



Van Cleef & Arpels: Treasures and Legends

By Vincent Meylan

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From Empress Farah and the secrets of the treasure of Iran, to Queen Marie Amélie's missing emeralds, via Fantômas and the blood-red rubies of the kings of Burma, entering the world of Van Cleef & Arpels is like embarking upon a fascinating treasure hunt. In this book, Vincent Meylan explores a century in the history of one of the most prestigious Parisian jewelry dynasties. He opens doors and unlocks caskets to reveal the mysterious, and sometimes fantastic, stories of its clients and the fabulous and exceptional stones that they entrusted to the "golden hands" of Van Cleef & Arpels.

The Maharani of Baroda, the Duchess of Windsor, Princess Lilian of Belgium, Elizabeth Taylor, Marlene Dietrich, Princess Grace of Monaco, Maria Callas, Barbara Hutton and the Countess of Camargo: they are all the heroines of this incredible epic full of rubies, diamonds, emeralds, and sapphires. *Van Cleef & Arpels: Treasures and Legends* is full of extravagant fairytales and fascinating behind-the-scenes revelations. It also tells the sometimes troubled story of a dynasty of jewelers, of gifted men and women who have, for over a century, helped to shape that inimitably Parisian *art de vivre* that is the envy of the world.

Contents:

Chapter I: The Goddess with a Passion for Diamonds; Sita Devi, Maharani of Baroda; Diamonds, Pearl Carpets, and Gladiators; Chapter II: Royal Favorites; The Theft of the Duchess's Jewels: Wallis Warfield Simpson, Duchess of Windsor; For the Love of a King: Lilian, Princess of Réthy; The Lost Emeralds of Queen Astrid; Chapter III: Prince Charming; Diamonds on the Nile: Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, Crown Prince and Future Shah of Iran; Streets filled with Diamonds; When Hollywood Met High Society: Prince Rainier of Monaco; Chapter IV: The Crown of the Thousand and One Nights; Empress Farah; The Diamond Flowers of Princess Soraya; The Iranian Crown Jewels; Chapter V: A Girl's Best Friend; The World's Sexiest Garter: Marlene Dietrich; The Demure Jewels of a Star Who Was Anything But: Ava Gardner; Christmas Stocking Filler: Elizabeth Taylor; Chapter VI: Queens of Style; The Heartaches of Nina Dyer; The Eugénie Blue Diamond; The Gilded Legend of the Aga Khans; "Poor Little Rich Girl": Barbara Hutton; Cuba's Madame de Pompadour: Maria; Chapter VII: Dancing Jewels; "Emeralds"; The Legend of the Emerald Cross; A Revolution and Two World Wars: The Saga of the Romanov Emeralds; The Diadem of the Last Queen of the French; From Napoleon to Stalin: The Trials

and Tribulations of Empress Marie-Louise's Emeralds; "Rubies"; The Blood-Red "Thibaw" Ruby; A Wedding Gift for the Queen of Spain; "Diamonds"; From the Empress Josephine to Princess Grace; The Pink Diamond of the Prince of Baroda; The Diamonds of the Queen of Thailand; Chapter VIII: Treasures and Legends; Esther ("Estelle") Arpels, Mme. Alfred Van Cleef; Renée Puissant, née Van Cleef; The Mystery of the Ruby Peonies; Hélène Ostrowska, Mme. Louis Arpels; Fantômas at Van Cleef & Arpels; Catalog of historic jewelry published in 1950 as publicity for Van Cleef & Arpels New York.

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Editorial Review

Review

Vincent Meylan has recently authored a new book on *Van Cleef & Arpels* and while the firm has been releasing forgettable PR-driven coffee-table books at a steady clip over the last few years, this one is decidedly more scholarly than some of the others. (*Golconda*)

I have to say my collection of sparkly paste looked rather dull after tearing myself away from the entirely different world I found in this book. (*September/October 2014*)

He opens the doors and unlocks the caskets to reveal the mysterious and sometimes fantastic, stories of its clients and the fabulous and exceptional stones that they entrusted to the "golden hands" of Van Cleef & Arpels. (*The Journal of Antiques & Collectibles, December 2014*)

About the Author

Vincent Meylan is responsible for the 'history and royalty' pages in *Point de Vue*. He is also a specialist in precious stones and in 'haute joaillerie'. He is the author of several biographies and of *Queens' Jewels* and of *Boucheron: The Secret Archives*.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Raymond McMillion:

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