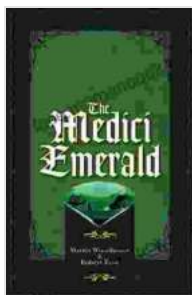


The Medici Emerald: A Historical and Gemological Marvel Attributed to Martin Woodhouse

The Medici Emerald, a gemstone of exceptional size and provenance, has captivated the world's attention for centuries. This captivating green treasure, discovered in the emerald mines of Colombia, has been adorned by some of history's most influential figures, including the Medici family of Florence and the Habsburg emperors. Its exceptional beauty and historical significance have made it a priceless artifact, a testament to the artistry and craftsmanship of its creator, the renowned goldsmith Martin Woodhouse.

Origins and Discovery

The Medici Emerald is believed to have originated in the Muzo mines of Colombia, a region renowned for yielding some of the world's finest emeralds. Its exact date of discovery is unknown, but it is believed to have been mined sometime in the 16th century. The emerald was likely brought to Europe by Spanish conquistadors, who had established a foothold in the New World.



The Medici Emerald by Martin Woodhouse

★★★★☆ 4.7 out of 5

Language	: English
File size	: 1905 KB
Text-to-Speech	: Enabled
Screen Reader	: Supported
Enhanced typesetting	: Enabled
Word Wise	: Enabled
Print length	: 219 pages
Lending	: Enabled



The emerald's early history is shrouded in mystery. It is thought to have been acquired by the Medici family of Florence in the mid-16th century. The Medicis, a powerful and influential family, were known for their patronage of the arts and their vast collection of treasures. The emerald became a prized possession of the family, passed down through generations.

Description and Gemological Characteristics

The Medici Emerald is a magnificent octagonal-shaped emerald, weighing an impressive 25.59 carats. It measures 3.02 centimeters in height and 2.35 centimeters in width. Its deep green color, known as "祖母绿" (bosuilik) in Chinese, is highly saturated and evenly distributed throughout the stone. The emerald is transparent, with excellent clarity and brilliance.

Gemological analysis has revealed that the Medici Emerald is a Type III emerald, meaning that it contains trace amounts of vanadium and chromium, which give it its characteristic green color. The emerald has a Mohs hardness of 7.5, making it a relatively durable gemstone.

Attribution to Martin Woodhouse

The Medici Emerald is believed to have been set in its current gold mount by the renowned goldsmith Martin Woodhouse. Woodhouse was a Flemish goldsmith who worked in Florence during the late 16th and early 17th centuries. He was known for his exquisite craftsmanship and his innovative designs. The attribution of the emerald's mount to Woodhouse is based on stylistic similarities to other works attributed to him, including the pendant of the "Salzburg Madonna."

Woodhouse's mount for the Medici Emerald is a masterpiece of Renaissance goldsmithing. It is made of gold and features elaborate scrollwork and acanthus leaves. The mount is encrusted with diamonds, rubies, and pearls, which complement the emerald's deep green color. The mount is designed to showcase the emerald's beauty and to protect it from damage.

Historical Journey

The Medici Emerald has had a long and fascinating journey through history. It passed through the hands of several prominent figures, including Cosimo I de' Medici, Grand Duke of Tuscany, and Emperor Rudolph II. The emerald was eventually acquired by the Habsburg emperors, who added it to their vast collection of jewels. The emerald remained in the Habsburg treasury for centuries, until it was sold at auction in 1934.

In 1949, the Medici Emerald was purchased by the American banking heiress Marjorie Merriweather Post. Post donated the emerald to the Smithsonian Institution in 1964. It is currently on display at the National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., where it can be admired by visitors from around the world.

Captivating Anecdotes

The Medici Emerald has been the subject of numerous anecdotes and legends over the centuries. One such anecdote involves Emperor Rudolph II, who was known for his eccentric behavior. It is said that Rudolph was so obsessed with the emerald that he would carry it with him at all times, even when he slept. He believed that the emerald had magical properties and that it would protect him from harm.

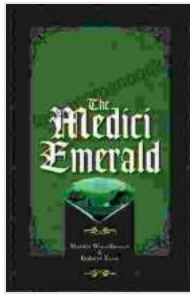
Another anecdote relates to the sale of the emerald at auction in 1934. The emerald was sold to an anonymous buyer for the then-record price of £30,000. The buyer's identity was not revealed until many years later, when it was discovered that he was a representative of the jewelry firm Cartier. Cartier had purchased the emerald on behalf of an undisclosed client, who is believed to have been Marjorie Merriweather Post.

Symbol of Prestige and Power

The Medici Emerald has long been associated with prestige and power. It has been worn by some of history's most influential figures, and it has been used to symbolize royalty, wealth, and status. The emerald's deep green color has also been associated with hope, renewal, and prosperity.

Today, the Medici Emerald remains a symbol of beauty, history, and craftsmanship. It is a testament to the skill of its creator, Martin Woodhouse, and to the enduring legacy of the Medici family. The emerald continues to captivate and inspire people around the world, serving as a reminder of the enduring power of gemstones.

The Medici Emerald is a truly extraordinary gemstone, a captivating blend of beauty, history, and lore. Its exceptional size, vibrant color, and historical significance have made it one of the world's most famous and coveted jewels. Attributed to the renowned goldsmith Martin Woodhouse, the emerald's exquisite mount is a masterpiece of Renaissance craftsmanship. Through its long and fascinating journey, the Medici Emerald has been a symbol of prestige, power, and hope. Today, it remains a priceless treasure, a testament to the enduring legacy of its creators and the captivating allure of gemstones.



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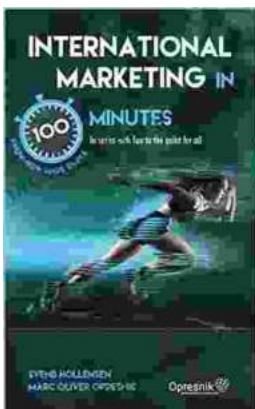
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