

NEW DESIGNER BRAND TARGETS HIGH-END SILVER MARKET

By Jennifer Henricus Prematilleke



A fine designer brand targeting the top end of the silver jewellery market was launched in June by the designer of ELLE Jewelry, Claire Vessot.

The new brand, Vessot Collections, is being produced and promoted in collaboration with Brands 88, an affiliate company of PAJ Group in Dallas, Texas which has the worldwide license for ELLE Jewelry and Watches.

"My dream as a designer has always been to create something that is purely from within me, without guidelines or restrictions of any kind," Ms Vessot, who is from Montreal, Canada told *Silver Styles* in an interview. "I am very excited by this new opportunity because I am able to express myself easily, concentrating on extreme beauty with tangible unique qualities."

She said Vessot Collections are very much part of her. "Designs are drawn from a free intuitive sketching process, expressing strong feelings and emotions. Pieces are sensitive and highly sculptural; three-dimensional but less geometric, which may be described as the softer side of ELLE.

"The aim is to create a fresh look for fine jewellery that combines precious metals and materials without it being all too serious."

Initially the collections are in silver, some with both silver and 14-karat yellow gold. Gemstones have been introduced to add glamour and drama, but the plan is to gradually evolve into gold, possibly with diamonds.

Ms Vessot said the new brand targets women 30 years and up who want something very beautiful with timeless quality and value, "something that appeals to the senses."

Retail price points are from US\$250 to US\$2,500. This is in contrast to ELLE Jewelry, which retails from about US\$50 to US\$800.

The collections

She said the collections launched at the JCK Las Vegas show in June have three stylistic themes – Enrapture, Serenity and Noctambul.

"Enrapture features a central braided motif that is entwined to create seamless forms, with all sides being of equal beauty. One of the styles is a soft collar of interwoven elements with a hidden clasp which fits like lacework on the neckline. To give the collection a fun twist I threw in an acorn as a design element for luck.

"Noctambul, which means having another life in your dreams, is about exotic texture, moving towards ornate meeting stark. I recently discovered a fantastic industrial mesh and used it as the inspiration for this collection, creating an open-work Moroccan mesh motif that is contrasted with polished silver, gold and gemstones including amethyst and tourmaline. There is a magic lantern in the design to add an element of Arabian fantasy.

"Serenity is about contours and structures and a desire to create fluid sculptures: for example, the centre piece is an ample 80-gram sterling silver cuff that is moulded to look like draped fabric on the wrist."

She said the collections will be sold through high-end department stores and independent jewellers.

The expertise

Ms Vessot hails from a fine arts and fashion background and says she still enjoys drawing, painting and sculpture. "My training in the fashion industry has helped immensely with

my jewellery creations since part of that training was to both drape and make flat patterns." Later, in the jewellery industry, she learned to carve waxes and recently she has been designing her own gemstone cuts, particularly asymmetrical shapes. She said the fantastic part of designing within PAJ Group is that the company has immense resources and talents that can be incorporated into the designing process.

Prior to joining PAJ Group eight years ago as the designer for ELLE Jewelry, Ms Vessot had been designing for a leading independent fine jewellery company in Canada before going out on her own as an independent designer. She has won 16 industry awards including 10 De Beers Diamond international awards.

Working on Vessot

She said the designing process and development for Vessot Collections is different to the process that evolved for ELLE. "With ELLE we had to start from the definition of what ELLE Jewelry would be and created a look that would relate directly to the magazine, reflecting the image of the ELLE Woman. ELLE's established style is contemporary-sleek, timeless and quite ageless too, from about 22 to 55 and older. Once the styling was established we studied fashion trends closely, gathering information from multiple sources to create a





comfortable, fashion-savvy collection always on top of the newest colours and silhouettes. Now we work with ELLE Paris, which supplies European trend directions. At the same time we compare and constantly analyse ready-to-wear colours and trends as they emerge and interpret them in our own unique way.”

In addition to Vessot Collections and ELLE Jewelry and Watches, Brands 88 promotes PAOLORENNA, Legends of Athena and Ganaelle and the company's main focus is to acquire, promote and design branded lines of jewellery, watches and accessories.

Chairman of PAJ Group, Felix Chen, said there is a lot of potential in the market to grow designer brands and since Ms Vessot is “one of the top designers in the world” he sees huge potential to create and promote a named designer collection from her. “We are targeting the top end of the silver market and plan to take the collections into the fine gold jewellery realm too.”

Pieces are produced at PAJ's factory in China. “We have established a separate section and production line in the factory with our most experienced workers to manufacture these pieces. They understand the importance of quality and this high-quality workmanship is visible in the new collections,” Mr Chen said.

新設計師品牌針對高檔銀飾市場

首飾品牌Elle 的設計師Claire Vessot於今年六月推出新銀飾品牌，以高檔銀飾市場為主要定位。

這個新品名稱為Vessot Collections，由Claire Vessot與Brands 88合作設計、製造和推廣。Brands 88是PAJ集團在美國德州的成員公司，擁有生產和推廣Elle首飾和手錶的專利。

來自加拿大蒙特利爾的Vessot女士接受《銀流》訪問時表示：「我的夢想一直是創造由心而生的作品，而並非單單受潮流影響的設計，所以我對於這個機會感到非常興奮，讓我得以透過高度美感和質量表達我的靈感。」

她表示Vessot Collections的設計創作過程使用直覺，表現出強烈的感覺和情緒。首飾的設計感性而且可塑性高，同時反映時下潮流。

品牌首先推出了銀飾系列，並計劃逐漸加入金飾。目前的款式包括14K及18K金，配以鑽石以及其他獨特的有色寶石，增添華麗氣派。

她又表示這個新品牌的對象是30歲以上的女士，她們追求歷久不衰的品質和價值，喜歡不太嚴肅的風格，帶來驚喜的元素和幽默感。

零售價格由250美元至2,500美元之間，價格和Elle首飾有很大差別，因為Elle的首飾零售價約為50至800美元。

她表示系列共有三個風格主題：Enrapture（著迷）、Serenity（寧靜）和Noctambul（夢幻人生）。據Vessot女士解釋，Enrapture以中心緊密結合的心形為象徵，製造出無縫的形狀，表現多角度的美態；Noctambul則象徵夢中的另一個人生，混合華麗和刻板；Serenity則講究輪廓和結構，創造出不固定的雕像，首飾系列將於高級百貨公司和獨立首飾店出售。

Vessot女士的藝術和時裝背景，令她現在仍然鍾愛繪畫、油畫和雕刻。「我對時裝的認識，對於首飾創作方面也有很大幫助，因為

學時裝的其中一部份就是製作平面圖案。」她在八年前加入PAJ集團成為Elle首飾的設計師，在此之前曾在加拿大一間高級首飾店工作，總共取得了16個行業獎項，包括10個戴比爾斯鑽石國際大獎（De Beers Diamond international awards）。

除了Vessot Collections和Elle首飾和手錶之外，Brands 88也負責推廣Paolorenna和Legends of Athena，主力推廣和設計名師系列的首飾、手錶和飾物，產品在PAJ的中國工廠生產。

