

An Extravagant High-Jewelry Season in Paris

By Marie Chabrol



An 18K white gold manchette (cuff bracelet) set with 22 marquise-cut blue sapphires (approximately 23.54 carats) and diamonds. Feathers marquetry. Unique piece. (Courtesy of Piaget)



Top: An 18K white gold ring set with a pear-shaped emerald from Colombia (12.06 carats) and diamonds. Unique Piece. (Courtesy of Piaget)

Middle: An 18K white gold ring set with a cushion-cut emerald from Colombia (9.75 carats) and diamonds. Unique Piece. (Courtesy of Piaget)

Bottom: An 8K white gold ring set with one cushion-cut unheated pink sapphire from Ceylon (4.09 carats) and diamonds. (Courtesy of Piaget)

During the month of July, Paris was - for a week - the center of the fashion world. If January is an important period for the important high-jewelry houses, the first week of July is definitely the place to be for everyone involved in the jewelry industry. For a few days, international fashion reporters gravitated around the Place Vendôme with its famous brands, while independent jewelry designers were also ready to go into battle as they unveiled their new high-jewelry collections.

This year, the Place Vendôme had changed a little bit and there were some important developments that need to be noted. Lorenz Baümer opened a new store next to their first premises after holding a "destruction party" for the event, and stands alongside Graff Diamonds which has chosen to become a new member of the golden square. Graff unveiled an impressive 105-carat D-FL diamond called 'The Graff Vendôme' cut from a 314-carat stone found in Lesotho.

Meanwhile, Alexandre Réza launched a new corner location in the Ritz Hotel, finally reopened to the public after a long-time closure for renovation. A perfect place for holding presentations, Chanel, Giampiero Bodino, Réza and Suzane Syz were pleased to address the industry press at the heart of this luxury hotel.

If the collections were all very different, many were focused on an ear of wheat, which is definitely a trend for this year, with Chanel, Chaumet

and Boucheron having decided to reinterpret it. Chanel paid the most beautiful tribute with 'Les blés de Chanel' featuring more than 60 jewels dedicated to wheat. It was impossible to miss the impressive diamonds: the 'Epi solaire' ring set with a rare 5.4-carat fancy vivid orange yellow stone graded by the GIA, or the 'Epi Vendôme' ring set with a luminous 18.2-carat Muzo emerald. But, above all, one of the most impressive masterpieces of this collection was the 'Fête des Moissons', a necklace set with a 25-carat fancy intense yellow (GIA).

In addition to wheat, plants were also the source of inspiration for many jewelry items, such as the ones that Chaumet chose for its new and colourful opus. A kindly and opulent nature inspired Claire Devé-Rakoff, Chaumet's Artistic Director since 2012, with buds, leaves, fruit and blooming flowers from lilies, bay and oak trees set with Burmese or Madagascan sapphires, spinels from Tajikistan, and paraiba-like tourmalines from Mozambique.

'Appartement de Mesdames' ring: 18K yellow, white and pink gold, darkened silver, diamonds and ruby. (Courtesy of Dior)



Bottom: 'Salon de l'Abondance' ring: 18K yellow and pink gold, darkened silver, diamonds, yellow diamonds and pink sapphires. (Courtesy of Dior)



'Salon de l'Abondance' brooch: 18K white and pink gold, darkened silver, diamonds and sapphire. (Courtesy of Dior)

JEWELRY TRENDS AND DESIGNS

An 18K white gold necklace set with blue calcedony, diamonds and a 43.05-carat green beryl. (Courtesy of Louis Vuitton)

An 18K white gold ring set with an 8.59-carat Australian opal and diamonds. (Courtesy of Louis Vuitton)

'Racines célestes', a ring in 18K white gold, set with an oval-cut pink spinel weighing 8.25 carats, round pink sapphires and brilliant-cut diamonds. (Courtesy of Chaumet)

'Promesse de l'aube', a ring made of 18K white gold, set with a cushion-cut indicolite tourmaline weighing 16.13 carats, a round Mandarin garnet, round pink sapphires and brilliant-cut diamonds. (Courtesy of Chaumet)

'Métamorphoses de Daphné', a brooch in 18K white gold, set with five oval-cut pink spinels from Tajikistan weighing 2.72, 1.96, 1.88, 1.86 and 1.83 carats, and brilliant-cut diamonds. (Courtesy of Chaumet)

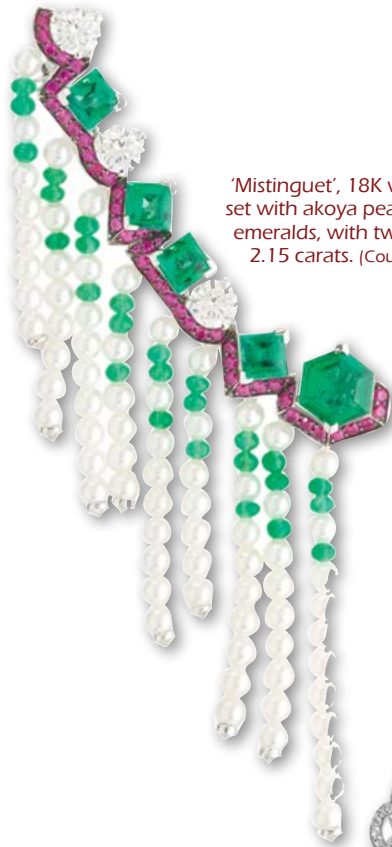
One of the masterpieces was the necklace 'Firmament Apolinien' featuring a beautiful 34.36-carat Burmese sapphire. And we have to mention the 'Métamorphoses de Daphné' brooch set with five pink spinels with weights ranging from 2.72 to 1.83 carats and the 'Promesse de l'Aube' ring with a mesmerizing 16.13-carat indicolite tourmaline.

Years ago, French high-jewelry was set only with diamonds, sapphires, rubies or emeralds. For sure, it's now different to see how the main jewelry houses and independent designers are filled with enthusiasm for all the colorful natural gemstones that are available. This season was focused on top-quality single stones with luminous garnets, bright spinels, impressive opals or tourmalines from all over the world, and especially from Africa. These included Piaget with a 5.31-carat unheated Madagascan pink sapphire, a 6.05-carat yellow sapphire from Ceylon, and a 6.39-carat spinel from Tanzania; Louis Vuitton with a perfectly matched pair of 12.47 and 12.29-carat red spinels, a 43.05-carat green beryl and a rare ensemble of Merelani Hills mint garnet; Giampiero Bodino with a 23.58-carat tourmaline on a Passameneria ring; Alexandre Réza with old-mine unheated sapphires, and a 4.26-carat Burmese spinel; as well as dazzling pieces from Chaumet and Dior.

18K white gold earrings set with red spinels weighing 12.47 carats and 12.29 carats, Australian opals and diamonds. (Courtesy of Louis Vuitton)

18K white gold earrings set with Merelani Hills tsavorite mint garnets, onyx and diamonds. (Courtesy of Louis Vuitton)

'Firmament apollinien', a necklace in 18K white gold, set with a cushion-cut Burmese sapphire weighing 34.36 carats, moonstone motifs, fancy-shaped sapphires, and brilliant and marquise-cut diamonds. (Courtesy of Chaumet)



'Mistinguett', 18K white gold earrings set with akoya pearls, diamonds, rubies, emeralds, with two center stones of 2.15 carats. (Courtesy of John Rubel)



'La Divine', 18K white gold set with diamonds, rubies and an unheated Mozambican 4.09-carat ruby. (Courtesy of John Rubel)



'Jolie môme' an 18K white gold ring set with white and black diamonds, an unheated 4.14-carat Mozambican sapphire. (Courtesy of John Rubel)

'Farandoles', 18K pink gold earrings featuring 18 spinel beads weighing 26.11 carats and brilliant-cut diamonds weighing 4.90 carats. (Courtesy of Alexandre Réza)



'Dune', an 18K pink gold cuff bracelet featuring two pear-shaped diamonds and 152 brilliant-cut diamonds weighing 31.48 carats. (Courtesy of Alexandre Réza)



'Toi et Moi', an 18K white gold ring featuring a pear-shaped Burmese spinel weighing 4.26 carats and a pear-shaped diamond weighing 4.19 carats. (Courtesy of Alexandre Réza)

'Lys Radiant', an 18K white gold brooch set with a 20.08-carat pear-shape fancy yellow diamond and rock crystal paved with white diamonds. (Courtesy of Boucheron)



'Plume de Paon', 18K white gold set with diamonds and a 24.37-carat morganite. (Courtesy of Boucheron)



'Hôtel Particulier', an 18K white gold necklace set with moonstones, mother-of-pearl, diamonds, rock crystal, black lacquer and a 21.80-carat yellow sapphire. (Courtesy of Boucheron)

'Hôtel Particulier', an 18K white and yellow gold ring set with diamonds, black lacquer and a 7.75-carat yellow sapphire. (Courtesy of Boucheron)



'Cape de Lumière' in 18K yellow gold, diamonds and a 81.61-carat engraved citrine. (Courtesy of Boucheron)





'Belle Epoque', 18K red gold earrings set with diamonds and pink sapphires. (Courtesy of Suzanne Syz)



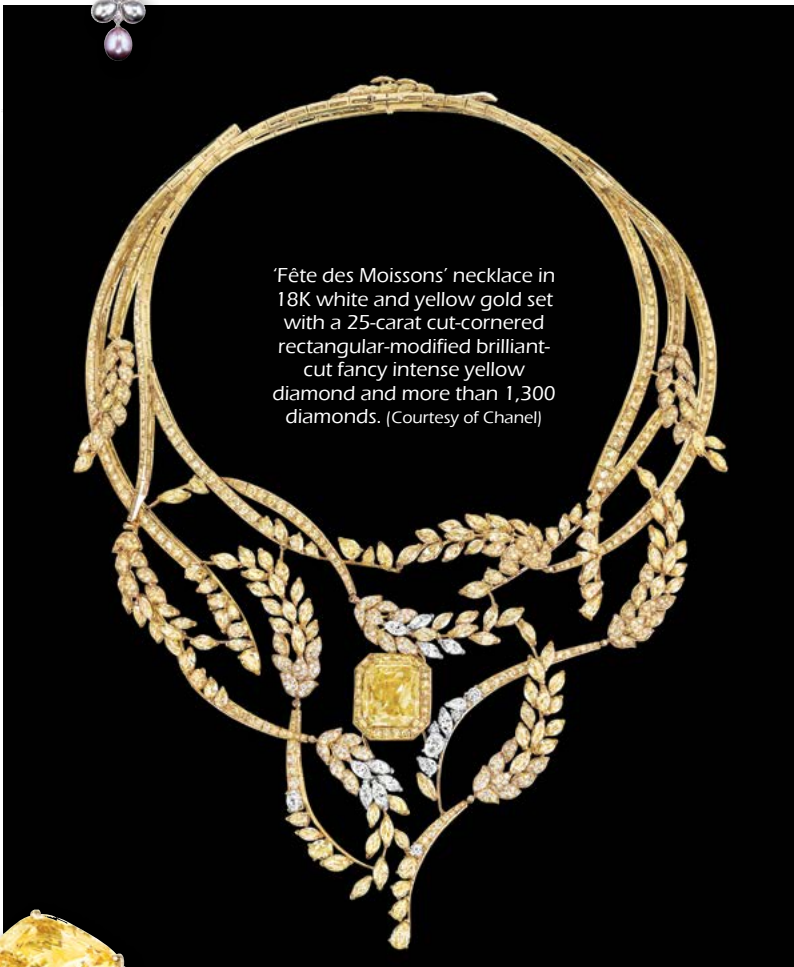
'The Sleeping Beauty', an 18K white gold brooch set with diamonds and freshwater pearls. (Courtesy of Suzanne Syz)

A titanium cuff bracelet featuring a 76-carat rose-cut diamond. (Courtesy of Suzanne Syz)



Among our favourite jewels and stones in these wonderful different creations where unusual precious materials are set in gold and platinum or alongside diamonds were: colorful birds feathers at Piaget, thank to the impressive know-how of Nelly Saunier who was the feather worker for Jean Paul Gaultier's Haute Couture collections. Piaget Artistic Director Stephanie Sivrière created a beautiful mix of couture fine crafts and jewelry. And then there was blackened silver chosen by Victoire de Castellane for Dior reinterpreting with a great modernity antique jewelry techniques and classical patterns from Versailles. This was definitely one of our favorite collections of this year and it's really difficult to choose favorite jewels from the 'Galerie des Glaces', 'Salon de Diane' or 'Salon de l'Abondance' collections.

Traditional precious gemstones were seen everywhere this year, especially emeralds from Colombia and Zambia. After far-reaching campaigns concerning emeralds from the Muzo mines in recent years, Colombian emeralds made a powerful comeback on the Place Vendôme. But Gemfields' emeralds from Kagen weren't outdone. Gemologists were keen to see



'Fête des Moissons' necklace in 18K white and yellow gold set with a 25-carat cut-cornered rectangular-modified brilliant-cut fancy intense yellow diamond and more than 1,300 diamonds. (Courtesy of Chanel)

'Épi Solaire' ring in platinum and 18K yellow gold set with a pear-cut 5.4-carat fancy vivid orange-yellow diamond and diamonds. (Courtesy of Chanel)



'Moisson d'Or' ring in 18K white and yellow gold set with a 17.1-carat cushion-cut yellow sapphire and diamonds. (Courtesy of Chanel)

'L'Épi' brooch in platinum and 18K yellow gold set with diamonds and various colored stones – garnets, tourmalines, beryl and peridots. (Courtesy of Chanel)



'Passamaneria', an 18K white gold ring set with diamonds and a sugar-loaf antique tourmaline. (Courtesy of Giampiero Bodino)



'Drapée Majestueux', an 18K white gold necklace, diamonds and 150 emerald beads for a total of 244.24 carats from Zambia. Reversible necklace. (Courtesy of Van Cleef and Arpels)

'Canopée', an 18K white gold ring, platinum, diamonds and one emerald-cut emerald of 13.52 carats from Colombia. (Courtesy of Van Cleef and Arpels)



'Claudine', an 18K white and yellow gold detachable clip, diamonds, buff-topped round emeralds, and nine emerald-cut emeralds for a total of 42.07 carats from Colombia. (Courtesy of Van Cleef and Arpels)



18K yellow gold earrings set with diamonds and 20.21 carats of Zambian emeralds. (Photo Marie Chabrol)

the magnificent gems chosen with special care by Van Cleef and Arpels for their new collection – 'Emeraude en Majesté' – exclusively designed to glorify this precious green gem. There is a 'Canopée' ring set with a 13.52-carat Colombian emerald; the 'Grand Opus', a necklace featuring three old-mine engraved emeralds weighing 127.88 carats; and the 'Lune d'Eau' ring set with three carats of Zambian stones.

We previously spoke about traditional jewelry techniques with the beautiful Dior collection. So, the second most technical collection was the one created by Claire Choisne, the Artistic Director of Boucheron, with '26 Vendôme'. After introducing sand and Taj Mahal marble last year, the creative team this year offered a large variety of jewels with hand-carved rock crystal and an amazing hand-graved intaglio bringing some stunning transparency effects. Superb colored gemstones enhanced this collection, with a fancy yellow diamond weighing 20+ carats, a 24.37-carat morganite, and a luminous 3.04-carat ruby from Mozambique.

The 'Lys Radiant' and 'Hotel Particulier' necklaces also deserve special attention. If these two jewels are outstanding examples of a jeweler's craft, the second was especially inspired by the first house of Frederic Boucheron which was in The Palais Royal. The jewelry-makers, gem-cutters and setters achieved the feat of appearing to some us a garden through a miniature window. Marvellous!

Famous independent jewelers and young jewelry designers from France and abroad also unveiled their new collections. We saw the new jewelry imagined by Alexandre Réza, and at the same time the lovely new gallery focused on rare gemstones. Definitely a pleasing moment with awesome natural treasures.

Meanwhile, Mellerio was happy to introduce to its historic store at 9 Rue de la Paix some new joyful cocktail rings set with rose-cut sapphires, pink and paraiba tourmalines, tsavorites and pink coral cabochons. Emilie Mellerio told us about the upcoming Orsay - Paris exhibition about France's Second Empire. From September 2016, Mellerio's 34 never-seen antique jewels will be displayed in the museum. We had the fortune to have a preview of these sumptuous masterpieces, and especially a brooch which once belonged to Joséphine, the wife of Napoleon. Unfortunately, photography was not allowed, so you have to be patient until the beginning of this event with articles to come.

Sophie Mizrahi-Rubel introduced her collection Vies de Bohême enriched with new jewels. By reviving the well-known house, John Rubel, she chose audacious and beautiful designs with nice gemstones to create statement jewelry closely inspired by Art Deco and the 1940s. We had a

big crush on the 'Mistinguet' earrings and the 'Jolie Môme' ring.

Suzanne Syz, the unconventional Geneva-based jewelry designer, chose a suite from the Ritz Hotel to launch her new creations of unusual gemstones with rough diamonds or quartz with inclusions, gold and titanium of course, and an awesome cuff set with a 76-carat rose cut stone and delicate Belle Epoque earrings.

And finally, I am finishing with the young Paris-based jeweler, Emerald House, which launched its first collection. Ina Lazarov, Bulgarian-born but who has lived in Paris for 16 years, decided to quit a successful career in the banking industry in order to develop her own jewelry line after many journeys in India and around Asia. She focuses on cabochon-cut stones such as tanzanites, tourmalines and spinels, and she chose emeralds from the Kagem mine to enhance her first high-jewelry creations.

After a week of viewing wonderful gemstones and impressive collections, it was difficult to come back to real life. This colorful season was a great tribute to French workshops which continue an important and somewhat rare tradition of know-how. We now hope that the next year will be as beautiful and amazing as this year – and we are sure it will be. ♦



'Épi Vendôme' ring in 18K yellow gold set with an 18.2-carat emerald from Muzo and diamonds.
(Courtesy of Chanel)

'Bouquet d'émeraudes' 18K white and yellow gold clip, diamonds, cabochon-cut chrysoprases, 11 carved emeralds for a total of 32.53 carats from Zambia.
(Courtesy of Van Cleef and Arpels)

'Nature Framed', 18K yellow gold set with a 106.52-carat dendritic quartz, diamonds and natural pearls.
(Courtesy of Suzanne Syz)

