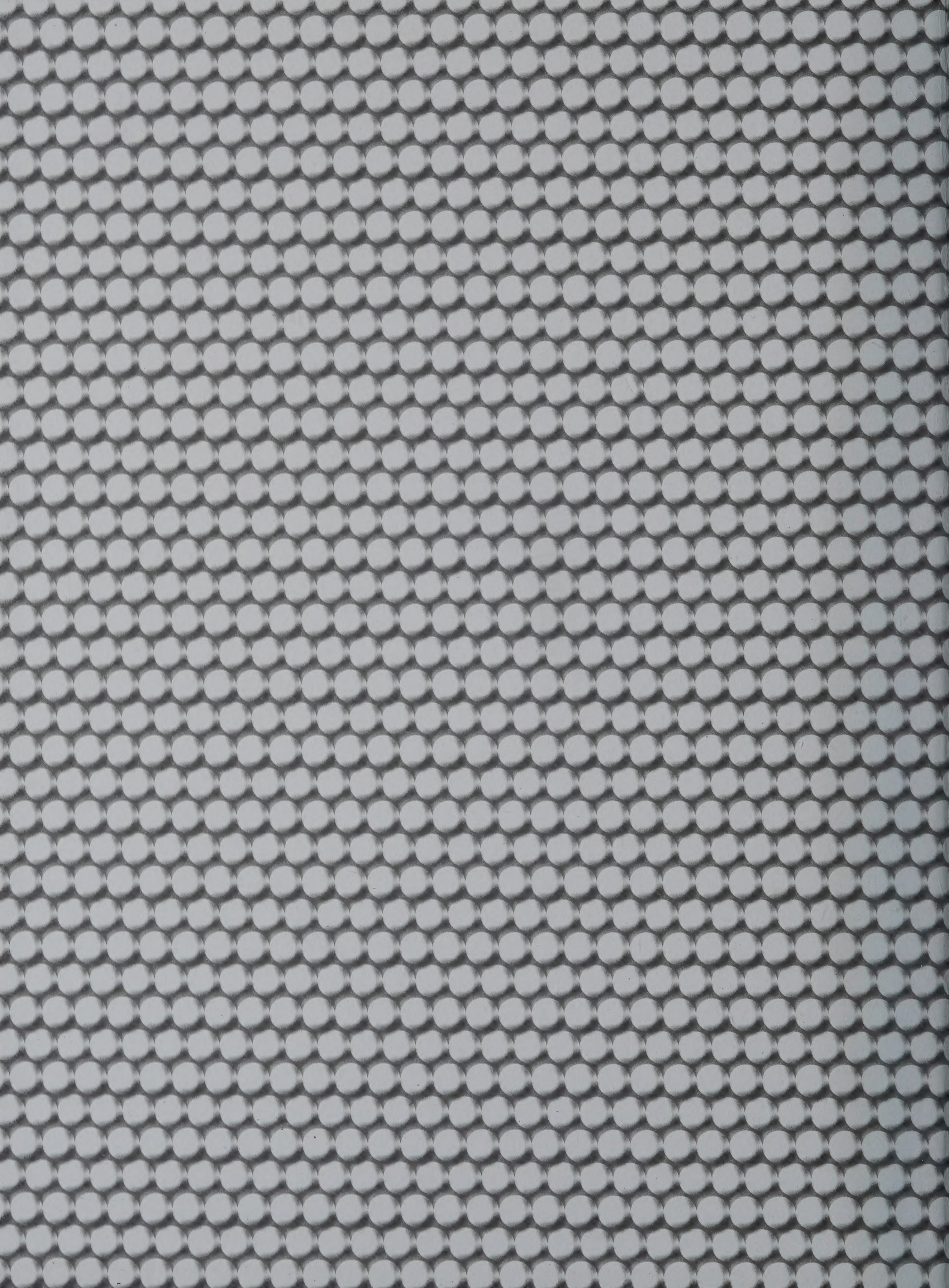
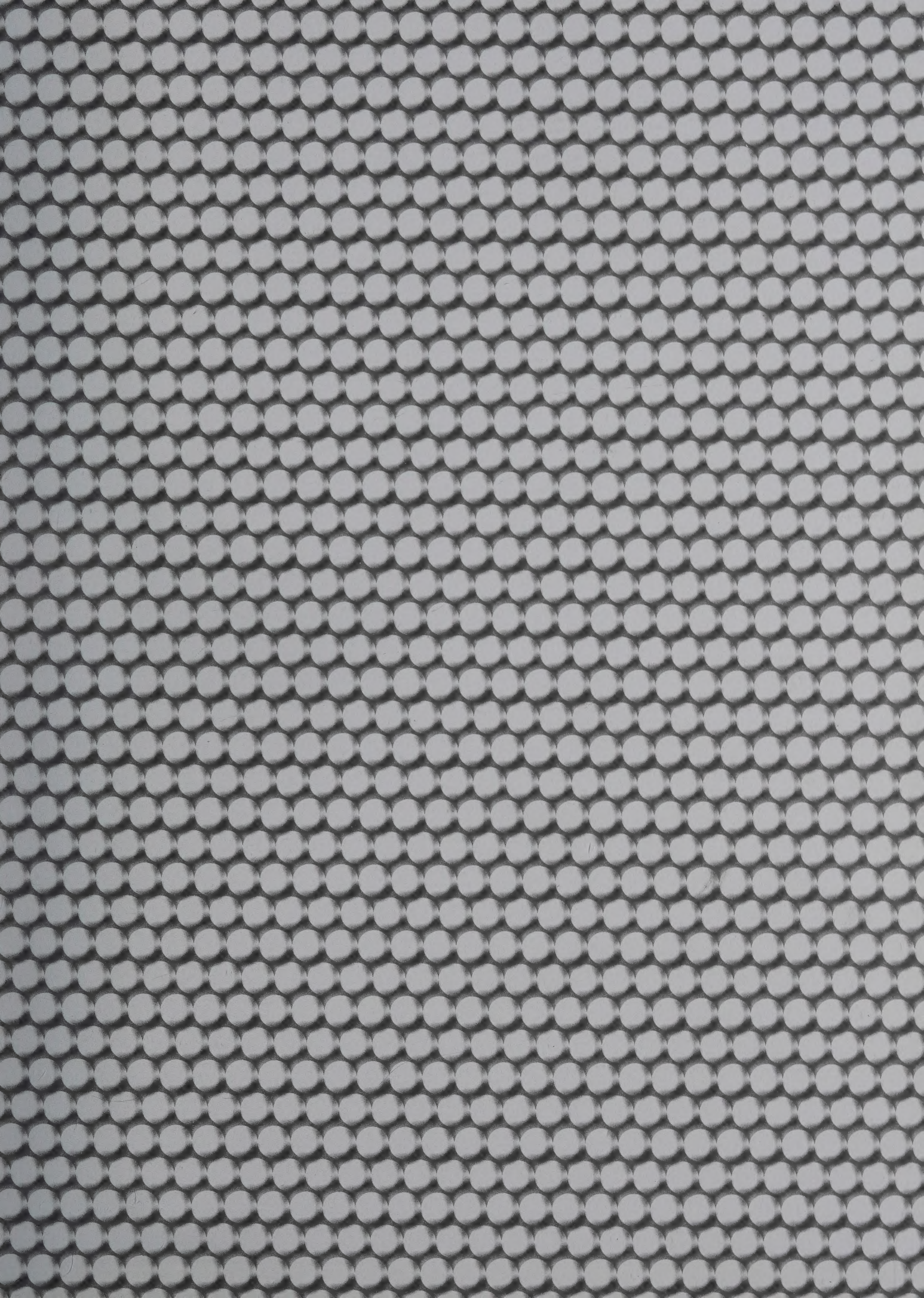


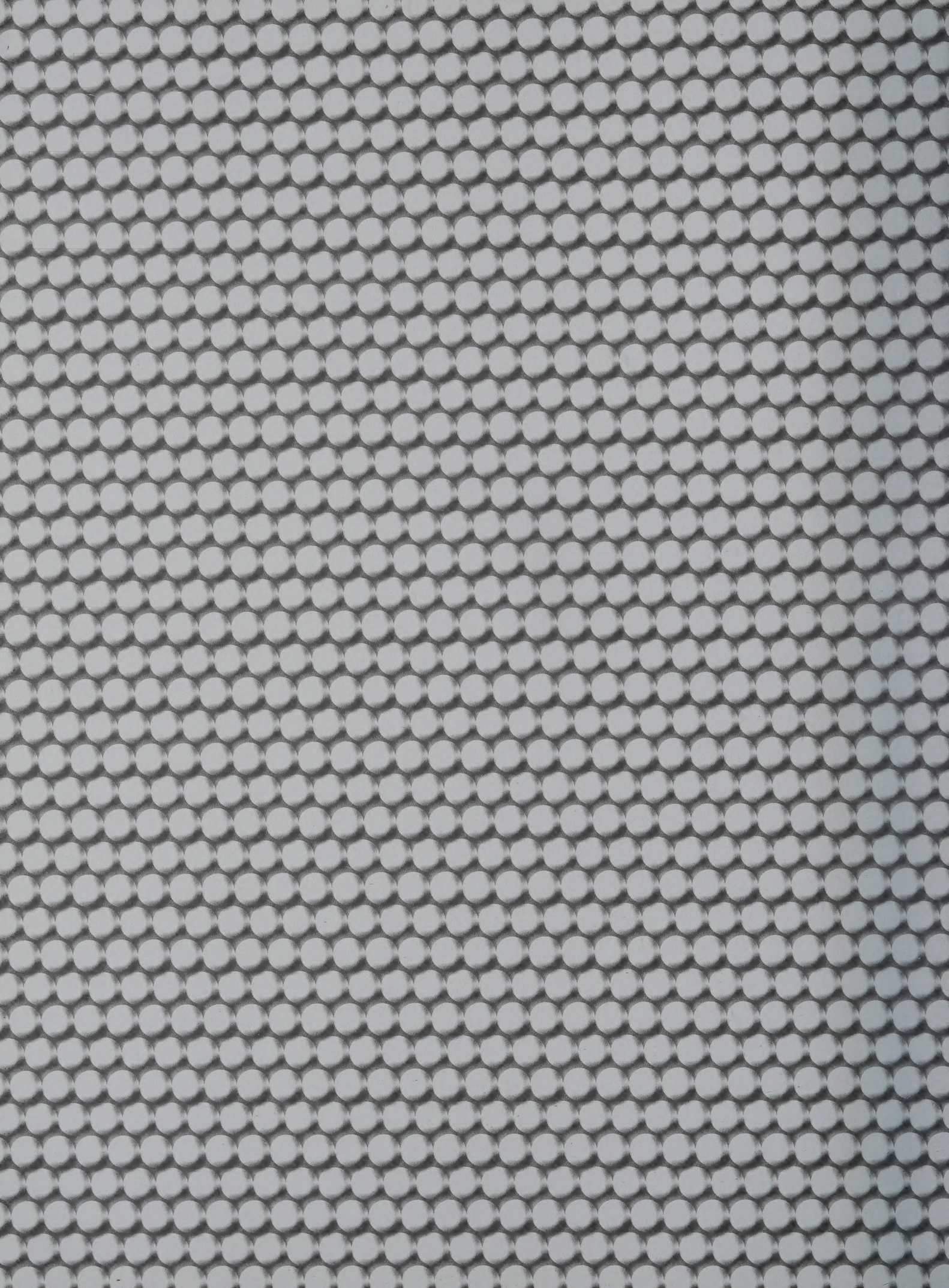
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THE PEARL NECKLACE

ASSOULINE







**THE PEARL
NECKLACE**

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MIKIMOTO

**THE PEARL
NECKLACE**

TEXT BY VIVIENNE BECKER

ASSOULINE

The Pearl Necklace

The pearl necklace—richly encrusted with myth and legend, radiant with intrigue and romance—is an ultimate, universal, iconic classic. No other piece of jewelry is so instantly recognizable; no other reverberates with such strong social signals. Elegant and expressive, the pearl necklace has threaded its way not only through jewelry history but through the story of fashion; indeed, pearls are woven into social, economic, and cultural history, from ancient to modern, East to West, Arabia to the Americas. The pearl necklace is a symbol of feminine purity, a sign of status and power, an emblem of tradition, and a quintessential heirloom, and yet it is precisely because of these cons-old and enduring associations that it has offered an irresistible invitation to subversive reinterpretation. It has adapted, chameleonlike, through centuries to become an expression of changing ideals of womanhood and of a woman's place in the world.

CULT CLASSIC

How did the pearl necklace come to constitute the very definition of classic style? The reasons lie in its roots in antiquity, when the pearl, one of the most ancient gems, held both men and women in thrall with its beauty and rarity. Sacred to Aphrodite, the Greek goddess of love, the pearl was born like the goddess herself from a shell in the sea; according to myth, as she emerged fully formed from the ocean, she shook her hair, and the drops of seawater turned into pearls.

Among the most famous historical pearls are the earrings reported by Pliny the Elder to have belonged to Cleopatra—the largest, he writes, ever seen in the world. These magnificent specimens are said to have come from the Red Sea and were unfathomably valuable. At a feast hosted by Marc Antony in her honor, Cleopatra famously sacrificed one of her

Akoya cultured pearl.



pearls by melting it in a goblet of wine vinegar and drinking it down to demonstrate the might and wealth of Egypt. This act presumably made an appropriately deep impression on Marc Antony, because likewise, in ancient Rome, and throughout the Roman Empire, the pearl was treasured and lusted after—the period marked the peak of pearl fever in the ancient world. Sumptuary laws restricting the wearing of jewels ensured that the pearl became established as a sign of social rank and wealth—so much so that women even slept in their pearls, and Emperor Caligula, it is said, wore shoes made of pearls and adorned his beloved horse, which he elevated to consulship, with a hugely valuable pearl necklace.

Pearl earrings were fashionable in the ancient world, but the Romans favored necklaces. It was only when a handful or an abundance of pearls, beautifully matched in size and tone, were strung together, emphasizing their sensual luminosity and the rippling rhythm of their natural curves, and when the necklace was clasped around the throat, drawing attention to the elegance, fragility, and erotic allure of the neck and illuminating the face, that the true nobility of the pearl was revealed to perfection.

FEMININITY

The pearl necklace's status as a classic is also rooted in the gem's age-old associations with purity and perfection. Probably discovered thousands of years ago as a by-product of the hunter-fisherman's search for food, the pearl was revered as a marvel of the natural world, a mysterious secret hidden inside the oyster shell; its otherworldly beauty, its ready-made perfection, its luminosity were all interpreted as signs of the divine. With a sheen likened to moonlight and a soft, tactile, orb-like form, the pearl looked like a pristine miniature replica of the moon. It was therefore linked in Rome with the virgin goddess Diana (the Greek's Artemis), the divine embodiment of femininity, modesty, and purity, as a symbol of the feminine power of the moon on the earth and of the moon's cyclical self-renewal.

The single-strand pearl necklace, stunning in its simplicity, remained a potent expression of purity and a symbol of perfection long after the fall of the Roman Empire. As ancient myth yielded to medieval and then modern legend, the pearl's appeal endured: A true classic was born.

Regarded, for hundreds if not thousands of years, as the first among nonmetallic precious materials—and the most valuable, long before the true brilliance of the diamond was revealed—the pearl necklace was to become the “first” jewel, a fitting complement to young, fresh beauty. In the modern era, acquiring one became a rite of passage, of initiation into womanhood, marriage, or, in the case of the debutante, into society. The ladylike single strand of fine white cultured pearls was the must-have adornment of debutantes, who were traditionally dressed in white and presented at court during the “season,” a British social ritual that continued until 1958. Along with the equally restrained and demure twinset, the polite strand of pearls went on to become an essential element of the “uniform” of young aristocratic British women, the so-called “girls in pearls” featured each week in the frontispiece of the upper-class British magazine *Country Life*. The pearl necklace, like good manners and a correct curtsy, became part of this very British tradition.

As the emblem of initiation into the power of femininity, the pearl necklace has been the jewel of choice, too, for first ladies—of politics, fashion, beauty, style, and business—as far back as Renaissance Italy, where Eleonora of Toledo, the Spanish-born wife of Cosimo I de' Medici, took on the role of the world's first “first lady” to her husband, the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Obsessed with pearls, she was renowned for her pursuit of the finest specimens, and quantities were sought and presented to her as wedding gifts. For her portrait painted by Bronzino in 1545, she displayed pearls in profusion, wearing a long and short pearl necklace together, perhaps as a sign of power and authority—she served as regent during her husband's absence from Florence—and also as her personal style signature. She was even buried in her favorite gold-mesh-and-pearl hairnet, also worn in the painting.



Centuries later, across the world, many first ladies of the United States assumed the simple, classic pearl necklace almost as a badge of office. Martha Washington is pictured wearing a pearl choker in a miniature portrait by Charles Willson Peale painted in 1772; Abraham Lincoln bought his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, a parure of fashionable seed pearl jewelry to wear to his inauguration in 1861; Mamie Eisenhower chose faux pearls for her husband's inaugural ball; and, with her innate sense of style, Jacqueline Kennedy gave the classic pearl necklace a new lease on life, a new gloss of international glamour.

The first ladies of beauty, Estée Lauder and Helena Rubinstein, also adored pearls, understanding how a fabulous necklace and earrings together bring a soft glow to the complexion. Ever since her grandmother had given her a necklace of tiny seed pearls when she was a girl in Poland, Helena Rubinstein had been captivated by pearls. She bought jewelry, including pearls, often at exorbitant prices, every time her husband was unfaithful. With the first money she earned, Rubinstein bought herself “good” white South Sea pearls, which she mixed with black and gray pearls. She wore them, according to her biography, like armor whenever she needed to feel good.

The pearl necklace was the jewel of choice likewise for first ladies of fashion, led of course by Coco Chanel, who created parodies of the great pearl necklaces of the Belle Époque that she had seen from afar, as a teenager growing up in an orphanage. She never forgot them, nor the pain of her exclusion from the rarefied world of the chic elite. She loved the simplicity of pearls, their low-key sheen, their whiteness—one of Chanel's “absolutes”—and their classicism. She advocated wearing pearls casually, without pretension or arrogance, at all times of day, even to the beach, and she herself was almost never without her many strands of pearls, which became her signature and continue to be one of the most recognized Chanel signatures today.

Chanel's influence was extensive and enduring, especially where pearls were concerned; because of her example, pearl necklaces were worn with individual flair by many of the great

In the traditional production of cultured pearls, ama divers collected oysters from the seabed so that the pearl-producing nucleus could be inserted. The ama would then carefully return the oysters, placing them where they would be protected from external dangers such as typhoons and red tide. Due to advances in pearl cultivation techniques, ama divers are no longer needed.

midcentury first ladies of style. Barbara “Babe” Paley, for example, one of Truman Capote’s “swans,” wore her strands of pearls twisted and wound several times around the neck and the wrist with a throwaway nonchalance that subtly and elegantly shook the traditional formality of fine pearls. Wallace Simpson, the Duchess of Windsor, wore her exquisite, exuberant jewels with great panache, but her pearl necklace was one of her favorites, not only for its classic beauty, quality, and rarity but for its royal provenance. The necklace, composed of twenty-eight natural pearls accented with diamonds, had been given by Queen Mary to her son, the Duke of Windsor. The necklace may be one that King George V had bought

“Perhaps part of our fascination
lies in the contrast between the pristine
and the provocative.”

in 1929 from his aunt, Maria Feodorovna, the Dowager Empress of Russia. Wallis’s necklace was later purchased by Calvin Klein for his second wife, Kelly Rector, at the milestone sale of the duchess’s jewels at Sotheby’s in 1987.

The temptation to twist the classic pearl necklace, to question and challenge its conventions and its aura of conformism, has kept it alive. Perhaps part of our fascination lies in the contrast between the pristine and the provocative, between the gem’s discreet beauty and the sensual, fluid, rippling movement of strands of pearls. Pearls lend themselves equally to the bride’s or debutante’s demure single strand or to the lavish row upon row flaunted by Belle Époque courtesans, to the formality of a First Lady’s choker or to the frivolity of the flapper’s floor-length rope. Like the tightly laced corset, the pearl necklace—polite, pure, respectable, and

innocent, guardian of the fragile and eroticized throat, held in place by a single silk thread—seems to hint at secret pleasures and passions. Even in antiquity, the association of the pearl necklace with virtue, modesty, and purity was contradicted by its astronomical value, by the worldliness, wealth, and power it represented and displayed, and by the abandon and profusion with which it was worn. This dichotomy has deepened the pearl necklace's allure and enhanced its mystery, bewitching women of style and status, both real and fictional, from Cleopatra to Carrie Bradshaw, and tempting jewelers, couturiers, designers, and artists from Paul Poiret to Yohji Yamamoto to explore and reinvent the pearl necklace in every age.

RARITY AND ROYALTY

The seemingly miraculous randomness of finding a perfect natural pearl, the extreme danger involved in diving to search for it, and its exotic origins in the Persian Gulf, Arabia, and India, have all added to the pearl's status. Beyond their immense value as treasure, pearl jewels have often been invested by their owners with inestimable emotional value too. Moreover, the pearl's associations with divinity and royalty meant that the pearl necklace in particular became in some periods a sign of authority, a prerogative of monarchs and nobles.

In Byzantium, the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire, jewelry, opulent and extravagant, reached the level of a true art form, one in which pearls played a vital role. Pearls were reserved for the emperor and his family, as signs of the splendor, wealth, power, and sophistication of his mighty empire: In the Justinian Code, promulgated by Emperor Justinian in 529 CE, pearls (and sapphires and emeralds too) were reserved for the emperor's use alone. The Byzantine mosaics in the Basilica of San Vitale, in Ravenna, show Emperor Justinian, richly adorned with pearls and other gems, as well as his imposing wife, Empress Theodora, her face framed with thick strands of pearls falling from a gold-and-pearl diadem to reach past her shoulders; more pearls are featured on her earrings and decorate the shoulders of her dress. While other

gemstones are present, it is pearls that dominate in the jewelry worn by both the emperor and the empress, as well as by the ladies of their court.

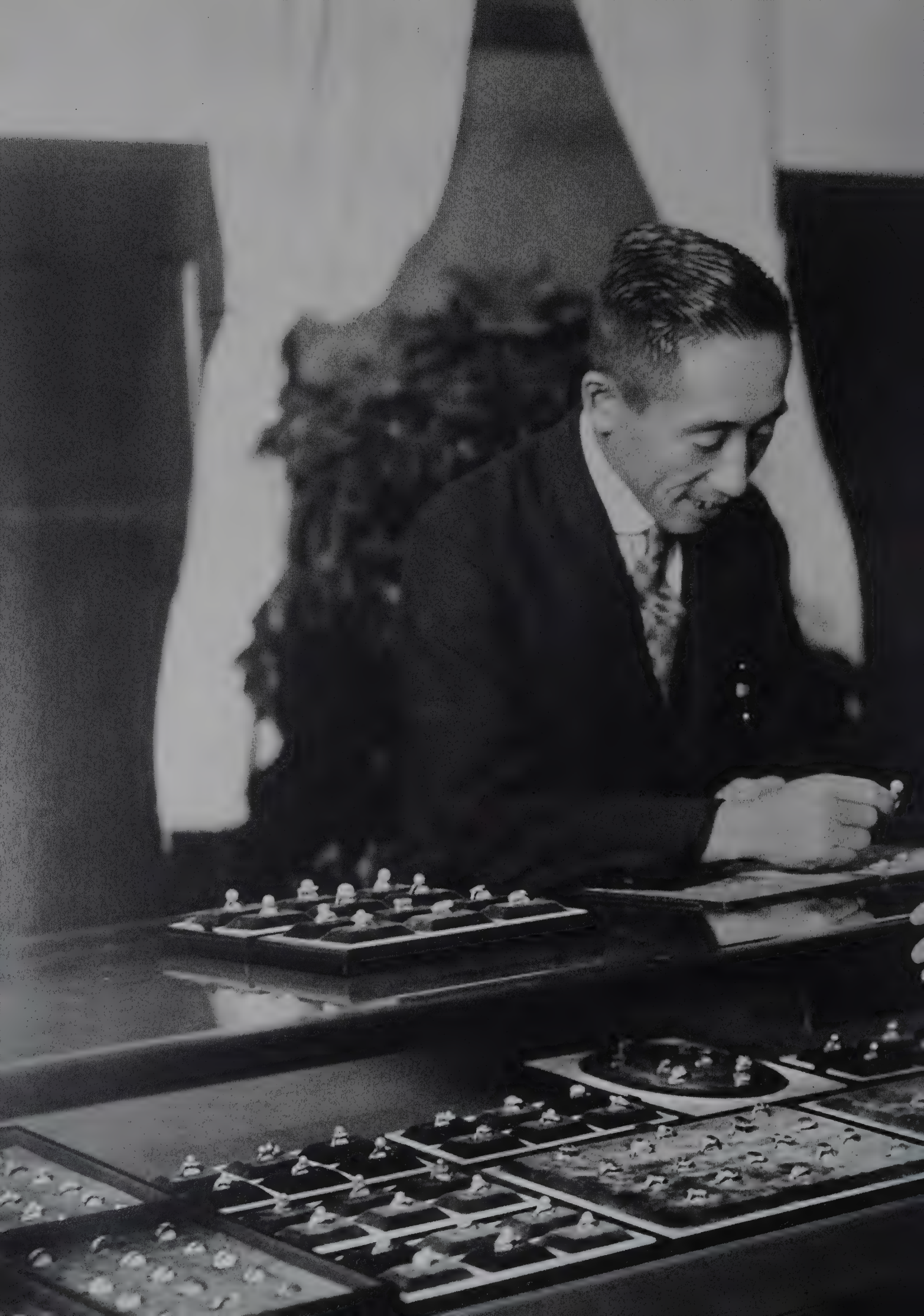
Yet it was not until the Renaissance that the pearl necklace truly became the ultimate power jewel, an emblem of might and majesty. It was in this period that many of the great historic pearl necklaces, including some of the world's most famous pearls—such as La Peregrina (later owned by Elizabeth Taylor and once almost swallowed by her pet Pekinese)—began their convoluted and often controversial journeys. Like other important jewels, the great pearls have been handed down through generations via strategic marriage alliances—lusted after, fought over, enmeshed in plots and intrigue. From the late fifteenth century, plentiful supplies of pearls newly discovered in the Americas made their way to the courts of Renaissance Europe. Revered by the Aztec and Maya, American pearls came from the seas of Venezuela and Mexico, the Gulf of Panama, and the Caribbean. The Gulf of California yielded delectable dusky black specimens.

The great female power brokers of the Renaissance—Catherine de' Medici, wife of King Henri II of France; Isabel of Valois, third wife of King Philip II of Spain; Eleonora of Toledo; and Queen Elizabeth I of England—were all fanatical about their pearls, which they wore stitched to their gowns and entwined in the hair, but mostly strung in long necklaces piled row upon row. In official portraits, pearls conveyed majesty, and the pearl necklace became part of the propaganda of official portraiture, announcing the power and wealth of empire, success in trade, and dominance at sea. For Elizabeth I, who reveled in intellectual wordplay and literary allusion, her pearls were a sign of the virgin queen's purity—although that virtue may not have prevented her from adding Venetian glass pearls to her parure. In some of her famous images, such as the three *Armada Portraits*, Elizabeth may well be wearing the six hundred white pearls bequeathed to her in 1588 by her close childhood friend, courtier, and favorite, Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester. It is tempting to suppose

that in this instance pearls signified not only power but the love that Elizabeth and Dudley undoubtedly shared.

Elizabeth I apparently had her sights set firmly on the famed Medici Pearls, six ropes of magnificent pearls with twenty-five large individual pearls, some the size of nutmegs, which had been given as a wedding gift to Elizabeth's cousin Mary, Queen of Scots, by Catherine de' Medici, when Mary married the Dauphin (the eldest son of the French king), Francis. The pearls had in turn been given to Catherine by her uncle, Pope Clement VII. Just as she kept track of her cousin, Elizabeth followed the whereabouts of the Medici Pearls and bought them in 1568, when they were offered for sale during Mary's imprisonment. These pearls were to weave their way through European history. Eventually, having been renamed the Hanover Pearls, they returned to Great Britain where they were worn by Queen Victoria and Queen Alexandra (the wife of Edward VII) before ending up in the royal collection of Queen Elizabeth II, who wears them often and with great style.

Firmly established as an attribute of royalty, magnificent pearl necklaces enhanced the majesty of European monarchs and nobles, notably at the courts of the Hapsburgs and the Valois, and at the dazzling court of the Sun King, Louis XIV. Several spectacular pearls were among the Golconda diamonds brought back for the Sun King from India by the celebrated gem merchant, adventurer Baptiste Tavernier. In Russia, pearls were worn with obsessive, ostentatious opulence. Catherine the Great, known for her love of jewels, covered her entire bodice with pearls, starting with a choker from which draped row upon row of pearls, each strand hung at the center with a monumental pearl drop, a look favored, too, by Queen Charlotte of Great Britain, wife of George III.





MUGHALS AND MAHARAJAHS

Meanwhile, in Mughal India, the pearl necklace had also emerged as an emblem of royalty. As with gems, the finest pearls from the Persian Gulf and from the Gulf of Mannar were reserved for the emperor and other monarchs, including the most fabulously bejeweled of all the princes of post-Mughal India, the nizams of Hyderabad. Gems, including pearls, could be bestowed as honors on courtiers, military leaders, and noblemen; a fine pearl necklace signified the ruler's favor, and therefore power and prestige. Emperor Jahangir appears in miniature paintings wearing ropes of pearls interspersed at regular intervals with cabochon gem beads (spinels or rubies, and emeralds), a style that persisted through the reigns of his successors. Shah Jahan on the other hand is pictured wearing longer ropes of pearls only, with one draped across his torso.

Yet it was later, under the British Raj, that the Indian pearl necklace took center stage in displays of princely splendor, assuming one of its most spectacular manifestations: the multi-stranded, multilayered pearl necklaces worn with such style by the fabulously wealthy and fabulously bejeweled maharajahs. For these rulers, their ceremonial jewels and other regalia, with the pearl necklace as the centerpiece, were signs of both authority and wealth. The gaekwads of Baroda were especially renowned for the rarity and abundance of their pearl necklaces. Such displays made a deep impression on all who saw them at official occasions, such as the Delhi durbars (public receptions) and the coronation celebrations in India for Edward VII and George V, or during the frequent trips to Paris and London made by the maharajahs, among whose purposes was often to have their traditional jewels reset in the latest European styles. The unforgettable images of the maharajahs, their chests entirely covered from neck to waist with row upon row of silky pearls, were to exert a long-lasting influence on the design of twentieth-century pearl necklaces.

VERVE AND VERSATILITY

The maharajahs had a particular way of wearing the pearl necklace, but ideas for twisting this classic jewel, for exploring its simplicity and versatility to create an expression of personal style, started as early as the Renaissance. Ropes of pearls were worn long and loose but also draped, looped, caught up in the center or at the sides (sometimes with a loop of thread or with a brooch); they could also be knotted or twisted to fall in an elongated pendant loop. The young Margaret of Valois was painted around 1560 by François Clouet wearing a simple necklace designed as a series of triangular clusters that stretches wide across her collarbones; more pearls—many more—decorate her hair and the bodice of her dress. Other Renaissance portraits show pearls worn across the chest and shoulders; necklaces or collars composed of thick, almost cylindrical clusters, evenly spaced at intervals; or long necklaces made of woven openwork cage-like motifs—all bold designs that look surprisingly modern today. Strands of pearls were also worn in the hair, woven tightly around or through a chignon, or as a band encircling the head, an ornament known as a *frenello*. Later, in the seventeenth century, as dress in general and silks in particular became lighter and brighter, strands of pearls woven loosely through the hair became the height of fashion.

Marie Antoinette owned a magnificent collection of pearls. She liked to wear them in her favored style of studied pastoral simplicity, with two strands around her neck and more wound around her wrist and woven loosely through her hair. While imprisoned during the Revolution, Marie Antoinette enlisted the help of Lady Elizabeth, Countess of Sutherland, wife of the British ambassador, Lord George Leveson-Gower, and entrusted a bag of pearls and diamonds to her for safekeeping, to be returned following the royal family's escape from France. But there was to be no escape. Lady Elizabeth kept the jewels and had the natural gray pearls remodeled into a necklace, which she wore to the wedding of her grandson in 1849. The necklace appeared at auction at Christie's in 2007.

According to the memoirs of Napoleon Bonaparte's private secretary, Louis de Bourrienne, which were published in 1831, Marie Antoinette's pearls ended up with the famous jeweler Foncier, who was summoned to show them to Joséphine, Napoleon's first wife, while he was first consul of the Republic. At the time, she was seething over her husband's appropriation of one of her diamond necklaces to give to his sister Caroline as a wedding gift. Seeing that there were enough pearls to make a fine necklace, Joséphine had only to find a way to pay for it, and eventually persuaded her husband's minister of war to divert funds for the purpose. When she dared to wear it, her husband, who had a keen eye for fashion and jewels, noticed at once the beautiful pearl necklace in her hair. De Bourrienne, in on the plot, had to back up Joséphine's story that this necklace had been presented to her years earlier.

Empress Eugénie, wife of Napoleon III, a great beauty, was besotted with jewels. She took to pearls ardently. Eugénie dipped into the French crown jewels, wore Empress Joséphine's pearls, and, for her wedding parure in 1853, remodeled pearls owned by Empress Marie Louise, second wife of Napoleon I, which included a spectacular six-strand pearl necklace. Eugénie was painted by Winterhalter wearing a superlative single strand of pearls fringed with drops that had belonged to Marie-Thérèse, Duchess of Angoulême, the only surviving child of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette. Eugénie adored dusky black pearls from the seas of Polynesia and took years to collect exceptional specimens for a ravishing necklace. She sparked a vogue for black pearls that continues today. Other famous black-pearl necklaces were owned by Nina Dyer, the wife first of Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza and then of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, and by Elizabeth, Viscountess Cowdray, wife of Weetman Dickinson Pearson, first Viscount Cowdray.

The luxury-obsessed Second Empire ended in 1870, and the French crown jewels were auctioned in Paris in 1887. At the sale, Tiffany bought four of Eugénie's fine strands of pearls (among many other jewels), while others of Eugénie's pearl necklaces were purchased by the famous courtesan Esther Lachmann, known as La Païva, heralding the pearls famously worn

later by the great Belle Époque courtesans, the *grandes horizontales*, led by “Les Grandes Trois”: Liane de Pougy, Caroline Otero, and Emilienne d’Alençon. There was fierce rivalry between them over their jewels, especially their pearls, which were among the most demonstrative signs of their success. Their reputations rose or fell with their jewels, as did their financial security. The pearl necklace became the currency of love.

“The woman of rank and wealth
usually prizes first amongst her jewels
her necklace of pearls.”

George F. Kunz, *The Book of the Pearl*, 1908

PEARLS, PRINCESSES, AND THE GILDED AGE

Empress Eugénie’s style, her influence as a fashion leader, and her way of wearing her beloved pearls in different lengths and styles layered together helped move the pearl necklace out of its traditional royal niche and into its position as one of the most fashionable status symbols of the early twentieth century. In England, the young Princess Alexandra, then the wife of Edward, Prince of Wales, brought from her native Denmark not only some of her family’s jewels but her great elegance and an acute love of pearls. She made a deep multirow pearl choker (worn, it was said, to cover a scar) the signature of her style and helped to turn the Edwardian era (in France, the Belle Époque, and the Gilded Age in the United States) into one of the great periods for the pearl necklace.

In America, tycoons, magnates, and industrialists used their immense new wealth to acquire the trappings of the aristocracy, including jewels, and particularly ropes of rare and valuable natural pearls, which became not only symbols of success and prestige but also



instant family heirlooms. In his *Book of the Pearl*, published in 1908, George F. Kunz, Tiffany's chief gemologist from 1879 until his death in 1932, wrote, "If one is a wearer of jewels, pearls are an absolute necessity; indeed, they are as essential and indispensable for the wealthy as are houses, horses and automobiles." Kunz added that single strands of pearls owned by some American women were worth more than Empress Eugénie's entire collection of pearls. Mrs. George Gould (shown in Kunz's book draped in pearls from her throat to below her waist) and Nancy Leeds both owned breathtakingly expensive necklaces. Demand soared and the prices of pearls were quoted daily in the newspapers; very large pearls, Kunz notes, could have been in theory four times as expensive as diamonds of an equivalent weight. Not only in America but throughout Europe and Russia, women lusted after pearl necklaces; they lied, sued, and cheated to get them. One anecdote charts the romance between the famous French music hall artist Gaby Deslys and her lover, King Manuel of Portugal, who was said to have sent Deslys a pearl necklace that had cost seventy thousand dollars—a fortune at the time—after first meeting her. The story relates how, together on board the King's yacht, the couple had a furious spat, and Deslys impetuously flung her pearl necklace into the ocean. Filled with remorse at how upset his lover must have been to do such a thing, the King bought her another, equally expensive pearl necklace, which the singer graciously accepted—not revealing that the pearls lying at the bottom of the ocean were in fact clever fakes.

Pearl necklaces were now being worn in a particular way, piled row upon row, echoing a style favored by Renaissance noblewomen and the maharajahs. At her coronation in 1902, Alexandra wore seven strings of colossal pearls, each some twenty-four to thirty inches long, mingled generously with diamonds and more pearl-studded corsage ornaments. Her style became the decade's *de rigueur* fashion; a lady might typically wear one simple necklace of large pearls, above this a dog collar of perhaps twenty or more rows of pearls with a diamond centerpiece, and below a long sautoir of pearls, often alternating with diamonds.

To make a pearl necklace, Mikimoto's experts assess each pearl by size, shape, color, and luster, handling each one hundreds of times. Strict matching requirements ensure that pearls adjacent to one another share the same beautiful luster to create an exquisite harmony at the neckline.

The many strategic alliances made between American heiresses and British or European noblemen inevitably involved the acquisition of a stunning pearl necklace, or several, befitting the new bride's married status, her entry ticket to the aristocracy. Most in demand were pearls with a past—above all great historic pearl necklaces, especially those with royal provenance, ones that had been previously owned by such figures as Catherine the Great, Empress Eugénie, or Marie Antoinette. The attributions of these necklaces were sometimes tenuous.

In New York in 1895, in one of the most high-profile transatlantic alliances, the eighteen-year-old Consuelo Vanderbilt married Charles Spencer-Churchill, the Duke of Marlborough. The bride's mother, who had a spectacular pearl collection, gave her daughter a pearl necklace that, Consuelo said, had once belonged to both Catherine the Great and Empress Eugénie. The new Duchess looked striking dressed in her formal pearl finery, with a deep choker of some nineteen rows, necklaces comprising two rows of enormous graduated pearls, and two longer rows arranged with great style, crisscrossing over her breast and shoulders.

One of the most telling stories involving a Gilded Age pearl necklace is that of Cartier's acquisition in 1917 of its Fifth Avenue premises. The banker Morton F. Plant was considering the sale of his palatial six-story neo-Renaissance mansion, on the corner of Fifth Avenue and Fifty-Second Street, to move farther uptown. Around the same time, Mrs. Plant had her eye on an exquisite two-strand pearl necklace that Pierre Cartier had been assembling for years and was at the time the house's most valuable set of pearls, valued at one million dollars. A deal was struck whereby Cartier acquired the Plant mansion in exchange for the necklace and a hundred dollars in cash. Always at the heart of Belle Époque society, Cartier bought pearls directly from the sheikhs who dominated the trade at the time and was involved in many of the era's most sensational pearl transactions, especially in Paris in the 1920s, when he bought fabulous pearls from Russian aristocrats escaping the Revolution, including Prince Felix Yusupov's famous black pearls.

THE MIKIMOTO CULTURED PEARL: A CLASSIC REBORN

Just as the aristocratic pearl necklace became the receptacle of dreams, and the iridescent pearl itself a microcosm of near-universal feminine aspiration, across the world in rural Japan, in an environment as far removed from the glittering Gilded Age as can be imagined, Kokichi Mikimoto, the son of a noodle-and-vegetable seller, was following his own dream and in the process was making those aspirations a reality for millions of women of all classes all over the world.

Mikimoto grew up in the small coastal fishing town of Toba, on Honshu Island, near one of Japan's richest pearl-fishing sites, Ago Bay. Here, as the young Mikimoto saw at first hand, the huge and rapidly escalating demand for pearls in the West was having an effect on the local industry, depleting the oyster beds and sending more and more divers, known as "ama," (all women, by custom) down to the ocean's depths to search for the treasures. He knew of the high prices paid for pearls and was concerned for the future of his pearl-fishing community. It became Mikimoto's dream to replicate the natural process through which a pearl is formed, when the oyster, as a defense mechanism, coats a foreign object, such as a grain of sand, with layers of iridescent nacre. Mikimoto saw a way to give nature a helping hand by artificially inserting a nucleus into the fleshy part of the oyster in its shell to stimulate the production of nacre and thereby, he hoped, cultivate a perfect pearl.

Mikimoto's inspiring story—his struggles, his determination, his dedicated perfectionism, and his rise to the status of a Japanese national hero—is well documented. From his first experiment, the daily immersion of bamboo baskets full of oysters, each implanted with a tiny foreign object, in the sea of the Shinmei Inlet in Ago Bay, Mikimoto realized that he had embarked on a path of immense hardship, one that demanded great patience and fortitude. Every few months, he gently pried open the oysters' shells, only to be disappointed time and time again. His family urged him to abandon his seemingly impossible dream—everyone,

that is, except his devoted wife, Ume, his most committed supporter. After heartbreaking trials and tribulations, on July 11, 1893, when Mikimoto believed all his oysters had been lost after a devastating instance of poisonous red tide plankton, Ume reminded him of some oyster beds at Toba that might have escaped. Seeing Mikimoto's despair, she pulled up one of the bamboo baskets and found the first cultured pearl.

Initially, Mikimoto's cultured pearls were semi-spherical—less than perfect. Nonetheless, he applied for a patent on his process, which was granted in 1896. Tragically, however, that

“It became Mikimoto's
dream to replicate the natural
process through which
a pearl is formed.”

same year, his beloved wife died suddenly at the age of thirty-two. Overwhelmed with grief, Mikimoto immersed himself even deeper in his pursuit of perfect cultured pearls. In 1905, disaster struck again in the form of another devastating red tide, which killed 850,000 of his oysters. In despair once again, Mikimoto shut himself away in his laboratory to examine each one. From a pile of dead oysters he found five perfectly round pearls.

Before starting on his adventure, Mikimoto had carefully selected the Akoya variety of oysters as the species that naturally produced the most desirable pearls. Over the next several years, Mikimoto refined his system of culturing Akoya pearls so that it consistently produced perfectly spherical gems of superior quality, luster, and color. It was a modern miracle, a perfect synergy of man and nature—of man *nurturing* nature: The pearl was reborn.

By the 1920s, Mikimoto's cultured pearls had not only brought fame and fortune to Toba, and indeed to Japan, but had revolutionized the entire world's pearl market and, coinciding with the Great Depression, sent prices of natural pearls plummeting. Europe, the leading market for natural pearls, was particularly hard hit, and Mikimoto found himself the target of a counterattack by the fine jewelry industry, which questioned the authenticity of his cultured pearls, claiming they were not "real," and advocated an embargo against his product. The affair culminated in a high-profile lawsuit, later known as the Paris Trial, at which the French Association of Commerce and Industry tried to prove that cultured pearls were fraudulent. However, reputable scholars, including Professor H. Lyster Jameson of Oxford University and Professor Louis Boutan of Bordeaux University, testified that, from a scientific point of view, "there is no fundamental difference between natural and cultured pearls in terms of their formation and structure." As a result of this evidence, in 1924 a French court ruled, "Cultured pearls do not differ from natural pearls at all." The ruling established that the cultured pearl was indeed of gem quality, and it was soon acknowledged as such the world over. Indeed, from this time forward, the term "pearls" has generally come to refer to cultured pearls.

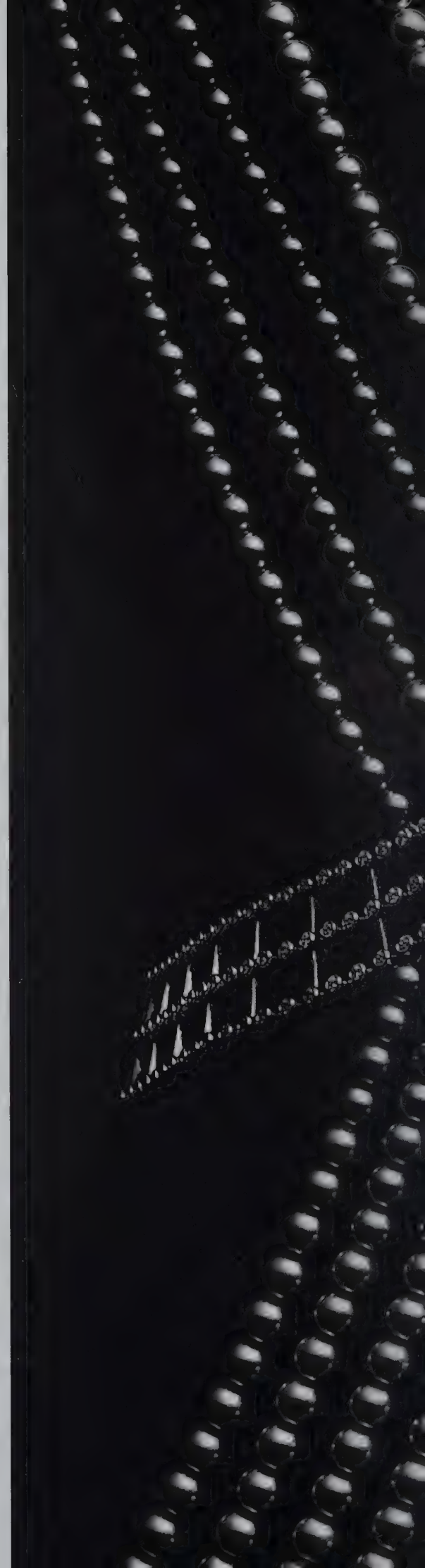
The timing of Mikimoto's launch in Europe, starting in London, was perfect: World War I had brought an end to the nineteenth century's lingering social order and the dominance of its leisure class. Women now worked, drove, drank and smoked and danced in public, played sports, and, most important, bought their own clothes and jewels. Most often, they wanted to wear styles they had seen in the movies, aspiring to previously unattainable luxury and glamour. For this new generation of working women, the pearl necklace was heavy with long-held associations of success, sophistication, elegance, and social status.

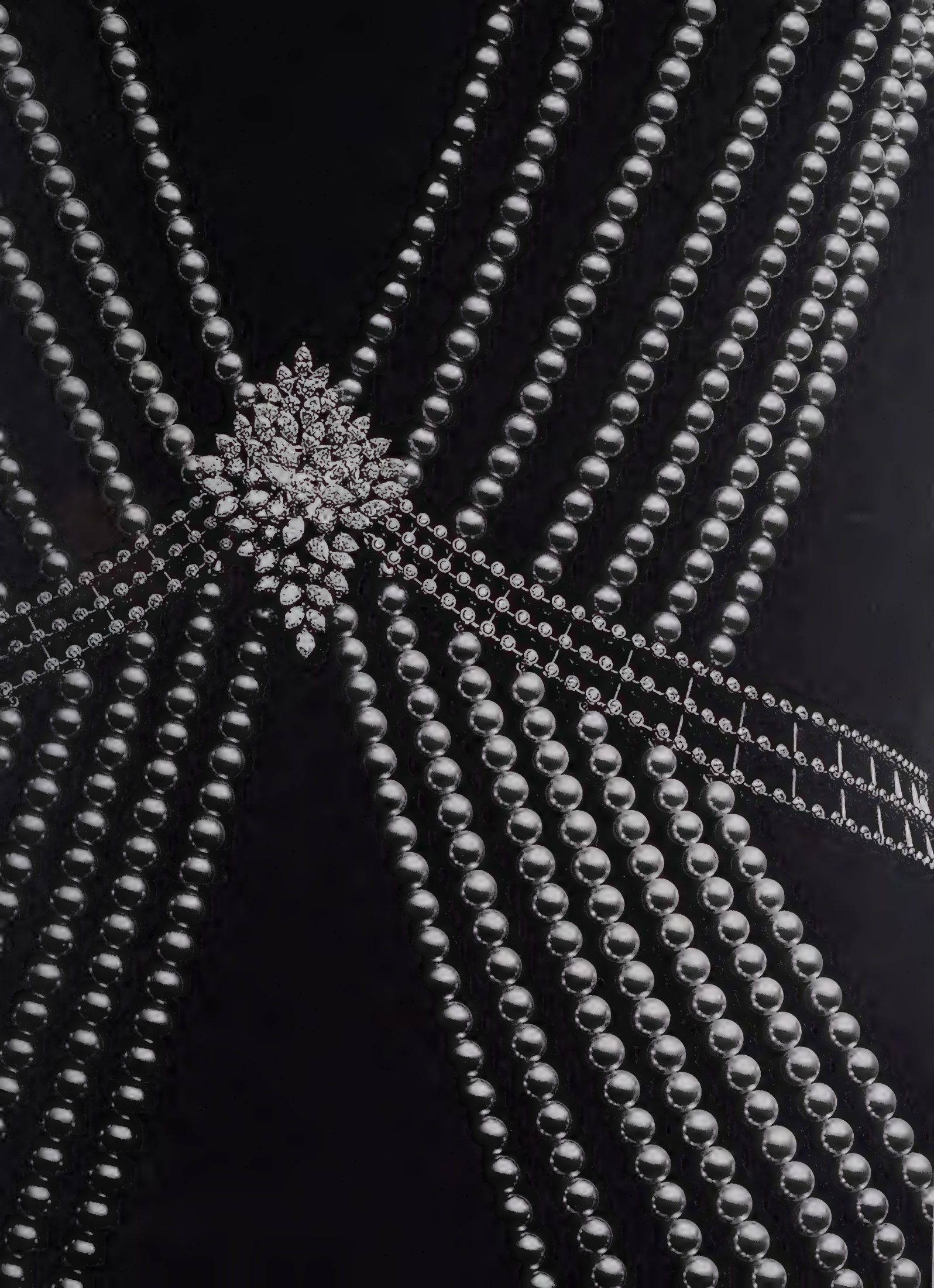
At court and in aristocratic circles around the world, the traditions of the pearl necklace persisted. In England, the awe-inspiring figure of Queen Mary, always wreathed in pearls

(many of them from the Imperial Russian jewel box), maintained the formal style and etiquette of the Edwardian era. Debutantes presented to her at court wore pearls with their traditional white or pale-tinted gowns. Yet, in this fast-changing world, the pearl necklace was taking on new meanings, new expressions, reaching out to a new, wider-than-ever clientele of style-conscious women. With the cultured pearl, Mikimoto had not only changed the course of jewelry history but had also begun the democratization of luxury; his hope and dream that every woman in the world would have a pearl necklace was fast coming true.

Aside from his determination and his inventive mind, Mikimoto possessed an instinct for people, a ready wit and charm—qualities that obviously helped win over supporters to his venture. And despite his unworldly upbringing, he clearly had an innate understanding of women, their dreams and desires, and the role that the cultured pearl necklace could play in their lives. As his fame spread, he was often invited

Front detail of body jewelry inspired by the myths of ancient Greece, made from Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls and South Sea White cultured pearls with diamonds. 2015.





on official visits, and during one trip to Europe and the United States, he was asked about the age-old belief that pearls can be used as a miracle medicinal remedy. “Indeed,” he replied, “for women’s troubles in particular, a string of pearls around the neck cures the problem immediately. I understand it’s a wonder cure for hysterics.” The women in the audience burst into spontaneous applause.

As a dedicated perfectionist, Mikimoto insisted on attaining the very highest quality and consistency in his pearls, a standard that continues in the company today. When his patent expired and a whole industry grew up around the cultured pearl, Mikimoto was concerned about the appearance on the market of inexpensive, inferior cultured pearls, which he felt threatened the reputation of the Japanese pearls that he had fought so hard to build. To demonstrate his determination to remain the leader in the field, Mikimoto once shoveled low-quality cultured pearls into a fire in the plaza outside the Kobe Chamber of Commerce and Industry, which handled most of the nation’s overseas trade. As he watched the pearls disappear in clouds of smoke, he declared, “As long as we refrain from producing inferior goods, Japanese pearls will grace the necks of women everywhere in the world.” Once again, he was proved right. Still today, only the cream of the world’s cultured pearl production is considered suitable for Mikimoto jewelry.

In the Pearl Museum, on Mikimoto Pearl Island, Toba, where the first-ever cultured pearl was found, is the original Mikimoto single-strand pearl necklace. Known as Taisho-ren, the “Boss’s Necklace,” it comprises forty-nine large, supremely lustrous, perfectly matched pearls, with at its center a pearl 14 millimeters (0.55 inches) in diameter, each one collected patiently over a period of ten years and hand-selected by Mikimoto himself. Taisho-ren remains the template for all classic strands of Mikimoto pearls.

Even today, assembling a Mikimoto pearl necklace is a painstaking, time-consuming business, an art form in itself, demanding expertise and experience, skill, judgment, and

craftsmanship. First a rigorous selection process sorts the very best pearls, each perfectly round and of high-quality nacre. The chosen few are then cleaned using specialized techniques and passed to the expert sorter. Each pearl is individually examined by northern morning light to reveal its “personality”: No two pearls are alike. Mikimoto cultured pearls are sorted and resorted by experienced specialists, who assess their size, shape, color, and luster, handling each pearl hundreds of times. The pearls are then matched according to their characteristics and personalities, including the subtlest nuances of tone and sheen in their “skin,” the outermost layer of nacre, in order to create a strand of perfect flowing harmony. Once sorted, the pearls are drilled with the utmost care and precision before being expertly hand-knotted by Mikimoto artisans using the finest silk thread.

This meticulous process, put in place long ago by the founder himself, ensured from the beginning that the Mikimoto pearl necklace fast became an object of desire, and an attainable one. Not only was the pearl itself reborn, but the classic, iconic pearl necklace, the single, graduated strand of fine pearls, was revitalized for a new era and for the interpretations of a new audience.

ORIENTALISM

For centuries, the finest natural pearls, called “Oriental pearls,” came from the Persian Gulf and were traded primarily by Arab and Portuguese merchants. This source in the Middle East accounts for the aura of exoticism and the mystique that has clung to the image of the pearl necklace for centuries. Like the Mughals and the maharajahs after them, Middle Eastern potentates, especially the Ottoman sultans, held pearls in high esteem, reserving the finest for themselves and members of their families.

So it was perhaps inevitable that when, in the early decades of the twentieth century, fashion design and the decorative arts were infused with the strong orientalist perfume that wafted in

with the sets and costumes of Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, the long pearl necklace—ever versatile, seductive, moving with the body—took on a new mood of sultry sensuality. Now, in addition to its other associations, the pearl necklace carried with it the compelling, musky scent of the ballet *Schéherazade* (premiered in 1910 in Paris) and the tales of the *Arabian Nights*. The couturier Paul Poiret created many sheath dresses encrusted with artificial pearls, as well as a famous “Fountain” party costume, in which cascading water was simulated with long strands of the same faux gems. Exaggeratedly long, looping pearl necklaces were featured in contemporaneous fashion illustrations by such artists as Paul Iribe and, famously, in Erté's stylized designs for fashion, stage, and screen. The dot-like shape of pearls and the long lines of the necklace fitted the graphic quality in favor in all areas of design in the 1920s and '30s.

For the flappers, the 1920s were liberating, as women abandoned corsets and tight bodices for loose, short, fringed columnar dresses. Flapper fashion was ideally accessorized with a long pearl necklace—twirling, flicking, flouncing, and reaching almost to the floor—along with a cigarette holder and a bandeau headband. Where once it had been a badge of conformity and respectability, the pearl necklace now spoke of freedom and fantasy. Josephine Baker, queen of the Jazz Age, often nicknamed the “Black Pearl,” appeared on stage in *La Revue Nègre* in Paris in 1925 wearing pearls and a skirt of artificial bananas—and very little else. In his iconic 1927 photograph of the American dancer and silent movie actress Louise Brooks, Eugene Robert Richee paired Brooks's signature sharply cropped bob haircut with the fluid line of a single long strand of pearls, capturing her embodiment of the 1920s woman and creating an icon of stylized minimalism.

PEARL ROMANCE

Weddings have a habit of bringing out the traditional in even the most unconventional modern bride, and the pearl necklace, for centuries linked to Venus, love, and purity, continues

to adorn brides the world over. In the Victorian era, for families that could afford them, pearls played a central role in the *corbeille de mariage*, the casket of jewels presented to the bride by the groom and his family on the eve of their wedding. Pearls suited the bride's chastity, complemented her white gown, illuminated her radiance, and at the same time equipped her for her launch into society as a married woman. Even now, it is traditional in some circles for the father of the bride to buy his daughter a pearl necklace to wear on her wedding day. In 1933, for the wedding of the American heiress Barbara Hutton to Prince Alexis Mdivani of Georgia, her father gave Hutton a strand of fifty-three stupendously valuable

“ Different species, shapes, and colors of pearls added to the versatility of the pearl necklace, from dreamy, cloud-like baroque pearls, through small, lustrous keshi pearls, to the gleaming South Sea specimens.”

pearls that had belonged to Marie Antoinette. The eccentric, jewel-mad Hutton was later said to have given the precious pearls to a goose to swallow in the belief this would improve their luster.

The gift of a pearl necklace, however, might also come from the groom. In 1956, actress Grace Kelly, a pearl devotee both on- and off-screen and a paragon of classic beauty and refinement, was given a three-strand cultured-pearl-and-diamond necklace by her fiancé, Prince Rainier of Monaco. Rainier chose the exact tone of the pearls to match his fiancée's

porcelain complexion. A symbol of their fairy-tale romance and also of the sophistication of the 1950s, the pearl necklace became the style signature of Princess Grace of Monaco. Marilyn Monroe was given a classic Mikimoto single-strand pearl necklace by her second husband, Joe DiMaggio, while they were in Japan on their honeymoon in 1954. This was one of the only pieces of precious jewelry that Monroe owned, and even long after their divorce, she wore it often to remind her, she said, of happier times. Perhaps, too, the necklace lent Monroe the sense of security and respectability she craved.

PEARLS IN FASHION

While Mikimoto's cultured pearls had made the dream of a classic pearl necklace a reality for women around the world, their winning combination of abundance and otherworldly beauty, their radiance and silky luster had also stimulated creativity in jewelry design, bringing fresh and exciting expression to the classic pearl necklace, turning it into a fashion essential. The long, flowing pearl sautoir, sometimes dangling seductively down the back, sometimes hung with a lush pearl tassel, continued to be the height of fashion into the 1930s. But gradually, as the decade wore on, and into the 1940s, the pearl necklace became shorter. Multiple draped rows of pearls clasped on each side with a diamond or colored-gem motif was a favorite jewel of the 1940s, as was, once again, the classic single or double strand of cultured pearls.

The 1950s, with the decade's cult of ladylike, white-gloved formality and soigné sophistication, bred a renewed passion for the pearl necklace, fueled by the rise and enormous popularity of cultured pearls. By now, too, the cultured South Sea pearl, huge and lustrous, was emerging as a bright star of the jewelry world. A new golden age of couture was also emerging, led by Christian Dior, with his sumptuous, rustling silk gowns and his revolutionary New Look, which referenced the S-, hourglass-, or butterfly-shaped Belle

Époque woman's silhouette and that era's cult of intensely idealized femininity. Postwar prosperity brought a return to grandeur, whose most natural accessory was again the pearl and in particular the Belle Époque *collier de chien*, or dog collar choker, a trend taken up both by fine jewelry and with great enthusiasm by the booming costume jewelry industry. The elaborate choker worked sublimely with off-the-shoulder evening gowns, while the neat single strand of pearls looked perfect inside the collar of a Dior "Bar" jacket, with its bell-like peplum. A slightly longer pearl necklace of two or more rows was a match made in heaven for the fashionable tailored but classic twinset, marking a new mood in dressy casual wear for the modern woman. Pearls were also twisted into thick, silky torsades, ropelike collars fastened with an elaborate clasp, a style that continued through the 1960s and '70s.

With centuries of riding out the vicissitudes of fashion behind it, the pearl necklace survived the "youthquake" of the rebellious 1960s, buoyed by a fresh, chic celebrity cult epitomized by the low-key elegance of Jackie Kennedy and by Elizabeth Taylor's pearl-bedecked glamour. After this, as ever, the pearl necklace continued to thread its lustrous way through the next half century and into the new millennium, maintaining its status as an enduring classic and upholder of tradition while at the same time inviting all kinds of innovation. Thanks to the invention of the cultured pearl, there was now a pearl necklace to embody the creative expression of each decade, whether dynamic—as in the styles relished by the 1960s jet set, when pearls were mixed with vibrant colored gems, coral, and onyx—or demure, as in the back-to-nature 1970s; whether maximal, as in the 1980s, or minimal, as in the 1990s. In the postfeminist, power-dressing decade of the 1980s, the pearl necklace enjoyed a huge surge of popularity, exaggerated and extrovert, reverting to the role as a symbol of feminine power that it had claimed in the era of Catherine de' Medici. In the 1990s, with the rise of the concept of the capsule wardrobe, the pearl necklace was seen as the perfect day-to-evening jewel.

Different species, shapes, and colors of pearls added to the versatility and creativity of the pearl necklace, from dreamy, cloud-like baroque pearls, with their echoes of Renaissance grandeur, through small, lustrous keshi pearls which are non-nucleated and therefore irregular, to the gleaming South Sea specimens. As a backdrop to such fast-changing fashions, the image of the pearl necklace as a badge of royalty has remained steadfast, especially in Great Britain, where Queen Elizabeth II, Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, and Princess Margaret all appeared regularly in public wearing regal rows and ropes of classic pearls. When, in the early 1980s, the young and enchanting Lady Diana Spencer was catapulted into the public eye, she was more often than not photographed wearing a single strand of pearls inside her frilled pie-crust collar—the uniform at that time of the young British upper-class or aristocratic woman, the so-called Sloane Ranger (more or less the British equivalent of the American preppy). As the Princess of Wales, developing her own style of movie-star glamour, Diana led the New Romantic movement, choosing the deep pearl choker as her signature jewel—a charming reference, witty and reverent, to another young and beautiful Princess of Wales before her, Alexandra.

Chameleonlike, the pearl necklace adapted to the minimalism of the 1990s, when the black South Sea pearl made a dramatic reappearance, enjoying a massive surge in popularity, as its bewitching, bruised tones of purple, bronze, gunmetal, and peacock blue-green brought a modern Goth, rock-and-roll edge to the pearl's traditional coyness.

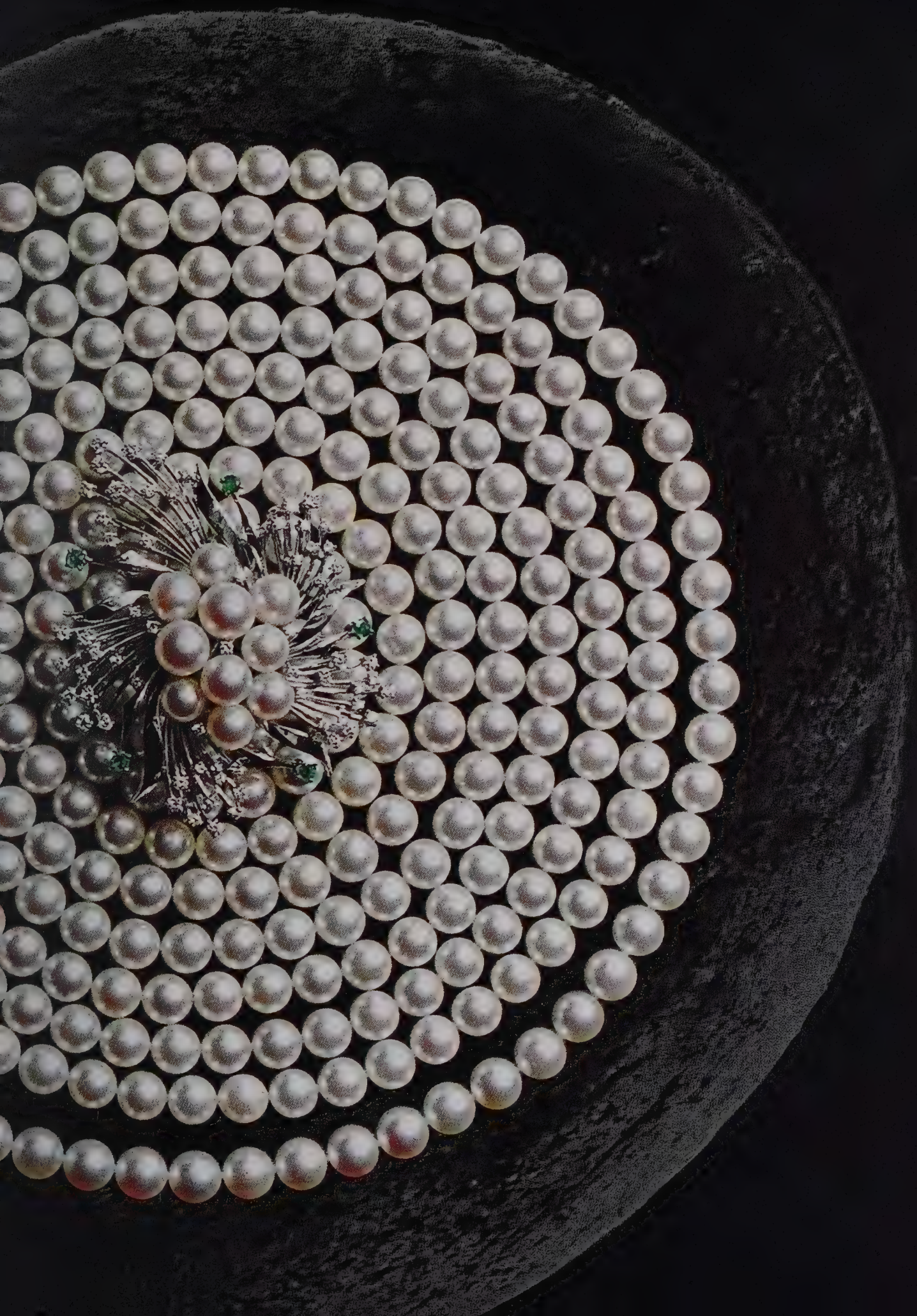
While pearls are among the oldest of gems, the pearl necklace is getting younger by the day, adding its luster to the twenty-first-century vogue for layered jewels worn with chains and charms—jumbled, twisted, and knotted in elegant disarray. Breaking down social and fashion taboos, pearls have begun to be worn for all occasions, at all times of day, by women of all ages—with sportswear, with denim, as the ideal complement to jeans and a white T-shirt. At Chanel, Karl Lagerfeld continues to tease the pearl's preciousness, as Coco Chanel

herself did, experimenting with its form, size, and sheen. Lagerfeld has, for example, created Ping-Pong ball-size faux-pearl catwalk jewels, honoring Chanel's own humorously parodic costume jewelry.

In the twenty-first century, the allure of the pearl necklace continues to tempt women, especially those in the spotlight, to subvert its conventions, to layer its heritage and romance with their own personal interpretations. Such stars as Angelina Jolie, who favors large pearls set or strung with bold simplicity, or Sarah Jessica Parker, who likes to mix at least one opera-length strand with other necklaces (both off-screen and as her TV alter ego Carrie Bradshaw), have made the pearl necklace an indelible part of their image. Perhaps nowhere is the duality or subversion of the pearl necklace shown to such dramatic effect as when worn by Lady Gaga, the ultimate nonconformist, who adores her classic Mikimoto pearl necklace. In an interview in *Harper's Bazaar*, she said, "The three most expensive items I've ever purchased, including an actual house: my sable, a strand of diamonds, and my Mikimoto pearls."

Mikimoto, with an instinctive understanding of the innate contradictions of the pearl necklace that goes back to the company's founder, continues to balance tradition with modernity, classicism with creativity. While the iconic strand of Mikimoto pearls is recognized and revered around the globe, each year, Mikimoto unveils a series of spectacular one-of-a-kind creations—whether contemporizing the maharajah-style display of row upon row of rare pearls, weaving a silky pearl "scarf," or transforming the necklace into a full-body ornament—these works of art bring an entirely new dimension to the concept, form, and function of the pearl necklace, adding new chapters to its never-ending story.









“Beauty is something wonderful and strange that the artist fashions out of the chaos of the world in the torment of his soul.”

W. S. Maugham, *The Moon and Sixpence*



MYSTERIES OF A BEAUTY

Japan's classic beauty is stylized as a haiku...small features, ears like perfect shells...one expects small miracles like this extraordinary pearl that fits exactly into the hollow above the rouge-blushed lobe. ...Hair is dressed with scented oils and combs of cryptomeria wood; the hairdresser, as always, is a hero —this one a famous fortune teller who reads the future in divining sticks or stars. (Mikimoto pearl.)

The pearl
necklace—richly
encrusted with myth
and legend—is an
ultimate, universal,
iconic classic.









“The liquid drops of tears that
you have shed / Shall come again,
transformed to orient pearl.”

William Shakespeare, *Richard III*







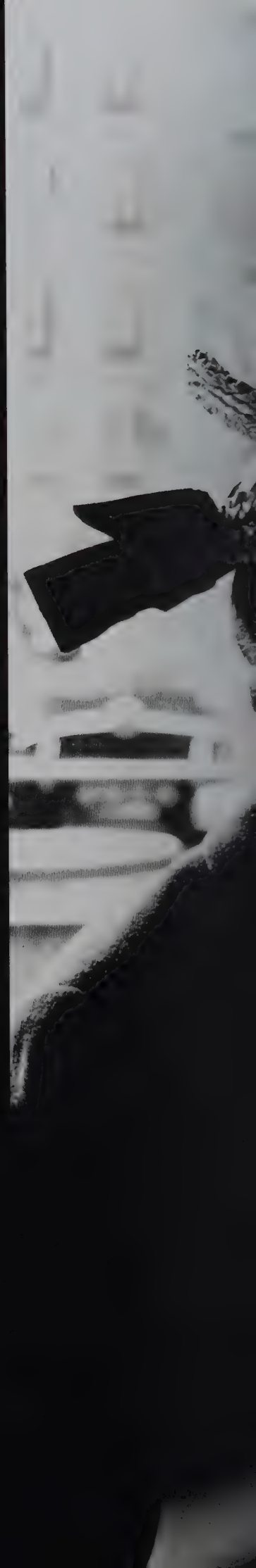




“Nothing gives the
luxury of pearls.
Keep them in mind.”

Diana Vreeland









“Everything suits her so—
especially her pearls.”

Henry James, *The Wings of the Dove*

The pearl necklace has
offered an irresistible invitation to
subversive reinterpretation.





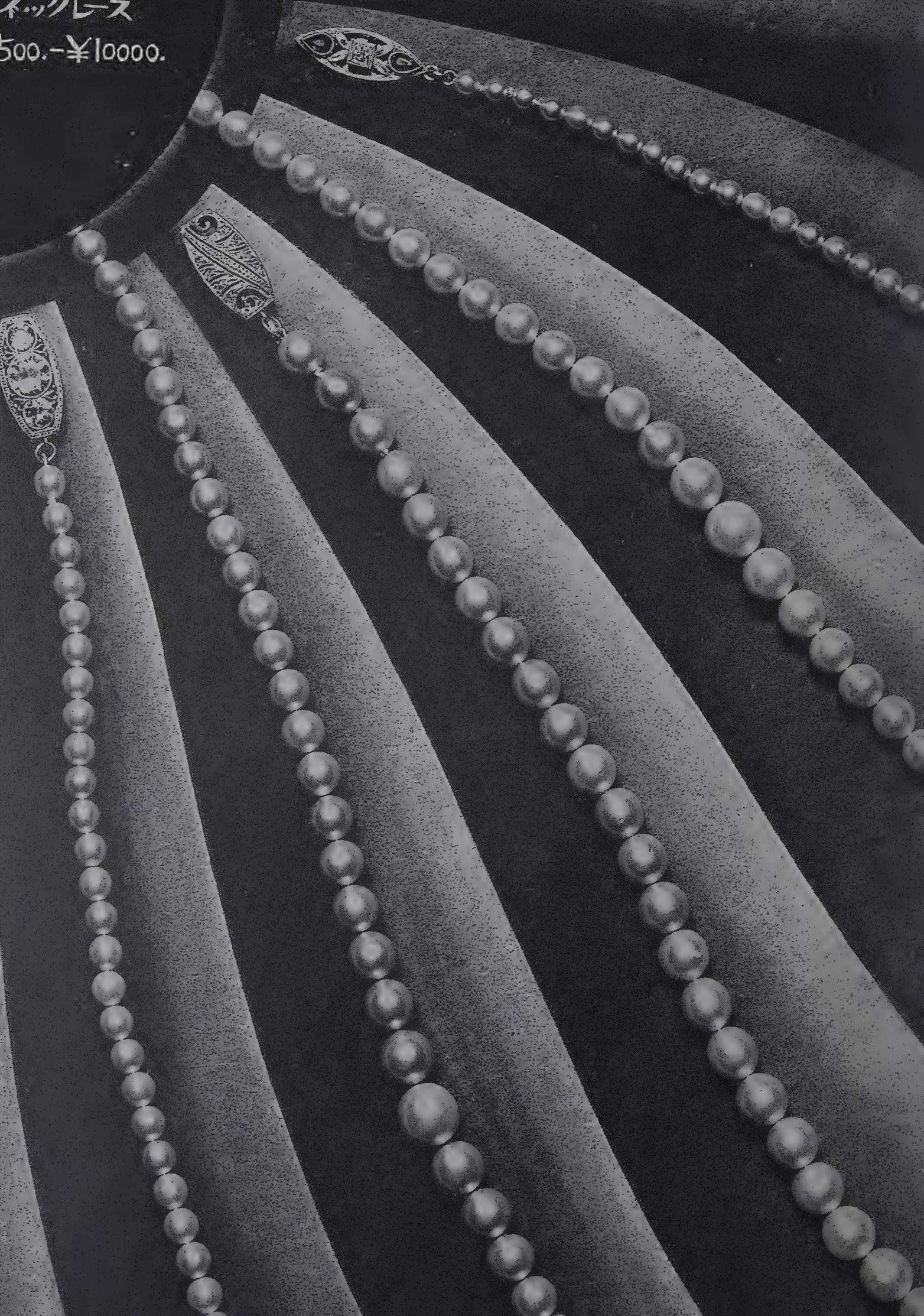


“In order to be irreplaceable
one must always be different.”

Coco Chanel



ネックレス
500.- ¥10000.





















“A thing of beauty is a joy for ever:
Its loveliness increases; it will never
Pass into nothingness.”

John Keats, *Endymion*



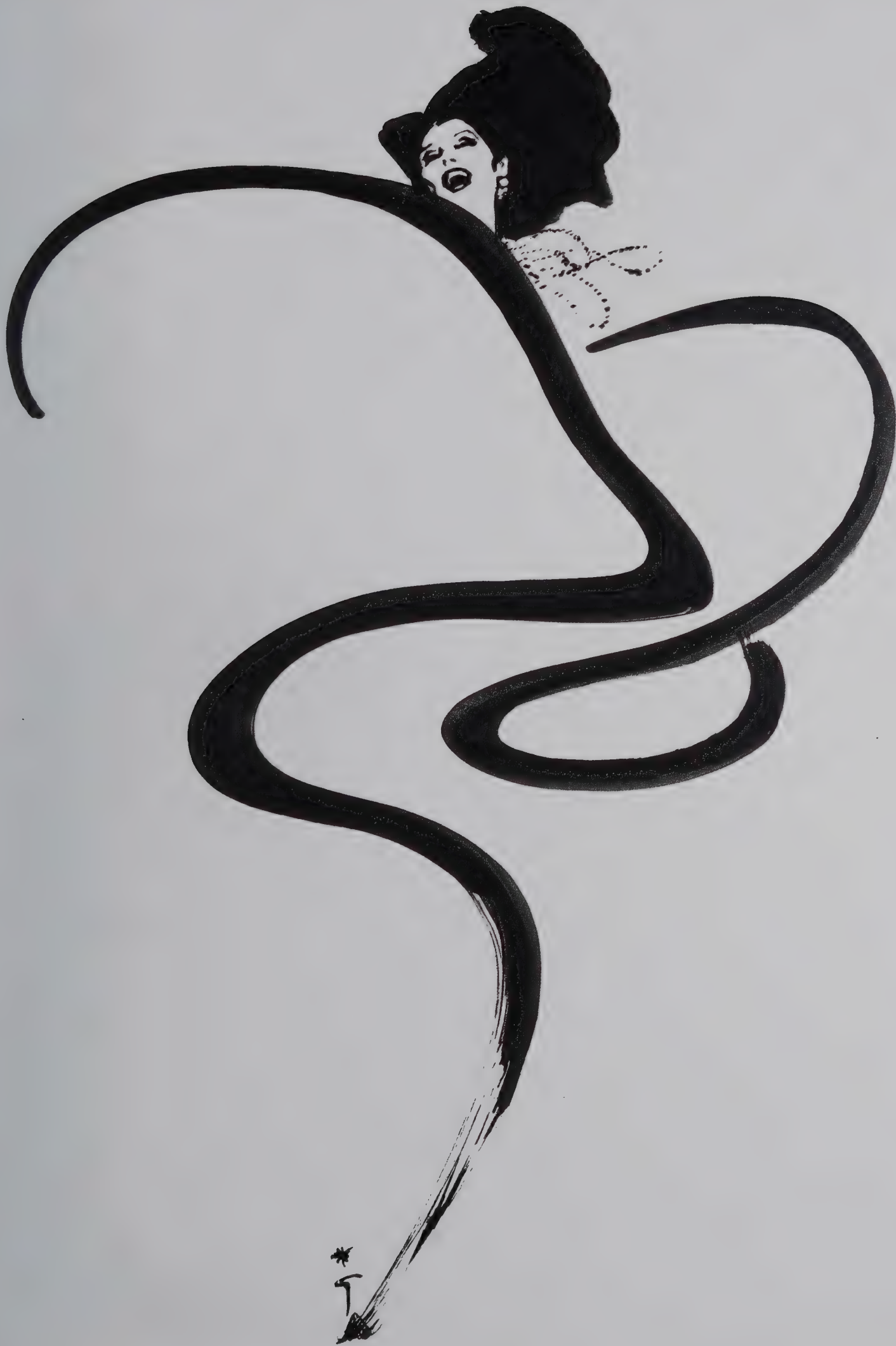




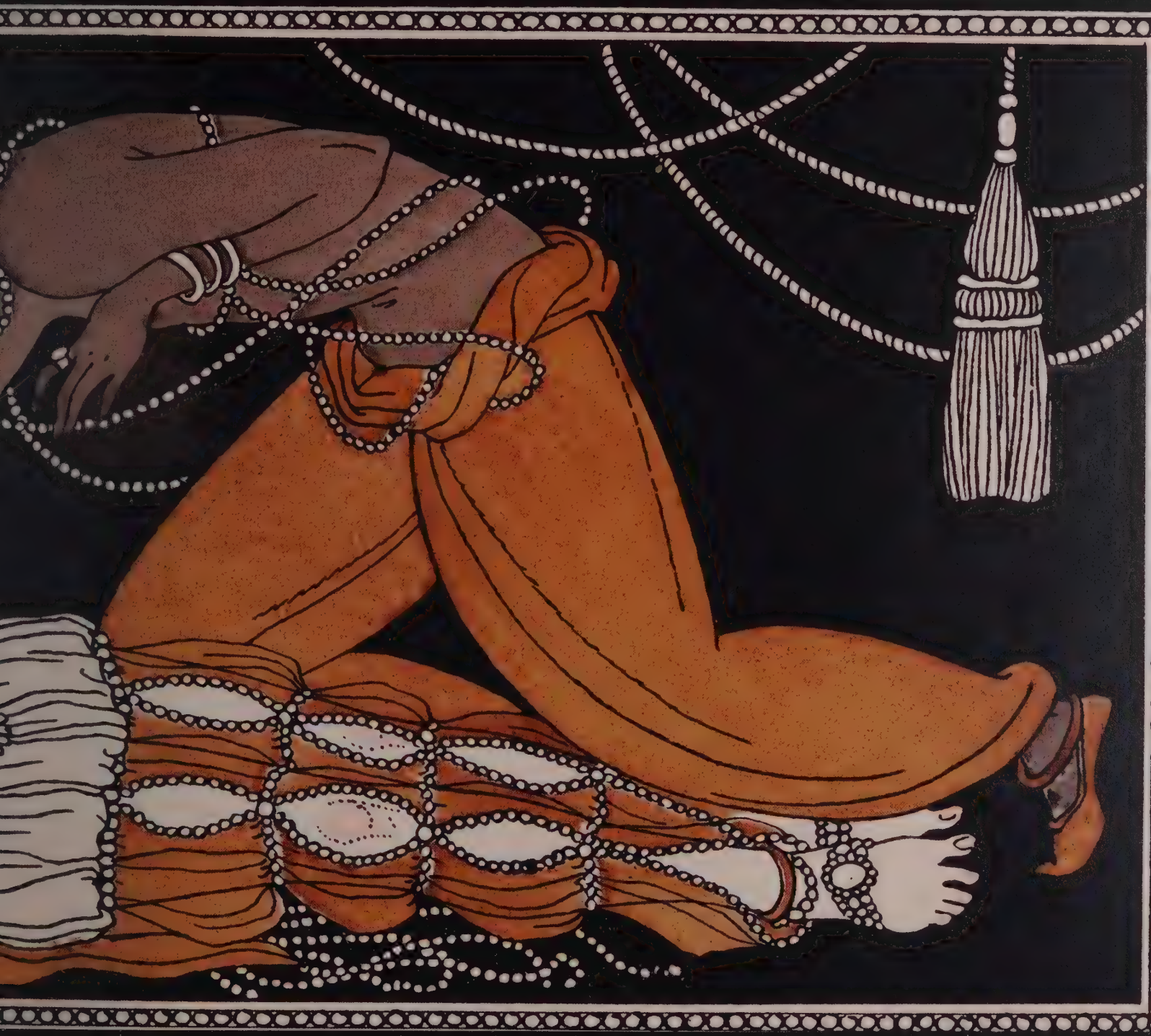
During the Renaissance
the pearl necklace truly became
the ultimate power jewel,
an emblem of might and majesty.













W-1010-50

THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY
HENRY JAMES

The most perfect prose master of the English language, Henry James has created a masterpiece of the novel. This edition is a new translation into the modern idiom, and is the most complete and accurate of its kind.

Introduction by Quentin Anderson

THE PORTRAIT OF A LADY
Henry James



“Why wait for
a lover to buy
you jewelry, lover
yourself!”

Lady Gaga









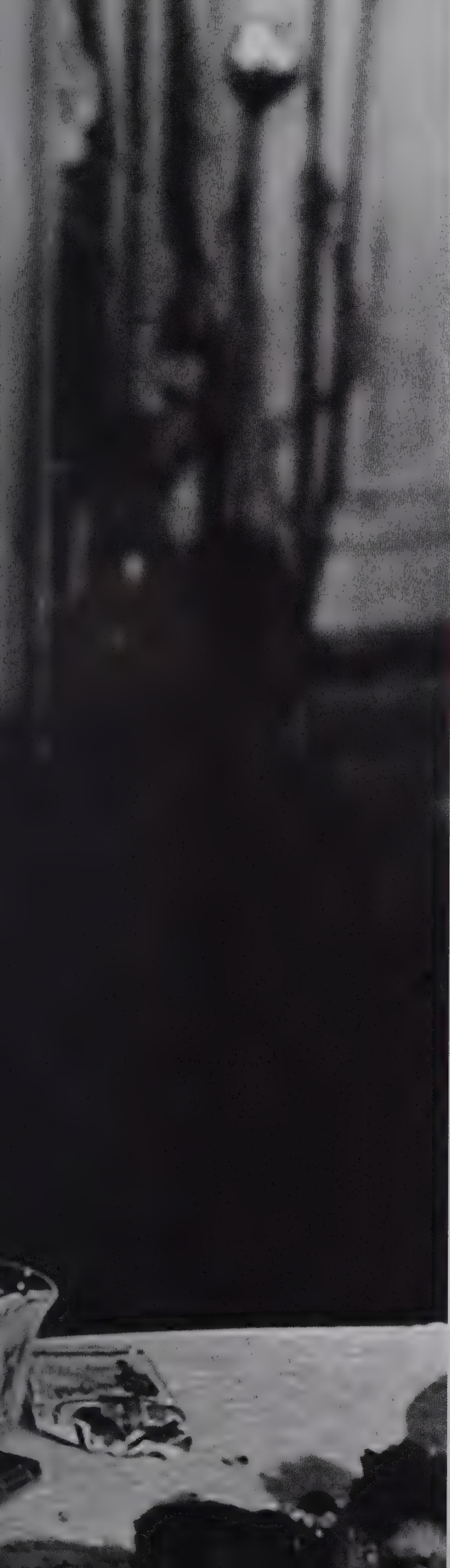
















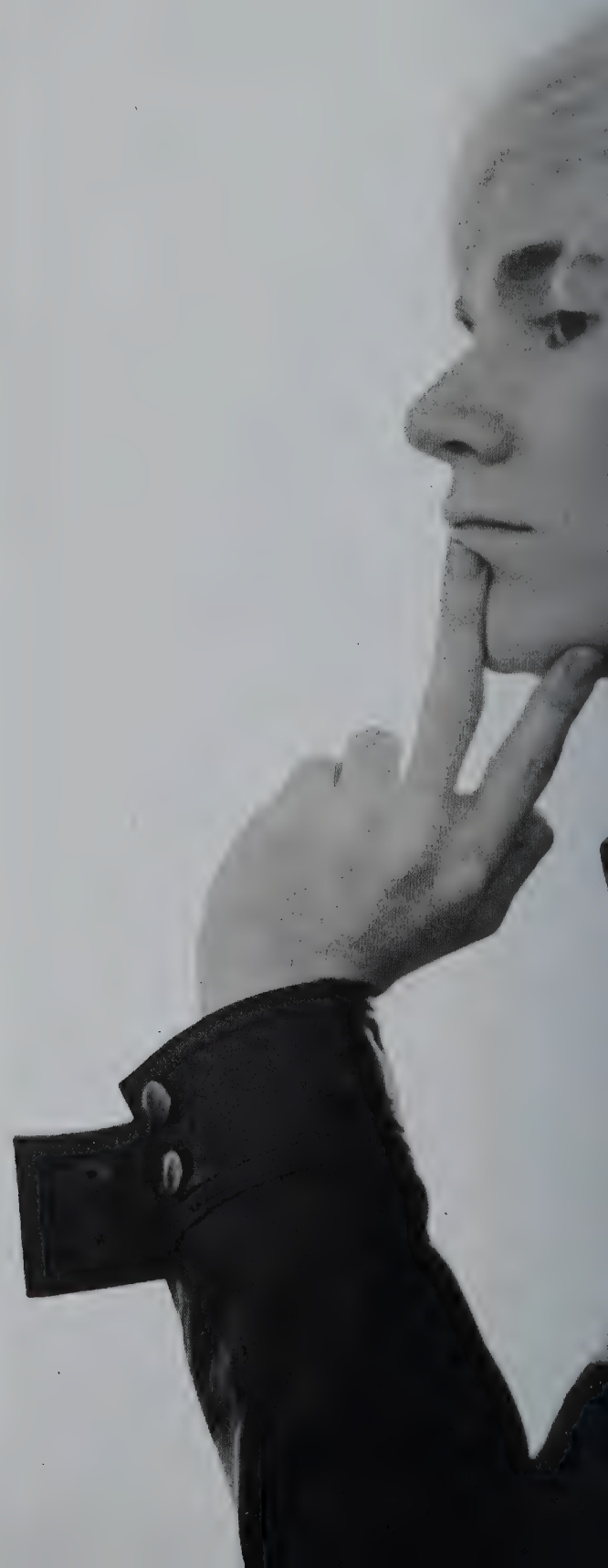
“You really can’t think of three more different women, but we all reached for our pearls this morning. You just can’t go wrong. I’d love to have what Diana’s wearing, those are very real and expensive. Hillary’s are very classic. Mine are baroque and lighter.”

Anna Wintour, at lunch at the White House
with Hillary Clinton and Princess Diana, 1996

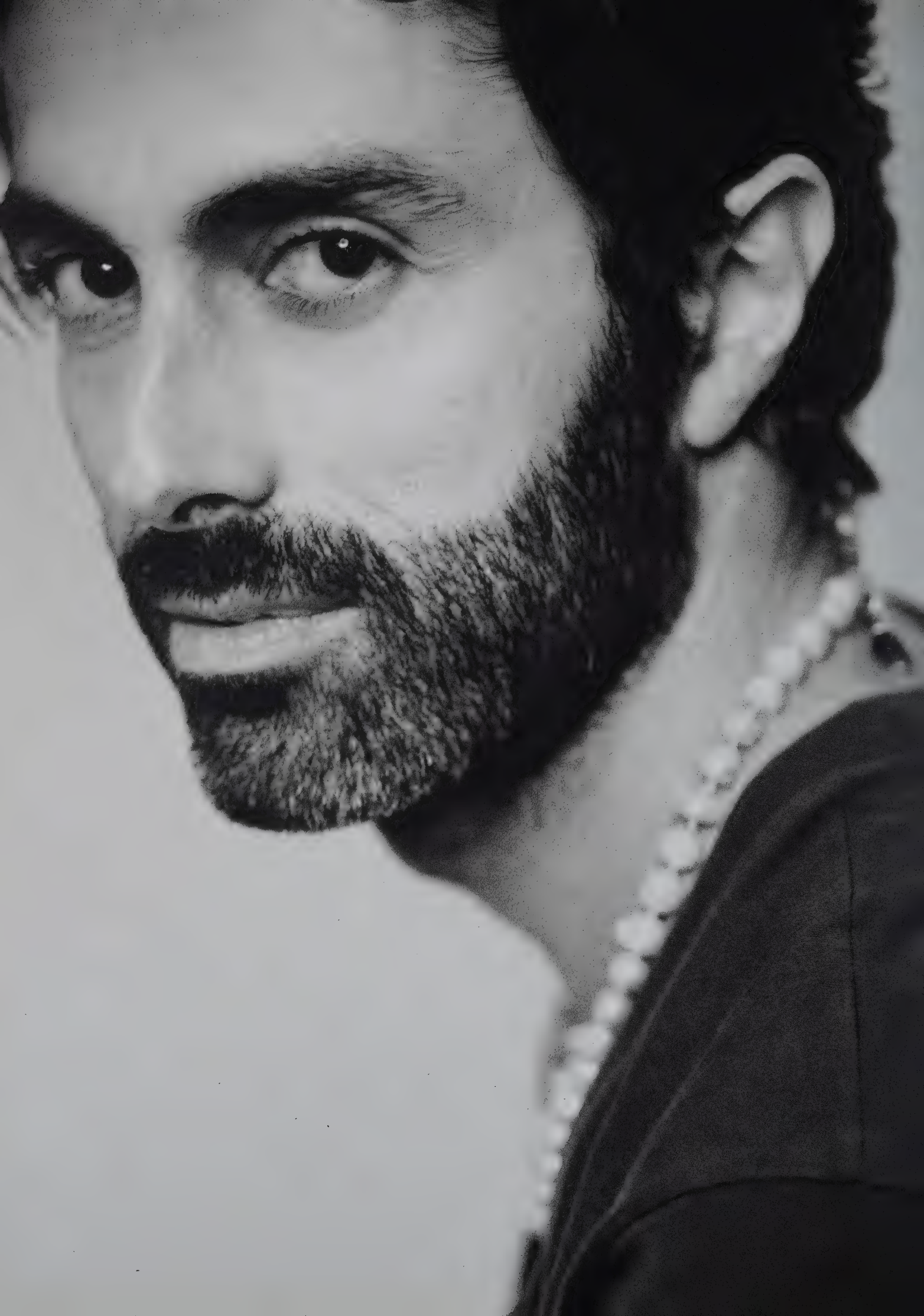












“The one thing I wear
almost every day is my
pearl necklace.”

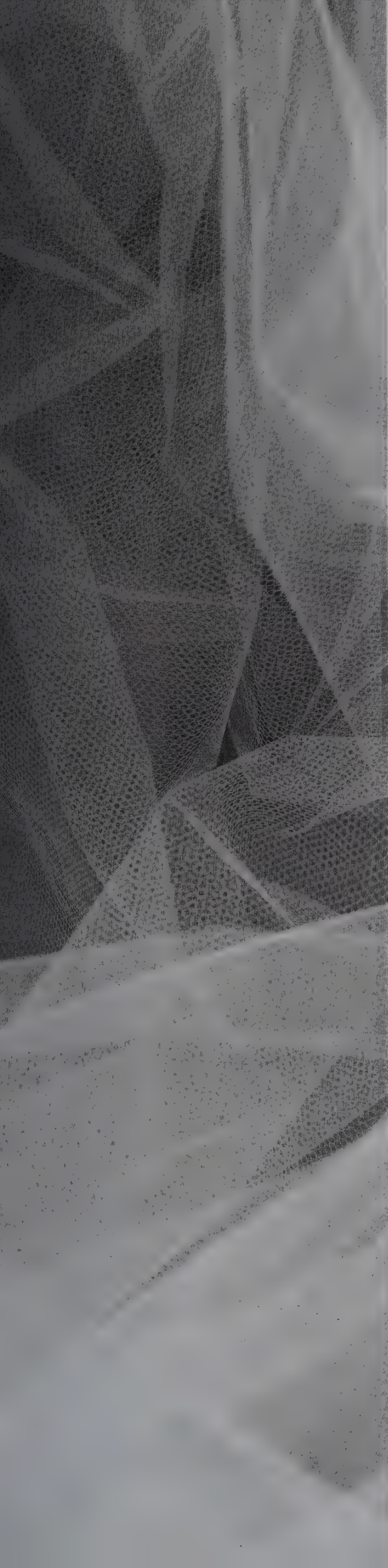
Giambattista Valli

“What is lovely never dies,
But passes into other loveliness,
Star-dust or sea foam, flower
or winged air.”

T. B. Aldrich, *A Shadow of the Night*







“So round, so rare,
a radiant thing, / So smooth
she was, so small of mold, /
Wherever I judged
gems glimmering /
I set her apart,
her price untold.”

Pearl, 14th Century



Vanity Number



















“I feel undressed if I don’t
have my pearls on. My pearls are
my security blanket.”

Lady Sarah Churchill













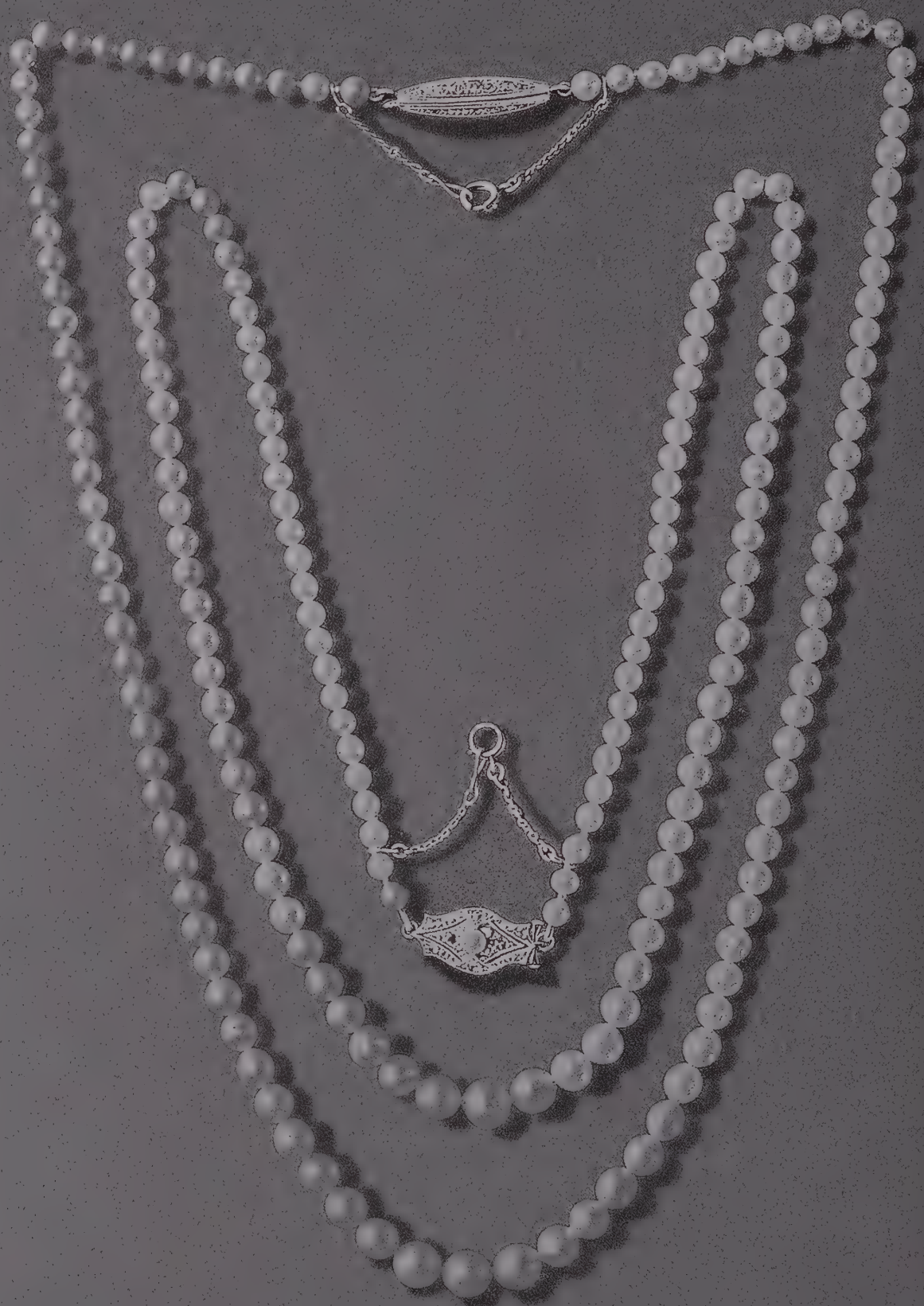




“All art is but
imitation of nature.”

Seneca











With a sheen likened
to moonlight and a soft, tactile,
orb-like form, the pearl looks
like a pristine miniature
replica of the moon.









VOGUE



PARIS

MIKIMOTO
N
VOGUE

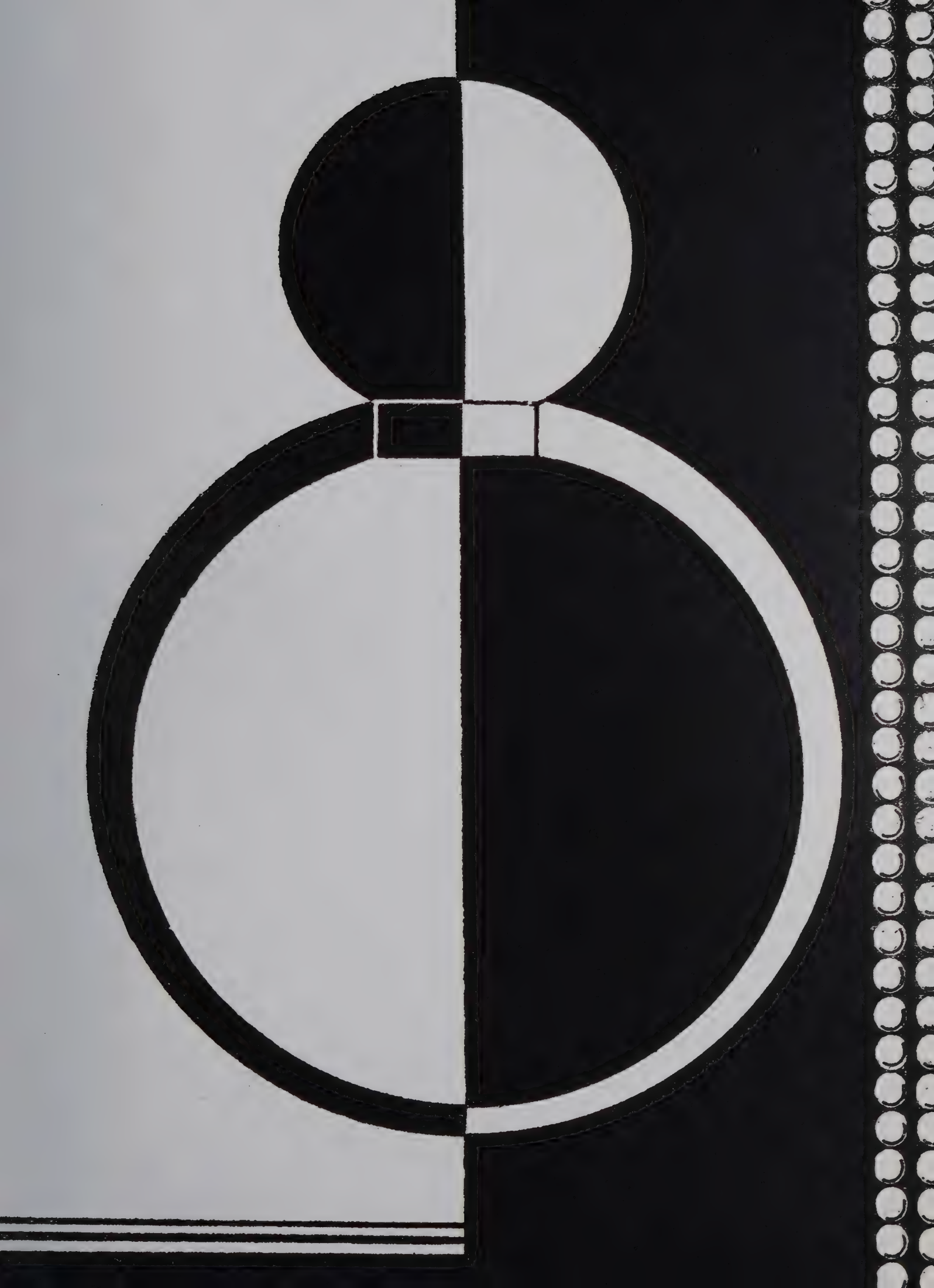




Sarah Jessica Parker
has made the pearl necklace an
indelible part of her image.













VOGUE

JAPAN

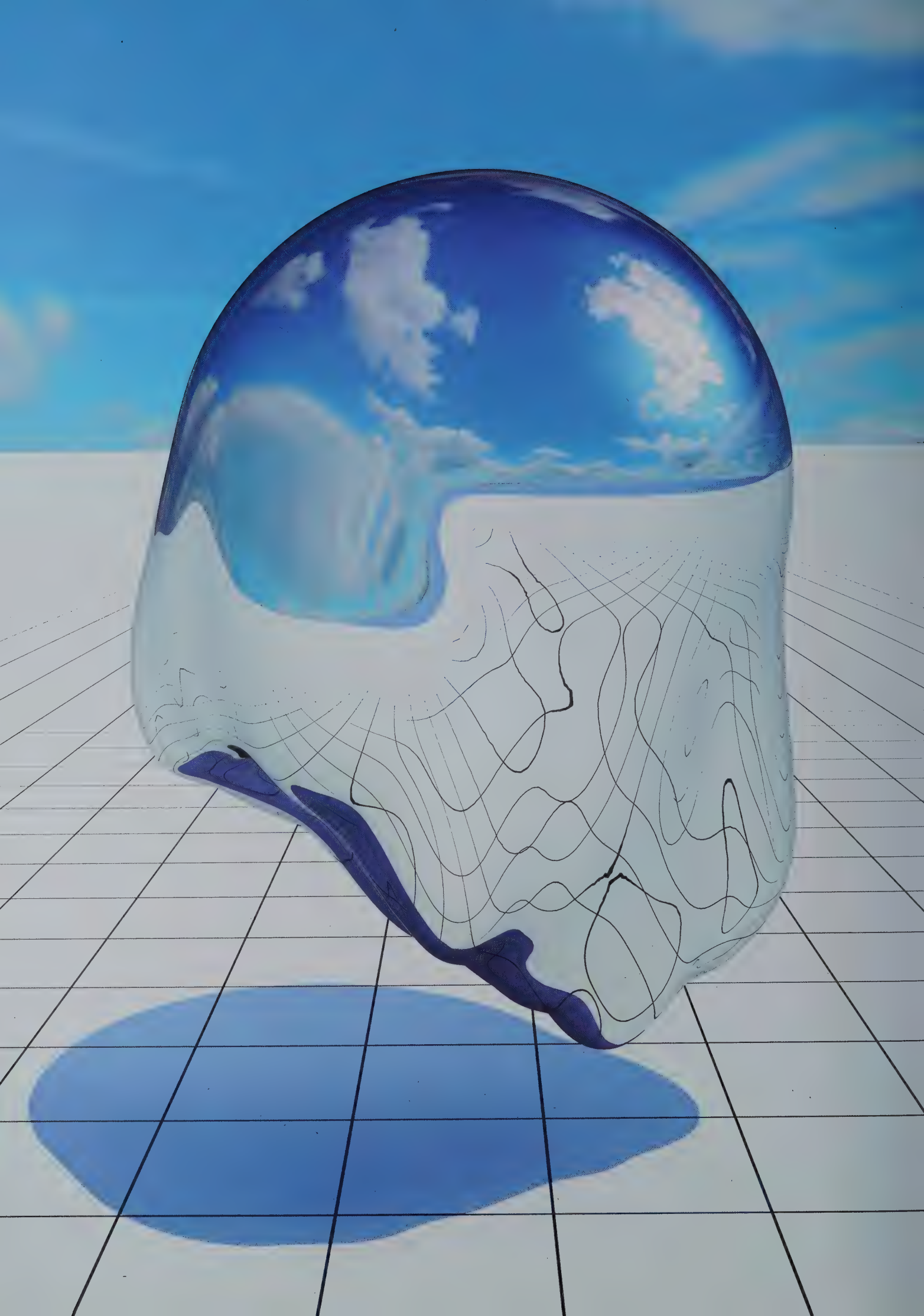
VOGUE PROMOTION

Gifted
Heart



















“I favor pearls on screen
and in my private life.”

Grace Kelly







*
Gandy







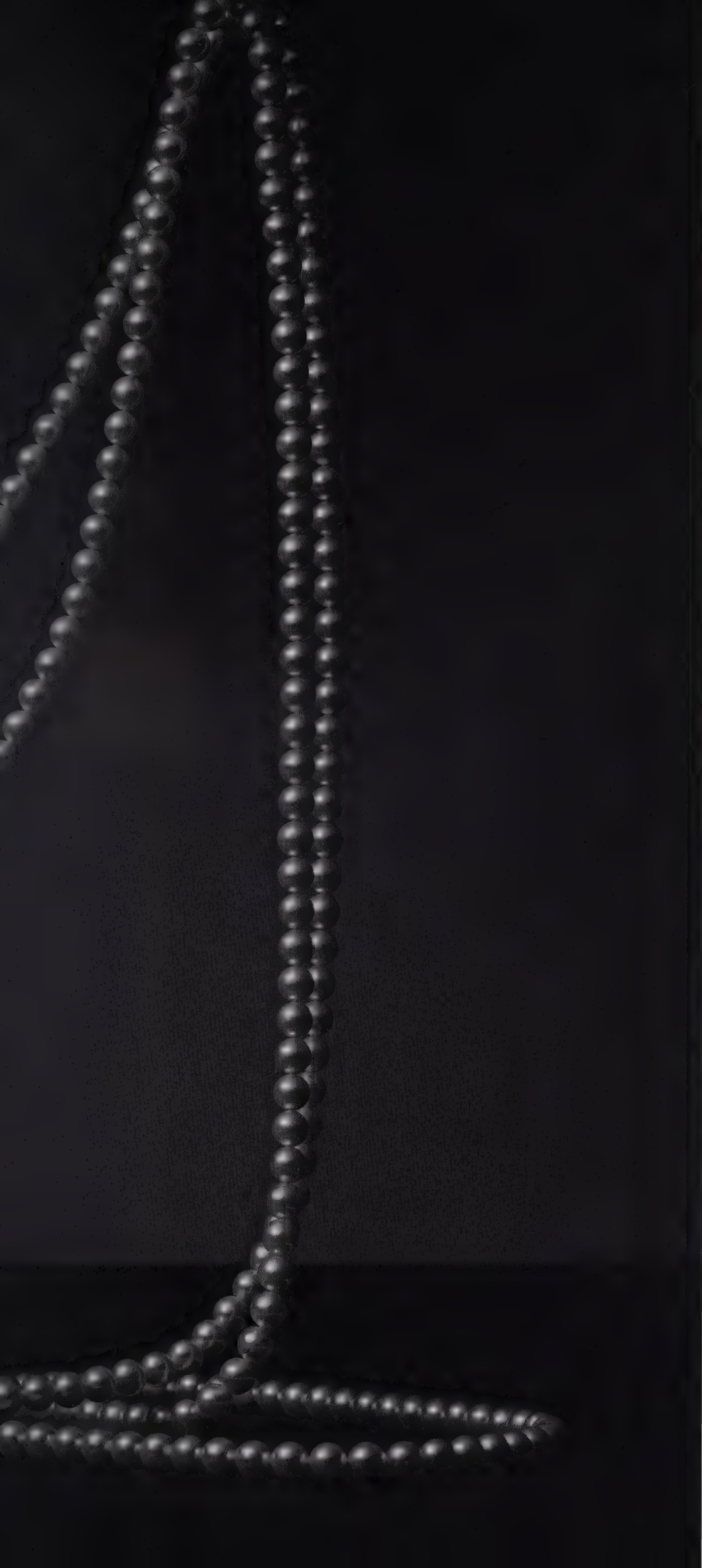


“If one is a wearer
of jewels, pearls are an
absolute necessity.”

George F. Kunz











“As pure as a pearl, /
And as perfect: a noble and
innocent girl.”

Owen Meredith, *Lucile*









Strands of pearls
were worn in the hair,
woven tightly around or
through a chignon, or
as a band encircling
the head.





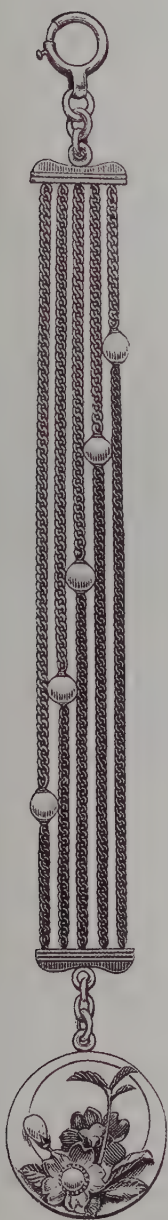














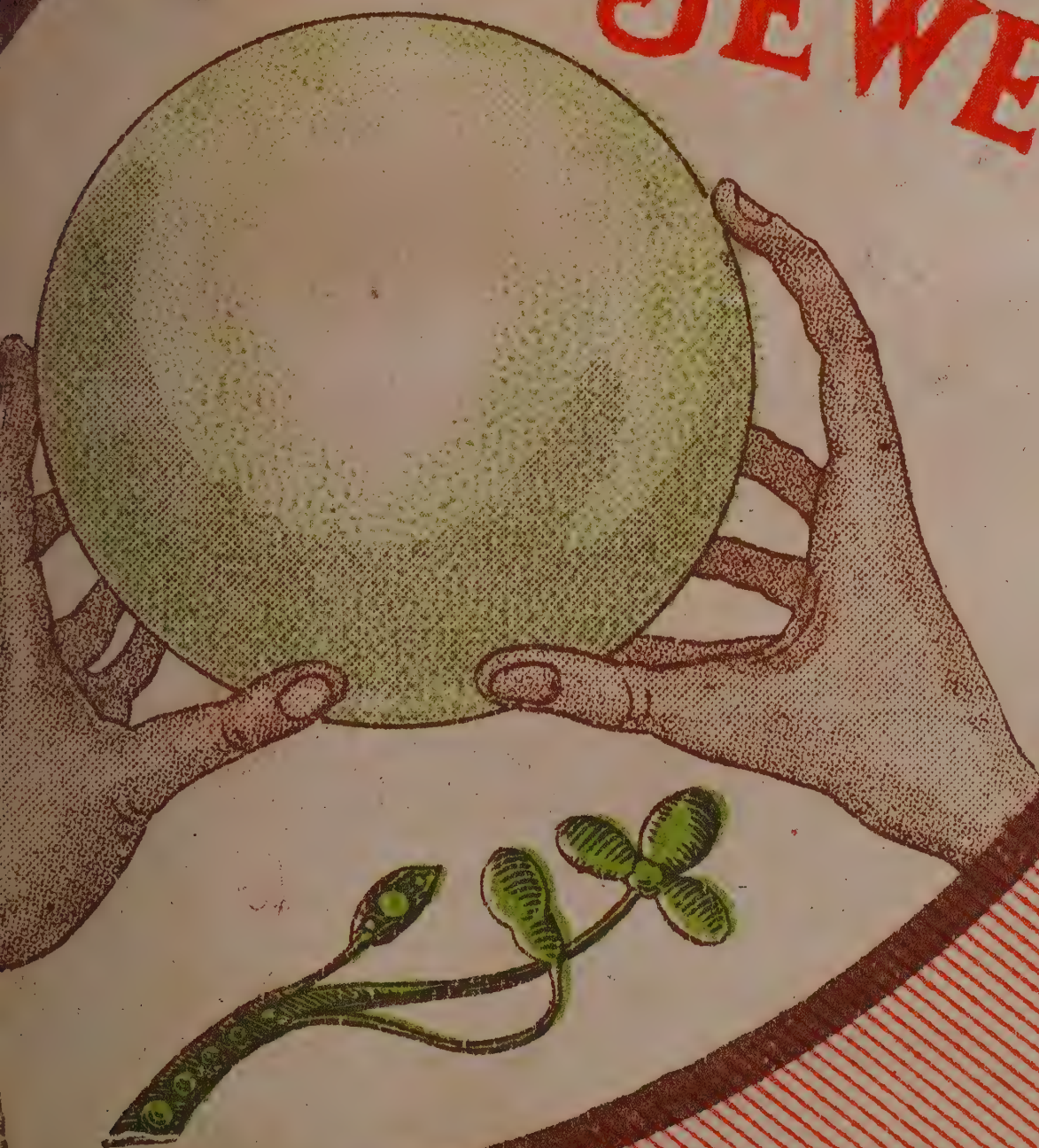




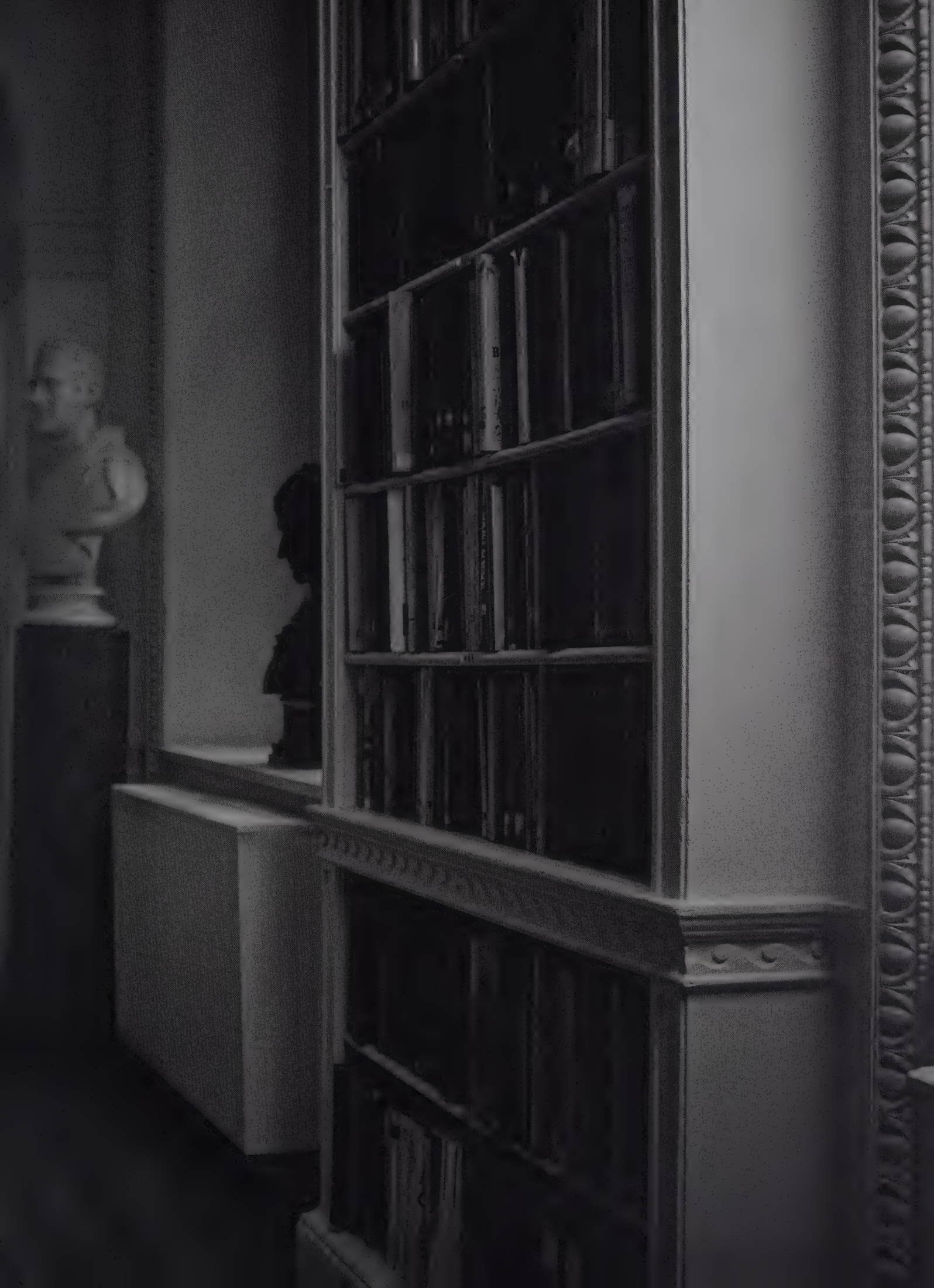
MIKIMOTO

MOTOSUKIYACHO,
DOME KYOBASHIKU,
TOKYO.

PEARLS
AND
JEWELS







“The pearl is the queen of gems
and the gem of queens.”

Aphorism

















“In a painting, you
should be able to discover
new things each time
you look at it.”

Joan Miró











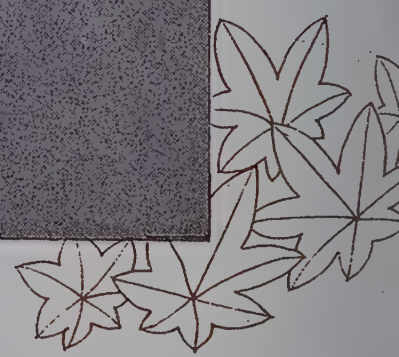
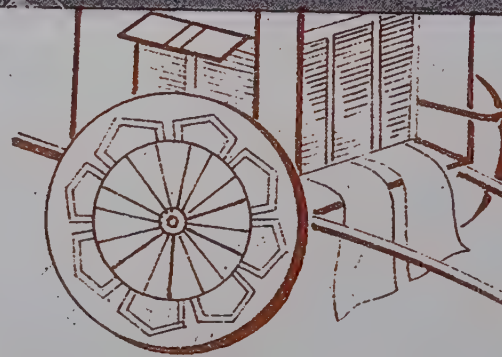


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3901

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NEE A JEE



“All art is autobiographical;
the pearl is the
oyster’s autobiography.”

Federico Fellini







“He came down with
a hundred people in four private
cars, and hired a whole floor of the
Muhlbach Hotel, and the day before
the wedding he gave her a string of
pearls valued at three hundred
and fifty thousand dollars.”

F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*









“In this broad Earth
of ours, / Amid the measureless
grossness and the slag, / Enclosed
and safe within its central heart,
Nestles the seed of Perfection.”

Walt Whitman, "Song of the Universal"









“I have always believed that fashion was not only to make women more beautiful, but also to reassure them, give them confidence.”

Yves Saint Laurent







“The crossroads of science
and art, innovation and inspiration
are what I love about design.”

Michelle Obama







“Pearls are always
appropriate.”

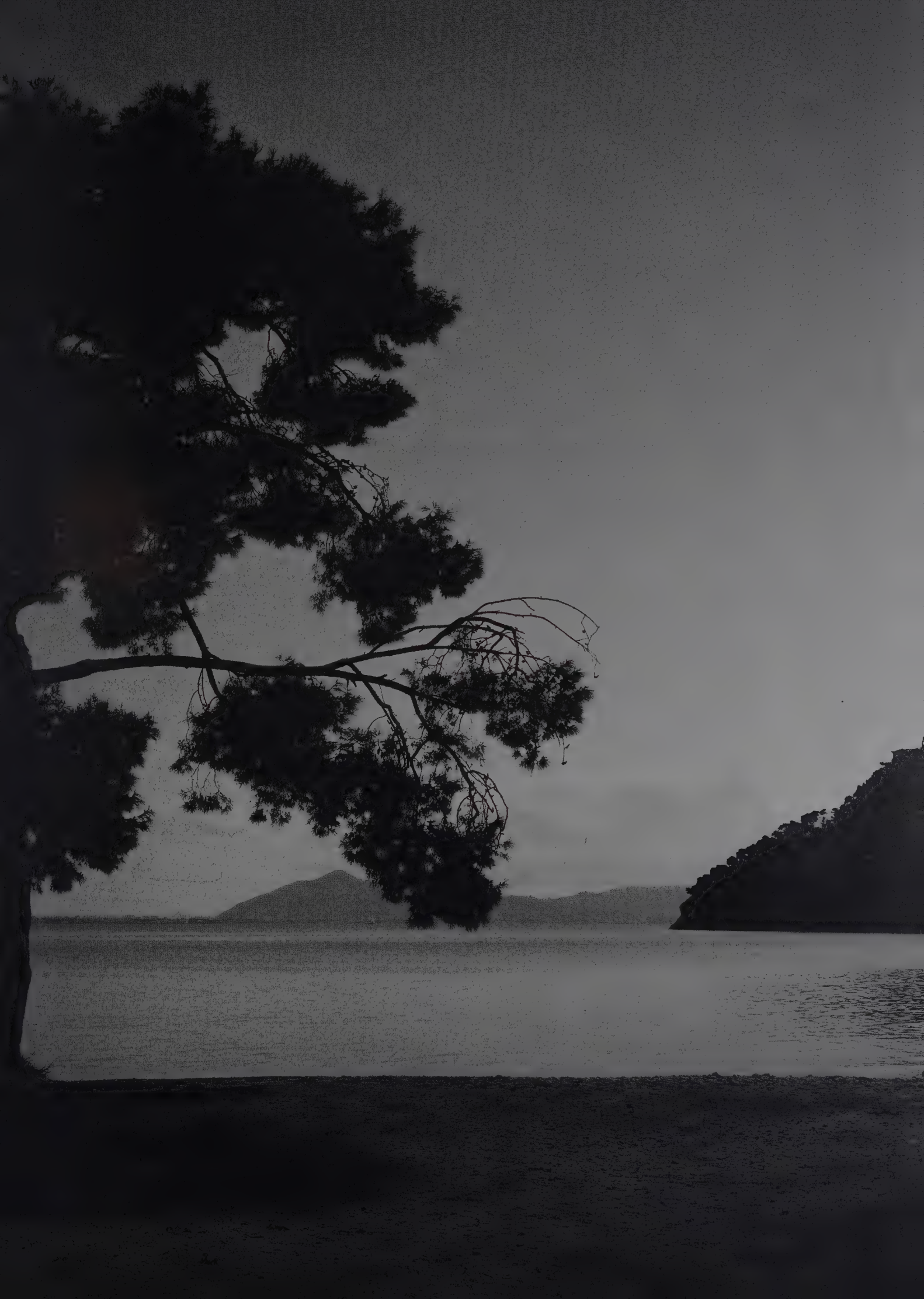
Jacqueline Kennedy



























“A well-dressed woman today wears not one but five or six strands at a time with suits and slacks, and in the evening piles on pearls in Edwardian profusion.”

Life, 1949

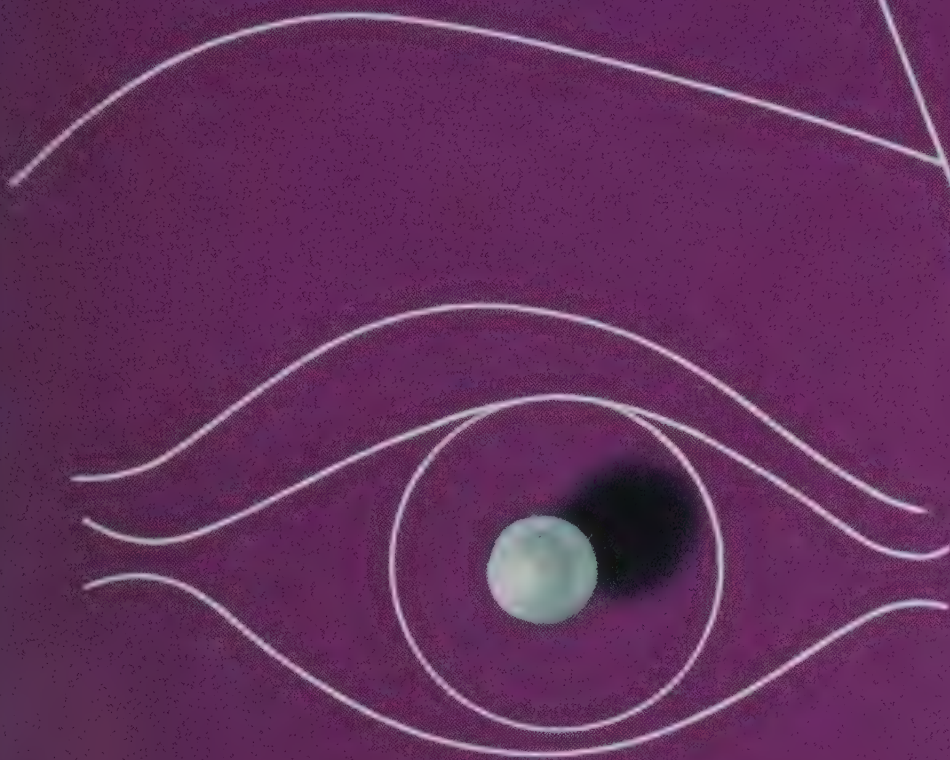
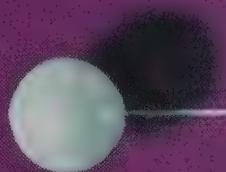
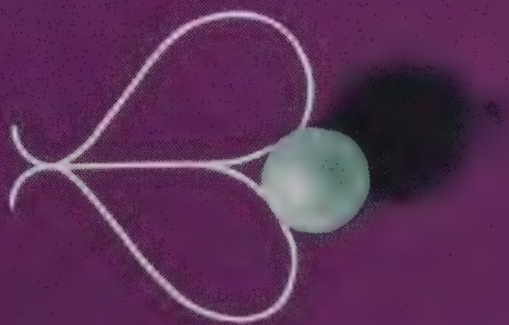
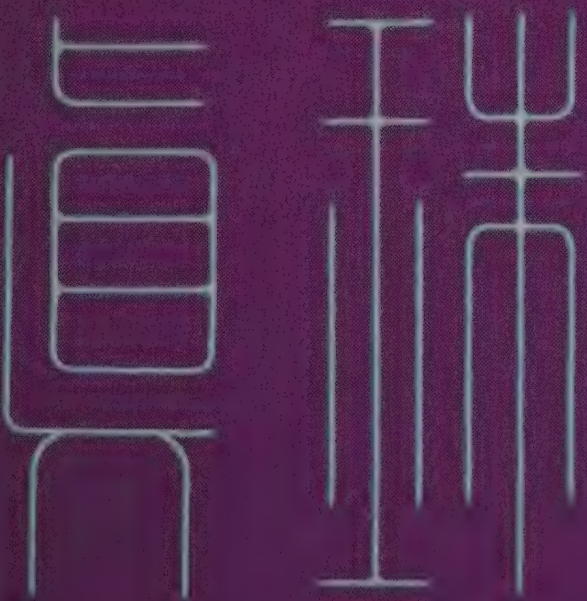














¥ 2,000





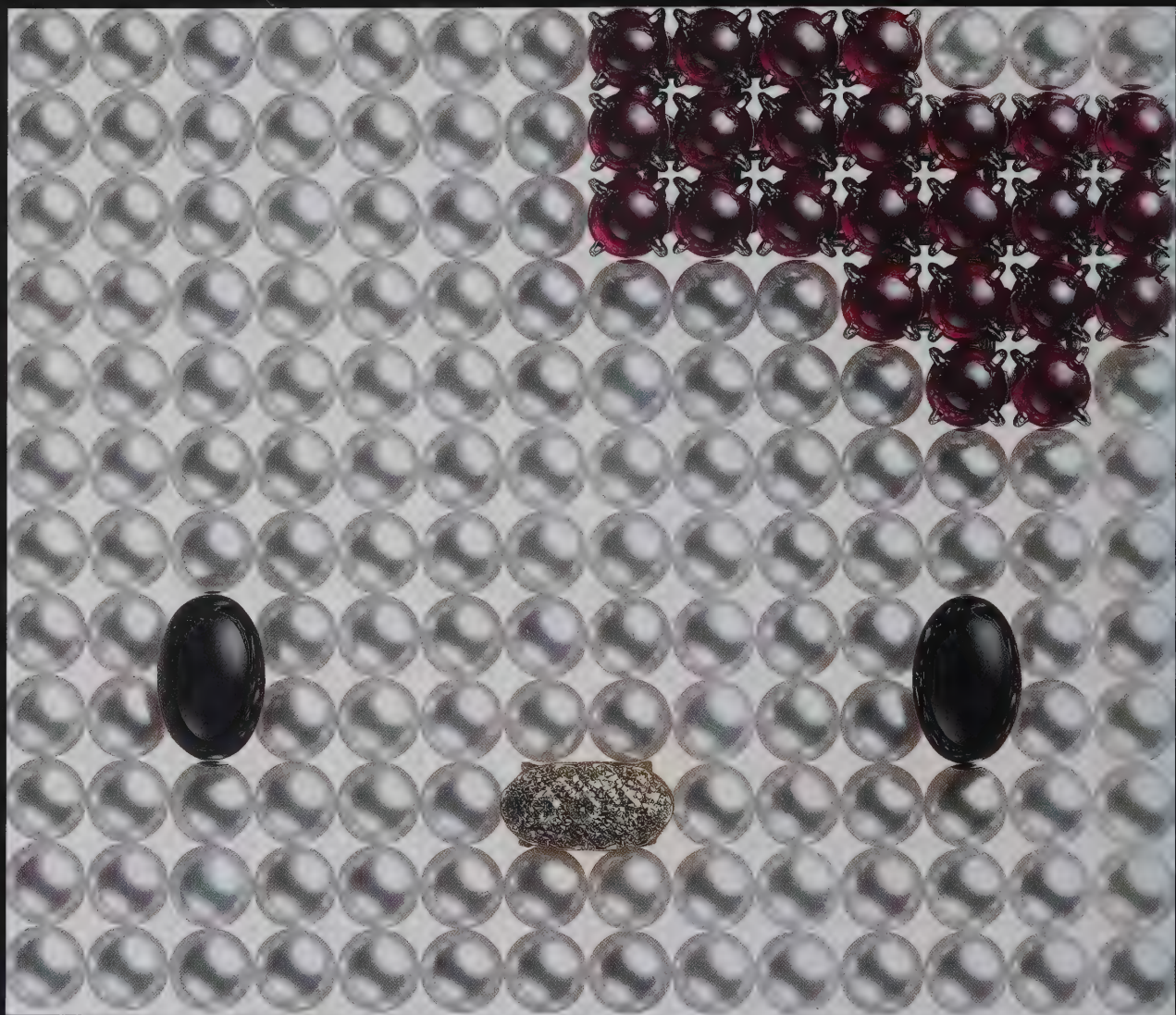


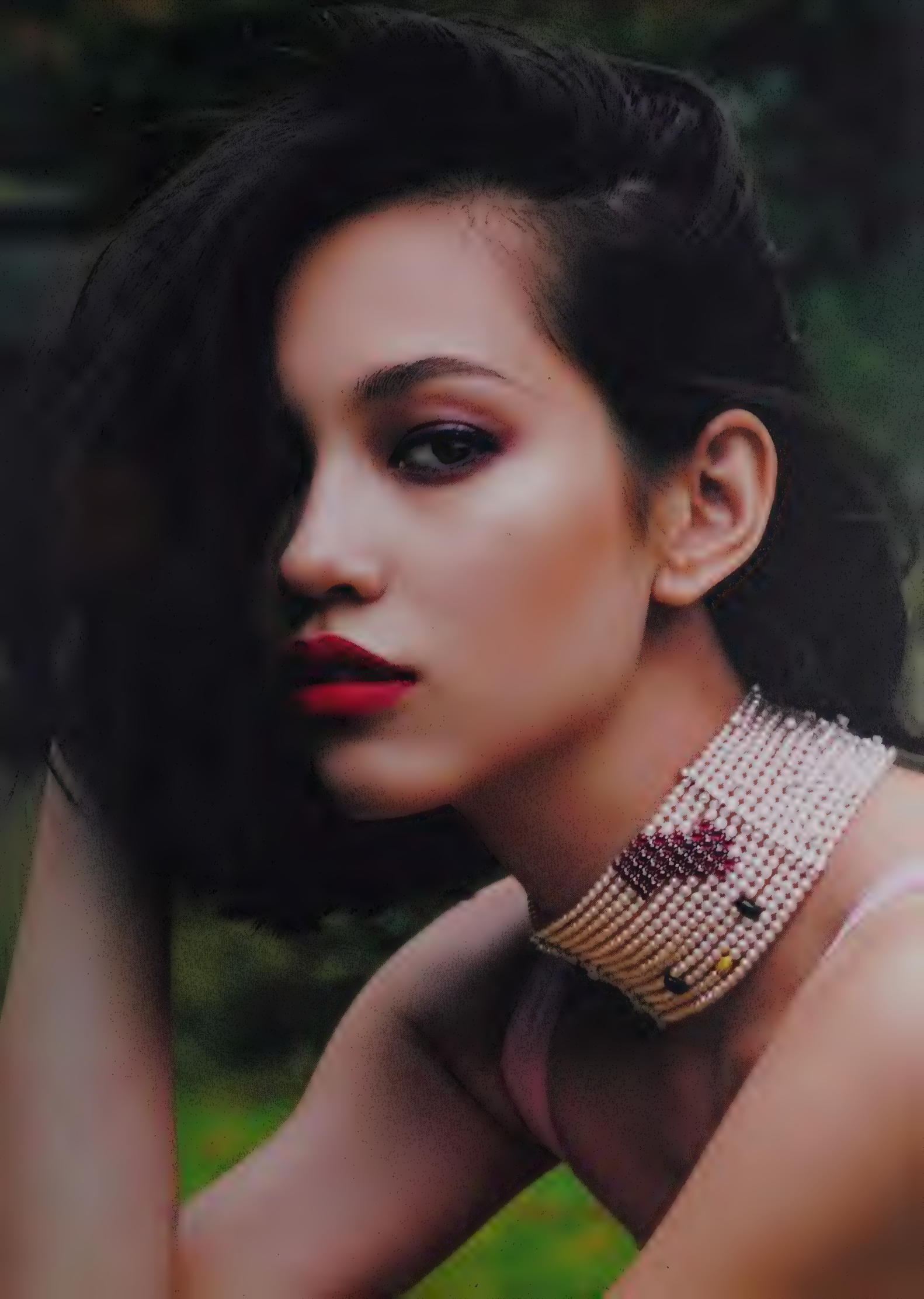
“By viewing nature,
nature’s handmaid,
art, / Makes mighty
things from small
beginnings grow.”

John Dryden, *Annus Mirabilis*











“The most beautiful
thing we can experience
is the mysterious.”

Albert Einstein





“A woman needs ropes
and ropes of pearls.”

Coco Chanel















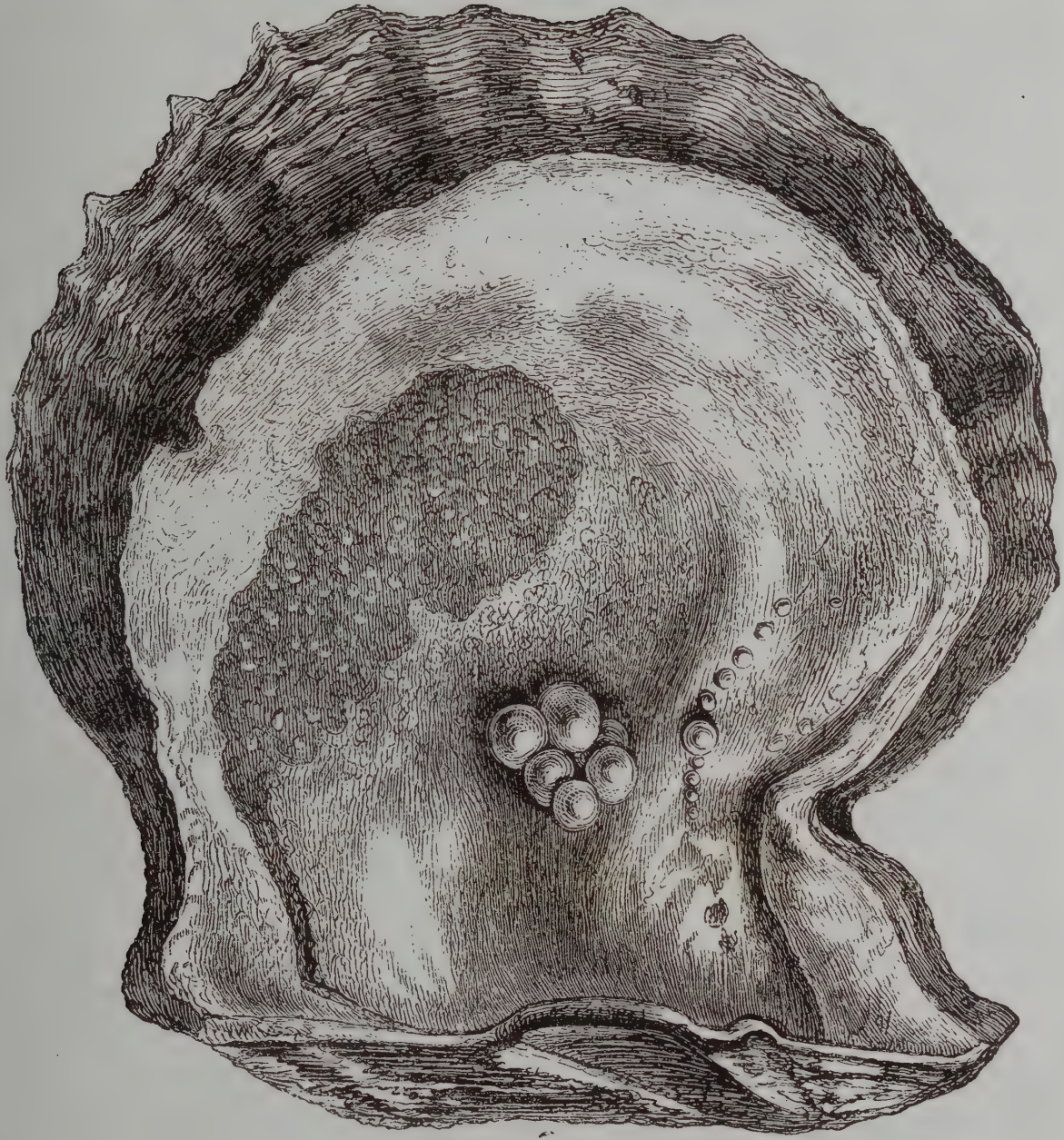


“Beauty is a
natural superiority.”

Plato







PEARL OYSTER.

“And the twelve gates were twelve pearls.”—REV. xxi. 21.









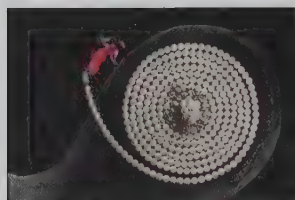




“Elegance is innate.”

Franca Sozzani

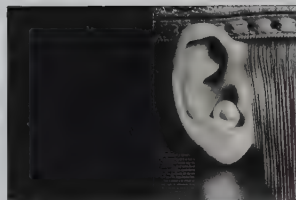
CAPTIONS



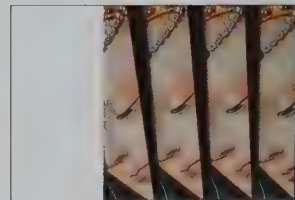
Mikimoto calendar, 1969



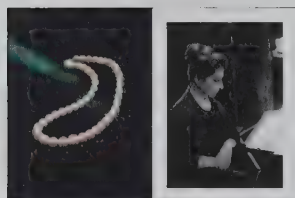
Left: George Gower (attrib.), *Armada Portrait* of Elizabeth I, c. 1588. Right: Mikimoto Akoya and South Sea White and Golden cultured pearl necklace with diamonds, designed to resemble a luxurious stole, 2011. The harmonious contrast between pearls and diamonds and the gradation of pearl colors evokes the depth and opulence of fur.



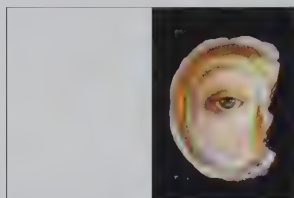
Richard Avedon, photograph from "The Great Fur Caravan" for American *Vogue*, October 16, 1966.



Carlo Crivelli, *Madonna and Child* (detail), mid-15th century.



Left: Taisho-ren, the "Boss's Necklace," a treasured necklace of 49 large pearls, with a center pearl approximately 14 mm in diameter, handpicked by Kokichi Mikimoto over a period of more than 10 years. Right: Opera singer Maria Callas, c. 1959.



Tabitha Vevers, *Pearlmaker VI*, 2011; oil and gold leaf on oyster shell.



Left: Maharaja Tukojirao Holkar III of Indore, 1911. Right: Norman Parkinson, photograph of Anne Gunning, outside the City Palace, Jaipur, India (detail), for American *Vogue*, November 1956.



Left: Cover of Mikimoto *Pearl* catalog, No. 49, 1930. Mikimoto published the catalog from 1908 to 1938. Even the earliest issues place great importance on design, featuring detailed sketches that exhibit the development of the distinctive Mikimoto style. Right: Erté, *Top Hats*, 1975.



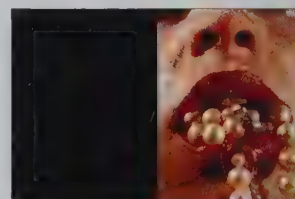
Mikimoto advertisement, 1959.



Regina Relang, *The Pearl Necklace*, 1955.



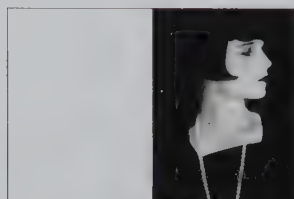
Jerry Schatzberg, photograph of Mary Heilem and Bob Smith, Central Park, New York, 1958.



Marilyn Minter, *Split*, 2003.



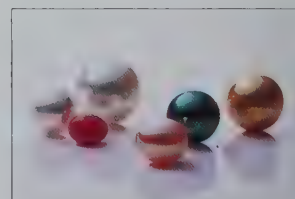
Illustration for the cover of American *Vogue*, July 15, 1928.



Eugene Robert Richee, portrait of Louise Brooks, 1928.



Left: From the Mikimoto *Pearl* catalog, No. 48, 1929. Right: Anthony Gilbert, *Patterned Lady with Pearls*, c. 1975.



Each pearl is unique. Pictured: Akoya cultured pearl; White, Golden, and Black South Sea cultured pearls; natural conch pearl; and freshwater pearl.



Left: Michiel Janszoon van Mierevelt, portrait of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham (detail), 1625-26. *Right:* Detail of a Mikimoto Black South Sea cultured pearl necklace with diamonds in a handcrafted grapevine motif, 2009.



Left: Nicholas Hilliard, portrait of Queen Elizabeth I (detail), c. 1575. *Right:* George Geldorp, portrait of Martha Bertie (née Cokayne), Countess of Lindsey (detail), c. 1627.



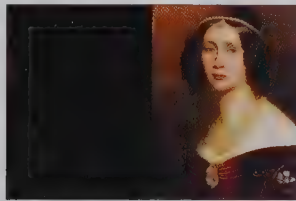
Dayle Haddon, founder of WomenOne, wearing Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Takahiro Ogawa at the United Nations General Assembly Hall, New York, 2015; hair by Eiko Narukawa, makeup by Aya Ogasawara.



Prince Akihito and Princess Michiko aboard the USS *Mount Vernon* on the Potomac River during a visit to the United States, 1960.



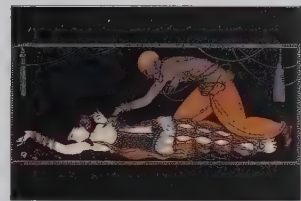
Left: Detail of a Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl necklace with drop diamonds that dance as the wearer moves; overlapping pearls and diamonds create depth for an impression of boldness and sensitivity, 2010. *Right:* Consuelo Vanderbilt, the 9th Duchess of Marlborough, dressed for the coronation of Edward VII, 1902.



Joseph Karl Stieler, portrait of Maria Anna von Bayern, Princess of Bavaria (detail), mid 19th century.



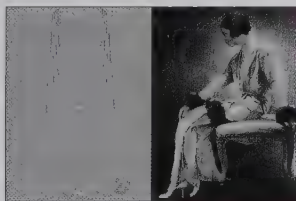
Left: Hilaria Baldwin, wearing Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Takahiro Ogawa, 2015; hair by Takashi Matono, makeup by Mari Kobayashi. *Right:* René Gruau, *Arabesque*, c. 1982.



Georges Barbier, print depicting Ida Rubinstein as Zobeide and Vaslav Nijinsky as the Golden Slave, in the ballet *Scheherazade* from Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes in 1910; print dated 1913



Lady Gaga, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Bruce Weber for *CR Fashion Book*, No. 7, 2015.



Left: Design sketch of a Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl necklace with sapphires and diamonds, 2017. *Right:* Adolph de Meyer, photograph of a model wearing a dress by Jean Patou, c. 1930.



Left: Adolph de Meyer, portrait of the Marchesa Luisa Casati, 1912. *Right:* The Madonna Nicopeia, Byzantine icon, Basilica of San Marco, Venice, 10th or 11th century.



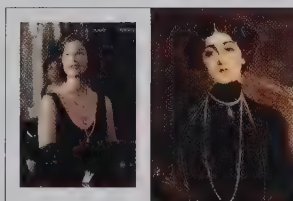
Left: Maharaja of Cooch-Bihar, 1913. *Right:* Frans Pourbus the Younger, portrait of Maria Magdalena, Archduchess of Austria (detail), c. 1600.



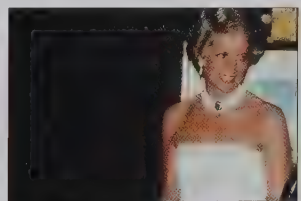
Left: Design sketch of a Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl necklace with diamonds, 2011. *Right:* Walde Huth, photograph of Lucky (Lucie Daouphars) for Dior, 1955.



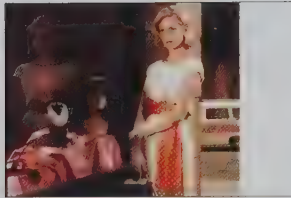
Jeanne Moreau, as Jeanne Tournier, in *Les Amants (The Lovers)*, 1958.



Left: Ashley Judd, as Linda Porter, in *De-Lovely*, 2004. *Right:* Giovanni Boldini, portrait of Lina Cavallieri, c. 1901.



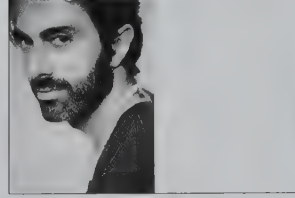
Diana, Princess of Wales, attending a state banquet during her official visit to Hungary, May 8, 1990. Her signature pearl choker made a charming reference to another young and beautiful Princess of Wales before her, Alexandra.



January Jones, as Betty Draper, in *Mad Men*, 2007.



Cecil Beaton, portrait of Candy Darling and Andy Warhol, 1969.



Fashion designer Giambattista Valli, wearing his signature strand of antique Indian pearls, photographed by Ralph Wénig, 2007.



Design sketch of a Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearl necklace with diamonds, 2009.



Nadar, portrait of Belle Époque dancer and courtesan Liane de Pougy, 1895.



Cover of American *Vogue*, Vanity issue, November 15, 1927.



Left: South Sea White cultured pearl necklace with diamonds from the Mikimoto "μ" collection, 2015.
Right: Julia Bergshoeff, wearing Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Patrick Demarchelier for German *Vogue*, September 2015.



Anna May Wong, as Ling Moy, in *Daughter of the Dragon*, 1931.



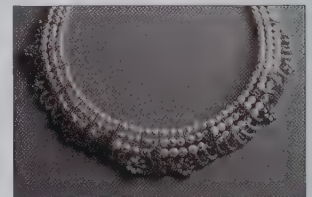
Left: From Mikimoto's *Gem Creation* catalog, 1970. *Right:* Michiel Janszoon van Mierevelt, portrait of a Lady of the Van Beijeren van Schagen Family (detail), 1620.



Left: Reiko Mabuchi (right) and Kyoko Mabuchi (left), wearing Mikimoto Akoya and South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Naruyasu Nabeshima, Japan; hair and makeup by Reiko Ito and Keiko Sunakawa (Shiseido). *Right:* Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl body jewelry with diamonds, a radiant design evoking the glow of an angelic being, 2013.



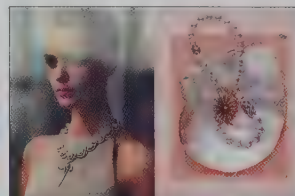
Photograph by Harri Peccinotti for British *Vogue*, October 1968.



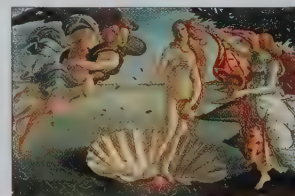
Three-strand Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl necklace with diamonds, with the hidden message, "may your days be as beautiful as flowers," decorating its hem, 2012.



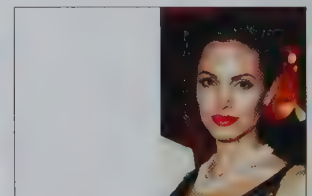
Left: American actress Sarah Hyland, wearing Mikimoto South Sea Golden cultured pearls, at the 68th Golden Globe Awards, January 2011. *Right:* Alfred Cheney Johnston, *Ziegfeld Girl*, c. 1920.



Left: Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearl necklace with diamonds, 2015–16. *Right:* Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearl necklace photographed by David Turner for *Elegant Bride*, Spring 2006.



Sandro Botticelli, *The Birth of Venus*, c. 1485.



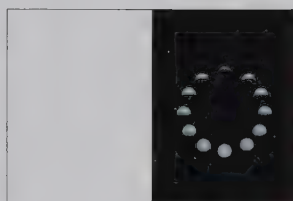
Angelina Jolie, at the premiere of *The Assassination of Jesse James by the Coward Robert Ford*, 64th Annual Venice Film Festival, September 2007.



Left: This graduated Akoya cultured pearl necklace (approximately 24 to 32 inches) was the first cultured pearl necklace to appear in the Mikimoto *Pearl* catalog, No. 40, 1923. *Right:* Drake Burnette, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Raf Stahelin for *Porter* magazine, Winter 2014



Wanthani Inkatanuvat (center), president of The Premier Group; Tasanee Sirikietsoong (left), managing director of Premier Gems Trading Co.; and Naline Lertsumitkul (right), finance director of Premier Gems Trading Co., wearing Mikimoto jewelry, photographed by Amat Nimitpark at the family residence, Bangkok, 2015



With a sheen likened to moonlight and a soft, tactile, orb-like form, the pearl looks like a pristine miniature replica of the moon.



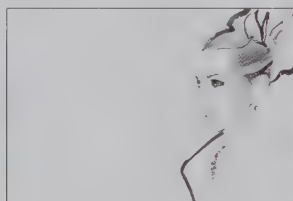
Left: Sumiko Mikimoto, chairwoman of Mikimoto, Japan. *Right:* From the Mikimoto *Pearl* catalog, No. 49, 1930



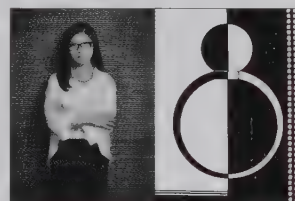
Left: Jessica Fellowes, author and journalist, wearing Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Manvir Rai (Junction Eleven Ltd) at The Royal Institution, London, 2015; hair and makeup by Rene Metcalfe. *Right:* Mikimoto necklace on the cover of French *Vogue*, September 1973.



Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl necklace and diamond earrings, 2015–16



David Downton, portrait of Sarah Jessica Parker, June 2012.



Left: Wang Tao, design director of Taoray Wang, wearing Mikimoto South Sea Golden cultured pearls, at her studio in Shanghai, photographed by Zhang Chi, 2015; hair and makeup by Nie Wenwen. *Right:* Mikimoto advertisement, 1929



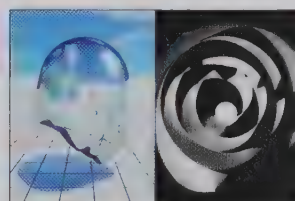
René Gruau, *Parisienne*, 1990.



Left: Illustration for the cover of American *Vogue*, February 1, 1928. *Right:* Naomi Preizler, photographed by Kourtney Roy for the cover of *Vogue Japan Gift Guide*, December 2014.



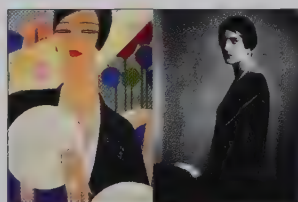
Left: Dancer Betty Delaune in an evening dress with pearls, 1926. *Right:* Sam Rollinson, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Damian Foxe for *How to Spend It* magazine, February 2012.



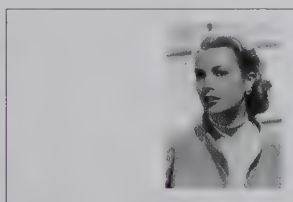
Left: Maiko Gubler, *Sphere Bloh*, from the series *About Making Architecture*, 2008. *Right:* Man Ray, *Rayograph*, 1926



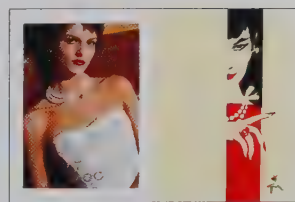
Left: Design sketch of a Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl necklace with tanzanite and diamond, 2014. *Right:* Photograph by Arnold Newman for *Life* magazine, Pearls issue, November 1949.



Left: Illustration for the cover of American *Vogue*, March 1, 1928. *Right:* Edward J. Steichen, portrait of Princess Irina Alexandrovna of Russia, 1924.



Grace Kelly, as Lisa Carol Fremont, in *Rear Window*, 1954.



Left: Jacquetta Wheeler, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Arthur Elgort for American *Vogue*, February 2002. *Right:* René Gruau, *Lady in Red Dress*, 1956.



Left: Natural conch pearl necklace with diamonds from the Mikimoto "μ" collection, 2015. *Right:* Josephine Le Tutour, wearing Mikimoto pearls, photographed by Benjamin Lennox for *Document Journal*, Fall/Winter 2013.



Left: Slim Aarons, photograph of C. Z. Guest and Consuelo Balsan (née Vanderbilt), Palm Beach, Florida, c. 1955. *Right:* Gianni Berengo Gardin, *A Venetian Taxi*, 1968.



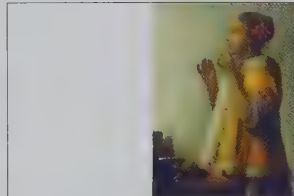
Christine Li (left), president of Waterside International Co. Ltd.; and Lee Tseng Wen Hui, former First Lady of Taiwan, wearing Mikimoto Akoya and South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Cliff Chen, at Waterside International, Taipei, 2015; hair by Jimmy, makeup by Shu-Ling Chian.



Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl lariat necklace with diamonds from the Mikimoto "Skipping Rope" collection, 2015.



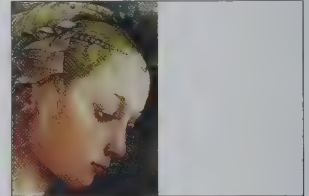
Left: Hiroko Takeda, floral artist, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Naruyasu Nabeshima at Chersea Flowers, Tokyo, 2015; hair and makeup by Kumiko Kurogi and Toyoyoshi Shinotsuka (Shiseido). *Right:* Cecil Beaton, portrait of Lady Diana Cooper, c. 1920.



Johannes Vermeer, *Woman with a Pearl Necklace* (detail), 1665.



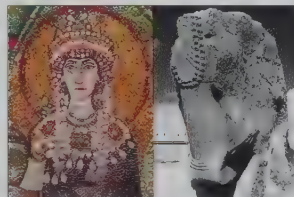
Jean Etienne Liotard, portrait of Marie Adelaide of France in Turkish costume, c. 1750.



Fra Filippo Lippi, *Madonna and Child with Angels* (detail), c. 1455.



Left: Ellie Graham, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl earrings, photographed by Patric Shaw for *Brides* magazine, February/March 2014. *Right:* Mikimoto advertisement, 1964.



Left: Mosaic of Empress Theodora with her court (detail), Basilica of San Vitale, Ravenna, Italy, c. 547 CE. *Right:* Decorative capital fragment from a column lining Processional Way, Persepolis, Iran, 6th to 5th century BCE.



Left: Franz Xavier Winterhalter, portrait of Elizabeth, Empress of Austria (detail), 1865. *Right:* Alonso Sanchez Coello, portrait of the Infanta Isabel Clara Eugenie, daughter of Philip II and Elisabeth of Valois (detail), 1579.



Left: Photograph by Anthony Denney for *British Vogue*, December 1965. *Right:* From the Mikimoto *Pearl Jewelry* catalogue, 1909.



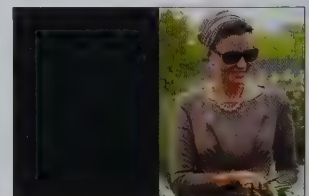
Left: Mikimoto catalog advertisement for the Chicago World Expo, 1933. *Right:* Tjin Lee (right), founder and managing director of Mercury Marketing & Communications; and Min Lee (left), international violinist and founder of Wolfgang Violin Studio, both wearing Mikimoto Akoya and South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Koh Sze Kiat at the family residence, Singapore, 2015; makeup by Gerra Chong.



Mikimoto advertisement, Meiji-Taisho era (1912–26).



Lara Potapenko, professor of Russian and English literature, wearing Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Manvir Rai (Junction Eleven Ltd) at The Royal Institution, London, 2015; hair and makeup by Rene Metcalfe.



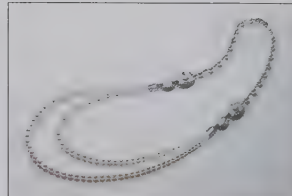
Qatar's Sheikha Mozah bint Nasser, on a visit to Spain, April 2011.



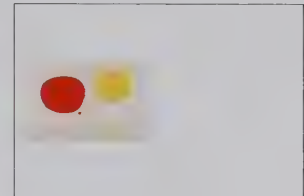
Left: While on her honeymoon with Joe DiMaggio in 1954, Marilyn Monroe received a Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl necklace from her new husband. Shown here in its original oval box, it is one of the few pieces of "real" jewelry she owned and treasured. Right: Joe DiMaggio and Marilyn Monroe boarding a plane, 1954.



Left: Actress Binnie Barnes, c. 1938. Right: Back detail of Mikimoto Akoya and South Sea White cultured pearl body jewelry with diamonds, inspired by the myths of ancient Greece, 2015.



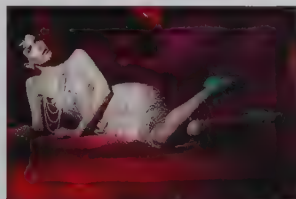
Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl and South Sea White cultured pearl necklace with mother of pearl and diamonds.



Joan Miró, *Painting (The Magic of Color)*, 1930.



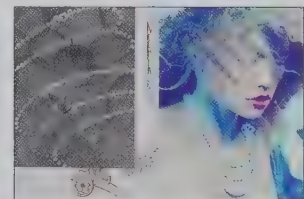
René Gruau, *Le Sofa Rouge*, c. 1988.



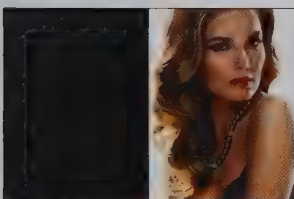
Kristiana Salinovic, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Katja Mayer for *Sunday Times Style*, December 2011; styled by Lucy Ewing



Sandro Botticelli, *Portrait of a Lady (Simonetta Vespucci as Nymph)* (detail), c. 1475



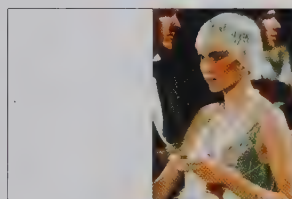
Left: Akoya cultured pearl necklaces from the Mikimoto *Pearl* catalog, No. 54, 1934. Right: Katia Elizarova, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Catherine Harbour for *JFW* magazine, December 2011; styled by Marcella Martinelli.



Bridget Malcolm, wearing Mikimoto Black South Sea cultured pearls, photographed by Mike Blackett for *Mayfair* magazine, December 2011.



Norman Parkinson, photograph of a model wearing a Le Groux Soucres hat (detail), for French *Vogue*, 1952.



Mia Farrow, as Daisy Buchanan, in *The Great Gatsby*, 1974



Left: Photograph by John Deakin for British *Vogue*, May 1952. Right: Photograph by John Sadovy for British *Vogue*, April 1954.



Design sketch of a Mikimoto South Sea Golden cultured pearl necklace with diamonds, 2016.



Junior editors from *Mademoiselle* magazine talking outside of the Walter Florell millinery salon, photographed by Lisa Larsen, for "Pearls: At Any Price They Are the Nation's No. 1 Jewelry" in *Life* magazine, Pearls issue, November 1949.



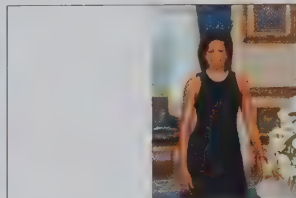
Left: Mariana Marcki, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Katya de Grunwald for *Independent* magazine, December 1, 2007; styled by Beth Dadswell. Right: Lauren Bacall, 1948.



Jerry Scharzberg, photograph of Yves Saint Laurent and Françoise de Langlade, Paris, 1962.



Kevin Spacey and Robin Wright, as Francis and Claire Underwood, in *House of Cards*, 2013



Official portrait of First Lady Michelle Obama, 2009.



Kelly Connor, market editor for *vogue.com*, wearing Mikimoto Akoya and South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Takahiro Ogawa at her apartment in New York, 2015; hair by Eiko Narukawa, makeup by Aya Ogasawara.



First Lady Jacqueline Kennedy and son, John F. Kennedy, Jr., at the White House 1962.



Left: Akiko Fukai, curator, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Naruyasu Nabeshima at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Tokyo, 2015; hair and makeup by Yumiko Kamada and Toyoyoshi Shinorsuka (Shiseido). *Right:* Mikimoto advertisement, 1991



The moon rises, like a pearl, over the sea, 2012



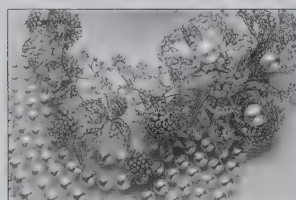
Left: Adolph de Meyer, portrait of Gertrude Vanderbilt Whitney wearing a Leon Bakst costume, for *American Vogue*, 1913. *Right:* From the Mikimoto *Pearl* catalog, No. 31, 1919.



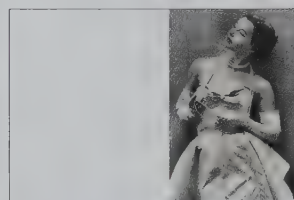
Left: Ivan Nikolaevich Kramskoi, portrait of Empress Maria Feodorovna, Princess Dagmar of Denmark, late 19th century. *Right:* Alexandra, Princess of Wales, c. 1889.



Bartholomeus van der Helst, portrait of a woman (detail), 1649.



Detail of Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls and South Sea White cultured pearls with diamonds in a dynamic combination of voluminous floral bouquets made from lacy set diamonds and a multistrand pearl necklace, 2011.



Photograph by Arnold Newman for "Pearls: At Any Price They Are the Nation's No. 1 Jewelry," in *Life* magazine, Pearls issue, November 1949.



Clifford Coffin, portrait of C. Z. Guest, wearing a Mainbocher outfit, c. 1950.



Left: Design sketch of a Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl necklace with coral, mother of pearl, and diamonds, 2012. *Right:* Emma Watson, wearing Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Ellen von Unwerth for *Sunday Times Style*, 2014



Left: Desiree Khalatbari-Lee, wearing Mikimoto South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Takahiro Ogawa, Laguna Beach, California, 2015; hair by Katsumi Kasai, makeup by Miyabi Goto. *Right:* The invitation to the opening of Mikimoto's three-story store in the Ginza district of Tokyo, 1953.



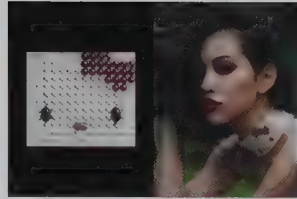
Left: From the Mikimoto *Pearl* catalog, No. 55, 1935. *Right:* Cecil Beaton, portrait of Princess Margaret, 1949.



Left: François Boucher, portrait of Madame de Pompadour, Mistress of Louis XV (detail), 1758. *Right:* Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres, portrait of the Princesse de Broglie (detail), 1853.



Wassily Kandinsky, *Concentric Circles*, 1913.



Left: Mikimoto x Hello Kitty collection launched in Paris in January 2014 to coincide with Hello Kitty's 40th anniversary. *Right:* Kiko Mizuhara, wearing Mikimoto x Hello Kitty, photographed by Toshio Onda for the editorial "A Sparkling Kitty," in Japanese *Vogue*, March 2014



Mieko Kawakami, novelist and poet, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Naruyasu Nabeshima, Tokyo, 2013; hair and makeup by Kumiko Kurogi and Jun Nakamura (Shiscido); styling by Rena Semba, Onward Global Fashion



Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearl necklace with diamonds, featuring expertly matched Akoya cultured pearls draped in rows emulating a soft, silky fabric, with diamond dividers used to amplify the size graduation, 2013



Keira Knightley wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Mario Testino for the editorial "Girl with a Pearl Necklace," in *Vanity Fair*, April 2004.



Left: Jenny Jing, executive publisher and editor-in-chief of *Harper's Bazaar Jewelry (China)*, wearing Mikimoto Black South Sea cultured pearls, photographed by Ted, at Lavin Sunny Garden, Beijing; hair and makeup by Zixi Yangdan (EBI). *Right:* Keke Lindgard, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls, photographed by Ellen von Unwerth for *Glamour*, 2013



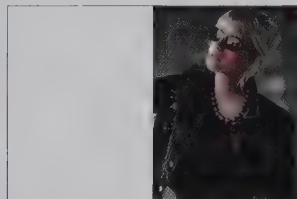
Left: Krysten Ritter, wearing Mikimoto Akoya, South Sea White, and Black South Sea cultured pearls, photographed by Williams + Hirakawa for *Los Angeles Magazine*, 2012. *Right:* French actress Vanessa Demouy, wearing Mikimoto South Sea White and Black South Sea cultured pearls, photographed by Laurence Laborie for *Globe Magazine*, 2014



Left: Grace Choi, creative director of Yf-ming, wearing Mikimoto Akoya and South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Ike Eichensehr at the Mira Moon Hotel, Hong Kong; hair by Michael Lam, makeup by Karen Yiu. *Right:* Martyna Frankow, wearing Mikimoto Akoya and South Sea Golden cultured pearls, photographed by Stockton Johnson for *Modern Weekly*, 2013



Sophie Vlaming, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured and South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Milo Keller and Julien Gallico for *Please!* magazine, 2009; styled by Celine Marioni.



Caro Van Ec, wearing Mikimoto Black South Sea cultured pearls, photographed by David Burton for French *Elle*, October 2012.



Left: Giovanni Boldini, portrait of Rita de Acosta Lydig (detail), 1911. *Right:* *Pearl Oyster*, illustration from *Bible Animals*, 1876.



Left: Maria Kobzar, artist, wearing Mikimoto Akoya cultured pearls and South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Alex Fadel at her home in Vienna, 2015. *Right:* Drake Burnette, wearing Mikimoto Akoya, South Sea Golden, and South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed by Raf Stahelin for *Porter* magazine, 2014



Georgina Bloomberg, wearing Mikimoto Akoya and South Sea White cultured pearls, photographed with her horse, by Takahiro Ogawa, New York, 2015; hair by Eiko Narukawa, makeup by Mari Kobayashi.



Meticulously crafted in celebration of the 120th anniversary of the creation of cultured pearls, "Dreams and Pearls" is a multifunctional crown that can be worn in 11 unique styles, made from natural Melo pearls, natural conch pearls, South Sea White, Black South Sea, and Akoya cultured pearls, with diamonds, aquamarines, garnets, tourmalines, and sapphires, Mikimoto 2013.



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