

A Touch of Brazilian Baroque at a Jewelry Near You

Contributed by Geovana Pagel
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Brazilian semiprecious stones, 950 silver, enamelled ceramics, nickel covered brass, aged silver and copper are the raw materials of the jewels and costume jewellery made by Arte Rupestre, from Belo Horizonte, city in the southeastern Brazilian state of Minas Gerais.

The rings, earrings, necklaces and bracelets are handmade one by one, and may arrive at the foreign markets in the next few months.

According to Julianete Moreira de Azevedo, responsible for prospecting new clients, Arte Rupestre's main objective for this year is to win new clients in Brazil and abroad. So much that the pieces are already exhibited in the business sector of the Bank of Brazil's website.

"An American importer took our virtual catalogue to the United States a few days ago. We also have some contacts in Italy, Spain and England," says Julianete.

According to her, the influences on the design both in the costume jewellery as in the line of 950 silver rings are the baroque, the rococo and tracery, all of them present in the handicrafts from Minas Gerais.

"Handicrafts and manual works have always been around in the family. Joining the goldsmith technique with the influence of handicrafts gives the costume jewellery by Arte Rupestre get a fine characteristic, of a handicraft half jewelry. The silver, in turn, is a jewel half handicraft, following a different line from the classic jewelry," she explains.

According to Julianete, the name Arte Rupestre (meaning cave painting art, in Portuguese) was chosen by her brother and goldsmith of the brand, Jenilson Moreira de Azevedo, as it relates to something primitive, made with the hands.

History

Jenilson is a goldsmith for ten years. He graduated in the Jewellery School of Minas Gerais. "I started as a goldsmith apprentice in a great jewellery company in Belo Horizonte, called Séculus," he tells. In the beginning of his goldsmith career, he worked with a more classic line of jewels, producing for other companies.

"Parallel to that, I produced gold plated articles that were sold by representatives," he recalls. Amongst the many researches and courses in making jewels taken by Jenilson, he highlights the Italian technique for enamelling gold.

After some time, Jenilson started working also with ceramics enamelling. "My aim was to create original ornaments for accessories," he highlights. From this research came the ceramic buttons which, unfortunately, proved not to be commercially feasible.

However, from the buttons the goldsmith came to what he now calls "ceramics cabuchon" which are the pieces used in the costume jewellery made by Arte Rupestre. Theses "stones" go through a burning process that make them resistant to impact.

Twelve of the seventeen models of rings in the bijoux line are adjustable, allowing the client to buy the ring without worrying about it's perfect fit. The silver rings are all made in 950 silver and each piece receives a manual finishing treatment that gives them a special touch.

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