

WONDER LAB*

*

WONDER

Speaks of amazement, enchantment, enjoyment, surprise, fascination and the unexpected.

LAB

Speaks of explorations, quests, experiments, innovations and the energy of a laboratory.

WONDER LAB is the laboratory of beauty and wonderment.



**11 SEPTEMBER
> 26 NOVEMBER
TOKYO NATIONAL
MUSEUM – HYŌKEIKAN**

THE EXHIBITION

15 EXCEPTIONAL MASTERS OF ART AND ARTISANS

Serge AMORUSO
Emmanuel BARROIS
Christian BONNET
Fanny BOUCHER
Roland DARASPE
Lison DE CAUNES
Gérard DESQUAND
Jean GIREL
Michel HEURTAULT
Nathanaël LE BERRE
Sylvain LE GUEN
Laurent NOGUES
François-Xavier RICHARD
Nelly SAUNIER
Pietro SEMINELLI



Bringing together 15 of the most talented French artistic craftsmen and women, the **WONDER LAB** exhibition offers a fresh perspective on contemporary creation. From silver smithery to ceramics, artistry with feathers, tortoiseshell glass, leather, straw, paper and textile, the excellence and diversity of French artistic crafts are put on view in Japan for the first time.

Echoing the Japanese concept of Living National Treasures, while affirming the contemporary nature of the approach, the **WONDER LAB** exhibition is as much for an enlightened audience, who will be able to discover the greatest French Masters of Art, as it is for a broader and newer public, who will be able to live and feel a unique experience.

By calling attention to a cultural exception that exists both in France (the Masters of Art) and in Japan (the Living National Treasures), the **WONDER LAB** exhibition sets the perfect conditions for a continued dialogue between the two countries.

The WONDER LAB exhibition will take place in the Tokyo National Museum's 1.000 square meters' Hyōkeikan building. Designated as a Jūyō Bunkazai (Important Cultural Property) in 1978, the Hyōkeikan is representative of the Western-style architecture of the late Meiji period (early 20th century). It is part of the oldest and largest art museum in Japan – the Tokyo National Museum –, which houses the most beautiful collection of Japanese art in the world.

From the materials to the lighting and the sound, the scenography of the great French-Lebanese architect **Lina Ghotmeh** will set up unique spaces within the Hyōkeikan, creating new surprises for visitors as they go from hall to hall, while forging a unity in this emblematic building in Tokyo's Ueno Park.

The exhibition is curated by **Hélène Kelmachter**, an expert in contemporary art and French-Japanese cross-cultural issues. She has chosen to highlight creators with remarkable personalities, each of whom combines vocation with tradition and innovation.

With the ambition of creating a field of contemporary creation that engages with art and design, all the while affirming its singularity, the exhibition embarks visitors on an unparalleled aesthetic journey that intersects know-hows, mediums, life journeys, and men and women who are determined to expand their skills, reinvent them and transmit them.

To enhance and prolong and prolong the exhibition, the public will be invited to meet the Masters of Art, attend conferences with experts and specialists (including a conference with glassmaker **Emmanuel Barrois** and renowned Japanese architect **Toyo Ito**), workshops for younger visitors, film screenings and discussions for students and professionals.

The Japanese public will have further opportunities to experience French artistic crafts through an exhibition catalogue that includes a foreword from Japanese stylist **Issey Miyake**, as well as a dedicated website and special merchandising.

The objective of **WONDER LAB** is to contribute to the prestige of France and the promotion of French artistic crafts abroad, as well as to foster the creation of a durable link between French artistic craftsmen and women and the Japanese public. It is part of a larger bilateral project to raise awareness about artistic crafts in France and Japan..

Japan is the first stop for the **WONDER LAB** exhibition before an international tour that will take it to other countries renowned for their ancestral craftsmanship, whereupon it will finish its journey in France.



Exhibition curation by Hélène Kelmachter

An encounter with exceptional know-hows, the WONDER LAB exhibition aims as much to be a reflection on creation today as it is to be a personal journey.

Thanks to Gaëlle Dupré, I was fortunate enough to be able to enter the ateliers of the most talented French artistic craftsmen and women, to discover the extraordinary skills and techniques of which they are the precious custodians and are committed to preserve, transmit and reinvent – in a relentless quest for perfection and innovation. I wanted to share with the Japanese public the emotion I felt in contact with these unique, generous and passionate men and women.

The choice of the fifteen Masters of Art and artistic craftsmen and women selected for this exhibition was guided not only by a desire to showcase the best of French creation in the artistic crafts sector and to highlight the diversity and wealth of these know-hows, but also to recognize those, who through experimentation, challenge the field of contemporary creation. As someone who hails from the world of contemporary art, I was particularly interested in the way these craftsmen

and women transfigure artistic fields and transcend disciplinary boundaries: a mutability that is regularly explored by contemporary artists and is magnified by these craftspeople, who are always pushing back the boundaries of their artistic explorations, questioning what it means to create, what is artwork, forging a new path for artistic crafts, producing unique and remarkable objects that elicit emotion.

They are not just the custodians of a heritage that they have the responsibility to keep alive and visible, they are foremost the creators of their time, who strive with passion and humility to transmit to future generations the values that they share. Having lived in Japan for five wonderful years, and having a profound attachment to this country – great proximity of heart and mind –, it seemed vital to me to parallel the French Master of Art distinction with the Japanese Living National Treasure specificity, to allow our two cultures to enter a dialogue through this exhibition, in a scenography designed by talented architect Lina Gothmeh, which brings out the magic of every installation, drawing visitors into a world of beauty, emotion and enchantment.



Scenography by Lina Ghotmeh

A journey alongside the hand

Engaging the material

The fifteen exceptional artists' work is staged in a way that invites us to immerse ourselves into their worlds, to discover their different mediums, objects and creation processes: feathers, leather, tortoiseshell, precious metals, straw marquetry, hand-block wallpaper printing, parasols, fans, folds, heliogravure, paper, glass, ceramics. We celebrate the artists' sensual relationship with their material of choice, the works of art that sustain them in an intimate way. The masters are entwined with their art, they gravitate together in a mesmerizing world filled with meaning – and material: a world where time is suspended behind a light that is both luminous and infinitely reflecting in the depths of the shapes that each hand creates. Murmurs can be heard, expounding the walls of each hall, unfolding each new space. The immersive space of unique experiences, the senses, the hand.

A journey from earth to air.

From ceramics to weaving

Two levels and eight halls transport us from a double-height central rotunda where an audio installation reveals the sounds and sights of the workshops. Each artist is heard walking, talking, and the characteristic sounds of their work arise: metal clinking, leather being cleaned, the circular inflections of the

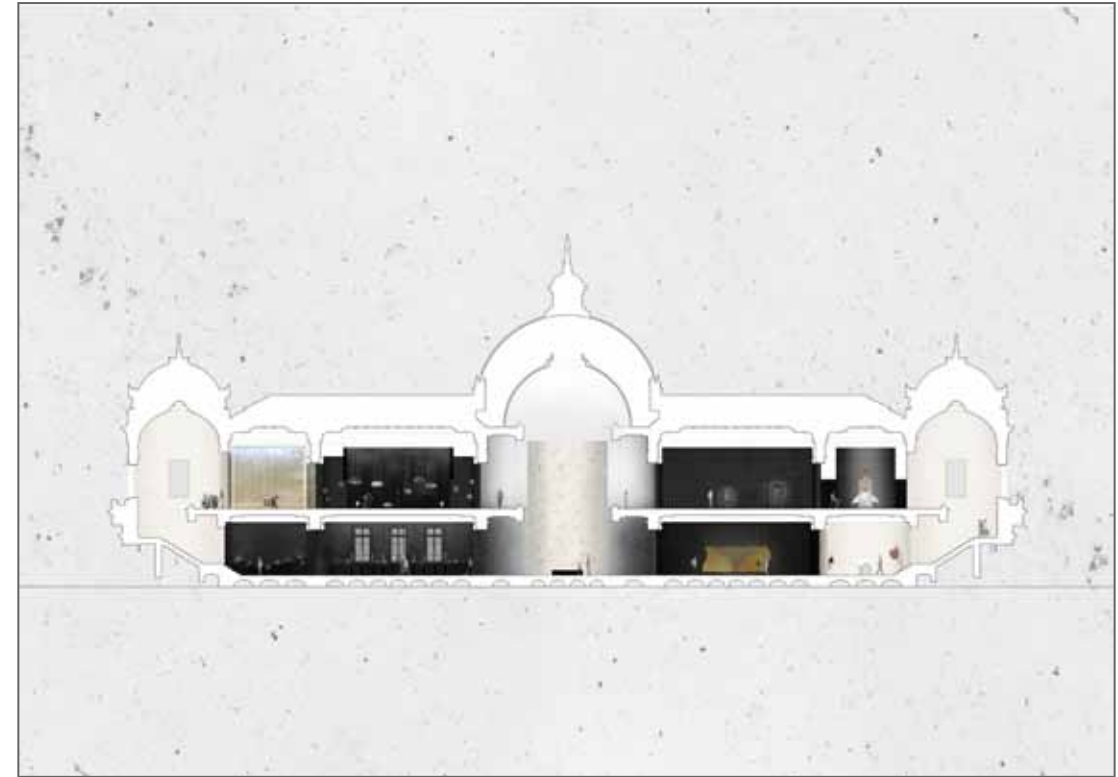
ceramics.... Little by little the hands accumulate and fill the space with their movements, a crescendo introduction to the sights to come in the eight halls. On the ground level, the earth: ceramics, glass, leather, metal, tortoiseshell, feather; on the first floor, the air: paper, weaving, folding, goffering, engraving.

In the confidence of artistry

A play on light, on materials, on gradations of shadows and darkness – each exhibition hall invites us to discover unique works of art, to feel the artistry behind each piece, to capture their vibrations thanks to a play on light and shadows, to the precise outline of the space, to the supports and sound installations. The objects are bare, so as to allow the public to get close to them, to take in their materials, their infinite details. This setting, this scenography takes the spectator on a journey, on a quest to understand the magic of this world, the mastery of the shapes, the work of the body and the mind.

From hall to hall

The journey across each exhibition hall and around each work of art is an immersion of the senses into the artists' unique worlds. It reveals the human dimension behind the work of these master craftspeople, their relationship to their mediums. As we enter each new exhibition space, we enter an imaginary workshop, the mind of each creator.





The exhibition is the most visible part of the **WONDER LAB** project, and just of one its multiple facets. The other elements of this project include concrete actions in three key areas that are inseparable from the work of artistic craftspeople: **education/transmission**, **culture** and **economy**.

Education/transmission

Transmission is at the heart of the French government's Master of Art – Student programme. The masters transmit ancient skills and techniques to their students, but also share their passion and heritage with the broader public.

The objective of **WONDER LAB**, through the exhibition's peripheral activities, is to communicate and exchange with the younger public.

There will be fun activities aimed towards children (workshops on feather-artistry, umbrella and fan-making and straw marquetry) at the Tokyo National Museum, as well as presentations in Japanese schools. Students will be able to attend conferences at the Tokyo University of the Arts (Geidai) – the oldest and most prestigious art school in Japan. The goal here is to promote these ancient crafts and techniques towards young designers, but also to foster creativity and dialogue between designers and craftspeople.

Following these conferences and discussions, exchanges and partnerships will be set up between France and Japan. The innovation department of the Tokyo University of the Arts has already expressed a keen interest in this.

Culture

The choice of the Tokyo National Museum – the oldest and biggest art museum in Japan – to present the French master craftsmen and women, is a strong symbol for both countries. In approving the contents of the exhibition, the Tokyo National Museum, who has since become a co-organiser, is placing the artists and their work in a museum and heritage context that is unprecedented in France and Japan.

Alongside the exhibition, there will be events with other museums, including the Museum of Oriental Ceramics in Osaka and the Sekaido Bunko Art Museum in Tokyo. The links created with these prestigious partners will continue after the exhibition is over.

HEART&crafts has initiated and is actively participating in the organisation of a partnership between French and Japanese public bodies and institutions working on artistic crafts.

Economy

The high profile of the exhibition will allow the participating craftsmen and women to reach new customers, and should, thanks to the media coverage, create an interest in French artistic crafts as a whole.

During the **WONDER LAB** exhibition, HEART&crafts will be organising meetings between the artists and their Japanese counterparts, as well as different companies, in order to foster future artistic and/or commercial collaborations.

HEART&crafts has contacted Japanese companies that might be interested in partnerships with the fifteen artists, and several projects are already in the works.

WONDER LAB websites:
International: wonderlabexpo.com
Japan: fr-treasures.jp

the exhibition

Gaëlle Dupré, founder of the HEART&crafts agency, is committed to promoting the work of exceptional French artistic craftspeople by organising prestigious events abroad – notably with the **WONDER LAB** exhibition, which will tour around the world. The exhibition will start its journey in the Tokyo National Museum's 1000 square meters' Hyōkeikan building, from 11 September to 26 November 2017.

The **WONDER LAB** project is built around an exhibition and two major focuses:

- To foster cultural exchanges between French and Japanese artistic craftspeople
- To foster cultural, economic and educational partnerships between the different stakeholders acting for the promotion of French and Japanese artistic crafts

WONDER LAB at the Tokyo National Museum is a 'first' in several respects:

- It is the first time the title 'Master of Art', created by the French ministry of Culture and championed by the National Institute for Arts and Crafts (INMA) is presented in Japan
- It is the first time an exhibition dedicated to French artistic craftspeople is held in a national art museum in Japan
- It is the first time the Tokyo National Museum is co-organising an exhibition of foreign artistic crafts
- It is the first time an exhibition has an entire building to showcase the wealth and innovation of exceptional French artistic crafts
- It is the first time internationally renowned ceramist Jean Girel is presenting his forty-year quest to rediscover the 'Yohen Tenmoku' Jian bowls from the Chinese Song dynasty (960 AD – 1279 AD) There are only four such bowls left in the world – three of them in Japan, where they are considered to be National Treasures.



HEART&Crafts

Founder and co-organisier of the project

The mission of HEART&crafts is to promote excellence in French artistic crafts by showcasing the work of master artisans in France and abroad, notably in Japan, through prestigious international events.

"HEART&crafts: With our hearts, for artistic crafts"

With passion and conviction, HEART&crafts is an agency that strives to create social bonds by placing emotion at the heart of the human and artistic experience, by instilling meaning into cultural practices – specifically in artistic crafts.

Through collaborative projects set up with public bodies and institutions (INMA, ministries, embassies etc.), HEART&crafts contributes actively to the prestige of France abroad, with the ambition of becoming a recognised reference in this field.

Tokyo National Museum

Co-organisier of the exhibition

The Tokyo National Museum is the oldest and largest art museum in Japan. With 116,000 works of art (including 99 National Treasures and 634 Important Cultural Properties as of March 2017), the museum's collection is the most significant in Japan. More than 1 million visitors come to the museum each year (1,9 million in 2015).

Its patronage is exceptional.

NHK Promotions

Co-organisier of the exhibition

NHK Promotions was created in 1977. A subsidiary of the NHK, Japan's public national broadcasting corporation, NHK Promotions is in charge of organising cultural projects and events. With its financial partners and strong links in the Japanese media and museums, NHK Promotions brings the guarantees of a strong partner, whether it is on the structural, organisational or financial level.

Asahi Shimbun

Co-organisier of the exhibition

One of Japan's leading and oldest newspapers, the Asahi Shimbun is the second most-read daily newspaper in the world with a circulation of 6.6 million (as of February 2016).

French institutional partners

The Bettencourt Schueller Foundation

Principal patron of the exhibition

The Bettencourt Schueller Foundation, a patron of French artistic crafts and exceptional know-how

Created by a family who believes in mankind's abilities and is committed to initiative, creativity, excellence and openness, the Bettencourt Schueller Foundation is driven by convictions that define its character and approach, working for the common good and not for profit, in an objective of social responsibility. Its actions are focused on three key areas: life sciences, arts, the promotion of an inclusive society.

Since its creation at the end of the 1980s, it has championed 493 laureates and 1,500 projects led by various teams, associations, institutions and organizations.

To promote excellence in the artistic crafts sector, to contribute to their prestige in France and abroad, these are the goals the Foundation set itself in 1999 when it created the Liliane Bettencourt Prize for the Intelligence of the Hand. In addition, it has set up structures to support its laureates in the long run. The Bettencourt Schueller Foundation also provides practical help to artistic crafts through a patronage program aimed towards professionals and institutions, to assist them in addressing the crucial issues of training, production, value, promotion and transmission.

The Foundation contributes to the prestige of French artistic crafts and excellence abroad, a sector with a strong cultural identity in France. In order to foster a French-Japanese dialogue, the Bettencourt Schueller Foundation is the principal patron of the Villa Kujoyama, one of the most prestigious French artists' residence abroad programs. In the same spirit, it has partnered with Wonder Lab, and is the main patron of this landmark exhibition.



The National Institute for Arts and Crafts (INMA)

In charge of the Master of Art – Student programme

The French National Institute for Arts and Crafts is a laboratory for the future for artistic crafts.

The mission of the National Institute for Arts and Crafts (INMA) is to enlighten the public about the wealth of artistic crafts, their educational and cultural value, their potential for employment creation and social empowerment, and to support them in achieving long-term growth.

For the Institute, these know-hows constitute as much a heritage that needs to keep reinventing itself, as an asset for France and numerous other countries in Europe and across the world, about which there needs to be a collective awareness.

Henceforth the objective is to promote the creative energy and the contribution of artistic crafts in society, while revisiting the way the public can learn about and discover about these trades.

With that in mind, INMA seeks to promote artistic crafts as a way to reveal the beauty of our everyday lives, as ambassadors of our way of life and creators of collective intelligence for our future. Beyond their technical and artistic prowess, the skills exercised in artistic crafts are the trademark of a humanity that needs to be transmitted, and the bearers of a universal message.

In 2012, the French Ministry of Culture entrusted INMA with the management of its Master of Art – Student programme. This one-of-a-kind programme in Europe was created in 1994 with the goal of preserving rare and exceptional skills and techniques in the artistic crafts sector. With the support of the Bettencourt Schueller Foundation, INMA is currently renovating the programme to transform it into an innovative laboratory of transmission, and to prepare the renewal of these skills and techniques.



**French Embassy in Japan
Institut Français in Japan**

with the patronage of the
French Ministry of Culture

15 exceptional artistic craftspeople 15 different artistic crafts

The **WONDER LAB** exhibition offers a fresh perspective on contemporary creation and reveals the excellence and diversity of French artistic crafts. The public will have the opportunity to meet the creators of today, who, by constantly experimenting and pushing the boundaries of their craft, are questioning and enchanting the world.

Selection criteria for the fifteen French creators participating in the WONDER LAB exhibition

- Mastery and excellence in an artistic craft in France
- Capacity to innovate (develop new skills and techniques, tools, processes; work outside the usual limits of their crafts etc.)
- Dedication of the artists to evolve, reinvent and entrench their crafts for the future

Serge **AMORUSO**
Emmanuel **BARROIS**
Christian **BONNET**
Fanny **BOUCHER**
Roland **DARASPE**
Lison **DE CAUNES**
Gérard **DESQUAND**
Jean **GIREL**
Michel **HEURTAULT**
Nathanaël **LE BERRE**
Sylvain **LE GUEN**
Laurent **NOGUES**
François-Xavier **RICHARD**
Nelly **SAUNIER**
Pietro **SEMINELLI**

Serge AMORUSO

Leather worker

Master of Art since 2006

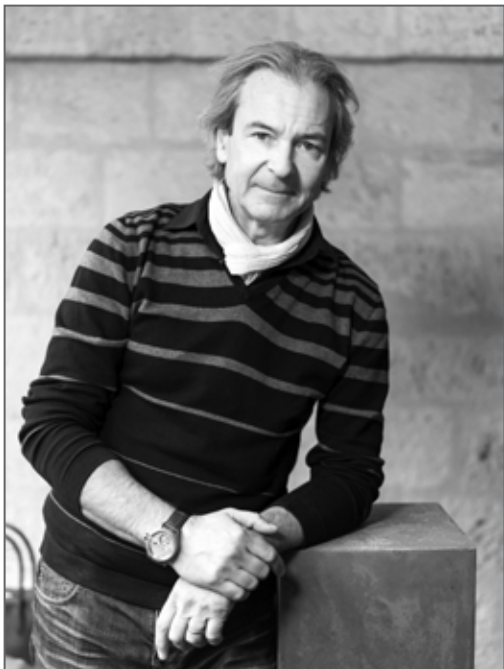
It is custom work that characterises Serge Amoruso's creations, each of which is designed to fulfil his clients' needs or desires. Exploring the combination between varied materials, different kinds of leathers blended with titanium, carbon fibre, ivory or meteorite fragments, Amoruso's goal is to always go beyond what is asked of him. With the obsession of doing things 'a bit differently', he brings out the beauty of the materials and elicits contrasting emotions, using leather, a medium that is imprinted by the marks left by time.



BIOGRAPHY

Venetian-born and Parisian by adoption, Serge Amoruso started to work at an early age in his cabinetmaker father's workshop. When he was 15, he opted to work with leather, fascinated by the sensuality of the skins and the multiple possibilities presented by this natural material. He trained at the Ecole Grégoire-Ferrandi, where he graduated as a saddlery and leather goods craftsman in 1978. Seven years spent at Hermès, in the prestigious 'trunk atelier', allowed him to acquire the knowledge and skills to master all the production stages necessary to create an object in high-end leather work, and to value elegance above all else. He then spent ten years sharing his passion with disadvantaged youth, while at the same time going on an inner quest: he walked the Zaskar Range, climbed the Himalaya twice, and travelled to Japan to perfect his aikido skills.

In 1995, he opened an atelier in Paris, where he continues to receive clients and create custom-made objects of desire for them. From leather goods to furniture, a cigar humidor or a scooter coated in alligator skin, an elevator covered in galuchat or the interior fittings of a boat, Amoruso, who believes that 'each piece is a story', transforms the wildest dreams into reality, accepting the most audacious orders, astounding his clients and exceeding their expectations. The master leather worker enjoys combining rare materials, pieces of ebony or rosewood, elements of mammoth ivory or meteorite fragments. On his quest for innovation, experimenting with new combinations, he uses, for some of his creations, titanium or carbon fibre. Amoruso cultivates an ongoing relationship with Japan, where he goes twice a year, with much joy.



Emmanuel BARROIS

Glassmaker

Master of Art since 2010

Living Heritage Company label in 2015

Alongside his work in dialogue with the world of design, architecture and contemporary art, Emmanuel Barrois continues to research new glass techniques every day with his team, in a quest for rigour and exploration. Approaching the conception and completion of each project with the same precision and passion, he affords himself the luxury of taking on exceptional glasswork projects, but also of crossing technical boundaries and blending practices. Combining traditional artisanal techniques and the most advanced industrial techniques, he finds creative freedom by mastering and overcoming the constraints of glass.

BIOGRAPHY

After training as an agronomist, Emmanuel Barrois worked in the humanitarian sector in Mali, Afghanistan and the Caribbean, before becoming a photographer for various magazines. While shooting an assignment on the preservation of heritage and artistic crafts, he met a glassmaker and discovered a fascination for light, colour and the art of physically defying the material.

In 1990, without any formal training, he started to teach himself glasswork, restoring stained glass panels from cathedrals and abbeys – not so much with the intention of rediscovering an ancient skill as to experience what the glassmakers of the 13th century felt when they were creating architecture and inventing modernity. A dialogue with architect Claude Parent, and later with Paul Andreu and Jean Nouvel, was instrumental in confirming his calling and understanding the necessity – in his own words – to ‘constantly call into question, to establish the principle of discomfort as a rule’. He has collaborated with Kengo Kuma a number of times, notably in 2013 for the creation of the glass shell panels of the Marseille Fonds Régional d’Art Contemporain, with Olafur Eliasson for the creation of the Louis Vuitton Foundation’s yellow glass columns and with Patrick Berger, to create the 30,000 square-metre canopy above the Forum des Halles in Paris, conceiving, for each of these large-scale projects, specific conceptual, aesthetic and technical solutions. Focused on architecture, Barrois’s work also leads him to projects of different scales, as well as to private commissions.

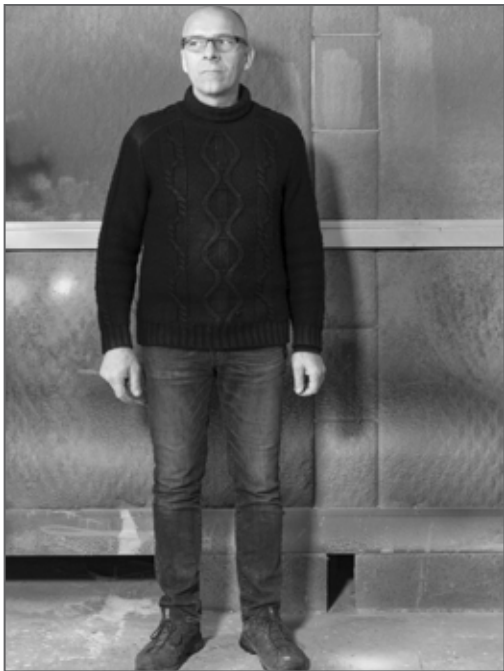


Photo © Philippe Chancel



Christian BONNET

Tortoiseshell artisan – spectacle-maker

Master of Art since 2000

Living Heritage Company label in 2015

Chevalier of the Legion of Honour in 2008

A true magician, Christian Bonnet enhances everyday objects, combining the beauty and transparency of the tortoiseshell with a grafting technique that he is the only person in the world to master. Whether he is conceiving bespoke eyeglasses for the most illustrious clients – from Le Corbusier to Yves Saint-Laurent–, restoring ancient objects or creating tortoiseshell sculptures, Bonnet uses his talent and intimate knowledge of tortoiseshell to create exceptional objects, inventing technical solutions and new aesthetics.



Lunette Pei © JYLSC

BIOGRAPHY

Christian Bonnet is one of the last tortoiseshell artisans in France. The successor of a family tradition that spans three generations, he learnt to work this noble and natural material from the age of fourteen, training as a spectacle maker with his father, while taking theoretical classes at the Pasteur optical school. In 1980, he took over as head of Maison Bonnet, which had been founded by his father thirty years earlier. Beyond his family legacy, Christian Bonnet is also the unique depositary of the skills, workshop secrets and tools of the last tabletiers, who have slowly disappeared, making him the last guardian of this ancestral tradition dating from Antiquity: the art of the tortoiseshell. Bonnet is passionate about tortoiseshell, from the richness of its colours – blood-red to honey yellow and multiple shades of amber – to the magic of its transparencies. The artist does not only play with aesthetic possibilities, he takes advantage of the organic specificities of tortoiseshell. He likes to share his love of tortoiseshell, be it explaining his craft to a neophyte who is lucky enough to visit his workshop, or meeting his Japanese counterpart Araki Hitochi, with whom he exchanges and collaborates with occasionally; the two men compare perspectives on their art, which, in their own way and according to their cultural heritage, they both master.



Fanny BOUCHER

Héliographeur

Master of Art since 2015

Living Heritage Company label in 2006

Fanny Boucher, with the complicity of her disciple, is taking heliogravure into a new dimension, experimenting with complex volumes, endeavouring with her photographic sculptures or this exhibition to create works of art from the copper matrixes that are usually only a step in the heliogravure process – creating a real revolution in the world of engraving.

BIOGRAPHY

After graduating from the Ecole Supérieure des arts et industries graphiques Estienne in intaglio engraving in 1998, Fanny Boucher specialised in the Talbot-Klic heliogravure au grain photo engraving process, which she learnt from the acclaimed engraver Gerard Desquand. The process was discovered by Viennese printer Karl Klic, after studying the work of William Henry Fox Talbot and scientist Jean-Daniel Lemoine, a 19th-century photo engraving specialist. In 2000, at the age of 24, she founded the Atelier Héliog, the only professional heliogravure studio in France, and one of ten in the world practicing an art so rare it is on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural

Heritage list. Boucher controls each step of the heliogravure process, from the most delicate to the most physical. She collaborates with prominent photographers and contemporary artists, who, from Gérard Garouste to Yayoi Kusama, Willy Ronis, Zao Wouki, Emilia & Ilia Kabakov, François Morellet, Yuri Kuper and Bernard Venet, entrust her with the task of interpreting their work and enhancing it with the alchemy of heliogravure. After working for ten years for this to be recognised not as a reproduction process but as an original creation, Boucher continues to innovate, as part of a strong desire to 'take heliogravure beyond engraving', by working her copper plates as if they were integral works of art. She opens heliogravure to unprecedented perspectives, ushering it into the world of design, interior decorating and visual arts. Since 2011, she has been accompanied by Antonin Pons Braley, a trained photographer who became her student, and to whom she is transmitting her knowledge. Together, they are taking the historical technique of heliogravure into the third dimension, experimenting on the development of heliogravure printing on new mediums.



Photo © Philippe Chancel



Globe © Heliog



Roland DARASPE

Silversmith

Master of Art since 2002

Living Heritage Company label in 2006

Liliane Bettencourt Prize for the Intelligence of the Hand in 2006

Compared to the delicate work of the feather-artist or the fan-maker, the physical aspect of the silversmith's work introduces us to a new relation between the artist and his material of choice. Roland Daraspe considers that the noise and vibration of his tools on metal are part of his creation process and dreams up contemporary creations that are both object and sculpture. Creating facets on the surface or hammering in delicate impacts, he invents surprising gradients, experimenting with silver and copper alloys.

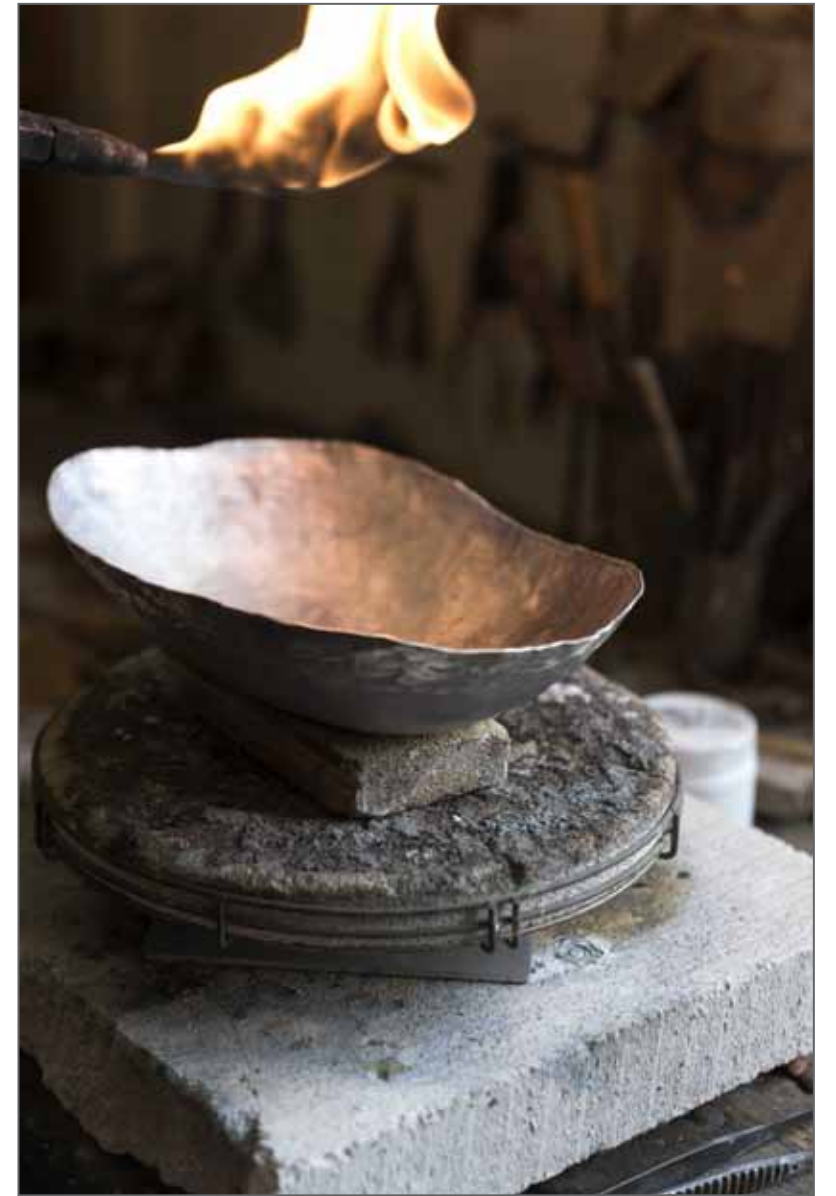
BIOGRAPHY

From his initial training as a coppersmith and then in aeronautical mechanics, Roland Daraspe has retained his love of metalwork, a mastery of the hammer and a taste for physically defying his material of choice. When he decided to dedicate himself to silverwork in 1978, it was as an autodidact. Just over a decade later, in the early 1990s, a solo exhibition at the Bordeaux Museum of Decorative Arts was recognising his work as a master craftsman. Since then, commissions orders from collectors, museums and French institutions have been unwavering, giving him the freedom to push his craft further, developing

shapes, experimenting with new techniques, combining metal alloys and coupling silver leaf (his material of choice) with snake wood or hard stones. Creating facets on the surface or hammering in delicate impacts, he invents surprising gradients, juxtaposing silver with nickel silver, a zinc, silver and copper alloy; doubling his pieces with silver-gilt; or revisiting the Japanese Mokume-gane technique, also known as wood eye metal, which creates the illusion of natural wood grain by overlaying, welding and laminating different metals, resulting in vibrant colour effects. Nature, which the silversmith lives in proximity to, is often an inspiration, influencing the shape of his objects, where harmony meets perfection, sensuality meets precision, and rigour meets creativity.



Photo © Philippe Chancel



Lison DE CAUNES

Straw marquetry

Master of Art since 1998

Living Heritage Company label in 2016

Chevalière of the Legion of Honour in 2011

Lison de Caunes learnt the art of straw marquetry by restoring ancient pieces for twenty years, before dedicating herself to creating unique pieces that revisit this French 18th century artistic craft, a staple of the Art Deco movement, of which her grandfather André Groult was a distinguished representative. In collaboration with the designers, decorators and luxury houses that commission her work, she transforms the simplest of fibres into precious materials. Luxury born from a simple material, this technique derived from a French historical heritage that has been reinvented, is accomplished, with this object, to perfection.

BIOGRAPHY

After studying bookbinding and gilding at the Union des Arts décoratifs, Lison de Caunes experimented with different rare materials, from galuchat to eggshell and parchment. Fascinated by the discovery of a commode in straw marquetry in the window of an antique shop, she decided to dedicate herself to the craft, reviving a family passion inherited from her grand father, the famous decorator André Groult. Surrounded by objects created by her grand father and armed with the tools he left her, it is first by restoring

ancient pieces – from private collections or museums, or those picked up in antique shops – that she learned the skills and techniques, the subtlety and precision of straw marquetry. It is in contact with these objects of the past, testimonials of a remarkable knowledge, that she was able to revive a craft commonly used in the decorative arts between the 17th and 19th centuries, before falling into disuse and then reappearing sporadically in the Art Deco style of the 1920s. She decided at the end of the 1990s to devote herself mostly to creating her own objects while also working in collaboration with well-known designers and interior decorators. A humble material, straw demands in fact patience and precision, passion and knowledge, talent and creativity to transform into a noble and luxurious surface, rare and precious. A craftswoman whose expertise is recognised around the world, she is also something of a historian, regularly organising exhibitions and publishing books on straw marquetry, telling the story of its beginnings as well as its current perspective, offering an overview of the countries where it is used, highlighting its uniqueness and revealing its wealth.



Photo © Philippe Chancel



Table © Gilles Trillard



Gérard DESQUAND

Heraldic engraver

Master of Art since 2006

Meilleur Ouvrier de France

(Best Craftsman of France) in 1979

If the relationship to time is a dimension shared by most Masters of Art, it is particularly present in Desquand's work. After spending years engraving the coats of arms, crests and signet rings of the most notable French families, he is dedicated today to inscribing history onto cylinder-shaped seals, which he rolls onto fine sheets of porcelain that retain its infinite imprint. The art of engraving, as he undertakes and reinvents it, is emblematic of the very essence of artistic crafts and their inherent link to time: time to acquire an expertise to create an object, to inherit a legacy or ancient skills, time to transmit and research new paths.

BIOGRAPHY

A son and grandson of engravers, Gérard Desquand is one of the rare heraldic engravers in France; there are only four left today. After obtaining a diploma in artistic crafts in 1970 from the Ecole Supérieure des arts et industries graphiques Estienne (where his grandfather had studied in 1896), he spent a year in apprenticeship with his father before opening his own workshop in 1972. He first specialised in intaglio engraving and embossing, notably for luxury houses, before switching, in 1972, to heraldic engraving, continuing the family tradition. Desquand perpetuates, with hollow engraving in metal, skills inherited from the heraldic tradition of the Middle Ages, while exploring the possibilities of imprinting through new mediums such as porcelain, whose delicate and transparent surface, retains the mark of a figurative motif in a gentle engraving. He has always been committed to transmitting his passion and knowledge, whether it is to his student Sarah Bougault – whom he is training in the art of heraldic engraving, and to whom he passed his atelier in 2016, while continuing to work there – or in the engraving class that he taught for 25 years at the Ecole Estienne. He was President of the National Institute of Artistic Crafts (INMA) between 2013 and 2016, and is currently the President of the Grand Ateliers association, actively contributing to the definition, dissemination and the recognition of artistic crafts in France.



Jean GIREL

Ceramist

Master of Art since 2000

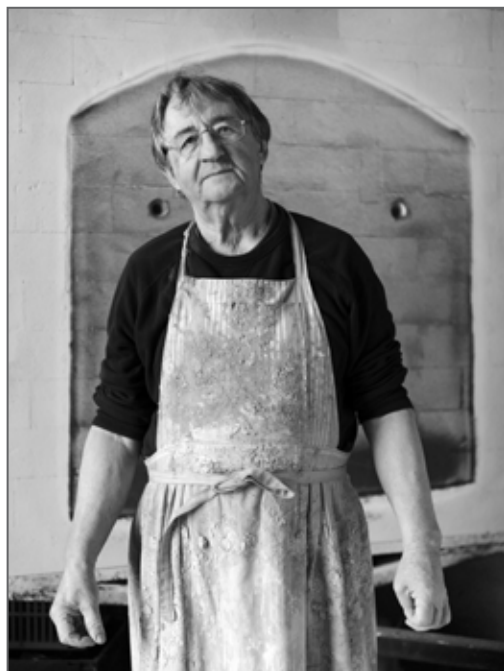
Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters in 2007

Ceramic artist Jean Girel believes that 'Pottery speaks to all the senses. It makes them intelligent, it gives them a soul.' As with all the artistic craftsmen and women exhibited here, his approach is a life choice, an ongoing passion, a vocation whose purpose transcends the artist, to become something much broader. With humility, he observes nature, experiments with techniques, even trying to do what no one else had ever attempted: inventing tools, building kilns, documenting propositions in dozens of notebooks, destroying the works that do not attain the utmost level of excellence. He considers that each piece must 'have an unexpected result, something that renews his desire to create'. Bringing together several of his ceramic series, the exhibition tells the story of the artistic and human journey that he has been on for forty years: to rediscover the technique, which had been lost since the Jian potters of the Song Dynasty, of the 'Yohen Tenmoku' bowls, whose outside glaze takes on astounding iridescent hues, while inside, a galaxy of round and oval patterns evokes 'a starry night sparkling in the sky'. There are only four left in the world. The presentation of the master potter's research, through about sixty Yohen Tenmoku, is in itself a remarkable event in the world of ceramics.

BIOGRAPHY

Jean Girel discovered the potter's wheel when he was ten years old and was introduced to the craft a few years later by a traditional potter. However, after studying at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Macon and obtaining a Bachelor in Fine Arts in Paris, he embarked

on a career as a painter. During a visit to the Guimet Museum in Paris, he came across stoneware from the Chinese Song Dynasty (10th to 13th century) – a decisive encounter that steered him toward what would be his life's work: in 1975, he decided to dedicate himself exclusively to ceramics. In 2008, he fulfilled the dream of every potter to set up an atelier next to his own clay deposit, on the site of a former tillery. Girel has published several books, including *La Sagesse du Potier* [The wisdom of the Potter] in 2004, *Brève histoire de la céramique* [A brief history of ceramics] in 2014 and *La céramique song ou l'art des cinq éléments* [Song ceramics or the art of the five elements] in 2015. He was a painter first, and it is with the eyes of a painter that he observes nature, aspiring to share through his ceramics the emotion that he feels in front of a landscape. For the past 40 years, he has been on a passionate journey, an exceptional human and artistic adventure: to rediscover the technique, which had been lost since the Jian potters of the Song Dynasty, of the Yohen Tenmoku tea bowls, of which there are only four left in the world – three of them in Japan, where they are considered to be national treasures. The bowls are kept at the Fujita Museum in Osaka, the Ryokoin in Kyoto and the Seikado Bunko Art Museum in Tokyo.



Michel HEURTAULT

Creator and restorer of umbrellas and parasols
Master of Art since 2013
Living Heritage Company label in 2011

To breathe beauty into everyday life, umbrella-maker Michel Heurtault spends his days recreating, restoring and designing exceptional umbrellas and parasols. Fascinated by these objects since his childhood – objects for which he sees endless creative possibilities – Heurtault adds a touch of the past, with infinite attention to detail (a handle or a piece of fabric) in every one of his contemporary creations, a habit dating from his days as a costume-maker for the theatre.

BIOGRAPHY

Umbrellas were the first toys of Michel Heurtault; as a child, he would disassemble them to understand their mechanism and replicate their architecture. This passion never left him, becoming his life and his art. Without any formal training, but with a respect for fine materials and a quest for beauty, he taught himself the subtlety of the fabric's alteration, the complexity of the cut, and the demands of the assembly work. Considered the most passionate among the collectors of umbrellas and parasols (there are more than 2000 in his collection, which for 30 years has nourished his imagination and his creations), Heurtault has an encyclopaedic knowledge not only of the object and its history but also of its styles, fashions, shapes and materials. The Parasolerie Heurtault, where ancient techniques are perpetuated and a heritage is shared with future generations, received the Living Heritage Company label in 2011.



Photo © Philippe Chancel



Nathanaël LE BERRE

Freehand metalworker
Liliane Bettencourt Prize for
the Intelligence of the Hand in 2014

Freehand metalworker Nathanaël Le Berre is always pushing further the limits between his creations – notably a pair of side tables created especially for this exhibition – and the field of sculpture. Exploring the complexity of shapes, experimenting with chemical patinas, he has fashioned his identity and singularity through his medium.



Œuvre infini © Nathanael Le Berre

BIOGRAPHY

Nathanaël Le Berre studied stained glass at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Appliqués et des Métiers d'Art, before choosing to dedicate himself to metalwork. It is at the school that he first discovered he could express his thoughts and inner world through the ancient technique of metalwork, using a sheet of steel, tin, brass or copper, on which he could create – from a flat surface – form and space. After graduating, he went on to perfect his skills in the workshop of sculptor Hervé Wahlen, while, at the same time, working for an ironwork designer and different silversmiths. In 2004, he set up his own workshop, bought the tools, the steel hammers and the boxwood mallet of Gabriel René Lacroix, a renowned metalworker from the 1920s, and started on the solitary path of personal creation. His repertoire of shapes started slowly to expand, his range of patinas to widen, taking him further and further in the exploration of possibilities offered by the metals he defies, tirelessly, in a sort of ascetic practice that is always rigorous and impassioned. The sacred and mystical influences from his childhood permeate his creations that, instilled with a spiritual dimension, reveal the invisible. Defining himself as a sculptor who uses the traditional and artisanal techniques of metalwork, Le Berre combines the discipline of the craft with freedom of expression. From the physical work that goes into hammering a metal sheet, he is able to create emotions. From the tension of volumes, the way they bend and unbend, the circulation of energy through vacuums and solids, emerges a sensation of serenity, infusing each piece with an invitation to meditate on nature, humanity, metal and time – all of which feed his creative process.



Photo © Philippe Chancel



Sylvain LE GUEN

Fan-maker

Master of Art since 2015

Sylvain Le Guen blurs the line between object and work of art. He explores 'the folds within the folds', opening up new dimensions, revealing the surprise of a complex origami design that pops up when the fan is opened. One of the youngest French Masters of Art, Le Guen devises unexpected combinations of materials, coupling ancient montures (mounts) with modern leaves.



BIOGRAPHY

Moved by the magic of a fan that he played with when he was eight years old, Sylvain Le Guen started exploring the mechanisms of this object that has fascinated him ever since. He created his first fan when he was ten, and then taught himself progressively the art of these little treasures of ingenuity. The restoration of ancient pieces helped him along his journey of technical discovery of the objet, the knowledge of its history and symbolism – a sign of power or a status symbol – before evolving into a symbol of elegance at the beginning of the 20th century. In 2001, Serge Davoudian, an antique dealer, and Fabienne Falluel, the chief curator of the Galliera fashion museum in Paris, both of whom encouraged him to make it his living. In his atelier, which he moved to the Drôme region in 2005, he alternates between the restoration of ancient fans, orders for collectors and the cinema – in 2006 he created 29 fans for Sofia Coppola's film, Marie-Antoinette – and collaborations with artists and creators – such as perfumer Francis Kurkdjian, for whom he reinvented the perfumed fan – all the while developing his personal creations. Le Guen studies the anatomy and development of the object with the rigour of a scientist, but it is with the magic of a poet that he dreams up surprising three-dimensional volumes that allow delicate pop-up flowers to appear in the folds of a fan or reveal complex origami designs. Mastering each step of production from beginning to end, Le Guen practises several trades, from marquetry to embroidery and feather-artistry.



Laurent NOGUES

Embosser printer

Master of Art since 2011

Living Heritage Company label in 2008

**Liliane Bettencourt Prize for
the Intelligence of the Hand in 2015**

Enhancing techniques or materials is what characterises the paper-embossing work of Laurent Nogues, who revisits an ancient French technique to discover new technical and aesthetic avenues, ushering graphic design into a new era with his innovative propositions. Exploring the characteristics of light and shadow, the complexity of relief, he ventures into large formats and takes paper beyond its limits, like with the '*pashika*' Japanese paper, which he transforms until obtaining a perfection unparalleled in paper embossing.



BIOGRAPHY

After graduating from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Appliqués Olivier de Serres, Laurent Nogues chose to embark on the path set by his father, a printer, while fostering his own explorations on the art of embossing, paper inlaying and hot stamping. Experimenting with different techniques, he combined age-old knowledge – dating from ancient times when coin stamping was used for embossing, and the Middle Ages when the art of illumination was used for hot stamping – with the latest technologies. In 1994, he founded the Créanog atelier, in a desire to save and revive techniques facing extinction, but also to be able to bring together all the different stages of creation. A true laboratory, Créanog is a place where innovation and technical revolution – from 3D programming to a digital system capable of engraving brass tools and opening up new horizons – are at the service of excellence. Enabling creations that are more audacious every time, these mechanical inventions and technological advances complement perfectly the irreplaceable work of the hand, which perfects the nervosity of a crest, conditions the quality of the shadows in the reliefs, gives the object its exceptional singularity.



François-Xavier RICHARD

Hand-block wallpaper creator
Living Heritage Company label in 2006
Liliane Bettencourt Prize for
the Intelligence of the Hand in 2009
Laureate of the Villa Kujoyama
artists' residence programme in Kyoto in 2017

Since discovering this medium, François-Xavier Richard has made it his ambition, with audacity and curiosity, to experiment with all the possibilities offered by wallpaper, devising his own tools and machines and using new technology to revisit techniques that had fallen into disuse since the 16th century, like stone paper. Whether he is designing new motifs for his personal collection or restoring ancient wallpapers from the 18th and 19th centuries, his creation is as much intertwined with the past as it is with the present.



BIOGRAPHY

A painter, sculptor and engraver, François-Xavier Richard graduated from the Ecole nationale supérieure des beaux-arts in Angers, and first sought a career as a set designer and scenographer for the theatre. In his early explorations, he researched artisanal techniques such as egg tempera, stamping and wood engraving. In 1997, he discovered hand-block wallpaper printing at the Maury atelier in Tours – one of the last manufacturers using this technique – and decided to focus on this 18th-century tradition, which had been completely abandoned since the mid 20th century. Two years later, at the age of 27, he founded the Offard atelier, an artisanal manufacturing company that specialised in the restoration of ancient wallpapers for the Monuments Historiques (Historical Buildings society), and the creation of bespoke wallpapers for luxury houses, designers, decorators and artists. In a spirit of experimentation and innovation, the Offard atelier combines traditional processes with new technology; using the natural pigments or rabbit-skin glue that have been used for centuries, printing paper one colour at a time, applying motifs on board-shaped blocks that are passed through hand-operated presses, while at the same using computers to print the blocks digitally.



Nelly SAUNIER

Feather Artist

Master of Art since 2008

Liliane Bettencourt Prize for the Intelligence of the Hand in 2009

Chevalière of the Order of Arts and Letters in 2012

Laureate of the Villa Kujoyama artists' residence programme in Kyoto in 2015

Whether she is producing extraordinary pieces for high-end jewellery houses or designing her own feather sculptures, Nelly Saunier plays with shimmering colours and the sensuality of feathers, creating enchantment and emotion. Infinitely precise work that can be scattered by the slightest breath, the feather sculptures of Saunier, who became known around the world after creating a spectacular bolero made of multi-coloured macaw feathers for Jean-Paul Gaultier – with whom she collaborated with for more than 17 years – deploy into installations that are both delicate and spectacular.



Alcove © Nelly Saunier

BIOGRAPHY

After growing up surrounded by nature, birds and trees, when Nelly Saunier discovered feather artistry at the age of 14, she recognised that it was her calling. She trained in feather work at the lycée Octave Feuillet in Paris – where she would go on to teach some years later – and went on to study textile design at the Ecole

Nationale Supérieure des Arts Appliqués Olivier de Serres. A feather artist, Saunier is one of the last people to hold this ancient knowledge, which in France includes the 'peacock milliners' of the 13th century, the 'panache feather workers' of the 16th century, and the golden age of feather work in the 1920s. Using her intimate knowledge of feathers, the plasticity, mechanics and features of each and every one of them, she is able to give life to them, to express emotion through them. In accordance with international regulations and to ensure the protection of species, she uses ancient stocks bought from antique dealers and feather workers, retrieves the moult of rare birds or beautifies the feathers of farmyard birds, pheasants, partridges or mallard ducks. She lends her talent to couturiers, designers and costume makers, and more recently to fine jewellery and luxury watchmaking, composing delicate miniatures made of diamonds and feathers that can be scattered by the slightest breath. But it is probably through her personal creations that Saunier's art and rich poetic world best expresses itself. A creator of emotion and beauty, the feather artist tells stories through the feather sculptures, which are regularly exhibited in contemporary art venues across France, Switzerland, the United States and Japan.



Pietro SEMINELLI

Master of pleats

Master of Art since 2006

Living Heritage Company label in 2011

For Pietro Seminelli, folds and pleats in textiles or paper are an immersion into our memory, into our inner Self. In a desire to take more risks, to scale up his work, he created for the exhibition a space that invites the visitor to experience a material that is guided by emotions.



BIOGRAPHY

A cabinet maker and an interior designer by training, a graduate of the Ecole Nationale Supérieure des Arts Appliqués et des Métiers d'Arts, Pietro Seminelli started his career alongside Louis Bercut, a scenographer for the Academie Française. But it is in the workshop of Gérard Lognon, one of the last French masters of pleats, that he learned about the art of pleating, an expertise at the crossroads between geometry and the observation of the rules of nature. After

becoming a master in this art that transforms a surface into a volume, Seminelli forged a new path, becoming an 'architect of pleats'. In 1996, he set up his atelier in Normandy, allowing him to develop the art of origami adapted to textiles on an architectural scale, transforming fabrics into a sculpture or a two-dimensional textile stained glass that plays on shadows and transparencies with sophistication and elegance. With scientific rigour, Seminelli makes precise calculations and designs complex diagrams that give birth to poetic constructions and landscapes, revealing alternating 'mountain' and 'valley' pleats in which tectonics are reinvented. An artistic expression with mathematical precision, for him the art of pleating is a true introspection, an immersion into the complexity of memory, a way to put into perspective man's place in the universe. An inventor of shapes, Seminelli is always exploring, whether it is the infinite possibilities of the sequencing of pleats, the creation of new textiles, or ways to apply pleating techniques to different mediums, from paper to ceramics. In 2013, he opened an office in New York to fulfil the numerous orders commissioned from the other side of the Atlantic. His creations have caught the eyes of the biggest architects and designers, from Peter Marino to Yohji Yamamoto, for whom, he created in 2016, a series of pleated sculptures.



Conferences

Tokyo National Museum

**Living National Treasures / Masters of Art:
A dialogue between France and Japan on history
and the future of the programmes protecting our
living intangible heritage**

Conference-discussion with **Gérard Desquand**,
Master of Art, heraldic engraver; **Lyne Cohen-Solal**,
President of INMA; **Kazumi Murose**, Living National
Treasure, lacquer artist; **Yoshiaki Ito**, Deputy
Director of the Kyoto National Museum

Saturday 16 September from 15:00 to 16:30

**Artistic crafts and innovation: observations from
the architecture sector**

Conference-discussion with **Emmanuel Barrois**,
Master of Art, glassmaker; **Toyo Ito**, architect; **Junji
Ito**, professor at the Tokyo University of the Arts
(Geidai), art critic

Saturday 16 September from 16:45 to 18:15

**The journey of a lifetime: the extraordinary story
of the quest for the 'Yohen Tenmoku'**

Screening of a film by **Yannick Couteron**, followed
by a conference-discussion with **Jean Girel**, Master
of Art, ceramist and **Tetsuro Degawa**, Director of the
Museum of Oriental Ceramics in Osaka

Sunday 17 September from 15:00 to 16:30

Tokyo University of the Arts (Geidai)

Japanese tea ceremony with a Tea Master in
collaboration with **Jean Girel**, Master of Art.
His ceramic tea bowls will be used for the ceremony

**Conference cycle with six French Masters of Art
and Japanese experts**

Details to be confirmed soon

Institut Français in Tokyo

**Yves Saint Laurent's spectacles: a discussion
with Christian Bonnet, tortoiseshell artisan,
spectacle maker**

Screening of the film Saint Laurent by **Bertrand
Bonello**, followed by a discussion with **Christian
Bonnet**, Master of Art, tortoiseshell artisan and
Masaya Kushino, fashion designer, moderated by
Yoshiko Ikoma, fashion expert

Friday 15 September, screening from 17:00 to 19:30
/ Labo vol.16 – discussion from 19:30 to 21:30

Fun activities for children ages 10 and up

Tokyo National Museum

Umbrella and parasol making

Workshop with **Michel Heurtault**, Master of Art, creator
and restorer of umbrellas and parasols

Saturday 16 September from 10:30 to 12:00

Straw marquetry

Workshop with **Lison de Caunes**, Master of Art,
straw marquetry artist

Saturday 16 September from 13:00 to 14:30

Feather artistry

Workshop with **Nelly Saunier**, Master of Art,
feather artist

Sunday 17 September from 10:30 to 12:00

The art of the folding fan

Workshop with **Sylvain Le Guen**, Master of Art,
fan maker

Sunday 17 September from 13:00 to 14:30

Tokyo National Museum

The Tokyo National Museum is located in Ueno Park. The oldest and largest art museum in Japan, its first exhibition was held in 1872, at Yushima Seido shrine in Tokyo, before moving to its current location in 1882.

Its collection comprises around 116 000 items, including 88 National Treasures and 634 Important Cultural Properties (as of March 2017), works of art and ancient objects from Japan and Asia. More than 3000 objects are exhibited in the permanent collection.

More than 1 million visitors come to the museum each year – more than 1,9 million in 2015. About 20% of visitors come from abroad (23% in 2015).



The Hyōkeikan hosts the WONDER LAB exhibition

The oldest of the six exhibition buildings that compose the Tokyo National Museum complex, the Hyōkeikan was inaugurated in 1909.

Designed by architect Katayama Tōkuma and built to commemorate the wedding of the Meiji Crown Prince, its name can be translated by ‘to express congratulations’.

Designated as a Jūyō Bunkazai (Important Cultural Property) in 1978, the building is representative of the Western-style architecture of the late Meiji period (early 20th century).





HOURS

The museum is open from 9:30 to 17:00 (last admission at 16:30)

- Open until 21:00 on Fridays, Saturdays
- Regular exhibitions will be open until 21:00 on 2 November
- Open until 18:00 on Sundays and public holidays, from April to September
- Open until 22:00 on September 22 and 23

* Last admission 30 minutes before closing

* Hours are subject to change

The museum is closed on Mondays

ADMISSIONS

Tickets bought at the museum:

Adults: 1400 yen

University students: 1000 yen

High/junior/elementary school students: 600 yen

Tickets bought in advance:

Adults: 1200 yen

University students: 800 yen

High/junior/elementary school students: 400 yen

GETTING THERE

(JR Line) 10 minutes from Ueno or Uguisudani Station

(Ginza or Hibiya Tokyo Metro Line) 15 minutes from Ueno Station

(Chiyoda Tokyo Metro Line) 15 minutes from Nezu Station

(Keisei Line) 15 minutes from Keisei Ueno Station

Address: 13-9 Ueno Park, Taito-ku, Tokyo, 110-8712, Japan

Visitor information (Hello Dial): (03)5777-8600 (domestic) /+81-(3)-5777-8600 (international)

Website: <http://www.tnm.jp>

WON*
DER
LAB

11 SEPTEMBER
> 26 NOVEMBER
TOKYO NATIONAL
MUSEUM – HYŌKEIKAN



PRESS CONTACTS

2e BUREAU

Sylvie Grumbach

Caroline Comte

wonderlab@2e-bureau.com

+33 1 42 33 93 18

www.2e-bureau.com

'Tulip Glass', a unique piece created by Roland Daraspe, Master of Art, silversmith.
© Philippe Chancel