



If These Jewels Could Talk: The Legends Behind Celebrity Gems

Beth Bernstein

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Throughout the 20th century, jewelry revealed the behind-the-scenes stories and the plot twists and turns in the real lives of celebrities that will always be larger than life. Some of the world's most fabulous jewels not only illustrated power and status in society but these magical gems held tremendous sentimental value as they were linked to the most significant moments and memories of Hollywood royalty, international aristocracy and international icons of style. If These Jewels Could Talk offers a glimpse into the jewelry boxes of these celebrities - the personal tastes, heartfelt anecdotes and the true tales of the women who wore and collected the pieces.

During the early- to mid-20th century, a majority of screen actresses requested to wear their own favorite pieces in films. This offered a peek into some of the great jewelers of the time who were designing for women who could choose anything. Actresses such as Merle Oberon, Paulette Goddard, Joan Crawford, Grace Kelly and Elizabeth Taylor as well as icons such as Jackie Kennedy and The Duchess of Windsor created signature styles for which they became known and which influenced generations of women, becoming part of our collective consciousness.

The 20s through the 50s were a time when the renowned jewelry houses were also celebrities in their own right. They mixed with the socialites and royalty they bejeweled.

In films, jewelry clearly developed and defined a character's personality - as it did in real life - whether it be a rags-to-riches story or those that figured into the plot: for example, a Cartier bracelet in Alfred Hitchcock's *Lifeboat*, or a Harry Winston necklace in *Notorious*.

Whether on or off screen, worn by the famed and the legendary, and designed by the most revered houses of the day, all of these jewels take us on a narrative journey that provide fascinating insight into the intriguing worlds of early Hollywood and nobility from the 1920s through today.

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