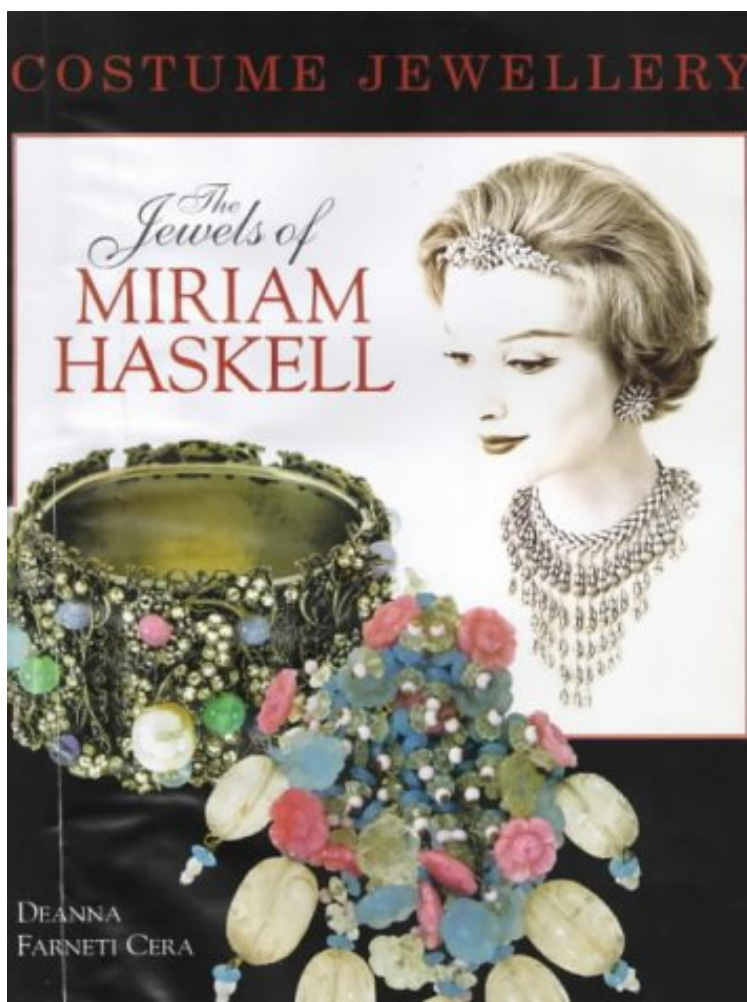


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## Costume Jewelry: The Jewels of Miriam Haskell

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helpful. *Jewels of Miriam Haskell* By Christine Saalbach Miriam Haskell is recognized as an important American costume jewelry designer in this wonderful coffee table book. She had a penchant for the unusual with her ostentatious accessories. She was born in 1899 in Tell City, Indiana to immigrant parents (a Russian father and a Prussian mother). At the dawn of the Roaring Twenties, she moved to New York City with \$500 in her pocket, opening a small boutique. Named *Le Bijou de L'Heure*, there she sold costume jewelry that she designed. In the early 1920's, Haskell advertised that "colored glass necklaces, one for each outfit, are considered a necessity this year." Not only was Haskell riding the wave of the Roaring Twenties, she was creating a wave of her own. The Twenties were the years that all of the fashion rules were broken. Haskell's unbounded creativity met with enormous popularity. The prices for her costume jewelry were much lower than the cost of precious metals and stones, so anyone could afford to look fashionable. The popularity of her costume jewelry continued, even after the stock market crash. Her sales did not drop significantly until 1931. Another difficulty Haskell encountered was the lack of material available for jewelry during WWII when glass from Bohemia and white metal was scarce. Haskell never registered her designs, although she began to sign her pieces in 1950. The Miriam Haskell trademark was not received until 1988, 64 years after she began designing. Because there were no marks to identify her work prior to 1950, it took a great deal of research on author Cera's part to verify pieces of costume jewelry as Haskell's. Cera relied upon advertisements in magazines and newspapers, and photographs of movie stars shown wearing jewelry attributed to Haskell. Haskell drew inspiration for her designs from many cultures - South America, China, Greece and the US southwest Indian designs. Her designs mimicked or consisted of any and all materials, including flotsam, stones, seeds, berries and beans. For the collector of costume jewelry, this book is a keeper.

Devoted to the story of Miriam Haskell, one of America's most distinguished fashion jewellers, this text includes over 200 examples such as bracelets, necklaces, brooches, earrings and parures from significant European and American collections which illustrate the styles of the small number of designers who were associated with the House. This is a work which should be of reference for collectors of period jewellery, for fashion designers and for everyone who is interested in the decorative arts.

From *Library Journal* *Antique Collectors' Club*. 1997. 207p. photogs. index. ISBN 1-85149-263-1. Copyright 1997 Reed Business Information, Inc. 'A detailed tribute to this famous costume-jewellery house' *Harpers Queen* Language Notes Text: English (translation) Original Language: Italian