

# SECRET GARDEN



American Jewelry Design Council 2020

# INTRODUCTION

Susan Helmich

For over 30 years the American Jewelry Design Council has been promoting its mission, to recognize original jewelry design as art, through exhibitions and guest appearances around the globe. From New York, California, and Puerto Rico, to London, Paris, Germany, and Russia, we've shared our theme-based projects, an annual creative challenge for our members since 1995. This year, the AJDC proudly unveils our 2020 theme project, "Secret Garden," which will be exhibited at the University of Arizona's Alfie Norville Gem and Mineral Museum.

I have found that opportunity reveals itself through associations that are based in trust. I owe our appearance at this exciting new museum to my dear friend and colleague Shelly Sargent, collection manager of "Somewhere in the Rainbow." It was Shelly who introduced me to Eric Fritz, manager of the museum. Once I shared the history and future vision of the AJDC with Eric, the museum invited our group to become a part of it.

In essence, the AJDC has found a home, offering to the museum a diverse group of artists and technicians who have made their names as industry leaders and innovators of fine design in gemstones and precious metals. The Alfie Norville Gem and Mineral Museum will provide the AJDC an opportunity to fulfill its mission through exhibition and education.

I attended my first Tucson Gem and Mineral Show in the 1973, while apprenticing in the lapidary and jewelry arts. Over the decades, I've witnessed its transformation in becoming the "vortex" of world-class gems, minerals, and jewelry. My journey into goldsmithing and design presented a pathway to join the prestigious AJDC in 1993. Since that time, I have been honored to serve as vice president from 1997- 2000, then president from 2000-2003. It has been a privilege to be a liaison in joining two brilliant organizations, the AJDC and the Alfie Norville Gem and Mineral Museum, which share a devotion to history and education.

Long may they both prosper.



Photography ♦ Pages 4 - 28: Sara Rey ♦ Page 14: Brunini Studio  
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## FORWARD

Elise B. Misorowski

2020 is a benchmark year for the American Jewelry Design Council: it marks 25 years during which its members have created exceptional jeweled pieces based on a specific topic. The theme chosen for this year is “Secret Garden.”

The concept of a secret garden was well suited to a year when everyone has been seeking solace and comfort from anxiety and uncertainty. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, our lives, lifestyles, and the ways we do business have been completely altered. A secret garden of the mind offers an escape to a happy place when we are all challenged by the necessity of wearing masks, social distancing, lockdowns, and quarantines.

Among the participating AJDC members, each individual has a different perception of what a secret garden means to them, and the pieces created for this collection are as unique and varied as the artists who conceived them. Many pieces are based on literal perceptions of gardens – fanciful little environments like windows into a private world – such as Pascal Lacroix’s “The Golden Stairs” and Ricardo Basta’s “Secret Garden.” Others are abstract interpretations of what a garden might represent – the balance of nature, a journey of discovery, or love – as delicately portrayed by Jose Hess in his ring, “The Blooming of Love.”

Secret gardens were also found in the ocean, as shown by Barbara Heinrich’s wonderful coral with pearl earrings and Paul Robilotti’s charming enameled mermaid in her clamshell grotto; or in places of fantasy including Kent Raible’s astonishing “Crystal Sky City” pendant; or in Susan Sadler’s own vegetable garden, in her sweet little “Snail on a Rock.”



Cartier “Tutti Frutti” bracelet of emerald, ruby, sapphire, diamond, and onyx in set in platinum, circa 1930. Photo by National Jeweler.

Members also voiced what was meaningful about this exercise. All stated that making an AJDC - themed piece gave them freedom: The freedom to be creative without boundaries, to try new things, and to practice unfamiliar skills such as enameling, lapidary, or special metal techniques.

Looking from the historical perspective, fashions for garden-themed jewelry ebb and flow in style and popularity through the centuries. World events, advances in technology, sources for precious materials, and levels of wealth have a direct effect on

how jewelry appears at a given time and these expressions change as time progresses.

One of the earliest examples of a garden theme in jewelry was fashionable in the late 1700s.

The *giardinetto* (little garden) ring was designed as a little potted tree or a simple flower bouquet fabricated of gold and silver set with small colored gems. After

jewelry tools and techniques improved in the early 19th century, French jeweler Georges Bapst fabricated floral brooches and hair ornaments that were made more lifelike by mounting his diamond set flowers on springs – *en tremblant* (trembling) – to animate them.

In the 1890s, flowers in jewelry became increasingly realistic but artists expressed them differently. Art Nouveau artist René Lalique created fantastic sensual combinations of flora, fauna, insects, water, and women in enameled gold jewels that were often set with carved gems. More conservatively, Tiffany & Co. Artistic Director Paulding Farnham designed perfect replicas of orchids, using vitreous enamels on gold set with diamonds and colored gems. Jeweler-

to-the-czars Peter Carl Fabergé created elegant gem flowers on gold stems in carved-rock crystal vases as a reminder of spring during the icy Russian winters.

Between 1920-1940, after the upheaval of World War I and the Russian Revolution, the look of floral jewelry became geometric and stylized. Cartier, and other French jewelers, cleverly combined antique carved rubies, emeralds, and sapphires from India, with diamonds and platinum in sophisticated jewels that suggested fruit, flowers, and leaves in a style now known as “Tutti Frutti.” With the onset of World War II, trade in gems was severely limited and precious metals were conscripted for the war effort. Little jewelry was made or worn until the war ended and recovery began.



Paulding Farnham orchids for Tiffany & Co., circa 1889.

In the 1950s, floral jewels became even more abstract. Harry Winston created his iconic “Wreath” necklace of high-quality, marquise- and pear-shaped diamonds cleverly set so that the platinum was barely visible. Bulgari gave new life to the early 19th century *en tremblant* style with diamond floral brooches on springs like the one Eddie Fisher gave to Elizabeth Taylor for her 30th birthday. The surrealist Salvador Dalí designed a “Living Flower” of gold and diamonds which opened and closed using electricity.

From 1960 – 1980, jewelry design was generally pure abstraction and not very representational. Floral jewelry was notably absent. British artist Andrew Grima incorporated rough gem crystals in his avant garde pieces – a radical departure from the norm. Jewelry design of the ‘80s predominantly focused on opulent displays of diamonds and gold in static designs.

In reaction to this lack of creativity apparent in commercial fine jewelry, a group of studio jewelry designers banded together in 1989 and the American Jewelry Design Council was born. In the last thirty years, efforts to raise the aesthetic value of jewelry by the AJDC continue to make an impact on the art community, the consumer, and the jewelry industry.

Now, in the 21st century, there is an abundance of wealth, readily available precious materials, and huge advances in technology; the perfect environment for innovative excellence.

No surprise that jewelry design has exploded in every direction – from

abstract to realistic, minimal to ornate, pragmatic to fanciful – offering a bountiful feast of choices.

Wandering through the AJDC’s “Secret Garden” collection, and delighting in the varied expressions from each artist, one can see how different styles from the past have been adopted and adapted to suit the current mood. Cornelia Goldsmith’s “Night Blossom Tree” pendant exemplifies *giardinetto* updated in size and complexity; Ricardo Basta’s enchanting “Secret Garden” incorporates a dragonfly *en tremblant* and a butterfly that opens and closes its wings; and Linda MacNeil’s sleek and sophisticated gold and green enameled leaf necklace reinterprets the stylized look of Art Deco.

Many Secret Garden pieces incorporate carved gems to great effect, and three members used a special gem fashioned by a notable gem carver as the center of their themed pieces: Paul Klecka used a prasiolite quartz

mandala carving by Dalan Hargrave, Susan Helmich used a poppy jasper carving by Uli Pauly, and Mark Schneider used a black onyx carving by Dieter Lorenz.

Other artists tried out new techniques or practiced unfamiliar ones, such as gem cutting, enameling, or special metalwork. Merry-Lee Rae’s beguiling enameled fox with grape stained lips and Barbara Minor’s elegant enameled rose garden, behind an Italian Renaissance quatrefoil metal screen, are beautifully successful examples of members expanding their creative talents.

Some of the members tested themselves with lapidary work: Kent Raible cut at least six of the many gems that are set in his ethereal floating city pendant, Gregore Morin carved all the opal for his sublime piece “Vinnys’ Delight,” and Alan Revere fashioned the rutilated quartz cabochon set in his mysterious “Key to the Secret Garden.” The artists also incorporated rough crystal specimens in several “Secret Garden” pieces: Katey Brunini used a tricolor tourmaline crystal as the strong focal point for her powerful hinged wooden bangle bracelet, while

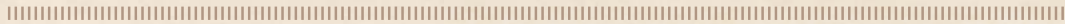


Elizabeth Taylor emerald, diamond, and platinum necklace by Bulgari, circa 1962. Photo by Getty Images.

Michael Good set red spinel octahedron crystals to look like pomegranate seeds in his luscious, ruffled, gold cuff bracelet.

Among those who showed their virtuosity in special metal techniques, Zoltan David stands out with his cuff bracelet, “Into the Mystic,” that incorporates zirconium, a highly unusual metal for use in jewelry.

Each of these marvelous jewels continues the long tradition of fine jewelry making – revisiting and drawing inspiration from the past while seeking out and exploring new expressions, new gems, and the techniques of the future. Linger on the path as you stroll through AJDC’s “Secret Garden.” There is much to admire and be intrigued by as you examine each exceptional piece displayed here.



Elise Besson Misiorowski is a graduate gemologist, jewelry historian, author, lecturer, curator, and jewelry consultant. She has worked for the Gemological Institute of America as a diamond grader, research librarian, international lecturer, and museum director. The author wrote a monthly jewelry column “*From the Vault*” for *Professional Jeweler*, and has written numerous articles on gems and jewelry history for *Gems and Gemology* and *Jewelers’ Circular-Keystone*, among other publications. Misiorowski curated two exhibits for the San Diego Natural History Museum, “The Nature of Diamonds,” in 1999, and “All That Glitters: The Splendor and Science of Gems and Minerals,” in 2010-12.



18th Century giardinetto ring, with diamond, ruby, and emerald set in gold and silver.  
Photo by Bonhams.

# WHAT IS A SECRET GARDEN?

Eric W. Fritz, Museum Manager  
University of Arizona's Alfie Norville Gem and Mineral Museum

What is a secret garden? The first thought might be of Frances Hodgson Burnett's 1911 children's book, *The Secret Garden*, in which the spoiled orphan Mary (taunted as "Mistress Mary, quite contrary") discovers a neglected garden that her uncle had padlocked after her aunt died. Mary and some new friends restore not only the garden but the lives of all it touches with a new splendor. Modern landscape design often has a secret spot, where visitors see something they did not expect, or find a place of comfort. It can be as simple as a bench tucked away, an area of solitude, or a complete hidden garden often designed in a whimsical array.

Secret is defined as being kept from knowledge or view, in other words, hidden. The word "hidden" alludes to something that requires some effort to discover, and then the satisfaction of finding that treasure.

What inspires a jewelry designer, especially tasked with the theme of a secret garden? On the surface, a theme of nature and flowers comes to mind. Secrets relate to something hidden but discoverable, obvious, or obscure. Is it really about a garden or is the true meaning more how one feels when at peace or in solitude?

Join us in welcoming the American Jewelry Design Council's 2020 Project: "Secret Garden." Share in the wonder, inspiration, and craftsmanship of this exhibition. The University of Arizona Alfie Norville Gem and Mineral Museum is thrilled to host the AJDC and the Secret Garden theme in what will have been a year of change. Museums are tasked with inspiring visitors young and old; creating an environment where such pieces can be marveled at and enjoyed. Our mission is to show the beauty of rocks and minerals as they emerge from the ground, as well as way artists transform them.

Every visitor has a different perception of what they see or experience. Knowing there is a secret, or something beyond what meets the eye, adds to the excitement. We look forward to guests seeing this project as a part of a special showcase in our museum's Gem Gallery.





## RICARDO BASTA Secret Garden

**My mind raced to do something very whimsical and animated, incorporating some gem specimens. I wanted to play with the word “secret” as much as I could imagine.**

With a project titled “Secret Garden,” the ideas flowed easily to create something fun and whimsical; something for the viewer to feel as well as see or perceive. Someone might like the playful rabbit or turtle, or the mushrooms, the pivoting lily pad with the frog on top, the butterfly that moves its wings, the pond that glows blue, or the secret rhodochrosite cavern that glows for nocturnal visitors.

Beginning with a basic concept and vision, I played it out with sketches, renderings, and prototypes. I saw how it would all come together, including animation and lighting some of the objects. I utilized every possible type of production in this piece: hand-carved wax work, bench fabrication, CAD, casting, hand engraving, and piercing or sawing designs in milled-out sheet silver and gold.

In addition to colored gems and minerals, my additional color palette is rendered in different colors of metal, including red, green, and yellow gold, as well as platinum and silver. Platinum remains white, in contrast to silver which darkens, or oxidizes, changing its look. The range of colors of gold play their own part, with different uses in the animals and objects.

To present “Secret Garden”, a base was custom-made in mahogany and is adorned with the story panels reflecting the scene and elements within the garden.



The pond within “Secret Garden” is paved with round, brilliant-cut apatite stones. The frog is set with tsavorite garnets, as are the leaves that adorn the mystical cave with a natural rhodochrosite door. The butterfly wings are accented with pink sapphires, white diamonds and blue apatite. Other gems include two natural pink tourmaline crystal specimens; black, white and brown diamonds; amethyst; rubies; yellow and orange sapphires.

Secret Garden: In cm: 6.35 h ♦ In inches: 2.5 h

Wood base: In cm: 6.35.6 h x 13.97 x 16.51 w  
In inches: 2.5 h x 5.5 x 6.5 w.





## MICHAEL BONDANZA Secret Garden

**My pendant was inspired by primitive cave drawings and symbols. It's made from sterling silver and 22k pink gold, with a lapis center.**

Secret Garden, where exactly is this secret garden? Is this an actual place, a state of mind, or both? After doing dozens of drawings to organize my thoughts and concepts... things quickly got out of hand, too many obvious and recognizable features. I needed something more primitive, beautiful, but puzzling. Secret garden... you're standing on it, there's no place else to go! This seems more appropriate for a poet, I'll do my best.

I started to look back to prehistoric cave dwellers and the artwork in their living rooms. Evolution, self awareness - cave paintings showed the world around them. Where is this place? I see stars, the sun and moon, seasons and plants - plenty of plants to eat and animals to hunt. Cave dwellers honored those gifts by painting the walls with their images. "Look at my hand print on the cave wall... that's mine, I'm here."

Prehistoric addresses are the symbols and carvings in the cliff walls, "We are here! We take pride in our sense of place and being... we make and wear jewelry!"

Like prehistoric people, we seem to be asking the same questions throughout the history of mankind. Question ... "But where is here?"

The fact that we can ask that question sets us apart from the natural world: We're standing on it! We can make tools to help make changes, we have some control over our environment." Astronauts looking back from our moon can see, "our secret garden." How fragile and alone it looks, don't take it for granted.

Without humans the planet will go on. In time it will be again a secret garden paradise... perhaps waiting for someone else? With all the advancements in science and technology, we are still primitive beings who need to realize...

...All we really have is each other.

18ct natural Afghanistan dodecahedron lapis 12mm, with sterling silver and 20k pink gold



## MICHAEL BOYD Botanical Series #3

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**Inspiration for this piece was drawn from the pathways and steppingstones in a desert riparian ecosystem.**

Botanical themes have long been personally inspiring for me. Born and raised in Colorado, I have spent most of my life in the more arid areas of the state where water is precious, and lush verdant gardens are a rarity. Rock gardens, as well as complex rock formations, have been strong inspirations for me.

In 2015, on a trip to Bogotá, Colombia, I was fortunate to purchase an unusual trapiche emerald crystal, which was sliced into four pieces. Five years later, I finally designed a project worthy of its rarity.

The emerald formed in a soft and included matrix. To make the slices more durable, I made each of them into a triplet using the natural form of the crystal in its matrix. The naturally petal-shaped emeralds are set over a layer of goshenite, the clear variety of the beryl species, to which emerald also belongs. The bottom layer is a sheet of platinum, a fairly neutral color, to reflect the true color of the emerald. I likewise made triplets of golden Madagascar tourmalines, backing them with goshenite and white Tanzanian chalcedony. I made doublets with the diamond slices, some set over white chatoyant cats'-eye opal, and others over white chalcedony. All are set in 18k and 22k gold.





## KATIE BRUNINI

### The Hottest Day Of The Year

**On the hottest day of the year, I want to escape to a secret garden and never leave.**

Like a bridge over troubled waters, I wanted to explore Mother Nature's capacity for power and violence – juxtaposed with her delicacy and gentle beauty. In my exploration of the “secret garden” of the imagination, a 35.70 ct. crystalline stalactite of tourmaline, as if on fire, is set next to falling, pink-bubblegum-colored, carved tourmaline leaves – set in 18k yellow gold and antique sterling silver on a canvas of wood and accented by .10 tw. hot-pink spinel.

I wanted to synthesize the play of opposites, light and dark, hard and soft, masculine and feminine energy, in a dance of *chiaroscuro*. There is no winner and no loser, just different perspectives. Considering all angles is part of my quest in holistic learning. Can one exist without the other?





## ZOLTAN DAVID Into The Mystic

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The secret garden is experienced as a journey of discovery. The mysterious and mystical aspects of life are similar. I created this piece, in tune with the theme. As you observe this bracelet, you will discover unexpected details and beauty designed to inspire and delight. The materials and techniques employed are original innovations.

My bracelet features tsavorite garnet, blue sapphire, paraiba tourmaline, and diamond. Metals include stainless steel, platinum, 24k gold, 18k gold, and zirconium.

In cm: 5.4 h x 6.7 w x 3.2 d ♦ In inches: 2.1 h x 2.6 w x 1.3 d





## CORNELIA GOLDSMITH

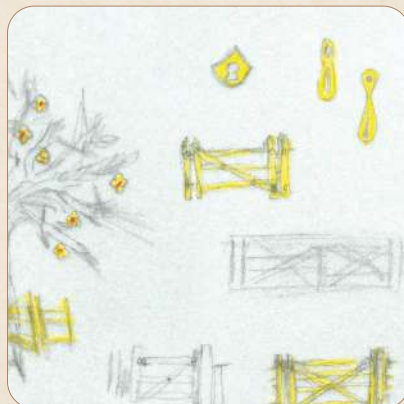
### Night Blossom Tree

**The Secret Garden is a special place where I can go to replenish my spirits!**

Multicolored tree blossoms are represented by pear-shaped amethyst, peridot, blue topaz, blue sapphire, golden diamond, Mozambique garnet, and Mozambique citrine, to symbolize growth, experience, and wisdom.

I chose small, brilliant black and yellow diamonds, set in oxidized black silver, to give the design a quiet counterbalance, evoking the silence of the night. Those are complemented by small tsavorite garnets. The tree stands next to an 18k gold fence.

In cm: 5.14 h x 4.76 w x 0.89 d ♦ In inches: 2.02 h x 1.87 w x 0.35 d





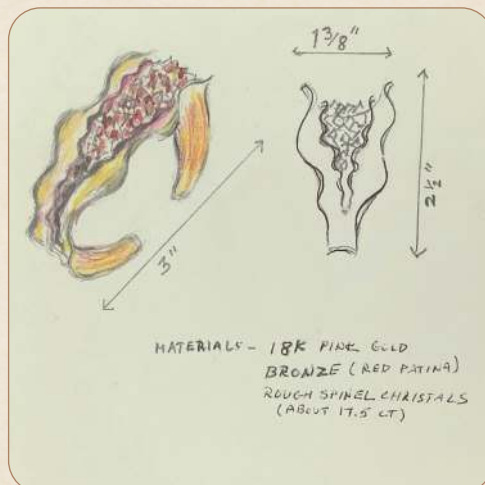
## MICHAEL GOOD

### Secret Garden



For me, my focus with this piece was primarily with the structural composition. It is made of three elements: tightly packed rough spinel crystals (17.5 tcw.), a red patinated bronze ruffled bezel, and 18k pink gold bracelet. All three elements hold one another in tension without solder, using a minimal quantity of material, which is possible because of the structural integrity and flexibility of the anticlastic process used in forming the bracelet and bezel.

In cm: 6.35 h x 3.49 w x 7.62 d ♦ In inches: 2.5 h x 1.37 w x 3.0 d





## ALISHAN HALEBIAN

### The Rite of Spring

**Myth, story, music, and colors of spring.**

Our recent collection of floral designs, which I have been expanding for the past few years, was a great canvas for AJDC's "Secret Garden" theme project. The entire collection was inspired by my favorite couture fashion design houses like Alexander McQueen, Vivienne Westwood, Chanel, and Valentino.

The "Rite of Spring" necklace is an evolution of shapes, colors, and textures, with a mix of contemporary and traditional floral patterns cascading like blooming spring flowers in the background of night fall. Music is my main motivation and inspiration of my creativity, therefore this necklace is an homage to one of the greatest 20th century Russian composers, Igor Stravinsky, and his ballet, "The Rite of Spring."

In cm: 26.67 h x 16.51 w ♦ In inches: 10.5 h x 6.5 w





## BARBARA HEINRICH

### Secret Underwater Garden

**My earrings are inspired by the ocean.**

My secret garden project is inspired by the ocean and the amazing variety of life forms it supports. Water is like the big mother womb, the origin of all life! The freshwater and Akoya cultured saltwater pearls, the black coral stems, as well as the red coral branches are all harvested from this immense underwater world, my muse in this year's "Secret Garden" project. They carry an exotic beauty and occupied my entire mind space when I was designing. I watched diving movies and went on a sea kayaking trip in the middle of it all.

After grasping the idea of working with these strong, related water elements, it took some time for my design to germinate. The dominating colors of red, white, and black, combined with 18k gold, did not come together easily.

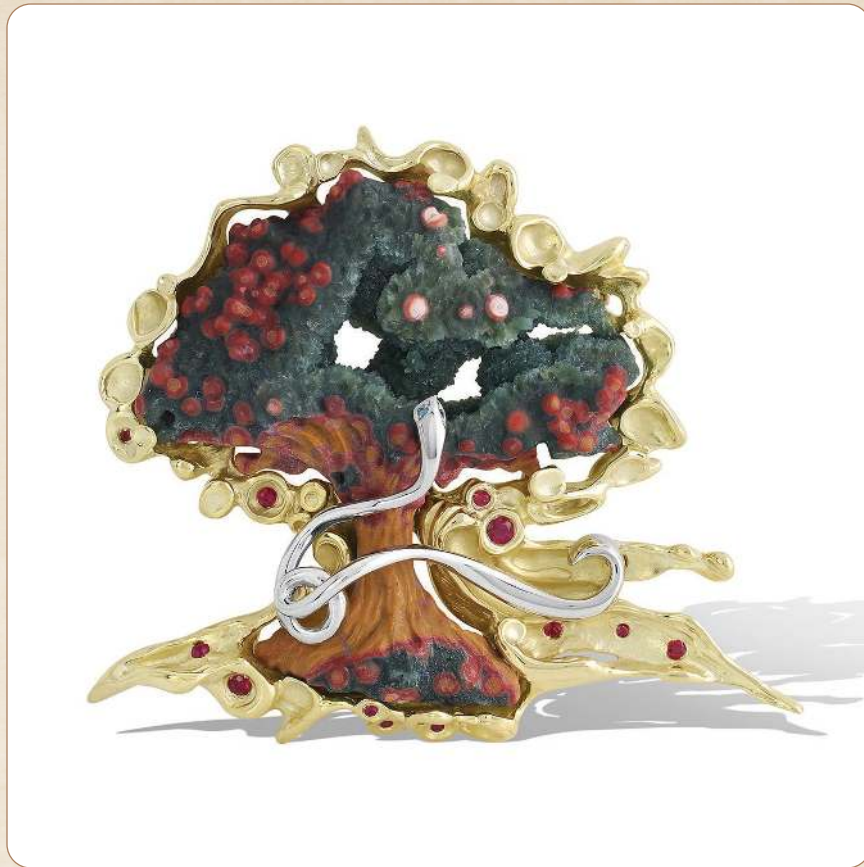
My default way of resolving design projects is always through sketching. Avoid the obvious, seek newness, go for maximum visual excitement - these are some of the guidelines along the way.

Finally, in a very playful composition, all of the materials and form elements came together, enhancing each without one dominating or throwing off the balance of the whole. My underwater earrings were complete!

In cm: 8.2 h x 3 w x 1.2 d ♦ In inches: 3.22 h x 1.18 w x 0.47 d







## SUSAN HELMICH Fool Me Once...

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### **The oldest story ever told, and the most well-known garden known to mankind.**

Fantasy, legend, and mythos served as inspiration for this work. The AJDC's project theme, "Secret Garden," tied in perfectly with an exquisite carving I've held in my safe since 2003: A natural poppy jasper with drusy (93.5 cts.), hand carved by German gem carver Uli Pauly in the shape of an apple tree. For me, this piece is a truly irreplaceable work of gem art and it fit the theme perfectly!

On a more personal note, I sometimes find answers to many of the questions in life through myths and legends, the oldest one being the story of the Garden of Eden! Some things never change, and we've all found ourselves in predicaments that we didn't sign up for. Those experiences become our secrets.

I felt the energy of joy, peace, and healing through the design and carving of my "Secret Garden." I am especially pleased to finally reveal this little gem and share its magic!

As I considered how to design around the poppy jasper, I realized that this apple tree didn't require much more to capture the heart of a viewer. My job evolved to simply completing the story and framing it. I set the gem in 14k green gold, sprinkled the frame with 0.43 carats of natural, untreated, round brilliant rubies, and added a platinum snake, sporting green gem eyes.

Poppy jasper is very fragile and therefore breakable; I've used extreme caution in handling it throughout the carving and setting process. After all, there will never be another apple tree quite like this one!

In cm: 5.5 h x 6.0 w ♦ In inches: 2.16 h x 2.36 w



## JOSE HESS

### The Blooming of Love

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A leader of the American designer jewelry movement and founding member of AJDC, Jose Hess passed away on February 9, 2021 at the age of 87.

José created an inspired theme project every year since AJDC's annual projects began, and we are privileged to present this “Secret Garden” piece as his last.

His ring features a rose quartz (20 tcw.) carving, enhanced by three-carat, natural, oval, cabochon aquamarine. José believed rose quartz is a stone of the heart, a crystal of unconditional love, and he used aquamarine, because it's known for tranquility, serenity, and harmony. The gems are set in 14k gold.

As José so often said about himself, his beautiful creation is...  
“Strong Like a Bull”



## SCOTT KEATING Blooming Cactus

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**After I designed this gem cut and put it together in rows, it reminded me of cactus flowers, creating a cactus garden!**

I was looking through my gemstone collection and came across these "Trellis Cut" carved gem cabochons, featuring amethyst, citrine, green onyx, garnet, moonstone, and blue topaz. I designed the cut, which was executed by Denton Anderson of Denver Gem Cutting. After seeing the multiple colors in the tray, I immediately recognized what a garden of colors they are. Playing with the shapes and putting them into rows, I then discovered that they look like cactus. So a cactus garden for the wrist came to mind. Working around the stone shapes to create the mounting was a great opportunity for expanding the garden language. I love the desert, and travel there from Colorado as often as I can. Visiting the cactus museum in Tucson deeply impressed me on one of my trips. Pulling out pictures from that visit and remembering the cactus textures, patterns, and rhythms, along with their spine patterns, inspired the sterling silver work of the bracelet you see here.

In cm: 6.04 h x 7.70 w x 3.22 d ~ In inches: 2.38 h x 3.03 w x 1.27 d



## PAUL KLECKA Everything Is A Circle

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**There is a sacred geometry embedded within the Flower of Life – an ancient symbol thought to represent the most important and revered patterns of the universe. As the catalyst of all life and existence, it is nature’s secret garden.**

The idea of a secret garden is a challenging one to express without a predictable design solution based on garden or floral themes.

I considered the idea of a maze – after all, a living hedgerow maze is a garden, and the participant must navigate the maze successfully to find the “secret” at the center.

But I was still intent on making a gemstone the star of my design.

Then I discovered gem cutter Dalan Hargrave, and after a few texts we discovered that we shared numerous stylistic concepts, the primary one being an interest in the optical manipulation of the jewel.

My signature is the interplay of metal and gemstones to create illusion – my Floating Diamond™ or the mirrored Mirage™ are both ideas that have been celebrated with multiple De Beers awards in Diamonds Today and Diamonds of Distinction competitions.

Dalan creates illusions within the body of the gems he cuts – mirrored reflections within the gem.

So, for my “Secret Garden” project, I used Dalan’s one-of-a kind, custom-cut, prasiolite quartz (heat-treated), in which he carved a Flower of Life pattern. I mounted it in circles of sterling silver that mirror, suspend, and reveal all aspects of the gem.

In cm: 2.6 h x 0.9 w ♦ In inches: 1.02 h x 0.35 w





## PASCAL LACROIX The Golden Stairs

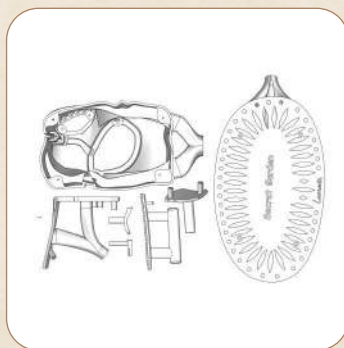
**Vagabond imagination.**

I love the AJDC themed projects because they launch me into the boundaryless unknown and give me a sense of deeper freedom in the creative process. Once the design starts to take shape in my mind, I also use techniques new to me – to further delve into the challenges of the unknown. In this case, most everything is threaded in place and held from the inside with miniature bolts.

For this particular project, I greatly appreciated the diversity of the tasks, such as rising the mountain, flowing the water, texturing freehand, modeling the garden keeper, and carving the golden stairs. To bring colors to the environment, I used 14k, 18k, and 22k gold; burned, oxidized, and brushed copper; mirror-polished oxidized bronze; inlay sterling silver; and copper. The mountain itself is patina on bronze. The monolith growing out of the spring is a 34.54 tcw. Tanzanian tsavorite. Diamonds totaling .16 tcw. are also included.

This piece continues to signify what has been magic for me since childhood: To create beauty even if it is never to be seen. To that end, every curve and detail of the inner elements is designed to be pleasing to the eye, while also serving a function, such as flowing the melted metal, to the interlocking of the elements and supporting structures. The base also harbors its own secret!

In cm: 7.5 h x 12.3 w x 7.6 d ♦ In inches: 2.95 h x 4.84 w x 3.0 d





## LINDA MACNEIL A Well Kept Secret

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### Glass, the mineral.

Is the glass you see in this floral necklace a mineral or a gem?

While it's true that green glass would not be found in the earth like a gem or mineral, it's also true that green glass is created using mineral ingredients. To make green glass, silica (sand), limestone, soda ash, chrome, and iron oxides are mixed and melted together in a furnace. An analysis of an emerald or a green tourmaline would reveal a similar list of minerals – though they are melted by volcanic forces and naturally fused into crystals and slabs of stone. So, if the ingredients that comprise glass are mineral, it is logical that glass is a mineral, albeit man-made.

I use glass in my art because the palette of colors I need cannot always be found by digging in the earth. And the forms I have made – with changing colors and different bubble patterns, and satin or high polished surfaces – are unique to glass. It is this control that enables my thinking as I create each piece. For my “Secret Garden” necklace, I used kiln-cast mirrored glass, Vitrolite plate glass, and 273 round, faceted, heat-treated yellow sapphires totaling 2.02 carats.





## BARBARA MINOR

Behind the Florentine Fence with Catherine de' Medici

**I've chosen to combine my love for the gardens, fences, and architectural details seen in Florence, Italy, with my explorations in vitreous enamels combined with fabricated silver, gold, gemstones, and pearls.**

Working on the "Secret Garden" project piece was a challenge and a wonderful accomplishment. My efforts focused on allowing every part of the piece to represent an aspect of historical Florence and Florentine decorative elements seen throughout the city and in museums. While working on this piece, I allowed significant time for development and in-depth exploration of ideas for fabricated settings and the inclusion of rhodolite garnets and cultured pearls, with a vitreous enamel floral design on copper. Metals used also included sterling silver, 18k yellow gold, and 24k gold foil. There were many trials before deciding which combinations of elements best represented the idea and captured the essence of a place I love so much. The process was, at the same time, frustrating while also extremely rewarding and exciting to see the essence of Florence captured.

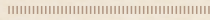
In cm: 8.89 h x 7.62 w x 1.27 d ♦ In inches: 3.5 h x 3.5 w x 0.5 d





## GREGOIRE MORIN

### Vinny's Delight



My secret garden:

Is full of memories

Warm sunny day, over flowing with

Art, flowers, friends

Sculptures abound surrounded in nature's art, man's art.

Capture the memories for myself then safely store them away in my art

Look, see if you too can see that moment, deep between the flowers is,

"my secret garden."

Pink Opal, Opal, Diamonds, Coral

In cm: 3.60 h x 3.60 w x 2.30 d ♦ In inches: 1.41 h x 1.41 w x 0.90 d





## JENNIFER RABE MORIN

### Celebrating Vincent

A satisfying part of being a member of the AJDC is the chance to make projects. As a commercial jeweler, it is refreshing to break out of making things for others, and instead to make something that is more intimately about my experience of the world. For the “Secret Garden” project, I made earrings that share some positive feelings about life. Life in my secret garden is a utopia wherein all celebrate and support each other for our splendid uniqueness, and this is beautiful.

The Secret Garden Earrings are bronze butterflies with lemon quartz wings and purple garnet bodies, embracing and lifting up a mineral of cavansite. A flower bud is in tow, made with lemon quartz, rose de France amethyst, and garnets, while above, all is overseen by a fly with an apatite body and lemon quartz wings. The whole image is as if to say “behold, let us together celebrate and uplift one another.”

A long time before I became a member, Diana Vincent was invited to join AJDC, and Diane's husband and partner, Vincent Polisano, was embraced by the AJDC family. His recent, unexpected, and sudden departure from us was so heartbreaking that I wanted to remember and celebrate him with my “Secret Garden” earrings, because he embraced and supported us like family. When we were most adrift he mentored us, when we were too busy working he would have us pause with a warm “hello” and a friendly chat, and when we were traveling, he traveled beside us. He worked hard and willingly shared what he learned to help all of us be a bit better at our game. We miss him, and his memory will be with us till we join him. Luckily, we still have Diane.

In cm: 7.62 h x 2.54 w ♦ In inches: 3.0 h x 1.0 w





## ADAM NEELEY

### Through the Looking Glass

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My ring features a large quartz crystal lens that reveals a magical gemstone garden made of crystal quartz, druzy malachite, multi-color sapphires, garnet, ruby, and tanzanite. It entices us to look closer!





**MERRY~LEE RAE** The Secret Garden: Aesop Was Mistaken

**My secret garden is the core of who I am. Perseverance – not sour grapes!**

The “secret garden” has been an idea of identity to me and not an actual place, since my mother read aloud to me *The Secret Garden* book when I was a child. It is a private place in our cores where we establish our own inalienable truths and our own value system.

In my secret garden, the fox always perseveres until he has the grapes! This is in contrast to the traditional story in Aesop’s Fables, where he gives up when he cannot reach the high hanging fruit, and decides they’re sour and not worth having. No grapes are so out of reach that giving up is the best immediate alternative!

I was delighted to have the opportunity to explore “Secret Garden” as a theme project. True to my nature, I chose to illustrate the fox in a way I had never used my materials before – affording me the opportunity to make the cloisonne vitreous enamel three times before I was satisfied. The grape juice on his lips explains his triumphant air. Grapes are made of purple chalcedony; metals used include sterling silver, 18k and 22k gold.

In cm: 6.0 h x 4.5 w x 0.1 d ♦ In inches: 2.36 h x 1.77 w x 0.39 d





## KENT RAIBLE Crystal Sky City

**Welcome to my secret garden: A weightless, drifting world where up is also down, crystals grow like plants, and the moonstone rises in the west.**

“Secret garden” means sanctuary, and for me, making jewelry is where I go to be alone, where the boundaries of time and space are transcended, where I am free to create beauty.

I’m an avid gardener and I love to watch the gradual unfolding of the seasons through plants. Seeds sprout, grow large and beautiful, then flower, bear fruit and provide harvest. They wither, die, and the cycle begins again. Gardens always surprise me, so the theme for this year’s AJDC project was intriguing.

Ideas for the project developed slowly, garden-like, during the winter months. It began as a vision of a crystal nursery, an arboretum of the mineral world. I prepared for spring’s planting by collecting seeds: odd crystals in boxes, thumbnails purchased in Tucson, interesting gold leftovers from my scrap box, my gem collection – including gem rough – since I’ve just started doing lapidary.

In spring, while cutting chalcedony, an idea crystallized: Layered clouds of translucent arcs, floating above a city of crystal structures, full of hidden treasures, emerging from a floating, sparkling horizon. Mysterious, multi-dimensional... my secret garden!

Through the summer, into fall, as the project gradually flowered and bore fruit, I was delighted, surprised (and often frustrated), by the many untrodden paths that presented themselves along the way. Creating a piece like this is its own reward: Witnessing the slow gradual unfolding of a mysterious life. Plants grow in a year; gems and crystals grow over eons.

This project took 200 hours over six months.

There are over 20 types of gem materials in this piece from all over the world, totaling 38 cut stones and uncut crystals; as well as 48 cut diamonds. Total weight for all stones combined is 73.10 carats, and the metals used are 18k gold and 900 Platinum.

In cm: 6.5 h x 5.0 w x 2.4 d ♦ In inches: 2.55 h x 1.96 w x 0.94 d





## ALAN REVERE

### Key to the Secret Garden

**A wondrous and mysterious Secret Garden is hidden from view.**

It is surrounded on all sides by a formidable wall overgrown with a thicket of twisted vines and protective barbs. The only access is through a large, heavily fortified door that is impenetrable. One must possess a very special key to gain entry, one that will slide into the lock and illuminate the way to a garden of delights waiting inside.

Since I have never made a key before, in preparation for this project I examined many different kinds of keys used throughout history. I discovered keys that are double, tubular, paracentric, cruciform, skeleton, dimple, master, abloy, and many others, each with its own application and characteristics. I honed in on a style used for clocks as the inspiration for this jewel. Clock keys are often tubular and nearly as wide as they are long, to afford leverage, as would be needed to open the huge lock on the Secret Garden door.

The sterling silver key, with 18k gold details, has an internal LED. Light shines out through the golden rutilated quartz (120 tcw.), which I cut, illuminating its own secret garden of rutiles, and guiding the way. Light also emanates from three tapered holes.

In cm: 10 h x 8 w x 3.2 d ♦ In inches: 4 h x 3.1 w x 1.25 d





**PAUL ROBILOTTI** Underwater Secret Garden

**I have always been attracted to, and inspired by, places on water.**

When I contemplate an AJDC project, I take my jeweler’s hat off and begin my search within. I attempt to create something that resonates with my personality and those things that I find most satisfying in my personal life. Mixed media allows more depth to any project for me. Furthermore, my works often are accompanied by poetry I’ve written to shed insight...a window of explanation so that the viewer may learn more about me as a whole person.

As such, I begin the process well in advance by assembling components over time. I take a mental picture and let it steep. Concepts, pieces, and parts come and go, and I may change any one as I draw nearer to conclusion. Sometimes I’ll have several machinations before settling in on what final direction I may take. But other times, I have a laser-like focus traveling in a straight line to fruition. I promise you, not with this project. Working with unusual materials creates its own set of challenges. I cannot tell you just how many times I abandoned my “Underwater Secret Garden!”

My piece uses garnet, peridot, iolite, pearl, diamond, and sterling silver.





## SUSAN SADLER Snail on a Rock

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### My summer garden.

I'm not sure how I got to "Snail on a Rock."

I keep things that I like around the studio and at home: a little wooden bird, shells, feathers, a bird's nest, etc. And, while I think about and work in my garden often, until this piece, it rarely found its way into my jewelry designs. Although as I write this, I realize that in a sense it actually does – the colors of my garden are also the colors of the stones in my jewelry.

I live in Oklahoma where gardening is truly a challenge. Our temperatures range from up to 110 degrees in the summer to minus 20 degrees in the winter. We deal with high winds, snow, sleet, and very unpredictable rain. In addition to these challenges, we also have lots of critters! If there's something in your garden a critter wants, you might as well call it salad and serve it up on a platter for all to enjoy.

Enter "Snail on a Rock" – wherever in my garden you wander in the summer, if you lift up a leaf or petal, you are likely to see a snail eating flowers and greenery. They are comical yet destructive little creatures – kind of clumsy, with a disproportionately large shell to drag around. But, however much of a pest they can be, they are an integral part of a garden – they promote a healthy ecosystem by stirring up the dirt in search of nutrients. Who would have thought that these tiny little creatures actually have a helpful purpose in a garden – especially since they go about their job so quietly, silently... and secretively.

My 18.5k gold snail is decorated with snakeskin coral (5 grams) and champagne diamonds (.40 tcw.). It hides under turquoise flowers with tsavorite garnet (.80 tcw.) leaves, and both snail and flowers rest on petrified wood.

In cm: 13 h x 11.5 w ♦ In inches: 5.11 h x 4.52 w

# MARK SCHNEIDER Both Sides Now

Create an object of art that can put a smile on your face.

I enjoy making AJDC project pieces because they give me the freedom to think outside the box and create a design without the restrictions of budget or the need to please a client.

The onyx "head" is a 56.71 tcw. gem, cut by Dieter Lorenz. Facial features and accessories are made from 0.25 tcw. of white diamonds, .03 tcw. of black diamonds, 1.44 tcw. of tsavorite garnets, .14 tcw. of blue cabochon sapphires, and 0.84 tcw. of rubies. Precious metals include 18k yellow gold, 18k and 14k rose gold, and 14k white gold.

In cm: 7.62 h x 3.81 w ♦ In inches: 3.0 h x 1.5 w



Original concept



Front view



Back view





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### **AJDC Mission Statement**

Essential to every culture, art is the vehicle for expressing emotions and ideas in a personal and creative manner. The American Jewelry Design Council is a non-profit educational corporation, which recognizes and promotes the appreciation of original jewelry design as art.

To that end the AJDC is committed to raising the awareness of the jewelry industry, the art community, the media and the consumer about the aesthetic value of artistic fine jewelry. Members of the American Jewelry Design Council are dedicated to elevating the caliber of jewelry design through educational activities and to challenging professional jewelry designers worldwide to actualize their creative potential.

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