



A

№. 78 JUN/JUL 2015 LL10,000



Tropical fever

Steamy summer style



Diamonds are forever

By Rowan Clare



Tabbah's couture approach to jewelry design

The cornerstone to many an engagement, the diamond has assumed a central role in romances ever since Archduke Maximilian of Austria proposed to Mary of Burgundy in 1477 with a ring set with thin pieces of diamond. Fast forward half a millennia and an anonymous aristocrat's 20th wedding anniversary was looming. A tradition cemented on his wedding day, he'd always surprised his wife with a bouquet of white roses surrounded by red roses. After two decades together, he was ready to reproduce

the intimacy of the tradition in a diamond necklace that she could keep forever. "We help people express their emotions in jewelry," explains Nagib Tabbah, C.E.O., designer and heir to House of Tabbah, the fine jewelry business that crafted the masterpiece. "Offering the bouquet in diamonds instead of flowers – it meant something to him and to her."

House of Tabbah has accompanied its elite clique of clients through highly charged moments since its inception in 1862. "It's not rational, it's not mathematical. It's more of an emotional journey," says Tabbah, who collaborates closely with clients for months to ensure the perfect result. Comparing the process to that of designing a yacht,

it's clear that the celebrities, royalty and politicians purchasing such pieces are not fettered by financial constraint. Instead, they select Tabbah for its reputation as purveyor of beautiful stones and the highest standard of craftsmanship. In an age of copycat designs, Tabbah is differentiated by its approach to jewelry. The majority of its pieces are bespoke, conceived in a similar manner to haute couture, and created around the exacting specifications of the world's wealthiest and well-connected.

As a child, Nagib Tabbah spent countless hours in his family's workshop. After studying precious stones in New York, he returned to the family business in Beirut.

Now, he represents the house's storied history, traveling frequently to Japan, the United States and Switzerland armed only with his sketchbook and pen. Many of his royal clients have been with the house for generations; assuming the traditional role of family jeweler, Tabbah is valued for its loyalty and discretion.

While he may craft some of the world's most exquisite jewels, Tabbah is relaxed when it comes to the etiquette behind wearing them. "It's really about you and your allure," he explains. "Be yourself, and they will look beautiful."

Allenby St., Downtown Beirut, tel. 01.975.777, tabbah.com

