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Bernd Munsteiner: Reflexionen in Stein [Reflections in Stone]

*Edited by Wilhelm Lindemann, 224 pp., illus., publ. by Arnoldsche, Stuttgart, Germany, 2004 (in German and English). US\$75.00**

This extraordinary new book on Bernd Munsteiner sets the famous lapidarist's work firmly within the realm of art—showing it to us not as we are accustomed to seeing it, as the stonemason's craft taken to the edge of possibility, but as something more. In the complex argument that opens the book, Lindemann explains how the development of faceting during the Renaissance took cutters away from the ancient view of precious stones as earthbound sources of divine light: In other words, even as gems grew more sparkly, their beauty lost its connection to the underlying material. But it is in such dynamic spaces that art flourishes. Much as Cubism bridges two- and three-dimensional representation, the reconciliation of the tensions between crystal and light through cutting is, in Lindemann's view, the driving force behind Munsteiner's creativity. A series of essays from American collectors Si and Ann Frazier and Michael M. Scott, German jeweler Deborah Aquado, and art historian Christianne Weber-Stober extend this thesis and offer personal glimpses of both the man and his work.

The heart of the book, though, is its more than 200 breathtaking photographs, most of them taken by Jürgen Cullmann and Harold and Erica Van Pelt. Pieces are grouped thematically and "hung" on the white space of the pages as if on a gallery wall, interspersed with close-ups of the rutile inclusions in the "Metamorphosis" crystal and of gem minerals in various

stages of cutting. Loose gems and jewelry from the earlier agate series are featured, as well as the more familiar "fantasy cut" tourmalines, aquamarines, and quartzes. Also seen are the sculptural works, outdoor installations, and several pieces of glasswork done for ceramics manufacturer Royal Copenhagen. A special section is devoted to "Dom Pedro," the 10,000 ct aquamarine Munsteiner cut in 1993.

For both the serious collector and the jeweler/gemologist, this book offers a comprehensive guide to one of the most important lapidary artists in the world. I particularly enjoyed seeing Munsteiner's complete body of work treated as a retrospective. As a museumgoer, I found that this approach helped me understand the whole as well as revel in the parts. And as someone who had understood these works primarily as exercises in "gee-whiz" lapidary technique, their intellectualism was as much of a surprise as their sensuality.

Beyond its obvious value as a reference, *Reflexionen in Stein* successfully accomplishes its goals: It carves out a space for Bernd Munsteiner's work within the broader context of Western art history—and then celebrates what happens there, even as the work itself invites us to do.

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Illustrated Guide to Jewelry Appraising, 3rd Edition

*By Anna Miller, 200 pp., illus., publ. by GemStone Press, Woodstock, VT, 2004. US\$39.99**

With this edition, the late Anna Miller

updated and expanded her respected *Illustrated Guide to Jewelry Appraising*. Every evaluator, whether newly minted or a seasoned professional, will find it a valuable resource.

The book covers a wide range of important topics, beginning with the appraiser's role and responsibilities in the first chapter. The second deals with understanding the different valuation methods, researching price points, and making the proper identification. Readers will find the third chapter especially rich in jewelry "forensic" identification. The process of estimating values for every conceivable form of wearable jewelry is covered next, while chapter 5 reviews the appraisal as a legal document. The book closes with tips on identifying and valuing unfamiliar pieces.

The *Illustrated Guide* discusses just about every major aspect of a carefully crafted and accurate appraisal for antique, period, and modern jewelry. It is organized logically and is refreshingly easy to read. Miller found ample room for detail, but did not overdo it. This edition includes an updated listing of market information and price guides, an additional jewelry period ("Consumerism," 1990–2002), and a new chapter called "Valuing the Unfamiliar," which covers reproduction, Asian antique, and Berber jewelry.

Although the quality and value of the text is as expected from someone with decades of experience, it is unfortunate that both the paper quality 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.*

the photographs are not up to the same standard. After reading the first-rate text, it is disappointing to be let down by dark, murky, and sometimes out-of-focus photographs.

In this reviewer's opinion, this book is a great reference guide, but it would have been outstanding if the production issues had been resolved. Nevertheless, Anna Miller has provided another useful tool that would certainly add value to any appraiser's library.

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Magic World: Inclusions in Quartz

By Jaroslav Hyrsl and Gerhard Niedermayr, 240 pp., illus., publ. by Bode Verlag, Haltern, Germany, 2003 [German and English]. € 49.00

This attractive book offers a fascinating look into a truly magical world: the approximately 130 minerals that have been documented as visible inclusions in crystalline quartz. The objectives of this book are not only to describe the minerals known to occur in quartz, but also to help gemologists identify them and encourage more collectors to study them. To meet these objectives, the authors have provided some 290 photos and photomicrographs.

The book begins with a general discussion of quartz, its modes of formation, and the kinds of inclusions that these differing modes produce. The paragenesis of fluid and solid inclusions is described, as well as what the presence of these inclusions tells us about the growth environment. Highlights of this section are photos of specimens and original labels from the W. E. Hidden collection, which is now housed in the Natural History Museum of Vienna.

The next eight chapters cover the inclusions themselves, organized according to their chemical classification (oxides, carbonates, silicates, etc.); the last chapter is devoted to inclusions in synthetic quartz. Short

descriptions of the inclusions are given, along with locality and other information that collectors might find valuable. Some of these, such as diamond as an inclusion in quartz, are stated to have been reported but not actually verified.

Notables such as Rock Currier, Si and Ann Frazier, and John Koivula contributed to this book. The specimens, superbly photographed by the authors and others (including Werner Lieber, Olaf Medenbach, and Jeff Scovil) capture outstanding examples of the varied and often breathtakingly beautiful inclusion scenes in quartz from a number of prominent collectors and institutions. These include: a 1 cm cinnabar crystal in doubly terminated quartz from Guizhou, China (p. 55); a 1.2 cm spray of päakkönenite needles from the Cryo-genie mine in California (p. 67); a large rock crystal quartz with actinolite needles from Switzerland (p. 164); a scepter-growth quartz, also from Switzerland (p. 168); and a Japan-law quartz twin with andradite from Peru (p. 196).

Only a few minor criticisms can be made. In some places, the English text has misspelled words or confusing syntax, such as "about 1 cm big, nicely formed cinnabar." Does this mean the cinnabar is 1 cm in size or that 1 cm is considered big for a well-formed cinnabar inclusion? (I favor the latter.) Sometimes the locality information given for the photos and the names of the minerals listed in the index are not translated into English. In addition, the text assumes an audience versed in basic mineralogy, which might force the novice reader to consult other texts for technical definitions and further data on the minerals themselves.

Still, this is the best new book on mineral collecting I've seen in a long time, and it is certainly the finest yet on inclusions in quartz. I hope the authors' aim, that many collectors will be attracted to quartz inclusions, will become a reality, just as long as there are still some left for me.

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Minerals: Their Constitution and Origin

By Hans-Rudolf Wenk and Andrei Bulakh, 668 pp., illus., publ. by Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom, 2004. US\$130.00 (hardcover); US\$70.00 (softbound).

This is an introductory college-level mineralogy textbook. As such, it may not seem a natural for the library of a gemologist; yet a basic knowledge of modern mineralogical principles and methods can be a tremendous advantage in understanding the latest advances in gemology. Such knowledge can also lead to a broader appreciation of the properties of gemstones and of the occurrence of gem materials in the context of natural processes. The gemologist stands to gain greatly from expanding his or her mineralogical background. This book may not be the perfect mineralogical primer for a gemologist, but it has much to offer.

Minerals: Their Constitution and Origin covers a very broad range of topics, and does so clearly and succinctly. It doesn't delve into any topic in great depth, but it provides a good understanding of those it addresses. The diagrams and photographs are well chosen and a great help, although it should be noted that many of the topics assume a basic background in physics, chemistry, and/or mathematics.

Those topics that would probably be of greatest interest to the gemologist include crystal morphology, crystal growth, optical properties, color, spectroscopic techniques, mineral identification, and mineral formation. Besides having a chapter devoted to mineral genesis, the book also covers specific types of mineral deposits in the context of the various mineral groups.

The last part of the book deals with applied mineralogy and includes a chapter on gems, both natural and synthetic. While the coverage of gemstones is very cursory, it is interesting to see how they are viewed in a mineralogical context.

In my opinion, one of the best books ever written on minerals was John Sinkankas' *Mineralogy for Amateurs* (called simply *Mineralogy* in later editions). No other book I have seen does a better job of explaining basic mineralogical concepts so that virtually anyone can understand them. Unfortunately, with the rapid advances in modern scientific mineralogy, this and other classic books for the layperson have become quite dated. *Minerals: Their Constitution and Origin* provides an excellent contemporary introduction to mineralogy. It may not be as enjoyable a read as some of the non-technical mineral texts available, but if you make the effort, you will come away with a lot of good, up-to-date mineralogical insight.

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Rocks Pebbles and Stones: Confessions of a Private Jeweler

By Fred Feldmesser, 100 pp., publ.
by Farrington Press, Boston, 2004.
US\$30.00 (E-mail: parker@feldmesser.com)

It's not often that total strangers welcome you to share in the most per-

sonal milestones of their lives. Jewelers are not only allowed, but also *trusted*, to help guide and be a part of the special moments in life: engagements, weddings, anniversaries, and so forth. Jewelers sell diamonds and gems, love and romance, and for this receive payment. In a style resembling a personal journal, private jeweler Fred Feldmesser shows that there are definitely more than monetary rewards to be gained. For all the books available on every aspect of the gem and jewelry industry, it is rare to come upon one such as this. Mr. Feldmesser opens up to the reader and relates how his love of jewelry has led him on a journey to interact with people and gems, as well as the life lessons he has learned.

Rocks Pebbles and Stones: Confessions of a Private Jeweler is composed of 20 vignettes spread over 100 pages in a magnificently bound volume. Each essay shares a key moment in Mr. Feldmesser's distinguished 30-plus-year career, or an insight he has gained. He begins with his father's guidance in introducing him to the world of diamonds, gemstones, and New York City's 47th Street. He then proceeds with his visits to exotic corners of the world, the inner sanctums of prestigious jewelers, and the homes of prominent clients, as well as his

charitable endeavors with Boston Children's Hospital. (A portion of the book's proceeds will go to children's hospitals in Boston and New York.) The reader will learn why Mr. Feldmesser has such an impassioned view of the role of a jeweler in people's lives.

One of the most charming essays, "Two Small Stones," begins in Mr. Feldmesser's home, where a client has stopped by with her two young boys to consult about some jewelry. As they leave, Mr. Feldmesser gives the children some Brazilian geodes as gifts. A few weeks later, he receives a package in the mail from the two boys with a letter saying they loved their geodes and decided to send him two favorite pebbles from their rock collection in thanks. Shortly thereafter, at the end of a lecture at Sotheby's, Mr. Feldmesser displayed an Art Deco bracelet, a Colombian emerald—and the two small stones he received from the boys. The point illustrated was that all gemstones, by their very nature, are rocks, pebbles, or stones: Sometimes a personal attachment is a more meaningful determinant of a stone's value than the market might otherwise suggest.

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2004 MANUSCRIPT REVIEWERS

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