



## The Exhibition

Exploring humankind's ongoing fascination with the diamond, *The Nature of Diamonds* provides an in-depth examination of it as a natural substance, digging into its geologic origins, how it is mined, its cultural significance in art, literature, and ornamentation, and its numerous uses in modern science and technology. Highlights include:

### Gem Vault

The spectacular walk-in *Gem Vault* houses some of the exhibition's most dazzling objects, including the *Incomparable*, the third largest cut diamond in the world. Also featured is a corsage ornament which once belonged to Princess Mathilde, niece of Napoleon Bonaparte, comprised of over 2,600 diamonds. The magnificent Oppenheimer Diamond is also on display, weighing an incredible 254 carats.

### The Historical Galleries

*The Historical Galleries* section illuminates the fascinating cultural and historical significance of diamonds. This section presents a historical panorama of diamond legend and lore, as well as the diamond's role in adornment. Ancient and medieval jewellery, manuscripts, and artifacts demonstrate how diamonds moved from India to the west.

### The Mining Tunnel

This authentic recreation of a Kimberlite mine tunnel gives visitors a sense of the conditions miners face around the world.

### Canadian Mining Video

The video *Crystal Clear: Diamonds from Canada's North* highlights the stories of three people in the Canadian diamond industry- Charles Fipke, who discovered the Ekati mine, Eira Thomas who discovered the Diavik mine and James Gowan, CEO of De Beers Canada, which is opening the Snap Lake and Victor mines.

### Star Artifacts

While every diamond is beautiful, there are of course some that shine a little brighter. From historical pieces worn by royalty to Canadian stones mined and set in our own backyard, the impressive pieces in this one-of-a-kind show are unique and incredibly rare. Highlights include:



**The Incomparable Diamond:** It is, as its name suggests, incomparable! At 407.48 carats, it is the third largest cut diamond in the world and the largest cut yellow diamond in the world. *The Incomparable* was found in its rough state weighing 890 carats and is the largest diamond ever offered to the public for sale. Incredibly, it was discovered by a young girl playing in a pile of rubble outside her uncle's house in the Congo in the 1980s.

Loaned by Marvin Samuels and Louis Glick

**Cartier shoulder brooch:** Once owned by Sir Elton John, this 15 cm-long shoulder brooch was created by Cartier in 1928 and is composed of round old-cut diamonds and platinum.

**Diamonds in the Rough:** A stunning layered white gold mesh necklace dotted with rough diamonds and cultured keshi pearls, created by Toronto-born architect Frank Gehry for Tiffany & Company.

**Tip of the Iceberg:** This unique 2007 ring features a natural, uncut 2.78ct octahedral diamond from the Ekati mine (Northwest Territories), created by Toronto-based designer Niki Kavakonis.

**The Aurora Butterfly of Peace:** An amazing suite of 240 diamonds, *The Aurora* represents every variety of fancy coloured diamonds and a range of cut styles.

**Oppenheimer Diamond:** Weighing an incredible 254 carats, the Oppenheimer was found in Kimberley, South Africa and was a gift by Harry Winston, Inc. to the Smithsonian Institution.

**Princess Mathilde Corsage ornament:** This corsage ornament once belonged to Princess Mathilde, niece of Napoleon Bonaparte, measuring approximately 11.5 by 14.5 cm and comprised of over 2,600 diamonds.

**Milky Way necklace:** This stunning piece consists of a platinum grid intricately adorned with 2,000 diamonds. Created by Toronto-based designer Dieter Huebner.

**Question Mark necklace:** The dramatic and delicate *Question Mark* necklace (1890) was created by the famed House of Boucheron of France.

**Bandeau:** This piece was specially crafted by Cartier Paris in 1920. This style of flat, flexible bandeau was made to suit the short hairstyles of flappers in the 1920s.