



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Hi res images available upon request

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Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris

On view February 17 through June 16, 2024

Travel to Paris with Marjorie Merriweather Post and explore the splendor and luxury of French art, antiques, fashion, and more

Washington, D.C.— Experience the City of Light through Hillwood founder Marjorie Merriweather Post's eyes in the special exhibition [*Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris*](#), on view at [Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens](#) from February 17 through June 16, 2024.

Marjorie Post was a dedicated Francophile, passionate about French culture, design, and artistry. A regular in Paris, she patronized iconic hotels; attended the theater, opera, and social events; and frequented art galleries, antique shops, haute couturiers, and luxury department stores. As with all aspects of her life, Post's time in Paris was characterized by her signature style and grace. This special exhibition will highlight Hillwood's renowned French collection, tracing Post's collecting and her trips to Paris in the 20th century.

"Marjorie Post was a celebrated collector, with an eye for elegance and a passion for history," said Kate Markert, Hillwood's executive director. "Her many years of admiration and appreciation for France culminated in this assembly and careful stewardship of beautiful treasures, and we are delighted to present this exhibition of pieces entirely from Hillwood's collection."

Post in Paris

Marjorie Post first visited Paris in 1900 as a young woman, attending the *Exposition Universelle*, or world's fair, with her parents. With the international inventions and pavilions dedicated to textiles and fashion, the trip exposed Post to a wide array of collector's items that would fascinate her for the rest of her life. Her next trip to France, with her father, C.W. Post, during the summer of 1904, is well documented in her scrapbooks. According to Post, "Paris is very gay and crowded."

Post traveled to Europe on luxury liners and stayed in lavish accommodations including the Ritz Hotel, Hotel Claridge, and Hotel Raphael. She became a very important client of designer Louis Vuitton, ordering almost 40 travelling trunks for all aspects of her wardrobe. Once in Paris, Post would spend days visiting her favorite retailers, including Callot Soeurs, House of Paquin, Gustave Beer, Thurn, and Madeleine et Madeleine for fashion; Van Cleef & Arpels and Joel Helft for jewelry; Galerie d'Art Ancien and A La Vieille Russie for antiques and art; and Saint Gobain and Keller for

modern luxuries. *Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris* will highlight these purchases, presenting a treasure trove of French artistry and creativity through fashion, jewelry, luggage, portraiture, decorative arts, and more.

Hillwood's French Collection

Hillwood is known for its [French collection](#), comprising furniture, porcelain, precious objects, and tapestries. Though she spent time in Paris in her youth, Post initiated her true appreciation of French fine and decorative arts in the early 1920s when designing her triplex apartment in New York City. Tutored by the legendary British art dealer Sir Joseph Duveen, Post developed a love for everything from 18th-century French furniture and Sèvres porcelain to the embellished architectural Louis XVI style, the neoclassical tradition characterized by harmony, balance, delicate decoration, and superb craftsmanship in design, which pervades the furniture in Hillwood's French collection.

When collecting, she valued items that were beautiful and finely crafted, with a focus on precious objects with historical associations. While she intended to display many of the items, Post also acquired pieces intended for use, particularly when entertaining. Today, this aspect of Hillwood's holdings features a wide variety of objects, nearly 60 of which will be on view in the exhibition.

Exhibition Organization and Highlights

Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris will present an array of fashion, accessories, jewelry, furniture, and more, focusing on the period from 1900 to 1969, from Post's first visit to Paris to her last. Organized into five areas, the exhibition will move through the 20th century as the viewer proceeds from section to section.

Opening with "Bon Voyage!," the exhibition will have the visitor board a ship as Marjorie Post did, surrounded by archival photos of travel with a Louis Vuitton trunk on view. Post remained a loyal Louis Vuitton client throughout her life, amassing a number of trunks for travel. A map of Paris will highlight Post's favorite places, transporting the visitor into Post's version of the city.

Next will be fashion-forward sections, displaying incredible pieces from Post's personal collection of apparel, some of which will be newly conserved. "A Modern Marie Antoinette" will highlight Post's admiration for the iconic historical figure, presenting multiple costumes and dresses with this influence. "A Shopping Guide to Paris" will move further into the 20th century, focusing on Post's stores of choice and welcoming visitors into an atelier of sorts. Post supported and patronized smaller couture houses, such as Callot Soeurs and Paquin.

The section focused on jewelry and little luxuries will include fans, hats, accessories, and more, speaking to Post's love for exquisite detail and craftsmanship. The exhibition will conclude with a look at the antiques and treasures Post collected, particularly those that initially led her to appreciate France.

Curator

Megan Martinelli is Hillwood's associate curator of apparel, jewelry, accessories, and textiles. Previously, Megan was a research assistant at The Metropolitan Museum of Art's Costume Institute, where she contributed to internal object assessment research and assisted with exhibitions including *China: Through the Looking Glass* (2015) and *Manus x Machina: Fashion in an Age of Technology* (2016). Before joining The Met, Megan curated an exhibition titled *The Other White Dress: Non-Wedding Dresses of the Twentieth Century* (2014) at the University of Rhode Island's Historic Textile Gallery and contributed to *Artist, Rebel, Dandy: Men of Fashion* (2013) at The RISD Museum of Art. At Hillwood, she was the curator of *Mid-Century Master: The Photography of Alfred Eisenstaedt* (2019), *Roaring Twenties: The Life and Style of Marjorie Merriweather Post* (2021), and *Grace of Monaco: Princess in Dior* (2022). Megan holds a MS in historic textiles and costumes from the University of Rhode Island and a BA in English literature from Providence College.

Events and Programs

Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris will inspire an array of programs and events throughout the presentation of the exhibition. A special event timed to Valentine's Day, on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, will celebrate the opening of the exhibition. A spring lecture series will feature a rich array of speakers exploring a variety of topics related to the exhibition.

Exhibition Sponsors

Marjorie Merriweather Post's Paris is supported by The Richard C. von Hess Foundation, The Marjorie Merriweather Post Foundation, Ellen MacNeille Charles, Janice and Ralph Shrader, Janice H. Brambilla, and Kyra Cheremeteff and Thomas W. Richardson. All exhibitions and programs are funded in part by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts through the National Capital Arts and Cultural Affairs Program. This project was supported by the DC Commission on the Arts and Humanities.

About Hillwood

When art collector, businesswoman, social figure, and philanthropist Marjorie Merriweather Post left to the public her northwest Washington, D.C. estate, she endowed the country with the most comprehensive collection of [Russian imperial art](#) outside of Russia, an [exquisite 18th-century French decorative art collection](#), and 25 acres of serene landscaped gardens and natural woodlands. Opened as a public institution in 1977, today Hillwood Estate, Museum & Gardens offers a gracious and immersive experience unlike any other. Highlights of the collection include Fabergé eggs, Russian porcelain, Russian orthodox icons, Beauvais tapestries, and Sèvres porcelain, and Post's personal collection of apparel, accessories, and jewelry. Thirteen acres of enchanting formal gardens include a [japanese-style garden](#), [rose garden](#), [French parterre](#), and an orchid-filled [greenhouse](#).

General Information

Location:	4155 Linnean Avenue, NW, Washington, DC Metro: Van Ness/UDC, Red Line (20-minute walk)
Information/Tickets:	202-686-5807 for information or www.HillwoodMuseum.org Facebook.com/HillwoodMuseum
Hours:	Tuesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Closed Mondays, most holidays, and for several weeks in January.
Café:	Merriweather Café is open Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Merriweather To Go, featuring a quick selection of sandwiches, salads, snacks, and beverages, is available Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Ticketing:	\$18, \$15 seniors, \$10 college students, \$5 for visitors age 6 to 18. No donation is suggested for children under 6. Adults and seniors receive \$3 off the suggested donation for weekday visits and \$1 off for weekend visits when reservations are made online. Members receive free admission to visit the estate during regular operating hours. To join visit http://www.hillwoodmuseum.org/membership For more information visit http://www.hillwoodmuseum.org/hours-and-tickets

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