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Introduction

Recognizing inspiration

Inspiration is a key component of creativity. Inspiration can come from nearly anywhere—the colors of a sunset, the shape of a stone, the texture of a flower’s petals. Every time you notice these details, every time you’re drawn to a leaf, every time you hear a piece of music that moves you, every time you hear a story or read a book that you keep going back to in your mind...that is inspiration. As jewelry makers, inspiration can bring us amazing treasures if we know how to recognize it—and it’s always there, waiting to be tapped, even when we’re not aware of it.

We surround ourselves with what inspires us; these are the things that spark our creativity and make us happy. Whether you’re buying clothes, home furnishings, or flowers for your garden, you are buying things that inspire you. Learning to observe allows us to tap into these moments of creativity. You don’t have to go far to find these sources of inspiration; look at the choices you have made in decorating, in planting gardens, and in your clothes closet. You’ll discover colors and motifs that are significant and meaningful to you.

This book is a reflection of my own home and my life, and within the photos and jewelry projects you can see many of the things that inspire me. Around my house are many nature-inspired things: organically shaped candleholders, bowls that look like leaves, tiles with tree designs, and many, many more. My walls are covered with photos and paintings from my travels, I have lamps that look like trees, and the design of my tables reflects an Art Nouveau influence. These items are beautiful to me and I find them personally inspiring.

I chose many of these pieces, and some were given to me as gifts. We choose objects that appeal to us, that we connect with on a personal level. Things that are given to us often have a sentimental attachment, and the items we gather on our journeys often become a part of us and influence us, sparking moments of creativity.

As I was designing projects for this book, I began to focus on what inspired me, and I started noticing other forms of inspiration nearby. I saw patterns emerging as I realized that many of my earlier pieces had elements in common with the art I’ve surrounded myself with in my home. For my book *Beautiful Wire Jewelry for Beaders 2*, for example, I designed a ring called Copper Moon. Hanging in my foyer is a photograph called Moonrise. I did not notice the connection between the two until I started writing this book. It was interesting to look at the objects in my home and see how many common threads they share with my designs from previous books.

Not every inspiration is meant to come to fruition as a piece of jewelry. But if you start paying attention to these inspirations, you will find yourself on a creative artistic journey. We carry these pieces of inspiration in our minds everywhere we go, and when we see that special component or the perfect bead color that resonates, inspired design can start to take shape.

Arina Miecz

We’ll start out easy...

I structured the order of the projects in this book so you would find the least-complicated projects in the beginning to help you learn and master techniques such as making wire loops. Each fundamental skill is detailed in the first project that uses it. (If you need a review, turn to the summary of these techniques that starts on p. 13.) As you move through the book, the projects get a little more challenging. After the first few projects, I assume that you’ve learned the steps for the fundamental skills, so I don’t repeat them every time.

Choosing materials

While gathering materials for each project, you can easily make substitutions in your choice of metal for wire, jump rings, and findings. I list the material I used to make the project as shown, but you can usually substitute your favorite metals or materials you have on hand.

Some people prefer to use a precious metal (sterling silver or gold-filled, for example) in their designs. Others choose less-expensive yet good-quality base metal alternatives, such as solid copper or plated copper in finishes such as gunmetal, a grayish color, or antique brass, a dark bronze color.

You can also make substitutions in sizes of components such as jump rings and beads. If you don’t have the exact size listed, a close match will do.

If jump rings aren’t specified as soldered, assume they are open. Regarding headpin length: If I don’t specify a length in the materials list, the fairly common length of 1½" should work just fine.



Sepia Jones

necklace
& earrings



I have always loved the design of the Art Nouveau period. The beautiful lines of the artwork, the amazing shapes of the architecture, and the rich detail of the jewelry are very inspiring.

Certain medallions, swirls, and intricate floral designs are very specific to this time period, and you see them again and again—in furniture design, architecture, fabric and wallpaper patterns, and jewelry.

You'll discover that many jewelry components in the Art Nouveau style are available now; some are old pieces from the turn of the 20th century and some are reproductions made from original molds using the same processes, such as the components I used in this set. The tones of the antique brass pieces I used remind me of an old sepia-tone photograph.



materials

- 36x38mm antique-brass filigree component
- 24mm antique-brass goddess charm
- 2 20mm antique-brass Art Nouveau column components
- 8 8mm antique-brass flower charms
- 6 9mm antique-brass textured jump rings
- 36 4.5mm antique-brass jump rings
- 5 3mm antique-brass jump rings
- 29" antique-brass chain
- Lobster-claw clasp
- 2" large-link antique-brass chain for extender
- Pair of antique-brass earring wires

tools

- Chainnose pliers
- Flatnose pliers



TONY WIEGH



Shades of the Ocean

necklace

Being on an oceanfront is one of my favorite ways to spend a vacation. I've seen the ocean from many different beaches, and it has many moods. Sometimes it's green, sometimes sky blue, sometimes dark. Sometimes you see all of its colors at once.

I love the ocean best in Tahiti. It is a splendid, vibrant blue, and the blue grows deeper and deeper the farther you look. The water is so clear and you can see very far into its depths. It's warm and inviting, welcoming me to jump in.

This project is about the shifting boundary between ocean and land. Beach gives way to ocean, transitioning from sand to sea. There is an ever-changing line of sea foam at the edge, where the warm color of the sand gives way to the different shades of blue. Farther out, one can see the reflection of sun on water, where the sea shimmers and sparkles in a magical way.

I used vacation photos to guide me as I selected the colors for this necklace, which mirror the transition from sand to foam to ocean to deep blue. To show the sparkle of sun on water, I used silver charlottes. I used different shades of Swarovski crystals and CZs, including opal colors and muted hues to give the necklace depth. I used small beads knowing I would have the visual weight of multiple strands, and I varied the shapes to create further interest.

materials

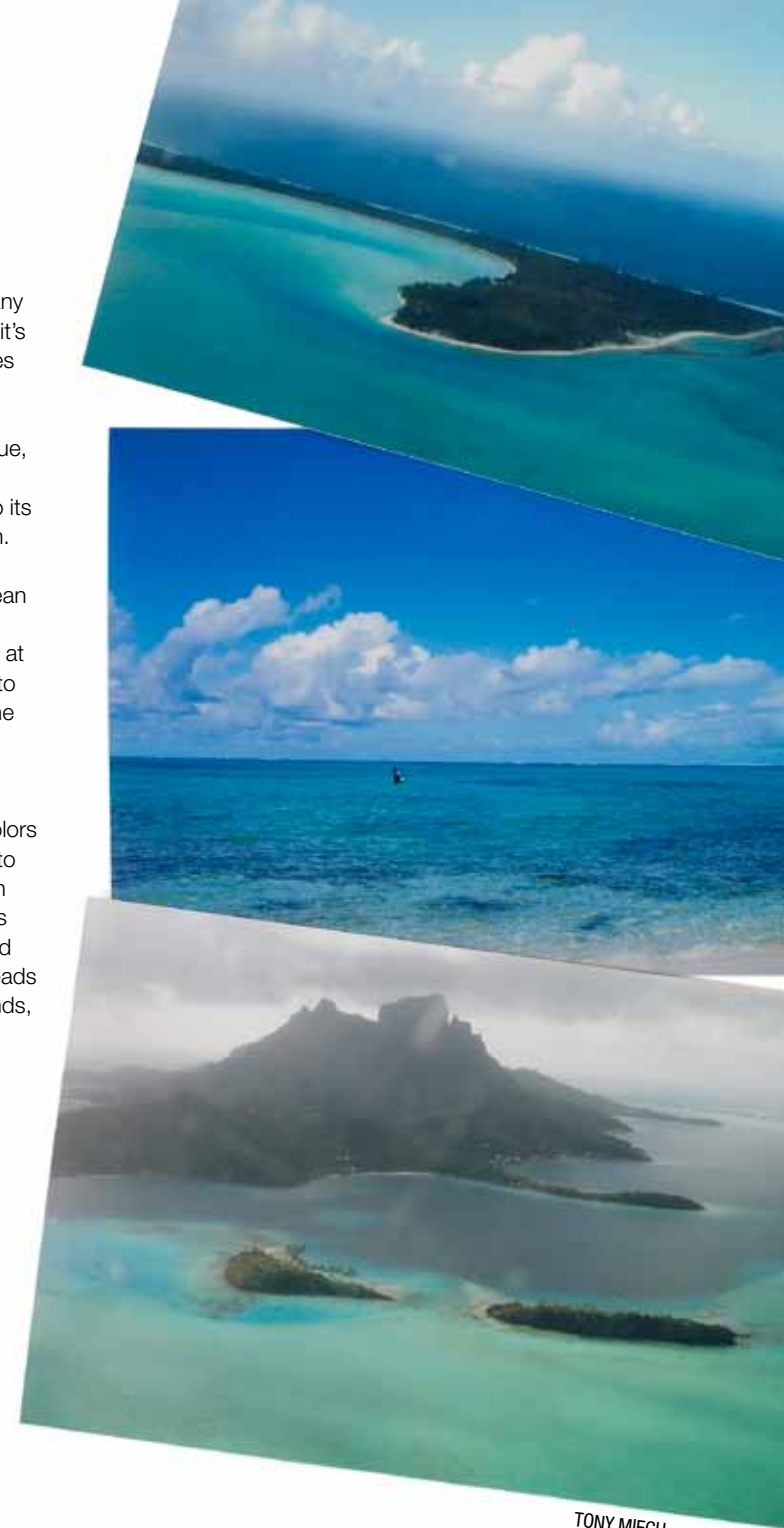
- 600–650 2–4mm crystal bicones, rounds, and CZ beads in many shades of blue and tan
- 20 grams 11° silver-finish charlottes
- 2 sterling silver jump rings
- 2 sterling silver cones
- 6" 22-gauge sterling silver half-hard wire
- Flexible beading wire, .014
- 3 sterling silver headpins
- 14 sterling silver crimp tubes
- Sterling silver hook clasp
- 2" sterling silver chain for extender

tools

- Bead Stoppers (large)
- Chainnose pliers
- Roundnose pliers
- Wire cutters
- Crimping pliers



A charlotte is a glass seed bead with a single facet, which gives these beads brilliant sparkle. Charlottes are available in many colors, including metal finishes such as silver and gold. Metal-coated charlottes are a bit heavier than glass charlottes, and they are often sold on short hanks or in smaller quantities.



TONY MIECH

Splendor

bracelet & earrings

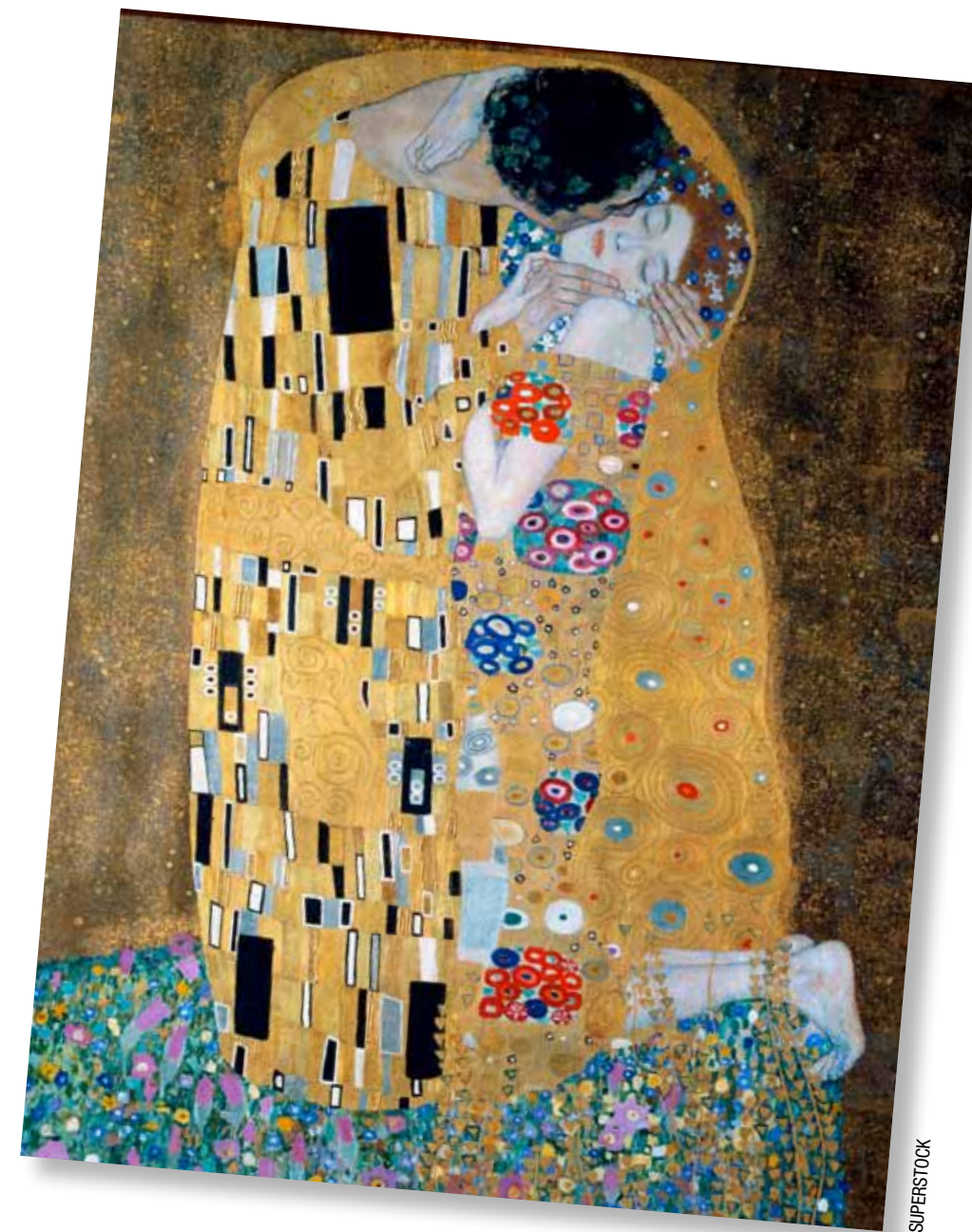


materials

- 3 18mm ceramic focal beads
- 5 4mm round crystals
- 2 grams 11° cylinder beads in background color
- 2 grams 11° cylinder beads in three accent colors
- 3 15° seed beads or charlottes
- 2 daisy charms
- 5 daisy spacers
- 11" 20-gauge gold-filled wire
- 18" 26-gauge gold-filled wire
- 7 8mm antique-copper jump rings
- 12 4–5mm antique-brass jump rings
- 3 antique-copper ball headpins
- Beading thread
- Antique-brass toggle clasp
- Pair of gold-filled earring wires

tools & supplies

- Chainnose pliers
- Flatnose pliers
- Roundnose pliers
- Wire cutters
- Beading needle
- Chasing hammer
- Steel bench block
- GS-Hypo Cement
- Scissors



SUPERSTOCK

Gustav Klimt's paintings are so moving and visually rich; his work conveys striking passion and energy. He uses different metallic colors such as golds, bronzes, and coppers, and his color palette and shapes are very easily translated into adornment. There's a natural relationship between his work and jewelry design.

I connect with Klimt's style not only because of his choice of color but also because of the organic elements that he favors. He often uses nature as his inspiration, reinterpreting it and painting it in a dreamy, stylized manner.

This piece was inspired by Klimt's style in general as well as particular paintings, such as "The Kiss" (above) and "Accomplishment." I was fortunate to find hand-painted beads that were obviously inspired by Klimt. For the bracelet, I made spirals from gold-filled wire to reflect the spirals in his paintings. I used a variety of cylinder beads in the colors that Klimt painted with to create miniature canvases in geometric shapes. I added a few small flowers, which echo flowers found in his paintings. I embellished with accents of different metallic colors and warm earth tones. Lastly, the clasp finishes the bracelet with another spiral element.