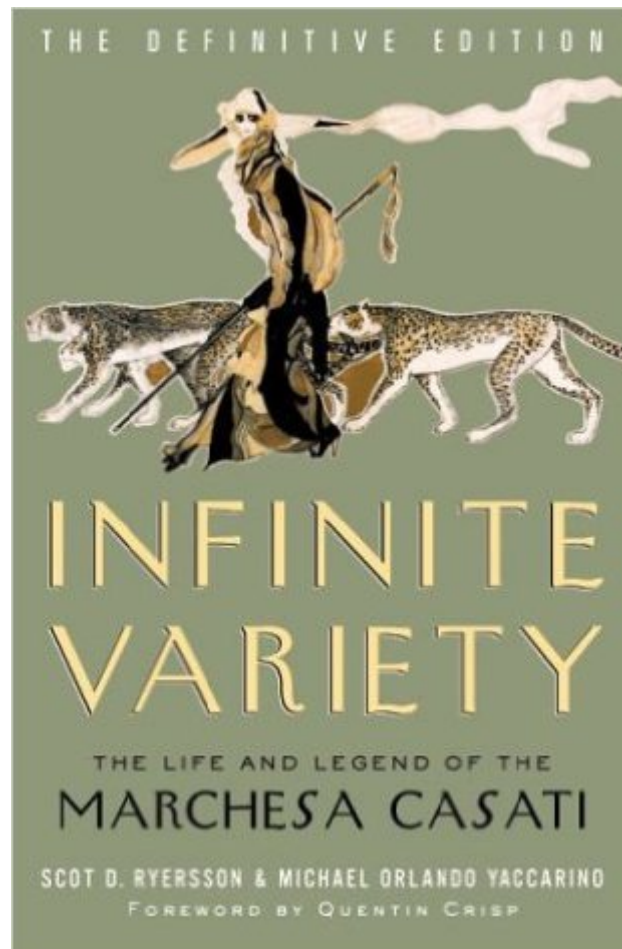


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Infinite Variety: The Life And Legend Of The Marchesa Casati (Definitive Edition)



Synopsis

For the first three decades of the twentieth century, the Marchesa Casati astounded Europe: nude servants gilded in gold leaf attended her; bizarre wax mannequins sat as guests at her dining table; and she was infamous for her evening strolls, naked beneath her furs, parading cheetahs on diamond-studded leashes. Artists painted, sculpted, and photographed her; poets praised her strange beauty. Among them were Gabriele D'Annunzio, Man Ray, Jean Cocteau, Cecil Beaton, and American writers Tennessee Williams, Jack Kerouac, and Ezra Pound. Couturiers Fortuny, Poiret, and Ermenegildo Zegna dressed her. Some became lovers, others awestruck admirers, but all were influenced by this extraordinary muse. The extravagance ended in 1930 when Casati was more than twenty-five million dollars in debt. Fleeing to London, she spent her final flamboyant years there until her death in 1957. Now nearly a half-century later, Casati's fashion legacy continues to inspire such designers as John Galliano, Karl Lagerfeld, and Tom Ford. Fully authorized and accurate, this is the fantastic story of the Marchesa Luisa Casati. Scot D. Ryerson is an award-winning freelance writer, illustrator, and graphic designer. He lives in New Jersey. Michael Orlando Yaccarino is a freelance writer specializing in international genre film, fashion, music, and unconventional historical figures. He lives in New Jersey.

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Customer Reviews

To read this book is to enter another world. It plunges the reader headfirst into the world before, then after World War 1 through the character of one fabulous woman. A woman ahead of her time, and possibly even our time. The Marchesa Luisa Casati set out to invent herself at a time when

most women only sought the protection of marriage. The writers present this complicated woman without making judgements or trying to force the reader to make judgements. There is little or no psychologizing of the sort that makes many biographies tedious reading. It is a case of "Here is the story of this one woman whose life touched practically every great artist, writer, dancer, and of the time in which she lived. Make of it what you will, but she provided a hell of a ride." I have just read it and am looking forward to reading it all over again. Some of what I read I MUST read again, just to assure myself it is true. I highly recommend it for anyone interested in the arts of the first half of the twentieth century and to anyone who simply wants a damn good read.

I read a review of this book in a national newspaper in the UK, and it sounded so interesting I bought it. I had never heard of the Marchesa before, but I have no idea why, she is so strange and marvellous that she really ought to be a household name. It's a bit too heroine-worshipping - yes, she is fascinating, but perhaps she wasn't terribly nice to know. But this is still a very absorbing book - I wish there had been more photos of her, but I suppose there is a generous selection already.

'This book about the Marchesa Casati (1881-1957) is called "The Definitive Edition" about a lady of extravagant leisures. It is an excellent book reviving the roaring twenties in Europe and gives you a fairly good insight of the lifestyle of the truly rich and famous through to the 1940s. Part of this set was the Marchesa Casati, who is a source of inspiration to this very day for fashion designers, artists and wealthy heirs. So if you squander your vast inheritance, at least do it in style!' (review from Elegant Lifestyle)

Considering "La Casati" an icon, the new edition renders an appalling idea in terms of images: all are b/w and printed on standard paper. If you are patient, I recommend you to search for: the French edition (still available) and the English one (from which the Quentin Crisp intro has been culled). The Italian edition is also worth tracking down. All in all, a higher price for the inclusion of colour images would have been a better option. Stefano Galli

"'Infinite Variety: The Definitive Edition' provides a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the bizarre and spectacular life that Casati led...All you fashion-conscious history buffs will love the in-depth exploration the authors take into Casati's stylish life."-Denise Dandeneau (Zink Magazine)"This meticulously researched and completely updated biography vividly details Luisa Casati's

extravagant life...Fashionistas, art history buffs, aficionados of Belle Époque and Jazz Age culture-and general readers-will be pleased."-Lorraine Thompson (Primo Magazine)

I've been a long time fan of the Marchesa Casati and her wild antics and have always hoped there'd someday be a book on her. I couldn't believe it when I finally found "Infinite Variety". This book was worth the wait. It contains so much info on this bizarre "living work of art" that her life is hard to believe, but, as they say "Believe it or not"! I can't believe that there's been nothing on Casati before. A fantastic book. My only complaint was that the authors didn't reproduce all of the paintings of Casati. But, there are over 50 pictures, each one better than the last. You won't believe some of them! Like I said, a fantastic book. Casati couldn't have asked for more!

"'Infinite Variety' is a thoroughly unbiased and well-researched biography. The 'Definitive Edition' includes a plethora of new information as well as artwork and photos. Thanks to the efforts of Ryersson and Yaccarino, the story of the Marchesa Casati, with all its splendor, will continue to astonish.--Jonathan Williams, Gothic Beauty Magazine

"Mesmerizing and revealing, 'Infinite Variety' is the definitive account of the Italian femme scandaleuse. A great glimpse, and more, into the life of a larger-than-life individual."-Mar Yvette (Clear Magazine)

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