

# Generations of Bejeweled Treasures

Bay Area-based Jyotsna Singh, the granddaughter of Maharaja Bhupinder Singh of Patiala, inherited her grandfather's passion for jewelry. As a princely ruler of a state in North India, the maharaja was famous for his impressive collection of crown jewels, in particular, the famed Patiala Necklace, which he commissioned from Cartier in 1928. The necklace contained 2,930 diamonds, including the world's seventh-largest diamond at the time, the De Beers, as its centerpiece.

As a child, Singh was fascinated by the royal family jewels, and she would often gaze upon them and imagine fashioning her own beautiful creations from the sparkling gems. Today, that vision has become a reality as she carries forth the royal legacy with her international brand Manjusha (a word that means "treasure chest of jewels").

Inspired by the beauty of the *jadau* technique of embedding stones, Singh designs her collections with gold vermeil, pearls, and precious and semiprecious stones handcrafted in India by skilled artisans. In homage to her family's heritage of jewelry collecting, an exclusive collection of Manjusha jewelry will be available at the Legion of Honor Museum Store in honor of *East Meets West: Jewels of the Maharajas from The Al Thani Collection*. Drop by during the exhibition's opening weekend for an in-person appearance by Singh.



**Kundan & Garnet Necklace**  
\$395 \ \$355.50 members



**Kundan & Green Onyx Earrings**  
\$195 \ \$175.50 members



**Sapphire Earrings**  
\$350 \ \$315 members

**MUSEUM  
STORE  
SUNDAY**  
BE A PATRON

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de Young & Legion of Honor

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**Sunday, November 25**

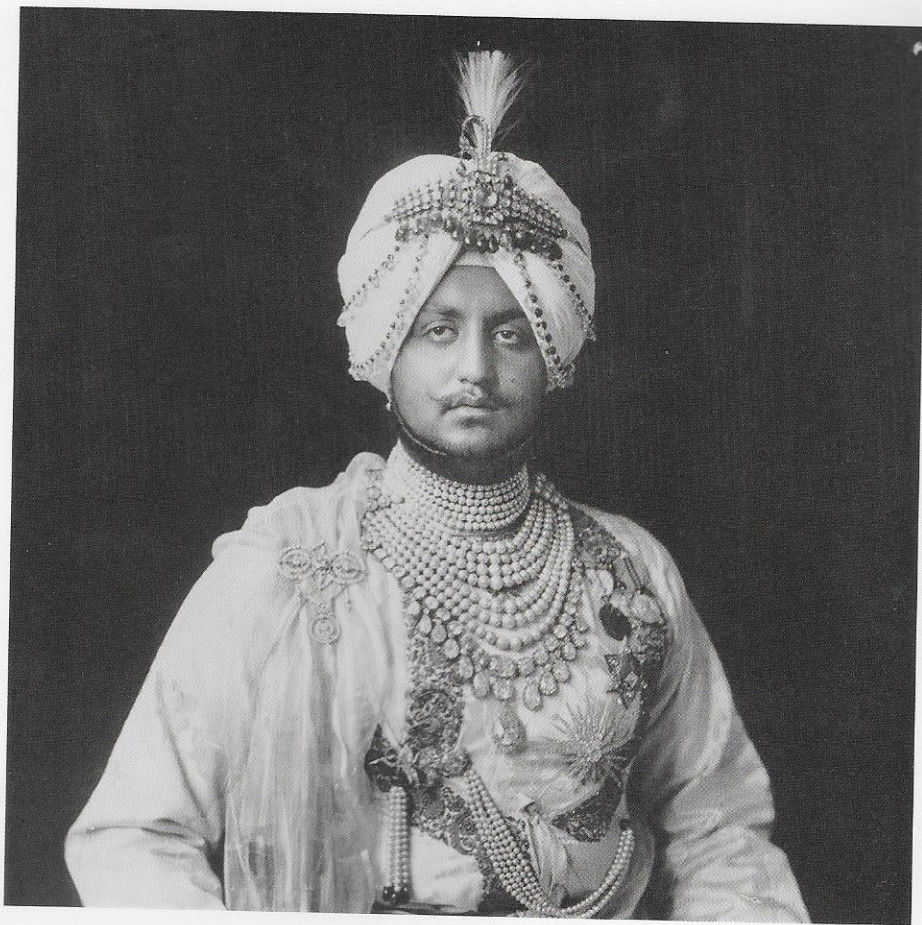
9:30 am–5 pm



## Jewelry and Gender

**Martin Chapman**

Curator in Charge, European Decorative  
Arts and Sculpture



Rulers across India and Europe used jewelry to underscore their status, but the form and function of gemstones varied greatly from East to West, especially in terms of how they relate to gender. In India, Mughal emperors and maharajas were adorned with elaborate set pieces of jewelry—turban ornaments, necklaces, bracelets, and belts—that in Europe would be donned mainly by royal and noble women. The notable exception is Louis XIV of France, who had a capacious appetite for Indian diamonds and wore them profusely on state occasions.

From the Indian perspective, though, maharajas wore magnificent jewels originally made for European women without any qualms. For instance, the Maharaja of Patiala acquired the large diamond necklace of Empress Eugénie of France, for whom Parisian jewelers created some of the most splendid suites and parures of diamonds during the Second

Empire (1852–1870). Such necklaces would never be worn by a man in the West, but for the maharaja this type of sumptuous jewelry was grist to the mill for his splendor. In addition, the maharaja had a tiara designed in the openwork, lacy design that would otherwise be worn in the West by women, but was greatly expanded in scale to fit the larger dimensions of his turban. The motif of a traditional turban ornament was included in the center, making this piece a true hybrid of Eastern and Western cultures.

The maharaja's descendant Maharajah of Patiala Sir Bhupinder Singh, who acceded to the throne in 1900, would continue to augment his family's already sizable jewelry collection in subsequent decades. In the late 1920s, he visited Paris to have new suites made. An account of his appearance at the jeweler Boucheron captures the theatrical nature of the court that revolved around the ruler: