More than two thousand years ago in Greece, skilled hands fashioned a tiny pair of earrings of flowery gold disks suspending miniature golden figures; in the Near East two thousand years before, deft fingers threaded minuscule tubes of gold leaf, crystal beads, and agate pendants onto strands of wool or flax to make simple yet striking necklaces. Today in Bloomington, modern eyes can explore more than 300 examples of these ancient adornments in the exhibit, *A Golden Legacy: Ancient Jewelry from the Burton Y. Berry Collection,* currently on view through February 27, 1996 at the Indiana University Art Museum. The traveling exhibition is returning home after a year of display at the St. Louis Art Museum in St. Louis, Missouri; the Museum of Art and Archaeology in Columbia, Missouri; and the Tampa Museum of Art in Tampa, Florida.

The jewelry in this treasure-filled exhibition, representing gold- and silversmithing traditions dating back more than 4,500 years ago, presents a variety of mythological and religious topics and expresses the rich world of ideas and images of everyday life in the ancient world of the West and Near East. From the filigree floral scrolls on necklaces and earrings, which reflect on the cycle of life, to the peacocks symbolizing eternal life on Byzantine earrings, the viewer is constantly reminded of the richness of beliefs which the ancients held. As the collector noted in one of his memoirs, the pieces "had an appeal to me because they were of the people, not of the state, nor of the king, nor of God." More than half the exhibition consists of jewelry sets comprising necklaces, earrings, bracelets, and finger rings, matched in motifs and proportioned in scale. Also included are diadems and wreaths, buckles, torques, clasps, and pins for garments, as well as funerary jewelry.

The exhibition pays tribute to the legacy of the collector, the Honorable Burton Y. Berry (1901-1985), a native son of Indiana and a political science alumnus (MA ’27) of Indiana University who lived and traveled in southeastern Europe and the Near East as a career diplomat. Among many posts with the Foreign Service, he was vice-consul in Istanbul, the U.S. representative to Romania, a delegate at the 1946 Paris Peace Conference, a special assistant of the American Mission in Greece, and deputy assistant and acting assistant secretary of state for African, Near Eastern, and South Asian affairs. From 1952-54, he served as U.S. ambassador to Iraq.

Berry’s interest in ancient jewelry was sparked by the Grand Bazaar of Istanbul. In the 1930s, he learned about the arts and culture of the area by avidly reading and visiting with scholars and experts, his collection growing as he traveled widely to other countries. He became so well known as a collector that he once consulted a noted Middle Eastern antiquary who advised him to contact Burton Berry, who was "the only one in the world who might identify it!" His remarkable collection, some 5,000 pieces, concentrated on the "minor arts" as he believed that major art pieces of bronze and marble belonged in museums. Burton’s long association with IU began in the late fifties when he heard from then IU President Herman B Wells that a new museum was being built and offered to loan (and later donate) his collection of ancient Greek coins. Over the years, the museum’s collection was augmented by other gifts from Berry of important ancient bronzes, ceramics, and jewelry. The jewelry collection is a major cultural resource of over 5,000 pieces, including almost 1,000 gemstones. This is the largest collection of jewelry to be given to a museum anywhere in this half century.

— Adriana Calinescu
Curator, Ancient Art, IU Art Museum

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**Exhibition Extended Through February 27, 1996**

The exhibition, *A Golden Legacy: Ancient Jewelry from the Burton Y. Berry Collection,* is on view at the IU Art Museum from September 8, 1995 through February 27, 1996. Museum hours: Wednesday-Thursday from 10:00 to 5:00; Friday from 10:00 to 8:00; Saturday-Sunday from noon to 5:00. The gift shop has some jewelry reproductions for sale.

An illustrated introductory booklet, *The Art of Ancient Jewelry,* by Adriana Calinescu, accompanies the exhibit; a detailed catalog, *A Golden Legacy: Ancient Jewelry from the Burton Y. Berry Collection,* by guest curator Wolf Rudolph (Fine Arts, IU Bloomington), is also available at the museum.