



Beads: A History and Collector's Guide

Stefany Tomalin

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In the '60/70s beads were underresearched. Even today in UK antique markets, necklaces and single beads still turn up in bargain boxes at cheap prices, whether glass, plastic, semiprecious stones or ethnic jewellery, holiday souvenirs or lavish carnival costume accessories. Throughout history beads show prestige and wealth, as trade goods, heirlooms and dowry, markers of tribal loyalty, as prayer aids, magic talismans, love tokens and signs of status in life. Nowadays they reveal amazing skills and give us an idea of what is valued enough to be skillfully copied, beads continue to display astonishing ingenuity -they are made of almost every possible material if it can be given a hole for threading. Handmade or mass-produced glass, stone, ceramic, bone, shell, pearls, coral, amber, jet, cast or handwrought metal, found objects or items constructed of tiny beads- stitched or woven modern or traditional beadwork, every piece leads to new discoveries. This book helps you explore the origins of many of your treasures, whether you collect beads of a particular category as: 'Eye Beads', Millefiori Trade Beads found in the 1960s, exotic tropical seeds and nuts necklaces, Victorian mourning jewellery, real or reproduction "Egyptian mummy beads", Tibetan turquoise, twentieth-century designers, Rosaries, even antique beads found on traditional English lace bobbins!

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