

JEWELRY

Graff reveals record emerald-cut diamond

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Graff's Lesedi La Rona diamond. Image courtesy of Graff, photo by Ben Hassett

By STAFF REPORTS

British jeweler Graff has unveiled a 302.7-carat polished diamond, which marks a number of firsts for the gemstone industry.

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The polished Lesedi La Rona diamond comes from the 1,109-carat rough diamond of the same name, which was unearthed in Botswana's Lucara Karowe mine. Along with being the largest emerald-cut diamond, the Lesedi La Rona is the largest diamond to achieve the Gemological Institute of America's highest marks for color and clarity.

"My love affair with diamonds is life-long and crafting the Graff Lesedi La Rona has been an honor," said Laurence Graff, founder of Graff, in a statement. "This diamond, our diamond, is beyond words."

Diamond debut

According to Graff, the rough diamond was the second largest gem-quality diamond ever found, and the biggest diamond of its quality to be unearthed in 100 years.

From the discovery of the stone, it took 18 months to cut and polish the diamond. The size of the diamond meant that Graff's existing equipment could not handle the analysis. Graff had to build a custom scanner so that the diamond's dimensions could be studied.

With this new technology, gemologists were able to examine the internal characters of the diamond. By studying the stone's flaws, the cutting process was strategized to create the clearest possible diamond.

The process behind the Lesedi La Rona diamond

Graff has named the diamond Lesedi La Rona, which means "Our Light" in Botswana's official language Tswana.

The diamond will be available for sale.

This latest diamond is part of Graff Diamonds' strategy to acquire significant stones. Previously the jeweler purchased the fifth largest diamond found in Sierra Leone.

The 476-carat Meya Prosperity is the 29th largest diamond ever uncovered. That acquisition was Graff's fourth substantial rough diamond addition in 2017 ([see story](#)).

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