

VICTOR TUZLUKOV'S FABERGÉ COLLECTION

Since 2020, gem cutter Victor Tuzlukov has created faceted gemstone eggs reminiscent of, and in homage to, the work of Russian jeweller Carl Fabergé. Here, he explains the history of and motivation behind these works of art.

I see the idea for the Fabergé collection as a manifestation of Higher Will. In 2020, during the COVID-19 pandemic, when there was more time for creativity, the thought came to me to create the most faceted gemstone in the world. Of the diagrams that I came across, the one with the largest number of facets was about 1,000 — although I do not know if anyone actually made a gem according to this diagram. I decided to make a large reserve, just in case.

In a classic design — with a pavilion and a crown — the number of facets cannot be as large as in a sphere or, say, an egg. The sphere design was not that interesting to me, so I chose the egg shape, especially since it was related to my concept of the finished stone. Having started the diagram, I got carried away and did not notice



Gothic Rhapsody, an 817 ct citrine with more than 3,500 facets, replicates the stained-glass rose design of Paris' Notre Dame Cathedral. Photo by Sergey No.



The completed scapolite, now known as Hiranya Garbha ('Golden Egg' in Sanskrit), holds the Guinness World Record for 'The Most Faceted Scapolite'. The final egg has 3,600 facets and weighs 216 carats. Photo by Dmitry Stolyarevich.

that the design for one 'hemisphere' of the gemstone exceeded 1,500 facets. Then (rather intuitively, and advantageously, as it turned out later) the idea arose to increase the number of faces on each hemisphere to 1,800, resulting in 3,600 facets for the entire stone. This was three-and-a-half times more than the maximum number of facets on one stone, at least as known to me at that time.

I chose natural scapolite from Tanzania to create this masterpiece, courtesy of my friend Steve Ulatowski from New Era Gems. But the diagram was so complex that the mission seemed utterly impossible. It was decided, before using natural rough, to make a testing stone, or 'touchstone', according to the same diagram from synthetic material. I used deep-pink cubic zirconia, which, as far as I know, gives the most beautiful dispersion

effect. Work on the touchstone took two months and was completed in October 2020. The final, cut gemstone turned out to be incredible. With such a small difference in the angles between neighbouring facets, the highlights from the internal reflections, without interruption, flowed from facet to facet, like trickles of light, shimmering in different colours. It became clear that the mission was possible. The limits of the possible in gem cutting had expanded again. Interestingly, the weight of this egg turned out to be 777 carats — a remarkably interesting and mystical number, which I considered a good sign.

Then it was time to work with natural material. The scapolite egg turned out to be better in shape than the cubic zirconia (which was more like a melon). The work took a lot of effort, over the course of about two months, as of these 3,600 facets had to be carried out



The Legend of the Stars–Wanderers was created from a Brazilian amethyst. The finished egg is 225 carats, with 1,491 facets. Photo by Laszlo Kupi.

I got carried away and did not notice that the design for one ‘hemisphere’ of the gemstone exceeded 1,500 facets.

through at least three stages: cut, pre-polish and polish. In January 2021, the natural scapolite egg was completed, weighing 216 ct. It turned out to be quite small for such a number of facets.

By that time, I already had experience with the Guinness World Records team, since I had created the world's largest cut spodumene weighing 3,051 carats in May 2020 and received a world-record certificate, which for the first time in history included the name of the cutter. While the Guinness team categorically does not accept submissions of

synthetic materials, the scapolite egg was quite worthy of taking a place in the list of world records.

I first applied for ‘The World's Most Faceted Gemstone’. But the Guinness team explained that different materials have different properties, and one cannot lump together, for example, diamond and quartz in the same category. The gem varieties require different technologies, different equipment and different skill levels. I was advised to be more specific when submitting for the record, calling my

egg ‘The Most Faceted Scapolite’, which is what I did. But, as far as I know, there are no other gems in the world with so many facets.

The faceted scapolite received its own name, *Hiranya Garbha*, or ‘Golden Egg’ in Sanskrit. In Hinduism, this term denoted the cradle of the worlds, the area from which Brahma emanates before the creation of the Universe. This name was due to the golden colour and a scattering of small crystal inclusions that flashed under a ray of light, like the embryos of future stellar systems. The synthetic egg was also named; the cubic zirconia touchstone is called Hour–Drop of Eternity, because the 3,600 facets are like the 3,600 seconds in an hour. Looking at the stone, we think that this is a lot, but an hour is just an insignificant drop in the vast ocean of Eternity.

When I received the Guinness World Records certificate and looked at the date it was issued – January 2021, this year seemed connected to something... Of course! Exactly 175 years before, in 1846, the great Russian jeweller Peter Carl Fabergé was born. His most significant works are Easter eggs made from precious materials, which are true masterpieces of jewellery art. Curious, I took a closer look at the history of Fabergé and saw that he died in 1920 – and my first egg appeared exactly one hundred years later!

This was a sign favouring the continuity of tradition. On the one-hundredth anniversary of the great master's passing, the first egg of the future collection is created! In addition, this beginning was hugely impressive – Hour–Drop of Eternity won a jewellery contest held by the Gokhan of Russia in Moscow and was exhibited at the State Historical Museum on the Red Square – in the country where Fabergé lived and worked and where his amazing works were released. This fact also seemed symbolic to me.

Over time, this collection of eggs began to grow, embodying the most diverse and daring ideas. The egg that followed *Hiranya Garbha* was made of golden citrine, utilised more than 2,500 ct and weighed about 426 ct. This piece is called Eiffel Tower because the mesh of frosted edges surrounding the polished facets resembles the structure of the world-famous building



In creating the Eiffel Tower egg, Victor Tuzlukov carved more than 2,500 facets into this citrine. The final piece weighs ~426 ct. Photo by Laszlo Kupi.



Victor Tuzlukov's newest addition to the Fabergé Collection, Triumph of Life, (left) is a 650 ct citrine, with 1,951 facets cut to create the geometric symbol known as the Flower of Life (detail on right). Photos by Victor Tuzlukov.

in Paris. This work is also interesting because the meet-points of these edges are also highlighted with matted facets, giving a rounding effect. In fact, this is an illusion. Each such 'rounding' contains several flat triangular facets, so small and so closely spaced that they merge into a rounded line.

The next egg from smoky quartz, called Gothic Rhapsody, has over 3,500 facets. It reproduces the stained glass rose design of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris — when looking at the egg from above. But when viewed from the side, we see that this stained-glass window stretches out into a long pattern in the Gothic style, reminiscent of the columns and arches of the famous cathedral. The roundings of these arches was made using the same technique of trimming meeting points with small triangles, along with frosted edges.

Standing somewhat apart in this series is a carving made of dark amethyst. This egg, with 1,491 facets and weighing 225 ct, is called The Legend of the Stars–Wanderers. Its peculiarity is that for the first time, the technique of frosting not the edges between the facets, but only the ends, was used. Thus, at the meet-points of facets and due to the number of joining edges, six-pointed stars are formed, similar to those made by Carl Fabergé with enamel on gold. Even

rows of these stars cover the polished surface of the egg, forming circles reminiscent of dancing. This, to me, is a visual representation of the journey of the soul on its earthly path, which it passes from incarnation to incarnation, according to Indian legend.

My latest egg from the Fabergé collection, released in March 2024, is called Triumph of Life. I have covered



Hour-Drop of Life, the touchstone that started Victor Tuzlukov's Fabergé Collection, is a deep-pink cubic zirconia with 3,600 facets. It was previously featured in G&J under a different name (Fall 2021, pp. 8–9). Photo by Dmitry Stolyarevich.

the surface of this citrine with a horizontal pattern of frosted facets representing the Flower of Life — a symbol of sacred geometry that uses a pattern of overlapping and repeating circles of an equal radius in 2D space — with polished areas between them. Because of the pattern, the curved surface and frosted 'petals' have rounded borders. When looking at the vertical design of the egg, one sees rows of polished facets with frosted areas between them. These areas are each formed by seven small, frosted triangles, and the polished facets also look rounded. This is the first time I combined these two techniques in one stone.

Triumph of Life, which weighs 650 ct, has 1,951 facets. Each curved polished area in each Flower of Life was calculated as just one facet, although initially I cut seven facets for each, and then joined them together during the polishing stage. This makes this stone the most faceted quartz in the world, with over two times the facets of the current record holder (which has 978 facets).

Of course, this tradition will continue. I have other designs that are simply waiting to be created. I do not know yet how many will be included in this collection; as of now, it depends on my imagination and the time allotted to me. Stay tuned for new works! ■