

A close-up, vertical view of a large, faceted blue diamond. The facets are clearly visible, creating a complex geometric pattern of light and shadow. The color is a deep, vibrant blue. The diamond is set against a dark background, which makes the facets stand out.

THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE
THE LARGEST
FANCY VIVID BLUE DIAMOND
AT AUCTION



THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE

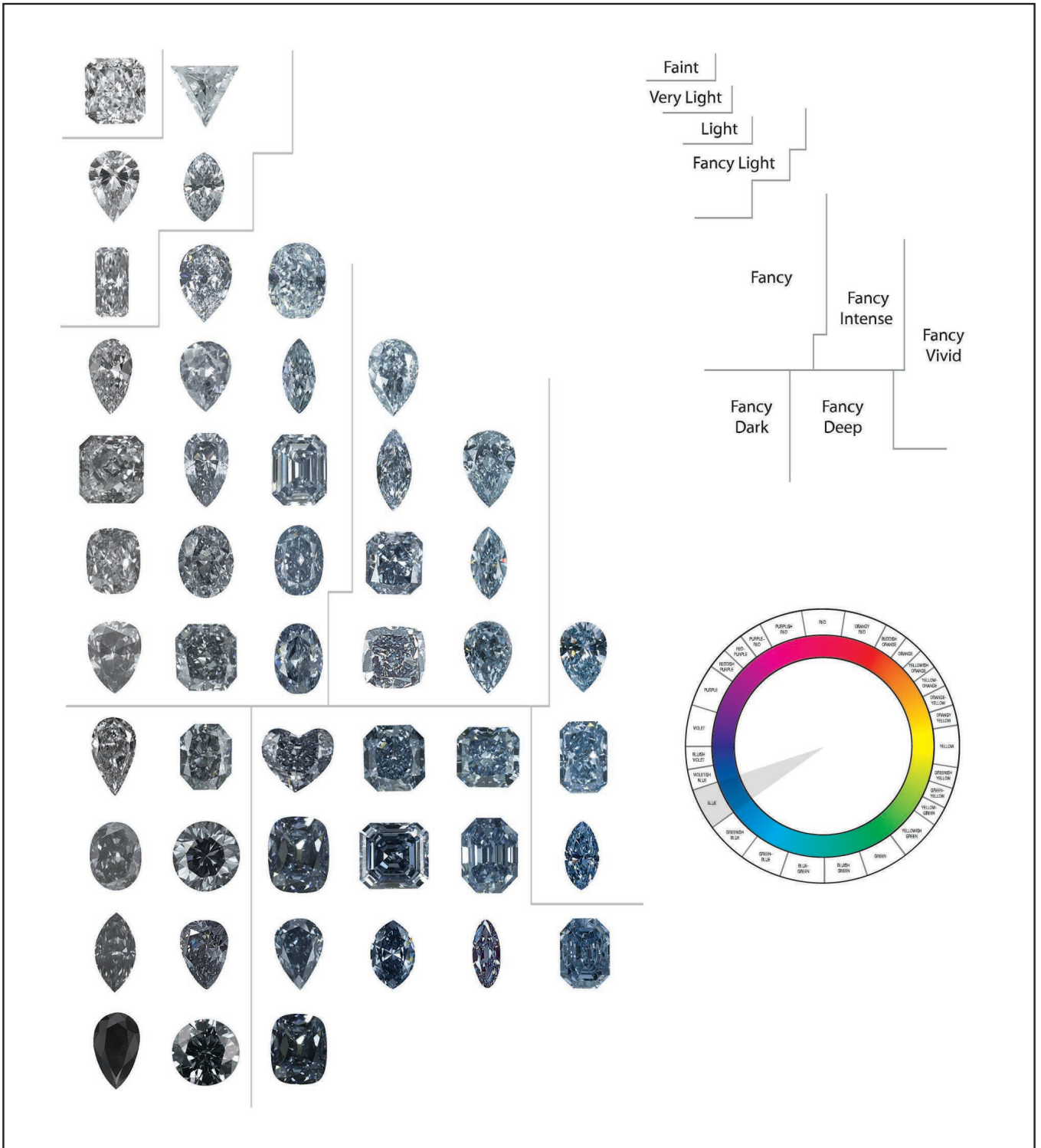
‘It is well known that extraordinary skill is required to extract the “best” color from fancy colored diamonds. Achieving the strongest colors in traditional shapes such as the 15 carat Oppenheimer Vivid Blue can only be achieved with a highly saturated intrinsic color of the rough diamond. This blue diamond’s color and clarity combined with its traditional cutting style and provenance is truly exceptional.’

Tom Moses, Executive Vice President GIA



'Rich and vibrant Fancy Vivid blue color beams from every precisely cut facet of the 14.62 ct emerald-cut diamond.'
Extract from the GIA monograph

THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE



Extract from the GIA monograph



INSIDE BLUES

Along the spectrum of all coloured diamonds, few fancy colours take pole position for their celebrity and rarity: reds, pinks, greens, and of course, blues. Few other colours can stand equal to the phenomenon of a fancy vivid blue. It is rarely seen in diamonds, and when it does occur, is generally a faint blue; just a few examples display a more intense colour. Blue diamonds are structurally the purest of all diamonds, with barely any impurities within their crystal lattice. Most have a trace of the element boron which in addition to their blue colour gives them semi-conducting properties; they account for less than one percent of all diamonds mined.

A stone with an overriding blue body colour, no matter where on the grading scale, from faint through to vivid, and including any stones with a gray colour modifier, is extremely rare. Gray is a common modifier in blue diamonds, and can detract from the value compared with a 'straight' fancy colour grade. Although still desirable, a fancy grayish blue is still far outclassed by a pure fancy blue. Furthermore, the rarity and value of a fancy coloured diamond rises exponentially depending on its position on the scale of colour saturation. Starting with faint, through to light, fancy light, fancy dark and fancy deep to describe the strength of the stone's colour, the extreme grades of fancy intense and finally fancy vivid reach the heights of a diamond's intense colour saturation. A fancy vivid blue diamond of 14.62 carats, with no mention of gray, has a star pedigree.



THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE



SIR PHILIP OPPENHEIMER

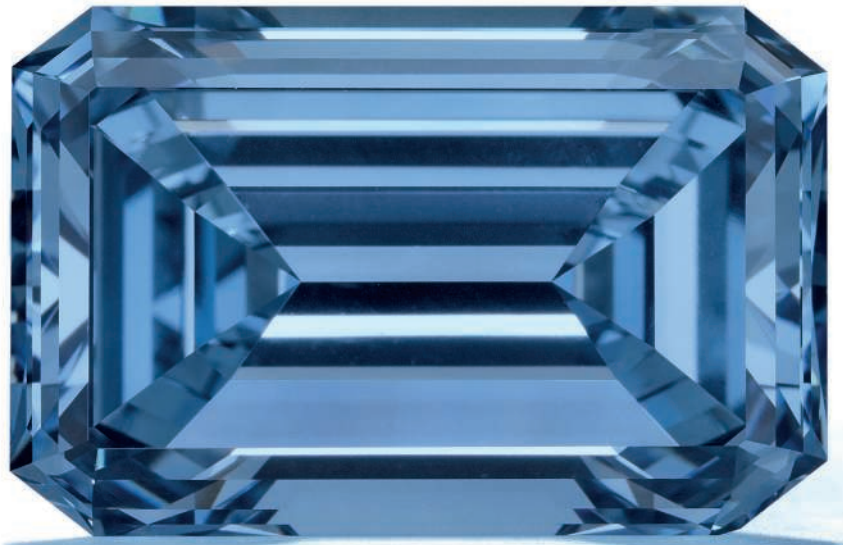
Philip Oppenheimer was born on 29th October 1911 in Britain. He graduated from Harrow and then later from Jesus College at Cambridge University. Son of Otto Oppenheimer, who controlled the Diamond Syndicate in London, Philip began working in the family business at De Beers in London in 1934, sitting at a bench sorting and valuing diamonds.

After serving as a lieutenant colonel in the British Army during World War II, and participating in the liberation of Sicily, he returned to De Beers in London. As head of the London-based Central Selling Organisation for 45 years, until 1993, Sir Philip oversaw a diamond sales cartel set up by De Beers to keep strict control over the diamond supply worldwide. The goal was to end the price swings that led to the failure of many diamond mines throughout the beginning of the 20th century.

The sales cartel was backed by the enormous influence of De Beers in the industry. It became very successful and eventually controlled the sale of nearly all diamonds produced at the De Beers' mines in South Africa, as well as other mines. One of Sir Philip's greatest coups was to bring the Soviet Union and its huge diamond reserves into the cartel in the late 1950's. Although the cartel did show strains from time to time, the organization generally controlled 80 percent of diamond production under the direction of Sir Philip.

Sir Philip was knighted in 1970. He worked closely over the years with his cousin, Harry Oppenheimer, the chairman of De Beers Mining, in building and protecting the family's diamond empire as it dealt with the complex politics of Africa whilst it emerged from colonial rule. South Africa especially was subject to much corruption and instability throughout this time.

Sir Philip was known in Britain as a social liberal, seeking to use the economic influence of the family's company to improve the living standards of its employees. In addition to his role at De Beers, Sir Philip was well known for his involvement in horse racing, owning a stable of winning horses. He pushed for De Beers to sponsor the King George VI and Queen Elizabeth Diamond Stakes at Ascot, one of the United Kingdom's most prestigious annual horse races.



THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE

‘Sir Philip Oppenheimer, born to immense wealth, could possess nearly anything he desired.

A reserved and elegant man, he had two surpassing passions: spectacular diamonds and magnificent thoroughbreds’

GIA, Gemological Institute of America

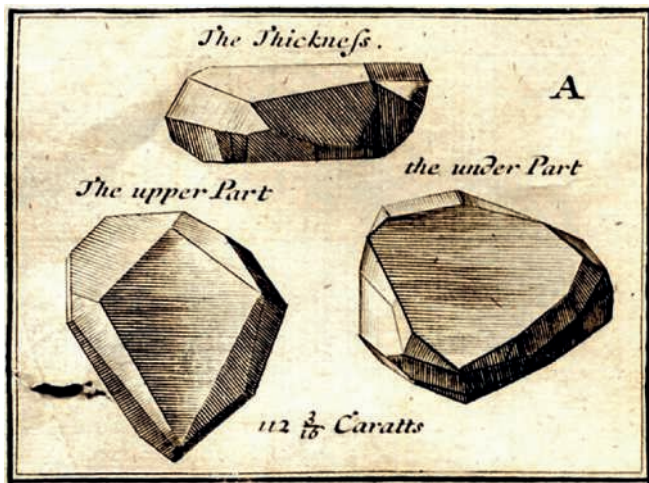


THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE

BLUES IN HISTORY

Important blue diamonds are in noble company, with some of the world's most famous, even infamous diamonds having a blue body colour, and possibly ranking highest among other coloured diamonds in importance and intrigue. Arguably the most famous blue diamond of all time, and perhaps the most famous diamond of any colour, is the legendary *Hope Diamond*.

Although not the largest recorded in existence, falling third according to Ian Balfours' *Famous Diamonds*, after an unnamed brilliant-cut weighing 51.84 carats and the 45.84 carats *Copenhagen Blue*, it is the largest whose whereabouts are currently publicly known. The incredible 45.52 carat fancy dark grayish-blue gem is notorious not only for its marvelous size and colour, but also for the 'curse said to hang over all who owned or wore it'. The unproven story was certainly woven well by Pierre Cartier in 1911 as a sale strategy to entice the young Evalyn Walsh McLean, American socialite and wife of the heir to the Washington Post fortune, into buying such an enigmatic jewel. Yet another fabled, and far more consequential account behind the *Hope* was recently proven to be true in 2005: a team of researchers, gemmologists and cutters from the Smithsonian Institute were able to verify the long-standing rumor that the *Hope* was cut from a diamond of the French Crown, otherwise known as the *French Blue*, which in turn was refashioned from the *Tavernier Blue*.



Drawing of the Tavernier Blue diamond



The Hope Diamond
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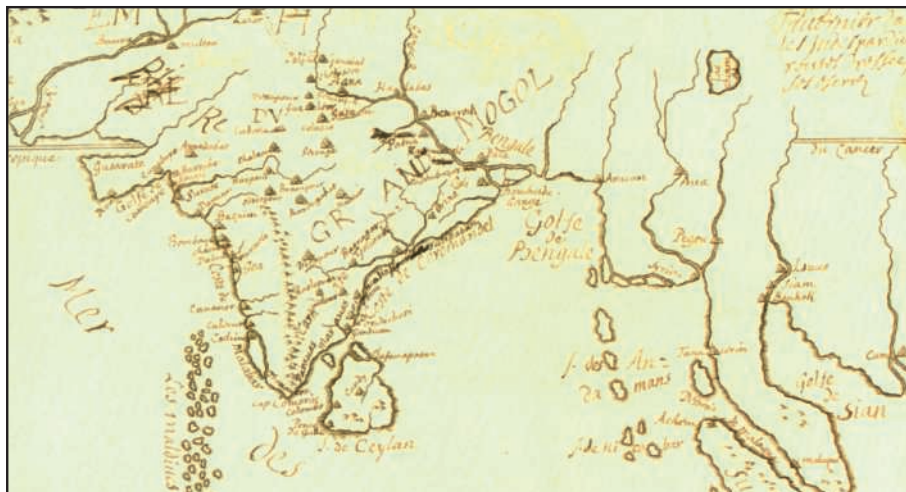
At some point during the mid-17th century, the renowned French explorer and merchant Jean-Baptiste Tavernier, during his final voyage to India, was offered a large steely blue gem. Weighing $112 \frac{3}{16}$ Florentine carats (115.16 metric carats), it was said to have been stolen from the eye of an idol. The dark blue diamond was taken by Tavernier back to France where he sold it in 1668, together with a collection of his finest purchases, to King Louis XIV. Four years later the Sun King had the stone re-cut into a heart-shape weighing the equivalent of 69.03 metric carats, and as one of the Crown Jewels of France, it became known as the *Blue Diamond of the Crown*. It passed through the hands of successive kings until September 1792, when it was among the jewels stolen from the *Garde-Meuble* during the French Revolution.



THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE

The diamond appears to have re-surfaced exactly twenty years later, again re-cut, in the accounts of a London diamond dealer. It was at one point rumored, although probably inaccurately, to have been acquired by King George IV. Finally, in 1839, the diamond was in the gem collection of Henry Philip Hope, part of the Hope Banking Family, and it remained in the family until 1901. The *Hope* as it became known, was resold several times on the international market until it passed through the hand of Pierre Cartier in 1909. Thereafter it would become the emblem of Evalyn Walsh McLean, closely tying its fate with her own, until her death and its sale in 1949 to Harry Winston. Winston donated the historic stone to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington in 1958, where it still resides today.

Historically the earliest and most legendary diamond 'mines' were the alluvial gravels in the banks or beds of rivers in India, known as early as 800BC. Jean-Batiste Tavernier visited a number of the Indian Mines between 1639 and 1668, recording the most important surviving geographical, geological and sociological account of early mining and dealing practices. The most famous mine was Kollur, a mine in the kingdom of Golconda, now part of the State of Hyderabad, celebrated for producing fine large whites of a special 'water' and the earliest known pinks and blues: the *Great Moghul*, as well as the pink *Dara-i-Nur*, and, most importantly, the *Tavernier Blue*. Given the relatively late discovery of alternative blue diamond sources, nearly all 'historic' blues are assumed to be of Indian origin. However, expecting sporadic exploitation, the mines were effectively commercially worked out by the nineteenth century, leaving true Golconda diamonds with a legendary label and the production of blues scant and scarce until the new African deposits would take over.



Ancient map of Golconda
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THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE

BLUES IN THE SALEROOM

Christie's has been privileged to have handled and sold some of the world's greatest blues: several which would be listed as historic blues, and some which have appeared in more recent times, but which have already taken their place in the Blue Hall of Fame.

One of the earliest historic blue diamonds to have appeared for sale at Christie's was the *Idol's Eye*, a stone sharing a common myth with the *Hope*, having been rumored to have once been stolen from the eye of an Indian idol. Its first authenticated appearance was on 14th July 1865 in the saleroom of Christie's London, where the catalogue described a 'splendid large diamond known as the *Idol's Eye* set round with 18 smaller brilliant and framework of small brilliants'. The 70.21 carat blue Golconda stone passed into ownership of 34th Ottoman Sultan, Abd al-Hamid II, who would be deposed from his autocratic position in 1909, after his time in Paris. Bought by a nobleman, the *Idol's Eye* rested in a London bank until after the end of the Second World War. Harry Winston acquired the diamond in 1946, selling it the following year to Mrs May Bonfils Stanton, daughter of the co-founder of the Denver Post and avid jewellery collector. After her death in 1962, the *Idol's Eye* was sold through auction once more, in 1967, and by 1979 the diamond was in the ownership of M. Laurence Graff. The ensuing sale conducted by M. Graff together with two other large and named stones, is thought to be one the most expensive diamond deals in history.

Also of Indian origin, the *Wittelsbach* is a historic diamond fortunate to have avoided the doom of latter-day obscurity. From the seventeenth century, this dark blue 35.56 carat gem mostly led a quiet and imperial life. Through the Spanish Royal Family, via King Philip IV and his daughter, to the Austrian Royal Family, via Emperor Leopold I and his daughter, it finally resided in the possession of the Wittelsbach family, the ruling house of Bavaria. The diamond remained in the royal family for the following two centuries until a decision was made to alleviate the hardship of family descendants by auctioning certain parts of the Bavarian Crown Jewels at Christie's London in 1931. Following the auction, the diamond was neither seen nor heard of again, until an unmanaged large diamond was placed on the display at the World Fair in Brussels in 1958. A skilled cutter in the Belgian diamond industry, Joseph Komkommer, fortuitously identified the diamond as the lost Wittelsbach and so saved its story for prosperity, until Christie's sold it again in 2008 for a world record price at the time.

Through the years **Christie's** has been privileged to have offered for sale many of **the world's most historic and famous blue diamonds:**

- 1864: The 70.21 carat ***Idol's Eye***
- 1931: The 35.56 carat ***Wittelsbach***
- 1984: The 42.92 carat ***Tereschenko***
- 1995: The 13.78 carat ***Begum Blue***
- 2008: The 35.56 carat ***Wittelsbach***





THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE

Record prices for **Vivid Blue Diamonds** at auction:

- \$48,468,153: the 12.03 carat ***Blue Moon of Josephine***
\$4,028,940 per carat, November 2015
- \$32,645,000: the 9.75 carat ***Zoe Diamond***
\$3,348,205 per carat, November 2014
- \$23,795,372: the 13.22 carat ***Winston Blue***
\$1,799,952 per carat, May 2014
- \$15,762,500: the 10.95 carat ***Bvlgari Blue***
\$1,439,498 per carat, October 2010
- \$9,488,754: the 7.03 carat ***Star of Josephine***
\$1,349,752 per carat, May 2009



The largest blue diamond ever to have appeared at auction is the incredible 42.92 carat pear-shaped *Tereschenko* diamond. Ranking the fourth largest fancy blue on record, it follows only the unnamed brilliant-cut weighing 51.84 carat. The original owners of the diamond, the Tereschenko family, were wealthy pre-Revolution sugar magnates, who had the gem mounted in an incredible multi-coloured diamond necklace by Cartier in 1913. It was reputed to be one the most extravagant and beautiful fancy coloured diamond jewels of the twentieth century. The *Tereschenko* was smuggled out of Russia in 1916 on the eve of the Revolution, passing into new private hands. Following seven decades of elusive silence, the diamond reappeared to great excitement in 1984, when Christie's announced the auction of this spectacular blue in Geneva. With a shout of 'Ten million Swiss Francs', the hammer was brought down to M. Robert Mouawad, setting a new world record price at the time for a blue diamond, and indeed for a diamond of any colour.

Several newer blues have recently attracted a world reception, not only through their rare quality, but also with the Graff name. Leading with the 6.07 carat *Graff Blue Heart* and the 39.31 carat *Graff Imperial Blue*, is the original 6.19 carat *Graff Blue*. Sold in 15 November 1990 at Christie's, in supporting what would become the *Graff Orange*, this beautiful dark blue circular-cut diamond would be recorded and remembered ever after.

Most recently in the world of named blues sold at Christie's is the beautiful *Begum Blue* diamond. When the jewellery collection of her Highness Princess Salimah Aga Khan came under the hammer in Geneva on 13th November 1995, it hit the headlines as the most important comprehensive and magnificent single owner jewellery collection to have appeared at auction since the jewels of the Duchess of Windsor were sold in 1987. The 13.78 carat fancy deep blue heart-shaped diamond known as the *Begum Blue*, mounted together with a D colour Internally Flawless heart-shaped diamond of 16.03 carats, was undoubtedly the star of the show.

However, of the important historic blue diamonds mentioned above, many are deep or dark blue colour and some even with a touch of grey; only a few could be described as intense sky blue. In this fancy vivid blue range, diamonds of even five or six carats are seldom seen in the saleroom, and those of over ten carats are virtually unheard of. Given the current market and the increasing rarity of blue diamonds, the appearance of such a gem at auction today – likely to take its place amongst other world class famous blue diamonds – is to be expected only once in a lifetime.

THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE

VERDURA

Fulco Santostefano della Cerda, Duke of Verdura, moved from his native Palermo to Paris in 1926, where he began working with Coco Chanel, initially in textiles, and eventually as their head jewellery designer. After relocating to the United States in 1937, he took a position at Paul Flato's jewellery establishment, first in New York, then in California. He remained with Flato for two years before opening his own salon in 1939 at 712 Fifth Avenue and a second, in 1947, in Paris, on rue Boissy d'Anglas.

His jewellery featured gold mountings with precious and semi-precious stones, a bold undertaking at the time when platinum was the most popular metal. In 1972, Verdura sold the business to his associate, Joseph G. Alfano, and retired to London, living there until his death in 1978. In 1985, Edward J. Landrigan purchased Verdura, Inc. and established a salon at 745 Fifth Avenue, where he continues to produce fine jewels from Verdura's original drawings in a manner consistent with the Duke's tradition.

Christie's is honoured to offer a prime example of the Verdura style, combining bold design with an exceptional gemstone. It is a testament to Verdura talent that they were chosen to design the mounting of this exceptional fancy vivid blue diamond. The 'Eight Blades' ring, created in 2004, demonstrates exceptional finesse as well as intangible beauty.



The front door of the Verdura shop, New York
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THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE
GIA MONOGRAPH





GIA REPORT
10387774

Verify this report at gia.edu

GIA COLORED DIAMOND REPORT

May 14, 2015

Report TypeGrading Report

GIA Report Number 10387774

Shape and Cutting Style Emerald Cut

Measurements 18.64 x 12.09 x 7.24 mm

Carat Weight 14.62 carat

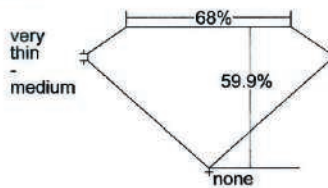
Color Grade Fancy Vivid Blue

Color Origin Natural

Color Distribution Even

Clarity Grade VVS1

Proportions:



Profile not to actual proportions

Polish Very Good

Symmetry Good

Fluorescence None

Comments: Internal graining is not shown.

www.gia.edu

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

GIA COLORED DIAMOND SCALE

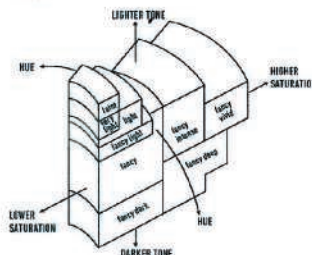
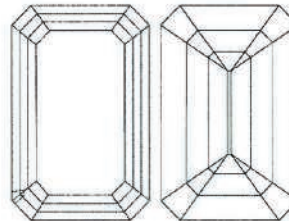


Illustration of GIA fancy color grade interrelationships

GIA CLARITY SCALE

FLAWLESS
INTERNALLY FLAWLESS
VVS ₁
VVS ₂
VS ₁
VS ₂
S ₁
S ₂
I ₁
I ₂
I ₃

CLARITY CHARACTERISTICS



KEY TO SYMBOLS*

- Feather
- Chip
- Extra Facet

* Red symbols denote internal characteristics (inclusions). Green or black symbols denote external characteristics (blemishes). Diagram is an approximate representation of the diamond, and symbols shown indicate type, position, and approximate size of clarity characteristics. All clarity characteristics may not be shown. Details of finish are not shown.

THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE

Fancy Vivid Blue

14.62 carats



Should you wish to bid on this lot, you will be required to obtain a High Value Paddle.

+242

THE OPPENHEIMER BLUE

A SENSATIONAL COLOURED DIAMOND RING

Set with a fancy vivid blue rectangular-cut diamond, weighing approximately 14.62 carats, flanked on either side by a trapeze-shaped diamond; also accompanied by the original 'Eight Blades' mounting from Verdura, ring size 6, mounted in platinum

'Eight Blades' ring signed Verdura

Accompanied by report no. 10387774 dated 14 May 2015 from the GIA Gemological Institute of America stating that the diamond is Fancy Vivid Blue, natural colour, VVS1 clarity.

Further accompanied by a hardbound monograph from the GIA Gemological Institute of America, featuring additional photography, data collection charts and gemological research, attesting to the rarity and provenance of The Oppenheimer Blue.

PROVENANCE:

Sir Philip Oppenheimer (1916-1995)

EXHIBITED:

New York, Verdura, *The Power of Style: Verdura at 75*, 14 October 2014 - 23 December 2014

CHF38,000,000-45,000,000

\$38,000,000-45,000,000

243-300 No Lots

