

**Brilliance of
exuberance**

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THE GLEAM OF GOLD SHEEN™ SAPPHIRES

宝石新贵：金光蓝宝石的慑人魅力

Thailand-based gemstone dealer Tanzim Khan struck gold through a chance encounter years ago. His initial curiosity and subsequent investment in a Kenyan mine brought Gold Sheen™ sapphires to the market where it continues to catch the fancy of jewellery brands and boutique designers. 金光蓝宝石由泰国珠宝商Tanzim Khan 先生在一次机缘巧合之下于肯亚发现，甫面世便备受瞩目。经其多年的投资开采及推广，这种新兴宝石近年引起的关注日增。

| Cynthia Unninayar |

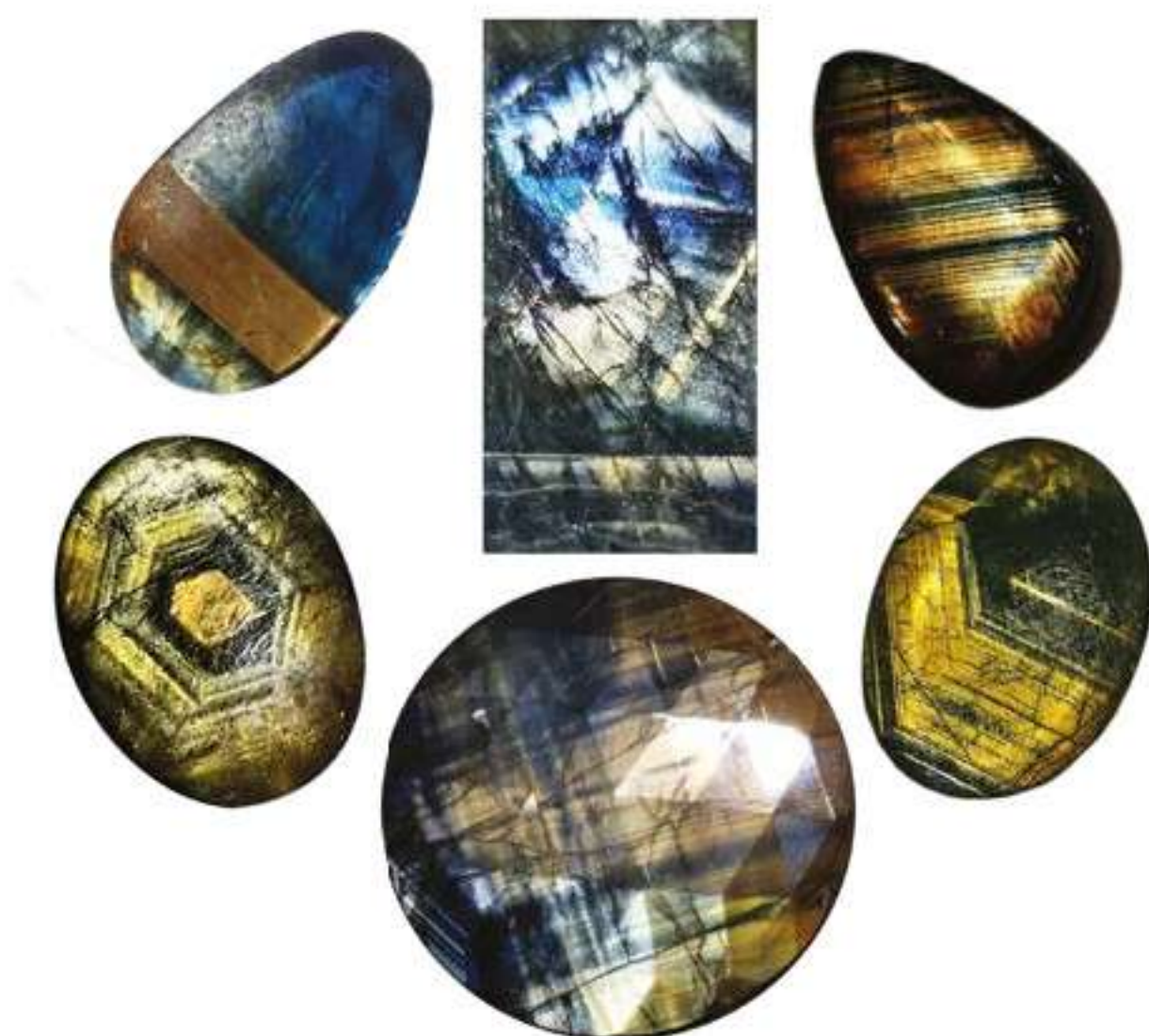


Ring by William Travis, which won AGTA's Savor Silver Award for Men's Jewellery (Photo: William Travis Designs)
在AGTA男士首饰类别获Savor Silver Award的得奖戒指

Like many dealers in the heart of Bangkok's gem district, Genuine Gems & Jewellery sold a variety of fine coloured stones. Then, one day, life changed forever for owner Tanzim Khan.

"With my shop in Silom and 30 years in the business, I am often approached by dealers who want to sell their gems," he recalled. "A few years ago, a man from Africa showed me rough stones from a remote location in Kenya. At first glance, they didn't look like much. I knew they were sapphires, but they were unlike any I had ever seen. I was intrigued."

Khan took a few samples and asked the man to return in a week. He experimented with cutting the unusual gems and ultimately found the right orientation of the rough to reveal a unique asterism with a golden shimmer. Noting that the sheen "was incredible," the gemstone dealer decided to investigate the mining conditions in Kenya. As he found them to be above average, he helped the mine owners financially and later purchased the entire production. By 2014, the mine was depleted but Khan had enough rough to satisfy demand for years to come.



Distinctive inclusions and colours turn the Gold Sheen™ sapphires into works of gem art 每颗宝石均散发独一无二的迷人魅力

"The gems differ from conventional sapphires because they exhibit a gold adularescence caused by the gem's molecular structure that refracts and reflects light. This creates an iridescence, which gives the appearance of light coming from within as well as shimmering on the surface," he explained.

Going mainstream

Khan then had to bring his find to market. The first step was having them analysed by various gemmological laboratories, including the Gemological Institute of America (GIA), Asian Institute of Gemological Sciences (AIGS), The Gem and Jewelry Institute of Thailand (GIT), TGL Gem Testing Laboratory, GRS GemResearch Swisslab, Lotus Gemology, American Gemological Laboratories (AGL), Swiss Gemmological Institute SSEF and IGL Labs. "The results all showed the gems to be a new species of sapphire – natural, no enhancement, exhibiting a golden sheen," he noted.

Next, Khan needed to give the gem a descriptive name reflecting its shimmering colours. He decided on Gold Sheen™ sapphires, now trademarked internationally.

Raising awareness about his gems involved a social media campaign and exhibiting at trade shows in Bangkok and Hong Kong. In 2016, Khan took his new sapphires to the gem shows in Tucson. "It was a good decision. Not only did I sell a lot, but I met many people who share my passion for them," he said.

Soon, Gold Sheen™ sapphire jewels were seen in collections of established brands as well as boutique designers. Added visibility occurred when the gem was featured in a ring that won the American Gem Trade Association's Savor Silver Award for Men's Wear. Today, the gem's biggest market is the US, followed by Japan and Switzerland, although Hong Kong, South Korea and Australia also appreciate these unusual sapphires.

"Sizes range from a few points to 500 carats, with the most common from 10 to 20 carats. The dust is also requested – for metaphysical purposes," Khan explained. The most popular cut is cabochon, followed by checkerboard, rose and brilliant. "We can make any cut that enhances the beauty of the stone," he added.

Prices vary by quality. Commercial grade sells for US\$7 to US\$15 per carat; good to very good, from US\$25 to US\$50; fine to extra fine, from US\$100 to US\$300; and rare, from US\$500 to US\$1,000. According to Khan, exceptional, large, multicolour transparent gems can fetch US\$2,000 per carat. Given the price and quality range, Gold Sheen™ sapphires are ideal for both fine and semi-fine jewellery, he noted.

"As we experimented with the gem, we found more colours. Some exhibit shimmers of blue, green, grey, red, pink and even purple," Khan revealed.

Most stones have two to three colours, although some have four, making each gem, with their distinctive inclusions, totally unique.

Very recently, Khan found that the gems glow bluish-green or translucent green in UV light. Another surprising discovery is that "some gems are colour-changing." And, all are untreated. "All Gold Sheen™ sapphires are completely natural, and we can verify their ethical provenance from mine to market," he remarked.

"This endeavour has exceeded my expectations," Khan concludes, noting that he continues to work with gemmologists in researching the unusual gems so that the world can fully appreciate the singular beauty of the gold and other colours in Gold Sheen™ sapphires.



An example of asterism in a Gold Sheen™ sapphire
金光蓝宝石呈现独特的星光效应

Gold Sheen™ sapphire pendant in gold by David Yurman
(Photo: David Yurman) 金光蓝宝石吊坠

故事开始

金光蓝宝石最先由泰国彩宝公司Genuine Gems & Jewellery的创办人Tanzim Khan先生发现。Khan先生是珠宝界的老行尊，从事宝石生意已超过30年。数年前，一位来自非洲的男士带着一批产自肯亚的原石走进他的珠宝店，自此，他与金光蓝宝石便结下了不解之缘。“乍看之下，该批宝石似乎平平无奇，我知道它们是蓝宝石，但这样的蓝宝石我从未见过，瞬间我便被它吸引住了。”

经过几天的实验，Khan先生发现这种宝石经适当的切割打磨后，会呈现星光效应，并散发出金光。“结果令人啧啧称奇，我便决定深入研究，并到矿场实地考察。”Khan先生发现当地作业条件颇佳，遂向矿场主人提供资助，最后更买断整个矿场的产出。该矿是金光蓝宝石目前唯一已知产地，并已在2014年开采完毕，但Khan先生手上仍有不少原石存货。

走进市场

Khan先生认为，要把这种宝石推广出去，须先提高其认受性。于是，作为推广的第一步，他把宝石送到世界各大实验室进行检测，包括美国宝石研究院(GIA)、亚洲宝石学院(AIGS)、泰国宝石与珠宝学院(GIA)、TGL Gem Testing Laboratory、GemResearch Swissslab (GRS)、曼谷宝石实验室、美国宝石实验室(AGL)、瑞士宝石学院(SSEF)和IGL Labs等。测试结果均表明，这是全新的蓝宝石品种，



Rough Gold Sheen™ sapphires 金光蓝宝石原石



Gold Sheen™ sapphire ring with diamonds by Baer Jewels
(Photo: Baer Jewels) 金光蓝宝石戒指配钻石

纯天然，未经人工改良，并能发出金光。Khan先生根据这种宝石的特点，将其形象化地命名为“Gold Sheen™ sapphires”(中文名由AIGS创办人及院长莫伟基先生译为“金光蓝宝石”)，继而在全球注册商标。他说：“这种宝石的分子结构使其散发与别不同的金光和虹彩，这在蓝宝石中独一无二。金光看起来就像从宝石内部散发出来似的，闪闪生辉。”

随后，Khan先生大力宣传他的新发现，他先在社交平台上发起宣传活动，又在曼谷、香港和美国的珠宝展上推广，这种迷人的宝石很快便成为珠宝品牌和设计师的新宠。其中，一枚以金光蓝宝石为主石的戒指获美国宝石贸易协会(AGTA)颁发男士首饰类别的Savor Silver Award，更使这种宝石备受瞩目。现时，需求主要来自美国、日本和瑞士，在香港、韩国和澳大利亚等地也有市场。

Khan先生称，金光蓝宝石的规格从极小到500克拉都有，当中以10至20克拉最常见，但粉末也有特定买家需求。蛋面切割最受欢迎，其后依次为棋格切割、玫瑰型切割和圆形切割。Khan先生指，他们可采用各种规格和形状的切割，以表现这种宝石的独特美态。

价格方面，普通级别的售价为每克拉7至15美元，较好的25至50美元，优质的售价为100至300美元，特级的定价由500至1,000美元不等；而具有多种色彩、最顶级的稀有宝石则可达每克拉2,000美元。Khan先生表示，由于质量和价钱跨度甚大，金光蓝宝石有很高可塑性，适用于不同档次的首饰系列。

“随着检测的宝石增多，我们发现这种宝石除了金光，还能散发出其它颜色的光彩，包括蓝色、绿色、灰色、红色、粉红色，甚至罕见的紫色。”最近，Khan先生还发现，有些宝石在紫外线照射下会发出蓝绿色或半透明的绿色光芒，有的甚至会“变色”。“多数宝石有两至三种色彩，有的甚至具有四种色彩，加上内含物不同，每颗宝石均是独一无二的天然珍宝，而且供应链公开透明，买家完全不用担心产品来源的道德问题。”展望未来，Khan先生表示会继续进行有关推广及研究，希望让更多人欣赏到这种奇异宝石的诱人魅力。

Pictures courtesy of Tanzim Khan unless otherwise specified.
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