

Dip, Maitaison coffee pot. Christofle. École cantonale d'art de Lausanne (ECAL) and Adrien Rovero (b. 1981), designer. 2006. Silver-plated metal, rubber. Bouilhet Christofle Conservatory © François Coquerel

**Nov 13, 2024**  
**— April 20, 2025**

# Christofle

## A brilliant story

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Press release



**MAD**

  
**RÉPUBLIQUE  
FRANÇAISE**  
*Liberté  
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Exhibition designed by the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris  
Produced with the support of Christofle

*Christofle*

MUSÉE DES ARTS  
DÉCORATIFS

# Christofle

## A brilliant story

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1. Steps for partial gilding of a *Jardin d'Eden* table spoon — Christofle Marcel Wanders (b. 1963), designer 2018 Silver-plated and gilded metal Bouilhet Christofle Conservatory © Gwenaëlle Dautricourt for Christofle

2. *Flèche* candelabra — Christofle Gio Ponti (1891-1979), designer Model of 1928, produced between 1928 and 1942 Silver-plated metal Bouilhet Christofle Conservatory © Christophe Dellière

From November 13, 2024 to April 20, 2025, the Musée des Arts Décoratifs will celebrate the creations and extraordinary expertise of the renowned silversmith Maison Christofle by organizing a major exhibition dedicated to this French company, which boasts nearly two hundred years of history. From the 1830s to the present day, this line of talented goldsmiths, begun by Charles Christofle (1805-1863) and Henri Bouilhet (1830-1910), has transformed the lines and decorations of silverware, allowing it to become a feature of daily life. In collaboration with leading artists and fashion designers – such as Gio Ponti, Andrée Putman, Karl Lagerfeld and Pharrell Williams –, Christofle is an artistic laboratory that revolutionizes traditional silver smithery by reinventing its uses and enhancing it with new colors and decorations.



1.



2.

From the teaspoons to monumental vases for the World Fairs, nearly 1,000 pieces of gold and silverwork, jewelry, paintings, drawings and posters recount the extraordinary story of this heritage company. *Christofle, a brilliant story*, curated by Audrey Gay-Mazuel, curator in charge of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – Art Nouveau collections, is presented in the Christine & Stephen A. Schwarzman Fashion Galleries, in a spectacular and immersive scenography that highlights the hidden side of the silversmith's profession and the most legendary sumptuous tables.



3.

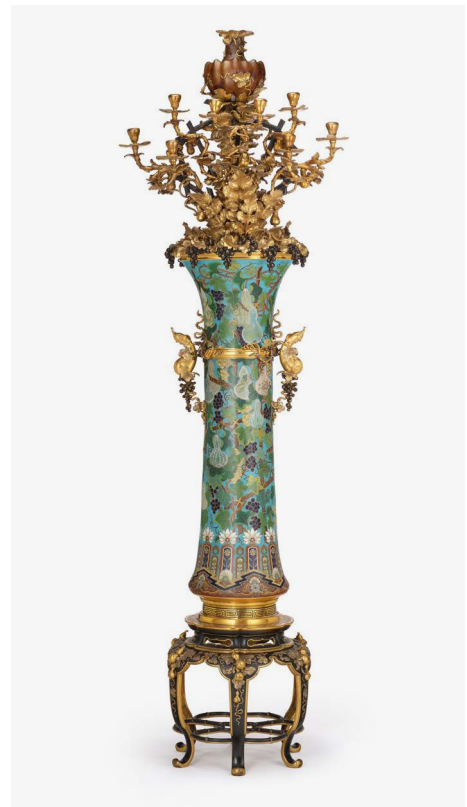
3. *L'Union fait le succès*  
coffee pot —  
Christofle  
Albert-Ernest  
Carrier-Belleuse  
(1824-1887), sculptor  
Model of 1880,  
produced after 1935  
Silver-plated metal  
and ivory  
Bouilhet Christofle  
Conservatory  
© Christophe Dellière

A jeweler by trade, Charles Christofle revolutionized gold- and silversmithing in 1842 by developing innovative techniques combining chemistry and electricity to silver- or gold-plate non-precious metals. Thanks to these new processes, he was able to make the tableware once the preserve of the elites and accessible, becoming part of our everyday lives, transforming the most common objects, such as video game consoles, cups or shoe boxes, into true works of design.

4. *Gourdes et vignes*  
*grimpante* torchiere —  
Christofle  
Émile Reiber  
(1826-1893), designer  
1874  
Gilded and patinated  
copper alloy, cloisonné  
enamel  
Paris, Musée des  
Arts décoratifs  
© Les Arts Décoratifs /  
Christophe Dellière

The exhibition opens with a spectacular presentation of Christofle's contribution to the world of decorative arts. Then, recreating the atmosphere of the Christofle factories, successively located in Paris, Saint-Denis and now Normandy, the visitor is taken behind the scenes to discover the secrets of the silver- and gold-plating processes, and to learn how a fork is made. The reconstruction of a silversmith's workshop, combining traditional tools with digital devices, reveals the mastery of this artistic profession.

Three rooms are dedicated to the masterpieces that Christofle presented at the World Fairs, from 1851 to 1925. Winner of gold medals at every event, the company has continued to innovate, creating monumental and spectacular pieces adorned with vibrant colors and patterns embodying the most avant-garde trends, from Japonisme to Art Deco.



4.

5. *Dip Malmaison* coffee service —  
Christofle  
École cantonale d'art de Lausanne (ECAL) and Adrien Rovero (b. 1981), designer  
2006  
Silver-plated metal, rubber  
Bouilhet Christofle Conservatory  
© Christophe Dellière

6. *Vertigo* vegetable dish with lid —  
Christofle  
Andrée Putman (1925-2013), designer  
2003  
Silver-plated metal  
Bouilhet Christofle Conservatory  
© Christophe Dellière

7. *Manche fraisier* Strawberry shovel —  
Christofle  
1894  
Silver-plated metal  
Bouilhet Christofle Conservatory  
© Christophe Dellière

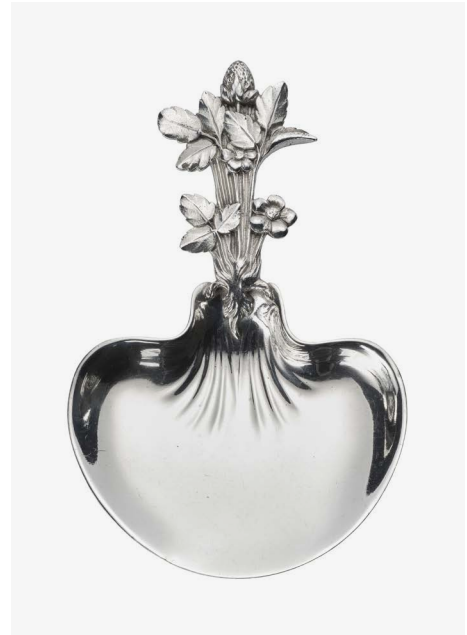
On the second floor, an idealized, museographic Christofle boutique offers a playful presentation of the endless variety of tableware and everyday objects that have become the hallmark of the company. From traditional cutlery sets to contemporary creations, from iconic silverware to iconic tea sets, each piece echoes Christofle's successes. Posters, advertisements and catalogs from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day reveal the commercial ambitions of this world-leading silversmith.



5.



6.



7.

As an ambassador of French luxury and art de vivre, Christofle has established itself in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as the preferred supplier of palaces, hotels and restaurants, as well as legendary trains, ocean liners and airplanes. From the famous Tour d'Argent duck press to the on-board service of the Concorde, visitors are invited to travel from the dining room of the Ritz to that of the ocean liner Normandie, from a coach of the Orient-Express to the cabin of Concorde.

Since the 1920s, Christofle has collaborated with leading designers to create pieces that are both modern and contemporary, imbued with the most avant-garde aesthetics. In the 1930s and 1950s, the Italians Gio Ponti and Lino Sabattini added dynamic lines and reinvented shapes with a touch of humor. At the same time, Danish and Finnish designers Christian Fjeringstad and Tapio Wirkkala also left their mark. Under the direction of Tony Bouilhet, Christofle immersed in the artistic circles of Jean Cocteau's, leading to collaborations with talents such as César and Arman.



8.

8. *Palmaceae* necklace —  
Christofle  
Michele Oka Doner  
(b. 1945), sculptor  
2005  
Solid silver  
Bouilhet Conservatory  
Christofle  
© Christophe Dellière

9. *Courge* tea service  
kettle —  
Christofle  
Léon Mallet (active  
1874-1900), sculptor  
Circa 1891  
Silver-plated metal  
and ivory  
Bouilhet Christofle  
Conservatory  
© Christophe Dellière

Since the 1990s, Christofle has surrounded itself with international designers, cementing its place in the history of contemporary art. Famous names such as Sylvain Dubuisson, Elisabeth Garouste and Mattia Bonetti, Martin Szekely, Richard Hutten, Marcel Wanders and Jean-Marie Massaud, as well as designers Christian Lacroix and Karl Lagerfeld, have all contributed their unique visions. Reconnecting with the legacy of its founder, Charles Christofle, since the mid-1980s, the Maison has made a name for itself again in the world of jewelry, with bold creations by Andrée Putman, Michele Oka Doner and Aurélie Bidermann.

The silversmith of kings, princes, emperors and then presidents, Christofle supplies palaces, ministries and embassies since the 1840s. From Napoleon III under the Second Empire to the current President of the French Republic, Christofle services have adorned the most majestic tables. Comprising hundreds of pieces and featuring impressive table centers complete with sculptures, planters and candelabras, now a signature of the French art of hosting, these services are a must for major diplomatic receptions. As a spectacular conclusion to the exhibition, the last two rooms of the tour surprise visitors with a magical display of tables whose settings contrast tradition and modernity, from the splendor of the 1860s to the *Vertigo* service designed by Andrée Putman in 2002.



9.

# Useful Information

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## — Press contacts

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## — Curator

Audrey Gay-Mazuel,  
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19<sup>th</sup> century – Art Nouveau  
collections

assisted by Astrid Grange,  
assistant curator  
19<sup>th</sup> century – Art Nouveau  
collections

## #Expo\_Christofle

## — Les Arts Décoratifs

**The not-for-profit organization  
Les Arts Décoratifs brings together  
the Musée des Arts Décoratifs,  
the Musée Nissim de Camondo,  
the Camondo School, the Ateliers  
du Carrousel, and the Library.**

Johannes Huth, President  
Sylvie Corréard, Chief executive  
officer  
Christine Macel, Director  
of Museums, Deputy chief  
executive officer

## — Musée des Arts Décoratifs

107 rue de Rivoli, 75001 Paris  
+33 (0) 1 44 55 57 50  
Métro: Palais-Royal, Pyramides,  
Tuileries

### Hours

Permanent collections:  
→ Tuesday to Sunday, 11 am – 6 pm  
Temporary exhibitions:  
→ Tuesday and Wednesday,  
11 am–6 pm  
→ Late night on Thursdays:  
11 am – 9 pm in temporary exhibition

### Admission

→ General admission: €15  
→ Concession: €10  
→ Free for under 26

## — Musée Nissim de Camondo

63 rue de Monceau, 75008 Paris  
+33 (0) 1 53 89 06 40

### Opening Hours

Open 10 am – 5:30 pm  
Closed Monday and Tuesday

### Admission

→ General admission: €12  
→ Concession: €9  
→ Free for under 26

## — Library

111 rue de Rivoli, 75001 Paris  
+33 (0) 1 44 55 59 36  
Open Monday 1 pm – 6 pm  
and Tuesday to Friday 10 am – 6 pm

## — Publications and images

107 rue de Rivoli, 75001 Paris  
+33 (0) 1 44 55 57 68

## — Visitor engagement

### → Activities for individuals

Reservation via the online ticketing

### → Activities for groups

reservation@madparis.fr

+33 (0) 1 44 55 57 66

### → Conferences, round tables and colloquiums

Reservation via the online ticketing

conference@madparis.fr

+33 (0) 1 44 55 59 26

## — École Camondo

266 boulevard Raspail, 75014 Paris  
+33 (0) 1 43 35 44 28

## — Ateliers du Carrousel

107 rue de Rivoli, 75001 Paris  
266 boulevard Raspail, 75014 Paris  
63 rue de Monceau, 75008 Paris  
+33 (0) 1 44 55 59 02

## — Bookshop & Gift Store

105 rue de Rivoli, 75001 Paris  
+33 (0) 1 42 60 64 94  
Open 11 am – 18:30 pm  
Open late on Thursdays until 9 pm  
Closed Monday

## — Loulou Restaurant

107 rue de Rivoli, 75001 Paris  
or access via the Carrousel gardens  
Open daily 12 pm – 2:30 pm  
and 7 pm – 11 pm  
+33 (0) 1 42 60 41 96

## — Le Camondo Restaurant

61 bis rue de Monceau, 75008 Paris  
Open Tuesday to Saturday from  
noon to midnight and Sunday during  
the day  
+33 (0) 1 45 63 40 40

## — Internet and social media

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