



MEDIA RELEASE

NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA

MEDIA CONTACTS: MEDIA AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS, NGV
MARION JOSEPH | 0427 147 999 | MARION.JOSEPH@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU
BRIANA TOMASINO | 0408 333 399 | BRIANA.TOMASINO@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU
BERNICE TOMOV | 0402 784 650 | BERNICE.TOMOV@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU
ANNIE ROSS | 0447 679 440 | ANNIE.ROSS@NGV.VIC.GOV.AU

Australian-exclusive **CARTIER** exhibition features nearly 400 precious jewels, tiaras, necklaces, iconic watches and more

NGV International, St Kilda Road | 12 June – 4 October 2026 | Ticketed



Thursday 11 June, 2026: Featuring nearly 400 extraordinary jewels, timepieces and precious objects, alongside rare archival materials including original design drawings, sketchbooks, photographs and more, the 2026 Melbourne Winter Masterpieces® presentation, **CARTIER**, is the largest exhibition on the global jewellery house ever staged in Australia.

Direct from London's **Victoria & Albert Museum**, this adapted and expanded presentation of **CARTIER** is exclusive to Melbourne and features nearly 300 works never-before-seen in Australia. Opening at NGV International on 12 June 2026, the exhibition explores Cartier's unparalleled reputation for design excellence, craftsmanship and technical innovation through a dazzling selection of Cartier creations owned and worn by the likes of **Elizabeth Taylor, Grace Kelly, Rihanna, Andy Warhol, Princess Margaret, The Duchess of Windsor, Dame Nellie Melba, the Maharaja of Patiala, the Begum Aga Khan III**, and heiresses including **Daisy Fellowes** and **Barbara Hutton**.

The exhibition charts the evolution and artistic legacy of the maison, including its transformation at the turn of the twentieth century by brothers **Louis, Pierre** and **Jacques Cartier**, grandsons of the house's founder Louis-François Cartier. The brothers established branches in Paris, London and New York, creating the first internationally recognised jewellery maison, and honed Cartier's inimitable style by bringing design and manufacturing in-house. With an illustrious client list of royalty and aristocracy, Cartier was described as 'the jeweller of kings and the king of jewellers' and were granted their first Royal Warrant by Britain's King Edward VII in 1904. Cartier's reputation later broadened thanks to the devotion of leading creatives from the worlds of cinema, music and fashion.

The exhibition features show-stopping works from the V&A and Cartier Collection, as well as key international loans from British Museum, Qatar Museums, Musée des Arts décoratifs in Paris, Collections of HSH the Prince of Monaco, Al Thani Collection and private lenders. The exhibition features a wealth of archival material drawn from the Cartier Archives in Paris, London and New York.

-continues-

Among the exhibition's most arresting highlights is a collection of **more than 30 magnificent tiaras**, including a spectacular display of 24 tiaras displayed in the final gallery. Tiaras, a timeless symbol of royalty, glamour and artistry, represent the pinnacle of the jeweller's art, and some of Cartier's most celebrated creations. With symbolic links to the laurel wreaths of classical antiquity and celestial halos, the tiara has been worn for centuries across cultures from Asia to Europe. The show-stopping display includes Cartier's celebrated Scroll tiara (1902), crafted in the house's signature 'Garland style' and worn by **Lady Clementine Churchill** at the coronation of **Queen Elizabeth II** in 1953 and by **Rihanna** on the cover of *W* magazine in 2016. The exhibition also opens with one of the largest tiaras in the exhibition, the Manchester tiara, commissioned in 1903 by the 'dollar princess' **Consuelo Montagu**, Dowager Duchess of Manchester who supplied all the diamonds herself.

The exhibition will also mark the first time in decades that two turquoise and diamond tiaras, worn by famed sisters **Lady Nancy Astor** and **Lady Phyllis Brand**, will be presented together. Born Nancy and Phyllis Langhorne in Virginia, USA, these glamorous sisters became central members of London's elite political and social circles from the 1910s to the 1930s. Other tiara highlights include the Sun tiara of 1907 with a 32-carat fancy intense yellow diamond in its centre; and the Art Deco diamond and platinum Halo tiara of 1934, which was inspired by ancient Egypt and owned by **Her Highness the Begum Aga Khan III**.

The exhibition includes a 1951 necklace gifted to **Elizabeth Taylor** by her third husband, film producer **Mike Todd**, while on holiday in the French Riviera in 1957. The necklace features a geometric latticework design of diamonds that showcase seven Burmese rubies, exceptional for their size and matching colour. Taylor herself described the necklace as 'like the sun – lit up and made of red fire.' The exhibition also features the many Cartier jewels owned by **Grace Kelly** following her marriage to **Rainier III, Prince of Monaco**, on loan from the collections of H.S.H. the Prince of Monaco. They include a multi-strand pearl and coral necklace (1958) and a 1960 gold and pearl poodle brooch, recalling her pet poodle Oliver.

The exhibition also focuses on Australian opera singer **Dame Nellie Melba**, who was an important early client of Cartier when the firm was becoming known internationally for its Garland Style jewels, often featuring floral swags and bows set in platinum and precious gems. The show also features necklaces and bodice ornaments that the world-famous soprano owned and wore both on and off the stage, as well as an autographed 1902 photograph of Melba owned by Pierre Cartier.

On display is an intricate diamond rose clip brooch (1938) worn by **Princess Margaret** at her sister's coronation, as well as a major selection of exceptional jewels belonging to **Wallis Simpson**, the Duchess of Windsor and wife of former King Edward VIII. These include her famous Flamingo brooch (1947), an extraordinary Bib necklace set with diamonds, amethysts and turquoise (1947), and her 1949 Panther sapphire clip brooch that features an impressive 152.35-carats cabochon sapphire.

Named for their distinctive combination of carved rubies, emeralds and blue sapphires, a rich selection of Cartier's iconic Tutti Frutti jewels also features, including the most spectacular example of Tutti Frutti jewellery ever created by Cartier: an Indian-inspired necklace commissioned by the Parisian socialite **Daisy Fellowes** in 1936. The exhibition also features a one-of-a-kind Tutti Frutti bandeau tiara (1928), owned by **Countess Edwina Mountbatten** and featuring carved emerald, ruby and sapphire leaves on a diamond set branch.

The exhibition also illuminates the Cartier commissions of Mexican actor, **María Félix**, the cultural phenomenon of Latin American cinema who was described by Jean Cocteau as 'so beautiful it's painful'. The display includes the sinuous Snake necklace (1968), which features 2,473 diamonds and scales enamelled in the colours of the Mexican flag, and Crocodile necklace (1975), which features two crocodile forms – one set with fancy yellow diamonds, the other in emeralds.

Additionally, there is a standout selection of Cartier timepieces that showcase the jeweller's industry-leading innovations in watch and clock making. On display is also a selection of works featuring opals, including a beautiful 1928 Art Deco bracelet mounted with diamonds and five large black opals, as well as a contemporary bracelet (2015) with 189.345-carat precious black opals from Australia.

-continues-

The never-before-seen exhibition design is a collaboration between the NGV, Studio Sabine Marcelis and CLOUD, two multidisciplinary design practices based in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. The exhibition design is inspired by colour, light and materiality, three elements that are synonymous with the aesthetic qualities of Cartier's jewellery. The exhibition design will reflect Cartier's extensive network of cultural and gemmological sources that inspire their jewellery creations. The exhibition also features an original soundtrack by Japanese electronic auteur Ai Yamamoto and Finnish composer Erkki Veltheim that combines ethereal salon music and lush electronics.

Steve Dimopoulos, Minister for Sport and Major Events, said: 'Not only do the Melbourne Winter Masterpieces exhibitions provide a dazzling experience, but they are also important to the state's economy – supporting local jobs and businesses in the CBD and across Victoria. *CARTIER* will again reinforce Melbourne's reputation as Australia's cultural capital, that's why we are backing this world-class exhibition that will be exclusive to the NGV.'

Tony Ellwood AM, Director, NGV, said: 'Cartier are world-renowned for their excellence in jewellery and timepiece design and innovation – a reputation fostered by the three entrepreneurial brothers Pierre, Louis and Jacques Cartier. This exhibition tells the story of how they transformed their grandfather's jewellery business into one of the most prestigious international jewellery houses with a clientele including royalty, high society and movie stars. We're indebted to our partner institution the V&A, for their support of this Australian-exclusive exhibition, as well as key lender Cartier.'

Helen Molesworth, Senior Curator of Jewellery, Victoria & Albert Museum, London, and lead curator of *CARTIER*, said: 'Cartier is one of the most famous jewellery houses in the world. This exhibition will explore how Louis, Pierre and Jacques Cartier, initiated a strategy of original design, exceptional craftsmanship and international expansion that transformed the Parisian family jeweller into an international household name. The V&A is delighted to tour its Cartier exhibition which celebrates the pioneering achievements of Cartier and its transformative ability to remain at the centre of culture and creativity for more than a century. We are excited to be able to share with visitors of the NGV some of Cartier's most famous creations as well as revealing previously unseen objects that further enrich our understanding of a jewellery house that continues to influence the way we adorn ourselves today.'

Pierre Rainero, Director of Cartier Image, Style and Heritage, said: 'Building on the success of its presentation at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, the NGV iteration of the *CARTIER* exhibition will showcase pieces never-before-seen in Australia. It promises to be an enlightening experience for the public, offering a captivating journey into the world of Cartier and its signature style, a living language in permanent evolution. We hope that it will not only inspire delight and awe, but also intellectual curiosity, fostering a deeper appreciation for jewellery as a distinct and powerful artistic expression.'

The Melbourne Winter Masterpieces® exhibition *CARTIER* will be on display at NGV International from 12 June – 4 October 2026. Admission fees apply. Information and tickets are available via the NGV website: [NGV.MELBOURNE](https://www.ngv.com.au/exhibitions/cartier)

Exhibition created by the V&A in partnership with the National Gallery of Victoria and in collaboration with Cartier.

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The exhibition opens with an introduction to Louis, Pierre and Jacques Cartier, who were united in their ambition to expand the family business globally, which had been established by their grandfather in 1847. The emergence of Cartier's first distinctive style, the 'Garland Style', will be explored as well as early cultural influences on Cartier's creations, including ancient Egyptian design. This section reveals how the Maison developed its own instantly recognisable style, one that combined modernity and innovation with elegance and refinement.

The next section of the exhibition focuses on the rise of Cartier's signature design aesthetic, its workshops, the Maison's exceptional access to significant gemstones and its technical innovation.

-continues-

At the Paris International Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts in 1925 Cartier prominently displayed its creations alongside other Parisian jewellers in the Grand Palais and leading fashion couturiers in the Pavillon de l'Élégance. A distinct aspect of the NGV exhibition will be a focus on Jeanne Toussaint, Cartier Paris's longstanding Creative Director from 1933 to 1970 and her innovative design aesthetic. Visitors will see how the panther motif, celebrated by Toussaint and one of the Maison's most iconic symbols, continues to evolve in contemporary jewels, using many of the same jewellery techniques that have been practised for decades.

In the early twentieth century, Cartier secured access to some of the most important gems in the world, notably due to sourcing trips made by Jacques Cartier to the Middle East, India and Sri Lanka, as well as the house's elite clientele and dealer networks. In a section entirely devoted to the materials behind the creations, some of the finest gems in the world are on view. A section on timepiece design also illuminates Cartier's exceptional technical innovation in clocks and watches and features their iconic Santos, Tank and Crash wristwatch designs. Also on display are Cartier's marvels of timepiece engineering, the Mystery Clocks, the hands of which appear to move as if by magic in mid-air.

The final sections of the exhibition celebrate Cartier jewels that were worn by film stars, and the stylistic evolution of the Maison in to the 21st century. The exhibition will culminate in a spectacular display of 24 tiaras. Cartier became a master of these crowning jewels at a time when high society wore them to the most glittering events in the social calendar.

ABOUT THE CARTIER COLLECTION

During the 1970s, Cartier began to gather pieces that had been produced in its earlier years; jewellery, timepieces and other precious objects were collected for preservation, leading to the establishment of the Cartier Collection in 1983. Today, the Cartier Collection includes pieces dating from as early as the 1850s until as recently as the 2020s. These pieces act as material records of Cartier's 180-year history of style and creativity.

With approximately 3,500 pieces and still growing, the Cartier Collection has sparked the attention of museums worldwide. Since the first major exhibition in 1989 at the Musée des Beaux-Arts–Petit Palais, Paris, the Cartier Collection has been showcased by some of the world's most renowned institutions in 45 monographic exhibitions, including at London's Victoria and Albert Museum, most recently at Capitoline Museums in Rome, and now in Melbourne.

-ends-

Cartier is made possible with the generous support of our partners:

PRESENTING PARTNER

MELBOURNE
EVERY BIT DIFFERENT

VICTORIA
State Government
CREATIVE VICTORIA

PRINCIPAL PARTNER

HOUSE OF KENNEDY
1976

EXHIBITION PARTNER

EXHIBITION CREATED BY THE V&A
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
NATIONAL GALLERY OF VICTORIA
AND IN COLLABORATION WITH CARTIER

V&A

PREMIUM PARTNER

HSBC

MAJOR PARTNERS

EY

T

QANTAS

LEARNING PARTNER

MELBOURNE

PARTNER

**CORRS
CHAMBERS
WESTGARTH**

SUPPORTERS

MOËT & CHANDON

YERING
Station

Dulux

Hilton
MELBOURNE
LITTLE QUEENST

**MELBOURNE
AIRPORT**

V/Line

TOURISM PARTNERS

MEDIA PARTNERS

QMS

Herald Sun

smoothfm
91.5

BROADSHEET

valmorgan

**ROCK
POST-ERS**

TORCHMEDIA

WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF

 **Australian Government**
International Exhibitions
Insurance Program

Images:

https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/5c4f2s13w3flunp7ajurp/AK7vEX8pMF40gR_uuV1La0s?rlkey=xqwg9073tluo4eho e5fydz5j4&st=11zg3coj&dl=0

Image Caption (L to R): Installation view of *CARTIER* on display from 12 June to 4 October 2026, at NGV International, Melbourne. Photos: Sean Fennessy, Felix Forest

Media Contacts:

Marion Joseph, Associate Director, Media and Public Affairs, NGV

0427 147 999 | marion.joseph@ngv.vic.gov.au

Briana Tomasino, Senior Publicist, NGV

0408 333 399 | briana.tomasino@ngv.vic.gov.au

Bernice Tomov, Media and Public Affairs Coordinator, NGV

0402 784 650 | bernice.tomov@ngv.vic.gov.au

Annie Ross, Media and Public Affairs Assistant, NGV

0447 679 440 | annie.ross@ngv.vic.gov.au