

# Sustainable Luxury

## A Conversation with Frédéric de Narp, Co-Founder and Chief Executive Officer, Luximpact

**EDITORS' NOTE** Frédéric de Narp has extensive growth and turnaround experience in fine jewelry and high luxury. He spent 19 years at Cartier, where he served as CEO, North America and launched the globally renowned “LOVE” campaign, engaging 24 celebrities as Brand Ambassadors to promote Love, Commitment and Passion for a cause. As President and CEO of Harry Winston, de Narp created the Harry Winston Hope Foundation®, inspired by the iconic Hope diamond, to support organizations that give young people a quality education, support and hope for a brighter future. In parallel, he led the turnaround of the Harry Winston brand, doubling sales in three years and attracting major attention in the industry. As a result, de Narp drove the highly profitable acquisition of Harry Winston by Swatch Group. As CEO of Bally, de Narp was credited for reviving the Swiss brand and reaching younger audiences by creating capsule collections in collaboration with Hip Hop and emerging artists.



Frédéric de Narp

with a very human purpose: to honor some of life’s most significant and meaningful experiences. A stunning piece of jewelry celebrates love, the birth of a child, an anniversary, a first career triumph – jewelry is personal, evocative and timeless.

### How did you get your start in the industry?

I began my career at Cartier in Japan at age 21. I learned and grew with the brand, helped expand to new markets across Europe, and eventually was appointed CEO of

Cartier North America. I had the good fortune of leading Cartier when the brand celebrated its 100-year anniversary in North America. It was this celebration that launched the LOVE collection, which raised millions of dollars for numerous charitable initiatives. I then became President and CEO of Harry Winston, and after the Harry Winston acquisition to Swatch Group, I had the opportunity to shift into the legacy fashion world at Bally. During this time, I was particularly struck by the industry’s discussions about sustainability and realized these conversations were not being translated into actionable change.

**COMPANY BRIEF** Luximpact ([luximpact.com](http://luximpact.com)) curates and relaunches historic and legacy French jewelry houses with sustainable, disruptive, and profitable business models.

### How did you arrive at the vision for Luximpact?

I have always been fascinated by fine jewelry because it creates art, beauty and design integrity



A Beaded cocktail ring from Oscar Massin



The Filigree collection from Oscar Massin

I reached out to my extraordinary former colleagues: Coralie de Fontenay, who spent over two decades at Cartier, and Creative Director, Sandrine de Laage, who led design for Cartier, Harry Winston and de Beers. Together, we set out to create Luximpact, with the shared vision to evolve the artistry of legacy French luxury houses with 100 percent climate-neutral, fully traceable, sustainably created materials.

### When did you realize the incredible potential of lab-grown diamonds?

We met the founders of Latitude Diamonds, the first and finest 100 percent climate-neutral stones to be SCS-certified for sustainability and assessed according to the core standards of ethical stewardship. We learned the tremendous environmental benefits of lab-grown diamonds and their ability to drastically reduce both legacy and current emissions. We also saw that the diamonds themselves are physically and chemically identical to their mined counterparts.



Rings from Oscar Massin

Latitude lab-grown diamonds are grown and produced in Washington, DC, by WD Diamonds, a pioneering technology company and global leader in the industry. The diamonds are grown using CVD (chemical vapor deposition) which results in the highest Type IIA purity level, representing just 1-2 percent of diamonds across the globe. WD is built on innovation, disruption and a deep commitment to sustainability. We knew immediately that we wanted to collaborate within the luxury space.

### What was the first brand Luximpact rebranded?

We started with Vever which we relaunched in a joint venture with the Vever family; we collaborated closely with Camille Vever, who

represents Vever's seventh generation. Vever is the first mission-driven jewelry brand in the luxury space. Its creative ethos – grounded in the Art Nouveau heritage of the brand – is built on a combination of innovative materials – including lab-grown diamonds – and the preservation of rare French artisanal know-how.

**“Luximpact is not only about sustainability and the planet, but also about supporting the people who live on it.”**

**Why did you select Oscar Massin as your next brand to relaunch?**

Massin was an innovator, an artist, and a master craftsman; he was even known as the “diamond reformer.” Massin was commissioned to create custom pieces for European royalty, and won the prestigious gold medal at the 1867 Universal Exhibition for his breakthrough designs. He was also deeply inclusive, sharing his patented techniques with others in order to help forge a brighter future for the next generation. Oscar Massin is now the first heritage luxury brand – with an exclusive U.S. presence – to integrate lab-grown diamonds in its jewelry. The new Oscar Massin jewelry collections are created from 100 percent climate-neutral, lab-grown Latitude diamonds in fully recycled 18k gold; they are fully traceable, untreated and certified by SCS global services to meet the highest standards of environmental and ethical responsibility. All the diamonds in the collections are grown and produced by WD Diamonds in Washington, DC, then set in private family ateliers in New York City.

**What are the biggest challenges in building a new category within the fine jewelry space?**

Developing a new category requires tremendous education, because we are truly creating something that has never existed. The creation of man-made diamonds of the quality that we are using has only evolved in the last seven or eight years. It is important to note that for the new generation in the U.S., sustainability and transparency of lab-grown diamonds are critical benefits; this is a generation that appreciates the commitment to the environment, in addition to impeccable design and craftsmanship.



*Model wearing Oscar Massin jewelry*

**How does Luximpact give back to the community?**

Giving back is a crucial aspect of the business. Luximpact is not only about sustainability and the planet, but also about supporting the people who live on it. All through May, we donated 20 percent of sales from [oscardmassin.com](http://oscardmassin.com) to Baby2Baby, a wonderful organization which provides children living in poverty with all the essentials every child deserves. The Baby2Baby initiative is dear to my heart, and also to those of our remarkable investors Rachel Zoe and Kate Hudson, both of whom work closely with Baby2Baby.

**Did you always have an entrepreneurial spirit?**

The fact is, the world is evolving, new opportunities are arising every day, and the industry has the power to create positive impact. There is a moment in your life when you ask yourself what you are passing on to the next generation. I feel it is my responsibility and duty as a leader to be creative and help change the world. Each of us is invited every day to do something, big or small. We have to use the talents we have received in a purposeful and meaningful way. ●