

CAMEOS

THE PERFECT GIFT FOR VALENTINES DAY

All the cameos on display are shell cameos. 90% of all shell cameos are carved within 25 miles of the Bay of Naples, Italy. This may account for the large number of mythological subjects. By far the most popular subject is the profile of a woman.

One of the telling facts as to the age of a cameo is quite often the hairdo. The cameo carver is a true artist as can be seen in the quality of the cameo. Once the cameo is carved a jeweler places it in a setting. The rarest of all settings is the 19th Century aluminum. Other settings include 18 K gold which were normally made for the European market, as were 15, 12, and 9 K gold. The 10 & 14K were most often made for the American market. The settings also occur in silver, both 800, 900 and 925 (sterling). Sometimes the silver mountings were decorated with marcasites. Many cameos were set in gold filled mounts. Other settings include bakelite, plastic as well as other man-made materials.

The most common cameos were used as brooches, while others were mounted into rings, pendants, earrings, hatpins, etc. The more elaborate cameos have small diamond embellishment such as a brooch, necklace, earring or ring. The most elaborate one we have ever seen, the woman depicted in the cameo had was wearing a diamond ring, a diamond bracelet, a diamond earring and 5 small diamonds

set in a tiara.