

Bashara
Concepts

Perla Marré™

Vermeer immortalized them in his paintings, Mikimoto put them around everyone's neck, "Coco" Chanel sewed them onto our clothing, Grace and Audrey made them a classic fashion essential, and now Gary Nightingale presents a work of art for the sole...

PerlaMarré

"The Ultimate Expression of Elegance and Feel Good"

Dallas, Texas-(June 6, 2005)- **PerlaMarré™** [www.perlamarre.com], the new luxury brand of handmade, lustrous footwear for women and men that cleverly incorporates a unique blend of genuine, cultured freshwater pearls from the Orient with the finest quality Italian leather. Pearls are the queen of all gems that have been cherished and idolized as a symbol of elegance and affluence for centuries. The innovative and elegant shoe designs are the first of their kind that both adorn and pamper the foot with aesthetic and therapeutic comfort.

"Adding a unique twist to an age old jewelry icon – the cultured pearl, and appreciating the zeal and excitement women have for fine designer shoes, it seems natural to incorporate the simple but elegant organic gem into the construction of high-end fashion shoes," PerlaMarré Creative Director and head designer Gary Nightingale said. While shoes are arriving in stores such as B.Whitman (817-410-3800) this summer, their official debut will be at the World Shoe Association Show in Las Vegas at the The Venetian Hotel and Resort (Suite 5337) August 4-7, 2005. The innovative and elegant shoe designs are the first of their kind that both adorn and pamper the foot with aesthetic and sensual comfort.

Throughout the ages, pearls have been treasured as art, medicine, currency, or to denote social class and distinction. Explorers risked their lives diving for them, knights wore them for protection, maidens wore them for their purity, and Cleopatra drank them for their richness. Entire armies and nations were financed with just one pearl.

It is widely known throughout much of the Orient that pearls have a certain therapeutic quality because of their natural composition of microelements such as calcium, and conductive properties such as being cool to the touch. According to astrology, the pearl is considered a stone of the moon and any "hot" condition can be cured with the "cool" of the pearl.

-more-

Those who wear PerlaMarré will experience a subtle, massaging sensation from the signature, patent-pending sole which combines beautifully styled cushioned leather padding and a cluster of pearls in their purest form. Each pair of PerlaMarré shoes is constructed with more than 700 cultured pearls (approximately 4 mm diameter, AA or AAA grade) that are hand-stitched onto the foot-bed of the sole (or sock) and also used as accents on the exterior of the straps of each shoe. Each distinctive pearl acts as a small prism, reflecting light from its surface creating iridescence. Like us, no two pearls are alike in that they each have their own size, shape and color. Beauty and elegance combined with the sensation of having the foot contact both a cool bed of pearls and comfortable cushioning gives PerlaMarré shoes its unique signature.

The artistic and well-constructed designs developed in part by Connexasia, Ltd. and its principals Gary Nightingale and Craig Tomchesson, are a perfect blend of Eastern and Western influences. Pearls farmed in China and ValPel leather imported from Italy are handcrafted into every shoe while the design is inspired by the latest footwear fashion to match different luxury lifestyles.

There are more than 20, aptly sea-inspired named, styles of PerlaMarré shoes for women ranging from bridal to evening to daytime to resort casual, with many of the styles offered in several seasonal color options. High heels and flats come in strappy, slide, slipper, sandal, sling back, thong, and wedge styles that are embellished entirely with pearls, other natural “water” inspired elements (coral, shells, mother of pearl) and delicate sparkling accents. There are also 3 men’s styles that creatively blend casual comfort, the natural look of the pearl and masculine accents. Pearls naturally come in creamy white, peach, or mauve which are the selected colors used on the foot bed (or sock) to keep an everlasting lustrous appearance over the life of the shoe. Natural and different colored dyed pearls are also used in as accents. The finest kid-skin, kid-suede, and textured leather is used on the uppers with colors and textures ranging in metallics, pastels, natural suedes, exotics and rich earthy tones. Women’s sizes are available in half-sizes from 6 to 12, in medium width, at suggested retail price ranging from \$200 to \$350, while the 3 men’s styles are offered in half-sizes 8-14 at a retail price of \$350.

About the Designer: While relatively new to the shoe industry, Gary Nightingale has received extensive training in shoemaking and beadwork. With a background in product design, engineering and marketing, he has always had the savvy for fashionable aesthetics, quality driven processes and market trends which he applies to his footwear creations. Gary adds to the success of PerlaMarré a mixed race heritage of East and West. With a mother from China and father Caucasian, Gary grew up speaking both English and Mandarin and appreciating both American and Chinese cultures, a key ingredient in developing and sourcing his product. Gary resides in both Dallas and Hong Kong, two very trendy and fashion conscious cities and desinations that help with his design inspirations.

-more-

About the cultured freshwater pearls: Pearls have been collected in their natural state since the 12th century, while the farming of cultured pearls has been around for about 100 years. Pearl development takes two to six years, which is a long investment period between nucleation and market. Each pearl producing mollusk will yield 1 to 40 cultured pearls, with the shape and size determined by the implanted “seed” characteristics. The color and quality of each pearl is determined by the length of gestation and mother-nature taking its course. Harvesting usually occurs in November, before winter, while the pearl sorting and pre-processing (drilling and stringing) happens year round, all of which are very labor-intensive processes. Aside from the natural colored pearls (white, peach, and mauve) a special dying process enables a multitude of colors to be added to the once conservative palette. The pearls used in PerlaMarrè shoes come from China’s fertile pearl farms located in the valleys of the Yangtse River, as well as its tributaries. Most of these farms are located within 300 to 500 miles of Shanghai. China is an acknowledged global leader in the cultured freshwater pearl industry.

Pearls were used as medicine as early as 2000 BC in China and as late as the 1600s in Europe. Arabs and Persians believed the gems cured a variety of diseases. In the Middle Ages, pearls were ground up and used to make love potions. Some cultures today still believe that pearls are an aphrodisiac. In many countries, especially India, pearls were ground up and made into balms that would be applied to the affected areas of the body. Even today in Asian countries, according to superstition, astrology and myth, ground pearl salves are used as fabled cures for various conditions, including allergies, inflammation, stomach upset, heart problems and insomnia just to name a few.

For more information on ordering or to schedule an appointment to view the shoes or to talk to its creators, please contact Lisa Endicott of Bashara Concepts at the number below.

###

Contact:

Elizabeth Bashara, Bashara Concepts

917-447-6989

ebashara@aol.com