

ARTS • FASHION • HISTORY • PEOPLE

HINGHAM

SOPHISTICATED LIVING
ON THE SOUTH SHORE

M A G A Z I N E



NATURE'S JEWELS

A deep green gemstone, set in the center of an ornamental brooch, catches your eye. Held in place by four gold prongs, the stone is encircled by an ornate pattern of smaller diamonds, pearls and other gems set amid swirls of gold. But appearances can be deceiving.

The brooch is the work of Hingham artist Sarah Boynton, and, despite its rich design, it contains no actual gemstones at all. The winner of the 2016 Newport Flower Show's Botanical Arts Best in Show award, the piece was made entirely of natural materials. The swirling gold framework is made of raffia (a ribbon-like material made from strips of the raffia palm tree); eucalyptus and Andromeda pods were transformed into "diamonds"; and a variety of nuts, sanded until smooth, became the large gems and pearls.



Outside of the recognition she's received, Boynton is grateful for the ability her craft has given her to be present and see the world in detail. "It just makes you take time and smell the roses," she says. As a botanical artist, that expression is one that she takes very seriously. sarahboynton.net

— LANNAN M. O'BRIEN



A member of the Garden Club of Hingham, Boynton's passion for botanical arts began with an entry into the Newport Flower Show in 2011—a sparkling tiara, which earned her a blue ribbon. Since then, she has devoted much of her time to hunting for materials in the woods and harvesting her own, creating detailed designs and teaching others her techniques in classes throughout the country. "I love the challenge of finding something in nature to replicate a manmade product," she says.

Her materials are often preserved using silica gel (the packets you find in new purses and jackets) or by drying in the microwave. When asked if she ever wears her art, Boynton's answer is yes. In fact, she once garnered a few laughs when she wore a piece to a Christmas party, since everyone knew where the "jewels" came from.

