



## **For Immediate Release**

Contact: [events@riogrande.com](mailto:events@riogrande.com) or 800-952-6222

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### **Rio Grande Issues Saul Bell Design Award 2018 Call for Entries**

AUGUST 2017 — Rio Grande is pleased to announce its call for entries for the 2018 Saul Bell Design Award. Now in its 18<sup>th</sup> year, the international competition challenges designers to pick up their tools and make their mark on the jewelry industry.

There are nine categories in the 2018 competition: Gold/Platinum, Silver/Argentium® Silver, Enamel, Hollowware/Art Objects, Alternative Metals/Materials, Emerging Jewelry Artist (two tiers) and Jewelry Collection (two tiers). The Emerging Jewelry Artist category encompasses two age ranges: 18 years old and younger (high school age) or 22 years old and younger (college age) as of Oct. 26, 2017.

Jewelry Collection is an exciting new addition to the 2018 competition that invites designers to make a cohesive set of wearable pieces (such as a coordinated necklace, bracelet and pair of earrings). Jewelers can compete in one of two Jewelry Collection subcategories: Couture/Fine, representing luxury jewelry made with precious materials, or Fashion/Bridge, representing trend-setting jewelry made with semi-precious and/or alternative materials.

“In the 16 years I’ve been with Rio Grande, it’s been an honor to see so many talented designers rise to the challenge of creating awe-inspiring pieces and to hear their stories of creation,” says Creative Director Jamie Gros. “The new Jewelry Collection categories add yet another level of opportunity and expression, and I am certain submissions will be nothing short of magic.”

Along with introducing Jewelry Collection Couture/Fine and Jewelry Collection Fashion/Bridge, the 2018 Saul Bell Award is streamlining a few facets of the competition. Metal Clay is no longer a distinct category: Contest organizers encourage designers to submit their PMC work in the Silver or Gold categories, and their base-metal clay work in the Alternative Metals/Materials category.

This year’s competition is also simplifying the pricing structure for all non-Emerging Jewelry Artist entries. Entrants can pay a discounted early-bird fee of \$75 for work submitted through Sept. 15, or the regular \$125 fee for work accepted through the final Oct. 26 deadline. Emerging Jewelry Artist submissions will continue to be just \$25 through the final Oct. 26 deadline.

As one of the jewelry industry’s foremost design events, the Saul Bell Design Award competition is judged by jewelers and industry leaders who are masters of their craft. They look for originality of design, successful incorporation of materials, wearability (except in the Hollowware category) and quality of workmanship as they examine each finalist piece both by hand and on model. The winning pieces are promoted throughout the industry and displayed in the exclusive Plumb Club during the 2018 JCK Las Vegas show.

“The amazing thing about being a finalist in the Saul Bell Awards for me has been the discovery that other people with knowledge of the subject have deemed my work to be of fine quality,” says Henry Spencer, who took two second place awards in 2017 for Gold/Platinum and Hollowware/Art Objects. “In truth, I never even suspected it would mean much to me. I was wrong about this. It has meant a lot.”

Entries will be accepted through October 26, 2017. Finalist pieces will be due by January 25, 2018. The entry form and detailed information about the competition, including submission guidelines and information about each of the categories, are available at [saulbellaward.com](http://saulbellaward.com).