



The Edward Arthur Metzger Gem Collection: A Peek Behind the Curtain

Presentation by

Elise A. Skalwold

A Peek Behind the Curtain is a behind-the-scenes look at a world-class gem collection given to Cornell University by the late Edward Arthur Metzger in 2004. Since the 871-piece collection is not wholly on public display, this is a rare chance to see a number of its fabulous pieces as they come alive on the big screen. Given the tiny yet valuable nature of gems, many might conclude that this is the most splendid way to experience such a treasure - that is, short of handling the gems themselves. Not only is this presentation a visual

feast of rare and unusual diamonds, exquisite colored stones, gorgeous jades and exotic pearls, one will also gain insights into the tremendous effort it takes to document such a collection. As well as some of the fascinating gemological features encountered along the way, the audience will learn a bit of the history behind the Collection and of the Collector himself. Central to bringing Edward Arthur Metzger's dream to life are the many people behind the curtain. Of particular note is the wonderful collaboration this author has had on this project with co-author and friend, mineralogist Dr. William A. Bassett and longtime friend, Jeffrey A. Scovil. Renowned as one of the world's "Grandmasters of Mineral Photography," it is Scovil's remarkable skill which captures for us the extraordinary beauty of the Metzger Collection.

Praise for

The Edward Arthur Metzger Gem Collection

A book by William A. Bassett and Elise A. Skalwold (this first of two volumes catalogs the entire Collection)

John I. Koivula: "...a picture is worth a thousand words and you have done one of the best descriptive collection catalogues ever produced. As a picturesque catalogue it will reach and influence a wide audience - and in the worlds of gems, mineralogy, and gemology we do need to reach many more people in order to preserve the sciences that we so much enjoy..."

Antoinette Matlins: "...an important addition to the trove of sparkling books written for people who love gems and jewelry. In addition to the magnificent photos by Jeff Scovil, and the clear and useful information about the gem families that comprise the collection, there is an intimacy to the text that creates a strong connection to and understanding of the man behind the collection ... This is a wonderfully accessible book through which one gains a much clearer understanding of what comprises a real 'gem' [along with] the passion, the excitement, patience and commitment that made Edward Arthur Metzger not only a collector, but a connoisseur..."

Richard W. Hughes: "...First of all, I have to say that this is an extraordinarily handsome volume and one that I am proud to add to my library... I am blown away by the collection, both in terms of quality and breadth. You are so fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with something like this. It is a treasure and a gift..."

Alan Jobbins: "...The photography is outstanding and brings the gems to life - the red diamond is almost in one's hand and the range of colours of the diamonds is quite amazing. The overall effect is to make the presentation remarkably crisp and so accessible. In addition to the excellent photography and the exceptional range of colours in all categories, on a broad educational front it excites pleasure and arouses the desire to learn..."

John Emmett: "...DOWNRIGHT SPECTACULAR - The collection, but more importantly THE BOOK! The book is actually the more important of the two as it will document for all time such treasures and the book will be studied by more lovers of fine gems than will probably ever see the collection. What a major contribution. Please accept my praise for this fine work and also congratulate your co-author [Dr. William A. Bassett]. I cannot imagine how much work was involved in doing such a project..."

Emmanuel Fritsch: "...there is excellent documentation, which is the first level of science. In that regard, your book has a definite scientific flavor, which would have been absent had it been written by someone less scientifically inclined..."

John Nels Hatleberg: "Fantastic!"



Elise A. Skalwold is an Accredited Senior Gemologist, independent researcher, educator, author, and photographer. She has served as Consulting Gemological Curator at her alma mater Cornell University (B.Sc. 1982) and is Contributing Editor and author for the quarterly column *G&G Micro-World* featured in *Gems & Gemology*, the peer-reviewed scientific journal of the Gemological Institute of America (GIA). Ms. Skalwold is a Graduate Gemologist (G.G.) trained in residence at the Gemological Institute of America Robert Mouawad Campus located in Carlsbad, CA. While living in Thailand she worked in the famous gem markets of both Chanthaburi and Bangkok and pursued studies at the Gem & Jewelry Institute of Thailand for which she was subsequently elected a Fellow of the Gemmological Association of Great Britain (F.G.A.) in London.

As well as having co-authored the 415 page book [The Edward Arthur Metzger Gem Collection](#) and presently working on a companion volume to it, Ms. Skalwold is an author/co-author of gemology and mineralogy papers featured in *Rocks & Minerals Magazine*, *Gems & Gemology*, *The Journal of Gemmology*, *InColor*, and (most proudly) two optical mineralogy booklets published by the Mineralogical Society of America. Passionate about her work, she takes great pride in representing gemology as a relevant geoscience around the world and with having done so at Cornell University; birthplace of the 125+ year-old Geological Society of America (GSA). A quintessential theme throughout her work was represented by the paper "Scholarly Treasure: The Role of Gems in a University Setting" presented at the 2013 GIA-sponsored first-ever Gemological Session of the GSA (for her review of the event, please see: "Gemology Bears Triumphant Tidings: a Review of the Historic 125th Anniversary Annual Meeting of the Geological Society of America" http://www.nordskip.com/GSA_Gemology_Session.pdf).

An internationally sought-after speaker, her engagements have recently included: 2018 Keynote Speaker at the Scottish Gemmological Association Conference in Dullatur, Scotland; the Scandinavian Gem Symposium in Kisa, Sweden; the Accredited Gemologists Association Conference in Tucson; several chapters of the Gemological Institute of America Alumni Association; Banquet Speaker, as well as, past speaker for the New York Mineralogical Club (co-founded by George F. Kunz in 1886); repeat speaker for the Rochester Mineralogical Symposium; and was the only female speaker for the prestigious 11th Annual Sinkankas Symposium [Ruby] held at the Gemological Institute of America in Carlsbad, CA.

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