EAST MEETS WEST

A Woman of Substance: east meets west
On her first trip to India during her year-long honeymoon, Doris Duke must have been entranced by the decorative arts and architecture she saw, little of which would have been familiar to Americans of that era. There were a few Indian philosophers and artists who had traveled in America, such as Uday Shankar (the older brother of Ravi Shankar), who made a well-publicized tour with his musicians and dancers in the early 1930s, but India and its culture were still quite mysterious to most people in this country.

At that time, the princely states in pre-independence India were still supporting thousands of craftsmen as they had for hundreds of years. Work in metal and stone, textiles, and, above all, jewelry, was exquisite. Indian jewelry, like other Indian decorative arts, leaves no surface unadorned; any part of the body that can support decoration receives it. The country’s long tradition of jewelry comes from a combination of factors: availability of gemstones, vast wealth accumulated from the trade in spices and textiles, and a large pool of skilled craftspeople. Until diamonds were discovered in Brazil in 1725, India had a world monopoly on diamonds, all mined in the old kingdom of Golconda. Rubies were imported from Burma (now Myanmar), sapphires from Sri Lanka (until a source of good sapphires was discovered in Kashmir in 1880, now completely mined out), and emeralds from Columbia. Pearls came from the Persian Gulf and Sri Lanka. Lesser gemstones were available in plentiful supply as well.

While in India, Doris Duke and her husband would have met upper-class British Colonial officers and their wives and the most Westernized and wealthy of the (male) Indian elite, those who fraternized with their British counterparts. Very few Indian women would have been comfortable in such company, so it is doubtful that Doris Duke gained much direct knowledge of Indian jewelry until later. She did develop a passion for Mogul architecture on that first trip, which eventually became the raison d’être of her house in Hawaii, Shangri La.

Because she was such a tall and striking woman, Doris Duke could wear jewelry that would have overwhelmed someone more petite. Once she did start collecting Indian jewelry, she chose spectacular pieces that she could wear with the more flamboyant clothes of the era. She also developed a taste for the somewhat more delicate and refined jewelry from Southeast Asia, primarily Thailand. The Indian and Southeast Asian ornaments in this exhibition will serve to illustrate her discerning eye for the exuberant but beautifully crafted adornments that would suit her as well as it suited their original owners.
Doris Duke purchased a necklace (illustrated in photo below) at auction at the Parke-Bernet Galleries’ sale, “Important Jewelry Collection of Madame Gunna Walba,” lot no. 80, on April 1, 1971, for $62,500. The original necklace consisted of five pendant elements, each section set with two triangular-shaped diamonds. At that sale, she also purchased lot no. 81, a diamond pendant clip, and lot no. 82, diamond pendant earrings. These two pieces were probably added to the necklace to create the chandelier-style pendant hanging from the center diamond.
81. Champa-Kali ruby and diamond cluster bracelet
India
Late 17th and early 18th century
Rubies, diamonds, gold; reverse with polychrome enamel
W: 4 ½ inches
L: 9 inches
This bracelet was probably part of a set with a coordinating necklace with similar ruby-set floral units from which pendant pearl elements are suspended. Doris Duke purchased this bracelet at the Parke-Bernet Galleries’ sale, “Important Jewelry Collection of Madame Ganna Walska,” lot no. 104, on April 1, 1971, for $3,250.
82. Pair of diamond, ruby, and enamel rigid gold bangles
Jaipur
C. 1900
Rubies and diamonds in kundan settings, enamel, gold; inside with polychrome enamel

83. Pair of ruby, diamond, and enamel rigid gold bangles
Jaipur
Early 20th century
Rubies and diamonds in kundan settings, enamel, gold; inside with polychrome enamel

84. Pair of ruby, diamond, seed pearl, and enamel rigid gold bangles
Jaipur
Late 18th or early 19th century
Rubies and diamonds in kundan settings, seed pearls, enamel, gold; inside with polychrome enamel

This type of rigid, enameled bangle, with or without gemstones, continues to be an extremely popular style in India and one that is most easily worn by Westerners as well. The practice of enameling the unseen reverse side of Jaipur-style jewelry is partly to preserve the original gold content of the bangle as well as to increase the rigidity of the bangle.
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85. Pair of diamond and enamel armlets
Jaipur
19th century
Diamonds, gold, silk and metal-thread cord; reverse with polychrome enamel
L: 7 inches
Variations of flexible armlets, called bazuband, appear in Indian folk jewelry and have been extensively copied by Western jewelry designers. A diamond and gold version was made by René Boivin in 1950.
86. Enameled and inset gold necklace
Jaipur
Early 20th century
Seed pearls, rubies, diamonds, red glass beads, silk and metal-thread cord; reverse with polychrome enamel

87. Ruby, diamond, and gold necklace
India
Late 19th or early 20th century
Cabochon rubies, diamonds, gold, silk cord; reverse with polychrome enamel
East Meets West:

88. Diamond, pearl, and sapphire gold necklace
Jaipur
19th century
Diamonds, sapphire beads, pearls, seed pearl, blue glass beads, enamel, gold, silk cord; reverse with polychrome enamel
Diamond, gem-set, and pearl gold *arya* necklace

Bikaner

19th century

Diamonds in *kundan* settings, sapphires, emeralds, rubies, seed pearls, gold, silk cord; reverse with polychrome enamel

*Arya* necklaces, extremely complex examples of the goldsmith’s art, are often worn attached to the neck by multiple strings of glass seed beads and silk tassels. Doris Duke purchased this necklace at the Parke-Bernet Galleries’ sale “The Important Jewelry Collection of Madame Ganna Walska,” lot no. 102 on April 1, 1971, for $2,600.
Carved emerald and diamond gold pendant
India
18th century, setting early 19th century
W: 2 3/4 inches
Carved emerald in hexagonal (shashpaha) form, emerald beads, diamonds in kundan setting, pearls, gold; reverse with polychrome enamel
The hexagonal form became a standard shape for Mogul emeralds because the actual crystal is shaped in that way. Beginning in the sixteenth century, lapidaries became skilled at engraving floral designs in low relief on these special stones.
91. Pair of seed pearl and glass bead gold ear ornaments
India
19th or 20th century
Seed pearls, glass beads, diamonds, enamel, gold, cord
H: 6 3/4 inches
These long ear ornaments are still an indispensable element in Indian bridal finery and are also used in dance costumes. They are worn firmly fastened to the hair or to other jewelry for security as well as to reduce the weight on the ear.

92. White sapphire, ruby, seed pearl, and gold bale jhabbedar ear ornaments
Delhi
19th century
White sapphires, rubies, seed pearls, emerald beads, enamel, gold, cord
H: 9 1/2 inches
An ornamental chain with a hook for attachment to the hair supports the bale jhabbedar earrings. This design dates to the Mogul period.
93. Gem-set and enamel gold armlet
Jaipur
20th century
Colored gemstones and rubies in kundan settings, gold; reverse with polychrome enamel
L: 7 inches
The stones on this armlet are set in the classical Hindu navaratna (nine gemstones) arrangement, a powerful amulet symbolizing the power of the sun and all the planets in relation to the universe. It was believed that such an armlet would allow the wearer to “manipulate celestial forces for personal benefit.”

94. Diamond, gem-set, and enamel gold flexible bracelet
Jaipur
Late 19th century
Diamonds, foil-backed corundums, gold; reverse with polychrome enamel
L: 7 inches
95. Pair of gem-set gold hand ornaments (hathphul) with finger rings (panchangala)
Jaipur
19th century
Emeralds, diamonds, rubies, gold, silver, cord
L: 5 ¼ inches
The hand ornament or hathphul is a traditional wedding jewel based on a lotus flower. It is worn on the back of the hand, secured by a bracelet and four finger rings and is hinged at many points for flexibility.
96. **Pair of diamond and enamel gold “lotus” bracelets**  
Probably Hyderabad  
Late 18th century  
Diamonds, gold, cord; reverse with polychrome enamel  
Length of one: 6 ¼ inches

97. **Pair of beryl, enamel, and gold “guard” bangles**  
Rajasthan  
Late 19th century  
Enamel, beryl, gold  
In northwestern India (Rajasthan and Gujerat), these large bangles are worn in pairs on each arm, above and below a set of smaller bangles or bracelets.
98. *Pair of seed pearl bracelets*

India  
Late 19th century  
Seed pearls, diamonds, enamel, metal-thread cord  
L: 6 inches  
The effect of *gajre*, granulated silver or gold balls, is emulated here with seed pearls. The oval or half-spherical form covered with real or imitation granulation is often used in Indian jewelry.

99. *White sapphire and enamel gold belt*

Jaipur  
Late 19th century  
White sapphires, seed pearls, gold; reverse with polychrome enamel
East Meets West:

100. Ruby pendant necklace
Madras, Tamil Nadu
Late 19th or early 20th century
Rubies, diamonds, emeralds, gold, cord
Two stylized peacocks facing a center rosette form the upper part of two pendants. The rubies come from Myanmar (Burma), which has been known as a source of rubies to Europeans since the late-fifteenth century.

101. Diamond hair ornament (part of a jadanagam, braid ornament)
Tamil Nadu
Late 19th century
Diamonds, emeralds, rubies
W: 2 ½ inches
L: 3 inches
This is the main part of a hair ornament traditionally worn by south Indian Hindu brides or by Bharata-natyam dancers. The missing upper part, fastened to the back of the head, would represent the sun, the new moon, and a fragrant flower (thazambhu). This section represents the nagaloga (literally, snake-king) and would be fastened at the nape of the neck. Attached to the bottom of this ornament would be a long, jeweled piece which would entirely cover a hair braid and end in three large silk tassels.
102. Diamond necklace
Delhi
Late 19th century
Diamonds, pearl, ruby glass beads, gold; reverse with enamel

103. Pair of diamond pendants
India
Late 18th or early 19th century
Diamonds, gold, enamel
104. Pair of diamond gold chain-link anklets (*jarau ka paizeb*)
Northern India
Late 18th century
Diamonds in *kundan* settings, enamel, gold; reverse in polychrome enamel
Feet are as visible as hands in Indian traditional dress, and jewelry in the form of anklets and toe-rings is always worn. The foot is given additional decoration with *mehndi* (henna) designs.

105. Diamond gold buckle
Southeast Asia
Diamonds, gold
W: 3 inches
H: 2 1/4 inches

106. Diamond gold buckle
Southeast Asia
Diamonds, gold
W: 4 inches
H: 3 3/4 inches
This buckle with its refined, delicate goldwork and small diamonds is very different in character to the kind of work in such pieces as the gold belt from Jaipur in Figure 99.
107. **Enameled and gold cigarette holder**
Jaipur
20th century
Enamel, gold
L: 2 ¼ inches
This cigarette holder is a charming novelty item, one that was probably made for the Western market.

108. **Silver gilt and synthetic ruby armlet**
Thai
Synthetic rubies, silver gilt
L: 10 ½ inches
East Meets West:

109. Silver gilt and synthetic ruby fringe necklace
Southeast Asia
20th century
Synthetic rubies, silver gilt

110. Bib necklace
India
White zircons, enameled miniatures, base metal, silk cord; reverse with polychrome enamel
This necklace of small, enameled religious paintings is decorative but also has apotropaic qualities to protect the wearer. It is a more elaborate version of the amulet necklace commonly worn by Hindus to show devotion to a particular god or goddess.