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Exhibitors Note a Strong Opening Day for JCK Vegas

May 30, 2015 12:47 AM By Jeff Miller

RAPAPORT... Official JCK Vegas attendance on opening day was still being confirmed as it came to a close; however, show organizers said that feedback from exhibitors was positive, which they hoped indicated a much more active buyer presence than was the case on the first day one year ago.

Rapaport News observed that the larger loose diamond firms that market heavily ahead of the show from Los Angeles, New York and Antwerp were busy with appointments and writing orders on the first day, signaling a strong start. But, as is often typical on the first day, activity was very subdued at the booths of many smaller diamond exhibitors, by their own account.



Nonetheless, retailers were ordering unique, fine diamond jewelry that presented an elegant fashion statement and that could be worn day and/or night, according to Gabriel & Co. New York, which nearly achieved its entire show sales goal on the first day.

Gabriel & Co.'s fall 2015 collections, including Aurora Gold, Lusso, Kaslique, Stellare, Souviens and Amavida, were all popular with buyers, according to the firm. The collections were curated by the company's global style director, Hal Rubenstein, and offered statement-sized "Cascade Chokers," an asymmetrical trail of diamonds, while the adjustable "Y-Knot" necklace featured clean lines that formed into the shape of the letter

"Y," made to fall in place while accenting the body's hidden contours.

In addition, the firm offered "Comets" earrings, featuring a large diamond or colored gemstone, encrusted ear cuffs and ear climbers that "climb" the length of the ear, and delicate ear jackets featuring "Gemini Sparklers" or "peek-a-boo" diamonds or colored gemstones.

"The welcome return of urbane sophistication to fashion couldn't be better timing for Gabriel & Co.'s new mantra of fine jewelry every day," said Rubenstein. "In each design of Gabriel & Co.'s curated collections, whether your focus is on the new brilliantly faceted stones of Souviens; the instantly successful rapier edge of Kaslique; the 'modern luxe' debut of Lusso or the youthful romanticism that enchants with Stellaré, the silhouette is both singularly striking, irresistibly accessible and endlessly adaptable."

This year, designer Erich Zimmermann of Augsburg, Germany returned to the JCK venue after a six-year hiatus and said that orders for his handmade pieces were very strong on opening day. "Rose quartz in rose gold rings are very easy to sell right now," he said, as were his hand-carved lavender and green jade earrings, which sold out. Early in the day, the designer also sold several of his Cocoon collier necklaces that were handcrafted in 18-karat yellow gold. He described the necklace collection as "light and organic," mimicking nature's delicate forms.

Zimmermann introduced the Sevensome diamond ring (pictured) in gray gold that featured seven diamonds, 5.08 total carat weight, in various cuts.

However, when the ring is worn, or turned on the finger, it reveals a different cut, such as a 0.74-carat brilliant cut, a 0.70-carat baguette, a 0.72-carat pear-shape, a 0.72-carat radiant, a 0.70-carat oval, a 0.70-carat navette or a 0.80-carat emerald cut.

ERICH ZIMMERMANN



Zalemark unveiled its much anticipated Crayola Fine Jewelry collection under the theme "I am Color." The initial collection offered a limited number of diamond pieces, but head designer and Zalemark CEO Steven Zale said that more diamond and gold jewelry will be forthcoming as the collection gains momentum.

Initially, the majority of pieces featured enamels, pearls and crystals in 14-karat white, yellow or rose gold and silver. Zalemark was chosen to partner with Crayola, one of the world's most recognized brands, to create a fine jewelry collection as it branches out with new product lines, including jewelry, clothing and home accessories.

Zale said that when he visited Crayola's corporate offices, the company's wall art inspired him to create jewelry that "flowed with color," as is pictured in the necklace below. Earlier in the year, Zale collaborated with music sensation Engelbert Humperdinck to create The Harmony Collection. The designer said that it has been a tremendous success.



In other news from the show, Dominion Diamond Corporation launched its business-to-business platform for the CanadaMark diamond hallmark program. Kiran Group and CUFF partnered to bring "smart jewelry" to the U.S. CUFF, which is based in San Francisco, plans to elevate wearable technology by discretely including it in fashion and accessories.

Tejas Shah, the CEO of Kiran USA, said, "The partnership with CUFF is an exciting opportunity for us to participate in the fast growing wearables category and lead the way for global expansion. We have plans to showcase the potential of the technology in new and much more fashion-forward ways and add functional value to jewelry our customers already love."

The Bombay Diamond Jewellery Company created a "Diamonds Dream In Color" campaign that specifically targets millennial customers and centers on natural pink diamonds. Nihar Mehta, the principal of

Bombay Diamond Jewelry, said, "We are leveraging our position of the rough material to

bring this product to the U.S. market. Providing educational materials will enhance the storytelling of these rare and beautiful diamonds.”

Also on opening day, diamond firm Kirk Kara celebrated its 125th anniversary at JCK 2015 and received its eighth consecutive Jewelers' Choice Award.



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