



# allure & mystery

# The Amber Room

November 1, 2008 – January 6, 2009

The Amber Room Studio of St. Petersburg  
Patron: Dr. Jürgen Linden, Mayor



## allure

Amber has a fascinating effect on the beholder: the carved works of art created in the Amber Room Studio seem to emit a special glow. Amber is a gemstone made of fossil resin, created by the power of nature. Baltic amber can be found along the coasts of the Baltic Sea and the North Sea. Since early times, amber has been crafted into jewelry, ornaments and other valuables, and has long been a symbol of luxury and power. A range of hues from golden-brown to reddish-brown give this transparent gemstone its characteristic appearance.

## mystery

The famous Amber Room of the Catherine Palace in Tsarskoye Selo near Saint Petersburg was a room entirely decorated with panels of amber. The room was lost in the chaos of the Second World War, and to this day its fate remains a mystery. The room's extraordinary beauty and craftsmanship—it was called the “Eighth Wonder of the World”—combined with its mysterious disappearance have made it into a source of enduring fascination.



## history

The Amber Room was designed by the architect and sculptor Andreas Schlüter, and created in the then-Prussian cities of Gdansk and Königsberg (now Kaliningrad). It was originally destined for the Charlottenburg Palace, but in 1716, the King of Prussia, Friedrich Wilhelm I, gave it to Tsar Peter the Great of Russia. It was the Tsar's daughter, Elizabeth of Russia, who had the Amber Room placed in the Catherine Palace at Tsarkoye Selo. In 1770, during the reign of Catherine the Great, the Amber Room was completed with the addition of mirrored pilasters and gold-plated carvings. During the Second World War, the amber panels were transported to Königsberg and reassembled at Königsberg Castle. In 1945, the panels went missing; the details of their disappearance are still unknown. Since then, the fate of the Amber Room has been a mystery. The Amber Room is a symbol of the tremendous cultural losses that occurred during the war.

## reconstruction

In 1981, the Amber Room Studio at Tsarskoye Selo was founded for the purpose of recreating the Amber Room in the previous summer residence of the Russian Tsars. The reconstruction was based on photographic material taken of the original Amber Room. The second Amber Room in the Catherine Palace was finished and dedicated in 2003 to commemorate the 300-year anniversary celebration of the city of Saint Petersburg. The Amber Room reconstruction is as impressive as the original that was lost, a gem that decorated the Empress of Russia's palace for over 200 years.



## the exhibit

The exhibit captures the ambition and sensitivity of the work completed in the Amber Room Studio. A selection of icons, small chests, vases, candleholders and other valuables are part of the exhibit. These pieces are accompanied by historical texts and photographs. A master craftsman in amber carving will demonstrate small carving projects live for visitors, allowing them to experience firsthand the demanding métier of gemstone carving. Watching a master craftsman at work gives one a deeper appreciation of the artistry and craftsmanship that went into making the Amber Room. The Couven-Museum and its décor originating from the eighteenth century provide an ideal setting for the amber artists' presentation. A film about the Amber Room and its reconstruction accompanies the exhibit.

Couven-Museum

Interior Design from

Rococo to Biedermeier

Hühnermarkt 17, 52062 Aachen

Telephone 0049-(0)241/432-4421

(during visiting hours)

Telephone 0049-(0)241/432-4999

(also outside business hours)

[www.couven-museum.de](http://www.couven-museum.de)

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MUSEUMSVEREIN  
AACHEN





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**Events and Activities**

**lectures**

**Thursday, November 6, 2008, 6.30 p.m.**

**Baroque Brilliance for St. Petersburg.**

**Francesco Bartolomeo Rastrelli**

Speaker: Dr. Cornelia Skodock, Hannover

**Thursday, November 20, 2008, 6.30 p.m.**

**Designed to amaze – Amber artwork in the  
Grünes Gewölbe (Green Vault) in Dresden**

Speaker: Dr. Jutta Kappel, Assistant Director of the Grünes Gewölbe,  
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden (Dresden State Art Collections)

**Thursday, December 4, 2008, 6.30 p.m.**

**The Tsar in Aachen. Peter the Great's travels through Western Europe**

Speaker: Professor Christine Roll, Historical Institute of the RWTH Aachen

Tickets: € 8 (discounted rate: € 6)

The lectures will be held in the conference room at Aachen city hall. Following the talk, visitors will be able to view the exhibit "Allure & Mystery – The Amber Room" as part of special evening hours until 9.00 p.m.

**workshops**

**Gold of the Sea**

Workshops for children and adults,  
By Julia Magr, Jewelry Designer, Aachen

**Saturday, November 15, 3.00 - 6.00 p.m.**

**and Sunday, November 16, 11.00 - 2.00 p.m.**

**Jewelry-making workshop for adults**

The amber artwork from St. Petersburg is an inspiration to create one's own work. This two-day workshop offers the opportunity to design exceptional, individual pieces of jewelry using amber and other materials.

Workshop fee: € 40 plus materials

**To register, call 0049-(0)241-47980-20**

**Saturday, December 6, 3.00 - 6.00 p.m.**

**Jewelry-making workshop for children (ages 7-12)**

After seeing the impressive amber works of art in the museum, we will experiment with glass beads, wood, wire and other materials in the studio and create our own impressive pieces of jewelry that you can wear or give as gifts.

Workshop fee: € 10 plus € 3 for materials

**To register, call 0049-(0)241-47980-20**

**activities for children**

**Readings (in German) by Martina Rester**, a professional

voice actress for radio, TV and audiobooks, Aachen

For children ages 6 to 10, free admission

**Saturday, November 8, 3.00 – 4.00 p.m.**

**"The Adventures of Strong Wanja" by Otfried Preussler**

For seven long years, Wanja must gather his strength before he can head for the White Mountains and win the Tsar's crown... ("The Adventures of Strong Wanja" by Otfried Preussler, published by Thienemann Verlag, is available in bookstores).

**Saturday, November 22, 3.00 – 4.00 p.m.**

**"The Room that Disappeared" – the story**

of a mysterious search for clues, by Martina Rester  
A room can't just disappear without a trace...

**Christmas season activities in the Couven-Museum**

We offer tours through the exhibit "Allure & Mystery – The Amber Room", followed by a Christmas activity workshop for children ages 6 to 11.

Museum admission € 3, plus € 3 for materials

**Saturday, November 29, 3.00 – 5.00 p.m.**

**The Magic Yellow Stone – where to find it, how to recognize it, and what it is capable of.**

In our studio we will create treasure chests.

By Nikola Roemer

**Saturday, December 13, 3.00 – 5.00 p.m.**

**Is there anyone, anywhere who can turn a stone into a polar bear?**

Does seeing the carved stone works of art make you want to try it yourself? – Our materials will of course be a bit softer! By Gisela Schäffer



**information**

**exhibit opening:**

7 p.m., October 31, 2008

**visiting hours:**

Mon - Fri 12 p.m. - 6 p.m.

Sat - Sun 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

and on Nov. 1, Dec. 25, Dec. 26,

and Jan 1, 2009 from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

**admission:**

Adults 8 € per person  
Reduced rate 6 € per person  
(for students, seniors 65 and older, visitors with disabilities, holders of an "Ehrenpass" or "Aachen-Pass", the unemployed, or holders of a "Städteregion" family card)

Children under 6 free

Children ages 7-16 3 € per person

Groups of 10 or more (adult rate) 6 € per person

Groups of 10 or more (reduced rate) 4 € per person

**guided tours:**

We offer 30-minute **public guided tours**: daily at 4.30 p.m., Sundays at 11.15 and 4 p.m. (admission to exhibit, guided tour free)

**Special tours** (20 persons maximum)

General tours (30 minutes), Mon-Sat, in German: € 20 (not including admission)

General tours (30 minutes), Sundays and holidays and/or with a foreign-language guide: € 25 (not including admission)

Tours and group rates must be booked in advance. Please contact:

By phone: 0049-(0)241/47980-20 or 0049-(0)241/432-4999

Or by e-mail: renate.szatkowski@mail.aachen.de

Special tours and school group tours (in German, French, English and Dutch) are also available outside the museum's regular opening hours and can be booked upon request.