



gold-in-glass and its roots

When 5,000 years ago the big pyramids were being built on the plains of lower Egypt, a whole fleet of moon-barques was involved transporting chalk-stone from the mountains of the South via the Nile to the construction sites in the North. The nights spent in the desert areas were cold, and the sailors who rested at sand-banks or on the shores would warm themselves up with open fires. To protect the fires from the desert winds they sometimes used the chalk-stone blocks to surround the fires. Having done so, they often made a strange discovery the next morning. They found in the cooling ashes some unusual “gemstones” which had not been there before.



The clever Egyptians soon discovered the secret of this manifestation: they realised that chalk, quartz-sand, potash and fire were the four elements which led to the creation of these new “gemstones”.
Glass was born!





The art of manufacturing glass must have been one of the best guarded secrets of the Egyptian empire, and of course it was a state monopoly. When the archaeologists around Howard Carter opened the sarcophagus of Tut Ankh Amun in 1922, they found on the left hand of the mummy of the young king two rings. One was a massive gold ring with a so-called “cartridge”. The other was a ring worked in heavy gold with the most precious of Egypt’s gemstones: Glass. The fact that the ring of the Pharaoh was worked in blue glass, and not with lapis lazuli, proves that glass was at that time even more valuable than lapis, the blue gemstone which was being imported all the way from Afghanistan.

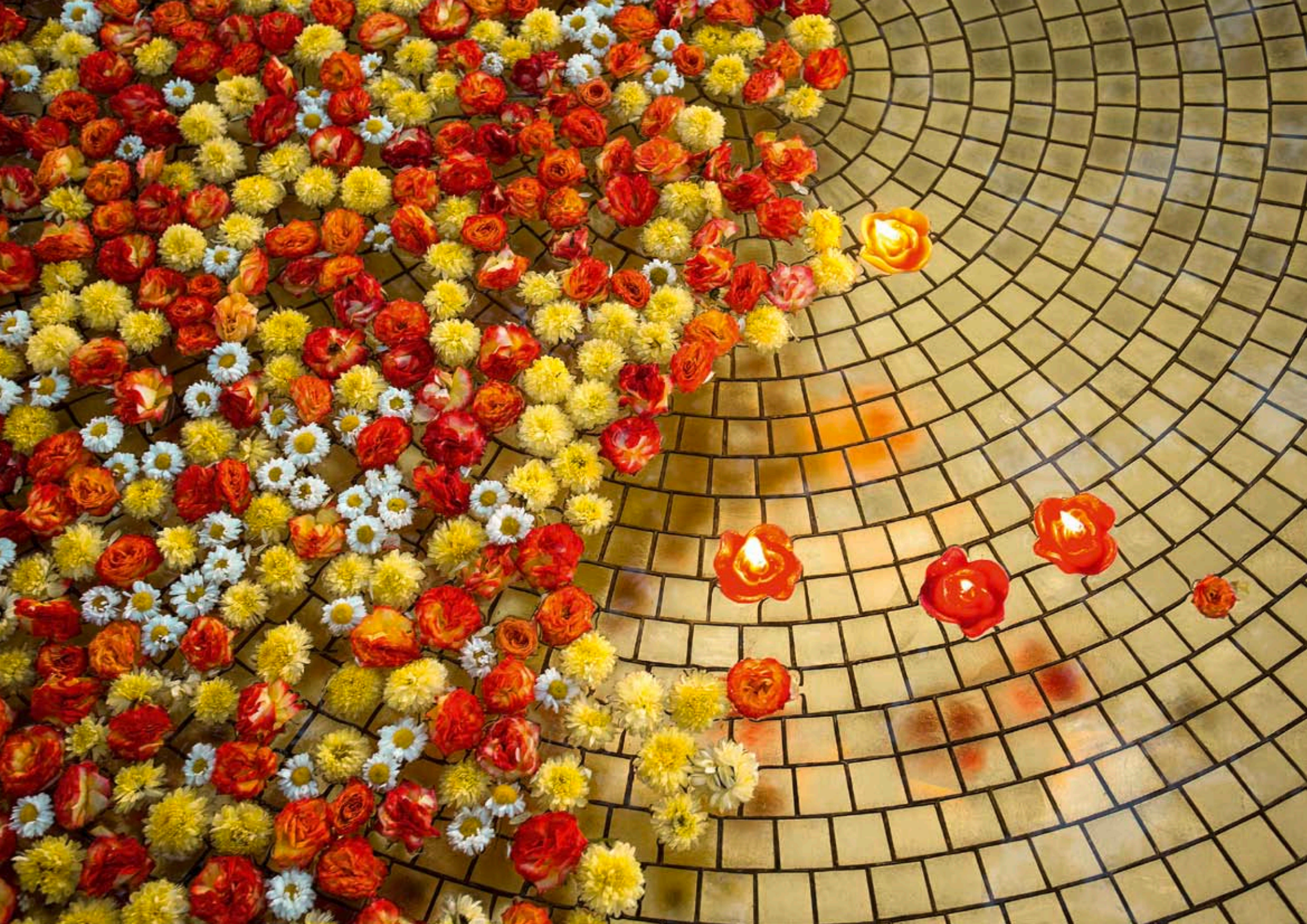


For the first three thousand years, in fact for more than half its history, glass served mainly as a gemstone for jewellery. Gold and glass, these were over many, many generations the two most precious commercial goods in ancient Egypt. In combination, set as jewellery, they were over several thousand years the most desirable goods that the people of Egypt could conceive of. And as the ring of Tut Ankh Amun and other findings showed, the ancient Egyptians had developed a variety in colour and a skill in the crafting of glass that has partially been lost today.









For 60% of the time glass has been around – set in gold, as a gemstone or in jewellery – it has surely left traces in the occult environment. Every material carries in its aura something of that which it has been used to create over time. The roots of glass, its history of genesis in ancient Egypt, in one of the most mystic of ancient civilisations, its position as probably the most expensive and sought-after commodity over a very long period of time at the courts of the Pharaohs, and its closeness to gold, all that is somehow still present in glass.



The combination of gold and glass for the purpose of interior decoration experienced its first big appearance in ancient Byzantium, approximately 200 AD. When working with gold one tries to maximise its effect by letting it appear as large as possible. Gold is very soft, and one can hammer one gram of it into an area as big as a table. Already in ancient Egypt rings and other jewellery items were often made out of gold leaf wrapped around a solid core of resin. The problem of the goldsmiths was always: how can I achieve the maximum area of gold covering with the smallest amount of gold possible, without running into the danger of the gold being too thin and getting damaged? The old Byzantines had a brilliant idea: they manufactured golden tiles by covering gold leaf with glass.





There was, however, a problem with this new technique. Glass in its melted state tends to absorb metals. If you were to pour hot melted glass onto gold leaf, the glass would absorb the gold and the optical appearance of gold would disappear totally. This problem was solved by the Byzantines by using a special, fast melting glass, so-called glass-flux. Glass-flux is rich in alkaline substances and therefore melts already at relatively low temperatures. With that, one could pour glass over gold leaf without the cold gold getting absorbed by the glass. The disadvantage was that glass-flux is not very water-resistant, and so one could use the gold tiles only in interior applications. Thereby, however, they hardly underwent any change, and today, after nearly 2,000 years, one can still admire the first glass-gold-glass tiles used in an early Christian basilica in Istanbul.



Even though the mystical element of the process of its invention and the 3,000 years of its early history are forgotten today, and although most people today regard glass just as a technical working material, still it has retained some of its magic and its special attraction to man. There were, and still are in our modern times, only a few schools of- or specialities in- glass art, which could or can connect to the hidden depth of the material. Examples are seen in Venetian glass, Murano glass, the Tiffany art of working with glass, the old Bohemian crystal glass, Pate-Verre glass art, the Bavarian glass blowing art and Swarovski crystal glass creations.



modern gold-in-glass

Gold-in-Glass sees itself as a new style in the craft of fusing glass, with a new technical element: the vacuum fusing of gold with glass. Gold-in-Glass has indeed invented and developed today's most modern glass-fusing technology, while retaining the aesthetic component rooted in the tradition of antique glass art, which is in every way as important as the technical aspect. The combination of the two elements, gold and glass, as used in interior decoration by the old Byzantines 2,000 years ago, and now continued with our self-developed modern technique of vacuum-fusing, is nothing less than a fully new style of glass art, appropriate for the modern world thanks to the new technology used, yet still rooted in the old traditions of glass manufacture.

This new technique is now expressing itself in new art-forms via Gold-in-Glass crafts. Whether as jewellery, as interior decoration material, as elements in outside facades, as accessories, or as simply objects in daily life, the flair of the old Egyptian or Byzantine style can be seen and felt by any sensitive and art-conscious person.



By way of its embodiment in the outer skin of Matrimandir, Gold-in-Glass art has already influenced and shaped Auroville's outward appearance. Now the same art seeks to become part of Auroville's economic and cultural life. Gold-in-Glass, uniquely manufactured and crafted by Auroville's Mitra unit in Auroville, is beginning to be marketed world-wide, with its technology covered by patents.





Every art craft expresses its own, very specific elements. Gold-in-Glass art has – by its two basic elements of gold and glass, and its ultra-modern technique of vacuum-fusing the gold and glass – its own specific style. In spite of the wide variety of articles and their use, only two elements are used: gold and glass.

Gold-in-Glass is at the same time both classic and modern, minimalistic and opulent. It embodies a flair which goes beyond the article itself, invisible but felt. The articles of Gold-in-Glass are woven into something out-of-the-ordinary and mysterious. The element of gold, which unfolds itself fully in this glass art-form, gives all pieces of Gold-in-Glass a character of their own, rich in value and substance, and with exceptional depth.

All articles of Gold-in-Glass are manufactured with absolutely pure materials of the highest quality. We do not use alloys, only pure gold and pure silver. For glass we use only the best technical glasses, low in alkaline substances and hydrolytically class 5 or higher. All pieces are fused in high vacuum and are annealed with a special annealing technology. Every piece is tested after its manufacture by way of our own developed techniques, to ensure that it has no tensions or flaws in the materials.





All Gold-in-Glass objects are suitable for interior use as well as exterior application.
They are dishwashing-machine proof and – if treated properly – have an unlimited life-span.







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