

Christian and
Yasmin Hemmerle

"We have learnt to take inspiration from everything around us—from nature to geometric lines in modern architectural buildings and, of course, travel."

Hemmerle boutique,
Munich, circa 1920



MAGIC IN METAL

A fine mélange of German craftsmanship and modernistic ethos, Hemmerle creates baubles for the bold, artistic bride.
By AKSHITA NAHAR JAIN

Based in Munich's hip Maximilianstrasse street for over a century, this heritage jeweller has appeased the bijoux needs of the Bavarian nobility as well as the present day fashion royalty. With a design history that has its root as creators of medals and ornaments for the Bavarian court, Hemmerle is a heritage jeweller who continues to wave the flag for exquisite hand-crafted jewellery. Founded by Joseph and Anton Hemmerle in 1893, Hemmerle is now run by Stefan and Sylveli Hemmerle along with their son, Christian and daughter-in-law Yasmin, making it a close-knit family affair.

At the turn of the last century, Hemmerle made the move from heritage jewellery to combining rare gemstones with common materials like iron and bronze to create unconventional jewellery that has become their signature now. Conceived on the request of a client who despised gaudy jewels, Stefan combined 19th-century Berlin iron with diamonds paving the path for a modernistic interpretation of gems. "My father took Hemmerle in a completely new direction when he pioneered the concept we are renowned for today by setting a diamond in textured iron. I have learnt from him not to be afraid to try new things and experiment," exclaims Christian. It is this experimental approach that shapes the jewellery at Hemmerle. The use of unorthodox material like iron, copper, wood, et cetera, against a dramatic backdrop of diamonds, spinels, rubellites and coloured tourmalines lends a neoteric vibe to the jewels. "The juxtaposition of materials we use gives our jewellery a vivacity that lends a different edge," says Christian about their novel pieces. He adds: "Whilst no two Hemmerle jewels are ever alike and no combination of materials the same, we do have our signature styles. Open ended harmony bangles capped with pavé diamonds, earrings with luxurious tassels, necklaces made from cut-stones, beads knitted in the round over silk, and unusual moonstones paired with carefully selected metals are pieces that bear our signature."

IMAGE COURTESY: HEMMERLE



"Interesting material can drive your creativity and push your boundaries as a designer."

Physalis and
pomegranate
brooch



With a design inspiration that's as diverse as their jewellery, Hemmerle produces ornaments that are truly one-of-a-kind. "We have learnt to take inspiration from everything around us—from nature to geometric lines in modern architectural buildings," says Christian. "My father was inspired by movements like the Bauhaus, Neue Sachlichkeit and Minimalism. We are also inspired by the places we visit; we once used teardrop-shaped Shiva Lingham stones that we unearthed along the banks of the Narmada River whilst in India," he finishes talking about his myriad design stimuli. From a chestnut brooch made of diamonds, obsidian, bronze, silver and gold to a fig brooch crafted from purple sapphires and demantoid garnets, the ornaments in Hemmerle's Nature's Jewels collection

display life-like realism that is difficult to imagine or replicate. Launched earlier this year, the pieces celebrate the beauty of Mother Nature and took over a year to create. Accompanied with a coffee-table book, this exotic collection of jewels is an ode to flora like no other.

Given the rarity of a Hemmerle design, it is no wonder that gems are the focal point of their pieces. "Gemstones are always our starting point and often we acquire a stone or pearl without a particular design in mind. Our designs start with a stone or pearl and then we work around it," says Christian. "We travel across the whole world treasure hunting for rare materials. Interesting material can drive your creativity and push your boundaries as a designer," he adds. An eye for detail and a heart for eccentric design is what composes a Hemmerle bride. "We work with all kinds of collectors from all over the world. The common denominator is that they are all art lovers with an eye for originality," says Christian about the Hemmerle client and muse.

His advice to brides, meanwhile, is simple. "We always say between a pair of earrings is a face. Therefore, the piece needs to be carefully selected to compliment the person who wears it." Modest yet profound, much like the jewellery he creates. "I think it's important to know the historical significance of the materials you wear and to appreciate the craftsmanship. Hemmerle pieces are aesthetic and comfortable; there is a lot of German engineering that goes behind the creation that you don't see. We are constantly measuring micro-millimetres and weighing the pieces to get the perfect result," says Christian. It is this philosophy for personalisation and attention to detail that draws the discerning bride to Hemmerle's ateliers. ■



Fig
brooch



Brass,
bronze,
and gold
earrings



Brown diamonds
and wood bangle

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