

# MATERIA

BOHEMICA



Inspirations  
& Innovations

PRECIOSA

AW 2020

PRECIOSA

## Director's Note

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In your hands you hold our fourth issue of *Materia Bohemica*, with its pages full of ideas for AW 2020 together with a closer look at our growing assortment of made-to-order products and their many application possibilities.

This issue, entitled *Metamorphosis*, focuses on the ongoing transformation of Preciosa alongside the transformation of the fashion industry as we know it. Over the past year, our team has revisited our core values as well as the perceived added value we bring to our customers; after much thought and deliberation, we have decided to focus more heavily on our semi-finished or what we are calling “made-to-order” products, which both save time and minimize waste. To ease this shift, we are also expanding our in-house application and design services and enhancing our application center.

Our own metamorphosis and the inspiration for this campaign comes both from nature, which plays a vital role in the production of our products, as well as from the application process itself: turning a plain piece of fabric into something special, which is mirrored by the proverbial journey from caterpillar to butterfly. Beginning with the raw material then loose stones transformed into a semi-finished product and from there to the catwalk, the metamorphosis of each individual crystal or fine jewelry stone is unique.

For this season's fashion story, we tapped one of New York Fashion Week's hottest tickets, Christian Cowan, whose designs showcase the customization possibilities of our made-to-order range. Its newest additions, crystal sheet and crystal mesh, have expanded the creative potential of crystal embellishment into more of a service than a product range that saves both time and labor cost. With a simple PDF file, we can turn a logo into a hotfix transfer or laser it from crystal sheet. Or, if all-over crystal is more to your taste, we trust that you will find the customization possibilities of our crystal net and crystal mesh as exciting as ever.

It may come as no surprise that a company run on nearly five centuries of tradition takes time to implement change; however, I am happy to say that we are well on our way and we look forward to sharing more stories, more services and more products that turn the ordinary into extraordinary.

**Jan Štiller**  
*Commercial Development Director*



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## AW 2020

# The Vibe

While nature and technology continue to fuse together into new hybrid ecosystems, fashion continues its search for new materials and products that straddle the ever-thinning line between the physical and digital worlds. Performance is everything and sustainability is key, and chosen as much for how it appears on screen as it does on the catwalk, fabric itself will sink or swim a collection. It's now about long-term appeal, both in terms of quality and design, and minimizing waste. Patterns and tailoring are pushing the boundaries from the two to three-dimensional as a new era of occasion wear is ushered in with a flourish of fantastical constructions and fondant-like silhouettes.



Explore and experiment with pattern cutting and abstract animal prints.

Products, top to bottom: Chaton Rose MAXIMA in Rose Opal, Round Cabochon in Crystal, Chaton Rose MAXIMA in Sun AB, Chaton Rose MAXIMA in Crystal Peacock Green, Chaton Rose MAXIMA in Smoked Sapphire, Crystal Mesh in Vitrail Light with Black plating, Plastic Banding in Fluorescent Yellow, Crystal Sheet in Crystal AB on Black film.



Embrace preppy classics subverted by streetwear edge and celebrate the craft.

Products, left to right: Crystal Mesh in Crystal with Gold plating, Crystal Sheet in Crystal Aurum on Black film, Metal Pyramid Stud, Wide in Crystal Honey with Rhodium plating, Chaton MAXIMA Rivet in Jet with Silver plating, Spike Bandings in Jet Hematite with Black plating, Chaton Rose MAXIMA in Red Velvet (cadmium-free), Metal Pyramid Stud, Narrow in Jet Hematite with Ruthenium plating.

Re-imagine air-brushed femininity and give cozy minimalism a try.



Products, top to bottom: Round Bead, Regular in White Opal, Chaton MAXIMA in Vintage Rose, Oval Cabochon in Beige Matrix, Crystal Sheet in Crystal AB with Transparent film, Round Nacre Pearl MAXIMA in Crystal Ceramic Grey, Alpha Round Brilliant-cut nanogem in Opaque Ivory, Crystal Strap in Beige.



## CRYSTAL CONFIDENTIAL

Head of product and services Marek Kinazs discusses Preciosa’s shift from purveyor of crystals to made-to-order magicians.

This season we are spotlighting four products to coincide with the four stages of metamorphosis. In numerology the number four represents self-control, stability and the accomplishment of long-term goals. As coincidental as it may seem, long-term growth is exactly what we aim to achieve with these four products comprising our made-to-order range. By focusing more on customizable, semi-finished solutions, we hope to transform and expand the possibilities of embellishment for designers.

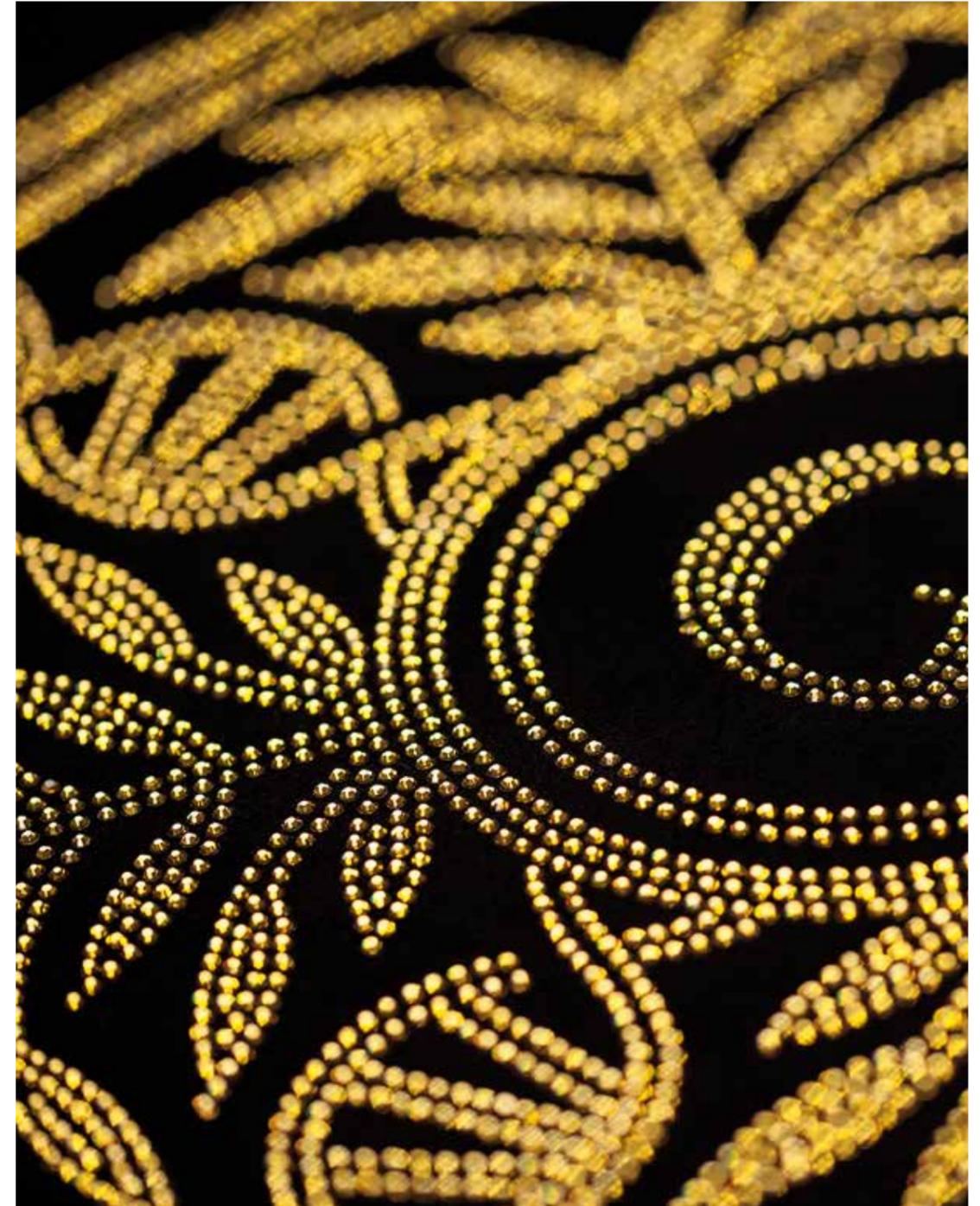
Two of our made-to-order products are well known to many of our customers already; the first, crystal net, was launched four seasons ago. Having quickly established itself as a runway and red-carpet staple, crystal net with its elastic shimmer effect is one of our most unique, sought-after products on the worldwide market. This season we are re-launching crystal net with new, expanded customization parameters, our assortment of hotfix flatback stones in addition to round chaton roses.

Secondly, we are revisiting our crystal hotfix transfers. Though this technology has been on the market for nearly a decade, we are transforming our own production process with the establishment of the Preciosa Application Center. All made in-house, we are working

to optimize the way in which these best sellers are made to deliver them faster and at a lower cost without compromising on quality or durability.

Crystal mesh, one of the new additions to our made-to-order range, is reminiscent of liquid diamonds and comes in every color and coating of our Chatons MAXIMA, as well as several plating options. And last, but certainly not least, we have crystal sheet which takes us back to our application center, where we can laser from it any desired shape, motif or logo. With these new products, we are especially pleased to bring to the market high quality, easy-to-apply versions of similar, less durable products that have been available for some time.

I’d like to end with one more exciting new development: a digital platform on which the user can interface with the design of our made-to-order products. This configurator of sorts allows you to change the specifications of your design at the click of a mouse, producing a digital version within seconds. Conceived as a way to give our customers a more comprehensive understanding of just how many customization possibilities we are able to provide, we hope this new platform is as fun for you as it is informative.



Crystal Transfer created for Japanese cosmetic brand, Genomer.

# METAMORPHOSIS

Inspirations & Innovations **AW 2020**

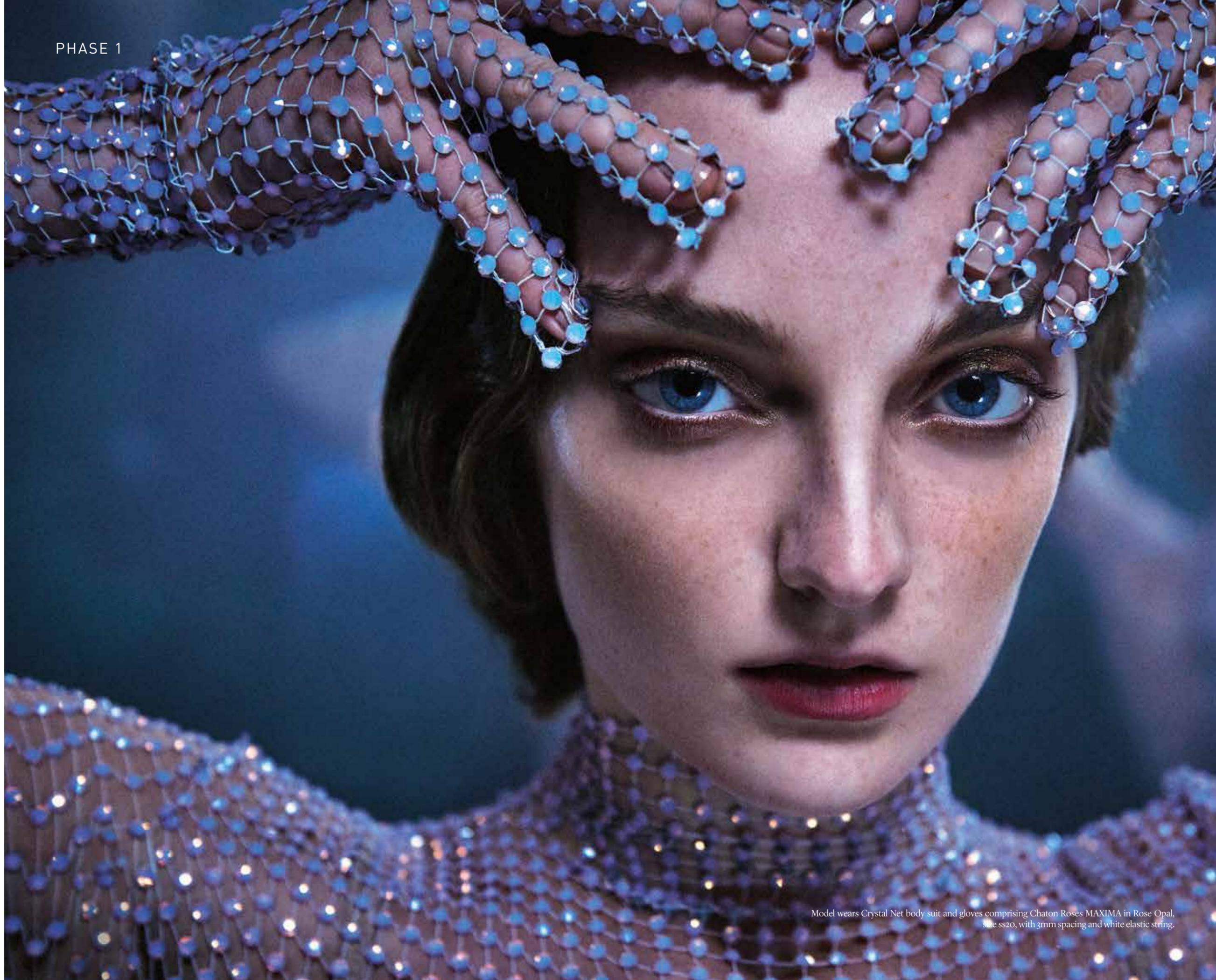
## THE MOST PROFOUND OF ALL ACTS

As arid summer afternoons fade to cool, dewy autumn evenings we are swept yet again from one season to the next, forever in forward motion, forever changing. It is said that nothing lasts forever and as the poet Ovid once observed in his aptly titled *Metamorphoses*: “What we have been, or now are, we shall not be tomorrow.”

His words, which are perhaps truer now than ever before, resonate well with our twenty-first-century culture, one in which we are constantly forced to re-think, re-invent and adapt our way of life and ourselves. Like us, our methods and means of self-expression are constantly evolving, and it is full of this sentiment that we enter the AW 2020 season.

More thoughtful are we when it comes to what we consume and how we dress. We are entering an age of deep self-reflection that will give way to a tailored, calculated glamor with attention to detail the likes of which fashion has never seen. Here, in our imagined tranquil oasis, we explore the transformation of a single element, crystal, through hybrid made-to-order fabrics and stylistic layering.

PHASE 1



Model wears Crystal Net body suit and gloves comprising Chaton Roses MAXIMA in Rose Opal, size ss20, with 3mm spacing and white elastic string.



PHASE 2



Model wears silk bow mini dress embellished with Crystal Transfer comprising Chaton Roses MAXIMA in Rose Opal, size ss16, with 3mm spacing over Rose Opal Crystal Net body suit.

PHASE 3



Model wears Crystal Mesh coat comprising Chatons MAXIMA in Gold Quartz, size ss8, with Gold plating over Rose Opal Crystal Transfer mini dress and Rose Opal Crystal Net body suit.



Model wears Gold Quartz Crystal Mesh coat over Rose Opal Crystal Transfer mini dress and Rose Opal Crystal Net body suit and gloves.



Model wears PVC cape embellished with Crystal Sheet flowers in Crystal AB on Transparent film and ABS Cone Studs in Crystal with Silver plating over Gold Quartz Crystal Mesh coat, Rose Opal Crystal Transfer mini dress and Rose Opal Crystal Net body suit and gloves.

# CHRISTIAN COWAN

X

## PRECIOSA

Twice a year, our team boards a plane to New York to witness his crystal-covered confections shimmer down the runway at New York Fashion Week, impressing his front row spectators with names like Christina, Cardi and Paris, (unless of course she's walking the show). This time, for once he came to us.



Christian at the Preciosa Application Center in North Bohemia, Czech Republic.



In our first ever international campaign collaboration, we tapped one of New York's brightest talents, Christian Cowan, to inject some of his signature flair into this season for the launch of our made-to-order product range. Who better to design the looks for a campaign in which the novelties such as crystal mesh and crystal sheet quite literally lend themselves to an all-over, hyper embellished aesthetic? What's special about Christian is that his looks are as artful and sophisticated as they are full of bling.

**"Over the years, crystals and embellishment have become a huge part of my brand identity."**

It's unusually chilly for July as Christian arrives in Prague, suitcases in tow full of looks designed for our fashion story. Having designed several recent collections featuring copious amounts of neon, he's fully on board with a more subdued pastel-colored campaign and its inspiration: metamorphosis, which we've been discussing over e-mail for several months. Metamorphosis was selected not only to serve as a metaphor for Preciosa's recent shift from a vast portfolio of loose stones to a more curated selection of products with an emphasis on the made to order, but also for the fashion industry at large. A Central St Martins graduate and New York Fashion Week veteran, Christian is quick to weigh in and we chat about the state of fashion, the most recent business deals and the perils of rogue taxi drivers all the way to the hotel. After a quick rest, Christian and his colleague, Natthias, join us for dinner during which our UK-born, New York-based guests get their first taste of authentic, hearty Czech cuisine and (to our relief) enjoy it.

The next morning, we're off to Kamenický Šenov, just short of the Polish border, to begin our tour of Crystal Valley at Preciosa Lighting, where we all try our hand at blowing glass vases, (Christian does well), and from there to Preciosa's traditional seed bead production. Walking through the factories, we witness up close some of the oldest, most traditional glassmaking techniques, which prompts Christian to remark on the importance of knowing the origin of the crystals.

"Over the years, crystals and embellishment have become a huge part of my brand identity. Not only is it interesting to see how they are produced for me as the designer, it's also important for my customers to understand the quality and thoughtfulness that goes into only this single aspect of a complete look," he says.

From handmade cabochons onto crystals, we finally arrive at Preciosa's Application Center. Christian is shown the molds of his own crystal transfer designs, including a tie-dye pattern and several versions of a bandana print, both for his SS 2020 collection. "This season, I was inspired by the places I visited as a child in Spain, where my mother is from. I spent time there growing up with my brothers and sisters and it's exciting to bring these memories to life," he says. Before we can get to the laser demonstration, our experts arrive to assist with the application of a final touch to one of his campaign show pieces: a PVC cape in desperate need of some crystal sheet flower cut-outs.

"The designs comprise my signature features like the big bow, lots of crystals as well as some new elements like the cape and the crystal mesh."

Before we know it, it's the day of the photoshoot, and (typical!) we've planned an outdoor shoot on a day that looks like nothing but rain. Christian remains undaunted and busies himself with a pair of crystal net gloves. "The gloves were especially challenging; we gave this task to our best seamstress. It took her plenty of time, but I think it was worth it - they look fabulous," he says gleefully. Alas, it starts to drizzle, but this is an autumn-winter campaign after all, and as the darkness approaches an eerie, quite calm sets in and we all agree the mood is perfect.

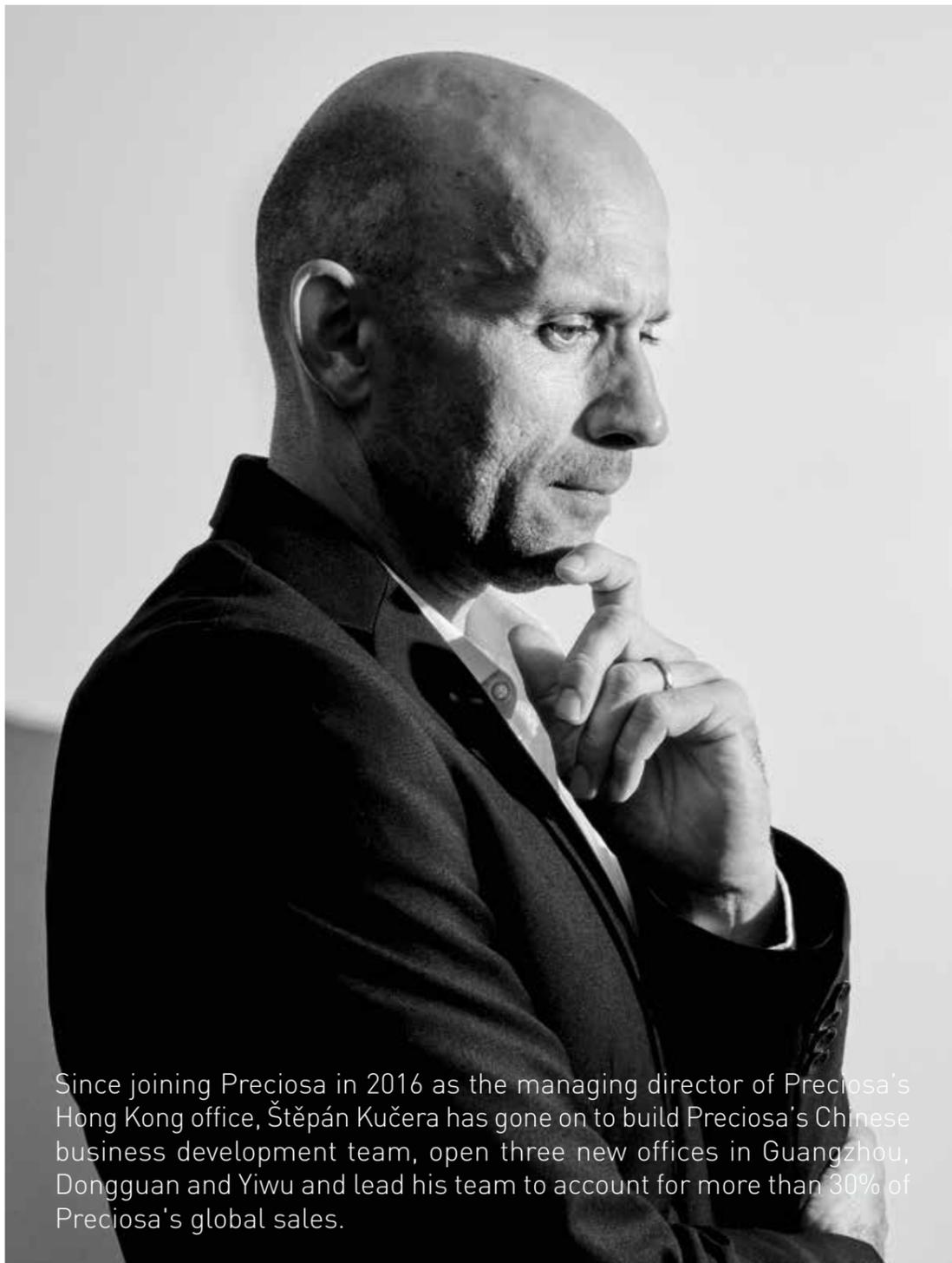
Christian is enjoying the slower pace of the shoot, as opposed to shooting thirty looks per day in a cramped studio. Once the shoot really gets going, sometime before midnight, we sit down with Christian one last time to speak about the looks themselves, each a more elaborate version of the previous one. "The designs comprise my signature features like the big bow, lots of crystals as well as some new elements like the cape and the crystal mesh. But, I must confess: crystal net is still my favorite material. I think these are always among my strongest looks." We all emphatically agree.



Christian on set of Preciosa's AW 2020 campaign shoot just outside of Prague.

## Preserving the Golden Goose

A conversation with Preciosa's managing director of China, Štěpán Kučera



Since joining Preciosa in 2016 as the managing director of Preciosa's Hong Kong office, Štěpán Kučera has gone on to build Preciosa's Chinese business development team, open three new offices in Guangzhou, Dongguan and Yiwu and lead his team to account for more than 30% of Preciosa's global sales.

**Many brands have entered the Chinese market over the past 15 years; however, this is no easy task. What do you think is the biggest obstacle for brands to gain traction with Chinese consumers?**

The biggest challenge is definitely competition and a saturated marketplace, which applies to every industry here. It's not enough just to be a supplier; there are thousands of companies that provide similar products no matter how unique you think your offer is. You have to have added value when it comes to your product or service, and consumers here are also starting to pay more attention to quality. There is also no room for error or a second chance; you have to succeed quickly to stay afloat.

**What was your strategy when introducing Preciosa to the Chinese market? How did you adapt?**

I don't think you can ever underestimate respect for the local culture or the value of listening to your customers; both were at the core of our strategy. Localization is an inevitable step for every international brand, especially for a market with huge potential like China. My hope is to combine my experience abroad with our team's knowledge of the local market situation to provide our customers with a set of unique services and solutions.

**Chinese economic growth is currently slowing. What does this mean for you and your team?**

It depends on how you look at it. To maintain the level of economic growth that has been taking place in China is not sustainable on any market; it was always clear that it would have to slow down eventually. Double-digit growth will always turn into single-digit growth, which is much more sensible and healthier. Nothing about the recent cool down has been a surprise and we can still very much benefit from the current situation. I see many opportunities here despite a slowing economy.

**What's the most noticeable change you've seen in China over the years?**

The generation of young Chinese who have studied abroad are now returning and you can see their influence. They are coming back because they see opportunities here, and now they have more experience and understand differences in global cultures. Chinese society is becoming much more international; it's

easier than ever to communicate and earn each other's friendship and respect.

**How has the average wage increase affected China's production industry?**

Companies are beginning to move their production to other Asian countries; for example, we've noticed a lot of the shoe production has moved from Dongguan to elsewhere in Southeast Asia. However, these alternative countries, such as Vietnam or Malaysia, don't have the infrastructure yet, so it will take some time before these moves will become profitable. It may appear cheaper, but it's also risky because the business environment in these areas hasn't matured as it has in China. Salaries grow with the economy, so this increase in wages is quite natural.

"I don't think you can ever underestimate respect for the local culture or the value of listening to your customers; both were at the core of our strategy."

**Can you talk more about your customers? Do you work more with local customers or international brands that have production sites in China?**

In terms of international brands, we work with many timepiece manufacturers followed by jewelry, footwear and handbag producers. Locally, we are beginning to establish relationships with emerging Chinese brands; it's great because the decision makers and manufacturers are all located here so we try to use this to our advantage whenever we can.

**What is most specific about doing business in China as an international brand?**

Again, it depends on what type of company you are. Since Preciosa is more of a supplier, it was necessary for us to build a local team who understand the economic and business landscapes and can communicate, both verbally and culturally. I am fluent in Chinese, but this isn't enough, especially

to grow here as fast as we have. Generally, China is specific, but this is something people spend a lifetime figuring out; for example, in the South, business is more profit driven, while in the North it's more about relationships.

**What is the added value of Preciosa in China?**

Firstly, all of our products are made in the Czech Republic, which means that they must meet a strict set of EU safety and consumer regulations. Additionally, Preciosa has very strong customization capabilities, which our customers here really appreciate. We are also moving away from the seasonal release of products and beginning to role them out as the customers demand them, such as the recent launch of our new Alpha Round Brilliant cut for fine jewelry stones, which took place in June. Timing is becoming increasingly important within our industry and we are always striving to continuously improve our ability to give our customers what they want when they want it.

"It's only a matter of time before the most talented Chinese designers will begin to take their place on the global stage."

**Preciosa has been more active in Chinese fashion in recent seasons. Can you talk more about this?**

Through some Chinese designers we have participated in many top international fashion events, including the big four fashion weeks. We are also trying to strengthen our presence at Shanghai Fashion Week, which is the biggest in China. Over the past several seasons, the event has emerged as the most direct promotion of Chinese original design and is becoming increasingly recognized by the global fashion industry. Certainly, the domestic fashion design industry has been making progress, and it's only a matter of time before the most talented Chinese designers will begin to take their place on the global stage; it's our privilege to begin partnering with some of them now and to support them in this endeavor.

**For you personally, what is it like living in Guangzhou? Is there anything to which you simply cannot adapt?**

I don't think so; though, it's a lot about your mindset. China is different of course, but I can't think of anything I couldn't get used to. I have felt a connection to China since a very young age; I have loved Chinese history and culture since I was little. I also had a certain inclination toward languages, so it was natural that I chose Chinese as my specialty. After I graduated from Wuhan University, I returned to the Czech Republic in 1997 to continue studying and acquired a master's degree in philosophy in 2000. So, in terms of culture, I can say that I started preparing for it very early. After coming to China, I really felt that the country was developing at an extremely fast pace. China is constantly changing, which I love, and it's definitely boosted my confidence knowing I've managed to lay down roots here. I find Chinese people very friendly and also love the cuisine; I really do love living here.

**What's one thing we should learn from the Chinese?**

Tolerance. Chinese are very accepting.





# Metamorphosis noun

meta·mor·pho·sis | \ ,me-tə-'mɔr-fə-səs

1. **a:** change of physical form, structure, or substance especially by supernatural means

*the metamorphosis of humans into animals*

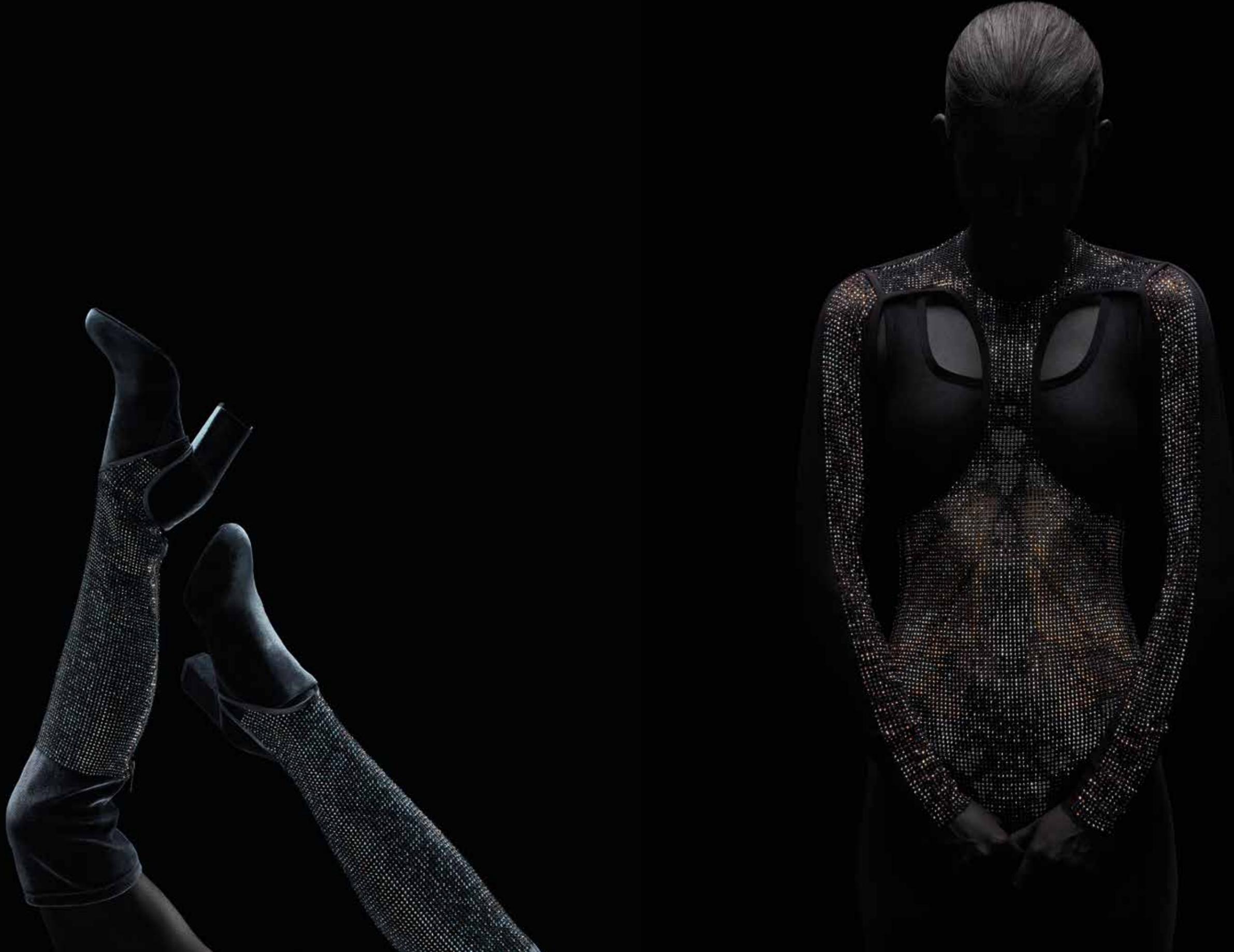
- b:** a striking alteration in appearance, character, or circumstances

**The company has gone through a series of *metamorphoses*.**

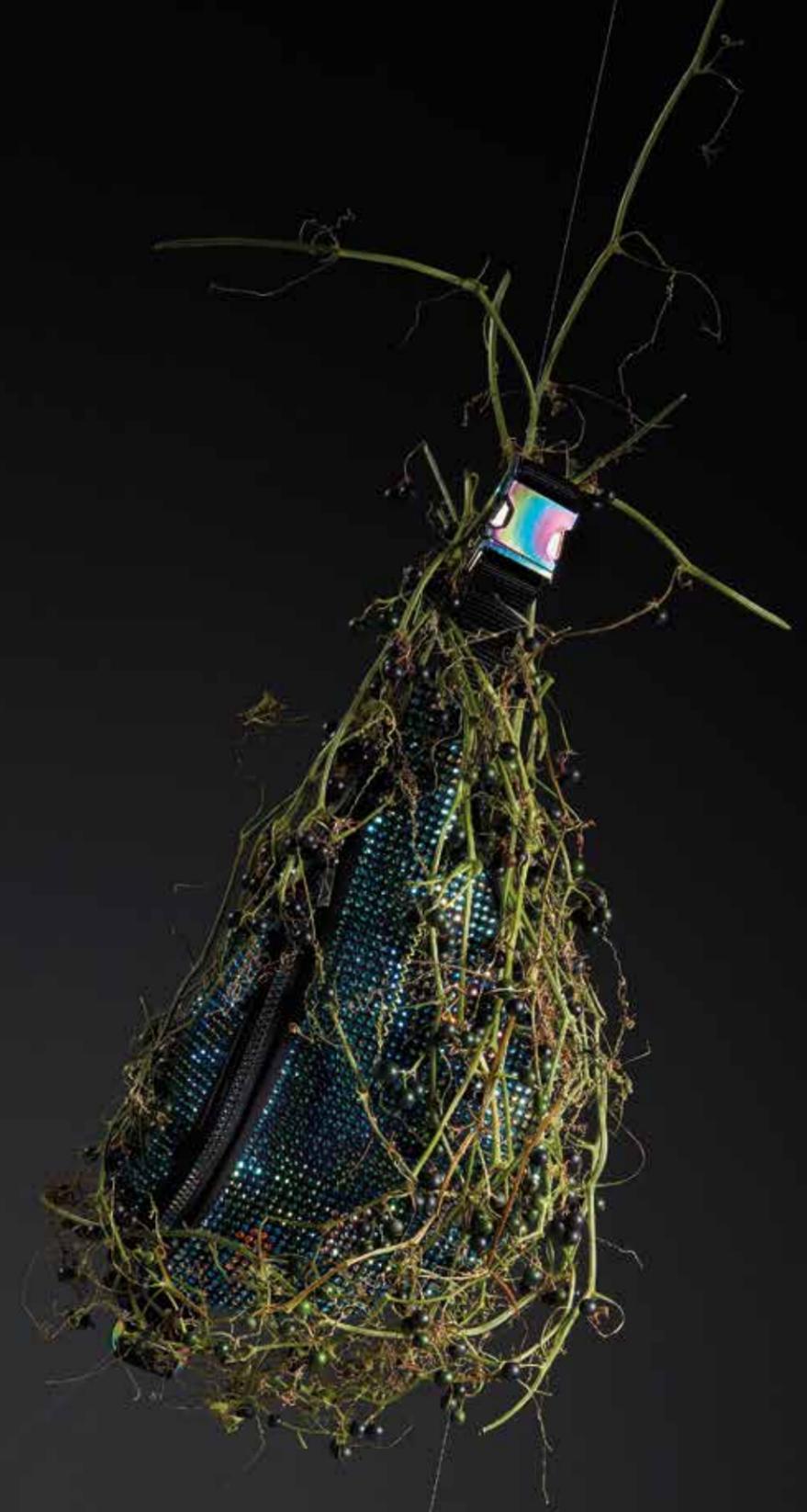
2. **:** a typically marked and more or less abrupt developmental change in the form or structure of an animal (such as a butterfly or a frog) occurring subsequent to birth or hatching

*the metamorphosis of caterpillars into butterflies*

This page: Removable Crystal Net shoe covers comprising Chaton Roses MAXIMA in Black Diamond, Black Diamond AB, Smoked Sapphire and Jet AB, all size ss10. Opposite page: Layered elastic Crystal Net body suit comprising Chaton Roses MAXIMA in Crystal Aurum, Crystal Honey, Crystal Labrador, Jet Hematite and Topaz AB, all size ss10.



This page: Watch with Crystal Transfer dial comprising Chaton Roses MAXIMA in Jet, size ss4, and Hyacinth, size ss6; Hyacinth stones are also applied to leather strap as a transfer. Opposite page: Fanny pack with Crystal Transfer comprising Chaton Roses MAXIMA in Capri Blue, Crystal Peacock Green, Aqua Bohemica, Peridot AB, Sun AB and Amethyst Opal AB, all size ss16.



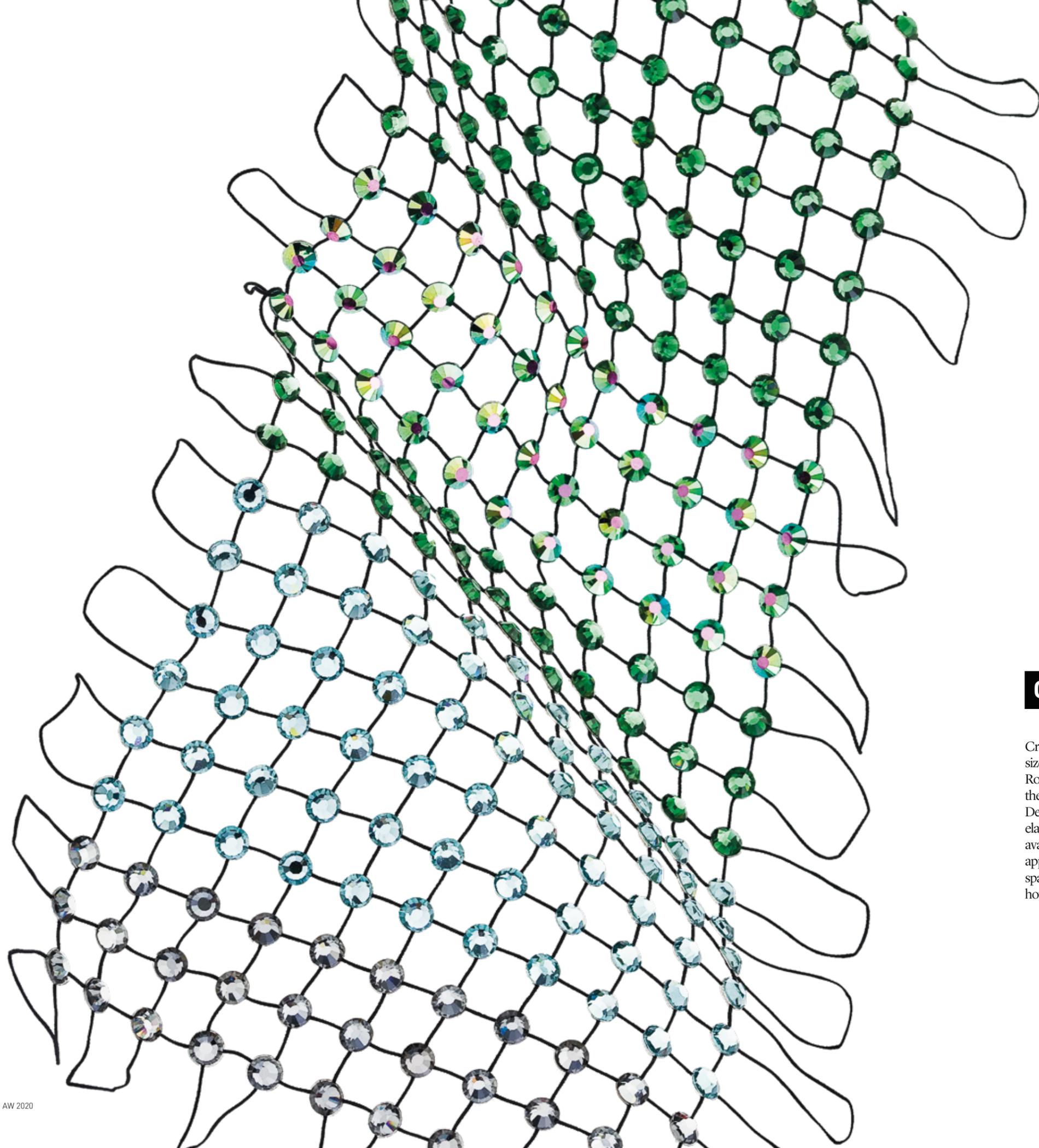


This page: Aluminum and Crystal Mesh choker comprising Chatons MAXIMA in Emerald AB and Aqua Bohemica, all size ss8. Opposite page: Crystal Mesh handbag with plexiglass handle comprising Chatons MAXIMA in White Opal, Crystal, Crystal Velvet, Crystal Vitrail Medium and Light Gold Quartz, all size sss.



This page: Watch with Crystal Sheet dial in Crystal AB on transparent film embellished with Chatons MAXIMA in Aqua Bohemica, size ss 5; protective glass covering is also embellished with Chatons MAXIMA in Crystal, Crystal AB and Vintage Rose in a combination of sizes from pp1 to pp3. Opposite page: Deconstructed shoe made of Crystal Sheet in Crystal AB and Crystal Labrador, both on transparent film, embellished with Strass Rings, size 12mm, and Chaton Roses MAXIMA in Crystal AB, size ss16.





## Crystal Net

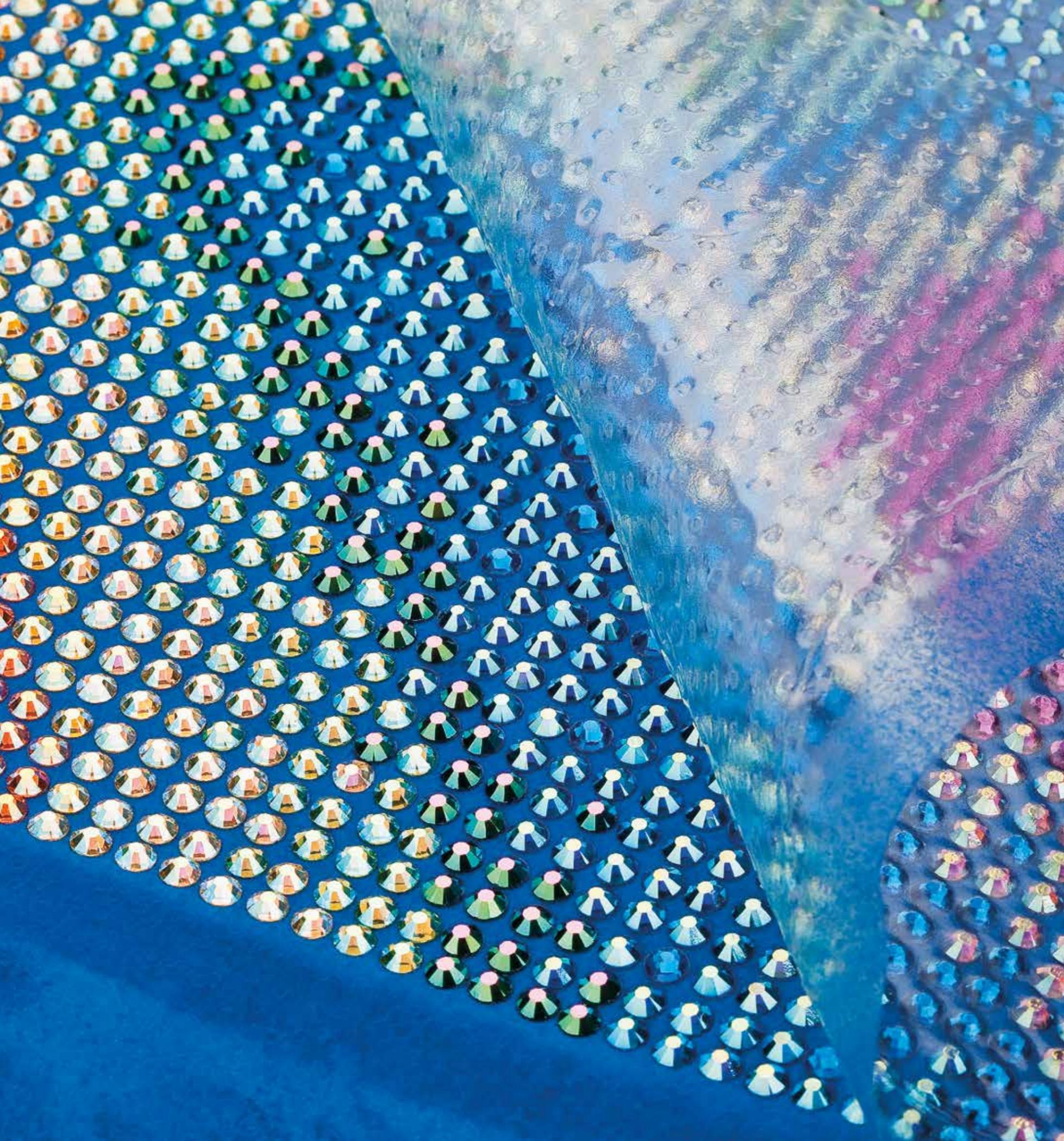
Crystal Net is created by applying any combination of up to ten different sizes, colors and shapes of our premium quality machine-cut hotfix Chaton Roses MAXIMA and assortment of flatback stones in a grid formation to the intersecting points of a net according to the specified design or motif. Depending on its intended use, crystal net can be made with elastic or non-elastic string and with loose, looped, filled-in or neat edges. Crystal Net is available in our regular assortment of colors and coatings suitable for hotfix application and in eight stone sizes from ss10 – ss48. A minimum of 1mm spacing between each stone is required. Crystal Net is suitable for sewing and hotfix application, both by hand and machine.

**IMAGINE**

**APPLY**

**WEAR**





## Crystal Transfers

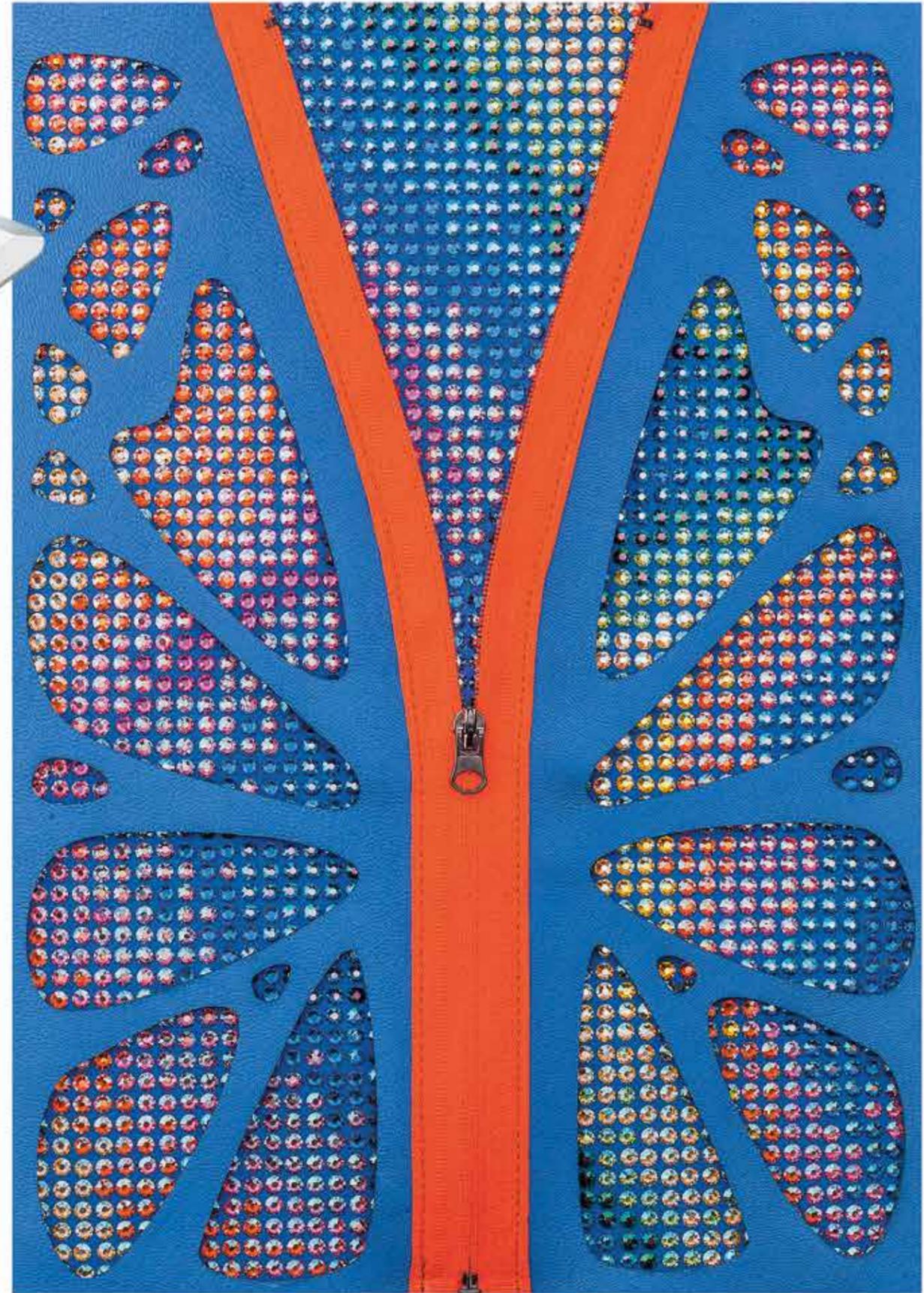
Crystal Transfers are created by applying any combination of up to ten different sizes, colors and shapes of our premium quality machine-cut hotfix Chaton Roses MAXIMA and assortment of flatback stones to transfer foil according to the specified design or motif. Crystal Transfers are available in our regular assortment of colors and coatings suitable for hotfix application and in every stone size from ss3. A minimum spacing of 0,5mm between each stone is required for stone sizes up to ss6; from size ss8, a minimum spacing of 1mm is required. Crystal Transfers are suitable only for hotfix application, both by hand and machine.



**DESIGN**

**HEAT**

**PEEL**





## Crystal Mesh

Crystal Mesh is available in our regular assortment of colors and coatings for our premium quality machine-cut Chatons MAXIMA in size ss5 or ss8. Crystal Mesh with ss5 stones can be plated in silver or gold and comes in a standard sheet of 28x80cm; Crystal Mesh with ss8 stones can be plated in silver, gold or black and comes in a standard sheet of 45x120cm. Crystal Mesh is suitable only for sewing application.

CUSTOMIZE

SEW

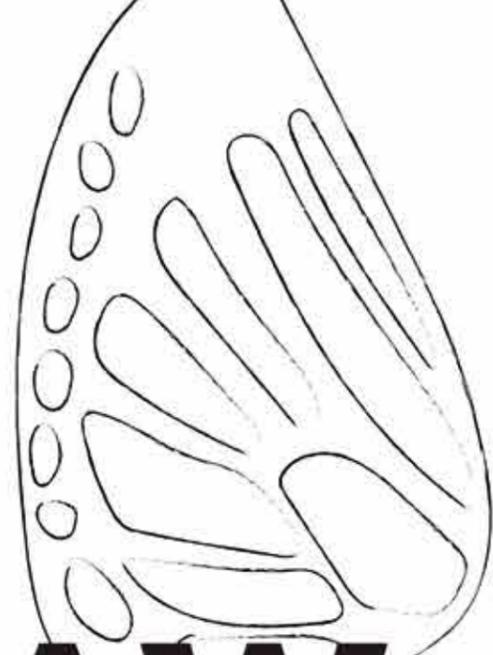
DRAP





## Crystal Sheet

Crystal Sheet is available in Crystal with six possible coatings: Aurora Borealis (AB), Starlight Gold, Aurum, Capri Gold, Labrador and Hematite on either transparent or black film. The maximum size of a single sheet of which shapes or designs can be lasered out according to the designer's request is 20x24cm. Crystal Sheet is suitable for gluing and hotfix application.



**DRAW**

**LASER**

**ADHERE**



# Meet The Alpha

Preciosa's re-imagined round brilliant cut for fine jewelry stones

Our fine jewelry stones portfolio welcomed its latest innovation this summer: The Alpha Round Brilliant cut. Named after the first letter in the Greek alphabet, the Alpha cut pays tribute to those ancient Greek mathematicians credited with the invention of geometry, upon whose intellect and pioneering spirit we so heavily rely. A paragon of geometrical precision, our re-imagined round Brilliant cut achieves the most ideal ratio of brilliance, scintillation and fire ever exemplified by round-cut cubic zirconia.

"Each of our 'Alpha stones' is simultaneously a testament to Preciosa's drive for innovation and ability to call upon our many centuries of Bohemian glassmaking heritage," said commercial development director, Jan Stiller. "This new Alpha cut is the culmination of hundreds of years of experience and the most modern of technologies developed right in our own facilities."

Meticulously developed in house with the latest diamond-cutting software to enhance cubic zirconia's natural optical properties and aesthetic characteristics, the Alpha cut likewise extends to much of our fine jewelry stones portfolio, including nanogems, and features a microscopic laser engraved Preciosa logo as proof of origin and authenticity.

Among the first in the world to view this new industry benchmark were our esteemed Chinese business partners, first in Yiwu, followed by Guangzhou. In August, we

presented the Alpha cut to our partners in India at a day-long invitation-only event with special guest and Preciosa ambassador, the Indian-born, New York-based fashion designer, Bibhu Mohapatra. Also present at the Mumbai reception were two of Thailand's most internationally acclaimed jewelry and fashion designers, Ek Thongprasert and Saran Youkongdee, who, like Bibhu, both designed a showcase pieces for the occasion.

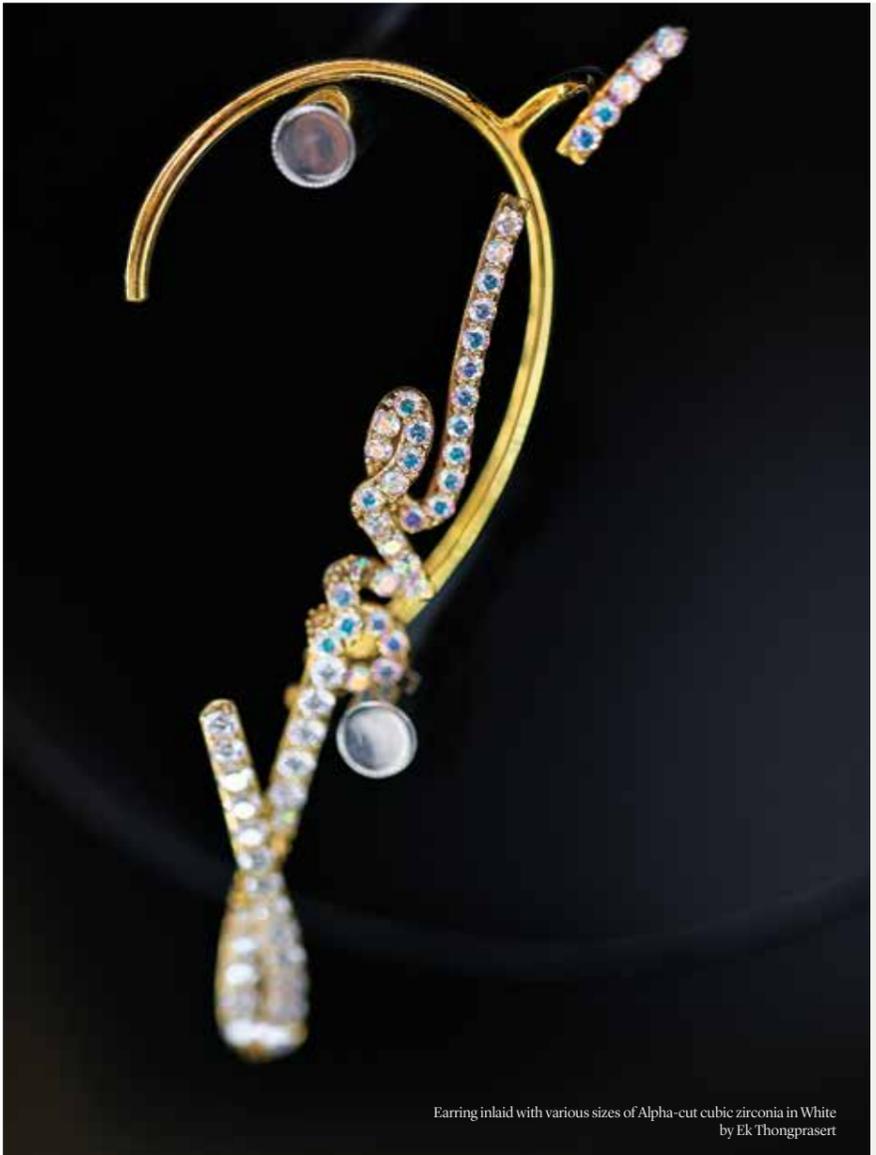
Speaking about his inspiration piece—a gold-plated headband inlaid with various Alpha stones called "The Taj," which means "imperial crown"—Bibhu said: "In India, jewelry is cultural; from the time a child is born, each piece he or she receives, and wears serves a specific purpose or symbolizes something special. For this project, I wanted to create a piece that magnifies and highlights the importance and power of women."

On display at the events were also two custom eyewear designs by New York based label, *a-morir*, a traditionally inspired Ganesha necklace and earrings designed and handcrafted by Anoma Jewels in Bangalore, and a one-of-a-kind commemorative necklace by Prague design studio Zorya, which comprises 86 stones in each of the 86 individual stages of the cutting and polishing process it takes to create a single Alpha stone.





22k gold necklace and earrings inlaid with various sizes of Alpha-cut cubic zirconia in White and synthetic pearls by Anoma Jewels



Earring inlaid with various sizes of Alpha-cut cubic zirconia in White by EK Thongprasert



Brass bracelet featuring various sizes of Alpha-cut cubic zirconia in Champagne by Sarran Youkongdee



18k gold-plated silver headband inlaid with various sizes of Alpha-cut cubic zirconia in White by Bibhu Mohapatra

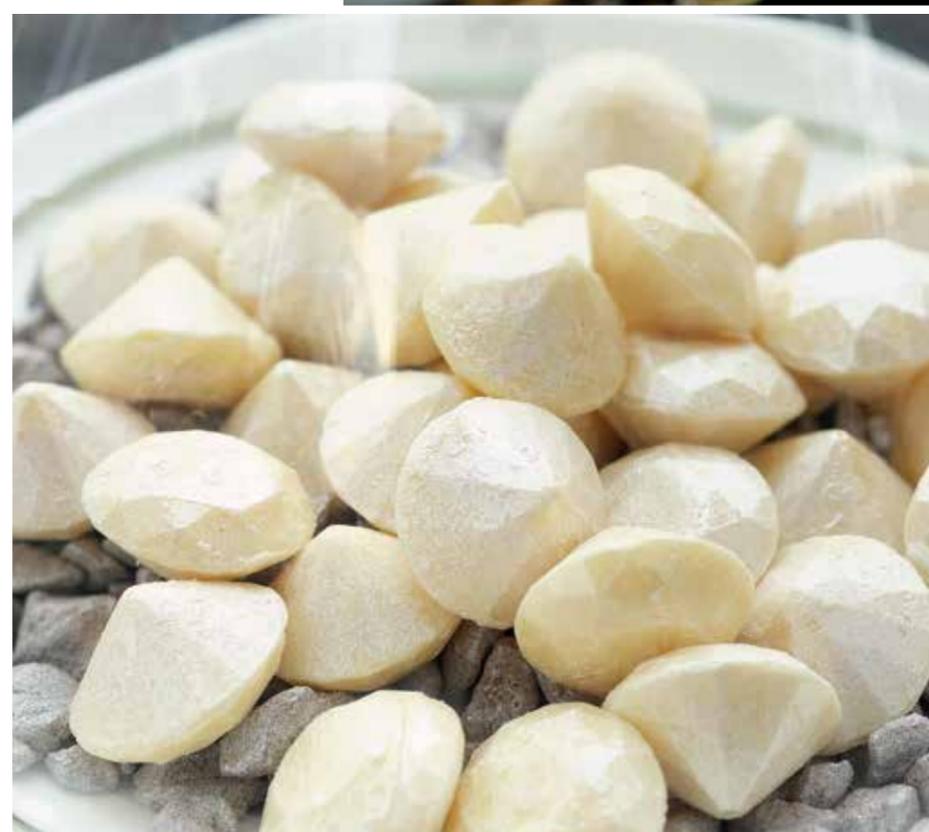


Gold-plated necklace featuring 86 cubic zirconia during each of the 86 stages of an Alpha stone's production process by Zorya



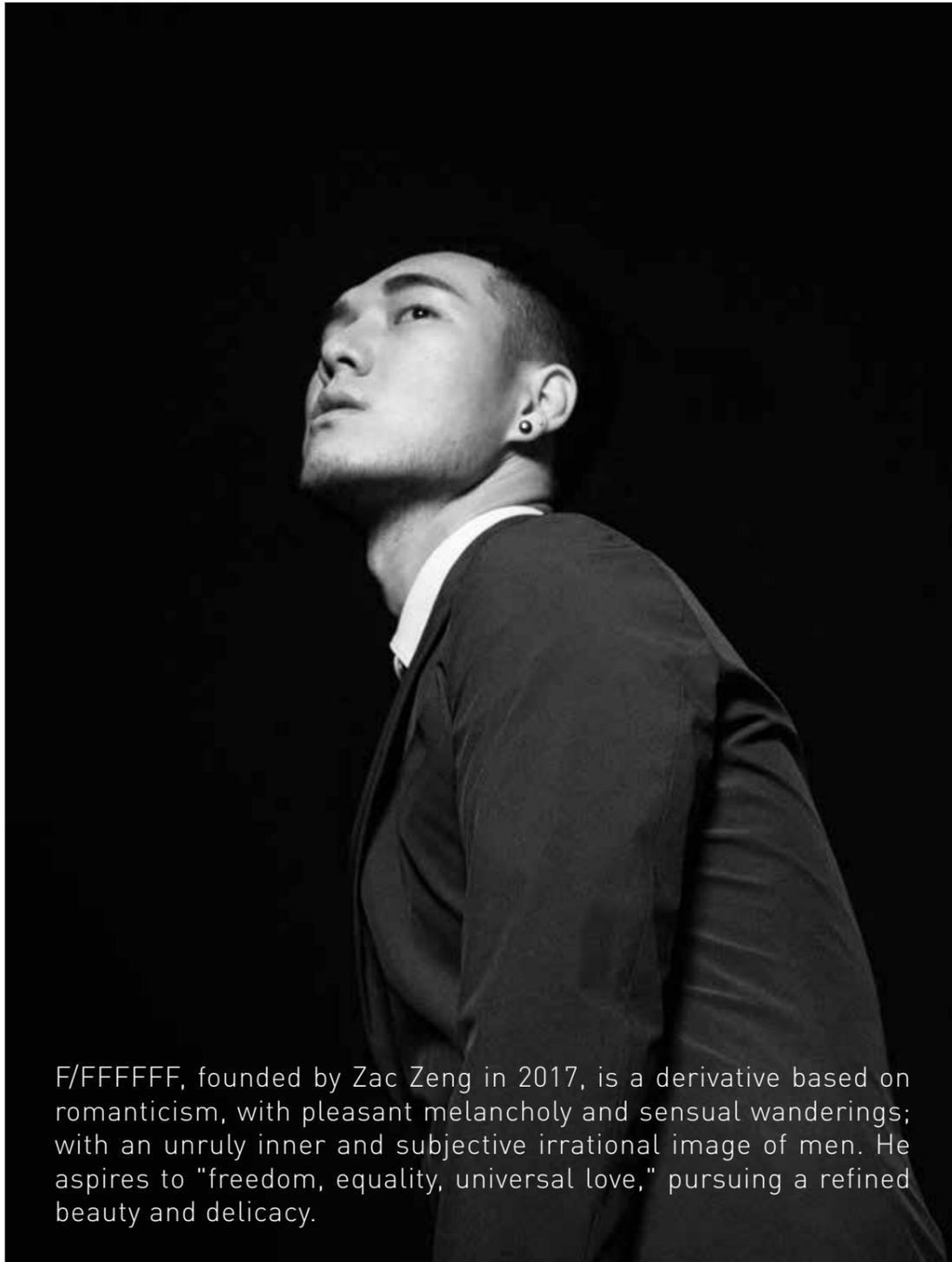
“Each of our ‘Alpha stones’ is simultaneously a testament to Preciosa’s drive for innovation and ability to call upon our many centuries of Bohemian glassmaking heritage.”

Jan Štiller, commercial development director



## Dressing China's A-List

A conversation with Chinese designer, Zac Zeng



F/FFFFFF, founded by Zac Zeng in 2017, is a derivative based on romanticism, with pleasant melancholy and sensual wanderings; with an unruly inner and subjective irrational image of men. He aspires to "freedom, equality, universal love," pursuing a refined beauty and delicacy.

Zac Zeng of F/FFFFFF

### How do Chinese celebrities cultivate their style?

Most have their own styling teams who dress them or procure custom looks from designers. They don't have time to shop by themselves and any appearance in public is considered fodder for fashion magazines and tabloid media, so they really do need someone looking out for them.

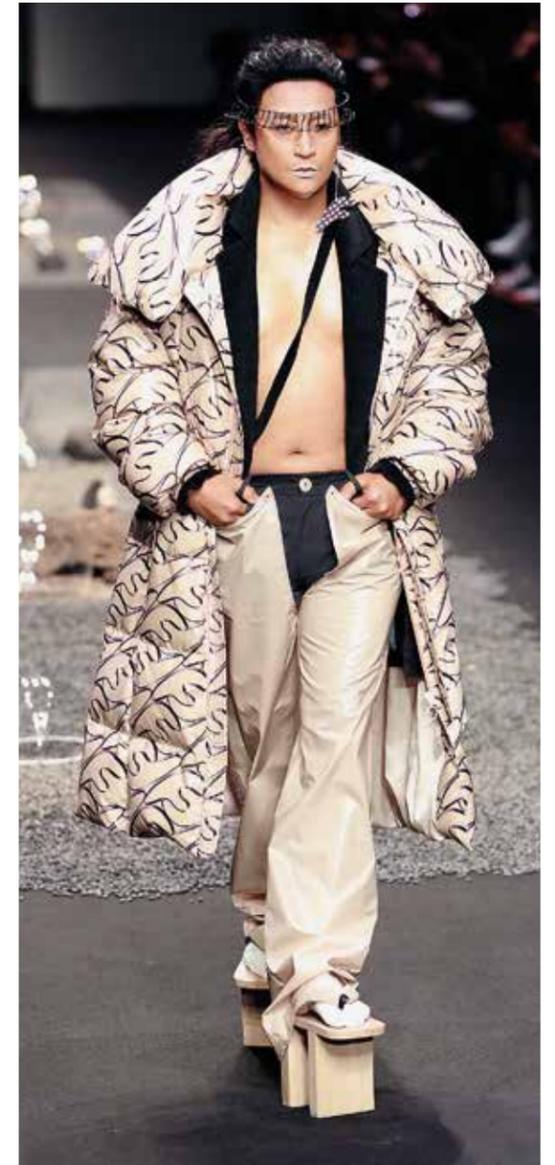
"When we look for fabrics, we try not to consider the price, only the quality. Maybe the right choice for a look will be expensive and that's okay."

### Can you talk about some of the looks you've designed for celebrities? Who have you dressed?

We've been fortunate to work with many of China's top performance artists, especially when it comes to pop stars. From Wang Yuan of TFBoys to Cai Xukun, Fan Chengcheng, Zhu Zhengting and Wang Linkai, all members of Nine Percent, and even Li Xian, who recently starred in the hit drama Television series, Go Go Squid!. Chen Zhipeng, who was in one of the first Chinese boy bands, Little Tiger, even walked in a show for us, which gave us a lot of exposure and even propelled the brand to the top of the Weibo search engine. We've dressed many actors and actresses including Huang Jingyu, Zhang Yishan, Xu Kai, Ma Ke, Guo Pinchao, Mao Zijun, Zhang Ming-en and Jiang Mengjie, and singers like GAI, Wu Mochou, Vava, Fu Xinbo, Hu Xia and Gao Yixiang, to name a few. I've also worked with some foreign celebrities, such as the Kazakhstani singer, Dimash Kudaibergen.

### How do you decide what to dress someone in?

It depends on the occasion and what the celebrity feels comfortable in, for example, if it's for a travel or an airport look, I'll go for something more leisurely; if it's for street photography or a magazine shoot, I'll go for something more design-y; if it's for the stage, I'll select a piece that's exaggerated or a bit more extreme.



Chen Zhipeng of Little Tiger walking the F/FFFFFF runway.

**Is there someone you particularly hope to dress?**

I guess my dream would be for the future Chinese president or the wife of the president to wear my clothes. The look would have to be customized because it would be such a special occasion. I think that what high profile politicians or heads of state choose to appear in represents the aesthetic trend of the whole country and speaks to the attitude of a country toward fashion. To foreigners, it would represent the recognition of native Chinese designers and having confidence in our heritage.

**What event do you enjoy designing for most?**

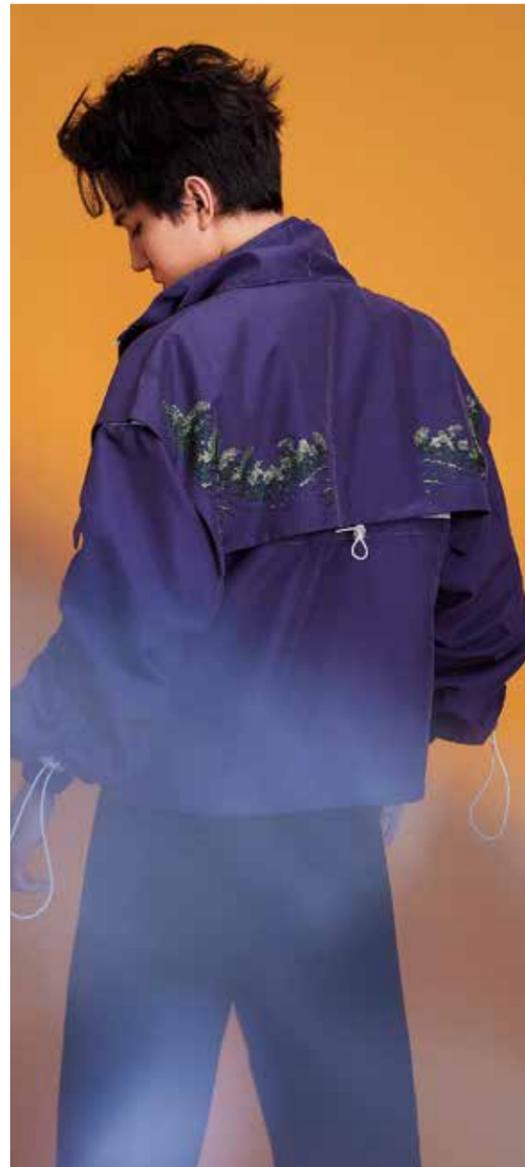
It would have to be the annual fashion show for my own brand, F/FFFFFFF because it's an expression of my own ideas and opinions. I can design whatever I like.

**Of what piece or look are you most proud of?**

I think of every look as my own child, so it's hard for me to make a choice. Perhaps this is the reason I have yet to launch something iconic that is instantly recognized as something belonging to my brand.

**Can you talk about the materials you use?**

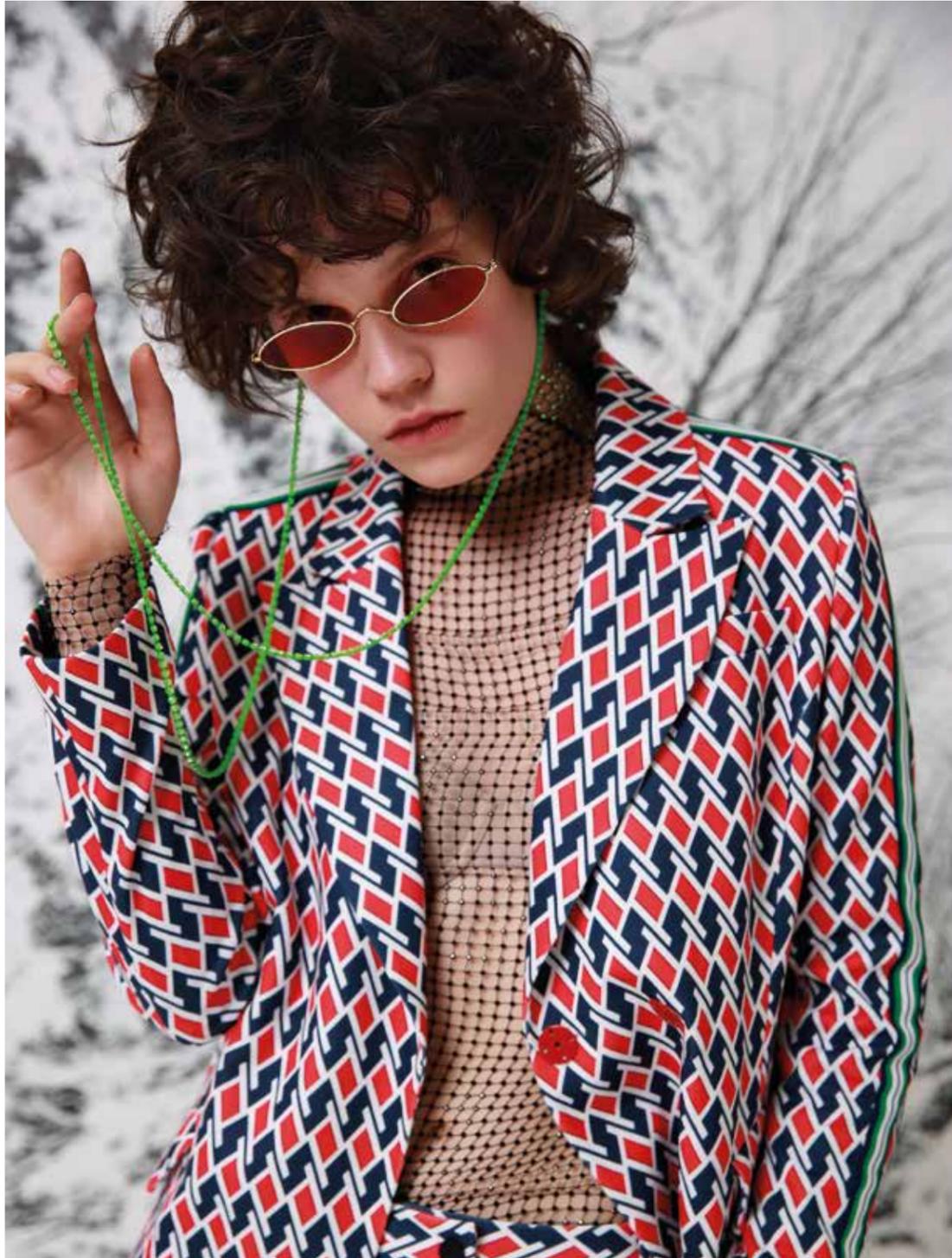
When we look for fabrics, we try not to consider the price, only the quality. Maybe the right choice for a look will be expensive, and that's okay. It also drives me to incorporate other high quality elements into my looks because I want to maintain the integrity of the clothes, like authentic crystals for example, rather than cheap plastic ones.



Kazakhstani singer Dimash Kudaibergen poses in F/FFFFFFF for Starbox Magazine

## GETTING IT ALL W.RONG

A conversation with Chinese designer, Wang Changron



**Before you started your own label, you held important positions at several of China's top womenswear brands. What inspired you to leave and venture out on your own?**

The path to entrepreneurship seemed to be my destiny. After 12 years of commercial experience, I had gone through companies' hardships, development, prosperity and even decline. I truly believe that younger brands will hold a larger proportion of the Chinese and global market share in the future. I simply identified a need for a certain style or concept on the current market and, with my experience, was able to turn this into a commodity through a balance of design and business acumen.

**How would you describe your label, W.RONG?**

As a Chinese fashion brand, W.RONG is meant to interpret the diversified charm and adventurous spirit of independent women born in the Eighties and Nineties. The brand combines sports with fashion culture and, I hope, breaks the rules and sense of clothing classism. We want to constantly remodel fashion.

"I don't believe that traditional sportswear can satisfy Chinese consumers anymore. They need more fashionable items for multiple occasions. Sports and fitness have become an irreplaceable trend and part of our daily lives."

**What drew you to the combination of sports and fashion? Why has it become so much a part of your brand identity?**

I think China's trends and popular culture are undeniably linked to China's environmental changes. China's economy has developed rapidly, and consumption levels have risen extremely fast, which has given way to a strong demand for fashion. People are paying more attention to health and wellness, as well as to global travel. The Chinese government is also vigorously promoting sports and



Wang Changron of W.RONG

personal health and hygiene. I don't believe that traditional sportswear can satisfy Chinese consumers anymore. They need more fashionable items for multiple occasions. Sports and fitness have become an irreplaceable trend and part of our daily lives.

**What is the difference between your aesthetic and those of other international and Chinese athleisure brands?**

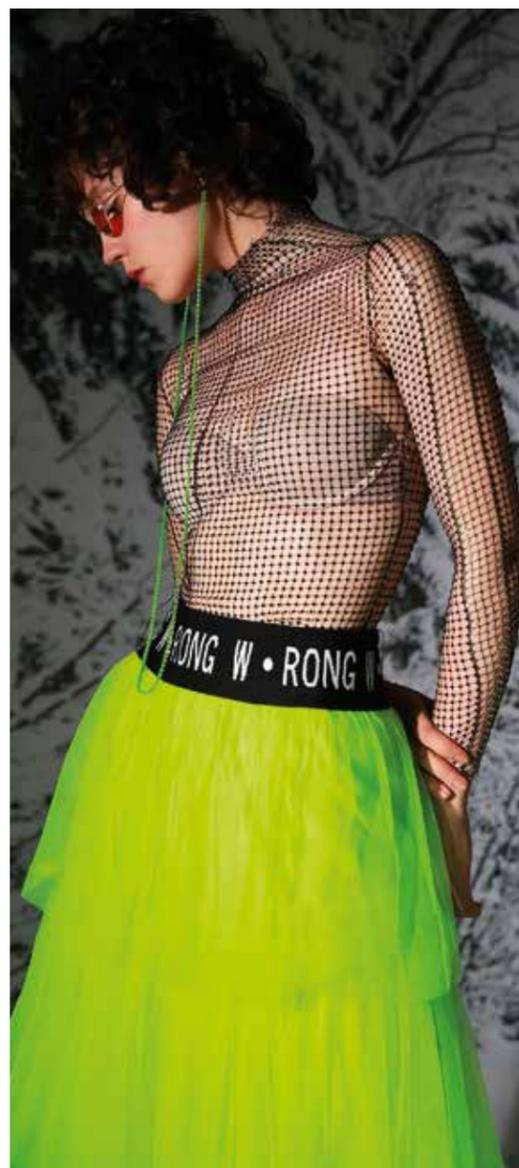
W.RONG does not represent a single aspect of a woman: it's about the mix of individuality that I call a "mix girl." In terms of fashion, the generation of women born during the last two decades of the twentieth century show vastly different tastes than those of previous generations of women. I hope to bring happiness to the women who wear my clothes. I like pure colors that give the looks energy. It's also my hope that they utilize the sporty aspect of my clothes and are able to move in them. My clothes can be mixed and worn appropriately on and for many different occasions.

**What do you think about trends in general and do you adjust your designs to reflect them?**

A trend is like its own collection of popular styles. We consider trends at the beginning of each season, but we don't deliberately pursue them.

**How do crystals fit in with your sporty fashion aesthetic?**

Preciosa's quality of raw materials and exquisite craftsmanship coincide with our brand. W.RONG emphasizes the many charming qualities of women. Crystals, I believe, are filled with the dream elements that women love; when combined with W.RONG's strong sports and fashion DNA, I think the clothes really become something special.



Preciosa crystal net top by W.RONG

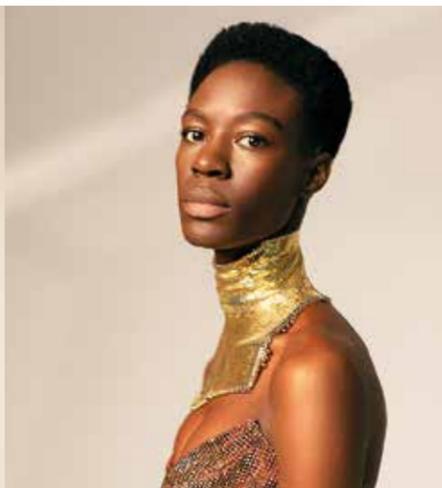


Founded in Shenzhen by Wang Changron in 2016, W.RONG combines fashion and practical wear to address the multi-occasion lifestyle of women today.

# Fashion & Featured



**A-MORIR**  
"Ayesha" sunglasses by New York based eyewear label, *a-morir*, featuring 75 feet of black plated Crystal and Crystal AB cupchain.



**KOLCHAGOV BARBRA**  
Model wears FW 2019 crystal net looks by London-based couture house, Kolchagov Barbra.



**JITROIS**  
Jean-Claude Jitrois inspects the crystal chandelier trimming embellishment on a custom signature stretch patent leather dress designed for a private client.



**ZUZANA KUBÍČKOVÁ**  
Prague-based designer, Zuzana Kubičková's 2019 couture collection features Preciosa crystals on almost every look.



**THE BLONDS**  
Fashion icon, LGBTQ rights activist and actor, Billy Porter enters the 2019 Met Gala wearing a custom crystal embellished look by The Blonds.



**DIANE VON FURSTENBERG**  
Supermodel Barbara Palvin wears custom crystal net wrap dress by Diane von Furstenberg at the 2019 CFDA Awards.



**THE BLONDS**  
Paris Hilton (left) walks The Blonds AW 2019 catwalk wearing a branded crystal necklace and corset dress.



**JIRÍ KALFAŘ**  
Ukrainian supermodel Alina Baikova (left) wears crystal net top and crystal transfer cape at Jiří Kalfář, who made history as the first Czech-born designer to show at NYFW.



# The Fashion Week Edit



**BIBHU MOHAPATRA**  
Inspired by the many women in his life, Bibhu Mohapatra's ten-year anniversary show featured plenty of fine fabrics, delicate crystal embellishment and floor-length volume.

**AREA**  
Area unveiled dozens of crystal cupchain concoctions at their AW 2019 show, held inside a Wall Street bank.



**CHRISTIAN COWAN**  
Supermodel Halima (right) closes Christian Cowan's AW 2019 show wearing a crystal net Hijab.

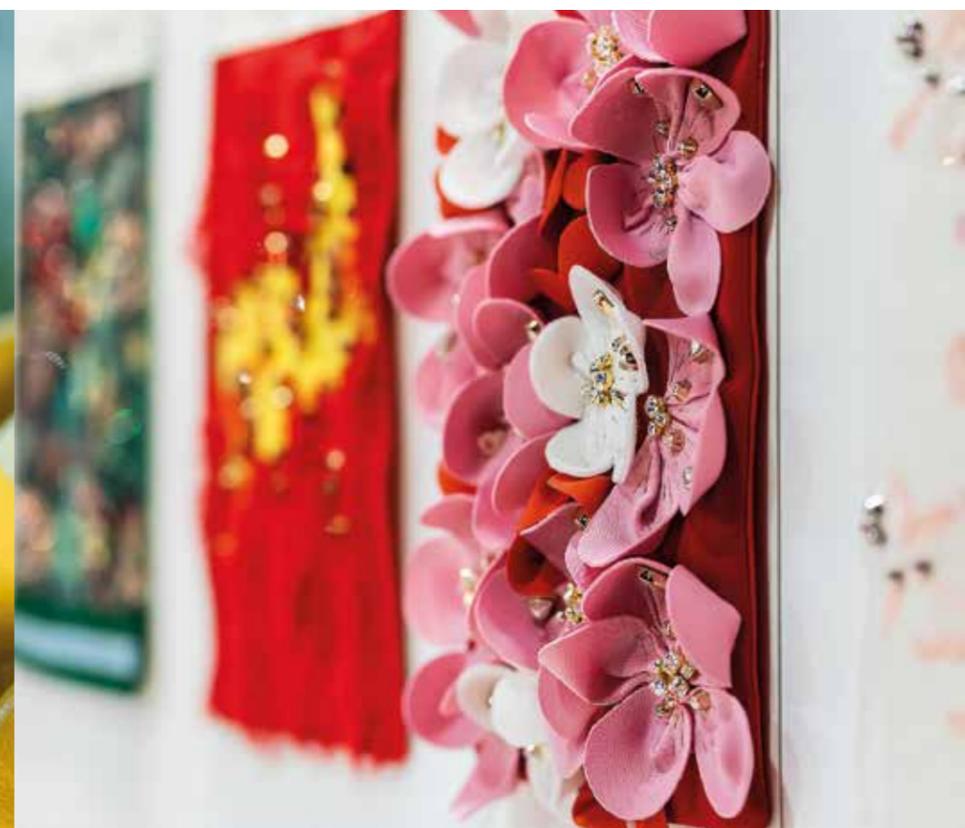


**MIRO SABO**  
Slovak designer, Miro Sabo, showed a hyper feminine collection full of crystal details at AW 2019 Prague Fashion Week.



## SS 2020 "RED REDEFINED" ROUNDUP

This spring, our teams held a series of luncheon and cocktail events and attended Lineapelle in Milan, where we introduced our many partners to our new cadmium-free Red Velvet, among several other exciting innovations.



## On Dressing the Wife of a Water Goblin

A conversation with award-winning costume designer, Simona Rybáková



A modern adaptation of Karel Jaromír Erben's classic Czech ballad, *A Bouquet*, has been brought to the stage of the National Theater in Prague, in a show that quickly garnered acclaim from audiences and critics alike. One scene—perhaps more than the rest—stands out as the most iconic within the vast realm of Slavic folklore, in which a drowning maiden is given the breath of life by the insidious water goblin and, once seduced, imprisoned at the bottom of his lake forever. The striking moment in which the water goblin, called Vodník, gives his desperate wife a dress and chain made of river pearls embodies one of the many tragedies in this much-loved story.

Part of the scene's power is undoubtedly attributed to a stunning Preciosa Crystal Net dress by internationally renowned costume designer Simona Rybáková, winner of the Czech Lion Award for Best Costume Design. Made in collaboration with Preciosa's design team, the dress comprises 6,000 Chaton Roses MAXIMA in sizes ranging from ss30 to ss40, creating a delicate ombré effect. The dress is also elegantly lined with the finest tulle, giving the near perfect illusion of a gown made entirely from water, foam and bubbles. Since its release, this latest production has become the theater's best-selling play and has received glowing reviews. Simona Rybáková talks about her collaboration with the National Theatre and Preciosa...

**Many of your designs are historically inspired – why is this? Do you prefer working on period productions rather than contemporary ones?**

The films and theater projects I work on are all collaborative efforts with their respective directors. To me, a historical film, fairy tale or sci-fi production presents a greater challenge than those that take place in present day. Of course, however, if I was offered an interesting motion picture set in present day by one of the directors with whom I regularly collaborate, I would not say “no.” For example, the Academy Award-winning Czech director Jan Svěrák and I have explored many different genres together, from the contemporary film *Empties*, a fairy tale called *Three Brothers*

and a 2017 release set during World War II called *Barefoot*. Theater is different. We always look for some kind of metaphor or stylistic choice. With theater production there is more often space for imagination that may disconnect with the historical accuracy of the piece.

**“With theater production there is more often space for imagination that may disconnect with the historical accuracy of the piece.”**

**You also did the costumes for *Milada*, a 2017 Czech-American production about Milada Horáková, who was hanged by the Czechoslovakia communist party on fabricated charges of conspiracy and treason, which won several Czech Lion Awards, including Best Costume Design. How does designing the looks for a project so historically straightforward as this differ from designing the costumes for *A Bouquet* in which you were given lots of creative freedom?**

It's very different. With historical pieces, especially those of such high caliber, you need to be exact so it's a lot of research. Designing for *A Bouquet*, on the other hand, was really special. Everyone in this country knows the stories and remembers them from their childhood in their own way. The entire production is a result of one massive dialogue between the directors, choreographer, composer, set designer and me – and it shows. We all drew our own inspiration from books, travel, exhibitions, films and, of course, childhood. In the end, the costumes are very complex and exact, but I also think there is a simplicity to them. I was so pleased with some of the reactions of the actors and actresses – one of the best compliments that I received was that the designs have a simple hint of folklore with an haute couture twist.



Sketch (left) and realization (right) of the crystal net dress designed for *A Bouquet*.

Simona Rybáková is a Czech costume designer and independent researcher born in Prague in 1963. Simona studied at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague, the University of Applied Arts in Helsinki and at the Rhode Island School of Design in Providence, Rhode Island. She is a member of the European Film Academy and the Czech Film and Television Academy as well as the Critical Costume Steering group, who are active in international costume projects. Simona regularly holds international lectures and exhibitions.

**One of the most memorable designs from *A Bouquet* is a crystal net dress worn by the heroine, which you have described as minimal. Can you talk more about this look? Can full-body embellishment still be minimalist?**

Certainly. The design I created from Preciosa Crystal Net is definitely minimalistic. The dress plays an important role in a ballad called "The Water Goblin." For it, I wanted people to feel that they were under water in a lake, which was achieved in several ways. At the beginning of the scene, we have the Goblin enticing the maiden by tickling her feet with a long reed from the bottom of the lake. The maiden, still wearing an "earthly" gown, is suspended high above the stage and is slowly lowered into the lake, the bottom of which is represented by the stage and its surface by the ceiling. Once she is trapped by the Goblin at the bottom of the lake, her wardrobe abruptly changes to the crystal net dress. Finally, she is given a massive pearl necklace by the Goblin that serves as both her wedding gift and her literal chain to the prison that is the Goblin's underwater world. I knew immediately that the dress she wears once she reaches his realm had to sparkle to mimic the reflective properties of water. I was desperately searching for some special material when I found Preciosa Crystal Net – and I knew it had to be it! It's not only gorgeous but also moves and sparkles like water. Almost as if it were alive.

"I knew immediately that the dress she wears once she reaches his realm had to sparkle to mimic the reflective properties of water."

**Have you ever worked with crystals before?**

I have worked with loose stones and jewelry, but never crystal net. I often run into budgeting issues

because crystal is such a fine material, though I'd love to work with them more in the future.

**What has been the biggest challenge of your professional life? *A Bouquet*?**

Any project with SKUTR, who did the stage direction for this production, is always a challenge. I can remember several bigger challenges from the past; for example, I once worked on a big advertisement for America. The dancers were supposed to look like marble statues jumping on trampolines. Or, *Milada*, which came with a great sense of responsibility toward her as a subject because she is such an icon. I've had many challenges in my career and I hope to face some more in the future.

**What is your professional dream?**

I have already experienced and been a part of so many projects – I am quite happy with my portfolio. However, there is one dream I have, which is to be part of a production that is all about humor and exaggeration, ideally dance related. And with people I respect professionally and creatively. And all with a generous budget. A very modest dream, isn't it?



Simona Rybáková in her atelier.

Crystal  
FAERIE  
—  
FOR NAILS

High quality and high impact.

Crafted in the Czech Republic, every stone of our Crystal Faerie for nails is sized, colored and polished to dazzling perfection.



Crystal Faerie in "Unicorn Tears"

PRECIOSA



## *Responsibility to Our Region Our Community, Our People*

To demonstrate our undying gratitude and appreciation for our region, its people and the natural resources it provides, we actively seek out ways in which we can give back to both the environment and our community. For more than twenty years, the Preciosa Foundation has contributed to numerous non-profit initiatives across the Bohemian region and throughout the Czech Republic. We focus our efforts on seven core areas. At the regional level, we support the

Fund for Health and Disease Prevention, the Environmental Fund, the Fund for Arts and Culture and the Fund for Exercise and Sports. At the national level, we contribute through our Fund for Research and Development, the Education Fund and lastly, the Fund for Social and Humanitarian Aid. The Preciosa Foundation has to date contributed more than USD 8 million to these organizations.

### Bohemian *crafted* since 1548

We offer more than 36,000 premium crystals, zirconia and nanogems in various shapes, sizes, colours and coatings to an extensive portfolio of luxury goods, fashion and jewelry designers, distributors, and producers across six continents.

### *Crafted* from sand

Our unique crystal chandeliers and lighting projects adorn luxury hotels, royal palaces, private residences and yachts all over the globe. We follow the legacy of the highest quality Bohemian Crystal in combination with 21<sup>st</sup> century cutting-edge technologies and our glassmakers' craftsmanship. We shape centuries of dreams into light.

### All about *beads*

We send traditional Czech beads and seed beads to all four corners of the earth. They are used in luxury jewelry designs and decorative embroidery, and also play an integral part in national costumes and traditional accessories. Our technically perfect beads, which are full of color and playfulness, are admired by professionals and non-professionals alike. They add a bit of magic to everything they touch.

### *Crystal* beauty

Our crystal jewelry and décor delight those who love beauty all around the world. Luxurious jewelry and sought after fashion accessories are created in the cradle of the world's glass jewelry industry. We begin with the centuries old tradition of Bohemian cut crystal, enriching it with our craftsmanship and skills and the latest technologies. We represent the essence of fine and elegant beauty.

### The *crystal crown* on your packaging

Vinolok is the most elegant and creative closure for wines, spirits, water, and oils. Vinolok is made from pure Bohemian glass, so there is absolutely no impact on aroma or flavor. Despite being completely leak proof, the unique properties of the Vinolok closure still allow the wine to breathe and develop slowly. The Vinolok glass closure establishes the look of a premium brand.



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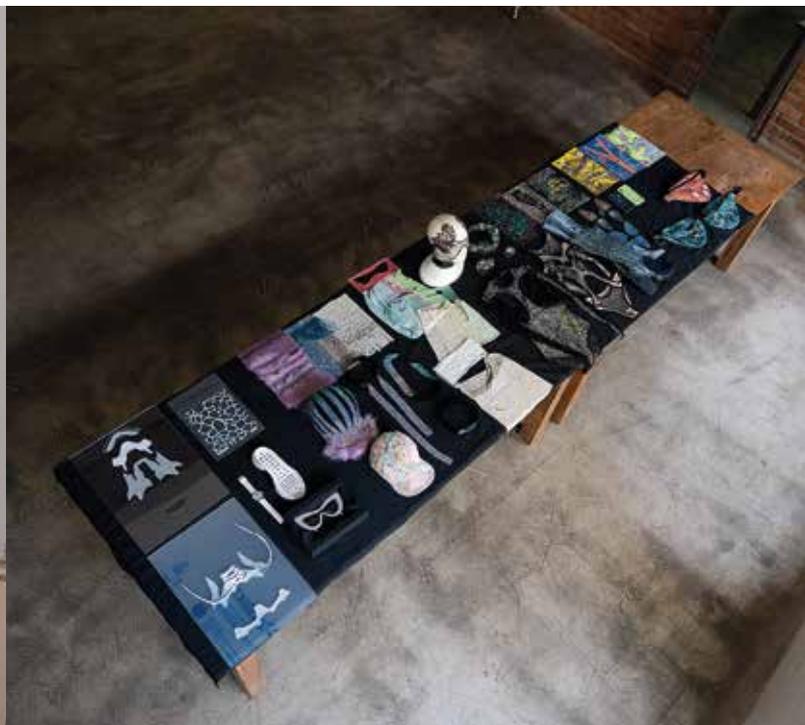
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