

HUI PŌHAKU 'Ō HAWAII

Rock & Mineral Society of Hawai'i, Inc.



Meeting Times

MEETING

Wednesday
March 22, 2017

6:15-8:00 pm

Makiki District Park
Admin Building

NEXT MONTH

Petrified Wood

LAPIDARY

Every Thursday

6:00-8:00pm

Makiki District Park
2nd floor Arts and
Crafts Bldg

MEMBERSHIP

DUE COSTS 2015

Single: \$10.00

Family: \$15.00

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P.O. Box 23020

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Tucson

This month those of you which ventured to Tucson, please tell us about your trip or show us what you folks found. I personally did not go this year and do not have much to add in the discussion. So here is a reprint of a short article by Merle White, editor of Lapidary Journal Jewelry Artist.

10+ Way Cool Cabochons from Around the World Seen in Tucson

These "ghost quartz" amethyst slabs from Arizona are just waiting to be cut into cabochons by the guy who dug this up. Seen here showing it off at the Kino Gem and Mineral Show:

John Heusler of Slabs to Cabs was happy to let me take a pic. The white, cityscape-like patterns are the result of quartz crystals that have disappeared: all that's left is the ghostly outline in chalcedony, a noncrystalline form of quartz.

Even locals call it "the gem show," although the 40 or more different venues that spring up during the first half of February in Tucson, Arizona, offer minerals, fossils, beads, jewelry, related tools and supplies, and more besides. Since its inception 63 years ago as a weekend club mineral show, it's become the world's foremost mineral and fossil show. And the greatest gem trade show on earth.

All of it is my favorite. Loose cut stones deserve special attention in my book though. Among those, it's the interesting and unusual in cut, color, and pattern that attract me. Very often those materials are cut as cabochons, so here are just a few of the cabs that caught my eye this year, pretty much just in the order I happened upon them.

1 Charoite from Russia :

Purple is my first favorite color and this gem material is a dandy. At its best, it's a rich purple swirled with black, white, and the occasional pale peachy hue. At its very best, those swirly patches also exhibit that



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mesmerizing sheen of light called chatoyance (familiar to most people in tiger-eye). Charoite is mined from one locality in Russia, near the Chara River in Siberia. Since it was first described in 1978, supplies have varied. This year what I saw was lovely, with good color, some with chatoyance, as in this sampling of cabochons on display in the courtyard at the Pueblo Show.



2 Drusy Agate from Brazil :



A source for many beautiful agates, Brazil is also the source for much drusy agate. That is, agate (a form of quartz) covered with tiny, colorless quartz crystals. In the most dramatic material, the underlying agate has some interesting color or pattern, and the crystal coating is small, uniform, and clean, which makes a stone cut from it sparkle like snow in bright sunlight. This cabochon was available at the Pueblo Show and cut by Greg Genovese, who frequently travels to the mines in Brazil (and elsewhere) to get the perfect rough.

3 Composite, USA to Down

Under : Exhibiting at the Gem & Jewelry Exchange (GJX), gem carver Steve Walters often combines more than one material in his cabochons. This marquise shaped cab includes pieces of Montana agate, some with gold run



through a rolling mill to create the pattern, and Australian matrix opal. The bands of agate colors, patchy gold, and the pinpoint of the opal's "fire" or play-of-color give the piece a rich contrast.



4 Australian Opal :

Gene McDevitt mines for, cuts, and wholesales opal cabochons from Australia, a place well-known as a producer of opal. This pair of boulder opal cabs is from Koroit in Queensland. The blues and greens of the opal light up against the tan matrix, or surrounding rock, in which the opal is found. Boulder opal often has great colors and life but occurs in thin seams and is typically cut with the boulder surrounding it, hence the term. At the Gem & Jewelry Exchange (GJX).



5 Fossil Coral, Indonesia : Many shades of tan, buff, and peach appear in the fossil coral found in several areas in western Indonesia. The original coral has been replaced by quartz, very often the mineral that replaces once-living objects that become fossilized. Cut in cross section, the now agatized corals appear like flowers scattered across a gem's surface. Seen at Tarak at the Gem & Jewelry Exchange (GJX).

6 Garnet, South Africa : If you've been a fan of gemstone cabochons for a long time you may recall an opaque to translucent material called Transvaal "jade," actually a garnet that was typically green,

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often with some pink. At Donald K. Olson at the Gem & Jewelry Exchange, I saw this speckled white, bluish green, and black cabochon, also garnet (the black is chromite) from the Transvaal in northern South Africa.

7 Montana Agate : Agate is found in many places around the world. The distinct patterns of Montana agate are only part of what makes this agate special. It's really known for taking an exceptionally good polish. Ask any lapidary who's cut Montana agate, and he or she will tell you

there is something different, something better, about this material. This set of Montana agates was on offer at Donald K. Olson at the Gem & Jewelry Exchange.



8 Petrified Oak, Oregon : Prized for its rich warm color and dramatic grain patterning, fossilized oak wood is known as golden oak. According to Barlows Gems, where I saw these cabs at the Arizona Mineral & Fossil Show, the material is from a Miocene-epoch petrified oak tree, making it about 15-30 million years old. It's from the Stinking Water area of Oregon, which is well known to petrified wood fans.

9 Madagascar Jasper : Popularly known as ocean jasper, or Madagascar jasper as it's found off the coast of that large island off the east coast of Africa, this jasper (an opaque form of quartz) is characterized by dots and circles and shades of pink, green, white, and tan. It's also called orbicular jasper, which simply means it's characterized by little orb-looking patterns .



10 Chalcedony from the

Western US : Some people collect gems for their own sake, but mostly we buy stones to put them in jewelry. This bubbly-looking chalcedony (called botryoidal, meaning like a bunch of grapes) is just the kind of unusual form that jeweler and gem cutter Falk Burger of Hard Works is known for. "I bought the chalcedony from a rockhound in Quartzsite in the '80s. He collected it from pockets along the shore of a newly dammed lake in California or Oregon, I don't remember," Falk told me when I asked where this gem was from. Falk was showing in Tucson at the Arizona Mineral and Fossil Show. I saw this pendant created by Marcia Cook, with the cabochon set in

18K gold, at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show. This is the name of the original Tucson Gem & Mineral Society show that launched the whole "Tucson show" that exists today.

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MAHALO TO MARKUS FOR ESTABLISHING OUR *ROCK FACE!*

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Newsletter Editor

The Rock & Mineral Society meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month (except for adjusted dates in November and December) at the Makiki District Park, 6:15-8 pm. Enter from Keeaumoku Street. Parking is free but limited.

The Newsletter is published monthly, some days prior to the meetings and is distributed in electronic format by email (Adobe Acrobat PDF file attachment). Printed copies are "snail" mailed to those who do not have email. The electronic format usually contains full-color images; the print version may be limited to B&W due to reproduction costs.

DOOR PRIZES

Please note that we have instituted door prize drawings at our monthly meetings. Because of Hawaii's gambling laws, these drawings cannot be conducted in the common "raffle" format where tickets are sold. Rather, each *paid* member attending the meeting will receive a drawing ticket upon request. A voluntary donation of \$1.00 is requested and encouraged. Drawings will be conducted at the end of the meeting with available prizes awarded in random order. You must be present to win. Please remember: if you win a prize, please bring one to the next meeting. This helps to keep our drawings going. Thank you.

11 Purple Chalcedony from Manakkara, Indonesia

Lexi Erickson's Grape Chalcedony necklace, which she designed and made the piece using a cab from The Clam Shell, which had more of these cabs at their American Gem Trade Association (AGTA) show booth. Because of its purple color, this piece of botryoidal chalcedony (as above, meaning the form resembles a grape cluster) is very believable as the centerpiece of her grape-themed pendant, complete with silver and copper leaves and tendrils.



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