

Benjamin Zucker's "Diamonds" at Les Enluminures, New York

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Les Enluminures, New York is exhibiting "Diamonds" beginning October 24 through November 9, 2019.

Les Enluminures announced an exhibition and sale of the extraordinary collection of diamonds — the king of gems — of Benjamin Zucker, one of New York's leading dealers in diamonds and precious stones. Through these diamonds, Benjamin Zucker's remarkable story unfolds over three generations.

As per the press release, Zucker arrived in New York in 1941 and had the benefit of the training of his grandfather, a leading expert in uncut diamonds in Antwerp, and his uncle, one of the foremost dealers of diamonds in the Far East. Some of the world's most famous diamonds, such as the Wittelsbach Diamond, passed through the hands of the Zucker family. Armed with the family "know-how," Benjamin Zucker formed a collection that "has taken a lifetime of patience, money, and unquenchable enthusiasm," according to art historian Diana Scarisbrick. As Zucker himself says, "Diamonds will always be a magical window facing the invisible world."

"Put together over more than 45 years, this hugely rare and immensely valuable collection includes approximately 35 precious jewels mostly made for European patrons — rings, brooches, hairpins,

earrings. It tells the story of the Indian diamond over a period of nearly 600 years, ending before the discovery of mines in Brazil, a source that displaced India and inaugurated a new age of diamonds. Starting with the octahedral diamond, the collection includes outstanding examples of world-class importance showing how jewelers gradually captured more and more of the allure of these indomitable gems evolving from point to table to rose to brilliant cuts. The success of the brilliant-cut (close to our cuts today) eclipsed the earlier shapes, many of which were recut to ‘modernize’ them, with the result that earlier cuts of ‘old mine’ diamonds included are exceedingly rare,” states the press release.

Many of these jewels have been exhibited in prestigious museums like The Walters Art Museum, the Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History, the Houston Museum of Art, and most recently the Metropolitan Museum of Art. They have never been offered for sale. An exclusive and lavish publication by leading scholars accompanies the exhibition. Written by Diana Scarisbrick, celebrated jewelry historian and author of “Diamond Jewelry: Seven Hundred Years of Glory and Glamour” (September 2019), it includes drawings tracing the evolution of diamond cutting by Jack Ogden, gemologist, and author of “Diamonds: An Early History of the King of Gems (2018).”

The exhibition will be on view from October 24 through November 9, 2019, at Les Enluminures, 23 East 73rd Street, 7th floor, Penthouse New York, NY 10021.

Founder: Louise Blouin

