



11. **Rhodochrosite** pseudomorph after gastropod shell. 6 cm. Kamysh-Burun iron deposit, Kerch Peninsula, Crimea Peninsula. FMM #OP1722.

12. Bunch of **barite** crystals covered with small **rhodochrosite** spherulites on **rhodochrosite** pseudomorph after bivalve shell. 12 cm. Kamysh-Burun iron deposit. Kerch Peninsula, Crimea Peninsula. FMM #90780.



PAINTINGS OF MUSEUM MINERAL TREASURES

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“The Masterpieces of Eastern Europe from the Fersman Mineralogical Museum”, the series of paintings (oil, canvas).

Artist: Vladimir L. Shcherbina.

Project Curators: Victor K. Garanin, Alexander A. Evseev and Mikhail Ye. Generalov, Fersman Mineralogical Museum, RAS.

Project Director: Ludmila A. Cheshko, *Mineralogical Almanac*.

Vladimir Leont'evich Shcherbina, author of the *“Masterpieces of Eastern Europe from the Fersman Mineralogical Museum”* series.



Everything on Earth can be found in paintings. There are masters in many genres: landscape painters, portraitists, battle artists, seascape painters, animalists, and some artists are known to paint just colored geometrical figures. Not a lot of famous painted mineral specimen “portraits” are known. An artist Vladimir Shcherbina decided to fill this gap. He graduated from the Stroganof Art School (Moscow, Russia) as an “artist on metal” in 1978 and functioned as a designer of cafe, restaurant, theater, exhibition hall interiors, and he designed and created stained-glass windows, forged grills and fences, street lamps, monuments, and so on. Nevertheless, he regards painting as his main activity. In his works he combines nature with landscapes and conveys his philosophy on canvas. His works have been displayed in many exhibitions and are in many private collections.

Mineral paintings have become a very new passion in Vladimir Shcherbina’s oeuvre. He has found a new genre and an appropriate technique.

Drawings of mineral specimens and fossils are known in catalogues of old collections and books on mineralogy. These were necessary when there was no other means to communicate the appearance of a masterpiece of the mineral realm. How can words alone describe the incommunicable beauty of those artifacts? A painting, like photography, is a subjective product of an individual’s view of the object reflecting also his inner world.

In the paintings presented here one can surely see the “individuality” of the specimen. A “portrait” came out very recognizable, but an artist added to it a beauty that he noticed inside, that may be not recognized by an indifferent viewer.

The minerals shown here are exceptional specimens found in the European part of Russia and Ukraine, and now are on exhibition at the Fersman Mineralogical Museum of the Russian Academy of Science in Moscow. Some of these specimens came to the museum in the 18th century, others later, even in the 21st century.

One of the world’s mineralogical treasures is Kola Peninsula. The Fersman Mineralogical Museum has a variety of unique specimens from the region also presented here.

Eudialyte (FMM #91898) is called *“Saami blood”* for its intense crimson color. It rarely forms crystals with faces, all the more of such a size like this specimen