

JEWELRY OF THE 1940s AND 1950s

By Sylvie Raulet, 332 pp., illus., publ. by Rizzoli International Publications, New York, 1988. US\$100.00*

This large, lavishly produced book addresses a period of jewelry design that has heretofore been overlooked by many jewelry historians. Spanning two important decades, the book examines the transition from the solid, geometric lines of Art Deco to the rich, fluid diversity of the modern period.

Raulet focuses primarily on the *haute joaillerie* of France, devoting relatively few pages to pieces from other countries. She not only provides historical background, but also distinguishes noteworthy styles of jewelry and mountings, as well as the prominent designs, of this turbulent period.

The section on jewels created by famous painters and other artists is especially interesting, despite the occasionally cumbersome biographical information. The section on watches and accessories describes the ingenious vanity/cigarette cases, compacts, and elaborate timepieces of the period. It is a bit disconcerting, though, to find an early Mickey Mouse watch by Ingersoll in the company of so many finely jeweled specimens. The book also contains a biography section, a select bibliography, a brief glossary, and an index.

Although the text does offer useful and interesting information, it is often vague, tedious to read, and condescendingly ethnocentric. There is no mention of the term *retro*, coined in the 1970s by François Curiel of Christie's, to define the distinctive jewelry produced between the late 1930s and the end of World War II.

Perhaps the greatest strength of the book lies in its 546 illustrations (235 in color). Nicely reproduced, they reveal the diversity and creativity of a time period shaped in turn by war, reconstruction, and prosperity.

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BOOK REVIEWS

Elise B. Misorowski and
Loretta Bauchiero, Editors

COLOR ENCYCLOPEDIA OF GEMSTONES 2nd Edition

By Joel E. Arem, 280 pp., illus., publ. by Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., New York, 1987. US\$53.95*

Arem has successfully compiled a tremendous amount of information into an important resource for the advanced collector in particular, but also as a reference for the practicing gemologist. Following a comprehensive introduction that simply, yet accurately, explains often-complicated concepts such as crystal structure, the book provides basic information on almost all of the mineral species and synthetics that have been cut into gems.

After 10 years of ongoing research, Arem provides some new information in this second edition. The gem section has been expanded from 210 species in the first edition to 250 species in this volume. New sections of special interest include "Thermal Properties," "Color Measurement and Specification," and "Gemstones from the Laboratory." For speed and convenience, the author presents a number of comprehensive listings, including: "Mineral Groups of Gemological Interest," "Gemstone Species and Ornamental Materials," and "Trade Names of Synthetics."

The book's format works well for quick and easy reference, especially with an expanded index that also includes gemstone varieties. Unfortunately, a few reference tables are poorly placed and may cause some confusion. The organization of the updated and revised full-color plates is better in this edition than the first.

The quality of the color prints has also been improved.

This edition of the *Color Encyclopedia of Gemstones* is well written and meticulously worked through so that the information is readily available and easy for the average reader to understand. Because of the quality of both the information and the color photographs, this book is an asset for any library.

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ANTIQUE AND TWENTIETH CENTURY JEWELLERY, A GUIDE FOR COLLECTORS 2nd Edition

By Vivienne Becker, 319 pp., illus., publ. by N.A.G. Press Ltd., Colchester, Essex, Great Britain, 1987. US\$45.00*

A lot of information is packed into this modest book on the jewelry styles that were popular in Western Europe during the last 200 years. Having done the research for us, Becker distills her findings into tidy categories that are easily referenced. The book is well indexed, provides a bibliography for further research, and has illustrations for almost every nuance discussed.

Although the book itself is not chronological, each of the 22 chapters follows one topic, such as diamond brooches, chronologically through its period of popularity. Subheadings within each chapter further delineate the history of the style, outside influences, techniques and materials used, prevalent motifs, and important designers or design houses.

An extensive chapter titled "Cocktail Jewellery of the 1940s" has been added to the otherwise virtually unchanged text of the previous edition. For this chapter, 22 new color plates and 13 new black-and-white photographs have been provided to illustrate Becker's vivid descriptions of the post-World War II "retro" style. This is an important update, as "retro" jewelry is cur-

rently enjoying a resurgence of popularity, and there are few references to it in the literature. This chapter gives us clues to help identify this style, which is appearing with greater frequency at auction and estate sales.

Clearly written and intelligently laid out, this is a very useful book for all those interested in antique and period jewelry.

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OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

Jewelry & Gems: The Buying Guide, by Antoinette L. Matlins and Antonio C. Bonanno, 206 pp., illus., publ. by GemStone Press, South Woodstock, VT, 1987, US\$14.95.* This inexpensive "book of the basics" is efficiently arranged in four parts. The first section provides practical knowledge in such areas as gem-cutting styles, popular settings, and the proper way to use a 10× loupe. In the second part, on diamonds, the authors elaborate on the many nuances of judging cut, color, and clarity, and show how these factors—combined with carat weight—determine the value of individual diamonds. The section also includes a table comparing the various color grading systems for diamond, a discussion of diamond substitutes, and questions designed to aid the consumer in buying a diamond. The colored gems portion covers gemstone lore, the determination of a colored stone's value by the "4 C's," and synthetic, imitation, and treated gems. The fourth section addresses such subjects as how to select a jeweler and a gemologist-appraiser, and includes a word of caution concerning investment-for-profit in gems. A center section of color plates depicts the better-known gems, and the reader will find the numerous charts, diagrams, tables, and refer-

ence lists helpful. Aside from a few typographical errors such as "adventurine" for aventurine, a few gemological mistakes such as referring to amber as "petrified" instead of fossilized, and the use of a few debatable terms such as "semiprecious," this book provides a helpful bridge between the jewelry industry and the buying public.

JOHN I. KOIVULA
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Mineral Museums of Europe, by Ulrich Burchard and Rainer Bode, 269 pp., illus., publ. by Walnut Hill Publishing Co., 1986, US\$49.50.* In this well-structured and methodically laid out book, the authors provide a guide to the mineral collections of Western Europe. Each museum is described under four headings: general information, historical notes, exhibits, and the minerals themselves. The general information appears in the upper right corner of the page, where it can be spotted easily. For each museum, the authors provide the address, telephone number, location, hours, fees, and name of the curator. Historical notes cover the origins of each museum and profile important collectors and curators. The exhibits section gives the spatial dimensions for the various galleries and describes the thematic arrangement of the exhibits. Finally, noteworthy mineral specimens are listed along with their localities and, as applicable, the display cases where they can be found. These minerals are further categorized by quality designations: excellent, good to very good, and rarities. Over 100 color photographs, most of them taken by Bode, richly illustrate this volume. The result is "a unique selection of some of the most beautiful minerals from classic, but often abandoned, localities." Many black-and-white photographs and illustrations of collectors, curators, and the various collections

further augment the text. Indexed and cross-referenced, this is truly a "Baedeker" for mineral enthusiasts traveling in Western Europe.

EBM

Descriptions of Gem Materials, 3rd edition, by Glenn and Martha Vargas, 180 pp., illus., publ. by Glenn and Martha Vargas, Thermal, CA, 1985, US\$15.00.* This well-planned book contains a wealth of information for gem cutters, particularly those interested in rare and exotic gemstones. The compact format gives the physical and optical properties of 450 gem materials, which are divided into two basic sections, one for natural gems and the other for synthetics and simulants. Further sections provide tables of hardness, specific gravity, refractive index, and a glossary of important names and terms used in gemology. An index of alternate, varietal, and incorrect names is included, as is a bibliography. New to this edition are the derivations of mineral names. The book could be improved by providing more information on the various localities of gem materials. To a buyer of rare and unusual gems, this is an important consideration. Nevertheless, a gem cutter will find this book a useful, quick reference for nearly all gemstones available.

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The Jade Kingdom, by Paul E. Desautels, 118 pp., illus., publ. by Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., New York, 1986, US\$37.95.* Desautels presents an interesting and colorful introduction to the world of jade. Well researched, the book attempts to cover every aspect of this fascinating and revered gem. In so doing, however, it simply skims the surface. Jade localities, gemology, cutting, and carving, as well as centuries of lore from

several cultures, are condensed into a mere 118 pages. The first three chapters address the definition of jade throughout history and the gemological testing of jade and its substitutes. While the first chapter is particularly well written, it was disappointing to see a discussion of hardness points in the first main section of

the chapter on testing, especially since there is no caution about the potential damage they can cause. The geology of worldwide sources of jade is touched on in chapter four. This is followed by specific chapters on Chinese jade and its symbolism, and jade from Central America, New Zealand, and the rest of the world. A chapter on the

cutting and carving of jade concludes this slim volume. Although not the final word on this subject, as a basic reference *The Jade Kingdom* is a succinct and highly readable discussion of this ancient gemstone.

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and EBM

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