

The Nexus ring in sterling silver and 18-karat vermeil set with natural dark grey agate and green tourmaline.



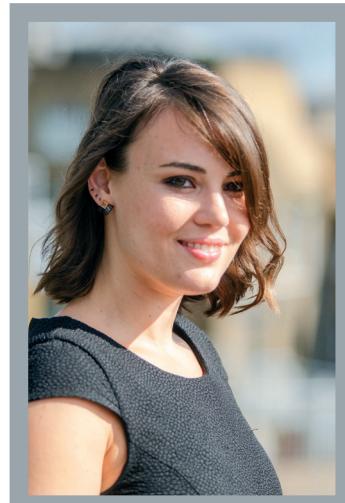
# IJL'S EMERGING GEMS

**SMITHA SADANANDAN** looks at the new design ideas from young jewellery graduates at the International Jewellery London (IJL) show.

*Britain is brimming with young talent. And annual jewellery shows like the International Jewellery London (IJL) is one such destination to discover a new breed of designers in the UK. Katharina Kraus, Zeemou Zeng, Daisy Grice and Yayun Fang have got off to a great start as IJL's Bright Young Gems - 2018. What made these designers stand out among their peers?*

## Katharina Kraus

Central Saint Martins,  
University Of The Arts London



**K**atharina's design aesthetic is unmistakably gem-centric, minimalistic and geometric. Her fascination with the angular lines found in the architecture of cityscapes and the depth of carved lines in stone and concrete, when seen from the ground, finds bearing in her creations. Katharina employs carved gems, a core design element, in her creations that highlight the natural light reflection in gemstones. "I first develop the gemstone shape and then design the jewellery around the stone," says Katharina, who primarily works in sterling silver and 14- or 18-karat yellow gold. The Nexus ring, showcased at IJL, is set with natural dark grey agate and green tourmaline. She combines translucent agate and transparent quartz with coloured gems such as topaz, rhodolith and tourmaline. "I look for subtle colour combinations and, of course, how they reflect the light. That's one of the reasons I love grey agate so much. It goes incredibly well with lots of colours – and because of the way it's been cut, it produces a golden shimmer from inside," she says.

The lace motif ring in 925 silver is set with amethyst.



## Yayun Fang

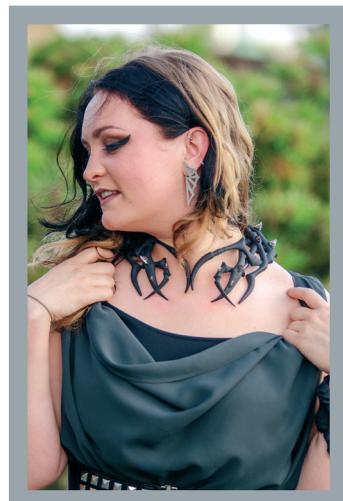
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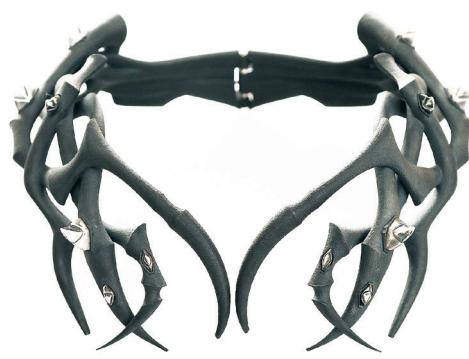
Yayun wearing a '\$' sign necklace made of sterling silver wire.

## Daisy Grice

Birmingham School of Jewellery



A devout fan of the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *Warcraft*, *Vikings* and the *Game of Thrones*, among others, Daisy cites fantasy films as her main inspiration. "Fantasy is something that has been created through pure imagination and that is what makes it so incredible," says Daisy who currently focuses on female characters when envisioning her collections. A passion for everything dark and macabre defines the jewellery. "I like to show this through my work and create something that is uniquely powerful and makes a bold statement," she says. Her Twisted Tales graduate collection deftly captures the aura of the character. Crafted in sterling silver, the neckpiece was initially designed with the evil fairy godmother, Maleficent, in mind. Wanting to convey beauty in the darkness, Daisy crafted it as an entanglement of black nylon branches accented with silver thorns, reminiscent of an armour. She created the hero piece and then, pared it down to make smaller pieces in sterling silver, set with black diamonds, for everyday wear.



Twisted Tales necklace.



Double-fanged pendant.

Yayun's work draws upon the craftsmanship of traditional lace seen in ancient paintings. When she first started to make the lace, she researched portrait paintings by old masters and was intrigued by what she saw. "Many female aristocrats in the 15th century wore very large gold chain necklaces to show their identity, power and wealth," she observes. This reminded Yayun of the chunky gold chain necklaces often sported by hip-hop musicians – and the combination of the aristocracy and street culture melded into the key inspiration for her work. She delved into the techniques of traditional lace-making to create a delicate yet powerful graduate collection. Yayun's lace necklace in 0.2mm sterling silver wire is quite eye-catching. "I see lots of very fashionable students of colour at our university, and that inspired me to design something really cool for these boys and girls." Yayun handcrafts each of her '\$' sign necklaces, which she perfected after numerous trials.

Melody pendant,  
ring and earrings in  
18-karat gold.



## Zeemou Zeng

University Of The Arts London



## Z

eemou was inspired by his mother to become a jewellery designer. "My mother is a gentle and beautiful woman. I was nine years old when she suffered a terrible accident in a fire that left her with scars all over her body. It was a miracle she survived. Then, she suffered from breast cancer. The way she fought changed my perspective on women – showing me how powerful and strong a woman can be," he says. Zeemou's debut collection Venus was an ode to women. This year he followed up with Melody, a "clever design solution". Clearly, it draws upon his background in interior and architecture design, with each piece incorporating a novel movement mechanism. "The name Melody echoes the symmetrical and parallel shapes made by the lines of pearls; besides, each piece is playable and creates a sound or 'tune' as the pearls slide within the piece," he explains. The core Melody collection in 18-karat yellow gold is accented in Akoya and Tahitian pearls and is also rendered using emerald, garnet, green agate, red agate, turquoise and amethyst beads.

## About IJL

Now in its 14th year, this International Jewellery London (IJL) project offers its winners, all young talented designers chosen as The Stars Of The Future, a unique opportunity to showcase their work at the industry jewellery show, as well as benefit from dedicated mentoring from jewellery experts before the event to enable them to leverage on the experience.

The Bright Young Gems (BYGs) are chosen from final year students and students from UK colleges and universities, who have graduated in the past two years, by a panel of judges. This year, Hilary Alexander OBE, editor-at-large *Hello Fashion Monthly*; Annabel Davidson, editor of *Vanity Fair on Jewellery*; Alice Edwards, jewellery editor for the *Sunday Times Style* and *The Times LUXX* magazine; Liza Urla, influencer and founder of Gemologue and, representing retailers, guest judge Henry Graham, creative director and co-founder of Wolf & Badger cast their votes in favour of four young talents – Katharina Kraus, Zeemou Zeng, Daisy Grice and Yayun Fang.