



A SYMBOLIC DISPLAY OF GENEROSITY

In 2019, just before the Covid pandemic, the then vice president of the International Colored Gemstone Association (ICA), Damien Cody, proposed a project to ICA's board of directors. He felt that there was a need to push for a more transparent supply chain in the colored gemstone industry, with a special focus on small-scale and artisanal miners who supply 80% of the world's colored stones. With more than 650 members around the world, primarily miners and dealers of colored gems, ICA is ideally situated to identify and develop programs to assist artisanal communities that might be in need of support. In 2021, Cody's idea became a reality, and *Gems Keep Giving* funded its first project – a well and water purification project in Kamtonga, Kenya. For an article on this project, see *InColor* Fall 2023, issue 50, page 39.

Today, Gems Keep Giving® is an independent, not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization that is dedicated to helping support artisanal colored gemstone mining and cutting communities around the world.

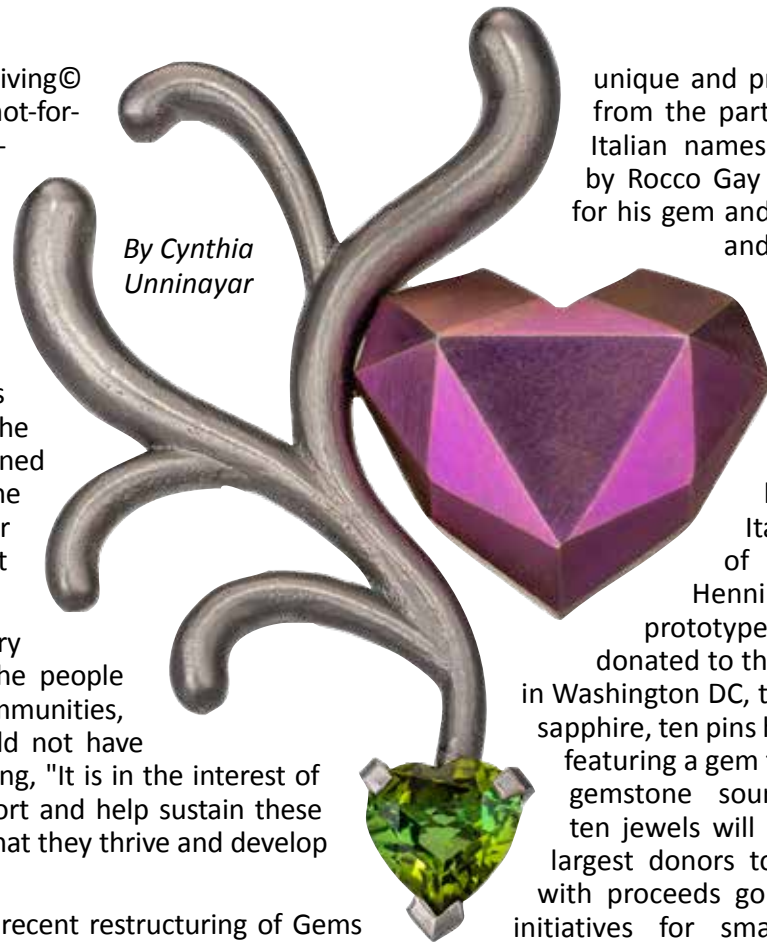
Ms. Hayley Henning has been appointed as the chairperson and is joined by a talented team in the gem-related industry. For a complete line-up, visit GemsKeepGiving.org.

"The global gem industry and trade depend on the people in these mining communities, without whom we would not have gems," comments Henning, "It is in the interest of all stakeholders to support and help sustain these communities, ensuring that they thrive and develop for future generations."

She adds that, with the recent restructuring of Gems Keep Giving®, the organization is now able to broaden its reach, seeking contributions and assistance from socially conscious industry stakeholders, corporate sponsors, foundations, and other gem-loving and enthusiastic donors.

To this end, the organization has come up with a delightful idea to help raise awareness and funds: A **Gems Keep Giving® Pin**. This symbolic, meaningful,

By Cynthia Unninayar



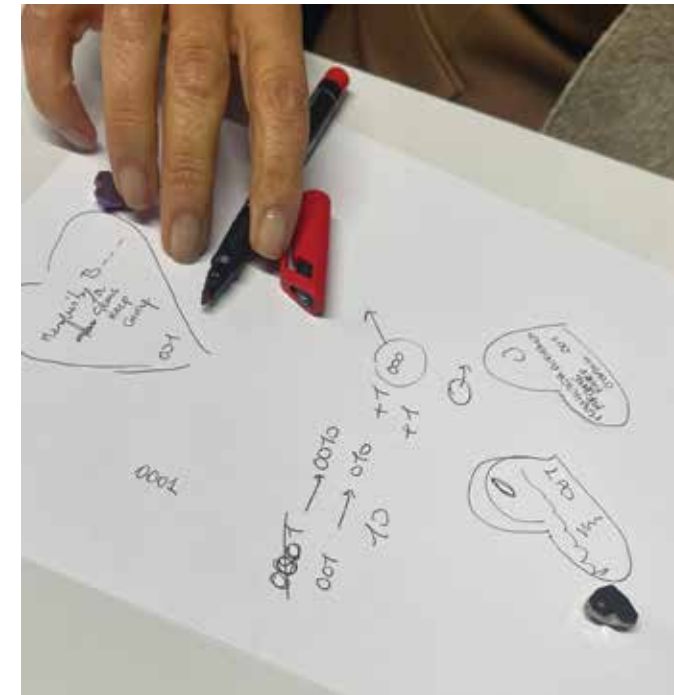
unique and priceless jewel was born from the partnership of two leading Italian names: Petramundi, directed by Rocco Gay who is known globally for his gem and gem-cutting expertise, and the noted designer Ms. Emanuela Burgener, of Margherita Burgener, a brand renowned for its original high-end jewelry collections.

"The pins are all being handcrafted in Valenza, Italy, the historic home of both companies," says Henning. "In addition to the prototype and one pin that will be donated to the Smithsonian Museum in Washington DC, that includes a Montana sapphire, ten pins have been created, each featuring a gem from a different colored gemstone sourcing country." These ten jewels will be awarded to the ten largest donors to Gems Keep Giving®, with proceeds going directly to support initiatives for small-scale and artisanal mining and cutting communities worldwide.

"When asked why he got involved in creating the pin for Gems Keep Giving®, Rocco Gay states, "It came from the desire to make something beautiful and meaningful to give to donors, something that would represent the foundation and its values. We decided on titanium, which is innovative, lightweight, easy-to-wear, unisex, available in colors and is very modern. We

also wanted the pin to include a prominent heart-shape in pink titanium, as well as a heart-shaped gemstone, both of which would evoke the foundation's logo."

With these general guidelines, Gay turned to Emanuela Burgener for the final design. "I have known Emanuela for a long time, and have been collaborating with her for almost thirty years. I chose her not only for her creative skills but because she is one of the pioneers in using titanium in fine jewelry," he explains.



The design planning for creating the pin began with ideas sketched on paper by Emanuela Burgener.

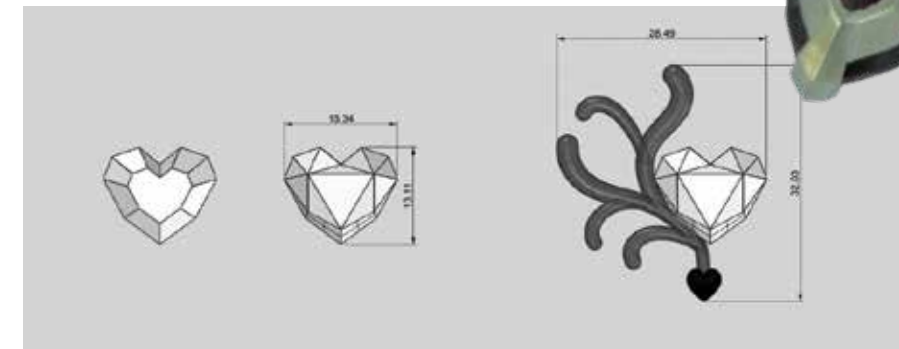
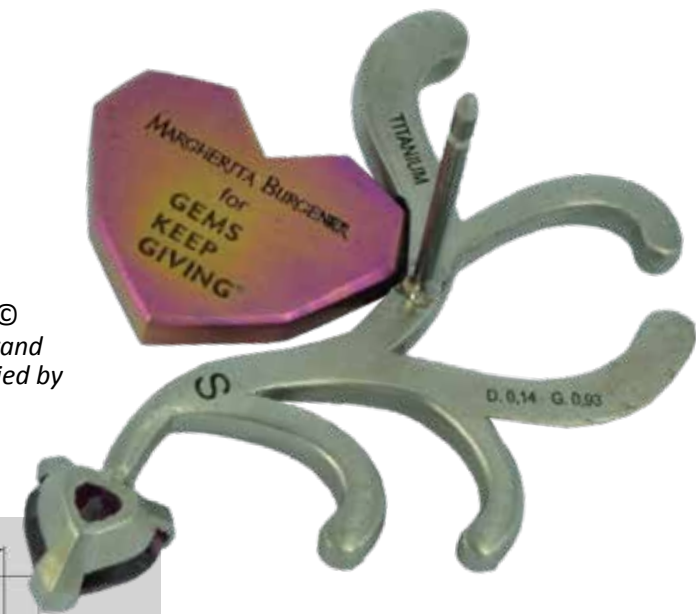
"I am deeply honored by Rocco Gay's invitation to design a jewel for Gems Keep Giving®, an association devoted to safeguarding the origins of gemstones and supporting artisanal mining and cutting communities," says Emanuela Burgener.

"As always," she adds, "my creative inspiration comes from Nature, a world deeply rooted in my identity, shaped by the mountain landscapes where I was born and raised. To me, humanity and Nature are inseparable, and this profound connection makes the design of the Gems Keep Giving® pin especially meaningful to me."

"The design reflects the delicate balance that defines life itself," Burgener adds. "The five intricate titanium branches symbolize five gem-producing continents

Only ten pins have been created that represent ten gem-sourcing countries, and they will be gifted to the top ten donors to Gems Keep Giving® as a symbolic display of their generosity in helping fund the organization's worthwhile projects.

The back of the titanium Gems Keep Giving® pin, designed by Emanuela Burgener of the brand Margherita Burgener, with colored gems supplied by Rocco Gay, owner of Petramundi.



The next step was a computer-generated drawing with size and relative dimensions of the component parts of the pin.

and the vital connection between Nature, the planet, and humanity. At its center, the faceted pink titanium heart, expertly crafted by goldsmiths, evokes the association's emblem. At the base, a small luminous heart-shaped gemstone represents a seed of hope, from which new stories of solidarity and beauty will emerge and flourish. Each gemstone, with its unique light and color, tells the story of its origin — a story of care and support brought to life by Gems Keep Giving®."

"This unique link between the gemstone and its place of origin makes each pin one-of-a-kind, just as the foundation's impact on mining communities is meant to be both singular and transformative," declares Rocco Gay, who provided and faceted the heart-shaped colored gemstones.

"I looked for gems with different origins and colors, from various geographical locations," he continues, "avoiding the usual 'big three' (emerald, sapphire, and ruby), while focusing on those stones that are still popular and available."

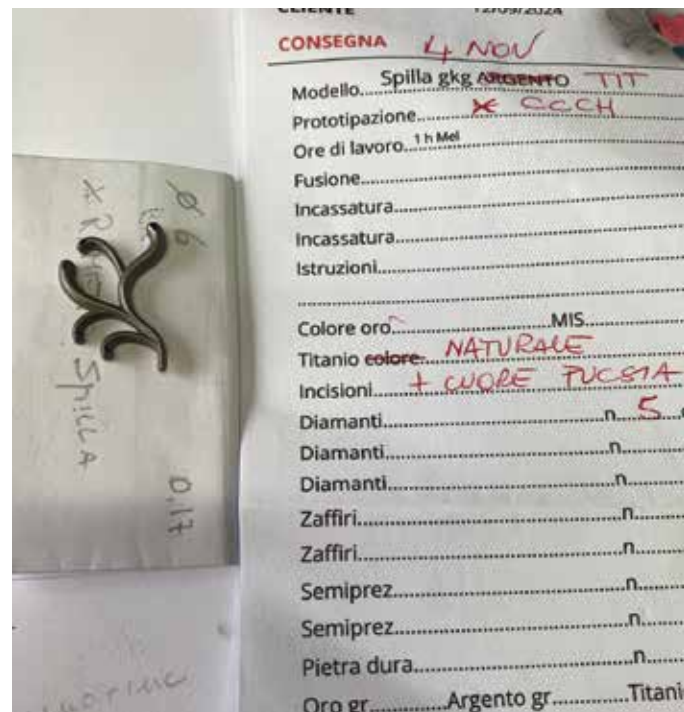
Titanium was the metal of choice because it is innovative, lightweight, modern, unisex, and available in colors.



Selection of colored gems telling the story of their origin and the communities where they are mined, sourced, and faceted by Rocco Gay.



Computer-generated image showing the position of the titanium branches and heart, with the gemstone at the base.



The five titanium branches represent five colored gemstone-producing continents.



The newly cast titanium elements.

Each of the ten pins features a heart-shaped gemstone with a distinct color at its base, paying tribute to the countries where gems are sourced. Extending from this stone are five titanium branches representing five gem-producing continents, and symbolizing global unity, life, and a future grounded in respect for Nature in all its forms.



Once polished, the three main titanium elements await assembly.



Putting the finishing touches on the pin's titanium heart and branches.



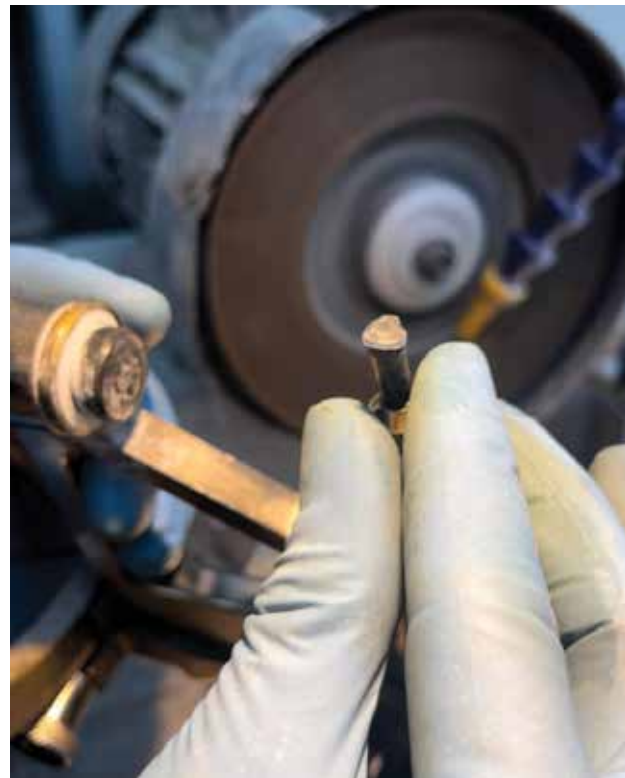
Polishing the pin's titanium heart.



Assembling the pin's titanium elements.



Examining the heart-shaped gemstones to be placed at the base of the Gems Keep Giving© Pin.



The heart-shaped gemstones during the faceting process.

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The completed ten pins.



Each pin comes with a gem-testing report from the Centro Analisi Gemmologiche in Valenza, Italy, about each of the heart-shaped gemstones.

A special breakfast event to update the media and friends about Gems Keep Giving© initiatives will be held during the Tucson gem shows on February 5, 2025 in the Turquoise Room at the Alfie Norville Museum in the historical courthouse, from 8 am to 10 am.

"Wearing the Gems Keep Giving© pin is more than just an accessory," muses Burgener. "It is a small, yet profound, gesture of generosity and concern for the world and a celebration of sustainable beauty, born from respect for both humanity and Nature."

"I strongly believe in the values of the Gems Keep Giving© initiative and the tangible possibilities the foundation has to improve the quality of life for the people involved in gem extraction and processing," explains Gay.

"Colored gems bring joy, happiness, energy, beauty and often wealth," he concludes, "and I believe it is only fair to share some of this with the entire supply chain, from the small mine at the edge of the world to the luckiest end consumer. I hope this project achieves the success it deserves and that it is only the first in a long series of projects involving our beloved colored gemstones."

Among the world's many beloved gemstones, those chosen for the Gems Keep Giving© fundraiser are Peridot from China, Tanzanite from Tanzania, Yellow Beryl from Brazil, Blue Zircon from Cambodia, Amethyst from Uruguay, Moonstone from Sri Lanka, Rubellite from Mozambique, Aquamarine from Madagascar, Champagne Topaz from India, and Green Tourmaline from Nigeria. For the special gift to the Smithsonian Institution in Washington DC, a Montana Sapphire was chosen for the heart-shaped gem.

During the Tucson gem shows, Gems Keep Giving© will host a breakfast event to update media and friends on current projects and fundraising initiatives. It will take place in the Turquoise Room at the Alfie Norville Museum, in the historical courthouse, on February 5, 2025, from 8 am to 10 am.

For more information, please email Hayley Henning at: HayleyHenning@gmail.com. ♦

