

Origin of ANKARS

“AN-K-A-R-S” is an acronym of the initials for the first and last names of three women: Angelina Rosanova, her daughter Ekaterina Stepnaya, and Angella Safonova - the founders of this technique:

Angelina

Katya (endearing for Ekaterina, later she changed it to Rina)

Angella

Rosanova

Stepnaya and **S**afonova under one ‘S’

I understand that Angelina Rosanova was the one to start ANKARS in 1994, sorry to say that she died in 2010. Her daughter Katya (Ekaterina = Rina Stepnaya) joined her in the early 1990s. The group also included Angella Safonova (now a professional interior designer). They started teaching tatting specifically stressing the necessity of a stiff and strong tatted foundation to hold a lot of beads and to imitate wire so that their jewelry looks like filigree (Note: It is filigree if translated literally considering that 'filum' = thread and 'granum' = seed, thus, seed bead.) They exhibited their beautiful pieces and attracted a lot of followers all over the country, the rest is history. Rina is responsible for all the publicity in books and on the Internet.

ANKARS Exercise

Rina Stepnaya (ANKARS) says that to avoid gaps between tatted rings and chains we need to train the tactile feeling/sense in fingertips of left thumb and forefinger. In regular life we do not need this specific ability, so it stays dormant, but can be awakened with diligent practice. She should know since ANKARS projects demand tightly tatted firm even rigid foundation to hold old those beads and keep shape.

Starting at lesson 2 of her course Rina trains her students using following exercise: Hold your previous ds tightly between fingertips of left thumb and fore finger, try to feel that it is really tight and not moving.

Now keeping it this way (fingertips in tight pinch and ds not moving, not even stirring) slowly make the 1st part of the next ds, use your **LEFT HAND ONLY!** Right hand does not move. That's all. Doing this exercise 5 minutes every day for a year will make this grip on ds automatic, there won't be any gaps between tatted parts, besides, if a pattern asks for some space between elements you'll be able to make them even and of the size you need. Your chains will be tight enough and well shaped. Loose chains are something the beginners often struggle with.

I confirm that the exercise works. The trick is to remember about it every time you pick up the shuttles, and pay attention to every stitch. It will slow you down for some time, but the result is certainly worth the effort.