

FINANCIAL TIMES

HTSI

7 OCTOBER
2023

MATE TO MEASURE

Autumn menswear sets sail

PLUS

AT HOME WITH FRANKEL (THE RACEHORSE TURNED SUPER-STUD) — HEMMERLE, A GERMAN GEM
THE GLORY OF GENOA — CHARLOTTE DELLAL'S RURAL REINVENTION — STUDIO NICHOLSON'S SHARP CHIC

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LIMAMU MBAYE wears GUCCI cotton slim T-shirt, £380, and denim trousers, £860. ONITSUKA TIGER canvas Mexico 66 sneakers, £80. SS DALEY silk/linen Sail hat, £230. DAVID YURMAN silver Maritime Compass amulet necklace, £435.

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Set sail with autumn's maritime menswear looks. Photography by Casper Kofi. Styling by James Valeri. Models Féranmi Ajetomobi and Limamu Mbaye

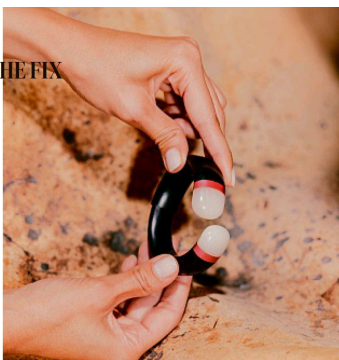
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Right: Yasmin Hemmerle with one of the house's master goldsmiths. Left: Yasmin Hemmerle holding Hemmerle's white-gold, copper, moonstone and wood Harmony bangle. Throughout: all jewellery, POA

JEWELLERY

A PEARL IN MUNICH

Felix Bischof meets the husband-and-wife duo at the heart of the Bavarian jewellery dynasty, Hemmerle

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JANEK STROISCH

A WHITE-GOLD, IRON AND OLD-MINE DIAMOND EARRING (ONE OF PAIR)

From the seat of their business, a townhouse in central Munich, Yasmin and Christian Hemmerle are extolling the importance of having the right materials to hand when making jewellery. An emerald recently made the cut, as did a pair of rare conch pearls that had previously been a Hemmerle possession. "My dad bought these and sold them maybe 25, 28 years ago," explains Christian, a fourth-generation jeweller, "but I was able to buy them back." They are now debating how to set the pearls. It's a creative process that they don't like to rush.

The husband-and-wife duo, who have helmed the family-owned business since 2021 (they joined in 2006), often use unusual materials in their collections. These might include a mammoth tusk, or faience glazed ceramics dating to ancient Egypt, or pebbles that had washed up on the nearby Isar river. Diamonds, too, in tones of grey, muddy brown and gasoline. Cuts of wood – among them olive, amaranth



and some fossilised varieties – have also been building blocks of the house's jewels. As have antique cameos: a set by the Roman carver Giuseppe Girometti, who completed portraits of Tsar Alexander I and King George IV, are the focal point of a new pair of Hemmerle earrings, which are matched with cream- and brown-coloured brilliant-cut diamonds.

The earrings have been made to mark the company's 130th anniversary, as have a minimalist bronze and white-gold ring topped with a rainbow moonstone, and a pair of deep-blue Ceylon sapphire earrings tied in parcel-like bands of white gold.

The last time Hemmerle reached a landmark birthday, in 2018, the family commemorated it with a collection of 11 pieces that nodded to its archives. But looking back at past achievements does not come easy to the couple, who grapple with notions of legacy and retrospection. "We always try to live in the moment while looking forward," says Christian, a trained diamond cutter and alumnus of the Gemological Institute of America. "I think an anniversary is always a moment to celebrate, to look back, but not to *auf den Lorbeer zu sitzen* [rest on one's laurels]."

At Hemmerle, jewellery is not released to seasonal schedules; rather, new creations

are grouped together when they are deemed ready and presented at exhibitions, including TEFAF (The European Fine Art Fair) in Maastricht and Manhattan or, next week, PAD London. "The accents we have throughout our history are not based on

MATERIALS MIGHT INCLUDE A MAMMOTH TUSK, OR PEBBLES FROM THE RIVER

anniversaries, they are based on the moments that we are living in," says Yasmin.

Still, the history of Hemmerle makes for an inspirational narrative. Brothers Anton and Joseph Hemmerle established the company in 1893, after purchasing an existing goldsmiths that completed orders for the Bavarian royal court. Two years after the takeover, Hemmerle was awarded a Bavarian royal warrant, appointed the official "Purveyor to the Court" by Luitpold, Prince Regent of Bavaria, in 1895. The company produced bejewelled objects, military ornaments and medals, and since 1905 it has made the Bavarian Maximilian Order, an award for outstanding achievements in science or the arts.

Since 1904, the only Hemmerle boutique in the world has been located on Munich's Maximilianstrasse, one of the city's four royal avenues, named after King Maximilian II of Bavaria.



Christian's father Stefan Hemmerle came into the family fold in 1970. A trained goldsmith with work experience gathered in French, Italian and Danish workshops, he ushered in a new era, setting the ground for a new stylistic vocabulary.

THE HEMMERLE HOUSE HAS ALWAYS experimented with materials. Stefan worked with iron, inspired by antique jewellery cast in 19th-century Berlin, when citizens were encouraged to donate their gold to aid the war effort during the War of Liberation (1813-15). He also authored the open-ended Harmony bangle, a design that has become emblematic for Hemmerle and has inspired myriad variations, carved from ebony or cast from copper. Elsewhere, the company has rediscovered traditional ways of making, such as the Austrian technique of knitting hand-carved and hand-drilled gem beads on silk.

"You learn through the past," says Yasmin. "We would not be here if we did not have all that behind us. It's going through those steps that [Christian's] great-grandparents and grandparents went through that gave us the platform to further experiment." Christian continues: "A lot of things were not really planned. A lot just happened – that's the secret of Hemmerle."

Today, Hemmerle employs about 50 members of staff. Each Hemmerle jewel (prices are never disclosed) is finished at

the townhouse, where a workshop is staffed by roughly 20 goldsmiths, gemsetters and apprentices. The team, many of whom have worked with the family for years and even decades, finishes roughly 200 pieces per year; each is unique and can take up to 600 hours to complete. "We don't give deadlines," says Christian, "because it's prototype building. How can you judge a prototype?"

It's a way of working that has endeared itself to collectors. "The rarity of their pieces creates an elevated and sustained demand," says Sotheby's London jewellery specialist Jemima Chamberlain-Adams. "But this excitement around Hemmerle

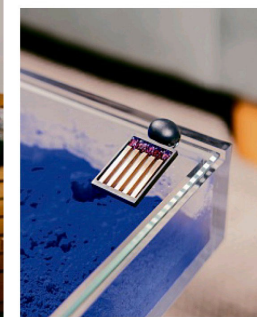
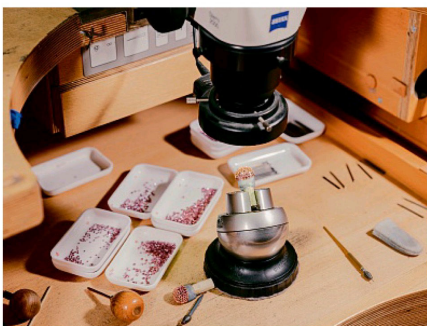
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jewels exists due to their high standard of unhurried craftsmanship and artisanal excellence."

To Patrick Perrin, the CEO and founder of PAD, the secret to Hemmerle's success lies in an intertwining of past and present. "Their bold forms, use of unconventional materials and instantly recognisable creations are steeped in a long jewellery tradition, but are also unparalleled in technique and storytelling," he says.

Among the other pieces they finished in time to present this year is a striking bangle crafted in bands of black-finished iron, worked to mimic the surface of pieces of simple string, pooling around a large white diamond of 39.29 carats. "I always say our jewellery is supposed to be worn and enjoyed," says Yasmin. "It's supposed to be part of our collector's everyday, to accompany them through their odyssey of life." ■ [Hemmerle.com](https://hemmerle.com)

Below: Yasmin and Christian Hemmerle in their Munich atelier. Above right: the couple handling earrings being made with tanzanites, aluminium and white gold. Bottom far left: stone-setting with red sapphires and bronze in the atelier. Bottom right: Hemmerle white-gold, rubellite, iron and bronze Earring (one of a pair) resting on a limited-edition Yves Klein Blue "IKB" Glass Table





Right: Yasmin Hemmerle with one of the house's master goldsmiths. Left: Yasmin holding Hemmerle's white-gold, copper, moonstone and wood Hammy bangle. Throughout: all jewellery, PGA

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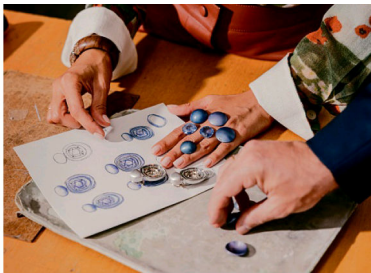
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