

RARE ANTIQUE JEWELLERY AND EXCEPTIONAL GEMSTONES

The Faerber Collection

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Photos provided courtesy of Faerber and KS Sze & Sons

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Renaissance Necklace, circa 1590



Antique Diamond Bracelet, circa 1840

The fall fair season in Hong Kong brought some amazing art, antiques and precious jewellery to the city.

At the Fine Art Asia fair, there were jewels and gems of significant size, quality and renown, while precious merchandise, experts and collectors from all over the world overflowed at another—the International September Jewellery fair.

At one event, an antique jewellery workshop presented by KS Sze & Sons, expert collector and seller of rare antique jewellery, Thomas Faerber, showed some of the fabulous and bejewelled pieces in the “Faerber Collection”, which are now available for sale in Hong Kong.

Thomas explained that he recently set up a collaboration with KS Sze & Sons, a local jeweller that was established in 1923, to present select pieces from the Faerber Collection to clients in Hong Kong. At KS Sze & Sons’ private showroom in Alexandra House, visitors were encouraged to closely examine the historical pieces on show and to try them on. A ruby and diamond tiara placed on the head of one lovely lady brought out a chorus of applause from the



Antique Emerald and Diamond Bangle, circa 1850



Art Nouveau Enamel and Diamond Choker by Lucien Gaillard, circa 1900



Art Nouveau Corsage Ornament by Georges Fouquet, circa 1901



Ruby and Diamond Necklace / Tiara by Chaumet, circa 1915

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attendees.

The presentation of the Faerber Collection included a briefing of the significant periods of jewellery manufacturer, types of production and some of the important pieces that have been acquired by Faerber.

Some of the most interesting pieces in the collection are from the Renaissance Period when Europe came out of the Middle Ages. During this period, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, arts and culture flourished, especially in Italy. A new world began for the jewellery business, and magnificent and grand pieces were created, as beautifully exemplified by Faerber's Renaissance Necklace, circa 1590.

One exceptional piece that Thomas acquired and sold was a historic emerald and diamond necklace with matching earrings, commissioned in 1810 by Emperor Napoleon as a wedding present for his second wife, Archduchess Marie-Louise. The necklace is so significant and its provenance so exceptional that it was purchased by the Louvre Museum in Paris, and is now part of their collection of French crown jewels.

For Thomas, jewellery and precious stones were always fascinating. His family was involved in the business, starting with his grandfather who worked as a goldsmith. He crafted and sold jewellery for the local market from a little shop in Cologne. Thomas's father founded his own business in pearls and then had success after the Second World War as a wholesaler.

"My father bought stones from diamond cutters in Amsterdam, Antwerp, coloured stones from dealers in Paris and sold them in

A regular selection of pieces from the Faerber collection will be on display at the KS Sze & Sons' private showroom



Art Deco Diamond Bracelet by Alfredo Ravasco, circa 1925

Germany. He was a wholesaler, an intermediary between the producer and the jewellers who were making the jewellery. I often went to my father's office and I was always interested in the diamonds, the precious stones and sometimes the antique pieces of jewellery I saw there. My father gave me some idea of the business and the most precious thing he left me, after he passed away, was his good reputation," explained Thomas.

The passion for antique jewellery and the reverence for the history that came with them began with the pieces that were introduced to him by his father. "I remember very clearly, my father came home one day with a beautiful antique emerald necklace and showed it to me. He bought it in Austria from Hungarian refugees who fled Eastern Europe with their jewellery. These refugees restarted their careers and lives with the money they obtained through the sale of the jewellery they brought out with them. It was a similar story with Russian aristocrats who fled

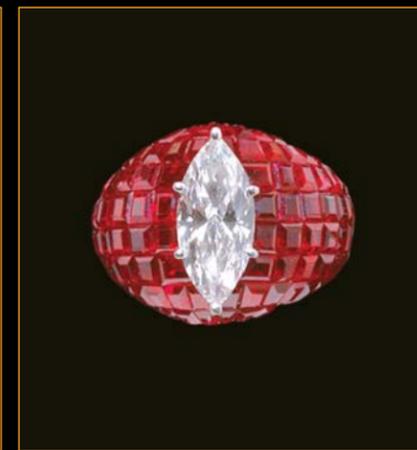


Multi-Gem and Diamond Torsade Bracelet, by Cartier, 1962

But then people realised that antique pieces have value and beauty



Mystery Set Ruby and Diamond "Fleurettes Earrings & Gallera Ring by Van Cleef & Arpels, 1989



The Dudley Pearl, drop-shaped pearl of 209 grain

with their jewellery."

Thomas's father's good reputation and good name helped when Thomas began his own career in jewellery.

"He was well liked amongst the German customers, international dealers and even amongst the Jewish people. When I went to Amsterdam, a Jewish diamond cutter took me on as an apprentice, because he knew my father. He told me, 'Your father was not a bad German.' When I started my own business in 1968, the name of Faerber meant something to professional people."

When Thomas started his business in 1973, he began with one assistant in Switzerland, selling tiny little diamonds and loose stones to the watch industry. Today, Faerber is based in Geneva with offices in Antwerp, New York, Paris and Geneva.

His transition from selling tiny diamonds to dealing in antique jewellery was because of his passion for rare and historical jewels and because of a timely encouragement by a friend.

"At an exhibition, I was exhibiting stones for the trade, for jewellery

manufacturers. A friend of mine from London, who was already dealing in antique jewellery, showed me some pieces, and he saw that I liked them. He suggested that I take the risk and buy three pieces. I thought, why not? The worst thing that could happen is that I give them to my wife.

"I took those three pieces and exhibited them at the Basel fair. It is mainly a professional trade show, an industry meeting of watch and jewellery brands to show their latest creations. But I had the audacity, the only one at that time, to show three antique pieces. Antique and old jewellery were not popular, as many people wanted new pieces. But then people realised that antique pieces have value and beauty. Those three pieces were sold by the end of the show. I was encouraged."

The Faerber business is now 50 percent involved in antiques and vintage jewellery and 50 percent in exceptional coloured stones and diamonds.

"I like to buy old pieces even when the artistic value is not is very good, but there is an important stone or diamond in it I can take out," Thomas

continued. "Some have magnificent provenance and history. These add a lot to their value and can constitute half of the selling price. With special coloured stones, I buy them where ever I can find them."

Thomas explained that he chose refined retailers KS Sze & Sons, because the business is about quality and service. A regular selection of pieces from the Faerber collection will be on display at the KS Sze & Sons' private showroom.

"I have known about the KS Sze & Sons brand for a very long time and they have a good reputation. Within the private showroom, clients can come in, try the jewellery on and think about it before buying. Dr Sze of KS Sze & Sons believes there is a good future for jewellery from the Faerber collection in this part of the world. So we are keen to develop this." 

Select pieces from the Faerber Collection are available at KS Sze & Sons by appointment. Tel: (852) 2524 2803 email, info@ks-sze.com website: www.ks-sze.com