

CONTINUING
EDUCATION
DESIGNMART
EVENTS

METROPOLIS LIVE

METROPOLIS POV DECEMBER 2008 • METROPOLIS OBSERVED
MAGAZINE

The Met in a New Light

By Suzanne LaBarre

Posted December 17, 2008

METROPOLIS@25

METROPOLIS BOOKS

NEXT GENERATION

SUBSCRIBE

SUSTAINABLE
METROPOLIS

TROPICAL GREEN

URBAN JOURNAL

Be the first to comment on this article

For more than four decades, the crystal chandeliers of New York's Metropolitan Opera House have hung over the foyer like a frozen burst of fireworks. In recent years, however, they grew dangerously fragile. Rust claimed some of the metal rays. Many of the birch connectors cracked. The once dazzling crystals became chipped or discolored, or simply went missing. But with the help of advancements in glass manufacturing, the 11 fixtures—a thank-you gift from the Austrian government for American reconstruction aid after World War II—are enjoying a second act.

Last summer, the chandeliers were packed into crates and flown to Vienna, where Lobmeyr, their original designer, undertook a six-week restoration. More than 50,000 prisms were replaced with deionized, machine-cut Swarovski crystals, some as big as oranges. "Forty years ago, we didn't have the technology or the equipment to grind and polish two-, three-, four-, and five-inch pieces," says Jordi Matons, a vice president at Swarovski. "Now we do." The result? "They refract the light much more brilliantly," the Met's Elizabeth Hurley says. "And they don't attract as much dust."

Be the first to comment on this article

[PRINT](#) [E-MAIL](#) [TALK2US](#)



Marty Sohl/courtesy Metropolitan Opera

