

A LASTING SYMBOL

Platinum is the precious metal most associated with love, however its cultural significance and symbolic associations extend beyond the romance of Valentine's Day



Research conducted by Platinum Guild International (PGI) has identified a strong preference for platinum among consumers when it comes to expressing love, and in Japan and China platinum is the precious metal that consumers feel is the most appropriate symbol of love.

In India, young couples increasingly see platinum jewellery as a fitting representation of the modern bond in a relationship between equals.

However, platinum's popularity as a symbol of status, longevity and strength is not just a contemporary phenomenon. The ancient Egyptians are known to have used platinum to

decorate the tombs of high-ranking individuals from around 700 BC, and around 100 BC the Incas were using platinum to create ceremonial jewellery.

Louis XVI considered platinum to be the only metal fit for royalty, a sentiment that is shared by many royals, and indeed celebrities, to this day.

The British royal family frequently incorporates platinum into ceremonial events, from the 1937 coronation of King George VI, at which Queen Elizabeth (later the Queen Mother), received a platinum crown, to last year's royal wedding which saw Meghan Markle give Prince Harry a



The Royal Mint issued a range of platinum coins to commemorate the 70th wedding anniversary of Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip - shown are the two sides of the £5 Platinum Proof Piedfort Coin

platinum wedding band, as well as wear the platinum Queen Mary diamond bandeau tiara herself to hold her veil in place.

Elvis Presley's 1967 marriage to Priscilla Anne Beaulieu put platinum firmly on the celebrity map, with the happy couple exchanging platinum rings. Celebrities today continue to embrace platinum for its beauty, glamour and exclusivity as they seek to raise their profile on the red carpet.

Interestingly, additional research by PGI has identified a recent cultural shift towards self-gifting with platinum jewellery. Japan has the highest per capita platinum jewellery consumption in the world, with platinum being used in over 90 per cent of engagement rings and over 80 per cent of wedding bands.

In addition to wedding jewellery, women are increasingly seeing the purchase of non-bridal platinum jewellery as a desirable way of investing disposable income and to celebrate the special moments in their lives.

The significance of seventy

In many cultures, platinum is the precious metal of choice synonymous with special occasions, especially a 70th anniversary – for example this year sees the platinum anniversary of the founding of The People's Republic of China, with celebrations expected to be focused around National Day in October.

In 2017, Queen Elizabeth II became the first monarch in British history to celebrate a platinum wedding anniversary as she reached 70 years of marriage to Prince Philip.

In honour of the occasion, The Royal Mint issued a set of commemorative platinum coins featuring a double portrait of the monarch and her husband.

The Prince of Wales's milestone 70th birthday last year was also marked with a special commemorative platinum coin.

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