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DUAL NATURE

BY CHRISTINA GEYER. PORTRAIT TONY KRASH.



Andrew Glassford El Pescado bracelet with Akoya pearl and enamel

When he and his partner rented a house in L.A. for the holiday, he realized it was time: After decades of tearing out jewelry advertisements and admiring his mother's collection, he was ready to launch his namesake jewelry line. He picked up a sketchbook and a set of colored pencils — a gift from illustrator Rob Wilson, a longtime friend — and began to draw.

In February, he booked a trip to Tucson for the Gem & Mineral Show and snatched up precious and semiprecious stones, from ruby beads to Sleeping Beauty turquoise, and Mexican fire opal. He studied at L'École Van Cleef & Arpels in Paris and began working toward his GIA graduate certification. Just like that, the 44-year-old financial services VP added jewelry designer to his curriculum vitae.

Glassford's debut collection speaks to his raw talent and keen eye for color. It references his childhood in Laredo and early exposure to Mexican-border culture. A fish brooch worn by his mother inspired his first piece, the opulent El Pescado, which he has interpreted multiple times. In one iteration, a hand-carved 18K yellow-gold fish with enamel, amethyst, emerald, sapphire, and diamond scales acts as a bold clasp on a double-strand Akoya pearl bracelet. Each piece is multigenerational. A 30-something could dress up jeans and an Oxford with cabochon turquoise earrings — massive, blue-green stones in an Aztec-inspired 18K gold setting — while her grandmother might pair them with a ball gown. These are statement pieces that resemble heirlooms, without a hint of tired gaudiness.

Creativity is a common thread throughout

the Glassford family tree. It's always been in his blood — it just took 44 years to awaken. One brother, Thomas Glassford, is a successful fine artist in Mexico City; another brother, Peter Glassford, is a furniture designer in Guadalajara. But one year into his second career, Glassford still wakes each morning, puts on a suit, and goes to his power-banker desk job — and there's no sign that this will change. Glassford has that rare duality of being equally logical and creative. One strength fuels the other. But get him talking about his second collection, and he vividly describes the geometric patterns seen in Beijing's Forbidden City, the vibrant colors of fruit markets, and baskets filled with rambutan. He details how they will manifest in a necklace or earring. Just the thing to drape on Mame as she slides down the banister.

He's the kind of gent Auntie Mame would go wild for. Andrew Glassford is tall and handsome, a successful Dallas banker who lives in an Art Deco-style house with his partner and their standard poodle, Mack II. His love for beauty includes a particular obsession with orchids, and he can't stop talking about his latest fixation on Asia, which springs from a recent trip to China and Tokyo. But it was one year ago, New Year's Day 2017, when Glassford made a decision that would make Mame proud.

