



MIGNON FAGET

A Life in Art and Design

[AN EXHIBITION]



September 22, 2010 – January 2, 2011

[THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION]

THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION

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“MIGNONESQUE”: *The Art of Mignon Faget*

Unless otherwise noted, all illustrated items are courtesy of Mignon Faget.

INSIDE FRONT COVER:

Inside Mignon Faget's studio
2010; photo by
Keely Merritt
The Historic New Orleans Collection

TITLE PAGE:

Mignon Faget
1992; photoprint by
Joséphine Sacabo

Fibula Belt Buckle
from *Dynamics*
1979; sterling silver

OPPOSITE:

Five-Knot Cuff
from *Knots*
1976; sterling silver

Aegean Reef Necklace
from *Corall*
2004; white branch coral
and sterling silver

*WYES-TV Donor
Recognition PylonScape Box*
from *Pylon*
1997; fiddleback maple and
brushed stainless steel

*Six-Bar Cuff and Pylon
Row Mesh Bracelet*
from *Pylon*
1997; sterling silver

Marquis Cuff
from *Opus*
2003; smokey quartz
and platinum-clad
sterling silver

I am honored indeed for the opportunity to introduce this exhibition of the work and achievements of Mignon Faget, a unique artist and designer in our midst. Over the course of four decades, through continually evolving creativity and her sensitivity to the innate qualities of a diverse array of media, she has established herself as a New Orleans institution. The fruits of this ongoing process of creative evolution have delighted and enriched us all.

Faget graduated from Newcomb College of Tulane University in 1955 and her art is emblematic of the distinctive aesthetic of that institution and the Newcomb Art Department. Whether working in fabric, metal, leather, stone, bone, or glass, Faget's *oeuvre* is firmly rooted in the tradition of the artisan. This dedication to hand-crafted quality wedded with an abiding love for nature and the distinctive culture of her native city has made Mignon Faget a true icon.

In addition to the jewelry, clothing, and furnishings she has developed for her galleries, Faget has executed many dozens of commissioned pieces for institutions ranging from carnival krewes to the Congressional Coalition on Adoption Institute. Although commissioned work always requires immediacy, through her creativity and impressive skill Faget's art transcends time and the vagaries of fashion. A Mignon Faget creation of the 1970s remains as perfectly stylish and elegant today as when it first appeared in her original Dublin Street showroom. This timelessness extends from the essential qualities that inform all of Faget's work: simplicity, intelligence, a deep understanding of and reverence for nature. The progression from idea to finished product might begin with a seashell collected on a beach somewhere along the Gulf Coast or a memory from past travels or childhood. Echoes of past cultures—Etruscan, Minoan, Egyptian, pre-Columbian—resound in her work. The idea is transformed in the artist's mind and studio to a talismanic object that embodies these qualities and enriches our lives.

Faget's aesthetic expresses the special qualities of our environment, our uniquely multicultural city, our flora and fauna. These elements are a continuing inspiration to Faget as well as fellow artists, architects, writers, poets, musicians, and residents of and visitors to our community. And all the while, she has continued to draw, paint, and sculpt—integral components of the design process.

Of equal significance to all of the distinguishing characteristics enumerated above: Mignon Faget has been here through it all—the tragedies and the triumphs alike—and her designs reflect her constant presence. Her work establishes unequivocally that beauty and functionality need not be exclusive of, nor diminished by, topical content. Her creativity, her sense of design, her unerring judgment of both the potential and limitation of her chosen medium have come to embody a style I would suggest is “Mignonesque.” On behalf of The Historic New Orleans Collection, I welcome you to explore *Mignon Faget: A Life in Art and Design*, an exhibition documenting the creative impulses, successes, and contributions of one of our region's most celebrated artists.

John Clemmer, *Emeritus Professor of Art*
NEWCOMB COLLEGE, TULANE UNIVERSITY





MIGNON FAGET: *A Life in Art and Design*

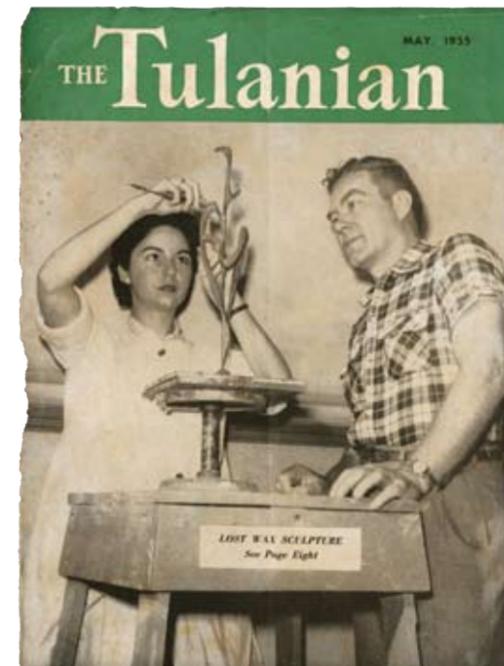
[M]ignon Faget is a nationally known jewelry designer from New Orleans. Throughout her more than four-decade-long career, her work has reflected a deeply rooted dedication to her native city. The seeds of her interest in fashion were planted during childhood when she began making suggestions for dresses that her mother, Mignon Josephine Cressy Faget (1896–2000), sewed for her. Together they chose dress patterns, combining features from two or more to produce their own design. Her mother’s encouragement led Faget to continue designing clothing through high school and college, including the dresses worn by her entire graduating class at the Academy of the Sacred Heart and the gown she wore in 1953 as Tulane University’s homecoming queen.

In 1955 Faget earned her bachelor’s degree in fine arts with a major in metalwork from Newcomb College of Tulane University. She studied sculpture under Jules Struppeck (1915–1993), drawing under Pat Trivigno (b. 1922), and pottery under Sarah “Sadie” Irvine (1887–1970). Struppeck’s book on the casting process, *The Creation of Sculpture*, was published in 1952 while Faget was a student. Many of her design philosophies parallel Struppeck’s instruction on the transformations of nature into sculpture. Faget cites a “design in nature” course taught by Robert Durant “Robin” Feild (1893–1979) as being particularly influential throughout her adult life. In Feild’s course Faget and her classmates went on outdoor sketching expeditions to examine simple elements of nature as though seeing them for the first time. Feild emphasized the necessity of reducing these

OPPOSITE:
Portrait of Academy of the Sacred Heart graduation class wearing Faget-designed dresses. Faget is pictured second from the left, top row. 1951; photoprint by Leon Trice

BELOW:
Mignon Faget and Jules Struppeck May 1955; relief half-tone from a photo by Armand E. Bertin from the Tulanian (New Orleans: Tulane University)

Mignon being crowned Tulane University homecoming queen by Dr. Arthur F. Hoge 1953; photoprint by Armand E. Bertin



components to abstracted forms. More than fifty years later, these exercises continue to inspire Faget's creative process.

Following her graduation from Newcomb, Faget studied for a year at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière in Paris. She would be diverted by marriage and familial duties before she resumed further studies in art. Her first experience designing jewelry came about 1963, when she re-designed a gold ring that she owned. After a long search for a stone to match a pair of earrings with bezel-set, faceted topazes, she had the deep brownish-red stones from the earrings and a newly found topaz set into the ring. In this first encounter with jewelry making, Faget merged her undergraduate training in metalwork with practical experience. Several years later she embarked upon a full-fledged endeavor in jewelry design.

Returning to her studies in 1967, Faget enrolled in Sue Ferguson Gussow's (b. 1935) printmaking course at St. Mary's Dominican College in New Orleans, a decision that propelled her into a challenging new *métier*. Upon seeing a block print that Faget made in class, Gussow suggested that she become a designer. Faget followed Gussow's advice. She designed a simple frock of white sailcloth, sewn by New Orleans seamstress Nancy Weller, to which Faget applied a wide border of yellow hand-printed nautilus shells. In 1968 Faget, who had modeled women's apparel with the D. H. Holmes College Board while she was at Newcomb, took the newly completed dress to the department store's Canal Street location, where she received an enthusiastic reception for her design and an order for eight dresses. With the Holmes order Faget launched her fashion enterprise. One year later she enrolled in a seven-week patternmaking course at the Parsons School of Design in New York. On her return to New Orleans, her creations were brought to life first by seamstresses working from their homes and later in a studio Faget set up in 1971 at 714 Dublin Street.

BELOW:

Sailcloth dress that launched Mignon Faget's career in textile design, modeled by the designer, 1968; photoprint by Jean Seidenberg

Model with members of the Galloping Goose Motorcycle Club April 1969; color halftone from a photo by Jean Seidenberg that appeared in *New Orleans Magazine*



A DEDICATION TO NATURE

From her earliest years as a designer, nature and natural materials have been constant sources of inspiration for Faget. In the late sixties, Faget experimented with contrasting textures in her clothing line. Her boldly innovative clothing style, which she later called her "affluent hippy" look, included fabrics with hand-printed designs and suede leather clothing with patterns made of silvery nail heads. Faget preferred textiles produced from plants and animals: cotton, denim, linen, and canvas; suede leather, silk, and wool. She delighted in combining delicate textiles with hard metal nail heads. Faget garnered much attention when *New Orleans Magazine* featured models wearing her studded designs, posed in Audubon Park with leather-clad members of the Galloping Goose Motorcycle Club, an outlaw motorcycle club founded in Los Angeles in 1942.

Working with metal accents eventually led Faget to experiment with silver. In 1970 she created a belt buckle by melting down silver bon-bon dishes she had received as wedding gifts. The buckle, a gift to artist-friend Jean Seidenberg (b. 1930), was inspired by a sand dollar Faget had collected during a family trip to the beach. Just as she favored natural textiles, Faget preferred elements of nature as motifs for her jewelry designs. Faget's first jewelry collection, *Sea* (1970), featured sand dollars and a variety of shells meticulously hand-crafted in silver, including olive, cockle, and scallop shells; sundial, tulip, and moon snails; as well as sea urchins and Venus clams. Finding that there was, as Faget described, "a dearth of handcrafted accessories available" in local stores, she introduced the *Cockle Shell* belt buckle, arranging the silver shells in mirror-like symmetry. Her

BELOW:

Mignon Faget and her staff: Harriet Hazlit, Vivian Bart Kabn, Dawn Brown, Ruth Yates, Marie Christina Benitez ca. 1972; photoprint by an unknown photographer

Catalog for *Gems of the Sea*, which featured Mignon Faget's first jewelry collection 1970; photos by Chris Harris





extraordinarily creative 1972 *Female Crab Belly* and *Male Crab Belly* buckles are early expressions of her interest in Louisiana's cuisine, culture, and environment.

Faget wished to make finely crafted jewelry available to women at affordable prices. She immediately found a receptive audience for *Sea*. Consciously scaling her jewelry toward a "bold but wearable size," Faget sought to create pieces to enhance clothing rather than dominate the wearer. Her works generated a sense of excitement locally, as well as in national markets like New York, Chicago, Atlanta, Dallas, and San Francisco. Within six years of establishing herself as a jewelry designer, Faget was described by *Times-Picayune* fashion editor Diane Sustendal as "our best-known nationally recognized artist in the field of jewelry design." Through the years this appellation has been assigned consistently to Faget.

After achieving success with *Sea*, Faget expanded the business to a larger building next door to her first studio. In 1973 she established an atelier-style venture at 710 Dublin Street. Faget divided the rooms according to her production needs and created an attractive showroom for her collections. It was from this 19th-century bargeboard building that her cottage industry flourished. Faget continued to focus on elements of the sea and earth, increasing her repertoire of shell designs to include cowrie, bonnet, spiral, and oyster shells; turban, garden, baby ear, and sea snails; and augers, ceriths, sea biscuits, disc clams, and flower coral. Throughout her life Faget collected shells during visits to beaches along the Gulf Coast and the eastern seaboard, and she dissected and translated many of these specimens into metal jewelry designs, developing these pieces not only into pendants, necklaces, earrings, pins, and bracelets for women, but also into cuff links, tux studs, money clips, and key rings for men.

Possessed of a curious mind, Faget explored the possibility of carving some of these shells from semi-precious stones. She produced carved, quartz moonsnails with frosted and polished finishes. Always concerned with the public's understanding of her creative process, Faget includes an explanation of the design process behind each new collection. With the 1976 release of *Sea and Earth*—an outgrowth of *Sea*—Faget mused, "I like to play with the dynamics of a form out of context. The shell that is no longer a shell but a form in sterling or gold, juxtaposed with rich silks." This latter reference to the colored silk cords on which her pendants are suspended underscores her interest in natural textiles.

As Faget continued to explore elements of nature, she sought new ways to interpret her subjects. In 1974 she introduced *Engraved Patterns*. This decidedly imaginative collection, which focuses on the rhythmic movements of water, was another natural extension of *Sea*. Sturdy sheets of sterling silver were fashioned into wide, highly polished cuff bracelets with perforated, undulating wave patterns. Faget also explored denizens of the region's murkier waters in wide cuffs, some of which feature the engraved patterns of garfish scales or alligator hides. Another series executed in 1974, *Earth*, incorporates sterling silver and landscape jasper into decorative boxes or containers and sculptural bracelets set with petrified palm wood cabochons, a choice Faget felt referenced the region's ancient flood plain, thereby highlighting her ecological concerns. Petrified palm wood, the Louisiana state fossil, comes from the era when the Gulf of Mexico reached the present-day Louisiana-Arkansas border.

Faget produced her whimsical *Animal Crackers* in 1975. This collection, inspired by the boxes of popular animal cracker cookies, initially featured a camel, lion, hippo, rhino, rabbit, giraffe, donkey, bear, and elephant. The capricious creatures were available as sterling silver pendants and pins and in semi-precious stones, which expanded their popularity across age and gender lines. The *Running Rabbit* bracelet, with its simplified shape and rhythmic repetitious forms, is both whimsical

OPPOSITE:

Engraved Cuff with Louisiana Petrified Palm Wood

from *Engraved Patterns* 1974; sterling silver and petrified palm wood

Engraved Wave Box from *Engraved Patterns* 1974; sterling silver

BELOW:

Tall Landscape Jasper Box from *Earth* 1974; sterling silver and landscape jasper





ABOVE:
Running Rabbit Bracelet
from *Animal Crackers*
1975; sterling silver

OPPOSITE:
Holoch Wrist Wrap
with *Garnet Tear Drop*
from *Zea*
1988; vermeil and garnet

Zea Maize Collar
from *Zea*
1988; vermeil and
freshwater pearl

The *Holoch Wrist Wrap* was designed to fit smoothly and snugly around the wrist bone, unlike the earlier *Five-Knot Cuff* [page 3] with its boldly sculptural interpretation of repetitiously knotted fabric.

and elegant. A tongue-in-cheek black sheep, executed in oxidized silver, hints at Faget's sense of humor. Later additions to this playful collection included an alligator, stegosaurus, brontosaurus, fox, monkey, and pelican.

The manner in which Faget approaches her subject differs from that of other designers. Her appreciation for the richness of nature is intense. Her philosophy recalls that of Swiss-German artist Paul Klee (1879–1940) who believed that an artist must see as a child. Like Klee's paintings, some of Faget's jewelry reflects a childlike viewpoint; others reveal a dry sense of humor. Klee believed that "art does not reproduce what we see, rather it makes us see." Faget's experience in her close study of organic forms parallels Klee's beliefs. In her *Sea and Earth* catalogue Faget explains:

As children, we all saw wonderful shapes and patterns in nature. But once we learned the names of things, the shapes became obscured. In that sense, the process of unlearning is as important to me as learning. When I reduce nature's forms to the least common denominator, I discover endless design possibilities. A garden snail reveals itself as the way a domed ring might look. A spiny crab claw suggests a pendant, intriguing to the eye and to the touch.

Unrelenting in her exploration of design as applied to jewelry, Faget delights in the potential for variation in the interpretation of a given subject. Her approach to design is comparable to that of brothers Ellsworth and William Woodward (1861–1939 and 1859–1939), who established the Newcomb Pottery enterprise in 1895 as an industrial arts venture for young women enrolled in the Newcomb College School of Art. Newcomb pottery motifs were drawn from Louisiana's indigenous flora, fauna, and related subjects. While the formal structure of the Newcomb Pottery enterprise was dismantled in 1940, over a decade before Faget enrolled at the school, there remains a subtle sense of thematic continuity between Faget's work and that of earlier generations. Through the years Faget has drawn inspiration from flowers, fruits, vegetables, seeds, nuts, sea life, animals, birds, and insects—including the mosquito.

Many of Faget's designs relate to Louisiana's food and culture: red beans, okra, red peppers, fish, shrimp, crawfish, crabs, alligators, streetcars, king cake dolls, banana leaves, and flowers, including the Louisiana iris. Faget's 2003 *Corall* collection, with its bits and fragments of branched sea coral, calls attention to this disappearing resource. *Corall* is a natural progression from the *Flower Coral* motifs seen in *Sea and Earth*.

Her sculptural jewelry is reminiscent of the work of Danish silversmith Georg Jensen (1866–1935) in its clean lines, minimalist form, sense of grace, and connotation of strength. This suggestion of strength and weightlessness is particularly true of her 1979 *Dynamics* collection, which was inspired by the bones of small animals, birds, and sea creatures. Some of the anatomical elements in this collection are not immediately perceivable, especially the *Fibula* belt buckle with its simple, abstracted form of an armadillo calf bone. The elegant, fluid, curved lines of the sterling silver *Helix* hair pin, also from *Dynamics*, would be echoed the following year in the carved moss agate *Lotus Pad* hair ornament from *Exotica*, which featured delicately carved stone flowers.





Faget's interest in flowers and plants is evident in her earliest prints, including a 1967 etching of a *Dracaena* corn stalk simply titled *Plant Form*. A Tulane botany course sparked her interest in the concept of passive armament, by which plants defend themselves. In *Armament* (1985) Faget translated this botanical theme in a series of striking pieces, including the *Thorn* bracelet, which was constructed on a grid held together with six pins. Faget considers this complex arrangement a breakthrough in engineering for its modular linking that creates a flexible base for the individual, interlocking points. Her *Crown of Thorns*, the most remarkable piece of jewelry in her *oeuvre*, mixes the sacred and profane, recalling imagery associated with both Christ's passion and the monarchs of Mardi Gras. Faget found further inspiration for *Armament* in the spiked leaves of plants in the *Cycadaceae* family. Her elegant *Cycas* pin is rendered minimally as a strong, lightweight spear. The designs have bold interpretations. Their unembellished linearity recalls earlier pieces from *Dynamics* and *Exotica*.

Faget revisited her interest in the corn plant after attending a colloquium that included a trip to Yucatán offered through Tulane's biology department in the mid 1980s. In *Zea* (1988) Faget celebrates the physical characteristics of corn, focusing on the plant's individual kernel and its textural husk, or "holoch" in the Mayan language.

ARCHITECTURAL INSPIRATIONS

[F]irmly entrenched in the culture of her native city, Faget has a deep appreciation for New Orleans's distinctive architectural structures. Faget's response to the city's architecture manifests itself in several of her major collections: *Colonnade* (1983), *Reeded Banding* (1983), *Romanesque Return* (1990), *Schema* (1992), *Cruxx* (1993), and *Ironworks* (2006–2007). *Colonnade* features monolithic elements of classical architecture, specifically the capitals of Ionic and Corinthian columns. Faget's recurring interest in the spiral design characteristic of Ionic capitals first appeared in her spiral shell in *Sea*. In *Reeded Banding* Faget extended the focus seen in *Colonnade* to include the vertical elements of fluted columns. Both *Colonnade* and *Reeded Banding* recall the simplified architectural style of Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959).

Romanesque Return, a large collection first designed in 1990 for philanthropists Phyllis and Patrick Taylor, draws heavily on the massive Richardsonian Romanesque style of the former Howard Memorial Library at Lee Circle, which was then undergoing restoration by the Taylors and is now part of the Ogden Museum of Southern Art. This structure, based upon a design by internationally renowned Louisiana-born architect Henry Hobson Richardson (1838–1886) but built in 1889 after his death, is one of the city's most architecturally significant 19th-century buildings.

Faget based *Romanesque Return* on the library's architectural elements, particularly the *voussoirs* (wedge-shaped stones forming the arches), medallions and engaged columns from the fireplace, and carved stone figures of the beast of ignorance located at the base of the main entrance's archway and the beast of knowledge carved on the wooden beams supporting the dome. Faget's *Beast of Ignorance Chained* forms an eloquent commentary on the library's purpose: to educate the public through reading.

From her earliest *Sand Dollar* belt buckle, Faget paid close attention to the closure, or fastener, of her jewelry. This concentration on detail is evident in the 1974 *Engraved Wave* collar, the 1976 *Symmetry* collection, and again in the 1990 *Beast of Ignorance Chained* bracelet, where the image of

OPPOSITE:
Crown of Thorns
from *Armament*
1985; sterling silver

BELOW:
Lotus Pad Hair Ornament
from *Exotica*
1980; sterling silver
and moss agate





the beast forms the closure. The engaged columns on Howard Memorial Library’s fireplace provided Faget with the opportunity to revisit elements developed in *Colonnade* and *Reeded Banding*.

Cruxx, which features the ever-present crosses visible throughout New Orleans on church steeples and in cemeteries, acknowledges the city’s religious character. In *Cruxx Transversa*, a piece influenced by ironwork in the St. Louis cemeteries, Faget pays tribute to the New Orleans blacksmiths who used strap iron to make crosses. Her Catholic education emerges in this collection, particularly in the *Mater Admirabilis Cruxx* necklace, which is based on the cross once atop the roof of the old Sacred Heart convent in the French Quarter, razed in the late 1940s.

Ironworks and *Ironworks II* celebrate the ironwork of the Cabildo and Le Petit Théâtre du Vieux Carré. Faget’s *Marcellino* collar and cuff bracelet were inspired by the balconies of the Cabildo. These pieces were named after Marcellino Hernandez, a Canary Islands native credited with forging the Cabildo railings and other Vieux Carré ironwork, including that of Le Petit Théâtre, in the 1790s. Ironwork on the Arsenal in the 600 block of St. Peter Street served as the source for Faget’s *Interlacement* bracelets with their crisscross pattern.

Faget is ever-alert to inspirations—animate or inanimate—wherever they present themselves. Two more collections take their cues from the built environment: *Fences* (1996) and *Pylon* (1997). *Fences* grew from Faget’s fascination with split-rail fences and her belief that individuals create their own dominions. Similarly, Faget was inspired by the ubiquitous pylon markers with their pointed peaks in Washington DC. Pylons, like fences, demarcate areas not to be trespassed by the general public. She translated the quadripartite peaks into sterling silver and gold in *Pylon* and then revisited this subject in 2008 to produce the larger, more emphatic *Pylon Tile* necklaces with semi-precious stones set in silver. These collections also reflect her wider awareness of how symbols of demarcation have been employed beyond the visual arts, especially in American literary culture in, for example, Robert Frost’s “Mending Wall” (1914) or William Faulkner’s *Pylon* (1935).

SERVICE

[F]aget’s commitment to service—both to her fellow citizens and her country—continues in a tradition long adhered to by members of the Faget family. Faget stands in admiration of the five generations of physicians in her family who, through their work, made incalculable contributions to their community. Her role models include her great-grandfather Jean-Charles Faget (1818–1884), who isolated the symptoms of yellow fever, and her uncle Guy Faget (1891–1947), a tropical-disease specialist who worked with Hansen’s disease patients in Carville, Louisiana. Faget, aware that service often goes beyond the direct impact of medical procedures, values her great-grandfather’s role as physician and confidant for his patients, one of whom was 19th-century novelist Kate Chopin. Faget recalls riding in the car as a child with her father, Edouard Beeg François Faget (1893–1979), on house calls to his New Orleans patients. Prior to Mignon’s birth, her father served in the United States Army during World War I, on Ellis Island in the 1920s, and later at the Quarantine Station in Mobile, Alabama.

In college, Mignon was a sponsor to Tulane University’s Army and Air Force ROTC units. This commitment underscores Faget’s early support of the United States military, and portends her philanthropic work in her community.



OPPOSITE:
Voussoir Collar
from *Romanesque Return*
1990; vermeil, red tiger
eye, garnet, and braided
cord

*Beast of Ignorance
Chained Necklace*
from *Romanesque Return*
1990; sterling silver and
blue-glass seed beads

*Catalogue for
Romanesque Return*
collection
1990; photos by
Glade Bilby II

ABOVE:
*Mater Admirabilis
Cruxx Necklace*
from *Cruxx*
2003; vermeil and
green garnet

BELOW:
Oyster Pendant
 from *Gulf Coast*
 2010; sterling silver,
 silk, and cotton

As early as 1976 Faget, in her role as artist, began to support philanthropic causes. She executed commissions for museums and schools, as well as civic, social, and charitable organizations. Long active in architectural preservation and conservation, Faget began her *AdornAments* series in 1993. These “wearable ornaments” depict local landmarks, including one of the famous steamboat houses of New Orleans’s Holy Cross neighborhood, the Uptown bargeboard cottage once home to Faget’s atelier, and the Rosa Keller Library in the Broadmoor neighborhood. Proceeds from this series benefit historic preservation projects sponsored by the Preservation Resource Center (PRC). Faget, who relocated her headquarters to 4300 Magazine Street in 1998, donated her historic Dublin Street cottage to the PRC in 2005.

Today Faget is calling attention to the long-term effects of the Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In May 2010, she introduced *Gulf Coast*, which features marine-inspired pieces from *Sea*, *Animal Crackers*, and *Gulf Stream* (1990) set against black ribbons in the tradition of mourning jewelry. A percentage of the proceeds from *Gulf Coast* benefits the Coalition to Restore Coastal Louisiana.

[S]ince 1970 Mignon Faget has introduced over thirty major jewelry collections. Each has been marked by a consistent intellectual component. A sense of immediacy, vibrancy, and coherence is integral to her art. As a result, her work has received wide appreciation for its characteristic freshness. Over 200,000 men and women collect Faget’s jewelry designs; consequently, her designs are now copied by others, evidence that Faget has earned the highest regard of artists, artisans, and the general public. Throughout her career, she has been a trendsetter, initially in designing conspicuously original clothing and later distinctly innovative jewelry. Faget, who draws inspiration and sustenance from the cultural heritage of her native land, has in turn contributed to the richness of her own city and the cultures beyond its boundaries.

Judith H. Bonner, *Senior Curator*
 THE HISTORIC NEW ORLEANS COLLECTION



The Historic New Orleans Collection

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ABOVE:
King Cake Doll Bracelet
 from *Louisiana*
 1989; sterling silver

FRONT COVER:
Cockle Shell Belt Buckle
 from *Sea*
 1970; sterling silver

BACK COVER:
Shell and bone specimen cabinet
 in *Mignon Faget's studio*
 2010; photo by Keely Merritt
The Historic New Orleans Collection

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