

Jeweller leaves no rare stone unturned



Picture: KYM SMITH

Nurit and husband Eitan Aharoni, who will be displaying their wares at the Australia Craft Show at the Convention Centre this weekend, inspect some of their items.

By **HELENA MUSA,**
Arts Editor

Diamonds may be forever but, according to a jeweler in town this weekend, they can be "almost boring."

Eitan Aharoni, born in Israel and educated in South Africa, arrived in Australia with his wife Nurit two years ago and set up a studio in Double Bay, Sydney.

Two of the many artists in town for the Australian Craft Show, the Aharonis have hit on a unique formula for success. Specialists in rare stones, many of them from Africa, they produce pendants, rings and necklaces which are quickly finding a market.

"In Africa we had access to unusual stones, the kind you don't see in shops", Mr Aharoni said.

He said he especially admired the exceptional tourmalines in blues, greens and reds, from Namibia, "the oldest desert in the world."

"A red tourmaline is really red", he explained, "A ruby is only pink-red and a garnet just a brown-red."

Mr Aharoni grew up in a family of gem experts, some of who could tell from which mine an emerald came just by the markings and flaws in the stone. He studied jewellery-making formally in Israel, his in depth knowledge of his materials was "a matter of experience."

With diamonds so predictable and easy to classify for many modern clients, business is looking up for the Aharonis. Nurit, whose name denotes a flower of Israel, is, to her husband, "truly my flower."

And no wonder. She designs the work he crafts so fastidiously, in a team effort which seems to be paying off if their recent show at Fox Studios in Sydney is any indication.

The Australian Craft Show, brainchild of art expert June Bibby, is now in its 12th year.

With a focus on wearable art, jewellery and ceramics for 2000, it should provide relief from motor mania as it continued in the National Convention Centre, 10am to 6pm until Monday inclusive.

