A wave of elegance: Mignon Faget creates new jewelry line

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An artisan crafts a Mignon Faget piece inspired by the iconic Tulane Green Wave. (Photo courtesy of Mignon Faget)

Just eight weeks ago, what began as a meeting between Mignon Faget and Tulane University to discuss trademarks and logos sparked something unexpected: A new jewelry line for the university that celebrates Tulane's legacy in a way that only the storied jewelry brand could, just in time for Wave Weekend.

"I think the final piece is a classic Mignon Faget design, but it also represents Tulane," said Maghan Oroszi, CEO of the jewelry company that has crafted a pendant, a pin and earrings embellished with the distinctive wave design. "I hope people see this as an elevated form that represents them, but it certainly ties into the legacy of Mignon."

Mignon Faget graduated from Newcomb College with a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 1955. She served as Tulane's Homecoming Queen in 1953. The company says Faget's time at Newcomb influenced her artistic vision and lifelong appreciation for craftsmanship, architecture and the natural world — elements that have become hallmarks of her jewelry.

Oroszi, who became CEO after Faget retired five years ago, also attended Tulane.

With Faget's aesthetic and Oroszi's own architectural and minimalist lenses, they wanted to go beyond replicating the common symbols of Tulane, like the wave, or a "T." Carmen Sarduy, Tulane's assistant vice president of marketing, was in agreement.

"That's not what I wanted to do," said Sarduy. "I wanted their design capability and something that embodies the collaboration."

Oroszi and Sarduy were in sync on what they wanted. Something artistic, something unique, something purely from New Orleans, Tulane and Mignon Faget.

Things moved quickly after that initial meeting. Sarduy suggested homecoming was the perfect time to make the line available. From sketch to finished product took just two months.

"To go to market, to ideate a product and take it to market through a partnership in essentially two months, that's crazy," Sarduy said.

It took what Oroszi calls "a very well-oiled machine" to make that happen.

"Everyone had to be on board," she said. "There couldn't be any mistakes. We had to plan it out on the front end and execute it as planned."

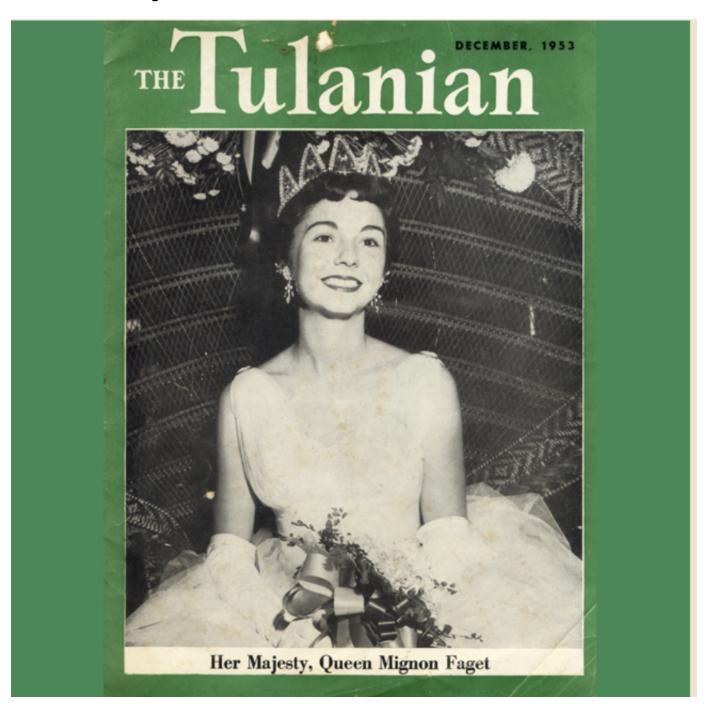
Both see the partnership as about something deeper: connecting generations of Tulane families through heirloom-quality pieces that honor New Orleans craftsmanship.

"These are the kinds of gifts that you would give when someone starts Tulane or when they graduate," Sarduy says. "It can tie an alum grandmother with an alum

granddaughter."

For two institutions steeped in New Orleans tradition — one educating students since 1834, the other crafting jewelry since 1969 — the partnership feels both natural and overdue. As Oroszi puts it: "What Tulane is doing, what we're doing, I think there's synchronicity."

The Wave Weekend Collection is <u>available online</u> and at Mignon Faget's Magazine Street and Lakeside stores, and will be available at the Tulane Bookstore and the Glazer Club during Wave Weekend.



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