

## Brazilian Jewel Makers Go to Past for Inspiration

Contributed by Geovana Pagel  
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In 2005, the Brazilian jewelry sector earned US\$ 100 million in exports of finished jewels. Little by little, Brazil has been gaining space in the segment's international market, which generates a turnover of US\$ 15 billion per year.

The Brazilian jewels, luxurious and rich in design, are already sold to more than 50 countries. The United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Saudi Arabia are amongst the main importers.

"I believe that the super affinity in trade (between Brazilians and Arabs) is influencing the style of some of the most important Brazilian manufacturers. The good news is that our production is becoming increasingly more beautiful," states the style consultant at the Brazilian Institute of Gems and Precious Metals (IBGM), Regina Machado.

According to Regina, the Brazilian market has shown sensibility to attract the interest of the Arab market. "This way, doors open in an irreversible transformation. We discover each other," she states.

According to the style consultant, who accompanies up close the tendencies and production of Brazilian jewelry, there is strong oriental and romantic influence in the latest collections launched by jewelers, especially those that sell to the external market.

"People have started to look for something different to the homogenization caused by globalization which leaves everything looking alike," she explains.

"That's why some jewelers are expressing an important tendency in the luxury consumption universe, which is to look for cultures distant from the great inspiration centers for their jewels and thus avoid predictability in their collections," she emphasizes.

According to Regina, the use of grandiose pieces is also an oriental tradition. "And Brazil receives the influence of African and indigenous adornments. The Brazilian woman's body, as the Arab woman's, is prepared to receive the decoration and exhibit it with elegance," she evaluates.

The stylist consultant explains that, little by little, Brazil starts freeing itself from the tradition of raw material exporter to win the world with luxurious jewels, with added value. According to specialists in the sector, luxury jewels cost, in average, between US\$ 12,000 and US\$ 20,000.

Many of these examples of luxurious and exuberant jewels were shown during the 42nd edition of the National Fair of the Jewels, Watches and Related Articles Industry (Feninjer), which took place from the 4th to 7th of February, at the Transamérica Expo center, in São Paulo.

Company Fiamma, from the city of Belo Horizonte, in the southeastern Brazilian state of Minas Gerais, which exports to the Arab market since 2002, presented new jewel models from their already traditional line Filigrana, with handmade jewels.

"Our necklaces and earrings have a very oriental air. The majority of pieces was made with diamonds and a lot of yellow gold," explains the designer Anna Vitória Motta. "As our pieces are big and striking, they are very successful with Arab women," she said.

The consultant Regina highlights that aesthetics of the filigree, application and entwining of gold threads, used by Brazilian jewelries such as Fiamma, for example, attracts the attention of the Arab market a lot and is the heritage of the Portuguese goldsmith masters, who, in turn, were influenced by the Moor goldsmith masters.

During Feninjer, the manufacturer from Minas Gerais also presented their line of colored medallions: golden, yellow, green and blue and the line of protection amulets such as the crossed fingers, the Greek eye, four-leaf clover and the ankh symbol which, according to Anna Vitória, was considered the key of life by the Egyptian pharaohs.

### Many Stones and a Lot of Gold

Designer Márcia Mór from Rio de Janeiro took to Feninjer her beautiful and eye striking jewels made from yellow gold and many stones.

"I always show jewels from all my collections. This year the highlight goes to the Victorian line and some stones such as

tourmalines, citrines, amethysts, rodolites and emeralds," explains Márcia.

The designer explains that she works a lot with big slabs, which ensure jewels with exuberant surfaces. "The stone is highlight of my jewels. It also ensures exclusivity. I insist on this characteristic," she states. The jewels by Márcia Mór won the foreign market three years ago. Saudi Arabia is one of her greatest importers.

Vancox, factory also based in Belo Horizonte, has the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain as their main importers. Seeking the production of exclusive jewels as a differential, the company invests heavily in design. Out of the company's 50 employees, 10 are designers.

In this edition of Feninjer, she presented a collection that suggests beauty, traditions and holy symbols as counterpoints that balance the rhythm of the contemporary world. The designer Wanda Gontijo looked for inspiration in the nostalgic wave that, little by little, takes over the world.

According to her, lost before the extreme technologic and robotic advance, the human being fears dehumanization and calls for the holy - lost in the memory of objects, images, symbols, rites - in search of the counterpoint that equilibrates.

In the collections presented during Feninjer, are the religious and mystic elements. Medallions, images of saints, reliquaries, mandalas and crossed fingers are used as symbols of protection. The pieces are worked in yellow gold, white gold and many Brazilian stones, which are one of the characteristics of the manufacturer. The line Lótus, inspired in the lotus flower, uses yellow gold and white crystal.

### Tunnel of Time

The jeweler GoldDesign searched in the past, in the ballroom of a castle full of jewels, the inspiration for the production of the Victorian collection.

"It is unlimited daring that inspires new possibilities that we find in a distant past to reinvent the present in a fusion of global ideas," explains the designer Ana Márcia Albuquerque.

According to her, the sumptuousness, romanticism and seduction are the collections strong points. In the pieces, rubies, iolites and oriental sapphire are the highlights.

Founded six years ago, the factory exports to France and the United States. "We are always looking for new clients and I believe this collection, in particular, has great chances of enchanting Arab consumers."

For five years the designer Cida Santos, from Minas Gerais, who has been in the business since 1986, has believed in her own name as a brand for the jewels she creates.

At Feninjer the window of Cida's stand attracted people for the golden jewels, in dim gold and large stones. She took the opportunity of participating in the fair to launch the rustic collection that has a beach look and may be used day-to-day.

"I worked with matte yellow gold, in a totally handmade manner. The differential in my work is to make a large jewel, with volume, with a lot of creativity and innovation," she highlights. Yellow gold, explains Cida, is the great trend in the market.

"We are living a period of total return to golden. All you need is to observe the quantity of women going around the fair in golden shoes and purses" she points out.

The jewels created by Cida are already sold to the United States and France, as well as the entire national territory. Soon she plans on winning new markets.

"I believe that my pieces will be attractive to the Arab countries. Since the Arab women love gold and large jewelry they will like my creations," she believes.

Last year, the productive chain in the gems and jewels sector generated a turnover of US\$ 766 million in the country. The expectation for 2006, according to information from the IBGM, is to reach US\$ 1 billion. Revenue in retail, with 20,000 companies, was of US\$ 540 million, generating 500,000 direct jobs.

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