

EVERYDAY
FABERGÉ

THE MCFERRIN COLLECTION



Published on the occasion of the exhibition

Everyday Fabergé

The McFerrin Collection at the Houston Museum of Natural Science

On extended loan beginning February 1, 2013

Houston Museum of Natural Science

5555 Hermann Park Drive

Houston Texas 77030

713.639.4629

www.hmns.org

Publisher: The Artie and Dorothy McFerrin Foundation

Creative & Editorial Director: Jennifer McFerrin-Bohner (Executive Director of the McFerrin Foundation and the McFerrin Collection)

Editor: Julie Osterman

Design: Infiniti Graphics

Photographers: C&M Photography and Jessica Woods

Contributors: Timothy Adams, Dorothy McFerrin,

Jennifer McFerrin-Bohner, James Hurtt, Tish Abbey, Patricia Hazlett

© 2022 The Artie and Dorothy McFerrin Foundation

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopy, recording, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the copyright owner.

Editor's note:

To the best of our knowledge, the content of the essays and descriptions of the objects are correct. We are grateful to the Fabergé experts who have contributed to this book. Often new discoveries about Fabergé and his workers are made, new pieces appear on the market, etc. Any errors contained within are unintentional. For consistency's sake, all articles, descriptions, and notes have been edited to reflect American spelling and style, as The McFerrin Collection is housed in the United States.

2	Foreword: Everyday Fabergé
4	Preface: The McFerrin Collection
6	Collector's Note
8	House of Fabergé
10	The Fabergé Workshops: Many Workmasters, One High Standard
16	The Bell Push: Summoning Fabergé's Genius
18	Smoking and the Evolution of the Cigarette Case
20	Got a Light? Vesta Safes Trending at the Turn of the Century
22	Good Evening, Ladies: One-of-a-Kind Accessories for the Nouveau Riche
24	Fabergé's Adaptation of Luxury Items to Everyday Objects
26	Framing the Imperial Family
28	Blooming Brilliant!

This book has been published with the support of The McFerrin Foundation

👑 denotes Imperial items
❄️ published in *From a Snowflake to an Iceberg: The McFerrin Collection*

🌀 published in *Fabergé: The Opulence Continues*

👑 denotes item from the *Sale of the Century*. These cases are part of the collection that belonged to Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna (1854-1920), wife of Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich of Russia, and sister-in-law to Emperor Alexander III (1845-1884).

Foreword

Timothy Adams

The Russian jeweler Carl Fabergé is famous for his Imperial Easter eggs and luxurious Imperial presentation boxes made for the last two emperors of Russia. However, the House of Fabergé was also a large retail organization that created a multitude of objects for everyday use by its clientele. Similar to Tiffany & Co. in America, it supplied members of society with items that would embellish their daily lives and activities.

By the end of the 19th century, the Industrial Revolution had created a wealthy merchant class whose wealth rivaled that of the nobles. It was a whole new market for the great jewelry houses of Europe and Russia. The bustling and wealthy city of St. Petersburg attracted the finest craftsmen and jewelry houses of the time. They came to cater not only to the Imperial Court, but also to the new affluent middle class, which wanted to be close to the seat of power and emulate that luxurious lifestyle.

Carl Fabergé, being an astute businessman, never missed the opportunity to offer the most elegant and refined solutions to the everyday needs of high society. Parasol handles, ladies' evening bags, cigarette cases, fans, and many other accoutrements were offered in precious metals or hardstones, decorated with a wide array of enamel colors and gemstones. Elegant homes required tasteful additions for daily activities, such as desk accessories, lamps, and bell pushes for summoning servants—all designed in classical styles, or in the latest fashion trend of Art Nouveau. Whatever the necessity, Fabergé would have a practical yet innovative solution for his customers.



Silver and Hardstone Bell Push 583

Fabergé, *KF* and *K. Fabergé* in Cyrillic beneath Imperial Warrant, scratched inventory number 16656, Moscow, circa 1899-1908
Height: 3" x Width: 4 ¾"



Parasol Handle 64

Fabergé, workmaster Mikhail Perkhin, St. Petersburg circa 1880

Height (with screw pin): 3" x Diameter: 1"

Giving a gift from Fabergé was appropriate for all occasions—birthdays, holidays, or as a gesture of friendship. Fabergé pioneered the

creation of small whimsical items, such as an animal carved from nephrite or rhodonite, called *objet de fantaisie*, which became popular gift items. From archival research we know that the Imperial family purchased Fabergé picture frames, bell pushes, and cigarette cases to bestow upon family members, subjects, and dignitaries.

This exhibition from the McFerrin Collection highlights items of everyday use that Fabergé’s workshops produced for a burgeoning international clientele. At its height, it is estimated that the firm employed around 500 workers to keep up with the demand for aesthetically designed pieces for refined lifestyles. This display of his functional objects of luxury will expand the viewer’s appreciation for the artistic vision of Carl Fabergé and the vast variety of items skillfully created by his firm.



Penguin Animal Study ❄️ 414
Fabergé, circa 1900
Height: 4 ¼" x Width: 4 ¼" x Depth 3 ⅜"



Fabergé building in Moscow, circa 1893

Preface

Jennifer McFerrin-Bohner

The world's fascination with all things Fabergé continues with a flourish. Every couple of years we find a new way to display our almost 600-piece collection by highlighting a different array of pieces and the intriguing stories that accompany them. Each exhibit has focused on a specific set of items, introducing them to museumgoers in a distinct light. In *Fabergé, Imperial Jeweler to the Tsars*, we explored Fabergé's exquisite craftsmanship. In *The Opulence Continues*, we focused on the lavishness of the items. In *The Art of Presentation*, we delved into the Russian Imperial Awards System. In the current exhibition, *Everyday Fabergé*, we are highlighting practical items one might use on a daily basis, with a focus on each workmaster's specialties. It is so interesting to see the varied workmaster styles up close and personal. I am truly in awe each time I get to examine Feodor Rückert's detailed enameled *cloisonné* pieces, Mikhail Perkhin's Diamond Trellis Egg (he designed 26 Imperial Easter eggs), or the fine intricacies of Henrik Wigström's delicate flowers and hearty natural wood frames. There is something so intimate about seeing these pieces through the workmaster's eyes.



Fabergé was highly effective in hiring the greatest goldsmiths and jewelers available. To foster creativity, he provided the best equipment, stones, jewels, and precious metals, as well as a house doctor for any medical needs. Fabergé's unrivaled talent was recognized worldwide by monarchs such as Edward VII and international leaders like King



Vanity Case ❁ 42

Fabergé, Mikhail Perkhin, St. Petersburg, circa 1895-1908
Length: 3 1/2" x Width 2 1/4" x Height 3/8"

Chulalongkorn of Siam. His customer base spanned the gamut from Tsars and Tsarinas to local businessmen and the *nouveau riche*, yet Fabergé found a way to appeal to everyone. He had to fully comprehend both worlds—the common working man and the affluent. While catering to the upper echelons of society by anticipating their wants and needs, Fabergé interacted daily with the working man who brought his designs to life.



Mahogany Metronome 352
 Fabergé, workmaster Antti Nevalainen,
 St. Petersburg, circa 1899-1908
 Height: 9 ½"

Our collection thoroughly reflects this dichotomy. From the brooches worn by royalty to the metronomes used by musicians and propelling pencils found in a home office, Fabergé created something for everyone. Spotlighting the few dozen everyday items in our latest display gives you a sense of Fabergé's practical and pragmatic train of thought. He adapted quickly to new technology brought forth by the Industrial Revolution. Bell pushes, which summoned the household help using newly discovered electricity, became common in wealthy households and Fabergé quickly created his own version. Taking advantage of the popularity of the camera, he made frames to display people's newest prized possessions—their photographs. In true entrepreneurial fashion, Fabergé anticipated and identified client needs, just like my father, Artie McFerrin. I'd like to think that the two of them would have been fast friends, eagerly discussing how to hone their crafts for the most success.

As you peruse *Everyday Fabergé*, I challenge you to consider which items might make your list of favorite pieces in our collection. From jewelry and vanity cases to dance cards and animal carvings (and, of course, eggs of all sizes and importance), there is something for everyone. Although our collection primarily focuses on the last two generations of the Romanov family—Tsar Alexander III and his son Tsar Nicholas II—we do have pieces from Catherine the Great that date to circa 1760. Maybe you will become fascinated with the pieces that illustrate Russian fairy tales, or perhaps you will be thrilled by being inches away from a tiara worn by the eldest daughter of Nicholas I, Grand Duchess Maria Nikolaevna. If you are anything like me, with all the fantastic craftsmanship to choose from, your favorite pieces may change with each display.



Cigar Case 523
 Fabergé
 Moscow, circa 1899-1908

Height (not including finial pull): 6 ¾" x Width: 4 ¾" x Depth: 1 ⅝"

dCollector's Note

Dorothy McFerrin

For us, collecting is not a hobby but a passion. It all began by chance with our purchase of a “Fauxbergé” egg at an antique store here in Houston almost 20 years ago. The experience of taking it to *Antiques Roadshow* and discovering it was a fake ignited in us the desire to learn everything we could about the House of Fabergé and the Romanov family, and of course, to try again.

And the rest, as they say, is history. Over a span of two decades, and with the immense help of reputable Fabergé dealers, auction houses, experts, and enthusiasts, we have not only amassed a collection of 600 pieces but also immersed ourselves fully in the narratives of the individuals who purchased these original works—from royalty to the working class. Just as captivating as the Romanov tales of breathtaking decorative gifts, like the Imperial Easter eggs, are the descriptions of everyday people using everyday things, such as lighters, purses, ink pots, and fans, and the workmasters who created these one-of-a-kind objects.

One of the great benefits of our collaboration with the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS) is my ability to share with visitors these many stories of Russian religion, war, politics, revolution, and especially love between the Tsar and Tsarina that we have absorbed through our purchases. Being selective about what we wanted to acquire, and focusing on provenance of royalty, has expanded our world view to these historical accounts that my generation was never taught in history classes.

During our collecting adventure, my late husband Artie and I had the opportunity to travel the world. It was amazing to see Fabergé pieces in royal palaces and museums in most countries from Europe to Asia. One



HMNS Fabergé Symposium 2016



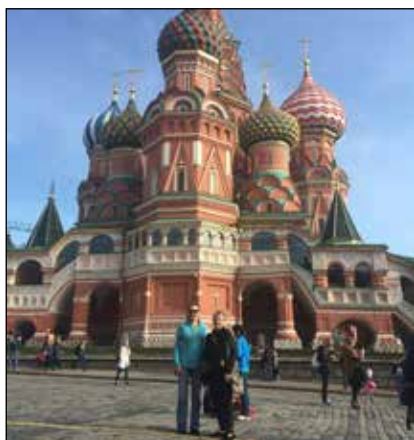
Fabergé lecture at HMNS

unique place we traveled was to my ancestors' homeland of Denmark, where my father and his family immigrated from Jersild to come to America. The Denmark connection to Maria Feodorovna, Dagmar of Demark, wife of Tsar Alexander III, and mother of Nicholas II, was still alive as we visited the Danish palaces. The elephant is Denmark's oldest and most distinguished royal order of chivalry and can be seen in many Fabergé pieces both in Denmark and abroad. It was often included in gifts between royals to signify their homeland. For example, the Imperial Trellis Egg in our collection includes an elephant as the "surprise" that was gifted from Alexander III to his wife Maria. The surprise is in the Royal Collection in London and was loaned to HMNS for one year to be reunited with the Trellis in 2017. Maria Feodorovna's sister was Alexandra of Denmark, Queen of England, and wife of Edward VII. Walking the palaces and museums in London, we have seen many Fabergé items owned by the couple, including many elephants. Their son George V, cousin to Tsar Nicholas II, was also a Fabergé collector. They often gifted each other personalized Fabergé, several of which we have in our collection.

Collecting Fabergé has certainly opened my life to a whole new world of rich Russian and European heritage, mesmerizing stories, stunning artworks, and new friends—from Fabergé connoisseurs spanning the globe to admirers like you. This is something that Artie and I have always cherished and respected. We hope that as you peruse the works and stories in the exhibition and in these pages, you will feel a hint of our passion for Fabergé's timeless creations that made him famous during his lifetime and throughout history.



*Fabergé Floral Studies at The Queen's Gallery,
Buckingham Palace, London*



St. Basil's Cathedral in Red Square, Moscow



Original Fabergé storefront in St. Petersburg, Russia

House of Fabergé

Jennifer McFerrin-Bohner

The House of Fabergé was founded in 1842 by Carl Fabergé's father, Gustav Fabergé.

After many years of studying and mastering his craft throughout Europe and Russia, in 1882 Carl Fabergé began leading the firm at age 36 in St. Petersburg. It wasn't until 1885 that Tsar Alexander III gave Fabergé the official title of Goldsmith by special appointment to the Imperial Crown. It was that same year the House of Fabergé was commissioned by the Tsar to create the first of 50 Imperial Easter eggs for the Tsarina, and later the Dowager Empress. Today, only 43 are known to have survived.



Carl Fabergé

While the Imperial eggs may be the most well-known items made by Fabergé, the same masters used their expert techniques to create decorative art objects for the home, everyday objects, and exquisite jewelry pieces. The House of Fabergé at its peak had over 500 employees and created more than 150,000 unique pieces. Using gold or silver, enameled and embellished with precious and semi-precious jewels, they created decorative boxes, desk sets, cigarette cases, perfume bottles, photograph frames, and timepieces. Examples of all these items and more unique pieces may be seen in the McFerrin Collection.

Groomed to take over the family business, Carl Fabergé had a strong reputation as a master goldsmith; however, it is believed that nothing has survived that can be said to be the work of Carl Fabergé. He also worked with the Hermitage Museum repairing and restoring objects. Alexander III declared he could not distinguish Fabergé's work from the original and thus ordered his replica work to be displayed in the museum as examples of superb contemporary Russian craftsmanship.

It was Carl Fabergé the entrepreneur, not just his exceptional talent, which made the business so successful. He decided to employ highly skilled master goldsmiths to run their own workshops under the name of Fabergé. In doing so, he could increase supply by developing more employees from different crafts, each of whom worked under a

master. These workmasters were committed to only work for the House of Fabergé, which supplied all the sketches and models of the objects to be made. Nothing would be accepted by the House unless it had been approved by either Fabergé or his appointed deputy. Overall, there were over 40 workmasters (yet only two were responsible for the Imperial eggs: Mikhail Perkhin and Henrik Wigström). They collaborated together as a part of a larger team under Carl Fabergé's exceptional leadership with the goal of making each object unique and flawless, worthy of the Fabergé name.

The brilliant businessman also kept up with the newest technologies and trends. For example, he produced vesta cases for matches, and then evolved to make lighters when the technology became available. With electricity came the bell pushes for the wealthy and with the first hand-held Kodak camera came a variety of picture frames. The great-granddaughter of Carl Fabergé, Madame Tatiana Fabergé, has joked that if he were alive today he would be making cell phone covers. Fabergé's pioneering focus to produce exquisite versions of the items people "had to have" further demonstrates his amazing business savvy and extraordinary ambition.

Fabergé became recognized worldwide by monarchs, heads of state, and international leaders. It was the Russian Imperial family, which was closely related to many kings, queens, and other royalty all over Europe, as well as their ties with international business leaders that helped Fabergé extend his reach. This powerful customer base along with his impeccable artistry allowed Fabergé to open a total of five stores in Russia and England. However, when the February Revolution of 1917 brought an end to the Romanov Dynasty, the House of Fabergé was forced to close.

Fabergé items became so popular and increased so significantly in value over the years that they have become victim to many counterfeit schemes. It takes an educated and trained eye to identify an authentic Fabergé piece; collectors and dealers alike have made mistakes. The McFerrin Collection offers a unique opportunity to see the breadth of Fabergé's work. Today, Fabergé's reputation as a producer of the highest standard continues to withstand the test of time around the world.



House of Fabergé craftsmen working at the workshop of Albert Holmström (left).

oFabergé Workshops

James Hurtt

One can imagine the organizational structure of the Fabergé firm to look like a pyramid, with Carl Fabergé directing from the apex a large organization composed of designers, sales staff, accountants, and others underpinned by about 20 independent workshops manned by master goldsmiths, silversmiths, journeymen, and apprentices. Each workshop had an exclusive contract to supply the Fabergé firm with a myriad of jewelry and objects that were sold through the flagship store in St. Petersburg and four branches located in Moscow, Odessa, Kiev, and London. The workshops translated the ideas and designs put forth by Fabergé and his designers into concrete objects of harmony and beauty, with each workshop imprinting its own special angle.

The financial and popular success of the Fabergé firm is due to the fact that each workshop did not deviate from the high standards expected for each and every piece. If an object failed to meet the judgment of the chief workmaster or Carl Fabergé himself, it was sent back to be reworked. There were two periods when the productivity and quality of the workshops were threatened—first during the Russo-Japanese War and revolutionary upheavals of 1904-1905 when production was disrupted by the drafting of some of the workers as well as workshop closures due to the dangers posed by the revolutionary mobs. The second occasion was 1915-1917 during World War I when many Fabergé employees were subscribed for military service. The Imperial Court and the aristocracy did not hold back on their orders for Fabergé items during these periods, and so Fabergé found himself petitioning the draft boards to exempt his special skilled workers.

The two most prominent workshops—due to the important commissions entrusted to them, especially the Imperial eggs—were those of Mikhail Perkhin (active 1886-1903) and his successor Henrik Wigström (active 1889-1918). Besides major commissions such as the Imperial eggs and presentation boxes, they also churned out all types of everyday objects, including cigarette cases, letter openers, photograph frames, clocks, and bell pushes. After Perkhin's sudden death, his workshop was transferred to his assistant, Wigström, which did not follow the normal course; usually the widow or son of the deceased workmaster would inherit a jeweler's workshop. Perkhin's widow was the daughter of Vladimir Finikov, who was head workmaster at the court jeweler Bolin. She no doubt was compensated for the loss of her inheritance by Fabergé and given additional support by her father.

Each workshop seems to have had a specialty or particular items that they produced. The Holmström workshop (father August and son Albert) active from 1857 to 1918

had the distinction of being one of the first contracted to produce jewelry by Carl's father Gustav, who founded the shop in 1842. The Holmström workshop made some of the finest jewels sold by the firm, including the Leuchtenberg Tiara (McFerrin Collection) and even a few of the Imperial eggs, such as the Diamond Trellis Egg (McFerrin Collection), where jewel setting was the most important aspect.

Major Fabergé Workshops:



Snuff Bottle 439

Fabergé, workmaster Erik Kollin,
St. Petersburg, circa 1890
Height: 1 $\frac{3}{16}$ " x Diameter: 1 $\frac{1}{16}$ "



Imperial Presentation Box 44

Fabergé, workmaster Mikhail Perkhin, *Fabergé* in Cyrillic,
original red leather fitted box, St. Petersburg, 1899-1902
Length: 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " x Width: 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x Height: 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ "

Erik Kollin (1836-1901), Chief Workmaster 1880-1888. Kollin left his native Finland in 1858 to settle in St. Petersburg where he obtained a position in Holmström's workshop. He became a master goldsmith in 1868 and by 1870 he had his own workshop. Soon after he was under exclusive contract to supply the Fabergé firm with jewelry and other objects. Fabergé appointed him Head Workmaster in 1880 and he held the position until he was succeeded by Mikhail Perkhin in 1889. Kollin continued to supply Fabergé until his death in 1901.



Mikhail Perkhin (1860-1903), Chief Workmaster 1889-1903. Perkhin came from a Russian peasant family making his way in 1878 to St. Petersburg, where he was apprenticed to Erik Kollin. He became a master goldsmith in 1886. Fabergé appointed him Head Workmaster in 1889. The most important presentation pieces were made under Perkhin's direction including at least 19 Imperial Easter eggs. Perkhin hired the young Henrik Wigström as his assistant in 1889. He died from stress and overexertion at the end of August 1903, at the young age of 43. He was succeeded by his assistant Wigström as Head Workmaster.





Casket 540

Fabergé, workmaster Feodor Rückert, *Fabergé* in Cyrillic, scratched inventory number 20409, Moscow, circa 1896-1908
Height: 3 1/8" x Width: 4 1/8" x Depth: 2"



Imperial Presentation Table Portrait 394

Fabergé, workmaster Henrik Wigström, *Fabergé* in Cyrillic, scratched inventory number 2194, miniature cardboard backing numbered 319, St. Petersburg, circa 1909, Height: 4 7/8" x Width: 4 1/4" x Depth: 1/2"

Henrik Wigström (1862-1923), Chief Workmaster 1903-1918. Henrik Wigström became apprenticed to a silversmith in his hometown of Tammissaari, Finland. After two years as an apprentice, 13-year-old Wigström took off for St. Petersburg in 1875 to continue his apprenticeship. By 1889 Wigström had attained the position of master goldsmith and was accepted as an assistant to Mikhail Perkhin. He so proved his worth that Fabergé entrusted him with Perkhin's workshop after the latter's death in 1903, and conferred upon Wigström the role of Head Workmaster. Besides thousands of objects and presentation boxes, Wigström's workshop produced 20 of the Imperial Easter eggs.



Feodor Rückert (1851-1918), active 1886-1915. Rückert set up an independent workshop in Moscow specializing in Pan Slavic or Old Russian designs applied to traditional forms such as kovsh, bratina, beakers, coffers, and tankards. In a nod to the modern world, numerous cigarette cases were produced as well as a few bell pushes. Besides supplying the Fabergé firm, Rückert also sold his objects to Ovchinnikov, Kurliokov, and Marshak. As Rückert was not a Russian citizen (having been born in the German Empire) his workshop was closed down by the government in 1914-1915 due to the war with Germany.





Elisabeth Balletta Fan 99

Fabergé, workmaster August Holmström, original fitted wood box, St. Petersburg, circa 1890
Length: 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x Width (closed): 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x Depth: 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
Height: 14" x Width (open): 26"



Cigarette Case 102

Fabergé, workmaster August Hollming, *Fabergé* in Cyrillic, 56 standard, scratched inventory number 4054, St. Petersburg, circa 1899-1908
Length (case): 3 $\frac{7}{8}$ " x Width: 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x Depth: $\frac{5}{8}$ " Length (cord): 8"

August Holmström (1829-1903), active 1857-1903. Specializing in jewelry and cigarette cases, Holmström also made the Diamond Trellis Egg currently in the McFerrin Collection. His son Albert Holmström (1876-1925) continued the family workshop working exclusively for the Fabergé firm until 1918.



Alma T. Pihl (1888-1976), active 1909-1918. She was the granddaughter of August Holmström and daughter of Oscar Pihl (1860-1897), who worked for Fabergé in Moscow. In 1909, Alma joined her uncle Albert Holmström's workshop as a draftsman and administrative assistant. She developed into a talented designer credited with the "snowflake" jewels, the Winter Egg, and the Mosaic Egg, which were made in her uncle's workshop. Alma married Nicholay Klee in 1912 but continued to create designs to be made for Fabergé. She fled to Finland in 1921 where she became a drawing and art teacher.

August Hollming (1854-1913), active 1879-1913. He was succeeded by his son, August V. Hollming (1885-1934), though the son probably only supplied the Fabergé firm through the end of 1913 and his contract was not renewed. They specialized in jewelry and cigarette cases.





Table Lighter 431

Fabergé, workmaster Antti Nevalainen, scratched inventory number 3091, St. Petersburg, circa 1890
Height: 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x Diameter: 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "



Cigarette Case 104

Fabergé, workmaster Viktor Aarne, *Fabergé* in Cyrillic, 56 and 88 standards
St. Petersburg, circa 1899-1908
Length: 4 $\frac{3}{16}$ " x Width: 2 $\frac{5}{8}$ " x Depth: $\frac{5}{8}$ "

Icon of Saint Blessed Ksenia of St. Petersburg 470

Fabergé, workmaster Hjalmar Armfelt, *Fabergé* in Cyrillic, scratched inventory number 4316, St. Petersburg, circa 1908-1917
Length: 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

Antti Nevalainen (1858-1933), active 1890-1910. Specialized in small decorative and utilitarian objects in gold, silver, and enamel. His workshop churned out a considerable number of photograph frames and cigarette cases and also featured *charkas* and *kovshes*.



Viktor Aarne (1863-1934), active 1880-1904. He first worked as a journeyman for August Holmström in 1880 and then for Perkhin, but left St. Petersburg in 1890 to return to Finland and set up his own workshop. He returned to Fabergé in 1891 and stayed until 1904, specializing in exquisite photograph frames and bell pushes. He then returned to Finland, setting up his own workshop and retail store in Vyborg.



Hjalmar Armfelt (1873-1959), active 1904-1918. After working for Nevalainen, Armfelt, with assistance from Fabergé, purchased Aarne's workshop in 1904 for 8,000 rubles. He continued to supply Fabergé with all types of items (especially frames, bell pushes, and desk items) until the end of the firm in 1918.





Match Holder and Striker 406

Fabergé, workmaster Julius Rappoport
St. Petersburg, circa 1890
Height: 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x Width: 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x Depth: 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ "



Imperial Presentation Cufflinks 399

Fabergé, workmaster Alfred Thielemann, 56 standard, scratched inventory number 2871, original red leather case stamped with Imperial eagle, St. Petersburg, circa 1910
Diameter: $\frac{5}{8}$ " x Length (with chain): 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ "

Julius Rappoport (1851-1917), active 1884-1909. His workshop supplied Fabergé with major silver items and services such as the dowries for Alexander III's daughters, Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga. He also specialized in animal figures made of silver that served as bell pushes, cigarette lighters, and match holders. At his retirement in 1909 he left his workshop to his team, which formed a new workshop named The First Silver Artel. Fabergé continued his contract with the new workshop until about 1912 when internal conflict and rising costs resulted in a decline in quality. The workshop ceased by 1913.



Alfred Thielemann (1870-1910), active 1890-1910. The Thielemann workshop was founded by Alfred's father and was probably supplying Fabergé before 1900. In 1901 the workshop moved into the Fabergé building and had an exclusive contract to supply small jewelry items such as cuff links, stick pins, brooches, badges, and jettons. His widow Elisabeth and his assistant, master goldsmith Vladimir Nikolaev, continued the business after Alfred's death in 1910. However, in the fall of 1914 Elisabeth, who was a great-niece of Fabergé's father, and her son were forced to leave Russia as they were German. Nikolaev took over the workshop.



Summoning Fabergé's Genius

Of all the everyday objects that the Fabergé firm made and sold during the last 10 years of the 19th century, the most novel and cutting edge was the electric bell push. Domestic electricity was introduced to Russia in 1880, and by 1890 the private consumption of electricity included lighting and, in the most affluent homes, an electrical bell system used to summon servants.

Always the entrepreneur, Fabergé seized on transforming this new household gadget into an elegant modern marvel. The typical bell push contained a basic brass or silver push button, which when pressed sent an electric current through the wires to the servants' quarters where the various bells representing each room were activated. Fabergé's opulent version of the bell push was composed of silver or gold and enhanced with various colors of enamel along with decorative appliques.



Bell Push    159

Cabochon-cut gemstones were almost always used for the pushpiece, most often moonstone or “mecca stone” (chalcedony stained blue-gray or pink), and these were sometimes surrounded by rose-cut diamonds or half pearls. Garnets, sapphires, amethysts, and rubies were also frequently used, and even faceted diamonds were pressed into service as pushpieces. Fabergé bell pushes exhibit as much diversity in materials and design as the firm's celebrated photograph frames and cigarette cases.

Fabergé, workmaster Mikhail Perkhin, *Fabergé* in Cyrillic, 56 standard, inventory number 9252, St. Petersburg, circa 1899-1903
Height: 3 7/16” x Width: 2” x Depth: 2”

The first purchase of an electric bell push by the Imperial family was in 1891 by Grand Duke George Alexandrovich and Grand Duchess Xenia Alexandrovna (the children of Alexander III)—a silver three-chick bell push for 180 rubles. By the end of 1916 it is recorded that the immediate Imperial family purchased 282 bell pushes. Most of these were purchased as gifts for friends and family. This pattern was repeated at the London shop. The majority of the 127 bell pushes purchased between 1906 and 1916 were also given as gifts.

The workmasters specializing in making bell pushes were Mikhail Perkhin, Henrik Wigström, Viktor Aarne, Antti Nevalainen, Hjalmar Armfelt, and Julius Rappoport. They followed the designs dictated by Eugene Fabergé (Carl's eldest son) and François Birnbaum, who directed a team of about 20 designers. Fabergé bell pushes reflected the fashions of the day such as neo-Rococo in the 1890s, Art Nouveau, and finally the neo-classical styles of Louis XVI and Empire that took hold from about 1905 on. The often whimsical items featured animals, particularly rabbits, elephants, owls, and sea creatures such as turtles, crabs, and fish.



Three Elephant Bell Push 125

Fabergé, workmaster Mikhail Perkhin,

Fabergé in Cyrillic, 56 standard

St. Petersburg, circa 1900

Length: 4 ¼" x Width: 1 ½" x Height: 1 ⅝"

The McFerrin Collection boasts examples of such animal bell pushes, including a rabbit, a turtle, and several sporting elephants. The triple elephant bell push in the collection cost Nicholas II 385 rubles and was one of the most expensive until his mother, Maria Feodorovna, paid 425 rubles for the carved nephrite, gold, and enamel composition (also in the McFerrin Collection) that is very similar to the Art Nouveau styled Apple Blossom Egg given by Russian nobleman Alexander Kelch to his wife, Barbara. In order to set these prices in context (prices ranged from 40 rubles for a simple silver-mounted wood bell push to a high of 425 rubles), one must know that a goldsmith employed in one of the Fabergé workshops made a salary of 80 to 130 rubles a month, while the average monthly salary of a doctor or lawyer was 315 rubles.

Few collectors use their Fabergé bell pushes as they were originally intended, with some exceptions, such as Queen Elizabeth II who owns at least 15 Fabergé examples. For the most part, they have been shorn of their silk-wrapped copper wires and today exist purely as *objets d'art*, admired as beautiful examples of Fabergé's work. Perhaps Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, who would have viewed her bell pushes merely as attractive and amusing conveniences, would be surprised to see them now, enshrined behind glass on velvet plateaus.



Jeweled Silver Rabbit Bell Push 492

Fabergé, stamped with Imperial Warrant, 84 standard

Moscow, circa 1899-1908, Height: 4 ⅜"

Smoking and the Evolution of the Cigarette Case

Timothy Adams



Imperial Cigarette Case 329

Fabergé, workmaster August Hollming, 56 standard, St. Petersburg, circa 1896-1908
Length: 4" x Width: 2 5/8" x Depth: 3/4"

Cigarette Case 482

Fabergé, workmaster Henrik Wigström, Fabergé in Cyrillic, 56 standard, Austro-Hungarian import marks, scratched inventory number 4428, St. Petersburg, circa 1899-1903, Height: 3 1/4"

Cigarette Case 541

Fabergé, workmaster Mikhail Perkhin, *Fabergé* in Cyrillic, 56 standard, French import mark, St. Petersburg, circa 1895, Height: 3 1/2" x Width: 2 1/8" x Depth: 5/8"

Peter the Great (1672-1725) was introduced to smoking on his travels to England, where he learned of the British Crown's monopoly on tobacco. He came back smoking a pipe, and importing American tobacco from an English company. The 28,000 pounds sterling he received yearly from the company for the rights to sell in Russia helped pay for expanding his army and naval capabilities. Smoking grew in popularity through contact with the Ottoman Empire during the Crimean War (1853-1856),

and cigarettes became a part of a soldier's rations. By the end of the 19th century, smoking was a popular pastime for both men and women.





Tsar Nicholas II with Anastasia sampling his cigarette, 1912

Fabergé responded to the trend by creating a wide array of cigarette cases, and they soon became one of the most popular items sold in his shops. A personal everyday object for gentlemen and ladies alike, the cigarette case was also the perfect gift for a friend or loved one. Fabergé produced cigarette cases in all types of materials, from silver, gold, and hardstones to wood, gunmetal, and even cork and leather. They could be decorated with *guilloché* enamel, precious gems, or Imperial emblems. Each one was unique, and the possibilities were endless.

The earliest form of cigarette case included a vesta or match compartment, and a large braided tinder cord for lighting cigarettes. The tinder cord had a frayed end, which once lit would smolder and could light several cigarettes till it was pulled back into the case and snuffed out. These were bulky cases, and awkward to carry in one's pocket or purse. This all changed when the cigarette lighter was perfected by the turn of the 20th century. Fabergé could now design elegant slim cases without match compartments and a bulky tinder cord. A wide range of shapes and sizes were available for everyday use. Curved ones that fit comfortably in a man's pocket, and smaller delicate cases in a variety of enameled colors to match a lady's purse. The McFerrin Collection has over 100 smoking accessories, including a variety of stunning cigarette cases.



Tsar Alexander III Cigarette Case   563
Hahn, workmaster Alexander Treiden, St. Petersburg,
circa 1890, Length: 3 ¾" x Width: 2 ½"

Vesta Safes Trending at the Turn of the Century

The term “vesta” refers to small matches used in the late 19th century. The name comes from the Roman Goddess of fire and the hearth. By 1863, machines making matches were introduced to Russia and by 1882, there were 263 match factories.

Small match or vesta safes remained popular smoking accessories from about 1860 to 1915. They were created to keep small matches from rubbing together in one’s pocket and igniting, thus the name match “safe.” The McFerrin Collection boasts several vesta safes, including at least one by Fabergé workmaster Henrik Wigström (active 1903-1917) for which a similar drawing is known from his design album.



Vesta Case 570

Fabergé, workmaster Henrik Wigström, London
import mark for 1911-1912
St. Petersburg 1908-1912
Length: 1 ¾”



Silver-Mounted Sandstone Match Holder 300

Fabergé, workmaster Antti Nevalainen, scratched
inventory number 17003, St. Petersburg, circa 1900
Height: 3 ¼” x Width: 3 ½” x Depth: 3 ½”

Fabergé created vesta safes in hardstones like nephrite as well as gold and silver, and often decorated the precious metals with *cloisonné* or *guilloché* enameling.

In a home or office, matches were used to light stoves, lamps, and candles. They were kept in match holders similar to the sandstone one by Fabergé workmaster Antti Nevalainen (active 1885-1917). The rough sandstone sides are an excellent striking surface, and is an example of how the Fabergé firm made use of even the most ordinary materials to create aesthetically pleasing everyday objects.

With the invention and popularity of the cigarette lighter, the need for small vesta safes became obsolete. The first wick lighter came to the market in 1880. The more popular flint lighter was introduced after the turn of the 20th century. A Russian flint lighter factory began production in 1907. Eventually Fabergé, always ahead of a trend, designed elegant cases for cigarette lighters to go with his newly redesigned, slimmer cigarette cases without vesta compartments. An exquisite lighter in rose gold engraved with swans and foliate swags from the St. Petersburg workshops is one of many examples of elegant solutions to everyday needs originating from the Fabergé design studios.



Cigarette Case with Lighter 28

Fabergé, workmaster August Holmström,
St. Petersburg, circa 1890
Length: 3 ¼" x Width: 2" x Depth: ⅝"

Another style he created was a three-part lighter, rectangular in form. The body is made up of alternating vertical bands of rose gold and yellow gold, and a leaf chased two-colored gold band separates the lid from the body. The interior reservoir can be removed from the case, making it both sophisticated and functional.



Lighter 501

Fabergé, workmaster Vladimir Soloviev, 56
standard, St. Petersburg, circa 1908-1917
Length: 2 ⅝" Width: ⅞" x Depth: ⅝"

dGood Evening, Ladies

Patricia Hazlett

One-of-a-Kind Accessories for the Nouveau Riche

One of the hallmarks of the House of Fabergé was the ability to both capture the imagination of, and create desire in, its clients. As the clientele expanded from royalty to the *nouveau riche*, demand for fashionable accoutrements for young ladies grew. Fabergé had the unique ability of transforming even the most mundane items into ornamental accessories.



Scent Flask    158

Fabergé, workmaster Mikhail Perkhin, *Fabergé* in Cyrillic, 56 standard, scratched inventory number 4142, original fitted holly wood box
St. Petersburg, circa 1899-1903
Height: 4 ¼" x Diameter: 1 ¾"

Scent bottles, cosmetic cases, decorative boxes, parasol handles, and evening bags were designed with fashion in mind. Ever the master of marketing, Fabergé would pre-release a glimpse of social season colors that would be highlighted that year. Eager young customers often had entire outfits designed around those colors. Fabergé also assured his clients that their purchased items were all one of a kind, thus inspiring anticipation for ladies to “show off” their new acquisitions between friends!

Synthetic perfumes were introduced in the late 19th century and Victorian women embraced them as a means to cover body odor, revive one’s flagging constitution, or as a means to protect the wearer from unhealthy vapors. Fabergé scent bottles were created in astonishing variety, utilizing many shapes, sizes, and raw materials. Nephrite, agate, rock crystal, and rose quartz produced especially beautiful products. Though difficult to both mine and work, nephrite was used in some of Fabergé’s most whimsical pieces, notably the gherkin-shaped scent bottles. Moss agate, with its fern-like appearance, was an admired accent stone.



Scent Bottle 67

Fabergé, scratched inventory number 58177

Circa 1890

Length: 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x Width: $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Elaborate ornamentation in the rocaille style was used on simple pieces such as vanity cases, jewelry boxes, and parasol handles. Coupled with exquisite enameling, this stylistic technique, often in intricate gold, further served to enhance everyday items.

Evening bags, cosmetic cases, and dance cards, called *carnet de bal*, completed the outfit. Purses of gold or silver mesh were accented with intricate goldwork atop enamel, with opening clasps of ruby or diamond. Fabergé often used the delicate acanthus leaf motif as accent, reflecting the royals' love of nature. A *carnet de bal* was a young woman's method of keeping track of the evening's dance partners. These small, enamel-enclosed cards were hung from the ladies' gowns with a fine hook. Attached pencils were used to write in gentlemen's names. Conveniently for the chaperone, the pencil was easily erasable, just in case the need arose to eliminate unsuitable partners.



Coin Purse 502

Fabergé, workmaster Fedor Ruch, 56 standard,
scratched inventory number 16585

St. Petersburg, circa 1899-1908

Length (with chain): 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x Width: 2"

Fabergé's Adaptation from Luxury Items to Everyday Objects

Tish Abbey



Propelling Pencil 354

Fabergé, Moscow, circa 1896-1908
Length: 3 1/8" x Diameter: 3/16"

Although his exceptional artisanship was unrivaled, what really made Carl Fabergé so successful was his ability to adapt. When the Great War began in 1914, many of his craftsmen were drafted, leaving him shorthanded. To add insult to injury, precious metals were at a premium, since all available metals were needed for the war. Adjusting to this labor and materials shortage, he temporarily moved from making luxury jewelry and upscale items to more utilitarian items. At the turn of the 20th century when the Industrial Revolution brought electricity to the wealthy, he pivoted again. He designed items around the new technology, such as electric bell pushes. Like all natural-born entrepreneurs, he simply saw a need and filled it.



Blue Gum Pot 314

Fabergé, workmaster Feodor Afanasiev,
St. Petersburg, circa 1899-1908
Height: 2 1/4"

But making the transition from opulent royal jewelry to ordinary everyday items toward the end of his career was definitely a gamble. Fortunately, it was one that paid off in a multitude of ways. Fabergé's finesse for changing focus allowed him to keep the workshop open and his employees working. His shop also produced parts for grenades and shell casings for the military, as well as syringes, scalpels, and other medical equipment. He was literally making anything that was in demand. From copper mugs and scabbards to Red Cross pendants and ink pots, Fabergé shifted his production capabilities to more practical objects. Even in creating these simpler everyday items, his long-standing claim to never make any two pieces alike still held true. The snuffboxes, mugs, and accessories he



Stamp Box ❄ 219

Fabergé, workmaster Mikhail Perkhin, circa 1899-1903

Length: 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x Width: 1 $\frac{3}{16}$ " x Height: $\frac{1}{16}$ "

designed during this period were practical, yet splendid. Although many were luxurious and elaborately decorated, others had simple designs with incredible craftsmanship. Fabergé was able to hone his enameling skills and invent more than 145 new shades!

During the age of letter writing, Fabergé seized the opportunity to provide exquisite desk accessories such as inkwells, pens, barometers, thermometers, compasses, rulers, wax gum pots, stamp boxes, and letter openers. Even though these were ordinary items, Fabergé designed them with exceptional and unmistakable quality.

Practical items and accessories such as glove buttoners, pillboxes, parasol handles, photo frames, purses, scent bottles, binoculars, belt buckles, belts, wallets, and hat pins were designed with (and for) a discerning eye. The refinement of the birch wood in the picture frames and the daintiness of the hat pins appealed to the most discriminating buyer.

Author Alexander Von Solodkoff put it perfectly when he wrote: "The Fabergé magic was not restricted to expensive and purely decorative items. Increasingly, from the late 1880s onward, the Fabergé workshops produced beautiful things that also had a practical use. A wide variety of otherwise ordinary objects such as penholders, photograph frames, table lighters, ashtrays, cigarette cases, and clocks. Not all were lavish, ornate, or elaborate: but all exhibit that elegance of design, that mastery of materials and techniques, and that perfection of workmanship that make up the Fabergé style."



Agate Rulers ❄ 122

Fabergé, Moscow, circa 1900

Length (ruler with enameled tip): 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ "

Length (second ruler): 6 $\frac{7}{8}$ "

◊Framing the Imperial Family




Jennifer McFerrin-Bohner

Fabergé will forever be synonymous with the elaborately ornate Imperial Easter eggs made for the Russian Imperial family. But when the first American-made Kodak camera hit the market in 1888, European aristocrats became budding photographers, and Fabergé took notice. Tsar Nicholas II was very fond of this new box camera—each one came with a 100-exposure roll of film. According to *Russia Beyond* (rbth.com), “Nicholas II also owned a special camera that Kodak made for him exclusively. It allowed him to take panoramic views.”

The photos that have survived provide intimate glimpses into a world few have ever seen. In 1849 the Imperial family hired photographer Sergei Levitsky to take portraits of Tsar Alexander III (1845-1894) and Tsarina Maria Feodorovna (1847-1928). Tsar Alexander III loved the photographers so much that he had a studio built for them next to St. Petersburg’s Kazan Cathedral. His son, Tsar Nicholas II (1868-1918) was a lifelong photographer and enjoyed gluing his pictures into the family photo albums.

As photography became a popular hobby of the more affluent, Fabergé welcomed the newfound technology and began to provide opulent ways to display the dearly loved photographs. Eventually the frames became the most sought-after items in the workshops. The McFerrin Collection maintains 13 of Fabergé’s wooden frames, ranging from presentation frames ordered by His Imperial Majesty’s Cabinet to intimate gifts within the royal family.



Imperial Presentation Frame    96
Fabergé, unmarked, circa 1895, Height: 12 5/8"

The Imperial Presentation frames were adorned with a crown made of gold, silver, enamel, wood, or leather. Imperial clients often requested wooden frames made from the Karelian birch trees in northwestern Russia between St. Petersburg and Finland. The royal family loved the birch wood because it looked like marble with the streaks and curving lines. Indoors it was known for its ability to resist corrosion. Therefore, it was often used in decorating royal chambers and palaces, lending it to be called the “Royal Tree.” Fabergé even made a Karelian Birch egg in 1917 for Tsar Nicholas II. Although never delivered due to the revolution, it was the next to last Imperial egg ever

made under the House of Fabergé. Even today, Karelian birch is one of the most distinctive and rare woods; with its pale yellow-tinted woodgrain, it is used to this day in yachts and car interiors.

Fabergé was able to source local materials to create his picture frames. After the wooden frames, Fabergé workmasters Mikhail Perkhin and Henrik Wigström began creating more luxurious enameled frames. Many of these were adorned with semiprecious stones from the Ural Mountains. From enamel to engine-turned radiating *guilloché*, seed pearls, and rose-cut diamonds, each frame was as unique as the photograph it held. The exquisite miniatures were the perfect adornment for writing desks, and for providing signed photographs to those who made significant contributions to the royal charities or who supported their war efforts.



Frame 553

Fabergé, workmaster Mikhail Perkhin
St. Petersburg, circa 1894
Height: 2 ½" x Width: 1 ¾" x Depth: ¾"



Imperial Fire Screen Frame 2

Fabergé, workmaster Henrik Wigström, 72 standard, original fitted holly wood box, lid lining *Fabergé / Petrograd / Moscow / Odessa* beneath Imperial eagle, St. Petersburg, circa 1910, Height: 7 ¼" x Width: 3 ¾"

Collectors began using the term "Fabergé style" when referring to smaller items adorned with precious stones or any object of absolute refinement featuring the highest-quality materials. The posh frames were an immediate hit with the upper echelons of Russian society. The swag details, acanthus leaf motifs, and scrolled legwork emulated various architectural facets of the palaces in which these frames were displayed.

One cannot mention Fabergé and frames in the same sentence without briefly describing his Imperial Fire Screen Frame as possibly the best example of goldwork to ever be created in a Fabergé workshop. The Louis XVI style double-sided frame is stamped by workmaster Henrik Wigström, who combined varicolored golds with a floral motif to create a timeless masterpiece. Fabergé's delicate frames, some exquisitely rare, and others beautifully ordinary, have certainly helped solidify his place in history as one of the most creative artist-jewelers of all time.

Blooming Brilliant!

Tish Abbey

It is thought that Fabergé created approximately 85 botanical studies. According to Faberge.com, only about 80 are known to have survived. The McFerrin Collection is fortunate to possess three of these delicate beauties: the Lily of the Valley Study, the Dandelion Flower Study, and the Gold and Jeweled Flower in Rock Crystal Vase. At the time of purchase, this lily of the valley botanical was the highlight of New York Russian Art Week at Christie's, finishing as the most expensive work by Fabergé sold at auction up until that point in 2009.

The largest botanical collection of Fabergé belongs to the British royal family. Queen Alexandra started collecting, as did Queen Mary, the Queen Mother, and now Prince Charles. The British Royal Collection currently boasts 26 botanical pieces, one of which is a Lily of the Valley Study similar to this one in the McFerrin Collection.



Lily of the Valley Study ❁ 97
Fabergé, original box
St. Petersburg, circa 1900
Height: 4 ¾"



Gold and Jeweled Flower in Rock Crystal Vase ❁ 301
Fabergé, St. Petersburg, circa 1900
Height: 4 ⅞" x Width: 2 ½" x Dimension: 1 ½"

Botanical studies were also a favorite of Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna, and were given as gifts by Tsarina Alexandra Feodorovna and others in the court. According to the property inventory sheet the Bolsheviks took in 1917, the Grand Duchess owned 33 flowers. When Alexandra was empress at the turn of the 20th century, she purchased this gold and jeweled flower piece, currently in the McFerrin Collection. Many of her precious array of flowers are now part of Queen Elizabeth II's extensive collection. Keeping in line with fantastical floral purchases, Queen Elizabeth and Queen Mary (the current Queen's mother and grandmother) obtained Fabergé's Cornflowers and Oats Study in 1944 to brighten up then Princess Elizabeth's shelter room during the war.

Although they seem deceptively simple, many skilled laborers were involved in the creation of these floral works. From Fabergé's original design idea to an expert enameller if needed, then to a jeweler, possibly a stone cutter or carver, and finally a goldsmith, each botanical study was

a true collaborative effort.

From start to finish, each step was well-thought out, planned to the hilt, and overseen by skilled workmasters and Fabergé himself. Henrik Wigström is credited with the Dandelion Flower Study. For the base, skilled carvers carefully manipulated the rock crystal to achieve realistic-looking water inside the vase. The leaves were carved from nephrite, and the flower was painstakingly made from tiny white threads tied to rose-cut diamonds with gold mounts. The other floral studies in the McFerrin Collection do not have a workmaster identified.

Franz Birbaum (seen here with Agathon Carlovich Fabergé), a senior designer for Fabergé from 1896-1917, said the botanical genre began when he repaired the Chinese Emperor's chrysanthemums. Fabergé's inspiration was said to have come from the floral brooches Catherine the Great had made in the 1700s. He continued to use local materials from Siberia, the Caucasus Mountains, and the Ural Mountains.



Franz Birbaum and Agathon Carlovich Fabergé



Dandelion Flower Study 402

Fabergé, workmaster Henrik Wigström, 72 standard
St. Petersburg, circa 1905

Flower Height: 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ " x Width: 3" x Depth: 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

Vase Height: 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x Diameter: 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

According to Géza von Hapsburg and Marina Nikolaevna Lopato in *Fabergé: Imperial Jeweler*, Fabergé was able to show off these petite floral wonders at the All-Russian Industrial Exhibition in Moscow in 1882. Empress Alexandra Feodorovna was the first member of the Imperial family to purchase one of Fabergé's flower studies. In the Russian State Historical Archives dated October 30, 1917, the Lily of the Valley Study was listed under Grand Duchess Maria Pavlovna's collection of 33 floral studies at Vladimir Palace.

These beautiful flowers were not only precious because of their design, they also brought a perpetual sense of Spring to an area that regularly endured harsh winters. The Lily of the Valley in particular held special meaning because it symbolized the first sign of Spring. Amidst ferocious storms, the fanciful flowers with native gems and colorful stone leaves were a welcome sight. Fabergé captured something as brief as a flowering botanical and made it as permanent and solid as his legacy.



EVERYDAY FABERGÉ

The McFerrin Collection is one of the largest private Fabergé collections in the world with an array of more than 600 items, primarily from the time of the last two Tsars, Alexander III and Nicholas II. The collection has been on long-term loan to the Houston Museum of Natural Science (HMNS) since 2013 and has included multiple loans to museums across the United States. The current exhibit, *Everyday Fabergé*, which opened in April 2021, features elegant and refined solutions to the everyday needs of high society, from jewelry, vanity cases, and dance cards to cigarette cases, frames, and animal carvings.

Carl Fabergé was the official jeweler of the Russian Imperial Cabinet at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries. His extraordinary reputation as a master jeweler continues to be maintained worldwide and throughout time.

We hope you enjoy learning about Fabergé, his entrepreneurial artistic vision, and the innovative objects of luxury he created for a widespread and discerning clientele.