



IN HIS OWN LEAGUE

Inspired by international uber chic style **Dagmar** is a complete pleasure to wear with its vast variety of embellished semi precious delights. Creative Director, *Pawan Anand* speaks to **Kavita Shyam** about what makes his brand tick...

Launched in 2004, Pawan Anand's hugely popular brand Dagmar has been creating unique pieces of jewellery couture with rich global antiquity as the inspiration. The initiative was to take the rich Indian aesthetic to the west and create a robust niche for itself there. Over the years the brand has evolved to have several representative offices cross the length and breadth of the globe. Pawan, known for introducing the concept of couture in jewellery conversations and lifestyle parlance has come a long way since the last nine years making a huge foray on the international front. He gives us an overview of his company, his designs and his future plans.

Was jewellery making always on your mind from the start? Design, aesthetics and luxury have always been something I gravitated towards even whilst growing

up. Having just finished a six year intense architecture degree I was all set to dabble into the world of construction when something provoked me to design a small jewellery collection. Even if just for recreation, I decided prior to actually getting down to designing lofty structures. Somehow the creative bent translated itself onto those first ten samples quite effectively and before I knew it I was on my way to setting up a jewellery label. Six months down the line once I was convinced that this was a genre in design I wanted to pursue, I did undergo some basic courses in gemology and diamond grading. As things would have it, the brand eventually delved more into luxury and semi-precious couture. I'm not sure if any academic machinery can develop an "eye" for detail. One either has it or not. If it exists, it can perhaps only be focused and made more effective.

What would you say is your unique selling point? How different are you from the other designer brands in town?

I believe the foremost selling point for any luxury oriented product is having a “unique offering” in terms of product. So I believe one of the strongest drivers for the growth of Dagmar jewellery is the product itself. I designed a collection that filled a very wide gap in the market at the time. The attempt was to create a significant niche in an otherwise over cluttered space. As a brand we bridged a gap of actually bringing the “Couture” element into jewellery and incorporating semi-precious gemstones and metals to create a line that was and is unique.

Every designer has a target wearer that they design for, how would you define your wearer?

The Dagmar woman is a confident and highly fashion savvy world traveller! I certainly cannot sieve out our audience on the basis of age or ethnicity, so it's more of a mind set and fashion quotient thing. I have patrons for our collections amongst the cutting edge of Manhattan down to the Bohemian woman in Paris all the way to a conservative yet well traveled performer in Chennai. So the key words would be confident, cutting edge, current and fashionable.



How would you define your collection besides, how do you maintain your quality standards?

As the founder and creative director for Dagmar Jewellery I have chosen to be very involved with the actual aesthetic for the brand and its collections. In a nutshell I would say my design inspiration comes from antiquity the world over. I am hugely inspired by authentic dated pieces be those Art-Deco, Persian, Moroccan, especially Indian! So my endeavor has essentially been to juxtapose the past with flashes of today and create a line that is highly reminiscent yet



is current enough to wear with élan. Quality poses to be a challenge owing to the delicate handcrafted nature of our entire ensemble of designs. I do attempt at making use of technology where available to ensure a more precise output. However, it's a challenge to also ensure that the technology does not take away from the actual rawness and quiriness of the eventual product. That is a part of our selling point given the fact that majority of my sales happen in international fashion capitals.

What is your latest collection all about? Define your brand.

The current collection in the offering at the house of Dagmar is a Line coined “The Upper East”! As the name suggests the uber fashionable borough of Manhattan, NYC was my source of inspiration this time around. That part of the city just has an infectious robust energy and almost effortless fashion quotient to it that I have attempted at capturing in our couture pieces of jewellery this time. The collection is about pieces that have individual identity! Simulated Colombian Emeralds, Rose Cut Quartz, Moroccan Filigree and rough stones form the crux of the collection.

‘Dagmar by Pavan Anand’ can be defined in a couple of sentences. The endeavor of the brand is to thread seamlessly between the paradoxes of flamboyant and effortless, current yet timeless, and understated yet conspicuous. To create an elegant flow to the manner

which each piece of jewellery manages to arrest attention and make compellingly emphatic statements.

Why does your designer draw his inspiration from people, places or events? So where do you draw your inspiration for your designs? What raw materials do you use in your jewellery making?

My travels tend to be one of the most profound inspirational processes for me. So I do tend to design and even name collections after locations that have inspired me. Antiquity the world over is also very inspiring. The collections are essentially handcrafted with sterling Silver and gold components. A wide range of antique treatments and enamel work are used. In terms of stones: a plethora of semi-precious and precious stones find their way into our collections. My personal favorites would be Ruby rough, simulated Colombian Emeralds and Labradorite.



How do you ensure customer satisfaction at all times? Have you attempted at creating a wide global distribution network of staff and/or associates since you have global outlets. So our label does offer an efficient after sale service facility, in whichever part of the world one is. Each piece of Dagmar Jewellery still comes with a lifetime warranty.

How about the most important aspect of jewellery making, i.e. pricing factor for your brand?

Since the crux of the collection is created crafting semi-precious stones and metals, the collections are extremely well priced. So the range would extend from INR Seven Thousand onwards upto about a lakh or so. Our couture and certain special pieces go upto our lakhs.

How did the name Dagmar come about and what does it mean?

Dagmar translates to "Glorious Day" in German. However, my primary reason for picking the name was the fact that it has a certain inherent power to it. Also I was pretty determined from back in the day to create a brand with global presence so the name had to have universal appeal.

What are the bridal trends in Jewellery this season? You have had plenty of Indian and international celebs wearing your jewellery but would you like any particular celeb adorning your Jewellery?

I believe a bride looks most appropriate in a piece that has timeless appeal. So I'm not sure that a bride should worry about following a trend. She should wear a piece that works best with her personality and accentuates her look and outfit best on that special day. Having said that, diamonds in combination with emeralds and rubies even though conservative, still work best with the Indian form and function. Layered necklaces with rose cut diamonds are a recommended look. Indeed, we are fortunate to have found a fair share of globally celebrated Hollywood and Bollywood linked patrons for our collection! I'd be glad to design a piece for Michelle Obama. I think she has a very sophisticated and refined sense of the way she puts herself together. On the other end of the spectrum I would love to create a piece for Donnatella Versace. We in fact did a showing in association with them in Jakarta last year and she has a very edgy yet glam presence to her.

Do you have anyone in mind to endorse your jewellery brand in the near future?

I have a few people in mind. I would want to affiliate with someone who is inherently avante garde and has an international sense of style and presence.

What have you planned ahead for Dagmar? Any growth-expansion-tie up plans moving ahead?

One of the primary endeavors is to create more international locations where Dagmar jewellery retails. I would also be keen to eventually diversify and grow the brand and my aesthetics to other offerings in the style and luxury segment. ■

