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WWD MONDAY

Accessories/Innerwear/Legwear

A Sigh of Relief



Retailers breathed just a bit easier after Black Friday traffic and sales exceeded their fearfully modest expectations. Shoppers were lured out of hibernation by discounts of unprecedented proportions, certain to take a bite out of fourth-quarter profits. For full weekend coverage, see pages 8 to 10.

Black Friday bargain hunters on Fifth Avenue.



PHOTO BY KEVIN MAZUR

JEWELRY & WATCH REPORT

Forward Thinking

Taking inspiration from physics to architecture, these new watch and jewelry brands are making their mark on the industry.



A women's style from DeWitt.

JEROME DEWITT

Three years after creating his brand, Jerome DeWitt continues to build his firm with quality and exclusivity as his guidelines. A descendent of Napoleon, DeWitt makes watches that are engineering marvels, giving a modern twist to the Swiss tradition. He has recently focused more on watches geared to women, including pieces with diamond bezels.

"Luxury should be more than words," said DeWitt. "It should be real. We want to be a product linked to quality."

DeWitt produces about 1,000 pieces a year with prices starting at 28,000 Swiss francs, or \$22,000 at current exchange. Though he's only referenced his Napoleonic pedigree obliquely for the moment, DeWitt is thinking how to do so in the future.

"We won't do a watch celebrating a battle," he says. "But I'm sure there's something Napoleonic that we can do."

— Robert Murphy



A Badollet watch.

BADOLLET

When Badollet, the watchmaker founded in 1855, closed its doors in 1924, it was the end of one of Switzerland's most storied manufacturers. But in an era of Lazarus luxury, it was only a matter of time before a savvy entrepreneur resurrected the name. It was revived last year by Robert Pfordmenges, a German investor who is a watch collector.

Now, the company, which manufactures 50 to 80 pieces a year, wants to beef up its presence in America. With watches that start at 150,000 euros, or \$189,000, with complicated movements like tourbillons and minute repeaters, the key to the future is exclusivity, according to chief executive officer Aldo Magada. One of Badollet's marketing ploys is its ability to personalize watches.

"We can customize everything," said Magada. "From the color of the face to the material of the watch. No two watches are the same."

Magada said the firm's objective was to sell 150 to 200 watches a year.

"That would be extraordinary," he said.

— R.M.

MATTIA CIELO

It wasn't a shot in the dark when finance guy Mattia Cielo ventured into jewelry to start his namesake company. Gems run in the blood of this 35-year-old Italian — his father, Sergio, founded Cielo Venezia 1270, a leading jewelry company known for its Milana, Nimei, Arkano and Kiara brands.

To design his baubles, Cielo wanted something completely novel and revolutionary. So he tapped Massimiliano Boni, who has a background in industrial design.

"We want to rewrite the rules of jewelry by bringing back to life ancient manufacturing techniques mixed with modern technology," said Cielo.

His industrial design-inspired pieces liberally mix gold, diamonds and stones of all types to create pieces that sparkle with light and movement. From afar, a dome-shaped diamond ring looks smooth, but close up 220 diamonds (18 carats) can be seen resting atop gold springs that add explosive movement. The line is sold in select boutiques, such as Bergdorf Goodman in New York, in addition to stores in locales such as Dubai, Hong Kong and Germany. Prices range from \$6,000 to \$100,000.

— Alessandra Tang



Mattia Cielo diamond ring.



A gem-studded cuff from Carolyn Rodney.

CAROLYN RODNEY

Carolyn Rodney has always been the artistic type.

For 15 years, she split her time between New York and Los Angeles as a sculptor, painter and set designer. But it was on a life-changing trip to India that she realized her true calling lied in another art form — jewelry.

"I had always had a huge fascination with precious stones and seeing traditional Indian jewelry inspired me to start making my own pieces," said Rodney.

Now the British designer lives between New York, London and Jaipur, India, where she designs and manufactures her signature peacock bangles, gold earrings and Eastern-inspired necklaces encrusted in rubies, diamonds and sapphires. Most of Rodney's pieces retail from \$2,000 up to \$45,000 and are available on a private basis in London, as well as at select Neiman Marcus stores in the U.S. While she still considers herself a novice of sorts, Rodney said this endeavor was simply "meant to be."

"I could have never foreseen this happening. I never even made jewelry before," Rodney said. "But I put a pen to paper and it manifested. Everything happened by magic."

— Caroline Tai

ANAHITA

For Ana Guity Stein, jewelry making is similar to constructing buildings — but the scale is a tad different.

The designer and founder of Anahita jewelry incorporates her background as a residential architect into gold and gemstone drop earrings with curving volutes echoing a building's cornice, and pendant earrings with mint tourmalines, sapphires and mandarin garnet that have a skylight affect.

"I'm an architect by trade, so I was always interested in design," says the 39-year-old Tehran, Iran, native who grew up across Germany, England and the U.S., and now resides in Manhattan. "I love sculpture and I wanted a line that has sculpture combined with movement for a sensual feel."

Anahita is sold privately through the designer who can be contacted through her Web site, anahitajewelry.com.

Stein, who counts artist Dale Chihuly as a key inspiration for her jewels, uses color in novel way. She pairs unlikely stones such as a blue-gray moonstone ring set with rubies or a show-stopping necklace made of white gold with yellow beryl, pink topaz and maline and diamonds. Prices range from \$2,000 to \$63,000 for the necklace.

— Sophie Chabott



Gold and gemstone earrings from Anahita.