

## EDITORS

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# 2010 BOOK REVIEWS

## Cartier and America

By Martin Chapman, 177 pp., illus.,  
publ. by Prestel USA [prestel.txt9.de],  
New York, 2009. US\$35.00

## High Jewelry by Cartier: Contemporary Creations

Ed. by Suzanne Tise-Isoré, 265 pp.,  
illus., publ. by Flammarion [edi-  
tions.flammarion.com], Paris, 2009.  
US\$125.00

After establishing itself as a luxury goods retailer on the Boulevard des Italiens in Paris in the late 1890s, Cartier quickly became an internationally acclaimed fine jeweler. One of the forces behind the firm's meteoric rise was its presence in New York, setting it apart from Parisian contemporaries. Cartier's genuine interest in exceptional gems (diamonds, natural pearls, and faceted sapphires, as well as gem carvings) and dedication to excellence in design, materials, and fabrication catapulted it to the iconic status it still enjoys today. Originally a family company patronized by European and Indian courts, and then by American elites, the firm is now part of an international luxury group and remains on the cutting edge of fashion and jewelry creation.

In 2009, Cartier commemorated its first century in grand style with this pair of books. Both allow the reader to view Cartier's ascendance through an exceptional assembly of jewels, but their perspectives are radically different. *High Jewelry by Cartier* is a lavishly illustrated thematic catalogue of the brand's most

recent work. *Cartier and America* was conceived more as a history book, showing the evolution of the brand and its following in America, particularly among famous collectors such as Marjorie Merriweather Post, Grace Kelly, and Elizabeth Taylor.

*High Jewelry's* strength lies in its beautiful photos of Cartier's latest creations. The red fabric cover and lettering are reminiscent of the famous Cartier signature box, and the overall presentation continues this luxurious motif with sketches and photos of wax and semi-finished jewelry presented in an artistic chiaroscuro, where the black background highlights their splendor and allows their full appreciation by the reader. Renderings of colored stones accurately represent their hues. Most of the pictures are magnified to display nuances of asymmetrical and uncalibrated gemstones, including briolettes, drops, and pearls.

Yet the book remains a beautiful enigma. It features magnificent representations of the pieces but provides minimal background, with no mention of provenance or date of origin. The reader might rightfully ask, for instance, if the pieces are privately owned or part of a museum collection. Were they a special order or a limited series? Were the gemstones recently cut, or are they older stones that have been incorporated into a contemporary setting? While the captions generally include the carat weight of center stones, it is difficult to determine the size of the pieces from the information provided.

*Cartier and America* takes a different approach. It was created to

accompany the exhibition that took place at the Legion of Honor in San Francisco December 2009–May 2010. It contains many interesting photos of Cartier's New York flagship store on Fifth Avenue (renamed Place de Cartier in 2001) and noted American collectors adorned with their favorite Cartier jewelry. The result is a fascinating historical journey that showcases the distinct style of each period. The book portrays some of the jewels designed to cater to the tastes of America's fashionable elite. Some truly iconic pieces are featured, including Marjorie Merriweather Post's diamond and carved emerald pendant/brooch (which also appears on the cover of the book), the Daisy Fellowes so-called Hindu necklace, and the diamond tiaras and realistic snake and crocodile necklaces designed exclusively for Mexican actress María Félix. The three most outstanding chapters are those devoted to the Art Deco period, the Mystery Clocks (only 12 were ever created), and the final section featuring all 277 pieces from the exhibition, with thumbnail photos, detailed descriptions, and measurements.

Both books masterfully display Cartier's specificity of design; use of exceptional gemstones set in a vast array of materials; revival of exotic, whimsical animal and floral motifs; and finely articulated structures. Both provide a valuable resource for jewelry lovers who want to refer to Cartier's style from the early Belle Époque to contemporary creations.

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## Gems and Gemstones: Timeless Natural Beauty of the Mineral World

By Lance Grande and Allison Augustyn, 369 pp., illus., publ. by The University of Chicago Press [www.press.uchicago.edu], Chicago and London, 2009. US\$45.00

This fine book was written to coincide with the opening of the newly renovated Grainger Hall of Gems at the Field Museum in Chicago. The foreword captures the tenor: "As befitting a natural history museum, the Grainger Hall of Gems showcases not only scintillating cut gems and intriguing jewelry designs, it also features uncut crystals in all their amazing natural beauty. The juxtaposition of the natural form and the jeweler's art is the main thrust of the exhibition, and the inspiration for this companion volume."

The book flows logically from chapter to chapter. The first is a simple but sound introduction to gems. This is followed by "Formation of Gems" and "Classification of Gems," leading into the heart of the book. Here the Grainger collection is documented over more than 200 pages. Each gem species is discussed and illustrated with stunning photographs of loose gemstones, crystals, or mounted jewels from the collection. There are modern jewelry pieces and combinations of rough and cut stones, many in full-page presentation. Lead photographer John Weinstein did a fine job of preparing most of the images.

The Grainger gallery features many pieces from the Hope collection (the same collection that once contained the Hope diamond), and several are shown here. Some of the more famous Hope pieces are the Aztec "Sun-God" opal and "Blaze," a 97.45 ct red topaz set in a modern Lester Lampert design. This chapter continues with additional gem materials such as tanzanite, jadeite, spinel, and garnet, including tsavorite and a 7.13 ct Russian demantoid. One of the

most stunning pieces is an Edwardian platinum necklace, exquisitely set with 300 small diamonds and a 60.2 ct blue sapphire carved into the form of a lovely face. The blue just glows.

The chapters continue with "Inorganic Gems Not Described Here" (included for the sake of completeness), "Organically Derived Gemstones," and "Organic Gem Types," which deals with pearls, coral, amber, ivory, and the like. Also covered are precious metals (primarily gold); synthetics, simulants, and treatments ("Augmentation"); mining, ethics; folklore and magic; birthstones; and the history of the Field Museum's gem halls.

I highly recommend this book as a resource for anyone interested in fabulous examples of gems and jewels.

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## Between Eternity and History: Bulgari. From 1884 to 2009, 125 Years of Italian Jewels

Edited by Amanda Triossi, 375 pp., illus., publ. by Skira Editore [www.skira.net], Milan, 2009. US\$80.00

Greek jeweler Sotirio Bulgari established his first shop in Rome in 1884, thus launching the brand's rise to international prominence. To commemorate the 125th anniversary of this event, an exhibition of Bulgari creations was held from May to September 2009 at the Palazzo Delle Esposizioni, only a few blocks from the original location at 85 Via Sistina.

Abley curated by Amanda Triossi (who co-authored a previous book on Bulgari, reviewed in the Winter 2008 *G&G*), this exhibition amassed a huge—and heretofore unrivaled—collection of famous Bulgari pieces created throughout the years. There is perhaps no better way to view the arc of Bulgari's ascendance than through this assembly of jewels. And for those of us who were unable to travel to

Rome to see this exhibition, Triossi has produced an artful coffee table book that comprehensively mirrors it.

The 900-plus illustrations include archival photos of 19th-century Rome, original jewelry sketches, and snapshots of movie stars wearing Bulgari jewelry. The catalogue is an interesting and comprehensive selection of the finest pieces, including jewelry from the Bulgari Vintage Collection and from private collectors such as Elizabeth Taylor.

The book traces the history of the brand from Sotirio Bulgari's early silver ornaments in the neo-Hellenistic tradition to the most contemporary fine jewelry pieces. It explores Bulgari's iconic styles, such as coin jewelry, the Melone bag, Tubogas jewelry, snake watches, and the Parentesi motif, to name a few. Finally, the book relates the house's transition from traditional silversmith to a high-end jeweler using platinum after 1905. As it became more established, Bulgari explored the many jewelry styles of the 20th century while affirming its own signature aesthetic, characterized by the use of very strong metal structures, cabochon-cut gemstones, and bold color contrasts. The firm's attention to design and craftsmanship, and its taste for fine gems, are particularly well illustrated here. The pictures, artfully color enhanced, even show the gemstones' inclusions.

Of the book's 19 chapters, the ones on the 1950s and 1960s "color revolution," the 1970s "eclectic creativity," and the 1980s and 1990s "opulence and colour" best illustrate Bulgari's uniqueness and innovation. During these decades, Italian design in general became more and more appreciated.

One of the most interesting sections features all 493 pieces gathered for the exhibition, with thumbnail photos and detailed descriptions and measurements. However, the book might have benefited from a paginated table of the illustrations and a glossary of jewelry terms, common Bulgari styles, and important members of the family. Last, more insight into both

the creative process of the early founders and today's corporate organization would have been interesting.

Nevertheless, the book is a must-have for gem enthusiasts, jewelry designers, appraisers, and even auctioneers who want to know Bulgari jewelry better. It allies the aesthetic quality of an art book with the precise, detailed documentation of a gemologist and art historian.

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## OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

**Jewelry & Gems: The Buying Guide, 7th Ed.** By Antoinette Matlins and A. C. Bonanno, 306 pp., illus., publ. by GemStone Press [www.gemstonepress.com], Woodstock, VT, 2009, US\$19.99. This latest edition of Matlins's definitive consumer buying guide includes updates on the most recent diamond and colored stone treatments as well as changes in the market since the sixth edition appeared in 2005. Also expanded is the section on diamond color grading, with special attention to the problems inherent in grading fluorescent stones.

TWO

**Contributions of the 4th International Symposium on Granitic Pegmatites.** *Estudos Geológicos* [www.ufpe.br/estudosgeologicos], Vol. 19, No. 2, 367 pp., 2009, US\$25. This proceedings volume presents papers from the PEG2009BRAZIL conference, held Aug. 30–Sept. 3, 2009, in Recife, Brazil.

TWO

**Exotic Gems, Volume 1.** By Renee Newman, 153 pp., illus., publ. by International Jewelry Publications [www.reneenewman.com], Los Angeles, 2010, US\$19.95. The latest in Newman's series of consumer guides, this book reviews the characteristics, treatments, sources, history, and market factors for tanzanite, Zultanite, Ammolite, rhodochrosite, sunstone, moonstone, and other feldspars.

TWO

**Agates II.** By Johann Zenz, 656 pp., illus., publ. by Bode Verlag [www.bodeverlag.de], Salzhemmendorf, Germany, 2010, €89. This oversized, visually stunning work is a follow-up to the author's 2005 *Agates*. Over 2,000 photographs illustrate an array of agate and jasper specimens, accompanying a review of agate localities, mines, and prominent collectors.

TWO

**Amber: The Natural Time Capsule.** By Andrew Ross, 112 pp., illus., publ. by Firefly Books [www.fireflybooks.com], Buffalo, NY, 2010, US\$29.95. This well-photographed volume captures the inclusions that occur in amber. A review of amber formation, chemistry, and localities is included, along with a guide to help identify included insects.

TWO

**Pearl Buying Guide, 5th Ed.** By Renee Newman, 153 pp., illus., publ. by International Jewelry Publications [www.reneenewman.com], Los Angeles, 2010, US\$19.95. Updated from the fourth edition (see Spring 2004 *G&G*, p. 91), this latest version of Newman's guide for consumers adds a new chapter on antique pearl jewelry, more information on freshwater cultured and natural pearls, and hundreds of new photos and illustrations.

TWO

**Gem and Ornamental Materials of Organic Origin.** By Maggie Campbell Pedersen, 268 pp., illus., publ. by NAG Press, London, 2010, £39.95. This new version of Campbell Pedersen's essential reference for organic gems (see Summer 2004 *G&G*, p. 184) has been revised and updated to reflect developments since its first publication. New treatments—most notably to amber and copal—are covered, as are new gem materials that have come on the market since 2004.

TWO

## LETTERS (cont. from p. S1)

forces applied to the stone. It is, therefore, unlikely for a single crystal to contain several regions with distinctly different strain features, and, in fact, such a situation has never been reported for natural diamonds.

The Hope diamond shows predominantly one direction of strain (again, see figures 8D-F in our article), which appears to be uniform throughout the diamond. The Wittelsbach-Graff diamond, on the other hand, exhibits a significantly finer-scale strain pattern, with distinct laminations oriented almost equally in three directions (figures 8A-C), and also uniform throughout the stone. The nature of the stress experienced by the two diamonds when they were still deep inside the earth was therefore significantly different: predominantly isotropic for the Wittelsbach-Graff diamond, and more unidirectional for the Hope diamond.

Finally, DiamondView images of the two stones revealed defect patterns that are typical of type II diamonds and are also the result of plastic deformation and annealing experienced deep in the earth (see Lang, 1967, and the references given in our article). Again, the mosaic defect patterns of the two diamonds, although uniform within each individual stone, are significantly different in scale from each other, indicating that they did not experience the same deformation and annealing history.

In the end, based on these observations and our collective experience, we could only conclude that the Wittelsbach-Graff and Hope diamonds did not come from the same original crystal.

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