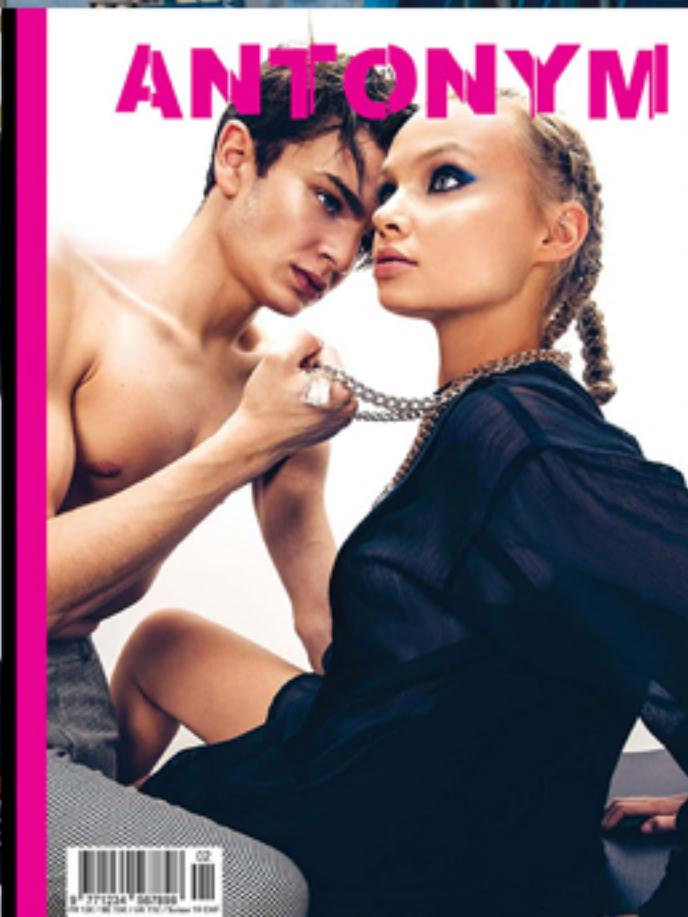
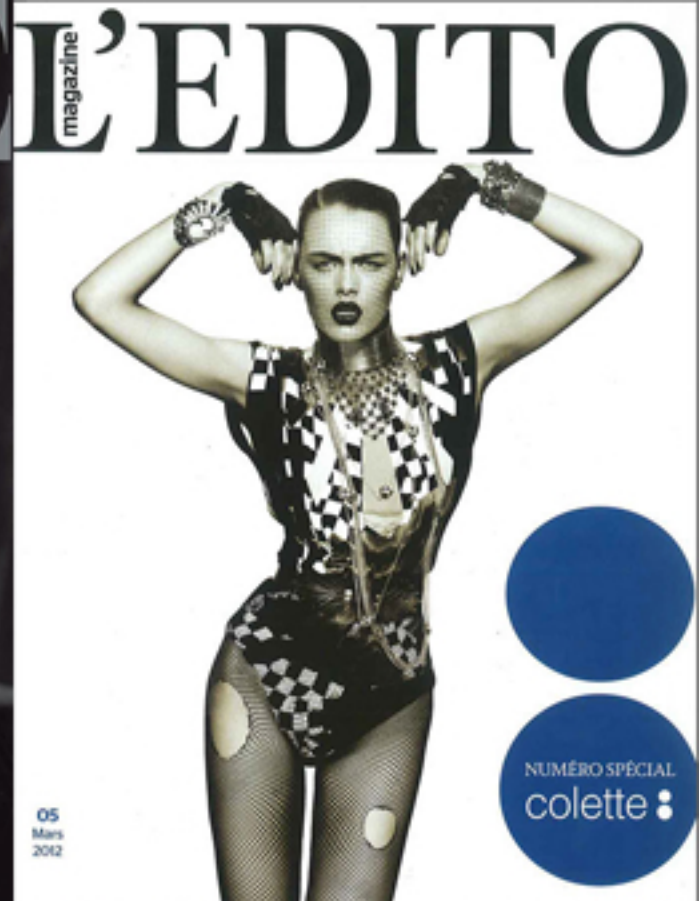


ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN  
PRESS BOOK







# Rita Ora Reveals the Story Behind Her Showstopping Met Dress

MAY 3, 2016 6:01 PM by [EDWARD BARSAMIAN](#)

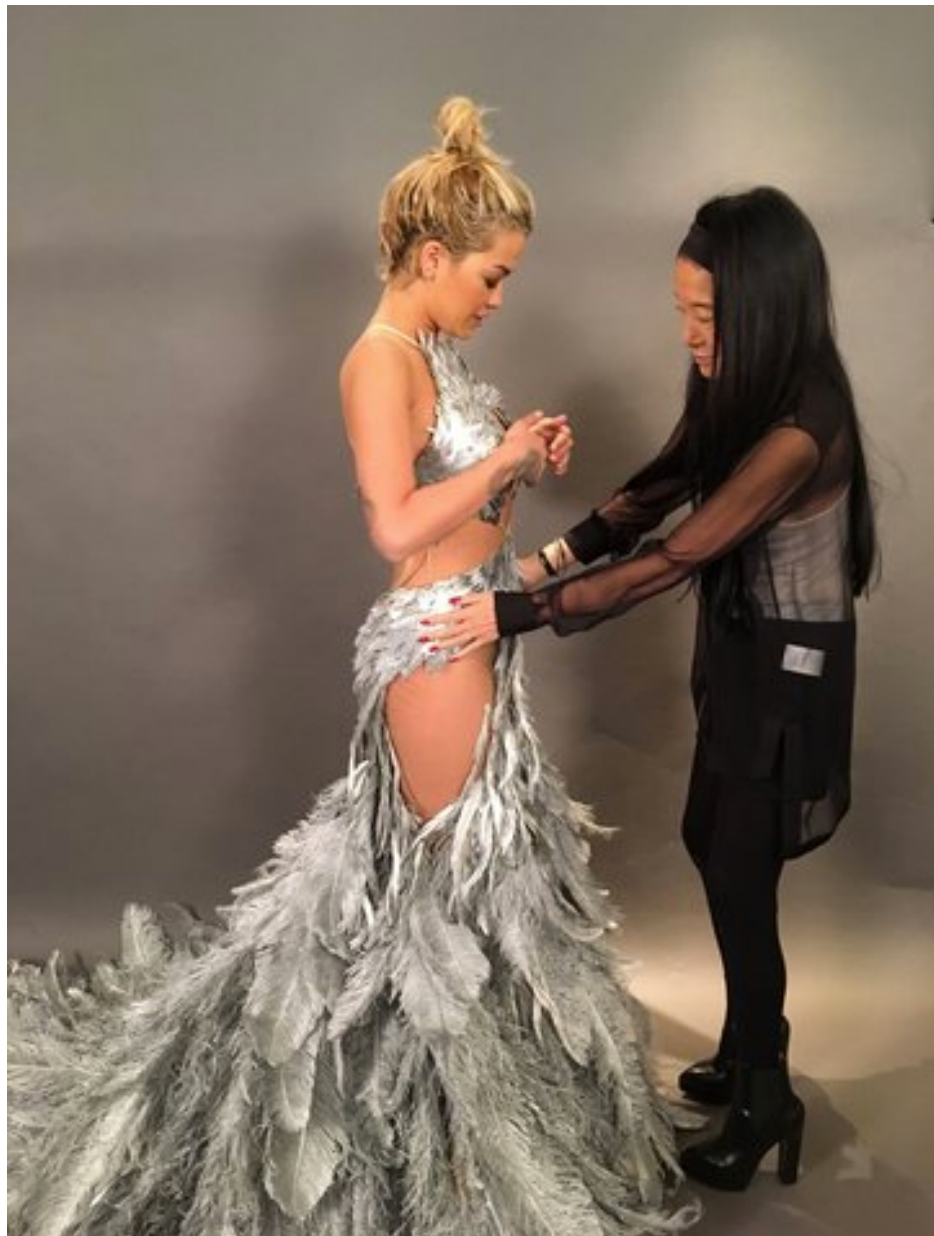


Photo: Courtesy of Vera Wang

At last night's Met Gala, there were some major moments, and repeat attendees such as Rita Ora know what ingredients are required to make an entrance. "I love Vera Wang," said Ora, who arrived arm in arm with the New York designer. "She made the dress for my Oscar performance last year." Wang and Ora toyed with several ideas before settling on a dress inspired by the work of Eric Charles-Donatien, a friend of Wang's who is known for his elaborate feathered accessories. "The Met red carpet evokes the absolute best and most astonishing moments in fashion," said Wang. "The design [for Rita] was about her skin, her sensuality, and her sense of freedom."

The 25-year-old British singer made a splash at last year's ball in a stunning vintage Tom Ford for Yves Saint Laurent number, so finding a look to equal what she calls "that wow factor" was no small feat. Ora found her match in Wang's silvery design that was crafted with handpainted metallic feathers flown in from Paris and took 8 weeks to make. "The Met is the most significant fashion party in the world," said Wang, "and a Met dress should reflect the individuality, state of mind, and personal style of the celebrity." At an event filled with the world's biggest superstars, there are bound to be plenty of memorable moments on and off the red carpet. As for Ora's personal highlight? "Bumping into Madonna," she said. "She is so supportive, and we took a picture together." A selfie for the ages, to be sure.

<http://www.vogue.com/13432602/rita-ora-vera-wang-collection-met-gala-2016/>

# What's NEWS



## Un nœud papillon Beluga Imperial

Posseur de plus de 100 nœuds papillon, Armen Petrossian ne pouvait pas ne pas rencontrer un jour le cravater de luxe Maison F. C'est grâce à son fils Mikaeli qu'est née la rencontre... qui a donné naissance à un partenariat aussi classique qu'astucieux. Voici donc la collection Maison F pour Petrossian qui présente – sous boîtes de caviar – une collection trendy de nœuds papillon en phase avec les valeurs et les produits de la maison Petrossian. So french et so chic ! Boutiques Petrossian et maisonf.com



## Chaud, chaud, chocolat

Le très couru Salon du chocolat ? Le revolla ! Il se tiendra au Pavillon 5 du parc des expositions de la porte de Versailles, du 28 octobre au 1<sup>er</sup> novembre. 20000 m<sup>2</sup> sur deux niveaux, avec des tas d'animations, des défilés, des chefs pâtisseries (dont Philippe Contin), des spectacles et même de grands médecins (comme les professeurs Pavié et Cabrol) pour vanter les vertus de ce délicieux produit, ambroisie de tous les gourmands (en photo, Wild Choco Bear par Orlinski).



## Pesseguero, offrez le Portugal !

Pour retrouver la magie du Douro et en prélude à vos prochaines vacances, offrez-vous (ou offrez à vos amis) ce coffret collector Pesseguero, du domaine éponyme, qui contient une bouteille de Porto Vintage 2012 aux qualités organoleptiques élevées et un flacon d'huile d'olive extra vierge douce et fruitée avec une finale épicée. Un parfum de li-bas...

59 € cavistes et épiceries fines



# LA PLUME COMME signature

Eric Charles-Donatien est designer-plumassier, diplômé de l'École Duperré et de l'École de la chambre syndicale de la couture parisienne. Il a fait ses classes au sein des ateliers et studios d'Hermès et d'Hanae Mori. Il a rejoint la maison du célèbre plumassier français André Lemarié où il a été responsable artistique pendant plus de 10 ans. Un passage qui lui a donné l'occasion de collaborer avec de grandes maisons telles que Chanel, Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Jean-Paul Gaultier ou encore Roger Vivier. En 2010, il a fondé sa propre société. Rencontre avec un passionné.

Réalisation | SOPHIA MIKOU - Photos | D.R

## Quelles sont vos sources d'inspiration ?

Je porte constamment un regard curieux sur ce qui m'entoure. Les sources d'inspiration sont partout où l'on pose son regard. Je me nourris d'éléments d'architecture, de décoration, etc. J'emmagasine des informations puis je fais un travail de digestion pour retranscrire ces idées sur une future création. La plume est en elle-même une source d'inspiration infinie ; je vais chercher un effet chatoyant, mat, brillant ou bigarré, des motifs, une couleur particulière. J'ai la chance d'exercer un métier ancien ; ce qui permet de le garder actuel, c'est d'y porter un regard libre. Je ne regarde pas la mode pour faire de la mode.

## Que préférez-vous dans le monde de la mode ?

Aujourd'hui, la mode est une industrie complexe. Ce qui me motive, c'est le travail des designers qui ont envie de faire passer des visions, ceux qui font un vrai travail de recherche. J'aime les collaborations autour d'une technique, de quelque chose d'inédit. La mode grand public m'intéresse moins, c'est pour cela que je continue à faire de l'artisanat. Ce que je préfère, c'est « le mouton à cinq pattes », j'aime les robes impossibles que l'on arrive quand même à confectionner. Les challenges sont importants pour moi. J'aime le lien qui se crée entre un designer et mon travail, mon expertise. On arrive à des résultats étonnants qui procurent un plaisir infini. Paris est sans conteste la capitale de la mode, mais j'aime ouvrir les frontières et travailler sur des projets ailleurs. Très tôt, je suis parti aux États-Unis, au Moyen Orient, en Asie, en Italie pour voir autre chose. Le métissage a quelque chose d'intéressant qui permet de faire avancer les messages.

## Comment travaillez-vous ?

Pour que le travail soit bien fait, il doit être effectué dans le plaisir. Une ambiance sereine et plaisante, de la musique ou du calme, du rire, beaucoup de rire, sinon ce n'est pas drôle ! On peut même danser si c'est nécessaire ! Il s'agit d'un travail profondément émotionnel, travailler dans de bonnes conditions est donc essentiel. J'aime le travail d'équipe ; on parle beaucoup, on échange sur nos vies. Mais j'ai aussi besoin de m'isoler pour réfléchir. En travaillant on doit ressentir du plaisir, je dirais on peut même danser si c'est nécessaire ! On parle beaucoup, on échange autour de nos vies.

## Quelle est votre création préférée ?

Je ne vais pas me chiffonner avec les uns et les autres... Nous avons fait des choses sublimes sur plusieurs projets mais celles que l'on retient sont celles dont la conception est mémorable. Ce n'est pas juste la finalité qui compte ! Je ferais une exception avec une tenue : un manteau en plumes d'or réalisé pour Alexander McQueen qui a un sens particulier pour moi : en effet, cette pièce d'exception a défilé lors d'une présentation qui a eu lieu juste après sa mort. J'ai également réalisé des choses fabuleuses avec Galliano chez Dior, Jean-Paul Gaultier (la robe marinière) et des souliers iconiques pour Roger Vivier. À chaque nom prononcé, je pense à celui que je n'ai pas cité... C'est plus facile de donner un exemple dans ce que j'ai produit sous mon nom : « Chimère », la voûte de plumes en métal et plumes naturelles dessinée et réalisée pour le salon de coiffure du spa de l'hôtel de Crillon.



Eric Charles-Donatien

### Connaissez-vous le Maroc ?

Le Maroc est un pays qui a toute mon affection depuis plusieurs années. Je connais Marrakech, je m'y suis senti bien, j'ai apprécié la chaleur des gens, les couleurs, les matières, les textures, la nourriture... J'ai eu la chance d'y travailler régulièrement pour la Plage Rouge, un site touristique qui ouvrait à l'époque ; ils voulaient des vêtements spécifiques que j'ai réalisés pour eux, c'était une superbe expérience : aller dans les ateliers, vivre avec eux, s'adapter à la compréhension du travail. Je retiens la gentillesse et la bonne volonté des personnes croisées dans les ateliers. Un souvenir marquant ! J'aime également rendre visite à mes amis du Bô Zin. J'ai aussi découvert le désert vers Sidi Ifni, un beau souvenir. Je regrette de ne pas avoir de projets qui me permettraient d'y aller plus souvent, et je n'ai pas assez de temps pour m'y rendre en villégiature.

### Que pensez-vous du caftan ?

Je trouve le caftan chic, c'est un bel habit ; j'aime la simplicité de ses coupes. J'ai eu l'occasion de travailler pour un prince à Doha sur des caftans réalisés pour un musée.

### Envisagez-vous des collaborations avec le Maroc ?

Il y a certainement quelque chose à développer. L'ennoblissement, c'est le cœur de mon métier, les possibilités sont infinies. Tout passe par les personnes, une rencontre peut déboucher sur un projet intéressant. Je suis ouvert à toutes les formes de collaborations d'autant plus qu'il y a peu ou pas d'antécédents dans ce domaine.



Pull en mohair de 4 tons tricoté, brodé de pampilles de perles et de cristal de jais par HUREL Atelier et remplume de plumes de coq fuchsia pour la collection haute couture Automne / Hiver 2017-2018 ARMANI PRIVÉ

### Quelles sont les textures qui vous plaisent ?

Toutes les textures me plaisent, il y en a cependant certaines avec lesquelles on est moins habile et avec lesquelles il est moins confortable de travailler. La plume a toute ma préférence grâce à la variété qu'elle suggère avec son caractère duveteux, rigide, lisse, nerveux, doux, rêche ; sans parler des couleurs qu'elle propose. J'aime aussi le cuir avec lequel on peut créer des choses fabuleuses. Enfin, le métal est une autre matière intéressante avec un côté luxueux, un doré que l'on peut combiner aux pierres. J'aime le côté masculin de l'acier brut avec les soudures apparentes, j'aime le combiner à la plume. La matière, c'est mon terrain de jeu ; je croise une matière, je la touche et je me pose la question : « Qu'est-ce que je peux en faire ? »

### Quelle palette de plumes vous séduit le plus ?

Il y a les plumes de canard, de faisan, de coq, celles avec un dessin particulier, des couleurs spécifiques, des effets métalliques, du vert, du bronze... Cela fait partie des choses qui me plaisent, issues de la nature et exploitées telles quelles. Il y a toute une variété de plumes à teindre qui, une fois lavées, travaillées et placées dans des bains de couleurs, prennent la nuance sans perdre leur légèreté ; je trouve leur transformation assez fantastique !

### Y a-t-il quelque chose d'intemporel dans vos créations ?

J'essaie de concevoir mon travail dans une idée d'intemporalité. Je ne m'inscris pas dans une vision de mode actuelle, j'aime savoir que je crée pour un plaisir plus long que quelques saisons. J'aime travailler avec une valeur esthétique et qualitative pour créer des objets que l'on va chérir jusqu'à la fin de ses jours.



Boucles d'oreille en pétales de laiton et bain d'or bordé de chaîne strassée, cristal swarovski serti rectangle et volute de plumes d'oie et "écailles" de paon : collection moye and da par @ericcharlesdonatien.



Manchette en laiton et bain d'or bordé de chaîne strassée, cristal swarovski serti rectangle et volute de plumes d'oie et "écailles" de paon : collection moye and da par @ericcharlesdonatien



Collier plastron en pétales de laiton, bain d'or et ruthenium, strass navette swarovski, le tout mobile sur structure ruthenium, rehaussé de plumes de coq violette : collection moye and da par @ericcharlesdonatien



Bustier - plastron façon armure, en plumes d'oie peintes en or : @ericcharlesdonatien pour @verawang



Collier plastron en pétales de laiton et bain d'or, le tout mobile sur structure ruthenium, rehaussé de plumes de coq fauve : collection moye and da par @ericcharlesdonatien

Manchette en plumes, scarabées et pyramide de laiton passé au bain d'or rose, strass swarovski et plumes d'oie aubergine : collection moye and da par @ericcharlesdonatien



portrait  
*Le Toucher*

# ÉRIC Charles-Donatien



SI LA VIE EST UN ROMAN,  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN NOUS SÉDUIT  
DE SA « PLUME » POUR NOUS ÉCRIRE  
DES CHAPITRES HAUTE-COUTURE.

*Par Jaimy-Lee VILO ROCHEFORT*

Je suis tombée amoureuse du travail de cet « artisan-crétif » et designer. Homme de valeurs et conscient du travail, il respecte les normes, et la nature. Il applique soigneusement la Convention de Washington (sur le commerce international des espèces de faune et de flore sauvages menacées d'extinctions garantissant la conservation de la biodiversité et l'utilisation durable des espèces sauvages).

Entre ses mains la tendresse de la plume prend toute sa puissance. De son imaginaire, la douceur de la plume prend toute son efficacité.

Eric CHARLES-DONATIEN, martiniquais d'origine, la singularité de sa marque Moye & Da, créée en 2008 s'inscrit dans une pluralité assurée.

Des lampes d'ambiance en acier et plumes d'oie noire peintes couleur or et, des centres de table en écailles de métal bruni, plumes de faisan et cuir impression croco. Des colliers plastron, en écailles de métal mobiles rehaussées de plumes de coq aubergine et, serties à quelques endroits de Swarovski aux tons rubis, brun et cristal... Une pluralité où le choix de matières, le choix des formes prennent vie. Tantôt objet de décoration et maroquinerie, tantôt bijoux et vêtements, c'est

un éventail de couleurs et d'ornements qui s'harmonisent, des conceptions symboles de leur vénéusté.

Au travers d'une création novatrice et personnelle, il s'attèle à partager et à transmettre. Il comprend les matières. Il comprend les couleurs et s'adapte à tous types de besoins. Auteur d'identités, de textures inattendues, couteaux, pinces de précision et ciseaux de couturier en main, de fils en aiguilles, il tisse des ADN. À chaque objet son histoire.

Il transcende la dichotomie entre le rêve et la réalité. La corrélation entre son imaginaire et ses doigts se modélise de façon délicatement exquise jusque dans les collections haute-couture.

Des créations qui se parquent lors de « collaborations-voyages » passant de Vera Wang, la styliste américaine d'origine chinoise connue entre autres pour ses iconiques robes de mariées, à Sorapol, prodige designer thaïlandais qui marie les techniques artisanales au code du luxe décadent, sans oublier Thierry Mugler, Roberto Cavalli ou, Dior. Des scènes de danses ailées où hommes, femmes arborent ses enjolivures, qui une fois portées sont sublimes. Le sujet s'est encore poétisé.

*Que les plumes soient d'autruche, de coq, de faisan,  
bienvenue dans l'univers poétiquement  
fantasque de la plumasserie.*

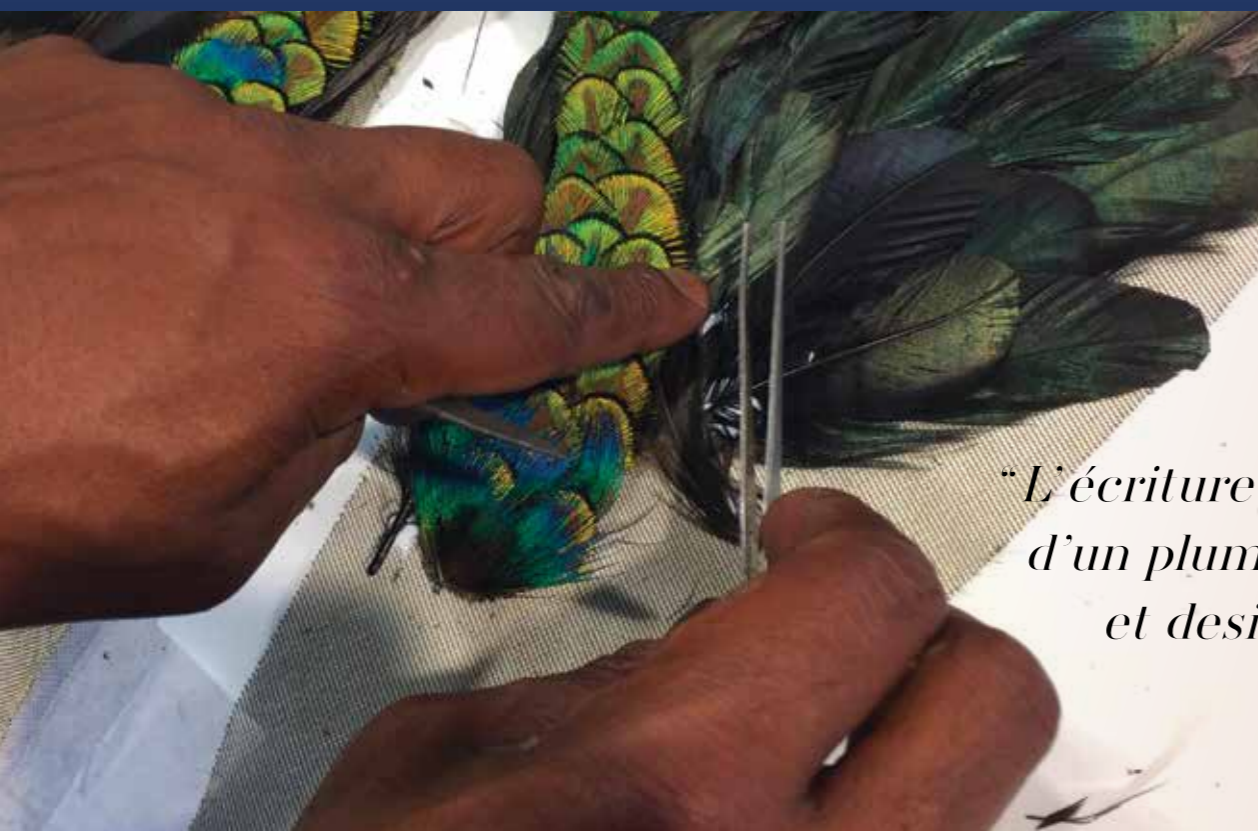
*Un monde enchanteur qui caressera votre regard.  
Un monde envoûtant qui embrasera votre curiosité.  
Un monde où s'enlumine le plumassier.*



## portrait

*Eric Charles-Donatien.*

Eric CHARLES-DONATIEN, avant-gardiste, capture, les pieds sur terre, les mouvements du vol d'oiseau dans une exploration méticuleuse et les pose sur le tissu qui se fait robe, sur l'or, le métal, les écailles qui se font bijoux, accessoires, alcôve, luminaires et, décoration. D'un battement d'ailes, finement précieuses, les plumes déploient leur magnificence. Ainsi, travaillées avec virtuosité et, assemblées avec art et amour, dès lors où il ajuste la dernière plume, ses chefs-d'œuvre prennent leur envol.



*“L'écriture suave  
d'un plumassier  
et designer ..”*

C'SMART

C'SMART



61



*La forte impression de D&G*

Robe en soie,  
sandales  
compensées  
en soie, D&G.  
Collier en métal  
et plumes de coq,  
Moye & Da.  
A sa main droite:  
bracelet en métal  
et cabochons en  
Plexiglas, Philippe  
Ferrandis.  
Bracelet en métal,  
D&G. A sa main  
gauche: joncs en  
métal, Agatha.  
Bague en métal,  
Poggi.

Réalisation  
Stéphanie Brissy

Maquillage Guerlain  
par Caroline Saulnier  
avec, pour le teint,  
Lingerie de Peau beige  
naturel, Poudre Éclat  
Métal, Terracotta sun  
in the city, Terracotta  
Blush sunny pink, sur  
les yeux, Crayon Yeux  
khôl me ebony, Écrit  
4 Couleurs les fumés,  
Mascara Le 2 de  
Guerlain noir, et sur  
les lèvres, Rouge  
Automatique chant  
d'armes.



# WILD

## THINGS

*Sole searching this season  
leads to MONUMENTAL masterpieces,  
both fur real and faux*

*Photographs by JASON PIETRA*

Hair-raising heels. THIS  
PAGE: Sandal, \$5,200,  
**Roger Vivier**. 212-861-  
5371. OPPOSITE PAGE:  
Bootie, \$2,295,  
**Christian Louboutin**.  
310-247-9300.  
Fashion editor:  
**Rae Ann Herman**

# Les derniers magiciens du falbala

La Rédaction | mardi 29 mai 2007 à 16:08



**Ils travaillent dans le secret de leur atelier à sublimer notre beauté. Brodeur, bottier, plumassier, chapelier... Regroupés dans une société créée par Chanel, quatre des plus grands fournisseurs de mode ont reçu Gala dans leur cour des miracles. Enquête dans un monde onirique où création rime toujours avec passion...**

Avant, ils pénétraient dans les maisons de haute couture par une porte réservée : Entrée des fournisseurs\*. Aujourd'hui, ils ont pignon sur rue, une clientèle privée, et travaillent pour le prêt-à-porter de luxe. Mais sans ces magiciens modestes et laborieux – qui œuvrent dans le secret de leurs ateliers à fabriquer du rêve –, les défilés des collections perdraient tout leur lyrisme. Depuis le début des années quatre-vingt-dix, c'est un métier en pleine évolution. «Avant, les couturiers nous laissaient cinq semaines pour exécuter une commande ; aujourd'hui, c'est dix jours. Nous devons travailler de plus en plus vite », explique le brodeur François Lesage. Pour mieux préserver un patrimoine fragilisé, quatre des plus anciennes maisons – Lesage (les broderies), Michel (les chapeaux), Lemarié (les fleurs et plumes) et Massaro (les chaussures) – se sont donc regroupées en une société créée par Chanel, baptisée Paraffection. «Nous sommes entrés dans une ère plus marketing», dit encore François Lesage, qui déplore de «ne plus guetter l'éclat de lumière dans l'œil du couturier quand je lui amenais une valise à la toilette. Il y avait une alchimie entre nous. Aujourd'hui, certains n'ont plus le temps ».



### **Lesage : broder, c'est rêver...**

A soixante-quinze ans, plus charmeur que jamais, le légendaire brodeur vous reçoit dans son bureau-tanière tapissé de lettres affectueuses de Christian Lacroix (son «filleul spirituel»), de photos glamour et de pièces brodées rutilantes.« Je suis né sur un tas de perles », dit-il. Héritier d'une maison centenaire, François Lesage dessinait des robes à Hollywood pour les vamps des studios quand le décès brutal de son père lui a fait prendre les rênes de la maison à dix-neuf ans, en 1949. Au cinquième étage de la rue de la Grange-Batelière, dans ses ateliers, on dessine, on pique, on pose perles, paillettes et cuvettes au crochet de Lunéville, on esquisse des fleurs sur organza et mousseline, en passant du point d'arrêt au passé plat, au milieu des tiroirs où sont enfermés les soixante mille échantillons créés depuis 1858 : la plus grande collection de broderies de couture au monde. Toujours au fait des tendances, Lesage met au point quelque trois cents échantillons qu'il soumet aux couturiers deux fois l'an. La commande venue, les cinquante employés explorent les 40 tonnes de fournitures en stock : de quoi tourner la clé des songes ! Le prince des artisans avoue qu'il n'a jamais su tenir une aiguille. Mais il s'efforce toujours de privilégier cet humour qu'il appréciait tant chez Schiap (Schiaparelli) et puisque broder, c'est rêver, il a créé dans ses murs une école de broderie où l'on accourt du monde entier.

### **Massaro, bottier depuis trois générations**



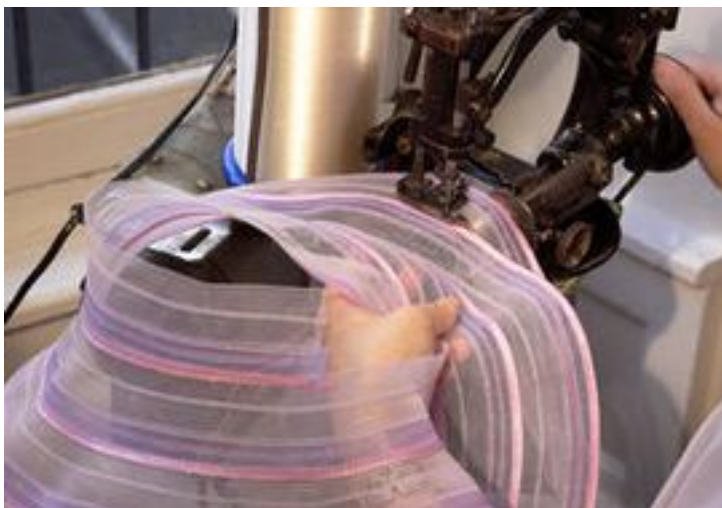
Deuxième doyen fameux parmi ces princes du falbala, Raymond Massaro, le bottier chouchou de Karl Lagerfeld, a vu défiler tous les grands de ce monde sur les fauteuils Louis XV de ses deux salons de réception, à l'entresol du 2, rue de la Paix. L'allure bonhomme d'un Gepetto, à soixante-quinze ans passés, il se souvient des wagons de commandes pour la comtesse Bismarck ou l'héritière Barbara Hutton, du mocassin en toile de panama pour Hassan II, de la mule papale (Jean-Paul II chaussait du 47), des escarpins de scène de Marlene Dietrich avec leurs talons en brillants. Mais aussi et surtout des chaussures de légende nées de sa collaboration avec les grands couturiers: la ballerine à élastique de madame Grès (qui fit s'envoler le pied), et la non moins célèbre sandale bicolore Chanel, objet-culte de Mademoiselle. Ce qui frappe, dans toutes ses chaussures exposées, c'est leur petitesse. «Il y a deux générations, explique Raymond Massaro, les femmes chaussaient encore du 34! Aujourd'hui, elles font du 39, veulent des basiques –trotteurs, bottes ou escarpins – et sacrifient volontiers la fantaisie au confort.» Bottier depuis trois générations – son grand-père, en Italie, avait enjoint à ses dix enfants de lui emboîter le pas dans l'univers du brodequin – Raymond Massaro, assisté de Bruno Marquini, veille toujours sur le labyrinthe des ateliers, où s'activent une dizaine de personnes sur les formes en bois. En formulant un vœu : que sa petite-fille, qui prend son pied en apprenant les métiers du cuir, peut-être, un jour...

**Chez Lemarié, plumes d'autruches, de marabout, de vautour et boas**



Chez Lemarié, Faubourg-Saint-Denis, changement d'atmosphère. Fondée en 1887, cette enseigne, spécialiste des fleurs et des plumes, reste quasiment la seule de son genre (dans les années quarante, il y avait deux cent soixante-dix-sept maisons à Paris !). Elle se déploie sur trois activités qui emploient vingt-cinq personnes : l'atelier de fleurs (plus de soixante mille camélias par an pour Chanel, cousus ou gaufrés sur les petits réchauds à mèche), l'atelier de couture (les « petites mains » y ont la réputation de faire de la haute voltige sur les tuyautés en tulle, les smocks ou les ruchés) et l'atelier de plumes, bourré jusqu'à la gueule de sacs en papier kraft où sont empilées les « coiffes » d'autruche, de marabout, de vautour ou les boas. Depuis le départ en retraite d'André Lemarié, **Eric Charles-Donatien**, le bouillonnant responsable artistique, bien décidé à remplumer l'affaire, pousse le concept de la plume-fourrure, en osmose avec les créateurs les plus extravagants : **John Galliano**, Roberto Cavalli, Hanae Mori, Vera Wang. Sa prouesse technique ? La robe-marin à plumes de **Jean Paul Gaultier**, portée par **Caroline de Monaco**. Son inquiétude ? L'appauvrissement des stocks ! «Bientôt, on ne trouvera plus les plumes d'argus (un oiseau de Malaisie), ni celles de héron, ni celles de paradisier !» Sa fierté ? Avoir conquis les créateurs américains, comme Ralph Lauren. «Cela ouvre de nouveaux marchés ! »

### **Michel : le repaire de la chapellerie de luxe**



On retrouve le même enthousiasme créatif chez Ludovic Kornetzky, le styliste qui vient d'arriver dans la maison Michel, repaire de la chapellerie de luxe depuis 1936. Formé comme tailleur chez Chanel à dix-huit ans, puis assistant d'André Lemarié pendant dix ans, Ludovic compte bien faire souffler un vent de modernité sur les 150 mètres carrés d'atelier de la rue Sainte-Anne. Douze employés y travaillent sur des machines centenaires qui exigent un doigté rare. Borsalinos en vison rasé pour Hermès, canotiers à ruban de tulle pour Chanel, bonnets en zibeline pour Balmain, calots en cuir tressé pour Scherrer... « Nos créations respirent le travail d'équipe », dit Ludovic. Empilés sur les armoires, trois millemoules en bois de tilleul servent d'archives. « La maison Michel a un vrai code ADN dans les chapeaux ultra-sophistiqués, mais nous ne pouvons plus nous appuyer sur les commandes de haute couture. Finis les budgets illimités ! Alors, pour le prêt-à-porter, on revient au piqué-cousu : le bob, la casquette customisée, taguée ou brodée, pour explorer le créneau du bibi personnalisé. » Avec toujours cette « touch of class » qui fait la différence !

Eliane Georges

[http://www.gala.fr/mode/fashion\\_week/les\\_derniers\\_magiciens\\_du\\_fal\\_bala\\_49739](http://www.gala.fr/mode/fashion_week/les_derniers_magiciens_du_fal_bala_49739)

PRICE

The politics of hurricane recovery  
by Amy Davidson Sorkin

SEPT. 25, 2017

# THE NEW YORKER

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LOOKS BACK IN ANGER

The defeated Presidential candidate talks to **David Remnick** about the mistakes, the hacking, the sexism, and the grave threat that Trump poses to American democracy



### STYLE FOCUS

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MOST DARING DESIGNER

**Alexis Okeowo**

THE LOST ART OF  
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**James Wood** on a  
novel of the immigrant crisis



## FEATHERED GLORY

*In a studio in Paris, an old craft is given new life.*

BY BURKHARD BILGER

There is such a thing as too much beauty. So the stuffed bird on the counter seemed to be saying. It was a Himalayan monal, *Lophophorus impejanus*, Liberace of land fowl. Its head was emerald, its neck amber and gold, its back a phosphorescent violet that flared to a sunburst at the tail. A pouf of feathers jutted from its head like a tiny bouquet. Named for Lady Mary Impey, the wife of the Chief Justice of Bengal in the late seventeenth-hundreds, it had a stout, ungainly body swaddled in bright plumes as if for an audience with the maharaja. It was a turkey that wanted to be a hummingbird.

Eric Charles-Donatien held it up to the light. "It's almost too nice," he said. "Do you have one that is just a little bit broken?" The shopkeeper frowned, then sent her assistant off with a nod. I trailed along, curious to see what she'd find. This was one of the finest taxidermy shops in Paris. Whenever some wild captive dropped dead within a thousand miles—a victim of sunstroke or virus, homesickness or honey-roasted peanuts—chances were that it would soon appear here, miraculously restored. A family of polar bears stood in one corner, a young giraffe in another; a flight of white pigeons hung from the ceiling, and baby owls peered from the shelves. "I could surround myself with these birds," I heard Charles-Donatien say. "They're a reminder that we're all animals."

Charles-Donatien is a plumassier. He designs feathered clothes and accessories for the fashion industry. Or, to put it another way, he takes the keratinous appendages of modern-day dinosaurs and crimps and cuts, glues and sews them to fit the bodies of undernourished mammals. All fashion is a

kind of metamorphosis—a chance to try on a different skin. The great designers are like the capricious gods in Ovid, reaching down to turn this mortal into a spider, that one into a swan, that one into a constellation. A plumassier tries to make people as beautiful as birds.

"Feathers are about seduction," Charles-Donatien told me. "They are meant to attract. And we are happy to know that the male birds are always the most beautiful." Charles-Donatien's parents are from Martinique, but he was born in France. He has an almost posh Parisian accent, but his English, like the Creole that he spoke on the streets as a boy, has kept its island lilt. He turned forty-five last week and frets about his weight, but to a less professional eye he still looks pretty lean. He exercises a few days a week, sometimes suspended from a hammock in an aerial-yoga class, and mitigates the occasional Nutella binge with abstemious greens and grains. His head is shaved, his features round and boyish, with half-moon brows—a merry mask of a face, as of some impish spirit. When I asked Robert Barnowske, a former vice-president of apparel design at Vera Wang, what he first thought when he met Charles-Donatien, he laughed: "Who is this hot guy showing me feathers?"

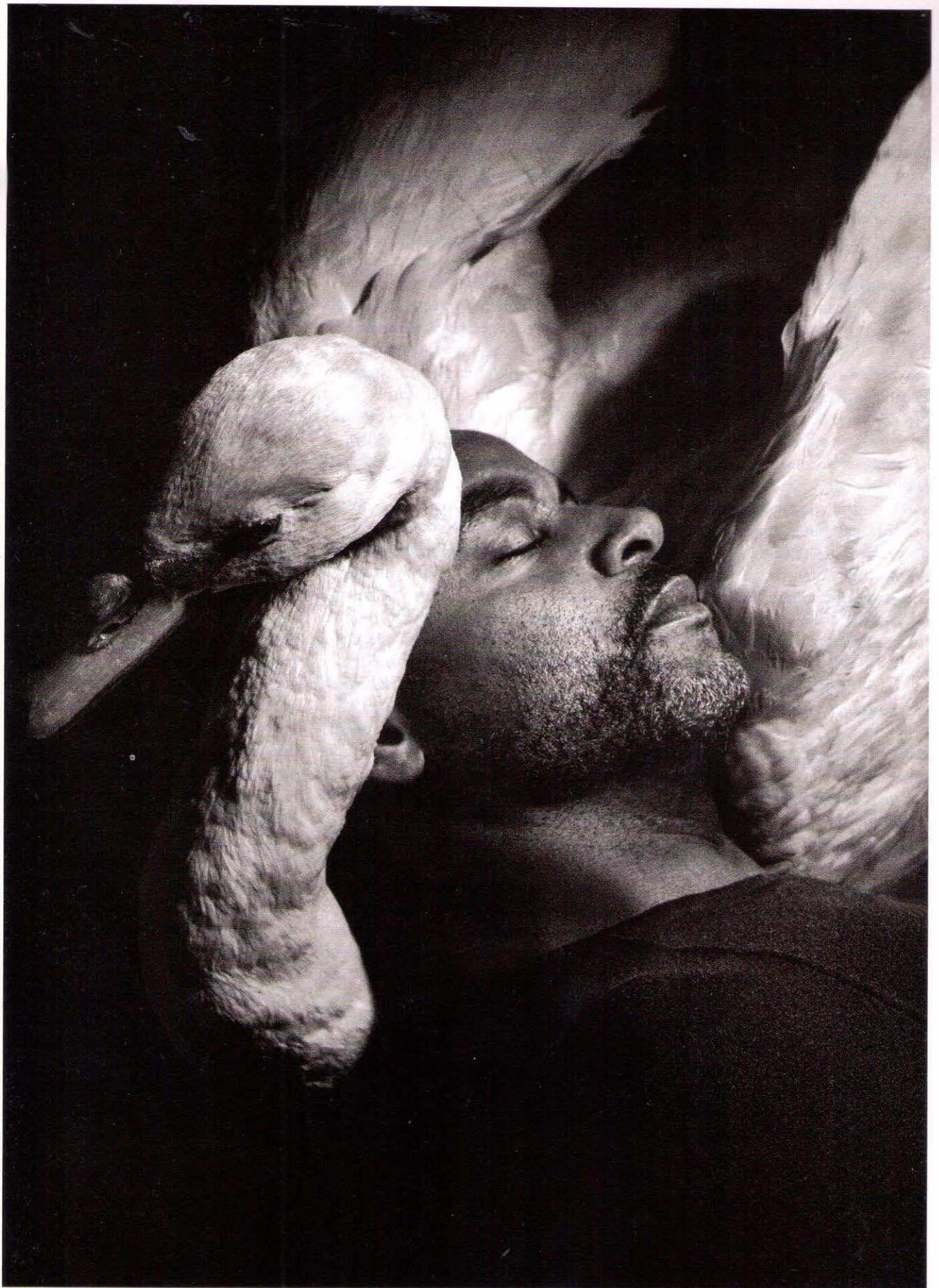
Charles-Donatien had come to the shop that morning, as he often does, to hunt for material. The world is full of birds, but the loveliest ones are off limits to plumassiers, protected by international conventions against the trade in exotics. Even antique feathers can be used only in the occasional, one-of-a-kind piece, and then only if the client agrees never to take it out of the country. All other feathers now come from farmed animals—goose, duck, chicken, turkey, pheasant, and ostrich. They're by-products of the food industry, cut

and dyed to resemble more colorful birds. A plumassier is like a goldsmith who can afford to work only in bronze, or a jeweller who makes do with rhinestones. No dye can match the in-lit glow of a scarlet ibis, from the carotenoid pigments in the shellfish it eats, or the refracted colors of a peacock's tail. So Charles-Donatien haunts the flea markets and taxidermy shops of Paris, eyes peeled for a flash of feathers.

When the assistant and I returned, she had a bird tucked under her arm. We'd found it in one of the cryptlike spaces beneath the building, where misfit animals were kept for parts or repair. There was a stork down there, and a red fox, a wild boar, and a horse's head staring up from the floor. A tiger skeleton skulked along one wall, and, on a table behind some wood ducks and a turtle, we came upon an Indian peacock. It had a musty smell and a melancholy look of neglect. Charles-Donatien turned it around in his hands. The wings were intact, but the tail had lost some feathers, and the belly was missing a patch of down. It was an extravagant oddity—a flamboyant bird of exotic origin, once common in the city's shops but now reduced to a handful of sightings. It was a lot like him.

"It's perfect," he said.

Paris was full of exotic creatures that morning: it was Fashion Week. Outside, on the rain-slicked cobbles near the Palais Royal, models tottered past in vertiginous heels as the locals looked on. It was their version of the monal's mating dance: one group strutting and fanning its tail feathers while the other tried to appear unimpressed. The analogy was imperfect—female monals are the plainer birds, chestnuts and cream, their plumage like avian overalls—but



*"Feathers are about seduction," the plumassier Eric Charles-Donatien says. "The male birds are always the most beautiful."*

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PARI DUKOVIC

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hard to avoid. People have been dressing up as birds since the Stone Age. Feathers are where fashion began.

Earlier that week, I'd visited the ethnological museum at the Quai Branly. Its exhibits were a reminder of just how fainthearted modern designs can seem compared with their predecessors. There were mourning masks from Melanesia with cascading beards of cockerel feathers; headdresses from Brazil and the Marquesas Islands, surmounted by feathered fans and diadems; skulls from Papua New Guinea topped by black plumes from a cassowary—a huge, reclusive bird that can gut a person with a stroke of its talons. In the forests of French Guiana, young initiates were once wrapped in mats of quilted, rainbow-colored feathers that depicted spirit animals. The mats were embedded with hundreds of stinging wasps and biting ants, dipped in a vegetal narcotic. It was the initiate's job to show no pain when the insects woke up.

The most astonishing work came from Mesoamerica, where the Aztecs used feathers like mosaic pieces, to create intricate tableaux of gods and martyrs. Caravans of *pochtecas*, or feather traders, moved through the rain forest as far south as Colombia, exacting feathered tribute from weaker tribes. Hummingbirds, parakeets, macaws, motmots, spoonbills, cotingas, and other species were killed or captured by the thousand, sometimes altering their natural ranges. Some were skinned on-site, but most were trapped or anesthetized with poison arrows and brought to the imperial aviaries in Tenochtitlán. There they were hand-raised on worms and grain and plucked for use in Montezuma's workshops. In Peru, the biologist Thor Hanson writes in his 2011 book, "Feathers," the Inca rubbed their parrots with poison-arrow frog secretions so that their colors would change with the next molt. In Hawaii, more than eighty thousand mamo honeycreepers were used to create King Kamehameha I's golden cloak. The bird is now extinct.

After the conquest, Cortés sent crates of Aztec featherwork to the king of Spain, along with codexes tallying the birds and the down collected. The most beautiful pieces made their way across Europe, en-

thralling Albrecht Dürer and the Holy Roman Emperor, among others. In France, a taste for feathered hats took hold under Louis XIV and quickly grew into a craze. Ostrich feathers were shipped in from Algeria, Tunisia, Egypt, and Madagascar, and dyed black, green, lilac, rose, sky blue, and yellow; heron feathers were brought from Germany and Turkey to adorn the Knights of the Holy Spirit. "The madness for feathers has reached a point of excess one never could have suspected," the journalist Louis-François Métra wrote in the winter of 1775. "Hats that would have seemed ridiculously tall a few months ago no longer suffice." Prompted by Marie Antoinette, who doubled the height of her feathered hat for a ball thrown by the Duchess of Chartres, women were soon wearing hats as high as two and three feet. Arguments broke out at the opera, where viewers could no longer see the stage, and the finest ladies were forced to kneel in their carriages to clear the ceiling, or else stick their heads out the window. "When a woman thus coiffed dances at a ball, she is compelled to continually bend down as she passes beneath the chandeliers," the Count of Vaublanc noted in his diary. "It is the most graceless thing imaginable."

Paris had twenty-five master plumassiers at the end of the seventeenth century. A century later, it had hundreds, making fabrics for Hermès, the Folies-Bergère, and the Moulin Rouge. In London, the feather market went

through nearly a third of a million egrets in 1910 alone. In New York, Hanson writes, a bird-watcher named Frank Chapman counted more than forty species of feathers on women's hats on a single walk, and those were only from native birds. Some ladies had taken to wearing whole birds on their heads by then—an economical choice, given that

feathers were more costly, by weight, than anything but diamonds. Among the treasures that went down with the Titanic were more than forty cases of feathers, worth upward of 2.3 million in today's dollars.

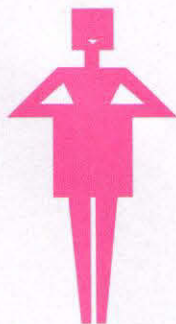
And then, belatedly, people had had enough. The Carolina parakeet and the Cuban macaw joined a lengthening list of extinct species: every ounce of feath-

ers represented six dead birds and many more abandoned chicks. On Cape Cod, *Good Housekeeping* reported, forty thousand terns were killed in a single season by one agent of the hat trade. Such massacres were entirely the fault of women "and their thoughtless, stupid devotion to 'style,'" the conservationist William Hornaday wrote in the *Times*, in 1913. "On their heads is the blood of the slaughtered innocents." (He failed to include hunters, clothing designers, and mill owners—most of them men.) Five years later, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act was passed, prohibiting the hunting and sale of all non-game birds in the United States and Britain. The interstate shipment of migratory birds had already been banned.

When a status symbol turns to stigma, the damage can be hard to undo. The feather trade has long since shifted to sustainable sources—its ethics no worse than the leather industry's, its environmental impact softer than cotton's. Yet the taint of its history, like the blood thrown on fur coats, may never wash completely clean. Of the four hundred and twenty-five feather houses in Paris in 1919, only four remain. Just one, Maison Lemarié, is still devoted to couture. Charles-Donatien was trained there and became the artistic director before starting his own studio, six years ago. He is, by some accounts, the last of the great plumassiers. "I don't know anyone else in Paris who can do what he does," Vera Wang told me.

"When I tell people we do feathers for clothes, they hardly think it's possible," Charles-Donatien said one morning, in his studio. "They think, Oh, that must be for stage shows." He picked up a pair of tweezers and extracted a pink ostrich feather from a small mound on his desk. He dabbed the quill in glue and affixed it to an intricate arrangement on the flap of a satin handbag by Roger Vivier, then paused to vape and assess. A Bach flute concerto played in the background, the notes flitting about in a ghostly flock. "Beauty is never enough," he said. "Meaning is more important. If something catches people's eyes enough to make them move around it, they will build a story around it. And that will not just be about beauty."

The feathers on the table were from an ostrich farm in South Africa, in the



## CHROME

Years he lives alone on Montezuma Road. Delivers newspapers  
during dawn's darkest hours. Marine layer hangs like gunfire  
over the Gulf of Tonkin. Optical illusion: how cleverly the war begins  
in his '93 Mazda MPV. We sail I-15 South as though it's the Thu Bồn River,  
flee Hôi An's cinnamon-forest barricade, viscera-flooded streets.  
American soldiers peeling his house apart, straw by straw.  
His uncles wearing nothing but nametags around their necks, lying  
in a ditch of saw-toothed rocks. Flies spewing from a missing eye.  
We grab doughnuts at a panaderia in North Park. A stereo beneath  
La Virgen croons "Como la Flor" while I probe a glazed exit wound:  
wedding ring he never gave my mother. Too poor for love, too ruined  
for ritual. I dance with him. My feet atop his feet, shadow in his shadow.  
Our song doesn't end even when it does, even when Yolanda pushes a bullet  
through Selená's back. We keep going. We remount his chrome motorboat  
as daylight sings sheets of warm air, revealing another imitation of Heaven.  
My father in the rearview mirror: sky I go blind scouring for the sun.

—Paul Tran

desert of the Great Karoo. Most of the others in the studio came from a local importer: goose from northern Europe; pheasant from South America; chicken, duck, and turkey from Asia. Some would keep their natural color—"It gives a very animal aspect to the finished work," Charles-Donatien told me. The rest would be bleached, dyed, and treated in the studio. Each species has its own particular shape and structure: ostrich feathers are incomparably light and airy; rooster tails have a languid arch. Goose feathers are rounded at the tip; turkey feathers are squared off—you can layer them like marquetry or glue them to a ribbon and gather them into a flower. "You have to respect them for their textures but use them to express what you need," Charles-Donatien said.

As he worked, he kept up a giddy running monologue: about deadlines and designers and his inordinate love of shoes ("They're a tribute to this hidden part of the body that carries you around all the time"); about the difference between featherwork for the stage and for fashion ("They do things that can be seen from five or ten metres; we do things that have to be perfect from five centimetres"); and about a boyfriend, in Holland ("He's a dentist. He doesn't give a fuck about fashion"). At one point, his phone buzzed with a text from his younger sister, who lives in Brussels with her Belgian husband. She had just given birth to a boy. "He looks like hell!" Charles-Donatien said, giggling. "I told her, 'What's wrong with you that you can only have white babies?'"

Like a lot of intensely social people, Charles-Donatien insists that he is, in truth, a bashful soul. "I'm a Caribbean flower!" he told me. "I like to be lonely a little bit." His studio is hidden on a backstreet at the edge of the Marais, tucked behind a Lebanese restaurant and a chocolate store. It's part workshop, part gallery, part laboratory, with displays of featherwork set among modish furniture, all overseen by two stuffed crows, Jekyll and Hyde. Three apprentices were bent over drafting tables in the back. They were piecing together decorative clasps for a set of Louis Vuitton bags, from bins of bright-red, white, yellow, and aquamarine feathers. The scene, for all its fashionable trappings, was a deliberate throwback: an atelier of the old school, devoted to handwork.

"We all know what fashion is today," Charles-Donatien said. "It's a shit ton of money. It's a lot of names. The world has become tough, rough, and rude. That's why you build a place like this, protected as much as you can from the outside. Because even in the hard times we have in fashion now, when everything is based on numbers and marketing and nothing emotional, really, clients still want to dream."

That week, in addition to the bags for Vuitton and Vivier, he was working on a purse for Cartier, jacket ornaments for Margiela, jewelry for Manfred, headpieces for Dior, a feathered alcove for the Hôtel de Crillon, and an exhibit on the subject of time. In the spare moments in between, he planned to attend Vera Wang's induction into the Légion d'Honneur—the French equivalent of a knighthood—and the première of her new collection, on which he'd been working all winter. "Sometimes it's hard to even explain what I do," he said. "We try to be grounded, but sometimes these tornadoes take us with them."

Featherwork is a collaborative art. It belongs to the circle of ancient guilds whose craft gave rise to the fashion houses: tanners, weavers, furriers, embroiderers, and lace-makers. Charles-Donatien has worked with Yves Saint Laurent, Donatella Versace, Alexander McQueen, Calvin Klein, Marc Jacobs, and Jean-Paul Gaultier, among others, and helped shape some of their most iconic clothes. His work ranges from



Feathers embellish a dress from Vera Wang's 2017 fall collection.

accessories and embellishments to feathered dresses for celebrities such as Beyoncé, Nicole Kidman, and Sarah Jessica Parker. Yet his name is unknown to most buyers and his contributions usually go uncredited. He is a *fournisseur*, in the dry French phrase—a supplier—though what he supplies may be the most memorable part of a design. “One of the reasons I’ve succeeded in this business is that I’ve stayed in the background,” he told me. “I’m there but not there.”

Charles-Donatien’s best-known work has been for the Met Ball, the annual fund-raiser hosted by the Metropolitan Museum of Art’s Costume Institute. These are high-tension acts, strung between creativity and compliance, bouts

of waiting and bursts of frantic labor. His first gown for the event, designed by Peter Dundas for Kim Kardashian, in 2015, was a see-through yet somehow virginal mixture of beads, embroidery, and ostrich feathers, some of them cut to look like vulture. His second, for the singer Rita Ora last year, was an even greater challenge. Designed by Vera Wang and inspired in part by Josephine Baker, it was a skimpy, halter-topped affair, with a long, fluttering train. Wang first discussed it with Charles-Donatien in Paris, then sent him the silk-and-organza base from New York. He had one week to cover it in silver feathers.

“She said, ‘You do whatever you want, but it has to be just stunning,’” Charles-

Donatien recalls. The dress needed three kinds of feathers, he decided, each of which had to be painted and arranged in a different way: short goose feathers at the bust, tightly fanned to provide support; long, loosely gathered rooster feathers at the hips and belly; and a riot of ostrich feathers in the train. Those at the top would be brightly gilded, while those below would have a softer finish. There were thousands of feathers to paint, one by one, so he did the work in his courtyard, under an umbrella in the driving rain, while a neighbor complained about the smell to the police and to city hall. “By the end, everything was covered in silver and we all looked like phantoms and maniacs,” he says.

The dress Charles-Donatien sent back to Wang was a combination of her lines and his textures. When he attended the fitting in New York, two days before the ball, he recalls, Ora was as happy as a girl at a prom. “Then the next day I get a phone call. The dress is too extravagant, too sexy. All the holes showing her skin need to be covered.” So he went back to work. He hung the halls of Wang’s office with plastic tarps and painted hundreds of additional feathers, then spent the night in a frenzy, adding them to the dress. By the time he was done, it was ten the next morning. Then came another call: on further reflection, and after another fitting, the dress looked best as it was before.

Seven hours later, the feathers were back in their original spots. Charles-Donatien later heard that Ora and Wang caused a “huge sensation” when they made their entrance at the ball, but he was already headed to the airport. “Back to my Parisian bubble,” he says.

Charles-Donatien is used to stepping in and out of the shadows by now. “I love darkness,” he told me. “It makes people seem on the same level.” His father is black, his mother Indian. He grew up Catholic in a predominantly Muslim neighborhood, and remains one of the few black designers of modest origin in his industry. “Thirty years ago, in the Paris suburbs, a black person saying he wanted to be in fashion—that was the weirdest thing ever. The weirdest,” he told me. “Fashion was a small world for the few, the happy few.”

Late one morning, he took me on a

scooter ride to his old neighborhood, in Asnières-sur-Seine. The weather had broken the night before, and Paris was bathed in cool midwinter sun, every column and cornice etched clear. He had me climb on the back, then rode northwest up the Rue de Clichy, past his current apartment in the less than trendy La Fourche district. ("The fashion people I know, they don't want to come to this neighborhood. They all assume I live in some chic apartment in the Marais. *Ah non!*") We crossed over a ring road and under the Seine, the buildings growing plainer and sootier with each expanding circle, from Beaux-Arts to brutalist. Charles-Donatien's own scooter wasn't working, so he'd rented the fastest-looking machine he could find and sang Prince's "Let's Go Crazy" as he rode. He wove through cars and trucks at speed, cantered over curbs, and gunned down sidewalks, a hornet's cloud of other scooters around him. At one point, I heard him yell, "I don't want to die here! I don't want to die here!" But more in glee than in fear. "This is nothing," he told me, when my shoulder bag whacked a passing car mirror. "Usually, I ride much faster."

He hadn't been back here since high school. And though the neighborhood seemed largely unchanged, revisiting it now, on this fleet, shining machine, was thrilling and strange. We passed a halal butcher and a line of men in prayer caps outside a mosque; we swung by his old elementary school and the apartment where one of his girlfriends used to live. When a driver leaned out to yell at us for buzzing his van, Charles-Donatien turned and shouted a Creole obscenity, then peeled out. "Fifteen minutes in the neighborhood and I'm already talking that way again," he said. "Don't mess with me!"

His parents had no money and few belongings when they arrived in France, in 1971. But they were well educated. His mother, who had taught in an elementary school in Martinique, found work as a secretary, while his father, who had taught in a junior high, studied computer programming. They would later get well-paying jobs in city government and the stock exchange, but in those early years the most they could afford was a two-bedroom apartment, two miles from

the last station on the Métro line. The building was a dingy, concrete high-rise—a bleak remnant of Le Corbusier's dream of a Ville Radieuse, with strip malls and blacktop where the parks were supposed to be. Charles-Donatien stepped off the scooter and gazed up at the façade, then stretched out his arm and counted up the floors—one, two, three. He traced his finger along the balcony to the right, then stopped at a curtainless window with a chipped green frame.

"That was my sister's and my room," he said. "I remember, the hallway was so creepy. The doors to the apartments were recessed, so you never knew if someone was hiding there. It was the perfect place to kill someone." For kicks, he and his friends would nab shopping carts and take turns riding them up and down the hall, running as fast as they could. The place where they didn't go was the ground floor—now a parking garage, but then a shadowy warren of retaining walls, open to the outside, where dope dealers worked. "It was the kingdom of the wind—a maze going in and out," he said.

On weekday mornings, he would step outside with his backpack on, glance behind him for any sudden movements, then sprint all the way to school. He ran to bus stops, judo lessons, friends' houses, the supermarket. He never seemed to stop.

"Every kid thinks he's special," Charles-Donatien told me. "In my specialness, I used to imagine that I was an angel, and that I was put here because I had lost my wings. But one day I would get them back." Later, his dreams of flight took other forms: ice skating, playing the flute, aerial yoga. In his twenties, he even took a job as a baggage handler at Charles de Gaulle airport, just to be close to planes. His mother did her best to encourage these interests—to keep him off the street and at the *centre sportif*. "She did everything she could so we didn't realize where we were living," as he puts it. But she was a pragmatist as well as a meliorist. "Do you have a place to sleep?" she would ask him. "Do you have two parents? Do you go outside naked? No? Then you have no issues. You want to be proud? Do something!"

That something, to her bafflement,

was designing clothes. When her son was four years old, she remembers, he saw their neighbor working at a sewing machine and declared that he would one day do the same. By the age of ten, he was devouring the fashion pages in *Jours de France*, sketching clothes, and critiquing her wardrobe. By fourteen, he had settled on a career in design. His parents reacted about as well as could be expected. "They wanted me to be aware of a certain reality," he told me. "Being black in France in the seventies—my mom told me that she sometimes went to bakeries that would not give her bread, even with me in her arms." Still, his father eventually gave in. He had only one condition: Eric had to be accepted by the top design school in France. To his son, that meant the École Duperré.

The admissions process for Duperré, as for all France's elite schools, was a model of merciless rigor. A few thousand applied every year and were promptly winnowed down, according to their portfolios and grades. (Even fashion designers in France have to be book smart.) The remaining hundreds came to Paris for an entrance exam: a single sheet of paper on which they had to create a design and explain it. "I got so nervous that I covered the whole page with drawings," Charles-Donatien remembers. "I didn't leave any room for the writing." Rather than start over, he simply wrote over his sketches, turning the text into part of the design—a palimpsest. In a class of seventy, he says, he was the only black student admitted.

Charles-Donatien's draftsmanship was well below the norm at Duperré, as was his sense of shape and line. For a design student, this was like being bad at math at M.I.T. "I was not considered good," he told me, as we swung past the school on the scooter. He glanced up at the building—a daunting Romanesque structure, with the words *Liberté, Égalité, and Fraternité* carved above its arched lower windows. The students were on break, clustered out front in windblown scarves and bright plastic boots, smoking cigarettes with an offhand elegance. "We weren't that fashionable," Charles-Donatien said, laughing. "Now they already have Givenchy."

What he had, at that age, was a rare eye for color and texture, and an irrepressibly creative mind. "I can have

a thousand ideas in a second," he told me. "It's like I'm opening a drawer and just picking something out." Most students at Duperré dreamed of being head designers, but Charles-Donatien gravitated toward fabrics and accessories, and he had a knack for working with others. His teachers said that he was more of a politician than an artist, but there was an art to collaboration, too, he found. "A designer says, 'I want a big flower. It has to be spectacular,'" he said. "Some of them mean this"—he circled his thumb and forefinger. "And some mean this"—he threw his arms wide. "That is what I love about working for others. You have to enter their heads and think with them. It gives me more pleasure than working for myself."

He went on to earn a second degree in clothing manufacture, then landed an internship at Hermès, France's oldest and most august fashion house. And he still knew nothing of featherwork. Then he met André Lemarié.

The grandson of Palmyre Coyette, who founded Maison Lemarié in 1880, André had transformed the business from a fancy hat shop into a wide-ranging purveyor of featherwork and embellishments. When Charles-Donatien was introduced to him, by a publicist for an ostrich farm, he recalls, Lemarié asked him to come by with some samples of his work. It was just a courtesy, Charles-Donatien assumed. But he went to a costume shop and bought some bright, tacky feathers of the sort you might use for a Mardi Gras outfit. ("I am blushing right now to think of it," he told me.) He cut and shaped them, mixed them with metal and linen threads, then wove them into a variety of flat, abstracted fabrics. They hardly looked like featherwork at all.

"Have you ever examined the feather of a bird?" Alfred Russel Wallace, the co-founder of evolutionary theory, once wrote. "No man in the world could make such a thing." Feathers are even harder to fake than fur, their structure being vastly more complex and varied. Falcon feathers are stiff, like jet-fighter wings, for stability at high altitudes; owl feathers are soft and barbed, to muffle

their descent on prey; sandgrouse feathers soak up water, so their chicks can sip them in the desert. The range of designs would put any wilderness outfitter to shame. Bald-eagle feathers zip up to keep out moisture; mourning-dove feathers rotate individually to control flight; golden-crowned-kinglet feathers keep the bird's body so insulated that it may be a hundred and forty degrees warmer than the air. "If human hair were similarly diverse," Thor Hanson writes, "a person might combine a neatly trimmed Van Dyke beard with a teased hairdo taller than the Statue of Liberty."

Yet none of this compares to the complexity of bird color. The leaf green of a quetzal's tail, the cerulean blue of a swallow's back, the golden-eyed wings of a great argus are the work of an infinitely patient genetic process—mutation upon mutation, like paint layered on canvas. Some feathers are pigmented. Others have structural color: nanoscopic bubbles, lattices, and granules that scatter and refract light. Still others have both, the ornithologist Richard Prum, a professor at Yale, told me. The green broadbill of Sumatra and Borneo, for instance, has feathers that blend prismatic blue with pigmentous yellow. Add to this the ultraviolet hues that birds can see and we can't, and you can start

to imagine how bedazzling a Himalayan monal truly is—how nearly hallucinatory to the female watching him dance. "All the beauty is in the feathers," Wallace wrote. "I almost think a feather is the masterpiece of nature."

To what purpose? Why bother getting so dressed up? Why would natural selection favor a bird built like an "Eat

Me" sign, with a tail so long that it can barely lift off? The problem so bedeviled Darwin, he once confessed, that the mere sight of a peacock's feathers made him sick. He could only conclude that animals, like people, must have "a taste for the beautiful." Sexual selection isn't only about finding the strongest mate, he wrote in "The Descent of Man." Some species just have a thing for shiny feathers or neon stripes, elaborate nests or melodious voices. Select for them often enough and they breed peacocks and angelfish, bowerbirds and nightingales.

It's not always pretty. Birds, like fashion designers, can let their tastes get away from them: electric-blue scalps, candy-striped beaks, Day-Glo orange Mohawks. "The examples go on and on," Prum writes in his recent book, "The Evolution of Beauty." The club-winged manakin has feathers that whistle prettily when rubbed together, but they're not much good at flying. The penis of the Argentine lake duck can grow to sixteen inches—the biggest in the world relative to its body—but it shrinks to a nub in the winter, when the bird is courting a mate. "Is it any wonder," Prum writes, "that many of the world's most exquisitely beautiful and aesthetically extreme creatures are so rare?"

Biologists have tried their best to make sense of all this—to find some sly advantage in every avian extravagance. Darwin's theory of mate choice made no sense to Wallace. Birds aren't beauty-pageant judges, he insisted. They can't make aesthetic decisions. Beauty, to them, must be a proxy for fitness—an "honest advertisement," as biologists later put it, for a suitor's strength and vigor. The more complicated the mating dance, the more coordinated the dancer. The longer the tail, the brawnier the peacock that can afford to lug it around. The brighter the feathers, the fitter the bird.

Prum doesn't buy it. Whatever the consolations of taste, he says, its practical benefits are often left far behind. "When the object of desire and the desire for it coevolve, you can get a kind of runaway process," he told me. "It can run right off the edge. That is the experience that many of us have when we look at the fashion pages." Prum has a term for this: "aesthetic decadence." Call it haute couture.

Maison Lemarié was a storehouse of such indulgences. When Charles-Donatien joined the business, in 1996, soon after showing his samples to André Lemarié, its workshops were lined from floor to ceiling with drawers and shelves. Instead of books, they held bundles of brown kraft paper stuffed with antique feathers of every sort: egret, tanager, mandarin duck, honeycreeper, jungle fowl, bird of paradise. "It was like going back in time," Robert Barnowske recalls, of his first visit with Vera Wang. "If you needed the perfect shade of

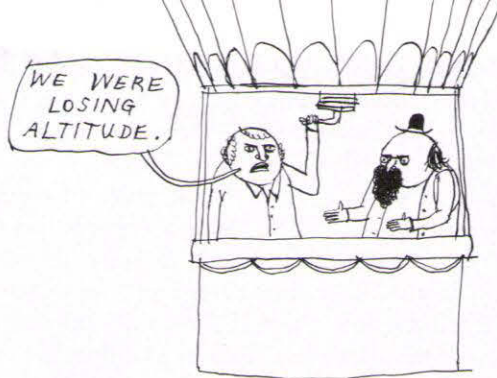


mauve, they'd take down a bag marked '1883' and rip open a corner so you could see a bit of feather. I always wondered what was in some of them—maybe a few dodo feathers."

The Lemarié staff was small, mostly female, and possessed of superlative, unfussy skill. They would huddle shoulder-to-shoulder around long, cluttered tables, sewing pleats, pinning patterns, and threading plumes through netting. They would stitch or glue feathers, one by one, to gauzy substrates of silk, organza, or muslin, until the fabric flexed and flowed like a living thing. "You'd go into one room, and the ladies would be making camellia flowers for Chanel, heating spoons over Bunsen burners, molding each petal by hand," Barnowske says. "Then you'd go down the hall and Eric would be working with Jean-Paul Gaultier, making a dress for Princess Caroline." Compared with the teeming workshops at Hermès, this was a family affair: tight-knit and fiercely loyal, filled with gossip, laughter, coaxing, and chiding. It was like home.

The year Charles-Donatien arrived, André Lemarié was seventy-one—a dapper gentleman "with the face of a country curé and the enthusiasm of a child," as a profile in the *Times* put it. The fashion houses, in those years, still operated at a stately, seasonal pace. Every six months, the city's craftsmen and *fournisseurs* would make their rounds from house to house with sample cases, to show off their latest creations: François Lesage with embroidery, Gérard Lognon with pleats, Raymond Massaro with shoes, and Robert Goossens with jewelry. "It was like church," Charles-Donatien told me. "M. Lemarié and I would go all around the city together. He introduced me to M. Saint Laurent, M. Ferré, M. Lacroix—the last big names in this industry—and we would pass M. Lesage in the waiting room and say, 'Salut!'"

Charles-Donatien spent his early years at the firm mastering traditional feather-craft techniques: how to thin plumes with a blade or a torch; glue them *à plat*, to lie flat in artfully irregular rows, or *en retrousette*, to curve against the cloth for a fuller effect. But as he moved up, gradually, from apprentice to artistic director he began to chafe at the narrowness of his art. "M. Lemarié was old school," he



says. "Feathers had to look like feathers. That was one of my fights with him. I wanted our work to evolve and keep going—to become a proper part of our world. Or we could just wait for M. Saint Laurent to order another ostrich scarf."

In 2000, after much lobbying, Charles-Donatien persuaded Lemarié to let him make a trip to New York. It was an unlikely target. American fashion was in one of its ascetic phases, all monochrome fabrics and severe geometries. Featherwork was the last thing on designers' minds. Featherwork was Zsa Zsa Gabor in a marabou boa, Cher sitting bareback on a horse, singing "Half Breed." On his first trip to the city, Charles-Donatien brought the usual boxes of samples and swatches, stacked on a dolly and cinched tight with a belt. He took the subway to

save money. It was an era when you could still see designers like Carolina Herrera in person, before an army of handlers and corporate go-betweens intervened. Yet he came home without a single order. "That was tough," he says. Though the Americans professed astonishment at the work, they had no idea how to use it—how to insert this exotic material into their already polished designs. "They didn't need us," he says. "So we had to create the need."

The next time he was in New York, he took cabs. Instead of bringing squares of fabric, he studied each designer's lines and tailored ready-made pieces to fit them: a pocket trimmed in overlapping feathers; a sleeve covered in the soft, dense plumes that grow close to a turkey's skin. But most of all he created

new techniques and textures: he roughed up the feathers to look like fur, or stitched them so close to the backing that they felt as smooth as snakeskin; he mixed them with beadwork in collages, or lacquered and bent them like armor plates. "I'd never seen feathers manipulated that way," Barnowske told me. "It was like he was bringing the old tradition into the next century. So I showed them to Vera, who loved them. And then we started ordering quite a lot."

Wang has since become Charles-Donatien's closest and longest-running collaborator. The two share a love of Paris and its tradition of exquisite handwork, and a peculiar insider/outsider status within it. Although Wang grew up on the Upper East Side, she has been travelling to France since she was six years old. She studied ballet and figure skating there as a teen-ager (she just missed making the 1968 Olympic team), spent a year at the Sorbonne in college, and later moved to Paris, where she worked as a European editor for American *Vogue*. Her induction into the Légion d'Honneur, in a ceremony at Les Invalides, where Napoleon is buried, was the ultimate validation of that history. It was also an irresistible cross-marketing opportunity.

The day after the ceremony, Charles-Donatien and I went to see Wang's new collection, at a private showroom in the Marais. The theme was Napoleon and Josephine. With Charles-Donatien's help, Wang had taken the classic elements of Napoleonic style—peacoats with officer's stripes, gauzy gowns with Empire waists, fleurs-de-lis and fur stoles, like a French hussar's—and reimagined them as sexy evening wear. "It's insane!" Marius Carlucci, who was then Wang's director of collections, exclaimed, as a model strode past in a corset of golden feathers. "She's an avatar! A young pope!" Charles-Donatien laughed and shook his head. "It's like an animal transforming into a woman."

When I'd visited Charles-Donatien's studio earlier that week, I'd seen studies for this collection pinned to a board above a drafting table. Some of the feathers were silky to the touch; others were stiff and lustrous. In one sample, the feathers had been gilded to look

like tarnished bronze, then layered like fish scales; in others, they resembled seashells, armadillo plates, blackened fingernails. Charles-Donatien pulled down a sample that he especially fancied, though Wang hadn't used it. It was black fox fur embedded with a glossy ridge of blue-black feathers. "They're from a goose, but no goose has feathers like this," he said. I told him that it looked like the hide of some mythological beast, and he smiled: "*J'adore les chimères!*"

In the finished collection, these ideas played out in unexpected ways. Almost every outfit bore a striking embellishment: a coat of arms, an embroidered badge, a feathered breastplate, tufted sleeves. If you looked closely, you could see patterns in the designs: a heraldic eagle, a pair of rising phoenixes. These were refined, modern designs, yet they had a rude vitality—as if they might peel from the cloth at any moment and take flight. "There are many, many ways to do featherwork," Charles-Donatien said. "The Chinese would do flat embellishments almost like cloisonné. Beautiful, but to me very dead. When I do wings, I like them to look like they came from a bird. They have to be alive."

The pieces in the showroom were as yet one of a kind—final prototypes of Wang's designs. Over the next few weeks, they would be worn more than a hundred times as they travelled from city to city, gathering preorders. "Paris, London, Moscow, Hong Kong—everyone has the same brands now, the same experience," Eka Iukuridze, the owner of Les Suites, an haute-couture boutique in Paris, told me. The Dior store looks the same wherever you go, she said. It's only the clients that change. One season, her shop will be filled with Russians, flush with oil revenue, favoring slim lines and lots of gold. Then oil prices will drop, the yuan will rise, and there will be nothing but Chinese, wanting short skirts and demure necklines. The sexiest dressers tend to be Middle Eastern, Iukuridze says, the most conservative ones French: "The Parisian lady who is very chic—you almost never see that anymore. It's like a game of being the same."

Six years ago, when Charles-Donatien left Lemarié to start his own studio, the firm was moved to a facility out-

side town by its corporate owner, Chanel. It was the end of an era. The new facility is well lit and equipped with every modern convenience, but it's no longer a world of its own. The time of house calls and tea—of craft inspiring design inspiring craft in a gracious, self-reinforcing cycle—is almost gone. "Now the designers call only when they need you," he told me. "Often, when I show them something new, they'll say, 'Oh, I didn't know you could do that!' And I think, Well, of course you didn't, because you don't come to my studio and I don't come to you."

The industry is still capable of magnificent things, Mariza Scotch, a friend and collaborator of Charles-Donatien's who has designed accessories for Ralph Lauren, Salvatore Ferragamo, and Edie Parker, among others, told me. But its efficiency often comes at the expense of more personal ideas. "Lemarié was articulating this very tender, beautiful process with very rare materials," Scotch said. "Now it almost doesn't matter how something smells or feels or changes in different light. What matters is how it will appear in a photograph of a show or a social-media feed. There is this obsession with attracting views—it's like a visual mixtape. But those screen views are in direct conflict with the feather from a rare bird that has been kept for a specific client for the right moment, when it will be revered."

On the last morning of Fashion Week, I went to meet Charles-Donatien at the Place de la Bourse. We were looking for a van. The night before, we were riding home from the studio in a taxi, when his cell phone buzzed. He peered at it for a moment, then let out a low, contented chuckle. The message was from a woman who claimed to have a stock of antique feathers to sell. The details were sparse, as if she were afraid of divulging too much over an insecure line. But she said that she could be found at La Bourse this morning, in a white van next to the flea market.

Charles-Donatien had arrived a few minutes before me, dashingy attired, as always. His black cashmere overcoat had a sweeping cut and the collar was up; his loafers were polished to a brilliant

shine. I started to compliment him on the outfit, but he held up the flat of his hand. "No. No. Do not say anything that is not true." Fashion Week had wrung him out. He'd been up until four in the morning two days earlier, preparing peacock feathers for the Margiela show, missing Wang's celebration party in the process. His eyes were bloodshot, his face still puffy from sleep, but he couldn't bear not to see these feathers.

The owner of the van was a small, gray-haired woman in granny glasses and a green khaki coat. When Charles-Donatien approached her, she gave him a quick once-over, then wrenched open the back doors of her vehicle. The seats inside had been replaced by stacks of wooden crates, plastic bins, and battered drawers, all filled with bundles of yellowed newspaper. Charles-Donatien unwrapped them with practiced hands. "Mainly ostrich," he said. "The black ones are dyed, the brown ones natural. Those old ateliers must have had them forever." He lifted a long, pale-orange plume out of a package. "Bird of paradise. And there are a few egret and heron feathers as well. There just aren't enough for me to make something. That's my dilemma."

I picked up one of the newspapers that he'd unwrapped. It was dated Wednesday, July 31, 1944. "FRANCO-VIETNAMESE TALKS RISK BEING BROKEN OFF," one headline read. Another, from the following year, reported on the sensational trial of Antoinette Huges, who styled herself the Countess of Bernardi. The court had recommended the death sentence for her and her accomplice, a M. Marcadet, for betraying one of their friends to the Gestapo in exchange for a quantity of gold. "Until the end, the Countess of Bernardi maintained the sangfroid and dignity of a woman of the world, victim of appearances," the story noted. The only hint of her anxiety, on the day of her sentencing, "was that her yellow turban was a little more poorly knotted than the day before."

And for just a moment I was back in the *ancien monde* of Paris fashion. When only a few aristocratic families could afford to patronize the top design houses, ordering hundred-thousand-dollar dresses for each ball or state dinner. When they would send their



*Charles-Donatien paints and lacquers goose feathers in his studio.*

children to Chanel for a pair of pants or a summer blouse, the way Parisians now flock to Uniqlo or Zara. When haute couture was a thing made to order in Paris and Paris only, of French fabric, by a few esteemed designers hand-picked by the *Chambre Syndicale*. When the care and money spent on beauty had no practical limits.

It's possible to be both nostalgic for that time and discomfited by it—to believe that haute couture is one of the glories of culture and an emblem of its excesses. Like a bird of paradise preening on a branch, weighed down by its luxurious tail, fashion can never truly justify its costs. Yet it brightens the world. "It's like an irrationally exuber-

ant market bubble," the ornithologist Richard Prum told me. "Its value isn't linked to function. But I find that beautiful and fascinating—I'm overjoyed by it. It means that life is about more than just adaptation. That subjective experience is a force in nature."

Charles-Donatien shot a last, regretful look inside the van. He had no need for these feathers. They were too plain to use as ornaments, too few to make a dress. He turned to the owner and lifted his palms in the air. "I can't take all of them," he said. "But I am tempted. I do love old things." The woman grinned. "Just set aside what you need and make me an offer," she said. There is no such thing as too much beauty. ♦

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## D'art d'art

# AD célèbre les métiers de la décoration au palais d'Iéna



Qu'il travaille le bois, le cuir, le staff, le verre, le papier peint sur mesure, la mosaïque ou la céramique, chaque talent sélectionné par la rédaction du magazine AD présente des panneaux illustrant sa virtuosité et sa créativité.

À travers cette manifestation qui met en avant des métiers peu connus du grand public et fait connaître des entreprises encore trop souvent reléguées dans l'ombre, le magazine veut encourager et faire évoluer le regard porté sur les métiers d'art. Car, ceux-là, en sortant des schémas établis et en redonnant une modernité nouvelle aux techniques traditionnelles, répondent aux esthétiques et aux modes de vie contemporains.

### **Un lieu fédérateur des métiers d'art**

C'est entre les colonnes de la salle hypostyle du Palais d'Iéna que s'inscrira le parcours d'AD Matières d'art. Ce chef-d'œuvre de l'architecture rationaliste moderne datant de 1939 – qui fut à l'origine un musée consacré aux travaux publics –, est, depuis 1959, le siège du Conseil économique, social et environnemental. Avant-gardiste en son temps, ce bâtiment en béton de l'architecte Auguste Perret repose sur un ordre classique. Les colonnes élancées et s'élargissant vers le sommet portent d'un seul jet la toiture. Les oeuvres des participants trouveront place en ce lieu magique et d'exception.

### **Une scénographie monumentale**

Développée sur un principe de matériauthèque géante, la scénographie conçue par Vasken Yéghiayan relève de l'installation artistique. Elle repose sur un ensemble de grands panneaux présentant le travail de chaque talent sélectionné. Conçu à la façon d'un paravent dont les cloisons s'encastrent, chaque module présente le travail d'un artisan, d'un artiste ou d'une entreprise à travers une sélection de ses réalisations. Il est proposé à chaque participant d'accrocher sur ces cimaises – hautes de 3,50 m pour la plus grande et 2,80 m pour la plus basse – des panneaux illustrant son travail, son savoir-faire et sa créativité. S'appuyant sur l'architecture néoclassique et moderniste du Palais d'Iéna, AD Matières d'art permet de s'immerger dans une immense mosaïque de matières.

### **Liste des participants**

AC Matière – Caroline Perrin > *création de décors muraux*

ARCA Ébénisterie > *ébénisterie créative, agencement, prototypage, recherche et développement*

Atelier ALM Déco – Mireille Herbst > *laque, vernis, dorure*

Atelier Camuset > *peinture décorative*

Atelier François Pouenat > *ferronnerie*

Atelier l'Étoile – Stéphanie Lay & Mathias Gaillaguet > *peinture décorative*

Atelier Ludwig & Dominique – Ludwig Vogelgesang > *ébénisterie d'art, restauration meubles xx<sup>e</sup> siècle et fabrication meubles sur mesure*

Atelier Martin Berger > *création de matières*

Atelier Mériguet-Carrère > *peinture décorative, dorure, laque, boiseries, cuirs*

Atelier Pierre Bonnefille > *créations murales*

Atelier Poulailon > *décors peints, trompe-l'œil, papiers dominotés, papiers peints*

Atelier Steaven Richard > *ferronnerie d'art*

Ateliers Bernard Pictet > *verre décoratif*

Ateliers Duchemin > *vitrail, verre décoratif*  
Ateliers Gohard > *dorure traditionnelle et contemporaine, matière, peinture décorative, métallisation, laque, verre*  
Ateliers Lison de Caunes > *marqueterie de paille*  
Ateliers Stuc et Staff > *stuc pierre, stuc marbre, staff, plâtrerie générale*  
Béatrice Serre > *mosaïque d'art*  
Blanc Carrare > *pierre, marbre, lave*  
Claire Pégis > *verre architectural*  
Codimat – Co-Design > *manufactures de sols décoratifs*  
De Crécy Studio – Marie-France de Crécy > *design textile et matières, broderie*  
de Gournay > *papier peint à la main*  
Dunod Mallier > *ferronnerie d'art, métallerie fine*  
Éric Charles-Donatien > *plumasserie, broderie*  
Éva Bellanger > *tissage, broderie, design textile*  
Féau & Cie – Guillaume Féau > *boiserie, ébénisterie, décors de boiserie anciens et contemporains*  
Fort Royal – Atelier Simon Marq > *vitrail*  
Fort Royal – Craman Lagarde > *ébénisterie, marqueterie*  
Fort Royal – Lithias > *taille de pierre, sculpture et marbrerie fine*  
François Mascarello Studio > *œuvres peintes et mobilier*  
Janaína Milheiro > *design textile, plume*  
Kapara > *design textile, tissage de cuir*  
Laurent Chwast > *peinture décorative*  
Lenka Beillevert > *fresque, bas-relief, stuc, plâtre*  
Manuela Paul-Cavallier > *création de reflets de feuilles d'or*  
Manufacture Robert Four > *tapisserie, tapis*  
Maonia > *ébénisterie, marqueterie*  
Perrine Rousseau > *création textile*  
Pinton > *tapisserie, tapis*  
Pouenat Ferronnier > *ferronnerie d'art, éditeur de mobilier*  
Rose Saneuil > *marqueterie d'art*  
Studio MTX > *surfaces, textures, broderies architecturales*  
Veronese > *luminaires, miroirs et mobilier en verre de Murano*  
VLD – Vitrines Lelièvre Driot > *serrurerie décorative, ferronnerie d'art*

## **AD Matières d'Art**

du 23 mars au 1er avril  
de 10 h à 18 h

Palais d'Iéna

Siège du Conseil économique, social et environnemental  
9, place d'Iéna, 75016 Paris

# The New York Times

## The Hands That Sew the Sequins

January 19, 2006

By ELIZABETH HAYT



François Lesage showing a Saint Laurent fabric made by his company.

Ed Alcock for The New York Times

EVERY day for the last three weeks in Montmartre, 45 seamstresses at the House of Lesage, France's oldest embroiderer, have been hunched over wooden frames feverishly stitching sequins, rhinestones and beads onto gossamer cloth. Their needlework is so intricate it seems spun from candied sugar. Defying the official French 35-hour workweek, they are rushing to finish some 50 designs for the spring haute couture shows, which begin on Monday.

The women are among the treasured "petites mains" (tiny hands), artisans who labor in workshops, that have changed little in a century, doing the elaborate handwork that transforms a designer's dress into a sumptuous showpiece of luxury. They make ornamental silk flowers, curling the edges with heated tools that look like lollipops. They fashion peau de soie evening sandals on custom lasts and stitch straw for hats and polish buttons shaped like bows and plate them in gold.

It is in part this handwork that explains why haute couture garments come with astronomical price tags: upward of \$25,000 for a suit and \$150,000 for an evening gown.



© Courtesy of Chanel

A model on the catwalk wearing the results of the many specialized workshops of Paris.

Toil and training alone do not account for the obsession with perfection. A sense of cultural patrimony also drives these artisans. "It's a culture, a philosophy," said François Lesage, 76, the dapper general director of the 125-year-old establishment, which he inherited in 1949 from his father, who bought it from the embroiderer for Charles Worth, the founder of French haute couture.

"It's a way to be dressed outside and inside," Mr. Lesage said. "It corresponds to a certain ethic of rigor and elegance without vulgarity."

Although it is not known how many artisans still work in France's haute couture industry, their numbers are dwindling. Especially diminished are the "fournisseurs," the artisans who work in outside workshops like Lesage, which specialize in a craft like embroidery or ornamental flower making. They supply the fashion houses still selling haute couture clothing - Chanel, Dior, Lacroix and a few others - with the decorative elements and accessories that complete an outfit.

It is handwork that defines haute couture as much as the three fittings required to custom-make a garment for a wealthy client. The dwindling number of regular clients, perhaps no more than a few hundred worldwide, explains why none of the fashion houses make money from couture - that and the expense of the fournisseurs.

None of the ateliers, or workshops, were willing to disclose what they charge the fashion houses, although one, the shoemaker Massaro, where 40 hours are needed for a pair of shoes, said retail customers for its shoes pay a minimum of \$3,000. "But that's for two feet," said Raymond Massaro, 76, the founder's grandson, defending the price.

Since the 1920's, when there were about 10,000 French embroiderers, the population has shrunk to about 200, Mr. Lesage said. In St.-Junien, a small city near Limoges that is the historical site of glove production, there were 120 glove makers in the early 50's. Today only three remain, said Dimitri Soverini, a spokesman for Agnelle, a family-owned couture glove maker. In Paris 60 years ago, 300 people specialized in feather work. Today less than a handful still do.

And yet to view the handworkers as quaint anachronisms would be a mistake, say the defenders of French fashion. Their skills are still central to French design. "Louis XIV's minister of finance Colbert said that fashion could be for France what the gold mines of Peru were to Spain," explained Valerie Steele, the director and chief curator of the Museum of the Fashion Institute of Technology. "Fashion isn't necessarily about concept but about craftsmanship. You need the people to make the best ribbon, the best lace, the best hats. This is essential to keeping French fashion prestigious and creative."

The number of artisans is diminishing for familiar reasons: the market for couture is contracting, crafts workers are dying off, a younger generation is unwilling to carry on family tradition, and cheaper labor is available overseas.

To guarantee the future of at least some artisans, Chanel has bought six of the oldest workshops that no longer have heirs to run them: Lesage; Massaro; Lemarié, a designer of flowers and feathers; Michel, a milliner; Desrues, a button- and costume jewelry maker; and most recently, Goosens, a goldsmith and silversmith. For the last four years Karl Lagerfeld, Chanel's designer, has paid tribute to the ateliers, which he dubbed the Chanel "satellites," by designing small clothing collections that showcase their handiwork. The most recent was shown in New York in December at the Chanel boutique on 57th Street.

Though Chanel subsidiaries, these ateliers can accept work from other houses and other clients. "Chanel bought us to preserve the knowledge and standard of what we do," said Tanguy de Belair, the chief operating officer of Michel. "They have the security of knowing they can get what they want from us, but they don't prevent us from working for others. We set our own prices. Lagerfeld tells us what to do for his show just as [Marc Jacobs](#) does for Louis Vuitton."

But not all designers are sanguine about the new ownership. Since Chanel bought Lesage in 2002, the American designer Ralph Rucci said, its work has at least quadrupled in cost, requiring him to be judicious in employing the venerable embroiderer and to branch out to other suppliers. At least one haute couture designer, Jean Paul Gaultier, has much of his handwork done in India.

On Rue Ste.-Anne, a street near the Palais-Royal once bustling with milliners, there is now only Michel, founded in 1936. The atelier employs 11 workers, who produce 4,000 hats annually. The process involves multiple steps: three seamstresses use a 19th-century sewing machine to stitch together strips of fine straw from Italy. Two hat makers add stiffeners to the straw and felt, blocking them with pins and strings on one of 3,000 wooden head forms. The hats are dried in a large oven to maintain their shape. Six milliners then assemble the brims and the crowns, garnishing them with ribbons, lace and tulle. And all of this starts from a mere sketch by a designer.



© Courtesy of Chanel  
Massaro shods the feet that walk the runway for a minimum of \$3,000 a pair, each pair representing 40 hours of handwork.

Overseeing the production is Nicole Todero, 54, who began in the trade at the urging of her father, a train conductor in Paris. He wanted his daughter, then 16, to work as a seamstress to help support the family of 11 children. In 1986, when the couture business was booming, Michel hired her and trained her in the techniques of haute mode.

Just as Michel is the last of a disappearing breed so, too, is Lemarié. Founded in 1880, the atelier is the sole remaining feather workshop on Rue du Faubourg St.-Denis, a street near the Gare du Nord once lined with similar establishments. The business was passed from generation to generation until André Lemarié (whose resemblance to Alfred Hitchcock has frequently been noted), retired in 2000.

The creative director, **Eric Charles-Donatien**, 33, was plucked from a job sewing men's wear for Hermès. "When I got here, the use of materials was very ladylike," he said. "I mixed the flowers and feathers together. I made the designs more abstract and concentrated on texture." "To make something more edgy I've ruched organza and shredded the edges to make them look like feathers, so you're not really sure what you're looking at."

Last fall, Kate Spade hired Lemarié to create fuchsia and black organza flowers when she introduced a small line of luxury bags and shoes called Collect, costing twice the price - \$600 to \$1,800 - of the regular Kate Spade line. "A lot of times you hear, 'No, this can't be done,' " she said. "But with Lemarié you hear what they can do. When they say, 'You can add this,' the work becomes a collaboration."

Having all of this expertise centralized in Paris allows designers to realize their creative dreams in ways unparalleled anywhere else in the world. For instance, it is common for Michel to send a hat to Lesage for embroidery and then to Lemarié for plumes and petals.

"It's like a laboratory," said Lars Nilsson, the designer for Nina Ricci in Paris, who uses the ateliers to add couture details to his ready-to-wear collection. "It's very Paris and quite unique because you have the connections and you can use two to three skills, like Lesage and Lemarié."

The demand for high fashion ready-to-wear in the last 15 years - made ever more deluxe by couture embellishments - has caused a business shift in many of the ateliers. At Lesage and Lemarié, for instance, 80 percent of the workmanship is done for ready-to-wear and 20 percent for haute couture. At Desrues, founded by Georges Desrues in 1929 in a workshop formerly at the edge of the Marais, the company has swelled from 20 employees in 1984 to 170 today. The original space could no longer accommodate the volume, so the workshop relocated in 1993 to an 86,000-square-foot, glass-and-steel, single-story factory in Plailly, an hour from Paris.

There, in addition to making costume jewelry for Louis Vuitton, Nina Ricci, Lanvin and Swarovski, Desrues produces a million buttons a year for Chanel alone, with only 3,000 used for haute couture.

Despite the volume the production process has not changed much. Artisans carve minutely detailed whimsical shapes like camellias, bows or miniature bottle caps into silicone prototypes, which are then cast into metal buttonmolds. A machine pours alloys into the molds. Once the material hardens, workers use rudimentary tools like tweezers to pry out the buttons. Each is then hand polished and smoothed before being plated in gold or silver.

"It is the same system, step by step for ready-to-wear and couture," said Mr. Lesage, who also supplies embroidery to ready-to-wear designers like Dolce & Gabbana, Celine and Balenciaga. "Couture requires more hours because there is always more embroidery done but for ready-to-wear, you have to be able to make 50 size 38's that are all exactly the same. The exactitude must be replicated by hand. The couture dress is unique and may never even be made to order. It's to attest to the quality of the house and to advertise for the brand. It is a dream of quality with no consideration of cost."

And what would happen to haute couture if the skills of all these specialists die out?

"There would be," Mr. Lagerfeld wrote in an e-mail message, "no haute couture any more."

<http://www.nytimes.com/2006/01/19/fashion/thursdaystyles/19ATELIERS.html>

# Widow

BY TATIANA TERRINE





Earring MOYE & DA PARIS by ERIC CHARLES DONATIEN. Necklace LUV AJ. Necklace LUV AJ. Belt worn as Necklace LUV AJ. Right hand: Long Ring JOANNA LAURA CONSTANTINE. Ring SERGE THORAVAL. Cuff ISHARYA. Left hand: Ring MOYE & DA PARIS by ERIC CHARLES DONATIEN. Rings SERGE THORAVAL. Bracelet LUV AJ. Bracelet LUV AJ. Fur QUENTIN VERON.



Necklace MOYE & DA PARIS by ERIC CHARLES DONATIEN. Right hand: Ring A.D. - L'ARCHITECTURE DU DESIR. Cuff MOYE & DA PARIS by ERIC CHARLES DONATIEN. Left Hand: Cuff JOANNA LAURA CONSTANTINE. Neck: Figures A.D. - L'ARCHITECTURE DU DESIR. Fur QUENTIN VERON.



Earring OUTHOUSE JEWELRY. Necklace OUTHOUSE JEWELRY. Ring AD-LARCHECTURE by ERIC CHARLES. DONATIEN. Fur QUENTIN VERON. Cuff SAMANTHA WILLS. Clutch MOYE & DA PARIS by ERIC CHARLES. DONATIEN. Fur QUENTIN VERON. Long Ring JOANNA LAURA CONSTANTINE.



Necklace JOANNA LAURA CONSTANTINE. Necklace with blackstone SAMANTHA WILLS. Ring MOYE & DA PARIS by ERIC CHARLES. DONATIEN. Long Ring JOANNA LAURA CONSTANTINE. Long Ring JOANNA LAURA CONSTANTINE. Fur QUENTIN VERON.



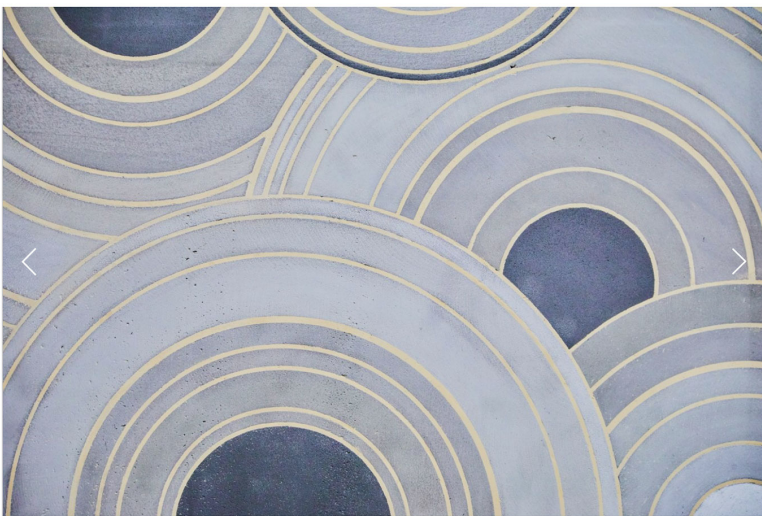
**AD Matières d'Art et la créativité sous toutes ses formes**

22.03.2018  
Palais d'Iéna

#DESIGN

1/13

Depuis toujours, le magazine AD s'est fait une mission de mettre en lumière les artistes et artisans qui font vivre l'artisanat d'art par leur travail et leurs approches novatrices. Les différentes manifestations organisées par le magazine, qu'il s'agisse d'AD Collections ou AD Intérieurs (dont la plus récente édition a littéralement transformé les salons de la Monnaie de Paris), sont des rendez-vous que tous les passionnés de design et d'architecture n'oseraient manquer. Sa nouvelle exposition, "AD Matières d'Art", ne déroge pas à la règle. Elle trouvait ce jeudi soir le parfait écrin en s'installant au cœur du Palais d'Iéna entre les colonnes imaginées en 1939 par l'architecte Auguste Peret. S'y émancipe une scénographie "modulaire" conçue par Vasken Yéghiayan et qui donne à voir le savoir-faire d'une quarantaine d'artistes, artisans et créateurs illustré par des panneaux créatifs de leur confection. Sublimer la matière, c'est le propos de cette exposition où l'on découvre (souvent avec émerveillement) des réalisations qui,



sublimer la matière, c'est le propos de cette exposition où l'on découvre (souvent avec émerveillement) des réalisations qui, même si elles utilisent toutes le support du panneau, dévoilent un éclectisme coloré. On s'amuse par exemple devant les boiseries vivantes de Guillaume Féau (Féau & Cie), on se fascine pour le travail minutieux du plumassier Eric Charles-Donatien ou pour les tapisseries de la Manufacture Robert Four. On retrouve aussi avec plaisir dans la ferronnerie d'art de l'Atelier François Pouenat la patte d'un Rodolphe Parente qui avait déjà sorti son épingle du jeu lors de la dernière édition d'AD Intérieurs. Avec un événement de cette magnitude, rien de plus logique que de croiser, au détour d'un module, les visages familiers de Pierre Marie, Michel Gaubert ou Chantal Thomass, et même du couple Alexandre et Sofia Sanchez de Betak venus avec leur nouvelle addition à la famille. Parce que l'amour pour la décoration ne connaît pas d'âge.

Photos: Valentin Le Cron

invités    ambiance    détails    social



Eric Charles-Donatien

# Stil

8

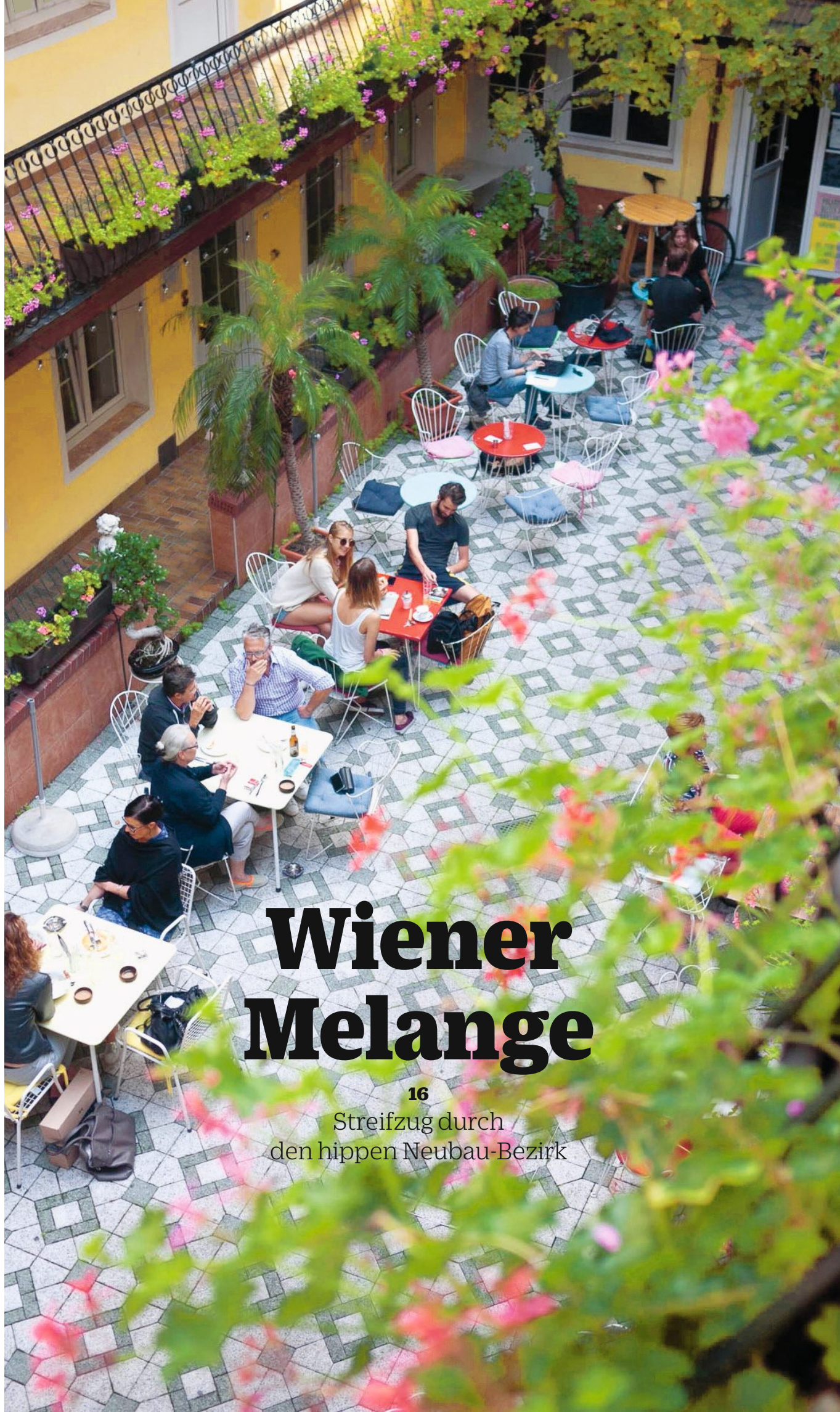
«Homo Faber»: Eine Ausstellung in Venedig holt Kunsthandwerker, die sonst ohne Publikum still vor sich hin arbeiten, aus ihren Ateliers



## Wiener Melange

16

Streifzug durch den hippen Neubau-Bezirk



strukturs von Spielautomaten. «Ich habe kein Interesse daran, bekannt zu werden», sagt Charles-Donatien, «wir sind klein, und ich möchte, dass wir klein bleiben, um die Qualität der zwischenmenschlichen Beziehungen zu bewahren, um Zeit für schöne Projekte zu haben und um gute Kontakte zu pflegen.»

### **Junge Generation finanziell unterstützen**

Genau hier liegt das Problem: Kunsthandwerker, die diskret in ihren Ateliers vor sich hin arbeiten, gehen das Risiko ein, unbekannt und unbemerkt zu bleiben. «Unsere Gesellschaft applaudiert den Falschen», sagt Johann Rupert, südafrikanischer Unternehmer und Präsident des Schweizer Luxusgüterkonzerns Compagnie Financière Richemont, «Fussballspielern, die Millionen verdienen, oder Modedesignern, die lediglich am Ende der Schau auf dem Laufsteg erscheinen. Die, die wirklich gute Sachen machen, sind bestenfalls auf den hintersten Seiten der Zeitungen zu finden.» Um das zu ändern, gründete er im Oktober 2016 die Michelangelo Foundation for Creativity and Craftsmanship, eine gemeinnützige Organisation mit Sitz in Genf, die es sich zum Ziel gesetzt hat, Kreativität und Kunsthandwerk zu erhalten, zu fördern und sicher in die Zukunft zu begleiten.

«Wir leben in einer Zeit massiver Veränderungen», sagt Rupert. «Die Globalisierung, die digitale Revolution, die künstliche Intelligenz eröffnen viele Möglichkeiten. Doch sie drohen auch einzigartige menschliche Fertigkeiten und das Fachwissen einer jahrhundertealten Kultur zu verdrängen.» Die Michelangelo Foundation soll sicherstellen, dass das wertvolle Erbe nicht verloren geht. Und zwar, indem sie Designer und Kunsthandwerker miteinander in Verbindung bringt, um eine Zusammenarbeit aufzubauen. Sprich: Indem sie die Ausbildung der jungen Generation finanziell unterstützt. Indem sie die Arbeit der Kunsthandwerker durch Veröffentlichungen, Netzwerke und Events bekannt macht. Indem sie also genau jene Strategien anwendet, die Künstlernaturen eher fremd sind.

«Es geht darum, die Kunsthandwerker aus ihren Ateliers zu holen, ihr Können gezielter zu promoten und zu kommunizieren», sagt auch der Italiener Franco Cologni, ehemaliger Cartier-Chef, Vorstandsmitglied bei Richemont und Mitbegründer der Michelangelo Foundation. «Wir müssen sie anregen, etwas zeitgeistiger zu werden und den heutigen Anforderungen besser zu entsprechen.»



### Zur Ausstellung

Ausgewählte Kunsthandwerker aus ganz Europa stellen vom 14. bis 30. September in der Fondazione Giorgio Cini auf San Giorgio Maggiore in Venedig ihr Können unter Beweis.

Weitere Informationen:  
[michelangelofoundation.org/](http://michelangelofoundation.org/)  
[homofaber](http://homofaber)

Ein erster Schritt in diese Richtung ist «Homo Faber», die erste grosse Kulturausstellung höchster europäischer Handwerkskunst. Sie wird in der zweiten Septemberhälfte in den prachtvollen Räumen der Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venedig zu sehen sein. Sie vereint eine breite Palette an Disziplinen - von der Goldschmiedekunst bis zu handgefertigten Fahrrädern, von seltenen Handwerkstechniken bis zu den legendärsten Beispielen höchster Verarbeitungsqualität - unter einem Dach.

«Wir haben uns für Venedig entschieden, nicht nur weil es sich hier um eine Hochburg der Kultur und einen Ort von unvergleichlicher Schönheit handelt», erklärt Cologni, sondern auch, weil Venedig von jeher eine europäische Drehscheibe des Austausches und der internationalen Verbindungen sei. «Homo Faber» wird sich zeitlich mit der Architekturbiennale von Venedig überschneiden und stellt ein wichtiges Zusatzangebot für weltweite Trendsetter und Meinungsbildner dar.

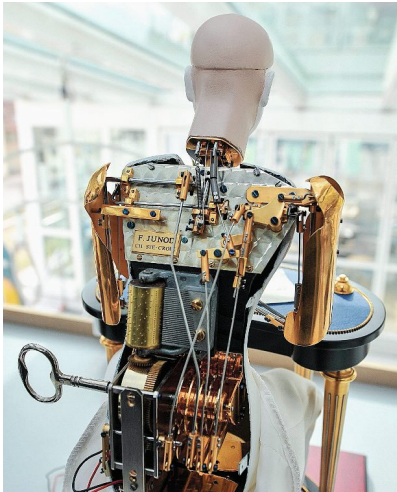
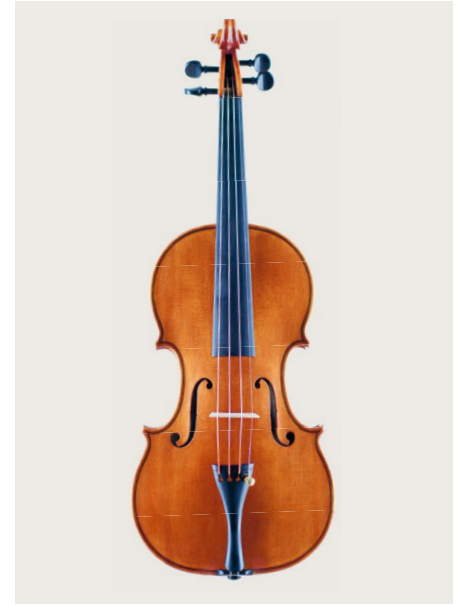
Der Clou der Ausstellung: Viele der Handwerker werden anwesend sein und den Besuchern Gelegenheit bieten, ihre Arbeit zu beobachten. Zum Beispiel Meisterschmied Alessandro Rametta, der in seiner Mailänder Werkstatt La Fucina di Efesto Skulpturen für Künstler wie Andrea Branzi und Jannis Kounellis, aber auch Einrichtungsgegenstände sowie grossformatige Metallstrukturen für Architekturprojekte fertigt. Oder Elke Dannenberg, die wie ihre Mutter und Grossmutter in Meissen für die weltberühmte Porzellanmanufaktur Vasen, Teller und Teekannen mit filigranen Motiven bemalt. Oder François Junod, der in Sainte-Croix im Kanton Waadt nostalgische, zartgliedrige und unglaublich komplexe Automaten herstellt, die tanzen, gehen oder Musik machen können.

### **Fünf bis sechs Geigen oder Bratschen pro Jahr**

Auch die Geigenbauerin Ulrike Dederer aus Zürich hat sich für Venedig ein paar Tage freigenommen. Ihre Werkstatt befindet sich in einem lichtdurchfluteten Holzcontainer, der im Garten ihres Wohnhauses in Oerlikon steht. Fünf bis sechs Geigen, Celli oder Bratschen schafft sie dort pro Jahr, komplett in Handarbeit und nach dem berühmten «metodo classico cremonese». Dederer verarbeitet einheimische Fichte und Ahorn, formt den gewölbten Boden wie eine Skulptur, biegt die Zargen, wie die Seitenteile genannt werden, und schnitzt Geigenhals sowie Schnecke - die Signatur jedes Geigenbauers.

Über mangelnde Aufträge kann sie nicht klagen. Sie sieht auch keine Nachwuchsprobleme: «Die Nachfrage nach Instrumenten ist gross, und es gibt viele junge Leute, die Lust haben, den Beruf zu erlernen.» Trotzdem findet sie sowohl die Michelangelo Foundation als auch die Ausstellung in Venedig wichtig, um ein paar Dinge zu klären. «Der Geigenbau wird in der Öffentlichkeit viel zu technisch und zu analytisch wahrgenommen», glaubt sie. Die Suche nach wissenschaftlichen Erklärungen, etwa für den Mythos Stradivari und den einzigartigen Klang seiner Geigen - es liegt am Holz oder an bestimmten Lacken, die es heute nicht mehr gibt -, lässt fast vergessen, dass Antonio Stradivari ein genialer Handwerker war. Sein Können ist der Schlüssel zum Erfolg seiner Streichinstrumente. Daran hat sich nichts geändert: «Wir haben exzellentes Material», sagt Ulrike Dederer, «man kann auch heute geniale Instrumente bauen.» Sie jedenfalls kann es.

Wie das geht, wird sie in Venedig zeigen. Sie hat eine transportable Hobelbank gekauft, die zusammen mit einem Teil ihrer Werkzeuge, einer halbfertigen Schnecke und dem Holzklotz, aus dem sie entstanden ist, mit ihr an die Lagune reisen werden. Natürlich auch eine fertige Geige, damit Besucher das Instrument auch einmal berühren und erspüren können. «Ich freue mich schon darauf», sagt Ulrike Dederer. «Die Ausstellung wird zeigen, dass bestimmte Dinge nicht von Maschinen gemacht werden, sondern per Hand. Viele Menschen wissen das gar nicht mehr.»



**Oben**  
Ein Musikautomat mit menschlicher Gestalt von François Junod.

**Ganz oben**  
Alessandro Rametta, Meisterschmied in Mailand, arbeitet oft im Auftrag von Künstlern.

**Rechts**  
Elke Dannenberg, Malerin in der über 300-jährigen Staatlichen Porzellan-Manufaktur Meissen.

**Oben rechts**  
Geigenbauerin Ulrike Dederer fertigt Instrumente wie dieses, das auf einem Modell der Gebrüder Amati basiert.



Camille trägt einen schwarzen Hut auf platinblondem Haar, dazu schwarzen Lippenstift, schwarze Klamotten und viel Metall an Handgelenken und Fingern. Sie sitzt an einer Arbeitsplatte vor einem Haufen länglicher pechschwarzer Schnipsel, die zwischen Skizzen, einer Packung übergrosser Wattestäbchen, in Plastic verpackten braunen Federn und anderen Dingen liegen. Stück für Stück greift sie die zungenförmigen Schnipsel mit einer Pinzette, beschmiert deren schmales Ende mit Klebstoff und befestigt sie nebeneinander und leicht überlappend um ein kreisrundes, hauchdünnes, etwa 50-Rappen-Stück-grosses Organza-Stoffteil herum. Die Schnipsel sehen jetzt aus wie Blütenblätter, doch sie stammen nicht von Blumen, sondern von Vögeln. Von Gänsen, deren weisses Gefieder erst gefärbt, dann in Form geschnitten wurde. Zum Schluss wird jedes der zentralen weissen Organza-Teile über eine Metallkapsel gespannt, damit es nicht platt, sondern plastisch wirkt. Wie bei einer Margerite, aber mit schwarzen Federblättern und weissen Stoffköpfchen.

«Es gefällt mir, wenn Federn nicht wie Federn aussehen», sagt Eric Charles-Donatien, in dessen Pariser Atelier Camille beschäftigt ist. Er kreiert langhaarige Pelzkragen aus luftig-leichten Straussenfedern für Giorgio Armani, verleiht einem Roger-Vivier-Laufschuh mit schillernden

lackierten Gänsefedern eine verblüffende Reptil-Optik oder entwirft gefiederte, schneeweisse und mit Ketten verbundene Epauletten für Paco Rabanne.

Der auf Martinique geborene Franzose ist Plumassier, wohl einer der Letzten und Besten seiner Zunft. Plumassiers arbeiten mit Federn. Sie beliefern Couture-Häuser, aber auch Theaterbühnen und zunehmend Innenarchitekten mit ihren duftigen, unglaublich zarten Kreationen. Noch vor einem Jahrhundert existierten über 400 Federschmücker in Paris, jetzt sind es bestenfalls zwei Handvoll, und das ist bereits eine Steigerung, verglichen mit den vier, die es gab, als Eric Charles-Donatien vor gut 20 Jahren im weltweit bekannten Federatelier Maison Lemarié einen Job bekam. «Ich wusste damals nichts von diesem Beruf», sagt er, «dabei hatte ich eine Pariser Modeschule absolviert.»

Kein Wunder, denn wie viele geschulte und erfahrene Kunsthandwerker arbeiten Plumassiers abseits der öffentlichen Wahrnehmung, in Charles-Donatiens Fall in einem unspektakulären, nur wenigen Insidern bekannten Hinterhof-Atelier im 11. Arrondissement. Der Beruf des Plumassiers ist den meisten Menschen ebenso unbekannt wie der des Mosaikbodenlegers, Buchbinders, Textil-Restaurators oder des Kon-



FOTOS: MICHELANGELO FOUNDATION

**Links**

Solche Kreationen aus Gänsefedern verlassen das Atelier von Plumassier Eric Charles-Donatien.

**Rechte Seite**

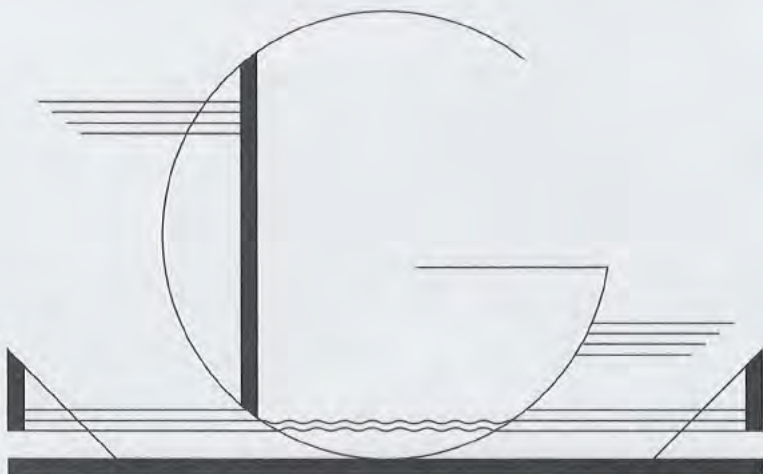
Der französische Kunsthandwerker Charles-Donatien bei der Arbeit.

KUNSTHANDWERK

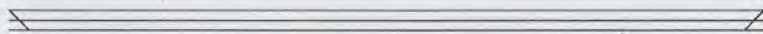
# Bühne für verborgene Talente

Pelzkragen aus Straussenfedern für Armani und Geigen, wie sie einst Antonio Stradivari fertigte – die Genfer Michelangelo Foundation engagiert sich für abseits des Rampenlichts arbeitende Handwerker

Text: Patricia Engelhorn



Growing up with a Francophile mother, I had always half-suspected that Paris's reputation as the world capital of style was her propaganda, coasting on the fumes of Chanel ads and old Audrey Hepburn movies.



Paris's status as the world's fashion capital dates back to the late 17th century when Louis XIV centralized and funded schools devoted to arts and crafts countrywide. Style became a matter of national pride.

Then, in 2006, I moved here myself and realized how wrong I was. Those *gamines ingénues* in ballet flats and perfectly fitted little T-shirt dresses really are riding bicycles all over town. In working-class Belleville, tony Saint-Germain, or the groovy Marais there really are young moms in ponytails, skinny jeans, and Bréton stripe T-shirts, and sleek fiftysome-things in angular bobs, with neat handbags and silk scarves, their creases pressed just so. Parisian style is mythical: The chic "*Parisienne*" is natural and feminine, her heels never too high, nor her skirt too tight, nor her makeup too pronounced except for that little pop of lipstick. But it's also real.

That famous Paris look has inspired hundreds of how-to books and sold thousands of plane tickets. It's also sold a lot of luxury handbags, though it must be said, mostly to people who aren't French. Com-

panies such as Chanel and Yves Saint Laurent have made millions off of the trope of the chic Parisienne. As a fashion journalist living in Paris, I've gotten to see how the aura is created, how those beautiful sparkly baubles and little black dresses come to life. There are men and women who train for years to carve a gemstone for a Place Vendôme jeweler. Others toil in the ateliers of haute couture artisans and work tirelessly to invigorate legendary Parisian fashion houses. Their labor makes the glamour possible. They're inspired by French taste as much as they promote it. But that demanding work is most often done in far less glamorous settings than what most people see on the shop floor. It happens behind firmly closed doors. I was able to open some.



## THE CRAFT BEHIND THE SPARKLE

It's not the Corinthian pilasters or the bronze central column celebrating Napoleon I that give the Place Vendôme its mystique today. It's what shines in the jewelry shop windows ringing the square. That sparkle has lured both lookie-loos and flush buyers since the turn of the 20th century, when jewelry houses such as Boucheron, Chaumet, and Van Cleef & Arpels first set up shop. The pull is even stronger now, as creativity, daring, and whimsy not seen since the 1930s have returned to the high jewelry market. ("High jewelry" is industry-speak



Artisans train for decades to master the skills needed to craft a single piece displayed inside the cases at Van Cleef & Arpels. Opposite: Île Saint Louis attracts locals and visitors with its cafés and unique specialty shops.



*Van Cleef's Mystery Setting is one of the most impressive techniques developed by the jewelry houses on Vendôme. The process is so labor intensive, it might take a combined 600 hours to put together a brooch.*



for those really outstanding, technically complex pieces that often feature especially valuable stones.) With the luxury goods boom in Russia and China, companies better known for clothes, such as Christian Dior, or leather goods, such as Louis Vuitton, have recently opened high jewelry divisions. "There is a reconnection to the worlds of art and fashion that has taken place since the end of the 1990s," says Nicolas Bos, CEO of Van Cleef & Arpels. And so the jewelry houses on the Place Vendôme now strive even harder to outdo each other in cleverness and pizzazz. There's Boucheron's translucent globes of rock crystal and pavé diamonds, and next door at Van Cleef

is a brooch that renders a parrot out of multicolored sapphires and diamonds, suspended on a branch made of opal and chalcedony.

Van Cleef is rare among the Vendôme houses in its desire to communicate to the public how its pieces are made. It has opened a series of immersive tutorials in an 18th-century townhouse on Vendôme called L'École; a small museum displays vintage pieces next door to the flagship boutique; and Van Cleef's high jewelry appears regularly on the international museum circuit. In the same spirit, the jeweler permitted me to poke around one of the ateliers in its network, around the corner from Vendôme. As a condition of my visit, I could not reveal the exact location of the workshop, nor could I name any of the artisans I spoke to, nor could we show them in photographs. "We can't afford to have people working with stones being identified in the street and followed," explained Bos. Fair enough.

All I really wanted to see was how they do a Mystery Setting. Patented by Van Cleef & Arpels in 1933, it's one of the most impressive techniques developed by the Vendôme jewelry houses. It is used for bracelets, necklaces, brooches, or any other piece in which Van Cleef wants an uninterrupted flow of gems with no visible metal. I already knew that to create a Mystery Setting, a gem cutter makes tiny jigsaw cuts along the sides of stones, allowing them to be linked together in a sort of train set on invisible metal rails, with no prongs or frames. I didn't know that the process is so labor intensive—it might take a combined 600 hours to put together a brooch—that the house can only produce a few such pieces a year.



The concept shop Springsioux, bottom left, sells jewelry and clothes designed by Eric Charles-Donatien, top right.

It turns out a Mystery set piece starts like any other high jewelry item: with a gouache drawing, then a pewter dummy. Once the mock-up is approved, while the precious metalwork is carved and its rails soldered, a lapidary goes to work on the gemstones. At this atelier, which houses about 40 employees, a handful of stoncutters work in a small room, set off from the main work space. On the day of my visit, the master cutter slowly chips away at the sides of a ruby of about .25 carats, already emerald cut by his apprentice. His tiny stone is affixed to a glob of waxy-looking lapidary cement on a metal rod. A single wrong move and he'll have to start over with a new stone, which would be an expensive mistake.

What inspires someone to pursue a career carving infinitesimal nicks into gemstones? The master says, "It's not just manual work. Each piece is a discovery, every time. I'm never bored."



### SPECIALTY ARTISANS

Highly-skilled jewelry artisans don't work exclusively for big companies on the Place Vendôme. There is a freelance network of them through-

out town, particularly in the 8th arrondissement. These craftspeople will pick up the overflow of work from a place like Van Cleef. And sometimes they'll work, using the same techniques, but with materials less precious, for young independent designers such as 28-year-old Annelise Michelson. Her toothy metal "Carnivore" earcuffs and rings are featured on the covers of the major French fashion magazines. Though her accessories are not made from rubies or platinum, and one of her pieces might take one twentieth of the time it takes to make a piece of high jewelry, many of the





Jewelry designer Annelise Michelson, left, is known for her bright, punk-style necklaces. Milliner Sandrine Bourg, below, crafts glamorous hats for couture clients such as Christian Dior, Chanel, and Givenchy.

techniques are the same, and there is nothing mechanized or automated in her work.

Michelson is one of many young artisans with haute couture training. She studied at *École de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne*, the pinnacle of education in the world of handmade fashion arts. So did Sandrine Bourg, whom I visit at her atelier downstairs from her lovely shop near the *Place des Vosges* in the Marais. Here she displays custom-made hats of all shapes and sizes, starting at \$650: There are jaunty, tapered felt fedoras; fascinators decorated with dappled grey pigeon feathers; and sweeping wide-brimmed sunhats. Her subterranean workspace, all of about 150 square feet, is crammed with hat blocks—the one part of her craft she contracts out, to the only carver left in Paris. She uses those blocks as frames to hand-mold materials such as wool, felt, sisal, and banana fiber into the tricky and dramatic shapes she's known for.

When Bourg was 18, she went to work for Madame Josette, a legendary Parisian hatmaker, who told her, “It takes nine months to make a child and nine years to make a hat,” Bourg recalls with an easy smile. “I had just arrived, and stood there with my suitcase in my hand and thought, what?! But this profession was calling me. I knew it was what I had to do. At first she had me just watching, saying that you learn more with your eyes than you do with your hands. That idea is very French and old school, but she was right.”

Those high standards, and the craft trades that are ruled by them, were what brought Bourg back to Paris to start her own business after a seven-year stint in London under Philip





Treacy, one of Britain's foremost milliners. "They say Paris is the capital of fashion, and though I think we must be more global in our vision, I had to come back here," she says. "This is where we still have all the artisans that I contact when we need feathers, flowers, embroidery. We're a little family."

If Bourj needs a feather to adorn a hat, she often calls Eric Charles-Donatien. I first met him seven years ago, when he was creative director of the 133-year-old feather and flowerworks Maison Lemarié. I recall visiting him at Lemarié's Haussmannian apartment in the 10th arrondissement. There, Charles-Donatien and

his staff would work around a table, sewing camellias made from satin, or carefully selecting, shaving, trimming, and attaching feathers to clothes, jewelry, and bags. They used sticks to apply glue as boxes of plumes, some over a century old, threatened to rain down upon us all from the shelves above.

Maison Lemarié is one of the few remaining couture ateliers of its kind. With the rise of automated production in the world of ready-to-wear clothing, there are fewer and fewer brands willing to devote money to handcrafted items. In 2002, Chanel purchased eight highly specialized ateliers, including Lemarié, in an attempt to preserve the skills of these artisans.

Charles-Donatien recently left Maison Lemarié to open his own atelier, where he does featherwork for such designers as Roger Vivier, Christian Dior, and Ralph Rucci. "When I'm training an intern, I try to explain the difference between just sticking some glue on any old feather, and finding the right one, with the right texture, so it's 100 percent the highest level they can do," he tells me. He also hand-makes costume jewelry and leather bags under his new brand, Moye & Da.

"No, it's not an assembly line, what we do," says Charles-Donatien. "And yes, it costs money. But to me what's chic now is not something that's simply trendy or expensive. It's about being conscious of the quality of something, and its conditions of production. Chic right here, right now, isn't a price tag," he says. "It's a connection. It's a more human point of view. It doesn't come just from your brain, it comes from your gut."



## PARIS FASHION REINVENTED

The decade between 1947 and 1957 has been called the golden age of haute couture. In Paris, visionary designers such as Christian Dior, Coco Chanel, and Hubert de Givenchy

ushered in a new standard for high fashion that attracted the world's attention. Though the originators of most of the storied houses have passed on, their companies have survived by hiring some of the most exciting young talent in fashion to take over, most visibly in Paris.

One such example is French-Swedish designer Marcel Marongiu, who in 2007 took on the challenge of reinvigorating the brand Guy Laroche. Laroche founded his haute couture house in 1957 and became known for his practical approach to high fashion at a time when Christian Dior's "New Look," with its whaleboning and petticoats, was very much in vogue. Laroche made a mark with fresh minimalism, graphic silhou-



Marcel Marongiu, top center, designs understated, elegant clothes for the Guy Laroche label. His pieces, and those of other haute couture houses, take inspiration from the streets.

ettes, masculine tailoring, and color coordination. “When I was auditioning for the position, I read press clippings and looked at Mr. Laroche’s own sketches, and as I researched, it became really interesting,” recalls Marongiu. He is in his upstairs workspace at Laroche’s flagship boutique on the luxury drag of rue François 1er. “He was making modern, minimal, easy-to-wear clothing—like sweatshirts out of heavy duchesse satin—which was avant-garde at the time. Before him, you had French elegance, but what Laroche did was chic, in the sense that it was contemporary and aware of the times around him.”

Now Marongiu has turned Laroche’s fixation with monochrome dressing into new signatures like bright suits and monochrome separates whose silhouette is more Marlene Dietrich than Jackie O. Other classic Laroche hallmarks, like slits and keyholes, appear frequently, and Marongiu has reintroduced the haute sweatshirt, most recently in silk satin. There’s nothing retro about it.

Most of the *jeunes filles* I see around town are priced out of Guy Laroche’s target market. But Marongiu’s simple clothes, with their body-conscious silhouette—sexy but not sleazy—share DNA with the looks on the street.

“Ever since I was starting out as a designer, I wanted to test myself against the people working in Paris, and show myself I was as good,” says Marongiu. “Paris was and still is the only place where fashion is what it should be: not only commercial nor only avant-garde and crazy. Here you have individual visions, and that’s why I think Paris is so strong.” **A**

ALEXANDRA MARSHALL writes about fashion, food, and travel. Photographer TARA DONNE shot “Maine’s Homegrown Revival” in the November/December 2011 issue of AFAR.

## WHERE TO FIND PARIS CHIC

### Guy Laroche

Actress Marlene Dietrich is the muse for this house’s fall 2013 collection.  
Rue François 1er, Champs-Élysées, 33/(O) 1-40-69-68-00, [guylaroche.com](http://guylaroche.com)

### Le Bon Marché

The classic Paris department store carries edgy jewelry from Annelise Michelson.  
24 Rue de Sèvres, 33/(O) 1-44-39-80-00, [lebonmarche.com](http://lebonmarche.com)

### Moye & Da

Eric Charles-Donatien makes jewelry and leather goods under the Moye & Da label.  
4 Rue Montesquieu, 33/(O) 1-42-60-97-88, [moye-da.com](http://moye-da.com)

### Sandrine Bourg

Beautiful handmade hats are sold at this milliner’s tiny shop in the Marais.  
19 Place Vendôme, 31 Rue des Tournelles, 33/(O) 1-48-87-19-32, [sandrinebourg.com](http://sandrinebourg.com)

### Van Cleef & Arpels

High jewelry has been crafted at Van Cleef’s flagship since 1906.  
22 Place Vendôme, 33/(O) 1-55-04-11-11, [vancleefarpels.com](http://vancleefarpels.com)



## LES LUMIÈRES DE L'ÉCLAIREUR L'ÉCLAIREUR'S SPOTLIGHT

•• *Guillemine Deylder* •• *Jacques Garand*

Parrain de la sélection 2012 des Talents à la Carte, L'Éclaireur prouve, si cela était nécessaire, qu'il n'a jamais aussi bien porté son nom. Depuis l'ouverture en 1980 de leur première boutique, déjà dédiée aux créateurs, Martine et Armand Hadida ont bousculé le monde de la distribution en mélangeant les codes. Détecteurs de talents et directeurs artistiques, le duo revendique une vision décalée et novatrice de commerce et jette les bases du concept store avec une longueur d'avance. Mode, design, verre et orfèvrerie cohabitent en toute intelligence. Capteur de tendances, le couple revendique des partis-pris forts, des sélections inattendues qui offrent une visibilité internationale aux talents qu'ils mettent en scène dans leurs cinq espaces, entre lieux de vie et galeries. Leurs recherches de plus en plus affirmées rendent hommage à la créativité transdisciplinaire. Ces Talents à la Carte en sont la plus belle preuve. As sponsor of the 2012 selection of Talents à la Carte, L'Éclaireur proves, if ever proof were needed, that it has never fit its name—"beacon" in French—so well. Since the 1980 opening of their first store, which was already dedicated to designers, Martine and Armand Hadida have shaken up the world of distribution and mixed the traditional codes. Skilled at detecting talents and working as art directors, the pair advocates for a quirky, innovative vision of commerce, and they laid the foundations for their concept store way ahead of the curve. Fashion, design, glass and gold work intelligently coexist. True trend-spotters, the couple champions having a strong point of view, finding unexpected selections that offer international visibility to the talents they showcase in their five spaces, which are half-gallery, half-living space. Their increasingly confident quest is a tribute to multidisciplinary creativity. These Talents à la Carte are the finest proof of that.



Noli me Tangere/ Touch me not, travail photographique  
Noli me Tangere/ Touch me not, photographic work



## Laurent Segretier

### L'image en mouvement

L'expertise comptable mène à tout. Pour preuve, le parcours de Laurent Segretier. Un stage à Pékin lui ouvre des horizons, l'incite à s'intéresser au monde de l'image et du design. Il en fait son métier. Directeur artistique, photographe, en charge d'une galerie, il se fait remarquer pour son travail personnel. Toujours entre la mode et l'art, un pied à Paris, l'autre à Hong Kong, L'Éclaireur l'invite à faire une première installation - travail vidéo et photos - dans la boutique de la rue de Sévigné. Les deux modèles d'appliques reprennent ses recherches « Fragments » et donnent du volume à l'image. « Pour créer cet écran, je les re-photographie en rajoutant un effet holographique. »

#### Image in motion

Accountancy leads to all kinds of things. Proof of this can be seen in Laurent Segretier's path. An internship in Beijing opened new vistas for him, inciting him to take an interest in the world of images and design. He made that his profession. An art director, photographer, and head of a gallery, he was noticed for his personal work. Between fashion and art, one foot in Paris, the other in Hong Kong, he was asked by L'Éclaireur to create a first installation - video work and photos - in the Rue de Sévigné store. Two wall sconces echo his "Fragments" research and give images volume. "In order to create this screen, I re-photograph them and add a holographic effect."



Collier « Tiger eyes » en or et plumes  
"Tiger eye" necklace in gold and feathers



## Eric Charles-Donatien

### L'homme de plumes

Directeur artistique pendant quinze ans de la maison Lemarié, plumassier parunier, Eric Charles-Donatien a collaboré avec plus d'une maison de Haute Couture. En 2011, il crée Moye & Da, sa propre ligne d'accessoires de mode, et ouvre son atelier où il met en scène son goût des textures et des couleurs. La plume reste son outil fétiche, mais ses réalisations s'accompagnent de broderie ou de peinture à la main, au gré de rencontres avec ses amis artistes ou artisans. Un univers créatif autour de la transformation de la matière qui s'étend au design. Une collection de meubles, annoncée pour l'été 2012, associera plume et métal. Les sculptures, présentées en collaboration avec la Fratrie, traduisent une réflexion commune sur l'environnement.

#### Man of a feather

Art director for fifteen years at the house of Lemarié and a master of feather finery, Eric Charles-Donatien has collaborated with more than one house of haute couture. In 2011, he created Moye & Da, his own line of fashion accessories, and opened his workshop, where he showcases his taste for textures and colors. Feathers remain the object of his obsession, but his designs include embroidery or hand-painted touches, depending on his encounters with artist and artisan friends. His is a creative world that revolves around transforming materials, and includes design. A collection of furniture, announced for summer 2012, will combine feathers and metal. Sculptures, presented in collaboration with La Fratrie, express shared considerations on the environment.

# France's Courtesan Couture: Zahia Dehar

BY [REBECCA BENHAMOU](#) 3/5/13 AT 12:00 AM



Zahia Dehar has peddled her tabloid scandal into a fashion fairy tale, attending the presentation of her fashion line during Paris Haute-Couture Fashion Week, Jan. 2013. CONSTANDECORDE/WIREIMAGE

As the woman at the center of one of the most high-profile sex scandals ever to hit French sports, Zahia Dehar has become the ultimate tabloid sensation. It all started in April 2010, when—at age 17—she was reportedly presented as a “birthday gift” to national football star Franck Ribéry by an alleged pimping network at a Paris VIP nightclub. The scandal broke in the press when Dehar was quizzed by French police investigating the illicit ring. Dehar told the cops that Ribéry and fellow footballer Karim Benzema had paid her for sex even though she was underage (prostitution is legal at age 18 in France). Set to stand trial in June, both men now face a possible three years’ imprisonment and a \$60,000 fine.

But while the allegations continue to tarnish their career and the image of French football, Dehar has capitalized on her notoriety, shifting her saga

away from the crime pages and into the fashion section. This past year she launched her own brand of lingerie with the help of the Hong Kong–based First Mark investment fund, and the line has become a darling of the French fashion industry’s glitterati.

“Since I was a little girl, I’ve had this passion for fashion and for what makes women look beautiful,” Dehar says. “I’m very proud of what I’ve achieved so far ... I’m concentrating on my brand for the time being, but I’ve got so many other dreams, and I’m constantly brimming with ideas.”

Between fashion shows and television appearances, this year is shaping up to be a busy one for Dehar. Last month *Zahia, From Z to A*, a documentary directed by Hugo Lopez, aired on French national television. Giving a peek into Dehar’s pink-colored world, it focuses on the creation of her latest lingerie collection. “Zahia is sort of contemporary myth, which is both sad and beautiful,” Lopez wrote in a letter to French magazine *Le Nouvel Observateur* the day the film aired. “She is a media icon, perhaps the most scrutinized French personality at the moment, the person that people most fantasize about.” A day later, on January 23, Dehar showcased her second couture lingerie line at the Palais de Tokyo during Paris Haute Couture Week. The line received mixed reviews in the press, as did its creator—while some people see Dehar as a modern-day Cinderella, others believe she is an opportunist. Though she rarely gives interviews, Dehar still wishes to defend herself from the negative publicity. “The one thing that I’m truly proud of since the scandal broke is that I’ve made my dream come true,” she says. “I no longer feel oppressed by the media. My brand created jobs in France and gave me the opportunity to work with the best craftsmen.”

On January 31, Dehar was again in the headlines after announcing that her next collection would be made in a French studio founded by former workers for Lejaby, one of France’s best-known lingerie brands, which went into liquidation in December 2010 (it has since been reborn as Maison Lejaby under new ownership). “I made this choice because I wanted to support Lejaby and also because I was looking for the best possible savoir-faire,” Dehar says. “I’m looking forward to having my whole line produced here, because it’s the best quality.” (A smart move, considering that President François Hollande’s government has been exhorting customers to buy “made in France.”)

While her wildest dreams may be coming true, Dehar's life hasn't always been *la vie en rose*. Born in Ghriss, Algeria, in 1992, she emigrated to France with her mother and younger brother when she was 10 years old and didn't speak a word of French. Raised in Champigny-sur-Marne, a commune in the suburbs of Paris, she fell into prostitution when she was 16. "I'm still the same person that I used to be, with the same passions and the same dreams. The only difference is that I've become a media target," she says, declining to talk at length about her past.



*vie en rose*: Dehar's fashion concoctions have attracted fans such as Karl Lagerfeld. ALFRED/SIPA

Soon after the prostitution allegations came to light in 2010, Dehar landed a gig as a lingerie model. The following year, she fronted the Spanish edition of *V* magazine and appeared alongside actor Eric Roberts in the Italian *Vanity Fair*. Dehar has even become a muse to the art scene, a new Kiki de Montparnasse. In May 2011 she starred in a futuristic short film, *Bionic*, staged by director Greg Williams. "She is a sort of extraterrestrial nymph, and that's why I wanted to work with her," Williams has said. She also posed as Eve in a piece named *Zahia in Paradise* for the photographer duo Pierre and Gilles.

By last February she'd become ubiquitous enough to stage an exhibition at Pierre Passebon's gallery, retracing the last two years of her artistic progression. "Zahia has a relationship with art that rejoins a very common tradition," Passebon had stated. "It is the place where emblematic figures like

Lady Hamilton, Marquise Casati, La Castiglione, and of course Gertrude Stein, with her numerous portraits, intermingle.”

“My meeting with Zahia was at first an aesthetic shock,” Passebon added. “Her body is a living sculpture.”



Dehar's style: "feminine and playful," displaying a love of the rococo. DOMINIQUE MAITRE

Now reinventing herself as a lingerie designer, Dehar has become one of Karl Lagerfeld's young protégés. After he shot her debut couture collection last year, he even compared her with Coco Chanel and 18th-century courtesans. “It is a tremendous compliment. I'm so flattered. And I've got so much admiration for Karl. He is my friend, my role model, and my mentor at the same time,” Dehar says.

Her collections—with their rococo avalanches of tulle, lace, and embroidered crystals and beads—feel like a fantasy world. “All the couture designs were inspired from a fairy tale that I wrote once, or from some personal anecdotes and history,” she says. “It could be anything, from a beautiful landscape to a mouthwatering pastry.” Defining her style as “genuinely feminine and playful,” Dehar likes her designs to be both humorous and sophisticated. “I opted for couture because it is the only way to make the most spectacular designs and embrace a richer, creative world while transcending the limits of

fashion trends.” She also prides herself on being a perfectionist, hiring top French craftsmen, from corset designer François Tamarin to feather specialist Eric-Charles Donatien and embroiderer Jean-Pierre Ollier. Her last collection even aroused the interest of photographers Terry Richardson and Ellen von Unwerth.



With Jean

Paul Gaultier during Couture Week. FOC KAN/WIREIMAGE

Despite the help of A-list fans and collaborators, Dehar hasn’t quite conquered the hearts of the French public. Last summer, she shocked the Twitterverse after posting a picture, while on holiday in Corsica, that showed off her bottom in a provocative pose. The French press has even dubbed her *la scandaleuse*—a nickname given to Marie Antoinette, who shared the same taste for extravagant outfits and baroque style. The French never forgave their queen for her over-the-top lifestyle. Will they ever get over Dehar’s controversial past? Only time will tell.

Rebecca Benhamou is a Paris-based freelance journalist. She writes about social affairs, culture, and fashion for the French magazines *L’Express* and *L’Expansion* and for *The Times of Israel*.

<http://www.newsweek.com/frances-courtesan-couture-zahia-dehar-62849>

JUL 9, 2017 @ 01:07 PM

## Inside The Newly Renovated Hôtel de Crillon In Paris

**Christina Liao**, CONTRIBUTOR[FULL BIO](#) ▾

Opinions expressed by Forbes Contributors are their own.



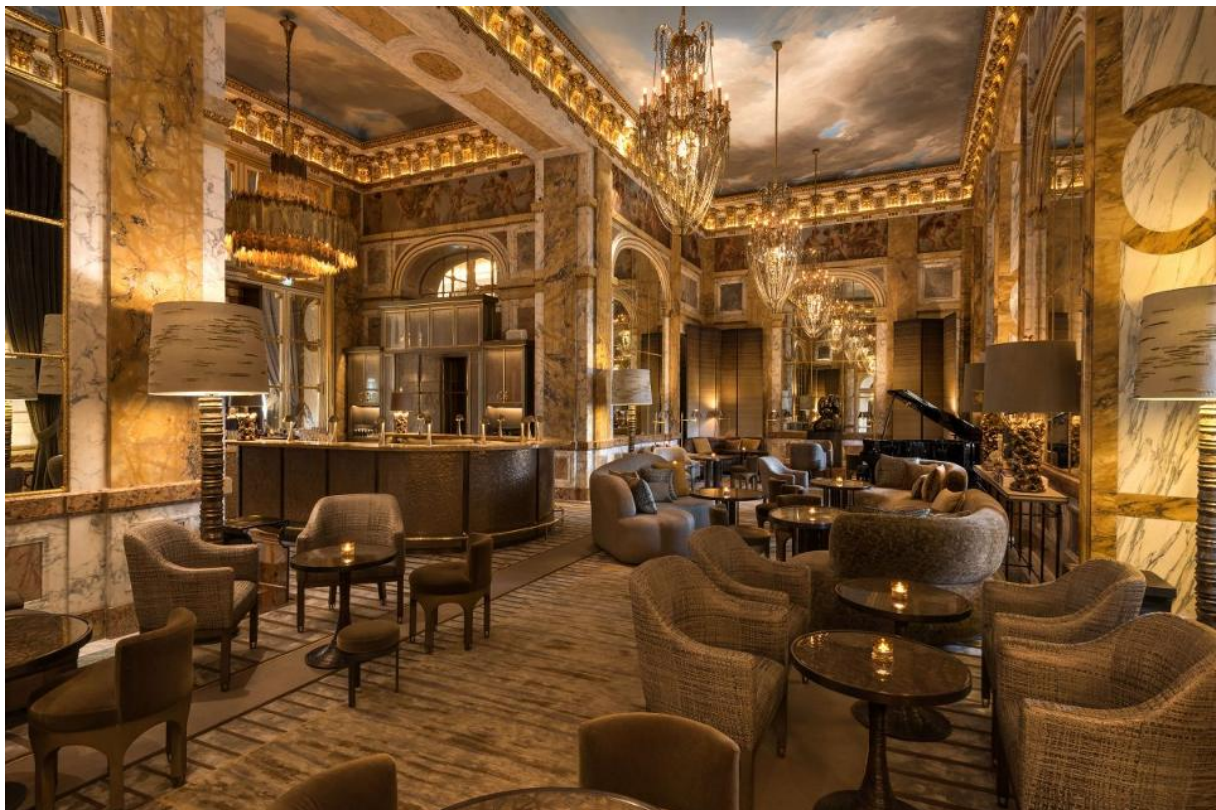
*The Louis Benech–designed Cour d'Honneur - Courtesy Of Rosewood Hotels & Resorts*

Just a few days ago—July 5, to be precise—[Hôtel de Crillon](#) reopened its doors after four years of renovation. Work was originally estimated to only take two years, but given the restrictions around refurbishing listed sites accompanied by the magnitude of the project (including the need to dig two floors underground to accommodate the new spa and pool), things understandably took a little longer, and it was certainly worth the wait.

The storied landmark was commissioned by Louis XV in 1758 and served as private residence until it was transformed into a hotel in 1909. Fast-forward to just over a century later and the property was purchased by Prince Miteb bin Abdullah bin Abdulaziz in 2010, who then shuttered the Crillon in 2013 for its much needed face lift. There was previously a lack of central air conditioning, and with 114 years of people—albeit upper-echelon guests—walking in and out without any sort of large-scale restoration, it was bound to lose its *je ne sais quoi*, if you will, just like any other historical building. In turn, no expense was spared when the ambitious task began, bringing in four Paris-based interior designers (Tristan Auer, Chahan Minassian, Cyril Vergniol and Aline Asmar d’Amman) to work with talented artisans. The

goal? To embrace the Crillon's legacy, enhancing its 18th-century furnishings, while bringing the hotel into the 21st century.

But let's get on to the good stuff. The facade is magnificent in every sense, with its French Neoclassical style, Corinthian colonnade, Coustou sculptures, and Baccarat chandeliers. Its imposing presence in the already marvelous Place de la Concorde commands your attention as you approach. There's even a vintage 1973 Citroën DS parked out front for passersby to awe at. And as you're greeted by handsomely suited men (an 80-piece wardrobe by ANDAM-nominated designer Hugo Matha was specifically commissioned for the staff) at the entrance, you already know your experience is going to be a spectacular one.



*The Les Ambassadeurs bar - Courtesy Of Rosewood Hotels & Resorts*

There are two elements that are noticeably dominant at the Crillon: marble (represented in 40 variations) and gold. With that being said, it thankfully doesn't feel garish. There's no doubt that the now [Rosewood Hotels & Resorts](#)-managed property is opulent, but it's not overly pretentious by any means. Stroll in and to your left is an intimate reception room with low tables and comfortable seats; gone are the days of formal check-ins behind a counter. To the right is Les Ambassadeurs, the former stomping grounds of the hotel's gastronomic restaurant of the same name that has now been transformed to a 60-seat bar. The warm, gilded space is, of course, packed with marble and wrapped around with frescoes and rococo-style detailing. The original roofing, a registered landmark, is hidden beneath the new sky-painted ceiling, where preserved 19th-century chandeliers that have been updated with chain trimmings hang. Here, you'll find the three Cs: cocktails, caviar, and champagne (over 100 options of bubbly are listed). Live piano music floats through the room in the early evenings while late nights call for a DJ.



*The hotel's Jardin d'Hiver - The Les Ambassadeurs bar - Courtesy Of Rosewood Hotels & Resorts*

Make your way through and you'll find Jardin d'Hiver, ideal for afternoon tea and to enjoy the delights of pastry chef Jérôme Chaucesse. Walls decorated with shimmering mica panels complement the aubergine-hued chandelier lampshades and multi-directional sofa of similar color. In this lounge not only is the ceiling adorned with gold leaf and the location of the famed Baccarat crystal elephant that was created for the Paris Universal Exhibiton of 1878, but hidden behind a mirrored door is L'Ecrin. Sitting only 22 to 24 diners, the restaurant is helmed by Michelin-starred chef Christopher Hache, who previously oversaw the brigade at Les Ambassadeurs. During the hotel's closure, he traveled around the world and worked with acclaimed chefs to diversify his flavors, keeping an open mind on how to approach French cuisine for Hôtel de Crillon's new fine-dining establishment.



L'Ecrin is incroyable, no doubt, but there's something to be said about the hotel's more casual eatery Brasserie d'Aumont. Beautifully plated classics can be enjoyed indoors, where there's a very distinctive brasserie vibe along with an inviting oyster bar, or alfresco in the posh courtyard by landscape architect Louis Benech, who redesigned the Water Theater Grove at Versailles. A colorful heirloom tomato salad is accompanied by avocado sorbet and cubes of sesame-crust watermelon that adds just the right amount of natural sweetness to the summery plate. The chicken, perfectly roasted with no hint of dryness, is served with chicken jus and a suprême sauce made of wild celery, cream, and, of course, butter. And the apricot mille-feuille is a great way to end the meal without feeling overly indulgent.

Head toward the back of the property and you'll find a boutique filled with bespoke and limited-edition products by brands such as Delfina Delettrez and Noor Fares. Then there's the soothing Sense spa that opens into a shrouded garden, replete with a 14-meter sky-lit pool composed of gilded fish scale-shaped mosaic tiles and a David Lucas hair salon where a spectacular creation by Eric Charles-Donatien consisting of black and gold feathers hangs above one of the windows. And as much as this oasis is to be adored, the most pleasant surprise is the grooming salon, where men can stop in for a cut or shave or recline in a revamped Aston Martin car seat for a shoeshine. (There's also a members-only cigar lounge should you wish to subscribe to it.)



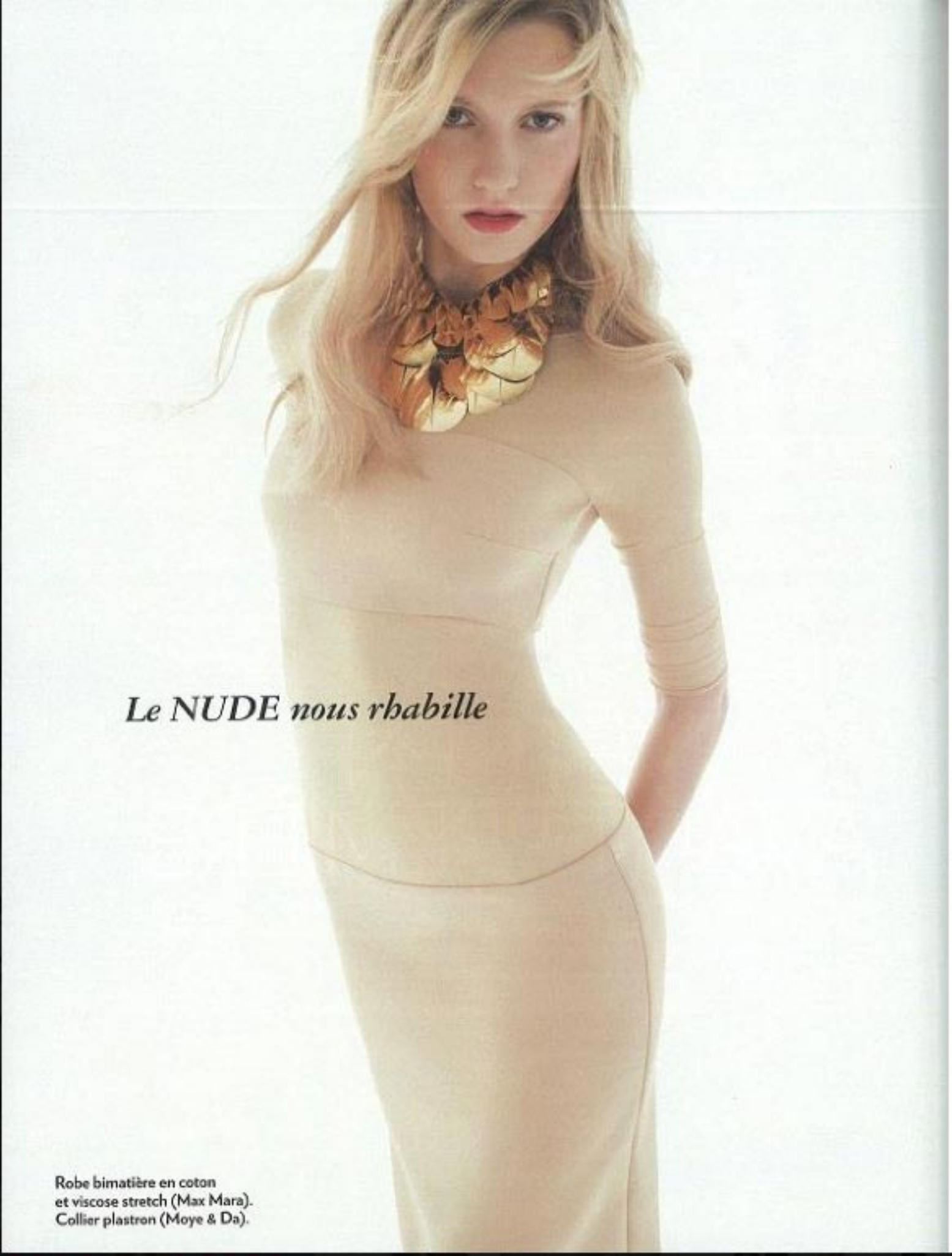
But what is it like to actually stay at the Crillon? The Signature Suites are undoubtedly the ultimate prize. The Bernstein, named after the composer who was once a frequent guest, is the largest, outfitted with a wraparound terrace that boasts incredible vistas of the Eiffel Tower and Grand Palais. Then there's the Marie-Antoinette, decorated in blush and taupe tones, with rose gold faucets and vases of pink roses scattered throughout. You can even book the suite to include the adjacent salon, which is named after the former French Queen and where she once took her piano lessons. (The neighboring Salon des Aigles witnessed the signings of the 1778 French-American treaty recognizing the Declaration of Independence as well as the 1919 covenant of the League of Nations.)

And as exquisite as the aforementioned suites are, one can't talk about the Crillon's accommodations without mentioning the two Grands Appartements by Karl Lagerfeld. The

legendary designer was asked to contribute to the project due to his affinity for 18th-century antiques. (Funnily enough, he had even purchased a model of the Crillon at a Christie's auction several decades ago.) His photographic work is displayed throughout and powder rooms in both feature a red marble fountain from the hotel's original courtyard, which has now been refashioned as a sink. However, the larger of the two has a Lagerfeld-curated library and a bright bathroom with a massive tub carved out of a single block of Carrera marble, weighing in at two tons and with direct views of the Place de la Concorde. To go the extra mile, you can combine these two suites with the adjoining Chouquette room—designed with Lagerfeld's cat in mind, it's the smallest in the hotel, but absolutely the cutest—for a three-bedroom flat. Extravagant suites aside, even the standard amenities throughout all 124 rooms (decreased from 147) are commendable. Beauty fanatics will thoroughly appreciate the bespoke Buly 1803 bath toiletries. Mini bars are stocked with Alain Milliat juices, La Mortuacienne lemonade, and custom-bottled Avantgarde Spirits cocktails (of note is the one marked 10, representative of the hotel's address and aptly named Les Ambassadeurs). Even the Nespresso machine is encased in leather, with an accompanying Cristolfe container holding coffee pods and tea packets. Plush robes with checkered detailing on the cuffs and hood are ridiculously delightful, as are the slippers that will make your feet feel like that of a bunny's. And we can't forget the divine beds, enrobed with fluffy Drouault duvets and pillows that ensure a good night's rest.

Needless to say, this is one of Paris's best hotels. Not just because of its head-to-toe makeover or its historic past, but because everything falls in line from the second you step in to the painstaking moment you must depart. An icon has truly been reborn.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/christinaliao/2017/07/09/inside-the-newly-renovated-hotel-de-crillon-in-paris/#7d3e8e8f7bd>



*Le NUDE nous rhabille*

Robe bimatière en coton  
et viscose stretch (Max Mara).  
Collier plastron (Moye & Da).



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CHRISTIAN LOUBOUTIN,  
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KATE BOSWORTH  
EN PRADA.



CHANEL JOAILLERIE,  
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ROGÉE VIVIEN,  
PRIX SUR DEMANDE

DÉFILÉ  
MICHAEL  
KORS.



# oiseaux de nuit MONTRUC EN PLUMES

*Zizi Jeanmaire serait fière de ces BEAUTÉS contemporaines qui savent arpenter le tapis rouge avec PANACHE.*  
RÉALISATION Julie LEVY



DÉFILÉ  
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KOTUR, 380 €.



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BIEL EN  
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795 €.

PHOTOS: ANDREW HARRIS / AGENCE CITY IMAGES / ON (COURTESY BETTY ANJEL, MARIO FALLER, SP)



Blogosfera fashion in fibrillazione: Cate Blanchett è stata avvistata nell'aeroporto di Hong Kong con delle nuove Roger Vivier. Nuove in tutti i sensi del termine: la maison francese ha appena lanciato Sneaky Viv', la sua prima collezione di sneakers. «Mi piace giocare con le parole. Nelle nostre collezioni c'è sempre un pizzico di humor... Trovo che Sneaky Viv' suoni bene, è divertente e chic», commenta Bruno Frisoni, direttore creativo e autore del nome. L'idea di realizzare una calzatura casual maturava da tempo: «È il momento giusto in termini di strategia, ma soprattutto per accompagnare lo spirito dei tempi». Frisoni ricorda bene quando le scarpe da ginnastica erano tutto fuorché cool. «Quando ho cominciato a lavorare nella moda, solo le americane le portavano, con la pelliccia, per andare a fare shopping, era abbastanza tacky», ride. «Poi alcuni marchi italiani le hanno introdotte con uno spirito d'avanguardia, suggerendo un atteggiamento di provocazione, come indossare i jeans per la prima all'Opéra. Oggi invece tutte le donne hanno un paio di sneakers, e non le portano per andare a far la spesa!». Per Frisoni creare una nuova silhouette più dinamica utilizzando i codici della maison, per giovani donne «nate con le sneakers», è stato uno step naturale: «Il marchio è sempre stato innovatore, questa collezione corrisponde a una clientela giovane e connessa. Per me è un po' come portare una scarpa maschile con un vestito estremamente femminile: spezza il look troppo sofisticato rendendolo contemporaneo e dinamico». Per questa

In basso e in senso orario. Modelli della linea Sneaky Viv'. Bozzetto di Bruno Frisoni, direttore creativo di Roger Vivier, realizzato per "Vogue Italia". La Sneaky Viv' con maxi ruche bianca. Foto courtesy Roger Vivier.

Una sneaker minimalista, arricchita da dettagli preziosi, come la fibbia di cristalli o una maxi ruche in pelle. Debutta Sneaky Viv', prima scarpa gym firmata Roger Vivier

# Funky Couture

by Maria Grazia Meda

collezione aveva in mente una forma essenziale, arricchita da dettagli couture. «Volevo una sneaker minimalista, ispirata a quelle degli skateboarders, semplice ma con un elemento forte, la fibbia di cristalli, molto Roger Vivier. E ho pensato a una variante con la zip di lato. Mi piaceva il concetto di slip in, il gesto di infilarle senza doverle allacciare». Come leggere questa nuova assenza di tacco? Le donne vogliono più libertà di movimento o è una reazione ai mercati, l'altezza del tacco coincide con le fluttuazioni del Dow Jones? Frisoni ride: «No, è solo una questione di moda. Lo stile non cambia, ma le mode sì; e vanno da un eccesso all'altro, dalla scarpa piatta al tacco più vertiginoso».



## BIJOUX A VOIR

# Dior, Cartier, Chaumet... 3 expositions haute joaillerie express à ne pas manquer en juillet

En juillet, alors que la Fashion Week haute couture bat son plein, les toutes nouvelles collections haute joaillerie sont présentées à une poignée de happy few, avant d'être castées par les collectionneurs les plus avisés. Chose ultra rare, pour la première fois, certaines maisons ouvrent leurs portes au public afin d'y dévoiler les coulisses et secrets de leur haute joaillerie. De Dior au Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris à Cartier dans son mythique écrin du 13 rue de la paix, en passant par Chaumet Place Vendôme... Pleins feux sur 3 expos événement à ne (surtout) pas manquer ce mois-ci.

Par Alexandre Marain le 03 Juillet 2018


### **L** L'exposition Cartier au 13 rue de la Paix



Du 15 au 21 juillet prochain, **Cartier** métamorphose sa boutique du 13 rue de la Paix en lieu d'exposition éphémère. En plus d'y dévoiler tout le savoir-faire de la maison, c'est une rare sélection de pièces haute joaillerie jamais présentées au public, ainsi que quelques modèles de la toute nouvelle collection "Coloratura" qui seront à admirer, au fil de trois grandes thématiques - faune et flore, influences du monde et pierre de couleurs -, mais aussi de différents ateliers sur le savoir-faire signature de la maison. Le plus ? Pour les plus avertis, des conférences seront organisées en toute intimité par plusieurs personnalités et experts de la maison. A voir notamment : **Loïc Prigent**, qui s'exprimera sur les coulisses du savoir-faire de la maison, l'actrice **Golshifteh Farahani**, qui débattera sur les influences du monde, l'architecte **Laura Gonzalez**, qui prendra la parole sur la faune et la flore ou encore le plumassier **Eric Charles-Donatien**, qui traitera des métiers d'art en général.

*L'exposition Cartier, du 15 au 21 juillet prochain, 13 Rue de la Paix, 75002 Paris*

<https://www.vogue.fr/joaillerie/a-voir/story/3-expositions-bijoux-haute-joaillerie-a-ne-pas-manquer-en-juillet-chaumet-dior-cartier/2925#lexposition-chaumet-place-vendome-3>



ELLE: Veste sans manches empilée,  
jupon poussoir assortie et compensées  
à talon, PRADA. Pointe-d'acier en cuir  
marini RI RICHARDY PONSUM.  
Serré-tête orné de plumes, MOYE DA.  
Bracelet en diamants, WASHULL.

—/ HER: Bejeweled sleeveless jacket,  
matching wrapover skirt and platform  
shoes by PRADA. Blow out her hair  
job by B. URBERRY PONSUM.  
Feathered hairband by MOYE DA.  
Diamond bracelet by WASHULL.



## Auf geht's nach Paris!

16. März 2014 / by copicos /

Endlich, endlich, endlich. Endlich liegt Frühling in der Luft, die Flirt-Laune steigt genauso wie das Reise-Fieber. Wie könnten wir diese drei schönen Gefühle besser kombinieren als mit einem Ausflug nach Paris, die Stadt der Liebe?

Okay, vielleicht ist so ein Spontan-Trip nicht für alle machbar, aber man wird ja wohl noch träumen dürfen, oder? Und genau dabei hilft uns jetzt ein neuer Reiseführer. Keine Angst, mit Reiseführer ist in diesem Fall kein langweiliger Schmöker mit unpersönlichen Sightseeing-Listen gemeint, im Gegenteil: Das e-Magazin **FALKE Footprints** bringt dir europäische Metropolen in einem spannenden Mix aus interessanten Menschen, versteckten Orten und Geheimtipps näher. London, Berlin und Zürich waren schon Thema, in der aktuellen Ausgabe dreht sich alles um **Paris**.



Zu den Menschen, die dir ihre Stadt aus ihrem ganz eigenen Blickwinkel vorstellen, gehört Eric Charles-Donatien. Er ist der letzte Plumassier, auf Deutsch Federmacher, seiner Zunft und dementsprechend gefragt in der Welt der Pariser Haute Couture. Wir lernen also nicht nur einen angesagten Paris-Insider kennen, sondern bekommen gleichzeitig noch einen Einblick in die Fashion-Welt – was will frau mehr?!

Das Beste daran: FALKE Footprints gibt's nicht nur als Webversion, sondern auch als App für iPads und Android-Tablets. Falls ihr also doch spontan den Koffer packt und in Richtung Eiffelturm fliegt, könnt ihr gemütlich über die Avenue des Champs-Élysées schlendern, euch für einen Café au lait in einem gemütlichen Bistro niederlassen und ganz nebenbei in eurem e-Mag schmökern. Worauf also noch warten? Paris, wir kommen!

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<http://blog.tnt-glitz.tv/2014/03/mit-dem-e-magazin-falke-footprints-paris-erkunden/>

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Portrait

# Le dernier créateur de plumes à Paris

30 septembre 2019 • par Maryanne MAÏNA

Éric Charles-Donatien travaille dans l'univers de la haute couture en tant que plumassier. Il est le dernier à exercer cette profession en France. Forbes Afrique l'a rencontré.



© EWANÉ NJA KW

J'ai toujours été fasciné par tout ce qui peut voler. J'aime les plumes et la créativité avec laquelle je peux mélanger des morceaux pour créer de la magnificence. Je suis un plumassier, un créateur de plumes. Je travaille avec des plumes pour créer des objets d'art pour la mode et la décoration d'intérieur.» C'est ainsi que Éric Charles-Donatien décrit son métier, qui est avant tout une

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Né en France, à Paris, de parents venus de Martinique et d'Inde, il conçoit des vêtements et des accessoires à plumes pour l'industrie de la mode. « Le métier des plumes existe depuis de nombreuses années. Les plumes proviennent d'une source naturelle, les oiseaux. Elles représentent la hauteur, l'honneur, la sophistication, le statut, la royauté et l'élégance, s'enthousiasme le plumassier. Il y a longtemps, les chefs, les rois et les reines utilisaient des plumes ou portaient la couronne. Aujourd'hui, les plumes sont utilisées dans la mode, la décoration d'intérieur ou l'art.»

## DES CLIENTS PRESTIGIEUX



Les antécédents d'Éric Charles-Donatien sont la

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Accepter



*Éric Charles-Donatien exerce son art sur des supports très divers. Plus qu'un artisan, c'est un véritable artiste designer, dont les incroyables créations sont plébiscitées par des stars de toute la planète.*

Lemarié, star de l'univers des plumes qui a créé la Maison Lemarié. « André Lemarié m'a formé il y a plus de vingt ans. Il m'a guidé et m'a montré le chemin à suivre pour développer mon art. Il m'a fait visiter d'autres maisons telles que Lacroix, Givenchy et bien d'autres endroits. Quand Chanel a racheté la Maison Lemarié, j'ai quitté l'entreprise pour me consacrer à la mode, à l'art et à la décoration d'intérieur», détaille-t-il.

En 2010, il crée sa société, Moye & Da, un laboratoire créatif de la vie

réelle où il déploie sa magie en utilisant ses mains et les plumes. Il travaille avec de nombreuses personnalités et des marques prestigieuses telles que Dior, Vera Wang sur ses collections de mariage et ses robes de gala, Thierry Mugler, John Galliano, Roger Vivier, Cartier, Armani, JeanPaul Gaultier, Peter Dundas, Roberto Cavalli, Chanel, Yves Saint Laurent, Alexander McQueen, Dolce & Gabbana, Givenchy ou encore Montblanc. Et parmi les célébrités qui ont porté des robes avec des motifs de plumes qu'il a créés, on compte...



© EWANÉ NJA KWA

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# Luxury Feather Maker for Stars

Business Daily (Kenya) 21 juin 2019 Maryanne Maina

Paris, being the home of luxury, always has interesting high-end careers. It is an industry filled with various professions from seamstresses, concierge companies, luxury AI companies, and unending, ever growing luxury consumers.

Walking around in the city, I came across Eric Charles-donation, an expert in the universe of haute couture (high fashion created by the use of hands, creating exclusive pieces such as Chanel, Ralph & Russo, Dior and other houses).

His haute couture universe has wings, he is the last plumassier (feather designer) in Paris, France.

"I was always fascinated by anything that can fly. I love

feathers and how creatively I can mix pieces to create magic, " explained Charles - Donation.

Paris-born Charles-donation designs feathered clothes and accessories for the fashion industry.

"The craft of feathers has been there for several years. Feathers are from a natural source, birds. Feathers represent height, honor, sophistication, status, royalty, and elegance," he explains. "Several years ago, chiefs, kings and even queens used

Feathers as fly whisks or wore them on their crowns. Today, feathers are worn for fashion, used in interior design or as art."

He studied at the Ecole Duperré and the Ecole de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne (an institution that is part of the Chamber of haute couture that works with seamstresses, fashion houses and designers). Charles-donation learnt his craft under the guidance of Monsieur André Lemarié who was a star in the universe of feathers. He created Maison Lemarié.

"Monsieur Lemarié trained me more than 20 years ago. He guided me and showed me the path to nurturing my craft. He took me to other maisons such as Monsieur Lacroix, Givenchy and many other places. When Chanel bought the family business of Maison Lemarié, I left the maison to work for myself with fashion, art and interior design," he said.



Designer Eric Charles-donation with some of his custom feather designs. (Top) A model in a Charles-donation's creation.

In 2010, his company MOYE & DA was born, a real-life creative laboratory where he creates his magic using his hands the feathers.

He has worked with design houses such as Dior, Vera Wang on her wedding collections and Met Gala gowns, Thierry Mugler, Alexander McQueen, Roberto Cavalli,

Chanel, Montblanc and Givenchy, to name a few.

Celebrities who have worn gowns with feather designs he has created include; Kim Kar-



dashian, Rita Ora, Beyonce, Sarah Jessica Parker, Nicole Kidman. one of his art pieces is a permanent feature at Hotel Crillon in Paris, France. He created a feather alcove for the hair salon in the hotel.

He sources feathers from several regions inclusive of Karoo in South Africa, Asia, South America and while walking around the flea markets and taxidermy stores in Paris.

"Feathers are different from fur. No skin or killing is required. I work with feathers from chickens ducks, geese,



**HAUTE COUTURE**

turkeys, peacocks and ostriches. All my feathers are sourced from suppliers who strictly follow the regulations of The Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)," Charles-donation expounded.

"My purpose is to show people that they can live with beautiful pieces from nature. Nature gave us the idea of beauty. My work is to use this beauty and

turn it into objects of art. Every piece represents beauty from nature that we can all appreciate just like sunsets and sunrises."

Ajouter un commentaire

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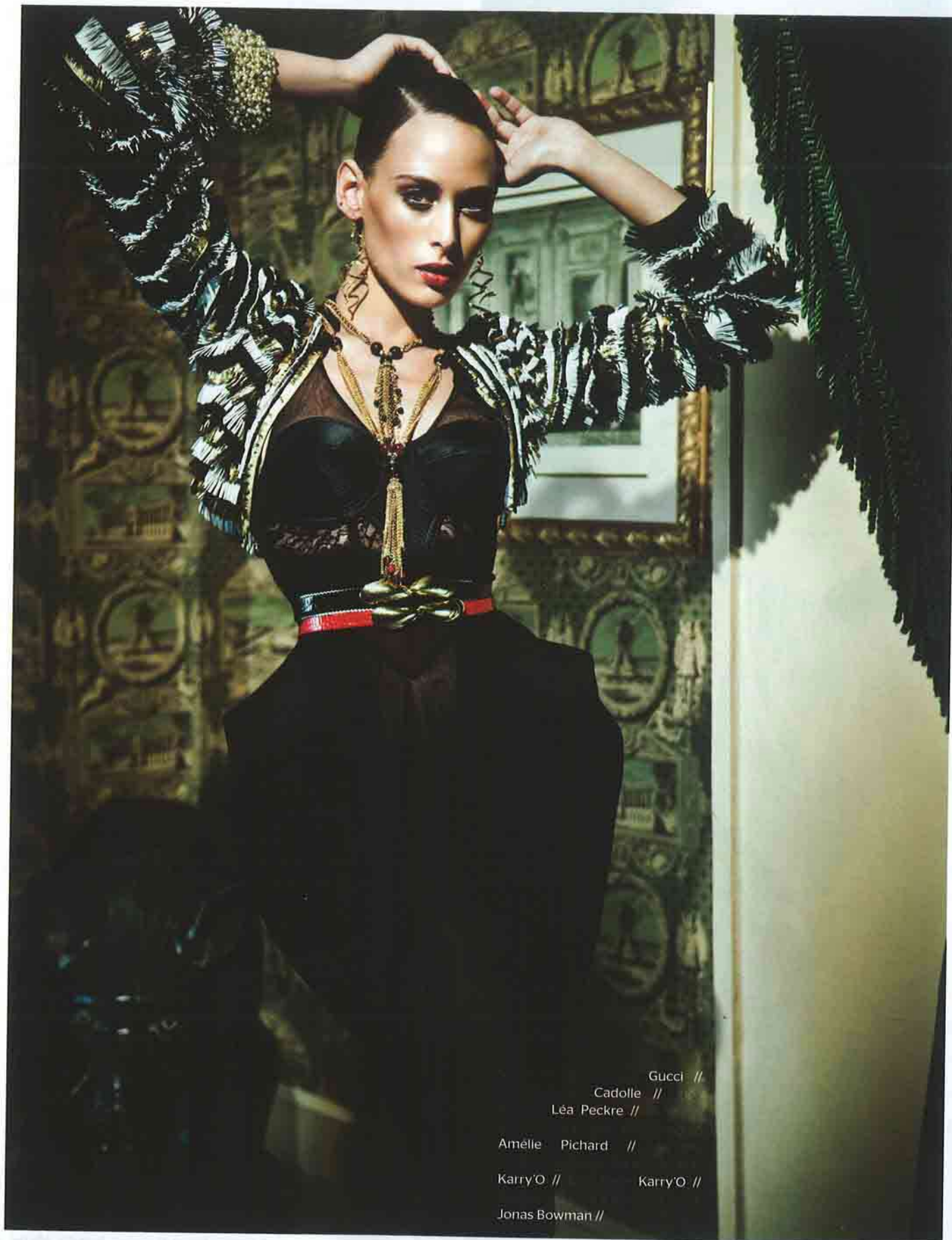


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 Alexandre Vauthier //  
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 Azzedine  
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 Vintage //  
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Robe noire en tulle et viscoses avec  
 perles et onyx // Hakaan // chez  
 Colette // Boléro en or et corail  
 en métal doré // Arzu Kaprol // Boucles  
 d'oreilles // Serpent // en or blanc setti  
 de diamants // Boucheron // sautoirs de  
 perles // chez // Karry'O //

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## VSD / PHOTOS

Publié le mercredi 24 janvier 2007 à 12:28 par La Rédaction

## QATAR, LE CHIC DU LUXE FRANÇAIS



**A l'occasion des 15èmes jeux Asiatique, ce pays de la péninsule arabe avait commandé à une société parisienne, un spectacle de mode et de danse. Reportage publié dans VSD n°1535 (du 24 au 30 janvier 2007).**

Sur la corniche infinie, haut lieu de promenade des habitants de Doha, c'est l'effervescence. Pour les quinzièmes jeux asiatiques, en décembre dernier, l'équivalent des JO réservés à l'Asie, la capitale qatarienne s'est parée d'or et de couleurs étincelantes. Une vitrine pour ce tout petit pays au cosmopolitisme étonnant, accolé à l'Arabie saoudite et à peine plus grand que le département de la

Gironde.

Parallèlement à la manifestation sportive, des Français étaient invités à présenter un grand show dédié à la mode. Dans les sous-sols du pyramidal Sheraton, hôtel symbole de Doha, s'agitent des top models, des danseuses du Lido, du moulin-Rouge, et surtout la danseuse étoile de l'Opéra de Paris Marie-Agnès Gillot. C'est la société française Auditoire, spécialisée dans l'événementiel, avec sa filiale la mode en images, qui a décroché le joli contrat. Le comité des jeux a, bien sûr, donné ses directives : « faire du plus beau défilé de mode jamais réalisé en Asie un véritable spectacle » et, naturellement, « intégrer les modèles dessinés par l'école de mode de Doha », raconte le patron d'Auditoire, Cyril Giorgini, également chargé du concept du village des jeux le long de la grève.

### **Les top models portent les plus beaux bijoux**

Entre défilé de mode et ballet contemporain, ce show a coûté, au moins, 2,3 millions d'euros. Une broutille sans doute pour l'émirat, ravi de pouvoir faire essayer en coulisses les plus beaux bijoux de la monarchie aux plus belles filles du monde. Breloques, colliers de perles (le pays fut longtemps premier exportateur de perles de culture) et d'or plein. Dans des coffrets de velours grenat, la « touch » qatarienne est arrivée sous très haute surveillance. La très aristocratique Chrystèle, longtemps mannequin vedette de Jean Paul Gaultier, essaie ces parures un peu clinquantes, mais « un proche d'un proche » de l'émir Tameem bin Hamad Al-Thani, le souverain du pays, choisit lui-même la plus adéquate pour chaque top. Un temps muse de Jean-Charles de Castelbajac, Tasha de Vasconcelos fait la diva. Entre deux « filages », Katoucha, l'ex-égérie d'Yves Saint Laurent, fait une pause-lecture. Dans ses longues mains : la bio de Christophe Rocancourt, *Mes vies*. Avec une élégante nonchalance, elle confie : « Je ne suis pas comme ces vieilles un peu ridicules incapables de décrocher des podiums, je suis venue par amitié pour Olivier Massart. Avec lui, je serais mannequin jusqu'à 80 ans, avec une canne s'il le fallait. » L'homme-orchestre du spectacle, habitué de ces grands raouts prestigieux, ne semble rien regretter non plus : « Les Qataris ne sont pas blasés, ils ont une vraie curiosité pour ce genre de show, inédit pour eux », raconte l'associé de Cyril Giorgini. En coulisses, des stylistes en herbe de l'école de mode de Doha, qui aident danseuses et mannequins à s'habiller, répondent au micro de la chaîne Al Jazeera. French manucure et abaya noire surbrodée, Noor Al-Ansari, 30 ans, semble ravie de l'expérience le premier jour, un peu moins le second... Rouge à lèvres vermillon, Aïcha exhibe avec fierté sa création personnelle haute en couleur, portée par l'une des danseuses. Pour ces jeunes femmes, tout est incongru.

### **Une représentation pour les femmes**

« Certaines sont choquées de nous voir dénudées, mais bon, il faut rester naturelle », glisse une danseuse du Lido. Dans ce pays, régi par la charia, le voile intégral est de rigueur et il a fallu organiser deux représentations, dont l'une exclusivement réservée aux femmes. La sheika, l'épouse de l'émir Tameem bin Hamad Al-Thani, a même fait le déplacement pour ce show qui lui était dédié. Sur scène, les tableaux des différents pays d'Asie ont fait la part belle au Qatar. « On m'a demandé de rallonger la composition pour le tableau de l'émirat », raconte Marco Prince, ex-chanteur du groupe de funk rock FFF, grand manitou de la musique du spectacle. Côté couture, la prestigieuse maison Lemarié, sise à Paris, a œuvré des centaines d'heures pour assembler et coudre des plumes d'oie ou encore de faisan sur des

modèles illustrant le Qatar. Du grand art, pour un coût de 15 000 euros par robe. « Ils avaient l'air content, plutôt surpris, commente le plumassier et directeur artistique de Lemarié, **éric Charles- Donatien**. Bien sûr, ils ne sont pas du genre à sauter au plafond ». Satisfaits ? Cyril Giorgini n'en doute pas une seconde. Ses contrats avec le Qatar pleuvent. « Ils s'intéressent à notre savoir-faire, veulent des solutions clefs en main, et c'est sans doute préférable. On s'attendait à ce que le show soit retransmis par les grandes chaînes asiatiques... donc il vaut mieux tout gérer de A à Z et non de B à W ». Le business français n'a pas fini d'enrichir l'image d'un pays milliardaire qui rêve d'acquérir une stature internationale.

**Caroline Derrien**

Gérard Uferas est né et vit à Paris. À partir de 1984, il entame une collaboration régulière avec le journal Libération, pour lequel il réalise de nombreux reportages et qui organise sa première exposition. Il publie ensuite régulièrement dans divers journaux ... Il participe à la création de l'agence Vu en 1986 et est, depuis 1993, membre de l'agence Rapho. Parallèlement au photojournalisme, il mène un travail de portraitiste, réalise des campagnes de publicité, des séries de mode, et poursuit des recherches personnelles qui l'amènent à exposer dans de nombreux pays. Son travail a été plusieurs fois récompensé et fait partie des collections de la Maison européenne de la photographie à Paris, du Fonds national d'art contemporain, de l'Union centrale des arts décoratifs, de la Bibliothèque nationale de France, de la National Gallery à Londres, du musée de l'Élysée à Lausanne, du Festival de Salzbourg en Autriche, de la collection Henkel en Allemagne, de la Maison de la photographie à Moscou...

<http://www.vsd.fr/photos/qatar-le-chic-du-luxe-francais-6407>



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## Zahia Dahar's Lacy, Racy World

Less than four years ago, she was at the center of a French prostitution scandal. Now she's a lingerie designer who counts Karl Lagerfeld among her fans.



- August 27, 2013 10:00 AM | by [Alexandra Marshall](#)
- Photography by [Dylan Don](#)

“If I’m sad, it’s impossible to think about pretty things,” says the eveningwear and lingerie designer [Zahia Dehar](#). “If I’m not feeling good, my job takes longer.” So, in the interest of productivity, Dehar, who is 21, has transformed her atelier on Paris’s Rue François 1er, just down the street from Christian Dior, into a resolutely cheerful place. The parlor, where she receives couture clients and displays pieces from the four collections she has thus far produced, is outfitted with heart-shaped pillows and chairs, and carpets meant to look like puffy clouds—all of them Dehar’s designs. The walls are trimmed with giant bows. It’s less a buzzing hive of garmentos than a Barbie Dream House. “I live the dreams now that I had when I was a little girl,” she tells me in a breathy coo.

On the surface, Dehar’s life looks very “pretty princess”: She spends three hours each morning getting ready for work, her big blonde hair and dramatic makeup professionally done. Her eyes are so enormous and doe-like that the temptation to frame them with extravagant false lashes is impossible to resist. Business casual for her is a circulation-threatening pencil dress from [Prada](#), [Victoria Beckham](#), or [Dolce & Gabbana](#), paired with stilettos. Her two dogs—Enzo, a German spitz, and Miyuki, a shih tzu—accompany her everywhere she goes. At her spring 2013 show, she traveled down the runway for her bow in a horse-drawn carriage framed by a heart-shaped garland of flowers while petting a newborn lamb. “Sometimes I still think I am 6,” she says, laughing. “Except my body has changed.” Her body did indeed change, and that’s when her troubles began. Dehar was born in a small town in Algeria and moved at age 10 to France with her younger brother and mother.

Obsessed with glamour, Dehar was out on the town as soon as she was able to fill out a micromini, snaring suitors with belly-dance moves she’d picked up from campy Egyptian films of the ’70s. By 16, she was a fixture at posh clubs around the 8th arrondissement and was charging wealthy men thousands of euros for her considerable charms. And then, in 2010, just after her 18th birthday, she was busted in an underage-prostitution sting that nabbed several high-level players from the French national soccer team. (Prostitution is legal in France, but only if both parties are over the age of 18.) Threatened by the police with deportation to Algeria (a country not known for its kind treatment of “fallen women”), Dehar became [known](#) across France as *la scandaleuse*.

It’s easy to understand how one might barricade oneself behind hearts and furry animals after such an ordeal. But Dehar did not get where she is now—set up in a 6,500-square-foot office; enlisting Karl Lagerfeld, Ellen von Unwerth, and Terry Richardson to shoot her look books; posing for [David LaChapelle](#) and Pierre et Gilles; [about to launch](#) a ready-to-wear lingerie line meant to compete with Agent Provocateur—by playing My Little Pony and wishing for a

brighter tomorrow. No, she has managed her situation quite ably. To begin with, after one painfully honest interview with *Paris Match* in April 2010—she spilled about being bought “as a gift” for the 26th birthday of her former client, the soccer star Franck Ribéry, and added that he was “neither particularly gallant nor well mannered nor even very nice”—she disappeared for more than a year. “I just hid out and cried all day and thought, What has become of my life?” she recalls.



Dehar in her showroom

Then, as many a scandal queen has done before her, Dehar hired a lawyer and began to plot her next move. “I couldn’t get a normal job, because what could I do? Take a meeting and have people say, ‘Oh, look, it’s you!’?” she says. So rather than fight her household-name status, Dehar used it to propel the fashion dreams she’d nurtured since childhood. Her pitch

was to combine risqué designs and a desire to “help women who want to have fun with their bodies” with the know-how of respected couture ateliers like Jean-Pierre Ollier and [Eric-Charles Donatien](#). Through her lawyer, she netted a Hong Kong backer, who wishes to remain anonymous. After a year of development and securing her artisans, she was ready to launch her first collection.

American readers should forget about how post-scandal rebirth is done in the United States. Dehar issued no empty “How did you get my sex tape?” denials, nor did she attempt to blanch the carnality from French minds. (This is a country, after all, with a centuries-old courtesan tradition.) A far, far cry from Monica Lewinsky’s [chaste little handbag line](#), Dehar’s debut collection included bra-and-underwear sets made to look like very revealing gift-wrapping. She’s also designed feather-trimmed G-strings, abbreviated see-through peasant tops, and rafia baby-doll dresses meant to suggest, she says, that “the woman was naked, rolling around in hay, and the hay stuck to her body.”

Dehar’s own body, meanwhile, has been front and center from day one. Thanks to a magazine spread in which she wore skimpy Chanel looks, Karl Lagerfeld came calling. He was so struck by her story, and her figure—which is astonishing, with a habitually arched back and a [J. Lo-worthy derriere](#)—that he agreed to [shoot her first look book](#). Though he is careful to mention that he has nothing to do with her designs, he has said that he finds her “extraordinary,” in the spirit of a Coco Chanel or courtesans like Liane de Pougy or Belle Otéro. “Only a doll comes close to the shape of her body,” says [Ellen von Unwerth](#), who photographed Dehar’s fall 2012 look book. “She is very clever and knows very much what she wants.”

After her first couture show, Dehar was the subject of an in-depth documentary, [Zahia de Z à A](#). In it, she models pieces for some highly revealing photo shoots—just as she does at the end of her shows, when she comes out as the bride. Dehar creates each look for herself first, then adapts it for fit models. “I can judge best what I think is pretty on myself,” she says.



The set for her fall 2012 show

Though Dehar will not reveal her client list, actresses like Emmanuelle Béart and Béatrice Dalle have turned up for her shows. Vintage-fashion king [Cameron Silver](#) is so taken with her work that, this fall, he's carrying her pieces at his Los Angeles emporium Decades, where members of Dehar's team will be on hand for fittings. "We're so Puritan in America, but it's not like she murdered anyone," Silver notes. "And this is not a vanity project; there's far too much investment and work involved."

Indeed, Dehar's attention to detail is impressive. Many of her designs—like a bustier dress made to resemble a stack of pleated cupcake wrappers, with "frosting" covering the breasts—are as clever as they are over-the-top. A pastry-themed group from fall 2012 gave rise to a capsule ready-to-wear lingerie collection, which launched this summer at the Parisian boutique L'Eclaireur in a space designed to look like a pastry shop. Cake-shaped minaudières, latex "whipped cream" pasties, and other wearable confections were sold alongside their edible inspirations. "It's fun to have women ordering cake and lingerie from the same place," Dehar says.

Fun indeed, but running an honest-to-goodness business is not a piece of gâteau, especially with Dehar's preening needs making her chronically late. "I don't go out much anymore," she confesses. She has no boyfriend, and "on the weekends, I prefer to stay at home with my dogs." But in spite of this comparatively low-key setup, Dehar is happy—a very important factor, after all, in the bottom line. "I may be more restrained now in my personal life, but doing this work really makes me feel free."

- Sitting Editor: Rogelio F. Burgos; Hair by Rita Dell'orco; Makeup By Jean-Michel Daquin; Photography Assistant: Queinnec Nominome. Dehar Wears Jimmy Choo Pumps; Set photo: CNP Montrose

<http://www.wmagazine.com/fashion/2013/08/zahia-dehar-french-lingerie-designer/>



1



2

## la nouvelle garde française

**SÉLECTIONNÉS PAR ARMAND HADIDA - FONDATEUR DE L'ÉCLAIREUR\* - POUR LES "TALENTS À LA CARTE" DU DERNIER SALON MAISON & OBJET, CES 6 CRÉATEURS ONT LE VENT EN POUPE.**

**1. ÉRIC CHARLES-DONATIEU** Astre discret de la mode et de la déco couture, le designer-plumassier, anciennement directeur artistique de la maison Lemarié, as-

socie la plume et le métal. Sa nouvelle ligne d'accessoires mode Moye & Da s'inscrit entre baroque et sur-réalisme. [www.moye-da.com](http://www.moye-da.com)

**2. CYPRIEN CHABERT** L'artiste veut renouer avec le paradis perdu. Inspirée de l'île de Pâques, sa table Ping-Pong (édition Fat Galerie) est une métaphore de la désinvolture avec laquelle l'homme traite son environnement naturel. À méditer. [www.fatgalerie.com](http://www.fatgalerie.com)

**3. POOL** Le duo d'architectes designers Léa Padovani et Sébastien Kieffer, anciens du studio de Noé Duchaufour-Laurance, cultive l'objet décalé et conceptuel. Avec L'idéal du moi, sculptural miroir en métal plié, il nous incite à nous voir d'un autre œil... [www.work.poolhouse.eu](http://www.work.poolhouse.eu)

**4. LAURENT SEGRETIER** Photographe, il appartient à la « new media generation ». Sa signature ? La transformation de ses images par la manipulation des pixels. Une technique qu'il a adaptée à la réalisation d'un caisson lumineux. [www.segretier.com](http://www.segretier.com)

**5. AMINE EON AMHARECH** L'architecte philosophe dit « Eon » est un familier du marbre. Taillées, sculptées, évidées..., ses pièces ultra-graphiques sont une parfaite leçon de « less is more ».

**6. VICTORIA WILMOTTE** La jeune designer de l'École Camondo et du Royal College of Art de Londres, s'est déjà fait un prénom avec ses pièces de mobilier en pierre naturelle et marbre. Dessin au cordeau et géométrie ciselée : elle les façonne avec l'œil d'un architecte. [www.victoriawillemotte.fr](http://www.victoriawillemotte.fr)

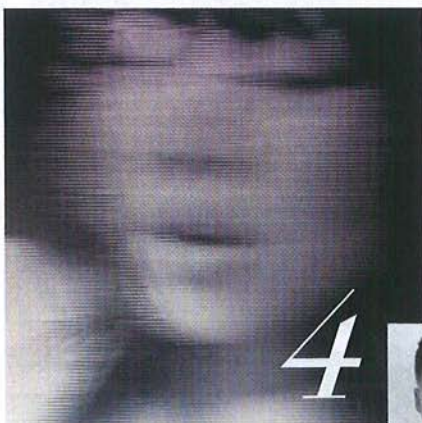
\*Premier conceptstore parisien : [www.leclaireur.com](http://www.leclaireur.com)



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5



4



6

PHOTOS LAURENT SEGRETIER, VICTORIA WILMOTTE, ÉRIC CHARLES-DONATIEU, LORENZO FORNARI

# 1980



**GOLD, GLAM AND GLITTER : LE COCKTAIL VITAMINÉ DES ANNÉES DISCO.** De gauche à droite. Manuela : pochette XXL en veau ve-lours et python, Salvatore Ferragamo, grigri Kenzo, manchettes en métal, Vionnet, sandales Walter Steiger, robe en soie, Salvatore Ferragamo. Elena : sac Vanitas et mini-sac clouté, Versace, boucles d'oreilles, Alexis Bittar chez L'Éclaireur, manchette Sylvia Toledano chez L'Éclaireur, joncs émaillés, Hermès, sandales Paule Ka, robe Versace. Megan : sac porte-monnaie XXL, Just Cavalli, collier Moye & Da, manchette Sylvia Toledano chez L'Éclaireur, pochette en cuir, Tommy Hilfiger, sandales Giuseppe Zanotti Design, robe Just Cavalli. Sacha : sac Chyc en cuir, Yves Saint Laurent, robe et ceinture, Balmain, bracelets Vionnet, jonc strassé, Alexis Bittar chez L'Éclaireur, sandales Jimmy Choo.

## CARTABLE À MALICE

Ingénieuse et pleine d'énergie, Angèle Lancel adorait concevoir des sacs à main de toute beauté dissimulant astuces et boîtes à secrets. Lancel lui rend hommage à l'occasion des 135 ans de la maison avec Angèle, un it bag (1 250 €) aux allures de cartable, réédition d'un modèle des années 60, qui reprend tous ses codes ludiques et pratiques avec rabat dissimulant miroir, pochette vanity...

Lancel, 8, place de l'Opéra, 75001.

Tél. : 01.47.42.37.29. et [www.lancel.com](http://www.lancel.com)



## BIJOUX DE CÉRAMIQUE

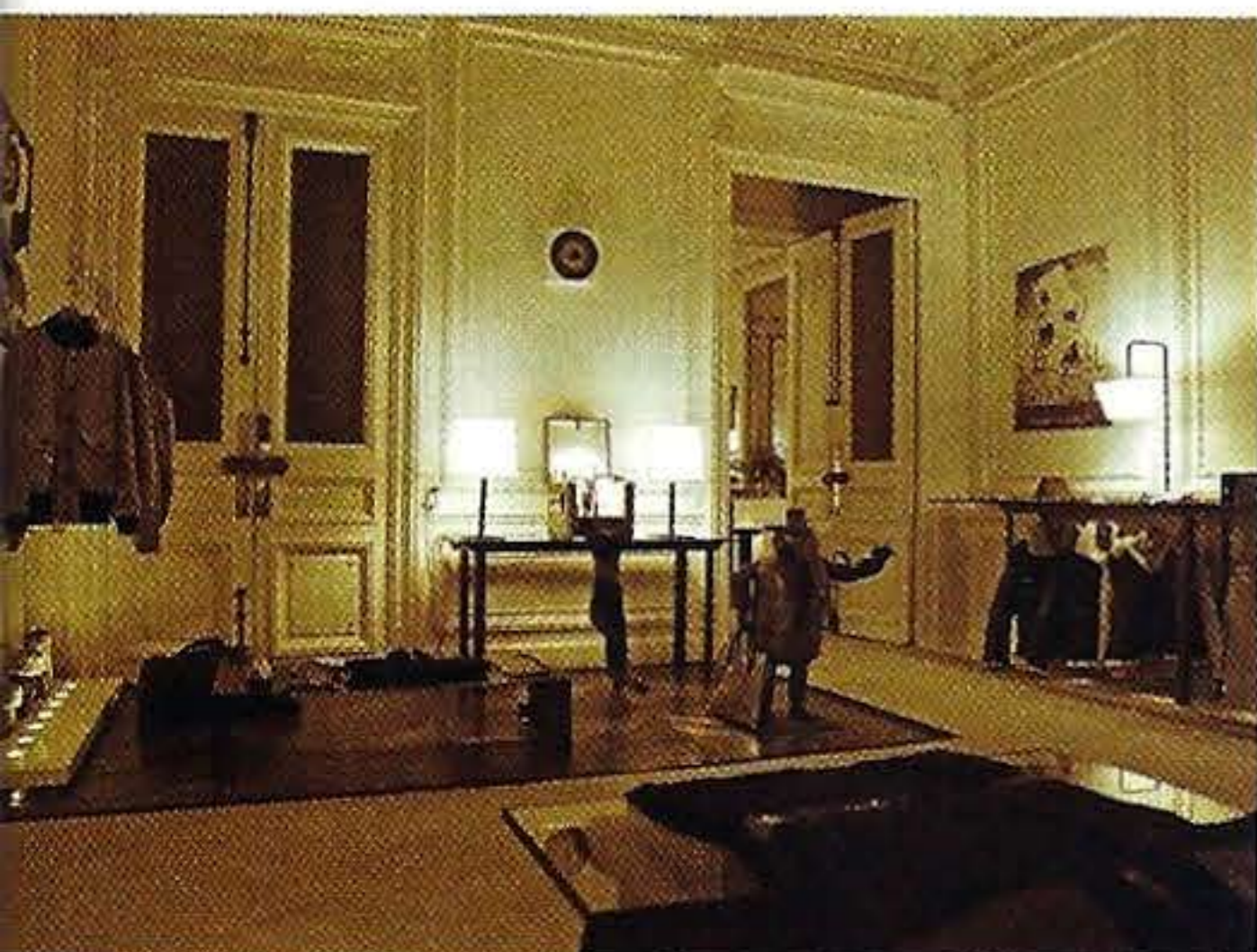
Après Limoges, New York et Taipei, Paris accueille l'exposition « Un peu de terre sur la peau », initiée par la Fondation d'entreprise Bernardaud. Travaillée selon l'expertise séculaire des porcelainiers limousins, cette terre devient matière à créer des bijoux spectaculaires, loin de tout classicisme. À découvrir au musée des Arts décoratifs à travers 140 pièces, objets de désir ou manifestes iconoclastes. Jusqu'au 19 août, 107, rue de Rivoli, 75001. Tél. : 01.44.55.57.29.



## BIEN PILOTÉE!

Une tannerie de peaux de lapins née en 1832 dans la Creuse, devenue au début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle fournisseur de blousons pour l'armée américaine et les aviateurs français, en voilà une aventure!

Signée Chapal, elle se poursuit avec l'univers du sport automobile, qui passionne Jean-François Bardinon, l'actuel p-dg. Comptant parmi ses clients Jaguar et Bugatti, la maison fabrique sacs de voyage, casques, accessoires, vêtements sur mesure... 244, rue de Rivoli, 75001. Tél. : 06.16.11.56.60.



## DÉMARCHE NATURELLE

Dédié à toutes les formes de nature urbaine, le concept-store Gams fête son premier anniversaire avec une exposition insolite de « jardins-escarpins », du 21 mars au 21 avril. Objets, mobilier et accessoires de mode y servent de support à des compositions de plantes signées Yann Monel, jardinier, photographe et fondateur du Troc vert de Montreuil, une manifestation fondée sur l'échange de plantes, qui se déroule le troisième dimanche de mai, avec pour slogan : « Plantez vos chaussures ! »

« Jardins perchés ». 60, bd Beaumarchais, 75011. Tél. : 01.55.28.65.50.



## L'HISTOIRE MARQUE LE PAS

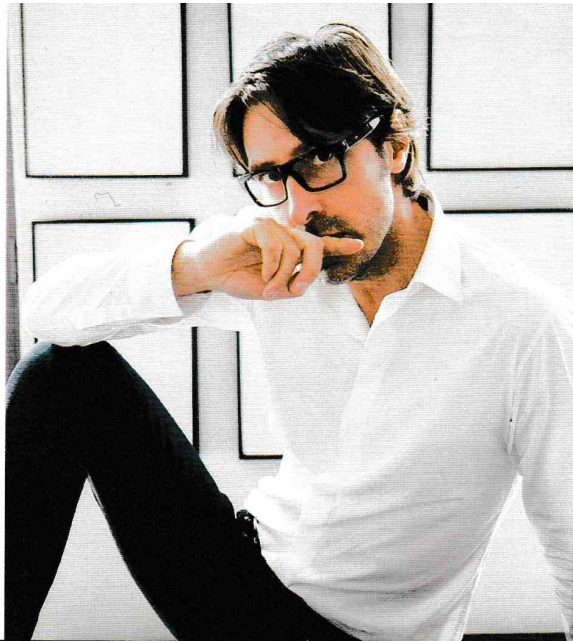
Roger Vivier, décédé en 1990, fut l'un des plus prestigieux portedrapeaux de la création française en matière de chaussures de luxe. On salue l'initiative de la Fédération française de la chaussure qui, en liaison avec la maison Roger Vivier et le musée de la Chaussure de Romans, a acquis près de 80% de la collection des modèles historiques pour lui éviter d'être éparpillée de par le monde. Ces trésors seront montrés au public à Paris dès la rentrée, au cours d'une exposition consacrée à « La chaussure française, 150 ans d'histoire ».



## SACS AU SECRET

Depuis sa fondation en 1893 par une dynastie de tanneurs et gantiers à Saint-Junien, en Haute-Vienne, la Maison Perrin s'est toujours positionnée à l'avant-garde de la technique dans l'artisanat du cuir. La première boutique Perrin Paris vient d'ouvrir à côté du bureau de style, blottie au fond d'une cour pavée. Un écrin confidentiel pour des sacs sculptures (sac Ball Bag, en trois tailles, dès 850 €), des pochettes-gants et des accessoires étonnants, pur luxe et résolument design, en édition limitée. Pièces uniques sur commande. 35, rue des Petits-Champs, 75001. Tél. : 01.42.97.40.26.





*Sa dernière collection*

Le défilé haute couture aux Beaux-Arts, à Paris, en juillet : « Longiligne et opalescente, ancrée dans le contemporain, cette silhouette allie dynamisme et mélancolique poésie slave. »

# CHRISTOPHE JOSSE & SES 5 COUPS DE CŒUR

**CRÉATEUR D'UNE ESTHÉTIQUE SENSUELLE ET AÉRIENNE, IL INVENTE UN NÉOCLASSICISME SUBLIL, NOURRI CETTE SAISON D'INFLUENCES SLAVES.**

**D**epuis janvier 2011, il a obtenu l'appellation haute couture qui lui confère le titre prestigieux de grand couturier. Une consécration pour cet ancien étudiant en histoire de l'art, qui a fait ses classes aux côtés de Louis Féraud et de Rose Torrente-Mett avant de fonder sa propre maison en juillet 2005. Sa marque de fabrique ? L'infinie discrétion, la simplicité étudiée, le travail de segmentation de la surface du vêtement, les nervures comme une ossature, les contrastes de matières (souvent atypiques) et d'effets, les jeux de panneaux. Résultat ? Une allure ultra-féminine, romantique, sensuelle, délicate et aérienne. Comment ne pas tomber sous le charme ?

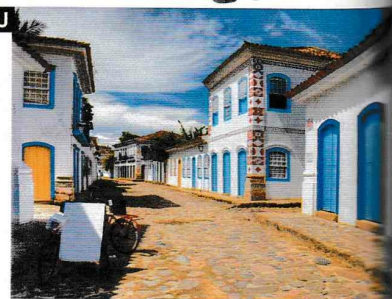
**SON INDISPENSABLE**

« Mes d'œillets en cuir signés Eric Charles-Donatien (Moye & Da). Il en réalise de toutes les couleurs pour ponctuer mes collections, principalement sur les vestes noires, bleues ou grises. C'est un peu devenu ma signature. »



**SON LIEU**

« Parati, au Brésil, à deux heures de Rio en voiture. C'est un petit village très coloré, à mille lieux de moi et de mon univers, mais la lumière et les couleurs, là-bas, me font un bien fou. »



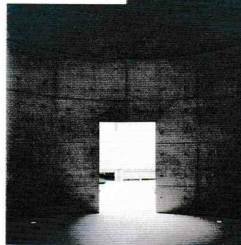
**SON ARTISTE**

« L'architecte Tadao Ando, pour son travail sur la lumière et sur la segmentation des volumes qui m'a beaucoup inspiré, au point d'en faire ma ligne de conduite. »



**SON CRÉATEUR**

« Christian Lacroix. J'aime son approche des matières et des volumes. Ses croquis sont particulièrement évocateurs. C'est l'un des couturiers les plus emblématiques du goût français. »



**SON INSPIRATION**

« Pour ma dernière collection, je me suis inspiré de photos de paysannes d'Europe centrale du début du XX<sup>e</sup> siècle et de broderies marocaines, russes et même norvégiennes. »



PAR MARIE-SOPHIE N'DIAYE

ILLUSTRATION: CHRISTIAN LACROIX

# La revanche des petites mains du grand luxe

Qu'ils transforment des plumes de faisan en accessoires haute couture ou qu'ils sculptent avec une créativité sans cesse renouvelée les cadrans des horlogers de renom, les artisans d'art affirment leur place au cœur de la création.

Par Marie Godfrain

**D**es chantiers de décoration à l'architecture, de l'art contemporain à l'univers du luxe, l'artisanat d'art, jadis jugé ringard, est aujourd'hui plébiscité par tous les milieux de la création. Valeur essentielle d'une époque en quête de sens, il offre désormais un supplément d'âme au style globalisé. Au point que les marques communiquent volontiers sur ces travailleurs de l'ombre, dont le savoir-faire justifie des tarifs de prestation élevés. Dans le même esprit, les grands noms du luxe sortent de plus en plus souvent de leur périmètre traditionnel : ils éditent des collections de mobilier et d'objets s'appuyant sur ces savoir-faire, multiplient les journées portes ouvertes dans leurs ateliers de fabrication et construisent des sites dédiés à ces métiers. Chanel a ainsi confié à l'architecte Rudy Ricciotti le dessin de son centre consacré aux métiers d'art, qui sera achevé l'an prochain, porte d'Aubervilliers, à Paris. Plus de 25 000 mètres carrés de béton et de verre, ouverts sur l'extérieur, comme une ambassade des artisans maison. Elle abritera ces métiers d'exception, un secteur en plein dynamisme. Tour d'horizon de ces savoir-faire les plus en vue.



En 2020, Chanel rassemblera ses métiers d'art dans un écrin de béton blanc (de 25 000 m<sup>2</sup>) conçu par Rudy Ricciotti.



**Serre-tête  
d'Éric Charles-Donatien  
*Queeny Bird***

Des plumes de faisan noires, bleues et blanches composent ce serre-tête en métal et or jaune de la collection Cléopâtre (2012) d'Éric Charles-Donatien, designer-plumassier, ancien directeur artistique chez Lemarié, qui a lancé son propre studio en 2010.



**Plumasserie**  
Un art qui retrouve  
du panache

Technique longtemps oubliée, la plumasserie est remise au goût du jour grâce à de jeunes créateurs comme Maxime Leroy ou Éric Charles-Donatien, qui renouvellent son usage dans la mode. Ainsi, lors de l'exposition «Double Je – Artisans d'art et artistes» en 2016, au Palais de Tokyo, le premier avait habillé une moto et divers accessoires de plumes noires. Chef de file de ces néo-artisans, Christelle Kocher, directrice artistique de Lemarié, plumassier historique racheté par Chanel en 1996, travaille la queue de faisan, le pied plat de dinde, la frange d'autruche brûlée, les plumes de nageoires d'oie et de collet de canard peintes. Autant d'atours qui garniront les robes et autres pièces phares du vestiaire Chanel. Preuve du retour en grâce de cette spécialité, Lemarié collabore avec d'autres grands noms de la mode. Celine, Givenchy ou Dior comptent désormais parmi les clients des ateliers de Pantin.



*Manteau en laine et soie Dior;  
body Cadoille; boucles d'oreilles en métal  
doré avec plumes et pierres Moyo & Da;  
main droite: bague avec pierre noire  
Marcoi, bague en métal doré Valérie  
MacCarthy, manchettes en métal doré  
Vivika Bergström et Hélène Zubaldia;  
main gauche: manchette ajourée en  
métal doré et bague en métal doré avec  
pierre ronde Yves Saint Laurent,  
bracelets fins avec pierres  
Sylvia Toledo.*



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VOYAGE

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# Après 4 ans de travaux, Le Crillon (re)carillonne

Après quatre années de fermeture et quelque 200 millions d'euros de travaux, le mythique hôtel de la place de la Concorde a rouvert ses portes ce mercredi 5 juillet.



par

Dorane Vignando

Publié le [05/07/2017](#) à 18h09

L'atmosphère est quelque peu survoltée. Il en est toujours ainsi, lorsque l'on finit les derniers préparatifs avant son entrée en scène. Après le Ritz, son voisin place Vendôme, l'Hôtel de Crillon (géré par le groupe Rosewood Hotels & Resorts) vient à son tour de terminer sa remise en beauté. Ce palais, dessiné en 1758 par l'architecte Jacques-Ange Gabriel à la demande du roi Louis XV, en avait bien besoin. Le voilà déjàuni et rajeuni : nouveau restaurant, nouveau bar, nouvelle brasserie, nouveaux salons, nouvelles chambres et suites.



Un prince saoudien se l'est offert en 2010 pour 250 millions d'euros, et en a déboursé encore 200

millions pour financer ce titanesque chantier, un de plus dans la course effrénée à laquelle se livrent les palaces de la capitale.

### **Insuffler une dose de chic contemporain**

Dans le respect de l'esprit de ce monument classé, l'édifice a été repensé entièrement par l'architecte Richard Martinet. Côté mise en scène, la directrice artistique Aline Asmar d'Amman a choisi quatre noms de la haute décoration (Tristan Auer, Chahan Minassian, Cyril Vergniol et Culture in Architecture) pour insuffler une dose de chic contemporain dans cet univers très XVIIIème.

Pas toujours simple de jongler avec les références historiques, de dé-ringardiser les codes, de plaire à la fois à l'Américain fortuné rêvant de Versailles et de clichés aristo et au Parisien en quête d'un cadre intime pour l'apéro.



**Yannick Stéphant pour L'Obs**

Si Cyril Vergniol a imaginé les 81 chambres et 33 suites, Tristan Auer, connu pour avoir taillé sur mesure les intérieurs de quelques rockstars, signe le lobby mais aussi la Brasserie d'Aumont (bar en marbre et bois de rose, tabourets en cuir tressé, plafond en feuilles d'argent patiné), l'espace barbier aux influences Art déco et le salon de coiffure.

De son côté, le Franco-Libanais Chahan Minassian, très prisé des grandes fortunes discrètes, a repensé L'Ecrin - le restaurant étoilé de Christopher Hache -, le jardin d'hiver et le bar Les Ambassadeurs avec ses meubles d'esprit brutaliste adoucis sous les ors.

### **Des suites signées Lagerfeld**

On peut ajouter à la longue liste de ce luxe de propagande made in France les niches en plumes de paon et de corbeau du plumassier de haute couture **Eric Charles-Donatien**, la collection de cocktails signature dans les flacons à parfum numérotés, les 17.600 écailles d'or de la nouvelle piscine, les 22

camaïeux de bleus du spa, les 40 types de marbres différents, les deux suites à 25.000 euros la nuit signées Karl Lagerfeld (dont une baptisée "Chouquette", en hommage à sa célèbre chatte, avec lit Grand Siècle et tapis aux motifs "griffures" de minette)... Poilant, non ?



**Yannick Stéphant pour L'Obs**

Enfin, tout ce faste reste relativement chaste. Rien ne fait mal aux yeux. Ni les lustres de 1902 ni les plafonds peints de ciel bleu. Encore moins le travail d'exception des 147 métiers d'art mis à contribution pour redorer le blason de ce vénérable Hôtel de Crillon.

<http://o.nouvelobs.com/voyage/20170705.OBS1709/apres-4-ans-de-travaux-le-crillon-re-carillonne.html>

 Article

**PEOPLE.**  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

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PLACES.


INSIDE.

 Article

INTRO 


WATCH VIDEO 

ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN  
*footprints*



# SEARCHING FOR HIS WINGS

ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN IS A PLUMASSIER, THE LAST ONE IN PARIS.  
THE COLOURFUL WORLD OF HAUTE COUTURE IS HIS HOME.

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Article

**PEOPLE.**  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

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**PLACES.**

**INSIDE.**

▶  
Article

PROFILE





**PEOPLE.**  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

3/13

**PLACES.**

**INSIDE.**



Now it's happened after all. It's raining in PARIS. The sky is gloomy and overcast, and we're standing soaked in front of a weathered, wrought-iron gate next to a Turkish fast food restaurant. Floor-fastened Resopal tables, gyros for three euros. Probably the cheapest meal in Paris. Maybe we should push back the meeting. BIRD FEATHERS and RAIN – how are those two things supposed to go together? The doorbell buzzes. Eric arrives five minutes after us. He welcomes us by saying, *“One should never come too early, not even for one's own interview”*. He grins and adds, smiling, that he learned that from his famous role models. He shakes my hand and asks us if we want a coffee. First thing's first.

.....

**I HAD A SHOP AT THE GRAND PALAIS,  
RIGHT BEHIND THE LOUVRE.**

.....

*“I had a shop at the GRAND PALAIS, right behind the LOUVRE. It was very small, I mean, very small. Everything here”,* he points at his new loft-like atelier with its half-dozen work tables and deeply staggered shelves, filled with all kinds of material and bric-a-brac, *“all that was once packed into a tiny store, that was about the same size as our current bathroom. The area around the Grand Palais is bourgeois, established, filled with tourists, in the middle of everything that has to do with fashion”*. But he wanted to get away from it.



**PEOPLE.**  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

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**PLACES.**

**INSIDE.**



**ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN, JEWELRY AND ACCESSORIES**





Article

**PEOPLE.**  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

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PLACES.

INSIDE.



Article

*“Paris can sometimes be very oppressive, HISTORICALLY. I always notice that when I come back from travelling. I travel a lot, you should know. Berlin, New York, London, Dubai. There is action there. Oberkampf is a bit like that, filled with interesting places and restaurants. The people in this neighbourhood structure their day: Make the best of it. We’ve been here for six months. It has changed a lot of things. For me too. This here is my studio. It fits my work better”.*

**EVERY PIECE IS UNIQUE.  
YOU NEVER COME INTO CONTACT  
WITH THE SAME THING TWICE.**

What’s a plumassier? *“A plumassier is a person who works with feathers. It’s a very simple job. The only thing we need to do it is a few old sewing machines, and that’s it. Everything else is handmade. Every piece is unique. You never come into contact with the same thing twice. The material – feathers – is as transitory as ideas themselves, and obeys in unexpected ways. That’s very hard to understand today with all the computers and machines”.*





**PEOPLE.**  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

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**PLACES.**

**INSIDE.**



Where does it come from, the love of this job? *"I learned everything from a master, André Lemarié. Everything I am today I owe to him. He discovered me at HERMÈS. I was a tailor there. He took me on".* Eric suddenly found himself in one of the last craft businesses in the city that worked with feathers.

.....

**I LEARNED EVERYTHING FROM A MASTER,  
ANDRÉ LEMARIÉ.  
HE DISCOVERED ME AT HERMÈS.  
I WAS A TAILOR THERE.**

.....

André Lemarié, who had taken over his father's business, was the person who integrated plumage into haute couture in the 1940s. His collaboration with Coco Chanel created a small revolution. He placed feathers on hats, but his main income came from the use of feathers in the haute couture of the time. There were a sign of class and taste. Suddenly the feather specialists were EN VOGUE. Over 60 small craft businesses popped out of the ground, everywhere, like mushrooms, but then tastes changed, especially in the '80s and '90s. Finally, there was only Lemarié left. Chanel bought his business in 1992. Since then, there is only that division and MOYE & DA, Eric's own company, which he founded in 2010.



Article

**PEOPLE.**  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

7/13

**PLACES.****INSIDE.**

Article

*"Through André Lemarié, I met big designers and had the opportunity to work with these artists, to understand them, their language, to grasp their visions. That they may mean 'no' when they say 'yes'. I owe all that to him. And how to interact with them, win their trust, dive into their world, but keep my distance and be able to escape. That's how Beyoncé, Nicole Kidman, Jean Paul Gaultier, Galliano and Yves Saint Laurent have all left their marks, in one way or another, on my work."*

.....

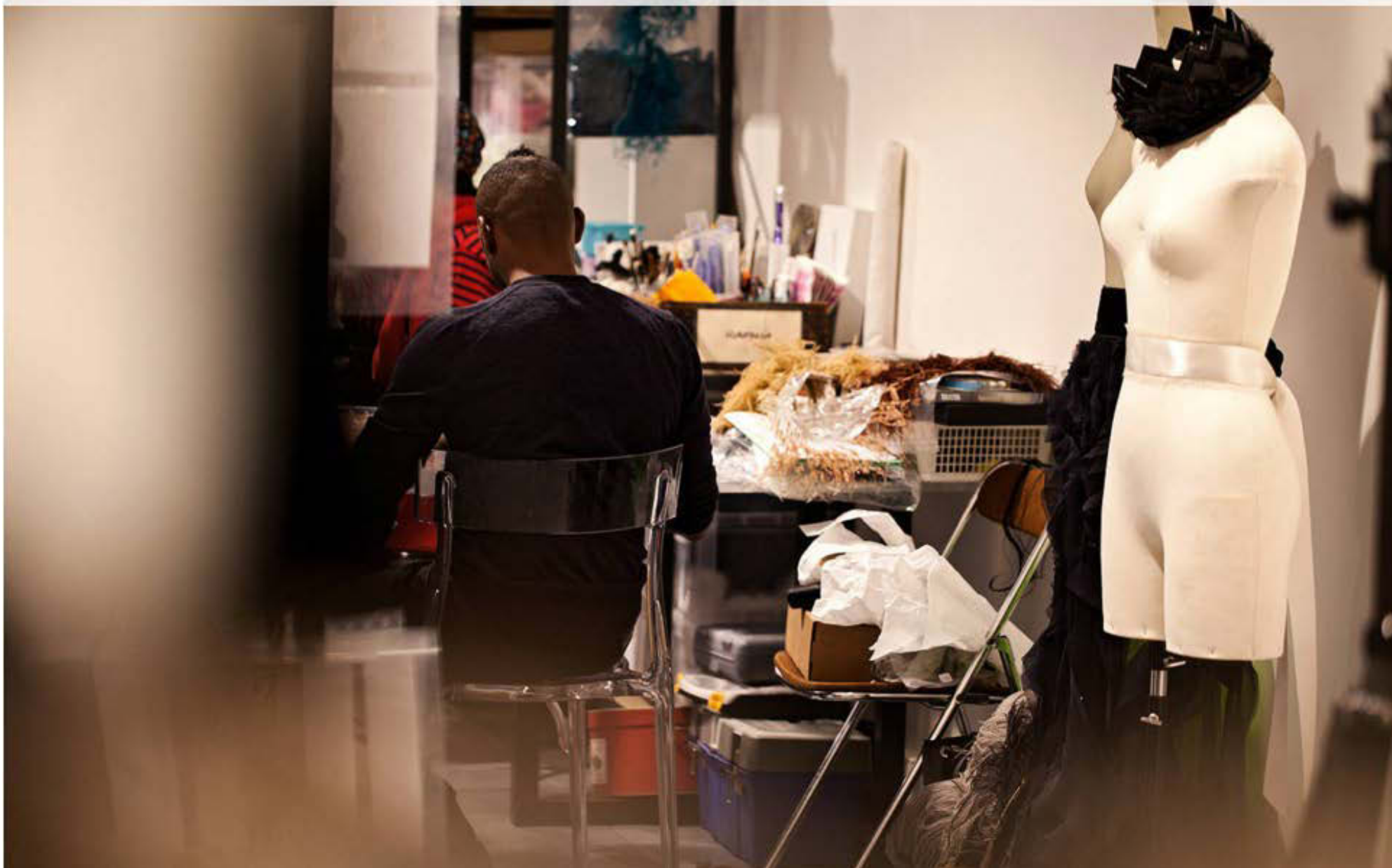
**THAT'S HOW BEYONCÉ, NICOLE KIDMAN,  
JEAN PAUL GAULTIER, GALLIANO  
AND YVES SAINT LAURENT  
HAVE ALL LEFT THEIR MARKS ON MY WORK.**

.....

One of Eric's colleagues brings me an espresso. The others, I count five, work unperturbed, maintain their concentration. Their job requires patience. They only say what it necessary. On the tables, there are small containers with different kinds of feathers. Some glue, tweezers, scissors...the stillness is contagious.



Article | **PEOPLE.** ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN | 8/13 | **PLACES.** | **INSIDE.** | Article





**PEOPLE.**  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

9/13

**PLACES.**

**INSIDE.**



The studio as microcosm of the artist's life. Nothing is random. Pieces of jewellery lie on expense reports, earrings with delicate tufts of feathers, tone in tone, Styrofoam mannequins hung with flamboyant feather boas, bangles – necklaces, each shot through with a little something extra that moves with the air when you pick it up. Feathers are alive, are simultaneously ornamentation and protection. They are always moving, surprising. Eric takes several into his hand, to show them to me. His eyes sparkle. He sees much more than the rest of us. You notice that with him. These are mostly pieces from old collections, he says. Models have worn them. The jewellery is heavy and large, organic, a lot of Art Nouveau with obvious influences from Fauvism and the Belle Époque – the greatest Paris era, LE GRAND SIÈCLE.

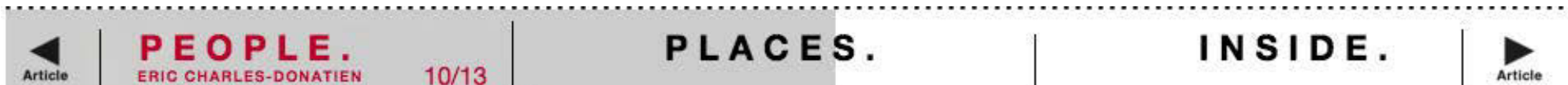
.....

**FEATHERS ARE AMONG THE OLDEST MATERIALS  
WORN BY HUMAN BEINGS.**

.....

Eric's imagination wanders backwards in time in front of us. A true artist. One can't pull away from him. *"Feathers are among the oldest materials worn by human beings. In order to warm themselves, to impress. But look in any historical museum – feathers were mostly used in order to make oneself look nice".*





*"WE AREN'T CREATING FASHION TRENDS HERE. At best, we are following them. What we do goes by the rules of others. A woman's taste, a designer's vision, a woman's complexion. We are only interested with the experience itself. That, which our feathers make come alive. The smell, the touch, the sound...that is what steers our work. That and the desires of our clients, which, of course, are always changing – with the current trends as well."*

.....

**WE ARE ONLY INTERESTED IN  
THE EXPERIENCE ITSELF.  
THAT, WHICH OUR FEATHERS MAKE COME ALIVE,  
THE SMELL, THE TOUCH, THE SMELL...**

.....

The loft-like studio is located on the ground level in the inner courtyard of an old, weathered Art Nouveau apartment building buried deep in the quartier. It's functionally decorated. Dozens of lamps turn the grey, rainy day into a sunny one. A workshop in the best sense. No glamour, and without any concession to potential clients. Eric's world is colourful, and his face speaks volumes. He could work anywhere if he had to – even without windows, in some basement. He would light up the room with his own brightness.





Article

**PEOPLE.**  
ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

12/13

PLACES.

INSIDE.



Article



No wonder he was able to build up his career so quickly in this glitzy, superficial world, where transcendence is everything, where will and imagination has become the credo of an entire industry. Eric fits in here, in Paris. Even in his condemnation of the city, he accepts its rules, the rules of a congealed bourgeoisie. I suspect why Paris has become the heartbeat of an entire fashion industry. *"I think, in the end, I've remained a child – un petit ange – a little angel – like my mother always called me. I'm an angel wanting to find his wings again".*

.....

**I'M AN ANGEL, WANTING  
TO FIND HIS WINGS AGAIN.**

.....

You only make fashion for women? *"I look for the woman in the man, the man in the woman – a very time-consuming search..."* Would he wear this feather jewellery himself? I point to an androgynous, faceless Styrofoam head wearing a small, shaggy piece of feather jewellery. *"Of course"*, he says, fast as a bullet. I ask him to come outside into the rain with me. Or would that be a problem for the feathers? He smiles at me defiantly and puts on the headpiece. *"I'm working on a new collection, for men. One day I will succeed. Look at the American Indians. What the men there wear on their heads, when they're going to war..."*

Text by Jo Weissgerber

Photos by Martin N. Kunz, Jo Weissgerber

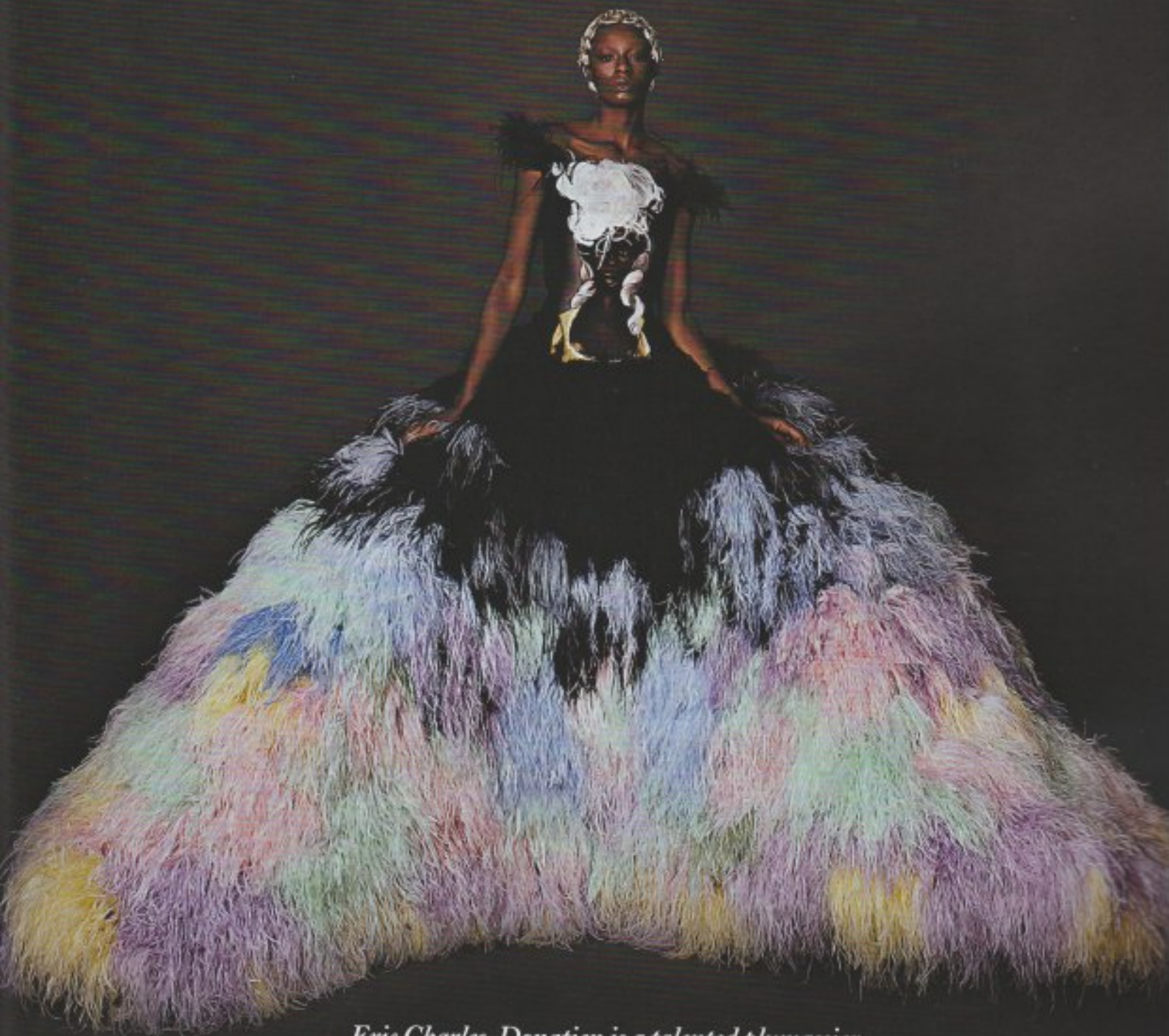
WATCH VIDEO





Eric Charles-Donatien in his Parisian atelier. Opposite page, a sumptuous decoration on a dress designed by London fashion house Sorapol in 2015.

# IN FINE FEATHER



*Eric Charles-Donatien is a talented plumassier whose formal vocabulary is as delicate as it is rigorous. His wonderful feathers decorate the creations of the greatest couture houses*

*by Julie El Ghouzzi*



"Madlight" is a lamp inspired by the light produced by candles; the feather wings evoke purity and freedom. Right, a dress by Christophe Josse (2011), decorated with hand-painted feathers.

"Take the tip of a downy ostrich plume and a fluffy fragment of marabou." What would otherwise sound as a bizarre invitation is actually perfectly normal in the atelier of a *maitre d'art* who has dedicated himself for more than 20 years to an unusual material that is charming and coquettish, soft and caressing, but that can also prove capricious and difficult to handle: feathers. Eric Charles-Donatien is an acclaimed feather master and designer who has built his career in exceptional contexts. For 15 years he was the artistic director of the famous Maison Lemarié (the last *plumassier* in Paris, acquired by Chanel in 1996), in whose effervescent atelier, as he likes to recall, he had to continuously invent new and spectacular ways to sew, cut and dye feathers to decorate the most beautiful haute couture dresses. How did it happen that this young *maitre* started working with feathers? By chance, but also thanks to his passion for this material. He enjoys remembering the years at the school of applied arts and, later, at the École de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne: "I was not very good at drawing, so for me to work directly on the materials was a way to make up for this deficiency. My vision is based on colour, and this allows me to understand the structure of things." Charles-Donatien presented one of his first projects in Lebanon in 1995, at a salon dedicated to artistic decorators. Thanks to a series of fortuitous and fortunate events, his project, which also included feathers, was shown to André Lemarié. "If you can make more of these, we will certainly ask you for some samples," he was told. Eric Charles-Donatien, who was then working as an intern at Hermès, succumbed to the charm of the legendary feather virtuoso and to the prestige of his atelier. "The little old ladies, the impressive collection of coloured and multiform feathers, the dust: it was like a couture version of Émile Zola!" Thus began a great adventure for the young creator, who had preferred the modesty of a workshop to a career as designer at one of the leading *maisons*. "I thought I would only

be there for a few months. But I ended up staying 15 years," he says. At Lemarié, Eric Charles-Donatien was appointed artistic director and in charge of all the atelier's operations. At the same time, he felt the strong desire to learn how it was done and acquire the knowhow. "I used to play hide and seek, just to spend a little more time in the workshop," he pleasantly remembers. No doubt, his precise and accurate knowledge of the techniques allows his creations to fully unfold their spectacular nature. It must be said that Eric Charles-Donatien is without doubt one of the most talented *plumassiers* of his generation, and an exhibition dedicated to his works will soon be held in Paris. Charles-Donatien explains that very early on he was more attracted by the materials than by the forms. But this alone cannot explain the brilliance and uniqueness of his talent. He certainly possesses the capacity to cooperate closely with the creative heads of fashion houses, often remaining hidden in their shadow. When the greatest designers impart their wishes to Charles-Donatien, he and his team have to understand their (sometimes decidedly ambitious) decorative intent and know how to interpret it with feathers: mastering the technical difficulties of this craft, Charles-Donatien transforms an idea into a (beautiful) product.

Chanel, Dior, Saint Laurent, Jean Paul Gaultier, Roger Vivier, Vera Wang and Roberto Cavalli are just some of the prestigious fashion brands for whom he has brought this vibrant material to life. In 2010, after the death of André Lemarié and before the atelier moved to its new and modern premises, Eric Charles-Donatien started his own business and founded a company, which he perceives and lives as a creative workshop. Feathers cut in the form of scales, colourful and iridescent aigrettes: his formal vocabulary is as delicate as it is rigorous, and it knows no boundaries. He transforms everything he sees, everything he hears, into absolutely original creations. "I have found that the way I work is very similar to a digestive process: it takes me some time to use what I see. Immediacy is not useful to the result." In addition to the feather atelier, Eric Charles-Donatien works with leather and metal on his accessories collection, thus adding always new materials to his creative vocabulary that sums substance to sense. His workshop is also a place where knowledge and skills are passed on: it is a point of honour for Eric Charles-Donatien to offer young people the opportunity to see and learn a trade. Because his spirit is light... like a feather. ([ericcharlesdonatien.com](http://ericcharlesdonatien.com))



# GRAZIA

MODE BEAUTÉ NEWS ET SOCIÉTÉ CULTURE PEOPLE LIFESTYLE FOOD HOMMES E-SHOP ADIDAS EQT ⊕

Accueil > Beauté > Soins visage et corps > Beauté : nos envies cool de la semaine  
BEAUTÉ / SOINS VISAGE ET CORPS / MAGAZINE / SOIN / ACTUALITÉ

## Beauté : nos envies cool de la semaine

Par [Joy Pinto](#) Le 21 août 2017

**NEWS BEAUTÉ** - Les dernières nouveautés de soins pour la peau et de maquillage. Pour ne rien rater des nouvelles tendances.

**Le crush** : Profondément réparateur, activateur de hâle, source d'hydratation, ce [baume](#) après-soleil est multitâche. Son plus ? Sa faculté à faire baisser la température de la peau de plus de 3 °C. Souverain après une journée brûlante. Baume Réparateur Réhydratant Sunissime, Liérac, 30 € les 40 ml.

**Ça arrive** : Coiffeur superstar, le Britannique Sam McKnight règne sur les défilés. Aujourd'hui, il part à la conquête des [cheveux](#) de madame-tout-le-monde avec une gamme de coiffants à l'efficacité backstage, c'est-à-dire rapides et modulables. A tester : cette laque aussi puissante que vingt épingles à cheveux, sans effet carton. Easy Up-Do Hair by Sam McKnight, 32 € les 250 ml chez Colette.

**Le look** - Jane Birkin baby-doll assumée : On se rappelle une jeune femme bohème et un peu sauvage. Mais dans les sixties, l'icône anglaise était tout de même bien apprêtée, même en chemin pour la plage. Cheveux dégradés au millimètre, lèvres sculptées au crayon et, surtout, ce regard de poupée longuement travaillé au [mascara](#) en haut et en bas, pour avoir l'air des plus candide. Le secret ? Galber les cils avec une formule volume XXL, avant de les séparer en petit tas de trois ou quatre avec la pointe de la brosse. L'allié : Mascara Paradise Extatic, L'Oréal Paris, 13,90 €.

Où se faire coiffer comme une VIP ? Au Crillon fraîchement rouvert qui cache un salon de [coiffure](#) signé David Lucas, le coiffeur des stars et des Parisiennes exigeantes. Palace oblige, le décor fait la part belle au

marbre et abrite une installation d'Eric Charles-Donatien à base de plumes et de métal martelé. Discrète, une cabine privative permet de vivre un tête-à-tête de quatre heures avec le maître. Coût de l'opération ? 1 000 €. Envie du coup de ciseau de David, mais intimidée par le lieu et le tarif ? Rendez-vous à quelques encablures de là, dans la nouvelle suite concomitante à son salon d'origine, très cosy aussi. A partir de 62 € le forfait shampooing, coupe, coiffage à l'Hôtel de Crillon, 10, place de la Concorde, Paris 8e . Tél. : 01 44 71 15 45.

2,9 : c'est la quantité en kilo de nourriture ingurgitée quotidiennement par un adulte, dont 50 % de boissons. Si les femmes privilégient les yaourts, les compotes, les volailles et les soupes, les hommes sont davantage portés sur le fromage, la viande, la charcuterie et les pommes de terre. Source : Anses 2017.

Notre sélection :

Easy Up-Do Hair by Sam McKnight, 32 € les 250 ml chez Colette

Mascara Paradise Extatic, L'Oréal Paris, 13,90 €

Baume réparateur Réhydratant Sunissime, Liérac, 30 € les 40 m

<https://www.grazia.fr/beaute/soins-visage-corps/beaute-nos-envies-cool-de-la-semaine-864480>



**BRONZE**

- 1. Collier en métal, résine et plumes de dinde, **Moye & Da**, 350 €.
- 2. T-shirt en coton, **Mango**, 50 €. Jupe en molleton, **H&M**, 30 €.
- 3. Pochette en cuir verni, **Surface to Air**, 295 €.
- 4. Derbys compensées en cuir, **Eden**, env. 100 €.

**OR**

- 1. Casquette en métal doré et laine, **Baptiste Viry**, 320 €.
- 2. Veste en cuir, **Oakwood**, 361 €. Pull en laine, **American Vintage**, 165 €. Jogging en molleton, **Joie**, 89 €.
- 3. Cabas en cuir, **Berénice**, 299 €.
- 4. Baskets en cuir, **Sandro**, 295 €.

*Métal urbain*

PAS COTON, LE MOLLETON? POUR L'ILLUMINER, ON MISE SUR LES BONS FASHION MINÉRAIS.

Par Julia Jedlinski

**Killer Chic**

**CUVRE**

- 1. Pull en molleton, **Bellerose**, 108 €. Short en cuir irisé, **Mac Douglas**, 440 €.
- 2. Boots en cuir, **Asos**, 77 €.
- 3. Besace en cuir, **Iro**, 213 €.
- 4. Joncs en argent, **Clio Blue**, de 70 € à 90 €.

# ERIC CHARLES-DONATIEN

## L'HOMME DERRIERE LES PLUMES

Photo©Josef Rusnak

La première fois que j'ai rencontré Eric, c'était à l'occasion d'un shooting, il y a quelques années. J'étais désespérément à la recherche d'ailes d'ange qui ne ressembleraient pas à ces répliques de déguisement de carnaval. Non. Ce que je cherchais moi, c'était le travail subtil et artisanal, pas forcément l'objet gigantesque mais quelque chose de beau et délicat. J'avais déjà entendu parlé de cet artiste ayant travaillé avec les plus grandes maisons et confectionné de ses mains ces créations si extraordinaires qu'elles paraissent irréelles. Irréel c'est bien le mot. Pourquoi accepterait-il de travailler avec moi, styliste photo inconnue noyée dans le milieu avec un book aussi mince qu'un « 20 Minutes » ? C'est donc sans grande conviction que je me décide à contacter Eric Charles-Donatien, artisan plumassier. Quelques heures plus tard, stupéfaction ! Il m'appelle en personne pour parler de mon projet. Une courte conversation et le rendez-vous est fixé.

Installé dans une jolie cour intérieure du quartier montant d'Oberkampf à Paris, Eric me reçoit, me présente son équipe de petites mains qui s'affaire minutieusement à l'élaboration des objets, des bijoux, des robes que l'on verra défiler sur tous les catwalks des grandes capitales de la mode. Son atelier est un lieu de transmission du savoir faire en plumasserie et Eric y met un point d'honneur à l'offrir aux futures générations de créatifs.

Rita Ora Photo-©Vera Wang

AUGUSTE 2017

Ce qui m'a frappé lors de notre rencontre, c'est sa disponibilité. Il est débordé de travail mais prend le temps de te parler et avec une telle bienveillance, qu'il te met de suite à l'aise. Aussi bien qu'au bout de quelques minutes tu as l'impression de parler à une vieille connaissance.

Eric, c'est un passionné, il ne te dira pas à coup de longs monologues, à quel point il aime son métier mais tu le sens, tu le comprends. Diplômé de l'Ecole Duperré et de l'Ecole de la Chambre Syndicale de la Couture Parisienne, il a fait ses classes au sein des ateliers et studios d'Hermès et d'Hanae Mori afin d'acquérir la connaissance des matériaux de luxe. Puis il rejoint le célèbre plumassier français André Lemarié en tant qu'assistant. D'ailleurs, quand il en parle, c'est avec une impression de nostalgie, il dit « Monsieur Lemarié », cette forme de respect entre le maître et l'élève qui persiste. Il est ensuite promu à la tête de la direction artistique de La Maison, ce qui lui confèrera 13 ans de collaborations avec les grandes maisons telles que, Chanel, Dior, Yves Saint Laurent, Jean Paul Gaultier, Roger Vivier, Vera Wang et Roberto Cavalli...rien que ça ! En 2010, il décide de fonder sa compagnie, peut-être par besoin de plus de liberté. Un véritable laboratoire de créativité où il développe MOYE & DA sa marque capsule d'accessoires sur-mesure. Il y associe avec une grande finesse, originalité et connaissance des matières, valorisant le savoir-faire artisanal français.

Je lui explique donc mon dilemme, que je suis à la recherche une paire d'ailes d'ange pour un shooting avec un jeune photographe, que j'ai très peu de temps...et qu'en fait...je suis dans une impasse. Il réfléchit quelques instant et me dit de la manière la plus naturelle possible : « Ecoutes, laisse moi quelques jours, je vais te faire des ailes rien que pour ton shoot ». Voilà, c'est tout Eric, jongler entre les collaborations avec les plus grands noms de la couture et autres projets mais trouver un moment (précieux) pour confectionner une pièce spéciale en un temps record. Un homme à l'écoute qui sait prendre le temps de s'intéresser à chacune des personnes avec qui il travaille, d'aller à la rencontre de chaque créateur pour interpréter et rendre réel, l'image de mode qu'ils ont imaginé. Ca doit être cela, la vraie passion, cette envie de ne jamais s'arrêter et de rien faire à moitié, à n'importe quel prix.

Une boulimie de travail qui ne s'arrête pas à la mode. Le Design: une envie de longue date qu'il a concrétisé par des projets pour des hôtels de luxe et un début de collection d'objets autour de la plume et du métal. Une autre façon de travailler sa matière fétiche, la rendant moderne, unisexe et multi-supports.

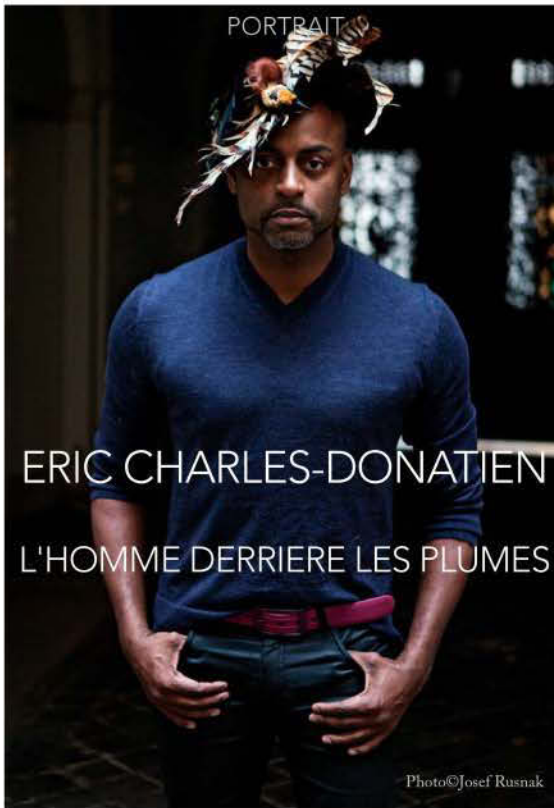
C'est toujours dans le plus grand respect de la tradition et avec une modernité folle qui lui est propre, que le plumassier aux doigts d'argent confectionne ces pièces majestueuses, avec l'idée entêtante que la création doit rester un lien constant entre poésie, philosophie et quête de sens.

www.ericcharlesdonatien.com

Tatiana Terrine

Maison Margiela Artisanal AH 2016

AUGUSTE 2017

Collier Tiger Eyes  
Photo-©KriSS&Nico

Sac Ball - Perrin Paris



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# PRECIOUS

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BY TATIANA TERRINE

A jewel is more than just a valuable rock; it gracefully adorns a woman's body, playing with the beauty of grandeur and the feminine side of her personality. The BLUR brings the best of evergreen precious jewels and cast a work of art with jewellery on the delicate canvas of a woman's skin.

*Photographer* Yannick Saint-Val  
*Artistic Director & Stylist* Tatiana Terrine  
*Hair* Virginie Moisson  
*Make-Up* Delphine Perrot  
*Models* Marha & Nicole @Studio KLRP



Necklace NANOUK JEWEL

Feather necklace MOYE & DA PARIS by ERIC CHARLES DONATTEN



Necklace JOANNA LAURA CONSTANTINE

Double ring JOANNA LAURA CONSTANTINE

Flower bracelet OUTHOUSE

Cuff JOANNA LAURA CONSTANTINE



Necklace NANOUK, JEWEL

Long necklace OUTHOUSE



Earrings OUTHOUSE Necklars OUTHOUSE

優れた逸品には、必ずそれを支える職人技がひそむ。羽根細工、クロコ、鉄工……各界で絶大な信頼を得ている職人たちの技を紹介しよう。

meister  
001  
羽根細工  
Feathers

パリの華麗なるオートクチュールを支える、  
創造的な羽根職人は何を生み出したのか。



エリックさんは、エルメスやマルセル・マロ・ロジューを経てルマリエへ。羽根のアクセサリは彼の発案。



羽根で「エリックセサリ」を作るエリックさん。微妙なニワスはうして作られていく。



アトリエの一角には蒸気が噴き出す器が置かれ、職人たちがうたり来たりしながら使用。



エリックさんからの提案でエメリック・フランソワさん(写真)とのコラボが実現。



ニューヨークでのデザイナーらとの打ち合わせに持っていったサンプル。羽根の可能性を提案。



稀少性が高かったり、捕獲が禁止された鳥の羽根も多数ストック。夢のような逸品を製作する。

**羽根細工の老舗アトリエを、  
新機軸で蘇らせた。**

シャネル、デイオール、ジバンシイ、華麗なパリ・オートクチュールを、最高級の羽根細工で支えるのが創業1880年のルマリエだ。パリ10区のアトリエでは職人たちがせつせと手を動かしている。「ここはこうして」と手本を見せて指示を与える人物こそ、アトリエ・テイック・ディレクター、エリック・シャルルドナシアンさんだ。

いまから9年前、エリックさんの羽根を使ったコレクションのコレクシオンがルマリエの創業者の孫、アンドレ・ルマリエの目にとまった。新しいテクニクやアイデアが生まれなくなつたメゾンを危惧する彼は、すぐさまエリックさんを工房に迎え入れる。市場に合った新しい感性が必要だつたのだ。「僕は素材の新しい面を引き出そうとしていた。羽根を羽根ではないようなアイデアで作つたり、布とメラージュしたり、新しい技術で表現したりね」エリックさんは、デザイナーからの依頼に応えるのみならず、自分からテ

ザイナーに提案する職人だ。羽根と布を組み合わせたサンプルを自分で作りデザイナーに見せる。このサンプルから服が考えられることもあるという。若いデザイナーとのコラボレーションも老舗に活気を与えることになった。28歳の若きオートクチュリエ、エメリック・フランソワさんとの仕事はそのひとつ。出来上がったのは、モダンな2つの感性と伝統の技が見事にミックスしたコレクションだつた。「エリックは予想外のアイデアを出してくれる。この黒いドレスには黒い羽根を想像していたが、彼が雄鶏の羽根を提案したんだ」とエメリックさん。また、1年前からエリックさんの発案でアクセサリのラインを開始。これも新マーケット開拓の一環だ。オートクチュールは万人のものではないが、アクセサリであれば多くの人がルマリエの職人技に触れることができる。「ルマリエが唯一無二なのは素材への繊細な感性と製作の質の高さなんだ」と語るエリックさん。彼は老舗のDNAを尊重しつつ、新風を吹き込むミッシオンに取り組んでいる。

# CHIMÈRE AU CRILLON

Crillon Chimère



111 Eric Charles-Donatien est passé maître dans l'art de transfigurer un plumage en création.



**L'Hôtel de Crillon a chargé le designer-plumassier Eric Charles-Donatien de concevoir un habillement pour une alcôve dans le salon de coiffure. In situ, il a imaginé une œuvre sur-mesure qu'il a baptisée Chimère.** The Crillon

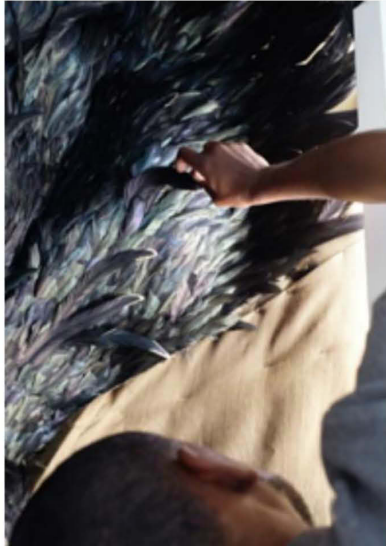
Hôtel commissioned the feather designer Eric Charles-Donatien to create a dressing for an alcove in the hair salon. In situ, he imagined a customized creation that he called Chimère.

« Je cherche à fabriquer des objets procurant de véritables émotions, suscitant analyse, introspection et méditation, et envoyant des énergies positives. » Ainsi Eric Charles-Donatien s'exprime-t-il sur son métier, dans lequel il est passé maître dans l'art de transfigurer un plumage en création, et ce, aussi bien dans la mode que dans la bijouterie ou la décoration. Initié à cette spécialité par le plumassier André Lemarié, il se sent investi d'une mission, celle de pérenniser ce métier rare : « pour donner une légitimité à un artisanat, il faut le transmettre. Je suis en charge des valeurs et principes de cet artisanat et je suis responsable d'un patrimoine, celui de la maison Lemarié, que je me dois de chérir, nourrir et entretenir ».

Le monde du luxe a compris l'urgence de remettre l'artisanat au cœur de ses intérêts. Pour preuve, l'exposition Homo Faber, qui s'est tenue à Venise fin septembre et à laquelle Eric Charles-Donatien a été invité à participer.

« Homo Faber représente le stade ultime de la visibilité de l'artisanat, explique le designer-plu-

« I'm looking to craft objects providing real feelings, sparking analysis, introspection and meditation, and sending positive energies. This is how Eric Charles-Donatien expresses himself on his craft, in which he is a master in the art of transfiguring a plumage into creation, in fashion as well as in jewelry or decoration. Trained to this speciality by the feather-worker André Lemarié, he feels invested with a mission which is to perpetuate this rare profession: "to give a legitimacy to a craft, it must be transmitted. I am in charge of values and principles for this craft and I am responsible for a heritage, that of the Lemarié house, which I must cherish, feed and maintain". The luxury world understands the urgency of putting crafts at the heart of its interests. As proof, the Homo Faber exhibition, held in Venice at the end of September and to which Eric Charles-Donatien was invited to participate. "Homo Faber represents the ultimate visibility stage for craftsmanship," says the feather-designer, adding: "this



massier, ajoutant : « cette exposition a mis l'objet à l'honneur, la phase suivante sera la valorisation du travail de la main ».

Le jour où l'architecte d'intérieur Tristan Auer lui a proposé de concevoir un habillage de plumes pour un plafond du salon de coiffure de l'Hôtel de Crillon, place de la Concorde, Eric Charliés-Donatien a commencé à dessiner l'alcôve telle qu'il l'imaginait : un tableau où la cliente allait jouer le rôle principal. Lorsqu'elle s'assoit sur le sofa, près de la fenêtre qui ouvre sur un jardin exotique, elle découvre au-dessus de sa tête une rosace centrale de plumes de paon vert clair, qui se prolonge en une sculpture de plumes de coq bronze et se termine par des plumes en laiton martelés qui descendent le long des parois. « C'est une allégorie du couronnement de la femme assise dans le canapé », commente le créateur. « Les plumes naturelles se transforment en plumes de métal, comme des honneurs figés ». A mi-chemin entre une sculpture et une œuvre qui s'anime, il a baptisé sa réalisation Chimère. Sans une présence physique, difficile d'appréhender réellement cette alcôve. Tandis que sur place, une fois assis, ce plafond singulier provoque à la fois choc visuel et sensation d'harmonie : il joue un rôle transitoire entre la nature luxuriante du jardin privatif et la sobriété des tonalités du salon de coiffure en marbre et boiseries claires. Une forme de lien organique qui fascine le visiteur et l'interpelle.

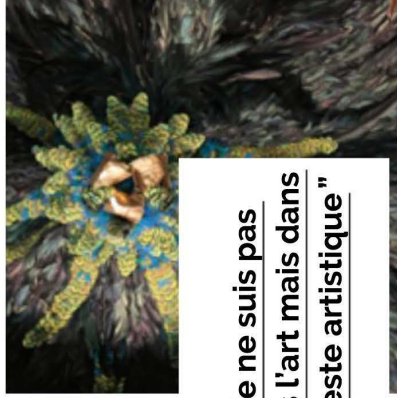
« Je ne suis pas dans l'art mais dans le geste artistique. Je ne crée pas des œuvres mais des objets », commente le designer-plumassier,

exhibition has put the object in the spotlight, the next phase will be the valuation of hand work.

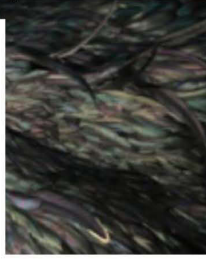
When the interior designer Tristan Auer offered him to design a feather dressing for a ceiling of the Crillon Hotel Hair salon on place of Concorde, Eric Charliés-Donatien began to draw the alcove as he imagined it: a painting where the client was going to play the main role. When she sits on the sofa near the window that opens onto an exotic garden, she discovers above her head a central rosette of light green peacock feathers, which extends into a sculpture of bronze cock feathers, and ends with hammered brass feathers that descend along the walls. "It's an allegory of the coronation of the woman sitting on the couch," says the creator. "Natural feathers turn into metal feathers, like frozen honors." Halfway between a sculpture and a work that comes alive, he christened his realization Chimère ("Mirage"). Without a physical presence, it is difficult to really apprehend this alcove. While on the spot, once seated, this singular ceiling causes both visual shock and feeling of harmony: it plays a transitory role between the lush nature of the private garden and the sober tones of the marble hair salon and light woodwork. A form of organic bond that fascinates the visitor and challenges her.

## OBJECTS

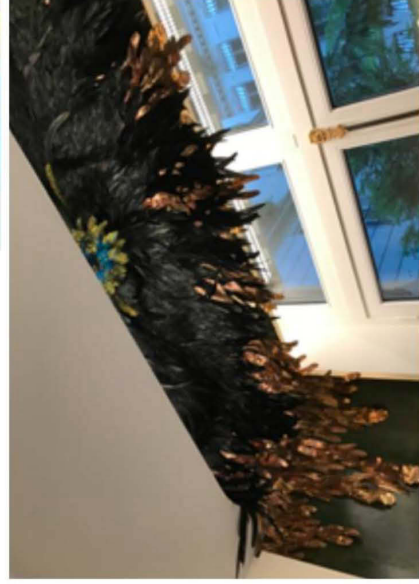
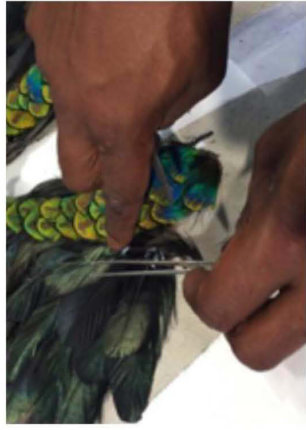
"I am not into art but in the artistic gesture. I do not create pieces but objects," says the feather-designer, anxious for his creations to be visible in everyday life and not exclusively intended for galleries and museums. To make the Chimère fresco, he worked for a month in the hairdressing salon where he hammered the metal elements of the plumage of this strange animal that spreads its wings. A few days before the Crillon Hotel reopened to the public, he locked himself in his Parisian studio to finish arranging one by one the feathers of peacock and bronze rooster on the three-dimensional structure in the shape of a star, that he then deposited on the alcove ceiling. For him, the feather craft is not limited to only technical knowledge. It is a know-how, an understanding of the environment and



## " Je ne suis pas dans l'art mais dans le geste artistique "



12 | Exposé au Crillon, la dernière création d'Eric Charliés-Donatien est spectaculaire.





## UNE BELLE PLUME

Publié le **juillet 30, 2014**



J'ai rencontré hier un homme qui travaille les plumes comme un poète. L'ensemble de ses créations sont des poésies de douceur et de légèreté. Mais, plus qu'un poète, il est aussi un visionnaire, et il peut vous customiser une chaussure Zara ou Louboutin, et en les transformant, il ringardise les marques qui les ont créées.

Un poète qui a l'image d'Alexandre Dumas, nous fait venir à Marseille des millions de Chinois par an par le seul fait que ceux-ci ont lu le Comte de Monte-Christo à l'école et veulent venir visiter le château d'If. C'est la France de Voltaire, de Hugo, Camus.. C'est la France de la diversité et du mélange des cultures. C'est la France qui fait de notre pays un pays de créateurs. Pour les comptables, voir la Grande-Bretagne !


Jusqu'au XVIIIe siècle, le costume s'est largement paré de plumes mais cet usage était quasi-exclusivement masculin. Avant la Révolution, les plumassiers sont associés aux fleuristes et aux marchandes de modes. Sous l'influence de son "ministre des modes" Rose Bertin, Marie-Antoinette cède à une folie des plumes devenue féminine et orne ses coiffures de "plumasseries", toutes plus extravagantes les unes que les autres.

À la Belle Époque, les chapeaux sont encombrants, surchargés, au point de ressembler à de véritables nids. Ce sont parfois des ailes entières et des têtes d'oiseaux empaillées qui ornent les coiffures féminines. Au tournant de la Première Guerre Mondiale, les chapeaux se font moins volumineux et les plumes se portent en aigrette, travaillées telle une matière précieuse, associées à l'or et au diamant. Présente sous forme de houpette, de boa ou de parure de col jusqu'à la Seconde Guerre Mondiale, la plume tombe ensuite quelque peu en désuétude.



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<https://parishaute.wordpress.com/2014/07/30/une-belle-plume/#more-2266>

ft.com/frontpage Europe  All times are London time

# FINANCIAL TIMES

December 6, 2013 6:41 pm

## Feathers are having a moment in the world of interiors and design

By Gisela Williams



The fashion world has gone mad for feathers, from Louis Vuitton's ostrich-feathered headdresses to Dries Van Noten sandals embellished with ostrich, goose and pheasant feathers. In a smaller but no less dramatic way, feathers are also having a moment in the world of interiors and design.

Feathers have, of course, been used decoratively for millennia, in fashion and ritual, in cultures from Africa to the Americas. One of the most compelling design-related exhibitions now on (until early March) is a collection of ancient feathered wall hangings at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. The 12 stunning panels, each about 7ft by 2ft, were discovered rolled up in large ceramic jars in 1943 in the valley of Ocoña in Peru. More than 1000 years old, the panels were made in southern Peru during the era of the Wari empire. They are covered with thousands of blue and yellow macaw feathers, and look almost avant-garde today.

Contemporary feather wallcoverings from the Nest collection by F. Schumacher & Co, a New York-based decorative textiles company, are in more subtle hues. Twenty-four different patterns have been created by arranging humanely gathered feathers on paperbacked panels.

"Feathers are in the air," says Dara Caponigro, creative director at Schumacher. "They are organic, utilitarian, and the colour and texture found in a feather are so special. For us, they are like jewels." The three-yard long panels are made in Taiwan. William Stubbs, a US interior designer, used several dozen panels of dark blue, iridescent overlapping feathers to cover the walls of a master bathroom. "The colour was beyond beautiful, very intoxicating and hypnotic," says Stubbs, who is based in Houston. "The results were stunning."

Equally stunning was an installation at London's Clerkenwell Design Week in May by Tracy Kendall, an award-winning British wallpaper designer. Kendall presented Black Swan, a wall of shimmery black feathers sewn on to paper. Prices are available upon request.

**Eric Charles-Donatien** attracted a lot of attention at the Maison&Objet show in Paris last year with his eccentric sculpture-like pieces: a 2m metal lamp pierced with gold-dipped feathers; a hanging mobile-like object of real and metal feathers – half-dreamcatcher, half-necklace; and a centrepiece of metal scales embedded with feathers.

“I wanted to show the art of working with feathers in a different, meaningful way,” says Charles-Donatien, who was design director at Maison Lemarié for many years. When it comes to feathers, Charles-Donatien is considered a master artisan by the world's most prestigious couture houses. “When I first started working with feathers, they were used mostly for expensive showpieces and costumes for a stage spectacle. Now they are considered a mainstream fashion embellishment like embroidery. That's why, a few years ago, I started to push working with feathers even further – into the home.”

Charles-Donatien is working on two hotel projects – one in London and the other in Paris – both of which use feathers with lighting, a combination which appears to be inspiring designers around the globe. Take, for example, the glamorous 1920s-style chandelier of ostrich feathers created by South African designer Haldane Martin and the whimsical crocheted chandelier embellished with grey feathers from Italian designer Loredana Bonora for a show last year at the Plusdesign Gallery in Milan.

“There is something so warm and beautiful about light going through feathers,” says Heike Buchfelder, founder of the Berlin design company Pluma Cubic. Since 2005, Buchfelder has been designing lights with feathers sprouting from cylinders or spheres of canvas. Tosa, a recent design, is a towering standard lamp with an enormous sphere of flame-dyed goose feathers, resembling a giant red dandelion or a Dr Seuss illustration.

“Feathers are fascinating,” Buchfelder says. “It's amazing how nature works. When feathers get dirty and broken from wind or water, they can be repaired by being smoothed over. The individual threads work like zippers.” Buchfelder only uses feathers from geese and chickens, birds raised to be eaten. Her lights can be found in the restaurant of the Ashmolean museum in Oxford and Lufthansa's VIP lounge in Munich.

“Feathers are naturally built to be dirt-repellent,” she says. “Their surfaces are smooth and any dust that lands on the feathers can be easily removed. They are also extremely durable, thanks to their hornlike quills. Under the right conditions, they can last for centuries, as is the case with traditional feather ornaments created by native tribes in North and South America.”

Artists such as Rebecca Horn are also using feathers to powerful effect. Her feather sculptures of wings – such as “Cockatoo Mask” and “Black Cockfeathers” – are in the Tate collection. And lately, the British artist Kate MccGwire is gaining a reputation

for her sculptures and installations made using feathers, which are both menacing and beautiful.

MccGwire grew up exploring the waterways of Norwich, east England. Fascinated by birds and taxidermy, she has been creating installations and sculptures from feathers for almost a decade. Next year is set to be an important one for her, with exhibitions of her work at MoMu, the fashion museum in Antwerp, and the Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature in Paris.

Works such as “Flail”, an object that resembles the knotted neck of a black swan contained in a glass case that seems too small to hold it, looks like a piece of taxidermy of a creature from another world. Installations such as “Evacuate”, a twister-shaped flood of feathers exploding from an oven, conveys the impression of something wild being released.

“Nature is beautiful and wonderful but it’s also tricky and brutal,” says MccGwire in her studio on the Thames. “I work very hard to achieve a creature that looks like it could be real.”

MccGwire is endlessly interested in feathers. “They are incredibly light but also incredibly strong,” she says. “They are the most unbelievable colours. Even with a black crow there is an amazing range of hues. If you look at the feathers on the wing of a magpie, there are these exotic petrol blues. I want to celebrate the incredible colours that we overlook.

“People ask me when I am going to move on from feathers,” she continues, “But each time I make a piece, I think about the next object I want to make.”



‘Quell’ (detail), by Kate MccGwire



A sculpture by Eric Charles-Donatien

<http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/2/11eaf712-5786-11e3-86d1-00144feabdc0.html>

**LES ESSENTIELS**  
d'Anne Valérie Hash



**D**éjà dix ans (fêtés durant la couture, ci-contre) que cette créatrice parisienne mène bien sa barque. Nouveauté de cette saison: le lancement du label AVHashBY qui se concentre sur ses essentiels à prix juste. [www.a-v-h.com](http://www.a-v-h.com).



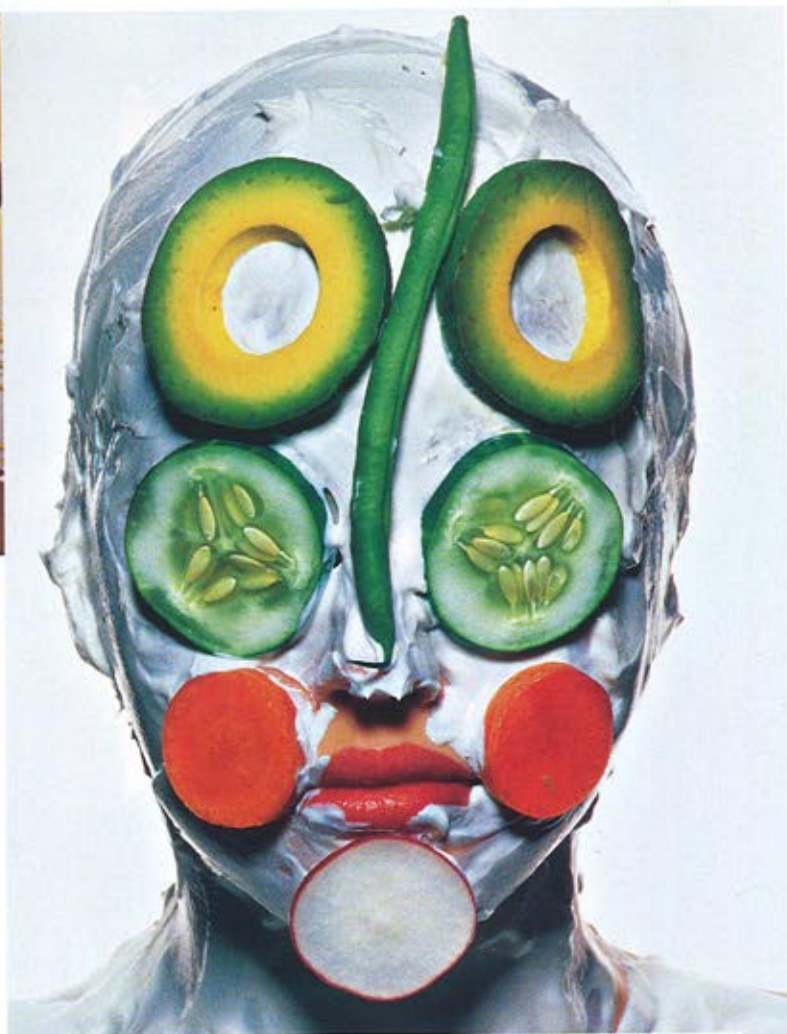
**La valse Dior**

Une merveille de technologie, cette montre Dior VIII Grand Bal! Editée en série limitée, les mouvements de sa masse oscillante évoquent une corolle de dentelle ou un plissé constellé de diamants. So chic! (disponible début novembre). Rens. 01 40 73 73 73.



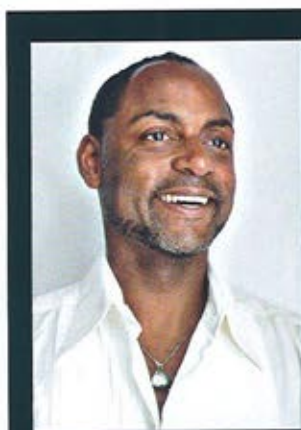
**EXOTIQUE**  
**Barbara Bui**

**P**ython et croco se fauflent dans les collections de la créatrice parisienne sous forme de sacs en cuirs précieux. [www.barbarabui.fr](http://www.barbarabui.fr).



**Fantasmagories**  
**D'ISSEY MIYAKE**

**L**e designer nippon célèbre sa longue collaboration avec le photographe Irving Penn via une rétrospective « Visual Dialogue » au sein de sa fondation, à Tokyo. Autre actu: la publication de la saga « Pleats Please » aux éditions Taschen. [www.2121designsight.jp](http://www.2121designsight.jp).



**Moye & Da**  
**en son écrin**

Longtemps directeur artistique de Lemarié, spécialisé dans la plume, Eric Charles-Donatien a fini par vouloir voler de ses propres ailes. Mieux encore, sa ligne de bijoux et d'accessoires a désormais un écrin au 4, rue Montesquieu, Paris 1<sup>er</sup>.







Thierry Jérouzet

Body corseté de petites  
plumes en dégradé de rose,  
ZAHIA DEHAR  
Chapeau en feutre,  
EL PASO BOOTY

Body corseté de petites plumes  
en dégradé de rose,  
ZAHIA DEHAR



# CITIZEN

Monica Bellucci porte une jupe veau rasé imprimé léopard, empiècements cuir nappa noir rivetés, **BOTTEGA VENETA**. Chemise soie noire détails matelassés, **CHANEL**. Collier *Camélia Solaire*, diamants sur or blanc. Bagues *Vendôme Lion*, diamants sur or jaune et *San Marco*, diamants, saphirs et perles sur or jaune. Les 3, **CHANEL JOAILLERIE**. Montre *Diamond Fury*, diamants et onyx noir sur or gris, **AUDEMARS PIGUET**

PHOTO SANDRINE DULIERMO & MICHAEL LABICA

Accessoires,  
Montres  
& Bijoux

# CITIZEN



Monica Bellucci porte un fourreau drap de laine et maille ajourée, **ALAÏA**. Bras renard et plumes de coq noirs, **QUENTIN VÉRON**. Boucles d'oreilles, collier et bracelet nacre et diamants sur or rose, collection *Serpenti* **BVLGARI**

PHOTO SANDRINE DULERMO & MICHAEL LABICA

## Mode

# CITIZENIK

PHOTO: SANDRINE DULLERMO & MICHAEL LABICA

Monica Bellucci est mise en beauté avec le maquillage **DOLCE & GABBANA** Teint *Classic 60*, poudre *Ivory 1*. Yeux *Contrast 145*, *Glamliner Black Intense 1*, *Volumized Lashes Intense 1*, rouge, *Dolce Rosa 222*. Robe tulle noir drapé, **DOLCE & GABBANA**. Colliers *Mosaic*, diamants blancs, **DE BEERS**. Boucles d'oreilles *Paris Nouvelle Vague*, diamants sur or rose, **CARTIER**

## Beauté

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