

BOOK REVIEWS

ends her book with an appeal to artists not to concentrate entirely on hunting and racing but to go out and venture into the exciting possibilities offered by sports like eventing, polo and dressage.

OLIVER BECKETT

## Artistic jewels

### ARTISTS' JEWELLERY

*Pre-Raphaelite to Arts and Crafts*

by Charlotte Gere and Geoffrey C. Munn

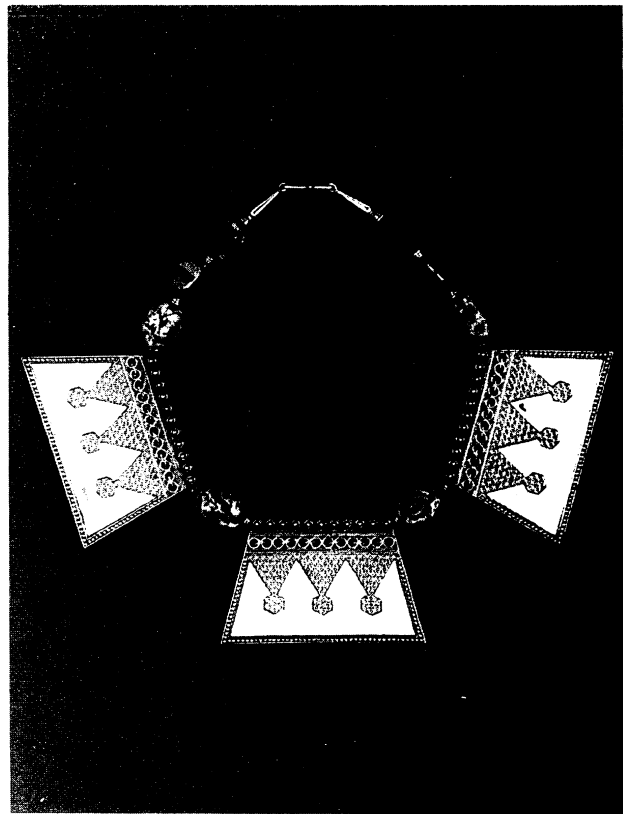
Woodbridge, Antique Collectors' Club, 1989, 244 pp., £29.95

'Necklaces, glittering with coloured stones and pearls set in enamel and gold, and various brooches and pendants . . . oriental gewgaws, elaborate buckles, clasps and belts jangling with Arabian coin. . . .' These are the comments of Diana Holman Hunt in her preface, giving a sharp-eyed little girl's memories of her Holman Hunt grandmother's treasure-chest. The illustration showing 'Grand' herself as a young woman in *The Birthday* evokes the fascination jewellery exerted on the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood as powerfully as Rossetti's *The Beloved*, on which one opens the volume.

The jewels designed by these artists and their peers,



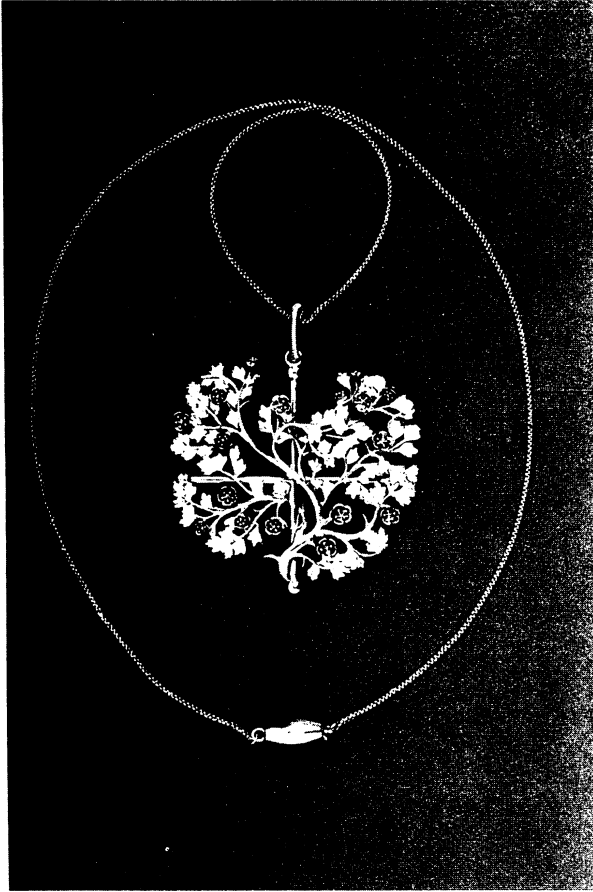
'Helen' by Sir Edward Poynter, 1887



A silver gilt and hardstone necklace by Carlo Giuliano

often for personal gifts or for discerning patrons, are the highlights of this book. Gothic and Tudor style designs by William Burgess, some original creations by Sir Alfred Gilbert, a barbaric neck ornament for Sir Edward Poynter's model to wear as Helen of Troy, 'bird brooches' and hearts, neo-Renaissance pendants and edicular rings executed for Burne-Jones and Charles Ricketts, phantastic objects drawn by Millais to adorn Effie, a Rossetti 'Angel' interpreted as a huge commesso cameo, are superbly illustrated, full-size and in colour and accompanied by extended captions. The designs and portraits of the wearers are often juxtaposed with the actual jewels, many of them traced or identified for the first time. While some, like Pugin's neo-gothic 'marriage jewellery', have long been in public ownership, arduous detective work was needed to trace the hawthorn blossom cross commissioned by Ruskin in 1883 from a design by Burne-Jones, so delicately combining Ruskin's public advocacy of 'natural forms' with his private memorial for Rose La Touche.

These jewels may have been created in reaction to the mass-produced commercial jewellery of the day, but their execution by craftsmen, working for such firms as the



*The Whitelands May Queen's brooch of 1883, designed by Sir Edward Burne-Jones for John Ruskin*

favoured Giuliano and Child & Child, is evidence of the high technical proficiency achieved in delicate openwork, gem-setting and especially enamelling. Other ornaments by the same firms show the pervading influence of historicism. There are many examples of neo-Gothic or Tudor-style crosses, of hearts and winged globes, even a few jewels incorporating novel specimens of the old-fashioned cameo, in opal. One surprising silver necklace could be taken for a modern creation by Jensen, if it were not for its Giuliano mark and its depiction on a portrait of Princess Louise.

The connection of these jewels with the artists' world of the mid-century would appear to be tenuous, and even more so that of the magnificent 'Devonshire Parure'. It is of a different order entirely, based on eighty-eight engraved gems from the famous Devonshire collection and richly set with diamonds. Commissioned by the sixth Duke, its conception may have owed something to the advice of Sir

Joseph Paxton. Incorporating, as it did, numerous historic masterpieces of the glyptic arts, it stands unique among the primary jewellery of its day. It was made by the firm of Hancocks; the designs of the seven ornaments, in widely differing, yet harmonising, historicising styles, have been attributed to Henry Hugh Armstead, one of the sculptors later engaged on the Albert Memorial.

The story of practising British jewellers of the Arts and Crafts movement is less happy. Despite the original and accomplished work of such men as Henry Wilson and John Paul Cooper, no single outstanding genius of the order of Lalique emerged in this country. The authors' discussion of this movement is judicious, and set against the sociological, economic and art historical background, including the wider European and American scene.

GERTRUD SEIDMANN

JEWELLERY - MAKERS, MOTIFS, HISTORY, TECHNIQUES  
by Diana Scarisbrick, Jack Ogden, Ronald Lighbown, Peter Hinks, Patricia Bayer, Vivienne Becker and Helen Craven  
Thames and Hudson, 1989, 192 pages, £16.95

Modern production methods have transformed books on jewellery from densely printed histories to a style which approximates to that of a slide lecture: the emphasis is on colour photographs, accompanied by extended captions. Short of being able to handle the objects oneself, such a visual feast is a satisfactory method of learning about jewellery, provided it does not offer up a mass of unrelated names and comments.

This pitfall has been avoided in the volume under review, firstly by scene-setting introductions to each of the nine chronological chapters (which present European and American jewellery, excluding folk art, from the ancient world to provocatively titled '1960-1989'), and secondly by arranging the 400 colour plates in two-page spreads, illustrating different themes, 'influences', materials or techniques occurring within the period.

No fewer than four editors of various kinds share the responsibility for this book with both a designer and an art editor. They have imparted to it an unfortunate 'coffee-table' look, with its introductory pages irrelevantly subtitled and printed in white on black, and a good many photo-spreads in which the relative sizes of jewels (no measurements given) are grossly distorted by the inclusion of huge enlargements 'designed' to fit the page. The colours, however, are mostly accurate, and the texts themselves belie any appearance of superficiality, for the editors have assembled a team of well-known experts in their fields. Their scholarly yet readable essays are miracles of conciseness, and their illustrations admirably combine a selection from the most famous with unhackneyed jewels. A magnifying glass trained on the 'Credits' page will reveal which jewels are in public ownership.

Jack Ogden highlights areas within the immense field of ancient treasures; Ronald Lightbown contributes from the wealth of his researches on the medieval world, a topic nowadays not easily accessible in well-illustrated form, and Diana Scarisbrick describes jewellery from the Renaissance to Romanticism. The manifold strands of later developments, contrasting the dominance of the leading Paris houses in precious objects of the first rank with the rise of the manufacturing jewellery centres in central Europe, England and America and the creations of artist-jewellers and designers of the day, takes the history into our century.

As we contemplate the lamentable pedestrianism seen in our high street windows, especially in contrast with the superior design and quality found in Switzerland, Germany and France, we welcome the space which this book devotes to excellence in post-war and contemporary jewellery and to its makers. Both Vivienne Becker and Helen Craven emphasize the rise of the new wave of artists and designers who employ both traditional and novel materials, and whose work is receiving encouragement by means of awards and exhibitions from the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths as well as the Victoria & Albert Museum, by De Beers as well as the Council of Industrial Design, although the sterling work of such as Barbara Cartlidge's London Electrum Gallery, so effective in showing and selling modern artists' jewels, surely deserved a mention. As an introduction to the subject, this book is excellent value.

G.S.

## Goya and Lawrence – protest and patronage

GOYA AND THE SPIRIT OF ENLIGHTENMENT

by Pérez Sánchez, Sayre et al

Boston, Little, Brown, 1989. 407 pp., £40.00

GOYA. IN PURSUIT OF PATRONAGE

by Sarah Symmons

Gordon Fraser, 1988. 200 pp., £20.00

SIR THOMAS LAWRENCE. A COMPLETE CATALOGUE OF THE OIL PAINTINGS

by Kenneth Garlick

Phaidon, 1989. 320 pp., £85.00

*Goya and the Spirit of Enlightenment* is the catalogue that accompanied a major exhibition in Madrid, Boston and New York. It illustrates and describes a comprehensive and exhaustive selection of Goya's work. Alfonso Pérez Sánchez, director of the Prado, and Eleanor Sayre, a curator emerita at Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, co-directed. They and their fellow contributors to the catalogue have amassed a treasury of fact and observation, a scholarly introduction to an artist of awesome ingenuity and dissimulating iconography.

The introductory essays are tinted with sentiment, strikingly at odds with the daemonic quality of Goya's vision. Goya's reactions often avoid clear interpretation but are never without bile, yellow and black. The self-portraits suggest that although proud of his profession he was sceptical of what he professed. In all the records of self-examination there is a feeling of *mea culpa*: mockery of his obsequiousness, quizzical irony or glacial sardonic rage. The chronological sequence of the 179 exhibits demonstrates not only his increasing painterly skills, but also his growing enthrallment by the now, the immediate preferred to the promised.

Eleanor Sayre writes on the prints and drawings, observing closely the technique in all its stages. She has a seemingly effortless ability to blend the way the work was done with its content. There is nothing clever or behaviourist in her writing. In her simple and matter of fact way she edges the reader into the tumult and confusion of Goya's imagery. She makes the exploration easy and amusing, decoding and directing attention simultaneously.

Fred Licht in a fascinating essay relates Goya to David and both to the muddling label 'the age of enlightenment'. Common sense then takes over and he makes the obvious link of Goya with Velasquez in an original way. This frees him to dwell on Goya as prime subject and he bounces about on waves of learning and imagination, intoxicated with the ambiguity and irony that promote and hide the story and the method.

When the National Gallery was lent Goya's portrait of the Condesa de Chinchon it was hung in a side room, a solo item. If it had been shown among the British paintings of Goya's time, it would have been seen, as Brian Sewell suggested, as comparable to the portraits of Sir Thomas Lawrence. The placing of the Condesa adjacent to Lawrence's immaculate Queen Charlotte would have thrown into relief the merits of both paintings, each enhanced by the individuality in the other, Lawrence's symphonic, formal portraiture alongside the Spaniard's bitter-sweet realism.

Goya (1746–1829) and Lawrence (1769–1830) demand understanding and scrupulous attention to detail while reading the images and while writing about them. Sarah Symmons and Kenneth Garlick have observed these preconditions and carried into their books true affection for their artists. Sarah Symmons enjoys Goya's ferocity, as apparently did his royal subjects. Dr Garlick, until his retirement in 1984, Keeper of Western Art at the Ashmolean, understands Lawrence's submission to the British caste system, and ruefully records how adept a social figure the artist became.

Sarah Symmons subtitles her pursuit of Goya, his pursuit of patronage. Patronage is her excuse. She has concentrated on Goya's formal works, restricting her argument and illustration. That is regrettable. It is in his prints and drawings that Goya developed his thoughts. His private art is reactive, violent, desperate, contemptuous of the folly, cruelty and stupidity that surrounded him. She has dealt with this aspect