

el Periòdic News

INTERVIEW

«Each artist and designer tell a personal story here, inspired by Swarovski crystals»

Stefane Isser

DIRECTOR OF THE SWAROVSKI CRYSTAL WORLDS MUSEUM

JÚLIA PONSÀ / RINA RYBALCHENKO
WATTENS / ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

It is said that glass has been around for fifty-five centuries, and although it is used to make all sorts of items, the truth is that it is magical, inspiring, and mysterious. People have considered it a semi-precious material from time immemorial.

More than a century ago, Daniel Swarovski took advantage of the beauty of crystal, and after inventing an electric glass cutting machine, he later founded a small crystal factory in the heart of Tyrol. His main goal was to create a diamond for any budget, and he was a great success: the company has now transformed into the Swarovski empire.

Today, the company has a global presence and Andorra is no exception – crystals, jewelry, and accessories, as well as furnishings from this famous brand, can be easily found in the country's shopping centres as well as in small private shops.

But what we can only find in one place on the planet is a 360-degree immersion into the Swarovski universe opened in 1995 to celebrate the company's

centenary. This experience is offered by Swarovski Crystal Worlds, a green museum located in the Austrian town of Wattens (15 kilometres away from Innsbruck).

We spoke to Stefan Isser, Director of the Swarovski Crystal Worlds Museum (Swarovski Kristallwelten), to reveal some of the secrets and curiosities of this extraordinary space. It not only brings together internationally renowned artists and designers, but it is a sensory delight that teleports us into glittering worlds.

—What is the history of the museum?

—Daniel Swarovski, who founded his crystal cutting company in 1895, saw crystal from the very beginning not only as a material but also as a source of inspiration. With this vision in mind, the Swarovski Kristallwelten (Swarovski Crystal Worlds Museum) was opened in 1995 for Swarovski's centenary as a tribute to crystal lovers.

—The museum has the so-called «Chambers of Wonders» – where does this name come from?

—The original principle of the



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Chambers of Wonders, accessed through the «giant's head» is based on the Chamber of Wonders of the Ambras Castle in Innsbruck. In the 16th century, this chamber was an attempt to assemble a universal collection of all knowledge of the time. This is what the concept of the Swarovski

Museum is based on. The main idea is that every artist and every designer can tell their story that was inspired by Swarovski crystals. Renowned artists such as Yayoi Kusama, James Turrell, Lee Bul or Fernando Romero have decorated each of the wonder chambers with crystal according

to their inspiration.

—What can we find in the exterior area of the museum?

—Circling the museum, you will find plants and flowers that radiate beauty, inspiration, and energy. We have created an amazing botanical landscape that naturally adapts to the surrounding Tyrolean alpine landscape. The centrepiece of our garden is the Crystal Cloud, designed by Cao Perrot. A work made up of more than 800,000 handmade and hand-cut crystals that, depending on the time of day and the seasons, offer our visitors new perspectives.

The play tower and the innovative children's playground are a must-see, offering children plenty of space for all kinds of inspiring play and adventure.

The area also features a magnificent interactive installation created by Spanish designer Jaime Hayon, a crystallised carousel. This amusement attraction reimagines the traditional merry-go-round while maintaining its nostalgic appeal. It has a monochrome design and shines with 15 million Swarovski crystals – emanating a warm glow that creates a fairytale atmosphere. Folklore and fairy tales inspired Jaime Hayon to create the fantastical characters that adorn the carousel seats.

—This summer, the museum is offering circus shows in collaboration with artists from the Circus Roncalli, a German professional circus. What can visitors expect from this event?

—From 19 July to 1 September 2024, we welcome the artists of the Circus Roncalli to our garden for the sixth time since 2019. During the Circus of Wonder program, there are four show acts and 15 performances a day. The programme included in the day ticket is multifaceted, and our target audience is anyone who wants to have a good time. And we also have a special gift for these hot summer days (just find where the Chamber of Wonder «Silent Light» is located) and if you find correctly, you will be waiting for winter magic and eternal snow with air temperature of minus 10 degrees centigrade.



—Which Chamber of Wonders fascinates the public the most? And which one is your personal favourite?

—Our Chambers of Wonders are unique, each one enchanting in its own way. One of our most exciting exhibitions is «Umbr» by James Turrell, one of the most recognised artists of our time. Another highlight is «The Art of Performance», where visitors

can admire the costumes of Hollywood stars such as Lady Gaga and Elton John. Personally, I'm particularly excited about what's coming up in November. We will be introducing two completely new Chambers of Wonder. I promise they will be absolutely spectacular...

—What is the profile of visitors to the museum?

—The museum attracts a very diverse audience, including art and culture lovers, Swarovski fans, as well as families and people of different ages and lifestyles. As one of Austria's most visited attractions, we appeal to a wide range of interests and preferences. We are happy to cater to the widest and most diverse audience and make sure that everyone can enjoy it.

This year we expect to welcome around 600,000 visitors. ●

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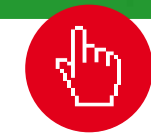
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GUETTA CONTROVERSY

ALEX MONTERO / LAURA GÓMEZ RODRÍGUEZ
ESCALDES-ENGORDANY

The controversy over the cancellation of David Guetta's concert seems to continue to add chapters to his story. And it is that according to sources close to EL PERIÒDODIC, it seems that the performance of the French DJ would have been canceled by a clause in Guetta's contract in which the right to cancel the concert would be stipulated up to 24 hours before its celebration and not only because of the Civil Protection report in which it warned about the possible risk of electrical storms.

According to the source, some of the attendees and part of the organization were already aware of the cancellation announcement even two hours before it, knowing that Guetta would not travel from Paris to La Seu d'Urgell as it was agreed, nor would it subsequently move to the Tarter area where the concert that would close the second day of Andorra Mountain Music 2024 was to take place. A performance for which the artist would have been paid in full by the company Live Nation (entity with which he had signed the contract with the alleged clause), as confirmed last Wednesday by the Minister of Tourism, Jordi Torres, who also emphasized that the amount deposited by the Government and Andorra Tourism would indeed be returned by part of the contracted insurer.

As several Spanish media have pointed out, it would not be the first time that the French DJ would have acted under this same clause. In July 2018, elDiario.es put on the table the doubt surrounding the cancellation of the artist in the performance scheduled for the festivities of the city of Santander, in which another 10,000 people had purchased a ticket to see him in concert. All of them were already inside the XXXX enclosure since early afternoon, waiting for Guetta to appear on stage at 11.30pm. It wasn't until 12:15 a.m., 45 minu-



Performance by David Guetta in 2018.

Live Nation's refusal to pay possible cancellation

The last-minute cancellation of David Guetta's concert in

tes later, that the organization confirmed the suspension of the concert on its social networks, stressing that they were working

until the last moment to guarantee the presence of the artist, but also stating that they knew that at 10:00 p.m. it was already «tech-

nically impossible» to get him to arrive on time.

A casuistry that opened several questions, as reported by EL



ARXIU BBF

Provide details regarding a cancellation clause

Andorra would not have been the only one in recent years

MUNDO, such as the fact that Guetta was able to perform the next day at the Tomorrowland festival, which gave rise to all

kinds of rumors about the real reason why the French DJ would not have been able to fly to Spain and yes to Belgium.

Even more so when, according to the aforementioned medium, the artist would have collected the ticket money-valued

at 300,000 euros in total -, despite not having performed in the concert scheduled in the Cantabrian capital. Guetta defended himself against the accusations, through a forceful message: «What need do I have to keep people's money? I do 150 shows a year and I can afford to return what I haven't earned», adding that, in relation to the organization's demands, «I will be happy to go to court if that's what they want».

And it is that according to the organization itself, the reasons given by the artist for not going to the appointment would not be entirely true, since the airline with which Guetta was supposed to fly usually has several

The artist canceled a concert in Santander citing reasons that wasn't entirely convincing

substitutes for this kind of cases: «We have not received any technical proof that the ship could not take off», they explained in statements to the Spanish media.

In this way, the reasons for arguing that it was a controversial cancellation have not stopped coming to light. Even so, from the Government they have reiterated to this medium that the cancellation of the performance would have been due to the report issued by Civil Protection and not for any other reason, while from Live Nation they continue to maintain that no they can give more details about the artist's contract, supporting the statements issued by the Executive and Andorra Tourism. It should also be remembered that the Concòrdia parliamentary group has sent a request for information to the Government about the content of the contract, and from this point, the executive has 30 working days to respond. ●