

Book Reviews

Susan B. Johnson & Jana E. Miyahira, Editors

BULGARI

By Daniela Mascetti and Amanda Triossi, 225 pp., illus., publ. by Abbeville Press, New York, NY, 1996. US\$75.00*

Bulgari is a welcome addition to the growing body of jewelry history literature. Not only are the luscious photos of sumptuous jewels a feast for the eyes, but the book is also a lucid and thorough portrayal of this prominent jewelry company.

Each of the 12 chapters focuses on a specific aspect in the development of Bulgari's distinctive style. Chapter one traces the history of the Bulgari firm from its modest beginnings in a small Greek village near the Albanian border to international success by following the life of Sotirios Bulgari, the founder of the firm. Sotirios, the only surviving child of a Greek silversmith, was born in 1857. His steady progress from silversmith to fine jeweler was the base on which the Bulgari firm was built. This chapter also shows how each successive generation contributed to the growth of Bulgari and describes some of their important clients and significant jewelry sales.

The next chapter, *The Evolution of the Bulgari Style*, demonstrates Bulgari's transition from following jewelry fashion (between 1920 and 1950) to leading it (from the 1960s to the present). We are shown how Bulgari designers introduced smooth, rounded elements that gave a sense of volume to their jewelry and incorporated colored gemstones for chromatic effect. Bulgari also chose to use more yellow gold for important pieces, in response to their customers' desire for jewelry that could be worn at any time of day and for any occasion.

The authors go on to address three important design innovations

introduced by Bulgari that are now part of their signature style: the integration of ancient coins in jewelry, the use of modules, and the use of a flexible band called a *tubogas*. During the 1960s, Bulgari revived the style of setting ancient coins in jewelry, which had been out of fashion since the end of the 19th century. The company also introduced the concept of using modules—simple, interlocking elements made of precious metals and/or carved gems assembled in different combinations to make necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and rings. The *tubogas*, named for its resemblance to a gas-pipe, is a flexible band of interlocking thin strips made without solder, used by Bulgari for collar necklaces, bracelets, watch bands, and rings.

Manufacturing aspects include discussion of the sense of volume that is built into each piece with metalwork and gems, the selection and cut of gemstones used by Bulgari, and the production of their jewelry, from design concept to finished product. These chapters are particularly interesting for the jeweler/gemologist. Each of Bulgari's line of luxury items has its own chapter: Silver and Precious Objects, Watches, and Perfumes. The book closes with a chapter titled *The Bulgari Image*, which is an enlightening examination of how Bulgari has carefully crafted the image they present to the public through advertising and store design.

The authors and the art director deserve special merit for the visual impact of this book. The jewelry is laid out and photographed so the reader can truly appreciate its magnificence, and many important jewels are shown from front *and* back to illustrate the beautiful gallery work and clasps. Also, close-up details provide an immediate understanding of Bulgari's manufacturing excellence.

The exceptional illustrations and the in-depth text make this book a useful reference for jewelry historians, collectors, and appraisers. Yet it is also an enjoyable read for anyone interested in a taste of luxury.

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COLLECTING AND CLASSIFYING COLORED DIAMONDS: An Illustrated Study of the Aurora Collection

By Stephen C. Hofer, 742 pp., illus., publ. by Ashland Press, New York, NY, 1998. US\$300.00*

This heavy, lavishly illustrated book delivers more than 700 pages on the various aspects of colored diamond collecting, with an emphasis on the observation, determination, and classification of a stone's color. The book is based on the 260 stones of the Aurora collection, which has been displayed at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

A brief introduction precedes a catalog of the entire Aurora collection. Each gem is illustrated, and its weight, dimensions, shape, cutting style, and color description indicated. Following the catalog is a concise discussion of important considerations in colored diamond collecting. Rarity is addressed at some length, as it is pivotal to the estimation of value. This naturally leads to a discussion of value, which is illustrated by a table of auction prices according to diamond color. Then the major section devoted to color begins, with comments first on color observation and

*This book is available for purchase through the GIA Bookstore, 5345 Armada Drive, Carlsbad, CA 92008. Telephone: (800) 421-7250, ext. 4200; outside the U.S. (760) 603-4200. Fax: (760) 603-4266.

grading, then on how to determine face-up color (see below). The longest of the 12 chapters (at nearly 200 pages, a book in itself) is devoted to color classification. It is organized by color (white, gray, black, purple, pink, red, orange, brown, yellow, "olive," green, blue, and colorless) and emphasizes the various nuances. Three appendices complete the book: (1) cut and color determination graphs; (2) a glossary and an extensive bibliography; and (3) a list of diamonds sold at auction, classified by color.

This is clearly not a book on colored diamonds in general, as it is strongly biased toward collecting and classifying. One feels that the book was written for the pleasure of sharing knowledge, rather than as a scholastic or scientific treatise. As such, it fulfills its purpose remarkably well. The collector will find all sorts of interesting information, as well as attractive color photographs that can also be used for reference.

The book's size (approximately 32 × 24 × 6 cm, or 12½ × 9½ × 2½ inches) and cost may be intimidating to some, but the overall quality of the production is excellent. The 700-plus color photos, a number of them by world-renowned photographer Tino Hammid, are of high quality, as are the numerous line drawings and color sketches. One of the great merits of this book is that the photos of groups of colored diamonds include a colorless diamond for visual reference. One wishes this could have been done for the catalog section; although pictures of colorless diamonds are available for comparison, these photos were not necessarily taken under the same conditions as those of the colored diamonds.

The text is easy to read, even when it comes to the more delicate aspects of color science (such material was enhanced by contributions from Nick Hale, a professional color scientist). Mr. Hofer should be commended for his remarkable bibliography, which provides an excellent base for further research. References

to other authors are numerous and offer a welcome support to the text.

The value of the text is limited, however, by the fact that Mr. Hofer makes no particular effort to compare his views with those of major players in the field. For example, the use of the catalog as a reference for collectors is significantly limited by the fact that it does not provide GIA color grades (although, as most auction houses and colored diamond dealers agree, this is the most widely accepted color grading system in the industry today). The author offers his own system to estimate color, with new concepts such as the CAMP ("colour-area micro pattern") and the weighted average face-up color, but the relationship between these parameters and the color terms used to describe the diamonds is not clear. Mr. Hofer also insists on giving each of the Aurora collection stones a common name, but such qualifiers as *jade*, *heliotrope*, "manilla," and *lead* are uncommon for colored diamonds, to say the least.

This beautiful, well-documented book is certainly a must-have for gem book and colored diamond collectors. Its superb documentation base will be an asset for scholars as well. However, in addition to the idiosyncracies in the discussion of color, the fact that there is little on practical concerns such as the separation of natural from treated or synthetic colored diamonds in this work makes it less useful for the gemologist outside the collector community.

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THE NATURE OF DIAMONDS

*Edited by George E. Harlow, 278
pp., illus., publ. by Cambridge
University Press, New York, NY,
1998. US\$29.95* (softbound)*

The Nature of Diamonds is the companion text for a special American Museum of Natural History exhibi-

tion of the same name. Its stated focus is to provide a well-illustrated overview of the diverse topics related to diamond. It is successful in this endeavor—both in content and in illustration.

In *The Nature of Diamonds*, leading scientists, gemologists, and cultural observers cover virtually every aspect of this cherished gem. The reader experiences a panoramic view, ranging from how diamonds form to their economic, social, and technological incarnations. Whether your interest in diamonds leans toward the romantic, the symbolic, or the scientific, you will enjoy the diversity of subject matter and the expanse of photos and illustrations.

Individual essays address three broad categories: science, history, and utility. Beginning with the science of diamonds, chapters examine diamond's unique mineralogy, the causes of color (both natural and artificial), the extreme environments required for formation, and a global timeline of sources and production. Subsequent chapters explore the role of diamonds throughout history, their diverse mythology and literary presence, and their evolving cultural status. Remaining chapters highlight diamond mining and processing, provide a brief excursion into the gemologist's world of identifying and grading gem diamonds, and give insights into the role of diamonds in modern technology.

Additional sections encompass a pictorial guide to the world's greatest diamonds and the diamond treasures of Russia. Two monographs cover the history of diamond cuts and the fascinating story behind the evolution of today's symbol of love and marriage, the diamond ring. Each chapter includes an ample bibliography.

The book's editor (and one of the subject specialists) characterizes *The Nature of Diamonds* as an overview of the expansive world of diamonds. However, it accomplishes far more than his modest statement might convey. This compendium of essays

penned by renowned experts, punctuated with numerous illustrations and photographs, and packaged with valuable bibliographical references, is an important resource for any library.

Whether you cherish diamonds for their status, their economic and social legacy, or their unique scientific applications, you will be entertained and enriched by *The Nature of Diamonds*.

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GLOSSARY OF GEOLOGY, 4th Edition

Edited by Julia A. Jackson, 769 pp.,
publ. by the American Geological
Institute, Alexandria, VA, 1997.
US\$110.00

Over the past few decades, the scope of gemology has expanded considerably, particularly in the areas of geology and analytical techniques. As a result, today's gemologist needs a more solid technical vocabulary than ever before. For geology and related fields (e.g., geophysics), the *Glossary of Geology* has been the best available dictionary of specialized terms in English since its first edition was published in 1957. The fourth edition continues this tradition of excellence. The *Glossary* now contains about 37,000 entries, of which 3,400 are new and 9,000 have been updated, expanded, or revised since the publication of the third edition only 10 years ago.

The 4,000-plus mineral names constitute the largest single group of entries in the *Glossary*. Therefore, it is not surprising to find such terms as *benitoite*, *californite*, *chrysoprase*, *demantoid*, *rhodolite*, and *tanzanite*, although some gem variety names such as *tsavorite* are not included. Among the more traditional gemological terms, *diaphaneity*, *enhancement*, *melee*, and *Tolkowsky theoretical brilliant cut* do appear, but manufactured materials such as cubic zirconia, GGG, and YAG are grouped together under *diamond simulant*.

There are also entries for most of the analytical techniques likely to be encountered by gemologists, such as infrared absorption spectroscopy, Raman spectrometry, and X-ray fluorescence (XRF) spectroscopy; only ED[energy dispersive]XRF was not present from among my arbitrary selection of terms.

Without hesitation, I recommend this *Glossary* to all gemologists as the most authoritative work of its type in English. Given the history of the *Glossary* and the size of this fourth edition, it is not likely that another edition will appear for at least a decade, which makes this volume a good long-term investment.

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GEM AND JEWELLERY YEAR BOOK 1997-98

Edited by V. V. Kala and A. Kala,
697 pp., illus., publ. by International
Journal House, Jaipur, India
[diaworld@jpl.vsnl.net.in], 1998.
US\$35.00 (surface), US\$50.00 (air)

Thirty-five years ago, India was an insignificant player in the diamond world, constituting less than 5% of any aspect of the industry. Today, it dominates in the manufacturing sector by virtue of its production of about 40% by value and 70% by weight of the world's polished diamonds, and by being home to at least 90% of the world's diamond cutters and 20% of De Beers's sightholders. Further, India-based companies are garnering strength in downstream jewelry manufacturing and retailing. The gem and jewelry industry is now a vital component of the national economy, having become India's second-largest source of foreign exchange—at 18%, surpassed only by textiles. How did this all occur? How do Indian diamantaires view the industry? And, what is the prognosis for India's influence on the diamond industry in the next millennium?

These are not easy questions to

answer, but some indications can be gleaned by perusing *Gem and Jewellery Year Book 1997-98*. Now in its 19th year of continuous publication—primarily for the gem and jewelry industry in India—this sourcebook is little known elsewhere. It is primarily concerned with the diamond industry, a reflection of the fact that polished diamonds account for the bulk (93%) of India's gem and jewelry exports.

The book is divided into three parts. Part I (358 pp.) covers a vast amount of material from the mining to retailing of diamonds. Topics include: a review of recent highlights in the Indian diamond industry; industry statistics that are difficult to obtain elsewhere; descriptions, with photographs, of new Indian-made manufacturing tools and technology; a "Who's Who," with brief profiles and photographs, of 171 Indian gem and jewelry luminaries worldwide; and glimpses of 38 world diamond mining and consuming countries from an Indian perspective. Part II (132 pp.) consists of nine appendices, ranging from a list of worldwide gem and jewelry organizations to a listing of India's diplomatic and trade representatives abroad. Part III (198 pp.) contains lists (with addresses and specialties) of over 3,500 selected international exporters and importers—from 55 countries—for gemstones, jewelry, pearls, and synthetic stones.

This volume clearly indicates that India has built up a formidable gem and jewelry infrastructure, particularly with respect to diamonds. It is also clear that the Indian diamantaires have the knowledge, finances, and ability to expand their influence. Those in the international gem industry who choose to ignore this unique and valuable handbook, with its wealth of information and subliminal implications, do so at their own risk.

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