

Gems & Jewellery

Nov/Dec 2016 / Volume 25 / No. 6

Gem-A
Conference 2016

Insights on ivory

On the trail of Blue John



Gem-A
THE GEMMOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
OF GREAT BRITAIN

Nov/Dec 2016

A burning question

Maggie Campbell Pedersen FGA ABIPP looks at recent changes to ivory laws and reports on the recent CITES meeting.

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Gem-A Conference

We round-up the speakers, seminars and guests at this year's Gem-A Conference, plus highlights from the Graduation Ceremony.

On the trail of Blue John

Sarah Steele FGA DGA reports on the popularity – and mysteries – surrounding Derbyshire Blue John.

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Goldsmiths' Fair

Gem-A's Membership Secretary Kim Foxwell BA MA FGA DGA reports on some of the most eye-catching and technically impressive pieces on display at this year's Goldsmiths' Fair.

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Cover Picture

Photography competition winner: Billie Hughes FGA — 'Scuse me while I pierce the sky'. An elongated negative crystal cuts through a fingerprint in this untreated Sri Lankan sapphire. Darkfield and diffused fibre optic illumination.

Published by

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Registered charity no. 1109555

Copyright 2016 ISSN 1746-8043

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Worth a thousand words...

We are pleased to share the winners of the 2016 Photo Competition, announced at the Gem-A Conference. The photos were judged by Gem-A CEO Alan Hart FGA DGA, Gem-A President Maggie Campbell Pedersen FGA ABIPP and gemstone photographer Danny Sanchez GG.

The Gem-A photo competition is an incredible opportunity for our talented students and members to showcase their photography skills, with the chance to win some superb prizes.

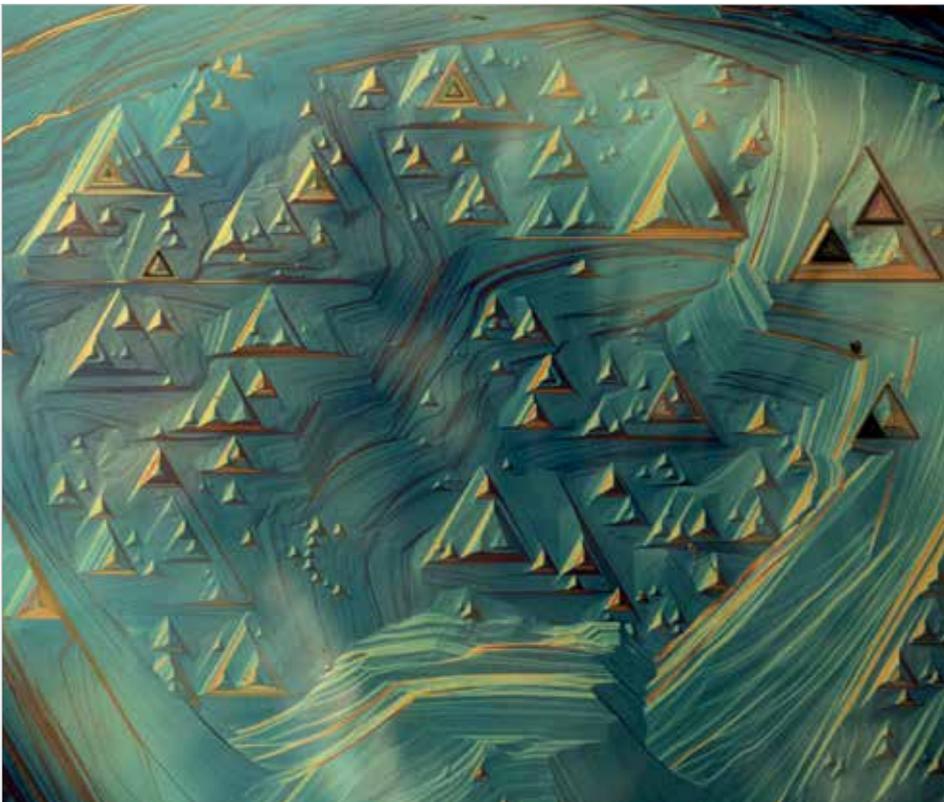
Entries by members and students were submitted under three categories, 'The Internal', 'The External' and 'The Humanity in Gems'.

Member Billie Hughes FGA and student Ziyin Sun won 'The Internal' category, member Jon Mehdi and student Anthony Shih FGA were selected as 'The External' winners, and Billie Hughes FGA secured a double whammy as the winner of the 'The Humanity in Gems' prize. From these winners an overall Member and Student Award was given.

Selected to win the Member Award was Billie Hughes FGA, for her mesmerising photograph entitled 'Scuse me while I pierce the sky' (**Front Cover**). Winning the Student Award was Ziyin Sun for his incredible entry entitled 'Trigons and growth marks on a diamond macle' (**1**). The winners will receive a year's free membership with Gem-A and a *Photoatlas of Inclusions in Gemstones* by Eduard J. Gübelin and John I. Koivula. Category winners receive an honourable mention (**2, 3 and 4**) and all winners will receive a professionally-printed copy of their stunning photographs.

We are always interested in beautiful photographs for use in upcoming issues of *Gems&Jewellery* and on our website, so if you have a photo you would like to share please email submissions to editor@gem-a.com. ■

... the power of well-taken photomicrographs not only helps reveal the identity and treatment of gemstones, but also attracts people to enjoy their beauty and uniqueness.



1: **Student Award, Ziyin Sun** — 'Trigons and growth marks on a diamond macle'. Field of view, 2.81 mm; imaged using episcopic differential interference contrast (DIC).

Ziyin Sun is a staff gemmologist in the gem identification department at GIA in Carlsbad, California. His interest in taking photomicrographs was first sparked when reading *Photoatlas of Inclusions in Gemstones*. He bought his first GIA DLScope Trinocular Microscope and started practising under the guidance of Nathan Renfro, the chief editor of 'Micro-World' in the publication 'Gems & Gemology'. Ziyin believes that the power of well-taken photomicrographs not only helps reveal the identity and treatment of gemstones, but also attracts people to enjoy their beauty and uniqueness. Most importantly, it popularises gemmology and communicates with the public outside the gemmological field.



2: **Honourable Mention, Jon Mehdi** —
‘Quartz crystal with liquid petroleum-filled cavities’.



3: **Honourable Mention, Billie Hughes FGA** — ‘Chasing fortune’.
Miners hunt for sapphire in the Banque Suisse mine in Ilakaka, Madagascar. The mine was named for the enormous wealth of gems said to be hidden in its subterranean vaults.



4: **Honourable Mention, Anthony Shih FGA** — ‘Dominican blue amber fluorescing in sunlight’.

Billie Hughes FGA got an early start in gemmology, travelling to mines around the world with her parents from the age of four. In 2011 she graduated from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) and went on to become a Fellow of Gem-A in 2013. The next year she and her family founded Lotus Gemology, a Bangkok-based gem testing lab specialising in ruby, sapphire, and spinel. Already distinguishing herself with her photographic work published in *Terra Spinel*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and *Ruby & Sapphire: A Collector's Guide*. Her photomicrographs will also be featured in the upcoming book *Ruby & Sapphire: A Gemologist's Guide*.