

Zeitschrift: Swiss textiles [English edition]
Herausgeber: Swiss office for the development of trade
Band: - (1951)
Heft: 4

Artikel: Boutiques...
Autor: Gaumont-Lanvin, J.
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-798811>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 11.01.2026

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

BOUTIQUES...

by J. Gaumont-Lanvin





It is not the fact that couturiers have boutiques that surprises us, but that for the most part they have waited so long. Indeed, to anyone who knows them, to anyone who knows to what extent their spirit likes to go off in search of detail, the atmosphere they need, the delight they take in having a hand in all that is either closely or remotely connected with their art, to anyone who understands all this, it is obvious that the boutique is the natural means of expression of Haute Couture.

A couturier cannot live for his dresses alone. He must go out and observe, visit the theatre, the cinema, the Ballet, go to concerts, see exhibitions of paintings or objects of art, take part in the life of Paris in all its forms, keep in touch with interior decorators, antique dealers and lapidaries, and pay frequent visits to the Flea Market — he must seize, as it passes by, the idea which he will turn into the new Fashion, to an accompaniment of brilliant images and a riot of accessories. From then on, the inventors of novelties besiege his door; he is offered the strangest objects. Of all this jumble, the couturier makes his choice. There is nothing more logical than that he should be led to create the setting in which his choice will be expressed, where the hundred and one odds and ends that he loves will be displayed. And this is the boutique.

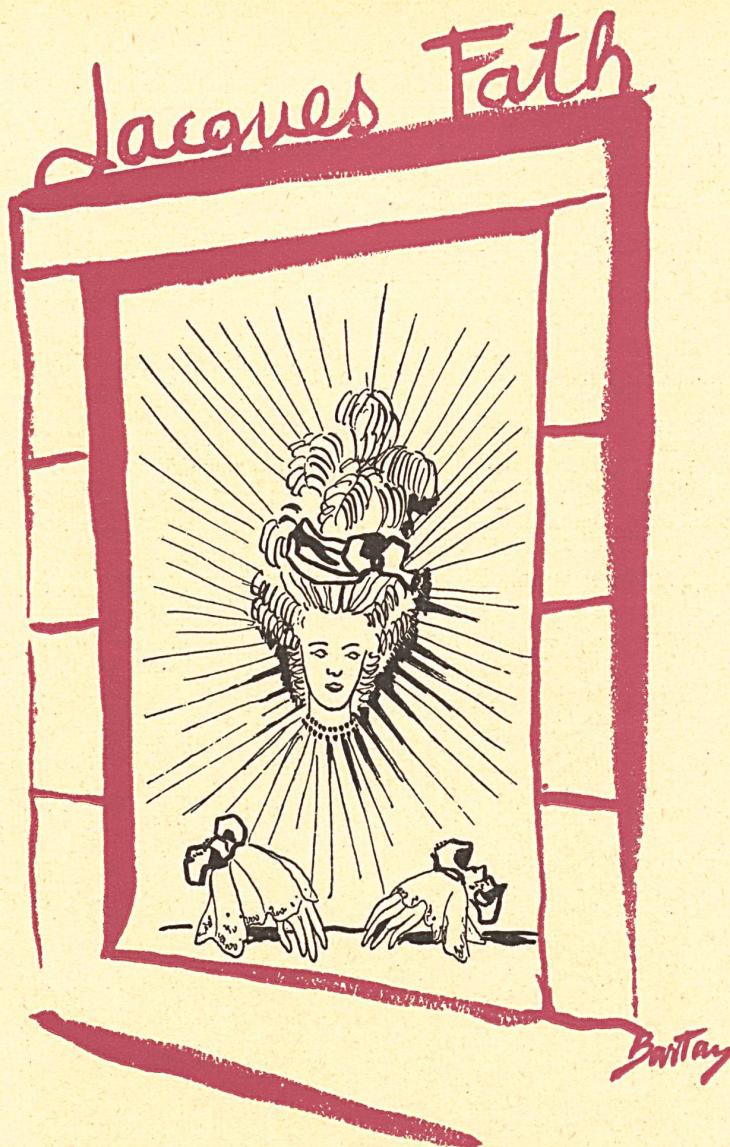
The boutique is, moreover, the pleasant, elegant and overheated place where he tries to sell more, for

the work of creation is ruinous. These dresses that are sold for four hundred thousand French francs, and which (when they are sold) give only a trifling profit, these dresses which have been worked on for days on end — to put right a fold, to change a skirt, to renew the embroidery — these dresses heavily decorated with gold which will tarnish to-morrow and be destroyed by dust, these dresses which no longer bring wealth but reasons for care, these dresses that are henceforth as exacting, as voracious as private mansions, these dresses that demand servants — these dresses are the ultimate expression of international luxury. They are an anachronism and yet they must remain as one of the links in the chain joining us to past epochs, like a symbol of eternal creation.

But to be able to go in for the ruinous sport of dress designing, couturiers must have other strings to their bow. The boutique is one of them.

A great spendthrift, a «playboy» of the beginning of the century, understood the tragic dilemma of the dressmaking situation. *Paul Poiret* was the first to create the perfume of couture and its setting, as did *Jeanne Lanvin* shortly after him. Both, although very different in character and background, understood that the couturier had to extend his activity.





Since the end of the last war, events have compelled couturiers to reflect, and to protect themselves. And after the perfumes, the lingerie, the handbags, scarves and accessories, we saw the appearance of the little ready-made dresses which are sold in the boutique but which nevertheless keep the reflected glamour and the predominant lines of the great collection.

However as soon as a boutique was opened, the desire was felt to make it original. The decorators were called in, an attempt was made to overcome this antithesis of the « boutique d'art » coupled with a shop where things are sold. And very often it was a success, so subtle is the taste of couturiers. And each boutique reflected, like a dress, the personality of the head of the House. In the five sketches accompanying these notes, it is easy to recognise the proud and luxurious simplicity of *Balenciaga*, the drapes, the friezes and preciousity of Napoleon III in the abode of *Jean Dessès*, the eager concern for quiet decoration and line, so dear to *Christian Dior*, the charming fantasy of *Jacques Fath* and finally the lovable tradition of *Maggy Rouff*.

Are boutiques merely a passing phase? Shall we see them fade away as soon as they are born? We do not think so. On the contrary, we believe that they are only in the first trial stage that hardly gives us a glimpse of what they will be like in the future.

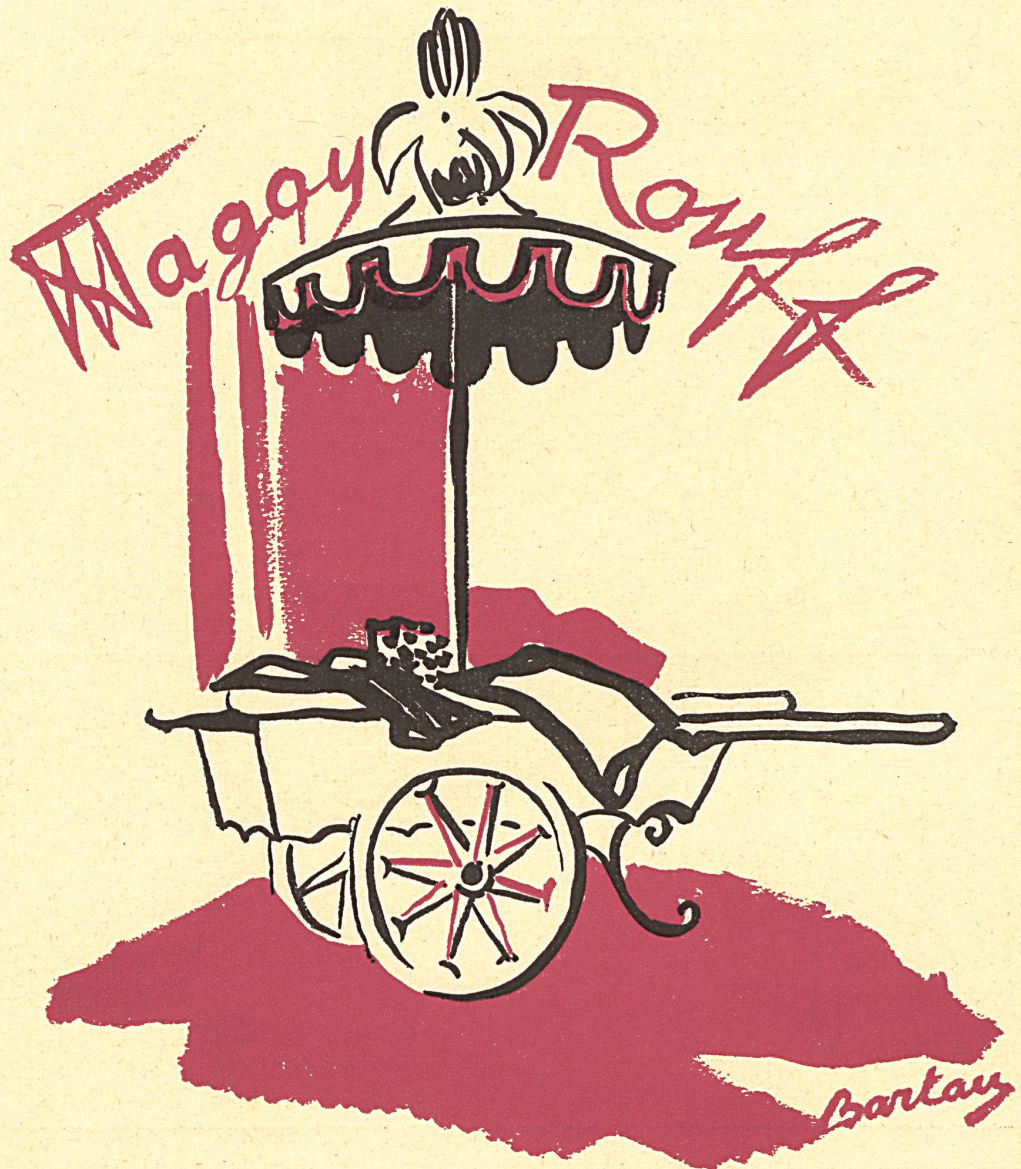
If couture is to survive it must, instead of awaiting events, launch out, copy itself, develop its points of contact with a wider clientele. And the boutique is one of the easiest means for it to use. Because the couturier knows that his boutique will always keep its elegance.

Up there, in the studio, he will continue to create the loveliest dresses in the world, but also those that he will sell by the thousand, everywhere, but which will be launched by his boutique.

These are not just empty, gratuitous assertions, but an argument that is logical and that the future will confirm...

But must we weigh down these light and iridescent bubbles — the couturiers' boutiques — with these weighty considerations? Is it not better to let oneself be led away by the charm of a visit to them and the intoxication of the perfume of Paris with which they are saturated?

Charming reader, let yourself be tempted. Go off for a visit round the boutiques, and even if you make no purchases, you will carry away with you the memory of these delightful luxurious surroundings : that alone will make your journey well worth while.



Swiss Office for the Development of Trade

Zurich and Lausanne

Publications

«SWISS INDUSTRY AND TRADE» :

Surveys Switzerland's economic situation and development ; gives general information concerning her industry, trade and national life. Issued three times yearly in English, French, German, Italian and Spanish.

Abroad : Address registration fee covering a two-year period : S. frs. 10.—.

«SWISS TECHNICS» :

A journal edited in collaboration with the Swiss Association of Machinery Manufacturers in Zurich. Notes on Swiss technical innovations. Articles concerning the construction of new machines, etc. Issued three times yearly in English, French, Spanish, Portuguese and German.

Abroad : Address registration fee covering a two-year period : S. frs. 15.—.

«TEXTILES SUISSES» :

A specialised trade journal, richly illustrated, giving information on all matters concerning the clothing and fashion trades following the latest developments in the textile trade.

A quarterly publication issued in four editions : English, French, Spanish and German.

Abroad : Annual subscription rate : S. frs. 20.—.

«DIRECTORY OF SWISS MANUFACTURERS AND PRODUCERS» :

Contains addresses of Swiss industrial firms ; classified indexes of products, branches of industry and firms. Available at present in English, French and German ; Spanish edition to be issued later. Price : S. frs. 18.— Postage unclued.

BOOKLET «SWITZERLAND AND HER INDUSTRIES» :

Giving a brief general survey of Switzerland, her institutions, national economy and industries ; containing 1 map and numerous illustrations.

English, French, German, Italian and Spanish Editions.

Price : S. frs. 2.10.

«INFORMATIONS ECONOMIQUES» :

A weekly newspaper on foreign trade.

Contains information on foreign markets, commercial methods, business possibilities, trafic in goods and payments.

Appears once a week in two languages (French and German).

Annual subscription rates :

Abroad : S. frs. 22.—.

Switzerland : S. frs. 18.—.

For all information please write to :

Swiss Office for the Development of Trade

Editorial Department

Place de la Riponne 3

LAUSANNE

Telephone 22 33 33

To obtain representations of **S**wiss Firms

apply to the

Swiss Office for
the Development of Trade
ZURICH