

# ANTIQUÉ

## — OF THE MONTH —

Designed to rest glittering on a table in a cocktail bar in the 1920s, vanity cases, or nécessaires, truly capture the golden age of glamour



### Covetable cases

As women became bolder with their make-up in the 1920s, jewellers created miracles of miniature engineering for the transport of their powder and paint. The desire for these beautiful fashion accessories kicked off when Cartier produced a case containing a mirror and a lipstick tube for interior decorator Elsie de Wolfe in 1921 and it wasn't long before other jewellery houses, such as Tiffany, followed suit. Functioning as both a handbag and a piece of jewellery, they were fashioned from exotic materials such as jade, mother-of-pearl and tortoiseshell and they contained all the essentials for a girl on a night out: compact, comb, sometimes even a cigarette and a tiny lighter. This ravishing 1940s gold Bulgari example, with its sapphires, diamonds and engraved sunrays, reflects the timeless appeal of art deco.

Over 200 vanity cases spanning the 1920s-70s will be on display in 'Ultra Vanities: Bejewelled Make-Up Boxes From the Age of Glamour' at Goldsmiths' Hall, London, from 31st May-20th July. Free. 020 7606 7010; [thegoldsmiths.co.uk](http://thegoldsmiths.co.uk)