

Van Cleef & Arpels to Open Permanent L'Ecole Campus in Hong Kong

After several pop-up L'Ecole programs in the city, the jewelry house is setting up its second permanent school globally.

By [Bennett Marcus](#) on July 30, 2019



📷 Courtesy

HONG KONG — [Van Cleef & Arpels](#) will open a Hong Kong branch of L'Ecole, its school of jewelry arts, the first permanent campus outside of Paris. The venture will be in developer Adrian Cheng's massive [new Victoria Dockside](#) art and design district along the city's Tsim Sha Tsui waterfront.

Spread over two floors inside the K11 Musea section of the project, L'Ecole will comprise 7,000 square feet with exhibition space, a library, five classrooms and workshops, and a large terrace overlooking Victoria Harbor.

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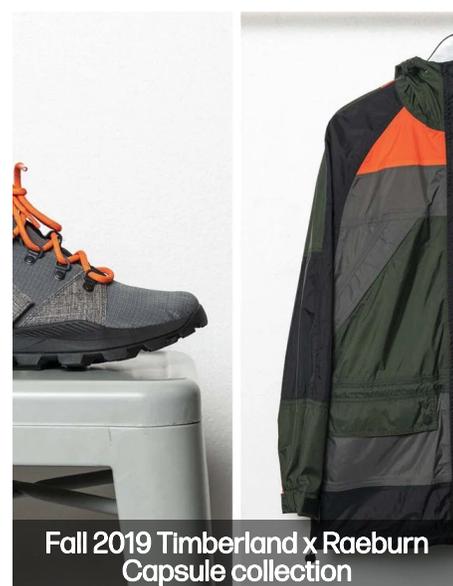
Van Cleef has operated a Paris campus since 2012, but L'Ecole has also traveled the world, offering courses and lectures in Tokyo, New York, Dubai and Hong Kong.

“We had that vision to take it abroad in this nomadic version, and Hong Kong was one of the first cities we came to and we immediately had a very high level of response,” Van Cleef chief executive officer Nicolas Bos told WWD.

The brand expects a permanent staff in Hong Kong of about 10, including teachers from Paris at least for the first year or two, in addition to local experts. The firm tapped award-winning Japanese architect Sou Fujimoto, with whom they collaborated on a 2017 Kyoto exhibition, to design the space.



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The school encompasses a terrace that overlooks Victoria Harbor.
Courtesy

They found Hong Kong participants making repeat visits each time, and realized that the interest in L'Ecole's courses was sustained, rather than just a bump due to curiosity. That led to a decision to search for the right location for a permanent school, although that was not the original plan.



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“Due to that response, we felt it could be something very, very strong for the whole project to have this sister location that would be really for Hong Kong and also could be – we’ll see in the future – a kind of base of operations for us for Asia,” Bos said.

He added that the location made sense for the school not only because of its accessibility, but because it’s one of very few projects in the world that incorporates cultural and commercial elements at a very high level.

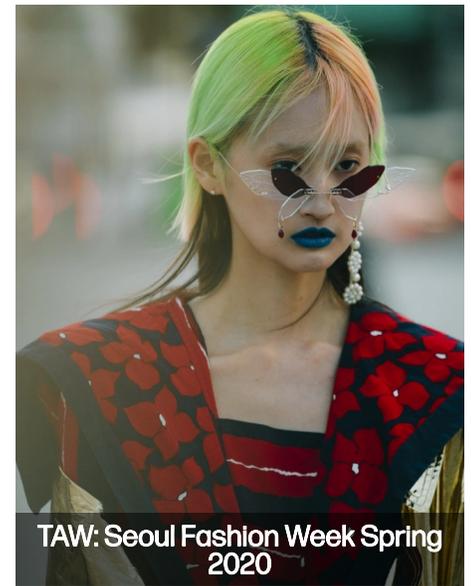
Bos declined to disclose the costs for the L’Ecole Hong Kong project, but said the region has shown tremendous growth over the last ten to 20 years, and they continue to see great potential for development.

“Hong Kong, Macau and mainland China, [South] Korea, Taiwan and Singapore have become major markets for international luxury, for fine jewelry, for haute couture, and they’ve been growing at a higher rate than Europe or historical markets,” he said.

He added that customers in these markets now have the same level of sophistication and taste as those in more mature markets.

“From a brand perspective, for a house like [Van Cleef & Arpels](#), which is very much about quality and expertise, it’s quite a satisfaction that we engage in a quality of conversation with clients today in Asia that’s exactly the same level as what we have in New York or in Geneva where we’ve been present for decades. It’s not a new market anymore, it’s not a different market anymore in terms of the expectations of the clients.”

 [Van Cleef & Arpels](#)



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