

Our Founder, Marcus Reller

After a traditional apprenticeship in Vienna, Marcus Reller became a Master Casemaker in the Goldsmith Guild producing cases with square corners and a lapped mirror finish . . . always. After escaping the Nazis and coming to America in 1939, he manufactured die-struck link bracelets for top-end Swiss and American watches in the 1940s and early 1950s. In 1956 he relocated to Miami establishing Reller, Inc. as a souvenir charm business relying on stamped, engine turned and brocaded discs with a few castings added as embellishments or frames. But the look was still high polish—flat mirror-like surfaces and never a buff when a flat lap could be used. Later, with coin mountings the construction was similar, mostly die-struck then turned on a lathe giving a final bright cut with a diamond tool.

The castings he used were first thoroughly finished to a high polish, then carefully fluxed and soldered in place on similarly prepared discs and the assembled piece needed little additional finishing.

The emphasis was on high quality in volume production. Even the smallest detail had to be perfect. Marcus always held that “it’s just as easy, just as fast to do a job the right way.”

In the 1970s Bernard, seeing a market for more complicated “art” castings and increased sales, formed a casting company to provide quality castings for Marcus and later the Miami “Trade.” Bernard broadened his own production outside the Reller shop to include finished goods.

From Marcus' viewpoint, there was possibly the pedagogical element of not making things too "easy" for Bernard so he would not miss some important lessons in entrepreneurship.

In 1982, the two businesses were combined and produced goods under the same roof in Gainesville, Florida. Marcus later returned to the dynamic Miami Jewelry scene to continue design projects relying on the Gainesville shop for volume production. He remained a well-known figure at industry events and in press until his death in 1992.