

Crystals & Trends

style-oriented



Steffen Dettmann

As a geoscientist with a background in research and trade, the Lübeck native has traveled to over 30 countries and has worked internationally on mineralogical and paleontological projects. However, he has always been artistically active. For several years now, he and his wife, Stephanie, have been running the Kristallkontor store-gallery in Lübeck's old town.

The result of his professional and creative exploration of the fascinating realms of crystals is presented in this book as an essayistic source of inspiration for curious aesthetes.

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Essay on the Long Journey
of Decorative Minerals into Interior Design

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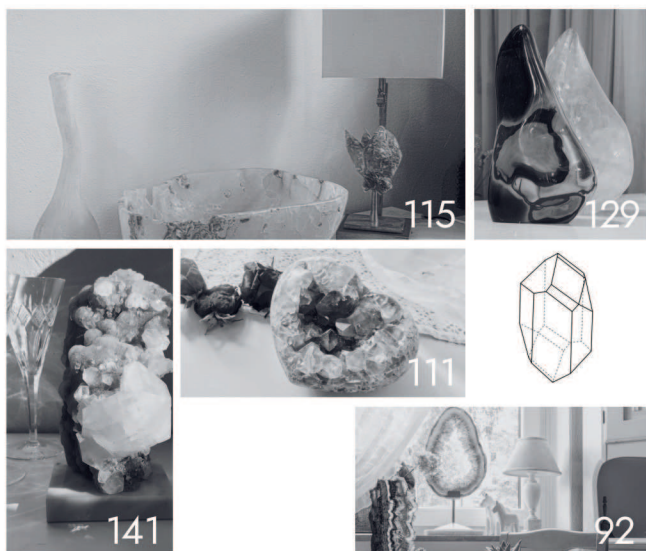
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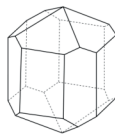
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The long journey of beautiful stones, from the first moments of wonder to our present time, has been marked by changing perspectives. At times, purely aesthetic aspects took the forefront, while at other times, culturally imbued meanings and symbolisms attributed to the minerals came into focus. The early exchange of precious stones across vast stretches of our Earth was always preceded by an inexplicable fascination and appreciation that endures to this day.

Each crystal possesses its own individual shape, telling us about its origin through its inclusions and inspiring us with its marvelous geometry. Thousands of minerals reveal intricate interplays of colors, textures, and patterns, often mirroring the culturally influenced surroundings of their place of discovery, whether in traditional attire, as adornments on vessels, or in regionally distinctive art forms, including architecture. Creativity and imagination flourish to their fullest extent when it comes to crafting with minerals or drawing inspiration from them.



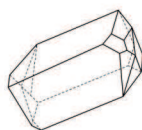
This journey through the history of decorative minerals is intended to serve as a source of inspiration, encouraging us to explore and savor some fascinating details with curiosity.



*The author at 7 months old in Hollage
near Osnabrück, Germany.*

As children, we didn't yet possess a scientific or historical understanding of minerals, but we already felt that the world had much to offer in terms of discovery.

Our curiosity and love for details led many of us to collect stones - whether on the beach during a walk or intentionally through purchases. We carefully arranged our treasures in display cases or placed them on shelves and our desks, so we could repeatedly take joy in them or keep them as little good luck charms nearby.





*Halite, Searles Lake, Trona,
California, USA*

It wasn't about their material value, but simply the joy we experienced when looking at them. This love for stones can last a lifetime and even evolve into a deep passion for minerals and rocks. Because as adults, we can still be captivated by their beauty and history. Their timeless nobility serves as the foundation for a sensitive and artistic integration of these marvelous natural objects into contemporary interior designs, especially in today's aesthetic context.

THE WANDERER

Prologue

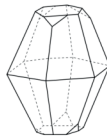
Through my long-standing professional activities and the associated travels, I have been given the nickname "Wanderer" by friends. This name continues to be a symbol of my enduring curiosity and open-mindedness, enriching my life like a growing mosaic. I see myself as someone who wanders among different cultures, people, and experiences.

During my five-year stay in northern Sweden, where dark and long winters prevail, I was deeply touched by the almost minimalist clarity of the landscape structures. These structures were reduced to simplicity during the seven-month-long winters under a blanket of icy snow. The subtle shades of color and the sparkling play of ice crystals in the white surroundings served as inspiration for my own interior design. Because the beauty of nature can be expressed not only outdoors but also in art and interior design.

Regionally, I furnished my space with classic furniture from the Gustavian era and delved deeply into the works of the influential artist couple, Carl and Karin Larsson in Sundborn. They considered nature as a forward-looking component of their creativity.

In this unique environment, the beauty and elegance of the subtly and artfully adorned white-painted furniture revealed themselves to me. They seemed custom-made for the individual presentation of my precious minerals. It was a truly harmonious interplay of art, aesthetics, and home decor that granted me a deep sense of contentment and joy.

As a scientifically trained expert in the mineral industry, I recognized many years ago that the beauty of nature should not only be professionally observed but can also play a significant role in our living spaces. With passion, sensitivity, and creativity, I developed my own style, which represents a new facet of interior design for me and might become a future trend. My goal was to create a harmonious connection between the aesthetics of nature and timelessly beautiful interior design. To give this unique style a meaningful name, I found a very fitting approach with the term "mineralistic."





*In their elegant
combination with
white-painted
furniture, sparkling
crystals convey a sense
of peace, harmony,
and comfort.*



*Selenite Geode, Rio Grande do Sul,
Brazil*

The interior design is characterized by bright Scandinavian furniture and crystals that can be found in all living areas. It is a loving tribute to nature and life. The execution of the design is based on conceptual clarity and subtle consistency. My intention is to convey a sense of life in which the lightness of being can resonate. Therefore, the mineralistic style is not just an aesthetic approach but also a philosophy that reminds us that we are part of the greater whole of nature and are committed to enjoying its beauty.

Rose Quartz, Ramaratina, Madagascar



The bright ambiance is accentuated by incoming sunlight and the changing interplay of shadows. In this living environment, the floral green hue of the mineral Népouit harmonizes particularly well with plant decorations. The polished freeform shapes of the mineral, thanks to their labradorescence, reveal new facets time and time again.



*Népouite, Pomalaa, Sulawesi,
Indonesia*



*Halite, Bad Hersfeld,
Germany*

CREATIVE MILESTONES

Trends in the Decorative Use of Stones in History and Culture

Approximately 200,000 years ago, Homo sapiens, the modern human, anatomically identical to us today, first appeared in Africa. They left behind their earliest testament of creativity - a meticulously crafted piece of stone. This stone was distinguished by highly precise geometric patterns carefully applied with red ochre. This astonishing find represents the oldest known example of art in the history of humanity and is estimated to be about 75,000 years old. It speaks to the remarkable creative ability of Homo sapiens that existed from their earliest days. This discovery powerfully underscores how deeply rooted our artistic and creative nature is as a species.

The early humans' ability to create artwork is considered evidence of their capacity for abstract thinking and is even linked to the successive development of our language abilities. While three-dimensional, figurative representations are known only from Europe, there is ample evidence that our ancestors were also artistically active in other parts of the world. Although we know decorated cave walls with numerous depictions, archaeological findings clearly indicate that our ancestors likely lived more near cave entrances. Many artifacts found there suggest that stones were used not only for practical purposes but also for artistic expression.

Stones found during archaeological excavations in the vicinity of historical sites and graves suggest that collecting minerals and rocks was practiced by early humans in prehistoric times. The motive for this behavior remains largely obscure, but many signs point to a deeply rooted human fascination with minerals.



*Two-sided hand axe, Flint,
Stellmoor near Ahrensburg,
Germany*



*Trad. sculptures,
Obsidian,
Teotihuacán,
Mexico*

Early humans may have perceived minerals as talismans due to their unusual shapes or simply revered their inexplicable beauty.

In 2008, a research team led by archaeologist Nicholas J. Conard from the University of Tübingen made a significant discovery in the Alb-Donau district near Schelklingen, located about 15 km west of Ulm in southern Germany. They found the Venus von Hohlefeld, a discovery that pushed back the age of the oldest known human figurative art by several millennia, proving that artworks were already being created during the Aurignac period around 35,000 years ago. The six-centimeter-tall figurine was unearthed alongside stone, bone, and ivory tools used by the early inhabitants of Homo sapiens in Europe.

Among scientists, the Venus figurine is considered the earliest example of this type of figurative representation, even though it wasn't entirely made of stone.

A similar, fully stone-carved figurine was discovered in 1988 in Galgenberg near Stratzing, Lower Austria. This women's statuette, made of serpentine, was dated to be around 31,800 years old. Also from Austria is the Venus of Willendorf, which is approximately 30,000 years old and showcases impressive fine stone carving from oolite.