The Pearl Odyssey

GemGenève · 7th edition

2-5 Nov. 2023

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Precious the tear as that rain from the sky which turns into pearls as it falls in the sea

Précieuse est la larme, tout comme la pluie du ciel qui se transforme en perles en tombant dans la mer.

Thomas Moore

The Pearl Odyssey

Pearls have been making quite a comeback in the world of jewellery over the past few years. Long seen as outdated or too traditional, this irresistible ball of mother-of-pearl is now inspiring a new generation of jewellers.

As an expression of wealth, prestige, and femininity, pearl jewels have weathered all ages, fashions and styles with unrivalled elegance. Constantly sublimated by the most daring jewellers, pearls have a very special place in the history of jewellery.

The Pearl Odyssey retraces the story of pearls and their tradition. Through a selection of some thirty outstanding pieces from the greatest private and heritage collections alongside previously unseen projects and archive material, visitors can discover all the creativity and expertise developed around the oldest jewel of them all and learn more about the science of pearls.

Depuis plusieurs années, la perle signe son grand retour dans l'univers de la joaillerie. Longtemps jugée désuète ou trop classique, cette irrésistible bille de nacre inspire aujourd'hui une nouvelle génération de joailliers.

Exprimant la richesse, le prestige ou encore la féminité, les bijoux en perles ont traversé les époques, les modes et les styles avec une élégance inégalable. Sans cesse sublimée par les joailliers les plus audacieux, la perle occupe une place de premier choix dans l'histoire du bijou.

The Pearl Odyssey retrace l'histoire de la tradition perlière. À travers une sélection d'une trentaine de pièces d'exception, provenant des plus belles collections patrimoniales et privées, ainsi que des projets et documents d'archives inédits, découvrez toute la créativité et les savoir-faire développés autour du plus ancien joyau du monde, et initiez-vous à la science des perles.


كتاب
لمحمد عطاء الله القاضي
الطبع على ذمته وعلى نفقة
حضرة الشيخ سعيد بن محمد سعيد المدلج
الشهير بالتجارة (الخليج العربي)
فلا يسوغ طبع هذا الكتاب بدون اذنه
فان حقوق الكتاب محفوظة له

The miracle of pearls

Pearls are as marvellous as they are enigmatic. Whether by miracle or by accident, a pearl-producing shellfish forms a tiny concretion that it then surrounds with thin layers of mother-of-pearl. Eventually a natural pearl appears; its colour may range from bright white to dark black or shades of grey, blue, green or purple.

From Japan to South America and from Australia to Sri Lanka via the Mozambique Channel, oceans all over the world have been vital pearl diving grounds through the ages.

This jewel of the seas has been sought-after and admired for its beauty for millennia: the oldest pearl harvested by humans, over 8,500 years ago, was discovered in Mexico. In ancient China, pearls were given as offerings to the gods and sovereigns. In ancient times, they were a source of both wonder and amazement; their mysterious origins were the subject of many legends and beliefs. Mermaids' tears, dragon's spit, crystallised dewdrops… the mystery of where pearls came from fired the imaginations of peoples the world over.

In the days of the Roman Empire, the precious nature of pearls made them a symbol of luxury and fortune; they enjoyed their first golden age and became the jewel of choice among the elite. In the second century, Tertullian wrote that "People fish not for pearls, but for ambition": wearing pearls was a way of asserting a certain social status.

For centuries, pearl divers risked their lives to retrieve these wonderful shellfish at depths of up to twenty, thirty, or even forty metres. In the Persian Gulf region, pearl diving made fortunes for many divers and traders. Harvesting pearl oysters continued using ancestral techniques into the early twentieth century.

Characterised by melody and song, pearl diving rituals are now an evocative heritage, inseparable from the history of pearl farming.

Le miracle des perles

La perle est un joyau aussi merveilleux qu'énigmatique. Miraculeusement ou accidentellement, un coquillage nacrier produit une minuscule concrétion, qu'il enveloppe indéfiniment de fines couches de nacre. Apparaît alors une perle fine, dont la couleur varie du blanc intense au noir profond, avec des colorations grises, bleutées, vertes ou violettes. Du Japon à l'Amérique du Sud, de l'Australie à Ceylan, en passant par le canal du Mozambique, tous les océans du monde ont été, selon les époques, des lieux de pêche incontournables.

La plus ancienne perle récoltée par l'homme, fut découverte au Mexique il y a plus de 8.500 ans. Depuis des millénaires, ce joyau des mers est recherché et apprécié pour sa beauté. Dans la Chine ancienne, les perles sont offertes en offrande aux dieux et aux souverains. Durant l'Antiquité, elles émerveillent autant qu'elles intriguent, et leur origine mystérieuse fait l'objet de croyances et légendes multiples. Larmes de sirènes, salive de dragon ou encore gouttes de rosée cristallisées, leur provenance enflamme l'imagination de tous les peuples du monde.

Déjà sous l'Empire Romain, sa préciosité en fait un symbole de luxe et de fortune, la perle connaît son premier âge d'or et devient le joyau de prédilection des élites. « Ce ne sont pas des perles que l'on pêche, c'est de l'ambition » écrit Tertullien au IIe siècle, car porter des perles, c'est affirmer un certain statut social.

Durant des siècles, les pêcheurs de perles vont, au péril de leur vie, chercher ces coquillages merveilleux à des profondeurs pouvant atteindre 20, 30 ou 40 mètres. Au cœur du golfe persique, la pêche des perles fait la fortune de nombreux plongeurs et négociants. La collecte des huîtres perlières va se perpétuer jusqu'au début du XXe siècle selon des techniques ancestrales.

Rythmés par des chants et des mélodies, les rituels de pêche constituent aujourd'hui un patrimoine puissant et indissociable de l'histoire de la culture perlière.

Pearls in the history of jewellery

Noble and elegant, pearls have been a source of fascination for jewellers of all ages and civilisations. The oldest piece of pearl jewellery, a three-row necklace of 216 pearls, was discovered in Iran in 1901. It belonged to a Persian princess who lived over 2,500 years ago.

From Catherine de Medici to Empress Eugénie, natural pearls have adorned the most powerful and influential women.

The Renaissance marked a new golden age of pearls. It was a time of exuberance, with pearls reigning supreme in jewellery sets, gracing crowns, and their gleam embroidered into all sorts of clothes.

In the nineteenth century, this unbridled passion awoke once again, with the elegance of mother-of-pearl rated more highly than the sparkle of diamonds. It was during this period that the most fabulous jewels were produced. The iconic pearl necklace re-emerged in outsize versions in the form of *sautoir* necklaces and chokers. Wearing a single row of pearls was out: wearing three, five or even seven was in! Symbolising love and fertility, pearls became the obligatory engagement gift.

Feminine and sensual, pearls were a permanent feature in the twentieth century. The greatest names in jewellery devised a whole host of pieces of unparalleled beauty and originality: brooches, stomachers, bracelets, veil pins, rings, earrings and more.

The likes of Chaumet, Cartier, and Vever reinvented the art of pearl jewellery, investigating all the avenues of creativity opened up by the many different forms of pearl. Round and pear-shaped pearls would be used as a central feature, or as regular detailing to add balance to a piece. The relevant expertise became more complex; pearls were used in meshes and lacework. Baroque pearls often inspired the most extravagant of designs. Their irregularities proved to be a limitless source of inspiration for jewellers, who transformed them into fantastic creatures and plants during the Romantic period.

Spanning Art Nouveau, the Roaring Twenties and Art Deco, pearls constantly moved with the times, sublimated in all manner of ways by the most daring jewellers.

Les perles dans l'histoire de la joaillerie

Noble et élégante, la perle fascine les joailliers de toutes les époques et de toutes les civilisations. Le plus ancien bijou de perles, un collier de 3 rangs comprenant 216 perles, fut découvert en Iran en 1901. Il appartenait à une princesse perse ayant vécu il y a plus de 2.500 ans.

De Catherine de Médicis, à l'Impératrice Eugénie, les perles fines ont paré les femmes les plus puissantes et influentes.

La Renaissance signe le nouvel âge d'or des perles. L'heure est à l'exubérance, elles triomphent dans les parures, magnifient les couronnes et s'admirent en broderie sur tous les costumes.

Au XIXe siècle, cette passion démesurée se ravive, l'élégance de la nacre est préférée à la brillance du diamant. C'est durant cette période que sont réalisés les bijoux les plus fabuleux. L'iconique collier de perles réapparaît et joue la carte de la démesure en version tour de cou ou sautoir. Ce n'est plus un rang de perles que l'on porte, mais 3, 5 ou même 7 ! Symbolisant l'amour et la fécondité, il devient un cadeau de fiançailles systématique.

Sensuelles et féminines, les perles sont incontournables au XXe siècle. Broches, devants de corsage, bracelets, épingles à voile, bagues ou pendants d'oreilles… Les plus grands noms de la joaillerie vont imaginer des créations d'une beauté et d'une originalité inédite.

Chaumet, Cartier, ou encore Vever réinventent l'art du bijou de perles en explorant tous les axes de créations qu'offrent ses multiples formes. Ronde ou poire, elle est utilisée comme élément central ou en ponctuation pour équilibrer une composition.

Les savoir-faire se complexifient, elle se travaille désormais en résille ou en dentelle. Les perles baroques inspirent souvent les designs les plus extravagants. Leurs irrégularités sont une source d'inspiration illimitée pour les joailliers, qui les métamorphosent en créatures fantastiques ou en végétaux durant la période romantique.

Art nouveau, années folles ou Art Déco… Définitivement indémodable, la perle est inlassablement remise au goût du jour, et fut sublimée de mille manières par les joailliers les plus audacieux.

The science of pearls

While William Saville-Kent is known to have grown a pearl in Australia, the birth of cultured pearls is usually held to date back to the end of the nineteenth century in Japan.

In 1893, Kokichi Mikimoto created a first specimen by deliberately introducing a foreign body into the oyster to serve as a nucleus. The mollusc's immune system would then secrete mother-of-pearl around this, producing a pearl. However, it was not until 1905 that a process allowing perfectly spherical cultured pearls began to be developed. This discovery marked the beginnings of pearl farming.

When this new type of pearl appeared on the market, it was a source of both curiosity and suspicion. Did it share all the properties of natural pearls formed without any human intervention? This entirely new problem captivated the world of jewellery, sparking a keen interest in the scientific study of pearls.

In 1922, Joseph Chaumet examined the new pearls from Japan in his gemmology lab and attempted to find ways of distinguishing natural and cultured pearls. His research formed the foundations of pearl classification. Today, this expertise has become formalised, with the creation of recognised terminology allowing pearl-forming shellfish and their production to be classified.

Laboratory analysis is a vital stage in assessing the quality of a pearl and determining its origin. The Swiss Gemmological Institute (SSEF) has become established as one of the world's international benchmarking laboratories for this speciality. Since 1972, it has been committed to research, education, and training of leading experts. SSEF also offers training courses open to all professionals and amateur enthusiasts seeking to specialise in the expert appraisal of natural pearls, cultured pearls and freshwater pearls.

La science des perles

Bien que William Saville-Kent ait réussi à cultiver une perle en Australie, la naissance de la perle de culture est généralement associée au Japon à la fin du XXe siècle.

En 1893, le japonais Kokichi Mikimoto crée ce spécimen en introduisant volontairement un parasite appelé nucléon à l'intérieur d'une coquille d'huître. Le mollusque, grâce à son mécanisme d'auto-défense inné, sécrète de la nacre et une perle se forme alors. C'est véritablement à partir de 1905 qu'est mis au point le procédé permettant d'obtenir les premières perles de culture parfaitement sphériques. Cette découverte marque les débuts de la perliculture.

Lorsque cette perle d'un nouveau genre apparaît sur le marché, elle suscite autant de curiosité que de méfiance. La perle de culture possède-t-elle les mêmes propriétés qu'une perle naturelle formée sans aucune intervention humaine ? Cette problématique inédite captive le monde de la joaillerie, et l'on se passionne pour l'étude scientifique des perles.

En 1922, dans son laboratoire de gemmologie, Joseph Chaumet examine les perles japonaises et tente de comprendre sur quels critères différencier une perle de culture d'une perle fine. Ses recherches marquent le début de la classification des perles. Aujourd'hui, leur expertise s'est codifiée, grâce notamment à la mise en place d'une nomenclature qui permet de catégoriser les coquillages perliers et d'identifier leur production.

Pour évaluer la qualité d'une perle et déterminer son origine avec certitude, l'analyse en laboratoire est une étape essentielle. L'Institut suisse de gemmologie (SSEF) s'est imposé comme l'un des laboratoires de référence à l'échelle internationale dans cette spécialité. Depuis 1972, il s'est engagé dans la recherche, l'éducation et la formation des meilleurs experts. Le SSEF propose également des cycles de formation accessibles à tous les professionnels et amateurs passionnés désirant se spécialiser dans l'expertise des perles fines, perles de culture ou perles d'eau douce.

People fish not for pearls, but for ambition.

Ce ne sont pas des perles que l'on pêche, c'est de l'ambition.

Tertullien, 2nd century

1 **Coral, pearl and diamond bracelet, Cartier, 1962**
Faerber Collection [D30 – E31]
Photo: Katharina Faerber

2 **Impressive pearl, enamel and diamond chrysanthemum *devant-de-corsage* brooch, Vever, 1900**
Faerber Collection [D30 – E31]
Photo: Katharina Faerber

3 **Black and white natural pearl ring, diamond and platinum mount, Ruder, c.1950**
Faerber Collection [D30 – E31]
Photo: Katharina Faerber

4 ***Belle époque* pearl and diamond necklace, August Schöning, c.1910**
The five-strand necklace set with cream colour natural pearl, ranging between ~ 3.0 and 3.5 mm, decorated with four campanula-shaped spacers, delicately *millegrain*-set with rose- and old-mine cut diamonds, mounted in platinum, with original burgundy fitted case signed "Aug. C. Schöning, Cologne, Germany", length ~ 38 cm". August Schöning was the grandfather of Thomas Faerber.
Faerber Collection [D30 – E31]
Photo: Katharina Faerber

5 **Brooch in platinum, diamonds, sapphires, crystal and three natural button-shaped pearls, René Boivin, c.1910**
Nicolas Torroni [B10]
ARR

6 **Fine baroque pearl pendant with a yellow gold and silver mounting of "ivy" motif set with rose-cut diamonds, c.1880**
Nicolas Torroni [B10]
ARR

7 **Photograph of Princess Marina of Greece and Denmark wearing a three-strand of fine pearls and a pair of fine pearl earrings, 1934**
Signed and dated
Nicolas Torroni [B10]
ARR

8 **Ring in yellow gold, diamonds, black and green enamel and a natural sea water pearl, René Lalique, c.1903**
Nicolas Torroni [B10]
ARR

9 **Rare collectible Victorian seed pearl *parure*, c.1850**
Hofer Antikschmuck
ARR

10 **Impressive pair of earrings, made of natural drop pearls and buttons and round diamonds**
Private collection
ARR

11 **Button pendant natural pearl, diamonds, gold, silver, c.1700 [button], c.1770-1790 [pendant]**
This pendant belonged to a lady-in-waiting to Marie-Antoinette, Queen of France from 1770 to 1793. The black pearl was said to have been used as a button on a Chinese royal garment, perhaps during the early 1700s.
The pendant setting reflects France jewellery styles of the late 18th century.
Private collection
ARR

12 **Empress Marie-Louise's gothic belt, Marie-Etienne Nitot, c.1812**
Gold, sardonyx and natural pearls
In its original case
Chased gold belt decorated with bees, stars, laurel branch and palmettes. Centred with a Greco-Roman cameo, a gift from Pauline Borghese, depicting Apollo and his mother Leto after killing the serpent Python on Mount Parnassus. Pearls are used here as punctuation throughout the belt. The whiteness and orient of the pearls contrast with the yellow gold. Gathered in palmettes, tri-lobed motifs and tassels, they are a major decorative element of the piece.
Chaumet Collection
Photo: Bruno Ehrs

13 **Princess Auguste Amelie of Bavaria wristwatches, attr. Marie-Etienne Nitot and son, c.1811**
Gold, pearls and emeralds
The first known pair of watch bracelets in Chaumet's history, commissioned by Princess Auguste-Amélie of Bavaria in 1811. It follows the fashion of symmetrical bracelets worn in pairs as part of a *parure*. Its composition of leaning scrolls in emeralds and pearls is comparable to

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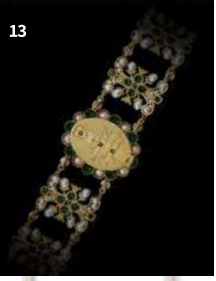

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Devant-de-corsage ornament brooch

This *devant-de-corsage* was exhibited at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1900, where the firm of Vever was awarded a Grand Prix for its magnificent and highly imaginative display of jewellery.

Of refined and delicate work, this *devant-de-corsage* is a magnificent example of the Art Nouveau style. Inspired by the Japanese love of nature and lively and simple designs, the Art Nouveau developed great craftsmanship techniques to serve the most luxuriant naturalism with materials selected for their artistic merits such as these baroque pearls called "Mississippi pearls".

Corsage ornaments such as this one were in vogue and highly prized in the 1900s by elegant women who loved to wear them along with pearl *sautoirs*, long gold chains or diamond "berthes".

The first owner of this *devant-de-corsage* was Louis Metman (1862-1943), curator of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris from 1898 to 1943 and great connoisseur and collector of Japanese arts.

His heirs have kept a letter from Henri Vever dated 10 March 1909, in which he explained his deliberate choice of irregularly coloured pearls to make the chrysanthemum flowers look more natural: "Shades and marks that can be seen [on pearls] have always existed, and as I told you yesterday, the pearls have been chosen like this with care and intent to avoid the coldness of a uniform whiteness and to nuance the petals in a picturesque way that gets closer to the fancy of nature."

It was purchased by the Faerber Collection in November 2005 from the Michel Perinet Collection in Paris.

Exhibitions:

"Exposition Universelle", Paris, 1900.
"Dix siècles de Joaillerie Française", Appolo Gallery of the Louvre Museum, Paris, 1961.
"René Lalique – Bijoux d'exceptions 1890-1912", Musée du Luxembourg, Paris, 2007.
"Pearl", Qatar, 2010.
"Japonisme: from Falize to Fabergé, the Goldsmith and Japan", Wartski, London, 2011.
"The Beauty Room", Museo del Gioiello, Vicenza, 2017-2018.
"Botanical – Observing Beauty", Beaux Arts, Paris, 2022.

Literature:

Gazette des Beaux-Arts, Roger Marx, volume 25, p.83.
Merveilleuses perles, F. Cailles, ed. Argus Valentines, 2006, p.280.

Broche d'ornement devant-de-corsage

Ce devant-de-corsage a été présenté à l'Exposition Universelle de Paris en 1900, où la maison Vever reçu un Grand Prix pour sa magnifique et très imaginative présentation.

D'un travail raffiné et délicat, ce devant-de-corsage est un magnifique exemple du style Art Nouveau. Inspiré de l'amour japonais pour la nature et des motifs vifs et simples, l'Art Nouveau a développé de grandes techniques d'artisanat pour servir le naturalisme le plus luxuriant avec des matériaux choisis pour leurs mérites artistiques, comme ces perles baroques appelées « perles du Mississippi ».

Les ornements de corsage, comme celui-ci, étaient à la mode et très prisés dans les années 1900 par les femmes élégantes qui aimaient les porter avec des sautoirs de perles, de longues chaînes d'or ou des « berthes » en diamant.

Le premier propriétaire de cette devant-de-corsage était Louis Metman (1862-1943), conservateur du Musée des Arts Décoratifs de Paris de 1898 à 1943 et grand connaisseur et collectionneur des arts japonais.

Ses héritiers ont conservé une lettre d'Henri Vever datée du 10 mars 1909, dans laquelle il expliquait son choix délibéré de perles irrégulièrement colorées pour rendre les fleurs de chrysanthème plus naturelles : « Les nuances et marques que l'on peut voir [sur les perles] ont toujours existé, et comme je vous l'ai dit hier, les perles ont été choisies ainsi avec soin et intention pour éviter la froideur d'une blancheur uniforme et nuancer les pétales de manière pittoresque qui se rapproche de la fantaisie de la nature. »

Il a été acquis par la Collection Faerber en novembre 2005 auprès de la Collection Michel Perinet à Paris.

Expositions :

« Exposition Universelle », Paris, 1900.
« Dix siècles de Joaillerie Française », Galerie Appolo au Louvre, Paris, 1961.
« René Lalique – Bijoux d'exceptions 1890-1912 », Musée du Luxembourg, Paris, 2007.
« Pearl », Qatar, 2010.
« Japonisme : de Falize à Fabergé, l'orfèvre et le Japon », Wartski, London, 2011.
« The Beauty Room », Museo del Gioiello, Vicenza, 2017-2018.
« Botanique – Observer la beauté », Beaux Arts, Paris, 2022.

Littérature :

Gazette des Beaux-Arts, Roger Marx, volume 25, p.83.
Merveilleuses perles, F. Cailles, ed. Argus Valentines, 2006, p.280.

Empress Marie-Louise's Gothic belt

Preserved in the National Archives, an invoice dated January 1813 indicates that Nitot & Fils, "jeweller to the Emperor and Empress, King and Queen of Westphalia", located at 15 place Vendôme, delivered a so-called "Gothic belt" to Empress Marie-Louise. One of the major pieces of the Chaumet heritage collection, it was inspired by the long belts worn by ladies in the Middle Ages, which descended from the waist to the bottom of the dress.

In chased gold, natural pearls, sardony and onyx, this extremely refined fashion accessory testifies to the triumph of neoclassicism in perfect harmony with Napoleonic symbolism. The 83 cm-long vertical openwork panel is composed of forty perfectly articulated elements of increasing shape. In twenty elements, the pearl-embellished palmettes characteristic of Nitot's work under the Empire are set alongside to star and bee motifs — emblems of imperial power. The belt ends with delicate pearl tassels that follow the Empress's steps.

But the extraordinary quality of this piece also lies in its innovative aspect. The other twenty elements are composed of interlacing motifs punctuated with pearls and directly inspired by medieval forms. This Gothic style heralds the taste for historicist jewellery of the Romantic period and reveals Nitot's visionary genius.

The inspiration for this masterpiece came from the antique onyx cameo to which the long vertical panel and two small side panels are attached. Presented by Princess Pauline Borghese to her sister-in-law Marie-Louise, this cameo is an archaeological gift in the very spirit of the times. From the Hellenistic period, it depicts Apollo triumphant on Mount Parnassus after killing the serpent Python, which lies at his feet. Pauline Borghese, Napoleon's favourite sister, owned the world's finest collection of antique cameos. The cameo is bordered by alternating six crescents and six ovals of three-layered sardony, the rarest of all, set in a pearl surround. It was this unique cameo that inspired one of Nitot's most sumptuous creations, somewhere between neoclassicism and romanticism.

Another exceptional feature of this belt is that it remains in its large original case, in red morocco gilded with the Empire coat of arms. Of particular note, the inner edge bears the signature: "M.E. Nitot & Fils à Paris n°1".


PARIS

Ceinture Gothique de l'impératrice Marie-Louise

Conservée aux archives nationales, une facture datée de janvier 1813 indique que Nitot & Fils, « joailler de L'Empereur et l'Impératrice, du roi et de la reine de Westphalie », situé au 15 place Vendôme, livre à l'Impératrice Marie-Louise une ceinture dite gothique. Pièce majeure de la collection patrimoniale Chaumet, elle s'inspire des longues ceintures portées par les dames du Moyen Âge qui descendaient de la taille jusqu'au bas de la robe.

En or ciselé, perles fines, sardoine et onyx, cet accessoire de mode d'un raffinement extrême témoigne du triomphe du néoclassicisme en parfait accord avec la symbolique napoléonienne. Le panneau vertical ajouré, d'une longueur de 83 cm, se compose de quarante éléments de forme croissante parfaitement articulés. Vingt éléments font se côtoyer des palmettes ornées de perles, caractéristiques du travail de Nitot sous l'Empire, avec des motifs d'étoiles et d'abeilles — emblèmes du pouvoir impérial. La ceinture se termine par de délicats pompons de perles fines qui ondulent en suivant les pas de l'Impératrice.

Mais l'extraordinaire de cette création tient également dans son esprit novateur. Les vingt autres éléments se composent en effet de motifs d'entrelacs ponctués de perles et directement inspirés par les formes médiévales. Ce style gothique annonce le goût pour les bijoux historicistes de la période romantique et révèle le génie visionnaire de Nitot.

Le camée d'onyx antique auquel se rattachent le long panneau vertical et les deux petits panneaux latéraux est à l'origine de la conception de ce chef-d'œuvre. Offert par la princesse Pauline Borghèse à sa belle-sœur Marie-Louise, ce camée est un cadeau archéologique tout à fait dans l'air du temps. D'époque hellénistique, il figure Apollon triomphant sur le mont Parnasse après avoir tué le serpent Python qui git à ses pieds. Pauline Borghèse, la sœur préférée de Napoléon, possédait alors la plus belle collection de camées antiques au monde. Le camée est bordé d'une alternance de six croissants et de six ovales de sardoine à trois couches, les plus rares, sertis dans un entourage de perles. C'est ce camée unique qui inspira à Nitot une de ses plus somptueuses créations, entre néoclassicisme et romantisme.

Autre fait exceptionnel, cette ceinture est restée dans son grand écrin d'origine, en maroquin rouge doré aux fers et portant les grandes armes de l'Empire. À signaler, car rarissime, le bord intérieur porte la signature : « M.E. Nitot & Fils à Paris n°1 ».

that of the bracelets in Empress Marie-Louise's ruby and diamond set made by Marie-Etienne Nitot, now in the Louvre. One watch indicates the hours, while the other serves as a calendar. Natural pearls create the famous palmette motif, widely incorporated into jewellery of the period due to its association with antique aesthetics. Alternating with emeralds, the pearls' brilliance adds softness and preciousness to the ensemble.
Chaumet Collection
Photo: Nils Herrmann

14 **Transformable bracelet, Jules Fossin, c.1840**
Yellow gold, silver, black enamel, fine pearls, rubies and diamonds
Bracelet convertible into a pendant, the central motif adorned with pearls set in diamonds and enamelled scrolls punctuated with rubies. The enamelled gold rectangular links frame rose-set scrolls cantered on a pearl (missing) and ruby. In a neo-Renaissance style with an enamelled gold frame, this typical mid-19th-century bracelet combines diamonds, rubies and pearls in a scrolled composition.
Chaumet Collection
Photo: Pauline Guyon

15 **Pearl fisherwomen bracelet, Morel, c.1845**
Gold, silver, enamel and natural pearl
A bracelet from the Romantic period, it features two silver mermaids, modelled in the round. They are just returning from fishing, bringing up from the water a shell in flamboyant colours evoked by the red, green and blue enamels, in which a magnificent Baroque pearl, ~ 1.3 cm in diameter, is set. The baroque pearl is both the centre and the pretext for this so-called "subject" bracelet, thanks to which Froment Meurice triumphs. This bracelet tells the story of a miraculous fishing in which two mermaids bring the most beautiful of natural creations to the surface of the sea: a pearl in its shell.
Chaumet Collection
ARR

16 **Bunch of grapes bracelet, attr. Jean-Valentin Morel, c.1850**
Gold, pearls, emeralds and enamel.
This bracelet is a perfect example of the naturalistic jewellery that became very fashionable in the mid-to-late 19th century. The matte surface of the branches has been obtained by stippling and chasing with a sharp metal point. The meticulous selection of mauve pearls for the grapes and the use of emeralds for the leaves demonstrate the desire to faithfully represent nature.
Chaumet Collection
Photo: Nils Herrmann

17 **Bridal veil pin, Joseph Chaumet, 1921**
Platinum, diamonds, hollow pearls
Bridal veil pin formed of two pearl *soufflures* adorned with floral motifs in platinum and rose-cut diamonds. Metal pin. Pearl *soufflures* are hollow baroque pearls. They are an inexhaustible source of imagination for jewellers, who use them to dress up their surfaces to imagine a subject or accentuate a shape. On this bridal veil pin, the *soufflures* become two hearts adorned with diamond flowers.
Chaumet Collection
Photo: Nils Herrmann

18 **Bow brooch, Joseph Chaumet, 1922**
Platinum, gold, pearls and diamonds
1 baroque pearl: 49 grs
1 pear pearl: 19,20 grs
8 pear pearl for 83 grains
2 pear diamonds 0,41 ct
253 roses 3,59 ct
Platinum brooch forming a large knot adorned with leaves and lines set with diamonds and entered with Baroque pearls, a larger Baroque pearl held in a pendant. The softness of pearls combines with the bow motif so dear to traditional jewellery, while diamonds reinforce the bright and symmetrical lines of Art Deco.
Chaumet Collection
Photo: Nils Herrmann

19 ***Bayadère* necklace, Joseph Chaumet, 1922-1924**
Gold, platinum, seed pearls, sapphires and diamonds
Weight of pearls: 2,364.60 grains
Estimated number of pearls: 50,000
Diameter of pearls: from 1.2 to 1.7 mm
Bayadère sautoir made of seed pearls

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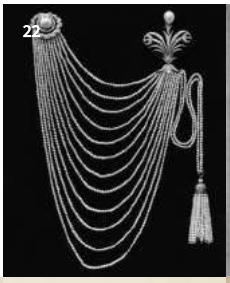

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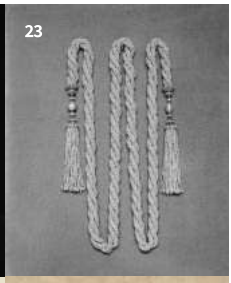

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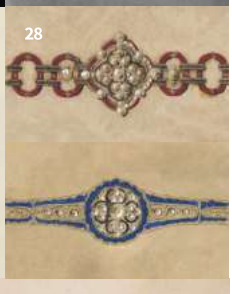

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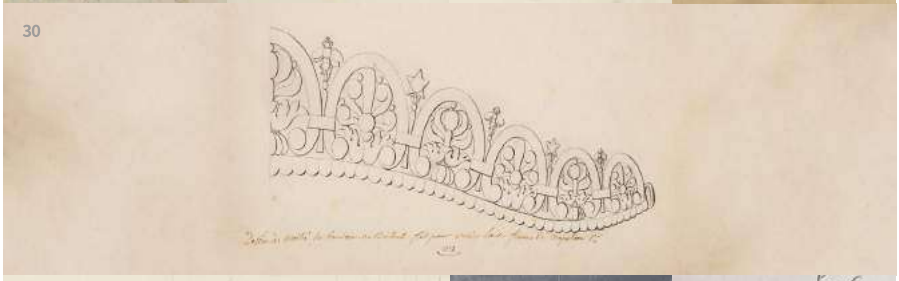

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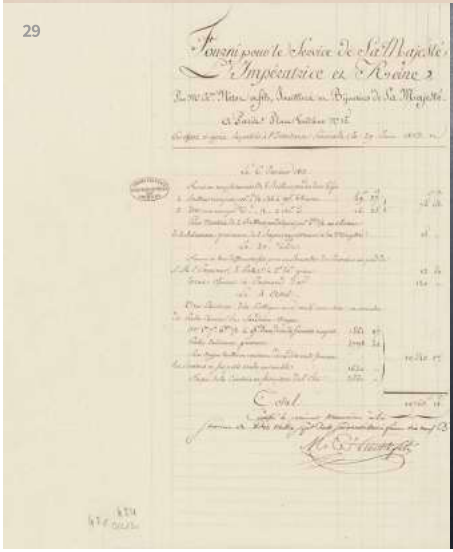

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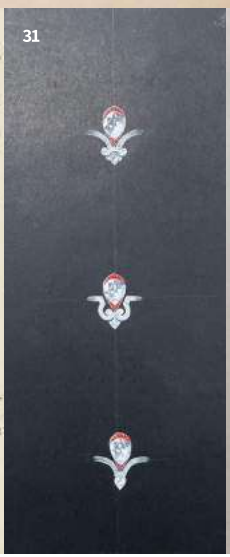

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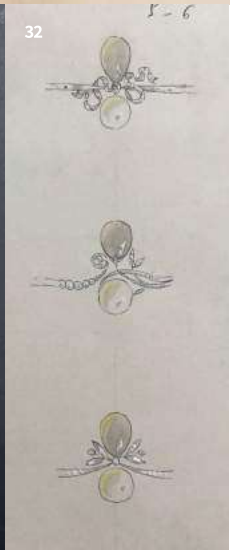

Restoring the Bayadère necklace

The *Bayadère* necklace takes its name from Hindu dancers, the bayadères, who wore a long necklace ending in two tassels. In the jewellery terminology, this term designates a sautoir made of fine pearl seeds tightened by pearl tassels. It was very popular from the end of the 19th century to the 1930s. It can be adorned with jewellery elements in platinum, diamonds and sapphires, like the one made by Chaumet from 1922 to 1924. In 1982, it was acquired by Chaumet and included among the first jewels in the Heritage Department.

In 2023, it was the object of a major restoration, the silk threads having become brittle over time. The work was appointed to Maison Flint, specialised in pearls stringing. The stringing of more than 50,000 pearls measuring between 1 and 1.8 mm took 270 hours.

The work was carried out in several stages. First, the thread was too damaged to be cleaned, so a pre-threading process had to be carried out on silk thread, followed by several cleaning baths to remove accumulated dust and restore the pearls' whiteness and orient. Next, the entire assembly was re-threaded onto the final silk thread. The final step was to reattach the threads to the jewellery elements, which were cleaned and revived by the Chaumet workshop.

This restoration allows us to present the *Bayadère* in its full length again, and to imagine it moving to the rhythm of the 1920s.

Restauration du collier bayadère

La collier bayadère tient son nom des danseuses hindoues, les bayadères, qui portaient un long collier se terminant par deux pompons. Dans le vocabulaire propre aux bijoux, ce terme désigne un sautoir fait de semences de perles fines resserrés par des glands de perles. Il connait un grand succès de la fin du XIXe siècle jusqu'aux années 30. Il peut être orné d'élément de joaillerie en platine, diamants et saphirs comme celui fait par Chaumet de 1922 à 1924. Il fut racheté par la Maison en 1982 pour y figurer parmi les premiers bijoux du département Patrimoine.

En 2023 il fut l'objet d'une importante restauration, les fils de soie s'étant fragilisés par le temps. Un prestataire externe, la Maison Flint spécialisée en enfilage, fut désigné pour ce travail qui représenta 270 heures pour renfiler environ 50.000 perles mesurant entre 1 et 1.8 mm de diamètre.

Ce travail se déroula en plusieurs étapes. Tout d'abord, le fil était dans un état tel que le nettoyage ne pouvait être fait, il fallut donc effectuer un pré-enfilage sur fil de soie, puis nettoyer l'ensemble par plusieurs bains pour retirer la poussière accumulée et redonner aux perles leur blancheur et leur orient. Puis, l'ensemble fut renfilé sur le fil de soie définitif. La dernière étape consista à rattacher les fils aux éléments joailliers qui ont été nettoyés et ravivés par l'atelier Chaumet.

Cette restauration permet de présenter de nouveau le Bayadère en suspension, pour l'admirer dans toutes sa longueur et l'imaginer se mouvoir au rythme des années 20.

and adorned with openwork platinum tassels set with calibrated and cabochon sapphires, and diamonds. The tassels end in sapphire drops. Natural pearl seeds are characterised by their very small size and their sale by weight. Here, they form a long necklace ending in two tassels. This necklace, very fashionable at the beginning of the 20th century, takes its name from Indian dancers, the *bayadères*, who wore similar jewellery.
Chaumet Collection
Photo: Nils Herrmann

20 ***Comète des mers* (*Ondes et merveilles*) ring, Chaumet, 2022**
Gold, natural pearls, padparadscha sapphires and fancy color sapphires
Pavage: 97 natural round pearls for 14.55 carats; 4 fancy-cut Padparadscha sapphires for 1.55 carats; 1 round green sapphire for 0.49 carats; 1 round yellow sapphire for 0.27 carats
Center stone: 1 light-grey fine pearl for 18.66 carats
White and rose gold ring set with an 18.66 carat (74.64 grains) natural pearl, fine grey to pink pearls, fancy Padparadscha sapphires and round coloured sapphires. The *Comète des Mers* set brings together the stars of the heavens and the sea, collecting a wide variety of natural pearls in shades of light grey, mauve and olive, in dialogue with sapphires in multicoloured hues.
Chaumet
ARR

21 ***Joséphine* (*Aigrette Impériale*) ring, Chaumet, 2020**
Platinum, diamonds and natural pearl
Pavage: 72 EF VVS brilliant-cut diamonds for 0.50 carat
Center stone: 1 natural white pearl, light brown hue 5.44 carats
Josephine Aigrette Impériale ring in platinum, set with a 5.44 ct fine pearl and *pavé*-cut diamonds. Combining sophistication and delicacy, majesty and grace, this solitaire makes the stones sparkle like so many glittering drops around the fine pearl. The softness of pearls blends with the brilliance of diamonds.
Chaumet
ARR

22 **Great stomacher with 12 strings of pearls and jewellery clasps set with pearls**
Photo c.1893
Chaumet Collection
ARR

23 **Marchioness de Morès' *Bayadère* necklace**
Photo 1907
Chaumet Collection
ARR

24 **Long necklace made of woven pearls, adorned with a pendant**
Photo 1911
Chaumet Collection
ARR

25 **Design for a great stomacher with 5 strings of pearls adorned with jewellery part set with sapphires and diamonds, c.1900**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

26 **Designs for a *Bayadère* necklace, early 20th century**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

28 **Designs for Renaissance revival style bracelets, Jules Fossin, c.1850**
Graphite pencil
Chaumet Collection
ARR

29 **Invoice regarding the gothic girdle provided by Marie-Etienne Nitot for Impress Marie-Louise, 1813**
French National Archives
Chaumet Collection
© Archives nationales

30 **Design for a tiara adorned with bee patterns intended for Impress Marie-Louise, c.1810**
Ink
Chaumet Collection
ARR

31 **Designs for Duchesse rings set with diamonds and rubies, early 20th century**
Graphite pencil and gouache
Chaumet Collection
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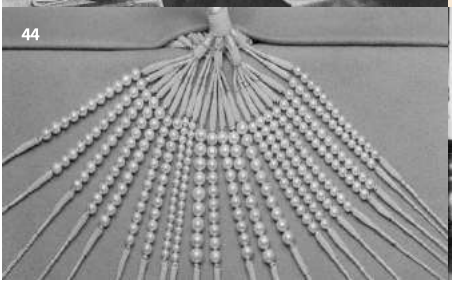
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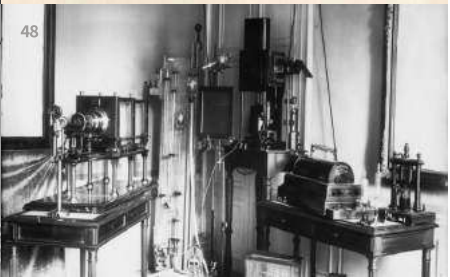
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M.E. Nitot et fils.

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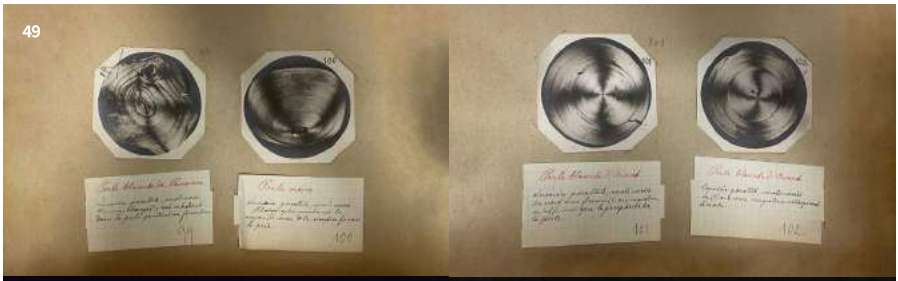

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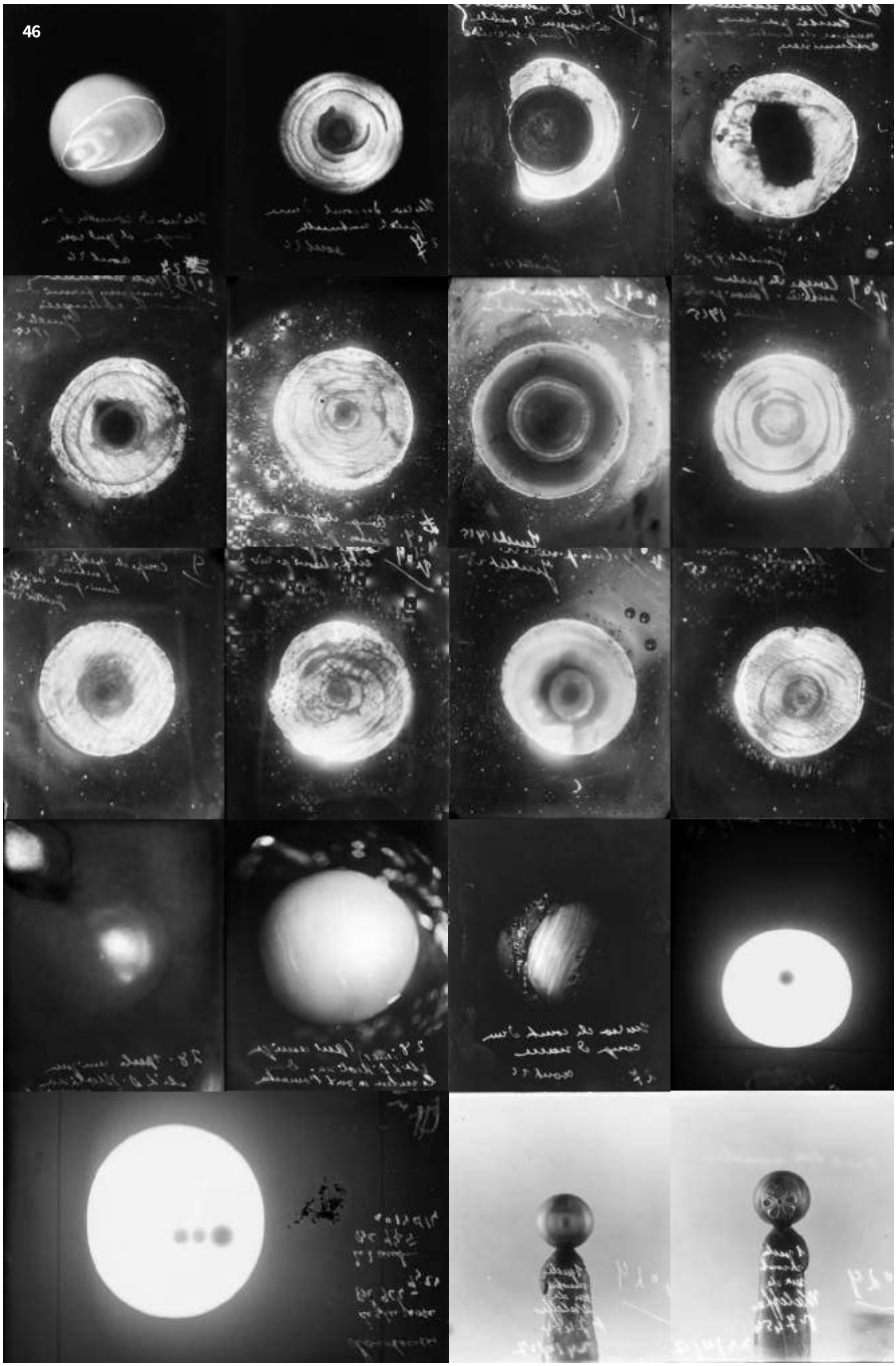

The desire of pearls is a thing which is found in all nations.

L'amour des perles est partagé par toutes les nations.

11th century Persian explorer Al-Biruni

Madame la Comtesse Greffuhle having asked me to deal with the question [of cultured pearls] in this assembly, I have been studying it for eight days. To study it, I went to the Japanese pearl representative. I sent someone to buy these pearls, not wanting to buy any myself, so that no one would think I was selling them. I paid a lot for them, more or less the price of natural pearls. To satisfy you, I gave myself the luxury of sawing the pearls.

Immediately I saw what was in the middle: a beautiful mother-of-pearl core, surrounded by a layer of pearls.

It was like a stuffed jewel.

Extract from the speech by Joseph Chaumet on 8 June 1922 for the Countess de Greffulhe, President of the propaganda committee for the French luxury goods trade.

Madame la Comtesse Greffuhle m'ayant demandé de traiter la question [des perles de culture] dans cette assemblée, je me mis à l'étude depuis huit jours. Pour l'étudier, je suis allé chez le représentant des perles du Japon. J'ai envoyé quelqu'un acheter de ces perles ne voulant pas en acheter moi-même, pour qu'on ne croit pas que j'en vends. Je les ai payées très cher d'ailleurs, à peu de choses près, le prix des perles fines. Je me suis donné le luxe, pour vous donner satisfaction, de scier les perles.

Immédiatement j'ai vu ce qui était au milieu: un beau noyau de nacre, entouré d'une couche de perles.

C'était comme un bijou fourré.

Extrait de discours de Joseph Chaumet le 8 juin 1922 chez la Comtesse de Greffuhle

Nahma: diving into an illuminated polyphony

The pearl has always been an object of desire, the source of various myths and legends inspired by the millenary history of pearl divers and their chants. An emblematic polyphony accompanying the hard work of pearl boat expeditions, mixing percussion and strong vocal exaltations of the crew, *fidjiri* became the symbol of the brave divers' glory on the coasts of the Gulf and Oman.

Recounting the turbulent history of pearl diving, the installation *Nahma: diving into an illuminated polyphony* represents an immersive work in which the public is invited to get familiar with the subject in a sensory way. Immersed in a sea of images amidst pearls, free divers, and other vanguard visual elements, the audience will navigate an epic that is both educational and sensorial, unsettled by the multi-dimensional aquatic projections and the constantly moving spatialised sound system.

After a notable appearance at Les Rencontres Photographiques d'Arles and a major transmedia installation at Lisbon's Museum of Art, Architecture and Design (MAAT), drawing on its artistic research for the project *Nahma: a Gulf polyphony*, the FLEE art collective presents its new work at GemGenève.

FLEE Project:

Founded by Olivier Duport, Alan Marzo and Carl Åhnebrink, FLEE is an independent publishing house, record label and curatorial platform dedicated to the artistic documentation and reinterpretation of hybrid cultural phenomena. Through a transdisciplinary artistic practice, the platform explores and creatively highlights the contours of globalization from a historical and critical perspective. Oscillating between different subjects and disciplines, ranging from music to architecture, the collective proactively defends an inclusive working method, presenting diverse, varied and sometimes conflicting, points of view.

Nahma : une plongée dans une polyphonie illuminée

La perle a de tout temps été un objet de désir, source de différents mythes et légendes, inspirés de l'histoire millénaire des pêcheurs de perles et de leurs chants. Emblématique polyphonie accompagnant le dur labeur des expéditions de bateaux perliers, mélangeant percussions et fortes exaltations vocales de l'équipage, le *fidjiri* deviendra le symbole de la gloire des courageux plongeurs sur les côtes de la mer du Golfe et d'Oman.

Retraçant l'histoire mouvementée de la pêche à la Perle, l'installation *Nahma : une plongée dans une polyphonie illuminée* est une œuvre immersive dans laquelle le public est invité à se familiariser avec le sujet de manière sensorielle. Plongé dans une mer d'images au milieu des perles, des apnéistes et d'autres éléments visuels avant-gardistes, le public naviguera dans une épopée à la fois pédagogique et sensoriellement déroutante, déstabilisée par les projections multidimensionnelles aquatiques et la sonorisation spatialisée en constant mouvement.

Après un passage remarqué aux Rencontres Photographiques d'Arles et une importante installation transmédia au Musée d'Art, d'Architecture et de Design de Lisbonne (MAAT), s'inspirant de ses recherches artistiques pour le projet *Nahma: a Gulf polyphony*, le collectif artistique FLEE présente sa nouvelle œuvre sur le salon GemGenève.

FLEE Project :

Fondée par Olivier Duport, Alan Marzo et Carl Åhnebrink, FLEE est une maison d'édition indépendante, un label discographique et une plateforme curatoriale dédiée à la documentation artistique et à la réinterprétation de phénomènes culturels hybrides. Grâce à une pratique artistique transdisciplinaire, la plateforme explore et met en lumière de manière créative les contours de la mondialisation d'un point de vue historique et critique. Oscillant entre différents sujets et disciplines, allant de la musique à l'architecture, le collectif défend de manière proactive une méthode de travail inclusive, présentant des points de vue divers, variés et parfois contradictoires.

32 **Designs for *Toi et Moi* rings set with pearls and diamonds, early 20th century**
Graphite pencil and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

33 ***Gouache* of the ruby and diamond set manufactured by Marie-Etienne Nitot for Impress Marie-Louise, second half of the 19th century**
Watercolour and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

34 **Design for a pendant with a pearl-body monkey playing with a pear-shaped pearl, c.1900**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

35 **Design for a bracelet with a mermaid and a merman grabbing a big baroque pearl, c.1900**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

36 **Design for a brooch with a mermaid grabbing a pear-shaped pearl, c.1900**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

37 **Design for 3 hat pins set with hollow pearls, c.1900**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

38 **Design for 2 hat pins set with hollow pearls and adorned with a decoration of palm trees, c.1900**
Graphite pencil, ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

39 **Design for a hat pin set with a hollow pearl, c.1900**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

41 **Design for a tiara with a decoration of a vine branch with grapes and oats, c.1909**
Graphite pencil and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

42 **Design for a tiara with a decoration of a vine branch with grapes and oats, with instructions for the handcrafting, c.1909**
Graphite pencil, ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

43 **View of Chaumet's Pearls Department, 12 place Vendôme, Paris**
Photo c.1920
Chaumet Collection
ARR

44 **View of the pearls acquired by Chaumet from Robert Sachs**
Photo 1929
Chaumet Collection
ARR

45 **View of Chaumet's stock of pearls**
Photo 1930
Chaumet Collection
ARR

46 **View of pearls submitted to scientific experimentations**
Photo 1900-1925
Chaumet Collection
ARR

47 **Design for a bracelet with a decoration of vine leaves and grapes, c.1850**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

48 **View of Joseph Chaumet's gemmology lab**
Photo early 20th century
Chaumet Collection
ARR

49 **Album containing photographs of gemstones and pearls submitted to scientific experimentations, early 20th century**
Chaumet Collection
ARR

50 **Extract from the speech by Joseph Chaumet on 8 June 1922 for the Countess de Greffulhe, President of the propaganda committee for the French luxury goods trade.**
Chaumet Collection

51 **Box containing fine pearl powder**
Used 2,000 years ago by the empresses of the Ching dynasty, pearl powder restores

radiance to the complexion and diminishes fine lines. *Poudre de Perles* provides the rare trace elements and amino acids necessary for human equilibrium. It comes from pearl oysters.
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
ARR

52 **Diving bezel**
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
ARR

53 **Pearl piercing tool**
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
ARR

54 **Al Lali book**
The pearl weight booklet used in ancient times.
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
© Al Fardan Collection

55 **Cross-sections of pearls**
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
ARR

56 **Pearl Endoscope for distinguishing cultured pearls from fine pearls, c.1930**
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
ARR

57 **Bashtakhta**
A wooden box that was used to store pearls throughout the diving trip. There are wooden sections and dividers inside to place pearls and pearl weighing equipment.
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
© Al Fardan Collection

58 **Mesh sieve**
Mesh sieve for sorting pearls by size.
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
ARR

59 ***Nahma: Diving into an Illuminated Polyphony***
FLEE Project
ARR

60 **White gold, diamonds and natural pearl necklace; yellow gold, emerald and diamond pendent**
Joseph Gad [E50]
ARR

61 **Necklace with 8 strands of natural pearls, sapphire and diamond clasp, Cartier**
678 pearls
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
ARR

62 **Silver brooch, ornamented with a Moor's head adorned with twisted beads**
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
ARR

63 **Old nautical compass**
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
ARR

64 **Necklace of 2 strands of 70 natural pearls and 8 cultured pearls, Cartier**
Pearl diameter: 8.5 to 11 mm
Heritage Gems [A30 – B31]
ARR

65 **Pair of large natural pearl button and diamond earrings**
Heritage Gems [A30 – B31]
ARR

66 ***Lobatus gigas*** (a.k.a. ***Strombus gigas, Queen Conch***)
Natural pearl and shell
4.79 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
ARR

67 ***Haliotis***
Natural pearl and shell
16.71 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
ARR

68 ***Veneridae***
Natural pearl and shell
17.55 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
ARR

69 ***Fasciolariinae*** (***Horse Conch***)
Natural pearl and shell
126.20 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
ARR

70 ***Melo***
Natural pearl and shell
42.34 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
ARR

71 ***Spondylus***
Natural pearl and shell
12.96 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
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72 *Pteria*
Natural pearl and shell
25.39 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
ARR

73 *Pectinidae*
Natural pearl and shell
5.34 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
ARR

74 *Tridacna*
Natural pearl and shell
54.76 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
ARR

75 *Pinctada*
Natural pearl and shell
7.32 carats
Ocean Flame [E13]
ARR

76 **Design for a knot brooch, c.1900**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

77 **Design for a knot brooch, c.1900**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

78 **Design for a knot brooch, c.1900**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

79 **Design for a knot brooch, early 20th century**
Graphite pencil and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

80 **Design for a knot brooch, c.1900**
Gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

81 **Design for the *Comète des mers* (*Ondes et merveilles*) ring, 2022**
Chaumet Collection
ARR

82 **Design for the *Chant des sirènes* (*Ondes et merveilles*) tiara, 2022**
Chaumet Collection
ARR

83 **Design for the *Comète des mers* (*Ondes et merveilles*) necklace, 2022**
Chaumet Collection
ARR

84 **Design for the *Chant des sirènes* (*Ondes et merveilles*) necklace, 2022**
Ink and gouache
Chaumet Collection
ARR

85 ***The Pearl of Guadalupe* (*Haliotis Fulgens*)**
Green Abalone
One of the largest symmetrical abalone pearls ever found this pearl measures 41.5 × 29.15 × 20.6 mm and weighs 145.08 carats (580.32 grains). Found from the coastal waters of Southern California this impressive natural pearl exhibits strong iridescent colours of pink, green, silver and blue.
Oasis Pearl
ARR

86 **Strands of natural seed pearls (*Pteria Sterna* and *Pinctada Maculata*)**
Pearl diameter: 1.5 to 2.5 mm
Oasis Pearl
© Oasis Pearl

87 ***Round Quahog Pearls: a rare natural marvel* (*Mercenaria Mercenaria*)**
The Quahog species is primarily found along the eastern coast of North America ranging from Canada to Florida. The species produces colourful non nacreous natural saltwater pearls ranging from white, beige and brown to rich dark purple and lilac. Round pearls from this species are exceptionally rare and represent less then 1% of all pearls found. This collection took fifteen years to put together and is the largest known collection of round pearls in the world.
ECIJA, Oasis Pearl
ARR

88 **Natural pearl pendant (*Pinctada Maxima*)**
The natural pearl possesses extraordinary characteristics and merits special mention and appreciation. It exhibits a highly impressive size and weight of 102.43 carats (409.74 grains), combined with an attractive baroque drop shape and a fine pearl lustre. The surface colour of the pearl

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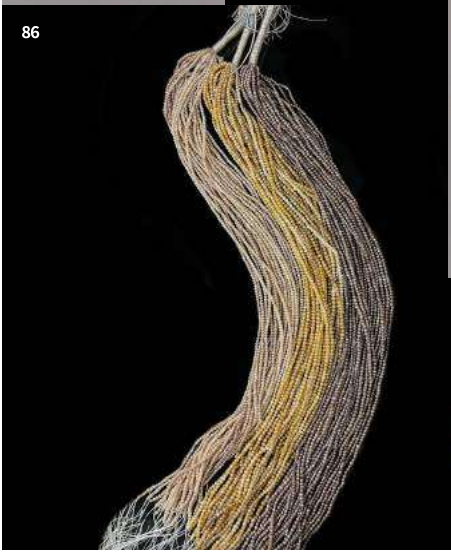

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is a delicate slightly cream.
ECIJA
ARR

89 **Pen shell exhibiting large blister pearl accompanied by 7 button-shaped natural saltwater pearls (*Atrina pectinata*)**
Oasis Pearl
© Oasis Pearl

90 ***Nautilus* pearl**
One of the rarest of all natural pearls, this 18.77 carats (75.09 grains) natural saltwater pearl is the first and only scientifically confirmed Nautilus pearl. The pearl went through a meticulous analysis of DNA Fingerprinting by SSEF concluding with 100% certainty the authenticity of this pearl. As stated in their report SSEF has never issued any report identifying a natural pearl as Nautilus pearl up to this date.
ECIJA
© Oasis Pearl

91 **World map of main natural pearl and cultured pearls fisheries through the ages**
SSEF [A71]
ARR

92 **View of pearls submitted to scientific experimentations**
SSEF [A71]
ARR

93 **Radiocarbon age dating and DNA analysis of natural pearls**
SSEF [A71]
ARR

94 **Analysis of exceptional natural pearls**
SSEF [A71]
ARR

95 ***How do natural pearls form? How do cultured pearls form?***
Video
SSEF [A71]
ARR

96 **Box containing different types of cultured pearls cut in half**
SSEF [A71]
ARR

97 **Oyster rack for cultured pearls**
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

98 **OyMeflaqa**
Knife-like tool that has a curved, short and thick blade that is used to pry open oysters and separate their meat from the shell.
Swiss Pearls [E11]
© Al Fardan Collection

99 **Al Daieen**
A bag or basket made from net that the pearl diver put around his neck and used it to hold the oysters during his dive.
Swiss Pearls [E11]
© Al Fardan Collection

100 **Ftam**
Diver's nose clips. Worn by the diver to avoid water going into the nose. These were usually made of animal bone.
Swiss Pearls [E11]
© Al Fardan Collection

101 **Round pearls sorted to the thousandth of a millimetre (Rainbow lip oyster, Mexico)**
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

102 ***Pinctada Radiata* shell and its pearl**
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

103 ***Pinctada Mazatlanica* shell and its pearl**
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

104 ***Pinctada Maxima* shell and its pearl**
This is the most common pearl-producing oyster.
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

105 ***Pipi* shell and its pearl**
This is the smallest of the pearl-producing oysters.
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

106 ***Rainbow lip* shell and its pearl**
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

107 **Baroque pearls from *Rainbow lip* oyster**
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

108 **Drop *Peacock* pearl, *Rainbow lip* oyster**
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR


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109 **Colored pearls layout**
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

110 **Colored pearls layout**
Swiss Pearls [E11]
ARR

111 **Wooden case with a traditional weighing scale**
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
© Al Fardan Collection

112 **Traditional pearl weighing tool**
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]
© Al Fardan Collection

113 ***Pearls, A journey through time***
The film titled *Pearls, A journey through time* is a testament to the rich history of pearl diving and the proud legacy of Alfardan Jewellery. In the tapestry of time, pearls emerge as nature's coveted secrets, hidden within the embrace of the boundless seas.
In the heart of the Arabian Gulf, they rise as emblems of unyielding pride, steeped in centuries of nostalgia, unrivalled by any gemstone in history's accounts. In the Gulf's waters, natural pearls historically entwined their fate with daring divers, a perilous dance with danger and adversity. Armed only with boats and rudimentary tools, these intrepid souls braved weeks, even months, in pursuit of their livelihoods, a sacred craft handed down through ages. Hussain Ibrahim Alfardan grew up as part of a reputable family known for its centuries-long passion for pearls. The foundations of the family's fortunes were laid towards the end of the 19th century by the late Ibrahim Alfardan, a renowned pearl trader himself. Walking in the footsteps of his father, Hussain Ibrahim Alfardan is today considered a leading authority on natural pearls, drawing on the expertise and experience of his ancestors, who were known as leaders in the pearl trade.
Al Fardan Collection
ARR

114 **Al Daieen**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

115 **Oyster shells of different sizes**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

116 **Bashtakhta**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

117 **Al Lali book**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

118 **Traditional pearl weighing tool**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

119 **Ftam**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

120 ***Sea of pearls: seven thousand years of the industry that shaped the gulf*, Robert A. Carter**
Al Fardan Collection

121 **Model of a small traditional wooden boat called "Dhow Boat"**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

122 **Wooden case with a traditional weighing scale**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

123 **Traditional pearl weighing tool**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

124 **Traditional pearl weighing tool**
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

125 **Khabbat**
A piece of cowhide sewn to the size of the finger. The diver wears it to protect his finger during oyster shells opening
Al Fardan Collection
© Al Fardan Collection

126 **Rare additional series of ten separate preliminary plates by Edmond Dulac for the quarto edition of *The Kingdom of the Pearl* by Leonard Rosenthal**
Gem Collectors Bookshop [A01]

127 **Vintage visuals, illustrations, magazines and newspapers**
Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31]


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128 **SSEF collection of half-cut pearls**
Assembled and polished by Dr Henry A. Hänni
1. Natural pearl from the Persian Gulf
2. Beadless freshwater cultured pearl from China
3. Beadless freshwater cultured pearl from China
4. Freshwater cultured pearl from China with coin-shaped bead
5. Freshwater cultured pearl from China with baroque-shaped bead
6. Beaded freshwater cultured pearl ("Ming Pearl") from China
7. Beaded Akoya cultured pearl from Japan
8. Beaded South Sea cultured pearl from Indonesia
9. Beaded golden South Sea cultured pearl from the Philippines
10. Beaded Tahitian black cultured pearl from French Polynesia
11. Tahitian cultured pearl with baroque-shaped bead from French Polynesia
SSEF [A71]
ARR

Key words:

Natural Pearl: Accidental formation in wild oysters without any human intervention (eg. natural pearls from Gulf oysters *Pinctada radiata*).

Cultured Pearl: A product of human intervention (tissue/nucleus implantation) and farmed/nursed oysters (eg. South Sea cultured pearls).

Freshwater cultured pearl: A cultured pearl produced in freshwater mussels (eg. *Hyriopsis cumingii, Hyriopsis schlegelii*) found in rivers, ponds or lakes. Freshwater cultured pearls are grown either in the mantle or gonad regions of the mussels.

Saltwater cultured pearl: A cultured pearl produced in saltwater oysters (eg. *Pinctada maxima, Pinctada margaritifera, Pinctada fucata*) found in marine areas. Saltwater cultured pearls are usually grown in the gonad region of the oysters.

Bead/nucleus: A small piece inserted into oysters to aid the growth of a cultured pearl. The material is usually from Mississippi freshwater shells that are cut into a round shape. Note that donor tissue material needs to be implanted into an oyster/mussel in a first generation for a pearl to grow, a bead alone is not enough.

Free online courses available in English, French, Chinese and Japanese:

www.ssef.ch/masterclass/

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We are all, from the highest to the lowest, servants of one master: the pearl.

Nous sommes tous, du plus élevé au plus humble, serviteurs d'un seul maître : la perle.

Sheikh Muhammad bin Thani, 1863

Exhibition created on the initiative of Ronny Totah, co-founder of GemGenève, Mathieu Dekeukelaire, director of GemGenève and Sandrine Totah, Horovitz & Totah.

This exhibition has been supported by Chaumet, the Flee Project collective, the Al Fardan collection and a private collector, as well as the collaboration of several partner exhibitors: Faerber-Collection [D30 – E31], Heritage Gems [A30 – B31], Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31], Joseph Gad [E50], Nicolas Torroni [B10], Ocean Flame [E13], Swiss Gemmological Institute SSEF [A71], Swiss Pearls [E11], as well as some external dealers: Hofer Antikschmuck, Oasis Pearl, and Ecija.

This exhibition has been realised thanks to the support of our partner Autre Idée (scenography). Furthermore, the project had been supported by Lumens8, Ferrari and AngloBelge.

Exposition créée à l'initiative de Ronny Totah, co-fondateur de GemGenève, Mathieu Dekeukelaire, directeur de GemGenève et Sandrine Totah, Horovitz & Totah.

Cette exposition a bénéficié du soutien de la maison Chaumet, du collectif Flee Project, de la collection Al Fardan et d'un collectionneur privé ainsi que de la collaboration de plusieurs exposants partenaires : Faerber-Collection [D30 – E31], Heritage Gems [A30 – B31], Horovitz & Totah [A30 – B31], Joseph Gad [E50], Nicolas Torroni [B10], Ocean Flame [E13], Swiss Gemmological Institute SSEF [A71], Swiss Pearls [E11] tout comme de certains marchands tiers : Hofer Antikschmuck, Oasis Pearl et Ecija.

Cette exposition a été réalisée grâce au solide soutien de l'agence de conception scénographique Autre Idée et grâce aux partenaires Lumens8, Ferrari et Anglo-Belge.

With the friendly support from

GemGenève is a unique hub where jewellery designers, dealers in precious stones, retailers, collectors, connoisseurs and buyers both professional and private can all gather under the same roof. Over the course of four days, GemGenève offers an opportunity to acquire exceptional pieces and be inspired by a community of specialists in the field of gemmology and jewellery. It's a laboratory of creativity and innovation, bringing together recognised designers and emerging talents; a world of design, rare gems, and antique and contemporary jewellery. Created by exhibitors, GemGenève offers a platform for expression and exchange that encompasses passion, expertise and education.

GemGenève représente un hub unique de rencontre entre les créateurs de bijoux, les marchands de pierres précieuses, les détaillants, les collectionneurs, les connaisseurs, les acheteurs professionnels et privés, tous réunis sous un même toit. Pendant quatre jours, GemGenève offre une opportunité de se porter acquéreur de pièces exceptionnelles et de se laisser inspirer par une communauté d'initiés en matière de gemmologie et de joaillerie. Un laboratoire de créativité et d'innovation, réunissant designers reconnus et talents émergents. Un monde de designs, de gemmes rares, de bijoux anciens et contemporains. Créé par des exposants, GemGenève offre une plateforme d'expression réunissant passion, expertise et éducation.

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