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From the editor:

Wow, wow, wow, what a privilege it has been working on this edition of floral design. When first approached by Russian florist, Sergey Malyuchenko with a suggestion to include some of his work for your enjoyment, never did I think that what you are about to see would be the result.

He has co-ordinated 14 of the best Russian florists and over several months sent through all I required to showcase their work. Each florist agreed to include a step by step lesson resulting in the astonishing lessons for you to try from these masters in their profession.

Of course, being so close to Valentine’s Day, the theme of the entire magazine had to be romance, love and passion! You are going to be able to try table settings, bouquets, coffee table and gift designs as well as see these talented florists’ more inspirational pieces.

Along the way you may, just like I did, fall in love with Russia! It is definitely on my list of places to visit especially as there is so much happening there in the flower world. Sergey has shared some of those details on page 3 and of course you can always bring Russia to you.

Yes, many of the florists we have featured are available to travel internationally as demonstrators or to take workshops. As you read their biographies you will realise they have had some of the best floristry teachers in the industry and then added their own style and interesting new techniques.

So, a little bit of Russian to learn to get into the spirit of this edition: “Хорошего дня!” Sergey tells me it sounds like “Khoroshego dnya!” and means “Have a wonderful day!”

Happy arranging

Editor
floral design

PS: All your favourite designers from the floral design team will be back next month with more fabulous step by step lessons.
FROM RUSSIA WITH

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Russia! How often do you get to see what is happening in floral design from that amazing country? Now you can!

Thanks to the considerable efforts of Sergey Malyuchenko who has co-ordinated all the fabulous florists for this very special edition of *floral design* you have an exclusive insider’s look at the world of the best of Russian floristry. Sergey was able to network with the ‘Non-commercial Partnership National Florists Guild’ (NGF) which is an independent organization. It is now also a member of the European Florist Organization (FLORINT) as the acting member of the Russian Federation.

NGF consists of florists, flower salons, flower workshops and schools from the different regions of Russia and organises contests in the Russian regions. If you are heading to Russia some of the year’s highlights include the Professional Floristry Championship of Russia within the framework of the flower exhibition (All-Russian Exhibition Centre) in Moscow, the North-West regional Championship Neva Fler, at the Len Expo, St Petersburg and The Urais Championship Europe-Asia, Ekaterinburg organised by the Urais Floristry and Design School Espero.

NGF is also the co-organizer of the annual flower festivals in the cities of Russia such as the International Festival of flowers in St-Petersburg, organised by the St Petersburg Culture Council together with A and V Bermyakov Studio and a Flower Festival within the framework of ‘Day of the City’ Celebrations in Dimitrovograd.

That is only the tip of the iceberg and it is worth finding out more from Sergey if after reading this edition, you plan to start saving for a great Russian floral adventure. He said, “For contact you can use my e-mail address: sergey@malyuchenko.ru. I always will guide and answer questions your readers might have. The email address of NGF is ngf@ngfrussia.ru (National Guild of Florists) and this is the group that organises all the mentioned events, and many that aren’t!”

Every year NGF together with the Starlight Cash and Carry and the Holland Flower Bureau organizes master classes, seminars and flower shows with famous international and Russian florists. NGF also organizes trips for their members to Greece and Crete, in order to take part in the seminars of the best European experts.

As a result of all this activity, Russian florists are making their mark on the world stage, taking part regularly in European Championships. This then is our tribute to the excellence of Russia’s best florists. Each was asked to create a design to inspire you and another with step by step instructions so you can try it yourself. Consider this issue as your masterclass of Russian style. Turn the page and prepare to be astounded!
Sergey Malyuchenko is the talented florist who made this edition possible and is also the man with the wicked twinkle in his eye on the cover!

Throughout this issue, classic Russian icons have been used for the backgrounds and Sergey will guide you through what they all mean in the small footnotes. Here you will see padlocks on the railings. This is a Russian tradition on the wedding day when couples hang a lock with their names on a bridge handrail for luck and happiness.

But now it is Sergey’s time in the limelight as he shares his beautiful designs with you and guides you through a new technique to try... enjoy!
Sergey Malyuchenko accidentally got into floristry about 10 years ago and appeared to be talented. He initially worked as an art director for wholesale companies and then started to participate at floristry contests.

Two years ago Sergey became a judge with Florintel.

“I own ‘Floral Concept’ doing decorations and concept realization for corporate and private events. I also do business consulting, workshops and demonstrations.”

“I love the moments of pure beauty, good memories and wonderful thoughts and anticipation for future works. For younger florists I would say ‘don’t stop to learn’, just by seeing and watching we learn a lot which helps us later in a work or art projects.”
1. Draw a heart shape with a felt tip pen on a shiny, curved glass vase.

2. Fill in the shape with hot glue from a glue gun. Repeat with a second piece, this time leaving a hole in one area, for the flowers.

3. Join the two curved shapes together with more hot glue along the connecting edges.

4. Add water to water retaining crystals and leave for 30 minutes for them to swell. Carefully fill the heart through the hole with these. Tie a golden cord around the shape as you would a parcel.

5. Place the flowers into the water retaining crystals, putting them tightly together so they support each other.
I give you my heart

A beautiful gift from the soul is yours to create thanks to Sergey Malyuchenko
The Thaw
Try this icy design under the guidance of Sergey Malyuchenko

1. Collect masses of glass bits, hot glue, glass flower phials as well as Birch twigs and Leucojum.

2. Sprinkle the glass bits into rings, each being slightly larger than the one before. Zigzag hot glue over the glass so it all holds together. Fill in the smallest one completely to form a firm base.

3. Use real ice to embed birch twigs. Start building up the layers, using hot glue to hold them all firmly together. Push in the real ice in the gaps so it drips down as it thaws.

4. Place more twigs inside, using them to hold the flower phials firmly. Add water to the phials and fill them with Leucojum.

Sergey felt this wasn't really a design for the romantic theme of this special edition but I knew you wouldn't want to miss it so you can read into the heading what you will!
Tiny pickling onions still in their skins pushed and glued onto cane swirls have never looked so glamorous! Wet the cane and force it into the shape you want until it dries.
Think about using cleaned flowering bulbs in your next design when you want a cascading effect with no water source. Hide the roots with decorative wire which will double as a useful mechanic to attach the bulb to the rest of your design.

“Irina Treneva

“Study, first love, birth of son, a little later birth of a daughter isn’t enough for a woman to be happy”?” questioned Irina Treneva.

“For the person who loves art these are not enough.”

In order to find an interesting job, Irina sought out the flower salon ‘Christina’ where she started to learn floristry. Her first teachers were her colleagues and directors of the salon, Natalia and Armen. Thanks to them the salon staff were able to learn from international grand masters of floristry such as Peter Hess, Elly Lin, Tor Gunderson and Gregor Lersch.

Irina participated in several floral contests in 2005 and 2006 twice winning the title ‘Champion of professional floristry of Russia’. In 2007 Irina represented Russia at the European Cup and continues to do lots of demonstrations and workshops.

Using wood shavings or curled bark is an option when flowers are scarce. The curled sheath from the bottom of Pampas Grass or Toetoe stalks would achieve the same effect. The temptation is to create a rustic bouquet but by adding graceful garlands of Hyacinth flowers, elegance is maintained.
1. Start by making a curved frame of Dogwood, securing each piece neatly with wire and weaving sticks throughout.

2. Cover flower phials by wrapping them with leaves such as Hydrangea, Grape or Ivy and wire them securely to the frame, using pliers to create a tight hold.

3. Add foliage to the phials, placing them so they flow in the same direction as the Dogwood frame. Wire them discreetly in place on to the frame.

4. Now add the flowers in a similar way.
Irina Tsvetina shares this design with you to try using a Dogwood frame. The fur coat is an optional extra. Do you think she said yes?
Valentine’s Day doesn’t have to be all about red Roses, as Ksenia Marchenko proves with this wonderful Rabbit design which would melt anyone’s heart. Have a go yourself and add your individual touches using easily obtained materials in your area.
1: Using a block of brown dry floral foam, use a sharp knife to carve an oval, body shape. Rub your hand over the edges to smooth them out.

2: Fold a length of heavy gauge florists’ wire in half, and fold two bends in each side. This will become the face and ears of the rabbit.

3: Wrap the wire with straw to form the ears and face, keeping it in place with straw coloured reel wire. Push the bottom loop into the floral foam. Hot glue it in place if it is not firm. Repeat this with two more lengths of wire to create the feet and the arms, but this time use one length pushed right through to create both arms and again to create both legs.

4: Hot glue wood chips onto the body, as 2 or 3 layers.

5: Use gold headed pins to gather up crinkled paper to attach the skirt. Finish with folded paper shoes and a carved slice of carrot hot glued to one arm.
Birch branch, Birch bark, Ornithogalum thyrsoides are the three components of Ksenia Marchenko’s fabulous heart shaped bouquet.

Ksenia started floristry about 10 years ago when studying architecture at Institute. Now by having an education in landscape architecture and experience in floristry, she help others to find beauty in life with flowers.

“Since 2003 I have taught floristry in the Ural School of Floristic and Design, and in 2007 I became art director at the flower studio ‘Flower Boom’. Now floristry is one of the important things in my life and I am sad without flowers.”

“From 2006 I started to participate in contests and realized it’s an important part of the profession. At contests you learn from your own mistakes, see others’ ideas, meet friends …. I do consider most masters as mentors. I learn from everyone, especially admiring the diligence and professionalism of Jan Aartsen (Holland). My biggest fan is my little son.”
Natalia Zhizhko, who works at the flower shop ‘Salvador’s Gardens’, in Moscow became a florist by a happy coincidence of events. She said, “I love my profession and all the time, look forward for self education and new knowledge. For me it’s a way of self expression.”

“I participate with pleasure in all sorts of projects, photo sessions, seminars and competitions, any event which is linked to floristry, communication and the exchange of experiences between artistic people. I prefer to work with plain, natural materials, plants and flowers, the beauty of which you see when you look closely.”

“Listen to yourself, look at nature, learn techniques, try different materials, exchange experiences and have joy with your profession!!!
You can contact me at zizko@inbox.ru Good luck to everyone!”

DESIGNER
NATALIA ZHISHKO
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Heart to Heart
Natalia Zhishko shares this new technique with you which results in a romantic bouquet but would make an equally fabulous garland.

1: Shape each piece of heavy wire into a heart shape and thread on the Berries. Use pliers to close up the shape and wrap the ends with the decorative reel wire to hold each end in place.

2: Using the thinner reel wire, select a berry which still has a stem in place to attach the strand. Then thread on more berries and Nerine florets to form a decorative ending.

3: Join each of the hearts together with cable ties loosely so each heart cascades naturally as well as being part of the garland. Push a berry on to the end of each cable tie, gluing it if necessary. Add the reel wire drops made in step 2.

4: Push a loop of florist’s wire into the apple so it is very firm. Use a cable tie to attach the garland to this wire loop. Hide all this with a Ranuncula cold glued to the apple.
DESIGNER
ALENA
PERMYAKOVA

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The list is long, the technique tricky but that’s what it takes to create a heavenly creature! Calamus, Cineraria, Lilium, Alstroemeria, Chrysanthemum, Ornithogalum, Rose, Parthenocissus (Virginia Creeper), Atragene and macropetala (both part of the Clematis family) were all in Alena Permyakova’s bucket as she made the wings to reveal a real Russian angel. The two main curves were created with cane which was joined using the tatami wiring technique. They were hung from the frame with fishing line so each became a mirror image of the other. Fishing line was stretched from the top to the bottom of the frame to allow the accurate positioning of all the other components, the glass phials being cable tied into place.
The Wings of an Angel

Alena Permyakova introduces you to a new technique using burned veneer and wooden spacers. Make the idea your own for a table design, bouquet or a large foyer piece.

She used:
- A sheet of veneer from Applied Birch
- Hypericum
- Nematanthus
- Ceropogia Woodii (String of Hearts)
- Ceropogia Sandersonii
- Phalaenopsis

BACKGROUND: Churches in Moscow
1: Draw a wing or heart shape on a piece of cardboard and trace it around the veneer three times. Cut out the shapes and burn the edges. Burn holes artistically through the more solid parts (use a candle) to create areas for the vines to come through.

2: Make several washers from cork and thin dowel glued together. Glue the cork to the veneer shapes so they act as spacers as you stack one on top of the other.

3: Wind the Cereopsis Sandersonii in and out the holes through the three layers followed by the other trailing plant material. Depending on how long your design needs to last, either cold glue the Phalaenopsis Orchids into place or place into flower phials which can be hidden between the veneer layers.

Alena Permyakova can be found at the flower shop 'White Orchid' in Omsk, Russia.

She has worked as a florist since 2003 studying in the Design faculty of the Omsk State Institute of Service. Her first mentors were very qualified florists, and she then took courses with Frank Pipper and Yanosh Sabo at the Siberian center of floristry, as well as in Switzerland with Peter Hess.

In 2006 Alena participated in the regional floral contest winning first place, in 2008 second place at the Russian championship of professional florists, in 2009 third place at the same championship.

Alena added, "Till this moment I continue to learn floristry, which I like as a way of communicating with people. I am free to express myself, in beautiful flowers and plants."

"To young florists, I would suggest that they be free in expressing their ideas and do not stop doing this. Learn from nature, the masters of the profession and your own colleagues."

"In my work I prefer to find individual ways to suit every client, and I like to experiment with new materials and develop new techniques."
Liudmila Tikhomirova is from Saint Petersburg. She graduated from the Aviation institute, but her love of art and nature forced her to change profession.

Becoming more interested in floristry, she studied at the International school for floral designers ‘Nicole’, later attending classes with Peter Hess, Gregor Lersch and Daniel Ost. Nowadays, she is General Director in a company called “Mila Schuman Art”, where she decorates interiors for celebrations. A member of the National guild of florists of Russia, she was a prize winner in the Saint Petersburg Championship in professional floristry and has participated in the Russia Championship. Her works have been published in Russian magazines and international books.

Mila added, ”My floristry profession allows me to explore different cultures and civilizations. Work trips to China, Belgium, Germany, Latvia and Sweden have given me the opportunity to meet florists from different countries, and enhance my technique for further projects.”
Mila used Pinus which was covered with Lichen, Ranunculus, Alnus, wire, paraffin wax, flower tubes and fishing line for this design.

She advises, “Make a skeleton with wire in the form of a star. Warm the wax and cover skeleton with it. Then attach Pinus and Alnus branches and the test tubes. Pour water into the test tubes for the Ranunculus. Use fishing line to suspend the project from the ceiling.”
Mila Tikhomirova guides you through this romantic table setting for two:

Start by assembling the plants and sundries on the right.

Take the aluminium base of the chandelier and attach 6 candlesticks using aluminium wire to hold them in position.

Secure bundles of Pine needles using the tatami wiring method and silver decorative wire, adding beads as you go. Hang many completed garlands of different lengths to the chandelier.

Cut Haworthia leaves and string them on to wire with the Pernettya berries. Bend the end of the wire to make an eyelet.

Use wire to suspend the completed elements all at different lengths.

Cut the Aspidistra's stem and string it on the wire together with Haworthia and Pernettya. Cover the ends with decorative pins. Place result on the glass.

Suspend pine needles on the side of the glass. Scatter the artificial snow all over the table. Place glass and candles. Place the finished chandelier above the table. Light the candles.
Chernyak Pavel is a florist from Moscow, Russia. He said, “Flowers have been an important part of my life since 2002. Before it I trained in an art school. I took part in the Moscow championship in 2008 and 2009 as well as the Russian championship.”

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BACKGROUND: These are traditional Russian spice cakes. On one is written ‘Only for You’ and on the other ‘Gift to the one I love’.
It’s light, it’s beautiful and it’s a new technique!

1: Loop the aluminium wire over itself in a chain to make a long shape. Bend this around into a heart.

2: Push the straws through the aluminium bends following the line of the heart. Bend up the short end.

3: Do this right around the heart shape making sure to emphasise the points of the heart with the placing of the straws. Glue them in if necessary.

4: Wire glass flower phials on to the aluminium wire right around the frame pushing them down into the structure.

Fill the phials with water and add the flowers so some are right down in the design and others are slightly above, to give the arrangement depth.
Pavel Chenyak created this luscious bouquet to inspire you! An armature of wired sticks created the nooks and crannies to place the Hypericum berries and the points to impale the Strawberries and glue on the Nerines. Use glue if necessary to secure the plant material.
Further inspiration comes from Natalia Koryakina who masterminded this amazing handbag with individual grass spirals bound with decorative wire. She then joined them together and before folding the structure into a pocket to house the Carnations either end. Fabulous!

DESIGNER

NATALIA KORYAKINA

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Photographer: Kirill Rotula
Make an open frame with the wire, threading on the beads as you go and the shavings from the Birch. This wire is very springy and you will need to use pliers to hook the ends around the structure to hold it all in the heart shape.

Accentuate the form with a bead at the end of the heart and loop some areas over others to make the structure firm.

Use cold glue to place the flowers inside the wire so they become enclosed by the structure, keeping them closely grouped and in the shape of the heart.

Background: A very traditional, Russian, homemade, sweet candy.
Natalia Koryakina is a professional botanist who studied at the biological faculty of the University of Saint Petersburg before working for many years at the Botanical garden of Saint Petersburg.

She has learned Ikebana since 1983 and classical floristry from 1990. In 1992 Natalia continued her education at the Pirita Expo Florist School in Estonia and has also completed courses with European florists from Switzerland, Germany, Sweden, Norway and The Netherlands.

Since 1992 she has been art director of her own floral company. “In my shop we do lots of man-made pieces and bouquets using local grasses and plants. We transform plant material with wickerwork, tying, twisting, the wax technique, sewing and with hand-made paper.”

In 1995 Natalia became a judge for international juries of floral contests receiving in 2006 the diploma of judges from FLORINT (European association of professional florists). Natalia has often participated in floral contests and had exhibitions at art galleries in Saint Petersburg as well as being involved in the International Landart festival in Grindelwald, Switzerland. She also conducts workshops and seminars.
"For me floristry is not only the profession—this is my life style. I think it is the original perception of our life and a constant search. I have chosen this way because I have loved flowers since childhood."

"It seems to me that people and flowers are just the same—they both have a soul. As for flowers, they speak such a beautiful language of silence and this is the strongest of the languages. They give us the right emotions, they are just a part of us."

"To deepen my knowledge of the art of floristry I finished at the floristry school 'Nicole' in St Petersburg and participated in several study trips to Germany where I took numerous lessons and master classes of well-known florists. Now I am a free lancer."

"My advice to the florists who are just starting is to try to have a communication between the flowers and yourselves by listening to your heart and finding your own style. As for me I do not use a lot of different flowers in one design. I prefer to use less flower variations to show the beauty of one kind of flower by using it as alone."

"My aim is to create free style arrangements and objects with any kind of material in its specific environment."
Wax the ends of the flower stems in this romantic design with Elena Dmitrieva

Iron frame: use a metal frame as a base. Let a welder make it for you (use 0.5 cm thick bars, make 6 vertical curly lines and connect them with several lines on the top.)

Coloured branches of Salix

Zantedeschia
Crystal Blush,
Amaryllis and
Carnet Glow
Tulipa Inzoli

Make a base from Salix branches, weaving them and knotting together with plastic ties. For stability, always fix them in several places (each one at least twice).

For this work you can use glass tubes with water to prolong the life of flowers but in this case for a more elegant impression you can use wax (melted in a water bath), covering the cuts of flowers. Zantedeschia and Tulipa will be fresh for 6 or 8 hours. It is enough for dinner.

Then attach the flowers with the cable ties (as branches), taking into account the movement and bends of flowers and branches.

Kindle the Flame
DESIGNER IRINA LADEISCHIKOVA
Ekaterinburg, Russia
Irina Ladeischikova was born in Ekaterinburg, and trained as a teacher.

She started in floristry in 1992, studying from 1993 to 1996 in the Republican school of flower arrangement and taking courses at French and German schools. In 2006 Irina continued her studies at the floral school in Gilzenkarscheng with Wally Klett, in the same year demonstrating at the wedding show exhibition at IPM, Essen.

In 2007 she won the Ural championship for wedding floristry, in 2008 becoming the overall winner at the Ural championship of professional florists.

Irina has had her own flower business since 1997, being the art director of the studio “Fleur.”
Irina Ladesichikova shares this wonderful idea of stringing romantic symbols through the trees, perhaps leading to a tryst for two?

You will need:
- Rosa Grand Prix petals, Ornithogalum arabicum, Birch bark, plus thin perspex or plastic, tiny wooden pegs, cold glue, nylon thread such as fishing line, and several trees to string it along.

1. Cut heart shapes out of perspex and pierce with two holes for the nylon.
2. Thread them on to the nylon.

BACKGROUND: The skyline filled with Russian church spires.
mine, it was always you from the start.
Larisa Kravchenkova is a florist and decorator. She started floristry while still a child, appreciating flowers and since has explored them more artistically.

Larisa has studied with Petere Hess, Gregor Lersch and Tor Gundesen as well as training in Ireland, Greece, the Baltic, Germany and France. At present she is head teacher at the 'Flowers in Details' floristry school, which is a department of the interior design school 'Details'.

She explained, "Floristry as a profession for me is about creativity, handicraft and hard work. The biggest part of profession is a team you are working with. For beginners I would advise you to learn from nature – and good luck in your creations!"
Larisa Kravchenkova successfully turned tough succulents into a soft, feminine necklace. Now it’s your turn...

1. Wrap heavy gauge florist’s wire with white parafilm. Making sure the length is long enough to sit comfortably around the neck.

2. Curl the ends with pliers to form a hook and eye. Cut small pieces of card and glue two pieces together over the wire. Do this all around the necklace.

3. Sort the succulents from smallest to largest to smallest again. Place a glass headed pin in the centre of each and cut off any ends sticking out... you don’t want neck wounds!

4. Cut the stems off and cover the back with teased out threads from the batting.

5. Use cold glue to attach a succulent to each small piece of cardboard.
Had I the heavens' embroidered cloths,
Enwrought with golden and silver light,
The blue and the dim and the dark cloths
Of night and light and the half-light,
I would spread the cloths under your feet:
But I, being poor, have only my dreams;
I have spread my dreams under your feet;
Tread softly, because you tread on my dreams.

William Butler Yeats
Parthenocissus tricuspidata (Virginia Creeper) and Malus (Apple) as well as the Phalaenopsis, Oncidium and Vuilleumieria cambria Orchids were the stars in Tatyana’s design.

All you need are two circular frames for the top and bottom with a tube of Organza fabric attached to achieve this wonderful effect. Use a hook to hang it from the ceiling and add the plant material.
Tatyana Voronina is from Saint Petersburg. She is a floral designer in the company ‘Planta A’ and a floristry teacher.

She explained, “My career started when I studied at the floristry school ‘Nicole’. When I had finished studying I went to work at ‘Planta A’, teaching floristry at that international school and continuing my own education by joining seminars by the grand masters of floristry.”

“The most wonderful part of floristry, in my opinion, is that you can express your emotions with flowers and transfer your views into flowers. In work I prefer simple and clear lines using formal and minimalistic styles. I show forms and structures to try to find and present the best of each individual plant or flower.”
Tatyana Voronina is the creator of this wreath table centre and shares her method with you.

To start:
Use the leaves of the Ivy to make a mat, adding each leaf with cold glue.

1: Curl the vine into a ring connecting them all in to each other with paper covered wire.

2: Build up the ring to make a full, generous wreath.

3: Using paper covered wire attach small glass flower phials and place in the flowers, positioning them to emphasize one direction around the circle. Lay the ‘String of Hearts’ on top.

Place the wreath on the Ivy mat, repeat the shape with stones around the outside, place the candlesticks either side and sprinkle over the fake snow.
Liv up my Life
Roshka Vyacheslav was interested in flowers from childhood, starting in floristry as a profession when he was 15. He prefers eclectic fusion styles and definitely classical European style.

He said, “Participation in floral contests allows me to find something new in floristry and to make my professional fantasies become real.”

“For me every customer is unique. Therefore my clients get something of their own and unrepeatable. I am 100% committed to their demands and sometimes go beyond.”

“My gut feeling of where to stop and what style to use is found in all my works whether it is a big decoration or a single bouquet.”

1: Position a curved bowl into the centre, securing it in place with hot glue. Take a fork over the wax to give it an interesting texture. Use glass headed pins to attach the felted wool around the top.

2: Place Phalaenopsis plants in the bowl, one each side, covering their roots with Moss. Secure the flowers to the top felt. Build up layers over the top with vine and decorative accessories.

3: Make garlands with Apple and bullion wire and secure these around the skewers in the wax.

4: Continue adding more depth with trails of Helichrysum, more felted wool and Vanda Orchids.

Red Phalaenopsis Orchids and the Vanda Orchid ‘Fuchsia Magic’ were combined with Malus (Apple) stems, felt, wool and Helichrysum petalare trails in Roshka’s design. These were mounted on the wax form, which itself rests in a wooden stand.

HAVE A GO!

1: Use a large ring mould to pour in paraffin wax, adding twigs or interesting plant material so it sets in the wax. Push skewers into the top once it has set.

BACKGROUND: Jewellery boxes and cases are made from Birch bark.
Sergey Karpunin is the Jury Chairman of the Russian Professional Florist Championships as well as those in Moscow and has been for several years. He serves regularly as a referee in European floristry championships and also takes on the role of technical advisor on many occasions. He has trained as a nuclear investigator in engineering, an economist, a wedding florist, a landscape designer and still had time to reach Teacher's Diploma 4th Grade at The Sogetsu School of Ikebana of Japan. He has worked for the last 8 years in the flower shop 'Tsvety na Sretenke', in Moscow although he regularly travels internationally as project and art director of Russian floral exhibitions.

His advice to young florists is, "To learn more, more and more… and to understand your own art preferences and style. I prefer minimalism for myself but for my clients – I go with their wishes and style."
Sergey covered the dry grass shape of this charming floral handbag with Mimosa. He used Ranunculas packed in closely together for the top to add the contrast.

The beautiful heart shape reflects his preference for the minimalist style as he only used Hypericum berries to create the wonderful texture.
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the fabulous book 'Variations Florales' from the European Floral Academy!

If you have a beautiful vase and you have no idea how to add the flowers and/or foliage, this is the collection for you!
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A browse through this large, beautifully photographed book from the European Floral Academy immediately had my creative juices going! There is less emphasis on beautiful vases and minimalistic chic as in their first book (this month’s prize draw see page 56) and the result is a much wider variety of styles and techniques.

Several of the designs start with a sleuth of reeds or Salix (Willow) bundled, glued or swirled in creative ways to produce some wonderful forms. These would be easily reproduced for an average designer and could be scaled for the coffee table or a large foyer display.

Amongst the wonderful arrangements on show are many which manipulate leaves, both dried and fresh. Layered, cut, folded or rolled, the results are extremely beautiful and reinforce the notion that extraordinary floral design can be achieved with foliage being the dominant plant material.

That is not to say that flowers have been forgotten in ‘Harmonies Florales’. They are used singly or in rows or bunches, often using just the one type of flower rather than a mix of forms and colours as in the English influenced styles. The result is the distinctive European look, stylish, clean cut and contemporary.

Who would I recommend this book to? Definitely not a beginner, as this is not a step by step ‘how to’ book, but for the novice designer it would be an inspiring coffee table book to take to a floristry teacher to be guided through the processes needed. Designers with a little more experience will be turning the pages for many years to come, each time noticing a new style of arrangement or technique to try, experiment with or use as inspiration to build on.

It also introduces a distinctive style if you want to move away from the multi flowered, multi coloured, English influences that can be expensive to produce, especially when 5 leaves can make an equally impressive and beautiful arrangement. Whether you have budget constraints, a limited selection of plant material or want to try the European style, this is the book for you.

Ordering information direct from the European Floral Academy is on the inside back page of this edition.