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Draped in Diamonds

By Gena Ng
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Diamonds are a girl's best friend. International fashion designers know this better than anyone else. They are infusing diamonds into their one-of-a-kind creations. Take a look at some of the world's most luxuriously expensive and illuminating iconic dresses.

Glowing Fantasy Creation

Valued at US\$30 million, the Nightingale of Kuala Lumpur is truly an exquisite piece of work. It made a dramatic entrance at The STYLO Fashion Festival, an annual event that supports the Formula One Grand Prix in Malaysia. This luminous red beauty is encrusted with 751 diamonds that cascade dreamily down the six-metre long train of the dress, and at the centre of the bodice is a 70-carat pear-shaped diamond. Simply breathtaking.

A spectacular one-of-a-kind ensemble specially commissioned by The STYLO Fashion Festival, this stunner is a result of collaborative work of Malaysian designer Faisal Abdullah, world-renowned jeweller Mouawad and Malaysian luxury lifestyle brand Jendela KL.



The Nightingale of Kuala Lumpur is a result of collaborative work of Malaysian designer Faisal Abdullah, world-renowned jeweler Mouawad and Malaysian luxury lifestyle brand Jendela KL. (Photo: Mouawad)

The One Just For Show

Just less than a year after unveiling a £3.7-million black diamond dress, Debbie Wingham surpassed her own creation with a £11.7-million red diamond number. Called the "Abaya", Wingham took inspiration from robe-like dresses that are worn by some women in the Islamic World. The dress was launched in the designer's favourite city — United Arab Emirate's capital Dubai.

The "Abaya", though simple in design, is anything but that. It is embellished with 2,000 stones, 50 two-carat white diamonds, 50 two-carat black diamonds, and 1,899 pointer diamonds. But the star of the dress lies in its centrepiece — a rare and expensive red diamond borrowed from a private collector that is apparently worth US\$7.4 million.



Debbie Wingham's £11.7 million red diamond dress. (Photo: Debbie Wingham)

Sparkling Spidey

The little black dress is a definite crowd pleaser at every party, but one encrusted with over 3,000 diamonds is bound to impress even the best-dressed. And that was what caught the eye of everyone at the 2004 world premiere of "Spider-Man 2" in London, when Irish singer and actress Samantha Mumba posed for cameras in a glittering £5-million ensemble.

Designed by British designer Scott Henshall, the dress was known as the most expensive at that time. It was made as a tribute to the film, and Henshall wove 3,476 diamonds into an intricate spider's web that wrapped around Mumba's body.

Glistening Black Beauty

In 2012, Debbie Wingham's £3.7-million dress made jaws drop when it debuted at Ukraine Fashion Week. Encrusted with 50 black diamonds that are two carats each, the striking dress weighs a hefty 13 kilograms. The black beauty is hand-sewn by Wingham and took her six months to complete.



Debbie Wingham's £3.7-million dress is encrusted with 50 black diamonds. (Photo: Debbie Wingham)

Gemological-certified Cocktail Dress

The year 2012 was an expensive one for haute couture. Not to be bested by Debbie Wingham's black diamond dress, renowned diamond wholesaler Tov International wowed the fashion world with a US\$15 million diamond cocktail dress.

Made out of 85 three-carat round diamonds, the dress was designed by Chloe and Reese. All the diamonds draped on the bodice of the dress are certified by the Gemological Institute of America and the American Gem Society. An illuminating piece of work, indeed.

Dazzling Black Number

Adorned with 2,000 South African diamonds set in 18-carat white gold, British fashion designer Maria Grachvogel's precious dress is a glittery stunner. It was modeled by supermodel Jodie Kidd at London Fashion Week back in 2000.

Worth approximately £250,000 at the time, the jewels that were hand-sewn on the gown were provided by VanPeterson.com. More than just a piece that lit up the catwalk, the long black silk dress was auctioned for charity by Harrods, and the proceeds went to the Nelson Mandela Children's Fund.



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