

THE “NATURE’S CREATIONS IN THE MASTER HANDS” EXHIBITION

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Specimens:
Polytechnic Museum (PM), Moscow.

Photo: Michael B. Leybov

1. The table top (marble, colored and decorative stones). Diameter 137 cm.
Master Alfonso Cavamelli, Rome, Italy, circa 1840s.
Polytechnic Museum #PM66301,
collection of Lev K. Zubalov.

(a) overall appearance;

(b) the center of the table top – the emblem
“Head of Medusa” (smalto, micro-mosaics),
Vatican mosaics workshop, Rome;

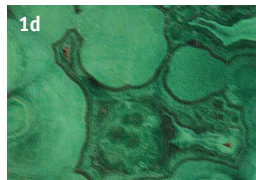
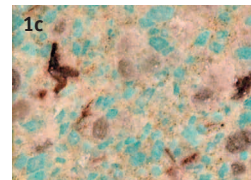
(c) and (d) details:

(c) amazonite granite from Urals, Russia;

(d) malachite from Urals, Russia.

The exhibition “*Nature’s Creations in the Master Hands*” was opened recently in a small hall of the Vernadsky State Geological Museum (VSGM) RAS, one of the oldest natural science museums of Russia. The theme of the exhibit is the unique collection of lapidary masterpieces from the Mining department of the Polytechnic Museum; the mineral and rock specimens corresponding to those masterpieces were selected from the Vernadsky State Geological Museum RAS collection.

The central piece of the exhibition is the table top – a white marble disc 4 cm thick and 137 cm in diameter with Florentine mosaic (Fig. 1). The table body – seven rows of 24 mosaic inlays, form leafs made of decorative rocks and minerals, separated from each other by black marble. The size of leafs increases from the center to the edge. On the side there is a meander-shaped belt of rectangular platelets of 48



4. An owl (chalcedony, ruby). 2.5 x 2.6 x 5.2 cm.
C. Fabergé company (?), Russia, early 20th century.
PM1348.



5. A pecking sparrow (amazonite, diamonds).
3.3 x 3.5 x 0.6 cm. C. Fabergé company, Russia,
late 19th – early 20th century. PM1243.



6. A tiger (carnelian). 5.1 x 2.8 x 2.3 cm. Russia,
late 19th – early 20th century. PM1316.

7. A hippo (heliotrope, diamonds). 5.2 x 2.7 x 2.9 cm.
C. Fabergé company (?), Russia,
early 20th century. PM1367.

8. A chinchilla (belorechite – Beloretsk quartzite,
diamonds, gold). 4.0 x 2.3 x 3.2 cm.
C. Fabergé company (?), Russia,
late 19th – early 20th century. PM1193.

