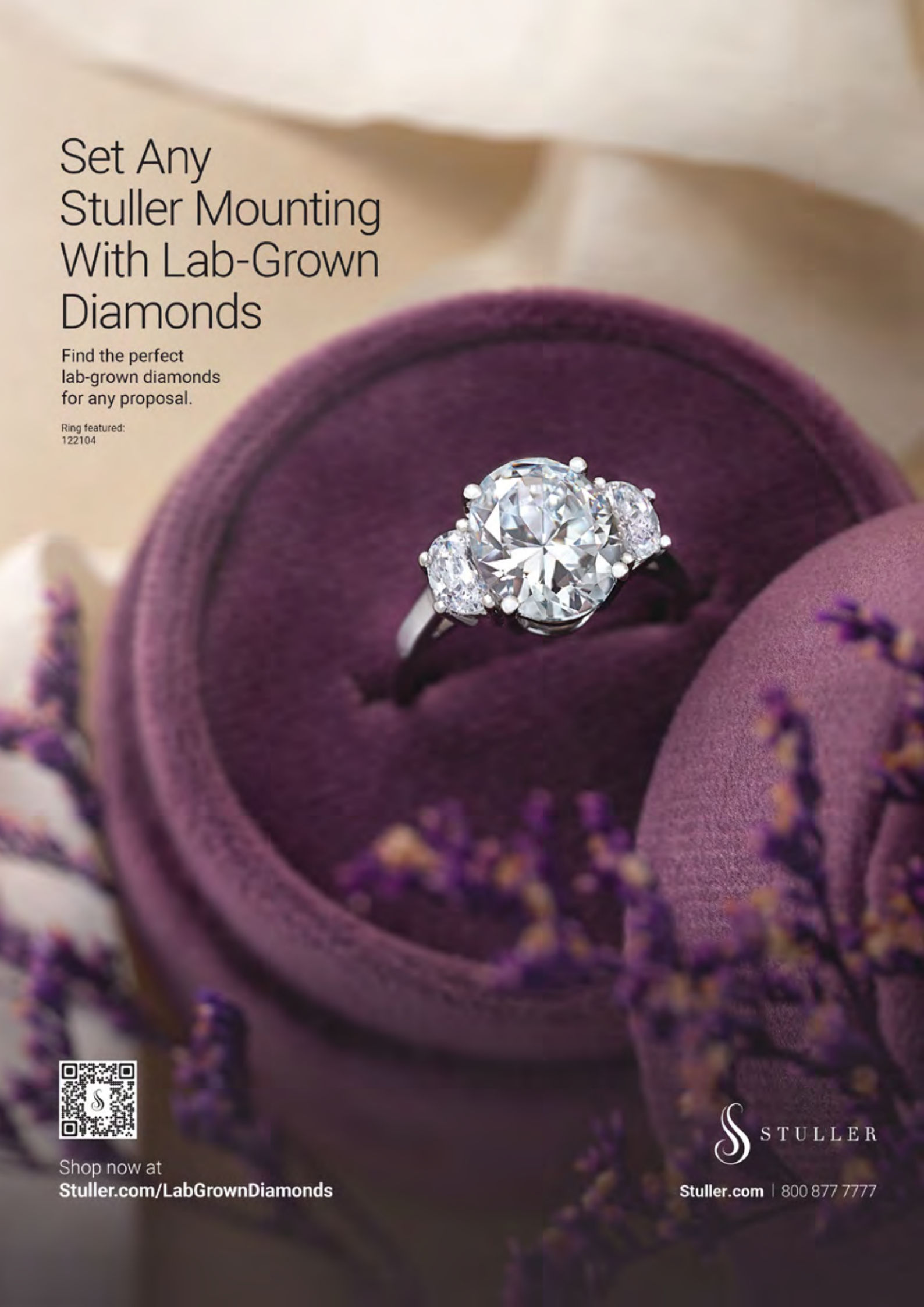
What quiche can teach you about social media success in the jewellery sector

Social media consultant Mark Saxby talks about the key principles for true social media success – principles most organisations ignore. Drawing on his experiences as the founder of a campaign against quiche, he explains how his battle will help achieve business objectives using social media.

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Members Only

September will be a busy month for the UK's three jewellery and watch buying groups – here's your need-to-know overview.

Hallmark Jewellery Group

The Hallmark Jewellery Group's (THJ) next social gathering will be its AGM and Trade Show on Thursday 7th September at Delta Hotels Forest of Arden (Marriott) in the heart of the Midlands.

This event is the perfect opportunity for members to network with fellow retailers, brainstorm, share experiences, learn about the group's latest news and preferential supplier updates and plan for the year ahead. Members will also be able to network with preferred THJ suppliers, explore new collections and place orders in a relaxed, friendly environment.

The day starts with refreshments and the chef's seasonal offerings, then continues with the AGM, followed by a buffet lunch and trade show. It's always a thoroughly enjoyable day for members and supplier partners.

If you are an independent retail jeweller and would like to become a member of the Hallmark Jewellery Group to benefit from preferential supplier discounts/terms while maintaining complete autonomy over your business, you can apply by emailing Tracey, **secretary@hallmarkjewellersgroup.com**, or online at **https://hallmarkjewellersgroup.com/member-application/**



Houlden Group

The Houlden September event will take place from 18th to 20th September at the De Vere Beaumont Estate in Windsor. On the first day, following a director's meeting, the all-new Showcase offers the chance for over 50 of the group's new and guest suppliers to showcase their products and encourage Houlden members to get a feel for what they offer and ultimately what they can add to their business. The day concludes with a welcome dinner.

On day two, a Supplier Focus Session kicks off the two-day Supplier Exhibition. There's also the Connection Conference (previously the Members Morning), which "will be an opportunity for all members and supplier partners to attend so the Houlden Advantage cascades into all areas," explains CEO Helen Haddow. "It provides the perfect opportunity for the Houlden community to engage with and be inspired by their like-minded peers as we explore our theme of expanding our knowledge." Speakers for the Conference will be announced over the coming weeks. In the evening, the Networking Dinner will also see the presentation of the much-coveted Houlden Awards of Excellence.

To discover more about the Houlden Group, visit **www.houldenjewellers.com**

















Sheldon Bloomfield at CMJ





Ungar & Ungar at CMJ

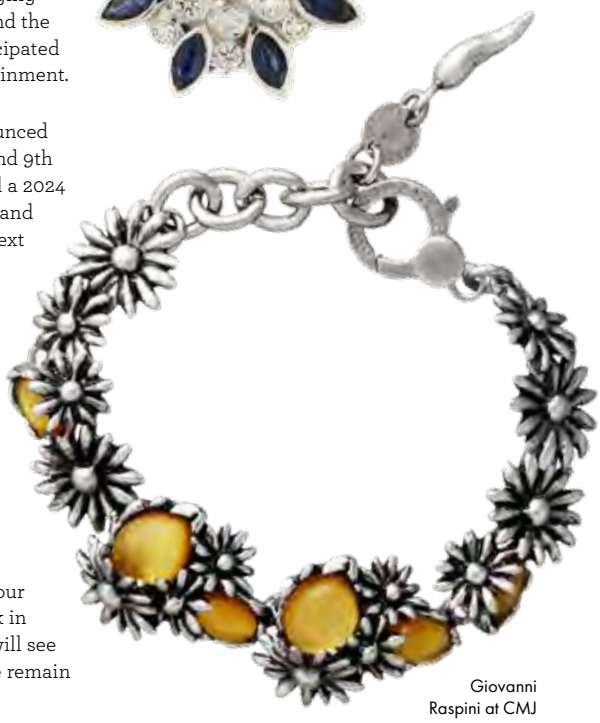
The Company of Master Jewellers

The CMJ's Autumn Trade Event will be slightly later than normal, on 10th and 11th September 2023, at the Hilton Birmingham Metropole. Its members come together to trade, learn and network, under one roof. The Digital Zone returns to the event, bringing the latest innovations in technology and the digital world, as well as the much-anticipated RPJ Band during the evening's entertainment.

The membership group has also announced its Autumn 2024 Trade Event on 8th and 9th September 2024 – and it has confirmed a 2024 events programme, with a host of new and exciting initiatives in the first half of next year to replace a Spring Trade Event. These events will ensure all members – retailers and suppliers – can network and engage with each other earlier in the year.

Emmet Cummins, managing director of the Company of Master Jewellers, said: "Due to the ever-changing economic situation and the current dynamic of the market, we believe an alternative programme of events is the most effective way for our members to trade, engage and network in 2024. This new programme of events will see us evolve with our members so that we remain key in preparing their businesses for tomorrow."

The CMJ is the largest specialist jewellery and watch buying group in the UK and Ireland, with more than 150 retailer members. To find out what membership can offer, visit **www.masterjewellers.co.uk**.



Giovanni Raspini at CMJ



Gemex at CMJ

Images courtesy of Stephanie O'Callaghan at Onevent



Genevieve Schwartz, yellow gold watermelon tourmaline halo pendant and cocktail ring

Take Three Designers...

Belinda Morris homes in on three inspirational jewellery designer members of the NAJ.

GENEVIEVE SCHWARTZ

Growing up with an artist mother, Genevieve has always been drawn to creative pursuits and had an interest in art, which led to a degree in art history. This course gave her a foundation that continues to inspire her jewellery pieces, from the bright and bold colours of Henri Matisse's paper cuts to the clean and repeated lines of the Art Deco movement.

"I founded my business in January 2021 after working as a jewellery designer for five years at the British jewellery brand Astley Clarke. I was drawn to jewellery design because it combined my love of art and design with very practical and technical making processes. As a teen, I spent hours watching the show *How It's Made*, which takes you through the industrial process of making an everyday object, such as rock candy or musical instruments. I was fascinated to see how materials could be translated from their raw state to finished objects, ready for use. This same interest led me to jewellery; I love the idea of transforming beautiful raw materials into wearable pieces to be treasured for generations.

I spent the first year of my business developing my brand DNA, both in terms of product and identity. Interestingly, and quite unintentionally, the first piece I designed and made for my brand is now the piece that fuels a large part of the brand development and growth. This piece is my Watermelon Sugar Ring, now part of a larger collection that explores my interest in bicolour tourmalines and their unique colour changing qualities. Through earring, ring and necklace designs, the centre stones are accented by colourful pavé rows, which highlight their natural beauty.

My interest in colour relationships formed as a child – my mother painted bright and vibrant still life. I've further developed this interest through my pieces as a commentary on how colours relate to one another and how these can mirror our own human relationships. The bicolour tourmalines and ametrines central to my work delve into the idea of how opposites attract, as they're made of colours on opposite sides of the colour wheel but exist harmoniously in each stone. When I take a moment to step back and look at the style I've developed, I'm struck by how central colour is in my work.

Winning Emerging Jewellery Designer of the Year at the UK Jewellery Awards and Emerging Jewellery Brand of the Year at the Professional Jeweller Awards last year increased my brand awareness and contributed to several new bespoke enquiries at the end of 2022. These awards also provided me with an amazing opportunity to meet more people in the jewellery industry and, in particular, the team behind the NAJ, an organisation I'm now delighted to be a member of.

The increase in bespoke enquiries is something many of those I work with at the Goldsmiths' Centre have experienced. My take is it's due to the economic crunch, which has changed customers' perception of how they want to spend their money, resulting in an increase in more customisable bespoke pieces and personalisable pieces like my Golden Futures range, which I expanded in my next phase of development this summer. I've also drawn up ambitious plans to design and create a new line of one-of-a-kind Watermelon Sugar pieces, which will push the limits of this idea further and incorporate new shapes and silhouettes.

I've really enjoyed the first two and a half years of building my business. It's been a challenge to juggle all the aspects of starting a business, from marketing and merchandising to product planning and making. But I've relished the experience so far, bolstered by a community which is both encouraging and supportive, and look forward to seeing what the next two and a half will bring."

The Watermelon Sugar Collection explores how the pandemic shaped and changed our relationships. Being separated from the people and places we care about has left us longing for ways to reconnect. Genevieve believes jewellery, steeped in a history of symbolic traditions, has played a major role in this process. People have turned to wearable objects to express how they feel and what they care about.

The increase in demand for engagement jewellery is evidence of this and led to the development of her collection of men's and women's engagement rings. Equally, her Golden Future rings, which won her a bronze award in the Goldsmiths' Craft and Design competition in 2021, are rooted in personal identity. These rings are fully customisable and offer customers an opportunity to commemorate valued people, places and personal characteristics.



FEI LIU

Fei Liu is an internationally acclaimed jewellery designer known for his exceptional masterpieces and unique design aesthetic. With a passion for meticulous craftsmanship, he has become a prominent figure – a visionary – in the world of fine jewellery. His eponymous brand, Fei Liu Fine Jewellery in the historic Birmingham Jewellery Quarter is a hub renowned for its rich heritage in jewellery making.

Born with an innate talent for art and creativity, after a four-month stint in Hong Kong in 1995 (combining an office job with teaching children art), Fei moved to Beijing to learn English. During that time, he met a gemmologist and became fascinated with the subject, using any opportunity to research it. The plan was to go abroad to study business, but a visit to a Russian crown jewellery exhibition planted the idea that he could combine his love of the arts with a specific skill.

In January 1998, he applied to jewellery schools in the UK and was accepted by the Birmingham School of Jewellery. There, he honed his skills and developed his signature style, marrying his Eastern heritage with Western contemporary styles. His designs are celebrated for their sculptural qualities and combination of vibrant gemstones.

The Limited Edition Collection is Fei's ready to wear line of 18ct and platinum designs. Each piece features one or more handpicked stones unique to that piece, making it a one-off design or produced in limited quantities.

Rather than having one favourite gemstone, Fei loves to work with all varieties because of the unique characteristics they each bring. The style of his jewellery is feminine, sculptural and colourful, so he tries to bring out the particular beauty of each design with a colourful assortment of gemstones to create a sparkle from all perspectives.

Fei believes jewellery is an extension of the wearer, so marrying the colours of materials brings out their unique personality. Renowned for his bespoke jewellery, he understands the importance of personal connection and works closely with clients to bring their personal visions to life. His bespoke pieces are treasured for their individuality – he collaborates with clients to design and craft one-of-a-kind creations that capture their style, personality and emotions.

Dedication to his craft has earned Fei Liu numerous accolades and a loyal following worldwide. His designs have been showcased in prestigious galleries, exhibitions and fashion events, attracting the attention of industry insiders and jewellery enthusiasts alike. His creations have graced the red carpet, adorned influential personalities and been featured in leading fashion publications.



Fei Liu, Citrines and diamonds in 18ct white gold earrings





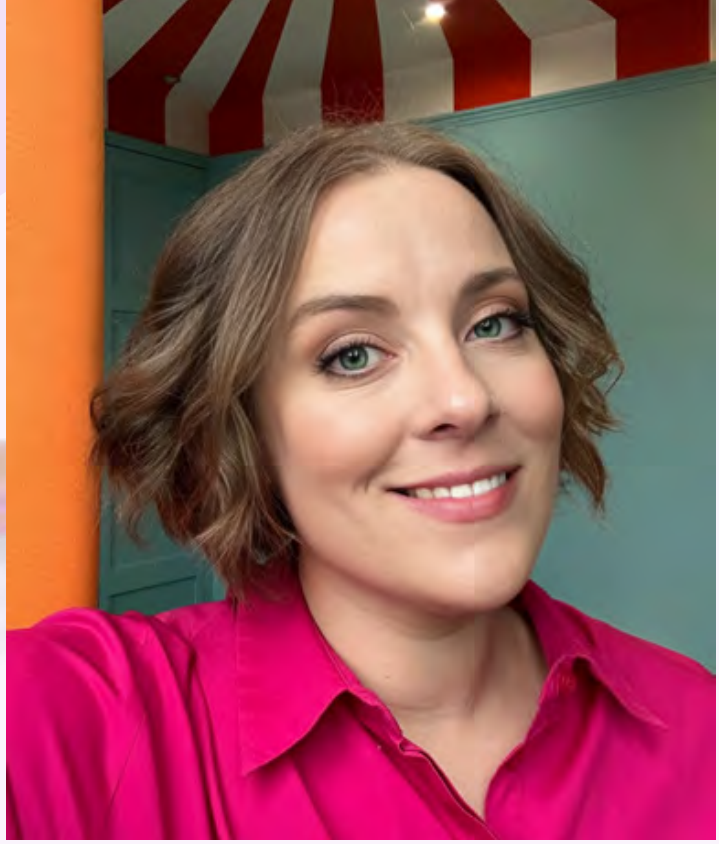


Fei Liu, Star sapphires and diamonds in 18ct yellow gold ring

Fei Liu, Rubies 7.86ct, diamonds 1.49ct and ladder diamonds 0.997ct in 18ct white gold bracelet



Jessica Flinn-Allen, unique hexagon salt and pepper diamond solitaire ring



JESSICA FLINN-ALLEN

Educated in metalwork and jewellery at Sheffield Hallam University, with an enriching exchange at Kookmin University in Seoul, South Korea, Jessica Flinn-Allen began her creative journey honing her skills in jewellery, industrial design and metalcraft. Despite discovering her own limitations as a bench jeweller, she found her passion in jewellery-related technology, such as CAD and 3D printing, allowing her to bridge traditional craftsmanship with innovative practices.

After university, she established her own business and, over time, broadened it to wholesale, concessions and even a retail store. Following a brief hiatus to focus on her growing family, Jessica returned to her passion, initiating a bespoke design service from her home, a beautifully converted chapel nestled in the serene Peak District National Park. This service quickly flourished into an expanding business, now commanding a diverse and talented team of 20 individuals across two flourishing brands – Jessica Flinn and Flinn & Steel.

Jessica's design philosophy marries the past with the future. She explores the sweet spot between the traditional and the completely modern, using recycled metals and traceable gemstones wherever possible. Pushing the boundaries of conventional aesthetics, she introduces alternative gemstones like laboratory-created diamonds and teal sapphires into her designs. Each Jessica Flinn piece has a unique hallmark – her own signature subtly embedded in the ring design, a testament to her personal touch. The collection hosts an array of Art Deco-inspired pieces and classic designs, revisited and mixed with non-traditional gemstones.

Jessica's designs cater to a broad audience, encompassing any gender, particularly those between 30 and 45 years, and her work is enjoyed by more mature customers, too. As a fierce ally of the LGBTQIA+ community, Jessica believes jewellery should be an avenue for self-expression, regardless of gender or sexual orientation.

"My mission is to empower my customers, instilling confidence in their choice to embrace designs that are slightly different yet represent their unique identity." She recently spoke on a TikTok webinar about being an ally to the LGBTQIA+ community and has pledged to increase representation in her brand's imagery, copy and content.

A highlight in Jessica's career came in late 2019, when she launched her first engagement ring collection. This significant step paved the way for her to expand the business online, developing a robust digital presence and building her sales team. The team now includes talented designers, like Emma Fathers, the recent recipient of *Professional Jeweller's* 2022 Young Designer of the Year Award.

Throughout her career, Jessica has navigated challenges, including a calamitous concession arrangement at House of Fraser with Hallett Retail, which led to a complete shutdown of operations. These difficulties, coupled with global crises – pandemic, a recession and now a cost-of-living crisis – have tested her resilience. "But I live by the mantra 'don't waste a good crisis' – these adversities are not setbacks, but opportunities for change, growth and innovation," she says.

In May, Jessica Flinn launched the Dopamine collection, a vibrant fusion of new designs. The collection captures the essence of summer, with teal stones and salt and pepper diamonds. The collection aims to imbue the same positive rush in its wearers as the dopamine chemical does in our brains.

Jessica Flinn has ambitious plans on the horizon. In the next 12 months, the company will open an avant-garde retail outlet in Manchester. The plan is to redefine the traditional retail experience – a space where experiential shopping and technology come together in a fine jewellery context. Following this, plans are underway to expand the Sheffield headquarters with the opening of an onsite workshop, training facilities and a new virtual design appointment hub, consolidating Jessica Flinn's commitment to innovative design and bespoke customer service.

Jessica Flinn also wants to expand her team, adding three new roles in sales and business administration. The digital design-your-own tool is set for an expansion, with plans to include more classic designs and new concepts after its successful soft launch earlier in the year. To experience Jessica's designs first-hand, you can visit the Sheffield showroom, with its unique sushi-style moving counter, or explore the collections online at www.jessicaflinn.co.uk.



Radiant cut teal sapphire and diamond vintage style ring

How to squeeze more £'s from your e-commerce website in 5 **easy checks that anyone can do**

Every lost, frustrated or confused client could be costing you £££'s!

1 Accounts bring clients back to your website

Clients love to be able to retrieve their previous creations, special date reminders or previous purchases. Consider implementing a **social login plugin** so clients don't have to remember another password! Accounts help you learn about your clients.

2 Have colleagues stress-test the content of your products for accuracy and consistency

Most people will forgive a typo, but pricing, photos and descriptions should be spot on. Keep your content and writing style consistent throughout the website. Products should load fast - so be mindful of large images and use tools like **Smush (WordPress plugin) to compress images**.

3 Make it fast!

There's no excuse in 2023 for a slow website. Clients expect sub-2 second loading times for your home and product pages. Any longer, and people start to wonder what is happening - speed builds trust! Use a **caching plugin and CDN** (content delivery network) to speed up your website significantly.

4 Review the website navigation, search, filters and product categorisation

Sadly, if clients can't find what they are looking for - even if you have it in stock - they will go elsewhere! Clients rely on search first and will begin to navigate from there. **Ensure your SEO is up to scratch**, as **Google** will help clients find your product pages directly.

5 Are your reviews accurate and true?

Reviews build trust, even slightly negative ones. We've become wary of overly positive reviews thanks to bots and other underhanded means of promotion, so **ask your clients for honest reviews** and give them a range to choose from. For example, have a 5-star rating for each area, such as delivery, accuracy, quality, enjoyment and more!

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> "It's the collective efforts over the years that have led us to achieve this remarkable milestone and our success.
>
> **Doug Henry, CEO, The Birmingham Assay Office**

BAO ANNIVERSARY

The Birmingham Assay Office is 250 years old. This milestone calls for some major celebrations, explains CEO Doug Henry.

"As we commemorate 250 years of the Birmingham Assay Office, we stand proud of our rich history and the remarkable milestones we have achieved. This momentous occasion is a testament to our enduring commitment to adapt, evolve and thrive in an ever-changing business landscape to support our customers and the trade with expert technical knowledge, quality and trust. We are celebrating throughout the year with our employees, our local community, the trade and our customers.

We hosted our Anniversary Ball at the Grand Hotel in July with over 220 people. The night was filled with music, networking and a walk down Birmingham Assay Office memory lane. We also ran a raffle and raised an amazing £5,000 plus for the Midlands Air Ambulance – and heard from the charity itself. It's a great cause. I would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thankyou to our sponsors on the evening: Sky Diamond, Needhams, Domino, CME Jewellery, Vipa Designs, F Hinds, Hockley Mint, IGDA, Goodman Bros, Bradleys Jewellers and Acme Whistles.

We've launched Discovery Days through the year for people to come and explore the Birmingham Assay Office, connecting our history and giving our community the chance to create a hallmark – it's not as easy as it looks!

During Birmingham Heritage week, on Wednesday 13th September 2023, we are hosting an event to showcase the city's rich cultural heritage for a wider audience, in collaboration with businesses from across the city. Given our long-standing presence in Birmingham, we have partnered with brands who share our values and also want to promote Birmingham's heritage: Lloyds Bank, Acme Whistles and Deakin & Francis. These brands have played a significant role in shaping the cultural landscape of the city.

The Birmingham Assay Office has also been supporting our chosen charities, Midlands Air Ambulance and The Benevolent Society. With all proceeds going to our charities, we launched our 250th logo, which, for £1, can be added to items during the hallmarking process, to commemorate 250 years of the Birmingham Assay Office. We've also completed the Birmingham 10K run, Jail or Bail, with our employees; we have a bike ride from Sheffield to Birmingham in collaboration with Hockley Mint planned this August and more activities throughout the year, including an event with our pensioners.

Towards the end of this year, we have a special celebration event planned for our employees. We want to show our appreciation of a team that brings unique skills, knowledge and passion to our business. It's the collective efforts over the years that have led us to achieve this remarkable milestone and our success."

Impressive Talent at Goldsmiths North 2023

This July, the magnificent Cutlers' Hall in Sheffield once again hosted Goldsmiths North – a shopping experience bringing the finest contemporary jewellery and silverware to the north of England.

Launched in 2019 and supported by Sheffield Assay Office, The Cutlers' Company and The Goldsmiths' Company, Goldsmiths North gives the public – and the trade – the opportunity to engage with and buy directly from a curated group of talented makers.

Committee members and trustees of Goldsmiths' Craft and Design Council (GC&DC) awards were there in force to support the show and the exhibiting designers:

JOHN BALL, Brown & Newirth

"Goldsmiths North is a must-save date in my calendar. The incredible talent on show is of the highest quality in design and making, with many of the exhibitors already proud members of the GC&DC community," says John Ball, MD, Brown & Newirth. "For those new to the competition, we offer advice and encouragement – we can provide the platform to showcase their work for consideration by our highly respected judging panel as worthy winning submissions. Congratulations to Brett Payne and Rebecca Joslyn for their tireless work bringing Goldsmiths North to Sheffield."

JUDITH LOCKWOOD, Mesmeric Distribution

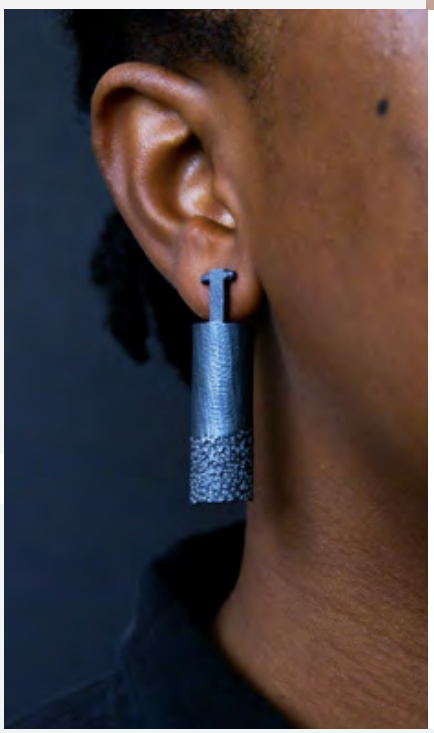
Judith Lockwood of Mesmeric Distribution agrees: "Another fantastic Goldsmiths North – it's wonderful to see GC&DC award winners Janet Barber, Fred Rich and Danila Tarcinale and, of course, have the opportunity to speak to potential entrants for the next competition. I particularly loved chatting with Sajjad Anwar from Isaacs Working Jewellers (Skipton) about a ring he was showing called Lady Reading a Book Without Interruptions – priceless, it was my memorable standout piece."

PETER CRUMP, Vipa Designs

"It's so inspiring to see the wonderful skills of seasoned professionals alongside new talent at the very beginning of their careers," adds Peter Crump, MD Vipa Designs. "It was very exciting to see how many GC&DC winners were exhibiting and the potential of how many more could enter next year. A truly delightful way to pass an afternoon – I'll certainly be back."

For those showcasing their work, Goldsmiths North offers the perfect combination of glorious venue, engaged consumers and the camaraderie of fellow designer-makers...





REBECCA JOSELYN ^

"The show was fantastic for me; my sales of silverware and jewellery were consistent throughout the event. It's really great to have a show of this standard in the north of England."

FRANCISCA ONUMAH <

"Goldsmiths North is a lovely show. It draws an engaged crowd that always comments on the well-curated variety of talent on display. My work sits between sculptural and functional silversmithing, and the audience responded really well to it – the tactile textures and sculptural forms create a lot of intrigue. It's so good to have a high-quality jewellery and silversmithing fair in Sheffield, a city with such a rich history of silversmithing."

ALEXANDER DAVIS <

"For the second year running, the show has been very successful for me. I think the Goldsmiths North clients enjoy my pieces. Customers comment that it's refreshing to see unusual and inventive designs, such as my carbon fibre ring with a lagoon tourmaline set in 18ct yellow gold."



LEONID DEMENTIEV ^

"The show was very successful in my view and will continue to grow from year to year. The curation and organisation are to the highest of standards. I was glad to come north of London to show my work. The number of visitors meant a continuous flow of conversations, and among [my pieces], the Milestone and Eternity rings received most attention for their sparkle and technical complexity, especially among designers and engineers."



EMILY NIXON ^

"My new Adakite rings with irregular pebbly settings containing yellow diamonds were much admired, as were my seaweed sapphire rings. I was delighted to have sold a beautiful engagement ring with seven white diamonds and an accompanying ripple ring with a channel of tiny white diamonds. It was a beautifully organised show in a spectacular venue, and it gave me an opportunity to meet clients from outside London and Cornwall face to face."



CLIO SASKIA <

"This was my second year at Goldsmiths North. It attracted enthusiastic, knowledgeable visitors with a passion for high-quality craft. As one of the few fine jewellery and silversmithing showcases in the area, it drew visitors from Edinburgh, York, Manchester and London to meet break-out and established designers. Of my creations, there were two favourites – the Chameleon Ring with its kinetic golden tongue, and the Bermuda Lizard Double Ring with a bejewelled rainbow belly."

Autumn Watch

Time for the new season

BAUHAUS

The new Bauhaus Aviation 2860M-5 has a 42mm case and bracelet in solid titanium and a fully luminous dial. With sapphire crystal and an automatic movement with power reserve indicator, the model is also available with a black leather strap, while another variation has a forest green dial and leather strap (or titanium bracelet).





ROLEX

The 42mm Oyster Perpetual Sky-Dweller (here, in 18ct white gold on an Oysterflex bracelet) has been updated with numerous enhancements; it features two time zones and annual Saros calendar. The other two variants introduce two new dial colours – white Rolesor (combining Oystersteel and white gold), with an Oyster bracelet and a mint green dial. The 18ct Everose gold version features a blue-green dial.





JUNGHANS

Junghans' historic fascination with aviation continues with three new models – two variations of the Meister Pilot Chronoscope and the new Meister Pilot Automatic. Inspired by the company's first pilots' wristwatch, these models have luminous numerals and hands that contrast with the dial and case, for optimal legibility. With concave recesses, the bidirectional turning bezel allows for precise adjustments, even while wearing gloves. There are two colour options: navy blue and desert.

RAYMOND WEIL

Raymond Weil pays tribute to its founder with a newly developed Pilot's watch. The freelancer Pilot Flyback Chronograph honours Mr Weil's love of flying, which lives on in his grandson Elie Bernheim, Raymond Weil CEO and Pierre Bernheim, chair of Geneva Airport's board. With a 42mm case, the steel surfaces are coated in grey PVD and the vintage aviation theme extends to the onion-shaped crown, a design standard on pilot watches, and the brown leather strap with rivets. Limited to 400 pieces, the watch features a propeller motif engraved on the sapphire case back.



G-SHOCK

To celebrate G-Shock's 40th anniversary, Casio has launched seven Clear Remix models which make use of transparent materials for a view of the watches' internal components. Combining the renowned (tough) function and design, this collection includes the very first G-Shock. All feature see-through materials for the case, band, LCD, buttons and other elements.



STERNGLAS

In the 38mm Berlin model, vintage meets minimalist design. The back of the 10mm high case has an engraving of the Berlin railway station in Sternglas' hometown of Hamburg. After its construction in 1857, it was the westernmost terminus of the rail connection between the two cities for 46 years. The watch also comes with an alligator print cowhide leather strap.



CITIZEN

The new limited edition 880 mechanical model in the CITIZEN 8 collection of mechanical watches, which combine practicality and functionality with modern designs, features autumnal gold colours and has a GMT function and magnetic resistance. The dial has an embossed pattern, while the two-piece centre case design accentuates its 3D style. The exhibition case back reveals the beating heart of the watch.



CARL F BUCHERER

Launched in June, the Manero Minute Repeater Anniversary Trilogy pays tribute to the rich history of Carl F Bucherer, marking the brand's 135th anniversary. Each watch, limited to one piece only, features the three highest complications, all peripherally mounted: an automatic winding system, floating tourbillon and minute repeater regulator.



TAG HEUER

The new version of the colourful Skipper (first launched to the high-level yachting world in 1968) is, like the original, based on the Carrera chronograph. Minus a bezel – the glassbox extends to the edge of the 39mm case – the curved flange dial and the well-placed chronograph counters, the Carrera Skipper is legible in all conditions. The watch also has the latest TH20-06 movement with bi-directional winding, an 80-hour power reserve and a high-end resistant textile strap.



ACCURIST

Inspired by Accurist heritage watches, this Rectangle Ladies Watch has an ion-plated rose gold stainless steel case with rose gold Roman numerals and matching hands. Ultra scratch-resistant sapphire crystal glass encloses the sunburst pattern dial. The watch comes with interchangeable straps – burgundy leather and stainless steel bracelet.



adidas ORIGINALS

The leading lifestyle and fashion label adidas ORIGINALS has infused its athletic edge into a new timepiece collection. With a youthful, unconventional feel, this range features new analogue, chronograph and digital watches inspired by street culture and mixing technology with watch design. adidas' athletic history is reinterpreted with new materials and reimagined silhouettes.



PIAGET

Following the success of the black Piaget Polo Date watch, launched at Watches and Wonders 2022, this sport chic watch has gone green. The dark emerald of the Polo Field's dial moves from subtle hues to a mesmerising and changing colour. On this new piece, the iconic gadroons of the Piaget Polo thicken to blend perfectly with the textured rubber interchangeable bracelet.



ORIENT STAR

The new Diver, with its colourful dials, comes with both a metal and silicone strap. Powered by the new in-house calibre F6N47, with power reserve indicator and a water resistance of up to 200m, this modified watch meets modern divers' watch standards. The 46-F6 series automatic winding movement, renowned for its stability, precision and reliability, boasts excellent self-winding efficiency with a 50-hour power reserve.



SEIKO

The Seiko Prospex Dark Depths GMT and the Prospex Marine Green GMT are inspired by both the 1968 diver's watch and Japan's first hi-beat one-piece diver's watch, created by Seiko. For 60 years, Seiko has innovated wearable precise watches for professional and recreational divers. These latest additions feature new in-house 6R54 calibre, enabling a mechanical GMT functionality, a first for Seiko dive watches. The new calibre allows for calendar-date functionality and a stop second hand function.



TUDOR

This new addition to the Black Bay line embodies the purest modern expression of the brand's first-ever dive watch, launched in 1954. Today, the Black Bay 54 is the most true-to-form inspiration of this model, with a 37mm case and a Manufacture Calibre. The stainless steel case has a 60-minute unidirectional bezel devoid of hash marks. New aesthetics and design include a lollipop seconds hand – mimicking that of the earlier model – and a smaller, more curved crown.

BACKES & STRAUSS X THEO FENNELL

Diamond company Backes & Strauss (est. 1789) has collaborated with British jeweller Theo Fennell to create the Regent Theo Fennell Rainbow watch. It has an oval case (40x47cm) and blends classical aesthetics with contemporary sensibilities. In rose gold and set with two rows of round brilliant diamonds (nine pieces in black PVD-coated stainless steel are also available), it features a dial designed with enamelled Arabic numerals in a spectrum of colours.





ULYSSE NARDIN

The Freak ONE, inspired by the first Freak model, has become the brand's flagship watch and features its three signature characteristics: no dial, no hands and no crown. Regulated by a silicon hairspring introduced in 2008 and an escapement treated with DIAMonSIL, which makes the movement abrasion- and shock-resistant, the model has black DLC-coated titanium and rose gold detailing, echoing recent Freak iterations.



BREITLING

Breitling's latest collaborations with Deus Ex Machina and Triumph Motorcycles uses the Breitling Manufacture Caliber 01 to upgrade the two new Top Time models. Seen here is the Top Time Triumph. The movement's mechanism is visible through an open case back. The dial features a twin-register display with speed-measuring tachymeter scale and the Breitling and Triumph logos. Its ice blue pairs with either a black racing-themed calfskin leather strap or mesh metal bracelet.

STERNGLAS

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Hamburg dark blue bronze | Milanaise – S01-HH27-MI11 – RRP £279
Hamburg Auto dark blue bronze | Milanaise – S02-HH27-MI11 – RRP £389

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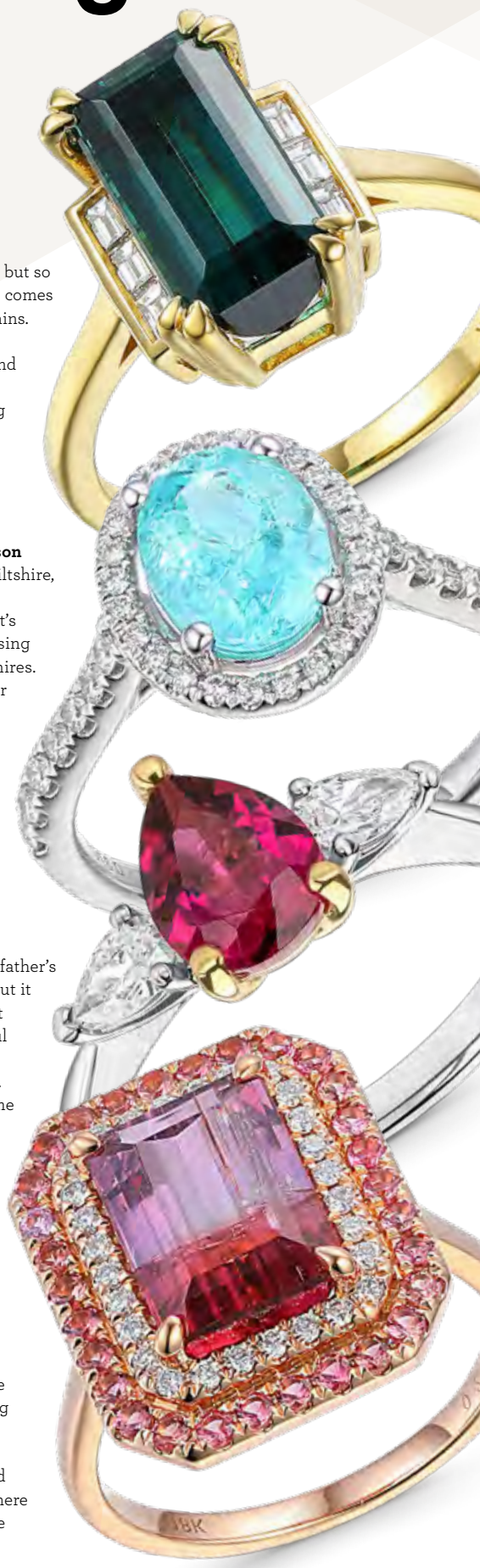
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German Timepieces

Gemmology Rising

Whether you're focused on trending stones, tackling customer misinformation or upskilling your retail team with the right qualifications, the influence of the science of gemstones has never felt so relevant. *Retail Jeweller* reports.



Understanding basic gemmological principles has long been an element of retail jewellery sales. However, there are a growing number of businesses whose focus on gemstone education has surpassed what beginner's level courses can provide. As a result, independents and suppliers across the UK are prioritising higher-level qualifications, such as those offered by the **Gemmological Association of Great Britain** (GEM-A) and the **Birmingham School of Jewellery**, to strengthen their businesses and provide a more nuanced customer experience.

"It is important to our business model that we are seen as experts in our field and not just salespeople," explains **Ian Cookson, managing director of PA Jewellery**. The Sheffield-based company employs five Gem-A-qualified gemmologists, including Cookson, and relies upon their combined knowledge to entice bespoke clients. This is partly a practical necessity for the business, as it is not based on the high street and therefore has no passing footfall to rely upon.

Similarly, the practical benefits of gemmology qualifications are obvious for **Fellows Auctioneers** in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, which generates 75 per cent of its turnover from jewellery. "We sell about 3,500 items of jewellery each month," says PR and communications manager **Alexandra Whittaker**. "We need the trained brain of a gemmologist to correctly identify stones at the valuation and cataloguing stages to ensure we correctly value and describe the items. When we recruit for a jewellery team member, we actively look for people with a gemmology background."

These practical benefits also help to boost the bottom line for many businesses in the trade, including retailers and suppliers. **Weston Beamor Group** managing director **Andrew J Morton** says: "We have individuals with such qualifications across most of our departments in roles including design, buying, sales and quality control. From a commercial point of view, it is invaluable to our business."

Elsewhere, Clark Diamonds director **Mike Barrows**, who has completed both the Gem-A Gemmology Diploma and Diamond Diploma, believes that qualifications help staff get up to speed. "There are two main aspects to our job – understanding the stones and understanding the market, which for most of our staff means understanding the customers," he says. "If somebody already understands the stones, it is generally easier for us to direct their knowledge to a commercial use, and they can pick up the market side of the business much more quickly." For this reason, **Clark Diamonds** encourages staff to study, reimburses their course costs, and offers bonuses to those who pass.

But with information from the internet more accessible than ever, could higher education be the answer to more 'traditional' jewellery businesses surviving in the long term? Barrows continues: "We are now having many more technical questions coming our way with the advent of laboratory-grown diamonds, which makes it more important than ever that we can answer the questions we get on the subject with confidence."

Cookson agrees, noting that customers often can't see the wood for the trees when reading online. "Today's consumers are more educated than ever, but so much of that information comes with an agenda," he explains. "As retailers, we need to identify what is correct and what isn't and be able to advise truthfully. Keeping our own knowledge one step ahead allows us to do that."

For the team at family retail business **HJ Johnson Jewellers** in Devizes, Wiltshire, gemmology is a multi-generational passion that's gone far beyond recognising rubies, spinels and sapphires. Third-generation director **Rachel Nield** has completed the Gem-A Gemmology Diploma, just like her mother and grandfather did before her. "I definitely think [qualifications] are becoming more important for retailers now," Nield explains. "The decision [to study] stemmed from my grandfather's passion for gemstones, but it quickly became apparent how important and useful these qualifications were for running the business. Personally, it has given me the confidence to know that when the time comes, I can run the business myself with the knowledge my mother and grandfather offered to our customers, which they have always valued so highly."

Nield also agrees that the internet is both a blessing and a curse. "After completing the Gem-A diploma myself, I realised how much information there is online that can confuse and mislead,"

she continues. "It can be written by anyone. Speaking to someone about a piece of jewellery is so much more useful and valuable to a customer because each piece is different and unique."

The appetite for greater knowledge is clearly there in the industry, and consumers, whether they realise it or not, are the ones who will benefit the most. Fellows Auctioneers knows that "a lot of gemmology isn't Google-able," with Whittaker noting that understanding practical tools, how to use them, and what to look for can only flourish with experience.

Cookson says it best: "I certainly think we would struggle without gemmologists. Knowing your product helps to buy well, sell well and instil trust. Who wouldn't benefit from that?"



Morganite aquamarine and paraiba gemstones

Cool colours

Pre-empt the latest gemstone trends for summer with nuggets of advice from the *Retail Jeweller* community...



"The combination of aquamarine and morganite emphasises the beauty of both gemstones and is a very sought-after combination in 2023. Large dark rough stones (aquamarines, almost Santa Maria colour) are currently hard to obtain. Our grey tourmalines, launched in 2022, have been well received, so we are excited to see how our grey spinels from Tanzania perform. Pastel variations of gemstones, such as tourmaline, morganite, aquamarine and Paraiba tourmaline, are also in demand."

Isaline Arnoldi, chief executive, gemhype.com

"This year has seen a big trend in pink-coloured stones, whether due to the Pantone Colour of the Year [Viva Magenta] or simply growing popularity. We have had a lot of interest in our dark pink gemstones, pink tourmaline and rubellite, but there's also been consistent interest in green gems, particularly tourmaline, tanzanite and the turquoise blues of Paraiba. These colours lend themselves to popular cuts and shapes – pear- and cushion-cuts, as well as long octagons that are perfect for Art Deco designs."

Stephanie Lee, director of design and marketing, Ntinga





Key conversations

If there's one question you should expect to field in the months ahead, it's "Are laboratory-grown diamonds really free from mining?" The Gem Academy founder **Julia Griffith FGA DGA EG** shares insights on how to answer your customers confidently...

"Almost all laboratory-grown diamonds involve mining. Many marketing messages throughout the industry suggest the opposite. This narrative needs to change. It's true that laboratory-grown diamonds are made – not mined. However, mining is often involved before laboratory-grown diamonds are created.

Mined materials must be brought together to produce every stone. Graphite, metals, minerals and gases need to be mined, processed and transported to a production facility to be used in the production process. The exact recipe depends on the growth method. However, almost all producers use ingredients that have been derived from mining. Despite this, the marketing messages promoting laboratory-grown diamonds in the jewellery industry often deny the involvement of any mining. Statements referring to a lack of mining, land moved or deforestation are commonplace. These may be concluded with claims on environmental sustainability. However, these claims are often assumptions that may be false.

The storyline around mining and laboratory-grown diamonds needs to change as it misleads customers into believing they may have a lower impact on our planet than they do. This is classed as 'greenwashing'."

Retail Jeweller
The leading jewellery and watch title

Retail Jeweller is the country's oldest jewellery and watch industry trade publication, making it a well-respected and indispensable guide to running a successful business in the trade. The mix of practical advice, industry news, trend information and expert opinion, makes *Retail Jeweller* an essential read for all serious jewellery and watch retailers, brands, manufacturers and suppliers. A subscription to *Retail Jeweller* includes full online access as well as a monthly print magazine and is available to all NAJ members at a 20% discount annually.

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Nana Kay @ Fritz Bandel



Lukas Stöcker, CEO Fritz Bandel

Tradition plus passion for four generations – we're happy to introduce one of the NAJ's newest members.

Founded in 1914, Dusseldorf-based German jewellery manufacturer Fritz Bandel is very well established in the industry, both in its home market and across Europe, including the UK. However, while its long history suggests a business that is steeped in tradition, this is a modern, dynamic company.

"We follow the market's development constantly and offer commercially positioned brands that provide retailers with high margin products," says Lukas Stöcker, the fourth-generation family member now at the helm.

Established as a wholesaler, Fritz Bandel's offering has changed considerably since the early days. Today, the company owns five jewellery brands, with the creative process taking place in its design studio in Dusseldorf. The lead brand – introduced by Stöcker in 2004 – is Nana Kay, a collection of quietly playful sterling silver jewellery with a wide target group (20 to 50 years of age) and suits all tastes and occasions.

"Nana Kay jewellery is desirable and stunning and offers design and quality beyond the price point expectation," adds Stöcker. "Over the years, it has built a high reputation for offering premium quality in the tradition of true quality at affordable prices, geared towards impulse purchasing and high value for money. Inspired by jewellery trends around the globe, every piece is a perfect accessory to match current fashionable looks."

Every piece is handmade in 925 sterling silver and all stones are set. At the end of the production process, each piece has a coat of fine-white rhodium or 14ct gold plating. This ensures a durable shine and true silver look. "Quality without compromise – that's the rule! And we launch two seasonal collections every year."

There are emotional roots to the brand. As Fritz Bandel is family owned, Stöcker wanted to create something to honour this bond. His mother, Renate Stöcker, is known as Nana, so he combined this nickname with a part of her maiden name, Kampert, to create Nana Kay.

Alongside the Nana Kay line are four other branded collections: Nana Kay Gold, style-led and classic designs in 9ct gold with cz, topaz or pearl settings; Dream Charms, collectible sterling silver pieces; Steelwear, edgy, stainless steel jewellery for men and Plaza Diamonds, chic and classic 14ct gold pieces set with diamonds. The marketing for all five brands is created in-house to portray the company's philosophy and ensure a close working relationship with business partners.

"By joining the National Association of Jewellers, we hope to further develop these relationships and our presence in the UK market," explains Stöcker. "This network will be another step towards consolidating a strong client base in the United Kingdom. With our sales representative Micheline Graham, who has known our company for more than a decade and has worked for us for three years, we ensure a close contact with our UK clients and easy communication."



Nana Kay diamond gold ring, opal and diamond platinum ring

> "By joining the National Association of Jewellers, we hope to further develop these relationships and our presence in the UK market.
>
> **Lukas Stöcker, CEO and owner, Fritz Bandel**

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It's all systems go!

A major gemstone and jewellery centre has been a twinkle in Chris Sellors' eye for many years, and he found the perfect spot for it. CW Sellors' impressive edifice on Carsington Water in Derbyshire is nearly complete, so Belinda Morris donned a hard hat to see the plans coming to life.

I remember Chris describing to me his ambitious Carsington project back in 2009 – a 3D model of it was sitting on the CW Sellors stand at IJL, and his enthusiasm for what promised to be a very exciting, all-encompassing public-facing space to showcase the world of gemstones and jewellery was infectious. It sounded amazing.

And now I can confirm it absolutely will be amazing. It's been many years in the conceiving, planning, agreeing and designing (a pandemic-induced halt didn't help), but finally the construction (by GF Tomlinson) is well underway, and it's clear this ambitious gem and jewellery world project will be unique – certainly nationally, perhaps even internationally.

To see for myself how the building work is progressing and to get a feel for what visitors will experience, CW Sellors director Rebecca Sellors (the project manager, working with local award-winning architects Evans Vettori) and workshop manager Paul Barker showed me around the site.

The imposing façade of mellow local stone harmonises with the natural surroundings and sets the scene for visitors, with five windows displaying jewellery to one side of the entrance. On the other side, set in local Hopton limestone, is a 3.3-metre-long hallmarks feature, incorporating all the assay office marks. Following the blasting of the letters and motifs, they have each been gold leafed by hand. Given Chris Sellors' passionate promotion of hallmarking, this is an entirely fitting visual gesture.

The all-glass entrance to the building opens into a light-flooded foyer, and, thanks to a three-storey glass back wall, visitors immediately enjoy an amazing view of the reservoir beyond. On the day I was there, the 15 vast glass windows were being slotted into their frames – it was like being in a very dramatic episode of *Grand Designs*... but without the will-they-won't-they jeopardy. A custom-designed and -made forged steel staircase will lead down to the ground floor (the building is in the side of a hill).

The divisions of the building, on various levels either side of the foyer, will have retail and exhibition-cum-events spaces, a design area and jewellery workshop, hospitality space and a café. Created by long-standing CW Sellors shop-fitting contractors Redd, the centre's interior design will echo the most recent refurbishments and extensions to the company's retail stores. The plans have incorporated plenty of room for the public to view jewellery making in action as well as learn to make something for themselves – training and short courses in jewellery design and manufacture will be on offer.

Factored into the design are very many windows, giving ample light for bench work, as well as views across the countryside and the centre's landscaped gardens. The top floor will offer even grander vistas, with a viewing deck, hospitality space and a VIP suite. For those who need to know such things, there's even space earmarked in the grounds for a helipad. The grand opening of the centre is planned for mid-to-late 2024. Watch this space!



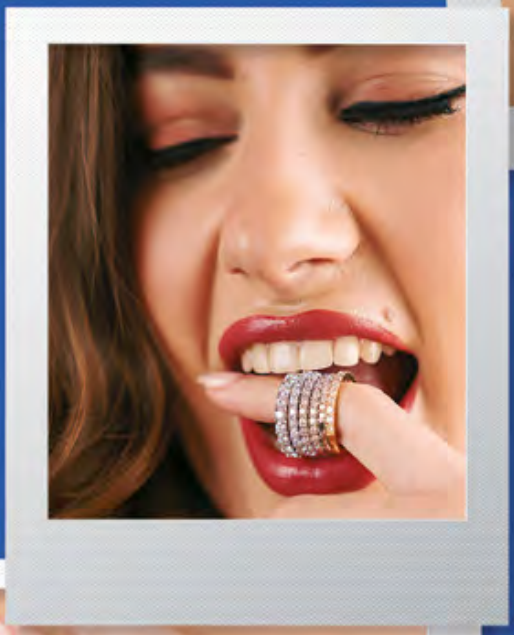


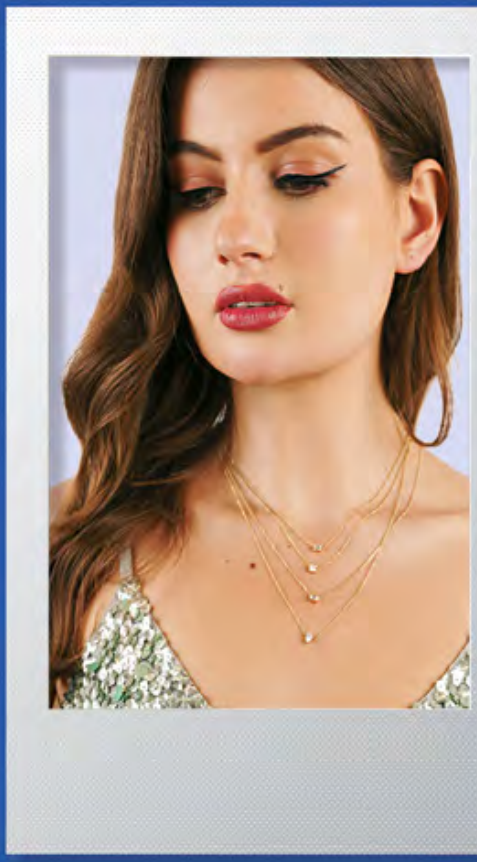
Top - Paul Barker, Rebecca Sellors and Belinda Morris on the roof terrace. Above - A three-storey window with views across the water. Left - The architect's visual of the Carsington project

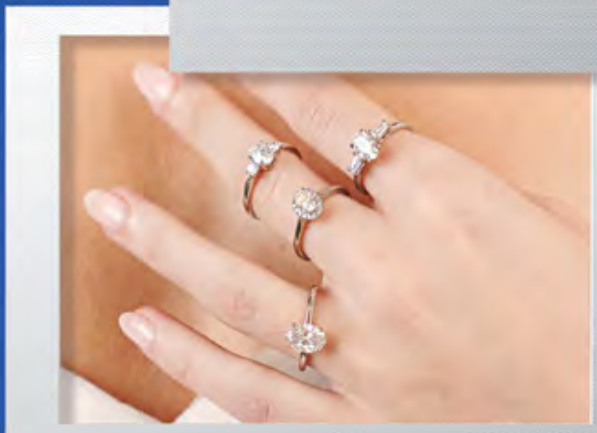












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Our latest JET Stars

Three more winners of the monthly Clarity & Success Award tell us about their jewellery journey and learning experience.



Ruth Duffy, Boodles (February winner)

"I started working at Boodles, Liverpool, back in September 2022. I had previously worked as a cabin crew manager for British Airways for 11 years, but I had a little knowledge of jewellery as, during my final year of flying, I worked for Goldsmiths in Liverpool two days per week.

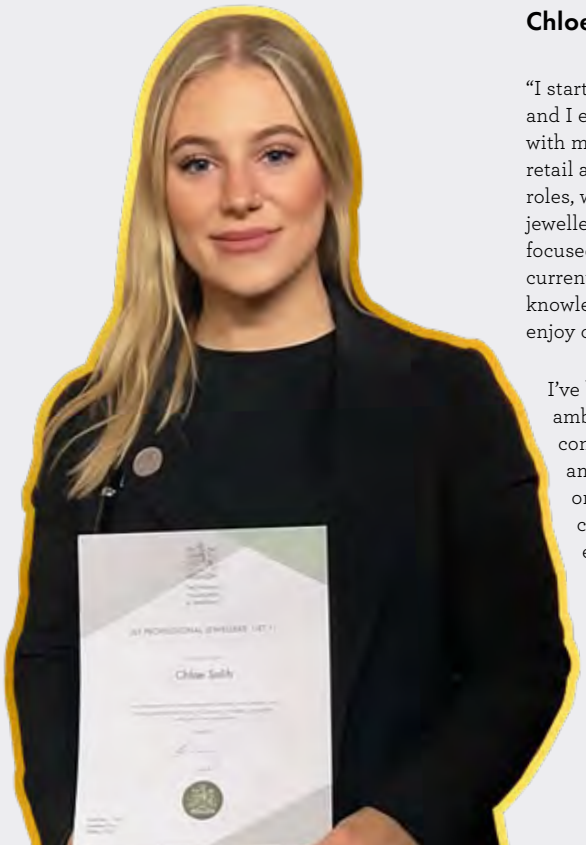
My main role is working on the shop floor, among some of our beautiful pink diamonds and gemstones, which are all hand selected by our directors. The thing I enjoy most about my job is building relationships with new and existing customers. I find out about their love of jewellery and tell them about the history and romance behind our beautiful collections. I'm also very privileged to experience some of the events we host and sponsor, such as Chelsea Flower Show and Cheltenham Gold Cup.

I was introduced to JET when I started at Boodles, and I was very keen to start my course. It has been a very important part of building my confidence and knowledge in jewellery.

The most enjoyable part of the course was the final project – I wrote about Boodles because it's the perfect example of a British designer. I could share information I have on Boodles – a business I'm extremely proud to work for. The store is also known as Boodles House, the original showroom that opened in 1798, known as Boodle & Dunthorne.

Our own design team designed the famous Raindance ring and has built on this fabulous collection. The Victoria & Albert Museum has one of our original Raindance rings in its iconic jewellery exhibition based on stories, and it's very exciting to see these ideas come to life.

Coming from a completely different background, I found the JET assignments gave me a very good insight into the world of jewellery – from shaped diamonds to hallmarking and designs. The JET course has given me the confidence I needed to speak to customers about jewellery. I now intend to carry on with my studies and complete JET2."



Chloe Salih, Chisholm Hunter (March winner)

"I started at Chisholm Hunter in July 2022, and I enjoy my work here, building a rapport with my customers. I've worked in fashion retail a lot, and I love to take on challenging roles, which is why I chose to work in the jewellery industry – it's very customer-focused and every day is a learning curve. My current role has developed my skill set and knowledge on diamonds and watches, which I enjoy communicating to my customers.

I've been assigned as a diamond ambassador in my store, and I've completed the Chisholm Hunter diamond ambassador academy course. I focus on selling diamonds and helping my customers pick the perfect gift or engagement ring.

I love learning and taking courses that test my knowledge. I thought JET would be the first steppingstone to getting comfortable in my role and learning as much as I can to grow into the company and my role. After hearing what it entails, I was excited to start and make sure I get the best score possible.

I enjoyed researching every aspect of the assignments, but I really enjoyed finding out more in-depth information on ruby and sapphire as it made me research the history behind each gemstone and how their colours can impact price and rarity, which is interesting.

However, the most challenging part of the course was the project and researching the warranties/Kimberley Process as it dives into a more technical background of the jewellery industry. Few people think too much about this, but it really opened my eyes and made me understand how the procedures in the jewellery industry work.

Being a diamond ambassador, I'm always speaking about the four Cs to my customers, and I enjoy breaking it down for

Alice Hobbs, Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery (April winner)



"I've always had a love for design and creating things. Having studied costume design and making at Nottingham Trent University, my interest in designing unique pieces grew, and I loved the intricate details of historical costumes and researching the inspiration and history behind them.

Joining Harriet Kelsall in March 2022 continued my love for creating unique pieces, while designing bespoke jewellery and learning all about the jewellery world.

Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery is an amazing company – we care greatly about every one of the customers and their unique story, sharing our passion with them to find the perfect piece. I love how special this role is; I've always enjoyed working with customers and sharing their personal story with them. Throughout my year here, I've assisted on and designed so many beautiful pieces for our customers, and it makes me so happy to know how meaningful each one is.

I started at Harriet Kelsall as an assistant designer, and I am now a junior designer. My role is to design the perfect bespoke piece for our customers, whether that's wedding rings or redesigning a meaningful piece of jewellery inherited from a family member. We also design ready-to-wear pieces for the collection.

I learnt about the JET course as previous colleagues at work had completed it and loved it. They gained lots of knowledge from the course. I wanted to learn more about the jewellery world and increase my knowledge to be more confident in guiding customers. It was my aim to know more about the process behind creating jewellery as well as all the elements that go into it.

The part of the course I particularly enjoyed was learning about gemstones. I loved the research and gained more detailed knowledge about them. I especially loved learning about pearls – it was really fascinating. We're really lucky to work with an amazing selection of gemstones at Harriet Kelsall, so I enjoyed looking at all the stones I wrote about, taking photos of them loose or finding them in previous pieces of jewellery we had made.

The most challenging part was researching and writing about watches because they're completely new to me, and I had to learn everything from the start. If I do get asked questions about watches now, I'm pleased I can share valuable knowledge.

JET has already helped me in my day-to-day work. It's given me a boost in confidence and knowledge that I can share with customers when I advise them on chains, metal types and gemstones.

My hope is to continue learning and developing my design skills and my career in the jewellery world. I hope to carry on growing at Harriet Kelsall and become a senior designer in the future."

> "
> JET has already helped me in my day-to-day work. It's given me that boost in confidence and knowledge that I can share with customers
>
> **Alice Hobbs, Harriet Kelsall Bespoke Jewellery**

each individual diamond ring. I wanted to learn who invented the four Cs, the history behind each diamond and how each cut originated. I wanted a better understanding of the Kimberley Process and warranties, and researching its background was extremely interesting.

JET has shown me the differences between each product we sell in store, taught me how to care for each precious metal and diamonds and explained their history and jewellery industry's procedures and regulations. It's given me a platform to work from, and I now use information from JET in my sales pitches.

I'm continuing to study as I want my knowledge and skillset to stay up to date. I'm hoping to progress at Chisholm Hunter, which is where I would like to stay. I'm looking forward to starting JET2 and achieving this certificate."

> "
> I thought JET would be the first steppingstone to getting comfortable in my role and learning as much as I can to grow into the company and my role.
>
> **Chloe Salih, Chisholm Hunter**

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CLARITY & SUCCESS

10 Ways to Combat Fraud

Specialist jewellery industry insurer TH March advises on ways for businesses to stay alert for online credit card fraud.

Unfortunately, fraud is an inevitable part of running a jewellery business, and individuals looking to carry out fraud have more opportunities to trick small and large businesses online than face to face.

The anonymising effect of the internet means fraudsters using credit cards to gain jewellery can make their transactions appear authentic.

10 ways for jewellery businesses to stay fraud alert:

1. Train your employees to recognise the signs of fraud. Examine your business and determine your unique set of risks. Ensure your employees understand these risks and how to mitigate them. Providing regular training sessions and setting goals for reducing fraud as a percentage of sales can promote profitability.

2. Use anti-fraud software to help detect suspicious activity. Establish your sales order process to address risk concerns. Highlight required transaction fields, verify card and cardholder data, use cookies to recognise customers and identify high-risk international addresses.

3. Protect your merchant account from intrusion. Use monitoring, passwords and information security efforts to minimise the risk of cyber thieves gaining access to your account or payment gateway and making fraudulent fund deposits.

4. Verify all credit card transactions and implement fraud screening procedures. Make sure the name and identifying information on the card match what is on file and check the cardholder's address – then only despatch the items to the address on record.

5. Prepare to handle transactions post-authorisation. Evaluate how you will deal with approved and declined authorisations before fulfilling an order. Require email order confirmations for approved transactions and review declined authorisations to take appropriate actions.

6. Be sure you are dealing with a real person and not a bot, malware or synthetic identity. Watch for larger than usual purchases or those made outside of normal business hours or from unfamiliar customers. The items of jewellery may appear completely random in size, colour and type.

7. Be cautious of phone scams. Sometimes a fraudster will make a payment over the phone using a stolen card number and request to collect the goods via a courier service, or friend/relative – because their address doesn't match the legitimate cardholder's. They may even buy online and ask to pick up in store, hoping to trick staff by claiming they've forgotten the physical card used to purchase and for verifying identity.

8. Use fraud prevention tools like Address Verification Service (AVS), Card Security Verification Codes, Verified by Visa® and MasterCard® SecureCode. Considering implementing 3D Secure authentication on your website as this will not only help to reduce online fraud, but it's a requirement under PSD2 payment rules. Enhance these checks by partnering with a payment provider (PSP) that runs background checks.

9. Keep your IT systems up to date with the latest, most secure version and use anti-malware protection for the best chance of keeping attacks at bay. Regularly test your e-commerce system to find vulnerabilities.

10. Have a response plan. If you experience fraud, a plan will help you respond quickly and effectively and minimise the damage. It will prevent it from happening again in the future.



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Hold on to what you've got

Don't neglect your existing employees in hunting for new employees, says JBN facilitator Michael Donaldson.

Attendees at Congress 2023



Attracting and recruiting people into retail in 2023 is extremely difficult. To illustrate the point, 17 per cent of JBN members were unable to attend the annual Retail Jewellers' Congress at the NAJ Summit due to staff shortages and the related issues of cover – despite their best efforts to interview suitable candidates.

Plenty has been written and reported about the tricks and pitfalls of attracting and recruiting staff, but less on retaining employees, regardless of their length of service.

The cliché it's easier and cheaper to sell more to existing customers than to new customers also applies to employees. It's easier and cheaper to keep (known) good employees than it is to recruit (potential) good employees. And while recruiters and the media would have us believe there's a shortage of good people, stories of headhunting are on the increase, and it's not just the money people are leaving for. Sometimes, the smallest of things can tip the balance and make people feel ignored, undervalued and taken for granted, thus more vulnerable to a flattering approach.

When was the last time you lost an underperformer to such an approach? Can't remember? That's probably because it's only the good performers who get approached.

What are you doing to protect, inspire, retain and motivate your good performers? Maybe stop spending so much time consumed with the demands, distractions and frustrations of recruiting the unknown quantities of new retail employees.

At June's Retail Jewellers' Congress, we heard from Rebecca Robins, a retail recruiter with a wealth of practical experience: four years in retail management, six years in retail and head office agency recruitment, 11 in house at Deckers, Joules and Superdry covering store and head office appointments on a global scale.

It's fair to say she knows a thing or two about retail recruitment and retention, so here are some tips she gave delegates:

#1. In retail, most candidates want to interview with you because they love your product. It's highly likely they're a customer. If they have a rubbish interview experience, you may lose a valuable customer, too. Make sure every candidate has a positive experience... even if they're unsuccessful

#2. It's really important for you and your team to forge a relationship with your recruit from the second they accept the job

#3. You need to set an amazing example to your new employee as much as they need to show that they have the skills and competencies to succeed in the role

#4. The probation period with your new starter is crucial for you both to make a great impression and set your new starter up for success, setting the path to good retention

#5. Create an induction planner with all the training they need to cover in their first weeks/months

#6. Set clear goals you expect them to achieve in their first weeks and months

#7. Schedule weekly one-to-ones during this time to give feedback on their performance and ask if they need additional support

#8. Make an occasion of them passing their probation

#9. Have regular one-to-ones once they've passed their probation

#10. Remember to have annual appraisals

Within a week of starting a new marketing job, I discovered I'd inherited a staffing issue that had allowed good people to leave or demand more money to stay, when a very good product manager walked into my office to tell me they'd received a very tempting offer from a competitor.

A quick review of their contribution, capabilities, behaviours and attitudes with HR, and the marketing director confirmed we didn't want to lose them and certainly not to a competitor, so I countered and secured them until the next time.

In the weeks that followed, I restructured the department to reduce recruitment costs, retain skills and secure the current business. I split my product team of nine into three cells of three with a senior product manager, a product manager and a product assistant in each. As and when I faced the pay me or lose me ultimatum, I now had another choice: promoting from within the cell and recruiting a new product assistant. It's important to know your organisation is resilient enough to survive and thrive after losing a good performer – should that ever happen to you.

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VICENZAORO, THE TREND SHOW

The best of Made in Italy and European high jewellery creations and luxury brands on stage in the ICON community and The Design Room. From 8th to 12th September 2023, in the beautiful Italian town of Vicenza, the heart of the Land of Venice.

The Jewellery Boutique Show organised by the Italian Exhibition Group is an international landmark event for the entire gold and jewellery supply chain, offering a high-level business experience.

The entire gold and jewellery supply chain in Vicenza

The trade event – celebrating its 70th anniversary in 2024 – showcases the best jewellery manufacturing, components and semi-finished products; diamonds, precious and coloured gemstones, contemporary jewellery, the latest innovative solutions for packaging and visual merchandising and the most advanced technologies for production and processing.

A business hub for the sector and a privileged observatory of the latest trends in style and design, VO is presenting a world preview of the new edition of *The Jewellery Trendbook*.

High-end Made in Italy jewellery

High jewellery creations and luxury brands showcase in the ICON community, which hosts the best of Made in Italy and international production. Italian excellence on show includes top brands from Damiani to Roberto Coin, Crivelli and Fope with iconic and timeless creations, colourful collections, gemstones mixed with different shades of gold and patented technology. Haute couture jewellery is on display from maisons such as Annamaria Cammilli, Roberto De Meglio or Palmiero, devoted to innovation and research on gold surfaces and textures. Gismondi 1754, listed on Euronext Growth Milan, is also there with its recent acquisition Vendorafa, historic brand from the district of Valenza. Numerous classic jewellery brands committed to preserving the goldsmithing Italian tradition are also exhibiting: Leo Pizzo, Mirco Visconti, Davite & Delucchi, Giorgio Visconti and World Diamond Group, to mention a few.



Fope bracelet and Roberto Coin earrings

An international flair with new entries at Vicenzaoro September 2023

The business experience in September is further enriched by new entries: the Spanish Carrera y Carrera, for example, with more than 135 years of jewellery-making tradition; made-in-Germany design by Jörg Heinz, renowned for its system of interchangeable fasteners; Staurino Fratelli, four generations of creations appreciated by Hollywood divas such as Sandra Bullock; the leading Canadian Maison Birks. Also back in Vicenza, the French brand Djula with its glam rock-inspired jewellery, much appreciated by singers Rihanna, Beyoncé and Ariana Grande, and consolidated presences such as the English Yoko London, with a selection of the most unusual pearls of colour and size. Alongside, Dámaso Martinez, Autore, Akillis, Stenzhorn or Schreiner Fine Jewellery, known for its luxurious creations coveted by the royal houses of many countries.

Creativity and research for red carpet jewellery: the design room is back

Unique pieces with a highly recognisable style, craftsmanship and creative talent are the protagonists of The Design Room. From Stephen Webster, a true icon in the world of jewellery design and in great demand among celebrities, including Jennifer Lopez, Christina Aguilera, Cate Blachett and Megan Fox, to Busatti Milano, a prestigious name from the Italian fashion capital. Miseno Jewelry, paying homage to the beauty of the Campania coastline, or the eccentric and luxurious pieces by young Chilean designer José María Goñi, who has conquered the Malaysian Royal Family as well as the singer Madonna. The Baroque jewellery of Alessio Boschi, a true ambassador of the Design Room who creates exclusive pieces of art interwoven with cultural citations, is on show. Vicenzaoro's treasure trove of design is also featuring Netali Nissim; the dreamy collections of Morphée Joaillerie; Salima Thakker; the elegant creations of Marina B, founded by Marina Bulgari and relaunched by French-Italian Guy Bedarida. Don't miss Leonori, Osi Vitoria Jewelry inspired by Chinese ink paintings, the contemporary touch of Mousson Atelier, the innovative design of Antonini Milano, which has been flaunted on the red carpet by stars such as Halle Berry, Anne Hathaway and Taylor Swift, and the Dreamboule rings, a blend of watchmaking culture, goldsmith tradition and liquid alchemy.

Focus on watchmaking: the Time B2B community and VO'Clock privé

After its debut in January 2023, the Time community is staging contemporary watches, independent brands and micro-brands that want to expand their presence in jewellery store windows and some of the best components and accessories producers.

On the other hand, VO'Clock Privé (8th to 10th September), the elegant lounge dedicated to watchmaking culture, will be open to the public. For its second edition it will gather together in a private area the most sought-after brands and a public of enthusiasts and collectors, offering a programme of meetings and technical workshops with the sector's most authoritative experts.

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Enamelled gold brooch set with coral, turquoise and pearls, by Carlo Giuliano. c 1885

A Touch of Gold

The Reminiscences of Geoffrey Munn (ACC Art Book, **£25**)

Geoffrey Munn, a familiar face on the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow*, is an acknowledged specialist in antique jewellery and has written several books on the subject. This, however, is his first account of himself – even though he wasn't convinced it would be of much interest. A close friend insisted he did indeed have something to say, and, on reflection, Munn saw how regrettable it was so few of his predecessors from the commercial art world had written memoirs, despite having so much to share.

"I hope the many shortcomings of my own story will become less apparent as its historical value increases, and that in writing it, I have managed to convey a little of the kaleidoscopic excitement that coloured almost every day of my life," Munn says in his foreword.

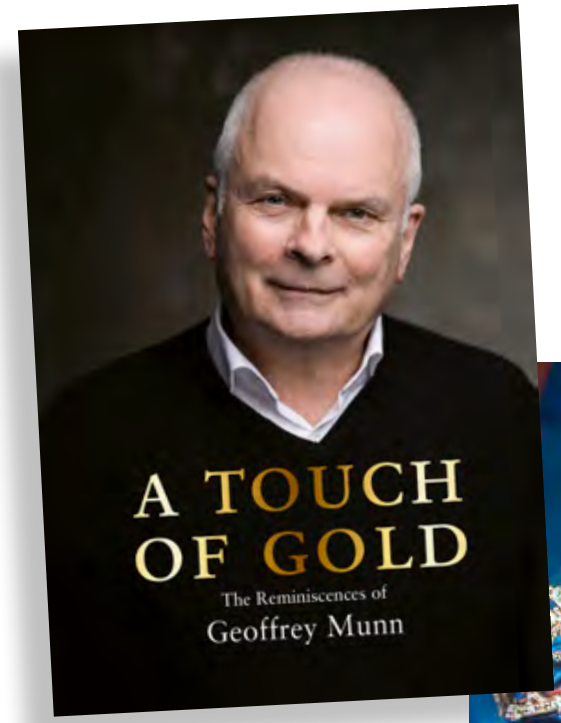
He has. And what a wonderful life! His is a warm, charming page-turner of an autobiography: from start to finish full of fascinating characters, incredible and amusing anecdotes, self-effacing humour and wry asides, beautifully detailed observations and, of course, stuffed with great nuggets of jewellery and art history.

The tale opens with Munn's beautifully descriptive recollections of a largely idyllic post-war childhood in the English countryside, progressing to a growing interest in English literature and history of art (thanks to an inspirational teacher) and eventually a job interview at the renowned jewellers Wartski, in London's Regent Street in 1972. The "callow hirsute youth with fashionable Beatles haircut and full beard" joined the shop where he was to remain for the next 50 years, eventually becoming managing director and its official historian.

Immediately enchanted by the shop's dazzling stock, the young Munn's growing passion for jewellery gathered pace, and the collection of work by Carlo Giuliano sparked a deeper interest in art history and "the joy of original research" – often conducted in an unconventional manner. At age 22, three years into the job, his article about the Giuliano family was published by *The Connoisseur*, and so began Munn's engrossing and successful extra career as an author of books on antique jewellery.

Each chapter of this book is devoted to a different aspect of the jewellery world and his rich life. It ranges from collectors and collecting (with some very bizarre encounters) to friendships, royalty, tiaras, haute couture, witchcraft, death, theatre and, of course, TV – moments from *Antiques Roadshow* give a behind-the-scenes insight into the programme. There are very many take-aways from Munn's book, but one in particular stays with me. He has written and received hundreds of letters over the years and stresses they are "the only respectable way of introducing oneself to a complete stranger." Love it.

Geoffrey Munn is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries and the Linnean Society and was Fourth Warden of the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths. In 2012, he was appointed an Officer of the Order of the British Empire for services to charity, and in 2016, Queen Elizabeth II made him a Member of the Royal Victorian Order.





Three diamond-set tiaras of British Royal provenance. By kind permission of His Majesty King Charles III

The last word goes to...

Helen Haddow

The chief executive of the Houlden Group



Describe your journey to the Houlden Group

I was extremely focused on becoming a chartered accountant, initially with Arthur Young (later EY). I pursued that career until I was a senior manager and realised the move to partner didn't appeal. I left the profession for a more balanced life with two young children. After a few years working for myself, I took on a consultancy project to assist Houlden Jewellers replace its dated computer system. Three months later, the company initially offered me a reduced-hours, permanent position, then invited me to join full time. I'm still here, 23 years later – the jewellery industry got under my skin!

Who inspired you, career-wise?

That's difficult – there have been many people at various stages of my life. A key one in the jewellery industry must be Stuart Laing, a visionary with drive and great passion. He was often ahead of his time, and some ideas he presented to the Houlden Group initially gained little traction; the members weren't ready. However, Stuart is persuasive and opened their eyes to important issues, and he showed me how imperative it is to inspire and encourage people to go outside their comfort zone to drive progress and development.

What have you learned about the industry since you joined the Houlden Group?

I learned so much at the beginning, being a complete novice to the jewellery and watch world. Understanding its idiosyncrasies was a steep learning curve. One thing that surprised me was how traditional the industry is; with our retailers and supplier partners so steeped in history, they can often be slow to accept the rate of change in this ever-adapting landscape. It's vital for Houlden to educate and encourage them to see the opportunities in adapting.

What were your objectives when you became CEO, and how have those changed?

Taking over from the founder of the company was a huge challenge – they were big shoes to fill. My key objective was to create a culture where everyone feels valued and listened to. This focus helped us deal with the challenges of the pandemic and emerge stronger as an operation.

Today, there's a greater focus on responsibility. This translates to our team and their wellbeing and with our members and supplier partners through alignment with our key company values of being passionate, principled and progressive, as well as our crusade to encourage everyone to take steps towards greater responsibility.

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Tell us something not many people know about you?

I don't think it's a secret anymore... but I love dancing, especially Scottish highland dancing, and I still teach and adjudicate all over the world. My passion stems from becoming the World Adult Highland Dancing Champion.

What are the three words that sum you up?

Considerate, driven, positive

If you could sit down with a wine/coffee with anyone in the trade, who would it be and what would you talk about?

Not one person, but I'd like to sit down with some of the key independent jewellers not (yet) part of Houlden but meet our entry criteria. I'd like to understand their business model and where the Houlden Advantage could have the same significant impact on their growth and development as it has for our current members.

What are the challenges you believe the industry currently faces, and how can the Houlden Group help its members meet them?

Staying relevant to the younger generation is imperative – these people are the next spenders – and showing that jewellers are not just focused on revenue but aim to have a balanced approach to people, planet and profit.

Our members invest in the education and welfare of their people while contributing to their wider community. They have a responsible approach to sourcing products and services and always strive to deliver outstanding experiences.

Houlden assists by providing exceptional training and education via the Jewellers of Excellence Academy, which covers all areas of continued professional development at all levels, from those new to the business to industry professionals.

Houlden has also embarked on a project to support our members taking steps towards greater responsibility and has provided input in many aspects, including supply chain audits as well as sustainable policies and practices.

However, the major Houlden Advantage is we facilitate members' information sharing across diverse levels. These learnings and focus on key areas of development help everyone grow their business and deliver exceptional experiences for their customers.

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