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A Brief History of the Fabergé Egg (Part 1)

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Fill the gaps with one of the words given. There are two words you don't have to use. There is an example done.

In 1916, in St. Petersburg, Russia, 0)goldsmith Peter Carl Fabergé was overseeing the production of two opulent, decorative eggs. The objects were 1)_____ to be the royal Easter gifts presented to Empress Maria Feodorovna and Tsarina Alexandra Feodorovna in April of 1917. But the imperial women would never see those eggs, 2)_____ would Fabergé see them finished.

As the Bolsheviks seized St. Petersburg, the three-century-long Romanov rule came to a violent and tumultuous end. The family was forced 3)_____ of the city and left behind their 50 imperial Fabergé eggs, created between 1885 and 1916, small yet lavish reminders of the dynasty's grand reign.

A century on, Fabergé eggs continue to enjoy an 4)_____ position in the history of the decorative arts. "It's really 5)_____ to have a piece of decorative art (6)_____ a painting) that has as much cultural resonance as a Fabergé egg," says Jo Briggs, associate curator of 18th- and 19th-century art at the [Walters Art Museum](#) in Baltimore, Maryland. "It's 7)_____ the *Mona Lisa* of the decorative art world."

Today, 43 of the original 50 imperial eggs are 8)_____ to exist, and can be found in museums and private collections worldwide. 9)_____ vessels of wealth, decadence, and artistry, they continue to capture the public imagination.

"Fabergé was given the opportunity to develop—year after year, in a kind of crescendo between 1885 and 1916—his concept of the most luxurious and ingenious object that a tsar could give to his spouse for Easter," says Fabergé expert Dr. Géza von Habsburg.

The first imperial Fabergé egg dates back to 1885, when the Russian Tsar Alexander III

10)_____ a gift for his wife, Empress Maria Feodorovna, for Easter. (The holiday is among the most important celebrations of the Russian-Orthodox ecclesiastical calendar.) Alexander 11)_____ the award-winning master goldsmith Peter Carl Fabergé. Fabergé was known for crafting fine objects and jewelry, and assisting in restorations for the [Hermitage Museum](#).

Well-12)_____ in the history of art, Peter Carl Fabergé based this first egg, it is believed, on the 18th-century Saxon Royal Egg, which he had seen in the Green Vault museum in Dresden—a gold egg that

13)_____ a gold hen, a gold crown, and a ring. Apparently riffing on that earlier egg, Fabergé created his own version in white enamel, which opened to a gold yolk that concealed a small gold hen, which in turn opened to a pendant. That final "surprise"—the prize 14)_____ within each Fabergé egg—came per the tsar's request.

"We know that is one of the very rare cases where the tsar wanted to have a say in the matter of what the surprise would be," von Habsburg explains. "After that, Fabergé was really given carte blanche to create whatever he wanted, but it all had to have some bearing on the family itself."

Each year thereafter, for three decades, Fabergé would imagine his own designs and lead the production of the imperial Easter eggs. When Alexander III died in 1894, his son Tsar Nicholas II kept the tradition alive, and 15)_____ the stakes: He began commissioning two eggs per year, one for his mother, Maria, and one for his wife, Alexandra.

ALMOST	COMMISSIONED	DESIGNED
DESTINED	ENCASED	FAMED
GOLDSMITH	HIDDEN	KNOWN
NOR	NOT	OUT
PAINTED	RAISED	RECRUITED
UNMATCHED	UNUSUAL	VERSED