

IN DISTINGUISHED COMPANY

In January, Jaipur-based Gyan Museum and the Dhaddha family hosted the India launch of Bernadette van Gelder's precious work – *Traditional Indian Jewellery*. Presiding over the event as guest of honour, Her Royal Highness Rajkumari Diyakumari expressed her delight, adding that it was "a proud moment for all of us in Jaipur to have this amazing work of art being launched here this evening. I would like to thank the Dhaddha family for giving me this honour, and Bernadette for choosing Jaipur for her book launch."

On the delightful occasion of unveiling a visually enchanting story of the history of India's jewellery, Arun Dhaddha, founder and director, Gyan Museum, said: "I have grown up seeing Bernadette and my father working together, and having her here is just like refreshing my memories." The book, he said, not only offered in-depth knowledge of traditional Indian jewellery, but also reflected a strong willpower, true dedication, longing passion and immense love which Bernadette has for India and its people.

In her book, an outcome of 35 years of extensive research, Bernadette van Gelder wrote: "Gyan Chand Dhaddha, who has enriched me as an individual, died prematurely, but the magic of his spirit lives on and motivates me to this day." For her illustrated archive, *Traditional Indian Jewellery* – Vol I & II (ACC Art Books, £125, 600 pg), Bernadette has dipped into a peerless collection of the most arresting traditional and vintage pieces that narrates the entire gamut of India's culture and glimmering jewellery heritage. There is so much to take in. Section 'The Golden Smile of India', primarily from the Nineteenth and Twentieth century, is dedicated to Gold and the Gods, Gold and Marriage, and urges you to linger over the history of ear and hair ornaments, necklaces, belts, bangles and bracelets. Catalogued with photographs and sumptuous antique pieces, the second volume, *Beautiful People*, takes readers on a journey through the



Gold Juda, head ornament
South India, early 19th century

Elaborate gold dome-shaped head ornament (juda) with a suspended fringe of triangle-shaped pendants in a spreading network. The whole is kundan-set with table-cut diamonds, cabochon rubies and emeralds on coloured foil with suspended pearls. This type of ladies' head ornament was designed to be worn at the back of the head.

years into the bejewelled world of nose (nath) and hand adornments (hath phool), enamelled creations, turban jewels and turban ornaments among others.

The book offers Bernadette van Gelder's glimpse into the world of Indian jewellery and is a must for connoisseurs and jewellery lovers.



Suresh and Arun Dhaddha, founders Gyan Museum, with Bernadette van Gelder and guest of honour Her Royal Highness Rajkumari Diyakumari.



Toti or tops, ear ornaments
North India, Gujarat, Kutch, 18th century

Gold guluband, arya or adyia, neck ornament
India, Rajasthan, Bikaner, 19th century

The rigid arched gold and pearl-fringed guluband, arya or adyia (neck ornament) is decorated with an openwork foliate design with a sun and crescent jewel in the centre, and flanked by two peacocks. The guluband is kundan-set in the centre with a teardrop-shaped foiled flat-cut diamond, bordered by channel-set foiled emeralds. The crescent is also channel-set with seven oblong-shaped foiled diamonds in the kundan technique. To the left and right of the centre stone are cabochon emeralds. Eleven plain gold cups to which pearls are wired, decorate the upper edge of the guluband. Suspended from the rigid upper part are thirteen triangle-shaped strands, all set with diamonds and small pearls terminating with tiny light-blue glass beads.

A pair of gold ear ornaments, toti or karnphool (flower) with a gently convex-shaped front plate, kundan-set with an intricate design of a central diamond rosette surrounded by a radiating floral arrangement of irregular-sized polki or rose-cut diamonds and foiled cabochon emeralds. Surrounding the central medallion are foiled channel or talpain-set rubies, interspersed with four-foiled table-cut diamonds, bordered by a row of pearls. The outer edges are decorated with a rim of gold beads.



Images Courtesy of Gyan Museum