

# Gift from the Kenneth and Sallie Snowman Collection to the V&A Museum

by Richard Edgcumbe



Chinchilla and Kangaroo

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The Victoria and Albert Museum is delighted to celebrate a most generous gift by Nicholas Snowman which, as well as work by Neuber of Dresden and a ring with a cameo of Elizabeth I, includes nine pieces by Fabergé which were in his parents' collection. They will be known to many admirers of Fabergé and all but one have been on loan to the V&A since 2003. The gift has been made under the British Government's Cultural Gifts Scheme.

Three of the animals were illustrated as formerly in the collection of Queen Alexandra by H. C. Bainbridge in *Peter Carl Fabergé* (London, 1949, pl. 86): a hissing baboon, a chinchilla, and a sturgeon. A kangaroo was at Sandringham when it was included by Kenneth Snowman in *The Art of Carl Fabergé* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1964, pl. 272). There are two further animals, a smoky quartz hare in the spirit of a netsuke, and an obsidian seal, in which skin texture and stone are perfectly matched (Géza von Habsburg, *Faberge: Hofjuwelier der Zaren*, Munich, 1986, nos. 368 and 321).

An enamelled box is set with a cameo of *Aurora* (*Fabergé 1846-1920*, exhibition at the V&A, 1977, no. R47). A cigarette case composed of woven strands of red gold, platinum and green gold was formerly in the collection of Robert Strauss (V&A, 1977, no. R17).

Most evocative of all is a rock crystal letter opener, mounted in gold and set with diamonds, which was a present from the Empress Alexandra to her former governess, 'dear Miss Jackson', at Christmas 1900 (Kenneth Snowman, *Carl Fabergé: Goldsmith to the Imperial Court of Russia*, London, 1979, p. 137).

Additional Information: [Antiques Trade Gazette](#), March 20, 2017.