

ENCHANTING



OHRSCHMUCK WEMPE

JEWELRY FOR THE EARS

TRYING TO OUTSPARKLE THEIR WEARER'S EYES AND ADDING THAT FINISHING TOUCH WHEN IT COMES TO HIGHLIGHTING HER BEAUTY, EARRINGS ARE INDISPENSABLE COMPANIONS IN A WOMAN'S LIFE.

WE'LL SHOW YOU THE 66 MOST BEAUTIFUL EXAMPLES - COVERING THE ENTIRE GAMUT FROM OPULENT AND LUXURIOUS TO DELICATE AND FILIGREED (STARTING ON PAGE 38). BUT FIRST WE'D LIKE TO INFORM YOU ABOUT THAT SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMEN AND THEIR EARRINGS, TODAY AS IN THE DAYS OF YORE.

▬▬▬ **AT THE 60TH BAMBI AWARD** ceremony, Iris Berben did not wear any jewelry – except for a pair of white gold earrings by Chopard, studded with 346 brilliant-cut diamonds. Likewise, Barbara Schöneberger did without a necklace to adorn her remarkable décolleté, limiting herself to just wearing earrings. This once again underlines the important role of jewelry for the ears which women have appreciated at all times. What is probably the most famous set of earrings belonged to Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt. It was adorned with magnificent pear-shaped pearls and is supposed to have been of immeasurable value. Cleopatra sacrificed it – at least in part – to her love of the Roman general Marcus Antonius (Mark Anthony). In order to demonstrate her favor she bet him that she would prepare the most expensive feast of all times for him – and dissolved one of the priceless pearls in wine (or vinegar, sources disagree) to serve an invaluable drink. Before she could destroy the second earring, however, he surrendered.

IT ALL STARTED IN 3000 B.C.

Beautiful women and beautiful jewelry for the ears belong together, today as much as thousands of years ago. The first pieces of evidence, dating back as far as 3000 B.C., are the frescoes and stone reliefs from Mesopotamia, ancient Babylon and ancient Persia depicting people adorned with earrings. Later on, inspired by the artfully crafted pendant earrings from Egypt, the people in the Byzantine Empire distributed this jewelry fashion all over the Mediterranean region. The custom in some countries – such as Spain, Greece and Turkey – to pierce girls' earlobes when they are no more than babies can be traced back to these influences. Archaeological finds also show us how far advanced the goldsmithing art was at the time of the ancient Greeks and Romans. Gold and silver jewelry and other objects, complemented by precious gemstones and pearls, reveal an impressively high level of workmanship. In our regions, jewelry for the ears did not become popular before the late 16th century, and its popularity always depended on the prevailing



PROMINENTE TRÄGERINNEN VON OHRSCHMUCK: BARBARA SCHÖNEBERGER MIT SCHMUCK VON CHOPARD; NAOMI CAMPBELL; PRIYANKE CHOPRA MIT CHOPARD HAUTE JOAILLERIE





OBERN: FRAU AUS POMPEJI, 25 N. CHR.;
OHREHÄNGE (RECHTS) GRIECHISCH, 4. JH. V.
CHR., EIN AUSSTELLUNGSSTÜCK DES SCHMUCK-
MUSEUMS PFORZHEIM; FOTO GÜNTHER MEYER
LINKS: FRAUENZEICHNUNG AUS DEM
JAHRE 1927, BILDAGENTUR FÜR KUNST, KULTUR
UND GESCHICHTE, BERLIN

fashion. Long pendant earrings, for example, did not go well with high ruff collars. Hairstyle fashions also played a certain role: combing one's hair back as it was the custom in the Neoclassical period (1770-1820) was conducive to wearing earrings.

EARRINGS FOR ARISTOCRATS

As a rule, valuable earrings were the privilege of ladies of noble descent. This changed in 1789 when the world was turned upside down by the French Revolution and the bourgeoisie became the most powerful social class. Popular earring variants of the past include so-called girandole earrings (featuring a bow or a flower motif with dangling stones) which became popular in aristocratic circles in the course of the 17th century, and the so-called pendeloques of the 18th century, pendant earrings with a pear-shaped gemstone. Let's jump to the first half of the 19th century when women were already advised by fashion magazines on how to combine their apparel with the appropriate jewelry. Coral, ivory and semi-precious gemstones were described as perfect for rounding off their morning ritual, whereas gold and valuable stones should be reserved for formal occasions. Brilliant-cut diamonds were regarded as the privilege of married women. Young unmarried women were expected to present themselves more demurely.

A STRING AROUND THE EAR

The history of the earring has seen the most different methods of attaching them to the ears such as by means of a string around the ear (in the 7th and 8th centuries) or by using an S-shaped clasp as a hanger (mid-18th century). The oldest and simplest fastening device, which is still the most common today, is a hook that penetrates the ear and – in more sophisticated systems – can also be closed by means of a clasping device with a hinge joint. Button earrings which, as the name indicates, are no larger than a button, became fashionable in the last third of the 19th century. They were fastened on

the back side of the ear by means of a small flexible triangle or a small snapping clasp. The predecessors of the ear studs that are still common today are so-called "ear screws" which were mainly worn by men.

ARTISTS, JESTERS AND SEAFARERS

If in our day and age, men of all ages proudly sport their ear studs, they are not following a fashionable trend but instead keeping a long tradition alive. As is supported by evidence from the 15th century, for example, it was not uncommon back then for men to wear earrings: In 1411, Oswald von Wolkenstein, a Tyrolean knight and minstrel, received rings for his beard and his ears as a gift from the Queen of Aragon. In the 16th and 17th centuries, due to the influence of Spanish fashion, jewelry for the ears used to adorn both the men at the European courts and the members of certain professions of the "ordinary people" such as artists, jesters, soldiers and seafarers. The latter, however, did not only wear their ear studs as an adornment but also for their symbolic meaning as an amulet. This is why the members of these professions continued wearing their earrings after it was no longer fashionable at court. After the French Revolution, however, decency was called for again in Central Europe.

In France, earrings were worn above all by soldiers, water carriers, jesters and musicians. As to the German-speaking regions, plenty of evidence from the early 19th century shows that this was the custom mainly in the south as well as in Austria. Towards the end of the 19th century, earrings for men went out of fashion. Only certain groups, usually in rural areas, maintained the custom, such as bargemen, fishermen and craftsmen. The peasants in Tyrol even remained faithful to their earrings way into the 20th century, and the Appenzell dairy farmers still won't do without them today. German, Swiss and Austrian carpenters represent another professional guild whose members are never seen without their earrings and usually wear them on their left ear.

MODERN MEN AND EARRINGS

Thus, by wearing earrings, men usually showed their affiliation with a certain group. This was no different in the 1970s when young men wearing small hoop earrings started attracting attention in German cities. On the one hand, this was due to influences from the music scene, and on the other hand, many young men did so to come out of the closet with their homosexuality. For them, the earring also had a symbolic meaning: depending on which ear – left or right – it was worn, it signaled a more feminine or a more masculine disposition. In the mid-eighties this habit, which had originally been developed by "outsiders", started becoming a general fashion, also due to the influence of the punk wave. And today, men simply like to adorn themselves with their earrings, just as we ladies do.



OHRSCHMUCK
AUS SILBER UND GOLD,
MIT SMARAGDEN,
DIAMANTEN, PERLEN.
PARIS, UM 1780.
SCHMUCKMUSEUM
PFORZHEIM; FOTO
GÜNTHER MEYER



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DO EARRINGS HAVE HEALING POWERS?

Why, of all people, did seafarers and fishermen wear earrings? They did so because they believed in the healing properties people in the past ascribed to earrings – as some still do today. Wearing earrings is supposed to prevent eye diseases and to strengthen one's eyesight. This also explains their importance for carpenters and is one of the reasons why, in some rural areas, even infants were adorned with an earring. Thus, based on beliefs and superstitions, the earring was considered an important, protective amulet. Simple golden hoop earrings in particular served this purpose. The more opulent an earring is, of course, the more predominant its decorative function.

EARRINGS AND ACUPUNCTURE

The fact that there is a relationship between the eye and the ear was not only known to the physicians at the time of Hippocrates but also to Chinese acupuncturists. There is in fact a point on the ear, in the center of the earlobe, which in Chinese medicine is considered the "projection point" of the eye. What an interesting connection between Western tradition and Far Eastern medicine. But what if the ear is pierced in many spots, as it is common among some young people? At least European acupuncturists disapprove of that, arguing that the projection points of other organs could also be "hit", which might have a negative effect on the treatment of a disease.

SOME TIPS FOR STYLING WITH JEWELRY FOR THE EARS

FACE SHAPE

- ▶ Women with a round, full face can counterbalance it with long pendant earrings which make their face look narrower.
- ▶ Those who have a long, narrow face should do without long pendant and chandelier earrings but rather wear round ear studs or button-shaped earrings. Everything that visually widens the face makes for a more balanced look.
- ▶ Women with an oval face can wear any kind of jewelry for the ears.
- ▶ Those who have a triangular face usually look particularly striking with chandelier earrings.



HAIRSTYLE

- ▶ The more luxurious and exuberant your hair is and the more of your hair you wear in your face, the more unobtrusive our earrings should be. Also, it is not appealing if the filigreed parts of pendant earrings get tangled up in your hair. An exception is the (still) fashionable hippie look which allows both long hair and pendant earrings.
- ▶ Magnificent earrings are highlighted best when your hair is either combed back or pinned up. A plain hairdo virtually calls for earrings.
- ▶ Short hair and earrings are a perfect match. The more expressive your hairdo, however, the more carefully you should choose your earrings. Wildly styled hair and romantic earrings usually don't go together well.

FASHION

- ▶ When choosing your clothes, always have the matching earrings in mind. A well-designed sculpture on the ear doesn't go well with a ruffled dress, and earrings with delicate floral motifs don't suit an avant-garde outfit.

MAKE-UP

- ▶ Make sure that the colors match. A cool pink for your lips and a warm coral red on your ear are a no-go, and a glaring red lipstick would drown out the delicacy of a rose quartz on your ear.



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