



Open House

Maison Vivier, the newly minted home of storied Parisian shoe label Roger Vivier, celebrates the rich history of the house that's crafting the footwear icons of the future

words TESS DE VIVIE DE RÉGIE

Photography: Ian Patrick (this page); Guido Taroni (opposite), both courtesy of Roger Vivier.



OPPOSITE PAGE Monsieur Roger Vivier. ABOVE Facade of Maison Vivier in Saint-Germain-des-Prés, Paris.

In 1965, to complement Yves Saint Laurent's legendary 'Mondrian' collection, Roger Vivier dreamt up a distinctive pump – one with a bold square toe and strong heel, set off by a glinting buckle that nodded to 18th-century aristocratic men's footwear. When Catherine Deneuve wore the style two years later as leading lady in Luis Buñuel's *Belle de Jour*, the silhouette was confirmed as a bona fide it-shoe and, in tribute to the 1967 film, gained its moniker of Belle Vivier. The shoes have been a byword for elegance ever since, appearing on some of the world's most (literally) well-heeled women, including Jackie Kennedy, Lee Radziwill and Babe Paley.

Sixty years on, another icon has emerged. On the Left Bank of Paris, in the city's literary heartland of Saint-Germain-des-Prés, an 18th-century *hôtel particulier* now houses the Maison Vivier, the multidisciplinary new headquarters of Roger Vivier. The building encompasses the house's extensive archives as well as the studio of creative director Gherardo Felloni – rooms executed with exquisite taste, befitting of the late Monsieur Vivier.

Opened during Paris Fashion Week in October 2025, the maison's debut was a fitting occasion for Felloni to present his Spring/Summer 2026 collection, 'Belle Vivier 60', an ode to six decades of the shoe. Naomi Campbell, Lou Doillon, Inès de la Fressange and Catherine Deneuve – wearing the shoes she helped render iconic – were all in attendance.

"The Belle Vivier is much more than a shoe; it's a cultural icon," reflects Felloni, who has headed up the house since 2018 after stints at Miu Miu and Dior. "That image in [*Belle de Jour* of] Deneuve walking through Paris in those sleek patent pumps with the square buckle captures an eternal kind of elegance: discreet, intelligent and irresistibly contemporary.

"For its 60th anniversary, I wanted to celebrate that spirit while opening a dialogue with the future," he continues. "The collection is full of sparkle and light – satin, lace, rhinestones, faceted beads, turquoise, coral; a true celebration of life and craftsmanship. It reflects how beauty can be both timeless and playful, structured yet full of emotion."

The 'Prato' shoes shimmer with multi-coloured sequins that suggest delicate petals and leaves. 'Coralli-Turchesi' feature cream cotton, embroidered with turquoise, coral and



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pearl-hued beads. ‘Pizzo’ are crafted from inky-black satin, overlaid with lace and embellished with black glass beads and sequins.

“For the [Belle Vivier 60 collection], the archive was central,” says Felloni of his creative process. “I revisited the iconic buckle and motifs, transforming them into contemporary expressions. Embroidery in turquoise, coral and rhinestones, all made by hand, brought new life to the designs. Materials like PVC and suede, evoking the spirit of the ‘60s when the Belle Vivier was first invented, were reinterpreted in dialogue with the maison’s heritage, so each shoe feels connected to the past while being completely alive today.”

The collection has also expanded into gilets and bags. “For me, the gilet is not a garment but an accessory: a precious complement to the outfit, often adorned with embroidery and couture-level embellishments,” muses Felloni. “Bags, too, are a canvas for the maison’s codes: the architectural elegance, the iconic buckle, the sense of sculptural balance. By extending these expressions beyond shoes, women can inhabit the world of Vivier fully, carrying the maison’s spirit through multiple forms of beauty.”

For the first time, the house’s archives are available to students, top clients, researchers and the press to visit by appointment. “The archives serve not only to preserve history but to fuel research, inspire contemporary creations and enrich the broader culture of fashion,” says Felloni.

“By welcoming these voices into our world, we allow culture to circulate – and that, for me, is one of the most beautiful ways to honour Monsieur Vivier’s spirit.”

The maison’s *Salon de l’Héritage*, a pantheon of some of the finest examples of Roger Vivier’s work, showcases a prototype pair made for the glamorous Princess Soraya of Iran in 1962 and decorated with silver threads and topazes, which sold for €19,750 at a 2011 auction. Also on display are a pair worn by French actress Jeanne Moreau for her turn as Catherine the Great in 1968’s *Great Catherine*. “The archive is a living treasury of imagination, full of shoes that transformed how women moved, thought and felt,” offers Felloni.

As well as blazing a trail as the ‘Fabergé of footwear’, Monsieur Vivier possessed a well-honed eye for interiors and a talent for effortlessly blending eras stylistically. *Le Salon Vivier* echoes his real-life apartment: pieces from his private collection, like a Gabonese Aduma mask and sofas from the reign of Louis XV, flank modernist Barcelona chairs by Mies van der Rohe, a Picasso lithograph and a Chinese cabinet that once belonged to Hubert de Givenchy.

In his earliest years, Vivier designed for the likes of Marlene Dietrich and Josephine Baker and founded his eponymous atelier in Paris in 1937. It was to Monsieur Vivier that the future Queen Elizabeth II turned for the shoes she would wear to her coronation: gold kidskin leather pumps featuring a regal *fleur-de-lis* motif and set with rubies. He

boasted a prodigious talent for dreaming up novel silhouettes: notably, ‘Virgule’, his comma-shaped heel, and ‘Épine’, embellished with a rose and thorn on the toe and the heel respectively, illustrating – along with his Belle Vivier – the designer’s genius for innovation.

And today, Felloni is continuing Monsieur Vivier’s legacy. As the locus of Roger Vivier’s creative engine, Felloni’s new office is very much a place for serious work – albeit an extremely chic one. “My studio is where everything begins – it’s both my refuge and my playground,” shares Felloni.

His sprawling desk, made by Florentine artist Duccio Maria Gambi, overlooks the *hôtel particulier*’s gardens, offering a serene vantage point for Felloni to sketch new creations into being.

“The space is filled with small details that tell stories: antique chairs, cardboard boxes that once held archive shoes, books on opera, art, photography, jewellery and gardens, a Limoges tea set with bees,” he describes. “It’s a place that reflects how I work: instinctively, visually and always guided by feeling.”

Much as Belle Vivier 60 builds on well-established house codes, expanding and riffing on them, the maison serves as a nexus between past and future. “To have the archives, the studio and the headquarters together under one roof means that the soul of the maison is whole again,” reflects Felloni. “It’s deeply symbolic.” The building is no static set-piece, but a living, breathing space – one true to the vision of Monsieur Vivier, but with one eye firmly fixed on what’s yet to come.

“When I walk through the halls, I feel Monsieur Vivier’s presence: his drawings, his wit, his curiosity, all whispering through the rooms,” shares Felloni. “It reminds us that what we do today will one day become part of that same story. This coexistence gives every creation a sense of continuity, of belonging to a larger cultural narrative that goes far beyond fashion.” HB

ABOVE ‘Prato’ from the ‘Belle Vivier 60’ Spring 2026 collection. OPPOSITE PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP Le Salon Vivier; Embroidered Belle Vivier clutch bag, POA; Roger Vivier creative director Gherardo Felloni.

Photography: Guido Taroni (top left), Bruno-Nico Van Mossevelde (bottom), all courtesy of Roger Vivier.