

The Best Jewelry of 2019

December 30, 2019 by [AMY ELLIOTT](#)



This end-of-year recap of my 2019 adventures in jewelry editing in order to identify the pieces that most stand out to me as special and unusual reveals a clear affinity for the many high jewelry collections that came out this year, from Van Cleef & Arpels' [ode to rubies](#) to Mikimoto's [Jardin Mystérieux](#).

I could not run this piece without acknowledging the importance of the [Christie's Maharajas & Mughal Magnificence](#) auction in June, which was billed as the sale of the century (in the end, it was not a record-breaker—the December 2011 sale of Elizabeth Taylor's jewels, which totaled \$115.9 million, is still the one to

beat). Even so, the 400 lots were truly epic, just pieces of unimaginable opulence and craftsmanship, thus raising the standard considerably when it came to most anything else I saw—or that came across my desk.

I'm also including a red carpet moment that made every jewelry editor I know absolutely lose their minds with delight: Dame Helen Mirren, in all her tonal turquoise splendor, at the premiere of her HBO miniseries *Catherine the Great*, wearing a suite of David Webb jewels.

With that I'll start with a trapiche emerald treasure from JCK Tucson 2019 and take you through my year of jewel hunting and vault peeping from there.

Happy New Year!

February



*Mandala necklace with trapiche emerald, tie-dye enamel, and diamond necklace in 18k gold, price on request; **Brooke Gregson***

March



*Aura collection earrings in 18k gold and diamonds, \$19,195; **Gismondi 1754***



*La Reina ring with carved green chalcedony and sapphires in 18k gold, price on request; **Daniela Villegas***



*Marie Antoinette spiderweb tiara with fancy sapphires, rubies, and aquamarines in 18k gold and silver, price on request; **Lydia Courteille***

April



*Jardin de Rubis necklace with a detachable clip featuring an 18.12 ct. cushion-cut ruby, rubies, and pink and white diamonds in white and pink gold, price on request; **Van Cleef & Arpels***

June



Ring with lapis scarab and rubies in 18k gold and silver, price on request; [Vram](#)



Consisting of nearly 400 lots spanning more than 500 years, the Christie's Maharajas & Mughal Magnificence sale traced the history of jewelry from the early Mughal period in India through the maharajas and their collaboration with the world's most renowned jewelry houses to create some of the most exceptional pieces of jewelry ever made. The Art Deco Patiala ruby choker shown here is by Cartier (Teresa Lourenco-Antebi portrait by Claiborne Swanson Frank).



*Platinum ring set with a 9.89 ct. sapphire and baguettes worn by Emma Thompson in the 2019 movie *Late Night*, price on request; [Doryn Wallach](#)*

July



Artist Series necklace and drop earrings with slab turquoise and pavé rubies in sterling silver and black rhodium, price on request; [David Yurman](#)

August



*Brooch with 56.18 ct. hexagonal aquamarine cabochon surrounded by 27.87 cts. t.w. kunzites and 0.84 ct. t.w. diamonds in platinum, price on request; **Myles Mindham, Mindham Fine Jewellery***

September



*Brooch with sapphires, garnets, emeralds, spinel, diamonds, and a natural conch pearl pendant in 18k white gold, price on request; **Mikimoto***



Earrings with 9.53 cts. tourmaline, 8.07 cts. t.w. citrine, and 0.9 ct. t.w. diamonds in 18k yellow gold, \$23,575; [Graziela Gems](#)

October



Helen Mirren in David Webb jewels at the premiere of HBO's Catherine the Great (image via: [@jostrettell](#))



*Lustre collection large chandelier earrings with 27.18 cts. t.w. baguette-cut diamonds and 2.38 cts. t.w. pavé-set white diamonds in 18k white gold, \$136,200; **Jacob & Co.***



*Ring with 24 ct. emerald and diamonds in platinum, price on request; **Material Good***

November



Steel and gold cuff (damascene technique), Angela Cummings for Tiffany & Co., circa 1975, price on request; [A La Vieille Russie](#)

Top, clockwise from left: Rachel Atherley Plumage earrings, spotted at NY Now, August 2019; Effy Jewelry malachite and onyx ring, spotted at JCK Las Vegas 2019; Anomy Pearls ring, spotted at JCK Las Vegas 2019; and circa- 1940s Jean Schlumberger brooch, spotted at A La Vieille Russie in New York City (images via: @aelliott718)