

AGTA Winner Features 7ct. Russian Emerald



RAPAPORT... A ring featuring an untreated 7.16-carat Russian emerald took the top prize at the 2018 American Gem Trade Association (AGTA) Spectrum Awards.

Joseph Ambalu, of New York-based Amba Gem Corp., won the Best of Show award for the piece (*pictured*), which was set in platinum and yellow gold, and accented with diamonds. The design competition took place in New York last week.

The Best Use of Color award went to Ricardo Basta of E. Eichberg for his “Phoenix Rising” necklace, which contained Mandarin garnets, Paraiba tourmalines, sapphires, rubies, fire opals, tsavorite garnets and turquoise, set in 18-karat yellow gold.

Avi Raz of A & Z Pearls collected the Best Use of Pearl award for a multicolored natural baroque freshwater-pearl necklace, with 14-karat rose, yellow and rhodium gold beads.

The accolade for Best Use of Platinum and Color accolade went to Deirdre Featherstone of Featherstone Designs for her platinum “Wonder Woman” cuff containing aquamarines, tanzanites, blue zircons, lavender spinels, tourmalines and star-set diamonds.

The Best Use of a Platinum Crown prize went to John Haynes of Schmitt Jewelers, who created a platinum “Solar Blossom” ring featuring a 14.73-carat orange zircon accented with tsavorite, garnets and diamonds.

Patrick King of Jewelsmith took home the Fashion Forward honor for a 14-karat white- and rose-gold pendant featuring a 13.31-carat sapphire and diamond necklace, while Caroline Chartouni of Caroline C received the Editor’s Choice award for an 18-karat white-gold and blue spinel ring accented with diamonds.

In the Bridal division, Zoltan David won first place for a 22-karat and 18-karat rose-gold necklace featuring a 46.12-carat opal accented with a 3.60-carat round opal and blue sapphires.

Designer Erica Courtney claimed the top spot in the Business/Day Wear category for her 18-karat yellow gold “Emerald City” necklace, with a 105.99-carat pear-shaped emerald accented with diamonds. The premier slot for Evening Wear was won by Gross & Currens of David Gross Group for a platinum-and-yellow-sapphire ring with diamonds.

The Classical division top honor went to Niveet Nagpal of Omi Prive for a platinum ring featuring cuprian tourmaline, diamonds, Paraiba tourmalines and Alexandrite.

The winner in the Classic Gemstone category of the AGTA Cutting Edge Awards — which recognize outstanding stone polishers — was Kenneth Blount of 100% Natural for a 91.36-carat unheated yellow Ceylon sapphire.

AGTA CEO Douglas Hucker noted the large number of new designers and first-time entrants, as well as a younger influx of contestants with a fresh design outlook.

“Over a dozen of our awards will be presented to first-time winners,” he said, adding that the range of materials that applicants used in their products was broader than in previous years.

“That diversity was evidenced in the absolute cornucopia of color and variety in the jewelry divisions.”

Judges at the event included Darryl Alexander of Alexander’s Jewelers, Randy Coffin from Coffin & Trout Jewellers, and Dallas Prince of Dallas Prince & Company.