

I wish I had known Sheikh Nasser properly, as my interactions with him were few and mostly very short. Except for the really remarkable trip that William Robinson and I made to Kuwait in 2000 to value his Indian jewels for the British Museum exhibition.

This was one of the highlights of my 42 years at Christie's.

My passion for Indian jewels really began in 1990 when I was asked to appraise 80 jewels from the collection of the Nissam of Hyderabad, which we went on to sell very successfully in Geneva.

At that point in my career I confess to having very little knowledge or experience of the subject just an abundance of enthusiasm.

The turning point came with the trip to Kuwait and the fascinating week that William and I spent with Sheikh Nasser looking at tray after tray of his exceptional early Indian jewels.

Every day Sheikh Nasser would spend a few hours with us discussing the pieces in great depth. We were in reality receiving tutorials from arguably the foremost authority on Islamic jewels. Realising the unique privilege, I took copious notes and quickly sketched the details of 17th century jewels and objects with Sheikh Nasser's comments explaining why one piece was early 17th century and comparing with another similar item that might be 100 years later.

I still have all of these notes, which are to this day a precious resource for my understanding of this wonderful subject. I learned so much in that short week that boosted my knowledge of early 17th century Jewels to a level that few could aspire to.

The fact is, that we rarely came across early Indian jewels and to see so many of the finest examples all in one week was unique. With our teacher so freely imparting his hard earned knowledge, I will always be forever grateful to Sheikh Nasser, an exceptional expert, generously sharing his passion for the subject that I love.

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