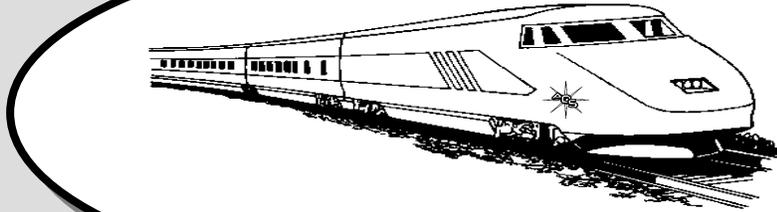


The Opal Express

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Table of Contents

<i>Eighth AOS Live Auction on June 14th</i>	1
<i>AOS Live Auction Rules</i>	1
<i>AOS Calendar for 2013</i>	1
<i>Members Only Website Password</i>	2
<i>Photographing Gems— A Minimalist Approach</i>	2
<i>Ethiopian Opal Agony and Ecstasy</i>	3
<i>From Rags to Riches – Ch. 35 A Change of Strategy</i>	6
<i>June 2013 Gem & Mineral Shows</i>	8

Eighth AOS Live Auction on June 13th

The AOS will hold its eighth AOS live auction, on Thursday, June 13 at our general meeting at 7:00pm. The auction will be fun, and "fund-raising," so come and snag a bargain while supporting your club!! **There were many great bargains to be had at the event last year!**

Don't miss a chance to buy or sell opal rough, cabs, books, tools, display cases, and other neat gem stuff when members may bring up to 5 items each for sale, as long as they are gem-related, and are approved by the AOS Board of Directors. You must be an AOS member to sell at the auction, and you must sign a vendor agreement. Vendors must donate 10 percent of the final price to the AOS, and will be paid after the refreshment break prior to close of meeting. We will arrive at 6:30pm to help vendors prepare their items. If you have items for sale, please come early, and allow us to assign a Lot Number, any minimum "Reserve" price you may request, and log your items into our computer for easy checkout later!

Bidders may be members, or visitors, provided they have a photo ID like a driver's license, and are willing to abide by Bidder rules. You must have an official bid paddle to bid, so sign up early when you first get to the mtg. Copies of the Vendor Rules and Bidder Rules will be made available at the signup table when you arrive.

If you want to bid, you must sign in to get a paddle, and agree to the Bidder rules, which state that all items must be paid for prior to close of meeting, the highest bid wins, all sales are final, no returns or refunds. The AOS auctioneer has final authority to determine the high bid, and can accept or reject any bid at AOS discretion. Bidders cannot bid for another person, and must pay for and remove their auction items prior to the end of the meeting. Bidders are not permitted to loan their paddles to others.

Proceeds from the live auction will go toward AOS activities like our annual show preparation and advertising. Please be generous with your bids, and get a bargain at the same time!

AOS Live Auction Rules

1) Only American Opal Society (AOS) members may sell an item/lot in the auction.

- 2) The member may submit a maximum of 5 items/lots (single item or grouped package).
- 3) 10% of all sales rounded up to the closest quarter (\$0.25) remain with the AOS.
- 4) Anyone that obtains a bidders card and number can bid, but must pay in **cash**.
- 5) All bids and/or raises shall be in dollars (i.e. no bids/raises of less than \$1 will be considered).
- 6) The AOS auctioneer maintains the right to reject unreasonable offers/bids/raises.
- 7) If the sellers minimum (reserve) bid is not received in "going once, going twice" call the item/lot is removed/dropped/pulled from the auction and given back to the seller/original owner.
- 8) Any seller or buyer making side deals/sales within the meeting rooms prior to or during the auction forfeits all rights to participate in the AOS auction.
- 9) Winning bidder must pay for and pick-up purchased item/lot as quickly as possible (within 10 min.) or forfeit right to purchase (with exception of auctioneer, cashier, record keeper or merchandise manager).
- 10) No warranties or guarantees are offered and all items are sold as is and where is.
- 11) All sales are final and no returns, trades or later credits will be considered.

AOS Calendar for 2013

Below is the AOS Calendar for 2013.

American Opal Society Calendar	
Date	General Meeting Topic / Speaker
10-Jan-13	Opals of The Americas, Part 2 – Jim Pisani
14-Feb-13	Fluorescent Minerals and Opals - Jim Pisani
14-Mar-13	Michael Greyshock on Gold Detecting
11-Apr-13	Dr. Walt Johnson on Jewelry Making
09-May-13	Video on Opal Mining in Brazil
13-Jun-13	Live Opal Auction
11-Jul-13	Opal Cutting Seminar
08-Aug-13	Member Show & Tell
12-Sep-13	To be announced
10-Oct-13	Opal & Gem Show Work Session
03-Nov-13	46th Annual Opal & Gem Show
04-Nov-13	46th Annual Opal & Gem Show
14-Nov-13	Opal & Gem Show Recap
12-Dec-13	AOS Christmas Party Potluck

Rare 306-Carat Australian Opal unlike any found in last 80 years

Santa Fe Designer Katherine Jetter Will Create Jewelry Piece

By ThelMproper Staff, May 10th, 2013



Australian miner Bobby and the rare opal he found on his last day of work.

Katherine Jetter, a Santa Fe, New Mexico jewelry designer knows her opals, so it takes something special to raise her eyebrows. But a 306-carat stone found in Australia brought her to tears. She calls it "The Royal One."

Australia is known for rare gemstones and the Royal opal is far from the largest ever unearthed in the outback. They have ranged in sizes up to 1,000 carats or more.

But this stone is unlike any other because of its color and its clarity. "It



made me cry when I saw it and I think it will make people gasp at the very least when they see it," Jetter told local ABC television station KOAT.

The Australian miner, who is only identified by the name, "Bobby," discovered the stone the day he retired and is now ready to share it with the world. He's a hard-scrabbled prospector who has been scraping up a living in the harsh outback for decades, and realizes blessings come when least expected.

"You get it when the good Lord's ready to give you a bit of it," he said while in Santa Fe to meet with Jetter. "That gives you a buzz I can tell you."

He's working with Jetter to create a one-of-a-kind piece of jewelry.

Jetter said a stone of this size and quality hasn't been found anywhere in the world since the 1930s. It's so precious, she's keeping it in a local bank vault.

Check out the video below and be sure to follow ThelMproper on Twitter for the latest in the world of arts.

From <http://www.theimproper.com/art/1421/rare-306-carat-australian-opal-unlike-any-found-in-last-80-years/>



Members Only Website Password

AOS website's members only area: Name: "member" and Password: "opalyear".

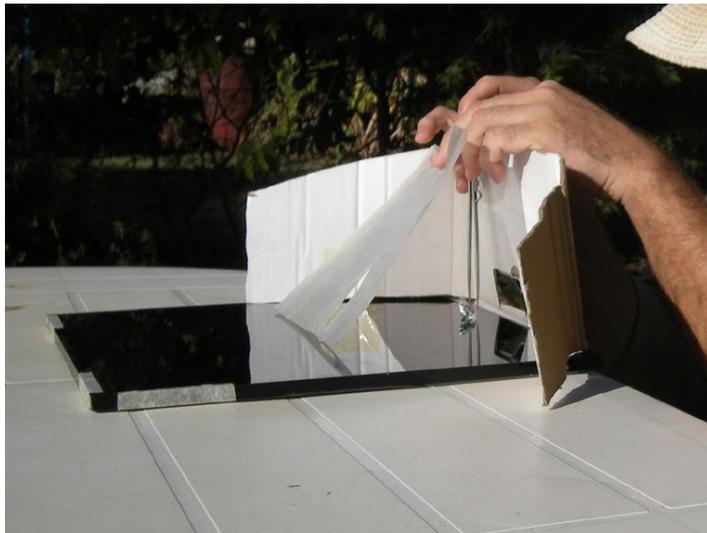
Photographing Gems— A Minimalist Approach

By Doug Menadue <http://www.Bespoke-Gems.Com>

Via Facets, 10/09

Here are some notes regarding how I take the gem pictures for my website. I have been often asked by people often because they want to photograph their own gems for personal or insurance reasons. I have to admit that my methods are a bit crude, but I have to work with what I've got and keep it simple.

Part 1



I like to take my photos in the morning using just sunlight. The light seems to be better this time of day. I don't use artificial lighting or lamps. Eventually I would like to get some proper lamps like the pros use and experiment with them, but at the moment I can get by without them.

I like to setup with the morning sunlight coming through a window. The earlier in the morning, the better. By 11 a.m., give or take a bit, I find the quality of the light is gone.

At the moment, for a base to put my stone on, I just use a white tile. Give it a clean to make sure no marks or specks are on it. An alternative that I have used is a piece of smooth (window) glass placed on top of a black surface (a book, folder, etc.). This will create a nice reflective surface effect in the photo. Depends on the gem as to which surface I use.

Position the tile on a table in the sunlight close to the edge. I would recommend that you avoid doing all this on tables or floor that have hard surfaces. I dropped a stone once, and it chipped when it hit the floor. Alternatively, place towels or something similar over any hard surfaces (except the tile).

Next, in order to diffuse the direct sunlight and soften any shadows, I get a piece of white printer paper and make a "tunnel" over the tile.

I use blue tack to keep it from moving. At the rear of the paper "tunnel", I stand another piece of white printer paper and fasten it in place. Told you it was pretty crude. Now, you'll need a digital camera that (a) allows you to take really close up pictures (mine has a "macro" zoom mode), and (b) has a timer.

Put the camera on a tripod.

To clean the stone, I use a polishing cloth and eyeglass cleaner. Same thing you use for cleaning your glasses.

With a pair of tweezers (if you need them) take the stone and place it gently on the tile. Be very careful not to drop it as it could chip.

Position the camera on its tripod as close as possible to the tile and stone. I usually have the lens on mine about 1-2" from the stone.

Orient the stone accordingly to get the best position/angle, and make sure it's in the picture. You may also need to move the tile slightly to take advantage of the sunlight and compensate for

shadow creep. Now, to avoid camera movement when taking the photo, I use the timer. When I have the shot composed, I set the timer (it's 10 seconds on mine) and shoot. This one of those little secrets and means you don't get blurred photos. Using the tweezers, move the stone around and take a number of shorts from different angles. I usually take up to a dozen or more photos of a gem. This gives me a good choice to work with.

Part 2

When finished, download all the photos to your computer. What I do next is sort through the photos to select a few with which I am most happy. I adjust these using Photoshop. You will need a photo editing program. I use Adobe Photoshop, but there are plenty of others out there like Paintshop Pro, etc. Use the one you are most comfortable with. They can all pretty much do the same thing.

The reason I adjust my photos is to make the gem look as close to natural as possible. The camera rarely takes a perfect picture. I also crop the picture to remove extraneous background things and focus in on the stone. This allows me to get consistently sized images.

The adjustments I usually make are combinations of:

- Levels (i.e., lighting levels, aka White Balance)
- Curves (adjusts the entire tonal range of the image)
- Brightness and contrast
- Touch up and remove any spots/dust/marks/fluff, etc. that might be on the stone.



Any good photo editing program will have these functions (though possibly named differently). There is no easy way to describe exactly the changes that are required as each photo is different. Its basically a case of trial and error until you get the results you want.

A word of caution before you begin editing your photos, make a backup of them so if you happen to really botch things up you can always go back to the beginning. I usually ZIP everything up first to make my backup.

I also rename my photos to identify the stone, e.g., "Stone3_Citrine_RoundBrilliant.jpg".

That's more or less it. It really is a case of playing around and experimenting until you hit on a formula that works for you. Try to keep it simple, and have fun. Good luck!!

Reprinted from Facet Talk, March/April 2009, Number 166. Facet Talk is the newsletter of the Australian Faceters Guild.

From <http://www.csms.us/pickandpack/Pick&Pack2009/09%20Nov.pdf>

Ethiopian Opal Agony and Ecstasy

From the [GemologyOnline.com](http://www.gemologyonline.com) Forum
Posted from 9/1/2011 to 10/4/2011

InTheDark , Florida
The Opal Express

The American Opal Society

I got hooked on this material two weeks ago. There were obvious problems with its fragility. It's often difficult to correctly orient because you are unable to properly assess the life of the stone in its natural state. But it's soft and easy to work dry.

My first few stone cabs cut and pre-polished to 600-grit dry then final polished with CEO2 wet. It's a nice finish but the opals usually lost their life and base color with the water. OK, I was told they would dry out. In Florida its 60%+ humidity all summer, and after 10 days it looked like no real change in the finished stones. I got some DampRid, a desiccant, and put the finished opals in a container that was essentially 0% humidity. They seem to have dried out in hours, bringing back their earlier color and life. Two out of fourteen cracked and two others seem to have CEO2 discoloration. About 8 stones into my experience I started to completely wet the opal before CEO2 polishing and none of those have the discoloration. Looks like that won't happen again.

I wonder if wetting and drying the discolored stones might help them. I will look for some method of drying them that is less rapid but I don't have a way to measure humidity.

As usual, I know I've come to the right place. Thanks in advance for sharing your own past pain and perhaps sparing myself and others from the pitfalls.

Finally, these opals are freeeeeking awesome. I'm in love. I have three pieces of facet quality rough that I expect to produce some of the finest stones I've ever cut. That's next week.

Update: Looks like only one stone cracked and where it cracked was a clear weak spot so... not really a surprise. Also, the discolored stones have improved quite a lot overnight. Go figure. Maybe they are absorbing water out of the air.

bobsiv, Washington DC

Sounds like you have everything under control. But I'll mention that in my experience different stones show different levels of hydrophaneity. Some will saturate in seconds and completely dry out in hours (the drying process usually goes from totally clear -> cloudy and crappy looking -> back to appearance of the rough). Others will take hours to completely hydrate and can take literally months to totally dry out.

I cut mine wet so I don't have to worry about silicosis and I've never had a stone take up CeO. I have had a couple pull in some discoloration from using nasty old acetone to remove the dops, so I use clean acetone now.

Also, I don't know if you followed some of the earlier discussions on this material, but I and others recommend pavilion angles well below critical if you decide to facet your stones. I managed to kill the color play in a couple of really nice stones before I got my system down.

PS: I always like to see what other people are doing with this stuff. Love to see some pictures of your finished stones.

http://www.etsy.com/shop/FlatFacets?ref=pr_shop_more

InTheDark, Florida

You're suggesting a faceted gem that has no working pavilion, like every native cut POS I've ever seen? 35 degree pav angles?

I defer to experience and will try that on the first one at least.

Worst opal photography ever:

Stonebender, Las Vegas, NV

June 2013

Page 3



Enjoy the Ethiopian stuff! It can be a treat to work with and a bear at the same time. Try adjusting your white balance on your camera, should help with the quality a bit:

Bob is just suggesting you give the stone a deliberate window. We're not trying to highlight and reflect the body color of the stone when faceting opal with play of color except in special cases- doing so will drown out the play of color. It makes sense to cut to proper angles so the play of color magnifies and reflects, but AFAIK reality takes an opposite outcome. Plus with all those color flashing around the crown, no one's going to pay attention to a window.

Ryan Quantz, A.J.P. (GIA), Gemcutter, Jewelry-Artist and Perfectionist.

mehoose, Australia

ITD, there's a group of us who soak before doing anything. This actually helps show up internal problems and if it's going to crack, you want it to happen before, not during or after.

That said, you'll still more than likely get the odd one that will give up after finishing. Also, some will revert fully back, some will stay clear, some can look quite yuck and some will never make up their mind, always changing with humidity.

They will absorb colours but if fully saturated beforehand this should be kept to a minimum if there's any at all.

Swishman, USA

Your problem with CeO discoloration is not the CeO but rather the pigments used in cheap CeO. Stick with either optical grade CeO or French Cerium, or try M-5 polish. Use them on felt for optimal results. I would also go much higher than 600grit before polishing. I go all the way to 3K pre-polish at minimum before the final polish. Sometimes even doing a 50K pre-polish. But the color bleeding issue is from cheap CeO and cheap diamond pastes using the pigments. I have never had any issues with the optical grade CeO from Vulcan Workshop, M-5, nor French Cerium.

<http://www.gemaddicts.com> <--- My Website

<http://www.gemsbyjennifer.com/store> <--- Wifey's Store

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/digitaldevo> <--- My Portfolio

gsellis, Suwanee, GA US

Try an acetone soak on your stained ones. It may help remove any dye. It also dehydrates the material.

George Ellis, www.faceting.biz

bohsiv, Washington DC

Looks like some nice bright material. Have fun with the faceting, the clearer stuff makes really neat cut stones (and if you're selling them, in my experience they go fast and at a good profit).

http://www.etsy.com/shop/FlatFacets?ref=pr_shop_more

InTheDark, Florida

As usual, a wealth of ideas for the asking. Thanks all. This is without question the nicest, friendliest forum I've ever frequented.

I've switched over to a lot of Lambina opal for a couple days as the new ideas pour in. That never makes me uneasy.

InTheDark, Florida

I faceted three of these and posted photos here:

<http://gemologyonline.com/Forum/phpBB2/viewtopic.php?f=8&t=3592&p=150280#p150280>

Swishman, USA

George, I know folks who have successfully get the CeO pigments almost all out with the acetone soak, but others had little to no luck. Same goes for diamond paste colors. So, seems like it depends on the type of pigment used.

InTheDark, Florida

Has anyone tried to stabilize this material? I'm thinking maybe dunking one in half epoxy and half alcohol then see how it sets up. I have not the slightest difficulty rationalizing such a process.

Thoughts?

Swishman, USA

Jon, I have never had it happen personally to me. The ones I have seen it happen to have this real pinkish CeO, looks way to pink for me. I am thinking you may be on to something!!!! Maybe someone is using pigments to dye another cheaper compound the same color! I have only had it happen with a cheap tube of diamond paste from China, lol.

To seal the opal simply take 1 quart jar of Acetone, squeeze in both tubes of Epoxy 330 clear, and dissolve. Now out your material into it. Soak it for about a week. Remove and let dry a few days. Remember to agitate the jar daily. This is the easiest method.

Best method is to use a coffee maker and heat your canning jar of Opticon. Tutorial is around here somewhere.

Conny Forsberg, Sweden

This seems to me to be a method which could lead to that you sit with a bunch of close to transparent opals with a less than optimal color play. You have to check your opals before by soaking in water and see how they behave regarding to color play. Maybe I'm wrong about this. Have you found white/orange, opaque to translucent stones, to return to the original state after sealing, Swishman?

Conny Forsberg FGA

gondwana, Australia

Sounds like this Ethiopian stuff is not very good quality so I think I'll stick to the Lightening Ridge Black or Cooper Pedy white. Never had a problem with them as long as I cut away the sandstone rubbish, potch, sand-grains, sand islands, cracks, white milky clouds and any other flaw. But I don't like using epoxies or super-glues on them and therefore avoid using acetone and the like. To me dunking an expensive piece of opal into acetone is a sin.

InTheDark, Florida

Gearloose wrote:

I do not know about his particular species of opal but at first glance would be concerned about damaging the color.

The RI of water in the opal structure is 1. If the water were replaced with something with an RI closer to silica, some color play could be lost.

I don't know the opal optics but... are you sure? Isn't water ~1.3 RI or so? I figure epoxy and alcohol to be maybe 1.5-1.7. I'd love to hear this explained.

Anyhow, I did treat one finished faceted stone today. It was very slightly more attractive than it was totally dry and not nearly as nice as it was water wet.

gsellis, Suwanee, GA US

gondwana wrote:

Sounds like this Ethiopian stuff is not very good quality so I think I'll stick to the Lightening Ridge Black or Cooper Pedy white. Never had a problem with them as long as I cut away the sandstone rubbish, potch, sand-grains, sand islands, cracks, white milky clouds and any other flaw. But I don't like using epoxies or super-glues on them and therefore avoid using acetone and the like. To me dunking an expensive piece of opal into acetone is a sin. Let me rephrase this and see what you think.

sarc

You can't put Lightning Ridge Black or Cooper Pedy white in acetone? Sounds like this Australian stuff is not very good quality, so I think I'll stick with Welo. Never had a problem with them as long as I cut away the sandstone rubbish, potch, sand-grains, sand islands, cracks, white milky clouds and any other flaw. But I don't like using waxes on them and therefore avoid using alcohol and the

like. To me storing an expensive piece of opal with some water is a sin. /sarc

Water, alcohol and acetone are three examples of solvents. Welo is hydrophane. Alcohol and acetone can work as drying agents. It actually is pretty amazing that Welo can handle rapid changes in hydration without damage. I will continue to recommend using acetone with Welo as it cuts the drying time from 2 weeks to a day or 2 (dries and then it rehydrates to room humidity). Next time, I want to try some John Church's dried Virgin Valley... When I can afford it.

George Ellis, www.faceting.biz

gondwana, Australia

Dear Mr Ellis

If you're in such an urgent hurry to dry your opals I recommend you throw them in the laundry drier overnight. That would serve the double purpose of sorting the cracks and flaws as well as extracting the water plus you'll end up with a lot more than what you started with! Skin is composed of water but I wouldn't recommend drying your skin with acetone! Though some people will try anything.

lightspeed

Acetone.... sounds like a great way to speed up the dehydrating of your beef jerky.

Maybe this should be declared on sale as technically it is a treatment; you are force de-hydrating using chemicals in a process to achieve your results on a porous material. Opal is hygroscopic therefore any process affecting this should be declared as a treatment. The end result may be the same but you are obtaining it by un-natural process. I am not a fan of any treatments on any gem and can barely abide heating. My 2c

gsellis, Suwanee, GA US

lightspeed wrote:

Cutting is a "treatment." You are hydrating it while using water for cooling/cutting and you are hitting it with WD-40 or Dr. Iggy's Snake Oil. Guess you need to count those too. The acetone helps remove the WD-40 too, which clearly is absorbed while cutting. You must be careful on keeping your laps clean as it will migrate swarf into the stone too but usually starts scratching like heck before you get there. The pores are huge and will migrate about anything and as noted, even dyes.

George Ellis, www.faceting.biz

lightspeed

The use of a cooling agent or lubricant should not have anything to do with effecting the internal makeup of a given gem (common exceptions to this are Ruby, Emerald where oiling is a commercial treatment) as the intended purpose for the application of these chemicals (yes water is a naturally occurring chemical) is not for effecting a gemstones internal makeup but is an external application for where the gem is in contact with another surface for the purpose of cutting forming or polishing. I myself used refined Kero to cut as a lubricant now do not, the reason for this was the absorption into emerald(think of surface pressure between lap, lube and stone) while cutting, you are inadvertently treating the stone with oil even though not by intention and the use of which was for another purpose. My conscience will not allow me to do this, and to sell as an untreated stone just because it wasn't for the specific intention of affecting the gems internals and appearance.

The use of a non-natural and refined chemical and the soaking of the gem in it is for the singular purpose of effecting the stones appearance by water/oil absorption into a liquid that will evaporate easily.

I am not against dehydrating your opal but the use of immersion in a refined chemical denotes treatment, and in the case of a liquid, this means immersion so that the chemical can penetrate the material being immersed.

The Opal Express

The American Opal Society

June 2013

Page 5

Why not try a non-penetrating chemical like Calcium Chloride crystals or Silica gel crystals or even Table salt where the use of these does not penetrate the internal structure and the moisture will still be absorbed. Thereby not introducing a liquid and soaking to directly affect the gems internal structure. That's not going to help your oiling issues though.

Just because everyone else does it doesn't mean we all should.

Well that's another 2c which makes 4c on this topic but in Australia 5c is the lowest denominator.

Swishman, USA

I only did the milky to clear base material. It returned to all of its original color play IIRC. I have never had an issue with losing the color play with the Opticon treatment. You can have them end up more milky vs. totally clear if you get too much heat while soaking them though.

As for soaking in acetone and called it a treatment!?!? Sorry, but that is a bit overboard to say it politely. If you want to start considering these treatments then EVERY SINGLE stone out there is treated, period! Almost every single stone out there is soaked in something to clean it after mining! Tourmaline often soaked in Muriatic Acid, corundum in hydrochloric and/or SIOL or Oxalic Acid, quartz is soaked in SIOL or Oxalic Acid, and the list can go on forever. So, if soaking in a cleaning chemical is a treatment, then there really are NO such things as untreated stones. Not to mention, if you wish to get this technical... A faceted or cabbed gemstone is treated as well even if no other treatments existed. A treatment is defined as something that changes the appearance of the gemstone in order to gain beauty, which in turn causes it to gain value(in most cases, except extreme treatments like glass filling and such)... Faceting or cabbing or even simply tumble polishing exposes the gemstones to all kinds of chemicals, solvents, abrasives, and the act of cutting and/or polishing the stones is in fact significantly changing their appearance (far more than most standard treatments do) in order to increase beauty (in most cases. .lol) and increase their value, the same exact point of normal treatments. So, by technical definitions, faceting, tumbling, and cabbing are all simply treatments as well.

I am all for full disclosure on treatments! Everyone knows that, but there is a line that shouldn't be crossed. I mean, come on, ALL opals should be seasoned anyways, but due to the nature of hydrophane opals, soaking in acetone, draws out the moisture much more readily and can cause them to become seasoned in days versus years. Yet it changes nothing to their appearance, increases stability, does nothing that sitting them in a dry area / room (dehumidifier) for 6 months+ doesn't do in the same way essentially. CA is used to dop them, and they get soaked ion Acetone to remove the CA typically anyways. I don't understand the issue here.

lightspeed

As for soaking in acetone and NOT calling it a treatment, sorry that's a bit overboard to say it politely!?!? You are soaking to improve the appearance and properties of a gem.

You are drying it to restore its colour, also removing water from the stone, altering its properties artificially. Franks dictionary of Gem terms,

TREATMENT: Is the process of artificially altering and improving the appearance and properties of gem materials.

Sorry swish I understand your point and understand what treatment entails. If you had an emerald or ruby and you soaked it in acetone, it would be to probably remove a dye oil or epoxy from the interior of the gem. Same principal, you are removing from the internal of the opal.

If someone handed you an emerald sapphire or ruby and told you it was treated, do you throw your arms in the air because it has been cut and polished and cleaned or are you more likely to be thinking it has been enhanced, I think the latter.

I understand your stance on a technical point swish but if simply cutting using refined Kero is treating an emerald you won't get me to see this one differently you and whoever else can simply do as you like, it bothers me not.

gsellis, Suwanee, GA US

Acetone is not a treatment. It is not even slightly permanent. All you need to do is drop the stone back in water for 20 minutes and you are back to where you started.

George Ellis, www.faceting.biz

lightspeed

Oiling a ruby or emerald is not permanent either, all you need to do is drop the gem back into acetone for 20 minutes and the oil is gone. Soaking a gem in acetone under the definition of terms is a treatment no matter how small or technical you think it is.

There are several ways to dry out your gem, none of which are applying a solvent to the internal structure, directly messing with the internals of a gem structure is treatment.

gondwana, Australia

Two old diggers overheard at the Digger's Rest Hotel:

"Hey Blue. Did'ya ere some blokes found some new road base they're callin opal?"

"Nah".

"Yeah, got from Afreekar. They reckon it's so dripping wet they gotta soak it in nail polish remover!"

"Wha' for"?

"Dunno. They say to get the water out, but then they soak it in water again to put the water back in".

"Sounds a bit nuts to me. But I tell ya what, if they can soak the grey outta potch and put a bit of nail polish colour back in, then they'll be onto somethin".

Swishman, USA

Sorry lightspeed, you will find NO untreated gemstones then, nit unless you dig them yourself! But then how would you clean them, since acids and solvents have to be used to so-so. Almost all tourmaline, corundum, quartz, beryl, etc. are soaked to clean them. Soaking in acetone is no different.

For the record, I don't soak my Welo in acetone except to remove the dops, common practice with all gemstones. So then all faceted stones are treated then by your definition. :/.

I'm not bashing your opinion; I firmly am for each and every one to have their own. But, it is being hypocritical that is what I am getting at. Soaking a Welo to season it quickly is treatment, to you, but soaking stones in everyone to remove shipping wax and or glue isn't!? Soaking rough and specimens in acids and solvents to clean all the stuff off isn't treatment!? Faceting outer cabbing, which drastically alters the entire stone, isn't?!

It is fine to pick a side and take a stance. But you can't have your cake and way it too. If one soak is a treatment, them all are treatments, since they see the same chemicals and same soaking times, lol. If one is a treatment then so is the other, our should say others, including cutting them.

I prefer to just let my Welo's season with the rest of my opals, sitting in TheCave™, lol, or out back on the slab when weather permits. I'm not in any hurry and have nothing but time, with tons (literally) of material that needs to be cut, so not like I need outer in a hurry, I can cut something else. Just figured I better specify that I don't use this method, since you seem to think I do/did. I was just merely pointing out a bit of hypocritical standards being applied to things, that's all.

gsellis, Suwanee, GA US

And for the record Jamie, my 'treatment' time is long enough to remove the CA. Usually up to 8 hours (because I drop it in the jar

and go to bed). Since Welo can transport water completely through a 3-4ct stone with a 3 minute exposure and waiting 20 minutes....

And a reemphasis for any removing CA with acetone or alcohol, use NEW, CLEAN fluids! Any color will jump right in (and seeing the dye discussions - it is probably the easiest stone to dye.) If you removed wax and a couple other CA dopped stones, then put the Welo in there.... that color is now added to your stone.

George Ellis, www.faceting.biz

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From Rags to Riches

Chapter 35 – Change of Strategy

By Peter Greisl

It was about 4:30 Sunday afternoon, when there was a knock on the Door and Doug Johnson was standing outside and ask if I can go with him to the Airstrip as he is flying to Adelaide and for me to take the Land Cruiser back to his place after he is gone. I told Chris that I am off with Doug and we drove to the Strip. There was his Twin Engine Piper Comanche a six-seater Plane, Doug got out and he explained what will happen, he showed me how to drain the tanks from water, I watched carefully as soon as clean fuel came out of the cock he turned it off and told me to do the same on the other wing while he was watching me. When this was complete he told me to turn the propeller a few times while he is in the cockpit and operating all the necessary switches he then told me to keep turning till he shows me a thumbs up sign at which I am to step back from the propeller as he will turn on the Ignition and start the engine and this will be repeated at the other engine. He nodded from the cockpit to me and started turning the propeller on the port side engine, I turned it for three four times and I shouted to him' Hey Doug at this rate we never get this bloody thing in the air' He laughed and gave me a thumbs up. I stepped back and the engine started to turn the

Propeller and I hear Doug saying out loud 'fire one' and the engine burst into a roar and it was running, He pointed to the propeller on the Starboard side and started to do same, again after the fourth turn he showed me thumbs up and I stepped back, I could see his mouth moving and knew that he was saying fire two. The second engine started to roar. I went around the side to where he was sitting and stepped up to his window, and he said, 'wait till I disappear of the horizon, then go back I will see you on Wednesday late afternoon, just lock up the Land cruiser, see you then' I Nodded and stepped down and left the Landing Strip area to go to the Land Cruiser and waited, he was taxied a few hundred feet and then the engines roared and the plane lifted off, I waited till he disappeared behind the horizon. I got in to the Land Cruiser and drove back.

Arriving at his place I locked up the land Cruiser and locked the gate of his Yard.

As I was walking back to our place, a guy came up to me, I stopped and said 'G'day mate, can I help you with anything?' He Introduced himself as being our Neighbor next to Marianne's Place and his name is Rob, he is up here with his wife and Brother, Trevor and they are working on Boundary Rider, He ask me if I can give him a tow down to Laszlo's Place as his Ute is overheating and he thinks he blew a head gasket. I said, 'Sure no problem,' I went inside and told Chris what I am doing and got the keys of Johnny for the Ute, and told Rob to jump in. We went to his place I turned the Ute around and Rob got a rope and tied it on to my tow bar and then on to his FX Ute. While he was doing this his wife I assumed came out and Introduced herself as Lorraine, and said, what a way to make new acquaintances, I assured her it was no problem and we have to get together one evening to do this all properly. She said 'I like that and like to meet your wife and daughter.' when everything was ready to go I also met Trevor as well, the whole family seems very nice and they are about the same age as we are.

I remember her from the butcher shop when she comes to buy meat.

I got in the Ute and Rob into his, he gave me a sign of being ready and I started the Ute and took up the slack of the towing rope

and we started to move. It was an easy journey without any problems, we untied at Laszlo's place and they pushed the car into his yard. I waited till Rob finished his explanation to Laszlo and then we returned to his place, he offered me money which I refused to take it by saying 'there could be a time when I need help, but you can offer me a beer and I smiled,' He replied I would have done that anyhow, come in, their place was similar to ours, they did not have any children. I learned that they have been here for a couple of years and found enough money to buy themselves a Backhoe and doing quite well, Robs parents are coming to visit next week spend time with them for a week,

I finished my beer and thanked them for their hospitality and Lorraine said 'How about coming over next Saturday arvo and we can have a BBQ?' I replied you're on, what do you want me to bring, Rob answered by saying just your wife and daughter, and bring your partner as well,' I thanked them hoped in the Ute and drove home, which was a great distance of 300 meters.

Upon my arrival, Chris said 'everything ok' I replied yes we are all invited to a BBQ at their place and I told them what went on.

'Ok Guys are you ready to go to dinner which I promised.' Chris replied 'what do you think, aren't we looking read to go?' Smart Alec I said lets go then, we got in the VW and drove down to Gus's Place. After a scrumptious meal we went home and Chris put Beatrix to Bed.

I organized with Johnny what I would like to have done with Scotty tomorrow, to pick Scotty up before he drives to the claim and come up here to pick up all the Gear and go to the claim, as I have no inclination of loading up tonight. Johnny agreed and after everything was organized we went to bed, to feel fresh and ready for action.

The next morning Johnny left earlier and I went to the shop at the normal time and started my duties.

It was a quiet morning which gave me time to catch up with my book work and make the shop ship shape.

Around 12 o'clock Johnny came bursting in the shop and just said, 'it's all over,' What's over I replied, he stammered, everything in the new tunnel collapsed, we were gouging and everything went well when suddenly Scotty broke through the wall and fell into another tunnel' we got rid of about four feet of dirt when it happened, we then started to take out the level and there was a huge boulder and as soon as we got the level of in to our buckets the boulder came down and everything collapsed on the other side of the tunnel. I do not recommend that we are to continue there other than putting in a cut.' I just shook my head in disbelief and said why is it? Whenever things starting to go well, something else seems to happen.' Johnny replied, 'let's be honest this place is like a honeycomb,' and we were lucky and had a good run, not to many people would be that adventurous like we were.' Well Johnny in that case would you use the rest of the day and check out surrounding claims and see if you find anything which has not been worked as much and scratch around to see if there is any traces anywhere'. As close as possible to our claim' 'Well that's what I had in mind, but first I drop Scotty home I don't want him to be involved in that as he will go back to his claim in a couple of weeks and it is no big deal to move any ladders by myself' Johnny replied 'Ok, Let's do that and I come out as soon as I finish here' I said. Johnny left and he took Scotty back home.

Of course under these circumstances working in the shop became suddenly a burden as my mind was on the mining situation. 4 o'clock was not coming quick enough so I can join Johnny and have a look myself how serious the damage was.

Finally here it was closing time I jumped in the car and drove to the Claim.

Upon arrival I saw Johnny trying to remove the Ladders, I shouted to him to wait I would like to go down and have a look myself and assess the situation.' He stopped and waited and I said 'get some lights going please so we can have a better look' He started the compressor and hooked up the lights and brought the

cable lamp boards to the shaft, I climbed down and Johnny lowered the lights and all the cable down and then he descended and joined me,. I walked towards the collapsed tunnel and shone the light around. I asked him why didn't you guys pull some of the dirt from the top back to see what is really going on behind the mullock heap? He replied by saying well according to Scotty who has more experience than me he said it would be waste of time as everything behind would have collapsed as well.'

Well I never take any information I receive until I have a look myself, I know I am the new boy on the block but it could have been the same scenario as with the last collapse, I re[plied.

Ok then I go and get the shovels and the picks and let's see what we can find out, Johnny climbed up and I heard the winch motor starting and he lowered the buckets down with the tools in it.

I just grabbed a pick and crawled to the top on the collapsed mount.

I started pushing the dirt down and Johnny filled the buckets as soon as he had three full he pushed them on the pipe towards the shaft. I was breaking out in a sweat and took of my shirt and shoveled more dirt down, Johnny shouted he is climbing up to pull the dirt, I went to the shaft and hooked up the one bucket after another and after the last bucket I yelled up get the other two buckets from Laszlo which he did so we had 5 buckets. I went to back to the mount and started shoveling again, I estimated that we have here about 30 buckets of dirt, but I am not clearing out the lot if there is nothing left behind the heap. We repeated this for about 15 buckets and I had a nice opening to shove in the light board, and poked my head in.

I noticed that a drive went off to the right and all the ceiling above has gone and half of the dirt is on the other side, I looked up and I noticed the indent of where a huge boulder would have been sitting, so my assumption was the Jack hammering shook the bloody thing lose and it came down and stopped supporting the roof which collapsed right up to the gypsum layer.

I shouted to Johnny 'Mate if you would have moved and I would have found out what the real problem was, I would have been pissed off.' Johnny just humbly replied, 'I learned a lesson here tonight.' Well all is not lost, let's get into it and see what we have on the other side, you should have done this, this afternoon when you had Scotty.' We switched jobs a couple times and worked like bloody Slaves on a Galleon fighting against a Tsunami.

I really don't know what time it was but we were both filthy dirty and more or less just staggering the last halve hour. But we cleaned all up and one good thing was with Johnny he noticed the opal level and kept it in the two buckets from Laszlo, which have to be tumbled.

Now all we have to do now is break through halve way down and then we have access to the other side where obviously the supporting boulder should be laying under all that dirt.

Once we cleaned up we had a good look and it will take about halve a day to clear up the rest to make the drive accessible.

We pulled up the buckets and lights and climbed up the ladder which was a tremendous effort, I was absolutely stuffed. We shoved everything on the Ute and I said to Johnny, 'tomorrow morning pick up Scotty and clear out the rest, take a couple pipes with you which as you will need to extend the run, and then start scratching for traces so you find a way where we can put it a drive, but what I suggest take a piece of paper and pen and go down and draw the tunnels and then climb up and stand on the top and near the shaft with the drawing in the right perspective relating to the situation down below and have Scotty walking around with your guidance to see if there is other shafts and mark them on the drawing and get measurements by stepping it out. This will give you a Idea in which direction we can drive without hitting another shaft, but unfortunately we do not know what we will hit below there could be more tunnels etc.' Johnny acknowledged that this was a good Idea and replied he will follow it to the letter.

Ok, let's piss off home I am absolutely stuffed. He got in to the Ute and drove off with me following behind him, while I was driving I was thinking to myself, amazing no Imaginations these young guys, ready to throw in the towel, I am glad I could stop him to start moving to another claim.

When we arrived home Chris was waiting and looked really worried as the time was just on midnight. Chris came over to the car and kissed me and looked me up and down and said with a grinning face, 'I can't see any lipstick so you are save, anyhow you are too dirty for anyone to touch you, what happened?' I told her everything and she was shocked and replied 'you could have been under there,' No we were always working under a very well supported roof it is only when you work on a new area where you cannot see any structure changes, tomorrow we will no more,' Johnny you can wait I have my shower first I like to get some hot water over my body to soothe these aching joints.'

When I was finish Johnny went and sat down and ask Chris how her day was while I got a beer out of the fridge. She told me that she had a visit from Lorraine and was very pleased to meet her and they had a pleasant afternoon and Lorraine told her also about the BBQ, and said to Chris anytime she feels bored or lonely to call over there and if she needs something from the co-op etc, she will take her as she got a car and does drive. I told Chris that's nice and she is a lovely person and so is Trevor and Rob, and there could be a friendship developing which is nice.

Johnny finally came out and we had dinner a great meat loaf Chris made with Mash potatoes. I told Chris tonight is Massage time I hope you got some deep heat left.

Johnny got a pen and paper and took it with him and said good night and went to bed.

We were not far behind him, and Chris gave a good working over which relaxed me and I dropped into deep sleep.

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June 2013 Gem & Mineral Shows

More shows can be found at <http://www.rockngem.com/show-dates-display/?ShowState=ALL>

8-9—GLENDDORA, CA: Annual show; Glendora Gem Club; Goddard Middle School Gymnasium; 859 E. Sierra Madre; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-4; free admission; more than 12 dealers, geodes cut on the spot, lapidary displays; contact Bonnie Bidwell, (626) 893-9602

8-9—LA HABRA, CA: Annual show; North Orange County Gem & Mineral Society; La Habra Community Center; 101 W. La Habra Blvd.; Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; jewelry, rocks, minerals, tools; contact Loretta Ogden, 20904 Trigger Ln., Diamond Bar, CA 91765, (909) 598-2456; e-mail: fbriktr1@aol.com; Web site: nocgms.org

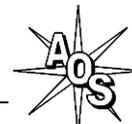
14-16—WOODLAND HILLS, CA: Annual show; RockAtomics Gem & Mineral Society; Pierce College Farm Center; 20800 Victory Blvd.; Fri. 10-5, Sat. 10-5, Sun. 10-5; free admission; "RockHound Roundup"; dealers, demonstrations, gems, mineral specimens, beads, jewelry; contact William Rucker, (818) 428-7834; e-mail: rockhound@rockatomics.org; Web site: www.rockatomics.com

15-16—SAN FRANCISCO, CA: Retail show; Pacific Crystal Guild; Fort Mason Center; 99 Marina Blvd.; Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-4; adults \$6, children (under 12) free; 38 dealers, minerals, gems, crystals, beads, metaphysical healing tools; contact Jerry Tomlinson, PO Box 1371, Sausalito, CA 94966, (415) 383-7837; e-mail: jerry@crystalfair.com; Web site: www.crystalfair.com

27-30—SAN BERNARDINO, CA: Show and sale; Orange Belt Mineralogical Society; Western Regional Little League Baseball Park; 6707 Little League Dr.; Thu. 1-5, Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 9-3; free admission; rocks, minerals, gems, jewelry, tools, books, crafts, raffle, mineral identification, geodes, crystals, arrowheads; contact Ken Gard, 205 W. Benedict #8, San Bernardino, CA 92408, (909) 624-1782 or (909) 887-5507; e-mail: kengard@roadrunner.net; Web site: OBMSRocks.yolasite.com

27-30—SAN BERNARDINO, CA: Show and sale; Orange Belt Mineralogical Society; Western Regional Little League Baseball Park; next to main office, 6707 Little League Dr.; Fri. 9-6, Sat. 9-6, Sun. 9-3; free admission; dealers, tailgate, rocks, minerals, gems, jewelry, crafts, tools, raffle, mineral identification, geodes, crystals, books; contact Ken Gard, 205 W. Benedict #8, San Bernardino, CA 92408, (909) 624-1782 or (909) 887-5507; e-mail: kengard@roadrunner.com; Web site: OBMSRocks.yolasite.com

28-30—SAN DIEGO, CA: Wholesale and retail show; Gem Faire Inc.; Scottish Rite Center; 1895 Camino del Rio S; Fri. 12-6, Sat. 10-6, Sun. 10-5; adults \$7 (3 days), children (11 and under) free; jewelry, gems, beads, crystals, silver, rocks, minerals, more than 70 exhibitors, jewelry repair while you shop; contact Allen Van Volkinburgh, (503) 252-8300; e-mail: info@gemfaire.com; Web site: www.gemfaire.com



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ADDITIONAL BADGES (Your First Badge is <u>free</u> when joining)		\$10	
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The Opal Express

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**Volume #46 Issue #6
June 2013**

Some Topics In This Issue:

- Seventh AOS Live Auction on June 13th
- Photographing Gems— A Minimalist Approach
- Ethiopian Opal Agony and Ecstasy
- From Rags to Riches - Ch. 35 -A Change of Strategy

Important Dates:

- June 13 - General Meeting:
Live Opal Auction!!!
Bring your opal, gems, jewelry, etc. to make a few \$\$\$!
Bring your \$\$\$ to get some great deals!

— GENERAL MEETINGS —

2nd Thurs. of the Month
7:30 pm - 9:30 PM

Garden Grove Civic Women's Club
9501 Chapman Ave.
Garden Grove, CA 92841
(NE corner of Gilbert & Chapman)

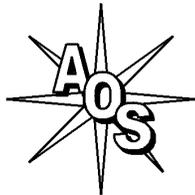
MEETING ACTIVITIES

Opal Cutting, Advice, Guest Speakers,
Slide Shows, Videos, Other Activities

TO:

June 13 Meeting

LIVE OPAL AUCTION!!!



The American Opal Society <http://OpalSociety.org>

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