PIGUET

HÔTEL DES VENTES I GENÈVE I 1978



Fabergé

9-10 DECEMBER 2026

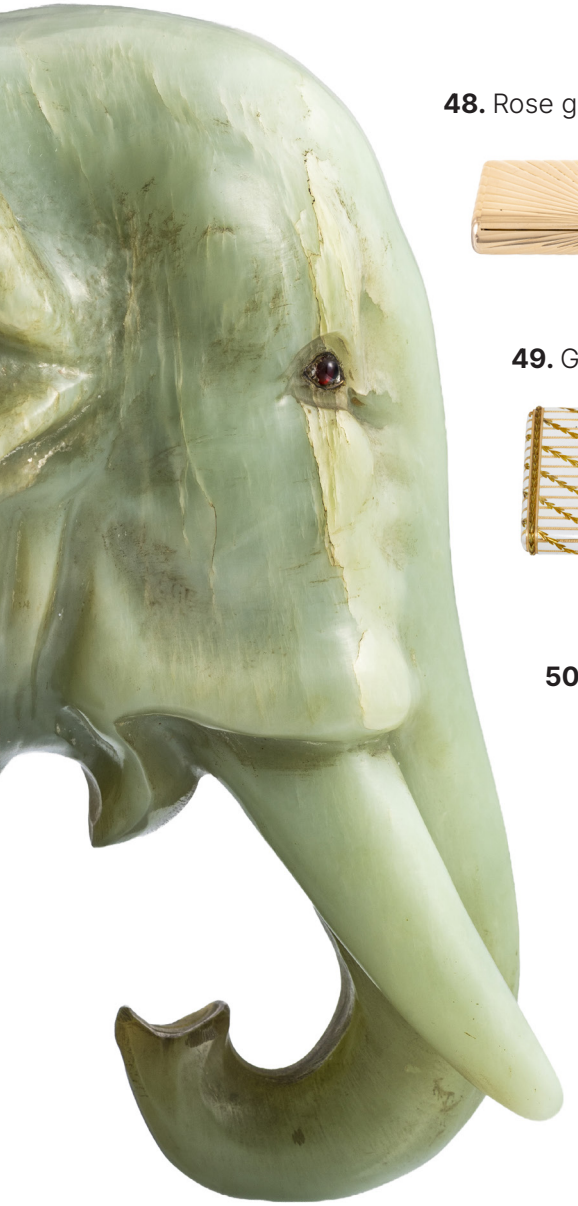




Baron de Reuter & Gordon Bennett Jr. Collection

Live auction - 9 December 18:00 CET

Carl Fabergé (1846 - 1920)



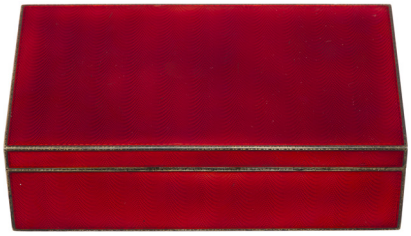
48. Rose gold box, August Hollming



49. Gold and white enamel case, Henrik Wigström

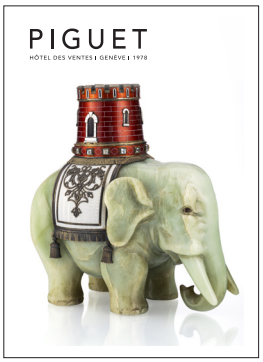


50. Silver-gilt and enamel table box, Henrik Wigström



51. Silver-gilt, enamel and bowenite elephant, Michael Perchin

SCAN TO VIEW
THE BARON DE REUTER &
GORDON BENNETT JR. COLLECTION



Sale Schedule

GENEVA

SCAN TO VIEW
THE CATALOGUE

THE ART OF FABERGÉ

Saleroom auction

LIVE

WEDNESDAY 9 DECEMBER 18:00 CET | N° 48 TO 51

Online only auction

ONLINE

THURSDAY 10 DECEMBER 12H:00 CET | N° 3039, 3040, 3161

VIEWING IN GENEVA

By prior registration on 3 December 2026
Register online at piguet.com

Public Viewing
4–6 December 2026, 12 noon–7 pm

GENEVA OFFICE
HDV Hôtel des Ventes SA
Rue Prévost-Martin 51 | 1205 Geneva
Tel. +41 22 320 11777
www.piguet.com | info@piguet.com

LAUSANNE OFFICE
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Tel. +41 21 613 7111
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Conducted by Maître Tronchet, Judicial Officer

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48. A finely crafted rose gold box, August Hollming, 1899–1903, Fabergé, the surface elegantly decorated with radiating fluted motifs, the thumbpiece set with a marquise-cut blue sapphire. Bearing the 56 zolotnik kokoshnik hallmark of assay master Yakov Lyapimov and the scratched inventory number 10581,
8.5 × 4 cm, 85 g

6.000-8.000







49. An elegant 585 gold and white enamel case, Henrik Wigström, circa 1903–1908, Fabergé, finely decorated with alternating vertical bands of chased two-colour gold and white enamel, embellished with diagonal garlands of waterleaf motifs. The mounts adorned with delicately chased foliate garlands, the thumbpiece set with a rose-coloured cabochon. Bearing the 56 zolotnik kokoshnik hallmark of assay master Yakov Lyapunov, St Petersburg, and the scratched inventory number 10576, 9×5 cm, gross weight 86g

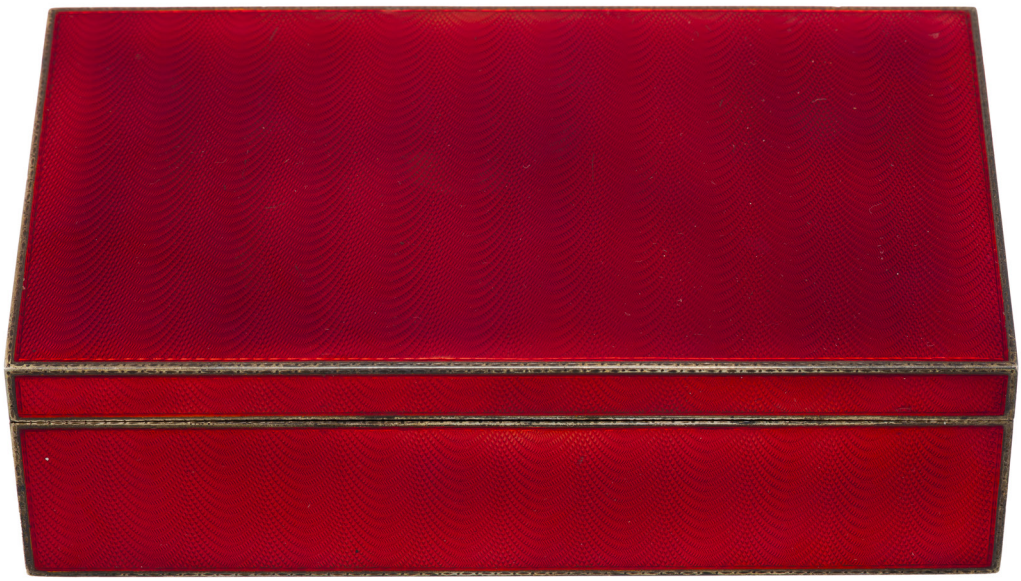
6.000-8.000

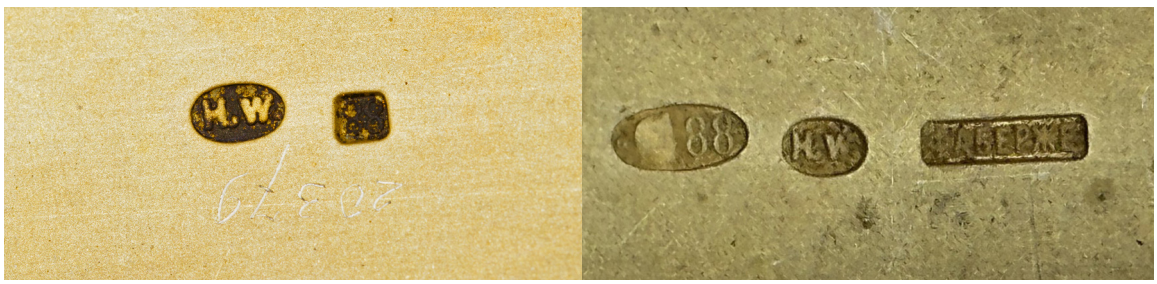






50. An elegant silver-gilt and enamel table box, Henrik Wigström, 1908–1917, Fabergé, all six sides finely decorated with a chevron-patterned wave guilloché ground beneath translucent red enamel. Bearing the 84 zolotnik kokoshnik hallmark, St Petersburg, and the engraved inventory number 20379, 14.5×8.5×4.2 cm
3.000-5.000











51. A magnificent Fabergé bowenite elephant with ornate silver-gilt and guilloché enamel mounts

Workmaster Michael Perchin, St Petersburg, 1899–1903

The large elephant carved from bowenite, caparisoned with a silver-gilt saddlecloth finely decorated with guilloché enamel and surmounted by a howdah, the enamel decoration executed in the colours associated with the Order of the Elephant of Denmark; marked Fabergé and with the workmaster's mark of Michael Perchin, St Petersburg, kokoshnik mark 84 for Yakov Lyapunov, 1899–1908, and scratched inventory number 3113. Completed in 1900.

28.5×26×16 cm; gross weight 11.54 kg

200.000-300.000

Provenance : Commissioned by the Russian Imperial Family during the reign of Tsar Nicholas II, and presumably presented by Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovich of Russia, brother of Tsar Alexander III, to James Gordon Bennett Jr.

The collection of James Gordon Bennett Jr (1841–1918) was subsequently united with the estate of Baron George de Reuter (1863–1909) through their respective marriages, in 1914 and 1891, to Maud Potter (1866–1946).

Thence by descent.

To bid on this lot you must apply for a special authorisation for high value lots:
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Gordie: An exceptional Fabergé Elephant

Completed in Saint Petersburg in 1900, at the height of Fabergé's artistic achievement and Imperial patronage, this magnificent elephant is a remarkable example of the firm's craftsmanship and ambition. Affectionately known as Gordie, he stands apart from the miniature hardstone animals for which Fabergé is so widely admired. Carved from a substantial block of bowenite and adorned with elaborate silver-gilt and guilloché enamel mounts, his imposing scale, exquisite workmanship and unusual function as a cache-pot suggest a commission of particular importance.

He was made in the workshop of Michael Perchin (1860–1903), Fabergé's celebrated chief work master, whose career coincided with the firm's emergence as the foremost jeweller to the Russian Imperial Court. Perchin oversaw the creation of some of Fabergé's most ingenious and technically accomplished works, including the great majority of the Imperial Easter Eggs produced before his death in 1903. His workshop brought together highly skilled goldsmiths, enamellers, stone-carvers and other specialist craftsmen, whose combined expertise enabled Fabergé to create objects of extraordinary complexity and refinement.

Gordie's enamelled mounts evoke the colours of the Danish Order of the Elephant, Denmark's highest order of chivalry, closely associated with Empress Maria Feodorovna (1847–1928), born Princess Dagmar of Denmark, daughter of King Christian IX and wife of Alexander III. The Empress maintained a lifelong attachment to her native country, and elephant-form objects incorporating the imagery of the Order featured among Fabergé's creations for the Imperial family which were destined to be presented as gifts.









James Gordon Bennett Jr. (1841–1918)



Steam yacht Namouna 1882

James Gordon Bennett Jr. (1841–1918) is believed to have received Gordie from his friend Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovich (1850–1908), brother of Alexander III and uncle of Nicholas II. A prominent naval officer and one of the more cosmopolitan members of the Russian Imperial family, the Grand Duke shared Bennett's passion for yachting and moved in the same international circles. Their acquaintance is documented as early as December 1871, when Bennett, then Commodore of the New York Yacht Club, entertained the Grand Duke at a banquet at Delmonico's in New York.

Bennett's maritime interests also extended to Arctic exploration. In 1879, he financed the ill-fated expedition of the Jeannette, which was lost in the Siberian Arctic in 1881. Bennett subsequently provided substantial funds to assist the survivors, working closely with the Russian authorities to facilitate their rescue and return. This episode offers intriguing link between Bennett and Imperial Russia, adding to the context of his longstanding association with Grand Duke Alexei. More than twenty years after their first documented meeting, in 1893, the American press reported that Alexei had been Bennett's luncheon guest aboard his yacht in the Mediterranean.

Following Bennett's death in 1918, Gordie remained in the de Reuter–Bennett family, passing by descent through successive generations until the present day.

The largest known surviving Fabergé hardstone elephant to date, Gordie is exceptional not only for his scale and the refinement of his execution, but also for the history he embodies. His origins, the personal connection between Grand Duke Alexei and James Gordon Bennett, and his preservation within the same family for over a century lend this extraordinary work a provenance as compelling as his craftsmanship.



Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovich of Russia (1850-1908)

Provenance: Gordie's journey



Maud Potter (1865–1946) was born into a wealthy American family. In April 1891, she married George Julius de Reuter (1863–1909), son of Paul Julius de Reuter, founder of the Reuters news agency. While continuing his father's legacy, George embraced the cosmopolitan lifestyle of the British aristocracy during the Belle Époque. His marriage to Maud reflected the close social ties between the British and American elites that characterised the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The couple had two sons, Oliver and Ronald. George's untimely death in 1909 brought this chapter of family life to an abrupt end. Five years later, Maud married James Gordon Bennett Jr. (1841–1918), a longstanding family friend and one of the most celebrated figures in international journalism.

Their marriage took place in Paris in 1914, attracting considerable attention in both journalistic and aristocratic circles. Bennett was then seventy-three and heir to the New York Herald, of which he had long been proprietor. Ronald lived with his mother and Bennett for the following four years, gaining further exposure to the privileged lifestyle associated with two of the most influential news organisations of the time: Reuters in Britain and the New York Herald in the United States.



Baroness de Reuter (Maud Potter) with her sons Ronald & Oliver de Reuter circa 1902



James Gordon Bennett Jr. (1841–1918) & Maud Potter (1865–1946) circa 1914

An eccentric and flamboyant character, James Gordon Bennett Jr. was renowned for his extravagant lifestyle and disregard for convention. He moved in a world of yachtsmen, sportsmen, prominent society figures and members of the European aristocracy. Dividing his time between New York, Paris and the French Riviera, he entertained some of the most distinguished personalities of his day.



Tsar Alexander III, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, Empress Maria Feodorovna (born Princess Dagmar of Denmark) and Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovich. Seated in the foreground: Tsarevich Nicholas Alexandrovich (later Tsar Nicholas II), Grand Duke George Alexandrovich and Grand Duke Paul Alexandrovich.



Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovich of Russia (1850-1908) in the uniform of General-Admiral

On 2 December 1871, while serving as Commodore of the New York Yacht Club, Bennett hosted a lavish banquet at Delmonico's in honour of Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovich of Russia. Following a private conversation between the two men, the evening unfolded into one of the most sumptuous and memorable occasions of the Grand Duke's celebrated American tour.

Bennett's yachts, initially sailing vessels and later steam-powered, were frequently anchored in the Bay of Beaulieu on the French Riviera, where he also owned the Villa Namouna. There, he welcomed an illustrious circle of guests, including the Duke of Leuchtenberg, Grand Duke Peter of Russia, Empress Eugénie, the Duke and Duchess of Rivoli, the young Winston Churchill and his parents, the Duke of Orléans, the Duke of Aumale, the Duke and Duchess of Camastra and the Duke of Eboli.

It is believed that Gordie, the elephant, was presented to Bennett at the turn of the century by the Russian Imperial family, specifically Grand Duke Alexei, as a token of his loyalty and longstanding friendship.



Drawing room of the Reuter's residence at 37 rue Bassano, Paris (lots 51,57,1661,1708)

Ronald Carl George de Reuter (1899–1964)

Born in 1899, Ronald grew up in an environment where international affairs, cultural patronage and high society were part of everyday life. His formative years were spent within this remarkable social milieu, in which members of the European aristocracy regularly mingled. Following his mother's marriage to James Gordon Bennett Jr., Ronald also became closely connected to the newspaper proprietor's considerable fortune and legacy.

It was through this family connection that Gordie entered the Reuter collection, eventually finding its place in the family's Paris residence at 37 rue Bassano. A period photograph shows Gordie prominently displayed at the centre of the mantelpiece, alongside a sculpture by Rodin (lot 57 in the present sale).

Gordie is also recorded in a 1948 inventory of the rue Bassano property, drawn up by Maître J. Bernard of Nice. Listed in the bedroom, the object is described as 1 éléphant de jade surmonté d'une tour d'une couverture en émail rouge et blanc décoré de lambrequins et pompons en metal doré (éléphant: h. 0,28 – long 0,25, Hauteur totale 0,30), with a valuation of 250,000 French francs.

In the early 1950s, Maître Étienne Libert, who had recently arrived in Paris, conducted a further inventory. On this occasion, Gordie was listed in the salon as 1 éléphant en jade, surmonté d'une tour en émail rouge, il forme cachepot, with an estimated value of 350,000 French francs.



Baroness de Reuter (Maud Potter) with her son Ronald de Reuter circa 1914

Surrounded by the works of art he had inherited, Ronald continued to develop the family collection, acquiring bronzes, furniture and other exceptional objects. His marriage to Wladyslawa Ocipska in Montpellier in 1953 marked a new chapter in the family's history. The following year, the couple settled in Geneva, where they led a more private life, away from the international prominence that had characterised earlier generations.

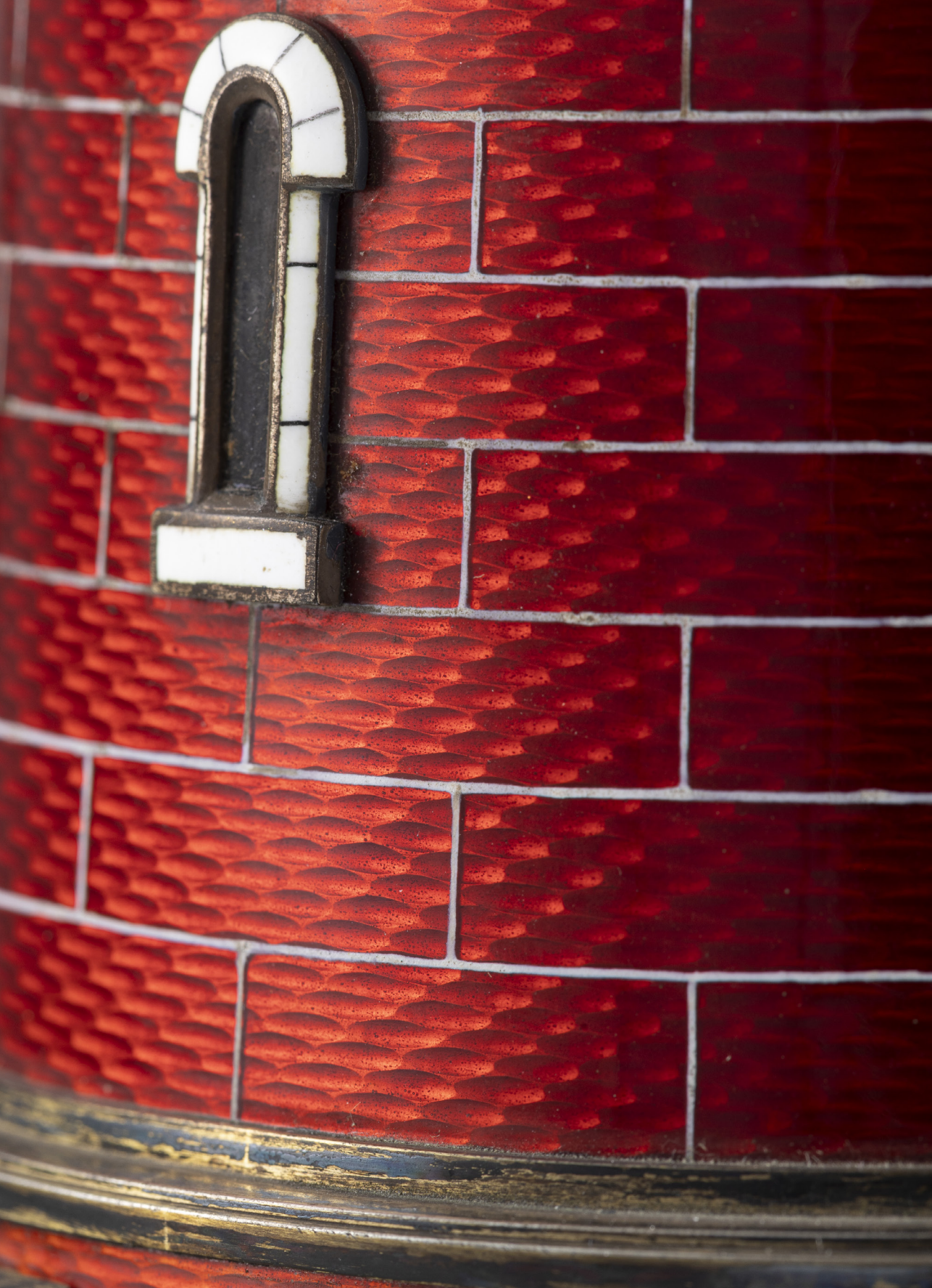
Across these three generations, the history of the Reuter family reveals a gradual transition from the world of international journalism and high society to one centred on the preservation of a rich cultural and artistic legacy. Once at the heart of a powerful press empire, the family increasingly devoted itself to the stewardship of its inherited possessions and the collection of fine furniture, works of art and objects of exceptional quality.

As Ronald and Wladyslawa had no children, the Reuter–Gordon Bennett estate subsequently passed to Wladyslawa's family, through whom this remarkable collection has been preserved to the present day



Ronald de Reuter and Wladyslawa de Reuter at a formal dinner, c. 1955–1960





Condition Report in Brief













To the best of our knowledge, based on the research undertaken and family tradition, Gordie the elephant has remained within the Gordon Bennett–Reuter family since its presentation as a gift in the early 20th century. The piece is exceptional both in its size and in the quality of its craftsmanship.

Please note that the following observations are intended as a brief summary of the object's condition only. The planter thats sits within the howdah is not shown in the image above.

- The elephant, its saddlecloth and tower have not been cleaned. The bowenite exhibits splits, cracks and natural imperfections. There is flecking within the surface which has created an oxydised colour speckled across his rump and down his left hind leg.
- Gordie was fixed on to a stand at rue Bassano, removed since. A trace of the fixing agent can be seen on the heel of his right front foot. A small chip under his right hind foot is visible near the toes.
- The centre of Gordie's right eye is set with a cabochon garnet, while the left eye is set with a flat, unfaceted garnet.
- Hallmarks inside the howdah: 'MP' and 'Fabergé' in Cyrillic, together with the 84 zolotnik kokoshnik mark of Yakov Lyapunov (1899–1908; in this instance, 1899–1903). Michael Perchin (chief workmaster, 1886–1903), St Petersburg. The 'MP' mark is also found on the lower rim beneath the turret.
- The Fondation Carl Fabergé has confirmed that the scratched inventory number 3113 corresponds to the object's completion in 1900.

For a full condition report and additional images, please contact the specialist, Christina Robinson, at **christina@piguet.com.**

To view the images and condition report directly on the Piguet website, please scan the QR code.

Carl Fabergé from other collections

Online auction - 10 December 12:00 CET



3039. A gold, silver and enamel vesta case, Anna Ringe Fabergé, St Petersburg, 1904–1908, the sides enamelled in translucent white over a guilloché ground with wave and ribbon motifs, the hinged lid bordered by a chased frieze of foliate scrolls, the push-piece set with a cabochon sapphire, the base fitted with a striking plate, the workmaster's and fineness marks almost illegible, in its original Fabergé wooden case, 4.5 × 3.5 cm

3.000-5.000





3040. A silver-gilt cigarette case with tinder lighter, August Frederik Hollming, Fabergé, 1898, with a polished finish and radiating fluted decoration, the lid centred with a gold coat of arms, later cord, 84 Kokoshnik mark of Yakov Lyapunov, St Petersburg, 10 × 6.7 cm, gross weight 258 g

1.000-1.500



3161. A circular gold (583 standard), metal and enamel brooch, August Holmström for Fabergé, St Petersburg, early 20th century, decorated with translucent green enamel over a guilloché ground, embellished with interlaced motifs set with rose-cut diamonds, suspending a collet-set old-cut diamond, workmaster's mark AH, 56 Kokoshnik mark, scratched inventory number 6946, diam. 3 cm, gross weight 8.8 g

2.600-3.000

Conditions of sale

Conditions of sale English version

Sale by auction on behalf of third parties.

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The condition of frames and glazing is not guaranteed.

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Friday 11 December, 11 am–5 pm
Saturday 12 December, 10 am–2 pm
Monday 14 December, 11 am–5 pm

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STORAGE

Buyers are requested to collect their purchases within eight days of the end of the sale. Any items not collected within this period, or for which transport has not been arranged, will be transferred to an external storage facility without prior notice, at the buyer's risk and expense (please refer to Article 15 of the Conditions of Sale).

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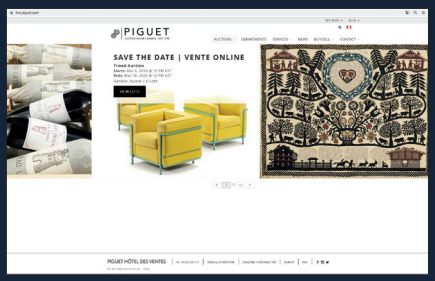
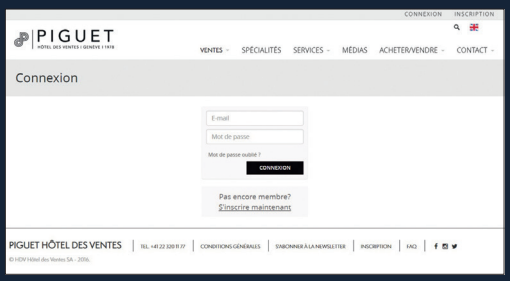


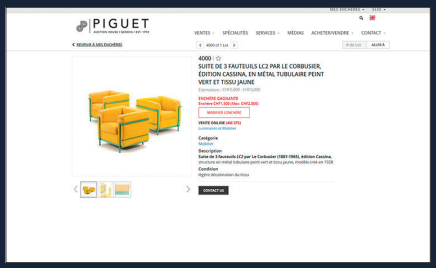
1. Consulter les catalogues

Sur piguet.com



2. S'identifier ou créer un compte

Identifiez-vous avec votre compte piguet.com ou créez votre compte, c'est simple et rapide !



3. Placer des mises

Choisissez vos lots favoris et misez



4. Suivre vos lots

Notifications automatiques par email ainsi que sur l'app. Piguet à chaque surenchère

REMPLIR UN ORDRE D'ACHAT TRADITIONNEL

Les ordres d'achats écrits sont toujours acceptés et traités avec soin.

Ordre disponible à la fin de ce catalogue



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Pour toute question:
support@piguet.com

PIGUET

HÔTEL DES VENTES I GENÈVE I 1978

Informations
HDV Hôtel des Ventes SA
Rue Prévost-Martin 51
1205 Genève – Suisse
Tél.: +41 22 320 11 77
info@piguet.com
www.piguet.com

Ordre d'achat

Doit être reçu au plus tard 24 heures avant le début de la vente.

LOT N°	DESCRIPTION DU LOT	MONTANT MAXIMUM EN CHF (HORS COMMISSION ET TVA)

La participation à la vente implique l'acceptation inconditionnelle des conditions de vente de *HDV Hôtel des Ventes SA* imprimées dans le catalogue disponibles sur internet. Le payement est dû **immédiatement** après la vente.
Aucune réclamation ne sera admise sur l'authenticité ou l'état des lots. — Plus de détails sur http://www.piguet.com/fr/conditions-ventes

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TÉLÉPHONE MOBILE

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Veuillez m'envoyer les factures par e-mail jusqu'à nouvel ordre (merci de cocher cette case) ☐

J'ai lu et compris les conditions de vente et les accepte intégralement.
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LIEU, DATE _____ SIGNATURE _____

