

Created by: Edward F. Nesta

Van Cleef and Arpels, Montblanc - Mystery Masterpiece

The luxury houses of [Van Cleef & Arpels](#) and [Montblanc](#) celebrate the start of their second centuries with a collaborative one-of-a-kind creation.



When the renowned artisans from the storied houses of Van Cleef & Arpels and Montblanc collaborate on a design, the result is a magnum opus. On February 8, 2007, the two houses introduced the impressive, ultra-chic, stylish, and the most expensive writing instrument in the world - known as the "Mystery Masterpiece." The Mystery Masterpiece would make a fabulous gift for any collector of fine jewelry or exquisite writing instruments, and for the mere price of USD \$730,000 it could be yours. The Mystery Masterpiece will be available in the Montblanc and Van Cleef & Arpels boutiques.

For the two houses, this was their first collaboration with another company, but as both companies celebrated their 100th Anniversary in 2006, they opened their creative doors to a venture that will mark the beginning of their next 100 years as progressive leading edge companies. The limited edition Mystery Masterpiece will be released in three variations, set either with rubies, sapphires, or emeralds, and accented by diamonds, and there will be only three pieces of each design worldwide; the setting will adorn the Montblanc meticulously crafted skeleton body of delicate white gold.



The settings use the legendary "Mystery Setting" technique, patented in 1933 by Van Cleef & Arpels, which completely conceals the gemstone settings; the result creates an illusion where the blossoms formed by the rubies, sapphires, or emeralds literally float on the backdrop of transparent resin. There are up to 70 gems set, with each setting requiring at least 90 minutes of work.

I saw the first Mystery Masterpiece, which was set with rubies, and I knew I was gazing upon exquisite form and unparalleled function; the piece took over a year and a half to create with artisans from both houses working together. As I gazed upon the glistening red rubies that formed spectacular leaves and blossoms, I let my mind wander as I imagined who would be the first person to procure this masterpiece, and what documents it would sign. This was an instrument destined to be a part of history; I could envision it being prominently displayed as part of a ceremony leading up to the signing of an international peace treaty; ok I am a dreamer, but I like to think positive, and with the Mystery Masterpiece, only positive things will be a part of its history.

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Luxury Experience Magazine had a chance to meet and speak with Mr. Stanislas de Quercize, President & Chief Executive Officer, Van Cleef & Arpels, and Mr. Lutz Bethge, Managing Director, Montblanc. Mr. Bethge commented on how well the two teams worked together and how the ideas just flowed between the groups as they created something so extraordinary. Mr. de Quercize commented on how unique it was to have two masters of their craft join forces, and how each wanted to outdo themselves, he stated, "This is the best of both houses." Mr. Bethge and Mr. de Quercize commented that there was a tremendous amount of passion by the artisans that was put into the design and development of the Mystery Masterpiece, and that there were many master craftsmen from both houses that had butterflies in their stomachs awaiting feedback from the unveiling. Mr. Bethge noted that although he personally writes with each of the new designs before they go into production, that in the case of the Mystery Masterpiece he felt that the piece was so special that it should be the pleasure of the owner to be first to write with the pen.

To experience the Mystery Masterpiece for yourself, or for additional information, please contact **Montblanc** or **Van Cleef & Arpels**.

Montblanc

www.Montblanc.com

Van Cleef & Arpels

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