

Seth responded saying that such detailed work put him into a meditative state. The finer points of detail helped him relax and focus, and here he found a true sense of calm and joy. I borrowed his wisdom.

Seth is not only talented. He is genuine and considerate and was a pleasure to work with, from start to finish. The quality of Seth's work reminds me very much of another artist who made an item that is in our treasure. This man, just like Seth, was immensely talented and devoted to the details in his work and art. In fact, he became the most respected jewelry designer of his generation. His name was Michael Perkhin, and he was the head workmaster at Faberge.

In the spirit of playfulness, I thought it'd be only appropriate to include a magnifying glass in our treasure: a Sherlock Holmesian symbol, reminding us of the importance of paying attention to the smallest things. Of course, the magnifier I chose for our treasure is no typical hand lens. It was made from gold and jade by Michael Perkhin himself, whom many experts consider to be the most skilled detailed workmaster in the history of Faberge.

As for the precise artistry of our magnifying glass, I won't spend time explaining the intricacies of Perkhin's gold rocaille foliate pattern that adorns it nor the specific techniques with which it was made. You can investigate on your own if you'd like. However, Michael Perkhin's life's story is certainly worth at least a few words.

At birth, Perkhin's chances of one day being revered in the industry of high-end jewelry designs seemed farfetched. Perkhin grew up poor. He learned to read and write only by studying with a priest in his small rural town. At age sixteen, Perkhin began work with a local blacksmith. He transitioned to goldsmithing at eighteen. He showed remarkable skill, and within just a few years, he was hired by the Frenchman named Carl Faberge.

By the age of twenty-six, Michael Perkhin earned the title of workmaster, the highest position within Faberge's design shop. Carl Faberge promoted Perkhin specifically because he wanted his company to be known for exquisite craftsmanship. He was determined to distinguish Faberge from the large, gaudy design pieces that were so common at the time. Carl believed Perkhin to be the best artist of his generation.

Michael Perkhin began his new position by reimagining what types of objects could become jeweled art. He loved small household accessories, and he visualized them as artistry. Ink bottles, umbrella handles, table clocks, and ashtrays were among the everyday items Perkhin began fashioning. Perkhin redrew the limits of what jeweled art might encompass. Several of his works are now considered timeless, and many attempts to replicate them continue today.

The Faberge brand rose to prominence and became the most respected Russian jewelry designer in the world. Faberge was most famous for its Imperial eggs. Fifty-four Imperial Faberge eggs were produced in total. These eggs are some of the most sought-after jeweled artworks ever created. Today, each Imperial Faberge egg is valued in the tens of millions of dollars. Michael Perkhin designed and crafted more than half of all these Imperial eggs.