

A WOMAN OF SUBSTANCE





Doris Duke is wearing the hair slides (Fig. 40) and pearl and diamond bracelet (Fig. 29) by Cartier and the snowflake ear clips (Fig. 66) by Van Cleef & Arpels in this photograph by Wallace Seawell.

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Doris Duke's Jewelry from the 1940s Onward

The next milestone in Doris Duke's life occurred in 1943. The divorce from James Cromwell freed her from the dominating influence of her middle-aged husband. She took full command of her own life. Her net worth was estimated to be more than \$300 million. She could buy just about anything she desired. While she did, in fact, spend money on homes and a lavish lifestyle, it was done with class, taste, and knowledge of value. In her jewelry purchases, she chose pieces that were tasteful and harmonized with her lifestyle. Since she already had diamond-set jewels, her attention turned to jewelry she could wear during the day or into the evening for dinner.

Miss Duke frequented the smaller jewelry salons in New York City of Paul Flato, Fulco di Verdura, and Seaman Schepps, designers who were at the "cutting edge," creating a new aesthetic in jewelry design. These designers maintained small salons and dealt directly with clients, creating special, one-of-a-kind pieces. She would often have them make new pieces of jewelry from gemstones that she purchased on her travels or that she had extracted from out-dated pieces. Into Verdura she would go with a parcel of stones to have made into something exciting, something different.

From the 1940s onward, Miss Duke's taste turned to interesting, unusual jewelry. For example, at Van Cleef & Arpels, instead of diamond-set brooches or bracelets, she chose a suite with rubies, sapphires, and diamonds with "Hawaii" flowers; her love of the island is reflected in this purchase (Fig. 73). By the 1960s, she was a regular client at David Webb in New York City, selecting jewelry often inspired by the East. Color contrasts characterize her jewelry from this period. Her jewelry choices became large in scale and were bought in suites. Earrings were not the small pieces from the 1930s or 1940s that hugged the earlobes; instead they were long and dangling ear pendants. She wore her blonde hair long, slightly pushed back to accentuate her beautiful ear accoutrements.

That Doris Duke loved jewelry is evident from even a casual examination of her vast collection. She continued to buy jewels until the end of her life. In 1991, just two years before she died, she bought the Cartier emerald bead ear clips at auction (Fig. 64). It is fitting that one of her last jewelry purchases is a piece by a maker that both she and her mother had patronized regularly many years before.



44. Turquoise, sapphire, and diamond bracelet

David Webb, New York

1965

Turquoise, sapphires, diamonds, gold, platinum

L: 7 inches

Doris Duke purchased this bracelet from David Webb on May 8, 1965, the same day she bought a coordinating necklace (Fig. 46). The bracelet was valued at \$7,700, but she was given a "special price" of \$6,000.

45. Pair of sapphire, turquoise, and diamond ear clips

David Webb, New York

1969

Turquoise, sapphires, diamonds, platinum

H: 2 inches

These earrings show a strong influence of Indian jewelry, reflecting Doris Duke's passionate interest in Mogul forms at this stage of her life. Most of the stones for these ear clips were supplied by Doris Duke with additional stones from David Webb's stock.

46. Turquoise, sapphire, and diamond fringe necklace

David Webb, New York

1965

Turquoise, sapphires, diamonds, gold, platinum

This necklace was assembled by David Webb with stones Doris Duke owned as well as others to complete the design. She may have disassembled one of her mother's sapphire pieces, inherited in 1962, or something of her own. The records indicate she purchased it, along with a coordinating bracelet (Fig. 44) on May 8, 1965.



47. Emerald-bead two-strand necklace

David Webb, New York

1969

Emerald beads, diamonds, gold

This necklace was assembled by David Webb with emerald beads Doris Duke owned. He created the clasp and spacers with diamonds.

48. Pair of emerald-bead drops

David Webb, New York

1957

Emerald beads, diamonds, platinum

H: 1 ¼ inches

On November 30, 1957, Doris Duke purchased from David Webb the emerald bead drops along with the diamond-set scroll ear clips (Fig. 56) from which to hang them (illustrated below as a combined piece).



49. Pink topaz and diamond "flower twist" suite consisting of necklace, bracelet, and ear clips

Verdura, Inc., New York

1966

Precious pink topaz, diamonds, gold, platinum

Height of ear clips: 1 5/8 inches

When viewed in the context of Doris Duke's other jewelry, this suite with pink topaz is atypical of her jewelry, which is usually set with darker hued gemstones. She purchased this suite from Verdura for \$27,500 on March 1, 1966.



A Woman of Substance:



50. Citrine and gold crossover necklace

Verdura, New York

1940

Citrines, gold

Before opening his own salon in 1939, Fulco di Verdura worked for Paul Flato, whose noted creations include a vine crossover necklace. Perhaps that necklace inspired Verdura when he created this design. This necklace was assembled by him with twenty-seven citrines from Doris Duke's collection and twenty-four that he supplied. On May 29, 1940, she paid \$800 for it.



51. Pair of ruby bead drops

David Webb, New York

1969

Ruby beads, diamonds, gold

H: 1 ¼ inches

Doris Duke purchased the ruby bead drops along with a ruby bead fringe necklace (Fig. 52) from David Webb on October 10, 1969.



52. Ruby bead and cultured pearl fringe necklace

David Webb, New York

1969

Ruby beads, cultured pearls, gold

A remarkable example of Doris Duke's recycling of old jewelry, this Indian-style fringe necklace was assembled by David Webb from three single-strand strings of pearls, consisting of 37, 49, and 53 pearls each, supplied by Doris Duke. She also provided Webb with 14 loose pearls and 1,136 ruby beads. She paid for this necklace and a pair of ruby bead drops (Fig. 51) on October 10, 1969.



53. A graduated opal bead necklace

David Webb, New York

1969

Opal beads, crystal rondels, diamonds, gold, platinum

Using her own stones, Doris Duke ordered this opal bead necklace and the matching earrings from David Webb. It was purchased on October 10, 1969. The art deco style clasp was probably a readaption of another piece of jewelry.



54. Pair of opal and crystal ear pendants

David Webb, New York

Opals, crystal, gold

H: 2 ¼ inches





55. Diamond tassel clip brooch

David Webb, New York

1957

Diamonds, platinum

H: 2 5/8 inches

Approximate weight of large pear-shaped diamond: 9.67 carats; of small pear-shaped diamond: 3.65 carats; of marquise-cut diamond: 5.00 carats; of baguette-cut diamond: 2.50 carats; of circular-cut diamond: 11.00 carats.

This splendid brooch was assembled by David Webb from a bracelet with a pear-shaped diamond that was given to Doris Duke by her mother in December 1949. The largest stone had been a gift from James B. Duke to his wife. In 1957, Miss Duke had David Webb remake it into this brooch.

56. Pair of diamond scroll earrings

David Webb, New York

Diamonds, platinum

H: 1 1/8 inches

The earrings were originally made to accompany the emerald bead drops (*Fig. 48*) and were purchased on November 30, 1957.



57. Cushion-cut sapphire ring

American

c. 1950

Sapphire, diamonds, platinum



A Woman of Substance:



58. Carved sapphire, ruby, and diamond bracelet

Van Cleef & Arpels, Paris, no. 3744
c. 1945
Sapphires, rubies, diamonds, gold
Length with tassel: 9 inches

59. Gold powder compact

Rubies, gold
c. 1955
W: 2 1/8 inches
L: 3 3/16 inches



60. Cabochon sapphire bunch of grapes clip brooch

Seaman Schepps, New York

1941

Cabochon sapphires, emeralds, diamonds, gold, platinum

H: 3 ½ inches

The revived naturalism of the 1940s is exemplified in this sculptural brooch. Doris Duke purchased it from Seaman Schepps for \$2,500 on June 10, 1941.

62. Cabochon sapphire, diamond, and gem-set bracelet

Seaman Schepps, New York

c. 1937

Cabochon sapphires, rubies, emeralds, diamonds, gold, platinum

L: 7 ¾ inches

Doris Duke had Seaman Schepps alter the buckle of this bracelet in 1952.

61. Pair of cabochon sapphire and diamond ear clips

Seaman Schepps, New York

1955

Cabochon sapphires, diamonds, gold, platinum

Doris Duke purchased these ear clips from Seaman Schepps on December 1, 1955.



63. Gem-set vanity case

Verdura, New York

1940

Brown, green, and yellow tourmalines, citrines, beryl, gold

W: 2 3/4 inches

L: 3 3/4 inches

Doris Duke purchased the vanity case from Verdura, Inc., on December 16, 1940. She then had the olivines in the original case unset and a new gold case cover added, then mounted the special jeweled outer case. The original case cost \$1,250, and the cost of the work was \$2,950, so the total cost was \$4,495 with tax.



64. Pair of emerald bead ear clips

Cartier, Paris no. R8427

c. 1967

Emeralds, emerald beads, gold

H: 1 7/8 inches

On June 8, 1967, a special order was placed at Cartier, Paris, for the earclips which were originally designed with diamonds along the edge and middle vein and the leaf itself with emeralds. On May 12, 1976, the client replaced the diamonds with 100 emeralds. These ear clips were then sold at auction at Sotheby's, New York, on June 12, 1991, lot no. 283, where Doris Duke bought them for \$99,000.

65. Graduated, single row, jade bead necklace

c. 1950

Jade beads, jade, gold

L: 16 1/2 inches

Approximate diameter of beads:
12.8 to 12.9 mm.



A Woman of Substance:



66. Pair of diamond snowflake ear clips

Van Cleef & Arpels, New York, no. 56611

1946

Diamonds, platinum

D: 1 ¼ inches

During the 1940s, Van Cleef & Arpels introduced new jewelry forms based on everyday items such as the pocket handkerchief and, in 1946, the snowflake. Doris Duke purchased ear clips in this form in diamonds.

67. Pair of aquamarine and diamond scroll ear clips

Van Cleef & Arpels, Paris

c. 1945

Aquamarines, diamonds, platinum

H: 1 inch



68. Diamond and yellow gold choker

c. 1950

Diamonds, gold, platinum

L: 17 ¼ inches

Doris Duke wore this necklace at her wedding to Porfirio Rubirosa on September 1, 1947.





69. Pair of diamond and pearl ear pendants

David Webb, Inc., New York

c. 1960

Cultured pearls, baroque pearls, diamonds,
platinum

H: 3 ½ inches

Like much of Doris Duke's jewelry from David Webb, these large-scale ear pendants show strong Indian influence. The large size is characteristic of jewelry from the 1960s.



A Woman of Substance:



70. Turquoise, freshwater pearl, and diamond Indian head brooch

Verdura, Inc., New York

1957

Turquoise, freshwater pearl, diamonds, gold, platinum

H: 1 ½ inches

The Indian on the reverse of the five-cent piece was the inspiration for this brooch. An irregular baroque pearl forms the headdress.

71. Diamond and gold feather brooch

c. 1945

Diamonds, gold, platinum

H: 4 ¼ inches

72. Pair of diamond and pearl fluted ear clips

Flato, New York

1939

Diamonds, pearls, gold

L: 1 ¾ inches

Doris Duke purchased these ear clips from Paul Flato on December 23, 1939.





73. Suite of "Hawaii" flower jewelry comprising bracelet, ear clips and ring

Van Cleef & Arpels, Paris, no. 50031

1947

Sapphires, rubies, diamonds, gold

Height of ear clips: 1 ¼ inches

Length of bracelet: 6 ½ inches

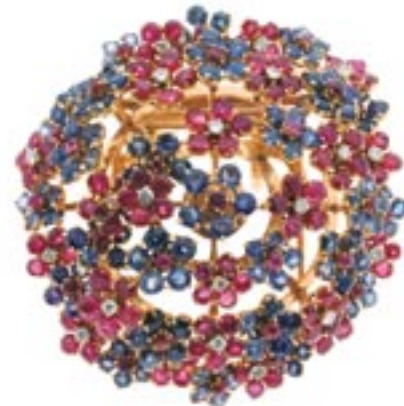
In the 1940s, Van Cleef & Arpels created many different types of jewelry with floral motifs. One such design was set with "Hawaii" flowers, ruby and sapphire flowers with diamond centers. The sapphire flower for the bracelet was bought on December 23, 1947, for \$6,500.

74. Ruby, sapphire and diamond clip brooch

c. 1947

Sapphires, rubies, diamonds, gold

H: 2 ¼ inches



A Woman of Substance:



75. Ivory, pearl, and diamond chess piece brooch

Verdura, Inc., New York

1940

Ivory, rubies, pearls, diamonds, gold

H: 3 ¼ inches

This chess piece is one of a large series of these brooches that Fulco di Verdura made from an eighteenth-century set of painted ivory chessmen from India. Inspired by Johann Melchior Dinglinger's *The Court of the Grand Moghul*, a group of elaborate gem-set figures at the Green Vaults in Dresden, Verdura dressed the figures in gold, gemstones, and pearls. They were purchased by many prominent leaders of society including Mrs. William H. Harkness and Mrs. Jules Stein, and on May 25, 1940, Doris Duke bought one for \$400.





76. Gold, curb-link charm bracelet

Gold, diamonds, turquoise

L: 7 inches

Four charms comprising a gold and diamond St. Christopher medal by Cartier, a folded one-dollar bill, a turquoise and diamond heart, and a "chick" locket

This charm bracelet is the type that any woman of the period might have worn and is probably typical of the personal jewelry that Doris Duke wore with sport attire.

77. Two-color, gold charm bracelet

Gold

L: 7 inches

Four swimming medallions awarded to Sam Kahanamoku

This bracelet was given to Doris Duke by her friend, Sam Kahanamoku. The reverse of one of the medals is inscribed, "To Lahilahi from Meleana June 13, 1944." Lahilahi was Miss Duke's nickname in Hawaii.



78. Ruby and pearl watch bracelet

On dial: Verdura

c. 1945

Rubies, pearls, gold, cord; reverse with polychrome enamel

L: 6 inches

Although the dial on this watch is signed Verdura, it is not known whether he actually made the bracelet or if it was a band that he acquired in India and then set a watch into it. Because of its Indian design, it would appeal to Doris Duke.



79. Diamond and platinum necklace mount

Cartier, New York

1937

Diamonds, platinum

This necklace mount is a particularly vivid reminder of how Doris Duke continually recycled stones from her jewelry as she refashioned her collection over the years. She purchased an important diamond necklace from Cartier, New York, on April 30, 1937, for \$65,000. Over the years, she unmounted many of the diamonds, setting them in other pieces of jewelry.

