

## Antique Jewelry from 1800 to 1939: Appreciating the Dreams



**From simple to spectacular, the evolution of jewelry over a 140-year period is brought to life in a new book.**

Since time immemorial, jewelry has played a powerful role in human society. Its history has filled volumes, and increasing numbers of people are rediscovering the authenticity and beauty of historic jewels. *Antique Jewelry from 1800 to 1939: Appreciating the Dreams* by [Ioannis Alexandris](#) offers an in-depth look at some of the most important, innovative and influential eras that created these historic pieces.

# ANTIQUÉ JEWELRY FROM 1800 TO 1939

*Appreciating the Dreams*



Cover of the book featuring an Edwardian fancy multi-colored diamond pendant, circa 1910. (Albion Art)

The goal of the book is to enlighten readers about these periods by explaining the influences — social, political, and cultural — that shaped the styles, the materials used, and the evolution of the various techniques employed. It also provides a comprehensive

list and short biographies of the artists active in these periods along with their signatures, making this an excellent reference.

“Knowledge is power,” says Alexandris, a 30-year veteran in the gem and antique jewelry business, “and my hope is that this book will serve as a reference to help prospective buyers avoid the pitfalls of misleading intentions or inaccurate information when it comes to purchasing an antique jewel.”



Front and back of an Edwardian brooch featuring sapphires, rock crystal, and diamonds, circa 1900. (Ioannis Alexandris)

Intended for jewelry aficionados and collectors, the book includes hundreds of images, illustrating jewels that range from modest to magnificent, some never seen before in

print. Starting with the Georgian and Victorian styles, it moves to Art Nouveau and Belle Epoque/Edwardian designs, followed by the creations of Art Deco. The author also includes examples of accessories, architecture, and fashion from these periods, showing that the many art forms are interconnected. The chapter on enamel illustrates the various types used through the ages, while another chapter discusses the main gemstones featured in antique jewels.



Ruby and diamond necklace by Bolin, that belonged to Tsar Alexander II. (Christie's Images Ltd, 1978)

Among early 19<sup>th</sup>-century jewels are the intricately designed Berlin Iron. They reached their peak between 1813 and 1815, when citizens of Prussia were asked to contribute their gold and silver jewelry to help fund the uprising against Napoleon. Today, these



cast-iron jewels are usually found in museums or private collections. Some of the more fabulous 19<sup>th</sup>-century pieces featured are splendid gem-studded tiaras and parures worn by European royals.



Art Nouveau dragonfly pendant featuring aquamarine, glass, diamonds, and plique-à-jour enamel by René Lalique, circa 1900. (Albion Art)

René Lalique was among the main artists of the Art Nouveau period, and many of his naturalistic enamel pieces are on these pages, while the Edwardian era featured designs with their roots in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Growing out of a rejection of Art Nouveau's naturalism, the popularity of Art Deco's geometric designs has meant that this era's jewels are among the most copied today.

*Antique Jewelry from 1800 to 1939: Appreciating the Dreams* is worthy of a place in the library of all who appreciate not only the beauty of antique jewels but also their history.

*Main image: Egyptian Revival brooch featuring carnelian, rubies, enamel, and diamonds by Carl Bacher, Austria, circa 1860s. (Ioannis Alexandris)*