

cincinnati art museum

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***Images Available Upon Request**

Cincinnati Art Museum set to glimmer with ‘*Simply Brilliant: Artist-Jewelers of the 1960s and 1970s*’ Oct. 22–Feb 6

CINCINNATI— The Cincinnati Art Museum will showcase an array of jewelry as groundbreaking as the era it hails from in *Simply Brilliant: Artist-Jewelers of the 1960s and 1970s*, on view from Oct. 22, 2021–Feb. 6, 2022.



The civil rights and women’s movements, space race, rock ‘n’ roll, the Vietnam War, the Kennedy assassinations, Pop Art, widespread use of drugs, the Pill, and free love mixed and mingled to create the wave of cultural change associated with the 1960s and ‘70s. These societal shifts set the stage for a breed of artist-jewelers who brought to their craft a new level of artistry to parallel these radical changes in society.

Their designs expressed individuality and nonconformity, and the aesthetic, political and intellectual values of those who wore them. The innovative jewelry in *Simply Brilliant* will enthral visitors with a journey through this revolutionary period in design and adornment.

The exhibition is drawn from one of the most important private collections in the world, which also has a local connection. Visitors will encounter the work of independent jewelers such as Andrew Grima, Gilbert Albert, Arthur King, Jean Vendome and Barbara Anton along with mold-breaking work created for Tiffany’s by Elsa Peretti, Bulgari, Cartier and other major houses.

The approximately 120 pieces on display represent a single collector’s fervent interest and convey an exploration of the international renaissance in fine jewelry in the 1960s and ‘70s. Cincinnati Kimberly Klosterman assembled the remarkable collection of pieces that focus on this period and formed the basis for this exhibition. Her passion saved many of these pieces from being dismantled or lost to time and changing styles over the years. The exhibition is curated by Chief Curator and Curator of Fashion Arts and Textiles Cynthia Amnéus.

“The jewelry in this exhibition is remarkable and examines a period in body adornment that is rarely explored or understood. You think about the rather prim jewelry of the 1950s, then suddenly these artist-jewelers are creating pieces that were big and bold. The work was overwhelmingly large, primarily gold and incorporated some very unusual materials. It was a new day. The times were changing and art, fashion, jewelry, all responded,” said Amnéus.

Most of the individuals whose work is represented in *Simply Brilliant* referred to themselves as artists first, jewelers second. They approached their work as a modern art form, creating jewelry that was part and parcel of the times in which they lived. They were largely preoccupied with subverting accepted design, and their approach was uncompromising. Theirs was a style that was appreciated by individuals who

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were looking for personal talismans to set themselves apart in an era when different was best. Jewelry-making for this new generation was about creativity; not about regurgitating demure designs of the previous decades or following traditional rules handed down to them.

Largely utilizing yellow gold and incorporating both precious and semi-precious gems, these artists were inspired in great part by nature. They focused on organic forms and favored abstract shapes, and concepts related to space-age trends. Their materials were as unconventional as their approach: designers incorporated coral, shell, geodes, elephant hair, and crystals like moldavite and lapis lazuli, set alongside mabe pearls, diopside and tiger eye. They were unrivaled in the texture they brought to jewelry design, and small faceted diamonds were often used sparingly, only to provide a bit of intensified brilliance.

The exhibition is accompanied by a full color illustrated catalogue edited by Amn us. The publication includes essays by some of the most important scholars in the field and is the first to set this work in context. It includes biographies of each designer and house represented, full color images, extended text for a select number of highlighted pieces and an appendix of maker's marks.

The exhibition debuted at the [DIVA Museum for Diamonds, Jewellery and Silver](#) in Antwerp, Belgium, in 2020, and then displayed at the [Pforzheim Jewellery Museum](#) in Pforzheim, Germany, before making its US debut in Cincinnati.

At CAM, *Simply Brilliant* will be presented to view for free in the Vance Waddell and Mayerson Galleries (G124 and 125). The exhibition will be accompanied by a variety of programming, with details will be announced closer to the time of exhibition. Photography is permitted, but no flash. On social media, use #SimplyBrilliant.

A Members Preview on Thursday, October 21 will feature a lecture from Amanda Triossi, the Italian jewelry scholar, educator, curator and author who has worked at both Sotheby's and Bulgari during her distinguished career and continues as a consultant for major jewelry houses today.

About the Cincinnati Art Museum

The Cincinnati Art Museum is supported by the generosity of individuals and businesses that give annually to ArtsWave. The Ohio Arts Council helps fund the Cincinnati Art Museum with state tax dollars to encourage economic growth, educational excellence and cultural enrichment for all Ohioans. The Cincinnati Art Museum gratefully acknowledges operating support from the City of Cincinnati, as well as our members.

Free general admission to the Cincinnati Art Museum is made possible by a gift from the Rosenthal Family Foundation. Special exhibition pricing may vary. Parking at the Cincinnati Art Museum is free. The museum is open Tuesday–Sunday, 11 a.m.–5 p.m. and Thursday, 11 a.m.–8 p.m.

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Image credit: Andrew Grima (1921–2007), b. Italy, active England, *Brooch*, 1969, gold, watermelon tourmaline, diamonds, Courtesy of the Cincinnati Art Museum, Collection of Kimberly Klosterman, Photography by Tony Walsh.