

Chaumet Launches Award for Female-led Cultural Projects

The Echo Culture Awards will distinguish grassroots projects fostering broad outreach and audience diversity with measurable on-the-ground impact.



[Chaumet](#) on Place Vendôme STEPHANE MURATET/COURTESY OF CHAUMET

[Chaumet](#) is kicking off the first edition of the Echo Culture Awards, a program that aims to distinguish women who lead grassroots cultural projects.

At the launch conference on Thursday, the jeweler's chief executive officer Jean-Marc Mansvelt said he'd "often been struck by the quality, the generosity and the self-evidence of these types of projects aiming to "ensure culture remains a great opportunity to foster bonding and solidarity.

When looking into such initiatives, the executive said he noticed many were led by women, often operating alone or in small-scale structures.

"Many are doing extraordinary things that go unreported but work tirelessly to give access to [culture] which can feel so remote, he continued. His conversations with activists highlighted a need for financial support, but more importantly a platform.

He highlighted the example of MuMo, an art truck imagined by Ingrid Brochard and designed by Matali Crasset, that travels from village to village so that primary school children may discover artwork drawn from national collections, but also start practicing art.

"Growing up in a remote village, this access was missing, said Brochard, explaining she had been inspired by library buses for her project.



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p. 2/2

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Projects eligible to the Echo Culture Awards can be either existing ones in need of amplification, or new initiatives launching in 2023. They must be female-led, with teams smaller than 20 and focused on spreading culture on the ground.

" The more local [a project] is, the more impactful and lifechanging it can be especially in a complex social context, said Mansvelt, adding that no artistic field or cultural project was out of bounds.

The jeweler will award endowments of 10,000 euros, 25,000 euros and 50,000 euros. Candidates will be asked to select the one matching the scale of their project during the submission process.

In addition to the purse money, the winners will see their project highlighted by the jeweler and benefit from mentoring from [Chaumet](#)'s teams. Mansvelt hopes the awards will foster a community that will see winners of different years come together, both to create synergies and to inspire future projects.

Applications for the first edition are open until March 10 to projects based in France. From next year, the awards will be extended to all of Chaumet's markets overseas.

In addition to communication campaigns, scouting for the Echo Culture Awards will be done in collaboration with the " Thanks for Nothing collective, a female-led association founded in 2017 to develop artistic and solidarity-driven projects with major social impact.

Marine van Schoonbeek, an art historian and curator who cofounded of the collective, said that the quality that could make a winner was being " an unstoppable woman, because you need a lot of energy to sustain grassroots projects.

The 2023 jury will be headed by French actress Sandrine Kiberlain, and will include Mansvelt and Brochard, as well as Chaumet's teams, who will get one collective vote. The three winning projects will be revealed at an awards ceremony on April 18.

A symbolic award could also be given out, without distinction of gender, to an actor in the field in recognition of their contribution and to spotlight their project.