HERMITAGE MAGAZINE

New Collection *Paris Nouvelle Vague*

A HOTEL AS LEGENDARY AS ST PETERSBURG ITSELF

THE LUXURIOUS TSAR SUITE

SAINT PETERSBURG – NEVSKIJ PROSPEKT, 153

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photographed by FRANCESCO CARROZZINI

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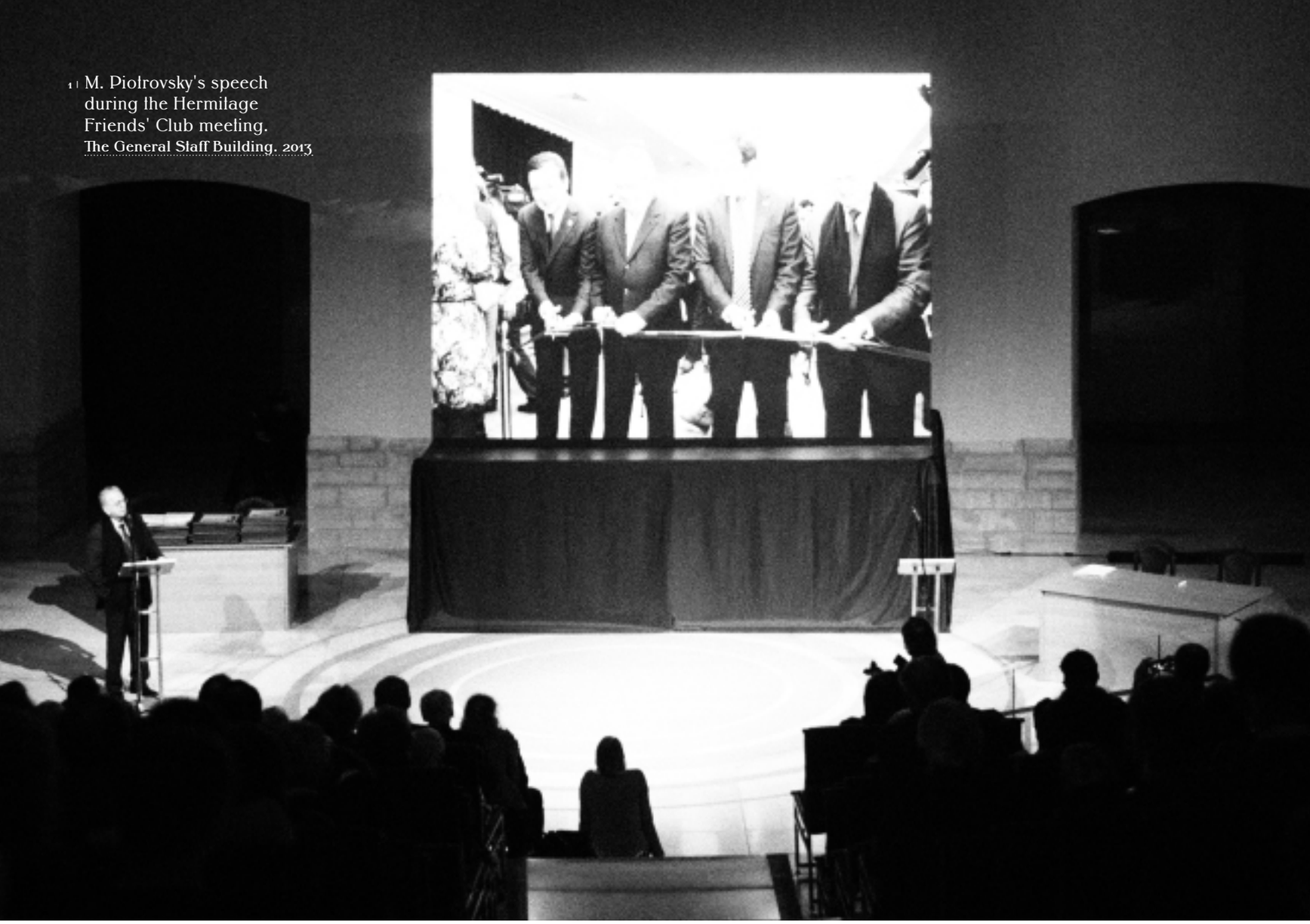

11 M. Piotrovsky's speech during the Hermitage Friends' Club meeting. The General Staff Building. 2013

WHO NEEDS EXHIBITIONS, AND WHY?

Many miles above us, the sky is crowded with planes carrying precious cargoes of Rembrandts and Poussins, Van Dijks and Goyas. This image is evoked at the beginning of Francis Haskell's famous book which follows the history of exhibitions of Old Master paintings. Large-scale art shows are a fairly recent invention, yet they quickly evolved into an important part of art life, a serious business, a complex logistical system and a pet subject for art journalism. The quantity and quality of exhibitions are often seen as key indicators of a museum's success, and the ability to secure loans of works of art is seen as a valuable skill in the museum world.

Exhibition openings are festive occasions; however, art shows also mean hard work both for the host venues and the contributors. This is why, despite all the enthusiasm for exhibitions, curators prefer to keep them rare and design them to appeal to the knowledgeable few rather than the general audience.

Both approaches are valid and work in different ways for different museum settings. Let us put aside the claim that exhibitions and associated travel may place works of art at increased risk. Unfortunately, years of practice have demonstrated that art works are just as likely to get damaged in their home institutions as they are on any tour. However, focus on spectacular loan-heavy "blockbuster" affairs often leaves the collection of the host museum in the shade and may even impair its financial viability. Impressive temporary shows make the permanent collection look pale by comparison, and enthusiasts seeking real knowledge receive less attention than

pretentious art show visitors — or, shall I say, consumers. Of course, museums with limited collections may have to rely on borrowed materials; however, these form part of a separate exhibition hall network.

The Hermitage Museum's permanent collection is the chief reason for visiting the museum, and temporary art events are just part of this cultural experience. The Hermitage emphasizes this aesthetic and intellectual unity by offering free admission to its special exhibitions. Incidentally, our visitors would hardly welcome the prospect of paying extra to attend art shows.

The Hermitage is affected by the so-called Nikolaevsky Hall phenomenon: any exhibition mounted in the stately rooms of the Winter Palace is guaranteed to attract hundreds of thousands of visitors, while attendance at the General Staff building is usually much lower, even for the most sensational art events. To achieve the right balance between the benefits for museumgoers and the interests of the museum, the Hermitage pursues a flexible and dynamic institutional policy. It is quite obvious that exhibitions must supplement and showcase the museum's permanent collection. The Hermitage's Blue Bedroom, for example, has become a prime venue for presenting applied art from the Hermitage's holdings. Exhibition catalogues, which describe works of art in monograph-like detail, offer yet another valuable opportunity to bring the permanent collection into the public eye. Some of the recently organized permanent exhibitions in the Hermitage provide an excellent backdrop for temporary shows. For instance, the large-scale collaborative exhibitions of Muslim art staged in the Hermitage ran in tandem with our Dagestan and Golden Horde collections.

Temporary displays may bridge some gaps in the main collection. One of our greatest successes in this area was the show of Australian aboriginal art, presented as a creative tradition spanning several millennia, not as some exotic ethnographical phenomenon. Another memorable event was the splendid tribute to Mexico — an art tradition represented in the Hermitage collection by a somewhat lonely yet precious Aztec gold bell; no similar items can be found in Mexican museums. Exhibitions can and should address a range of scientific, curatorial or political problems, as did the Russian-German exhibition "The Bronze Age" (2013) which focused on issues of cultural integrity in united Europe and adopted a civilized approach to so-called displaced art.

The numerous events we have held celebrating Russian history and the Romanov dynasty have helped to shape some of the most popular parts of the Hermitage's permanent exhibition — such as the Romanov portrait gallery and the restored portraiture section of the Field-Marshal Hall, which also discreetly presents a number of excellent field-marshal batons.

Collaborative events may shine an unusual light on Hermitage treasures, as was the case with the exhibition "From Guercino to Caravaggio" (2013), in which masterpieces held by the Hermitage were displayed alongside paintings from Sir Denis Mahon's collection. Pictures loaned from Italian museums helped to reinterpret the more familiar pieces; further insights were prompted by the concept of the show which celebrated the outstanding English art historian Sir Denis Mahon and his efforts to reinstate the reputation of a whole epoch in world culture. The permanent exhibition of 19th-century European art (excluding the Impressionists) paves the way toward the new display housed in the General Staff building and mentally prepares the visitor for this art experience. An exhibition about the Dutch king William II and his wife Anna Pavlovna (2013) also paid homage to the legacy of 19th-century art. This dynamic connection between permanent and temporary displays, as well as between special shows, is of utmost importance to any large museum. The two major end-of-millennium exhibitions of Orthodox and Islamic art which helped to bring together art lovers and members of religious confessions in a single museum space offers further support to this statement.

Apart from supplementing the museum's collection and establishing links between its many parts, art shows in the Hermitage fulfil a number of specific purposes. Some of our exhibitions seek to inform viewers by focusing on milestones in Russian history and world culture; others aim to introduce the audience to modern art. There are shows that present a single great artwork from a single great museum — purely aesthetic experiences intended for the sophisticated viewer, who may spend hours in front of a masterpiece.

Our magazine reflects the very spirit of the Hermitage, wrapping the museum in ephemeral clothes of exhibitions and intriguing connections.

Mikhail Piotrovsky

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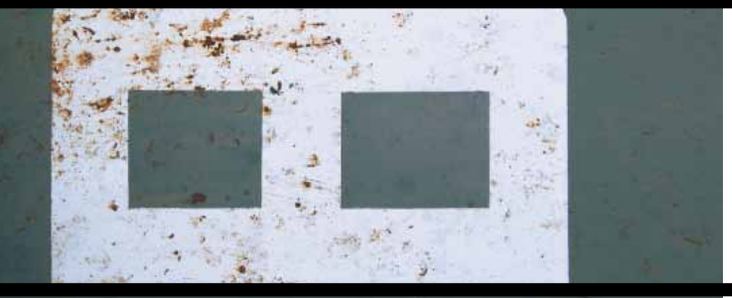

Platform numbers at Florence Santa Maria Novella railway slation. 1930s

BAUHAUS IN TEL AVIV. MIGRATING MODERNISM[15]

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↓
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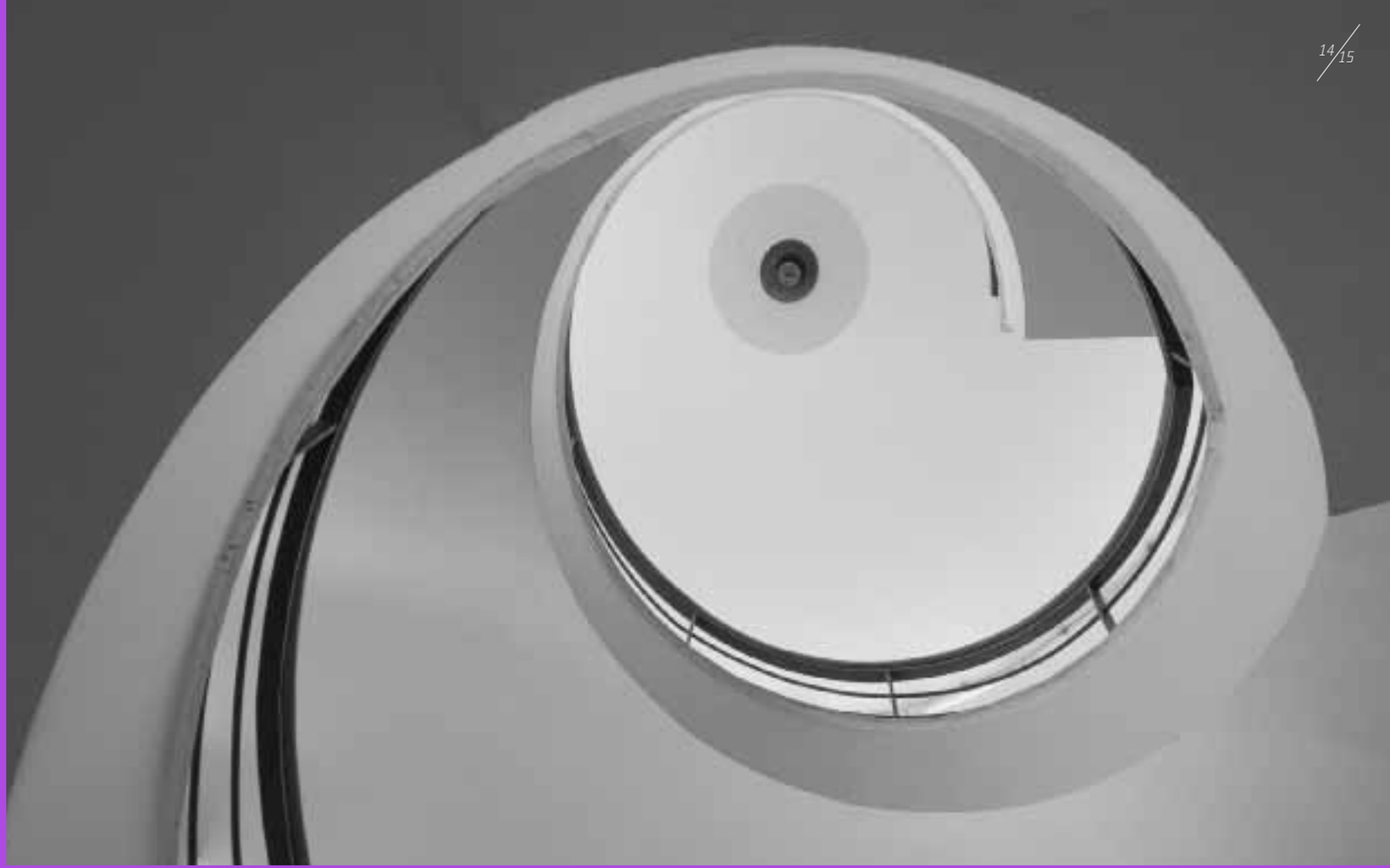
KSENIA MALICH, MARIA ELKINA

"THE WHITE CITY. BAUHAUS ARCHITECTURE IN TEL AVIV" AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM WAS NOT ONLY AN EXHIBITION ABOUT A UNIQUE ARCHITECTURAL LEGACY, IT ALSO DEMONSTRATED THE FUNDAMENTAL CULTURAL BONDS BETWEEN RUSSIA AND ISRAEL AND THE SPECIAL TRADITIONS IN THE RELATIONSHIPS OF THE TWO NATIONS. SHLOMO SHWA, A FAMOUS WRITER WHO KNEW TEL AVIV WELL, WROTE: "TEL AVIV WAS A CITY OF BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTED IN ONE DAY ON THE DUNES, A WHITE CITY AGAINST A WHITE BACKGROUND. PEOPLE USED TO SAY THIS CITY EMERGED AS A REALIZATION OF OUR DREAMS, AND THIS IS HOW WE STILL SEE IT TODAY."



2 | Stairway in the house of Chaim Weizmann, first president of the state of Israel, in Rechovot

PHOTO: SHACHAR MUZICANT

Tel Aviv's architecture of the 1930s and 1940s represents a unique modernist landmark in terms of its size and integrity. Hundreds of snow-white buildings, as though growing from the dunes, appeared there when Mandatory Palestine (1920–1948) became a one-of-a-kind testing area for the ideas of the modernist movement under conditions of practical necessity. And yet the history of the White City is much more complicated than it seems.

The common phrase Tel Aviv Bauhaus is rather conventional since the White City can be considered neither a branch nor a direct logical continuation of the famous German art school.

In 1909 Tel Aviv was a small garden suburb of the city of Jaffa. The first to come here were 60 Jewish families who wanted to escape the crammed quarters, hustle and poor housing of the old city. The district developed quickly: under the British mandate and following the signing of the Balfour Declaration[1] Tel Aviv became the destination for thousands of migrants every year who came to Eretz Yisrael from Poland, Russia, Italy, France and Germany. From 1921 to 1925 its population grew from 2,000 to 34,000 people.

During its first years, the city's development was chaotic, its architectural look being influenced partly by European eclecticism and partly by local tradition.

It all changed during the Fifth Aliyah[2] when, after the Nazis came to power in Germany, more than 250,000 Jews left for Palestine. Most of these migrants were scientists, artists, doctors, lawyers, and musicians. There were many architects, too, inspired by the achievements and avant-garde[3] experiments of contemporary European architecture. They had received a brilliant education not only at the famous German school of the Bauhaus (Shlomo Bernstein, Aryeh Sharon, Shmuel Mestiechkin), but also at universities in Belgium, France, and Austria (Zeev Rechter, Dov Karmi, Benjamin Anekstein, Genia Averbouch), and had cooperated with such eminent masters as Walter Gropius, Le Corbusier and Erich Mendelsohn (the latter of which lived and worked in Palestine from 1934 to 1939). Besides that, 1928 saw the first students graduate from the developing faculty of architecture of the Technion (the Israel Institute of Technology).

1 During World War I, Great Britain occupied Palestine and ran the country from 1922 to 1948 on the basis of the League of Nations Mandate; one of its purposes was the creation of "a national center for the Jewish people" in Palestine guaranteed by the British Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour in his letter to Lord Rothschild of November 2, 1917 ("The Balfour Declaration").

2 Aliyah (Hebrew lit. "lifting", "ascension") is the process of repatriation to Palestine, since 1948 — to Israel. The Fifth Aliyah covers the period of 1929–1939.

3 ↓ p. 052 p. 271

It is true that starting from the 1920s, and especially in the 1930s, when the Nazis came to power in Germany, many of the Bauhaus alumni — designers, photographers, architects, textile designers — came to work in Tel Aviv. One of the Bauhaus alumni was Arieh Sharon who later worked on the general plan for the whole state of Israel. But the Bauhaus influence was neither exclusive nor direct. Architecture at the Bauhaus was perceived as the means to turn a social utopia into reality: the creative method was closely related to the communist ideology that dominated at the school. In Tel Aviv, along with the unprecedented possibilities, the architects had to deal with immediate practical needs[24] and city planning problems, so dreams and abstractions had to be put into perspective. The Bauhaus methods inevitably began to be applied more formally. Social residences for workers formed only a small part of the total number of building projects at that moment.

24 ↓ p. 076 p. 206 p. 212

Edward Shapiro, consul general of the state of Israel in St. Petersburg

"In 1937 Julius Pozner, an eminent expert in architecture, published an article which explained the popularity of the Bauhaus style in Tel Aviv. According to Pozner, the new Israeli people wanted to create a unique style on their land, a style which would not, in any way, remind them of the life in diaspora which was coming to an end so tragically (and, as it seemed, forever) by the end of the 1930s. They were building a city which had never existed before, a city not associated with the Jewish traditions and ghettos, a happy city. In a strange way, it can be compared to Peter[1] the Great's idea to design and build a European, not Russian, city, despite all the discord..."

1 ↓ p. 078 p. 099 p. 168 p. 169 p. 170 p. 173 p. 222 p. 235 p. 240

3 | Circular Balconies. Dizengoff Circle, Tel Aviv. Between 1934 and 1939

PHOTO: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

BAUHAUS — VKHUTEMAS

In the history of the Modern Movement[3], it is hard to find an example of such ideal conditions for architects' working from scratch and on such a scale. In the first decades of its development, the architectural avant-garde in Europe either didn't have a great opportunity to experiment (due to a lack of progressive customers) or was constrained by available technical facilities (poor construction infrastructure). The experience of two important schools that laid the foundations of modern architecture — Bauhaus in Germany and VKHUTEMAS in the Soviet Union — was very indicative in this sense.
The two schools were founded almost simultaneously: The High School of Industrial Arts, Construction and Design ("Bauhaus", 1919) in Weimar and Higher Art and Technical Studios (VKHUTEMAS, 1920) in Moscow. Both societies developed revolutionary methods of engineering design, and conducted research into universal principles of shape and new construction technologies. The projects of both schools are characterized by a minimum of decorative elements and a maximum of compositional expressiveness, every functional zone having a volume-space design of its own and being clearly defined in the general concept of the building. But most importantly, artists and architects were hoping for dramatic social reform and believed that the new art was a condition for the development of a new person and the guarantee for a happy future for the whole of humanity. Despite different economic and political situations and the rejection of the Soviet ideology by many European artists, Weimar (later Dessau) and Moscow were quite closely connected. Germans were well acquainted with the works of El Lissitzky (2), and Vassily Kandinsky taught a class at the Bauhaus. By 1927 the German school's projects were already being displayed in Moscow, at the First Contemporary Architecture Exhibition. In the early 1930s dozens of foreign architects who believed in the possibility of great change and new Soviet architecture worked on the construction of standard workers' quarters in Magnitogorsk and other cities in the Urals and Siberia. "We [are] Soviet architects", wrote the ex-director of the Bauhaus Hannes Meyer. But he and his colleagues were very soon disappointed by working in the Soviet Union with its low-skilled local workers, lack of construction materials and stationery, maddening bureaucratic dystopia and a car that had been provided for in their contract, but they found was "taken" all the time.
In 1932, after the announcement of the results of a competition to build a Palace of Soviets, and the resolution "On the restructuring of literary and artistic organizations", it became clear that Stalin's regime had chosen the development of a classical heritage as its official style in architecture. This is when the history of Soviet Modernism (15) is interrupted for a long period of time. Strangely enough, Bauhaus stops functioning a year after, too; the Nazi government closed the school in 1933. Former students and teachers left for Mandatory Palestine, and from 1931 to 1937 more than 3,000 buildings were constructed in Tel Aviv, clearly designed according to the Bauhaus philosophy. The attempt to create a new functional city had not been successful in Germany or the USSR, but their experiences influenced residential district projects in Tel Aviv.
_KSENIA MALICH

3
The Modern Movement is the term traditionally defining the period of formation of architectural modernism in Europe and America. Constructivism, Functionalism, Bauhaus, New Construction, International Style and other styles defining the quality and direction of architectural experiment in the 1920s to the 1940s belong under the Modern Movement.

4
From "Leningradskaya utopia. Avangard v arkhitektury Severnoi stolitsy" by E. Pervushina, SPb, Tsentrpoligraph, 2012.

5
Avner Yashar runs one of the leading architectural bureaus in Israel. His father, Yitzhak Yashar, is the architect of several important buildings in Tel Aviv, characteristic of brutalism and national style. The Hermitage Magazine talked to Avner Yashar about the influence of the modernist environment on contemporary architectural work during his visit to St. Petersburg in the summer of 2013.

15 ↓ p. 14 p. 26

2 ↓ p. 261 p. 262 p. 283

WATER TOWER AT THE CABLE SECTION OF THE KRASNY GVOZDILSHCHIK (RED NAIL) FACTORY

Address: 25 liniya Vasilievsky Ostrov, 4, St. Petersburg, Russia

The iron rolling and wire plant, which in 1921 was renamed Krasny Gvozdilshchik (Red Nail) was founded on Vasilievsky Island in 1873.
The water tower at the cable section was built at the plant in 1930–1931 by Y.G. Chernikhov and became a symbol and example of the Constructivist style.
A cylindrical reservoir is placed on a narrow prism-shaped base with two additional thin supports. The tower is balanced by the squat building of the cable section. The tower's audacious and surprising silhouette makes a strong impression from the outset. The cable section has since been rebuilt and now has a different shape.
A project to create a contemporary art gallery in the tower has been planned[4].

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

Avner Yashar, architect [5]

"Erich Mendelsohn's is a quite a story. He is a great architect, a man of another school. His approach to work is very organic and he pays much attention to the landscape he works with. Le Corbusier's school works with light and shadow as an element of shape, but it is not sensitive to nature. For the modernists who wanted to build a new world, nature was part of the old world. Le Corbusier wanted to demolish an old part of Paris and to build towers instead. But sometimes the most beautiful ideas are the most frightening."

5 | Levant Fair, Tel Aviv. 1934

Not only Bauhaus alumni worked in Israel. An informal circle was formed in Tel Aviv in the 1930s which gathered to discuss theoretical problems in architecture in the evenings. The names of the participants of these discussions show how diverse the ideas that prevailed in the White City were. Together with Arieh Sharon there was an ex-employee of the Berlin Mendelsohn Bureau, Josef Neufeld, and Le Corbusier follower Zeev Rechter. Later the circle was joined by Dov Karmi from Ghent, Shlomo Barkai who had earlier worked at Le Corbusier's bureau, and other architects from different European countries. They edited an influential architectural magazine called "Building in the Near East" (Habinyan Bamizrah Hakarov). There were two problems constantly on the agenda: improving the quality of architectural engineering and creation of a truly national style that could oppose the eclectic style that had been dominant in previous decades. Thus there were three major ever-present yet invisible figures of the modernist movement in the architecture of Tel Aviv in the 1930s: Hannes Meyer (the last director of the Bauhaus in Dessau), Le Corbusier and Erich Mendelsohn.

Mendelsohn first came to Palestine in 1923 and then returned there in 1934 to work on a house for the head of the Zionist movement, Chaim Weizmann. The commissions he received in Jerusalem allowed him to stay in Mandatory Palestine until 1941, but he did not construct any buildings in Tel Aviv. However, the architectural environment of Tel Aviv was influenced by the ideas of this pioneer of organic architecture. Thanks to him and his students the interaction of architecture and landscape became a recurring theme in the White City.

In Tel Aviv's architecture, Le Corbusier's influence is more visible — due to the fact he had most clearly and explicitly articulated the formal approaches to design: buildings on pylons, roofs with gardens, common balconies, designing the interior space of the buildings from the top to the bottom — all of this can be identified without much effort. However, the role of Bauhaus is more evident in the fact that its followers, besides the functionalist approach, set an ideological direction that was not yet entirely visible in the 1930s, but which almost completely determined the development of architecture in Israel after the Second World War.

By the early 1930s, Tel Aviv enjoyed a unique situation in city development: general enthusiasm, rising national sentiment and belief in the fast renewal of society, a population explosion and a critical need for new residential districts. Dozens of young high-profile architects from experienced European bureaus were working there, in the absence of a historical urban context, and, therefore, in the spirit of full liberty and creative experimentation.

The Scottish architect and urbanist Patrick Geddes was invited to work on the plan for the new city. According to the garden city concept popular at the time, he created a project with many boulevards and green streets well isolated from major transport routes.

The architects who worked on the White City district (so named later because of the light color of most of the facades) adapted the Bauhaus methods to the local climate conditions. Heavy sunlight, exhausting heat and high humidity made the architects give up the large glass areas and wide ribbon windows and borrow some traditional construction approaches from the Middle East. Thus the projects incorporated

6
A ventilating window standing proud from a wall and covered with a wooden or stone carved "veil" lattice; a widespread element in traditional stone constructions in the Middle East.

Amir G. Kabiri, president and director of the Hermitage Museum Foundation in Israel, president of the M.T. Abraham Foundation

"Sir Patrick Geddes worked with such innovative notions as 'conurbation' and 'environment'. He became a pioneer of the organic approach which sees the nature of a city as an organism, constantly developing and changing, and as a uniform urban tissue, uniting the city and the countryside landscapes. Adapting and using the newest scientific principles of urban development with their new vision of space and environment in Tel Aviv, Geddes had a great influence on urban theory in the 20th century."

PHOTO: ITZHAK KALTER

6 | Engel House. Architect: Zeev Rechler. 1934
7 | Rubinsky House, Architect: Lucian Korngold. 1936

8 | The Geddes Report Map. 1925

PATRICK GEDDES AND PLAN 58

If Tel Aviv is a unique monument to modernist architecture, it is to a great extent thanks to the general plan which was developed from 1925 by Scottish architect Patrick Geddes (1854–1932). The first draft of the plan was approved in 1927, but it was later modified multiple times with the final version created in 1938 and called Plan 58 (possibly referring to the number revisions the plan had gone through).

Geddes is a most interesting and somewhat underestimated figure in urban planning in the 20th century. Educated as a biologist, he performed interdisciplinary research into the theory of evolution and sociology and many years later realized that this knowledge could be applied to city planning. He believed that an understanding of human behavior and habits, determined to a great degree by biological factors, was the key to creating the best living spaces. By the time Geddes began working in Tel Aviv, he had designed plans for several districts in Great Britain, had worked as a consultant for territory planning in India, and had published a book entitled "Cities in Evolution" in 1915.

Geddes' plan for Tel Aviv was based on the garden city concept, with standard low-rise planning and a lot of vegetation. Garden cities, first described by the British sociologist and utopian Ebenezer Howard, seemed the ideal solution to building on empty land at that time. There was nothing revolutionary in the garden city principles by the mid-1920s; they were applied quite widely, but mostly in the suburbs. Tel Aviv is one of the very rare examples of how Howard's ideas were used in a part of the city which later became central.

Plan 58 included four types of street. Wide main roads, the major transport routes, passed through the city parallel to the shoreline. Less wide streets ran perpendicular to them and, apart from traffic, allowed sea breezes to flow into the residence districts to alleviate the heat. Narrow streets divided the city into 30 districts (there were 60 in the first draft but only half were built). Finally, very narrow streets passed through the districts that did not allow much traffic. In the middle of every district there is a green public space.

The uncompromising regularity of Plan 58, easily visible to anyone who looks at the map of the White City today, is reminiscent of the Commissioners' Plan of 1811 which laid out the streets of Manhattan, New York of 1811. The district was divided into 2,028 districts with Broadway and other streets and avenues laid out in the plan. The two plans have much in common: wide main streets crossing the city in perpendicular directions, and the clear division of the city into separate districts. But the similarity of the two cities is only formal. The shape of the Manhattan plan was determined by practical considerations

8a

12a

PHOTO: INITZA METZGER-SZMUK

9 | Camels in Hayarkon Slreel. circa 1930s
10 | Dizengoff Square. Archilecl: Genia Averbouch. 1935

PHOTO: ZOLTAN KLUGER

PHOTO: COURTESY OF NESHER AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY AND GEOGRAPHICAL APPLICATIONS LTD.

11 | Aerial photograph of Tel Aviv today

and its authors disregarded natural landscape. But Geddes saw adapting the new city to the natural conditions as one of his major aims. He worked in detail with every district and the green areas within them. He defined the percentage of territories to be left without construction and took the local topography into account when delimiting the zones. He created standards which meant that even now more than half of the city is covered with green areas which retain significant distances between the buildings.
Without defining a particular architectural style for future building in Tel Aviv, Geddes recommended they should be adapted to the climatic conditions with no wide windows and a lot of flat roofs.
It is difficult to say definitively whether the Tel Aviv plan is a direct practical application of Geddes' theoretical research. His research was too deep and diverse to be incarnated in a single complete form. But Tel Aviv is a rare example of how an entire city planning concept was exhaustively materialized, thus defining the development of the city for many years to come. Discussion of Plan 58 itself and its underlying principles is not only important as an attempt to document historical facts. At the beginning of the 20th century, Geddes proposed city planning ideas that are now, 100 years later, the core of any discussion on city development. In fact he was a precursor of the interdisciplinary approach to urban theory which is popular today and which was one of the first attempts to see future of streets and districts as something much more complicated than the mere assignment of functions. The questions Geddes asked in his "Cities in Evolution" still have no answer: "After the two first questions, namely 'Where? Where does everything come from?' and 'How? How does everything live and function?' an evolutionary researcher can ask a third question. No, not the good old 'What next?' one, as if anything could happen, but 'Where? Where now?' This, without any doubt, is the essence of the evolutionary concept, and this is where the complexity of its application lies".

_MARIA ELKINA

8b

12b

PHOTO: ZOLTAN KLUGER

12 | Aerial view of London Public Garden and Hayarkon Street. Mid-1940s

courtyards, patios, arcades, ventilation windows, and *mashrabiyas*[6]: everything that facilitates access to the air and creates shade. Many buildings were equipped with special curtains, balconies, air gaps ("thermometer" windows), and marquees. Offsets and niches capturing the sea breeze strengthened the draft and helped to lower the temperature in the apartments. Many houses were raised on concrete pillars which created more public space and natural ventilation. Flat roofs were used for gardens, pergolas, clothes drying spaces and leisure areas. All these architectural elements were wonderfully blended into the modernistic framework without corrupting the principles of functional architecture and even adding to its expressiveness. The striking combination of different volumes, dazzling white plastering, the dance of contrasting shadows — the new architecture districts were unbelievably impressive.

In 1939, after the publication of the White Paper and the St. James Conference[7], the speed of Tel Aviv's development dropped dramatically. Most architectural bureaus closed, and only the largest continued to operate, along with the Tel Aviv municipal urban planning department. Construction work was resumed in full only after 1948[8] and continued within the International style, which was at the peak of its popularity, as in other countries, in the 1950s, passing through a neobrutalism stage. The Bauhaus heritage did not attract much attention in these conditions, and gradually the unique 1930s artefacts lost their distinguished modernistic look. The buildings were updated with annexes and build-ups, paned balconies with plastic blinds, while the white plastering crumbled, and the walls became covered in cracks. The White City was gradually absorbed into the ruthless urban diffusion. But these districts were lucky, thanks to the involvement of architects, historians and citizens. In 2003, UNESCO proclaimed the White City a World Cultural Heritage site, placing more than 2,100 buildings into a protected zone. The large-scale renovation program being carried out in Tel Aviv is unprecedented: the buildings (more than 1,600 are included in the conservation plan) have been cleared of later additions, and their facades and historical interiors have been reconstructed.

7
The White Paper of 1939 is the report of the Secretary of State for the Colonies Malcolm McDonald to the British Parliament. It was offered to considerably reduce quota of Jewish immigration to Palestine and cancel the majority of points of the Balfour Declaration. The White Paper was approved during the St. James Conference that took place in London, in the St. James's Palace on February 7, 1939.

8
In 1947, the UK refused the Mandate for Palestine, and on May 14, 1948 the establishment of an independent Jewish state was proclaimed. Israel was recognized as the member of the UN on May 11, 1949.

With all the diversity of Tel Aviv's imagery, the White City is interesting because of its integrity, and because it represents an important stage in the development of Modernism[15]. In Tel Aviv, the new language of architecture proved its vitality in a city for the first time: the result of risky artistic experiments also turned out to be valuable from the practical point of view. Besides that, Tel Aviv was the first example that showed the universality of modernism: ideas born in Europe were materialized in another part of the world. The modernist movement tested the possibilities of globalization and this eventually determined the present situation in architecture, when a project designed in Amsterdam can be realized in Paris, and Japanese architects work on construction projects in Italy.

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Mikhail Piotrovsky

"Most remarkable for me is the fact that the restoration and reconstruction projects are being carried out under the conditions of the disastrous market system, the private ownership of almost all of the buildings, diverse methods of encouragement and compensation for preserving the architecture, and the question of how to overcome certain inconveniences related to these factors.
It is a very flexible and clever system. It functions well because most of the inhabitants and developers — I had the chance to speak to some of them — are sincerely proud to live in a remarkable architectural landmark, and are not wailing, as in some other places, that heritage conservation disturbs their lives.
It seems that almost all obstacles to conserving fragile architecture can be overcome if there is goodwill. Then the sun caresses the buildings and does not highlight their cracks".

13 | Leon Recanali House. Architects: Shlomo (Salomon) Liaskovsky, Jacob Orenstein
14 | Circular Balconies. A house in Hayarkon Street. 1930s

PHOTO: CONGRESS LIBRARY

MOSCOW ON THE MOSCOW

THE CITY OF MOSCOW IS A HISTORICAL SIMULACRUM THANKS TO THE WORK OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES. THIS IS WHERE MOSCOW GETS ITS WELL-KNOWN POWER FROM: EACH NEW EPOCH HERE IS SO STRONG THAT IT OVERSHADOWS ALL THE PREVIOUS EPOCHS THAT CAME BEFORE IT. THE MOSKVA-CITY BUSINESS CENTER, WHICH PEEKS INTO THE GAP BETWEEN ST. BASIL'S CATHEDRAL AND THE SPASSKY TOWER, IS A GREAT EXAMPLE OF THAT: NO ONE CARES THAT IT HAS CHANGED THE HISTORICAL APPEARANCE OF RED SQUARE, WHICH ITSELF HAS BEEN DOMINATED ALL THESE YEARS BY A MERCEDES LOGO, THE PEDESTAL FOR WHICH IS THE FAMOUS CONSTRUCTIVIST HOUSE ON THE EMBANKMENT.

DIMITRI OZERKOV

Moscow has two museums named after Pushkin: one is the Pushkin Museum itself, a literary museum dedicated to the life and works of Alexander Pushkin, and the other is the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, which has no relation to the poet. Why does the Museum of Fine Arts carry Pushkin's name? Because Pushkin is a famous Russian poet. Is there any logic in that? Of course! During Stalin's time, it was impossible to name Ivan Tsvetaev's new art museum after its founder, the father of the disgraced poet Marina Tsvetaeva! In 1937, a different name was necessary, and everyone and his dog knows who Pushkin is. And another thing about Moscow: everybody always shows people the church where Pushkin was married, which, by the way, is what saved the church from demolition in that same year of 1937 (only the old bell tower was destroyed). But that's not the main thing: Pushkin's name in the museum name is the same "replica made from the original", as is the main historical collection of the Pushkin Museum itself, carefully chosen by Tsvetaev. Otherwise, a museum of replicas is doomed to remain the lot of students. One can see this phenomenon in St. Petersburg in the collection of the Baron Stieglitz School of Drawing, or the Museum of Replicas of the Academy of Fine Arts. These museums are also, basically, worthy of Pushkin's name.

There was a change during the Stalin years in the collection of the Museum of Fine Arts as well: orginal works were added to the museum's exhibition of copies. Paintings and drawings were brought to the museum from the Hermitage in St. Petersburg, or taken from captured German trains and from the closed State Museum of New Western Art (GMNZI). A unique feature of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts since that time is that copies and originals are actually displayed in practically the same space: a museum of moulds grew firmly entwined with a collection of originals. Therefore, the phenomenon of the original in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts always comes as a nice surprise, as a miracle. It is as if the casts magnify the power of the orginals: visitors to a temporary exhibition of Caravaggio were all taken aback by his mighty velvet curtains and buttafour fruits, since they were what made Caravaggio's paintings so strikingly original as compared to everything else in the museum.

15 | A mirrored pavilion erected for a fashion show on Red Square
July 2013

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

The largest works in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts collection are copies. Michelangelo's David, Donatello's David, fragments of Greek temples, Italian palazzos and French Gothic portals are completely integrated into the architecture of Roman Klein's architectural style, which itself is largely a copy of German museums of the 19th century, including the New Hermitage, designed by Leo von Klenze, with its pedantic Greek classicism and grand staircase that leads several flights upwards from the entrance to somewhere above, skyward. In St. Petersburg it leads to the original works in the "Large Skylight" rooms. In Moscow it leads to the casts made from the famous orginals of the past.

The topic of temporary architecture has always been very dear to Moscow, a city which is always changing and improving something. This architectural tradition continues in the case of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. Strange buildings/simulacra contain strange originals in the Glazunov and Shilov galleries. The appalling architecture of the museum of private collections makes it hard to believe that there are originals exhibited on the walls of these strange boxes. All of the most interesting and significant buildings surrounding the Pushkin Museum are themselves copies[19] of their own originals. The Moscow Manege burnt down and was built all over again. The Moscow Hotel was torn down and then built all over again. The Red Gate and the church beside it were torn down and rebuilt. Only a part of the facade of the Zholtovsky House was preserved, and was repainted in a depressing fashion and given terrible new window casements. The rest of the buildings are just as ghostly. The Lenin Library, which stands apart, has been turned into a giant pedestal for advertising. The authenticity of the Kremlin towers is just as misleading, because you can't see what has remained of their original style now that they're full of security alarms, sensors, and anti-missile devices.

Unlike the people of St. Petersburg, Muscovites know how to accept copies the right way: to love them and quickly forget that they are copies. This gives the city and its people their strength. It is clear that this phenomenon will be more specifically described in terms of adaptive aesthetics and civil mimicry. After all, any "restoration" in Moscow means building all over again! Hardly anyone remembers any more that the Cathedral of Christ the Savior is a "restored copy" (Moscow oxymoron) of the original, in which nothing is orginal except for its similarity to its source. And the collective memory of the place. I remember how excited the professional community was when it was decided that once the cathedral was constructed, the "original" bas reliefs, stored in the Donskoy Monastery, would be returned to the walls of the new cathedral. But no, why make things so difficult? All the reliefs were produced all over again.

It is going to be the same with the State Museum of New Western Art (GMNZI) project. Everything that has been said recently by interested parties about the museum's possible restoration will be reversed and distorted to the point that you will not recognize the original. Everybody understands perfectly well that if a positive decision is made all of a sudden in Moscow, then the local custom is that some Moscow entrenpreneurs show up immediately and get the most budget money possible in record-short time to make buildings all over again. After all, this is a lot cheaper than restoring what you already have. And most surprisingly of all, very soon everyone will start thinking that this was the way the building always was. Just like people think today that the Cathedral of Christ the Savior always stood with its bas reliefs on its walls, and never even think that there was a swimming pool in its place, or that there was a hysterical competition for the Palace of Soviets to be built there.

Everyone knows that St. Petersburg is the "city on the Neva", and Moscow is the "city on the Moscow River". Muscovites add the word "River", because otherwise the expression "Moscow on the Moscow" sounds weird. But there's logic in this too: The city of Moscow stands right on another Moscow, no matter what. Future archeologists will obviously take great interest in uncovering the ruins of one Moscow on top of another Moscow, layer by layer, with churches under Constructivist culture palaces, upon which stand new churches.

Muscovites can't understand what they see in the Hermitage: "These must all be copies here too!" But it just so happens that things were different in St. Petersburg than in Moscow right from the beginning. Here the authenticity of each masterpiece is not only visible to the naked eye, it is also confirmed by all kinds of documentation starting from the 18th century. You can be sure in the Hermitage that you are looking at an original work of art: this museum does not show copies, does not want to, and does not know how to. Big capitals are fated to work with simulacra. If Moscow is the new Rome standing on seven hills, the peak of the empire of copies, wiping out enemy civilizations one after another, then St. Petersburg is the Northern Venice, a wise original, which happens to go underwater from time to time.

It will not be possible to restore the State Museum of New Western Art (GMNZI) completely: some of the paintings cannot be returned. Those who speak about restoring the museum forget about this fact. What can you do about that? Of course, just replace them with high-technology nanocopies. You'll be able to touch these paintings with your hands, and photograph them with a flash, and look at them from any distance. After all, the architecture of GMNZI was nothing special, and it won't be easy to look at originals: we'll have to remember the boxes of the museum of personal collections again.

Overall, manufacturing an honest copy is the only way to rebuild the GMNZI without destroying the Hermitage and the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. Otherwise the Hermitage will lose one of the most important parts of its collection, and will justly demand that the 500 paintings that were given away in an exchange with the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts back in the day be returned. And the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, losing both the paintings it got from the Hermitage, and the ones it got from GMNZI, will once again become a museum full of casts for students, and will probably lose its "Pushkin" name. After all, you can't give a provincial mansion full of casts the name of Russia's greatest poet!

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PHOTO: VLADIMIR FRIDKES

16 | Elena Kilaeva, the artist
who created this issue's cover,
in her studio

1 | Cathy Wilkes. *Untilled*

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA (P34-35)

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VENICE

THE 55TH VENICE BIENNALE S OF CONTEMPORARY ART

An oversaturated reality that presses and provokes awaits those looking for treasure in a world where everything is upside down. The official *giardini* with the "Big Three", dark puns and substitutions, Ravel soaring over the French Pavilion, and the 1972 edition of Bowie; Buddhist monks on the embankment, a pregnant Alison Lapper causing an uproar at the facade of San Giorgio Maggiore, Bill Viola's gelatinous tears, and an Iraqi house instead of a 14th century palazzo; a little white boat slowly drifting next to the Arsenal with a crew of musicians playing Icelandic music, tender and elegiac, all summer and all autumn, when all the super yachts have already left the lagoon, heralds Kjartan Sveinsson flying out of the fog, at the very end of this golden Venetian maze.

2 | Vadim Zakharov. *Umbrellas. Danaë* Installation (fragment) Russian Pavilion

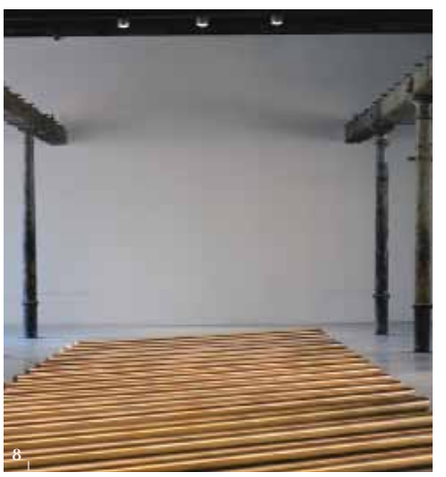
3 | Buddhist monks on the quay near St. Mark's Square, Venice. 2013

4 | Vadim Zakharov. *Danaë* ***Installation*** (fragment) Russian Pavilion

5 | Eva Kotáková. *Asylum*

6 | Valentin Carron At the Swiss Pavilion

7 | Wim Botha *Dimensional portraits created from encyclopaedias* South African Pavilion



8 | Walter De Maria *Apollo's Ecstasy*

THE BERGEN ASSEMBLY

Sergei Guskov

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Is there any point in putting on a regular, international art exhibition? The Bergen Assembly started out by pondering this question. As often happens, it was agreed that there was absolutely no point at all, but it would be interesting to create the first Bergen Triennial anyway (there are many precedents for this — take, for example, the Moscow Biennial[S]). Curators Yekaterina Degot and David Riff were invited as conveners of the assembly. They are both known for pioneering work of this kind as creators of the 1st Ural Industrial Biennial[S] in 2011. The biennial in Yekaterinburg enjoys ongoing success and it remains to be seen how the Bergen project will develop in the future.

The Norwegian city was reimagined as the town of Solovets from the science fiction novel by the Strugatsky brothers, "Monday begins on Saturday", which is the eponymous inspiration for the triennial. The structure of the assembly was also inspired by the novel and eleven different exhibition sites were given the title of "institutes", echoing the research institutes that are satirized in the Strugatsky brothers' novel. Some of the centers took the departmental names of the novel's "Research Institute of Wizardry and Sorcery", and others came up with their own titles. Still, the project is not just a pastiche of the Cold War novel — it is also an attempt to explore the problems of the here and now.

Norway is an ambitious country — it has even attempted to solve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This effort was documented in the film "The Goodness Regime" by Norwegian artist

9 | Andreas Siekmann and Alice Creischer
Untilled. 2012
10 | Bergen Assembly 2013
Socialist Sci-Fi (exhibition view)
11 | Jan Peter Hammer
Tilikum. 2013
12 | Maxim Spivakov
Untilled. 2013

9 | PHOTO: MINZE TUMMESCHEIT AND ARNE HECTOR

10 | PHOTO: NILS KLINGER

11 | PHOTO: MONIKA ŻAK

12 | PHOTO: NILS KLINGER

PHOTO: NILS KLINGER

13 | Lars Cuzner and Mohamed Ali Fadlabi
Forensics of Attraction. 2013
14 | Anna Oppermann
Ersatz Problem by Example of Beans. 1977
15 | *Urban Fauna Laboratory. Valley of Beggars.* 2013
EXHIBITION VIEW

Sille Storihle and Palestinian artist Jumana Manna, who are quite critical of Norway's attempts to take on the heroic role of peacemaker. One could expect a Soviet-themed exhibition from the curators, who have never shied away from expressing their socialist views, but in fact here they have demonstrated that the space that was once occupied by the communist idea of utopia has now been filled by a vision of the West and countries such as Norway, in particular. This idea is explored by the Russian art group Chto Delat? in their film, "Border Musical",which shows the somewhat common Norwegian phenomenon of children being taken from their parents by social workers. However the woman at the center of this film is Russian and she finds this practice unthinkable. The finale, sung by the mother whose child has been taken from her and the good citizens of Norway who allowed it to happen, cannot fail to give the viewer pause for thought.

Both of these works show how we can lose our ability to criticize the status quo. There must be something suspicious about a situation where life is so wonderful that there is literally nothing more to be said about it. You begin to wonder about the underbelly of the "perfect society" and sure enough, one of the institutes displays photographs by Alexander Rodchenko taken at the construction site of the White Sea-Baltic Canal and video work by British artist Imogen Stidworthy, who was inspired by the work of Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

The strange thing is that Scandinavian socialism does not really exist anymore because everywhere has become more or less the same. The countries that speak most ardently of freedom are guilty of the same crimes that used to be levelled at "godless communists". An exhibit by US-based artists Aeron Bergman and Alejandra Salinas is particularly interesting in this regard. They discovered a monument in Detroit with which the authorities paradoxically decided to quash the rebellion of 1967 — one of the incidents in the bloody period of unrest that accompanied the civil rights movement. This is to name but a few of the exhibits. The exhibition holds scores of works, and although many of them were created especially for the Bergen Assembly, their significance has much further reach.

PHOTO: NILS KLINGER

PHOTO: NILS KLINGER

RIJKSMUSEUM. MY FIRST MUSEUM

Since July 1, 2008, when I took up the office of Rijksmuseum director, and throughout the period during which the museum was being prepared for reopening after its reconstruction, that is until April 13, 2013, I kept a diary with my iPhone and my camera. This resulted in a kaleidoscope of fragments from different places all over the world that either inspired or, on the contrary, annoyed me. So I thought to myself either "I should do it like that!" or "I should not do it like that!" Some sort of collage emerged showing what the new Rijksmuseum should look like. Wim Pijbes

The diary recorded not only museums, but also airports, shops, restaurants, parks, swimming pools, churches — all the crowded places from Antwerp to New York and from Basel to Taipei. I have thus collected a lot of examples, both of brilliant findings and of failures. But no matter how many different solutions there may be, every museum has a special mission of its own. This is undoubtedly true of the Rijksmuseum.

The particularity of the Rijksmuseum is that its new building, built in 1885 and entirely renovated now, was designed as a national art and history museum. This distinguishes the Rijksmuseum from many other national museums. It was decided to focus on the art and history of the Netherlands, combining them in the same building. Foreign art was never displayed here.

Even though the museum is rather functional, many people criticized the architect Pierre Cuypers for his inclination towards neo-gothic eclecticism. His rather ambitious style indeed seemed not to be the best choice for a Protestant country, especially considering that European architecture at that time had already mostly rejected historicism. Besides that, against the background of the surrounding buildings the Rijksmuseum looked bulky. But over the years, all of this gave it a special character and charm.

It was originally planned that the museum would receive up to 200, 000 visitors a year, but then their numbers grew to two million. At the beginning of the 21st century, the government approved a major renovation project.

The Spanish architectural bureau Cruz y Ortiz Arquitectos proposed a daring, but simple solution: to create an underground entrance zone uniting the Eastern and Western parts of the building. Alongside this, after demolishing the partition walls and intermediate floors added later, the museum regained its 19th-century proportions and the Cuypers' staterooms regained their original appearance.

Today's visitors can now see the museum as it used to be 125 years ago, walking through the monumental staircases, the hall, the ceremonial gallery and "The Night Watch"(23) hall, and also taking a look at the library reconstructed in all its beauty. The new Rijksmuseum kept its splendor but rid itself of its unappealing massivity.

The museum garden will now no longer merely the green periphery of the building, but also a sculpture gallery and recreational space for the visitors who can enjoy themselves on the sunny new terrace. The garden is now a spacious green "living room"' in the city center. Entry is free and the plants have been chosen so that at all times of the year there will be a fragrant flower garden. There will also be a fountain for children designed by Danish artist Jeppe Hein.

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PHOTO: PEDRO PEGENAUTE/RIJKSMUSEUM

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PHOTO: IWAN BAAN/RIJKSMUSEUM

PHOTO: NOORTJE SCHMIDT

16 | 17 | Rijksmuseum
18 | Queen Bealrix and Presidenl Vladimir Pulin al lhe opening of lhe exhibilion *"Peler lhe Greal, an Inspired Tsar"*

19 | Jan Asselijn
The Threalened Swan. 1650
Rijksmuseum, Amslerdam

In the renovated Rijksmuseum the focus in general is on the visitors, because people are often more unique than pieces of art. The Dutch writer and artist Jacob Jan Cremer once said that students should necessarily go to museums because you can meet the most beautiful girls there.

The first impression is often the most important, just as every trip starts with a first step and the first kiss always stays in our memory. The Rijksmuseum makes a first impression for hundreds of thousands of people every year; it concerns both children and tourists, many of whom are seeing real art and a real museum for the first time. Big museums are captivating in an almost magical way; their space somehow touches you. I am sure that in the new Rijksmuseum both the interiors and the museum's collection will make visitors' hearts miss a beat. There is nothing bad in being rendered speechless for a moment by the stunning beauty revealed to you.

But even for those who think they have already seen everything our museum is preparing some surprises. The historian Johan Huizinga introduced the concept of the "historical sensation" back in 1920. In the case of the Rijksmuseum the actual visit to the museum, the tête-à-tête with history and art, a new experience should become a sensation; visual, aesthetic, intellectual and emotional.

It should be noted that many new generation museums are developing in this direction, successfully realizing the transition from "visiting" and "seeing" to "experiencing".

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Beginning

On November 19, 1798, three years after the foundation of the Batavian republic, the government supported Isaac Gogel's idea to create a national museum in The Hague, as had already been done by the French at that time. The exhibits included, first of all, the remains of the stadtholders' collection and the paintings which had earlier decorated the halls of different state institutes. On May 31, 1800, the National Art Gallery (as it was originally called) opened its doors to the public. At that time the collection included 200 paintings and historic objects.
Gogel, together with the director K.S.Ross, helped purchase works of art for the museum in subsequent years. Their first acquisition was "The Threatened Swan" by Jan Asselijn, bought for 100 *guldens* and still considered a major masterpiece in the Rijksmuseum's collection today.

Moving to Amsterdam

In 1808, on the orders of the new monarch Louis Bonaparte (Louis I), the collection was moved to Amsterdam which had become the capital of the Kingdom of Holland. The paintings and other exhibits were located in the palace on Dam square, in the former city hall. They were then united with the most valuable paintings owned by the city, among them "The Night Watch"(23) by Rembrandt(8). Several years after William I, Prince of Orange, was proclaimed king of the Netherlands in 1815, the museum, already named the Rijksmuseum("The State Museum"), together with the engravings collection delivered from The Hague, was displayed in the Trippenhuis, a 17th-century city mansionon the Kloveniersburgwal canal, where at that time the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences was also located. In contrast to the Louis Bonaparte period, there were no significant acquisitions at that time.

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PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

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PHOTO: IWAN BAAN/RIJKSMUSEUM

The Rijksmuseum has learned to think "in real time" and you could feel it from the very first day after it opened.

The world is changing fast and new possibilities are appearing. The hierarchy that used to exist, with its condition of division into different forms, into "high" and "low", is disappearing. Thus in modern zoos there are no more separation walls, and zebras, giraffes and antelopes now live on the grass together in an artificial African savannah.

The renovated Rijksmuseum uses the concept of the mixed display, where painting, glass and ceramics, silver, clothing, weaponry and furniture are exhibited together in the same halls. The positioning is determined not by the shape or the material, but by a consistent chronological narration, and each item becomes part of it. The museum is ready to show the Netherlands to the world from a whole range of different perspectives, from paintings by the medieval Dutch masters to the work of Mondrian.

Rejection of clear limits and hierarchies and the juxtaposition of art forms can be found everywhere today. Fashion becomes art, art becomes fashion. The "temple" that used to be hard to access is now open to everyone, and the process of introduction to art is becoming ever simpler thanks to easier means of travel and new means of communication.

In 2012 the Rijksmuseum introduced the web portal Rijks Studio. It gives everyone free and unlimited access to a collection of 125,000 works of art, which is constantly being added to. During a short period of time around 100,000 of visitors created their own works of art based on the museum exhibits: collages, patterns, color combinations etc. Recently, in part thanks to support from the world's leading design magazine Wallpaper and the design studio Droog Design, this project received worldwide recognition as an example to follow.

PHOTO: ERIK SMITS/RIJKSMUSEUM

18 ↓ p. 042 p. 150

20 | The *Night Watch* Gallery
21 | The Great Hall
22 | The 17th Century Gallery
23 | The 19th Century Gallery

An entirely new disposition of the exhibits allows a real insight into art and history including famous masterpieces and unexpected revelations. Every exhibit was given a place of its own and a new context. The only piece that kept its former place is "The Night Watch"(23) by Rembrandt(8), although the painting is now displayed a little lower than before. The exposition will be in constant motion. Real art is timeless, but old masters seem static and are now less popular with young people, so we deliberately bring them together with our contemporaries. We can do this by suggesting a comparison of Rembrandt's portraits with portraits by Marlene Dumas, and decorative art of the past centuries with modern Dutch design.

8 ↓ p. 039 p. 068 p. 115 p. 126 p. 150 p. 206 p. 273 p. 279

Art and history are not out of date, and the Rijksmuseum has both feet in the present; it is a place where everything is happening here and now. Because of its particularities and traditions our museum cannot only preserve its influence, but also become one of the platforms for modern art development, without any ceremoniousness or haughtiness. The prospects are bright. For example, we can cooperate more actively with schools, develop projects taking into account the demographic situation and educational expansion, and invite new partners: TV channels, radio stations and tour operators.

23 ↓ p. 038 p. 039 p. 115 p. 126

The renovation of the building was financed by the state: the interior works were supported by our major partner, Philips, the national lottery fund Bank Giro Loterij and the main sponsors, the ING bank and the KPN company. The Rijksmuseum also received help from many other funds and private sponsors, which once again emphasizes the nationwide significance of the museum.

The renovated museum stays loyal to the values it always embodied: taste, fantasy, determination, optimism and moderate "bourgeois" values. It is with this that the Rijksmuseum welcomes in the future.

Cuypers' temple

The Trippenhuis did not conform to the standards in keeping with the museum's exhibits. Besides that, many people thought that the Netherlands should have a building designed especially for the National Museum. After long discussions construction work finally began in 1876. The architect Pierre Cuypers created a project in a historical style combining gothic and Renaissance(18) styles. Although many people found this style too medieval and "not Dutch enough", the museum was officially opened in 1885.
Besides the paintings and the engravings from the Trippenhuis, the Rijksmuseum received almost all of the old paintings from the Amsterdam city collection, including "The Jewish Bride" by Rembrandt, which was given as a gesture of goodwill to the city by the banker Adriaan van der Hoop. The 19th-century art collection formerly located in Haarlem was also transferred to the museum.

Construction and renovation works

Because of the constantly growing number of exhibits and the changing conceptions of museum space, the Rijksmuseum building grew with different annexes. Thus, in the period 1904–1916 a new wing was added on the southwest side, which was partly reserved for the 19th-century paintings given to the museum from the Drucker-Freizer collection(now the Philips wing). In the 1950s and 1960s the courtyards were transformed into exhibition halls to increase the display area.
In 1927 under the supervision of the director Frederik Schmidt-Degener, the museum was divided into departments of history, painting, sculpture and applied art, and after 1945 they were relocated to separate parts of the building. In the 1950s the department of Eastern Art was created (for the Eastern Art Society collection).
In the 1970s the number of visitors reached a record level, almost two million a year. The building could no longer meet the requirements of a modern museum.

Into the future with Cuypers

During the latest renovations, the museum regained its original layout and the courtyards were cleared of all construction. Paintings, applied art and historic exhibits are now displayed in a united, chronologically structured narrative about the art and history of the country.
The building was in every respect modernized and reconditioned, but at the same time it regained the look that generally corresponds to Cuypers' project. "Into the future with Cuypers" is how the museum's directors calls this approach.
The renovated Rijksmuseum, which opened in 2013, represents for visitors a wonderful celebration of the 21st-century museum.

THE SPRINGTIME OF THE RENAISSANC⑱ — SCULPTURE AND THE ARTS IN FLORENCE, 1400-1460

18
↓
p. 041
p. 150

LOUVRE

An exhibition currently showing in the Louvre was previously displayed in the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence, in endless corridors of marble, stucco and terracotta — everything that composed the "new beauty" and elegance of the different facets of the social life of Florence during the Quattrocento epoch.

24 | Benozzo Gozzoli, attributed
Study, from the Group of Castor and Pollux
c. 1447–1449
The British Museum, London

PHOTO: © THE TRUSTEES OF THE BRITISH MUSEUM

To prepare the viewer for Renaissance art the exhibition starts with impressive Roman vases, sculpture reliefs with dancers that later inspired many Tuscan artists including Niccolò Pisano[1], and works from the 13th and the 14th centuries by French artists among others (two beautiful 13th-century "Madonna with Child" paintings are included, one from Paris and one from Picardy) which allegedly influenced his art. We can see the artistic and cultural embodiment of the new construction of the world in its development. The diversity of approaches used in the exhibition and their close relation to one another facilitates greater understanding of the secret of the "explosion of the Florentine Renaissance.

The main subject of the exhibition is the sculpture born in Florence in the early 15th century and the major theme of the "springtime" Renaissance. More than 140 objects — monumental works, sculptures, paintings, drawings, manuscripts, coins, jewelry and majolica — represent the masterpieces of the early Renaissance.

The gothic meets and merges with the classical at the very beginning of the 15th century; we can see this on the doors of the Florence baptistery[2], in the "Sacrifice of Isaac"[3], in the gilded bronzes by Lorenzo Ghiberti, which are thought to have marked the "solemn opening" of the Renaissance — the enchantment of late-gothic elegance in classic sculpture forms.

The new sculpture standards of the 1420s are illustrated with masterpieces by Donatello ("Pazzi Madonna", 1417–1418)[4], and Nanni di Banco[5], including sculptures destined for public spaces (Section 9: "Beauty and Mercy. Hospitals, orphanages, communities, fraternities").

Wooden sculpture models are displayed, the most important ones being the model of the dome of Santa Maria del Fiore by Brunnelleschi, as an ultimate highlight of Florence, and a model of the most famous Renaissance private residence — Palazzo Strozzi; a retrospective of sculptures that influenced the development of all the figurative arts, in direct dialogue with its classic predecessors — ancient sarcophagi, the revival and development of horse monuments and carved portraits.

"The Springtime of the Renaissance" explains the Greek and Roman influence on Renaissance art and their later interpretations. The dialogue between sculpture and painting is illustrated with works by Giotto, Masaccio, Filippo Lippi and sculpture reliefs which are related because of the new possibilities of linear perspective that had been revealed by the artists.

Carved portraits that became popular by the middle of the 15th century, and which are represented by marble busts by Mino da Fiesole[6], Desiderio da Settignano[7] and Antonio Rossellino[8], were a curious artistic transition from Fiorentina libertas to the hegemony of the Medici family (Section 10: "From the city to the palace. New patrons of the arts").

The star of the exhibition, indisputably full of beauty, is Donatello. There are 13 of his works displayed here, including the nobly elegant but expressive "Madonna with Child" (1420–1425).

Donatello's sculptures are monumental statues, busts and reliefs which constitute the amazing scope of the exhibition, but they do not overshadow works by other famous sculptors: Ghiberti, Nanni di Banco, Lucca della Robbia[9], Nanni di Bartolo[10], Agostino di Duccio[11], Desiderio da Settignano, Mino da Fiesole. "The Springtime of the Renaissance" represents several works by each of the sculptors, so that the public can see how many

25 | Paolo Uccello
Diamond-pointed Sphere
c. 1450–1475
Musée du Louvre, Paris

major artists worked in the first half of the 15th century. Panels by Brunnelleschi and Ghiberti for the competition for creating the second door of the Florence Baptistery (1401), monumental sculptures by Donatello for Orsanmichele[12] and for Campanile[13], amazing terracotta by Lucca della Robia or a unique series of Florentine busts are only a part of the ensemble which makes this city an unrivaled creator of the new Renaissance style, a source of the "Florentine myth" for centuries to come.

Both visiting the exhibition, in which the curators try to find the sources of this amazing new world which went on to illuminate the history of the arts and humanities, and studying its catalogue are essential for every art lover. This exhibition is so full of masterpieces that one could just enjoy them without trying to understand the history they try to tell. And still the Louvre could have told it more clearly, as some parts of the exhibition become understandable only with some additional research after the visit.

1 Niccolò Pisano (c. 1220 – belween 1278 and 1284).

2 Ballislero di San Giovanni — lhe Baplislry of Sl. John in Florence.

3 The slaluary "Sacrifice of Isaac" (1418–1421), crealed wilh Nanni di Barlolo.

4 Slaalliche Museen zu Berlin-Preussischer Kullurbesizl, Berlin.

5 Nanni di Banco (c. 1384–1421).

6 Mino da Fiesole (1431–1486).

7 Desiderio da Sellignano (c. 1428/1431–1464).

8 Anlonio Rossellino (1427–1479).

9 Lucca della Robbia (1399/1400–1482).

10 Nanni di Barlolo (1362–1422).

11 Agoslino di Duccio (1418–1481).

12 Orsanmichele, Or San Michele — a unique Florenline church and grain slorehouse.

13 Giollo's bell lower — lhe campanile of lhe Florence Calhedral (Duomo).

TODAY WE REBOOT THE PLANET
INSTALLATION BY ADRIÁN VILLAR ROJAS

SERPENTINE SACKLER GALLERY

He never smashes his sculptures to make cracks. It just happens: they break during the journey and deteriorate despite the superglue. He poses unanswerable questions about the fate of the world.

Adrián Villar Rojas' installation "Today We Reboot the Planet" has inaugurated the newly opened Serpentine Sackler Gallery[1] in London. The architectural transformation of the 1805 gunpowder store, realized by Zaha Hadid, became the first exhibition venue to host Villar Rojas' clay curiosities and vast array of modern stone monuments, the playthings of a time machine that turns ordinary objects into ancient relics. The new gallery is the second Serpentine venue in London, and was opened with the support of the Sackler Foundation.

The multiple realities of Villar Rojas are the very metaphysical basis and subject of the fantasy stories of Jorge Luis Borges[2]. He builds monuments because he is not ready to lose anything[3]. He looks at the world with the eyes of an inhabitant of many different realities, giving a thrillingly new perspective each and every time.

Villar Rojas, who comes from Argentina, is one of the most intriguing of contemporary artists. He has come to prominence for large sculptures made from clay, cement, wood and brick. The games he plays with time, history and the future in this fossilized world of ruins and monuments are becoming ever more akin to a narrative: the next chapters in an unknown myth.

"Today We Reboot the Planet" is Villar Rojas' first installation to be shown in Britain. He is best known for recent projects at dOCUMENTA (13) in Kassel, Germany, for the Argentinian Pavilion at the 54th Venice Art Biennale, his monumental installation in the Jardin des Tuileries in Paris (2011) and the 12th Istanbul Biennale(s).

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26 | Entrance to the exhibition
27 | *The Serpentine Sackler Gallery* designed by Zaha Hadid
28 | Sculpture based on a still from Robert Bresson's film *"Au Hasard Balthazar"* (1966) with embedded potatoes and pasta

26

PHOTO: LUKE HAYES

27

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

1
The gallery and installation opened on September 28, 2013.

2
"The Circular Ruins" (1940).

3
"I build monuments because I'm not ready to lose anything" (Adrián Villar Rojas).

28

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

29 | **Killens kissing between feel of Michelangelo's David**
The Serpenline Sackler Gallery, London

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

EXHIBITIONS IN MUSEUMS AROUND THE WORLD

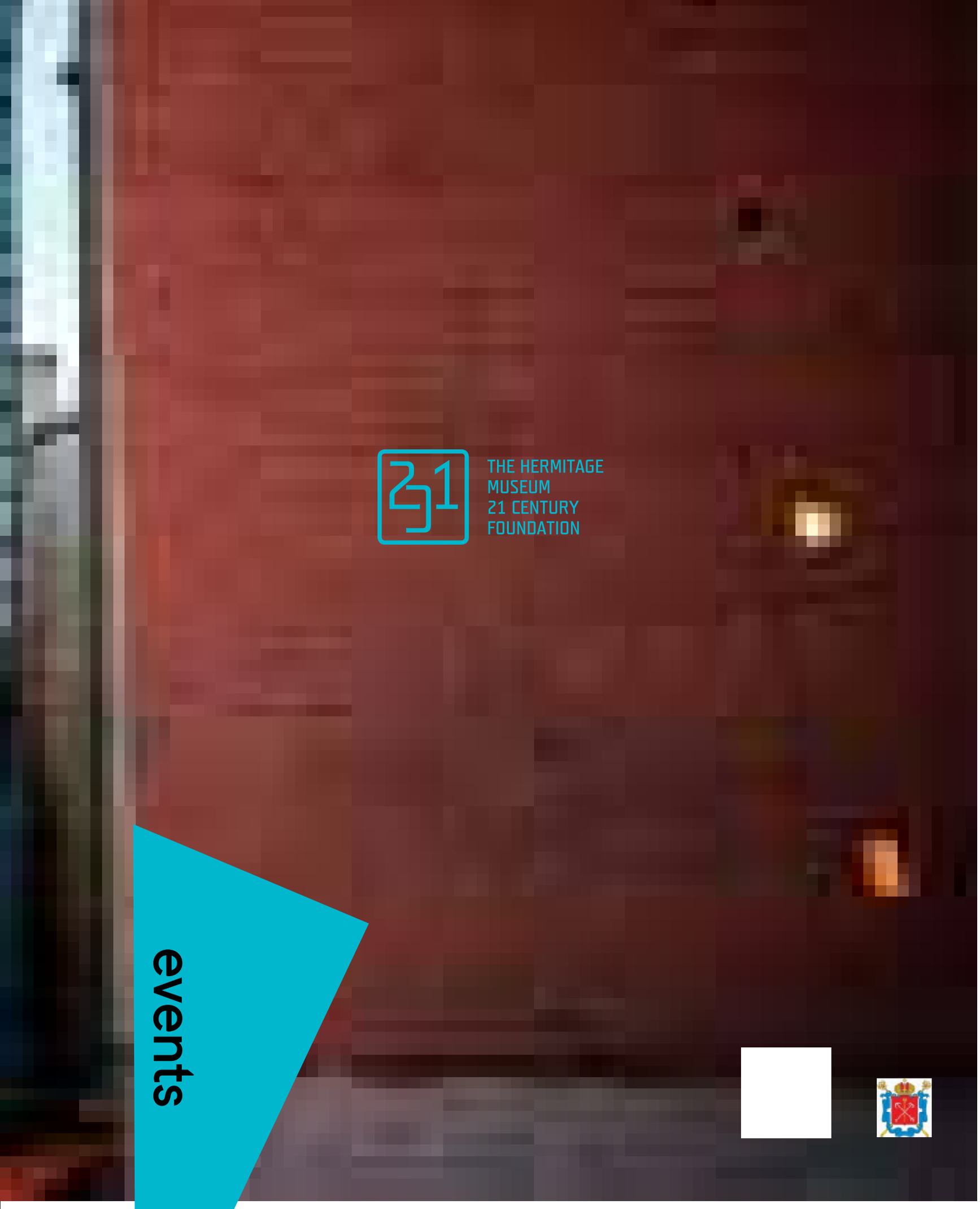
WINTER 2013–2014

MANIFESTA 10

The European Biennial of Contemporary Art

28 June — 31 October, 2014
St. Petersburg, Russia
The State Hermitage Museum

parallel


THE HERMITAGE
MUSEUM
21 CENTURY
FOUNDATION
events

THE BERLIN WORLD-IMPROVEMENT MACHINE

Reviews of the exhibition typically start with something like this: "We live in a depressingly stupid world. Capitalism has taken over and there is no escaping it. So to fix matters, we now have the World Improvement Machine (Weltverbesserungsmaschine) in the courtyard of the Hamburg Station. If it doesn't break down and if we all gather round it, the world will become a better place". Maria Isserlis, Marta Zdroba

16 ↓ p. 681 p. 280

This tetrahedron is not revolutionary[16], nor could it be described as a work of art. It is an abstract structure that is not beautiful or even interesting — it is basically Maslow's pyramid. Do you want to improve the world? Then start up the engine in your head and let it drive you around, following a map of 70 exhibits in 15 different Berlin museums — moving from Rubens' "Landscape with Cows and Duck Hunters" to "The Reclining Calf" at the Pergamon Museum and then on to Goya, the Babylonian Ishtar Gate, and Rodin's "The Thinker" and on and on through Berlin, finding inspiration, juggling associations and creating your own machine as you go. Change the world by changing yourself.

Curator Friedrich von Borries resurrected an old idea for this project. It is a very old idea — it goes back a long way, almost 400 years. The Machine originates in the 17th century and it is likely that the Berlin Academy of Arts, founded in 1696, and the Royal Museums of Berlin, founded in the 1830s, were originally established to realize the project. Curatorial notes on philosophy and history have been created for every one of the 70 mechanisms[22] of the Machine (read: exhibits), walking routes have been specially mapped out and reading material has been recommended. This is a study of a changing world.

22 ↓ p. 237 p. 286

Von Borries is an academic, an architect and an artist, but more than any of these, he is a prophet. This is his latest effort to save civilization from catastrophe by living the right kind of life in a world that has gone wrong. Here he juxtaposes the art of consumption with the consumption of the arts[1].

This is truly ambitious. The project is like a biennale[5] in that it engages the whole city of Berlin. But it is not the first of its kind — it follows the lead of Massimiliano Gioni and his Encyclopaedic Palace in Venice, which was inspired by the ideas of the folk artist, Marino Auriti. In Venice the central theme was the individual's obsession with collecting. In Berlin, through the exhibition of artefacts in the Machine, we see an attempt to cast new light on forgotten collections.

We guess this is a kind of sectarianism. In all likelihood, it is doomed to fail.

5 ↓ p. 035 p. 036 p. 044 p. 093 p. 196 p. 243

30 | A pyramid erected in front of the Hamburger Bahnhof

1 Borries F. von. RLF. "Das richtige Leben im Falschen". Berlin, 2013.

AMSTERDAM

KAZIMIR MALEVICH AND THE RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE ③

③ ↓ p. 016 p. 271

THE STEDELIJK MUSEUM
19 OCTOBER 2013 — 2 FEBRUARY 2014

The Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam has organized a major in-depth retrospective of Kazimir Malevich and the Russian Avant-Garde, on show until February 2, 2014. The exhibition is the first major retrospective dedicated to a key figure from the museum's collection since the Stedelijk reopened in 2012, and unites the collections of Nikolai Khardzhiev (under the stewardship of the Stedelijk) and George Costakis (State Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, Greece) with the comprehensive collection of the Stedelijk itself.
Bart Rutten, co-curator of "Kazimir Malevich and the Russian Avant-Garde" exhibition

These collections not only provide new insights into the work of Malevich, but also place him within an extensive art historical context, and the dialogue between Malevich and such contemporaries as Mikhail Larionov, Natalia Goncharova, Liubov Popova, Alexander Rodchenko, Ivan Kliun, Gustav Klutsis and many more.

As well as the collections mentioned before, the Stedelijk was able to include loans from all over the world that gave the curators the possibility to, for example, loosely reconstruct the phenomenal Suprematist "0.10" exhibition[1].

The curators worked intensely with renowned graphic designers Mevis & Van Deursen, who developed a graphic identity for the exhibition.

The most beloved room in this huge, 2,000 square-meter exhibition: a small cabinet dedicated to drawings by Malevich executed between 1912 and 1915, in which his conceptual grounding for Suprematism takes shape. To quote Aleksandra Shatskikh, whose research has been a great source of inspiration for this exhibition: "In his drawings, [Malevich] was freed from the absurdist desire to shock engendered by strategic aims. Malevich always loved the conversation with the paper, which could respond instantly to any impulse. Paper became the true home of his thought, artistic and philosophical." ("Black Square", 2012)

A part of the exhibition will travel to the Bundeskunsthalle, Bonn and the Tate Modern, London.

1 "0.10. The Last Cubo-Futurist Exhibition of Painting", December 1915–January 1916, Petrograd (St. Petersburg), Nadezhda Dobychina Gallery (7, Field of Mars). The exhibition was initiated by Ivan Puni, and Natan Altman, with the participation of Ksenia Boguslavskaya, Maria Vasilyeva, Vasily Kamensky, Anna Kirillova, Lyubov Popova, Ivan Puni, Olga Pozanova, Vladimir Tatlin and Nadezhda Udaltsova, as well as a number of others. It featured Suprematist works by Kazimir Malevich (including his famous "Black Square") and his successors. According to the organizers, the word "last" was meant to imply the end of the Cubo-Futuristic period in Russian art and the transition to a new trend — Non-Objectivity.

31 | Exhibition visitors. 2013
32 | The photograph shows works from as many as eight different museums

31 |

32 |

PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

VERMEER AND MUSIC: THE ART OF LOVE ④ AND LEISURE

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THE NATIONAL GALLERY
JUNE 26—SEPTEMBER 8, 2013

The National Gallery, London, offered a rare opportunity to appreciate the influence of music on the work of Johannes Vermeer and his contemporaries last summer. Forming the centerpiece of the exhibition were four magnificent paintings by Johannes Vermeer himself. The "Music Lesson" was on loan from Queen Elizabeth II while "The Guitar Player" had come down from Hampstead from the Iveagh Bequest at Kenwood House. The other two paintings were from the National Gallery's own collection, "Young Woman standing at a Virginal" and "Young Woman seated at a Virginal".
Geraldine Norman

A collection of original musical instruments was included in the show, allowing visitors to compare 17th-century virginals[1], guitars, lutes and other instruments with the paintings themselves to judge the accuracy of the depictions, and understand the artistic liberties the painters might have taken — and why — to enhance the visual appeal of their work.

Three days a week visitors could experience live performances in the exhibition space by the Academy of Ancient Music, bringing the paintings to life with music of the period.

Music carried many diverse associations in 17th-century Dutch painting. In portraits, a musical instrument or songbook might suggest the talent or sophistication of the sitter, while in still lives or scenes of everyday life, it might act as a metaphor for harmony, a symbol of transience or, depending on the type of music being performed, an indicator of education and position in society.

The captivating depictions of domestic musical performances in paintings by Vermeer, Gerard ter Borch, Gabriel Metsu, Jan Steen, Pieter de Hooch and Godfried Schalcken ranged from contemplative images of single musicians to lively concerts and amorous encounters between music-master and pupil.

The exhibition was supported by The Blavatnik Family Foundation and the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

1
The *virginal* (possibly derived from virgin, as it was most commonly played by young women) is a keyboard instrument of the harpsichord family. In England, it could also apply to a harpsichord, clavichord or spinet.

34

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36 |

37 |

34 | **Johannes Vermeer**
A Young Woman standing at a Virginal. c. 1670–1672
The National Gallery, London

35 | **Jan Molenaer**
A Young Man playing a Theorbo and a Young Woman playing a Cittern.
Probably 1630–1632
The National Gallery, London

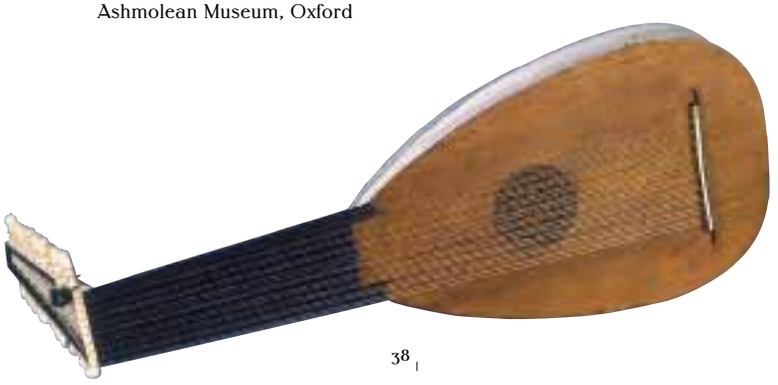
36 | **Johannes Vermeer**
The Guitar Player. c. 1672
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2013

37 | **Johannes Vermeer**
The Music Lesson. c. 1662–1663
Kenwood, English Heritage as Trustees of the **Iveagh Bequest**

38 | **Anonymous**
Lute. c. 1630
Victoria and Albert Museum, London

39 | **Anonymous**
Cittern. Early 18th century
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

40 | **René Voboam**
Guitar. 1641
Ashmolean Museum, Oxford



38 |

PHOTO: © ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD

39 |

PHOTO: © ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM, OXFORD

40 |

LONDON

HONORÉ DAUMIER (1808–1879)

ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS
OCTOBER 2013 – JANUARY 2014

Daumier was in many ways the "artist's artist". The reception of art and artists in public life was regularly recorded by him — for instance, connoisseurs debating the merits of avant-garde versus traditional approaches — and is a thread which runs through the exhibition. Daumier has never been underrated by his fellow artists both modern and contemporary: Edgar Degas, Vincent van Gogh, Pablo Picasso, and particularly in Britain, Francis Bacon, Paula Rego and Peter Doigare are all indebted to him. It is time to reevaluate his important place in the innovations of 19th-century French painting and his continuing relevance today.
Exhibition curators: Catherine Lampert and Ann Dumas

For Baudelaire, Daumier represented the ideal artist, one with the capacity to capture "the heroism of modern life". Daumier's main employment was producing witty caricatures of the bourgeoisie for such satirical newspapers such as Le Charivari. Even today they still seem astonishingly relevant — we recognize the doting parents, the crafty estate agent, the arrogant lawyer, the feminist writer — while the late lithographs that address the mistrust between European countries now seem prophetic. Daumier's versatile line and expert use of contrasts of light and dark, particularly evident in his approach to lithography, can also be seen also in his works on paper and paintings. The artist's endless revisions reveal a self-critical faculty acutely sensitive to anything false or borrowed.

Daumier tackled a broad range of subjects. His finely tuned visual memory allowed him to recall his perceptive observations of daily life, portraying with great immediacy the comings and goings on public transport, the world of street entertainers, drinking scenes and the life of those on the margins of society such a his working class neighbors along the quays of the Ile Saint-Louis. At the same time he embraces the world of literature with figures such as Don Quixote, whom he interpreted in a whole series of works.

"To me art's subject is the human clay
Landscape but a background to a torso.
All Cézanne apples I would give away
For one small Goya or a Daumier"

W.H. Auden, "Letter to Lord Byron" (1937).

41 | Honoré Daumier
Advice to a Young Artist. 1860
The National Gallery of Art,
Washington D.C.
42 | Honoré Daumier
The Print Collector. c. 1857–1863
The Art Institute, Chicago
43 | Honoré Daumier
The Third Class Railway Carriage. c. 1862–1864
The Art Institute, Chicago


41 |


42 |


43 |

LONDON
ANDOVER
WASHINGTON

OULWICH PICTURE GALLERY
OCTOBER 16, 2013 — JANUARY 12, 2014

ADDISON GALLERY OF AMERICAN ART
MASSACHUSETTS, FEBRUARY 1 — APRIL 13, 2014

FREER GALLERY OF AMERICAN ART
AND ARTHUR M. SACKLER GALLERY
MAY 2 — AUGUST 14, 2014

WHISTLER IN LONDON: BATTERSEA BRIDGE AND THE THAMES

"Whistler in London: Battersea Bridge and the Thames" will be the first major exhibition dedicated to James Abbott McNeill Whistler's time in the British capital between 1859 and 1903. American by birth, his father was employed by the Russian railways and he moved to St. Petersburg in 1842. The young Whistler took private art lessons, and then enrolled in the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts at the age of eleven. In 1847–1848, his family spent some time in London which was later to become his home from home, though he spent four influential years studying painting in Paris from 1855.

His early paintings mark one of his most successful and profound assaults on the art establishment of his day. He was an enthusiastic proponent of "art for art's sake". The exhibition includes 15 of Whistler's paintings of Chelsea and the Thames River, along with 35 prints, 10 rarely-seen drawings, watercolors and pastels and culminates in several of his famous Nocturnes including "Blue and Gold – Old Battersea Bridge" (1872–1877), one of the artist's most critically acclaimed and widely-known paintings of Battersea Bridge, and a study of "Black and Gold: The Fire Wheel" (1893).

The exhibition is complemented by historic photographs, hung throughout, which will help to set Whistler's work into the social context of the Chelsea neighborhood where he lived and worked, and will bring to life the stories behind some of the famous works. Fourteen etchings from the series of 16 etchings of scenes of the Thames (1871) are being displayed, including "Rotherhithe" (1860), which is closely related to "Wapping" (1860–1861), the innovative oil painting of the same year, featuring Whistler's mistress "Jo", which is also in the show.

44 | James McNeill Whistler
Brown and Silver: Old Battersea Bridge
c. 1859–1863
Addison Gallery of American Art, Andover, Massachusetts

45 | James McNeill Whistler
Wapping. c. 1861–1864
John Hay Whitney Collection, Image courtesy of National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

PARIS

MASCULINE/MASCULINE. THE NUDE MAN IN ART FROM 1800 TO THE PRESENT DAY

MUSÉE D'ORSAY

For this exhibition to take place, another had to be held first, in in the Vienna Leopold Museum (Nackte Männer, October 2012 — March 2013). This was an attempt at gathering the main facts on a subject which is undoubtedly very prominent in Western art. Marta Zdroba

Apparently, the Musée d'Orsay wanted to show that the aesthetic, professional and religious rules concerning the image of the nude masculine body were based on the classicist traditions of the 18th century, both in the 19th and 21st centuries.

For a long time, from the 17th century to the 19th century, the representation of the nude masculine body was a key element of academic artistic education. The Musée d'Orsay, using both its rich collections and those of other French museums, tries to give different — frivolous, social, philosophical — interpretations of the naked body in painting, drawing, sculpture and photography.

The subject is powerful, and the excellent choice of exhibits gives rise to unexpected and interesting dialogues and confrontations, and new interpretations of old works, just a step away from traditional, classical approaches. The exhibition is based on a thematic principle, not on a chronological one. History and sensuality, classical ideals and heroic nudes, uncompromised pictures of bodies, living and dead, of short, ugly and beautiful ones, are juxtaposed in an interesting way: Olympic gods(12), the hardship and misery of 19th century heroes, realism and expressionism.

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The representation of complete nakedness was not always accepted. There is a wonderful story in the exhibition's catalogue about Queen Victoria who was shocked upon a visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum when she saw some details of Michelangelo's "David". This is when the fig leaf fashion arose to mask the necessary for royal visits. There are many fig leaves at the Musée d'Orsay exhibition too, as well as many ribbons and cloths falling over the piquant parts entirely by accident, but the mood is nevertheless much more one of "let it all hang out".

The exhibition ends with two sections of erotic images of the naked masculine body: "Masculine Temptation" and "Object of Desire". These show mostly homoerotic images, and for the most part neglect masculine-feminine relations, with a little exception — a strange painting by Ferdinand Hodler, "Spring III"[1] (1907–1910), with a naked boy sitting on the ground and looking straight at the viewer, completely ignoring the girl dressed in white sitting in front of him in complete awe.

The exhibition presents a disproportionately large number of works by the French artists Pierre and Giles, including their famous works "Mercury" (2001) and "Vive la France" (2006). There are many St. Sebastians — he is a popular subject — starting with Guido Reni[2], with his beautiful martyrs, through the incredibly feminine St. Sebastian by George de la Tour[3], to the homoerotic St. Sebastian by Alfred Courmes pictured as a sailor naked below the belt[4]. There are famous and undisputed masterworks from artists such as Rodin ("Naked Balzac") and there are some less well-known artists such as Karl Sterrer, and Koloman Moser.

The exhibition is quite large, but it seems that an overdose of masculine nudity is impossible or momentary.

French critics promise that after a visit to the exhibition you will undress every man you see with your eyes. This is an inevitable effect of the endless number of painted, sculpted, drawn and photographed naked men at the Musée d'Orsay in the autumn of 2013.

46 | Pierre & Gilles
Mercury. 2001
Galerie Jérôme de Noirmont, Paris

1
Ferdinand Hodler.
Spring III.

2
Guido Reni (first half
of the 17th century).

3
George de la Tour.
St. Sebastian lended
by St. Irene (1638).

4
Alfred Courmes.
St. Sebastian seen from
behind at the St. Martin
Lock (1974).

STOCKHOLM

CINDY SHERMAN. UNTITLED HORRORS

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART (MODERNA MUSEET)
OCTOBER 19, 2013 — JANUARY 19, 2014

Cindy Sherman[1] became famous for her anxiety-ridden interpretations of subjects that are by turns, fantastical, naturalistic, surreal and Freudian. These characters are captured in different photographic genres and they are the result of an exploration into the murkiest depths of vanity, delusion and self-examination.

Sherman operates in the context of constant social scrutiny and the collusion of recognition and confrontation. "Untitled Horrors" includes works from different periods and phases of Sherman's oeuvre as well as essays by well-known writers and directors, and artists whose working practices explore the grotesque, the bizarre and the unusual. The shockingly made-up faces and baffling bodily experiments in the "Disaster", "Civil War" and "Horror and Surrealism" series examine the flimsiness and strangeness of our attempts to seek order in the human experience.

At first glance, these images, that contain fragments of the inner self of the artist, can be difficult to accept as real; but the more you look at them, the more convincing they appear. "I think people are more apt to believe photographs, especially if it's something fantastic. They're willing to be more gullible. Sometimes they want fantasy."

Cindy Sherman is one of the leading and most influential artists working today. She belongs to a generation of Postmodernists who changed the face of photography and its role in visual art. Sherman's work became critical at a time when contemporary art was going through a turbulent period of self-examination and it still challenges a traditional understanding of identity. Her work can be by turns cruel, comedic, disgusting and deceptive and it gives rise to novel interpretations of familiar themes. Sherman employs her own body as a model and makes unsparing use of masks⑥, wigs and prostheses in order to shake up the practice of contemporary photography in which the human form is increasingly being subverted by mannequins and traces of human waste and decay.

This is a sensational exhibition where collages give rise to a metanarrative and once again the juxtaposition of images from different periods and series over the past 30 years provides fresh interpretations.

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1 Cindy Sherman (born, January 19, 1954) is a contemporary American artist who works in the genre of conceptual photography. According to ArtFacts.net, she is the most famous and influential female artist of all time. She comes in at number seven in Art Review's Power 100 2011 list of the top-hundred most influential people in the art world. Sherman had a large retrospective exhibition in Moscow's museum of contemporary art in 2012.

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PHOTO: © CINDY SHERMAN. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND METRO PICTURES, NEW YORK

47 | Cindy Sherman
Untitled Film Still #10. 1978
48 | Cindy Sherman
Untitled #153. 1985

● PHOTO: © CINDY SHERMAN. COURTESY OF THE ARTIST AND METRO PICTURES, NEW YORK

IMPRESSIONISM[14], FASHION AND MODERNITY

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM

This exhibition at the Metropolitan Museum in New York presents a feast of aesthetic form and a celebration of the authentic spirit and beauty of life in Paris, the most important city of the second half of the 19th century. As well as works from the Met's permanent collection, the exhibition includes exhibits from other European and American museums, mostly from the Musée d'Orsay and the Art Institute of Chicago.
Anna Nizyaeva

As one moves from one room to the next, it is impossible not to be transported to that time, as it is brought to life with depictions of the streets of Paris and its inhabitants by Auguste Renoir, Eduard Manet, Henry Somm, Edgar Degas and Jean Béraud. The flashback created by the exhibit is made all the more tangible with real artefacts from the lives of Parisians, such as dresses by the English designer Charles Worth as well as accessories, such as hats, umbrellas, fans, shoes, cravats, fashion magazines, ribbons, pins and opera glasses.

The silk ball gowns depicted in the paintings of Jean Béraud ("The Ball") and James Tissot ("Evening" and "Women of Paris") are brought to life on mannequins resplendent in the ensembles by Worth, with their bare shoulders, iridescent silk and fine, lace bustles with long trains.

In James Tissot's "Portrait of the Marquise de Miramon, née, Thérèse Feuillant" (1866), the subject stands in a bright pink dressing gown, leaning her elbow against a mantelpiece draped in red cloth. The exhibit displays a small, 12-inch piece of the soft, pink, silk corduroy that belongs to the gown depicted in the painting.

The curators of this exhibition have provided so much: delight in viewing famous paintings, nostalgia in the recognition of the faces of portraits, admiration of the renowned Impressionist painters and the opportunity to see the accessories of the lives Parisians — one can almost touch what they wore, what they held in their hands and tied around their waists and fixed to their hair. This is the very stuff that decorated the lives of Parisians a century and a half ago.

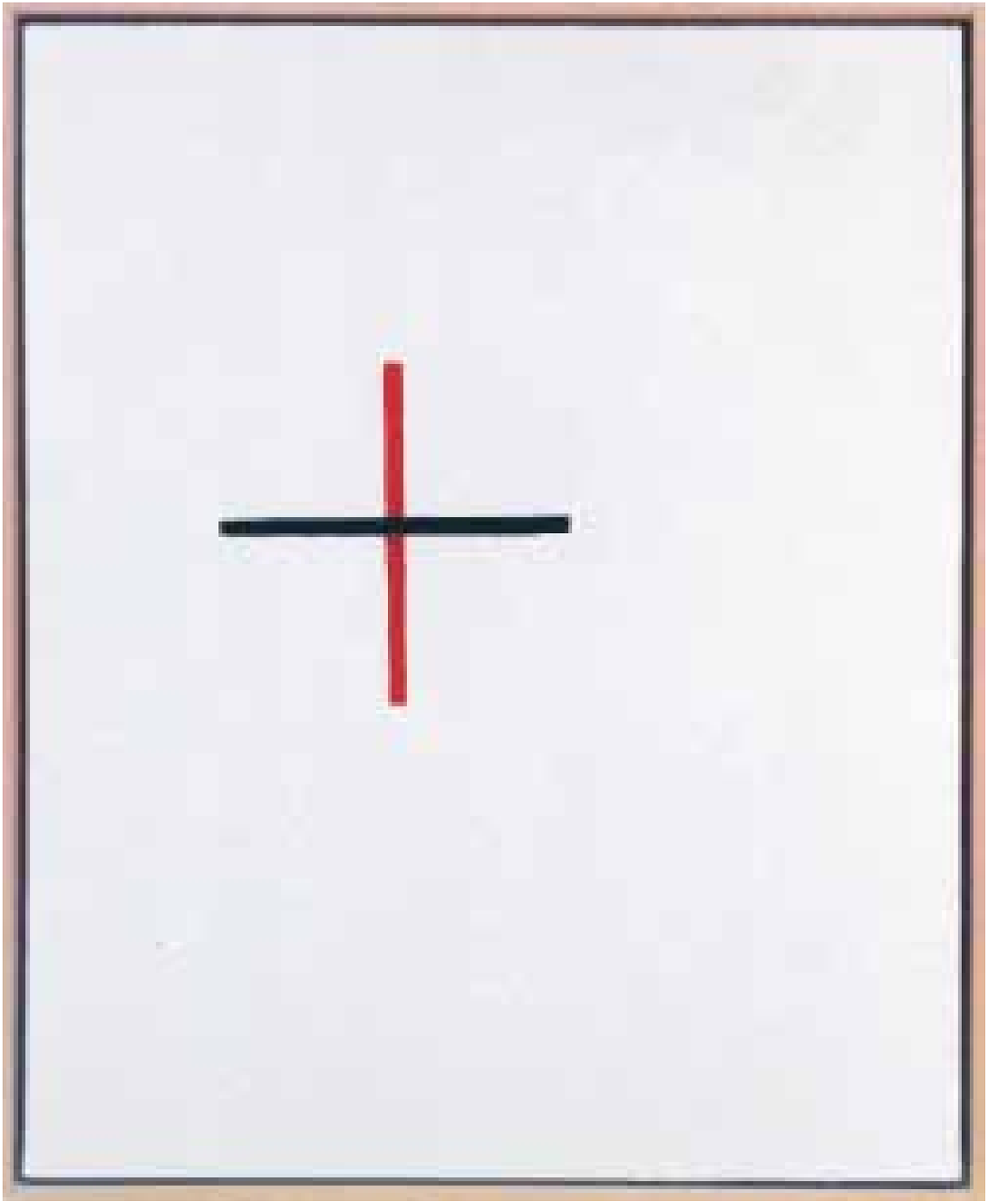
49 | Albert Bartholomé
In the Conservatory. 1881
© Musée d'Orsay, dist. RMN-Grand Palais / Patrice Schmidt

In 1868, Émile Zola wrote that "... we recognize ourselves only when faced with reality: even though we do not give our own lives meaning we demand that artists represent us exactly as we are in their paintings, with our suits and our habits..." The exhibition is devoted to exactly this kind of art; art which reflects the symbiosis of life and artistic interpretation. This approach to art did not separate the reality of the Parisian streets from artistic creativity and it became the mainstay of *La Nouvelle Peinture* (the New Painting) in the 1860s and 1870s.

Edmond Duranly, "The New Painting" 1876

"The aim of modern art is to grab the attention of the public with striking, distinct images that are easily recognizable because of their representational veracity [...] and to create a complete impression of what we see on the streets. People are willing to embrace art that is an honest representation of their clothes, their faces, their habits, their tastes and traditions, and their very soul."

Albert Bartholomé depicted his wife wearing a summer dress in the painting"In the Conservatory" (1881). The extraordinary ensemble she wears includes a hat and a layered purple skirt that reveals the white interior of its pleats, a spotted bodice with striped sleeves, numerous bows, and an ornate white and purple bustle skirt with a trim. Miraculously, the whole ensemble survives almost perfectly intact because the artist put it into safe-keeping after the death of his wife. Image © Musée d'Orsay

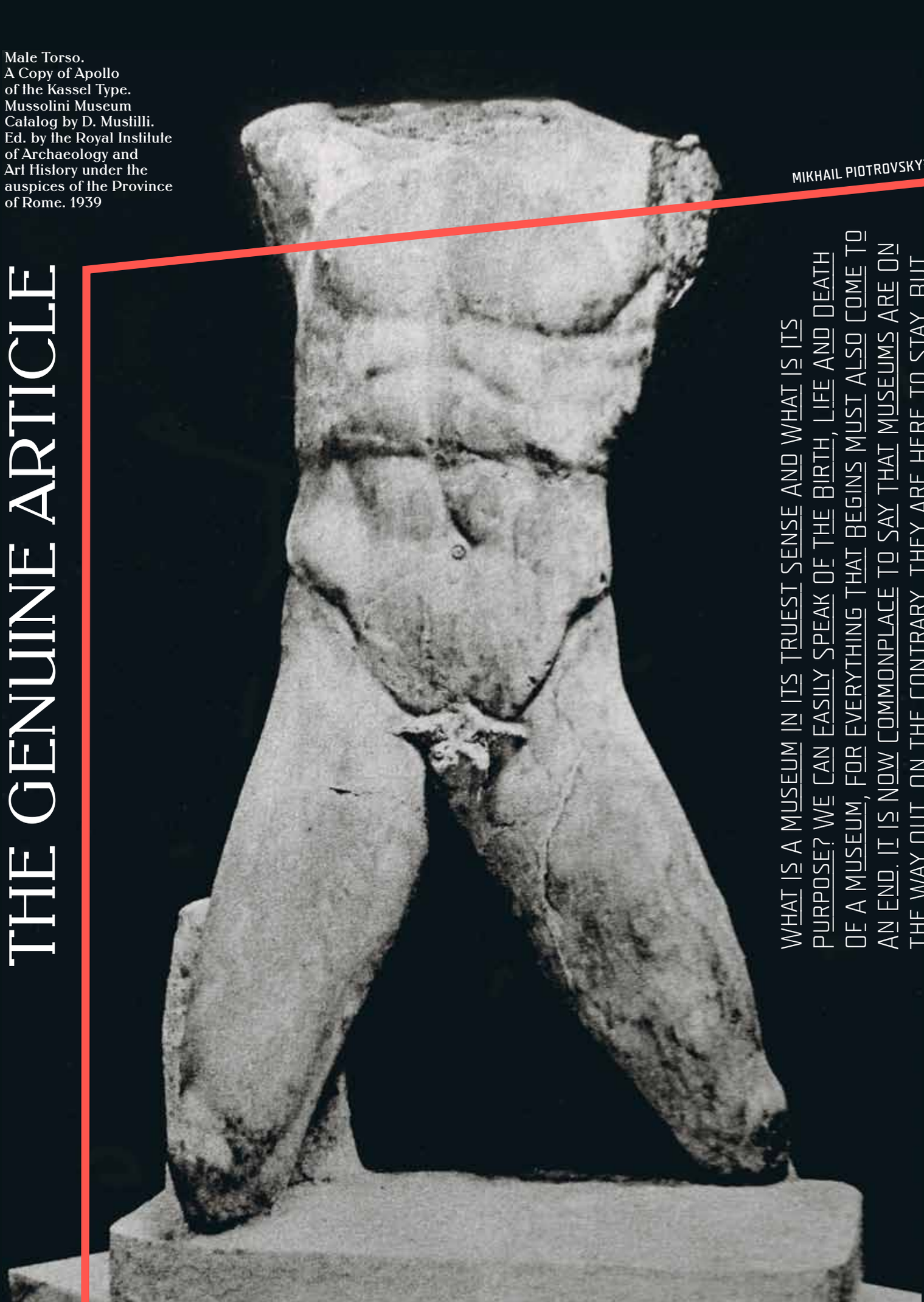


50 | Kazimir Malevich
Suprematist Cross. Motif: 1916
version: 1920–1926
Stedelijk, Amsterdam

THE GENUINE ARTICLE

MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY[1]

WHAT IS A MUSEUM IN ITS TRUEST SENSE AND WHAT IS ITS PURPOSE? WE CAN EASILY SPEAK OF THE BIRTH, LIFE AND DEATH OF A MUSEUM, FOR EVERYTHING THAT BEGINS MUST ALSO COME TO AN END. IT IS NOW COMMONPLACE TO SAY THAT MUSEUMS ARE ON THE WAY OUT. ON THE CONTRARY, THEY ARE HERE TO STAY, BUT THEY ARE FACING MANY DIFFERENT THREATS.



Male Torso.
A Copy of Apollo
of the Kassel Type.
Mussolini Museum
Catalog by D. Muslilli.
Ed. by the Royal Institute
of Archaeology and
Art History under the
auspices of the Province
of Rome. 1939

What are we missing? *Can we compare the state of Russian and international museums? We do not lack for anything in comparison to Western museums. Indeed, the comparison is absurd. Our museums have their own special qualities that are in no way inferior to their Western counterparts, even with respect to technology. The most interesting comparison that can be made is with museums in Asia. Nowadays, visitor numbers are a very popular topic and the figures for China, South Korea and Japan are indeed high. The 10 million who visit the Louvre is another matter. It has a distinctive approach and an entirely different attitude to museums. People go to museums there, just like in Amsterdam, or perhaps more so.*

Our stereotypes are somewhat dated: on the one hand, we belong to the East; on the other hand, to the West. But we are not Eastern — we are in the middle. Another stereotype is that there is an example from elsewhere that we should watch and learn. This is a traditional Russian idea, but is misguided, as there is no country where things are done perfectly. Each individual should develop guidelines for their own life from various sources. Yet they must do this for themselves and not simply try to learn from others. Then things will work out fine. We sometimes try to take lessons from others, learning what we can. But that is beside the point.

Authenticity: *Museums shape, store and study collections of original pieces of art. Like many things, it is impossible to describe precisely what distinguishes the genuine article from a copy. This is the 21st century and we are able to understand things beyond simple arithmetic. On the whole, we know, or should know, that parallel lines can converge under certain conditions and that two-times-two can equal five as well as four. I hope that museum visitors understand this.*

From a historical perspective, museums occupy a role somewhere between churches and Disneyland. Museums arose as temples for artistic treasures: churches would boast of the gifts they gave their gods[12] (the famous wonders of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi). This view of a museum as a temple remains to this day. However, alongside this, there is another popular point of view that sees a museum as something akin to Disneyland — a place for entertainment. This is evident in official presentations and documents both here and in the West. The state now views museums as a place where people have fun and spend their leisure time. When a museum becomes Disneyland, it stops being a museum. There is little threat of this happening when a museum keeps its true essence — genuine articles. So a "Chocolate Museum" where visitors can eat the exhibits is not a museum.

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Genuine articles make their presence felt and communicate with people. They live in museums and are preserved there, giving museums their special charm. The more our world becomes virtual and unreal, the more people strive to come into contact with genuine articles. This is why people are willing to queue for art exhibitions, even though the miracle of technology means they can see the paintings on computer screens in better resolution. Despite this, they still come to see exhibitions, with people from across the world happy to wait in line.

The replacement of museums with virtual reality is a threat, since virtual images and modern technology, which can help museums, are not their core objective. Virtual museums, which simply reproduce a museum in its entirety, as is the case on the website of each and every museum, are generally useful and interesting. A good virtual museum is a modern means of bringing together different collections. There is a comprehensive program for the creation of virtual museums here in Russia, supported by the Union of Museums of Russia. Exhibits from different museum are being collected and, together with images of nature and historical monuments, display things that will never be brought together in real life.

Please do not touch: *Beautiful decorations alone can develop a person's taste, even when they have nothing left to learn. Highly knowledgeable people can still visit museums and discover new things for themselves.*

To go to university, you have to pass exams and have a certain level of ability and education. The same is true to attend a specialist college. But anyone can visit a museum. Moreover, we all have something to see in a museum, depending upon our wishes, level of knowledge and training. Museums offer everything to each and every one of us. They are accessible to all, but for each person on their own level. This depends on a person's level of education and training, highlighting the crucial dialectic between egalitarianism and elitism. The Hermitage is a fine example of this.

The museum helps people understand that everything is here for them and that they can see and enjoy it all. But if everything is on offer... All art is available according to the Constitution, but you are not allowed to touch it. This is a key point that must be repeated over and over again.

Research center or Kunstkammer?: *The Kunstkammer also brings together the whole world and merits discussion. Although it does contain remarkably unusual and surprising contraptions, the Kunstkammer was not intended to portray the evolution of human civilization. So there is a pretty shell or three and then a beautiful crocodile, followed by a deformed body, Islamic artefacts and even a Rembrandt...* [8] *The focus is on extraordinary things that draw people in to be at once delighted and astonished.*

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

The work of a museum and discussions between a museum and its visitors suggest a dialogue around particularly meaningful things, such as collections of masterpieces. Imagine an evening dispute between a designer and researchers in a large museum: "Let us explain how it all began. We will hang up a map of the Northern Black Sea region here and one of Greece there, but we have no materials at all here and they are nowhere to be found. So we will put some photographs here with captions. There are remarkable things over here that we should not place along the wall. Let's arrange them somehow... No, showcases in the middle of the room are a fire hazard... Let's display collections — they give the entire story. No, this is not the history of ancient times, this is the modern history of the museum, using genuine articles." Exhibitions grow out of these debates, at the Hermitage as everywhere else.

The fiercest argument I have had occurred when we were making a special Eastern Room, which is now the Gold Room. It was a massive argument, centering on the Scythians and how to combine historical details with the incredible artefacts on display and what a guide should mention.

Guides, audio guides and captions: *Guides play an important role in museums. There is nothing to be done about this. In general, tours are a hindrance to the museum, with groups of people getting in the way of those who know where to go. But few people explore a museum like the Hermitage without a guide and the museum accounts for what the guide will say. To this end, you cannot write lots of information on the walls.*

To some extent, tour guides can now be replaced by audio guides — a personal stereo and headphones. This saves us from captions, which can largely be removed. My dream is for all museums to be free to enter, with no labels on the wall. Captions are a very interesting and serious issue. Soon after becoming director, I visited London and marveled at the captions in the National Gallery. They have the best captions, written in an interesting and concise style. I mentioned them to Viktor Pavlov, our chief artist: "Mikhail, did you see where people looked after they read the caption?" I responded: "I didn't really pay attention." The next time I did: when a person read the caption, they stopped looking at the painting. The captions were too richly detailed. You see, sometimes "the ear" solves some of this problem for us.

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Treasures: *Society has always had the strong desire to undermine certain aspects of a museum, transforming it into something else entirely. There is a deep willingness to use what museums hold and change their longstanding traditions and significance. Museums are now in the grip of material concepts, without any space for metaphysics. They have been discarded to the fringes of society, perceived as something dusty and superfluous, fit for education alone. This results in highly practical conversations about how everything there has gathered dust: something is not quite right, we need to realize that the museum rats do not understand things and send the right people, discarding unnecessary things and keeping the essentials.*

At the same time, we all appreciate that museums hold something of great importance, even in the simplest terms. This is what people mean by "treasures." I cannot stand this word. Everything becomes treasure when people develop a level of familiarity with it. We have a market-based mentality: it would be good if all these treasures were used correctly. Yet again, people say that museum employees are failing in their efforts and that there are others who know how to preserve items and compile lists. These people are supposedly able to account for everything and should be given greater responsibility. They will then get to the bottom of things, and how: deciding what is not needed, what can be sold, what can be given away and what should be added to personal collections or given to friends, leaving the essentials in museums. Why, for example, would a museum need six identical sabers? That is too many.

A museum is itself the custodian of traditions. It preserves our culture, which is the non-inherited memory[10] of a generation. Culture can only be learned. Museums are one of the means of teaching people how to pass on cultural traditions. They are traditional institutions.

We sometimes say that museums are the DNA of the nation. But culture cannot be inherited genetically and must be learned. It is not enough just to watch. That is not how we can come to comprehend national and universal traditions.

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Nikolai Fyodorov[2]: *We are incredibly fortunate in Russia. We have a great philosopher, who wrote the only existing treatise on museums. I am referring to Nikolai Fyodorov. This is a stunning work and Fyodorov is one of the most prominent figures among Russian philosophers.*

His philosophy brought us Tsiolkovsky and success in space exploration. As soon as we started disregarding philosophy, our success in space also began to dwindle.

Russian cosmism can be found in poetry and art. It is still poorly understood and we still have something left with which to shock the world. For instance, Russian cosmism is no less important than Suprematism.

Fyodorov wrote the treatise "The Museum, its Meaning and Purpose", which also stemmed from a simple cosmic idea. According to Fyodorov's theory, we will all rise from the dead and live forever. He came to Tsiolkovsky with the idea of conquering outer space so that we would have somewhere to live after resurrection. For us to rise from the dead, we must preserve memories and artefacts of civilization from ancient times. A human being lives for as long as their name survives.

By the "malady of the age" Fyodorov means the desire to leave and renounce the past, stripping life of its meaning and purpose. Museums are the remedy for this ailment, capable of restoring balance to a person's attitude to the world and themselves.

In Fyodorov's philosophy, the very appearance of museums therefore appears inevitable, a required display of universal conformity.

PHOTO: YEVGENY KASSIN / TASS PHOTO CHRONICLE

N.F. Fyodorov. "Muzei, yego smysl i naznacheniye" (The Museum, its Meaning and Purpose). *In Filosofiya obshchego dela. Stat'yi, mysli i pisma Nikolaya Fedorovicha Fedorova.* T. II. Moscow, 1913

"It is of course not an exaggeration to say that a museum, as a full expression of the soul, will restore our spiritual world and personal harmony, bringing us the type of joy that a father feels upon return of the prodigal son..."
"Preservation not only has an organic quality, but also an inorganic nature, particularly human nature. Muses and museums stem from memory and hence from humanity in full. In other words, both linguistic and psychological research tell us that muses and museums are contemporary to mankind: they grew alongside its consciousness."

Nikolai Fyodorov, one of the founders of Russian cosmism, was born in 1828. In the 1870s, Fyodorov was the mentor of Konstantin Tsiolkovsky.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky became acquainted with the teachings of Fyodorov in 1878. In the 1880s and 1890s, Leo Tolstoy and Vladimir Solovyov maintained regular contact with Fyodorov. Solovyov called Fyodorov a "dear teacher", referring to his doctrine as "the first movement forward of the human spirit on the path of Christ."

He was viewed as a wise theologian and philosopher. Tolstoy said of Fyodorov: "I am proud to live in the same era as such a man." Having met Fyodorov in 1881, Tolstoy wrote in his diary:

"Nik. Fyod. is a saint. Make up the boxroom? That goes without saying. He does not want a stipend, nor bedding."

Fyodorov can quite rightly be considered the forerunner of the noospheric worldview, the foundations of which are the work of Vladimir Vernadsky and Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. The trans-humanist movement of the late 20th century can also count Fyodorov as one of its sources.

"The philosophy of the common task" met with a response in the creative work of many authors, poets and 20th century artists, including Valery Bryusov, Vladimir Mayakovsky, Nikolai Klyuev and Velimir Khlebnikov, Maxim Gorky and Mikhail Prishvin, Andrei Platonov and Boris Pasternak, Vasiliy Chekrygin and Pavel Filonov.

Their work touched upon the profundity of Fyodorov's aesthetic demands, the originality of his aesthetics, his ideas of the regulation of nature, resurrection and our duty towards previous generations.

To mark 100 years since his death, Belgrade hosted an International Congress on "Cosmism and Russian Literature. The Centenary of Nikolai Fyodorov" in 2003.

SALA II

PALACE CHAIRS ▪ CARRIAGES ▪ ICONS ▪ SOULS ▪ GRAVESTONES

Palace chairs: *Is a museum a dishonorable place? Or somewhere very honorable? This is linked to another extremely important aspect of a museum's work. A museum removes objects from use — that is absolutely the clear and principal idea. Take an object, for example a chair, and in 100 years' time it will be a museum exhibit, on which sitting will be forbidden. That is a constant part of our work at the Hermitage. In all our rooms we have remarkable furniture from Imperial palaces. Quite recently, this was normal: there is furniture — in the museum halls and depositories — that can be used. There then came a time when the keepers decided to hand over the furniture, as 100 or 150 years had passed and it had become fit for the museum. So everything is taken away and put into storage. Everything ceases to be put to its intended use. This is the significance of museums.*

A museum places objects into an entirely different context, namely the history of art, culture and civilization in general. This is a very topical issue. There have been discussions about church utensils. It is clear that items transferred from churches to museums are no longer ceremonial objects, having become art exhibits. They ended up in a museum because they have an artistic function and are cultural monuments. This is the status they hold in a museum. They can keep their ritualistic function in part and its energy, but they are no longer ceremonial objects.

This is not a question of moving an item from one place to another by rights. On every occasion, we need to decide the extent to which the universal, museum-related significance of an item supersedes its ritual importance.

The most important side of a museum's activity is associated with rituals: objects enter a museum and lose the context of their historical environment. Works of art are often created for ritual purposes, for example sculptures of the gods[12]. When a new ideology arises, as happens constantly, its main goal is to remove all traces of its predecessors. When Christianity arrived, we pulled down ancient statues with fanatical relish. How could they be saved? With the help of the concept of "art": "these are not idols, they are works of art." Since they were art, the objects could be removed and placed in museums, where they would be out of danger, as no one would worship them there. In this manner, some ancient art was saved from Christian vandalism.

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Carriages: ***The impact of the Russian Revolution on Russia's cultural heritage cannot compare with the French Revolution's impact on French cultural heritage, first and foremost the impact on religion... There are no carriages left in France. We have exhibitions abroad, but we wouldn't take carriages to Spain, which has plenty of carriages of its own. But we could take carriages to France because there is hardly a single carriage left there. It is said that official orders were given for the royal carriage to be destroyed, with the proviso that the paintings were to be removed. Everything else was to be burned. The destruction was without precedent. This was where the museum got involved. The Musée de Cluny (now known as the National Museum of the Middle Ages) was largely founded to preserve religious art as art and hide it from potential destruction.***

When Protestantism arrived in Catholic countries, the splendor of Catholicism and images of the Virgin Mary, verging on the idolatrous, were everywhere. The Protestants did not approve and once again destroyed the sculptures of the Virgin Mary: the situation was acute in the Netherlands and Great Britain.

Most of the sculptures that remain are in museums.

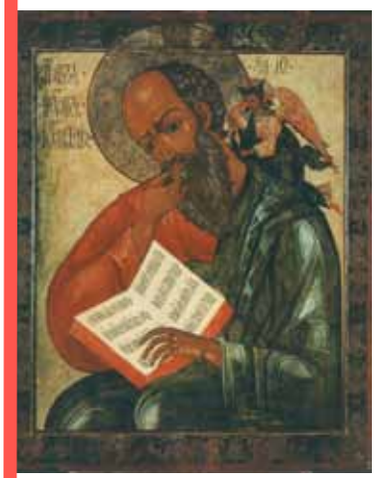
An exhibition opened in England based on the art collection of Sir Robert Walpole, the first prime minister of Great Britain. This vast collection was purchased by Catherine the Great, but that is another tale of scandal, acquisition and shipping. We exhibited the collection in Houghton Hall and the Marquess of Cholmondeley, the living descendant of Walpole, is not seeking the return of the pieces. The collection could have been lost forever if Catherine had not bought it (there was later a fire at Houghton Hall and the portrait gallery burned down).

Europe soon began to collect the remnants of Catholic excess. In the early years of Protestantism in England, articles were written about the mad collectors and villains sending ships full of dozens and dozens of Virgin Mary paintings and statues to godly England. The nephew of Sir Robert Walpole even gave a special sermon in Houghton Hall about how these were pieces of art, not idols, and did not violate religious decency.

This is one, if not the main, purpose of museums. They are the means by which we preserve our heritage from annihilation. People try to destroy everything.

The same thing has happened and continues to happen in Russia. The monuments taken to the Museon Art Park on Krymsky Val in Moscow are another example of how society preserves its heritage from destruction for political reasons.

The dialectic of the process is that, having removed objects from their contexts, the museum keeps them and makes them art. As you can see, this is a wider philosophical idea. Entirely different aspects of the pieces begin to "function" when they are treated as historical or artistic artefacts in a museum.



Icons: *An icon in a church can be in poor condition and there is nothing to be done. It cannot get worse. An icon in a museum must be cleaned, as is the case at the Hermitage. The purpose of a museum is for everything to be in view. This is not essential to rituals, so there we have another difference. "We should however note that scorn for items placed in the archives is completely baseless and is the result of the resolute inability of our age to realize its own inadequacies." (Nikolai Fyodorov). Wise words. "If our age did not lack for this ability, then it would of course find no shame in this, but rather see it as a truly honorable submission to a museum. For instance, delivery of the first steamship that previously transported slaves or perhaps manufactured goods, but then became unfit for purpose."*

This is about the utilitarian principle, not statues of the gods[12]. Everything begins a new life in a museum, sometimes after resurrection. "Nevertheless, if a museum is simply a depository, no matter how respected, then entering it is like going to the grave, albeit accompanied by a dead-like artistic or academic renewal. This cannot bode well and, in this case, the destructive meaning that is associated with it is justified."

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On the other hand: "If entry into the archives, simply into a depository, merits scorn and the lifeless revival does not satisfy living beings, then nor does leaving the object exactly as it is appear honorable. Peace and death[13], eternal discord and struggle are the very same evil. Hypocrisy is inevitable for as long as a museum is a mere depository or lifeless revival, compared to the struggles of life." In modern terms, we are constantly fighting for museums to be granted the right to be academic institutions. This is once again the case now. The philosophy of museums and education turn a museum into a living organism. "It is clear that, for an era that calls itself progressive, the richer and more abundant the submissions to museums, the more deserving they are of the progressive label. But progress is precisely the production of lifeless objects, alongside the supplanting of living people. It can be called the truest form of hell, when, like the museum, if there is a heaven, it is still only a projection — a collection of departed souls under the guise of old rags."

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Souls[7]**:** *There is a belief that museums collect departed souls under the guise of objects. Perhaps this is the energy of the items that we all feel in museums. "For the museum, man is always above the object; for the trading quarter and industrial civilization and culture, the object is above man. The museum is the last remnant of the cult of our ancestors." This is the key point: supporting the mysterious cult of our ancestors. The museum is not just a remnant, but the expression and preservation of the cult of our ancestors.*

In reality, there is nothing more important for mankind than reverence for our ancestors. Animals show no such veneration for memory and the family tree. There is no sense in which other generations stand before you: either you must prove yourself worthy of them or you despise them; but, in either case, they should make their presence felt. "... The main form of this cult [of our ancestors], which is separated from religion (as we see amongst Protestants), is returning in the form of museums." This could be the most important element that gives the right to revival and memory[10]. "Only ashes and the remains of the dead are above the items preserved in museums; only the grave is above the museum, if the museum itself does not become a transference of ashes to the city or the transformation of a cemetery into a museum."

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Gravestones: *The most terrible moment for an ancient Egyptian was when their name was removed from the gravestone or sarcophagus. This marked the true end to the person's existence. Our memories are on gravestones.*

Artists often like to claim that museums are essentially art cemeteries and that this is awful. It might be horrifying for a living artist, yet all artists aspire for their work to be displayed in a museum. We often forget that cemeteries are a very important part

of our civilization, the basis of our remembrance and an artistic focus. A decent measure of social development is the upkeep of cemeteries and the number of visitors. Remembering our ancestors is the norm for civilization. I believe that a museum is truly a cultural cemetery and hence a very important place. I doubt whether anyone shares my opinion.

SALA III

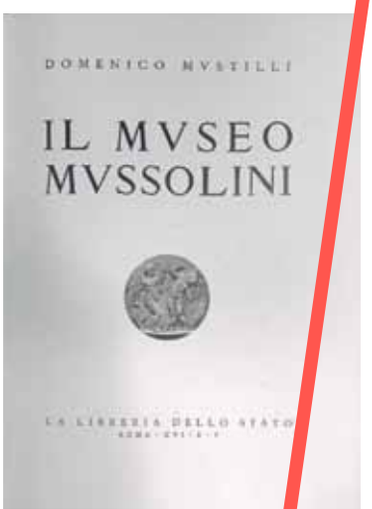
Conscience: *"The second contradiction of the modern museum is that an era that only values useful things collects and preserves the superfluous. Museums are a justification of the 19th century: their existence in this industrial age proves that our conscience has not yet fully disappeared." Our conscience has not yet fully disappeared... Maybe this was no longer the case in the 20th century.*

"There is no other way of understanding the act of preservation in today's commercialist and grossly utilitarian age, as it is impossible to comprehend the great non-commercial value of objects that are no longer fit for use. By keeping objects despite our exploitative tendencies, our century, albeit in a self-contradictory manner, still serves an unknowable God."

This may be the preservation of "objects that are no longer fit for use", but museum artefacts have a completely different value. They relate to completely different categories of value. When we say that an object is priceless, do we mean that it has no value? Artefacts in museums are priceless because they have been removed from the market. In principle, once it has been removed, it should not go back. If there is no market, there is no price. The objects are priceless because they exist in a totally different world.

Despite all the money-making opportunities for museums, they have a distinctive atmosphere. As soon as a museum starts to operate based on profit, it is over. The museum can be turned into a sales outlet, where anything whatsoever can be done. A museum does the work of the "unknowable God" and God[12] becomes knowable. Much of a museum's significance is that it preserves memories[10], which do no less than help us to become immortal.

Encyclopaedic and national museums: *Encyclopaedic museums collect diverse civilizations in one place, creating a dialogue between different cultures. Objects from across the globe communicate with each other from one room to the next, as visitors observe. Every national encyclopaedic museum develops a narrative in its own language. The Hermitage is an encyclopaedia of world culture, written in Russian; the Louvre is an encyclopaedia of world culture in French; the British Museum is the same — in British English; and the Metropolitan Museum of Art is yet another world encyclopaedia, this time written in American English.*



Such encyclopaedias are created in the early years of empire. Empires take great pride in their ethnic and cultural diversity. Even the Roman Empire brought unity and was keen to emphasize its scale and diversity. The Hermitage, Louvre and British Museum, and later the Metropolitan Museum of Art, all grew from this imperial idea.

In the 19th century, a very different museum concept became the priority of the nation state: national exhibitions, devoted to the cultural heritage of the nation. The principles for selecting collections changed and the idea arose that, if an object belonged to our nation, it should be in our country. If an item were German, then it should be in Germany. This view is held more strongly in Germany than anywhere else. During any military campaign, they kept a list of objects that should be returned to Germany because they related to the German spirit. Such lists were distributed during both World Wars — and included part of the Hermitage collection. That is another story. Hitler's planned Führermuseum in Linz was an extreme manifestation of this.

National museums that aim to display national prowess will exist for as long as there are nation states.

"Museums of place": *A different type of museum appeared in the 20th century: in general terms, these were local museums, based on a sense of local pride. Monuments can be found wherever you go, visited by tourists. But local residents are not drawn in until a sense of local pride is developed, in large part by the interest of those who want to make some money. So the Greeks began to realize that Greek sculpture is remarkable and, in general, is important for the country. Again, if I take this to the extreme: let the Parthenon frieze return to where it belongs.*

The core concept of "museums of place" is that everything should be located where it came from. Greece is an excellent example, at the very least because our entire civilization originated there. Greece is always lobbying for the return of the Elgin Marbles from London to Athens. Yet, in Greece itself, local museums respond by saying: wait a minute, in Athens you have a vast archaeological museum of wonderful artefacts that came from our regions. Let us take all that back, as we need tourists too.

The same is true in Italy. Churches ask museums to hand back icons and paintings because, if they were in every church, people would come visit. Look, they have a Cima da Conegliano and are overrun by visitors. Our Bellini was taken away, so let us have it back. These are large, material items, like oil. The Uffizi Gallery stood up for Giotto in a major dispute with the churches from which the paintings had been taken, but only because these large wooden pieces cannot be kept outside a museum (for the time being). However, the right conditions can be provided in other places if it is a question of bringing new value to a location.

We must remember that Italy experienced a period of secularism , when many churches were closed or destroyed, with their contents given to museums. Many Italian church buildings have been put to non-religious use and belong to the Ministry of Interior. The very same ministry is the main advocate of returning icons and paintings from museums. It has an utterly concrete approach, lacking in any piety: "We need tourists to come and want people to enjoy their visit, so hand everything back."

"Modest Manifesto": *A text by Orhan Pamuk, the Turkish author and recipient of the Nobel Prize, has recently been published. In his book "The Museum of Innocence", there are fascinating discussions on the psychology of collecting, how the first sensations of a collector arise and a comparison of the collector to museum officials.*

Orhan Pamuk composed a manifesto that is important to the history of museum development. He writes about extremely small, private and personal museums, which represent the memory[10] of an individual or family in a highly intimate manner. Any items are suitable for such museums.

Whether you agree or disagree with Pamuk's manifesto, it reflects a broader idea. It is no coincidence that Pamuk sent the manifesto to the International Council of Literary Museums, representing precisely such small museums typically devoted to a single figure.

From a psychological perspective, the manifesto is very subtly formulated and historically correct. It fully reflects one of the main contradictions of the modern era: which is more important — society and its history or each individual and their personal history? As we know, there is no solution to this problem. If an individual feels more important than everyone else, in extreme cases they will take a weapon and start shooting others. Or, at the other extreme, society can disregard the personal opinion of each individual. The same question is relevant for museums. To what extent can everyday life and the wider image of culture (civilization) come together?

For a museum such as the Hermitage, where archaeology occupies an important role, this problem is largely in the process of being resolved by expositions that tell of the lives of people, without veering into ethnography. Ethnography is an entirely different matter.

Are people afraid of going to large museums, as Pamuk claims? Yes and no. People do indeed sometimes express fear. At the Hermitage, people are always saying: you'll get

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lost, you won't be able to find your way around. Although finding your way is very simple in our museum because of the windows: outside reference points can be seen through the windows to the right and left.

This is a necessary sensation. People should feel that a museum is somewhat above all of us. This is important. Yes, individuality and each and every person are too, but a museum is something even more significant. Visitors and those who work in museums must remember this. Museum workers can often forget that this is not their property and that we are all nonentities in comparison to what we are preserving and putting on display.

"Hermitage" means "a place of solitude" and, in principle, the museum exists for those of us who understand this and come alone — as a place of solitude. Arriving at a museum and separating ourselves from the streets that surround us, we pass the foyer frequented by thieves, crowds, lines and individuals who come and go. About 10 to 15 meters from the entrance, you can forget where you are and truly feel an individual, one for whom all this has been specially prepared. An El Greco and a painting are there for personal communication, so that we recognize our own individuality. If a person can stand and look at a painting for two hours, they are an individual. If an hour is too long, then they have strong individuality (not everyone has this and, in some cases, the opposite is true).

Pamuk proposes changes to the priorities in the distribution of state riches, in favor of small museums over larger ones. We hear the same thing repeated over and over again. But which small museums? They are all different. Irina Antonova [former director, now president of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts] spent 20 years telling international forums how things were still bad in Russia because the state gave all its funding to large museums and none to smaller museums, such as the Pushkin Museum. She would add that all the large museums are in St. Petersburg, the home city of the president of Russia himself, making the reason clear. So the distinction between "large" and "small" is always a means of arguing over money...

Should our homes be turned into museums? This is a highly original way of life. If you live in a historical monument (and you cannot make any changes to the roof or the color of the walls if you live in central Paris), you will somehow have to participate in the development of the museum and take pride in it. Turning your life into a museum is completely fine, albeit slightly ostentatious. Nevertheless, Orhan Pamuk has done this himself, so is entitled to speak on the subject.

Are we hindered by the vast palaces among which we live? We live in St. Petersburg. I think that the palaces of our city reflect our souls in full and we always feel part of what surrounds us. But things are different in every city and this is not true in some. For this is a city that we cannot touch. It is too fragile and we need to preserve it. If you remove a bit, everything will go flying. In contrast, you can build whatever you like in Moscow. It will endure it and not deteriorate. Moscow can absorb anything.

A MODEST MANIFESTO

I love museums and am not alone in finding that they make me happier with each passing day. I take museums very seriously and that sometimes leads to angry, forceful thoughts. But I do not have it in me to speak about museums with anger. In my childhood there were very few museums in Istanbul. Most of them were simply preserved historical monuments or — quite rare outside the Western world — they were places with an air of the government office about them. Later, the small museums in the back streets of European cities led me to realize that museums — just like novels — can also speak for individuals. That is not to understate the importance of the Louvre, the Metropolitan

Museum of Art, the Topkapi Palace, the British Museum, the Prado, the Vatican Museums — all veritable treasures of humankind. But I am against these precious monumental institutions being used as blueprints for future museums. Museums should explore and uncover the universe and humanity of the new and modern man emerging from increasingly wealthy non-Western nations. The aim of big, state-sponsored museums, on the other hand, is to represent the state. This is neither a good nor innocent objective.

[...] I would like to outline my thoughts in order:
1. Large national museums such as the Louvre and the Hermitage took shape and turned into essential tourist destinations alongside the opening of royal and imperial palaces to the public. These institutions, now national symbols, present the story of the nation — history, in a word — as being far more important than the stories of individuals. This is unfortunate, because the stories of individuals are much better suited to displaying the depths of our humanity.
2. We can see that the transitions from palaces to national museums and from epics to novels are parallel processes. Epics are like palaces and speak of the heroic deeds of old kings who lived in them. National museums, then, should be like novels; but they are not.
3. We are sick and tired of museums that try to construct historical narratives from a society, organization, team, nation, state, people, company or object. We all know that the ordinary, everyday stories of individuals are richer, more humane and much more joyful than the stories of colossal cultures.
4. Demonstrating the wealth of Chinese, Indian, Mexican, Iranian or Turkish history and culture is not an issue. It must, of course, be done, but it is not difficult to do. The real challenge is to use museums to tell the stories of the individual human beings living in these countries with the same brilliance, depth and power.
5. The measure of a museum's success should not be its ability to represent a state, nation or company or a particular history. It should be its capacity to reveal the humanity of individuals.
6. Museums must become smaller, more individual-focused and cheaper. This is the only way that they will ever tell stories on a human scale. Big museums with their wide doors call upon us to forget our humanity and embrace the state and its human masses. This is why millions outside the Western world are afraid of going to museums.
7. The aim of present and future museums is not to represent the state, but to recreate the world of individual human beings, without forgetting that these individuals have endured ruthless oppression for hundreds of years.
8. The resources channeled into monumental, symbolic museums should be diverted into smaller museums. These resources should also be used to encourage and support people in turning their own small homes and stories into museums.
9. If objects are not uprooted from their context, but are situated with care and ingenuity in their natural homes, they will already portray their own stories.
10. Vast buildings that dominate neighborhoods and entire cities do not bring out our humanity. On the contrary, they quash it. It is more human to imagine modest museums that turn neighborhoods, streets, homes and nearby shops into parts of the exhibition!
11. The future of museums is in our own homes.

The Vyoshensky Manifesto: ***Just over a year ago, in September 2012, the Union of Russian Museums adopted the Vyoshensky Manifesto, in which we attempted to convey the problems facing Russian museums. We did so in quite blunt terms. There has been some change, but much remains to be achieved.***

The period after perestroika saw Russians museums having to protect their collections and honorably preserve their assets (in our country, practically only two things were not privatized: the assets of the Academy of Sciences and the museum's collection... everything else was privatized, reprivatized and then renationalized). We should always remember that, whenever a redistribution occurs, there are a large number of alternatives: private collectors and the dwindling antique market... How they would long for six identical sabers, five up for sale.

The Vyoshensky Manifesto is related to this need[24] to guarantee the protection of museum collections and their development. Russian museums exist in accordance with a model that should become an example for society: an economic rationale that does not seek a 200-percent profit; normal social programs providing free visits to those who need museums the most — children, students, pensioners and certain other categories of Russian citizen. Someone has to pay for this, namely those who buy full-price tickets and know where their money is going.

The Hermitage is a museum that maintains a constant dialogue between cultures and where the beautiful word of "internationalism" can be heard in its truest sense. Much can be learned from the museum. The entire life of a museum is between a rock and a hard place, continually faced with potential ruin. But museums will never end. They will live on, broadening their scope, opportunities and audience and spreading understanding of what a museum is, what it can be and what it is not.

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THE VYOSHENSKY MANIFESTO

We are today faced by the genuine possibility of the disappearance of museums and their dissolution into Disneylands with mythical business plans.
We are against the national inferiority complex, expressed through the neglect of our heritage, against corporate raids and financial humiliation and artistic and historical illiteracy.
We are opposed to museums being reorganized according to the models of home-grown business and political machinations. On the contrary, propaganda and business must be developed with reference to the museum model of humanitarian and responsible action.
We are fully aware of how best to function. Many museums from around the world come to learn from us. We request the continued right to take independent decisions.
[...] We request that the distinct character of museums be recognized by Russian law, accounting for the strategy documents composed by the Russian museum community.
Museums perform a State function in preserving the cultural DNA of the nation. They create a cultural product that ensures this DNA is passed on. We anticipate a supportive approach from the [Russian] State towards this higher goal of museums.
Russian museums can only fulfil their mission if several steps are taken by the State and society itself.
The first and main step is a complete and unconditional refusal to rank museums in the categories of cultural and educational, leisure or recreational establishments.
The second most important step is to consolidate in all legislative acts and law-enforcement practice, at all levels, the principle of the integrity, inviolability and indivisibility of the Museum Fund of the Russian Federation, museum exhibits of cultural heritage and historical-cultural sites.
The final step is the acceptance by the State of its commitment to the material support of museums.

1_____
Text based on "The Sharp Corners of the Global Museum Space", a lecture by Mikhail Piotrovsky at the State Hermitage Museum, June 2013.

2_____
Among the many brilliant museum workers, Nikolai Fyodorov holds a special place. He was an original thinker, who stands as one of the sources of Russian religious philosophy in the late 19th and early 20th century. Fyodorov was the founder of the philosophical and academic movement of cosmism. He was "Moscow's Socrates", whose views were admired by Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky and Solovyov. Fyodorov engaged in the study of Russian national history and proposed a range of initiatives aimed at preserving Russia's spiritual and cultural heritage.

3_____
Cima da Conegliano (Giovanni Battista Cima) — a painter of the Venetian school (from the late 16th century to the first-half of 17th century, exact date of birth and death unknown).

4_____
Secularism — a principle according to which the government and other sources of authority must be separated from religion and religious faith.

5_____
During the unification of Italy, secularisation occurred between 1855 and 1866, followed by the elimination of the Papal States in 1870. In a historical sense, secularisation (from the Latin *saecularis*, meaning "worldly") indicates removal from religious, spiritual conduct to a worldly, civilian setting — the transfer of church property to the state.

6_____
Ferit Orhan Pamuk — Turkish author and recipient of numerous international prizes, including the 2006 Nobel Prize for Literature. In 2006, Time magazine listed Pamuk as one of the 100 most influential people in the world. His works have been translated into 60 languages and published in more than 100 countries.

7_____
One of the author's more recent works, "The Museum of Innocence" is devoted to the idea of objects as a reflection of the reality of the past. On April 28, 2012, a museum opened in Istanbul based on the book.

1 | **Leonardo da Vinci**
Madonna and Child (The Benois Madonna)
1478. Italy
Oil on canvas (transferred from panel). 49.5 x 33 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Source of Entry: Collection of M.A. Benois, Petrograd. 1914

This painting is one of the few surviving works by the young Leonardo; it is likely that it was the first work painted by Leonardo independently from his master Verrocchio. For centuries,"Madonna and Child with Flowers" was considered lost. In 1909, the architect Leon Benois sensationally exhibited it in St. Petersburg as part of his father-in-law's collection. The painting had apparently been brought from Italy to Russia by the notable connoisseur Alexander Korsakov in the 1790s. Upon Korsakov's death, it was sold by his son to the Astrakhan merchant Sapozhnikov for 1,400 rubles and so passed by inheritance to the Benois family in 1880. After many a squabble regarding attribution, Leon Benois sold the painting to the Imperial Hermitage Museumin 1914.

2 | **Caravaggio (Michelangelo Merisi de Caravaggio)**
The Lute Player. c. 1595. Italy
Oil on canvas. 94 x 119 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum-
Source of Entry: acquired in Paris from the Giustiniani collection, Rome. 1808

"The Lute Player" was painted in c. 1595 for Caravaggio's patron Cardinal Francesco del Monte. Del Monte later sold the painting to his friend, the banker and art collector Vincenzo Giustiniani. In 1808 Giustiniani's collection was put up for sale in Paris. Before the beginning of the auction, Dominique Vivant Denon, the then director of the Louvre, bought the painting for the Hermitage on request of Tsar Alexander I.

3 | **Antonio Canova**
The Three Graces
Between 1813 and 1816.
Italy. Marble. 182 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum-
Source of Entry: acquired from the Duke of Leuchtenberg, St. Petersburg. 1901

The sculpture was commissioned by Empress Josephine, but it remained unfinished at the time of her death. It was her son Eugène who bought it from Canova, and his son Maximilian brought it to St. Petersburg. Another version was subsequently made for John Russell and installed at the Duke of Bedford's residence at Woburn Abbey. That version is now owned jointly by the Victoria and Albert Museum and theNational Galleries of Scotland.

4 | **Frederik Ruysch**
Injected head of a few-month's-old child with dissected cranium
c. late 17th century or early 18th century. Holland, Amsterdam
Inventory № 4070-165
Kunstkamera, St. Petersburg
Provenance: Collection of Frederik Ruysch, Amsterdam — Emperor's Kunst and Natural Kammer, St. Petersburg — Peter the Great's Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (Kunstkamera), Russian Academy of Sciences.

Frederik Ruysch (1638–1731) — outstanding Dutch anatomist; studied medicine in Leiden; made professor of anatomy in 1665 and of botany in 1685 (both in Amsterdam). Ryusch's method of preserving anatomical specimens and embalming corpses with liquor balsamicus became world-famous, as did his technique (now lost) for injecting a solidifying liquid into thin blood vessels. Ruysch founded the first anatomical museum in Denmark after Worm and Bartolin. In 1717 during his second foreign trip, Peter the Great bought Ruysch's anatomical cabinet for 50,000 florins. The specimens prepared by Ruysch and displayed in the Academy of Science's Museum (Kunstkamera) in St. Petersburg are still in an excellent state of preservation. Ruysch sold part of his collections to Poland's King Stanislaw, who presented them to Willenberg University.

5 | **Jean-Simeon Chardin**
Still Life with Attributes of the Arts. 1766. France
Oil on canvas. 112 x 140.5 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Source of Entry: purchased from the artist by Catherine the Great. 1776

This canvas was commissioned by Catherine the Great for the St. Petersburg Academy of Arts and was brought to St. Petersburg immediately. It is regarded as one of Chardin's best allegorical still lives. All the objects in the picture represent various arts. There is a statuette of Mercury, patron of art, by Pigalle, in the center of the composition, and there are items symbolizing the main artistic genres. It is believed that the painting was brought to St. Peterbsurg by Falconet, who was then invited to create the equestrian statue of Peter the Great. The Empress like the still life so much that it was not handed to the Academy of Arts and remained in her private rooms.

6 | ***Monogram Badge Worn by Catherine the Great's Ladies-in-Waiting***
Between 1770 and 1780
Russia, St. Petersburg
Gold, silver and cut diamonds; chased. 7.3 x 3.3 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Source of Entry: from the collection of Empress Catherine the Great

The practice of ladies-in-waiting wearing the Empress's monogram badges (ciphers) in diamonds emerged during the reign of Catherine the Great, also known as Catherine II, and replaced the earlier custom (still in existence under Elizabeth I) whereby the ladies-in-waiting wore miniature portraits of the Empress. Ciphers became widespread in the 1770s.The best-known and final shape of Catherine the Great's monogram featured a large calligraphic letter E (the Cyrillic initial letter of Catherine's name in Russian) with the numeral II in the middle.

7 | ***A Dog Wearing a Space Suit***
1958. A laboratory worker helps a dog into a space suit to ensure the animal's safety during a space flight.
№ 1227775

The completion of the biomedical testing program on animals travelling to space to the altitudes of 100.8; 212 and 450 km in single-stage R-2A, R-2 and R-5 rockets (which featured a sealed cabin with an air regeneration system for animals and a return capsule carrying animals as well as recording and auxiliary equipment) paved the way towards safer space travel for "highly organized life forms" and eventually made it possible for the Soviet Union to conduct human space flights.

8 | ***Peter the Great's chair*** (1)
© The State Hermitage Museum, The Staraya Derevnya Restoration and Storage Center

9 | ***Vis-à-vis carriage for two***
c. 1761, France, Paris
Wood, iron, steel, bronze, leather, glass, silk, mother of pearl; forging, casting, chasing, woodcarving, gilding, inlay work, quilling, painting, weaving, embroidery.
500 x 200 x 250 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum,The Staraya Derevnya Restoration and Storage Center
Inventory № EK-13
Source of Entry: from the Stable Museum in Leningrad. 1927

In the 18th century the expression vis-à-vis was used to describe a carriage with a body for two passengers who sat face to face. The Hermitage's vis-à-vis carriage has exceptional artistic and historic value. It is almost impossible to find carriages of this kind in any other museum in Europe. The carriage belonged to the famous public figure Ivan Ivanovich Betskoi, who bought it in Paris and presented it to Catherine the Great in 1762. The carriage is decorated in the Rococo style.

10 | ***Icon "St. John the Divine in Silence"***
1679. Workshop of the Kirillo-Belozersky Monastery, Archangelsk.
Studio of artist Nektary Kulyuksin.
Egg tempera on gesso, linen, wood. 158.5 x 60.5 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Brought from Arkhangelsk region in 1960.

This work by an icon painter from the Kirillo-Byelozyorsk Monastery in Arkhangelsk depicts the apostle touching his lips with his right hand, as a sign that he is keeping silence, while with his left hand he points to the text of the Gospel According to St. John. On the reverse of the icon, details of the endowment are recorded: the name of the painter, the time and place where the icon was painted and the purpose for which the endowment was made.

11 | **Rembrandt Harmensz van Rijn**
Flora. 1634. Holland
Oil on canvas. 125 x 101 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Acquired between 1770 and 1774

Rembrandt painted his wife Saskia van Uylenburgh as Flora, goddess of spring and flowers, three times: in 1634, 1635 and 1641. In this work he combined elements of pastoral and historical portraits. Created in the year of their marriage, this painting shows the love and admiration the artist felt for the young woman. The contrast between the young sitter's diffident pose and the sumptuousness of her richly embroidered clothes and accessories gives the image a special charm.

12 | **Jacob Isaackszon van Ruisdae**
The Jewish Cemetery
1655. Holland
Oil on canvas, 84 x 95 cm
Gemäldegalerie. Dresden (a version of this painting created c. 1660 is at the Detroit Institute of Arts, gift of Julius H. Haass in memory of his brother Dr. Ernest W. Haass).

Two drawings by van Ruisdael representing this small cemetery near Amsterdam have survived; the drawings depict three tombs(those of Queen Mariede Medici's former physician Elijah Montalto, Chief Rabbi of Amsterdam and an unknown wealthy man). Both drawings were reworked into the painting "The Jewish Cemetery", which the English artist John Constable called "an allegory of human life".

13 | **Etienne-Maurice Falconet**
Threatening Cupid
Between 1772 and 1780
France, Sevres.
Soft-paste porcelain and biscuit. 23.7 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Source of Entry: Pavlovsk Palace. 1932

Etienne-Maurice Falconet created the sculpture at the height of the airy, festive Rococo period in art. "Threatening Cupid" was sculpted in 1757 for Marquise de Pompadour's mansion; the work was a tremendous success with the public and drew the attention of many art collectors. Six copies of the original piece were commissioned in different materials and sizes. The copy held by the Hermitage dates back to the 1770s or 1780s.

14 | **Domenico Mustilli**
The Mussolini Museum,
ed. by the Royal Institute of Archaeology and Art History under the auspices of the Province of Rome. 1939

15 | ***Tabernacle with a statue of St. Sebastian***
Corner of Viadegli Alfani and Borgo Pinti, San Giovanni district, Florence.

16 | **Claes Oldenburg**
A fragment of Mouse Museum and Ray Gun Wing — architectural structures made from knick-knacks and found objects. 1970s. MoMA, New York, April 14–August 5, 2013

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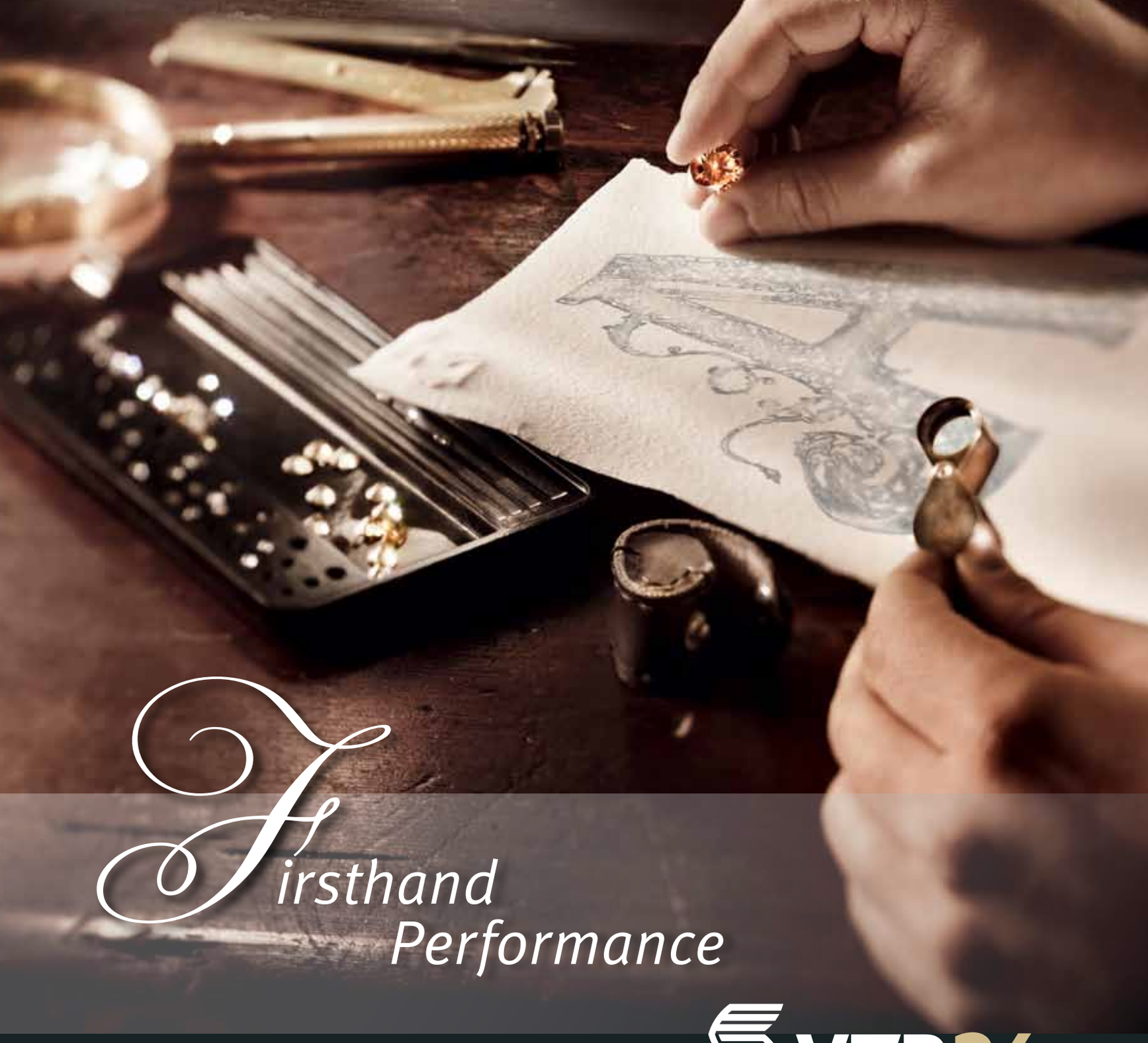

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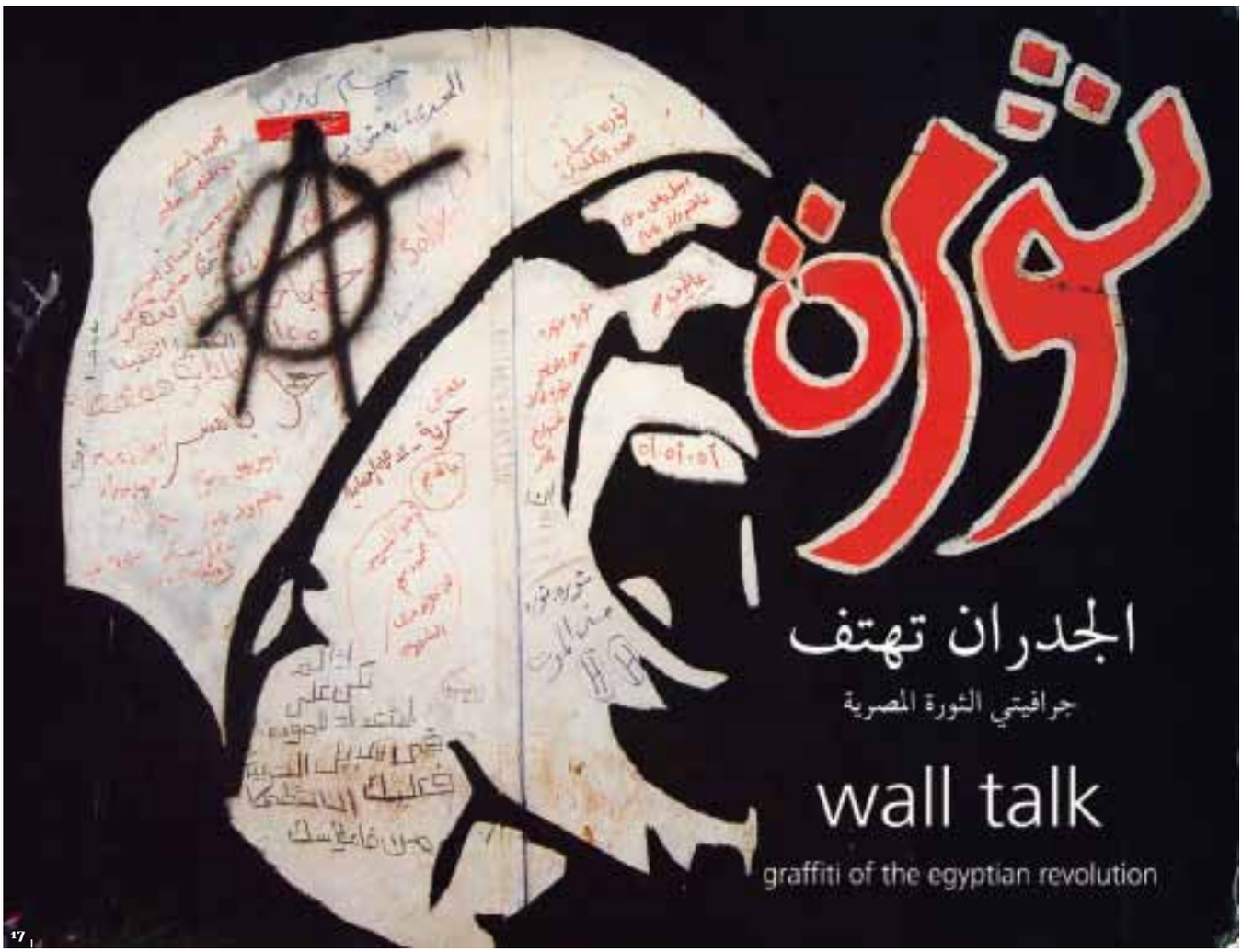

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PHOTO: MAYA GOWAILY. FROM "WALL TALK: GRAFFITI OF THE EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION". ZEITOUNA. 2012

ON THE AESTHETICS OF REVOLUTION

17 | Revolulionary Graffili in Mohammed Mahmud Slreel, adjacenl lo Tahrir Square, Cairo

18 | Inscriplion on lhe sarcophagus of Queen Nakhl-Baslel-ru, molher of commander Ahmose. Basall.
4lh Cenlury BC

Graffiti at Tahrir Square — this is the Egyptian revolution[16], the Arab Spring: the first stage of the revolution and the first revolutionary graffiti.

It says, "They are coming". And you can see who is coming. We can see a lot of these signs in our streets as well, this is the international symbol of anarchists, and there are plenty of those in St. Petersburg. The lady is shouting, "Revolution!" Do you recognize the lady? Yes, Lilya Brik by Rodchenko. The aesthetics of the Russian Revolution lives on. Sometimes we think that this aesthetic is gone, that we gave it up and everything is over. But it is still alive in the rest of the world and is active.

When riots against the Muslim Brotherhood started in Egypt, crowds in Ismailia destroyed the headquarters where slogans had been printed. All these slogans were torn to pieces by the crowd but in such a particular way that any parts of the text with the word Allah in it were intact. This was taken care of. The slogans were torn very carefully. This is a historical tradition.

This tradition can be seen in the Hermitage as well. There are two large basalt sarcophagi dating back to the times of the Persian invasion of Egypt. These sarcophagi belonged to the relatives of the last rulers of Egypt before this invasion. The new Persian authorities must have ordered local collaborationists to knock off the names of the people who were lying in these sarcophagi. Egyptian names, however, partly consist of names of gods[12], so the hired traitor knocked the names off, but the parts that were actually names of gods were left intact and they are visible to this day.

Revolution today is the same as back in the days of the Persian invasion. What happens in the streets now gradually becomes a museum exhibit. All these graffiti images are already being discussed by museum staff — how can they be preserved? The museum is expanding its audience and is expanding the concept of the museum collection. Everything should be saved and taken to a museum. And graffiti should be saved as long as no one paints them on the walls of our buildings.

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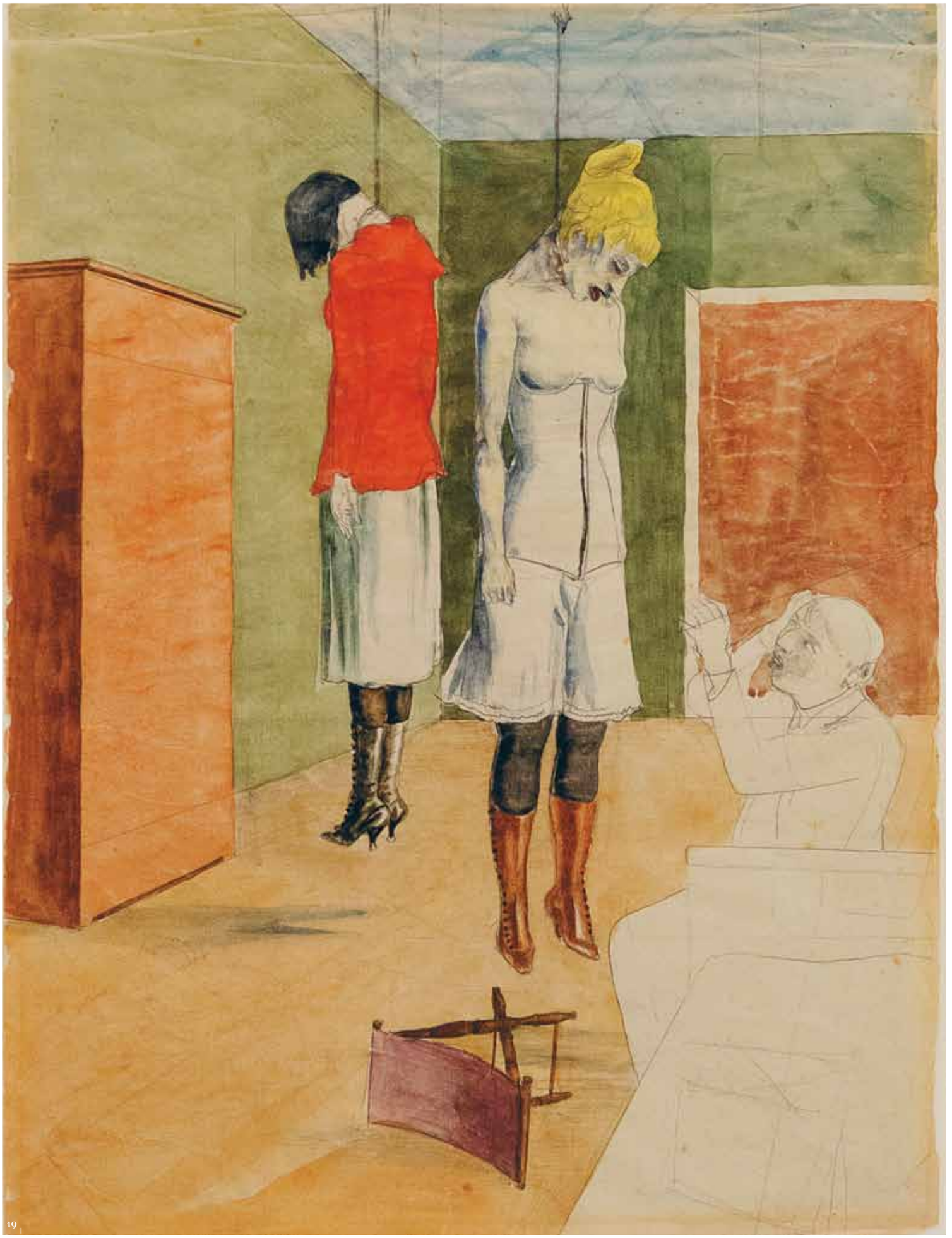


GIRRE NICHT MEHR WIE EIN WERTHER!

DIMITRI OZERKOV

German art of the 20th century sets out to be serious and uncompromising. This can be seen in its forms and palette, the message it aspired to deliver, and the context it created.

Tough and very harsh.

And uneasy.

Georg Baselitz said: "My painting is methodically organized by an aggressive, dissonant reversal of ornamentation."

Uncompromising.

Ultra-figurative and often ugly. But very expressive.

Not funny at all.

Crude rather than amusing.

And aggressively masculine.

The language of German art of the past century is instantly recognizable; it is unlikely that a work of German modernism would be confused with a French or Italian one. German canvases have many layers of paint, as in those of Lovis Corinth, Otto Dix, and Christian Schad. Images are often either crossed out, as in the work of A.R. Penck, or treated brutally, as in that of Baselitz, who attacks his sculptures with a chainsaw.

This stands in sharp contrast to the refinement of French Surrealism and the poetry of Italian Metaphysical Painting — both of which inspired international movements. German art is more introspective; at first glance it appears crude. Seemingly focused only on chronicling events in modern German society, it is actually a prism through which to understand and converse with the rest of the world. Its global revelations have very local roots. In the 20th century, Goethe's protagonist — young Werther — driven to suicide by unrequited love, became an international role model, even as the Germans repudiated him as too soft.

Even when German art is figurative, its message is often complex. When it is abstract, it may be a tapestry of symbols. Wilhelm Worringer described the opposition between the two visual languages in his book "Abstraction and Empathy" (1908), which foreshadowed the main ideological disequilibrium of the century. Abstraction found expression first in the work of Der Blaue Reiter painters and later in the Dada movement. Worringer laid out his theme just before the *Katastrophenzeit* (catastrophic time) of World War I, and this play of opposites continued through the century, reflecting the political scene. The Bauhaus, with its radical inquiry into abstraction, was shut down by the Gestapo. Abstract painting was among the art dubbed as "degenerate" and destroyed in massive bonfires (or stolen, if valuable, such as work by Van Gogh and Cézanne) by Nazi officials. Hitler backed its "positive" counterpart, the figurative art displayed in the "Grosse Deutsche Kunstausstellung" ("Great German Art Exhibition") of 1937–1944. However, the pendulum swung back again, and the officially approved artists were forgotten in the post-Nazi era.

After World War II, the country was split into two parts — East and West Germany — separated by a wall of ideology. With the death of Joseph Beuys and *der Mauerfall* — the dismantling of the Berlin Wall — a new era of German art began. But its main characteristics remained unchanged.

Through all these political swings and turnabouts, the only thing that did not attract destructive criticism was the technique of painting itself. Lost in ideological controversy, artists concentrated on method. Brush and palette remained the tools of the trade, and no ideology was involved. "I am a German artist, and what I do is rooted in German tradition," Baselitz said. Many other German artists would agree. Sigmar Polke stuck to tradition but explored a unique approach of mixing visual contexts. Despite similarities to Pop Art, it is far from being an easy or amusing style. The artist followed tradition in using natural materials, especially wood, which had given birth to German Renaissance sculpture and prints. But Polke's work is also about the specific *deutsche Formgefuhl* (German sense of form) as opposed to the harmony of Italian Renaissance art. Wilhelm Lehmbruck's casts would hardly have been possible without the precedent of the wooden sculptures of Tilman Riemenschneider. Forest landscapes such as those by Baselitz, Anselm Kiefer, and Markus Lupertz would have been impossible without the German tradition from Albrecht Altdorfer to Caspar David Friedrich and Ferdinand von Rayski. It is no surprise that German Expressionism is the inspiration for the country's artists today. Expressionist drawings by Erich Heckel, Max Hermann Pechstein, Ernst Ludwig Kirchner or August Macke could easily be compared to Baselitz's neo-Expressionist compositions, and may even seem to deliver a single pictorial statement.

19 | Rudolf Schlichter
Artist with Two Hanged Women. c. 1924

Knowledge of the German art-historical context is necessary to understand why a German artist, once trained in the technique of painting, should feel like a professional warrior in the field of ideology. In the early 1920s, Lovis Corinth (1858–1925) wrote: "As long as I can walk on this earth and am able to work, I shall go on painting as I always have. I don't think that anybody will be able to say that I was untrue to myself. Maybe I will be praised someday as a soldier who has remained steadfast at his post."

Needless to say, artists were even more steadfast at the end of the 20th century. It is very much true for Kiefer in his direct quotations from German historic realities, such as in "Tempelhof" (2011), where he refers to the whole mythology of Hitler's most powerful Luftwaffe airbase. Twentieth-century German artists previously found themselves forgotten at their posts. "I was alone," Polke would say at the beginning of his career in the West, after he had escaped from Soviet-controlled East Germany in 1953. He was like the soldier that had lost his way in a forest in the famous "The Chasseur of the Woods" (1814), by Caspar David Friedrich. And Walter Gramatte's "The Great Fear" (1918) may be seen as a portrait of the whole century.

If not literally soldiers during one or both World Wars, most 20th-century German artists suffered from political interference and/or the activities of politicians. In the context of history, they were forced to treat their profession as a very specific vocation — the embodiment of a specific *Kunstwollen*, or "will to form".

The term was developed by Worringer and then by Vasily Kandinsky, with a debt to Alois Riegl, to signify the artist's need to manifest an inner drive, or necessity, through the work. Almost any canvas created in Germany in the 20th century was composed with the intention of being an artistic statement rather than a simple artwork. A still life was not just an aesthetic depiction of objects but a pictorial manifesto. A portrait would not be painted solely as a faithful depiction of a particular face; it would be an attempt to embody the forces that dominate the personality being portrayed. Take as an example Otto Dix's "Lady with Fur Coat" (1923) and "Ursus in Swaddling Clothes" (1927), or Erich Heckel's "Sleeping" (1914).

No one would simply paint a landscape: it would be a disquieting recollection, such as August Macke's "Woman with Child and Girls on the Street" (1913) or Conrad Felixmuller's "The Beggar of Prachatitz" (1924), or an unnatural monument, like Georg Baselitz's "One Leg" (1988). A landscape by Paul Klee would reveal a secret movement of the soul in which every brushstroke has a meaning. He asked his Bauhaus students to "draw up a topographical plan and take a little journey to the Land of better understanding. The first act of movement (line) takes us far beyond the start point. After a short while we stop to get our breath (interrupted line or, if we stop several times, an articulated one). And now a glance back to see how far we have come (countermovement). We consider the road in this direction or in another (bundles of lines). A river is in the way; we use a boat (wavy motion). Farther upstream we should have found a bridge (series of arches)."

A German artist is an intellectual who feels responsible for educating, inspiring, and moving society. The art itself may not be fully understood, but its goal is to influence the minds of its beholders. Lupertz would say that one cannot understand an artist in his time but only love or hate him. While politicians are busy discussing the various problems of society, an artist asks people to look around their immediate environments and appreciate what has already changed. The task of the artist, if not actually healing — in the romantic case of Beuys — was seen as helping the suffering post-war society to find a new identity.

Is it the masculinity of the *Kunstwollen* that makes German modern art pay so little attention to women? Historically there was little demand for a Lorelei — the captivating woman who drove passing gentlemen to destruction. The most popular feminine image is Werther's love object, Lotte, when she is feeding bread to her younger siblings — a warm, calm, and confident mother figure. She is the Mother Earth manifested in the archaic forms of Hans Arp, or the modest and pensive female nude in Lehmbruck's sculptures. Although happy to have women around, the modern German man has no time to fall in love. Artists must be serious and strong, pointing out the right way for the rest of the globe — out of a strange socialist-Surrealist context, as in Neo Rauch's "Waldsiedlung" (2004).

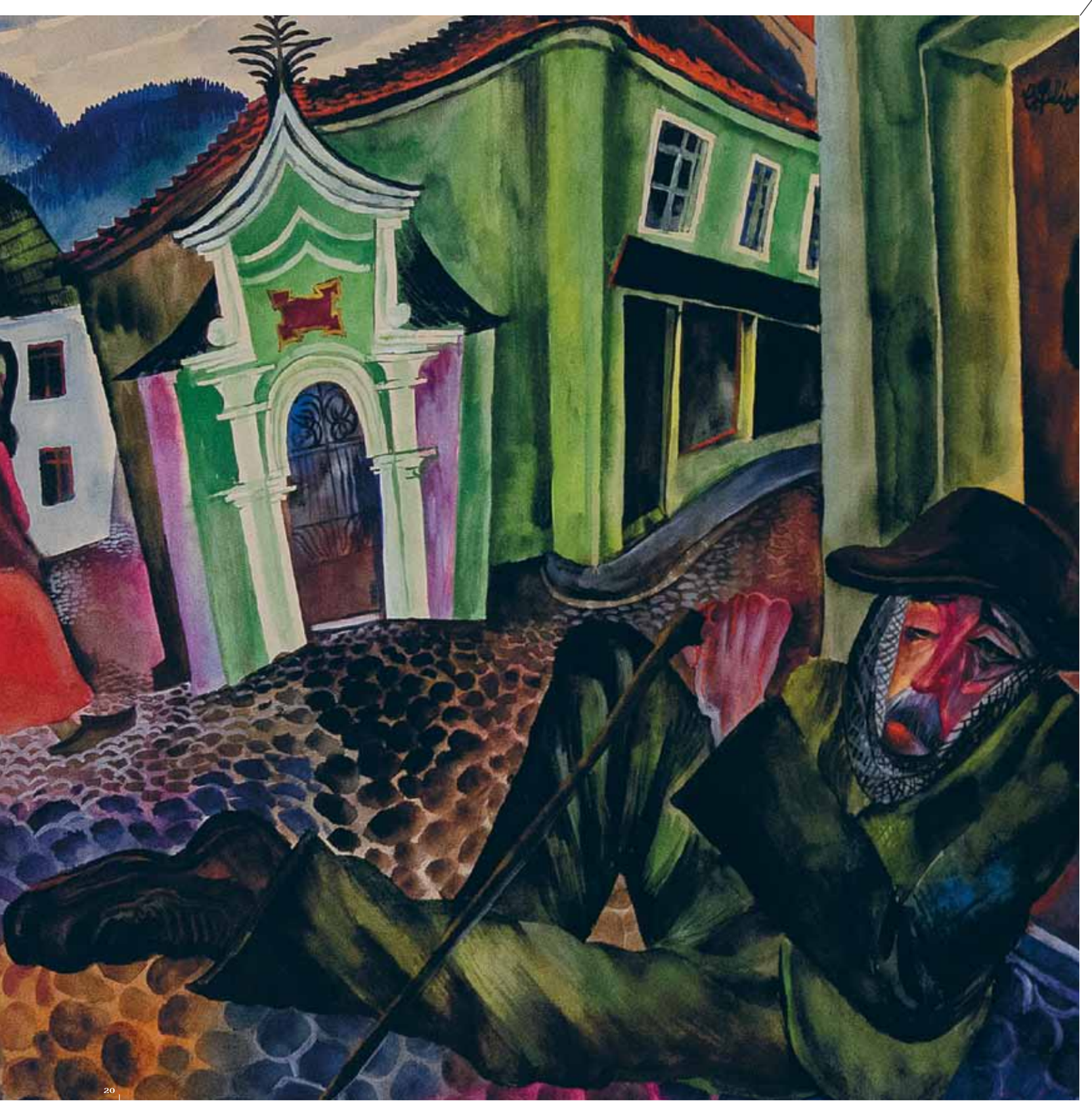
Art versus politics is the central theme for 20th-century German art. It is all about the state of unbalance between reaching a selected goal and losing necessary freedom. Logically the central personality in this uneasy world should be a national hero, with all of his sorrows and problems. In the 20th century he could not permit himself to be a mad lover or a Kierkegaardian flaneur. He is embodied instead as the Nietzschean superman, obsessed by surroundings that are changing faster than he can keep up with. More than ever, he wants to be a true warrior who wanders among hills and cities trying to bring justice to the cruel world around him. But the position of the hero must be left empty — the role of the Fuhrer has been radically corrupted — so he must remain steadfast in his role as artist.

The lack of a pure political ideology has made artists feel that they must provide a substitute. Since the word "nation" is still taboo in Germany — for fear of a new, unexpected Werther effect — artists must try with all their might to lead society:

Girre nicht mehr wie ein Werther, Welcher nur für Lotte gluht...

"Do not bill and coo as Werther, on fire with passion for Lotte only." This poem was left to the *Volk* (the people) by the great Heinrich Heine in 1844, and German artists of the 20th century have heeded his request, continuing the strophe of the national poet at the top of their voices:

Was die Glocke hat geschlagen Sollst du deinem Volke sagen, Rede Dolche, rede Schwerter!



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20 | Conrad Felixmüller
The Beggar of Prachatitz. 1924

MEN OF REALITY

DIETER BUCHHART

During the first months of his military training and World War I, Otto Dix focused on Expressionist, Cubist and Futuristic idioms. But when he experienced unfettered human nature in wartime, Dix also took recourse to a realistic form of representation in drawings and paintings such as "Portrait of Bruno Alexander Roscher" (1915). In so doing, he sought out the "description of the visible and the 'close-to-life' reproduction of a person"[1] In his war diary, he noted in 1916: "War too must be considered a natural phenomenon"[2].

The horror of war is presented by Walter Gramatte in his painting "The Great Fear" (1918) which reflects the bare human fear in bloodshot eyes staring out of the darkness, a symbol of the dark time. It refers to the imminent end of World War I and serves as an overture to the interwar years. The horror in Christian Schad's "Chantal" (1919) gives way to a fear of the future, the bare represented figure looks doubtingly and sceptically at the beholder.

The misery, poverty and hunger of the subsequent years is inscribed in their face, just as "The Beggar of Prachatitz" (1924) by Conrad Felixmuller marks the misery of the interwar years. In turn, George Grosz' watercolor "Cheap Whiskey" (1933) can be seen as an emblem of prohibition, poverty and economic depression at the start of the 1930s in the United States. The human faces have become horrific masks shaped by poverty, alcoholism, and malice.

While Dix's mysterious portrait of a veiled woman wearing a revealing dress and fur coat (1923) raises associates of his depictions of prostitutes, in "Ursus in Swaddling Clothes" (1927) he presents his immediate family, for he "must see everything with his own eyes... to confirm that it is so"[3]. He thus describes the misery of the period as well as the birth of his son and the newborn in the crib.

Another drastic work is the painting "Sex Murder" (1922), which is based on the famous, lost collage "Sex Murderer [Self-Portrait]" (1920). In the watercolor version, the victim lies covered in blood on the ground, while the grimace of the monstrous murderer is only partially visible, with a bloody hand and knife on the right side of the picture. His demonic grin betrays the madness of a world gone awry with misery, violence and death[13].

Rudolf Schlichter has the final say in "The Artist with Two Hanged Women" (1924). Here, the artist portrays himself literally as a man of reality, who seems to be part of the event depicted in the watercolor. Two young women with polished boots have hanged themselves to escape the sorrows of their time. The artist himself is depicted in pencil as the chronicler of the event, caught in another reality between the fascination of sexual attraction and horror over the death[13] of the two women.

1 Andreas Strobl, Otto Dix: *Eine Malerkarriere der zwanziger Jahre*. Berlin, 1996, p. 192.

2 Otto Dix: *Kriegstagebuch* 1915/16, p107, zit. nach Otto Dix 1891–1969 (Ausstellungskatalog, Museum Villa Stuck, Munchen, 1985), p. 273.

3 Otto Dix

13
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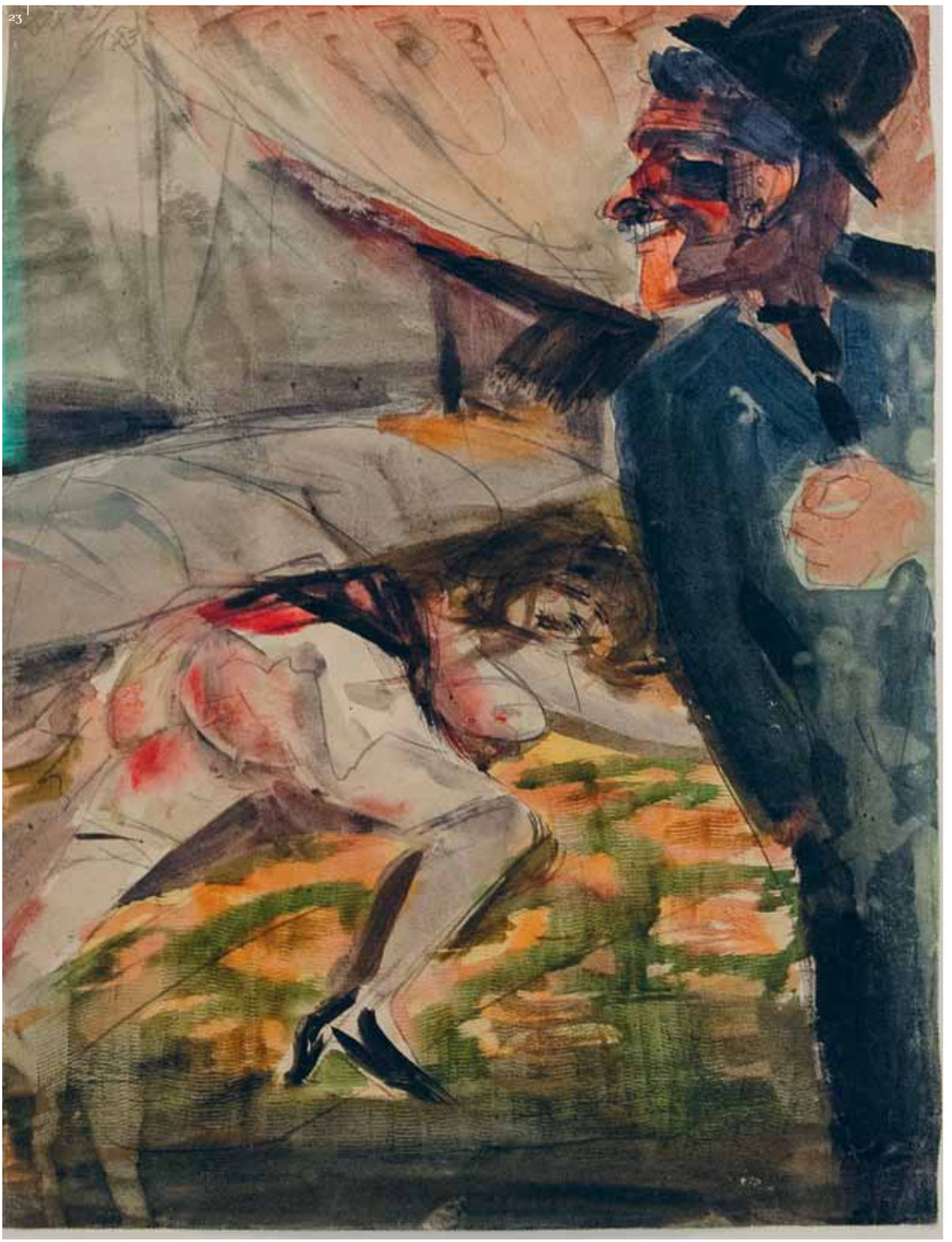
21 | Otto Dix
Ursus in Swaddling Clothes
1927
22 | Otto Dix
Portrait of Bruno Alexander Roscher
1915
23 | Otto Dix
Sex Murder. 1922



24

Anselm Kiefer

Tempelhof means both “temple courtyard” and “courtyard of the Knights Templar” in German. Built by the Nazis, the Tempelhof airport was used as an assembly point for military aircraft during World War II. In 1948 it became the airfield for US Air Force “raisin bombers” transporting food to two million Berlin inhabitants. Before its closure in 2008, Tempelhof functioned as a civil and commercial airport.

Kiefer’s eponymous painting is not a nostalgic depiction of an architectural monument of the Third Reich, but a complicated image of a hermeneutic cathedral of the past, a place of both mystical aspiration and apocalypse. The interior of this huge post-industrial temple is shown in perspective, rising up from a mixture of different materials reminiscent of various chemical elements and symbols of alchemy.

24 | Anselm Kiefer
Tempelhof
2011

Georg Baselitz

In "Eagle in Bed", Baselitz implements the technique of inverted canvases, later defined sarcastically as the "clever art of bad pictures". Broad brushstrokes, with the black liquid paint flowing over the canvas, characterizes the artist's aggressive manner of early 1980s. The central figures, lying on a bed or in a cage, are not clear and seem to disappear into the composition. The strange black creature with a curved yellow beak and an open mouth is incurably ill, dying in its distorted cage. Although it represents the formidable German eagle, a symbol of strength and power, the depiction produces a sense of loneliness, exclusion, and total powerlessness.

25 | Georg Baselitz
Eagle in Bed. 1982

26 | Neo Rauch
Waldsiedlung. 2004

Neo Rauch

At first glance, the mundane scene in "Waldsiedlung" is plausible enough but transforms quickly into a perceptual enigma. The ground surface appears unstable, it quivers and winces, while a kind of grass grows over an infrastructure resembling layers of parchment in an old book. It seems that time has perhaps stopped and flows back into this strange extra-dimensional plane created by the artistic imagination.

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Art in Business

GERMANO CELANT

It is the lack of frontiers in the world that is causing anxiety in the realm of art, for the idea is spreading that it is no longer possible to have a place or center of reference able to act as a filter for the evaluation or selection of new creative contributions. This change has been brought about by the globalization of information on art and its extensive market, which has completely obliterated the role of museums and galleries in proposing artists and works. They had been the keystone for over a century, with the power to select and make decisions for cultural and marketing reasons, and to make a historical impact on the modern and contemporary aesthetic proposition. Today this machinery of analysis and research, of criticism and selection, has been overtaken by a diffusion in the media of images representing the objects produced by the artist. This diffusion, realized through innumerable technological channels that have become the principal means of shaping opinion and obtaining support, cancels out any possibility of verification and assessment when it comes to conceptual and emotional value.

What counts now is success amplified by excess of exposure and short-lived excitement, with all its variations connected with glamor and reputation, making everything indefinable, impersonal and alike. In fact visibility in the media is rendering direct experience of the work less and less necessary, so that the process of staging and visiting an exhibition in a certain city or institution, whether public or private, appears irrelevant. Hence the loss of the central role of the capitals of art: Paris, until the 1940s leader in the field thanks to the rise of the historical avant-gardes, from Cubism to Surrealism, and New York, from the 1950s to the 1990s the center of a direct and industrial practice, ranging from Action Painting to Pop Art and Minimal Art, that has since flooded the whole Western market.

With the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War an information and economics-oriented society has spread around the globe: the world of art that has likewise emerged has no leadership apart from that given by capital gain, without an identity or location. In the absence of an area of belonging, to a symbolic or political "belief" that sustains it, the work turns into a floating asset, bound to the economic value that is assigned to it and recognized by financial systems. So art, as Warhol declared, is not just a business, but is in business. It has become an instrument of profit and trade, so that the place of exhibition — the museum or gallery — has been transformed into a showroom where luxurious merchandise that comes from the studios of "artisans" is put on show. And if the engaged and the intellectual among them try to document the rejection of a former visual and contextual reality, their contribution inevitably serves to boost their consumption.

Since it is difficult to distinguish what is new, owing to identities that are characterized by different ethnic and philosophical roots, from Asia to Brazil, from Buddhism to Christianity, the glorification of the change of product is entrusted today to the presentation of the results of the latest generation in such a way as to highlight not so much the emergence of new ideas and alternative concepts, but the pretention of being original as a result of being young and using exciting technologies. Success is currently afforded to a group of artists, born around 1972, from Wade Guyton to Kelley Walker, who resort to means and processes linking digitization and computerized printing. This fashion was immediately reinforced and celebrated with the

1
"Business art is the step that comes after Art. I started as a commercial artist, and I want to finish as a business artist. After I did the thing called 'art' or whatever it's called, I went into business art. I wanted to be an Art Businessman or a Business Artist. Being good in business is the most fascinating kind of art." (Andy Warhol. *The Philosophy of Andy Warhol*).

2
Wade Guyton (born in 1972, Hammond, Indiana).

3
Kelley Walker (born in 1969, Columbus, Georgia).

auction of their works at Christie's and Sotheby's, where the confirmation of a rise in value has taken the place of historical and linguistic analysis. It is no accident that as time has passed, over the course of the last 20 years, the auction houses and then the art fairs have become the means of increasing value: the former through an artificial and continual increase in prices and the latter through the presentation of the valuable nature of images and objects of art, and therefore their direct and concrete marketing.

But what is the reason for this disorientation? Today a journey of discovery in art would no longer entail paying a visit to some of the places where artists live, from Paris to New York, from Berlin to London and Los Angeles, but is conditioned by the total vision of a creative world that, being on a vast scale, can no longer be pinned down or grasped. Owing to its worldwide ubiquity it has become impossible for anyone who is interested in contemporary art — the art that is currently being worked on and created — and who wants to study or acquire it, promote or understand it, to experience it first hand and see it for what it is. Since it is impossible to explore all the territories of the former periphery of the former capitals of art, the consternation of information and emotion is absolute.

With frequency and discovery denied, what is left? Perhaps the hope of finding another center in which it is possible to see and experience the summary of everything that is going on? Since it is problematic to rely on experimental celebrations, and therefore the risk of the Documenta and Biennali[5], from Kassel to Venice, from Athens to São Paulo, a place is being recreated, for the moment, at the art fairs. The best gallery owners, "curators" of stands and at the same time "promoters" of the "true" values of art, converge on these events from every continent. To them is entrusted the presentation of an established situation or one that is still to be discovered, sustained, however, not by a theoretical analysis, but by a financial commitment and a guarantee of repurchase in the future. It is the greatest possible guarantee of security given to the consumer, who is therefore able to wander around, without making endless journeys, in a single department store and take possession — at no risk — of a piece of artistic "soil," to be transplanted in his home.

28 | Wade Guyton
Untilled. 2006

27 | Wade Guyton / Kelley Walker
Dear Kelel one drinker, here is the recipe for our signature cocktail. 2004

In this connection it is worth noting that such artificial and temporary communities, from Art Basel to Frieze, do not take place in what used to be the capitals of art, but in cities where the banking industry is strong and there are generous tax exemptions — Basel, Hong Kong and London, the terminals and deposits of global wealth. It is to these free markets that flock the people who are obsessed with the knowledge and possession of art. Here you find the best stores, or single-brand galleries, from Zwirner to Gagosian, from Hauser & Wirth to Werner, from Perrotin to Gladstone, from White Cube to Goodman, which proliferate in other parts of the world and live on the passage of work from the artist's studio to the home or private museum of the collector. Here there is the freedom to feel connected, without embarrassment, to artistic fashions and their temporary commodification, where art is offered as a fetish capable of turning a vehicle of messages into a means of ornamentation of one's own power and capacity for investment — all without anxiety and fear, so that it is possible for the collector to enter into contact with the pure as well as economic idea of art, without his own gaze, at times passionate at times speculative, or having to meet the disorienting and radical vision of the artist, assuming that this still exists.

A Former Artist

For over a century, between 1963, when the Impressionists[14] shattered and pulverized the representative and chromatic system of images, and again in 1989, when the fall of the Berlin Wall led, through the spread of information on other identities and cultures, partly through

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new technologies like the Internet, to the destruction and dispersion of a compact and unambiguous system of power in the definition of art, with the result that it had to be extended to other expressions spread over all the continents and not just the West, the position of the artist remained the same. Throughout this period this position was always that of a dropout from society: an individual convinced of expressive and creative capacities intent on making a mark on the community, if not the whole of society. The artist's essential characteristic was that of working in solitude, in search of an absolute way to tell a story, about himself or others, specifically outside tradition and convention. It was a desire, not yet professionalized, to carry out a free activity, in which to reflect alone on a process of seeing, thinking and acting that was not bound to previous periods or existing languages. It was something anchored to a rebellious, revolutionary and anarchic vision with respect to the "authorities" in the realm of creativity, professed by those who, together, formed an "avant-garde," so-called for its determination to break through the accepted aesthetic lines.

This quest for a new and disruptive visual culture that in the modern era — as demonstrated by the vain hopes cherished by every movement from Russian and Italian Futurism to Dadaism, Constructivism, Neoplasticism, Surrealism, and all the way up to the radical developments linked to the cultural rebellions of 1968 and reflected in the lines of conceptual and performance research that carried out a theoretical (but no longer material), philosophical and procedural analysis and reinterpretation of the meaning and practice of art — has increasingly sought to connect with real life and therefore with the changes taking place in society, and has thus undergone a complete turnaround. With the advent of globalization, at the end of the 20th century, there has been a shift from a hypothesis of overthrow to a practice of acceptance and complicity with the international machinery of economic power. Art has turned into a means of entertainment and ornamentation, churning out fetishes in close connection with the boom in the movement of capital. This has resulted in a connivance with the process of commodification of all expressions of creativity, turning them into fashion.

It is from this perspective that we need to analyze the course taken by the artist in history: that of a person who at the beginning of the modern era was engaged in the construction of a new world, blazing trails for ideology and utopia.

29 | Sarah Lucas
Au Naturel. 1994

30 | Damien Hirst
The Physical Impossibility of Death in the Mind of Someone Living. 1991

The theoretical and philosophical justification of this action, projected into the future, has been essential and up until the 21st century gave art actual power. In fact the artist as person aspired to renewing and subverting the past, if not the age-old. The artist was therefore part of a community that was committed to the construction of a different social reality through an aesthetic revolution. The steps in this process of change were, in fact, often taken by a group of individuals who came together to find a common and unified spirit and language with which to give the power of revelation to their proposal; a proposal that came to embrace a broad range of means of expression and communication, from cinema to painting, from sculpture to theater, from music to architecture. In order for the new to be able to express itself, this gathering of different personalities all seeking the same liberating result, organized joint undertakings, such as manifestos, actions, concerts, exhibitions and books through which the group's attitudes were developed and promoted.

The effort to involve large numbers of people had a multiple function, that of broadening awareness to many, so that art acquired a wider social dimension, but also that of allowing the group to make itself heard through the "clamor" of the various manifestos, which became national and international means of communication. It was a way of going beyond the monologue of the single artist, in which the individual found fulfilment, and moving toward the possible inclusion of others and the decentralization of society. In addition, the fact of being carried out by a group of people gave the operation a "social" aspect, in which the individual was effaced to the benefit of the overall aesthetic and imaginative mission. In fact, a sense of identity was sacrificed to develop an ideal project, one inspired by an idea or a style of life.

For over a hundred years, from Impressionism[14] to Minimalism and Conceptualism, the head-on clash with institutions or with earlier aesthetic and behavioral transgressions was effected by groups of people who symbolically challenged the existing cultural and artistic systems. A few individual figures

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stood out, but were usually identified with a "movement," such as Divisionism, Fauvism, Expressionism, Cubism, Orphism, Suprematism and so on... It was a sequence of trends that continued up until the 1990s, when the only close-knit propulsion system, the Western and fundamentally Anglo-Saxon one, was thrown into crisis, revealing its relativity and partiality. What has come to dominate since the end of the 20th century is a system of global distribution that is based on an aggressive capitalism in which — with provocation and rebellion having fallen by the wayside — all that counts is an economic result. Art has become pure appearance, a simulacrum of innovation. Its intellectual and conceptual use-value has given way to an exchange-value, regulated by the workings of the economy. The heroic image of the artist whose ascent was rooted in the struggle against tradition and conservative attitudes has been consigned to the past and its place taken by a presentation of the "originality" of ideas, but not an incisive and caustic one. He has become a figure capable of adapting to pliancy and mutability, the moods and fashions of the market.

31 | Maurizio Cattelan
Him. 2001

So after a last outburst of heroism and political engagement on the part of the generation shaped by 1968, which identified with a broad range of different "trends" — Body art, Conceptual art, Neoexpressionism, Land art, Arte Povera, etc. — the contours and weight of ideas have given way to an absolute individualism, connected to a myth of the artist as "star." The image of the "diabolical" artist has been revived and is used by the media to impart more glamor to the protagonist, who is transformed into an almost depraved figure: first there was Julian Schnabel and then Jeff Koons, Damien Hirst and Maurizio Cattelan. Above all the image of the new no longer entails a new philosophy in the practice of art but is expressed in terms of "generations." In the 1990s it was the Young British Artists (YBA), where what counted was anger, filtered through a punk vision, and expressed by a group of artists who identified with the social condition of the lumpen proletariat, which included Marc Quinn, Tracey Emin, Gavin Turk, Sarah Lucas, Jake & Dinos Chapman, Gilliam Wearing and Gary Hume, with many taking part in "Sensation", a controversial exhibition at the Royal Academy in London in 1997: from this moment on age, together with impact on the media and commercialization, became the distinctive trait of a change in linguistic direction. Moreover, with the triumph of globalization since 2001, the emerging economic powers — from Russia to China, from India to Brazil — have been making efforts to promote and increase the value of their respective artistic productions, both in the sense of publicizing them around the world and in collecting them to build an identity of their own, based on works that will go on to make up the collections of future local and national museums.

32 | Jake & Dinos Chapman
Zygolic acceleration, biogenelic, de-sublimaled libidinal model (enlarged x 1000)
1995

Arriving at the present day, the new order connected to the unrestrained circulation of capital has resulted in a complete loss of the artist's critical function. With the disappearance of any threat or otherness, the lack of any clash of worlds and the end of the Cold War, the position of the intellectual has grown impoverished, become superfluous. Where it previously stirred a sense of unease, stemming from a lack of understanding or from its content, art is now a "resource," a business that needs to be boosted rather than repressed. It has turned into merchandise for entertainment and consumption. No longer does the artist reflect on his language, or think about the course of his historical development, but only on his communicative effect, with the consequence of reducing his value as an expert and specialist in order for him to enter the system of entertainment. Thus he has been seduced by this society to the point of forgetting the "tribal" aspect of artists, who have always come together to form "avant-gardes," outposts of rupture with the past and penetration into "enemy" territory. Now the artist has achieved the status of his "enemy," he is a wealthy professional. It suffices to think of Damien Hirst and his Science Production Studio, which unabashedly handles the new business of his art, selling everything from jeans to purses, jewelry to T-shirts, sculptures to paintings. He shares the ups and downs of the international stock market. He joins in with the euphoria of "useless" values, the ones connected with fashion and glamor, and no longer works on the "disturbing", but rather on the pleasing and elegant, on ornament and on the affirmation of power: a former artist.

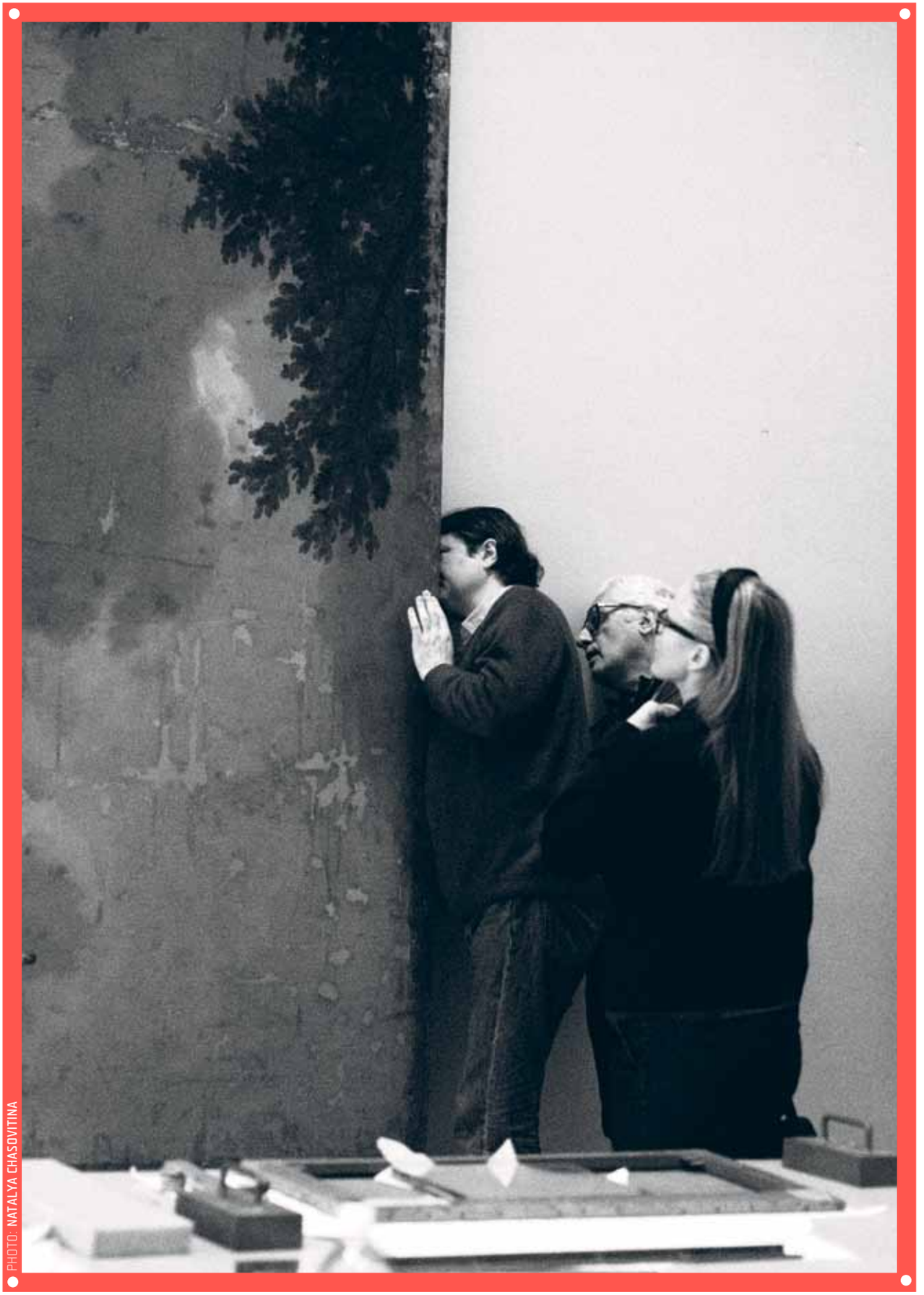

PHOTO: NATALYA CHASOVITINA

33 | Germano Celant in the Staraya Derevnya Restoration and Storage Center of the State Hermitage Museum
April, 2013

ON ST. PETERSBURG MUSEUM COLLECTIONS OF THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY: SOME CHINESE RARE OBJECTS AND THEIR DRAWINGS

THE ARCHIVE OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES HOLDS A GREAT NUMBER OF DRAWINGS WHICH SHOW THAT BY THE 1730s, THE FIRST MUSEUM IN RUSSIA, THE KUNSTKAMERA IN ST. PETERSBURG, HELD MORE THAN 500 CHINESE WORKS OF ART. IT WAS BELIEVED THAT THE FIRE IN KUNSTKAMERA OF 1747 PRACTICALLY DESTROYED THE CHINESE COLLECTIONS, YET TODAY WE CAN STATE THAT THIS WAS NOT TRUE AND MANY OBJECTS THAT HAD BEEN IN THE KUNSTKAMERA SINCE IT WAS ESTABLISHED HAVE SURVIVED.

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MARIA MENSHIKOVA

In the 1730s, as part of a project to realize Peter the Great's ideas, there was an attempt to create a catalogue of the collection of the first Imperial museum with illustrations. The drawings were done by the artists of the Engraving Chamber and the works survived long after the fire. The majority of the drawings of the Chinese objects were completed between 1735 and 1740.

Many of these drawings are stored in the archives of the St Petersburg branch of the Russian Academy of Sciences. (r. IX, op. 4). Some sheets went to the Hermitage collection in 1922 (and are now stored in the Department of the History of Russian Culture). These drawings have repeatedly drawn the attention of researchers but in most cases it is very hard to relate the images to the original objects. This is due to several external reasons. Firstly, the objects and the drawings are stored in different institutions and even if experts are presented with them, they have no chance of correlating them. Secondly, it is commonly believed that most of the original Kunstkamera collection was burnt in 1747 and the pieces that we have now were accepted by the museum later when the void left by the fire was being filled. Thirdly, many objects are in warehouses and have barely been seen for many years. And another factor that has had a significant influence on the matter is that the collections were handed over to other museums in the course of the 18th and 19th centuries. By the 20th century the history of the pieces had been forgotten, the tracks of the artworks had often been lost and the objects themselves had gone missing or been sold.

The drawings that are currently a part of the collections of the Academy of Sciences and the Hermitage are mostly watercolors, and using the color setting we can even assess the materials and techniques that were used to make these objects. The majority of sheets are not signed but some of them have full signatures with initials on the front or on the back; some of them are also dated. Some of the artists who worked for the Academy of Sciences were very famous, such as Alexei Grekov, Yakov Nechaev (sheets 188, 184), Mikhailo Makhaev (sheets 1, 60, 88), Andrei Polyakov (sheet 135) while others were less famous such as Yefim Terentiev (sheet 145) and Grigory Abumov (sheets 138, 495) who worked as students or apprentices for the Engraving Chamber of the Academy of Sciences at the time when the attempt was made to create an illustrated catalogue of the Kunstkamera collection. Some artists, especially students such as Makhaev for example, found it rather hard to paint typically Chinese objects. We should specifically mention Nechaev's skill. Not only could he convey the particular features of the oriental object but he was also able to copy Chinese characters and stamps. Items painted in watercolor are normally quite easy to recognize as they were an attempt to obtain a realistic image for the catalogue.

The objects pictured are made of bronze, pagodite, ivory, wood, lacquer and silk. It was also important that apart from practical things or the everyday objects and curiosities that Peter the Great was so keen on, the objects stored in Kunstkamera also included scrolls with paintings (sheets 54, 60, 87).

Some of the objects in the pictures from the archives can be identified as the artifacts now stored in the Hermitage and the Kunstkamera.

Certain objects were included in the exhibition "Peter the Great and Holland" held in 1996–1997. As for the majority of pieces, we cannot yet state with certainty that they belonged to the Kunstkamera collection as they are not unique examples of Chinese applied art. This particularly applies to bronze that could be cast using split moulds and even carved bone portraying traditional Chinese deities. However, the origin of some objects is absolutely clear.

One of the objects represents entangled tree roots with carved figures. This object is stored in the Department of History of Russian Culture (ERD-112) and was received from Kunstkamera as part of the "Peter the Great's Study" collection. However, due to the reasons stated above, no one has correlated this exact wooden carving with the picture. We can state that it is the exact object pictured on sheet 229 from the archive of the Academy of Sciences. Judging by the picture, however, in the early 18th century the top left corner of the entangled roots bore an inscription in Chinese which has not survived. This object comes from the collection bought by Peter the Great in Holland from pharmacist Albert Seba in 1715–1717. It was described as "a very rare piece of an eaglewood tree root with a Chinese carved image of rivers, boats and figurines". The object is indeed very rare and we have not been able to find anything similar in any other collections.

1 | ***Ship with two sails***
UNKNOWN ARTIST. 1730s
© The State Hermitage Museum
Inventory № ERR-7182

We have managed to find a total of five Chinese objects in the watercolor paintings stored at the Hermitage. All of them were painted on the same paper with a Strasburg lily watermark and the letters IV; the sheets are of the same size (46 cm by 29.5 cm). One painting is a head-on image of a flask made of gilded bronze and cloisonné enamel (ERR-7112). This is a moon flask with flattened round body and an oval-shaped foot with no decoration and a short cylindrical neck. There are two dragon-shaped handles of gilded bronze on the shoulders and four loops, each with a rose-knot on the sides, and a lid with a handle shaped like a seated lion. It should be noted that in the picture the flask has a gilded chain connecting the lid and the handle and even a partly preserved little string (or a tangled wire?) pulled through the top and two loops. The string is torn off and the bottom two holes on the foot are left empty. The mirror of the flask has a cloisonné enamel landscape with a couple of pheasants, a rock and an arborescent white peony, magnolia and other plants in bloom as a symbol of spring. On the neck we can see a branch with peaches which symbolizes longevity. The background is filled with a web of comma-shaped curls. Owing to the quality of the painting and the way in which the details and colors are conveyed so accurately, we can date the vessel to the reign of the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644), that is to

2 | *A European Man on a Horse*
Peter the Great Museum
of Anthropology and Ethnography
(Kunstkamera)

the late 16th century or the early 17th century. The particularity of this painting is that it was done on a whole sheet (46 cm by 59 cm) with the right and left side of the watermark; the watercolor itself is 42 cm high. The sheet is signed on the back in the bottom right corner: A.G. 1736. The initials were deciphered by G.A. Printseva as those of Alexei A. Grekov (1723/1726–after 1770) (see: Peter the Great and Holland. State Hermitage: Exhibition Catalogue. St. Petersburg, 1996. No. 67).

This flask exists. We managed to find it in the Kunstkamera's stores. As far as we know, the painting is the earliest image and the flask itself is the oldest example of Chinese cloisonné enamel in European collections, which means that as early as the beginning of the 18th century, to St. Petersburg at least, such pieces were only imported individually, maybe even as curiosities.

The four other paintings are not signed but can be studied as one group. The manner and the skill of the works suggest that they were done by Nechaev. The painting (ERR-7182) is of a ship with two sails, and at the center of the deck there is a pavilion on four pillars with a double-tiered roof. There are figures of two officials in the pavilion and a figure of a young man. On the bow of the ship there is a hexagonal canopy with a flag on top; there are four figures of sailors on the deck. On the broadside is a picture of the waves and there are horses galloping along the waves attached to the broadside, probably moving, (two on each side), and next to the fence of the deck there is a long dragon on each side. By the broadside, closer to the bow, there is a balcony with a figure standing on it (it is unclear whether it is a man or a deity). Underneath the bottom one can see little wheels. The ship is painted in watercolor with traces of a pencil sketch on a large sheet (60 cm by 46 cm). Below the drawing there is a number: 18. The watercolor (46 cm high) expands all across the sheet. The image is accurate and we can suggest that the ship is made of ivory, silver-plated or gilded tin, fabricating materials, maybe stones, and amber, with a painted finish.

The next painting (ERR-7136) is of a man on a horse. It is a European man dressed in European clothes — he is wearing high red morocco boots with spurs, trousers similar in cut to Dutch trousers, a short jacket (with a large collar and a fringe), with buttons at the front, and a top hat with a wide brim; the man is holding a round object and a stick-like object in his hands. Behind his back we can see the branch of a tree in bloom. The horse is grey with a harness made of gilded metal with red detail and a red tassel next to the chin, red reins and gilded hooves. The horseman is sat in a gilded saddle with a horse blanket with a fringe and embroidered flowers. Under the blanket we can see a wheel. The number in ink underneath the painting reads 65. The watercolor is done on one sheet, and the height of the painting is 17 cm.

The next painting (ERR-7137) is of a Chinese lady dressed in a traditional Chinese dress with wide sleeves. Over the dress she is wearing a vest with a plumage-collar on her neck and a thin, light scarf behind her shoulders. Her hair, put up in a chignon, is decorated with a topknot and with one lock running down. She is wearing earrings. In her right hand she is holding a cup on a lotus-shaped plate and her left hand is raised to her shoulder. From underneath the dress one can see a little narrow lotus shoe. The vest is embroidered with branches and flowers. The painting is signed with ink with the number 63. The watercolor was painted on one sheet; the height of the painting is 23cm.

The last painting (ERR-7105) is of a Chinese woman on the back of a possibly flying phoenix. The woman is wearing

3 |

3 | *A European Horseman*
© The State Hermitage Museum
Inventory № ERR-7136

a long Chinese dress with wide sleeves and a plumage collar, her hair is done in the same way as in the previous painting and she is wearing a thin, light scarf behind her shoulders. She is holding a tray with two peaches in her hands. The bird has bright feathers; there are traces of blue, green and red on the silver and golden background; its claws are stretched to the back. Under the belly one can see wheels. The painting is signed with ink with the number 60. The watercolor was painted on one sheet; the image is stretched across the whole sheet and at an angle is 30 cm long.

These paintings are of objects that are still stored in the Kunstkamera. There are other objects that are not portrayed in drawings or paintings in the collections of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography. While he have not yet been able to find any mention of the flask in writing and the painting is the only evidence of its existence, the situation is different with the other object.

In 1743 Grand Prince Peter and Grand Princess Catherine arrived in St. Petersburg at the court of Elizabeth. They settled in Oranienbaum where they created a small court. Following the example of other European palaces and, of course, St. Petersburg, the couple also tried to create a museum of curiosities in Oranienbaum, and so Prince Peter took classes from Y. Shtelin and attended Kunstkamera. The couple partly succeeded in their plan — as we know, there was a little Kunstkamera at the Picture House, which was built and furnished in the 1750s and the collection there existed until 1792, when it was finally closed down on Catherine the Great's orders. It is probably owing to the interest in creating this little museum that at the end of 1744 the Grand Princess sent an enquiry about gold, silver and other precious objects stored at the Kunstkamera. In response she received a "Catalogue of golden and silver objects and precious stones stored at the Imperial Kunstkamera, in chamber GG", handed to her on March 12, 1745. (See: Materialy dlya Istorii Imperatorsjoy Akademii Nauk. V. VII: 1744–1745. St Petersburg, 1895. pp299–322).

The Catalogue lists the following:

No 18. A Chinese ship of ivory, decorated with gold-plated silver with its sails out. The human figures found on the ship are either sailors, or merchants and are made partly of ivory, partly of amber, and the whole ship moves on wheels.

No 60. A silver machine on moving wheels in the form of a woman sitting on a flying peacock.

No 63. The same machine as under number 60 in the form of a standing woman who is holding a glass in her right hand and is stretching out the left hand.

No 65. A machine similar to number 63 in the form of a man sat on a horse and crashing cymbals.

All these objects are listed as received from P. Moshkov in 1725 and they were stored in "case no. II". The numbers in this catalogue match the numbers in ink on the paintings.

Apart from the paintings and those toys that are still stored at the Kunstkamera and are listed above, there are other objects that are part of the same group. These are three figures that are stored at the Hermitage, in the Oriental Department. One of them is a mechanical toy representing a Chinese woman sitting on a horse; the woman is holding a stringed musical instrument, a *pipa* (LS-94). Another toy is a Chinese girl sitting on a *qilin*, a mythical creature (LS-92). The third is of a Chinese man, also sitting on top of a *qilin* (LS-91). All three have mechanisms that are wound up with a key and a spring. They were made in China and their stylistic features suggest that they date back to the late 17th century or the early 18th century, the Qing Dynasty (1644–1911), and to the period of the reign of Kangxi

4 (2) | ***Entangled Tree Roots***
© The State Hermitage Museum
Inventory № ERD-112

4 (1) | ***Drawing of Entangled Tree Roots with carved figures***
The Archive of the Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg Branch
Sheet 229

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

5

5 | *Flask*
A. A. Grekov. 1736
© The State Hermitage Museum
Inventory № ERR-7112

Emperor (1662–1722). They are made of copper and tin with detail using silver and gold plating, painting, engraving; ivory, corals, kingfisher feathers and silk (the figures are 19.5 cm, 20 cm, 20 cm high respectively). As the figurine of the lady on a horse is similar to the horseman in picture 3 and a Chinese woman in picture 4 (see Peter de Grote en Holland. Amsterdam, 1996–1997. No. 72, 73), we can state that the head and the arms of all of these toys are made of ivory, their hair is drawn in ink, the reins of the horses are strings of tiny coral beads and the manes and tails of the animals are made of silver wire. The movements of the figures were also the same. Unfortunately, the winding keys were not given to the Hermitage but the mechanisms and the springs still are working and the toys can be wound. When working, the toys move around on their wheels but also the animals move their necks, heads, jaws, legs, and tails; the human figures shake their heads and move their ivory hands. The figures probably played the musical instruments that they are holding. There is another similarity: it looks as if the artists who painted the objects from the Kunstkamera tried to indicate their sizes, and if possible to make a life-size image. Thus, the size of the horseman and the woman on the horse match the size of the images. Since the 1930s the three figures have been in the Jewelry Storage Room of the Oriental Department and have been considered to be made of silver; they were listed as silver in the catalogue from 1745. We have managed to find the earliest mention of them in the Hermitage collection. They were transferred to the Hermitage under the reign of Catherine the Great from a state storage room (it is not stated which one) and placed in the collection, which is recorded in the Precious Object Register started in 1789 (State Hermitage Archives, f. 1, inv. 6, lit. D): "one male statue on a beast", under No. 129 and "two copper Chinese statues of women with ivory heads and arms sitting on a horse and on a beast" under No. 242.

The fact that the figures and the paintings are very similar and that we have not been able to find similar toys in any other collection enables us to come to the conclusion that this is one group of items. They could have come to the Winter Palace or the Hermitage from the Kunstkamera in the 1780s when Catherine the Great organized the first exchanges of curiosities from the museum for other collections, for example the cabinet of minerals of Professor Laxman. Besides, single Chinese objects listed in the Kunstkamera catalogue of 1745, which was made on Grand Princess Catherine's request, were also found in the inventory of the Hermitage from 1789 (for example, a silver "jug" — a vase with filigree and enamel and with two dragon-shaped handles: No. 56 in the catalogue and No. 180 lit. D in the inventory, respectively). It is also possible that Moshkov did not hand all similar items over to the Kunstkamera but left some of them in the Palace collections.

The figures stored in the Hermitage are not pictured on the paintings, however. The discovery, after the paper, with paintings, that I delivered in the Kunstkamera, was unexpected: the toys still exist in the Kunstkamera collection. We can now safely state that they were in Kunstkamera in the 1730s and that they were not destroyed by the fire of 1747. Today we can relate the following items to the paintings:

1. Clockwork figure of a Chinese woman on a peacock (inv. 671 — 29).

2. Clockwork figure of a Chinese woman with a face made of ivory. When wound the figure waves her hand as if she's pulling powder on her face (inv. 671 — 30).

3. Chinese clockwork toy: a model ship with stern and central constructions on the deck, seven members of the crew and the front mast. Both splashboards are made in the shape of dragons and on the sides there are figures of galloping horses. There are four wheels underneath: two driving wheels, one wheel for turns and one as a prop under the bow of the ship (inv. 673 — 278).

In the Kunstkamera these objects have not been correlated with Peter the Great's collection. Due to several transfers from the Kunstkamera in the 18th century and early 19th century, the oldest mention of these rare objects dates back to 1827–1837 when the Chinese items were handed over and returned from the Asian museum founded in 1818 where they had been temporarily stored. We can now consider their history reconstructed.

Apart from those coinciding with the paintings, two more model ships were found which are similar to first one (inv. 673 — 277, 279). We have also managed to find a figure of a European man sitting on a horse. The history of two more twin toys is curious. Both of them represent a Chinese woman sitting on a deer (inv. 621 — 28). The two items were borrowed by Grand Prince Peter Fyodorovich (the future Tsar Peter III) from the Kunstkamera in St. Petersburg for the Kunstkamera in Oranienbaum, where they were deliv-

V. F. Levinson-Lessing. "Peter the Great: First Journey Abroad"

"According to Yaguzhinsky, up to the age of 25 Peter saw nothing except for icons, and could not develop a taste for art. During his first journey, some paintings of an entirely different nature attracted his attention. In Amsterdam — in the City Hall and in many private houses — he saw collections of the greatest Dutch paintings which captivated him and he then had this idea of having a similar collection of his own, but that was done only in 1717. His taste was shaped by Dutch painting, and he stayed loyal to it for the rest of his life."

6 | *Drawing of a scrolled painting*
18th century
The Archive of the Academy of Sciences, St. Petersburg Branch

7 | *Chinese Woman*
The State Hermitage Museum

Inventory № ERR-7137

6 |

ered in 1757, namely "Two Chinese women made of copper sitting on deer". They were returned to the Kunstkamera on Catherine the Great's orders in 1792, as "sitting on deer with broken mechanisms". The toys on wheels stored in Oranienbaum also included the ship and the elephant with the Chinese man.

Not only do the paintings help us identify the original items but they also help us get a better idea of what the objects used to look like. At the moment the paint is not always in place and some details are missing: Xī Wáng Mǔ, the Taoist goddess, Xi Wangmu, the Queen Mother of the West sitting on the phoenix (the woman on the peacock) is missing the tray with peaches of immortality whereas she has them in the painting.

It is hard to tell how these automata ended up in St Petersburg. We can make the following guess. They were possibly brought to Russia by Captain L. Izmailov for the Tsar from his trip with the embassy to China in 1719–1721. Besides, the list of what Captain Izmailov is asked to buy in China, a document dated June, 1719, mentions a model ship.

Bergholtz, who in January 1722 looked through the objects and gifts from China together with Duke of Holstein before they were shipped to St. Petersburg, mentions in his diary: "... he [Izmailov] showed us many more interesting objects, like a model of a Chinese ship (about two cubits long) with a pointed front and back" (Dnevnik kamer-yunkera Bergholtza. P. 2. Moscow, 1858. p112).

This might have been a gift from the Kangxi Emperor. It is well known that both Peter the Great and Kangxi showed an interest in mechanisms. They exchanged various curiosities made at the time in Europe or in St. Petersburg, by the Tsar himself or by the craftsmen of the Forbidden City. The clock workshops of Kangxi made mechanisms that were either parts of clocks or of such clockwork toys. Peter the Great could have seen the machines and enamels that had been brought to Moscow from China when visiting Izmailov on the way to Astrakhan or when he was back in the capital. These objects were delivered to St. Petersburg in 1722 and were most likely handed over to the Salt Chamber to Moshkov where many precious things were sent and were then transferred to the Kunstkamera or other state storage facilities. In the early 18th century machines like this were quite popular in Europe but today there are practically no such clockwork toys to have survived. The only Chinese clockwork toy of the same period is stored at the Museum of Duke Anton Ulrich, in Braunschweig. This group of artefacts can be considered one collection and is unique.

According to the paintings and identified objects, Russian Tsars had at least 11 Chinese mechanical toys in their collection in early 18th century. We would like to believe that it will be possible to make them move again. The paintings give an accurate idea of their original state and will help in restoration. Further studying of the paintings from the Kunstkamera together with archived materials and comparing them with the existing items in museum collections will make it possible to identify other objects from Peter the Great's collection and find out more about their history.

EMMANUEL WAEGEMANS

TRACES OF PETER THE GREAT[1]

Postmodernism has influenced the demystification of the Netherland's role in the history of Russia. The Russian poet Vasily Zhukovsky celebrated the glory of our country in Zaandam in 1839 in the presence of the future Tsar Alexander II.

Here lies the cradle of your empire
Here great Russia was born!

These grandiloquent lines are written on the walls of the Tsar Peter House in Zaandam and the Dutch have taken great pleasure and pride in citing them. However more recently, the idea of Holland as the cradle of Russia has drawn some criticism. Apparently the Dutch Republic cannot be credited with playing such a significant role in the building of St. Petersburg as was once believed. In fact it is the Dutch themselves who are most keen to point this out; but do they protest out of modesty?

Even though the Postmodernist concept of the "Petrine myth" has been brought to light, the fact remains that the young Tsar Peter Alexeyevich went to Holland twice and, although he achieved only limited diplomatic success, he still managed to convince hundreds of Dutch to resettle in Muscovy (as Russia was then called) and help to build a new country, a new fleet and brand new capital city. Throughout the end of the 17th century to the beginning of the 18th century we find that Peter the Great was indeed surrounded by Dutch people. Hundreds of builders, sailors, carpenters, bricklayers, furniture makers, architects, sluice experts and sundry artisan specialists came to help Peter the Great to build his empire.

The brain drain from Holland was so great that some feared the collapse of the country. The Russian tsar even continued his recruitment drive to enlist Dutch specialists to the service of his country

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“Do you know what Wagner’s interval is? It can only be explained through a comparison. Peter the Great[1] gave us Wagner’s interval. Peter the Great is neither person nor spirit: it is some other thing that flew in and flew out again. Peter the Great saw here, in this place, water in the fathomless sky; he captured this combination of water and sky — and created one of the most splendorous places on Earth. […] Wagner captured something similar. And this is how he had his intervals. After all, genius happens when you lose your head. It flies in and flies out again when you are free from all of your enlightened insights.”

1 ↓ p. 016 p. 078 p. 099 p. 108 p. 110 p. 173 p. 222 p. 227 p. 235 p. 240

8–9 | *The Tsar Peter House in Zaandam* (Peter Mikhailov stayed here during his first visit to Holland) was carefully restored by the beginning of 2013.

during his second visit to the Netherlands in 1716 and 1717. By that time Peter the Great already had a wide network of both Russian and Dutch agents who bought up weapons and works of art for him. His acquisition of weaponry was forbidden, but it was considered crucial to a victory over the Swedes at that time. Towards the end of the tsar’s life, the relationship between the nascent Russia and the Dutch Republic had deteriorated significantly and the “Dutch period” of Russian history came to an end. Over time Dutch artisans were replaced by Germans and then by the French.

While on a visit to Zaandam, when the great friendship between our nations was in full swing, Peter the Great controversially made the following statement in favor of the young, but powerful nation of Holland: “We need to speak Dutch at sea and German on dry land; but we do not need French at all, for we have little to do with that nation.”

Peter the Great was the first, and alas the last Russian tsar to speak Dutch. But perhaps this is reason enough to take pride.

Naturally, we know that this all took place in the distant past and that Holland’s role in the development of Russia all but ended with the death[13] of Peter the Great. But that does not diminish the fact that together our nations laid the foundations for a new Russia – Imperial Russia, ruled from St. Petersburg. We can also take pride in the fact that our nations have never been at war. Russia has never been engaged in armed conflict with Holland as it has with France and Germany. Surely this has made our relationship more harmonious and stable. We would hope that this peaceful relationship, indeed this friendship and love[4] (as between the “teacher” and the “student”, as it was once described) will prevail and that it will facilitate continuing cordial relations between Russia and Holland.

13 ↓ p. 072 p. 086 p. 163 p. 195 p. 205 p. 206 p. 209 p. 252

4 ↓ p. 054 p. 131 p. 145 p. 150 p. 159 p. 186 p. 254

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11

The Hermitage Amsterdam has paid homage to the most famous Romanov, Peter the Great, who opened Europe to himself and opened Russia to Europe.

Young Peter [1] went to Europe incognito in 1696 and organized the so-called Grand Embassy. Peter did not head the Grand Embassy as himself though, and instead took on the humble carpenter's name of Peter Mikhailov. In 1996, Holland and Russia prepared a very in-depth exhibition dedicated to Peter the Great and Holland. The exhibition was first shown in the Hermitage, and then in the Amsterdam History Museum (today the Amsterdam Museum). Scientific research done by the staff of both the Hermitage and the Amsterdam Museum provided a new image of Peter the Great in the eyes of the Dutch. The Dutch nation is proud that the Russian tsar came to their country to gain experience — not only in ship-building, as was already well-known, but also in medicine, the occult sciences and the arts. The young tsar acquired his taste for collecting during his first visit to Holland, when he often visited private galleries and libraries.

Seven years have gone by since that first Amsterdam exhibition, and a new generation of Dutch people has grown up, making it worthwhile to remind people of the historic friendship between our two nations. Having a permanent branch in Amsterdam, the State Hermitage Museum can make a large single-themed exhibition of items taken only from its own collection. Despite Russia's historical twists and turns, the personality of the first Russian emperor has always remained extremely important in Russia, right from the time of Peter the Great himself to the present day. Therefore, Peter the Great's heritage has been carefully preserved at all times in Russia, including in the Russian Empire, the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, the Soviet Union and now the Russian Federation. This heritage includes the magnificent collection of his personal wardrobe, and the funny "curiosities" that Peter the Great carefully collected for the first Russian museum, the Kunstkamera.

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SVETLANA DATSENKO

13 | "Origins", "Victories and Defeats", "I'm a student looking for a teacher", "The Crowned Collector", and the "Transformation of Russia": these are the ways the exhibition creators decided to portray to the public the image of Peter the Great, whose heritage is kept both in Russia and in Holland.

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10-12, 14, 15 | The exhibition *"Peter the Great, an Inspired Tsar"* in the Hermitage Amsterdam was chosen for the museum's official opening in 2013. The Hermitage Amsterdam's own collection, which has just several exhibits which tell, most of all, about the new history of the Hermitage branch on the banks of the Amstel, added another major exhibit. The first persons of both states, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands and Russian President Vladimir Putin, opened a memorial plaque with the bronze handprints of Peter the Great himself, as if blessing the continued friendship between the Netherlands and Russia.

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

16 | All visitors of *"Peter the Great. An Inspired Tsar"* exhibition could find out how tall they are compared with Peter the Great. A Dutch theatrical crafts workshop produced a copy [19] of a Peter the Great's costume.

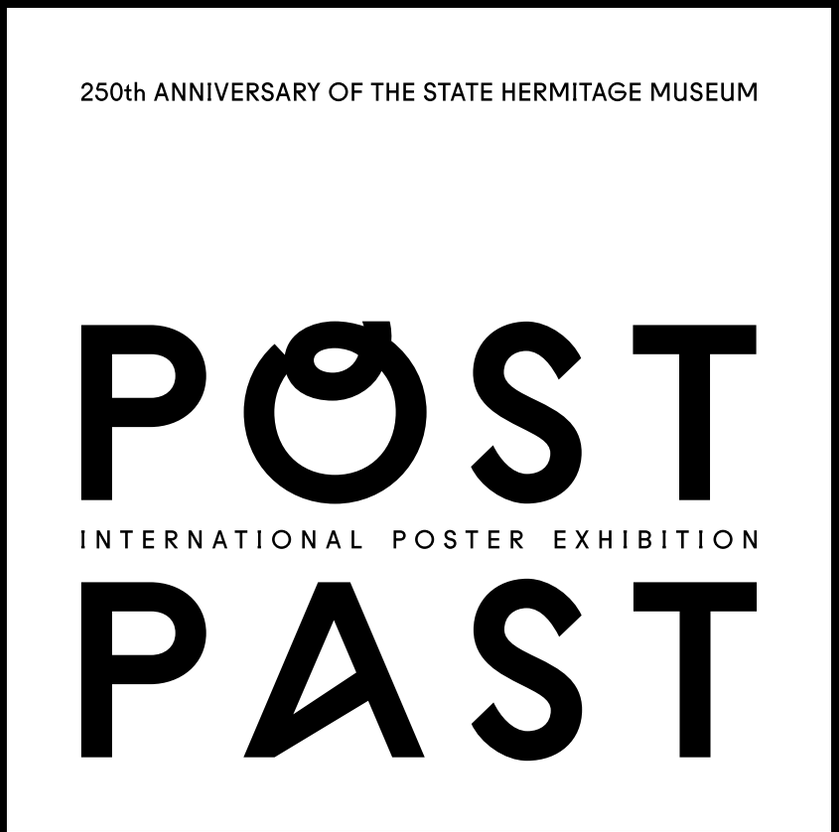
17 | Vincent Boele of the Hermitage Amsterdam and co-curator of the exhibition, was the first to try on the copy of the costume.

19
↓
p. 030
p. 205

An essay by Peter Greenaway published in 2000 in the Dutch publication "The Low Countries' Yearbook" and included in the 2012 "Twenty Is Plenty. The Best of The Low Countries' Yearbook" (2012)

"As a child Holland sailed into my consciousness on the back of a disaster. I went to school in London and they scrupulously taught us London's history. I was intrigued by the three disasters of the reign of Charles II; in 1665, the Great Plague of London, in 1666, the Great Fire of London and in 1667 the Dutch sailed up the Medway to fire cannon-shots at the Tower of London. The first two events were in the nature of Acts of God, the third was certainly an act of the Dutch. Who were these Dutch? And how come that Charles' brother was thrown out by a Dutchman? And how come we ended up having a King who spoke English badly with a Dutch accent? And who was the little man in black velvet who fatally tumbled this Dutch King onto the back of his head when his horse tripped over a molehill on Hampstead Heath? This Dutch country was called both Holland and the Netherlands – to have two names was greedy — and spoke Dutch which sounded suspiciously like Deutsch, and they had an alarming reputation for being excessively clean. And then what about double Dutch, my old Dutch, Dutch courage, Dutch treat, Dutch caps, to go Dutch, my Dutch uncle and even Dutch Elm Disease?"

INTERNATIONAL POSTER EXHIBITION
DEDICATED TO 250TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM



INVITED PARTICIPANTS INCLUDE:

IVAN CHERMAYEFF, ALEXANDER GELMAN, MILTON GLASER, IGOR GUROVICH, ALAIN LE QUERNEC, ELENA KITAEVA, UWE LOESCH, ANDREY LOGVIN, LECH MAJEWSKI, HOLGER MATTHIES, KEIZO MATSUI, ISTVÁN OROSZ, GUNTER RAMBOW, STEFAN SAGMEISTER, ANDREI SHELYUTTO, WALDEMAR SWIERZY, ANNIK TROXLER, VLADIMIR TSESLER, MIECZYSLAW WASILEWSKI, TADANORI YOKOO, AND OTHERS.

MEN IN

THE MAJORITY OF THE GROUP PORTRAITS IN THE EXHIBITION ARE ALMOST UNKNOWN OUTSIDE AMSTERDAM. _____ DIFFICULT TO TRANSPORT. MOREOVER, GROUP PORTRAITS TAKE PRIDE OF PLACE AT THE AMSTERDAM MUSEUM_____ LOVERS TO LEARN ABOUT THIS GENRE AND THE STAGES IN ITS DEVELOPMENT.

18 | Nicolas Eliasz Pickenoy
The Osteology Lesson of Dr. Sebastian Egbertsz. 1619
Amsterdam Museum

BLACK

_____ THEY HAVE PRACTICALLY NEVER BEEN TAKEN TO OTHER MUSEUMS, SINCE THEIR LARGE SIZE MAKES THEM _____ AND RIJKSMUSEUM, IN PERMANENT EXHIBITIONS DEVOTED TO THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE. THEY HELP ART

PAUL SPIES,
DIRECTOR OF THE AMSTERDAM MUSEUM
AND MUSEUM WILLET-HOLTHUYSEN

The group portraits of the 17th century provide visual evidence of Dutch national unity. The shooting company always played a special role, with their members guaranteeing local residents peace and order. Another noble pursuit for men and women from affluent families was leading the many godly institutions of the city. The riflemen and trustees, taking pride in the diligence with which they fulfilled their social obligation, commissioned the prestigious group portraits, which became an integral part of the golden age for Amsterdam art in the 17th century.

The Amsterdam group portraits of riflemen and regents essentially formed the nucleus of the city's art collections. Thanks to a sense of corporate responsibility, the paintings remained in their native halls for over 300 years, until they were all transferred to the town hall. In 1885, most of the works were given to the newly built Rijksmuseum as conclusive evidence of the skill of the Dutch artists of that era. "The Night Watch"[23] by Rembrandt[8] remains the highlight of the collection to this day.

23
↓
p. 038
p. 039
p. 041
p. 126
8
↓
p. 039
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p. 279

Almost a century later, several dozen group portraits returned to the city's collection to decorate the walls of the new Amsterdam History Museum. Despite its name change in 2011, the Amsterdam Museum continues to offer visitors a superb collection of group portraits of 17th century riflemen and regents.

The Netherlands-Russia year in 2013 provided an excellent opportunity to send the masterpieces of this collection on a journey, facilitating cooperation between two of Europe's leading museums, both of which hold art by Dutch masters. The Amsterdam Museum was delighted to take part in this creative dialogue, thanks to which the wider international public will be able to feel the renowned spirit of Dutch unity.

19 |

19 | Nicolaes Maes
The Headmen of the Amsterdam Surgeons' Guild
c. 1679–1680
Amsterdam Museum

20 | Jacob Lyon
Civic Guardsmen of the Compony of Captain Jacob Pielerszn Hooghkamer and Lieulenant Pieter Jacobszn van Rijn
1628
Amsterdam Museum

Mikhail Piotrovsky

"These portraits are huge and very rarely leave Amsterdam. This is truly an exceptional event. So many leading Dutch names, who we know individually and in small groups in our collection, will be brought together in the Great Hall. The black clothes contrast against the white columns and walls, creating a beautiful, instructive and unforgettable sight."

20 |

21 |

22 |

21 | **Gerbrand van den Eeckhout**
The Head of the Coopers' and Wine Tappers' Guild. 1673
Amsterdam Museum

22 | **Nicolaes Moeyaert**
The Governors and Lady Governors of the Old Men and Women's Almshouse. 1640
Amsterdam Museum

23 | Exhibition visitors with paintings in the background

PETER GREENAWAY, WHO RANKS AMONG THE MOST CELEBRATED AND ACTIVE FILM DIRECTORS, IN LENGTH SINCE HE FIRST CAME TO OUR ATTENTION SOME 20 YEARS AGO. HOWEVER, HE WILL

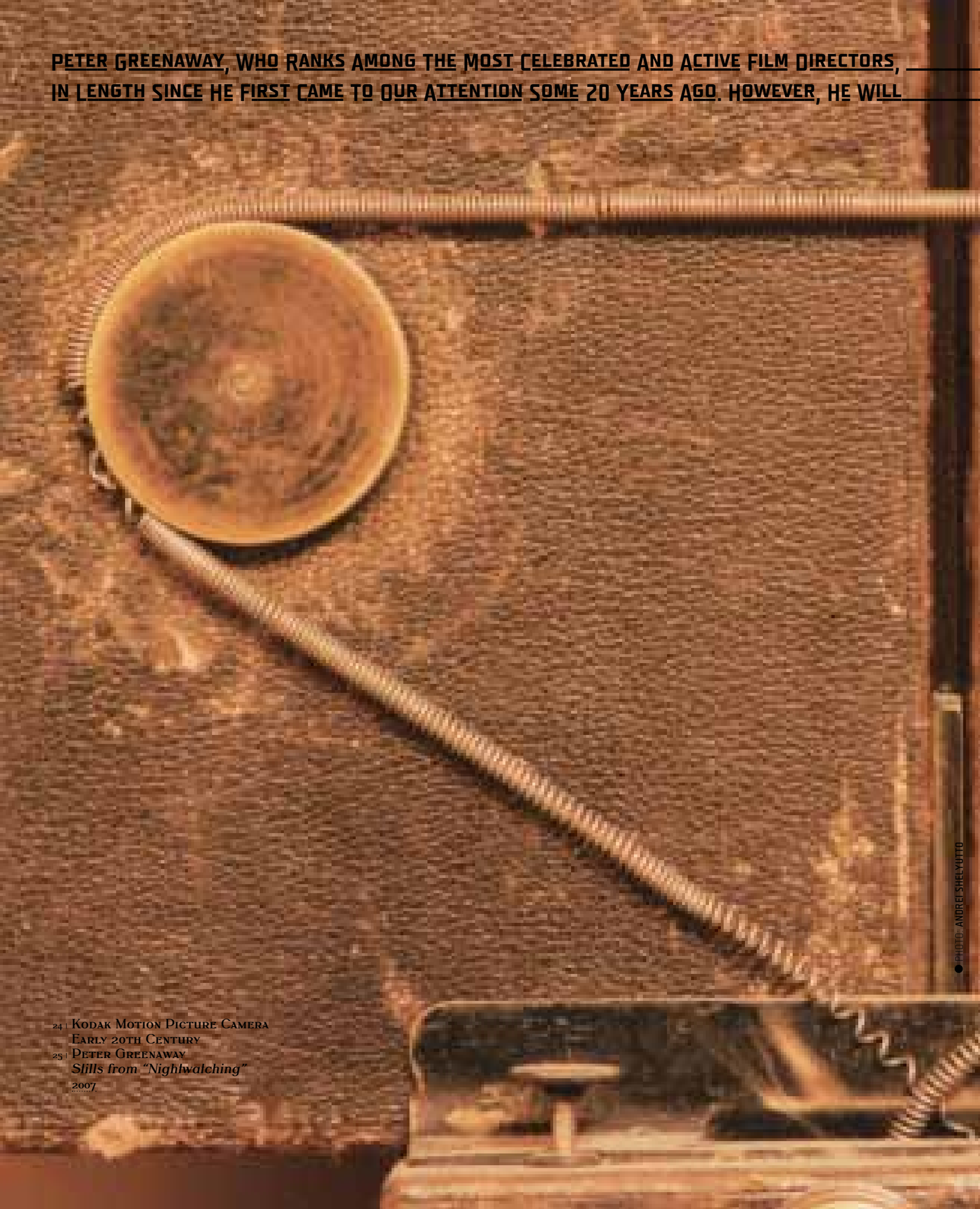

PHOTO: ANDREI SHELYUTTO

24 | Kodak Motion Picture Camera
Early 20th Century
25 | Peter Greenaway
Slills from "Nightwalching"
2007

CELEBRATED HIS 71ST BIRTHDAY IN 2013. THE LIST OF HIS WORKS HAS TREBLED
LIKELY NEVER BE AS INFLUENTIAL AND WELL-REGARDED AS HE WAS AT THAT TIME

THE DRAUGHTSMAN'S CONTRACT













Back then in Russia, small groups would gather for tea and vodka and watch the copies of "The Draughtsman's Contract" (1982) or "Drowning by Numbers" (1988) that they had managed to get their hands on. Detailed, seemingly slow and sedate, yet at the same time fond of paradoxes, Greenaway appeared to be a remarkable storyteller, capable of narratives that were ripe for discussion and interpretation. From artists and architects to choreographers and historians, everyone found something of professional worth in his films. Who did not write about him back then? One of his films inspired Georgy Knabe to write a whole piece in 2006 on The Problem of Postmodernism and Peter Greenaway's film "The Belly of an Architect" (1987). The renowned historian of ancient Rome was far from the first to note that almost every Greenaway film "focuses on the graphic world of an Old Master of European art." Knabe traced "The Draughtsman's Contract" back to English art of the 17th and 18th centuries, "A Zed & Two Noughts" (1985) was, in his view, linked to Vermeer, "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover" (1989) to Hals and "The Belly of an Architect" to Raphael and Bronzino.

Greenaway captivated us because of his intellect. He seemed to be a "cultural director" and to appreciate what you needed to know about the architecture of Boullée and at least the basics of Shakespeare's "The Tempest". Greenaway strived to make his audience experience art in both rational and emotional forms. In this, he was a sometimes didactic, but always brilliant, communicator.

In part, this reminded me of a genre of professional academic discussion, when the Soviet-era intellectuals Dmitry Likhachev and Yury Lotman used to address Soviet television viewers. My impression of these discussions was twofold: firstly, delight from the story and pleasure from meeting someone that you would not perhaps come across in your everyday life. The second impression was perhaps stronger than the first. It was as though Greenaway were standing behind all of his films, constantly alerting you to his presence: sometimes showing the audience his drawings, sometimes imposing his own interpretation of his film in the many interviews he willingly gave, as if realizing that this was his opportunity to set additional reading material for homework.

26 | Peter Greenaway
Stills from *"Nightwatching"*
2007

In all this, Greenaway rarely showed himself to be an "archival" director. For him, cinema was an opportunity to bring together several artistic forms: literature, music, art and theater. Each of these has its limits: it is impossible to enjoy art and literature at the same time as, for example, admiring a painting while listening to off-screen commentary. Anyone who has used an audio guide in a museum will have encountered this conflict — between the images that delight your eyes and the non-stop words that hurt the ears. We are all told that we cannot encounter art unprepared, but this hinders our experience of it once and for all. "Any canvas from the 17th century is accompanied by 17 pages of explanatory text. Every painting has a name, which completely distorts our perspective." These are the words of Greenaway, who has attempted to fuse art, words and music into a digestible mix that does not ruin our attitude to art forever and allows us to approach it with an open mind.

Looking at Greenaway's life, from early childhood to his current fame, we can see how he accumulated talent and, with its help, created ever more complex and multi-dimensional works. There is no sense that, as is the case with many young people who are looking to find themselves, he abandoned one pursuit in favor of another. Perhaps that is how he saw his life, but, from our current perspective, his career developed in gradual steps, akin to a museum collection. There is the sense that he improved his biography as a decorator transforms a home in the English or French style, adding items and impressions that were previously lacking.

Greenaway started out as an artist, a graphic artist rather than a painter. I have had the chance to see his work at exhibitions: detailed landscapes and portraits, painted with a sure hand, with beautiful lines and thick brushstrokes. They not only gave you a sense of good training, but also of an ability to analyse what can be seen around us. This is the key skill for graphic art, which is more circumspect than painting and is supplied, almost since the moment of its birth, with scientific and technical equipment: a system of perspective, large frames, cameras obscura, printing presses, copper sheets and associated chemistry. In this respect, it is actually close to filmmaking, which also relies on increas-

27 | **Rembrandt van Rijn**
The Night Watch. 1642
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam


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35

ingly complex technology. The graphic artist is the aristocrat of the visual arts: someone who is able to keep their distance from the subject, a good storyteller, a master of the unexpected comparison, capable, with the help of a single stroke, of showing color and volume. They are illusionist, storyteller and lecturer at the "Znaniye" society. In short, they are Peter Greenaway.

When Greenaway is discussed, people always mention that his father was a birdwatcher and he is himself a keen entomologist. His passion for insects was not just a hobby, but rather part of his character that brought together the real Vladimir Nabokov and the anecdotal cousin Bénédict of "A Captain at Fifteen". The fundamental desire of an entomologist is to classify the natural world, dividing it up into orders and families. Research begins with the chase: firstly, you have to select your subject, then find it and capture it in a killing jar, until, resting on a pin, it becomes the subject of detailed examination.

Entomologists attach as much importance to the texture of antennae or insect segments as geologists to the problem of continental drift or astronomers to supernova flares. The entomologist's point of view is smaller-scale, but more immediate. I will never forget the words of Nikolai Oleynikov in "In the Art Gallery", where he examines paintings as an entomologist would the form of a butterfly. "The King of Britain sits on a cloud, / his left leg trampling on the world below. / An eagle soars through the air above, / gripping lightning in its claws. / Two geniuses — one with a large cup, / Akin to a samovar, / The other — with a silver rod in their arms — / Bow down to the feet of the invincible sovereign. / In the distance below, prisoners walk in chains." These are impressions from the "Apotheosis of James I" by Peter Paul Rubens in the Hermitage collection. Why not the filmmaking of Peter Greenaway?

Cinema followed on from the artistic training and passion for entomology. Greenaway came to the world of film quite late, inspired by Ingmar Bergman's "The Seventh Seal". He would go and see the film, released in 1957, twice a day, as though he were going to work. Carried away by the cinema, Greenaway tried without success to enroll at film school. He nevertheless found work as a film editor at the newsreel studio of the Central Office of Information, which shot films about Britain and its way of life. Greenaway gradually advanced to the role of director, gaining experience in unexpected associations and never required him to toe a prescribed line. This experience of documentary, even educational, films has never left him. He is able to explain and surprise. The crux of his art is the representation of familiar things from unfamiliar perspectives.

I can still remember one of Greenaway's exhibitions in Geneva in 1994, entitled "Framing or Deception". It saw hundreds of white wooden staircases of different heights — from 40 cm to two meters — installed around the city. Climbing the staircase, you came across a frame that captured a view selected by Greenaway. His "cameras" were by no means focused on tourist sites and were often directed toward roof corners adorned with putti, the pointed finger of a statue, a rock in a park or people playing giant chess in the Parc des Bastions. As journalists wrote at the time, "Greenaway and the sun have awakened the genius of Geneva and its locations." By making the urban landscape the subject of his installation, the director not only amused tourists, but also stirred up many architectural and artistic associations. Film critics highlighted clear references to "The Draughtsman's Contract" and "The Belly of an Architect", while architects recalled the Teatro Olimpico of Andrea Palladio, with its permanent fan-like decoration of three diverging streets. People were astonished at how a fragment from the fabric of urban life could change when removed from its usual context. In the white frame of Greenaway's staircase, the dry, primitive neoclassicism of the Musée Rath became classical: the surprised audience discovered ruins of ancient Delphi in the center of Geneva. Visual links and a sense of distance become confused.

28 | Peter Greenaway
Still from *" The Cook, the Thief, His Wife & Her Lover"*
1989

29 | Peter Greenaway
Still from *"The Belly of an Architect"*
1987

30 | Peter Greenaway
Still from *"The Draughtsman's Contract"*
1982

31 | Peter Greenaway
Still from *"A Zed & Two Noughts"*
1985

32 | Frans Hals
Banquet of the Officers of the St George Civic Guard. 1616
Frans Hals Museum, Haarlem

33 | Clemente Spera, Alessandro Magnasco
Mythological Figures among Ruins. 1690s
Blanton Museum of Art, Texas

34 | Thomas Gainsborough
Mr and Mrs Andrews. c. 1750
The National Gallery, London

35 | Johannes Vermeer
The Art of Painting. c. 1665
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

As you would expect of someone of his age, Greenaway is now captivated by all the newest art forms, particularly computer and video art. He clearly sees the elixir of life in this. His latest projects are related to the younger generation and modern forms of expression.

It must be said that Greenaway's most recent works do not produce as overwhelming an impression as his first major films once did on their grateful audience. His Rembrandt [8] cycle ("Nightwatching" [23] and "Rembrandt's J'accuse"), where he attempts to unravel the secret of the famous painting "The Company of Captain Frans Banning Cocq and Lieutenant Willem van Ruytenburch Preparing to March Out", appears to be a token of his gratitude to the Netherlands, the country in which he has chosen to live and work.

The films did not enjoy great success. Examining the great work of art through the eyes of an art critic, Greenaway loses out in visual appeal to a less subtle and astute opponent. The role of intermediary between the cinema-going masses and classical art, which he fulfilled at the turn of the century, is now the domain of others. The idea of "art detective", developed by Umberto Eco in "The Name of the Rose", proved too alluring for mass culture, which is always flattered to use classical culture as a cover. As a precise and educated master of his art, Greenaway does not achieve this effect in "Nightwatching", in contrast to Ron Howard's cruder and more artificial "The Da Vinci Code" (based on the Dan Brown novel), which appeared the year before. The then director of the Louvre, Henri Loyrette, gave the American filmmakers access to the museum. The decision was criticized, yet visitor numbers increased many times over. Greenaway's idea that you need to know how to discuss art with people, perhaps by adding stories that are not directly associated with it, once again received confirmation, albeit by others.

However, the power of Greenaway's art comes from the fact he is not just a filmmaker. It is to his advantage that he has never been a commercial director, instead gaining the ability to work on a range of artistic projects in which he can act as curator and sometimes participant. In my view, the means by which he expresses himself is no longer so important to him: cinema, exhibitions and now a global project consisting of 92 installations, not unlike "The Tulse Luper Suitcases", which will not be finished in his lifetime.

Greenaway is convinced that classical cinema is gone forever as a result of the invention of the television, enabling people to become involved and react to what they are seeing. He is extremely skeptical about the 3D experience, in which he only sees a commercial attempt by the big screen to compete with television, which has long since won the race. The museum has an undoubted advantage here: art can hardly be privatized like films on discs and the Internet. Perhaps the fate of "Nightwatching" did not become a cinema sensation, but it did form the basis for a major, high-quality museum project. Greenaway believes that the key is to suggest people look at things with an open mind. Even while filling his films with stories and associations, he actually intended to purify the views of museum visitors, just as gourmet chefs cleanse one's fast food-defiled palate.

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ФОТО: НАТАЛИЯ ЧАСОВИТИНА

36 | Mikhail Dronov,
Aleksandr Taratynov
The Night Watch 3D. 2006

FRENCH BOOKS WILL TEACH NO GOOD

1 | Charles Dupuis
Original painting by Antoine Watteau
Love Lessons, 1734

DIMITRI OZERKOV

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

"I WOULD GIVE A NICE WHIPPING BOTH TO YOU AND YOUR PARENTS FOR GIVING YOU FRENCH BOOKS TO READ, AS FRENCH BOOKS WILL TEACH NO GOOD. THERE IS POISON IN THEM, PUTRID POISON, MY DEAREST!" THESE ARE THE THOUGHTS OF MR. GOLYADKIN (1846), ECHOING THE SIMPLE SENTIMENT EXPRESSED BY VARIOUS CLASSES IN THE RUSSIAN CAPITAL. BOOKWORMS OF ST. PETERSBURG WERE RATHER SPOILT FOR CHOICE LATER! "CATHERINE'S LOVERS" BY VALISHEVSKY, SOMOV'S "MARQUESS'S BOOK" IN VARIOUS TRANSLATIONS AND "A DIFFERENT ST. PETERSBURG"... BUT IT WAS THE LIGHT STYLE OF FRENCH NOVELS OF THE COURTEOUS CENTURY THAT ALWAYS REMAINED THE POINT OF REFERENCE FOR THE LITERATURE OF THE NORTHERN CAPITAL. THEY WERE CAREFULLY COLLECTED AND REVERENTLY REREAD BY INTELLECTUALS TO DISTRACT THEMSELVES FROM THEIR PEDANTIC SCIENTIFIC STUDIES. MANY OF THOSE BOOKS ARE NOW STORED IN CENTRAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE ST. PETERSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH LIBRARY.

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p. 054
p. 056
p. 109
p. 145
p. 150
p. 159
p. 186
p. 254

A French novel is born out of love[4] and love in France is seen as a way of domination over idleness, mostly among women. Rotating around Versailles, the 18th century was based on illusions which excited the imagination and artfully turned the most incredible fantasies into reality. It was reigned over by the ephemeral style of *rocaille* flirting which controlled all spheres of life for the worldly loafer: mythological characters and symbolic formulae, brilliant wit and the elegance of euphemisms, passionate commitment and fugitive inspiration. Rococo featheriness sees "love" and "good" as a pleasant erotic adventure, as a witty and non-committal pastime. In keeping with this flippant nonchalance, an intricate play on meanings is based on the tender sensuality of novels that composed entire libraries. As Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux instructed writers back in 1674:

Ingenious Love, inventive in new Arts,
Mingled in Playes, and quickly touch'd our Hearts:
This Passion never could resistance find,
But knows the shortest passage to the mind[1].

Caravans of enamored couples stride across the French literary Olympus: Silvia and Dorante, Marianne and Valville, Paul and Virginie, Zaïre and Orosmane, Tanzai and Neadarne, Manon and Des Grieux, Julie and Wolmar, Malek-Adhel and de Linar, Sémire and Zadig, Mirzoza and Magogul, Cunégonde and Candide, Annette and Lubin... Suspicious ladies of the court and simple-minded pretty women who were not quite a part of high society strove to copy the heroines of novels in everything (just as they copy the heroines of films and TV series today).

20
↓
p. 159

The narrative of the novel (like the plot of a film) entered life and transformed it. "I am reading a chapter from 'Sophie', one of Heloise's letters and two fables by La Fontaine to remind myself of a couple of tones that I intended to take in for this occasion. Meanwhile, my *chevalier* is approaching my doors with his usual haste," observed the Marquise De Merteuil with cold attention to detail.

Gorgibus in Molière's "Pretentious Young Ladies" instructed his daughter Magdelon: "I tell you marriage is a holy and sacred affair; to begin with that is to act like honest people". "Good Heavens!" exclaims Magdelon in response. "If everybody were like you, a love-story would soon be over. What a fine thing it would be have been if Cyrus had immediately espoused Mandane, and if Aronce had been married at once to Clélie." Russian readers kept up:

Seeing herself as a creation –
Clarissa, Julie, or Delphine –
By writers of her admiration,
Tatyana, lonely heroine,
Roamed the still forest like a ranger,
Sought in her book, that text of danger
And found her dreams, her secret fire,
The full fruit of her heart's desire;

From early on she loved romances,
They were her only food... and so
She fell in love with all the fancies
Of Richardson and of Rousseau.
Her father...
...cared not what his daughter kept
By way of secret tome that slept
Until the dawn beneath her pillow.
His wife, just like Tatyana, had
On Richardson gone raving mad[2].

From the early 18th century French novels were extensively imported into Russia. An expert in this matter, S.V. Luppov, quotes rather impressive figures of ever-growing importation in his "French Books in Russia". The books were available in bookstores in St. Petersburg (Weitbrecht's, Klostermann's, the Gay brothers', Gerstenberg's, Rospini's, Ligan's, Miller's, Schnor's, Ewers's and others) or could be obtained ad hoc.

The most famous Russian reader of Elizabeth's reign, Princess Dashkova recalls: "I got very passionate about reading... Shuvalov, Elizabeth's lover, who strove to be known as a philanthropist[20] of his times, found out that I am such a keen reader and offered that I make use of all new arrivals that he regularly received from France. This favor was a source of endless joy for me, particularly, when I moved to Moscow a year after getting married; the local book stores hardly had anything apart from what I had already read and some of those works were already in my collection which included nearly 900 books; I spent all my pocket money on this collection..."

Girls rarely collected books. Novels would mostly be handed down from one to another (like films on DVD today). These also included the "dangerous novels" (a term common in the 18th century) — pocket-sized books *(octavo or duodecimo)*, which could easily be hidden un-

1 The Art of Poetry. Nicolas Boileau Despréaux, 1636–1711. Translation by Sir William Soames (revised by John Dryden, 1631–1700)

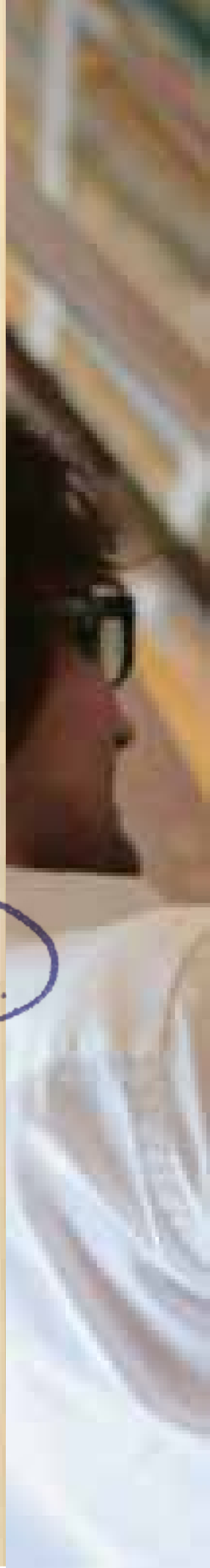
2 Translation by Charles H. Johnston

der a pillow or behind the dressing table. They contained love stories with plenty of naughty episodes and were written in a frivolous style. French wisecrackers called them "novels that can only be held with one hand".

Men were traditionally attracted to the engraved illustrations in such novels. They could be bought also as separate prints. What is more, there was normally a limited preliminary issue of all the illustrations of the nude in order, allegedly, to test the wooden block. These were uncensored, and instead of elegant locks, draping and bunches of foliage that would cover the female genitals and bosoms on the prints of the second and following stages of the block going on official sale, showed nudity. It goes without saying that it was these first test prints which, having illegally passed censorship, became desirable objects for the enthusiasts who paid through the nose and bought them on the nod under the counter. Respectable scientific reference books on etchings of the 18th century modestly dubbed these rare sheets "prints before the draping" *(épreuve avant la draperie)* or "before the foliage" *(épreuve avant feuillage)*.

"Little paintings, small ideas, frivolous compositions appropriate for the boudoir of a young fashionista or a dandy's cozy nook, written for playful abbots, small entrepreneurs, well-to-do businessmen and other people devoid of good nature and hardly holding any taste," is how Diderot described this phenomenon. But it was only by the middle of the 19th century that such works lost all wit and taste and their anonymous production got into full swing, giving birth to the European porn industry. Russian collectors of those separate etchings in the middle of the 19th century included a certain Prince Golitsyn. The catalogue of his collection was published in Paris in 1887 and became one of the fundamental reference books on the subject. Another collector was Alexander II — in his diary for 1917, A.N. Benois describes the tsar's study in the Winter Palace as being full of pictures of a rather "frivolous nature".

In Russian patriarchal society, where "love" and "good" have a totally different meaning, these aspects of relationships were traditionally kept within the male culture. And even today, those in St. Petersburg who possess such "dangerous" books and etchings and who are true connoisseurs of this "putrid poison" are still men. Suitable for libraries and museums, their collections are not in demand with dandies or damsels these days. Only eager philologists carefully read into the intricate language of oxymorons, reverent aestheticians admire the devious morals, rare bookworms lovingly stroke the beautifully decorated quality covers and greying connoisseurs of engraving gaze at the sharp prints. Only these chosen ones have access to the poison of French literary Eros in its complete original form which gave rise to so many absurd imitations. These are what the majority of the remaining population has to deal with and they will soon have nothing better to do than, as Vladimir Sorokin put it, to "stop the T-vibrations and throw the frozen hedgehog out of their narrow beds".



Peter Greenaway *

After you create promising merchandise you need some good advertising. My advertising trick is animating these erotic images. Dramatizing them. Staging them. And bringing into this performance some turbulence or even danger. Adding a little blasphemy. Even a small threat of legal prosecution can be perturbing. A challenge to the authorities. A challenge backed by prevailing opinion is a delight hidden under the Academy veil, under the brilliance of the arts, a call to "artistic thought". It is no secret that we are involved in a game: they know that you know that they know... erm... that we all know what is really on our minds... erm... don't we?

Notes in the margin – reader's marginalia on the pages of an 18th-century book (cursive, late 18th-century–early 19th century)

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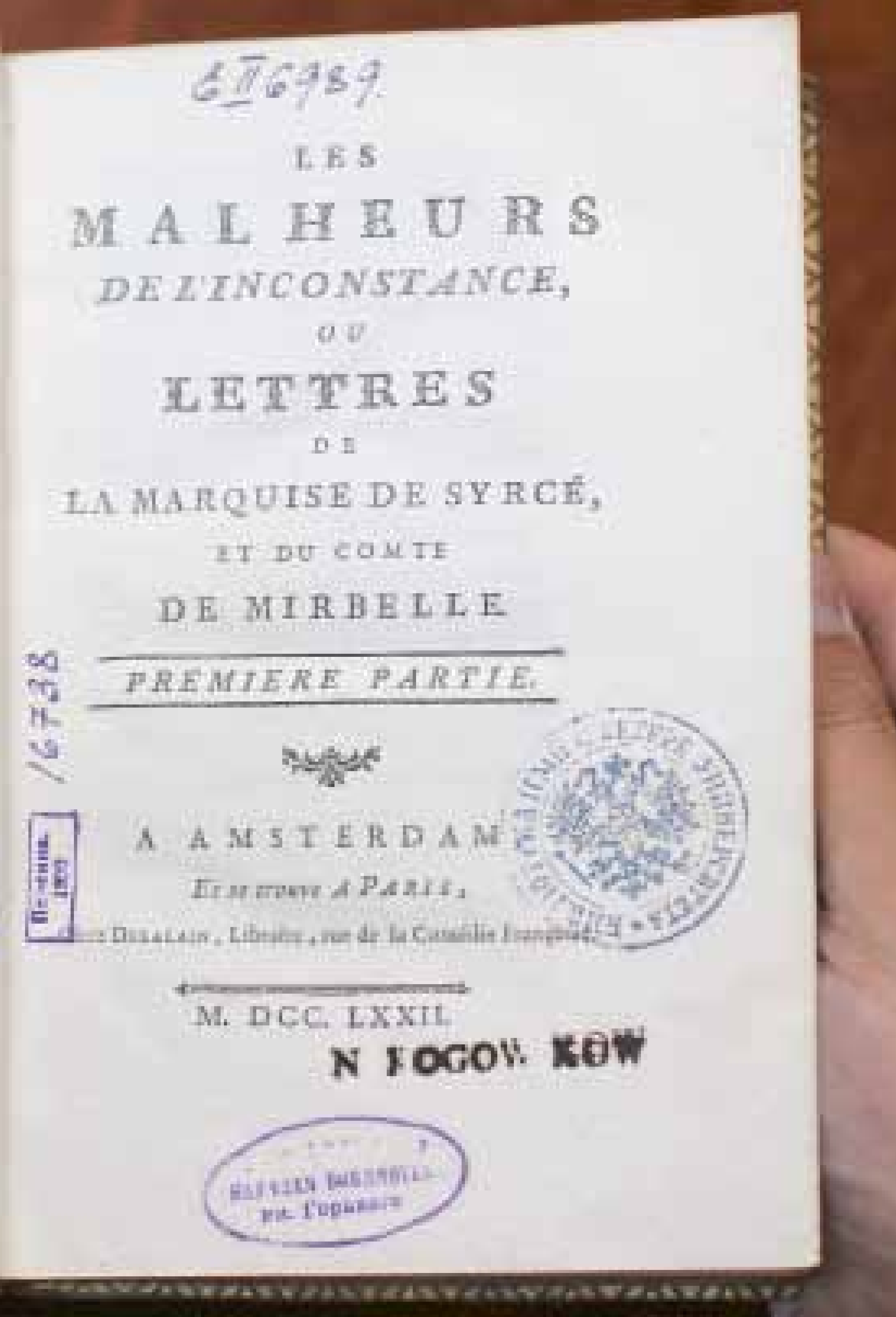
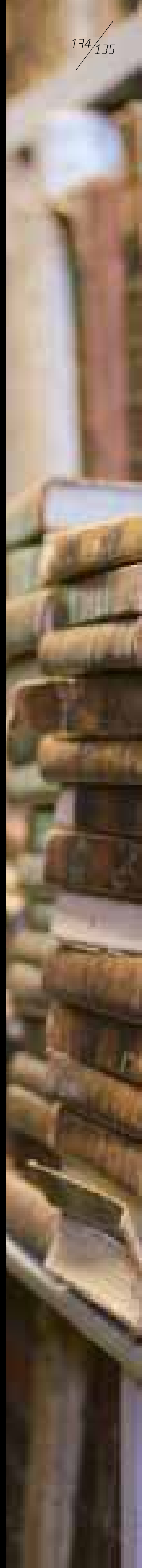

LES
MALHEURS
DE L'INCONSTANCE,
OU
LETTRES
DE
LA MARQUISE DE SYRCÉ,
ET DU COMTE
DE MIRBELLE.
PREMIERE PARTIE.
A AMSTERDAM,
Et se trouve A PARIS,
Chez DELALAIN, Libraire, rue de la Comédie Françoise.
M. DCC. LXXII.



Dorat, Claude-Joseph (1734–1780). Les malheurs de l'inconstance, ou Lettres de la marquise de Syrcé, et du comte de Mirbelle (The Fatal Effects of Inconstancy, or, Letters of the Marchioness de Syrcé, the Count de Mirbelle and Others). Amsterdam, et se trouve à Paris: Delalain, 1772. Vol. 1 Title page. St. Petersburg State University Research Library (ref. num. E II 6989; copy from the library of N.S. Rogovikov)

Copperplate engraving by J. De Longeil based on the drawing by F.M. Queverdo: frontispiece to Part 1 of "The Fatal Effects of Inconstancy" by Claude-Joseph Dorat (Paris, 1772). 18 x 11 cm [Queverdo, François-Marie-Isidore 1748–1797), Longueil, Joseph de, 1730–1792)]

LETTRES

DE LA VICOMTESSE

DE SENANGES,

ET DU CHEVALIER

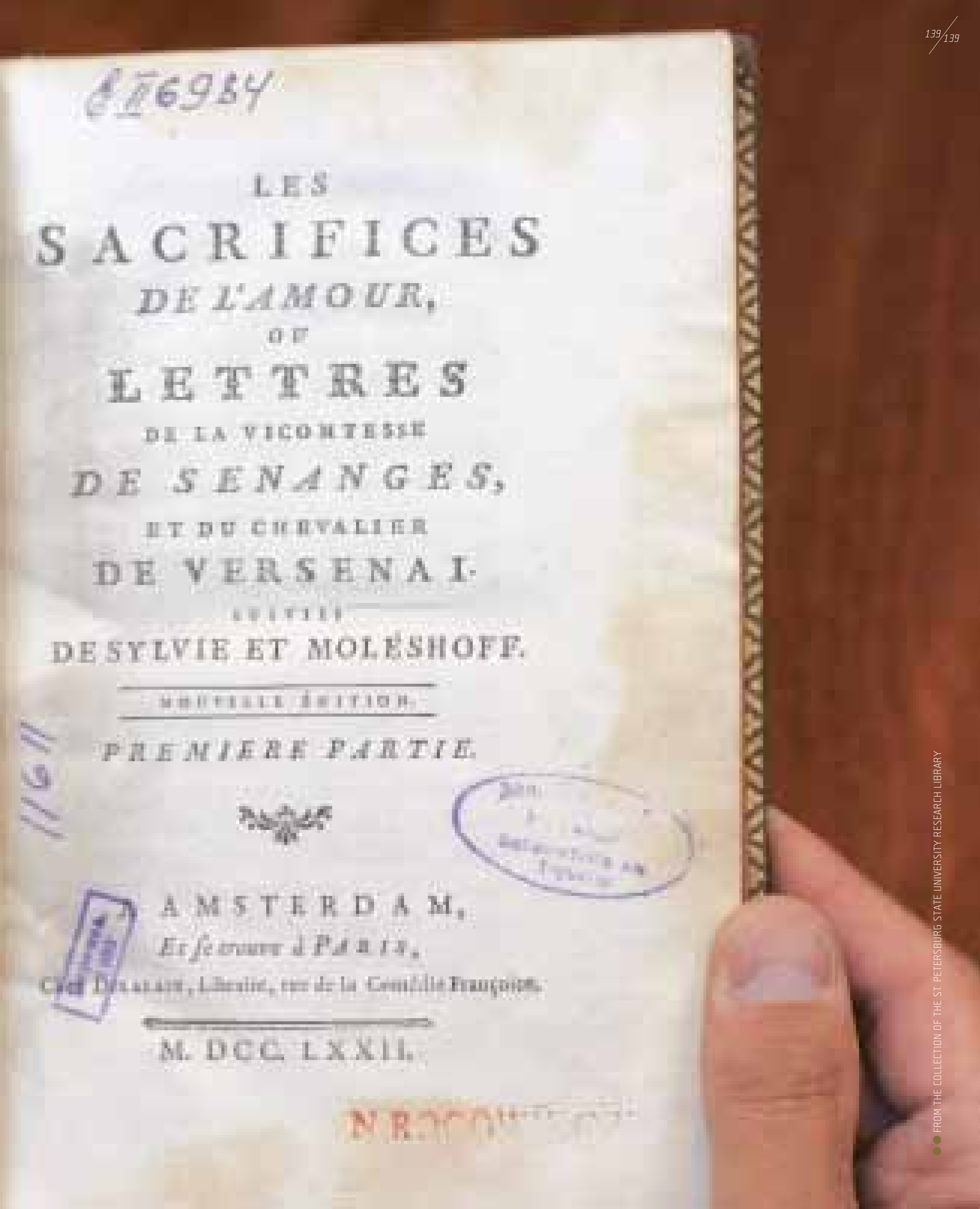
DE VERSENAL

LETTRE I.

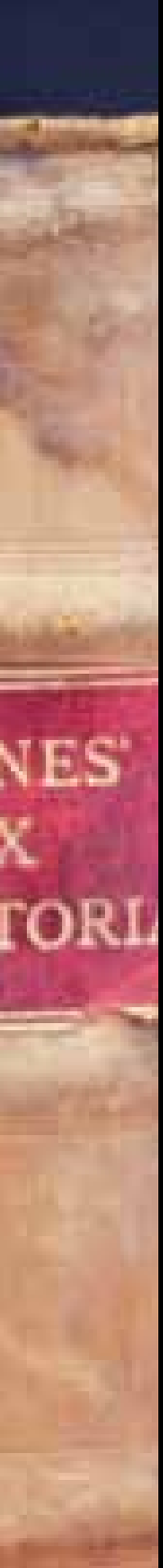
*Le Chevalier, au Baron de ***.*

QUE je vous porte envie, mon cher Baron! quoique vous soiez encore dans l'âge où l'on ne renonce à rien; vous avez quitté Paris, pour vivre dans vos Terres: vous préférez à son tumulte la douceur d'une retraite

Dorat, Claude-Joseph (1734–1780). Les Sacrifices de l'amour, ou Lettres de la vicomtesse de Senanges et du chevalier de Versenai (The Sacrifices of Love, or, Letters of the Viscountess de Senanges and of the Knight de Versenai).Amsterdam, et se trouve à Paris: Delalain, 1772. Vol. 1 Title page. St. Petersburg State University Research Library (ref. num. E II 6984; copy from the library of N.S. Rogovikov)



FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE ST. PETERSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH LIBRARY



The spines of 17th-century books published in Western Europe from the collection of the Rare Books Department of the St. Petersburg University Library

FRENCH ILLUSTRATED BOOKS OF THE 18TH CENTURY IN THE COLLECTION OF THE RARE BOOKS DEPARTMENT OF THE ST. PETERSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH LIBRARY

ALEXEI SAVELYEV,
SOLOVYEV IS HEAD OF THE RARE BOOKS AND MANUSCRIPTS DEPARTMENT OF THE ST. PETERSBURG STATE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH LIBRARY

The collection of the St. Petersburg State University Research Library holds some 100 illustrated books from 18th-century France. There are almost no rarities and this is no surprise given that throughout its history the library has been mostly stocked with academic literature: luxury volumes of the 18th century simply were not essential.

The library dates back to 1783, the year when Catherine the Great presented the book collection of P.F. Zhukov, a highly educated civil servant, to the newly established teachers' seminary. His library numbered 1,100 volumes and contained books that had been given to him personally by M.V. Lomonosov, I.F. Bogdanovich and other illustrious personalities of Russian culture. Later, after the end of the 18th century, the university book collection has been built up mainly through private donations: it now holds volumes from more than 200 personal collections of prominent Russian figures of science and culture.

The collection of French illustrated books has been shaped over the course of more than two centuries of the university library's history. A nearly complete selection of C.J. Dorat's works with engravings based on drawings by C. Eisen, C.P. Marillier and F. Queverdo (including the famous 1770 edition of "The Kisses"), judging by the stamps on the title pages, was formerly part of the library of N.S. Rogovikov, a merchant and court banker to Tsar Paul I, who was conferred the title of Baron of the Russian Empire in 1880.

A 1786 edition of "The Iliad", illustrated by C.P. Marillier (with and without explanatory text on the engravings), "Idylles" by Solomon Gessner with illustrations by J.J. Le Barbier (Paris, 1786-1793, three volumes), "Oeuvres" by J.J. Vadé with colored engravings (Paris, 1796) and quite a few other luxury editions bound in red Moroccan leather with gold embellishments, originated in the library of Prince Golitsyn (1773–1844), Minister of Spiritual Affairs and Public Education during the reign of Alexander I. These books were acquired in 1843 from the Public Library, to which Golitsyn himself had donated a part of his collection in 1842 (a total of 611 titles in 1910 volumes were given to the university).

A beautiful standalone edition of "New Heloise" by Jean-Jacques Rousseau with engravings based on drawings by C.N. Cochin and Gravelot (Paris, 1764) formerly belonged to N.N. Strakhov (1828-1896), social commentator and philosopher, friend of Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy, and St. Petersburg University graduate in Physics and Mathematics. His library (7,877 titles in 12,453 volumes), which included a rich collection of books in various scientific fields, fiction in Russian and other major European languages, and also some incredibly rare books from the 15th century to the 17th century, was donated by his heirs in 1896.

A two-volume edition of Ovid's "Metamorphoses" (Paris, 1807), decorated with 220 copper engravings by the great French masters, was part of the collection of P.I. Lublinsky (1882–1938), a celebrated legal scholar, university professor and one of the most famous Soviet bibliophiles. In 1945, the Council of People's Commissars (Sovnarkom), the government of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic decided to buy his enormous collection (9,186 volumes that included more than 1,500 rare early printed books) for the university library.

The collection also contains reprints, reissues, and counterfeits of a number of other remarkable French illustrated books. On the whole, the St. Petersburg State University Research Library collection gives a fairly complete representation of the works of almost all the master book illustrators of 18th-century France, a century of an unprecedented flowering of this very fine and graceful art.

THE INTERNATIONAL HERMITAGE FRIENDS' CLUB

THE INTERNATIONAL HERMITAGE FRIENDS' CLUB is a special programme that has united friends around the museum for the first time in Russia. The club has implemented and is carrying out numerous museum development projects with the support of its many friends all around the world during the 15 years it has operated.

Being a friend of the Hermitage Museum has become an excellent tradition. Many renowned international and Russian companies, charities and private individuals are among the Friends of the Hermitage Museum; they understand perfectly well that by joining the club and contributing to the preservation of the priceless treasures of the Hermitage Museum for future generations they become involved in the history of the museum — a history that stretches back almost 250 years.

The Friends of the Hermitage become aware of their involvement in the life of the great museum when they see with their own eyes the outcome of dozens of projects implemented thanks to their support, including the conservation of works of art of international significance, the organization of international exhibitions, culture festivals and educational programmes for children.

The activities of the Hermitage Friends' Club are now centred around preparations for the museum's 250th anniversary.

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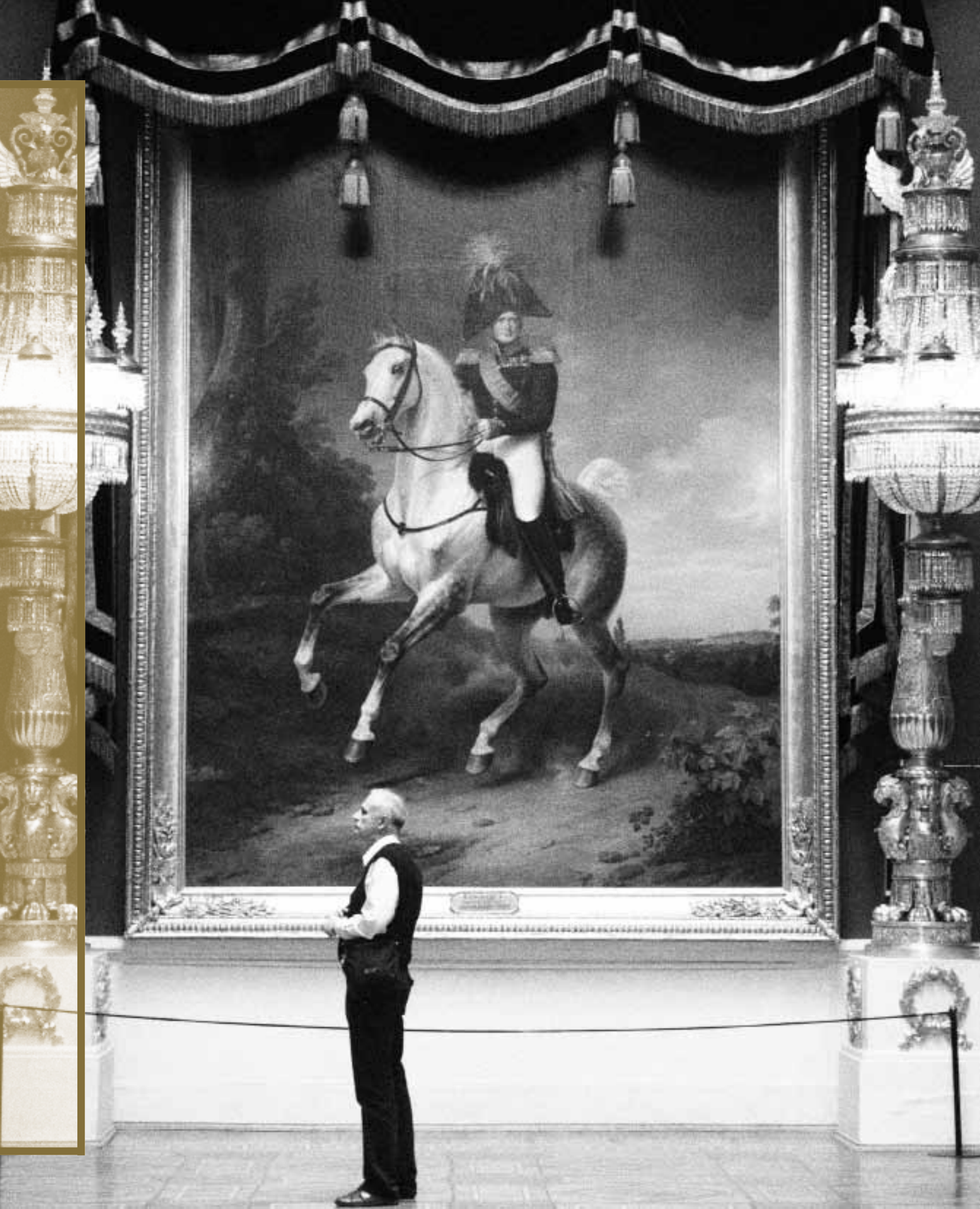
THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM INVITES ALL THOSE WHO CARE ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THIS GREAT MUSEUM TO BECOME ITS FRIEND



THE 18TH CENTURY FOR US IS THE EPOCH OF PETER THE GREAT,HIS SPOUSE CATHERINE I AND DAUGHTER ELISABETH. IN FRANCE IT IS THE TIME OF CASANOVA AND LOUIS XV; THE CENTURY OF VOLTAIRE, DIDEROT, ROUSSEAU. AND IT IS ALSO THE TIME OF PAINTINGS BY BOUCHER, LANCRET, FRAGONARD, LE BRUN, CHARDIN... AND ANTOINE WATTEAU. THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM HAS A WONDERFUL COLLECTION OF WORKS BY THESE ARTISTS. THEY WERE CREATED AROUND THE TIME WHEN THE HERMITAGE WAS BEING CREATED, TOO.

2 | Antoine Watteau
An Embarrasing Proposal
1715–1716

WAT

MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY

An outstanding 18th-century art specialist, Hermitage staff member Inna Sergeyevna Nemilova is one of the people the Hermitage was and is most proud of. A most charming and elegant woman, she was a brilliant French-language and art expert, and a very thorough researcher. She loved and studied in great detail more than 400 paintings from "her"collection, and published an academic catalogue and several books. Her wonderful book "Mysteries of Old Paintings", a masterpiece of educational art history, is written in such a way that both specialists and amateurs can see the very essence of her revelations. And these revelations shed new light on 18th-century art and Watteau, a painter whose work is inseparable from the century of the *fêtes galantes.* It is a century when people deliberately had a lot of fun, probably anticipating the commotion of the bloody French Revolution.

Here is what Benois writes about Watteau: "Watteau's name evokes images of promenades, masquerades, games, dances, comedies, some kind of a dreamlike carelessness. And indeed, Watteau created a special genre of painting which probably corresponds to the amusing name of *fêtes galantes.* His students and successors developed and promoted this new genre. But the creative and human personality of the genius master is too diminished if we only see him as this merrymaker. Watteau's nature was, on the contrary, proud and difficult, sickly sensitive and deeply melancholic"[1].

Two paintings at the Hermitage are a great illustration of these words: "Savoyard with a Marmot" and "Mezzetin" (which was sold to the Metropolitan Museum in New York in the 1920s and is now on display there). "'Mezzetin' was created during the last years of the master's life, maybe after a trip to England, whence he returned seriously ill. The painting belonged to a friend of Watteau's, Julien, and at the sale of his collection in 1617 was kept by his widow (Julien married not long before Watteau's return). It was bought for Catherine the Great, probably at the sale of Madame Julien's collection in 1778. 'Idylls of War' *(Les délassements de la guerre)* was created to form a pair with 'Hardships of War'. [...]Watteau lived as a timid anchorite at that time; his mild and sensitive heart was outraged by the trials and tribulations of humanity and needed some rest. We do not know anything about his affairs of the heart, but he was hardly lucky in this respect. Maybe it was the constant dissatisfaction of his soul⑦ longing for love④ that was, together with the feeling of aggravating tuberculosis, the cause of his disillusionment. Maybe this comic lover was really an ironical picture of what he felt himself. In any case, Watteau showed here what he had already shown multiple times, what composed along with the world of colors his real element — music"[2]. In these wonderful works beauty goes together with deep, painful, sensitive sadness.

Theatricality was rather characteristic of this century. In Russia they said that Catherine I also organized life as some sort of theater. Watteau "knew how to dream about festivals, these festivals

4 ↓ p. 054 p. 109 p. 131 p. 150 p. 159 p. 186 p. 254

7 ↓ p. 072 p. 164

1 *Benois A. A:* Guide to the Paintings Gallery of the Imperial Hermitage. St. Petersburg: Saint Eugenia community, [1910].

2 Ibid.

TEAU

3 | Antoine Watteau
La Boudeuse (The Capricious Girl). c. 1718
© The State Hermitage Museum

4 | Konstantin Somov
The Ridiculed Kiss. 1908
The Russian Museum

were later created according to his paintings, but he never had fun himself, as his ideals were unrealizable and his irony incurable"[3].

Watteau created quite a number of masterpieces. Inna Sergeyevna Nemilova studied and described some of them. One of such art history revelation concerns the painting which is now called "Actors of the Comédie-Française". It had a lot of different names, for example "Portrait of Three People with a Black Boy". Its subject remained a mystery.

A thorough study of numerous Watteau sketches, documents, contemporary engravings and art history materials led to a wonderful revelation: this picture proved to be an amazing and very rare psychological group portrait of the Comédie-Française actors, participants in Dancourt's play "The Three Cousins"[4]. The painting shows famous actors: Christine Desmares, La Thorillière, Peretti and Philippe Poisson, while the girl in the middle remains unidentified.

Another Watteau painting in the Hermitage,"An Embarrassing Proposal", presents famous gallant scenes. No one really knows what the embarrassing proposal really is. One could think of something scabrous which hardly matches the 18th-century picture. The studies did not aim at determining the subject: it was necessary to perform an X-ray analysis of the master's technique. We know that Watteau's paintings became darker because he used too much oil in the solvent. By the way, Nemilova noticed that we were lucky: the Hermitage paintings are fine, the solvent does not spoil them, they do not darken and fade as much as other Watteau paintings in other museums. Nemilova conducted a microscopic analysis of the strokes: in "The Embarrassing Proposal" tiny particles of blue, violet and brown paint were found on the girl's face. The paints were obviously mixed on the brush: one color on some fibers, another on some others. As often happens in art, the result does not correspond to the cause. The cause of this mixing, as his contemporaries confirmed, was Watteau's carelessness: he did not properly wash his brushes. And the result was what the Pointillists strived to achieve later, in the beginning of the New French painting era, when color was compiled of small touches. And here, in this painting, these short small points of color create a pearly — not even color — image which makes the picture so amazing.

The X-ray study showed how meticulously Watteau worked on this"light"scene: he first painted four figures (two and two), then changed them and added another one. The resulting lightness hides the very complicated hard work of a very rigorous painter. This was also a revelation, as Watteau's contemporaries did not describe him this way.

Benois writes: "This was a time when French society lost completely all seriousness, forgot about all concerns and plunged into pleasure. The king's court was lovely and young[5]. The time of splendor and tiring manners was forgotten(11). Pleasure was now mostly intimate and delicate"[6]. It was amusement before a catastrophe. I will draw here not quite an art history parallel — the Silver Age of Russian culture in its St. Petersburg version, an attraction to elegance and glamor, which somewhat predicted the catastrophe of the Bolshevik Revolution and the Russian Civil War that broke out in the country later. The World of Art magazine and the art movement it inspired and embodied *(Mir iskusstva)*, which we love and of which we are so proud in St. Petersburg, where one of the creators, theorist, writer and artist was Alexander Nikolayevich Benois, is a direct, although of course very much modified parallel to the gallant 18th century.

11 ↓ p. 153

3 Ibid.

4 Florent Carlon Dancourt (1661–1725).French dramatist, actor and head of the Comédie-Française company. Another Watteau painting, "Pilgrimage to Cythera" (1717, Paris, Louvre), also shows a scene from the third act of Dancourt's play "The Three Cousins"(cf. Nemilova I.S: Watteau and his paintings in the Hermitage, Leningrad, 1964).

5 This refers to Louis XV.

6 *Benois A. A:* Guide to the Paintings Gallery of the Imperial Hermitage.

Thierry de Duve. "Pictorial Nominalism. Marcel Duchamp. Painting and Modernity" *

...Most of the "psychoanalysis" of a painting is already done by the painting itself, or, more precisely, made explicit by the disaccord of the image and its name. The work of an analyst-detective, that is, the search for hidden meaning, is already done. If the analyst intends going further in this way, he has to stop speaking from an analyst's point of view. Either he becomes a biographer and tries to discover the identity of the woman who [...] is sublimated in his painting, or, according to our imaginary scenario, what event in the life of the "suffering man" made the "artistic spirit" work on his sublimation in this way. [...] Or the analyst becomes an aesthetician and an art historian and looks into works of art [...] for iconographic resources, uncoded or coded in a different way, that explain an image or a painting.

THE EMBARKATION

DID IT REALLY EXIST IN EUROPE AT THE BEGINNING OF THE 18TH CENTURY, THIS WORLD OF YOUNG AND TENDER WOMEN BENEATH A LOOM OF ILLUMINATED SKY, OF ELEGANTLY HELPLESS CHEVALIERS ONLY THINKING ABOUT LOVE, THE WORLD OF REMARKABLE FRAILTY AND EVEN MORE REMARKABLE PERFECTION OF THEIR RELATIONSHIPS (AND THIS PERFECTION REALLY MAKES YOU WONDER IF THIS IS NOT ALL A COMEDY PERFORMED BY GREAT TRAGIC ACTORS...), THE WORLD OF UNFINISHED GESTURES, EVANESCENT SMILES AND LIGHT TOUCHES, THE WORLD SCENTED WITH A FEELING OF PRICELESSNESS OF EXISTENCE MIXED WITH GRIEF ABOUT ITS ENDLESS FLUIDITY WHICH DOES NOT EVEN SPARE THE BEST WE WOULD LIKE TO KEEP FOREVER. THE WORLD OF ROYAL TREES AND EVERLASTING MUSIC... DID IT EXIST? NO, IT DID NOT EXIST. THIS IS A REALITY OF ANOTHER, HIGHER KIND: IT DOES EXIST.

EVGENY BOGAT*

* Well-known Russian essayist (1923–1985).
This is an excerpt from: E. Bogat. *Izbrannoye (Selected Works)*. Moscow, Moskovsky rabochy. 1985 (Letters from the Hermitage, letter 5).

5

An artist who does not see or does not want to see mundanity in the reality around him is either a child or a wiseman. Watteau was both a child and a wiseman. [...] Our world which sometimes seems almost mundane to us because we have neither the child's heart[9] nor the wisdom of Watteau, this world already existed in the soul of the strange master from the quiet city of Valenciennes. This was a world that never even came to the minds of his contemporaries, people of the beginning of the 18th century. It was the world of the blue dancers of Degas, the animate haystacks of Monet, fading away in the evening, the world of Sisley's bare trees dazing in the blue and frosty air, Renoir's delightfully bodily women, Van Gogh's skies swelling with constellations... It was the world of Modigliani's "haunted tenderness", Picasso's tragic longing for good, Chagall's paradoxical rejection of mundanity... The world with a heightened sense of the pricelessness of existence, of its uncertainty and of its woundedness.

9 ↓ p. 150 p. 152 p. 153

6 ↓ p. 060 p. 150 p. 156 p. 213

Yes, this world (worlds even) lived in Watteau's soul, so each of his smallest paintings, which his short-sighted contemporaries saw as mere courteous amusements, comes laden with the future. And because he was a painter, not a philosopher, he expressed the idea of the future by means of new abundance and diversity in the life of trees, air, sky and innovative precision of the most delicate nuances of a man's internal life, manifesting itself with unequalled ease: in fugitive gestures, passing glances, fleeing smiles, barely noticeable peculiarities of walking style...

Considering all of that it would not seem strange that he saw life around him, so to say, from the height of the future, from the distance of the future, which did not hinder him from examining it admiringly and in detail, as a poor boy (and he was one himself, the son of a mason), watches a gorgeous celebration behind a high gilded fence. [...]

One of the best of Watteau's paintings is "The Embarkation for Cythera". This painting is very knowledgeably described by Alexander Benois in his "History of painting": "How characteristic that the painter surrounded 'The Embarkation' with a haze... the island of love looks so delightful from here... It tempts us with its blaze, its melodies coming from far away and its heady smells. It is a glow of a faraway heaven." ... "What painting this canvas has!" ... "The separated hearts have come together, and the impossible has become natural..."[...]

Cythera (the birthplace and one of Aphrodite's names), according to people of the "pastoral" 18th century, is related to Ceres, the goddess of abundance, wine and bread. Cythera's island is more than a tenement of love. It is a place of perfect (natural) life and perfect (natural) relationships between man and woman. This is what Rousseau dreamt of.

The Embarkation...

The 18th century starts with Watteau's paintings and ends with Robespierre's deathmask[6]. It is strange and frightening to see these two names together. Who could possibly be further from Watteau than Robespierre? But great artists are born at times when humanity needs to see the world in a new way in order to build it anew. And if between the names of the lighthearted and delicate Watteau and the resolutely serious and tragic Robespierre we place the name of Rousseau, who was both an artist akin to the "master of gallant amusement" in his perception of the world, and a thinker inspiring the revolutionary leader, we can feel the strange wisdom of the century. Yes, it is opened by the ironically pensive Watteau and closed by the heroic David.

Let us imagine: if there were only these two painters' canvases left from all of the 18th century, we would think that the creations that had disappeared contained the tremendous, spiritual work of several generations. We would imagine great art unequalled in the history of our culture. Then, we are shown into the "secret halls" where this disappeared art is stored and hidden, and shown canvases by Boucher, Fragonard, Greuze... We see entertainment, amusement, the delights of life: we see the attractive theater boxes and elegant boulevards, joyful parties; we see dressing, changing, undressing... And even the great Chardin would not be able to fill this mysterious void between Watteau and David... We can think then that art has never yet told the history of the century so superficially and incompletely. The century escapes our understanding; it seems frivolous and lighthearted, then naively serious, then openly sensuous, then sentimentally lyrical... This painting just does not match the great literature and philosophy, the turbulent social thinking: Voltaire, Diderot, Rousseau... It seems mysterious... As if this century changed masks.

And it was a century of masks indeed. Not only in Venice where the masquerade lasted for six months — everywhere in Europe the mask became something incomparably greater than just a picturesque attribute of amusement. It was used in attempts to laugh off Fate and Clio ... It created the illusion of personal invincibility and social equality. It reduced the

5 | Antoine Watteau
The Embarkation for Cythera
Between 1718 and 1721
Charlottenburg Palace, Berlin

drama of human relationships to reassuring and ravishing buffoonery.[...]

People did not wear masks[6] when they mounted the scaffold.

Maybe we should understand the painting of the century — that in between Watteau and David — as a mask? (The open and clear Chardin does not relate to that, but even then not everybody hid their face.)[...]

Watteau saw life around him as would a boy — as a poor mason's son admiring a wonderful world from behind a high fence, which seems to him especially attractive because of its inaccessibility. He saw it, he dreamt of it, he imagined it.

Robespierre was rough, destroying this wall separating masons' children from the amazing world, comforting and pleasing only a few.

The century that started with Watteau's elegant and gallant paintings and ended with David's heroic canvases has great logic. [...]

I like a game: recognizing Manon Lescaut in a crowd of women in Watteau's paintings. I justify this game with a wish to get a deeper feel for the spiritual unity of the epoch, which is expressed in painting, in literature and in music. But it is really just a sweet game. (La Rochefoucauld wrote that "the head cannot long play the part of the heart", but the heart cannot long play the part of the head either...) I recognize Manon Lescaut in different women in different paintings, and a moment before that my heart skips a beat in this feeling that "I will hear the forgotten word Love[4] in a forgotten, living language" (Blok again). And in recognizing Manon Lescaut, I feel in my heart "times interlaced, and countries interlaced". And more Blok: "The game of centuries! You are so dear!" (Sometimes I think the "old Europe" could describe Watteau with this line by Blok: "The last dream of my evening soul".)

In fact, why would my heart need to find Manon Lescaut in Watteau's paintings, to see an imaginary creature, a novel character in the reality of the body? And why, when reading letters of women who really existed in the 18th century, can't I help imagining and romanticizing? Why do these women's faces in the portraits, with their expression of wit, humor, a lively soul and a special intimacy on the lips lightly touched by tender feeling, seem to gleam from the deepest depths of our souls? Why? What is that if not a desire to feel more fully the richness of our own personality, to enjoy it, to thank the world for it afterwards?

I have already written in these letters that the Italian Renaissance discovered the "I", the Northern Renaissance discovered the "you", the 18th century (and before it, Rembrandt[8] who went ahead of his own century) deepened the human personality burning within itself. It began the great synthesis of the "I", the "you" and the surrounding world, the synthesis which has not finished in us yet. Embracing the existence more and more with our hearts, we become more and more like ourselves.

When I recognize Manon Lescaut in Watteau's paintings, even without being aware of it I am in fact deepening my own self, learning spiritual work that is particularly in need by modern man. Maybe it is an unconscious desire to restore the harmony between reason and the heart?[9] To defend the sovereignty of soul in the time of the exuberant development of the mind? "My constellations were grieving so inconsolably above you!..."

4 ↓ p. 054 p. 109 p. 131 p. 145 p. 159 p. 186 p. 254
6 ↓ p. 060 p. 150 p. 156 p. 213
8 ↓ p. 039 p. 041 p. 068 p. 115 p. 126 p. 206 p. 273 p. 279
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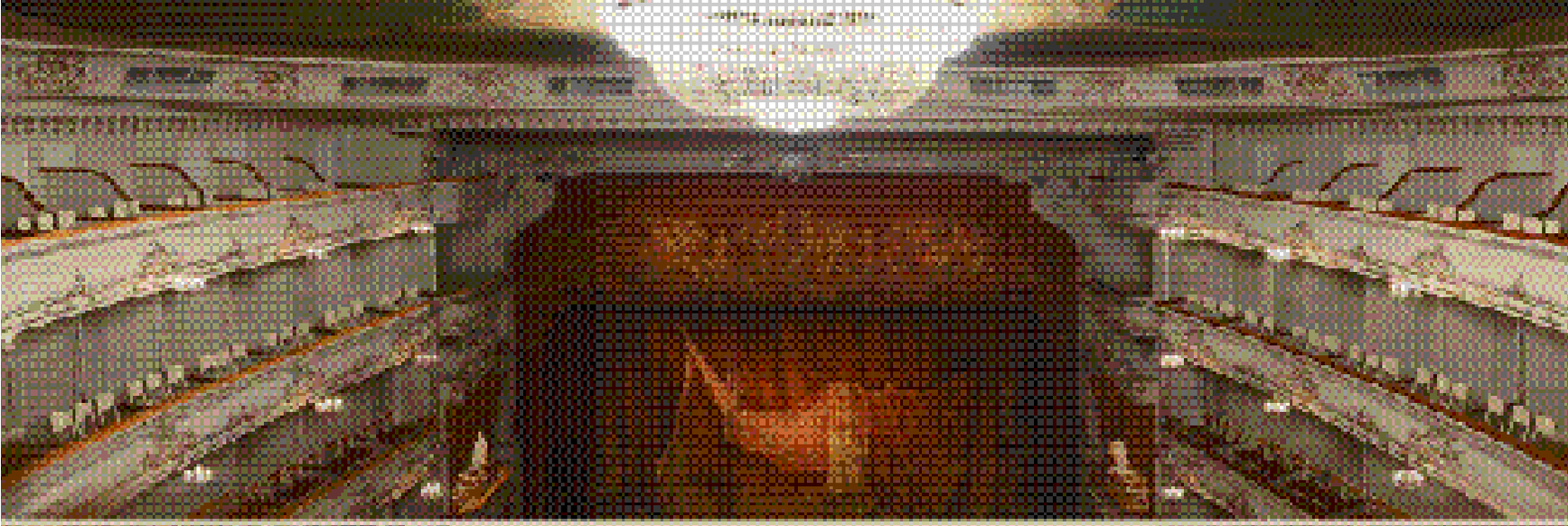
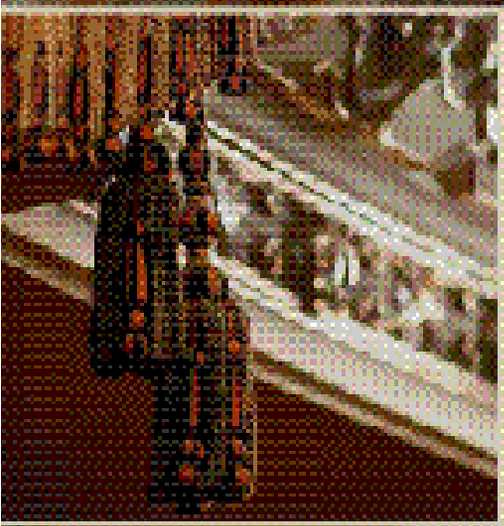
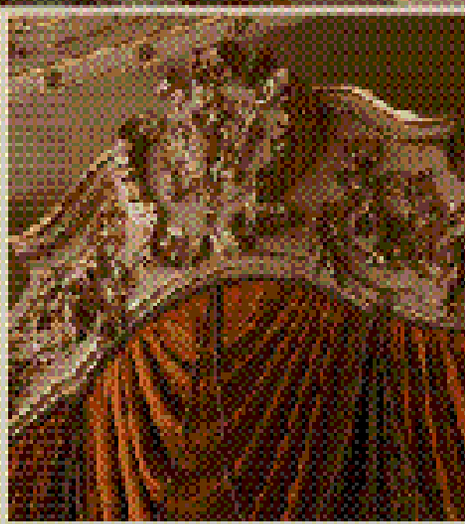
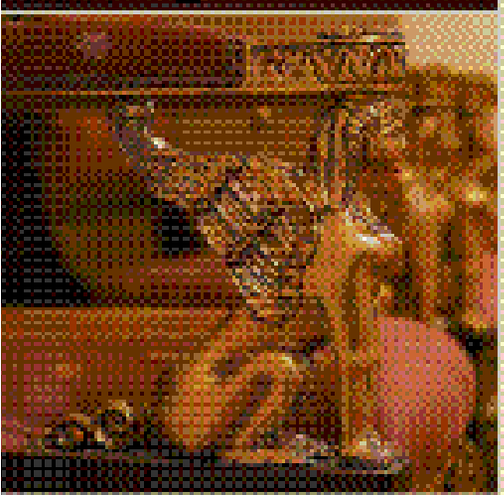




MIKHAILOVSKY
THEATRE

180 YEARS





1, Arts Square, St. Petersburg
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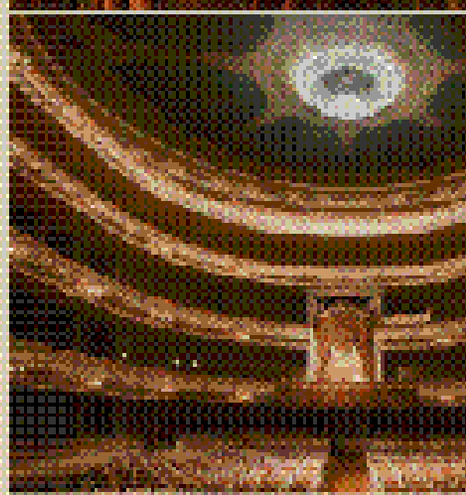


STYLE OF THE CENTURY

IS PAINTING A MASK? THE SUBTLE ARTISTIC RUSE OF THE CENTURY? A WISH TO STAY UNRECOGNIZED? IT IS QUITE TEMPTING TO IMAGINE WE ARE DEALING WITH A CENTURY-PHILOSOPHER WHO PUT ON A PROVOCATIVELY THOUGHTLESS MASK SO THAT NO ONE COULD SEE HIS GRIEVING PENSIVE FACE...

EVGENY BOGAT

6 | Antoine Francois Dennel
Original drawing
by Jean-Honore Fragonard
Oh, If He were Devoted to Me Likewise! 1770s

"To think is to suffer" — one of the bitter truths discovered by Stendhal, whose youth coincided with the last great storms of the century. From Diderot's letters we learn that he liked witty jokes, mystifications and masks... But his face was not grieved, it was pensive and joyful. Voltaire's face was joyful as well. The encyclopaedists' faces were cheerful. They would probably laugh at Stendhal's formula, as they sincerely thought that not to think is to suffer. They took pleasure in thinking, and enjoyed life while thinking without any break.

No, the painting of Fragonard, hedonistic to indiscretion, or even of the openly sensuous Boucher was not a mask, and not only because it expressed the subtle desire for the pleasures of high aristocratic society in the last hours of its dominance: both Fragonard and Boucher were talented artists and their paintings expressed something more — they are a mirror of morals as well as a history of ideas for us. And even when the theme speaks about the moral decadence, the stroke, glowing with a love of life, expresses a rising force.

There are a lot of new and strange things waiting for us in this surprising century as we travel through the times. Diderot was a most virtuous man, the chastity of reason and heart itself, and yet he was entirely sincere when writing to his fair one: "Only passion and vice animate works of painting, music and poetry". It was a century when sophistication tried to seem naive, and naively — to seem sophisticated. Ageing noblewomen spoke about love with young girls' chastity, and craftsmen's sons tended to be proud not to be without vice either... It was a century when people wrote philosophical letters to their lovers, and philosophers dealt with great truths as intimately and easily as with lovers.

The style of the century — and this was reflected in painting, too — is a remarkable realm of details and particularities, along with the great social initiatives and great scope of intellectual work. Man's private life had never been so interesting to the mind and soul before.

9 ↓ p. 149 p. 150 p. 153

When an 80-yearold interlocutrix of Diderot's tells him that even then her old heart[9] would beat with joy if she heard from a man what he used to whisper to her in her youth, and the thinker relates it in his letter, adding, "This conversation is worth much more than a philosophical or a political discussion", we see the whole of the 18th century in front of us, and then we can understand better, more fully and open-heartedly Fragonard's joviality and Boucher's sensuality.

When D'Alembert exclaims in a letter to his lover who is no longer alive: "If you showed me it was hard for you to part with me, with what joy I would follow you to the eternal lenement", we see the 18th century, too, and we feel that people who created the "Encyclopedia" drew the strength of their minds from the life of the heart.

"Good style comes from the heart," Diderot affirmed. And the lesser known and more unfortunate Vauvenargues expressed it in a formula which became immortal: "Great thoughts are born in the heart".

When reading about the 18th century you think it was a time when everyone loved and everyone wrote letters; everyone philosophized and spoke nobly and excitedly; you think that the century itself had this desire it could not satisfy — the urge to speak everything out, to express itself fully in communication. A feeling like this grasps you before a long separation, a great uncertainty — on a shore before the departure of a ship...

This strange, frivolous, philosophizing, loving, heroic century started the great metamorphosis — a sequence of tremendous social and economic commotion — that entirely changed the image of the earth and created the unprecedented (even though it can seem mundane to us sometimes) world that surrounds us today.

There is a particularity, maybe natural, of human perception: you can only see clearly and exhaustively the mundanity of modern life, but you never feel it at centuries' distance. The life of the 18th century, with its philosophers in powdered wigs, salons, duels, alchemists, masquerades, public executions, carnival amusements, agitations of love, carriages, crowds of people around card tables, torches lighting the night streets, seems picturesque, mysterious and varied to us. But in the letters and memoires of people of the time they complain about monotony. What we see as especially exotic: the interiors of the halls, dances, costumes — particularly annoys them with its lack of diversity. What is unspeakably exciting for us: the fantastic lifestyle, full of unexpected and charming details — exasperates them with its uniformity and routine. Watteau alone could avoid this entirely, as if he saw the contemporary world with our present-day eyes.

9 ↓ p. 149 p. 150 p. 153

Of course at all times immediately perceived reality seemsmore routine and monotonous than it is seen centuries later (Chronos, a life-wise old man with a scythe in his hands, likes the "distancing effect" just like the artists, and someday, from a distance, from a third millennium's shore, our life will seem not only strange, but excitingly picturesque). But the people of the 18th century had a particularly strong feeling of monotony, deepened by a special, sharp anxiety of reason and the heart. They were longing, longing for novelty! We cannot easily understand this, because today we are oversaturated with it and even tired of it. We cannot easily understand this, because today we are in the open stormy sea, and they were living in the last minutes before departure... We cannot easily understand this, just as the movie characters in Antonioni can not easily understand Watteau's men and women.

But we have to understand this in order to better see. We should learn to see the beginning from the height of the centuries in order to, as Pierre Teilhard de Chardin figuratively and accurately put it, know how to "create by symmetry wonderful visions of the future". (In these essays on the history of painting we can write: we should learn to see Watteau in order to be able to create "by symmetry" the visions of such worlds in the future, with even more beautiful trees and even more beautiful life around them.)

Yes, people of the 18th century experienced a particular anxiety — the anxiety before departure. What did they talk about during these last minutes? Diderot and d'Holbach spoke about cruelty and humanity. They were nervous, they raised their voices and quarreled. D'Holbach looked through the past centuries for dreadful executions, piles of cut-off heads, masses of human bodies torn to pieces, and fed these stories with an ironic smile to the sensitive Diderot: take a look at the nice creature the human being is!

Diderot told him about heroism, generosity and mercy, about what he discovered in history and contemporary life. He did not contest d'Holbach, as the latter did not invent or imagine anything, he was only speaking of historical events, he did not ignore these cruel stories — his heart was full of rage towards despotism, his hand "strained after a dagger", but he was convinced that the truth about mankind wasmore complete than that. Like the majority of thinking people of the time, he believed that man is not evil from birth, he becomes evil because of a bad education and bad laws. Man is born good. "If I am mistaken, he exclaimed, I am happy that such a mistake could be born in the depths of my heart...[9]" (This reminds me of a touching passage in the fundamental work by the 18th-centuryEnglish historian Gibbon, "The History of Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire": speaking about the cruelty of the barbarians that subjected young daughters of the conquered commander to a quite spectacular execution — strong wild horses tore their bodies to parts –he comments that even today, in the 18th century, it is hard to believe this really happened, but in the future such cruelty will seem absolutely unthinkable...)

But this very same 18th century that witnessed the Marquis de Sade andhis novels — and today, at the turn of the 20th century these are read and reread by millions of people in the West.

7 | Antoine Watteau
Actors of the Comédie-Française
1711–1712

HOW ANTOINE WATTEAU'S IT

THIS CASE CLEARLY SHOWS US HOW FAST AND COMPLETE THE PROCESS OF FORGETTING REALLY IS: ALREADY BY THE MIDDLE OF THE 18TH CENTURY, WHEN THE PICTURE WAS ENGRAVED, NO ONE COULD UNDERSTAND THE ACTUAL MEANING OF THE WORK, ALTHOUGH CHRISTINE DESMARES WAS STILL ALIVE AND WATTEAU HAD ONLY JUST DIED.

8 | **Antoine Watteau**
Eight Studies of Heads
c. 1715–1716
Musée du Louvre, Paris

ALIAN ACTORS BECAME FRENCH

INNA NEMILOVA*

* Inna Sergeyevna Nemilova (1922–1982) was a major specialist in the history of French painting of the 18th century, curator of the Hermitage collection of French paintings of the 18th century and author of its academiccatalogue published in 1982.
The text is published in an abridged form and with author's orthography, from a book by I.S. Nemilova "Mysteries of Old Paintings" (Moscow, Izobrazitelnoye iskusstvo, 1989)

Among the recognized masterpieces in the Hermitage collection there is a small painting by Antoine Watteau depicting two women, an old man, a young man and a black child standing by a stone balustrade. I describe the painting on purpose rather than just giving its name. I have to do this by no will of my own, because from all the names this painting has had since its creation, it is hard to choose the most suitable. You can judge for yourself: in Baron Crozat's[1] catalogue the picture was defined as "Personages wearing masks, preparing for the ball". Why "wearing masks"? None of the personages wears a mask; there's only one woman holding one in her hand. Another name was given to the painting in the article by the painter and art critic Lépicié in an 18th-century French newspaper Mercure de France[2]. There, it is called "Return from a ball". Lépicié's contemporary and colleague Dezallier d'Argenville interpreted the picture as a "Preparation for a ball"[3]. None of these names can satisfy us, as we can see no returning, no preparation and no ball in the painting.

It may be that the differences in determining the storyline are essentially not so important, but they still prevented the painting in question from having a stable, permanent name.

It had one for some time thanks to the following circumstances: the engraver A.S. Thomassen Jr. engraved this work and, according to the tradition of the time, placed a poem under the picture, which started with the word "Coquettes..." and continued with a story about what ladies were capable of to get past their old husbands' guard[4].

Thus the first words of the poem on the engraving gave a new name to the painting. It began to be called "Coquettes". It is mentioned under this name in most Western 19th and 20th century research on Watteau. But the inadequacy of this name, which, by the way, was not given by the painter himself, and much later after it was created, still dissatisfied many art historians. That is why in some works we encounter yet another version — "Italian actors"[5]. Actors, because Watteau did in fact dedicate a whole range of paintings to people of this profession, and Italian actors, because it was the Italian fairground theater that Watteau especially appreciated, and an additional proof of the actors' Italian background is allegedly provided by their Italian theater costumes.

We see the same variety of names in Russian research on Watteau and in Hermitage catalogues starting from the 18th century. In Münnich's 1783 catalogue[6] the painting is called "Personages wearing masks"⑥ (?!); in the 1797 catalogue[7] — "Masquerade", the author of the 1859 inventory[8] cared enough to look at the picture and dealt with it the same way I did: without giving the painting a name, he only gave its description: "Two women talking to two men, and a black child".

I could continue the list of the different names for the unfortunate painting, but I am afraid of tiring the readers. I will say only that I started studying it when it was called "Italian comedians" in the museum, and the personages even had defined names: the old man was considered to be Pantalone, the girls were called Rosaura and Isabella, and the young man wearing a beret was dubbed Scapin.

First of all we had to clarify the storyline of the painting. And to this end, we needed to forget about all of its "mysterious transformations" and try to look at it as if we knew nothing about the picture, except for the fact that it is one of the masterpieces by Watteau, a great and very interesting French 18th-century painter.

The first thing that caught my eye is that the painting is different from Watteau's theater sketches, both in character and in composition. The personages depicted here are not playing music, not talking, not flirting, not enjoying nature as the usual characters of Watteau's theater works do. The personages of our painting have no connections, either internal or external. Most of Watteau's works do not have any narrative, but this is one of the most narrative-less. Its composition reminded me somehow of 18th-century group portraits.

Looking ahead I can tell you that my attempt at clarifying the character of the personages and identifying them confirmed this hypothesis, which was originally just a guess.

This time the key to my research was to be found in Watteau's numerous drawings. Contemporaries describing his life observe that he never parted with his sketch book. He seemed to do his sketches for future use, recording a pose he liked, an elegant movement, a light turn barely perceptible but full of life. Later, working on the composition of a painting, he used the material he had when he needed it, grouping his drawings in an improvised manner, whereas other masters used sketches they had intentionally made for a particular painting.

1

Pierre Crozat, known as Junior or The Poor (1661–1740) was born in Toulouse. Moving to Paris he made his career as a financier and became the French treasurer. He owned great collections — a drawing collection amounting to 19,000 works, an art gallery containing about 400 paintings of high quality and a considerable collection of different carved stones and sculptures. After Crozat's death the drawing collection was sold in aid of charity, and the carved stones were bought by the Duke of Orleans. The paintings went to his inheritors. The collection, expanded by his nephew Louis Antoine Crozat, Baron de Thiers (1700–1770), was purchased by Catherine the Great. (It should be noted that Pierre Crozat for some strange reason is often confused with his nephew, also an art collector, Joseph Antoine Crozat, Marquis de Thugny). The acquisition of this collection played a decisive role for the Hermitage. It was bought in 1772 upon the initiative of one of the most enlightened people of the time, the Russian ambassador in Paris, D.N. Golitsyn, through the intermediary D. Diderot and the art collector Tronchin. This purchase enriched the Hermitage collection with a whole range of the most significant masterpieces by great painters, especially the Italian painting collection ("Madonna with Beardless St. Joseph" by Raphael, "Judith" by Giorgione, "Danae" by Titian, "Lamentation of Christ" by Veronese, "The Birth of John the Baptist" by Tintoretto etc.). The addition to the Flemish painting collectionwas no less significant ("Portrait of a Chambermaid", "Bacchus", "Hagar leaves the House of Abraham" and five sketches by Rubens, several portraits by Van Dyck, works by Jacob Jordaens, David Teniers and others), seven paintings by Rembrandt (including "Danae" and "The Holy Family"). This purchase laid the foundation for the French painting collection, which included works by Louis Le Nain, Nicolas Poussin, Pierre Mignard, Nicolas de Largillière, Antoine Watteau, Nicolas Lancret and Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin. (The above-mentioned catalogue by Crozat: *Catalogue des tableaux du cabinet de M. Crosat, baron*

6
↓
p. 060
p. 149
p. 150
p. 213

From Watteau's drawings, beautifully published[9], I chose a large group of works which are undoubtedly related to this painting.

Then I had to answer an important question regarding whether the painting is an aggregation of images randomly grouped together (which I doubted, being acquainted with Watteau's works) or whether these are connected with some logic which evades one at first glance.

This logic was clearly revealed upon identifying the personages in the picture. My idea that it was possible to know who these people were and what were their names was confirmed in a piece of research by the French art historian H. Adhémar[10] who found that the woman wearing a headdress in the painting was Madame Desmares.

So who was this woman? Christine Antoinette Charlotte Desmares (1682–1733) was one of the most outstanding actresses of her time. Since the age of eight she had performed in the famous Comédie-Française theater. Of course, she only played small parts: cupids, zephyrs and nymphs were present in most of the plays of that time and were portrayed by the youngest performers, usually the children of the company actors. Later on, Christine became a prima and was equally brilliant at playing tragic and comic parts. Her contemporaries gladly recount how "Desmares spent the whole evening laughing on stage again". She left the stage at the age of 38, at the height of her career. Among other roles, she had great success in performing Colette in "The Three Cousins" by Dancourt, which is a particularly interesting fact for me, as the reader will see shortly.

9 | Jean-Baptiste Santerre *Portrait of a Young Lady with a Letter* (thought to be Mademoiselle Christine-Antoinette-Charlotte Desmares). 1700–1717

We shall return later to some of the questions related to this Watteau heroine.

I managed to define the name of the second person, namely the old man on the right who, as I already mentioned, had received the name of Pantalone, a specific comedy character who is avaricious, quarrelsome and distrustful.

Watteau has a great drawing of this personage[11]. It is almost a full-length portrait of the old man (only his feet are beyond the edge of the sheet). It is exactly this figure, only knee-high and much more detailed, that is used in our painting.

The above-mentioned drawing belongs to a whole series of other drawings depicting the same man. Rearranging these drawings in my mind in a particular order I made sure that they all had the same model and that one of them depicted (as confirmed by the inscription and documents) La Thorillière, an actor at the Comédie-Française who was very successful in both comic and tragic roles[12].

It should be noted that the similarity between La Thorillière and the old man is marked. Both have a very characteristic forward gaze, large eyebrows with a fancy curve and big noses. La Thorillière looks much fatter in the drawing than in the picture, but this is not an essential difference, as the works could have been created at different times.

Let us cite here some facts from La Thorillière's biography: Pierre Le Noir La Thorillière (1659–1731) was the son of a well-known actor from Molière's theater. La Thorillière himself was brought up in this company's tradition. He began performing at the age of 14, at first on the company's tours. In 1684 he started performing tragic and lovers' parts in Paris and in 1693 he switched to servant characters and comic roles which were his greatest success. He retired in 1731.

The most difficult personage to identify was the young man wearing a beret and called Scapin.

I had to work with Watteau's drawings again, analysing them in the most attentive way. Not only had I to find the drawings that could relate to the young man with the beret, I also had to study very carefully all the information that exists about them: if they were engraved in the 18th century with an indication of the person they depict, and if there are some documents or contemporaries' notes that could give some insight. I would also like to remind you that all this material has to be dealt with great caution and checked multiple times.

de Thiers. Paris, 1755. p65.)

2 *Lépicie B.* Notice nécrologique sur S.-H. Thomassin (Lettre à M.D.L.R. de La Roque) écrite de Paris le 11 février 1741) // Mercure de France, 1741, mars. P. 567.

3 *Dezallier d'Argenville A.-N.* Voyage pittoresque des environs de Paris ou indication de tout ce qu'il y a de plus beau dans cette grande Ville en Peinture, Sculpture et Architecture. Par M. D.*** Paris, 1757. P. 140.

4 Coquettes, qui pour voir galants au rendez-vous
Voulez-vous courir le bal,
en dépit d'un époux.

5 *Josz V.* Watteau, mœurs de XVIIIe siècle. Paris, 1903. P. 328, 329.

6 Cf. Münnich's catalogue (note № 1, p. 82), т. 1, с. 274, № 873.

7 Cf. 1797 catalogue (note № 2, p. 82), т. 2, с. 55, № 2545.

8 Inventory of the paintings of the Hermitage (The State Hermitage archives, f. 1, list XI-Б, д. 1, 1859, № 1699).

9 *Parker K.-T. et Mathey J.* Antoine Watteau. Catalogue complet de son œuvre dessiné. Paris, 1957–1958. T. 1–2.

10 *Adhémar H.* Watteau, sa vie, son œuvre. Paris, 1950. P. 119.

11 *Parker K.-T. et Mathey J.* Op. cit. T. 1, № 64.

12 Ibid. T. 1, №№ 84, 53, 64; T. 2, № 914.

At first I was really lucky. I managed to find Scapin's features in an image of a young man in a drawing which belongs to the private Bordeaux-Groult collection[13]. Both the painting and the drawing undoubtedly depict the same face. We can see exactly the same facial contours with large cheek bones, a straight nose with wide nostrils, a particularly shaped mouth with full sensuous lips. On the same sheet as the study of the young man's head there is an image of a hand holding a mask which connects it thematically to our painting.

But this small victory, despite being significant in itself (you do not find studies of a masterpiece every day), did not help identifying the person, although it was the first element in the chain of further research. This drawing was much easier to compare to other Watteau sketches than to the painting.

The same face looks at us from a whole series of Watteau's drawings[14]. We recognize him in the characters of the paintings "The Lesson of Love", "The Enchanter" and others.

There are also some full-length drawings of the character. Some images are extremely similar to our young man; in others the similarity is somewhat less obvious, but nevertheless they all have some characteristic features which make us think that they are all sketches of the same person.

The puzzle becomes more challenging with every new drawing, and almost comes to a dead-end because of two drawings in particular[15]. Both sketches depict the same person, namely our young man. Comparative data shows this very clearly. One of these images was engraved in the 18th century in a special collection of Watteau's drawings with an exact indication that it depicts Philippe Poisson, an actor at the Comédie-Française[16]. It seems like a brilliant piece of evidence; an old engraving, an old inscription, and moreover, the personage proves to be an actor of the same theater as the previous ones, but a researcher is rarely satisfied completely: the second image, a sketch of the same face, is a study for a well-known Watteau painting, "The Family", and this painting is very well documented. Its characters are listed in a 1777 notarial act which completes the schedule of property of the deceased widow of a certain Jean Le Bouc-Saint-Tussen. The act affirms that the picture shows the Le Bouc-Saint-Tussen couple with their son who later became a jeweler and married the daughter of Watteau's friend, the picture dealer Gersin.

Thus, according to old documents, we have two names for the same face.

Being somewhat acquainted with the Hermitage painting as far as its personages are concerned, I decided that it was the painting that could be the key to defining the mysterious young man's name.

The picture shows two well-known actors of the Comédie-Française. This creates for us the possibility that the person depicted next to them is a third actor of the same theater, and not Le Bouc-Saint-Tussen. It seems logical that by the side of Desmares, Watteau would paint her partner in "The Three Cousins" who plays the part of Blaise in this comedy, and not a man who has no relation to theater in his profession.

Unfortunately we could not identify the fourth heroine of the painting — the nice-looking girl wearing a striped dress with a ruff. There are painter's sketches for her, too, but none of them can be iconographically connected to somebody from Watteau's environment. Judging by her costume and the fact that she appears twice by the side of Desmares, this heroine could be an actress, too, most probably from the same Comédie-Française theater.

The last personage in the painting which I have not yet discussed is the Arab pageboy. There is a special sketch for him, a sheet where his head is depicted among others[17]. We can also recognize him in the painting "Conversation" which shows notorious the French philanthropist[20] and Watteau's protector, Crozat, surrounded by his friends in a park. It is usually assumed that the boy is a Crozat's servant.

The pageboy probably does not have a particularly meaningful role in the painting and is just an ornamental element, as was often the case in 18th-century paintings.

Thus, by identifying the people in the painting, I came to the conclusion that none of its names, including the last one, "Italian actors", corresponds to the facts. This is definitely a group portrait of actors, not of the world of Italian comedy, but rather French, and most probably these people are all participants in one play — "The Three Cousins" by Dancourt. Therefore the painting should properly be called "Portrait of

13
Ibid. T. 2, № 746.

14
Ibid. T. 2, №№ 731, 741, 815, 817, 830, 839.

15
Ibid. T. 1, № 172; T. 2, № 665.

16
The sheet № 172 is engraved with this inscription in the Watteau's works collection: Figures de différents caractères... Paris, 1735.

20 ↓ p. 131

Comédie-Française Actors". It doesn't represent a theater scene, as many of Watteau's paintings do. None of the personages is there by chance or chosen by the painter for his appearance, movement or turn that corresponds to the general concept. Every person he portrayed was thoroughly studied by the painter in a whole series of sketches. In order to achieve overall coordination, Watteau had to use different techniques. He took only a part of his sketch of La Thorillière for the painting, but expanded it and made it more detailed. He wanted to paint Desmares and La Thorillière facing each other, so he used *contre-épreuve*, obtaining it from the drawing of Desmares with a mask in her hand[18] which is oriented the same way as the image of the old actor.

As far as we can judge, the painting in question is a one-of-a-kind group portrait by Watteau. The existing Watteau group portraits are interpreted in a completely different manner. In these, the personages are dressed in theatrical costumes uncharacteristic of them, holding musical instruments, and the whole portrait is conceived as a genre scene. [...]

In the painting we are dealing with actors portrayed just as they left the stage. There is nothing deliberate in their positions around the balustrade. Instead of the usual landscape background, Watteau this time used a smooth and dark one. All the painter's attention is drawn to the masterful portrayal of the faces.

This seems to be all that we can say about the painting. And yet it is difficult to stop at this point. Once you commence your research you have to bring it to a conclusion, especially if the conclusion looks promising. [...]

The painting was created during a time when Watteau was especially close friends with A. de la Rocque, a theater historian, playwright and director. Apparently, through this man, Watteau became better acquainted with La Thorillière and Christine Desmares. The talent of the latter had already impressed him before. Taking a closer look at his earlier works we find among them "The Embarkation for Cythera" which shows the final scene from Dancourt's play "The Three Cousins" in which she played the leading part.

It seems that Watteau remained an ardent admirer of hers his whole life, because, having dedicated the works we have spoken about to the actress' image, he returned to it at the height of his oeuvre in the major painting "The Embarkation for Cythera".

The present essay gives sufficient insight into the uncertainly of a painting's destiny, in this case not only of the Comédie-Française portrait, but of the whole series of intimate portraits of "minor arts".

The case we have discussed is really special and extraordinary: not only were the names of actors — who were once famous and much-loved (4) — forgotten, even the genre of the painting was misinterpreted. Instead of a group portrait, which was the initial concept of the painter, the picture was perceived as a domestic scene from theatrical life. It should be noted of course that Watteau's work is a very special phenomenon and, taking into account his technique of using sketches of his friends and acquaintances in the picture without changing them, this confusion may be somewhat more excusable than in other circumstances.

17 *Parker K.-T. et Mathey J.* Op. cit. T. 2, № 729.

18 Ibid. № 541.

4 ↓ p. 054 p. 109 p. 131 p. 150 p. 186 p. 254

NB: The bookbinder put this sheet at the end of Volume 1, after the Table of Contents.

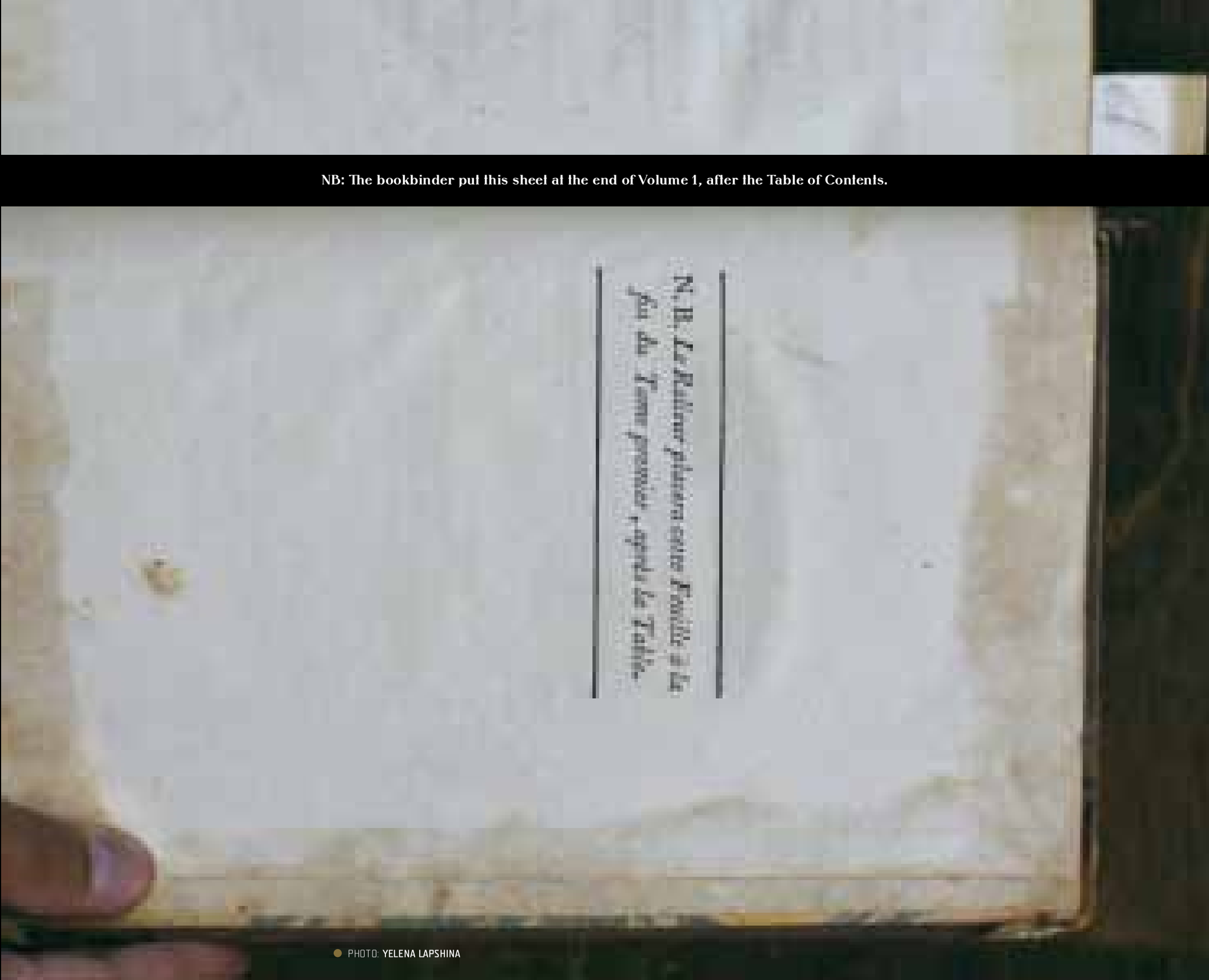


PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

Carte Postale

THE MAIN FEATURE OF POSTCARDS IS THAT THEY CONTAIN A DUAL MESSAGE: ONE ENCRYPTED IN THE PICTURE, WHICH IS OFTEN PERFECT, WHILE THE OTHER, IN WORDS, IS OFTEN HELPLESS. THE WHOLE MATTER IS IN THE COMBINATION OF THE WORDS AND THE PICTURE.

ALEXEI TARKHANOV

Postcards with views of famous sights on the front and words on the back were sent at different times and for different reasons by people of whom we know nothing in most cases to other people about whom we also know nothing.

Postcards are simply a substitute for letters. In Russian, the word for it is "postcard". Perhaps this is also because in Russian history the term "open letter" had a much different meaning as well.

Today, a postcard is really nothing more than a message sent from the road, a travel report, and only for the few who adhere to the old rules. You are less and less likely to see tourists sitting at the tables of the Florian Cafe in San Marco and copying for the tenth time what they see before their eyes to their distant relatives. Now people prefer to share photos on the web: at least you are not dependent on the caprices of the post office.

We send postcards to one another less and less frequently, but it really was a brilliant idea on the part of the post office to add a picture to one's message. At the beginning of the last century, every photography shop made its own cartes postales. Their subjects could rival silent movies: suggesting a wedding or break up, infidelity or heartache, a birth or even a funeral. The right picture could be chosen to transfer the theater of life, the drama of any emotion. Such letters could be sent by people incapable of explaining their feelings in words. Somebody else's imagination was there to help.

In Soviet times, the only postcards that remained from this wide variety of images were those with standard city views and congratulations for important holidays, such as New Year's Eve or November 7, the anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution. And of course there was a lucrative part of the publishing industry representing postcard art that replaced books and reproductions.

This only increased the contrast of the solemnity of the picture with the unimportance of the words. These cards were made by poets and calligraphers, but were sent by ordinary people. Words and stories began to move further and further apart. It seems that it became not so important to people what was depicted: the important thing was what was written. But that's not

THE HERMITAGE ON THE FRONT

quite the case. When the postcard was sent, the message on the back was more substantial than the picture on the front, and in almost a third of our postcards the picture was an independent topic from the message on the back. But even in this situation it is obvious a choice was made, if not in favor of the picture's meaning, then at least in favor of beauty. And it is quite natural that the correspondence between the citizens of St. Petersburg, and later when it was renamed Leningrad, was conducted with pictures of the Winter Palace, the home of the Hermitage Museum, on the front.

Just as it was impossible to take a walk through the city without going by the Winter Palace, so did views of the Hermitage grace postcards year after year. While some of these views have changed so little that you could mail them today, others look as old as the messages written on the back. It is not just that photos could capture things that have disappeared. Old postcards, to which a current stamp was added, were popular right up until the 1940s, as if the open letter was sent to the recipient from a different, already distant time.

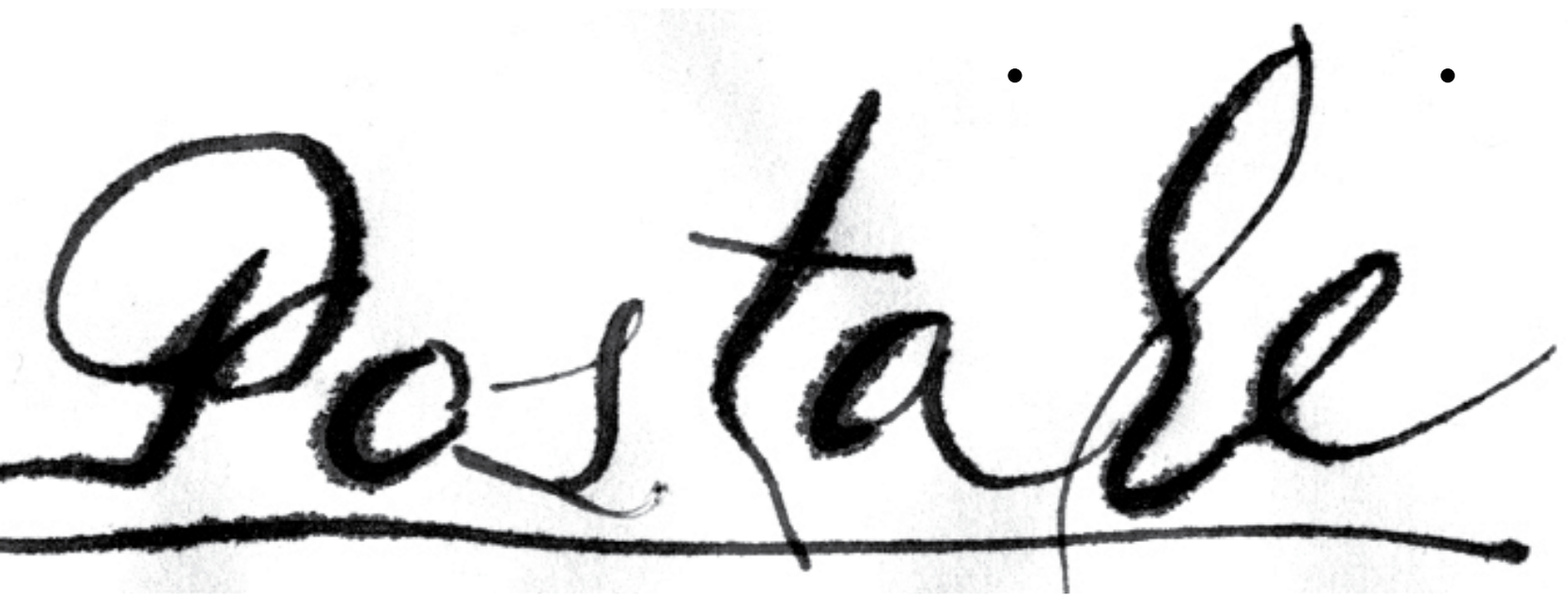
It is also important that these postcards live at odds with city life. While life passes, the city remains. Impressions are sometimes ridiculous, observations are sometimes miserable, and words can be too standard: it is no wonder that at some point postcards began to come with pre-written texts that you simply had to sign your name under. But we can see for ourselves how postcards create feelings, how suddenly, for no apparent reason, a little note grows into a whole letter for which the designated square isn't big enough. Lines cover every little opening on the card in search of a place for one last sentence. The card is turned over sideways and upside down, and the sky and the earth in the picture begin to change places.

In essence, this is a topic for a Hitchcock film: a postcard with meaningless text but with a photo that contains is a very important sign. The fate of the empire depends on the picture, just as it did on a musical phrase in "The Lady Vanishes". And here even the military censor, who left his stamp on one of the cards in 1945, would be utterly powerless.

The Hermitage as an Image

The image of the Hermitage encourages the selection of a postcard that shows a painting or a view and then the writing of something on the back that can be read by anyone who gets a chance to hold the image in their hands between the two addresses, at an unknown moment, not having a clue about it but convinced of the opposite. An image is an obstacle or a message, a secret contract between the sender and the recipient, which has an iconographic power that helps the text to be read but also serves as the message field, since some people write also on the front. The back of the card encourages the writer to send a hundred cards instead of one proper letter, to understate the scale of a unique tragedy, to sign this rectangular charter, shockingly stereotypical, on card which preserves the inscription so well, applies restrictions with its edges, smoothes the bareness of the subject, its insignificance and randomness; it encourages the writer to make the message indecipherable to anyone but the addressee without risking it being undelivered. The Hermitage is on the front while the back reveals train, plane and personal crashes, cholera and war, the death of Stalin or the death of a mother, Pushkin's tomb, lovely countryside, prayers and advice. With clues described by Jacques Derrida[1], which become anachronous when you read them, the postcards of the Hermitage that we have collected are like "sheets of a herbarium", as Alexei Tarkhanov might have put it.

1 Jacques Derrida. The Post Card: From Socrates to Freud and Beyond



How to live with the adjective “inconsequential”? This adjective describes a temporal process. But what if we take “spatial” as a probable and reasonable answer? To be getting closer and closer to what is drawn away from the present and saved in the souls[7] of those who do not accept the logic of the present. [...] This is what Osip Mandelstam, who was to perish in the camps, said: “Time, for Dante, is the content of history, understood as a single, synchronic act. And conversely: the content is the joint containing of time with one’s associates, competitors, co-discoverers”. John Berger. “Benlo’s Sketchbook. How does the impulse to draw something begin? * “In 1850, August Salzmann photographed the road to Beith-Lehem: nothing but stony ground, olive trees; but three tenses dizzy my consciousness: my present, the time of Jesus, and that of the photographer, all this under the instance of 'reality' — and no longer through the elaborations of the text, whether fictional or poetic, which itself is never credible down to the root.” Roland Barthes. “Camera lucida. Reflections on Photography”

“The first man who saw the first photograph (if we except Niepce, who made it) must have thought it was a painting: same framing, same perspective. Photography has been, and is still, tormented by the ghost of Painting (Mapplethorpe represents an iris stalk the way an Oriental painter might have done it); it has made Painting, through its copies and contestations, into the absolute, paternal Référence, as if it were born from the Canvas (this is true, technically, but only in part; for the painter’s camera obscura is only one of the causes of Photography; the essential one, perhaps, was the chemical discovery). [...] ‘Pictorialism’ is only an exaggeration of what the Photograph thinks of itself.” Roland Barthes. “Camera lucida. Reflections on Photography” “...History is a memory[10] fabricated according to positive formulas, a pure intellectual discourse which abolishes mythic Time”. Roland Barthes. “Camera lucida. Reflections on Photography”

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1907

St. Petersburg.
The Winter Palace
from Admiralty Embankment
Photograph. 1906

Postcard: 1906
Text: August 14, 1907

Pushkino Station Of the Moscow-Yaroslavl Railway
For M.P. Struchkova c/o Voznesensk Manufactory, F. Nikitin

No 14
<unclear>

We had to stop at a random place because a cargo train crashed ahead of us. If only you, Mama, saw the landscapes we are passing. They get worse but beautiful again the after. Everyone is in good health. Kisses. Misha. Katerina is being mysterious

1910

Jean-Honore Fragonard
The Stolen Kiss
France. Late 1780s
Oil on canvas. 45 × 55 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Source of Entry: King Stanisław August Poniatowski's collection. 1895

Postcard: between 1896 and 1916
Text: 1910

To Her Honour
Lidiya Ivanovna Sidorova.
Petersburg
Lakhla. Bobylka Village
on Primorskaya Railway

Moscow
14 July
Dear Godmother!
We arrived in Moscow this morning and will be starting on our way home at 9 in the evening. We had no money at all in Sevastopol, all we had to eat was cucumbers and we all lost quite a lot of weight over that week. On 11th we received 100 rubles from Glazunov and earned 500. We spent the money on our journey home. Regards to everyone. Lots of love, Lena

1910

Louis Caravaque
Portrait of Anna Petrovna and Elizabeth Petrovna
Russia, St. Petersburg. 1717
Oil on canvas, 76 × 97 cm.
Provenance: Before 1931 — The State Hermitage Museum (Romanov Gallery of the Winter Palace)
After 1931 — The State Russian Museum

"Under his [Peter the Great's] reign, Caravaque [...] painted a portrait of Princesses Anna and Elizabeth in their youth" (Yakov Shtelin's Notes on Fine Arts in Russia. Moscow, 1990. V1)

Postcard: between 1896 and 1916
Text: 1910(?)

St. Petersburg
120 Ligovskaya
To Her Honour.
Anna Emanuilovna Shash

I get up at 8 and I am in the forest until 3. I then have lunch and go for a walk again until 8, have dinner and tea and at 11 I go to bed. Cholera is raging in Kiev, (500 ill people <crossed out> <illegible>

1911

Titian (Tiziano Vecellio)
Penitent Magdalene
Italy. 1560s
Oil on canvas. 119 × 97 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Source of Entry: Barbarigo Collection, Venice. 1850

Postcard: between 1896 and 1916
Text: March 2, 1911

To M. and A. Schmidt
Moscow
Chistiye Prudy. Lubkovsky proyezd
Guskov's house

St. Petersburg, 2 March

Dearest Manya and Aristida!
It is Wednesday already and we are leaving Petersburg tomorrow and will be in Moscow on Friday at 1 p. m. We are having a good time here. We have been to Alexander III Museum and saw Thaïs at the Conservatoire yesterday. We went on a tour around the city, looking at everything interesting there is. Bye! See you soon! Lots of love to you, Manya and Aristida! Yours, Nadya [?]
Hugs from Boris

1915

Bartolomeo Carlo Rastrelli
Portrait of Emperor Peter I (Peter the Great) [1]
Russia, St. Petersburg. 1723–1729
Bronze; cast, chased and engraved. 102 × 90 × 40 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Source of Entry: The Academy of Arts in Leningrad (previously the Summer Palace). 1848

1
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Postcard: 1903
Text: 1915

Saratov
Vokzalnaya str.
Between Nizhnyaya and Tsyganskaya str.
House 37 of Vasilyev
To Natalia Kuzminichna Vasilyeva

February 15, 1915

I am sending my kindest regards to you, dear Natalia Kuzminichna! I am wishing you all the best and congratulations on moving into your new house! I have received your letter, thank you very much, and I am replying straight away. I am doing fine, getting more and more used to this life. I have some news: I fasted and ardently prayed for my sins in the second week and on 10th I went to the funeral of the head of the police and saw a bit of Petrograd. The city is very beautiful, we went via Nevsky Prospekt and other streets. I did nothing special on the holidays

Vasya

1915

Alexander Hall
of the Winter Palace
Photograph. 1910

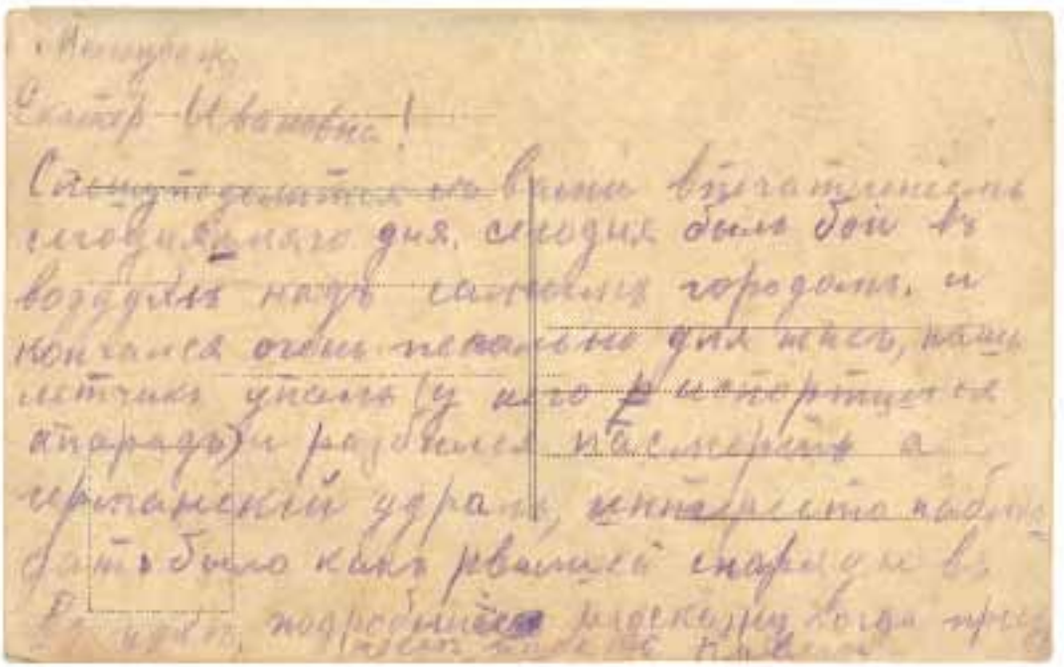
Postcard: 1910
Text: 1915

To Nikolai Georgiyevich
Semi [lylkin?]
7 Bogoroditskaya
Voronezh

Dear Kolya! The sad news of your Mum's passing was delivered to me by Alyosha.
This is all very sad! Generally speaking, I don't understand what dying feels like...
Send my regards to [unclear], Mama and everyone and goddaughters.
Please send [unclear] the code! Please send over 10 3 kopek stamps and 15 10 kopek ones, I really need them!
Take care!
П. 19/II-15 г.

1917

St. Petersburg.
Palace Square, Winter Palace and Guard Corps Staff Building
Photograph. 1917



Postcard: 1917
Text: 1917

Dear Yekaterina Ivanovna!
I am eager to share what happened today with you. There was an air battle over the city today and it ended rather sadly for us –our pilot crashed (his plane broke down) and died and the German one turned his tail. It was interesting to watch shells explode in the air, I'll tell you in more detail when I arrive [unclear]. Pavlik

1919

Giovanni Duprè
Abel
Italy. 1844
Marble. Length: 235 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Source of Entry: From the sculptor, Giovanni Duprè. 1845

Postcard: between 1896 and 1916
Text: 1919

Kuznetsk (Saratov region).
Voznesenskayasq., Donatova's house.
To Olga Ivanovna Klestova.
From Saratov.

My dearest Lelechka!
I have just accidentally found this postcard and I am writing to you straight away because you asked for a sweet card. I will probably send you letter, too. Why is Lena complaining about you? Have you read her message? We laughed so hard when we were reading it, you can't imagine! Tell me if you want me to write you letters on white or purple paper. Goodbye! Kisses. Irka. Write soon.
Send my love to Vera, Liza and Ko[unclear]. It would be great if you could send over your photograph

1945

Leningrad. Palace Square, the Alexander Column and the Winter Palace
Photograph. 1945

Hello, Comrade Bezborodko!
I received your card, thank you very much! I hope you get well very soon. Dear Comrade Bezborodko, I will get straight to the point and let you know my new address and ask you to continue our correspondence. I don't have your home address so I have to write to the hospital and I am not quite sure my postcard will get to you. Once I have your reply, I will tell you about everything in detail. I will tell you one thing, I was very sorry to say goodbye to such a wonderful group of people.
Take care! My best wishes! Kindest regards to your mother. I do the same job as Lebedev. Regards, Sh.[unclear].

Postcard: 1945
Text: 1945

Leningrad
Post Box 336
3rd department, ward 100
To Bezborodko G. Y.

п/п 24 702
[unclear]
March 6, 1945

1947

Andrea del Sarto (Andrea d'Agnolo)
Madonna and Child with St.Catherine, St. Elisabeth and St. John the Baptist
Italy. 1510s.
Canvas (copied from wood), oil.
102 × 80 cm
© The State Hermitage Museum
Source of Entry: Josephine's Collection in Malmaison. 1815

After 1917 the collection of Andrea del Sarto's works at the Hermitage expanded through nationalized private collections and the collection of the Academy of Fine Arts.

Postcard: 1916
Text: 1947

January 24, 1947

Dear Borya!
I am afraid you will interpret my silence in the wrong way. The only reason is that I am absolutely inundated with work. Please forgive me! I no longer look like a person, more like a machine. The only good thing is that I don't have to think of any thing else.
I received your long letter a while ago and wanted to reply with an equally long one but, as you see, I still haven't found time for that so I decided not to keep postponing it and send at least a short note. Both me and my sons are in good health. Volodya is with me now. He went to Moscow to the academy in autumn but he got seriously ill there, with an appendicitis. They had to urgently operate on him in Moscow and so the academy has been put off for another year. I am pleased that he is with me. Do write me! Best wishes, O.U. [unclear]

1949

Leningrad. Palace Bridge, the Winter Palace and the Admiralty
Photograph. 1949

Postcard: 1949
Text: 1949

May 22, 1949
Odessa

Lilenka!
Knowledge, persistence and love[4] will help over come everything on your way.
Alla

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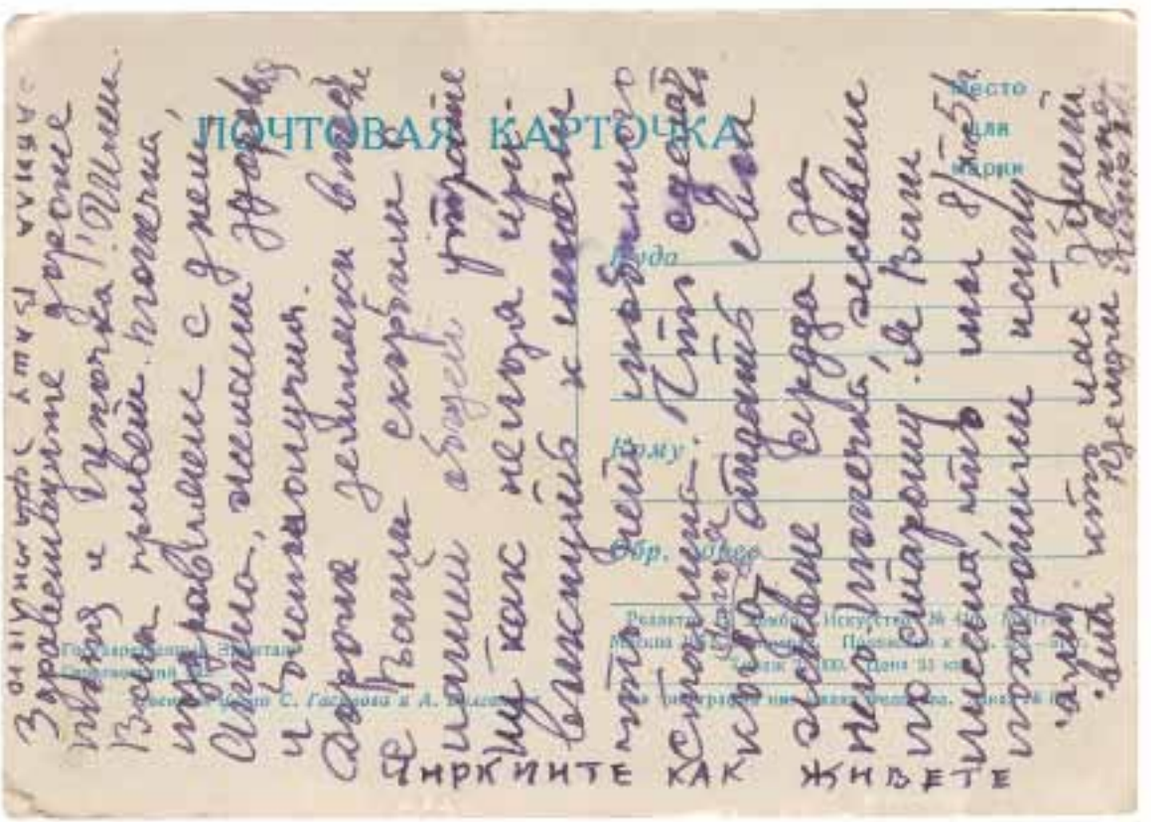
1953

St. George's Hall of the Winter Palace
Photograph. 1953

The throne remained unchanged until 1917, when the symbols of the Russian Empire were removed. Later, in the 1930s, it was completely dismantled. It was replaced with a monumental map of the Soviet Union made of Russian gemstones for the World Exhibition in Paris in 1937. During restoration in the 1980s, the map of the Soviet Union was dismantled and handed over to the museum of the Mining Institute in St. Petersburg. St. George's Hall (the Large Throne Room) has since regained its original historical appearance.



Postcard: 1953
Text: 1953

Hello, dearest Tonya and Lenochka! Greetings from us! Tonechka, Happy saint's day! Be healthy and best wishes to you.
Dear fellow countrymen, we are mourning our common loss with you. We cannot get used to the thought that we no longer have our beloved Stalin with us. What can be done if we cannot sacrifice our hearts for him?
Tanechka, we are living as we used to. I told you before that on 8/XII 51 our mother died.

Regards to everyone who knows us.
Yours, Anna and Pyotr
Drop us a line about yourselves
I can't remember your surname

1977

Pieter Janssens Elinga
Room in A Dulch House
Holland. Late 1660s–early 1670s
Canvas, oil. 61.5 × 59 cm

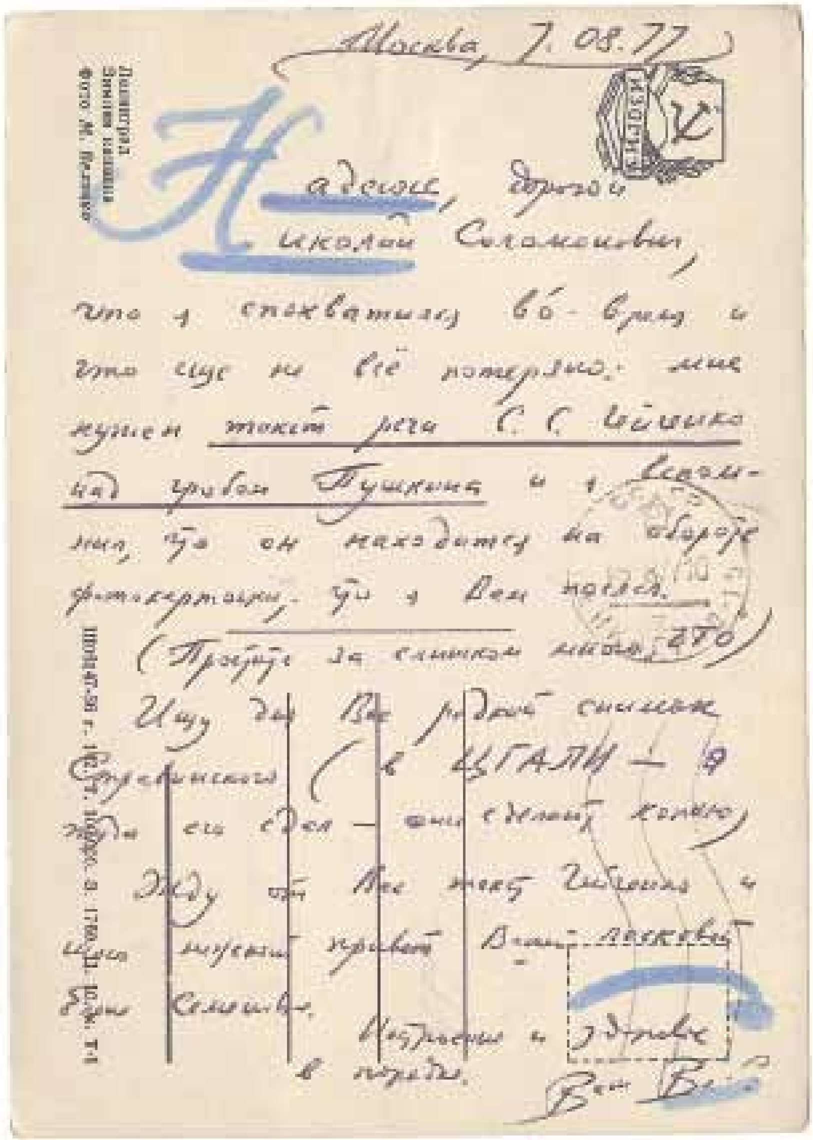
Source of Entry: Count Stroganoff's collection in St. Petersburg. 1912

Postcard: 1977
Text: 1977

Congratulations to the Pioneers. Masha.

1977

Leningrad. The Winter Canal
and the Arch between The Great Hermitage
and the Hermitage Theater
Photograph. 1956



Postcard: 1956
Text: 1977

Moscow, August 7, 1977

I hope, dear friend Nikolai Solomonovitch, that I realised in time and that it's not too late. I need the text of Geichenko's speech at Pushkin's funeral and I remembered that it's on the back of the card that I sent to you.
(I am sorry for so many "thats")
I am looking for a rare shot of Stravinsky for you (I have taken it to the Literature and Arts Archive and they will make a copy for me)
I am waiting for Geichenko's speech from you and sending my kindest regards to your dear Yelena Semyonovna.
I am feeling fine.
Yours, Vl. S.

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

1 | Larissa Salmina on the doorstep of her house in Oxford, 2013

AN ADVENTURE

GERALDINE NORMAN
ARTICLE BASED ON AN IDEA BY NIKOLAI MOLOK[1]

IN VENICE

LARISSA HASKELL, NÉE SALMINA, WAS THE FIRST AND SO FAR LAST HERMITAGE CURATOR TO ACT AS COMMISSIONER FOR THE SOVIET PAVILION AT THE VENICE BIENNALE. THE YEAR WAS 1962 AND IT WAS A TURNING POINT IN HER LIFE. NOT ONLY DID SHE HAVE THE EXTRAORDINARY HONOR OF ACTING AS COMMISSIONER — HER AMUSING ACCOUNT OF THIS IS BELOW — BUT SHE MET HER HUSBAND, FRANCIS HASKELL[2], PROFESSOR OF THE HISTORY OF ART AT OXFORD UNIVERSITY FROM 1967 TO HIS DEATH[13] IN 2000. AGAINST ALL THE ODDS, THEY WERE MARRIED IN 1965.

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L.S-H: It was the most extraordinary story. One of the people who had been sent with an exhibition abroad died in Sweden because of overwork. He was over 70. Meanwhile special grants became available to study in Paris and I was persuaded to apply to study Italian drawings in the Louvre. And I had a very clean profile — none of my relatives had gone abroad. I put down that I knew Italian, German, English and French — four languages. And I was 30 years old. I sent all my application documents to Moscow and waited.

Well, the next commissioner of the Soviet Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (5) in 1962[3] should have been Alexander Andreyevich Guber from Moscow. He was very distinguished and taught at Moscow University[4]. But Khrushchev had to sign all the big foreign currency payments of the Ministry of Culture. So first of all he had to sign for the zinc coffin to bring the late curator from Sweden. It was an enormous sum of money, as if the coffin had been made of gold! Next he had to sign for Guber to go to the Biennale and he looked at the age of Guber, who was 60, and he said "Do you have anyone younger?" And they said no. Next, for some reason, came my application. Khrushchev looked at it and said "Here is one who is only 30 — send her". And that was that.

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Larissa was born on the February 27, 1931 and was in Leningrad, as St. Petersburg was then called, during the Siege of Leningrad during World War II, when many tens of thousands of people died of starvation. She and her mother were joined by a friend with a son of Larissa's age and they survived the Siege together — her father was away in the army. "Leather belts, if well cooked, were palatable," Larissa says, "but I couldn't take brown buttons."
Between 1949 and 1954 she attended the Repin Institute of the Academy of Fine Art, then sat the exam to spend three years as a post-graduate at the Hermitage Museum. She was encouraged to specialize in Italian drawings by Prof. Mikhail Dobroklonsky, head of the drawings department. After the three years she obtained a permanent post and, following her Venetian adventure in 1962, was made Academic Secretary of the Department by Mikhail Artamonov, then Director of the Hermitage.

L.S-H: I was told that I had to fly to Moscow to talk to the Ministry of Culture. I had no idea what it was all about. So I went and met a man called Lebedev. He was Director of the Tretyakov, I think[5]. He asked me: "Do you know anything about Soviet art?" I answered "No." And he said, "Well you have one week to learn because you are to have charge of our exhibition at the Venice Biennale"[6]. I was very surprised but he told me who the painters I had to learn about were. Some were in St. Petersburg and some in Moscow. I could go and see them and talk.
So I went back and told them in the Hermitage that there was a proposal for me to go to the Biennale. And everyone said: "Don't go. Don't go. Refuse at once. If you do it you will be completely despised as an art historian." But then I started going to Moscow every three days, something like this. It was a very strange life, seeing all the painters and talking to them.

From an interview with Vladimir Goryainov, Commissioner of the Soviet Pavilion in Venice in 1964 (Vice-Commissioner) and 1982. *Open Space*, 2011

"This is likely hard to understand, but a commissioner was not the same as a curator: give me Deyneka, Saryan and everything else. A commissioner would go to the depository and select items, sometimes making requests of the artist. After that, everything again needed the approval of the Central Committee and the Ministry of Culture."

And then I was told to prepare a catalogue of the exhibition. I had to write an introduction and Lebedev asked me: "What is the main feature of Soviet art?" — he was a real expert on it. I said I didn't know. And he explained: "The main feature of Soviet art is that it truthfully reflects Soviet life".' Then his deputy repeated the question: "Do you know what the main feature of Soviet art is?" and I said, "Yes I do". And I told him. But he said "No. You've got it wrong. The main feature of Soviet art is optimism". So I wrote that Soviet art reflected Soviet life optimistically[7].
Then I got my visas for Italy and an assistant was appointed, Igor Tarasov, a restorer from Moscow.

2 | Larissa Salmina in Italy, 1962

3 | Palace of Weddings
Larissa Salmina and Francis Haskell,
August 10, 1965

4 | With Italian painters: next to Larissa Salmina is Tono Zancanaro,
Venice, 1962

From an interview with Vladimir Goryainov, Commissioner of the Soviet Pavilion in Venice in 1964 (Vice-Commissioner) and 1982. Open Space, 2011.

"Restorers began to accompany paintings after Kukryniksy's canvas 'The End' (about Hitler's bunker) was damaged. The painting suffered water damage while on a ship travelling between an exhibition in America and another in Mexico. The exhibits had no escorts on the ship because the exhibition in Mexico was not part of the original plans. The painting was ruined. So what you see today is not the work of Kukryniksy, but that of restorers. There was quite a scandal. A meeting was held with Furtseva [Minister of Culture], with the decision taken that the exhibition's escorts — a commissioner in the case of the Biennale — must always stay with the exhibits and help with restoration if needs be. So restorers accompanied the paintings for the next decade."

L.S-H: I was told that on the journey I must never leave the wagon containing the paintings — I had to be with them the whole time. Tarasov and I were put in a passenger car and at every stop we checked that the wagon was following us. The thing was that the wagon would have to be paid to go at passenger speed if it was attached to a passenger train and obviously nobody paid for this. Nobody had paid for this for previous Biennales but the commissioners were more diplomatic than me and turned a blind eye — while I believed what I was told. So somewhere in Czechoslovakia a man came and said that I had to change trains. I said I can't change. I must stay with my wagon. So at the next stop we looked and our wagon wasn't there.

What could we do? We went on to Prague and I went to the head of all the railways, explained to him who I was, that I was travelling with the wagon to the Biennale and so on. The wagon had disappeared. They were absolutely wonderful to me. They telephoned, they knew exactly where my wagon was and what had happened. And they took us all round Prague to show us everything and put us in the most luxurious train without charging us extra. And, after that, at each station the stationmaster would call: "Wo is die Fraulein der seiner Wagon hat verloren?"[8] And he would tell me exactly where my wagon was.

Finally we arrived in Venice and went to the hotel that Irina Antonova[9] had advised us to use. Meanwhile there had been an earthquake in Venice and all the pavilions were damaged. We had to repair the roof, to patch the walls and I had to find special firms to do all this. I was completely unprepared but somehow we managed. And then our wagon arrived and we busied ourselves with putting up our exhibition. I made terrific friends with the commissioner of the Brazilian Pavilion and he told me exactly how to organize the reception and was incredibly helpful. It was useful to be a 30 year old!

Then the time of the great opening came and there was a huge scandal. An artist whose pictures were of dead rats, painted different colors and stuck on the canvas, had been refused entrance to the Biennale. So he had a box of live rats and when everyone came — the President of the Republic, and all the generals and everyone in such beautiful uniforms — he opened the box and the rats flew at them. One of the generals killed a rat inside the sleeve of his uniform. It wasn't a Russian artist of course.

5 |


Palladio's grand original:

VILLA MALCONTEN

by John Russell; photographs by Lord Snowdon

6 |

5 | The Sunday Times, color section. December 23, 1962 Villa Malconlenla

6 | "One of lhe Villa's mosl providenlial visilors lhis year was Miss Larissa Salmina of lhe Hermilage Museum in Leningrad, who is seen (righl) looking oul of one of Palladio's indoor windows lowards lhe frescoes whose aulhorship she was able lo confirm from lhe evidence of drawings now in her charge..."

7 | Robert Adams exhibition in the British Pavilion, 1962

7 |

PHOTO: CHARLES GIMPEL, COURTESY OF KAY GIMPEL

The Biennale ran from June to October 1962 and Larissa met her husband, Francis, at the end of August. He travelled on with her to Belgrade and came frequently to visit her in St. Petersburg.

Christopher White. Francis Haskell. Gifted Art Historian Generous with His Talents // *The Guardian*. 21.01.2000

I met by chance the then-editor of The Burlington Magazine[10], Benedict Nicolson, much excited about his forthcoming first visit to Leningrad, as it then was. But it soon became clear that his bubbling enthusiasm was directed not so much towards the great art and architecture he was about to see, as to the fact he was going to share a wagon with Haskell for a whole 48 hours, and "what wonderful conversations we are going to have".

She told him to say he was only interested in Tiepolo drawings — then they would be free to do what they liked together. Finally the head of department sent for her and said: "I hear that you have appropriated a very interesting foreigner. Release him!" And thereafter she shared him with the other curators. Antonina Isergina[11], the famous curator of modern French art, showed him the Shchukin and Morozov collections of the Impressionists[12] and became a friend.

L.S-H: Everyone was pleased with our exhibition[13]. There was an enormous amount of receptions and so on. One of our pictures was dropped by an Italian workman and there was a huge hole in it. Tarasov did a wonderful job on the spot, using my tiny iron that I'd brought with me to iron my clothes. As a restorer he was superb.

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

From an interview with Vladimir Goryainov, Commissioner of the Soviet Pavilion in Venice in 1964 (Vice-Commissioner) and 1982. *Open Space*, 2011.

"And what was the reaction from the Western audience?"
"Very mixed. Around 1960, for example, the pavilions of the Biennale were dominated by abstract paintings. This was not as it is now: two of every sort. Suddenly there was this one pavilion where, although it was not completely realist art, it was figurative. And the reaction was mixed. On the one hand, they said it was outdated. On the other, both the press and experts took the view that, although it was an old art form, it showed interesting things. The general public liked it, while artists and specialists of course took the same view as they then always did of our art."

At the time it was impossible for a Russian to marry a foreigner. In 1965 Khrushchev was out and Larissa hoped that there would be a change of rules — she applied for permission to marry Francis and received it. On August 10, 1965 they were married. Larisa's visa only came through on December 26, and she left immediately.
She joined Francis in Cambridge where he had a fine set of rooms in King's College, but women were not permitted to live there. Their first problem was therefore to find an apartment where they could live together. They found something but it was not very nice. Francis had waited for Larissa's arrival to share in the decision on whether to apply for the Professorship of the History of Art at Oxford University. She told him to go ahead and, although he was really too young, he was elected. So they abandoned the "nasty flat" in Cambridge for a small house in Walton Street, Oxford. It had no bathroom or heating, so for their first year they shared it with a team of workmen.

Christopher White. Francis Haskell. Gifted Art Historian Generous with His Talents

"In 1965, Haskell married Larissa Salmina, then a curator at the Hermitage Museum. It was a union of great happiness and closeness, which offered a haven of conviviality in their house in Walton Street, Oxford."[14]

Larissa started out giving Russian lessons to private students but soon got back to her interest in drawings. She had published an article on the 16th century Sienese artist Francesco Vanni on the basis of the Hermitage collection before she left Russia. She now discovered a Vanni in the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and subsequently brought his work to light by rediscoveries in Italy and in America. She published on several other Italian draughtsmen.
She had always been interested in the late 19th century Russian school, known as the Silver Age, because her teacher in Leningrad, Dobroklonsky, had known Benois and Bakst in his youth. Few people in the UK were familiar with the period and she was asked to prepare a catalogue of Russian Drawings by the Victoria and Albert Museum, published in 1972[15] . She also made a catalogue of Russian Paintings and Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum[16] — five minutes down the road from her home — which has been through two editions and a third is in preparation. She has been buying drawings for them for some years and acts as honorary keeper of Russian paintings there.
She also helped conduct research for her husband's books. She was particularly interested in "Taste and The Antique; The Lure Of Classical Sculpture 1500–1900" written in collaboration with Nicholas Penny, now Director of the National Gallery[17]. "They used to give me tasks," Larissa says, "mostly translating long essays from German books into English."

PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

8–9 | The Wallon Street house is now filled to the brim with papers and drawings but it is still her home. It has seen the coming and going of art scholars from all over the world, especially curators from the Hermitage.

“Haskell was an international star, invariably the center of attention at conferences, symposia and art-historical gatherings around the world. [...] His contribution to discussions was distinctive; carefully choosing his subject and his moment, he would develop his argument with a passionate eloquence which generally swept all before him. He cared deeply about the quality of acquisitions made by museums and, very particularly, believed in the principle of free entry to them. But he was not doctrinaire.”[18]

She travelled extensively with Francis, especially in Italy where they had friends all over the country. They also went to the US many times and Francis helped found the Provenance Center of the J .Paul Getty Foundation in Malibu, California[19]. His great specialty was the history of collecting and he left his papers to the Getty on his death in 2000. The executor of his will is Nicholas Penny. “Nick and I have managed to get them back,” says Larissa. “We didn’t think that the recently appointed staff were interested and I would prefer them to go to somewhere in England.”[20]

L.S-H: I was rather scornful of the other exhibitors. Next door to mine was the German pavilion and at first I thought the ruins were the fault of the earthquake. Then I realized it was meant to be Germany after the war. The English was no better. There were paths of stones all over the floor.

1 This interview with Larissa Salmina-Haskell by Geraldine Norman first appeared in the book *Russian Artists at the Venice Biennale, 1895–2013*, published by Stella Art Foundation, 2013.
2 Francis Haskell (1928–2000), an English art historian. Haskell was one of the leading art historians of his generation and served as Professor of the History of Art at Oxford University. His father, Arnold Haskell, was a renowned expert on Russian ballet and had a Russian wife.
3 “In the 1920s and 1930s, the Soviet Pavilion caused great controversy. By the 1950s and 1960s, it provoked an ironic smile at the very least. After that, it stopped receiving attention, until it was closed following the Soviet authorities’ disapproval of the 1977 Biennale of Dissent.” *Russian Artists at the Venice Biennale, 1895–2013*, Stella Art Foundation, 2013.
4 Alexander Andreyevich Guber, Soviet historian, member of the Soviet Academy of Sciences (from 1966) and expert in the history of Southeast Asia. From 1962, he worked in the Communist University of the Toilers of the East and the Institute of History at the Academy of Sciences. Guber taught at Moscow State University and the Academy of Social Sciences attached to the Central Committee of the Communist Party, also heading the “Soviet Union-Indonesia” society. Guber was deputy Commissioner of the Soviet Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 1956 and 1958.
5 Polikarp Lebedev, Director of the Tretyakov Gallery, 1939–1941 and 1954–1979.
6 The Soviet Union participated in the Venice Biennale until the early 1930s. After World War II, it only began to participate again in 1956. At various times, commissioners of the pavilion included: Sergei Diaghilev (1907), Fyodor Bernshtam (1914), Pyotr Bezrodny (1920), Pyotr Kogan (1924, 1928 and 1930), Fyodor Petrov (1932), Pavel Fridgut (1934), German Nedoshivin (1956), Aleksei Fedorov-Davydov (1958), Irina Antonova (1960), Larissa Salmina (1962), Alexander Khalturin (1964) and Vladimir Goryainov (1982).
7 The artists whose work was exhibited at the Soviet pavilion in 1962 included “three representatives of the ‘severe style’: Gely Korzhev, Viktor Popkov and Tair Salakhov.” “In 1962, these followers of Deyneka and Favorsky, who exhibited under the slogan ‘a new sincerity’, were severely criticized by Nikita Khrushchev after he visited the ‘30 years MOSX’ exhibition.” *Russian Artists at the Venice Biennale, 1895–2013*, Stella Art Foundation, 2013.
8 “Where is the young lady who lost her wagon?” (translation from German)
9 Irina Antonova, art historian. From 1961 to 2013 she was Director of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. In 1960, she served as commissioner of the Soviet Pavilion at the Venice Biennale.
10 *The Burlington Magazine* is a monthly academic journal dedicated to the fine and decorative arts. It was founded in 1903. Francis Haskell was a member of the magazine’s editorial board.
11 Antonina Isergina (1906-1969), Hermitage specialist in Western European art.
12 Shchukin and Morozov’s collections of New Western Art have been in the Hermitage since 1948.
13 “... the innovations, for which there had been such a dramatic struggle in Soviet artistic circles, were indiscernible to the Western eye. In the Soviet Pavilion, no ‘new sincerity’, for which the representatives of the ‘severe style’ had stoically fought, could be made out. They saw the very same ‘smiling, upright people, working women... and Uzbeks with moustaches’, who could easily have been depicted forty years previously.” *Russian Artists at the Venice Biennale, 1895–2013*, Stella Art Foundation, 2013.
14 Obituary by Christopher White. Francis Haskell. Gifted art historian generous with his talents. *The Guardian*, January 21, 2000
15 Catalogue of Russian drawings by Victoria and Albert Museum, Larissa Salmina-Haskell, 1972.
16 Russian Paintings and Drawings in the Ashmolean Museum / Larissa Salmina-Haskell, Oxford : Ashmolean Museum, 1989.
17 Nicholas Penny (born 1949), British art historian. Since 2008, he has been Director of the National Gallery in London.
18 Obituary by Christopher White. Francis Haskell. Gifted art historian generous with his talents. *The Guardian*, January 21, 2000
19 The J. Paul Getty Museum is the largest art museum in California. Since 1997, the main collection has been exhibited in Los Angeles, in the Getty Center. Collections of antiquities are exhibited at the Getty Villa in Malibu.
20 The Francis Haskell Memorial Fund is currently active in London and, among other things, funds research by young academics from different countries into the history of Western art.

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CHILDREN

WALDHAUER
FIRST TEACHERS IN THE HERMITAGE: 1909–1935

ZORINA MYSKOVA

IT IS EASY TO OUTLINE THE MAJOR PEDAGOGICAL PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM: FROM THE 1910s UNTIL THE BOLSHEVIK REVOLUTION OF 1917; THE 1920s; THE 1930s AND 1940s; AND FINALLY THE POST-WAR PERIOD. WHILE THE PHASES PRIOR TO WORLD WAR II HAD THEIR OWN SPECIAL FEATURES, ALL THESE YEARS TOGETHER SHOW HOW FIRMLY AND PURPOSEFULLY THE HERMITAGE WORKED ON ITS OWN METHOD OF PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION WITH CHILDREN[1].

When we say that the Hermitage has survived everything and will survive everything, this "everything" means several periods that are particularly dramatic. The main question is: how did it survive? Without mentioning the details, which are as naïve and commonplace as they are painfully dreadful, how did it manage to survive what others did not?

What were the elegant people who worked at the Hermitage thinking about in the beginning of the 20th century? Did they live for the moment? Did they try to predict their destiny? Did they believe that everything would perish except for those walls — that death was coming to others, but not for them? Did they try to outtalk their terror, did they joke, did they look around and feel the imminence of the end? Did they try to cut themselves off, to show what was happening without participating in it, to imagine new worlds?[2]

13 ↓ p. 072 p. 086 p. 109 p. 163 p. 195 p. 206 p. 209 p. 252

We often read about the events of the early 20th century, about wonderful educated people, and the "big" life they led crumbling day after day around them: the traditions, the goals, the world; we also read about the "smaller", private life, and the main life — that of the Hermitage. First came the Bolshevik Revolution, then the famine and devastation of the 1920s, terror and death[13]; then the repressions of the 1930s which ruined the essence of everything; then the 1940s, the war, the Siege of Leningrad. Then the end. Entropy was bound to annihilate the very foundations and possibilities of future reconstruction.

In memoirs you read about people and events, some of them funny, at the time, but now seen as tragically painful. These events are often so strange from our modern-day perspective and so incompatible with any of our notions of

"Boy with Thorn" (Spinario; Fedele, Fedelino)
is a bronze Roman statue from the middle of the 1st century BC, and a copy[19] of a Greek Hellenistic statue from the 3rd century BC. It is part of the collection of the Capitoline museum in Rome (Hall of the Triumphs, inventory № MC 1186). It depicts a naked boy sitting on a rock and trying to pull a thorn out of his left foot, which is probably a reference to the Pastoral idyll known in Hellenistic poetry. In the Middle Ages the thorn was a symbol of the original sin, so the boy was allegorically perceived as a sinner trying to save his soul.
The antique bronze statue drew the attention of artists in the 15th and 16th centuries, and they replicated it multiple times and in various materials. The Hermitage statue, which is the same size as the original, is special in its fine casting and the noble tone of its patinized bronze. It has recently been proved that the creator of the statue is the eminent Italian sculptor Guglielmo della Porta who in the middle of the 16th century created a series of copies of antiques for the Farnese, a noble Roman family.

19 ↓ p. 030 p. 112

life at that time that you cannot help but be confused. And if you manage to realize that "that" life is more interesting, complicated and terrible than any of our notions about it, and that our notions about it are based on our own experience which is not compatible with that of those people and that life, this is already a victory.

Lev Rakov[3] wrote in 1935: "Late winter saw the death of O.F. Waldhauer[4], who had run the Antiquities Department at the Hermitage for many years. For two days there was music playing by his coffin, which was covered with flowers. This funeral was remarkable for its special museum-like solemnity. Hardly anyone had been given such an after-life honor: the open coffin was carried through the antique sculpture halls lit with torches... I had to do a lot of things concerning the whole sad ceremony"[5]. This was in 1935. The first wave of Stalin's repressions had already come and gone. Some Hermitage employees had been shot, others had been exiled. There were torches — a strange piece of symbolism, not really compatible with the times. Secret signs, the 18th century — what was this? What was the secret life the Hermitage led, and what was at its core if torches could be lit in 1935? And our terror today is that of being people who know what happened next: a year after Waldhauer was buried with such honors, his widow Nina, who was German by birth, was shot — and no one was able to help, no high patronage aided her... Remember how we used to shout at children's performances when we saw from the auditorium something that the inconsiderate hero on stage could not: "It's behind you!! Run!!"

What these people did, literally on the brink of their graves, had the quality of Antiquity in its heroism. By 1935 not only had Waldhauer and many others been carried away from the Hermitage (many died a natural, although untimely, death)[13], yet others had been taken away to be shot directly; works by Rubens, van Eyck, Raphael and Rembrandt[8] were removed; collections, interiors, and traditions were ruined. These were further rough blows to the huge wound that had only just begun to heal... What was there left? Children. Children brought to the Hermitage by Waldhauer, long ago, before the ruin. Working with children, especially the children of workers, was an interesting and honorable task for a researcher into Antiquity in the early 20th century[6].

Children first started to go on museum visits as a result of lasting Europe-wide educational reforms in the late 19th century and early 20th century. Consequently, the Hermitage became a little more accessible to children in 1910s. And not only to children: museum education was also a requirement for workers of the time as a result of a deliberate policy by museum authorities[7].

At the end of the 19th century Russian society realized the importance[24] of the history and culture of Antiquity and Classical languages in the development of children's talents. The "historical

13 ↓ p. 072 p. 086 p. 109 p. 163 p. 195 p. 205 p. 209 p. 252
8 ↓ p. 039 p. 041 p. 068 p. 115 p. 126 p. 150 p. 273 p. 279
24 ↓ p. 016 p. 076 p. 212

11 | A. A. Peredolskaya and O.F. Waldhauer in St. Isaac's Square in Leningrad. 1934

and philosophical method" of teaching Classical civilization was developed. Researchers into Antiquity strongly believed that Classical education, learning Greek and Latin, developed the mind and character and made education richer. This new method was so contrary to the "plague of materialism", as the Marxism infiltrating Russia was then called, and so much hope was placed on the school of ancient moral values, that it explains what happened later. It was vitally important to preserve humanistic references and the possibility of ethical maturity. The Hermitage became the place where this was not only possible — it was the most important thing.

Waldhauer started teaching in 1908, "to earn a living while working without a paycheck at the Hermitage. [...] He taught Greek and the history of fine arts, and he was more and more enthusiastic about it, developing his own method for getting children involved in admiring art. Fortunately these works by O.F. Waldhauer were then published by A. Brock in German, and in 1912 the school director[8] was proud to show his students' experience in this new field to the participants of the Russian teachers' congress"[9].

The way we imagine Waldhauer, surrounded by children, surprisingly coincides (cinematographically and graphically) with contemporary memories of him: in 1913-1914 "in the depths of the library shelves of the Hermitage Antiquities Department he found astonishing things hidden behind huge tomes, for example, 'Pelike with a Swallow' (well known in old academic literature and considered lost without a trace), a wonderful lekythos with a unique image of Artemis feeding a swan, and, finally, small red-figure vases from the high period of Greek Classical art with genre scenes in a very fine miniature style, etc. All these wonderful objects were hidden in the library by the former Hermitage keeper Kizeritsky (he had died in 1902, and no one had any idea about the hidden works)"[10]. He found in the cases a whole collection of ancient engravings and told museum stories to children, students and young workers. He was a discoverer, a wizard, an entertainer; a great man. He had something of the image of a crazy scientist, so popular in the Soviet films of the time, but there was something Jungian about him, too, in this discovery of hidden treasure in cases...

Before February 1917 the Hermitage was run by the Ministry of the Imperial Court, and its staff rooms were dominated by a rigid scientific atmosphere; visit cards, hard collars, formal ties, shortened beards — and women were entirely unacceptable. Upstairs, in the rooms behind the paintings gallery, only French was spoken; downstairs, behind the Antiquities halls, only German[11]. "The dignified and highly knowledgeable Waldhauer"[12] came from this well-organized world full of meaning.

Were the children's classes peaceful and joyful, at least before 1917? "The feeling of an approaching war, or, let's be

ON THE ORGANIZATION OF GUIDED TOURS IN PETROGRAD FROM 1918 TO 1929:

In 1918 the People's Commissariat for Education (Narkompros) established a special bureau for guided tours for schoolchildren. On January 1, 1920 a central gathering point for guided tours was created in the Anichkov Palace, known as the Central Station. This was quite convenient for visitors since the palace is located in the very center of the city on the intersection of Nevsky Prospekt and the Fontanka River. At that time it was in the same palace as the City History Museum. Visitors first had a tour of the City History Museum exhibitions and then headed to the Hermitage and the Russian Museum nearby.

Schoolchildren from more distant Petrograd schools and those coming from the outer suburbs received a free meal. A 60-place dormitory was created for schoolchildren from the provinces coming to Petrograd, which the employees jokingly called the "General Headquarters". By prior arrangement visitors could have a place to stay, meals and the opportunity to go on a tour according to an established program.

The first director of the Central Station was the artist P.V. Ilyina-Kovalskaya, the wife of the director of the City History Museum, L.A. Ilyin.

The Central Station did not only receive schoolchildren. From October 15 to October 30, 1920, a special course was organized to familiarize Petrograd educators with "humanities teaching material extant in Petrograd". The participants were given guided tours by Professors V.Y. Kurbatov, I.M. Grevs, and P.N. Weiner, as well as other eminent experts in the history and culture of St. Petersburg.

Such courses were also repeated in May 1921 with an extended program.

The station in the Anichkov Palace remained open until September 1924, when it came to an end. We can definitely say that all the guided-tour stations in Petrograd/Leningrad played a very important role in the education of schoolchildren and their teachers. In those troubled days the best measures were taken to maintain the work of the professors and tour guides, as well as the participation of thousands of schoolchildren. From scarce, almost nonexistent food supplies the young regime delivered a "lion's share for the guided-tour stations". These circumstances attracted the best professors to give lectures and conduct the guided tours, on the one hand, and on the other, attracted large numbers of visitors to the stations.

After 1924 the guided tour stations slowly began to close down. Starting from 1929 the stations were asked to do political educational work, to work on the class structure of the population, and to "do research on the forms of class struggle in the city and in the countryside". In 1939 the director of the Lakhta Station, P.V. Wittenburg, was arrested, as well as the other employees of the station. The museum's collections were taken by different organizations: part of the archaeological collection was taken to the Hermitage, but many art objects just disappeared, including works by the painter A.N. Benois. In 1932 the Lakhta Station was closed down. [...] Between 1929 and 1931 the guided-tours and regional history movement was effectively destroyed. Many specialists were arrested. Their domain of activity, disparagingly called "coffin delving", was eliminated. All literature on guided tours published before 1921 had to be examined and maybe withdrawn. — from G. Usyskin. "Tourist and Guided Tours work during the first years of the Soviet Regime (1918-1926)". G. Usyskin. "Essays on the history of Russian Tourism." St. Petersburg, 2000.

12 | O.F. Waldhauer and his students in the Hermitage. Late 1920s.

13 | Relocating a statue of the King of the Bosphorus. Jupiter Hall. 1928

more prudent, the feeling of an approaching new era, terrible in comparison to the present and the past, can be seen in O.F. Waldhauer's 1914 work, published in only 50 copies and titled 'In Memoriam'. One has to be very imaginative to see this book as a fantasy inspired by Waldhauer's classes on arts and literature for children. Published in such quantity and written in German, was this small book a presentiment, a warning, a farewell, a prophesy?"[13]

Did these projects for children give some guarantee of personal security to the teacher? Waldhauer, a well-known person in Petrograd, as St. Petersburg was called then, and a Germanophile, "frantic in work", had, since 1914, become, among other things, an object of harassment in the general boycott of everything German and of the hysteria in the press concerning the "damage to Antiquities in the Hermitage" (the lack of heads, arms, legs and noses on the Classical statues in the museum was attributed to the activities of "Hermitage Germans").

And yet in 1917, under the new regime, Waldhauer was sent by the Ministry of Education to Sweden to study the teaching of art history to children. Other Scandinavian countries were originally on the list, too, but then it was limited to Sweden, which was already a great thing.

After a short break (the Hermitage was closed to visitors until November 1918) Waldhauer resumed his lessons with children. He struggled to get permission to teach, but he received it. Imagine this, after the apocalypse. Where and how did he take the children? Through the half-empty, dirty, ruined halls?[14] Or did they sit in the corner under the staircase, shaking off plaster from children's heads, with the clatter of feet and sound of furniture being moved?[15]

And who were these children? In 1918, they were those not yet shot or deported, whose families had not yet been destroyed by the Red Terror which followed the Revolution. What kind of guided tours were they, about the "lost paradise"[16]? "Or were those the first symptoms of the strange delusion that in the circumstances of the [Russian] Civil War, the best people among the Russian intelligentsia, when in the euphoria of freedom, terror, cold and hunger (such an explosive mixture) gave birth to ideas of genius"[17]?

V.F. Levinson-Lessing. "History of the Hermitage Painting Gallery (1764-1917)"

"One episode from the history of studying and promoting Hermitage treasures in the last years before the [Bolshevik] Revolution, which seems to be unknown to the press, is worth telling. In 1910 a group of students from the History and Philology Faculty of St. Petersburg University, joined by several students from the Women's Higher Education (Bestuzhev) courses, created a special group of about 20 participants for studying the Hermitage. This group worked independently on a systematic study of the Hermitage collections and received help and advice from professors B.A. Turaev, B.V. Farmakovsky and O.F. Waldhauer. The participants, most of them not belonging to a party but Revolutionary-oriented, aimed at organizing guided tours for workers, which they started to do in 1913. Several guided tours were conducted in 1913 for popular educators who arrived for the All-Russian Teachers' Convention. In 1914 the group's members organized tours for wounded soldiers."

BACKGROUND. EARLY 1920s:

In 1920, a theatrical performance called "The Seizure of the Winter Palace" took place on Palace Square, with 8,000 actors, several armored cars and 150 projectors.

On December 26, 1920 the Petrograd Soviet announced the closure of all factories until January 10, 1921. On January 21, it was declared that bread allowances would be cut "by a third for a period of 10 days, starting from tomorrow, January 22". In reality this measure was repeated every ten days.

Lenin was still alive. It was a period of burning intraparty struggle. The 11th Russian Communist Party (Bolshevik) conference held in August 1922 declared as anti-State all anti-Bolshevik parties and movements. All leftist and socialist newspapers and magazines were closed. Processes were started against former comrades in the political struggle — the Socialist-Revolutionaries. It was a period of terrible economic and political crisis. As a result of the Kronstadt rebellion in 1921, 2,103 people were sentenced to death. The persistent anti-church campaign began in earnest as the Bolshevik takeover became entrenched. Patriarch Tikhon was framed for anti-Revolutionary activity; in 1925 his successor, Metropolitan Pyotr, was arrested and sent into exile. Epidemics of typhus, dysentery and cholera, aggravated by the White Army campaign of General Yudenich, spread voraciously. In 1920 more than 20,000 typhus patients were registered in Petrograd hospitals.

The Policy Statement on Unified Working Education in the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, approved by the All-Russian Central Executive Committee, gave workers and peasants the right to enter universities. Workers' faculties were created at universities and institutes. The State provided grants and dormitories for alumni.

Alexander Blok died on August 7, 1921.

Leaders of Proletkult, an experimental "proletarian culture" body, called for the trashing of the cultural achievements and traditions of the past. Art workshops and clubs were created. Different groups emerged with their own forms and manifestos (for example, the Serapion Brothers group). Architects created gigantic building plans.

In 1921 a case was filed which framed a group of Russian scientists and cultural figures in Petrograd for "counter-Revolutionary" activities. On Lenin's initiative, 160 people were sent into exile, and the poet Nikolai Gumilev and the chemist M. Tikhvinsky were shot. By the middle of the 1920s the list of political émigrés was joined by many great people: Ivan Bunin, Sergei Prokofiev, Alexander Kuprin, Alexei Tolstoi, Maxim Gorky, Sergei Rachmaninov and others.

From 1922 regular radio broadcasts began in the city, first by means of street loudspeakers; later residential houses, enterprises and public places were equipped with radios.

And in 1921 at the time of the anti-Bolshevik rebellion in Kronstadt and a new wave of furious terror? Were there children in the Hermitage classes who were denied life for the sole fact of their kinship? (That year in Petrograd more than 2,000 people were shot in relation to the Kronstadt rebellion alone.) Did they see the horrible bodies of people from the Volga region starving to death[13], who came to Petrograd in the masses? How many of them were sick with the typhus that took over Petrograd in 1920 after White Army General Nikolai Yudenich failed to conquer city and aggravated the plague? How did Oscar Waldhauer explain to the children everything that was happening around them? We know that life learns from art but what parallels did they draw? What did he show to console or to justify? Was he afraid? Since 1921 all museum literature (meaning all teaching resources, lectures and so on) were completely censored according to ideological principles. Judging by an interview Waldhauer gave to a German newspaper during the year he was director of the museum[18], the Hermitage did not explicitly separate its approach to museum education from the new general educational system.

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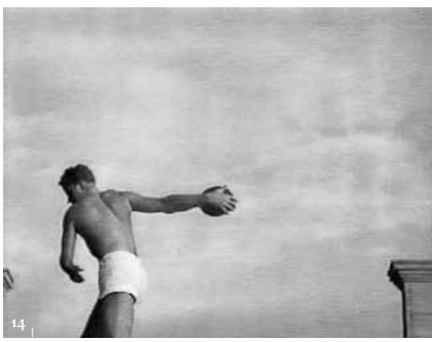
"During his short term in the director's office Waldhauer managed to organize a Sunday university in the Hermitage, an extension school with quite an elaborate program of popular lectures organized in courses. This 'invention' of Waldhauer's, slightly modified, continues today"[19].

In 1921 it was decided to run courses for teachers in the Hermitage, so that they could do guided tours in the halls for boys and girls, separately. That corresponded well with the philosophy of the time: "museum education" was coming into vogue everywhere. In Austria there was a theory about the "integrity of children's artistic expression"[20], and Soviet art education was demonstrating a short period of interest in biogenetic theory and the practice of "pedagogical noninterference"[21]. So it was in the spirit of the time, but still rigid: guided tours, boys and girls separated.

Waldhauer developed his own system of art education at school in five steps: its main elements were contemplating a work of art and learning to analyse it[22]. They say that these methods were not popular in the context of general Soviet education, and this is quite understandable: no art has value separate from its material production or in contradiction with Marxist-Leninist class theory...

Waldhauer not only taught in the Hermitage. The creator of the Art History Institute, who also ran the State Higher Art History Course, Count Valentin Zubov, wrote about Waldhauer in his memoirs (which start with the words: "On a May evening in 1914 I was sitting with my friend, the art historian Baron Nikolai Wrangel..."): "The then-young German-school archaeologist Oscar Waldhauer[23], who seemed destined for a big academic future and who died too early — exhausted by the hardships of the Revolutionary period — taught Greek sculptural history in German"[24].

The 1930s brought into focus education and antiquity in the context of balance and the clash of public and personal ideals in both European and Soviet cinema, which was deemed as the most important art.


14


15


16

14–16 | Stills from *"A Strict Young Man"*. 1936

"A Strict Young Man", 1936. Directed by Abram Room, screenplay by Yury Olesha.

— But these are bourgeois qualities!
— No, these are human qualities. [...]The bourgeoisie perverted these qualities, because of the power of money. And since there is no bourgeoisie now, these qualities regain their purity.

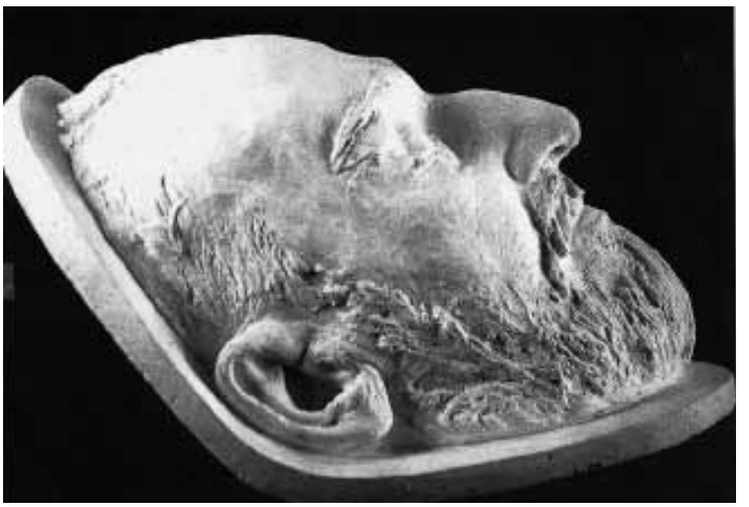
Mikhail Kosinsky writes about Waldhauer's lectures at the State Higher Art History Course in 1924: "Oscar Waldhauer was one of the greatest specialists in Greek and Roman art in our country in those years. Was it only in Russia though? In 1920s he was offered the director's position at the Pergamon Museum in Berlin. He was the head of the Antiquities Department at the Hermitage and ran the corresponding department's teaching for the courses. [...] A beautiful raven-headed man, Oscar Waldhauer wore a beard and looked a little bit like a mythical centaur. [...] For some reason he did not have time to organize exams at the courses and he held them in the Hermitage. The keepers and guards were then mostly former court butlers. These old men were very serious in their job and very strict with the students"[25].

Throughout his life (before the Hermitage, too, and he did not have an "after") Waldhauer studied Antiquity. He called Hellenes individualists, especially Ionians, who had the blood of the ancestors of Aegean culture. "Enterprise and initiative, independence and watchfulness are the characteristic features of this very talented Greek population; they manifest themselves both in the political and spiritual life of the people" (Waldhauer, 1923)[26]. We can guess that something of the kind was characteristic of Waldhauer himself: conscious activity informs the personality, and the influence must have been considerable. The students of this representative of "the most talented Hermitage population" later showed their worth in the political and spiritual life of the country. Everything proved not to have been done in vain.

Were the first Hermitage educators missionaries? Yes, they showed real devotion, noble and selfless: teaching children, determinedly and consistently, systematically "outside the system", in times of hunger, epidemics, terror, in horrible living, personal and cultural conditions — all without profit or compromise.

What were the sources of the Hermitage educational school? As with everything in the humanities, a school does not develop through a model of behavior, because there is no uniform model: every researcher has his own goals,

17 | In an antique sculpture room.
Preparing for evacuation. August 1917



18 | Death mask[6] of O.F. Waldhauer.
1935

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p. 060
p. 149
p. 150
p. 156

ideals and values. It so happened that the learning of Classical civilization by children became so important in Russia at a time when there were no ancient values left, and it was something structurally and systematically wholesome, and it took place in the Hermitage.

There is no doubt that in their educational work the Hermitage researchers realized their understanding of academic duty, moral progress and social responsibility. The necessity[24] of progress was firmly ingrained in the minds of the progressives, of the researchers of Antiquity.

The Hermitage Antiquities Department saved our children; it saved us.

Zorina Myskova expresses her deep gratitude to Mikhail Piotrovsky, General Director of the State Hermitage Museum, and Anna Trofimova, Head of the Antiquities Department of the State Hermitage Museum, for their valuable support and advice in writing this article.

PETROGRAD CHILDREN BY 1921:

"In Petrograd there are over 6,000 juvenile delinquents aged nine to 15, all of them recidivists and none too few murderers among them. There are 12-year olds who have as many as three murders to their name. Isolation does not reach its goal." (Lenin's notes on a letter from Gorky, April 2, 1920. Central Party Archives of the Marxism and Leninism Institute. 13, op.1. Item 42. p18 – 18 reverse).

In the second half of 1921 Petrograd's population was increased by refugees from the starving Volga regions. New orphanages were opened. "The food allowance for one child was 400g of bread, 130g of flour, 16g of salt, 200g of cereals, 25g of sugar, 400g of potatoes, 50g of herring, sometimes some condensed milk. Of course this allowance was not given to them entirely, but still children gained weight quickly and were quite satisfied." (Central State Archives, St. Petersburg, 2552, Op. 1, F. 1256, p22).

"...the People's Commissariat for Food systematically does not deliver children's allowances according to the standards. [...] Children starve to death in many places..." (Letter from Anna Yelizarova-Ulyanova to her brother Vladimir Lenin, May 17, 1920. Central Party Archives of the Marxism and Leninism Institute, 13. Op.1, l. 42, p1).

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p. 016
p. 076
p. 206

1 Based on the article “Musei uchil i uchiltsya (Problemy preemstvennosti v muzeinoy pedagogike na primere antichnogo iskusstva). (Museum Teaching and Learning (The Problem of Succession in Museum Pedagogy using the example of Antique Art)) by I.A. Kureyeva and E.V. Mavleyeva in Antichoye iskusstvo v sovetskom muzeevedenii. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov. Leningrad: Gosudarstvenny Ermitazh, 1986.

2 “The novel by [H.G.] Wells helped me. I suddenly remembered it, it came into my mind. Two humans from Earth arrived on the Moon. There are lots of inhabitants. They look like ants standing on their hind legs; they are a little shorter than men. The men were only two, and in a cave whole regiments of huge hostile ants started marching towards them. One could believe that would be the end. But the men suddenly noticed that these ants were incredibly feeble and fragile. You barely touch one — with your finger or with a stick — and it’s dead. And if the ant itself hurls something, or its legs get entangled, it falls down breathless. And so their dead bodies just rolled around the cave...” (Zinaida Gippius, “Lunnye muravyi” (Moon Ants), 1910: about a wave of suicides in 1909 when people tried to escape reality).

3 L.L. Rakov (1904–1970) — historian, the Hermitage Museum’s Academic Secretary in the 1930s.

4 Oscar Waldhauer was approved as a candidate for a teaching position in 1903 and was appointed keeper of the Antiquities Department in 1914. In 1913 Waldhauer was appointed keeper of the Antiquities Department and taught Greek and art history in the former Reform college. In 1927 and 1928 he served as acting director of the entire Hermitage. His major works in publishing, which attributed and systematized Antique works of art in Soviet museums were related to important problems in Soviet art history in the 1920s and 1930s (realism, portraits). Waldhauer was one of the pioneers of the academic methods of mounting museum exhibitions.

5 From “Roman v stikhakh” (A Novel in Poems), the memoirs of L.L. Rakov Lev Lvovitch Rakov. Tvorcheskoye nasledtye. Zhiznenny put. (Lev Lvovitch Rakov. Life and Artistic Legacy). Avtor-sostavitel A.L. Rakova. St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvenny Ermitazh (seriya “Khranitel”), 2007. pp 140–149.

6 Waldhauer explained his teaching method and view of the importance of art studies in children’s education in articles published in “Jahresbericht der Schulen der Reformierten Gemeinden” (“Die Kunst in der Schule”, 1908; “Die Antike und die Kunsterziehung”, 1911; “Donatellos S. Giovanni Battista in Siena. Eine Kunstpaedagogische Studie”, 1913). For educators, tour guides, lecturers, students and scientists the article “Die Antike und die Kunsterziehung” (The Antique and Art Education) remains a brilliant example of stylistic analysis of works of art, a method of contemplation and a great example of how to use observations, even those that appear insignificant at first sight, for general conclusions that are always historically precise.

7 Understanding the great ethical and aesthetic value of Antique art, Waldhauer, together with B.A. Turaev and B.V. Farmakovsky, conducted a great deal of educational work at the Hermitage from 1910 onward; he also trained St. Petersburg State University students to be tour guides for workers.

8 A.A. Brock’s college.

9 E.V. Mavleyev. Waldhauer. Nauchny redaktor A.A. Trofimova. St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvenny Ermitazh, 2005.

10 A.A. Peredolskaya. Oscar Ferdinandovich Waldhauer.

11 I.M. Diakonov. Kniga vospominany. (Book of Memories). St. Petersburg, 1995. pp. 416–417.

12 Ibid.

13 E.V. Mavleyev. Waldhauer. Nauchny redaktor A.A. Trofimova. St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvenny Ermitazh, 2005.

14 “... The archives of the Hermitage have been evacuated to Moscow. [...] Even if it is true that the Germans make these demands, this was no more than an attempt — maybe with the ‘general indifference of the gone-wild Russians’ they would manage to get very effective ‘trophies’.” A.N. Benois. Dnevnik 1916–1918 godov. (Diary 1916–1918). Moscow, 2010.

15 “During the summer months of 1918 the Hermitage, frozen during the past winter, did not have the time to dry out, but only defrost, and hence was damp. So during the winter of 1918–1919 the cold got into the building, freezing the water in the cracks. [...] Marble bas-reliefs began to fall from the walls in the Aura Hall.” E.V.Mavleyev. Waldhauer. Nauchny redaktor A.A. Trofimova. St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvenny Ermitazh, 2005.

16 “And after their first serious defeat, the overthrown exploiters — who had not expected their overthrow, never believed it possible, never conceded the thought of it — throw themselves with energy grown tenfold, with furious passion and hatred grown a hundredfold, into the battle for the recovery of [...] ‘paradise’.” Lenin referring to 1918 in Polnoye sobraniye sochineny. (Collected Works). Vol. 37, p 264.

17 E.V. Mavleyev. Waldhauer. Nauchny redaktor A.A. Trofimova. St. Petersburg: Gosudarstvenny Ermitazh, 2005.

18 From 1927 to 1928.

19 Ibid.

20 In the 1920s the Austrian educator F. Cizek developed the idea of the liberty and integrity of children’s artistic expression in drawing which led its followers to attempt to eliminate all educational activities, and aspire to a state of “pedagogical non-interference”.

21 In the 1920s A.U. Zelenko developed a project for a Children’s Museum-Palace. The project’s creator believed that a children’s museum should be built based on sensory perception, and the main working methods would be based on “museum games” aimed at encouraging children’s imagination with images of historical epochs. Lessons would provide children with space for initiative and research, deepening their emotions by means of dramatization.

22 L.M. Shlyakhtina. U istokov muzeinoy pedagogiki: O.F.Waldhauer. (On the Sources of Museum Education: O.F. Waldhauer). Obrazovatelnaya deyatelnost khudozhestvennogo muzeya. Vypusk 7. St. Petersburg, 2002.

23 See: I.A. Kureyeva and E.V. Mavleyeva “Musei uchil i uchiltsya (Problemy preemstvennosti v muzeinoy pedagogike na primere antichnogo iskusstva). (Museum Teaching and Learning (The Problem of Succession in Museum Pedagogy using the example of Antique Art)). Antichoye iskusstvo v sovetskom muzeevedenii. Sbornik nauchnykh trudov. Leningrad: Gosudarstvenny Ermitazh, 1986.

24 Between 1912 and 1929 Waldhauer taught courses on Antique art history at the Russian Art History Institute (in 1918 he became a professor and in 1920 he became the dean of the fine arts history department).

25 V.P. Zubov. Stradnye gody v Rossii (1917–1925). (Rush Years in Russia: Memories of the Revolution (1917–1925)). Moscow, 2004.

26 M.F. Kosinsky. Pervaya polovina veka: Vospominaniya. (First Half of the Century: Memoirs). Paris: YMCA-Press, 1995.

staraya

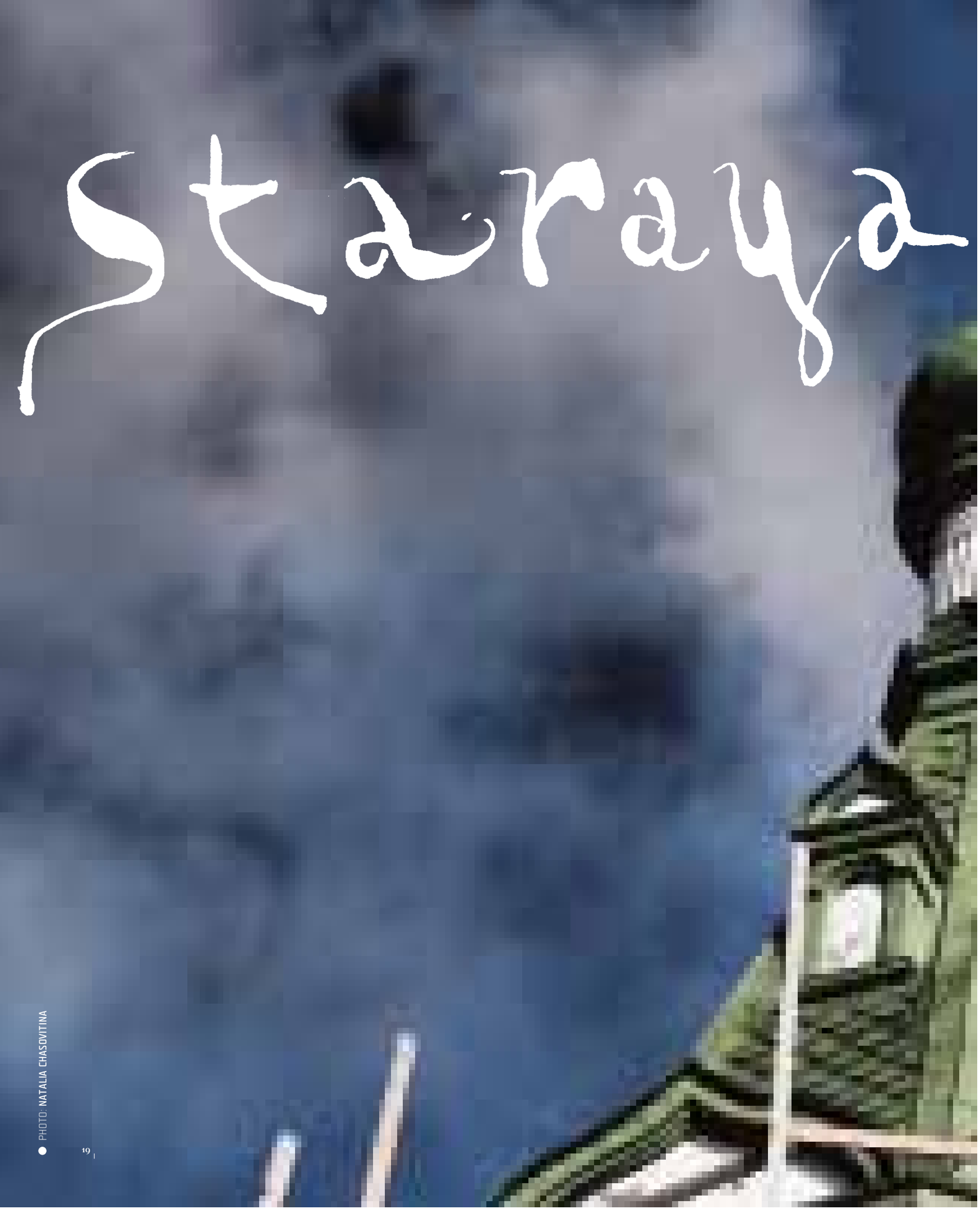
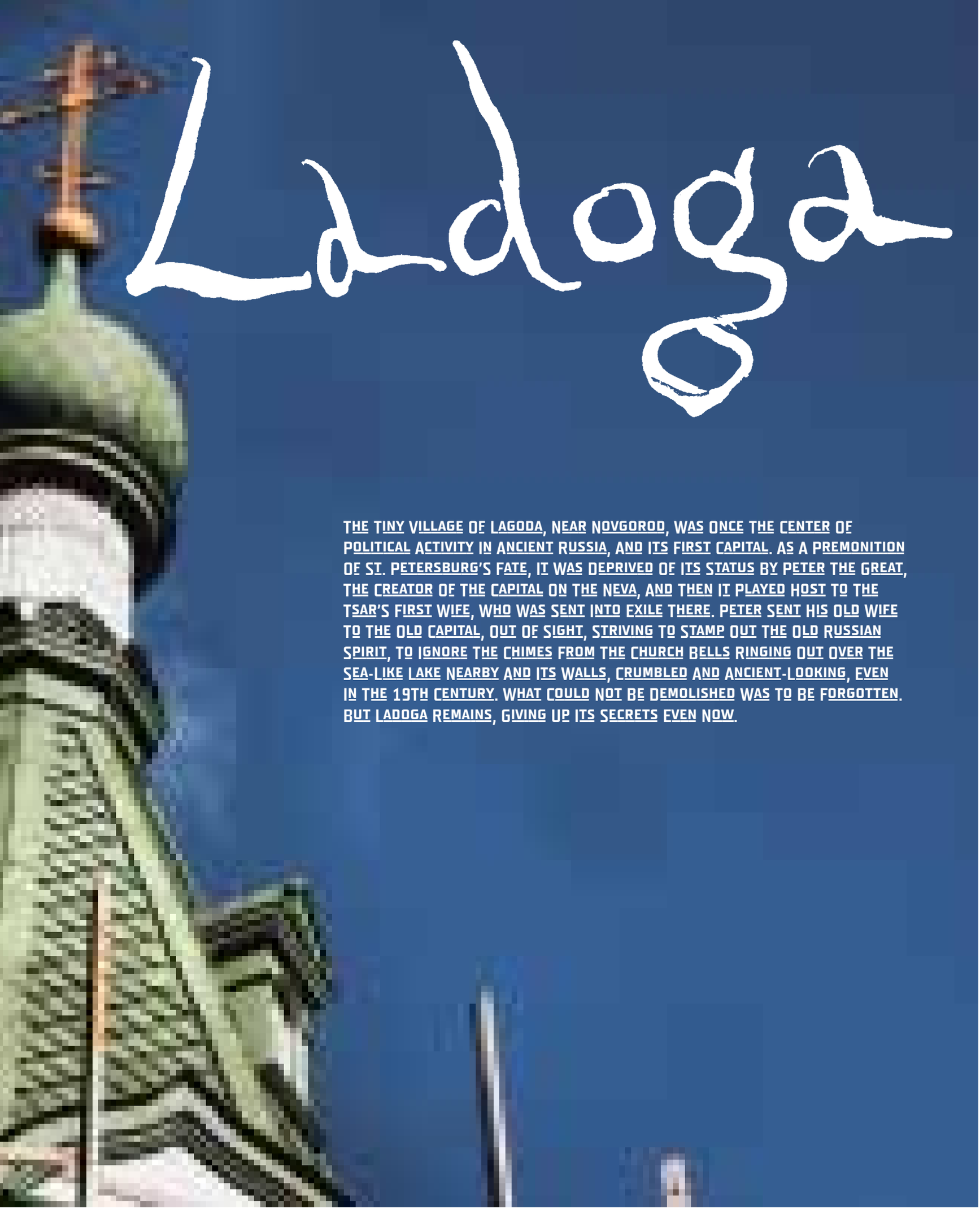


PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

Ladoga



THE TINY VILLAGE OF LAGODA, NEAR NOVGOROD, WAS ONCE THE CENTER OF POLITICAL ACTIVITY IN ANCIENT RUSSIA, AND ITS FIRST CAPITAL. AS A PREMONITION OF ST. PETERSBURG'S FATE, IT WAS DEPRIVED OF ITS STATUS BY PETER THE GREAT, THE CREATOR OF THE CAPITAL ON THE NEVA, AND THEN IT PLAYED HOST TO THE TSAR'S FIRST WIFE, WHO WAS SENT INTO EXILE THERE. PETER SENT HIS OLD WIFE TO THE OLD CAPITAL, OUT OF SIGHT, STRIVING TO STAMP OUT THE OLD RUSSIAN SPIRIT, TO IGNORE THE CHIMES FROM THE CHURCH BELLS RINGING OUT OVER THE SEA-LIKE LAKE NEARBY AND ITS WALLS, CRUMBLED AND ANCIENT-LOOKING, EVEN IN THE 19TH CENTURY. WHAT COULD NOT BE DEMOLISHED WAS TO BE FORGOTTEN. BUT LADOGA REMAINS, GIVING UP ITS SECRETS EVEN NOW.

A charm was found in Staraya Ladoga, among the ruins of a large house destroyed at the end of the 10th century. The charm has an inscription written in two rows on both sides of the plate, with the rows separated by a line. Each row of the inscription probably consisted of twelve characters, although the last runes in three of the rows are damaged by a soldered eyelet. The majority of the runes are symmetrically doubled and branch both to the right and to the left from the stem. These types of runes have recently been dubbed mirror runes.

On September 2, 1950 the participants of the archaeological expedition to Staraya Ladoga by the Institute of History of Material Culture of the Soviet Academy of Sciences, led by V.I. Ravdonikas, were working at the excavation site of the ancient settlement on the left bank of the Volkhov River, to the south from the stone fortress founded in 1114 by Pavel, the mayor of Ladoga. In a pile of household waste inside a residential building dating from the 8th or 9th century, one-and-a-half meters below the surface, they unexpectedly found a 42-cm long wooden rod with 52 so-called runic characters on one of its facets.

This discovery in Staraya Ladoga, however, was in fact the second of its kind within the former Russian Empire (or the Soviet Union, if you wish): the first artefact, an inscription on a stone found on the Island of Berezan in the Black Sea, was found by Professor E.R. von Stern in 1905. This was seen as a very significant event for Russian science back in the day and even a commemorative medal was issued. And 45 years later another inscription, even longer than the one from Berezan which consisted of only 35 characters, had been discovered.

It is known for a fact that Slavs did not use runes even before they took up Christianity and the Cyrillic alphabet that came with it.

It was first believed that the artefact discovered in 1950 was a part of a bow, if not a battle one (it was made of fir after all), then a hunting bow, but after thorough examination this hypothesis was dropped.

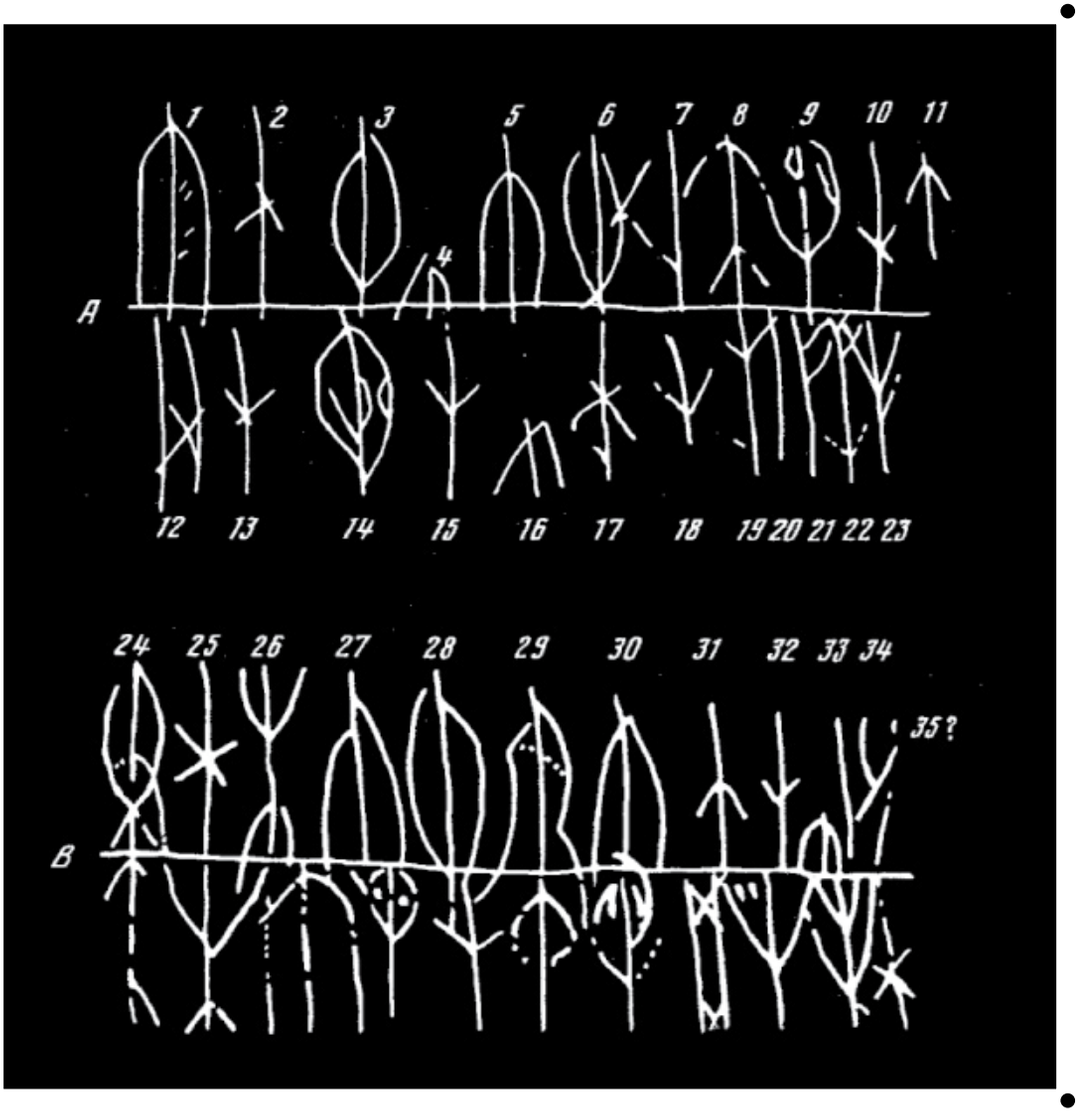
Nowadays there is no doubt that the finding, now an exhibit at the Hermitage Museum, is self-contained and not a part of a larger object. At the same time it is not an example of writing from the pre-paper era such as birch-bark manuscripts from Novgorod, scribbled hurriedly, and torn and discarded by the addressees after reading. This object, on the contrary, was made rather carefully: the runes seem to have been written by a skilful hand and the specifically designated spline makes it possible to attach the wooden stick to one's belt or a horse's harness, for example. This is most likely an amulet, or perhaps a tool for telling the future — quite a common use for runic texts. The same explanation is suggested by various possible interpretations of the inscription. This explanation means it is likely an object from the sphere of magic, so to speak, and not of Slavic origin, but Varangian, which somehow found its way into the house of a large Slavic family.

Practically speaking, this is not too unusual; many of us would find an object belonging to a different culture if we thoroughly searched our homes. Such items can be brought from our travels, or given to us as presents by guests. Let us say, on buying or receiving the object, we were told something about its magical features, we listened and nodded but soon forgot all about these words which were never supported by our own experience of tradition. We might store the object, which proved to be of no use to us at the time, and then accidentally lose it.

We could confine ourselves to the presumption that something similar might have happened to this stranger who lived 13 centuries ago — they either went somewhere for a visit or hosted a foreigner and thus acquired this souvenir which they hardly ever treated seriously — if it were not for another significant aspect of this object in terms of the centuries-long history of Staraya Ladoga.

1 *Melnikova E. A.* Skandinavsky amulet s runicheskimi nadpisyami iz Staroy Ladogi i Gorodishcha // Drevnie gosudarstva Vostochnoy Evropy. Materialy i issledovaniya. 1991. M.: Nauka, 1994. pp 231–239.

2 Runes were an ancient original alphabet, or a set of related alphabets, to be exact, which were used until the 16th century (together with the Latin alphabet) by Germanic peoples in northern Europe, ancestors of modern Scandinavians, Germans and Englishmen. Most runic inscriptions preserved until today were discovered in Scandinavia but have occasionally been found further away from the area of Germanic settlements, and even as far as the Mediterranean where the Vikings would go quite regularly.


1 2 3 5 6 7 8 9 10 11
4
A
12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23
24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34
35?
B

Admittedly, Staraya Ladoga, or just Ladoga, since it only became Staraya (Russian for old) at the beginning of the 18th century, when Novaya (new) Ladoga was founded nearby, did not exist at the time. But it was bound to appear because its location was a natural stopping point on the way from the Varangians to the Greeks, or rather, from the Baltic Sea to the south, through the Russian plain. The discovery of silver Arabic dirhams from the 8th century and more modern denarius coins from Western Europe serve as perfect evidence of the past strategic location of the site.

There is a very simple explanation for this, as the rapids located up the Volkhov River from Ladoga made navigation impossible for seagoing vessels (cogs). Cargo had to be moved onto vessels with a shallower draught. The cogs themselves, together with gear and probably part of the goods, were stored in Ladoga. It should be mentioned that the storage was exempt from duties because Novgorod charged sales duty in Gostinopolie, upstream from the first rapids on the Volkhov, where customs clearance for all goods imported or exported by foreign merchants took place. The merchants were mostly Swedish, or Gothic, as they were called in Russia (derived from Gotland Island).

There is evidence that in the 13th century the Swedes even built a stone church in Ladoga (or nearby, in fact). This is indicative of more than just their piety; the merchants also needed the stone church as a fireproof place to store important papers and hold public meetings.

St. Peter's Catholic Church in the German court in Novgorod fulfilled these functions so it is most likely that St. Nicholas's Church in Ladoga had a similar role. It is interesting that up until 1255 the church officially belonged to the Lund archiepiscopacy and not the geographically closer German dioceses of Livonia.

So, back in the day, Ladoga was the "window to Scandinavia". Later layers on the same excavation site of the

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2013

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21 | View of St. George's Church
Staraya Ladoga

22 | Entrance to St. George's Church
Staraya Ladoga

23 | St. George's Church, view from the east.
Staraya Ladoga

24 | Rurik's fortifications around
St. George's Church
Staraya Ladoga

PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

23

1909

24

PHOTO: M. PROKUDIN-GORSKII / LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

ancient settlement — what are known as the e-horizons (9th–10th centuries, when the settlement became a town) and the d-horizons (11th–12th centuries) — have plenty of various objects of Scandinavian origin, many of which were most likely produced on the spot. Historians believe that in the Middle Ages, the local population consisted of three ethnicities. Apart from Ingrian tribes from the Finno-Ugric group and Slavs, there was a significant Swedish community which included not only merchants and soldiers but also craftsmen and farmers. In short, Ladoga and its surroundings were a place of natural Swedish colonization from ancient times.

Nevertheless, politically, the city always remained a part of what is traditionally called Kievan Rus. In 1019 the prince of Novgorod and Kiev, Yaroslav Vladimirovich (Yaroslav the Wise), was married for the second time to Ingegerd, the daughter of Swedish King Olof Skötkonung; Ladoga, with all the adjacent territories, became Yaroslav's wedding present to his bride, and the attendants she brought along from Sweden were appointed the prince's governors in the city. This princess, who became Irina after converting to Orthodoxy, gave her name to the whole area between Lake Ladoga and the Gulf of Finland — Ingria.

It should be noted that Yaroslav the Wise, who spent most of his reign in Novgorod, was good at giving presents — of all the lands that he possessed, Ladoga, for the reasons listed above, was the most conveniently located for the Swedish princess, or rather for the people who were sent there by her.

The 12th century witnessed the construction of six stone churches. Two of them still exist: St. George's Cathedral, which contains a significant part of the original murals, and the Cathedral of the Dormition (which belongs to the Convent of Dormition in Staraya Ladoga which many

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2013

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25 | Church of the Nativity of John the Baptist on Malysheva Gora Staraya Ladoga

26 | Exit from St. George's Church Rurik's fortifications

27 | Church of the Nativity of John the Baptist on Malysheva Gora. Staraya Ladoga

28 | Gate in the wall surrounding St. George's Church Rurik's fortifications

PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

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1909

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PHOTO: M. PROKUDIN-GORSKII / LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

years later, from 1718 until 1725 would host Peter the Great's first wife, Yevdokiya Lopukhina).

It is important to realize that such a number of churches is very significant for that period. This is a greater concentration of churches than in Suzdal, Rostov and Pskov, all of which are known for their architecture. Besides, Ladoga, which was not even particularly large, had a stone fortress, which neither Kiev, nor Vladimir had. Obviously, this "suburb" of Novgorod would not have been able to afford even a third of this construction had it been confined to using its own funds. Besides, Novgorod regularly squeezed out of its dependent lands even those meager savings that they managed to make (it is not for nothing that over 300 years later Novgorod's loss of independence and the transition of power to Moscow served as such a potent incentive for the development of these "suburbs"). Such a concentration of churches were not even needed in Ladoga.

It is only natural to presume (there is practically no mention of the architecture of Ladoga in the chronicles) that all of these were funded by external investment. Whose, then? Could it have been princes of Novgorod who had rather complicated relations with the ruling groups of Kiev and were striving to get additional support through favors to the surrounding lands? Or princes of Vladimir, striving to strengthen their right to reign in Novgorod? Someone else?

Although the answer is not obvious, the very attempt to create such a center that would architecturally and culturally exceed both its abilities and needs, in an area with a rather small but varied population, inspires analogies. First of all, one cannot help recalling the village of Bogolyubovo, near Vladimir-on-Klyazma, which was conceived by the prince of Vladimir and Suzdal, Andrei Bogolyubsky, of which nothing remains but the Church of the Intercession on the Nerl and some fragments of the wall of the prince's palace decorated by German craftsmen. And then there is St. Petersburg itself, clearly founded by Peter the Great[1] as a long-term project, but at that time far from being a largecity. St. Petersburg's first dwellers also spoke different languages...

It is hard to dismiss the idea that in the 12th century someone had extensive plans with regard to this little town on the banks of the Volkhov, despite the fact, as it turned out, they were not to pass.

29 | St. Nicholas the Wonderworker Monastery. Staraya Ladoga

30 | St. Nicholas the Wonderworker Monastery. Staraya Ladoga

PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

1 → p. 016 p. 078 p. 099 p. 108 p. 109 p. 110 p. 173 p. 227 p. 235 p. 240

Sergei Kapitsa. "Glance to the Past and the Future"

"...We live in a world where the probability of improbable events is growing. The asymptotical instability of complex organizations developing in a peaking regime results in 'phase transition' — the appearance of two possible scenarios for further events: either the death of the organization, breakdown of an empire, and ruin of a complex structure; or the transition to a new attractor, to a new functioning regime. The analysis of synergetic models of the complex systems' evolution will probably allow us to find an explanation of a well-known phenomenon described long ago by historians — periodicity in history. Studying 21 civilizations that have existed over the last 3,000 years allowed A. Toynbee to describe the periodic transitions from medium progressive to medium regressive development, cycles of 'departure and return', analogues of the 'Supreme Ultimate', rhythms of yin and yang in history."

1909

PHOTO: M. PROKUDIN-GORSKII / LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

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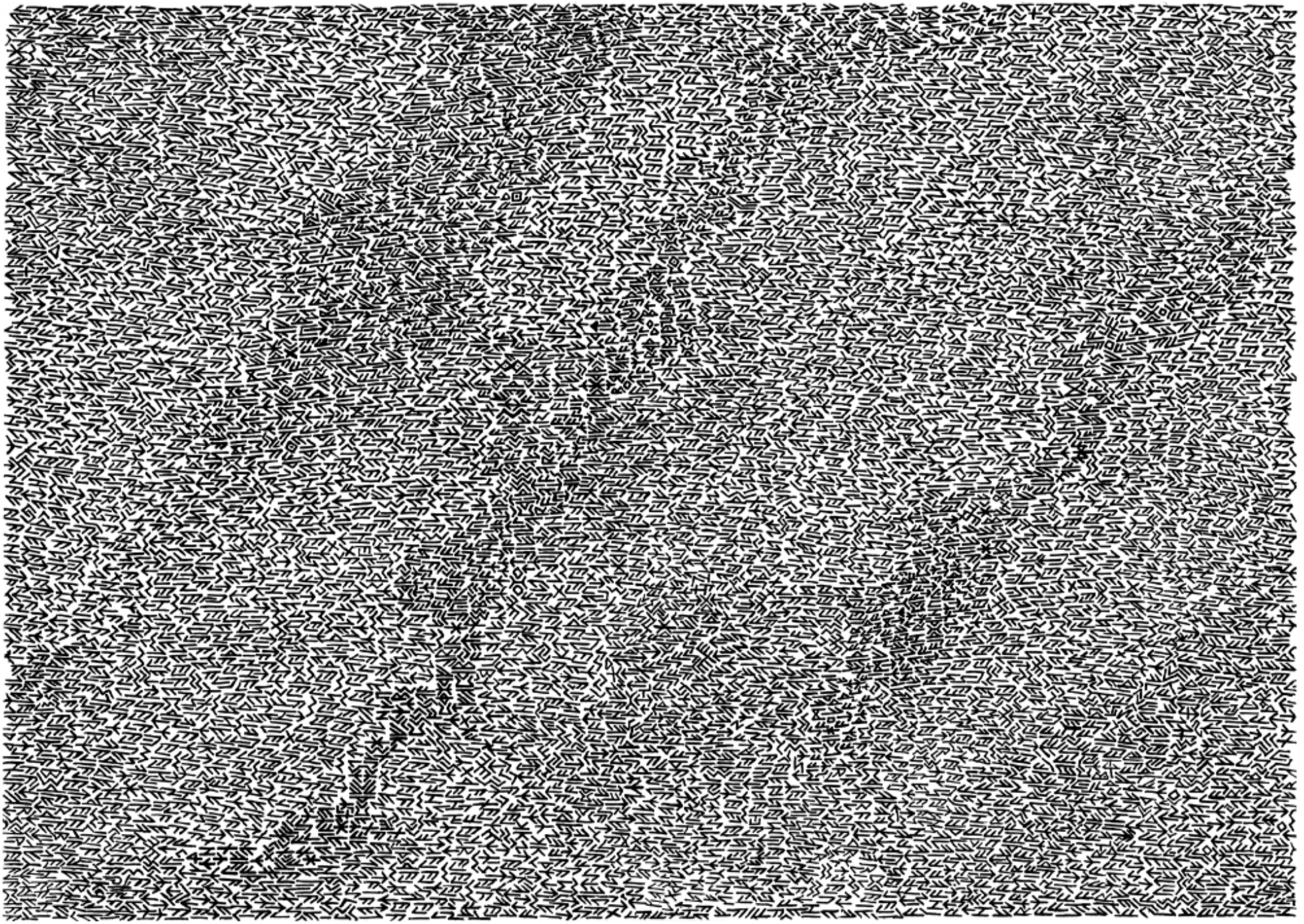

ILLUSTRATION: IVAN SHELYUTTO. «RUNE 18534 — RUNE 19189»

11 **Peter the Great's ceremonial costume:** jacket, camisole, shirt front, culottes, sword belt, scarf, cuffs, shoulder band of the Order of St. Andrew the First Called, stockings, shoes. 1724 Gros de Tours, wool, silk, linen cloth, knitted silk, lace, silvered threads, wood (button cores and shoe nails), silver (sword belt and shoe buckles); handwork © The State Hermitage Museum

● ILLUSTRATION: IRINA BATAKOVA

Bartolomeo Carlo Rastrelli. Wax Effigy. 1725. Wood, wax, metal, enamel. Height: 204 cm. Source of entry: The State Museum of the Ethnography of the Peoples of the USSR. 1941. © The State Hermitage Museum
The Wax Effigy is a life-size wooden figure of Peter the Great sealed in an armchair. Immediately after the Tsar's death, Carlo Bartolomeo Rastrelli took wax impressions of his face, hands and feet. In 1725, using the death mask and impressions, Rastrelli made the Wax Effigy of the Tsar. The figure wears Peter's own clothes.

NINA TARASOVA

“One cannot marvel enough at the craftsmanship of... this needlework.”*

The history of the costume of Peter the Great’s Wax Effigy

FEATURING 300 GARMENTS AND ACCESSORIES THAT BELONGED TO THE GREAT RUSSIAN EMPEROR, “PETER THE GREAT’S WARDROBE” RANKS AMONG THE WORLD’S BEST COLLECTIONS OF EARLY 18TH CENTURY MENSWEAR AND IS UNDOUBTEDLY THE PRIDE OF THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM. HOWEVER, JUST ONE OF THE OUTFITS IN THE COLLECTION CAN BE ACCURATELY DATED AND BOASTS AN UNPRECEDENTEDLY LONG EXHIBITION LIFE — THE FORMAL DRESS WORN BY PETER THE GREAT ON CATHERINE I’S CORONATION DAY ON MAY 7, 1724.

The coat, camisole, breeches and sword belt, all made of light-blue *gros de Tours*[1], carry an exquisite design of interlwined branches embroidered with silver threads. A sew-on star of the Order of St. Andrew-the-First-Called is fastened to the left side of the coat; a light-blue ribbon of the Order extends over the right shoulder diagonally to the left hip. The outfit is complete with a lace cravat and cuffs, a delicately pleated shirt-front of fine cloth and silk stockings with a clock design (embroidered in silver). The slender silhouette, the perfect harmony of the blue fabric and silver trimmings, the exquisite décor and the skilful execution make Peter the Great’s (1) costume a truly unique work of applied art.

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At the beginning of the 18th century Peter the Great and his courtiers mainly dressed in the European style that had emerged in late 17th century France under Louis XIV.

A typical men’s outfit at that time consisted of a long jacket or coat, a camisole and knee breeches. The coat was narrow in the waist and had dramatic skirts (pleated into the side seams), wide turnback cuffs and deep slash pockets with decorative flaps. Coats sometimes featured small collars (in Sweden and Russia), but most were collarless because wigs were an important element of the male costume at the time. The coat, usually unbuttoned, showed a tight fitting camisole made of same- or contrast-color fabric, usually slightly shorter than the coat and without a collar or side pleats. The broad-belted knee breeches, gathered at the back, had a flap front. The accessories included a lace jabot and cuffs, buckled leather shoes and silk stockings. Clothes were made of linen, cloth, silk, brocade and velvet and embellished with embroidery, lace and passementery.

The beacon of style and an object of emulation in France was the king, “the sun” of French fashion. His outfits of silk, brocade and velvet, his clean-shaven rosy face, his thin moustache and dramatic wigs, his smile, gestures and even the contents of his pockets were an instant hit with the French aristocracy.

The first Russian to obtain the most fashionable European clothes and accessories was Prince Alexander Menshikov, famous for his ostentatious display of wealth sometimes bordering on the tasteless. However, St. Petersburg residents learned about European styles not only by looking at foreign and Russian dandies or at “fashion dolls” displayed at the city gates[2]; the sartorial example was also set by the Russian monarch. The Tsar ordered European garments abroad or had them made to measure by foreign and Russian court tailors at home. The surviving wardrobe items show that Peter the Great paid much more time and attention to his appearance than previously thought.

For formal occasions, the Emperor preferred red, brown or green suits with sumptuous gold and silver embroidery of amazing beauty and intricacy. The elegant cut and sophisticated colors were underscored by Spanish and Genoese lace; a multitude of metal-braided buttons glittered on the silk like gems. The undergarments were made of fine cloth and delicate lawn and embroidered with floral motifs. The long gowns (made of Chinese, Italian or French fabrics and worn over a camisole and breeches) were favored at home where the Tsar could spend his time in friendly conversations, resting by the fireside or smoking a pipe. His working clothes, however, had to be comfortable and practical above all; Peter the

* O.P. Belyaev. Kabinet Petra Velikogo. Otdeleniye pervoye. (Peter the Great’s Cabinet. Part One). St. Petersburg, 1800. pp19-20.

2 | **The sew-on star of the Order of St. Andrew the First Called**
© The State Hermitage Museum

Great's wardrobe was quite heavy on plain jackets and trousers made from thick cloth and dark-colored wool...

Peter the Great first travelled to France in spring 1717. Duc de Saint-Simon reminisced that the Tsar usually wore "a caraat made of cloth, a round unpowdered dark-brown periwig, a plain black close-fitting outfit with gold buttons; a waistcoat, knee breeches and stockings, but neither gloves nor oversleeves; an Order star over his breast... His jacket was often unbuttoned... Despite this simplicity, one was bound to recognize the Tsar by the air of magnificence so natural to him"[3].

French fashion made a strong impression on the Tsar. After his visit to Versailles, the Russian monarch developed a taste for exquisite red and pea-colored velvet suits and brown rep coats with black velvet turnback sleeves and collars. Peter the Great's attire also became the focus of public attention in France. Months after his departure, an outfit known as *habit du tzar* (Tsar's habit) or *habit du farouche* (savage's habit) was still popular with the French[4].

While in 1717 Peter the Great surprised European fashion trendsetters by his modest dress, in 1724 he was determined to dazzle Europe by the exuberant coronation ceremony of his wife Catherine as well as by opulent attire. The Coronation Commission received tens of thousands of rubles to organize the ceremony, purchase fabrics and accessories in Venice, Paris and Berlin and create luxurious outfits for the royal couple[5].

The Empress's clothes were made in Prussia[6]. Count A.G. Golovkin, Russian Ambassador in Berlin, bought most of the supplies for the Moscow celebrations. In early spring 1724 he received a promissory note for 20,000 rubles to cover some of the coronation expenses[7]. The enormous amount indicates that Peter the Great's outfit may have been made in Berlin, especially given the fact that embroidered garments in those times were often shipped to Russia as pre-prepared parts to be assembled later[8].

On May 7, 1724 Moscow saw the Emperor in a dramatic "cerulean summer coat, richly embroidered with silver, in red silk stockings and a hat with a white feather"[9]. The Empress wore a Spanish-style "sumptuous dress... of purple silk with magnificent gold embroideries; five ladies-in-waiting carried her train"[10]. S.A. Amelyokhina suggests that the choice of colors for Peter the Great's and Catherine I's attire was symbolic as blue and purple had imperial connotations[11].

According to a legend (first recorded by A.A. Narlov, who heard it from his father), Catherine I personally worked on the embroidery of Peter the Great's iconic outfit: "The Empress herself, together with her ladies-in-waiting, produced the silver embroidery on the light-blue silk coat; when finally she presented her work to the Tsar and requested him to wear the garment on her coronation day, His Majesty looked at the embroidery, lifted the coat and shook it. Some silver threads landed on the floor, and the he said, 'Behold, Catherine, this is a soldier's daily wage, all wasted'. The Tsar donned the coat on the coronation day to please his spouse, but never wore it again, deeming this inappropriate as he usually wore a guards or navy uniform"[12].

Peter the Great's biographer I.I. Golikov, quoting Admiral A.I. Nagaev, recounts the following story: "The Empress embroidered in silver a light-blue silk coat for her illustrious spouse to wear on her coronation day; when he first put it on, the Empress said, 'Ah, my lord, how well it befits you, and how I wish I could always see you dressed like this!' 'An imprudent wish!' the Emperor replied. 'You should realize that not only are such expenditures superfluous, but they are also a burden on my people; and I will have to answer to God for each ruble of my people's money I may have misused. Know that the monarch must differ from his subjects not in wealth and splendor, much less luxury, but in that the monarch's constant care is the burden of ruling and the well-being of his people. Besides,' the Emperor added, 'this outfit just inconveniences me and limits movement'."[13]

3 | **Turnback sleeve cuff of the jacket. Double-sided (two-faced) embroidery. Fragment**
© The State Hermitage Museum

O.P. Belyaev reiterates the story about Catherine I's contribution to Peter the Great's outfit: "It is claimed that this outfit and the sword belt were embroidered by the Empress herself and some of her ladies-in-waiting following the latest fashions. One cannot marvel enough at the craftsmanship of these garments; the delicacy, purity and tastefulness of the needlework clearly proves that the Empress was adept not only at state councils and military exploits but also more feminine pursuits"[14].

This beautiful legend became so closely associated with Peter the Great's reign that Catherine I's incredible embroidery achievements were quoted by modern Russian and international historians following 18th and 19th century authors[15].

The state dresses of the Imperial couple were to have a long life, but while Catherine I's coronation dress almost immediately found its place in the Kremlin Armory (May 23, 1724)[16], the Peter the Great's suit had to travel back to St. Petersburg. Soon after Peter the Great's death, the Empress ordered the court sculptor Bartolomeo Carlo Rastrelli to create a wax cast of the Tsar as soon as possible. A studio with a guard of honor at the doors was set up for Rastrelli in the Winter Palace. The wood-and-wax statue was completed in July 1725 and may have been dressed in the light-blue silk outfit at about the same time. After several years in the palace formerly belonging to Crown Prince Alexis, "the Wax Effigy of His Imperial Majesty from Prince Alexis's home"[17] arrived at the Kunstkamera museum on July 14, 1732 and was displayed on the second floor in the western wing[18].

The fire of 1747 was a time of trial for the museum. Unlike the ground floor, where most of the exhibits and library books remained intact, the spaces upstairs were seriously damaged by the flames. The only surviving items came from the Emperor's Cabinet. We owe this to the wisdom of A.K. Nartov (he insisted that Peter the Great's wax statue and the items from Peter the Great's Turnery should be rescued first) as well as to the heroic efforts of the Academy staff, soldiers and officers from four guards and garrison regiments, and city residents. The exhibits were evacuated through the doors and windows, lowered to the ground on ropes or just thrown on the snow. "How sad it must have been to watch these luxuries scattered around and thrown in the dirt!"[19] exclaimed I.G. Backmeister, a staff member of the Academy of Sciences' library.

The salvaged collection was housed in the Demidov House owned by the Academy of Sciences; in 1748, the articles from the Emperor's Cabinet underwent restoration. The archives of the Academy of Sciences contain numerous reports and statements on "repairs to the Wax Effigy" as well as requests for "a canopy,... a stand for displaying the portrait of Peter the Great,... and two cases for storing His... Majesty's outfits..."[20] The damaged Kunstkamera building was completely restored in 1761; preparation work for the new exhibition, however, did not start until late 1766.

In 1783 the Kunstkamera staff was joined by O.P. Belyaev, whose outstanding publication "Peter the Great's Cabinet", issued in 1793 and re-edited in 1800, remains an invaluable source of information about Peter the Great's wardrobe. Most of the Cabinet collection filled two rooms in the north-west wing of the Kunstkamera. The portrait room, measuring just over 25 square meters, was dominated by the Wax Effigy. "The statue is dressed in a light-blue *gros de Tours* suit embroidered in silver; the wig was made from the Tsar's real hair; it wears purple silk stockings with a clock pattern in silver and old shoes with very small silver buckles, the very shoes that belonged to Tsar himself,"[21] Belyaev wrote. He says that he sometimes allowed museum visitors that showed "sufficient prudence" to pay homage to the Wax Effigy and "warmly kiss" the armchair; while doing so, the visitors would inevitably touch the costume. The excessive contact proved damaging to the velvet upholstery of the armchair under the

4 | **Culottes from Peter the Great's ceremonial costume.** 1724
© The State Hermitage Museum

Wax Effigy as well as the clothes and accessories. According to Belyaev, "to prevent visitors from touching the revered statue of His Majesty and its attire... a wooden barrier, appropriately sized" was made in 1798[22].

When Napoleon entered Moscow in September 1812, the waxwork and its famous outfit had to endure their first long-distance evacuation. Following a governmental decree, the objects from the Emperor's Cabinet together with the Archive of the Academy of Sciences were moved from St. Petersburg to Petrozavodsk. Academician A.F. Sevastyanov and Junior Librarian Bogdan Ger, assisted by an employee, three caretakers and a junior officer were in charge of the transportation and safety arrangements. With the imminent danger over, the evacuated objects returned to St. Petersburg in mid-December 1812.

In 1849, on the order of Emperor Nicholas I "the Wax Effigy with clothes" was handed over to the Peter the Great Gallery in the Grand Imperial Hermitage, which also displayed Peter the Great's outfits from the Marly Palace in Peterhof. The royal "memorabilia" attracted much public interest, creating serious difficulties for the gallery staff. Thus, A.A. Kunik, Curator of the Peter the Great Gallery and the Jewel Gallery, wrote in his report to the Hermitage Director A.A. Vasilchikov in early 1885: "I have recently realized that the great wax statue of the Emperor... must be protected against the dust and soot as well as constant contact with the visitors. To preserve this historic royal effigy so dear to the heart of every Russian, it should be displayed in a decent glass case"[23]. A large showcase for the Wax Effigy, with gilded columns, gilded bronze handles and two doors was made in March 1885 by Master Cabinetmaker L. Kortz.

The gallery of the Smaller Hermitage proved unsuitable for the collection. A confidential letter written in 1909 by I.A. Vsevolozhsky, Director of the Hermitage, to Minister of the Imperial Court V.B. Frederiks lists the key drawbacks of the venue: the long, narrow, dimly lit and poorly heated corridor which made it impossible to properly display larger items (including the outfits), not to mention the badly ventilated closets where the clothes were damaged by the damp. Finally, "in these utterly inappropriate settings, the display suffers from the lack of system and visual appeal, and, to a certain extent, ineffective care of the exhibits"[24]. After evaluating the objects' storage conditions in the gallery and their state of preservation, Grand Duke Constantine, President of the Academy of Sciences, described them as "doomed to ruin" and supported the idea of Academician V.V. Radlov, Director of Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography (MAE), to create a commemorative department in MAE[25]. In 1910 the exhibits from the Peter the Great Gallery were moved from the Small Hermitage to the new MAE building in Tamozhenny Pereulok; "a ceremonial opening of the Peter the Great Department in the museum took place... on May 20, 1912"[26]. The Wax Effigy became the centerpiece of the exhibition: "The full-size statue... is displayed directly in front of the entrance; the Effigy is seated on a throne in an iron showcase with mirror glass"[27]. Having spent an amazing 180 years on public display, the Wax Effigy's costume suffered from soiling and discoloration; the silk threads were torn in places; the fabric and embroidery had partly lost shape. An urgent restoration of the ensemble was conducted in 1911 in V. Gornova's studio in St. Petersburg.

The year 1917 was extremely hard for MAE. After the February Revolution, the museum was closed to the public; later in the year, it faced forcible evacuation to Moscow. A general meeting of the museum staff resolved: "We will not consent to evacuation other than at the imperative request from the government"[28].

In 1919 the Peter the Great Gallery became open for experts; occasional organized tours were held even though the museum rooms were unheated, with temperatures drop-

5 | **Embroidery found inside the camisole during the restoration of Peter the Great's ceremonial costume**
© The State Hermitage Museum

ping below zero, and the museum's workers had to pick up a "livelihood" under very trying conditions[28]. In early 1930 the Gallery was closed due to the general reorganization of the Academy of Sciences and its agencies. On May 3, 1930 the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences resolved to divide the collection of the gallery between several research institutions; most exhibits were transferred to the Historical Household Department of the Russian Museum, already understaffed, underequipped and lacking in exhibition space. In 1934 and 1937 the Wax Effigy, together with many other historical objects, had to move yet again — first to the Revolution Museum, then to the State Museum of the Ethnography of the Peoples of the USSR. This nomadic existence ended after all collections of the History Department of the Ethnography Museum were handed over to the Department of the History of Russian Culture (DHRC) opened at the Hermitage in April 1941. The objects from Peter the Great Gallery found their home in the Winter Palace. Yet many of them were to travel to Sverdlovsk during World War II.

In July 1941, the DHRC exhibits were placed in 40 cases for evacuation; Case No. 39 contained the Wax Effigy, with its wax components separated from the wooden parts and individually wrapped. The blue suit, accessories, underwear and shoes were carefully removed and packed in the same case; the cravat and jabot travelled in Case No. 34[30]. While in temporary storage in Sverdlovsk, the cases were opened several times to assess the state of the objects. Case No. 39 with the Wax Effigy and the light-blue *gros de Tours* costume was checked twice (in 1943 and 1945), both times with satisfactory results[31]. Certificate of Assessment No. 158 of May 28, 1943, signed by V.N. Vasilyev (Head of DHRC), Senior Researcher M.V. Stepanova and restoration worker F.M. Kalikin, documents that Case No. 39 was opened in the presence of M.E. Mathieu, Deputy Director of the Hermitage Museum. "The parts of Wax Effigy contained in the case were packed in cotton wool, wood shavings, plywood and paper. Each of the parts was wrapped in oilcloth, then placed in wood shavings and wrapped in another layer of oilcloth. The packing was dry throughout. We unwrapped one package with the wax hands, which proved completely intact"[32]. Other items were left unopened in order to avoid any damage to the packaging. The Wax Effigy was reassembled upon its arrival from Sverdlovsk in 1946.

Since 1992 the wax image of Peter the Great in the light-blue silk costume has been part of the Winter Palace of Peter the Great collection. The ensemble has had a tragic yet remarkable life: it survived a fire, incompetent repair work, two full-scale evacuations, and numerous movements from one museum to another as well as 264 years on display in precarious settings where the delicate fabric was exposed to light, dust, soot, and temperature and humidity fluctuations. Despite the preventive and restorative efforts undertaken in 1964 and 1975, the famous outfit has required the serious expert attention of the State Hermitage Textile Restoration Laboratory.

Studies undertaken in the Hermitage Museum by Senior Researcher E.A. Mikolaychuk (Department for Scientific and Technical Analysis) and Restoration Artist M.V. Denisova (Textile Restoration Laboratory) showed that all the items making up Peter the Great's suit (coat, camisole, breeches and sword belt) were seriously soiled, had lost shape, were damaged in several places as well as had multiple traces of repair, such as patches. Moreover, as the original seams of the coat had been broken and the parts had been sewn together incorrectly, the coat size was altered and the strain on the fabric increased significantly. The articles also needed urgent cleaning and reinforcement.

Apart from conserving the elements of the unique ensemble, the museum team had to address a major reconstruction challenge — to restore Peter the Great's clothes to their authentic size.

Launched in 1996, the textile restoration project involved some complex work which only a few experts were qualified to undertake. It also resulted in exciting discoveries.

As the coat was being disassembled, the sewn-on star of the Order of St. Andrew-the-First-Called was detached from the fabric and found to be emblazoned with the embroiderer's name ("Ene Pally Brodeur") on the reverse side. The foreign origins of the embroidery artist are confirmed by the use of Latin characters Z, N and S, and not their Cyrillic equivalents, in the Russian motto of St. Andrew's Order "ZA BЂBPY I BEPNOSTЬ".

As soon as the camisole was immersed in water for cleaning, an embroidered pattern about 7 cm by 5.5 cm became visible through the wet lining on the inside of the skirt. After the seam on the skirt was partly removed, it appeared that between the outer shell and the lining the camisole carried an image of an Imperial crown embroidered on the wool in colored silk threads.

The outline of the crown is made with red threads, with a centrally located embroidered cross on top. The crown rim is underscored by two horizontal stripes embroidered in the herringbone technique with white and yellow-green threads. The crown is embellished with vertical stripes matching the simple décor on the rim, four embroidered light-blue flowers and two stylized daisies. The crown is surrounded by multiple yellow-green crosses. There are two letter Rs embroidered with red threads to the left and right of the crown, which possibly stand for REX and REGINA. The embroidery may provide support to the claim that Catherine was involved in the making of Peter the Great's outfit for the 1724 coronation festivities.

Quite obviously, the silver trimming on the coat, camisole, breeches and sword belt required incredible craftsmanship which the future Empress hardly possessed. However, she may have embroidered the small crown, lovingly adorned with daisies and visible to no-one. This secret sign inside the camisole, worn almost next to the body, could have only been left by someone very close to Peter the Great. It is well known that foreign outfits were mostly delivered to Russia as separate parts (already embroidered) and were then sewn together and fitted by local tailors. In our opinion, it is highly likely that Catherine did embroider the crown while Peter the Great's camisole was being "assembled".

The restoration of the outfit was completed in 2002. In 2003 the impressive light-blue *gros de Tours* costume and the famous Wax Effigy of the Emperor (dressed in a different suit, also from the "Peter the Great's Wardrobe" collection) became the most prominent features at the exhibition "A Tribute to the Founder of St. Petersburg" mounted in the Hermitage Museum to celebrate the city's 300th anniversary.

1 *Gros de Tours* is a type of rep silk fabric.
2 *Zhelyabuzhskiy I. Zapiski* // Russkiy byl po vospominaniyam sovremennikov. XVIII vek. Part 1. M., 1914. p 51. — Here: a mannequin in a European costume.
3 O prebyvanii Petra Velikogo v Parizhe v 1717. Iz zapisok gertsoga de Sen-Simona. SPb., 1856. p9.
4 See *Kornilovich A.O.* sochineniya i pisma.M.; L., 1957. P. 151; Poludenskii M. Petr Velikii v Parizhe // Russkiy arkhiv. 1865. Stb. 696..
5 See *Amelyokhina S.A.* Kullurno-istoricheskaya evolyutsiya formy i simvoliki ceremonialnyh kostyumov pri rossiiskom imperatorskom dvore XVIII–XIXvv.: Diss. ... kand. ist. nauk. M., 2003. pp 42–43.
6 See Diplomaticheskiye dokumenty, otnosyashchiesya k istorii Rossii v XVIII stoletii // Sbornik russkogo istoricheskogo obshchestva. T.3. SPb., 1868. p374.
7 See *Amelyokhina S.A.* Kullurno-istoricheskaya evolyutsiya formy i simvoliki ceremonialnyh kostyumov... p.60.
8 This issue requires further study which goes far beyond the scope of this publication.
9 *Bergholz F.V. Dnevnik* // Yunost derzhavy. M., 2000. p.226.
10 Ibid. p.226. See also Petr Velikiy i Moskva: Katalog vystavki. M., 1998. p.174.
11 See *Amelyokhina S.A.* Kullurno-istoricheskaya evolyutsiya formy i simvoliki ceremonialnyh kostyumov... pp.38–39.
12 *Narlov A.K.* Dostopamyatnye povestvovaniya I rechi Petra Velikogo // Petr Velikii. Vospominaniya. Dnevnikovye zapisi. Anekdoty.M. 1993. p28; *Narlov A.A.* Rasskazy o Petre Velikom (po avtorskoi rukopisi). SPb., 2001. P.64.
13 *Golikov I.I.* Anekdoty, kasayushchiesya do gosudarya imperatora Petra Velikogo. M., 1798. pp.458–459.
14 *Belyaev O.P.* Kabinet Petra Velikogo. Otdelenie pervoe. SPb., 1800. pp.19–20.
15 See, for example, *Sharaiia N.M.* Voskovaya persona. L., 1963. pp21–22; Pamyatniki russkoi kultury pervoi chetverti XVIII veka v sobranii Gosudarstvennogo ordena Lenina Ermitazha: Katalog. L.; M., 1966. p217; *Belyavsky V.C. Yekaterina I.* Zolushka na trone Rossii// Na rossiiskom prestole. 1725–1796. Monarkhi rossiiskie posle Petra Velikogo.M., 1993. p20; *Anisimov E.V.* Zhenshchiny na rossiiskom prestole. SPb., 1998. p33; *Amelyokhina S.A.* Kullurno-istoricheskaya evolyutsiya formy i simvoliki ceremonialnyh kostyumov... p47; *Pavlenko N.I.* Yekaterina I. M., 2004. p26; *Hughes L.* Russia in the Age of Peter the Great. New Haven; London, 1998. p.362.
16 See *Amelyokhina S.A.* Kullurno-istoricheskaya evolyutsiya formy I simvoliki ceremonialnyh kostyumov... p.60.
17 Materialy dlia istorii Imperatorskoi Akademi inauk (hereinafter MIIAN).T. II. SPb., 1886. p.151.
18 For more details on the collection of the "Peter the Great's Cabinet" see *Tarasova N.I.* "Sii veshchi sut dlya rossiyanina dragotsenny// Osnovatelyu Peterburga: Katalog vystavki v Gosudarstvennom Ermitazhe. SPb., 2003.
19 *BackmeisterI.G.* Opyt o Biblioteke i Kabinete redkostei I istorii naturalnoi Sankt-Peterburgskoi Imperatorskoi Akademii nauk. SPb., 1779. p.127.
20 MIIAN. T. IX. SPb., 1897. p71, p.276.
21 *Belyaev O.P.* Kabinet Petra Velikogo. p.4.
22 Ibid. p.7.
23 Arkhiv Gosudarstvennogo Ermitazha (hereinafter AGE). F.1. Op. 5. 1885. Ed. khr. 8. L. 22.
24 Ibid. 1909. Ed. khr. 25. L. 39, 39 ob.
25 See Ibid. Op. 2. 1909. Ed. khr. 32. L. 1 ob., 2.
26 Sankt-Peterburgskie Vedomosti. 1912. May 22 OS (June 4 NS).
27 *Pekarskiy E.K.* Putevoditel po Muzeyu antropologii i etnografii imeni Petra Velikogo. Galereya Imperatora Petra I. Pg., 1915. p1.
28 Otchet o deyatelnosti Rossiiskoi Akademii nauk za 1917 g. Pg., 1917. pp.117–118.
29 Otchet o deyatelnosti Rossiiskoi Akademii nauk za 1919g. Pg., 1920. pp. 148.
30 See AGE. F.1. Op.5.D. 2720. L. 56, 57, 64.
31 See Ibid. D. 2841. L. 9, 29.
32 Ibid. L. 9.

Kremlin. Egg-Shaped Triptych

This triptych has been made based on the shrine of the Moscow Kremlin, which are connected to events in Russian history. The main icon of the triptych is the Saviour of Smolensk, in which the Saviour is shown at his full height with an open Gospel and Saint Sergius of Radonezh and Varlaam of Khutyn falling down before his feet. To the right is the image of Saint Nicholas of Mozhaisk, and to the left is Our Lady of the Unbreakable Wall. The leaves of the egg-shaped triptych depict two six-winged Seraphim, who crown the top in the form of the Saviour Tower of the Moscow Kremlin, surrounded by filigree flowers.

Vladimir Mikhailov
tokens of faith

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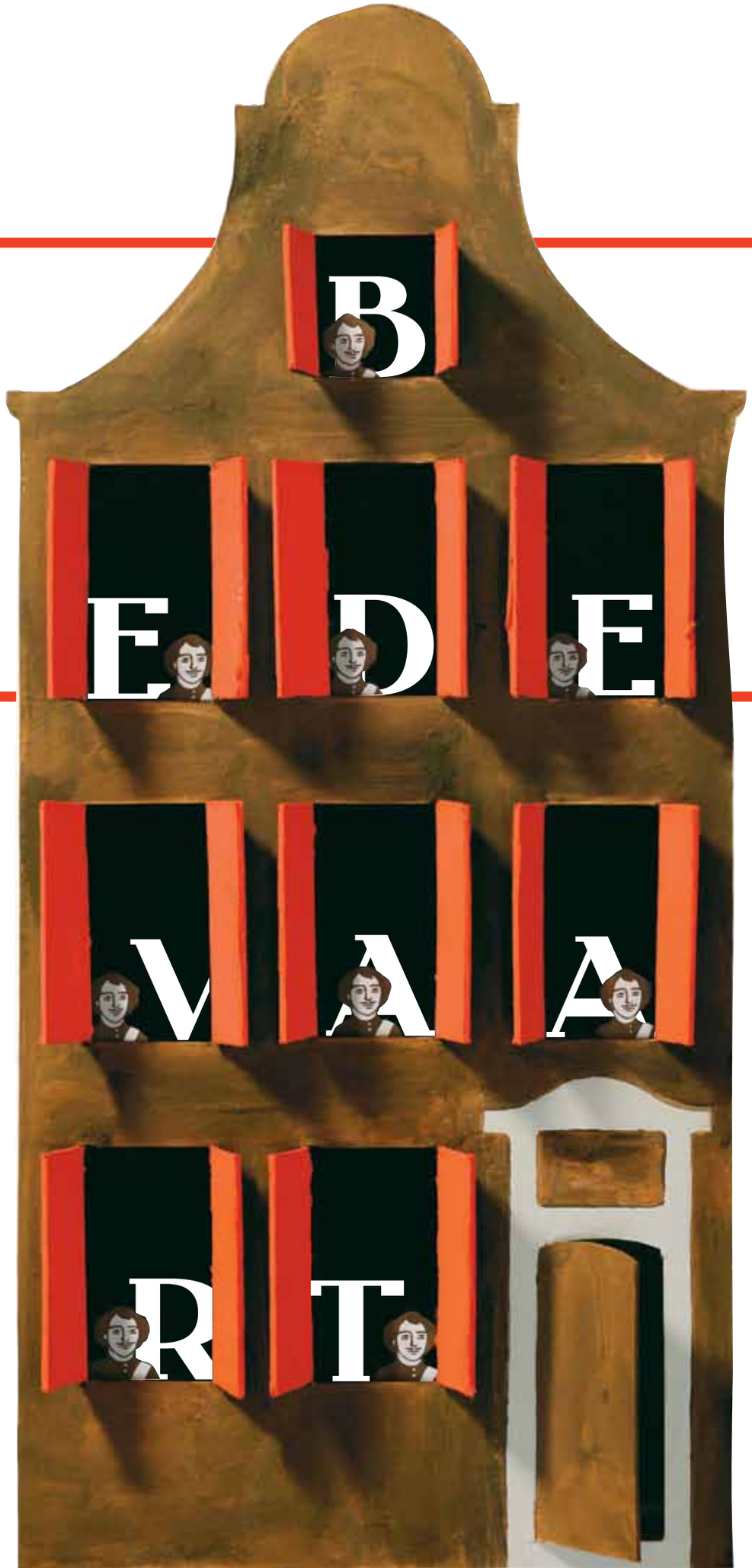

Bedevaart (Dutch):
pilgrimage

DMITRY GUZEVICH, IRINA GUZEVICH

THE EUROPEAN MYTH OF PETER THE GREAT IS AN EXTRAORDINARY PHENOMENON WHICH CONSTITUTES AN INTEGRAL PART OF EUROPEAN CULTURAL MYTHOLOGY. PETER THE GREAT DID NOT HERALD SOCIAL REFORM IN WESTERN EUROPE, NOR DID HE FOUND GREAT CITIES OR MILITARY FLEETS OR EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS. HE DID NOT SO MUCH AS CHOP OFF AN OPPONENT'S HEAD OUTSIDE HIS OWN DOMAIN; AND YET, OUTSIDE HIS OWN COUNTRY, HIS NAME IS AS WIDELY RECOGNIZED AND HIS DEEDS ARE AS WIDELY KNOWN AS THOSE OF NAPOLEON. PETER THE GREAT'S FAME OUTSIDE RUSSIA EVEN SUPERSEDES THAT OF CHARLES XII OF SWEDEN, FREDERICK THE GREAT OF PRUSSIA AND LOUIS XIV OF FRANCE.

While three of these great monarchs achieved widespread renown throughout Europe after waging foreign military campaigns, Louis XIV never left his own country during his reign. This explains why the European myth surrounding Loius XIV is not centered on the monarch's personality and is rather characterized by the splendor of his palace at Versailles. Indeed many European monarchs sought to imitate Versailles, including both Peter the Great[1] and Frederick the Great as well as such avowed foes of France as William III of Orange and the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire in Austria.

1
↓
p. 016
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It should be underscored that we speak here of the myth that surrounds a monarch outside the country where they reigned, rather than within it. For example, Matthias Corvinus and Francis II Rákóczi of Hungary are, of course, legendary in their native land, but there is no Rákoczian myth outside that country. The fact that there are sites associated with him in neighboring countries owes more to shifting political borders than the development of a myth surrounding his persona in those places.

Peter the Great is different. His extravagance and the fact that he travelled widely in Europe during his reign may partly explain his fame, but at least six other Russian tsars also travelled widely, whether in the role of emperor or as heir to the throne. Paul I, three Alexanders and two Nicholases traversed the continent and although in some cases their trips were marked by commemorative monuments and plaques (Alexander III even got a bridge in Paris named after him), it seems that these monarchs did not capture the European imagination enough to give rise to an enduring myth.

The Codex of European monuments to Peter the Great and historical sites marked by the presence of the Tsar or his courtiers has identified more than 550 sites. Even excluding the areas that were within his domain at the end of his reign and that are now outside Russian territory, there remain as many as 400 such places.

The overwhelming majority of these places are sites where the Tsar and his courtiers are really believed to have visited. In these cases the myth grew around a historical fact, that is a real life story that was scrutinized, fleshed out and developed in imagination. Their ambiguities and discrepancies can usually be easily explained. For example, some confusion arose over a visit made by Peter the Great and his courtiers to The King's Arms Inn in Godalming, on the way to Portsmouth, during a visit to England in March and April of 1698[1]. Legend has it that upon returning to Deptford, the Tsar and his entourage of 13 courtiers consumed an unheard-of quantity of food at the inn. The innkeeper's receipt remained intact, and it itemized the breakfast thus: "The following was served at the breakfast: half a ram, a quarter of a lamb, 10 hens, 12 spring chickens, three quarts of brandy, six quarts of mulled wine, seven dozen eggs and this is not counting the vegetables, of which the company ate as much as was provided. For lunch the company ate five

racks of beef, of three stone weight, one ram of 56 pounds, three quarters of a lamb, a boiled calf — the shoulder and tenderloin — and eight chickens and eight rabbits, all washed down with white wine (about 30 quarts) and red wine (about a dozen quarts)". To commemorate this visit, a plaque was placed at the site on December 4, 1998 and the ceremony was attended by the Russian ambassador to the UK, Yury Fokin. However, historians now believe that Peter the Great did not actually stop at Godalming on his return journey from Portsmouth and it is suspected that the breakfast might never have taken place. Nevertheless a memorial plaque was placed to give homage to the fictitious event that gave rise to the legend of Peter's breakfast.

In fact, the surviving historical document from the event was not the innkeeper's bill to the government for the visit, but an unreliable letter, written by a private party unconnected with the incident. The letter was clearly a narrative, rather than a strictly financial document, and it contained at least one known inaccuracy which is that Peter the Great and his company stopped at Godalming on their return journey from Portsmouth (from March 25 to April 4), when in fact they only stopped there en route to Portsmouth (from March 20 to March 30). Simple exaggeration would explain the Pantagruelian breakfast that was attributed to Peter the Great. After all, hyperbole was a common literary device in those days, not least in the epistolary genre.

There are many other inaccuracies, for example, Peter the Great was said to have stayed at 15-16 Buckingham Street in London and there had always been a commemorative plaque on the wall (which vanished after a recent remodeling of the building). However, he was never there: the Tsar and his entourage really stayed in nearby Norfolk Street. Norfolk Street is now a narrow walkway inside a housing estate, but the street where Peter the Great stayed still featured on a 1944 map of London. To this day it is impossible to be certain about the exact location of the tavern somewhere on the edge of London and the Tower of London where Peter the Great stopped to have a brandy and where there was subsequently a sign with his portrait. But our research of the area and our analysis of the legend gives us sound reason to believe that Peter the Great did in fact stay in this part of what is now East London[2].

We also found a few places where the Petrine myth prevails in its most "clear" form without any discernible link with events in the Tsar's life, or indeed his travels.

First, there are places where we know for a fact he never set foot in; however there are legends about his exploits. These are some of the stories:

One of these legends[3] is associated with the harbor town of Donaghadee in Northern Ireland, which has a population of 6,500 people, just 22 kilometers from Belfast. It lies on the Antrim coast, on the coast of the North Channel which connects the Irish Sea to the Atlantic Ocean and separates Ireland from Scotland. Grace Neill's Bar, which opened in 1611 and was known as The King's Arms at that time, is the oldest pub in Northern Ireland and Ireland's second oldest pub (that title was claimed by Seán's Bar in the town of Athlone, which has been operating since the year 900). Legend has it that Peter the Great stayed here in 1698. This legend was recorded by local historian W.G. Pollock[4], whose book was published in three editions (in 1975, 1976 and 1982). He claims that in 1698 Peter the Great visited Scotland and stayed at an inn called The Blair Arms in Portpatrick, then he made the 37-kilometer crossing of the Irish Sea from Portpatrick to Donaghadee, and stayed in The King's Arms, where one of the rooms was subsequently called "The Emperor's Room". And after that Peter the Great set off to a small, coastal town called Warrenpoint to study shipbuilding. Warrenpoint is a small town of 7,000 inhabitants situated on an inlet between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. The rumor of this event has been reinforced in the press and on the Internet. In the 19th century and the early 20th century, Grace Neill (1818–1916) was the owner of The King's Arms and the establishment has borne her name ever since. Her ghost is the second greatest attraction of the establishment after the connection with the Russian Tsar and the bar has become a draw for tourists, having recently won various national prizes, including the Pub of the Year Award in 2005 and the Dining Pub of the Year award in 2004. However, the fact of the matter is that Peter the Great visited neither Scotland nor Ireland on his travels, and the town of Warrenpoint was not established until the 1780s. It is a mystery how the story came about. We think that it may have been confused with the true tale of one of the famous guests of the inn, Daniel Defoe (Franz Liszt and John Keats were also guests at The King's Arms), who had seen the Tsar in London in 1698 and later wrote a book about him. The story is a perfect example of the European mythology surrounding Peter the Great.

Yet another story about Peter is associated with the town of Baasrode in Belgium (population 6,000). The town sits on the banks of the River Scheldt in the triangle formed by the cities of Antwerp, Brussels and Ghent, in what is now the municipality of Dendermonde. Because of its location, Baasrode became a famous trading post in the early Middle Ages. Until 1986, Baasrode was one of the main shipbuilding centers in the southern Netherlands (there were five wharfs in the town in 1777). Now it is part of the town of Dendermonde. Peter the Great did not visit Baasrode on either his first trip to Flanders in 1697–1698 or his second trip, which he made in 1717. Nevertheless, over the past few centuries a legend arose that during the Great Embassy, as his journey became known, the Tsar studied shipbuilding not only in Zaandam, but also in Baasrode. After all, Vernimmen's shipyard, which maintained a strong trading connection with Zaandam, was founded in Baasrode in 1685. This legend was immortalized in 1937 in two children's story books by the Flemish writer Abraham Hans. In the very town of Baasrode tourists could see a house called "Pierre le Grand" (which can be found on old maps) where the Tsar allegedly stayed. The house has since been replaced by a parking lot[5].

There is also a Czech myth of the Peter the Great and although it is similar to the Irish and Belgian myths, it is general in character and is not associated with any particular site. On June 6 OS (June 16 NS), 1698, Peter and his entourage passed through Prague on their journey from Amsterdam to Vienna. However, they did not stop in the Czech capital, but dined outside the city and moved on. The following excerpt from the Emperor's journal of 1698 confirms this: "We arrived at the city of Prague before nightfall, passed through the city, which is great, the Czech capital, and stopped at [a] tavern one mile outside the city, where we ate. After four hours, we moved on through the night"[6].

Apparently the citizens of Prague and their descendants were offended by Peter the Great's failure to visit, and the city's legends were complemented by a myth, intimating that the Tsar had stopped in the capital and had spent a whole week "spending time with the various elements of Czech high society"[7]. This myth was clearly fueled by the fact that Russia and what was then Bohemia did enjoy a good relationship during the Petrine era. Peter the Great had sojourned in Carlsbad in Western Bohemia twice, in 1711 and 1712, so that is a city which he visited indeed. The National Museum in Prague, in its turn, has a small, ivory snuffbox that Peter the Great carved while on vacation in Carlsbad[8]. And the Tsar did send an envoy of translators to Prague between 1716 and 1721, and their work was thought to have influenced the development of Russian translation[9].

Slightly different is the myth associated with the city of Mechelen in Belgium. The point is that unlike Donaghadee or Baasrode, Peter the Great could well have visited it, although documentary evidence of this is yet to be found. A local legend, which has survived up to now, holds that Peter stopped there during his visit to the Austrian Netherlands (now in the area of present-day Belgium) in June–July 1717. Legend has it that he was so enchanted by the playing of church bells that he ordered a whole set of bells and a carillon — a set of bells of various height driven by means of a keyboard or an automated device[22] — to be sent home to Russia. These bells sounded softer than the chimes that rang out from the churches in Moscow at the time. Malines is the French name for the same town, and the legend of Mechelen would have it that the common Russian expression for a soft ringing, *malinovy zvon*, comes from Peter the Great's visit to the Flemish town[10].

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p. 051
p. 286

An anti-Petrine myth exists in contrast to the Petrine myth. We have identified one in France. According to Ukrainian legend, Grigory Orlik (1702–1759), the son of Philip Orlik, general lieutenant of the French army and a political refugee who had fled to France from the wrath of Peter the Great, was awarded a chateau by the king of France and, as is usually the case in France, the area around the castle took the name of the owner: Orly. More than two centuries later, Orly Airport was built on the land. In fact the name Orly is very ancient, originating in the 9th or 10th century, and it is already in evidence on a map of the Ile de France of 1620. French etymology also suggests that orly could also mean "the edge of the marsh" (Orly = or ly)[11]. Still there is no reason why the general could not have been given land in this area. As a result, it may turn out that both the name of the place had existed before and the myth has some basis in historical fact. This story clearly requires further investigation.

Most of these myths developed quite a long time ago, in the 18th and 19th centuries, and were only committed to paper at best in the 20th century. However, while conducting this research we have recorded the birth of a new Petrine myth: the Brussels myth. Here it is:

In the Brussels Park (which was earlier called the Palace or the Duke's Park) stands a bust of Peter the Great by the sculptor Christian Daniel Rauch. It was presented to the city by Prince Anatoly Demidov in 1854. A marble statue of a woman reclining and reading a book lies in a nearby grotto. The current urban myth is that this arrangement commemorates the fact that the Tsar was invited to dine with the king (there was no king reigning in the Austrian Netherlands at that time). The party waited for Peter the Great for a long time but he failed to arrive for dinner. The following morning, a search party of servants came upon the Tsar asleep in a ditch in the arms of a local beauty in exactly the spot where the park is today[12]. In fact, the Tsar might well have seen the marble "Penitent Mary Magdalen" by Jérôme Duquesnoy (1602–1654). In other words, the Mary Magdalen had been created (and was quite possibly already lying in the park) in 1717.

This myth about Peter the Great obviously came about firstly, because he indeed stayed at the Grand Palace of Charles V (Maison de Charles Quint, which was demolished in 1778, but the memories of it have survived) from April 3 OS (April 14 NS) until April 7 OS (April 18 NS), 1717, and secondly, because his extravagance was widely noted at the time. It was said that during a raucous festival in the park that took place on April 5 OS (April 16 NS), 1717, one of the Tsar's courtiers, having partaken of the intoxicating libations that were offered, made his way to the island in the center of the Mary Magdalen fountain. Peter the Great followed his subject to the statue, but he slipped into the water. Apparently the Tsar was so drunk that he vomited straight into the fountain. The city authorities saw fit to commemorate this event with plaque detailing the event in Latin, which remains on the site to this day. It reads: "The great Tsar of Muscovy, Peter Alexeyevich, sat on the edge of this fountain and anointed these waters with Imperial wine on the third hour after midnight, on the Sixteenth of April in the year of 1717"[13]. And so, the imagination was fueled by the two statues in the park, while in fact they were placed in close proximity to one another by chance.

The tale of the missing Tsar and his alleged mistress is not recorded in any serious historical texts, or even in local history or travel literature about Brussels (we are sincerely grateful to Professor Emanuel Vaegemans for verifying this with historians in the city). Some tour guides do tell the tale however, and we found out about the story online from reports by Russian tourists who were captivated by the story. The urban myth crystalized around the late 1990s, when more and more Russians

began to travel abroad. It is likely that the "Brussels myth" will soon appear in guidebooks and become widely known.

Why did we write at such length about a pure myth while there are plenty of commemorative sites and monuments recording real facts of Peter the Great's life? The reason for this is that the pure myth gives him credit as a folkloric character, while the verified commemorative sites associated with him only tell us about Peter the Great as a historic figure.

Of course, Peter the Great's epic stature in Russian culture is well known and it has been subject to scholarly analysis. The historian Boris Puntilov[14] is the foremost scholar in this area. However, it is most unusual that a monarch should be mythologized outside the range of his own domain.

So far we have examined myths about Peter the Great that are associated with particular places based on the Codex of Petrine Monuments and Commemorative Sites. But there are many more stories of Peter's deeds and exploits in poetic folklore which are not location-specific. As recently as at the beginning of the 20th century, historian P. Monteverde recounted a section from a poem in Dutch about the Emperor that claims "it seems as though Peter the Great spent a lifetime of regret that he didn't marry the slender beauty from Zaandam". Monteverde committed this passage to memory when he heard it recited at a family gathering in Holland[15]. This is only one example of the many appearances that Peter the Great makes in the folkloric tradition, but a striking one.

Let us summarize the findings.

We have found that myths about Peter the Great in Europe have not only survived but are constantly being updated, and he became a significant figure in the folklore of many European countries. This would surely not be the case had the Russian monarch not turned into a key figure of European civilization. In other words, he clearly must have had an extraordinary impact on both Russian and European collective memory.

While striving to understand this effect, we have come up against the challenge of using the right terminology to explain this phenomenon. Peter the Great's reforms, described in Russian in terms such as "civilization," "Westernization," and "Europeanization," are of little use. Still less effective are the explanations in terms of (Western) influence, reforms and revolution (all the way down to a "Bolshevik" on the throne).

Peter did dramatically change Russia. But why should he also be commemorated in Belgium, the Netherlands, Austria, Denmark and even the UK and France? This could only have happened because the changes that are identified as having taken place in Russia under his reign had such an impact on those European countries that not only does each one seek to preserve memories of their own stake in Petrine reforms, but communities produce artefacts to assert an even greater involvement in events than was really the case.

In a previous analysis, we came to the conclusion that Peter the Great's influence should not only be seen in terms of the European-style reforms being brought about in Russia, but rather in terms of Russia becoming part of Europe's wider cultural landscape, or indeed of European civilization expanding its reach to Russia[16].

An analysis of the myth of Peter the Great in Europe supports this assertion, since the mere fact of the expansion of European civilization served to fuel the myth.

And the Tsar himself became symbolic of European cultural enlargement.

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3 Grace Neill's Inn in Northern Ireland// Kross, A. and Guzevich, D., *Codex of Petrine Monuments and Commemorative Sites in Europe,* 1st issue, St. Petersburg, 2012

4 Pollock W. G., *Six Miles from Bangor: The Story of Donaghadee and the Copeland Islands,* Belfast, 1982, pp 28–31.

5 Waegemans, E., *Peter the Great in Belgium,* St. Petersburg, 2007, pp69–84

6 Diary of 1698: Journal 206, St. Petersburg 1853, p25

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8 *Petrine Monuments and Commemorative Sites in Europe: Preliminary list* // Kross, A. and Guzevich, D., Codex of Petrine Monuments and Commemorative Sites in Europe, 1st issue, St. Petersburg, 2012

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11 fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orly

12 Faustov, S. *In the Kingdom of Belgium,* (blogpost: faustov.ru/?cat=9&paged=2)

13 Waegemans, E. *Peter the Great in Belgium,* p139

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15 Monteverde, P. *The little house where Peter the Great stayed while in Holland* // Russian archives 1906, Book 1, №1, pp 488–491

16 Guzevich D., Guzevich I. Velikoye posolstvo: Rubezh epoch bkb Nachalo puti: 1697-1698. SPb, 2008. pp. 333–337.

Prague
Reval
Woolwich
Riga
Vienna
Dresden
Mitau
Deptford
Portsmouth
Libau
London
Pillau
Leiden
Koenigsberg
Utrecht
Krakow
Zaandam
Amsterdam
Waldau
Brandenburg
Marienwerder
Ragnit
Coppenbrugge
Teplice
Carlsbad
Memel
Torgau
Saardam
Gevelsberg
Elbing
Rawa
Leipzig

6 | Johann Georg Hertel
Canoneer's Compass
Late 17th Century
Bavaria, Augsburg
Brass, steel, engraving

PLĀGĀ CAELI[1]

EVEN MY DEEPEST FANTASIES PALE IN COMPARISON TO REALITY. MY IMAGINATION IS CINEMATIC. BUT IF I WERE TO BE SHOWN THE EVENTS OF PETER THE GREAT'S TRAVELS TO EUROPE IN 1711–1712 ON A MOVIE SCREEN, I WOULDN'T BELIEVE A SINGLE EPISODE OF IT. I'D SAY THAT IT WAS A BIG JOKE AND A MOCKERY OF HISTORY[10].

6 | Alexander Djikia
Peter the Great, the Russian king

10 ↓ p. 069 p. 072 p. 073 p. 074 p. 164

JOHN SHEMYAKIN

Take Peter the Great in 1711, after going through all the shame, disappointment, and horror of the Prut campaign. Peter[1], who had been the winner of the Battle of Poltava, who had fulfilled almost all his plans, he who was already a hero, was thrown like a little puppy into a Turkish bag, and this bag and its catch was flaunted to the whole world. The Russian army, dying of hunger, full of despair and helplessness, had the good fortune to be allowed to escape, to crawl out of a death trap. And all that plus the disgraceful reconciliation conditions, with the surrender of Azov — Peter's first place of victory[2].

What did Peter do after all this? I would have hidden underground and howled and repented. And as soon as I took a break from repenting, I would have chopped off the heads of my brothers-in-arms. I would have burnt the traitors alive in their wooden cages. Leaning on a creaking lever, I would have personally torn out the tendons of all my unpleasant neighbors on the torture rack. Maybe I'd start writing memoirs, reading some of them in the frosty morning haze, under the low rumble of bells and the crowing of crows before the dangling and shaking survivors, surrounded by steel bayonets.

But Peter went on his way with ease, leaving immediately for Europe. And he went first of all to Dresden.

It was in Dresden that Peter first got to see the miraculous carousel. Peter was probably the first Russian person to see this marvel and realize how wonderful it was. The Tsar (already a grown man) rode around on the carousel until he was completely exhausted. In fact Peter demanded that the carousel be wound up so fast that the other people riding on it, holding onto their wigs for dear life, were thrown off the carousel, their coattails flapping like bird wings, into the bushes, while Peter himself, spreading his legs out wide, kept his balance with all his might while thundering with laughter under the brilliant German sky. Then he collapsed into the grass and fell asleep. What was he trying to prove on this carousel, and to whom? What was he squeezing out of himself on this centrifuge? What was he dreaming on the perfect German lawn with the Saxon flowers planted in a straight line?[3]

Peter lived humbly in Dresden, in the Zum Golden Ring Hotel. The Saxon Marshal Pflug[4] messaged to the palace: upon leaving the hotel, Peter "took [...] several bed sheets and blankets, and wanted to put the green silk curtains in his luggage too [...] but, encountering resistance from the hotel staff, who protested against Peter's stealing, he reluctantly conceded the items back, taking only two bed sheets made of Indian cotton prints"[5].

This wasn't greed. A few days later, in Freiburg[6], the Tsar, being extremely impressed by the night ceremonial march of 2,000 miners in his honor, gave 80 gold ducats just to the orchestra to whose music the miners set their steps and sang their miners' marches and ballads. He rolled out barrels of wine for all, which he paid for generously, without even bargaining. Peter was probably not only the first Russian who rode on a carousel, but also the first to appreciate the beauty of the German *fackelzug*[7] to the beat of drums and simultaneous cries of *"Hoch!"*. He couldn't resist showing the drummers how he, Peter, knew how to beat "the daybreak" and whatever other marches you could want. He got a prize for his efforts, and sent it to Menshikov, who at that time was besieging Stettin[8].

1 ↓ p. 016 p. 078 p. 099 p. 108 p. 109 p. 110 p. 173 p. 222 p. 227 p. 235

Tyrannical personalities have a special key to the hearts of intellectuals. Leibniz first met the Tsar in 1711 in Torgau, and had a conversation with him, and later wrote to his friend Fabricius: "I was in Torgau not so much to witness the wedding[9] as I was to see the Russian Tsar. This man's mental abilities are enormous. Following my advice, he intends to arrange magnetic observations throughout his vast kingdom." This was written a few months after the episode described with the curtains. Leibniz was convinced that Peter really would conduct large-scale magnetic observations in Russia. At the next meeting with Peter the Great, Leibniz actually agreed to enter the Russian service, accepting a salary.

Peter went to Carlsbad[10] to take the therapeutic waters. To start, he enrolled in a shooting training club, for propriety's sake. He had excellent results with the gun. But he quickly stopped going to the lessons. He shot at a man who, as it seemed to Peter, was getting in his way. The story goes he missed the person, got angry, and quit shooting for a long time. All these targets, and rules, and competitors, I can't stand it anymore! Give a man some freedom!

Next Peter went to work on a construction site. On the second day he got in a fight with one of the workers, and dipped him into lime. He went to a wedding of some locksmith, and distinguished himself with his gaiety and his "Russian custom of kissing all the women in the room after each toast". At the wedding, he met some lathe hand and made three table legs on a lathe himself. He didn't finish turning the fourth leg, citing his huge work load and governmental concerns. The same evening the lathe hand saw Peter climbing a mountain with a wooden cross, a shovel and a coil of rope.

When consuming mineral water, Peter distinguished himself as both an obedient patient and a Russian tourist. Instead of drinking three cups, he drank three pitchers. After all, if everything was paid for ahead of time, why just indulge in little cups? And no matter what, drinking a whole jug of mineral water must be more beneficial to the body than drinking from a little cup with a spout. That's obvious to any reasonable traveler.

The Austrian emperor sent Peter wine as a gift. Many bottles, from the imperial wine cellars. Peter wasted no time selling off the gifted wine. The bottles, which were now re-labeled as "Tsar" wine, were sold off in a day. This was the first-ever example of Russian rebranding on the foreign market. Who needs terrible wine from pale Austrian vineyards? But when the "Tsar's" wine is sold by the Tsar himself — that's another matter. The people paid 241 gold thalers for the re-branding miracle. Peter put his earnings in a deposit account and received 12 thalers and 25 groschens per year in interest. Peter was the first Russian to open an account in a foreign bank.

Peter started to love playing ball. He didn't care about the rules, and hit the ball with his hands, his feet, a stick. He broke sticks and distributed them to all the members of his team. And won. When the captain of the opposing team was smashed in the head for a fifth time with a stick, and dragged off the field, the game was stopped due to one side having the upper hand. Peter was very happy with the win. He gave each one of his teammates a guilder. Peter escorted the losing captain to his home, walking solemnly beside the cart. There, at the loser's house, Peter had supper[11].

In his next trip to Germany, Peter visited places connected to Martin Luther. He sighed over Martin Luther's grave, visited numerous Lutheran libraries and classrooms. The pastors couldn't get enough of this visitor who was so susceptible to Lutheran charms. They showed Peter the famous ink spray stain on the wall. After all, the devil came to Luther, and Luther threw the inkwell at him. A typical Protestant story — full of hints, but understandable to all. Peter stared for a long time in silence at the ink remaining on the wall after the devil's raid. The pastors stood behind the Tsar in awe. Peter turned to the pastors, his mouth distorted by grief, and a tear glistened in his left eye.

The pastors rushed to comfort him, to say Luther's work is alive, and that his doctrine is omnipotent because it is true! They asked the Tsar to leave his signature on another wall, close to the door, as proof that he had visited the church and participated in religious progress. Peter signed the wall near the door with chalk. Then in one leap he jumped to the biggest ink spot and scribbled next to it: "This ink is new and this is all a lie". After that he hugged the two pastors and told them to show him around the building[12].

You couldn't make it up! How could you film such a thing? Couldn't be done. This man survived acute post-traumatic shock and remained the same person, not changing himself, as happens with the rest of us, but rather distorting all of the places, events and rules around him. Crumpling them in his little imperious fist.

1 Excruciating pain from a lightning strike (Latin).
2 As a result of the Prut campaign in 1711 (the Russian-Turkish war of 1710–1713), the Russian army was surrounded in Moldova and was in critical condition due to a lack of food and ammunition. Under the terms of the Prut peace treaty, Russia returned Azov to Turkey and abandoned its fortresses on the Azov Sea.
3 See: *Brikner A. G.* Peter the Great in Dresden in 1698, 1711 and 1712 // Russkaya Starina. 1874. V. 11. No. 12.
4 August Ferdinand von Pflug — en earl, and Saxon prime minister and privy councilor. Died in 1718.
5 Digest of the Imperial Russian Historical Society. V. 20. SPb., 1877.
6 Freiburg — a city in Baden-Württemberg, the center of the Black Forest.
7 Fackelzug — a solemn procession with torches in honor of a respected person. This custom has been preserved in Germany to this day.
8 Stettin (Polish: Szczecin) — a city in north-west Poland.
9 This refers to the wedding of Peter's son Alexei Petrovich, held in October 1711 in Torgau. Peter came to the wedding immediately after the Prut campaign.
10 Carlsbad, or Kaiser-Karlsbad; (Czech: Karlovy Vary) — a town in Bohemia, and one of the most famous resorts in Europe.
11 See: Peter the Great in Carlsbad in 1711 and 1712: Historical Reminiscences, gathered by K.L. Kustodiev: Speech delivered at the meeting of Russians in Carlsbad to celebrate the 200 year anniversary of the birth of Peter the Great, May 30, 1872 (transcription of the words spoken by him on that day in a Karlsbad church, and a lithograph of the home in Pfau). Budapest, 1873.
12 This article also draws on the following materials: Russkaya Starina. 1875. V. XII (stories published in excerpts of Baron Eikhgolts; they relate to Peter's later visits to Europe, but the overall atmosphere is transmitted perfectly); *Brickner A.G.* Peter the Great's Journey Abroad from 1711 to 1717 // Russky Vestnik. 1880. V. 150. No. 11. pp567–592; No. 12. pp639–657; 1881. V. 151. No. 2. pp622–657.

Bir

Julian Charriere and **Julius von Bismarck** airbrushed Venetian pigeons for the opening of the 13th International Architectural Biennale[5] in 2012. French artist **Kader Attia's** installation titled "Flying Rats" (150 live pigeons pecking sculptures of children made from sponge and grains) was displayed at the Lyon Biennial in 2005. Stuffed pigeons, about to defecate on the heads of visitors who have come to see Tintoretto's paintings, felt at ease in the main pavilion of the 54th Venice Biennale in 2011 (**Maurizio Cattelan,** "Turisti"). **Jeremy Deller** (the British Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale) painted a huge a hawk clutching a red Range Rover in its talons ("English Magic"). A large leather vampire bird by **Nicholas Hlobo** (54th Venice Biennale, 2012), "You are a bird" by **Wei Dong** (Arsenale-2012) with a dead bird around the neck of a girl surrounded by red guards — these are just a few of the birds that have appeared at recent large contemporary art events.

5
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c. 035
c. 036
c. 044
c. 051
c. 093
c. 196

NICO DE HAAN

ON SEPTEMBER 26, 2012, AS PART OF THE ANNUAL PROGRAM WINDOW ON THE NETHERLANDS, THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, IN COLLABORATION WITH THE HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE DUTCH INSTITUTE IN ST. PETERSBURG AND THE GENERAL CONSULATE OF THE NETHERLANDS IN ST. PETERSBURG, PRESENTED AUDIENCES WITH A LECTURE BY DUTCH ORNITHOLOGIST NICO DE HAAN, INTRIGUINGLY ENTITLED "400 YEARS LATER, SNYDERS' CONCERT OF BIRDS BREAKS INTO SONG". THE SUBJECT OF THE LECTURE WAS A CANVAS BY THE PROMINENT FLEMISH PAINTER FRANS SNYDERS (1579–1657), DATING BACK TO AROUND 1630–1640 AND PART OF THE HERMITAGE'S COLLECTION.

Natalia Ivanovna Grilsai, a senior researcher in the Hermitage Museum's Department of West European Art, describes the canvas thus: "The painting presents a lively gathering of birds, filling the air with their cries and song under the direction of an owl, sitting upon a branch in front of an open book of sheet music. This subject, in which there is an element of allegory — the ridicule of the owl — can probably be traced back to Aesop's fable 'The Owl and the Birds'. Mind you, paintings like 'Concert of Birds' are linked to this fable only by their external motif — the depiction of birds gathered around an owl on a tree. Representations of 'bird concerts' can also be reconciled with the proverb coined by the Dutch poet Jacob Cats: *Elck vogellge singt soo't gebeckt is* (every bird sings as it can, meaning everyone speaks as they are able). In the work of the Flemish painters, parodic illustrations of this nature often represented allegories of air or sound, allowing the artists to simultaneously demonstrate the diversity of the bird kingdom. In the painting at the Hermitage, portrayals of species of bird found throughout Europe's forests, fields, rivers and lakes are united with the decorative species cultivated in Europe (peacocks and pouter pigeons) and with the exotic natives of the New World (the toucan, the Amazon parrot and the red macaw)".

Jan Baptist Weenix (1621–1663) and Melchior de Hondecoeter (1636–1695) painted similar pictures both before and after Frans Snyders. As Albert de Mirimonde demonstrated (see: Mirimonde A. P. de. Les concerts parodiques chez les Maîtres du Nord // Gazette des Beaux-Arts. 1964. Ser. 6. Vol. 64. p. 253–280), concerts of birds should be seen as part of a more general group of "animal concerts" — to be precise, concerts of monkeys and concerts of cats. Worthy of mention, for example, is a delightful little painting by David Teniers the Younger (Munich), in which an owl conducts a choir of cats (see: Schwarz H., Plagemann V. Eule // Reallexikon zur deutsche Kunstgeschichte. München, 1973. Bd. VI. Kol. 313).

Of course, we should not interpret similar paintings as purely animalistic works, as they are first and foremost moral scenes. The owl in them is not so much a symbol of wisdom as an expression of spiritual blindness and stupidity: the spectacles, discarded beside the score on which it is sitting, are a clear reference to the old Flemish adage: "What's the use of candle and glasses if the owl doesn't want to see?"

The symbolic content of "Concert of Birds" should not be ignored. An analogy with the cat concerts allows us to presuppose that here the chief element is that of the disharmonious character

Alexander Sekatsky "Notes from Israel", Novy Mir №1/2012

"I see a monastery yard, with guinea fowls and turkeys walking around it, there are a couple of fantastic peacocks. The birds often make some sorrowful sounds which are new for me, with an unexplainable regularity, and by the end of the first day I thought that the famous prophesy 'before the rooster crows' might actually refer not to a rooster, but to one of these birds, although I can also hear roosters crowing in the mornings. They are reminiscent of the denial of the closest apostles, and I'm starting to think that a Christian believer who comes to Jerusalem feels first of all that the times of denial and treason continue, they are not over, and that none of the times started here and then they are over. They can be all traced here, to their source."

of the musical ensemble depicted: the sharp, piercing cries and song of the larger birds drown out the cheeping of the smaller ones. The very image of a concert of birds can be brought together with Cats' dictum: every bird sings as it can. The ensuing moral lesson is this: the choice of words and register allow us to draw conclusions about the person with whom we are dealing (see: Cats J. Spiegel van den ouden en nieuwen Tyt. 1632).

"Concert of Birds" features representations of a whole host of birds. But what is it that makes these birds — and watching them — so appealing? In my view, bird watching is a form of hunting, and a very amicable form of the pursuit. You leave home, and on each occasion you have a wondrous encounter with birds, birds which act in a particular way, have a beautiful appearance and sing delightfully. When you watch birds, the green natural environment around you is transformed into a magic box from which anything can appear and which provides you with infinite enjoyment. Birds also serve as a symbol of freedom and happiness, and deep in our hearts we would all like to be like them.

I have a question. Which of you has heard a concert of birds? In spring, at sunrise — or even better, when it is still dark, go into the forest, or the garden, or the edge of the woods — and listen carefully. When the dawn chorus begins, it is a true carnival. In spring I always attend these free concerts.

Several centuries ago, much of what we now know about birds was still unknown. People had no idea that birds migrated to warmer regions for the winter. The ability to fly was regarded as a link with the heavenly world above, so unfathomable was it to us. It is no accident that angels have wings. Even in those days people were enchanted by birds and everything connected with them.

Birds were depicted in the wall paintings of Egyptian and Greek temples. Even the Romans, before marching into battle, observed birds and their movements. In the 14th century, beautiful birds with colorful plumage decorated the pages of medieval church books. But these depictions of birds were often relatively primitive.

How was Snyders able to portray birds so masterfully in his painting? After all, binoculars, just like photography, had not yet been invented.

In 1492 Columbus discovered the Americas, and ships began to make the long voyage to South America. There they caught parrots and other birds, and a whole stream of tropical birds subsequently flowed into Europe. The ships of trading companies such as the Dutch West India Company visited Asia, India and Africa, from where they also brought back bright tropical birds.

Brightly-colored birds conferred status and glitter, and spacious aviaries were built at many royal courts. When the birds died, they were stuffed and served as models for many artists. There is no doubt that Snyders also made use of such models. For instance, the collection of King Rudolf II in Prague was one of the largest of its kind in Europe. Exchanges between collections also took place.

6 | Frans Snyders
Concert of Birds
1629–1630
Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid

Frans Snyders

Flemish painter, born November 11, 1579–died August 19, 1657.
A contemporary of Peter Paul Rubens, best known for his portrayals of full-bodied women, Snyders was a specialist in the illustration of hunting scenes, animals and still lifes. And even a great master such as Rubens would often ask Snyders to paint parts of his canvases. Being Baroque artists, both place an accent upon action and dynamics in their hunting scenes, but Snyders excluded human figures from his compositions, preferring to concentrate on nature. He also inspired other artists, who followed him and ventured to create their own version of a "Concert of Birds".
Snyders, it seems, had a genuine fondness for birds and perhaps was even an ornithologist, insofar as he portrayed them so flawlessly. There is no doubt that he was truly charmed by these creatures, otherwise he simply would have been unable to render them so magnificently.

Nico de Haan

(born 1947)
Nico de Haan studied at a forestry academy in the Netherlands, graduating in 1970. In 1974 he began working for the Dutch Society for the Protection of Birds (in 1984 he became Assistant Director). He as written a number of scripts for documentary films about birds. Since January 1, 2004, de Haan has been Ambassador of the Netherlands for the protection of birds.
In 2004 the ornithologist set up his own organization, VogelkijkCentrum Nederland, dedicated to furthering education in the study and protection of birds.
Haan in Dutch means "cockerel".

7 |

8 |

Paintings at the time featured colorful scenes designed to delight the eye. It was during the 16th century that the tradition of depicting a host of bright and varied birds and beasts on one canvas appeared: either biblical (paradise) or mystical scenes. In the 17th century the genre of the hunting still life first became popular: at the time, counts and noble families were in the habit of commissioning such paintings in order to decorate their castles and estates. They commissioned not only portraits, but also pictures of birds.

If you look at this painting, your gaze is immediately drawn to the section featuring the white-tailed eagle, the swan, the bittern and the hawk. On the other side stand the peacocks, and in the foreground the macaw stands out. A delightful collection of birds, they are portrayed vividly and convincingly. Almost all the birds are depicted with their beaks open, and only a few of them sit and look on. The work has been completed with such attention to detail that I am curious as to the nature of Snyders' guiding motives. Does this painting represent a kind of ode to the beautiful birds which live on our planet? Or could it be the illustration of the Greek myth according to which the owl teaches the other birds a lesson in wisdom?

The tropical macaw and parrot, the terrible white-tailed eagle, the aquatic birds, the swallows: all together make a marvelous combination.

The placement of the birds is also worth noting. In the center is an owl, which clutches several sheets of musical notation and conducts. According to one version, the owl seeks to warn the birds of impending misfortune; according to another, it is preparing to conduct the choir of birds, who will perform the music written on the notation sheets.

The painting features depictions of 26 species of bird, as well as a bat. But what do they look like in reality?

7 | Melchior de Hondecoeter
Concert of Birds. 1670

8 | Melchior de Hondecoeter
Concert of Birds
The Smith Van Gelder Museum, Antwerp

V.F. Levinson-Lessing. "Peter the Great: First Journey Abroad"

"Exotic animals from East Indies and West Indies in Holland were not only collection objects for scientists. Live animals were brought in great numbers to live in zoos and decorate gardens and houses. In almost every rich house there were parrots; birds of paradise and hummingbirds flew in aviaries; *cochin-chinas* and other Indian wildfowl walked around in gardens along with peacocks that had already been imported for a long time. It is interesting to remember the numerous images of parrots in the Dutch interiors of the 17th century, and the diversity of birds in the vast paintings by Hondecoeter."

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9 | Frans Snyders
Concert of Birds. 1629–1630

Snyders, Frans [1]

Snyders (1579–1657) was a great contemporary (and frequent collaborator) of Jordaens and Rubens, albeit a more one-dimensional one. [...] Snyders' colossal knowledge extended [...] to the portrayal of living creatures. Nobody, not even Rubens, succeeded in so conveying the passions of animals, their peculiar psychology. For some reason Snyders was less successful with cats and lions.* But the rest of the animal kingdom found in him a genuine champion. The perfection in the execution of our **Concert of Birds** remains difficult to believe, and even the Japanese have cause to be in envy of such knowledge, such freedom and faithfulness of representation. Each bird lives and moves freely, boldly, in a manner consistent with its nature and not one of them conveys the impression that it was painted from a taxidermist's model or using a specimen in a cage. **

* The models for the latter were kept in the menagerie owned by the governors of Flanders in Brussels.
** The other masterpieces displayed alongside this painting and the four "stalls" (painted for the Bishop of Trieste, a well-known art lover) are "Fruits" and "Fight Between a Rooster and a Turkey". But Snyders' other works are also marvels of painting.
[1] *Benois A.N.* A Guide to the Picture Gallery of the Imperial Hermitage. SPb., 1911.

1

The blue tit is a symbol of dexterity, agility, happiness and truth.

Blue Tit
(Cyanistes caeruleus)
Blue tits have beautiful little blue-violet "hats". The more intense the color of the male's hat, the more attractive he is to females. And he does everything he can to make that hat brighter. Blue tits are very light birds, and they often hang from the very tips of thin branches, where other birds are unable to grip; there they pick up insects. They can also be encountered in this region [Russia]; perhaps you have seen these birds. Their trill is reminiscent of the sound of a mobile telephone which needs recharging.

2

The swallow is the herald of spring, and its symbol. It also guides lost children home.

Barn Swallow
(Hirundo rustica)
These birds often build their nests in barns. The very long tips of this swallow's tail feathers capture our attention. The artist has even gone so far as to exaggerate their length. These tail tips are very important. The males with the longer feathers enjoy more success with the females. In Norway they carried out an experiment: the tail feathers were cut off the most successful males and attached to the most hopeless losers in the mating game. And the ladies immediately changed partners. Why? Swallows with longer tail feathers are more maneuverable in flight, meaning they catch more insects and are thus better family providers. Swallows do not sing, but chirp and chatter, and this is the only bird which, in Russia as well, flies into the house of its own free will and sings.

3

Bluethroat (Luscinia svetica)
Notably, this painting also features a bluethroat. You need to be a real expert birdwatcher to see this one in the wild. There are two types of bluethroat: with either a red or white star upon the breast. The bluethroat depicted here is the kind with a white star, which is found in western and central Europe. Bluethroats with a red star inhabit northern Europe, the Alps, and possibly the area around St. Petersburg. The bluethroat is a migratory bird which winters in Africa, but it returns early to Holland, to areas where reeds grow. From March onwards you can hear its explosive song: it begins bashfully, but then quickly gathers power.
Now we will move on to songbirds, which feed on seeds. Note that they all possess a powerful beak with which to split seeds: these are the goldfinch, the bullfinch, the hawfinch, and we will meet a superb singer, the song thrush.

4

A goldfinch in a cage used to signify that the house was home to a girl who was ready to be wed. A goldfinch depicted in a cage with an open door meant that the girl had lost her honor.

Goldfinch (Carduelis carduelis)
But why in Dutch is this bird called a putter? This word comes from the word for "well". The goldfinch can learn how to draw up water from a little well beneath its cage, pulling a little bucket by a string by gripping the cord with its beak. The sound of its song is a little crackly.

5

The bullfinch is a symbol of peace, tenderness and care. The appearance of a bullfinch heralds the arrival of better times. A poor man who is married to a rich woman is sometimes referred to as a "bullfinch".

Eurasian Bullfinch
(Pyrrhula pyrrhula)
If a bullfinch appears in your garden, you should have plenty of time in which to study it: unlike other songbirds, it is not particularly fast-moving. In fact it is nothing more than a brightly-colored fatty. Its song is dominated by one tone, but some bullfinch owners have even managed to teach their birds to sing *Wilhelmus*, the Dutch national anthem.

6

This bright, eye-catching bird was given a special meaning in many cultures. To the Greeks the kingfisher is a sacred bird. In Chinese culture the kingfisher is a symbol of purity, while to the Celts the kingfisher symbolized brightness and wit.

Common Kingfisher (Alcedo atthis)
Here Snyders also highlights the details. He painted both a male and a female. The kingfisher is a bird which you hear first, then see. And, as they usually disappear like a flash of blue lightning, observation is usually limited to the exclamation: "I've seen a kingfisher." With the aid of a special membrane over their eyes, they can compensate for the reflection and refraction of water: this gives them the ability to dive for fish with precision. Sometimes they spend the winter in cities, where it is warmer and the water does not freeze so hard. Their inability to discern the reflections in the panes of windows sometimes results in unfortunate accidents.
Their cries are short and loud.

7

Hawfinch
(Coccothraustes coccothraustes)
Note the large cone-shaped beak — the hawfinch has something of the look of a clown. With this plier-like beak it can split even the toughest cherry stones.

8

The song thrush symbolizes the love for song, talent and judgment.

Song Thrush (Tyrdus philomelos)
It is truly an artist of the first class. Not only can it copy the song of various birds, but it also has its own repertoire. Its repeated calls, which are typically threefold, are its distinguishing characteristic. It wakes early and by the dawn it is already in full song.

9

In the Middle Ages the hoopoe was a symbol of the libertine. "Hoopoe" was the name given to a man who made use of the services of prostitutes.

Hoopoe (Humulus lupulus)
The hoopoe often plays a leading role in depictions of birds in old manuscripts: this probably is largely due to its ability to ruffle its crest.
What is surprising is that the beautiful hoopoe is in fact something of a slattern. Like the kingfisher, it lays its eggs in an underground burrow. The entrance to the burrow is usually marked by a quantity of droppings, which allow the nest to be located from a distance by smell. For this reason it is sometimes called the "Dung Cockerel". The hoopoe will occasionally nest in Holland, but in general this bird is found in warmer climes.
Its song is a quiet and pleasant *"hoop, hoop, hoop"*.

10

The golden oriole is a symbol of joy and musicians. Confucius considered the oriole a symbol of friendship.

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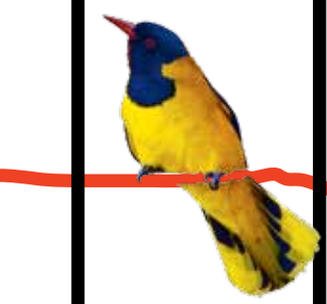
13 ↓ p. 072 p. 086 p. 109 p. 163 p. 195 p. 205 p. 206 p. 209



Golden Oriole
(Oriolus oriolus)
This is a fantastic bird. It has beautiful coloring, yet it is tricky to spot. High in the treetops, yellow is a true form of protection. Like all members of the *Corvidae* family, it is a songbird.
If you are capable of mimicking the song of the oriole, it may fly up out of curiosity, as it interprets this as the arrival of an intruder.

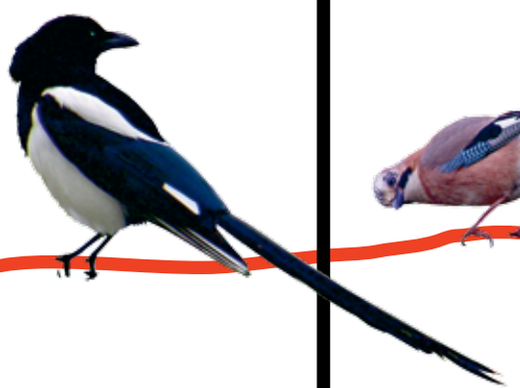
11

The jackdaw is a symbol of survival, the ability to adapt, loyalty and the capacity to give and share. Birds from the crow family (Corvidae) have a symbolic meaning in all cultures. The Celts saw them as agents of the gods (12), and depicted them on coins and helmets. They are birds of war, associated with war and death (13), and the prophecy of both. However, they were not only harbingers, but also wise judges.

Western Jackdaw
(Corvus monedula)
Jackdaws live in groups which have a clear hierarchy. There is no emancipation — only the males are able to improve their status, and the status of the female is automatically linked to the status of the male. They have no chance of forging a career. Jackdaws are very loyal birds, and always remain in sight of each other. In groups they even fly in pairs.

12

The magpie is a symbol of discontent and intelligence. It also symbolizes thievery and is the embodiment of the garrulous thief. In China it is considered to be the bearer of good tidings.



Magpie (Pica pica)
Magpies are beautiful birds. If you look closely at a magpie, you will see how pretty it is. It is especially beautiful when seen in the sun, when shades of blue and green are visible on its wings and tail. Its tail is particularly remarkable. It is long, like that of a parrot, and trapezoidal. When it swoops, its tail unfurls, creating beautiful wave-like motions. If you happen to see a group of magpies, look carefully at their tails, and you will note an analogy with the language of dogs. The bird which is chief in rank holds its tail higher than those of the others to signify its dominance. Magpies chatter, but occasionally you can hear them quietly and indistinctly murmuring their song.

13

The jay symbolizes ingenuity and use of force, in the positive sense of the word.

Eurasian Jay (Garrulus glandarius)
The jay is a beautiful bird, and my personal favorite. In the winter it typically subsists on acorns, which it hides during the autumn; at other times of the year it feeds on caterpillars and insects, and sometimes fledglings or eggs. Within its range it creates a bona fide supply depot — an individual can squirrel away around 8,000 acorns every autumn, the majority of which it will manage to find even half a year later. Jays spot us quicker than we spot them. When in danger they give a sharp, loud cry, and then all creatures in the forest know that you are coming: not only the crows and the jays, but also the roe deer, the hares and the foxes. On the whole this bird can only be seen in glimpses: if you see a white back hidden among the greenery in the trees, then you know you have seen a jay. They sing more often than magpies, but quietly, and, because they take flight as soon as they spy us, it is impossible to listen to them for long. And now let us take a look at the birds which do not sing: the partridge, the grey heron, the bittern and the woodcock.

14

The partridge symbolizes lustiness, female energy and independence. In olden times, birds played a special role in the game of love. If a hunter were to present a lady with a pheasant or partridge, it meant no less than an invitation to amorous pursuits.

Grey Partridge (Perdix perdix)
Vogelen, a Dutch verb which means "to bird", was formerly used to describe this game; nowadays it means simply 'to watch birds'. In fact, the fact that the partridge in the painting is perching upon a tree is, from an ornithological perspective, incorrect: in nature it stands with both feet on the ground. Before dusk falls, the male partridge sings briefly. The male has a harem, and the birds live in groups.

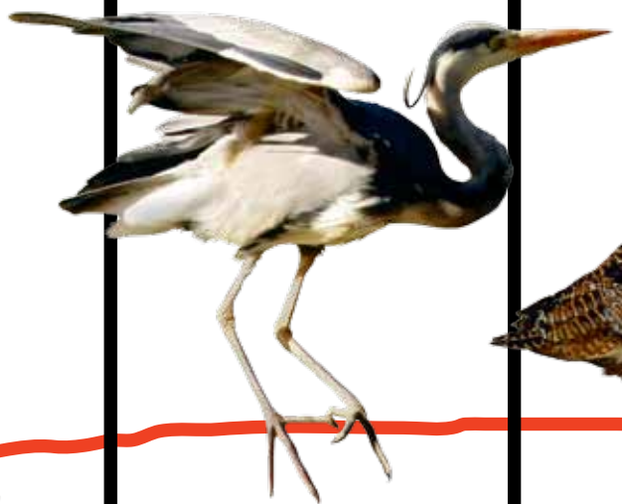
15

The owl is a symbol of scholarship, the "wisdom of Athena". It is also a symbol of the night, those who love the dark hours, and nocturnal vigil. The hoot of an owl at night was taken by the inhabitants of a village as an omen signifying an imminent death. This symbolism also has its origins in Ancient Egypt and India. An image of an owl on a tombstone symbolizes the vigil until the day of resurrection.

Owl (Strigiformes)
But there is one more meaning: owls are the bearers of misfortune; and although I find owls beautiful, I subscribe to this opinion. On more than one occasion owls have led me into extraordinary circumstances, and have almost cost me my life. The owl in the painting is clutching sheet music, and it seems clear that the birds should sing this music. The owl conducts with a raised talon. However, it is not entirely clear whether the birds are singing or protesting. What species of owl is depicted here? It is difficult to say with any degree of certainty. Its orange eyes suggest that this is a long-eared owl, but the small feathers and ochre plumage give us grounds to presume that this is a steppe owl.

16

In Buddhism the heron personifies purity and intuition, while in Christian culture it is a symbol of true belief. During the time of the Pharaohs the heron was seen as a symbol of renewal. It also symbolizes silence, meditation and equilibrium.



Grey Heron (Ardea cinerea)
In autumn herons are really quite grey, but with the coming of spring they become more beautiful. They have a white neck with black flecks, a smart drooping crest, and a bright-orange beak which is rendered translucent in sunlight — this is very unusual.
And did you know that the heron can powder and comb itself? It does this if its neck happens to be fouled by the slime of a squirming eel. Using its beak, it crumbles the fuzz under its wing into a powder and then applies it to the dirty spot. After waiting a little for everything to dry, it turns to its pocket comb — the ribbed nail of its middle toe, which it uses to clean out the dirt.

17

Eurasian Woodcock
(Scolopax rusticola)
A mysterious nocturnal bird. It can be heard only in spring, when it makes its mating call. Its plumage provides it with excellent camouflage. The painting also features three types of predatory birds: an owl, a marsh harrier and a white-tailed eagle.

18

Eurasian Bittern
(Botaurus stellaris)
A mysterious inhabitant of reed beds, the Eurasian bittern was formerly found all over the Netherlands and is depicted in many hunting scenes.
It makes a sound resembling that of a foghorn using a pouch in its throat, which it fills with air before blowing it out.

19

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23

4
↓
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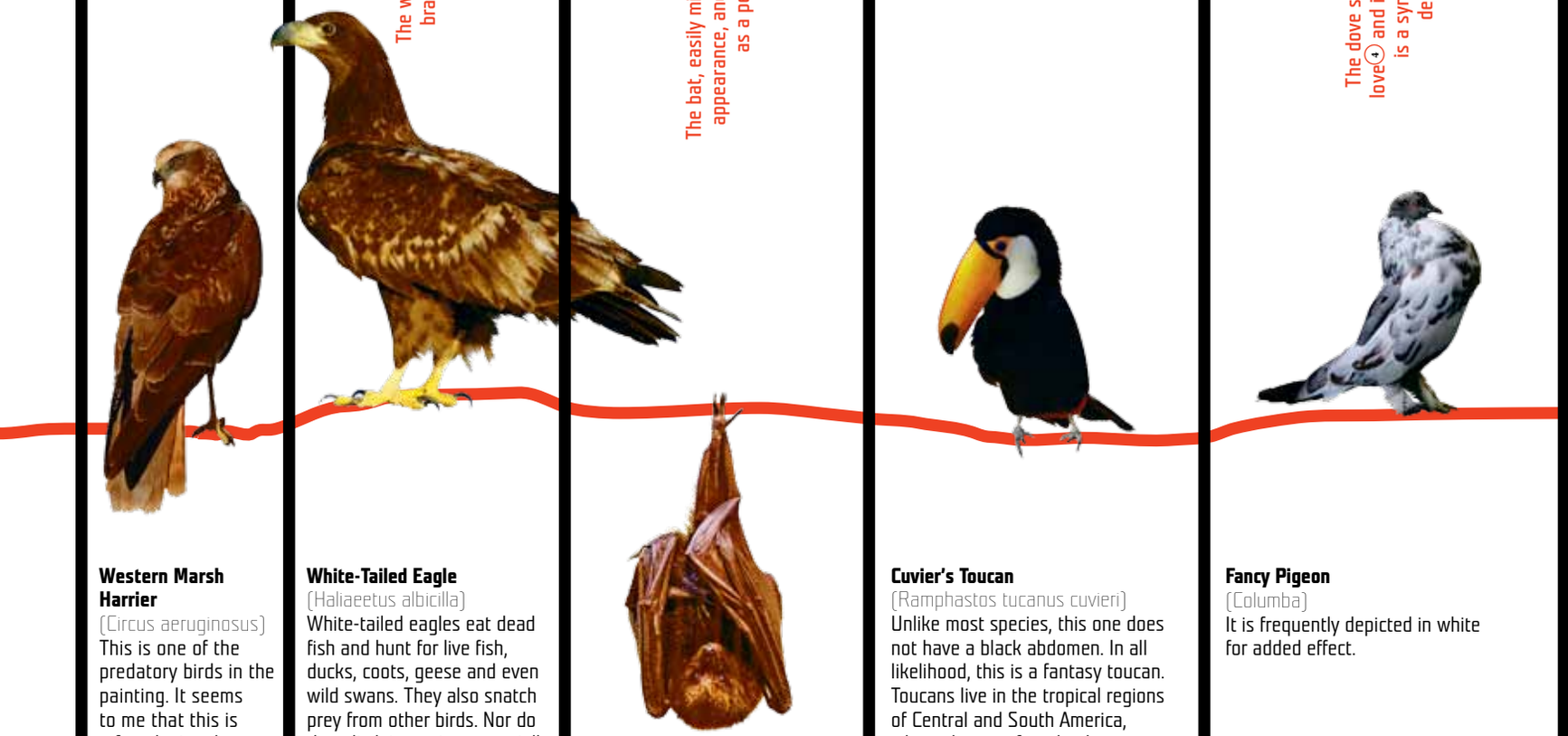
The white-tailed eagle has symbolized courage, bravery and militancy for centuries in many cultures, including in Russia

The bat, easily mistaken for a bird, has an aggressive appearance, and in many images and texts serves as a personification of the devil.

The dove symbolizes various characteristics: news, love (4) and innocence; a dove bearing an olive branch is a symbol of reconciliation. It is frequently depicted in white for added effect.



Western Marsh Harrier
(Circus aeruginosus)
This is one of the predatory birds in the painting. It seems to me that this is a female; its plumage is completely brown. Another characteristic of the female Western marsh harrier is its distinctive "yellow headlamp". Its yellow or beige crown and the marking on its neck are visible from afar, leaving its identity in no doubt — the contrast with its brown coloring is unmistakable. The Western marsh harrier calls only in spring, and is silent for the rest of the year.

White-Tailed Eagle
(Haliaeetus albicilla)
White-tailed eagles eat dead fish and hunt for live fish, ducks, coots, geese and even wild swans. They also snatch prey from other birds. Nor do they disdain carrion, especially in winter — better to eat carrion than spend hours chasing geese. For this reason they are referred to as the "vultures of the north". White-tailed eagles circle at high altitude, so attention should be paid to the tail: it should be short and wedge-shaped. The color of the tail is an indicator of the age of the bird: if the tail is brown and the head dark, then it is a young bird of less than a year. If the tail is whiter, then it is a juvenile — two to three years old. If the tail is completely white, then the bird is an adult. The painting shows an adult white-tailed eagle with a snow-white tail. White-tailed eagles call to one another in the spring, but the rest of the year they are silent.

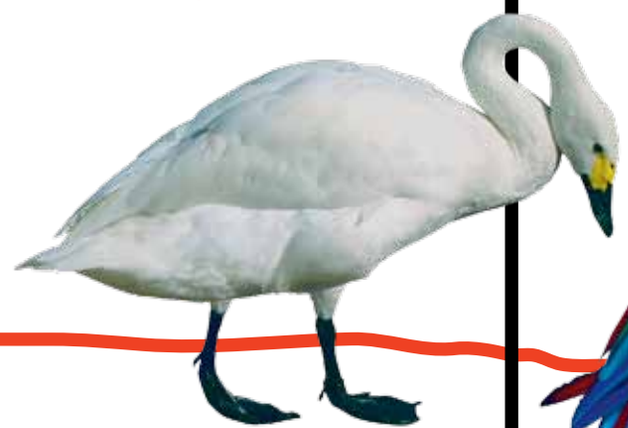
Bat (Microchiroptera)
The bat has an aggressive appearance. Snyders created a wonderful portrait of a bat in this painting.

Cuvier's Toucan
(Ramphastos tucanus cuvieri)
Unlike most species, this one does not have a black abdomen. In all likelihood, this is a fantasy toucan. Toucans live in the tropical regions of Central and South America, where they are found only on trees in tropical and subtropical forest. In spite of their bright coloring, they are hard to spot unless they take flight or make their monotonous cry. They live in groups of around 12 birds. Toucans generally feed on fruit, but also eat insects, spiders, and even small reptiles. They have been known to destroy the nests of other birds.

Fancy Pigeon
(Columba)
It is frequently depicted in white for added effect.

24

The swan is a symbol of love, wisdom, power, elegance and harmony. Swans are the bearers of the soul, and people also transform into these birds from revenge or as punishment. The Celts believed that swans could bewitch people with their calls and lull them to sleep. The snow-white of their plumage is a symbol of purity.



Bewick's Swan (Cygnus bewickii)
And here Snyders is attentive to the details: just by the beak alone one can identify the species of swan — Bewick's swan or the Whooper Swan. If the division between the black and yellow markings on the beak is vertical, then it is a Bewick's swan (the Whooper swan has a triangle which extends to the end of its beak). I have a particular personal story connected with a Bewick's swan: these birds once saved my life. I am a keen ice skater, and one day I was out skating on a wide lake. In the distance we could see holes in the ice: sections of open water occupied by groups of Bewick's swans. The swans were constantly calling back and forth to one another, and everywhere we could hear their merry din, which had accompanied us for the duration of the outing. After three hours we decided to go back, having already covered 60 kilometers. And this is when the unforeseeable happened: we were enveloped in thick fog. It was impossible to make out a thing, and we could have skated around in circles, simply gone into a hole in the ice and sunk. But the swans showed us the way out. We stopped and listened. We heard the clamor of swans and we knew that we must not go in that direction, because there was an opening in the ice. Moving in the opposite direction, we quickly reached the shore.

25

The parrot is a symbol of mimicry, chatterboxes and empty talk, and also diplomacy. It can also symbolize gossip. Sometimes it is a symbol of polygamy. It has long been considered a symbolic intermediary between the world of man and the realm of the otherworldly.

Green-Winged Macaw
(Ara chloroptera)
This species can be found in the forests of North and South America. Their numbers are constantly decreasing due to the destruction of their habitat by man, and also because they fetch a good price on the market. These birds have a very strong beak: with the capacity to apply 138 bar of pressure, it is capable of snapping thick tree branches in two. So the parrot's beak is perfectly suited to splitting very hard nuts and seeds.

26

The parrot is sometimes a symbol of purity and innocence.

Blue-Fronted Amazon (Amazona aestiva) Blue-fronted Amazons are found in the north-east of Brazil to Paraguay, and in a number of regions in Argentina, where they live in forest, open savannah near trees, and close to farmland. They live in pairs and small groups. During the day they can be seen in the crowns of trees, and in the evening they gather on a roosting tree, where they spend the night together. They feed on various kinds of fruit, seeds, berries, nuts, including palm nuts, as well as flowers and buds. In flight they are quite noisy. In the breeding season, from October to May, they settle in the hollows of old trees: every year the pairs return to nest in the same hollow.

27

The peacock personifies immortality, beauty and dignity, but is also a symbol of pride and vigilance. A woman depicted with a peacock symbolizes pride, one of the seven deadly sins. In Buddhism, the peacock feather symbolizes protection from worldly temptations, while in Babylon peacocks were a symbol of the sun. The peacock is also associated with the Celtic culture of sun worship: its beautiful fan of feathers represented the solar disc. The peacock has become a symbol of immortality, pride and resurrection.

Peacock (Pavo)
The peacock originates from Asia and India, and lives in woodland and orchards close to water. Both the male and the female have a coronet-like crest upon their heads. The male is distinguishable by its brightly-colored plume of elongated tail feathers, which it can spread in order to make an impression; it is composed of around 150 feathers. The eagle may be renowned for its keen sight, but the peacock has 150 eyes.

PHOTO: **IZIS BIDERMANAS**

"Birds", begins on page 242

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PHOTO: DUBROVIN STUDIO

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UTOPIA AND REALITY

Interview with Ilya and Emilia Kabakov[1]

IN 2013 THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM HOSTED THE "UTOPIA AND REALITY. EL LISSITZKY, ILYA AND EMILIA KABAKOV" EXHIBITION. THE EVENT WAS ORGANIZED BY THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM IN COOPERATION WITH THE VAN ABBEMUSEUM (EINDHOVEN, THE NETHERLANDS) WHICH HOLDS THE LARGEST COLLECTION OF LISSITZKY'S ART OUTSIDE RUSSIA.

DIMITRI OZERKOV

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DIMITRY OZERKOV (D.O.): I'd like to start with speech in its own right. In the 1970s people in Moscow did a lot of talking, and you also talk a lot. Does speech have great significance in your work and life? What is its role?
ILYA KABAKOV (I.K.): Perhaps it has something to do with different periods in one's life and with one's situation. It's very important to let a person get things off his or her chest. A huge reserve of thoughts, ideas, reactions and reflections build up inside, a muddy swirl of words, so that one doesn't know what one wants to say, but one wants to have one's say.

The subject was dealt with quite well in Moscow Conceptualist circles. Life wasn't like it is today, fast, high-speed, with everything summed up in two or three words. There had been 30 years of incredibly unchanging, stable life in the Soviet Union. For 30 years we all knew more or less the same people, whom we met regularly. And what's so interesting is that we weren't bored. We all talked endlessly. Of course this was after work, so everything started at around 5 o'clock. People really did talk passionately. There were two kinds of speech in artistic circles back then. The first was the monologue, in which a teacher spoke, spreading truth and sincerity while the rest just listened as a huge flood of words poured over them — many artists, although not all of them of course, had this strong, persuasive energy. The second type was the conversation: more restrained, calmer, in which what was said by others was no less important and interesting than what you yourself said. This was particularly important in Conceptualist circles, where people a priori maintained respect for each other, without any authoritarian "I know, so you listen to me". But alongside our dialogues and trialogues there was also productive silence. I remember with so much pleasure how for many years [artist Viktor] Pivovarov's son Pasha [artist Pavel Pepperstein] sat on the divan in my studio. He sat pressed up against his father and it was absolutely impossible to get a word out of him. He was just there, present. Unlike the other children who came, he showed no reaction but he was there at nearly all our daily meetings. And? The time came when Pasha spoke up. It turned out that all those years he had been accumulating a body of ideas and thoughts that were to be realized in endless Medical-Hermeneutics conversations [Pepperstein's art group].

D.O.: Do you have a passionate desire to speak?
I.K.: Yes, back then I had a passionate need to say my piece.

D.O.: Is it like the passion for drawing or are they different things?
I.K.: I don't know what it comes from. Perhaps from life within a community because everyone within that community had their own role. The silent had their role just as the speakers did. My role was that of the merry entertainer. I always had some strange mass-entertainer inside me. I felt obliged to speak.
EMILIA KABAKOV (E.K.): It is a way of hiding oneself behind one's speech. You hide behind a character so that no one can see what you really are.

D.O.: Like a mask?
I.K.: Not just visual but spoken.

D.O.: To look like a nice person, not touchy, making no demands?
I.K.: Yes. But things were different back in the 1970s, and serious, when our circle of friends took shape. Talking in that "traditional" Russian way about the latest meanings, the latest thoughts and such like. And discussing things happening around us. We were like eternal flies-on-the-wall, sizing up politics, social structures, psychology. Of course it was all tied up with the culture of books. Our language was not that of the television or other media, but of books. We were well-read lads.
E.K.: It's all tied into a particular tradition, because there is a distance between what you say and you yourself. Art and Language, for instance, is a Conceptualist group but when they speak they are always participants, they always talk about themselves. We, us...
I.K.: That's right, in our circle you rarely heard the t-word. People very rarely talked about themselves. The self was mentioned only as an example of wider questions. There was a higher, neutral point of view, the view of "the art historian", "the cultural historian"...

D.O.: Not a participant but a third person?
I.K.: Third, fourth, fifth... So, with regard to life in the Soviet Union — although "for them", in psychological terms you were just an ordinary Soviet person — you had the illusion that you were speaking with a great sense of distance, as if you were a member of the English Geographical Society, describing the life of the monkeys known as "Soviet society", the "Soviet jungle" and so on. You were a person from a different culture, describing the ethnography of some aborigines.
E.K.: The paradox being that you yourself were one of the monkeys.

2 | Mounting the installation *"In the Communal Kitchen"*
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3 | In the Communal Kitchen Installation. 6 parts (fragment). 1991
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PHOTO: YELENA LAPSHINA

I.K.: And all this looking down on oneself from above was very important. One looked upon others from a distance, but also upon oneself.

E.K.: In the West that would be schizophrenia.

I. K.: Of course it's impossible. Everyone really talks about themselves. Their own brand, their own image, the t-word is all important. It's very hard to form your own image, but when it's done, you don't want to get out of yourself.

D.O.: So what is the situation today? Did this story, this form of communication, this paradigm, die along with the Soviet Union? What replaced it?

E.K.: It's hard to answer that, above all because we don't live here [in Russia].

I.K.: We can't talk about the situation here today, we have no right.

D.O.: But in the West?

I.K.: One really notices the loneliness. Every artist you meet is incredibly sad. Even though he might be incredibly successful. But his physiognomy will be unbelievably sad, because no one understands him, he is alone, the curator showed his works the wrong way. The world has always offended him in some way. There is no "other"; everything around is a wilderness in which he is forced to exist by his genius. The role of the Russian artist, of our generation at least, derives traditionally from the 19th century, from the Age of Enlightenment. The artist is not only "me", but has value in as far as he performs a "cultural role"... The artist has to have social significance. That's where the great difference lies.

D.O.: When we look at the Russian Avant-Garde, at El Lissitzky or Malevich, can we say their function was that of the 19th century or was it a monologue? How do you see them?

I.K.: That was quite a specific period in time. You have to look at Lissitzky and Malevich, it seems to me, like

different personalities who took their turn as the social situation changed. To generalize about the Lissitzky phenomenon is very difficult. Lissitzky during the Suprematist period came up with cosmic discoveries, structures floating in space. Discoveries in the world of geometry seen from the viewpoint of architecture, of course. Lissitzky approached it from the side of architecture. Thus the first stage was the discovery of cosmic movements by these abstract forms. The second stage was an attempt to create some kind of "Artistic International". His departure [from the Soviet Union] in 1921 as the envoy of the new Socialist land, the bombast of the creation of a common, universal geometry of style that would suffuse all the different areas of production, all objects — his journal was called The Object — architecture, books and so on. The formation of an integrated design project, which would be accepted by all mankind in a new stage of existence, when mankind itself would become new. Some sort of government was to be set up. But of course this aroused no enthusiasm in any of the people he met, not in Schwitters or Arp. Each of them was fighting for his own style, not for some universal style being put to them, forced on them, by the commissar just arrived from Russia. Schwitters' letters reveal a terribly negative attitude to this universal project. In 1923 Lissitzky[2] left Germany, the West, disappointed with his unrealized international project. In Russia he was promised the moon and the stars, the promotion of his ideas. Then came the next stage, the Soviet stage, and the last one for this particular individual, in which he tried to realize his projects. The horizontal skyscraper, the universal apartment, the watersports stadium in the Sparrow Hills. And not one project made it through. But another project did get through, and he became what they called a spets or specialist. He became the mouthpiece for Soviet propaganda abroad. He was a master of the art of collage, of exhibitions, he headed brigades made up of people chosen by himself, and he did those famous exhibitions — of Printing, of Furs, the Pharmacy and other

4 | *Whose Grater is This? ("In the Communal Kitchen"* **installation, fragment).** 1996
The Regina Gallery, Moscow

5 | *Apartment War No 3* **(installation fragment).** 2000
The Tsukanov Family Foundation, London

6 | **Mounting the installation**

7 | *Whose Grater is This? ("In the Communal Kitchen",* **finstallation, fragment).** 1996
The Regina Gallery, Moscow

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PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

8 | El Lissitzky
Poster for the *Russian exhibition* at the Museum of Decorative Arts in Zürich. 1929
Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

things too. He started working as a specialist in the new Soviet state and so he was left alone. Like other engineers he was protected by that status of specialist. And that's that. We don't know if he was disappointed in this last stage. What should we think of it? Of course he was a child of his time, a time when it seemed that anything was possible. One could build a new world, a new city, a new man, a new ideology, a new religion. He was one of those who built, with the hammer and sickle, this installation project which then evolved during the time of his own generation into horror, nightmare and blood. Was he to blame for that?

D.O.: How did you discover Lissitzky? Was it in the Soviet period?

I. K.: I didn't know about him during my education. The Avant-Garde was a no-go area. Our education stopped with the Barbizon School and everything else was part of the black hole of the rottenness of capitalism, into which went the Avant-Garde, which was considered a mistake, for we had no part in that formalist concept of art. I found out about it very late and I have to say that I had no particular enthusiasm. Psychologically I am of a different type. They wanted to build one vast barn or hangar, shiny and new, a festive hangar. Meanwhile we were already under the ruins, the remains of that barn, which had collapsed so spectacularly. We belonged to the end of the epic story. They started the epic and we ended it. We saw the results, whereas they saw only the project. They were at the start, a peculiar overture to the symphony — the denouement fell to us.

D.O.: Which is in part what you demonstrated in "Red Wagon".

I.K.: Of course. All the works are linked with such reflections on that paradise-barn.

D.O.: Nonetheless, there is the Kabakov-Lissitzky project, in which there are obvious parallels between your work and that of Lissitzky. Do you see any personal parallels to his fate? Lissitzky also illustrated children's books, Lissitzky produced clearly utopian projects...

I.K.: There are many points of contact. Above all in those things that applied not only to Lissitzky but that were part of Russian artistic culture as a whole, that deliberate "paper design" element, the deliberate development in principle of projects that could not be resolved or realized... The creation of fantastical images of a realignment of the way of life, which were better not put into effect: the traditional Russian phenomenon of thinking up projects. When those projects are in the spirit of Manilov, that's fine, but when anybody tries to realize them, of course it leads to the death of a huge country.

E.K.: In this instance Lissitzky is like the optimist to Kabakov's pessimist. At the start there was one world, but by the end there was another. This precise parallel runs through the whole exhibition.

I.K.: You can put it like this. In the West people often ask: "What was the meaning of the Russian Revolution?" We answer very simply, that the meaning of the Russian Revolution lies in that no revolutionary project should ever be put into effect, or it will turn out the way it did in Russia. But as long as people live they will come up with projects. Our brains generate projects constantly. While we remain human, we plan. Everyone has projects. But if we realize them in terms of politics, everything ends in death and blood, in the destruction of the gene pool and so on. What can we do? Thus things intended to change life for the better, those so-called universal projects, should all be poured down the design drain. They should not be put into effect, but put into a special room called a museum, art, culture, i.e. they should remain on paper, or at best as wooden models. They're all wonderful, but just leave it all on paper, in the library, in cases named "Campanella", "Thomas More", "Lissitzky", "Malevich" and so on.

D.O.: Which brings us right onto the subject of the museum. It is important that your project, Lissitzky-Kabakov, is intended for a museum. It's like a hyper-museum.

I.K.: Absolutely. That is its place.

E.K.: Because it is the start of utopia and the end of utopia, the whole period between start and finish.

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9–10 | **El Lissitzky**
Exhibition fragment

PHOTO: **RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN**

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PHOTO: **RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN**

And any utopia, any "ism" is a utopian project. Look how they start out and what they come to in the end.

I.K.: But there has to be a dual view of all this. On the one hand, you have to be drawn into this project to rebuild the way the world is run. We have 64 projects, making this a Palace of Projects.

E.K.: Leave it all there in the Palace of Projects.

D.O.: Can you say, extrapolating the idea a little, that the ideal museum is just such a "palace of projects"?

I.K., E.K.: Of course.

I.K.: Every great artist has huge, gigantic projects.

D.O.: In Russia today people sometimes say that a museum is just a dusty archive of the past, and the great role played by the museum in contemporary culture is not recognized.

I.K.: Museums are of the greatest significance. While we remain human we must have museums. If we have no museums, we have no memory.

E.K.: The museum is mankind's cultural memory, and if you destroy the museum you destroy cultural memory, what then?

D.O.: Is it important that a museum be an active institution, always working, moving on?

I.K.: The thing is, humans are not just animals, beasts of consumerism, always buying something. Humans have a past and a future. The past and the future are an uninterrupted movement, a cultural evolution. While you have your culture behind you, you can be a participant in human life. A human becomes just that when he understands the symbolic level of life. A human being is one who is driven by the gene of culture from the past through today and into the future, that bridge over which humankind passes from the past into the future. That is the meaning of life.

E.K.: There is research being done which has shown that the human brain is programmed, to put it in primitive terms, for the Ten Commandments, to subordinate itself to a religion, to a set of rules. If that really is the case then the destruction of churches and the destruction of religion leads to the absolute degradation of society. The same thing happens with regard to culture, because museums are just like churches. There is a process of degradation, we lose the Ten Cultural Commandments, and then we lose everything we should be by our very nature. That which makes us people.

I.K.: But if we return to the subject of artists, we can say that the most terrible thing that happened after the Avant-Garde, and due to it, was the separation of the artistic world from wider world culture. That was the most important phenomenon.

D.O.: The Hermitage 20/21 project was conceived as something over and above the Hermitage, showing contemporary art within the context of the old museum, according to museum rules. We often set ourselves limits that don't exist in galleries and art centers. We insist on them because we cannot lower the cultural level set by the museum.

I.K.: That's right, because there has to be unbroken continuity. Any attempt to create a different artistic, anthropological type would seem a catastrophic path to take.

D.O.: Should this museum, this "palace of projects", be in the capital city? Or should every self-respecting town have a small museum? How do you see this question?

E.K.: I think that every self-respecting town should have a museum. Not everyone is able to travel, not everyone has the chance. And then every area, every town, every country has something specific to it. There is the common cultural field, [the] international [cultural field], but there are also national regions and I think that that is very important to people, when their culture adds something. Let them enter the river through this small island of culture.

I.K.: One should have one's roots in one's own soil, but the top should emerge onto a higher plane.

D.O.: To get back to individuals. Lissitzky was oriented towards the future, Kabakov is oriented towards the past: the look at the future from the past and vice versa. Yet Lissitzky, to my mind, was a man of an utterly Renaissance type, working with different forms, in different formats, which allowed him to create these optics. Do you feel like a Renaissance artist?

I.K.: I don't think there are any specific "Renaissance" qualities here, it's just normal to work in different media. Those multi-media characteristics were typical of the whole of the Renaissance. Every author was able to paint a fresco, a painting, a miniature, to build a barn, a house, a castle and so on. It was all one single field of production. Why? Because narrow specialization is the result of an attitude to things which is that of mass-production, of commerce. The Renaissance was a system in which one's creativity could be projected onto different forms, different media.

E.K.: Free creativity.

I.K.: Yes, free creativity. Leonardo was commissioned to cut canals, he spent an awful lot of time in the swamps, and he fell sick. He described a fly or a cockroach, he wrote a handbook on how to draw a horse, because the rays of creativity lit and light up the most far-flung corners. The same with Michelangelo. As artistic production becomes mass-production, while the Renaissance personality dissolves in the manner of production and becomes strict production according to media. Now we have artists who just do paintings, or prints. It is the honor and conscience of the professional, who is very good at paintings but can't do tables or only knows how to do frames. How did this "corridorisation" come about?

E.K.: I think it comes from lack of imagination. There are artists with a very active imagination which seems to force them on, to whip them into doing something new, to try out different genres, different views. And there are artists with no imagination. So marketing and the customer have great significance.

I.K.: But it is all linked too with the raising of the criteria of quality, that's how I'd put it. A raising of the quality in the making of a painting, progressing through to Realism.

That is, artists achieve incredible professionalism in some things. But nonetheless professional tendencies narrow the range of media in which someone works.

D.O.: "A narrow specialist is like a boil?"
I.K.: Yes. Everything comes back to the Swiss clockmaker.

D.O.: Correct me if I'm wrong, but I see a connection between Lissitzky's activities and yours in that Lissitzky opened up the device of the new exhibition form, bringing together furniture and magazines and a new look at things, and lighting, all in one room. He created a whole new world in a separate little cupboard. It seems to me that that device is very like your total installations.
I.K.: Maybe so.
E.K.: The only thing missing from his work is the personal space.
I.K.: Here, the person is present in our spaces. But there is no person in his work. The fundamental specific feature of the Avant-Garde is its lack of humanity. Everything is done for the anonymous "new man".
E.K.: It's not for you but for them.
I.K.: Let me cite an example. A friend of mine went to a museum, got tired and wanted to sit on the step into some room or other, and then heard the guard scream: "That step is not for you but for everyone!" That's a precise and correct statement of the question, the Avant-Garde made things for everyone, but never for one person alone.

D.O.: There are all kinds of characters in your work but it is aimed in effect at a specific viewer, who comes in, walks along a corridor and sees something...
E.K.: It is specifically for that individual viewer, who will always find something for him or herself.
I.K.: It is always done for a specific viewer and there has always been a human presence in these installations.
E.K.: There is a hero.

D.O.: So we arrive at another parallel between Lissitzky and Kabakov: the impersonal and the personal.
I.K.: These are tales about people, while Lissitzky has a universal design. It is with some reason that he is considered to be the greatest, indeed the first, designer of the modern age.

D.O.: You also pay a vast amount of attention to each detail.
E.K.: But that is not design.
I.K.: It is zero design, it is everyday banal design.
E.K.: It's a bit like scrupulously delineating a three-dimensional painting. A total installation is a three-dimensional painting which makes it possible to go inside and look at all the internal details of the painting. We know very well how to stand in front of a painting and look at it, but as yet we are very bad at understanding what we are looking at from inside.

D.O.: Has your attitude to detail in your work changed over time? How to carefully you delineate all the parts?
I.K.: There is no question of delineation. That, I would say, is the technique of Delacroix. There's something drawn there, but in fact it's pretty badly drawn. Or you know that it's a lion, but a very vague sort of lion.
E.K.: But in an installation, if a chair is just half-a-millimeter to the left then it will be moved 20 times until it stands just where is should stand visually within the picture.
I.K.: The overall view is very important. Delacroix — he's a good example — had a profound, integrated understanding of the painting. There are artists with an innate sense of the whole. Like Turner. For him the detail does not play a particular role, because the detail is but a participant in the whole. And there are artists who have absolutely no sense of the whole. Ingres, for instance. You cannot look at his work because you have no sense that he saw the painting as a whole. In order to know how to make something unified, you have to have a sense of distance.

D.O.: So is it more important to take Turner's view?
I.K.: The sense of the whole is important for installations too. It means that the space between things is no less important than the things themselves.
E.K.: Installation artists very often think that it is only the details that matter. And they start working up the details. They end up with objects in space. But there cannot be a total installation if you don't see the room as a whole.

11 | *The Man Who Flew Into Space From His Apartment* Installation (fragment). 1985
Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

12 | *The Palace of Projects Model. 1998*
The collection of Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, New York

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

You won't get the atmosphere you want to convey. If someone goes in and sees objects, it means the work has not succeeded.

I.K.: A work of art is a vibration — which is given off by a painting when everything comes together like a jigsaw. Then the painting vibrates.

D.O.: Sometimes you can't see the wood for the trees...

I.K.: Of course. Why are Shishkin's works bad art? Because there is no whole. But he is good for the microscopic, because every last knothole is painted.

D.O.: Some of Turner's works seem almost abstract...

I.K.: Yes, the fires, the mists. But it is hard to imagine a greater, more integral artist.

D.O.: I have another question, linked with Turner, and Titian, and Rembrandt. This is the question of the ageing artist, one who has entered the third or fourth age of life. There is what we call the artist's late style. What is it? Some art historians see mistakes while others say they aren't mistakes but the different viewpoint of age. In Titian's St. Sebastian it was important that the flames be white and not the colour of flames.

I.K.: That's a very interesting question. What do you think?

E.K.: I think it is all very individual. I do think one develops a different, broader and more profound view. One understands that life is coming to an end and one wants to have a place in cultural history. By this time it is important not to exhibit oneself as an individual, but to go down on the great page of history. So one starts to look around, to see what one has done and what needs to be done in order to make it. You are sitting in a carriage but in this carriage you know who is sitting nearby. And you want to fit in, so that you don't get thrown off at the next stop. And in this case, I think, it's the same thing. You've gone full circle in your paintings and today those paintings, in some expanded form, have arrived at a moment when they are employing elements of, say the 1960s and 1970s. But they are more profound, broader, they have absorbed the meaning of what was done then but also some universal experience of what has been done over all those years since. I would even say that the experience of installations is now included in these paintings. The painting itself has taken on elements of installation. The collage technique is elements of installation introduced into a painting. That's it, I think.

I.K.: You're talking more about you and me. As regards the great classics of art, in old age you see the whole in a much expanded form. All late works by an artist capture the picture as a whole. Whether it's late Renoir or late Titian. He's done a hundred paintings and he knows perfectly well what the effect should be. But it seems he lacks the energy to prepare each detail present in this particular painting. So we get the paradox between the whole and the details. In all late works the details get worse, they're done in a hurry. The artist seems to mutter

them because it is important to pronounce the phrase as a whole. Early Titian is a whole, together with its details, but late Titian is a whole that's not quite evenly cooked. The best comparison for this evolution is with Claude Monet. His late water-lilies, those vast panoramas, were roundly condemned by critics, because we all know the balance in his great works between the whole and the carefully worked up knotholes, all kinds of details. This daubing, this colored sauce, particularly the very late stuff in which there is no Japanese bridge but simply a handful of colors tossed onto the canvas, where there is nothing at all except for daubing, was, as we know, greeted very badly, but these are great works, the result of all life. He turned the dominance of the whole color paste into an ultimate purpose and significance at the end of his life.

D.O.: In contemporary art there are few artists who do things themselves. How do you feel about the situation, very popular today, in which other people help artists create their works?

E.K.: Everyone has their own situation so I don't think we need to discuss it. Many have proposed the concept of "I don't do anything, someone will do it for me". Others do that because they're just making goods. Yet others do things themselves. It's a matter of principle, technology and the integral nature of the artist. We do everything ourselves.

I.K.: It's all linked with the question of the loss of the "school". The school of preparing paintings started to die more than 100 years ago at the turn of the 20th century. It was the time of the death of the academic and professional approach to the making of paintings and the appearance of the principal dilettante on the scene, ready to do everything himself. First he imitates real paintings, like Cezanne, and then he's off on his own path. This death of the school had a key significance. Today the author is a being without anything to hold him back. Either he imitates through his works, hinting that he knows how to do something or other and is not totally without promise, or he radically rejects any execution and acts as a manager who commissions the works he conceives from specialists, who carry them out.

E.K.: There must be consent from the viewer and from the museum and cultural world in this situation. If they are agreeable, then why not do it?

D.O.: And what if we recall the old Italian bottega [workshop/studio], with Raphael and 50 masters working to his designs in his bottega?

I.K.: There is just one difference: when the things are being made by the maestro himself, the manager, must know how to do everything. Today's manager doesn't know and doesn't want to do anything.

D.O.: This subject has been developed with regard to the Old Masters. In the Hermitage we have Rubens, Rubens and pupils, workshop of Rubens, circle of Rubens, school of Rubens...

I.K.: But Rubens could have done it all himself.

E.K.: Have you ever come across the book "The Advocates"? About Michelangelo and other artists. It includes the contracts which he and his workshop/studio concluded with different clients. For instance, a painting in which everything was done by the artist himself cost such-and-such number of gold coins, while a painting in which he did the figure while everything else was done by his students or apprentices cost such-and-such, while a painting in which he did only the hand or only painted the face cost such-and-such and so on. There was a huge range of gradations. It was all very precisely set out. We didn't know about it, but it was incredibly interesting.

D.O.: So there's nothing new.

I.K.: There is one new difference. For instance, there is an artist working today who wanted to make a load of paintings for an exhibition. He simply ordered paintings from three different artists and exhibited them as his own.

E.K.: Signed by him, with the statement that he made them.

D.O.: Do you mean the celebrated story about Damien Hirst, when it came out that three people had been painting his "dot works" for years?

E.K.: There are plenty of others, where the artist sits and does something else while 12 people paint a huge picture. Then he comes up and signs it. He doesn't tell anyone that in this painting "the apprentices painted this, while I painted that". He says: "Everything is mine".

I.K.: The division between manager and producer which is so very important today is that of the "project owner". The manager thought up the project so who carried it out is unimportant. This enters into the area of business, because in business today the one who sells the car is not the one who made it. He organizes a whole chain that ends with dispatching the car to the show room. That moment of organization, of manipulation, which takes great talent of course, was once in the hands of entrepreneurs — Diaghilev for instance — but today the artist does it himself.

D.O.: It is known that every day you work very hard from the morning onward. What else is there? Do you read? Listen to music? What other stimuli are there?

I.K.: Nothing. Walking in the streets.
E.K.: He reads, listens to music the whole day in his studio, goes to concerts, the theater, museums.
D.O.: Does it give you anything?
I.K.: It's tied up with the past. And the past is yours now, far more than in our youth.

D.O.: The very last question. We agreed not to talk about the current situation in Russia and I will not ask you to wish contemporary Russian artists something. But what should they definitely not do? Suppose there's a young man, an artist, who wants to be like you, because the name Kabakov is...
E.K.: He shouldn't be like us. Let him be himself. One shouldn't get too tied up in oneself. You should keep looking at what goes on around you, and not keep thinking that people don't accept you because of this, that you're better than others but they don't want to take you, because you've thought up 100 reasons. You have to look and see why. If you see that something's wrong, look at yourself first, compare yourself with others. The contemporary artist always has to see not a single episode, but the whole series within which stand the artists on the museum wall or in some vast exhibition. You don't need to stand out right now. The best thing is to start with group exhibitions, because you can make a mistake in a group exhibition, and by comparison with the others you'll see where you made it. When you stand out on your own, you think that's success. But that success turns out to be very short-lived. Better when you travel a single path with others. In the 1980s there was a really good situation with the Kunsthalle and Kunstverein. There was no financial support but the artist was able to show what he could do and compare himself with others. And he could very clearly see how to move forward.

D.O.: So again we're talking about a kind of dialogue?
E.K.: There must always be a dialogue with others.

D.O.: What is success for an artist?
I.K.: Let me first answer the first question. A good question. Not what should be done, but what you definitely shouldn't do. Don't stand up there on your own, but be in a group, reflect within the system. There are two things you mustn't do. The first is never to link your work to the idea of earning. At a certain stage, at some time, you will start to earn money through your work. But for a vast period of time you must separate earnings and artistic production...
E.K.: I would say do not make works of art in order to earn money.
I.K.: ...and don't think that your paintings or works must be sold, find their trading zone or gallery and so on. Don't aim at money. Because today's success and vast sums of money show that you need to move slowly towards those places where the money is. This moment of separating yourself from money is important. So the question immediately arises: where then can we earn money? I've got a girlfriend, a wife, there's a child growing up, I need money! The answer is: find some preferred kind of work on the side...
E.K.: Today the situation is different to that in which we found ourselves. Because the world is open to us and very often in the art world you can find someone, works will be bought. But you mustn't produce them with the aim of selling.
I.K.: ...yes, don't aim at the market and produce the same thing that is already being sold in other places. If you steer your ship toward the money, you'll have had it. And now for the second point. There should be progressive repulsion toward life. You should not live the ideal life. Why? Art lies in the sphere of fantasy, endless work in this sphere. Every act in life, so-called relaxation, distracts you from your work. It is very difficult to do but ideally you should work every day and it should be the sole form of your existence. You have to switch in to it, like a violinist. This profession demands continuous work, training. You have to make something artistic every day, because it is not you who is the artist, but what you do. You are like a chef, there in order to fry the chicken. The chicken is your purpose, not you who fries the chicken. It's a whole recoding of today's art world that is absolutely central. The less you live, the better for your art. Now I'll answer the question about what is the measure of success. An excellent question. The thing is, the artist is a chef working in a restaurant. The success of a chef is a very good dish, made by him. Success is the success of the product, not the success of the chef. The chef should not come out of the kitchen. If you like the chicken it doesn't matter if there is applause or they shout "Bring on the chef!" Today an artist can be successful because of so-called happenings: how he set out the chairs, how he dressed, how he functions on the art scene, whether he is good at getting the media on board. In today's situation success is minimum attention to the product, maximum attention to the chef.
E.K.: Which is a mistake, because chefs come and go.
I.K.: Of course. Success is short-lived. Today's chef/artist has to be out there mixing with people all the time, he must never go out of range of television, of the magazines and so on. Magazines today show the minimum possible of the artist's work and show the maximum possible of his house, his mug, his mistresses. That is success today. Once, success was in the product, today it is in the artist himself.

D.O.: Today it has become the trend that the chef comes out into the restaurant for applause when they serve the dessert.
I.K.: And in magazines they ask: tell us about your life! What kind of house do you have? What do you eat? The question put to the artist today is not "What did you draw?" but "What trousers are you wearing? What's your way of life?" It's like talking to the chef and saying "What kind of toque [chef's hat] do you wear?" and so on. It is undoubtedly pathological.
E.K.: It's not pathological, but a sign of the century, a sign of the times.

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ONE OF THE GREAT TREASURES OF THE COURTAULD GALLERY'S FAMOUS COLLECTION OF IMPRESSIONIST AND POST-IMPRESSIONIST PAINTINGS IS PAUL CÉZANNE'S "THE CARD PLAYERS" (C. 1892—1896). FROM A MODEST SUBJECT OF TWO PEASANTS PLAYING CARDS AT A SIMPLE WOODEN TABLE, CÉZANNE CREATES A PAINTING OF EXTRAORDINARY MONUMENTALITY AND SERENITY, QUALITIES THAT HAVE ENSURED ITS ENDURING REPUTATION AS ONE OF HIS MOST ICONIC AND POWERFUL WORKS.

PAUL CÉZANNE "THE CARD PLAYERS"

DR BARNABY WRIGHT,
DANIEL KATZ CURATOR OF 20TH CENTURY ART, THE COURTAULD GALLERY, LONDON

The painting is part of a series of card-player canvases that Cézanne produced in the first half of the 1890s which his early biographer, Gustav Coquiot, described as being "equal to the most beautiful works of art in the world". Cézanne's Card Players series stands alongside his Bathers series as the most ambitious and complex figurative works of his career.

The first mention of the Card Players series comes in 1891 when the writer Paul Alexis visited Cézanne's studio in Aix-en-Provence and found the artist painting a local peasant from the farm on his estate, the Jas de Bouffan. A number of different farm workers came to sit for him during these years, often smoking their clay pipes. They included an old gardener known as le père Alexandre, who posed as the figure seated on the left in "The Card Players", and a farm hand called Paulin Paulet who sat as the right-hand figure. Paulet obviously fascinated Cézanne because he used him as the subject for another painting, "The Smoker" (c. 1890–1892), which is now one of the highlights of the Hermitage Museum's collection. For the Card Players series, Cézanne made individual pencil studies of each peasant, rather than posing them together at play, which he used as the basis for his paintings. His depictions of card players occupied him for several years and resulted in five closely related compositions of different sizes. He seems to have begun with a modestly scaled canvas depicting four players (the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York) which he greatly enlarged and elaborated in a second composition (The Barnes Foundation, Philadelphia). Cézanne then produced three near-identical scenes depicting just two players in profile, beginning with a small canvas (Musée d'Orsay, Paris) which he turned into the larger Courtauld version before doubling its size for a culminating painting, which is now in a private collection.

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Cézanne's repetition of his compositions demonstrates his commitment and perhaps struggle with the subject as he strived to express the essence of these sun-beaten farm workers whom he found so compelling. For him, the local peasants of Aix were the human equivalent of his beloved Montaigne Sainte-Victoire that presided over the town — steadfast, unchanging and monumental. As he later put it, "I love above all else the appearance of people who have grown old without breaking with old customs". Cézanne's card players are not shown as rowdy drinkers and gamblers in the way that, for centuries, peasants had been depicted in rural genre paintings. Rather, they are stoical and completely absorbed in the time-honored ritual of their game. As the English critic Roger Fry wrote of "The Card Players" in 1927: "It is hard to think of any design since those of the great Italian Primitives... which gives us so extraordinary a sense of monumental gravity and resistance — of something that has found its center and can never be moved". The monumentality of the works epitomize Cézanne's stated aim to produce "something solid and durable, like the art of the museums".

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Cézanne's Card Players series is that their evocation of unchanging traditions was achieved by pushing the boundaries of painting in radical new directions. Cézanne painted freely and inventively, rendering his peasants through a vibrant patchwork of brushstrokes which animates the surface of the paintings. For most 19th-century viewers his technique would have appeared as coarse as his peasant subject matter but the Card Players series would prove an inspiration to later generations of avant-garde artists[3].

For Pablo Picasso, Cézanne's peasants were a touchstone for his Cubist portraits and their example resonates throughout the 20th century with particular homages paid to them by artists as diverse as Fernand Léger and Jeff Wall.

"The Card Players" by Cézanne was on display in autumn 2013 as part of the "Masterpieces from the World's Museums at the Hermitage" series. The painting was lent by The Courtauld Institute of Art, London, which possesses an impressive collection of modern French paintings. Mikhail Piotrovsky called the painting "a super masterpiece from among the greatest and most expensive paintings in the world."

13 | Paul Cézanne
The Card Players. 1892–1896
The Courtauld Gallery, London

MAGGI HAMBLING: WALL OF WATER

14 |

14 | Maggi Hambling
For Amy Winehouse. 2011

15 | Photographic portrait
of artist Maggi Hambling

15

MAGGI HAMBLING, PAINTER, SCULPTOR, DRAUGHTSWOMAN AND PRINTMAKER, IS ONE OF BRITAIN'S MOST DISTINGUISHED CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS. HER PAINTINGS LIE ON THE BORDERLINE BETWEEN FIGURATIVE AND ABSTRACTION. SHE IS BEST KNOWN FOR HER PORTRAITS — OFTEN OF THE DEAD — AND HER PAINTINGS OF THE NORTH SEA.

GERALDINE NORMAN

The series of monotypes shown in the Hermitage Theater foyer in June 2013 derive from her current series of paintings, also called Wall of Water. They are inspired by the British composer Benjamin Britten whose centenary was celebrated in 2013. His opera, "The Prodigal Son", based on Rembrandt's painting, was performed in the Hermitage Theater during the summer.

In 2003 a sculptural tribute to Britten by Hambling, titled "Scallop", was unveiled on Aldeburgh beach in Suffolk — Aldeburgh is famous for its annual music and arts festival, founded by Britten and others in 1948.

At the invitation of the British Council, Hambling visited Russia in October 2010 and was asked to explore ideas to celebrate Britten's centenary. The monotypes which resulted confront the power, energy and drama of the North Sea off the Suffolk coast, a lifelong inspiration for Britten and the subject matter dominating Hambling's work since 2002. The source of the imagery for this series was the artist's experience of unnervingly high waves breaking over the sea wall at Southwold, north of Aldeburgh.

The works confront the discord preceding the moment of reconciliation portrayed so profoundly by Rembrandt in "The Return of the Prodigal Son". Maggi Hambling's Wall of Water series acts as a metaphor for the dissolving barrier between father and son

Benjamin Britten's "The Prodigal Son" was first performed in Orford Church, Suffolk, in 1968. Dedicated to Shostakovich, the work was inspired by Rembrandt's ⑧ "The Return of the Prodigal Son" which the Russian composer frequently visited in the Hermitage Museum.

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Maggi Hambling is one of the most celebrated of contemporary British artists. She was made Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) in 1995, then a CBE (Commander of the Order of the British Empire) in 2010. Hambling studied at Ipswich School of Art (1962–1964), Camberwell College of Arts (1964–1967) and the renowned Slade School of Fine Art (1967–1969). As a student, she experimented with various forms, mastering the means of expression of Op Art, Pop Art and Abstract Expressionism, which were then at the height of fashion in the art world. In the 1960s and early 1970s, Maggi Hambling applied much of what later resulted in the celebrity of the Young British Artists of the 1990s, for example the use of living plants and animals, experiments with light, sound installations and conceptual projects. However, nothing proved as artistically rewarding for her as painting. She would later recall: "I always needed the help of others to set up the lighting or sound equipment or take photos. I felt more like an impresario than a creator. [With painting], I can stretch a canvas, prepare it and paint completely independently, without relying on anyone else."
In the last 10 years, waves have become the central character and muse of Hambling's art. This extensive cycle of paintings, graphic art and sculpture includes "Wall of Water" (2011), a series of monotypes that are on exhibit at the Hermitage Museum. The series celebrates the power, might and beauty of the North Sea and is a tribute to the memory of the renowned British composer Benjamin Britten, who found inspiration in the harsh beauty of the sea throughout his life.
_YEKATERINA LOPATKINA

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIOULLIN

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PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIOULLIN

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"William II and Anna Pavlovna. Royal Splendor at the Netherlands Court", an exhibition which opened in the State Hermitage Museum in September 2013, became one of the key events of the year celebrating the relationship between the Netherlands and Russia. The exhibition was devoted to the marriage of Prince William of Orange, heir to the Dutch throne and the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, and the Grand Duchess Anna Pavlovna. The exhibition was organized jointly by the Hermitage Museum and the Royal Picture Gallery in the Hague in the Netherlands, the Dordrecht Museum and the Villa Vauban — Musée d'Art de la Ville de Luxembourg, and supported by the constant partner of the Hermitage Museum, Heineken United Breweries.

WILLIAM II AND ANNA PAVLOVNA. ROYAL SPLENDOR AT THE NETHERLANDS COURT EXHIBITION

16 | Nicolaas Pieneman
William II (1817–1890), King of the Netherlands. 1849
Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands

17 | Nicaise de Keyser
Portrait of Queen Anna of the Netherlands, née Grand Duchess Anna Pavlovna of Russia. 1850
© The State Hermitage Museum

18 | Coronation uniform of William II, Waterloo hat and sabre, orders. c. 1840
Maurits huis, The Hague

19 | Elegant silver brocade court dress. 1890s

NIKOLAI ZYKOV

The fight with Napoleon ended with the Congress of Vienna. One of the decisions of the Congress was to restore the Netherlands' independence and to proclaim as its king William I from the Orange-Nassau dynasty. Almost immediately after the Congress ended (June 9, 1815), the son of William I, the future King William II, who had already repeatedly proven his courage and military abilities, distinguished himself at the Battle of Quatre Bras (June 16) and the Battle of Waterloo (June 18), where he was wounded.

In Russia, Tsar Alexander I paid attention to the Dutch prince and not only awarded him with the order of St. George but also matched him with his sister Anna Pavlovna (his other sister Yekaterina made sure this decision was made).

The wedding ceremony took place in St. Petersburg at the beginning of 1816, six months after Waterloo, with an Orthodox rite in the Winter Palace church, and a Protestant one in the White Hall.

The young couple spent their time in St. Petersburg and its suburbs until the summer. It is thought that this encounter

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

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PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

19

with St. Petersburg and the Imperial collection impressed the Dutch crown prince so much that he became a passionate art lover. William did not enjoy the wealth of Alexander I or his successor Nicholas I, but he managed to compile a wonderful collection of paintings with many considerably valuable pieces.

After his sudden death, the family had financial difficulties and was forced to sell the collection, and Nicholas I bought several works for his collection by Guercino, Gossaert, del Piombo, van der Weyden and, for example, a painting by Jan van Eyck which was later sold by the Hermitage Museum. Even this list, which is far from being exhaustive, shows what significant works by the old masters were included in William II's collection, though it should be remembered that he also bought paintings by contemporary Dutch artists. Many of these paintings are also displayed at the exhibition.

The beginning of the exhibition explains William's participation in the Napoleonic Wars and his wedding: there are many personal objects which belonged to both consorts, objects from Anna Pavlovna's dowry, articles for daily use and so on. The second part of the show includes paintings and images of the places at which they were exhibited: the Gothic Pavilion and hall of the Kneuterdijk Palace in The Hague.

Because the William II collection was dispersed all over the world after his death, many of the palace buildings constructed according to the king's own plans (which were unfortunately full of technical mistakes) were later demolished.

The exhibition is an attempt to fully represent everything that is related to the Dutch king's life and that of his spouse, who united the Romanov family with the Orange-Nassau dynasty.

Twenty-six museums and private collections have participated in the exhibition, from the Netherlands, France, Luxembourg, the UK, Denmark, Canada and the US. The Hermitage's main partners in the project are the Dordrecht City Museum, the Netherlands Royal Archive, and the Luxembourg City Museum Villa Vauban.

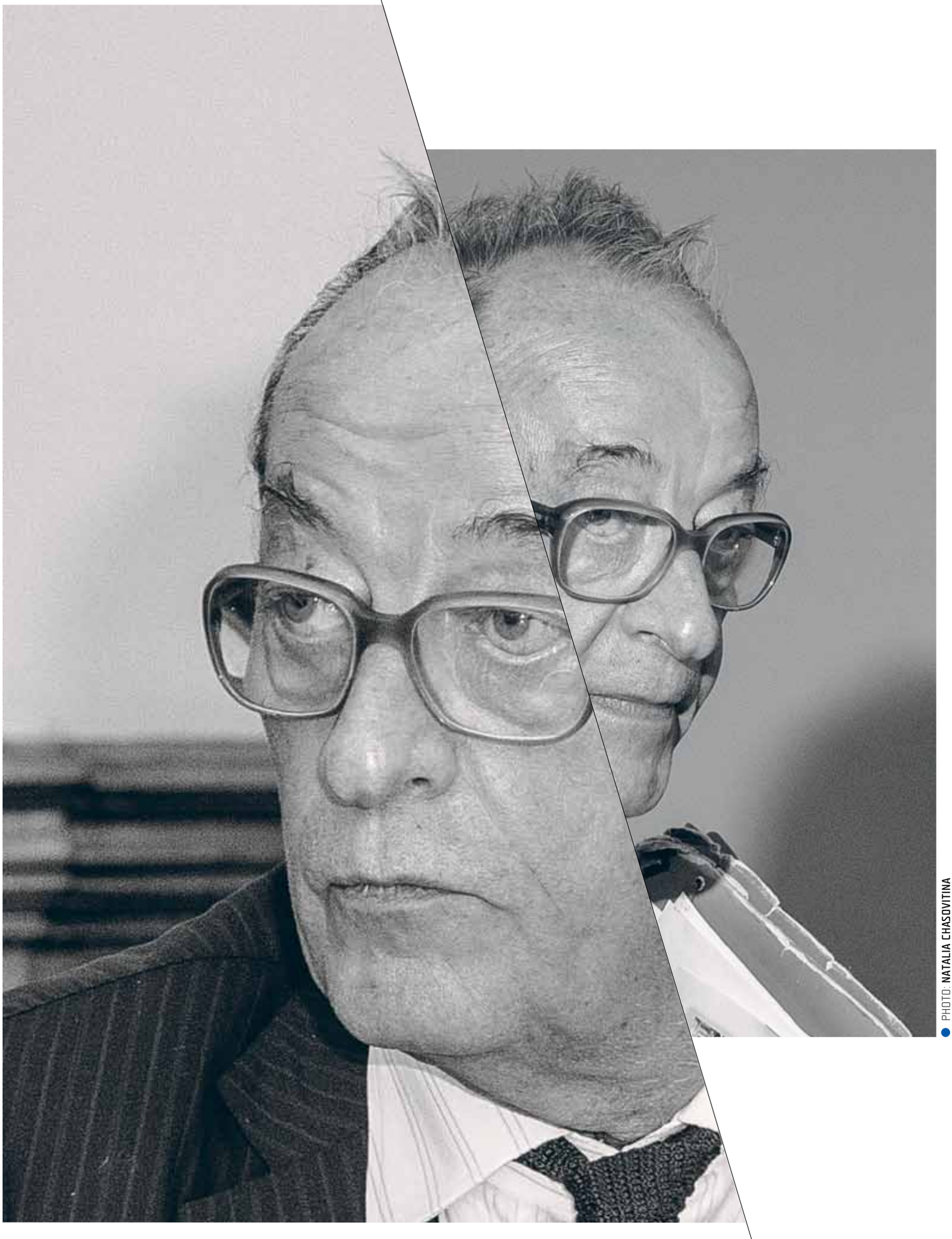

PHOTO: **NATALIA CHASOVITINA**

KASPER KÖNIG, CURATOR OF MANIFESTA 10
SERGEI FOFANOV[1]

NO FEAR

ART HAS BECOME TOO FASHIONABLE AND CHIC, TOO MANY PEOPLE HAVE STARTED TO LIKE IT, AND FINALLY IN THIS PERVERTED FORM EVEN MORE PEOPLE LIKE IT NOW. THE SITUATION IS CATASTROPHIC AND FATAL. OUR GOAL IS TO CHALLENGE THIS FACT IN ALL POSSIBLE WAYS AND TO REMIND EVERYONE ABOUT REAL ART, WHICH IS OF A DIFFERENT NATURE.

Q. Why is the choice of curator so important for Manifesta? What is the role of the curator?

A. The curator is only a link between the artist, on one side, and the public, on the other. When it was suggested to me that I organize Manifesta 10 in St. Petersburg, I did not need to think about it for long. But I know how to lose, and I asked only for permission to publish my concept a year after Manifesta is over in case my project faces rejection. I have been to St. Petersburg with Emily Evans, a young art historian, and to prepare the project. For the main idea I have chosen the energy that exists between the history of the Hermitage and the history of the development of modern art. I have tried to convey this message here in a graceful, intelligent and lucid form, and to demonstrate the process of the aesthetic transformations in Europe during recent years. I wanted to emphasize the contradictions and find a relevant illustrative model with which to understand them, but not a model on which to build your life. The Hermitage is a special place; it uses a wonderfully complex approach to the understanding of different visual cultures.

The Winter Palace has a hidden magic to it; you get constantly lost there, wandering in a state of absolute euphoria. It is probably one of the most important and amazing museums in the world. Its unique state not only conforms to purely aesthetic conventions, but also reveals the most interesting things. I am very enthusiastic… this probably sounds too declamatory, but I am truly enthusiastic about working with the Hermitage and in the Hermitage.

You cannot ask art to be more powerful than it is in order to improve the future. But with the help of art we can better understand many things, and we should not give too much praise to art which does not deserve it.

Q. How can Manifesta 10 become a noteworthy event in St. Petersburg, a city of 5 million people already saturated with cultural events? How can you draw attention to it?

A. If we manage to do one trick and organize our exhibition in such a way that St. Petersburg people can find a reflection of their own lives there, and make these realities a factor in self-identification, we are sure to get the recognition of the world art community. If the city and its inhabitants are ready to change, it is important for us to express such a willingness, too. I consider it a delusion to believe that St. Petersburg is for the world associated with its traumatic history, full of utopian plans. Using this experience and not forgetting the poetic souvenirs, we can create a common future. Many features of St. Petersburg are unique and distinguish it from other world cities. Its identity is clearly marked by its history and aesthetics.

I am a pragmatic person and I have been considering some well-known and quite obvious city symbols for Manifesta. For example, I would like to suggest that artists reinvent the ensemble of Palace Square and the Alexander Column. I would like to bring some famous art projects and include them in St. Petersburg's urban environment. But it is too early to speak about this now: we will see what we can do.

Q. Tell us about the most successful Manifesta: how did it change the place where it was held and what contribution did it make to art history? And what were the mistakes? For example, why was the Cyprus biennale cancelled?

A. I have visited all the Manifesta biennales, except for the one in Tyrol. I have studied some of them very carefully and thoroughly and organized tours with my students. I was part of the Manifesta supervisory board for a long time.

The most interesting Manifesta for me was the one in Ljubljana, because it corresponded entirely with the original concept of Manifesta — to bring together different parts of Europe. Ljubljana is a very beautiful city with a unique history which had fully experienced the influence and glory of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the Slovenians are perhaps the only people who managed to come out of the awful Yugoslavian crisis without dishonor after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc…

But staging Manifesta in St. Petersburg is a completely different story. The first Manifesta was held in Rotterdam, a large and busy port city on the sea. We can draw a parallel here with the spirit and character of St. Petersburg and find some very interesting historical and cultural comparisons. Rotterdam has a very powerful dynamic; it was almost entirely destroyed during World War II and rebuilt afterwards. St. Petersburg is an incredibly beautiful city. I am interested in the historic idea of the previous Manifesta biennales — to speak once again about Europe as a cultural area with all its diversity of language, cultures, places, and particularities. This diversity is of particular significance now — it is more important than economic issues or ideologies as we think about our common past and the possibility of a common future here.

Q. Is the job of a curator to find new interesting artists or to create a concept of a panorama according to a certain ideology?

A. I would say that the issue is not in the ideology, it is in the particular things that we want to show. If the artists themselves want and are ready to exhibit certain works, they have the right to do so and we have to take this into account. But we cannot simplify and reduce the general concept, or we would be patronizing the audience. We have to inspire the public, sometimes help them orientate themselves, keep their interest up. But not in a snobbish way, and without ever imposing our own will. We have to let the visitors feel some things, to teach them how to differentiate, and maybe something that earlier seemed uninteresting or even appalling will gain new meaning and

PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

suddenly become much more important than what was always visible and appreciated anyway. It is a complex process which takes time, and it is impossible without using historical experience.

We do not cast ourselves as missionaries or reformers; on the contrary, we want to dive deeper into the present cultural situation to open up access to art for as many people as possible.

Once again, we are not talking about ideological preferences, we are talking about taking other people's opinions seriously. If you like something, you should not impose it upon others straight away: we should all learn to explain our preferences to other people and give them a chance to reveal the original concept of a work of art. There is a risk of populism and exhibiting only what is successful with the audience and appreciated by everyone. In this case, after the first try, the wave of interest will soon pass away.

The best sign of success of any exhibition is the influence and significance it has in the years that follow it. This raises the question: to what extent do artists realize what they are really facing? If they are not satisfied with something, there is no possibility of a creative moment as there is no real challenge. It is the same as with a musical ensemble: if one of the members does not understand what the others are doing, the attentive listener will notice a false note; such a band has no future. But this concerns only a small number of artists, and we have to take them seriously. We have to evaluate their creative potential objectively, and not the chances of a making profitable art investment or some fast money on the art market.

Q. For the first time Manifesta is being held in one of the greatest museums in the world. Will it be able to stay out of the shadow of Rembrandt?

A. People usually come to the Hermitage with their whole family; many people come with their children and grandchildren to take pictures on the grand staircase or in the palace halls. They see works by Matisse, Rembrandt, decorative art objects, Islamic art, antique sculptures — a whole range of world art. It is a universal museum, filled with a special feeling which brings us closer to the Russian experience.

To get to know the Hermitage, to feel its incredible might, one has to spend two whole days there, maybe even three. Think about the treasures of the Siberian burial mounds, for example. The Hermitage has objects that can truly captivate the visitor. It is, of course, a fabulous museum!

I hope that people who are mostly interested in contemporary art will be able to understand it, too. Their visions of art will be confronted with the prehistoric archetypes which are very radical and amazingly beautiful, and incorporated into this complex anthropological and museum context.

20 | Kasper König waltzing in a room of the State Hermitage Museum, with *"The Dance"* by Henri Matisse in the background

Here I partly experienced once again what I felt about Russia based on what I know from the literature we all read, the music we all listened to, the objects that are impregnated with Russian history. It was here that the Revolution took place, but not the one we know from Eisenstein's films. From the very beginning I was a little discouraged to see that all the attention here is drawn to the history and no one thinks about the future. But now I see that Russia is working on a complex revision of its history and legacy. It is very difficult to deal with one's history correctly. If we manage to exhibit one third of Manifesta in the halls of the Winter Palace, and to transfer the Hermitage hallmarks — Matisse's "Dance" and "Music" — to the halls of the General Staff Building, and display the other two-thirds of the biennale there, we will change the general context of the exhibition, creating a dialogue between the traditional and contemporary art. Many visitors coming to see Matisse will have to pay attention to what we will be showing them, too. Thus we can find this link between the Imperial residence and the eastern wing of the General Staff where the major part of the Manifesta 10 exhibition will de displayed.

Q. Contemporary art is connected to the artist's liberty of expression — and the curator's liberty. Are you afraid, for example, of violating Russian laws prohibiting the propaganda of non-traditional sexual orientation [so-called anti-LGBT laws] or mockery of religious beliefs? Are you afraid of seeing armed Cossacks coming to Manifesta 10 to carry out a pogrom? Or are such scandals beneficial to contemporary art as they draw public attention to it?

A. There is no fear at all. The most important thing is not to provoke intentionally those who are highly sensitive or it will stray into a field beyond the art. My main idea is zero self-censorship: we should always express all the different art concepts independently and clearly.

There is no fear. It would be too primitive and silly to start messing with some feelings manifesting from protest. Misusing art for some advertising purpose is as foolish as being constantly afraid and going around on a leash held by those whose feelings may be violated.

There is a whole range of art concepts: some artists may be gay or lesbian, some have a special vision of the situation in the world. But we cannot connect art works to propaganda, let alone propaganda for some sexual preferences.

Contradictory laws only overdramatize and place fear in our hearts, and this is very sad. No one has the right to impose his will and call on young people to ostracize some feelings or others. Everything should be treated wisely, especially the things that demand much tact. The last thing I would want now is to play the role of a missionary who brings moral reference points to the world. At the moment we are dealing with a very complex phenomenon, namely the Hermitage, and it lays some special obligations upon us. So we should not worry about anything else. There is no fear.

1 Art historian Sergei Fofanov is an assistant to the curator of Manifesta 10. He lives and works in Berlin. He was born in Leningrad, as St. Petersburg was then known, in 1984, graduated from the faculty of art history and art theory at the St. Petersburg State Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture and worked at the State Hermitage Museum from 2007 to 2013. Since 2010 he has been a PhD student at the Free University of Berlin. He works as a curator of exhibition projects dealing with German art and culture of the 20th and 21st centuries.

28 June — 31 October, 2014
St. Petersburg, Russia
The State Hermitage Museum

MANIFESTA 10

The European Biennial of Contemporary Art

manifesta

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EXHIBITIONS AT THE HERMITAGE

Birds: Messengers of Gods. Western European Applied Art from the 16th Century to 19th Century

April 17–September 29, 2013
Winter Palace, Blue Bedroom

This exhibition was dedicated to birds that accompanied the gods of Olympus. The eagle embodied the solid power and strength of Jupiter, the peacock personified Juno's majesty and greatness, while elegant swans and tender doves were Venus and Apollo's heralds...

More than 100 exhibits were displayed in the Blue Bedroom: glyptography and jewels, and objects made of silver, faience, porcelain, espaliers, furniture, fabrics, ivory, enamel, embroidery, lace, and artworks made of bronze.

Gegenlicht. German Art from the George Economou Collection

May 25, 2013 –January 20, 2014
The General Staff Building

Over a period of just 20 years, the Greek collector George Economou assembled an extensive collection of more than 2,500 paintings and drawings by German artists who belonged to the Expressionist and New Objectivity movements. The exhibition features works from the 1920s–1930s by Expressionists including Otto Dix, Christian Schad and George Grosz, and neo-Expressionists including Georg Baselitz, Anselm Kiefer, and Jorg Immendorff.

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

21 | **Bronze sculpture of a cockerel, companion of Mercury, the god of trade. "Birds: *Messengers of Gods. Western European Applied Art from the 16th Century to 19th Century*", exhibition fragment**
© The State Hermitage Museum

Wisdom of Astraea... Freemasonry in the 18th Century and the First Third of the 19th Century – Objects from the Hermitage Collection

May 18–September 1, 2013
Pickel Room of the Winter Palace

More than 400 objects formed this exhibition including genuine items from masonic ceremonies and rituals, works of both Russian and foreign-language literature revealing the wisdom of the Freemasons, and portraits of the most famous members of the Russian lodges.

Corporate unity. Dutch group portrait of the Golden Age from the Amsterdam Museum collection

June 8 –September 1, 2013
Winter Palace, Nicholas Hall

Group portraits of members of shooting clubs, curators of charity institutions and heads of craftsmen's guilds are an exclusively Dutch phenomenon. They are now kept in Dutch museums and leave the country only on very rare occasions, and this exhibition in the Hermitage became one of the main events of a year of cultural events celebrating the relationship between Russia and the Netherlands. On June 20, 2013, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and the country's ambassador to Russia, Ron Keller, paid a visit.

The White City. Bauhaus architecture in Tel Aviv

June 12–September 15, 2013
The General Staff Building

The White City is the name given to the 4,000 buildings erected in Tel-Aviv by architects who graduated from the Bauhaus higher school of construction and design style founded in Germany in 1919. The curators presented archived maps and photographs at the exhibition together with films, 3D-visualisations, and models of buildings and quarters.

The exhibition continues the series of architectural presentations by the Hermitage and became the central event of the days of Tel Aviv event in St. Petersburg.

Bronze Age: Europe without Borders – 4000–1000 BC

June 22–September 8, 2013
The General Staff Building

The exhibition was organized by the Hermitage in cooperation with the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, the State Historical Museum of Moscow and Berlin State Museums of Prehistory and Ancient History, and is the second project between Russia and Germany that shows the interconnection of historical and cultural events in the vast European space. It presented a rare opportunity to see Western European antiquities transferred to the Soviet Union from Germany after the end of World War II, among nearly 2,000 exhibits including ceramics, items from ancient treasure troves, weapons and parts of horse harnesses.

Utopia and Reality. El Lissitzky, Ilya and Emilia Kabakov

June 28–August 25, 2013
Court Gallery of the Winter Palace

The exhibition was prepared by the Hermitage in cooperation with VanAbbe Museum in Eindhoven, the Netherlands.
Lissitzky and the Kabakovs are not usually compared, but particular works from the avant-garde, representing Soviet utopia and Moscow Conceptualism as the art of Soviet reality, formed this exhibition. It was organized as a dialogue between the artists which ran through several rooms and topics such as Victory over Routine and The Routine has Won, A Monument to the Leader and A Monument to a Tyrant, and Transforming Life and Escaping from Life.

From Guercino to Caravaggio: Sir Denis Mahon and 17th-Century Italian Art

July 13–September 1, 2013
Armory Hall

The exhibition was dedicated to the British collector and expert on fine arts, Sir Denis Mahon and embodied the original idea of displaying paintings from his collection with canvases which he never possessed but loved and studied. The exhibits include works by Guercino, Caravaggio and their contemporaries from the Italian collection of the Hermitage.

Paul Cézanne's "Card Players" from the Courtauld Gallery, part of the "Masterpieces from the World's Museums at the Hermitage" series

September 14–November 17, 2013
Winter Palace, Apollo Hall

Cézanne created five paintings on this subject over several years. They are all in different collections today and the painting from the Courtauld Gallery is one of them.
It is believed that the first was the largest painting (with five characters). The artist gradually decreased the number of people, making the composition more and more concise. The version displayed in St Petersburg could arguably be called the last and most perfect.

Dutch Architecture. 1945-2000

October 16, 2013–January 12, 2014
The General Staff Building

The exhibition is part of the cultural program of a year of events celebrating the relationship between Russia and the Netherlands. It showcases 200 models, drawings and photographs from the collection of the New Institute as well as items from the collections of modern Dutch architectural firms.
Visitors will learn that in the second-half of the 20th century the tendency toward the collective was replaced with a deep respect for individuality and that the change of ideals itself led to greater variety in architecture.

A Christmas Picture. From the "Christmas Gift" series

December 21, 2013–March 9, 2014
Winter Palace, Hall 152

The annual exhibition from the Christmas Gift series traditionally showcases works by masters of the Imperial Porcelain Factory from the 18th century to the present day. This time the subject is sentimental Christmas stories, winter landscapes, children with rosy cheeks, and other equally touching images.

22 | Theo Bosch, Aldo Van Eyck
Residential Buildings in Nieuwmarkt district, Amsterdam. 1975
Nederlands Architectuurinstituut (NAI)

HERMITAGE EXHIBITIONS ON TOUR

Peter the Great, an Inspired Tsar

March 9–September 13, 2013
Hermitage Amsterdam

This exhibition initiated the cultural program of a year of events celebrating the relationship between Russia and the Netherlands. As many as 665 paintings, sculptures, drawings and works of applied arts, examples of arms and military ammunition, tools, books and curiosities came together to create an intricate mosaic of the life of the first Russian Emperor.

Olympia: Victory over Time. Antique and Western European artworks from the collection of the State Hermitage Museum

April 16–November 7, 2013
Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Center

The exhibition featured about 300 antique and Western European artworks celebrating the history of the Olympic Games and their revival.

The first section consisted of antique exhibits including marble statues of athletes and their gravestones, painted vases and bronze vessels that served as awards for the winners. The second section showed how ancient traditions to do with the Olympic Games are being preserved today.

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

23 |

23 | Bartolomeo Carlo Rastrelli
Portrait of Emperor Peter the Great. 1723–1729
© The State Hermitage Museum

Visit to Houghton: Walpole's masterpieces from the Hermitage of Catherine the Great

17 May — 29 September 2013
Houghton Hall, Norfolk, United Kingdom

In 1779, Catherine the Great bought a collection of fine-art paintings for the Hermitage from Robert Walpole. Contemporaries called this collection the most famous in England. The collection was partly distributed to other museums but its core still belongs to the Hermitage.

This year, a part of Walpole's collection was shown at his family estate. The exhibits included the artworks from the Hermitage collection, paintings from the museums of Tsarskoye Selo and Pavlovsk, the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, the Metropolitan Museum and the Victoria and Albert Museum and others.

Collector of Wonders. The Alexander Bazilevsky Collection at the Hermitage

June–November 2013
Palazzo Madama, Turin, Italy

This amazingly beautiful exhibition from the Hermitage shows the masterpieces of medieval European art from the famous Bazilevsky collection. These include early Christian monuments, ornaments of the Roman and Gothic eras, carved ivory, enamels from the Rhine and Limoges, Venetian and German glass and Italian majolica.

Gauguin, Bonnard, Denis. A Russian Taste for French Art

September 14, 2013–March 16, 2014
Hermitage Amsterdam

This exhibition is dedicated to the three French artists of late 19th century and early 20th century and their artistic development. Pierre Bonnard and Maurice Denis briefly belonged to a group known as Les Nabis, the Hebrew word for prophet, the exhibition traces the links between this group and Gauguin by following their development and presenting the famous decorative panels "Méditerrannée" by Bonnard and "The Story of Cupid and Psyche" by Denis.

The World of Nomads

November 19, 2013–May 25, 2014
The Hermitage-Vyborg Center

An equally large version of an exhibition that recently saw great success in the Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Center in the capital of Tartarstan has been specially mounted by the Hermitage at its Vyborg branch. The exhibition is dedicated to the culture of nomadic peoples who lived and replaced each other in the lands of Eurasia for thousands of years, from the 1000 BC to the establishment of the Great Mongol Empire in the 13th century.

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The European Biennial of Contemporary Art

28 June — 31 October, 2014
St. Petersburg, Russia
The State Hermitage Museum

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

24 | Pierre Jaquet-Droz
"Caged Bird" Automaton. 1790s
© The State Hermitage Museum

Presentation of sculptures by Quinto Martini

May 24, 2013
Winter Palace, Blackamoor Hall

An exhibition of sculptures and paintings by Quinto Martini, prepared by the Hermitage together with the Italian Friends of the Hermitage Association, was held in the Winter Palace in the summer of 2013. On the opening day, Teresa Bigazzi, Quinto Martini's heiress, presented five artworks to the Hermitage: "Alcheya", "Nature", "Rain", "Rooster" and "Beggar Woman".

Presentation of Ulla Tillander-Godenhielm's book "Jewels from Imperial St. Petersburg" published by Liki Rossii

May 28, 2013
The State Hermitage Museum

A great-granddaughter of the famous jeweler Alexander Tillander, supplier to the Russian Imperial Court, presented her new book to journalists and Hermitage personnel. It includes the stories of famous items of jewelry, and biographies of their creators and owners. The book is particularly valuable for its excellent photographs.

13th International Greater Hermitage Music Festival

July 9–11, 2013
Atrium of the General Staff Building, St. Petersburg

Jazz took center stage at the festival that took place in the atrium of the General Staff Building and the hall of the Academic Capella this year. The audience appreciated the performances by Tine Thing Helseth and her jazz-tango fusion band, pianist and composer Wolfert Brederode, singer Maria João and pianist Mário Laginha.

1st International Festival of Summer Music

July 19–27, 2013
St. Petersburg

Music sounds different in museums from the way it sounds in concert halls: the synthesis of architecture, music, history and fine arts provides an unforgettable experience. This is why in the summer of 2013 the best museums in St. Petersburg and its surroundings were chosen as venues for performances of the music from various eras, styles and countries by the best soloists and musicians from around the world.

State Hermitage Museum and Montblanc signing ceremony

June 27, 2013
The State Hermitage Museum

The General Director of the Hermitage, Mikhail Piotrovsky and the head of Montblanc Russia, Anton Kuzin signed an agreement on The Conditions of Preparation and Implementation of the Cooperation Program Aimed at Preservation of the Cultural Legacy and Development of the State Hermitage for 2013–2015. From now on Montblanc, a Swiss watch company, will help the museum in developing the Laboratory of Scientific Restoration of Clocks and Musical Instruments.

Presentation of the restored Caged Bird musical automaton[22] by Swiss master Pierre Jaquet Droz

July 9, 2013
Winter Palace

It took the restorers about two years to revive the rare mechanisms of this unique automaton clock. Various experts were involved including an organ builder, an engraver, a gilder and even a taxidermist. The clock, with its face at the bottom of the cage, shows correct time. A mechanical bird turns its head and a miniature organ plays music that imitates birdsong. This project was financially supported by an old friend of the Hermitage, Samsung Electronics.

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↓
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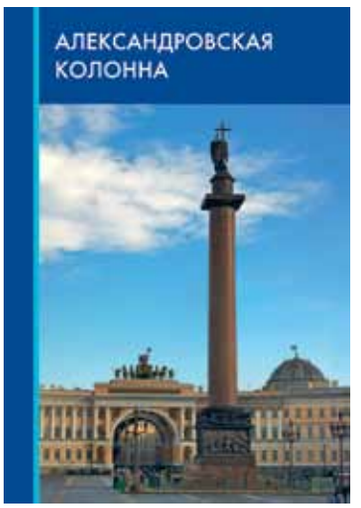
"Peter the Great's Time in Persons": Annual Academic Conference

November 19–20, 2013
Menshikov Palace

This annual academic conference is dedicated to the questions of Russian history of the 18th century. Year after year, its participants dig deeper and deeper into the times of Peter the Great and artists of that era to learn more about the reforms that changed Russia.

BOOKS PUBLISHED BY THE HERMITAGE MUSEUM



"The Hermitage. Western European Art"

L.N. Voronikhina

This study and guide covers the collection of Western European art at the Hermitage Museum — painting, sculpture and applied arts. The book also examines the architecture of the buildings belonging to the museum, the history of the creation and development of the collections which include works of art from Western Europe from the 11th to the 20th centuries. The book is organized chronologically and the material is divided by artistic schools. Additionally, the book will introduce visitors to the main sections of the collection with emphasis on the most significant masterpieces and new arrivals. The guide also includes short references on the history of the buildings and the halls of the museum, and suggests routes to follow around the halls.

The book was published in late 2012

"The Art of Western Europe at the Hermitage"

R.M. Kogan

The author presents the 250-year long history of the State Hermitage Museum and its development as a museum of world culture and world art, and tells the story of the creation of the gallery which includes works by artists from various Western European countries. Over time the museum acquired collections of sculpture, graphic arts and applied and decorative arts. These days on display in the halls of the Hermitage are masterpieces by European artists from world-famous collections stored at the Hermitage. The purpose of this guide is to help a visitor to navigate the expositions in the multiple buildings of the museum and also give a general idea of these buildings and their interiors now serving as exhibition halls, offering insight into their historical significance and artistic value.

The book will be published in February 2014

"Antique Weaponry in the Hermitage Collections"

D.P. Alexinsky

The author tells us about items of antique weaponry which have always been attractive and fascinating for connoisseurs and lovers of the art of the ancient world. Unsurprisingly, such works of art became collectibles in the modern age and can be found in various museums. The Hermitage Museum owns a collection of rare and even unique weapons which combine aesthetics with functionality. Some of them are on display in the museum.

The book was published in December 2013

"The Alexander Column"

D.V. Lyubin

The book is dedicated to the Alexander Column, a unique monument which belongs to the Hermitage collection. It covers the stages of its design and installation, as well as various aspects and lesser-known facts about its existence from the 19th century to the early 21st century. The book presents rare archival materials from the research department of the Russian Academy of Arts, photographs from the Central State Archive of Cinema and Photography, and materials from the State Historical Archive of Russia.

The book was published in 2013

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