

made, as well as much discussion of how many workers there were, of what sexes, and what work they performed, giving a fuller picture of glass bead manufacturing than we ordinarily are privy to. There's much discussion about the nature of bead sizes and the colors and surface treatments used, sometimes in quite some detail. In terms of how the glass itself is made for use in beadmaking, one charming story relates the acquisition of the sand that forms such a large part of the glass body, from an interview with Bruna Costantini, who grew up literally surrounded by her family's seed bead factory: "When the wet sand came to the factory to be used in the glass production, it was full of fresh clams and other molluscs that were picked out and put aside to be eaten. 'The whole room smelled of the sea!' exclaims Costantini, with a sweep of her hand from her nose, in a gesture encompassing the room" (p. 145).

Much is told about the cottage industry work associated with beads and wreath production, with wreaths and associated parts being made in people's homes, and extensive coverage is given to *l'impiraressa*, the women in Venice who gathered in sunny alleyways to gossip and string the huge quantities of beaded hanks sold around the world. Making funeral wreaths became such a popular way to make money in France that well into the 20th century, women could be seen in working-class neighborhoods in the town of Chauny sitting outside their front doors threading beaded flowers for delivery to the factory. Those imprisoned were also significant practitioners of this art. The First World War created a tremendous demand for memorial wreaths and the need for workers was so great that over 40,000 people, including prisoners, were employed at this.

In the center of the book, a few pages describe technique, but they are really more oriented toward the *theory* of technique and what is most critical to know about how choices are made. Close ups illustrate various finishing details and discuss how the flower elements are made and why.

The book wraps up with a series of short interviews with people of interest to the author and to the reader of the book as well, including Evelyn Ulzen (Berlin, Germany) who, along with her husband, Jürgen, collected over 13,000 pieces of beadwork and made of their home a museum, including around 200 objects associated with funeral wreaths; the aforementioned Bruna Costantini (Venice, Italy); and several beaded flower creators. Tudy Sammartini spoke of her aunt Nella Sammartini Lopez y Royo (Venice, Italy), who revived the practice of beaded flower making in Venice in the 1980s and about whom she wrote a book.

I very much recommend *Flower Forever* both to lovers of beadwork and bead history and to those who find beaded flowers appealing. The pictures are pretty and detailed and the information is clear and understandable. The book is available from flowerforeverbook@gmail.com.

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Beads from Germany: Idar-Oberstein, Lauscha, Neugablonz.

Floor Kaspers. Marblings Publishing, Amsterdam. 2016. 134 pp., 165 figs. ISBN: 9789491311031. \$37.79 (soft cover); \$51.79 (hard cover). Also available as a free download at <http://beadmuseum.com/files/BeadsfromGermany.pdf>.

In this book, Kaspers documents three German "bead towns:" Idar-Oberstein, Lauscha, and Neugablonz, exploring how each town became so focused on the production and/or distribution of beads made of agate or glass, and "what happens when the demand... slows down" (p. 7). The book is divided into six sections entitled "Introduction," "Idar-Obarstein," "Lauscha," "Neugablonz," "Conclusion," "Notes" and "Literature." Not content merely to quote previous publications, many of them in German or English, Kaspers travels to each of the three towns to explore museums and other sites and interview people formerly or currently involved in the bead trade. In the process, she elicits information that is unavailable to armchair bead historians.

For example, following in the footsteps of German bead researcher Jürgen Busch, she visits the ruins in Lauscha of the glassworking furnace constructed in 1897 by Günter Kühnert & Co., which was abandoned in 1990 after German reunification, following decades of making marbles, marble beads, and other glass products. Inside the remains of one building she finds old bags of soda, lime, and quartz as well as old molds. Nearby, she finds pieces of cane and malformed marbles, though no marble beads (pp. 86-91).

Striking images accompany the text, including archival photos of beadmakers or bead sellers at work. Other photos were apparently taken by Kaspers herself, including close-ups of beads, bead sample cards, and beadmakers in action, in addition to colorful glass rods leaning against the wall of a factory (front cover), a concrete sculpture of a glassblower



bending over his rod (p. 58), photos of street signs such as Perlengasse or "Bead Street" (p. 101), murals on the walls of an apartment building depicting beadmakers in action (p. 120), and details of factory interiors showing bead molds, bead cabinets, and various machines.

Save for the formatting issues that plague many self-published books, *Beads from Germany* would be an unqualified success. Had Kaspers hired an editor to proof her text, there would be no grammatically incorrect sentences, no misspelled words ("it's" instead of "its," again and again; "underminded" for "undermined;" "amethyst" for "amethyst; and so on), no missing punctuation marks, and no missing captions for some of the photos.

The absence of a map showing the locations of Idar-Oberstein, Lauscha, and Neugablonz (not to mention the related location of Gablonz in the contemporary Czech

Republic) is also unfortunate. I looked them up on the internet, discovering that Idar-Oberstein is in southwest Germany, Lauscha in east-central Germany, and Neugablonz in southern Germany.

Finally, Kaspers' formatting of the "Notes" and "Literature" sections at the end of the book is amateurish. The latter, divided into two unnecessary categories, "Magazines" and "Books," is sometimes difficult to decode. For example, under the subheading "Beads" in the "Magazines" category, she lists five articles, providing titles, years, and volume numbers without mentioning authors or page numbers. I finally concluded that Kaspers was referring to articles in *Beads: Journal of the Society of Bead Researchers*. Also under "Books," she includes an article published on a website, without mentioning the date on which she accessed the article.

Despite these drawbacks, Kaspers' blend of history and ethnography is engaging and informative. Given that beadmaking is in decline in many parts of Europe, eyewitness accounts are especially precious. *Beads from Germany* is the fourth in Kaspers' series of small, self-published books devoted to bead manufacture and trade. No doubt the other three are worth reading as well: *Beads from Briare: The Story of a Bead Revolution from France* (2011); *Beads from Tucson: Where the World Meets for Beads, Stones and Jewelry* (2012); and *Beads from Jablonec: A History in Beads* (2014). Kaspers generously offers free digital downloads of all the books, in addition to selling print and digital versions. May she publish many more such books in the future.

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