Olertis Names ‘Firebird Phoenix’ Winning Design in U.S. High Jewelry Competition

AI, CAD, gemstone selection, charitable giving, and planned 2027 exhibitions shape the next stage of Olertis’ Firebird Phoenix project.



Estela Soler’s "Firebird Phoenix" winning necklace design concept, combining swan and peacock characteristics in a detailed flying-bird composition.

BOSTON, MA, UNITED STATES, September 19, 2026 / EINPresswire.com/ -- How Olertis Selected the Winning Jewelry Design

Estela Soler from Santa Ana, CA has won Olertis’ Nationwide Design Competition, and received a $5,000 award for her concept for a one-of-a-kind necklace called ‘Firebird Phoenix.’ It was selected from more than 350 entries.

Natalie Richard, designer and customer support manager at Olertis, described the selection process:
“Nearly 100 of the submissions were worthy of serious consideration, so our final decision went beyond visual appeal alone. We also needed to determine if each concept could potentially be developed into a high jewelry piece within the constraints of the competition. Because the Firebird Phoenix will be created as a custom-commissioned piece, we consulted with its future owner regarding the final decision. While many of the concepts were visually stunning, it was Estela's custom design that provided us with a unique combination of visual lightness and unusual asymmetry. Additionally, the Phoenix theme works particularly well with the fiery-colored gemstones selected for the piece.”

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>
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The design takes inspiration from a flying bird, combining visual characteristics of both a swan and a peacock. Instead of depicting the bird literally, Firebird Phoenix

creates movement throughout the necklace using an elongated, extremely detailed composition.

AI, CAD and Engineering in Custom Jewelry Design

Approximately 80% of the entrants used artificial intelligence tools. Other entrants made their designs using traditional drawing methods, 3D jewelry software and vector graphics. This range of approaches reflects a broader trend in the U.S. custom jewelry industry, where artificial intelligence is increasingly being discussed alongside techniques such as additive manufacturing and automation. The 2026 Jewelry Symposium in Metro Detroit featured industry programs on AI in jewelry design, additive manufacturing, metallurgy, responsible sourcing and process automation.

GIA's Jewelry Design & Technology program ties together modern jewelry design principles with CAD modeling, prototyping and manufacturing along with issues of scale, proportion, durability, comfort and manufacturability.

Ms. Soler created the original design concept for Firebird Phoenix, and Olertis' design and production team will transform her artistic vision into reality via 3D modeling, engineering and traditional jewelry craftsmanship.

The gemstones selected for this design will combine fine jewelry materials with laboratory-grown options. Given the significant value associated with natural rubies of the size envisioned, laboratory-grown rubies offer a more practical option while allowing the design to retain its intended scale, color, and visual impact within the project's economic parameters. Olertis plans to pair these lab-grown rubies with natural garnets, natural citrines, and natural F-color, VS-clarity diamonds. With this combination of natural and laboratory-grown gemstones, clear disclosure of gemstone origin is particularly relevant, consistent with Jewelers of America's emphasis on distinguishing between natural and laboratory-created gemstones for consumers.

The Firebird Phoenix reflects broader developments shaping contemporary custom jewelry design. The issue is especially timely in 2026 as the American jewelry trade discusses natural versus laboratory-grown gemstones, color and new technology in jewelry design. JCK's 2026 coverage has highlighted artificial intelligence, gold prices, natural and lab-grown diamonds, colored gemstones and versatility among the active topics shaping the jewelry trade.

A High Jewelry Project with a Charitable Purpose

All funds raised through the project will be donated to charity. Currently, Olertis is considering donating all proceeds to one of three organizations: Feeding America, Direct Relief or St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.
During production, Olertis will determine which organization will receive the proceeds and announce the decision publicly. If Olertis is unable to select a single recipient, the funds will be

divided evenly among all three organizations.
Olertis intends to display the completed piece at either a major U.S. jewelry industry event or art fair. Although no specific venue has been selected at this time, Olertis is considering displaying the finished piece at either JCK in Las Vegas (June 4-7, 2027, The Venetian Expo), COUTURE in Las Vegas (June 2-6, 2027, Wynn Las Vegas), or The Winter Show in New York (January 22-31, 2027).

Now that Estela Soler's winning design has entered the next stages of development, it will evolve from a competitive concept into an actual high jewelry creation through digital modeling, engineering, fabrication and handcraftsmanship while fulfilling its intended charitable purpose.

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