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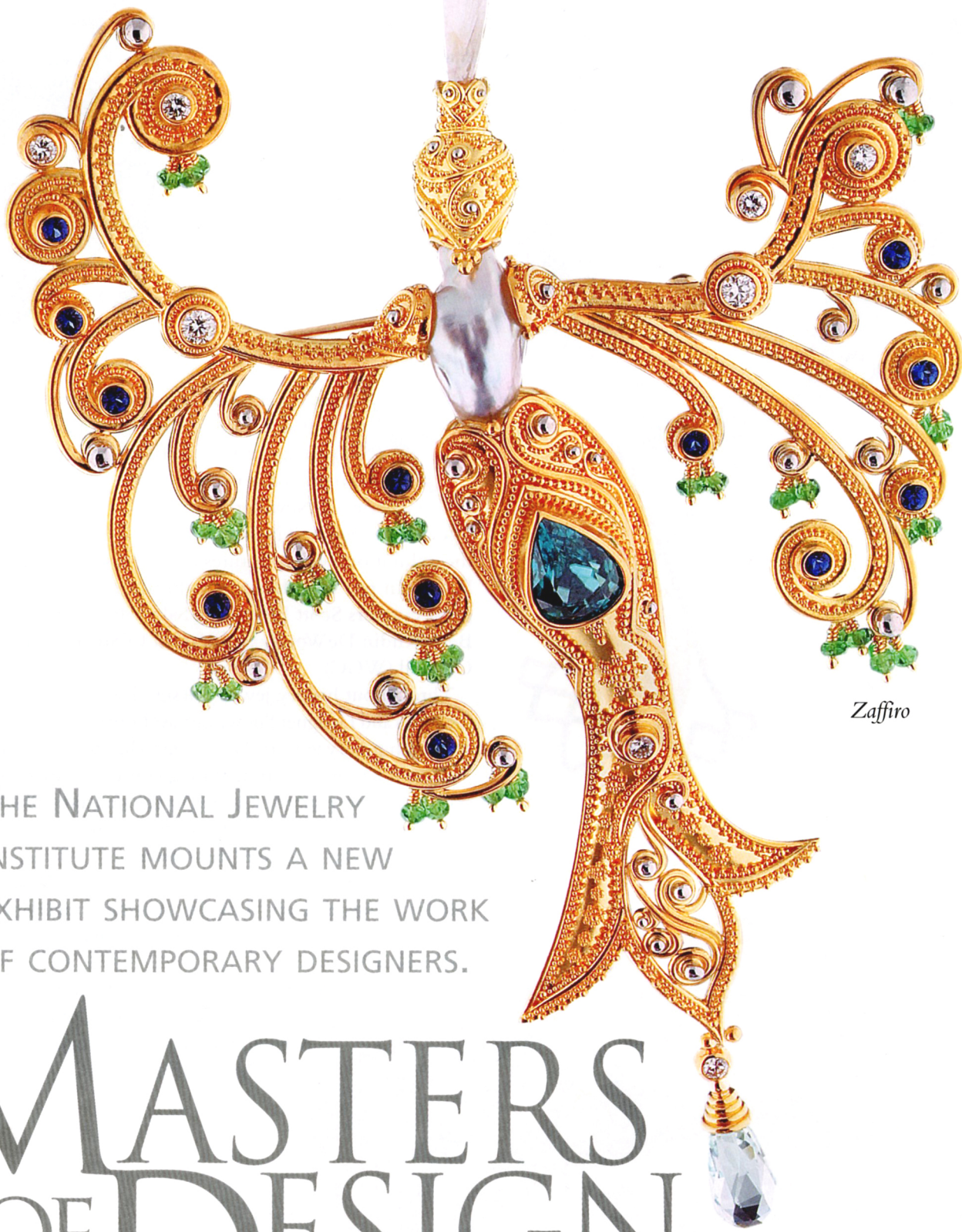
ТДБ

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SELLING GEN Y

STYLE



Zaffiro

THE NATIONAL JEWELRY
INSTITUTE MOUNTS A NEW
EXHIBIT SHOWCASING THE WORK
OF CONTEMPORARY DESIGNERS.

MASTERS OF DESIGN

By AMBER MICHELLE



Dominique Cohen



Leila Tai

Today's designers are tomorrow's collectibles and with that in mind, the National Jewelry Institute (NJI) inaugurated its first Designer Showcase, an exhibition of contemporary jewelry, at the Forbes Galleries in New York City.

Jewelry expert and NJI vice chairman Ralph Esmerian curated the exhibition, which features designers from all over the world. Esmerian put together this exhibition with the assistance of guest curators Scott Erdman of Saks Fifth Avenue, philanthropist Beth Rudin DeWoody and Duvall O'Steen of the World Gold Council (WGC).

Throughout history, jewelry design has reflected the fashions of the times and Designer Showcase pays homage to the changing styles of contemporary jewelry. According to Judith Price, NJI's president, "There is a misconception among consumers that jewelry design stays the same year after year. On the contrary, like fashion, it is seasonal. The National Jewelry Institute's exhibition will celebrate the new fashions of jewelry this season."

Besides viewing jewelry as part of fashion, DeWoody recognizes jewelry as wearable art. "I like to ornament myself with beautiful jewelry and I also like jewelry as a decorative object, just to collect and look at."

Designer Showcase holds a more commercial appeal for corporate entities World Gold Council and Saks Fifth Avenue, both of which recognize the importance of promoting design.



Tanya Farah

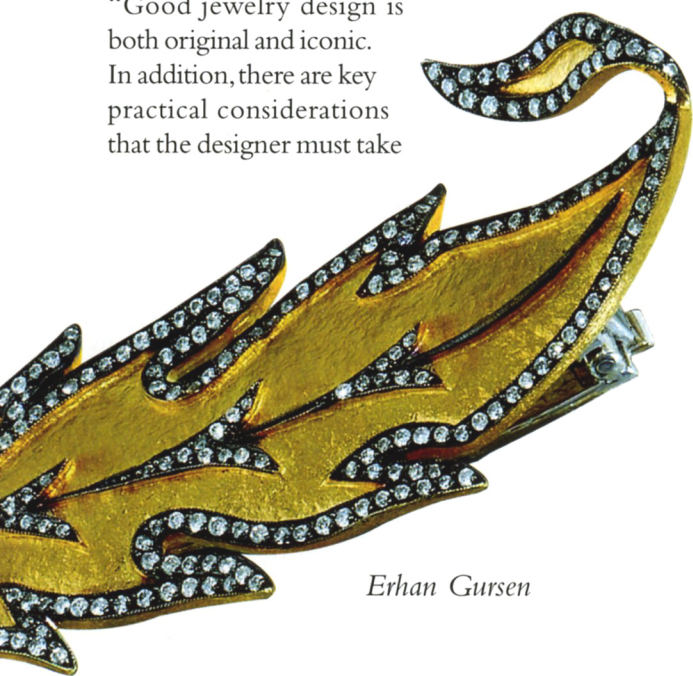




“This collection focuses on the high end and celebrates design with unique and enduring style,” says WGC’s O’Steen, director of jewelry public relations and promotion in the U.S. “The emphasis is on innovative design and the intrinsic value of gold, which is increasingly important right now.”

Scott Erdman, vice president and merchandising manager, Saks Fifth Avenue, notes that the retailer became involved in this project as a way to raise the profile of the store’s jewelry department and to draw attention to some of the designers featured there.

“Good jewelry design is both original and iconic. In addition, there are key practical considerations that the designer must take



Erhan Gursen



Stephanie Albertson

into account — how the jewelry looks on a person’s figure and how it looks in the cases.”

If jewelry is to have relevance today, besides looking back at history, it is also important to look forward and to showcase new talent, notes Esmerian. “The future is really important to giving credibility to the world of jewelry. We picked designers on the basis of visual interest. There were some I’d never heard of before and it’s fantastic to recognize these designers.”

Designer Showcase is on display at the Forbes Galleries through June 28, 2008, and at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, July 19, 2008 through January 18, 2009. ♦



Graff