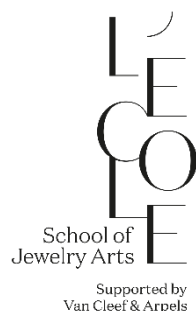




香港大學美術博物館
University Museum and Art Gallery
The University of Hong Kong



Press Release

*New exhibition by the University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong
and L'ÉCOLE Asia Pacific, School of Jewelry Arts*

“Designing Jewels: 200 years of French Savoir-Faire (1770-1970)”



展覽 Exhibition

06.06 – 05.10.2025

香港大學美術博物館
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筆脈珍傳

法國珠寶巧藝二百年 (1770-1970)

DESIGNING JEWELS

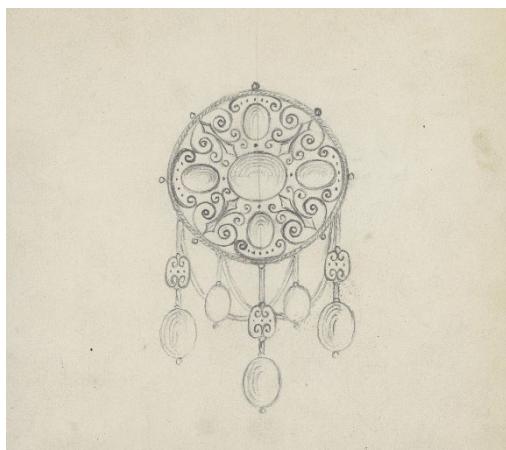
200 Years of French Savoir-Faire (1770-1970)

From June 6th to October 5th, 2025, the University Museum and Art Gallery of the University of Hong Kong (UMAG) and L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts are proud to present **“Designing Jewels: 200 years of French Savoir-Faire (1770-1970)”**, an exhibition that explores the rich history of jewellery graphic resources from some of the most prominent French Maisons.

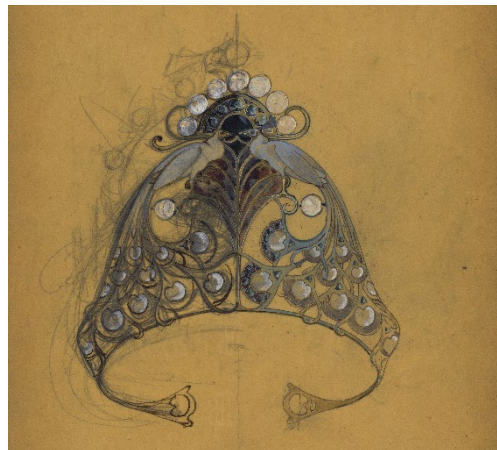
For the first time, UMAG and L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts collaborate on an exhibition highlighting the intersection of jewellery and graphic arts, co-curated by **Florian Knothe**, an Art Historian, Curator, and Director of UMAG; and **Mathilde Berger-Rondouin**, Art Historian specialising in the field of European decorative arts and Lecturer at L'ÉCOLE. The display focuses on jewellery drawings, mostly dating from the 19th century, and benefits for technical studies of the drawn representations.

Jewellery designs — whether as preliminary line drawings or gouaché illustrations — are unique in that they represent different stages in the manufacturing process of jewels and preview the appearance of a veritable work of art in its beauty, colour and material application. Rarely exhibited, under studied and often unpublished, jewellery drawings remain relatively unknown to the public despite their essential role, serving as the references for all master craftsmen involved in the creation of the jewellery. Since the Renaissance, drawings have constituted the initial and guiding step in a creative process that gives life to an artistic idea and allows for the development from inspiration to masterpieces.





Mellerio Borgnis (1858–ca.1914)
Drawing of a brooch
Graphite on paper
ca. 1865
Van Cleef & Arpels Jewelry Culture Fonds



René Lalique (1860–1945)
Drawing of a 'peacocks' diadem
Pencil, ink and gouaché on BFK Rives paper
ca. 1900
Van Cleef & Arpels Jewelry Culture Fonds

Benefiting from Van Cleef & Arpels Patrimony Collections combined with the Van Cleef & Arpels Jewelry Culture Fonds (set up for research, presentation and educational purposes in 2019), loans from Lalique Museum France and private jewellery collections in Hong Kong, this exhibition features a remarkable collection of about 100 drawings alongside 13 exquisite jewellery pieces. This exhibition is supported by the French May Arts Festival.



"Together, the different stages recorded in the drawings and the jewellery masterpieces not only testify to the expertise and fine craftsmanship for which the represented Maisons are known, but they also illustrate the preparatory steps and transfer of knowledge as a sketched idea becomes a priceless jewel."

Florian Knothe, Director of the University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong

Drawings of bird clips
Pencil, ink and gouaché on paper,
Van Cleef & Arpels stamp
ca. 1960
Van Cleef & Arpels Archives



Zip Necklace design
Circa 1951
Van Cleef & Arpels Archives

Offering visitors a 360-degree exploration, a satellite exhibition will be hosted at L'ÉCOLE Asia Pacific, School of Jewelry Arts, showcasing the behind-the-scenes of one of the most iconic Zip Necklace crafted by high jewellery Maison Van Cleef & Arpels. This segment delves deep into the design processes, archival practices, and technical renderings that bring such masterpieces to life. The Zip Necklace stands as a monumental testament to the Maison's unwavering spirit of innovation and extraordinary technical mastery. Through inspiring, iconic, and often internationally influential displays, the exhibition underscores the essential transfer of knowledge that fuels the creations captivating connoisseurs across cultures worldwide.

"Thanks to the launch of the L'ÉCOLE research project in 2018 and the establishment of the Van Cleef & Arpels Jewelry Culture Fonds in 2019, these have led to the creation of this exhibition dedicated to jewellery drawings, highlighting their historical significance and beauty."

This unique exhibition invites visitors to explore the initial stages of the jewellery-making process, by understanding jewellery drawings' history, technique, authors and status. It is our vision to ignite in a wider audience a passion for jewellery culture and cultivates a deeper understanding and appreciation for the art of jewellery design."

Olivier Segura,

Managing Director of L'ÉCOLE Asia Pacific, School of Jewelry Arts

On the occasion of this exhibition, multiple programmes from intricate craftsmanship of legendary jewellery designs, to hands-on workshops and accessible programming designated for the exhibition are provided at the two venues – UMAG and L'ÉCOLE campus situated in K11 MUSEA. These include in-person and online conversations, L'ÉCOLE's iconic "Open House", and accessibility tours for visually impaired individuals, in partnership with Beyond Vision International (BVI).

Along the journey in the exhibition, engaging activations further enrich the visitor experience, providing a dynamic platform for learning, connection and creativity. These include live gouaché demonstrations by jewellery designer and L'ÉCOLE lecturer every weekend, colouring activities for adults and kids, and an interactive digital game that blends art with technology.

Practical Information

Exhibition "Designing Jewels: 200 years of French Savoir-Faire (1770-1970)"

From June 6th to October 5th, 2025

Open from Tuesday to Sunday

9:30 a.m. – 6 p.m. (Tuesday – Saturday)

1 p.m. – 6 p.m. (Sunday)

Closed on Mondays, Public and University Holidays

Free Admission

♀ *University Museum and Art Gallery
1/F & 2/F, Fung Ping Shan Building, UMAG,
The University of Hong Kong
90 Bonham Road, Pok Fu Lam Rd, Hong Kong*



To go further: Satellite Exhibition

From June 6th to October 5th, 2025

Open from Monday to Sunday

1 p.m. – 7 p.m. (except special closure)

Free Admission

♀ *L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts
510A, 5F, K11 MUSEA, Hong Kong*

For more information:

**University Museum and Art Gallery
The University of Hong Kong**

<https://umag.hku.hk/>
@umag_hku #umag

L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts

<https://www.lecole.vancleefarpels.com/hk/en>

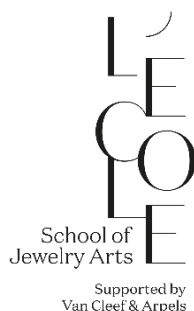
@LECOLEAsiaPacific #LECOLEAsiaPacific
#DesigningJewels

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About L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts

Established in 2012 with the support of Van Cleef & Arpels, L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts aims to introduce the public to all aspects of jewelry culture through various activities: courses, workshops, conversations, exhibitions, research, books and podcast.

Activities at L'ÉCOLE cover three main areas: the history of jewelry, the world of gemstones and the savoir-faire of jewelry-making techniques.

The courses are open to everyone, with no prerequisites: complete beginners as well as enlightened amateurs, collectors and those with a curiosity for the world of jewelry. Students experiment with gestures, skills and tools, guided by their lecturers – art historians, gemologists and craftsmen.

L'ÉCOLE now has four permanent addresses: in Paris, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Dubai.

Moreover, since its inception, L'ÉCOLE regularly travels abroad, in Europe, America, Asia and the Middle East, for talks, exhibitions or travelling course programs that can last one to three weeks. L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts therefore contributes to the promotion and visibility of jewelry culture on an international scale.

For more information: <https://www.lecolevanclleefarpels.com/hk/en>





香港大學美術博物館
University Museum and Art Gallery
The University of Hong Kong

About the University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong

The University Museum and Art Gallery (UMAG) of The University of Hong Kong was founded in 1953 as the Fung Ping Shan Museum. Originally established as the Fung Ping Shan Library of Chinese language publications in 1932 in honour of its benefactor, the building became a museum dedicated to collecting Chinese art when the University's libraries consolidated. The museum was renamed UMAG in 1994, shortly before its new wing was opened to the public in 1996. It is the oldest continuously operated museum in Hong Kong and over the past seventy years it has built up a diverse collection of ceramics and bronzes dating from the Neolithic period (c. 7000–c. 2100 BCE) to the Qing dynasty (1644–1911), as well as traditional and modern paintings from the Ming (1368–1644) to the twenty-first century.

Chief among the collections are the Museum's ceramics, which show the extraordinary achievements of the Chinese potter from Neolithic period painted pottery jars, to the decorative porcelains of the Qing dynasty. Among the early wares are examples of funerary pottery dating from the Han (206 BCE–220 CE) to the Tang dynasties (618–907), which include lead-glazed models and vessels, as well as tri-coloured (sancai) ceramics. Throughout Chinese history, ceramics have been traded and admired outside of China. Of these, green ware, particularly Yue and celadon, which were sought after in Southeast Asia and Korea, and the development of blue-and-white porcelains, which were made for the Islamic market and popular in Europe, have been the most influential pieces and are well-represented in the Museum's collection. Of particular note is one of the earliest known examples of underglaze-blue decoration in the form of a small tripod water pot dating to the Tang dynasty. The Museum also has representative examples of work made by the famous Song (960–1279) kilns, such as those of Ding and Cizhou, and mono- and polychrome decorated ware from the Ming and Qing dynasties.

Other highlights of the collection are the Museum's Chinese bronzes that include ritual vessels dating to the Shang (c. 1600–c. 1100 BCE) and Western Zhou (c.1100–771 BCE) periods, and a comprehensive collection of mirrors dating from the Eastern Zhou (770–256 BCE) period to the Tang dynasty. The Museum also contains the largest known collection of Mongol period (Yuan dynasty 1271–1368) Nestorian crosses in the world. In addition to its collection of carvings in jade, wood and stone, the Museum has a small but significant collection of Chinese ink painting dating from the Ming dynasty to the present and twentieth-century Chinese oil painting.

In addition to these permanent collections, UMAG regularly hosts exhibitions of contemporary and ancient Chinese and Western art, as well as on early Hong Kong history. The Museum was originally established as a teaching museum and has maintained this commitment to the University through the teaching of Chinese art and museum studies and by encouraging students to broaden their education through the arts. It regularly presents non-exhibition related talks and activities that are open to both the University's students and public.

For more information: <https://umag.hku.hk>

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