



Smithsonian Associates

Lunchtime with a Curator: Decorative Arts Design Series

Fabulous Fakes: The Golden Age of American Costume Jewelry, 1935–65

Phyllis Gerstell

Monday, October 2, 2023 - 12:00 p.m. to 1:00 p.m. ET

Costume Jewelry Bibliography

(books in bold are favorites)

Baker, Lillian. *Fifty Years of Collectible Fashion Jewelry, 1925-1975*. Paducah, Kentucky. (P.O. Box 3009, Paducah 42002-2009): Collector Books, 1986.

Becker, Vivienne. *Fabulous Costume Jewelry: History of Fantasy and Fashion in Jewels*. Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 1993.

Bell, Jeanenne. *Answers to Questions about Old Jewelry "1840 to 1950*. 7th ed. Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2008.

Bloom, Ariel. *Pictorial Guide to Costume Jewelry: Identification & Values*. Paducah, Kentucky: Collector Books, 2008.

Brown, Marcia Sparkles. *Coro Jewelry: A Collector's Guide: Identification & Values*. Paducah, Kentucky: Collector Books, 2005.

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Carroll, Julia C. *Collecting Costume Jewelry 101: The Basics of Starting, Building & Upgrading: Identification and Value Guide*. 2nd ed. Paducah, Kentucky: Collector Books, 2008.

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Ettinger, Roseann. *Popular Jewelry of the '60s, '70s & '80s*. Rev. 2nd ed. Schiffer Book for Collectors. Atglen, PA: Schiffer Pub., 2006.

Farneti Cera, Deanna. *Adorning Fashion: The History of Costume Jewelry to Modern Times*. English edition. Woodbridge, Suffolk, UK: ACC Art Books, 2019.

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Leshner, Leigh. *Warman's Vintage Jewelry: Identification and Price Guide*. Iola, WI: Krause Publications, 2008.

Lewis, Melinda L., and Henry Swen. *The Napier Co.: Defining 20th Century American Costume Jewelry*. Benicia, CA: Life by Design Publishing, 2013.

Miller, Judith. *Miller's Costume Jewelry*. London, New York: Miller's; Distributed in the USA and Canada by Octopus Books USA, 2010.

Musetti, Katerina, William DeLizza, and Harold Elster. *The Art of Juliana Jewelry*. Atglen, Pa.: Schiffer Publishing Ltd., 2008.

Peacock, John. *20th Century Jewelry: The Complete Sourcebook*. New York, New York: Thames & Hudson, 2002.

Pitman, Ann Mitchell. *Inside the Jewelry Box: A Collector's Guide to Costume Jewelry: Identification and Values*. Paducah, Kentucky: Collector Books, 2004.

———. *Inside the Jewelry Box. Volume 2: A Collector's Guide to Costume Jewelry: Identification and Values*. Paducah, Ky.: Collector Books, 2007.

———. *Inside the Jewelry Box: Volume 3. a Collector's Guide to Costume Jewelry: Identification and Values*. Collector Books, 2008.

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Pullée, Caroline. *20th Century Jewelry*. North Dighton, MA: JG Press, 1997.

Rehmann, Jacqueline. *Classic American Costume Jewelry: Identification & Value Guide*. Paducah, Kentucky: Collector Books, 2009.

Rezazadeh, Fred. *Costume Jewelry: A Practical Handbook & Value Guide.* Paducah, Kentucky: Collector Books, 1998.

Schwartz, Sharon G., and Laura Sutton. *Eisenberg Originals: The Golden Years of Fashion, Jewelry, and Fragrance, 1920s-1950s.* Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing Ltd, 2017.

Tanenbaum, Carole, and Eve Townsend. *Schreiner: Masters of Twentieth-Century Costume Jewelry.* First edition. New York, New York: G Arts, 2017.

Vega, Alice, and Terry Niefeld. *Monet: The Master Jewelers.* Atglen, PA.: Schiffer Publishing, 2011.

Websites

ASJR: Association for the Study of Jewelry and Related Arts: <https://www.asjra.net/>

CJIC: Costume Jewelry Collectors Int.'l: <https://www.costumejewelrycollectors.com/>

Morning Glory Antiques: <https://www.morninggloryantiques.com/>

N&N Vintage Costume Jewelry: <https://www.trifari.com/>



- **The Art Deco Style:
1920's-30's**
- **The "Retro Style":
1935-late 1940's**
- **Postwar Prosperity:
1950's and beyond**



Art Deco Style 1920's-30's

- **Diamonds set in platinum; accented with ruby, emerald, sapphire or enamel**
- **Geometric shapes**
- **Massed bracelets to accent bare arms**
- **Emphasis on long, straight lines (sautoirs; long strands of pearls)**
- **Dangling earrings to accent bobbed hair**

“Retro” Style 1935- late ‘40’s

- Rose gold setting, often over silver
- Outsized semi-precious stones instead of diamonds
- Curved but flat metalwork; no texture to the gold
- Naturalistic and ribbon-like forms
- Massive “statement” pins
- “Gas Pipe” necklace chains



Post-War Prosperity

Late '40's-1965

- Rose gold is OUT; “power pins” are OUT
- The “diamond look” returns in a big way
- Yellow gold is IN—but with better plating, in more finishes, often with pearls
- Styles are lighter, more “feminine,” often in white and pastel colors
- As move to 60's, all-gold look becomes more dominant

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