2015 DENVER SHOW REPORT

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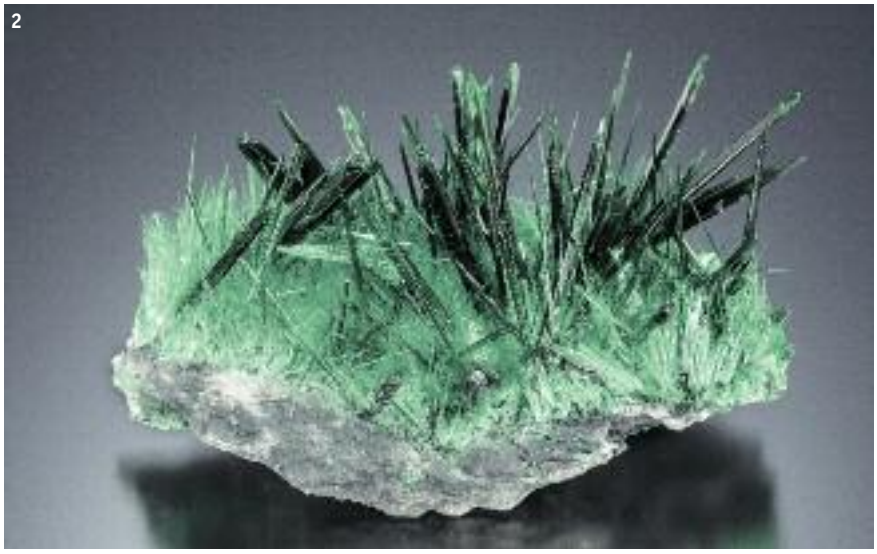
The weather has been unusually warm for the Denver show this year. It's made for a rather pleasant visit to the show, although the warm weather is not without a downside. The new *Fine Mineral Show* at the Denver West Marriott in Golden had its second year this year. The main floor of the hotel was completely full with dealers, focusing on better, more expensive specimens. Although the show never seemed crowded to me, most dealers reported that sales were good. The main competition, the *Colorado Mineral & Fossil show* at the Ramada near I-70 and I-25 seemed bustling, but with smaller numbers than I'm accustomed to seeing in previous years, although dealers reported that there had been better numbers earlier in the week.

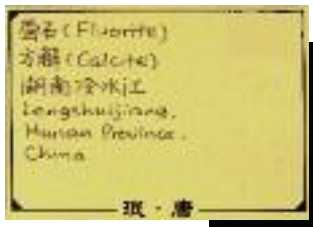
There were a number of new finds being marketed at the shows. Most are not totally novel, the exception being a new find of superb crystallized **copper** specimens from Bou N'has, Morocco. They vary from stacked small crystals forming relatively fine chains, reminiscent of specimens from Dzezkhazgan, Kazakhstan to spinel twins and excellent hoppered crystals. Specimens ranged from thumbnails to small cabinets. Most of the best ones and most attractive prices could be found with *Spirifer Minerals* of Poland.

Additionally, Carlos Menezes was offering a new find of **ludlamite** crystals on pisolitic iron ore from a new iron prospect in Amazonas state, Brazil. Amazonas is a huge state in western Brazil, heavily forested, and with a relatively small population. There is very little on the market from this state considering its size. Hopefully these ludlamites are a harbinger of things to come.

A couple of years ago, I saw I single, extremely good specimen of **azurite** crystals with the most desirable electric blue color from the Sepon Mine in Laos. The piece was

1. **Copper**. 5.7 cm high. Bou N'has, Morocco. Specimen: Spirifer Minerals. Photo: J. Scovil.
2. **Brochantite**. 6.3 cm wide. Milpillas mine, Cuitaca, Sonora, Mexico. Specimen: Marshall Sussman. Photo: J. Scovil.

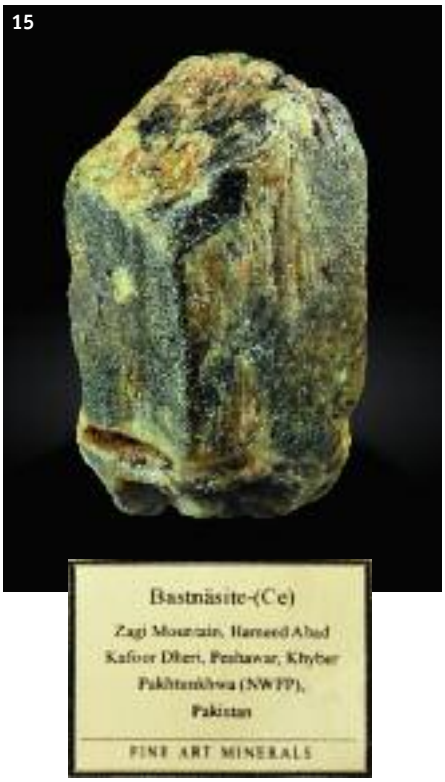




3. **Fluorite**. 14 cm tall.
Lengshuijiang, Hunan Prov., China.
Specimen: Safaa Yu.
Photo: Richard Jackson.

4. **Gold**. 648 gram.
Round Mountain, Nevada, USA.
Specimen: Stonetrust.
Photo: Joe Budd.

5. **Azurite**, **malachite**. 18.5 cm wide.
Sepon mine, Savannakhet prov., Laos.
Specimen: Miner's Lunchbox.
Photo: Jeff Scovil.



15. **Bastnasite-(Ce)**. Zagi Mt., Hameed Abad Kafoor Dheri, Peshawar, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (NWFP), Pakistan. Specimen: Fine Art Minerals. Photo: Jeff Scovil.

16. **Magnesioaxinite**
(a) fluorescent light,
(b) incandescent light.
4.2 cm wide. Arusha, Merelani District, Tanzania.
Specimen: Barnett Fine Minerals.
Photo: Jeff Scovil.

intriguing but I never saw another one until now. *Miner's Lunchbox* had something on the order of a dozen superb specimens from new production. My understanding is that the specimens were trimmed from several tons of "specimen" material stockpiled by the artisanal miners. The specimens are truly outstanding, with electric blue color and easily give all but the best Milpillas specimens a run for their money.

Speaking of Milpillas, there were rumblings at Tucson this year about some volborthite being found there that was very good. Marshall Sussman had dozens of world class **volborthite** crystal groups, at their worst far superior to any volborthites I've ever previously encountered. The best specimens are matrix pieces where volborthite crystal rosettes exceeding 2 cm in length are seen in association with lustrous azurite crystals. Such aesthetic examples of rare species are almost never seen in numbers on the market and are well worth pursuing.

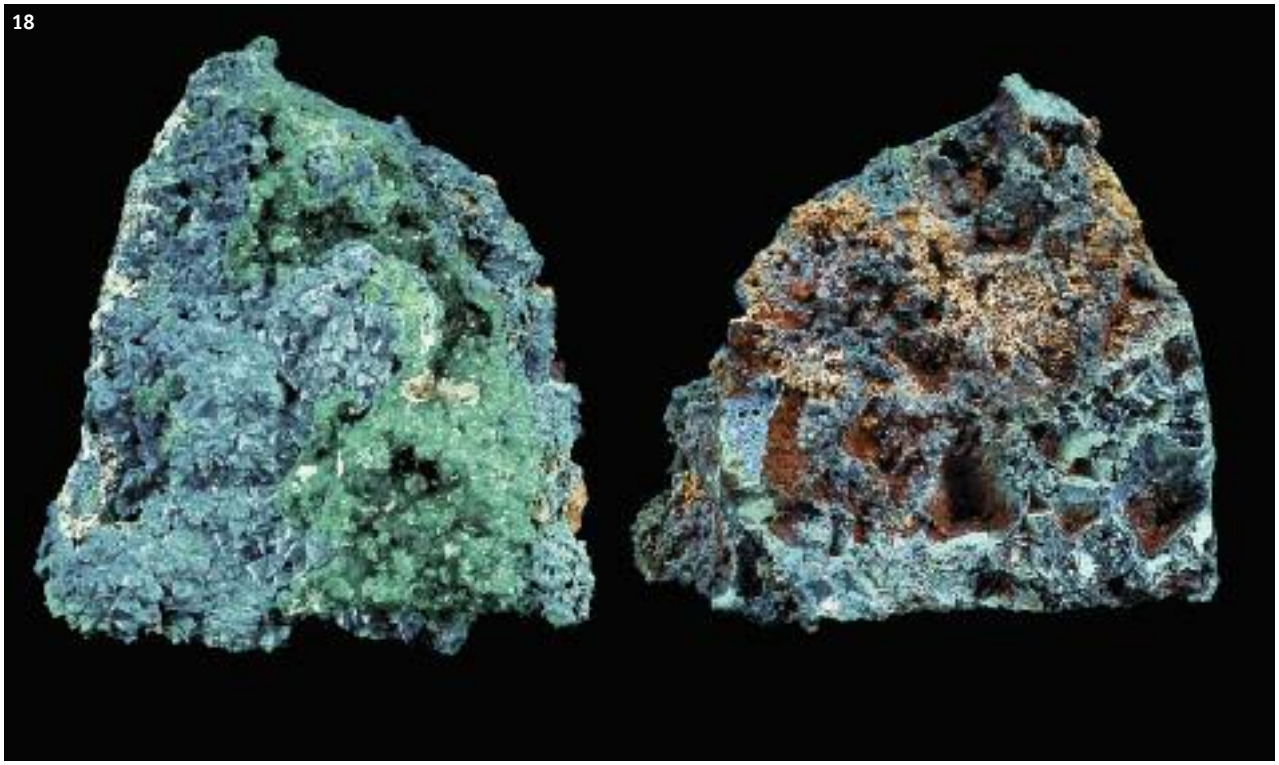
Also at Tucson this year, a new find of green **stolzite** coatings on **scheelite** were found in Mundo Nuevo, Peru. Ibrahim Jameel of *Khyber minerals* was offering additional specimens in Denver this year. Ibrahim's pieces are typically smaller than those offered in Tucson, but they are sharper and have better color.

Two other interesting things observed in Denver included some **shattuckite** pseudomorphs after calcite from the Tantara Mine, DRC, offered by Valere Berlage, and one of the finest **magnesioaxinite** crystals from Merelani, Tanzania that I have ever seen (offered by Blake Barnett). The pseudos are multigenerational, with the small shattuckite pseudomorphs after calcite on a limonitic matrix which includes casts after an earlier generation of larger calcite crystals. I had an extensive conversation with Valere about the Shattuckite pseudos and there are some interesting geochemical problems with these things that will require a closer look by someone at some point.

In closing, it has been an excellent show this year, with a great many wonderful specimens available. The Weather Channel was at the main show again this year, so TV coverage of the hobby may be increasing. This is probably a good thing for the hobby overall, although many of those that I have talked with have mixed feelings about this.

If you couldn't make the Denver show this year, consider putting it on your calendar for next year, it is really one of the best shows in the United States and well worth the time to visit.

17. **Voborthite**, **azurite**, **malachite**. 10.7 cm wide. Milpillas mine, Cuitaca, Sonora, Mexico. Specimen: M. Sussman. Photo: Jeff Scovil.



18. **Shattuckite** replacing **dioptase** with secondary **dioptase**. *left* – new generation of dioptase on the pseudomorphs: shattuckite after dioptase after calcite; *right* – scalenoedrons of calcite now dissolved and gone. More than 20 cm. Tantara mine, D.R. Congo. Specimen: Valere Berlage. Photo: Jeff Scovil.