

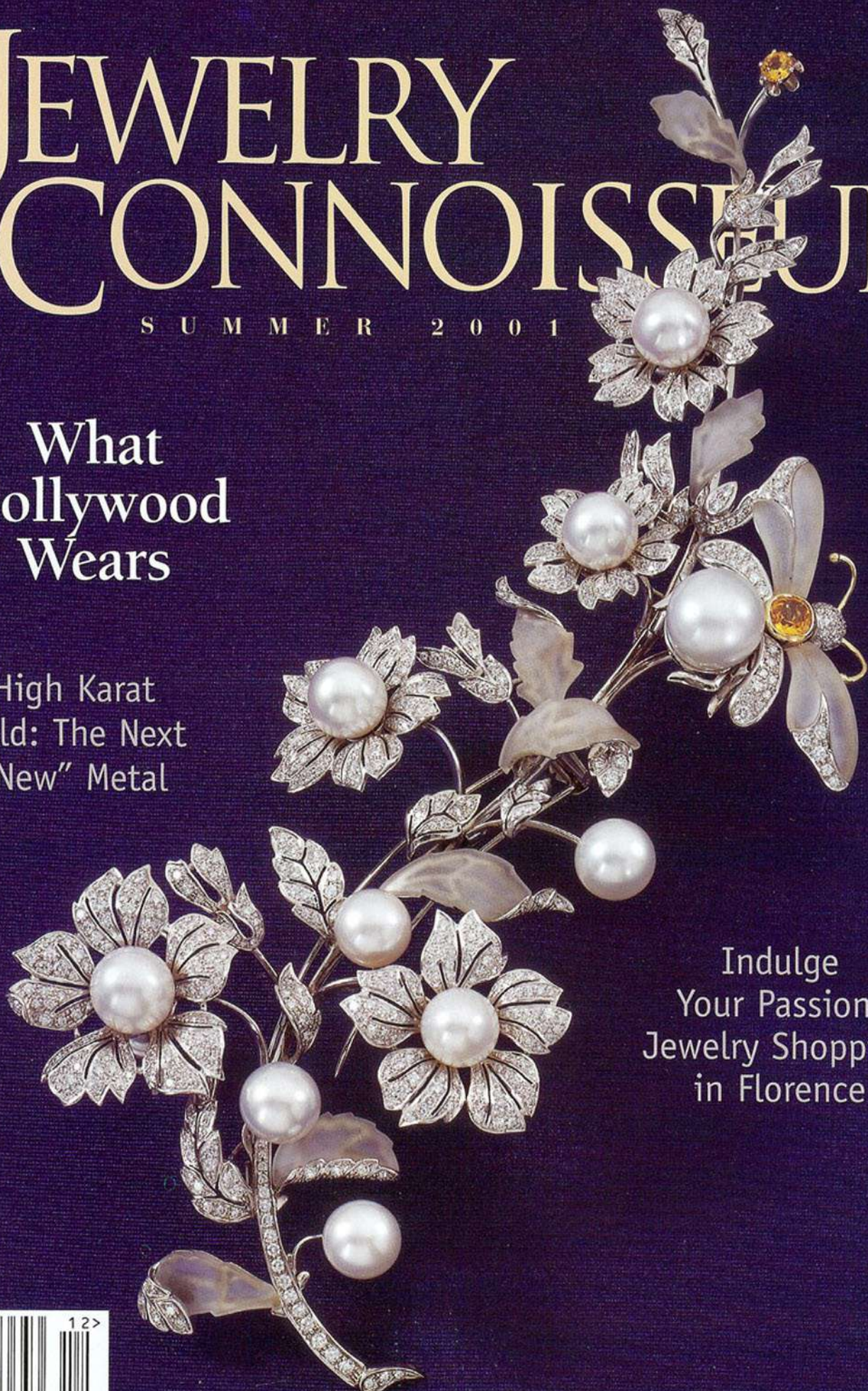
JEWELRY CONNOISSEUR

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Labradorite



ROBERT LEE
MORRIS

When light hits it, Labradorite dances with a subtle Technicolor iridescence that is fascinating to watch. It is pronounced Labrador—like the dog—with a sprightly -ite attached to the end. The Maine Red Paint tribe indigenous to the Canadian Northwest territory Labrador, used Labradorite as an ornamental gem before the year 1000.

Labradorite got its name when missionaries “discovered” it in Labrador in 1770. Today, it is mined in remote areas of Southern India where monsoon season determines whether or not the mines are accessible. The gem gets its iridescence because it tends to separate into layers as it crystallizes from its molten form. Labradorite’s amazing iridescence is best brought out when the gem is cut as

a cabochon stone, meaning that it has a smooth surface with no facets. This gem is often mixed with silver as a cool complement to its grayish tones, but the warmth of gold is an interesting contrast to its Northern light sheen.

Labradorite looks wonderful when worn with dark toned clothing or textured fabrics, especially if it is a multistrand necklace or a large stone set in a big setting. When used in more minimalist designs or as smaller beads, Labradorite is sleekly elegant against satin or techno fabrics. Labradorite mixes beautifully with pearls in shades of gray or silver and is stunning when used with Tahitian pearls. ♦

Chalcedony

Like the moon rising above still blue waters, Chalcedony has a luminous inner glow. Pronounced “cal” as in California and “Sydney” as in the Australian city, this gem is a member of the quartz family. It gets its dreamy, tranquil color and texture from waters heated by volcanic fires deep within the earth. Colors of this gem range from sky to steely blues and even into a purplish blue. The deeper the color, the more valuable the stone. Chalcedony’s icy tones are enhanced by white metals

and it is often set in silver, white gold or when the stone is really fine, in platinum. Combined with rose gold, the icy blue of the gem is sweetly warmed; a yellow gold setting gives this gem a vintage feeling. Its luminosity is best brought out by a domed cabochon cut.

In warm weather Chalcedony can be worn with crisp cottons and cool linens. When the weather turns nippy,



GREG MORIN

Chalcedony is lovely with gray wool, or a classic black and white tweed. The color of Chalcedony is best brought out by wearing it with contrasting colors that are similar to its tone—cream, pink, peach or yellow. If the Chalcedony has a deeper tone, try wearing it with navy, lilac, mauve or heather. It can easily be overwhelmed by brights such as red, tangerine or cobalt blue. This gemstone mixes well with diamonds or pearls. ♦

Cynthia Renée is a geologist and gemologist living in Southern California. She owns Cynthia Renée Co.™ which specializes in designing jewelry with colored gemstones. QVC features her show, “Collecting Color with Cynthia Renée.” She can be reached at 760.728.5150.