

Baccarat

CRYSTAL LEGEND

15 October 2014 / 4 January 2015

Petit Palais, Musée des Beaux-Arts

Avenue Winston Churchill, 75008 Paris

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Open Tuesday-Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm

Late closing: Thursdays until 8 pm

To mark Baccarat's 250th anniversary, the Grandes Galeries at *the Petit Palais* will be host to the masterpieces of the world's most celebrated crystal maker: astonishing testimony to the virtuosity of Baccarat's craftsmen.

This is the first Baccarat retrospective in France since the Bicentenary exhibition at the *Musée des Arts Décoratifs* in 1964. In harmony with the architecture of *the Petit Palais*, built for the *Universal Exhibition* of 1900, this new presentation will include creations designed by Baccarat for the big exhibitions in Paris between 1823 and 1937 – the shows which brought the company an international reputation and commissions from leading figures and celebrities all over the world.

In a state-of-the-art setting highlighting the virtuoso skills of crystal's greatest craftsmen, the visitor will discover works grouped according to their stylistic affinities or the context they were created in. A remarkable selection of some 500 pieces, mostly from Baccarat's own private collection, will be rounded off by loans of significant items from *the Musée d'Orsay*, *the Louvre*, *the Musée des Arts Décoratifs*, *the Cité de la Céramique*, *the Musée des Arts et Métiers*, *the Château de Compiègne* and *the Musées de Nancy*. In addition drawings and other archival material on display for the first time will retrace the genesis of the works on show and point up the sources of inspiration for the company's artisans over the last 250 years. The exhibition will include such exceptional pieces as the monumental 'Negus' vase, the Duchesse de Berry's dressing table and chair, and the 'Simon' vases created for the *Universal Exhibition* in Paris in 1867. Dinner services commissioned by royal families and other potentates including Tsar Nicholas II, the emperor of Japan, and various maharajahs offer further testimony to the skills of their makers. A table featuring some of these commissioned pieces will underscore Baccarat's triumphal contribution to living as one of the fine arts; and a special space will be set aside for the history of the legendary Harcourt Glass: commissioned by King Louis-Philippe in 1840, this iconic piece inspired by the shape of a ceremonial chalice was engraved with the king's monogram.

The exhibition will close dazzlingly with a series of majestic chandeliers hung in *the Petit Palais's* Galerie d'Honneur, the most monumental of them gleaming with 250 lights.

Curator

Michaela Lerch-Moulin, curator of the Baccarat Heritage Collection

Dominique Morel, conservateur en chef au *Petit Palais*

