

TOMORROW'S ARTISAN MARKET

For two decades, studio jewelry artists have been steadfast, innovative, and resilient to changing market conditions

BY SHARON ELAINE THOMPSON

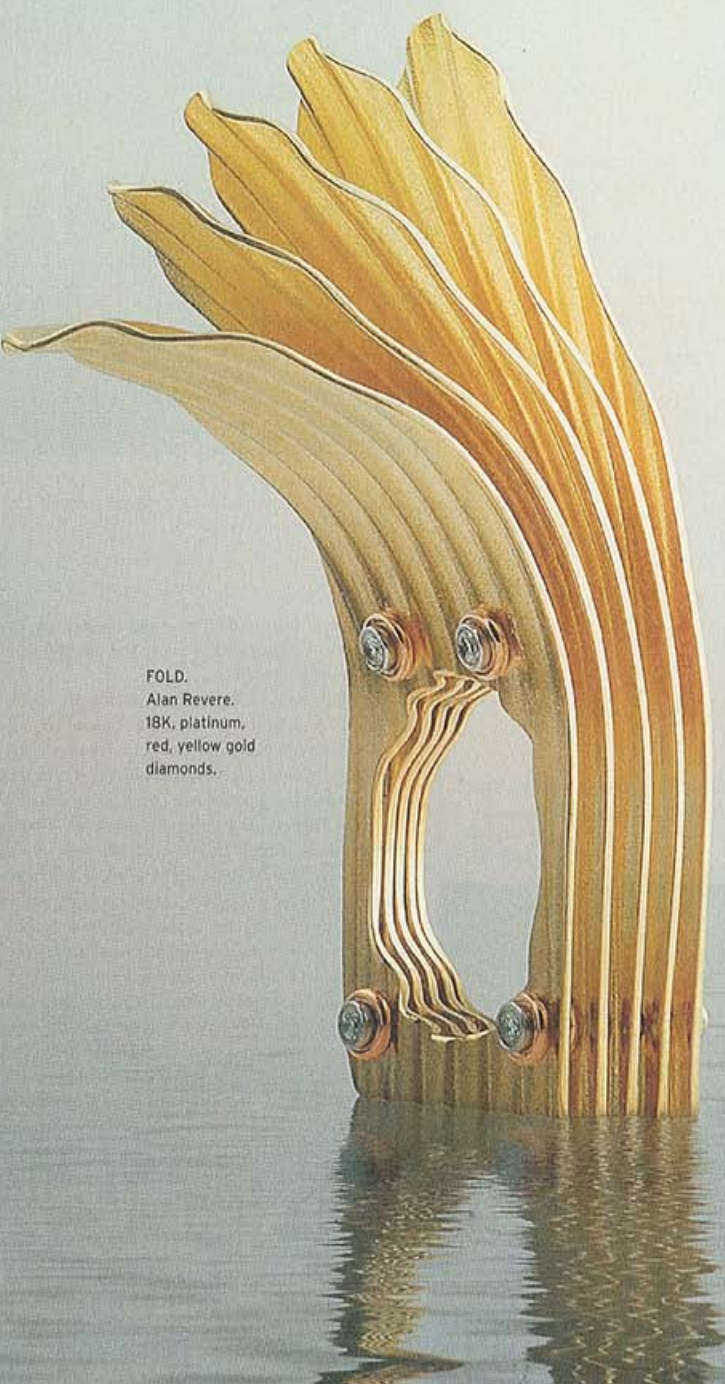


My first exposure to studio jewelry was in 1984 when, quite accidentally, I saw an exhibit entitled "Jewelry USA" sponsored by the Society of North American Goldsmiths (SNAG) and the American Craft Museum (now the Museum of Arts and Design). I had seen nothing like it — jewelry made from steel, niobium, plastics, beach pebbles, boar bristles, and found objects, as well as gold, silver, and gemstones. Some of the work I thought very peculiar — rings set with colorful erasers and bits of crayon and colored pencil? Even those pieces made from "conventional" materials were any-

PENDANT/BROOCH. John Paul Miller, 1975. 9 1/2" x 2" x 1" (25.2cm x 5.2cm x 2.6cm). Enameled, fused, granulated, and soldered gold.

thing but conventional. One piece, a necklace by Abrasha, made of basalt pebbles, 18K gold wire, and a single diamond, absolutely entranced me. I left the show a bit confused, but I found that ever afterward "conventional" jewelry seemed a bit drab and unimaginative.

Today, many of the names in that show are familiar to readers of *Jewelry Artist*: Joe Apodaca, Alan Revere, Mary Lee Hu, John Paul Miller, Bruce Metcalf, and Bob Ebendorf among many others. Many have become teachers, collectively inspiring thousands of young craftspersons. Images of their work in magazines and



FOLD.
Alan Revere.
18K, platinum,
red, yellow gold
diamonds.