Headline Sponsor

Bonhams

# Valuers' Conference

## EVENT GUIDE 2026

**Saturday 16th May - Sunday 17th May**

Edgbaston Park Hotel

The Institute of Registered Valuers

# Welcome

**Join us on 16-17 May 2026 at the Edgbaston Park Hotel, Birmingham, for the Valuers' Conference, hosted by the Institute of Registered Valuers (IRV).**

Proudly supported once again by our returning headline sponsor, Bonhams, this standalone event brings together professionals and enthusiasts from across the jewellery valuation and gemmology community in a welcoming and collaborative environment.



## A renewed focus on deep-dive, hands-on learning

Now in its 37th year, the Valuers' Conference continues to build on the strengths of previous events—this time from a fantastic venue perfectly suited to our programme.

Responding to valuable delegate feedback, all workshops and masterclasses have been extended to 120 minutes, each with a comfort break built in. This added time allows for richer discussion, greater practical engagement, and deeper learning throughout the weekend.

On Saturday evening, the Valuers' Gala Dinner offers a chance to dress up, reconnect with peers, and celebrate standout achievements, including the presentation of the David Wilkins Award and recognition of the IRV's newest Members and Fellows.

## Supporting the next generation of valuers

As we look to the future of the profession, we are especially committed to welcoming emerging talent. With generous support from the NAJ Educational Trust, we are delighted to offer 30 half-price tickets exclusively for current students.

This conference plays an essential role in shaping professional excellence, within jewellery businesses and for individuals at every stage of their valuation journey. Whether you're attending for the first time or advancing your expertise, you'll find a weekend full of insight, inspiration, and practical learning through expert-led talks and interactive workshops.

## Be part of the experience

We encourage all delegates to plan their visit, share their attendance with peers, and get ready to make the most of everything the 2026 Valuers' Conference has to offer. With industry-leading speakers and exciting programme enhancements, this year's event promises to be one of our most rewarding yet.

We look forward to welcoming you.



**Heather Callaway**
IRV Chair

# It's good to get together

**The 37th Valuers' Conference**

Get ready for a high-energy and stimulating event! The Conference is a friendly and welcoming affair that offers an exciting mix of rigorous business sessions and practical hands-on workshops. Attendees work hard to fully benefit from all that's on offer, and with each passing year, we welcome back familiar faces and many new ones.

The programme is designed to broaden the knowledge and expertise of attendees, whether they are a valuer or not. On Saturday, we kick off with main presentations that will captivate and inspire you.

Then, on Sunday, we jump into practical, lecture-based workshops and masterclasses that provide a deep dive into a variety of topics.

Come ready to learn, network, and have a great time as you learn from expert speakers and fellow guests. The Valuers' Conference remains the place to be if you want to stay at the forefront of your industry and take your expertise to the next level.

| **PRICING** | |
|---|---|
| **NAJ/IRV Member** | |
| Two Day Ticket | £390 +VAT |
| One Day Ticket | £225 +VAT |
| **Non-Member** | |
| Two Day Ticket | £440 +VAT |
| One Day Ticket | £265 +VAT |
| Gala Dinner (included in 2-Day Ticket Price only) | £30 +VAT |



*"The variety of workshops and masterclasses means that everyone can benefit from attending, from Valuers to Retailers, and the relaxed and informal learning environment makes it easy for novices to begin their studies without being overwhelmed.*

*"I believe that in today's market, both independent and high street retailers cannot afford to have untrained and inexperienced staff, and the Valuers' Conference is a perfect place to improve your knowledge and skills."*

**Jules Proctor | Biagio Jewellers**

# Get the most out of the Conference

### ID Badges

Each attendee will have a lanyard and badge, and we ask that you wear it at all times so you can get access to the correct conference rooms.

The badge includes your name, business and whether you are a valuer, retailer, designer, supplier or student.

The NAJ team will be on hand across the two days to help direct people to the correct locations and answer any questions you may have.



### Photos

A photographer will be taking photos during the events – lots of them! They will be popping into many of the sessions at the Valuers' Conference and during our social events.

In accordance with GDPR, all participants have been asked for permission to be photographed and/or videoed and their responses recorded.

Photographs and/or videos taken by participants at the Conference should be for personal use only. They may not be distributed or published without the permission of those included in the photographs and/or videos.



'Personal use' includes putting pictures and/or videos on social media, provided that the security settings prevent the public from viewing the photographs and/or videos.

NB: Delegates must not photograph and/or video any workshops/presentations without prior consent.

### Social Media

We encourage attendees to share their participation at the Valuers' Conference via social media platforms.

Please feel free to tag in the Association (@UKNAJ) where appropriate.

### Wifi

The hotel operates a free Wi-Fi service.



# Keynote Speakers
## Saturday 16th May



**Jonathan Darracott**

**Similar Watches, Very Different Values**

Jonathan Darracott is Global Head of Watches at Bonhams, based at New Bond Street, with over 25 years' experience as both auctioneer and manufacturer. He oversaw the 2,000-piece Collection of a European Nobleman (2015), one of the largest single-owner watch sales, and pioneered the company's first online-only auctions, helping establish Bonhams as the UK market leader for watches. Uniquely, he is also an accomplished watchmaker.



**Francesca Brickell Cartier**

**The Cartiers: The Untold Story**

Francesca Cartier Brickell is a direct descendant of the Cartier family. Her great-great-great-grandfather founded Cartier in 1847, and her grandfather, Jean-Jacques Cartier, was the last family member to own and manage a branch of the firm. After leaving a career in finance, she independently researched her family's history and authored the bestselling book The Cartiers.

In her talk, she shares a behind-the-scenes account of the dynasty that transformed a modest Parisian workshop into a global luxury house, recounting her worldwide research and the three brothers who built the brand's international legacy.



**Mark Cullinan**

**Diamonds: Valuing from Mine to Marketplace**

Mark Cullinan, great-grandson of Sir Thomas Cullinan - the discoverer of the Premier (now Cullinan) Diamond Mine - was born and raised in South Africa. After a decade in London's investment sector, he spent the next 30 years deeply involved in the diamond industry. Mark holds Diamond Grading and Rough Diamond diplomas from HRD Antwerp and has contributed to diamond prospecting efforts in South Africa. He is the owner and CEO of Cullinan Diamonds, specialising in diamonds, investment diamonds, and jewellery.



**Dr Yun Luo**

**Diamond grading report**

Dr. Yun Luo is the Director of Metrology and Quality Control at GIA, where she leads a team dedicated to the science of measurement in diamond grading. She focuses on aligning instruments with GIA's rigorous standards and developing processes and resources that ensure measurement quality across all GIA laboratories.

Dr. Luo earned her bachelor's degree from the Gemmological Institute at China University of Geosciences (Wuhan) and her Ph.D. in Environmental Mineralogy from Miami University, Ohio. Since joining GIA's Research and Development division in 2011, she has been committed to advancing measurement science to support research, production, and the integrity of GIA's grading systems.



**Justin K Prim**

**Classic Cuts of History: Exploring Gemstone Designs through Antique Jewelry and Art Synopsis**

Justin K Prim is an American gemcutter based in France. He has studied gemcutting traditions worldwide and completed gemmology programs at GIA and AIGS. Justin has taught gemology and gemcutting at AIGS and IGT in Bangkok, and founded the Faceting Apprentice Institute. He has authored several books on gemcutting and regularly writes articles, produces videos, and lectures on its history.

In this talk, he explores gemstone history and design through surviving jewellery and painted sources, from the late Medieval and Renaissance periods to the Cheapside Hoard. He'll examine antique and traditional cuts, tracing technological advances in gemcutting tools and explain their historical significance and enduring influence.



**Sarah Caldwell Steele**

**Carbon-Based Gems, Carbon-Based Consequences: Jet's Synthetic Legacy Proves Some Forevers are Measured in Catastrophe, Not Carats**

Sarah Caldwell Steele, Curator of Jet at Whitby Museum, discovered Whitby Jet aged seven and has spent over 40 years as a commercial lapidary. With a geology degree and Fellowships of the Gem-A, she is now the leading authority on Jet. She is also a PhD researcher at Durham University, developing new methods to identify and classify ancient carbonaceous materials in archaeology.

Her talk explores how Victorian demand for Whitby Jet spurred the creation of early synthetics that contributed to the rise of plastic and the Anthropocene. Reflecting on lab-grown diamonds, she examines the lasting consequences of solving material crises through innovation - and the warning history offers the diamond industry.

# Workshops
## Sunday 17th May

**Kate Flitcroft – Auctioneering: Behind the Scenes**
Gain insight into the art and strategy behind auctions in this interactive workshop. Through a live mock auction, delegates will explore the auctioneer's role, including preparation, estimating strategies and the subtle techniques used to control pace and engagement.

**Pravin Pattni – Valuing Asian Jewellery**
With gold prices at historic highs, valuing Asian jewellery presents growing challenges. Using live pieces, this hands-on session will demonstrate that materials once considered straightforward now require a more disciplined, nuanced valuation approach.

**Tracy Jukes – Coloured Gemstone Pricing**
Tracy will examine coloured gemstone pricing across the past, present and anticipated future. Delegates will assess a range of coloured stones and learn how to establish a fair trade value.

**Justin K Prim – The Science of Gem Cutting**
This workshop combines traditional gemmology with optical science to explain how different cutting styles influence colour, brilliance and overall beauty. Attendees will gain practical insight into cut design, colour control and what to look for when purchasing cut stones or commissioning a lapidary.





**Sarah Caldwell Steele – Practising the Dark Arts: Untangling Black Gem Materials**
Black gemstones can present significant identification challenges due to their opacity. This workshop explores why standard techniques often fail and demonstrates the specialist methods used to distinguish jet from its many simulants.

**Jonathan Darracott – Watch Complications and Why They Are Valuable**
This hands-on session will explore a variety of watch complications, examining both their function and the factors that contribute to their value.

**Charles Carmona – Estimating Weights of Mounted Gemstones: Common and Uncommon Shapes**
An accessible introduction to the key factors used when estimating the weight of mounted gemstones. The session combines clear, animated explanations with hands-on examination of stones in a wide range of shapes.

**Barry Sullivan – Let's See How It's Made**
Learn how different manufacturing techniques — including rubber mould, wax, CAD wax and handmade processes — affect value, and how to identify these methods in practice.

# Workshops
## Sunday 17th May

**Howard Levine – Synthetic Diamond Prices**
Howard reviews the diamond market over the past 12 months, exploring why premium synthetic diamonds have remained stable while many natural categories experienced double-digit declines. The session also examines USA–India trade dynamics and how jewellers can protect their margins.

**Charlotte Rose and Lisa Levinson – ASSURE Program**
An exploration of the ASSURE Program, covering its technical framework and offering hands-on experience with the testing equipment.

**Rachel Kinsella – Valuing Unique and Complex Items: Building a Defensible Framework**
This workshop examines how to produce defensible valuations for complex and unusual jewellery where comparables are limited or imperfect. Using a detailed case study, it will demonstrate a structured framework for selecting, analysing and applying comparable data, supported by bounded adjustments and consistent methodology.

**Rupert Huddy – Hallmarks and Designer Stamps**
A practical session exploring the differences between sponsors and makers marks, featuring examples of fakes, forgeries and reproductions for hands-on examination.

**Gabriel Kleinberg – Investigating Gemstone Treatments**
While heat, diffusion, coatings and fillings are becoming increasingly sophisticated, they almost always leave behind evidence for the observant gemmologist to follow. Armed with only a loupe and tweezers, we will be delving into the world of treatments, and these "red flags," such as suspicious inclusion patterns, surface-reaching features, and colour inconsistencies. By the end of the session, you will have a renewed confidence in your ability to detect enhancements and a deep understanding of why disclosure is vital for the integrity of our industry.

**Jackie Sanders and Gaynor Wright – Progressing with FoAP**
Designed for those considering an application to become an NAJ IRV, this session explores the mandatory and often challenging requirements, including worksheets and written submissions.

**Seth Solomons – Large Diamond Valuations**
This workshop examines the differences involved in valuing large diamonds for insurance, open-market sales and diamond reports, including certificated and uncertificated stones, and where to source suitable comparisons.



# Gala Dinner

On Saturday evening, attendees are invited to a special three-course gala dinner.

The dining experience enables attendees to network and rest after a full day's Conference. The return of the gala dinner also gives delegates the opportunity to celebrate this year's David Wilkins Award winner.

**Dress Code**: Smart
**Theme**: A Stone With a Story

*A piece of jewellery featuring a gemstone of particular meaning, rarity, history or personal significance. Whether it is an extraordinary coloured stone, a remarkable diamond, a treasured heirloom, or a piece with an intriguing provenance, we encourage you to select something that speaks to you. As valuers and jewellery professionals, we understand that every stone carries more than just beauty; it carries story, craftsmanship and legacy. We look forward to an evening of sparkle, conversation and shared stories.*



# David Wilkins Award

The David Wilkins Trophy will be presented to this year's winner at the launch of the Valuers' Conference on Saturday, 16th May.

The David Wilkins Award is the pinnacle of achievement for jewellery valuers, made all the more prestigious as it is voted for by peers and fellow IRV members and colleagues.



NAJ Educational Trust
Supporting Jewellery Education Since 1994

# Student Support

Thanks to the support of the NAJ Educational Trust, we are able to offer more discounted student tickets than ever before.

Up to 30 students will have the opportunity to attend this year's Conference at a special discounted rate. To be eligible, you must be a current student.



## Saturday 16th May Timetable

| | |
|---|---|
| 09.00 | Registration |
| 09.45 | Welcome |
| 10.00 | Francesca Brickell Cartier |
| 11.00 | Comfort Break |
| 11.20 | Jonathan Darracott |
| 12.05 | Sarah Caldwell Steele |
| 12.55 | Lunch |
| 14.00 | Dr. Yun Luo |
| 14.45 | Mark Cullinan |
| 15.30 | Comfort Break |
| 16.00 | Justin K Prim |
| 16.45 | Thanks and Close |
| 19.00 | GALA DINNER |

# Sunday 17th May Timetable

| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **09.00** | **SESSION 1** | Pravin Pattni - Valuing Asian Jewellery: Easy and not s… SOLD OUT | Tracy Jukes - Coloured Gemstone Pricing: Past, Present & Pre… Future T… SOLD OUT | Justin K Prim - The Science of Gemcutting | Kate Flitcroft - Auctioneering: Behind the Scenes | Barry Sullivan - Let's See How it's Made | *Howard Levine & Charlotte Rose - Synthetic Diamond Values & Pricing / Disclosure & Detection: Protecting Integrity in the Diamond Supply Chain* |
| **11.00** | **Comfort Break** | | | | | | |
| **11.30** | **SESSION 2** | Rachel Kinsella – Valuing Unique and Complex Items: Buil… a Defe… Frame… SOLD OUT | Tracy Jukes - Coloured Gemstone Pricing: Past, Present & P… Future… SOLD OUT | Jonathan Darracott – Watch Complications and Why They Are Valuable | Kate Flitcroft - Auctioneering: Behind the Scenes | Charles Carmona – Estimating Weights of Mounted Gemstones: Common and Uncommon Shapes | Rupert Huddy – Hallmarks and Designer Stamps |
| **13.30** | **Lunch** | | | | | | |
| **15.00** | **SESSION 3** | Gabriel Kleinberg – Investigating Gemstone Treatm… SOLD OUT | Jackie Sanders and Gaynor Wright – Progressing with FoAP | Jonathan Darracott – Watch Complications and Why The… Valua… SOLD OUT | Sarah Caldwell Steele – Practising the Dark Arts: Untangling Black Gem Materials | Charles Carmona – Estimating Weights of Mounted Gemstones: Common and Uncommon Shapes | Seth Solomons – Large Diamond Valuati… SOLD OUT |
| **17.00** | **Close** | | | | | | |



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Association
of Jewellers

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