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BRINGING JOYA TO MONACO

Vanessa Margowski and Delphine Pastor-Reiss unite jewelry and culture for an unprecedented event at One Monte-Carlo.

BY FRANÇOISE CLAIRE PRODHON

Joya, the new international jewelry fair, takes place November 21-24 at One Monte-Carlo. How did you come up with the idea for Joya, which is open to the general public?

Vanessa Margowski: It was above all my interest in art and design that led me to jewelry. Far beyond its aesthetic aspects and the frivolity that some people attribute to it, jewelry is an extraordinary cultural and artistic testimony.

Initially, I let myself be guided by pleasure and curiosity, before realizing that there was no fair dedicated to jewelry that was open to the public and to collectors. Most of the time, the world of jewelry is the subject of trade fairs; when it isn't, it is presented at general fairs dedicated more generally to decorative arts. There are fairs that are certainly prestigious but open to all kinds of creations. The desire to work on this project was therefore born out of these observations.

I think you wanted to give Joya a very specific character...

Vanessa: Yes, the idea was immediately obvious: I wanted to bring together a selection of galleries or brands specializing in antique jewelry, artists' jewelry and, more broadly, contemporary jewelry. The history of jewelry is almost as long as the history of mankind, which is why we wanted to bring together antique jewelry

and the most contemporary creations in a single event.

We also wanted to go beyond a strictly commercial offer by putting the subject of jewelry back into a cultural context by providing Joya with a program of conferences, a bookshop, a museum exhibition and artistic interventions. The same goes for the show's scenography and visual identity, which are part of this desire to assert our difference.

To carry out this project, you teamed up with Delphine Pastor-Reiss with whom you had previously worked at a contemporary art and design gallery in Monaco.

Delphine Pastor-Reiss: Vanessa and I have known each other for a long time and we worked together on this gallery project, which seemed a bit crazy and ambitious at a time when contemporary art and sharp design weren't necessarily on the agenda in Monaco.

Throughout this adventure, which lasted almost 17 years, we learned a lot and had the pleasure of meeting wonderful people. The concept of the gallery was to invite international gallery owners to come and exhibit at our venue in Monaco. Each time we were involved in curating the exhibition, which was really exciting! This enabled us to introduce a whole audience to contemporary art and design,

and even to build up collections for some of them. Mixing contemporary art and design in the same gallery was something totally new at the time, and in doing so we realized that the two interacted very well, which I think helped to create bridges.

More recently, Vanessa came to me with the idea of this new show, and, although jewelry isn't the area I know best—despite following certain designers like Elie Top since the beginning—I immediately accepted the proposal and wanted to make my contribution to this project, which we've since developed together. Today, we are delighted to announce the first edition of Joya, which will be held in Monaco at the end of November 2024.

We can imagine that the Principality has many strong points, apart from the fact that you both live there and that you are Monegasques.

Delphine: Monaco is in our DNA. I'm a true Monegasque and for me it was important to launch the first edition of this ambitious international cultural project in Monaco. And since you mentioned the strong points, we should emphasize the legitimacy of jewelry in Monaco, where some of the biggest names have been established for a century, just like the great collectors that we hope to attract more and more towards jewelry.



Over the years, Monaco has become very international, and let's not forget that security is one of the Principality's assets, which means that jewelry has its place and can be worn.

Let's talk about the Principality's cultural vocation, a place that hosts a huge number of major annual events in a wide variety of fields, from the Formula 1 Grand Prix to tennis tournaments, from the Ballets de Monaco to the Prix Prince Pierre or the Rencontres Philosophiques, from numerous trade shows to prestigious auctions...

Delphine: There are indeed a huge number of cultural, sports and social events organized in Monaco throughout the year. But there are also museums like the New National Museum of Monaco at Villa Paloma and Villa Sauber, exhibition venues like the Grimaldi Forum, and recently, international contemporary art galleries like Hauser & Wirth and Almine Rech that have set up shop. All this has changed the game, with Monaco now offering some very sharp events. Prince Albert II wanted to put Monaco on the contemporary art circuit and, more generally, there is a real desire on the part of our sovereigns to bring quality to Monaco's cultural offering. Princess Caroline, who has made a major contribution to this, is heavily involved in the New National Museum of Monaco, the Ballets de Monte Carlo and the Prix Prince Pierre. There is now a very fine

contemporary art fair, Artmonte-carlo, and all this helps to stimulate Monegasques' interest in culture. For all these reasons, Joya is the perfect addition to our cultural program.

You wanted Joya to include a cultural component. What does this entail?

Vanessa: We approached L'École des Arts Joailliers supported by Van Cleef & Arpels in Paris, and asked them to set up a series of lectures based on a daily conference. This gives Joya a heritage aspect and underlines the values of transmission that we hold dear.

Children have not been forgotten either, as there will be an educational workshop for them during the weekend. Of course, we also sought the support of local partners, in particular the NMNM, and together we thought about how they could support the Joya project. The museum came up with the idea of producing a work with contemporary artist Julien Carreyn who works mainly with Polaroids and film photography and has photographed some of the pieces from the Société des Bains de Mer collection, which has been deposited with the museum. These include stage jewelry and headdresses. Julien also designed the images associated with the salon, while Yorgo & Co created the visual identity and is the author of the films that we put online on the show's Instagram account @joya.monaco, which gives us a

particularly coherent image. Another of our partners is the L'École des Arts Joailliers, as is the Musée d'Anthropologie de Monaco, which we wanted to include in the project. It will be lending us archaeological jewelry that will be displayed in their showcase, providing an overview of museology in the 1940s and showing what the Monaco museum was like in those years.

Finally, I'd like to talk about the scenography.

Vanessa: We chose the Basel architectural firm Christ & Gantenbein to create Joya's architectural identity. Once again, the proposal had to stand out from the crowd, and Christ & Gantenbein has a great deal of expertise in designing spaces for art and cultural exhibitions.

We haven't mentioned the exhibitors, but I imagine it's still too early.

Vanessa: Yes, the list is not yet exhaustive. Joya, which aims to be a high-quality show, is targeting around 15 international exhibitors—specialist antique dealers, jewelry galleries and designers. We can already say that it promises to be varied and exciting, with very high standards. The aim is to go well beyond this first edition.

Delphine: We already have some ideas and plans, perhaps for future editions of Joya in other venues, but it is still too early to talk about it. ●