

Media release

HARRY OPPENHEIMER MUSEUM RE-OPENING, TEL AVIV

Varda Shine – 11 February 2008

Good Morning

It is my privilege and my pleasure to add my welcome to my colleagues and friends here whilst we celebrate the re-opening of the Harry Oppenheimer Museum.

I can tell you that Harry would strongly approve of today's celebration, he opened this museum on 3rd July 1986 and 22 years later he would take great pleasure in seeing the care, attention and imagination that has been showered on the refurbishment.

He would be delighted that his passion for diamonds and for the diamond industry lives on through it.

He would be excited about Israel's flourishing diamond industry, and the world class expertise and innovation that come from Israel's diamantaires.

Most of all he would be proud to see the Roar of the Diamond exhibition – a fantastic showcase of home-grown South African creativity and skills.

The exhibition pieces we have loaned the museum have been created by up and coming talent that have entered the DTC Shining Light Awards – a competition that represents excellence in South African jewellery design.

I would like to take this opportunity to talk about the importance of supporting and nurturing this talent.

As you all know, most of the world's diamonds are mined from Southern Africa, particularly South Africa, Botswana and Namibia.

I believe that it is imperative that we help Governments in those countries to unlock and maximise the full value that diamonds bring to their countries.

This means supporting the growth of jewellery designers and manufacturers as well as cutting and polishing operations.

Public & Corporate Affairs

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Since 1996, the Shining Light Awards have provided an international platform to bring together and showcase South Africa's creativity and talent.

I am extremely proud that De Beers and DTC have sponsored and supported this initiative from the beginning, and is still involved today.

The Awards provide more than just a showcase. Entrants are given the opportunity to work in cooperation with world-class, innovative diamond manufacturers.

For those of you here today that have supported or sponsored designers – I thank you.

I am sure each and every jewellery designer will have learned some valuable lessons from you – in technical excellence as well as wider industry skills and knowledge.

Before I finish and leave you to enjoy the sparkling exhibition, I would like to thank the Israeli diamond industry in its entirety.

Israeli diamantaires are setting the standards worldwide – not only through its world class expertise and technical innovation, but also through its strong entrepreneurial spirit.

All of these factors ensure that the world's consumers are more in love with diamonds than ever before, which is vital to the future success of the global diamond industry.

On behalf of the Oppenheimer Family and all of us at De Beers and DTC, I would like to thank those involved for their hard work in the refurbishment of the museum and the creation of a fantastic exhibition.

Thank you and enjoy the exhibition.