

Twelfth Through Eighteenth Centuries Dover Jewelry And Metalwork: A Journey Through Time and Art



A Pictorial Encyclopedia of Decorative Ironwork: Twelfth Through Eighteenth Centuries (Dover Jewelry and Metalwork) by David Gentleman

★ ★ ★ ★ ☆ 4.2 out of 5

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: The Rich Legacy of Dover Craftsmanship

The town of Dover, nestled amidst the rolling hills of Kent, England, has witnessed centuries of rich artistic heritage. Among the many notable crafts that flourished in Dover, jewelry and metalwork held a prominent place. From the intricate designs of the medieval era to the opulent creations of the Baroque and Rococo periods, Dover artisans showcased their exceptional skills and artistry in these exquisite works.

The Medieval Era: Intricate Beauty in Metal and Gems



During the medieval period (12th-15th centuries), Dover jewelry was characterized by its intricate metalwork and the use of vibrant gemstones. Artisans employed techniques such as filigree (delicate wirework) and cloisonné (enameling within metal cells) to create intricate brooches, pendants, and rings.

Gemstones such as rubies, sapphires, and emeralds added a touch of opulence to these pieces. Religious motifs and symbolism were prevalent in medieval jewelry, reflecting the deep faith of the era. Dover craftsmen also created liturgical objects, such as chalices and reliquaries, showcasing their mastery of metalworking and enamel techniques.

The Renaissance: A Flourishing of Artistic Expression



Renaissance Metalwork

The Renaissance (16th-17th centuries) brought a renewed interest in classical art and humanism, which had a profound impact on Dover jewelry and metalwork. Artisans drew inspiration from ancient Greek and Roman designs, incorporating elements such as acanthus leaves, scrolls, and mythological figures into their creations.

Gold and silver became the preferred metals for jewelry, and enameling and engraving techniques reached new heights of sophistication. Dover metalworkers also produced exquisite tableware, such as ewers, plates, and candlesticks, showcasing their versatility and craftsmanship.

The Baroque and Rococo Periods: Opulence and Drama



The Baroque (17th-18th centuries) and Rococo (early 18th century) periods were characterized by an embrace of opulence and dramatic forms. Dover jewelry and metalwork reflected this aesthetic, with pieces featuring elaborate goldwork, gemstones, and pearls.

Baroque jewelry designs incorporated scrolling patterns, asymmetrical shapes, and a sense of movement. Rococo creations were more delicate

and playful, with pastel colors, floral motifs, and asymmetrical designs. Dover artisans also crafted elaborate gold boxes, snuff boxes, and other decorative objects during this period.

Techniques and Materials: The Secrets of Dover Craftsmanship

Dover craftsmen employed a wide range of techniques to create their exquisite jewelry and metalwork, including:

- **Filigree:** Delicate wirework used to create intricate patterns and embellishments.
- **Cloisonné:** Enameling within metal cells, creating vibrant and colorful designs.
- **Engraving:** Carving or etching designs into metal for added detail and texture.
- **Casting:** Pouring molten metal into molds to create intricate shapes.
- **Chasing and repoussé:** Hammering metal from either side to create raised or recessed designs.

The materials used by Dover artisans varied depending on the period and style, but gold, silver, and gemstones were common. They also experimented with other materials, such as ivory, enamel, and pearls, to create unique and captivating works.

Cultural Significance: Jewelry and Metalwork in Dover Society

Dover jewelry and metalwork played a significant role in the social and cultural life of the town. Jewelry served as a marker of status and wealth, with elaborate pieces reserved for the nobility and wealthy merchants.

Religious objects, such as reliquaries and chalices, held great spiritual importance and were often commissioned by churches and religious institutions. Dover metalwork also adorned the homes of the wealthy, adding a touch of elegance and opulence to their surroundings.

: A Lasting Legacy of Artistic Excellence

The jewelry and metalwork created in Dover from the twelfth through eighteenth centuries stands as a testament to the exceptional skill and artistry of its craftsmen. Through intricate techniques, the use of precious materials, and a deep understanding of the cultural context, Dover artisans produced works that continue to captivate and inspire today.

The legacy of Dover jewelry and metalwork extends beyond its historical significance. It serves as a reminder of the enduring power of craftsmanship and the importance of preserving the artistic traditions of the past.



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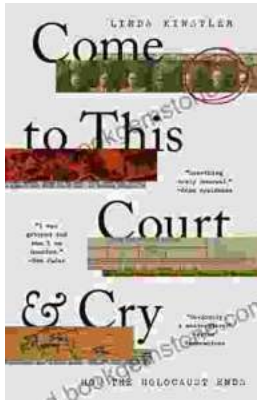
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