

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

# Christofle

## A Brilliant Story

—  
Press kit

**Nov 14, 2024**  
**— April 20, 2025**



**MAD**

  
**RÉPUBLIQUE  
FRANÇAISE**  
*Liberté  
Égalité  
Fraternité*

Exhibition designed by the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris  
Produced with the support of Christofle

*Christofle*

*madame*  
THE SHOP

**M**

**BeauxArts**  
Magazine

**ELLE**  
DÉCORATION

**MUSÉE DES ARTS  
DÉCORATIFS**

# Summary

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- **Main partner of the exhibition**
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# Press release



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

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

**From November 14, 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 silversmiths, 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 silversmithery by reinventing its uses and enhancing it with new colors and decorations.**



2.



1.

**From the teaspoons to monumental vases for the World Fairs, nearly 1,000 pieces of silverware, 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.

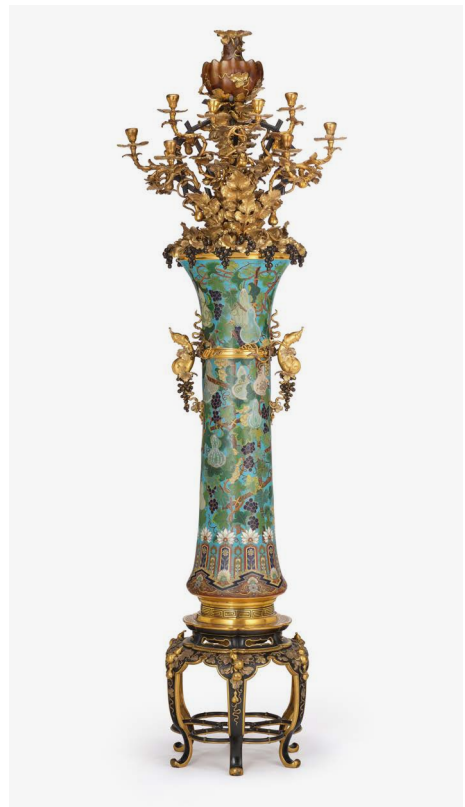
3. *L'Union fait le succès*  
coffee pot —  
Christofle  
Albert-Ernest  
Carrier-Belleuse  
(1824-1887), sculptor  
Model of 1880,  
produced after 1935  
silver-plated, ivory  
Conservatoire Bouilhet  
Christofle  
© Christophe Dellière

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 an accessible, becoming part of our everyday lives, transforming the most common objects, such as video game consoles, coffee cups or sneakers boxes, into true works of design.

4. *Gourdes et vignes*  
*grimpantes* 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. It then recreates the atmosphere of the Christofle workshops, successively located in Paris, Saint-Denis and now Normandy, and takes the visitor behind the scenes to discover the secrets of silvering and gilding, and 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, rubber  
Conservatoire Bouilhet  
Christofle  
© Christophe Dellière

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

7. *Manche fraisier* Strawberry scoop —  
Christofle  
1894  
Silver-plated  
Conservatoire Bouilhet  
Christofle  
© Christophe Dellière

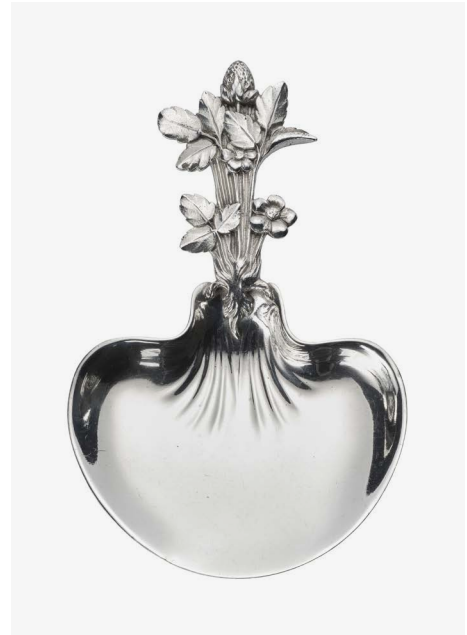
On the second floor, an idealized, museographic Christofle boutique offers a playful presentation of the endless variety of tableware and everyday objects that have become the hallmark of the company. From traditional cutlery sets to contemporary creations, from emblematic silverware to iconic tea sets, 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  
Sterling silver  
Conservatoire Bouilhet  
Christofle  
© Christophe Dellière

9. *Courge* tea service  
kettle —  
Christofle  
Léon Mallet (active  
1874-1900), sculptor  
Circa 1891  
Silver-plated, ivory  
Conservatoire Bouilhet  
Christofle  
© 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 Mademoiselle 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.

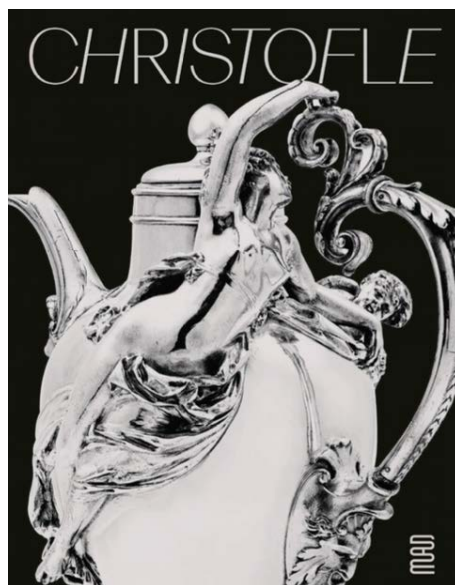
# About the exhibition catalogue



## The book

The Musée des Arts Décoratifs, which has maintained close ties with Christofle since the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is showcasing the creations and excellent expertise of this goldsmithing house by organizing the largest exhibition ever dedicated to this manufacturer with nearly two hundred years of history. Since its founding in the 1830s, this line of goldsmiths, created by Charles Christofle and continued by Henri Bouilhet, has transformed the lines and decorations of silver to adapt them to everyday life. Associated with the greatest creators such as Luc Lanel, Gio Ponti, Andrée Putman and Karl Lagerfeld, Christofle is an artistic laboratory that is revolutionizing traditional goldsmithing by renewing its uses and adorning it with new colors and decorations. The rich iconography of the exhibition catalogue invites us to discover pieces, each more remarkable than the last. In doing so, it immerses us in the splendour of grand restaurants and palaces such as the Ritz, legendary trains, ocean liners and planes such as the Orient Express, the *Normandie* and the Concorde, but also places of political power, all equipped by Christofle, ambassador, in France and abroad, of the art of living and French luxury. Through thirteen thematic essays divided into four chapters, this work traces the extraordinary destiny of the house of Christofle. Sixty-one notices unfold a history of decorative arts translated into goldsmithing, from historicism to Japonism, from Art Nouveau to Art Deco, from 1950s design to the most contemporary.

10. Catalogue of the exhibition “Christofle. A Brilliant History” — 304 pages  
230 illustrations  
22.4 x 29.4 cm  
Hardcover  
Sale price: 55 euros  
ISBN French version: 978-2-38314-024-5  
ISBN English version: 978-2-38314-026-9  
Éditions des Arts Décoratifs  
On sale: November 14, 2024  
Distributed by L'EntreLivres  
Distributed by BLDD



10.

## The authors

Under the direction of Audrey Gay-Mazuel, heritage curator in charge of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – Art Nouveau collections at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs

Essays by Caroline Radenac, Audrey Gay-Mazuel, Clara Villani, Étienne Tornier, Anne Dion-Tenenbaum, Virginie Desrante, Astrid Grange, Anaïs Alchus, Marie-Liesse Boquien, Julie Verlaine, Sophie Bouilhet-Dumas, Laurence Bartoletti

# Wall panels



11.

11. Especially from the service of one hundred place settings delivered to Napoleon III for the Tuileries Palace, central piece “France distributing crowns of glory” — Christofle François Gilbert (1816-1891), Georges Diebolt (1816-1861), Pierre-Louis Rouillard (1820-1881), sculptors 1852-1855  
Silver-plated metal  
Paris, Musée des Arts Décoratifs  
© Les Arts Décoratifs / Jean Tholance

12. Coffee cup  
*Objets Miroir* — Christofle  
Ramdane Touhami (born in 1974) for Art Recherche Industrie, designer  
2022  
Silver-plated metal  
Conservatoire Bouilhet  
Christofle  
© Christophe Dellière



12.

## Innovative and historic

Founded in the early 1830s, Christofle, specializing in silverware, has always been committed to reinventing the decorative arts through the metamorphosis of forms and decorations, and by associating silver with unexpected materials to challenge the codes of luxury. Today, Christofle continues to innovate, finding its way into our daily lives by transforming everyday objects into works of design, from videogame consoles to coffee cups and shoeboxes.

The company's history has been linked to that of the Musée des Arts Décoratifs since the last third of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. During the Paris Commune of 1871, the Tuileries Palace, where the monumental 100-place setting service owned by Emperor Napoleon III was kept, burned down. A masterpiece executed between 1852 and 1855, its centerpiece, made up of large sculptures, was saved from the ruins and donated by the directors of Christofle to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. Made from silverplated metal achieved through an electrochemical process, it embodies the modernity that Christofle introduced to the dining tables of the powerful.



### Alchemy – Transforming silver

In 1842, Charles Christofle, a jeweler by training, purchased the patents for silver and gold plating by electrolysis: using an electric current, a fine layer of silver or gold can be deposited on a nonprecious metal, giving it the appearance of precious metal. This revolutionary industrial process marked the dawn of a new era in gold- and silverware, developed by Charles Christofle and his successors, his son Paul and his nephew Henri Bouilhet. Tableware, services, and flatware would become the company's specialty, alongside more exceptional pieces, monumental sculptures, and reproductions of artworks. Although some processes are now mechanized, the crafting of precious metal practiced in the Christofle factory in Yainville, Normandy, for the fabrication of flatware, silverware, and plated pieces, remains similar to those of the methods of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

13. Refreshment fountain —  
Christofle  
Marcel Eudes (active between 1873 and 1889) and Claude Leprêtre (active around 1873), sculptors  
1873  
Silver-plated and gilded metal, ivory  
Conservatoire Bouilhet Christofle  
© Christophe Dellière

14. Engraving of the decoration of a matrix —  
Manufacture Christofle



14.



13.

### International competitions

Showcases for industrial progress and fierce international competitions, universal exhibitions punctuate Christofle's history, from the first, organized in London in 1851, to that held in Paris in 1925, which marked the advent of modernity. The millions of visitors, the press coverage and the prestige of the awards, encouraged Christofle to push the limits, presenting monumental pieces and spectacular technical achievements. With rare consistency, Christofle took first place, sweeping up gold medals in the face of English, German, and American competitors. From 1869, as a prelude to the universal exhibition, Christofle began presenting new works at shows organized by the future Musée des Arts Décoratifs, then known as the Union Centrale des Beaux-Arts Appliqués à l'Industrie, and as of 1882, the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs. Associated with leading designers and sculptors, Christofle accumulated patents, reinventing forms and decorations with unequalled creativity and translating into gold and silver the aesthetic movements of the day: revival styles, Orientalism, Japonisme, Art Nouveau, and Art Deco.

## Japonisme

In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, Japan progressively opened to the West. The commercial treaty signed with France in 1858, followed by Japan's participation in the universal exhibitions of 1862 in London and 1867 in Paris, inspired a taste for Japanese arts, which became the model for reinvigorating the decorative arts.



16.

15. "Japanese style" corner cupboard — Christofle  
Émile Reiber (1826-1893), designer, attributed to Grohé Frères, cabinetmakers, Eugène Capy (1829-1894) and Léon Mallet (active between 1874 and 1900), sculptors, Eugène Guignard (1817?), author of the patina, Jean-Baptiste Tard (1834-1894), enameler  
Around 1874  
Oak, ebony, blackened pear, stained and blackened walnut, Rio rosewood, Indian rosewood, wacapou, snakewood, silver-plated, gilded and patinated copper alloy, cloisonné enamel  
Paris, Musée des Arts décoratifs  
© Les Arts Décoratifs / Christophe Dellière



15.

16. Nesting Coffee Pot — Christofle  
Christian Fjerdingsstad (1891-1968), goldsmith  
1926  
Silver plated metal, boxwood  
Bouilhet Christofle Conservatory  
© Christophe Dellière

An incomparable draftsman, Émile Reiber, head of Christofle's composition and design studio from 1865 to 1878, studied the Asian collections exhibited in Paris. He produced many designs for silverware pieces decorated with motifs and colors borrowed from Chinese and Japanese works. The mix of these Asian influences, known as "Japonisme," impregnated decorations, as well as compositions inspired by Japanese prints, and the techniques used, such as metal patinas and cloisonné enameling. This was one of Christofle's most creative periods.

17. Rocking kettle from the tea and coffee service “Squash” —

Christofle

Léon Mallet (active between 1874 and 1900), sculptor

Around 1891

Silver-plated metal, silver, ivory

Conservatoire Bouilhet

Christofle

© Christophe Dellière

18. Cornet vase,

*Dinanderies* collection — Christofle

Luc Lanel (1893-1965), designer

1928

Silver-plated and

patinated copper alloy

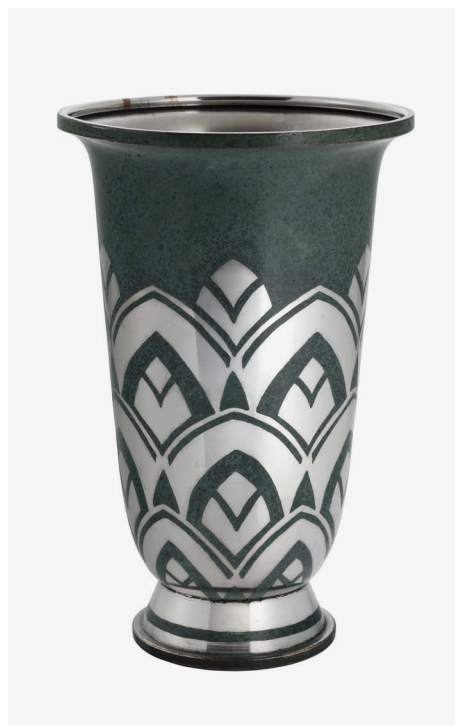
Bouilhet Conservatory

Christofle

© Christophe Dellière

### Art Nouveau

At the Universal Exhibition of 1900 in Paris, Christofle presented a stand dominated by vegetal forms: tea services shaped like squash, plates decorated with anemones and poppies, small vases metamorphosing into romaine lettuces or bunches of carrots, soup tureens shaped like cabbages or celery, and vases and lamps as irises, chrysanthemums, peonies, and thistles. Many of these pieces had already been presented at the *Exhibition of the Feminine Arts* organized by the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs (the future Musée des Arts Décoratifs) in 1892. Ever in search of novelty, Christofle became a pioneer in a “new art”—Art Nouveau – that found its source of inspiration in nature rather than in the past.



18.



17.

### Art Deco

In 1925, for the International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in Paris, Christofle (at the initiative of Tony Bouilhet, grandson of Henri Bouilhet) exhibited works at the Grand Palais, in the silverware section, but also in a pavilion shared with Baccarat. Christofle became known as a champion of modernity and collaborated with the leading figures in Art Deco including Luc Lanel (who served as the company’s artistic director from 1922 to 1946), Christian Fjerdingstad, Louis Süe and André Mare, Paul Follot, André Groult, and Joseph-Elie Cazes. Sober decoration and geometric forms defined the designs. In hand-raised copper, pieces, copper is combined with gold, silver, and colored patinas; they contributed to the company’s ongoing research in the coloration of metalwork since in the 1860s.





19.

19. Table set for the first-class dining room of the Normandie ocean liner, *Transat* dinner service and *Atlas* cutlery — Christofle  
Luc Lanel (1893-1965), designer  
1933-1935  
Paris, Musée des Arts décoratifs and Saint-Nazaire collection  
Agglomération Tourisme-Écomuseum  
© Christophe Dellière

20. Table fork from the *Régence* service — Christofle  
Charles Mewès (1858-1914), architect  
Around 1898  
Silver-plated metal  
Ritz Paris  
© Christophe Dellière

### Daily life – Shining in society

In the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the arts of the table were flourishing. The bourgeoisie, with its increasing power, established mealtimes as an essential moment for performative socializing. The Russian-style service, in which dishes were served individually to each guest, became widespread, introducing the specialization of flatware, which was replaced after each course. Impressive sets comprising hundreds of pieces with flatware for every use and complete tea services developed at this time.

Christofle distributed its latest wares in Paris at the Pavillon de Hanovre, its largest store from 1854 until 1931, when it was replaced by the store on Rue Royale. Pieces were also sold through numerous vendors that proliferated throughout France and across the entire world. Catalogues and advertising inserts were among other sales strategies used by the internationally recognized French silversmith.



20.

### Embodying French luxury

As of the 1850s, Christofle positioned itself as the preferred supplier to luxury hotels and restaurants, which were flourishing at the time. Christofle had furnished services, flatware, and barware to a long list of prestigious establishments by the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, including the Grand Hôtel du Louvre, the Grand Hôtel de la Paix, the Hôtel Terminus, the Ritz, the Meurice, the Crillon, and the Lutetia in Paris, as well as the Riviera Palace in Monte-Carlo and the Negresco in Nice. The splendor of fine dining in luxury hotels was mirrored in the opulence of sea and rail travel, which developed in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, reaching its apogee in the 1920s. Prestigious trains such as the Orient-Express and legendary ocean liners, including the *Normandie*, offered their clients luxurious cabins complete with Christofle silverware. As of 1926, Christofle products also accompanied the first tourist flights made by Air Union, the future Air France, which the company continues to supply.

## Diplomacy – Bringing power to the table

From the early days of the business, in the mid-1840s, the modernity of the silverplating process developed by Christofle, as well as the variety of decorations and forms in its tableware, made it the supplier of choice for the King of France, Louis-Philippe, and his family. In the following decades, Christofle specialized in majestic dinner services comprising hundreds of pieces, some monumental in size. These large services were commissioned by Emperor Napoleon III for his residences, but also by the ministries and the Élysée and Luxembourg palaces. As silversmith to kings, princes, and emperors, Christofle would cater to presidents when the Third Republic was proclaimed in 1870. Since then, most of the ministries, the residence of the president of the National Assembly, and the Élysée Palace maintain complete services that allow the French art of living to reign over the tables where important diplomatic negotiations take place.

21. Christofle advertising insert, *Air, Earth, Sea* —  
Around 1954  
Offset printing  
Bouilhet Christofle  
Conservatory  
© Christophe Dellière

22. *Arborescence*  
Candelabra —  
Christofle  
Ora ìto (born in 1977),  
designer  
2010  
Silver-plated metal  
Bouilhet Conservatory  
Christofle  
© Christophe Dellière



21.



22.

## Modern and Contemporary – Design metal

At the initiative of Tony Bouilhet, the head of Christofle from 1930 to 1969, the company evolved within avant-garde artistic circles and took a more modern direction. His meeting with Italian architect and designer Gio Ponti in 1925 was a defining moment. From that time, company embraced dynamic lines, often punctuated by the humor of Italian design, and later Scandinavian influences. During the Second World War, the production of silverware stopped and, at Tony Bouilhet's initiative, the boutique on Rue Royale became an art gallery presenting work by Jean Cocteau, Paul Éluard, and Jean-Charles Moreux. This adventure lasted until the 1970s, witnessing collaborations with César and Jean-Michel Folon. Since 1986, Christofle has returned to the jewelry-making activities of its founder, Charles Christofle, and has joined forces with international designers to claim its place within the history of contemporary art.





23.

23. *Babylone Cuff*  
Bracelet —  
Christofle  
Mademoiselle Aurélie  
Bidermann (born  
in 1975), jewelry designer  
2023  
Silver  
Conservatoire Bouilhet  
Christofle  
© Pierre Mahieu



24

24. *MOOD by Christofle*  
× *Karl Lagerfeld* —  
Christofle  
Karl Lagerfeld  
(1933-2019), fashion  
designer, designer of the  
model  
2018  
Steel, silver-plated metal,  
polymer  
Conservatoire Bouilhet  
Christofle  
© Studio des fleurs  
for Christofle

### Contemporary design

Since the 1990s, Christofle has been working with international designers, positioning itself as a champion of contemporary design. Its artistic directors have partnered with designers such as Sylvain Dubuisson, Gae Aulenti, Elisabeth Garouste and Mattia Bonetti, Martin Szekely, Richard Hutten, Marcel Wanders, Jean-Marie Massaud, and Ora uto, as well as the couturiers Christian Lacroix and Karl Lagerfeld. Tableware, vases, and candelabras have all been transformed. Launched in 1993, the *Haute Orfèvrerie* range designates exceptional works and small furniture pieces individually made by the silversmiths in the workshop.

# Main partner of the exhibition

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*Christofle*

Christofle is a luxury house founded in Paris in 1830 by a visionary jeweler and entrepreneur, Charles Christofle. This shrewd businessman was interested in a new chemical process right from its invention: electrolytic silvering, for which he bought the patents. First a silversmith, then a goldsmith, Christofle quickly became known for the quality of its pieces. This is how the house became a supplier to the king, then to the emperor, and to many other prestigious tables from the 19th century. It also participated in large outdoor decorations by perfecting the technique of massive electroplating: the statues of the Paris Opera, or the Virgin of Notre-Dame de la Garde in Marseille, the largest electroplating in the world, are among its most spectacular achievements.

Close to the Union Centrale des Arts Décoratifs (UCAD), which gave birth to the Musée des Arts Décoratifs, the Christofle and Bouilhet families forged close ties between their house and this establishment, from its creation in 1864. Thus, Christofle participated in all of the UCAD's exhibitions, which gave rise to donations or purchases by the institution. Christofle was even the subject of an exhibition at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in 1964, proof of the lasting friendship between the two institutions, sublimated today by this new exhibition: "Christofle, a brilliant history".

Following the evolution of customs, Christofle equipped the greatest hotels, and new means of transport since the middle of the 19th century: trains, ocean liners, then luxury planes were all showcases for the goldwork pieces designed for them.

To satisfy this demanding and diverse clientele, Christofle has collaborated since its beginnings with leading artists, as well as internationally renowned designers. It thus asserts its own aesthetic, while bringing the great artistic trends into homes: historical styles, Art Nouveau, then Art Deco are thus worthily represented on all tables. Timeless and durable, Christofle pieces are also designed to be passed down.

Today, the house's production is still ensured by its factory in Yainville, Normandy, where its high-end goldsmithing workshop is also located, intended for exceptional orders. Thanks to unique know-how perpetuated from generation to generation, the house has been reinventing tableware, jewelry and decoration for almost two centuries. Its mission, more than ever: to silver life, a goldsmith's work.

# Activity for the public

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## INDIVIDUALS ADULTS

### FREE TOUR

#### **Christofle, a brilliant history**

Christofle, a brilliant history  
From the small spoon to the large monumental vases from the universal exhibitions, the entire art of goldsmithing is presented in this exhibition dedicated to the Christofle house. Scenography, videos and digital devices invite you to immerse yourself behind the scenes of creation and reveal the secrets of this excellent know-how. The presentation of laid tables, intimate or majestic, gives a glimpse of the splendor and refinement of great restaurants and palaces such as the Ritz, legendary trains, liners and planes such as the Orient Express, the *Normandie* and the Concorde.

*Duration: 2 hours*

### GUIDED TOUR

#### **Christofle**

The speaker takes visitors behind the scenes of Christofle's creation. From cutlery to monumental pieces and from silver work, gold to enamels and patinas, the workshop secrets and the craftsmen's excellent know-how are revealed. The presentation of tables set in prestigious locations also leads to identifying the role of Christofle, ambassador in France and abroad of the art of living and French luxury.

*Duration: 2 hours*

## INDIVIDUALS YOUTH AND FAMILIES

### VISIT BOOKLET

#### **Drawing book to accompany the family visit**

Specially designed for this exhibition, a drawing book and a pencil are available to children.

### WORKSHOP VISIT

#### **À la belle fourchette !**

This workshop invites children to discover how Christofle cutlery is made and decorated. In the exhibition, everyone draws the shapes and patterns of the objects presented to create, in the workshop, a project for an engraved metal spoon or fork.

*Audience: 4-6 years old, 7-10 years old and families*

#### **A well-set table!**

Following in the designer's footsteps, from drawing to experimenting with the decorative properties of metal, everyone creates their own research notebook around the shapes and ornaments of objects to design a decor to place in the center of the table.

*Audience: 11-14 years old*

## CONFERENCE

### **Coloring metal, from analysis to restoration of Christofle patinas and enamels**

*Thursday, December 5 from 6:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.*

*Audrey Gay-Mazuel, heritage curator, Musée des Arts décoratifs (introduction) Michel Bouchard, doctor in archaeometry, Philippe Colomban, ceramicist, emeritus research director, CNRS – Sorbonne University, Catherine Didelot, heritage restorer, Musée des Arts décoratifs, Amandine Hélène, heritage restorer, Musée des Arts décoratifs, Julie Schröter, heritage restorer and doctor in art history.*

Preparation for the Christofle exhibition enabled pioneering work to be carried out on the analysis of so-called electrochemical patinas and cloisonné enamels developed by the goldsmith's house from the 1867 Paris World's Fair. A research team composed of restorer Julie Schröter, researchers from CNRS/Sorbonne University and the CARAA laboratory, studied the enamels and red, orange, brown and black colourings of the metal producing the polychrome inlay effects that made Christofle famous when Japonism was at its peak. These analyses led to better practices for the restoration of Christofle's coloured metals. Heritage restorers Catherine Didelot and Amandine Hélène carried out a major restoration project on nearly 500 pieces for this exhibition. This conference will highlight the causes of surface alterations, the treatments implemented and the preventive conservation measures to slow down tarnishing and oxidation during the exhibition period.

## STUDY DAY

### **French goldsmith houses, from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century: heritage, research and creation**

*Thursday, March 20, 2025 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.*

The major exhibition on the history of Christofle is an opportunity to look at the French goldsmith houses still in business today and to study the dual movement they face: both the management of their heritage and their ability to innovate. All founded in the 19<sup>th</sup> century or at the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, they have valuable funds of tools, drawings, archives and collections, sometimes still in situ or preserved in museums. Following the symposium dedicated to 19th-century goldsmithing organized at the Louvre Museum in 1994, this study day will take stock of the state of research on these French houses almost 30 years later by involving master's and thesis students. The testimony of the heritage managers of Christofle and Puiforcat or even Richard orfèvre, in Paris, will allow us to understand how the past impacts contemporary creation. A round table composed of the directors of these houses will discuss the difficulties and challenges to be met in order to continue the production of goldsmithing in France.

*Additional information to come*

## **IN GROUP**

Guided tours and workshop tours are offered to schools, leisure centers, colleges, universities, associations, companies on the days and times of their choice and in several languages.

## **ADULT GROUPS**

### **Guided tour**

*Duration: 1h / 1h30 / 2h*

→ Specific for the public in the social field:  
workshop tour

*Duration: 2h*

## **YOUTH GROUPS – EDUCATION**

### **For primary and secondary schools**

→ Workshop tour

*Duration: 2h*

→ Guided tour

*Duration: 1h / 1h30 / 2h*

### **For vocational high schools, CAP-BAC Pro and BTS**

→ MAD PRO Setting the table  
with Christofle

2h guided tour + 2h workshop tour

A program designed for students  
in professional sectors of the hotel and  
catering trades (CAP, BAC PRO, BTS).

→ Guided tour

*Duration: 1h / 1h30 / 2h*

→ Workshop tour

*Duration: 2h*

### **For higher education**

→ Guided tour

*Duration: 1h / 1h30 / 2h*



# Useful informations

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## — Press contacts

Isabelle Mendoza  
Guillaume Del Rio  
+ 33 (0) 1 44 55 58 78  
presse@madparis.fr

## — Curator

Audrey Gay-Mazuel,  
heritage curator  
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  
Bénédicte Gady, Acting museum  
director

## — Musée des Arts Décoratifs

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

### Opening hours

→ Tuesday to Friday, 11 am – 6 pm  
→ Open late in temporary exhibition  
on Thursdays until 9 pm

### 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

Closed from August 4, 2024  
to early 2026

## — Library

111 rue de Rivoli, 75001 Paris  
+33 (0) 1 44 55 59 36  
Open Monday 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

madparis.fr  
facebook.com/madparis  
instagram.com/madparis