



*Diamonds: myth, magic, and reality.* Published under the direction of Jaques Le-grand, Crown Publishers Inc., New York, 1980.

The diamond has fascinated mankind since the dawn of times, and a rather large number of books on the subject have been written. The most recent contribution, "Diamonds: myth, magic and reality", still fills an important gap. The book combines the history of and myths about diamond with an excellent description of the geology, production and use of the diamond.

Chapter 1 deals with the history of diamond production and use, containing many of the traditional stories about famous diamonds and diamond finds, as well as some not so often told ones, all richly illustrated.

Chapter 2 deals with the geology and mining of diamonds and contains a rather thorough discussion of the various diamond production sites. The illustrations are very well chosen – particularly, the drawings are excellent. However, the discussion of one of the most important producers – the Soviet Union – is very meagre indeed – little more than one page in the book. Although there has been a veil of secrecy on the "red diamonds", there is still much more to be said on the geology and mining of Soviet diamonds. Australia, where diamondiferous pipes were discovered some years ago and are presently mined is mentioned with a few lines only.

Chapter 3 describes the properties of diamond as well as its use as a gem, including cutting and classification. As could be expected from the well-known experts contributing to this chapter, the subject is dealt with in an excellent manner and is outstandingly well illustrated.

Chapter 4, finally, discusses diamond jewelry art and contains a short – in my opinion, far too short – section on synthetic and industrial diamonds. Most of the diamonds produced are used for industrial purposes and not as gems, thus a more thorough discussion of the industri-

al use would have been motivated. On the whole, "Diamonds: myth, magic and reality" is an excellent book, close to perfection, which can be highly recommended to both the interested lay-man as well as to the specialist.

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