



SHADOW

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 public 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.

FOREWORD

by Victoria Gomelsky, Editor in Chief, Jewelers Circular Keystone

When the American Jewelry Design Council (AJDC) debuted its first themed design project in 1995—tasking members to interpret “Mona Lisa”—it quietly launched what would become a beloved tradition: the annual challenge. Now, 30 years later, these creative provocations remain a ritual of exploration and reinvention. Over the decades, AJDC members have tackled concepts both literal (“Spiral,” “Polka Dot”) and abstract (“Transformation,” “Secret Treasure”), responding not only with wit and virtuosity, but with jewelry that blurs the line between adornment and art.

Yet much has changed since those early days. In the mid-1990s, the notion of an independent jewelry designer was still a novelty. Outside of storied houses like Cartier or Harry Winston, fine jewelry was valued largely for its raw materials—the carat weight, the metal purity—rather than the hand or mind behind it. But seeds of a shift had already been sown by pioneering talents like David Yurman, Penny Preville, Jose Hess and Robert Lee Morris, who insisted that jewelry bear not just gems, but names—their names.

As the 2000s unfolded and digital platforms democratized visibility, the spotlight began to find designers who once worked in the industry’s shadows. Today, AJDC artisans occupy a vital niche: creators of deeply personal, concept-driven work, whose pieces speak in stories rather than status.

And yet, in 2025—a year marked by economic headwinds and industry flux—that spotlight can feel more like a flicker. The theme for this year’s AJDC challenge, “Shadow,” feels as much a reflection of the moment as it is a creative prompt. But within its ambiguity lies potential, and in the designs that follow, darkness becomes a fertile ground for beauty, ingenuity, and surprise.

Some artists embraced the theme with stark literalism. Alan Revere’s sculptural cuff juxtaposes vermeil and oxidized silver, light against dark, while Michael Good’s rippling neckpiece evokes shadow as duality. Paul Klecka looks to the past with a sundial watch, where time is measured by shadow’s passage, and Whitney Boin’s “Shadow Detached” brooch turns silhouette into statement, his crowned hero rendered in stark painted platinum.

Others allowed their materials to carry the mood. Thomas Herman's "The Old Lake" brooch captures a misty, natural abstraction in Montana agate. Ricardo Basta's high-polish silver setting casts mirrored shadows around a green tourmaline. Tim McClelland channels the cosmos with a solar eclipse ring: black jade and golden swirls against a backdrop of chalcedony. In Alishan Halebian's pendant, a mother of pearl arc captures the journey from brightness into darkness, while Linda Macneil's graphic planetary form explores orbit, motion—and the eerie elegance of cast light.

For some, shadows stirred darker instincts. Gregore Morin's "Vampire Butterfly" earrings perch rubellite insects atop cones of ebony, while Mark Schneider's "Snakes and Shadows" pendant lets golden serpents coil through a haunting drusy agate.

Still others turned to metaphor. Scott Keating's horn cuff, anchored by Utah conglomerate, references geologic memory—shadow as history embedded in stone. Katey Brunini summons the strength of a samurai in her "Akira" pendant, cutting through darkness with diamond-set silver. Jennifer Rabe Morin

alludes to both Jungian psychology and Impressionism in her candy-like ring, capped by a 25-carat rhodochrosite cabochon. And in Merry-Lee Rae's "Shadow Work" necklace, introspection becomes alchemy, with cloisonné enamel and gold charting a journey through emotional terrain.

Amy Roper Lyons perhaps says it best. Her silver, enamel, and pyrite brooch explores the tension between darkness and luminosity, material and metaphor. "This brooch is not merely an ornament," she writes, "but a narrative of contrast—where roughness and refinement, opacity and translucence meet in a moment of unexpected harmony."

In a year shadowed by uncertainty, these works remind us that the most meaningful art often emerges from darkness. That contrast, not clarity, is what makes beauty endure. And that only by embracing the dark can we fully see the light.



MICHAEL GOOD
Shadow Neckpiece

Necklace
Sterling silver
190.5 x 190.5 x 38.1 mm
7.5" x 7.5" x 1.5"



Timepiece
Bronze, silicone
40 x 40 mm
1.57" x 1.57"

PAUL KLECKA

Shadow Time

Sundial - the original timepiece, and now on your wrist.



THOMAS HERMAN

The Old Lake

I love this scenic agate! It describes a time and place that cannot be put into words.

Brooch

18k gold, Montana agate

31.75 x 57.15 x 6.35 mm

1.25" x 2.25" x 0.25"



Ring

Silver, green tourmaline,
diamonds

38 x 25.4x 25.4 mm
1.5" x 1" x 1"

RICARDO BASTA

Shadow

This Tourmaline was so odd, striking my creative eye! It had the natural, exterior crystal finish, or 'skin' on one side which is now set in the interior of the ring. I had the vision to set it with a high mirror finish behind it and this played into the "Shadow" effect. I particularly liked the asymmetry of the polished face of the faceted stone which felt right. Echoing the asymmetry of the stone, I ran a fine line of diamonds for balance.



ALISHAN HALEBIAN

Eclipse

Mother of pearl was the inspiration, everything else just fell into the place like a shadow; it is the journey of the light into the total darkness.

Pendant

18k gold, oxidized silver,
mother of pearl, coral

65 x 60 x 10 mm

2.56" x 2.36" x 0.39"



Ring

Chalcedony, black jade,
yellow and white
diamonds, gold, silver

27 x 25 x 25 mm
1.06" x 0.98" x 0.98"

TIM McCLELLAND

Solar Eclipse Ring

This is an impression of the total solar eclipse that took place in North America
on April 8th, 2024.



GREGORE MORIN

Vampire Butterfly

In the shadows lurks a brilliant crimson blood red immortal butterfly with a night black chrysalis. Bred by a long forgotten race of vampires, who were driven through eons of time and loneliness, to create an ethereal companion.

Earrings

Rubilite, ebony, gold,
silver

72 x 22 x 22 mm

2.83" x 0.87" x 0.87"



Necklace

Cloisonné enamel,
14k, 18k and 22k gold,
silver, sleeping beauty
turquoise

200 x 175 x 10 mm
8" x 7" x 0.375"

MERRY-LEE RAE

Shadow Work

I originally began this piece for the Tempest Project, but chaos ensued (as it often does in Tempest years), and I found myself deep in the Shadow project year. Titled "Shadow Work", it reflects the introspective process of uncovering parts of ourselves that unconsciously shape our lives. This practice brings greater authenticity through conscious awareness. Each creature holds meaning: Wolf (intuition), Dolphin (harmony and generosity), Raven (transformation and healing), Hummingbird (joy and perseverance), Octopus (adaptability and creativity), and Yellow Tang (the unconscious higher-self, feelings, and motives). The portrait is of my daughter, symbolic of all that is good.



WHITNEY BOIN

Shadow Detached

This is a copy because, of course, I carry the real one around with me.

Brooch

Painted platinum

76 x 98 mm

3" x 3.9375"



Pendant

14k, 22k and 24k gold,
druzy agate, black and
white diamonds,
pearls, rubies

50.8 x 38.1 x 7.94 mm
2" x 1.5" x 0.3125"

MARK SCHNEIDER

Snakes and Shadows

My love of reptiles and nature were the inspiration for this piece. The free-form black and white agate druzy became the focal point with its variation of black and white color and textures. The cat's eye flower is suggestive of the eggs laid by the snakes. The snake design is carried out to the back of the piece as well as the front.



SCOTT KEATING

Ancient Shadows

This Utah conglomerate gemstone reminded me of the shadows of the past that still show themselves to today's geology. This fact inspired me to build off that theme and create this bracelet.

Cuff bracelet

Utah conglomerate,
bronze, buffalo horn

60 x 77 x 62 mm
2.36" x 3.03" x 2.44"



Pendant

18k gold, silver,
diamonds, golden coral

115 x 19 x 19 mm
4.5" x 0.75" x 0.75"

KATEY BRUNINI

Akira

Our Japanese katana was inspired by the light that shines within the Samurai warrior. An image of the full moon setting into the Pacific Ocean lit the blade from shadow. We attempted to capture chiaroscuro in carved and honed golden Hawaiian coral balanced with high polish silver and gold. The cutting edge is calibrated to the specs of actual Samurai measurements... in miniature.



AMY ROPER LYONS

Shadow of My Dream

Inspired by pyrite-embedded slate, this brooch explores the interplay between darkness and light. The rough, enigmatic slate—its dark matrix lit by sparkling pyrite—suggests depth and hidden complexity. In contrast, I envisioned a luminous enamel surface evoking the fleeting essence of water or sky. The piece becomes a conversation between opposites: grounded darkness and ethereal light. More than ornament, it is a narrative of contrast—where roughness and refinement, opacity and translucence, meet in harmony.

Brooch

Silver, 18k gold,
enamel, pyrite in slate,
diamonds

57.15 x 31.75 x 12.7 mm
2.25" x 1.25" x 0.5"



Cuff bracelet/sculpture
Silver vermeil
120 x 150 x 25 mm
4" x 6" x 1"

ALAN REVERE

Is a shadow real?

There is no shadow over my being.



JENNIFER RABE MORIN

The Shadow is Full of Potential!

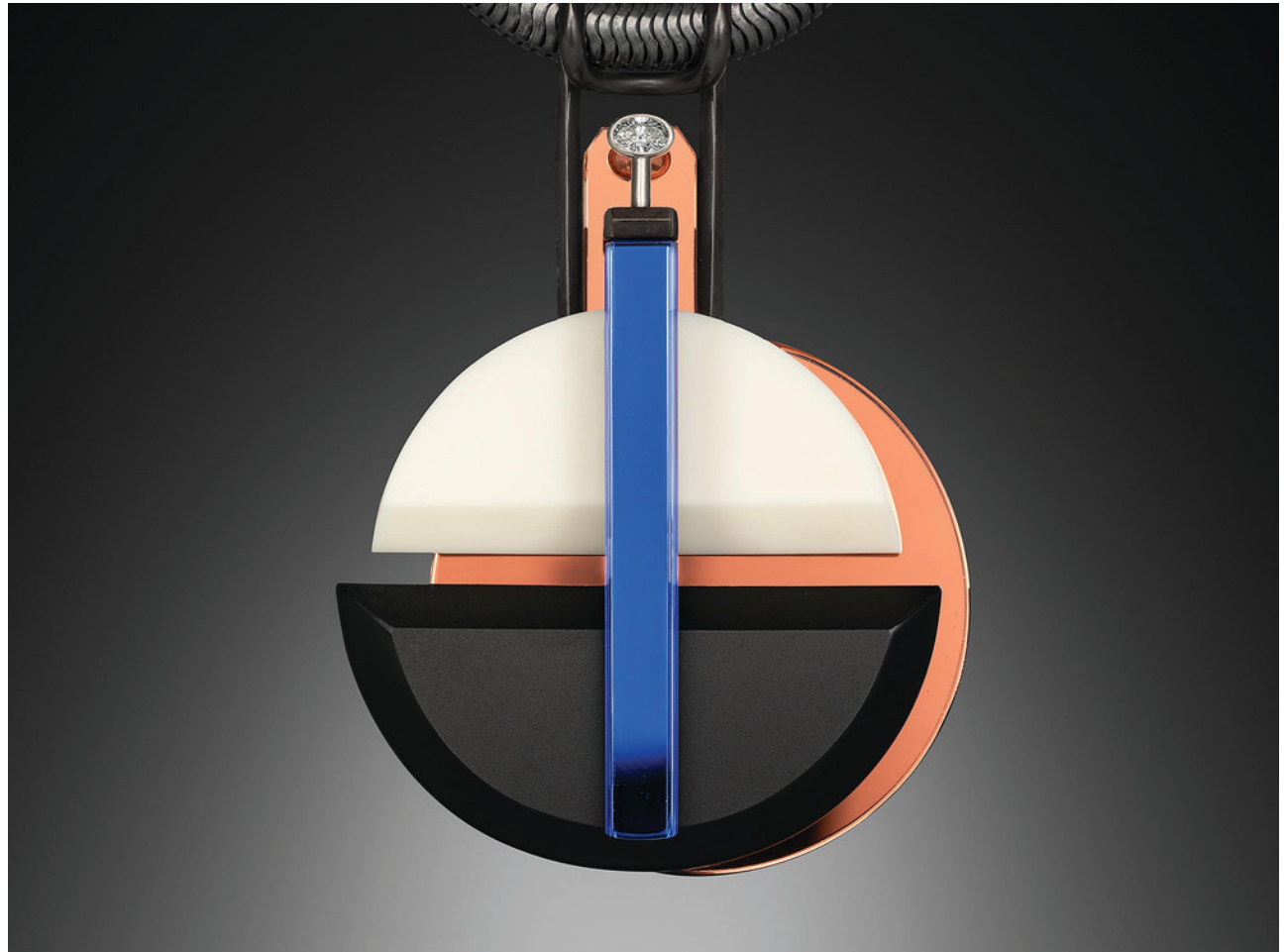
In Jungian psychotherapy the shadow contains all those neglected or hidden parts of the personality whereas with close inspection that shadow is a treasure of hope and inspiration. In the Impressionistic School of Painting they understood that the “shadow” is not a dark and somber place but a space filled with lively reflections of color.

Ring

Sterling silver, 18k gold,
rhodochrosite
cabochon, various
gemstones

44.45 mm (diameter)

1.75” (diameter)



Pendant

Mirrored plate glass,
vitrolite plate glass,
silver, diamond

95.25 x 63.5 x 15.88 mm
3.75" x 2.5" x 0.625"

LINDA MACNEIL

Pink Shadow

An imagined planet in motion, caught in time, reflects distant light
and casts a pink shadow. A lone star twinkles above.

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PAST PROJECTS

1995 Mona Lisa

1996 Cube

1997 Wheel

1998 Key

1999 Puzzle

2000 Water

2001 Flight

2002 Peekaboo

2003 Fold

2004 Sphere

2005 Pyramid

2006 Secret Treasure

2007 Spiral

2008 Tension

2009 Explosion

2010 Tear

2011 Black & White

2012 Ice

2013 Wave

2014 Rhythm

2015 Fire

2016 Transformation

2017 Stripes

2018 Together

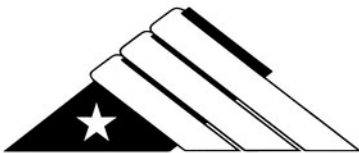
2019 Polka Dot

2020 Secret Garden

2021 Badge

2022 Connection

2023 Tempest



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