

Medieval Manuscripts Meet Modern Jewelry At New York City Jewelry Week

Kate Matthams Senior Contributor

I write about luxury and independent jewelry design in Europe.

Follow



Nov 15, 2023, 08:41am EST



1 of 4 free articles



Exclusive Membership Offer: Save 60%. Get unparalleled access to premium journalism and member only events for just \$29.99/year.

Subscribe Now

Open in New York this week, is *The Color of Medieval Life*, a fascinating exhibition presented by the specialist dealer of art from the Middle Ages, Les Enluminures, which sets out to demonstrate why the Dark Ages were anything but. The jewel in the crown of the event, is the first US solo show from British artist jeweler [Joy BC](#), whose work taps into Classical history to explore Ancient mythology and motifs. In *Deconstructed Classics - Seeing Life in Color*, both existing and new jewels by Joy BC are set in dialogue with manuscripts and jewelry from the Middle Ages, presented by Les Enluminures.



The Artemis necklace by Joy BC, recycled 18ct gold and fine 999 silver, on show with manuscripts ... [+] OLIVIA ROSE

“The manuscripts and the jewels are both venerating narratives which are of great

1 of 4 free articles

Exclusive Membership Offer: Save 60%. Get unparalleled access to premium journalism and member only events for just \$29.99/year.

[Subscribe Now](#)

white, blue, red and yellow, each of which are significant in the rainbow world of Medieval manuscripts, as well as early jewelry.

BETA

A silver necklace from the Artemis collection (above) responds to the pale white moon representing femininity, along with the bright silver of a deconstructed Classical column bracelet (bottom). Meanwhile, red bronze and garnets signify blood and pain, which came to symbolize strength and courage in Medieval times. Elsewhere, yellow denotes gold and sacred objects, symbolizing the sun, radiance and hope, through jewels like the 22ct recycled gold Persephone ring. Finally, blue conveys inspiration and dreams, including Joy's Precious Tear ring (below), with a sapphire tear, part of an ongoing series by the artist exploring the emotional and physical significance of tears.



1 of 4 free articles

Exclusive Membership Offer: Save 60%. Get unparalleled access to premium journalism and member only events for just \$29.99/year.

[Subscribe Now](#)

Best High-Yield Savings Accounts Of September 2023

By **Kevin Payne** Contributor

BETA

Best 5% Interest Savings Accounts of September 2023

By **Cassidy Horton** Contributor

Les Enluminures sets out to provide a fresh reading of the art of the Middle Ages, through intricately embellished manuscripts, finely worked miniatures and Medieval jewels. Founded in Paris and Chicago in 1991 by Medieval and Renaissance historian Dr Sandra Hindman, Les Enluminures has a gallery in New York and is active in the international art world, from Frieze London to the Winter Antiques Show in New York. A team of art, jewelry and manuscript experts based on both sides of the Atlantic regularly work with institutions of international renown, like the Louvre in Paris, as well as private collectors.

Passport: Explore the finest destinations and experiences around the world in the Forbes Passport newsletter.

Sign Up

By signing up, you accept and agree to our [Terms of Service](#) (including the class action waiver and arbitration provisions), and you acknowledge our [Privacy Statement](#).



The Medusa Comb brooch, by Joy BC, bronze, recycled gold and Fuli peridot. FULI GEMSTONES

1 of 4 free articles

Exclusive Membership Offer: Save 60%. Get unparalleled access to premium journalism and member only events for just \$29.99/year.

Subscribe Now

she explores Classical art and mythology, reinterpreting them for our times in precious metals and gemstones using ancient techniques like wax casting. A graduate of the prestigious Glasgow School of Art, with an MA from the Royal College of Art, she regularly shows at the [Goldsmiths' Fair](#) and was included in the seminal exhibition [Force of Nature in 2021](#) at [Elisabetta Cipriani Gallery](#), curated by [Melanie Grant](#). In 2022, she produced a bespoke series as part [Fuli Gemstones'](#) designer program, including a variation on the Medusa comb brooch (above), in bronze, yellow gold and Fuli peridot, which explores transformation and power, through the myth of the snake-haired Gorgon, Medusa.



The Colonna bracelet by Joy BC, fine silver and 22ct gold, on show with manuscripts curated by Les ... [+] OLIVIA ROSE

1 of 4 free articles

Exclusive Membership Offer: Save 60%. Get unparalleled access to premium journalism and member only events for just \$29.99/year.

Subscribe Now

as commissions from international museums including the Nelson Atkins Museum in Kansas City, Missouri, and the Swiss National Museum, Joy BC's modern reinterpretation of Antiquity as jewelry art has won her a grant from the Queen Elizabeth Scholarship Training fund, to study with Italian goldsmith Giovanni Corvaja. After spending time living and working in what was once the heart of the Roman Empire, it's exciting to imagine where her creative practice will take her next.

Deconstructed Classics - Seeing the World in Color by Joy BC, is on as part of The Color of Medieval Life exhibition presented by Les Enluminures, November 13 to 19 2023, by appointment only, at 23 East 73rd Street, 7th Floor Penthouse, New York, NY 10021. Follow me on [Twitter](#) or [LinkedIn](#). Check out my [website](#).



Kate Matthams

Follow

As a Paris-based editorial consultant and translator, I have spent my career strategizing and creating content for organizations ranging from start-ups to multinationals. Ex-Condé Nast, I now help luxury brands define their positioning through editorial, and write about lifestyle and culture for international media titles, with a particular interest in independent jewelry design and diversity in the jewelry industry. **Read Less**

Editorial Standards

Reprints & Permissions

1 of 4 free articles

Exclusive Membership Offer: Save 60%. Get unparalleled access to premium journalism and member only events for just \$29.99/year.

Subscribe Now