

France Thierard

*How did you start making jewels?*

It all started here, in Venice, during a trip. At that time, I was living in Paris and working for the Comédie-Française, and I returned home with a “loot” of Venetian glass beads. I thought I must be mad for buying so many and take them back with no reason: I had no idea what I could ever do with them. Then I bought some thread and made my first sautoir. It was a success: people kept asking me where I bought it and hearing that I had made it myself, a friend even wanted one too. The official kick-off was at the annual awards evening of the Comédie-Française: I was wearing one and received many compliments and requests for replicas. Following that evening, Elle published an article on my creations... and I kept making more.

*How was the idea of the book born?*

Before the jewels. The reason I was in Venice the first time, when I bought all those glass beads, was to do field research to write the book; I already had that idea in mind. The “Venetian collection” of jewellery I created, is parallel to the book: there are four prototype of travellers, each with a specific profile in style and taste: the Dreamer, the Adventurer, the Erudite and the Elegant. Each has her dedicated itineraries and jewels.

*What are the materials used?*

Venetian glass beads always: they are a constant in my works because they represent the start of my career as a jewel designer. Gold, silver, plated metal, wrought in battuto technique; gold Venetian chain for some of the pieces; Polynesian pearls, red and black ebony for the forcola pendants, and gems. I am a museologist and art historian by education; I became gemmologist later, so gems and stones are of interest to me and feature in my creations, from the simplest to the most precious ones.

*Ongoing projects?*

Lisbon. I already have a jewels' collection inspired from the Azores' flowers. The professional labour is Venetian though: even if the inspiration for the design comes from a different city, the jewels come out of Venetian professionals' hands anyway.

*Is Venice still your muse?*

Certainly. Venice is what brought me to create jewellery and change my life. I even moved here. Plus, all my jewels are always handmade by Venetian artisans and jewellers: Saverio Pastor (better known as “Forcolaiotto”), Cipolati, Laberintho laboratory, ...