

Helena Rubinstein: Beauty At the Boca Raton

The name Helena Rubinstein conjures up elegant images of international beauty salons and fabulously packaged cosmetics that rivals Estée Lauder and Elizabeth Arden. She changed the way women envisioned themselves, and empowered women to define and assert their individuality beginning in the early twentieth century. Yet this is just a dab of blush compared to the depth and breadth of Madame (as she was widely known) Rubinstein's accomplishments including visionary art collector, entrepreneur, and one of the first female self-made magnates.

Madame Rubinstein's lush, inspiring story comes to life – and to Boca Raton via the Jewish Museum in New York City – in the varied and significant exhibition, *Helena Rubinstein: Beauty is Power*, organized by Mason Klein, and opening at the Boca Raton Museum of Art on April 21, 2015.

According to Klein, *Helena Rubinstein: Beauty is Power* "explores how Madame helped break down the status quo of taste by blurring boundaries between commerce, art, fashion, beauty, and design."



Rubinstein wearing a 1923 Paul Poiret dress, photographed by Nickolas Muray, c. 1924. Courtesy of George Eastman House, International Museum of Photography and Film. © Nickolas Muray Photo Archives.

Rubinstein's famed art collection was dispersed at auction in 1996 and it is partially reunited featuring works by Pablo Picasso, Elie Nadelman, Joan Miró, and Henri Matisse along with works from her peerless collection of African and Oceanic art. Rubinstein adorned herself with exquisite jewelry and clothing designed by renowned couturiers, Cristóbal Balenciaga, Elsa Schiaparelli, and Paul Poiret, many depicted in images throughout the show along with

a bevy of luscious pins, bracelets, and other jewels.

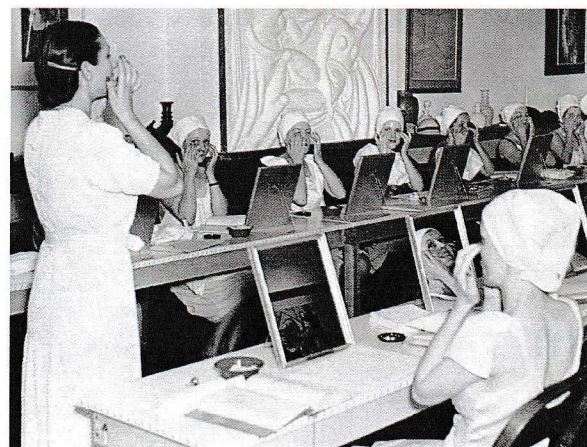
The exhibition's title arrives from one of Rubinstein's early advertisements that touted "Beauty is Power" as its slogan in 1904 showcasing Rubinstein's distinctive brand of commercial savvy and inherent feminism. Vintage advertisements, cosmetics products, and promotional items from her business are part of the exhibition. She was stellar at self-promotion and commissioned her portrait by leading artists of the day including Marie Laurencin and Andy Warhol.

Picasso, one of Rubinstein's favorite artists, completed more than 30 drawings of Madame in 1955 and a selection of these are shown for the first time in the United States in this exhibition.

Madame was known for her volatile moods and these are



Helena Rubinstein holding one of her masks from the Ivory Coast, 1934, Photograph by George Maillard Kessler. Helena Rubinstein Foundation Archives, Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY, Gladys Marcus Library, Special Collections.



Mala Rubinstein, Helena Rubinstein's niece, leads a beauty class at the flagship salon at 715 Fifth Avenue in New York, c. 1937. Helena Rubinstein Foundation Archives, Fashion Institute of Technology, SUNY, Gladys Marcus Library, Special Collections.