



Experience African Gemstones

NISHAN COLLECTIVE:

African Gems through Art

www.nishancollective.com



Curated by YIDIDIYA DAMTEW

ABOUT

Nishan Collective

Nishan Collective is a curatorial platform for fine jewelry, ethical gems and decorative arts celebrating East African heritage and global craftsmanship. Through storytelling, exhibitions, ethical sourcing and collaborations, we empower women, honor culture, and inspire through handcrafted beauty.

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Message from the Curator

YIDIDIYA DAMTEW

Our debut exhibition is a curatorial tribute to love, legacy, and the feminine spirit. Inspired by *Yekit*— an Ethiopian tradition of saving something precious for a loved one—this collection explores softness, strength, and romantic nostalgia through art.

Living in Florence for five months gave me the space to fall in love again—with myself, with craftsmanship, and with the deeper meaning of art. I left Ethiopia tired and searching. I returned inspired, full of tenderness, full of ideas. The long tradition of craftsmanship in Florence—visiting museums, speaking with world-renowned artisans and jewelry makers—awakened something in me. It reminded me that craft is not just technique; it is storytelling. It is a way of feeling, of dreaming, of offering solutions through beauty and intention.

This collection is the result of years of quiet admiration—of loving a sector from afar, observing, appreciating. But Florence taught me to be brave. To stop watching and start creating. Drawing inspiration from my business development background and what I learned in art management during my time in Florence, I began shaping a brand that serves as a creative and ethical bridge. It brings together my love for jewelry, gemstones, and decorative arts with a mission to spotlight Ethiopia's rich artistic resources and untold stories.

Message from the Curator

YIDIDIYA DAMTEW



With this collection, I also wish to extend a gentle call—to collaborate across borders. I hope to work hand in hand with Italian craftsmen, sourcing gemstones from Ethiopia and blending our traditions in a way that uplifts both. Through global craftsmanship and local heritage, I want to offer not only beauty, but a shared vision for ethical sourcing, cultural celebration, and economic empowerment.

Our work brings together Ethiopian cultural roots and the refined craft heritage I encountered in Florence. Both places, in their own way, hold a deep reverence for tradition, beauty, and meaning. And I believe there is so much we can learn from each other. Ethiopia is rich in talent and resources. When channeled thoughtfully, craft can become a vehicle for social empowerment and economic growth.

Through this collection, I wanted to reflect on my own journey. To give form to the opinions and dreams I had kept to myself for so long. To say thank you—to Florence, for helping me dare; to Ethiopia, for grounding me in culture; and to the feminine spirit, for carrying so much love in silence and strength.

The *Yekit* Collection is my love letter—to where I come from, to where I've been, and to where I hope we're going. It is an offering. It is love, in the form of craft.

Inspiration



National Palace Museum, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Nishan, traditionally, is a gesture of recognition, engraved in metal or woven into symbols to commemorate those who shape society through diplomacy, culture, and action.

At Nishan Collective, we translate that symbolic weight into physical form. Our curated designs echo the ceremonial quality of medals and emblems, reimagined through fabric, texture, and metalwork. Bold folds, intricate patterns, and central pendants mimic the language of honorifics—like a medal pinned over the heart, a gestures of recognition—for stories, for people, for presence.

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Signature Pieces (Brooch Series)



Our fabric curated creations are inspired by the essence of Nishan—a mark of honor and remembrance. Each piece combines vibrant textiles, traditional patterns, and handcrafted pendants to celebrate cultural legacy and personal story. These designs are more than accessories; they are soft sculptures of identity, resilience, and tribute.

The Loyal Thread



Deep navy fabric folds into a lush handwoven bow brooch, stitched in deep navy with glimmers of gold and silver and finished with a bronze floral emblem with gems at its heart. Understated, yet unmistakably elegant. It is a tribute to the one whose love is often felt more than heard. Inspired by the grace of fairytale heroines and the strength of matriarchs who pour endlessly into others, this piece honors silent resilience.

Love, Etched



A striking red bow, hand-stitched from traditional woven fabric, layered with mesmerizing geometric cross pattern in gold that whispers Ethiopian tradition, bursts against a black sash—a symbol of fierce love and unshakable spirit. Finished with a radiant bronze pendant cradling a glowing earth-toned opal, this piece is power wrapped in poetry. It honors the unsung givers in our lives—those who love in silent, steadfast ways. Wear it as a symbol of legacy and affection—a gift to another, or to your own heart, stitched in gratitude and reverence.

Whispers of Bloom



Soft ivory fabric meets a blooming flower rosette of green and gold stripes—tied gently at the hip, this sash feels like a page torn from a fairytale. The blooming flower dangles a crowned heart with floral bronze brooch that holds an amazonite gem, reminiscent of clear skies after a storm, sways from a crowned heart. Worn across the shoulder, it honors tradition while blooming into something timeless. A piece made to gift the nurturer, the anchor, the one who gives without asking.

Heartline



A bright blue sash crowned with a bow in bold fuchsia and gold—this piece is accented by a traditional Ethiopian motif in warm hues and a striking bronze cross medallion holding a black obsidian gem at the center. This sash speaks to the power of presence—of walking into a room with warmth, color, and quiet confidence. An ideal gift for someone whose spirit commands attention or a regal touch for your own celebration of self.

The Yekit Collection



Following the soft presence of our fabrics, these bronze and stone creations continue the language of love in solid form. From heart-bearing cups to spoon sets, each piece is designed as a sacred gesture—of giving, receiving, and remembering.

Noir Affection



Forged in the spirit of Yekit, these spoons are more than tools —they are small offerings of care. The black gem handles, dark as obsidian gleam with depth. A spoonful of gratitude, cradled in gems and bronze.

Earthbound



These round spoon sets are crowned with earth-toned opals—each one echoing the quiet dignity of the land and the hands that nourish it., these spoons are quiet tributes—crafted for those who serve love in everyday moments.

Blue Keepsake



Adorned with luminous amazonite stones, this set is a quiet ode to deep love and everyday grace. Each handle, shaped from the heart, honors our loved ones. Crafted as a keepsake, gifted like a medal—a Nishan of devotion.

Thrones of the Heart: Spoon Set



A trio forged in love and legacy. Each spoon tells a story: a winged heart for freedom in love, a crowned heart for tender devotion, and a royal crest for rooted strength. Adorned with gems of shadow, sea, and earth—they honor the unseen monarchs in our lives, and the thrones we build within.

Thrones of the Heart: Cup Set



Three vessels of love —

One wears a crowned heart, for quiet, unwavering devotion.

One cradles a winged heart, for the ones who set us free.

One holds a royal seal, for love that rules with grace.

Jewelry Collection



A love letter cast in metal and light — this set whispers of devotion, of hands that give without fanfare and hearts that carry generations. Inspired by Nishan's spirit of honoring the unseen, every curve and gem speaks of fairytale romance, ancestral strength, and the quiet magic of those we often forget to thank.

Everkind



Adorned with luminous stones, this set is a quiet ode to deep love and everyday grace. Each handle, shaped from the heart, honors our loved ones. Crafted as a keepsake, gifted like a medal—a Nishan of devotion.

Lionhearts



Forged in the spirit of guardianship and glory, this ring trio pays tribute to the strength worn quietly by men of vision. Together, they reflect a code of honor carried across generations. A timeless offering for the guardian, the leader, the protector.

Vivid Whispers



Each necklace a radiant celebration of nature's vibrant palette. These necklaces showcase opals in an array of captivating hues, each stone shimmering with a unique play of color. Crafted to capture light and imagination, they evoke a sense of wonder and elegance, making every piece a personal treasure. Perfect for those who cherish individuality and the magic of natural beauty.

Our Collaborators



- Abenezer zenebe - Gemstone miner and Cutter
- Denselgy Abera - Smithery and Jewelry maker
- Surafel Alebachew - Bronze Work
- Shewanesh GebreMariam - Gemstone Polisher
- Amran Wondowson - Fabric Designer

List of Ethiopian Opals

- Black opal
- Ethiopian Opal (Wello Opal)
- Fire opals
- White precious Opal
- Crystal opals
- Marquise
- Precious Fire Opal
- Shewa Or Mezezo Opal
- Trilliant Welo Ethiopian Opal Gemstone

A close-up photograph of a tray containing various gemstones and beads. The tray is divided into several compartments by light-colored, textured dividers. The compartments are filled with a variety of stones, including round beads in shades of light blue, green, and white, as well as larger, faceted stones in shades of green, purple, and brown. The background is a soft-focus field of many small, colorful beads.

Thank You