

# What's New in the Mineral World?



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I am writing this on the last day of 2016, so before getting on to business I'll say Happy New Year to all. I have appended a couple of items from dealers' late-December web updates. Some dealers have, of course, been offering acquisitions from the big shows in Denver (September) and Munich (October), and one or two especially remarkable bits of that fallout are mentioned below. But most major finds which had their debuts in Denver and Munich are handled in the print reports which, as usual, will appear in the first *Mineralogical Record* issue of 2017 (to be mailed out in a couple of weeks); the main job of *this* report is to pass on a bit of scattered, just-after-Christmas intelligence concerning--

## What's New Online

In a well-illustrated article which can be found on the website of *Via Mineralia* ([viamineralia.com](http://viamineralia.com)), Robert Kunze, one of two Austrians who run the dealership, describes his recent visits to a small former **fluorite** mine 2.5 kilometers north of the village of Mihalkovo, Rhodope Mountains, Smoljan Oblast, in southern Bulgaria, 35 km north of the border with Greece. Until its closure in 1994 this mine produced fluorite for industrial uses, and, it seems, turned out some very good, collector-quality fluorite specimens as well. These have not yet reached the collector market, but Robert writes that "about 20" of them will be posted "later"—and so (unless you've already discovered this site for yourself) you heard it here first. Most of the fluorite crystals, individually reaching 2 cm, are cuboctahedrons (about 5% of them are simple cubes), with slightly rounded, stepped surfaces; they are transparent and pale green, pale violet, or colorless. Specimens tend to be crystal clusters to cabinet size, either loose or resting on matrix of porous, pale yellow gneiss, so weak and friable that, Robert writes, trimming by bare hands only is often possible. Shown here is one of the 30 specimens "from an older



collection” which Robert obtained in Bulgaria—probably typical of the pieces soon to be offered for sale.



**Fluorite, 10.5 cm, from Mihalkovo, Rhodope Mountains, Smoljan Oblast, Bulgaria. Via Mineralia specimen and photo.**

The main pages of specimen listings on *Via Mineralia* are also worthy of your attention, for here are many interesting one-of-a-kind, nearly all chosen with a keen eye for aesthetics. Witness his mold pseudomorph (epimorph) of a fine-grained mixture of **siderite and sphalerite after calcite**, from the Broken Hill mine, Aggeneys, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. Have I ever pictured one of these peculiar items before? One knows that they’re hollow and therefore lightweight, but still it’s surprising to pick one up and feel one’s hand rise towards the ceiling. This example from the *Via Mineralia* site is the best-looking, best-balanced one of these latté-brown epimorphs that I’ve ever seen.



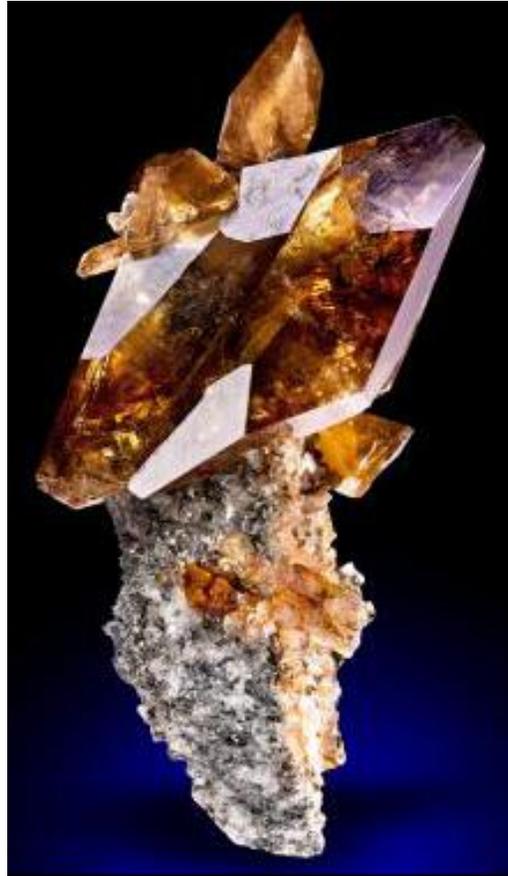
**Siderite/Sphalerite epimorphs after calcite, 14.2 cm, from the Broken Hill mine, Aggeneys, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. Via Mineralia specimen and photo.**

For this fruitful season, Rudolf Watzl of *Saphira Minerals* ([saphiraminerals.com](http://saphiraminerals.com)) has posted six pages of specimens for a Christmas sale: 30% off for one piece, 35% off for two, 40% for three or more. Prominent in the mix are vividly colorful **fluorite** specimens from the Berbes mining area, Ribadesella, Asturias, Spain—many to full cabinet size, with transparent, deep purple cubic crystals on drusy quartz, in some cases with platy white barite crystals along the margins.



**Fluorite, 8.8 cm, from the Berbes mining area, Ribadesella, Asturias, Spain. Saphira Minerals specimen and photo.**

After Christmas, i.e. in a very-late-December update, Rudolf Watzl has regaled us with more of the Alpine beauties which are his specialty, and among these are just two **titanite** specimens so outrageously gorgeous that I must show you one in this space. It's not unreasonable to hope that more specimens like these two may appear in due course, as Rudolf says that they represent a "new find" at a site called Kristallwand ("crystal wall"), Frosnitztal, East Tyrol, Austria. In the 4-cm matrix piece shown here—the one of the two which is not yet marked "sold," but if you are interested you'd better hurry—a 2.1-cm "fishtail" titanite twin, brown but with a greenish core, rests at a self-consciously cute sort of angle on matrix. The price of the piece is 2900 Euros (= just over \$3000).



**Titanite, 4 cm, from Kristallwand, Frosnitztal, East Tyrol, Austria. Saphira Minerals specimen and photo.**

For yet a third flavor of **fluorite**, we can turn to Dan Weinrich of *Weinrich Minerals* ([weinrichmineralsinc.com](http://weinrichmineralsinc.com)), who, while in Munich this past October, picked up some of the stunning orange-yellow fluorite specimens which have been trickling for years, with a stronger flow just this past year, from the Frohnau region near Annaberg, in the Erzgebirge ("ore mountains") of Saxony, eastern Germany. The fluorite specimens of this old mining area have, as I say, kept reaching the market since the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century—long after active mining for metals had ceased in the Annaberg district—thanks to ongoing collecting by locals. I always look for them when I come to Munich, and at the 2016 show, indeed, several dealers had fine selections, though (sorry to say) I did not

include any particular lots in my print report. The most distinctive “Frohnau” fluorite specimens feature very sharp cubic crystals which look opaque and quite black at first glance but are actually deep golden yellow inside; there are also specimens in which the fluorite cubes are deep brown to brown-orange. Dan Weinrich’s new specimens are miniature to small cabinet-size clusters, on and off matrix, of amber-yellow, completely transparent crystals—as tasty a flavor of fluorite as you can ask for—from the Bergmannisch Glück Gegentrum mine, Frohnau, Annaberg district.



**Fluorite, 8 cm, from the Bergmannisch Glück Gegentrum mine, Frohnau, Saxony, Germany. Weinrich Minerals specimen and photo.**

These next two paragraphs are by way of a well-wishing goodbye to John H. Betts, longtime mineral dealer of New York City ([johnbetts-fineminerals.com](http://johnbetts-fineminerals.com)), who will be closing down his dealership in 2017. John's website is always a treat to visit, especially for us native northeasterners, as the site's very frequent updates have always been strong on classics and new finds alike from New England, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. But by no means is John parochial: he often has fine things, at prices unfailingly "reasonable," from contemporary worldwide localities too. A case in point, in his "new listings" update of November 15, is the scattering of several superb-looking thumbnail-size **stannite** specimens from the Yaogangxian mine, Chenzhou, Hunan, China. These specimens, formerly owned by Georg Gebhard, are tightly intergrown groups of very sharp stannite crystals, all priced under \$200 and all very much brighter than the dull black stannites which are the more usual things from Yaogangxian (as likewise from the San José mine in Bolivia, another major locality for the rare tin sulfosalt species).



**Stannite, 2 cm, from the Yaogangxian mine, Chenzhou Prefecture, Hunan, China. John Betts Fine Minerals specimen and photo.**

Besides its weekly new-listings updates, the John Betts site offers numerous "specialty" pages, and currently, shown alike in the pages for Sulfides, Pyrite, and Mexico, there are *matrix* specimens of **bornite-coated pyrite** from the Milpillas mine, Cuitaca, Sonora, Mexico. Already renowned for its azurite, brochantite, volborthite, cuprite and more, the Milpillas mine began giving up distinctive pyrites about a year ago (see the 2016 Tucson Show report in May-June 2016). The crystals are complex and rounded, with many visible forms; a minority are pyrite-colored but a greater number have dull black coatings of what is said to be bornite, or perhaps a bornite/chalcocite mixture. Most specimens seen so far are just loose single crystals but the Betts specimens show the crystals resting lightly on pieces of white matrix—pyrite collectors take note.



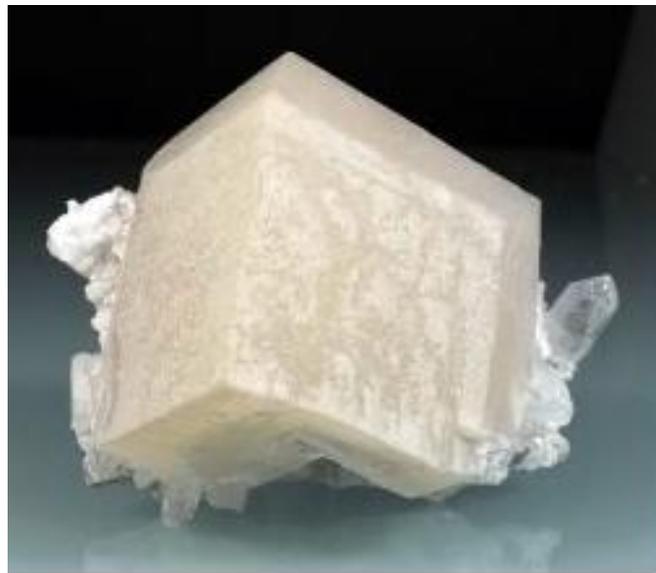
**Bornite-coated pyrite, 6 cm, from the Milpillas mine, Cuitaca, Sonora, Mexico. John Betts Fine Minerals specimen and photo.**

Time now to do something I always enjoy doing—welcoming a new website to the online fraternity. The dealership, called *Mineral One* ([mineral-one.com](http://mineral-one.com)), is based in northern Italy, and its “About Us” page goes on to say that “For over 25 years we have been collecting and selling mineral specimens...Today we have decided to give birth at [sic] a new project: the galleries of fine minerals on the web.” For the site’s September debut those galleries were not yet very well populated, but two of the offerings are indeed *new* (at least as far as I know). For one, there are some excellent single crystals and groups of **amethyst** from Maquar, Zarkashan Mountain, Qarabagh district, Ghazni Province, Afghanistan. The crystals are stout, fat, deep purple and transparent near the tips, with big pyramid faces which meet at terminal points; at the crystal bases are bits of matrix which the site calls “white carbonates” (only glimpses of this material show up in the photos, so we’re unable to judge the “carbonate” bit). In any event, significant amethyst specimens from Afghanistan are rarely seen, so the several examples here, from a “new discovery spring 2016,” are appetite-whetting.



**Amethyst, 6 cm, from Maquar, Zarkashan Mountain, Qarabagh district, Ghazni Province, Afghanistan. Mineral One specimen and photo.**

Also the *Mineral One* people offer some quite nice-looking, miniature to cabinet-size **calcite** specimens from a “new discovery spring/summer 2016” in an unnamed mine at Băiuț, Maramureș, Romania. The site calls this calcite “manganoan” although in the photos it doesn’t look even faintly pink; the accompanying text calls it “white, with very beautiful pearly reflections,” and this seems confirmed by the pictures. However, the text also credits the calcite with “strong fluorescence, deep pink color.” The crystals are sharp and blocky, and there are little quartz crystals in fringes around them.



**Calcite (Mn-rich), 6 cm, from Băiuț, Maramureș, Romania. Mineral One specimen and photo.**

In a “post-Munich” update of November 20, Jordi Fabre (fabreminerals.com) offers six very attractive loose crystals of **elbaite**, 2 to 6.4 cm long, from a find in August 2016 in the Naipa mine, in the famous Alto Ligonha pegmatite district of Zambezia Province, Mozambique. The crystals are well terminated on one end, translucent to transparent, and color-zoned in pink to an odd bluish green. Elbaite crystals from Alto Ligonha can be extremely fine (see the article on the locality in November-December 2000), but new lots have not appeared for a while—let us hope that, through Jordi, relevant diggers will be inspired to keep digging.



**Elbaite, 5.1 cm, from the Naipa mine, Alto Ligonha district, Zambezia Province, Mozambique. Fabre Minerals specimen and photo.**

Mike Keim's *Marin Mineral Company* ([marinmineral.com](http://marinmineral.com)) is nearly always good for a "what's-new" item or two, especially in the gem-crystal category. An October 21 update on the *Marin* site shows several fine examples of **grandidierite**, known in significant specimens only from vaguely defined pegmatite localities in Tuléar Province, southern Madagascar. A couple of dealers had specimens at the 2016 Tucson Show, and there was some little confusion and contradiction about the precise locality or localities (see that report in May-June 2016). Mike's new specimens, which in general are superior to those seen at Tucson, are said to have come from somewhere in the Anosy region of Tuléar; they are miniatures and thumbnails showing fairly sharp, bladed grandidierite crystals in open vugs, and also loose single crystals and clusters of two or three. The color is a pleasant blue-green, the luster is medium, and there is some translucency—even gemminess near a few crystal edges. Probably this lot represents a record for quality in grandidierite, a rare Mg-Al borate-silicate first described in 1922 and named for French explorer Alfred Grandidier (1836-1912).



**Grandidierite, 4.4 cm, from the Anosy region, Tuléar Province, Madagascar. Marin Mineral specimen and photo.**



**Grandidierite, 1.2 cm, from the Anosy region, Tulear Province, Madagascar. Marin Mineral specimen and photo.**

A month or so after presenting his grandidierites, Mike Keim came up with a November 16, two-page posting of “Rare and Unusual” minerals, including four small thumbnails of a beautiful, and indeed rare, Alpine species much coveted in Europe: **cafarsite** from its type locality of Wannigletscher, Scherbadung Mountain, in Canton Wallis, Switzerland (but right on the border with Piedmont, Italy, where the same mountain is called Monte Cervandone). Mike’s loose crystals of the Ca-Ti-Fe arsenate range from 8 mm to 1.4 cm; they are equant, with many isometric forms showing, and they are smooth-faced, lustrous, a very rich red-brown, and alive with inner highlights.



**Cafarsite, 1.1 cm, from Wannigletscher, Scherbadung Mountain, Wallis, Switzerland. Marin Mineral specimen and photo.**

Then there is Mike’s November 4 update showing several loose crystals, thumbnail to 6 cm long, of what he calls “chrome tourmaline”—a brand-new find from a small digging near the village of Nadonjukin, Simanjiro, Manyara region, Tanzania. I learned about this gem-crystal discovery at the 2016 Munich Show, where three dealers had selections from it— and so you’ll read about it in the Munich Show report in the January-February 2017 issue. But so gorgeous is the material that, I think, this slight advance notice is warranted; besides, Mike Keim deserves credit for being the first dealer (to my knowledge) to have introduced the “chrome tourmaline” crystals online. The prismatic crystals (with slightly sloping terminal faces) have been analytically verified as the tourmaline-group species **dravite**, with enrichments in Cr and V presumably responsible for their spectacular coloration. Mirror-lustrous externally and flawlessly gemmy all through their interiors, the crystals are a deep forest-green for most of their lengths, but grade to brown-green, then to brown, towards their bases. Mike’s price for the 2.5-cm example shown is \$700, and prices at Munich were comparable.



**Dravite, 2.5 cm, from Nadonjukin, Simanjiro, Manyara region, Tanzania. Marin Mineral specimen and photo.**

And December brings yet one *more* item of note from Mike Keim. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of that month the *Marin Mineral* site showed up with five intriguing **prehnite** specimens “from the Charlie Key prehnite collection,” all of them hailing from an old favorite haunt of New England collectors: the O & G Number One quarry at Woodbury, Litchfield County, Connecticut (not to be confused with the O & G Number *Two* quarry at Southbury, New Haven County, Connecticut). At old Number One the prehnite is found, with sparse calcite and zeolites, lining cavities in basalt. Of Mike Keim’s five pieces, two are cabinet-size, two are miniatures and one is a thumbnail; all show large, lustrous, translucent botryoids on basalt matrix, in colors ranging through white, yellow and palest

green, and one 6-cm specimen displays pearlescent white prehnite forming pseudomorphs after analcime crystals. These classy-looking specimens represent Connecticut prehnite at its very best; the one shown below, the largest of the lot, is priced at \$900.



**Prehnite, 10 cm, from the O & G Number One quarry, Woodbury, Litchfield County, Connecticut. Marin Mineral specimen and photo.**

Isaias Casanova of *IC Minerals* ([icminerals.com](http://icminerals.com)) has an October 4 update with a petite, sweet suite of 20 specimens from Tsumeb, Namibia, many of them from the John Schneider and Chris Amo collections (see my brief write-up on John in March-April 2016). The superstar of the lot is a 3-cm specimen once in the Jim and Dawn Minette collection and acquired by them from the Lidstroms in 1971: a group of sharp, lustrous **scorodite** crystals, slightly translucent and showing strongly the “scorodite” color effect: purple in incandescent light and blue in sunlight. The price of this large thumbnail specimen is \$7500...but who cares whether or not you or I can afford it; my job is to show it to you:



**Scorodite, 3 cm, from Tsumeb, Namibia. IC Minerals specimen; Isaias Casanova photo.**

A recent “new arrivals” update on the site of Jack Crowley’s *The Crystal Mine* (crystal-mine.com) shows an attractive miniature of well crystallized brownish orange **zoisite** from the Rosario Mabel mine (later called the Flor de Peru II claim), Pampa Blanca district, Castrovirreyna Province, Huancavelica Department, Peru. Jack writes that this was “a one-time find...The location may not be the Rosario Mabel mine itself, but a small occurrence nearby...These came out about the same time as the epidote crystals from this locality, which were abundant several years ago.” I find this interesting because, beginning in 2003, a few specimens marked *clinozoisite* reached the U.S. market, attributed to a place called “Huaytara” in Huancavelica Department, and these look exactly like the specimen which Jack pegs as zoisite from the Rosario Mabel mine. If anyone has any good information, either about the occurrence or about the species in question, I’d be glad to hear it, since in *Moore’s Compendium* I noted “clinozoisite” from “Huaytara” but noted no zoisite from Peru at all. (Well, as I said in my Introduction to the *Compendium*, it is not, and can’t be, a literally complete *list* but rather an extensive *selection* of worldwide occurrences, 1960 to 2015...and corrections will always be welcome, for inclusion someday in Volume 3.)



**Zoisite, 5 cm, from the Rosario Mabel mine, Pampa Blanca district, Castrovirreyna Province, Huancavelica Department, Peru. Crystal Mine specimen and photo.**

Jack Crowley's *The Crystal Mine* site also offers several nice hand-size specimens of **quartz epimorphs after calcite**, the best of them showing distinct forms of doubly terminated calcite scalenohedrons, from Crystal Cave, Ouray, San Juan Mountains, Ouray County, Colorado. These were collected, Jack writes, in the late 1980s and into the 1990s.



**Quartz epimorphs after calcite, 6.7 cm, from Crystal Cave, Ouray, San Juan Mountains, Ouray County, Colorado. Crystal Mine specimen and photo.**

Speaking of quartz, Ed Rosenzweig of *Edwards Minerals* (edwardsminerals.com) continues to handle the new, bright, sharp clusters of **smoky quartz** crystals now being dug by Kelly Hilmer in the “Smoky Mountain Crystal Mine”—part of a coal mine near Ashland, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. I say “continues” because Ed also had a few of these specimens at the 2015 Denver Show (see January-February 2016). The best of the specimens now being shown on the site is a deep smoky-colored, gemmy cluster measuring 3.7 cm and with a shape such that it looks very much—Ed isn’t loath to point out in his text—like a duck:



**Smoky quartz, 3.7 cm, from the Smoky Mountain Crystal mine, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania. Edwards Minerals specimen and photo.**

Now for a web bulletin from China. Minerals from that enormous country are not as widespread on the market as they were a decade or two ago, but some websites native to China do keep the flag flying, and these merit frequent checking on. The extensive site of *Jinan Chinese Mineral Trading Co., Ltd.* (chinesemineral.cn) has a November 9 update with four main categories: “Specimens Gallery,” “Fine Minerals Gallery,” “Big Rock Gallery” and “Bulk Materials and Polished Products.” As you might guess, the “Fine Minerals Gallery” is the place to go if you’re a “serious” collector. Most of the specimens on this page are of course very *large*, but many are also quite fine, with fluorites and calcites from various Chinese localities dominating. Here I’ll direct your attention especially to the incredible **löllingite** specimens from the Huanggang mining complex, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia (labeled only “Chifeng” on the site), as these great gray glittering crystal fans exceed löllingite specimens from all other localities by several orders of magnitude, not least because they are always so big (will I ever find a *thumbnail* of this material?). The 14.5-cm piece shown here is dusted, typically, by tiny crystals of arsenopyrite, but the 18.5-cm specimen, like a minority of those from Huanggang, is rendered a dull bluish gray by a thin molybdenite coating.



**Löllingite, 14.5 cm, from the Huanggang mine complex, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia, China. Jinan Chinese Mineral Trading Co., Ltd. specimen and photo.**



**Löllingite coated by molybdenite, 18.5 cm, from the Huanggang mine complex, Chifeng Prefecture, Inner Mongolia, China. Jinan Chinese Mineral Trading Co., Ltd. specimen and photo.**

For its part, *Shelter Rock Minerals* ([shelterrockminerals.com](http://shelterrockminerals.com))—collector Scott Rudolph’s sales site managed by Terry Szenics—has an extensive selection of Chinese minerals in a generous, five-page “Asia” section. You can spend a bit of pleasantly “lost” time in checking out the numerous Chinese azurites, calcites, fluorites, mimetites, pyromorphites, spessartines and others here—all familiar enough as to style but all, too, boasting what most savvy shoppers would call bargain prices (e.g. fine cabinet-size calcites from the Leiping, Fozichong, Shimen, Daye district, Xikuangshan and Yaogangxian mines at less than \$200). Rather more out-of-the-way in these pages are a group of ten fine **arsenopyrite** specimens from the Yaogangxian mine near Chenzhou, Hunan Province, with sharp, bright crystals in loose groups or on matrix. There are also seven variously sized specimens of an item once seen much more commonly than it is now: **wire silver** on crudely crystallized acanthite from the 66 Line mine, Lingqiu, Shanxi Province.



**Arsenopyrite crystals on matrix, 10 cm, from the Yaogangxian mine, Chenzhou Prefecture, Hunan Province, China. Shelter Rock Minerals specimen and photo.**



**Silver on acanthite, 3.1 cm, from the 66 Line mine, Lingqiu, Shanxi Province, China. Shelter Rock Minerals specimen and photo.**

The *Shelter Rock* site also offers a group of excellent miniatures of **wavellite** from the Montgomery County quarry, Mauldin Mountain, Montgomery County, Arkansas. Yes, classic Arkansas wavellite like this has been familiar for many decades, but these new specimens are unusually lustrous, and far better than most we've seen (the accompanying text introduces the piece shown here as "a happy little specimen").



**Wavellite, 3.5 cm, from the Montgomery County quarry, Mauldin Mountain, Montgomery County, Arkansas. Shelter Rock Minerals specimen and photo.**

During the 1990s and early 2000s the open-pit magnesite mine at Mount Brussilof, near Radium Hot Springs, British Columbia—then already abandoned commercially—turned out supplies of fine **dolomite** specimens rivaling similar, better-known ones from Eugui, Spain, except that the Mount Brussilof specimens have associations of quartz crystals, magnesite crystals, and tiny yellow-brown crystals of the rare phosphate svanbergite. These dolomite specimens from the far west of Canada haven't been seen for a while, but now the website of *David K. Joyce Minerals* ([davidkjoyceminerals.com](http://davidkjoyceminerals.com)) offers about a dozen good miniatures. Some of the larger ones have untwinned, colorless and transparent dolomite rhombs in simple groups, whereas most smaller specimens show the dolomite crystals resting on massive white dolomite/magnesite matrix, with, sure enough, orange-yellow microcrystals of svanbergite sprinkled sparsely thereon. Mount Brussilof surely is one of the world's best localities for dolomite, and this is a good chance to pick up an attractive example which won't be hard on the budget (most cost less than \$100).



**Dolomite, 4.9 cm, from the Mt. Brussilof mine, Radium Hot Springs, British Columbia, Canada. David K. Joyce Minerals specimen and photo.**

On his *Trinity Minerals* site ([trinityminerals.com](http://trinityminerals.com)), John Veevaert has his usual tempting—and smashingly well photographed—gleanings from the Denver and Munich shows. Among them are five miniatures from a new find of **wurtzite** in the Huanzala mine, Huallanca district, Huanuco Department, Peru—the world's most prolific pyrite locality. At the Denver Show, Alfredo Petrov had some of the new Huanzala mine wurtzites, and I described them, too, in my print report...but we didn't show any photos of the material with that report, so here is a *smashing* one as seen on the *Trinity Minerals* site. The specimen is itself pretty smashing, I'd say, for wurtzite: platy metallic black crystals are densely gathered on pyrite matrix, with patches of drusy white calcite. Moreover these wurtzite specimens are quite different from the equally fine ones which came from the Huanzala mine in September 1997.



**Wurtzite, 5 cm, from the Huanzala mine, Huallanca district, Huanuco Department, Peru. Trinity Minerals specimen; John Veevaert photo.**

At the Munich Show, John Veevaert obtained from the Bruce Cairncross collection (i.e. from Bruce Cairncross himself, who was in attendance) a couple of elegant little specimens of the coveted species **shigaite** from the N’Chwaning I mine, Kuruman Manganese Field, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. As of John’s update of November 17, one of these two specimens was marked “reserved” but the other was still available; it is a wondrous 3.2-cm “toenail,” priced at \$650, with red-brown, transparent, excruciatingly sharp, platy crystals of shigaite standing edgewise on matrix.



**Shigaite, 3.2 cm, from the N’Chwaning I mine, Kalahari Manganese Field, Northern Cape Province, South Africa. Trinity Minerals specimen; John Veevaert photo.**

And so we conclude with one-of-a-kinders of exceptional quality...for which Kevin Ward's *Exceptional Minerals* site ([exceptionalminerals.com](http://exceptionalminerals.com)) seems a natural place to go. A November 2 update on that site shows many spectacular items that Kevin picked up in September 2016 in Denver, and at the head of the line is a 5-cm **rhodochrosite** from Rob's Pocket, Mini-King Raise, Sweet Home mine, Alma, Colorado, priced at \$15,000. Indeed, by now you've seen zillions of Sweet Home "rhodos," both live and in pictures, and yet your soul cries out for still more...and so here is Kevin's, with undamaged, deep pink rhombs to 2.7 cm accompanied by quartz crystals over sulfide (tetrahedrite?) matrix.



**Rhodochrosite, 5 cm, from Rob's pocket, Mini-King raise, Sweet Home mine, Alma, Colorado. Exceptional Minerals specimen and photo.**

On the *Exceptional Minerals* site this time out there is also an extensive “Keystone” (50% off) section, with all manners of things, and especially old classics, reduced to half-price—and here are two which I find especially impressive. A miniature-size matrix specimen of **crocoite**, with sharp, bright orange-red, tabular crystals to 7 mm, is not from Tasmania but rather from the Tagebau [open pit working] Callenberg North, Callenberg, Saxony, Germany. This little mine in the eastern Erzgebirge produced very well crystallized crocoite in 1977 and a few years thereafter, but in 1987 the site became a trash dump. A small find in 1992 yielded a few more specimens, but the workings now are inaccessible, and German crocoite (for which there’s just this one locality) has become shockingly rare. Kevin’s price on this one is \$1500, but wait! Keystone makes it just \$750.



**Crocoite, 6 cm, from the Tagebau Callenberg North (#1) open cut, Callenberg, Saxony, Germany. Exceptional Minerals specimen and photo.**

Among the very *largest* of the old-classic pieces in Kevin Ward’s Keystone pages is a ram’s-horn **gypsum** on matrix of massive calcite and gypsum, from an unspecified one of the old mines—or from one of the “caves” above an orebody—at Bisbee, Cochise County, Arizona. The central ram’s-horn curl is 7 cm across, and it is lustrous and satiny-beautiful and, to judge from the photo, wholly undamaged. The price of \$4500 for this huge specimen keystones down to \$2500.

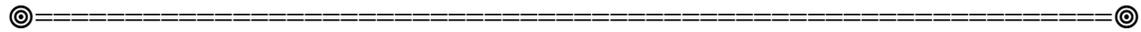


**Gypsum, 18.5 cm, from Bisbee, Cochise County, Arizona. Exceptional Minerals specimen and photo.**

### **Some changes for Tucson 2017**

Now that it's 2017, red-blooded mineral collectors are beginning at least to fantasize about the Tucson Show in late January/early February, if not to make concrete plans for attending that great circuslike event. "Circuslike" is an apt metaphor because—as you're tired by now of explaining to curious neighbors and indifferent in-laws—there is no single unified "Tucson Show" in some great, crowd-choked Center Ring; rather, there are about 40 shows in separately managed "rings" all around town. And most of those other rings, being devoted to fossils, gems, beads, lapidary arts, mystical-crystal accessories and the like, need not concern us *really serious* pursuers of crystallized mineral specimens.

However, there will be some additions to, and other significant changes in, the Tucson *mineral show* scene in 2017, and prospective visitors should be aware of these. So I will conclude this report with a brief sketch list of the Tucson shows of interest to mineral collectors—including, at the end of the list, bulletins on two such shows which will be entirely new. If you are making the scene in '17, you can, of course, keep checking appropriate websites for any details you require.



The climactic “**Main Show**” will be unchanged in its timing and in its essential format from last year, and from many years past. It will take place from February 9 to February 12 at the Tucson Convention Center, 260 South Church Avenue. The theme in 2017 will be “Mineral Treasures of the Midwest.” There will be an admission charge of \$13 per adult; children under 14 with a paying adult will be admitted free. Website: [www.tgms.org](http://www.tgms.org).

Marty Zinn’s **Arizona Mineral & Fossil Show** will take place from January 28 to February 11 at the Tucson City Center Hotel (formerly InnSuites), 475 North Granada Avenue at St. Marys. But a warning: the big dirt parking lot at the hotel, available for show visitors’ parking in former years, will not be available this year, and has been walled off. Thus parking might be a challenge, although Marty’s staff assures us that plenty of curbside parking will still be available on nearby streets, as well as along the hotel’s outside margins, as in the past. Visitors can also utilize the free shuttle service that makes the rounds to other shows around town. No admissions charge. Website: [www.mzexpos.com](http://www.mzexpos.com).

Dave Waisman’s **Fine Mineral Show**, a small, “elite” show with high-end dealers, will be held as usual at the Westward Look Resort, 245 East Ina Road, in the beautiful foothills along the northern edge of town, between February 3 and February 6. The *Mineralogical Record*, for the first time, will have a room here (instead of at the InnSuites as previously), where subscriptions, back issues, books etc. can be obtained. (We’ll be in the right-hand building uphill from the parking lot.) No admissions charge. Website: [www.westwardminerals.com](http://www.westwardminerals.com).

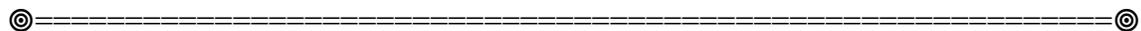
The **Pueblo Gem & Mineral Show**, an up-and-coming venue for mineral-specimen sales, will happen between January 27 and February 8 at the Riverpark Inn, on the access road parallel to I-10 on the west side of town. No admissions charge. Website: [www.pueblogemshow.com](http://www.pueblogemshow.com).

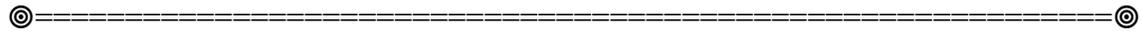
The Oracle Road **Just Minerals** Event, a show for (as the man said) just minerals, debuted last year, and will try in 2017 to repeat its major success of 2016. It will go on for only three days, January 29 – 31, at Elks Lodge 385, 1800 North Oracle Road. No admissions charge. Website: [www.xpopress.com](http://www.xpopress.com).

And these two shows are brand-new:

A show thus far known only as “**Tucson’s New Mineral Show**” (TNMS) will take place between January 31 and February 6, in a former movie theater building at the corner of Oracle Road and Grant Avenue; there will be ample parking space, and both parking and admission will be free. To quote from a write-up in the November 2016 *Mineral News* by Marcus Origlieri, the show’s organizer: “Tucson’s New Mineral Show is an event for mineral collectors on any budget. The focus of TNMS is mineral diversity, with over 125,000 specimens available including display specimens, new finds, odd locality pieces, thumbnails, vintage collection pieces, historic and classic specimens, rare species, and new mineral species...Additionally there will be mineralogical literature and educational materials, and also specimen display and storage supplies.” Website: [www.tucsonsnewmineralshow.com](http://www.tucsonsnewmineralshow.com).

And at the hallowed old **Executive Inn**—now called the Fortuna Inn—at 333 West Drachman Street, a new show will rise pheonix-like. Yes, for many years in the 1990s and early 2000s the big show at the Executive Inn was the place where Tucson’s most intense mineral-action outside the Main Show took place. But when Marty Zinn moved to the InnSuites it seemed that nothing





much more of any importance to mineral collectors was destined to happen at the Executive Inn, despite an abortive attempt or two in recent years.

But now, Guanghai (“George”) Liu, who runs the Chinese dealership *AAA Minerals* and is a prime mover of the now-burgeoning shows in Beijing and Shanghai, has stepped into the breach: Dr. Liu will manage the show which will debut at the former Executive Inn (now Fortuna Inn Suites) from January 25 through February 12. Admission and parking are free and, as old-timers will remember, the hotel is centrally located, just a few blocks away from the City Center (InnSuites) show and just a few further blocks from the Tucson Convention Center. Dealers will be set up in about 35 of the hotel’s rooms, in tents outside, and in the (remodeled) ballroom; they will offer “mainly minerals,” says the website, although there will also be “cut stones and beads, hobby supplies and equipment...microscopes and gemological equipment etc.” It looks as if this show may evolve in one of several different directions; it will be interesting to keep track of, and already I look forward to my first visit. Website: [www.aaamineral.com/en/show/](http://www.aaamineral.com/en/show/).

I said it before and I’ll say it again: HAPPY NEW YEAR!

