

JEWELMER

# Perfect Pearl

What makes Jewelmer Joaillerie stand out from the crowd?

**SMITHA SADANANDAN** takes a look at this French-Filipino brand that specialises in Golden South Sea pearls with its precious approach to design.



Jewelmer's Tropics bangle bagged the 1st Runner-Up prize at the Couture Design Awards 2014.



Having successfully founded and pioneered a Black Tahitian pearl company, French pearl farmer Jacques Branellec sailed around the world for two years, seeking out adventures. He came to the Philippines and discovered that the waters were ideal to cultivate the most sensitive of South Sea pearl-bearing oyster *Pinctada maxima*. At that time, entrepreneur Manuel Cojuangco was considering an aquaculture venture in Palawan. The two met and realised their business and creative interests were much aligned. The duo inspected the site for the pearl farm in Palawan, drew up a business plan and set up Jewelmer in 1979. The company grew from strength-to-strength and transformed into Jewelmer Joaillerie with distinct designs, celebrating the radiance of Golden South Sea pearls and hinging on contemporary aesthetics.

“Golden pearls are the rarest of all South Sea pearl varieties produced in nature. It took our scientists around 10 years to perfect the art and science that has made Jewelmer one of the top three pearl-producing companies in the world today. Jewelmer is the only such company specialising in Golden South Sea pearls,” says Gaelle Branellec, creative designer. “It takes 377 individual steps to produce a single South Sea pearl—a testament to the diligence, patience, and dedication our farmers have devoted to the pearl.”

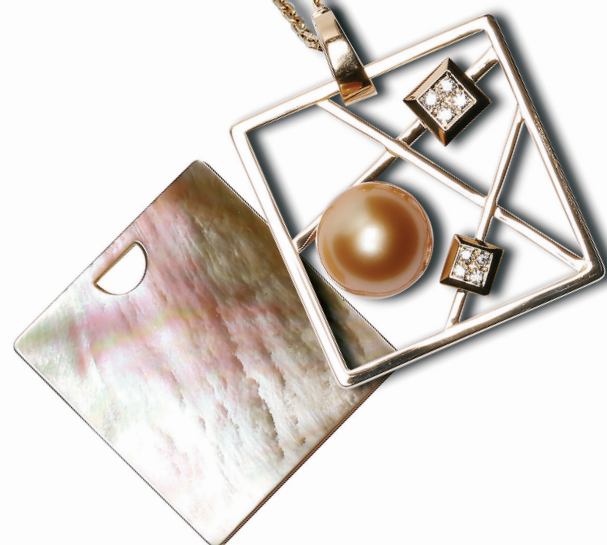
## LOUVRE

An expression of architecture's continuity, bright as the glass pyramids, reflecting light and colours from the sky. The Golden South Sea pearl becomes a work of art in a homage to artist I.M. Pei's architectural masterpiece. The collection combines European and Asian sensibilities to create an exhilarating symphony of pearls, gold, and brilliant stones. A perfect example of modernism at its most elegant.



The pieces, crafted in 18-karat yellow or white gold, are often accented with diamonds as seen in the Lautitia collection, featuring varied designs such as Pelagia (fish), Effloro (flowers) and Ostrea (representing the oyster shell). Sometimes, Jewelmer's designs are sprinkled with coloured gems as evidenced in the Lautitia jewels and C'est La Vie cuffs. Colourful swirls of the cuff bracelet evoke ripples created by a pearl dropping into the water; the colour palette for the C'est La Vie line is inspired by the works of Robert and Sonia Delaunay, French husband and wife duo, who along with others, founded the Orphism art movement, noted for its use of strong colours and abstract cubism.

Another eclectic collection, Madame de Pompadour, pays tribute to the French "understatement" born at the 18th century. "The aim was to highlight the extreme refinement of the society, art and creation that the period was famous for in the French artistic history. Madame de Pompadour was one of the most innovative



## WATCH ME

The pearl finds itself in an abstract design that uses architectural elements, thus creating a perfect balance between femininity and versatility.







## ILLUSION

It's a play of perception. Gold and brilliant diamonds are crafted in a manner to create volume, light and pattern. At the centre of this illusion is the Golden South Sea pearl, bright and tangible as ever.





## LINEA D'ORO

The graphic designs with a simple silhouette evoke a stroke of elegant calligraphy, or the bold, architectural line of a modern edifice – all of which highlight the sensuous curves of a pearl that stands out in stunning detail.



and entrepreneurial women of that period. She created the Royal Sevres Porcelain and many other fine manufacturers that promoted the French know-how all over Europe. As part of our inheritance of French culture, naming one of our collections as Madame de Pompadour was an evident choice,” adds the creative designer.

Digressing from the traditional route, Jeweler’s SS16 Illusion line plays upon the shapes and contrasts between the round pearls and square cubes. As light bounces off the cube faces, it recreates the glimmer of sunlight that shines on the water surface.

Meandering through contemporary territory, the Caravelles collection is a creative ode to Italian explorer Christopher Columbus and his fleet. Inspired by the three Caravelles that sailed out to discover the New World, the pearls of this collection are like the ships – Santa Maria, La Pinta and La Niña – following each other, linked by passion and the strong spirit of their creator.

References both big and small from the French capital have regularly inspired jewellers. Thus, Louvre plays muse for the brand’s aptly titled collection, Louvre: everything from the square base to the pointy top, and the view of the Louvre from above, blend harmoniously into wearable art, while architecture and graphics with simple, clean lines meld in precision to form the pieces for Linea d’Oro. The linear shape is accentuated by juxtaposing the gold elements with pearls to create a series of minimalist jewellery that is visually strong and captivating.

Flouting the conventions ascribed to traditional pearl jewellery, Jeweler makes a bold move and explores the graphic universe of the ’70s for its Watch Me collection. Drawing upon the hippie years

and Mondrian paintings, the design is both young and playful, successfully bridging the classic-contemporary gap in the pearl universe. “This is our attempt to show that pearl is a multi-generation gem, transcending age groups in their pleasure of wearing pearls,” explains Gaelle.

Which perhaps is the most complicated design that Jewelmer has worked on? “In all our creations, there is no complicated piece,” says Gaelle. Each piece of jewellery at Jewelmer is born from a challenge by surmounting numerous difficulties. “But when the piece of jewellery is born, everything is forgotten; what remains is our authentic desire to offer beauty and poetry,” she adds.

Apart from creating extraordinary pieces, Jewelmer is a brand with a conscience that keeps glowing. The brand’s concern for clean and green environment, and the livelihood of the pearl farmers is topmost on its mind. The Save the Palawan Seas Foundation (SPSF) was established in 2006 by Jewelmer to provide sustainable livelihood practices such as organic farming, tree planting and beekeeping for its partner communities. ■



## LAUTITIA

True to its meaning, Lautitia, meaning magnificence in Latin, keeps the pearl as the centrepiece of the design. The exquisite collection of cocktail rings evokes nature’s beauty – from the blossoms of Effloro to the magnificent oyster that bears the living gem in Ostrea to the vitality of the seas from the splendid Pelagia.

The collection is a testimony to the unparalleled craftsmanship and innovation that defines the brand.







## C'EST LA VIE

The unexpected mosaic of colourful, geometric harmony underscores the collection dotted with Golden South Sea pearls that are strategically placed in dramatic swirls of coloured gems.







## DOLCE ROSA

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Sparkling flowers and pearl blossoms radiate femininity. Each piece features petals with diamonds individually set by expert craftsmen.