

# TOPICAL PROBLEMS OF PEDAGOGY OF TRADITIONAL APPLIED ART: TRADITIONS AND INNOVATIONS

## General issues of professional pedagogy of traditional applied art

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### **Creative works of students from the Higher School of Folk Arts (Academy): prospects for the development of kholmogory bone carving art**

**Abstract.** The article discusses creative works by students of the Higher School of Folk Arts who are studying artistic bone carving. A brief comparative analysis of some works is conducted, revealing both traditional characteristics of Kholmogory bone carving art and new solutions that do not fit within the canons of Northern Russian bone carving. Factors influencing the formation of artistic style in the works of artists and masters of bone carving are substantiated. Historical data on artists and stylistic elements of bone carving from past centuries, which formed the traditional style of Kholmogory bone carving art, are presented.

**Keywords:** bone carving art, composition, artist, master, student, Kholmogory bone carving, openwork, sculpture, panel, canons, stylistic, technological.

Kholmogory artistic bone carving is one of the types of traditional arts and crafts, with the village of Lomonosovo in Arkhangelsk Oblast being its ancient center where traditions of this type of applied art are preserved and developed.

Analyzing the genesis of artistic bone carving in the Russian North from the XVI to the XXI century, it can be argued that Kholmogory bone carving art, like a living organism, has changed and transformed over time, with its stylistic and technological characteristics evolving.

Among the centers of bone carving art in the Russian North—Solvychevodsk, Vologda, Veliky Ustyug, etc.—the role of Kholmogorsky district particularly strengthened in the XVIII century [8; 9]. It was from these places that bone carvers

and turners were invited to Moscow and St. Petersburg to fulfill orders for the royal court. Masters not only worked on orders but also trained and improved the artistic level of their products, adopting innovative techniques. For example, O.Kh. Dudin, the founder of "Northern Rococo," developed the style and techniques of this fashionable eighteenth-century artistic style in bone carving [8], which became firmly established and turned into elements of traditional ornamentation in Kholmogory bone carving art. Bone carving artists interpret rocaille, adding individuality to the ornamental filling of the overall composition of the work.

N.S. Vereshchagin—a well-known bone carver of the late XVIII and early XIX centuries—embodied the styles of classicism and empire in his works. His vases, richly decorated with fine carvings, represent the highest level of professional skill and artistic style of the era. Elements invented by the artist—the plant meander, turned balls—"bone pearls," openwork mesh, and others—became canonical in bone carving art [8]. V.P. Guriev, one of the famous Kholmogory masters of the twentieth century and an organizer of production and training in the village of Lomonosovo, contributed to the revival of the bone carving craft in the early twentieth century when it was on the verge of extinction. In the late nineteenth century, he worked at a factory in St. Petersburg, where he made billiard balls and was the first to start making "Samoyed masks" out of bone for Archangel "Samoyed dolls" [7].

N.D. Butorin (December 7, 1934–April 10, 2013)—an artist and teacher, the founder of narrative engraving, creator of a new direction—engraving on bone. Before him, engraving served as an ornamental addition, filling empty fields of items with colorful ornaments or symbols [6].

Kholmogory artistic bone carving is the most renowned style of bone carving art in Russia, which transforms over time within the framework of traditional canons and requirements [1; 2; 5]. Various factors influence the renewal of artistic style: demands of the modern art market, demand for product assortment; individual authorial style; emergence of new materials and technologies, etc. Modern artists face a complex challenge – creating original works while carefully preserving traditions that form the essence and foundation of traditional Kholmogory bone carving art.

This issue – maintaining the traditional foundations of bone carving art while applying innovations – is of great importance in organizing the educational process for future bone carvers. As they acquire knowledge and develop skills, students choose an artistic style: strictly adhering to tradition or seeking new opportunities in creating works with their own unique authorial touch while respecting fundamental traditions, seamlessly integrating innovations. Students study traditions by repeatedly producing pieces based on samples. At the same time, innovation and originality are essential requirements for creative coursework and final qualification projects.

Several factors may influence the creative approach taken by students in creating artifacts: the appearance of new decorative materials unconventional for bone carving art (semi-precious and jewelry stones, amber, epoxy resins, mother-of-pearl, pearls, etc.); new technologies (pyrography, bone staining, inlay, digital computational devices used in carving, etc.); modern tools and equipment for

processing various materials (CNC lathe, sawing, milling machines, etc.); computer programs for drawing and 3D modeling; diverse internet resources, etc.

Using examples of works created by students of the Higher School of Folk Arts, we will analyze the artistic and technological components, identify traditions and innovations as a result of working on the artistic image.

Figure 1<sup>20</sup> shows a sculptural composition titled "Deer in Autumn Forest," executed using an unconventional material for bone carving—amber. Multi-figure sculptures are not widely prevalent in Kholmogory bone carving art, where openwork items dominate. However, during the late XVIII and early XIX centuries, many Kholmogory masters produced model-type sculptural compositions. An example is the table decoration "Nenets Camp," depicting scenes from the life of the Nenets people in the tundra, shown in Figure 2<sup>21</sup>.



Fig. 1. V. Malyshev Sculptural composition "Deer in Autumn Forest." 2023. Supervisor: V.N. Kolobov

The piece "Deer in Autumn Forest" is made from materials such as moose antler, decorative bone (metatarsus), and amber. A wooden base serves as the pedestal. The innovative and interesting decorative and coloristic solution in the artwork involves the use of amber, which acts not just as an additional element or accent but as a primary component alongside the decorative bone and horn, creating a coloristic and decorative contrast. The inlay of amber with bone and horn enhances the image of the spotted deer, while the sprinkling of amber "crumbs" creates a decorative effect of autumn foliage.

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<sup>20</sup> Fig. 1, 3-10. Photos by the article's author.

<sup>21</sup> Fig. 2. Virtual Russian Museum. - URL: [https://rusmuseumvrm.ru/data/collections/folk\\_art/rk\\_211/index.php](https://rusmuseumvrm.ru/data/collections/folk_art/rk_211/index.php) (accessed: November 25, 2024).



Fig. 2. Decorative table ornament "Nenets Camp."  
Late 18th century. Kholmogory

In the sculptural composition "Paradise Garden" (Fig. 3), large openwork elements are used in the decorative design, creating images of trees and shrubs made from moose antlers, as well as small openwork details of peacock tails. The quality of execution of the openwork technique, characteristic of Kholmogory bone carving art, depends on the decorative material used. Metatarsal bones are often used for fine openwork, whereas the porous structure of moose antlers is better suited for larger pierced carvings. The decorative treatment of tree crowns' foliage is done in classical traditions and appears in many works by Kholmogory masters, both in relief and openwork forms. The novelty lies in the harmonious combination of large and small forms of openwork carving in multi-figure sculpture, allowing decorative objects and elements to blend together seamlessly.



Fig. 3. O. Alekhno Sculptural composition "Paradise Garden." 2017.  
Supervisor: V.N. Kolobov

Another original creative idea in the creation of a sculptural composition is the application of epoxy resins (Fig. 4). Currently, synthetic resins are actively used in decorative and applied arts, including bone carving. In the sculptural composition

"Amphibians," epoxy resin was used to imitate water, perfectly complementing natural organic materials and helping create the desired decorative effect.

The box "Poppies in Summer Garden" (Fig. 5) features an unusual shape and numerous openwork ornamental inserts with floral motifs. Its construction lacks a solid wooden frame, allowing light to penetrate through the item, giving it a sense of lightness and fragility. The main elements of the ornamental composition are poppies, symbolizing fertility, feminine charm, and youth. The patterns in the composition are executed without traditional "northern rococo" elements typical of the Kholmogory style, yet the decorative texturing is based on canonical principles.



Fig. 4. V. Malyshev Sculpture "Amphibians." 2019. Supervisor: V.N. Kolobov



Fig. 5. Borminskaya S. Openwork box "Poppies in Summer Garden." 2018. Supervisor: V.N. Kolobov



Fig. 6. P. Kudryavtsev Rotating panel "City of Peter." 2017. Supervisor: V.N. Kolobov

The decorative rotating panel "City of Peter" (Fig. 6) depicts Peter the Great at the center, embodying the image of the founder of St. Petersburg. Surrounding Peter's profile, between two ornamental bands, are architectural landmarks representing the historical heritage of the city on the Neva River. On the foreground are architecture and monuments, while the sky is depicted in the background.

The panel is shaped like a ship's wheel, symbolizing the maritime character of the city. Due to its unique design, parts of the panel can be rotated.

The ornaments encircling the panel's composition are executed in the traditional style of Kholmogory bone carving, forming a rim-like pattern.

Figures 7-10 show decorative panels titled "Autumn," "Spring," "Summer," and "Winter" from the set "Seasons." These works demonstrate the variability in the use of expressive means from two types of decorative and applied arts: Kholmogory artistic bone carving and elements of Nizhny Tagil feather painting.

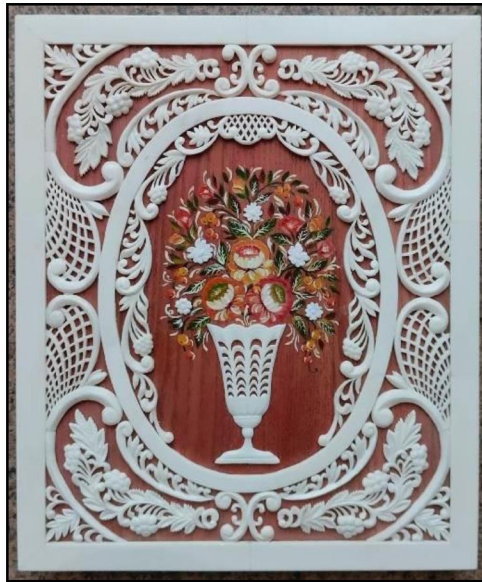


Fig. 7. E. Bogdanova Panel "Autumn."  
2022. Supervisor: V.N. Kolobov



Fig. 8. E. Bogdanova Panel "Spring."  
2022. Supervisor: V.N. Kolobov



Fig. 9. E. Bogdanova Panel "Winter."  
2022. Supervisor: V.N. Kolobov



Fig. 10. E. Bogdanova Panel "Summer."  
2022. Supervisor: V.N. Kolobov

The composition of the panels is characterized by clarity and stability of forms. Natural motifs and shapes retain their naturalness and create a lyrical image of each season, reflecting their sequential change. Seasonal peculiarities of each time of year are gently expressed in carved elements of ornamental and floral compositions, combined with bouquets painted in the Nizhny Tagil feather painting style. Rowan berries, lilies of the valley, spruce branches, and flowers are executed using openwork carving, while netting and plant shoots, typical of Nizhny Tagil painting, are harmoniously integrated into the overall composition of the panels. The carved elements forming the openwork frame beautifully complement the painted floral bouquets.

At the Higher School of Folk Arts (Academy), education in the field of artistic bone carving is based on mastering traditional Kholmogory carving, its artistic-

stylistic features, and technologies. At the same time, there is a constant experimental search for solutions and ideas. Students have a unique opportunity to implement innovative ideas and approaches into traditional bone carving art, with their projects providing a scientific basis for the development of traditional art, giving it a contemporary resonance and dynamism.

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