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Information

## Introduction

From our historical roots to our fashion forward considerations, we invite you to experience the world of Extasia. This publication was developed to serve as a resource and training guide for museum gift store staff in better understanding Extasia handcrafted cameo and intaglio jewelry.

People visit museums to experience the inspiration of art, history, learning and beauty and to be reassured by the presence of daily objects from the past. In that spirit, Extasia marries historical images with contemporary fashion to create a uniquely sophisticated museum store collection.



*Inspired by the Classics,  
Created for the Moment*

## Extasia Commissions

In addition to our extensive commercial line, Extasia works with museums and historical properties to develop original product from images in our signature hand-pressed glass and red bronze. We have been commissioned for custom work by a variety of organizations.

### Hotel Del Coronado, San Diego, CA

San Diego's Hotel Del Coronado is known the world over for its Victorian architecture and crowning cupola. In 2001, Extasia created a versatile 18/13mm intaglio of the cupola. The historic landmark is offered in a variety of jewelry styles and colors which change with the season.

### French Government, Reunion

Using a 19<sup>th</sup> century agate cameo as a model, Extasia created a stone in the image of Empress Josephine and a suite of styles sold at many of the RMN owned gift stores throughout France.

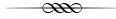


*Extasia's Josephine Suite for Reunion, French Government*

*Insert: Original Josephine 19th century agate cameo, and Extasia glass reproduction*

## The Lobkowicz Palace at Prague Castle

After more than forty years of Communist rule and another 12 years seeking restitution, in 2002, the Lobkowicz family had a number of significant properties returned to them. Extasia was commissioned to create a jewelry collection for the newly renovated Nelahovitz Palace gift store located just outside of Prague. The Nelahovitz is the first privately owned museum in the Republic.



## Ready-to-wear Museum Collections

Extasia has 4 collections specifically designed to compliment art exhibitions and appeal to museum gift store customers.

- **Antiquities Collection** -- Our images of ancient Greek and Roman gods and goddesses are skillfully combined with a Victorian era setting.
- **Modern Art Collection** -- A two-part collection featuring bold Pate de Verre glass inspirations, and our homage to the Bakelite jewelry of the 1940s executed in resin.
- **Natural History Collection** -- Using fossilized Mammoth ivory and Jet, a fossilized plant material, this hand-carved collection celebrates the natural world with exquisite representations of birds, bees, beetles, flowers and acorns.
- **Southern Collection** -- An ivory colored cameo set on a gray background sets the theme for our two-piece glass offering.



## Extasia Basics

### What is a cameo? What is an intaglio?

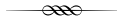
Extasia is known for its two signature hand-pressed glass stones, the cameo and the intaglio. An intaglio (pronounced in-TAL-ee-oh, with a silent 'g') is an image carved into the surface of a medium.

Conversely, a cameo is an image carved in relief, or raised above the surface of the medium (think of coins).

At Extasia we use cameos and intaglios in a variety of materials; hand-carved shell from the coast of Italy, hand-pressed glass, hand-cast glass and hand-carved jet and fossilized mammoth ivory.



*The image on the left is intaglio. The image on the right is cameo*



## Intaglios & Cameos Through the Ages

The beginnings of intaglios can to be found in cave etchings dating back over 15,000 years ago. Carvings of animals, gods, and humans meant to inspire, protect, and inform us appeared, and over time, evolved from cave walls to cylinder stones.



*Early art form known as petroglyphs*

Cylinder seals and seal rings appeared around 3500 B.C. for use as an administrative device. Seal stones were carved with images of a king, queen, or lesser royalty conveying identity, and privilege, providing security as well as ornament.

Only royalty and wealthy landowners were able to afford seal stones. The production price was equal to that of an ox and slightly less than that of a slave girl.





Seals reflected class status; the bearer might gain a quick audience with a royal personage or other special privileges. The carved image of a living ruler, Alexander the Great for instance, would allow safe passage.

Assyrians, Babylonians, Persians and Hittites first wore charm bracelets from 500 to 400 B.C., and seal stones began to fall out of favor. Created from locally available gems, charms were often inscribed with figures of gods, humans and animals. Wearing the image was believed to invoke the god or goddess' specialized influence and served as protective talismans. Charms occupy a special favored niche to this day.



### Early Tools

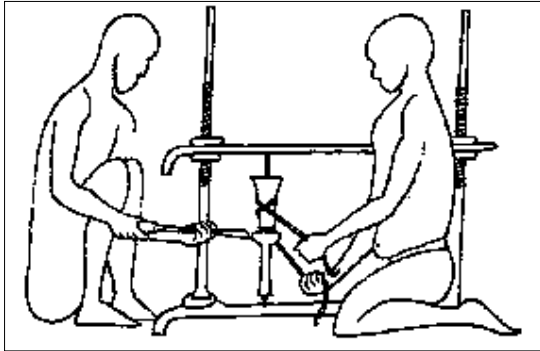
In 700 B.C. the Chinese were credited with making the first potter's wheel, which led to the development of the lathe around 600 B.C.

The first lathes were simple; a wheel with a belt drive, a set of drills, and abrasives. As the lathe was refined through the ages, it became an

important tool in the production of cameos in 322 B.C.

These tools made working in relief more manageable on hard materials such as Sardonyx, a multilayered stone. Carvers used all their skills to make use of the layered colors to heighten and beautify their pictures. This stone provided the inspiration of the first Cameos.

Regardless of the era, cameos & intaglios have always been created using available materials and state of the art technology.



### **The Grand Tour 1600's – 1800's**

Cameos and intaglios have cycled in popularity like any fashion trend. As time passed, charms diminished in religious significance and became fashion jewelry. From the mid 1600's well into the 1800's it was popular for nobility and wealthy gentry to make a "Grand Tour" of European countries, primarily of France and Italy. These trips were made to enhance education in the arts, history, and language. A finely carved cameo or intaglio with a classical theme made for the perfect souvenir.

## The Industrial Revolution 1750 – 1850

The Industrial Revolution played a very important role in every aspect of human life including and especially fashion. It spawned a paradigm shift from an economy based on manual labor and draft animals towards machine based manufacturing. Machine based manufacturing required skilled labor, which increased the wages of workers. This in turn created a middle class with more discretionary income.

Cloth loomed by machine reduced the cost of fabrics making fashion more economically available to a wider reach of consumers.

Sometime in the mid 1800's innovations in glass manufacturing were also taking place. One such innovation was pressed glass. Steel molds were made so that molten glass could be poured then pressed. John P. Bakewell patented one such method in 1825 to make furniture knobs. Around the same time in Bavaria, glass was being pressed with images and used in jewelry just as it is today by Extasia.



## The Victorian Era 1837 - 1901



Queen Victoria reigned during the golden era of the British Empire from 1837 until her death in 1901. She was a dominating presence politically and in fashion. Her fondness of shell cameos may have influenced many people who, even today, think of cameos as being

fashioned from shell rather than simply being a raised image.

Queen Victoria can be directly linked to the tremendous popularity of the charm bracelet by wearing tiny lockets holding family portraits. After the death of her beloved husband she resolved to wear only black. Whitby jet was favored as part of her mourning attire because of its somber color and modest appearance.

## The Launch of Extasia – 1991 to Present



Stefanie Freydon is the energetic creative force behind Extasia jewelry. A designer first and foremost she decided long ago that her life would always involve the creation of beauty.

Life as art has been her credo, its manifestation and dissemination. With Extasia, Freydon has

created the perfect fusion of her interest: jewelry design, a life of laughter, friends and family, and the economic, environmental and cultural health of her rural, Northern California Sierra community.

In the '70's Freydon't moved to Nevada City with her son and jeweler's bench where she fabricated gold and silver pieces and called her line "Anie". With friends, she founded a cultural center in North Columbia's 100 year old, one-room schoolhouse. The North Columbia Schoolhouse Cultural Center exists today as the heart and soul of the community producing a wide variety of art, literary and performance events including the Sierra Storytelling Festival "the Queen of Festivals".

The desire to provide her community with a rich artistic culture led her to become the Director of the Nevada County Arts Council where she coordinated artistic activities throughout Nevada County.



By the mid 80's, Freydon't wanted to learn more about the interface of culture and economics in community development. In 1986, leaving her mountain home, she entered UC Davis in the graduate program for Community Development, with an emphasis on rural economic development. She finished off her graduate internships at California Department of Housing and Community Development and the Colorado based, Rocky Mountain Institute, a

non-profit organization that encourages sustainability in business, civil society and government.

Working as a Director of Development, Freydont later moved to San Francisco and if it weren't for a fortuitous moment with Fimo plastic clay, we may never have associated her with jewelry again.

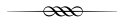
In her youth she trained with master smiths in gold and silver and became an accomplished designer winning awards for her student work while still in high school. But in 1990 Freydont became fascinated with the colors and properties of the new plastic, low fire clays. No longer constrained by high costs and boundaries inherent in precious metals she created her first line of costume jewelry. Now that she had the unlimited use of color in design, Freydont found herself reverting to type and her original passion – the design and creation of wearable art.

In 1989, a lifelong desire to explore the landscape and cultures of the Southwest led Freydont to a sojourn in New Mexico and cemented the artistic move back to her roots as a fine metal smith. She once again delighted in the grip of torches, jewelers saw, sandpaper, drills, and hammers, to create beauty and form and wearable art.

Abandoning Fimo, the Southwest, and a current boyfriend, Freydont returned to the Sierra Nevada Foothills and launched her first metal collection in 10 years. She called it Extasia.

A year later, providence guided her to the signature look of Extasia. On a trip to Providence, Rhode Island, home of costume

jewelry manufacturing for over 100 years, Freydon found closeout boxes of old glass intaglios, and remembers this as that lighting bolt moment. And thus the first intaglio collection “Daughters of Dust” was born and Extasia became the worlds largest design house using hand-pressed German glass intaglios. Not surprisingly many of the original classic designs are still current in the Extasia line.



## **The Materials of Extasia**

Extasia designers work with a wide range of materials including vintage and contemporary glass beads, semi-precious beads and fresh water pearls.

### **Signature Red Bronze**

Extasia jewelry starts with a special bronze alloy, which creates a warm, rich, color when polished. Our favorite recipe for Red Bronze includes copper, silicon and magnesium. We offer silver, rose gold and yellow gold, and matte black finishes as well.

Extasia's settings are cast using the same technique as fine jewelry - lost wax casting. It is one of the oldest forms of fabrication predating the Pyramids in Egypt, and has been updated over time using modern technologies.



Modern lost wax casting method – screw tree



## Hand-pressed German Glass

Glass rods are heated to cherry red in furnaces and the molten glass is then carefully placed in steel molds. The glass is slowly cooled over 24 hours to prevent cracking. When the stones are cool enough to handle they are trimmed and polished by hand.

Glass stone making is an exacting craft done by a small group of artisans in Western Europe. Sadly, this craft is dying out. Extasia has made significant contribution to the revival of the glass stone industry by commissioning new molds and colors, which show the art at its best and most expressive. Ninety percent of the images we use are our original, proprietary designs.



*Lampwork glass making*



*Pressed glass making*

## **Fossilized Mammoth/Mastodon Ivory & Jet**

Extasia's Ivory & Jet collection features hand-carved fossilized ivory and jet. These materials are harvested as a by-product of gold mining and oil exploration in Russia and Alaska. The fossilized ivory is U.S. certified mammoth or mastodon ivory. Unearthed after 4,000 to 15,000 years, it is hand carved by village artisans expressly for Extasia.

Jet is a geological material considered to be a minor gemstone. Jet is not a true mineral, but rather a mineraloid. Its organic origin derived from decaying wood under extreme pressure. Jet has been used as an ornamental material since the Iron Age.

Queen Victoria popularized the use of jet in jewelry when she went into mourning after the death of her husband, Prince Albert.

Today, it finds its way into Extasia's rare materials collection in the form of birds, flowers, bees, and other images inspired by nature.



*Hand carved fossilized jet earrings*

## Pate de Verre

Pate de Verre is French for a form of kiln cast glass. It literally translates as glass paste. Using the 2000-year-old technique, Extasia master craftsman, Robert Kahl, creates a glass paste, spreads it into a plaster mold then kiln fires it into a liquid state. After a slow cool down the hardened image is removed. The mold is broken in the process and can only be used once or twice at the most.

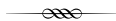


*42mm round doves cast in glass*

## Carved Shell

Conch Shell is a soft material, easier to carve in relief compared to stone, and is a medium of choice for cameo makers. Carnelian Shell is most frequently used for cameo carving. Its palette ranges from warm sienna, peach, or orange background with an ivory foreground.

The most costly shell cameos are carved from sardonyx shell. This conch has a thick outer wall with a dark amber interior. Cameos carved from sardonyx shell feature a dark brown to gray background and white foreground.



## The Images of Extasia in Glass

The glass images used in Extasia jewelry are created from steel molds using the same techniques predating World War I. The images are inspired by neoclassical designs. Ancient Greece is of particular interest and we translate the archetypical images of gods, goddesses, and everyday life for our collections.

Most molds were commissioned and are owned by Extasia. We have included information on the images from the turn of the century molds. The particular images may or may not be the actual subject matter intended by the original artist. Since a few of the molds are antiques and not well documented, we cannot authenticate original context of the image.



**Aphrodite** -- In Greek mythology, Aphrodite is the goddess of love, beauty and sexual rapture. She was born when Uranus was castrated by his son Cronus. Cronus threw the severed genitals into the ocean, which began to churn and foam about them. From the aphros ("sea foam") arose Aphrodite. Her attributes are the dolphin, the dove, the swan, the pomegranate and the lime tree. Aphrodite is also known as Venus in Roman mythology.



*30\22mm oval image reproduced from mid 19th century hand carved Italian lava stone bracelet*

**Athena** -- The Greek goddess of wisdom, war, the arts, industry, justice and skill. Her mother was Metis, goddess of wisdom and Zeus' first wife. In fear that Metis would give birth to a son mightier than himself, Zeus swallowed her and she began to make a robe and helmet for her daughter. The hammering of the helmet caused Zeus great headaches, and he cried out in agony. Skilled Hephaestus ran to his father and split his skull open. From it emerged Athena, fully grown and wearing her mother's robe and helmet.



*30\22mm oval image reproduced from mid 19th century hand carved Italian lava stone bracelet*

**Demeter** -- The Greek earth goddess who brings forth the fruits of the earth, particularly the various grains. She taught mankind the art of sowing and plowing to end their nomadic existence. Demeter was also the goddess of planned society. In ancient art, Demeter was often portrayed sitting as a solemn woman, wearing a wreath of braided wheat, or ears of corn.



*36 \ 26mm oval and  
20 \ 15mm oval Demeter*



*36mm round and 21mm round  
Demeter*



*28 \ 22mm Triangle  
Demeter*

**Dionysus** – Is the Greek god of wine, inspirer of ritual madness and ecstasy, and the patron deity of agriculture and the theater. Dionysus is also known as Bacchus in Roman mythology.



40\30mm oval \*

**Hermes** -- Hermes is the great messenger of the gods in Greek mythology and a guide to the Underworld. An Olympian god, he is also the patron of boundaries and of the travelers who travel across them. His symbols include the tortoise, the rooster, the winged sandals, the winged hat, and the caduceus (given to him by Apollo in exchange for the lyre). Hermes is identified as Mercury in the Roman pantheon.



30\22mm oval Hermes\* in opaque slate colored glass

**Medusa** -- One of the Gorgons, and the only one who is mortal. Her gaze turned whomever she looked upon to stone. In a particular myth, Medusa is originally a beautiful maiden who desecrated Athena's temple by lying there with Poseidon. Outraged, Athena turned Medusa's hair into living snakes.

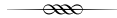


*45mm irregular round Medusa in Pate de Verre glass*

**Merchants of Agora** -- The Agora was an open "place of assembly" in ancient Greek city-states. Early in Greek history (900s–700s BC), freeborn male landowners who were citizens would gather in the Agora for military duty or to hear statements of the ruling king or council. Later, the Agora also served as a marketplace where merchants kept stalls or shops to sell their goods amid colonnades. This image depicts a market scene from ancient Greece.



*55\35mm oval reproduced from mid 19<sup>th</sup> century Italian hand-carved lava stone pin*





## The Images of Extasia in Metal

Stefanie Freydont, owner and lead designer for Extasia, had the rare opportunity to purchase original plaster molds created by Bertel Thorvaldsen in the 1800's. Master jeweler, Kate Dwyer re-mastered nine images from the molds to be cast in metal and used in many pieces of the Extasia line.

Following is a brief description of the images created by Bertel Thorvaldsen and information on the artist.



*Original plaster molds by Bertel Thorvaldsen, ca 1800*

**Bertel Thorvaldsen** was an outstanding representative of the neoclassical period in sculpture. He became the foremost artist in the field after the death of Antonio Canova in 1822.

Thorvaldsen left his Nordic roots and refined his talent in Italy where he lived for 16 years. In 1838, he returned to Denmark and resided there until his sudden death on March 24, 1844 in the Copenhagen Royal Theatre.

Motifs for Thorvaldsen's works were drawn mostly from Greek mythology, as well as works of classic art and literature. He is Denmark's most important Neo-classical artist and leader of the movement.



*Bertel Thorvaldsen*  
19 November 1770 –  
24 March 1844

**Achilles – This image is believed to be Achilles at the Forge of Vulcan.** In Greek mythology, Achilles was a Greek hero of the Trojan War.



*Thorvaldsen's original plaster  
2 1/4" x 1 7/8"*



*Achilles Extasia  
reproduction 1" x 1 7/8 "*

**Alexander the Great – A detail from the Triumph of Alexander the Great depicting the entrance of Alexander into Rome.**



*Thorvaldsen original 2 1/2" x 2 3/4"*



*Alexander the Great Extasia  
reproduction 1 1/4" x 1"*

**Asclepius & Higeia** – The God of medicine is depicted with one of his three daughters, Higeia (Hygiene). Asclepius was the son of Apollo and the nymph, Coronis.

The myth tells that Coronis took a second lover and Apollo in fit of rage had Artemis kill Coronis. When she was laid on the funeral pyre, Apollo filled with regret and cut the unborn child from Coronis's womb. Asclepius, whose name means "to cut open", was given to the centaur Chiron who schooled the boy in the healing arts.



*Asclepius & Higeia  
Extasia reproduction  
1" x 1 ¼"*

**Aurora** -- The Roman goddess of dawn, known to the Greeks as Eos. Every morning she awakens, renewed and vibrant, to set a blanket of reds, oranges and pinks into the sunrise, opening the gates of heaven so her brother Helios, the sun, can ride in his golden chariot across the sky.



*Aurora, Goddess of Dawn – detail  
from Thorvaldsen's renowned  
"Morning" bas relief original 1 ¾"  
in diameter*



*Aurora Extasia reproduction  
1 ½" in diameter*

**Jupiter & Ganymede** – Modeled from the larger full relief of Thorvaldsen’s masterpiece by the same name. Tending sheep one day, Ganymede is spotted by Jupiter, who wants to bring him to Olympus to serve as cupbearer. Jupiter captures Ganymede by taking the form of an eagle. The original measures 1” x ¾”.



*Jupiter & Ganymede  
Extasia reproduction*



*Child Extasia  
reproduction 1”*

**Mother and Child** – This detail was pulled from a larger familial relief scene. The original depiction measured 3” x 2”.

**The Putto** -- (pl. putti) is a figure of a human baby or toddler, usually a naked male with wings, found especially in Italian Renaissance and Baroque art. The putto can be seen in many of the Thorvaldsen pieces. This putto detail was pulled from the “Ascension of Mary” bas-relief.



*Putto Extasia  
reproduction ¾”*

**Three Graces** -- In Greek mythology, the Three Graces are the goddesses of joy, charm, and beauty. The daughters of the god Zeus and the nymph Eurynome, they were named Aglaia (Splendor), Euphrosyne (Mirth), and Thalia (Good Cheer). The Three Graces were a popular subject matter for artists in the Neoclassical movement.



*Three Graces – Thorvaldsen  
original 1 ¼" x 1 ½"*

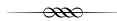


*Three Graces Extasia  
reproduction 1" x 1 ¼"*

**Venus & Cupid** -- Venus the Roman goddess of love and fertility is depicted with Cupid, the son of Venus and Mars, the god of war.



*Venus & Cupid Extasia  
reproduction 1 ¾" x 1 ½"*



## **How to Care For Extasia Jewelry**

Caring for Extasia jewelry is best accomplished by using a soft damp cloth for glass. To renew the glow of our Signature Red Bronze or silver plated styles, simply use a jeweler's cloth and buff.

Gold plated styles do not require a jeweler's cloth. A damp cloth will remove debris from jewelry.

Ivory, jet and waterbuffalo horn can be cleaned with a soft, damp cloth.

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## **Notes**





*The Art of*  
EXTASIA