NEWS RELEASE

Pearls, They're Not Just Your Grandmother's Necklace Anymore

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The term is fluid fashion, and it's more than a ripple in the jewelry industry, it's a surge. From male models strutting on New York Fashion Week runways to Major League Baseball players trotting around bases, what was once considered women's jewelry now proudly adorns fashionable, influential men. And consumers are noticing.

We're talking pearls. Classic, elegant, and considered the world's oldest gem, pearls were gifted to Chinese royalty as early as 2300 BC. A fragment of ancient pearl jewelry, on display at the Louvre in Paris, was discovered in a sarcophagus of a Persian princess dating to 420 BC. In ancient Rome, pearls were deemed so precious, Julius Caesar passed a law limiting the wearing of the gems only to the ruling class. Thankfully today, no such edict exists.

Today, musicians like Harry Styles, Sam Smith, Pharrell and A$AP Rocky pull off the fluid fashion-forward look with grand deftness. Designer Marc Jacobs wears a pearl necklace every day, calling it his good luck charm. With cred like that, oysters need beware.

The trend in fluid fashion jewelry mirrors the fashion industry, with the global unisex apparel market expected to generate $3.2 billion by 2030. There's also an intersection of the two industries. During Marc Jacobs' New York Fashion Week show in February, **all male models donned pearls** -- strands and studs -- to balance the designer's punk-inspired new collection.

Today, Signet is keeping pace, designing jewelry for categories rather than genders. Signet's research on the subject revealed that 28 percent of men surveyed said sports stars have a positive impact on them wearing non-conventional jewelry. From Major League Baseball stars like Joc Pederson, whose famed pearl necklace is now in the baseball's Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York, to Formula One racer Lewis Hamilton, male consumers are casting aside the label of gender when it comes to jewelry, opting for style and statement making.

"Pearls are not just timeless, they're genderless. Whether it's a daytime setting or an evening on the town, the right pearl accent can add just the right amount of flare for anyone and any occasion," said Ann Grimmett, VP of Merchandising for Jared.

Looking for a cultured statement maker, **search at Jared.com**.