



S. Bulgari

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Celebrating 125 years

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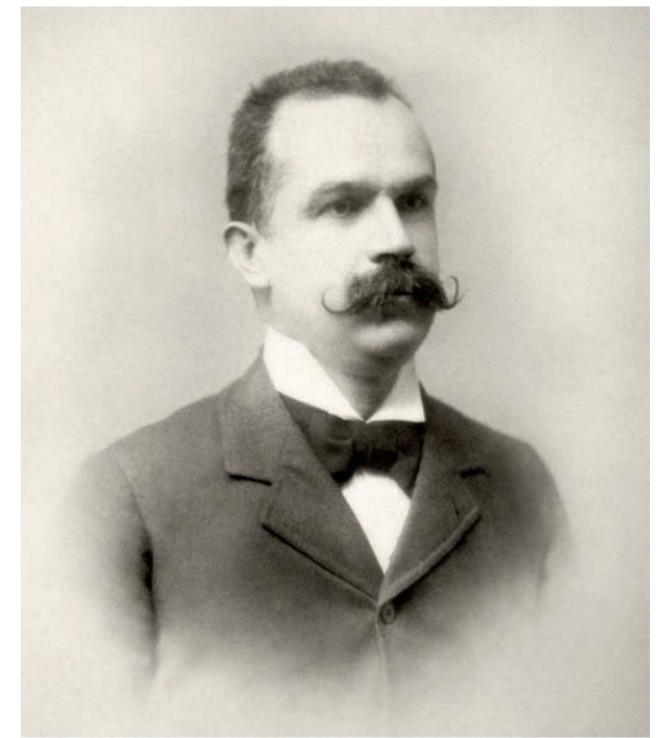
A JOURNEY THROUGH HISTORY: SOTIRIO BULGARI AND HIS VISION

Pushing the boundaries between classical tradition and epochal change

For many, Bulgari is a name imbued with history. But not everyone knows the extraordinary personal story of the man who started it all, Sotirio Bulgari – the visionary founder who intuited the coming age of globalization and helped make it happen; a story that has its origins in the rich world of myth and that today celebrates 125 years. Sotirio Bulgari was born in 1857 in the Epirus Mountains, through which flows the Acheron (source of the legendary River Styx) and upon which stands the Temple of Zeus at Dodona. In this region the silversmith's art has been passed down from father to son since the Byzantine era, and it was from the power of this tradition, from the technical skills that had evolved over centuries and from the vast classical *imaginarium* rooted in these very places that the young Sotirio Bulgari cultivated a vision that has proven to transcend the boundaries of time and space, the courage and foresight of which is especially apparent today.

The word "vision" derives from Greek and Latin to give us the word "idea". Sotirio Bulgari discovered that he had a sharp entrepreneurial instinct, so when he sensed an epochal change in the air, he set out for a Europe that was on the verge of becoming modern. He left continental Greece for Corfu, winter home of Princess Sissi and the Hapsburg court, and then moved on to the recently unified Italy, heart of the "Grand Tour" that was *de rigueur* among Europe's aristocracy, stopping first in Naples and finally in Rome. He brought with him an extraordinary cultural heritage of imagery and traditions and timeless glamour. Driven by a boldness that enabled him to overcome obstacles and conventions alike, Sotirio Bulgari decided not to limit himself to the Eternal City he had chosen as his home. His journeys, facilitated by new means of transport like the train and the automobile, took him to the favoured locales of European high society and the aesthetic sensibility cultivated there. His vision overturned numerous existing assumptions and anticipated many concepts that have since become the norm. From season to season, he brought his style directly to the most exclusive and sophisticated tourist destinations of the time – St. Moritz, Lucerne, Bellagio, Sanremo and Sorrento – and was gradually able to create an international network of ten stores, where his creations generated admiration and wonder among the aristocracy, which in turn consolidated his reputation and fame.

Sotirio Bulgari's classical sensibility and powerful creative spirit came together to define a path characterised by innovation: from his deep roots there grew a uniquely original aesthetic that challenged reigning stylistic orthodoxies. Today, the sign on the storefront in Via Condotti evokes not only Roman epigraphy but an entire philosophy of beauty, wherein the past informs the contemporary in a process of continual transformation. Sotirio Bulgari was, by nature and by choice, a 'global citizen' in the most modern sense of the term; a traveller who had embraced and absorbed several cultures and had the ability to combine entrepreneurial spirit with artistic sensibility. Aware that he was destined to transcend the boundaries of his time, he built his empire of beauty; an empire founded on taste and magnificence that his sons Giorgio and Costantino inherited in 1932, along with the vision that was born with their father and a talent for constantly honing his originality, such that in the years to come they were able to definitively earn a place for Bulgari in the history of fine jewellery. In the words of Gonzales-Palacios, «the history of jewellery is an infinite cycle of give and take between past and present, between Classical and Baroque, between splendour and restraint»; a history that is born of a living ancient tradition, capable of continually generating formal and technical innovations. Herein lies the vision, as relevant today as 125 years ago, of Sotirio Bulgari.



Portrait photo of Sotirio Bulgari, Rome, c.1885.



Giorgio Bulgari with his wife Leonilde at St. Moritz, 1932.



The Bulgari storefront in Via Condotti, 1920s.

PARENTESI: AN ENDURING SYMBOL

From classical Roman architecture to a modern classic

Over the course of its 125 years, Bulgari has cultivated an ever more unmistakable style. Beauty, indeed the very concept of beauty itself, have been explored in myriad ways, each time new and surprising, yet always beneath the steady light of the brand's Greco-Roman origins. Parentesi was created only 25 years ago, but its underlying form goes back more than two millennia. It is a collection that represents great innovation in its source of inspiration, for Parentesi derives from the travertine junctions of the building blocks used in Roman architecture, and is responsible for spreading the concept of modular jewellery, such that a centuries-old symbol has thus become an icon of fine jewellery making. Every model from the Parentesi collection uses the same elements in diamond pavé and gold, combining them in a variety of forms. The volumes and colours are bold and distinctive, the design clean and stylised. Parentesi, which draws its name from the similarity between its main formal feature and stylised brackets is a collection that celebrates the power of its roots and the beauty of antiquity; whilst the repetition of the modules make it

consummately modern, it comes directly from ancient Rome.

And so, from a timeless inspiration comes the success of an innovative idea: the Parentesi collection has become one of the emblems of luxury jewellery, and has bloomed into a wide range of models designed to meet even the most varied tastes, inspiring appreciation for both its material presence and aesthetic timelessness.



Detail of a Roman sidewalk.



"Head of Aphrodite" by Luca Pignatelli. The parentheses are evident in the painting.

How Bulgari invented prêt-à-porter jewellery

It was with Parentesi that the idea of a jewellery line was born – no longer a series of individual pieces, but a collection coherent with itself and its own *raison d'être*. Parentesi offered the opportunity to wear jewellery in a new and more casual way, thanks to the combinations

of modules that could also include precious gems. «When I am in Rome, I always visit Bulgari, because it is the most significant modern art museum in the world», said Andy Warhol, whose words allude to the special ability to capture the spirit of the present embodied by Parentesi. The compactness of the design, the unmistakable form, the smoothness of the edges, the sophisticated aesthetic harmony and extreme "wearability" make it one of the most imitated jewellery collections of all time and forebear of prêt-à-porter jewellery, which represents but one of the great revolutions sparked by Bulgari. A single module is combined with itself in a variety of ways – an invention that makes design the focal point of

its beauty and value, reinforcing the role of aesthetics and emphasizing its most sophisticated characteristics. The result is a range of jewels that can be worn for any occasion by dynamic women who enthusiastically embrace contemporary life and who recognise in themselves the values of Bulgari: beauty, sensibility and unique creativity. With Parentesi, Bulgari once again reinvented the way people think about jewellery, and in this case the way it is produced, with a magnificent prêt-à-porter collection that changed the industry and was embraced by the entire world.

The glamour of the new Parentesi Cocktail collection

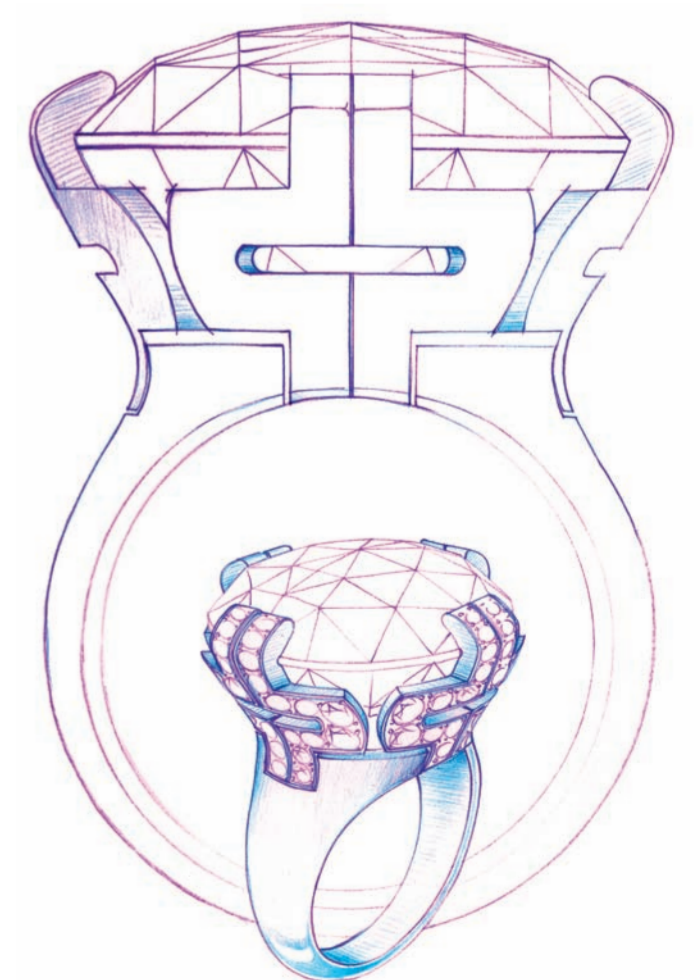
The iconic power of the Parentesi line has today been further intensified with the debut of a new collection, where the signature motif of the entire line is combined with coloured gems and greater volumes to create a series of modern yet always classic jewels that are at once extremely feminine and full of personality.

In Parentesi Cocktail, the famous parenthesis becomes for the first time a structural element, defining the settings that frame stones like aquamarine, amethyst, beryl, citrine, tourmaline and topaz in various colours. A refined yet assertive design that results in jewels that are distinguished by their versatility and visibility. Incisive lines and carefully calibrated proportions characterise the pendants, necklaces, sautoirs, earrings, bracelets and above all rings of extraordinary impact that give the name to this new collection.

The combination of an archetypal sign with a simple, unmistakably Bulgari design has brought forth a new branch of the Parentesi line, whose deep roots have blossomed once again in a fresh and truly enchanting creativity.



Parentesi Cocktail necklace in pink gold with amethysts, citrines, green quartz and diamond pavé.
Parentesi Cocktail ring in pink gold with green quartz and diamond pavé.



Sketch for a Parentesi Cocktail ring.

ANOTHER WAY OF LOOKING



The Parentesi model in acetate, with tortoise shell lens frame and black temple.

Parentesi becomes a new collection of eyewear

If we could look back and see the beginning of the long history that has made Bulgari synonymous with luxury, we would see the elegant carriages that used to stop in Via Condotti to allow passengers the time to browse among the magnificent jewels displayed by Sotirio Bulgari in his new shop.

Today, more than a century of pushing the boundaries of the ordinary and the expected, along with the Bulgari taste for combining rich historical sources with contemporary design has resulted in the Parentesi line of men's eyewear.

Bulgari's classic parenthesis motif – one of the great icons of modern jewellery, inspired by Roman architecture – is now featured in a collection of elegant frames in metal or acetate created to celebrate the brand's 125th anniversary. It is this motif that distinguishes in an intriguing and unmistakable way a line of eyewear characterised by rectangular forms, softened corners and perfectly proportioned volumes, giving the man who wears them a look of strength and confidence.

The range of models allows one to choose among the two best known versions of the parenthesis motif: the most recent variant, made famous by the latest jewellery collections, and, in a more vintage vein, one of the earliest interpretations of the motif that first appeared in a magnificent Bulgari sautoir in the 1970s. In the latter, luminous crystals are set into enamel inlays to reproduce the renowned Roman-inspired design on the temples of an oversize frame notable for its decisive attitude.

The Parentesi collection also debuts a new line of sunglasses for women inspired directly by the founder, with the inscription "S. Bulgari" engraved onto the temples with the same font used by the first Bulgari store in Via Condotti. The new models feature ample lens frames and graduated tinted lenses, with a variety of colours and materials, from classic acetate in black, white and red to the soft luminosity of silver, pale gold and pink gold.

Classic femininity interpreted with diamonds and steel

Bulgari presents a new tribute to women with a capital W: a collection that is enriched by steel and diamonds, a combination as surprising as contemporary femininity.

Alongside the versions in yellow, pink and white gold with diamond pavé and individual baguette-cut diamonds, sapphires and rubies, there is a new line of watches distinguished by subtle charm and balanced form, where ultra-contemporary lines and profiles merge with the values of classic elegance in a new interpretation of feminine allure.

Like the rest of the collection, the new watches have clean and decisive lines, simple dials, sinuous bracelets, with the purity of diamonds as the focal point, combined here with the strength of steel. A perfect pairing of materials for expressing the sensibility and lifestyle of today's woman, who is at once discerning, demanding and practical.

Two sizes (35 and 26 millimetres, the smaller with pink gold inserts), two dial styles (black or argenté, both with clou de Paris finishing and embossed indexes and numbers) and alternating glossy and satin finishings on every detail of the bracelet make for an exquisitely seductive timepiece. Equally exquisite are the monogrammed Bulgari quartz movement and the case, waterproof to 30 meters. With the new Assioma D watches, diamonds and steel embody purity and strength.



Assioma D. Curved steel case with brilliant-cut diamonds, argenté dial with clou de Paris finishing and Bulgari-manufactured steel bracelet.

REWRITING THE FUTURE WITH OUR SUPPORTERS

The success of the Save the Children campaign is growing

Good news from every front, thanks to the many people who have accepted Bulgari's invitation to join in support of "Rewrite the Future", a campaign by Save the Children, the world's largest independent organization for the protection and promotion of children's rights. The goal of this campaign is to ensure by 2010 a quality education to 8 million children who live in war-torn countries. To date, the campaign has laid the groundwork for long-term improvement in the lives of nearly 6 million of them. Thanks to "Rewrite the Future", schools have been built, books and educational materials have been provided, and millions of children have been protected from violence of every kind.

In the words of Charlotte Petri Gornitzka, General Secretary of the International Save the Children Alliance, whose presence extends to more than 100 countries, "Millions of children can now also rely on Bulgari and its customers. Save the Children, faced with inaction and delays, encourages and involves anyone who wishes to and can really do something, whether as a company or an individual". Bulgari, after having donated a million euros upon joining the campaign, has been working to raise 9 million more by the end of 2009. Toward this end, among various other initiatives, Bulgari has created a silver ring in homage to the origins of its founder, Sotirio Bulgari. The ring, engraved with the logo of Save the Children on the inside, can be purchased for 290 euros – 50 of which go straight to "Rewrite the Future" – in all the Bulgari stores throughout the world and in some select department stores.

Among the recent news is the latest celebrity to join the campaign: Barbie. Yes, the world's most famous doll will be lending her face to a collection of portraits shot by photographer Fabrizio Ferri, who for his part is offering his services to this important solidarity initiative for free. Along with Barbie, the group of supporters of "Rewrite the Future" has now grown to include: Andy Garcia, Alain Delon, Ben Stiller, Benicio Del Toro, Eros Ramazzotti, Isabella Rossellini, Laetitia Casta, Hugh Jackman, James Belushi, Jason Lewis, Julianne Moore, Sting, Willem Dafoe, Sally Field, Terrence Howard, Portia de Rossi, Ellen DeGeneres, Kimberley Peirce, Mischa Barton, Ginnifer Goodwin, Olivia Wilde, Jennifer Esposito, Ronaldinho, Zachary Quinto, Eddie Van Halen, Debra Messing, Valeria Golino, Fabrizio Ferri, Alessandra Ferri, Giuseppe Tornatore, Paolo Maldini, Gabriele Muccino, Cuba Gooding Jr, Rosario Fiorello, Vittoria Puccini, Cristiana Capotondi, Giuseppe Fiorello, Lena Headey, Kyle McLaughlin, Desiree Gruber, January Jones, Sam Worthington, Toni Collette, Leonard Goldberg and Teresa Palmer.



Silver ring for Save the Children.



1. Ben Stiller, 2. Cristiana Capotondi, 3. Giuseppe Fiorello, 4. Jennifer Esposito, 5. Lena Headey, 6. Terrence Howard, 7. Barbie, 8. Ronaldinho, 9. Paolo Maldini.

Ben Stiller in Africa with Save the Children and Bulgari

Ben Stiller, one of the celebrities supporting Bulgari's effort to help Save the Children's "Rewrite the Future" campaign, recently flew to Uganda to visit the remote region of Karamoja in the north-eastern part of the African nation. Stiller travelled the area for four days to get a first-hand sense of the conditions for children caught up in the warfare that troubles so many parts of the world, and he also witnessed the interventions of Save the Children in Uganda.

Upon his return, Stiller said:

«Save the Children is really changing the lives of these needy children. Even in the poorest and most remote communities, I saw kids who wanted to learn and teachers who wanted to help them. The educational programs of Save the Children, many of which are conducted in areas torn by war and conflict, are bringing hope to children who are excited by the opportunity to go to school and to try to rewrite their own and their community's future". From all of us, heartfelt thanks to Save the Children and to Ben Stiller.



Ben Stiller visiting Save the Children sites in Uganda, February 2009.