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There's a High-End Jewelry Gallery Hidden in the Berkshires

By Jordi Lippe-Mcgraw



This stunning modern gallery is hidden away in the Berkshires.
SIENNA PATTI CONTEMPORARY

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/jordilippemcgraw/2020/11/06/theres-a-high-end-jewelry-gallery-hidden-in-the-berkshires/?sh=7d567df04163>

When you think of places where you'd find the world's most luxe jewelry, New York, Los Angeles, and Zurich might come to mind. Lenox, Massachusetts? Not exactly. But that's where you'll find Sienna Patti Contemporary, one of the most prominent design and jewelry galleries.

The gallery, opened in 1998, is one of only a handful of its kind in the world and is a best-kept secret in the heart of The Berkshires. Founder Sienna Patti was born in Massachusetts before becoming a leading figure in and the authority on art jewelry. She's lectured at universities, curated more than 150 exhibitions, and is an advisor and appraiser to major public and private collections worldwide. But, when it came time to set up her own gallery, Patti opted to return to her roots.

"I grew up not far from here and just my luck, as I couldn't imagine a more perfect place to have my gallery," Patti told me.

The sprawling 1,500-square-foot gallery is set up like any other top-rated museum. On one side is the "collection" and on the other is for the rotating exhibitions. What's more is that the area has continued to be a source of inspiration thanks to spots like Jacob's Pillow and MASS MoCA, as well as the great restaurants opening.

"I have had the opportunity to develop a fantastic clientele that is interested in art and culture and doesn't need or want to be in just another version of a large city. They prefer the anonymity and peace that these hills allow. Plus, I am constantly inspired by the history in this area—the amount of creative people, writers, artists, and dancers that have made it their home over the years is incredible."

That inspiration continually transforms the gallery as it's known for showcasing emerging and established contemporary artists who focus on true craftsmanship and creating studio jewelry. Melanie Bilenker, for example, incorporates her own hair into beautiful and intimate portraits of everyday life. Carina Shoshtary uses little chips of paint scraped from a wall of graffiti or plastics from her 3D pen to create fantastic colorful works that are gemlike. And Christopher Thompson-Royds hand paints on gold sweet and delicate images of flowers.

But, to Patti, these are more than jewelry; they're works of art, and a gallery is the best way to showcase them.

"You aren't buying into a look or a brand; you are buying the work of an artist and supporting an individual," she said. "It is an investment in individuality. The museums know this, and major collecting institutions have begun to add studio jewelry to their collections. It is only a matter of time before the idea trickles down and becomes a purchasing trend on an individual level."

Not surprisingly, the pieces command a top-dollar with prices ranging from \$1,000 to \$30,000. But to make this form of art more accessible, Patti also launched the Sienna Patti Shop with limited edition and one-of-a-kind works at lower price points (\$100 to \$3,000).

Even if you're not in the market to buy a piece, the hidden gem of a gallery is worth a visit as it's one of the few places where you can see some of the world's top jewelry artists while surrounded by idyllic mountains.

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