

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

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**Editor-in-chief**

**Dear colleagues,**

Here is the next issue of «The Art of Eurasia» Journal, the result of the intense collective work of authors – art critics and editorial staff. We share what captured our thoughts and soul and gave an unforgettable experience that can only give art, in this case – the art of Tuva.

On the one hand, we realized that we illuminated only a small facet of the majestic crystal – the art of Tuva, which absorbed the remarkable achievements of the daring creative spirit of man from the era of stone to the present day. Outside the journal issue there is still a lot of new and interesting. Apparently, we need an encyclopedia of «Art of Tuva» to show all the stages and main phenomena in the artistic culture of this region.

On the other hand, it is obvious that the art of Tuva is really an integral continuum, ancient, filled with live currents and energies that firmly connect artists through many centuries. We hope that this will open when you get acquainted with the articles in the three main sections of the journal – «Eurasian heritage», «Forum» and «In storerooms and expositions of museums and art galleries». They represent art from the 3rd Millennium BC, to the beginning of the 3rd Millennium of our time. At the same time, many outstanding artists and their works of art amaze, but even more – how closely linked the work of masters for five millennia. It's like one dynasty, one school, one workshop working on the decoration of this corner of Eurasia.

It is amazing not only the absence of time gaps between the masters, but also the feeling of how they, with great respect for their predecessors, strive to continue the tradition, and at the same time learn new techniques, work with new materials and art forms. The idea involuntarily arises that everyone in whom the craving for creativity is awakened learns a certain general predestined plan for decorating the Tuvan land and will contribute to the creation of some magnificent artistic canvas. The art of ancient masters and our contemporaries is like separate pieces of a mosaic that organically and accurately fit into this grandiose picture. Looking at the works of contemporary artists, you realize that they felt exactly what needs to be done, and their work as if even expected at this time and exactly as they are. And this is not a mechanical unity with other creative lines, but a heterophonic one, as in a folk song, where each performer expresses his talent as much as possible, but does not destroy the integrity of the choir.

Tuva is sometimes compared to an ethnic cauldron, in which many ethnic groups fused, nations united. And this image of the boiling mass is quite applicable to the art of Tuva. The creative intentions and beliefs of the peoples living in this territory poured into it, remaining alive and active, representatives of various religions came here and conducted successful missionary activity. And all these spiritual streams fused together not to the degree of indistinguishability, but on the contrary mutually reinforcing each other. For example, the images of lions-guardians of the Blessed Buddha, having passed a long way from Tibet through China and Mongolia, enriched with plastic expressive features, thanks to the talent of Tuvan stone cutters turned into arslans – amazingly beautiful statues of lions. And today they have become iconic for the Tuvan art, it is a key image of one of the rare areas in the arts of Eurasia – carving soft stone agalmatolite that brought fame to the Tuvan masters.

Openness to the world, the joy of learning new things from other cultures and the desire to present their achievements in art to other nations – this is the root feature of Tuva artists. It attracted many researchers both from Russia and other countries. Many remarkable details can be found about them in the essays of our authors.

One of the reasons to turn to the art of Tuva was the festival «Mongun kerzhek» («Silver adze»), which was held in Bai-taiga kozhuun, one of the centers of folk art in the Republic. It was an incredible event in terms of the number of participants and the variety of different events: a scientific and practical conference, meetings with artists of various crafts, a fair that was amazing in terms of the number of masters and their products, a Buddhist rite of benevolence was performed. And all this – against the backdrop of its sprawling intermountain valleys with beautiful graceful lines, clean waters of the rivers, the stone sculptures of the era of the Turks, complexes of petroglyphs, where the mighty bulls with baggage marching, depicted in the bronze age. Tuva is truly one of the living springs of Eurasian art, and this is the issue of our journal about. We will be glad if it will help to understand the art of this region, and maybe will call to Tuva.