

# Van Cleef & Arpels Virgo Zodiac Pendant.



Boasting a nearly 4,000-year history, the Western Zodiac system continues to maintain a powerful hold on the imagination of many people today. This piece, made by esteemed jeweler Van Cleef & Arpels, features prominent Virgo symbols made with the

expert craftsmanship expected from the Paris luxury company. Michaan's Auctions is proud to offer a **Van Cleef & Arpels Virgo Zodiac Pendant** (\$3/5,000) for sale in our Summer Fine Sale, held on Monday, June 17th.

This piece is made by the French jewelry company, Van Cleef & Arpels, a company founded by Dutch immigrants in Paris in 1896. Diamond-cutter Alfred Van Cleef and his father-in-law Salomon Arpels took up a retail location in Place Vendôme, near the Louvre, and soon expanded their presence through new openings in holiday resort towns such as Vichy, Nice, and Monte-Carlo. In 1925 they achieved their first critical success, winning the grand prize at the International Exposition of Modern

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Industrial and Decorative Arts with a handsome bracelet with red and white roses rendered with rubies and diamonds. Soon after their success achieved international dimensions, in the 1930s they were commissioned to design and fabricate the crown for the Queen of Egypt and did the same for the Iranian Empress in 1867. The company was the first French jeweler to open boutiques in Japan and China; today they operate over 150 stores around the world.

Astrology, a form of divination based on the location of celestial objects, was first systematized in the ancient Near East no later than 1800 BCE, with some experts believing it began as early as 2144 BCE. Developed from attempts to develop a reliable calendar for farming based upon the movement of the stars and planets, these observations came into contact with local religious

practices, forming a body of text used by ancient priests to predict the future. By 1500 BCE, the city of Babylon had created a list of over 7,000 celestial omens and had a vast oral tradition that is now largely lost. These traditions spread throughout the region, reaching Egypt around the time of Alexander the Great's conquering of the country in the fall of 332 BCE. These astrological traditions merged with ancient Egyptian astrological observations, some of which had already been used for at least 3,000 years by that point, to form the Western Zodiac that we would recognize today. This knowledge was collected for the first time in the "Tetrabiblos", a text by the Roman-Egyptian scholar Ptolemy around 150 CE, and after being translated by Arabic scholars, was taught in universities throughout Europe until the late 1600s.

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Virgo is one of the zodiac signs in the Western Zodiac system and approximately represents the dates between August 23rd and September 22nd. Symbolized by the Maiden, the constellation and season were first associated with wheat and the harvest by the Babylonians, a connection which continued under the Greeks who attributed it to Demeter, the goddess of the harvest, or her daughter Persephone, queen of the Underworld. It is also sometimes associated with Astrea, the last of the Greek Gods to live on earth, a virgin goddess representing justice, innocence, and precision. Virgo is an Earth sign, which has connections to practicality, caution, and “groundedness.” It is therefore a negative or passive sign but with a mutable modality, emphasizing its resourcefulness. The sign is ruled by the planet Mercury, a planet associated with

the principles of communication, adaptability, and rationality, and also in exaltation further emphasizing the strength of these characteristics. Virgo’s detriment is Jupiter, traditionally connected to rulership, growth, and prosperity.



The **Van Cleef & Arpels Virgo Zodiac Pendant** (\$3/5,000) features an 18k yellow gold pendant measuring approximately 27mm in diameter

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suspended from a 14k yellow gold rope link chain of 19 inches. It features a relief of a female figure before a unicorn, with a small ridge to indicate the ground and a half circle of dots loosely correlating to the rim. The pendant is in an archaic style, resembling an ancient coin, with an irregular edge, purposefully misaligned stamping, and a simple design. The back features the Virgo symbol, the dates August 23rd and September 22nd in Roman numerals, and an engraved personal message, all with expert precision.

**A Van Cleef & Arpels Virgo Zodiac Pendant** (\$3/5,000) will be offered in Michaan's Auctions Summer Fine Sale on Monday, June 17th. This sale features an incredible selection, full of the season's most esteemed items. The sale is headlined by historically important works in the Asian Art Department, exquisite jewelry in the

desirable Art-Deco style, and important works from notable American and European modernist artists. Also featured are fine examples of Persian carpets, sterling silver dishware, and an extremely rare book by an icon of American poetry. A Van Cleef & Arpels Virgo Zodiac Pendant (\$3/5,000) will be offered in Michaan's Auctions Summer Fine Sale on Monday, June 17th. This sale features an incredible selection, full of the season's most esteemed items. The sale is headlined by historically important works in the Asian Art Department, exquisite jewelry in the desirable Art-Deco style, and important works from notable American and European modernist artists. Also featured are fine examples of Persian carpets, sterling silver dishware, and an extremely rare book by an icon of American poetry.

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Also on June 17th, Michaan's Auctions will be presenting an initial selection from the vast estate of the notable New York artist and antiques dealer, Vito Giallo, who is finally offering the most treasured items from his Madison Avenue store, in a special auction preceding our Summer Fine Sale. This collection, titled "Chapter I" to commemorate the recent publishing of Vito Giallo's memoir, features exceptional pieces across every department, headlined by bronzes and

painted works in the Fine Art Department, as well as impressive collections of Silver & Objects de Vertu. Also included are important collectibles, quality decorations, and admirable pieces in glass.

Michaan's Auctions catalogs can be viewed on our website: [www.michaans.com](http://www.michaans.com), LiveAuctioneers, and on our Michaan's Live site. Bid live in our gallery or remotely via absentee, phone, or online.

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