

## EDITORS

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### Tiffany Flora & Fauna

By John Loring, 256 pp., two vols., illus., publ. by Harry N. Abrams, New York, 2003. US\$50.00\*

John Loring has done it again. *Tiffany Flora & Fauna* is a beautiful two-volume set showcasing the best of Tiffany & Co.'s jewelry and *objets d'art*. The first book features Tiffany flora. Loring notes Tiffany's unofficial motto, "Mother Nature is the best designer," and clearly she has been the inspiration for countless Tiffany pieces. In fact, Edward C. Moore, Tiffany's head designer in the late 1800s, established one of the first design schools in the U.S., where he would often have students create studies of botanical specimens in pencil and watercolor. Moore himself was strongly influenced by Asian prints, and many of his original designs featured peonies, irises, and patterns reminiscent of Japanese and Persian art. In later years, one of his students, Paulding Farnham, was highly successful in designing enameled floral jewels, particularly orchids, for Tiffany. Several of Farnham's orchid brooches are featured in the pages of this book.

Of course, the use of botanical elements was not confined to jewelry. Tiffany glass and silver also featured amazingly realistic flowers and fruits. Most notable is the Louis Comfort Tiffany-designed glass screen called "Three Seasons," which was displayed at the 1900 Paris Exposition.

The second book focuses on fauna in Tiffany designs. Tiffany & Co. jewelry has always featured animals of all kinds. Indeed, their contemporary "Nature" collection includes butter-

flies, salamanders, dragonflies, birds, turtles, and frogs in diamond-pavéed platinum. Especially pleasing in the fauna volume are the fanciful creatures designed by Jean Schlumberger, Donald Clafin, and Elsa Peretti.

Both volumes contain design sketches from the Tiffany archives. Loring also includes examples of Audubon paintings, Asian prints, and botanical photographs that served as inspiration for some Tiffany designers. The photos in both volumes are simply magnificent, making the books a visual delight. In these pages, it's easy to see why Tiffany & Co. has maintained its position as one of the world's most popular retailers of fine jewelry and luxury objects for more than a century.

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### Burma Ruby: A History of Mogok's Rubies from Antiquity to the Present

By S. K. Samuels, 254 pp., illus., publ. by S.K.S. Enterprises, Tucson, AZ, 2003. US\$45.00

The author, a native of Burma, has used his wealth of personal experience in compiling this book. Dr. Samuels lived under the British rule of Burma and, later, its occupation by the Japanese during World War II. After the war, he earned a medical degree from the University of Rangoon and traveled around the Mogok district. In 1960, he emigrated to the U.S., and did not return to Burma (now Myanmar) until more than 20 years later.

In *Burma Ruby*, Dr. Samuels looks at the Mogok mines from the local perspective, in contrast to the occidental histories put together by the "noble enterprise" of colonialism. He tells much of this history via anecdotes and personal communications, using a variety of unique Burmese sources as well as more traditional references.

In the first chapter, "Lure of the Ruby," one of the author's major points is that many references to ruby in antiquity fail to note the actual sources of the material. He concludes that, since Sri Lankan rubies are predominantly pink, many rubies in the ancient European references might be from Mogok. Unfortunately, this deduction ignores the fact that some Sri Lankan rubies are decidedly red; he also does not take into account any of the African localities, which produce rubies of very similar look to Mogok. As one can imagine, attempting to document anecdotes covering 1,000 years of history is no easy task.

The second chapter is a concise natural history of the geography, climate, topography, and geology of Myanmar, as well as the ethnic and linguistic groups that make up the complicated land of the ruby. The next 80 pages deal with the history of Burma leading up to and through World War II, again relying on local Burmese legends and histories,

*\*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.*

prefacing them with this statement: "Not much credence can be given to such stories, but they do suggest that rubies and other precious gems were known, valued, and used by inhabitants of the country for a long time."

The following chapter, "Developing the Post-War Gem Trade," first describes the escalating political and economic problems leading up to the March 1962 military coup and beyond. It then looks at development of the Myanmar Gems Corporation and the auctions held by the Union of Myanmar Economic Holdings Limited.

In the "Stone Tract" chapter, the author discusses the Mogok area itself, covering the geography, geology, and mines. Briefly mentioned are the Mong Hsu mines, which today produce most of the world's rubies (albeit, treated). At the end of the chapter, he discusses rubies and their classification, as well as the sapphires of Burma.

Next is a section of unnumbered pages with 33 color plates. Most are original photos by the author, and all have interesting gemological themes, including pictures of the palaces, King Thibaw's ruby-encrusted slippers, and a flawless sapphire of approximately 20 ct, offered for \$100,000 in 2002 by a private party. The tragedy is the poor color reproduction. Fortunately, the black-and-white photos throughout the book are of better quality.

In "Properties of Burmese Rubies and Sapphires," Dr. Samuels mixes gemology with emphasis on local customs. For instance, he mentions that the color of ruby is due to impurities such as chromium, but then goes on to discuss the term *pigeon's blood*. He is accurate in commenting that, while such terms are relics of the past, they carry a certain romanticism that is very important to gemstones.

The chapter titled "Smuggling, Heat Treatment, and Provenance of Burma Rubies" presents some amusing stories, including how the 496.5 ct SLORC ruby (named for the country's State Law and Order Restoration Committee) came to be spirited out of the country and back again. Heat treatment and provenance are dis-

cussed briefly, but not from a scientific standpoint. The chapter ends with a list of five local gem labs that do origin reports, along with addresses.

"The Gem Trade in Modern Burma" covers the economic structure of Burma, exchange-rate issues, and the country's poor economic performance of the last decade. The author also covers the annual gem emporium, but only in general terms (mostly just in table form), without any photos or depictions of specifics.

"Buying Gems in Burma" includes a short history of Rangoon, plus the ins and outs of trying to buy at the MGE auction or at Rangoon's Gems Museum. Dr. Samuels gives a rather simplistic summation of three of the C's (color, clarity, and cut), plus precautions to take when buying.

Following the author's closing remarks are various appendices, especially of interest for Burma-philés. There is also a somewhat limited bibliography. One major flaw of the book, given the breadth of issues it covers, is that it lacks an index.

All in all, while there is some interesting information here, the book would have benefited greatly from better editing and production.

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### **Gems from the East and West: The Doris Duke Jewelry Collection**

*By Janet Zapata, Ulysses Dietz, and Zette Emmons, 120 pp., illus., publ. by the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation, New York, 2003. US\$27.50 [www.newportrestoration.com/jewelryexhibit.html](http://www.newportrestoration.com/jewelryexhibit.html)*

When American Tobacco Company and Duke Power magnate James B. Duke died in 1925, he left his fortune to his only child, Doris. At the tender age of 12, she became the richest girl in America. Years after her death in 1993, the heiress remains an enigmatic figure, despite many biographies and notwithstanding a family legacy of achievement in education and charity.

Among her many passions, Doris Duke was undeniably fond of jewelry. This catalog, the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation's third publication about her collections, represents a collaborative effort by jewelry historian Janet Zapata, the Newark Museum's curator of decorative arts Ulysses Dietz, and Indian jewelry scholar Zette Emmons. Organized to reflect Duke's heritage and the evolution of her personal style, it memorializes the one-time touring exhibit of her collection and illustrates a rarefied segment of American society—a stratum populated by persons whose lives were defined by unabashed wealth and privilege.

Two essays set the stage. The first describes the Duke family; the second recounts events in Doris Duke's life that lend meaning to the collection. For example, Duke's yearlong honeymoon around the world at age 22 is described as the sentinel event that ignited a lifelong passion for Indian, Southeast Asian, and Islamic arts.

The first 110 images capture the collection's more significant pieces, which benefit from larger photographs and more extensive narrative than the 200-plus pieces that were not included in the exhibit. Period photos of the Duke family and estates mark the passage from Gilded Age gentility to the acquisitive reaches of the family's 20th century prosperity.

Heirloom cameos and carved coral demiparures of Civil War-era neoclassicism give rise to the belle époque jewelry favored by Doris's mother. Cartier's 1908 platinum festoon necklace, said to be one of the most opulent of its time in the New World (and set with diamonds provided by J. B. Duke), symbolizes the young nation's rising economic status, celebrating its emerging royalty rooted in railroads, oil, tobacco, and ore.

Doris Duke's personal jewelry is described as an "unintentional collection." Aside from her Indian and Asian pieces, no unifying theme emerges. The design houses of Cartier and Van Cleef & Arpels are well represented in Duke's earlier years, when she favored classical glamour. Later,

flamboyant pieces from Verdura and David Webb suggest the collector's greater comfort with extravagant flair and independence.

Above all, the mystical beauty of Indian and Southeast Asian jewelry held sway over Duke. Dramatic pieces from her Asian travels and acquisitions include hand ornaments as well as ruby and emerald necklaces that reveal a passion for exotica and regalia.

Sketches and diagrams enhance the book's multi-sourced photography. Archival images of the Duke estates and the few photos of the reclusive Duke wearing her jewelry add context to the compilation.

The Duke collection is scheduled to go to auction at Christie's New York in the spring of 2004. Those fortunate enough to have viewed the 2003 exhibit will savor Gilded Age and modern glamour as well as Asian treasures. The catalog also offers ample content for jewelry designers and historians, collectors, curators, appraisers, auction house associates, and admirers of Eastern arts.

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## Minerals of the World

*By Ole Johnsen, 439 pp., illus., publ. by Princeton University Press, Princeton, NJ, 2002. US\$49.50*

This good-looking field guide was written by well-known mineralogist Ole Johnsen of the University of Copenhagen. It is divided into three parts: "Mineralogy & Crystallography," "Mineral Descriptions," and "Tables." The first part covers "What is a mineral?" as well as crystal geometry, the seven crystal systems, formation and growth, and the chemical, physical, and optical properties of crystals. In the second part, minerals are listed according to their chemical families, such as carbonates, native elements, and the like; the silicates are subdivided into cyclosilicates, tectosilicates, and others. The tables in the third part cover common minerals and their properties, with one table for minerals with metal-

lic or submetallic luster and a second for those that are nonmetallic. There is also a periodic table of the elements. The book concludes with a glossary and an index.

The softcover edition is well bound and uses good paper stock. It is bigger than most field guides, which makes it harder to pack, but you wouldn't want to ruin it in the field in any event. The inside boasts more than 600 color photos and diagrams. Most of the images show good examples of the more than 500 minerals included and are helpful in identification. The color rendition is better than in other books of similar import. The crystal and atomic diagrams are quite effective in creating an understandable visual image.

A book with the (somewhat overused) title *Minerals of the World* should give a balanced representation of all important minerals and their prime localities. This guide is unusually rich in minerals and localities for Scandinavian countries, especially Norway. However, many will appreciate their inclusion here, as they are often given scant coverage in other works. Because nearly all specimens depicted are part of the Geological Museum of the University of Copenhagen—and the author admits his bias in the preface—the selections in this book are understandable.

Some errors, mostly minor, were noted. A few involved incorrect or misspelled localities. For instance, *Stirling* was used for Sterling Hill, New Jersey, and the Sterling mine in Antwerp, New York. On page 233, the text correctly states that lazulite comes from the Yukon, but it places the Yukon in the U.S. rather than Canada. There are also errors of a technical nature, mostly gemological. The purple of amethyst quartz is not due to iron alone but to iron in unison with radiation-induced color centers. The term *fire opal* does not properly apply to opal with intense play of red or orange but rather to opal that has a red, orange, or yellow body color—with or without play of color. The orthoclase in figure 567 does not show labradorescence but rather adularescence.

There are also some notable omissions. For example, important localities for titanite (sphene, not an obsolete name as this book states)—such as Brazil, Madagascar, and Pakistan—were not included. There is no mention of Afghanistan or Pakistan as sources of tourmaline, and the species liddicoatite is somehow omitted. Afghanistan, Madagascar, and North Carolina are not mentioned as spodumene localities. There are important amber sources besides the Baltic. The Maori of New Zealand are indeed well known for their carvings of nephrite, but the author inexplicably fails to touch on far more important Chinese nephrite carvings. Of jadeite jade, one of the rarest and most valuable of all gems in its finest qualities, the author says merely that it "is a highly appreciated material for carving."

Despite these negatives, *Minerals of the World* has a tremendous amount to offer. On a mineralogical level, this is a fine introductory work, especially since it was written to show minerals and their properties that can be seen by the unaided eye or with a loupe. Those who appreciate minerals in general or want to learn more about the minerals of Norway, Greenland, and other countries in that part of the world will especially enjoy this book.

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## OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED

**Cultured Pearl: Charm of the Pearl.** *By Shigeru Akamatsu, 179 pp., illus., publ. by Shinju Shinnbun Co., Tokyo, 2003 (in Japanese). 3,800¥. Fax: (+81) 03-3834-6493.* The author is a well-known veteran of the pearl industry, having served with K. Mikimoto & Co. for decades. In this book, he surveys the spectrum of cultured pearls, covering the history of the pearl (natural and cultured), the science of the pearl, the pearl culturing process, quality standards, and more.

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