

(Free pdf) Pearls: A Natural History

Pearls: A Natural History

Neil H. Landman, Paula Mikkelsen

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Neil H. Landman, Paula Mikkelsen : Pearls: A Natural History before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Pearls: A Natural History:

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A book with the luster and allure of its subject, Pearls is the most spectacular volume ever produced on this prized gem. Blending history, science, and the jeweler's art to celebrate these natural treasures - as in Abrams' hugely

successful Amber - this lavishly illustrated volume, shimmering with new color photography and archival images, traces the natural and cultural history of pearls around the world. Published to accompany an exhibition organized by the American Museum of Natural History in New York and the Field Museum in Chicago, *Pearls* begins with the earliest pearl artifacts found in Mesopotamia and discusses how pearls are formed, in nature and by humans, the ways different cultures have used pearls in literature, paintings, religious objects, and sculptures, and, of course, pearls as personal adornment.

.com From Leonardo da Vinci's recipe for imitation pearls to the derring-do of deep-sea pearl divers, *Pearls: A Natural History* delves into virtually every aspect of the gemstones that have been prized since ancient times for their luster and purity. The fascination of this book--which accompanies an exhibition at the American Museum of Natural History in New York through April 14, 2002--is the way it effortlessly combines scientific, historical, cultural, and practical information. Key topics include different species of marine and freshwater mollusks, the history of perliculture and ecological issues affecting pearl production. The more than 200 photographs include reproductions of spectacular objects ranging from a 16th-century Russian icon of the Madonna and child encrusted in freshwater pearls to an early-20th-century brooch in which lozenge-shaped Mississippi River pearls create the opulent blossoms of a diamond-stemmed flower. Solid information, intriguing trivia, and inviting design give this book a broad appeal. -- Cathy Curtis
From Publishers Weekly
Accompanying a traveling exhibit from the American Museum of Natural History, *Pearls: A Natural History* by Neil H. Landman, Paula M. Mikkelsen, Ridiger Bieler and Bennet Bronson presents these gems in all their natural luster and social value. Jewelry and ornaments from 19th-century India, the antebellum U.S. (a photo of Mary Todd Lincoln in her inaugural jewels), 15th-century Korea, 14th-century England and seventh-century Byzantium appear alongside images of the international pearl industry. Along with selecting 225 photos (150 in color), the authors explain both "perliculture" and the harvesting of naturally occurring specimens, the biology of the mollusks that produce them and the history of pearls in human society. Gem aficionados will be taken with the book's range of size, shape and color of these ever-popular jewels. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.
From Booklist
In readiness for a major exhibition at New York City's American Museum of Natural History and Chicago's Field Museum, curator Landman and his colleagues chronicle everything you ever wanted to know about the pearl, beginning with the fact that not all are born in oysters or made of mother of pearl. Their book, festooned with a variety of photographs and illustrations from ancient and modern times, clearly achieves its mission of one-stop informational source--about history; cultivation; physical, chemical, and optical properties; harvesting; and saving. An invaluable reference for all kinds of information-gathering and curiosity-sating. Barbara Jacobs
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