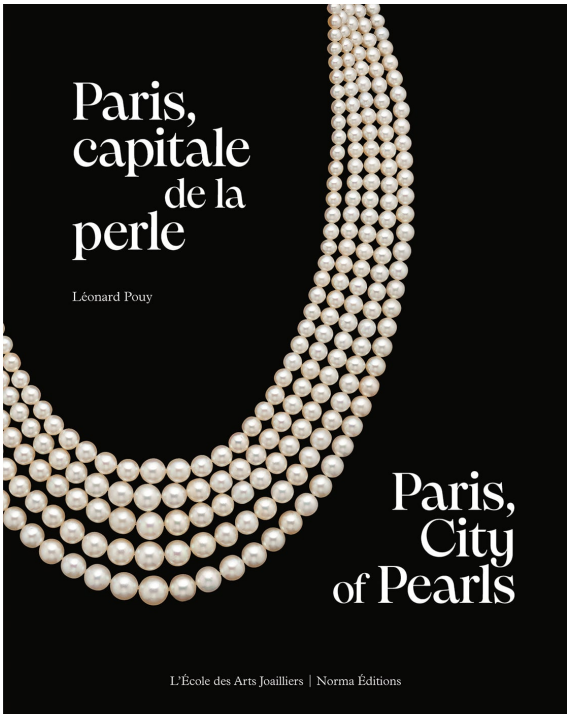
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Paris, City of Pearls

A Historical Heyday for Jewelry

Léonard Pouy

ISBN	9782376660934
Publisher	Editions Norma
Binding	Hardback
Territory	World excluding Southern, Central and Northern Europe
Size	280 mm x 220 mm
Pages	242 Pages
Illustrations	200 color
Price	£50.00

- Accompanies the exhibition *Paris, City of Pearls* at the Ecole des Arts Joailliers from November 2024

If Paul Lévi and Jean-Paul Poirot are to be believed, rue Lafayette, which has been home to the majority of Parisian gem dealers since the 19th century, is thought to have been home to almost 300 fine pearl merchants between the two world wars, between numbers 1 and 100. The sheer size of this number is striking when compared with the current state of the fine pearl market, both within the capital and worldwide. As well as unravelling the final mysteries surrounding this biomineral, the main aim is to show the extent to which pearls inspired Parisian jewellers and artists of all kinds, both young and old. They all seem to have been driven by the same pearlomania, whatever their medium, from opera to cinema, painting, photography, posters or illustrated books, to the point of making the pearl one of the symbolic forms of the Roaring Twenties.

Text in English and French.







Published 3rd Dec 2024