

INÊS BARBOSA, LDA.

Morning breaks in Póvoa de Lanhoso. The first rays of sunlight announce a new day, unconcerned whether the morning mist might shadow their starring role.

Inês Barbosa was born there, in the land of gold, where the Romans created the oldest road in northwest Iberia: Road XVII, built in the time of Augustus between 5 BC and 2 BC and from which several milestones are kept on display in museums. That road served to transport the gold extracted from mines between the Douro and Minho Rivers and Galicia.

Her destiny was written the moment she was born into a family of Filigree artisans going back 5 generations. Inês grabbed hold of that destiny with the passion of someone who would write a new page in the family book, ensuring that her offspring — the sixth generation — will continue writing in Filigree shapes refined by time.

Inês' eldest daughter Rita is a designer and brought freshness to her mother's workshop. She designs jewels inspired in Nature's organic shapes, taking their aesthetic and structural aspects and breathing new life into Filigree, making the final design the outcome of her creative thoughts on the reality she sees and feels. It is an intimate silent project where she co-creates with Nature.

Using an autumn palette, the colours that most stimulate her creativity, Rita takes a pencil, and the magic happens on paper. The *ginkgo* flower is chosen. "It's so elegant! Notice the delicate shapes. In Japanese culture, *ginkgo* flowers are symbols of longevity, hope and achievement." Is Filigree not just the same? Rita's hand sketches onto the blank page that happy encounter and the harmony of shapes. And the design will give birth to a jewel that will come to life in the artisans' hands and from there travel the world.

The artisan goldsmiths and *enchedeiras* (fillers) in the workshop are all young men and women. The future lies there, fighting the Adamasters who prophesied the end of the art. Inês and Rita also have their own worktops. They also create skeletons for jewels they too fill, they too solder. The workshop produces only unique jewels that bear the hallmark attesting to their authenticity. "Everything is hand-made. Everything." Inês makes the statement with the intellectual honesty required of someone who is fascinated by the simplicity and sophistication of luxury, knowing that exclusivity defines her as an artisan. "The bangle is a work of art." Made with the thinnest gold threads and encrusted with diamonds, the structured rigid bracelet is the apple of her eye. Inês salvaged it from tradition and gave it a modern, exquisite, luxurious look with a very special charm.

Over the past few years, Inês' obsession has been to create a Certified Portuguese Filigree ecosystem, placing it at the forefront of jewellery in the world as a natural extension of Portuguese passion and elegance. Inês Barbosa remains on her journey towards the infinite of singularity. The sun rises in a special place where Portuguese Filigree was born and Inês knows that the view through the fine mesh of twisted and beaten threads creates the most beautiful sunrise in the world.

Texts by Sónia Felgueiras

Enchant yourself with the story
of Inês in video

