

OPENING ADDRESS
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PLATAFRICA AWARDS - 2015

The modern sophisticated Indian bride is free-spirited, gracious and has a great deal of worldly experience and knowledge about modern society, the arts, culture and defies stereotypes. She is cosmopolitan, brave, ambitious, **educated**, driven and personifies elegance; **and increasingly**, her and her groom's coming together having been eternally blessed by their parents through the gifting of platinum jewellery.

With this picture in mind honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen **good evening** and welcome to this wonderful event tonight where we will shortly announce the winners of the 2015 Plat Africa jewellery competition.

You may be wondering why on earth Anglo American Platinum, which is a South African platinum mining company, has chosen in 2015 to promote an Indian bridal jewellery theme, with assistance from the Platinum Guild International and other partners.

I can tell you that it is all about opening up new market segments which we believe have the growth potential to stimulate further demand for platinum, thereby helping to sustain the platinum mining sector, and offering an opportunity for South African jewellers to design and manufacture elegant platinum bridal jewellery for the Indian market. All of this for the benefit of South Africa.

You may also be sceptical about whether us platinum miner's, who are not exactly world renowned for being into design, marketing or giving advice to the likes of Cartier, Bvlgari or Tiffany Co. can really succeed in growing a luxury market segment in some far away destination by focusing on concepts, which are also often foreign to us miners, such as love and emotion.

Well, you only have to look to the Chinese market to see what miners can achieve when they become creative. In collaboration with the Platinum Guild International, which we as the platinum industry established in 1975, have been actively promoting platinum jewellery sales in China since 1997. Through an investment of ~US\$150 million a market delivering a net return of ~US\$4.3 billion, and demanding one million eight hundred thousand ounces of platinum annually, has successfully been created in China. Interestingly in cities like Shanghai and Beijing, 60% of young modern and sophisticated couples acquiring wedding rings are opting for platinum. This market will continue to grow through our efforts.

So can this success be replicated in the Indian market, particularly given the deeply entrenched cultural affiliation to gold jewellery?

We believe it can be, through intelligent marketing, which leverages consumer insights into the young urban consumers' un-met needs in jewellery. Over the past four years, the PGI has positioned platinum as the metal of choice for celebrating love and introduced a new jewellery segment known as the 'Platinum Love Bands'.

As you may be aware, in India many marriages are still arranged, so the couple will not necessarily have gotten to know each other all that well before they experience the traditional wedding, an occasion where their families come together, and wealth is transferred mostly in the form of pure gold jewellery. At this time the couple may not have discovered love for each other, this usually comes at a later stage, their 'Platinum Day of Love', a moment in time when the couple celebrate their affection and love for one another by exchanging Platinum Love Bands.

With our partners in India, we have also now launched the exquisite 'Evara Platinum Blessings' collection, jewellery that places platinum at the very heart of the wedding ceremony, which represents over 60% of total jewellery sales in India. Evara is rooted in Sanskrit and stands for blessings, a gifted jewellery set from the bride's parents to the bride and groom, carrying with it the platinum promise of everlasting love.

The everlasting bond of love is at the heart of every Evara design, as each piece has a unique platinum bond that holds together multiple strands of platinum, symbolic of the couple and their two families coming together, to create a beautiful new relationship.

This range of jewellery offers an ideal opportunity for the parents and family to bless the bridal couple's marriage by the giving of platinum jewellery, which is designed so that it can be worn beyond just the wedding day. Importantly, every time the bride wears her Evara jewellery she will be carrying with her, her parents' love and blessings. Symbolically, these two platinum jewellery collections are defining a place for platinum jewellery that is both personal and emotional and highly differentiated from gold.

Both these market development initiatives in India have already seen a surge in platinum sales, with sales on track to grow a further 25% in 2015 and forecast to deliver a market demand of 500,000 platinum ounces by 2020.

It is for this reason that we decided the theme for the 2015 Plat Africa competition should be Indian bridal jewellery. This has enabled us to actually showcase possible styles of exquisite platinum jewellery which has all been designed for the Indian bridal market by South African based jewellers, demonstrating the immense talent we have right here in South Africa.

I want to express my personal thank you to Harriet and the team who have worked largely behind the scenes on the competition. Thank you to our judges who have given up their time to make a contribution to local skills development. And a big thank you to co-sponsors, Metal Concentrators and partners Shine Magazine, part of Media24 and then of course the event organising team.

To all entrants, well done on being part of the competition and to the winners we will shortly announce, CONGRATULATIONS to you all!!

Your jewellery pieces are indeed true to what epitomises platinum and further demonstrates that every sophisticated, elegant and modern bride should be wearing at least one piece of platinum jewellery on the special day of her marriage.

Thank you very much and enjoy the evening.

1. Sanskrit = The corpus of [Sanskrit literature](#) encompasses a rich tradition of [poetry](#) and [drama](#) as well as [scientific](#), technical, [philosophical](#) and [religious](#) texts. Sanskrit continues to be widely used as a ceremonial language in Hindu religious rituals and Buddhist practice in the form of [hymns](#) and [chants](#). Spoken Sanskrit has been revived in some villages with traditional institutions, and there are attempts to enhance its popularization.