



"JEWELRY OLYMPUS-2008", Saint-Petersburg, December, 2008

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Branch of Sakura by German Grunberg

Happy Hippopotamuse by Vitaliy Gnatuk



Even the economical meltdown did not make Petersburgers forget about the exhibition "*Petersburg Jeweller*" held in the Manezh on December 11–14. People headed to the show instead of thinking about their daily bread.

This passion started in 1996 when the exhibition group *World of Stone Ltd* organized the first show "*Petersburg Jeweller*". The exhibition has two trade features that differs it from the other shows. First, designer's art in Russia is presented only on the show. Second, the democratic "*Jewelry Olympus*" competition, lead during the show, which allows any artist to take part in it.

Uncountable Treasures

"*Petersburg Jeweller*" is a jewelry box for all the visitors: there is a fair on the first floor and the contest showcases on the second. Visitors would confirm that the show became more diverse. There is much wider choice of stone and jewelry than few years ago. Jewelry brands present their goods in the *Manezh* more frequently. Now one can buy adornments from Brazilian jewellers, German agate cameos, Check garnets. *Alrosa-Neva* and *The Mint* was presented on this show.

The assortment of goods by small private shops really widened because under pressure of competition they try to make the best fashion collections. The second time the *World of Stone Ltd* run a "*the Hit of the Season*" festival which results were summarized during the show in Manezh. This time collection of silver rings with enamel made by Alexai Sergeyev was considered the best sold serial collection on the *World of Stone Ltd* shows during the year.

It is very much in evidence that the market of jewelry in Saint Petersburg have got closer to the worlds one. Customers can find Arizona turquoise, Brazilian Venus's-hairstone and more rare aquamarine of bright turquoise color and striking bluish-violet tanzanite.

There is a bigger variety of minerals presented. Not only specialists and people who are close to the world of geology are the buyers but ordinary visitors. This becomes possible through the popularizing work that does the *World of Stone Ltd*. The geological show, special exhibitions of minerals increase the interest of adults and children to the topic. It was no surprise that talks of Michael Leybov on the new mineral exposition in Freiberg Mining Academy and Anatoly Zolotarev on Popular Gemmology had a great success.

Photo: Michael B. Leybov

The Stone-Cutters Begin and Win

Many people think that the *Petersburg Jeweller* show is more appropriate to be called lapidary at first and only secondly as a jewelry one. It is partially true. Works of all traditional genre : floristics, animal figures, artware, blocked miniature and even a rarely created nowadays busts from monocrystals, are presented on the second floor. One can find unique, inimitable items in every category.

Galina Gabriel, the jury's chair, said that it was easy to determine the winner of the Grand Prize. Most of the votes were given to Anton Anan'ev for his *Fish* made from chalcedony. Its' artistic and technical excellence was unquestioned. It was more difficult to determine prizes in "*Classics in Carvings*". Consequently, a *Cat* figure carved by Alexander Levental and Olga Poptsova from obsidian in style of contemporary plastic art gained the lead. *Minotaur* by Anton Anan'ev was chosen to have the second prize. The third prize was awarded to the work of Ivan Golubev, the student of Ural State Academy of Architecture and Arts.

1. *Cat* by Alexander Levental and Olga Poptsova
2. *Minotaur* by Anton Anan'ev
3. *Nounded Beest* by Ivan Golubev
4. *Fish* by Anton Anan'ev





↑ *Dialog* by Stepan Krivoshechekov

↗ *Quilty* by Felix Ibragimov



Constellation of The Bull (jasper, gold, diamonds) by Sergei Falkin



Lapidary art was nominated also for other prizes. The jury set apart a stylish and tailored “*Branch of Sakura*” by German Grunberg from *Eboly* shop, from the number of floristic compositions and awarded with the second prize in category “*Interior adornments, presents*”.

It is unfortunate that Sergey Falkin, the holder of the Grand prize of the last year did not participate the contest and none of his many astonishing works was nominated for prizes in spite of their supreme qualities. For example, *Don Quixote* made in technique of multicoloured block miniature is a very memorable artistic character and masterpiece. Assembling of colours and pieces of stone is remarkably perfect, especially use of Australian coral jasper.

“*Tauromania*” was an exposition of lapidary art dedicated to the Year 2009, year of Taurus. It was an adornment of the show. Eight artists from Saint Petersburg and Natalya Bagut from Irkutsk participated in the project. Every one of them presented their own vision of the animal which fits to be carved in stone more than any other.

We can not imagine the *Petersburg jeweller* show without jewelry. Even in this category lapidary artists showed their skills. The ring by Sergey Stankevich with a bug carved from nephrite with perfect literalism that is typical for the artist was awarded the third prize in category “*Jewelry Art Wizard. Classics*”. Jury noticed the high artistry of items in general and a number of novel solutions. Elegant works by Mark Baldin from Novosibirsk were awarded the first prize in the same category for concept articles made with traditional techniques. Boris Kolesnikov, a regular participant of the show, was praised for contemporary implementation of traditional ornament in jewelry.

There were a lot of new names in category “*Innovations in Jewelry*” because of participation of five jewelry shops, three of which took part in the show for the first time. Series of silver brooches by Finnish artist Melitina Banabina was awarded the first prize.

Little Softer by Mohs scale

Not only hard precious stone was the subject of the show. Carved articles of calcite, talkochlorite and anhydrite attracted visitors attention with their fresh



Broche made of landscape chalcedony by Felix Ibragimov



Winners and Jury's Members of
"Jewelry Olympus-2008" Competition.
Photo: Alexander Khlebnikov

view on the world. Nataliya Kimber brought works of Permian masters to Saint Petersburg again and the jury found among them some new and original things. Vitaliy Gnatuk was awarded in category "*Carving plastics in soft stone*". He carved his cats and hippopotamuses with a mosaic technique and makes very vivid images in primitive quilt style. Stepan Krivoshechekov in the contrary used blacks and whites for his composition "*Dialog*". Two birds with raised feathers made a nice couple which won a prize in category "*Carving plastics in soft stone*".

Everyone stopped at sight of amber figures collection by Andrey Kavetskiy who gain third place in category "*Interior adornments, presents*". His angels are as simple and joyful as children what stressed with light outlines and bright sunny amber which characteristics were masterfully used with love and care.

Collection by Felix Ibragimov was a special occurrence on the stone feast. Geologist, lapidary, photographer and artist Felix Ibragimov is in love with landscape chalcedony with his whole heart. He himself discovered a deposit of the stone in Kazakhstan. Felix gathered a unique collection of chalcedony sections in which none are alike. The most interesting articles, ware and lapidary plastics from the collections made the public ecstatic. The table lamp from landscape chalcedony made with co-authorship with Armenak Oganezov was gained *Audience choice* award with big breakaway.



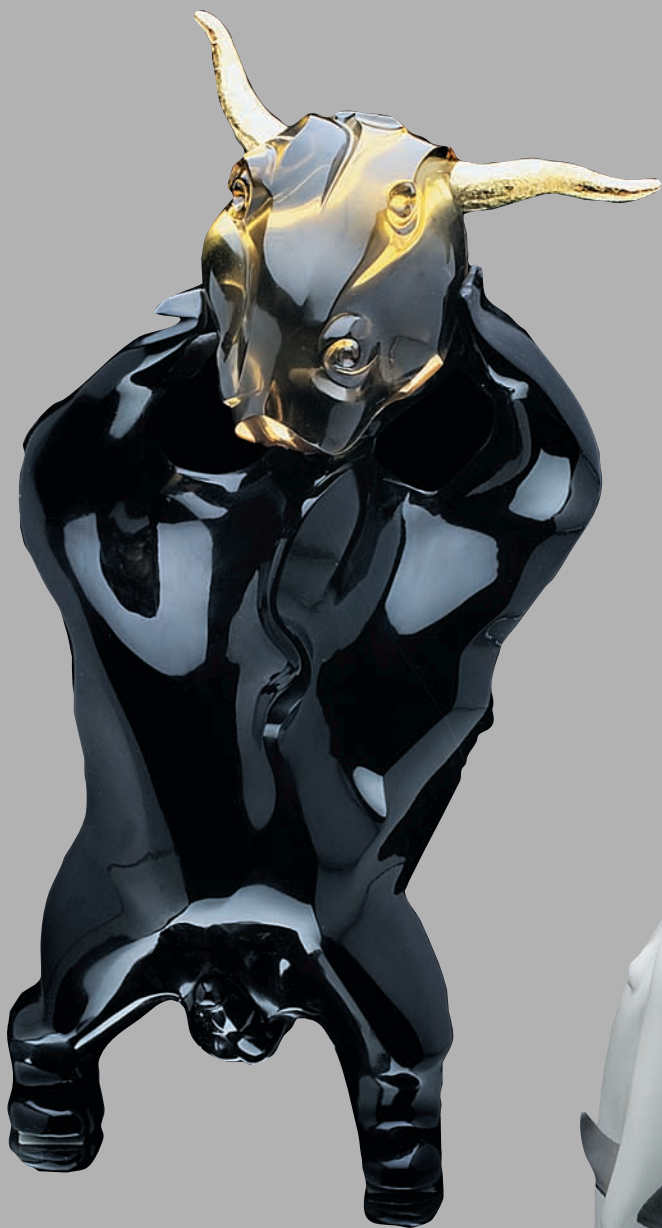
"TAUROMANIA" by Sergey Falkin

The Bull (Taurus), an oriental symbol of 2009, is known for its persistence and commitment. Both qualities are also can characterize a well-known Russian stone-cutter Sergei Falkin. Last December at the exhibition *Petersburg Jeweler* with a special exposition *Tauromania* he presented not only one showpiece, like many others, but a full set of new carvings which attracted public and media attention.

In 2007 he was rewarded with the Grand-Prix at the "*Jewelry Olympus*" exhibition. In 2008, when he did not actually participate in the competition, he offered to the public his new and versatile collection demonstrating all the wide scope of his abilities; his original plastics and masterly skills which evidently expose decorative, plastic and optical properties of gems. Very effective is his mythological Taurus in a *mummer mask*, whose ominous form hits your imaginations through a powerful plasticity and a combination of black quartz-morion and golden citrine. Another example is "*Abduction of The Bull*", with its dramatic black and white tones and opposition of male and female. And, at last, *Rodeo*, a brutal sculpture carved of fluorite with fantastic inner play of light.

All these carvings can be considered a modern line in a stone sculpture rather than a classical carving art. Sergey Falkin is one of the Russian pioneers of a new approach who has succeeded on his way.





He has started with classics. In the very beginning he worked in Hermitage and got basic artistic knowledge there. Then he became restorer at the famous amber workshops in Tzarskoye Selo where Sergey learned to carve amber. It was only then when Sergey started to work with hard stone and very quickly passed the apprenticeship to the masterly level. As for his artistic imagination and capability to create plastic images, they were always highly estimated. Among his recent achievements — an exhibit of his carvings took place last year in Louvre in Paris, within the exhibition *Cultural Heritage*, that received a very positive public and media response.

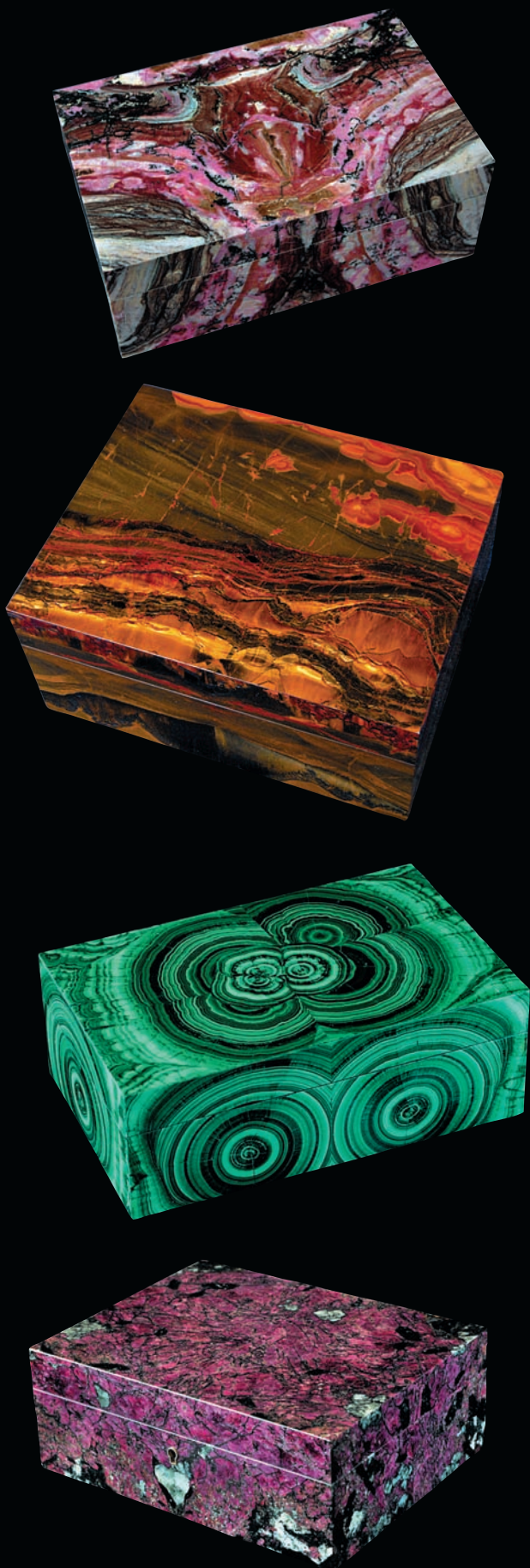
Now we are presenting only a few carvings by Sergey Falkin. You can find more at his personal site: www.bagulnikspb.com.

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1. *Rodeo*. Fluorite, gematite, smalta
2. *A la Picasso*. Quartz
3. *Procession of Mummies*. Citrine, obsidian, gold
4. *Abduction of The Bull*. Magnesite, obsidian, gabbro

Photo: Alexander N. Veselovskii, Valerii I. Mayboroda



IN SEARCH OF BEAUTY

In the past, we discussed Konstantin Libman's *Gems Art Studio* artwork (*Mineral Observer*, volume 13b, 2008). Since then, the studio has significantly evolved. The studio aesthetic value dramatically increased along with increased number of new jewelry models and increased variety of semi-precious gems and other materials, utilized by the artists.

Newly introduced unusual semiprecious gems include Jaspilite and Eudialyte, which are crafted along with traditional Malachite, Petrified Wood, and Agate.

Eudialyte jewelry box is amazingly elegant and balanced. The harmoniously outlined dark crimson shades may fit any interior, whether it is an office desk or a living room coffee table.

Konstantin Libman's *Gems Art Studio* creates spectacular Jaspilite jewelry boxes and tabletops. Unequivocal quality and accuracy in ornament assembly of individual mosaic pieces provide an impression of unity. Some artwork skillfully reflects a medieval knight order and the crusades. Among recent Jaspilite artwork, there is a remarkable tabletop. The ultimate art quality of its large size (70 cm in diameter) is astonishing. No wonder that the masterpiece is a XIII International *Jewelry Olympus* Show First Prize winner within the category of *Interior Adornments & Presents* (December 2008, Saint Petersburg).

Creating of such masterpieces requires highly evolved artistic intuition and skills, as well as persistence and professional confidence. Let us wish Konstantin Libman success in his creativity to continue pleasing the art admirers' eyes.

