



Big sparklers

MEET the DESIGNER



Hobart jeweller Chris Hood, of Metal Urges, has been collecting pretty stones since he was a child

GEMSTONES are my lollies. I was always going to come into this but didn't know that until looking back.

Going through childhood boxes. I've found shiny stones in the bottom of all of them. I don't remember collecting them. Some of the stones I collected when I was as young as four.

Growing up I was always on tools and loved being in my dad's tool workshop. Going through school I was always said I am not going to sit behind a desk and finish a day's work without having something physical to show for it.

I opened Metal Urges in 2005. **I am nearly always dealing with happy people.** People mostly buy fine handmade jewellery for celebrating something happy. There is the odd piece of mourning jewellery.

I love the juggling act. I don't get to finish everything I start every day but I have to keep 10 balls in the air. I like that about a jeweller's world.

I'm inspired by doing things

at the highest possible level. I want to make something that exceeds expectations.

I have a large box of [gemstone] lollies waiting to be made up into designs. The stones influence the design styles. I have designs in my head I just have to find a customer to convince for that design.

My greatest success so far is to manage six staff. Doing the right thing and keeping everyone satisfied.

My biggest challenges is to keep up with demand, even slow demand.

My creative process is different for each client. It starts with matching stones up with clients. We don't make pieces unless we have a client in line. Inspiration is partly due to the stone and what the customer wants.

Every client is different. Some come in knowing exactly what they want – they are often the toughest – and others leave it to you.

Everything is handmade in-house. The studio, in that sense, is a very late 18th, early 19th-century workshop.

As told to MERYL NAIDOO

Metal Urges is upstairs at 105 Liverpool St.
metalurges.com.au