

GEMS FROM THE EAST AND WEST

The Doris Duke Jewelry Collection

FOREWORD

When the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation was launched in 1996, we knew very little about Doris Duke's life and her work. Now, seven years later, we have come to better understand the multiple dimensions of Doris Duke as a generous philanthropist, talented collector, and an independent woman with diverse interests and an adventurous spirit.

This catalog is the third book that the foundation has published about Doris Duke's collections. *Doris Duke's Shangri La*, published in 2002, examines her Islamic art collection and Honolulu home; *Doris Duke: The Southeast Asian Art Collection*, published in 2003, documents the diverse objects she collected for a Thai Village Project that she envisioned building in Hawaii but was never able to complete; and now we are pleased to offer *Gems of the East and West: The Doris Duke Jewelry Collection*, which catalogs the most personal of her collections.

Doris Duke's jewelry offers us a rare glimpse into the evolution of her tastes and interests. This catalog contrasts her increasingly refined and unconventional selection of jewels against the fashions of her time and the social conventions of the wealthy. It also demonstrates a signature trait of Doris Duke as a collector that is evident in her other collections and at her estates: she became personally involved in her acquisitions and projects, whether by redesigning outdated jewelry, helping to restore works of art, or designing marble floor panels for her home in Hawaii.

Upon a closer examination of each of her collections, we have gained a more nuanced understanding of Doris Duke, including her personal aesthetic, discerning eye, and appreciation for unusual and exotic works of art. We also have gained insight into her unique and complex vision as a philanthropist. Although she led an intensely private life, she opened the door to her life's work when she died, leaving the majority of her wealth, estates, and collections to the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation to benefit the public and to offer people an opportunity to learn about the cultures and the art that she devoted a

lifetime to exploring and acquiring. In the near future, selected pieces from Doris Duke's jewelry collection will be auctioned, as well as other personal effects that were left to the foundation. Proceeds from the auction will support the work of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation.

We hope that this publication will help illuminate the distinctive style, aesthetic standards, and artistic vision that Doris Duke applied to so many aspects of her life. It has been a labor of love for several staff members at the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation—including Patrick Lerch, Olga Garay, Elizabeth Steinberg, and Kim Bedetti. The foundation's trustees have also been engaged in this project, especially Marion Oates Charles, who recognized from the beginning that Doris Duke's jewelry was a valuable asset not only in terms of its precious stones and stellar craftsmanship, but also because it sheds light on the life and times of a remarkable woman.

The Newport Restoration Foundation has been a key partner for us in this endeavor—particularly Pieter N. Roos and A. Bruce MacLeish, who has worked tirelessly to organize the first exhibition of Doris Duke's jewelry and played a key role in the production of this catalog. In addition, we would like to thank Ulysses Dietz, Janet Zapata, and Zette Emmons, whose work as the guest curators for the jewelry exhibition has yielded a valuable interpretive source of information about Doris Duke's jewelry, style and life.

Finally, we are especially pleased that the first exhibition of Doris Duke's jewelry will be unveiled at the J. Carter Brown Galleries at Rough Point, which was Doris Duke's home in Newport, Rhode Island. Carter Brown was appointed to the board of the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation when it was first established, and he continued to serve on our board until he died in 2002. His broad experience and expertise on innumerable subjects—especially the arts—were an invaluable resource for the foundation.

Joan E. Spero, President, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation

APRIL 2003

FOREWORD

The exhibition of Doris Duke's jewelry collection at Rough Point marks a turning point in the operation of this historic site by the Newport Restoration Foundation. The exhibition, as others that will follow it, will engage the public in new ways by highlighting tangible aspects of Doris Duke's interests throughout her life. Her jewelry obviously has not been available for public scrutiny until this time. Nor has the NRF had the occasion or the space to offer the public an intense experience with works of art of this scale surrounded by so much didactic information.

The new J. Carter Brown Galleries at Rough Point have enabled the installation of Doris Duke's jewelry in a delicate and intimate fashion. The inauguration of these galleries with this exhibition, therefore, helps to launch a new public amenity on site, and a place from which traveling exhibitions can be spawned that will offer public delight at other institutions over time. It is also anticipated that exhibitions may be brought to Rough Point that will extend the mission of the NRF in new ways. For this we owe the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation a debt of gratitude. It is through its vision and understanding that these galleries and therefore this exhibition are possible.

These galleries are dedicated by the Trustees of the Newport Restoration Foundation to J. Carter Brown in gratitude for his great support and influence on our work. He was a Trustee of both the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and of the Newport Restoration Foundation. In this service, he helped guide these related foundations during their early years. During his distinguished career in the museum world, Carter Brown was a passionate gatherer of works of art of the highest quality in exhibitions that extended knowledge and understanding of the history of culture. He wished to share the pleasure of his own curiosity with others. He also recognized the necessity of engaging people with dynamic ideas portrayed through the comparison of artifacts in beautiful settings. How much he would have appreciated this inaugural exhibition in these galleries for which his efforts had created the groundwork. I congratulate NRF

Executive Director Pieter N. Roos and the NRF staff for creating them and this exhibition.

To feature Doris Duke's jewelry as if it were one of her passionate collecting efforts is, however, to give truth to a myth. While she certainly acquired jewelry of spectacular quality during her lifetime, according to people who knew her, Miss Duke's jewelry became an "unintentional collection" based on inheritance as well as on her own personal taste. From her grandmother, Florine Holt, and her mother, Nanaline Duke, she acquired jewelry of classical restraint, to which she added items of more dramatic presence, working with designers of her own time. Built on the influence of her forebearers, her taste was expanded by her travels and contact with people whose knowledge of fine things she admired. Doris Duke's own passion for the arts of India and Southeast Asia directed her toward acquiring this collection of jewelry. While her jewelry was an amenity beautifying her life, it was but just one of the masses of wonderful objects flowing through her experience that defined her.

As opposed to her directed and discreet collections, or her theme-related houses in which she invested significant amounts of focus and time, Doris Duke's jewelry collection consisted of a more broad-based process of selection. In this respect, her jewelry can give us more of an insight about her own history and character than her other holdings. Her jewelry collection is thus testimony to several generations of response to conspicuous opportunities sifted through her hands.

The works that are included in this exhibition summarize her broad cultural interests and her passion for refinement. We are fortunate that she has left these glittering treasures together for us to appreciate. They—and Miss Duke through her legacy at Rough Point—can teach us much about collecting and about the cultures from which her objects have emanated. We must not stop remembering the larger legacies she left to support the maintenance of historic houses and the support of works of art yet to be created.

Roger Mandle, President, Rhode Island School of Design and Trustee, Newport Restoration Foundation

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We are especially thankful to our colleague, Zette Emmons, whose understanding of and experience with Indian jewelry helped complete the story of this remarkable collection. We also recognize the enthusiastic support of Mary Sue Price, Director of The Newark Museum, and Ward L. E. Mintz, Deputy Director for Programs and Collections at The Newark Museum, as this project got underway.

As we compiled background material for this project, we were generously assisted by many individuals from large and small jewelry houses, who contributed not only information about their pieces but also provided period photographs and original art work. For this, we owe special thanks to Bonnie Selfe, Cartier, Inc., New York; Pascale Milhaud and Monique Gay, Cartier S. A., Geneva; Ward Landrigan and Cyd Hamby, Verdura, Inc., New York; Stanley Silberstein, David Webb, Inc., New York; and Roshi Ameri, Seaman Schepps, New York. We also want to thank Stephen Lash, Sheri Farber, Simon Teakle, Veridiana Pontes-Ring and Daphne Lingon at Christie's, New York, for their assistance with various aspects of the collection.

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We are indebted to Ricardo Zapata for his editorial assistance toward melding the introduction into a coherent whole, and to Patty MacLeish for her unerring editorial eye in picking out problems we could no longer see. Lastly, we thank photographers Richard and Elizabeth Walker and designer Darcy Magratten whose talents truly brought the beauty of this collection to these pages.

Ulysses Dietz, The Newark Museum

A. Bruce MacLeish, Newport Restoration Foundation

Janet Zapata, Jewelry Historian

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CURATORS' PREFACE

Doris Duke was a remarkable woman. She was a tireless traveler, a prodigious builder and renovator of houses, and an insatiable collector. While her collections of Asian and Islamic art are relatively well known across the country, one of her most fascinating collections is the one that was known only to her family and friends and, even then, only in bits and pieces—her jewelry. In fact, Miss Duke did not consider it a collection at all: it was just her personal jewelry, ranging from antique heirloom pieces from her grandmother to the latest fashionable examples of the 1960s crafted by society jewelers such as David Webb, Inc. The one facet of her jewelry that Miss Duke might have thought of as a collection was the Indian jewelry, which she began to acquire on her wedding trip in 1935 and continued to add to throughout most of her life. However, as is often the case with jewelry, Miss Duke saw this collection as something without scholarly or art-historical interest. It was something that either she liked and wore or that had intimate, personal meaning from important moments in her life.

Part of Miss Duke's feeling about her jewelry would have derived from the fact that, until the past fifteen years or so, few American museums had any interest in the history of jewelry. Even fewer had done any scholarly work on the jewelry they did own, unless it came from the Renaissance or antiquity. Hence, she had no way of knowing that her wonderful collection of jewels—hundreds of objects in a myriad of styles and materials—could indeed tell a story. As we look at it today, Doris Duke's 399-piece jewelry collection not only tells the story of her life, but it also tells a story of America in the latter part of the nineteenth and most of the twentieth centuries. Far from having no art-historical interest, it offers us insights into changing taste from the 1850s to the end of the twentieth century, as well as shedding light on the complex social customs of the Indian subcontinent in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Even in the fragments of jewels—components from original pieces refashioned into more modern pieces—there is a story of ceaseless change and restless energy.

It is our privilege to provide an account of the story of Doris Duke's least known collection as an introduction to the exhibition of 110 pieces selected from it. This exhibition, which is the first and only time this diverse group of jewels will be seen together, is organized into the five following groupings: inherited pieces, jewelry from Nanaline Duke, Miss Duke's early Western jewelry, her later Western jewelry, and her Eastern jewelry. For each section, this catalog includes a brief contextual introduction followed by photographs and descriptive information, including some original design drawings, photographs, and other documentation, about each of the exhibited pieces. At the front of the catalog, two essays provide more detailed background material that will help foster an understanding of and appreciation for Doris Duke's lifetime pursuit of beauty.

Janet Zapata Ulysses Dietz Zette Emmons