



museum of arts and design

Elegant Fashion Jewelry Exhibition Opens at MAD June 25, 2013

***Drawn From the World-Renowned Collection of Barbara Berger,
Exhibition Showcases Over 450 Pieces by Designers Including Balenciaga,
Chanel, Dior, Miriam Haskell, and Yves Saint Laurent***

(New York, NY – April 11, 2013) – ***Fashion Jewelry: The Collection of Barbara Berger*** will be an eye-opening presentation of necklaces, bracelets, and earrings, many of them one-of-a-kind, drawn from the world-renowned collection of Barbara Berger. Featured designers include Kenneth Jay Lane, Lanvin, Missoni, Oscar de la Renta and Pucci. The exhibition will be on view at the Museum of Arts and Design from June 25 through September 22, 2013 (a portion of the exhibition will remain open until January 11, 2014).

“Costume jewelry is not made to give women an aura of wealth, but to make them beautiful.”— Coco Chanel

Popularized by fashion icons such as Elsa Schiaparelli and Coco Chanel, costume jewelry took off as an art form in its own right in the post-World War II era. As the European couture houses returned to business, the increased availability of synthetic gemstones and sparkling crystals opened up a spectrum of new design possibilities, allowing designers to produce even more vibrant and elaborate creations. At the same time, the market and appeal for costume jewelry began to grow. After years of wartime austerity, women developed an appetite for luxury, fantasy, and exuberance. And with the relatively modest prices of costume jewels (compared to gemstones and precious metals), women were able to acquire multiple pieces, for daily wear as well as for evening, and to layer many accessories together in the chic, over-the-top style epitomized by Chanel.

“Always put on more jewelry, and mix fine with costume.” – Barbara Berger

From swans and starbursts to feathers and flowers, the couture jewelry in ***Fashion Jewelry: The Collection of Barbara Berger*** presents a stunning array of extravagant pieces that not only celebrates the heritage of costume jewelry, but the creativity of brilliant designers and craftsmen across five decades of high-end fashion. The exhibition underscores the continuing popularity of couture jewelry today through stellar contemporary works from designers such as David Mandel, Iradj Moini, Robert Sorrell, Daniel Von Weinberger and Lawrence Vrba.

“Barbara Berger’s extraordinary collection features over four thousand pieces, by more than eighty designers, and represents over fifty years of collecting,” says David McFadden, William and Mildred Lasdon Chief Curator at the Museum of Arts and

Design. "We are delighted to display a rich assortment from this dazzling collection, a virtual encyclopedia of this exciting and provocative era of fashion history."

The daughter of an American diamond merchant, Barbara Berger began her collection of *bijoux de couture* when she purchased a pair of Chanel earrings at a French flea market as a teenager. Since then, she went on to assemble one of the largest and finest collections of couture jewelry in the world comprising of around 4,000 pieces. Many of the works were made expressly to be worn with haute couture clothing by fashion designers like Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent, Dior and Dolce & Gabbana.

Influenced by the high style of New York City, where she spent her youth, and the vivid colors of Mexico City, where she makes her home, she continues to add to her collection with an unerring eye. Ms. Berger will generously donate selected works from her collection to MAD's permanent holdings of modern and contemporary jewelry.

"To talk about collecting costume jewelry is to talk about life, style, heart, and passion. Collecting is a treasure hunt, and completing my collection has been one of the highlights of my life," said Berger. "My collection features what's interesting to me – extraordinary, unique designs imbued with fantasy and a sense of humor. It's usually love at first sight."

INSTALLATION

Fashion Jewelry will be presented in an elegant installation that will celebrate this glorious jewelry. The first section in MAD's jewelry gallery will survey the range of designer works by the American and European houses, including Chanel, Balenciaga, Maison Grippoix, Marcel Boucher, Miriam Haskell and Trifari, to name a few. This will showcase not only the historical relationships between the houses and their designers, but also reveal their distinct signature styles and motifs. This section of the exhibition will remain on view through January 11, 2014.

In the main gallery, work will be presented thematically, with pieces variously arranged by subject, material, geography, color and motif. From flora and fauna, to rhinestones, gold and resin, this impressive collection can truly be appreciated in all of its glitz, glamour and brilliance. This section will be on view through September 22, 2013.

"This exhibition is the most important presentation of fashion jewelry the world has seen in decades," says guest curator, Harrice Miller. "Barbara Berger's passion for collecting beautiful objects combined with her connoisseur's eye has resulted in an extravagance of treasures."

EDUCATION AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS

In conjunction with the exhibition, MAD will offer a range of educational programs, including master classes, salons, lectures, films, Open Studios artists, and other workshops.

One of the highlights will be a conversation between collector Barbara Berger and jewelry historian, Harrice Miller, which will take place on Thursday June 27th at 7pm. This event will be followed by a book signing. Books can be purchased prior to the event and are available through the Store at MAD.

EXHIBITION ORGANIZATION AND CREDITS

Fashion Jewelry: The Collection of Barbara Berger is organized by David McFadden, William and Mildred Lasdon Chief Curator at the Museum of Arts and Design, in collaboration with jewelry historian Harrice Simons Miller, as guest curator.

Support for *Fashion Jewelry: The Collection of Barbara Berger* generously provided by Miriam Haskell, with additional support from KLM Royal Dutch Airlines, the official airline of MAD.

PUBLICATION

The exhibition is accompanied by a lavishly illustrated publication on the Berger collection published by Assouline in 2013 titled *Fashion Jewelry: The Collection of Barbara Berger*. The book includes forewords by Pamela Golbin and Iris Apfel and an essay on the history of fashion jewelry in the Berger Collection by Harrice Miller.

ABOUT THE MUSEUM OF ARTS AND DESIGN

The Museum of Arts and Design explores the intersection between art, design, and craft today. The Museum focuses on contemporary creativity and the ways in which artists and designers from around the world transform materials through processes ranging from the artisanal to digital. The Museum's exhibition program explores and illuminates issues and ideas, highlights creativity and craftsmanship, and celebrates the limitless potential of materials and techniques when used by gifted and innovative artists. MAD's permanent collection is global in scope and focuses on art, craft, and design from 1950 to the present day. At the center of the Museum's mission is education. The Museum's dynamic new facility features classrooms and studios for master classes, seminars, and workshops for students, families, and adults. Three open artist studios engage visitors in the creative processes of artists at work and enhance the exhibition programs. Lectures, films, performances, and symposia related to the Museum's collection and topical subjects affecting the world of contemporary art, craft, and design are held in a renovated 144-seat auditorium.

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