

Bal Polonais

Glittering evening benefits MOT

MEMBERS of the Bal Polonais have teamed up with Dobie Jewelers and Stagecrafters in Royal Oak to stage a benefit for the Michigan Opera Theater on Wednesday, Nov. 29 that promises to make the ball more of a sparkler than usual.

Dobie Jewelers has arranged to bring in the Diamond Symphonies Collection, a remarkable collection of diamond jewelry by American designers that premiered in New York at the Jewelers of America show.

The Diamond Symphonies Collection is planned to highlight an afterglow hosted by Dobie Jewelers following a performance by the Stagecrafters.

Bal Polonais members are selling tickets for the stage performance and afterglow as they raise funds to support the forthcoming performance of a Polish opera by the Michigan Opera Theater.

THE DIAMOND Symphonies Collection will be shown at the

Royal Oak location of Dobie Jewelers from Nov. 20 to Dec. 2.

"This holiday season, diamonds will add dazzle and dazzle to today's sleek, sassy and free-spirited styles," said James M. Dobie, owner and president of the 64-year-old jewelry store.

This is the year to glamorously bare the neck and show off an elegant necklace, especially if it is art-deco-inspired with triangular cut diamonds. For evening celebrations, a sparkling diamond necklace or dangling earrings add to the allure of romantic swirls of chiffon, supple and silky gowns, plunging necklines and intricately embroidered velvet and lace dresses, currently the height of fashion.

According to noted New York jewelry designer Jose Hess, "This year, one of the hottest items on a woman's wish list is a pair of diamond drop earrings. They are both sexy and elegant, and they glide and glisten across the shoulders with the slightest movement."

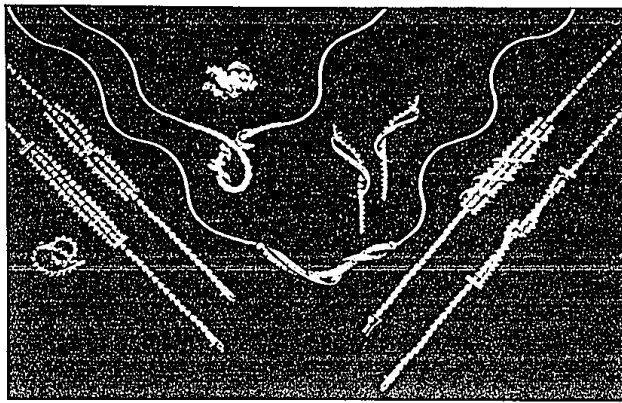
Hess is one of many American designers represented in the

Diamond Symphonies Collection. Another collection participant, Palazzo, suggests that for the daring, large diamond hoops will add dash to a curvy cocktail dress.

For day and evening, a cluster of diamond bar pins or a fluid diamond ribbon brooch clasps a soft wool shawl that drapes today's sleek jersey or crepe dress, achieving a quietly chic look. For up-to-the-minute panache, a diamond brooch accents a scarf or a diamond circle pin clasps a wrap tucked around the shoulders of a sweater.

Bold jewelry designs can create an attitude of daring, such as wearing several diamond rings stacked on one finger. For others, it's hip to be square. While in the world of fashion, sweeping plaids are making their mark, jewelry designs feature geometric styles. From the Diamond Symphonies Collection, serpentine baguette earrings by Ungern, worn along the rim of the ear, are particularly effective.

According to Kathy Kimmel of Nova Stylings, a collection participant, "The ever popular



Finding diamond jewelry to suit her style and taste is no problem, as American designers turn their talents loose in the Diamond Symphonies Collection now available at Dobie

Jewelers in Royal Oak and Lakeside Mall. New for 1989 are gold and diamond jackets to give a dressy look to the classic diamond tennis bracelet.

diamond tennis bracelet is appearing with different shaped stones, such as baguettes, princess cuts, marquise cuts, pears and ovals. And while the classic tennis bracelet remains a basic wardrobe item, for a new and dressier look, women are adding a gold and diamond jacket, which is similar in concept to jackets for diamond car studs.

Fantasy gems: a cut above the rest

By C. L. Rugenstein
staff writer

LIKE A sparkling rainbow of pinks, blues, greens and golds, the carved gems of master gem-cutter Bernd Munsteiner — called the "Picasso of gem cutters" — filled the showcase.

Charles Duquet, of Duquet Jewelers in Farmington, brought out the stones for a closer inspection and explanation of Munsteiner's "fantasy cut," said to be the first new gem cut in 500 years.

For that reason alone, an authentic Munsteiner gem would be a priceless gift.

But Duquet and Munsteiner have teamed up to bring the gems, in one-of-a-kind settings, to the Detroit area.

DUQUET, AND Margo Seabrook who works with the Munsteiner collection, displayed luxurious piece after piece — rings, bracelets, earrings, brooches and tie tacks with "fantasy cut" gems.

The cut itself has a geometric quality. The facets slash across the stones in diagonals, or zig-zags, or come from two different directions to join at the center. Seabrook brought out a necklace. Almost 2-inches long, the 21 carat marquise-shaped aquamarine was faceted at the points and across the middle. Mounted on a half-inch wide gold chain, it had a 2.00-carat marquise-shaped diamond and retailed for \$43,800.

To make a complete set, a matching ring with a 10 carat aquamarine and one carat diamond can be had for \$19,500.

Though his personal favorite is the aquamarine, Munsteiner works a lot with tourmalines, citrines, amethysts, quartz and laminated agate.

SEABROOK SET out a line of tourmaline rings for men, in various shades of pink and green. A hefty chunk of gold ring (all the gold used is 18 karat, Duquet said) with a trapezoid-shaped, dark green tourmaline had a price tag of \$5,500.

The face of that stone, however, was smooth — the cuts were made on the back and reflected through.

"Most of the cuts fall from the back and are seen as a design in the stone," Seabrook said.

She demonstrated with a 24-carat citrine (a golden stone) and diamond bracelet worth \$9,600.

Also for the gentleman gem

fancier was the small, aquamarine-and-diamond tie tack at \$1,385.

One stunning piece was the agate, relief-carved brooch. Variations of blue, from light at the top, to the mid-gold six levels down, flowed from the center of the oval stone. Set in 18 karat gold with 10 small diamonds the brooch retails for \$4,600.

Gem cutting is Munsteiner's art as well as his craft. Duquet had examples and photos of several Munsteiner gem sculptures on display, and said he was negotiating to buy one for permanent display in the store. The sculptures are also for sale.

Munsteiner comes from a family of artisans. He follows his father and grandfather in the trade at his home near Idar-Oberstein, Germany — the European center for gem cutting from the time of the Romans. His two sons and his wife work with him at his studio in Slupshausen, 20 miles from Idar-Oberstein.

THE "FANTASY CUT" got its name from Munsteiner's struggle to create the cut, said Duquet.

"He was told he'd never get the brilliance back out of the stone," Duquet said. "It's a type of cut called 'inner selecting' — positions the cuts on the proper angles to get the total reflection of that particular stone."

Munsteiner figures out the cuts "in his mind," Duquet said. "He feels he can see what he will achieve from the moment he first sees the rough (stone)."

It took Munsteiner 25 years, but he finally proved his critics wrong.

Munsteiner cuts 1,000 to 1,500 stones and sculptures a year, Duquet said. Of those, 500 come to America. Of those, Duquet gets 100 to 150 stones. Currently he has the largest collection of Munsteiner gems in North America, or about 80 loose stones and pieces of jewelry in stock, he said.

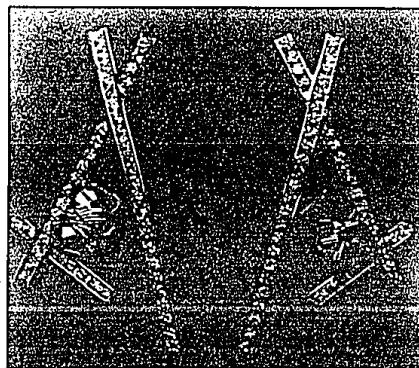
"Christmas is our biggest time of year, especially for ladies who know about the gems," he said.

But beware of gems claiming to be originals. Munsteiner clones, who use lasers to achieve their cuts, have flooded the market.

To guarantee originality, Munsteiner started carving his trademark into the girdle of the stone. He also issues certificates for each stone.

The certificates come with a photo of the stone and a brief description in his own handwriting, as well as a photo of Munsteiner.

And an original Munsteiner gem would put sparkle into a special someone's life.



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