

Musée WESSAINT AURENT Paris

EXPOSITION

LES ORS D'YVES SAINT LAURENT

MUSÉE YVES SAINT LAURENT PARIS 5, AVENUE MARCEAU, PARIS 16 WWW.MUSEEYSLPARIS.COM

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2022 marks the 60th anniversary of the first Yves Saint Laurent collection under his name, as well as the 5th anniversary of the opening of the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris.

The exhibition, GOLD by Yves Saint Laurent, will celebrate the occasion by examining the role that gold has played in the couturier's work. Under the curatorship of Elsa Janssen, director of the museum since March 2022, in association with the museum's curatorial team and with the artistic collaboration of Anna Klossowski, the exhibition *GOLD* by Yves Saint Laurent presents gold through some forty haute couture and ready-to-wear dresses, selected accessories and objects, as well as display cases filled with jewelery, essential to the Yves Saint Laurent silhouette.

From the very first buttons adorning his pea coats to dresses that appear entirely fashioned from gold, no collection escaped the couturier's "golden" touch. So many materials lent themselves to Saint Laurent's mastery of the dazzling radiance of gold: brocade, lace, lamé, sequins, leather, embroidery—whether through fabric, jewelry or perfume, gold sparkles...

" It is today's black. I always enliven black with gold, through buttons, belts and chains."

Whether reflected in sun-filled memories of Marrakech and Oran, or on display with objects collected by Pierre Bergé and Yves Saint Laurent or accessories designed by Loulou de La Falaise, gold has always inspired the couturier's œuvre.

" An evening should glow; otherwise it's a bit absurd. "

Yves Saint Laurent's radiant character illuminates this chrono-thematic journey through a dazzling diversity of ornaments, sumptuous fabrics and exquisite materials.

From the jeweled dress designed for his autumn-winter 1966 collection and photographed by David Bailey, to the sequined dresses worn by Zizi Jeanmaire and Catherine Deneuve, the exhibition celebrates the empowerment of women, while channeling the Palace club years and that festive era.

To complement the creations of Yves Saint Laurent, the museum has invited the Belgian sculptor Johan Creten to exhibit five works that remind us of the extent to which gold has always inspired artists.

BY DAY AND BY NIGHT



GOLD has been present in Yves Saint Laurent's creations since his spring-summer 1962 haute couture collection. The first ensemble to open the collection featured a wool pea coat inspired by a sailor's wardrobe; its gilded buttons evoked the braided rope used on board ship.

Buttons quickly took on the role of real jewels that could be found throughout the couturier's collections. Whether smooth, round, ribbed or fashioned from rhinestones, in any number of shapes and materials, these ornaments provided accents to garments by giving them a nobler and more at-ease look. They could light up an ensemble whose tones might otherwise seem austere, or provide a touch of extravagance to ensembles and headwear.

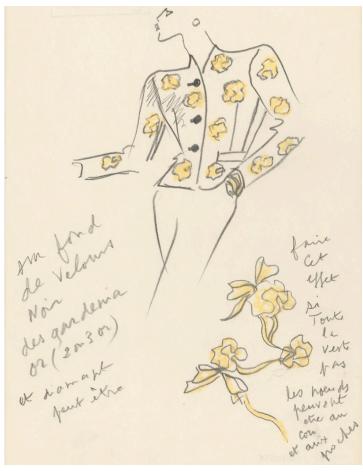
The fall-winter 1966 haute couture collection, the tenth designed under the couturier's name, marked the appearance of gold in cocktail and evening ensembles at the House of Yves Saint Laurent. Whether used as a unique color or within a range of colors, gold highlighted the seams and enlivened fabrics with dazzling touches. For this same show, in a festive spirit, Yves Saint Laurent enjoyed dressing his models in dresses entirely embroidered with sparkling sequins. The golden touches found in the daytime outfits echo the radiant fabrics and embroideries found in his evening ensembles, which lure one into a realm of fantasy.

SET OF GOLDEN BUTTONS
Studio of Yves Saint Laurent
© Matthieu Lavanchy
© Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris

A GOLDEN COUP

"One thinks of gold – in particular gold leaf – when one thinks of glory."

Yves Saint Laurent, Le Figaro, July 11, 1991





[1]

GOLD, perceived as a sign of wealth, power and prestige, has often been associated with deities of the ancient world and reserved for the powerful. Yves Saint Laurent broke with the collective imagination by popularizing gold materials for women. Throughout his career, the couturier drew his inspiration from this precious substance and appropriated its symbolism to paint a "majestic" portrait of the modern woman, who, wearing his elegant and contemporary creations, would find herself invested with an aura of power and a kind of "sovereignty." She was proudly and confidently at ease with herself. More than just providing an aesthetic effect, gold had become a manifesto of feminine power.

Gold's brilliance, when associated with the sculptural aspects of black, the richness of certain fabrics, the refined workshop techniques and even the seemingly architectural cut of certain creations, evokes the Baroque universe of the 17th and 18th centuries and its grand manifestations such as the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles. At once monumental, dynamic and ostentatious, this artistic movement provided the ideal ambiance for the staging of power and the exaltation of French expertise. "[...] My fantasies and my very fertile imagination lead me [...] to the Baroque", said Yves Saint Laurent.

In the manner of Louis xIV—the Sun King—the couturier embraced this glittering style to exalt the female body and affirm its sun-like power. After all, what does gold conjure up for us if not sunshine, light, warmth, and by extension joy, energy and life? Imbued with majesty and vitality, the Saint Laurent wardrobe asserted the power of women, immutable and timeless like the precious metal that adorns them.

- [1] ORIGINAL SKETCH OF A JACKET

 Autumn-winter 1988 haute couture collection

 © Yves Saint Laurent
- JACKET FROM A COCKTAIL SET
 Fall-winter 1988 haute couture collection
 Matthieu Lavanchy
 Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris



EVENING ENSEMBLE Worn by Karen Mulder Fall-winter 1995 haute couture collection © Yves Saint Laurent © Guy Marineau

TIME TO SHINE

"I love parties. They're joyous; they glow, sparkle and glitter."

Yves Saint Laurent, Le Figaro, July 11, 1991

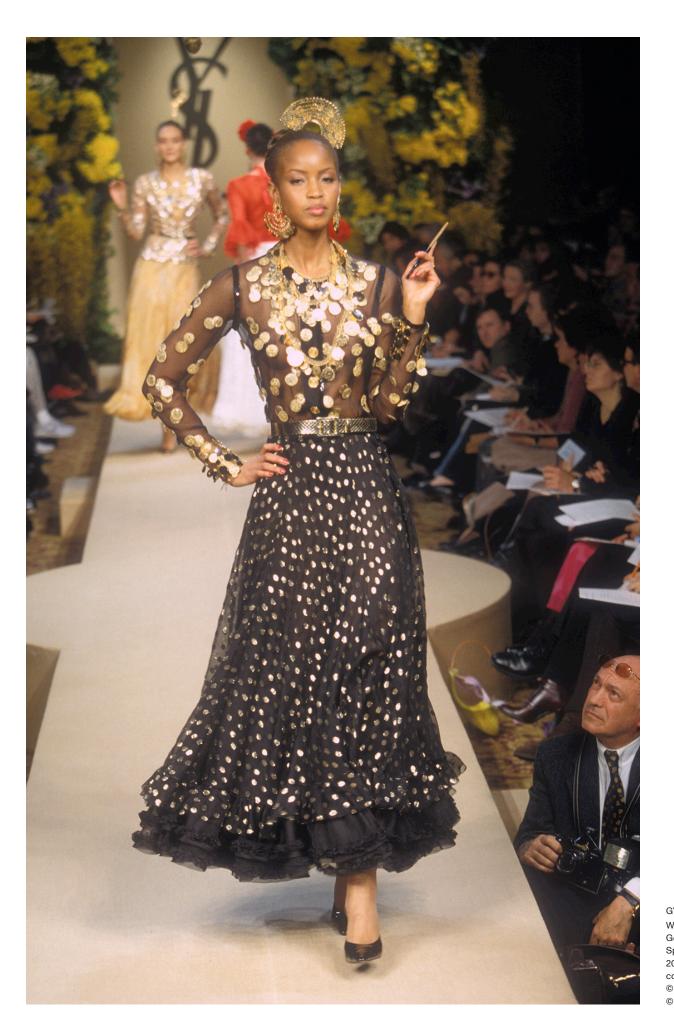


BEGINNING at the end of the 1960s, Paris saw the emergence of trendy clubs that revolutionized the city's nightlife. At these new temples of hedonism, it seemed as if everything was allowed and everyone was free to express themselves as they saw fit. The dress code was glamorous-chic, yet daring and extravagant. For the opening of the legendary Palace, on March 1, 1978, the invitation card made it clear: "Tuxedo, evening gown or anything that suits the occasion."

Yves Saint Laurent was a regular at these Parisian nightspots, and spent many exhilarating evenings with friends at Chez Régine, Le Sept or Le Privilège. In 1967, at Chez Régine, he met Betty Catroux, whom he quickly considered his female double, his twin and his accomplice when exploring Paris by night. They became inseparable, and together they explored everything these clubs had to offer.

That festive atmosphere was one of the couturier's sources of inspiration, and gold, with its shiny and flashy aura, naturally had its role to play. Yves Saint Laurent used it to offer women a radiant, colorful and sensual wardrobe. Gold, from its use as a simple detail to a total look, whether through a play of materials (such as lamé, leather and brocade) or by the technique involved (braided fabrics, embroidery or quilting) or by combining it with other colors, pushed femininity to its fullest expression. Dresses that flowed as if made from molten metal, transparent fabrics clouded by golden sparkles, bare back necklines... everything was a pretext for a magical evening!

EVENING DRESS
Worn by Violeta Sanchez
Spring-summer 1981 haute couture collection
© Yves Saint Laurent
© All rights reserved



GYPSY DRESS
Worn by
Georgianna Robertson
Spring-summer
2000 haute couture
collection
© Yves Saint Laurent
© Guy Marineau

LIGHT ME UP!

Exhibition installation by Anna Klossowski

"As for jewelry: no gemstones, no colors, nothing flashy. Just gold, or rather gold-plated, as I only like costume jewelry."

Yves Saint Laurent, Elle, March 7, 1968





[1]

WHEN Yves Saint Laurent designed dresses, he always had their associated jewelry in mind. He rarely sketched them, yet he had a very precise vision of the overall look of the ensemble. To transcribe what he had imagined, the couturier would rely on craftsmen such as the goldsmith Robert Goossens or the jewelry designer Roger Scemama.

Beginning in 1972, Yves Saint Laurent found an accomplice-interpreter of his whimsical taste in the person of Loulou de La Falaise. She worked alongside him until the fashion house closed in 2002. She said that "accessories are another way of dressing in Saint Laurent", and considered costume jewelry–known as *bijoux fantaisies* in Frenchessential and conspicuous accessories, which would provide golden accents to a silhouette and give the line of a garment the necessary radiance in all circumstances.

Displaying them in aggregate, Anna Klossowski, daughter of Loulou de La Falaise and goddaughter of Yves Saint Laurent, pays homage here to accessories. One showcase displays them chronologically, while the other presents them chromatically, as the couturier often associated gold with other colors and materials such as coral or quartz. These daring combinations manifest the imagination and fantasy driving Loulou de La Falaise and the couturier. Against a background that calls to mind the wefts of golden and brightly colored fabrics, Anna Klossowski engenders a conversation of sorts between earrings, necklaces, bracelets, rings and a belt, and reminds us that for YSL, jewelry exists only when seen against clothing.

- [1] SET OF ACCESSORIES

 Bracelet, ring and brooch

 Spring-summer 1986, 1988 and 1989
 haute couture collections

 © Matthieu Lavanchy

 © Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris
- [2] LOULOU DE LA FALAISE

 Dressed in an evening ensemble from the fall-winter 1988 haute couture collection Photograph by Arthur Elgort, published in Vogue (Italy), 1988 December

 © Arthur Elgort for Vogue Italy

INTERLUDE: THE JEWEL DRESS



RESSEMBLING a sarcophagus, a jewel or a reliquary, this lightweight dress equally evokes a mermaid. Photographed by David Bailey for the December 1966 issue of *Vogue* Paris, it remains open to interpretation.

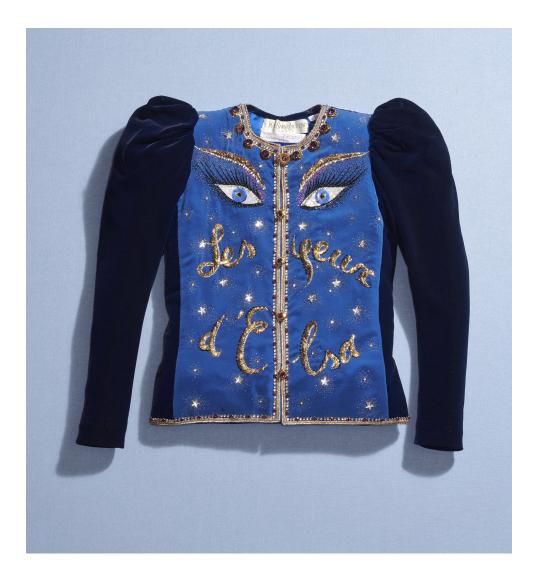
Playing on illusion—the encrusted belt and collar are trompe l'oeil—this dress needs no other accessories. Fashioned entirely in sequins and precious stones, it pays homage to the flamboyant Cleopatra, the last queen of Egypt. The pharaonic film of 1963, *Cleopatra*, by Joseph L. Mankiewicz, is an obvious inspiration. Gold shines as if emanating from the Egyptian sun god; the symbolic power of this dress seems to tap into a divine energy.

David Bailey was born in London in 1938 and became a leading figure of the counterculture of the 1960s. As a photographer and director of advertisements, he played a key role in transforming fashion photography, and he elevated his models to the rank of icons. As with Yves Saint Laurent, women were the common thread in David Bailey's photographs. It was through Bailey that Catherine Deneuve met the couturier. In September 1965, Bailey photographed the Mondrian dress for the cover of *Vogue* Paris. He also executed three photographic portraits of Yves Saint Laurent.

IN GOLD LETTERS

"One day, my name will be inscribed in gold letters on the Champs-Elysées."

Yves Saint Laurent, as quoted by his mother in Le Temps Retrouvé, a film by David Teboul, 2001



WHEN Yves Saint Laurent declared to his family and friends, "One day, my name will be inscribed in gold letters on the Champs-Elysées", he was not yet 15 and was already dreaming of being a great couturier. At 21, when he succeeded Christian Dior as the head of one of the most prominent couture houses of the time, he became the youngest couturier in the world. At 25, alongside Pierre Bergé, he created his own couture house. For its launch, the graphic designer Cassandre merged the couturier's initials—YSL—and created the iconic logotype. Those three warm bronze letters still shine brightly today.

This section of the exhibition, "In Gold Letters", attests to Yves Saint Laurent's artistic passions, which ranged from literature to live performances. He paid homage not only to the poets of the sun, such as Aragon or Cocteau, whose names he embroidered in gold thread, but also to the icons of song and music hall stars that the couturier dressed. Yves Saint Laurent designed stage outfits for the cabaret star, Zizi Jeanmaire, as well as for the renowned pop singer Sylvie Vartan. He confidently drew a golden silhouette "until it becomes a single line.". The *jumpsuit*, which first appeared in 1968 in Yves Saint Laurent's collections, offered women an androgynous line, but one that clearly highlighted the female body. Covered in gold sequins, Zizi and Sylvie sang and danced with passion and style.

PALETOT

Tribute to Louis Aragon with the title of the collection of poetry Les yeux d'Elsa (1942) Autumn-winter 1980 haute couture collection © Matthieu Lavanchy © Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris

DISPLAY OF CURIOSITIES



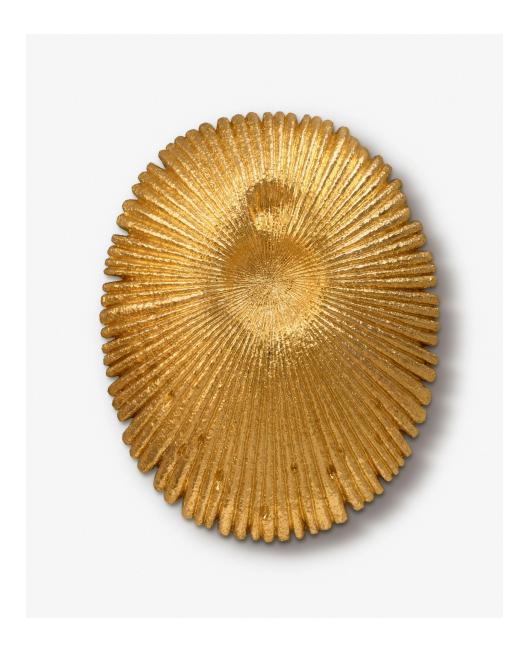
WORKS of art, rare pieces and gold objects rub shoulders here much as they would in a cabinet of curiosities. But more than *aurum* (*gold* in Latin), it is their aura that gives value to these objects. Yves Saint Laurent, as an aesthete and art lover, knew how to combine worthless trifles with old master paintings.

This hodgepodge includes objects ranging from accessories (hats, shoes, bags and gloves) to the world of beauty (perfume bottles and other iconic gold packaging including the scandalous "Champagne" perfume, which was forbidden to be sold under that name and renamed "Yvresse,"—a play on the French word ivresse, meaning drunkenness or euphoria. These are shown alongside elements of the métier dear to the couturier (a thimble, golden scissors) and objects similar to those that belonged to Pierre Bergé and Yves Saint Laurent (sold by Christie's in 2009) or body-molded jewelry created by the sculptor Claude Lalanne.

FINGER JEWELRY
Collaboration with Claude Lalanne
Fall-winter 1969 haute couture collection
© Adagp, Paris, 2022
© Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris
© Matthieu Lavanchy

GUEST ARTIST 13

JOHAN CRETEN



THE BELGIAN —born and Paris-based artist Johan Creten (born 1963)—a pioneer in the revival of ceramics in contemporary art—has been working itinerantly for almost forty years, from Mexico to Rome, from Miami to The Hague. In his creative process, the artist channels "Slow art" and the need for a return to introspection and an exploration of the individual and societal torments of our world. His representations of the world are poetic, lyrical and mysterious.

All his work seems to start from an observation of nature. Shaped by hand, his wall sculptures seek a geometric perfection. His harmonious works are embodiments of a majestic splendor: images of bliss, prosperity and of great happiness. The body of work shown here, fashioned from clay and gold, resonates with the daytime jewelry that are the golden buttons so cherished by Yves Saint Laurent.

Johan Creten's work is exhibited all over the world. Several monographic exhibitions have been devoted to him in various museums and in his galleries such as the Piscine de Roubaix (2022), the Villa Medici (2020) or the Perrotin gallery (2020). His works are also found in numerous public and private collections including the FRAC Pays de la Loire, the Musée d'Art Moderne de Paris and the Bass Museum of Art in Miami.

THE EXHIBITION CATALOGUE 14

GOLD BY YVES SAINT LAURENT

Editions Gallimard

Preface: Madison COX 22×28 cm – 192 pages Preface: Joan BUCK 120 illustrations

Foreword: Elsa JANSSEN French
Texts: Yvane JACOB 35 euros

Photographs: Matthieu LAVANCHY ISBN: 978-2-07-300732-2

EXCERPT FROM THE CATALOGUE

Foreword by Elsa Janssen

The collections of the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris are brimming with hidden treasures: more than 5,000 haute couture garments, over 5,000 accessories and more than 50,000 sketches from the couturier's collections, spanning forty years, reflect both the couturier's creative genius and the process involved in creating haute couture collections.

The collections are an endless source of inspiration for conceptualizing and designing an exhibition. While focusing on the lines and silhouettes of certain garments that are stored with great care in our reserves, something struck me: Gold played an important role in the collections presented by Yves Saint Laurent between 1962 and 2002.

Gold is matter, light and color; undoubtedly a color unto itself. In Yves Saint Laurent's collections, gold is leather, lurex, lace or sequins. It appears as gold buttons, gold chains, gold trim. Gold slips in everywhere, as accents or as a total *GOLD* look. Whether seen on a leather coat or a lamé dress, gold attracts the eye like a magnet.

Mounting the exhibition *GOLD by Yves Saint Laurent* seemed a must for the museum's team, which has the great responsibility of preserving, documenting and promoting the couturier's oeuvre. Putting together this exhibition meant traveling a path strewn with glittery clues. It involved selecting about forty works from among all those inventoried. Gradually, a thematic journey revealed itself: an exhibition divided into five chapters, each recounting a different aspect of the couturier's relationship with gold.

As seen in his first collection in 1962, the addition of gilded buttons was all that was needed to lighten up a navy blue pea coat. The "Daytime jewelry" segment of the exhibition shows that these simple gold accents allowed women to do without jewelry during the day. Each button had its own particular shape and texture, like a blossom that the couturier would add to his sketches.

"A golden coup" highlights the Baroque-inspired universe of Saint Laurent and gold's use as a form of armor with which women could conquer the world.

The "Time to shine" segment of the exhibition evokes the parties and nightclubs where the couturier could enjoy the moment while also finding inspiration. As captured by the cameras of Guy Marineau and Philippe Morillon, the couturier's eyes sparkle as he's surrounded by women who amuse him. In these alluring images, we see haute couture side by side with rive gauche clothing, underlying the impact that ready-to-wear had on the democratization of fashion.

To the team at the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris, sharing the couturier's oeuvre with the public also meant giving voice to the heirs of his unique adventure. "Light me up" is a joyful invitation extended by Anna Klossowski, an editor of art objects, the daughter of Loulou de La Falaise and goddaughter of the couturier. If the subject is gold, the discussion inevitably leads to jewelry. And at the House of Yves Saint Laurent, jewelry rhymed with Loulou. From 1972 until the closing of the fashion house in 2002, she designed thousands of jewelry pieces that became essential elements of the Saint Laurent silhouette. Through three hundred selected pieces, Anna Klossowski fills us in on the deep bond between the couturier and his creative partner.

"In gold letters" welcomes the visitor to the literary world and the performing arts dear to Yves Saint Laurent. The exhibition closes with a jumpsuit, never before exhibited, designed by the couturier in 1972 for the singer Sylvie Vartan.

Finally, since Yves Saint Laurent's genius transcends the ages, I found it meaningful to engender a dialogue between his work and the art of today by showing works employing gold by the couturier alongside stoneware and gold luster works by the contemporary artist Johan Creten.

CURATORIAL TEAM 15

HEAD CURATOR

Elsa JANSSEN

CURATORIAL TEAM MUSÉE YVES SAINT LAURENT PARIS

Alice COULON-SAILLARD Manager of the photographic, audio-visual and press collections

Domitille ÉBLÉ Manager of the graphic art collection

Judith LAMAS
Manager of the textiles and accessories collections

Sylvie MAROT Conservation project manager

EXHIBITION DESIGN Jasmin OEZCEBI

ARTISTIC DIRECTION

Anna KLOSSOWSKI

In 2015, Anna Klossowski, art historian and exhibition curator, cofounded *We Do Not Work Alone*, a publishing house specializing in limited-edition commonplace objects designed by artists. She has worked with numerous international artists of different generations including Annette Messager, Erwin Wurm and Dorothy Iannone. Daughter of Loulou de La Falaise and goddaughter of Yves Saint Laurent, Anna Klossowski has a special bond with the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris. As a child, she would often come to 5 avenue Marceau, where she would spend time with the renowned couturier, try on the accessories designed by her mother, and observe the goings on at the couture house.

Valérie WEILL

Valérie Weill began her career as a fashion journalist before becoming an independent set designer in 2000. Known for her spontaneous, sculptural compositions, she has collaborated with numerous renowned photographers. Her still lifes, which often reflect her sense of humor, regularly fill the pages of reviews including *The Gentlewoman*, *i-D*, *Purple* and *M Le magazine du Monde*. In parallel, she co-launched with the photographer Philippe Chancel a collection of books, Souvenirs, published by Thames & Hudson, in which they take a fresh look at Paris, London and New York.

SOUND DESIGN

Pierre-Arnaud ALUNNI

The sound designer Pierre-Arnaud Alunni works in the fields of art, fashion and design. He has created soundtracks for Dior Homme, Jean-Paul Lespagnard and Christian Dada, among others. He collaborates regularly with the Centre Pompidou, the FIAC, the Fondation Giacometti, the Ministry of Culture and the Nuit Blanche, an annual all-night arts festival in Paris.

THE MUSÉE YVES SAINT LAURENT PARIS,

presided over by Madison Cox, is dedicated to the work of one of the greatest couturiers of the 20th century and is the first museum of its kind to open in the international capital of fashion. It was inaugurated on October 3, 2017 and has been designated a "Musée de France" by the French Ministry of Culture. Fifteen years after the closure of the haute couture house, it opened its doors at a landmark hôtel particulier at 5 avenue Marceau in Paris, where for nearly 30 years—from 1974 to 2002—Yves Saint Laurent's creative genius held sway. The museum's rich collection includes more than 100 000 graphic artworks—including 55 000 fashion sketches by the couturier—130 000 photographs, 20 000 accessories and textile samples, as well as a press and audiovisual archive housing more than 50 000 documents. This unparalleled collection is the result of pioneering, systematic archival procedures put in place at the couture house by Pierre Bergé and Yves Saint Laurent, beginning in 1964.

ELSA JANSSEN

was named Director of the Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris in March 2022. She has curated and produced numerous exhibitions and has worked with internationally renowned artists from a variety of fields, including Hans-Peter Feldmann, Maurizio Cattelan, Alex Prager, Christian Lacroix and Xavier Veilhan.

CONFERENCES

A cultural program, including conferences, will be offered to the public.

Discover the complete program at: www.museeyslparis.com

LOCATION

Musée Yves Saint Laurent Paris 5, avenue Marceau 75116 Paris +33 (0)1 44 31 64 00 contact@museeyslparis.com

HOURS

Individual visitors, every day from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., except on Monday. Thursday until 9 p.m.

Last entry 45 minutes before closing.

Groups are welcome from Tuesday to Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Group reservations are handled by Cultival.

ADMISSION

Ticket price 10€

Reducted ticket price 7€

Those 10-18 years of age, teachers and students (upon presentation of a valid card justifying the discount).

Free admission

Children under 10, art history students, students enrolled in fashion school, students in journalism, the unemployed and those earning the minimum wage, persons with disabilities and the persons accompanying them, refugees, bearers of a professional journalist identity card, members of ICOM-ICOMOS, members of the Association des Amis de la Fondation Pierre Bergé – Yves Saint Laurent and the Association des Amis de la Fondation Jardin Majorelle, as well as professional and certified guides (upon presentation of a valid card).

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PRESS

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