

THE WORLD OF FABERGE

RUSSIAN GEMS AND JEWELS



Houston Museum of Natural Science
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum - Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow





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Presented by the

Houston Museum of Natural Science

in cooperation with the

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February 11, 1994 - July 10, 1994



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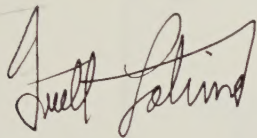
The Board of Trustees and the staff of the Houston Museum of Natural Science welcome you to *The World of Fabergé: Russian Gems and Jewels*. This exclusive exhibition marks the North American debut of more than 300 Fabergé objects, Russian gems, and gem crystals on loan from the A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum - Russian Academy of Sciences in Moscow. As a complement to this outstanding Russian collection, this exhibition also features Fabergé objects on loan from major American museums and private collections, many of these objects on public display for the first time.

The idea for this exhibition was conceived in February 1993, and we are indebted to Dr. Alexander Godovikov, Director of the Fersman Museum, for his invaluable assistance in making this exhibition a reality one year later. Also, we are grateful to Mr. Christopher Forbes who graciously agreed to join with the Fersman Museum as a major lender to the exhibition. The objects on loan from the FORBES Magazine Gallery collection and the Fersman Museum will travel from Houston to the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff. Without the participation of these lenders, an exhibition of this caliber would not have been possible.

The World of Fabergé: Russian Gems and Jewels explores the wide variety of Russian gems and decorative stones used by Fabergé and other jewelers throughout Russia, thereby ensuring that visitors will be entranced by the splendor of items created by master craftsmen from masterpieces wrought by the forces of nature.

Grateful appreciation is extended to the many supporters of this exhibition. Your generosity has ensured that countless visitors will have the opportunity to enjoy a glimpse into the world of Fabergé.

Sincerely,



Truett Latimer, President
Houston Museum of Natural Science

Olovyanishnikov Panagia, 13.8 cm in height. This gold panagia and chain was made in the traditional Russian style by the firm of P.I. Olovyanishnikov in Moscow. The gold work is accented with pink and green tourmalines, diamonds, seed pearls, and a pendant emerald. The icon, Our Lady of the Sign, is painted on a mother-of-pearl plaque. The presentation inscription, to the Prelate Serfim Chichagov, is dated December 18, 1911. A La Vieille Russie, New York.





Peter Carl Fabergé, a collector of gems and minerals, is shown here sorting a parcel of loose gemstones.

К.Ф.АБЕРЖЕ

The polished gems, gem crystals, and jeweled objects in *The World of Fabergé: Russian Gems and Jewels* are distinctly Russian, Russian in flavor, texture, and appeal. The exhibition is composed of natural crystals recovered from Russian mining districts; polished gems and gem carvings made in Russian cutting shops; and jewelry and jeweled accessories made by Russian metalsmiths, using Russian materials. All of the Russian objects, decorative stones, gems, precious metals, and enamels were created in workshops throughout historic Russia.

This exhibition provides a glimpse across three centuries of Russia's mineral heritage. The products of this heritage were interpreted by Russia's lapidary artisans and master craftsmen as they turned rough stones, gold, and silver into elegant objects. The most prominent of these jeweler-artists at the turn of the century was Peter Carl Fabergé. Many of the gemstones seen in this exhibition are from his personal collection, and most of the objects were made in his workshops in Moscow and St. Petersburg.



RUSSIA'S MINERAL HERITAGE



*Interior view of the A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum - Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow.
Photograph by Harold and Erica Van Pelt, Los Angeles.*

RUSSIA'S MINERAL HERITAGE

Although Russia's political boundaries have been drawn and redrawn over the past 300 years, they have always encompassed vast deposits of valuable minerals. Some of these deposits have been exploited for strategic and industrial purposes. Others have provided decorative stones such as **nephrite jade**, **lapis lazuli**, **malachite**, and multi-colored **agates** and **jaspers** used for decorating and furnishing the opulent buildings and palaces of the Czars.

Russia's immense deposits of **gold**, **silver**, **copper**, and **platinum** in the Ural mountains and in Siberia are well known, but Russia's historic boundaries also contained an enormous variety of precious gems: **diamonds** in Yakutia, **emeralds**, **topazes**, and **aquamarines** in the Transbaikalia region, the Ural mountains, and the Ukraine; and perhaps the most "Russian" of all gems, **alexandrites** and **demantoid garnets** from the Ural mountains.

During the last three centuries, Russia's natural wealth of gems, precious metals, and decorative stones has provided Russia's lapidary artisans, goldsmiths, and jewelers with a seemingly endless supply of raw materials with which to create their jewels and *objets d'art*. Most of the Russian lapidary artisans and jewelers who flourished in Imperial Russia gathered around the stonemaking and metalsmithing centers of St. Petersburg, Ekaterinburg, Kolyvan, and Peterhof. The objects produced by these artisans reached their peak in both quantity and quality during the last half of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th.

THE A. E. FERSMAN MINERALOGICAL MUSEUM- RUSSIAN ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, MOSCOW

The major lender to this exhibition, contributing more than 200 objects, is the A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum in Moscow. The Fersman Museum owns one of the greatest mineralogical collections in the world and can trace its roots back to the beginning of the 18th century. Over the last 250 years, the collection has grown to number more than 150,000 items, including polished gemstones, mineral specimens, and objects made from Russian decorative stones. Although the collection contains pieces from all over the world, its strength lies in the documentation of the wide variety of minerals found in Russia and the surrounding regions.

The importance of documenting the immense mineral wealth of Russia was recognized in the early 1700's, and by 1716 the Museum of Mineralogy was established in St. Petersburg. In 1718 the King of Sweden gave Czar Peter I a magnificent example of wire silver (page 9) from the royal silver mines at Kongsberg, Norway, to add to this collection. Soon after, on the order of Czar Peter I, an extensive collection of minerals was acquired that formed the basis of the mineral collection of the Kunstkammer Museum in St. Petersburg. This collection came under the control of the newly formed Russian Academy of Sciences in 1725.

Increased mining activity helped the collection to grow as mining companies began sending samples to the

museum from new discoveries in Siberia and from the active mining regions of Altai, Transbaikalia, and the Urals. By 1745 the collection had grown to include more than 3,000 gems, minerals, and rocks. On December 5, 1747, a great fire destroyed virtually the entire collection. Only the most valuable pieces were saved, including the wire silver from Kongsberg. After the fire, a governmental decree was issued which provided that mineral specimens be collected from all known mineral deposits and sent to the museum. At this time, the museum also made purchases from several private collections.

By the mid-1780's the collection had returned to prominence, numbering more than 9,000 specimens. During the 1800's several major collections were purchased, but toward the end of the century, the museum began to emphasize paleontology over mineralogy. During the first decade of the 20th century, however, mineralogy once again moved to the forefront, and in 1912 the Russian Academy of Sciences purchased the mineral collection of V.P. Kotchubey in Vienna for 160,000 rubles, almost \$50,000.

THE FERSMAN ERA

In 1919 Alexander E. Fersman was appointed Director of the Museum of Mineralogy. Under his leadership museum activities were directed toward researching the country's economic mineral deposits and developing laboratory methods using the latest developments in geochemistry. In 1954 the museum was named after Fersman in recognition of his great achievements in mineralogy and geochemistry.

During Fersman's tenure, the museum received one of its most important acquisitions. In 1925 Agathon Fabergé was persuaded to donate the personal gem collection of Peter Carl Fabergé to the museum. The collection consisted of more than two hundred polished gemstones, including emeralds, rubies, sapphires, aquamarines, and alexandrites; a few mineral specimens; and some gem rough.

The museum also received some of Fabergé's original design catalogues, wax seal impressions, and hardstone stamps for making the wax seals. These were produced in Fabergé's seal engraving workshops in St. Petersburg and are on display in the exhibition. Interior photographs of Fabergé's seal engraving workshops, goldsmithing workshops, enameling kilns, and stone-setting shops are also preserved in the Fersman Museum's archives. Some of these images were reproduced for the exhibition and for this catalogue.

The Russian Academy of Sciences, which included the Museum of Mineralogy, was moved from St. Petersburg to Moscow in 1934. The relocation took three years. The museum reopened in 1937 in Moscow where it remains today, under the direction of Dr. Alexander Godovikov. Currently, the staff of the Fersman Museum is involved in a wide variety of scientific research, including the development of a new system of mineral classification and the description of new mineral species. The Fersman Museum is open to the public, and members of the museum staff are available for consultation with students, collectors, visiting curators, and scientists.



Peter the Great Kongsberg Silver, 21 cm in length.

Found in the royal silver mines at Kongsberg, Norway, and presented by the King of Sweden to Czar Peter I in 1718, this natural, crystallized "rope" of silver is among the oldest specimens in the collections of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.

FABERGÉ AND HIS RUSSIAN CONTEMPORARIES

"When you touch and hold a Fabergé object, you are in contact with something not only from the era of the Czars, but of an ancestry far more ancient, for it is typical of all the Imperial courts there have ever been."

Satcheverell Sitwell, 1946

Gems, jewels, and *objets d'art* produced by Russian jewelers and goldsmiths at the turn of the century are widely regarded as some of the most beautiful objects ever produced. It was during this era that Peter Carl Fabergé distinguished himself as the leading jeweler-artist of his day, not only in Russia, but in all of Europe.

After the ascension of Czar Peter the Great to the throne in 1689, the art of the goldsmith and the art of the silver-smith played important parts in establishing the trappings of both the Imperial Russian Court and the Russian Orthodox Church. Beginning in the middle of the 18th century and continuing into the early days of 1917, the patronage of the Czars and the Church allowed Russian goldsmiths and jewelers to perfect their craft. Their rise to preeminence was assisted by the development of new technologies and new sources of material, combined with a centuries-old sense of style and design. It is interesting to note that this sense of design appeared in various guises, for while objects produced in the St. Petersburg workshops were strongly influenced by Western European styling, those produced in Moscow

retained a distinctly Russo-Byzantine quality.

Dozens of firms flourished in and around St. Petersburg and Moscow during these years. Most of these firms produced a wide range of products with one or two areas of specialization. Some, including the firm of P.I. Olovyanishnikov (founded before 1766), specialized in church ware and ornamental icons using enamel, gold, and silver. The firm of I.P. Khlebnikov (founded in 1867) specialized in silver plate, cloisonné enameling, and silver tableware, while the firm of Karl Hahn in St. Petersburg excelled in enamel work, combining a broad range of colors with flawless design and execution. Hahn's work is represented in the exhibition by one of his Imperial Easter Eggs (page 55).

One firm, however, chose to excel at every facet of the jeweler's craft rather than specialize: the firm of Peter Carl Fabergé. Fabergé is best known for the magnificent Imperial Easter Eggs commissioned by Czars Alexander III and Nicholas II. However, the Fabergé firm also produced a limitless variety of fine jewelry, personal accessories, and luxurious household objects. Fabergé's hardstone animals, figurines, and cut flowers mounted in rock crystal vases are objects of fantasy which delight the viewer.

PETER CARL FABERGÉ AND THE FABERGÉ FIRM

"If you compare my *objets d'art* with those of Tiffany, Boucheron, and Cartier, you will certainly notice that their prices are higher than mine. Expensive articles are of little interest to me if the price is dictated only by the number of diamonds or pearls that are used."

Peter Carl Fabergé, 1914

The above quotation may explain why Fabergé always emphasized form and function over gawdy displays of precious gems and gold when designing his objects. In fact, Fabergé considered jewelers who attempted to increase the value of their objects simply by using more gems as "mere merchants," Tiffany, Boucheron, and Cartier among them.

In contrast to these "merchants," Peter Carl Fabergé regarded himself as an artist whose medium happened to be decorative stones, enamels, and precious metals, adding precious gems to his palette only when the design called for them. For Fabergé, the value of an object was determined by the creativity of the design and by the flawless execution of that design by highly skilled craftsmen. For this reason, Fabergé often used common materials in extraordinary ways to produce objects of unparalleled elegance.



An interior view of Fabergé's goldsmithing workshop in St. Petersburg, circa 1903.

PETER CARL FABERGÉ: TRADITION AND INNOVATION

Peter Carl Fabergé was born in 1846 in St. Petersburg where his father, Gustav, had opened a jewelry business four years earlier. As a young man, Carl was trained in classical goldsmithing techniques as an apprentice to the jeweler Friedman in Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Later, he studied in Dresden where he was inspired by the 16th- and 17th-century treasures on display in the fabled Green Vaults. His knowledge of the centuries-old German lapidary centers in Dresden and Idar-Oberstein, near Frankfurt, would later serve his firm well.

After finishing his studies in Dresden, he traveled to Paris, London, and Florence, familiarizing himself with European art and learning the styles and techniques of Europe's leading goldsmiths and jewelers. In 1870 Carl

Fabergé returned to St. Petersburg and took over the family business where he continued to produce jewelry in the tradition of the firm.

Within a few years, the Fabergé firm began designing and producing a wide variety of objects, including cigarette cases, ashtrays, boxes, dishes, clocks, vases, desk sets, paper knives, scent bottles, and tableware. For inspiration he drew upon European styles, allowing rococo, neoclassical, and Louis XVI designs to influence his creations. However, Fabergé's influences were not limited to Western Europe; he also embraced traditional Russian motifs for much of his silver work and Japanese styling for some of his hardstone animal carvings. Fabergé's eclectic designs ensured that his objects were both classic and modern, traditional and original, and often ahead of their time.



Fabergé's system of workshops and workmasters encouraged craftsmen to collaborate on the design and production of many of the pieces created by the Fabergé firm.



Fabergé Engraved Rock Crystal Seals, 8 cm in length.

Fabergé produced seals bearing personal insignias for members of the Imperial Court and other prominent families, keeping a catalogue of the various insignia designs and to whom they belonged. A separate catalogue of sample wax impressions was also maintained by Fabergé. These catalogues are included in the exhibition.

A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ACCLAIM

Peter Carl Fabergé first garnered national acclaim with his entry into the Pan-Russian Exhibition of 1882 where he was awarded a gold medal for his reproductions of the Scythian Treasure which had only recently been discovered in the Crimea (page 34). It was this achievement that brought him to the attention of Czar Alexander III. In 1884 the Czar appointed Fabergé "Jeweler to the Imperial Court" and commissioned the first Imperial Easter Egg, to be presented to Empress Maria Feodorovna the following Easter.

International recognition began with a gold medal at the Nuremberg Fair in 1885, and in 1887 Fabergé won top honors at the Nordic Exposition in Stockholm. As a result, he was appointed "Jeweler to the Courts" of the Swedish and Norwegian royal families. At the Paris Exposition of 1900 Fabergé displayed some of his Imperial Easter Eggs which were so well received that he was elected into the French Légion d'honneur. In 1903, in an effort to better serve his growing list of European customers, Fabergé opened a shop in London which was quite successful until it closed following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917.

PETER CARL FABERGÉ: HIS WORKSHOPS AND WORKMASTERS

In an effort to keep up with the rising demand for his elegant objects, Fabergé established a system of workshops and workmasters in St. Petersburg. Each workshop was run by a workmaster, and the workmasters in turn reported to Fabergé's head workmaster.

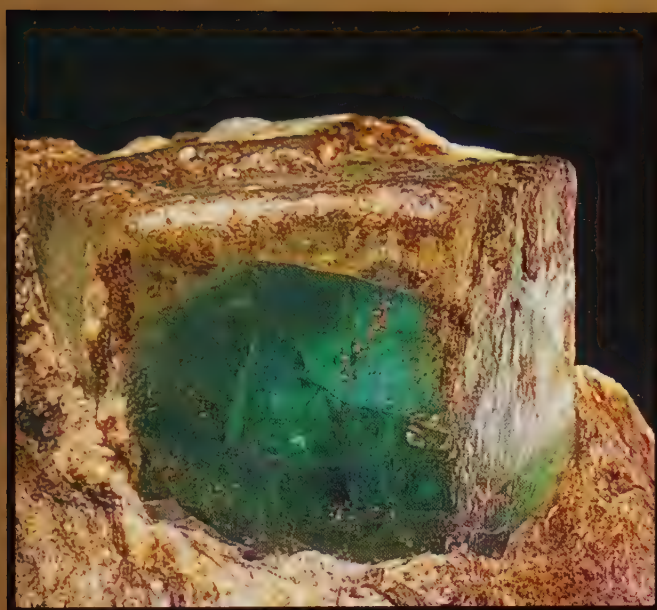
From 1870 to 1886 Erik Kollin, a native of Finland, was the head workmaster of the Fabergé firm. He was mainly responsible for the production of gold jewelry, most notably the reproductions of the Scythian Treasure (page 34). Beginning in 1886 and until his death in 1903, Michael Evamplievich Perchin was Fabergé's head workmaster and as such was responsible for the production of Imperial commissions, including some of the early Imperial Easter Eggs. Perchin was succeeded by his assistant Henrik Wigstrom, another Finn. In fact, of the more than twenty workmasters who ran the various workshops which comprised the Fabergé firm, less than half were Russians.

At the height of the success of his firm, Fabergé employed almost 500 designers, carvers, enamellers, and goldsmiths. Having such a complement of skilled artisans allowed Fabergé to free himself from the jeweler's bench and spend most of his time as the guiding force behind the conceptual and design phases of his business. It should also be noted that Fabergé was a talented businessman who understood the value of spending some of his time personally offering his creations to his elite clientele.

In addition to producing objects in his own workshops, Fabergé also commissioned for resale hardstone carvings from the Imperial Hardstone Workshops in Peterhof and in Ekaterinburg, as well as from Idar-Oberstein, Germany. The firm of Carl Woerffel, under the direction of the hardstone carver Derbyshev, also provided carvings for Fabergé, eventually becoming part of the Fabergé firm. Fabergé and other Russian firms also commissioned, for resale in their shops, silver and enamel cloisonné objects in the traditional Russian style. One example is a cloisonné style cigarette case (page 40) produced for Fabergé by the firm of Feodor Ruckert, a Russian-born silversmith of German heritage.

However, most of the objects handled by the Fabergé firm were designed and produced in Fabergé's workshops. Fabergé's imaginative designs often required his workmasters to avail themselves of a variety of talents and techniques. A single piece might require multiple enameling techniques, exquisite and imaginative gold and silver work, and the cutting and polishing of hardstones. Such execution required the collaborative effort of numerous craftsmen, beginning with the conceptual designs and following through to the final polish. Only through this system of workshops and workmasters was Fabergé able to ensure that the objects produced by his firm met his exacting standards. It is reported that he would personally smash with a hammer those pieces which did not reflect his taste or meet his standards.

RUSSIAN GEMS AND GEM CRYSTALS



Chrysoberyl (Alexandrite), 8 cm in length
Alexandrite, the gem variety of the mineral chrysoberyl, is one of the most desirable of all Russian gemstones. The natural crystals shown here are still imbedded in the mica schist matrix where they formed. The two polished alexandrite gems weigh just under 2 carats each. Takowaja, near Ekaterinburg, Ural mountains, Russia. Fabergé collection
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



Peter Carl Fabergé collected many things, among them gems and minerals. This exhibition contains more than fifty selections from Fabergé's personal gem collection, on loan from the Fersman Museum in Moscow. Some come from around the world; others are from classic Russian localities.

Russian mines have long been a source for fine crystals of gem minerals which, when cut and polished, are transformed into fine quality gemstones. **Diamonds** and **emeralds** are among the most sought after of all gems, and Russia has produced millions of carats of each. Diamonds ranging up to several hundred carats from the Mir Pipe in Yakutia and emeralds of more than a thousand carats from the mines at Takowaja in the Ural mountains are considered mineralogical classics. The Takowaja mines have also produced some of the world's finest crystals of **alexandrite**, a variety of **chrysoberyl** named in honor of Czar Alexander III. In contrast to diamonds and emeralds, polished alexandrites rarely exceed three carats in size.

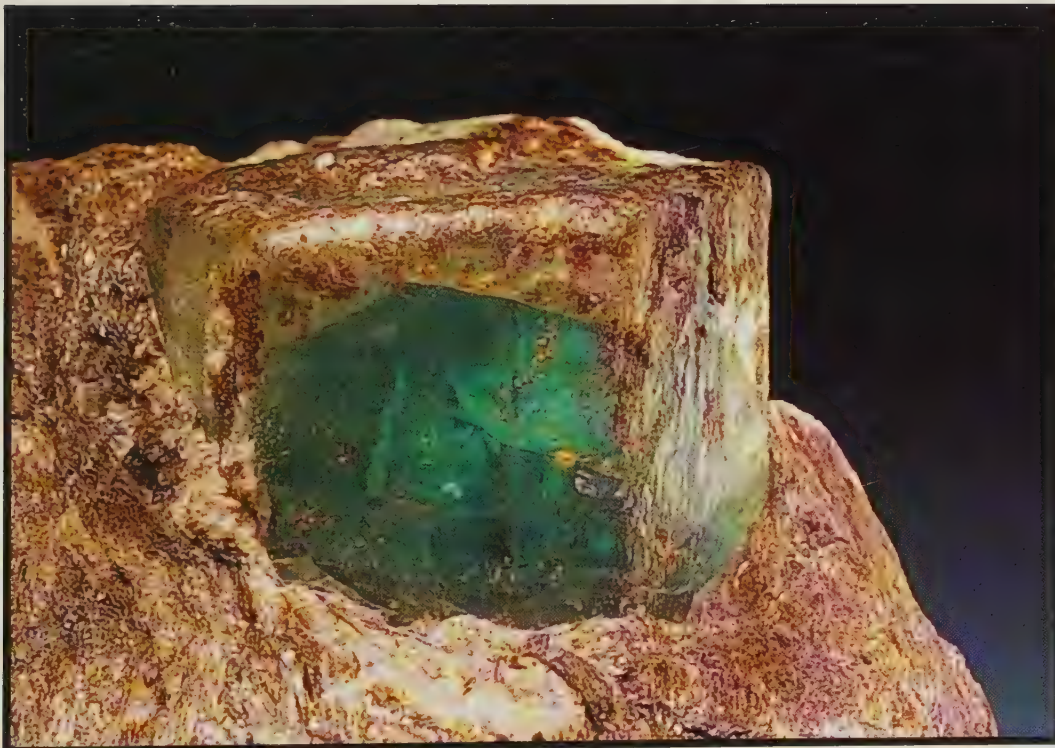
Fine quality **topazes** in a variety of colors are produced throughout Russia. Medium blue crystals are found near Mursinka in the Ural mountains, light yellowish crystals are found in the Adun-Cholon Range, and sherry colored crystals come from Siberia, the Transbaikalia region, and the Ukraine. Among the most beautiful topaz crystals are the razor sharp, glassy red crystals found near the Sanarka river in the Ural mountains (page 19).

Russia has also produced superb crystals of **tourmaline**, **aquamarine**, and **heliodor** (yellow beryl) from the Ural mountains, the Transbaikalia region, and the Ukraine. In addition to popular gems used in jewelry, Russia has produced rare and unusual gems like **scapolite**, **phenakite**, **petalite**, and others, examples of which are on display. **Demantoid** (page 20), a rare green garnet found in the Ural mountains, is a true Russian classic and is among the most desirable of all Russian gemstones. Fine demantoid garnets rarely weigh more than five carats.



*Diamond Crystal in Matrix,
3 cm across.*

The crystal measures 1 cm across and shows numerous natural, triangular growth patterns. This piece is from the Mir Pipe in Yakutia. Photograph by Harold and Erica Van Pelt, Los Angeles. Houston Museum of Natural Science collection.



*Beryl (Emerald) Crystal,
3 cm across.*

Emerald, the deep green gem variety of the mineral beryl, has been known for centuries as a popular and durable gemstone. This emerald was found in the same region that produces the alexandrites. Takowaja, near Ekaterinburg, Ural mountains, Russia. A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



Gold Crystals on Quartz, 12 cm across. Russia has produced enormous quantities of gold, usually in the form of waterworn nuggets or microscopic grains in rocks. Natural gold crystals of this size are exceedingly rare, and matrix specimens from Russia are virtually unknown to Western collectors. This is among the best of its type. Beresovsk, Ural mountains, Russia. A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



Platinum Nugget, 1,692 grams. Platinum nuggets of this size and larger are found only in Russia. In contrast, the largest platinum nugget ever found in North America weighs slightly over 30 grams. This remarkable piece was acquired from the collection of Prince V. P. Kotchubey. Beresovsk, Ural mountains, Russia. A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



Topaz Crystals, 3 cm in length.

Reddish-pink crystals of topaz are known from only a few localities in the world. The sharp, glassy crystals shown here are among the few that survived being cut into gemstones.

Sanarka river, Ural mountains, Russia.

A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



*"Imperial" Topaz, 40 to 60 carats.
Probably from near Ouro Preta, Minas Gerais, Brazil. Fabergé collection -
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.*



*Demantoid Garnet, 3 to 5 carats.
Demantoid is a gem variety of green andradite garnet and is among the most Russian of all gems.
Along with fine quality alexandrites, Russian demantoid garnets command premium prices from jewelers and
connoisseurs alike. Bobrovka river, Ural mountains, Russia.
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.*



Elbaite (Tourmaline), 7 cm in length. Though not as prolific as the mines of Brazil and California, Russian tourmaline mines have produced limited quantities of beautiful crystals and rough material suitable for cutting fine gems. The gemstone pictured here weighs almost 6 carats. Transbaikalia Region, Russia. A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



Quartz (Amethyst), 12 cm across. Amethyst crystals have provided gem rough to Russian gem cutters and jewelers for centuries. Amethyst of the finest color is often referred to as "Siberian" amethyst in reference to the beautiful gems found in that part of Russia. The crystal group, as well as the 10-carat polished stone, are from the mines at Mursinka, Ural mountains, Russia. Fabergé collection - A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.

Beryl (Heliodor), 7 cm in length.
Heliodor, the yellow variety of the gem beryl, is found mainly in Brazil and occasionally in the New England states. This perfect, six-sided crystal from the mines at Mursinka is still attached to the feldspar matrix where it originally formed. Mursinka, Ural mountains, Russia.
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



Beryl (Aquamarine), 7.5 cm in length.
This gemmy, lustrous aquamarine crystal, attached to a crystal of smoky quartz, is a superb example of a Russian mineralogical classic. Sherlova Gora, Transbaikalia Region, Russia.
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



*Beryl (Aquamarine and Heliodor), 30 to 55 carats.
Mursinka, Ural mountains, Russia. Fabergé collection -
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.*



*Topaz Crystal on Matrix, 5 cm in length.
This perfect, 5 cm long topaz crystal is perched on a matrix of quartz and muscovite
and was recovered from the mines at Mursinka, in Russia's Ural mountains.
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.*

THE WORLD OF
FABERGÉ



Much has been made of the accomplishments of Peter Carl Fabergé and the Fabergé firm, and justly so. Many of his creations are widely regarded as works of art, and throughout his portfolio are numerous, undisputed masterpieces.

But Fabergé did not exist in a vacuum. His business was built upon the skills of a wide range of talented craftsmen and artisans who inherited and expanded upon the legacy of the Russian lapidary shops first established in the early 1700's. Fabergé did not originate the lapidary and goldsmithing arts in Russia; rather he drew inspiration from these centuries-old traditions and, in turn, inspired his workmasters to raise these traditions to a new standard of creativity and perfection.

Nor did Fabergé stand alone during his era. His world included not only Western contemporaries like Tiffany, Boucheron, and Cartier, but also other Russian firms like P.I. Olovyanishnikov (page 3), Karl Hahn, I.P. Khlebnikov, P.A. Ovchinnikov, and a host of others. Some firms were established as early as the mid-18th century, while others, including Fabergé, were established almost 100 years later.

These firms competed against each other not only for customers, but also for gold medals at Russian and international competitions, each firm acutely aware of the achievements of the others. The most accomplished firms were allowed by the Czars to call themselves "Jeweler to the Imperial Court," a fitting title since the art of the metalsmith and the lapidary, upon which these firms thrived, began to flourish under Czar Peter the Great as early as 1724.

Indeed, the first workshop for cutting and polishing stones was already founded in Peterhof by 1724. Shortly there-

after, in 1726, the Imperial Hardstone Workshops were established at Ekaterinburg, in the Ural mountains, for the production of carvings and ornamental stone. Eventually, other independent workshops sprang up around Ekaterinburg. Of these, the Lagutin workshop is represented in the exhibition by an exceptional jasper plate, decorated with Russian gemstones, which was presented to Czar Nicholas II in 1891 during a trip through the Ural mountains. (page 28). By the 1750's the St. Petersburg workshops were producing gem-studded jewelry as well as exquisite, Italian style mosaics, a superb example of which is included in this exhibition (on facing page). Other lapidary workshops were established at Kolyvan in the Altai mountains.

Peter Carl Fabergé built upon the heritage of the Russian lapidaries by frequently producing objects from common, decorative stones whose only virtues were subtle colorings or attractive patterns. As a collector of gems and minerals, Fabergé was quite familiar with the wide range of decorative and semi-precious stones found in Russia's mountain ranges; jaspers, agates, lapis lazuli, malachite, rock crystal, and even obsidian were all used in a variety of combinations. In fact, the number and variety of stones used by Fabergé exceeded that of any other firm. These stones were then combined with multi-colored enamels, gold, silver, and precious gems to achieve a desired effect.

For cutting and polishing, Fabergé first relied upon the Peterhof lapidary works and the Ural-trained artisans in Carl Woerffel's St. Petersburg workshop. By the beginning of the 20th century, however, Fabergé had established his own lapidary workshop in St. Petersburg.



Venetian Style Mosaic Cabinet, 130 cm in height.

This gold-plated bronze and wooden cabinet with mosaic stone panels was made for Empress Maria Feodorovna at the Court of St. Petersburg around 1895. A similar cabinet remains on display in the Hermitage. The mosaic panels, made from serpentine, jasper, jade, lapis lazuli, opal, and marble, required the efforts of six craftsmen and took more than five years to complete.

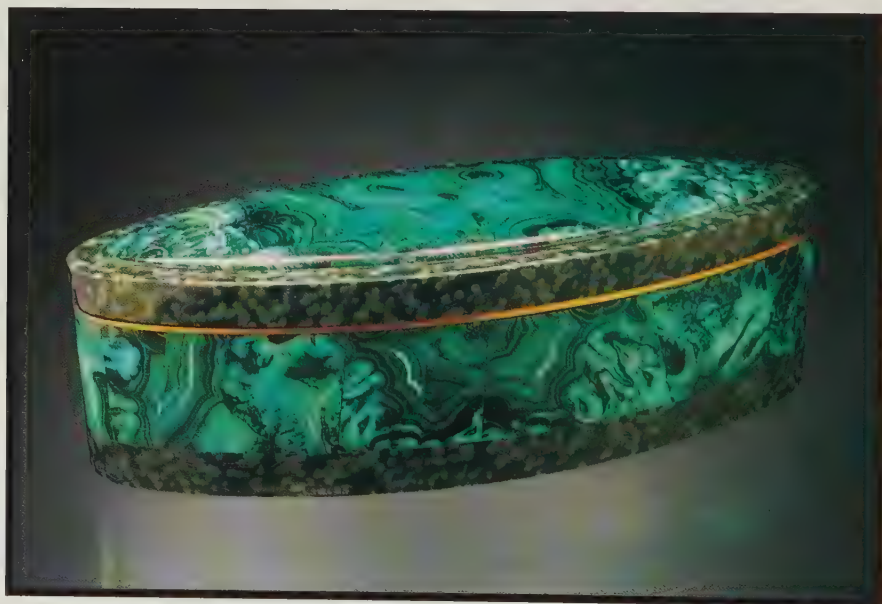
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



*Nicholas II Commemorative Plate,
31.5 cm across.*

*This jasper plate decorated with Russian
gems, including emerald, sapphire,
alexandrite, demantoid garnet, lapis
lazuli, amber, and serpentine, was made
in the Lagutin lapidary works at
Ekaterinburg, this plate was presented to
Nicholas II in 1891.*

*A. E. Fersman Mineralogical
Museum, Moscow.*



*Malachite and "Jasper" Box,
14 cm in length.*

*Since its discovery in the Ural
mountains at the beginning of the 18th
century, malachite has been Russia's
most popular decorative stone. This
box is accented with a dark gray stone
known as porphyry which was used
in the hardstone workshops around
Ekaterinburg and Peterhof.*

*A. E. Fersman Mineralogical
Museum, Moscow.*



*Fabergé Moss Agate and Silver Cup,
8 cm in height
Made for Fabergé under the supervision
of workmaster Michael Perchin, this
cup is carved out of moss agate with
a silver-gilt handle and base attached.
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical
Museum, Moscow.*



*Fabergé Banded Agate Cup,
10 cm across.
Produced in Fabergé's hardstone
workshop after the turn of the century,
this cup was carved from a single
piece of agate.
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical
Museum, Moscow.*

RUSSIAN ORNAMENTATION AND JEWELRY

Before the middle of the 19th century, fine Russian jewelry was made almost exclusively for members of the Imperial Court, ranking noblemen and their families, and officials of the Russian Orthodox Church. Some of these jewels were made for personal adornment in the form of necklaces, brooches, pendants, and pins. Others were commissioned by the Imperial Court as awards, medals, Imperial Orders (page 32), and even "Lady-in-Waiting" pins (facing page). Whether for adornment or reward, these jewels were magnificent creations featuring lavish displays of diamonds and gold.

By the middle of the 19th century, new technologies and manufacturing



*Catherine the Great "Tulip" Pins, circa 1780,
approximately 4 cm in height.*

*These flower-shaped pins were originally made as dress buttons for Catherine the Great and as such were once part of the Russian Crown Jewels. Each pin contains up to 60 diamonds.
Anonymous Loan.*

processes allowed Russian firms to greatly increase production, making jewelry and other objects more widely available. Fabergé made use of these advances in some areas of the business, but he also realized that his unique pieces of jewelry and intricate *objets d'art* required not only imaginative designs but also countless hours of meticulous work at the jeweler's bench. An eighty-carat star sapphire oriented in a diamond brooch so that each of the star's six rays are aligned with a rose cut diamond (page 35) and a necklace carved from nephrite jade and accented with diamonds, rubies, and gold bear testimony to Fabergé's imaginative and labor-intensive designs.



"Lady-in-Waiting" Pin, 7.5 cm in height.

This diamond "Lady-in-Waiting" pin forms the Cyrillic initials of Czarina Maria Alexandrovna, wife of Czar Alexander II (1855-1881), and is surmounted by the Imperial Crown.

This pin, accompanied by the blue silk moire ribbon with which it was worn, was presented by the Czarina to the daughter of the Swedish Ambassador to the Court of Alexander II.

Anonymous Loan.

Diamond Star of the Grand Class, Order of St. Catherine, 9 cm across. The Order of Saint Catherine was established by Peter the Great on November 24, 1714. This was the highest Imperial Order exclusively for ladies and was restricted to members of the Imperial Court, foreign queens, and other princesses of high rank. This piece contains more than 400 diamonds with a total weight of more than 40 carats. Anonymous Loan.



Diamond Star of the Grand Class, Order of St. Alexander Nevsky, 9 cm across. Made at the turn of the century with diamonds set in gold and silver around a red enamel center, this Order is similar to the Order of St. Catherine pictured above. A La Vieille Russie, New York.



*Gustav Fabergé Amethyst Brooch, 4.2 cm across.
This brooch was produced by Gustav Fabergé, who opened his jewelry business
in St. Petersburg in 1842. His now famous son, Peter Carl Fabergé,
took over the family firm in 1870.
The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.*



*Peter Carl Fabergé Amethyst Brooch, 4.2 cm across.
Produced by Peter Carl Fabergé in St. Petersburg around the turn of the century
and stamped "KF" in Cyrillic, this gold brooch contains a "Siberian" purple amethyst
surrounded by diamonds and is quite a departure from the
styling seen above in his father's work.
The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.*



Fabergé Scythian Style Gold Bracelet, 9 cm across.

This bracelet was produced for Fabergé under the supervision of workmaster Erik Kollin and is modeled after a bracelet which was part of the Scythian Treasure discovered in Crimea during the second half of the 19th century.

Fabergé's replicas of the Scythian Treasure won him international recognition and brought his creative abilities to the attention of Czar Alexander III.

The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.



*Fabergé Sapphire and Diamond Brooch,
4 cm across.*

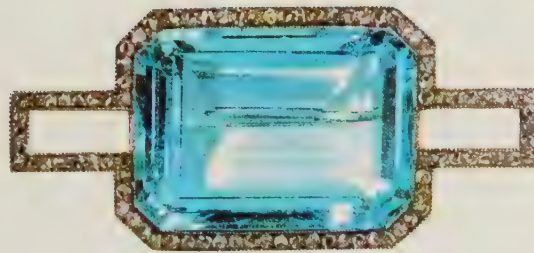
The 100-carat star sapphire in this brooch is oriented so that each of the star's rays is exactly aligned with a single diamond. The sapphire is surrounded by numerous smaller diamonds set in gold.

Anonymous Loan.

*Fabergé Aquamarine and Diamond Pin,
4 cm across.*

Weighing approximately 30 carats, this bright, medium blue aquamarine is surrounded by diamonds set in gold.

Anonymous Loan.



OBJECTS OF LUXURY



Fabergé Purpurine, Lapis Lazuli, and Nephrite Clocks, approximately 6 cm each.

In addition to routinely transforming common objects into items of luxury, Fabergé was also adept at producing fully functional objects in miniature. A La Vieille Russie, The Brooklyn Museum, and the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III at Rienzi.



One of Fabergé's many strengths was his ability to apply his imagination and creative abilities to the design of household objects and personal accessories, thereby transforming once common necessities into elegant objects of luxury.

Fabergé's cigarette cases, ashtrays, and other smoking accessories were designed using precious metals, nephrite jade, jaspers, and a wide variety of vibrantly colored enamels. Other Fabergé objects include clocks

and picture frames of all shapes and sizes made from enamel, nephrite, lapis lazuli, and quartz; cups and vases made from gold, silver, agate, and rock crystal (transparent, colorless quartz); inkwells and desk sets made from nephrite and silver; and an enormous variety of personal accessories ranging from walking cane handles to perfume bottles to opera glasses.

By emphasizing function as much as form, Fabergé often transformed the mundane into the magnificent.



Britzin Cigarette Case, 9 cm in length. Stamped "Britzin" in Cyrillic, this intense, royal blue cigarette case, trimmed with gold laurel leaves and white enamel borders, contains a hinged matchesafe hidden in one end. The clasp consists of 10 diamonds set in silver. The collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III at Rienzi.



Nicholas II Cigarette Case, 8 cm in length. This gold and enamel cigarette case features more than 70 diamonds mounted in silver and gold settings which form the Imperial Crown and the cypher of Czar Nicholas II. Four larger "mine cut" diamonds anchor the corners of the box, and a single "rose cut" diamond, mounted in gold, serves as the clasp. The collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III at Rienzi.



*Fabergé Agate Intaglio Box,
6.3 cm across.*

Set with an agate intaglio carving of the Adoration of the Magi, this circular, two-colored gold and enamel box was made for Fabergé under workmaster Michael Perchin. The white enamel stripes alternate with gold, and the intaglio is surrounded by seed pearls. A La Vieille Russie, New York.



Nephrite Jade and Gold Frame, 12.5 cm in height.

This picture frame, made from a polished slice of translucent nephrite jade and trimmed with silver and gold garlands, holds the image of King Carolus I of Romania. Markedly inconsistent with the elegant simplicity of other Fabergé nephrite picture frames, the metal work is nonetheless stamped "FABERGÉ" in Cyrillic. The collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III at Rienzi.



*Fabergé Gold and Enamel Chalice, 13 cm in height.
Stamped "FABERGÉ" in Cyrillic, this chalice features a white, satin enamel cup with a rich, green enamel stem.
The enamel is applied over an 18-carat gold base.
The collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III at Rienzi.*

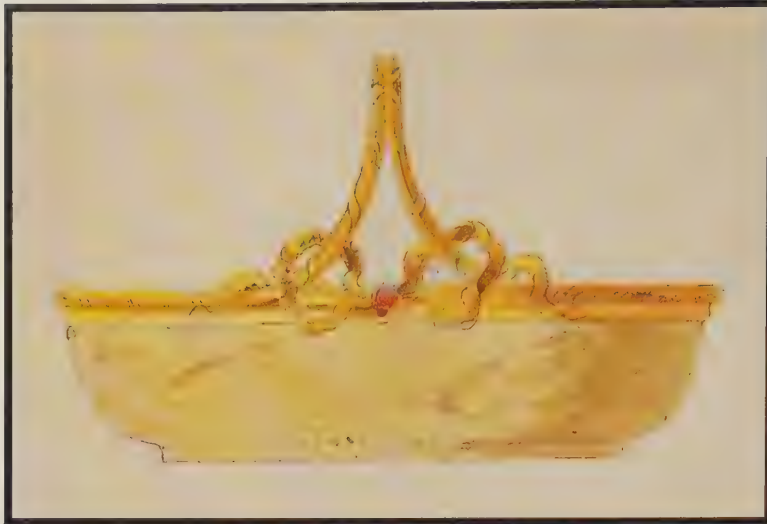
Feodor Ruckert Cigarette Case,
 9.4 cm across.
 This Fabergé cigarette case, stamped
 "K. FABERGÉ," was made in Moscow
 by workmaster Feodor Ruckert sometime
 between 1908 and 1917. During the
 second half of the 19th century, a
 resurgence of interest in Old Russian
 styles inspired silversmiths to produce
 cloisonné enamel work of this type as
 a way of paying tribute to their
 Russian heritage.
 The FORBES Magazine Collection,
 New York.



Fabergé Cross of St. George Cigarette Box, 13.4 cm in length.
 Stamped "K. Fabergé" in Cyrillic, this silver, silver gilt, and enamel box features an inset, miniature
 reproduction of the painting "Before the Advance" by the history painter Vasily Vereschagin
 (1824-1904). The hinged thumbpiece is chased with the figure of St. George slaying the dragon.
 The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.



*Fabergé Nicholas II Placard Holder, 15 cm in height.
This two-colored gold column surmounted by the Russian Imperial Eagle sits on a square
base decorated with diamond-set garlands. A miniature of Nicholas II within a diamond
cluster, surmounted by a diamond Imperial Crown, is suspended from the column.
A La Vieille Russie, New York.*



Fabergé Drawing of a Purpurine and Gold Basket, circa 1900.

*Fabergé often made color sketches of the objects he envisioned, then gave these drawings to his craftsmen. This Fabergé drawing resulted in the creation of the purpurine basket pictured below.
A La Vieille Russie, New York.*



Fabergé Purpurine and Gold Basket, 10 cm in length.

Produced by workmaster Erik Kollin, this Fabergé basket is made from purpurine glass trimmed with a two-colored gold "raffia" handle and rim. The gold crossbandings and ribbons are accented with two faceted demantoid garnets.

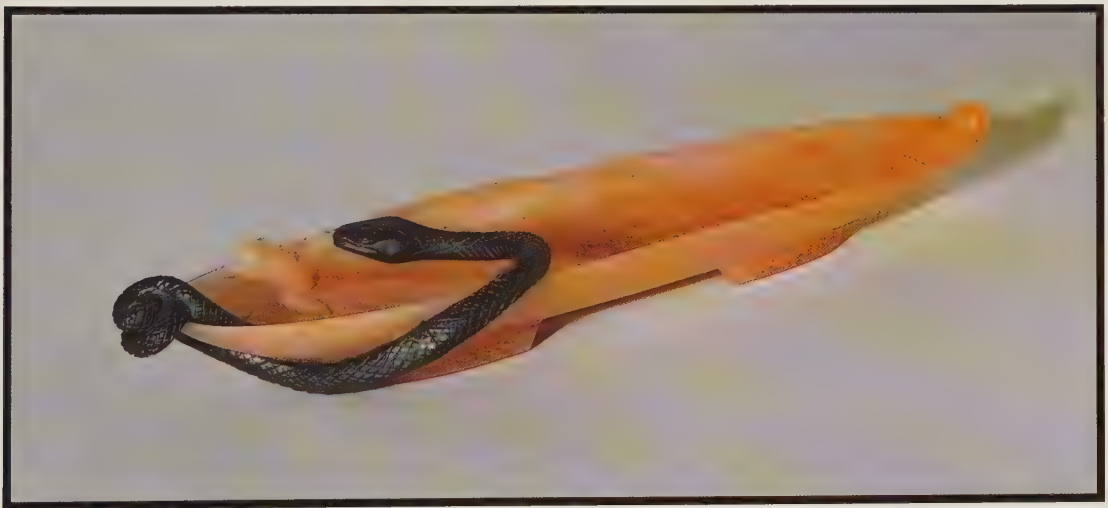
A La Vieille Russie, New York.



Fabergé Doulton Powder Pot, 14 cm across.

Made from glazed and gilded fired clay with a silver lid, this powder pot is exemplary of Fabergé's collaborations with leading international manufacturers of objets de luxe. The pottery bowl was produced by the British firm of Doulton Burslem (Staffordshire). Its delicate floral motif is complemented by the rococo style lid fashioned in silver by Fabergé's Moscow branch prior to 1899. This piece is stamped "K. FABERGÉ" in Cyrillic beneath the double-headed eagle Imperial Warrant mark.

The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.



Fabergé Eosite Lily Pad Dish, 19 cm in length.

This Fabergé dish features a black basalt snake coiled around an eosite lily pad. The snake is attacking a frog which is perched on the rim of the tray, and a snail sits on the tip of the leaf.

A La Vieille Russie, New York.



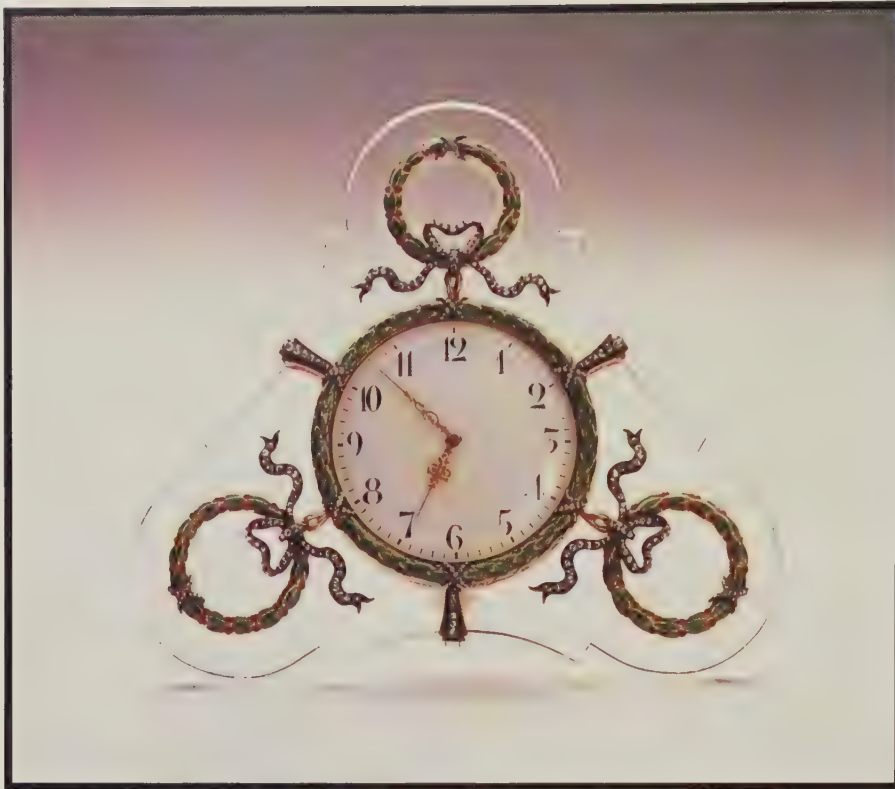
Fabergé Duke of Kent Seal and Queen Alexandra Seal, 8 cm and 6.3 cm in length, respectively. Both of these seals were made by Fabergé in St. Petersburg using nephrite jade and gold. Bearing the marks of workmaster Henrik Wigstrom, the Duke of Kent seal, made between 1908 and 1917, is engraved with the personal seal of Edward George Alexander Edmond (1902-1942), the fourth son of King George V of England. Queen Alexandra's seal, made between 1899 and 1908, is accented with mauve enamel and a ruby cabochon. The seal is stamped "KF" in Cyrillic, and the matrix is engraved with the personal insignia of Queen Alexandra of England. The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.

Fabergé Nephrite and Diamond Box, 9.8 cm in length. Produced by Fabergé in 1902 under the supervision of workmaster Michael Perchin, this handsome box was presented to Count Kinsky, the Austrian Ambassador to the Russian Court. It was crafted from a single block of nephrite jade, an expensive procedure which ensured that the grain of the cover and that of the box matched exactly. The gold hinge is carefully concealed in the design, a hallmark of Fabergé's painstaking attention to detail. Finally, the comptorial coronet and monogram of Count Kinsky are picked out with small rose cut diamonds which impart a twinkling contrast to the dense, glowing bulk of the nephrite jade. The Matilda Geddings Gray Foundation, Courtesy of New Orleans Museum of Art.





*Fabergé 25th Anniversary Clock, 16.6 cm in height.
Produced in St. Petersburg under the supervision of workmaster Henrik Wigstrom, this Fabergé clock was made using nephrite,
two-colored gold, silver gilt, pink and blue enamel, diamonds, and pearls.
The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.*



Fabergé Rock Crystal Clock, 11.7 cm across.

This Fabergé clock was made in St. Petersburg between 1899 and 1908 under the supervision of workmaster Michael Perchin. The clock face was made using diamonds, rock crystal (quartz), gold, and red, white, and green enamel. Most of Fabergé's clocks used clockworks provided by the Swiss firm of Moser & Cie. The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.

*Fabergé Art Deco Style Magnifying Glass, 15 cm in length. Produced in St. Petersburg prior to 1899, this magnifying glass was made for Fabergé under the direction of workmaster August Hollming using rock crystal, sapphires, blue enamel, and two colors of gold. The gold work is stamped "A*H," the initials of the workmaster. The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.*

Fabergé Smoky "Topaz" Vase, 20 cm in height. (facing page) Carved from a single crystal of smoky quartz, this vase was made for Fabergé under the supervision of head workmaster Michael Perchin and presented to Emma Balletta, prima ballerina of the Imperial St. Michael Ballet Theatre in St. Petersburg. This vase is widely regarded as the most elegant object Fabergé ever created. The Brooklyn Museum, Bequest of Helen B. Sanders.





OBJECTS OF FANTASY



Fabergé Egg Charms, 2.5 cm in height.

Easter was the most important festival of the Russian Orthodox Church, as a result, the giving of eggs of all shapes and sizes was popular throughout Russia. These eggs, made from purpurine, rock crystal, rhodonite, lapis lazuli, and gold, were made by Fabergé to be collected and worn as charms on a bracelet or hung from an "egg tree."

A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.

The noble and privileged classes of Imperial Russia provided Fabergé with a wealthy clientele willing to be entertained and bedazzled by his exquisite objects. While much of the enjoyment in owning a Fabergé cigarette case was derived from its actual use, the owners of Fabergé's animal carvings, flowers, or Easter Eggs had only to glance at the object to appreciate the beauty or cleverness inherent in these creations.

Among the scarcest of Fabergé's *objets d'art* are his incredibly detailed flowers. Some of these creations were "planted" in golden baskets growing out of gold filigreed soil, but more often they appeared as "cut" flowers placed in rock crystal vases polished in such a way that they appeared to be filled with

water. Flowers, a harbinger of spring and a symbol of renewal, were quite popular in Russia, and these amazingly life-like plants made from gold and semi-precious stones would almost certainly lift one's spirits during the harsh Russian winter.

Fabergé also produced hardstone animal carvings and figurines characterized by whimsical facial expressions and life-like poses. Whether reproducing a Russian soldier, a suite of farm animals fit for a queen, or simply creating a series of frolicking household pets, Fabergé used carvers who were able to bring these stones to life.



*Nephrite, Gold, and Rock Crystal Daisies, 14 cm in height.
These daisies were created with gold stems, nephrite jade leaves, and white enamel petals.
In the style of Fabergé, the rock crystal vase appears to be filled with water.
The collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III at Rienzi.*



Fabergé Nephrite and Gold Pine Tree with Flowers, 25 cm in height.
 This Fabergé, Japanese style vase is made from nephrite jade and contains a gold bonsai planting of a pine tree with flowers made from gold and enamel. A photograph of a similar piece is preserved in the archives of the Fersman Museum.
 A. E. Fersman Mineralogical Museum, Moscow.



Fabergé Turquoise and Gold "Forget-Me-Nots," 11.3 cm in height.
 These Fabergé "forget-me-nots" are made with turquoise and diamond flowers, nephrite jade leaves, and gold stems. The Japanese style vase is made from rock crystal and eosite.
 A La Vieille Russie, New York.



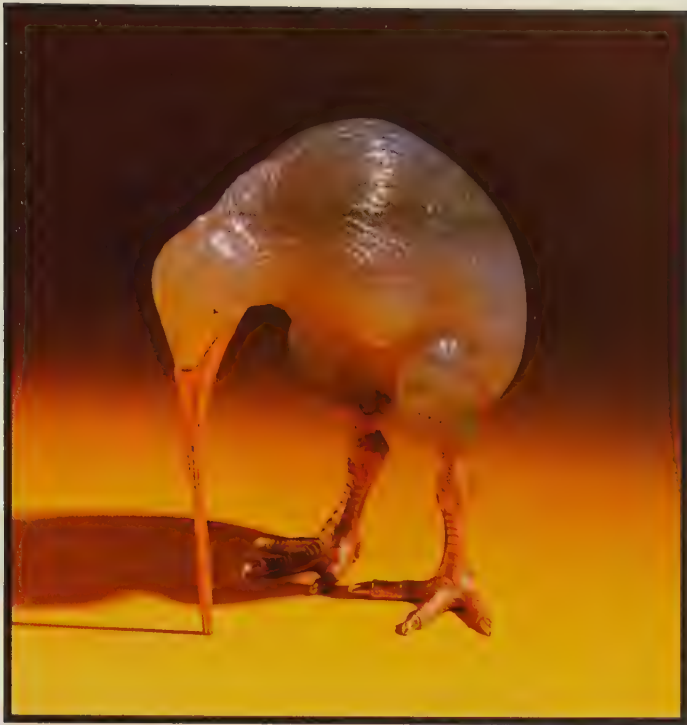
*Fabergé Gold and Enamel Poppy Flower, 25 cm in height.
A gold and enamel poppy flower with gold stems and nephrite jade leaves rests in
a rock crystal quartz vase which has been polished in such a way that the vase
appears to be filled with water.
The collection of Mr. and Mrs. Harris Masterson III at Rienzi.*



*Fabergé Agate Bulldog Box, 5 cm in height.
Made for Fabergé by workmaster Michael Perchin, this agate bulldog
head, mounted as a box, features large diamond eyes set in gold-rimmed
black enamel, rose diamond nostrils and teeth, and a gold, buckled collar.
A La Vieille Russie, New York.*



*Fabergé Agate and Gold Chick, 8 cm in height.
The body of this piece is carved from agate and mounted on gold legs. The eyes are made
from rubies. The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.*



*Fabergé Agate and Gold Kiwi,
9.5 cm in height*

*Carved from gray agate with gold legs,
ruby eyes, and a gold beak, this kiwi was
produced for Fabergé under the supervision
of workmaster Michael Perchin
A La Vieille Russie, New York*

*Fabergé Hardstone Figure of a Soldier,
15 cm in height.
Fabergé's life-like hardstone figurines
depicted a wide range of Russian society,
although peasants and members of the
military seem to be favorite themes. This
soldier is a composite carving made from
jaspers, agates, and feldspar.
A. E. Fersman Mineralogical
Museum, Moscow.*



FABERGÉ, EGGS, AND RUSSIA'S EASTER TRADITIONS

Fabergé is best known for his Imperial Easter Eggs which were first commissioned by Czar Alexander III and, after his death, by his son Czar Nicholas II. One of the last of these fabled Imperial Eggs, the Cross of St. George Egg of 1916, is on display in the exhibition (page 57). This particular egg was one of Empress Maria Feodorovna's favorites and the only one she took with her when she fled Russia.

The giving of eggs was a popular Russian tradition due, in large part, to the fact that Easter was the most important festival of the Russian Orthodox Church. The giving of eggs, in any form, was a widespread Russian tradition. In response to this popular custom, Fabergé and other Russian firms created a host of egg-shaped objects including egg charms for jewelry, egg-shaped scent holders, and egg *bonbonnières*. A magnificent gold and enamel Imperial Easter Egg made by the firm of Karl Hahn, a Fabergé contemporary, is pictured on the facing page.



*Imperial Easter Egg by Karl Hahn, 11.3 cm in height.
Karl Hahn, like Fabergé, was appointed "Jeweler to the Russian Imperial Court" by Czar Alexander III.
Hahn was a master of gold and enamel work and was one of Fabergé's chief artistic rivals.
This Imperial Easter Egg is trimmed in gold and decorated with flowers, garlands,
ribbons, and a smoking torch executed in multi-colored and layered enamel work.
A La Vieille Russie, New York.*





*Fabergé Imperial Easter Egg,
Cross of St. George, 1916,
(two views)*

10.5 cm in height

Presented by Czar Nicholas II to his mother, Empress Maria Feodorovna, this was the last of Fabergé's Imperial Easter Eggs and the only egg the Empress took with her when forced to flee Russia. Made of silver as a gesture to wartime austerity and less lavish than some of the pre-war fantasies, this egg nonetheless reflects Fabergé's unerring sense of proportion and design.

The shell is enameled an unusual matte opalescent white and underpainted with trellised garlands of pale green laurel which frame the Order of St. George crosses. A gold ribbon enameled in the Order's colors of orange and black encircles the egg. Pendant from its bows are two medallions, one the St. George Medal chased in silver with the profile of Nicholas II and the other the Grand Cross of the Order enameled in extraordinary detail with a miniature of St. George slaying the dragon

Buttons concealed in the ribbons below the medallions trigger springs which cause them to open, revealing miniatures of the Czarevich Alexis and his father, Czar Nicholas II.

The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.



*Fabergé Globe Clock Egg,
23 cm in height. (facing page)*

In striving for unique designs for his creations, Fabergé often experimented with stylizing the concept of the egg form. This egg features a rock crystal globe upon which is etched the continents interconnected by popular shipping routes. The globe is mounted on a nephrite jade base inset with a cream colored enamel clock. The geared workings of the globe enable it to turn. It is interesting to note that a Fabergé egg design drawing dated 1917 shows a similar globe resting among the clouds. The FORBES Magazine Collection, New York.



Moonstone Easter Egg, 12.5 cm in height.

This Easter Egg was made from white enamel applied over a yellow gold base. The egg was then decorated with two-colored gold, red enamel, diamonds, and seed pearls. The top half of this egg features eight moonstones surrounding a red enamel "sun" with another moonstone mounted in the center of the "sun."

The egg opens to reveal a flower basket "surprise," the petals of which are made from turquoise and white enamel. Reminiscent of the Fabergé style, the metal work bears the markings "M.P." and "FABERGÉ" in Cyrillic.
Anonymous Loan.



THE FABERGÉ LEGACY



During the last seventy years much has been made of the "Fabergé influence" when describing carvings, jewels, and jeweled objects produced by master craftsmen throughout the world. At times, however, the "Fabergé influence" has been hailed in an attempt to bolster the provenance of objects, Russian and otherwise, made after the death of Peter Carl Fabergé in 1920. Other objects, purported to be made in the "Fabergé style," are often confused with those objects which were actually made by the Fabergé firm prior to 1917. Often, such well-intended attributions create uncertainties in the minds of many.

One thing that is certain, however, is that just as Fabergé was influenced by the creations of others, he in turn influenced the work of subsequent generations of lapidary artists. This influence was felt during his lifetime, for while Fabergé produced the majority of his objects in his own workshops, he also commissioned objects from other firms in other towns and other countries.

Educated as a young man in Frankfurt am Main and in Dresden, Fabergé was well acquainted with the centuries-old lapidary firms centered in the German town of Idar-Oberstein. In later years, Fabergé turned to the craftsmen in



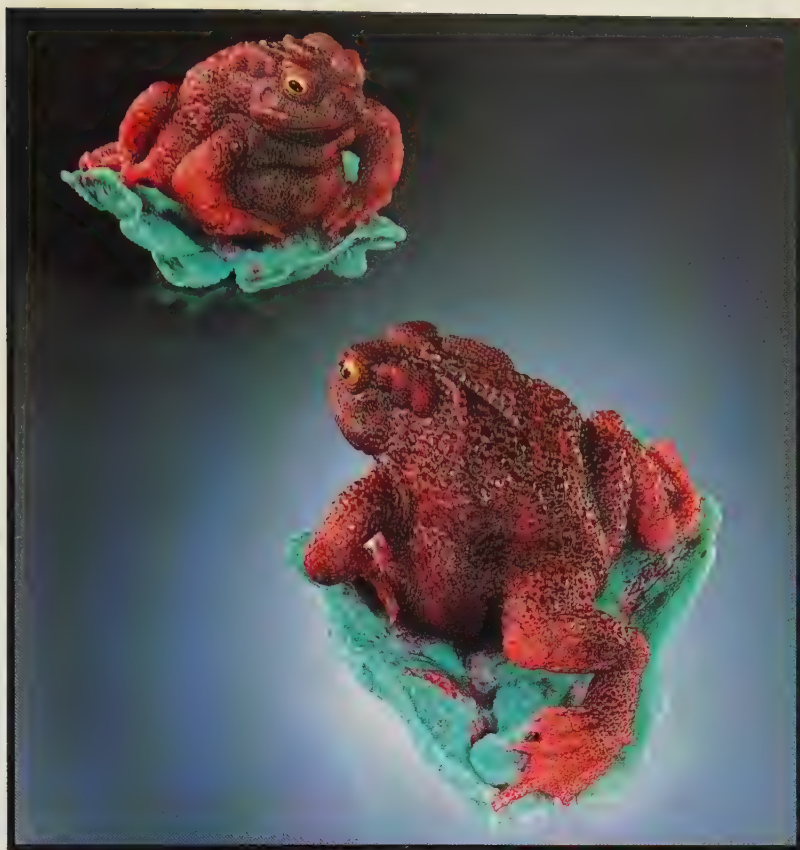
*Dreber Grossular Garnet Chameleon, 20 cm in length.
The grossular garnet chameleon and fig branch rest on a carved chromite base.
The chameleon, branch, and base were carved from a single piece of massive
green garnet with a vein of black chromite running through it.
Photograph by Harold and Erica Van Pelt, Los Angeles.
Anonymous Loan.*

Idar-Oberstein for the production of many of his hardstone animal carvings.* Some of these firms remain active today, as do the descendants of the craftsmen who produced the carvings for Fabergé.

Today, Idar-Oberstein's premier carver of hardstone animals is Gerd Dreher. It is interesting to note that Gerd's grandfather, Hermann Dreher, was carving during the time when Fabergé's commissions allowed Idar-Oberstein to prosper. Carvings by Gerd's father, Paul Dreher (1910 -1968), unwittingly changed hands under the name Fabergé long after they left Germany. While the quality of these carvings speaks for itself, they were not among those commissioned by Fabergé prior to 1917.

The carvings on these pages are by Gerd Dreher of Idar-Oberstein, Germany. His work is a continuation of the centuries-old tradition of German hardstone carving, a tradition that was recognized, utilized, and promulgated by a man named Peter Carl Fabergé.

* For a more in-depth discussion of the connection between the Fabergé firm and Idar-Oberstein, see Geza von Hapsburg's work entitled **Fabergé**. Written as the catalogue for an exhibition in Munich in 1986, it is a superb reference for Fabergé enthusiasts. Mention is made of Hermann Dreher on page 80.



Dreher Ruby Toad, 15 cm in length.

This carving was produced from a single, fist-sized ruby crystal imbedded in green zoisite. Highly detailed leaves and skin are a Dreher trademark. The rough material is found in Tanzania. Photograph by Harold and Erica Van Pelt, Los Angeles. Anonymous Loan.



Dreher Russian Jasper Toad, 8 cm in height.

This toad on a toadstool was carved from a single piece of Russian jasper found in the Ural mountains. Dreher used banded agate and 18 karat gold foil to make the eyes. Photograph by Harold and Erica Van Pelt, Los Angeles. Anonymous Loan.

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The World of Fabergé: Russian Gems and Jewels

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Bartsch, Joel A.
Curator of Gems and Minerals
Houston Museum of Natural Science

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