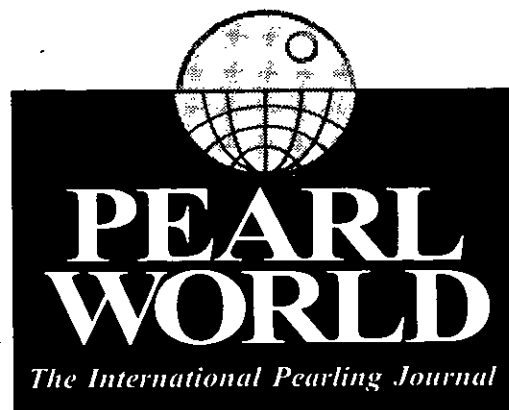


April / May / June 2006

Volume 15, Number 2

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- Tucson Gem Show 2006: pearls and pearlers
- "The Pearl King": a poetry book review
- Global warming: the potential to raise sea levels 20 feet
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The importance of branding:

You see a gorgeous girl at a party.

You approach her and say, "I am fantastic in bed."

That is direct marketing.

You are at a party with a bunch of friends when you see a gorgeous girl.

One of your friends approaches her, pointing in your direction, and says, "He is fantastic in bed."

That is advertising.

You see a gorgeous girl at a party.

You approach her and get her telephone number.

The next day you call and say, "Hi, I'm fantastic in bed."

That is telemarketing.

You are at a party and see a gorgeous girl.

You get up, straighten your tie, walk up to her, introduce yourself, pick up her scarf when she drops it, get her a drink, offer her a ride, and then say, "By the way, I'm fantastic in bed."

That is public relations.

You are at a party. A gorgeous girl sees you.

She walks up to you and says "I hear that you are fantastic in bed."

That is brand recognition.

EDITORIAL

To begin with, I ought to apologize to our female readers for putting such a male chauvinistic parable on the front cover.

Howsoever, this delightful tale was provided by a very feminine friend of ours (and a damn fine, experienced, global pearl watcher in her own right). If you reverse the polarity of the sexes in its telling, it is still a humorous lesson in explaining the nomenclature used in the jewelry industry.

Hopefully, no one will be offended.

Going along with this theme, we were recently gifted with a blurb sent in from another well-known, global pearl watcher. To begin with, here is the article in question, entitled *Swimsuit Envy*.

As if the perfect bodies, gorgeous swimsuits, and exotic locales didn't generate enough envy, the annual Sports Illustrated swimsuit issue throws diamonds into the mix this year to make life feel even more unfair to us regular folks.

The world's most expensive swimsuit makes its splashy debut in the annual lust fest, which hit newsstands this week. The bikini is constructed with more than 150 carats of D-Flawless diamonds

set in platinum.

Created in collaboration with Sports Illustrated editors, the swimsuit was designed by jeweler Susan Rosen with stones by DTC sightholder Steinmetz Diamonds.

Among the diamonds—which, according to the Diamond Information Center, include some of the rarest in the world—are a 51 ct. D Flawless pear-shape stone and a 30 ct. D Flawless emerald cut.

The swimsuit, worn by supermodel Molly Sims, is valued at \$30 million. (We think it would be worth even more to see someone try to swim in it.)

Now for the photo which accompanied the article:



Not to be outdone, your intrepid Editor dug out another photo article in equally questionable taste, this one about a bikini made up entirely of pearls. It brings to mind one sev-

eral years ago celebrating a pearl encrusted garment created by Robert Wan that was certainly a little less revealing than the one below.

I have selected the least salacious picture of the set to illustrate this particular idiocy, and if anyone wants to see the entire collection, please e-mail a request.



The model's name is Madysen (we are told by an online company called *Virtual Girl*), and comes from Durban, Republic of South Africa. Her statistics: 23 years of age, height 5.80, weight 115, and measuring 36/24/34. I would convert these to millimeters and grams or carats, but my pea brain fails me.

I reveal all this gratuitous detail to explain the following wonderful punch line. In her own words:

I was raised in the countryside called Thousand Hills, such a beautiful place. My Father used to hide me. He didn't want the neighbors to know what he called my "evil beauty." When I finally left home and moved in town, I discovered that my body was my future and my "treasure."

I've never heard of a better oxymoron than "evil beauty." And, as for "treasure," pearlers deal with this commodity everyday.

This exhausts my pitiful accumulation of near-naked women, dressed to the nines in little or nothing, worth gazillions.

The Editor

Source: *Sports Illustrated*, *Virtual Girl*



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oopsies (most people call these errata)

A snake-bit issue, with a more than the usual amount of errors after going through several printers, readers, scanners and spell checkers. We shall punish the proofreader (me) accordingly, and try to learn our InDesign desktop publishing program and to operate our error-prone keyboard (with teensy little keys) better. And we offer our sincere apologies.

Your admonished Editor

On page 8, jumping to page 13: Eve's story ("Wear Your Pearls") should have continued. Full story appears below.

On page 11: caption under upper left photo should read "keshis" not "keishis".

On page 13, jumping to nowhere: a repeat of Gary Roskin's article which began on page 3.

Should be Eve's article from page 8 continuing and ending.

Wear Your Pearls!

Peggy Yntema, a lady from an old Dutch family, recently sat next to Pearl Society founder Eve Alfillé and related this story - which gives a whole new meaning to the phrase "Wear your pearls!". While growing up in pre-World War II New York, a family friend who worked for the Chemical Bank told of a young woman who was hired as a secretary "for the quality of her skin". Apparently this woman's skin was deemed to be of the right type to maintain the Chemical Bank's clients' pearls.

Her only duties consisted of being escorted down to the Bank's vault every morning accompanied by security guards: they would then open the vault, pile the customers pearls around her neck, and she would spend the day wearing them. Each day she would wear a different group of customer pieces. It was an effort to preserve and maintain the luster of the Bank clients' valuable pearls. Ms. Yntema was wearing some very fine triple-strand akoya pearls that day.

Inventive Award Winner

And the winner for most creative and completely incorrect pearl salesperson goes to... the sales gentleman at a prestigious New York jewelry shop in the Trump complex at Columbus Circle. When asked about the difference between black South Seas, white South Seas pearls, and pink pearls he stated: the black & white South Seas pearls come from the same place (editor note: Ummm, sorry but not exactly, since the white South Seas come primarily from Australia, with a few cultured in Indonesia, the black South Seas pearls primarily in Tahiti, and the Cook Islands, with some other varieties found in Mexico.)

Now, what about the pink pearls, we asked?

This inventive (and oh so incorrect) salesman went on to further explain that the pink pearls (clearly freshwater pearls... almost certainly from China) were in fact found in the same place as the black & white South Seas but are much cheaper because they are only grown at 150 feet below sea level instead of 400 feet like the others!

Please, young man, skip the acceptance speech.

Source: The Pearl Society Newsletter, Eve J. Alfillé Gallery & Studio, 623 Grove Street, Evanston IL 60201.
Phone: 847-869-7920. Contributors: Diane Alfillé, Matt Arden, Eve J. Alfillé, Esther Solar.

SCANNING THE PEARL WORLD

PEARL MARKET REPORT

This was an article by Gary Roskin from the third quarter of last year that we did not get to use. If you didn't read it, there are some interesting things he had to say. If you did see it, it still has relevance today.

When Tiffany & Co. created a retail store with only one product, you'd have been forgiven for thinking the scheme risky. But the store, called Iridesse (www.irdesse.com), has borne out the wisdom of the adage "Timing is everything."

Iridesse sells only pearl jewelry, and there has never been a better time for retailers and consumers to buy pearls. Overall selection, variety, and quality of the world's cultured pearls are all outstanding.

Pearl production is up, and so is demand. Paspaley auctions reportedly enjoyed its best sales in five years this past year in Hong Kong, selling over 150,000 pearls—including all the baroques, indicating a major new trend—with a value of more than \$13 million.

But demand, though rising, isn't keeping pace with skyrocketing production. Unsold pearls numbered close to 33,000, leaving growers with a great deal of old inventory to sell at the next auction, even as pearl production continues to rise, driving down prices.

Quality also is rising, the result, according to producers, of an improving growing environment, especially for South Sea farms in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Australia.

In fact, studies in the Philip-

pinos show marine diversity increasing 21% in pearl-farm sites compared with unprotected areas. The result is higher-quality pearls and better regeneration of the *Pinctada maxima*.

For reasons that aren't entirely clear, production numbers for South Seas and Tahitians are expected to decrease over the next year or so, the result of fewer oysters available for grafting.

Martin Coeroli, General Manager for GIE Perles de Tahiti, says that may push prices up 10% to 20%, but expect that outcome only for high-luster, clean true-peacock-color 8mm and 9mm rounds.

Robert Wan's Tahiti Perles, the largest grower in the French Polynesian islands, sold over 190,000 pearls at its Tahitian pearls auction in Hong Kong last Spring. To improve, or at least stabilize, profits without increasing supplies, Wan has chosen to price his goods using the more stable euro instead of the U.S. dollar. This has raised prices in the United States.

EXPECT THE BEST

One indication of the overall high quality of cultured pearls is that more are labeled "metallic luster" than ever before.

Another sign is that sizes are big and getting bigger. akoyas are at 9+ mm, Chinese freshwaters are at 12mm, and South Sea keshis are at a whopping 15 to 16+ mm. The wide variety of shapes and natural colors allows retail jewelers to carry hundreds of different items using only one gem material.

Last year's TA Show in New

York produced more good news. Suppliers like Frank Mastoloni & Sons were optimistic about the current market. Mastoloni had a wide selection of akoyas, as well as some large (10 to 12mm) South Sea keshis.

Lois Berger, G.G., FGA, pearl expert and appraiser with Martin Fuller & Associates, McLean, Va., noticed a lot of old stock at JANY, but liked what she saw at Tara & Sons, including Chinese freshwaters and some baroques.

"Large baroque South Sea Australian white pearls were big eye-catchers," she says. In keeping with recent trends, Tara had quite a few mixed-origin strands, including Indonesian gold with Australian white mixed with natural peach, pink, and the occasional purple Chinese freshwater. This was new and large-inventory.

Assael, New York, showed large 13 to 16mm very fine quality white South Sea baroques as well as large 15 to 16mm Australian golds.

While most everyone watched inventories carefully, Stuller took on more, adding Tahitians to its line of Paspaley Australian whites.

DEMAND BY ORIGIN

Australian whites are as popular as they've ever been. According to figures published in Pearl World newsletter, whites from the *Pinctada maxima* are expected to peak at over 9 tons in 2006. By weight, the increase is 260% higher than six years ago.

A decade ago, the big round

"Scanning" to page 4

"Scanning" from page 3

and baroque whites accounted for only 20% of the market. Today, at 50% of total pearl production, they dominate the market. This means that prices for retailers have either become more affordable, as with the large baroques, or have increased relatively painlessly.

Indonesian and Philippine golds are popular, but the recent revelation that golds can be dyed, even without drilling, has led to more laboratory identifications, adding cost.

Tahiti deserves credit for its quality-control process, which has helped keep cheap, low-quality pearls out of the market.

While nacre thickness is somewhat disappointing from a purist's point of view, nacre of slightly greater than 0.5mm is acceptable. To qualify as a Tahitian, a pearl's nacre must be 0.8mm or thicker, which is more than enough for a bead-nucleated pearl.

The Japanese akoya, after all, with 0.5mm nacre thickness, was praised for over a century.

Chinese rounds and near rounds are plentiful. "Most goods are picked in bulk," says Marc Freeman, Freeman Gems, Los Angeles. "And they'll buy in massive quantity. But then the goods get blended in the strand."

Freeman notes that picking to make strands of all-white perfectly round Chinese freshwaters is difficult. "If, in fact, you are working with non bead-nucleated pearls, the odds of having something perfectly round are slim to none," he says. "And the only reason that we're seeing rounds to the degree that we do is the sheer volume of production."

JAPANESE / CHINESE AKOYAS

Avi Raz, A&Z Pearl, Los Angeles, showed perfectly matched 8 to 8.5mm round akoyas with beautiful luster at JANY.

Note that the phrase "Japanese akoyas" is no longer used, since most strands combine Chinese and Japanese akoyas. The consensus is that it doesn't matter where they're from as long as quality is high.

But don't be fooled by tags that say, "Made in Japan." The strand is made in Japan, but the pearls on it may be Chinese.

NATURAL PEARLS

Although natural pearls don't constitute a big market for retailers, they shouldn't be ignored. The auction market for natural pearls is scoring huge points, says Rahul Kadakia, head of the jewelry department for Christie's Americas.

"Christie's actually holds the world record for the most important natural pearls sold at auction," Kadakia notes. The latest sale, a double-strand natural pearl necklace measuring from 8.5 to 16.3mm, sold for \$3.1 million at Christie's Geneva in November, 2004.

"We also sold in November, 1999, the Barbara Hutton/Marie Antoinette single-strand pearl necklace measuring from 8.5 to 16.35mm for \$1.47 million, which at that time was also a world record," says Kadakia.

"In May 2000, we sold two single-strand black-pearl necklaces by Cartier and Janesich measuring from 4.7 to 14.4mm for \$1.04 million."

Christie's sold a historical three-strand black-pearl necklace, formally the property of

Nina Dyer, at Christie's Geneva in November 1997 for \$913,320. That was a bargain at today's prices.

"Natural pearls have always been an extremely rare part of the jewelry world and in recent years have become even more sought after," says Kadakia.

"Pollution, oil mining, and overharvesting of the pearl-bearing oysters have all resulted in a drastic decrease in the growth of natural pearls. Most of the natural pearls that are offered for sale at auctions today or that come up on the open market are all part of older jewels or collections that have been put together over many years."

Source: Gary Roskin in JCK

TIMELY PEARLS

Although cultured pearls are one of the most prevalent precious gems in fine jewelry this year, there's long been a lack of pearl-adorned timepieces. Perhaps it's not surprising that watch brands have been much more likely to use diamonds than pearls. Pearls aren't as tough as diamonds and watches may receive more wear than jewelry.

But with the current popularity of pearls and pearl bracelets, the time for the pearl watch has arrived. After all, mother-of-pearl dials are already standard on many watches, including men's styles. Several watch brands are making the world their oyster this season.

Chanel, which has championed the pearl in its iconic chain necklaces, was the first to create a pearl watch. Its "Mademoiselle" watch, which has a bracelet of five strands of akoya pearls on

"Scanning" to page 5

"Scanning" from page 4

gold wire, is a long-standing best-seller. Recently, this style moved up-market. The new 18k white gold version has an all-diamond pave dial. This new high-end Chanel Mademoiselle model retails for \$19,200.

When ESQ revamped its line last year, taking a more fashion forward stance, the company added multi-strand pearl and manipulated gemstone bracelets. A stylish ESQ pearl bracelet watch has a suggested retail of \$350.

Pippo Italia watches expanded on its collection of flower watches this February by adding a new style with petals of baroque pearls. In contrast to previous styles which confine their pearls to the bracelet, large and lustrous freshwater pearls frame the watch face. The suggested retail for this new style is \$1,895.

A treat for pearl lovers to add to their jewelry wardrobe, these new pearl watch styles are also just the thing to get the bride to the church on time.

Source: Jeff Prine in *Modern Jeweler*

PEARL SOCIETY TIDBITS

One of the great joys in our life is receiving *The Pearl Society Newsletter*, put out by the Eve J. Alfillé Gallery & Studio (623 Grove Street, Evanston IL 60201; phone XXX-847-869-7920)... and edited by Diane Alfillé, Eve's gregarious daughter, with assistance by Diane's husband, Matt Arden, Eve herself, Susie Maltz and Esther Solar.

Founded by Eve and now in its 16th year, the Society puts on several presentations a year which bring in pearl experts and

aficionados from all over to speak to the assembled members, in addition to arranging field trips to special pearling venues in a pretty darn wide geographical area.

Membership is a paltry \$25 a year, and worth every farthing.

Here are some tidbits from the latest newsletter:

KILLING KASUMIGAS

Kazumigas--are a type of pearl which comes from Lake Kazumiga-ura (Lake of Kasumi), the second largest lake in Japan, located about 60km northeast of Tokyo. The mussels are a crossbreed between Japanese and Chinese freshwater mussels, and are implanted with round or flat nuclei.

Large, colorful Kazumiga pearls glow in rosy hues of cream, bronze and light to dark pink. Cultivation success was achieved in 1993 with a handful of pearls as the result. The belief was this crossbreed had two unique qualities: the mussels were pollution resistant and able to accept a round nucleus.

This past February, Eve Alfillé inquired about the current Kazumiga pearl cultivation results to Fuji Voll of Pacific Pearls (past Pearl Society speaker).

"He described how disease has ravaged that lake and current production. And the Kasumigas he showed me were very pale, lacking in the magnificent bronze and violets that characterize the most attractive of these pearls.

In fact, I had just bought one of his last remaining older strands, with great colors," Alfillé remarked.

"Fuji told me how since 2003, the mussels had been under attack (as well as the carp in Kazumiga-

ura), originally thought to be caused by a strain of the herpes virus, but later recognized as caused by the presence of aluminum in the lake. Aluminum is used in water treatment plants, and apparently, storms caused overflow in their facilities, resulting in contamination of the lake,

PEARL SUBMARINE FOUND

According to the *British Times* (www.timesonline.co.uk) from June 06, 2005, a British explorer has found an early submarine he believes was the inspiration for Nautilus, the Captain Nemo vessel in Jules Verne's novel *Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea*, with a pearl connection.

Colonel John Blashford-Snell discovered the half-submerged, cast-iron wreck off the coast of Panama while searching for ancient ruins. She was built in 1864 by a visionary craftsman, Julius Kroehl, for the Union forces during the American Civil War.

But the boat, called *Explorer*, was never used in the conflict and was subsequently taken to Panama where she was used to harvest pearls. The Colonel and his team dived to examine the wreck they believed was a Japanese mini-sub, and discovered that it actually dated from the American Civil War.

The submarine, which measures 36 feet by 10 feet, was lying in under 10 feet of water off an archipelago known as The Pearl Islands, abandoned after three years in the pearl industry.

Her crew all died from what was described then as a "fever",

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BOOK REVIEW

Not long ago we received a request from Catherine Greenwood, asking if we would be interested in a book about pearls... particularly as a major portion of its content centered upon Mikimoto. We immediately acquiesced, and here are some reviews kindly provided by her publisher, Kitty Lewis of Brick Books.

The Pearl King
by Catherine Greenwood
London, ON: Brick Books, 2004,
ISBN 1-894078-38-1, 122 pp., \$16.00 paper.

For a book of poems, *The Pearl King* is a tightly focused collection based on the theme of pearls. The poetry is well pedigreed, as can be seen in the back of the book from the list of prizes won for individual poems. (Note also the many literary publications the poems have appeared in.) Here is a work, finely researched, honed and polished, like the primary metaphor of the pearl it uses as its theme.

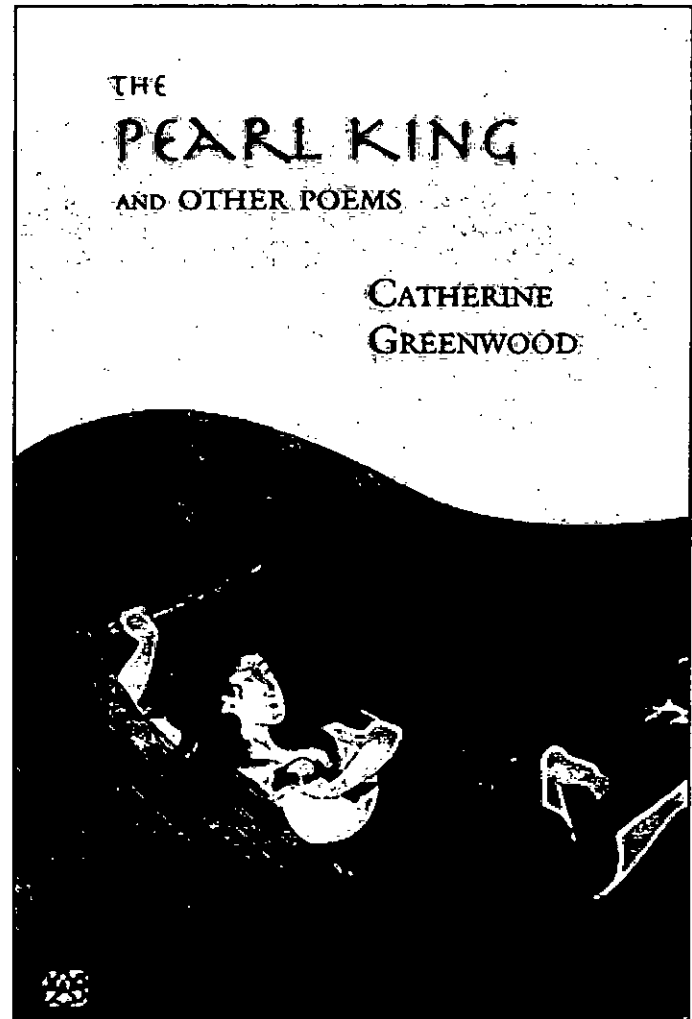
The Pearl King is an absolute delight to read, the images startlingly crisp and fresh. There is a strong narrative focus — mostly on Mikimoto, the “Pearl King,” Japanese founder of the cultured pearl— that gives the collection a binding lyrical strength. Stories about pearls are interwoven and drawn from various characters whose lives are affected by the milky gem. There is the fiercely dedicated Mikimoto, who speaks of himself, in “In Service to a Dream,” as a “Stableboy/ to my own ambition, endlessly/ polishing the hooves/ of the beast, grooming/ the monstrous brood-/mare of my dream.”

There is his wife, Ume, who speaks thus in “Pearl Farmer’s Wife”: “I accuse him of being/in love with an oyster,/ making my resentment a jest,/ a small seed spit out/so it won’t grow in me”.

And there are his children, describing their relationship with their father in memorable poems such as “Eldest Daughter,” “Only Son,” and “From the Pillow Book of the Pearl King’s Youngest Daughter, ‘Memories of Certain Splendid Things.’”

The family observations are richly textured ones. For example in “Only Son,” the narrator describes his father thus:

*Blindly decoding the bat squeak
of dream, my father, deep
in his mind’s black cavern, was an island
I could walk to when the tide went out.*



Greenwood uses both the principals of the Pearl King’s story—Mikimoto and his family—along with a myriad other characters that relate in some way to the pearl—from merchant to diver, courtesan to monk—to weave a sensual discourse on the pleasures of beauty and the sacrifice it makes of the lives dedicated to its perfection.

The styles and tone of the poetry in *The Pearl King* vary widely. The book opens with a prose poem that helps lay the historical and narrative foundation of the story. The poems are then divided into three sections:

“The Pearl King,” “North Atlantic Drift,” and “The Abacus That Counts Time.”

“The Pearl King” section has the most variety

“Pearl King” to page 7

"Pearl King" from page 6

in poetic forms, from the "proem" of the beginning to a whimsical Noh play script entitled "Postscript: Pearl Island, a Noh Drama," which is a satire of that dramatic form. The latter seems a little out of place with the rest of the section, partly because of its wonky humour. "The Pearl King" section is the most richly saturated portion of the book in terms of the mythology and folk legends of Japan, but some of that Japanese influence spills over into other sections as well. I was struck in particular by Greenwood's voice, which is tautly lyrical with a clean, spare focus; it reminded me of the Japanese forms of waka and haiku.

For a debut book of poetry, Catherine Greenwood's *The Pearl King and Other Poems* is a tightly wrought gem of beauty and clarity. A pearl, in short, of the most lustrous kind.

From *Prairie Fire*, a literary magazine from Winnipeg, Manitoba, by Sally Ito, a Winnipeg resident who is the author of two books of poetry, *Frogs in the Rain Barrel* (1995), and *Season of Mercy* (1998).

A second review from the Saskatoon Star-Phoenix, March 2005, by Bill Robertson, a freelance writer:

Another Victoria resident, this one born on Vancouver Island, is Catherine Greenwood, and she has published her first collection of poems, *The Pearl King*.

Something about islands must run through this woman's blood, because the first, and by far the largest, section of this collection is about pearls and their facts and mythology, most of that centered upon Japan. Then, in the second section, "North Atlantic Drift," we move to poems of the Shetlands.

In the beautiful "Diving Girls' Prayer," which opens section one, we get the lines, "Lead me down ladders of sunlight/ Part the deep green curtain of the sea," while in "The Pearl Farmer's Wife" a woman left at home too much while her husband works makes a joke of his absence: "a small seed spit out/ so it won't grow in me." Not all pearls are good.

As we read through this section, we see not only how many references there are to desire and sexual fecundity: "Desire sways heavily, a sweaty/ quilt hung out to air?" And "the ocean electrified in its own aphrodisiac juice." But how many references there are to dreams, charms, spells, curses. Ah, the pearl has always been about magic, and Greenwood takes us through the fight between the traditional pearl gatherers and those who would artificially stimulate a pearl.

And just as we've had about enough of pearls, the poet moves us to the bracing winds of the Shetlands, where "the season is a slow glance/ between the winds."

This bit of difference gets us ready for the final section, tough poems about tough people, including the disturbing and breathtaking "Canonic," about a beaten woman, and "Black Plums," about a pedophile.

Fortunately, we have these final poems to anchor that large first section of myths and dreams. This becomes a bold first book.

And a third review from the Winnipeg Free Press, October 2004, by Alison Calder, a teacher of Canadian literature at the University of Manitoba:

Victoria writer Catherine Greenwood's first collection, *The Pearl King and Other Poems* (Brick, 123 pages, \$16), mixes Japanese mythology and the production of cultured pearls to probe ideas of authenticity, artifice and value.

In the title section, traditional female pearl divers become mermaids, and then figures in tourist exhibits, as Greenwood calls on different kinds of fictions. The many-layered pearl becomes a metaphor for truth, as different voices seek love, wealth, or poetry.

The imaginative slant on her topic and the range of poetic voices her make Greenwood a writer to watch.

For more information on The Pearl King, or any of the books offered by Brick Books, publisher of new and established voices in Canadian poetry since 1975, go to www.brickbooks.ca, or write the company at 431 Boler Road, Box 20081, London, Ontario N6K 4G6, CANADA. Telephone: 519-657-8579. From their catalogue:

Why publish poetry? Here's what the founders of Brick Books, said: "Does poetry have an audience? Why publish poetry in a time, for a culture, that does not seem to value it? These questions have proven so durable that their longevity may be taken, all by itself, to serve as an answer. The fact of the continued existence, and growth, of a press like Brick Books, which publishes only poetry, might constitute another. Poetry may have been 'relegated' to the margin or the underground, but its existence there, as anyone who has worked for a small press or a literary magazine can testify, is vibrant, bee-bright, sinewed like mountain

"Pearl King" to page 8

"Pearl King" from page 7

folk." (Don McKay, from "A Word in Your Ear"). "Why are we moonlighting in this demanding, non-paying job? I'm not sure we'd all have the same answer, but a composite response would have to stress the deep satisfaction of being members of a thoroughly professional body with an amateur heart. We do it for love. Have done, by gum, for 20 years." (Stan Dragland, from "Once Upon a Time...").

Our thanks to Catherine Greenwood for suggesting a review of her book, and Kitty Lewis, General Manager of Brick Books for her help and permission to do so.

As an aside, if you have any interest in islands *per se*, may I suggest a very unusual and interesting book I recently finished, *Eccentric Islands: Travels Real and Imaginary* by Bill Holm.

A brief review by Bonnie Smothers: *Icelandic by blood, itinerant Minnesotan writer and teacher Holm*

was destined to become an island aficionado: his name means "island" in Old Norse. Having conjured a desert island beneath a cottonwood tree in the vast sea of his farmer father's fields as a boy, Holm knows that while islands are useful as microcosms, they can engender delusions, and he holds this yin-yang vision firmly in mind as he chronicles various island sojourns throughout the world. A true raconteur, Holm is as philosophical as he is descriptive, as funny as he is feisty, and he voices bracing opinions on everything from the inanity of resorts to our obsession with money. He recounts the tragic history of the steeply cliffed Hawaiian island of Molokai, once home to a leper colony overseen by the heroic Father Damien; sings the praises of beautiful, musical, and poor Madagascar; and, in the book's most heartfelt sections, portrays his ancestral land, celebrating Iceland's volatile landscape, rich literature, and tenacious inhabitants. Vibrant, adventurous, and empathic, Holm relishes the uniqueness of each place even as he recognizes that, like each person, each island is but a link in the chain of life.

Pearlers like us all like islands!

The Editor

"Scanning" from page 5

but what was more likely to have been the bends after they regularly submerged to about 100 feet to harvest pearls from Pearl Islands' oyster beds.

Colonel Blashford-Snell, 67, added: "What made it ideal for the pearl trade was its lock-out system, which meant people could get out of it, gather up pearls then return to the submarine."

The lock-out system was identical to the one in the *Nautilus* from Verne's book, published in 1870.

SCOTTISH PEARL POACHERS

Pearls have long been a part of Scottish life; Alexander I, the 12th-century king of Scotland, was said to have the world's best

collection of freshwater pearls. They are also part of the Scottish Crown Jewels, including the giant Kellie pearl, the largest found in Britain.

Since early times, Scotland's rivers have been plundered by fishermen in search of the pearl. Conservationists fear increased poaching in Scotland could force extinction within 25 years, because poachers kill all the mussels they catch, even though most do not contain pearls!

Six years after a ban on the fishing, sale or advertising of freshwater pearls, Scotland's wildlife crime unit is investigating the ongoing sale of freshwater pearls in Glasgow.

Although jewelers can apply for a license to sell pearls acquired before 1998, only two have been issued... however, jewelry shops across the UK continue to stock Scotch freshwater pearls.

Endangered mussel species

used to be found in more than 160 rivers; they are now reduced to 61 breeding colonies in about a dozen Scottish waterways.

Pearl poachers have been detected on the River Tay, in Perthshire, the River Dee in Aberdeenshire and, on the west coast, divers have been spotted combing the deep river mussel beds.

WEAR YOUR PEARLS!

Peggy Yntema, a lady from an old Dutch family, recently sat next to Pearl Society founder Eve Alfillé and related this story - which gives a whole new meaning to the phrase "Wear your pearls".

While growing up in pre-World War II New York, a family friend who worked for the Chemical

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OUR CHANGING CLIMATE

Two relatively recent articles portray the problem pearlers may have to deal with in the not-too-distant future: sea levels rising up to 20 feet.

A noted climatologist on CBS' *Sixty Minutes* last weekend warned that we are perilously close to the tipping point, and that vacillating on solving the problem of global warming another ten years could well be disastrous.

We begin with the first article, by Robert Lee Hotz of the *Los Angeles Times*, entitled *Snow isn't keeping up with Antarctica's melt, researchers find*:

The ice sheets of Antarctica, the world's largest reservoir of fresh water, are shrinking faster than new snow can fall, scientists reported Thursday in the first comprehensive satellite survey of the entire continent.

Researchers at the University of Colorado determined that from 2002 to 2005 Antarctica lost its ice at a rate of 36 cubic miles a year, rather than growing from heavier snowfalls as previous research had predicted. That amount of ice is equivalent to about 30 times the fresh water used by Los Angeles every year.

"It is the first time we can say that if you look at the entire ice sheet, it is losing mass," said geophysicist Isabella Velicogna, whose findings were published online Thursday by the journal *Science*.

Last month, an independent research team at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, Calif., reported that the Arctic glaciers of Greenland were melting twice as fast as five years ago, adding an extra 38 cubic miles of fresh water to the Atlantic Ocean every year.

Taken together, the findings suggest that a century of steady increases in global temperatures has altered the seasonal balance of the world's water cycle.

If so, experts say, increasing global temperatures - the 10 warmest years on record all occurred since 1990 - may be hastening the demise of the polar ice caps, and estimates of the pace of future sea-level rise could be too low.

By previous calculations, Antarctica's coastal glaciers shed enough meltwater every year to raise world sea levels by two-tenths of an inch, even as new snow falling in the interior locked up the same amount in the ice cap. The result was that sea level remained essentially the same from year to year.

"A little bit of change in one of these things could throw it all out of balance and, evidently, that is what is going on," said University of Colorado geophysicist John Wahr, who helped analyze the new satellite measurements.

Indeed, portions of the Antarctic coast are 4.5-degrees Fahrenheit warmer than 60 years ago, previous research has shown.

Those same areas have lost an estimated 5,500 square miles of ice in the past 30 years, calving icebergs the size of Belgium and Rhode Island. In 2002, an entire ice shelf collapsed into the sea.

The newest work signals a broader loss across the entire continent, an amount equal to more than 13% of the annual sea-level rise measured in recent years, the researchers said.

The shrinkage is concentrated in the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, which contains enough fresh water to raise global sea levels more than 20 feet.

The researchers based their findings on gravity measurements collected by a pair of orbiting satellites, called the Gravity Recovery and Climate Experiment, launched in 2002.

Another article, this by Doug Strout entitled *Inuit see signs in Arctic thaw* and subtitled *String of warm winters alarms "Sentries for the Rest*

of the World" in a recent Washington Post, details the changes already at hand... pretty damn scary:

Pangnirtung, Canada - Thirty miles from the Arctic Circle, hunter Noah Metuq feels the Arctic changing. Its frozen grip is loosening; the people and animals who depend on its icy reign are experiencing a historic reshaping of their world.

Fish and wildlife are following the retreating ice caps northward. Polar bears are losing the floes they need for hunting. Seals, unable to find stable ice, are hauling up on islands to give birth. Robins and barn owls and hornets, previously unknown so far north, are arriving in Arctic villages.

The global warming felt by wildlife and increasingly documented by scientists is hitting first and hardest here, in the Arctic where the Inuit people make their home. The hardy Inuit - described by one of their leaders as "sentries for the rest of the world" - say this winter was the worst in a series of warm winters, replete with alarms of the quickening transformation that many scientists expect will spread from the north to the rest of the globe.

The Inuit - with homelands in Alaska, Canada, Greenland and northern Russia - saw the signs of change everywhere. Metuq hauled his fishing shack onto the ice of Cumberland Sound last month, as he has every winter, confident it would stay there for three months. Three days later, he was astonished to see the ice break up, sweeping away his shack and \$6,000 of turbot fishing gear.

In Nain, Labrador, hunter Simon Kohlmeister, 48, drove his snowmobile onto ocean ice where he had hunted safely for 20 years. The ice flexed. The machine started sink-

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JEWELMER SHINES AT IJT 2006

Tokyo, Japan - Jeweler International, a Philippine-based South Sea Pearl producer, shone in the International Jewellery Tokyo (IJT) at the Tokyo Big Sight, Tokyo, Japan, which was held from January 25 to 29, 2006.

Jeweler has been a consistent participant in IJT for 17 years straight, since the fair started in 1989.

Jacques Branellec, Jeweler's Managing Director said, "The Philippine natural golden pearl has become a symbol of nature. In the Philippines, pearl producers have been proactive in environmental protection and conservation activities.

"Jeweler's philosophy is anchored on a deep respect for nature and a high commitment for people living in a close relationship with the environment for a common purpose: responsible operations that will lead to a sustainable business.

"Therefore, the company takes actions to preserve the beauty of an island paradise and a vital marine environment that is necessary to grow pearls.

"Jeweler values the synergy between man and nature. Showcasing these gold pearls in trade shows such as IJT is a natural venue for us to share their beauty and inner fire with an international audience."

IJT is Japan's largest international trade event for pearls, jewelry, gemstones and all related industries.

With 27 years of experience in pearl farming, Jeweler International has established a reputation within the pearl trade of being a trusted source of fine gold pearls.

The gold-lipped oysters in the company's farm in Palawan, in the southern part of the Philippines, yield a palette of natural colors. Pearls in hues from champagne to deep gold, like fiery molten lava, glow with inner fire and exude a

subtle magnetism.

Their natural beauty proves that pearls that come fresh from the farm hold their own allure and are valued highly by pearl enthusiasts.

In fact, the value of natural champagne and golden pearls posted a 20-30% increase compared to other categories of South Sea pearls.

Natural yellow, champagne and gold are the hot colors for 2006 for the jewelry world.

This means that all the subtleties of gold, in all its luscious and warm shades, will glow hot this year. Perfect for this are natural color champagne and gold pearls which will be prominently featured in fashion spreads as well as in big retail stores.

Set in long ropes or multi-color strands— or mixed and matched with different varieties of pearls—these colors often dominate and catch the eye.

Classic, edgy, young and modern designs take center stage. And Jeweler carries a fabulous selection: multi-color looks, long versatile ropes and lariats, long dangling earrings, as well as South Sea baroques are getting lots of attention.

Most importantly, jewelers are predicting that pearl jewelry, not just strands, is where the action will be this season.

Fashion forward pearl pieces are one of the season's most important styles in earrings, necklaces, pendants, and other jewelry categories. Versatile pieces from brooches which can double as pendants also have a huge market.

Daniela B. Fenix, Jeweler's new Marketing Manager, observes: "This year, there is a general mood of optimism for jewelry industry players who participated in the IJT, whether the enterprise is small, medium or large.

"It was refreshing to see the many trends and visions that jewelry designers have come up with to

showcase during the trade fair.

"This year's IJT showed that the pearl industry in particular is on the upswing for 2006 and quite likely in the years to come.

"Our company's Gala Night was truly exciting and magical. Gold South Sea pearls glowed brightly that night. Many guests flocked around and took pictures with the Jeweler models, admiring the fine pieces they were wearing."

Jeweler will be participating in the following trade shows around the world:

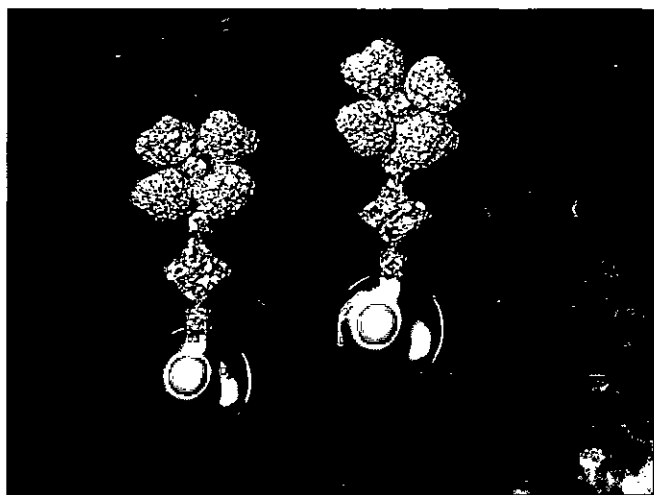
- Hong Kong International Jewellery Show (March 6-9/ Booth No. A2C11-12)
- Basel World (March 30-April 6, Hall Stand 3.1 L46)
- International Jewellery Kobe (May 18-20, Booth No. C121)
- JCK Las Vegas (June 3-6)
- Vicenzaoro 2 (June 10-15, Pavillion I, Booth No. 3135-3139)
- Orogemma (Sept.15-20, Pavillion I, Booth No. 3135-3139)
- Hong Kong Jewellery & Watch Fair (Sept. 20-25, Booth No. 2A02, 2B02)

And please don't forget to mark your calendar for the world's biggest South Sea Pearl yearly event, *Jeweler's Ultimate Orient 2006* annual fashion show which is the highlight of the Hong Kong Jewellery & Watch Fair, Asia's largest jewelry trade show, which will be held in September 2006.

For more information, please contact Jeweler's marketing department at (632) 8100266 loc 36, fax (632) 8189778, email marketing@jeweler.com.



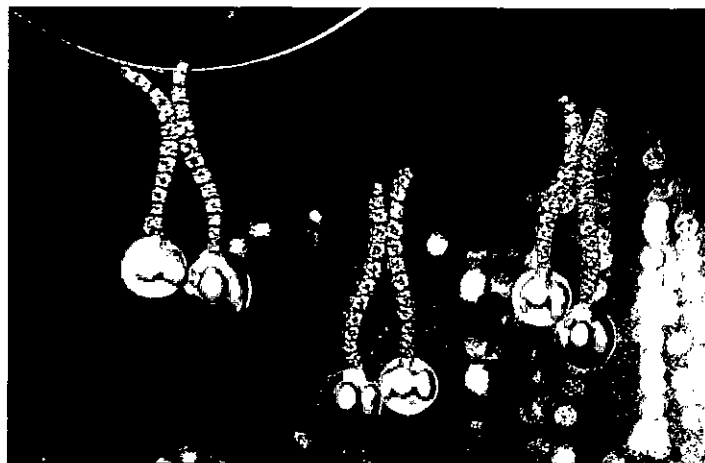
A very versatile brooch that can double as pendant, made of natural color champagne and golden Philippine South Sea pearls with keishis set with diamonds on a hand-carved mother-of-pearl shell highlighted in 18k yellow gold textured finish.



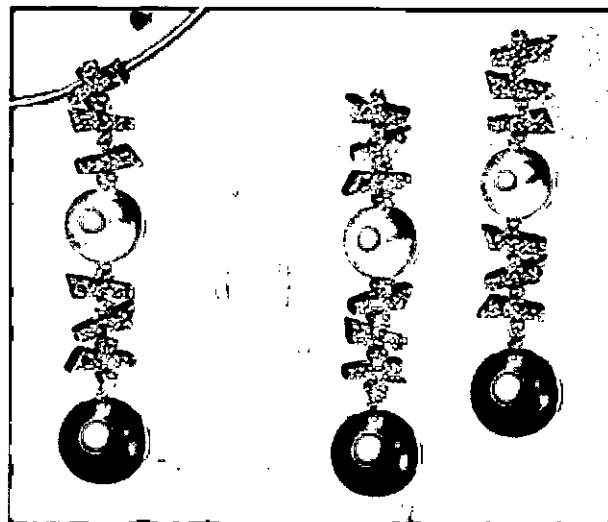
A pair of flower-inspired natural color golden Philippine South Sea pearl earrings set with pave diamonds in 18k yellow gold.



Jeweler shines at the International Jewellery Tokyo, January 25-29th.



A set of matching pendant and earrings of natural color gold and white Philippine South Sea pearls set with diamonds in 18k white gold.



A set of matching pendant and earrings of natural color golden and white Philippine South Sea pearls set with diamonds in 18k yellow gold.

(From left to right) Top Philippine model Ms. Valerie de los Santos, Mr. Jacques Branellec, Managing Director of Jeweler, Ms. Daniela B. Fenix, Marketing Manager of Jeweler, and Model Ms. Isabel Roces wearing fine South Sea pearl jewelry by Jeweler during the Gala Ball of the International Jewellery Trade Show in Tokyo, Japan.

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FRENCH ENVOY VISITS PHILIPPINE PEARL FARMS & PLEDGES SUPPORT FOR FRANCE-PHILIPPINE ENVIRONMENTAL COOPERATION

Bugsuk, Palawan- His Excellency Gerard Chesnel, France's new envoy to the Philippines, recently visited the pearl farming industry in the Philippines from January 17-19, 2006, upon the invitation of Mr. Jacques Branellec, Managing Director of Jewelmer International. M. Chesnel was accompanied by his wife, Mme. Ning Chesnel, along with the Economic and Commercial Counsellor, Mr. Yves Cadilhon, Mme. Pheck Cadilhon and Cultural Counsellor Francois Blamont.

During the three-day trip to Palawan, Ambassador Chesnel was toured from Busuanga to Bugsuk where he was shown around the many on-going processes before a South Sea pearl is harvested. He was amazed by the complexity and delicate methods observed from the time the baby spats are reared in the hatchery to the time the oysters are ready for grafting in the operation laboratory.

Environmental presentations of native dances and rituals centered on the importance of the four elements of nature- water, earth, air, fire- were showcased in the evening to the delight of the visitors.

Ambassador Chesnel commented in one of the cultural shows done in Bugsuk, "Thank you for offering us a glimpse of the Philippine culture with the show you prepared for us tonight. I congratulate you for your very good teamwork and your team spirit which is highly evident tonight. We are also very impressed of the positive impact that your work [pearl farming] has on the environment. We express our deepest appreciation for inviting us here."

Ambassador Chesnel was deeply touched and was very impressed with the warm welcome given by the provincial board from the time the group arrived at the Puerto Princesa airport, up to the time they arrived at the provincial capitol where local dances and lively music were per-

formed for them.

Vice Governor Ponce de Leon opened the ceremony after which Ambassador Chesnel commented: "Thank you very much for the warm welcome. This is the best welcome I've ever had in all my visits here in the Philippines. I've been here for four months now.

"We are in Palawan because we want to develop a close cooperation with you. We know that you have a concern in the protection of the environment. In Europe, we are very interested in this area."



French Ambassador Gerard Chesnel holds a baby crocodile in his hands during his most recent visit to the Crocodile refuge in Palawan.

The French envoy listened as Vice Governor Ponce de Leon emphasized the importance of Palawan, which is located in the Western border of the Philippines and is hailed by international marine scientists as the last ecological frontier housing the most diverse marine species in the Philippines and in the world.

Ambassador Chesnel commented after the presentation that, "This is exactly the kind of information we need to give [the French government] ideas and information on areas where we (France and Philippines) can work together.

"We already have ideas of our own. When we speak of tourism, it

is one of your main resources. In the case of Palawan, emphasis should be on eco-tourism. That is what we wish deeply. In a very fragile and unique environment, it is the kind of development that should be conducted. In this field, we (France) have experience. If we can be of help, we will be studying in what areas and fields we could cooperate efficiently."

The French envoy's visit was well-timed as environmental focus is on Palawan. Currently, there is a need for an ecological underwater revolution in Palawan to preserve the very few healthy corals which support the various marine life thriving underwater. According to statistics, there are few live corals in Palawan, observed by scientists and parties interested in environmental conservation.

Mr. Jacques Branellec, Jewelmer's Managing Director and a marine environmentalist who is of French descent and a three-decade resident in the Philippines, emphasized during the meeting, "If we want to push for eco-tourism, we would need to take good care of our marine resources.

"Palawan is known as the food basket of the region. To support the projected population boom in the year 2021, we must reverse the damage and start concrete actions now so we ensure fish supply and we could offer a beautiful underwater paradise to tourists who look forward to refreshing vacations in our isles.

"Otherwise, if no concrete action is taken and we let the sea habitat get destroyed, there will be no more corals left and no more shelter for fish to breed and multiply. There is a great possibility of 'marine desertification' where a dead sea with no life is what we would let our children inherit. Time is of the essence if we want to rehabilitate and revive the sea to its former health.

"It is not easy to change the ways

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of thinking in communities overnight. It will take bravery, courage and sacrifice to create a paradigm shift. If we all team up together, we can make a difference and we can start something which the future generations can benefit from," concluded Mr. Branellec.

Palawan Vice Governor David Ponce de Leon agreed that there is a need for teamwork from all parties present to implement solutions. "The public sector and Palawenos value the excellent partnership that they have with the aquaculture sector such as the pearl farming industry for the sustainability of marine protection efforts they have started such as seaweed farming and Giant Clam culture, presently under study, which are alternative livelihood projects for coastal communities and are environmentally friendly and ecologically sound."

Ambassador Chesnel was pleased with the whole Palawan trip and the fruitful cooperation that has been initiated with the local government.



(From left to right): Marine Biologist; Economic Counsellor Mr. Yves Cadilhon with wife Mme. Pheck Cadilhon; Mme. Ning Chesnel with His Excellency Ambassador Gerard Chesnel; and Mr. Jacques Branellec, Managing Director of Jewelmer, during one of their pearl farm visits.

He was also impressed by the environmental projects the government officials together with the aquaculture sector have started.

He pledged support to future marine protection and conservation projects for the province. In his closing remarks, Ambassador Chesnel

expressed his desire to further strengthen and advance bilateral trade relations and developmental efforts of France and the Philippines, in particular during his tour of duty. ♦

Source: Jewelmer International Inc.

"Scanning" from page 8

This was an article by Gary Roskin from the third quarter of last year that we did not get to use. If you didn't read it, there are some interesting things he had to say. If you did see it, it still has relevance today.

When Tiffany & Co. created a retail store with only one product, you'd have been forgiven for thinking the scheme risky. But the store, called Iridesse (www.iridesse.com), has borne out the wisdom of the adage "Timing is everything."

Iridesse sells only pearl jewelry, and there has never been a better time for retailers and consumers to buy pearls. Overall selection, variety, and quality of

the world's cultured pearls are all outstanding.

Pearl production is up, and so is demand. Paspaley auctions reportedly enjoyed its best sales in five years this past year in Hong Kong, selling over 150,000 pearls—including all the baroques, indicating a major new trend—with a value of more than \$13 million.

But demand, though rising, isn't keeping pace with skyrocketing production. Unsold pearls numbered close to 33,000, leaving growers with a great deal of old inventory to sell at the next auction, even as pearl production continues to rise, driving down prices.

Quality also is rising, the result, according to producers, of an improving growing environment,

especially for South Sea farms in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Australia.

In fact, studies in the Philippines show marine diversity increasing 21% in pearl-farm sites compared with unprotected areas. The result is higher-quality pearls and better regeneration of the *Pinctada maxima*.

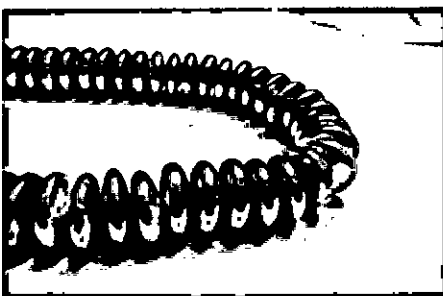
For reasons that aren't entirely clear, production numbers for South Seas and Tahitians are expected to decrease over the next year or so, the result of fewer oysters available for grafting.

Martin Coeroli, General Manager for GIE Perles de Tahiti, says that may push prices up 10% to 20%, but expect that outcome only for high-luster, clean true-peacock-color 8mm and 9mm rounds.

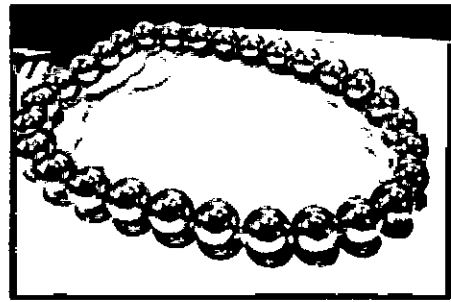
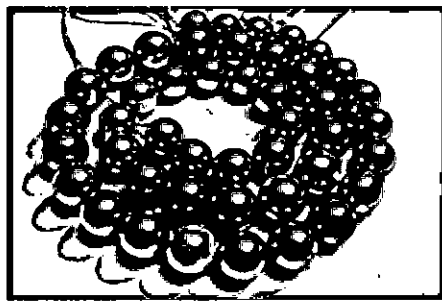
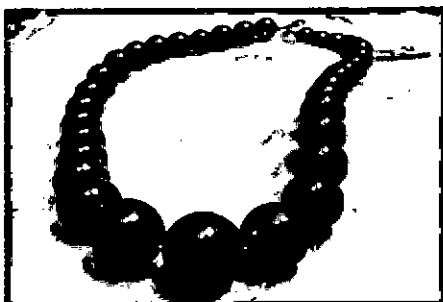
Robert Wan's Tahiti Perles,



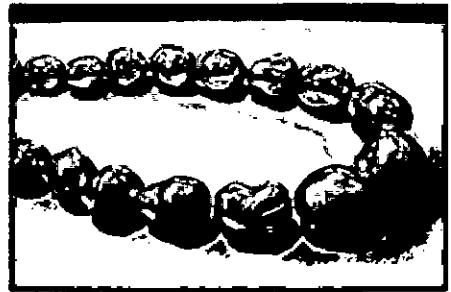
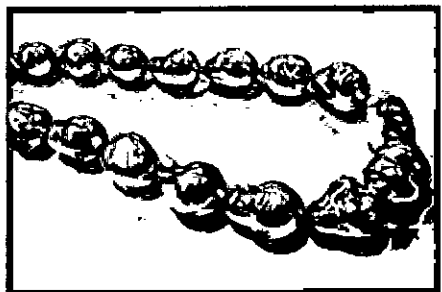
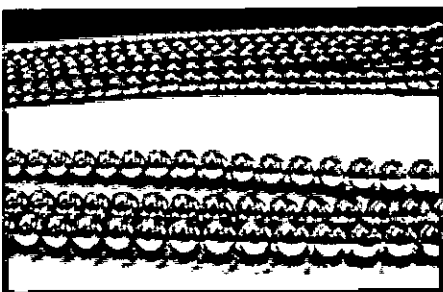
CFWCP keshis & petals seemed to predominate in Tucson. Above left: 12x26mm, keshi-double, \$850, King's Ransom. Middle: 15x18mm, keshi-petal, \$625, King's Ransom. Right: 12x16mm, double petal, \$280, B&A Trading Co.



Other CFWCP forms were popular. Above left: 12x13mm, center-drilled coins, \$375, King's Ransom. Middle: 10x13mm, keshi, \$300, Sea Hunt. Right: 15x18mm, butterfly "v-shape" interlocking baroque pearls, \$700, Sea Hunt.



South Sea pearls were in abundance, too. Above left: 9.9x11.8mm, Tahitian SSPs, black w/green overtone, \$4,000, Sea Hunt. Middle: 9x11mm, round, mixed origin (Tahitian, golden and white SSPs, with CFWCPs), \$8,100, King's Ransom. Right: 13x15mm, round, white SSPs, \$25,500, Adachi America Corp.



Above left: 7-8mm SSP strand, looks like Japanese akoya, \$1,470, Adachi America Corp. Middle: 14x18mm, baroque SSPs, \$12,250, Adachi America Corp. Right: 16x20.2mm, baroque SSPs, \$38,500, Adachi America Corp.

Tucson 2006 demonstrates pearl power

by Lois H. Berger, G.G., NAJA

At this year's Tucson Show we experienced brisk business, shining pearls and great camaraderie.

Our favorite Chinese freshwater cultured pearls (CFWCPs), the "petal pearls", were again a hot ticket item as they were in 2005. The petal pearls were even larger than last year (15x18mm), with greater availability, richness in color and huge, eye-catching luster. This beckons to the buyer. In fact, all of the CFWCP new inventory has a refreshing bold look. But be prepared - prices are higher. The range of sizes and prices for the petal pearls are as follows:

Chinese Freshwater Cultured Petal Pearls

10x11mm - white	\$150
10x12mm - off white	\$250
10x13mm - multi-color w/bronze	\$220
12mm - double petal white	\$280
12x13mm - white	\$225
13mm - silver blue	\$250
14x18mm - apricot	\$500
15x18mm - pastel	\$625

The baroque coin cultured pearls have the thickest nacre and the largest sizes that I have ever seen. In these large sizes, the blemish is very heavy with lines sweeping across the pearl as though the nacre was being pulled in the mollusk. The range of sizes and prices for the baroque coin cultured pearls are as follows:

Baroque Coin CFWCPs

10x12mm - white	\$150
10x12mm - white, bead nucleated	\$500
10x13mm - multi-color	\$350
12mm - Lt. blue-silver-white	\$140
19x25mm - light pastel	\$500
20x23mm - white	\$400

Chinese freshwater cultured pearls are affordable for all. They have excellent luster, clean, off-

round, matched, white rose and available in all sizes. Better treatment has provided a very marketable product. Range and sizes of the Chinese freshwater cultured pearls are as follows:

White Chinese Freshwater Cultured Pearls

3x3.5mm	\$18
3.5x4mm	\$20
4x4.5mm	\$24
4.5x5mm	\$28 - \$30
5.5x6mm	\$39
6x6.5mm	\$48
6.5x7mm	\$80
7x7.5mm	\$100
7.5x8mm	\$150
8x8.5mm	\$225
8.5x9mm	\$275 - \$300
9x10mm	\$250 - \$500
10x11mm	\$500 - \$1,100
12x14mm	\$2,800

The Chinese akoya, bead nucleated, cultured pearl has increased its 6mm to 7.5mm crop in recent years. A wide range of sizes are available up to 9x10mm. Pricing is more expensive than Chinese freshwater cultivated pearls because of differences in farm costs, cultivation methods, varying processing techniques and skill of technicians. Size and price in the A grade range of these pearls, 16-inch strands, are as follows:

White Chinese Akoya Cultured Pearls

5x5.5mm - 5.5x6mm	\$700
6x6.5mm	\$800
6.5x7mm	\$900
7x7.5mm	\$1,150
7.5x8mm	\$1,500
8x8.5mm	\$2,200
8.5x9mm	\$3,000
9x10mm	\$8,500

For both Chinese akoya and Japanese akoya cultured pearl strands, the lower sizes are generally Chinese akoya cultured pearls. These sizes are from 5x5.5mm - 8mm. Above 8mm, only Japanese akoya cultured pearls are used in

the highest quality strands.

Japanese akoya cultured pearls are in great demand, especially larger sizes from 8-10mm. These sizes are very scarce but I did see some excellent quality strands in this size range. Small sizes of 5mm- 6mm are not being cultured by the Japanese and, as a result, these sizes are only available in Chinese akoya cultured pearls or Chinese freshwater cultured pearls. Most dealers are not stocking very many Japanese cultured pearls of high quality. Production is down and this does not portend well for the Japanese pearl industry. I did see a few scarce, excellent quality Japanese akoya cultured strands of 7x7.5mm, 8x8.5mm and 8.5x9mm. Range in sizes of Japanese akoya cultured pearls are as follows:

White Japanese Akoya Cultured Pearls **

7x7.5mm	\$900 - \$1,200
7.5x8mm	\$1,200 - \$1,600
8x8.5mm	\$3,500
8.5x9mm	\$4,000 - \$5,000
9x9.5mm	\$6,670 - \$7,000
9.5x10mm	\$9,000 - \$11,000

** These strands are A-quality and 16-inch lengths

Last year, we saw absolutely beautiful round, natural color, high luster, clean, matched, Chinese freshwater, tissue-nucleated cultivated pearls. This year we saw more of these pearls with the same high quality. The rarity of these CFWCPs puts them in a special niche. The growth factor is 3-10 years in the water.

Apropos to the round CFWCPs, the Chinese are trying to cultivate a round, bead-nucleated CFWCP for commercial production. Estimated time is 3-7 years for production. Problems exist, with a high mollusk mortality rate and a higher proportion of pearls with "tails", and there will be even greater efforts to succeed. We have seen

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Tucson Show" from page 15

these particular strands last year and again this year at the show. In fact, these baroque strands have been nucleated with a Chinese freshwater cultivated pearl. Baroque strands like these were often 10x12mm, priced at \$500.

CFWCPs Tissue Nucleated

10x11mm – peach/pink	\$2,200
10.8x9.8mm – orange	\$2,800
10.8x9.8mm – lavender rose	\$3,200
10.75x9.75mm – multi-pastels	\$6,600
10x11mm – yellow metallic	\$5,800
10.8x9.8mm – peacock metallic	\$18,000
11x12mm – multi-pastel	\$28,000

The keshi baroque CFWCPs were outstanding! These free-form baroque shapes exhibit so much orient that they are a delight to behold.

The term "keshi" has been popularized to refer to a CFWCP of baroque shape. I use the word "keshi" in this report as a generic term. The range of sizes and prices of keshi CFWCPs is as follows:

Keshi CFWCPs

9x10mm – silver blue	\$135
10x10.5mm – multi-pastel	\$375
10x12mm – multi-color	\$160
12mm – white double petal	\$280
12.5x16.5mm – multi-pastel	\$1,540
10x30mm – very light pastel, double keshi	\$250
12x26mm – multi-color	\$850
14.5x15.5mm – multi-color	\$175

A note about luster. We have been seeing high luster for quite awhile and as it gets even higher, there is mounting speculation concerning the treatment. China does not disclose treatments, so it is a guessing game. Everyone has their own idea. Only time will tell. It is

Fred Ward's opinion that, "almost all cultured pearls are treated."

As we know, the Pearl Ministry in French Polynesia has curbed the exportation of low quality and heavily blemished pearls with nacre thickness of less than 0.8mm. They appear to be succeeding, as I have not seen any of these pearls at the show this year.

There were "show specials" with low pricing and decent quality. Pricing of quality Tahitian pearls is stable and business appeared brisk. Pricing for low-end goods appears to be the same as last year. Mid and high-end are somewhat pricier than last year. High-end is always top dollar. It was hard to discern what was new inventory versus old inventory in terms of pricing, but the goods looked excellent.

It seems that there were fewer baroque strands. There were many more black and gray mixture strands. The aubergine and pistachio-colored Tahitian pearls were a bit flat in color and in short supply, as has been the case for the past several years. Speculatively, this may be due to mineral changes in the water.

A new trend has come about in the last year or so, using a mixture of different pearls of origin in one necklace. The pearls used are: black South Sea cultured pearls, white South Sea cultured pearls, golden South Sea cultured pearls and CFWCPs. Range of price and size is as follows:

Tahitian Round Cultured South Sea, multi-origins

9x11mm – Bk SSP, golden SSP, white SSP, rosé CFWCP	\$8,100
10x12mm – Bk SSP, white SSP, golden SSP, peach/purple CFWCP	\$5,000 – \$9,000
14.4x12mm – white SSP, golden SSP	\$7,500
16.3x13mm – Bk SSP, golden SSP, white CFWCP	\$18,750

Tahitian South Sea Cultured Baroque

10x12mm – pistachio	\$1,600
9x11mm – black, green overtone	\$1,045
15x16.5mm – black, mixed grays	\$5,200

Tahitian South Sea Cultured Rounds

8x9mm – multi-color	\$1,357
8x10mm – black, pistachio green	\$4,000
8x11.5mm – black	\$1,200
9.9x11.8mm – black, green overtone	\$4,000
10.8x11.5mm – mixed grays	\$1,200
10x12.5mm – black, green overtone	\$5,200
10x15mm – black, blue overtone	\$12,000
11x12mm – black, green overtone	\$6,000
14x11mm – black, bluish green	\$9,750
14x12mm – black, green overtone	\$12,000
15x17.5mm – black, green overtone	\$25,000
17.8x15.5mm – black	\$21,000

White South Sea cultured pearls, almost indistinguishable from Japanese akoya cultivated pearls or high-end CFWCPs, were seen in sizes from 7-8mm. They are very round, high luster, clean, white rosé, well matched and priced from \$1,470. This is favorable pricing. Vendors should educate the buyer in order to avoid confusion as to the origin of these strands.

Last year, some farms cultivated 6-8mm pearls with the purpose of hastening production of a larger second harvest. This second harvest allows a lengthier cultivation period resulting in 9-14mm pearls.

As was the case last year, demand was high for large South Sea cultured baroque pearls. The market for South Sea round pearls was not as fast-moving. Range of size

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and prices for South Sea round cultured pearls is as follows:

**White South Sea
Cultured Pearls**

9x10.3mm	\$3,500
10x11.3mm	\$7,000
11.1x15mm	\$5,000
12x13mm	\$12,600
12.6x19.1mm	\$9,000
13.1x12mm	\$11,200
13.4x10mm	\$15,000
14.8x12mm	\$20,250
14x17.7mm	\$25,725
17.25x15.95mm	\$82,500

**White South Sea
Cultured Baroque**

12x16mm	\$2,000
11.2x15.8mm	\$2,100
11.12x15.8mm	\$1,092
12x17mm	\$7,350
13.2x7.3mm	\$8,750
14.1x19mm	\$17,500
15.9x10.8mm	\$4,500
15.4x13.4mm	\$12,750
19x15mm	\$21,000
16x21mm	\$63,000

The information in this report is intended to provide a cross-section of what is available in the current pearl market at the wholesale level. The tables listing sizes and pricing are not intended for grading purposes.

My sincere thanks to the members of our pearl group: Fuji Voll; Sara Canizarro; Renee Newman; Gina Latendresse; Philip Schneider; Lois Berger; Fred Ward; Gary Roskin; Eve and Maurice Alfillé; Betty Sue King; Stewart Robertson; Bo Torrey; Sara Beth Koethe; K.C. Bell; Elisabeth Strack; Wendy Glover; Alyson and Thomas Wooldridge; and Ron Greenidge.

My special thanks to the dealers who were so very helpful: American Pearl Company; A&Z Pearls, Inc.; King's Ransom; Sea Hunt; Pacific Pearls; Tara & Sons, Inc.;

Freeman Gem Company; Otimo International; Shogun Trading Company; King Plutarco, Inc.; Adachi American Corp.; Frank Mastoloni & Sons, Inc.; Imperial-Delta, Inc.; DSL Pearl, Inc.; ALSOL Gems, Inc.;

Provockative Gems, Inc.; Emiko Pearls International; and, B&A Trading Company. At this year's Tucson Show we experienced brisk business, shining pearls and great camaraderie. ♦



The Pearl Group: (from left, back row) Fuji Voll; K.C. Bell; Bo Torrey; Renee Newman; Thomas and Alyson Wooldridge; (middle row) Ron Greenidge; Eve Alfillé; Sara Canizarro; Elisabeth Strack; Philip Schneider; Gina Latendresse; Lois Berger; (in front) Maurice Alfillé; Wendy Glover. Missing from photo: Fred Ward (who was shooting this picture); Gary Roskin; Betty Sue King; Stewart Robertson; and Sara Beth Koethe. Photo © Fred Ward 2006.

ABOUT LOIS BERGER

If you don't know this diminutive dynamo (at the farthest right in the photo above), you sure ought to. She takes it upon herself at each annual Tucson Gem Show to wear tracks in the carpet of, primarily, the AGTA Show in the Tucson Convention Center, bouncing from pearl dealer to pearl dealer and absorbing a wealth of detail about their offerings... in addition to leading a group on Friday mornings to selected venues of interest. Then she comes back to her home in Maryland to prepare detailed reports such as you see above. This is a "labor of love" for Lois: she doesn't get paid one sou. And you and I are the beneficiaries of this drudgery. Me, because I get to publish her findings (thereby looking relatively atop pearl matters). And you, because you get to see an in-focus snapshot of what is meeting the public taste at the early, active, loose pearl and pearl jewelry show in the United States. Bye the bye, the name "Lois" means "responsible" and "highly moral." And it certainly fits. We salute her industriousness and responsible reporting.

The Editor

OVERHEARD AT TUCSON AGTA

AMERICAN PEARL COMPANY

Gina Latendresse

What's new and different? Quahog pearls, for one. [Ed: She points to several purplish pearls which are grouped together in the display case. If you're curious about this type of pearl, quahog is defined as:

quahog | kwô hôg; - hâg; kw -; k -| (also quahaug) noun a large, rounded edible clam of the Atlantic coast of North America. Also called hard clam, hard-shell clam. • Venus mercenaria, family Veneridae. ORIGIN mid 18th cent.: from Narragansett poquaôhock. [from The Oxford American Dictionary]

These come from New England, and are practically so new and rare that nobody knows much about them. People are waiting to see how they'll be priced. Some are on tour right now, and I've heard that they should be coming up for auction next year or the year after. Everyone's waiting for these auctions to set the price parameters. There are a few here in our display case, and only one is available... at a price set by the owner at \$22,000. There seems to be a lot of interest in these, particularly by New England media. Antoinette Matlins seems to be the "point man" on these pearls, obtaining certification and other relevant information on them. Right now demand seems to be just looking at them and seeing them; nobody wants to sell them.

We also have a good collection of melo and conch pearls, too, which always arouse a great deal of interest in Tucson because they're such unique types of pearls. We are known for specializing in natural pearls from the Mississippi River and its tributaries, and have a huge collection of these in different sizes, ranging in price from \$100 per carat, up to thousands. Our premier specimen is 68mm and weighs 89 carats... from Dad's collection gathered over some 50 years, it's the largest winged pearl ever found, and is probably 70-100 years old. And no, Bo, it's not for sale at any price!

To give the consumer a slightly better understanding of the value of natural pearls compared to cultured pearls, let me give you an example. Don't take this literally, and perhaps it's slightly embellished, but it should serve to show the difference between two rather similar sizes. The 9mm cultured pearl will fetch approximately \$500. An 8.5mm natural pearl will go for about \$9,000.

SEA HUNT PEARLS

Jack Lynch

New this year are giant coin pearls... some of the biggest I've ever seen. Some of them are very nice quality, some here a little rougher, but huge: they're 20-25mm. The reason the Chinese are really producing these is because they eventually want to get the big keshi, because that's the by product of the coin. They take the coin out where the pocket was, they put the shell back in the water and hope to get nice big flower petal keshis. So that's why they're doing these really big coins.

I also have had really beautiful tiles, and really nice pairs for earrings... some of the nicest quality. If you look at them, they're really smooth-skinned. And that's a very good item for me. I had a very hard time this year finding very large goods, anything over 11mm was not to be found as it was in the past. But the quality of these sizes 11mm and below is so greatly improving every year.

Look at some of the whites down here, the luster and the color... an akoya-like orient on some of them. There are no large sizes available now due to the cycle we're in. The lesson for me is that if we see big, beautiful goods, we'd better buy them right away as it's going to be feast or famine with goods like these.

Also the same for the very tiny, what used to be called seed pearls. But they're not seed pearls. They're actually probably bits of mantle tissue that were scattered around in the mussel. Some are very round, and these are \$50 a strand. Some, less round but still very nice, are \$25. They must have been saving these for years, because I really haven't seen them before last year, the first time I had them.

The other things that are doing really well are my strands of mixed colors, mixing freshwaters with Indonesian and Tahitian pearls. Last year I called them "eye candy." They've gotten a very big response at the show here. People are getting used to mixing Freshwater with South Sea. It used to be a blasphemous thing to do in most peoples' eyes. But folks are getting used to it because the quality of the Freshwater is so nice. The size range of these strands is basically controlled by the sizes of the CFWCPs in them, most under 11mm but a few over 12mm.

Tahitian multicolors are very strong for me because, as you can see, the colors that are put together

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"Tucson Show" from page 18

are very vibrant. With Tahitian goods, it's getting very hard to find anything over 12mm. Why? Because the Tahitians are getting very good in producing those in that smaller size range, and because they're having a good success rate with under 12mm, they're not even trying to produce bigger pearls. There just none to be had. Big drops are impossible to find.

Want to see something nice? Look at this opera length strand we have, black and lustrous. Just what you need for Eve, Maurice!

KING'S RANSOM

Betty Sue King (aka "Pearl Goddess")

This year we have lots of lovely pastels, evenly hued. In this world-pearl necklace, the white pearls in the strand bring out the colors of the golden Philippines, the Tahitian blues and pistachios plus the freshwaters' pink-peach pastels. This one, 9-11mm, seventeen inches long, is \$8,100. The luster, shape and finish can only be termed superb.

We also have lovely double keshis. For you career girls, this exquisite example is 18-1/2 inches long and is priced at \$1,540.

There's really nothing that's not selling well, especially all of the colors, whether naturally colored or dyed. The luster is what gets you.

Our new collection... each one is a miracle in itself. Not a single SSP in the group... all freshwater. This: "an untoasted marshmallow." As for loose pearls, here's an 8-way roller, 13mm, natural color: \$3,800. Very exceptional.

**EMIKO PEARLS INTERNATIONAL
RON GREENIDGE**

Many at the Emiko stop were curious about the brown Tahitian pearls that Ron Greenidge was displaying. We've covered this product in a previous issue, but Ron's explanation was enlightening, as he held up some samples and talked about how they became the way they were.

These come about via a two step process: (1) removing color and (2) the color is then stabilized by means of hand polishing. It's normal for Tahitian pearls to lose a certain amount of color saturation over a period of time... normally about 5%-to-8%.

Once stabilized, they won't lose any more color, and will stay the same.

You need to start with a really nice Tahitian pearl. Its body color has to be either dark or black, with a green or aubergine secondary color. It also has to be lustrous... because anytime you process a pearl, you lose a certain amount of luster. With our process, this loss can be up to about 15% or less of the luster; so when you have a brown pearl with good to strong luster like this one, you can assume that the luster was even brighter than what you see now. You have to start with a pearl with very strong luster, and a fine color. And that's that story.

Can you influence the eventual coloration in any way, shape or form? No. The color of a Tahitian pearl is influenced by its natural color bodies which absorb light and produce the effect one sees... usually black or brown body color. What we're doing is removing some of the black. However, sometimes you don't know how strong the secondary color is, or how much brown is in there versus black. So it's kind of "throw it in the air and see what happens."

You still have to match, though, and matching actually becomes more difficult. Say you go to an auction and buy 500 black/aubergine pearls, and then you process them. And maybe only 300 will come out in various shades of brown.

There are other pearls out there in the market that are brown. But, unlike our process, the color they derive often entails dyeing, adding color or irradiating. But the end result all too often is that color spots are visible, or many of them have a look on their skin like the crinkled texture of an orange, or even what is called "spider webbing" in the industry.

**FREEMAN GEM COMPANY
MARC FREEMAN**

The group next gaily trooped to Marc Freeman's booth to see what he had on hand, and Marc waxed eloquently about his product he calls "PurePearl", or sometimes "All Nacre Pearl." We have covered this matter in a previous issue, but in case you missed it, here is a brief article entitled "Nuclear Deterrence" by Gary Roskin from the January issue of JCK which provides some background information to augment Marc's dissertation to the assembled crowd:

PEARL TERMINOLOGY GENERATES CONTROVERSY

Marc Freeman, of Freeman Gem and Pearl in Los Angeles,
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believes the term "nucleated"--- as in "mantle tissue-nucleated"--- when used to describe Chinese freshwater cultured pearls is a misnomer.

First, some background: In creating bead-nucleated pearls, producers use a small piece of tissue from the oyster's mantle alongside a mother-of-pearl bead to stimulate the growth of nacre. The bead becomes the nucleus, hence the term "bead-nucleated."

But in creating a CFWCP, only a 1 mm x 1 mm piece of mantle tissue--- no head--- is implanted in the mussel. According to Dr. Lore Kiefert, Director of the American Gem Trade Association Gem Testing Center laboratory, the implanted mantle tissue determines the growth of the pearl. But that tissue dissolves and becomes the pearl sac, not a nucleus. "In the case of a headless cultured pearl, [the pearl forms] around a tiny hollow," Kiefert says.

Thus, Freeman argues that CFWCPs should be described as "tissue-activated," not "tissue-nucleated." The AGTA Gem Testing Center laboratory has re-examined the issue and concluded that Freeman's CFWCPs, although they still will be labeled "tissue-nucleated," deserve all additional comment: "Radiograph shows approximately 100 percent nacre thickness, no bead present."

"We do not have such a comment on a natural pearl report," says Kiefert. "It is understood that a natural pearl is made of 100 percent nacre and does not need an extra explanation."

Underlying the issue of terminology is the issue of pricing. Natural pearls--- generated from an irritant, yet not considered nucleated--- can be worth millions of dollars, based on beauty and rarity. Meanwhile, producers of fine-quality CFWCPs may have to defend the four- and five-figure prices they charge.

Figuring a price range on natural pearls requires looking at the auction market. Gail Levine at AMR

(Auction Market Resource), for example, notes that a single-strand Edwardian necklace with a 7mm center pearl brought \$14,100, and another Edwardian necklace strung with larger, more rounded pearls and a 10mm center pearl, sold for \$84,000.

Gary Schuler, Senior Vice President, Director of Jewelry, Sotheby's New York, says the better natural strands average around \$80,000 to \$90,000. "Of course, there were two very major strands that sold for over a million dollars each," he adds. These sold at Christie's, one in London, one in Geneva. "They were important sizes, probably 10 to 12 mm," notes Schuler.

Compared with those kinds of prices, Chinese freshwaters of the highest quality might be considered a bargain, costing a retailer between \$800 and \$1,000 per strand for the smaller sizes (8mm to 10mm), and generally from \$5,000 to \$40,000 per strand for the larger pearls (10+ mm to 15mm).

[Ed: Marc begins his briefing here]

What I have here are 7mm to 9.5mm or 10mm clean white goods, ranging approximately from \$3,000 to \$5,000. I call them "PurePearl"... or sometimes "All Nacre Pearl."

This one is a fine 9.6mm-to-9.9mm round, AAA sample. Our new AGTA cert here [he points to a copy of the certification document from AGTA standing in a plastic holder on the counter] states "100% nacre, mantle-tissue nucleated."

I feel that this confuses people; they think there's some residual matter at the center of the pearl. That's why I'm trying to get them to use the term "activated" rather than "nucleated."

We've sold two superb white strands at the show, at \$8,500 each. They are very rare these days. If I received an order for a dozen strands like those, I couldn't put it together. The three strands I got last year were the result of har-

vests from 1,400 ponds.

The problem is that these days, in China, groundwater pollution is proliferating, as pearl farmers can readily attest to this growing problem.

Producers can no longer leave their shells in their water as long as in the past... the mussels can't survive over 3-to-5 years maximum. Progress-- such as factories, roads and housing-- is affecting the pearl farms.

Years ago there were mud roads, then they became gravel, then asphalt. Now they're four-lane thoroughfares with houses in the middle of nowhere, luxury residences for the producers and factory owners as well as an expansion of lower grade housing for the factory workers in nearby villages. It's just plain impossible to keep the infrastructure clean

Fifteen millimeter big pearls? There are very few available in respectable quality, nor can one expect there to be any increase in availability. Actually, large sizes are diminishing.

The term "PurePearl" is very descriptive, and very easily understood by the consumer. And it's a term the retailer is grabbing on to. "All Nacre Pearl" is probably even easier to comprehend.

As to the quantity of pearls coming out of China these days, here are some round figures to give you an idea. There are in excess of 100,000 farms today, ranging in size from a half acre to 20 acres or more... this, a number put forward by a number of brokers, as there are no official government figures. Each of these hundreds of thousands of acres can support thousands of shells per acre. If there are two to twenty mantle tissue implants per shell (the mantle tissues now being much smaller than before, about one millimeter in size, whereas they used to be three), you can visualize the vast quantities of CFWCPs coming out of China. ♦

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ing. He said he was "lucky to get off" and grab his rifle as the expensive machine was lost. "Someday we won't have any snow," he said. "We won't be Eskimos."

In Resolute Bay, Inuit people insisted that the dark arctic night was lighter. Wayne Davidson, a longtime weather station operator, finally figured out that a warmer layer of air was reflecting light from the sun over the horizon. "It's getting very strange up here," he said. "There's more warm air, more massive and more uniform."

Villagers say the shrinking ice floes mean they see hungry polar bears more frequently. In the Hudson Bay village of Ivujivik, Lydia Angyiou, a slight woman of 41, was walking in front of her 7-year-old boy last month when she turned to see a polar bear stalking the child. To save him, she charged with her fists into the 700-pound bear, which slapped her twice to the ground before a hunter shot it, according to the *Nunatsiak News*.

In the Russian northernmost territory of Chukotka, the Inuit have drilled wells for water because there is so little snow to melt.

Reykjavik, Iceland, had its warmest February in 41 years. In Alaska, water normally sealed by ice is now open, brewing winter storms that lash coastal and river villages. Federal officials say two dozen native villages are threatened. In Pangnirtung, residents were startled by thunder, rain showers and a temperature of 48 degrees in February, a time when their world normally is locked and silent at minus-20 degrees.

"We were just standing around in our shorts, stunned and amazed, trying to make sense of it," said one resident, Donald Mearns.

"These are things that all of our old oral history has never mentioned," said Enosik Nashalik, 87, the eldest of male elders in this Inuit village. "We cannot pass on our traditional knowledge, because it is no longer reliable. Before, I could

look at cloud patterns or the wind, or even what stars are twinkling, and predict the weather. Now, everything is changed."

The Inuit alarms, once passed off as odd stories, are earning confirmation from science.

Canada's federal weather service said this month that the country had experienced its warmest winter since measurements began in 1948. Nationwide, average temperatures this winter were 7 degrees above normal. Some of the larger temperature increases were in the arctic north.

"That is entirely consistent with the long-range forecasts that indicate the effects of global warming will be most felt in the north," said Douglas Bancroft, Director of Oceanography and Climate Science for Canada's federal fisheries department.

"What we see is very clear. We are going to see a reduction in the overall arctic ice. It doesn't mean it goes away. But it brings profound changes," he said by telephone from Ottawa, the Canadian capital. "Weather will get stormier because the more open water you have, the easier it is for storms to brew up."

Bancroft said there would also be significant changes in the region's ecosystems.

"You have species that adapted over 40,000 years to a certain regime," he said. "Some will make it, and some won't."

Satellites at NASA have measured a meltdown of the ice sheets in Greenland and Antarctica in the past decade. With other NASA data, scientists in Boulder, Colo., say the retreat of the ice caps in 2006 may be as large as last year's, which they say was likely the biggest in a century. Earth's average surface temperatures last year tied those of 1998, the highest in more than a century, NASA says.

In this month's issue of the journal *Science*, a team of U.S. and Canadian researchers said the Bering Sea was warming so much it was experiencing "a change from arctic to subarctic conditions." Gray whales

are heading north and walrus are starving, adrift on ice floes in water too deep for feeding.

Warmer-water fish such as pollock and salmon are coming in, the researchers reported.

Off the coast of Nova Scotia, ice on Northumberland Strait was so thin and unstable this winter that thousands of gray seals crawled on unaccustomed islands to give birth. Storms and high tides washed 1,500 newborn seal pups out to sea, said Jerry Conway, a marine mammal expert for the federal fisheries department in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia.

"We are seeing dramatic changes in the weather systems," Conway said. "To be honest, we don't really understand what are the potential impacts. If you look back in history, there have been warming periods that have gotten back to normal. But we don't know if that will happen this time."

Metuq, the hunter, fears the worst. "The world is slowly disintegrating," he said, inside his heated house in Pangnirtung, a community of 1,200 perched on a dramatic union of mountain and fjord on Baffin Island. Seal skins stretched on canvas dried outside his home. The town remained treacherous. Rain in February had frozen solid, and there had been almost no snow to cover it.

"They call it climate change," he said. "But we just call it breaking up."

The troubles for the Inuit are ominous for everyone, says Sheila Watt-Cloutier, head of the International Circumpolar Conference, an organization for the 155,000 Inuit worldwide.

"People have become disconnected from their environment. But the Inuit have remained through this whole dilemma, remained extremely connected to its environment and wildlife," she said.

"They are the early warning. They see what's happening to the planet, and give the message to the rest of the world."

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In yet another article, this one from *The Observer* two years ago, we are told of even more dire consequences: potential rioting and nuclear war, Britain becoming "Siberian" in 20 years, and this threat to the world being greater than terrorism.

We do not intend to be alarmist, but of all the people in the world, pearl producers ought to be concerned because they make their livelihoods on and near the water.

And others in the pearl chain ought to take note, too. For where will we all be if we all, ostrich-like, do nothing?

Climate change over the next 20 years could result in a global catastrophe costing millions of lives in wars and natural disasters..

A secret report, suppressed by U.S. defense chiefs and obtained by *The Observer*, warns that major European cities will be sunk beneath rising seas as Britain is plunged into a 'Siberian' climate by 2020. Nuclear conflict, mega-droughts, famine and widespread rioting will erupt across the world.

The document predicts that abrupt climate change could bring the planet to the edge of anarchy as countries develop a nuclear threat to defend and secure dwindling food, water and energy supplies. The threat to global stability vastly eclipses that of terrorism, say the few experts privy to its contents.

'Disruption and conflict will be endemic features of life,' concludes the Pentagon analysis. 'Once again, warfare would define human life.'

Senior climatologists, however, believe that their verdicts should help convince the United States to sign up to global treaties to reduce the rate of climatic change. Sources have told *The Observer* that American officials appeared extremely sensitive about the issue when faced with complaints that America's public stance appeared increasingly out of touch.

It is wisely felt that the planet is already bearing a higher population than it can sustain. By 2020

'catastrophic' shortages of water and energy supply will become increasingly harder to overcome, plunging the planet into war.

The authors warn that 8,200 years ago climatic conditions brought widespread crop failure, famine, disease and mass migration of populations that could soon be repeated... and that the potential ramifications of rapid climate change would create global chaos.

"This is depressing stuff," one said. "It is a national security threat that is unique because there is no enemy to point your guns at and we have no control over the threat."

He added that it was already possibly too late to prevent a disaster happening. "We don't know exactly where we are in the process. It could start tomorrow and we would not know for another five years," he said. "The consequences for some nations of the climate change are unbelievable. It seems obvious that cutting the use of fossil fuels would be worthwhile."

The suppression of this report is a further instance of the White House trying to bury evidence of climate change. 'It is yet another example of why this government should stop burying its head in the sand on this issue,' adding that the current administration's close links to high-powered energy and oil companies was vital in understanding why climate change was received sceptically in the Oval Office.

"This administration is ignoring the evidence in order to placate a handful of large energy and oil companies,' he added.

To sum up scientific facts:

- Temperatures have been steadily rising over the past decade. Nine of the 10 warmest years on record have occurred since 1995. A university study predicted the Earth's temperatures will rise by at least 4 degrees by 2100, which would be comparable to conditions 130,000 years ago, when the ice sheets melted.

Even a 1-degree rise in temperature is significant on a global scale. Such changes are usu-

ally measured in fractions of a degree.

"The Arctic is already warming much faster than we thought it would," an expert has said. "To think we're not going to get 4 to 5 degrees warmer in another 50 years is wishful thinking."

- Sea levels are rising more rapidly, in part due to thermal expansion of the ocean waters caused by the worldwide rise in temperatures, another said. That expansion didn't occur 130,000 years ago because the warming was more localized.

Rising sea levels are destabilizing ice shelves in Antarctica which are already weakened by warmer temperatures. Ice sheets are breaking off into the ocean, raising water levels like ice cubes in a glass of water.

By the end of this century, sea levels could rise 3 to 4 feet; if current warming trends continue, "we're committed to 4 to 6 meters (13 to 20 feet) in the future," the climatologist concluded.

There are those who believe this is all hogwash. From a recent letter in our local newspaper:

"There is no such thing as 'global warming.' The entire premise for this skewed theory is based on a cruel hoax, a monstrous fraud and a damnable lie. The aggregate mean temperature of the planet has actually fallen by 1° C since about 1860. This is not a warming trend; this is a cooling trend. There is no such thing as a 'runaway train of global warming.' It does not exist."

Ed: please note that the writer of this drivel lives in the mountainous north part of Arizona, hundreds of miles from the ocean, and safely removed from any 20-foot rise in sea levels.

Many pearlers do not.

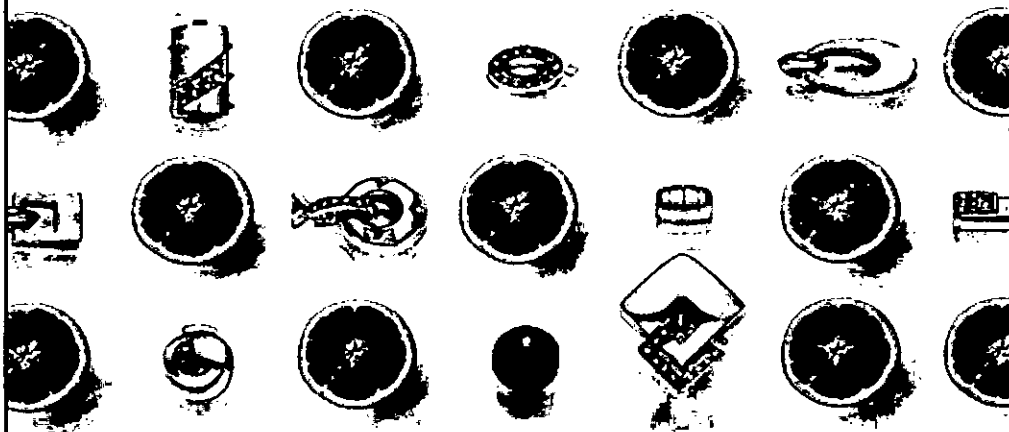
Sources: *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, *The Observer*, *The Arizona Republic*.

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