



Zameer Kassam

THE CLIENT:
SUSHEILA KHACHANE

THE IDEA: Zameer Kassam's eyes sparkle, much like the diamond ring he's clasping. The breathtaking bauble belongs to one of the jeweller's favourite clients, Manhattan-based attorney Susheila Khachane, whose husband, Yorick Starr, a senior vice president at Wells Fargo, approached Kassam nearly five months before he popped the question.

THE PROCESS: "Yorick spoke at length about Susheila's fiery personality and her ability to take over a room without saying a word," describes Kassam. His namesake company, devoted to high-end, bespoke jewellery, launched in New York City about three years ago. Though he's designed approximately 400 pieces to date, Kassam's own company has virtually no existing collection, devoting anywhere from three to nine months towards a

meticulous, made-to-order process. There's even a "scouring" phase, where Kassam personally travels the world for the perfect gemstones. It's landed him in locales like Iceland, Botswana and, most recently, Afghanistan.

THE TECHNIQUES: "Susheila's got this effervescence about her and we wanted to bring that to life," says Kassam, adding that everything from the ring's platinum prongs (hand-sculpted to resemble the letters S and Y) to the single peridot and alexandrite, surreptitiously tucked inside the band, is abundant with meaning. Kassam asserts they don't have an inventory "because we never remake a piece." It's this exclusivity factor that attracted clients like Starr and Khachane.

THE FINAL PRODUCT: A sparkling cushion-cut diamond ring set in platinum. "My husband's a reserved, quiet guy but Zameer brought out this emotional side of him through the design process," says Khachane. "Zameer really ensured this was more than just a ring." She was so enamoured with the ring that she had a second piece, pear-shaped diamond and white-gold earrings, commissioned shortly afterwards. "She wanted something that was distinctly Susheila," Kassam recounts. The two settled on

Clockwise from far left: Inspecting diamonds for Susheila Khachane's bespoke earrings; Zameer Kassam discussing the pieces with her; the ring and earrings; Khachane trying them on



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Khachane's love for the ocean—she's scuba-certified and describes the beach as her "happy place"—and part-Maharashtrian background as springboards for inspiration. The result? Icy droplets with a regal shimmer. "I don't think my husband or I can just walk into a store and buy jewellery anymore," says Khachane. "Everything has to be sentimental and meaningful," she adds. "If it's not, it's just not interesting."

—Aarti Virani
Tel: 1-888-234-1886;
Zameerkassam.com >

