

TOP AWARD FOR SOMERSET JEWELLER

A Somerset goldsmith and jeweller has beaten the UK's leading jewellers to win a top award in the industry's equivalent of the Oscars.

Erica Sharpe's success was in the annual Kayman Award organised by the British Jewellers' Association (BJA).

The award's theme this year was 'Party Pieces' and she designed a suite of jewellery for special birthdays.

Leading retail and manufacturing jewellers entered work but only 15 were selected for the final – and Erica, from Wedmore, took third place.

"The judges thought that Erica's entry was both a good design and commercially very sellable," said a BJA spokeswoman.

"They judged on the originality of design, imaginative use of stones, commercial viability and the quality of manufacturer."

Erica's designs were inspired by the 1940s painting *Broadway Boogie Woogie* by Dutch artist Mondrian.

It took her a month to complete the stunning necklace, bracelet and ring using white gold and 40 unusual gemstones in blue, purple, pink and pale blue which had to be specially cut so they all matched.

The jewellery is entitled 'Birthday Boogie Woogie' and has been designed to commemorate 16th, 18th, 21st or 40th birthdays.

"I set out to create pattern and movement through the use of colour in the gemstones", said Erica, a qualified gemologist. "I'm delighted to come third against stiff competition – I was the only independent designer and sole trader up against bigger retail and manufacturing jewellers."



Jeweller Erica Sharpe with her 'Birthday Boogie Woogie' gemstone necklace.



Jeweller and goldsmith Erica Sharpe at the annual Kayman Award ceremony in Birmingham with Geoff Field, executive chairman of the British Jewellers' Association.