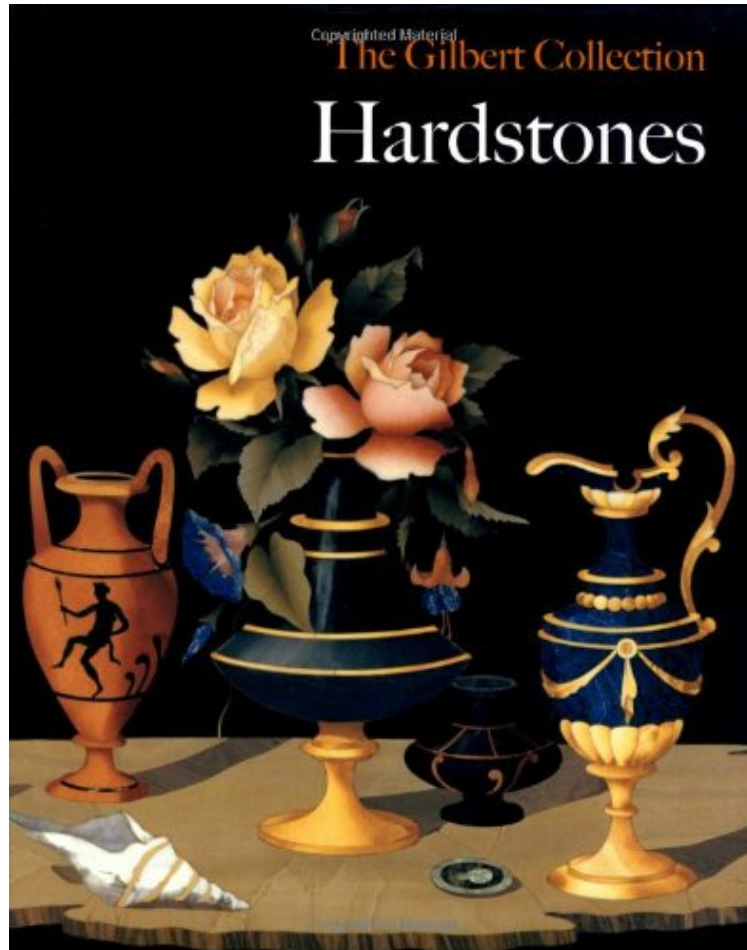


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## Hardstones: The Gilbert Collection

*Anna Maria Massinelli*

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**Anna Maria Massinelli : Hardstones: The Gilbert Collection** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Hardstones: The Gilbert Collection:

The technique of Hardstone mosaic was developed in the sixteenth century under the patronage of the Grand Dukes of Tuscany, in parallel with the revival of Roman mosaics made from tiny tesserae. Complex images were created from a matrix of coloured marbles and semiprecious stones, selected and cut with breathtaking craftsmanship. During the seventeenth century the technique was used in the production of some of the most magnificent luxury objects in Italy; in the eighteenth century, panels of landscapes, birds and flowers were incorporated into furniture and snuffboxes. This gave way in the nineteenth century to the production of pictures in extraordinarily convincing imitation of oil paintings.

About the Author Anna Maria Massinelli specialises in sculpture and the decorative arts. She has contributed to a number of exhibition catalogues, international conventions and specialist magazines. She has written several books including *Treasures of the Medici*, published by Vendome Press in 1992. Between 1993 and 1996 she was Assistant Curator for the Department of Decorative Arts of the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. She is currently Professor of History of Art at the Academy of Fine Art in Palermo.