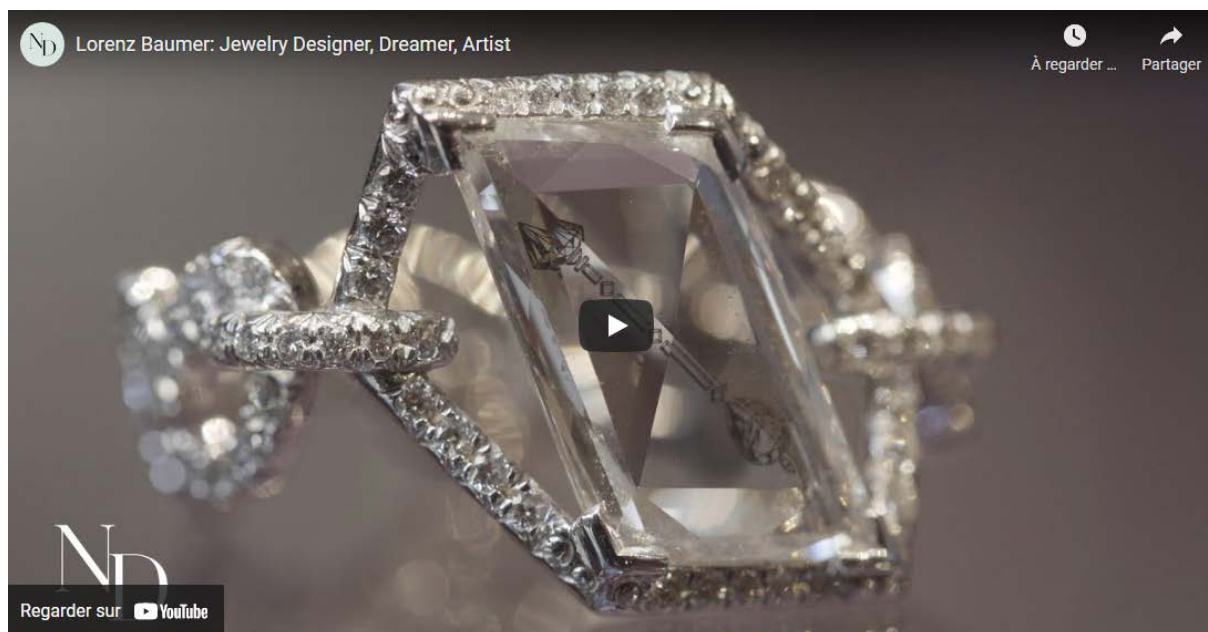


STYLE & INNOVATION

Lorenz Baumer: Jewelry Designer, Dreamer, Artist

Proving the irrelevance of convention when turning women into princesses.



When the jeweler Lorenz Baumer was a little boy, he loved to watch his mother get dressed up for parties and put on her fine jewelry. “She wouldn’t be my mom anymore, she was a princess! I always want to turn women into princesses—to make them feel good about themselves,” Baumer says. “I began with costume jewelry, and my first clients were my mother’s friends.” One of these ladies asked him to reset a diamond piece she didn’t like, he made her a ring and the rest, as they say, is diamond history.

Baumer recalls this all from his stunning atelier/shop at 19 Place Vendome in Paris, a place that is far beyond a mere retail outlet; come visit (once we are free to travel again!) and Baumer will show you his art collections, and perhaps invite you to share in whisky from his personal cache.



Rose De Damas Olfactive Ring



Yellow Diamond Ring

“I use diamonds as a way to paint with light.”

His studio is eclectic, a reflection of his history: now happily ensconced in the heart of Paris, where he claims fame as the only independent jeweler nestled amongst the headquarters of many major houses, Baumer is the son of diplomats, and grew up all over the world; while the sights and sounds he soaked up would come to inform his jewelry, his original training was that of an engineer.

“I wanted to make my parents happy and in France, one of the most sought-after things that you can do is go to engineering school,” he recalls. “But once I had that diploma I just said ‘Well, let me have a little bit of fun and design some fine jewelry.’”

And design jewelry he did.

Baumer laughs that his real birthday is 1992, the year he started making jewelry. And since that day, he has worked at some of the greatest houses in the world, serving as Artistic Director for Chanel jewelry for 20 years, and launching Louis Vuitton’s first jewelry line in 2007.



Princess Charlene de Monaco wearing the 'Ecume de Diamants' Tiara and Lorenz Baumer by Karl Lagerfeld

In 2010, Baumer entered a competition to create a diamond tiara for Olympic swimmer Charlene Wittstock's wedding to Prince Albert II of Monaco. He won the contest with a creation that he calls 'Ecume de diamants,' which translates as 'diamond foam,' or—more poetically—ocean spray.' Equal parts modern and wildly extravagant, the crowning glory pays tribute to the bride's love of water, and flaunts round and elongated diamonds laid out on thin strands of white gold.

Baumer's sensibility is witty and insouciant, and diamonds have always been central to this vision. "A diamond is the hardest, strongest, whitest stone, and it reflects and sparkles more than any other gem," he says. "I use diamonds as a way to paint with light. I love taking round diamonds and fat baguettes and mixing them with shiny gold; I love using white diamonds to reflect white gold. And I also love the colored stones: pinks, oranges and browns."



Vanitas Diamonds Good Girl - Bad Girl Ring



Ange & Demon Good Girl - Bad Girl Ring

The designer deploys these stones in ways that are frisky and unconventional. Take for example, his Good Girl/Bad Girl collection, pieces—think: skulls, spiders and beetles in white and black diamonds—that reinterpret the dark side using charm and elegance. “We all want to be bad sometimes! I think women want to be bad, but not that bad. It is about how there can be two side of the same person.” There is also a pendant that you can flip around, depending on how fierce or placid you feel on a particular day: one side depicts a gun, the other sports a dove. “It’s about war and peace,” Baumer explains.



Jonquille Diamond Meteorite Ring



Titane Lagon Ring

Other works are more frankly sentimental: the *Pense à Moi* collection offers twisted knots of diamonds, often with a colored stone center—bright ruby or tanzanite!—, inspired by the delicate handkerchiefs Baumer’s grandmother wore. Baumer remembers how she would tie a knot in the hanky’s corner when she wanted to remember something. “It’s a symbol,” the designer says, “of the mysterious links that unite us; a secret and unique message between two people.”

Or consider the amazing tattoo collection, which invites the etching of a custom image on a diamond’s surface. “People love having tattoos on their bodies,” Baumer notes, “so why not on a ring?”

Baumer loves nothing more than to work with individual clients, whether it is to discuss their own special tattoo engraving or event to create an entirely custom piece. “For me, it is all about the ties you have with the people that love you and that you love,” he says.. “It’s about loving yourself!”



'Clef de Mon Coeur' Tattooed Diamond Ring

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