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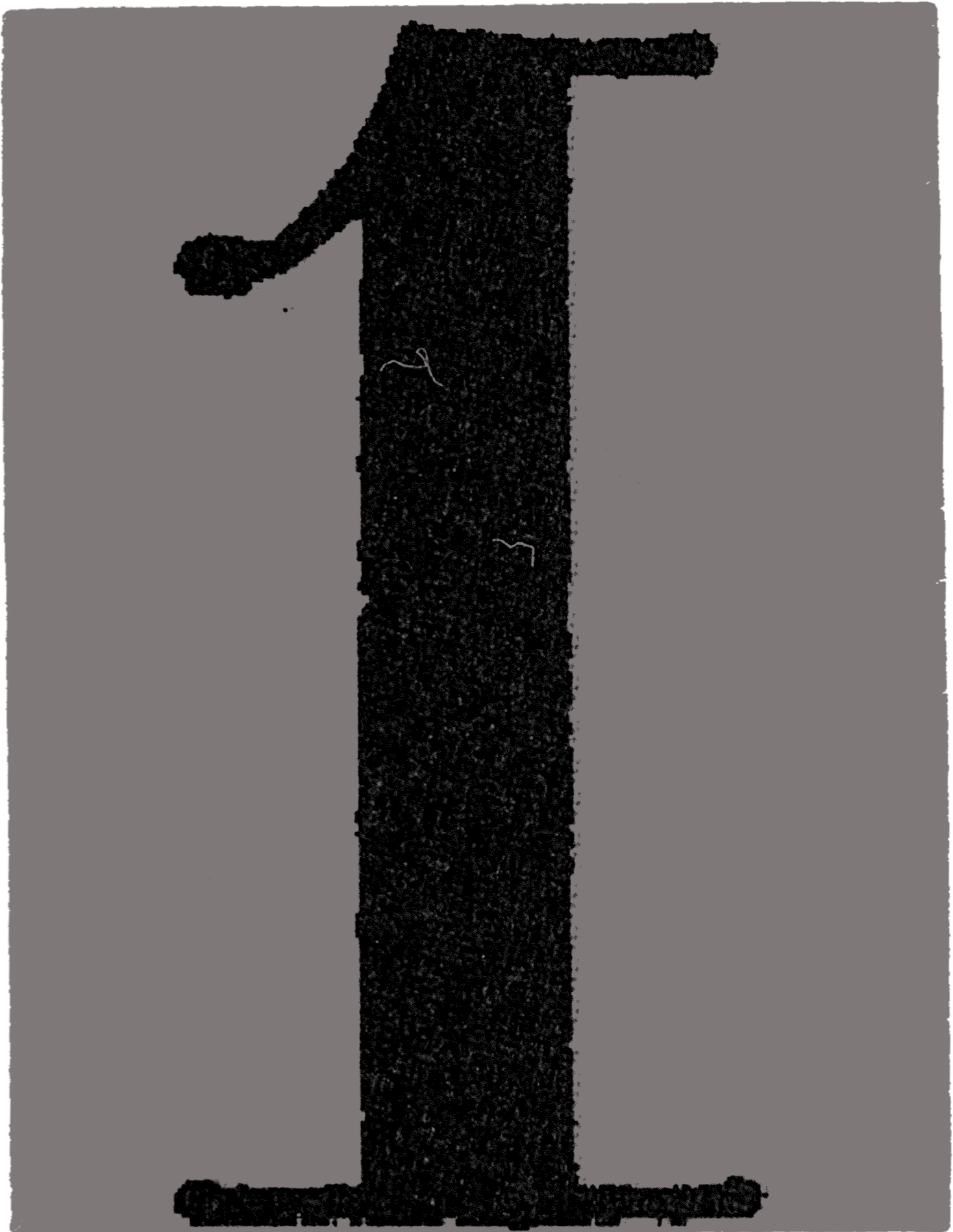
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ISSUE No 22 (XXII)

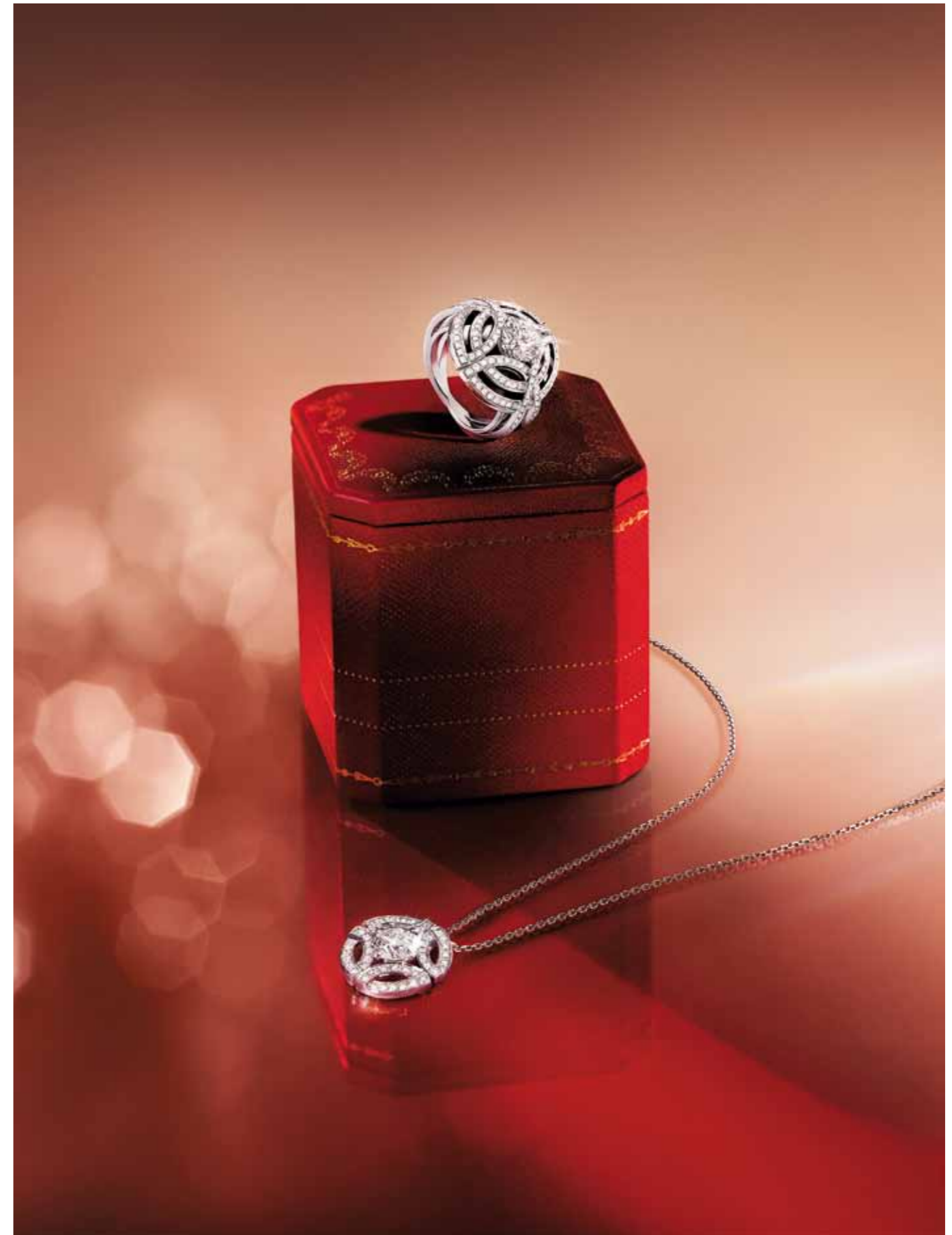
ZAHA HADDAD, CATHERINE THE GREAT AND STANISLAV AUGUST  
IBN BATTUTA'S TRAVELS, THE SPANISH COLLECTION  
BEAUTIFUL SCENERY IS SKILFUL PAINTING





MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY  
ZAHA HADID

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St. Petersburg, Naberezhnaya Moiki, 55, Tel.: (812) 670 70 70

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# DEFENDING THE BRIDGES



PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

AT THE OPENING  
OF THE EXHIBITION  
"STEVE McCURRY.  
UNGUARDED MOMENT",  
SEPTEMBER 2015

Our magazine is not only about the Hermitage Museum. Through the events and projects that our museum conducts, we speak about topics that are important to the whole world of art and culture. Presently, we feel that a special "Hermitage world" has taken shape and is thriving, encompassing the dynamic "Greater Hermitage" program. In recent times, when all types of relations between states, peoples and religions have deteriorated, many of our museum's common projects have acquired new dimensions, reinforcing the dynamism and versatility of the "Hermitage world."

Culture has once again confirmed its role as a bridge between peoples, which is especially important when other routes are closed. In this sense, a seemingly unexpected thing has been happening: one after another, Hermitage events have suddenly started becoming politicized. The Hermitage's British exhibitions had a particularly loud resonance among 2015 exhibition projects. The series of Hermitage's British exhibitions came in exactly those months at the beginning of the year when relations between Russia and Great Britain deteriorated significantly, and when traditional anti-Russian sentiment once again flourished in English society. It was precisely at this time that the British Museum brought a sculpture from the Parthenon to the Hermitage, thereby demonstrating the high degree of trust that exists between the two museums. The very successful exhibition "Francis Bacon and the Old Masters" was held in both countries. St. Petersburg museumgoers chose the exhibition of Zaha Hadid, a British architect of Arab descent, as the best exhibition of the year in St. Petersburg. Huge crowds came to see the work of Scottish photographer Steve McCurry, who reports from the world's hot spots.

At the end of the year, despite the official cancellation of the Russian-Polish cross-cultural year by the Polish side, the tremendous exhibition "Catherine the Great and Stanislaw August" was held in the Hermitage's Nicholas Hall with the participation of a Polish museum. The exhibition provided a scientific and artistic view into the similarities and differences of the ways in which the two enlightened monarchs collected art. The exhibition made it largely possible to reconstruct the last Polish king's collection, which had previously fallen apart. The particularities of the heyday of neoclassicism in Russia and Poland were demonstrated by the exhibition. Political circumstances sharpened the historic tragedy of the relations between the two monarchs, which began as a romantic relationship, and ended in the complete partition of Poland. The two "students" of Voltaire, from whom the philosopher expected a practical application of the ideals of the Enlightenment, turned out, in fact, to be followers of their national traditions. Catherine embodied absolute autocracy, while making the rights of religious minorities cause for liquidating Polish independence. Stanislaw August adopted the first constitution in Europe, but was forced to show solidarity with traditional Polish "democracy", which destroyed the country's statehood from within. The exhibition featured works that spoke about art and about politics, and set the stage for serious historical reflections at a time when politicians are trying to manipulate historical emotions.

Cultural bridges must be two-way streets. Thus, we went once again to Venice, a city so dear to the museum heart of St. Petersburg. Once we went there to exhibit Prigov, a little known artist in Europe. This time we cooperated with glass manufacturers to bring together some of the greatest contemporary artists around a very Russian theme: neo-Gothic and pseudo-Gothic art. The Hermitage's initiative led to a world conversation about art.

This cooperation was continued through the Year of Photography in the Hermitage. A series of exhibitions was held to honor the completion of the project for a photo restoration laboratory and photo storage facilities (together with the American (!) Andrew W. Mellon Foundation) at the Hermitage. These exhibitions included an elegant exhibit of the photography of Sergey Levitsky, a Russian master of the nineteenth century, the mystical emptiness of the Hermitage rooms by Candida Höfer, the sad abandonment of the palaces of Cairo by Xenia Nikolskaya, the insightfulness of Steve McCurry, and photo-reportage from Kiev and Donbass. Altogether, these exhibitions made for a lively and well-used bridge similar to the Venetian one.

Persian speech could be heard all over the Hermitage for a whole week during the conference of European Iranian scholars, who gathered in memory of the famous Iranian Congress of 1934. The new conference attracted many Iranians, including those living both in Iran and abroad. Discussions between native Iranians and researchers of Iranian culture were held against the backdrop of brilliant exhibitions such as "The History of the Iranian Congress," "Masterpieces of Iranian Art in the Hermitage," and finally, the story of the famous travels of Ibn Battuta. One could also get a vivid picture of the unity and diversity of medieval Islamic culture. Purely scientific projects gained unexpected relevance within the context of the current political tension. Past experiences of cultural interaction became an instructive example for modern day exchanges.

The delight from the excellent exhibition dedicated to Catherine the Great and the Hermitage in Sydney, Australia, was, I believe, reinforced by the exigencies of the political situation, whereby Australia turned out to be one of the harshest critics of Russian policy in the world. People recognize the role of cultural bridges. The Hermitage Amsterdam has already become a tradition among such bridges. The exhibition there on Alexander I, Napoleon and Josephine reminded people of the human aspects of international politics. The collection of Spanish art from the Hermitage became the backdrop for reflections on bygone cultural and political relations. In the Netherlands, one did not collect Spanish art, the art of the invaders, whereas Russians did collect it. Sometimes cultural bridges run high above the water and the ground.

Cultural bridges must be defended. They must survive even at times when other bridges are blown up. Meanwhile, politicians always have the temptation to make culture the first sacrifice of any confrontation. This is very dangerous, since it's much harder to go backwards in the cultural sphere than it is in the economic or tourism spheres. Culture is the main enemy of barbarity, thus bloody and evil forces, as we can see today in the East, purposely destroy museums and historical monuments.

They want to blow up cultural bridges. We need to preserve them.

Mikhail Piotrovsky  
06.01.2016  
On Christmas Eve

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Hermitage Museum XXI century Foundation would like to thank **Paul Mosterd** (exhibition center Hermitage Amsterdam, the Netherlands), **Nikolai Vladimirovich Ilyin** (foundation Hermitage Israel, Frankfurt – Saint Petersburg – Tel Aviv), **Mikhail Kamensky** (Sotheby's, Moscow) **Natalia Bryzhko-Zapur** and **Anna Lazar** (Polish Institute in St. Petersburg), **Olga Sviblova** (MMAM, Moscow), **Nadia Taiga** (Berengo Studio, Venice), **Sofia Trotsenko** (VINZAVOD, Moscow), **Nikolai Palazhchenko** (Moscow) for a special attention and friendly support of the magazine.

**Special thanks to:**

**Larisa Korabelnikova, Maria Khaltunen, Marina Tsyguleva, Vyacheslav Fedorov** (The State Hermitage Museum)

ISSN 2218-0338

Founding Company: **The State Hermitage Museum**

Publisher: **The Hermitage Museum XXI century Foundation**

The State Hermitage Magazine is registered as a media publication, registration number PI FS77-38126 issued 24 November 2009 by the Federal service for supervision of communications, information technology and mass communication (Roscomnadzor).

Circulation 3 500 copies

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Size: 231 x 285 mm

For subscription information in Saint Petersburg please contact:

SZA Pressinform, tel: +7 (812) 335-97-51; subscription reference 41093 (Russian edition), 41094 (English Edition)

**Printing house PNB Print (Riga)**

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**The Hermitage Museum XXI century Foundation**

An independent private Russian foundation supporting the projects and programmes of The State Hermitage museum in accordance with appropriate general agreements. Publisher of the State Hermitage Magazine  
19 Bolshaya Morskaya Street, St. Petersburg, 191186. Tel. / fax: +7 (812) 312-02-30

**COVER:**

Fragment of a painting by **Pierre Auguste Renoir** "Roses in a vase". 1910  
Canvas, oil. 61.5 x 50.7 cm. The State Hermitage Museum

Fragment of a painting by **Maurice Denis**  
"Panel 7. Cupid Carrying Psyche Up to Heaven" (The Story of Psyche Series). 1908  
Canvas, oil. 180 x 265 cm. The State Hermitage Museum

Cross from rock crystal with gilded copper figure of Christ. Italy. 15th century  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № Ф-1564  
Photo: **Rustam Zagidullin**

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ARCHITECT ZAHA HADID WAS AWARDED THE PRITZKER PRIZE IN 2004 IN THE STATE HERMITAGE. IT IS THE HIGHEST ACCOLADE, OFTEN TERMED THE «NOBEL PRIZE» OF ARCHITECTURE.

ZAHA HADID WAS BORN IN BAGHDAD IN 1950. SHE ENTERED LONDON'S FAMOUS ARCHITECTURAL ASSOCIATION SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE IN 1972. IN 1979, TWO YEARS AFTER SHE HAD GRADUATED WITH HONORS, HADID FOUNDED HER OWN ARCHITECTURAL STUDIO.

THE FIRST PROJECT REALIZED BY HER STUDIO - A FIRE STATION FOR THE VITRA COMPANY - WAS COMPLETED IN 1993. A FEATURE OF HADID'S AND HER OLDER PARTNER PATRICK SCHUMACHER'S CREATIVITY IS IN THE CONJUNCTION OF ARCHITECTURE, URBAN PLANNING, GEOLOGY AND LANDSCAPE STUDIES. HADID'S PROJECTS COMBINE HAND-MADE SYSTEMS AND A TOPOGRAPHY CREATED BY NATURE; THEY CALL UPON THE LATEST INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGIES AND THE BASIC PRINCIPLES OF NATURAL PROCESSES.

KSENIYA MALICH, CURATOR OF THE EXHIBITION

# ZAHA HADID

## CALLIGRAPHY OF SPACE

**ON THE 31<sup>ST</sup> OF MAY 2004 THE STATE HERMITAGE WAS FULL, WITH VISITORS AND THE AUDIENCE SITTING IN THE HALL AS WELL AS ON STAGE. THE EVENT WAS EXCEPTIONAL, AS THE FAMOUS ARCHITECTURAL PRITZKER PRIZE WAS BEING GIVEN TO A WOMAN OF ARABIC ORIGIN. THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF ZAHA HADID<sup>1</sup>, THE CREATOR OF FAIRY TALE CASTLES AND SPACES FULL OF REACTIVE MOVEMENT AND WHIRLWINDS AND ONE OF THE MOST DISTINGUISHED ARCHITECTS OF THE CONTEMPORARY ART SCENE, WERE CELEBRATED. THE AWARD WAS GIVEN TO AN INNOVATIVE ARCHITECT, WHO HAS CONSTANTLY REITERATED THAT HER INSPIRATION HAS ALWAYS BEEN THE RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE, AND ABOVE ALL, THE SUPREMATISM OF MALEVICH<sup>2</sup>.**

I had the pleasure of meeting Zaha, talking to her and listening to her lectures. I remember well a lecture delivered by her in Istanbul at the Architectural Congress. Young architects, mainly young women were listening to her as though to a preacher, with real fascination and belief in making the impossible possible. Zaha's drawings always create the impression that what she is trying to achieve is impossible, yet she always puts her ideas into practice.

I distinctly remember the night of the 11th of September 2001 when Zaha, Tom Krenztzem, the director of the Guggenheim Museum, and I were on the roof of his house in Manhattan admiring the stars in the sky and the two famous Twin Towers, talking about new architecture and new politics. The next day I was a witness to the collapse of those very Twin Towers. Politics had delivered a blow to architecture. To confront the evil which freely roams the world one needs a very special, strong architectural arrangement which can change space and is able to transform in order to defend it.

Zaha is constantly talking about her ideas being derived from the Russian avant-garde. Initially this sounds strange, as the squares, circles and rectangles of the Supremalists are not similar to the waves and hurricanes created by Zaha. But that is where its deep meaning lies, as the Russian avant-garde not only created its own language, it gave the artist the freedom of space and made him a master of all dimensions; first on paper, then in real life. This is the trail of the Russian avant-garde that Zaha has adopted and used with unusual and exceptional power.

The rigid sides of squares are transformed into whimsical curves, the creation of which necessitates a feeling for and knowledge of Arabic calligraphy.

An ability to turn the elegant curve of a letter into a glorious wave, bird, dolphin's back or enormous waterfall is another element of culture, from which Zaha has created a unique method and aesthetic manifesto. Calligraphy is indeed a type of abstract art.

Playing with this can be taken a long way. She does this and takes it even further.

Every year we receive new revelations and beauty from the hand of Zaha. I am very happy that some of them are displayed at this exhibition. We are all delighted that Zaha has returned to the Hermitage.

MIKHAIL PIDTROVSKY

1  
↓  
p. 218

2  
↓  
p. 024  
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● PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

↑ AZABU JYUBAN  
Tokyo. 1987.



Your new exhibition is opening in the very center of Saint-Petersburg, a city of refined but conservative architectural taste — in the Nikolaevsky Hall of the Winter Palace with its magnificent neoclassical interior, no less. What is history for you? Is it architectural monuments, our memories or just tradition?

History is universal, but it is also deeply personal. Our perceptions of historical events are filtered through our own memories, contexts, world-views; and those perceptions change with time, as we change. We have to respect and learn from history, but we must not be bound by it — that only creates paralysis.

And what does historical context mean for you? Do you try to recodify all these historic values?

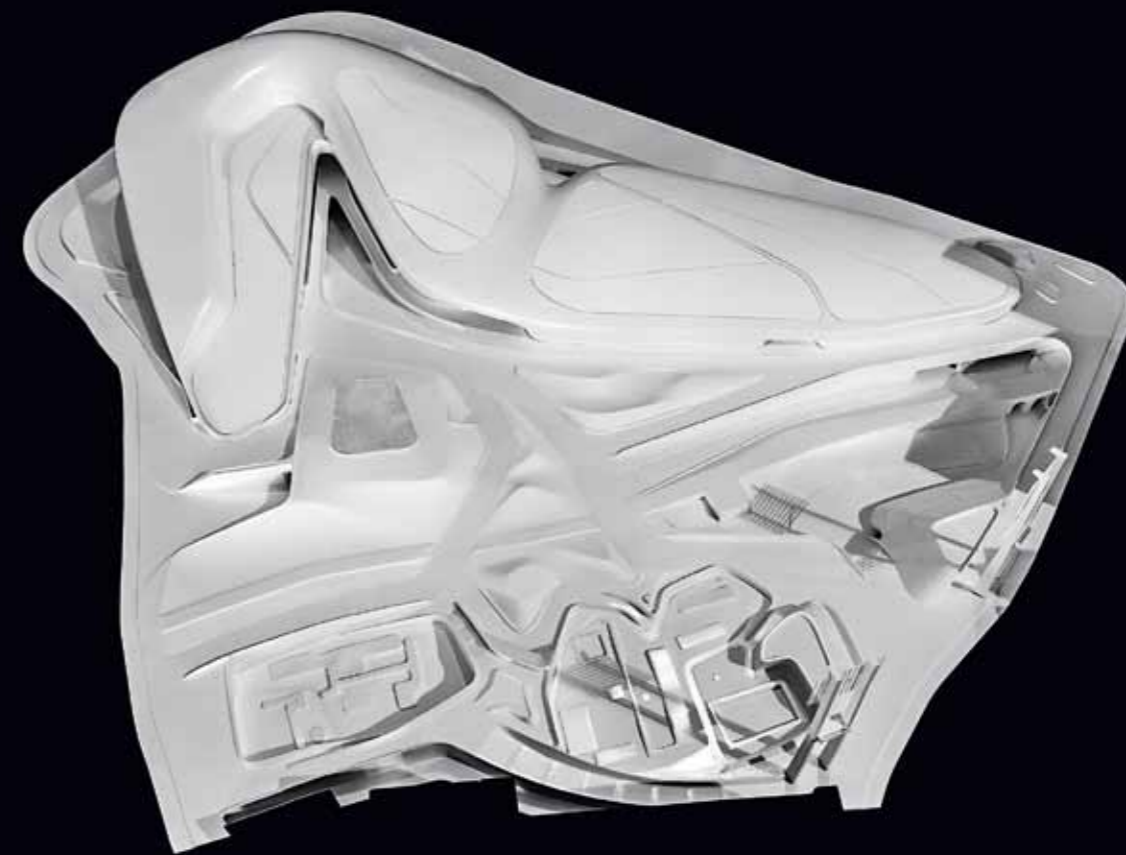
I don't believe cities should be like Venice and not grow or change at all. It is important to intervene in a contemporary way — but it requires sensitivity. In cities, you need zones where the space can shrink and expand — you need to allow and plan for an organic kind of growth to occur. This organic growth has made the urban fabric of our great cities so rich; they are a fantastic collage layered over many centuries of history and cultures.

How is it that in the 1980's many strict modernists (like Leon Krier, for instance) became apologists for historicism? Historicism and contextualism had become part of a very tangled and complex discourse at the time that you were studying.

In the late 1970's and early 1980's, there was a loss of courage in the profession and a perception — perhaps in reaction to the economic realities of the time — that the modernist project had failed. Many architects reverted to historicism and the familiarity of the past. It was a regressive moment that I think was finally debunked by Christo's "Wrapping of the Reichstag" in Berlin (1995). There were millions of people there singing and dancing; they all flocked to see this building being wrapped, because it was a strange idea. It was an extraordinary event — and very important historically as that's when it became clear to me that people are indeed interested in fantastic projects — those projects that make fantasy become reality.

But does the current situation not imply that the Modernist project has failed?

One of the tasks I set for myself at the beginning of my career was the continuation of the unfinished project



↑ Dongdaemun Design Park. Seoul. 2007–2014.

↓ Shell Models: London Aquatics Centre, London. 2005–2011.



of Modernism, in the experimental spirit of the early Avant-garde. I radicalized some of its compositional techniques like fragmentation and layering to create fluidity instead of barriers. I have always believed that a formal repertoire is critical in urbanism. I am particularly interested in shaping the ground; not just as a formal gesture but as a way of dealing with the complexity of the whole urban system. Modernism ignored the ground by lifting buildings above it and leaving the space open. We needed to go back to the ground, study it, and learn how to programme it as an event space. I was experimenting with placing large programme structures on the ground so they don't become a barrier.

Form and programme cannot be separated from each another; topography brings them together. As an architect, it is important to be engaged in this process. I was intrigued by the urban interventions of the old guard Modernists, such as Tecton's neo-Corbusian, slab and block housing estates in London. These are large scale fragments, incomplete geometric interventions designed to replace the existing city. It is their incompleteness that interests me, because it represents an impulse to make urban geometry dictate building form and way of life.

**Incompleteness is something brought from other sciences to urban planning. This is the idea of natural self-reproduction and self-development. In what way can architecture acquire this complex awareness?**

I think many architects are increasingly interested in the city in an indirect way. Perhaps this is a reaction against the negative impacts of zoning and planning regulations which have distorted so many city landscapes. We should move away from these two-dimensional ideas and think about layering across an entire site. Its additive potential lends itself to a new way of reading and intervening in the contemporary city. Urban density is related to lifestyle choice. 20 years ago there was an anti-urban trend that favoured suburban lifestyles over metropolitan lifestyles. What makes cities interesting is the proximity of all civic programmes close to the centre; an intensity brought about by the collision of programmes that makes the city more sociable and metropolitan.

We've now learned to apply our new architectural techniques to urbanism, where elements fit together to form a continuum and we've applied this on a city wide scale. We can develop a whole field of buildings, each one different but logically connected to the next:

an organic, continually changing, field of buildings. With these techniques we can do something radically different from the urbanism of the beginning of the 20th Century, when buildings stood in distinct plots in disconnected chaos.

The way cities are used today is also very different to that of the past. We must now accommodate the widest variety of people with many different interests, experiences and influences — as well as different living patterns. Unlike centuries past, our cities must no longer be planned for only one single type of inhabitant. All buildings should have a civic component. Even a commercial high-rise building should have a civic program offering public spaces in which people can connect with each other. Developers in both the public and private sectors must invest in these public spaces. They are a vital component of a rich urban life and cityscape — they tie the urban fabric together. An arts centre, opera house or a dance school or public park, by the very nature of their cultural and civic importance, these spaces are accessible to everybody — which helps eliminate segregation in our cities.

**Talking about the history of architecture do you have a favourite era?**

I still believe in the twentieth century idea that architects can contribute to a better life. If you look back to the 60's, when I was growing up in Iraq, there was an unbroken belief in progress and a great sense of optimism. Iraq was a new republic and it was going through a period of nation-building. Baghdad was undergoing a Modernist influence; Frank Lloyd Wright and Gio Ponti both designed buildings there. The ideas of change, liberation and freedom of this era were critical to my development. My father studied at the London School of Economics under Laski and Fabian. When he returned to Iraq he joined the Beirut Group that was the basis of the Iraqi Democratic Party. There was an incredible momentum of social reform everywhere. The ideology of this era was very important to me and the development of my work.

**Which architects from the past would you compare your work to?**

It is an obvious comparison, but Oscar Niemeyer's spatial sensibility and talent are unique and unsurpassed. His work led me to look anew at the problem of scale and fluidity in architecture. Many architects of that period



↑ Field of shells, 2014  
↓ Tower Research Installation





2 | MALEVICH'S TEKTONIK  
London, 1976-1977

3 | HAFENSTRASSE DEVELOPMENT  
Hamburg, 1989

4 | VICTORIA CITY AERIAL  
Berlin, 1988



experimented with shape, but Niemeyer pushed his work to a higher level — using all the advantages of concrete technology of the time to create those wonderfully fluid forms. Niemeyer was among the first architects to talk about organic architecture, in terms of how the buildings' design is carefully thought about as if it were a unified organism. His work on composition and expanding the formal repertoire of modernism was critical. What Niemeyer changed dramatically was the creation of a spatial organizational plan. Each layer of his buildings could be quite different, but his seamless transitions within the design enabled it to cope with increased complexity.

I visited him a few times in his home in Rio. It's a masterpiece and a lesson in how to achieve something with very simple lines. Architecture is like writing — you must edit and re-edit, again and again, until it looks effortless.

Niemeyer's importance for the architecture of the 20th century can't be overestimated. Sadly, it sometimes seems as if his genius isn't always fully recognized, perhaps because his flamboyant style has sometimes been misunderstood as ornamental. It's true that Le Corbusier awakened Niemeyer when he came to Brazil in the 30's, but Niemeyer's influence on Corbusier is the more significant factor, bringing out the hidden sculptural talent of Le Corbusier and inspiring the more formally liberating trajectory of his later work, which culminated in Ronchamp.

Architecture of the twentieth century was raised on the constant search for a new improved world and more advanced technology. This is the "neomania" coined by Paul Valéry. But if we consider the end of the 60's to be the twilight of modernism can we speak about the end of this neomania?

Architecture does not follow fashion or economic cycles but the cycles of innovation generated by social and technological developments. Architecture can carry within it an inherent sense of vitality and optimism; the ability to connect communities and build their futures. Ecological sustainability and social disparity are the defining challenges of our generation, and the architecture of inclusivity offers solutions to these key challenges.

I believe what is new in our generation are the much greater levels of complexity and connectivity. With over 50% of the world's growing population now living in cities, contemporary urbanism and architecture must move



Tower Research Installation





51 **MONSOON RESTAURANT (INTERIOR)**  
Sapporo, 1989–1990

61 **TOMIGAYA BUILDING**  
Tokyo, 1986

beyond the outdated architecture of repetitive orthogonal blocks, towards an architecture for the 21st Century that addresses the complexities and dynamism of our lives today. Consequently, our work is exploring new concepts and methods that examine and organize the complexities of contemporary living.

Huge advances in design technology are enabling architects to rethink form and space, using new construction methods and materials in development such as sophisticated architectural facades that can take almost any shape and have the structural, weatherproofing, and insulation properties compressed into a single layer and can be easily fabricated and assembled anywhere. 3D Printing will open many new possibilities for the construction industry.

#### So we are still in thrall to technology?

Our task as architects is to continue this progress. We must marry these new concepts of accessibility and integration with the incredible advances in ecologically sound materials and construction practices. We must

not look at the disparate parts, but understand them as a whole, working together to create integrated communities that present solutions to the defining ecological and social challenges of our time. It is only through an architecture of inclusivity that we will create a truly sustainable society. Our designs demand continual progress in the development of new technologies, and our collaborators continue to respond by providing ever more sophisticated design and fabrication applications. Great things come from this method of working!

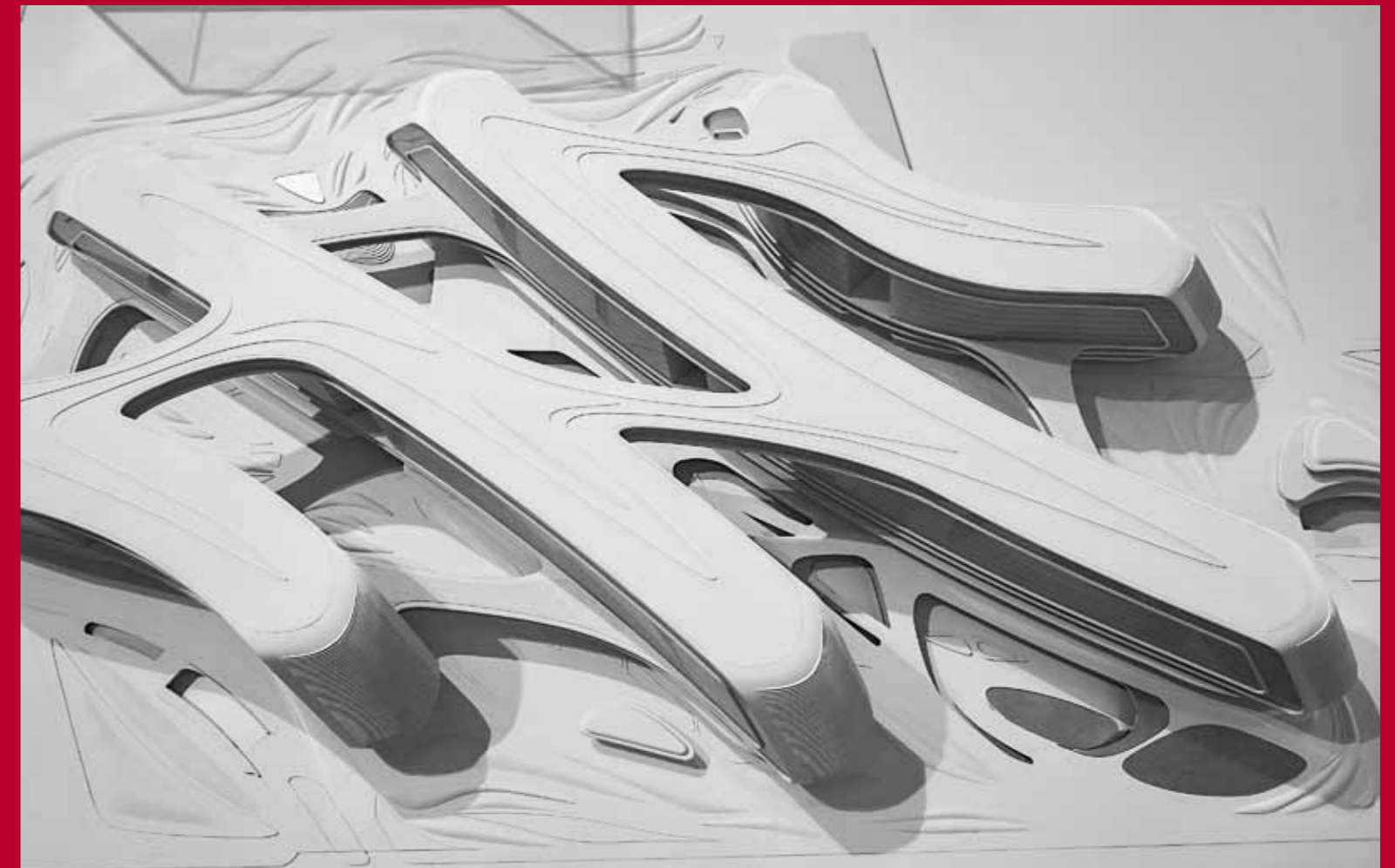
#### How do you view the contemporary educational preparation of architects? Are there any key schools?

I always thought teaching was very important experience, because you also learn from those you teach, and it is very rewarding somehow to show people what they can achieve beyond what they thought is possible for them to do. It's not just about what I know only, but what my students know too. It's reciprocal.

I don't think you can teach architecture. You can give a few lectures on history, and there is teaching



↑ Galaxy SOHO, Beijing, 2008–2012, Sponsor: Zhang Xin and Pan Shiyi of SOHO China  
↓ Sky SOHO, Shanghai, 2010–2014, Sponsor: Zhang Xin and Pan Shiyi of SOHO China



the technical issues and concepts of a design, but you can really only inspire people to make the next move. And that is a very difficult task because firstly, not everybody can do it, and secondly, it's not something that is tangible. I don't walk into the classroom and say "I am going to teach you this, today". We always set up a problem to look at, and then we explore it. Of course, the most rewarding aspect is when the students achieve beyond your expectations.

For my students at the University of Applied Arts in Vienna there was a very interesting programme. It is a masterclass and the students are with me for 5 or 6 years. At the end of six years, the students have had a unique opportunity to learn from my repertoire and experience, and many come to work with us in London. Some of the best people in our office are from the Vienna studio.

In Vienna, we explore on all scales, from whole cities, urban and large building complexes, all the way to furniture, fashion and product design. We have also explored the full ambit of programmatic agendas. Throughout this entire process we have been consistent in our general ambition to give expression to the complexity and dynamism of our time. Each year, we have set a conceptual research agenda in order to home in on important aspects for potential architectural innovation. However, the students ultimately assume the responsibility for their own design agenda.

Credit is due to the students who contribute to the discourse. Their ambition to improve the project's impact on society is encouraged. You never know what can come out of the students when they're given opportunity. They may be scared at first — not of me, of course! — but they just need to be given confidence to do their best. I think the great degree of freedom is why students like to come and work in our office. Their only obligation is to work hard and do their best. You need to let people grow, and it's so exciting to see them and their work mature.

**There are hundreds of people working at your studio. Would you say it has become a real school, fulfilling the role of former institutions?**

Architecture is certainly not a solo act. We have a wonderful team in the office that I've worked with for many years. The office has a great atmosphere of incredible energy and many people in the office contribute to the work. It's a different kind of operational psychology today. Previously, in an architect's office, you'd have each individual do almost everything: make a model, design, answer the phone or make a slide presentation. Now, you have people who specialize in different aspects of the design and construction process, so we've worked hard to establish a collective research culture in our office where many talents can feed off each other's ideas and experience.

**You use ultra-modern technologies, however you still draw by hand. What tools do you choose when you start thinking about a project?**

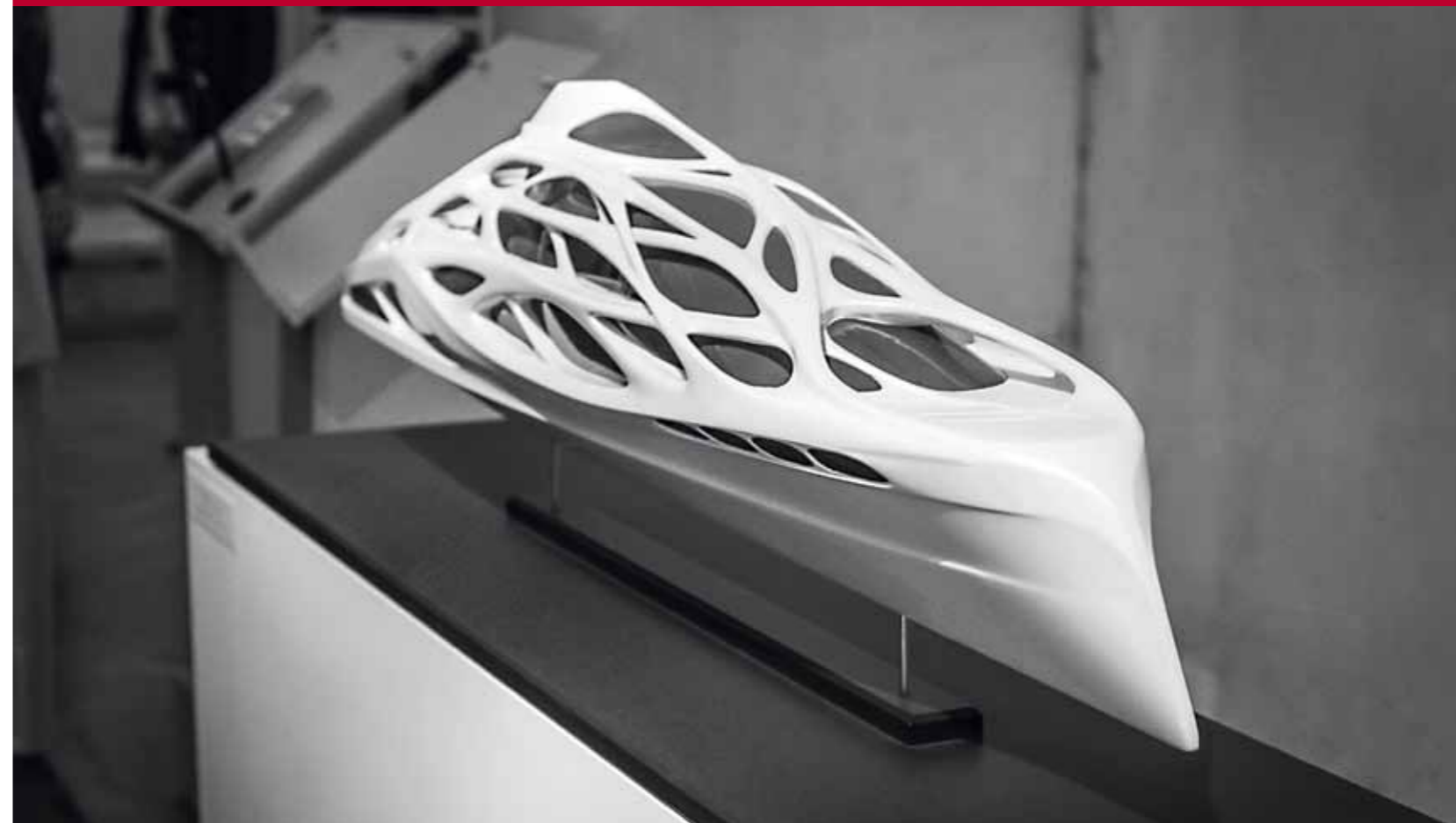
Painting formed a critical part of my creative experimentation, particularly in the early part of my career. It is a design tool that allowed us to experiment in both form and movement — leading to the development of a new language for architecture. It was the only thing available to us at the time as designers — as 3D design software didn't exist. There has been a complete shift in the last thirty years — to now doing some projects only on the computer. I thought architectural drawings required a much greater degree of distortion and fragmentation to assist our research — but eventually it affected the work of course. I'm not a painter — the paintings we created were always part of the research for our architectural projects. If I did them again I'd do them in a very different kind of way, but they were very important at the time.

In the early days of our office — the method we used to construct a drawing or painting or model — led to new exciting discoveries. It might take 10 years

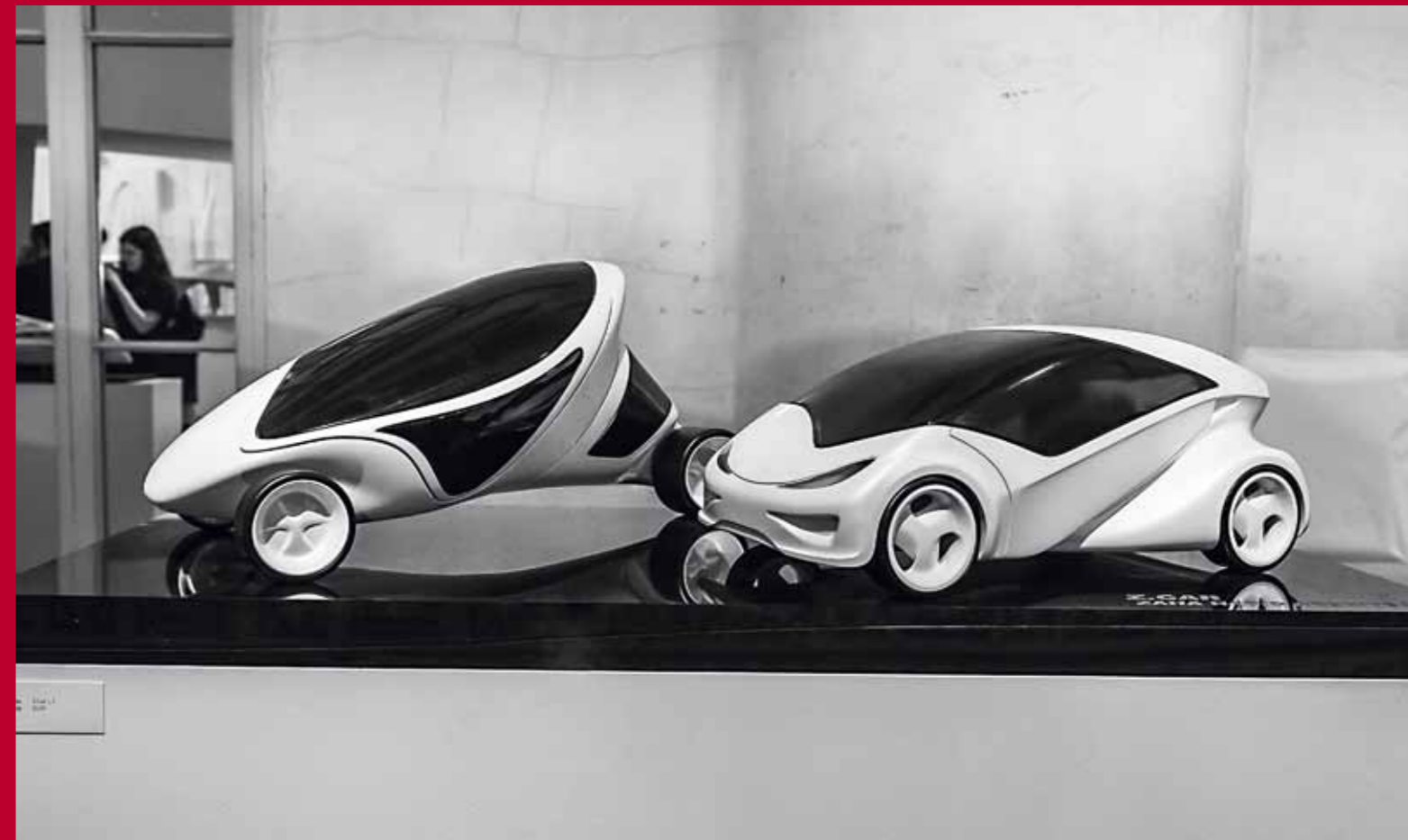
Zaha Hadid (Interview, 2012):

**"Works of such supremacists as Malevich<sup>2</sup> and Lissitzky are only seen as art objects because they have no scale to be compared to. But the minute you put scale they become architecture."**

2  
↓  
p. 014  
p. 048



↑ Unique Circle Yachts. Blohm & Voss, 2013. Lender: Blohm & Voss  
↓ Z-Car I, II, 2008





71 MONSOON RESTAURANT (INTERIOR)  
Sapporo, 1989–1990

for a 2D sketch to evolve into a workable space, and then into a realized building. And these are the journeys that I think are very exciting, as they are not predictable. For example, I used to produce hatched lines on my drawings. These became striated models, which eventually became the diagram for MAXXI. So a simple idea like that would evolve over time.

Doing the drawings was a slow process, as they required tremendous concentration and precision. Architectural drawing involves putting one sheet over another and tracing, like a form of reverse archaeology in a way. It leads to a process where distortion in the drawing can lead to distortion in the building. The processes lead to literal translations in the building.

**You have talked about the natural world as the best example for sound large scale urban projects. Does this mean a dialogue with the surrounding landscape is essential?**

We often look at nature when we work to create environments — at her coherence and beauty. People ask me; “Why are there no straight lines, why no 90 degrees in your work?” This is because life is not made in a grid. If you think of a natural landscape, it’s not even and regular — but people go to these places and think it’s very natural, very relaxing. I think that one can do that in architecture. A lot of this work was based also on early drawing research — looking at geology and archaeology, and more recently organic morphology, cells and biology. Each of our projects is the very specific result of how context, local culture, function and innovative engineering come together — allowing the architecture, city and landscape to seamlessly combine, both in terms of formal strategy and spatial experience.

I would say that quite consciously, we have a very open, diverse formal repertoire. One of the principles we adhere to is to attempt to embed a project into context with a whole series of articulate relationships that draw out features with the surrounding environment. We always first investigate and research the landscape, topography and circulation of the site. We then draw lines of visual connections with the local environment and lines of movement that become evident from these investigations, and bring these lines into the site — using them to inform our design so that each project has the strongest possible relationship with its unique environment.



↑ Tower Reliefs  
↓ Orchis Stools, ZHD, 2008





With every project, there is never an immediate attempt to create a predetermined organic form. There is always an underlying logic and architectural method within the design which we then push to the highest standards. If the completed design becomes a recognizable iconic form, it is an expression of the essence and quality of the design itself — and not because the design represents something else.

**How did Russian Suprematism become so crucial for you? Why not Bauhaus or De Stijl?**

I was unsure about what I really wanted to do until I reached my fourth year at the Architectural Association. Alvin Boyarski offered me my first platform to explore my ideas, and Rem Koolhaas and Elia Zenghelis were crucial as my teachers. But from my first days in architecture at the AA, I have always been interested in the concept of fragmentation, where we were de-constructing ideas of repetitiveness and mass production. So the work started out with abstraction.

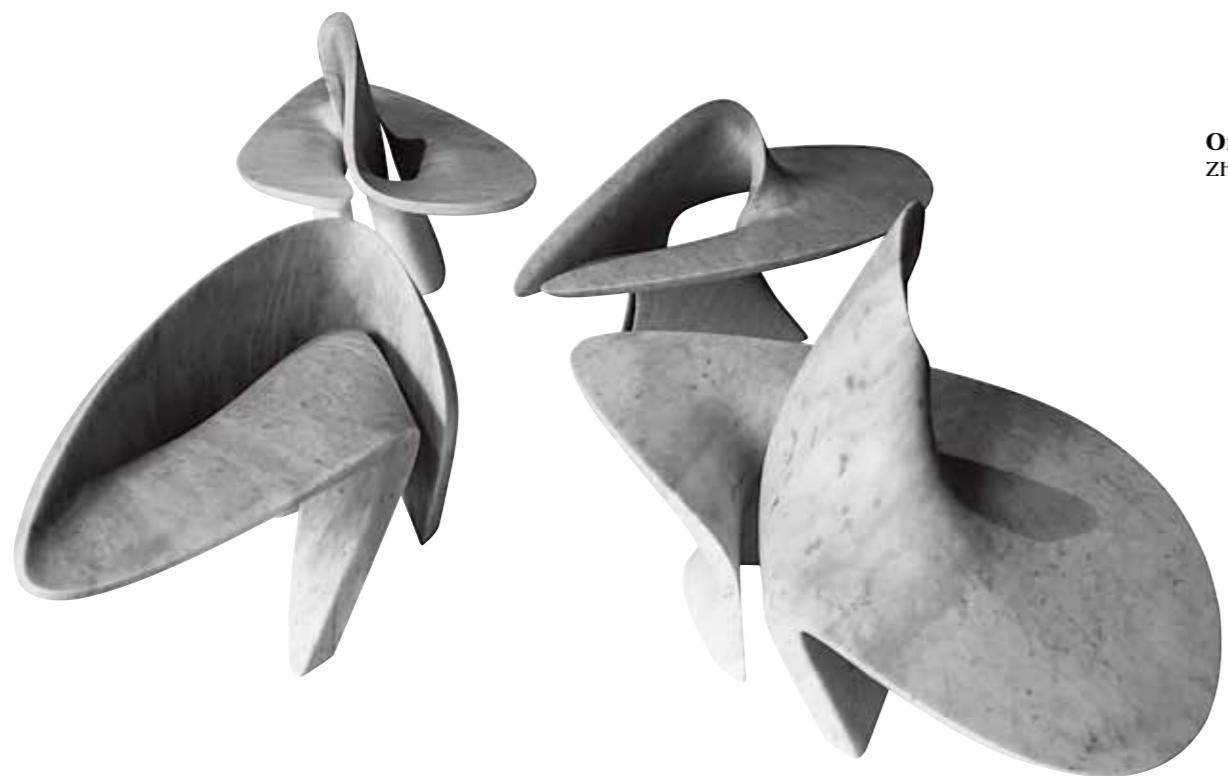
It goes back Europe in the 1960s and '70s, when certain figures were concerned with shattering and breaking—and before that to the beginning of the twentieth century, when some abstract movements were looking at figurative art, and also at certain geometric ab-

stractions, as well as Arabic calligraphy. I'm absolutely sure the Russians—Malevich, in particular—looked at those scripts. His work allowed me to develop abstraction as a heuristic principle to research and invent space. Kandinsky's art is also related to script. The person who first observed this connection was Rem Koolhaas. He noticed that only the Arab and Persian architecture students like myself were able to make certain curved gestures. He thought it had to do with calligraphy. The calligraphy you see in architectural plans today has to do with the notion of deconstruction and fragmentation in space.

**But why did it take so much time to be convinced it was not just a formal language but a very efficient architectural method?**

In the 1970's, most architects had no work because of the economy, but we were very productive with drawings. I think there was a similar ambition to that of Malevich's most formative period in revolutionary Russia — in the sense that we thought to inject new ideas that might regenerate or revitalise current thinking.

Russian Avant-garde not only anticipated the urbanist utopias of the 1960s and the high-tech style of the 1970s. Leonidov's 1927 project for the Lenin Institute



**ORCHIS STOOLS**  
ZHD. 2008



and his 1934 competition entry for the Soviet Ministry of Industry were 50 years ahead of their time.

Much of our work from the 1970's was criticized as "paper architecture" — as if we were trying to avoid engaging with the real world. But I'm convinced it was a very important period. The 70's were a very critical time of investigation, and they helped the development of all the work that followed over the next thirty years. However, this theoretical work has a slight stigma to it because so much was never realized. However, I have to say that it was not my choice not to build for so long; there just wasn't the opportunity. I was heavily criticised, even up to the mid 1990's.

**Malevich said that we can't trust our consciousness because "all the buttons are mixed up, like on a Petrograd telephone". Here we see that avant-garde abstraction despite its formal early studies has entirely non-rational origins. But can we avoid rationality in architecture?**

Malevich also said "The square is not a subconscious form. It is the creation of intuitive reason." I think what he meant is that our consciousness is rational, but it isn't a pure rationality. It's mixed with the weight of our associations, with historical and societal norms. In painting terms, he frames this as the tyranny of object and subject — the notion that painting must always depict something. That was the inherited idea of art at the time; that it must be a representation.

I don't believe that Malevich was advocating a total rejection of rationality so much as he was saying that we cannot achieve truly rational thought without first setting aside the existing influences and preconceptions of our conscious minds. Rather than relying upon inherited ideas of what art is, we must begin from the subconscious, and build our rationality upon that — that is the concept of "intuitive reason".

Malevich's principles also apply to architecture. The inherited idea of architecture and urbanism in our Fordist-trained consciousness suggests a series of repetitive, isolated, unconnected orthogonal structures — regardless of their appropriateness. So it is not rationality that must be avoided, but the inherited idea.

**You've had a lot of experience in designing museum buildings. How do you resolve the dichotomy of museum architecture and the temporary exhibition installation?**

Art is not created in a vacuum, and it's certainly not meant to exist in a vacuum. It's meant to engage and question; to be considered and debated. These days, its important have a variety of space because curators make so many different interpretations of space when designing exhibitions. It's not only a question of how you exhibit the art, but also about how, through variety, curators can interpret different leads and different connections between works of art. Curating is about creating contextual options that allow us to explore and interpret works of art. This interpretation should reflect local viewpoints, cultures and traditions — and not present the art in the same homogenous manner as it travels around the world. Through varied gallery conditions, exhibitions can challenge pre-conceptions and explore new possibilities. A minimalistic space can work for some art, but certainly not in every respect. Variety gives you much more curatorial flexibility.

Artists are, by their very nature, experimental and questioning. They can see the potential of doing things differently and are not afraid to push boundaries. As their work has been stuck in a white cube for so long; most artists are excited to finally have the opportunities to explore new possibilities in spaces that engage with the public.

**But these sacred museum spaces have their own, independent life. What is the role of architecture in this process?**

The story of the art gallery has changed a great deal — galleries have become places where you can experiment with light and movement, study people's behaviour and establish a dialogue. Some say museums have become too popular, too crowded; but I think this is positive. This connection between culture and community is critical. Galleries have now become public spaces — part of our civic domain, accommodating the widest variety of people who enjoy being in spaces with vitality and variety. Galleries should be forums for the exchange of ideas; places to present an ever-changing menu of art that feeds the cultural vitality of the city.



↑ Heydar Aliyev Center, Baku, 2007–2012

↓ View of Zaha Hadid's exhibition in the Nicholas Hall of the Winter Palace





IGOR GUROVICH  
THE ARTIST WHO CREATED THIS ISSUE'S COVER



EXHIBITIONS IN MUSEUMS ALL OVER THE WORLD  
HERMITAGE-MOSCOW



THOMAS LEROY  
*Speaking in Tongues. 2014.*

● PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

VENICE

56th VENICE BIENNALE PARALLEL EVENT  
PALAZZO CAVALLI-FRANCHEZZI  
MAY – NOVEMBER 2015

**A NEO-GOTHIC PALAZZO FILLED WITH WORKS BY RENOWNED MODERN ARTISTS AND ANCIENT TREASURES FROM THE HERMITAGE, PETERHOF AND PAVLOVSK. GLASSTRESS 2015 GOTIKA, BASED ON THE CONCEPT BY DIMITRY OZERKOV, HEAD OF THE HERMITAGE 20/21 PROJECT, HIGHLIGHTED THE INFLUENCE OF THE MIDDLE AGES ON MODERN ART.**

DIMITRI OZERKOV

Glassstress 2015 Golika, presented at the 56th Venice Biennale, was organized by the Hermitage's Department of Modern Art in collaboration with Berengo Studio, the largest glass making company in Murano. Gothic and Neo-Gothic objects from the Hermitage collection were juxtaposed with glass works by contemporary artists, who explored the theme of the "Gothic condition" of modernity. The art show was held in the historical Palazzo Cavalli-Franchetti and the Berengo Fondazione exhibition space in Murano. A "Life Bank" boat with chickens and a dromedary camel travelled between the two exhibition venues along the Grand Canal; the dishes for the receptions were provided by a chef from the slow food movement.

Gothic was the first international style in European visual arts and architecture, and remained an artistic lingua franca for at least four centuries, a function performed today by contemporary art. Like medieval symbolism and the "Biblia Pauperum", the language of modern art is accessible to everyone, from Africa to America, from Russia to Japan. Like Gothic, contemporary art has grown to be something more important than an art style. It is a new

language of culture, a modus vivendi for a host of international collectors and connoisseurs travelling the world from one art fair to another. They are followed by a crowd of curious idlers stirred up by publicity and hungry for miracles.

The original Gothic system of formal values is still alive. Numerous Neo-Gothic styles and Gothic revivals continue to generate gables and crockets, creeping into the sphere of contemporary art. This is especially obvious in Venice, one of the world's most Gothic cities and a capital of modern art. What do the Gothic style and modernity have in common? First, both Gothic and contemporary artists take their time. Gothic cathedrals were built over several centuries; the last of them, Gaudi's postmodern Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, is still incomplete. Second, the strict architectonic systems of Gothic and modern art, with their rigid rules, can nevertheless embrace and integrate the forms of any other style. Gothic architecture often comprises neoclassical or baroque elements added centuries later, like St. Eustache Cathedral in Paris. Pilasters, capitals and broken pediments form integral parts of Gothic buildings; this resonates perfectly with

\* The author and curator of the exhibition – Dimitri Ozerkov, head of the project "Hermitage 20/21".

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN



the hybridity of contemporary art. Third, Gothic edifices are illogical. They seem to soar above the ground. They strain for the heaven. They defy gravity. According to art historians, the Gothic style evolved from the tent, finial or canopy suspended in the air, ever reaching up to the skies. Illogicality and absurdity, present in St. Eustache Cathedral, became the fundamental principles of twentieth century art. Fourth, Gothic architecture includes numerous marginal deviations. The bending and intertwining columns in the courtyards of Spanish monasteries; supporting pylons which suddenly arch like the flying buttresses of the Chartres Cathedral; the intersecting pinnacle tops on the portal of the cathedral in Fribourg; the window of the Milan Cathedral which seems to rotate around its axis. These visual features are based on macabre imagery (shiny tombs) and a verbose yet accurate scholastic philosophy. A definition of contemporary art, that is individualized and marginalized.

All these Gothic “aberrations” closely resemble some general trends in contemporary art, which is in turns praised and reproached for constantly playing games with the viewer. The Hermitage’s Glassress 2015 Golika in Venice looks at how medieval ideas and communication technologies have crept into modernity with its technological, and, supposedly, spiritual progress. The exhibition, which could have been called “The New Middle Ages”, using the name of the article by the Russian philosopher Berdyaev (or “Living in the New Middle Ages”, after Umberto Eco’s recent publication), makes us look on our time as uniquely transitional and intercultural. Like medieval people, we stand on the ruins of great empires and live amid their echoes — their material remains, ideologies, myths and phobias. The value of the social has been diluted as a result of the mass production of meanings. We have nothing to aspire to, nothing to build, and no reason to believe in tomorrow. The me-

dievalization of society gives rise to the modern art of a prolonged transitional era.

Similarly to the Middle Ages, today’s burghers lead a chaotically esoteric life utterly deprived of art, the best samples of which are only available to the elite. Art requires leisure, and burghers are too preoccupied with earning money to visit museums. They bless technological progress, but their so-called time saving devices and newly available upgrades, paradoxically, seem to fill their day with complex magic rituals instead of creating respite. Charge your mobile, your tablet and your laptop; don’t forget your charger and a spare battery; find the time to tank your car; check your emails and the currency exchange rates; agree to update your software or leave it till tomorrow; pay your bills and make sure you get your dues. The routine is repeated every day and every hour until the final lethal outcome. Burghers sneer at medieval monks who spent years copying manuscripts — they would have done it in a single click! But most burghers are simply miserable slaves to Facebook, Instagram, Messenger and WhatsApp. They will spend hours staring at the screen and poking it with their fingers. An iPhone in their hands is like a medieval missal which they consult every time they have a problem. Our new Middle Ages are marvellous! May the life-saving web traffic never cease! May we be given our daily organic food today! May holy Yoga dispel evil spirits! May a bottle of still mineral water restore our natural might! May the blessed gym deliver us from infirmities! May Bolox grant us beauty everlasting!

**Dinos Chapman:**

“This is the first time I have worked with glass. What is interesting, many of my prejudices and conjecture were not confirmed. Many things which had seemed unbelievable proved possible. It was a kind of investigatory experience. We have always been interested in finding the limit beyond which problems arise. As soon as we are comfortable with the medium, we do not want to use it anymore. The same applies to glass: it is interesting as long as it is inconvenient. This enables the artist to create complex, experimental objects. They have life. I think that making a sculpture from glass is the same as making a sculpture from porridge. Or dog shit, or bronze, or marble. These are different kinds of media. Glass is yet another interesting step. However, art is not about the medium.”

Gabriella Belli, Director, Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia:

**“This exhibition is the first-ever attempt to present art works from the Hermitage as masterpieces in themselves and as a source of inspiration for glassworks, most of which were commissioned to Berengo Studio. Dmitry Ozerkov and Adriano Berengo undertook a unique challenge to explore the interaction of medieval and contemporary art. 56 artists from around the world created new objects in conjunction with Murano glass masters. This experience, entirely new for some artists, has shown yet again that glass is an incredibly flexible material; it is an ideal creative medium offering a unique opportunity to develop individual languages for making new artistic statements.”**

1 | OLGA TREIVAS  
*Rags Chapel*. 2015.

2 | FRAGMENT FROM THE EXHIBITION.  
HELMETS OF 16–19 CENTURIES,  
FROM THE COLLECTION  
OF THE STATE HERMITAGE ARSENAL

3 | ADEL ABIDIN  
*Melamorphosis*. 2015.

4 | PALAZZO CAVALLI-FRANCHETTI, VENICE

5 | JAKE & DINOS CHAPMAN<sup>5</sup>  
*The Same But In Glass*. 2015.

YASAM SASMAZER  
*Fear of Reason.* 2013



● PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN



**Hans Op de Beeck:**  
"I was really impressed by the works of the local artists. They have all the skills required to create complex shapes from glass. This collection of glass objects reminds me of an enormous still-life combining classical symbols (e.g. the vanitas genre) and modern forms. Glass is self-sufficient — this is what makes it so beautiful. Glass is raw and coarse, yet it does not need any shell. It has everything. Glass can be compared with bronze, which has a 'skin' of its own."

HANS OP DE BEECK  
*The Frozen Vanitas.* 2015

Medievalists traditionally distinguish between the good and bad Middle Ages. To the "good" Middle Ages we owe Gothic cathedrals, illuminated manuscripts, the legend of the Holy Grail, scholastics and alchemy; the "bad" Middle Ages is notorious for the barbaric destruction of historical legacy. "What is required to make a good Middle Ages?" asks Umberto Eco. "First of all, a great peace that is breaking down, a great international power that has unified the world in language, customs, ideologies, religions, art, and technology, which at a certain point, thanks to its own ungovernable complexity, collapses. It collapses because the "barbarians" are pressing at its borders; these barbarians are not necessarily uncultivated, but they bring new customs, new views of the world".

The modern barbarians flood Murano with cheap glass from China and import Turkish halal meal to Germany. They persuade the tired burghers to fill their homes with stupid souvenirs from Paris and New York showing the Eiffel Tower or Empire State Building. The barbarians furnish the burghers' flats according to feng-shui, train the burghers in pilates, introduce them to Forex and make them believe in the American dream again. The burghers do not have time for anything. Yet their new world outlook keeps their lost society afloat, and they spend the rest of their

time and money trying to convince themselves that they understand the purpose of life.

Artists alone can rescue society today. Like in the olden days, they flock together into workshops, guilds and unions around the greatest professionals, the masters. They try the most innovative materials and cutting-edge technologies for processing and shaping their ideas. They keep their finds top-secret, scaring everyone with intrigue and auction prices. They defend their faith in what ignoramuses call contemporary art. This looks like overcomplicated rubbish to laypersons, yet collectors and connoisseurs know better; they tirelessly move from one fair to the next. Because the first one to make sense of the situation will rule the new Renaissance...

In an attempt to investigate these problems, the Hermitage encouraged us to revisit the Gothic condition. The fifty or so contemporary artists involved in the project created an alchemy of glass combining the medieval Gothic mythology and the most advanced technological capacities of the 21st century. Together with expert glass makers from Murano, they provided new insights into the form and state of Gothic mentality today. In Venice, the English Gothic novel and the aesthetics of the Goths, *A Game of Thrones* and *Syberia* became rightful contributors to the new Gothic world of the New Middle Ages.

VENICE

THE BIENNALE OF UNTIMELY ART

The 56th Venice Biennale of modern art opened in May with a collective exhibition in the Arsenale and exhibits in the national pavilions in the Giardini Park. Our old Russian pavilion in the Giardini is one of our cultural treasures inherited from Tsarist times. The pavilion was built at a time when people hoped that states would learn to compare themselves not by the tonnage and the number of cannons on their battleships, but rather by their paintings and sculptures. The pavilion was finished just before the start of the first of the World Wars. Alexei Tarkhanov

The city of artists at the Venice Biennale sometimes reminds me of Moscow. It reminds me of the Exhibition of Economic Achievements (VDNKh) of the Soviet period, where the pavilions were used to show what made each Soviet republic glorious. And it reminds me of the Moscow Olympic Games, so so fresh in my memory, with gold medals that they call "Lions" in Venice. And finally — the Diplomats' Quarter, they are indeed diplomats of the arts, since the art spaces of the pavilions are aesthetically extraterritorial. We choose what and how to show ourselves in Venice.

Irina Nakhova's exhibition, put together by the curator Margarita Tupitsyna, seemed to me to be a good choice. The exhibition was entertaining and deep, aggressive and contemplative, modern, yet historical. Nakhova's exhibition spoke about the origins of Moscow conceptualism as a whole, about its traces in previous and current political reality, and about the evolution of one of its most interesting artists.

The opening of the Russian exhibition, meanwhile, was surprisingly informal. Before, Alexander Avdeev, the Minister for Culture, would come to the Biennale himself or send his deputies. But current Minister Vladimir Medinsky didn't go to Venice, maybe he was busy working on other projects in Russia for the 70th anniversary of Victory Day, or perhaps he was affected by his skeptical attitude towards modern art. The Ministry for Culture did not want to reap the rewards, even as one of the sponsors, albeit not the title sponsor. It's not the first time that the Russian pavilion has become a half-state, half-private



● PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

undertaking (if we compare state and private financial contribution, the state provides only a quarter of the budget). This time, as at the previous two Biennales, the Russian exhibition was organized and financed by the Stella Art Foundation, founded and led by Stella Kasaeva, who was appointed by the Ministry for Culture in 2010 as the commissioner of the Russian pavilion.

At all three of these Biennales, Kasaeva has shown Moscow conceptualist artists — the most well-known artistic circle of the late USSR in the West. This is an international art movement that is so rooted in several countries that these exhibitions were created through international cooperation. Andrey Monastyrsky was curated in 2011 by the philosopher Boris Groys, who lives in Germany. In 2013, the curator for Vadim Zakharov, who lives between Moscow and Cologne, was Udo Kittelmann, the director of the National Gallery in Berlin. The 2015 exhibition was done by two Russian women living in America: Irina Nakhova and Margarita Tupitsyna.

Minister Medinsky, who doesn't have much special trust or much special interest in modern art, can be understood. Modern art does not work so directly for state propaganda as do cinema, plays, or books. Modern art itself resists being used in any way. Wherever modern art is forced to do something, the results are uncertain, as was shown, in particular, by the over-politicized main exhibition in the Arsenale, collected by the fashionable American-Nigerian curator Okwui Enwezor.

Unlike VDNKh and the Olympics, the artist and the curator of the Russian pavilion tried not to turn their space into a propaganda showcase. Rather, they tried to do something more complex. That said, they weren't aiming to win an indispensable "Lion" either and I think this is just the kind of approach that's necessary for Russia in Venice.

It brings to mind an old film chronicle by Studio Luce in Venice from the end of the 1930s, when at the opening of another Venice Biennale, warships entered the city carrying Mussolini in his bullish manner, as well as the diminutive Victor Emmanuel III, with cartoon plumage on his head. Maybe it's good that politics has ceased trying to break into the tower of untimely modern art like a graceless battleship.



THE EXPOSITION OF THE RUSSIAN PAVILION OF THE 56TH VENICE BIENNALE. ARTIST IRINA NAKHOVA, CURATOR MARGARITA TUPITSYNA.

MILAN-VENICE

SERIAL/PORTABLE CLASSIC

Palazzo Ca' Corner della Regina, the Venetian residence of the Prada Foundation, and their new campus in Milan designed by Rem Koolhaas were chosen as the venues for two most sensational exhibitions of antiques: the Serial Classic (in Venice) and Portable Classic (in Milan).

Ancient heroes in marble, painted plaster and bronze — mass production replicas of famous classical sculptures from Ancient Greece and Rome, unconventionally presented Venuses, Apollos, Herculeses, discus throwers and runners — life-size versions in Milan and smaller, portable versions, in Venice.

The Hermitage provided replicas of the Doryphoros's head and of Laocoön and His Sons, which is made specific mention of by the curator of the exhibition, Salvatore Settis, an archaeologist and an expert on Ancient art. This is a good example of something which is not contemporary turning out to be the most modern with no need for further explanation or addition. Possibly, because the success in representing the image is timeless.

1) Center: BERNARDINO LICINIO  
*Sculptor and his pupils.* c. 1533  
Oil on canvas  
Alnwick Castle, Collection of the Duke of Northumberland  
Right: *Crouching Venus*  
1ST-2ND CENTURY A.D.;  
marble  
Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado

2) EXHIBITION VIEW OF "PORTABLE CLASSIC"  
Section: "Size: small masterpieces from the classical world"

3) EXHIBITION VIEW OF "PORTABLE CLASSIC"  
Section: "Scale: the Farnese Hercules"

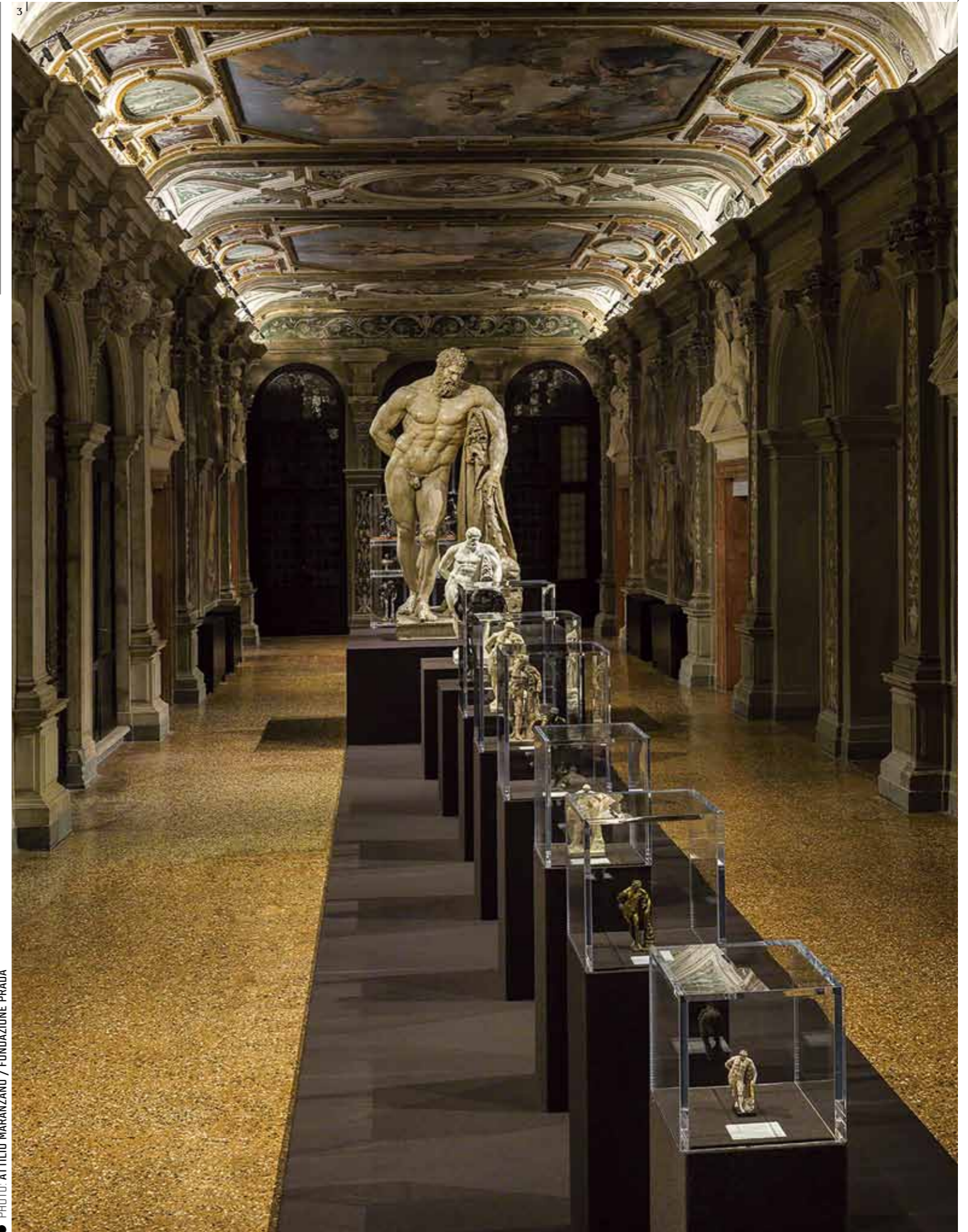


PHOTO: ATTILIO MARANZANO / FONDAZIONE PRADA

PHOTO: ATTILIO MARANZANO / FONDAZIONE PRADA

PHOTO: ATTILIO MARANZANO / FONDAZIONE PRADA



GIORGIO CONTI FOUNDATION (PALAZZO CUCCHIARI), CARRARA  
JUNE-OCTOBER 2015

The “Canova and the Masters of Marble” exhibition consists of statues collected by Emperor Nicholas I. The exhibition was organized by the Giorgio Conti Foundation with collaboration from the Hermitage Museum and the Carrara city administration. Sergei Androssov



**PIETRO TENERANI**  
*Psyche in a Faint*  
Italy, FIRST HALF OF THE 19TH CENTURY  
Marble. 112 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum

## CANOVA AND THE MASTERS OF MARBLE

Even those who don't know where Carrara is have at least heard of Carraran marble, from which the best sculptures of the modern age were made. For readers with an interest in geography, Carrara is located at the northern end of the Italian region of Tuscany, not far from the Tyrrhenian Sea, where the Apuan Alps begin. Carrara is located in a large valley surrounded by hills, and it is difficult for the city to expand in width. It can only grow up the mountainsides. Many of these mountains consist of white marble, which provides the city its wealth. Marble was first quarried here by the ancient Romans (traces of their presence are still found in the cliffs and caves to this day), and the marble reserves will last for several hundred more years. That said there are almost no quarries producing the marmo statuario today. Nevertheless, the extraction of finishing and decorative stone is still in full swing.

The ancient Romans, who first developed the quarries of Carrara, began bringing strong slaves here to do the hard physical labor of accessing the marble. Passing on experience and skills from generation to generation, the local inhabitants grew accustomed to working with marble. The majority of these people were craftsmen and masons, but skilled sculptors were produced in this environment as well. That said, these artists were forced to leave Carrara to look for masters in the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. For example, Pietro Tacca (1577-1640) worked in Florence; Giuliano Finelli (about 1602-1653) and Domenico Guidi (1628-1701) — in Rome; Pietro Baratta (1668-1727) — in Venice; Giovanni Domenico Olivieri (1708-1762) — in Madrid.

The Duchess Maria Teresa Cybo founded the Academy of Fine Arts in Carrara in 1769. The first director of the Academy, naturally, was a sculptor — Giovanni Antonio Cybei (1706-1784). From that time on, Carraran sculptors could receive professional training at home, although the most talented of them still move to other cities, mostly to Rome. It was in the Eternal City that a new generation of Carraran sculptors, including Carlo Finelli (1782-1853), Pietro Tenerani (1789-1869), and Luigi Bienaimé (1795-1878), created their best works. Those sculptors who did not leave Carrara, being members of the famous Triscornia, Lazzarini, and Nicoli sculpting families, worked mainly on works for export. Almost none of their works remain in Carrara today.

Many natives of Carrara came to work in St. Petersburg. These sculptors received orders for their work from the Tsarist family or from Russian aristocrats. Numerous marble statues and busts that adorn the Summer Garden in St. Petersburg were carved by Pietro Baratta, who even received a patent in Italy for the title of first sculptor “Of the Tsar of Muscovy.” Giovanni Antonio Cybei did much work for Catherine the Great. Paolo Andrea Triscornia (1757-1833) worked on marble replicas of famous antiques by order of Paul I, and his brother Andrea Maria Triscornia (1761-1824) even established his own sculpture workshop in St. Petersburg. Finally, Nicholas I became a customer of Carlo Finelli, Pietro Tenerani, and Luigi Bienaimé, having visited their studios in Rome in 1845.

Works of Carraran sculptors were kept not only in the Hermitage, but also decorated the streets and squares of St. Petersburg (such as the Dioscuri group in front of the St. Petersburg Manege of the Imperial Horse Guards, or the lion figures in front of the Lobanov-Rostovsky Palace, sculpted by Triscornia).

● PHOTO: FONDAZIONE GIORGIO CONTI



All of these Italian-Russian sculptural connections made it possible in 1996 to organize a sculpture exhibition entitled “Marble of Tsars. Carraran Sculptors in the Hermitage and Peterhof.” In this exhibition, twenty six sculptural groups, statues, and busts were shown at the Carrara Academy of Arts and at the Palazzo Ducale in Massa, the main city of the province. The exhibition managed to demonstrate the main masters of sculpture, from Baratta to Bienaimé. The exhibition was a great success, thanks in part to the great local patriotism so characteristic of Italians. The residents of Carrara didn't know about the skill of their sculptors, since almost none of these sculptors' works remained in their homeland (except for a few plaster models at the Academy).

Almost 20 years later, the works of Carraran masters from the Hermitage returned to Carrara once again. This time the exhibition was held at the Palazzo Cucchiari, an exhibition hall that recently opened after a careful and detailed restoration using funds from the Giorgio Conti Foundation. The exhibition contents were somewhat different as well: statues by Antonio Canova (1757-1822) and Lorenzo Bartolini (1777-1850), who both also worked in Carrara, were added to the show. The Carrara Academy of Arts provided a number of works, mainly original plaster models. Statues which had been demonstrated at the previous exhibition, mainly “Spring”, “Summer”, “Autumn” and “Winter” by Cybei, “Venus in a Shell” by Finelli, “Psyche Fainted” by Tenerani, and “Cupid with Pigeons” by Bienaimé looked different in the small chamber halls of the Palazzo Cucchiari (and certainly completely different than they do in the Hermitage). The marble seemed alive and almost transparent in the bright light of the Italian sun.

The exhibition was a great success, which is especially pleasing to see since sculpture is an art form that can be difficult to understand. All the more pleasant to see true connoisseurs of marble sculpture enjoy this art in the Italian province of Massa and Carrara.

**ANTONIO CANOVA**  
*Orcheus*  
Italy. 1770s  
Marble. 140 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Inv. № N.sk-315

The “Asia in Amsterdam” exhibition opened in October, 2015 at the Rijksmuseum, the Netherlands’ national museum. The show has an extremely interesting theme: The Netherlands established the Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), referred to by the British as the Dutch East India Company, in 1602. Ships sailing under the Dutch flag with the letters VOC transported an immense number of products from various places in Asia that permitted trading with Europeans during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. María Menshikova

The Netherlands ousted the Portuguese, competed with Great Britain, and founded a colony on the island of Java. The center of the Dutch colony was Batavia (modern day Jakarta). Colonial items and the works of masters from the island of Dejima in Japan, from Guangzhou and Macau in China, and from Siam (Thailand) were brought to Batavia, from where they were shipped to Europe. Thanks to the work of the Dutch East India Company and the Batavia colony, rich collections of Asian art began to appear in the Netherlands.

The Hermitage has just two exhibits at the “Asia in Amsterdam” exhibition, but these two are some of the most important pieces for studying the development of relations between Asia and the Netherlands, and are significant for the history of diplomatic relations between the rulers of Europe and Russia at the end of the 17th- beginning of the 18th centuries. These exhibits are a writing set of the Dutch Stadtholder William III of Orange (1650–1702) and an incense burner (cassollette), which was also once in the collection of the family of Orange. Both items are made of high-proof flattened silver wire using a thin ribbon technique throughout, which in Europe was called “filigree”.

The rectangular writing set has a flat, hinged cover on a chain, with a lock, and stands on four legs. Inside there is a plug-bottom, separating the unit into two tiers. The top layer has five compartments: for envelopes, feather pens, ink and sand pots. Underneath there is a drawer for paper.



1) **INCENSE BURNER**  
FROM THE COLLECTION  
OF THE FAMILY OF ORANGE  
Batavia. 1650s–1670s  
Height 21 cm  
Silver, filigree  
Inv. N<sup>o</sup> LS-641

2) **WRITING SET**  
OF WILLIAM III OF ORANGE,  
STADTHOLDER  
OF THE NETHERLANDS  
Batavia (?). 1672–1689  
26.2 x 21.7 x 6.5 cm  
Silver, filigree  
Inv. N<sup>o</sup> LS-643



3) **COMPOSITION WITH PARROT**  
AND STILL-LIFE OF THE EXHIBITS

4) **VEST. 18TH CENTURY.**  
Peabody Essex Museum, Salem, USA

On the cover there is a shield with the complex coat of arms of Orange. The coat of arms features a crown with five leaves atop it. A ribbon wraps around the coat of arms, and contains the motto of the Order of the Garter: “Honi soit qui mal y pense” (“Shame on him who thinks evil of it”). The GHLO monogram under a crown can be seen on the filigree bottom insert.

The coat of arms and the crowned cipher reveal the owner’s name — William III (Willem Hendrik), Prince of Orange, Stadtholder of the Netherlands from 1672, King of England from 1689. Judging by the monogram and the coats of arms, the writing set was made after 1653, when — being the son of the English princess Mary — William received the Order of the Garter, but before 1689, when William was elected King of England and changed the coat of arms and crown.

It’s likely that the writing set was made for William in 1672 when he was elected the Stadtholder. The writing set was one of the most important items on the tables of European rulers of the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries, and served as a symbol of power and an indicator of one’s level of education.

William III had no children, and his collection of silver was inherited by Frederick I Wilhelm (1657–1713), King of Prussia. He built a palace in Charlottenburg and placed the silver filigree works in his lacquered study there. A complete inventory of the collection was compiled in 1715. This inventory includes the writing set, and many other items, such as the incense burner shown at the exhibition, candlesticks, trays and boxes.

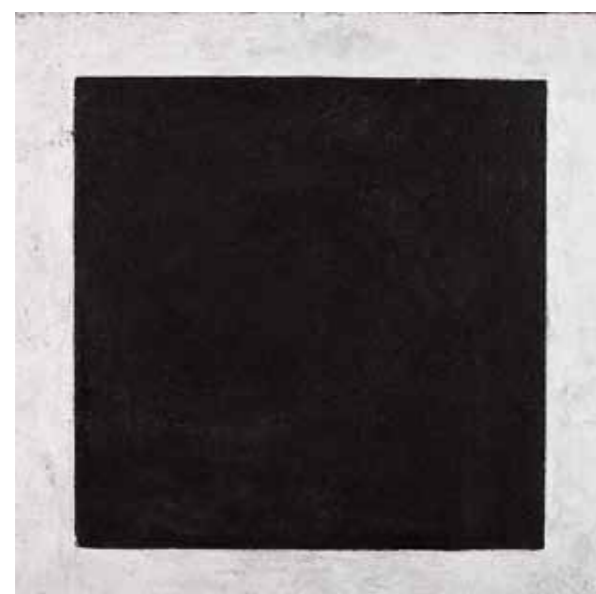
How did these objects come to St. Petersburg, as part of the collection of Peter the Great? Peter was a guest of Frederick I (1688–1740) in November 1717, and received the Amber Room as a gift. Perhaps in Charlottenburg the Tsar saw the writing set and other silverwork from the collection of his “youth idol” — William III of Orange — and asked for these masterpieces to be given to him.

These wares were first held in storerooms in St. Petersburg, and then were ordered by Catherine the Great to be transferred in 1789 to the Hermitage, which is documented in the “Inventory of Precious Things”. Furthermore, the inventory of 1859 states: “The inkpot was inherited by Fredrick I, the King of Prussia, and he in turn gave it to Peter the Great.”

These and other items from the Hermitage collection of ribbon filigree have many particularities concerning their style, ornamentation, and technique of execution that indicate their Eastern origin. Perhaps the silver filigree was created for the Stadtholders’ court of the Netherlands, most likely in Batavia, where masters from China and South-East Asia worked. These silver precious memorabilities, which are so important to Dutch history, are shown at the exhibition “Asia in Amsterdam”.

# IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE LAST FUTURISTIC EXHIBITION 0.10

THE BEYELER FOUNDATION CELEBRATED THE 100<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF KAZIMIR MALEVICH'S "BLACK SQUARE" WITH THE EXPOSITION DEVOTED TO THE EXHIBITION "0.10"



**Why is the Beyeler Foundation, in particular, holding the most large-scale exhibition devoted to the 100th anniversary of the key event in Russian avant-garde art: the 0.10 Exhibition?**

The idea of showing an exhibition devoted to Malevich came to our director, Sam Keller, a long time ago. Our collection contains a Suprematist work by Kazimir Malevich from 1915. This was one of the last acquisitions made by the museum's founder Ernst Beyeler, and we've been dreaming of making a Malevich exhibition for a long time thanks to this work, in order to show the audience the context in which this work originated. Matthew Drutt, our visiting exhibition curator from New York, proposed focusing on the historic 0.10 Exhibition.

**Was the Malevich work of 1915 from the Foundation's collection part of the original 0.10 Exhibition?**

It is known that the "Suprematist Composition" was made in 1915, specifically in time for the 0.10 Exhibition. One of the pieces of evidence is the painting's format: a large number of paintings exhibited by Malevich at the 0.10 Exhibition had an 80x80 cm format. Our painting has the basic elements of Suprematist paintings: square, rectangle, and circle. That said, we don't have ultimate proof that the work was exhibited at 0.10. This painting isn't visible in the famous 1915 photograph. The original exhibition catalogue does not name works by name. For example, Malevich had about 10 works at the exhibition that are listed in the catalogue as "Painted masses

in movement", but the actual names of the paintings were not given. We learned that the painting owned by our Foundation was displayed at the first retrospective Malevich exhibition in Moscow in 1920, and there is even a photo of Malevich with his piece of art.

**How did this work come to be part of the Beyeler collection? Is this a piece that Khardzhiev owned?**

The painting was in Khardzhiev collection, and was among those art works owned by the collector that were transferred to the West. Ernst Beyeler bought it in 2006. The Black Cross, belonging to the Centre Pompidou, and the Suprematist composition, from Stockholm Moderna Museet, both of which are displayed in our exhibition, also came from Khardzhiev's collection.

KAZIMIR MALEVICH  
*Black Square*  
Russia. CIRCA 1930  
Canvas, oil. 53.5 x 53.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Inv. № ГЭ-10620

ZINAIDA PRONCHENKO SPOKE WITH DR. ANNA SZECH,  
AN ASSISTANT CURATOR AT THE BEYELER FOUNDATION.

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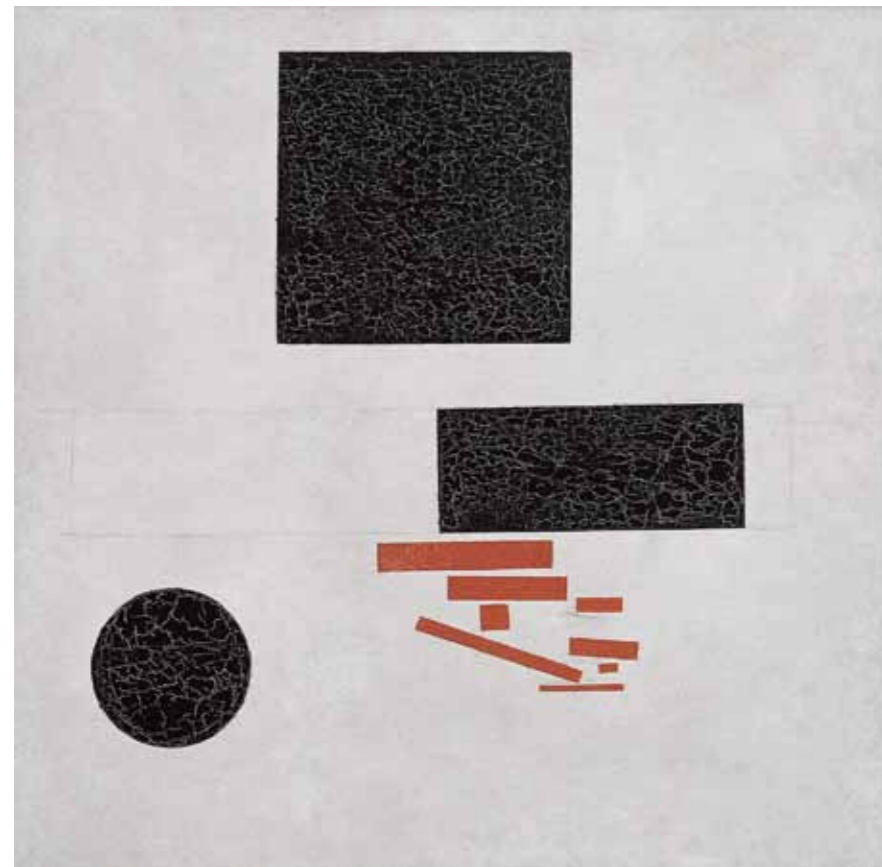


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PHOTO: ROBERT BAYER



- 1 | **KAZIMIR MALEVICH**  
*Supremalist Composition.* 1915  
Oil on canvas. 80.4 x 80.6 cm  
The Beyeler Foundation, Riehen/Basel,  
Beyeler Collection
- 2 | **EXHIBITION POSTER FOR "THE LAST  
FUTURISTIC EXHIBITION OF PAINTING 0.10",**  
Petrograd. 1915  
Russian State Archive for Literature and Art, Moscow
- 3 | **VLADIMIR TATLIN**  
*Painterly Relief.* 1914–1916  
Wood, metal, and leather. 62 x 53 cm  
The State Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow,  
Gift of George Coslakis, 1977
- 4 | **LYUBOV POPOVA**  
*Portrait of a Lady (Plastic Drawing).* 1915  
Paper, oil, cardboard, and wood. 66.3 x 48.5 cm  
Museum Ludwig, Cologne



"THE LAST FUTURISTIC EXHIBITION OF PAINTING 0.10"  
Petrograd. WINTER 1915/16  
View of the room with Malevich's  
*Black Square* and other supremalist paintings  
Russian State Archive for Literature and Art,  
Moscow



Several of the artists in the exhibition aren't household names, to say the least. For example Ksenia Boguslavskaya, and Maria Vasilieva.

The artists taking part in the exhibition were determined by the 1915 catalogue. The 0.10 Exhibition is very well known in specialist circles. It's already taken on mythical status. We took the original catalog of 1915, where the names of all of the exhibition participants are listed. There can't be any surprises here. But we won't find out any more about many of the items shown in the original exhibition, even though there have been in-depth studies by art historians from around the world offering possible variations of works that could have participated in the exhibition.

In particular, we weren't able to find a single work shown at the original exhibition by the artist Anna Kirillova. Surprisingly, the recently published Encyclopedia of the Russian Avant-Garde, which is quite large, doesn't have a single mention of this artist. Thanks to research done by Irina Arskaya from the Russian Museum, we were able, in our catalogue, to publish one watercolor done by Anna Kirillova in the 1920s, as well as the artist's biography.

Maria Vasilieva is a little-known representative of the Russian avant-garde. She left Russia at a young age to live in Paris, and there she had close contact with the French avant-garde. The artists of the 0.10 Exhibition invited her to take part in the Petrograd show, but she returned to Paris soon after the exhibition ended. Today there is a Maria Vasilieva museum in Montparnasse.

The Beyeler Foundation hasn't compiled a direct reconstruction of the 0.10 Exhibition, but rather has made a sort of 100-year anniversary project. As part of its continuation, the Foundation is also showing the two-part Black Sun project, with modern art works that don't have a direct relation to 1915 and the 0.10 Exhibition.

This was also the idea and the desire of our director: to make a parallel exhibition. Black Sun 1 is dedicated to artists from the first half to the middle of the twentieth century. The exhibition includes works by Kandinsky, Mark Rothko, and Josef Albers, all representatives of abstract painting. Black Sun 2 was born out of close cooperation with modern artists. This exhibition includes art works by 36 modern artists who draw a parallel with the work of the Russian avant-garde. There are also works that pay direct homage to the avant-garde: next to the Tatlin room there is a room where Dan Flavin's well-known work "Monument to Tatlin" is exhibited, while next to the halls where Malevich's works are exhibited there is a piece by the famous German artist Rosemarie Trockel entitled "Homage to Malevich." Even our own collection currently contains only abstract art works at this time. This is a unique situation where there are no figurative paintings on display in the Beyeler Foundation rooms.

**What's the purpose of combining these two exhibitions in one space for you?**

We've made an exhibition that sheds light on the 0.10 period. Thanks to the "Black Sun" exhibition, one can see how influential and important this art is to this day. The 0.10 exhibit shows just how visionary the artists of that time were, particularly Malevich and Tatlin, who had an effect on all twentieth century art. The 0.10 period was a time when Russian artists did work that would guide European artists for decades.

1 | **0.10** — A group of cubo-futurist artists that existed in Petrograd in 1917. The group's foundation was preceded by an exhibition entitled "The Last Futurist Exhibition 0.10", which took place from December 19, 1915 to January 17, 1916 in the Dobychnia Art Bureau in Petrograd (Marsovo Pole, 7).

2 | **The Beyeler Foundation** — One of the major Basel museums, located on the city's outskirts in Riehen. The Beyeler Foundation museum features Ernst Beyeler's collection of art works by 20th century artists. Beyeler, a superlative Basel art dealer, accumulated his collection over a half century. The museum features art works by Picasso, Giacometti, Warhol, Rothko, Klee, Kandinsky, Miró, Monet and others.

3 | **Nikolai Ivanovich Khardzhiev** (1903–1996) — Russian writer, literary historian, and art collector.

4 | **Encyclopedia of the Russian Avant-Garde** — Both a fundamental publication and a cultural project aimed at popularizing the Russian avant-garde. Written by the art historians Vasily Rakilin and Andrei Sarabyanov.



PHOTO: RHEINISCHES BILDARCHIV

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**PALLADIO IN RUSSIA.  
FROM BAROQUE TO MODERNISM**

The Museo Correr in Venice hosted an exhibition from September-November 2014 entitled "Russia Palladiana. Andrea Palladio in Russia dal barocco al modernism." The exhibition highlighted Andrea Palladio's influence on Russian culture. In Russia, the exhibition was hosted by two Moscow museums, the Tsaritsyno Museum-Reserve and the Shchusev Museum of Architecture, from April to July 2015, using the title "Palladio in Russia. From Baroque to Modernism". Arkady Ippolitov

Andrea Palladio, recognized by all art historians to be the most influential architect in the world, has a special significance for Russia. Palladianism defined not only much of Russian architecture, but also much in the Russian conscience and lifestyle as well. Palladio's name was written for the first time in Russian in the title of a 1699 manuscript attributed to one of the Dolgorukov princes, a supporter of Peter the Great. The value of the manuscript is enormous — this is the first treatise on architecture in Russian. The name Palladio immediately signified Architecture with a capital "A".

The height of interest in Palladio's creativity came during the reign of Catherine the Great. Charles Cameron came to Russia in 1779 by invitation from the Empress, followed in 1780 by Giacomo Quarenghi. The superb Russian architect Nikolay Lvov also underwent his formation during Catherine's reign. These three great architects, being faithful to Palladianism, defined the neoclassicist style that prevailed in Russian architecture until the 1830s. Lvov's words "Let there be Palladian taste in my country" was the slogan under which intensive construction was done, beginning during Catherine's reign all over Russia, and changing the face of the country.

Palladian prototypes are easily visible in all kinds of buildings: churches, palaces, public buildings, private homes. The Villa La Rotonda can be called, without exaggeration, the most significant architectural model for Russia of the neoclassicist age. No wonder the Villa La Rotonda served as a model for the St. Sophia Cathedral in Tsarskoye Selo, Catherine the Great's utopian "Greek project," as well as for imperial residences. A manor house with a frontispiece and portico reflecting in a shimmering water surface, so achingly-beautiful: this is a pure Palladian mark of the Russian Golden Age, the time of Pushkin. The fascination with Palladio in Russia diminished somewhat in the second half of the 19th century, but then broke out again around 1900 with renewed vigor. The interest on the part of Russian modernism in eighteenth century neo-classical and empire style merged with nostalgia for the manor estates of a bygone cultural period, thereby making Palladianism an integral part of the Silver Age.

Soviet Palladianism is a special cultural phenomenon. I. Zholtovsky, I. Fomin, and A. Shchusev, who all started their careers before the revolution, created works during the Soviet period imbued with Palladio's spirit. The laconic Palladian style was close to the avant-garde aesthetics of the revolution, and it had an enormous influence on Stalinist architecture, which arose from a complex alloy of neoclassicism and the avant-garde. Chronologically, works by A. Brodsky and T. Novikov, begun at the turn of the 21st century, complete the exhibition.

The exhibition makes it possible to trace the 300-year history of Russian Palladianism for the first time, and includes a considerable number of unpublished and unknown materials from the collections of the best Russian museums and archives. That said, Palladio's influence went far beyond architecture, thus the exhibition contains not only architectural drawings, designs, and buildings models, but also works by Levitsky, Borovikovsky, Soroka, Borisov-Musatov, Sudeikin, Grabar, Benois, Dobuzhinsky, Kandinsky, Suetin and many others. Altogether, 22 different Russian museums, archives, and libraries took part in the exhibition, including the Hermitage, which provided about a quarter of all the exhibit items.

1 | ST. SOPHIA CATHEDRAL  
IN PUSHKIN

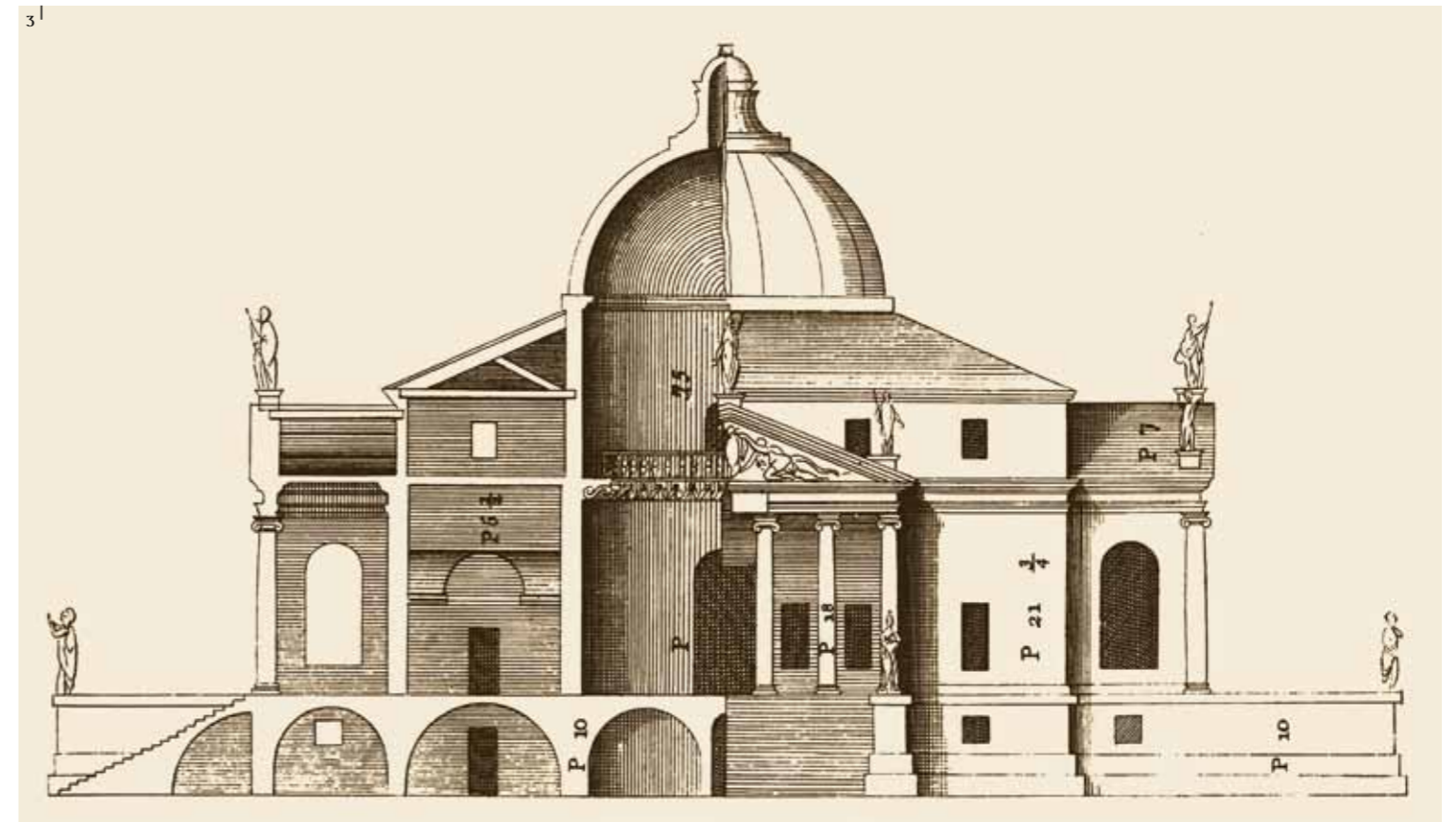
2 | ANDREA PALLADIO  
*Villa Rolonda in Vicenza*

3 | ANDREA PALLADIO  
*Villa Rolonda*  
Plan



● PHOTO: SCHOLZ, F. / DPA / PHOTO TASS

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### IMAGINING THE ORIENT. CHINESE INFLUENCES ON RUSSIAN CULTURE IN THE 18th – EARLY 20th CENTURY

An extensive exhibition under this title was launched on November, 25, in the Tsaritsyno museum in Moscow. The concept was suggested by the curators of the museum. The exhibits for this theme were collected from various museums: the State Historical Museum, the State Museum of Oriental Art, the Kuskovo Museum, Kunstkamera, Peterhof, Oranienbaum, Tsarskoe Selo, and the Hermitage. Maria Menshikova

The Hermitage contributed just a few items for this exhibition but many of them play a key role in representing the history of Chinese artworks in Russia. These items include painted silks wallpapers, porcelain, lacquerware, jewellery, cloisonné and painted enamels, carved ivory and silks. The exhibition in Tsaritsyno also represents chinoiserie, as a reflection of a fashion “for everything oriental”, for imitations of Chinese art and a trend of collecting expensive authentic items from China. Exploration of eastern lands once gave rise to trade and export and later even a passion for the acquisition of expensive, exotic and “useful” items which were not yet to be found in Europe. Interest in Chinese art and development of the chinoiserie style (French for “Chinese-esque”) peaked around the last quarter of the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries.

Spices, ivory, shells, mother of pearl, sea pearls, gems, silk, porcelain, lacquerware, silver, furniture and many more items were brought to Russia over land. Over the eighteenth century alongside the dominant European rococo, Chinese influences manifested themselves almost in every area of Russian cultural life, namely, in architecture, interior design, landscape design, applied arts, philosophy and political philosophy, as well as literature.

In the nineteenth to early twentieth centuries, as the styles of eclectic Historicism and Art Nouveau developed, the Chinese theme had a strong presence in the culture of the two Russian capitals and spread in exhibitions, trade and fashion. “If you are going to a ball... don’t even think of coming without a bouquet and a Chinese fan, unless you want people to think you came from Kamchatka”, — advised fashion magazines (Severnaya Pchela. 1833. # 40).

The use of Chinese motives and items was mostly suitable for the occasion but sometimes unexpected. One of the central pieces at the exhibition is a phelonion (a vestment worn over other clothes by an Orthodox priest) made of pieces of dark blue silk that dates back to the late sixteenth to early seventeenth century. A large dragon playing with a pearl in the clouds is embroidered on each piece with coloured silk and golden threads. Very bright and rather scary, they look somewhat odd on a liturgical vestment. Such fabrics could rarely be found in use outside China, since golden dragons were originally a symbol of the Emperor and wearing them was a subject to very strict regulations. They could only get to Europe as a gift from a ruler. For example, ten pieces of silk with embroidered dragons were brought from China by L. Izmailov’s mission in 1719–1721. Notably, the delegates remarked that the fabrics were decorated with “dragons of disgusting appearance”. Considering such a vision of Chinese dragons, we can only guess how they ended up on the phelonion of an Orthodox priest. It is known that Peter I organised dinners with carnivals. Perhaps, this garment was made for the prince of the All-Joking, All-Drunken Synod of Fools and Jesters, F.Y. Romodanovsky (1640–1717). Another detail that speaks in favour of this theory is that his coat of arms had a black dragon on a golden field.

Chinese porcelain was an expensive export product to Europe. In the eighteenth to nineteenth centuries, despite existing local production, Chinese items would often be copied at European factories. Thus, in the 19th century St. Petersburg many art works from the Far East would be given out from private collections in order to have them copied at the Imperial Porcelain Factory. The exhibition has two remarkable items: two similar carved vases with handles shaped as like butterflies and a greyish glazed surface. One of the vases was manufactured in Jingdezhen, China, around the 1720s and 1730s whereas the other one was made as its replica in St. Petersburg in the 1880s.



1

1 | **CHASUBLE**  
Silk, embroidery: China. c. 1600–1650  
Cul: Russia. **LATE 17TH — EARLY 18TH CENTURY**  
Satin Silk, Silk Embroidery  
and Couched Gold Thread, linen lining  
146 x 200 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum

2 | **VASE WITH BUTTERFLIES**  
Russia, St. Petersburg,  
Imperial Porcelain Factory. **1883**  
Porcelain, painted with white paint,  
glaze relief  
Height 21.6 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum

3 | **JAR WITH TWO HANDLES  
IN THE FORM OF BUTTERFLIES**  
China, Jingdezhen. **1730s.**  
Porcelain, relief, glaze  
Height 21.6 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum



2



3

ROSTOV-ON-DON

**RELIQS OF RUSSIAN COSSACKS  
FROM THE HERMITAGE COLLECTION**

Nina Tarasova

**I'll patiently search  
For traces of Cossack antiquity:  
In the dust of the village archive,  
In the mounds of ancient virgin land.  
The path of my excavations will end,  
When it is time,  
Going from the Volga to Perekop,  
From the Azov to the Khopyor...**

These lines from the poem "Dream" were written in 1939 by Nikolai Turoverov, a Don Cossack and poet, and gave the exhibition its name. The "Traces of Cossack Antiquity..." exhibition was curated by the State Hermitage for the State Museum of M.A. Sholokhov. It's unlikely that Turoverov imagined that searching for "traces of Cossack antiquity" would be done first and foremost in Russia's main art museum.

The exhibition in the Sholokhov Center, a new exhibition complex opened in Rostov-on-Don to commemorate the 110th anniversary since the birth of the Nobel Prize winner, consisted of 239 artifacts from the Hermitage. The paintings, drawings, sculptures, weapons and military ammunition, costumes and accessories, books, items made of precious metals and military and civic medals, were all related to the history of the Russian Cossacks. These works stress and highlight the unique, ambiguous and controversial role of the Cossacks in the fate of the Russian Empire. Being defenders of state borders, fearless warriors, explorers, adherents of the Christian faith and "Cossack freemen," heroes of fine art and decorative arts, as well as of folklore and high literature, the Cossacks were the bulwark of the throne, but could prove to be the initiators of slaughterous turmoil.

The "Cossack" exhibition from the Hermitage was an outstanding event in the cultural life of Rostov-on-Don and the southern regions of modern Russia, and had a wide public resonance. Visitors to the Sholokhov Center repeatedly noted the "elegance, beauty, and diversity of the Hermitage exhibit items" and the "historical and educational value of the exhibition."



PHOTO: MARIA KIM

EXHIBITION  
IN THE "SHOLOKHOV CENTER".  
Rostov-on-Don

The advertising



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Moscow, OCTOBER 2015

Mikhail Piotrovsky:

**“Moscow already has a dynamic system of museums working with contemporary art, but it is obvious that this system needs us as well. It lacks a museum institution with a particular position and view on contemporary art within the context of the entire history of art...”**

Dimetri Ozerkov, head of the Contemporary Art department at the State Hermitage Museum and of the Hermitage 20/21 project, presented the contents of the future museum. “We will focus on the artists and works of art that had never been shown in Moscow before. The Hermitage Moscow building will give us the possibility to exhibit highly varied kinds of art, different forms and approaches”. This will include works of art from major Hermitage exhibitions in Saint Petersburg, from the permanent collection of the museum (for example, the Shchukin and Morozov impressionists and post-impressionists collection) to various events as part of the Hermitage 20/21 project, as well as objects from the Hermitage storage.

The Hermitage has already simulated such an experience: for example, at the Brothers Chapman exhibition there were medieval torture instruments displayed alongside Francisco Goya’s drawings; old and new were juxtaposed and interacting with each other at Manifesta and at the Venice Biennale.

There will be a special space in the museum dedicated to works by contemporary Saint Petersburg artists. Dimetri Ozerkov says that Saint Petersburg, in contrast to Moscow, a free city, is quite a puritanical one, and this will also influence the museum’s conception: “We will show here what we cannot show in Saint Petersburg”.

The author of the Hermitage Moscow architectural project is the world famous American



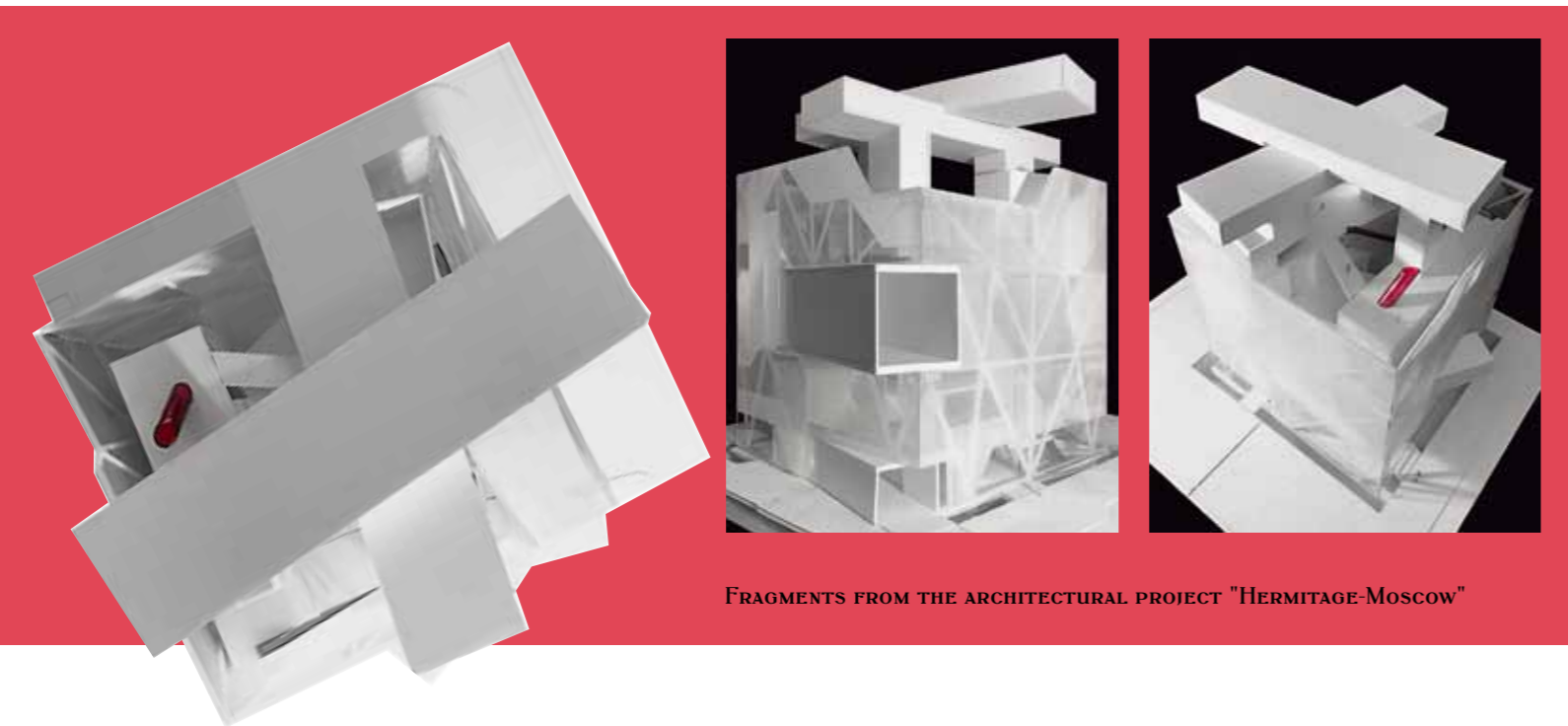
PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

Dimetri Ozerkov:

**“It is the work with museum storage that sometimes brings unexpected revelations in the search for parallels between old and new art. Our approach to art is that all of it was contemporary at some point. We try to understand old art through contemporary art. Artists get inspiration from old creations, and these works start living a new life.”**

**THE “HERMITAGE-MOSCOW” MUSEUM CENTRE  
WILL BE A KEY FEATURE OF THE FUTURE  
“ZILART” CULTURAL CLUSTER LOCATED  
ON PART OF THE TERRITORY OF THE ZIL PLANT.**





FRAGMENTS FROM THE ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT "HERMITAGE-MOSCOW"

PHOTO: ASYMPTOTE ARCHITECTURE: HANI RASHID + LISE ANNE COUTURE/LSR

architect Hani Rashid. He says it is very important to preserve the unique twentieth century industrial site — the ZIL plant. Nonetheless the new building will be as modern and hi-tech as possible: its author defines this architectural trend as 'hyper-modernism'.

Rashid tried to combine in one project the experiences of Russian idealism and American modernism in a sort of an "alchemical experiment". One of his inspirations was Buckminster Fuller's geodesic dome. The future architect saw the dome at an exhibition in Montreal in 1967 and, while working on the Hermitage Moscow project, remembered the feeling of being driven towards the future and the lightness of the construction.

There is also significant influence from the Russian avant-garde and constructivism heritage, especially El Lissitzky's work. "His powerful

ideas opened the doors to the twentieth century", believes Rashid.

The new centre will have everything a museum needs to be fully operational: a depository, customs, restoration workshops and research laboratories.

The interior is designed in such a way that every floor will have its own ideas and concepts. The ground floor will be a continuation of the city within the museum walls; a place for meeting, with cafés, bookstores, installations and sculptures. There will be no ticket required to enter this area. The first floor will host an educational centre and a library. On the upper floors there will be different galleries, from small halls to an enormous open space (fifty meters long and ten meters high), and the rooftop will form a recreational space with a sculpture garden and restaurants.



Hani Rashid:

**"This is a territory for experiments. I really hope there will be a sort of chemical reaction happening here, which will give an impulse to the cultural life of this space and inspire curators and artists for new projects."**

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**ANOTHER THING IS CLEAR TOO: A NEW HERO IS ENTERING THE MOSCOW MUSEUM RING. THE DEGREE OF TENSION IS RISING IN THE CITY'S MUSEUM COMPETITION, UNDETECTABLE TO THE EYE OF THE UNINITIATED.**

## “HERMITAGE-MOSCOW”. THE VIEW FROM MOSCOW

HANI RASHID, THE AUTHOR OF THE ARCHITECTURAL PROJECT, AT THE PRESENTATION IN MOSCOW IN OCTOBER 2015.

● PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

The Hermitage brand is comparable even to the Kremlin Museum brand in the mass consciousness of the Hermitage's potential audience. This is a product of Muscovites' enthusiastic attitude for the greatness of the Hermitage collections, and the effect of the unexpected transfer of an important chunk of sacred Petersburg space from the banks of the Neva River to the Original Capital. The Hermitage can perhaps chip away a significant share of the Moscow museum-going audience if it implements a properly structured repertoire policy.

Moscow loves to be impressed. This huge city is yearning for new spectacles with gladiatorial fights. The luxury of the super modern Garage, with its great imported contemporary art projects by foreign-language curators, is nothing new for Muscovites. The globalism of Multimedia Art Museum's photo exhibitions generally attracts a younger audience. But the Hermitage is a phenomenon of a different rank. The Hermitage is the universal symbol of cultural values to all social and age groups. What is Moscow expecting from the Hermitage in Moscow? Universalism and pragmatic exhibition plans. Graceful arrangements of old and new age art, past and modern, Western and Russian, Asian and European, Imperial and democratic. Art that, because of reasons both objective and subjective, not a single other museum in Moscow is able to provide. Art that will allow us to see into the future.



TIM PARCHIKOV  
*Times New Roman. Episode III: Moscow*  
2012



CATHERINE THE GREAT  
AND STANISLAW AUGUST

HERMITAGE – POLAND  
STRZEMINSKI

# CATHERINE THE GREAT AND STANISLAW AUGUST



UNKNOWN ARTIST  
*Portrait of Catherine II Wearing a Kokoshnik (Woman's Headdress). Copy*  
Denmark, 1830s. Oil on canvas, 70 x 60 cm  
The State Hermitage museum. Inv. No. ГЭ-7276



LAMPI, JOHANN-BAPTIST, I. 1751-1838  
*Portrait of Stanislaw August Poniatowski*  
Austria, Second half of the 18th century. Oil on canvas  
The State Hermitage museum. Inv. No. ГЭ-1361

THE HERMITAGE EXHIBITION WAS INITIALLY PLANNED AS AN EXTENSIVE COMPARISON OF THE POLISH AND RUSSIAN ART OF THE LAST THIRD OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. THIS PROJECT COULD NOT TO BE REALIZED FOR REASONS BEYOND OUR CONTROL. STILL, PORTRAITS OF CATHERINE THE GREAT AND STANISLAW AUGUST ARE ON DISPLAY ALONGSIDE THEIR CONTEMPORARIES, WHOSE ROLE IN THE HISTORY OF BOTH STATES WAS OF IMPORTANCE. HERE, WORKS OF THOSE ARTISTS ACTIVE BOTH IN POLAND AND RUSSIA ARE ALSO EXHIBITED.



UNKNOWN ARTIST  
ACCORDING TO THE ORIGINAL BY M. SHIBANOV  
*Portrait of Catherine II in a Travelling Dress*  
Russia. After 1787. Oil on canvas  
The State Hermitage museum. Inv. № ЭРЖ-2702

# T

he celebration of the 250 year anniversary of the Hermitage stimulated new research into the museum and its early history, which, unfortunately, is rather poorly documented. Catherine the Great's activity is, no doubt, closely linked with the Enlightenment ideas widespread in Europe in the eighteenth century and to a degree shared by many educated people.

An enlightened monarch was not only supposed to be a connoisseur of arts and architecture but also he was expected to patronize talented painters, architects, men of letters and musicians and also collect works of art. Such traditions of assembling art collections that were passed down from generation to generation were preserved by the monarchs of Italy and the kings of France and Spain. The rich collections accumulated by Peter the Great were of very low demand at the time of Catherine the Great, who preferred to start anew. Yet it is not correct to compare the activity of the Russian empress with the activity of Western European monarchs; rather the analogy should be sought in the countries of Eastern Europe. A comparison with Stanisław August Poniatowski is most instructive.

Like Catherine the Great<sup>1</sup>, who came to power through a coup d'état, Stanisław August Poniatowski did not acquire the throne through birthright: he was elected king of Poland in 1764 under pressure from Russian diplomats and backed, to a great extent, by military force. Russian support was given not only out of political considerations but because of personal relations too. When he was in St. Petersburg in 1755–1758, first as a private person and later as a diplomat, Stanisław Poniatowski had an affair with the Grand Duchess Ekaterina Alexeevna, the future empress Catherine the Great. She has a brief mention of it in her notes, admitting, though, that the young Pole was among her close circle.

Stanisław August's memories in this respect are more explicit. He tells, in particular, that during one of his visits to the Grand Duke's residence in Oranienbaum in 1758 he was detained on the order of Grand Duke Pyotr Fyodorovich after "several hours spent with the Grand Duchess". "The Grand Duke started asking me,

in unambiguous language, if I had slept with his wife". Stanisław Poniatowski writes that he denied everything and just managed to avoid arrest. Yet only several days later, the Grand Duke not only regained his kind disposition towards Stanisław but, judging from the memoirs, accepted Poniatowski's role. "I used to come [to Oranienbaum] at night, climbed the secret stairs to the rooms of the Grand Duchess, where the grand Duke and his mistress (Elizaveta Vorontzova) were already waiting. We had a meal together, after which the Grand Duke withdrew with his lady, while I could stay with the Grand Duchess as long as I wished."

Stanisław August dictated his memoirs in his later years when almost no witnesses of the events of forty years before remained. And yet, speaking about the situation described above he found it necessary to add, "However strange, or whatever nonsense it may seem, I insist that everything I have described is absolutely true". Stanisław Poniatowski must have been truly in love with young Ekaterina, his admiration is present in the description so valuable for posterity. "She was twenty five when, recuperating after the birth of her first child, she bloomed in a way only a woman of natural beauty may dream of. Dark-haired, deliciously white-skinned, with large blue salient eyes full of expression, with very long dark lashes, a petite pointed nose, a mouth that beckoned to be kissed and perfectly formed arms and shoulders. She was of medium height – on the tall rather than the small side, her gait, exceptionally light and at the same time noble; a pleasant quality of voice; her laughter as easy as her character allowing her to move with ease from merry, childish, carefree games to the ciphering table..."

It can be assumed that Ekaterina Alexeevna and Stanisław Poniatowski actually shared views on life, politics, society and art. Though younger than Ekaterina Alexeevna, Stanisław Poniatowski had travelled a lot, having visited London, Paris and Vienna before he came to Russia. In Europe he did not limit himself to sightseeing but he also met the high and mighty as well as scholars and artists. In short, he was a man tempered by



*Tapestry: A Portrait of Catherine II*  
Russia. 1782–1783  
The author of the original: Fyodor Rokotov  
Wool, silk and metal thread. 82 x 62 cm  
The State Hermitage museum. Inv. № ЭРТ-16192

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p. 052  
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PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

## BAROQUE MAN

**René Descartes** argued that the unity of the world lies in man's reason; his principal philosophic statement "I think, therefore I am" ("Cogito ergo sum") became the motto of his epoch. Thomas Hobbs determined that all things in existence including the human soul are material. **Benedict Spinoza** wrote about rational understanding as the source of concordance between spiritual and material worlds. **Michel de Montaigne** called life a receptacle of the good and the evil. The ideological foundations of Baroque were formed as a result of the upheavals caused by the theories of the Polish scientist **Nicolaus Copernicus**. According to **Blaise Pascal**, the Baroque man became aware that he is "a midpoint between nothing and everything".

experience and knowledge of life. Feodor Golovkin, who knew the Empress very well, remarked that Stanisław Poniatowski, "the most immaculate man in Europe in terms of his good manners, his gentle politeness of speech" had so favourably influenced the future monarch.

The fate of the two people, Ekaterina (Catherine) and Stanisław followed two different courses. The rule of Catherine the Great made Russia a more powerful European state enlarging its territory through bloodshed and war. One of the newly acquired territories was part of Poland, which had lost its sovereignty after Stanisław Poniatowski was forced to abdicate. Present-day scholars share the opinion that having led the country into a state of severe inner conflict and fragmentation he had practically no means of pulling it out of its deep crisis. At the same time, Stanisław Poniatowski's achievements as an enlightened monarch, patron of arts and art collector are undisputed. During his reign, practically from scratch, he started collecting paintings, sculptures, precious stones, coins and medals. Deprived of Catherine the Great's financial wealth, he, nevertheless, accumulated several artistic collections in Warsaw. By 1795 the catalogue of the royal picture gallery included almost two and a half thousand works — the number is only slightly smaller than that of the Hermitage picture gallery. The sculpture collection of Stanisław

Poniatowski comprised 176 marble sculptures and 542 plaster casts of famous ancient and modern sculptures; there were also figurines made of local stone and decorative vases.

Unfortunately, already in his lifetime Stanisław Poniatowski's collections began to dissolve. In 1797 he arrived in St. Petersburg on the invitation of Paul I bringing about forty pictures with himself. They were initially kept in the Marble Palace, which was to become the final retreat for Stanisław August. Some of the pictures were presented by him to some friends and people he was dependent on (such as A. Bezborodko). After his unexpected death on February 1st, 1798 the pictures from the king's collection were sold at an auction held from the 19th to 26th of October. The works left in Warsaw were later sold and changed hands often; some were eventually lost in the wars that rocked Warsaw more than once. Nevertheless part of Stanisław Poniatowski's picture gallery is still to be found in several collections in Warsaw, such as the Royal Castle, the Muzeum Łazienki Królewskie and the National Museum.

There is no doubt that some of the works from the Hermitage exhibition are worthy of an individual account, more detailed than the catalogue entries. Each of the pieces gives testimony to the artistic and cultural links between Poland and Russia in the late eighteenth century.

### DECORATIVE FIGURINES

Porcelain overglaze painting, gilding  
Meissen Porcelain Manufactory. 1735-1760



PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

"THE CROWN ALONE HELD the exclusive prerogative to create a new man, a Russian European, who would exercise in full his physical and spiritual powers <...>

The excessive weight of ritual in the court's life blurred the boundary between the stage and the audience, all the more so considering that the candles were kept lit during the play. Besides, the popularity of amateur performances among the aristocracy led to the fact that members of the audience and actors could, to a certain extent, exchange roles. The emotional repertoire of the audience formed and enriched alongside their acquisition of social skills, all these processes passed under the vigilant eye of the monarch. <...>

The presence of the Empress in person was the focus of the whole performance. At the same time she acted as a spectator, a stage director, and a character of a performance, playing her roles with skill and confidence. There were two boxes for the Empress in the auditorium of the Winter Palace opera hall: one at the back just opposite the stage, to affirm her status and provide her with a perfect viewpoint. The other was in the immediate proximity to the stage, and expressed her intimate relation to what was going on; moreover, it let the members of the audience observe the Empress' reaction to various elements of the performance and to revise and tune their own emotions accordingly. If theatre was becoming a symbolic projection of the court, court life itself also reflected the aesthetics of a theatre performance."

An extract from Andrei Zorin's lecture "Drama in the Period of Catherine the Great Viewed in an Historical and Cultural Context", delivered at St. Petersburg State University in the summer of 2015

PIERRE CORNEILLE reached the pinnacle of his fame during the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. In Russia his tragedies were translated and staged from the eighteenth century onwards and became quite popular at the time of Catherine the Great.

A great princess so strangely to forget  
Herself, and love a simple knight as yet!  
What will the king, what will Castile say?  
Do you forget the role that you must play?  
I n f a n t a : So little that my blood would drench the earth  
Before I'd stoop thus to betray my birth.  
<...>

I labour to lose him, lose him with regret ...  
I feel my very soul is split in two.

Though my strength is great, my love is too.

Pierre Corneille, *Le Cid* (1636)



"IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IT WAS CONSIDERED that sex stimulated thought, it was a form of intellectual improvisation and was linked to the science du concret. I also think that for people of the eighteenth century sex served as a tool of thought and that with its help human thinking ability was improved. Erotic episodes in novels stimulated readers to think about the nature of pleasure, about power and many other things, including the relationship between man and woman, naturally. When Darnton was collecting material on orders for forbidden books, he discovered that the top position in the bestseller list belonged to Thérèse Philosophe, a novel ascribed to Jean-Baptiste de Boyer, Marquis d'Argens. It contains a lot of explicit pornography, but next to describing intimate love scenes the author strays into philosophy. Regaining their physical strength for the next portion of sexual pleasure, the lovers plunge into meditations on ethical responsibilities, on the existence of God and other metaphysical issues discussed in the philosophical treatises of the time."

History, Anthropology and Journalism.  
An interview with Robert Darnton, author of "The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History", 1984

"AS SOON AS political absolutism weakens and the craving for individual freedom grows in the transitory period between Baroque and Rococo, embryology discovers spermatozoa, viewed as the independent *vita propria* of living beings (animalculists, Antonie Philips van Leeuwenhoek, Nicolaas Hartsoeker, and others.) With the growth of the social role of women (there were some who called the eighteenth century "the century of women") ovists appeared (A. Vallisneri, Bourget). And "Buffon went so far in his acceptance of the equality of sexes that he presumably discovered female spermatozoa"

The strife between preformationism and epigenesis, between vitalism and mechanism went against the specific political, aesthetic, philosophic and cultural background. Each stage in the development of science is shaped by the whole range of factors and cultural events of a particular epoch."

From the discussion between Ludwik Fleck and Tadeusz Bilikевич (L. Fleck "The Genesis and Development of a Scientific Fact")

### DIGITALIS PURPUREA.

IN 1775, ENGLISH PHYSICIAN WILLIAM WISERING DISCOVERED THE HEALING PROPERTIES OF DIGITALIS FOR HEART DISEASE. IN RUSSIA IT WAS IMPORTED MAINLY FROM GERMANY UNTIL 1914.

Botanical illustration from the book «Köhler's Medizinal-Pflanzen», 1887.



PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIBULLIN

## Portrait of Catherine II as Minerva

Unknown sculptor  
The State Russian Museum



The State Russian Museum has lent to the exhibition a marble bust of Catherine the Great when she was quite young. She is looking straight ahead, her head is slightly inclined to her right shoulder with a lock of hair falling onto it. She is wearing a plumed helmet adorned with a laurel wreath; the armor on her breast is decorated with a mascarón in the form of Medusa the Gorgon and a cloak with the ribbon of the Order of St. Andrew the First Called thrown over the armor. The bust was evidently carved by a highly skilled professional sculptor who excelled at creating details like the helmet, but was not so exacting in rendering the facial features of the Empress. It is not improbable that the sculptor did not work from life, but rather followed some standard likeness.

The clue to understanding the bust lies in the inscription in Polish cut out on the right side, "*Drogi upominek 'od moiej Dobrodziejki: 1765'*" (A precious gift from my benefactress). The inscription not only gives us the date of the piece, depicting the Empress when she was young, but also enables us to trace the work's history.

According to Elena Karpova, who has undertaken a thorough investigation of the work, the inscription enables us to conclude that the bust may have been given by Catherine the Great to Stanisław August (perhaps in 1765, or even earlier), after which he had the inscription carved in Polish. A logical assumption would be that Catherine the Great had become "the benefactress" for Stanisław August after his election to the Polish throne in 1764. In such a case we are dealing here with the earliest sculptural image of Catherine the Great, which makes the bust truly unique.

After a serious study of literature and archives the researcher offers the following reconstruction of the later history of the bust portrait. There is a possibility that it was placed in the audience hall of the Royal Castle in Warsaw together with the busts of Elizabeth of England, Henri IV of France and John III Sobieski (*Jan III Sobieski*). When, as late as 1819 there was a sale of the Castle's collection, the portrait of Catherine the Great was purchased by Pavel Svinin, a well-known man of letters, collector and owner of the "Russian Museum". In 1823 he sold to the Russian Academy "a bust of white marble presenting the image of the Empress Catherine the Great as Minerva" for fifteen hundred roubles. Later the bust became the property of the Academy of Sciences, in 1905 it was shown at the famous exhibition in the Tauride Palace. But it was not until 1993, when the bust was handed over to the Russian Museum, that its fascinating history was revealed.

At the same time, there are still questions concerning the bust. It may be supposed that its transportation from Russia to Poland was connected with some event, such as the election of Stanisław Poniatowski king. The parcel must have been accompanied by a cover letter, which was expected to be answered by the Polish king. The memoirs of Stanisław August contain some letters from Catherine the Great. Seemingly, he should have included the letter about her gift. Yet there is no trace of such correspondence.

The main question about the authorship of the bust remains unanswered. In 1764 to 1765 Russia possessed no professional sculptors of its own, Fedot Shubin, the famous portraitist, being still a student in the Academy of Arts. True, the French master Nicolas-François Gillel arrived in Russia in 1758 and had since lived in St. Petersburg and been professor of sculpture in the Academy of Arts; but his works are very different to the style of the bust from the Russian Museum.

It should be also noted that Russia at the time was not in possession of its own high quality marble ("statuary marble") and had to import it. We still cherish the hope of finding documents disclosing the history of the bust in full detail.

## King Stanisław August Giving an Audience to a Miller and his Wife

Marcello Bacciarelli  
The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow



Acquired in 1924 by the The State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts from the private collection of Lev Zubalov, the picture must have been originally part of the artistic collection of King Stanisław August. The museum inventory contains an entry which is, probably, the translation of the Polish inscription on the back of the painting and tells the story behind Bacciarelli's subject matter – a story connected with the attempted kidnapping of Stanisław August on November 1, 1771.

That evening, the king's carriage driving in the centre of Warsaw was attacked by an armed squad under the command of a certain Kuzma, who was backed by armed opposition, the so called Bar Confederation, which was against the policy and reforms of Stanisław August. The royal guard, who were small in number, could not offer resistance to the attackers. The wounded king was disarmed, robbed and taken out of Warsaw. Stanisław August recollected later how he managed to engage Kuzma in a conversation and persuaded him first that he would get more money for a live king instead of a dead one and that the king could pay him much more than the conspirators. Besides, the carriage, which was to be waiting for the captured king in the appointed place, was not there. So, as a result Kuzma sent away all his accomplices and remained alone with Stanisław August, who effectively went on with his persuasions. Late at night Kuzma and the wounded king came across a mill and begged the miller to let them stay overnight. After some hesitation the miller agreed. Having written a note detailing his whereabouts the king fell sound asleep, while the converted Kuzma watched over him. An hour later colonel Ernest Coccei (Kokkei) arrived with a small detachment and at about five in the morning Stanisław August was brought to the Royal Castle. Kuzma was later granted an allowance that enabled him to live comfortably in Italy.

Thus, the picture shows an audience which Stanisław August gave to the miller, whose name is not mentioned in the memoirs, and his wife in the Royal Castle. In the centre is the figure of the king reclining on the sofa; his right arm is stretched out to the genuflected miller to receive his kiss. The miller's wife, wearing a shawl and a fur cloak, stands behind her husband. Nearly all the people in the picture can be identified; to the left of the miller's wife, wearing a brown camisole stands Jan Boeckler (Beckler), the king's private physician, who had been with him for many years and accompanied him to St. Petersburg at the end of his life. In the right foreground Prince Kazimierz Poniatowski, the king's elder brother and the arch chamberlain of his court is drawn in profile. Next to him we see, all in black, Kajetan Ghigiotti, Stanisław August's Italian secretary. In the picture its author, the court painter Marcello Bacciarelli, also makes an appearance. He is the third on the left peeping out modestly from between two important persons. The scene is set in one of the rooms of the Royal Castle decorated by the oval portrait of Catherine the Great as goddess Minerva.

The picture from the Moscow museum would appear to be the author's replica of another picture by Marcello Bacciarelli, of a bigger size, dated 1771, which perished in WWII. A number of reproductions are known to exist, one of which is by Friedrich Lormann, signed and dated 1788 (National Museum, Warsaw, on loan to the Royal Castle).



## Portrait of Marie Thérèse Geoffrin

Unknown French (?) painter, mid-18th c.  
The State Hermitage, St. Petersburg



The Hermitage collection includes a small oval portrait depicting an elderly lady in a bonnet sitting in an armchair near a table on which a book with the inscription: "*Connoissa... de... hommes*" lies. She holds an open book in her left hand; a bust of a young man is to the left of her.

The portrait is far from a masterpiece, it lacks emotion and is, presumably, a copy from a lost original. The name of the master remains unknown but due to a pastille portrait from the National Museum, Krakow which can be traced to the same prototype, the sitter is Marie Thérèse Geoffrin, nee Rodet (1699–1777), who hosted a famous Parisian salon. She received the luminaries of the time including notable artists and philosophers; Voltaire, Montesquieu and Grimm among others.

According to her contemporaries, a traveller in Paris who had not been introduced to Madam Geoffrin's salon had not actually been to the capital of France. Such popularity is even more surprising because Madam Geoffrin did not come from a rich aristocratic family — her husband owned a mirror factory and died relatively young.

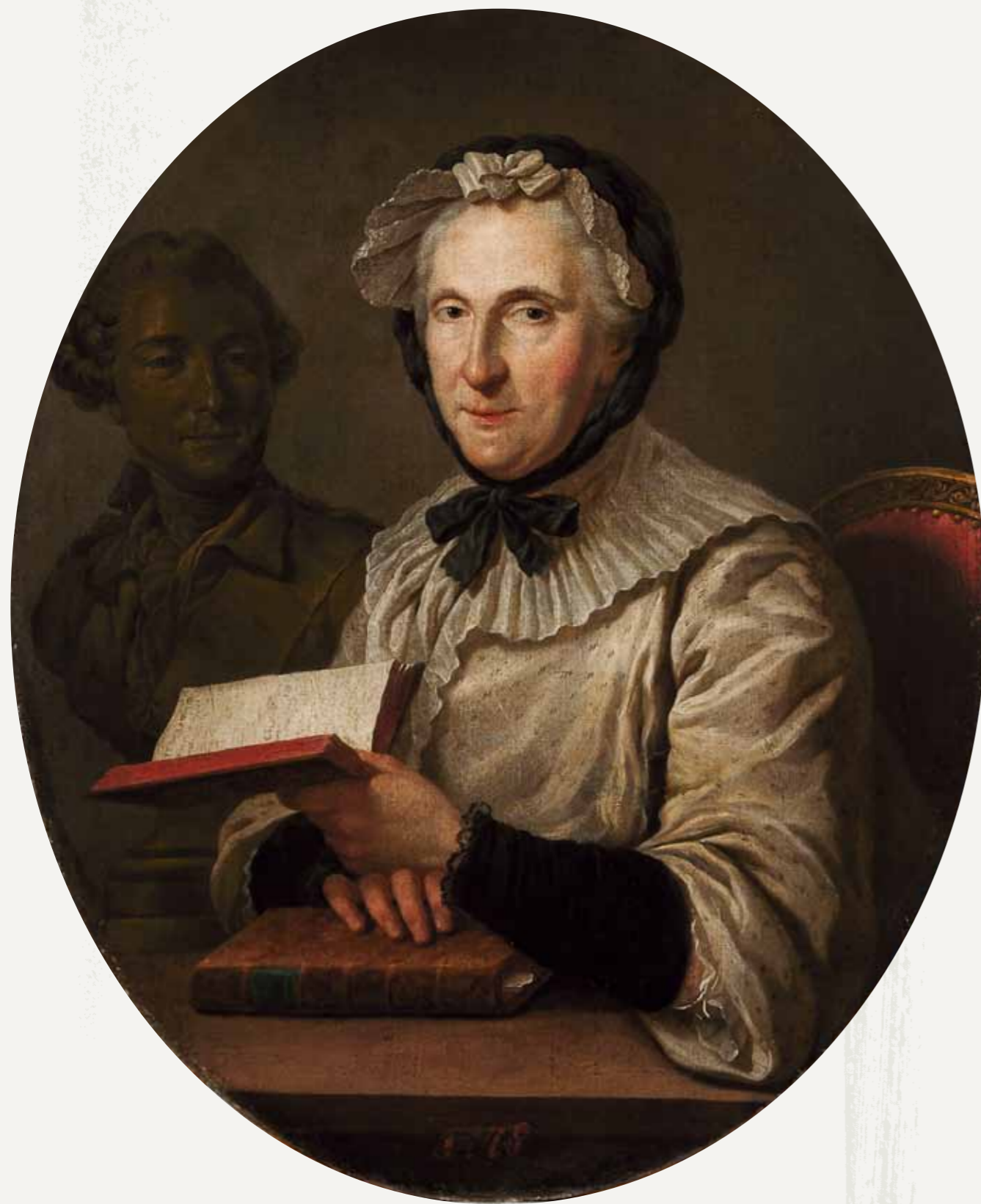
Stanisław August made the acquaintance of the hostess of the salon as early as 1753 during his first visit to Paris. They became friends, to which their numerous letters bear evidence. The correspondence was not formal, instead it was full of spontaneity and emotion, so that the letters could be read as *belle lettres*. It may be considered very unusual that Stanisław August called Madam Geoffrin "Ma chère maman" (My dear mother), while she addressed him "Mon cher fils" (My dear son). In 1766 Madam Geoffrin even visited Warsaw, where Stanisław August demonstrated the utmost respect to her.

Yet, it is with light humour that Stanisław August wrote about Madam Geoffrin, "For forty years this amazing woman has enjoyed the benevolence of all those who were prominent for their merits, talent and beauty in Paris. For this she should thank her wit and favours which she loved to do most heartily, — and was able to do most artfully — as well as a lot of truly noble things she has done... At seventy years of age she walks, writes and corrects her friends, grumbles at them, even domineers them — with the energy of forty years ago".

In 1765 Stanisław August authorized Madam Geoffrin to commission the prominent French painters — Charles-André van Loo (Carle Van Loo), François Boucher and Joseph-Marie Vien — to paint four monumental pictures from ancient history. The king himself participated in conceiving the theme for the pictures, which were to glorify competition, justice, concordance and magnanimity. Two painters had to be eventually substituted as Boucher denied the offer, and van Loo died. The pictures commissioned through Madam Geoffrin can still be seen in the Royal Castle, Warsaw. They are "Augustus in front of the Statue of Alexander the Great" and "The Continnence of Scipio" by Joseph-Marie Vien, "Scythian Tsar Sylarius with Sons" by Noel Hallé and "Julius Caesar Refuses to Look at Pompey's Head" by Louis Jean François Lagrenée.

Catherine the Great was in correspondence with Madam Geoffrin as well; some of Catherine's letters have survived, while all the French replies have been lost. In 1771 Catherine the Great bought two big pictures painted by Carle Van Loo in 1754: "The Spanish Concert" and "The Spanish Reading" from Madam Geoffrin.

The portrait of Madam Geoffrin found its way to the Hermitage collection in 1933, its provenance unknown. At the same time, Stanisław August's collection inventory contains under the number 1478 a portrait of his "mother" presumably signed by Jean-François Gilles Colson. No trace of the signature can be found on the Hermitage canvas but the faded numbers coincide with the number of Stanisław August's collection inventory. It would be logical therefore, to assume that we are dealing with this very portrait. To confirm this assumption, the picture shows, to the left of Madam Geoffrin's image, a bronze bust resembling the portrait of the Polish king.





## Altar

Ciro Ferri and Urbano Barlaesi  
State Museum of the History of Religion, St. Petersburg



In the State Museum of the History of Religion in St. Petersburg resides a small altar decorated with a gill-bronze relief carrying the coat-of-arms of the Rzeczpospolita (The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth) and the Poniatowski family. Its seemingly mysterious history has been clarified of late as a result of the investigations by Raisa Rashkova and her Polish colleagues A. Saralovicz-Dudinskaya and D. Shevchik-Prokural (their joint paper in print).

The impressive gill-bronze bas-relief depicting *The Beheading of St. John the Baptist* shows, on the left, the executioner, who stands with his right foot on the beheaded body of the saint, while in his left arm he holds the head on a tray, which he is handing to Salome. In the background the figure of a maid can be seen.

It has been proven that the relief is a reproduction of a composition from San Giovanni Decollato church in Valella on the island of Mella and was created in Rome, commissioned by Gregorio Carafa, the Grand Master of the Order of St. John in 1688–89 (now kept in the church museum). The pattern for bronze moulding was drawn by the famous Roman artist Ciro Ferri, while the casting, chiselling and gilding probably were done by Urbano Barlaesi. The Hermitage relief must have been produced at the same time. For a hundred years it was in Rome, until 1772 when Giuseppe Garampi, an enlightened priest was appointed papal nuncio to Warsaw and brought the relief as a gift to Stanisław August. It may be reasonably supposed that the whole altar was created from a drawing by Ciro Ferri in the 1680s as there is a distinct stylistic affinity to a reliquary from the same church which was created from a drawing by this master.

It is possible that the Polish coats-of-arms were also added in Rome, just before the altar was sent to Warsaw, as they contain heraldic errors. In 1777 the altar with *The Beheading of St. John the Baptist* relief was placed in the new chapel of the Royal Castle in Warsaw.

How did the altar make its way to Russia? Its appearance is connected with the life and death of Joanna Grudzińska, a Polish noble, who on May 24, 1820 became the wife of Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovich of Russia, the viceroy of the Kingdom of Poland. After the marriage Joanna was styled *Princess of Lovich*. Contemporaries wrote about her with great warmth and thought that she had a benevolent effect on the harsh temper of her husband.

The Polish uprising at the end of 1830 forced Constantine and his spouse to flee from Warsaw; on the way to St. Petersburg the Grand Duke died in Vitebsk on June 15, 1831. Joanna Lovich was at his death bed and delivered the body to the capital. Here she lived in Galchyna and Tsarskoye Selo respected by the royal family. She was seriously ill and died in Tsarskoye Selo on November 17, 1831 at the age of 35. She was buried there in the church of St. John the Baptist.

Not long before her death the Princess of Lovich addressed the Emperor Nicholas I asking to “bring to Tsarskoye Selo, to the Roman Catholic church” the altar from the Royal Castle in Warsaw in front of which she had been wed; the same clause was included in her will. Nicholas I ordered her last wish to be granted. The altar from the Royal Castle, with the “bronze image of *The Beheading of St. John the Baptist*” packed in three crates, was transported to Tsarskoye Selo in April 1833. One hundred years later the Roman Catholic church in Tsarskoye Selo was closed and the altar was moved to the Museum of the History of Religion and Atheism, by which time its history was totally forgotten.

It should be added that when the church was closed the remains of the Princess of Lovich were no longer in Tsarskoye Selo; in 1929 they were exhumed by her sister's descendants and reburied in the family grave of Chojnowski in Rawicz.



PHOTO: K. V. SHAPDVALOV

## Pygmalion and Galatea

*Pietro Slagi*  
The State Hermitage, St. Petersburg



This monumental marble group is not exhibited in the Nikolayevsky Hall because of its size (235 cm high) and considerable weight. It has been left in its permanent place in the Gallery of the history of ancient painting in the New Hermitage. Yet, there is no doubt that it also comes from the art collection of Stanisław August and has a remarkable history. The subject matter is taken from Ovid's narrative poem *Metamorphoses*, in which Pygmalion, a sculptor, falls in love with the marble statue he has carved. Answering his pleas Venus, the goddess of love, gives life to Galatea. In Pietro Slagi's presentation a naked girl stands on a small pedestal slightly leaning forward as if addressing Pygmalion, who has thrown himself on his knees in front of her, his hands clasped. A Cupid is kissing Galatea's right hand.

The sculpture lacks the author's signature, but written records indicate that it was carved by the sculptor, Pietro Ceccardo Slagi (1754–1814), who lived and worked in Italian Carrara, notable for its marble quarries. People of Carrara knew how to carve stone from childhood and many became professional sculptors. At the same time they preferred to follow well-known works, copying famous statues, both ancient and modern. In our case, Pietro Slagi acted in the same way, only copying the work of his contemporary rather than an ancient example. In 1763 Étienne Maurice Falconet (1716–1791), the future author of the Bronze Horseman, created a sculptural composition based on the subject of Pygmalion and Galatea. This small sculptural group, now in the Louvre, was replicated in porcelain (produced at the Sèvres manufacture). It was this porcelain figurine that had inspired Pietro Slagi. True, the work of the Carrara sculptor lacks the elegance and delicacy of Falconet's creation, still his work may be praised for its professionalism and mastery in handling marble.

It is not known when exactly Pietro Slagi was commissioned by Stanisław August to make two large-scale marble sculptures. The other one, "Prometheus and the Man He Created", copied the porcelain figurine which was produced after the model of Louis-Simon Boizot (1743–1809) (it is now stored in the Hermitage). The choice of the sculpture may have been influenced by the fact that Gioachino Slagi, Pietro's brother, worked in Poland and was personally known to Stanisław August. Both sculptures must have been completed by the end of 1792 as already on February 6, 1793 the king ordered the sculptor to be paid and the two statues to be packed and transported from Carrara to Livorno, a port with regular maritime links to many countries. Due to the size and weight of the figures their delivery to Poland took a very long time.

In the letter of August 8, 1795 Marcello Bacciarelli, the court painter and artistic adviser to the king, wrote to his patron, "As I already informed Your Highness in my last letter, the two groups by Slagi have arrived in good shape. They seem to me good work. Galatea has a wonderful body, her face is quite beautiful and full of tenderness, the head of Pygmalion is also rather expressive... I can't judge for sure, though, as I have only seen them inside the crates..."

At that time the thoughts of Stanisław August must have been far from art — his kingdom had practically ceased to exist. A year had passed before Bacciarelli got a secret decree to ship both statues to St. Petersburg. Perhaps it had something to do with the idea of Catherine the Great to move Doniałowski to the Russian capital. And indeed both works were delivered to St. Petersburg the following year, when the king came there too. Soon after his arrival he presented both compositions to Paul I, who "ordered to have them installed as soon as possible so that the Polish king could already see them in place at the first ball in St. George's Hall ..." Later the statues were moved from site to site: from the Winter Palace to the Tauride Palace and back again. The fact that they were created by one author, who may have viewed them as a twin group was not taken into consideration. As a result they are now in the same museum but on different floors.

# HERMITAGE – POLAND \*

NATIONAL MUSEUM IN WARSAW

● PHOTO: NICOLAS GROSPIERRE

POLAND  
EXHIBITION ACTIVITY OF THE STATE HERMITAGE IN POLAND

**1956**

**Rembrandt and his School**  
3 exhibits  
National Museum, Warsaw  
March, 15 – April, 30, 1956

**1964**

**Bernardo Bellotto, also called Canaletto**  
8 exhibits  
National Museum, Warsaw  
September – November, 1964  
Preceded by: Dresden;  
followed by: Vienna

**1965**

**[Archaeological exhibition]**  
31 exhibits  
National Museum of Archaeology,  
Warsaw  
June – August, 1965

**1967**

**USSR Insignias, Decorations and Medals**  
177 exhibits  
Museum of Medallion Art, Wrocław  
November 1967 – 1968

**1970**

**Dagestan Applied Art**  
534 exhibits  
(85 exhibits from the State Hermitage collection)  
Museum of Archaeology, Warsaw  
Museum of Archaeology, Krakow  
Museum of Archaeology, Wrocław  
October 1970 – 1971  
Followed by:  
Prague, Pisek, Bratislava (ČSSR)

**1972**

**Western European 1550s – 1650s Landscape**  
(from the collections of GDR, Hungarian People's Republic, Polish People's Republic, ČSSR museums and the State Hermitage Museum)  
10 exhibits  
National Museum, Warsaw  
March, 15 – April, 15, 1972  
Followed by: Prague, Budapest

**1973**

**17th – 20th Century French paintings**  
(from the State Hermitage collections)  
25 exhibits  
National Museum, Warsaw  
June, 15 – August, 1, 1973

**1973 \***

**Copernicus: Science, Truth, and Progress**  
13 exhibits  
Children's Creative Art Centre and Gallery, Toruń  
September, 5 – November, 8, 1973

**1975**

**Western European and Oriental 15th – 18th Century Armour** from the State Hermitage collections  
151 exhibits  
The Historical Museum, Wrocław  
March, 19 – April, 30, 1975;  
Malbork Castle  
May – September, 9, 1975;  
Polish Army Museum, Warsaw  
September, 22 – November, 3, 1975

**1976**

**Treasures of Scythian Art (Treasures of Scythian Barrows)**  
162 exhibits  
National Museum, Warsaw  
August, 4 – September, 12, 1976  
Preceded by: Sofia  
Followed by: Prague, Belgrade

**1978**

**Central Asia and the Caucasus 18th – 19th Century Armour** from the State Hermitage collections  
240 exhibits  
The Historical Museum, Wrocław  
March – May, 13, 1978;  
Malbork Castle  
May – July, 20, 1978;  
Polish Army Museum, Warsaw  
July – November, 5, 1978

**1981**

**Western European 12th – 19th Century Ivory Carving** from the State Hermitage collections  
146 exhibits  
National Museum, Warsaw  
June, 15 – July, 19, 1981

**1984**

**Rembrandt and His School**  
32 exhibits  
National Museum, Warsaw  
October, 10 – November, 14, 1984

**1989**

**The Etruscan World. Archaeological Objects from Socialist Countries Museums Collection**  
190 exhibits  
from the State Hermitage collections  
National Museum, Warsaw  
October 1989  
Preceded by:  
Berlin, Prague, Budapest

**1990**

**Russian 16th – 19th Century Armour**  
123 exhibits  
Malbork Castle  
June, 1 – December, 18, 1990

**1991**

**European Ceremonial 17th – 19th Century Weaponry**  
110 exhibits  
Malbork Castle  
June, 15 – October, 15, 1991

**1994**

**Western European Applied Arts from the Middle Ages**  
90 exhibits  
Malbork Castle  
July, 15 – November, 11, 1994

**1996**

**Watercolors by Zygmunt Vogel**  
17 exhibits  
Lazienki Palace, Warsaw  
October, 14 – December, 20, 1996

**1997 \***

**The Golden Gate of Poland. Gdansk 1000th Anniversary**  
7 exhibits  
National Museum, Gdansk  
May, 2 – August, 31, 1997

**2000**

**"Descent from the Cross", the Masterpiece by Peter Paul Rubens,** from the State Hermitage collection (Passion of the Christ)  
3 exhibits  
National Museum, Warsaw  
April, 7 – May, 28, 2000

**2002**

**101 Masterpieces by Old Masters. 14th – 17th Century Armour and Tapestry** from the State Hermitage collection  
101 exhibits  
Malbork Castle  
May, 25 – October, 27, 2002

**2004 \***

**Sport in Ancient Greece**  
25 exhibits  
National Museum, Warsaw  
May, 15 – July, 30, 2004

**2004**

**Renaissance Castle. Tapestry and Other Applied Arts** from the State Hermitage collection  
55 exhibits  
Malbork Castle  
May, 28 – October, 31, 2004

**2005 \***

**300th Anniversary of the Order of the White Eagle**  
33 exhibits  
The Royal Castle, Warsaw  
November, 1, 2005 – February, 28, 2006

**2006 \***

**Baltic Amber** from the State Hermitage collection  
227 exhibits  
The Historical Museum, Gdansk  
June, 28, 2006 – January, 17, 2007

**2006 \***

**Silver Light. 16th – 19th Century Silver**  
Artwork from the Historical Polish-Lithuanian Territory and Modern Poland, from the major Russian museums collections: the State Hermitage, the Moscow Kremlin Museums, the State Historical Museum  
62 exhibits  
The Royal Castle, Warsaw  
September, 11 – November, 26, 2006

HERMITAGE  
WORKS OF ART FROM POLISH COLLECTIONS AT THE STATE HERMITAGE

**1956**

**Fine Arts Objects from Polish Museums**  
410 exhibits  
July, 22 – August, 31, 1956

**1960**

**Works by Jan Matejko**  
120 exhibits  
January, 12 – February, 8, 1960

**1966**

**Contemporary Polish Posters**  
June, 22 – August, 22, 1966

**1967**

**Works by the Sculptor F. Strynkiewicz and the Artist K. Szramkiewicz**  
53 exhibits  
December, 18, 1967 – April, 25, 1968

**1968 \***

**International Graphic Arts Exhibition "Intergrafika-67"**  
958 exhibits  
(26 works by Polish artists)  
August, 24 – September, 15, 1968

**1968**

**Modern Polish Tapestry and Decorative Textiles**  
46 exhibits  
November, 19, 1968 – January, 6, 1969

**1968 \***

**International Revolutionary Posters Exhibition**  
481 exhibits  
December, 29, 1968 – January, 29, 1969

**1970**

**The Image of Vladimir Lenin in Modern Polish Art**  
89 exhibits  
August, 4 – September, 24, 1970

**1972**

**Modern Polish Graphic Arts**  
94 exhibits  
October, 24 – November, 26, 1972

**1972**

**Western European 1550s – 1650s Landscape** from the collections of GDR, Hungarian People's Republic, Polish People's Republic, ČSSR and USSR (the State Hermitage) museums  
122 exhibits  
October, 24 – November, 26, 1972

**1973**

**Western European 17th – 18th Century Paintings** from the National Museum, Warsaw  
26 exhibits  
June, 20 – October, 1, 1973

**1975**

**Engravings and Drawings by Tadeusz Kulisiewicz**  
163 exhibits  
July, 23 – September, 7, 1975

**1976**

**Polish 17th – 18th Century Portrait**  
80 exhibits  
December, 3, 1976 – January, 2, 1977

**1977**

**Xawery Dunikowski. Paintings, Sculpture, Drawings**  
118 exhibits  
April, 20 – May, 10, 1977

**1978**

**Polish Medallion Art**  
562 exhibits  
September, 21, 1978 – October, 22, 1978

**1978**

**Amber in Works by Old and Contemporary Masters** (from the Malbork Castle collection)  
137 exhibits  
April – October, 30, 1978

**1979**

**Polish 16th – 20th Century Realistic Art. Traditions and Modernity**  
115 exhibits  
May, 22 – June, 24, 1979

**1981**

**Polish 13th – Early 20th Century Silver** (from the Warsaw National Museum collection)  
120 exhibits  
May, 7 – June, 21, 1981

**1990 \***

**The Etruscan World. Archaeological Objects from Eastern Europe**  
862 exhibits  
(26 exhibits from Polish museums [The National Museum, Warsaw; The National Museum, Gdansk; Gdansk Castle, Poznan])  
June, 4 – July, 23, 1990

**2003**

**Passion. Krzysztof Penderecki's Musical Sketches**  
12 exhibits  
June, 19 – July, 27, 2003

\* After V. Malveev's book, "The Worldwide Hermitage or Planet Hermitage", 2012

# THE SHORTEST LINE

## VLADISLAV STRZEMINSKI AND THE COMPOSITION OF SPACE

THE ART NOUVEAU EXHIBITION WHICH OPENED AT THE VILNIUS CINEMA CORSO IN 1923 MARKED A CUTTING EDGE MOMENT IN THE INTERWAR PERIOD. IT ENCOURAGED POLISH AVANT-GARDE ARTISTS TO SEARCH FOR NEW FORMS. THE EXPOSITION WAS ORGANIZED BY VYTAUTAS KAIRYUKSHTIS (1890–1961) AND VLADISLAV STRZEMINSKI ALONG WITH OTHER 20–30 YEAR-OLD ARTISTS FROM VILNIUS AND WARSAW. THE EVENT CELEBRATED MODERN ART AND THE EMERGING CONSTRUCTIVISM MOVEMENT IN PARTICULAR. A YEAR LATER THE CUBISM, SUPREMATISM AND CONSTRUCTIVISM DIVISION WAS FOUNDED. THIS SIGNALLED A SHIFT FROM THE DATED CUBISM-FUTURISM TO INSPIRATIONAL CONSTRUCTIVISM. ART HISTORIANS WOULD LATER SAY THAT THE VILNIUS EXHIBITION HAD MANIFESTED “RADICAL MODERNISM”.



FORMER CINEMA HALL "CORSO", VILNIUS

“The ultimate goal of architecture is not building practical houses, as well as not increasing the number of sculptures and pavilions. Its purpose — to be a regulator of the rhythm of social and individual life.”

Vladislav Strzeminski,  
source: W. Strzeminski,  
Zasady nowej architektury [1931],  
[w:] red. Z. Baranowicz, Władysław Strzeminski.  
Pisma, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk  
1975, s. 141.

This hall accommodated the part of the international collection of contemporary art that was created by the group a.r. in the years 1929–1939. Strzeminski used neoplastic colors for the wall paint to split the hall into sections. This not only structured the space, but also reduced the incongruence between the dramatic exhibits and the traditional background. Visitors were suggested to follow a route through the halls marked by a narrow band of black carpet on the floor.

In 1947 Strzeminski published an article on structuring the environment. The text insisted on turning cities into “unified and purposeful self-sufficient bodies”. Here rhythm was replaced by optical illusion, which he thought could lift people’s morale and increase efficiency. In the article Strzeminski also challenged extreme functionalism and abstract design by developing a concept of an ideal city that would provide access to good communication and accommodation, as well as parks, sun, and fresh air.

Strzeminski suggested parallel arrangement of districts resembling figures in neoplasticism. “Architecture is not about building functional accommodation or multiplying sculptures in exhibition halls. It could define social and individual life rhythms.” Therefore, an artist should aim to place a human in a modernized environment with better opportunities for development. In order to achieve this Strzeminski introduced space composition to architecture, thereby making contemporary art more practical. He put design and ergonomics ahead of aesthetics, as the former were based on scientific organization of labor, technology, psychophysiology and mechanics. Fine art was to focus on “forming social utility”.

An advocate of art’s utility, Vladislav Strzeminski was one of the leading figures of the Polish avant-garde. He resembled the character of his incomplete story written after WWII, Joseph Obertynski, who was “a rational man of logic and the mathematically shortest line, an enthusiast who believed in steady progress”. We would add that in Strzeminski’s case this progress was facilitated by avant-garde art.

### PAULINA KURC-MAJ

Vladislav Strzeminski<sup>5</sup> himself displayed 10 works in styles ranging from cubism and suprematism to a synthetic “unizm”. Along with the drawings and paintings there was one remarkable spatial object, the plan for the railway station in Gdynia, which was reconstructed for an exhibition at the Museum of art in Łódź in the 70s. Unfortunately this art object has been lost.

Having acknowledged Kazimir Malevich’s influence, Strzeminski went further to suggest a new trend in architecture. Today, we know that this was meant to modernize not only art, but the whole country. Built on the site of a small fishing village Gdynia a modern port became a major transport junction, in the restored Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth.

Strzeminski’s call for modernization was well-timed. In 1918 Poland gained independence along with the Central European and Baltic countries. These countries aimed to build sustainable advanced economic, welfare, and cultural systems that would both employ the achievements of western civilization and reflect the national identity of the local people. The events in Central Europe encouraged artists to be involved in this search for ways to modernize the state. Strzeminski’s project of the Gdynia railway showed how art and architecture could facilitate the development of the country.

Though never accomplished, it lived on as an illustration in the book “Composition of Space” that Strzeminski wrote together with his wife Katarzyna Kobro (1898–1951) and published in 1931, following

his first book “Unizm in Art” (1928). Both books featured unizm in form construction, sculpture, architecture, and typography.

Strzeminski’s teaching borrowed from neoplasticism and Dutch De Stijl, which insisted on simpler forms, basic colors organized by visual rhythm. In a nutshell, the artist compared making a sculpture to modeling space. To synchronize with the space it required a harmonious rhythm based on the principles of the Golden section. This was expected to modernize art and architecture. Strzeminski qualified objects with a different vision as irrelevant, “meant only for a display”. According to the master, Le Corbusier’s geometry, simplified forms and lack of support at the base made superficial designs.

In contrast, Strzeminski and Korbo sided with utilitarianists; for they had been members of the Warsaw group Praesens for some time. According to them, a solid composition was as important as compliance with technology and functionality. They also focused on man in architecture: “A man finds himself framed by a building, whose spatial-temporal rhythm of passages and sections specifies his route.”

The idea of space construction was that human life rhythms and compositional continuum should be synchronized: “Architecture results from a number of equally important factors: site, utility, design, quality, color, direction, forms, which are capable of defining life rhythms themselves.” This ambition was realized in a series of sculptures by Katarzyna Kobro and Vladislav Strzeminski’s paintings.

5  
p. 086  
p. 160

Besides, Praesens artists also designed pavilions for the National exhibition in Pznan in 1929.

Nonetheless, these new principles of the organisation of space remained theoretical. An overview of the concept was communicated in the private interior design created by Vladislav Strzeminski in 1930.

Here the apartment space was presented as a number of planes painted in neoplastic fashion. All the structures were made at 8 to 5 ratio with a basic measurement of 1.75 meters, which constitutes the average height of man.

Apparently, this single picture is hardly evidence that Strzeminski achieved what he thought of as the main goal of architecture, saying that “an interior should give directions to people and make them stop wherever it is necessary”. We have no information about the interior of his apartment or the one he designed for his friend and neighbor, Łódź artist Stephan Wagner. Nor can we see his designs of interior and matching furniture made for the first Director of the Museum of art in Łódź, the Marian Minich. The only surviving spatial object by Strzeminski is Neoplasticism hall at the new building of Łódź Art Museum dated 1948.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ **Neoplasticism** — designation of the type of abstract art, entered by Piet Mondrian, which existed in 1917–1928 in the Netherlands and brought together artists, grouped around the magazine “De Stijl” (“Style”). Distinguishing features of the “Style” are clear rectangular shapes in architecture (“international style” of P. Auda) and abstract painting in the layout of large rectangular planes, painted with the primary colors of the spectrum (P. Mondrian).

ANDREY SHELYUTTO

Strzeminski graduated from a cadet corps in Minsk and then the Higher School of Military Engineering in St. Petersburg. He lost a leg and an arm at the elbow in battle but, like his ancestor, continued his struggle. Meeting Tsekhanowski in St. Petersburg is partly what urged him to change the battle field, and Strzeminski became an artist. He followed Malevich and became a Champion of the New Art, a member of UNOVIS and later created the theory of Unism, etymologically and ideologically based on his experience in Vitebsk. Together with Tsekhanowski and Dmitriyev, who was appointed chief keeper of monuments in newly founded Belarus, Strzeminski came up with a project for a city of the future in Minsk. This project somehow got implemented in the mid-30s, when the border of the USSR was about 20 km away and a symbolic entrance to the USSR was being constructed in Minsk. He constantly travelled from one cultural centre to another: he was friends with Malevich in Vitebsk, worked together with Eisenstein in Arts and Agitprop studios in Smolensk and painted propaganda trains in Minsk. Together with his wife Katarzyna Kobro, a girl of German origin whom he met at the hospital in Moscow, where she

worked as a nurse, Strzeminski founded an art studio, using Malevich's school in Vitebsk as a model. Malevich himself sometimes came with lectures. One of their students was Nadia Khodasevich, who later became known as a French artist Nadia Leger and wrote memoirs about her teachers. Strzeminski found nothing he could relate with in Vilnius: Ruszczyk and other local artists were mere expounders to him. He found the right place in Warsaw, where he joined a group called BLOK, and then left for proletarian Łódź whose people he considered a suitable audience for his theoretical and, essentially, magical work. Following Malevich's example (Malevich wrote a book called "Die Gegenstandlose Welt", or "The World As Non-Objectivity", which immediately found itself in the epicentre of European art critique), Strzeminski wrote "Unism in Painting", then "Space Composition". "Time-Space Rhythm and its Calculations" (together with Kobro) and "The Sun in Closed Eyes".

I don't think that Strzeminski divided the creative process into design and art, as it is not an option for a magical artist. Shtankovski, Malevich and Tomashevski also saw all processes in art as one single entity. Tomashevski, the most famous teacher of artists in post-war Poland, was involved in a constant dialogue with Strzeminski. He insisted, for example, that students should definitely go to an exhibition

of African weaponry. There was a head of an ancient spear and a video about this spear saying that an elephant hit by this spear would drop dead. The guides, imposing black warriors, spoke nothing but French, and Dutsky, who also spoke it fluently, asked them what poison was on the tip of the spear. One of their magnificent guides said there was no poison. "Do you see that drawing on it? Rest assured that if you touch the blade, you will immediately perish, that's why it's under glass." This short anecdote fully demonstrates the essence of Strzeminski's theory. Asking his students to evaluate a composition, Tomashevsky demanded that they look at it for a long time and then close their eyes: if they kept seeing their composition as a burn on the retina, the composition was good.

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**STRZEMINSKI. A WARRIOR ARTIST, A KNIGHT, ONE OF THOSE WHO RESTORED THE ORIGINAL MAGICAL MISSION AND EXPERIENCE OF ART. HIS SURNAME COMES FROM THE WORD "STIRRUP", ALSO DEPICTED ON HIS COAT OF ARMS, AND ORIGINATES FROM AN OLD STORY ABOUT A KNIGHT WHO, HAVING LOST HIS HORSE AND SWORD IN A BATTLE, CONTINUED TO FIGHT HIS ENEMIES WITH MASSIVE FORGED STIRRUPS, USING THEM AS FLAILS.**

E. КИТАЕВА  
The poster  
for the 100th anniversary  
of the V. Strzeminski birth

DO YOU SEE THAT DRAWING?



“For the King has in him two Bodies, viz., a Body natural, and a Body politic. His Body natural (if it be considered in itself) is a Body mortal, subject to all infirmities that come by Nature or Accident, to the Imbecility of Infancy or old Age, and to the like Defects that happen to the natural Bodies of other People. But his Body politic is a Body that cannot be seen or handled, consisting of Policy and Government, and constituted for the Direction of the People, and the Management of the public weal, and this Body is utterly void of Infancy, and old Age, and other natural Defects and Imbecilities, which the Body natural is subject to, and for this Cause, what the King does in his Body politic cannot be invalidated or frustrated by any Disability in his natural Body.” \*\*

“The kings of the New Covenant no longer would appear as the ‘foreshadows’ of Christ, but rather as the ‘shadows’, the imitators of Christ. The Christian ruler became the *christomimes* – literally the ‘actor’ or ‘impersonator’ of Christ – who on the terrestrial stage presented the living image of the two-natured god. <...> The antithesis of *natura* and *gratia* was commonly used to indicate not only that the weakness of man’s nature was remedied by grace, but also that grace disposed man to participate in the divine nature itself.” \*\*\*

# D I C H O T O M I E S \*

\* **Dichotomy** (Greek. *dichotomia*) – division into two parts.  
\*\*  
*E. Plowden*. *Commentaries or Reports*. London, 1816.  
Excerpts from: *E. Kantorowicz*, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1957  
\*\*\*  
*Ibid.*



TANKARD: ALEXANDER THE GREAT CONVERSING WITH DIOGENES

**PETER ROHDE III**  
Poland, Gdansk (Danzig). 1707–1717  
Silver; cast, forged, chased, with gilding  
Height: 39 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № Э-443

Plutarch reports that Alexander the Great spent a long time waiting for Diogenes to come to him and show respect but the philosopher continued to enjoy his leisure. Then Alexander decided to pay him a visit. He found Diogenes lying in the sun in Craneion, near Corinth. Alexander came up to him and said, “I am Alexander, the great king”. “And I, Diogenes replied, am Diogenes the dog.” “Why do they call you a dog?” “I wag my tail at whoever throws me some food, I bark at whoever doesn’t and I bite those who are nasty.” “Are you scared of me?” asked Alexander. “Are you good or evil?” asked Diogenes. “Good”, was the reply. “Who would be scared of good?” Finally, Alexander said, “You can ask me whatever you want.” “Stand a little out of my sun” said Diogenes and continued to bask in the sun.

TANKARD: MEETING OF KING SOLOMON AND THE QUEEN OF SHEBA

**JOHANN ROHDE II**  
Poland, Gdansk (Danzig). 1690–e  
Silver; cast, forged, chased, with partial gilding  
Height: 27 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № Э-17969

According to the biblical story, the Queen of Sheba heard of Solomon’s wisdom and fame and came to test him. “Solomon answered all her questions; nothing was too hard for the king to explain to her”. The Queen of Sheba could not help herself and said, “The report I heard in my own country about your achievements and your wisdom is true. But I did not believe these things until I came and saw with my own eyes. Indeed, not even half was told me; in wisdom and wealth you have far exceeded the report I heard”. “And she gave the king 120 talents of gold, large quantities of spices, and precious stones. Never again were so many spices brought in as those the queen of Sheba gave to King Solomon”.

TANKARD: THE PROPHET ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW OF ZAREPHATH

**PETER ROHDE III**  
Poland, Gdansk (Danzig). 1700–1710  
Silver; cast, forged, chased, with partial gilding. Height: 18.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № Э-18019

The Widow of Zarephath was a woman who gave shelter to the Prophet Elijah, who then performed several miracles to thank her: he made it so that her house would never run out of food and then raised her little son back to life. It is believed that the boy grew up to be the prophet Jonah.

TANKARD: DEPICTING CATHERINE THE GREAT ENTHRONED

**JOHANN JACOB BROMM**  
Poland, Gdansk (Danzig). 1770–1789  
Silver; cast, forged, chased, with gilding  
Height: 21.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № Э-8849

Early in the morning on 28 June (9 July) 1762, while Peter III was away in Oranienbaum, Catherine came from Peterhof to St. Petersburg accompanied by Alexey and Grigory Orlov, where guards units swore allegiance to her. Peter III saw that it was no use trying to resist, abdicated the following day, was arrested and then died under unknown circumstances. Catherine once mentioned in a letter that before dying Peter had been suffering from a haemorrhoidal colic. After his death (although there is evidence that she gave the order before his death) Catherine ordered that an autopsy be performed in order to dispel any suspicions of a poisoning. The autopsy showed (according to Catherine) that the stomach was absolutely clear, ruling out the possibility of poisoning.

TANKARD: MEETING OF JEPHTHAH WITH HIS DAUGHTER

**SIEGFRIED ORNSTER**  
Poland, Gdansk (Danzig). 1690s  
Silver; casting, pressing, stamping, partial gilding. Height: 21.4 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № Э-1786

One of the judges over Israel, Jephthah, swears an oath that if God grants his victory over the Ammonites, then ‘whatever comes out from the doors of his house to meet him when he returns’ will be given for a burnt offering. When Jephthah comes home, he is greeted by his daughter. He is stunned but eventually acted upon his oath. It is often concluded that Jephthah sacrificed his daughter. Some conservative biblical scholars persistently prove that he kept his promise. It is said that almost all early writers believed that Jephthah did really immolate his daughter. The idea that he fulfilled his oath by keeping her in seclusion or in perpetual virginity only emerged in the Middle Ages. A key protagonist in the Old Testament, some believe he represents a moral dilemma.

TANKARD: MEETING OF ISAAC WITH REBECCA

**BENEDIKT CLAUSEN**  
Poland, Gdansk (Danzig). 1700–1730s  
Silver; cast, forged, chased, with partial gilding. Height: 19.1 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № Э-17409

Abraham, who lived far away from his homeland, in Canaan, decided to find a wife for his son Isaac back home, in Haran. On his order, his servant Eliezer set off for Mesopotamia. Getting ready for the trip he prayed to God to give him a sign so that he knew that God approved of his choice of a wife for Isaac. Having arrived in the city of Nahor (Harran), Abraham’s servant met Rebecca, Abraham’s grand-niece, at the well and was touched by her friendliness and helpfulness. Eliezer saw this as a sign from God, asked her parents for Rebecca’s hand for his master’s son and received their blessing. Isaac fell in love with Rebecca and married her.

# POLISH HEADSTONES AND MONUMENT KEEPERS

Restitution of Poznan art objects



THE LATE 90<sup>S</sup> WERE AN IMPORTANT MILESTONE IN RUSSIAN-POLISH CULTURAL RELATIONS. THE HERMITAGE HANDED BACK POZNAN ART OBJECTS TO POLAND. AMONG THOSE WERE BRONZE HEADSTONES FROM THE POZNAN CATHEDRAL, WHICH HAD BEEN ALLEGEDLY LOST IN WWII. POLISH PAPERS PUT THE NEWS ON THE FRONT PAGE, WHILE IN RUSSIA IT WAS HARDLY MENTIONED. NEVERTHELESS, THE VERY FACT OF THE RETURN OF THE SO-CALLED "DISPLACED ART" IS EXCEPTIONAL AND WAS ONLY POSSIBLE THANKS TO A WHOLE SERIES OF SERENDIPITOUS EVENTS. TODAY ONLY FEW WITNESSES TO THE EVENTS OF THIS CASE REMAIN, WHICH PROMPTS ME TO OFFER MY ACCOUNT.



TOMBSTONE  
OF THE MAGISTRATE  
LUKAS GURKHA  
Poznan Cathedral

SERGEI ANDROSOV  
● PHOTO: ALEXANDER PETROSYAN

The art objects in question were transferred from the Pushkin Museum in Moscow to the Hermitage relatively recently, in 1955, with no record of their initial whereabouts. A total of thirty one works included five bronze headstones in various states of preservation, an antique door and a cast iron fire-place fence.

Later, their origin was established. The headstones had been transported to The Germanic National Museum in Nuremberg by the Nazis. Then, in the process of evacuation they were seized by Soviet troops and initially stored in Moscow. Then, the art objects were transferred to the Hermitage, where they were informally referred to as "Polish".

For some time no attempt was made to study the headstones. They were stored in a most romantic (and most inconvenient) vault for sculpture on the ground floor of the Hermitage theatre (today part of the Winter Palace of Peter the Great), they were virtually inaccessible. Moreover, displaced art objects were classified and therefore dangerous to research.

In the late 70s, Irina Novoselskaya, a long presiding head of the Western European Art Department, delegated me to sort out these headstones and establish their origin. Having struggled through the ancient gothic inscriptions on them, I detected a Latin word "pozniensis" referring to Poznan. Furthermore, in a book on the history of the Polish town I saw a photograph of one of the headstones. As for the others, according to an old monograph about Peter Vischer senior, a fifteenth to sixteenth century sculptor and bronze founder, they also come from the Poznan cathedral.

Not once did the Hermitage suggest to the Ministry of Culture that the bronze headstones should be returned to the friendly nation that had suffered German aggression. The letters were left unanswered, though. One of the possible explanations is that such decisions were made at the top, or more likely the Ministry never looked into the matter.

The situation changed in 1990 when Nikolay Gubenko, a famous actor and producer, became the Minister of Culture in USSR and his companion, the actress Isabella Cywinska took the same post in Poland. Their friendly relations set the ball rolling. In the summer, a group of Polish experts came to



the Hermitage to examine the headstones, which by this time had been placed in a more accessible hall. On thorough inspection they were happy to confirm the authenticity of the pieces. The then famous journalist Aleksandr Nevzorov was also there to document the discovery. He mainly stressed the allegedly terrible storage conditions at the Hermitage. His expertise in such matters was rather doubtful, however.

Eventually, in late autumn, 1990 it was officially agreed to give the collection back to Poland. In practice, the implementation was fraught with problems, as the Hermitage had neither funds nor people to simply package and ship these hefty art objects. Then, the General Consulate of Poland in Leningrad stepped in. They commissioned Polish craftsmen involved in restoring Peterhof's Grand Cascade to come to the Hermitage with instruments and materials.

It was decided to use planks, so that we wouldn't need cases for packaging. All in all, it took two days to load the stones into a Polish truck with an open top, which would deliver them to Poznan. I was to fly to Poznan, dispatch the exhibits and literally hand them over. Then deputy director Vladimir Malveev, and the curator Nina Kosareva were also invited to the ceremony.

The trip to Poznan turned out to be far from easy. I flew to Gdansk, where they met me, fed me, which was a real treat in the hungry 90s, and gave me a ticket for a train that arrived in Poznan at night. The truck came next evening, and we faced new problems. The cathedral that the headstones were to be placed in, didn't have porters in staff. The volunteers hardly handled a couple of stones, when they started to complain about twisted spines and squashed fingers resulting from the lack of training. Unloading and placement was certain to take more time.

A marvellous solution was found the next day, when patriotic ladies from the Monuments preservation committee involved in the venture called on their elder sons and husbands. With joint efforts we unloaded the truck. The ladies themselves took pride in unpacking the stones, which were thought to have been lost during the war.

The old Abbot, Catholic priest Tomaszewicz, who like most Poznan dwellers had a good command of German, was also there observing our work. Besides, we were joined by the cultural elite of the town, namely: the restorer Jan Lehmann, who was one of the first to see the stones in Leningrad; doctor Konstanty Kalinowski, an expert in local baroque sculpture, who would later successfully manage the Poznan National Museum. I had known him through his work and afterwards we would meet at conferences on sculpture.

All the exhibits were dispatched, reviewed and handed over in one day. My next destination was Warsaw, where I went to meet my colleagues. They arrived over four to five days, and the next day we were travelling by train to Poznan to join in a congress of monument keepers. The restitution ceremony was a part of the agenda.



By the time we arrived, the congress was already in session. The event took place on the outskirts of Poznan, in a nineteenth century mansion. I remember a funny incident concerning our accommodation. Malveev and I were placed in a family suite with a king size gilded bed. Anyway, I don't remember sleeping, as the night was really festive and cheerful. After the official dinner an all-male select group were invited to continue the festivities. The conservators gave long speeches to toast the event in Polish, which we hardly knew. Everyone then had to down their drink in one. Then, waiters would appear to fill our glasses. After this gastronomic session we were barely able to make our way to our room and immediately fell asleep.

The ceremony fell on Sunday. The stones were cleaned, yet not placed. The mass was celebrated by the bishop of Poznan himself. According to one employee from the Russian Embassy, it was the first time a Polish bishop had blessed Soviet people.

On the way back home, we stopped to meet the Minister of Culture, Mrs. Cywinska in Warsaw. After all preliminaries we were granted food packages, which we were happy to bring home. This was a token of gratitude from those who had switched to a market economy to those who were about to do it.

It only remains to tell that I came to Poznan in 1993 once again to see the stones mounted. They were set vertically, not horizontally as they were designed to be. Apparently, this was meant to protect the headstones which had undergone so many adventures in the twentieth century, though in the end had fortunately been returned home.

# YOUNG CATHERINE, OR THE MAKING OF AN EMPRESS

HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM EXHIBITION CENTRE  
OPENED ON 13 JUNE 2016

**AFTER IMMENSELY SUCCESSFUL INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITIONS, CATHERINE THE GREAT RETURNS TO AMSTERDAM AFTER 20 YEARS. THE HERMITAGE EXHIBITION TRACES CATHERINE II'S RISE TO IMPERIAL POWER; HOWEVER, ITS WORKING NAME, "THE MAKING OF AN EMPRESS", DOESN'T TRANSLATE SO WELL INTO RUSSIAN OR DUTCH**

SVETLANA DATSENKO



GROOTH, GEORG CRISTOPH. 1716–1749  
Portrait of Grand Duchess Ekaterina Alexeevna

Circa 1745.  
Oil on canvas. 105 x 85 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № ЭРЖ-2474

↓  
c. 052  
c. 068  
c. 142  
c. 200

One evening in December 1996, two high-profile exhibitions, “Peter I” in Amsterdam’s Historisch Museum and “Catherine the Great”<sup>1</sup> in the national exhibition centre De Nieuwe Kerk, were inaugurated simultaneously. Both shows were the highlights of the programme celebrating the 300th anniversary of Russian – Dutch relations. The exhibition “Catherine II. The Empress and Arts” also marked the beginning of the Netherlands Friends of the Hermitage Foundation, plans for which were announced on the exhibition’s inaugural day by Ernst W. Veen, Director of De Nieuwe Kerk. Ernst Veen was the visionary author and then the Director of the “Hermitage Amsterdam” Exhibition Centre which opened its doors in 2004.

Nearly 20 years have passed. The Hermitage’s exhibitions commemorating Catherine II have toured the world from Canada to Australia.

The Dutch have a particular veneration for Catherine the Great: the Russian Empress was grandmother to the Dutch Queen Anna Paulowna, Russian Great Duchess and youngest daughter of Catherine II’s only son, Great Duke Pavel Petrovich.

The arrival of the young German princess in Russia in winter 1744, her marriage to Crown Prince Pyotr Fedorovich and her life at the court

of Empress Elizabeth I, the 1762 coup-d’état, Princess Fike’s accession to the Russian throne and her transformation to Catherine the Great are the key themes of the Amsterdam exhibition. Russia’s foreign and home policy under Catherine II, her purchase of the artworks which formed the core of the Hermitage collection, her concept of art as a vehicle of state ideology, her passion for philosophy, architecture and stone carvings – the State Hermitage Museum yet again confirms its encyclopaedic expertise and its ability to provide a fresh take even on the most familiar topics.

“The personality and life of Catherine the Great in the context of late 18th century Russian culture and history is an inexhaustible subject, which will never cease to fascinate researchers, art experts and historians,” says Vyacheslav Fedorov, exhibition curator and head of the Department of the History of Russian Culture of the State Hermitage Museum.

<sup>1</sup> In 2009 reconstruction works were completed on the historical Amstelhof building which houses the Hermitage Amsterdam Exhibition Centre. The Centre organizes biannual exhibitions of works from the State Hermitage collection.

Krzysztof Zanussi (2005):

**“We do not understand each other, and therefore, we are afraid. We must realize that Poland and Russia are not as similar as is always suggested.”**



SHOT FROM A SHORT FILM  
BY KRZYSZTOF ZANUSSI  
“DEATH OF A PROVINCIAL\*” (1968).

\*  
Provincial — monastic degree  
in the Roman Catholic Church.



ORIENT  
RESTORATION

POLLUNIN



FRAGMENT OF SILK FABRIC  
Spain, 14<sup>th</sup> century  
Silk, 59 x 38.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Inv. № ET-1187

THE EXHIBITION:  
A GIFT TO CONTEMPLATORS. IBN BATTUTA'S TRAVELS  
SEPTEMBER - DECEMBER 2015

## IBN BATTUTA'S TRAVELS

THERE IS A FAMOUS SAYING BY ACADEMICIAN I.A. ORBELI (1887-1961), A FAMOUS SCHOLAR AND LEGENDARY DIRECTOR OF THE STATE HERMITAGE, REGARDING AN EXHIBITION DEVOTED TO A MEDIEVAL LITERARY WORK, "OBJECTS CAN'T SERVE AS AN ILLUSTRATION TO A TEXT." THIS EXHIBITION, ON THE CONTRARY, SHOWS THAT A TEXT AND OBJECTS ARE EQUALLY ABLE TO RENDER THE COLOUR AND THE ATMOSPHERE OF AN ERA. THE MORE DIVERSE THE MATERIAL USED, THE MORE BRIGHT AND MULTI-DIMENSIONAL IS THE OVERALL VIEW. GIFT TO THE OBSERVERS ALLOWS A CLOSER EXAMINATION OF THE ERA OF IBN BATTUTA AND THE COUNTRIES HE VISITED, AND A CONSIDERATION OF THE HISTORICAL PROBLEMS WHICH ARE DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY RELATED TO THE TRAVELLER'S IDENTITY.



- 1 | **STORAGE CASE FOR A SCROLL OF SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH**  
Syria, Damascus. 1520-ies.  
The State Hermitage Museum
- 2 | **BODHISATTVA**  
China. Early 14th century  
The State Hermitage Museum
- 3 | **CAFTAN AND ROBES**  
Yuan Dynasty. Late 13-14th century  
Marjani fund
- 4 | **FORTUNY VASE**  
Spain, Malaga  
Second half of the 14th century  
The State Hermitage Museum



MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY

The Muslim world first appeared as a unified caliphate with an extended empire. From its predecessors, the Byzantine and Sasanian (Iran) Empires, it inherited an extended infrastructure of roads and stations, the arteries and lymphatic vessels of the state. The caliphate disintegrated quickly, but the infrastructure including the roads and mail remained and

AL-IDRISI  
*Joy for one who is longing to cross the world*  
North Africa. The beginning of the 14th century  
In Arabic. Maghrib handwriting. Brown ink  
The State Hermitage Museum

# BOOKS ABOUT ROADS

TRAVEL IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF HUMAN LIFE. TRAVEL ALLOWS CULTURES TO MIX AND INTERACT. CONQUESTS IN THIS SENSE ARE A GOOD EXAMPLE OF TRAVEL. FOR MUSLIM CULTURE, CHARACTERIZED BY THE WORLD OF CITIES AND TRADE, ON THE ONE HAND, AND NOMADS OR WANDERING TRIBES LIVING CLOSE BY, ON THE OTHER, TRAVEL HAS BECOME AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF THE STRUCTURE OF LIFE.

**THE EXHIBITION "A GIFT TO THE CONTEMPLATORS' THE WANDERINGS OF IBN BATTUTA", ORGANIZED JOINTLY WITH THE RUSSIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY AND THE MARJANI FOUNDATION FOR SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OF RESEARCH AND CULTURAL PROGRAMS, OPENED IN THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM IN SEPTEMBER 2015.**

was developed and extended. Alongside this structure a whole world of people and institutions appeared – those who were responsible for the security and comfort of the travelling officials, tradesmen, pilgrims and military men and those in search of knowledge and adventures. The order of tax payment was also established.

Roads with their infrastructure became an important constructive element of the physical and human geography of the Islamic world, they crossed deserts and on them settlements were formed. Arabic geographic literature featured this world extensively. Famous books by Ibn Hawqal, al-Muqaddasi, Ibn Khordadbeh and others served as maps showing distances, routes and the different details of every post station. Gradually these maps and notes turned into detailed descriptions. All of them were originally additional information to maps which became an important element of Muslim studies and Islamic cultural and literary heritage. They are indeed enigmatic and beautiful. The geographical descriptions are detailed and accurate.

turn into a legend about the Embassy of Harun al Rashid and Charles the Great. One of such examples of interest in distant lands is the unique "A History of India" by al Biruni (eleventh century).

Islamic culture possessed a number of elements and basic notions which secured the popularity of traveling and served as a means to describe them. Discovering the new and travelling in search of knowledge and teachers was considered to be a virtue and the duty of a Muslim. There are even sayings by the Prophet Muhammad related to this issue, which may be apocryphal but are important in that they indicate the opinion of the community ("At the very least go to China to seek knowledge"). This notwithstanding, every Muslim, including travellers, has to pray towards the Qibla, facing in the direction of the Kaaba. Establishing the location of the Qibla in the different places of the enormous Islamic world, stretching from China to Spain as well as further inland was a serious and important issue. Travelling stimulated this art, which in turn stimulated more travel.

PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA, RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

An important notion of the Muslim way of life is characterized by the term Hijrah. Apart from the famous journey undertaken by Muhammad from Mecca to Yathrib, it meant a migration to a better place where a Muslim would live better or where he could gain more knowledge and develop his talents for advocating Islam.

The desire to embark on Hijrah would inspire a lot of people to travel in the Middle Ages, and this indeed was the psychological motivation for Ibn Battuta's travels. He was looking for new impressions and new places to apply his talents. One should mention that nowadays the Hijrah is carried out on a much larger scale, which at times poses a threat for certain countries.

The main stimulus and regulating tool of travelling was the Hajj — the compulsory pilgrimage of Muslims to the Mecca Shrine. Providing Hajj was the responsibility of authorities throughout the world. The Hajj was a long journey and included different types of activity ranging from studies to trade. It served as an important stimulus in traditional Asian trade. Religious obligation and business initiative merged together. The route of the Hajj was well established and controlled. The Hajj changed the social status of the traveller, made him proud of his achievements and would inspire him to provide a great number of stories on his return. Moreover, those stories would later be turned into allusions showing the routes of the Hajj which was very important for later pilgrims.

Reports of travels into various exotic and less exotic countries gradually turned into books which were ornamented more and more with personal reminiscences and private experience. "Travels" by Ibn Fadlan, the account of a journey of an Abbasid official along the river Volga at the beginning of the tenth century is a famous example. A visit whose aims were primarily political and trade related, became an

epic about conversion to Islam in faraway Volgian Bulgaria. Tales of amazing travels have always prompted and continue to prompt doubts as to their authenticity. "Travels" by Ibn Fadlan has withstood those doubts over the centuries, whereas the "Second Account" by Abu Dulaf (tenth century), part of the Mashhad Manuscript, didn't. Regarding the veracity of Ibn Battuta, the main character of our exhibition there were a lot of doubts as well, though their number gradually decreased. Al Ghazali (twelfth century) also describes exotic worlds. Ibn Jubayr born in the Maghreb (twelfth century) also leaves a detailed diary of his journey to sacred Arabia. Ibn Battuta also started with the Hajj. The accounts by Ibn Jubayr are very vivid. A personal feel and vivid impressions become more and more important in books on geography and in the genre of travel accounts.

Thanks to this we experience a far wider range of Muslim life than in more ordinary geographic accounts. On the one hand, they contain a great number of accounts of visits to different countries, often beyond the bounds of the usual world, which makes them unique and valuable for researchers and critics. On the other hand, they provide an insight into the mentality of the world that gave birth to travel. Take for instance the account provided by Ibn Battuta in which he describes his simple, and at times, quite comfortable life in the different places he stayed. In the vast world including China, the Volga region, India, Africa and other lands he encountered virtuous and Islamic occupations. The image of the clerical arbiter, highly sought everywhere, is one of the most desirable and characteristic of Muslim culture. That is how the mechanism of cultural unity worked.

The number of Muslim travel writing continued to grow, its pinnacle being in the twelfth to fourteenth century. It is interesting to note that Western Europe was seldom the subject

of interest. On the contrary, in Europe an analogous genre was to develop independently of all potential influences and would later arrive at a similar point. Talking about Ibn Battuta it is impossible to ignore the name of Marco Polo. These two names together remind us of the fact that it is possible to unite the whole world without planes and TV programmes.

Abu Abdallah Muhammad ibn Muhammad ibn Abdallah al-Lawali al-Tanji known as Ibn Battuta, who would later become a famous traveller, was born in the Moroccan city of Tanja (European name — Tangiers) in 1304. Members of his family would traditionally perform the duties of qadis or judges. There is evidence that he received a classical Muslim education which included the study of Koran, the hadiths (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad), legal literature and basic calligraphy; in the book about his travels Ibn Battuta devoted a great deal of attention to these matters. When describing almost all the cities of the Islamic world that he visited, the traveller gives precise and detailed information about local qadi, theologians, gatherers of hadith and representatives of the scholarly estate and ascetics. In this environment he would spend time talking and praying. As Ibn Battuta observes, a man of this milieu (that is belonging to the traditionally educated layer of society) even when encountering difficulties and left with no means, would always be able to find a position of the Mosque imam, the cherisher of the sacred Mausoleum or even the position of qadi which would provide him with an income.

A vivid account of impressions from travelling practically always makes the descriptive part eloquent literature. Sometimes a literary element dominates, at times turning the narrative into a fairy tale.

Contemporary scholars are well able to decipher the information on cultural history from any text. Among those, there is a genre in which one finds a parody on the book of traveling and even the world of travel. These are the so-called picaresque stories, makamas. The main character of such a novel is a knave who is always travelling, deceiving and entertaining the audience round the world. Sometimes they do good things. In some episodes makamas become or imitate the main characters, for instance, faqihs — theologians and there one sees a parody on famous stories about travellers. In reality it is not a parody but one of the possible dimensions of a diverse life thriving along the routes of the Islamic world; one which Ibn Battuta presented to us better than anyone else.

At the age of 21 the Moroccan decided to make the Hajj pilgrimage. It looks like the main aim of Ibn Battuta was to fulfill the main duties of a Muslim as well as to enhance his knowledge in the field of Islamic education, getting to know the authorities in this sphere. That is why, for instance, in Damask, one of the cultural centres of Islamic world, he attended a course of lectures and received certificates. As one can see from the book by Ibn Battuta, he started the journey on the 2nd of the month Rajab, in the year of the Hegira 725 (13 June 1325) and then went via the Maghreb across the Far East and making a stop in Egypt, visiting not only Cairo and Alexandria but also Upper Egypt. Then he went to Syria

**BOCCA**  
China  
Yuan Dynasty.  
Late 13–14th century  
Mardjani Foundation  
Inv. N<sup>o</sup> HM/T-229, HM/T-405



1 | "PORTRAIT" OF A HIGH-STATUS WOMAN  
Qocho, Turpan Oasis  
Second half of the 13–14th century  
The Slate Hermitage Museum

2 | TILED STOVES  
Khorezm, Kunya Urgench,  
Sultan Tekesh's Mausoleum  
Around 1200  
The Slate Hermitage Museum

3 | TOP OF THE HAT WITH THE IMAGE  
OF A DRAGON, SET ON THE COVER  
OF THE VESSEL  
China. 13–14th century  
The Slate Hermitage Museum



where he visited all the important centres, and then joined a Syrian caravan and went to Mecca. Having made his first pilgrimage Ibn Battuta went to Iraq and Western Iran where, via Baghdad he went to Mecca. After his third pilgrimage to the Sacred City he stayed there for two or three years and then started on another journey across the Red Sea up to Yemen. From there he went by sea to the South along the Eastern coast of Africa and came back along the Southern coast of the Arabian peninsula, entering the Persian Gulf. Ibn Battuta undertook one more journey to Mecca approximately in 1332 after which he went round Syria and Egypt to Latakia, the Syrian Mediterranean port, and boarded a ship going to the Land of the Turks (Asia Minor). Having visited almost all the main centres of this peninsula, he went to see the governors and rulers of local dynasties. From Sinop (on the southern coast of the Black Sea) he went to Crimea which belonged to the Golden Horde. From there with Khan's convoy he travelled round the Caucasus, across the vast steppes and then went to Constantinople accompanying the third wife of the Khan,



**HOLDER FOR A MIRROR  
IN THE FORM OF A "LUNAR COW"**  
China, 12–13th century  
The State Hermitage Museum

a Byzantine princess, who wanted to visit her relatives. Having come from this journey across the steppes to Sarai, the residence of the Golden Horde, Ibn Battuta decided to reach India across the continent. Passing through different centres of Middle Asia such as Urgench, Bukhara, Samarkand, following then a complicated route across Horasan and Afghanistan he reached India on 12 September 1333.

After a few years spent at the court of the Delhi sultan Muhammad Shah II (1325–1351) from the Tughlaq dynasty, Ibn Battuta was given by the monarch the position of Ambassador and sent to China. He went across India and reached the Malabar shore. In the port of Calcutta disaster struck. A thunder storm carried the ship loaded with consular gifts and documents into the open sea. For some time Ibn Battuta stayed with Malabar princes and then went to the Maldive Islands where he lived for 18 months working as a qadi. Then he went to Ceylon and Sumatra, and then to China. Coming ashore at the port of Zayton (this is how it is referred to in medieval Arab sources, meaning Quanzhou), he reached Beijing (Khanbaliq). After that he stayed in China and decided that it was time to return. In 1347 he went back along the following route: to Malabar with a stop in Sumatra, then round the Persian Gulf and up to Baghdad, Syria and then to Mecca to perform one more pilgrimage. In 1349 he went to Egypt and from Alexandria he went to Tunisia, then to Algeria, and then across land to the city Fez (from the

Arabic Fas, which is now in Morocco). After a short break Ibn Battuta crossed the Gibraltar Straits and went to Granada, a Muslim state of the Nasrid dynasty (1230–1492) in Spain. Having come back to Morocco he undertook his last journey, which was quite dangerous, with the aim of visiting a new Islamic state of Mali. To do that he crossed the Sahara and reached the Niger river. In 1354 he came back to Fez where following the order of Sultan Abu Inan Faris his reminiscences were recorded by the Granadan scholar Ibn Juzayy, and compiled the main work under the name "A Gift to Contemplators of the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Travelling".

According to Ibn Battuta these are the main benchmarks of his 30 year travels. This book by one of the most distinguished travellers of the Middle Ages "A Gift to Contemplators of the Wonders of Cities and the Marvels of Travelling" is a unique manuscript which describes the main cultural events of the world of the first half of the fourteenth century, Muslim, Christian as well as Buddhist. In this manuscript one finds a reflection of the era in which these worlds, because of the Mongol invasion, became open to each other, when the Muslim East which had restored itself after the destructive Mongolian invasions of the previous century flourished under the rule of new dynasties. At the same time mankind was being ravaged by the plague, one of the main disasters in human history, also documented by the Arab traveller.



**TILE FOR THE BOTTOM ROW OF "MUKARNAS"**  
Central Asia, Samarkand, ensemble Shah-i Zinda,  
mausoleum of an unknown woman  
1360–1361  
Mardjani Foundation  
Inv. No. HM/Apx-13

VIII EUROPEAN CONFERENCE  
ON IRANIAN STUDIES  
General Staff Building,  
The State Hermitage Museum



PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

## THE HERMITAGE IRAN – THE IRANIAN HERMITAGE

MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY

Iran is a country which is spiritually and geographically close to the Hermitage. Russia's connections to the Iranian world are reflected in the museum collections in all their diversity. Early Iranian history cannot be understood without the Scythian objects that the Hermitage has, and without the research of several generations of Hermitage specialists in Scythian art. The magnificent eagle from Peter the Great's "Siberian Collection" is one of the brightest symbols of the beauty of ancient Iranian art and the greatness of Achaemenid power. Several thousand kilometers north of Iran, on the banks of the Neva, it tells people about the glory of Ancient Iran, as do the oldest Iranian carpet from the Pazyryk burials and one of the oldest Iranian Muslim-era carpets found in Dagestan.

Our connections with Iran are wonderfully diverse. On the one hand, there is science, on the other, there is politics. Major Russian and international specialists on Iran have worked and continue to work at the Hermitage. Their research focuses on the unique collections of Iranian art hosted by the museum. The best collection of Sasanian silver, after being studied by Y.I. Smirnov, I.A. Orbeli, K.V. Trever, V.G. Lukonin, B.Y. Marshak, became exemplary for all those who study ancient and medieval Oriental foreutics. Without the work of L.T. Guzalyan on Persian inscriptions on tiles the full text edition of "Shahnameh" would have been impossible. The Iranian jewelry collection was introduced to science by A.A. Ivanov and his colleagues. The great exhibition "Persian Painting" created by A.T. Adamova was a breakthrough in the understanding of the artistic language

DIPLOMACY AND SCIENCE BECAME ONE IN A WONDERFUL EVENT IN THE LIFE OF THE HERMITAGE. IN 1935 THE USSR HOSTED THE CONGRESS OF IRANIAN ART AND ARCHAEOLOGY. THE CONGRESS WAS ORGANIZED BY THE HERMITAGE AND ITS DIRECTOR I.A. ORBELI. IT WAS HELD DURING THE YEARS OF TOUGH REPRESSION IN THE COUNTRY AND WAS A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE AND MAINTAIN SCIENTIFIC TIES WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD. BUT THE CONGRESS HAD AN EVEN MORE IMPORTANT SIGNIFICANCE: IT SHOWED THAT EVEN UNDER IDEOLOGICAL STRICTURE AND ABSENCE OF LIBERTY, REAL SCIENCE NOT ONLY EXISTS, BUT CONTINUES TO DEVELOP IN RUSSIA, DESPITE EVERYTHING. EXCELLENT IN-DEPTH TALKS, SCIENTIFIC WORKS, EXEMPLARY SCIENTIFIC AND ART PUBLICATIONS, HIGH-QUALITY EXHIBITIONS – ALL OF THAT MADE THE CONGRESS A HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT ONE. FOR THE HERMITAGE IT BECAME NOT ONLY A GREAT MEMORY, BUT AN OPTIMISTIC AND INSPIRATIONAL PARADIGM.

WE DO NOT PRETEND TO RECREATE THE SCALE AND SUCCESS OF THE 1935 CONGRESS TODAY. BUT WE REMEMBER IT AND WE REMEMBER THAT THE TRADITION OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH ON IRANIAN CULTURE IN RUSSIA HAS NEVER BEEN INTERRUPTED. SCIENTISTS' AND THE MUSEUM'S WORK, MUTUAL EXCHANGE AND ENRICHMENT AND THE DIALOGUE OF CULTURES ARE ABOVE POLITICAL CHANGE.

THE HERMITAGE IS A WITNESS TO THAT, AND IT STRIVES TO CARRY THIS TESTIMONY TO THE PEOPLE.

WE ARE GRATEFUL TO ALL THOSE WHO WORK TOGETHER WITH US FOR THIS GOOD CAUSE.



PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIULLIN

POSTER  
OF THE IRANIAN ART EXHIBITION  
Leningrad. 1935  
Paper; typographic imprint  
The State Hermitage Museum



PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

TOPOGRAPHY OF THE 227TH ROOM  
Bronze ware  
Iran and North Caucasus. 12–13th century  
The State Hermitage Museum







PERSIAN MANUSCRIPT OF THE KHAMSA BY NIZAMI. 1431. Miniature from the story of "Khosrow sees Shirin bathing" The State Hermitage Museum

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

SULEIMAN SEPAHBADI, delegate from Iran on the III International Congress of Iranian art and archeology Leningrad. 1935. Gelatine photo St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Archive

MOHAMMAD TAGHI MOSTAFAVI, delegate from Iran on the III International Congress of Iranian art and archeology Leningrad. 1935. Gelatine photo St. Petersburg branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences Archive



PERSIAN MANUSCRIPT OF THE KHAMSA BY NIZAMI. 1431. Miniature about the Iranian Princess visiting Bahram-Gurom The State Hermitage Museum

During the conference the exhibition "On the 80th anniversary of the Iranian congress at the Hermitage" was opened in the foyer of the Hermitage Theatre. 100 items were presented from the collection of the museum, telling about this significant event in the history of world Oriental Studies — III International Congress of Iranian art and archeology.

"Long before the revolution the Sasanian collection was one of the highlights of the Hermitage, even though these remarkable Iranian medieval works of art were artificially separated from each other at the old museum.

The 1913 donation to the Hermitage of a whole range of excellent artifacts, previously kept in Rome in one of the Stroganov collections, significantly enriched the Hermitage collection.

A turning point in collecting and studying the Sasanian artifacts was the creation at the Hermitage of the first oriental studies museum department in 1920 — the Department for Caucasus, Iran and Central Asia. Liberated by the Revolution from the necessity to consider Oriental art only as a spoiled version of the art of the great Mediterranean peoples, as some secondary material to the history of ancient art, Byzantine art and the art of tsarist Russia which claimed to be its natural, legitimate and unimpeachable heir, the Hermitage began developing a new department — the Oriental Culture and Arts Department. This allowed for the realization of the rights and obligations that were given to the museum by the October Revolution: conserving at the Hermitage works of art from nationalized private collections and collecting the greatest works scattered around small local museums at the Hermitage, given that these works can be better conserved, studied and exhibited in a central state museum than in a local one.

All of this, as well as purchasing some objects from new findings at excavation sites and people's homes in Dagestan villages, led to significant growth of the Oriental department collections and particularly of its Sasanian collection. This is why vis a vis Sasanian metal artwork the Hermitage is several times richer than all other world museums together, and why nowhere else is the scientific study of these works of art as richly supplied with material as it is in Leningrad. <...> We hope <...> to pay tribute to our teachers who did so much, each in his own field, to prepare us, by teaching us directly or by transmitting tradition, in the study of the Iranian and Caucasian art — to N.Y. Marr, S.F. Oldenberg and Y.I. Smirnov."

Orbeli I.A., Trever K.V. "Sasanian Metalwork. Art Objects of Gold, Silver and Bronze." Moscow, Leningrad, 1935.

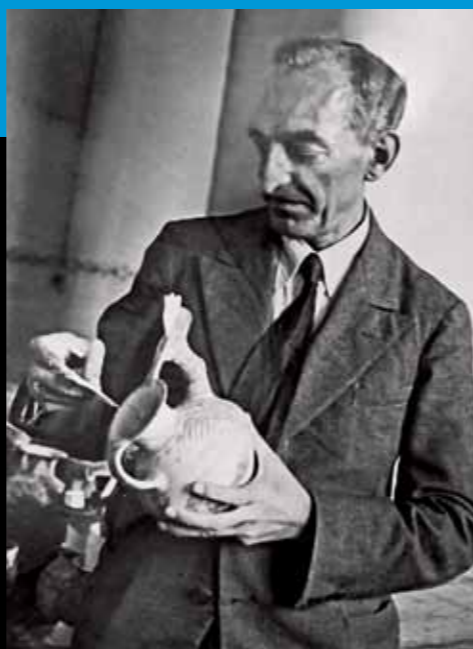


PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

development of the entire Muslim world. Major specialists from several generations, the heroes of the Russian Iranian studies, work at the Hermitage. Their efforts, in conjunction with those of virtually all the Hermitage departments, created this unique exhibition which is part of the permanent exhibitions at the museum.

Ancient and medieval Iran had active commercial relations with Siberia, the Volga region and the Russian North. One of the products and highlights of these relations is the unique collection of Iranian silver.

The merchants were followed by numerous embassies. Elephants coming to Saint Petersburg with Persian ambassadors became part of the cultural memory of our city. The history of the embassies themselves, sometimes related to dramatic events (such as the murder in Tehran of our ambassador and the great poet Alexander Griboedov), stayed in our collective memory not only as political acts. When Alexander Sokurov was creating his now famous film "Russian Ark", where characteristic episodes of Russian history were brought to life within the Hermitage, he staged the reception of Khosrow Mirza's embassy in the main hall of the Winter palace.. This breathtakingly beautiful and solemn scene is not a political memento; it is a meeting of two cultures: Russian and Iranian.

The diplomatic and military aspect of Russian-Iranian relationships is well represented at the Hermitage, which is not only a cultural history museum, but a monument to Russian statehood. Diplomatic gifts and war trophies started the excellent Hermitage collection of Qajar paintings, which now attracts as much attention as the Sasanian silver. The unique battle paintings by Qajar masters are part of another line of scientific research — of how Iranians and Russians saw each other through the eyes of painters. This section of the exhibition shows for the first time such a wide range of newly discovered and interpreted artifacts.

The Qajar painting of a battle against Russians in a way counters the enormous panorama by P.Y. Diaselsky depicting the journey of the Russian embassy to Tehran. Today, being used to photographic information, we see and appreciate the work of the documenting watercolorists in a new way and with new enthusiasm. A whole range of materials on how Russians perceived Persians, and how Persians perceived Russians, will undoubtedly serve as an object for thorough study and aesthetic admiration.

Source: Piotrovsky M.B. The Hermitage Iran — the Iranian Hermitage // Iran in the Hermitage. The Creation of collections: Catalogue of the exhibition at the State Hermitage, Saint Petersburg; June, 24 — August, 22, 2004.

# IRANIAN STUDIES CONFERENCE: “WAHHABISM IN ACADEMIA”

FROM 15 TO 19 SEPTEMBER, THE HERMITAGE AND THE INSTITUTE OF ORIENTAL MANUSCRIPTS IN ST. PETERSBURG HOSTED THE 8<sup>TH</sup> EUROPEAN CONFERENCE OF IRANIAN STUDIES. 236 SPEECHES WERE DELIVERED.

PAVEL BORISOV



PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

TILE FRIEZE OF THE PIR-HUSSEIN'S MAUSOLEUM Iran. 1285-1286 The State Hermitage Museum

## MANY PEOPLE TOOK OFFENCE

What is an academic conference and what role can it play? I strongly believe that a conference is a meeting where scholars from various places who research similar issues, are given the opportunity to discuss their work. Such discussions and Q&A sessions are meant to improve the results of these works.

This is why the full versions of the speeches made at the 8th European Conference of Iranian studies will only be published in a couple of years, and the abstracts presented are nothing but a short summary of the topics covered in the speeches. This is why the abstracts were posted online and no collection of speeches was published. Many colleagues look offence at that,

as they wanted to present their speech as a research paper and have it counted as a publication but this plan did not work.

For the same reason — a conference is a place for discussions — we did not accept any works in absentia, that is speeches made not by the researchers themselves (ok, maybe by one of the team of researchers) but by someone else, who would not normally be very familiar with the topic. Normally, at the end of a speech made in the absence of the author, the chairperson says that, unfortunately, no questions or remarks are possible due to the absence of the researcher. What is the point of a conference then? So we did not accept any speeches in absentia, and some colleagues, as I have said, look offence.

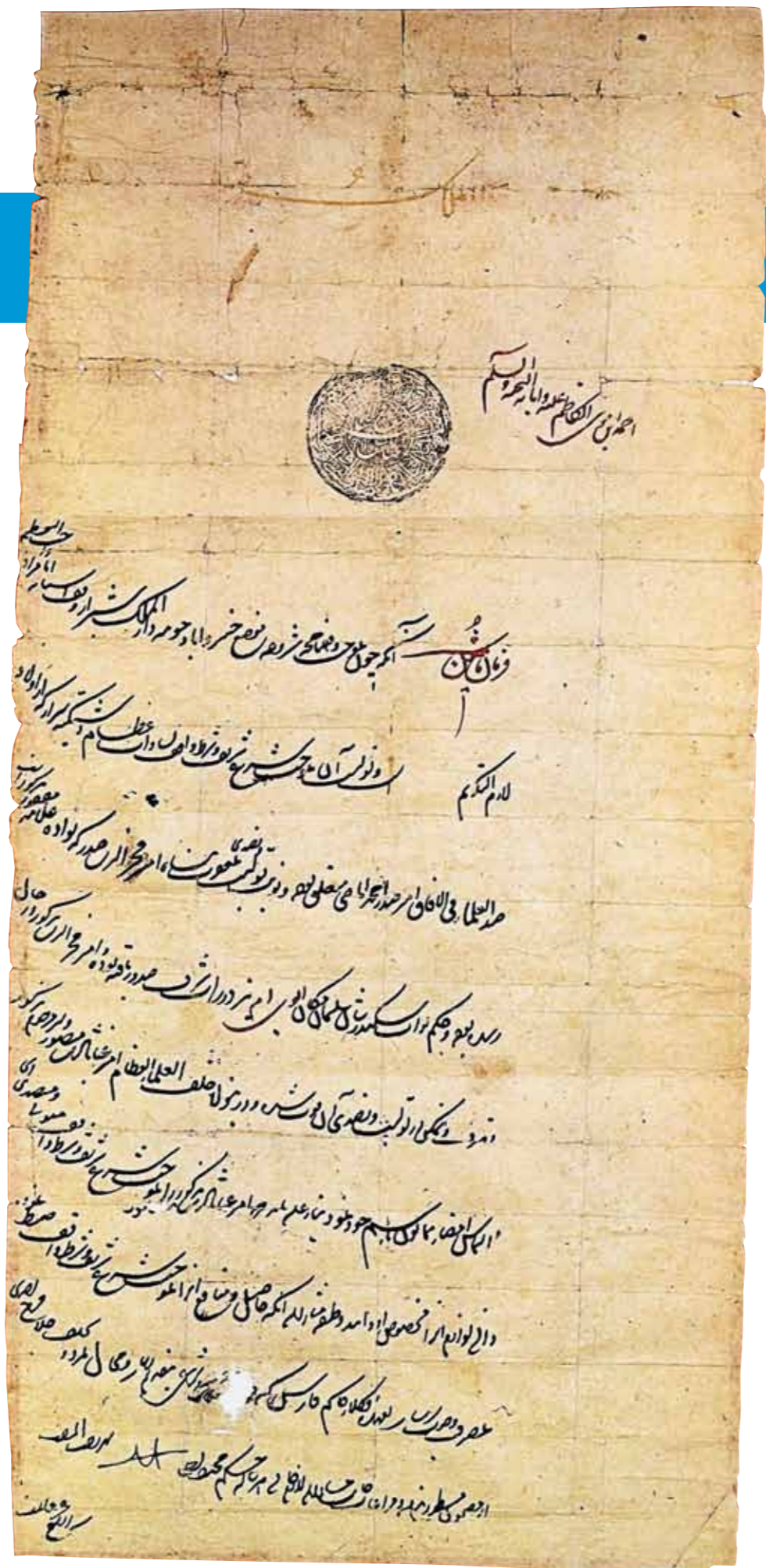
There was also quite a stringent selection process involved in the conference: we received a lot of applications (up to five emails per minute on the last day before the deadline), so we had to choose the very best works. Unfortunately, not all the applications were presentable, some were obviously amateurish and had nothing to do with academia, they were too political, religious or national, or the author simply reiterated something they had already written before. Therefore our panel turned down about one hundred applications. Do I even need to say they look offence? As we found out later, though, even some of the works accepted for the conference should have been filtered out.

European conferences of Iranian studies take place every four years, and, following the es-

ablished European tradition, we accepted works in three languages: English, French and German. Russian and Persian, therefore, were not among the working languages of the conference, and, again, many people, look offence. We did, however, have to make allowances, a couple of times: say, someone sends an application in one of the European languages and then it turns out they can hardly speak a word of English. What do you expect us to do? It's not a criminal offence after all...

Another common practice is to send an application for participation at the conference and then not to turn up. To prevent this we had to pester some participants, find out who had not applied for a visa yet (visas are a whole other story, we are eternally grateful to the passport and

FIRMAN OF SHAH ABBAS (SAFAVIDS)  
National Museum, Teheran



visa department of the Hermitage), who did not respond to emails, who was “lying low”; sometimes we had to write politely “Would you terribly mind confirming’ and sometimes sternly ‘If there is no response within 10 days, we will have to cancel your participation”; then people would either confirm or apologise for not being able to come. Those who never responded were crossed out and look offence. We did, of course, make a couple of mistakes after all. We were expecting a few people, they failed to turn up without prior warning, so we had to make last minute changes to the programme. Then it was our turn to take offence.

Despite all that, there were a lot of speeches and five-six sessions would be running simultaneously. The chairpersons had to make sure no speaker exceeded their assigned thirty minutes and gave way to the next speaker. This was done to ensure that having heard one speech, participants could move to a different room and listen to a speech made at a different session (many people did do that, so some speakers had to be interrupted and they also look offence a little).

As I was saying earlier, a conference is a real gathering of scientists who speak in person in front of their colleagues, and these colleagues help improve the work through their comments and remarks, since truth, as we all know, is born of arguments, and a conference is not a lick in an annual academic report. Such an approach, however, is now seen as obsolete and akin to Wahhabism in academia. Whether you take offence or not, if we don't stick to these rules, an academic conference is worth close to nothing.

However the 8th European Conference of Iranian Studies was indeed worth something. I am not going to summarise all 236 speeches here but I would like to mention a few works or topics which, in my opinion, were of particular interest and importance.

European conferences of Iranian studies organised by the Societas Iranologica Europaea traditionally bring together experts on ancient, medieval and, partly, modern history or Iranian peoples (these are not just Persians from Iran but also Tadjiks, Afghans, Kurds, Ossetians, and in ancient times they even included Scythians, Bactrians and many others). Modern times and recent history receive relatively little coverage though. Other subjects also included literature (again, mostly, medieval), languages and folklore.

**ON ROYAL INSCRIPTIONS**

About a fifth of the speeches were on the period of the so-called Ancient Iran — from the first mentions of Iranian peoples up to Alexander's expeditions. Ancient Persians, led by Cyrus the Great, conquered most kingdoms of the East one by one and in 539 BC Cyrus entered Babylon. This was the beginning of the Achaemenid Empire which expanded over many thousands of kilometres and lasted two hundred years. The Persian king of kings needed to make various ethnic groups in his power, on different levels of development, acquiesce and accept his rule.

As the world's first empire, Achaemenid Persia was also the first in the world to require an imperial ideology, and we had a few fascinating talks on this matter. This ideology expressed itself in political monuments and royal inscriptions. Such inscriptions were few and far between and served, according to Ilia Yakubovich, as apologia for the king's controversial deeds and decisions. The most famous inscription on a cliff at Mount Behistun is an apologia of Darius the Great, who ascended the throne by overthrowing his predecessor and quelled rebellions in various satrapies. Darius's son and heir, Xerxes, left the so-called Anli-Daiva inscription. He says in the inscription that he suppressed a rebellion in Mesopotamia and destroyed some temples there which were

sanctuaries of demons, daivas. Yakubovich suggests that the destruction in question is Xerxes's burning of Acropolis in Athens in 480 BC during the Greco-Persian Wars.

The concept of making royal inscriptions itself was borrowed by the Achaemenids from the preceding kingdoms of the east, and as the researcher of Iran, Maryam Dara, demonstrated, there are many similarities between Achaemenid and earlier Urartian inscriptions. These lies imply that Medians had a tradition of proclamatory texts, since they are the only interlink between Urartians and Persians (Medians conquered Urartu, and Persians defeated Media) but we know very little about Media and historians currently doubt how substantial this kingdom was. Alexander the Great's campaigns seem to have put an end to the writing tradition of the Achaemenids, however, a fellow researcher from Britain, Burzine Waghmar, researched the connections between the Achaemenid inscriptions and later ones, made during the rule of Ashoka (third century BC) in India. They are completely different and speak about the establishment of Buddhist laws on the subcontinent, while a few linguistic features indicate a relation with those of Achaemenid. There was probably also an oral tradition of royal dicta which was preserved in the satrapies further to the east, in India.

Still, inscriptions were only accessible for the small part of the population which was literate. Everyone else was mainly exposed to political monuments. In Persepolis, the sacral capital of the Achaemenid Empire, the palace is covered with reliefs depicting the king in various incarnations, his guards and warriors, as well as some people representing the ethnic groups of the empire, who joyously bring the king tributes from their provinces. Achaemenid reliefs are unusually peaceful for the Ancient East. There are some depictions of hunting and tearing animals apart but otherwise, it is all peace

and quiet, no battles, no executions and torture, so popular in Assyria, only a few captives with ropes around their necks (and yet smiling) at Mount Behistun. Several years ago an expedition of Italian and Iranian researchers started excavations at the Bricks Hill in Persepolis. They uncovered the foundation of a monumental building. In the ruins they found a lot of burnt bricks with coloured glaze. It turned out that the design of the bricks matches that of the bricks used to build figures of bulls and gryphons at the famous Ishtar Gate in Babylon, and the construction dates back to the period which preceded Darius and must therefore belong to the times of Cyrus the Great (or the short rule of Cambyses). This discovery totally changes our idea of many events of the Achaemenid era. Firstly, it means that the monumental constructions in Persepolis were not planned by Darius (as we have believed all these years) but many years earlier, by Cyrus. Secondly, having conquered Babylon, Cyrus probably wanted to construct a replica of the grandest city in the world in his homeland in Persia and ordered to build an exact copy of hundreds of bricks which had been used 50 years previously to build the Ishtar Gate.

#### ON MEDICINE AND HOUSEHOLD SLAVERY

The period between Alexander and Islamisation of Iran is traditionally referred to as Middle Iranian. This period saw a rise of writing systems in many Iranian languages, while the peoples of Eastern and Western Iran developed in very different ways. Sogdian was one of the languages of the Eastern group. Christiane Reck's speech was on unpublished medical fragments in Sogdian. One of the texts started with the following question, "How can one become a virgin again?" The response is badly preserved, it had a list of drugs and poisons, many of which we cannot identify, unfortunately.

Another Eastern Iranian language is Bactrian. Nicholas Sims-Williams from Cambridge presented an edition of an amazing Bactrian document. It stipulated the (almost slave-like) conditions on which a man could leave his wife and children with his father. It is reminiscent of *snokhacheslvo* (the term used to refer to illicit sexual relations between a pater familias of a peasant household and his daughter-in-law during the absence of his son) in Russian villages in the 19th century (especially when the man was conscripted), but the latter was not recorded of course.

Another Bactrian document, a pre-nuptial agreement, stipulated a marriage between two brothers and one woman (something that still happens in Tibet, for example).

#### ON ZOROASTRIAN APOCALYPSE

It may sound surprising but the main literary tradition, so-called Pahlavi, the Middle Persian language used by Zoroastrians, had its heyday as early as the eighth to ninth centuries, during the dominance of Islam. It would seem that Pahlavi literature did not emerge in the context of the internal development logic of Zoroastrianism (with its emphasis on the oral tradition) but under the influence of external circumstances: Muslims could not stand pagans, or kafirs, but left alone communities practising other monotheistic religions, what they called People of the Book. In order to pass for people of the book Zoroastrian priests urgently needed to get their own writing culture which did not take long to emerge.

Under the rule of infidels, with oppressions and rapidly depleting numbers of followers, eschatological beliefs about the imminent end of the world and the arrival of the saviour spread

which show the same mythological basis interpreted to suit the needs of very different religions. Azadeh Ehsani-Chombeli (Tehran) gave a speech on similarities between fantastic sea creatures from Pahlavi texts and Talmud.

Eschatological expectations of Zoroastrians did not prove true. Both their religion and their literature in New Persian (Farsi) continued to exist alongside Islam (speeches by Olga Yastrebova and Aliy Kolesnikov, St. Petersburg); in the seventeenth century French traveller Jean Chardin described the Zoroastrian quarter in the capital of the time, Isfahan (Badrosadat Alezadeh from Isfahan). Until today there are groups of Zoroastrians in Central Iran and in Mumbai and over the last decades they have spread all over the world. One of the particularities (nearly non-existent now) of the Zoroastrian ritualism is exposing corpses so that they could be eaten by vultures and jackals on stone constructions called *dakhmas* ("towers of silence"). Attendants of "towers of silence", who were the subject of a speech made by Anton Zykov (Moscow), were known as *nasū-sālārs*, which translates as "caretaker of dead flesh, corpses". In India *nasū-sālārs* were recruited from the lowest castes, while in



MASTER ALI IBN MUHAMMAD IBN ABUL QASIM  
*Aquamanile*  
Bronze (brass), inlaid with silver  
Muharram 603 / August-September 1206  
The State Hermitage Museum

PHOTO RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

among the remaining Zoroastrians. Eschatology and the figures of saviours in the Pahlavi tradition were the subjects of speeches by Pooriya Alimoradi (Toronto) and Artur Ambarsumian (St. Petersburg). Awaiting the Messiah, the saviour, is also typical of the Shia branch of Islam, now prevailing in Iran (a continuation of the Zoroastrian theme, perhaps?), Judaism and Christianity. But awaiting the Messiah is not the only common thing between Judaism and Zoroastrianism. The Babylon Talmud was created in Mesopotamia in the third to fourth centuries, during the rule of the Persian Sasanian dynasty which practised Zoroastrianism. Many common concepts have recently been found in Talmud and Pahlavi literature

Iran they were specifically trained members of the Zoroastrian community; generally, one can tell that the attitude towards caretakers in Zoroastrian communities was similar to the way underlayers were treated by the surrounding population.

#### THE "GOLDEN AGE" OF MUSLIM PERSIA

The vast majority of the Iranian population since the eighth century has been Muslim, and most speeches on Iranian studies of the Classical and Postclassical periods were on Islam, writing tradition, history and arts. The small and currently unsafe Afghan town of Ghazni in the eleventh century was the largest cultural centre. Rulers

of the Ghaznavid dynasty, Mahmoud and Mas'oud, collected the best libraries in the capital, invited the best scholars and poets, including the great Al-Biruni and Ferdowsi. The speech from Viola Allegranzi (Paris) was on descriptions of Ghazni in historical essays of the eleventh century and the discoveries of Italian excavations in the town.

Ferdowsi (who did not fit into the court of Ghazni, by the way) with his epic of Shahnameh gave rise to a considerable number of imitations which started emerging in the twelfth century and belonged to the more lower-class literature. One of the plot developments, the Barznameh, famous not only for its poetic and prosaic versions, but also for its folklore versions (Gabrielle van den Berg, University of Leiden). Mario Casari (Rome) presented a poetic discussion from the fifteenth century between chess and backgammon for the first time. In Iranian tradition backgammon is seen as a more advanced game, the Persian response to the Indian chess. There were many speeches on various philological issues with regards to the classics of Persian poetry: Jalal ad-Din Rumi (Mahmoud Jafari, Tehran), Nizami (Olga

revealed from them, while the numismatic material keeps expanding (primary due to the spread metal detectors, sadly).

#### EMBASSY OF PERSIA TO SIAM AND EMBASSY OF GRIBOYEDOV TO PERSIA

There were, however, quite a number of works on the Safavids (sixteenth to early eighteenth centuries). Qizilbash, Turkic Shia tribes from the territory of Azerbaijan, in 1502 conquered all of Persia and the adjacent territories. Both the Safavids and the following Iranian dynasties (the Afshars, the Qajars) originated from the Qizilbash who challenged the Genghisids. By the time of Shah Abbas (1524–1587) the Safavid Empire had reached its peak successfully waging wars against the Sublime Porte and the Mughal Empire; this period saw the development of irrigation, crafts, monumental construction in Isfahan and direct interaction with European countries. There are still plenty of written accounts left from the Safavids which due to their volume and difficulty are only just drawing the attention of researchers.

There were speeches on the Safavids' political history (Rudi Mallhee, Newark; Charles

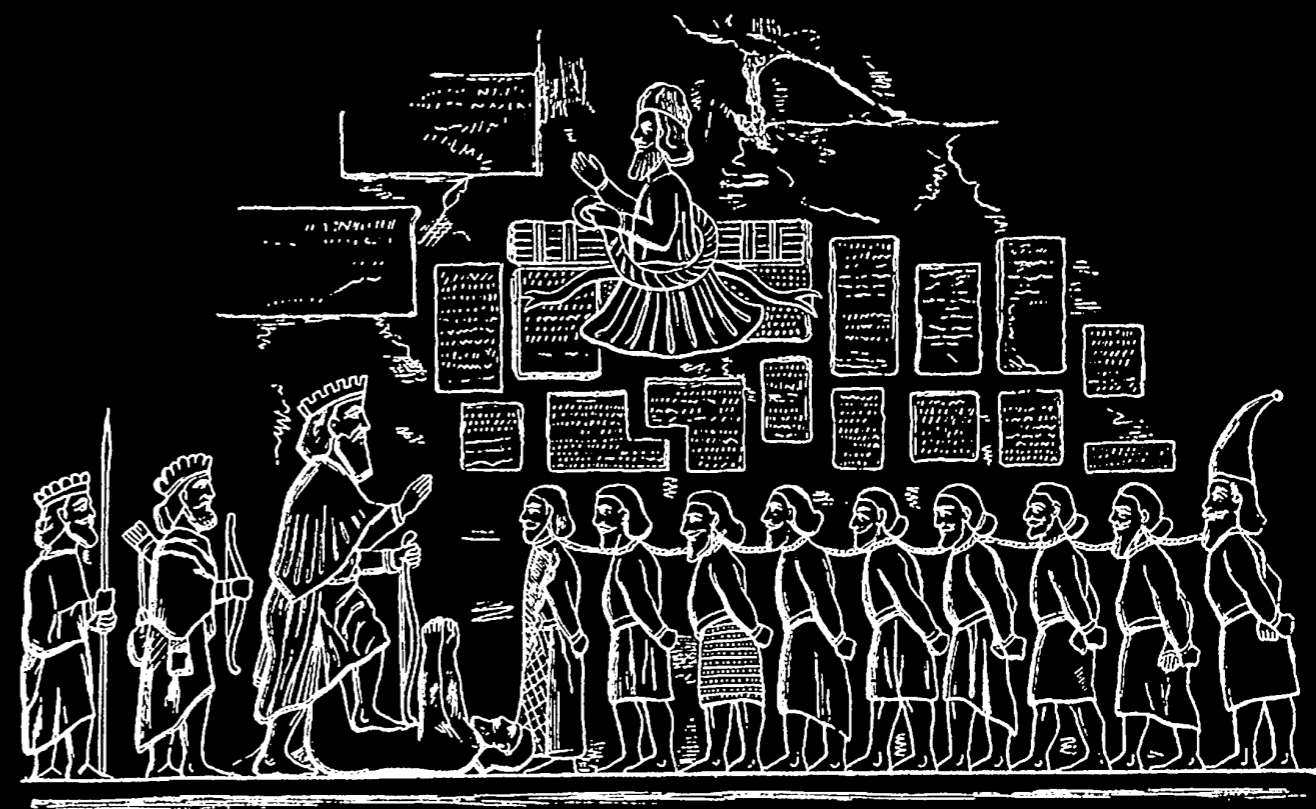
Davidson, Boston), Saadi (Arham Moradi, Marburg), Nasir Khusraw (Morleza Mohseni, Ahmad Ghanipour, Babolsar), Bidel (James White, Oxford) and also the "Kalila and Dimna" collection (Shokoufeh Taghi, Uppsala).

In the historical section there was a surprisingly low number of works on the period between the ninth and the fifteenth centuries, and the presented ones were based on numismatic materials (V.S. Kuleshov, St. Petersburg; Zahra Baseri, Morleza Bagloo, Hasan Karimiyani, Tehran; Amirhossein Salehi, Siyamak Sollani, Tabriz; Michael O'Neal, Washington). It would appear that at the moment the main narrative sources on Iran and adjacent fields are fully integrated in the academic world and there is not much more to be

Melville, Cambridge; Mohammad Taghavi, Tehran; Roman Siebertz, Vienna), religion, including the spread of Shia Islam across Iran (Peyvand Firouzeh, Cambridge); Ghulam Ahya Hossaini, Göttingen; Maryam Sabbaghi, Chicago), studying documents (Meysam Abdoli, Marziye Morlazavi, Ali Mashhadi Rafi, Tehran), regional history (Yukako Goto, Kwansei; Akihiko Yamaguchi, Tokyo), particular poets and historian (Mohsen Bahramnejad, Maryam Musharraf, Tehran) and even on the embassy of the Safavids to Siam (Tomoko Morikawa, Sapporo).

Among the speeches on the Qajars in Iran (1796–1925) a series of speeches stands out on the rise of the national identity of Iranians and development of Iranian studies in Europe,

RELIEF ON THE BEHISTUN ROCK  
Everybody is smiling  
Kermanshah, Iran





PLAYING BACKGAMMON  
ON THE SOGDIAN MURAL

Russia and Iran. Yannik Lintz (Paris) pointed out the re-usage of Achaemenid reliefs in Qajar reliefs; Reza Zia-Ebrahimi (London) criticised the traditional model of Iranian history as a chain of conquests of the country and the following absorption of the invaders; and Stephanie Cronin (Oxford) wondered whether Russian and Soviet schools of Orientalology can be considered “orientalist” in the sense of Edward Said’s term “orientalism”, that is studying a foreign culture while intentionally distancing oneself from an invariably imperfect object. There were a few speeches on distinguished academicians: Agalhangel Krymsky (Oksana Vasylyuk, Kyiv), Jan Rypka (Majid Bahrevar, Prague), Vladimir Minorsky (Denis Volkov, Manchester), Arthur Upham Pope (Yuka Kadoi, Edinburgh), Henry Corbin (Janis Esols, London).

One of the special sessions was dedicated to the diplomacy of Iran, Russia, Great Britain and “third countries” in the first half of the nineteenth century and concentrated around Alexander Griboyedov. The slaughter of the great poet and Russian ambassador to Tehran by a fanatical mob in 1829 remains a particular episode in the history of Russian-Persian relations. A colleague from Tabriz, clearly not entirely comfortable in the real world and offended for some reason by the picture of a camel in the logo of the conference (which was taken from a silver Sogdian vessel in the Hermitage) sent me the following message in colloquial Farsi: “You are a camel yourself! A Russian is an enemy of Iran! Why do you put a camel into the logo for a conference on Iranian studies? Have a bit of respect. If we are camels, so be it, but what are you, Russians? The murder of a Russian ambassador in Iran is our biggest pride. He was slaughtered like a dog! Those who have gone there (St. Petersburg — P.B.) from Iran are illiterate thieves...” Barely any modern Iranians would put their name under this passage; good rela-

tions between the two countries are complemented by a mutual liking on the personal level, which manifests itself by, for example, Persian spoken more and more often in the Hermitage halls but the example above demonstrates how the 1829 incident is important for the Iranian national identity. The speeches by Nadezhda Tarkhova (Moscow) and Firuza Melville (Cambridge) emphasize the considerable political and economic tensions between Griboyedov and the British mission in Tehran and his plans to develop Russian commercial presence in Iran (as we know, mobs are often directed by certain sentient forces).

As a way of compensation for the carnage at the Russian embassy, the Iranian shah sent his grandson Khosrow Mirza with generous gifts. This redemption mission under a 16-year-old prince and the manuscripts presented as gifts are the subject of the speeches by George Bournouliau (New York) and Olga Vasilyeva (St. Petersburg), while Lidia Leontjeva (Tartu) found at the Tartu University Library a very old copy of the “Seven Thrones” by Abd al-Rahman Jami which had been presented to Griboyedov by Khosrow Mirza a year prior to the murder.

#### FIRST TIME EVER AT A MUSEUM

For the first time ever the European Conference of Iranian Studies was not held at a university or another academic institution but at a museum, also with an extensive Iranian collection. This explains one particular feature that all participants will remember — its vast exhibition programme. A week before the conference an exhibition called “A Gift to Contemplators” was launched dedicated to the travels of Ibn Battuta and showing the Islamic world including Iran in the fourteenth century and “Iran at the Hermitage”, with its seven halls of masterpieces of Iranian art and the panorama by Pawel Piasecki depicting the route of the Russian embassy from the Caspian Sea to Tehran. Our colleagues from the Institute of Oriental Manuscripts exhibited manuscripts in Persian and other Iranian languages from their funds, and the Russian National Library displayed illuminated codexes of Persian poets.

During the preparation for the conference one theme kept coming up — the 3rd Congress on Iranian Art and Archaeology which took place on 10–16 September 1935, eighty years previously almost exactly to the day. No participants of that congress still work at the museum, obviously, but the memories were transferred from one generation to another and everyone still informally referred to our conference as a Congress. One of the exhibitions especially timed with the conference was designed to remind its visitors of the congress that took place eighty years ago during a hard time for our country and the whole world and which was a significant event. Participants were then greeted by Chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars Molotov himself, the Hermitage was closed to the public for a week and eighty five of its halls were used for an exhibition of the Art of Iranian peoples with exhibits coming from the Hermitage collection, other museums of the USSR and delivered from museums in France and Iran.

Times change and international congresses or conferences are quite common but remain a significant event in the academic world and in the memory of the participants.



PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

THE COLLECTION OF PHOTOS IS BEING PREPARED TO BE MOVED TO THE ROOMS OF THE RESTORATION AND STORAGE CENTRE "STARAYA DEREVNYA"

# PHOTOGRAPHIC CONSERVATION

**A RECENT ADDITION TO THE STATE HERMITAGE, THE SCIENTIFIC CONSERVATION LABORATORY FOR PHOTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS (SCLFM), COMPLETE WITH EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS REQUIRED IN PHOTOGRAPHIC CONSERVATION AND RESEARCH, HAS FOUND ITS HOME IN BUILDING E OF THE STARAYA DEREVNYA RESTORATION AND STORAGE CENTRE.**

**T** TATYANA SAYATINA

The State Hermitage's vast collection of photographs spans the history of international and Russian photographic art from the earliest days till the present. Some of the photos highlight the busy life of the museum; others document the restoration of museum objects and the work of archeological expeditions. Items of special value include the historical photographs from the Winter Palace and the Imperial Hermitage.

Until recently, the Hermitage had no laboratory specializing exclusively in photographic conservation. The development of state-of-the-art laboratory and storage facilities as well as the training of highly-skilled conservators took many years of hard labour on the part of museum workers and is a real tribute to the cooperative efforts of the State Hermitage, the Andrew Mellon Foundation and the Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation.

The partnership between the Hermitage and the Andrew Mellon Foundation was initiated in 2005 with the workshop "Evaluating Photographic Materials: First Stage of Conservation Planning", which attracted many Russian and international experts. The workshop identified key areas for future collaboration and the Hermitage's needs in photographic programmes.

Implemented thanks to the practical cooperation with, and support from, the Andrew

Mellon Foundation, the programmes started with curators and restorers examining, conserving and repairing daguerreotypes held in the Hermitage. These activities translated into the exhibition "The Epoch of the Daguerreotype. Early Photography in Russia" and the publication of a catalogue.

In 2008-2009 an integrated database of the Hermitage's historical photographs was created following an in-depth study of the museum's collection. The designs for the SCLFM premises and the storage facilities of the Department of the History of Russian Culture (DHRC) were partly based on the recommendations provided by Samuel Andersen, a leading US architect and designer specializing in museum and laboratory spaces.

PHOTOREPRODUCTION OF THE PAINTING "PORTRAIT OF A WOMAN" BY AN UNKNOWN MASTER OF THE DUTCH SCHOOL OF THE 17TH CENTURY  
Gelatin imprint  
Before and after restoration



PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

The Scientific Conservation Laboratory for Photographic Materials (the youngest laboratory in the Scientific Restoration and Conservation Department) was officially inaugurated on 1 September 2011.

In 2015 a joint five year programme of the State Hermitage and the Andrew Mellon Foundation was completed, which involved museum staff training in photograph testing, cataloguing and documentation techniques; restoration and conservation of photographic materials; providing the laboratory with the required equipment and materials and designing new laboratory and storage facilities. The works were implemented under the leadership of Paul Messier, Head of the Lens Media laboratory at Yale University and the director of a private restoration studio in Boston; Vyachelav Fedorov, Head of the Department of the History of Russian Culture; and Talyana Baranova, Head of the Scientific Restoration and Conservation Department.

The Andrew Mellon Foundation provided the funding to acquire storage and restoration equipment and media as well as information resources for the Laboratory (books and a photographic collection for training purposes). The Hermitage 21st Century charity foundation made a valuable contribution to these activities.

One of the priority tasks facing the laboratory at present is preparing DHRC photographic collections for relocation to the Staraya Derevnya Restoration and Storage Centre. First, preliminary conservation has to be performed, which consists of dust removal and the packing of photos into acid-free envelopes and storage boxes. Items in need of any repair are identified and entered in the SCLFM schedule for subsequent restoration. In 2012–2015 the Laboratory cleaned up over 10,000 photographs.

Documentation is a major component of any conservation activities. The restoration assignments and methods have to obtain the approval from a panel of Hermitage researchers and conservators. All stages of conservation works and their results are carefully recorded and photographed. The State Hermitage Museum has developed and effectively utilizes the conservation module of the CAMIS information system.

The SCLFM also actively pursues research and is fully equipped to perform paper acidity tests, tests for the migration of chemicals used

for paper bleaching and tests to detect the photo-activity of print storage and exhibition materials. As part of the collaborative project mentioned above, a portable X-ray fluorescence device was acquired to identify photographic techniques and chemical agents used for print toning.

With the rapidly increasing number of photographic exhibitions mounted in the Hermitage in the past few years (works from the Museum's own collection as well as visiting shows), monitoring of art objects during such events has become an important part of work undertaken by conservators.

Art shows recently participated by our conservation experts include "William Carrick. Pictures of Russian Life"; "The Last Emperor of Russia. Family and Court of Nicholas II at the Turn of the Centuries"; "The Art of Russian Masons in the 18th - 19th Centuries in the Hermitage Collection"; "The World of the Russian nobility. Under the Family Coat of Arms and the Imperial Eagle"; "New Acquisitions. 1997–2014"; "Servants of the Imperial Court. Livery Costume of the Late 19th – Early 20th Centuries in the State Hermitage Collection"; "Gifts from East and West to the Imperial Court over 300 Years", "Conservation in the Hermitage. Through the Prism of Time"; "A Vessel of Eternal Joy: Japanese Miniature Teapots for Sencha Tea from the Hermitage Collection"; and "Remember the Day of Happy Meetings with your Friends..." Celebrating the 80th Anniversary of the Iranian Congress in the Hermitage".

The conservators also prepared photographic works for the exhibition "The Levitsky 'Light-Painting' Studio. Early Russian Photography in the Collection of the State Hermitage Museum", opened on 10 December 2015 and curated by NYu. Avelyan, Senior Researcher, DHRC. The prints, executed in early photographic media (salt paper and albumen) and in differing states of preservation, were sent to the DHRC Laboratory by the Scientific Library of the State Hermitage. To introduce the viewers to the procedures used for carte de visite photographs by Levitsky's studio in the 1850s, special montages featuring both the print and the passepartout were developed by conservators for the exhibition. Photography in reflection and macrophotography of the prints on salt paper were also performed to display the use of varnish for the shaded parts and white paint for the lighter areas.



## THE LEVITSKY "LIGHT-PAINTING" STUDIO

ON THE EXHIBITION OF WORKS BY THE RUSSIAN  
PATRIARCH OF PHOTOGRAPHY, SERGEY LVOVICH LEVITSKY,  
FROM THE HERMITAGE COLLECTION.

**THE ARTWORKS FROM THE STATE HERMITAGE COLLECTIONS PRESENTED  
IN THIS EXHIBITION OFFER A LOOK AT THE HISTORY OF RUSSIAN PHOTOGRAPHY  
OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY THROUGH THE PRISM OF TIME,  
AVOIDING THE STANDPOINT OF MODERN PHOTOGRAPHY, WITH ITS INHERENT "IMMEDIACY"  
AND COMPLETELY DIFFERENT AESTHETIC VIEWS.  
IT IS NO COINCIDENCE THAT THE WORKS CHOSEN FOR THE EXHIBITION  
CAME FROM THE BEST PHOTOGRAPHY STUDIO IN ST. PETERSBURG,  
OPENED IN 1849 BY THE AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER  
SERGEY LVOVICH LEVITSKY (1819-1898).**





**PORTRAIT  
OF AN UNKNOWN WOMAN**  
 1856–1857  
 Albumen print



**PORTRAIT OF COUNTESS  
EKATERINA RIBEAUPIERRE  
(1788–1872)**  
*From the album  
of the Princes Yusupov*  
 1856–1857  
 Albumen print



**PORTRAIT  
OF AN UNKNOWN WOMAN**  
*From the album  
of the Balashovs*  
 1856–1857  
 Albumen print

Levitsky's legacy is so significant and diverse that it makes the master's work, without exaggeration, a pre-eminent contribution to the history of Russian photography. Confirmation of this contribution comes from the unofficial title given to Levitsky by his contemporaries: "The Patriarch of Photography." Over more than 40 years of artistic endeavour, Levitsky created thousands of prints, which have subsequently become, on many occasions, the core works of exhibitions dedicated to nineteenth century Russian photographic art.

We are presenting Levitsky's works from the State Hermitage collection in this volume for the first time, not only introducing museum goers to one of Levitsky's most brilliant creative periods (1854–1859), but also showing the first steps taken using the wet-plate photography technique in Russia. Prior to this, Levitsky had managed to achieve truly great success at home, primarily as a daguerreotypist. Levitsky gained his professional experience in France, and this experience, combined with his artistic taste, and the constant striving for technical excellence in his works, and his rare organizational skills, enabled Levitsky to occupy a special position in the Russian photography community. According to his contemporaries, Levitsky had an enormous influence on the development of Russian photography, which made a significant step forward in a short time thanks to Levitsky's work.

The photographic explorations started in the 1840s and continuing into the next decade made those years, as Levitsky himself appropriately stated, a time of "photographic alchemy," an era of the most active professional experiments. Russian photographers, like their European counterparts, were interested in the increasing possibilities of photography on paper, and aggressively searched for new ways to improve it. The arrangement of major players in the St. Petersburg photography business changed completely in the first half of the 1850s: only those who did a lot of experimenting, not only as artists, but also, increasingly, as chemists, made the cut as the best and most successful. Levitsky himself, being an avid fan of daguerreotypes, was nevertheless well aware

of the possibilities of negative-positive processes, as he expended significant effort and material resources on scientific research and technological development. Levitsky's workshop already had a special department where portraits were made on paper by this time. This department was expanded significantly in 1852, and started creating "samples of rare perfection". The cooperation between Levitsky's Photography Workshop and the outstanding military engineer and inventor Alexander Ilyich Tchaikovsky (1823–1881), which continued more than four years, became an important milestone in the work of both masters, and made it possible to raise Levitsky's business to a new level. Levitsky's studio continued to be considered the premier photographic establishment in St. Petersburg at the end of the 1850s.

Today it's hard to imagine the difficulties faced by photography masters in their practice in the middle of the nineteenth century, from organizing the shoot, photo-exposure, and image development, to printing and designing the shots. That is why the exhibition organizers opted not only to display artistically remarkable works of Levitsky, but also to display those prints that illustrate the complexity of the transitional period in photography, underlining the hand-made feel of these works.

The eighty seven pieces in this exhibition fully reflect the characteristic search for imaginative solutions, so common for this period of Levitsky's creativity, and familiarize Hermitage visitors with the particularities of illumination, retouching and various examples of print design. The exhibition presents examples both of everyday products made by the Levitsky studio, and unique prints made by the master for the imperial collection.

This exhibition is a continuation of another exhibition — "The Era of the Daguerreotype. Early Photography in Russia" — which was successfully held at the Hermitage in 2011–2012 (see Hermitage Magazine issue 18), and introduces museum goers to the stages of formation of negative-positive processes using the example of Levitsky's Photography Studio, one of the most famous and successful photo studios in St. Petersburg.



VYACHESLAV POLUNIN

I hate parody. Arkady Raikin once said that if you want to make fun of something, you have to be even more sensitive about the cause than what you're mocking. This is essential. Or like in Monty Python — revel in destruction of the world.

# THE STATE OF CELEBRATION

All the fantastic art, starting with Bosch, Breugel, and even Goya. Bosch's carnival figures, the huge series of small drawings of dwarves and ugly creatures, are transformed and dressed up: some of them are in barrels, some have pots on their heads. I asked my son to make a whole stove of tiles for me — he copied Bosch.

**THERE ARE TWO WORLDS THAT ARE A CONSTANT SOURCE OF FASCINATION TO ME; FANTASTIC ART AND HUMOUR. EVERYTHING I LIKE LIES BETWEEN THE TWO: IN CINEMA, IN PAINTING, IN LITERATURE, EVERYWHERE. SOME THINGS ARE CLOSER TO THE GROTESQUE, ABSURD, SURREAL; OTHERS TO WARMNESS, TO HUMOUR AND CELEBRATION. EVERYTHING IS BETWEEN THE TWO, AND I LIKE IT THE MOST WHEN BOTH ARE PRESENT.**

This frightening Goya — this is the one I like. I have not otherwise managed to embrace Spain. Although I love Miró and Picasso and Dali, and many others from Spain... I travel a lot — and I know my countries. With France it's the opposite — it feels like home there. The same is true with England and with Italy.

Breugel is, of course, a celebration; one of the most festive people in the world. And his festivals, children's games, fairs, carnivals are a liberation from everything. Here, 'in a Breugel' is the one of the most essential environments for me.

Then there is this "bouncing off" through Callot. He also has a fantastic series; I learned movement from Callot. Tiepolo's Pulcinellas... Several hundred great paintings, I collected, studied, and from them took inspiration for my own characters.

I "touched" on romanticism a little bit: I need a fantastical feeling in life; it has to be unreal. Hence this Friedrich, with all these backs turned: mystery, fear, danger, strange figures, a lonely man standing on a hill. Then, the Symbolists. My favourite is, perhaps, Böcklin. This bird flying out of the window... I often come back to Isle of the Dead. Böcklin is close to Goya, along the same lines.

What I love most are the Surrealists. First of all, Ernst and his Seven Elements series. One of my friends went crazy about this series, left reality and cannot come back to it. I think it is one of the most powerful phantasmagoria series. And of course, even though it is so simple, Magritte. I was surprised. I look at the pictures and they are quite naïve. But when I saw the originals in New York, I could not believe my eyes: his magic is so strong, so powerful! Magritte's line is continued through Böcklin.

Dali is more of an eccentric character for me than an artist. I think he is a great clown, but his paintings don't touch me. Among "my" Symbolists there are, of course, some Russians: Somov, Musatov, Vrubel, Petrov-Vodkin and others; they are all very bright. In their colourfulness lies an expression of life's rich tapestry. Kustodiev and Petrov-Vodkin for me are those who feel this feast of life. Even the one who paints women wearing scarves...

The Flemish focus more on a celebration of the body. It's not what I like. I want a celebration of the soul; joys and games.



**HIERONYMUS BOSCH**  
*The Garden of Earthly Delights*  
(1500–1510)  
Prado Museum  
Spanish Painling Hall



**FRANCISCO GOYA**  
*Perfect Folly*  
(circa 1815–1824)  
The Slate Hermitage Museum



**FRANCISCO GOYA**  
*Carnival Folly*  
(circa 1815–1824)  
The Slate Hermitage Museum



**DIETER BREUGEL THE YOUNGER**  
*Fair with a Theatrical Performance*  
(first half of the 17th century)  
The Slate Hermitage Museum



**GIACOMO LEONARDIS.**  
*Carnival* (second half of the 18th century)  
The Slate Hermitage Museum



**GIOVANNI DOMENICO TIEPOLO**  
*Horseman with Pulcinellos*  
(1770–1790s)  
The Slate Hermitage Museum



**CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH**  
*Sunset (Brothers)*  
(between 1830 and 1835)  
The Slate Hermitage Museum

PAUL KLEE  
*Angelus Novus*  
1920  
Oil and watercolor on paper  
31.8 x 24.2 cm  
The Israel Museum, Jerusalem



Waller Benjamin, "Passagenwerk", 1939:

"A Klee painting named 'Angelus Novus' shows an angel looking as though he is about to move away from something he is fixedly contemplating. His eyes are staring, his mouth is open, his wings are spread. This is how one pictures the angel of history. His face is turned toward the past. Where we perceive a chain of events, he sees one single catastrophe which keeps piling wreckage upon wreckage and hurls it in front of his feet. The angel would like to stay, awaken the dead, and make whole what has been smashed. But a storm is blowing from Paradise; it has got caught in his wings with such violence that the angel can no longer close them. The storm irresistibly propels him into the future to which his back is turned, while the pile of debris before him grows skyward. This storm is what we call progress."

EL GRECO  
THE SPANISH COLLECTION

GOYA  
CHILDREN

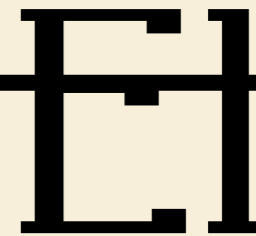
# THERE IS NEITHER JEW NOR GREEK

EL GRECO.  
"SAINT PETER  
AND SAINT PAUL"



**DURING THE 70 YEARS OF POLITICAL ATHEISM IN RUSSIA THE HERMITAGE PAINTINGS AND EXHIBITIONS ON BIBLICAL THEMES WERE THE SOURCE OF KNOWLEDGE ON THE BIBLE, RELIGIOUS DOGMA AND EVENTS. WE SHOULD KEEP IN MIND THIS ROLE OF MUSEUMS WHEN DISCUSSING WHERE THINGS SHOULD BE KEPT: IN CHURCHES OR IN MUSEUMS. SPIRITUALITY, INCLUDING RELIGION, WAS PRESERVED IN RUSSIA THANKS TO MUSEUMS: THEY ALLOWED YOU TO SEE WHAT YOU COULD NOT SEE ANYWHERE ELSE.**

MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY



El Greco<sup>2</sup> was a Greek artist who lived in Spain and Italy and became Spanish, bringing to Spanish art, which was already quite intense, a certain special Byzantine-Greek influence.

Looking back through history, 200 years before El Greco, Theophanes the Greek (Feofan Grek), the great Russian-Greek artist was painting churches in Novgorod, and despite the difference in time it is interesting to compare them, giving us as they do considerable pause for thought.

Peter and Paul are two major figures in Christianity. Every figure has its own symbols.

Peter holds a key. Simply put, it is the key to Paradise; but he has to have two keys, to open and to close sins.

Paul always holds a book. Sometimes he has a sword, but not here. Paul is almost always depicted bald, with a beard and a long face. It is generally believed that here Paul is a semi-self portrait of El Greco. Yet El Greco had several faces that he used in his paintings, often making them look like him.

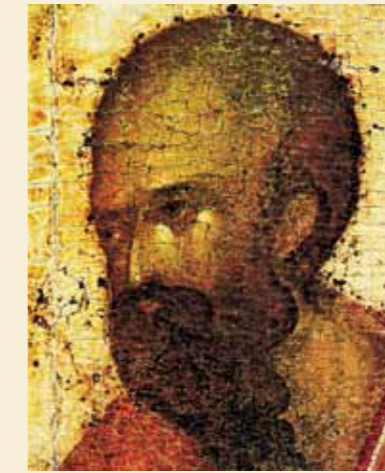
Peter was always more simple. Sometimes he is depicted bald, sometimes not. He often has curly hair (not here, but some other Peters that we have at the Hermitage do). The two main figures are also easily recognizable in Russian painting and icon painting: in a Russian church iconostasis they are always placed at the ends of the most important row of icons. The Hermitage holds excellent examples of different depictions of Jesus, Peter and Paul by different schools: Moscow, Novgorod, and the Northern school.

Paul is one of the greatest figures in the history of Christianity. An apostle who was not one of Christ's companions, he converted to Christianity after Jesus' death. A very well-educated, religiously exalted person, he was, like many Jews, waiting for the Messiah, and was aggrieved and angered when a man who died on the cross started being considered the Messiah. And then the great miracle that is depicted on Paolo Veronese's *Conversion of Saul* occurred. This was on the road to Damascus. Saul (he changed his name to Paul when he converted to Christianity) was going down the road, and suddenly his horse threw him off, and he heard a voice coming from the sky: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." In this fascinating painting people and horses are scattered around, there is a voice coming from the sky, light shining down from the heavens and a man lying in steel-blue clothes: Saul, having fallen to the ground, is looking at the sky and listening to the voice. Saul went blind. A Christian, Ananias, laid his hands on him, and Saul regained his sight, converted to Christianity, changed his name and started preaching. At the Hermitage there is a wonderful painting by Panini, *Apostle Paul Preaching on the Ruins*.

He ended his days in Rome under Nero. They say Nero used the fires in Rome to persecute Christians. Paul and Peter, who by that time had come to Rome, were executed, too. Paul was beheaded, so he is often depicted with a sword, which is at the same time the sword of the church and the one he was beheaded with. They came together in death.

Peter is a very simple man. He was a fisherman. There is an English tapestry in the Hermitage, made from Raphael's sketches, which depicts the fisherman Peter together with Andrew becoming the first

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**FEOFAN GREK**  
*Apostle Paul (fragment)*  
The last quarter of the 14th century  
210 x 117 cm  
Cathedral of the Annunciation  
in Moscow Kremlin

**FEOFAN GREK**  
*Apostle Peter (fragment)*  
The last quarter of the 14th century  
210 x 107 cm  
Cathedral of the Annunciation  
in Moscow Kremlin



GROTTO OF ST. PAUL, MALTA

apostles of Christ. Christ gave them a big haul of fish, and then saved their boat when there was too much fish. Peter became one of the first and best-loved of Christ's disciples, following him continuously. There is an icon where Jesus is washing his disciples' feet, and very often it is Peter whose feet he is washing. And another icon, the well-known scene of the Transfiguration, where Christ reveals his identity as the Son of God: three of his disciples were present there, John, James and Peter. All three fall to the ground at the mountain when they see it; Peter is falling on the left. There is also the great *Saint Peter* by Van Dyck.

During the Last Supper, Christ already knew that Peter would betray him. And Peter did: he renounced Jesus several times when he was arrested and taken to trial; he betrayed him, and afterwards repented. There are several paintings on this theme at the Hermitage, for example *The Denial of Saint Peter* by the Flemish artist Gerard Seghers. The moment of Peter's denial and repentance is a very important one, both in his own life and in a philosophical sense. There is a whole genre in painting known as *The Repentance of Saint Peter*.

It is interesting to look at portraits of Peter in different emotional states. We can see him repenting in one painting, preaching in Antioch in another and imprisoned in Rome in another. There are many paintings depicting his liberation. In Murillo's painting an angel leads Peter out of prison. As we know, Peter became Bishop of Rome, and popes have been his successors since that time. This is why there is a sculpture of Peter in Saint Peter's Basilica in Rome. During Nero's persecutions of Christians he was arrested and executed. His crucifixion is depicted in a fascinating painting by Caravaggio. At the Hermitage there is a painting which was first attributed to Caravaggio when it was acquired, but is in reality by Leonello Spada: *The Martyrdom of Saint Peter*.

The Apostles, when depicted separately, are static. In the El Greco painting, by contrast, they are depicted together. El Greco is always very dramatic, even hinting at hysteria, but this painting is particularly dramatic. This is a crucial episode in the development of Christianity: Saint Paul came to Antioch to preach

# Art | Basel

## Basel | June | 16–19 | 2016

and reprimanded Peter for his inappropriate behaviour, and this inappropriate behaviour is a somewhat important chapter in the understanding of how Christianity was born. In the Epistle to the Galatians Paul describes an episode which is most likely depicted here: "But when Peter came to Antioch, I resisted him to his face, because he stood condemned. For before some people came from James, he ate with the Gentiles. But when they came, he drew back and separated himself, fearing those who were of the circumcision. And the rest of the Jews joined him in his hypocrisy; so that even Barnabas was carried away with their hypocrisy. But when I saw that they did not walk uprightly according to the truth of the Good News, I said to Peter before them all, 'If you, being a Jew, live as the Gentiles do, and not as the Jews do, why do you compel the Gentiles to live as the Jews do?'" A very emotional speech.

The Gentiles and the Jews... They say that one of the Apostles was called a Gentile, and the other a Jew. Peter came to Antioch and at first stayed together with the Gentiles, the Hellenes, and ate with them, thus violating the Jewish laws, but then rejected this and joined the group of early Christians who considered it obligatory to obey the law while believing in Jesus, so they complied with all the Jewish rites and rituals. But it is not through law that man can be saved; he has to believe in God: it is faith that triumphs over sins, not obeying the law. This is a very important issue for every religion. The Gentiles (they were also called Hellenes) became Christians. But the Hellenes and Gentiles were always separated by a gulf; they were completely different peoples. One considered everyone equal and that the past must be forgotten; the other part of Judeo-Christians believed the law had to be strictly respected.

Peter hesitated and went from one group to another. In the painting Paul, his hand on the book, is lecturing Peter in the presence of others. Peter is shrinking; you can see tears in his eyes: he knows that he is rightfully condemned. Here, in this sermon, Paul said what may be the most important words for believers and non-believers alike.

Having reprimanded Peter, Paul then spoke to all the people: "So that the law has become our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all children of God, through faith in Christ Jesus". And then the most important idea: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus". This famous phrase, "there is neither Jew nor Greek" defines all Christians as one and the same nation; a united people, where everyone is equal. People are not divided into different ethnicities. It is this idea of teaching that made Christianity conquer, attract and unite the whole world. And to this day this idea is one of the most important ethical precepts.

I once went to a grotto in Malta, where Paul supposedly found shelter after a shipwreck. He was a brilliant preacher; we know many of his famous sermons. When he was preaching to philosophers in Athens (he knew philosophy very well himself, and many of them listened to him and followed him), he came to a cemetery in Athens and saw many of the monuments. Paul was terrified: there were so many idols everywhere in Athens, and one of the gravestones read: "To an Unknown God". He came out and said: "What therefore you worship in ignorance, this I announce to you". And then he explained all the principles of Christianity.

Here, in this painting, some of the most important words in the Christian teaching left by the Apostle Paul are being uttered. We are very lucky to have such a painting at the Hermitage. It is a piece of art that prompts one to contemplate what is more powerful: the image or the spoken word. The spoken word usually has more power than the image; sometimes the image can replace the spoken word. But here we have a wonderful example of an exceptional unity of words and image — this is exactly what El Greco wanted to convey in this painting.

Francisco Pacheco<sup>®</sup>  
"The Art of Painting" (1649):

**"...Domenico Greco was ahead of everyone else in his work with colour. So I was greatly surprised when having asked Domenico Greco in the year 1611 which was the more difficult: drawing or colouring, he answered that colouring was. Yet this was not as amazing as it was to hear him speak with so little regard for Michelangelo (who is the father of painting) and say that he was a good man but did not know how to paint."**

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# SPAANSE MEESTERS

SPANISH MASTERS

EXHIBITION HALL HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM  
NOVEMBER 2015 - MAY 2016

SPANISH ARTISTS  
FROM  
THE HERMITAGE:  
THE WORLD OF  
EL GRECO, RIBERA,  
SURBARAN,  
VELÁZQUEZ,  
MURILLO AND GOYA

SVETLANA DATSENKO  
● PHOTO: EVERT ELZINGA

THIS EXHIBITION SHOULD BE A REAL TREAT FOR ART LOVERS, FOR THEY CAN SEE VERY FEW SPANISH PAINTINGS IN DUTCH MUSEUMS. NOR CAN DUTCH CONNOISSEURS INDULGE IN MANY TEMPORARY SPANISH DISPLAYS. IN FACT, THE ONE AND ONLY EXHIBITION "VELÁZQUEZ AND HIS TIMES" HELD IN THE RIJKSMUSEUM DATES BACK TO 1985.

TRADITIONALLY, THE FIRST VISITORS  
IN EACH NEW EXHIBITION  
IN THE CENTER *HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM*  
ARE MEDIA PROFESSIONALS



HER ROYAL HIGHNESS PRINCESS BEATRIX RECEIVES FROM THE DIRECTOR OF THE HERMITAGE MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY A GIFT — HIS BOOK *MY HERMITAGE*. ON THE LEFT WE CAN SEE KATELYAYN BROERSE, THE DIRECTOR OF THE EXHIBITION CENTER *HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM*



SPANISH ART OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY IS ALSO PRESENTED AT THE EXHIBITION. HERE IS AN ATTENTIVE VISITOR TAKING A CLOSER LOOK ON THE PAINTING *BALLERINA* BY VICENTE PALMAROLI GONZALEZ

Amsterdam is travelling in time from the elegant age of Empire style to the golden age of Spanish painting with the arrival of the finest Spanish works from the Hermitage collection, the second largest after that of Spain.

The golden ages of Spanish and Dutch painting coincide, falling in the same period from the second half of the sixteenth to the end of the seventeenth century. Today, they will join together in the exhibition hall<sup>1</sup> *Hermitage Amsterdam*. At the end of 2014 its wing accommodated a permanent *Portrait Gallery of the Golden Age* display of the Rijksmuseum and the Amsterdam Museum's collections. This includes works in the unique group portrait genre<sup>2</sup> by Rembrandt's contemporaries, such as the famous *Night Watch*<sup>3</sup>.

In the Golden age the Netherlands were a province of the Holy Roman Empire governed by the Spanish kings, Charles V and later his son Philipp II. The incidents of cruel Spanish government under Philipp II were rendered in an anonymous seventeenth century work *The Allegory of the tyranny of the Duke of Alba in Netherlands as well as in the armory of the time*.

The centerpiece of the Hermitage exhibition is made up of works by the acclaimed Spanish masters El Greco, Velázquez, Murillo and the crowning jewels of the museum's collection: *The Apostles Peter and Paul*, *Portrait of a Young Man in Profile* (1616–1617), *Portrait of Count-Duke of Olivares* (1638) and *Immaculate Conception* (c.a. 1680).

*Portrait of the actress Antonia Zarate* (1811) is the only canvas by Goya the Hermitage displays; nevertheless, the museum has provided a large number of his graphic series, such as *Bull Fight and the Horrors of War*.

A temporary exhibition gives a unique opportunity to combine different art objects. For example, there are no permanent displays of graphic works, for they require certain light conditions. Likewise, paintings are rarely displayed alongside fine art. The last time this was ventured was in the current exhibition of the Rijksmuseum.

The exhibition hall *Hermitage Amsterdam*, though not in possession of a collection of its own, can craft temporary exhibitions combining paintings, graphics, drawings and fine art objects. The curators of the *Spanish Masters from the Hermitage* display also achieved this. Visitors can not only admire the fine examples of Spanish painting, but also indulge in the atmosphere of the time. They can enter a wealthy seventeenth century *casa*, follow in Columbus's footsteps while examining Aztec exhibits, and sympathize with rebellious Dutch nobles violently murdered at the Duke of Alba's orders.

The chosen period implies that the exhibition should finish with Goya. However, another famous Spanish artist Pablo Picasso could not be overlooked. Dutch visitors will have a chance to see one of his beautiful still lifes, two drawings and ceramics.

1. At the end of autumn the exhibition hall closed its *Alexander, Napoleon and Josephine* display

2. You can read further about the Hermitage group portrait exhibition in the article *Men in Black* (№ 20).

3. Rembrandt's *Night Watch* is still on display in the Rijksmuseum

# SPANISH MASTERS

from the Hermitage

## The World of El Greco Ribera Zurbarán Velázquez Murillo & Goya

28 Nov —  
29 May 2016

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THE HERMITAGE COLLECTION OF OLD SPANISH MASTERS' PAINTINGS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT OUTSIDE SPAIN. IT INCLUDES WORKS OF ART BEGINNING FROM THE INTERNATIONAL GOTHIC OF THE 15<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY UP TO THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. ITS CORE CONSISTS OF PAINTINGS BY "GOLDEN AGE" ARTISTS, FROM THE SECOND HALF OF THE SIXTEENTH CENTURY TO THE END OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY. THE DIVERSE COLLECTION INCORPORATES MASTERPIECES FROM ALL THE FAMOUS SPANISH PAINTERS: EL GRECO, RIBERA, ZURBARÁN, VELÁZQUEZ, MURILLO AND GOYA, AND WAS STARTED DURING THE REIGN OF CATHERINE II.

# THE SPANISH COLLECTION

THE STORY OF THE HERMITAGE COLLECTION OF SPANISH PAINTING OF THE FIFTEENTH TO THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY



PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

A.N. Benois. "Guidebook to the Picture Gallery of the Imperial Hermitage":

"The Imperial Hermitage (unlike the Berlin Museum) cannot be seen as a systematic collection that can be used to study art history. The character of the collection rather reflects the personal tastes of the Russian Tsars or those of the collectors who donated all their acquisitions to the Hermitage. Crozat, von Brühl, Walpole, Catherine II and Nicholas I — each of them contributed to the creation of what later became the main museum of the Russian state. But they did not try to present a comprehensive image of the history of painting; all they wanted was to be surrounded by beautiful objects. The collections compiled over the course of two centuries, however, covered major swaths of the artistic past. Some epochs and countries are in fact quite fully represented at the Hermitage."

LUDMILA KAGANE

### Paintings by Spanish masters, acquired by Catherine II

The Spanish paintings collection was started when Catherine II<sup>1</sup> created the Hermitage picture gallery in 1764. Paintings by Spanish masters were very rarely seen on the art market in the eighteenth century; only the names Ribera, Velázquez and, most of all, Murillo were known. The great paintings by Murillo were purchased for the empress in Paris, with the help of Prince Dmitry Golitsyn who played a major role in the creation of the Hermitage paintings collection. Well-educated, communicative and interested in science, literature and the arts, Golitsyn was part of enlightened French society and a friend of Diderot, joining him on visits to salons and private galleries. Diderot personally sent Catherine II one of Murillo's best paintings, *Rest on the Flight into Egypt*, purchased in 1768 from the collection of Jean Gaignal, the former secretary of Louis XV. Several years later, in April 1772, Prince Golitsyn purchased two works by Murillo — *Boy with a Dog* and *Girl with Fruits and Flowers*<sup>1</sup>, from the collection of Étienne François de Choiseul, the former foreign affairs minister of Louis XV. The same year the famous paintings collection of Louis Antoine Crozat, Baron of Thiers, including the magnificent small *Holy Family* by Murillo, was brought from Paris to Saint Petersburg. Some other paintings were also purchased in Paris.

Another valuable acquisition was made in England. In 1779 Catherine II managed to purchase for the Hermitage the famous collection of Robert Walpole (1676–1745), the Prime Minister of Kings George I and George II. The sale of one of the best galleries of England was decided on by his grandson. Seven Spanish paintings came with Walpole's collection, including such masterpieces as *Adoration of the Shepherds* and *Immaculate Conception* by Murillo.

In 1773 Catherine II ordered three paintings from Spain for the portrait gallery of European ruling monarchs and their heirs (in the Chesmensky Palace). The portraits of King Charles III, his son Charles, Prince of Asturias (the future King Charles IV), and the heir's wife Maria Louisa of Parma were painted by the court painter Mariano Maella; they were brought from Madrid in the late 1770s<sup>2</sup>.

One of the most valuable works of the Hermitage collection, *The Lunch* by Velázquez, was also purchased in the eighteenth century. It was acquired, however, as a painting by an unknown Flemish master, and only in 1895 was attributed to the great Spanish artist. The source of this painting remains unknown.

↓  
p. 052  
p. 068  
p. 094  
p. 200



BARTOLOMÉ ESTEBAN MURILLO  
*Boy with a Dog*

Spain. Second half of the 1650s  
Canvas, oil. 70 x 60 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Inv. № ГЭ-386

About twenty paintings in total signed by Spanish artists were purchased during the reign of Catherine II, but not all their attributions were confirmed later.

Spain, late in its development, was incomparably healthier and simpler than Italy. It was ruled by the awe-inspiring Inquisition and the decadent Habsburgs, but the people itself, in all social strata, even in the highest, in the seventeenth century were as naive and unlearned as they had been in the Middle Ages. There was nothing like the over-education and sophistication that we can find in the Italian culture of the end of the fifteenth century onwards. The most progressive Spanish painters of the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries are full of childlike faith. Their daily lives are simple, and they express this with perfect sincerity. The uniformity of artistic exploration, as well as that of the subjects themselves, is quite remarkable. The Spanish masters painted either portraits — indulging the proud aristocratic aspirations inherent to the nation — or religious pieces. In Spain there could be no anti-pagan iconoclasm like the one Florence saw in Savonarola's days for the simple reason that the local painters themselves were far from any kind of paganism. The Inquisition became so deeply rooted in the country precisely because this institution was quite popular there and was considered necessary even by the enlightened intellectuals.

### Purchases of Alexander I

Alexander I, following the example of Catherine II, tried to replenish the Hermitage collections. In 1808 the main custodian of the paintings gallery Franz Labensky was sent to the director general of the museums of France, Dominique Vivant Denon. Labensky lived in Paris for over a year and together with Denon looked for works of art worthy of the Hermitage. Later Denon continued to buy and send paintings to the Hermitage for several years. Until recently, his name was commonly associated with the acquisition of two grandiose works by Murillo: *Isaac Blessing Jacob* and *Jacob's Dream*. It was later revealed, however, that the French museums director was not directly related to their purchase, although he might have played an indirect

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<...> In Italy, starting from the second third of the sixteenth century art is almost exclusively concentrated on the formal tasks. "Substance" is almost forgotten. But the same formal issues, upon their arrival (quite a late one) to Spain, get substance to them again, and thus these forms receive more strength and impressiveness. There was no "empty religious art" — like the one that started with Sarto and Correggio and that the Bologna academicians could not contest — in Spain during its golden age of culture, and the "beautiful, but empty words" could make appearance there only in the very end of the seventeenth century, under the influence of foreign masters. But the Spanish masters could give an air of importance and solemnity not only to religious paintings, not only to portraits, but even to depictions of still life. The approach to art in itself was different from the Italian one. Italians were always in search of virtuosity, solving technical problems for the sake of giving more lightness to the painting. Spanish artists, on the other hand, liked solemn and rigorous manner, and even the two most elegant and light Spanish painters, Murillo and Claudio Coello, seem reserved, impassive and contemplative compared to their Italian counterparts (for example, Fetti and Luca Giordano)."

A.N. Benois.

"Guidebook to the Picture Gallery of the Imperial Hermitage"

<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, in 1930 this painting was given to the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts (Moscow).

<sup>2</sup> All the paintings were kept in the Chesmensky Palace until 1830, and were then transferred to the English Palace in Peterhof and to the Hermitage in the 1920s.

role. The paintings were part of the series which had been a constant focus of connoisseurs' attention since its creation. In the eighteenth century there were talks about its sale, and Catherine II signalled an interest in acquiring it. Nonetheless, the series was taken out of Spain only later, and in disparate pieces, during Napoleon's invasion. *Isaac Blessing Jacob* and *Jacob's Dream* got into the hands of William Coesvell and Edmund Burke, the Dutch ambassador to Spain. They secretly sent the paintings to Paris, put them into one of the bankers' houses and in 1811 presented them to the Russian embassy. Alexander I accepted them immediately.

The selling of these two works by Murillo reflects the tragic events of the beginning of the 19th century in Spain. In 1808 Napoleon's army invaded. A liberation struggle began and a temporary government established. The country was in ruins, devastated by unrest and financial problems. The French generals look properly from churches and monasteries on pain of death, while the temporary government needed money to wage war and sold works of art which collectors bought up very cheaply.

That is when Coesvell started his collection. He lived in Madrid from 1801 and was a representative of the largest Dutch bank, "Hope & Co". He met the painter George Augustus Wallis who was sent from England to the Iberian Peninsula in 1807 by the dealer William Buchanan to look for paintings on sale. Art dealers were primarily interested in works by Italian and Flemish painters, and there were many of them in Spain. But Wallis could appreciate works by local artists as well, and for this reason he is sometimes called the "first herald" of Spanish painting. Due to the difficult circumstances Buchanan's agent ran out of money: the English and French banks where he could source funds were either bankrupt or granted loans with very high interest rates. Coesvell helped Wallis financially and, in turn, used the artist's knowledge and taste to create his own collection of Spanish and Italian paintings. In 1814 Coesvell exhibited them in Amsterdam.

In the meantime, on 31 March 1814, after the victory over Napoleon, Alexander I triumphantly entered Paris at the head of the allied forces. At the end of June he went to Holland and visited Amsterdam. Coesvell, who had earlier successfully sold Murillo's paintings to the Russian emperor, suggested some more paintings to him. Alexander I visited the gallery and bought the entire Spanish part of the collection.

The interest of Alexander I in Spanish painting was not accidental. Political events of the beginning of the nineteenth century put Spain at the centre of Russian public attention.

Napoleon's war against Russia, started in 1812, strengthened the sympathies with the country; Spanish partisans courageously fighting the occupying forces were compared to Russians. In 1813 Spanish soldiers who did not want to fight against Russia in Napoleon's army rendered themselves as prisoners of war. Alexander I protected them, and they were housed in the Tsarskoye Selo casern. The Russian emperor ordered the creation of two battalions which were referred to as "Alexander's battalions". In the second decade of the nineteenth century Spain was no longer a far-away, exotic yet gloomy, country for the Russians as it was before, and the influence of Spanish themes in Russian culture became considerable. It is thus quite clear why Alexander I bought the Spanish paintings from Coesvell.

A total of 84 paintings were delivered to Saint Petersburg in three consignments in 1814 and 1815. Such a collection of Spanish paintings was unique for the beginning of the nineteenth century in terms of the number of artistic schools represented (Valencia, Toledo, Seville, Madrid), the number of artists, the high quality of the paintings and the variety of genres. The Hermitage received works by great masters: El Greco, Ribera, Zurbarán, Velázquez, Murillo, including such masterpieces as *Portrait of Count-Duke Olivares* by Velázquez and *Childhood of the Virgin* by Zurbarán. Along with them, magnificent paintings by other artists, less famous but nonetheless well known, were received into the collection: Luis de Morales, Juan Pantoja de La Cruz, Francisco Riballa, Pedro de Orrente, Juan Baulista del Maino, Antonio de Puga, Antonio de Pereda and many others.

Almost at the same time as the Coesvell collection, in 1815 Alexander I bought part of the Malmaison gallery of the empress Josephine in Paris. Separate halls were chosen in the Hermitage for the new acquisitions. The Spanish paintings sent by Coesvell were put together with those acquired by Catherine II (before that they were kept with the works from other European schools). A Spanish gallery thus appeared in the Hermitage — the first outside Spain.

**Growth of the collection under the reign of Nicholas I and later. Losses**

Descriptions of Saint Petersburg in the first quarter of the 19th century mention the Spanish paintings gallery of the Imperial Hermitage as a special highlight. Later on a special focus was given to the new acquisitions themselves.

In 1829 paintings were purchased from Hortense Beauharnais who inherited part of the collection of her mother,



1 | BARTOLOMÉ ESTEBAN MURILLO  
*Two Women by the Window*  
Spain. 17th century. Canvas, oil. 41 x 58.6 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № ГЭ-338

2 | BARTOLOMÉ ESTEBAN MURILLO  
*Isaac Blessing Jacob*  
Spain. Circa 1660. Canvas, oil. 245 x 357.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № ГЭ-332

3 | DIEGO VELÁZQUEZ DE SILVA  
*Luncheon*  
Spain. Circa 1617. Canvas, oil. 108.5 x 102 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № ГЭ-389



4 | BARTOLOMÉ ESTEBAN MURILLO  
*Death of the Inquisitor Pedro de Arbues*  
Spain. Circa 1664. Canvas, oil. 293.5 x 206.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № ГЭ-302

5 | JUSEPE DE RIBERA  
*St. Sebastian Cured by St. Irene*  
Spain. 1628. Canvas, oil. 156.5 x 188 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № ГЭ-325

6 | FRANCISCO DE ZURBARÁN  
*Childhood of the Virgin*  
Spain. Between 1658 and 1660. Canvas, oil. 73.5 x 53.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № ГЭ-306



the empress Josephine. Among them was one of the best paintings by Ribera, *Saint Sebastian Cured by Saint Irene*.

Two years later, in 1831, some paintings were bought from Manuel Godoy, "Prince of the Peace", the powerful former minister of King Charles IV. While in power, Godoy created a collection of more than a thousand paintings in Madrid. In 1808 he had to leave the country with the royal family, and all his property was confiscated. The Prince of the Peace was forced to live in exile until the end of his life. From 1812 to 1830 he lived in Rome, and there, at villa Mallei, created a new gallery. He decided to part with this, too, when moving to Paris. Godoy suggested to Nicholas I that he buy the 297 paintings through the Russian embassy. The emperor ordered that only the best of the collection be chosen for him. As a result, only twenty three paintings were purchased, including four Spanish ones, but with some masterpieces among them: *St. Jerome and the Angel* by Ribera and *Death of the Inquisitor Pedro de Arbues* by Murillo.

Soon afterwards the Hermitage received works of art from the collection of the Spanish ambassador Juan Miguel Páez de la Cadena, who came to Saint Petersburg in December 1824. Spain was at the centre of interest in the Russian capital at the time due to the revolution that took place not long beforehand. Páez de la Cadena, well-educated and well informed of current events, was able to explain a lot about Spanish history, culture, literature and art. He developed many relationships in Saint Petersburg; he is mentioned in many written sources of the time, including Pushkin's works, for example in these lines from *Eugene Onegin*: "Forgive me, Prince, but can you not / Say who it is that now the Spanish / Ambassador is speaking to?" Gogol knew Páez de la Cadena as well. It is probably due to the ambassador's influence that the Spanish theme was so present in the Russian literature of the 1830s, for example in works by Pushkin, Gogol and Lermontov.

Páez de la Cadena brought the painting collection from Spain; half of it, twenty five works, was Spanish canvases. In 1834 the ambassador's mission in Saint Petersburg was over, and he sold his entire paintings collection to the Hermitage. It included works by artists of different schools, among which the Spanish contributors Juan del Castillo, Antonio del Castillo, Francisco Collantes, José Antolínez, Pedro de Villavicencio and others.

In 1834-1835 the Russian consul in Cádiz, Alexander Gessler, who had been staying there since 1827, sent some Spanish paintings to the Hermitage. Five years after his departure he visited Saint Petersburg, and the gallery keeper Labensky asked him to find works by Velázquez for the museum. After coming back to Spain the consul wrote back that works by this master were very hard to find, but that he had found some, and had bought works by other painters as well. Gessler purchased thirty two paintings in total for the imperial treasury. None of the Velázquez attributions were confirmed, but among the acquisitions were notable works by such painters as Bartolomé González, Pedro de Moya and Clemente de Torres.

In 1846 the Hermitage inherited the collection of Count Dmitry Talishchev, diplomat and ober-chamberlain of the Russian imperial court, who served as ambassador in Madrid from 1814-1821. Talishchev brought back an invaluable collection of works of art: not only paintings by Western European masters, but also many other objects. Talishchev's collection includes very notable Spanish paintings, among them



PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA



1 | A VISITOR OF THE EXHIBITION "SPANISH MASTERS FROM THE HERMITAGE" IN FRONT OF A PORTRAIT OF A LADY IN BLACK, ARTIST — FEDERICO CARLOS DE MADRAZO

2 | PABLO PICASSO  
*Glass Vessels*  
France, 1906.  
Canvas, oil, 38.5 x 55.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Inv. № ГЭ-8895

3 | WORKS BY PABLO PICASSO AT THE EXHIBITION "SPANISH MASTERS FROM THE HERMITAGE" IN THE HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM

4 | A VISITOR OF THE EXHIBITION IN FRONT OF THE PAINTINGS BY SPANISH ARTISTS IN THE CENTRE HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM



*Angel of the Guard* by Antonio Pereda, *Two Women by the Window* by the circle of Murillo, *Portrait of Charles II as a Child* by Sebastián Herrera Barnuevo and *The Annunciation* by Jose de Antolines.

The collection continued to grow throughout the 1850s. The *Immaculate Conception* by Murillo was purchased from Duke Braschi in Italy, portraits of Philip IV and of Count-Duke Olivares<sup>3</sup> by the workshop of Velázquez from the Dutch king William II. The masterpieces were brought from Paris in 1852 by the Hermitage director Fyodor Bruni who took part in the posthumous sale of the collection of Marshal Soult, known for shameless pillaging of monasteries and churches in Seville. Bruni chose several paintings from Soult's gallery, including *St. Lawrence* by Zurbarán (the painting once decorated the San Jose church in the La Merced cloister in Seville) and *Liberation of St. Peter* by Murillo, which was part of the famous ensemble of the Hospital de la Caridad in Seville, one of the best examples of the Baroque style. Bruni also purchased other magnificent works in Paris. By the middle of the 19th century the Hermitage Spanish collection was for the most part complete.

Until this time the collection had been growing, but then little by little began to diminish. In 1850 the New Hermitage building, designed especially for housing works of art, was finished; it was opened in 1852. The picture gallery could not host the enormous quantity of paintings collected since the beginning of its creation. In 1847 some of the works of art were sent to the Kremlin museum in Moscow, and in the 1850s many paintings were sent to suburban palaces. In 1855 an auction took place in Saint Petersburg where many pieces, including 15 Spanish paintings, were sold. In 1862 some works of art were given to the newly-created Moscow Public Museum, and in 1884 to the Radishchev Fine Arts Museum in Saratov.

In the beginning of the 20th century almost no Spanish paintings were bought for the Hermitage. One of the best paintings, *Saint Peter and Saint Paul* by El Greco, was received as a gift in 1911 from the general P.P. Durnovo.

### The post-revolutionary period

After the 1917 revolution the Spanish collection suffered considerable losses again: many works of art were given to the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts or to other museums in Russia, and some were sold as antiques. At the same time the collection grew, however, thanks to the paintings that were brought back from the suburban palaces and acquired from nationalised private collections: those of the Grand Duke Konstantin Romanov, counts Stroganov, Shuvalov, Panin etc. As a result, the Hermitage acquired Spanish Gothic paintings, which had never been purchased for the museum before. Some sixteenth and seventeenth century paintings were acquired as well, including originals and paintings by the workshops of the most famous artists: Ribera, Zurbarán, Velázquez, Cano and Murillo. The only work by Francisco Goya, *Portrait of the Actress Antonia Zarale* was added to the collection much later: it was given to the museum in 1972 by the American millionaire Armand Hammer.

After all the changes, the collection now includes more than 160 paintings.

3 \_\_\_\_\_ This painting was given to the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts (Moscow).

**BLOOD GUSHING FROM A WOUNDED BULL DURING A BULLFIGHT**

**THE QUALITIES OF THE BULL:**  
BRAVURA (BRAVERY)  
NOBILIDAD (NOBILITY)  
HUMILIDAD (HUMILITY)

In his youth, serenades, fandango and the Aragonese jola; the knife as the final argument in street fights in Saragossa; a stab in the back in Madrid, several months of bullfights as part of the touring corrida group in Rome. At the age of 60, a series of etchings *La Tauromaquia*, with stories and inscriptions resembling modern newspaper reports. Francisco de los Toros, the torero. Francisco Goya, the artist.

**TYPES OF BULLFIGHTING:** CORRIDA DE TOROS — A CLASSICAL SCENARIO INVOLVING AN EXPERIENCED MATADOR AND A BULL WHICH IS AGED AT LEAST 4 YEARS AND WEIGHS 500 KILOGRAMS. NOVILLADA — A BULLFIGHT INVOLVING AN APPRENTICE TORERO. CORRIDA DE REJONES — A BULLFIGHT WHERE THE MATADOR IS MOUNTED ON HORSEBACK.



# GOYA LA TAUROMAQUIA





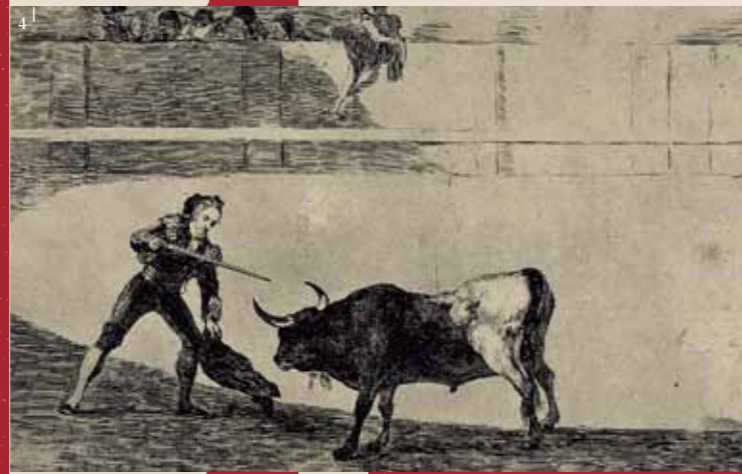
The corrida has three distinct stages known as tercios (thirds):

**The tercio of lances.** The bull is released into the ring and is confronted by two picadors mounted on horseback. The picadors launch the first attack at the animal and deal light wounds which anger the bull making it launch more ferocious charges. **The tercio of banderillas.** In the next tercio, three banderilleros (matador's "assistants") attempt to plant banderillas (barbed wooden sticks, about

80 centimetres in length, decorated with coloured paper) into the bull's neck. **The tercio of death.** In the final stage, the wounded and angered bull is confronted by the malador, who enters the ring with a fake sword and a mulela (a cape used to confuse the animal). The fake sword just serves to spread the mulela wide. The actual weapon (estoque) is only produced at the very last moment when the malador is ready to pierce the bull between the shoulders and through the heart.

FRANCISCO GOYA  
Spain, 1815-1816  
Paper, etching, aquarelle,  
drypoint, culler  
(III state from the three)  
The State Hermitage Museum

- 1 | Torero slabs a bull with a spear from the assistant's shoulders
- 2 | A very skillful student from Falzes, wrapped in a cloak, is enticing a bull with the movements of his body
- 3 | Marlincho's frenzy in the arena in Zaragoza
- 4 | Pedro Romero kills a bull
- 5 | El Cid Campeador pierces another bull
- 6 | They loose dogs on the bull
- 7 | Mariano Ceballos, nicknamed The Indian, kills a bull while riding a horse
- 8 | Famed Marlincho slabs the banderillas, dodging the bull
- 9 | The agility and daring of Juanilo Apinyani in Madrid
- 10 | The unfortunate death of Pepe-Ilo in the arena in Madrid
- 11 | Inspired moor Gazul was the first one who fought a bull according to the rules
- 12 | Ceballos again, riding another bull he breaks a short spear in the arena in Madrid





● PHOTO: EAST NEWS / AFP / RAFA RIVAS



● PHOTO: REUTERS / PIXSTREAM



● PHOTO: REUTERS / PIXSTREAM

1 | Spanish malador Oliva Solo is looking at the bull during a bullfight at the San Fermin festival in Pamplona

2 | Spanish bullfighter Manuel Jesus Cid (El Cid) looks at the death of the bull during a bullfight

3 | Spanish bullfighter Jose Miguel Perez is teasing the bull in the arena during a bullfight

4 | Spanish bullfighter Manuel Jesus Cid (El Cid) stands next to a dying bull in the arena after a bullfight in Pamplona

5 | Spanish malador Oliva Solo is fighting with a bull in the arena in Pamplona



● PHOTO: EAST NEWS / AFP / PEDRO ARMESTRE



● PHOTO: EAST NEWS / AFP / RAFA RIVAS

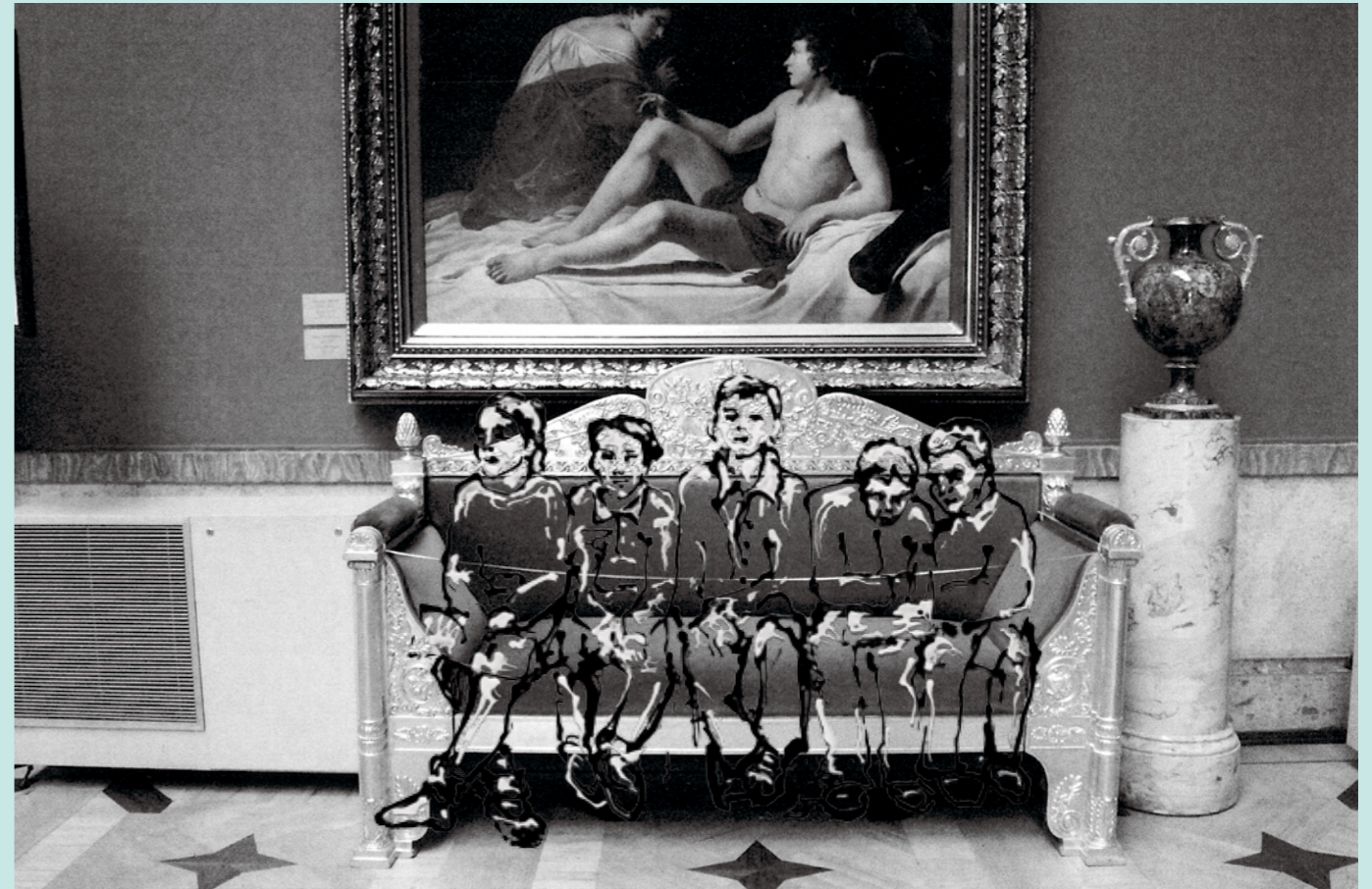
## CHILDREN



# DIFFERENT EVERY MOMENT

Katya Granova's series of works is a reflection on the passage of time in the museum. Endless school excursions; children: their transparent, shadowy figures lightly superimposed over the pictures of museum halls which were captured by the photographer in their immutable grandeur. Children, who are about to change in a second, led through this frozen eternity by guides and struggling to acknowledge its presence so near to them.





Kalya Granova, artist, photographer, aspiring curator, graduate of Kingston University, London:

**“Every day, there are dozens, hundreds of school excursions attending the museum – excited (or not so excited) faces, mobile photos... Every day the children leave the museum; they change, they grow up, and when they come back again, they are different.**

**Yet the museum remains almost the same: the same walls, the same pictures and vases. The father of the Prodigal Son will never raise his eyes; the imperial thrones stand still on the gilded steps. Everything is the way it was many years ago when I used to go on those excursions myself.**

**Art works seem to give royal audiences to the endless stream of children who act as ambassadors of a different world. The time imprisoned by the great masters in their pictures will always stay with us; moments of real life will pass forever.”**



John Berger. "Ways of Seeing", 2012:

**"Soon after we can see, we are aware that we can also be seen. The eye of the other combines with our own eye to make it fully credible that we are part of the visible world. If we accept that we can see that hill over there, we propose that from that hill we can be seen. The reciprocal nature of vision is more fundamental than that of spoken dialogue."**

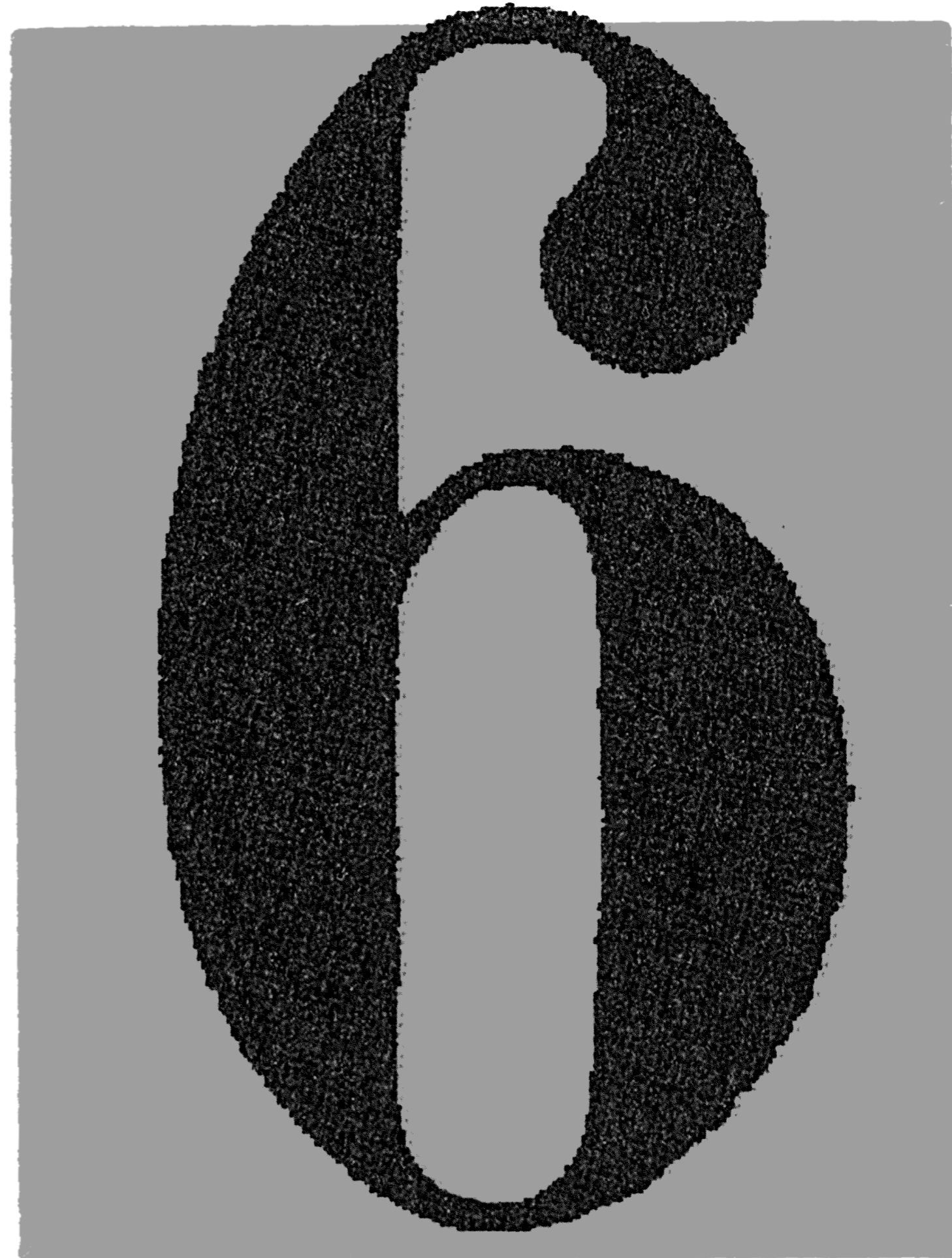
DAVID DELRUELLE  
*Walking Through The Door*  
Collage on paper, 24 x 13 cm, 2014



George Didi Huberman, "Images in Spile of All":

**"Every act of the creation of an image overcomes the impossibility of describing something real. Artists, in particular, refuse to bow to that which cannot be portrayed, though its destructive hypnosis has an effect on them — as it would on anyone who has encountered the annihilation of man by man. In such situations, they create a series of images, montages in spite of all — after all, they know that human tragedy can multiply endlessly. Callot, Goya and Picasso, and also to the same extent Miro, Faulrier, Sirzeminski<sup>©</sup> and Gerhard Richter plagued and tormented the unportrayable to such a degree that it started to speak, ending its dead silence. In their works the historical event becomes an obsession, it fuels the imagination and turns out multiplying images (with all their similarities and differences), that whirl in a single tornado appearing at a particular moment in time."**

5  
↓  
p. 084  
p. 086



CARDUCHO  
KAMENNY ISLAND THEATRE

PORTE-BOUQUETS



# BEAUTIFUL SCENERY IS SKILFUL PAINTING



ON AN EXCERPT FROM  
VICENTE CARDUCHO'S  
“DIALOGUES ON PAINTING”

**IT IS THOUGHT THAT THE LANDSCAPE GENRE IS ABSENT FROM THE SPANISH ART OF THE GOLDEN AGE, THE TWO SMALL VIEWS OF THE VILLA MEDICI BY VELAZQUEZ ARE CONSIDERED TO BE EXCEPTIONS TO THE RULE, AND THE FEW PANORAMAS OF BUEN RETIRO AND DEER HUNTING SCENES BY JUAN BAUTISTA MARTINEZ DEL MAZO SEEM CLOSER TO HISTORICAL TOPOGRAPHY THAN VISUAL ARTS. RATHER THAN REPRESENTING OR CELEBRATING NATURE, THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY SPANISH LANDSCAPE IS AN ARTIFICIAL EXAMPLE OF A PERFECT WORLD ORDER. NATURE IS JUST ONE PART OF THIS ORDER.**

DIMITRI OZERKOV  
PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIULLIN

In 1633 the Spanish court painter Vicente Carducho (1578–1638) published the book “Dialogues on Painting” dedicated to His Majesty Philip IV, King of Spain and the New World<sup>1</sup>. An original in-quarto volume with 10 etchings (printed in Madrid) is held in the State Hermitage Library (ИБЭ, Inv. № 14043). A defender of Romanicism and opponent of the “naturalistic” manner favoured by Velázquez, Carducho wrote his treatise in the classical form of conversations between a master and his pupil. The title page of the first dialogue bears the inscription “Dialogos de la pintura entre maestro, y discipulo”. The book includes eight dialogues, all set in the countryside near Madrid. Each dialogue has a sub-heading (the origins of painting; the definition of painting and its distinctive features; painting theory and practice; imitation of nature and so on.) summarizing the general topic of the discussion.

The Master is unmistakably the alter ego of Carducho. The third dialogue opens with the Master giving a definition of painting. He quotes a number of sources, each meticulously indicated in the margins. However, when the Master finally declares, “I myself see painting as...”, the comment on the margins says “Definición de la pintura del Autor”, the author’s definition of painting. The identity of the Pupil is less clear. Although this character may represent Carducho’s real student, the painter and engraver Francisco Collantes (1599–1656), it is far more likely to be a generalized image.

“Dialogues” were conceived as an art manifesto of sorts, possibly written with the aim of liberalizing the Spanish artistic environment in the Italian spirit and argue for establishing a royal academy of fine arts. The first three parts of the book are considered to date from 1606, the year when the first (unsuccessful) attempt to create an academy in Madrid was made<sup>2</sup>. However, it was not until the mid eighteenth century, more than one hundred years after “Dialogues” came to light, that Madrid’s San Fernando Academy was founded.

In the fourth dialogue, the Master arrives slightly late to the appointed meeting place with the Pupil on the bank of the river Manzanares. The Pupil courteously greets him, saying: “Rato ha que le espero, aunque no ocioso, antes entrele-

nido, mirando esta espesura de alisos, sauces y chopos; este correr de Mançanares, y a la sombra de las ramas, beuiendo reflexos en corlezas de alamos, y va en resplandores lauando arenas, que relocando están con los plateados pezcillos: y mucho mas en nuestro proposito he reparado, en los bellos pedaços de Países que forman estas orillas, que parecen copiados de los que pintò Paulo Bril, o los que dibujò Gerónimo Muciano [Girolamo Muziano]” (“I have spent some time waiting for you, however, not idly; I have been entertaining myself by looking at this copse of alders, willows and black poplar, at the flow of the Manzanares, now drinking the reflections of the poplar trunks in the shade of the branches, now washing the sand in glints of sunshine, coming alive with little silvery fish. I have become all the more convinced of the subjects of our conversation among the beautiful pieces of landscape making up these banks, which seem copied from those painted by Paulo Bril or those depicted by Gerónimo Muciano [Girolamo Muziano]”)<sup>3</sup>.

Let us pause to consider the following two issues. First, the Pupil describes the river bank as a collection of landscape fragments: “pieces of landscape making up these banks” (pedaços de Países que forman estas orillas) rather than a single landscape or panorama which could be painted on a long scroll of paper or horizontal canvas. Second, these fragments of the countryside appear copied from works by well-known artists, the Flemish painter Paul Bril (1554–1626) and the Italian Muziano (1528–1592) (que parecen copiados de los que pintò Paulo Bril, o los que dibujò Gerónimo Muciano). Apparently, the conversing Master and Pupil cannot perceive real nature before their eyes unless it is linked with *depictions* familiar to both of them.

Given Carducho’s didactic stance, this passage may seem to be just another convention of artistic discourse, a description of the painter’s vision of nature. However, Spanish seventeenth century literature offers other examples of the same tendency to see the beauty of the physical world through artworks. Like the Spanish painting of the Golden Age, Spanish fiction offers few artistic accounts of the landscape. Compared to later periods, such accounts are brief and have



been referred to as “mere allusions, which fail to capture the pulse of natural life” in the same sense as, say, nineteenth century literature and open air painting<sup>4</sup>. “The day was dawning when Don Quixote left the inn” (“La [hora] del alba sería cuando Don Quijote salió de venta”) — so much for nature. The expression “Flemish landscape” was a common trope in the literary Spanish language of the 17th century. Areas of natural beauty are compared to “Flemish canvases”. Like Carducho, Cervantes writes in “La Gilanilla”: “Our Flemish pictures and landscapes are those which nature presents to our eyes in the rugged cliffs” (“Por cuadros y paisajes de Flandes tenemos los que nos da la naturaleza en estos levantados riscos”); in other words, there would be no real scenery but for painted landscapes. Similar ideas are expressed by Lope de Vega, Góngora and lesser known authors.

The word *paisaje* in modern Spanish is not confined to depictions of nature. A panorama of city buildings and streets without a single tree can be described as *paisaje urbano*<sup>5</sup>. Unlike the loanword *peyzash* in contemporary Russian (which means “a view of scenery; any portrayal of scenery”), in sixteenth to seventeenth century Spanish and French this word (Spanish *país*, *paisaje*) meant “an expanse (*extención; étendue*) of scenery that can be seen in a single view from a specific point” rather than a pictorial representation of natural objects. The primary meaning of *país* is “a country, territory or area”, something which extends over a distance; see the Spanish and French names for the Netherlands (*Países Bajos, Pays Bas*). The same goes for 16th and 17th century Dutch and German, where the word for landscape painting (*Landschaftsmalerei*) was derived from *Landschaft*, meaning scenery in a particular region<sup>6</sup>. In modern Spanish *país* has come to signify a country or area, while *paisaje*, a word also borrowed from French in the eighteenth or nineteenth century, denotes a painting. However, *país* and *paisaje* still remain close in meaning<sup>7</sup>.

It may be suggested that for Cervantes, Lope de Vega and Góngora sophisticated art metaphors were part of their literary style. However, the above-quoted passage from Carducho shows that this rhetoric is applicable to the science of paint-

ing and may be grounded in the unique mode of perceiving reality which existed at that time. Unlike in our days, when reality is seen as a subject matter for art, in seventeenth century Spain painting used to determine human perception of the physical world and serve as a criterion for aesthetic appreciation. A painted landscape was not supposed to capture “the beauty of nature” seen in an instant — this approach would evolve much later. The landscape in “The Hermits” by Velázquez does not show a fleeting moment: it is a carefully designed backdrop for scenes from sacred history, forming a linear narrative sequence. The separate episodes of the meeting between St. Anthony and St. Paul are set in a single panoramic vista. You see St. Anthony talking to the centaur after looking for St. Paul’s dwelling for three days, St. Anthony tormented by the devil during the journey and St. Anthony knocking on the door, begging St. Paul to let him in. In the central scene, the two saints are represented praying together. Finally, St. Anthony is portrayed after his return from Alexandria, sitting over St. Paul’s dead body, with lions digging the grave. The story develops in the same landscape settings and is effectively distributed between several distance views with uneven yet clear boundaries framing the individual hagiographical events.

The same device is used in “The Surrender of Breda”, also representing a string of battle scenes rather than a panorama observed in a single time moment. In the foreground, the keys to the defeated fortress are being given to the winning general; the background represents the long battle preceding this event. We can see colours flying, soldiers running and smoke shrouding the sky. We long to feast our eyes on the panorama opening before us during this unique historical moment. Velázquez does his best to help by shading the details in the background. Yet Spanish historical painting always captures much more than just a passing moment. The Russian art historian V.V. Kemenov, in an attempt to present “The Surrender of Breda” as a revolutionary landscape impression, had to display wonders of eloquence. “The fires in and around the fortress — three days after the surrender of Breda! — are still burning, with white pillars of smoke lowering to the sky... The long and brutal battle has stopped only

recently... The viewer seems to feel the calm and transparency of the morning air after the deafening noise and the smoke of the artillery attack”<sup>8</sup>. Kremenov’s positivist approach makes him believe that it is the grandeur of the open expanse which imparts heroic quality to the scene, rather than vice versa. However, in the theory of Spanish seventeenth century historical painting, the scenery only becomes majestic when it frames historic events.

Painting is a way to make sense of the natural environment. The concept of painting as navigation proved attractive to early twentieth century artists and was addressed in Paul Klee’s “Creative Confession”. In the times of Velazquez, however, the Spanish understood reality as a sequence of pictures, and painting as a method for ordering reality by locking each “piece of landscape” into a frame or the “window of a painting”<sup>9</sup>. Nature should be structured, not known. A landscape is what you see through the window or, rather, what is represented in Flemish paintings. In the excerpt from Carducho’s fourth dialogue, the bank of the Manzanares is endless and cannot (should not) be comprehended. However, when broken down into fragments or separate groups of natural features, it may function as an object of aesthetic perception. Natural scenery cannot exist in culture before being compartmentalized through painting.

As for landscape composition, the approach typical of Spanish seventeenth century art was amply summarized in the guidelines compiled by another important Spanish painter and theorist of the Golden Age, Francisco Pacheco<sup>10</sup>, in the famous “Arte de la pintura, su antigüedad y grandezas” (“The Art of Painting, Its Antiquity and Greatness”), published in Seville in 1649. Chapter 7 (Volume 3) says: “A landscape is to be painted in the following order: after the canvas has been prepared, it should be divided into three or four distance planes; in the first plane, where a figure or a saint is placed, one paints trees and large rocks in proportion to the size of the figure; the second plane comprises trees and small houses; the third, much smaller objects; in the fourth, where the mountains meet the sky, the objects appear the smallest [...]. Having selected the colours, one proceeds as follows:

## DIALOGO

*Esto, Pintor famoso  
(Reservandole a Dios su providencia)  
Consigues poderoso,  
Quando arguyes con arte la evi'encia,  
Siendo la copia al natural tan una,  
Que no sabe a quien irse la Fortuna.  
O tu, que a rasgos formas  
Las acciones de humano a lo insensible,  
Que de inmortal te informas,  
Pareciendo en tus obras imposible,  
En ti solo el olvido no se advierte,  
Pues retratas a costa de la muerte  
Logra quanto pensares,  
Y piensa siempre, porque mucho logres,  
De lo que imaginares  
Tu misma Fama con tu diestra cobres:  
Nunca lo alcanza todo el pensamiento,  
Y en ti es execucion lo que es intento.  
Minerva te obedece,  
Tan hija del concepto de tu idea,  
Que tanto se encarece,  
Quanto executa, o tu Pinzel desea:  
O feliz la Pintura, pues alcanza  
Que viva una deidad con esperanca.*

VICENTE CARDUCHO  
Dialogues on Painting  
Madrid, 1633  
Book spread with the illustration  
of the Seventh Dialogue  
The Slate Hermitage Museum



f. 107. l. 3. f.



a blend of white and ochre on the horizon near the mountains, a small amount of the rosy colour (*la del rosado*) added above, with the darkest paint at the top; the colours must blend imperceptibly. The various clouds in the sky are painted by adding a small amount of carmine (or, in other cases, black) to blue <...> After doing the sky, which takes up the upper half of the canvas, one does the land, starting from the mountains which touch the sky. These are painted in the lightest blend of blue and white, slightly darker on the horizon as the land is always darker than the sky, especially if the sun shows in that part. These mountains usually have their own light and dark shades as cities or small trees are often composed at the foot of the mountains. After that, still further below, buildings or towns and large trees are represented; these are painted in pure blue, which befits this distance. The blue must be blended with white; to single out [some of the mountains], add a little yellow (genuli), which acquires a green shade in this part of the paint-

ing. Any buildings here must be painted with a bit of black and red earth (*tierra roxa*) to make them different from what is shown above and to make sure they are in keeping with this part of the picture. Large trees and buildings are painted closer to the front or, if needs be, raised above the horizon. The trees can be green with ash or [candle] soot and have several shaded areas to make them different from the objects behind <...> Any figures in this part must be in proportion to the sizes of the trees or buildings. The figures must not be too well-defined, nor the trees too sharp (*muy picados*), nor the colours as dark [contrast] as in the foreground; however, they must be painted more clearly than those in the background <...> The foreground with the figure (the first object to sketch and the last to paint) is the largest part of the painting and also the part one finishes [the canvas] with. The trees painted here must rise from the ground to the full height of the sky as they embrace (*sujetan*; literally, bind together) all the other planes,

VICENTE CARDUCHO  
*Dialogues on Painting*  
Madrid, 1633.  
Front page and the book spread  
with the illustration  
of the Seventh Dialogue  
The State Hermitage Museum

being the first part to see. One can immediately sketch or paint (*manchar*; literally, to soil) them in black with shade, with a small amount of light-green (*cardenillo*) and ochre. The same goes for the light areas, but there is no need to show the shape of the leaves as they mainly have to be painted over. [The leaves] are made small, with several dry ones among the greenery. However, it will be far better if they resemble natural (*naturales*) leaves of known trees <...> Also, if the herbs in the foreground are natural (*naturales*), it deserves great praise as this is the spot closest to the front. Landscapes must be finished with the same colours <...> Sometimes one needs to paint the sea storm, in which case black and white are used to make the sky gloomy, with clouds of the same colours and dark-blue waves <...> This method is also applied to paint burning cities such as Troy, and glimpses of light on the sea, land and ships; this requires dexterity (*destreza*) and observation (*observancia*) as one has to follow a particular order in depicting receding objects and various light reflections <...> For a snow-covered (*nevado*) landscape, all the parts named above are painted in the usual style (*estilo*) but the trees are shown leafless and the trunks dry; whereas the top parts of all objects are painted in white, even though they retain their shadows”<sup>10</sup>.

What makes this unique piece of theory particularly interesting is the interface of technological and aesthetic issues which are normally considered separately in the 20th century. Pacheco sees the landscape as a carefully planned art construct which has to evoke particular sensations. This can be achieved by correctly placing the horizon in such a way that the sky should “take up the upper half of the canvas”, by “composing” cities and trees which must proportionately decrease in size and be painted less clearly as they recede, and by finally “binding” the landscape with figures and trees in the foreground. This is the realm of attention and dexterity, not reflection and meditation on nature. One can notice that the intertwining tree trunks in landscapes by Murillo and other Spanish artists were clearly intended to smooth over the rigid structural design of the composition and achieve some artistry. Seventeenth century Spain remains blind to

natural landscapes but knows how to construct artificial ones.

Spanish landscapes of the seventeenth century are rare and considered fairly unremarkable from the artistic viewpoint. They were created entirely in the studio by composing natural objects or, more precisely, by following the established manner of execution for the first, second, third and fourth compositional planes and their mutual subordination to one another. While Spanish ideas of nature were determined by art objects, the latter, in turn, depended exclusively on painting technologies. In “Arte de la pintura” Pacheco advises his readers to copy landscapes by other artists, mentioning nothing about working in the open air. The same applies to animal painting: “A diligent artist should paint animals from nature... but as natural objects are not always available, one can turn to Bassano’s pictures [for guidance]. In some cases, it is safer to imitate his representations of animals than to imitate nature”. A recommendation faithfully observed by Pedro Orrente (1580–1645).

To create their landscape compositions, Spanish painters often used view engravings, mostly Flemish. Partly for this reason, old Spanish landscapes normally served as topographical sketches or backgrounds for monumental historical paintings and were based on either view engravings (as in “The Surrender of Breda”) or commissioned panoramas of historical events composed in the studio in accordance with the canons similar to Pacheco’s. The prime examples are landscapes by Velazquez’s son-in-law Juan Bautista Martinez del Mazo (Velazquez himself was married to Pacheco’s daughter) or Velazquez’s experimental composition sketches of the Villa Medici.

The views of the Villa Medici, made during one of Velazquez’s two trips to Italy, are two lightly painted oil studies of the serliana motif, also used in some of his major paintings (e.g. “The Spinners”). In the 19th century the sketches suddenly came to be seen as finished works and as the most iconic Spanish landscapes of the Golden Age. It is unlikely that Velazquez consciously rejected the aesthetic principles of his time — completeness and perfection — the principles shared by both Pacheco and Carducho, who wrote that

“a simple imitation of nature is neither science nor art; it is just a careful study (*uso cuidadoso*)”<sup>11</sup>. The famed impressionism and psychologism of the Roman sketches can only be appreciated by early twentieth century viewers. We admire the technique that ushered in the era of modernist art.

The theory and practice of Spanish painting are inseparable. The little page of “Dialogues” by Carducho carries two allegorical figures of painting, *teórica* and *práctica*; his artistic reasoning, claims the writer, comes from God and is intended for His glory. The front page of Pacheco’s book states that his work “teaches the method of painting all holy pictures” (“*enseña el modo de pintar todas las pinturas sagradas*”). Pacheco dwells on the sublime role of the painter, which is akin to that of the Catholic preacher. In Carducho’s fourth dialogue (quoted above), the Pupil exclaims: “Look at this purple glow; what well-painted clouds the sunset presents to our eye!” To which the Master replies: “Such is painting by Lord God”<sup>12</sup>.

It is fascinating to compare the Spanish understanding of landscape in the seventeenth century (“the scenery is only good as long as it

resembles a completed art work”) with principles of the modern space perception theory. Remarkably enough, the division of a landscape painting into three planes, so simple and straightforward, stemming entirely from composition theory, finds unexpected parallels with modern research on visual perception. The late twentieth century studies of the eye and vision (e.g. James Gibson, Tadahiko Higuchi et al<sup>13</sup>) in the light of the new artistic discipline, *Visual Perception of the World*, have shown that the human eye normally divides visible objects into three distance planes or views. Objects are seen as either very close, within easy reach, or very remote, located on the horizon of the visual field (the “here” and “there” concept). When both these views overlap, the eye usually builds a middle-distance view, an empty space separating close objects from remote ones. This way, the ancient Spanish approach to landscape finds an interesting resonance with the twentieth century. However, the age-long question still persists whether it is art that trains us to see the world as following a known model (a viewpoint shared by many in seventeenth century Spain), or whether the ancient painting formula is based on the natural mechanisms of human vision.

1. All the quotations in the article are from “Diálogos de la Pintura, su defensa, origen, esencia, definición, modos y diferencias.

Al gran Monarca de las Españas y Nuevo Mundo, Don Felipe III por Vicencio Carducho, de la illustre Academia de la nobilissima Ciudad de Florencia y Pinlor de Su Magestad Católica.” Madrid, 1633.

2. Wazbinski Z. Los Diálogos de la Pintura de Vicente Carducho: El manifiesto del academismo español y su origen // Archivo Español de Arte. 1990. T. 63. No. 251.

3. Diálogos. F. 47.

4. See Pérez Sánchez A. E. El paisaje en la pintura española del siglo XVII // Los paisajes del Prado. Madrid, 1993.

5. See Aldana Fernandez S. Estética del paisaje en Zurbaran // Revista de Ideas Estéticas. 1965. T. XXIII. No. 89, enero-febrero-marzo. P. 29-42.

6. See Wood C. Albrecht Altdorfer and the Origins of Landscape. London, 1993.

7. See Moliner M. Diccionario del uso del español. T. 1-2. Madrid, 1986.

8. Kamenov V. V. Karliny Velaskesa. M., 1969. P. 120.

9. See Gallego J. El Cuadro dentro del Cuadro. Madrid, 1982;

Stoichila V. I. L’inslauration du tableau. Mélaeinture à l’aube des temps modernes. Genève, 1999.

10. Pacheco F. Arte de la pintura / Ed., introd. y notas de B. Bassegoda i Hugas. Madrid, 1990. P. 513-514.

11. Diálogos. F. 54.

12. Ibid. F. 47.

13. See, for example, Higuchi T. The Visual and Spatial Structure of Landscapes. Cambridge, 1983.



INVITATION TO CONSIGN  
OLD MASTER PAINTINGS  
UPCOMING AUCTION IN LONDON JULY 2016



A HISTORICAL SKETCH

# KAMENNY ISLAND THEATRE

**"The old theatre will soon be destroyed; all its furnishings will be sold; the walls will be demolished for firewood; its old chairs, brass sconces and the funny lamps from the central chandelier may end up in some junk shop; the quiet spirits of the past will fly away; the deities of mirth and dance, still hiding in the dark corners, will disappear; the laughter will vanish, and the place will finally sink into oblivion. What a pity it will be to lose the dear theatre, an old temple of joy."**

This passage appeared in the magazine "The Capital City and the Countryside" in 1915 (Issue 28) in an article by G.T. Polilov-Severtsev, well-known in his time as a playwright and translator. The comment now seems bizarre, to say the least, as it refers to the wooden Kamenny Island Theatre, which, following a massive renovation, still adorns the Old Theatre Square in St. Petersburg and has started a new life as the Second Stage of the Tovstonogov Bolshoy Drama Theatre. However, having been written by an art expert, not just an overenthusiastic theatre lover, the text rests on a more solid foundation than a simple rumour.

During World War I, as the news from the front grew more alarming, few people cared for the wooden theatre which had not been used for performances for three and a half decades. It is a miracle that the Kamenny Island Theatre should have survived the historical turmoil and several major reconstructions. Today, the venue is fully equipped with state-of-the-art light and radio systems, effective stage machinery and lifts as well as other technologies to support theatre work.

The very place and time of its construction showed that the theatre was destined for something special. By the second decade of the nineteenth century, as the widowed Empress Maria Fedorovna could no longer regularly visit her favourite summer residence in Pavlovsk, her son Alexander I acquired the Yelagin Palace "for the Crown". To make the residence comfortable for the large royal family, in 1818–1822 architect Carlo Rossi fully reconstructed all the interiors and built three garden pavilions, a conservatory, self-standing kitchen facilities and stables.

The idea to open a theatre in the neighbourhood was always in the air but, due to different circumstances, failed to materialise. It was only under Nicholas I that the project finally took shape, mostly owing to the new Ministry of the Court and Domains which was entrusted with control over the Directorate of Imperial Theatres. The Ministry was established immediately after the new Isar's ascension to the throne in August 1826; with the start of the warm season, a royal decree was issued on 12 May 1827 ordering Smaragd Shuslov, the Directorate's official architect, to build a summer theatre. The structure had to be delivered on a modest budget of 40,000 roubles (contributed by the Department of Domains) and an extremely tight schedule. In just 40 days Shuslov and his staff built a wooden theatre on the beautiful hill in the centre of Kamenny Island to the unrealised design for the Yelagin Island Theatre.

Nicholas I, who was spending the summer at the Yelagin Palace, closely watched over the construction process; to visit the site, he only had to cross the First Yelagin Bridge. On 25 June 1827, a special committee appointed by the Emperor carefully examined the finished building. Architects V. Stasov, A. Mikhailov, V. Berelli and E. Sokolov concluded that "the quality of the material makes the theatre safe for performances for the period of seven years". The Imperial Kamenny Island Theatre opened on 1 July 1827 with a French comedy by J. Dieulafoy "Défiance et Malice, ou le Prêlé-rendu", translated into Russian as "Two for Four, or Jealousy and a Joke". Some historians ascribe the authorship of the play to Vasily Karatygin, a remarkable actor and playwright; however, he denied this suggestion. In his book he wrote that he had only made a poetical translation of the comedy for the benefit performance of his wife Alexandra Kolosova. The play premiered in St. Petersburg's Bolshoi Theatre on 31 January 1827, and was performed on 1 July with a different actress in the main part.

Soon after the first shows, which ran in summer three times a week, the Kamenny Island Theatre started to attract large audiences. It was opened to the public at the same time as the park ensemble created on the Islands by Joseph Bush, Russia's most celebrated garden designer. Brought to Russia by his father at a very young age, Bush took part in the development of park landscapes in Tsarskoe Selo and Pavlovsk. By 1826, he had completed similar projects on Kreslovsky, Yelagin and Kamenny Islands. The summer theatre in Kamenny Island quickly became a favourite place of entertainment for city residents frequenting the new green spaces on the banks of the Kreslovka and Middle Nevka rivers.

The astounding beauty of the Kamenny Island Theatre, exceptional in its austerity, helped it survive till this day. The wooden edifice has features commonly present in stone buildings, such as a magnificent façade with a triangular pediment supported by eight Corinthian columns and crowned with an enormous lyre. The carved wooden relief designed by Sergey Shuslov represents some other attributes of theatrical art — musical instruments, thyrsus-staffs and tragedy masks.

The two sculptures in front of the building, "The Music Contest of Apollo and Pan" and "Castor and Pollux", were meant to symbolize the competitive spirit vital to any creative work, making the artist tirelessly search for perfection.

The auditorium of the Kamenny Island Theatre, which consisted of stalls, three tiers of boxes, a balcony and a gallery and could seat about 750 people, also excited general admiration. The light-coloured furniture, made from Karelian birch to the design of architect S. Shuslov, included 213 armchairs, 108 chairs and a number of benches (upholstered with wool and canvas) in the balcony. The auditorium looked particularly cheerful owing to the bright lemon-coloured curtain and the green and blue ceiling and wall paintings to A. Shiryayev's design. The boxes, trimmed with blue cotton velvet, were decorated with arabesques; painted flower garlands were scattered all over the ceiling. The interior created a joyful atmosphere and was in perfect harmony with the parks and canals which surrounded the theatre. The auditorium was also equipped with clever devices to create stage effects.



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1 | ACTOR AND PLAYWRIGHT  
V.A. KARATYGIN

2 | CHOREOGRAPHER  
CHARLES DIDLO



3

3 | BUILDING  
OF KAMENNY ISLAND THEATRE  
NOWADAYS

PHOTO: STAS LEVSHIN



4



5

4 | KAMENNY ISLAND THEATRE  
Lithography of 1830-ies

5 | KAMENNY ISLAND THEATRE  
Lithography of 1850-ies

For example, the Kamenny Island Theatre incorporated “a lifting floor mechanism for masquerades” constructed by “Schichlmeister” Vasily Tistrov. The back wall of the stage could also be lifted so that the park landscape became the backdrop for the performance.

Many features were designed with economy in mind; for example, only the fireplaces near the royal and ministerial boxes were faced with tiles; all the others were plastered. Nevertheless, the structure, whose woodwork had been executed under the supervision of “the Okhta carpenter” Faddey Kononov, received universal praise. Although originally not intended for long-term use, the building of the Kamenny Island Theatre remained in service for almost 17 years, hosting over 400 performances in 1827–1839. However, by the early 1840s the ground waters and almost annual floods had seriously damaged the structure, built without a foundation.

Renovation was postponed several times until in July 1843 the State Treasury provided the funding to conduct an overhaul of the Kamenny Island Theatre. The Royal Architect A.K. Cavos oversaw the dismantling of the theatre, which was rebuilt on the stone foundation. The reconstruction works were finished in July 1844 and resulted in a number of changes to the initial theatre. The building became much taller owing to the stone basement, and the new balconies (called “platforms”) with balustrades added to the side wings became an excellent place for the audience to spend the interval. The wooden frame of the theatre was preserved; however, the walls were rebuilt from vertically placed pine logs and faced with horizontal planks, and the floor of the auditorium was supported by pillars. The façade was reinforced with imitative rustic stonework; the windows in the reconstructed building were now arranged in three tiers, not two, and had a more modern shape.

Architect Alberto Cavos was the son of the composer and director Caterino Cavos, who made a significant contribution to Russian musical culture. Although the architect’s father had died in 1840, before the beginning of the reconstruction, Alberto Cavos apparently knew the weaknesses of the venue. He made the auditorium semi-elliptical while preserving its original design with three tiers, a balcony and galleries. Purple became the predominant colour, said to have been chosen at the insistence of Emperor Nicholas I who loved that theatre. The auditorium received a new burgundy curtain with a geometrical pattern, and the boxes were trimmed with purple woollen velvet. Other adornments included painted designs on the white background in all the boxes, apart from the imperial and ministerial boxes, decorated with wooden carvings.



COMPOSER AND CONDUCTOR K. KAVOS

As the emperor and the royal court were keenly interested in the theatre, Cavos increased the number of comfortable seats in the stalls and added a royal circle with boxes. Cavos’s grandson Alexander Benois reminisced that he had always liked to book a seat in the royal circle of the Mariinsky Theatre (built by his grandfather); as we see, Cavos took particular efforts to make the boxes spacious and comfortable.

The reconstructed theatre used an interesting procedure for lighting the central chandelier. The ceiling had a small aperture with an iron trapdoor through which a stage hand was lowered to fill and put a light to the oil lamps, then to be lifted again. After the “air works” were completed, another lampman would illuminate the apron stage with the footlights. However, the auditorium itself was very dim; only on special occasions two-candle sconces were lit up near the boxes.

The new Kamenny Island Theatre quickly became a magnet for St. Petersburg theatregoers and holiday-makers. The official opening took place on 11 July 1844 with a performance of “A Dangerous Means” by I. Auger and the vaudeville “Parisian Fairies” presented by the Imperial French Company. By the mid-1840s, the Islands had been built up with summer residences, the owners and tenants of which accounted for much of the audience of the newly-restored theatre. Even decades later, the most faithful spectators warmly remembered the atmosphere of the Kamenny Island Theatre on performance days. The square in front of the building was usually full of vendors selling fruit, refreshing drinks and flowers.

The performances, presented from May to August, started at 7:30 in the evening. Long before this time, young officers and state servants flocked to the theatre in a hope to see the arrival of their favourite actress, a well-known dancer or musician. The artists would appear in the theatre an hour and a half before the show. They travelled to Kamenny



AUDITORIUM OF KAMENNY ISLAND THEATRE



PHOTO: STAS LEVSHIN

The reconstructed theatre used an interesting procedure for lighting the central chandelier. The ceiling had a small aperture with an iron trapdoor through which a stage hand was lowered to fill and put a light to the oil lamps, then to be lifted again. After the “air works” were completed, another lampman would illuminate the apron stage with the footlights. However, the auditorium itself was very dim; only on special occasions two-candle sconces were lit up near the boxes.

Island in different types of horse-drawn vehicles. Some were taken to the theatre in the heavy green carriages owned by the Directorate of Imperial Theatres and humorously dubbed “the scaffolds”. After a long and tiring journey, the 6–7 actors would alight in Kamenny Island, clutching their make-up boxes and holdalls with the things required for their stage work. More successful performers came in hired coaches; the stars had their own equipages.

In 1827 a summer residence for the female students of the Imperial Drama School was built next to the theatre. The students attended the performances twice a week, accompanied by the school headmaster, who lived in a small house nearby. The would-be actresses, lovely in identical light-blue dresses with white capes and rapturously looked at by all the spectators, were seated in their designated boxes in the third tier which the strict rules prohibited them from leaving till the end of the performance.

No history of the Kamenny Island Theatre would be complete without at least a brief description of the repertoire. Much of it was determined by Caterino Cavos, who had a powerful



POSTERS  
OF KAMENNY ISLAND THEATRE  
1829 and 1860



influence on St. Petersburg's cultural life during the first four decades of the nineteenth century. In that period, Cavos headed both the Imperial Russian and the Imperial German opera companies and was the Musical Director of the Imperial Theatres; in other words, he controlled all orchestras, to say nothing of his teaching activities in the Imperial Drama School. In addition, Cavos was a prolific composer, an author of several ballets staged by the great choreographer Charles-Louis Didelot ("Don Quixote", "Zephira and Flora", "Cupid and Psyche", "Apis and Galatea"), although this part of his artistic legacy is overlooked by art historians. The same goes for Cavos's vaudevilles, usually associated with the name of their dramatist, Prince A.A. Shakhovskoy.

Many publications about the Kamenny Island Theatre (mostly by historians of architecture) mention its production of the opera "Ivan Susanin", apparently confusing it with M.I. Glinka's famous work "A Life for the Tsar" directed by Cavos in 1836. However, much earlier, in 1815, Cavos had composed an opera with a similar plot, which was a great success in St. Petersburg. The diverse repertory of the Kamenny Island Theatre is a vast and exciting subject in itself.

An evening at the theatre could include a vaudeville show, followed by a short ballet like "La Fille mal gardée", a ballet divertissement or a whole act from an opera. The stage of the theatre was also suitable for performing complete operas (such as Cavos's "Ivan Susanin" already mentioned here); after the reconstruction, the Alexandrinsky Theatre company also gained tremendous popularity in the then fashionable operella, "The light-hearted daughter of the French nation". The Alexandrinsky's productions, including "La Belle Helene", starred some of the theatre's future leading actors such as M.G. Savina, V.N. Davydov, K.A. Varlamov, N.F. Sazonov, I.I. Monakhov and the famous V.A. Lyadova, who started as a ballerina, became a huge success as an operella actress and died prematurely in the prime years of her career.

However, with time the playhouse gradually lost its appeal to spectators. A renowned theatre historian A.I. Volf wrote in the first volume of his "St. Petersburg Theatre Chronicles" in March 1877: "The dachas in Kamenny Island were popular among the aristocracy, so a theatre in the area was almost a necessity, in the absence of other opportunities for summer entertainment. Why this dilapidated theatre is still open and giving performances (very poorly attended) is absolutely unclear".

The history of the Kamenny Island Theatre could have ended in the 1880s when it was converted into a storage facility for theatre sets and faced almost certain disappearance in the foreseeable future. By the end of the nineteenth century, the wooden theatre, left without the advantages of modern lighting and ventilation systems, had become completely unsuitable for operation. However, nobody dared to cause damage to a building of such exquisite beauty. Today, the transformed theatre still stands at its former address, Number 13, Old Theatre Square.

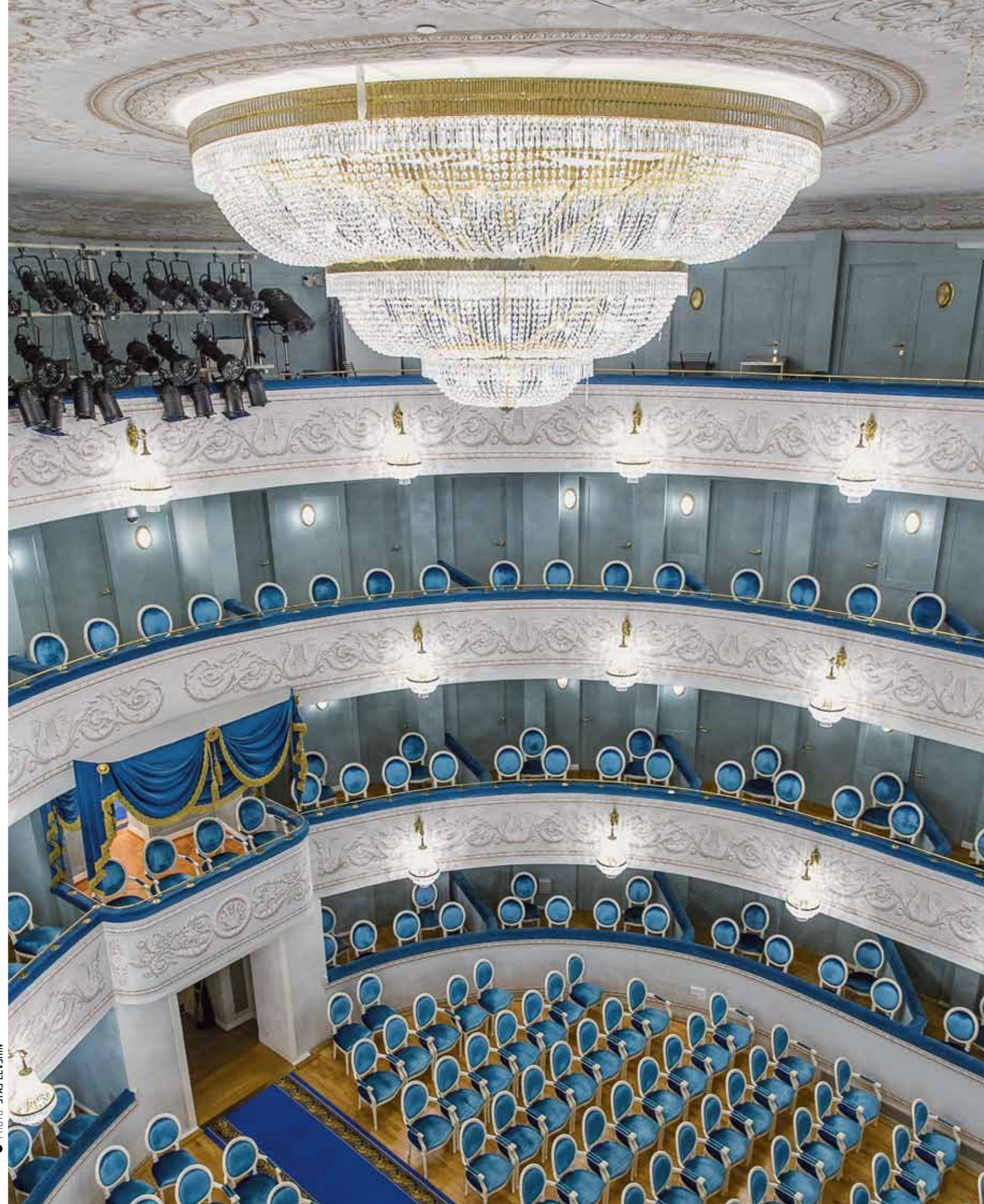


PHOTO: STAS LEVSHIN

# TOVSTONOGOV'S DUETS

IRINA SHIMBAREVICH

● PHOTO: VALERIY GENDE-ROTE

During minutes of rest, the great Russian theatre director Georgiy Tovstonogov liked to make himself comfortable on the sofa in the ante-room to his office, smoke a cigarette and look at the photographs on the wall, each showing an episode from his life and remarkable characters, dear to his heart. When he was in the right mood and could afford the time, Tovstonogov used to tell us when and where he had met these people, how their friendship had developed, and how often they saw each other, giving such vivid and accurate descriptions of the people he knew as could be expected from an outstanding director. *Tovstonogov's Duets* is the name I chose for this series of precious historical moments caught on camera.

One of these photos shows Boris Piotrovsky, the legendary director of the Hermitage, in his office. As Tovstonogov said, he was introduced to Piotrovsky by Vitaliy Suslov, Piotrovsky's research assistant, whom Tovstonogov had met and made immediate friends with during a trip abroad. Tovstonogov was really keen to get acquainted with "Boris, a great man and one of the most brilliant figures in Leningrad culture", together with the conductor Evgeny Mravinsky, sculptor Mikhail Anikushin and actor Arkadiy Raykin. Tovstonogov valued, respected and admired the selfless labour of the museum worker for whom "funding was much more difficult to obtain than for us theatre people", as he stressed upon returning from a collegium of the Ministry of Culture in Moscow. "My southern temperament lets me down; I have so much to learn from the Orientalist Piotrovsky, who wisely selects his strategy and arguments and carries his attacks with perfect timing and, most importantly, reserve!..."

The third in the Hermitage Museum trio so highly appreciated by Tovstonogov was the fantastic Vladislav Glinka, Chief Curator of the Department of Russian Culture, who acted as the historical consultant for some of Tovstonogov's productions, including the stage version of Dostoyevsky's "The Idiot". Tovstonogov believed that a good understanding of visual arts, a sense of colour, knowledge of the laws of composition were key to theatre direction. This is why he treasured Piotrovsky's opinions about paintings and artists. He kept repeating one conclusion he made while talking to Piotrovsky: independent reading provided some insight into Western European but not Asian art!

On his tours abroad, Tovstonogov invariably attended museums (he was pretty well informed about their collections) and would get extremely angry when some of his actors neglected to visit the Louvre, Prado or the Dresden Picture Gallery. He was never too busy to see temporary or permanent exhibitions in the Hermitage.

Once I heard Piotrovsky and Suslov introducing Tovstonogov to their plans of a major reconstruction in the Hermitage and new trends in museum work. Tovstonogov shared his impressions about the book on Yves Saint-Laurent he had received from Suslov: "Great book, beautifully published. I was astonished by Yves Saint-Laurent's sense of the movement and lines of the human body... He creates both historical and modern costumes. Mounting this exhibition in the Hermitage is a real political move! Nowhere will the mannequins look as splendid as in the rich interiors of the Hermitage, with their mirrors and parquet floors!..."<sup>1</sup>

One warm summer day the famous photographer Valeriy Gende-Rote of the Freie Welt magazine was inspired by the idea to show Tovstonogov and Piotrovsky strolling together on Palace Square. The talented artist did not take no for an answer, so we took a car to the Winter Palace. Piotrovsky, who deeply respected Gende-Rote, agreed to find the time for the walk and the photoshoot. Gende-Rote choreographed the scene with all his authoritative expertise. The resulting picture shows Boris Piotrovsky and Georgiy Tovstonogov striding across Palace Square and talking. The two giants of culture had a good laugh that day as neither of them could remember the last time they had been out for a walk...



<sup>1</sup>.....Georgii Tovstonogov. Sobiratelnyi portret: Vospominaniia. Publikatsii. Pisma. SPb., 2006. P. 498.

The advertising

## ASIAN FABERGE



MR. ROLF VON BUEREN  
*Dragon earrings*  
with scarab,  
diamonds & rubies  
2012

THE JEWELRY CRAFT OF INDOCHINA REMAINS A MYSTERY, IMPERCEPTIBLE BY A EUROPEAN MIND. COULD THAT BE THE REASON WHY IT HAS GAINED ESTEEM WITH CONNOISSEURS WHILE AT THE SAME TIME BEING OBSCURED BEHIND A LONG LIST OF BRAND HEAVYWEIGHTS? THE IMPRESSIONS' ECHOES OF LOTUS ARTS DE VIVRE FINE JEWELRY AND HOME DECOR ENTWINE INTO ITS SECOND, UNOFFICIAL NAME — "ASIAN FABERGE".



MR. ROLF VON BUEREN  
*Snake earrings*  
with gold inlaid  
black ebony wood,  
pink tourmalines &  
diamonds  
2012



MR. ROLF VON BUEREN  
*Nautilus shell ring*  
with rhodolites  
2005

The history of the brand begins in 1962, when a descendant of German gentry Rolf von Bueren moves to Thailand and declares this, at the time unremarkable, land his second homeland. Twenty years later Rolf von Bueren is inspired by the revelations of the Asian cultural heritage, the lavish generosity of nature, and most importantly by Helen's — his Thai wife's — hobby to establish a guild composed of master artisans who inherited the know-how of jewelers commissioned by the rajas of India, the emperors of China, the royal courts of Bali, and the kings of Siam. The archetype of the future brand becomes the sense of beauty in the Thai tradition, presented with European laconic appeal.

All jewelry, accessories, and home decor by Lotus Arts de Vivre are crafted in a single copy. Each piece is unique. For this purpose Rolf von Bueren travels thousands of miles from Bangkok in the search of exotic and authentic materials such as precious and semi-precious stones, rare types of wood, corals, pearls, stingray leather, coconut shells, and textiles from the XVIII century. The concepts, the implementations of which takes up to six months of effort of highly skilled craftsmen, unite symbolic images and material values. Diamonds and scarab wings, gold and silk, teakwood and silver, sea pearls and rose rubies, emeralds and enamel — are the wrist-twining dragons, frogs on flowerpots, birds on purses, rhinos and bulls as the accents of home decor.

After thirty years of the brand's existence its patrons include Arab sheikhs, royalty of Thailand, Malaysia, Spain, Belgium, and the United Kingdom, politicians and Hollywood stars. Elizabeth Taylor was among the brand's earliest fans. An elephant-shaped purse, inlaid with gold, diamonds, rubies, and pearls, remained the actress' favorite accessory her entire life.

Lotus Arts de Vivre products are exhibited at auctions of the best auction houses of the world, and fanciers of unconventional objets d'art strive to augment their collections with items which have become an art form.

AS THE NAME "PORTE-BOUQUET" IMPLIES (FRENCH "PORTE" – TO CARRY, "BOUQUET" – BUNCH OF FLOWERS), THESE ARE OBJECTS FOR CARRYING FLOWERS WHICH COULD BE EMPLOYED IN DIFFERENT WAYS. THEY COULD BE HELD IN ONE'S HAND, OR WORN ON CLOTHES OR ON A LONG HANDLE. SOMETIMES "PORTE-BOUQUETS" WERE CREATED IN DIFFERENT STYLES AND MATERIALS, AND ALSO HAD A SMALL MIRROR OR A CARD CASE. THE MOST ELABORATE MODELS HAD SMALL LEGS SO THEY COULD BE USED AS FLOWER VASES AS WELL.

PORTE-BOUQUET WITH FILIGREE (SMALL)  
CHINA, CANTON, 1820–1840  
Silver; cardboard, silk, glass (box); filigree  
Height 16.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in the 1920 / Inv. № AC-598 a, 6

The square, resounding with cries, was fragrant with the flowers that decorated its pavement, roses, jasmines, pinks, narcissi, and tuberoses, evenly spaced out between moist grasses, catmint, and birds; the four pins, placed in the centre, arranged in a cross, were the most precious. The man who had bought flowers for his breast, as he smelt them, swelled with pride, as if the message that he meant for another had recoiled upon himself...

# Porte-bouquets

In the design of this article quotes from the following works are used:  
Gustave Flaubert *Madame Bovary* (1857), letters; Ivan Turgenev *First Love* (1860);  
Anatole France *Red Line* (1894); Emile Zola *Page of love* (1912).

**T**here was no clarity in the definition of the term porte-bouquet for a long time. In France it was first listed in about 1860 in the Lillré dictionary, where it was defined as an “ornament and holder for a bouquet... a small flower vase”. Thus here the accessory was assimilated to a flower vessel. This confusion persists in modern dictionaries that define it, for example, as a “small flower vessel which can be hung”.

“To prevent the small bouquet from falling out of its jewelry holder during dances, it was held with a special pin. All the movements of the lady had to be flowing and smooth, and her posture ideally straight, otherwise the water, vital for the fresh flowers, could spill from the porte-bouquet and leave a wet spot on the ball gown. A special ring on a chain or a bracelet held the porte-bouquet on the hand, and ladies coming to the theatre could demonstrate this living ornament pulling their hand on the box ledge.



**PORTE-BOUQUET  
WITH PENDANTS  
EUROPE,  
SECOND HALF  
OF THE 19TH CENTURY**

Bronze, glass,  
mother of pearl (handle);  
chasing, granulation,  
gilding, carving  
Height 17 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1951  
Inv. № ЭРР3-860  
*Published for the first time*

**PORTE-BOUQUET  
WITH SNAKES (SMALL)  
WESTERN EUROPE,  
MIDDLE**

**OF THE 19TH CENTURY**  
Copper, enamel,  
mother of pearl (handle);  
mother of pearl (handle);  
casling, chasing,  
gilding, carving  
Height 11.6 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1951  
Inv. № Э-14796  
*Published for the first time*

**PORTE-BOUQUET  
WITH A VASE  
IN A FORM OF FEATHERS  
EUROPE,  
19TH CENTURY**

Bronze, mother of pearl  
(handle); casling, chasing,  
gilding, carving  
Height 14 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1951  
Inv. № ЭРР3-856  
*Published for the first time*



**PORTE-BOUQUET  
WITH LARGE FLOWERS  
EUROPE (?),  
SECOND HALF  
OF THE 19TH CENTURY**

Brass, enamel,  
mother of pearl (handle);  
casling, inlay, gilding, carving  
Height 15 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1991  
Inv. № ЭРР3-6365

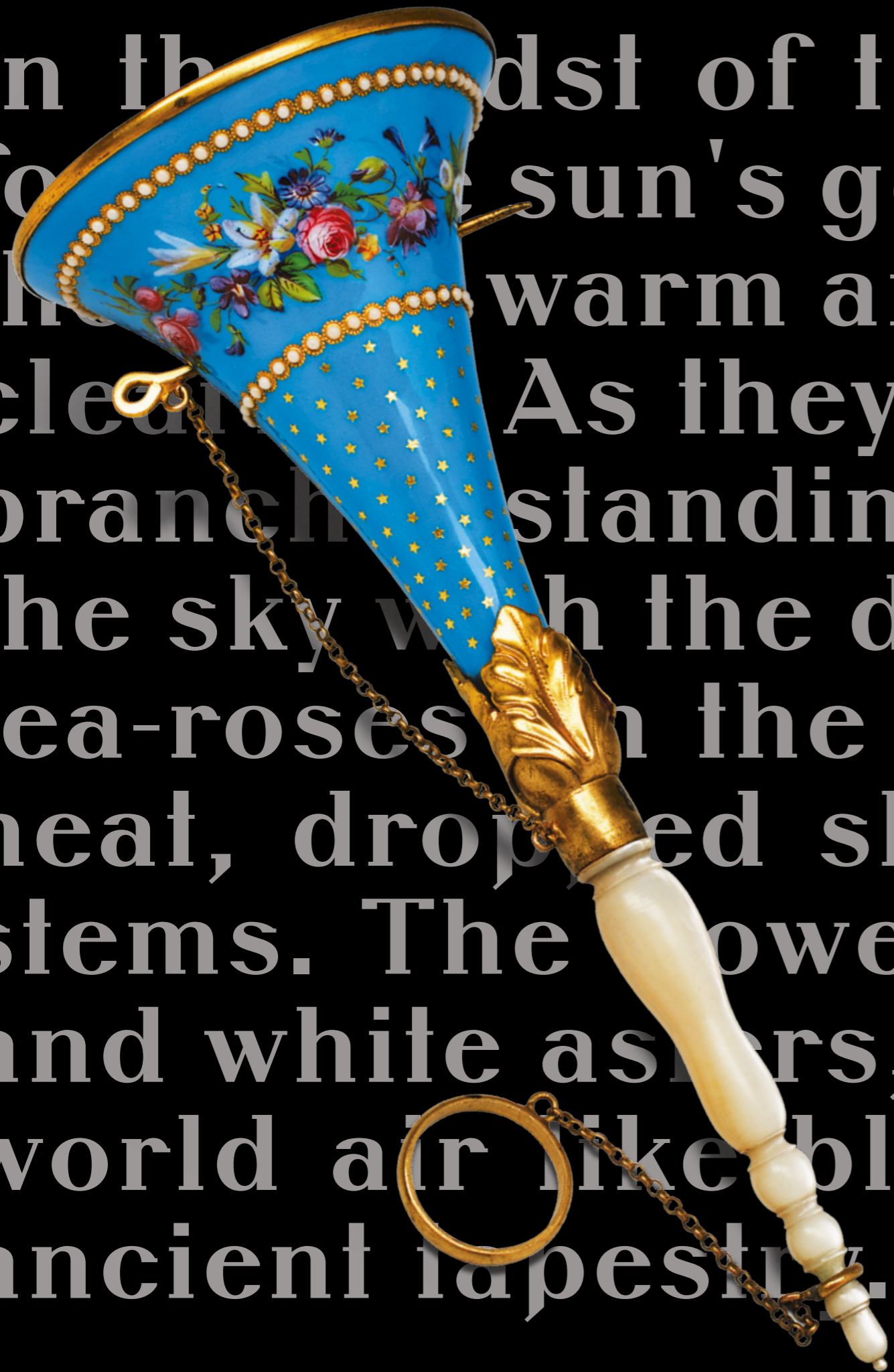
**PORTE-BOUQUET  
WITH ROCCAILLE CURLS  
EUROPE,  
19TH CENTURY**

Brass, enamel;  
chasing, gilding, painting  
Height 17 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1951  
Inv. № ЭРР3-858  
*Published for the first time*

**PORTE-BOUQUET  
WITH AN OPENWORK VASE  
EUROPE,  
SECOND HALF  
OF THE 19TH CENTURY**

Silver, ivory (handle);  
chasing, carving  
Height 13 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1950  
Inv. № ЭРР3-1562  
*Published for the first time*

In the midst of the leafy profusion they  
found the sun's golden rays streaming on  
the warm and still as in a wood and  
clear. As they looked up they saw the  
branches standing out against the blue of  
the sky with the delicacy of  
tea-roses on the huge branches, faint in the  
heat, drooping slumberously from their  
stems. The power-bells were full of red  
and white aspers, looking with their old-  
world air like blossoms woven in some  
ancient tapestry.



PORTE-BOUQUET  
WITH BLUE ENAMEL  
EUROPE (?), MIDDLE  
OF THE 19TH CENTURY  
Enamel, metallic, pearl  
(handle); stamping,  
painting, carving, gilding

Height 19 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1941  
Inv. № ЭРФ-4740  
Exhibitions:  
St. Petersburg 2011

PORTE-BOUQUET  
WITH A CROWN  
FRANCE (?),  
MIDDLE  
OF THE 19TH CENTURY  
Bronze, enamel, glass;  
chasing, gilding, painting

Height 14 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1951  
Inv. № ЭРФ-857  
Published for the first time



Creation of porte-bouquets is also related to the fact that, for several centuries, a noble lady had to wear expensive gloves of kid or of silk, which were also covered in embroidery, lace and precious stones. It was very difficult to clean them, sometimes even impossible, and they got soiled very quickly, especially when in contact with flower bouquets. The invention of the porte-bouquet allowed ladies not to touch the flower stems.”\*

Compared to private collections, museum collections of porte-bouquets — in Russia as well as in other European countries — are not very rich. They usually contain from several to two or three dozen items; the Hermitage has nineteen items. Most of them were created by European masters in the middle or the second half of the nineteenth century, but there are also objects made in China and in Russia. The exhibition Nineteenth to Early Twentieth Century Porte-Bouquets from the Bilgi Kenber Collection, France was held in the Blue Bedroom from May to October 2015.



**PORTE-BOUQUET WITH CORALS**  
GREAT BRITAIN (?), MIDDLE OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
Bronze, coral, mother of pearl (handle); casting, chasing, gilding, carving  
Height 15 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1951  
Inv. № ЭРРЗ-854  
Published for the first time

**OPENWORK PORTE-BOUQUET**  
RUSSIA (?), 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
Silver; filigree  
Height 8 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1941  
Inv. № ЭРРЗ-5396  
Published for the first time

**PORTE-BOUQUET WITH OVAL MEDALLIONS**  
RUSSIA (?), SECOND HALF OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
Bronze, mother of pearl (handle); casting, chasing, gilding, carving  
Height 15.6 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1969  
Inv. № ЭРРЗ-3429  
Published for the first time

**PORTE-BOUQUET WITH BLUE BEADS**  
EUROPE, 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
Bronze, glass, mother of pearl (handle); chasing, gilding, carving  
Height 15.5 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1951  
Exhibitions: Amsterdam 2009

**PORTE-BOUQUET WITH SNAKES (BIG)**  
WESTERN EUROPE, MIDDLE OF THE 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY  
Copper, enamel, mother of pearl (handle); casting, chasing, carving  
Height 15.6 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum  
Entered in 1956  
Inv. № ЭРРЗ-15707  
Published for the first time

\* Dubrovskaya E. Porte-bouquet — a Fragrant Accessory of Earlier Times // History Illustrated. 2010. № 10.



## IMPERIAL PORCELAIN MANUFACTORY

In 1944, by 200 anniversary of Leningrad Lomonosov Porcelain Factory's foundation, in besiege Leningrad, an artist Anna A. Yatskevich (1904–1952) created the «Cobalt net» painting with an elegant golden-blue ornament on a white set's field.

This set became an original top point of search and achievements in new porcelain art sentiments according to the fortunate accurate rhythm, extraordinary subtlety of lines and color correlation. It became also a classical masterpiece in porcelain art and the Imperial Porcelain Factory Manufactory's trademark. This way of a porcelain painting was applied by artists of different countries and epochs. Anna Yatskevich underlined probably the motives of the first set, made by Russian porcelain inventor D.I. Vinogradov for the empress Elizabeth I in 1750s. Texture gilded net with amaranthine forget-me-nots on crossings could be the basis of Anna Yatskevich's painting.

Anna Yatskevich created more or less simultaneously two types of painting – «Golden net» which was applied to manufacturing and was on production for more than 20 years, and «Cobalt net», which was started on production after several years of technicians and manufactory workers activities. The artist itself adopted the painting for distribution – the painting of set became more contrast and dressy.

Since 1950, the «Cobalt net» has been replicating on the manufactory. The lacy cobalt drawing decorated with golden «bugs», pastiche floral ornaments and scalloped cuttings seems smoothly and elegant on the classical set shape «Tul'pan» («Tulip»), created by sculptor and Honoured artist of RSFSR S.E. Yakovleva in 1936.

In 1958 on the first postwar World's fair in Brussels «EXPO'58» the «Cobalt net» set was honored with the Golden medal for its harmony of shape and painting. In 1969, the «Cobalt net» set was assigned by The State quality mark of the USSR. The set has been under popularity and customer demand for many years.

The set composition has changed through the years. In 1996–1999 manufactory artist G. D. Shulyak, the Honoured artist of The Russian Federation created a painting of cutlery and gifts. The pattern was later transferred on thin-shell bone china items. Now the «Cobalt net» set gained to a vast number of items contained more than 100 positions.

The «Cobalt net» set is introduced in collections of The State Hermitage, The State Russian Museum, The State Historical Museum and many others collections in Russia and abroad. For 65 years of distribution, the «Cobalt net» set has taken his place in millions of homes.

By virtue of a universal language, created by the artist Anna Yatskevich in old besieged Leningrad, the «Cobalt net» became not only a significant item of the first Russian porcelain manufactory, but also a symbol of Saint Petersburg, an embodiment of a classical St. Petersburg style.



Anna A. Yatskevich  
(1904–1952)



Signature A.A. Yatskevich on the cup's backdrop  
on the service shape «Tulip»



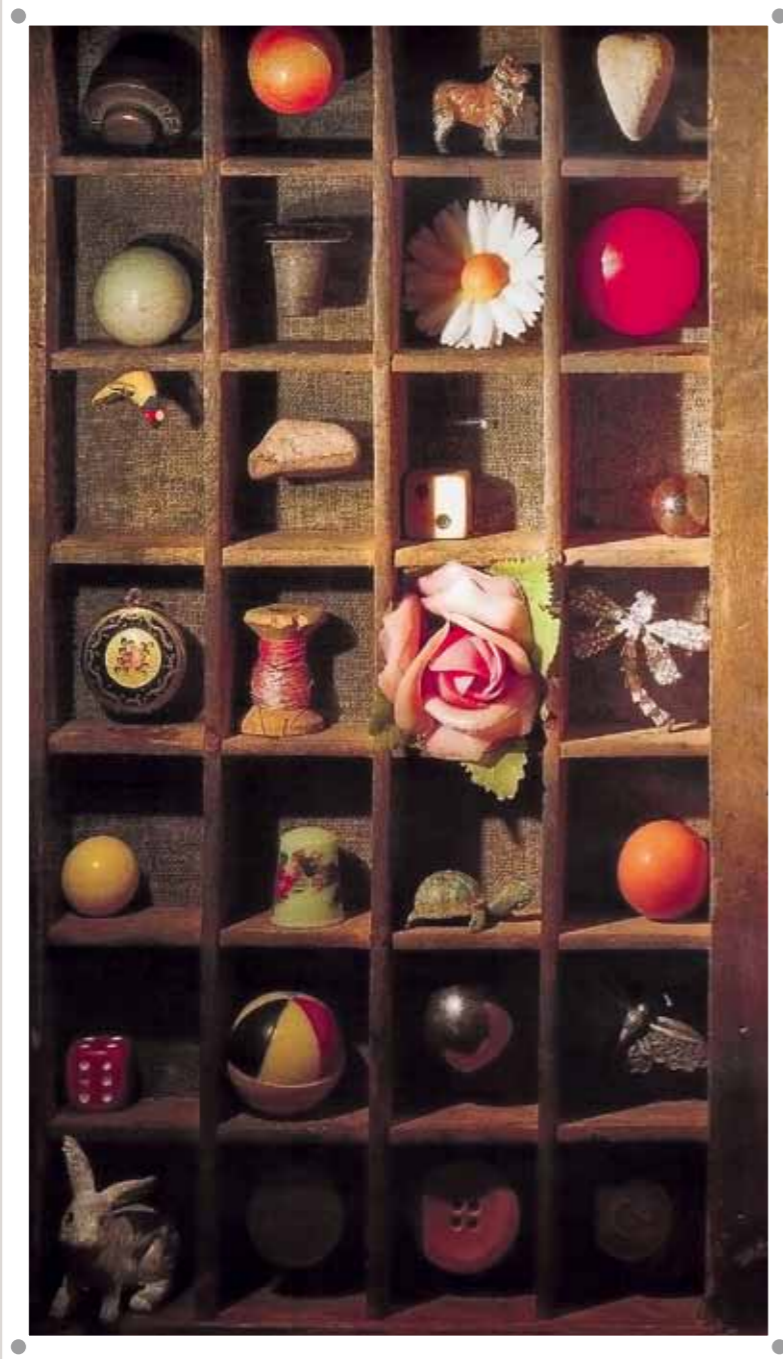
Items from the Empress Elizabeth's service «Sobstvenniy» created  
in the middle of the XVIII century.  
Collection of the State Hermitage Museum.



«Cobalt net» –  
symbol of Saint-Petersburg



ORKHAN PAMUK'S  
MUSEUM OF INNOCENCE IN ISTANBUL  
(a fragment from the exhibition 58. Tombata)



**“The amazement you feel, realising that everything that has surrounded you since childhood, that was the center of your world, the starting point for all your ideas about life, not so long ago (100 years before you were born) did not exist, is a challenge no less difficult than the prospect of seeing the world as it will be after your death. All your life experience, all those relationships with people developed over many years, all one’s accumulated possessions – all these things lose their significance in the face of time, and the awareness of this makes my heart flutter.”**



Orkhan Pamuk, “Istanbul. City of Memories”, 2003



SEASON  
CANDIDA HÖFER  
STEVE McCURRY

THE FORGOTTEN ARCHITECTURE OF CAIRO  
MASTERPIECES OF THE HERMITAGE  
“GLIMPSES OF ITALY” IN KAZAN

FROM NICHOLAS I TO NICHOLAS II  
PORTRAIT OF PRINCE GORCHAKOV

A YEAR AGO CANDIDA HÖFER WAS COMMISSIONED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CONTEMPORARY ART AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM TO PHOTOGRAPH THE INTERIOR DECORATIONS OF THE MARIINSKY THEATRE, YUSUPOV PALACE, PAVLOVSK AND PUSHKIN PALACES AND THE RUSSIAN NATIONAL LIBRARY, AS WELL AS THE HALLS OF THE HERMITAGE. AS A RESULT, 25 PICTURES WERE REVEALED TO THE PUBLIC AT THE DISPLAY DEDICATED TO THE YEAR OF CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY.

# CANDIDA HÖFER: MEMORY

JUNE-SEPTEMBER 2015

The museum, theatre, and library halls in Höfer's pictures are strikingly sterile, unattended by any human. Otherwise, their traces would be apparent in benches pushed aside or a crumpled carpet. These rooms strip an empty space down to its design and function.

The opening photos by Höfer, characterized by a high level of precision though taken in poorly-lit halls without lighting equipment, are both attractive and depressing. These glimpses of the hidden dimension of familiar public houses thrill and frighten like haunted places. The viewer turns into one of Caspar David Friedrich's contemplators from the Hermitage collection displayed in the adjoining halls.

The Youth Center of the Hermitage collaborated with The Department of Modern Art to draw up a series of workshops alongside the exhibition. These involve seminars with Candida Höfer, a movie about the photographer's approach (*Silent Spaces*) directed by Rui Xavier, a lecture of the curator Yuri Molodkovets (*Capturing Spaces*) aimed at reorganizing the General Staff Building.

At the end of the exhibition ten photos by Candida Höfer will be given over to the Hermitage collection.



PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

**Candida Höfer** born in 1944, Eberswalde, Germany, a graduate of Düsseldorf Academy of Fine Arts and became a worldwide famous photographer after displaying photos of deserted public house interiors. These were an attempt to grasp the bond between man and his surroundings.



PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

# STEVE McCURRY MOMENTARY VULNERABILITY

FROM SEPTEMBER 29 TO NOVEMBER 22, 2015,  
THE STATE HERMITAGE DISPLAYED WORKS  
OF THE FAMOUS PHOTOGRAPHER STEVE McCURRY  
AT THE GENERAL STAFF BUILDING.

Steve McCurry was born in the suburbs of Philadelphia, studied cinematography at Pennsylvania State University and worked as a freelance correspondent for a local newspaper.

Then McCurry went on his first trip to India. He travelled light with just a camera and some film. A group of refugees helped him cross the Afghan-Pakistan border and reach the territories controlled by the rebels. At the time, foreign journalists were banned from Afghanistan, so McCurry was the first to take shots of the conflict.

Since then McCurry has been to many places. He has taken photos of war conflicts, endangered peoples, archaic and modern worlds always focusing on individual stories. There are 80 works by the artist at the exhibition including the famous *Afghan Girl*.

# TOPIC – ABSENCE

## “DUST. THE FORGOTTEN ARCHITECTURE OF CAIRO”

KSENIA NIKOLSKAYA  
 CONCEPT AUTHOR AND EXHIBITION CURATOR – M.B. PIOTROVSKY  
 MARCH-MAY 2015

IN 2006-2011, WHILE STUDYING THE HISTORY, CULTURE AND TOPOGRAPHY OF THE EGYPTIAN CAPITAL, SAINT PETERSBURG PHOTOGRAPHER KSENIA NIKOLSKAYA PHOTOGRAPHED THE COLONIAL-ERA ARCHITECTURE OF CAIRO. ABANDONED, HALF-RUINED MANSIONS, PALACES, VILLAS AND PUBLIC BUILDINGS, NOW ON THE PERIPHERY OF THE MODERN LIFE OF THE CITY, BEAR WITNESS TO THE EUROPEAN PRESENCE IN EGYPT. NOW COVERED WITH DUST, THE LUXURIOUS INTERIORS OF THESE BUILDINGS WERE INFLUENCED DURING THEIR CREATION BY THE BEST EXAMPLES OF FRENCH ARCHITECTURE OF THE BARON HAUSMANN ERA.

KSENIA NIKOLSKAYA

We enter the building through the back door and find ourselves in complete darkness. My heart is beating heavily; I do not feel at ease, but then the doorkeeper turns the light on – and we see a fantastic space, entirely untouched, covered with a soft layer of dust: the palace of Sleeping Beauty.

The building looks as if the owners have only just left it, just disappeared, departing hastily without taking their belongings with them. In the centre of the luxurious hall is a grand staircase of pink marble, decorated with gryphons and leading to the first floor gallery with a glass dome above it. To the left of the staircase is the dining room; facing it are the living room and the library. Throughout there is marble and silk, polished wood and crystal, mirrors and paintings between the windows... a sensation of former grandeur and the drama which unfolded within these walls, a feeling both of curiosity and embarrassment, as if you were reading someone's correspondence...

Now it seems absolutely natural that my photographic study of abandoned interiors in Egypt started when I first entered this building, the Serageldin family residence in Cairo. Thereafter I saw many beautiful abandoned buildings in a state of decay, disappearing before our eyes.

First I was trying to find in them traces of the Saint Petersburg of my childhood, but then I realised I was equally fascinated by their own stories.

I was born in the Soviet Union, a country that no longer exists, just like the name of my native city – Leningrad. And I studied the art of Ancient Egypt on cracked black-and-white slides shown to us by a professor who had never been to Egypt.

When I went there for the first time, in 2003, I worked as a photographer in an archaeological mission of the Egyptology Research Centre, part of the Russian Academy of Sciences in Memphis. This expedition was unforgettable, but I was too busy taking photographs to be able to really discover the country, even though I did feel a connection to this place. Later, in 2006, I returned thanks to the support of the Egyptian embassy in Moscow. This was a real adventure, and as Roland Barthes said, there is no photography without adventure.

After coming back to Moscow, I met with the director of the Egyptian Cultural Centre who wanted to exhibit my photographs, but while looking at them in his office, with every minute he grew sadder and sadder for some reason. In the end

1 | **A MOSQUE IN OLD CAIRO**  
2010

2 | **RHINOCEROS**  
Agricultural Museum, Cairo, 2010

3 | **WORKING MOMENT OF SHOOTING**  
Courtesy of the author



"This makes us perceive the anthropogenic environment as an arena in which human drama is happening. But try to see these buildings as active participants in an historical performance, not as a mere background. How wonderfully these actors perform; what dramatic ingenuity the artificial environment at the end of the twentieth century shows in transforming the characters into nostalgic objects by the force of its colonial connotations!

<...> In its nostalgia for "La Belle Époque", the dust of Egyptian modernity paints grey the urban palette of the colourful pre-1952 cosmopolitan life. The post-revolutionary attempts to get rid of the dust, often with the help of carpets and brushes (the latter were sometimes made of coloured plastic, but the bamboo variety is far better), may seem too old-fashioned and traditional. The rhythmical tapping of brushes on carpets hung on the Art-Deco balcony balustrades cuts through the cacophony of calls to prayer ringing out from loudspeakers, an example of how modernity can give birth to its opposite. On the whole, from a universal point of view, the Egyptian dust can be compared to a drawn-down curtain."

Professor On Barack (Israel)

he asked me, "So where are the Pyramids?" I had to answer that I did not find them interesting and that for this reason I had never photographed them. Our meeting ended there and the director never called me back.

I'd photographed Egypt for the last five years, but only when I had left the country could I finally develop a vision, a concept for the project. It happened during a trip to the USA in 2009. In New York I met the wonderful photographer Jason Eskenazi who at the time was working temporarily as a security guard at the Metropolitan Museum. Jason invited me to the museum on a Monday, when it is closed to visitors. The empty building reminded me of the time when I was part of a student club at the Hermitage and we could enjoy the museum on our own when it was closed in the evenings. And on that day at the Metropolitan I finally saw what I had seen before many times, but what I had never really noticed: "The Milkmaid", the famous painting by Jan Vermeer, was on display as part of an exhibition. During normal opening hours you could never even get close to it, but now I could look at it intimately. In the picture she is standing all alone — and this feeling was strengthened by the emptiness of the museum — but she did not look sad. In the background, on a small ceramic tile on the wall, there is a Cupid shooting an arrow with his bow. The symbolism is quite straightforward: she is longing for her lover. And at that point I knew that the main topic of my project would be absence; that which I had thought about all the time.

When we left the Serageldin Palace, it was already dark outside. Only several years later would I learn of the stories hidden beneath the dust.

This project took me five years to complete. Strangely enough, the last photograph was taken on 17 January 2011, just several days before the so-called Egyptian Revolution, and I finished editing on 11 February — the day Mubarak lost power.

## THIS CAIRO – THE BEAUTY OF DECAY

MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY

On Ksenia Nikolskaya's photographs we can see, under a cover of dust, the Cairo of the Belle Époque, the most European period in the life of this great city which often gets forgotten in its turbulent centuries-long history. This period is characterised by an exotic Oriental adaptation of Mediterranean culture. These photographs are stunningly beautiful, and they embellish the seeming decay they portray. An abandoned interior is always beautiful and embodies many qualities. It is life stopped short and a story leading into the past. Time stands still and is winding back, and it is happening in an interior filled with objects that, like museum exhibits, have found themselves in a new context, no less interesting than the context of their previous life. We can feel this lost Egypt better than if we looked at real photographs from that time. Monuments are able to revive memory.

I often went to Cairo and stayed for long periods and had the pleasure of walking through it. I worked behind the scenes at the Opera, which had not yet been burnt down. I went to clubs that still existed at the end of the 1960s, including the famous "Automobile Club"; I met the descendants of old pachas. I ate Greek pastries in "Groppi", went to semi-abandoned palaces and to palaces converted into office buildings.

This dust-covered Cairo is enchanting in the way in which the neglected Leningrad was. In the 1990s there were similar photographs taken and similar books published about Leningrad, but it only made it more fascinating. When I was young I loved exploring abandoned buildings. In the 1970s there was a vast programme of extensive renovation in Leningrad, and many buildings were empty. It was the optimistic version of the desolation we later saw in the 1990s. Cairo is located on the edge of the desert; if not taken care of, it gets covered in sand dust. Saint Petersburg — Leningrad — is located on swampy land; if not taken care of it quickly falls into decay, like in the engravings by Favorsky or Piranesi.

Dilapidated architecture is beautiful, but fragile. It either crumbles or gets renovated, reconstructed — and loses the charm of authenticity. This happens in all great cities. Ksenia Nikolskaya preserved a special Cairo for us, and did it like only an artist from Saint Petersburg could do; someone who knows the beauty of decay, which tormented and fascinated us in the 1920s, 1950s and 1990s. The aesthetics of fading are one manifestation of the propaganda of renewal. When renewal occurs, it leaves not only a document but also artistic evidence.

# MASTERPIECES FROM THE HERMITAGE: THE LEGACY OF CATHERINE THE GREAT

THE HERMITAGE COLLECTION COVERS A NUMBER OF EXHIBITION THEMES THAT ARE ALWAYS IN DEMAND ALL ACROSS THE WORLD. THIS IS DUE TO THE HIGH LEVEL AND UNIQUENESS OF THE ARTWORKS OWNED BY THE MUSEUM. EXAMPLES WOULD INCLUDE EXHIBITIONS ORGANISED ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS IN VENUES OTHER THAN THE HERMITAGE ITSELF ON SCYTHIAN CULTURE AND THE REGION NORTH OF THE BLACK SEA, IMPRESSIONISTS, CLASSIC ART NOUVEAU AND, OF COURSE, CATHERINE THE GREAT.



PHOTO: NGV PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES

MIKHAIL DEDINKIN

↓  
p. 052  
p. 068  
p. 094  
p. 142

The famous Empress has long been an iconic historical figure causing intrigue with her glorious biography, exceptional role on the political scene and rather dramatic personal life. The Hermitage she created preserves numerous relics from that historical period and the Empress's collections. They serve as an abundant source for even more exhibitions which can tell the famous Empress's story in a unique way. Over the last two decades alone the Hermitage has organised exhibitions about Catherine II<sup>1</sup> in the Netherlands, Japan, the United Kingdom, China and other countries. The concept of the exhibition in the National Gallery of Victoria in Melbourne was created at the same time as the Hermitage of Her Imperial Majesty<sup>2</sup> exhibition was being organised as part of the celebrations for the museum's 250th anniversary. This is why some sections of the two exhibitions are very similar, however their scale and contents were meant to be largely different. Furthermore, the organisers look into account that masterpieces

of Western Art from the Hermitage had already been displayed in Melbourne, albeit nearly 30 years ago. Many objects from the previous exhibition were from Catherine's collection and the organisers did not want to repeat themselves.

The permanent collection of the National Gallery set the benchmark for the selection process. The National Gallery holds the best selection of artworks in Australia. It was mostly created in the 1920-1930s and reflects the artistic tendencies of those years. The museum has a rather impressive collection of masterpieces from the Dutch School and the Baroque period. Its gem is the splendid *Banquet of Cleopatra* by Tiepolo which had been sold as part of the Soviet sale of Hermitage paintings through the *Antiquariat* agency. The Gallery also holds a significant collection of works from the 18th century, with English painters prevailing. Its highlight is a set of paintings by Joseph Wright of Derby.

The museum in Melbourne has strong ties with Art Exhibitions Australia, a small public company established by the Australian Government in order to arrange and promote major art exhibitions on this remote continent. Owing to its administrative and financial support, the museum has hosted exhibitions from Prado, Louvre, d'Orsay and exhibitions on Turner and Monet.

Every winter, when it is summer in Australia, the National Gallery of Australia holds one major exhibition which becomes an artistic highlight in the largest city of the continent. In 2015 it was the Hermitage that had the privilege of playing this role. The Australian exhibition was based on the history of the Hermitage, its expansion and its transformation from an entertainment pavilion into the largest museum collection of the second half of the eighteenth century. As in the Hermit-



PHOTO: NGV PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICES

1) *DONNA NUDA*, FROM THE SCHOOL OF LEONARDO DA VINCI, ALWAYS ATTRACTS CONSIDERABLE INTEREST, IN THIS CASE, SURPASSING TITIAN IN THE CENTER OF THE HALL OF ITALIAN ART

2) THE OPENING OF THE EXHIBITION WAS ACCOMPANIED BY A CURATORIAL COMMENTARY IN THE HALLS

age itself, the organisers tried to give visitors an idea about the way the Hermitage buildings looked at the time, tell the story of their creation, the style of the architecture in the city in the 1760-1790s and show this group of buildings in the context of the city panorama. In the catalogue this subject is covered in the introductory article called *The Genesis of the Hermitage*. The development of the European art collection is presented in this article as a logical continuation of Peter I's reforms during the Enlightenment, as a wise political gesture which created a brilliant display of the country's progress, as a powerful image-making move which contributed to the glory of the wise *Star of the North* (this is what Voltaire called the Empress). At the same time it was a deeply personal and intimate world imbued with a sincere love for art, where not only the collections but each detail of the inte-

1 See the article about the exhibition in the 21st issue



3) **ADORATION OF THE MAGI BY RUBENS WAS THE CENTER OF THE COMPOSITION OF THE HALL OF FLEMISH ART**

4) **TABLE, LAID WITH A SEVRES CAMEO SERVICE, GAVE AN IDEA OF THE SPLENDOR AND LUXURY OF PALACE LIFE DURING THE REIGN OF CATHERINE II**

The Hermitage exhibition has become the most visited art exhibition in the history of Australia. The interest to our exposition can be proved with the fact that long before the end of the exhibition all catalogs had been sold – more than 10 000 copies

rior and life was carefully looked after and seen to by Catherine II. Her museum combined artistic collections and a library, a collection of minerals, a botanical garden, a treasury and a theatre. She managed to create an ideal environment for the contemporary intellectual, a universe of sorts which unified fine arts and science and gave the Hermitage a unique image which it has largely kept up to this day.

At the exhibition at the National Gallery of Victoria the early history of the Hermitage was covered in the introductory hall with a large full-dress portrait of Catherine the Great by Alexander Roslin. In the same hall, just as in the Hermitage one day, the visitors were greeted by a marble bust of Voltaire.

In a separate large case there was an installation on the lift tables of the Hermitage. It had a table laid with the Sevre's Cameo Service, ceremonial French silverware and Sevre's biscuit porcelain figurines. Another case contained a Cameo Cabinet installation including items from the famous Roentgen and Rauch furniture sets and tables with cameos from the Empress's collection. The walls in this hall were decorated with paintings by Benjamin Patterson depicting late eighteenth century St. Petersburg. One wall had a collection of panoramic views and drawings of the Hermitage buildings and interiors, while the opposite wall – a collection of drawings, maps and views of Catherine's constructions in and outside the city which were acquired by the museum during her reign. This section of the exhibition displayed works by Quarenghi, Cameron, Starov, and Neyelov, the masters of the Russian architecture of the late eighteenth century.

The architectural theme continued in the walk-through hall, where one decorative group comprised watercolour and gouache paintings by Charles-Louis Clérissieu, Charles De Wailly, Louis Jean Desprez, and Giuseppe Manocchi. These were architectural fantasies and projects showing the Empress's interest in Roman art and architecture, as well as Neoclassical architecture. Her collection of graphic arts composed a unique 'architectural library'.

The exhibition continued through a few grand halls dedicated to the Empress's picture gallery. Two Italian halls had such Renaissance and Baroque masterpieces as *Portrait of a Young Woman* by Tizian, *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt with Saint Justice* by Lorenzo Lotto, *Portrait of a Young Man* by Domenico Capriolo, works by Paris Bordone, Domenico Felli and two large landscapes by Bernardo Bellotto. Australian visitors seemed to be particularly intrigued by *Donna Nuda* attributed to Leonardo da Vinci's school.

The Flemish Art Hall had such large-scale canvasses as *The Adoration of the Magi* by Rubens and his workshop. Rubens was also represented by *Roman Charity* and *The Conversion of St. Paul*. This hall is complemented by works by Van Dyck (*Family Portrait*), Jacob Jordaens (*The Apostles*, *St. Paul and St. Barnabas at Lystra* and *Portrait of a Family*), Cornelis de Vos (*Self-portrait Of The Artist With His Wife Suzanne Cock And Their Children*), David Téniers the Younger (*The Village Fete*) and others. Small as it was, this collection of works gave visitors an impressive idea of the Flemish Baroque in its prime and demonstrated the role of the masters represented in the Empress's painting collection, even though the Flemish group was divided into two halls.

The highlight of the Dutch seventeenth century art section was Rembrandt with his *Portrait of a Scholar* and *Young Woman with Earrings*. This section also included *Portrait of a Young Man in a Beret* by Rembrandt's workshop, *Portrait of a Young Man Holding a Glove* by Frans Hals, *Bacchus and Ariadne* by Ferdinand Bol, *A Stag Hunt* by Philips Wouwerman, *Waterfall in Norway* by Jacob van Ruisdael, *Doctor's Visit* by Gabriel Metsu, *Guardroom* by Jacob Duck, a couple of large paintings with birds by Melchior d'Hondecoeter, *Convivial Fellow* and *Lute Player* by Gerrit van Honthorst along with other equally significant paintings. Such a selection successfully demonstrated both the originality and variety of Dutch artworks in Catherine's Hermitage and a wonderful selection of Rembrandt's works in the Imperial collection.

The French hall of the exhibition had paintings by seventeenth century artists, such as Louis Le Nain, Claude Lorrain, Sébastien Bourdon, and Jean-Baptiste Santerre. However, the focus in this hall was on the renowned artists of the eighteenth century. Here visitors could see Antoine Watteau's *Savoyard With a Marmot*, Nicolas Lancret's *Concert in the Park*, Francois Boucher's *Landscape with a Pond*, Jean-Simeon Chardin's *Laundress*, and a couple of paintings featuring Turkish sultanas by Carle van Loo. Such an extensive collection of French paintings is due to the special place France occupied in European cultural life in the second half of the eighteenth century and the role French literature, art and philosophy played in Russian society at the times of Catherine the Great.

The next hall had a marble bust of Catherine the Great by Jean-Antoine Houdon in the centre. One of the themes presented in this hall was the Empress as a patron of European artists. Here visitors would find *Filial Piety (The Paralytic)* by Greuze, *The Destruction of the Turkish Fleet in the Bay of Chesme* by Jakob Hackerl, *St. John the Baptist in the Desert* by Anton Raphael Mengs, *Iron Forge Viewed from Without* by Joseph Wright of Derby, and *Cupid Untying the Zone of Venus* by Joshua Reynolds. Another highlight of the same hall was a selection of amazing drawings by European artists. Suffice to say, that on display were works by Rembrandt, Rubens, Dürer, Callot, Dumonsnier, Poussin, Van Dyck, and Guercino. This part of the exhibition was of particular interest to Australian visitors since collections of graphic classical works available in the country are rather modest.

The row of halls presenting the Imperial art gallery ended with the *Warpole Hall*. The organisers thought it would be a good idea to dedicate a whole section of the exhibition to one of Catherine II's largest acquisitions. This was the only way to build such an extensive and universal collection of European art in such a short period of time. The first British Prime Minister's collection was justly considered the best private collection in Britain. This section also included a portrait of Warpole, 1st Earl of Orford, himself. The painting by Jean-Baptiste van Loo was bought from his grandson together with the arts gallery at the family estate, Houghton Hall, in Norfolk. Among the masterpieces from this collection on display in this hall were a couple of royal portraits by van Dyck, *Landscape with Stone Carriers*, *Lion Hunt* and *Head of a Franciscan Monk* by Rubens, *Bird's Concert* by Snyders, *Monkeys in the Kitchen* by Teniers the Younger, *Adoration of the Shepherds* by Murillo and so on. This was a powerful final chord to a succession of high spacious halls dedicated to the Hermitage arts gallery.

A very small and low-rise room nearby resembled a jewellery box. Here visitors would find exquisite works, mostly silver filigree, by Chinese jewellers from the seventeenth to early eighteenth century. Since the reign of Catherine the Great, the Hermitage has had the best collection of such artworks in the world. These fragile masterpieces, for which Catherine had a particular, feminine interest, are rarely on display outside the Hermitage. The highlight of this section was a large toilet service with a high mirror painted with exotic birds and surrounded by thirty eight items: jewel cases, boxes, coffee and tea sets and so on. The same section included various golden pins and combs, and next to finest Chinese jewellery – Ilya Neyelov's designs of a Chinese village in the park of Tsarskoe Selo. Such a cultural rapprochement was caused by a fascination for China in Russia in the eighteenth century.

The exhibition in Melbourne was different from the previous ones dedicated to the times of Catherine the Great. It did not touch upon her biography, any details of her everyday life, did not present any of her personal belongings, Russian history or ethnography. It focused entirely on demonstrating the splendour of her favourite creation, the Hermitage. Judging by the feedback from the visitors and reviews of critics, experts and colleagues, the desired effect was achieved.





10th JUNE 2015 - 19th FEBRUARY 2016  
EXHIBITION HALL "HERMITAGE-KAZAN"

## GLIMPSES OF ITALY

"GLIMPSES OF ITALY" IS TO OPEN A SERIES OF EVENTS CELEBRATING THE 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE "HERMITAGE-KAZAN" EXHIBITION HALL, THE FIRST HERMITAGE FILIAL IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION. THE EXHIBITION DISPLAYS 190 HERMITAGE PAINTINGS, GRAPHIC WORKS, AND SCULPTURES OF THREE CENTURIES FROM THE 1650s TO THE 1960s.

# In

the second half of the seventeenth century and even more so in the eighteenth century, English, French, and Russian nobles were expected to tour Italy commissioning portraits as well as purchasing paintings and sculptures.

Alongside the tsars' collection the Hermitage deploys a large number of works from private collections, which were originally bought on trips to Italy. These were generally kept in private apartments rather than displayed in ceremonial chambers and were cherished as a part of memorabilia regardless of their artistic merit.

In the sixteenth century Italian masters set the trend: French, Spanish, German, Dutch artists and sculptors followed in their footsteps. The cultural exchange became even more evident in the seventeenth century. It resulted in a somewhat universal movement and style involving all European masters. At first, it was known as Caravaggio style, then Baroque. One of the leading figures of this movement was the Dutch artist Nicolaes Berchem, who addressed mythological subjects (*Pastoral Scene. Education of Jupiter*). The popular genre of urban crowd scenes is represented at the exhibition by *Market in a Square* (Johannes Lingelbach), *Quack* (Jan Miles), as well as by a fine nineteenth century painting *Fireworks*

*in Naples* (Oswald Achenbach). Other eighteenth and nineteenth century masters inspired by Italian landscape and architecture were the famous Claude Lorrain, Alessandro Magnasco, Hubert Robert, Claude Joseph Vernet and Jakob Philip Hackert.

Paintings are displayed alongside bronze statuettes copying bigger originals of famous ancient Roman statues. These statuettes signify an interest in Ancient times, which was typical of Italian visitors in the eighteenth century.

The most collectable items were graphic sheets with Italian sights, which were relatively cheap and transportable. In the eighteenth century, this gave rise to the Italian genre of urban landscape, Veduta. The works by Marieschi Michele and Giovanni Ballista Piranesi were exemplary for many masters of this genre. In the nineteenth century the former were replaced by water-color landscapes painted by Posillipo artists, the first to work in the open air.



**190 WORKS FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM WERE PRESENTED IN THE HALLS OF THE EXHIBITION CENTER HERMITAGE-KAZAN**

The debutants at the exhibition will be Ippolito Caffi with *View of the Castle Sant'Angelo*, a recent Hermitage acquirement, the youngest nineteenth century portraitist Franz Xaver Winterhaller with an unfamiliar *La Siesta*, Gabriele Smargiassi and Giacinto Gigante with restored landscapes. Vasily Uspensky, the exhibition curator, says: "We wouldn't be surprised if Petersburgers decided to come to Kazan to admire the masterpieces which haven't been displayed in St. Petersburg."



285 EXHIBITS FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, INCLUDING PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS, COSTUMES, FURNITURE, PORCELAIN, SILVER, GLASS — IN THE HALLS OF THE EXHIBITION CENTER HERMITAGE-VYBORG

PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

18th SEPTEMBER 2015 - 18th MARCH 2016  
EXHIBITION HALL "HERMITAGE-VYBORG"

## FROM NICHOLAS I TO NICHOLAS II. THE AGE OF HISTORICISM IN RUSSIA

THIS EXHIBITION FEATURES A REMARKABLE PERIOD IN THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF RUSSIA, WHICH SPANNED THE REIGN OF FOUR SUCCESSIVE EMPERORS, NAMELY: NICHOLAS I, ALEXANDER II, ALEXANDER III, AND NICHOLAS II

In the 1820s, fascinated by the latest European fad, Russia lost interest in classicism and fell for the romantic idea of historical revival. In search for inspiration, artists and applied art masters started to rediscover the heritage of different countries. As a result, we now enjoy a number of art movements called "styles": "NeoGreek", "Gothic", "Second Rococo", "Renaissance", "Moorish", "Oriental" and so on. The "Russian" style was somewhat sidelined. Historical thinking was applied to all art forms: literature, music, architecture, painting, and sculpture. However, it proved even more inspirational for the decorative arts involved in interior decorations.

This is a complex display of 285 exhibits from the Hermitage collection including paintings, graphic works, costumes, furniture; china,



PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

George Vilinbachov at the opening ceremony:

**"We are exposed to historicisms from an early age and it evokes many memories. These are of historical novels of the period; tin soldiers and other childhood toys impersonating not only soldiers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but also warriors of earlier times, such as Romans, Persians, or knights. These toys often serve as a history lesson for children leading them to an interest in learning it later in life. As a result, archeology, museum work and other history related walks of life received a boost at the time.**

**Aside from its European implications, historicism in Russia is highly associated with the NeoRussian style. Our exhibition is aimed at showing Russian historicism: the way Russian artists relied on ancient, medieval, gothic heritage, revived Rococo and Baroque styles as well as Russian heritage and styles. We display NeoRussian furniture and attire, such as kokoshniks, which were in vogue under Nicholas I, or costumes recreating designs from Alexei Mikhailovich's reign, worn at the exemplary ball of 1903."**

glass, and silver pieces; works in stone, bronze, and metal. These are accompanied by photographs featuring notable events and architectural monuments, as well as by nineteenth century portraits of contemporaries.

The centerpiece of the exhibition is a set of watercolors depicting the new interiors of the Winter Palace commissioned in the aftermath of the 1837 fire. Contemporaries saw this renovation as a historical moment noting the latest art trend. The pictures of Palace halls as well as authentic decorative elements are displayed in all parts of the exhibition.

The Hermitage collection gives a full picture of historicism in Russia. The exhibits vary in quality from the finest pieces to simpler items made for the middle class consumer.



## THE INTERNATIONAL HERMITAGE FRIENDS' CLUB

THE INTERNATIONAL HERMITAGE FRIENDS' CLUB — is a special program of the State Hermitage Museum that for the first time in Russia has united Friends around the museum. Over the years of its successful activity, the Hermitage Friends' Club has already implemented and is carrying out numerous museum development projects with the support of its many Friends all around the world.

The year 2014 marked the 250th anniversary of the Hermitage. The Museum celebrated this date with a burst of cultural events: exhibitions, festivals, ceremonies and receptions, and prepared a special present for all museum visitors, — the opening of new permanent displays and exhibition spaces in the Small Hermitage and the General Staff Building.

Hermitage Friends all around the world participated in the celebration of the anniversary of the beloved museum with an array of generous donations, supporting restoration projects and exhibitions of art masterpieces, and organizing gala receptions which honored the great museum, its contribution to the world of culture, and the work of everyone involved in its activity.

Though the celebrations are over, the Hermitage continues to further cooperation with its patrons, partners and Friends. The number of new Friends continues to grow, and the geography of Hermitage branches and Friends' organizations is steadily expanding, now including Italy and Israel.

For the Hermitage every contribution is important. We are happy to introduce new programs and projects for museum development to our Friends and look forward to their continued support. In addition, the new spaces and exhibitions at the General Staff Building open new exciting opportunities for interesting collaborations.

### Hermitage Friends' Club Komendantsky entrance

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THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM INVITES ALL THOSE WHO CARE  
ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THIS GREAT MUSEUM TO BECOME ITS FRIENDS.

YOUR PARTICIPATION WILL HELP US PRESERVE  
THE HERMITAGE AND ITS TREASURES FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS!

# THE HERMITAGES, plural form

FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF URBAN PLANNING, THE "HERMITAGE" BRAND EXTENSION HAS BEEN AN ABSOLUTE SUCCESS: IN TOWNS WHERE LOCAL CULTURAL LIFE MIGHT NOT INCLUDE FAMOUS NAMES WIDELY KNOWN IN RUSSIA AND BEYOND, THE MUSEUM'S CENTERS HAVE BECOME THE MAIN CULTURAL ATTRACTION.

ALEXANDER ARKHIPOV

Economics has an interesting view on financing culture: money invested in art returns to society in revenue from businesses which feed the theatre and museum visitors, accommodate those who come from other cities, and sell them books, albums and souvenirs. Museums and theatres create jobs, helping the develop-

ment of related infrastructure: workshops, studios and publishing houses. The compulsion to form a "creative" economy in major Russian cities is important not only for the culture, but also for the prosperity of the country. Fortunately, it seems that this is evident to the municipal authorities in Ekaterinburg, Vladivostok, Kazan and Vyborg: they are actively supporting the work of the future and existing Hermitage branches.

When defending himself from the obscurantist attacks on the Chapman<sup>3</sup> Brothers exhibition and on contemporary art as a whole, Mikhail Piotrovsky said: "It is the museum that decides what is art and what is not". The sacred position of the Hermitage in Russian culture will help carry this view into the major Russian cities. When radical activists impose their censorship even in the very heart of Moscow, the Hermitage branches will be a reputable interlocutor in the dialogue on the acceptability of art, and their reasonable but firm position — such is the corporate culture of the country's main museum — will help bring mutual understanding between creative circles and the conservative public, who are often the victims of the atrocious demagoguery of speculators trying to commercialize the notion of "spirituality".

The Hermitage's international activity is becoming especially important. At a time when relations be-

tween Russia and the West are quite complex, the Hermitage is one of the pillars of our culture which evokes only positive images: Saint Petersburg, enlightenment, Catherine the Great and her patronage of the arts, breathtaking beauty, a collection of inestimable cultural and historical value, and Mikhail Piotrovsky. British Museum director Neil MacGregor stated recently in The New York Times, "Most of us [museums' executives] consider him the best director in the world."

At the Peggy Guggenheim museum in Venice almost all the employees speak Italian with a very pronounced American accent. This is, undoubtedly, *soft power*: we are very far away from you, we are accused of isolationism, of being self-centered — but here are dozens of young people studying your culture and your language who came from the other side of the Atlantic. It would be nice to see this in the Hermitage branches abroad — in the Netherlands, in Italy, in Israel, in the USA: the museum shows the world an image of educated Russia, and this image should include people who live and work in the present, who reflect the best we have in us. Besides arts and sciences, the Hermitage should have within it the human being. Let him or her speak English and the local language fluently, with a mysterious Russian accent: the James Bond series already proved to us that this is very attractive for Her Majesty's subjects — and not only for them.

It remains to be seen if the Ministry of Culture will be willing to support such a project at the present time, but one can only wish that there will be philanthropists who understand the importance of fostering cultural and human dialogue, now more than ever.

3  
p. 037



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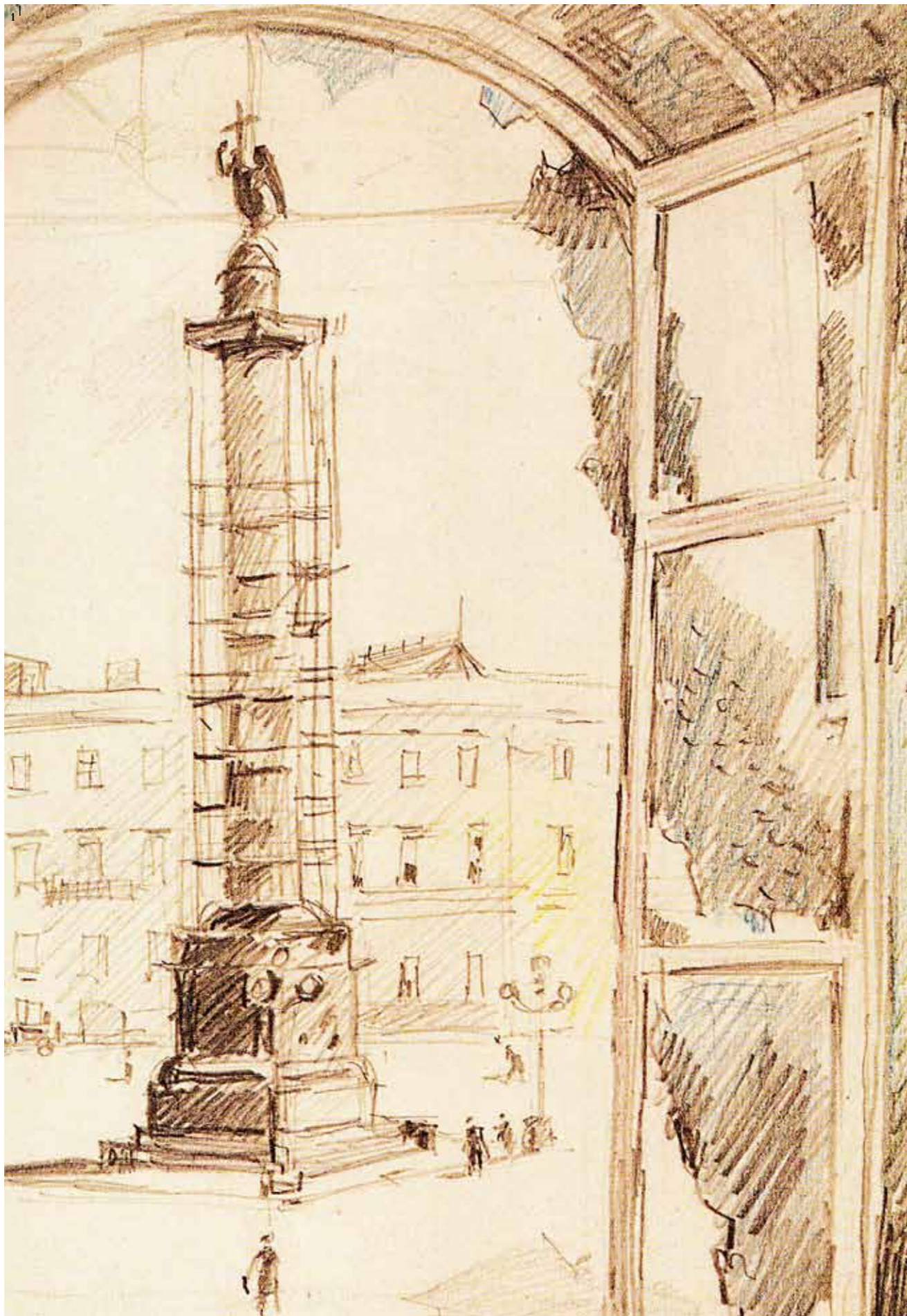
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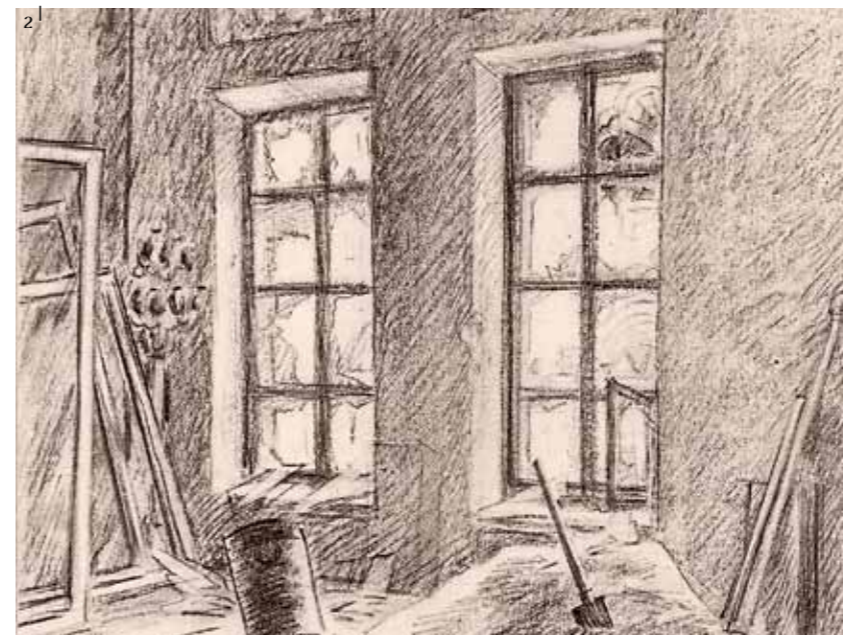
1 | **ADRIAN KAPLUN**  
*View of the Alexander Column from the window of the Winter Palace*  
April 25th, 1942  
Paper; pencil, colored pencils  
24.2 x 21.7 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum



2 | **VERA MILYUTINA**  
*A Hermitage hall with empty frames and sand*  
April 1942  
Charcoal on paper  
34.5 x 35.3 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum

3 | **ADRIAN KAPLUN**  
*The large skylight rooms in the Hermitage with empty frames*  
May 27th, 1942  
Lithography. 22.6 x 30.9 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum

4 | **SERGEI MIKHAILOV**  
*Bomb Shelter at the Hermitage*  
November 19th, 1941  
Paper; Black chalk, charcoal  
14.5 x 19.6 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum



**"WE SHALL REMEMBER THOSE YEARS..."** A HERMITAGE CHRONICLE OF WAR AND VICTORY. ON THE 70th ANNIVERSARY OF THE VICTORY  
EXHIBITION ABOUT THE LIFE OF THE MUSEUM DURING THE GREAT PATRIOTIC WAR  
WORKED IN THE FOYER OF THE HERMITAGE THEATRE SINCE APRIL TO JULY 2015

# NOLI TANGERE CIRCULOS MEOS \*

MIKHAIL PIDTROVSKY

\* "Do not touch my drawings" — during the siege of Leningrad one of the museum officials or some educated Leningrad resident hiding in the Hermitage vaults wrote this quotation from Archimedes on the museum wall. These words were originally addressed to a Roman soldier who went on to kill the scholar. Today, no one remembers the soldier's name, while the memory of Archimedes lives on.

Memory restores justice, and the good defeats the bad.

This war seems so distant: 70 years can alter actual historical memory. Nevertheless, the hearts of Russians are still grieving for these tragic events. The siege of Leningrad is an example of not only military and civil courage, but also of an outrageous war crime similar to the catastrophes of Dresden and Hiroshima.

There are many reminders that keep the memory fresh. On rainy days, the cracks left by shells and bombs swell like wounds. In the workshop at Staraya Derevnya they are still restoring carriages damaged in the bombing. In the new exhibition hall in Manege of the Small Hermitage you can see the traces of that explosion. Our moral duty is to pass on the memory of those tragic events in which the museum was involved. This is both an important lesson and a rich legacy for us.



**PAVILION HALL OF THE HERMITAGE. 1942–1943**  
Photo: Boris Kudoyarov (1898–1973)  
15 x 10.5 cm

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## HERMITAGE - 2015

### Awards to the Official State Hermitage Hotel

In January 2015 the Official State Hermitage Hotel became the prize-winner of the International Hotel Awards in the nominations "Best Hotel" and "Hotel Web-site".

The Hotel has also been awarded the prestigious 2015 TripAdvisor Travelers' Choice award in three categories: Top Hotels, Luxury and Best Service in Russia.

### Dedicated to the 71 Year Anniversary of the Complete Lifting of the Siege of Leningrad

From 27 January to 2 February a multimedia program "The Hermitage during the Siege", created at the Hermitage School Centre, was shown on a screen in the Jordan Staircase of the Winter Palace.

The exhibition "The Siege of Leningrad in Children's Drawings" was published on the museum website: 24 drawings by the pupils of the Hermitage Art Studio dedicated to the life of the museum during the Siege.

On 27 January, a Memorial evening dedicated to the 71-year anniversary of the complete liberation of Leningrad from the siege was held at the Official Hotel of the State Hermitage Museum. The guests included siege veterans and combat veterans, among whom were Hermitage employees, as well as representatives of the Union of Journalists and the Union of Theatre Workers, members of the public organisation "Residents of the Central District of Besieged Leningrad" and distinguished athletes who were welcomed by Mikhail Piotrovsky, Director of the State Hermitage Museum, E.P. Babayev, the hotel director, and representatives of the St. Petersburg City Administration.

On 28 January, a delegation of employees of the State Hermitage Museum laid flowers at the memorial plaque at Piskaryovskoye Memorial Cemetery in memory of the Museum employees who died during the Great Patriotic War and the siege of Leningrad.

### The State Hermitage receives the Foreign Affairs Ministry reward

On February 10, 2015, Diplomats Day, a gala reception was held at the Marble Palace, where a Foreign Affairs Ministry representative in Saint Petersburg handed out awards for efficient work in the field of international cooperation. The State Hermitage received a diploma and a medal for developing international cultural cooperation.

### Presentation of a New Publication about the General Staff Building

On 27 February 2015, the new publication "State Hermitage Museum. General Staff Building. Creation of the Museum" (published by The Bronze Horseman Publishing House, St. Petersburg, 2014) was presented.



DIRECTOR OF THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY AND PRESIDENT OF BOOK-TRADE HOUSE "BRONZE HORSEMAN" LEONID POZDEEV ON THE PRESENTATION OF THE BOOK *THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM. THE MAIN STAFF. CREATING A MUSEUM*

It was attended by M.B. Piotrovsky, Director of the State Hermitage Museum, L.L. Pozdeev, President of the Bronze Horseman Publishing House, N.I. Yavein, Head of the Studio 44 architectural workshop, V.P. Lukin, Chief Architect of the State Hermitage Museum, A.N. Dydykin, Head of the General Staff Department, and I.G. Astrov, Head of the History Sector.

The limited edition is a gift of the Bronze Horseman Publishing House to the State Hermitage Museum.

### The Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiades' Visit to the Hermitage

On February 27, 2015 the President of the Cyprus Republic Nicos Anastasiades and his spouse visited the State Hermitage.

### Russian Instagram Users in the Hermitage

On 2 March 2015 Russian Instagram users took part in the #emptyhermitage event in the State Hermitage. They had the opportunity to visit the halls of the General Staff building that have been opened after the restoration, permanent displays and temporary exhibitions, in the absence of visitors. The event took place on the initiative of the State Hermitage with the support of Yury Molodkovets, curator of the #emptyhermitage project on the museum side.

### Signing of the Protocol of Intent between the State Hermitage and the "LCR Group" on the Conditions of the Creation of a Museum Centre in Moscow

On March 11, 2015, in the Council Chamber of the Hermitage the Protocol of Intent between the State Hermitage and the "LCR Group" was signed. The Protocol on the creation of the Hermitage-Moscow museum centre ("Hermitage 20/21") was signed by the Museum Director-General, Mikhail Piotrovsky, and the "LCR Group" Director-General, Andrey Molchanov.

The ceremony was attended by the Director of Cooperation with Investors and Public Relations, Yuri Ilyin, the project architect Hani Rashid, the Hermitage vice-directors and heads of departments, and media representatives.

The project will be realized in two stages. The first one includes the design and development of technical projects by the "LCR Group" as well as constructing, equipping and the interior design of the Museum Centre. The second stage is the opening and running of the centre, including holding artistic and historical and cultural exhibitions. Contemporary art exhibition programmes will be considered by the Hermitage as a priority and will be part of the existing global "Hermitage 20/21" project, as well as the development of the "Big Hermitage" conception.

### Restoration Workshop by the State Hermitage Museum in the Eastern Crimean Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve

The State Hermitage Museum held a workshop "Issues of Restoration of Archaeological Objects Made of Metal with Active Corrosion" at the Eastern Crimean Historical and Cultural Museum-Reserve on 16–21 March 2015. It is the first workshop organized at the Eastern Crimean Museum-Reserve for experts from Crimean museums in Sevastopol, Simferopol, Bakhchisarai and Sudak, as well as from the Republic of Tatarstan, by the Laboratory for Scientific Restoration of Objects of Applied Art of the Department of Scientific Restoration and Conservation of the State Hermitage Museum.

### The 9th "Dedication to Maestro" International Festival was held on March 19–29 in the best Saint Petersburg concert venues.

According to the tradition, the festival programme was dedicated to the major events and dates of the year 2015. Classic and jazz concerts were held, featuring well-known artists as well as young talent.

### Signing of the Agreement between the State Hermitage Museum and Korean Air

On 20 March 2015, a ceremony of signing sponsorship and license agreements between the State Hermitage Museum and Korean Air for the years 2015–2020 took place in the Council Chamber of the State Hermitage Museum.

The agreements were signed by Mr. Mikhail Piotrovsky, Director of the State Hermitage Museum, and Mr. Sung Hoi Song, Regional Director and Managing Vice President of Korean Air Headquarters in Russia and the CIS. The project is a continuation of cooperation between the Museum and Korean Air and includes production of information materials for visitors, i.e. Hermitage guide maps, including for visitors with disabilities, and posters for temporary exhibitions in Russian, English, French, German, Chinese, Korean and Spanish which are to be placed in the museum.

### The 10th Patron's Day in the Hermitage

On 13 April 2015 the Hermitage Theatre was the setting for the 10th Patron's Day, an annual celebration organized by the State Hermitage and the public organization Journalistic Centre for International Collaboration that publishes the "Russky Metsenat" almanac of social partnership.

Mikhail Piotrovsky, General Director of the State Hermitage, welcomed those attending the ceremony. Then the meeting participants spoke about major charity programmes of the year.

Representatives of the Guild of Master Armourers creative union, the collectors and art patrons Alexei Gnedovsky and Gennady Sokolov, handed over to the Hermitage a collection of Sudanese weapons. Examples of the weapons were put on show in cases in the foyer of the Hermitage Theatre. Also on display there were two other works acquired for the Hermitage: a preparatory drawing for Hieronymus Francken the Younger's painting "The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Virgins" (donor: V.M. Aminov) and a putative portrait of Hetman Mazepa by Balthasar Denner (donor: A.N. Leshchinsky).

### Mikhail Piotrovsky awarded the "Innovation" prize

On 21 April 2015 the awards ceremony for the 10th "Innovation" All-Russian Contemporary Visual Art Competition was held in Moscow. Mikhail Piotrovsky, the General Director of the State Hermitage, became a winner in the nomination "For the support of Russian contemporary art".

### Handover of the diver N.S. Myshlyaevsky's helmet after its restoration in the State Hermitage to the Kronstadt Naval Museum

On 30 April 2015 at the "Staraya Derevnya" Restoration and Storage Centre the helmet of the diver N.S. Myshlyaevsky who died in the Great Patriotic War was handed over to the Kronstadt Naval Museum after renovation of the object at the State Hermitage.

In October 2013 the Kronstadt Naval Museum director V.N. Shatrov asked the State Hermitage for help in the restoration of the diver's helmet which had been retrieved from the bottom of the Gulf of Finland. On 7 November 2013 the diver's helmet was delivered to the State Hermitage Department of Scientific Restoration and Conservation, Laboratory for Scientific Restoration of Applied Art Objects. During 1,5 year, the restorators did a great amount of work for the renovation of this unique object.

### The State Hermitage at the 12th edition of "RESTAURO. Exhibition on the Art of Restoration and Conservation of the Cultural and Environmental Heritage" in Ferrara (Italy)

On 6–9 May 2015 the Exhibition on the Art of Restoration and Conservation of the Cultural and Environmental Heritage in Ferrara was held simultaneously with the "Expo Milano 2015".

The State Hermitage held workshops on the "Technique of Russian Mosaics" (Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Sculpture and Semi-Precious Stones) and the "Technique of Stained Glass" (Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Applied Art Objects, Stained Glass Restoration Sector).

### The State Hermitage for the Great Victory Day

There was a whole range of events organized by the State Hermitage to commemorate the Seventieth Anniversary of the Great Victory. The exhibition "We shall remember those years...". A Hermitage Chronicle of War and Victory" was held in the museum.

## HERMITAGE - 2015

The Hermitage Staraya Derevnya Centre prepared a special programme “70 excursions for Great Patriotic War veterans”.

The cultural and educational event “The Black Square of the War” hosted during the “Museum Night” on May 16 was also dedicated to the memory of the years of the war. During the war time after the evacuation of the museum the frames were kept in their places in the hope to be able to resume the museum activity as quickly as possible after the return. As a reference to that, on the black walls of a hall at the Restoration and Storage Centre authentic frames from the Hermitage reserves were hanged, and between them – quotes from the Hermitage employees’ memoirs. A special highlight was the participation of the Russian film director A.N. Sokurov who demonstrated working materials for his new film “La Francophonie” dedicated to the Hermitage during the siege.

### The Night of Museums in the Staraya Derevnya Restoration and Storage Centre

On 16 May the State Hermitage held two cultural and educational events during the Night of Museums: “The Black Square of the War” exhibition dedicated to the memory of the Great Patriotic War; and the musical programme “Tango is the Soul of Argentina” commemorating Russia-Argentina Bilateral Culture Year.

### International Museum Day at the Hermitage. Celebrating the Veterans

On 18 May 2015 the Hermitage Theatre hosted a Solemn meeting of the Artistic union of museum workers of Saint Petersburg and Leningrad region, dedicated to International Museum Day. The main event of the day was the ceremony of awarding of 200 veteran museum workers – those who worked at the museum for thirty to sixty five years. All the veterans received thank you letters signed by the president of the Artistic Union of Museum Workers of Saint Petersburg and Leningrad Region, the State Hermitage general director M.B. Piotrivsky, as well as booklets, souvenirs and flowers.

### The Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the National Museum of the Sultanate of Oman and the State Hermitage in the Sphere of Cultural Cooperation

On 28 May 2015, the official signing ceremony of the Memorandum of Understanding between the State Hermitage and the National Museum of the Sultanate of Oman in the Sphere of Cultural Cooperation was held. In the presence of the Minister of Heritage and Culture of Oman and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum of Oman, His Highness al-Sayyid Haitham bin Tarik al-Said, the Memorandum was signed by Professor

Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky, the General Director of the State Hermitage and a member of the Board of Trustees of the National Museum of Oman, and Jamal al-Musawi, the Director of the National Museum of Oman. This is the first agreement to be signed between an Omani museum and a museum in Russia.

The forms of collaboration will be: providing technical assistance to the National Museum in the development of museum work, consultations on the creation of educational programmes and also visitor-service programmes; providing work experience for staff.

### The State Hermitage co-organized the 5th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum

On 27–30 May 2015 in the East wing of the General Staff building the 5th St. Petersburg International Legal Forum was held. For the fourth time the State Hermitage co-organized one of the most representative and prestigious events of the legal professional community. The Legal Forum is a place of meeting for eminent lawyers, researchers, judges, attorneys, legislation representatives and other specialists for whom law and legislation are the main interest and the main focus of activity.

On 28 May the Forum hosted a traditional round table on the urgent issues on the agenda which are important for the museum community. This year the round table focused on the topic “Legal barriers to accessing-world cultural heritage. Is there a solution?” The round table was moderated by the Russian President’s Special Representative for International Culture Cooperation Mikhail Shvydkoy.

A special emphasis was made on the problems of cultural objects protection in conflicts and disagreements between states and especially on the legal instruments for easing tension in the international cultural cooperation and immunity of cultural heritage objects in their transfer and crossing of state borders. Leading international and Russian specialists took part in the discussion, including Steven Josh Knerly, special law councilor of the USA Association of Art Museum Directors, partner of the Hahn Loeser & Parks LLP law firm, and Anna O’Connell, lecturer at the London School of Economics and Political Science.

On 29 May, the last day of the Forum, the Russian Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky and the Governor of Saint Petersburg Georgy Poltavchenko presented the 4th Saint Petersburg International Cultural Forum.

### Signing of the Agreement on Establishment of the Hermitage–Vladivostok Centre

On 19 June 2015, Mikhail Piotrovsky, Director of the State Hermitage Museum, and Vladimir Miklushevsky, Governor of the Primorye Territory, signed in the Council Chamber of the State Hermitage Museum an agreement of intent to establish a Hermitage–Vladivostok Centre. The Centre will be located in the historic building of the Trading House “Kunst and Albers” designed by the architect V.A. Planson in 1903.

### Signing of the Memorandum on Informational Cooperation between the State Hermitage and “Rossiyskaya Gazeta”

On 25 June 2015, Mikhail Piotrovsky, the State Hermitage director general, and Pavel Negoits, the general director of “FGBU ‘Rossiyskaya Gazeta’” signed a memorandum on informational cooperation.



ZAHA HADID DURING A CHARITY RECEPTION AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM. JUNE 26, 2015

The sides agreed on the priority exchange of information and special information support provided to the Hermitage by “Rossiyskaya Gazeta” in covering the events held in the museum, in its affiliated centres and those organized by the museum.

### Gala Charity Banquet at the Winter Palace

On 26 June 2015, the State Hermitage Museum hosted the X Gala Charity Banquet.

The guests approached the famous portico with the Atlanteans of the New Hermitage and proceeded to the Gallery of History of Ancient Painting, where they enjoyed a welcome cocktail.

Mikhail Piotrovsky, Director of the State Hermitage Museum, greeted the audience at the Hermitage Theatre. He handed the honorary diamond badges “Artist at the Hermitage” to the honoured guests Zaha Hadid<sup>1</sup>, the famous architect and the only female winner of the Pritzker Architecture Prize, and Candida Höfer, one of the classics of contemporary photography, whose solo exhibitions were held in the museum halls.

The gala concert of opera and ballet soloists held at the Hermitage Theatre, as well as the program of the evening in general, were a dialogue between the classics and modernity. Symbolically opened by the overture “Musical Journey: from Beethoven to the Present Days”, it included arias from the classical operas “Carmen” by Bizet and “Lucia di

Lammermoor” by Donizetti, the pas de deux from “Carmen Suite” by Shchedrin and “The Dying Swan” by Saint-Saens performed by the leading soloists of the Mariinsky Theatre, as well as dance performances by the best Russian breakdance group TOP 9.

This year, the gala dinner was served in “Pergama”, the new area of the Small Hermitage which used to house the stables of Catherine the Great (the world-renowned architect Rem Koolhaas is the author of the restoration project).

The honoured guests of the Gala Banquet featured the artists Zaha Hadid and Candida Höfer, Prince Dmitry Romanov and his wife, Alexander Sokurov, Lev Dodin, the President of Phillips Auction House Edward Dolman, the Artistic Director of the Foundation Louis Vuitton Suzanne Pagé, Jim Broadbent, heads of the companies that supported the Gala Banquet organization: Gazprombank, LSR, Montblanc, Hennessy, Blavatnik Family Foundation, Smolensk Diamonds and others.

### Grand Prix of the “Imperial Gardens of Russia” Festival

The Grand Prix of the 2015 “Imperial Gardens of Russia” Festival was awarded to the State Hermitage and the Bermyakovykh (Tsubaki) Studio for the “Tsar’s Dreams” project.

Authors of the project: the State Hermitage Chief architect V.P. Lukin; the 1987 USSR floristry champion V.A. Bermyakov and the multiple prize-winning florist A.V. Bermyakov.

### By the Presidential Decree № 369

On 16 July 2015 Sergey Androsov, head of the Western European Fine Arts Department, and Ludmila Ershova, head of the Scientific and Educational Department, were awarded the second-class medal of the Order of Merit for the Motherland for their many years of service to the development of Russian culture, arts and media.

Anna Ierusalimskaya, the leading research fellow at the Oriental Department, was awarded the honorary title of Honoured Cultural Worker of the Russian Federation.

### Hermitage at Vkontakte Festival

On July 18–19, 2015 the State Hermitage participated in the First Vkontakte Festival, which was held in the Tercentennial Park of St. Petersburg. The museum prepared a special program for the event. Visitors were introduced to the Youth Center, various volunteer programs, listened to lectures about the museum and talked to the Hermitage staff.

Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky gave a lecture at the Lecture Hall of the Festival about the celebration of the Museum’s 250th anniversary.

### Another day with longer opening hours in the Hermitage starting September 1

Starting from September 1, 2015 the State Hermitage Museum will introduce day with longer opening hours. The main museum complex, the Winter Palace of Peter I, the Main Headquarters Building, the Menshikov Palace and the Museum of the Imperial Porcelain Works will be open to the general public from 6 to 9 p.m. not only on Wednesdays but on Fridays as well. The State Hermitage Museum is a socially responsible institution, and our goal is to make the museum more open and accessible.



# “WE WILL BE DINING WITH AMBASSADORS FROM EXOTIC COUNTRIES...”

THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM POSSESSES A PORTRAIT OF PRINCE A.M. GORCHAKOV BY E.I. BOTMAN (1874). GORCHAKOV IS REPRESENTED IN A 1856 DRESS-COAT OF THE STATE CHANCELLOR AND IS WEARING THE ORDER OF ST. ANDREW THE FIRST-CALLED WITH DIAMONDS, THE ORDER OF ST. VLADIMIR (FIRST CLASS), THE AUSTRIAN ORDER OF THE GOLDEN FLEECE AND ALEXANDER II'S PORTRAIT IN A DIAMOND FRAME; HIS RIGHT HAND IS RESTING ON A TABLE WITH A MAP OF THE BLACK SEA REGION AND THE CRIMEAN PENINSULA.



EGOR BOTMAN  
Portrait of Prince A.M. Gorchakov  
Russia. 1874. Canvas, oil. 141 x 104 cm  
The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. № ЭРЖ-1518

Alexander received a good home education and, having completed a grammar school in St. Petersburg and passed his examinations with flying colours in 1811, entered the Tsarskoe Selo Lyceum; among his classmates were A.S. Pushkin, I.I. Pushchin, P.M. Yudin and S.G. Lomonosov.

He applied himself diligently to the study of foreign languages and mastered English and Italian in addition to the compulsory French and German.

Following graduation from the Lyceum with a Minor Gold Medal in June 1817, Gorchakov was accepted as titular counsellor to the College of Foreign Affairs (Russia's foreign office), where he quickly proved his worth.

The poet Alexander Pushkin joined the College of Foreign Affairs at the same time as Gorchakov but was much less keen on a diplomatic career. In 1819 Pushkin wrote his former schoolmate the following humorous message in verse:

*A fosterling of the muses, friend of high society,  
A brilliant observer of customs,  
You insist that I should leave my peaceful circle,  
Where, a carefree admirer of beauty,  
Unknown, I spend my time of leisure.*

*You, too, leave your state dignities  
And join the close circle of my friends,  
You, a willful lover of the Charites,  
A pleasant flatterer, a caustic talker,  
The same un-pious wit as before,  
The same philosopher and mischief-maker.*

Meanwhile, Gorchakov successfully advanced in the diplomatic service and, in his capacity as an attaché, took part in the Holy Alliance congresses in Troppau (1820) and Laibach (1821). In 1822 he was appointed first secretary of the Russian embassy in London.

The young diplomat was not involved in the events of 14 December 1825 (the Decembrists' Uprising), having earlier refused to join the secret society planning to reorganize the Russian political system; Gorchakov was convinced that "noble aims cannot be achieved by nefarious schemes".

After a brief assignment in Rome (1827), Gorchakov was made counsellor of the Russian embassy in Berlin in April 1828; in December of the same year, he was promoted to chamberlain and appointed charge d'affaires in Florence and Lucca.

In 1833 Gorchakov was sent on an important mission to Vienna as a counsellor of the Russian embassy. D.P. Talishchev, then the Russian Ambassador, resisted his niece M.A. Musina-Pushkina's engagement to Gorchakov because of the sailor's lack of fortune. Partly for this reason, in spring 1838 Gorchakov resigned from service, secretly hoping for his resignation to be declined. However, Count K.V. Nesselrode, Head of the Foreign Office, accepted his request.

In June 1838, Gorchakov, then forty, wedded the beautiful high-society lady Maria Musina-Pushkina (nee Urusova), to whom he was happily married for the next fifteen years.

In October 1839, partly owing to the influence of his father-in-law (senator A.M. Urusov, president of the Moscow Palace Office), Gorchakov returns to the Foreign Ministry as the actual state counsellor and is appointed extraordinary

ambassador and plenipotentiary minister in Wurtemberg in December 1841. The new ambassador invested much effort in arranging the marriage (concluded in 1844) between Karl Frederick Alexander, Crown Prince of Wurtemberg, and the Great Duchess Olga, daughter of Nicholas I, which brought Gorchakov closer to the Russian royal family.

In January 1850, Prince Gorchakov was appointed extraordinary ambassador and plenipotentiary minister of the German Confederation in Frankfurt-am-Main, where he first met Otto von Bismarck (1815–1898), the Prussian representative in the Federal Convention and the future founder of the German Empire. Then an aspiring politician, Bismarck would always listen to Gorchakov's advice.

In June 1854, at the height of the Crimean war, Gorchakov revisited Vienna where he was appointed manager of the Russian Embassy. A year later, in 1855, he was promoted to ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary at the Austrian court, which upheld a hostile neutrality towards Russia, forcing it to withdraw troops from the Danubian Principalities.

Vienna became the centre of diplomatic peace efforts; however, the tensions between the nations appeared unsurmountable and the negotiations yielded no results.

On 30 August 1855, the ruined Sevastopol was abandoned by Russians to the allied troops following a 349-day siege; the allies had lost about 70,000 in casualties, not including deaths from diseases. The eleven months of the siege had cost the Russian armed forces 83,500 lives. In February 1856, peace talks started at the Congress of Paris, resulting in the Treaty of Paris (signed on 18 March) which officially ended the Crimean war. European diplomatic circles claimed that Russia had escaped lightly with only insignificant concessions. The Baron de Bourqueney, the French ambassador in Vienna, gave the following opinion of the Treaty: "From reading this document, it is impossible to understand who won and who lost."

In April 1856 Prince Gorchakov was made Minister of Foreign Affairs. In full awareness of the challenges facing Russian diplomacy at that time, the Emperor offered his

## ALEXANDER DYDYKIN

**Alexander Mikhailovich** Gorchakov was born on 4 June 1798 in Haapsalu, now in North-West Estonia, into the family of a senior army officer. His father was Major-General Prince Mikhail Alekseevich Gorchakov (1768–1831); his mother, Elena Vasilyevna Ferzen (1766–1822), was daughter of Colonel Baron Ferzen.

new minister an annual salary of 40,000 roubles in silver – an amount which far exceeded the earnings of any other governmental minister in Russia.

The defeat in the Crimean war demonstrated the necessity of urgent fundamental changes in Russian foreign and home policy. The new minister's political programme was summarized in the circular of 21 August 1856 disseminated among the Russian ambassadors. The document declared the need to make the internal development of the country a top priority and subordinate the foreign policy to the good of the nation; any agreements interfering with Russia's national interests were to be revised. The primary goal of Russian foreign policy was to abolish the restrictive provisions of the Treaty of Paris regarding the "neutral status" of the Black Sea, which made it impossible for Russia to maintain a navy in the region. In the 1856 report of the Foreign Ministry, Gorchakov referred to France as the most important European nation with which Russia had no disagreements; he spent the next two years labouring assiduously to reconcile the political positions of the two countries. The work resulted in a secret Russian-French treaty of neutrality and collaboration (signed in Paris in February 1859) pulling an end to Russia's international isolation.

The minister had characteristic views on the relative significance of the international political players in 1859. In a letter of invitation to his friend Fyodor Tyulchev, then an official in the Foreign Ministry, Gorchakov wrote: "... we will be dining with ambassadors from exotic countries – Brazil, Siam... and the North American States."

In 1859–1862 Bismarck was made the Prussian Ambassador in St. Petersburg. He paid particular attention to his contacts with Gorchakov, praising Gorchakov's gift for diplomacy as well as his ability to see the situation from a broad perspective, taking due account of the interests of all great nations. The future Iron Chancellor's experiences in Russia inspired him to make the following proverbial conclusion: "A war with Russia is like committing suicide for fear of death."

After returning to Berlin in 1862, Bismarck became the Foreign Minister and Minister-President and embarked on his plan to consolidate German lands around Prussia.

In 1864, 1866 and 1870 Denmark, Austria and France suffered defeats in the lightning wars against Prussia. The brilliant

yet brutal campaigns were followed by the declaration of the German Empire (with Wilhelm I as the Emperor) on 18 January 1871 in the Hall of Mirrors at Versailles.

Prussia had "swallowed" Germany.

The time between the defeat of France and the high-rank meeting in Versailles was effectively used by the Russian Foreign Ministry to mitigate the principal consequences of Russia's loss in the Crimean war. On 19 October 1870, Prince Gorchakov announced that, in view of the current situation in Europe, Russia would not abide by its commitments concerning the demilitarization of the Black Sea under the Treaty of Paris. The only serious objections came from London, which had no real impact on the situation. The protest of the French Ambassador de Gabriac, representing the defeated French government which had fled from Paris to Bordeaux, looked ridiculous. The other nations had no say on the matter as they were not among the guarantors of the treaty that was so humiliating for Russia.

The triumph of 19 October, which miraculously coincided with Lyceum's Day, can be called the greatest moment in the history of Russian diplomacy, at least in the nineteenth century. In a surge of euphoria, St. Petersburg high society even believed that Bismarck had been specially "nurtured" by Gorchakov to avenge France for its trespasses against Russia.

On 1 March 1871 the London protocol acknowledged Russia's right to maintain the navy in the Black Sea and build military fortifications along the coast. As Bismarck put it, "do not expect that once having taken advantage of Russia's weakness, you will receive dividends forever. Russians always come for their money. And when they come, they will not rely on the Jesuit agreements you signed that supposedly justify your actions. They are not worth the paper they are written on. Therefore, with the Russians you should use fair play or no play."

Gorchakov's diplomatic success was highly praised by the Emperor, who added the prefix "radiant" to Prince Gorchakov's title. Four years before, in June 1867, in appreciation of his 50-year-long service, Alexander Gorchakov had been elevated to State Chancellor, the highest civil rank in the Russian Empire awarded to just eleven state dignitaries since the time of Peter the Great. The Radiant Prince Gorchakov became the last chancellor in Russian history.

*Prince! You have kept your word  
Without using cannons or money,  
And the beloved Russia  
Is reinstated in her rights.  
And the sea, bequeathed to us by our ancestors,  
Has forgotten the brief moments of shame  
And kisses its beloved shores  
With waves, now free.*

*F.I. Tyulchev*

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## BOOKS BY THE HERMITAGE



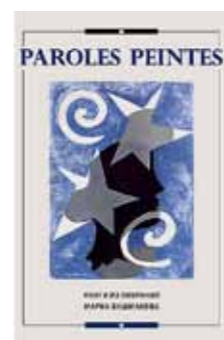
### “VESSELS OF ETERNAL JOY” Japanese miniature teapots for Sencha tea in the State Hermitage collection

This catalogue presents part of the collection of miniature Japanese teapots from the State Hermitage’s Oriental Department. The variety of forms and decorations of these items gives a representation of the broader context of Japanese national culture of the 17th – 19th centuries, from religious and secular tea ceremonies to everyday life.



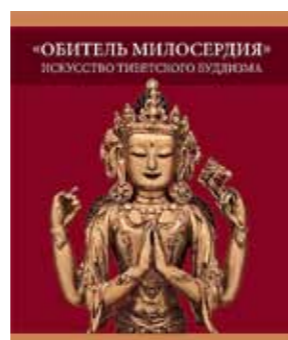
### “MECHANICAL MARVELS” Musical, timepiece, and animation mechanisms of the 17th – 19th centuries in the State Hermitage collection

This catalogue presents works of Western European and Russian applied art of the 17th–19th centuries equipped with unique musical, timepiece and animation mechanisms. These items vary in purpose, and include jewelry, table and mantle clocks, boxes with cleverly hidden surprises, and even a droshky with an odometer and mechanical organ.



### “PAROLES PEINTES” Books from the Mark Bashmakov collection

This catalogue narrates the history of a particular artistic phenomenon called livre d’artiste. The majority of the exhibited items come from the 1940s – 1970s, during which period a new developmental stage of the livre d’artiste took place.



### “THE PLACE OF MERCIFULNESS” The art of Tibetan Buddhism

This catalogue introduces art lovers to works of Buddhist art, including sculpture, paintings, and ritual items. The book presents artifacts of the 18th – early 20th centuries from the State Hermitage collection. These collections were compiled at the beginning of the 20th century by outstanding researchers on Central Asia such as E.E. Ukhtomsky, P.K. Kozlov, N. Roerich, and others.



### “ONCE IN A FARAWAY KINGDOM...” From the cycle “Offerings for Christmas”

This publication introduces readers to porcelain works made at Russia’s oldest porcelain factory during the Soviet and modern times. These pieces depict folklore and fairy tale subjects, which became a very popular trend starting from the 1920s, and which occupied a significant place in the production of artistic porcelain.



### ORIENTAL WEAPONRY IN THE STATE HERMITAGE COLLECTION

This publication is dedicated to the State Hermitage weapons collection, which reflects the centuries-old art of making weaponry in various regions of the East, such as in Turkey, Iran, India, Central and South-East Asia, the Caucasus and the Far East. Particular attention is paid to decorative items. The catalogue contains unique examples of form and decoration.



### “A GIFT FOR THE CONTEMPLATORS” The Wanderings of Ibn Battuta<sup>©</sup>

This publication is devoted to the journeys of the great Moroccan pilgrim Ibn Battuta. The catalog presents about 300 art objects, the pictures of most of which are being published for the first time. Artifacts owned by the State Hermitage include ceramics, textiles, metal products, glass, architectural details, and numismatics.



### RUSSIAN FURNITURE ART OF THE 18th CENTURY IN THE HERMITAGE COLLECTION

The Hermitage collection of Russian furniture of the 18th century is the largest in Russia. The earliest items come from the reign of Peter the Great, when Russian furniture art was just beginning to develop in line with fashionable European trends. The Hermitage collection also contains furniture from the era of Catherine the Great, when the Russian furniture business truly blossomed.

**V.D.N.H.**

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**at the 15th International  
Architecture Exhibition in Venice**

28.05.2016 – 27.11.2016

Pavilion Commissioner: Semyon Mikhailovsky

Curator: Sergey Kuznetsov

Co-curator: Catherine Pronicheva



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