

Cultural memory and its influence on jewelry design — a case study

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This work intends to demonstrate the importance of cultural memory, rescuing what was left to us as a historical and cultural legacy by our ancestors. In this approach, the proposal is to build a jewel as a case study, in order to disseminate and value the influence of Japanese culture, with a millenary heritage of a people who worship their ancestors and who value craftsmanship and manual techniques. In view of this proposal, it is intended to discuss these relations between jewelry design and Japanese culture, to establish a cross between memory, history and cultural symbols, an articulation between tradition and contemporaneity. Jewelry as a vehicle for a place full of memories that connects cultures in time and space. It will be presented as references the work of jewelry designers Kazumi Nagano, known for her work in gold threads, paper and fabrics, and Kazuko Nishibayashi with structured jewelry, yet transmitting lightness and fluidity. In addition as a case study, and in dialogue with the proposed discussion, I will present the jewels that I have been developing starting from my oriental roots and my training as an architect, seeking to balance the jewels structured with the same concepts that are applied in architecture as per example form and function, textures and full and voids as well as the importance of Japanese cultural heritage, such as origami and shibori, an ancient technique of manual dyeing creating patterns in the fabric that consists of sewing, folding, tying or attaching the fabric to dip in tincture. It is understood that since the most remote times, jewelry is a form of communication, capable of expressing different cultures and the group belonging to it, jewelry has values attributed by each person and is recognized at different times and different peoples. However, the concept of jewelry in Japan differs from that of the West, probably due to the secular conception of fashion. It was not common to use necklaces, bracelets, rings and earrings in traditional clothing, being

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in charge of the use only by men and women of the nobility. In the rescue of Japanese cultural memory, the concept of what is or is not a jewel is manual work, the raw piece transformed into art and not its expensive raw material. Such memories of an ancient tradition make it possible to recover and rescue fragments that remain in memory that occupy a place in space. This cultural memory can be enhanced as it becomes “raw material” in jewelry design, rescuing ancestry keeping it in the present, an eternal return of these memories. It is the materialization of only a very tenuous part of a cultural heritage acquired from our past, manifesting itself as a trend, but in constant change. Therefore, in this theoretical-practical work, jewels reflecting ancient Japanese art will be presented as an inheritance for a contemporary world and as theoretical reflections such as Bergson, Deleuze and Nora clarify questions about memory as multiplicity, and how it articulates in the temporal planes evidencing cultural values of a place.

KEYWORDS

Cultural heritage, Cultural memory, Jewels, Jewelry Design