

BLING! See 200 pieces of handcrafted jewelry you probably wish were yours

NEW EXHIBIT | Oct 23, 2019

By [Meredith Moss](#), Staff Writer

Dayton Art Institute's 'Maker & Muse: Women and Early Twentieth Century Art Jewelry' will run through Jan. 19

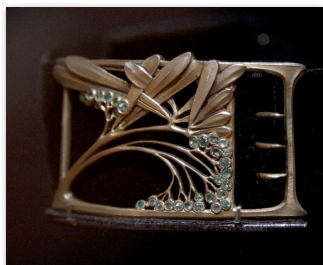
It was about six years ago that art curator Elyse Zorn Karlin got a phone call from Chicago philanthropist and art collector Richard H. Drieshaus.

“Mr. Drieshaus collects all kinds of things — decorative arts, architecture, antique cars,” she says. “He asked if I’d come and look at his early 20th century jewelry collection, because it’s my area of specialty. He wondered if it could be turned into an exhibit.”

The Richard H. Dreishaus Museum, open to the public since 2008, is located in a 19th century historic mansion in Chicago that Dreishaus restored and filled with furniture and precious objects he’s collected over the years.

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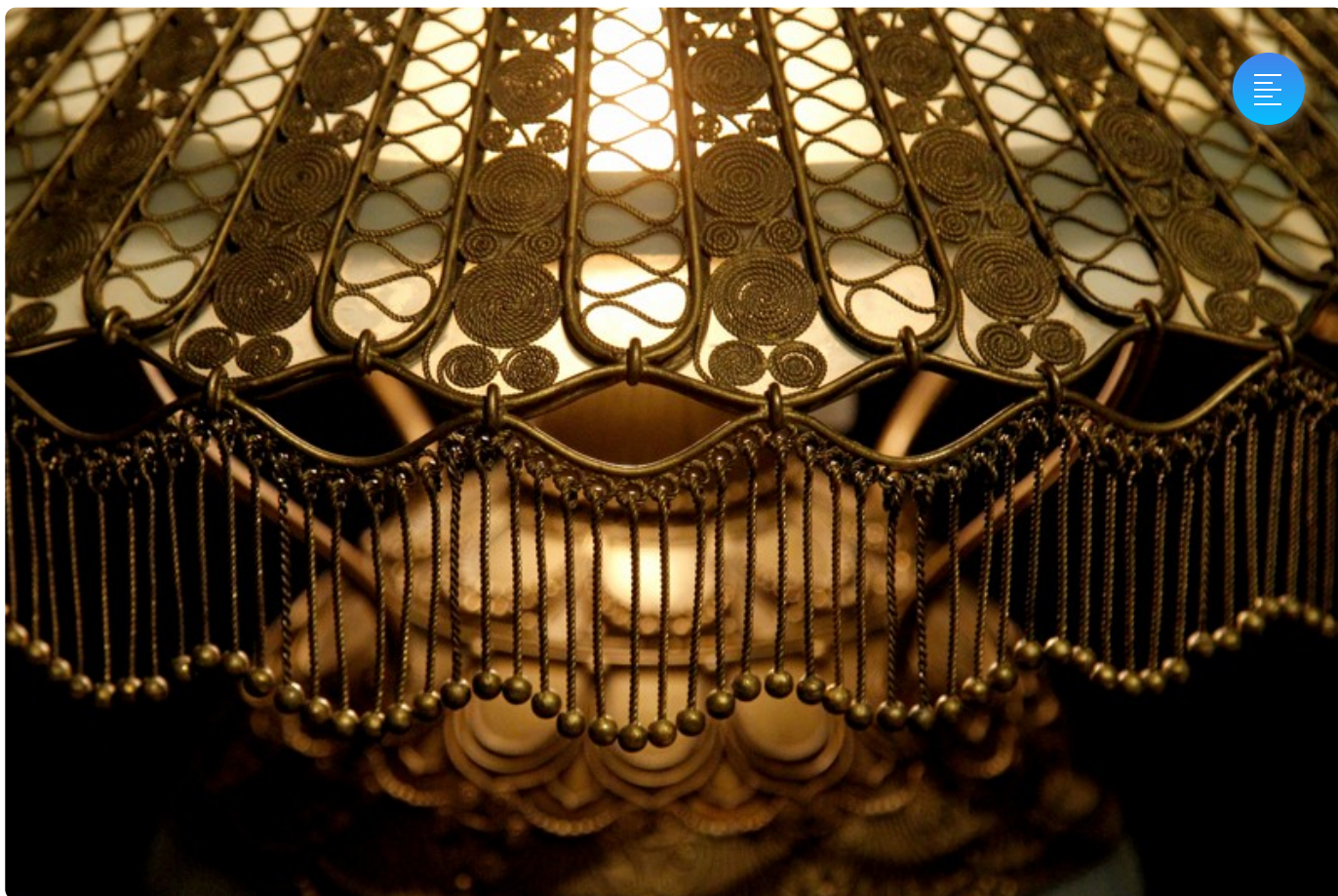
Karlin, a jewelry historian, says she couldn’t believe what she saw when she accompanied Mr. Drieshaus to his bank vault to view his collection. “It was fabulous!” she says now. “It’s basically handmade art jewelry, a reaction against the Industrial Revolution, when jewelry was being manufactured for the middle classes.”



### PHOTOS: Sneak peek at the exquisite jewelry from the Dayton Art Institute’s new exhibit

As soon as she saw the collection, Karlin knew what the premise for an exhibit might be. “Women played a central role, not just as wearers, but they were starting to make jewelry for the first time,” she says. “In some countries, women were still not allowed to make jewelry because it was considered inappropriate, but they were the subject matter of the jewelry.”

You’ll see how Karlin turned the Dreishaus jewelry into a traveling art exhibit when “**Maker & Muse: Women and Early Twentieth Century Art Jewelry**” comes to the Dayton Art Institute Oct. 26 through Jan. 19, 2020. Karlin will be in town to lecture at the museum on Saturday afternoon, Nov. 9.



## WHAT YOU'LL SEE

The exhibition showcases more than 250 pieces of jewelry representing five different regions: Great Britain, France, Austro-Germany, New York and Chicago. It focuses on the role of women, both as inspiration and as designers from 1880 through the 1920s. Among the artists featured are Louis Comfort Tiffany, Charlotte Newman and René Lalique.

“Guests will learn not only about metalworking and jewelry-making, but also about societal shifts and its effects on the lives of women, from the acceptance of working outside the home to the suffragist movement,” says Katherine Ryckman Siegwath, the DAI’s in-house curator for the exhibition. This exhibition celebrates the DAI’s centennial as well as the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, giving women in the United States the right to vote.”

**>> PHOTOS: [Dayton’s Red Carpet night at the Dayton Art Institute Art Ball](#)**

Works from the DAI collection will complement the exhibition, including jewelry and designs by Daytonian Virginia Blakeney, who created designs for Tiffany.

The dazzling collection includes necklaces, brooches, bracelets, pins, rings, jeweled and enameled boxes, pendants, buckles, cloak clasps, cigarette cases and tiaras. The pieces, created between the late Victorian Era and World War I, are made from materials ranging from gold and silver to semi-precious gems and enamel. “It’s so beautiful and different looking,” Karlin says.

The jewelry of this era, Karlin says, was created by jewelry makers around the world in response to the growing industrialization of the world and the changing role of women in society. Their work — artistic, detailed, hand wrought, and inspired by nature — became known as art jewelry. “This exhibition ... offers a new and groundbreaking perspective on woman’s role within that world,” she says.

#### **>> PHOTOS: [Did we spot you at the Dayton Art Institute’s Oktoberfest?](#)**

Highlights include four revival-style works by Mrs. Newman of London, who paved the way for female jewelry makers of the British Arts and Crafts movement; a daring brooch depicting the female nude form by the French jeweler René Lalique; a Jugendstil pin by the Wiener Werkstätte, to be worn by the hostesses of Vienna’s premier Cabaret Fledermaus; rare designs by Julia Munson, the first director of Louis Comfort Tiffany’s jewelry studio and works from Chicago’s distinguished Kalo Shop, founded by Clara Barck Welles.





## WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

Visitors to the exhibit will learn about five areas of design and fabrication: the Arts and Crafts Movement in Britain, Art Nouveau in France and Belgium, Jugendstil in Germany and Austria, Louis Comfort Tiffany in New York, and American Arts and Crafts in Chicago. Each gallery explores the historic social milieu associated with these movements, accompanied by selected contextual objects of the period.

Karlin says people have been adorning themselves since the beginning of time. “It’s a primal urge and goes back hundreds of thousands of years,” she says. “There was a time when men wore more jewelry than women — think of Henry VIII. Jewelry also has many layers of meaning, it can identify you with certain groups. In some families it is handed down for generations for sentimental value or just a thing of beauty.”

In some countries, only the wealthy were permitted to wear jewelry. They had sumptuary laws that dictated who was allowed to wear jewelry.”

>> **Dayton Art Institute receives historical marker**



## FEATURED PIECES FROM DAYTON COLLECTION

Because the DAI space is larger than the other exhibit venues, Siegwarth decided to incorporate related artworks from the DAI's collection. One example? "We will augment the Art Nouveau section with a beautiful music cabinet by German-American artist Edouard Colonna," she says. "Colonna lived in France as a furniture and jewelry-maker and later immigrated to the United States and lived in Dayton where he designed home interiors, including an interior for Brainerd Thresher's parents. Thresher would become a decorative artist and was an early patron of the DAI." A recently acquired mermaid design by Thresher will also be on view.

Designs and jewelry by Virginia V. Blakeney are also on display. Blakeney lived in Dayton and studied art in France and Belgium; upon her return she created jewelry for affluent Dayton families as well as designs for Louis Comfort Tiffany.

>> **BEST OF DAYTON:** [Dayton Art Institute a big winner in its biggest year](#)







## **SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**

Because jewelry is such an accessible medium, Siegwarth says the upcoming show has something for everyone whether they are interested in art, history, science or women's equality. "Everyone has jewelry or adornments," she says. "These are dazzlingly beautiful objects, and people will be surprised by the media and techniques used. Guests will find beautifully intricate and hand-wrought objects using horn and moonstone, filigree metalworking and plique-à-jour enameling. As art jewelry, the perceived value of these objects is not through the use of large, precious gemstones, but through these unique and fantastical designs. "

You'll see photos of women wearing the jewelry and stories related to the era. "A lot is happening in the world at this time and you see it reflected in the jewelry," says Siegwarth.



“For example, in 1881, the Rational Dress Society was established to protest Victorian-era fashion. With the new fashions, new jewelry was needed to match.”

This change played an even larger role: the new style of dress was also a tactic of suffragettes, who used fashion to reinforce their argument for equality alongside the right to vote. This emergence of the modern woman also led to ideas of the *femme fatale*, and this fascination and fear of women can be seen in many of the Art Nouveau jewelry designs.

Look for curving lines and women’s hair flowing in the Art Nouveau pieces. “Rene Lalique made jewelry for people like Sarah Bernhardt; without her his jewelry would not have been so popular. It was big and erotic and nobody had ever seen anything like it in jewelry before. Some wealthy women would buy it and put it on their dresser because they were afraid to be seen in public wearing it!”

Karlin is hoping those who come to the exhibit will learn to appreciate the role of women in jewelry at the early part of the 20th century and how far they’ve come today. “I believe the women who were part of this early art movement led the way for women today to be able to make jewelry on equal terms with men.”



## WANT TO GO?

**What:** “Maker & Muse: Women and Early 20th-Century Art Jewelry”

**Where:** Dayton Art Institute, 456 Belmonte Park, Dayton

**When:** Oct. 26 to Jan. 19. Museum hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday through Saturday, noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday and extended hours until 8 p.m. on Thursday. Closed Mondays and Tuesday

**Admission:** Adults: \$15, seniors (60+), active military, groups (10 or more): \$10, college students (18+ with ID) and youth (ages 7-17): \$5. Children (ages 6 and younger) and museum members: free. Prices include admission to the special exhibition, all focus exhibitions and the museum’s collection galleries.

Guided tours of the special exhibition are available for individuals, groups and schools. For more information or to schedule a tour, contact Rique Hagen, at 937-223-4278, ext. 332 or [school-tours@daytonart.org](mailto:school-tours@daytonart.org).

**Lecture:** Curator Elyse Zorn Karlin will speak about the exhibit from 1-2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 9 in the Mimi and Stuart Rose Auditorium. The presentation is free to members, included in museum admission for non-members.

**Other related events and programs** include a jewelry-themed ARTventures family program on Saturday, Oct. 26, Trivia Night at the DAI on Friday, Nov. 1 and a Language of Art literature program on Saturday, Nov. 16.

An exhibition catalog, edited by curator Elyse Zorn Karlin, will be available for \$50 at the DAI’s Museum Store.

**For more information:** [daytonartinstitute.org](http://daytonartinstitute.org)

**Heading for Chicago?** The Richard H. Driehaus Museum is located at 40 E. Erie St. on the Near North Side near the Magnificent Mile. The museum is housed within the historic Samuel M. Nickerson House, the 1883 residence of a wealthy Chicago banker.

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