

## Caveat Emptor

### Alain Viot

In the Emerald trade business in Bogotá, Colombia, there is a specific way of conducting business. While good stones and special stones are shown by the very owner, medium quality stones are usually traded by an intermediate seller.

This position is usually held by a member of a known and respected family, with not enough economical resources to buy and trade his own stones. He may actually offer some low quality stones of his own, along with somebody else's good quality Emeralds.

Normally this selling representative has little or no formal gemological training. So with somebody else's stones (normally cut stones, sometime rough ones) in his pockets, relying on his day to day experience, good will and a network of known potential buyers, he shows up in old Bogotá center where cutters and buyers offices are located. He may represent one or more sellers but should never disclose their names.

So, some time ago, when I was in a friend's office, such an intermediate man was showing off a pair of Emerald cabochons. Being an amateur, they invited me to look at them. The stones were gorgeous, looking like two very fine specimens of emerald trapiche, 4 to 5 cts cabochons, with

attractive - homogeneous strong green color, almost inclusion free with a well centered and well defined dark star pattern.

However checking them with a 10X hand loupe I saw tiny bubbles close to the junction between the supposed natural beryl and the carbonaceous dark pattern. Also the dark pattern was too neat to be true (see drawings 1 & 2).

As soon we made him understand that the stones were frauds, the seller took them back, leaving no time for a picture or an RI reading. Due to the way business is conducted there, we had no chance to ascertain the name of the owner.

Was he defrauded himself, or was he aware that the stones were man made material? If so, the fake stones are probably in the market again, being shown by a middle man - who ignores the fraud - to eventual buyers.

The only thing we were able to do, was to order the middle man not to show these stones any more, or any other stones from this particular owner. Also we warned him that he will have to return his badge giving access to trading offices if he ever comes back again with fakes. His name was sent around so as to watch him.

As long as people with no formal gemological training and ignoring commercial laws regarding treatment (in the case of Emerald), act as traders, there will be a lot of room for such deception.

**END**

*Ed: - Alain is a member of the UKFCG living in South America. He sent us this article in response to the article by Brian Fairless on page 14 of issue 69.*

When the motor got warm either the brass holder and/or the brushes would expand causing the brushes to hang up and not make contact with the commutator. The motor would slow down and eventually stop. The fix was to remove the brushes and lightly file down two of the four sides slightly to increase clearance. PROBLEM SOLVED!

Another area that was not completely thought out was the bolt used to adjust the drip pan up and down. At 3/4 inches long it was a finger buster, just too damned short. I purchased a 4 inch eye bolt as a replacement, from a hardware store. I covered the excess thread with a 3 inch piece of plastic tubing to keep the exposed threads from collecting grit. No more groping and swearing.

Stay tuned for other modifications as I come up with them.

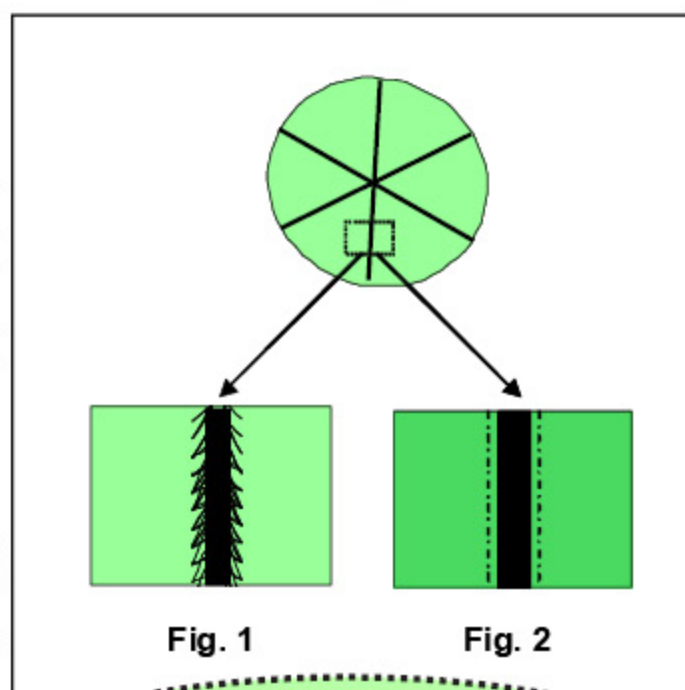


Fig. 1

Fig. 2

#### Emerald trapiche, cabochon cut

Fig. 1: Natural irregular pattern with medium color

Fig. 2: Man made material, pattern too perfect with bubbles zoning close to it and strong homogeneous color

## TIPS AND MODIFICATIONS FOR A RAYTECH-SHAW FACETING MACHINE

By - Martin Bliedernich

The following from Facets page 5 May 1993

I was taught faceting, ten years ago, on a Raytech-Shaw faceting machine. After being somewhat frustrated by what I consider some poor design features; I have, over the years, developed changes that have made faceting easier for me.

When I first received my machine the motor after an hour or so of faceting would move slower and slower until it stopped. The machine was sent back to the factory and returned to me with the condition still present. The problem occurred after the motor was warmed up. My teacher called the factory and found out that some motors had insufficient clearance between the brushes and their holder.