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**The American Museum of Natural History Presents  
*Cosmic Splendor:*  
*Jewelry from the Collections of Van Cleef & Arpels***

Special Exhibition of Jewelry Inspired by Astronomy Opens April 11



On April 11, the American Museum of Natural History will open [\*Cosmic Splendor: Jewelry from the Collections of Van Cleef & Arpels\*](#), an assemblage of astronomy-inspired jewelry and timepieces from the collections of the High Jewelry *Maison* founded in Paris' Place Vendôme in 1906. The exhibition will open in the Melissa and Keith Meister Gallery, part of the Museum's [Allison and Roberto Mignone Halls of Gems and Minerals](#), and will showcase more than 60 celestial and mythological jewelry creations that celebrate the wonders and mysteries of our universe.

"We are so pleased to partner with Van Cleef & Arpels to celebrate the enduring inspiration of the cosmos through this spectacular showcase of natural beauty, creativity, and craft," said Sean M. Decatur, President of the American Museum of Natural History. "Drawing on the Allison and Roberto Mignone Halls of Gems and Minerals, which tell the story of Earth's extraordinary diversity of minerals, and the Hayden Planetarium, where visitors explore the glory of the universe, *Cosmic Splendor* is

a particularly fitting offering for our Museum. It joins a long tradition of sharing with our visitors the natural world, science, and the great variety of cultural expression at the intersection of nature and art.”

“We are honored to collaborate once again with the American Museum of Natural History in New York on the occasion of *Cosmic Splendor: Jewelry from the Collections of Van Cleef & Arpels*,” said President and CEO of Van Cleef & Arpels Catherine Renier. “A highly esteemed institution dedicated to the study and understanding of the sciences of the Earth and the Universe, the Museum is the perfect setting to share our profound fascination for the Cosmos.”

For millennia, people have been moved by the grandeur of space to explore the workings of our universe—and to create captivating works of art. From the early astronomical observations of Galileo to iconic space missions such as Apollo 11, along with new findings made possible by cutting-edge tools like the James Webb Space Telescope, discoveries about the universe have influenced and inspired artistic expression. *Cosmic Splendor* will celebrate the timeless allure of the cosmos through dozens of jewelry creations, timepieces, and precious objects from Van Cleef & Arpels’ patrimonial Collection and contemporary jewels generously lent by their owners for the exhibition.

“Through rich designs and ingenious craftsmanship, the pieces on display pay homage to the infinite creative spirit of Van Cleef & Arpels and highlight how the cosmic wonders have inspired the *Maison* to the present day,” said Patrimony and Exhibitions Director of Van Cleef & Arpels Alexandrine Maviel Sonet.

### **Exhibition Organization**

*Cosmic Splendor* features display cases showcasing jewels across the following celestial themes:

- **Take me away**, featuring exquisite pieces that evoke the wonder and grandeur of space, from meteors and shooting stars to legendary science fiction voyages, such as the **Tampa** necklace (2010), which pays tribute to Jules Verne’s novel *From Earth to the Moon* with a design that includes a gem-encrusted space capsule with loops of diamonds tracing its flight.
- **Across the universe**, showcasing jewels inspired by the billions of immense, swirling galaxies in the observable universe, including the **Doubles Galaxies** clips (2021), a pair of pink and mauve spiral designs reminiscent of the Butterfly Galaxies in the constellation Virgo.
- **Lunar wonders**, with creations that celebrate our fascination with the Moon, including a gold **Moon** pendant and brooch (1969) similar to clips given to the Apollo 11 astronauts. These striking yellow gold pieces depict the lunar landscape with a ruby cabochon marking the mission’s landing spot.
- **Our star**, a collection of radiant jewelry creations that pay homage to the Sun, such as the **Fleur de soleil** clip (2016) with a fiery orange garnet at its center and the **Sun** pendant-clip (c. 1973), fashioned in yellow gold and diamonds with oval cabochons of citrine.
- **Beyond Earth**, with treasures inspired by worlds beyond our own, including the **Trappist** transformable long necklace and earrings (2021) that take their name from the distant TRAPPIST-1 planetary system and the **Midnight Planétarium** watch (2012), which tracks the rotation of the planets in our solar system.
- **Burning bright**, a selection of pieces suggesting the variety of stars in the night sky. Among the 13 pieces on view, the **Astre (Star)** necklace (2010) is adorned with a luminous black opal at its center while the **Asterisk** set (1966-1967) features a clip and pair of earrings in timeless star-shaped designs.
- **Lucky stars**, a group of jewels depicting signs of the Zodiac. This display presents pendants, bracelets, and timepieces inspired by constellations that have captivated humanity for centuries.

“From fiery mandarin garnet to vivid green tsavorite and rich blue lapis lazuli, *Cosmic Splendor: Jewelry from the Collections of Van Cleef & Arpels* showcases stunning, astronomy-inspired jewelry that incorporates an incredible diversity of gemstones,” said Kate Kiseeva, curator of the Museum’s Allison and Roberto Mignone Halls of Gems and Minerals. “Formed through the geological forces deep within the Earth, the exhibition’s dazzling creations are a fitting tribute to the beauty of the cosmos and the worlds beyond our own.”

*Cosmic Splendor* will be on view through January 4, 2026, and is included with any admission. It is curated by Director of Patrimony and Exhibitions at Van Cleef & Arpels Alexandrine Maviel-Sonet, guest curator, and Kate Kiseeva, assistant curator in the Museum’s Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Division of Physical Sciences. Additional consultation is provided by Denton Ebel, curator in the Museum’s Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences, Division of Physical Sciences, and Ruth Angus, associate curator, Department of Astrophysics, Division of Physical Sciences. The exhibition is designed by the Museum’s award-winning Exhibition department.

The Museum and Van Cleef & Arpels previously collaborated on [Garden of Green: Exquisite Jewelry from the Collection of Van Cleef & Arpels](#), an exhibition of jewelry featuring green gemstones in 2023-2024. Van Cleef & Arpels is also the exclusive corporate sponsor of the Museum’s upcoming Hayden Planetarium Space Show.

### **Exploring Space and Planet Earth at the Museum**

For generations, the American Museum of Natural History has transported visitors to the edges of the known universe, nurturing the public’s curiosity about the magnitude and workings of the cosmos. Exhibitions in [the Frederick Phineas and Sandra Priest Rose Center for Earth and Space](#), which includes the Hayden Planetarium, explore the vast range of sizes in the cosmos, the 13-billion-year history of the universe, and the nature of galaxies, stars, and planets.

The Museum’s [David S. and Ruth L. Gottesman Hall of Planet Earth](#) presents the geological history of Earth, while the Mignone Halls of Gems and Minerals tell the fascinating story of how the vast diversity of mineral species arose on our planet and how we use them for personal adornment, tools, and technology.

### **About the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH)**

The American Museum of Natural History, founded in 1869 with a dual mission of scientific research and science education, is one of the world’s preeminent scientific, educational, and cultural institutions. The Museum encompasses more than 40 permanent exhibition halls, galleries for temporary exhibitions, the Rose Center for Earth and Space including the Hayden Planetarium, and the Richard Gilder Center for Science, Education, and Innovation. The Museum’s scientists draw on a world-class permanent collection of more than 30 million specimens and artifacts, some of which are billions of years old, and on one of the largest natural history libraries in the world. Through its Richard Gilder Graduate School, the Museum offers two of the only free-standing, degree-granting programs of their kind at any museum in the U.S.: the Ph.D. program in Comparative Biology and the Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) Earth Science residency program. Visit [amnh.org](http://amnh.org) for more information.

### **About Van Cleef & Arpels**

Born from the love story of Alfred Van Cleef and Esther (known as Estelle) Arpels, Van Cleef & Arpels was founded in Paris in 1906 at 22 Place Vendôme. Inspired in turn by nature, couture, dance, and imaginary worlds, the High Jewelry *Maison* has cultivated a style imbued with poetry. Its quest for creative excellence has given life to the Mystery Set technique, one of its most emblematic savoir-faire. This enchanting universe is expressed in numerous pieces, such as the *Zip* necklace and the *Alhambra* motif.

In the 1970s, Jacques Arpels began buying back old pieces emblematic of the *Maison*’s style to preserve them for future generations. Today, the patrimonial Collection is comprised over 2,800 High Jewelry, Jewelry, Watchmaking creations, and precious objects. Handcrafted between 1906 and the 2000s, these works trace the evolution of Van Cleef & Arpels’ style and inspirations, as well as the development of its

expertise. Since 1992, the year of one of the first major patrimonial exhibitions highlighting the Collection, renowned cultural institutions and Van Cleef & Arpels boutiques have been presenting it to the public. These events are occasions to demonstrate how the *Maison's* creation is part of the history of jewelry and contributes to the wealth of the French decorative arts.

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***Image:***

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