

703-Carat L'Heure Bleu Tanzanite Carving Sets New **GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS™** Title as World's Largest Cut Tanzanite

It was an exciting day at the Rice Northwest Museum of Rocks & Minerals, Hillsboro, Oregon, when artist Naomi Sarna's 703-carat L'Heure Bleu tanzanite carving set a **GUINNESS WORLD RECORDS** title as the world's largest cut tanzanite, on March 9.



A standing room only crowd witnessed the “weigh in” as Guinness World Records adjudicator, Michael Empric, verified and announced the results. Gemstone experts, Jessie English, J.S. English Appraisals and Madeline Saunders, Oregon Estate Jewelry, were the official witnesses for the weighing. Rice Museum board president Gail Spann and museum director, Kim Vagner were also on hand for this historic event.

“As the Director of the Rice Museum of Rocks & Minerals board, and long-time supporter of this wonderful ‘gem’ in Hillsboro, I couldn’t have been more delighted that we hosted Naomi Sarna on her adventure with Guinness World Records that was enjoyed by many attendees! We are lucky to have such talent grace our Museum’s doorstep,” said Gail Copus Spann, president, board of directors, Rice Museum of Rocks and Minerals.

Several years ago, artist Naomi Sarna was invited to travel to the [Tanzanite](#) mines located in the foothills of Mt. Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. She was asked to create a carving for an international competition. The mines are on the ancestral land of the Maasai and it is the only place in the world where this blue-violet gemstone is found. While there Sarna was asked to do humanitarian work, so she taught Maasai women how to make wire-wrap jewelry from tanzanite. Touched by the community, the poverty and the eye disease she witnessed, Sarna decided that she when she sells her award-winning tanzanite L'Heure Bleu carving, she will donate the profits to the world-renowned Portland-based Casey Eye Institute to provide eyecare to the Maasai. Dr. Andreas Lauer, Chair of the Casey Eye Institute came as its representative and just as the weighing ceremony took place, doctors from the Institute were touching down in Tanzania for a cataract conference!

“The Casey Eye Institute is in Naomi’s debt. In the future, patients, their families and the Maasai community will feel her passion and love as they express it through their smiles and joy from improved vision,” commented Dr. Andreas K. Lauer, director, Casey Eye Institute.

“The Guinness World Records brings international recognition and attention to my tanzanite carving L'Heure Bleu. This recognition gives great strength to my promise to help the Maasai with their vision difficulties. This is the cornerstone for our future hopes to provide eye care to the Maasai in Tanzania,” stated artist Naomi Sarna.

While she was in Tanzania, Sarna was presented with several tanzanite crystals eventually selecting the piece that she hand-carved into the 703-carat L'Heure Bleu. It won a [First-Place Spectrum Award](#) for carving from the American Gem Trade Association. It sits on a Sterling Silver base inspired by the winds of Tanzania's Great Rift Valley.

Source: Naomi Sarna Designs

Additional Images



About Naomi Sarna Designs

Naomi Sarna is an international award-winning gem carver who recently moved to Portland, Oregon.

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