

Payal Mehta's Bespoke Jewelry Pieces Are Inspired By Art

The designer's art collection includes Damien Hirst, Andy Warhol, and Raqib Shaw.

Eileen Kinsella, October 14, 2016



VIEW SLIDESHOW

artnet News recently caught up with art collector and innovative jewelry designer Payal Mehta, who divides her time between Dubai, New York, Belgium, and Italy.

As the daughter of a jewelry designer, Payal has been immersed in the jewelry business for years. Collecting art, however, is a more recent pursuit. She told artnet News how she honed her metal-working skills, where she finds inspiration, and why she thinks art collecting and jewelry design go “hand in hand”.

Her art collection includes her favorite piece, an antique Burmese Buddha, along with works by an array of modern and contemporary artists, such as [Damien Hirst](http://www.artnet.com/artists/damien-hirst/) (<http://www.artnet.com/artists/damien-hirst/>), Raqib Shaw, [Takashi Murakami](http://www.artnet.com/artists/takashi-murakami/) (<http://www.artnet.com/artists/takashi-murakami/>), [Andy Warhol](http://www.artnet.com/artists/andy-warhol/) (<http://www.artnet.com/artists/andy-warhol/>), and S.H. Raza.

During our interview, Mehta cited Richard Bach's best-selling 1970s book, *Jonathan Livingston Seagull* as a major source of inspiration. Of her “Lotus” series, she says: “It is delicate to look at, yet through its subtle form it offers a powerful statement. To make it evoke our multi-dimensional existence, I stretched, elongated and extended its shape.”

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Her "Constellation" collection is inspired by signs of the zodiac. "I also love math and physics," says Mehta, "so that goes hand in hand when you're thinking about the cosmos." Other collections, such as "Slice," take their inspiration from the Japanese art of wabi-sabi, which takes the view that beauty can be found in imperfection.



Cuff from the "Bird" series collection. Courtesy of Payal Mehta.

What was the first piece of art you ever acquired?

The first piece of art I really collected was by [Indian artist] Syed Hyder Raza in 2004. His work really resonated with me as it represents spirituality and strength.

How did you become interested in making jewelry?

About 10 years ago, while living in New York City, I noticed that jewelry was very ornate or trendy. We all have this multi-tasking lifestyle— there is no time to change between running errands, working, attending social events. Why shouldn't we be wearing beautiful stones instead of wearing nothing or wearing fake jewelry? And that's how I started designing things that women can wear with today's lifestyle.

Why do you think that art and jewelry design go "hand in hand"?

I actually studied art history first. I find myself drawn to and moved by pieces [my husband and I] have collected. I am very moved by sculpture in particular... In essence, jewelry is miniature sculpture.

How did you learn how to make the jewelry itself and source material and stones?

I had to acquire the skills. I spent three years taking metalwork courses. Stones have to be of the highest quality and sourced ethically. Each piece has to be meaningful enough to be passed from generation to generation—from a mother to a child, from a grandparent to a child. That is very important for all my pieces.

Where do you find inspiration?

Each collection has my own story. The 'Birds' was the first series. I asked myself: "What is a universal thing that people could relate to?" The notion of flying high is very peaceful to me.

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A piece from the "Lotus" Collection. Courtesy of Payal Mehta

