



## What's in a Name: Oscar Heyman

One of New York's finest jewelers, Oscar Heyman is world renowned for their top quality materials, design and craftsmanship. Their floral brooches, like the one pictured here that we recently purchased, are the design house's most iconic creations. A collection of these won gold medals at New York's World Fair in 1949.

Brothers Oscar, Nathan and Henry Heyman immigrated to the US from Eastern Europe in the early 1900's. By 1912, the brothers founded Oscar Heyman & Bros. in New York. Both Oscar and Nathan had trained in their uncle's Fabergé workshop before leaving Europe, and were skilled in working in platinum, a relatively new metal at the time. The family took pride in their work, and managed a self-contained system of manufacturing high quality jewelry, right down to making their own tools. Experts will say that any piece that comes from the Oscar Heyman's workshop will no doubt be better crafted than it needs to be. They were credited with being the first American jewelry company to master the invisible setting, which was introduced to the US by Van Cleef & Arpels in 1936.

The design house is better known to the industry than to the public due to its history as a "jeweler's jeweler", creating pieces for Cartier, Van Cleef & Arpels and Tiffany & Co. Although you may not know the name, you are certainly familiar with their most famous work: in 1969 Oscar Heyman was commissioned by Cartier to create the exquisite setting for the 69.42 carat Taylor-Burton diamond. The design was a v-shaped necklace comprised of 53 graduated pear-shaped diamonds (shown right).

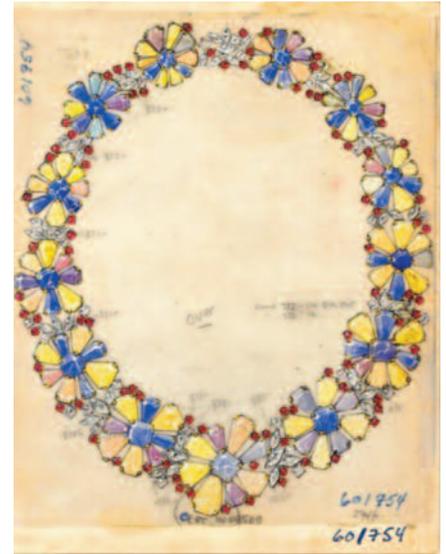
Today, Oscar Heyman produces jewelry under its own name, such as this floral spray brooch. Each flower is comprised of blue, pink and pale yellow sapphires with just a hint of diamonds. The mounting is 3 dimensional with curling leaved and unruly stems. Even the diamond swirled ribbon has a sense of movement. Iconic pieces like this one from famed jewelry houses like Oscar Heyman will always be sought after.



## Not All Sapphires are Blue

By Adam Heyman

You don't have to be a gemologist to appreciate the remarkable range of color that is unique to corundum—the natural, clear mineral that makes up the ruby and the sapphire. I imagine you're thinking that rubies are red and sapphires are blue. However, it's old fashioned to think of sapphires as solely blue, such as the iconic gem stone found in Princess Diana's engagement ring. In fact, they come in a rainbow array of extraordinary colors.



The manifestation of color derives from different impurities present in the rock, resulting in specific hues and tones, like pink, orange, purple, golden, and violet, that appear nowhere else in the world of gem stones. A true gem lover could easily identify the differences (the unique, saturated spectrum of color and a hardness that is only surpassed by diamonds) and would never confuse, say amethysts, blue topaz, or aquamarine stones with sapphire or any other corundum.

When these colors are combined in one piece of jewelry, the visual effect is breathtaking and takes on a special appeal. The 80-year-old, family-owned drawing of this fantastic necklace (pictured above), which dates back to the 1930's, is an elegant example of the stunning sapphires my father and his siblings (the founders of the nearly century-old fine jewelry firm Oscar Heyman & Bros.) would import, along with round rubies and diamonds, from Ceylon (later known as Sri Lanka).

The specific keystone shape of the sapphires is typical to the area of origin. Locals working at the mines would cut from the rough rock often with the intentions of maximizing the weight of the finished stone. Incidentally, these shapes lent themselves beautifully to the floral cluster design as shown repeatedly in this necklace.

As unique as sapphires are, they are thankfully not too hard to find. I urge you to walk into the finest jewelry store near you (anywhere on New York's 5th Ave or Madison Ave, Beverly Hill's Rodeo Dr., or Chicago's Michigan Ave) to catch a glimpse at this natural perfection.



*About Our Expert: After 44 years in the family business that was founded in 1912, Adam Heyman can truly say his passion for fine jewelry runs deep in his blood. At the helm of his Russian father and uncles' New York-based firm called Oscar Heyman & Bros., Adam still becomes elated at just the thought of sapphires, which he has been chasing around the world—Bangkok to India to Sri Lanka—for more than three decades in the name of beauty, jewelry design, and pure nostalgia.*