

MEDUSA Jewellery and Taboos

19 May - 5 November 2017

Press preview: 18 May 2017, 11 am – 2 pm

Preview: 18 May 2017, 6 pm – 10 pm

The Musée d'Art moderne de la Ville de Paris presents MEDUSA, an exhibition taking a contemporary and unprecedented look at jewellery, unveiling a number of taboos.

Just like the face of Medusa in Greek mythology, a piece of jewellery attracts and troubles the person who designs it, looks at it or wears it. While it is one of the most ancient and universal forms of human expression, jewellery has an ambiguous status, mid-way between fashion and sculpture, and is rarely considered to be a work of art. Indeed, it is often perceived as too close to the body, too **feminine**, **precious**, **ornamental** or **primitive**.

But it is thanks to avant-garde artists and contemporary designers that it has been reinvented, transformed and detached from its own traditions.

In the wake of the museum's series of joint and cross-disciplinary exhibitions, such as "L'Hiver de l'Amour", "Playback" and "Decorum", MEDUSA questions the traditional art boundaries by reconsidering, with the complicity of artists, the questions of craftsmanship, decoration, fashion and pop culture.

The exhibition brings together over 400 pieces of jewellery: created by **artists** (Anni Albers, Man Ray, Meret Oppenheim, Alexander Calder, Salvador Dalí, Louise Bourgeois, Lucio Fontana, Niki de Saint Phalle, Fabrice Gygi, Thomas Hirschhorn, Danny McDonald, Sylvie Auvray...), avant-garde jewellery makers and **designers** (René Lalique, Suzanne Belperron, Line Vautrin, Art Smith, Tony Duquette, Bless, Nervous System...), **contemporary jewellery makers** (Gijs Bakker, Otto Künzli, Karl Fritsch, Dorothea Prühl, Seulgi Kwon, Sophie Hanagarth...) and also **high end jewelers** (Cartier, Van Cleef & Arpels, Victoire de Castellane, Buccellati...), as well as **anonymous**, **more ancient or non-Western** pieces (including prehistorical and medieval works, punk and rappers' jewellery as well as costume jewellery etc.).

These pieces, well-known, little-known, unique, familiar, handmade, massproduced, or computer made, mix some refined, hand-wrought, amateur and even futuristic aesthetics which are rarely associated together. They sometimes go far beyond simple jewellery and explore other means of engaging with, and putting on, jewellery.

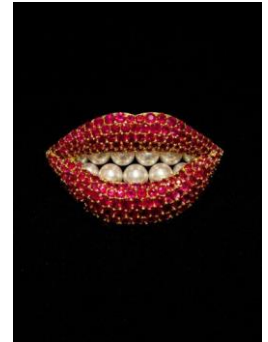
The exhibition is organized around four themes with a specific display for each: **Identity**, **Value**, **Body** and **Instruments**. Each section starts from the often negative preconceptions surrounding jewellery in order to better deconstruct them, and finally reveal jewellery's underlying **subversive and performative potential**.

Fifteen works and installations **by contemporary artists** (Mike Kelley, Leonor Antunes, Jean-Marie Appriou, Atelier EB, Liz Craft...) dot the exhibition, echoing the themes of its various sections. The works presented question related issues of decoration and ornament, and anchor our connection to jewellery within a broadened relationship to the body and the world.

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Salvador Dalí reproduction by
Henryk Kaston
Ruby Lips, 1970-80
Miami, Private Collection
Photo : Robin Hill

Director:

Fabrice Hergott

Curator:

Anne Dressen

In collaboration with Michèle Heuzé
and Benjamin Lignel, scientific
advisors

Practical information

Musée d'Art moderne
de la Ville de Paris
11 Avenue du Président Wilson
75116 Paris
Tel. +33 1 53 67 40 00
www.mam.paris.fr

Open Tuesday to Sunday

From 10 am to 6 pm

Late-night opening on Thursdays until
10 pm

Catalogue published by Paris Musées
€ 39.90

Tickets

Full-price: € 10

Concessions: € 7

Cultural offering

Information and reservations

Tel. +33 1 53 67 40 80

Press relations officer

Maud Ohana

maud.ohana@paris.fr

Tel. +33 1 53 67 40 51

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