

## **Bijou Graphique** **Fine Art Jewelry by Dawn Estrin and George Wilson**

Bijou Graphique was started in 1995. Since that time, artists Dawn Estrin and George Wilson have combined forces to create a unique vision of what jewelry can be. The artists have lived and worked together for twenty years, both exploring many mediums and materials. Their work together reflects a common interest in themes such as art, romance, and humor.



Dawn has pursued art since her teen years when she studied metalworking at the Cleveland Institute of Art. She holds a BFA in Fine Arts for painting and drawing. Later in life, she became interested in photography, a craft she taught herself and has practiced for 15 years. She draws on a vast collection of images used in the jewelry.

George's interest in art also goes back to his early life. He has accumulated years of knowledge about a multiplicity of materials and techniques to design and build the jewelry. He conceives processes that are used in the invention and making of the works. He makes many of the tools used in their creation.

Our jewelry is based upon the concept of creating aesthetic settings for the display of unique photographs. The photographs we choose for our work are the result of endless searching for images that express, in intimate terms, such things as classic human beauty, romance, love, humor, and fantasy... that which we and all artists strive to find.

Through a special miniaturization process that retains every tiny bit of detail in each image, we seek to make it possible for a person to wear this art. Each of our pieces tells a story which can be interpreted differently in the mind of every viewer. The dreamlike quality of the images draw those who see them into a tiny fantasy world. The wearer brings the story to others so that they may contemplate and delight in this world as well.

The photograph itself is the catalyst in designing a piece of jewelry. We first decide on a shape in which to frame it and then incorporate additional design elements, creating a richly detailed setting for the image. Our designs are influenced by our love of decorative arts from the European Renaissance, Baroque, and Neo-Classical periods as well as American Art Deco and the architecture of the Middle East.

Our work is of the highest quality where materials and technique are concerned. All the jewelry is handmade of sterling silver. The gemstones and pearls are all genuine and of good character. The backs of the pieces are finished with an attractive, patterned metal, stamped sterling, and bear our personal hallmarks. The photographs themselves are real continuous-tone images, not photocopies or screen prints. We hand print, in miniature, each individual photograph. The images are sealed into the work with an optical quality, shatterproof polycarbonate plastic.