



# King of Colour

HAVING SUCCESSFULLY SEDUCED BUYERS THROUGHOUT EUROPE AND ASIA, MILANESE JEWELLER POMELLATO IS SET TO MAKE HONG KONG ITS NEWEST CONQUEST, WRITES JESSICA NG

**“THEY CALL THEM THE STEVE McQueen shades because the iconic actor used to have them,”** Andrea Morante says of the foldable Persol sunglasses he is wearing. In the city for the brand’s first boutique in Hong Kong, the CEO of Italian jeweller Pomellato starts things off in style with an anecdote on the “King of Cool”.

“When McQueen showed up with these glasses, along with his signature Daytona Rolex, he pushed the popularity of the two brands beyond imagine,” explains Morante. “The original Daytona that McQueen had is now the most expensive Rolex on the secondary market,” he continues. “He was one of the first real brand ambassadors.”

Morante is seeing stars in his eyes, and so was Pino Rabolini, who founded Pomellato in 1967 and upped its celebrity association in the early 1980s. Taking a page from fashion houses, the brand broke the jewellery industry norm when it entrusted top fashion photographer Helmut Newton with its 1982 campaign. The resulting shots secured the brand’s reputation as the jeweller du jour, with women throughout Italy clamouring for its chic creations. The brand became a reflection of the country’s emerging class of alpha females: strong, seductive, complicated and powerful – everything the jeweller and the campaign were about.

Fast forward to the present day and the Italian jeweller still calls on its celebrity fans, including the current face of Pomellato, Tilda Swinton, who has been with the brand since

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2010. Swinton and Pomellato were a natural fit – both are unconventional beauties, bold, and exude a casual elegance.

The vibrant easy-to-wear pieces are what set the historic jeweller apart in the industry. “We stand for colours,” Morante says, describing Pomellato’s signature look. When the house was founded in the late ’60s, hardly any of their competitors incorporated colour into their designs. But in this fickle industry, where brand recognition ensures commercial success, Pomellato had to stand out. It made a conscious decision to inject colour into its jewellery through the novel use of semi-precious stones and a specially formulated pink gold. “There was a clear attempt to say “if it’s a certain colour, it’s ours,” explains Morante. “The unique shade of rose gold, for example, is now synonymous with Pomellato.”

This uncompromising boldness has stolen the hearts of women throughout Europe and Asia. “It’s all due to love affairs,” says Morante of their successful conquest of the region. By sheer coincidence, Christina Ong, founder of luxury retail company Club 21, saw some of Pomellato’s chic, ready-to-wear pieces in Milan and was instantly smitten. She consequently brought the franchise to Singapore, which is now home to two boutiques. The brand’s uniquely cut coloured gems then caught the eye of a lady from Taiwan, who successfully introduced Pomellato to Taipei.

With Hong Kong, it was the Italian jeweller that made the first move, launching its first boutique in Central last December. Opening to great aplomb, the pioneer of prêt-à-porter jewellery is quickly generating interest. “We were eager to present ourselves to the Hong Kong audience, even before any love affairs happened.” And to attract the ladies, Pomellato turned the IFC store into a well-thought-out labour of love with the



brand’s taste for polished precision highlighted in everything from the interior decor to the smooth stones on display.

“There’s a strong element of curiosity, and also an element of novelty,” Morante explains of the interesting store layout and its ability to draw in passers-by. The Italian jeweller is the new kid on the block that everyone wants to know. This duality of being the fresh face in Hong Kong, accompanied by its rich Milanese heritage, is paramount to Pomellato’s unique marketing strategy. The brand has formed relationships with some of the city’s most influential ladies, and with its increasing popularity, Pomellato will continue to woo the women of Hong Kong with another Canton Road boutique further down the line.

The quick ease with which the screen legend McQueen could capture female hearts flashes through our thoughts. And with its easy elegance, Pomellato will seduce Hong Kong’s women just as effortlessly. ■



SOLID AS  
A ROCK

CLOCKWISE  
FROM LEFT

Andrea Morante, CEO of Pomellato; Capri necklace with cross; Veleno rings; Tilda Swinton; Nudo rings