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# Rock-Solid *Advisers*

*From acquiring rare gemstones to coordinating custom commissions, a jewelry consultant can guide you through the process of assembling collections that are destined to become heirlooms.*

BY JILL NEWMAN





Consultant Patricia Hambrecht provides clients with unique, artistic pieces, such as this Hemmerle lizard brooch pavéed with 62 carats of green diamonds and cat's-eye chrysoberyl eyes.

**L**IKE AN ART EXPERT advising on the acquisition of a masterpiece, a jewelry consultant will educate you about the quality, rarity, and value of a particular gemstone, or help you find an antique piece or contemporary design that suits the wearer's taste or exemplifies that person's sense of style.

A consultant also can facilitate the creation of a bespoke piece, as Patricia Hambrecht did for John Howard, when the Bear Stearns Merchant Banking CEO wanted to give his wife a unique birthday gift. Hambrecht arranged a meeting between Howard and German designer Stefan Hemmerle, who showed Howard a rare, 7-plus-carat orangey-brown diamond and presented sketches for a custom-made setting. Howard suggested some modifications to the initial design, and ultimately, Hemmerle placed the stone in a blackened gold ring and surrounded it with clusters of brown diamonds. Howard's wife was thrilled when she received it. "When you purchase fine art, you want to make

*"When you purchase fine art, you want to know what you're buying. Jewelry is similar."*

—JOHN HOWARD, CEO,  
BEAR STEARNS  
MERCHANT BANKING

sure you know what you're buying. Jewelry is similar. You never really know whom to trust or whether you are getting a fair deal," says Howard. "Patty has impeccable taste, and she's highly trustworthy."

To a European client who recently requested a set of custom studs and cuff links, Hambrecht provided several options. The client selected a sketch submitted by Hong Kong designer Edmund Chin, who crafted the pieces with emeralds, jade, green garnets, and diamonds that were cut like tiles and pieced them together to form mosaic patterns. Hambrecht's ability to create such experiences for her



**PATRICIA HAMBRECHT**

Hambrecht relishes the hunt for a special gift, a rare stone, or hard-to-find estate pieces. "When a client requests a diamond necklace, I like to collect several great designs to present them with options," says the former president of Harry Winston and Christie's North and South America. Hambrecht acquires pieces from an elite group of international jewelers, including such designers as Germany's Stefan Hemmerle and lesser-known craftsmen who create pieces for prestigious Fifth Avenue houses.

*Patricia Hambrecht, Jaspas LLC,  
212.333.5423*



clients is particularly appealing to Howard, who gradually has developed his own appreciation for jewelry design. He continues to work with Hemmerle, occasionally visits other designers, and has become more involved in determining the designs for his wife's jewelry. "You can choose to be part of the artistic process, review sketches, and meet the craftsman," he says. "Patty has given me the ability to go outside a Cartier and Tiffany and create something very personal."

Hambrecht established her company, called Jaspas (an acronym for Jewelry Advisory Service Par Excellence), in May 2005. Some consultants work on retainer, while Hambrecht and others charge fees that are percentages—typically about 10 percent—of the prices of the jewelry. As a former president of Harry Winston and Christie's North and South America, she can provide her clients with access to a vast network of stone dealers, master jewelry craftsmen, and antique jewelry specialists. "People come to me for three reasons: my taste level, contacts, and trust," says

Hambrecht, a self-proclaimed jewelry addict, who on this day is wearing earrings that Hemmerle designed with champagne diamonds and smoky quartz, a necklace made of mandarin garnet and mammoth ivory, a set of Taffin bangles made from petrified wood and mandarin garnets, and a champagne diamond ring.

Timothy Lloyd Pope also arranges meetings between his clients and designers. He can schedule visits to the by-appointment-only upstairs salons of Verdura and James de Givenchy for Taffin, which, Pope says, are perceived as "unavailable or like ivory towers." On a recent visit to Taffin, one of Pope's clients, an equestrian enthusiast, requested that de Givenchy create a pair of sapphire-and-diamond drop earrings that she could wear comfortably with a riding helmet. "Timothy helps clients build an intelligent and useful jewelry wardrobe," says de Givenchy, who credits Pope with an "amazing" sense of color and scale. "Timothy loves to mix pieces—from designers such as Verdura and Suzanne Belperron—that have similar looks."

*A French Art Deco diamond and platinum bracelet (left) exemplifies consultant Timothy Lloyd Pope's sophisticated taste.*





*"I work with highly motivated individuals who have big lives, and one luxury they can't buy is time."* —TIMOTHY LLOYD POPE

Pope, a fashion industry veteran who worked for Chanel, J. Mendel, and Geoffrey Beene before establishing his own wardrobing business in 1994, has since extended his services to include jewelry consultation. He provides what he calls "head-to-toe packaging" for men and women who keep him on annual retainers to maintain complete, up-to-date wardrobes. "I work with highly motivated individuals who have big lives, and one luxury they can't buy is time," says the impeccably dressed Pope, whose Madison Avenue office is cluttered with racks of designer clothes and shoes. He typically visits his clients' closets seasonally so that he can update their wardrobes, keeping them both stylish and practical.

Linda Bialecki, owner of the Wall Street recruiting firm Bialecki Inc. and a longtime client of Pope's, appreciates his practical attitude. When he found a strand of expensive South Sea pearls languishing in Bialecki's drawer, Pope

had Verdura restring them with gold beads and faceted citrines. "Now I wear that strand all the time, either as a long necklace, doubled, or tripled as a choker," she says.

Pope also convinced her never to wear round earrings, pointing out that

triangular or drop styles will appear to elongate the shape of her face.

"I've bought more than 50 pieces of jewelry with Timothy," says Bialecki. "I won't buy anything without him." Her purchases have included a Verdura ivory knight brooch encrusted with



#### TIMOTHY LLOYD POPE

Working on an annual retainer, Pope, a fashion industry veteran, provides advice on his clients' entire wardrobes—clothing and accessories. "Many women buy or receive jewelry as a gift for a special occasion," he says. "I encourage them to build a wardrobe of jewelry with great designs that they love and will wear often. They need to make a plan and stick to it."

*Timothy Lloyd Pope Consulting,*  
212.223.3858

*A circa-1935 pair of diamond and sapphire earrings (top) that Pope selected for one of his clients.*





*This rare Suzanne Belperron necklace and pair of turquoise and amethyst earrings by James de Givenchy for Taffin are among the acquisitions Pope has made for clients.*

gemstones, and a Ming dynasty rock crystal bangle with a gold and brown diamond clasp—both pieces that a collector might place in a safe instead of incorporating into a wardrobe. “These are statement jewels,” Bialecki says, “but I wear them day in and day out; they’re fun.”

Pope has assembled collections of more than 200 pieces for five of his clients and has developed what he

calls “Bento box” systems that organize and store the pieces in customized drawers with compartments for groups of various designs that can be mixed and matched. For each client, he also maintains a notebook containing photographs of every piece of jewelry she owns. One client has three such notebooks detailing the jewelry stored at each of her three homes. “I help them make smart decisions

about their wardrobes,” says Pope.

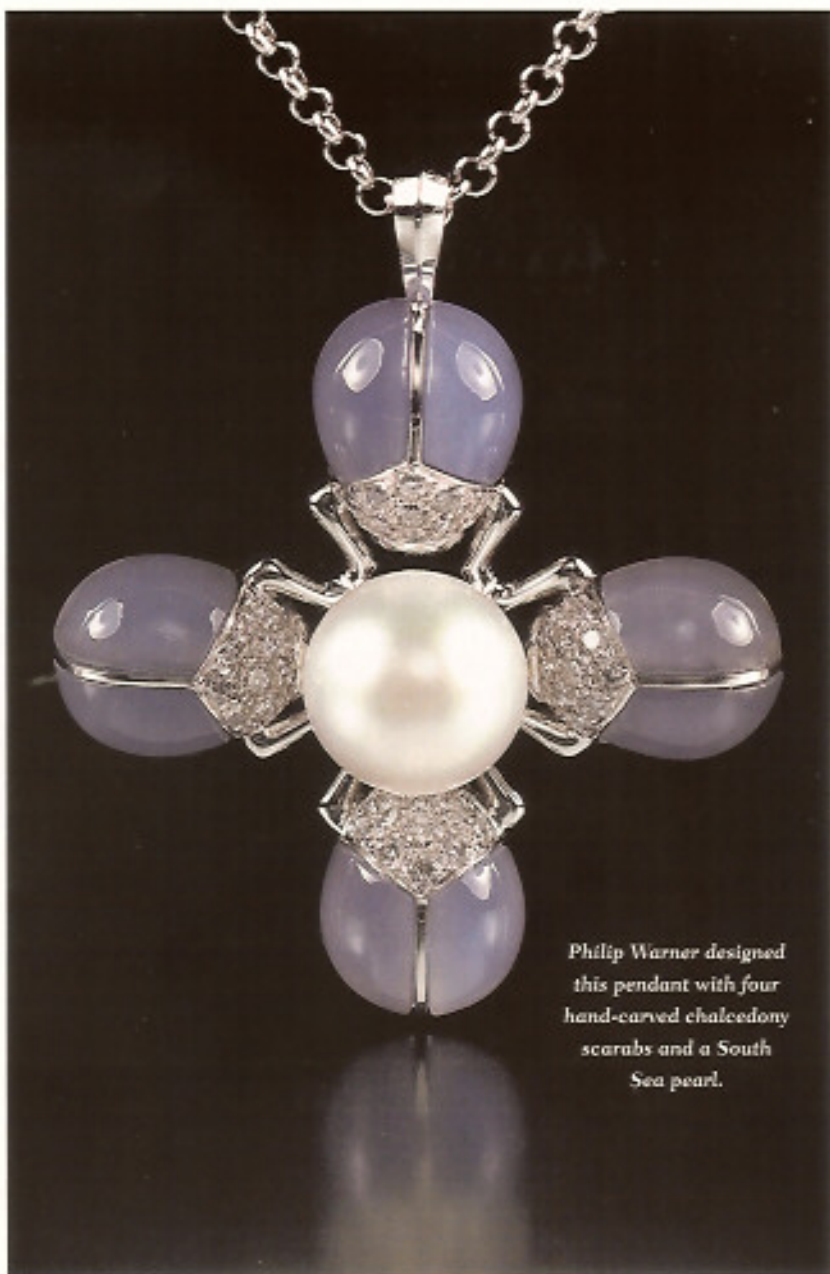
While a jewelry consultant will help you assemble a personal collection, he or she also can be an invaluable resource when you are seeking a gift for someone else. Philip Warner, a former president of Asprey who last year established a bespoke business that creates jewelry, leather goods, humidors, and other items in one-of-a-kind designs, says he frequently is



asked, "What can I get the man or woman who has everything?" He recently convinced an avid antiques collector—whose interests range from cars to sterling silver picture frames—that for his wife's birthday he could give her something new and unique. Warner hired a master craftsman in Germany to carve images of the couple's four children into two cameos and then commissioned a jeweler to surround the cameos with tiny diamonds to create a choker. "My work is not about instant gratification," explains Warner, a tall, jovial, and handsome Brit. "You have to wait, but that's part of the experience."

Warner also designs custom jewelry for clients. Among his pieces are an intricately detailed, diamond-encrusted snake bangle with emerald eyes, and a black-and-white diamond octopus brooch with a black mabe pearl head and ruby eyes. He advises his clients on acquisitions of extremely valuable diamonds, and his clients often have him produce distinctive settings for those stones.

One collector of Rolls-Royce automobiles commissioned Warner to create what he calls a "drinks box" as an accessory for his cars. Warner employed seven different workshops to create the portable bar, which includes a cut-crystal flask made in Devon, England, and monogrammed linens from Paris. A carver in Dorset, England, crafted the box itself. The project took more than a year to complete. Such commissions, he points out, require a leap of faith on the part of the client. "Sometimes," Warner explains, "you're asking someone to pay \$50,000 for something they can't see or touch until it's ready." ■



Philip Warner designed this pendant with four hand-carved chalcedony scarabs and a South Sea pearl.



#### PHILIP WARNER

After nearly two decades at Asprey, Warner established his own bespoke business, which creates elaborate, personalized jewelry and gifts. "True luxury transcends a brand name," says Warner, who defines a luxury product as something that is unique, high-quality, and has personal significance to the buyer. He works with clients to develop designs for jewelry, crystal, or leather items, and then he commissions craftsmen to produce the pieces to his specifications. "It can take weeks or months to create a specialized product," he says, "but the journey is part of the adventure."

Philip Warner, 914.864.2397, [www.philipwarner.com](http://www.philipwarner.com)