

AGTA Announces 2016 Summer AGTA Spectrum Awards™ Winners

Dallas, Texas, July 25, 2016 - The American Gem Trade Association is delighted to announce the winners of the prestigious AGTA Spectrum Awards™. The competition was held in New York on July 23rd and 24th and is regarded as the world's preeminent colored gemstone and cultured pearl design competition. The prestigious judges for the competition this year were the following: Gail Brett-Levine of National Association of Jewelry Appraisers; Diane Garmendia of 33 Jewels at El Paseo; Jay Mednikow of J.H. Mednikow & Co., Inc.; Victor Velyan of Victor-Christy Studios; and Lew Wackler of Lew Wackler Gem Co.

"What a spectacular collection of winners!" said Douglas K. Hucker, AGTA CEO. "The AGTA Spectrum Awards™ always showcases the best, most innovative and the most exciting evolutions in the design and colored gemstone industry and this year was certainly no exception. Unquestionably the quality of the gemstones and metals in the craftsmanship was elevated this year in all of the entries we received, and that was evident in the choices our expert judges made."

Winners of the 2016 Summer AGTA Spectrum Awards™ are:

Best of.....

Best of Show

Ruben Bindra, B & B Fine Gems - Suite of round, brilliant Russian demantoid Garnets (24.67 ctw.).

Best Use of Color

Derek Katzenbach, Katzenbach Designs - 14K white gold ring featuring a 4.97 ct. bicolored Tourmaline accented with tsavorite Garnets, Tourmalines and Diamonds (.69 ctw.).

Best Use of Pearls

Judy Evans, Oliver & Espig Gallery of Fine Arts - Platinum pendant featuring a 13.44mm golden South Sea cultured Pearl accented with Diamonds.

Best Use of Platinum and Color

Kathy Kinev, Jewel Creations, Inc. - Platinum "St. Chapelle" ring featuring Rubies, Sapphires, tsavorite Garnets and blue and white Diamonds.

Fashion Forward

Lorenzo Chavez, Geogem-USA - Platinum and 18K yellow and rose gold "Gift from the Abyss" pendant featuring a 124.73 ct. carved Kunzite accented with blue Zircons and Diamonds (.82 ctw.).

Spectrum

Bridal Wear

Bridal Wear - 1st Place and Platinum Honors

Ricardo Basta, E. Eichberg, Inc. - Platinum "Royal Blue" ring featuring a 12.00 ct. blue Sapphire accented with Diamonds (2.59 ctw.). The ring features a detachable 18K yellow gold "Quilt" jacket featuring Turquoise accented with Diamonds (.43 ctw.) and tsavorite Garnets (.16 ctw.).

Bridal Wear - 2nd Place

Alexia Connellan, Alexia Connellan Luxury Jewelry - Platinum "Regency Earrings" featuring mint Tourmalines (8.63 ctw.) accented with Diamonds (2.50 ctw.).

Bridal Wear - 3rd Place

Caroline Chartouni, Caroline C - 18K white gold earrings featuring red Spinel accented with Diamonds.

Bridal Wear - Honorable Mention

Jessica Neiwert, Jessica Nei - 18K rose gold "Snow Blossom" convertible earrings featuring lavender Chalcedony (13.50 ctw.) accented with Moonstones (1.66 ctw.), pink Sapphires (.41 ctw.), Amethysts (.29 ctw.) and Diamonds (.54 ctw.).

Bridal Wear - Honorable Mention

Samuel Sulimanov, Samuel Sylvio Designs - 18K white gold earrings featuring Paraiba Tourmalines (3.0 ctw.) accented with Paraiba Tourmaline melee (.68 ctw.) and Diamonds.

Bridal Wear - Manufacturing Honors

Dennis de Jonghe, deJonghe Original Jewelry - Platinum ring featuring a 2.20 ct. Aquamarine accented with Diamonds (0.40 ctw.).

Bridal Wear - GEM DIVA Award

Heena Chheda Shah, Real Gems, Inc. - 18K white gold "Roselyn" earrings featuring eight pear-shaped Emeralds (15.89 ctw.) accented with fancy and round Diamonds (3.49 ctw.).

Business/Day Wear

Business/Day Wear - 1st Place

Ricardo Basta, E. Eichberg, Inc. - 18K yellow gold and platinum "Honey" ring featuring a 13.58 ct. Heliodor accented with Sapphires (.82 ctw.) and Diamonds (.96 ctw.).

Business/Day Wear - 2nd Place

T. Foster & Co, Fine Jewelers, T. Foster & Co, Fine Jewelers - 18K yellow gold and platinum ring featuring a 22.93 ct. orange Sapphire accented with Diamonds.

Business/Day Wear - 3rd Place

Zoltan David, Zoltan David, LLC - Palladium and 22K yellow gold ring featuring a 4.12 ct. Danburite accented with blue Sapphires (.42 ctw.).

Business/Day Wear - Honorable Mention

Shuang Feng, Fon Shon Jewellery Art & Design - 14K white gold with 18K rose gold plating ring featuring an oval Morganite accented with Diamonds.

Business/Day Wear - Honorable Mention

Patrick King, Jewelsmith - 14K white and yellow gold pendant featuring a 31.94 ct. lemon Quartz accented with a 2.96 ct. Opal and Diamonds (.15 ctw.).

Business/Day Wear - Manufacturing Honors

Ilyn Strong, Ilyn strong fine art jewelry - 18K yellow gold earrings featuring bezel-set Rubies (1.56 ctw.).

Business/Day Wear - Platinum Honors

John Ford, Lightning Ridge Collection by John Ford - Platinum "Mirror" ring featuring a 3.65 ct. black Opal accented with Diamonds (.69 ctw.).

Business/Day Wear - Entry Platinum Innovation

Jill Maurer, Jill Maurer - Platinum "Verge" ring featuring an 11.19 ct. golden Zircon accented with natural colored Diamonds (1.23 ctw.).

Business/Day Wear - GEM DIVA Award

Naomi Sarna, Naomi Sarna Designs - 18K palladium white gold "Confetti Heart" ring featuring multicolored Diamonds, Sapphires, Rubies and Amethysts.

Classical

Classical - 1st Place

Niveet Nagpal, Omi Gems, Inc. - 18K rose gold ring featuring a 4.01 ct. cushion-cut pink Spinel accented with Spinel melee (.52 ctw.), Diamond melee (.82 ctw.) and a .01 ct. Alexandrite.

Classical - 2nd Place

Niveet Nagpal, Omi Gems, Inc. - Platinum and black rhodium ring featuring three Alexandrites (6.99 ctw.) accented with Alexandrite melee (1.64 ctw.) and Diamonds (.91 ctw.).

Classical - 3rd Place

Alexia Connellan, Alexia Connellan Luxury Jewelry - 18K rose gold "Spiral Earrings" featuring Morganites (9.50 ctw.) accented with Akoya cultured Pearls (8.02 ctw.), Sapphires (1.08 ctw.) and Diamonds (.85 ctw.).

Classical - Honorable Mention and Entry Platinum Innovation

Lindsay Jane, Lindsay Jane Designs - Platinum ring featuring a 7.77 ct. Moonstone accented with purple and blue Sapphires (0.97 ctw.) and Diamonds (0.52 ctw.).

Classical - Honorable Mention and GEM DIVA Award

Heena Chheda Shah, Real Gems, Inc. - 18K white gold "Bridget" ring featuring a 3.08 ct. oval Ruby accented with round Rubies (.31 ctw.) and round and pear Diamonds (3.87 ctw.).

Classical - Manufacturing Honors

Dominique Israileff, ASBA USA, INC. - 14K rose gold pendant featuring a 13mm Tahitian cultured Pearl accented with Diamonds (.37 ctw.).

Classical - Platinum Honors

Zoltan David, Zoltan David, LLC - Platinum pendant featuring a 35.63 ct. marquis Moonstone cabochon set in blue patina bronze on a strand of cabochon Moonstones (18.20 ctw.) and Diamonds (1.20 ctw.).

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Evening Wear**Evening Wear - 1st Place**

David Gross, David Gross Group - Platinum necklace featuring 21 unheated Mozambique Rubies (29.33 ctw.) accented with Diamonds (21.61 ctw.).

Evening Wear - 2nd Place

Phillip Dismuke, Jewelsmith - 18K yellow gold and platinum ring featuring a 13.53 ct. black Opal accented with Sapphires (1.01 ctw.) and Diamonds (.07 ctw.).

Evening Wear - 3rd Place

Robert Pelliccia, J.R. Dunn Jewelers - 18K yellow and white gold pendant featuring a 23.94 ct. boulder Opal accented with blue and pink Sapphires (.58 ctw.) and Diamonds (.92 ctw.) on a black Diamond bead necklace.

Evening Wear - Honorable Mention

Erica Courtney, Erica Courtney, Inc. - 18K yellow gold "Easter Egg" ring featuring a 7.46 ct. Paraiba Tourmaline accented with Paraiba Tourmalines (1.09 ctw.) and Diamonds (2.45 ctw.).

Evening Wear - Honorable Mention

Sinork Agdere, Lord Jewelry - 18K yellow gold and platinum "Ballerina" ring featuring a 65.0 ct. specialty-cut lemon Citrine accented with Diamonds and enamel.

Evening Wear - Manufacturing Honors

Ilyn Strong, Ilyn strong fine art jewelry - 18K rose gold "Calla Lily" ring featuring a 5.17 ct. rose-cut green Tourmaline accented with Diamonds (0.03 ctw.).

Evening Wear - Platinum Honors

John Ford, Lightning Ridge Collection by John Ford - Platinum "Electric Blue" necklace featuring black Opal (197 ctw.) accented with Diamonds (6.27 ctw.).

Evening Wear - GEM DIVA Award

Alexia Connellan, Alexia Connellan Luxury Jewelry - Platinum "The Fringe Earrings" featuring bicolored Tourmalines (20.32 ctw.) accented with Diamonds (1.50 ctw.).

Men's Wear

Men's Wear - 1st Place and Platinum Honors

Mark Schneider, Mark Schneider Design - Platinum and 18K yellow gold ring featuring a 8.76 ct. Maw Sit Sit accented with black, white and yellow Diamonds (2.27 ctw.) and tsavorite Garnets (.93 ctw.).

Men's Wear - 2nd Place

William Travis, William Travis Jewelry - Silver and 18K yellow gold ring featuring a 17.67 ct. carved Lapis Lazuli scarab beetle accented with orange Sapphires (.96 ctw.).

Men's Wear - 3rd Place

Craig Slavens, Studio 247 Fine Jewelry - Carbon fiber, platinum and 18K rose gold ring featuring a 4.52 ct. unheated Padparadscha Sapphire accented with Diamonds (.39 ctw.).

Men's Wear - Honorable Mention and Entry Platinum Innovation

William Travis, William Travis Jewelry - Platinum band featuring blue Sapphires (.54 ctw.), cognac Diamonds (.18 ctw.) and colorless Diamonds (.18 ctw.).

Cutting Edge

All Other Faceted

All Other Faceted - 1st Place

Jeffrey R. Hapeman, Earth's Treasury LLC - 42.47 ct. brilliant square cushion specialty-cut Apatite.

All Other Faceted - 2nd Place

Mikola Kukharuk, Nomad's - 12.44 ct. square cushion tsavorite Garnet.

All Other Faceted - 3rd Place

Ambassador Gems, Ambassador Gems - 24.12 ct. cushion-cut blue Zircon.

All Other Faceted - Honorable Mention

Hemant Phophaliya, A G Color, Inc. - 48.62 ct. sugarloaf Tanzanite.

Carving

Carving - 1st Place

Naomi Sarna, Naomi Sarna Designs - Hand-carved Ametrine (297 ctw.).

Carving - 2nd Place

John Dyer, John Dyer & Co. - Aquamarine carving titled 'Sydney Symphony' (53.63 ctw.).

Carving - 3rd Place

Meg Berry, Mega Gem - 21.70 ct. pyrope Garnet titled "Rooster."

Carving - Honorable Mention

Naomi Sarna, Naomi Sarna Designs - Rutilated Quartz carving (1375 ctw.).

Classic Gemstone

Classic Gemstone - 1st Place

Ruben Bindra, B & B Fine Gems - 10.11 ct. Sri Lankan cushion-cut orange Sapphire.

Classic Gemstone - 2nd Place

Allen Kleiman, A. Kleiman & Co. - 20.03 ct. unheated emerald-cut yellow Sapphire.

Classic Gemstone - 3rd Place

Allen Kleiman, A. Kleiman & Co. - 15.01 ct. emerald-cut blue Sapphire.

Classic Gemstone - Honorable Mention

Ruben Bindra, B & B Fine Gems - 7.22 ct. cushion-cut Padparadscha Sapphire.

Innovative Faceting

Innovative Faceting - 1st Place

John Dyer, John Dyer & Co. - 80.29 ct. specialty-cut Ametrine.

Innovative Faceting - 2nd Place

John Dyer, John Dyer & Co. - 175.37 ct. deep concave cushion-cut Morganite titled "Mozambique Sunset."

Innovative Faceting - 3rd Place

Ryan Joseph Anderson, Ryan Joseph Gems - 89.41 ct. Amethyst, titled "Efflorescence."

Innovative Faceting - Honorable Mention

Glenn Wm. Lehrer, Lehrer Designs, Inc. - 30.79 ct. Danburite and a 1.03 ct. Ruby titled "KaleidosCut." When placed together, they create an 8-pointed star in the Danburite.

Objects of Art

Objects of Art - Honorable Mention

Brenda Smith, Brenda Smith Jewelry - "Light My Fire" object of art featuring Opalized wood (250 ctw.) accented with a hand-carved 75.0 ct. Sunstone flame, 40.0 ct. hand-carved Mexican fire Opal and Diamonds (.20 ctw.).

Objects of Art - Honorable Mention

Neda Behnam, Samuel B. Collection - 18K yellow gold "Stallion" statue featuring champagne Diamonds (7.81 ctw.) accented with tsavorite Garnets and Mother-of-Pearl on an Onyx base.

Pairs & Suites

Pairs & Suites - 1st Place and Best of Show

Ruben Bindra, B & B Fine Gems - Suite of round, brilliant Russian demantoid Garnets (24.67 ctw.).

Pairs & Suites - 2nd Place

Allen Kleiman, A. Kleiman & Co. - Suite of pear-shaped unheated Mozambique Rubies (18.77 ctw.).

Pairs & Suites - 3rd Place

Ben Kho, Kho International, Ltd. - Suite of round Rhodochrosite (17.26 ctw.).

Pairs & Suites - Honorable Mention

Allen Kleiman, A. Kleiman & Co. - Earring suite of oval pink and purple (unheated) Sapphires (17.23 ctw.).

Phenomenal

Phenomenal - 1st Place

Gil, Gil Int'l - 5.56 ct. untreated Alexandrite.

Phenomenal - 2nd Place

Robert Shapiro, Robert Shapiro - 10.05 ct. oval boulder Opal.

Phenomenal - 3rd Place

Manu Nichani, Blue Moon Ent. - 19.07 ct. royal blue rectangular, cushion-cut Moonstone.

Phenomenal - Honorable Mention

Robyn Dufty, DuftyWeis Opals, Inc. - 103.80 ct. cabochon boulder Opal.

This year's AGTA Spectrum Awards™ will be presented during the 2017 AGTA GemFair™ Tucson to be held January 31 - February 5 at the Tucson Convention Center in Tucson, Arizona. Winning entries will be displayed during the show and AGTA Spectrum Awards™ recipients will be recognized during the AGTA Spectrum Awards™ Gala, on Saturday, February 4. Tickets for the gala are \$100 and cocktail attire is encouraged.

AGTA Spectrum Awards™ entries were judged on the basis of overall beauty and wearability, innovative design, effective use of materials, quality of gemstones, quality of workmanship, broad-base consumer appeal and potential to generate positive publicity for natural colored gemstones.

AGTA Cutting Edge Awards™ honor excellence and creativity in lapidary arts, including natural colored gemstones and cultured pearls, carvings and other gem materials.

Bridal Wear sponsored by The Knot - The Knot sponsored the Bridal Wear division of the AGTA Spectrum Awards™ for the fifth year. As the #1 wedding network in the U.S., reaching 80% of brides, The Knot represents an opportunity for unprecedented exposure for Spectrum entrants. Whether gracing the bridesmaids or donning the bride, herself, this category captures all looks coming down the aisle. Engagement rings, wedding bands, necklaces, earrings, bracelets and tiaras should be considered.

Platinum Honors™, sponsored by Platinum Guild International, recognizes outstanding use of platinum in colored gemstone and/or pearl jewelry in the five Spectrum Awards categories and for the Best Use of Color and Platinum. Platinum Honors™ Entry Platinum Honors - Bridal Wear under \$2,500 (semi-mount only), Platinum Honors Innovation - Classical under \$3,500 and Platinum Honors Innovation - Day Wear under \$2,000.

WJA GEM DIVA™ Awards celebrated its fifth year of association with the competition. WJA GEM DIVA™ Awards were presented in the Bridal Wear, Evening Wear, Classical and Business/Day Wear categories. All women who entered the AGTA Spectrum Awards™ competition were eligible for this category.

Manufacturing Honors recognizes outstanding use of colored gemstones and cultured pearls in jewelry appropriate to be manufactured in production quantities. All designs that qualify for judging in the AGTA Spectrum Awards™ competition will also automatically be qualified for Manufacturing Honors judging.

Fashion Forward Honors recognizes the outstanding use of colored gemstone and/or cultured pearl in artful, trend-setting jewelry. All necklaces, earrings, bracelets or other jewelry that qualified for judging in the AGTA Spectrum Awards™ competition automatically qualified for Fashion Forward Honors judging.

For further information regarding the 2017 AGTA GemFair™ Tucson or the AGTA Spectrum Awards™ Gala, please call (800) 972-1162 or visit our website at www.agta.org. For more information regarding the AGTA Spectrum Awards™ competition, please contact Megan Whitmire at megan@agta.org or (800) 972-1162.

The American Gem Trade Association is a not-for-profit Association serving the natural colored gemstone and cultured pearl industry since 1981. The AGTA serves the industry as "The Authority in Color" and has its headquarter office in Dallas, Texas.

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