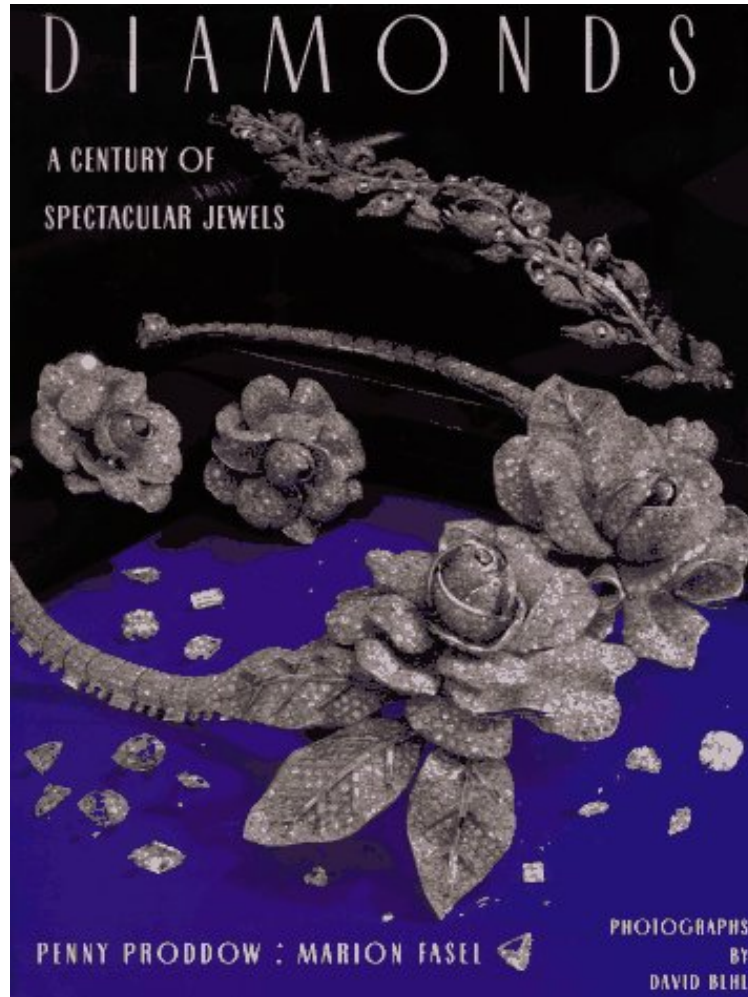


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## Diamonds: A Century of Spectacular Jewels

*Penny Proddow, Marion Fasel*

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**Penny Proddow, Marion Fasel : Diamonds: A Century of Spectacular Jewels** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *Diamonds: A Century of Spectacular Jewels*:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Spectacular overview of sumptuous diamond jewelry By Catherine S. Vodrey Penny Proddow and Marion Fasel have done it again! "Diamonds" is a spectacular overview of some of the most famous, infamous, and downright jaw-dropping diamond jewelry ever made. Those who are interested in a gemological history may be disappointed, as Proddow and Fasel concentrate solely on mostly modern diamonds set into jewelry--but those who salivate over the treasures of luminaries from Queen Elizabeth to Elizabeth Taylor will be delighted with this book. Proddow and Fasel have done their homework and provide the reader with a lengthy history of the diamond and its stature in the jewelry world. From the beginning, it was considered rare, unusual and much to be treasured--and its status as such ensured that it would be used in only the most elegant, important, and imaginative

jewelry. We learn of the origins of the famed Tiffany setting for diamonds. This was a prong structure which supplanted the formerly popular bezel setting by exposing the pavilion (bottom) of the stone itself, thereby allowing more interplay of light and sparkle. This seemingly simple approach ended up establishing Tiffany as one of the world's premier jewelers. We learn about the freedom jewelers felt during the Art Deco and Art Nouveau periods--the freedom to approach jewelry as art and not just dull commissioned pieces from nobility. We learn about the way Jackie Kennedy wore several diamond pins in her hair during a 1960s trip to Paris to SUGGEST the appearance of a tiara--without the royal associations of an actual tiara. Proddow and Fasel have done their homework in providing splendid photographs of both well-known and rarely-seen diamond pieces. The book is particularly strong in showcasing nature-oriented jeweled pieces. Particular stand-outs include:- An astonishingly beautiful butterfly brooch from the 1890s, in which the butterfly's body is made of a diamond and a ruby and the wings are enormous carved and etched diamonds (p. 20), not to mention a diamond and platinum butterfly brooch in which actual butterfly wings are encased in rock crystal (p. 32);- An actual lion's paw seashell in which diamond tentacles climb the shell's grooves and set off the gleaming coral color (p. 87);- An enormous Cartier snake necklace commissioned by Mexican actress Maria Felix in 1968 and featuring over 2,400 diamonds on one side. The other side was done completely in colored enamels, making the necklace reversible (p. 112);- A tortoise compact made from a real tortoise shell and pavé diamond head, feet, and tail (p. 130). This book is an invaluable and instructive guide for anyone who loves diamond jewelry and appreciates the imaginative flights of fancy it inspires in its creators. Highly recommended!

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Deceiving cover  
By Mr Frank M. A. Aris  
The book is nice for people who would like to know a bit more on diamonds in general. If, however, you would like to have in-depth details of this fabulous gem, then there are much better quality books, like "Diamonds", second edition by Eric Bruton, or the GIA provides some nice books; Lord Ian Balfour has written an outstanding work on "Famous Diamonds". All in all, "Diamonds: a Century of Spectacular Jewels" is a nice coffee-table book, but then, if it's just the pictures you like, why not buy a copy of "Magnificent Jewels" by Christie's, these sales are held twice a year, both in New York as well as in Geneva (Switzerland); and the photos (not to mention the prices - before AND after the sales!!) will take your breath away!

1 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Mediocre photography  
By sbtier  
The highlight of this book, strangely enough, is the text. It explains how jewelry styles changed throughout the century in an interesting way. Unfortunately, the photographs weren't as good; they didn't accentuate the jewels very well and were sometimes slightly out of focus and grainy. In the chapter on pink diamonds, many of the photographs make the diamonds look gray. Throughout the book, diamonds described as canary yellow look like white diamonds. In general, the beauty of the gems were not captured.

Diamonds have been used to adorn the human body since ancient times, but diamond jewelry of remarkable invention, style, and variety really came into its own only in the twentieth century. This book surveys the rich history of this century's fascination with diamond jewelry with unmatched thoroughness. Authors Penny Proddow and Marion Fasel (coauthors of *Hollywood Jewels*) describe the parade of interesting jewels with wit and style - from the French empress Eugenie's glittering tiara to the pop singer Madonna's diamond navel ring. Decade by decade the authors trace the changes in public taste - often led by society figures or entertainers such as Marjorie Merriweather Post, Lyn Revson, Merle Oberon, and, of course, Elizabeth Taylor. They reveal the innovations of a succession of creative designers, detailing the evolution of styles including Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Machine Age, Pop, and Fantasy. They show the introduction of ever-new cuts of diamonds - from the traditional round and rose-cut stones to baguettes, pear shaped, rectangular, and even half-moon stones - and follow the contemporary trend from pure white diamonds to canary and, more recently, pink ones. The authors have handled many of these dazzling modern jewels, delved into the archives and studied the drawings of the leading artisans and jewelry merchants - Cartier, Van Cleef and Arpels, Harry Winston, Bulgari - and interviewed many living designers, including Paul Flato, Julius Cohen, Rachele Epstein and Daniel Brush.

From *Library Journal*  
Through most of their long and sparkling history, diamonds have been reserved for royalty; that is, until 1887, when the leaders of the Third Republic of France decided to sell the French crown jewels. Following that event, anyone could own them. This work successfully blends a highly informative and authoritative text with magnificently photographed splendors that exhibit the opulence associated with the jewels. Each chapter focuses on some aspect of the historical importance of the diamond over the past century and its relationship to and impact on fashion. Career information on an array of notable jewelers?from Boucheron, Bulgari, and Cartier to Schlumberger and Winston?is featured. Also highlighted are the styles of Art Nouveau, Art Deco, Machine Age, Modern, and Pop, along with the evolution of settings from traditional silver to platinum and gold. This cavalcade of jewelry history is punctuated with references to fashion, glamor, socialites, entertainers, and royalty. This volume could serve as a companion to *The Master Jewelers* (LJ 10/15/90) and would be a welcome addition to any collection.?  
Stephen Allan Patrick, East Tennessee State Univ. Lib., Johnson City  
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