

As far as I can judge, the information she does give is generally correct.

The author also discusses such issues as storage, conservation, and protecting endangered species. Of the 268 pages, there are seven near the end devoted to “charts,” three to a glossary, and five for an index, which could have been much more comprehensive.

If you wish to consult this book in a practical way to identify or learn more about the material of a particular piece, you still have to start with some idea of the substance, then find the pages that refer to it and see if there is a match. This book should also be useful to those with a general interest in the subject but the price is steep unless you will be using it frequently, in which case I would certainly recommend it.

Stefany Tomalin
7 Douglas Court
Quex Road
London NW6 4PT
United Kingdom
Email: StefanyTomalinBeads@
COMPUSERVE.COM

World on a String: Parts One, Two, and Three.

Diana Friedberg and Lionel Friedberg. Zepira International, Los Angeles, CA. 2004-2005. \$24.95.

For bead researchers, I recommend viewing each of the *World on a String* DVDs at least three times. Really!

The first viewing is to see what is included in this historic series. Parts One, Two, and Three are already being shown on Public Television. Diana is traveling from Guatemala to Tahiti, the U.K., Brazil, and onward to tell the story of stone and modern Art Glass beads for Parts Four and Five. Because all are bound to become the “lingua franca” between bead lovers and everybody else, bead researchers will want to be conversant with the material in *World on a String*.

The second viewing is to remind yourself of why you fell in love with beads in the first place. You will also reaffirm that beads are a touchstone to world cultures, social issues, history, and hope.

By the third viewing, you are familiar with the enormous content of the series, and can give yourself the pleasure of viewing each scene of each section of each part as an art

piece. *World on a String* has so far won eight international awards for documentary film making.

I do want to offer this caveat: whatever your particular area of study or collecting, you will certainly wish that you had at least ten minutes on camera—or ten more minutes if you are one of the many interviewees—to present your special knowledge and expertise. As you see, however, the scope of the film and consider the range of the potential audience, you are likely to accept the necessity of a simple overview of history, theory, and current bead research. What is in the films is documentation of beadmaking and bead use as it has never been shown before... in all its dynamic, gritty glory.

Each of the DVDs has a theme. Part One, *The Eternal Bead*, is an overview of all types of beads. Part Two, *The Tiny Mighty Bead*, is about glass seed beads. Part Three, *The Sacred Bead*, views beads being used in various religious contexts. Each part is an international journey. Diana is often invited to lecture at screenings, and her tales of reaching some of the locations (26 countries so far) sound like Doctor Seuss and the troubles of getting to Solla Sollew.

Here is the itinerary for *World on a String, Part One: The Eternal Bead* (2004, 93 minutes): Bead beginnings and early beadmaking and use; Bushmen in Southern Africa; The Fertile Crescent; The Indus Valley, agate, and carnelian; Mesopotamia and Egypt; India, beads made by cottage industry and mass production; Venice, glass working traditions; Ghana, beadmaking and the marketplace.

After watching *The Eternal Bead*, I appreciate the beads that I wear, study, and string even more than before. For example, the portraits of “the men who breathe glass” had a profound impact on my feeling for the simplest glass beads from India. Now when I look at those beads I see not only their shape and color and translucence, but the fierce heat of the glass furnaces, the traditions and economy of entire communities, and the smokey, handsome faces of the glassworkers who accept beads as their life.

“The men who breathe glass” is my lone reference to the commentary of the films. I had planned to use many quotes from each part’s narrative, but as I prepared this text I realized that all the narrative, as written and read by Lionel Friedberg, is itself a work of art. Trying to select an occasional elegant phrase was just too difficult because the whole narrative is beautiful and expertly designed to be part of the viewing experience.

World on a String, Part Two: The Tiny Mighty Bead (2005, 94 minutes). This part presents vivid images that include the following cultures: Central and South America, rituals of the Huichol of Mexico; North America, Native Americans of many tribes at an annual dance festival; Nepal, India, the Newar People and the Rabari People of the Ran of Kutch; Myanmar, the Naga People, Southeast Asia, Vietnam Hilltribe Flower Hmong and Red Mao; South Africa, the Ndebele and Zulu Peoples.

In the course of Part Two, Diana brings us up close and personal to bead-bedecked opium smokers, reformed headhunters, mescal inspired artists, dedicated social activists, festival dancers and solemn, lovely Naga women whose only personal possessions are their beads.

The next time I am about to complain as I am caught in Los Angeles traffic on the way to a Bead Society meeting, I am going to put things in perspective by remembering the uniquely dressed widowed or deserted Zulu women of Southern Africa as they walk together for hours through their lush hill country, then help one another across a rushing river to reach their daily beading circle. Their determination to sustain themselves and their group through beads is inspiring. Seeing it through Diana's camera is amazing, and humbling.

World on a String, Part Three: The Sacred Bead (2005, 93 minutes) covers bead use in Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Shamanism. Scenes in Part Three range from demonstrations of passionate public religious ritual to serene private worship. Beads appear on gilded statues, village costumes, and rosary strings. There are many dazzling displays, but amid all the color and action I found most touching the scene focused on an elderly woman in a Northern Spanish town, a town so small and so remote that there was no church or resident priest. We see her as she sits alone next to a vintage radio, listening to a broadcast of a Catholic mass. She does this faithfully twice each day, counting her prayers on a rosary of simple black beads. One gets the feeling that those beads are her lifelong dearest companions.

Part Three also features a very informative visit to a monastery in the United States. Here we see rose petal rosary beads being made, from blossom to bead, by chatty, good-natured monks. It is a rare and delightful addition to bead lore.

Participating with the Friedbergs to produce the *World on a String* series, the Bead Society of Los Angeles has taken a unique opportunity to fulfill its original mandate to find and share information about beads. Diana and Lionel have been working on major productions together for 35 years, first in South Africa, then in the United States. Their extensive experience writing, directing, producing, photographing, and editing documentaries in many parts of the world, plus their compassion for people and passion for beads, gives this documentary series top professional polish and genuine insight.

By contributing to general as well as specific knowledge about beads, *World on a String* will create a better informed, more receptive audience for bead research. With this in mind, I suggest that you not only watch your copies three times, but recommend *World on a String* to your local public lending libraries and college and museum reference libraries.

The *World on a String* website is <<http://www.worldonastringmovie.com>>.

Lois Rose Rose
3165 Queensbury Drive
Los Angeles, CA 90064
Email: loisroserose@sbcglobal.net

Beads of Life: Eastern and Southern African Beadwork from Canadian Collections.

Marie-Louise Labelle. Canadian Museum of Civilization, *Cultural Studies Paper* 78, Gatineau, Quebec J8X 4H2, Canada. 2005. 186 pp., 109 color figs., 64 b&w figs. Canadian \$45.00 (paper cover).

The book opens with a map of Africa that shows the countries covered. The author elected to cover the subject in a thematic and sociological way, to reflect how the exhibits themselves were arranged. This is not, however, a catalog-style publication, but rather a companion to the exhibition with the same title, which opened at the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Quebec, on 14 April 2005, and ran until 26 February 2006.

The first chapter after the Introduction covers Eastern and Southern African Beadwork from Canadian Collections. It comes as something of a surprise to find out just how