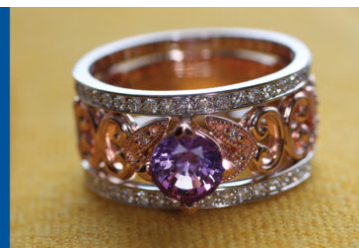


Meet Michael Nashef: The 2020 March Bridal Madness Champion

MARCH
Bridal
MADNESS

2020 WINNER:
MICHAEL NASHEF



The 2020 March Bridal Madness Champion is Michael Nashef, owner of [Intersecting Hearts](#) in Portage, Michigan



Michael, Congratulations on your well-earned title of 2020 March Bridal Madness

Champion. Can you tell us a little about yourself?

I discovered design as a teenager, learning about leatherwork with my brother when I was 14. As I got older I began creating woodwork and jewelry. In 2006 I became the first graduate with a BFA of the Metal/Jewelry design program at Kendall College of Art and Design in Grand Rapids, Michigan, later getting an MFA in Jewelry Design at Bowling Green State University in Ohio. I always love to incorporate elements of travel, nature, and architecture into my work, creating one-of-a-kind pieces with gold, silver, and unique gemstones.

What's the story behind your store's clever name?

When I was researching symbols of love when I was gearing up to propose to my wife, I kept seeing the same motif: the heart shape. The concept of Intersecting Hearts was born from that idea of two overlapping hearts because to me, that creates a symbolism of the harmonies two people bring to a relationship. Just like my wife and I, every couple has their own story, and I wanted to be able to represent that with a unique, simple design.

What's the story behind your winning design?

For this specific ring, my customer wanted to use a genuine purple sapphire, which I purchased from Stuller, and wanted to have a wide band. So I took one of my designs, [Deco](#), and put two bands with diamonds on each side to make it wider.

Where did you find inspiration for this design?

This is an Art Deco-inspired ring, with the *Intersecting Hearts* symbol nestled between the scrollwork containing small side diamonds.



Can you tell us all about your creative design process?

I always love to incorporate elements of travel, nature, and architecture into my work, creating one-of-a-kind pieces with gold, silver, and unique gemstones. This piece fell right within that wheelhouse.

Throughout your career, what's something that sticks out as a high point?

Creating my MFA thesis work, which can be seen on my [website](#).

What impact has custom design software had on your business?

It has a tremendous impact on my career and business. Using software, specifically Matrix 9.0, allowed me to bring my design to life without incurring big expenses in production. It allowed me to showcase designs to customers and bring their designs and ideas to life without the labor-intensive of wax carving and manufacturing, until the customer is ready to move forward after seeing the renders.

How did you come to learn about and use Stuller as a resource in your business?

As a person who started as a bench jeweler, Stuller is one of the most essential companies to have an account/business with because they have everything under one roof, including all of the knowledge everyone has!

Outside of work, what are your interests and hobbies?

I love woodworking, gardening, and creating birthday cakes for my daughter!



Another huge Congrats to Michael and a huge thank you to everyone who participated in this year's challenge!