

# THE ART SURVIVED THROUGH CENTURIES

*Ketevan Charkhalashvili*

Besarion Darjania, people's artists, member of Union of Painters. He is the only Geor-

gian artist mentioned in the Art Encyclopedia 2001 - published in Cincinnati with the authorship of Phil Metsger. Besarion Darjania has taken part in an

art exhibition in Washington. In the festival Tbilisoba in October last year he exhibited at the first gallery-studio of cameo art on Caucasus on Shardin Street, a pre-eminent gallery for modern Georgia art.

Cameo art belongs to a number of cultures, and was traditional in pagan Georgia. After the spread of Christianity in the 4<sup>th</sup> century AD it was forgotten. Today the art of cameo along with sculpture and enamel, which has the same history, tries to find itself and forms of expression in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

"My first profession and the field of my current activity are quite different," Darjania told Georgia Today. "By virtue of family traditions in medical and biological fields, I became a student of the Biological faculty. But my hobby of my childhood appeared stronger than these traditions - I left the institute as already had finished my disser-

tation and begun to work in the art workshop of union "Soslani" and finished a secondary study of sculpture at Tbilisi State University. Fortunately I was assigned to make a cameo for diploma work. It was my first attempt with this art form. After I studied collections of Hermitage in Petersburg, in the libraries of Tbilisi and Moscow and collections of Antique cameos in Djanashia State Museum of Tbilisi where I made my first cameo. I found out that this art was widely spread in Georgia before Christianity. The art of coining of gold took place in Christian culture too. But in fact my creations are the result of hard practical work during many years."

GT: How many years have you worked as a cameo artist?

B.D.: I have been involved with cameo cutting already now for 20 years. One of my first cameos I made for my wife before our wedding.

GT: Do your creations display aesthetics of Georgian antique, Greek or traditions of Georgian gold coining?

B.D.: I make any kind of cameo cutting. I use form and

of animal images. In short, it is art without limits.

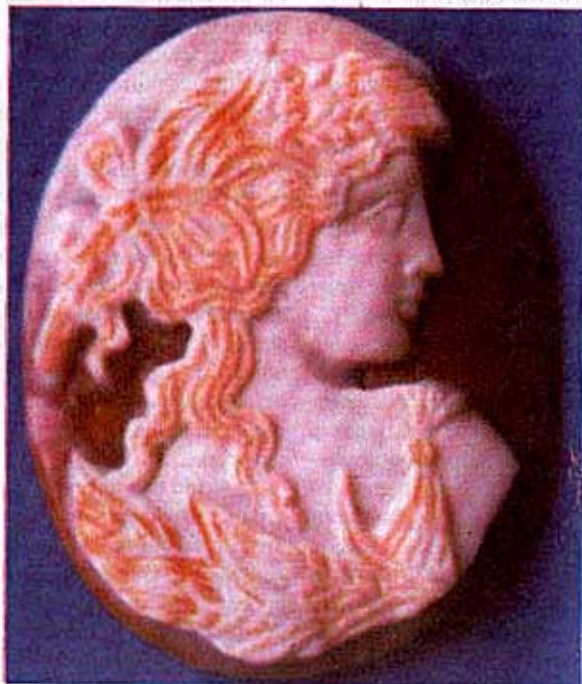
GT: What kind of material do you use?

B.D.: I use shell, coral, amber, agate, so-called mammoth

main function be?

B.D.: For the festival "Tbilisoba" I plan to open a gallery of cameo art. "Cameo" or "Mix" - with one of these names I will brand my gallery.

An art studio in the gallery will help children to learn the art of cameo cutting, gold coining and enamel. I together with my friends, and the best specialists will teach the secrets of this art to pupils. The aim of the gallery is to keep traditions of old Georgian art, which has come through centuries. In spite of the fact that I have already worked 20 year I have not held a display of my works yet. I mostly work for my customers. That's why exhibition, including painting, sculpture, graphics, cameo art as well as gold coining will fill the gallery. It is the first gallery popularizing cameo art in Caucasus. I wish to collaborate with various foreign studios and institutes to popularize Georgia art abroad.



subject of Classical, Antique, Christian and non-Christian art as well as using the aesthetics

tusk and semiprecious stones.

GT: When are you going to open a gallery and what will its