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CHANEL

by Donatella Zappieri

«I've always had
such a full life.
I've always chased
the time».



Photo of Gabrielle Chanel on her suite's balcony at the Ritz Paris in 1937 by Roger Schall. © Schall Collection / Roger Schall.

This is how Gabrielle “Coco” Chanel describes her life. A quote and a statement still so relevant today, especially when we approach the extraordinary universe Arnaud Chastaingt, Director of Watchmaking Creation has been able to represent in the latest watch and jewelry creations.





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Born in 1883 in a small French village, Gabrielle Chanel lost her mother at the age of 12, her father put her and her sister in an orphanage in the Aubazine Abbey, where she got the basic elements of education but above all learnt how to sew. Her career in fashion started with a job in a small hats and stocking shop and soon later developed further when she opened her first activity as a hat designer. In 1916 she was already a successful entrepreneur managing three stores with more than 100 employees. A master of courage and a hard worker, she liked to describe herself “a bee born under the lion sign”. A wonderful mix of totemic animals to inspire empowerment and self-esteem.

She created models and accessories that soon became iconic, emphasizing the way she would conceive women emancipation and her hate for stereotypes, whilst developing shapes and pioneering the use of alternative materials that are still today key elements of style and timeless chic for all women around the world. Her image is strong in our imaginary and some of her creations date back to more than 50/60 years, hence, when we see quilted leather or gold, black and white, beige, pearls, tweeds, chains, lions we immediately think of Coco and her wonderful world and moreover her love for freedom, allure and casual chic.

Today, in every new launch of the Maison, some of these iconic elements are strongly

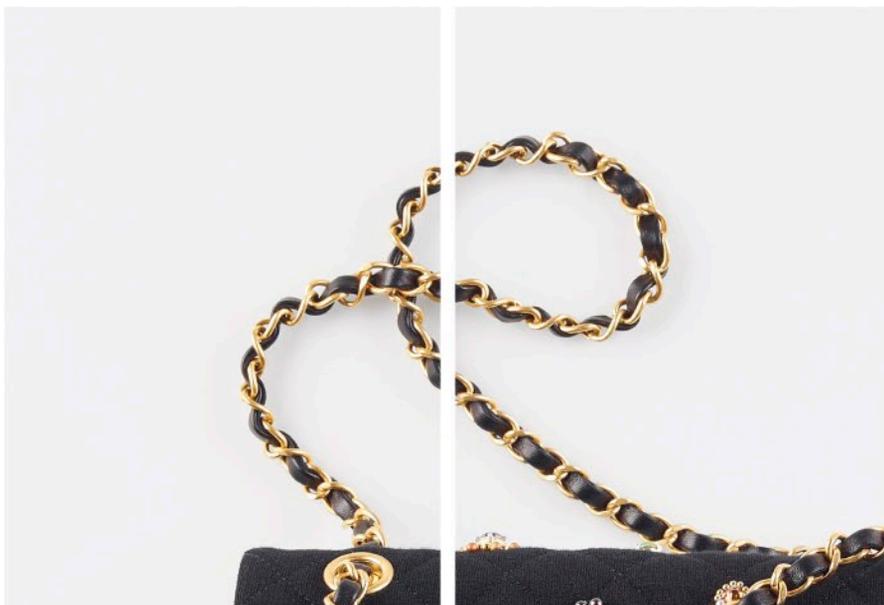
represented aiming to a constant homage to Coco, her work and attitude.

As regards watch making, it was only in 1987 that Chanel launched the first watch line, called Première, that was followed in 1993 by the first Fine jewelry collection.

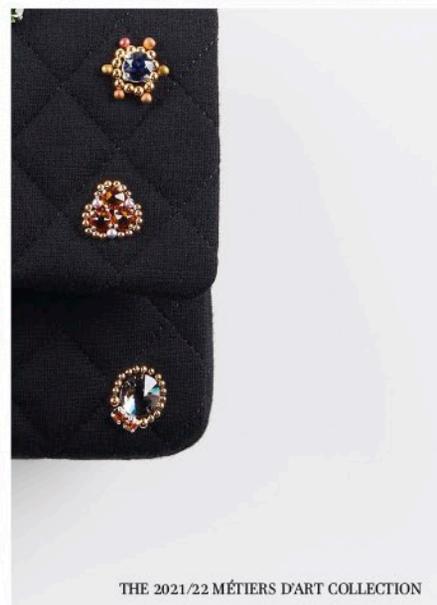
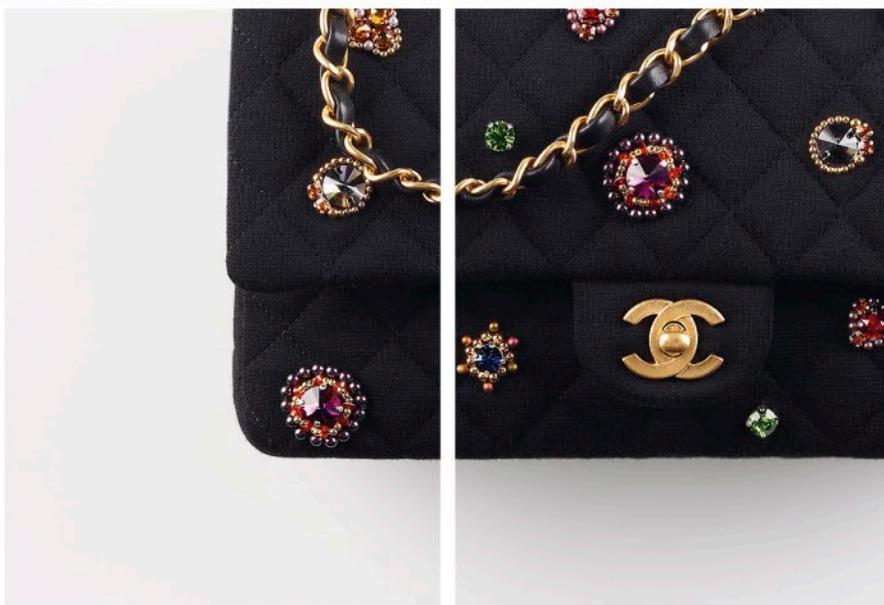
In 2000, the first J12 was released in black ceramic, once again a break-through not only as far as the mechanism was concerned but also the use of an unconventional material.

In 2022, at Watches & Wonders, Mademoiselle Chanel and the J12 watch met again in 3 exceptional creations, each limited to 55 pieces. The first one is “Mademoiselle J12 La Pausa”, La Pausa is a villa in Southern France that Coco Chanel decided to build and decorate when she fell in love with the area around Toquebrune-Cap-Martin. This villa became her “buen retiro” and was also the place where she hosted many important guests during the years when she was admired by the international jet set.

This new watch interpretation welcomes the silhouette of Mademoiselle dressed in a Breton top and sailor pants, inspired by a photograph taken in her garden at La Pausa. For the first time, the Mademoiselle J12 is equipped with the Caliber 12.1, in an exclusive all-black version. In Mademoiselle J12.XS, Coco’s silhouette appears in the form of a figurine, entwined in white gold and black lacquer, topped off with a two-tone straw hat accentuated with a brilliant-cut diamond. The J12 Gabrielle Caliber 3.1 pays homage to the



CHANEL HAUTE HORLOGERIE, Watches & Wonders



THE 2021/22 MÉTIERS D'ART COLLECTION

iconic silhouette of Gabrielle placed on the dial, dressed in black and wearing her beloved pearls. A true keeper of time, Mademoiselle Chanel strikes a pose in a painting within a precious frame composed of a white gold bezel set with baguette-cut diamonds.

Going back once again to Coco's storytelling, her famous quote «If you're sad or heartbroken, make yourself up, dress up, add more lipstick and attack» becomes the motto of the Haute Horlogerie Red Edition collection, emphasizing the red as one of the Maison's five signature colors, alongside white, black, beige, and gold. Gabrielle loved the power of red when used as an accent. Red for boosting your confidence, for asserting yourself. Red as a detail to highlight the structure of a jacket, as a feature to accentuate the lining of the iconic 2.55 handbag. For the newly launched collection, exceptionally, red becomes the signature hue of Chanel timepieces.

Arnaud Chastaingt declares: «As a stylistic device, I have used it on three Haute Horlogerie creations. I like the boldness of

a movement made up in red, the sensuality of the marriage of beige gold and rubies, the authority of a glossy red strap against a wrist. There is nothing faint-hearted about red! It has an uncompromising elegance». To further celebrate the key attention to details and the devotion to preserve métiers d'art, all Chanel watches are carefully manufactured, developed and assembled by the Chanel Manufacture at La Chaux-de-Fonds, Switzerland.

In J12 X-Ray Red Edition Chanel the concept of transparency is highlighted where the case and bracelet links are cut from raw crystal sapphire. The J12 X-Ray Red Edition Rouge reveals its curves and those of its movement. The J12 silhouette remains unchanged, but the accent on red adds a note of contrast to the look. Symbols of life and passion, the rubies accentuate the unique and sophisticated character of this timepiece.

There is another essential feature of Gabrielle Chanel's stylistic universe: the button. In the new edition of the Mademoiselle Privé Bouton



we open the doors into her intimate world as a showcase, revealing the symbols that were so dear to Mademoiselle and the objects with which she loved to surround herself.

Realized by the hands of the finest artisans, this collection is an extraordinary expression of virtuoso craftsmanship and a celebration of métiers d'art, remaining faithful to outstanding artistic skills and exceptional savoir-faire.

The final homage to this never-ending storytelling and incredible universe are two outstanding high jewelry pieces. Mademoiselle Privé Coromandel Long Necklace with the onyx dial decorated with miniatures in 18K beige gold (a special galvanic developed by the Maison) and set with 50 brilliant-cut diamonds. The back of the onyx dial is embellished with the profile of Gabrielle Chanel sculpted in 18K

beige gold. The Mademoiselle Privé Cage Long Necklace is in yellow gold, pearls and diamonds. At the end of the chain, two birds sit opposite each other in a cage set with diamonds. The dial in yellow gold and diamonds is revealed beneath the cage.

After admiring all these creations there is even more expectation regarding the discovery of the new High Jewelry collection celebrating the 90th anniversary of Coco's first collection that will be unveiled in Paris during Haute Couture show in July 2022.





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