

# A conversation with... Alessio Boschi

by Ivan Allegranti



**Alessio, please tell us about yourself. How did you get involved in the jewellery business and when did you realise that you wanted to be a jewellery designer?**

When I was seven years old my parents divorced and I went to Greece on holiday. It was my first trip away from Italy and I was very excited. I visited an exhibition of the jewels of Philip II of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great. And I was so fascinated by that gold and by the manufacture of those precious jewels that it was impossible to pull me away from the exhibition. So, this was my first insight into jewellery. My second one was when, after I studied science in high-school, I enrolled at the Accademia di Costume e Moda in Rome (the Fashion Academy of Rome) where I joined the jewellery design course, which was very influential at the time. When I graduated, I won a scholarship at the Accademia and after that, by chance, a friend of my cousin's – a trader of stones – asked me if I wanted to join him in Greece to sell jewellery collections to jewellery companies. And then, Mihail

Vassiliadis, a Greek jewellery company, asked me to work for them. They "adopted" me, and I stayed in Greece for three years. My third bond with jewellery happened when I saw an exhibition about 18th century painters from Valtellina, famous for their artistic pendulum clocks, to whom I'm distantly related. I was so fascinated by their craftsmanship that my love for jewellery just kept growing. My love for jewellery was born when I was 19 years old and studying at the Accademia di Costume e Moda, but it really grew when I was in Greece where I discovered my true calling.

**You founded your own company, Alessio Boschi Jewels, in 2013. How long was the journey to this point?**

In 2010 I founded Lux2Lux with my best friend. We started to make jewellery ourselves, and, using the connections I had in Asia, selling it to Chinese customers. One of our main clients was Florentia, a Chinese brand of pearl jewellery, and another one was

Queen of Jade in Beijing. For the latter I was designing and producing unique pieces of jade. Then in 2013 I decided to move to Thailand where I founded Alessio Boschi Jewels. I didn't name the brand after myself because I'm a narcissist, but because I won many jewellery competitions, making my name recognisable, which meant the business could grow easily. Around a year later I founded another company, Tao, where I was joined by my former assistant at Florentia and, soon after, by my sister Valeria.

**What are the stylistic codes of the Alessio Boschi jewellery brand?**

The first thing is the colours. I love colours because they are the meaning of life. For me they are everything, with or without using stones. For instance, needles of rutile within quartz or bubbles inside tourmalines that look like flowers are fascinating and beautiful to me. I also really like colours because we use them as a representation of our emotions and feelings. Another important characteristic of my jewels



is the movement. I think that movement gives more life and sparkle to the stones I use. I'm also fascinated by multifunctionality. As a Roman, I love to see people's interactions and watch them play and have fun with jewellery. It has such an amazing and surprising effect when a ring becomes a pendant, or an earring can be transformed into five smaller earrings. I also favour curves over spiky and geometric lines, because for me they are more feminine. Another rule of my creativity is that I love to play with hidden details, because I don't like jewellery you understand too quickly. Instead I want that my customers to interact with it and feel emotions for it. That's why my brand's motto is "A precious journey" – I want people to discover the details of each jewel through the story I tell them. Finally, the most important characteristic of my jewellery is that the pieces need to have a story.

**Is there a stone which you tend to use frequently in your collections, and if so, what is it and what is its attraction?**

I love all stones, and it depends on the collection and the collection's spirit. But I have a love affair with Paraiba tourmalines – they are very expensive and I use them a lot in my Thalassa collection (Greek for the sea). I once used a 0.8mm stone as a detail in a piece of a jewellery, and I like it because it's very pure. I don't use fancy stones, because I can't source them. I make high-end jewellery at affordable prices – I prefer to work with high quality stones but not rare stones, and I prefer to focus on exceptional design which adds value to the stone.



**Your brand doesn't opt for celebrity placements or brand ambassadors – what is the reason behind this choice?**

When I was working with an Australian pearl company, they approached many stars from the Academy Awards red carpet. I designed an Art Deco-style collection for the awards one year, and it worked well as a celebrity placement. But it was a time when celebrities were affordable. Now, in my opinion, unless you don't have a muse or a face for a campaign, it makes no sense to give your jewellery to celebrities because it doesn't really help increase sales. So, instead of using money on celebrities, I prefer buying stones and doing something unique.

**What do you want to express with your jewellery?**

The first thing I want to express with my jewellery is my passion for it. In fact, I like to repeat this saying: "When you buy something from an artist you're buying more than an object. You are buying hundreds of hours of errors and experimentation. You're buying years of frustration and moments of pure joy. You're not buying just one thing, you are buying a piece of heart, a piece of soul... a small piece of someone else's life." I want to express myself with my jewellery to let my customers enter my dream world and my soul.

**Please tell us more about your new pieces. What is their main inspiration and their major characteristics?**

The collection is an extension of my three main collections. *Naturalia* is inspired by animals, nature, flowers and natural phenomena, *Thalassa* is devoted to sea creatures and everything related to the sea, and *Historica* – my personal favourite – is inspired by architecture and great people of the past. In fact, with the new collection I can explore and get to know many great people from the past, like *Marie Antoinette* or *Casanova*, or the *Mughul* dynasty. With the *Breakfast in Jaipur* collection I want to express the beauty of feminine icons like *Audrey Hepburn*, but with *Rajasthani* craftsmanship. These pieces are my most expensive ones because I use decorations developed during the *Mughul* era. The other piece, a world premiere, is the *Thalassa* collection embracing the ultimate in multifunctionality. It will be officially launched during *Baselworld 2018*. The shell ring is a masterpiece. It is inspired by scallop shells and at first glance you see that it is a ring, and you can remove the shell and wear the ring on its own. But when you open the shell you find a chain with sea creature pendants, and there is a separate piece you can easily attach to the shell which looks like a fish skull and which becomes a brooch.



**What are some of your dreams – both in terms of business and your free time away from work?**

In terms of business, I hope to have enough money to keep creating more jewellery. But I also want to restructure my business and hire more people. In fact, at this stage I'm the 100% owner of my company which employs seven people – and I am very happy about this. But I would also love for the company to boom. I would love to be discovered by someone who believes in me and my creativity. In terms of my private life, I would love to live in Civita di Bagnoregio near Orvieto. When I'm there I feel like I can get back to normal life, like in the olden days, with people who live with real values. So, my dream is to retire there and buy another house so that I can run a B&B.

**What are the future plans for your brand? Can you reveal something we might see in the future?**

In the coming months, I will expand to Europe because I see that there is a demand for my jewels. I'm considering founding a company in Cyprus, because

it's the door to Europe. I'm also thinking about making objects d'art. At Baselworld 2018 you will see an expansion of the Breakfast in Jaipur collection and there will be a new collection inspired by 18th century art, featuring micromosaics used in a modern way. Also, a revisited Castellani in which the jewels intertwine modern and antique features. And then, there will be a new masterpiece, a necklace called Medusa.

**What do you think are the three characteristics that a perfect piece of jewellery should have?**

The first is excellent craftsmanship of the piece, and it needs to have a story behind it. Secondly, jewellery should be beautifully wearable, expressing the owner's femininity. Finally, the jewel should be ethically correct – made with stones, materials and craftsmanship that respect nature and human rights.





ALESSIO BOSCHI

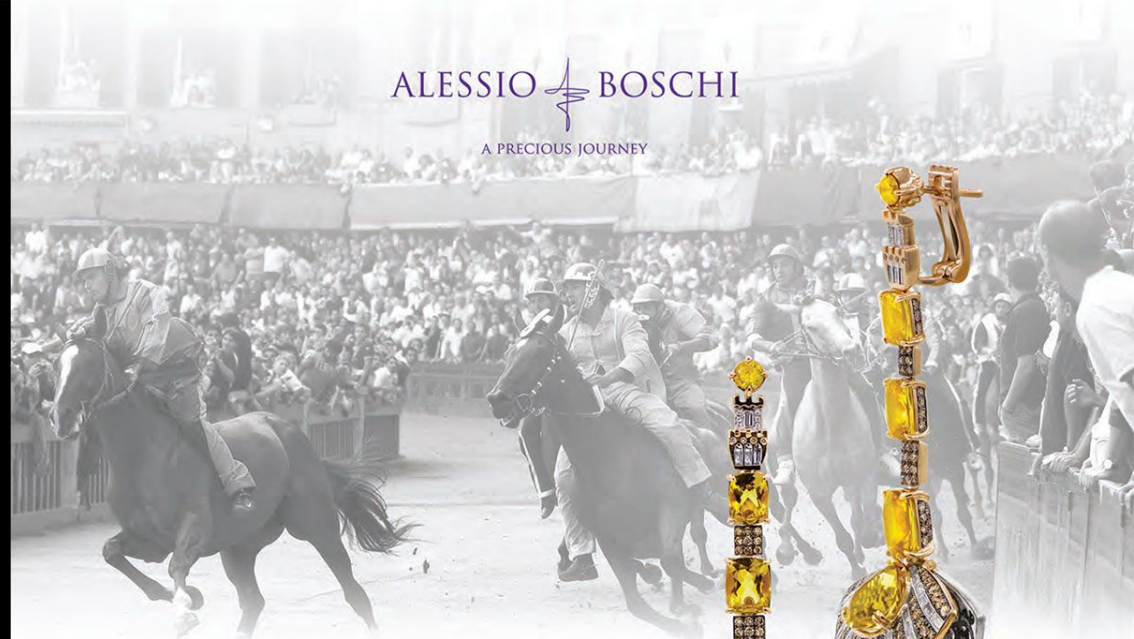
A PRECIOUS JOURNEY

HOMAGE TO PIAZZA NAVONA

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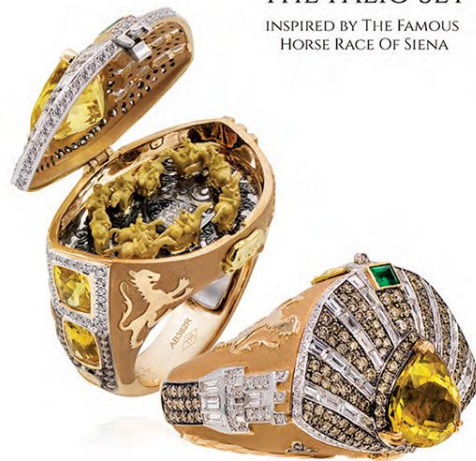
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A PRECIOUS JOURNEY



THE PALIO SET

INSPIRED BY THE FAMOUS  
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BASELWORLD

MARCH 22 - 27, 2018