

Van Cleef & Arpels

– TEFAF 2026 –  
HERITAGE COLLECTION

PRESS KIT



Since 2013, Van Cleef & Arpels has been a regular participant in the Fine Art and Antique Fair TEFAF (The European Fine Art Foundation) in Maastricht. A key event for the art market, each year this prestigious assembly attracts art lovers, collectors, as well as public and private institutions from around the world. From March 14 to 19, the most distinguished worldwide galleries will be displaying masterpieces of various art forms (paintings by acclaimed artists, antiques and more). Alongside these treasures, the Maison is exhibiting some 40 time-honored pieces from its Heritage collection illustrating its role in 20th century decorative arts. This selection, which is offered for sale, highlights one of Van Cleef & Arpels' technical signatures—transformability—as well as its gemological expertise.

*Cover:*

TRANSFORMABLE NECKLACE  
WITH DETACHABLE CLIP, 1963

Platinum, diamonds  
Heritage collection

# CONTENTS



THE HERITAGE COLLECTION .....	P. 4
SELECTED PIECES .....	P. 5
<i>Box, 1944</i>	
<i>Bracelet, 1947</i>	
<i>Aigrette clip, 1955</i>	
<i>Transformable necklace with detachable clip, 1963</i>	
<i>Bracelet, 1974, and Necklace, 1983</i>	
VAN CLEEF & ARPELS SINCE ITS FOUNDING .....	P. 13

# THE HERITAGE COLLECTION

---

Born in 2007, the Heritage collection brings together time-honored creations designed and fashioned by the Maison between the 1920s and the 1990s, and intended for sale. Today, this selection comprises some 150 pieces representing Jewelry, High Jewelry and precious objects. It is distinct from the patrimonial Collection, which is composed of creations owned by the Maison and destined for display at exhibitions around the world.

Before entering the Heritage collection, each creation is carefully examined by Van Cleef & Arpels' experts. In the workshops, craftsmen analyze its condition and materials. Once it has been cleaned, any necessary repairs are carried out, in keeping with the savoir-faire and high standards of the Maison. The Heritage Department's buyers ensure that each piece is properly identified. With the help of Patrimony Department members, they perform research in the Van Cleef & Arpels Archives, rigorously exploring client files, account books and sketch libraries to authenticate each creation and issue the associated certificate, a precondition for it to join the Heritage collection and to be made available for sale.

“ Every year, TEFAF Maastricht provides an opportunity for Van Cleef & Arpels to put rare pieces on display. Representing various periods and sources of inspiration, they reflect the full richness of our Heritage collection. This year, we will be celebrating white High Jewelry through creations dating from the 1940s to the 1960s. We will also highlight the influence of historicism at the Maison with a *demi-parure* mingling diamonds and sumptuous rubies. ”



**Natacha Vassiltchikov**  
High Jewelry Retail Director

# SELECTED PIECES



- *Box, 1944* -



**Yellow gold, turquoise, rubies**  
Heritage collection

Since its founding in 1906, Van Cleef & Arpels has come to prominence for creating precious objects that complement daily life. By the 1920s, the Maison spotlighted functionality through its beauty compacts designed to hold a range of items. This box follows from that tradition, while reflecting the aesthetics of the 1940s.

Platinum, long a favorite material, was requisitioned as part of the war effort. Consequently, yellow gold returned to its preeminent position, as illustrated in this piece. The metal is delicately engraved, in the style of pill cases and snuff boxes fashionable in the 18th century. The resulting motif, concentric and naturalistic, accentuates the three-dimensional quality imparted by the arrangement of the gemstones: a ruby heart encircled by two rows of turquoise. The choice of stones—both precious and ornamental—attests to Van Cleef & Arpels' penchant for color combinations. The halo pattern echoes the goldwork, enriching the composition with a singular depth effect.

## - *Bracelet, 1947* -

This platinum and diamond bracelet mirrors the aesthetic codes of *Ludo* creations. Introduced in 1934, the design calls to mind a precious belt, combining Art Deco geometry and the art of couture, a universe dear to the Maison. Its distinctive and highly flexible *brique* weave is denoted in this 1947 piece. The square links of the bracelet, each one a testament to Van Cleef & Arpels' technical expertise, are carefully assembled and adjusted one by one, to ensure optimal articulation and flexibility. The central feature once again betokens couture: indeed, since the 1920s, the Maison has sought to recreate the flowing drape of fabric in precious materials. This streaming bow is fashioned from diamonds of various cuts—baguette, emerald and brilliant. The volume and depth achieved through the multi-layer composition contrast with the refinement of the bracelet, while the square diamonds of the central motif echo the shape of the links.

Recreating the lightness of textiles in precious materials, this combination of diamonds and platinum demonstrates the resurgence of white jewelry in the late 1940s.



**Platinum, diamonds**  
Heritage collection

- *Aigrette clip, 1955* -



From the very beginning, Van Cleef & Arpels has looked to nature for inspiration to create pieces suffused with vitality. The design of this clip calls to mind a stylized floral bouquet. Platinum and osmior—an alloy patented by the Maison in 1932—are fashioned in a spiral structure. The rays, set with baguette-cut diamonds, recall foliage gently swaying in the breeze. Brilliants punctuate the streaking beams like delicate dewdrops, accentuating the regularity of the motif. These stones offer an additional dash of light while echoing the center of the clip, made up of oval and brilliant-cut diamonds. Distinctive of white jewelry in the 1950s, this blend of calibrated—for the stems—and round diamonds—for the flowers—creates an interplay of contrasting forms that further enlivens the piece.

**Platinum, osmior, diamonds**  
Heritage collection

*- Transformable necklace with detachable clip, 1963 -*

Since the 1920s, Van Cleef & Arpels has distinguished itself with transformable creations. This necklace from 1963 reflects that tradition: the piece can be worn with or without the pendant, itself detachable as a clip, and complemented according to the wearer's fancy by two elements rounding out the lower section.

The creation features two rows of diamonds, one baguette-cut, the other brilliants. Its linear design contrasts with the expansive central motif. Composed of gemstones of various cuts, it suggests frost-covered flower petals, a reverent nod to one of the Maison's key sources of inspiration since its founding: the eternal ebb and rebirth of the natural world.



**Platinum, white gold, osmior, diamonds**  
Heritage collection

*- Transformable necklace with detachable clip, 1963 -*



The theme of nature is coupled with a focus on couture—another realm dear to Van Cleef & Arpels—illustrated by the two detachable ribbon-shaped segments rounding out the choker.

This piece is an eminent example of evening High Jewelry typical of the 1960s. Its varied functionalities and aesthetic references reflect the Maison's creative universe.

**Platinum, white gold, osmior, diamonds**  
Heritage collection

*- Bracelet, 1974, and Necklace, 1983 -*

The 1970s and 1980s saw the return of larger, more colorful jewelry. These two pieces echo that period, while manifesting the steadfast reliance on historicism—consideration of past styles—in the work of Van Cleef & Arpels. They are distinguished by their central features in rubies and diamonds, evoking the “daisy” motif fashionable in the 18th century: a colored central stone surrounded by diamonds. This adornment also illustrates the timelessness of floral references in the jewelry arts, and particularly in the Maison’s creative heritage.



Open and closed views of the bracelet  
Yellow gold, rubies, diamonds  
Heritage collection

- *Bracelet, 1974, and Necklace, 1983* -



The necklace takes the form of two diamond rows, its lower half interspersed with daisies. These flowers also adorn the bracelet, which presents a structure reminiscent of 18th century specimens, often worn in pairs. For this piece, the influence of historicism is nonetheless open to reinterpretation in keeping with contemporary tastes: the combination of diamonds and yellow gold exhibits a degree of modernity. Moreover, the similarities between the motifs on the bracelet, created in 1974, and the necklace, from 1983, point to a certain creative continuum from one decade to the next. The abundance of influences visible in this *demi-parure* attests to the importance of revivals during the 1980s, placing the Maison's creations in the French jewelry tradition.

**Yellow gold, platinum, rubies, diamonds**  
Heritage collection

# VAN CLEEF & ARPELS SINCE ITS FOUNDING



Van Cleef & Arpels boutique window, Place Vendôme ca. 1955  
Van Cleef & Arpels Archives

**V**an Cleef & Arpels came into being in 1906, at 22 Place Vendôme, Paris. Its founding followed from the 1895 wedding of Alfred Van Cleef and Esther Arpels—known as Estelle—both hailing from families of jewelry merchants. The Maison’s sources of inspiration, including love, nature, couture, dance and imaginary worlds, open gateways to an enchanting universe. Guided by excellence, Van Cleef & Arpels is recognized for its gemstones selected according to the most stringent criteria, its virtuoso savoir-faire and a penchant for innovation, all expressed through High Jewelry, Jewelry and Watchmaking collections. Its style, exemplified in several signature such as the Mystery Set technique, the Minaudière, the *Zip* necklace and the *Alhambra* motif, continues even today to blend ingenuity and poetry.

**1895** Wedding of Alfred Van Cleef and Estelle Arpels.

**1906** Alfred Van Cleef and his brother-in-law Salomon—known as Charles—open a boutique at 22 Place Vendôme. Charles’ other brothers, Julien and Louis, would join the family adventure in the years that followed.

- Creation of the first watch and the first animal and lucky-charm jewels.
- Order for a bejeweled replica of the yacht Varuna of New York, the Maison’s first precious object, in jasper, ebony and enamel.

**1920** Emergence of a pronounced trend for jewelry and vanity cases inspired by India, Egypt, China, Japan and Persia.

**1922** Creation of a necklace adorned with the *Prince Edward of York*, a pear-shaped diamond weighing more than 60 carats.

**1925** Participation in the Paris *International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts*, where Van Cleef & Arpels is awarded a Grand Prize in the jewelry category, particularly for the *Entwined Flowers, Red and White Roses* bracelet set with rubies, emeralds and diamonds.



LUDO BRACELET, 1938  
Yellow gold, diamonds  
Heritage collection

**1926** Rachel Puissant—known as Renée—, daughter of Alfred Van Cleef and Estelle Arpels, becomes the Maison’s Creative Director.

**1929** Participation in the exhibition *Les Arts de la Bijouterie, Joaillerie et Orfèvrerie* at the Palais Galliera in Paris.

**1933** Creation of the Minaudière, a sophisticated vanity case for elegant ladies.  
- Patent application for the Mystery Set technique.

**1934** Launch of *Ludo* jewels.

**1935** Creation of a yellow gold watch on a double snake chain, known as the *Cadenas* watch as of 1938.

**1937** Participation in the Paris *Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la Vie Moderne*.

**1938** Creation of the transformable *Passe-Partout* jewel.

**1939** After participating in the New York World’s Fair, the Maison settles in Rockefeller Center. In 1940, a boutique opens at 744 Fifth Avenue.

- On the occasion of Princess Fawzia of Egypt's wedding to Mohammed Reza Pahlavi, the future Shah of Iran, Van Cleef & Arpels creates jewelry sets for the bride and her mother, Queen Nazli of Egypt.

**1941** Creation of the first *Dancer* and *Fairy* clips.

**1949** Pierre Arpels designs a round watch with an elegantly thin case, intended for his personal use. Since 2012, this *PA49* has been reinterpreted under the name *Pierre Arpels*.

**1950** Creation of the *Zip* necklace, transformable into a bracelet, inspired by the zip fastener and patented in 1938.

**1954** Inauguration of *la boutique* at 22 Place Vendôme, a sales area that would lend its name to the collections offered, including the emblematic animal clips.

**1956** Prince Rainier III of Monaco acquires a jewelry set in pearls and diamonds as a wedding gift for Grace Kelly. Van Cleef & Arpels later becomes “Official supplier to the Principality of Monaco”.

**1967** For the coronation of Farah Pahlavi, Empress of Iran, the Maison creates her crown, necklace and earrings, along with jewelry sets worn by members of the Imperial family.

**1968** Creation of the first *Alhambra* long necklace.

**1971** Jacques Arpels purchased the *Walska Briolette*, a 96.62-carat yellow diamond that came to adorn a *Bird* clip.

**1972** Opening of *la boutique des heures*, a shop dedicated to timepieces, at Place Vendôme.



PILL BOX, 1940  
Yellow gold, sapphires, diamonds  
Heritage collection



*BICHE CLIP*, 1960

Yellow gold, white gold, rose gold, rubies  
Heritage collection

**1992** Organization of one of the first large-scale exhibitions dedicated to Van Cleef & Arpels by the Palais Galliera, Musée de la Mode de la Ville de Paris.

**2003** First thematic High Jewelry collection, *Songe d'une nuit d'été*.

**2006** Inauguration of the Poetic Complications watchmaking collection with the *Lady Arpels Centenaire watch*.

**2007** Launch of the Heritage collection.

**2009** *The Spirit of Beauty* exhibition at Tokyo's Mori Arts Center.

**2011** *Set in Style* exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York.

**2012** *Timeless Beauty* exhibition at the Shanghai Museum of Contemporary Art.

- *Van Cleef & Arpels: the Art of High Jewelry* exhibition at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris.

- Founding of L'ÉCOLE, School of Jewelry Arts (with the support of Van Cleef & Arpels) in Paris.

**2013** The Maison takes part in TEFAF Maastricht for the first time.

**2016** *Van Cleef & Arpels: The Art and Science of Gems* exhibition at the ArtScience Museum in Singapore.

- Creation of the *Fée Ondine* automaton Extraordinary Object, presented the following year at the International Fine Watchmaking Exhibition (SIHH) in Geneva.

**2019** For the first time, 44 pieces from the Heritage collection are put on display in a specific exhibition at the Korea Furniture Museum in Seoul.

- *Van Cleef & Arpels: Time, Nature, Love* exhibition at the Palazzo Reale in Milan.

**2020** *Gems* exhibition at the French National Museum of Natural History in Paris.

- Launch of *Dance Reflections* by Van Cleef & Arpels, a program supporting contemporary dance.

**2024** Publication of *The Van Cleef & Arpels Collection (1906-1953)* by Atelier EXB.

**2025** *Cosmic Splendor. Jewelry from the Collections of Van Cleef & Arpels* exhibition at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

- *Timeless Art Deco with Van Cleef & Arpels High Jewelry* exhibition at the Tokyo Metropolitan Teien Art Museum.



*CHEVEUX D'ANGE NECKLACE*, 1962

Platinum, yellow gold, diamonds  
Heritage collection



Access the Van Cleef & Arpels press lounge at the following address:

<https://presslounge.vancleefarpels.com/>

If you do not yet have an account, you may create one online.

#VCATEFAF #VCAHeritage #VanCleefArpels

[@vancleefarpels](#)