

S.J. PHILLIPS



Art Deco blackened steel, diamond and cultured pearl suite comprising bracelet, pair of earrings, ring and brooch by Marsh & Co., American,

the bracelet alternating openwork blackened (oxidised) steel links of geometric cartouches with figure-of-eight links, each featuring spiralling scrolls and centred by a round white cultured pearl, alternating larger and smaller, diamond set loop joins between, one forming the clasp, engraved to underside with bright cut bands and radiating flowerheads, the earrings of tapering panel-hoop form in blackened steel each inset with a diamond forget-me-not and circular aperture hung within with a round cultured pearl, the blackened steel ring similarly decorated with a round cultured pearl flanked by diamond forget-me-nots to a steel tapering mount of slightly bombe form, the brooch similar with tapering curve-ended panel with oval aperture, diamond geometric detail and flowerhead, pearls flanking at scrollover top, the diamonds of round brilliant and single cut.

Marsh & Co.

G T Marsh & Co. was a renowned San Francisco jewellery store and gallery famous for creating fine jewellery using matte-finished blackened steel set with diamonds, gold, pearls and other gemstones.

Founded in 1876 by Australian immigrant George Turner Marsh, they originally began as an importer of Asian antiques and art, George having spent several formative years working in Japan.

In the 1930s they began making the blackened steel jewellery for which they are now celebrated. This jewellery combines the influence of the Art Deco movement with the Asian origins of their gallery, particularly in its use of the blackened metal, pearls, jade and coral.

The highly unusual, black patinated steel was developed by one of their in-house jewellers. With an interest in metallurgy and shotguns he experimented with metals and the processes used to prevent them from rusting. By sandblasting steel and bluing it, he was able to perfect the matte black finish which contrasted beautifully with diamonds and lustrous gems.

Today, Marsh jewellery from the 1930s, 40s and 50s is rare and extremely collectible and although rarely signed, the pieces are identifiable by their distinctive appearance and use of materials.

Length of bracelet 17cm / 6 7/8"

Width of bracelet 1cm / 3/8"

Length of earrings 2.2cm / 7/8"

Width of earrings 1.2cm / 1/2"

Ring width at top 1.1cm / 7/16"

Brooch panel length 3.8 x 4.1cm wide / 1 1/2 x 1 5/8"

Pearls range 8.9mm (the ring) to
Weight: 44.5g