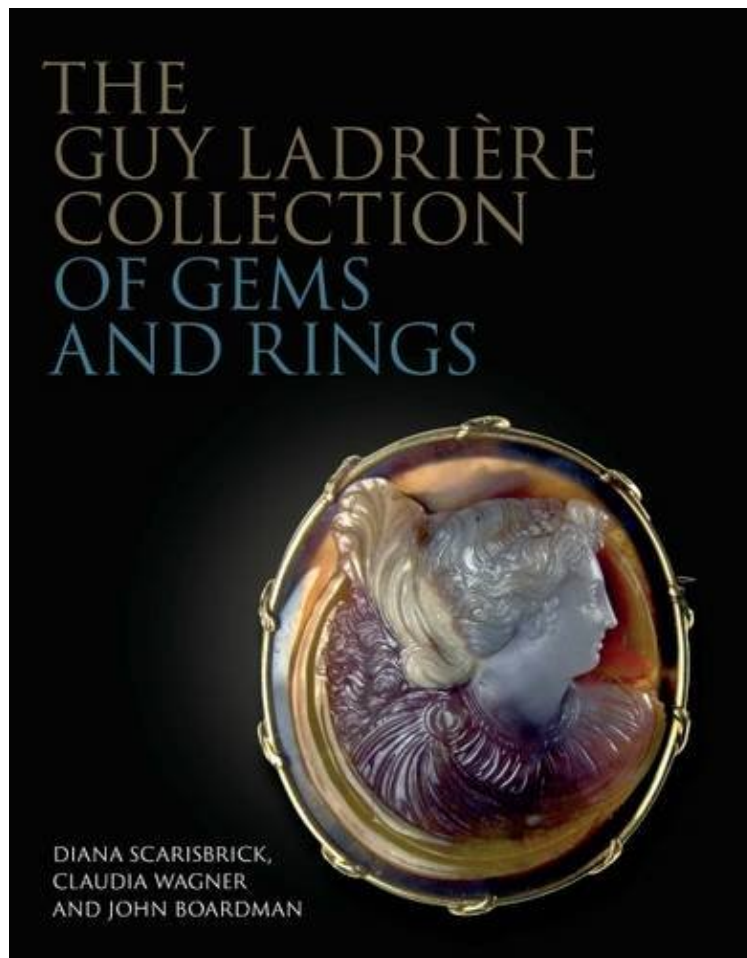


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The Guy Ladrière Collection of Gems and Rings (The Philip Wilson Gems and Jewellery Series)

Diana Scarisbrick, Claudia Wagner
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One of the world's finest assemblages of rings and gemstones, the Guy Ladrière Collection in Paris is of major importance both to the collector and the art historian. This handsome volume, written and compiled by three of the foremost experts on gems and semi-precious stones, is the first to catalogue, illustrate and describe all the pieces in the Collection. Comprising some three hundred items, and including a rich and varied mixture of cameos and intaglios, the Collection ranges from ancient artefacts originating in the Minoan period to gemstones and rings of the nineteenth century. It also boasts many medieval pieces, Christian crystal plaques and Lombardic stones with inscriptions. Of special interest are the prize pieces in the Collection. These include the famous rhinoceros, most probably depicting an identifiable animal (the celebrated 'Madrid' rhinoceros, also known as the 'Marvel of Lisbon' and taken from Portugal to Spain in 1583); Queen Elizabeth I crowned with the mythological lionskin of Hercules, and presented as the power to tame the forces of evil; and some remarkable and varied pairs of heads.

'There can be few collections of gems and rings in private hands that are so large, rich and varied and which contain so many items of such importance. The tone is set by the very first item in the catalogue: a contemporary bust in the round of Queen Elizabeth as Hercules. There are important Greek and Roman gems and rings, and a rich assortment of Late Antique and Merovingian gems and rings, as well as Byzantine and Medieval gems and gem-settings, including spectacular works from the court of the Hohenstaufen Emperor Frederick II. For me the stars of the show lie in the Renaissance and Early Modern period, especially the representation of an Indian rhinoceros: a cameo carved by Jacopo da Trezzo. A number of the gems are recorded as having come from important old collections - for instance those formally in the possession of, respectively, the Earl of Arundel, Cardinal Albani, Marlborough, Wyndham Cook and Sir John Evans. In reality many of the items are very small, and a great joy of the volume is the quite magnificent photography. In opening this volume you will be unlocking the doors of a *Kunstkammer* and viewing a cabinet of rare marvels.' - Martin E Henig, Honorary Visiting Professor of Archaeology, Institute of Archaeology, University College London; formerly Supernumerary Fellow of Wolfson College, Oxford
About the Author
Diana Scarisbrick, a noted authority on engraved gems, and a former Jewellery Editor at Harpers Queen Magazine, is now a Research Associate at the Beazley Archive in the University of Oxford. Her many publications include *Finger Rings: Ancient and Modern* (2006) and *Rings: Miniature Monuments to Love, Power and Devotion* (2014).