

SSPC Design Competition



Gold Award winner of the "Bracelet" category was designed by Eva Shiu and manufactured by Chow Tai Fook Jewellery Co. Ltd.

Gold Award winner of the "Brooch" category was designed and manufactured by Kurt Neukomm.

Gold Award winner of the "Earrings" category was designed by Anita Dickey and manufactured by Simplicity Co.

Gold Award winner of the "Necklace" category was designed by Cheung Wing Yee and manufactured by Tse Sui Luen Jewellery Co. Ltd.

Gold Award winner of the "Ring" category was designed by Shamaine Chua Ng and manufactured by Shirochyo Inc.

Beautiful models, unique pearls and unique designs – these were the ingredients that made a perfect combination when the winning pieces of the fourth South Sea cultured pearl jewellery competition were shown to the international media at the Hong Kong Jewellery Show this March.

Designers from all over the world entered a total of 600 designs for this popular competition run by the

South Sea Pearl Consortium and sponsored by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council. This year, however, it was the local talent from Hong Kong that ran away with twelve prizes at the award ceremony with Ms Eva Shiu and Ms Lily Lam achieving the remarkable distinction of winning three prizes each. The aim behind this competition is to promote the beauty and uniqueness of South Sea cultured pearls by

encouraging jewellers to portray the pearls' brilliance in creative, yet wearable pieces. Mr. Lawrence Leung, Director of the SSPC Hong Kong commented, "The results this year have been very promising for the future of the South Sea cultured pearl. With every passing competition, we see more and more creativity and diversity in the entries in which our talented competitors emphasise the beauty of the pearls."

Stuller and Paspaley A Joint Passion for Quality



Diamond and pearl necklace from Stuller and Paspaley.

A new era for the US pearl market began in April of this year. A new partnership united two of the top names in the industry Stuller, Inc. of Lafayette, Louisiana and Paspaley Pearling Company of Darwin, Australia, who announced their new joint business enterprise for the distribution of Paspaley South Sea cultured pearls to North American retailers.

Branded as "Stuller & Paspaley", this line of South Sea cultured pearls and pearl jewellery will give the American jewellery market convenient and efficient access to the largest stock of the world's finest cultured South Sea pearls. From loose pearls and perfectly matched strands to a range of exquisitely-crafted jewellery, Paspaley South Sea cultured pearls are guaranteed to be of natural colour and lustre.

"I've always had a passion for fine pearls, but in North America, the industry has never before had a relationship with a supplier that guarantees quality and reliability. Now, however we have the world's premier supplier combined with the finest distribution network and are able to satisfy demand," said Matt Stuller, CEO and Chairman of Stuller. "That is why we believe the relationship between Stuller and Paspaley can strengthen the North American pearl market."

The debut Stuller & Paspaley collection features a range of jewellery with pearls as they are meant to be seen: from a single, breathtaking gem that stands alone by virtue of its beauty through to the incomparable strands that have been Paspaley's trademark for more than 25 years. Retailers are being offered jewellery with full sales support materials including the Stuller & Paspaley magazine, consumer brochures and sales advertisements. Indeed the collection has sparked huge interest in the press with both Modern Jeweler and National Jeweler both featuring articles in recent editions.

"For the first time, American jewellers will be able to access these magnificent gems in a range of shapes and sizes, with the same level of service and support they have become accustomed to receiving from

Stuller," said Nicholas Paspaley, Executive Chairman of Paspaley Pearling Company.

A limited selection of the new collection was on sale at the JCK show in Las Vegas, the initial interest and sales surpassed all expectations. The full Christmas collection, featuring exciting new designs, will be launched at the JA New York show in July.



White South Sea cultured pearls form stunning pendants set in yellow gold and hanging from a simple gold chain.

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Selection of the different shape pearls available in the Stuller and Paspaley collection.

pearlfection

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Nature's Leading Role

Welcome to the second edition of Pearlfection, the South Sea Pearl Consortium newsletter.

In this issue we take a look at some of the new jewellery featuring white South Sea cultured pearls, not just jewellery from established designers but also the winning jewellery from the South Sea pearl competition held earlier this year. This competition, held every two years in Hong Kong, affords new designers a chance to have their ideas made into finished jewellery and then for the winners to have the opportunity to exhibit these pieces at the Hong Kong Show.

Nature still seems to be playing a leading role in jewellery designs this year and that seems fitting when designs include white South Sea cultured pearls. These rare and beautiful pearls rely on nature to produce the thick nacre which gives these gems their unequalled lustre and their creamy, voluptuous appearance. Indeed nature is vital for the survival of these pearls. Although seeded by man, once the nucleus has been inserted, the oyster shells are placed back into the sea for several years to allow nature to do what it does so well, produce the many layers of nacre that form the white South Sea cultured pearl.

The role of nature does not stop there. The white South Sea cultured pearls, the rarest of cultivated pearls in the world today are from the Pinctada maxima oyster, one of the world's largest but most solitary oysters. Almost three quarters of the world's Pinctada Maxima shells grow in beds that lie off the pure, untouched coast of North West Australia. It remains one of the few virgin coastlines in the world today and its protection is critical to the future of the South Sea cultured pearl.

So nature is not only playing a leading role in jewellery designs but a vital role in the perfection of the white South Sea cultured pearl.

Suzi Jarrell

Paspaley Harvest Perfection



The Paspaley Pearl.

"We always strive for perfection only to discover that perfection is perfectly elusive, but occasionally when you are harvesting your pearls you find a pearl whose shape, colour or size is a perfect example of its type."

- Nick Paspaley, Chairman, Paspaley Pearls
These words took on a special meaning for Paspaley Pearls when one very special pearl was discovered last

year. A perfectly round 20.4 mm rose-coloured pearl, described by Executive Chairman Nicholas Paspaley as "unequivocally the most exceptional gem ever harvested by Paspaley Pearls and possibly the finest large pearl the world has seen during the past century". Indeed so sure is Nicholas Paspaley that he will never harvest another pearl as exquisite as this rare gem that he has named it "The Paspaley Pearl". The pearl was discovered at the Vansilt farm during last August's harvest and has now been added to the Paspaley collection. Rarely seen in public and unlikely ever to be sold, when asked about the value of this unique pearl, Nicholas Paspaley compared it to a rare strand that was sold by Sotheby's several years ago for 2 million US\$. He added, with a twinkle in his eye, that the Paspaley pearl was worth significantly more than that whole strand; however he declined to say by how much more!

This wonderful pearl was first shown at the Hong Kong Jewellery Show back in March and was also on display at the Couture Collection and Conference at the end of May and the JCK Show in Las Vegas.

SSPC welcomes Honorary Members

The annual general meeting of the SSPC was held just before the start of the Hong Kong Show in March 2003. As well as confirming the programme for the coming year, the SSPC board also decided to invite five new members to become honorary board members of the SSPC.

These invitations were in recognition of important contributions made in the distribution or promotion of the white South Sea cultured pearls. This year the board was delighted to welcome Tiffany and Company, Stuller Inc, Tasaki Pearls, Utopia and Salvador Assael to be the first honorary members of the SSPC.

SSPC Sponsors Key Events

The South Sea Pearl Consortium was delighted to be the sponsor of the opening breakfast at the Couture Jewellery Collection & Conference held at the end of May. This is unique networking event in the jewellery calendar is held in luxurious surroundings at Phoenix, Arizona and enables retailers and jewellery manufacturers not only to do business together but also to play a little golf or tennis, socialise and network together. The SSPC was delighted to be the host of the first morning's breakfast and opening keynote address, where exhibitors and retailers alike were entertained in grand style by the writer and comedian Al Franken.

His novel reasons for buying South Sea cultured pearls given during his opening speech certainly made a lively start to this elite event.

His special brand of humour proved to be an excellent way to start the first day of buying on the collection floor and the South Sea Pearl Consortium were very happy to start Couture off on a high note.

The SSPC also had a booth in the Grand Foyer of the collection floor where they showed a stunning display of South Sea cultured pearl jewellery. One of the highlights of the display was "The Paspaley Pearl." This perfectly round 20.4 mm rose-coloured pearl is unequivocally the most exceptional gem ever harvested by Paspaley Pearls, the sponsor of the South Sea Pearl Consortium. It was described by Executive Chairman Nicholas Paspaley as "Possibly the finest large pearl the world has seen during the past century". The pearl was especially flown from the Paspaley family vaults in Darwin, Australia for a sneak preview in Couture before going on to the JCK show. Rarely seen in public and unlikely ever to be sold, its value is inestimable. The South Sea Pearl Consortium was delighted to be allowed to give attendees of Couture the opportunity to view this unique gem.

Recognising the market potential for South Sea cultured pearls in the US and Europe, the SSPC have increased educational and promotional activities in these core markets. As pearls form an essential part of most jewellery stores collections the SSPC is currently placing its emphasis on education in order that the retailers may become more knowledgeable about the white South Sea cultured pearl and what sets it apart from other pearls. To this end the consortium is providing information and training materials for retailers as well as website featuring information and the latest in pearl jewellery.

Another aim of the SSPC is to raise the awareness of the consumer to the delights of the many and varied designs incorporating white South Sea cultured pearls from the many talented jewellery manufacturers of today.

It was with this in mind that the SSPC agreed to be one of the sponsors of the Jewellery Information Centre's annual press luncheon. Seventy of the top consumer editors and stylists attended the event at Le Cirque in New York, which was sponsored by the top jewellery organisations to reveal the new jewellery available to the consumer this fall.

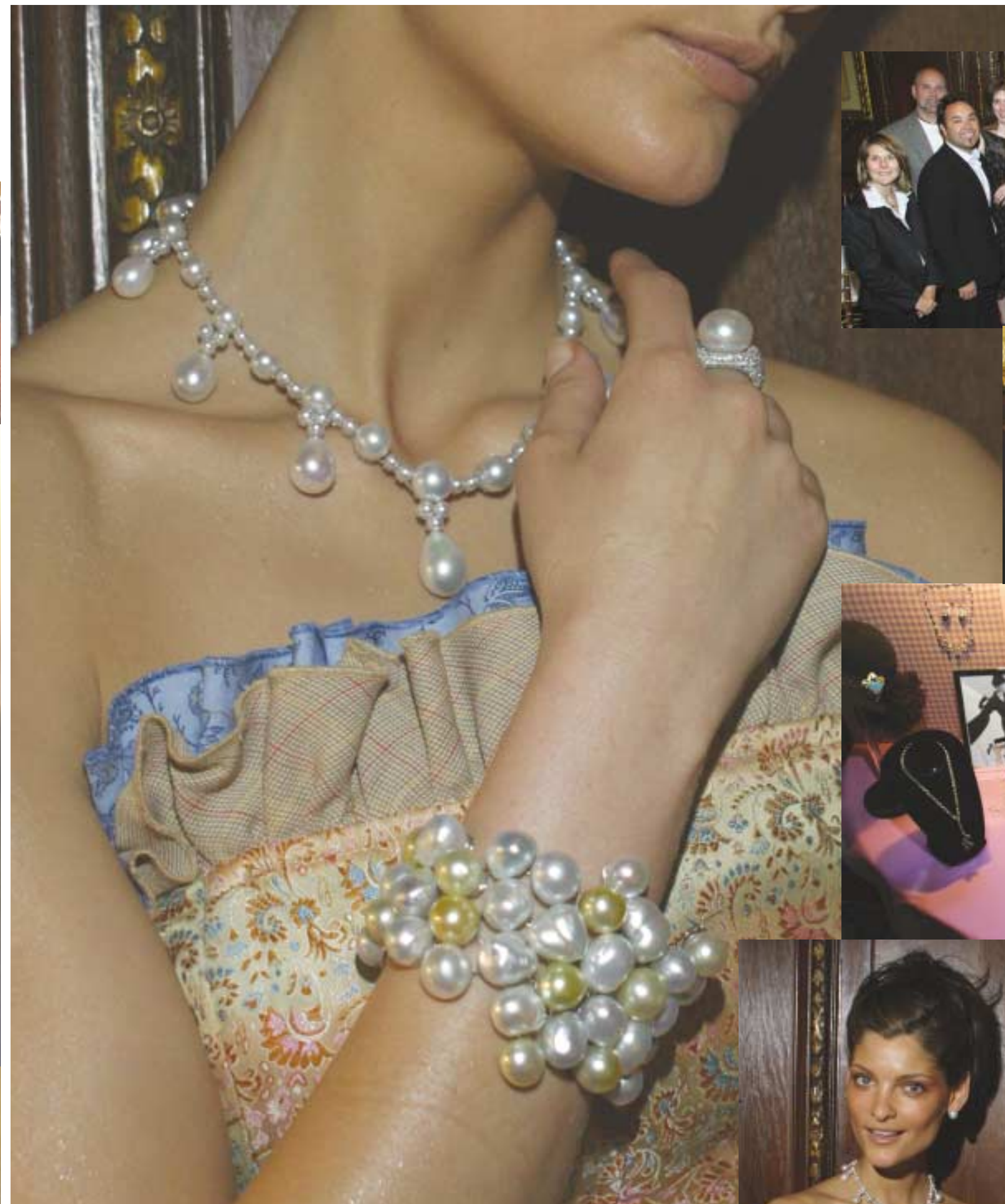


From top to bottom:

Members of the SSPC and Paspaley team with guest speaker Al Franken and Couture organiser, Nancy Robey.

Comedian and keynote speaker, Al Franken takes a closer look at the Paspaley Pearl.

Suzi Jarrell, Communications Director of the SSPC, Al Franken, guest speaker and Nancy Robey, Global Director of Couture at the opening keynote address.



There were five main jewellery trends identified this year such as chandelier type earrings, the return to nostalgia and the re emergence of colour in jewellery. Each of the top jewellery organisations, such as the World Gold Council, the Platinum Guild and the Diamond Information Centre joined with the SSPC and provided perfect jewellery examples from different designers to fit these themes. The South Sea Pearl Consortium showed jewellery from Tiffany and Co.,

Stuller and Paspaley, Utopia and Schoeffel. Stunning models moved amongst the guests wearing exquisite pearl jewellery. A delicious lunch, and a surprise jewellery draw with prizes from each of the organisations, completed the day.

From left to right:

Model wearing stunning pearl necklace from Tiffany and company, ring by Stuller and Paspaley and South Sea pearl cuff from Utopia of Italy.

Members of the jewellery organisations who took part in the JIC luncheon at La Cirque, New York.

Suzi Jarrell with the winner of the SSPC prize.

A selection of the latest pearl jewellery on display at the editors' luncheon.

Examples of the "trends" tables from Nostalgia through to Ear-resistable.