

Through cutting-edge technology and clever diversification, Swarovski is at the forefront of premium cut crystal manufacturing and fashion jewelry. It's now working with a naval architect on a range of superyacht interior designs using its crystals with stunning results

Swarovski

Poetry of precision

WORDS: Amanda McCracken

Standing in an enormous acoustic manmade multi-faceted crystal deep inside the foothills of the snow-capped mountains of the Tyrol Valley in Austria, guarded at the entrance by a giant and a crystal-laid waterfall, is certainly a surreal experience. But this is the Swarovski Crystal Worlds which opened in 1995 to celebrate the first 100 years of the Swarovski company. Since then, this realm of fantasy has given more than 11 million visitors and fans of crystal, innumerable moments of wonder. Currently the Swarovski Crystal Worlds are being expanded to double its size. This unique and groundbreaking project has enabled world-renowned creative visionaries to push the boundaries of design, art, architecture and technology, and redefine the possibilities of crystal.

Walking around it is an extraordinary place where your imagination is taken through a multi-sensory experience, where visions become reality, with each chamber exposing creations from some of the most exciting and creative minds of the 21st century.

Such is the aura of this fascinating place that it prompts you to look a bit deeper into the history of Swarovski and how it all came about.

SMALL BEGINNINGS

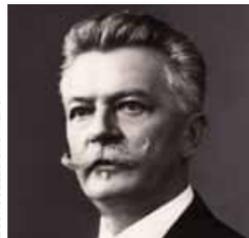
Daniel Swarovski, a crystal cutter who learnt his skill from his father in his homeland of Bohemia, was fuelled by the exciting development of electricity and set out to invent a mechanical machine for cutting and polishing crystal stones which, at the time, were placed in beautiful pieces of jewellery. Such was his entrepreneurial prowess he aimed high to create brilliant quality crystal stones, which he referred to as 'the diamonds for everyone'.

In the late 1800s he moved from his homeland of Bohemia with his family to Tyrol in Austria, and it is here where the headquarters are currently, that the true roots lie, as this is the place where the first factory was built, and in 1895 the Swarovski company was founded. The new Swarovski crystal stones or 'chatons', revolutionised the industry,

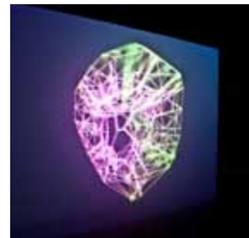


BOURROLLEC BROTHERS

1 Gabriel Chandelier was created by Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec in collaboration with Swarovski for the Palace of Versailles. This project was unveiled in 2013



2 Daniel Swarovski embraced couture and worked with fashion houses, including Christian Dior



PIC CREDIT - DAVID LEVIN

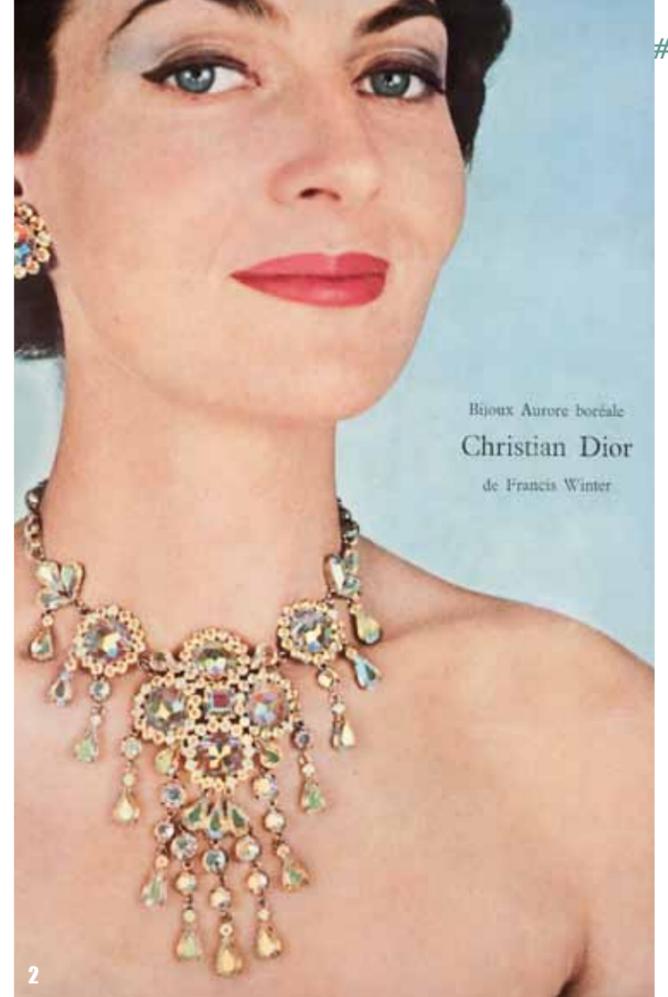
3 Arik Levy's Osmosis Interactive Arena (above) was in Swarovski's Digital Crystal Exhibition, and Vincent Van Duysen's Cascade featured in Swarovski's Crystal Palace Collection



4 Architect Zaha Hadid was commissioned to design an installation called Prima

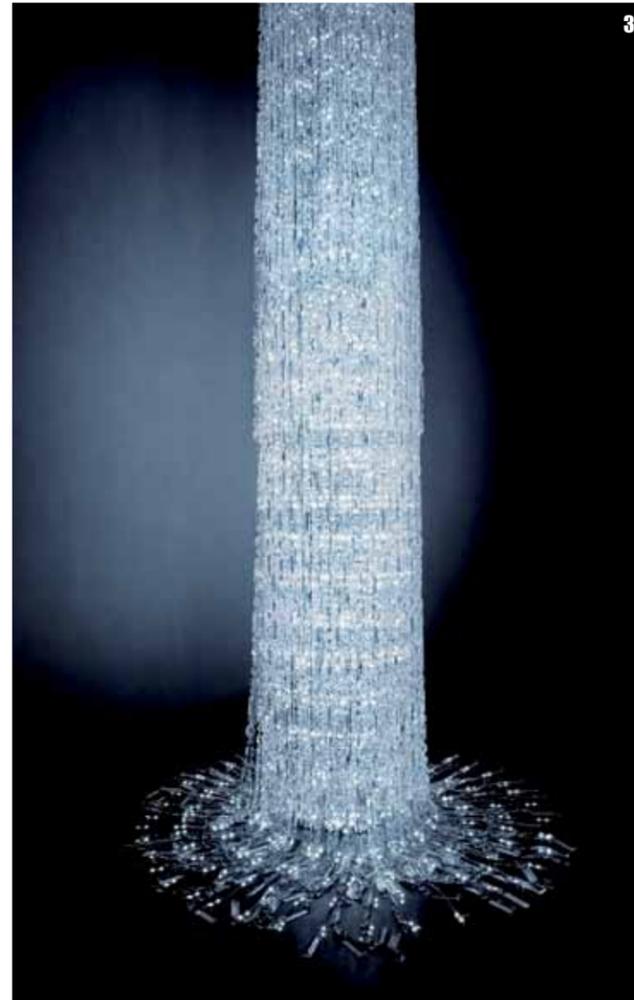


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Bijoux Aurore boréale
Christian Dior
de Francis Winter



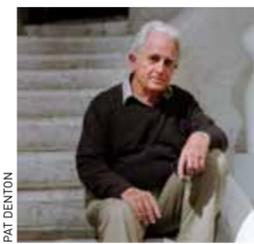
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We wanted to **show how crystals** are perfect for enhancing **luxury interiors** – including yachts and other spaces, creating a **bright, sophisticated ambience** that makes a room come alive. Crystal is all about the light that it **refracts**, so when it's combined with a variety of different surfaces, the effect is **extraordinary**



Martin Francis, naval architect who developed surface collection for interiors with Swarovski (left)

providing new levels of brilliance, consistency and precision – and the art of creating these crystals is to this day is still a well guarded secret.

As the concept of couture evolved in the 20th century Daniel Swarovski and his sons worked closely with fashion houses Chanel, Schiaparelli, Balenciaga and later Christian Dior, and also jewellers such as Robert Goossens and Francis Winter in Paris. As the era of the 1920s swung into the 'Jazz Age' so did a lust for luxury and Swarovski hit the big time with crystals dripping from clothing and jewellery from couture to cabaret.

And so the company went from strength to strength. In 1956, Swarovski added to its creative legacy with the introduction of the 'Aurora Borealis' effect. The crystal effect seems to magically shimmer in every colour of the rainbow and was named after the Northern Lights. Christian Dior was the first designer to use it. As the women of the era became bolder and more elegant in their dress, so Swarovski was swept along on another inspirational journey, and one that is today still evolving.

In recent years Swarovski has rekindled its name in the celebrity world with crystal cutting a dash on stars of stage and screen at events such as the Oscars, The Cannes Film Festival and the Toronto Film Festival. It also has a close relationship with the movie industry and appears on costumes worn by Nicole Kidman in the smash hit *Moulin Rouge*; James Bond's *Die Another Day*, *Casino Royal*, and created the magnificent chandelier in the film version of *Phantom of the Opera* and *Black Swan*, among a few. Also, Swarovski Entertainment collaborates with established industry partners and exceptional talent to produce international feature films such as *Romeo and Juliet*.

Swarovski now comprises different businesses. While being the world's leading producer of loose crystals to brands, manufacturers and designers worldwide, it also creates design-driven jewellery, lighting and accessories products as well as genuine gemstones. Since 1976, the company has continued to create its own brand lines of accessories, figurines, jewellery, lighting and home décor items that are sold through more than 2,350 retail outlets worldwide. Swarovski Lighting has gathered an impressive portfolio of international tailored lighting project commissions for the Palace of Versailles (Paris, France), the Rockefeller Center and the Metropolitan Opera (both in NYC, USA). The Swarovski Crystal Society has 300,000 members worldwide, keen collectors of the crystal figurines.

craftsman, has led to an impressive portfolio of international project commissions in recent years. The most recent launch is Interior Solutions, developed together with naval architect Martin Francis, and launched at the Superyacht Design Symposium in February this year.

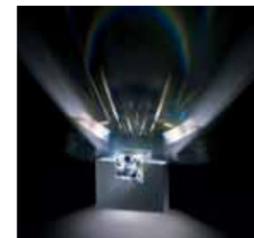
Francis really needs no introduction to those in the superyacht industry, such is his technical know-how he has been involved with the design of superyachts for many years, the most recent being the motoryacht *A*, which he worked on with Philippe Starck. Swarovski have worked closely with Francis on a new collection which gives a unique palette to interior designers to work with, a new dimension of surface panels incorporating Swarovski crystals and exceptional technology in a way that you wouldn't expect.

'When I first came to Swarovski I was overwhelmed by the precision, technology and whole ethos of the company. Swarovski has this enormous potential of what I would describe as creating a virtual surface. By taking individual elements they create these by placing them in simple arrangements, so you are not so aware of a material but instead a surface,' says Francis.

Handling the materials during a visit to Swarovski HQ, they are very tactile, beautiful and elegant, adding crystal refinement to interior surfaces such as wood, suede, leather and glass, and showcased as a selection of sample panels. Basically it's the analogy of peeling back, letting the material do its thing and just letting the crystals have their own life. It's exciting and the next step up in luxury living – with this collection anything is possible. [bb](#)



The Aspen by Kempinski at Kempinski Hotel Mall of the Emirates with sparkling Swarovski Crystal Ground wall panels



The Madison Luminaire wall light is one of many lighting designs created by Swarovski



Swarovski's Crystal curtains appeared at the 2014 Oscars



ABOVE: Swarovski Crystal Worlds, Wattens, Austria

INTERIOR SOLUTIONS

Swarovski is to date an international corporation still family owned and run by fifth generation family members, with over 30,000 employees. The drive and innovation of the company, along with its dedicated trend research department, technical expertise and a dynamic team of designers and

Contacts

For further information on the collection and interior projects contact the special projects team at sp.interiorsolutions@swarovski.com