



Joan Tenenbaum



"The anthropologist's job is to live with the people, understand their culture, and interpret it to the world. Usually this is done through books, but I'm doing it through jewelry." Artist's statement.

After her doctoral studies in anthropology and linguistics during which time she lived in Alaska with the Athabaskan, Yup'ik and Inupiaq people, Tenenbaum returned to designing jewelry. She gives homage to these cultures through her distinctive jewelry.



Woman of the Sea Brooch
22K/Sterling bimetal, copper

The Spirit Helper Series

Inspired by small, ancient figurines they represent spiritual power and fertility.



Spirit Helper Earrings
Patinated Silver



Spirit Helper Earrings
(small) Silver, 14K



Spirit Helper Dinner Ring
Silver, 14K, fossil ivory



Left: Brooks Range Ring
Silver, fossil ivory

Right: "For Marr'aq" Ulu Brooch II
Silver, 14K, fossil ivory

The Ulu Series

Inspired by traditional knives, the ulu was the Inuit woman's most important tool.



Yup'ik Ulu Earrings Silver, 14K



Tanaina Ulu Earrings
Silver/22K Bi-metal



Man-Woman Hollow Bead Earrings
14K, silver

The Man-Woman Series

Smiling man and frowning woman represent the dual nature of reality.

Man-Woman Trillion Pillow Earrings
18K, patinated silver



Aleut Hunting Visor Brooch
Silver, antique trade beads, copper