

Research Article

The Process of Traditional Method of Jewelry Illustrated Drawings: A Dying Perspective

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Abstract

This study describes the traditional jewelry illustration techniques used by local jewelry illustrators of Pakistan and also explores the role of local jewelry illustrators of Pakistan in jewelry market. The research emphasizes on hand-drawn jewelry illustrations focusing on intricate details such as design, materials, techniques, and gemstones, playing a vital role in visualizing pieces before they are crafted. This research further explores the inspiration, methods, and criteria used by local jewelry illustrator who illustrate jewelry without modern tools. This study will raise awareness among educators, designers, and students about the need to preserve this vanishing art form. It also highlights the historical importance of traditional method of jewelry illustration for jewelry manufacturing. The study also explains the importance of creating innovative and authentic designs of jewelry using the traditional method of jewelry drawing.

Keywords: Jewelry illustrators, Naqsha Navees, Craftsman work, Local art of Pakistan, Traditional jewelry techniques.

Introduction

Drawing, one of the oldest forms of illustration, remains a powerful medium for conveying ideas, particularly in jewelry design. An illustration can be describe as a visualization which is drawn by an artist. The main aim of any illustration is to convey the information or idea. Illustration may be a drawing, a photograph, a collage, etc. (Kaloyanov, 2024). For any design field, the process starts with a drawing. It is necessary for a jewelry designer to first depict the design idea of a jewelry piece through drawing (Wolf, 2022). In jewelry making, illustrated drawings have significance value that refers to detailed hand drawings of different jewelry pieces such as ring, earring, necklace, etc. It emphasize the design, materials, techniques, inspiration, form, gemstones and all major to minor details including measurements and sizes which are necessary for jewelry manufacturing. These illustrated drawings are used to visualize a design of jewelry pieces before its manufacturing.

To become a jewelry designer or you want to open up your own jewelry brand, drawing is very important to portray your ideas on paper. Sometimes you also have to portray a client's idea on paper to get a customized design for which drawing is also important. Therefore, these different situations explains the importance of drawing for jewelry (JD Institiute of Fashion Technology, 2021).

The designers who can draw their creative ideas on paper have more value and their designs are considered to be more authentic and original. There is a difference between fine and commercial art, same case is hand drawings carries more details yet time taking but has more value as compared to computerized image is less detailed. This is the reason they say that "learning to draw is how you learn to see" (New York Jewelry Design Institute, 2021).

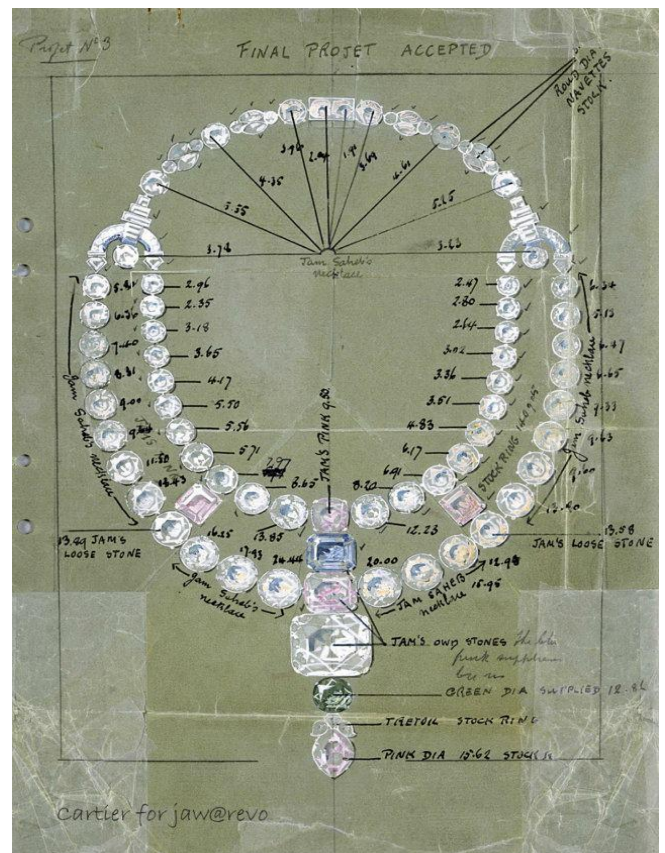


Figure 1: Drawing of the ceremonial necklace for the Maharajah of Nawanagar, 1931, London Cartier Archives. Jacques Cartier presented the Maharaja with a dazzling project. (Ahluwalia, 2013)

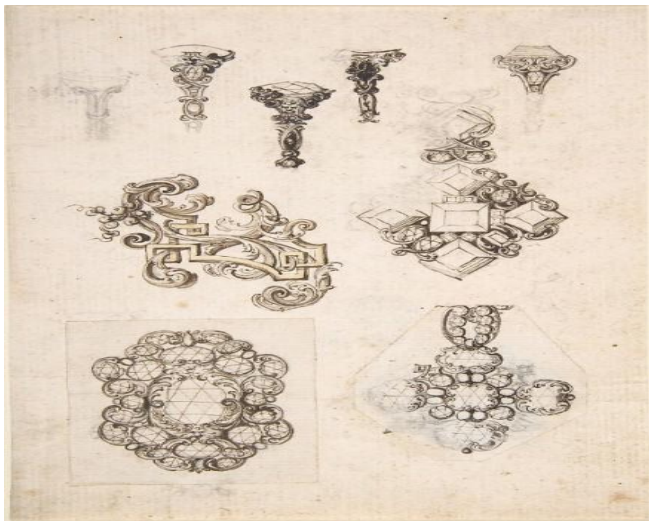


Figure 2: Sheet of Jewelry or Decorative Designs, Anonymous, Italian, 17th century (THE MET, n.d.)



Figure 2: Annotated 1920s sketch for an elaborate art deco emerald necklace (Murad, 2019)

The above three illustrations are made by illustrators through hand drawing which show the significance of hand drawing in jewelry. These historic references indicate the usage and importance of jewelry hand drawings in different countries during different time periods. This explains that drawing is an oldest medium to express jewelry ideas on paper from centuries.

“An illustrator is a person who draws pictures, especially for books” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). A jewelry illustrator is a person who draws a product on actual scale with an accuracy, so that these drawings can directly be transfer to a craftsman who manufactures the product, in local language these jewelry illustrators are known as “Naqsha Navees”. Their work is more focused towards traditional gold jewelry with some specific jewelry techniques. Naqsha Navees were the middle man who portrays clients’ ideas to the manufacturer. Their drawing was not limited to paper but they also used to draw the outlines of design on metal sheet with pointed metal tool for manufactures to get the accurate design in manufacturing. These Naqsha Navees were not educated, they were taught by the local-masters. Their learning process starts from

learning of drawing a simple circle of same sizes without using any tool, moving towards drawing of different traditional motifs including flowers and leaves known as “Pattian” in local terminology. After learning of traditional elements, they start composing these element and motifs with curved lines known as “Jharian” in local terminology to create innovative designs (Ali, 2023)



Figure 3: Types of Pattian with Jharian by Muhammad Tayyab (Local Naqsha Navees from Pakistan)

This study, will revolve around the inspiration, technique and criteria that local jewelry illustrators keeps in mind while designing and illustrating jewelry. This study also focuses on the effective measures involved by a jewelry illustrator while designing without using the assistive tools to design jewelry. This study will help to understand the perspective and criteria followed by local jewelry illustrators.

The study emphases on historical documentation of the process of traditional method of jewelry illustrated drawing by local jewelry illustrators of Pakistan because the documentary evidence is not available, which is a major gap in the area of jewelry manufacturing. It will give a deeper understanding about the traditional method of illustrating jewelry in Pakistan. The study will also explain the technique and demonstrating the effectiveness of the technique to the forthcoming professionals in jewelry design and manufacturing. It is pertinent to portray this dying technique in literature for making it part of academic evidence in the field of jewelry design.

Research Objectives

1. To highlight the importance of the traditional method of jewelry illustration by local craftsmen in Pakistan.
2. To identify factors to design jewelry through the traditional method of jewelry illustration

Method of Obtaining Data

This research is a qualitative research is based on collecting data through the interviews of two Naqsha Navees from the local jewelry market. The interviews were conducted in Urdu language and were translated into English. The pictures are also taken from Naqsha Navees’ personal work with their permissions to be used for my paper.

Process of Traditional Method of Jewelry Illustration

There are different factors which a traditional illustrator workout before starting illustrating a jewelry piece. The base of traditional method of jewelry drawing revolves around different factors such

as precision, detailing, perfection and working on actual sizes. The process of jewelry illustration starts with first deciding the jewelry article which needs to be illustrate such as earring, pendant, necklace, etc. because the key factors vary from product to product. There are different key factors for an earring and different for a necklace that are presented below.

Process of Earring

For an earring first the type such as ear-stud, dangle earring, short length or long length is decided after this size of earring in inches needs to be decided which is also related to the gold weight to be used in the jewelry piece, if there is a limitation of gold weight to be used in the piece then size of the piece will be drawn according to it. After that the shape of the article is decided for example round, oval, half-round, drop, etc. It is also workout that either to incorporate a major gemstone at the center or not to use any gemstone because the composition or shape of the design also depends upon the shape of gemstone to be used at the center of the design. If the centered gemstone shape is round then most likely the overall composition will be round or curved form. If the centered stone shape is oval then the overall composition will be ovals.

For ear-studs, the designs are minimal and size is also restricted due to its wearability. For dangle earrings there are two parts the upper part is ear stud and the lower part can be a stone or a metal piece dangling with the top part. Its sizes vary from short to long length.

The drawing process for each type starts with a center line so that the designs should be symmetrical and balanced. Then outline of shape and size is marked for reference, then drawing the shape of major gemstone at the center of the design. Next is to place different design elements around the center stones by keeping in mind the concept of flow and eye movement (Chaal in local language) in a design using the center gemstone shape as the focal point. For symmetrical designs one side is drawn and the other half is traced out by folding the paper from the center line and taking the impression by rubbing a coin. At the last the placement of small sizes of stones is done if there are any. If it is the ear-stud then the process ends here but if it is a dangle earring then the design of second piece starts by using the same process, design elements in both pieces will be same but their size and placement may differs.



Figure 4: Earring drawing by Muhammad Tayyab (Local Naqsha Navees from Pakistan)

Some of the drawings made by local jewelry illustrators are open for any jewelry technique they just draw the outlines of the elements and place the main central stone. Such designs can be manufacture through any jewelry technique for example the figure shown an earring design which can be manufactured through stamping, as well as with stone work, as well as through chasing, etc. This type of drawing is workable for any technique according to the demand of client.

Process of Pendant

The drawing and design process for a pendant is same to ear-stud because the pendants designed by traditional jewelry illustrators are paired with ear-studs or earrings. Sometimes the pendant is designed first and sometimes earrings. The elements are same in both the pieces just the size may vary and the bail is added in pendants to pass the chain.

Process of Necklace

Necklace is a big piece and it also has different types such as short and long lengths. There are two ways to design a necklace, first is to design an earring first and then design the necklace using the elements of earrings. Second is just to start the necklace and then design the earring for particular design.



Figure 5: Necklace drawing by Muhammad Tayyab (Local Naqsha Navees from Pakistan)

To start with necklace drawing first step is to draw a semi-circle for the reference which indicates the neckline, and draw a center line vertically. After this the distance of the center piece is marked in the center line from neckline. The next step is to draw the main center element of the necklace, using same elements as used in the earring designed earlier. In few designs the design of main central element is as same as designed in earring but in few designs the design of central piece is slightly different. After designing of the central piece it comes the side parts of the necklace, for side parts there are different methodologies are adopted such as by repeating the central element in small size or small to smaller sizes. Second option can be to develop two sub-elements from the central design and repeat them throughout. Usually one side of necklace is drawn and the other half is traced out by folding the paper from the center line and taking the impression by rubbing a coin.



Figure 6: Necklace drawing by Muhammad Tayyab (Local Naqsha Navees from Pakistan)

The above figure shows a necklace drawing with the repetition of same elements on right and left sides. The line at the center is a paper crease line which is used to trace the impression of half side on the other side of the paper. The repetition of one element in a design is recommended for manufacturing purpose because one piece can be handmade and its copies can be produce through casting technique which consumes less labor and reduce cost of the product.

Process of Bindia (Forehead Piece)

Bindia is a piece worn at forehead; it is a sub piece of a necklace set. The bindia design comes from either necklace or earring designs; it is always designed after designing a necklace or an earring. The pattern and flow of elements is same as used in the necklace or earring. Usually the central element is drawn for bindia comparatively in small size or sometimes in the same size.

Process of Jhoomar



Figure 7: Jhoomar drawing by Muhammad Tayyab (Local Naqsha Navees from Pakistan)

As it is shown in the above design the central main floral element is same in both the pieces and the leaves element is also same, but the flow and placement of elements is different according to shape and sizes of top and base piece.

Discussion

Traditional method of jewelry drawing is beneficial for both the client and the manufacturer. This method gives a better

understanding about the ideas and demands of client about the jewelry piece, enable a more effective way to visualize and describe design ideas to practical jewelry. The ability to present various design possibilities through detailed illustrations is particularly valuable for customized jewelry pieces, which enhances client satisfaction and engagement in the design process.

The continuation of traditional jewelry drawing practices is essential in preserving originality within the industry. Integration of Naqsha Navees from the local jewelry market into educational structures, the necessary skills to create original and innovative designs can be given to the future jewelry designers. This collaboration not only offers recognition for these skilled artisans but also ensures that their techniques and knowledge are passed down to succeeding generations of designers.

It is required to note that the future designers need not to follow the exact methodologies practiced by Naqsha Navees, they can adapt this style of drawing to illustrate their own creative expressions of jewelry. It is also notable here that their library of inspiration was limited to traditional motifs but their methodologies are useful and practical which can be incorporated to a broader range of design inspirations. This method should be continued for portraying the creative design ideas of jewelry. It is the practical and authentic way to produce creative and innovative designs.

Conclusion

Jewelry drawing plays a dynamic role in jewelry making, it is always the base of a design. It is important to do work out all the details and sizes before starting manufacturing of a jewelry piece because it helps a manufacturer to better understand the design and requirements of the designer and client. Moreover, the paper shows the importance and need of jewelry hand drawn illustrations in different time periods. There are lot of minor details while drawing a jewelry piece which needs to be focused to avoid errors during manufacturing.

The local jewelry market of Pakistan is blessed to have such talented people like Naqsha Navees, who were the backbone of our traditional jewelry who should be recognized worldwide through their originality of creative designs. Traditional method of jewelry drawing should be taught and trainings should be given in academics and Naqsha Navees should be the part of such trainings to get firsthand knowledge.

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