

LUXURY WITHOUT COMPROMISE

# Robb Report



## CAR OF THE YEAR

LAMBORGHINI DELIVERS AGAIN

FEBRUARY 2019

Geology's Gems

# FORCES OF NATURE

OFTEN COMPARED to fireworks or volcanoes, opals—with their flashing and kinetic play of colors—are having a moment. Just ask jewelry designer Katey Brunini, who lately has fallen under the iridescent gem's spell. "They are as electric as the earth and water they come from, almost alien in the rainbow of colors they exude," she says. "They're like lightning." It might sound a tad airy, but Brunini, who is constantly hunting for unique opal specimens, is on to something, especially when it comes to her designs featuring boulder matrix opals. They're a geologist's dream, glittering from within the rock formations in which they're discovered to offer a window into their very origins.

Those origins are plenty intriguing on their own. Most of the world's opals come from the dry and arid Australian outback, where the stones are formed deep within the ground from a mix of silicon dioxide and water. (As a result, they can contain as much as 20 percent water.) The darker its hue, the rarer and more prized the opal. Thus, black opals—like the ones Australian designer Margot McKinney sources for some of her dramatic pieces—are among the most valuable. Depending on whom you ask, they might even be considered invaluable. "They are magical stones," says McKinney, "a real force of nature." *Jill Newman*



Margot McKinney brings out the opal's inherent colors (\$58,500; Margot McKinney, [margotmckinney.com](http://margotmckinney.com)).



Katey Brunini's boulder opals pair brilliantly with pearls and other gems (\$37,700; [kbrunini.com](http://kbrunini.com)).

Sylva & Cie's opal ring is a graphic display of light and dark (\$18,375; Marissa Collections, [marissacollections.com](http://marissacollections.com)).

