Gem & Jewellery ’88 Exhibition

Posted on

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A gem by definition is a mineral worn for personal adornment. In ancient times supernatural properties were often attributed to certain precious stones and some were worn as charms to cure diseases or ward off evil spirits.

Sri Lanka with its world-wide reputation for quality gems and pearls inspired Chinese writers of long ago to recount how the Buddha in his compassion on the people of Sri Lanka had ‘sprinkled the land with a dew causing it to produce red gems.’ From the time of the biblical King Solomon, who wooed his queen with gems all the way from this tiny island in the Indian Ocean, gems have been used as gifts from our kings to foreign countries. King Devanampiyatissa is said to have sent eight varieties of pearls to the Indian Emperor Asoka as a token of his friendship. Pearls, sapphires and rubies and other precious stones were among the earliest exports. Today this reputation built over the ages, continues to attract visitors to the island, most of whom take away a precious stone or a set jewel as a memento.

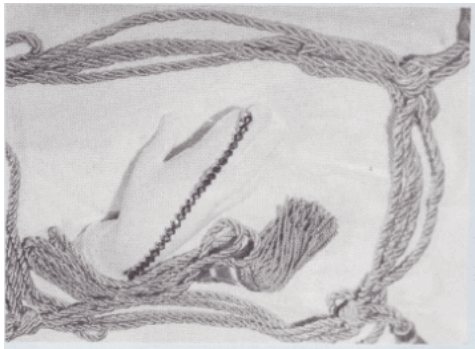
Sri Lanka, one of the world’s five leading sources of precious stones, produces a variety such as the Sapphire, ruby, taaffeite, korne-rupine and also an assortment of about sixty semi-precious stones including amethyst, garnet, moonstone, zircon,

topaz, tourmaline, cats eye, alexandrite, and agate. Because of this long tradition of the land of pearls and gems, Sri Lanka’s foremost jewellers in a bid to focus world attention on our gem resources came together to present an exhibition of gems and jewellery. On 13th and 14th March, the Golden Ballroom of the Hotel Lanka Oberoi-red carpetted with heavy vermillion drapes-made a truly befitting background for the Gem & Jewelry ’88 Exhibition and Fashion Display. The first of its kind to be held in Sri Lanka, it was organised by the Gemmologists Association of Sri Lanka and the Sri Lanka Jewellery Manufacturing Exporters Association in collaboration with the Sri Lanka Export Development Board.

The lissome models clad in red leotards blending harmoniously with the red decor of the Ballroom flitted in and out and posed in different stances displaying the exquisitely made pieces of jewellery on their hands, necks, waists and fingers.

Each stall displayed creations from the better known jewellery houses in Sri Lanka. The natural beauties styles into so many motifs, traditional and modern, were displayed in unusual settings of driftwood, sea shells, rocks and flowers. Others were exhibited on more modem setting of glass and velvet, enhancing the beauty of the de igns as well as the lustre of the stones. There were showcase of an array of glittering, twinkling jewellery \”)’ing v.ith each other. Jewels for the bride, for evening wear. casual wear, and for all occasions and ages – to tempt the women who pored over them. There were chunky necklaces, antique bracelets, giant pendants and gems in various hues and shapes.

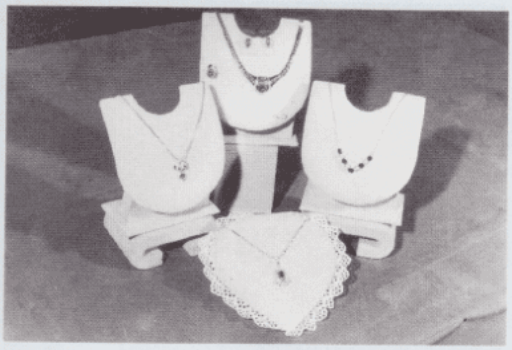
And of course there was jewellery for men too. Diamonds, always believed to be a girl’s best friend, were on tie pins, cuff-links and rings ready to be given as a gift of classic elegance for the man in your life. A beautiful brooch cum pendant designed as a flamingo with its plumage set with rubies and the body encrusted with diamonds particularly caught my eye as it did so many others. An unusual pink and blue enamel-work necklace with matching ear studs, which is very much in vogue all over the world, stood out as one of the modem pieces of craftsmanship.



A bracelet studded with gems.



An armlet worked in gold.



A variety of necklaces on display to tempt the fair sex.



Two necklaces of pearls and beads, and rings to match.

A necklace fashioned in white and red-brown stones in the shape of two prawns lay on a bed of gold velvet with a crocheted cloth making an attractive background.

A giant sand-coloured stone on a fan-shaped gold filigree setting had a red stone drop pendant with strands of beads for the chain, laying on a pile of pebbles.

For today’s fashion conscious women and men, this display of jewellery gave a much needed glimpse of the variety of design and style now available in Sri Lanka and held promise of much more vogue creations in the future.



A model displays some interesting jewellery at the exhibition.