HERMITAGE MAGAZINE

SANTIAGO CALATRAVA.
IN SEARCH
OF MOVEMENT,
THE CHAPMAN
BROTHERS.
THE END OF FUN,
IMPRESSIONISTS
ON THE AMSTEL,
THE PALACE CATS,

“Art is propelled by an urge to expand. This desire, this passion constantly impels us to transcend the boundaries of our previous experience in life and in art. It inspires us to overcome all kinds of 'artist's blocks' — only to reveal new, seemingly insurmountable obstacles ahead of us.”

Aleksei Tarkhanov

ISSN 2218-8789

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THE CULTURE OF DAVOS AND THE DAVOS OF CULTURE

PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

There is a kind of "Davos culture" in the line of thought and lifestyle characteristics of the world's financial and political elite; those who gather once a year at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. This culture includes free-market economics, human rights and political values, and a love of moderate luxury goods.

These ethnographic details, however, are not sufficient to understand what Davos is and what is interesting about it to those who live in other cultures. But it is indeed interesting.

There are committees at the forum where specialists are invited on a temporary basis to define the agenda for subsequent meetings. One of these groups is devoted to culture in its high sense. It includes art critics, artists, musicians, writers, museum workers, university art specialists etc. Culture at the forum is not only a cultural programme embellishing the life of the participants: it is a whole series of discussions about the role of culture in economic and social development; its capacity to solve human problems in non-economic ways; and its ability to encourage creativity and outside-the-box solutions. In discussions with cultural experts, businessmen search and find new ideas and new people, which is essential for the Davos culture's future.

I have had the chance to participate in the preparations and discussions of several forums, including the one that took place in 2013. This experience inspires some reflection about our present-day reality. At Davos there were two panel discussions devoted to culture. One was pretty elitist. Directors of the world's major museums

discussed the meaning of encyclopedic museums and their role in global culture. One of the controversial issues was restitution — claims for the return of cultural artefacts to the countries of their origin. The moral aspect of the problem, a certain notion of justice and injustice, entails the necessity of discussing and making decisions very carefully. There are in fact some ways to combine the interests of global culture and local cultures. This is much like the situation in the global economy.

The other panel discussion was less elitist. Cultural experts talked about cultural events and institutions helping people and cities to survive crises and economic disarray. Museums, theatres, preservation campaigns, music festivals... in Russia, Italy, Ghana, America. Artists had decorated the forum building with their works, organized guided tours and explained to the businessmen why they had made something the way they had. A conductor explained in seminars and demonstrated at the closing ceremony how to unite thousands of people from all over the world in one choir. A young artist raised money online to give away as grants to other young artists. A designer turned slums into habitable installations. It is culture people who introduce what is an art experiment today but what can become an innovation in another world tomorrow. Whether this happens or not depends on businessmen listen very closely. Culture helps us to prepare for the future. It is one of its major functions and its role in society.

This is impossible without preserving the past, which is the function of museums. But museums are not only about preservation, but reconstruction too. And today we, the museum and the magazine, are bringing back to life a wonderful and beautiful typographical font that had been lost in the turmoil of history. Many thanks are due to those who saved it for today and gave it to the Hermitage. These amazing letters will be our official typeface from now on. It will be easily recognizable for its stylistic closeness to the museum itself, and its inner connection to the museum's spirit. We will tell the world all about it at the next Davos forum.

Davos learns much from cultural events and initiatives, while culture learns from Davos to estimate risk and appreciate stability. But culture needs its own Davos, too, with thoughtful discussions about internal problems, the prophecies of its wise men, the world's fate and interracial and intercontinental arguments. Academic forums cannot replace Davos in this sense, but the major modern art festivals can: the Venice Biennale, Documenta in Kassel, the mobile Manifesta, and many other events. There is much movement and life at such forums, but some kind of void can still be felt. We are yet to witness the birth of a cultural forum where politics and managers would be welcome, exotic and interesting — but as guests.

MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY

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Mintimer Shaimiev

Mintimer Shaimiev

Republic of Tatarstan, Russian Federation, photographed on June 19, 2004

Dear Friends!

The increasingly intense cultural exchange between the Republic of Tatarstan and the State Hermitage Museum has already become a great tradition of our time. The many artistic and cultural/historical exhibitions, international conferences, forums, festivals, lectures, and meetings of the most accomplished scholars and eminent cultural figures that have been organized by the Kazan Kremlin and the world-famous Hermitage are all clear proof of the deep and growing mutual interest between the cities of Kazan and St. Petersburg.
It is wonderful that the Hermitage Magazine, the publication of our country's most important museum, is aimed at conserving and popularizing global cultural heritage. This rich historical and cultural legacy is not only a special and extremely important socio-economic resource for Russia's economic development, but also a source of national pride and glory. Working with cultural heritage goes hand-in-hand with the challenges of preserving and developing the historical and spiritual traditions, cultures, and languages of all peoples living in Russia.
I am sure that this journal, which unites our professional interests, will attract the attention of the public at large to preserving invaluable monuments of Russian history, culture, and art. I wish your journal fruitful work, new ideas, and creative achievements.

Read about Nomads of Eurasia on the Road to Empire exhibition on p. 236

HERMITAGE MAGAZINE

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PHOTO: **AANDREI SHELYUTTO**

František Štorm in his studio

Prague, 2012

Can we say that a typographical font is clothing for words? Hardly; words don't need that. It's more of a way of moving from the two-dimensional space into 3D. A key to the door of the unconscious. A font is the image of meaning. A font can capture it forever, or prevent it from existing: it can do anything with meaning. A font gives us an authorial voice that cannot otherwise be heard.

Nabokov's synaesthetic coloured letters, small inscriptions by Yury Olesha, Felici's silver, Tschichold's distilled serenity, the exquisite artistry of William Morris: these are all part of the world that surrounds us, our civilization. We would never be able to imagine what these non-literate worlds are like, and what kind of signs speak there, without letters and their created form.

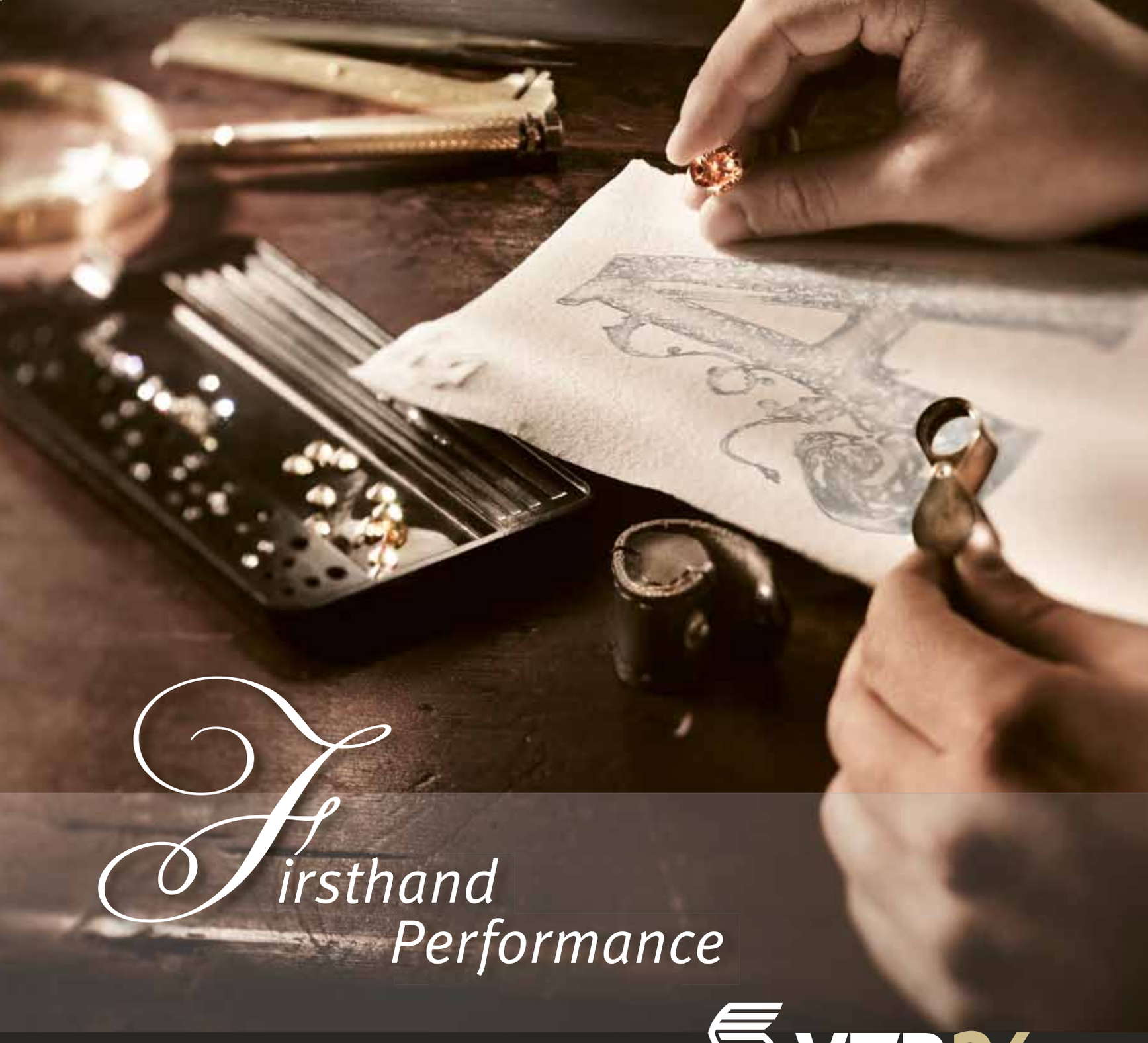
The Cyrillic letter "Э" stands for "Эхо" (echo) in Russia everywhere but St. Petersburg where it invariably stands for Hermitage — "Эрмитаж" (the Russian pronunciation of hermitage is closer to French hermitage with a silent "h").

Project manager Andrei Shelyutto, seeing the Cyrillic word in a very old book, said: "Ever since my childhood I always saw the word 'Hermitage' printed in this particular font; a European font, but a Russian one at the same time; a Catherine the Great font, but also a Secessionist one. It looks somewhat old, but it could be from the future as well. It is basically very much like the museum itself…" He added that the font's characters had probably been scattered over the fields of battles and revolutions, like Russian culture as whole, and that gathering such fragments is a mission of the nation's great museums. With the help of the unparalleled Czech typographer František Štorm, we worked for two months to find and reconstruct this one-of-a-kind Cyrillic font, which was hitherto considered irretrievable. Štorm recognized it as a typeface designed by German designer F. W. Kleukens called Ingeborg-Antiqua. Its Latin version was introduced by the Stempel typographical foundry in 1910 (the name of the genius creator of the Cyrillic version remains unconfirmed). The font is based on the powerful traditions of the modernist Silver Age: it appeals to 18th-century civil typography and at the same time sees into the future. Its very creation came at the start of a new Russian visual language, yet one that never got the chance to continue and develop.

Štorm told us that what we have reconstructed is a very good example of century-old Secessionist art, and beautiful too: "I am sure that it will be a wonderful source of sentimental feeling for the readers of the magazine, in addition to its high clarity and readability."

We began working on this project knowing that the recovery of this unique Russian font would result in a priceless artefact for world culture, and now our task is successfully complete.

Andrei Shelyutto initiated and headed the project, while František Štorm was responsible for technical reconstruction, programming and the realization of the font. The resulting typeface was reconstructed according to the latest technical and programming standards and is called Hermitage Ingeborg.



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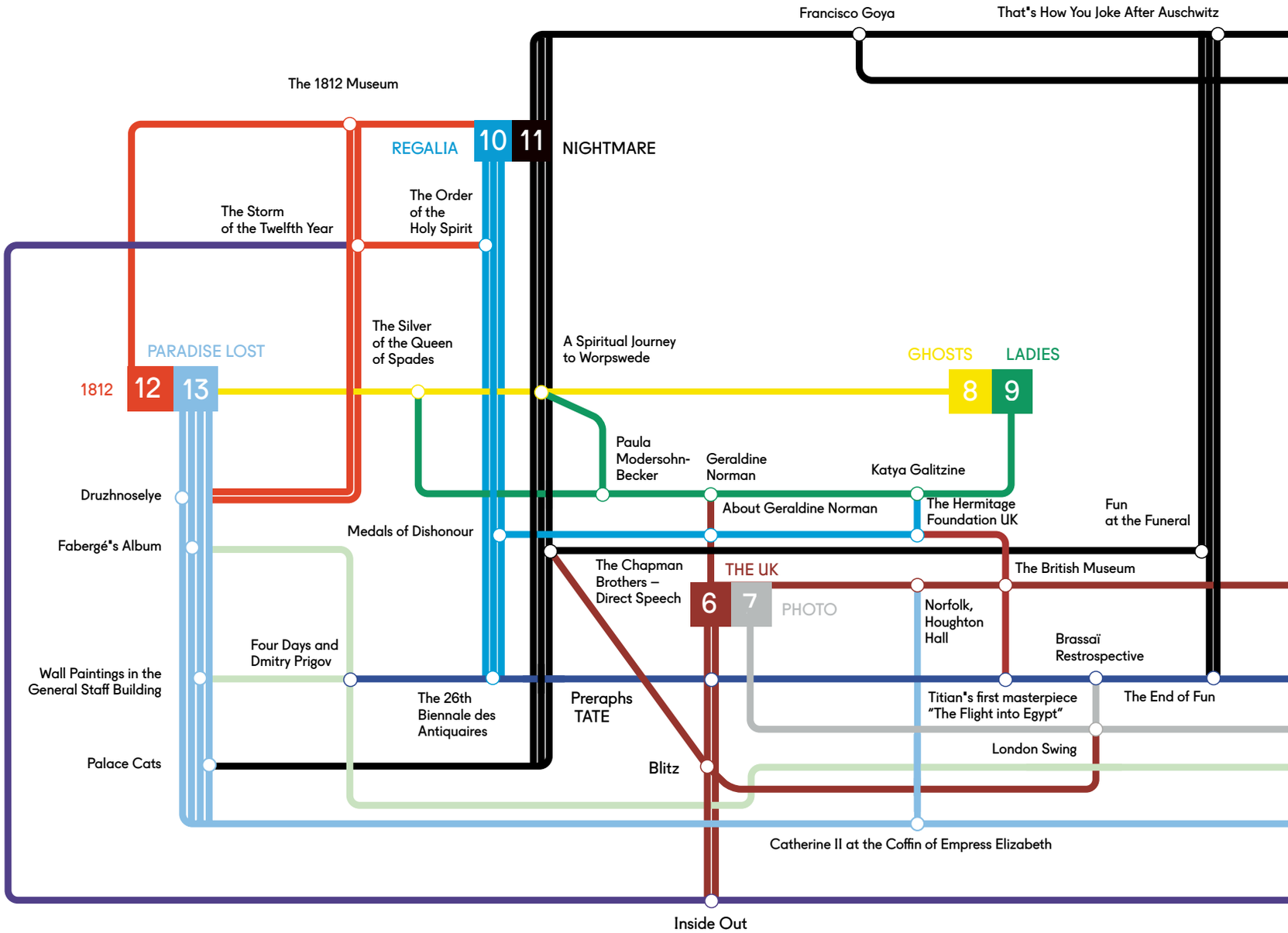

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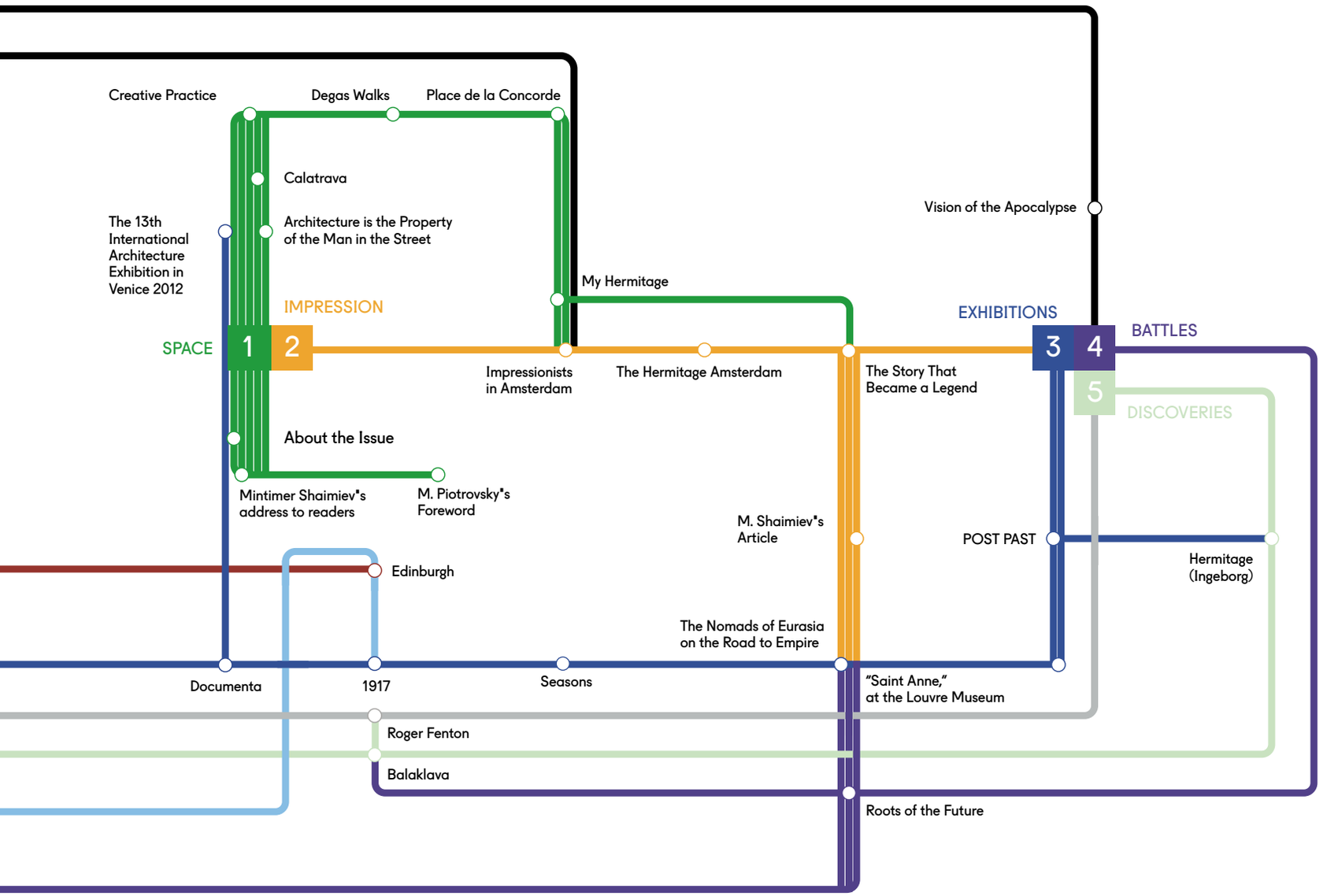


CALA

The Quest for Movement exhibition celebrating the work of Santiago Calatrava, part of the Hermitage 20/21 programme, was the best attended architecture exhibition

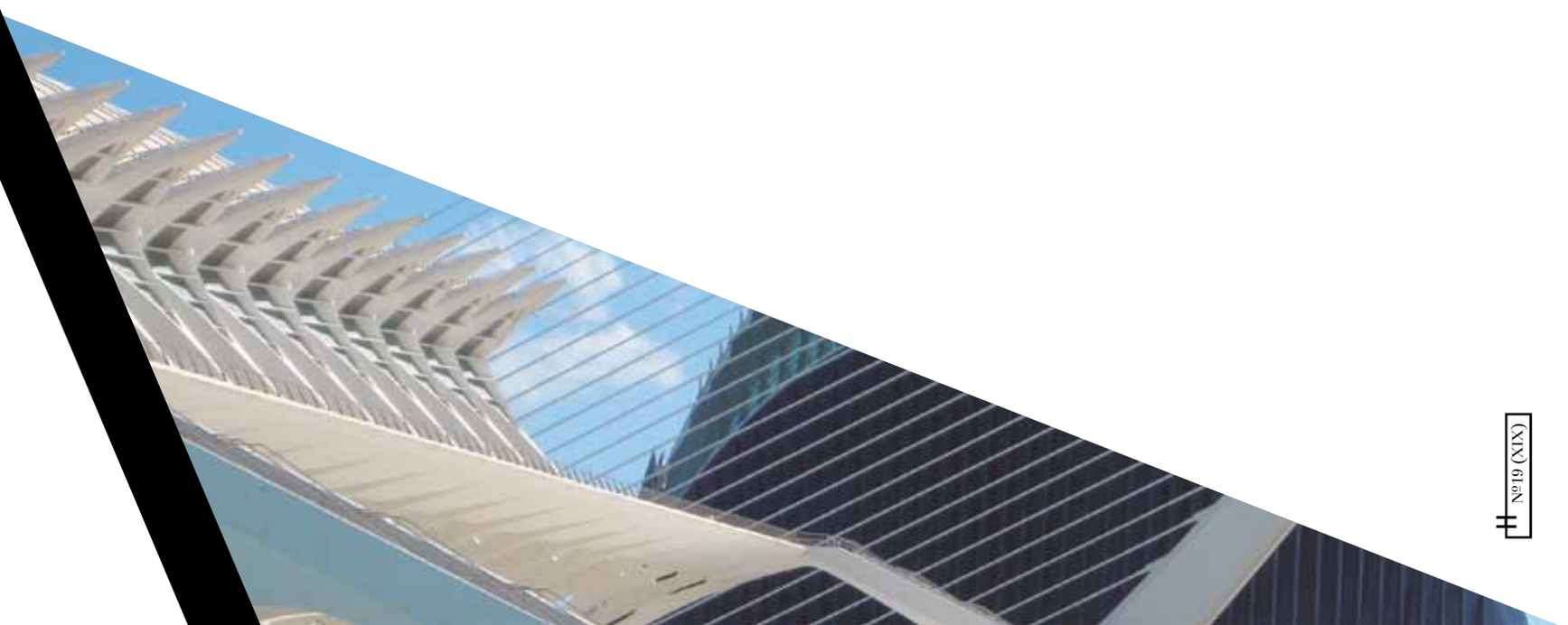
PHOTO: YURI MOLODKOVETS

Santiago Calatrava at the opening of his exhibition in the State Hermitage Museum in 2012

AN EXHIBITION OF SANTIAGO CALATRAVA'S WORK AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM INAUGURATED A SERIES OF SHOWS CELEBRATING TODAY'S ARCHITECTURAL MASTERS.

TRAVO

in the world in 2012, according to The Art Newspaper. The ranking meant that the exhibition attracted two-and-a-half times more visitors than the Venice Biennale.



MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY

Architecture has always been a theme at the Hermitage and the exhibitions it mounts. The very museum itself is an encyclopaedia of architectural styles, represented in its buildings by the vaunted names of Rastrelli, Quarenghi, Rossi and Klenze. The museum preserves, studies and exhibits to the public samples of the most beautiful architectural drawings, from working draughts to architectural forms and examples of paper architecture from various periods. One of the problems — and concurrently one of the unique qualities — of exhibitions at the Hermitage is the challenge of achieving congruity between the exhibits and their luxurious palatial surroundings. The location of this exhibition of contemporary architecture in the Nikolaevsky Hall of the Winter Palace creates a singular dialogue between space and structure, in which the old architecture of the museum plays a significant role.

We have been planning this exhibition for a long time. Over time the concept gradually came together, to the delight of both the artist and our staff. Santiago Calatrava may be a Spaniard, but as is common today in architecture, he is also a man of the world — both in terms of the places he has lived and of his style. His website is decorated with the emblem of the famous Order of Calatrava — a Greek cross with fleur-de-lis at its ends. It is difficult to avoid drawing a comparison between this symbol and the whimsical lines of the architect's constructions. The name of Santiago honours St. James of Compostela, whose well-known emblem is a shell. And here again we return to these whimsical lines, consistent with many of the architect's buildings, railway stations and airports.

Santiago Calatrava is wellknown for the intense scrutiny he affords to nature and the forms it creates. The tense lines of his bridges convince the eye of their stability precisely because they recall the interior structures of fish and other sea creatures. While looking at his constructions and projects, one is often reminded of the belly of a whale, into which he places us like the Biblical Jonah. It is difficult to imagine a more brilliant manifesto for modern technology. Every architect learns from nature, but the embodiment of the results of this learning in reality is evidently possible only in our era.

Calatrava is renowned for his bridges. There is a particular mystique associated with the bridge, not only embodied in its aesthetic, but also for the delight it inspires in viewers: one of the reasons is that the bridge is a potent symbol of man's ability to adapt nature to his purpose without violating it in the process. Everything stems from mutual concord. Bridges are a hymn to this love both figuratively and literally. Calatrava's bridge in Dublin is instantly and joyfully recognizable as an Irish harp — the enduring romantic emblem of Ireland — and is a beautiful embodiment of the national symbol. The bridge at the entrance to Jerusalem appears as an absolutely unexpected and, at first glance, alien line in the landscape. But here too, its form is immediately recognizable as King David"s harp (*kinnor*), and everything falls into place.

The architect inserts contemporary structures into the landscape, and more impressively, into long-established historical ensembles with such elegance that any spontaneous internal protest quickly subsides even in the most ardent defenders of the sanctity of cultural heritage. Calatrava's famous bridge in Venice is a classic example of this paradigm. The artist and architect's creation is an elegant and strict response to the challenge presented by this city steeped in history.

The exhibition affords a marvellous opportunity to see how architect, artist, engineer and sculptor coexist within one creative continuum. Each of the genres in Calatrava's work stands independently, yet they can also be viewed as a harmonious whole. They participate in an ongoing dialogue. And the Winter Palace has become part of this dialogue.

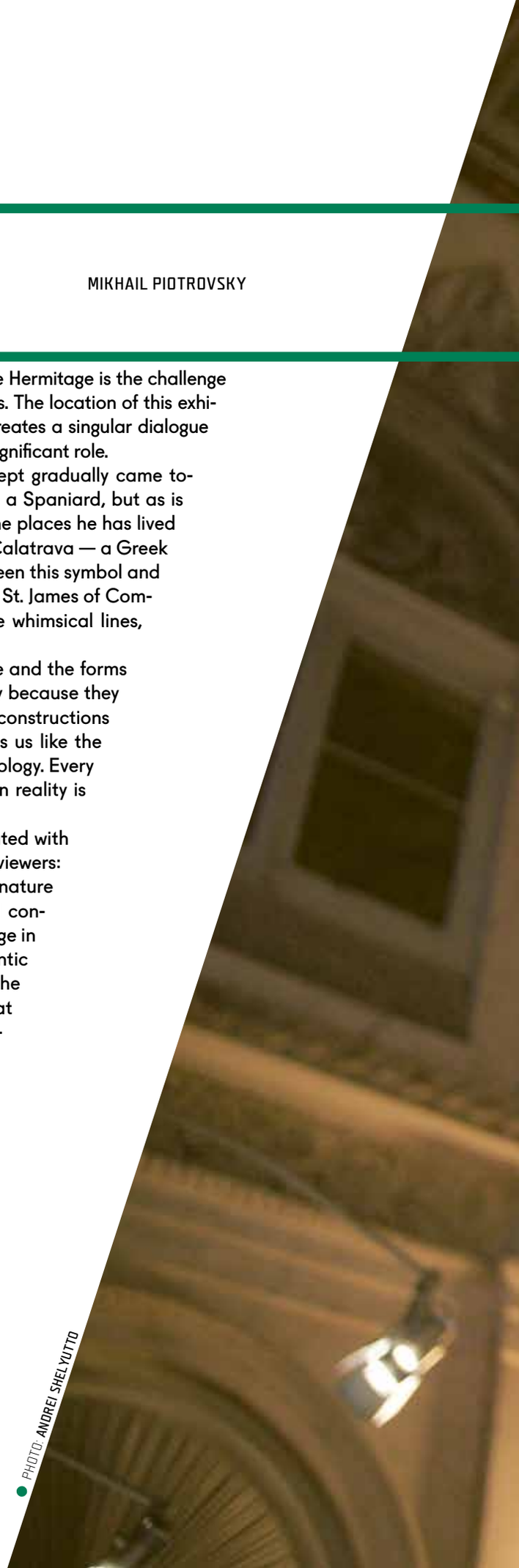


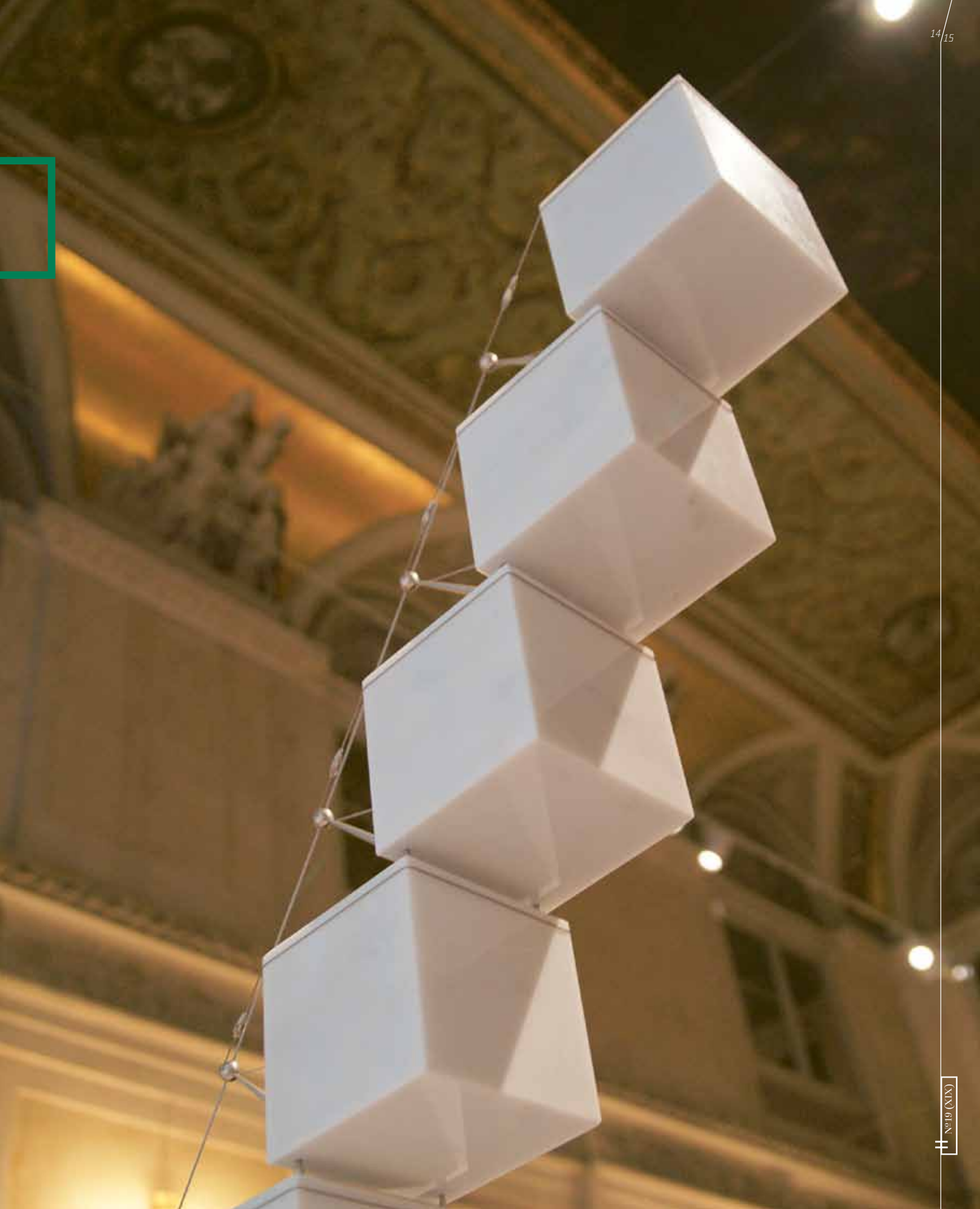
PHOTO: ANDREI SHELYUTTO

Santiago Calatrava

Running Torso

2005

While marble, chrome-plaled sleel, wire



CREATIVE PRACTICE

DMITRY NOVIK

In a packed lecture at the Hermitage's theatre, on the occasion of the opening of Santiago Calatrava's exhibition The Quest for Movement, the Spanish architect used a metaphor to explain the reasons he chose his profession. In his youth he had been interested, in turn, by painting, mathematics, biology and engineering. Architecture allowed him to combine his love of all these subjects, and use the knowledge he had acquired in creative practice.

The Quest for Movement offered the spectator an intellectual voyage through the world of Calatrava, and places it in unique focus. The exhibition showcases a wide range of the architect's work, from light watercolour outlines of the human figure to complex models of railway stations and stadiums, from mounted sculptures of ebony and stainless steel to working notes with the calculations of static and wind loads on buildings. The aim of the exhibition's curator Cristina Carillo de Albornoz is clear: it is an attempt to explain the phenomenal popularity of Calatrava, who has worked all over the world, from Malmö to Jerusalem, from Rio de Janeiro and New York to London and Berlin.

Calatrava is often referred to as the leader of "biotech" contemporary architecture. His global renown is explained by his trademark use of recognizable forms derived from nature, which testify to a perpetual quest for movement. He draws the body of a young woman at her morning toilette — a favourite subject of the Impressionists; or the powerful figure of an Olympic athlete — a familiar theme from ancient times. He constructs "object-transformers", following in the footsteps of the Russian avant-garde, and compares the human spine with dancing leaves like a classic modernist sculptor. And later these studies find their application in his architectural projects. No less significant is his ability to work with space: to radically change the landscape, yet avoid damaging it. These are clearly important factors in the success of Santiago Calatrava, which is beyond doubt: in the space of 30 years he has built no fewer than 40 important public buildings and constructions around the world.

Of all of Calatrava's projects, the jewel in the crown is surely his magnificent City of Arts and Sciences complex in Valencia. As the high-speed train from Barcelona approaches the edge of the city, the complex flashes in the sun to the right of the train, vying with the clear blue Mediterranean Sea for the passenger's attention before the train arrives. However, Calatrava's complex is not visible from the railway station itself, located in an area featuring Imperial architecture from the 19th Century and the circular building of the nearby bull ring. The City of Arts and Sciences was built some distance away, in the dry bed of the Turia river. After a catastrophic flood in 1957, the river was diverted around the edge of the city. The empty bed was later filled with promenades and sports facilities, but still lacked a dominant element. The City of Arts and Sciences fulfils this role: the Queen Sofia Palace of the Arts raises its striking dome, the planetarium winks at the visitor with its large eye, the Prince Felipe Science Museum and the greenhouse beckon with their patterned structures. Each of the constituent buildings is expressive in its own way and at the same time functions as part of an ensemble. Unsurprisingly, day and night, at any time of year, you can see amateur photographers roaming the complex, exploring the visual possibilities offered by the countless spectacular angles of the complex.

1. Santiago Calatrava

Lyon-Saint Exupery Airport Railway Station
Satolas, Lyon, France
1989–1994

2. Santiago Calatrava

Ciudad de las artes e las ciencias
Valencia, Spain
1991–2000

3. Santiago Calatrava

Samuel Beckett Bridge
Dublin, Ireland
1998–2009

4. Santiago Calatrava

Oriente Station
Lisbon, Portugal
1993–1998

On the other side of the Iberian Peninsula, in Lisbon, the Oriente railway station is more than just its lacework crowns of metal trees — a reference to the Garden of Eden. It is also a comfortable transport hub, combining long-distance and suburban trains, buses and the metro. Finally, it is also the gateway to Nations Park, a complex built for the Expo in 1998. Calatrava's station plays a majestic solo in this orchestra of exhibition halls, trade centres, hotels, museums, theatres, and a funicular railway, running along the banks of the Tagus estuary. However, it is a solo that also allows every note played by the other architectural instruments in the orchestra to be heard.

Circumstances are quite different in Lyon, where Calatrava designed the Saint-Exupéry Airport Railway Station. This bird of steel, glass and concrete has just landed, and has not yet folded its wings. The space beneath the wings shelters a small but convenient terminal with platforms for high-speed trains and Rhone express suburban services, and also access to buses. Calatrava's winged bird welcomes visitors to Lyons and bids a safe flight to those leaving the city. The station has completely revolutionized the dull landscapes typical of standard airport buildings.

A further example of Calatrava's skill with landscape was demonstrated by his creation of the Olympic complex in Athens. Besides reconstructing the main stadium and designing a velodrome for the 2004 Olympics, he created a 21st century Agora in the form of an elegant white arcade and the Nations Wall — a 250-metre long wavelike construction full of movement. Part of the achievement here is that Calatrava's structures do not inconvenience the spectators of sporting competitions or other events: it is only a short distance from the Irini metro station to the Olympic stadium, along broad, spacious avenues. The Agora and Nations Wall are intended to be places for meditation and contemplation, removed from the high emotions of sport. But without these structures the Olympic complex would be incomplete.

Santiago Calatrava is renowned first and foremost for his bridges. With every project he finds a new approach, avoiding repetition while preserving his unmistakeable signature. An example of this is his Constitution Bridge across the Grand Canal in Venice, which unites two important points in the city — Piazzale Roma and the Santa Lucia railway station. The architect sensibly abstains from competing with the historic bridges which span Venice's main artery. He creates an elegant, almost flat silhouette, and only the curved concrete supports on the banks of the canal hint at the creator's identity.

However, Calatrava's bridge for high-speed trams in Jerusalem takes a completely different approach. On the edge of the city the architect created an ambitious and complex suspension bridge with a mast 119 metres high and featuring 66 cables. It quickly became known as King David's Harp. From close quarters it is remarkably difficult to identify which part of the bridge is suspended from this or that cable. In this way Calatrava reminds you that you are in a city whose dramatic and complicated history has no comparison.

In 2009 Santiago Calatrava inscribed his elegant autograph upon Madrid. In fact, this was his very first project in the Spanish capital. For the Plaza de Castilla, bordering the district with the highest skyscrapers in Spain, he designed an obelisk, clad in oscillating bronze plates. The "living" tower looks particularly striking at night when illuminated. Calatrava felt no need to compete with the omnipresent glass and concrete skyscrapers. As ever, he was absolutely confident in his principle — to search for motion.

ARCHITECTURE IS THE PROPERTY OF THE MAN IN THE STREET

ONE OF THE MOST SUCCESSFUL ARCHITECTS OF THE MODERN ERA, SANTIAGO CALATRAVA ASSURES US THAT HE — A MAN QUALIFIED BOTH IN ARCHITECTURE AND ENGINEERING — CANNOT CALCULATE EVERYTHING, AND IN FACT DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A CLEAR IDEA OF WHO HE IS. HE HAS COMPLETED MORE THAN 40 LARGE-SCALE PROJECTS AROUND THE WORLD IN 30 YEARS' WORK: BRIDGES, STADIUMS, OPERA THEATRES, MUSEUMS, RAILWAY STATIONS, SKYSCRAPERS — ALL OF THEM CONTINUE TO SURPRISE THEIR CREATOR, WHO KNOWS FULL WELL THAT THE ARCHITECT'S PERSONAL CONCEPT COUNTS ONLY FOR SO MUCH.

Q. Is this exhibition only about contemporary art, or it is also about the art of the future?

A. Yes, it's also very much about that. I think that whatever is contemporary also covers at least the next ten years of work because many of the projects that I'm showing have yet to be built, although they will be built. That means that you know they are being made for the future.

Q. Is there anything in the Hermitage Museum's collection that is very special to you?

A. I discovered a Pontormo. Il Pontormo, a painting. Of Maria, the child and two saints. My goodness, I couldn't believe it. That's just to give you the name of a great artist. It's incredible what you have, the diversity and the quality of the works is incredible: wherever you look you discover things, it's a joy to be here and to see this. In a way, the Hermitage is a monument to humanity because all those artifacts, they are all artificial: they have been made by people, by contributing the very best of themselves, by trying to reach the highest point of their expression, and to pass on to us a message that is still there. So I just chose the Pontormo because I discovered that I couldn't believe my eyes. When I saw the Christ by Titian — I almost collapsed when I saw that. My goodness, what texture, what a mixture of colours and water — it's incredible. The Hermitage is enormous: it's a magical place; what a place, what a place!

Q. How would you describe the architectural style of St. Petersburg?

A. St. Petersburg is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. It's in the relations between the canals, water, the landscape, St. Petersburg's surrounding area — it's all very special. The nature of St. Petersburg, also the climate, the rough climate of St. Petersburg, the long nights: all of that makes the city very, very special. But St. Petersburg is also a city for an architect because wherever you turn your gaze and whatever you look at there is something to discover. It never stops. A street corner, the roofs, the houses, the cornices, the streets, a plaza. From the smallest of details to the overall conception of the city — it's a visual city. But it's also interesting that in the materiality of the architecture, St. Petersburg has another soul, which is musical. And I love that because in this contrast, this bipolarity between the city of music, this big musical event, and on the other hand this city of architecture, it's a monument by itself — it really is a unique place in the world.

Q. When did you start to work in architecture?

A. I started studying seriously when I was 17-years old — between the ages of 17 and 20. I had always had a sensibility with regard to architecture, and when I was visiting cities and looking at them I learned what architecture means, having decided to be an architect at this age.

Santiago Calatrava
preparing his doctoral
thesis, 1981

Q. Do you do a lot of drawing?

A. I draw the whole time. I can draw better than I can speak. I think it is like breathing, it really is like breathing.

Q. Do you ever think that when you are sketching you are creating an object for a museum?

A. No, not at all. Even a piece of architecture at a museum has an exterior, has a façade, so architecture is in the streets, architecture is accessible to everybody. Architecture is to be enjoyed by everybody. In my opinion, it has a very community-related sense.

Q. Do you have a full vision of a project before it's finished?

A. No, and this is a very mysterious thing, because buildings are autonomous. You see the shadows, you see the grass, the things that are growing. The moments of the day, they are unique, the buildings always become atmospheric. The atmosphere, the light recreates the building. It is very pretentious to say you control everything — it's not true. To me, the buildings surprise me, even if I have been working for years and years on them.

Q. Does the size of the what is being designed matter? Is it important if it's a small project or a large project?

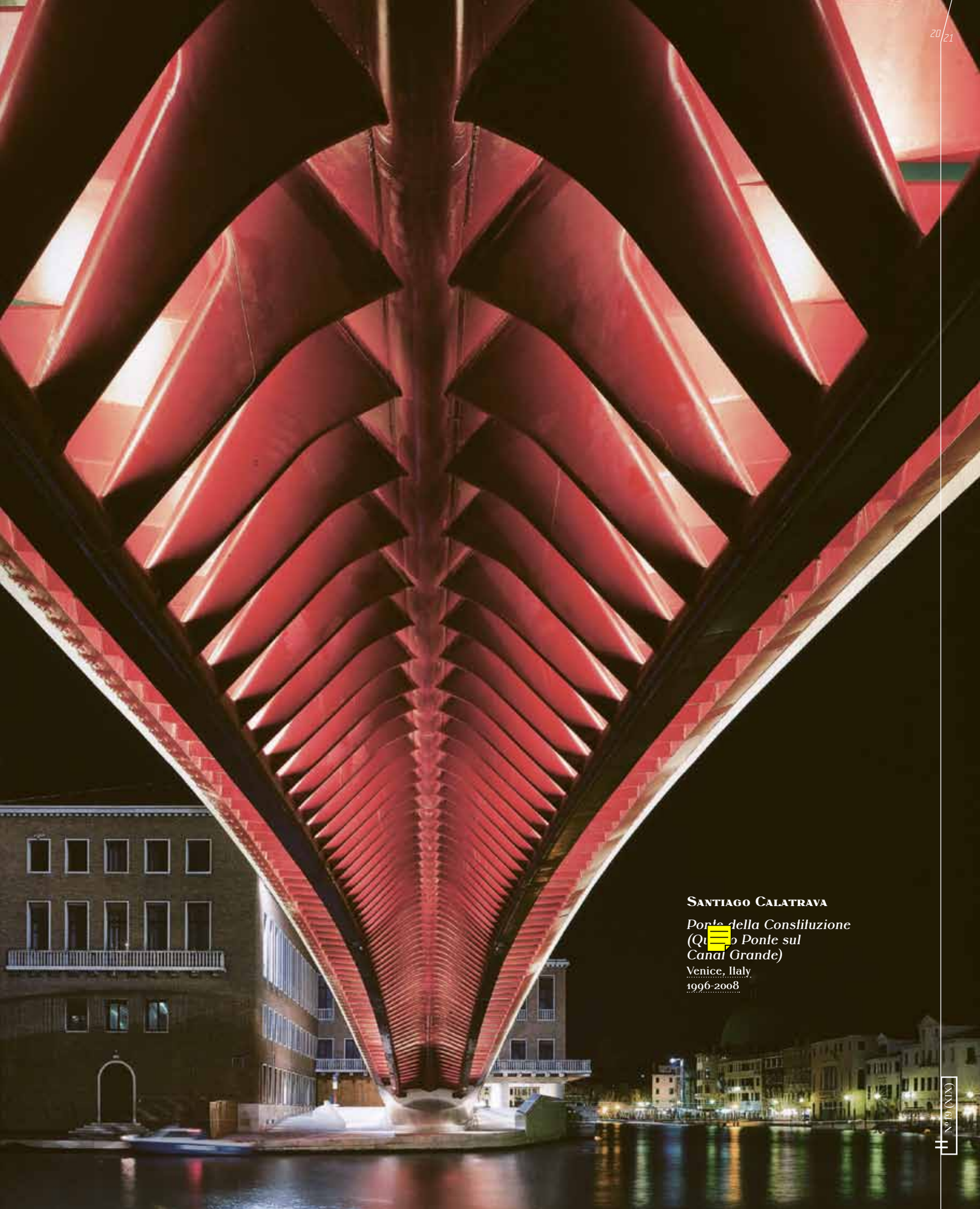
A. There's no difference. The difficulty and the challenge is still to make an object, even for somebody who is trying, say, to make just a cup, to paint a ceramic, or something like that. It's somewhat like what happens in biology. You take a person, or an animal, and when you examine it with a microscope you also see the inside of the animal and when you use an even more powerful microscope you can even see other things inside. So the complexity keeps going all the way through, and the complexity of the microcosm is just as important as the complexity of the macrocosm. In fact, in order to make the overall macrocosm work, you have to remember that God is in the details. The details play an enormously important role.

Q. Which of your projects would you say is your favourite?

A. For me this is an important question. Take your hand — which finger is your favourite? Which of my four children — somebody might ask me — is my favourite? It's as difficult to design a chair as to design a house. And to make a chair requires as much love as the designing of an entire museum. There is no difference, regardless of the scale. Everything which you make is art, if it is the result of an artistic process. There are some projects which I've been working on for 20 years, and there are projects I've worked on for much shorter periods; they are all important to me. At the end of a project you are already a different person, not the same person you were at the beginning. Because life is cyclical, and each cycle lasts 15 years. You are surrounded by different people, people who perhaps have forgotten the source of the original idea — the idea which was born 20 years ago. It is a personal, existential experience, working on a project. You need to be prepared for all kinds of surprises, for all eventualities. You can draw everything, but you can never capture all the feelings. It's impossible. When you see a building, this is your own perceptual experience of this building, and it always amazes you. I've thought about this many times. And I think that our work can be compared to that of a composer, who creates music by working on a score. When you create, you expel something from yourself. We strive to create a beautiful object, a beautiful work of art, so that people fall in love with it, so that it is to their liking. And afterwards it turns out that everybody — and yourself — perceives your creation completely differently. I don't believe that it's necessary to have a special education in order to appreciate works of art. You are human, and you are capable as a human of appreciating that which has been created by a fellow human. This, in my view, is an extremely interesting phenomenon, one from which we can learn a lot. Architecture is a craft which requires maturity, and the best works by, say, Raphael or Michelangelo, were those that they produced in their maturity.

Q. Is there an architect who inspires you? Whose works you can't forget?

A. Oh, many, many. I was impressed by seeing the drawings of Melnikov. I think he was an enormous artist. And I love the work of an American architect Louis Kahn. When I was young I was enormously attracted by the work of Le Corbusier and also by an intensive relationship with the landscape, so the work of Frank Lloyd Wright and many others. It's like painters and artists, there are also a lot of architects, even working today, a lot of good architects, they are no less than artists. For me, for many years it has been a mystery. Somebody like Cézanne has been



Santiago Calatrava

Ponte della Consliluzione (Quarto Ponte sul Canal Grande)
Venice, Italy
1996-2008

also a mystery, or somebody like Rodin. Of course, Picasso, more recently. You have to understand that this is change. You can only learn from those persons who have dedicated their lives to their art and also fulfilled their careers with works — you can learn a lot from them. A great deal. I feel very close to them in terms of their feeling and their understanding of life and the dedication with which they worked.

Q. What will you be doing in 20 years' time?

A. I don't know, but I hope I will be alive, first and foremost; I love life very much and I think it will be too early to leave. Really, I don't know exactly what I will be doing , but I definitely think I will carry on doing the same things I have already been doing for over 20 years — I mean, painting and sculpting and enjoying learning new things, discovering new people as I'm doing here now in St. Petersburg.

Q. What was the most unexpected critical reaction to your work that you have had?

A. I don't know. Honestly, I appreciate the importance of the critics and their approach to my work, and indeed I have been linked to good critics who have taught me a lot, who have given me a sense of the critical stage of my work, but nevertheless, I can't ... I remember people who spoke about "a daring flight". I remember that in very early critical essays on my work somebody in Italy wrote about this "daring flight". I think the idea of flight can still be found in my work today.

Q. What does your house look like?

A. My houses are all renovated. They are all old houses. I have never built for me to live in. For me it is very important to have space and to have a lot of light.

Q. If you could alter something specific, something special in your personality, what would that be? Some strange trait in your personality, in your character?

A. Myself? I don't know. I don't have any particular opinion about myself.

Q. What's your favorite music?

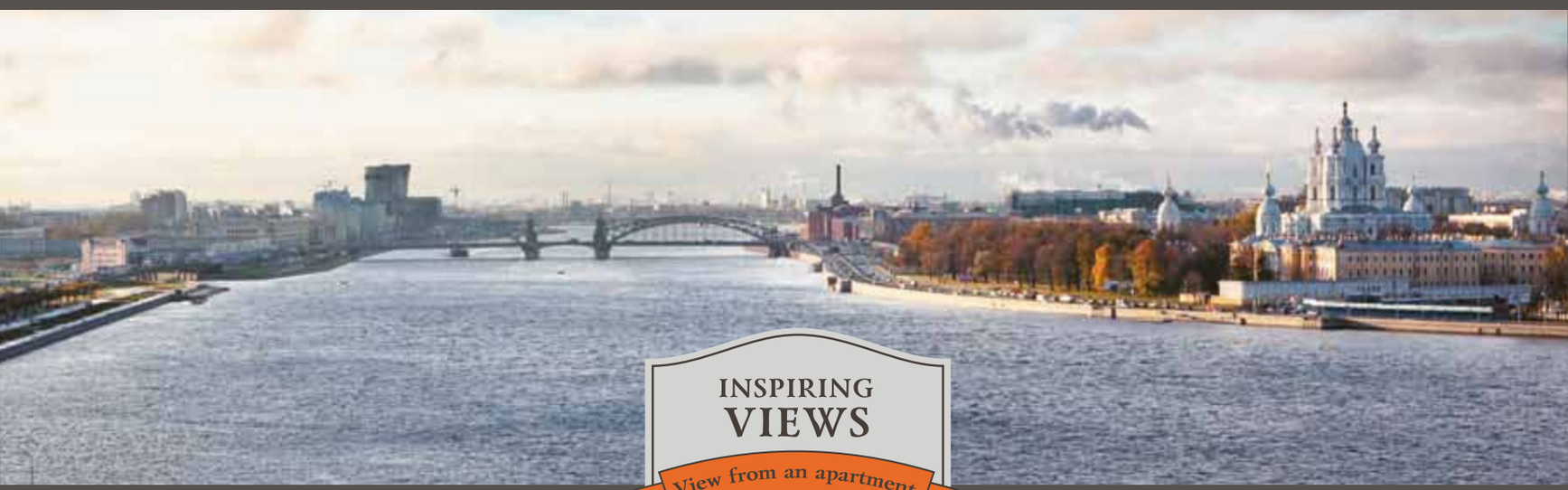
A. All kinds of music. I have been changing a great deal in this regard. There was a time when I loved Bach, there was a time when I hated a lot of Bach. Or there was a time in which I hated Rachmaninoff, or Skriabin, but I love music. Also there was a time when I hated pop music. So it's not only classical — I just love music. But it very much depends on the time and the circumstances. But it's something that I pay a lot of attention to. I think that music is an important part of my life.

Q. Is there anything you couldn't live without? Something that makes you happy?

A. Yes, my family. I'm very much a family-oriented person. I love my daughter. Now she is 17-years old. She just turned 17, and it's a wonderful thing to watch her, the evolution from a child into, let's say, a woman. It's really fantastic. I also have had the same experience with the three others, boys, who are now adults. But in my family I have always had very important support. I was given the best advice in my life by my mother. She told me to be a good person. To be a good person and to love other people. I think this is what I would give as advice to others — to be a good person and to love other people. I have a lot of friends. I love friendship. And friends for me are the salt of the earth. It's this that makes life beautiful, our friends. So I have all kinds of friends all over the world. I love friendship, I think it's one of the most beautiful things. It's also a way to spread love to people and also to receive it. □

INTERVIEW BY ANDREI SHELYUTTO AND LIUBOV GLEBOVA

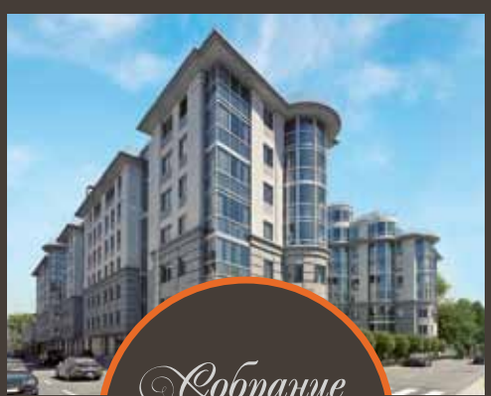
life in the RBI style



INSPIRING VIEWS

View from an apartment 9th floor

HOUSE ON THE SVERDLOVSKAYA EMBANKMENT



Собрание

THE HOUSE FOR NOBLE FAMILIES

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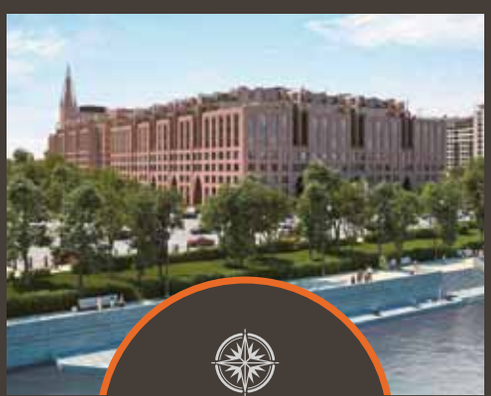

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THE HOUSE ON THE SVERDLOVSKAYA EMBANKMENT

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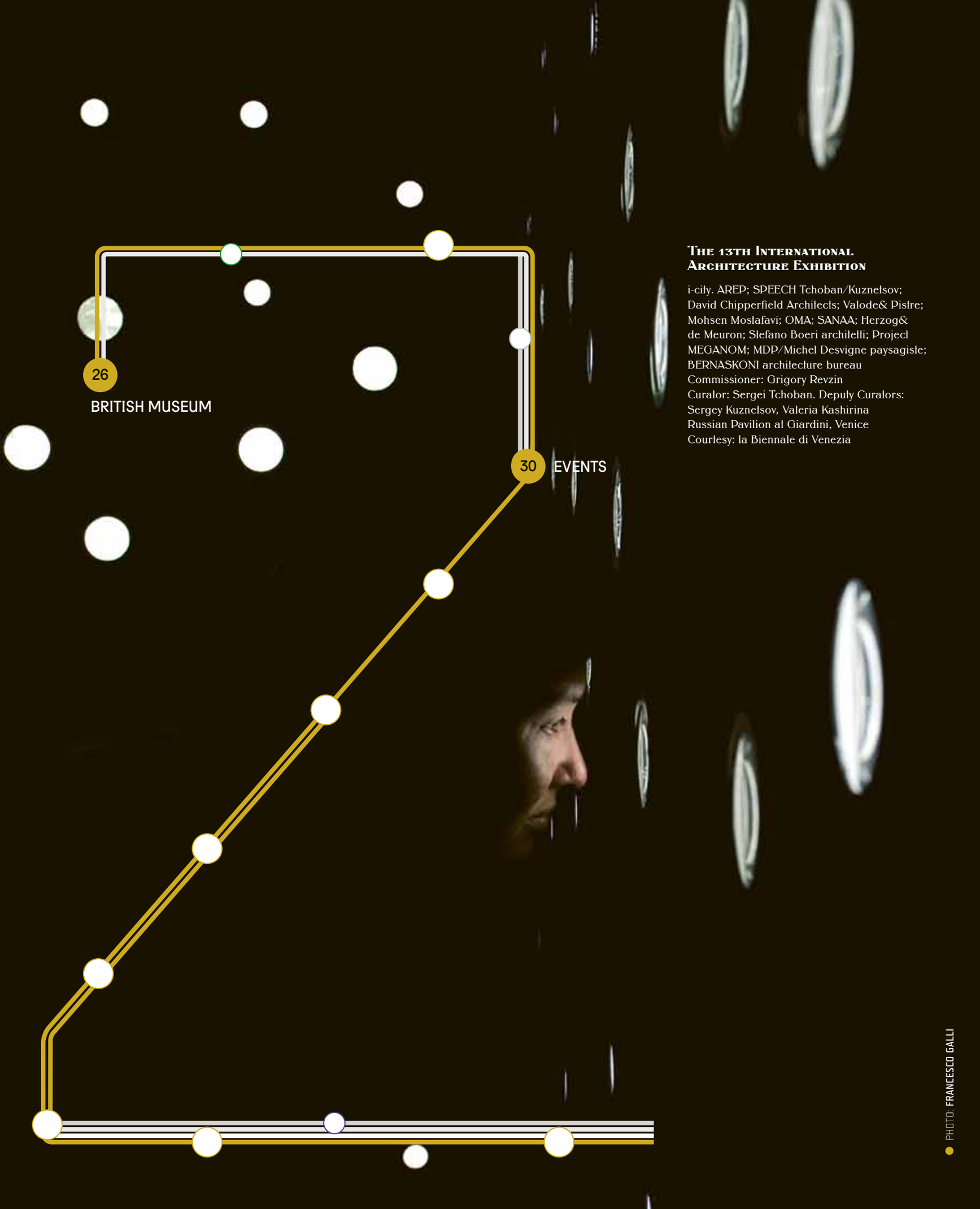
Sergei Kuzhavsky,
the artist who created
this issue's cover,
in his studio

PHOTO: SERGEI KUZHAVSKY



The 13th International Architecture Exhibition

i-city. AREP; SPEECH Tchoban/Kuznetsov; David Chipperfield Architects; Valode& Pistre; Mohsen Mostafavi; OMA; SANAA; Herzog& de Meuron; Stefano Boeri architetti; Project MEGANOM; MDP/Michel Desvigne paysagiste; BERNASKONI architecture bureau
Commissioner: Grigory Revzin
Curator: Sergei Tchoban. Deputy Curators: Sergey Kuznetsov, Valeria Kashirina
Russian Pavilion at Giardini, Venice
Courtesy: la Biennale di Venezia

PHOTO: FRANCESCO GALLI

LONDON

A GLEAM OF IMPERIAL HIWSTORY: THE HERMITAGE VIEWED FROM THE BRITISH MUSEUM

There are only two museums in the world which can be compared to the British Museum by the volume and diversity of their collections and which gather the whole world into one building, giving an overview of the whole of humanity. In Paris or Berlin the same areas are covered by several different museums. Only the New York Metropolitan Museum and the Hermitage are as diverse and universal and have the same ambitious remit. Of course, the Met is a much later creation of a different sort while the Hermitage is really the 18th-century sister of the British Museum. This is the opinion of Neil MacGregor, the British Museum's director.

Neil MacGregor,
Director of the British Museum

Both the Hermitage and the British Museum were tremendously enriched and transformed by Imperial experiences of the 19th Century. And both museums have been shaped by the political structures of their countries. So it is absolutely predictable that the British Museum is a parliamentary museum, created by and still accountable to parliament — not the government, but parliament. On the other hand, the Hermitage is an Imperial creation which has always had a very direct link to the centre of power.

They also share a long tradition, both being over 200 years old. Both of them have traditions of collecting, of scholarship, of publishing, and also of collaboration. There have always been connections between the scholars in St. Petersburg and the scholars in London and collaboration between them. They are like twin sisters — or, at least, cousins — doing the same thing within different political systems.

The British Museum's building was designed especially for the collection as a public institution. The Hermitage, of course, is a museum in a palace. When a museum wing was added to the palace in the 19th Century, it was extended in a way that only a palace could be extended. And even the non-palace galleries of the Hermitage are more palatial than anything in the British Museum or the Met.

The long relationship between the two collections has always been supported by close personal friendships at all levels, both in curatorial departments and at director level. We have been able to work together to re-affirm the importance of having a collection that shows the whole world — and the whole of humanity, from pre-history to the present day. In this era of globalization, Mikhail Piotrovsky and I feel a strong affinity in talking about the importance for the whole world of the existence of these kinds of collections.

One of the most remarkable phenomena of the last couple of decades is that museums have become a global family, driven by the growth of exhibitions and the exchange of objects. We have been working with the Hermitage in a number of areas: we lend regularly to each other's exhibitions and this year we are particularly delighted that we are lending a whole exhibition to the Hermitage — "Medals of Dishonour".

It is the kind of exhibition that illustrates a lot of what unites us. We are both still shaped by our political histories. And this is an art form that is about political change, political response across the whole of Europe and the world and I think it will find a resonance with the Russian public.

The great difference between the two collections — apart from the fact that the British Museum does not have paintings — is that the Hermitage is exceptionally strong in geographic areas where the British Museum's collections are thin: for example, in objects from Europe, from the Danube to the Urals, and Central Asia. The British Museum has very little Caucasus, Georgian or Armenian material, whereas the Hermitage is very rich in those areas. Vice versa, the British Museum is extremely rich in areas like Australia, Oceania, and North America, where the Hermitage collections are less strong. There is a very nice complementarity in the world that we present, explained of course by our Imperial histories.

This autumn the trustees of the British Museum are holding a meeting at the Hermitage for the first time. They have a meeting outside London every year, alternating between visiting a UK museum or a foreign one. The aim is to look at another museum with comparable collections or comparable issues and see how that museum has addressed them. It is the first time that our trustees have been to the Hermitage as a group. They

British Museum

View into Assyrian Transept: Gallery 7

are not museum professionals — they are people of great distinction from many walks of life. It is important for them to understand that every great museum is the product of its own history, its own politics, its own collectors and scholars. You see that most clearly, of course, by going to another place. And where better than the Hermitage?

An obvious question, stimulated by the Hermitage, is: how can we make the presentation of the British Museum's collection of antiquities as beautiful as that in the Hermitage? Or, at least, more beautiful than it is at present? That goes for our Greek and Roman, and Assyrian collections. There is no collection of antiquities in the world that is presented as beautifully as that in the Hermitage. Clearly we cannot resurrect Klenze — the German architect who designed the Petersburg galleries in the mid-19th Century — but we need to think of a way.

I am particularly pleased that Antony Gormley is on our board of trustees. Having engaged very directly with the antiquities collection of the Hermitage through his exhibition there last year, Antony has an understanding of its human, emotional and affective power, which very few people outside the Hermitage can have. To accompany his Hermitage exhibition, he took the antique marble gods and goddesses off their plinths to mingle at eye level with visitors. It was, for those lucky enough to see it, an unforgettable experience.

Perhaps the most important element of the trustees' visit to St. Petersburg, other than their encounter with the collection and the building, will be their meeting with Mikhail Piotrovsky and the chance to hear his view of a world collection. It is very important for our trustees to hear from someone with the authority of Mikhail and to learn not just his ambitions for the Hermitage, but also how he expects the British Museum to play its part in the world.

Mikhail has more ideas, more energy than anyone I have ever met. I want our trustees to speak to him, to hear him. The job of every director and every board of trustees is to keep reshaping the institution for which they are responsible in a changing world.

British Museum

Greek and Roman: Gallery 13

British Museum

View into Assyrian Transept: Gallery 9

Mikhail has had the greatest challenge that any director has had in that regard. Every assumption on which the Hermitage had run for decades was suddenly changed. And the world in which the Hermitage functioned was suddenly changed as well. The way he has re-imagined and reshaped the museum to carry it triumphantly through to the 21st Century is an achievement that the trustees of the British Museum should know more about.

I have been a member of the Hermitage International Advisory Board since it was set up by UNESCO in the 1990s. I think, perhaps, its most important contribution has been as a sounding board for Mikhail to try out his ideas. Its members are, of course, his peers from other great museums. We are all friends and we have got the same kinds of problems and it has — we all hope — been useful to Mikhail to talk about the way he was thinking of doing things. I think we have mainly helped by contributing questions. What was remarkable to me — and, again, I know of no other house in the world where this could have happened — is that from the beginning Mikhail wanted our discussions to be held with a large range of senior management present. It was important for him that his colleagues should hear international views of the Hermitage. I imagine that it changed the debate inside the Hermitage about how the institution should refashion itself for a refashioned world.

Another thing that was important about this was that Mikhail insisted from the beginning that we should have lunch and dinner with his senior management colleagues. Most of us did not speak Russian but it was always possible to have a conversation in German, in Italian or in French. So again it allowed us to meet not only Mikhail but the whole management team. We do this on a regular, annual basis, reviewing what has gone well over the past year and what could perhaps be bettered. It is very important in my eyes because we have in some small way the privilege of being part of the Hermitage family. I have been involved now for over 20 years and I think I have missed two meetings. The Hermitage is not just a Russian museum. It is a world museum.

From Mikhail Piotrovsky's speech "The Medal as a Museum Symbol" at the opening of the Medals of Dishonour exhibition in September 2012

"The British Museum and the Hermitage share a special friendship. We are both members of a small, exclusive group of universal museums with a special place in history and the modern world. Having said that, we also differ in many respects: our names are different, our collections are different, and our origins are different. Yet nonetheless, both museums have for a long time shared a common mission of enlightenment, a common approach to the challenge of understanding world culture. Above all we are united by the special attention we pay to the role of science in our museums. Our longstanding links are first and foremost academic; but it is also a spirit of traditional friendship that binds our mutual academics. For many years the Hermitage International Advisory Board has been headed by the director of the British Museum, Neil MacGregor. The British Museum regularly holds readings in memory of the eminent Hermitage scholar of Iranian culture, Vladimir Lukonin, while at the Hermitage we honour the memory of Mary-Anne Marlin, a heartfelt friend of the Hermitage and a longstanding trustee of the British Museum. It was she who defined for us the genuine role of a trustee. When I became director of the Hermitage, the first museum I visited in my new capacity was the British Museum, and the chief object of my interest was the work of its trustees. One of the most outstanding examples of our academic collaboration was the Greek Gold exhibition, which brought together the world's most valuable collections of antique jewellery art, and was nothing short of a global sensation."

VANITY FAIR: THE 13TH INTERNATIONAL ARCHITECTURE EXHIBITION IN VENICE 2012

The Biennial Architecture Exhibition in Venice, or La Biennale di Venezia, is one of the world's most famous architectural exhibitions. Alternating with the Biennale of Contemporary Art since 1980, it is held in two sections — the first in the national pavilions in the Giardini Gardens, and the second in the old Venetian Arsenal. Forty-one countries participated in the 13th International Architecture Exhibition in 2012, including first-time participants Kosovo, Kuwait and Peru. Architecture critic and journalist Grigory Revzin, the Commissioner of the Russian Pavilion, discusses the event.

British architect Sir David Chipperfield was the curator of the exhibition in 2012. He suggested "Common Ground" as the theme, and the idea was to demonstrate certain professional principles, or grounds, that unite all architects. In the event, the exhibition was transitional.

I have been attending this Biennale for many years and this time I was most interested to see something that hadn't been there before. Just imagine — you enter the main pavilion, the former Italian pavilion, which hosts the curator's exhibition, as usual, and one of the first expositions is titled "Anonymous Architects." It consists of works by architects involved in restoration projects in Venice and at Muslim monuments for the Aga Khan Foundation. Both groups do very good work, but nothing like this had ever happened here before: that would have been simply impossible — neither anonymous architects, nor restorers can exhibit at the Biennale since this exhibition had always been about celebrities and famous constructions.

The Biennale, in general, is more akin to a fair. It's a show, and it's quite difficult to state professional values at a show. The Venice Biennale is quite a peculiar institution. Everyone is very keen on it, and I can remember five attempts to replicate it; in Istanbul, Cairo, Shanghai, Rotterdam and Moscow. But so far there has been nothing quite as good. Entire nations compete in Venice, and they try to determine whose artistic level is higher, so the show is based on the interweaving of artists' ambitions and vanity. This really works because it's always nice to find out who is cooler between, say, America or Austria. But obviously, each country always has an artistic community which declares that, due to the stupidity of their national bureaucracy, their country is presented by the wrong masters, the wrong projects, the wrong concepts and their national exposition is generally an embarrassment for the whole nation. In this respect Russia is no exception: We always give a warm, sometimes even fiery reception to those whose work is displayed in the Russian pavilion.

The Biennale took over the Venetian Arsenal in 1998, with a NATO base being vacated to that end. It was decided then that the projects chosen by national bureaucracies should be on display in national pavilions, whereas the Arsenal, which is a lot more spacious than all the national pavilions put altogether, should be given to artists chosen by the curator. This was done in order to avoid the infamous interference of the state in artistic affairs. The problem was, however, that 200,000 people visit the exhibition and they know nothing of the works by architects from Chile, Bahrain, Hungary and even Portugal. The works displayed in the national pavilions are at least chosen by their state, but who are these others and why are they interesting?

We all think we're professionals, but it's actually quite hard to appreciate the works of the Czech masters of low-rise architecture without any prior training, especially if one isn't aware of the situation in the world of Czech architecture — the architect might be their best representative, or perhaps experiments conducted by students might be in fashion in this particular period. This year, for example, the Golden Lion was given to a group of independent architects who helped to renovate a gigantic squat in an unfinished skyscraper in Caracas — it's quite difficult to appreciate, off the cuff so to speak, that such things should be paid special attention.

The exhibition is comprised of more than 10,000 works and all visitors need some sort of guidance. I think this is why the organizers take safe bets with celebrities. Since 2000, 70 percent of the exhibition in the Venetian Arsenal has been made up of personal exhibi-

The 13th International Architecture Exhibition Japan Pavilion

Archileclure possible here? Home-for-All
Naoya Halakeyama; Kumiko Inui;
Sou Fujimolo; Akihisa Hirala
Commissioner: Toyo Ilo
Depuly Commissioners: Alsuko Salo, Tae Mori
Pavilion al Giardini, Venice

PHOTO: ANDREI SHELYUTTO

PHOTO: PATRICIA PARINEJAD

VICTOR VEKSELBERG,
The President of Skolkovo Fund

tions by the likes of Norman Foster, Daniel Libeskind, Coop Himmelblau, Zaha Hadid, Jean Nouvel, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, Peter Eisenman, Odile Decq, Rem Koolhaas and others. As they are well-known, everything worked out quite well.

The problem was that the 2000s ended with the recession, and the architecture of attractions produced by the celebrities retired from the scene entirely, along with speculative capitalism. Simplicity, modesty and discretion are in vogue now. And it's extremely difficult to run a modesty fair featuring restrained shows.

This is what Chipperfield came up with: he opened the Arsenal with an exhibition by Foster. However, Foster didn't display Foster himself; instead he exhibited a piece of academic research — an exposition of questions posed to various architects of the world about the things that engage them. Those who know Foster, a man who represents what is in fact a vast factory project called Foster, will understand how much time he spent on this exhibition. About six minutes, probably. Nevertheless, he exists and he considers it right to go forward this way. We then move on to the exposition created by Herzog and de Meuron which is dedicated to a concert hall project in Hamburg. The project is represented by two scale models, and the rest is made up of newspaper and magazine articles denouncing this huge construction. As a result, it's not an exhibition by two winners of the Pritzker Prize but about how difficult it is for these distinguished masters of architecture to work surrounded by unappreciative journalists. Or about how difficult it is for journalists to work with two Swiss men with the psyches of hysterical opera divas. It is up to the visitor to select the interpretation.

In brief, 2012's architecture biennale was an exhibition of celebrities who decided to present themselves not as celebrities but as researchers, academics and philosophers. In my opinion, it didn't work terribly well, but this is more of a concern than an assertion. The urgency of the matter is somewhat heightened by the fact that it isn't clear what is going to happen next. It is quite difficult to continue to work with the same celebrities: times have changed and attempts to present them in a different role, as modest and reserved professionals, are not very convincing, since it then becomes unclear what it is that makes them famous. The attempt at organizing an exhibition of deeply inconspicuous, quiet architects who work like bees on creating real estate around the world has not been terribly successful either, because the question of what the point of visiting the show is quickly arises. Dentists, too, work hard on treating and whitening teeth around the world to perfection, but you would struggle to make a global artistic event out of such an exhibition.

For now, the president of the Venice Biennale, Paolo Baratta, has suggested to the commissioners of the national pavilions that in 2013 the event should be given over to students. "Let it be an international student campus," he said. That seems quite sensible: there are over ten million architecture students around the world, and they are bound to attract 200,000 followers in Venice somehow. It's not yet entirely clear how they're going to turn a vanity fair into a student party, but it will definitely provide an opportunity for a fabulous get-together.

In 2012, Russia presented an exposition called i-citi-i-land at the 13th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice. The Russian Pavilion, created in 1914 by the architect Shusev, hosted two parts of the exposition. The main part presented the Skolkovo project in its entirety: the architectural concept, the layout of the districts, the specific sites and constructions, the architectural approaches of the innovation centre and even the results of architectural competitions for particular elements on the territory. The exposition actively engaged new technologies, such as QR-codes and tablets, updating the content as new information appears within the project. The second part of the pavilion was dedicated to "science towns" of the Soviet era and documented the history of 37 towns in photographs. Thus, visitors were able to see how the historical experience of building secret Soviet "science towns" has been transformed into the concept of a contemporary open urban environment.

For the first time in the history of La Biennale di Venezia, the Russian Pavilion received a special mention from the jury for the magic provided by the dialectic approach to Russia's past, present and future. We were glad that the Commissioner of the Russian Pavilion, Grigory Revzin, emphasised that Skolkovo is the best Russian architectural project of the moment, both for the number of famous Russian and international architects involved in the project and for the quality of the unique architectural and technological concepts behind it.

The 13th International Architecture Exhibition Russian Pavilion

i- city/i-land. AREP; SPEECH Tchoban&Kuznelsov;
David Chipperfield Archilecls; Valode& Pislre; Mohsen Moslafavi; OMA; SANAA; Herzog& de Meuron;
Slefano Boeri archilelli; Projecl MEGANOM; MDP/Michel Desvigne paysagisle; BERNASKONI archileclure bureau.
Commissioner: Grigory Revzin.
Curalor: Sergei Tchoban. Depuly Curalors: Sergey Kuznelsov, Valeria Kashirina. Pavilion al Giardini, Venice
© SPEECH Tchoban &Kuznelsov

MOSCOW
BARCELONA
PISTOIA
BASEL
ST. PETERSBURG

FOUR DAYS AND DMITRY PRIGOV

During four summer days Dmitry Ozerkov, head of the Hermitage 20/21 project, visited four of the most important events of the art season in 2012 in Switzerland, Spain, Italy and Russia — as guest, jury member, observer and expert. These events remain the most important of the year — until the 2013 summer season begins.

Irina Korina

Zakluchenie
2011–2012
Plasticine, steel. Different sizes
© Artist

The main event of summer 2012 was Art Basel, held in the Swiss city in June. The exhibition was amazing and fascinating for the works presented by the young artists of the Art Unlimited project, especially the combination of architecture and figurative art in the spacious installations "Open Universe" by Ricci Albenda and "Architecture without Architects" by Damián Ortega. The latter involved chairs, tables and paintings, effectively a whole house, hanging off invisible strings and surrounded by no walls. In 2012, a series of architecture exhibitions was begun as part of the Hermitage 20/21 project and so we paid special attention to these works.

Art Basel was followed by the launch of the Kandinsky Prize exhibition in Barcelona, Spain. The Russia-originated event was held in the Catalan centre of contemporary art for the first time. Its curator, Andrei Yerofeyev, aimed to present a panorama of contemporary Russian art on three levels: religious, political and on the level of pure abstract form. Visitors to the exhibition were presented with rather harsh works, and a similar event would hardly be able to take place in Russia without causing uproar. Political notes have recently become more tangible in contemporary art and many artists have turned into political protesters, making them consequently less interesting from an artistic point of view. For this reason, the Barcelonan concoction of Russian art was particularly interesting, being politically active, religiously acute, and demonstrating a particular level of development with regards to modern society — while sometimes bordering on non-art.

It was particularly satisfying to see a photograph of Dmitry Prigov on the cover of the catalogue of Kandinsky Award exhibition. In the photograph, Prigov, who died in 2007, lies on the floor and timidly looks out from behind a door, inhabiting his permanently changing character. Prigov is in fashion these days. Installations that follow his drawings are now created in Barcelona, and in London, at an exhibition of Russian art at the Saatchi Gallery. In November 2012, we organized a series of Prigov Days at the Hermitage which included the premier of the opera "Two Acts", several concerts, a conference and the opening of the Prigov Hall. He was not recognized during his lifetime and we are making up for it today. But the Hermitage is not just following a trend — we recognize the scale of this artist. It is at the Hermitage that one can find the most important part of Prigov's graphic legacy.

A day after the launch of the exhibition of the Kandinsky Prize in Barcelona, a large dinner was held to commemorate the 30th anniversary of Giuliano Gori's collection in Santomato di Pistoia in Italy. Gori is a collector with a unique biography. He began collecting artwork when he was a rich 20-year-old yuppie, and friends with Andy Warhol and the American and London elite who visited him often at his Italian estate. The collection resides in his Fattoria di Celle palazzo and adjacent park. The private collection, which would normally be accessible only at certain hours, was open to everyone on that day, and the whole vast park was at the visitors' disposal. Walking with children around a park full of works is a new open form of admiring art, calm and relaxed, surrounded by nature, in the traditions of the Renaissance when park sculpture was a source of pleasure, rest and education all at once. Giuliano, by the way, is the only collector of Prigov from the West who remembers that Prigov was first and foremost a sculptor. Giuliano suggested casting sculptures of Prigov's famous monsters, and they are now a part of his collection.

Philippo Berta

Homo Homini Lupus
2011
HD video

Both in Italy and in Russia, the Moscow International Biennale for Young Art was much anticipated. The event, held mainly in the Central House of the Artist, was its third year and included numerous exhibitions, shows and other events that drew the attention of both intellectual and financial elites, as well as young artists striving to present something new. I participated in this event as a member of the jury that chose the winning artist and the subsequent announcement coincided with the 20th anniversary of the state Centre of Contemporary Art in Moscow. The prize was given to Aslan Gaysumov, an amazing artist from Chechnya, who created unique objects using books represented as victims of a war. The installation was titled: No title (the war). Many artists have worked with books. Art is infinite in this genre and has a long history, but Gaysumov made a very special project, subtly giving the object a certain material fragility, revealing the psychological and emotional conditions concealed in such fragility.

The Moscow Biennale is another form of presenting art which is different from the demonstrative forms of Art Basel, where people buy works of art, or from displaying Russian art in a different country, as in the exhibition of the Kandinsky Prize, or from the relaxed and comforting presentation of Gori's collection in Italy. These four forms are all interesting and have a right to exist. The problem is that none of these forms are represented in St. Petersburg as such. And Russia in general has no big art fair, no large biennale or large private collection that would be open to the public with on such a scale. Russian collectors meanwhile keep on trying to join the Western community, which is a shame. I believe, however, that a new era is not far away and nothing but good awaits us. Within the Hermitage 20/21 project we present the main examples of contemporary art — the most interesting national artists. We have already shown American, British and French artists and are now thinking of others.

Loris Cecchini

The Hand, the Creatures, the Singing Garden
2012

Despite the traditional perception of art as of a source of pleasure for the few, there needs to be different ways for anyone to access it. Many people know nothing of art and they do not understand what exactly they should know about it. The lack of mass interest may be due to modern "obscurantism", which yields no profit or income and is seen as a whim or a folly. Can people accept new forms of presenting art, which are not yet available in Russia, with enthusiasm? What are the conditions required for such successful results? We currently seek answers to these questions.

Franz West

Gagosian Gallery, New York

Chris Burden

Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna

DOCUMENTA (13)

The Documenta modern art exhibition is held in Kassel, Germany, every five years. It was founded in 1955 by Arnold Bode, an architect, artist and university professor who wanted to renew the Germans' taste for the classic avant-garde after it had been repressed by the Nazis. Works by 1930s German artists were gradually complemented with modern art and the exhibition became an international event, with a reputation for being one of the major European art forums. More than 150 artists from 55 countries took part in the 13th exhibition which was held in the summer of 2012. Victor Miziano, art historian and editor in chief at Moscow Art Magazine, tells us about the Documenta 13 exhibition.

Being aware that Documenta 13 was declared not to be based on a specific project I was positively surprised when I realized that this wasn't exactly true. In fact all the components of a curatorial project were present. The whole enterprise was based on a very precise complex of ideas, rooted in a long philosophical tradition and containing lot of topical theoretical references. Even if I do not recognize myself in the ideological programme, I have to admit that our contemporaneity, at least, is recognized within it. Most of the artists and works that had been selected for the show, as well as most of the 100 texts written for the catalogue, were selected to justify exactly that programme. Finally, the gist of the dramaturgy of the show which took as its theme the so-called "Brain" (in the central part of the exhibition presented in the Fridrizianum's Rotunda) also justified this programmatic impulse. Such a complex, meticulously contracted display would be not possible without "the concept".

The curatorial impulse was also revealed in Documenta 13's firm decision to defend this representative style of display. We must consider the fact that this decision was taken at the moment when the representational format has been violently accused of being exhausted and even reactionary, and when it is proposed that the presentational format is its counterpoint; i.e. when the display of artefacts is a counterpoint to an immersion in the spontaneous creation of life (here I am obviously referring to Artur Zmijewsky's Berlin Biennale). The complexity of works and objects displayed in the "Brain" display amounts to a clear manifesto that representation is still valid that it can be inexhaustibly rich in meanings and associations, indeed no less then the presentation of streams of life. In that, Documenta 13's curators continued in the tradition of Documenta 12, and the hidden polemics of Documenta 11, at which the display was only part the discursive process, and also with that if Documenta 10, which put the purpose of the exhibition into profound and critical doubt. Both curators, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, whose "Brain" section was assimilated to a hermetic and refined "Japanese Garden", and also her predecessor Roger Buergel, who organized his exhibition as if it was ornamental marquetry, have made it clear that the representational format is not only applied by them, but is also reflected and tested for strength.

1. Pierre Huyghe

Spanish greyhound "Human" presents his front leg painted pink as "Living Art" at dOCUMNTA (13) fair for contemporary art
Kassel, Germany, June 6, 2012.

PHOTO: PICTURE ALLIANCE/PHOTOSHOT/EAST NEWS/ BORIS ROESSLER

PHOTO: AFP PHOTO / EAST NEWS / BARBARA SAX

PHOTO: ACTION PRESS/EAST NEWS

PHOTO: AFP/EAST NEWS

In that, then Documenta 13 follows the best of the Documenta legacy, which, from the legendary Documenta 5 onward, has not only been a major contemporary art show, but also a platform for curatorial self-reflection and self-experimentation. However, I have to add that at this particular iteration, the more time you spent away from the exhibition's kernel, the "Brain", the less you felt the curatorial presence in the show. I was partly prepared for this as I knew that some had labeled the exhibition "organic" (Alex Farquharson). "Organic" doesn't presume a lack of structure, but unfortunately most of the Documenta 13 exhibition's textiles left an impression on me that it had not been tempered enough, and was sometimes a bit too confusing.

What the Documenta 13 project had in common with its predecessor was that there were historical references and in particular references to Documenta's own history. That was very symptomatic of an attempt to live the past as if it was the present: a characteristic tendency of recent times. But it is notable that Roger Buergel was sometimes very disrespectful to many qualities in his curatorial attitude, and this seemed to be indistinguishable from the spirit of Documenta. Some of his strategic choices could have been seen as eccentric and incongruous, but they remained very coherent with the project he wanted to realize. In the case of Documenta 13 it was not always clear whether references to the past were made consciously or merely made with an uncritical adherence to the canon.

For example, the increased quantity of the exhibition's participants seemed to be excessive, unnecessary to the project and justified only in respect of the established mammoth size of Documenta. Another example was Documenta 13's main publication, which contained double references to Documenta 10. Both publications, one by Catherine David and the other by Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, are heavy in terms of content and weight, and both are titled a little pretentiously — "Das Buch" and "The Book of the Books" respectively. At the same time "The Book of the Books" is structured around 100 texts and has the subtitle "100 Notes — 100 Thoughts" and evokes Documenta 10's conference programme which was called "100 Days — 100 Hosts". But if David's programme lasted 100 days simply because that is the length of the Documenta festival, then Christov-Bakargiev's idea of imposing a priori on the theoretical publication an fixed quantity of essays seems artificial and motivated not by research and conceptual thinking, but by the magic of figures. The same could be said of Documenta 13's appearance in Afghanistan and Egypt, which obviously follows Documenta 11's radical decision to leave Kassel and the European context. Okwi Enwezor's bet on the dislocation of Documenta was profoundly rooted in a general curatorial concept, while for Documenta 13 , it seemed to be a politically correct sideshow. I could go on and give more examples of this kind, but my main positive points, and at the same time critical remarks concering Documenta 13, have already been revealed. What I saw in Kassel was undoubtedly "a Documenta", but it seemed me that, in its implementation, the intention to build a proper Documenta prevailed over the intention of realizing a proper project.

2. Giuseppe Penone

Ideas of Stone
World Art Exhibition dOCUMENTA (13)
"Collapse and Recovery"
Kassel, Germany, June 24, 2012

3. Thomas Bayrle

Visitors look at works by German artist Thomas Bayrle during a preview of the dOCUMENTA (13) fair for contemporary art
Kassel, Germany, June 6, 2012

4. Pierre Huyghe

An art work consisting of live bees and referred to as "alive entities and inanimate things, made and not made."a preview of the dOCUMENTA (13) fair for contemporary art
Kassel, Germany, June 7, 2012

METZ

1917

PHOTO: MARIA SIDELNIKOVA

In 2012, the new Centre Pompidou-Metz in north-eastern France hosted an exhibition about the diverse and complex life of art in the midst of World War I, named simply for the year of its inspiration: 1917. This year was not a simple one: it saw the US enter World War I, revolution in Russia, rebellions and strikes at the front and at the rear. But artistic life not only continued, it actually flourished. The 1917 exhibition embraced all that was created in what French historian Jean-Jacques Becker called an "impossible" year. Tens of halls, hundreds of paintings, letters, photographs and sculptures bore witness to art and war as they intersected, conflicted or attempted to ignore each other. In Germany, Otto Dix created a series of front-line drawings, Switzerland saw the first Dadaist exhibitions open, in Holland the De Stijl movement was developing, Duchamp's Fountain caused a scandal in the US, and Diaghilev and the Ballets Russes chose to hide from war and revolution in Italy — Picasso was invited there to work on the scenery for the ballet "Parade". The stage curtain, which had been kept in the depot of the Centre Pompidou in Paris for 20 years, was the impetus for this 1917 artistic adventure. Claire Garnier, curator of the exhibition in Centre Pompidou-Metz, tells us about it.

We spent two years working on this exhibition. Picasso's stage curtain for "Parade" was the starting point of it all. During the planning stage we already thought of leaving free space on the ground floor for large paintings. This space was initially intended for "Parade" which has been stored in the Centre Pompidou depot in Paris because there is no appropriate room for it. The work by Picasso had been eagerly awaited in France since the time of the Metz museum's opening in 2010. But Centre Pompidou-Metz's director, Laurent Le Bon, decided not to show it at the inauguration and make it the centre of the subsequent exhibition. And then immediately came the idea of not displaying it separately or in the context of the Ballets Russes, but of putting together an exhibition about one particular year — the year 1917, when Picasso created this, the largest of his works.

When we began seeing historians, many of them asked: why an exhibition about 1917 in 2012? But we did not think about that at all. Centre Pompidou-Metz is not a historical museum, and it is not necessary to relate its exhibitions to historical dates and anniversaries. We were amazed at the quantity and quality of the works of art created during this period. One would think of this year as a tragic historical moment, with ruins and death everywhere, yet artistic life continued. And it was important for us to show that art remains strong even during war.

This idea was reflected in the exhibition's layout. The only thing we asked the scenery designers to do was not to reconstitute the atmosphere of war, not to turn the exhibition halls into trenches, but at the same time somehow make the visitors feel the tragedy of the era. The gallery was cut by a ragged line symbolizing historical rupture. Dim narrow corridors where for the most part documentary materials were exhibited were followed by light halls of different shapes (corners, ovals, squares) to form a loop. In the second part of the exhibition we suggested that the designers work with a spiral form. This object appears quite often in the art works of 1917, and besides the spiral itself is a symbol of physical and psychological disturbance. We wished to express these two ideas by means of the spiral — destruction of body and soul. Here we can see, for example, the collision of such objects that seem mutually exclusive, such as plaster masks of deformed faces and Harlequin masks. The whirlpool of war erases the boundaries between disciplines, cultures and genres: artists work on camouflage, sculptors work in military hospitals. This is why there are no such boundaries in the design of the 1917 exhibition either.

One might have thought that Russia was not sufficiently represented at the exhibition, but that was not true. The 1917 October Revolution was reflected quite scantily because an artistic understanding of those revolutionary events was reached several years later. Our aim was to show the immediate, spontaneous reaction of the time, so Russia was much more widely represented by documentary materials. We collected posters, postcards and photographs reflecting the 1917 events. Besides that, there were international press clippings, notably from French newspapers that closely followed the changes in Russia. There were also several halls of paintings by Chagall, Kandinsky and the Russian avant-garde. Although Rozanova and Malevich created abstract paintings, it does not mean that they did not address themes of war and revolution.

Pablo Picasso

Curtain for the ballet "Parade"

1917
Tempera on canvas. 1050 x 1640 cm
© Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

Constantin Brâncuşi

Princess X

1915–1916
Bronze, limestone. 61.7 x 40 cm, 5 x 22.2 cm
© Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris

Plaster casts of the faces of the wounded

1914–1919
© Le Musée du Service de Santé des Armies, Paris

The sharpest impression I have from the 1917 exhibition was of the trophy art hall. Letters without addresses, anonymous words carved on everyday objects by ordinary people — all of it makes you see that the will to live was much stronger than death. I also appreciated the gueule cassée films and photographs hall. Waxworks of deformed faces are undoubtedly impressive, but they are still just sculptures. Films are something else though. You can see real people: they show faces which had literally been reconstructed, assembled from pieces; you see the emotions coming back to them. It was just incredible.

Unfortunately, 1917 was not a travelling exhibition because of its size. It would have been physically impossible to send so many show-pieces abroad, and it made no sense to design a specially reduced version that could travel. The virtue of the 1917 exhibition was in its scope. And "Parade" remained at the Centre Pompidou-Metz after 1917 closed until the beginning of 2013. **_as told to Maria Sidelnikova**

BRASSAÏ. RESTROSPECTIVE

OLGA SVIBLOVA: "THIS IS THE EXHIBITION OF MY DREAMS"

The retrospective exhibition of works by George Brassaï (1899–1984) held in Moscow last year may not have been the first of its kind, but it is the largest so far. In 2006, the Moscow House of Photography exhibited this great artist's works at its Photobiennale. The latest exhibition was held at the Multimedia Art Museum from August to October 2012, and, as well as photographs from his most famous series, it featured drawings, sculpture, the film "As Long as There Will be Animals" and even tapestry. Brassaï could write articles, draw, make films and carve abstract figures out of marble, but he chose to focus on something that united all his skills: photography.
The exhibition displayed nudes and graffiti, surreal experimental shots, portraits of his friends Picasso and Dali, but, most importantly, it featured Paris. Paris by night, Paris by day, mysterious Paris.
Olga Sviblova, the director of the Multimedia Art Museum, discusses the exhibition.

I spent more than 10 years trying to organize this exhibition. And I do not think I will ever be able to hold another like it again. This was a complete retrospective show of the work of Brassaï. And I am very grateful to the Brassai Estate for allowing us to put works from their collection on display, and to an old friend of ours, the supervisor of the exhibition, Agnès de Gouvion Saint-Cyr. Everything was represented: Brassaï's surrealistic experiments, his graffiti, drawings and even sculptures. And, of course, his incredible images of Paris.

Brassaï saw Paris the way nobody else did. This is a Paris that dissolves into Paris, in the light of gas lamps and car headlights. This is a Paris mesmerizing in each of its details, from the fence around the Luxembourg Gardens to the Eiffel Tower. This is a Paris where everyone is beautiful, from a blind news vendor to a prostitute. This is a mysterious Paris... and very dangerous.

Brassaï was brave enough to do something that no photographer before him had dared try: he started taking photographs of the Parisian underworld. The lively yet dangerous world of drug addicts, bandits, brothels and night cafés. His photographs reproduce the amazing atmosphere of that mysterious, dangerous but very genuine life. No one had shown such a Paris before.

Brassaï's albums of Paris made him famous. Yet he got into photography accidentally. When he moved to France in 1924, he wrote articles for newspapers and magazines to earn a living. A few years later he also needed to illustrate the articles with photographs. Brassaï was not satisfied with the shots he commissioned from friends, so he picked up the camera himself. If it had not been for this, we would probably not have known this great photographer.

Brassaï, who had studied in academies of arts in Budapest and Berlin, came to Paris in order to paint. But while his Paris by night is known to everyone, who knows his graphic works? Perhaps a few experts. We are very proud to have shown his drawings at the exhibition: we placed them next to the nude photographs. And one can say that his graphic works are as good as his photography. At some point Picasso even advised Brassaï to give up photography and concentrate on drawing.

As for his sculpture, who knows them? His incredible "Head of Pablo Picasso"! His "Mature Woman"? And the head made under the influence of the Cycladic figurines from Picasso's collection? And although Picasso's influence is present in all these figurines, one can hardly blame him — this was the inevitable outcome of this prolific friendship.

We displayed his "Graffiti" — a series that Brassaï created over the course of 23 years. It was Brassaï who noticed and photographed pictures on walls, what today we would call street art.

Later, in 1968, all these faces, symbols and figures were transferred to a tapestry. In this respect our exhibition is unique because the tapestry had never before left Brassaï's house. But we managed to bring it over. Sometimes you dislike something about an exhibition; everything seems to be all right, but you still dislike something. This exhibition was different; I liked everything about it. I would even call it the most absolute exhibition of my dreams. I will miss it.. **_As told to Maria Mazalova**

Brassaï

Ciel posliche
1934
© Eslale Brassaï-RMN

PARIS

"SAINT ANNE", LEONARDO DA VINCI'S ULTIMATE MASTERPIECE AT THE LOUVRE MUSEUM

One of the most interesting classic museum projects of the year was the exhibition of Leonardo's masterpiece "Saint Anne", which has undergone the most thorough restoration in its history. The exhibition showed not only the painting itself, restored with the aid of the C2RMF (Centre for Research and Restoration of the Museums of France), but also compositional sketches, preparatory drawings and the National Gallery of London's magnificent cartoon which has never been seen next to Leonardo's work from the Louvre by a contemporary audience. Sergei Khodnev, journalist and art historian, tells us about the exhibition.

The baby Jesus held carefully by Mary is playing with a lamb. This is not surprising for the High Renaissance, but something is confusing: the Virgin is sitting in the lap of her mother, Saint Anne, in a very natural manner. This was normal for the ancient iconographic version, and in early Gothic times there were such depictions, somewhat rough and innocent: the big figure of Saint Anne sitting with a smaller Virgin in her lap, and the Virgin holding a tiny Jesus. Michelangelo used the Byzantine deesis in his "Last Judgment", and Leonardo used the idea of the exotic medieval canon in his "Virgin and Child with Saint Anne", thus creating one of the most perfect compositions of his work.

The painting has a complicated history, which remains unclear, but the Louvre is particularly proud of a supposed French connection (which is quite understandable). According to one version, the image of Saint Anne was commissioned back in 1500 by Louis XII whose second wife, the Duchess of Brittany, was called Anne. But Anne of Brittany died, her crowned husband followed, and the commission was not finished. Leonardo kept returning to "Saint Anne" while he was still able to hold a brush, giving the Louvre curators the right to use the catchphrase "ultimate masterpiece" on the posters. "Saint Anne" did not make it into a French king's collection right away, unlike the "Mona Lisa", for example; it took more than 100 years. "Saint Anne" was first acquired by the Gonzaga of Mantua, then, during the Thirty Years' War, Cardinal Richelieu took it away from Mantua and hung it in his palace. After the cardinal's death, it came to be in the possession of another Louis; Louis XIII.

What follows is quite a typical story of hardship and of a big old masterpiece battling through the slings and arrows of a developing museum's conscience. Several restorations, some quite naïve from the technological point of view, possible direct additions (some experts think that the wood in the right part of the artwork was painted quite late, possibly in the early 19th Century), deterioration of the wooden panelling, the ageing of the lacquer... Until recently the traces of time were quite striking: a blurred "filter" of a darkened lacquer, cracks, stains visible on Mary's cape gleaming with pearly and smoky colours.

The Louvre first raised the issue of the serious restoration of "Saint Anne" in the 1990s. but the high council responsible for such decisions asserted that a thorough restoration with the existing technologies would involve the serious risk of damaging Leonardo's original glaze layers, the "veils", as French specialists say, that create the major singularity of Leonardo's paintings — the famous *sfumato* effect. These concerns determined the decision. But two years ago the question was raised again, and the specialists presumed that techniques had developed enough to minimize the risk. It was true that technology had developed and the thickness of the layer of lacquer to be removed could be calculated to within one micron. So once again the Louvre gathered the best specialists on Leonardo and the masters of restoration so that they could supervise the cleaning of the painting in order to raise the profile of the project.

The result was that Ségolène Bergeon Langle, who is not only considered a great restoration specialist by colleagues from all over the world but is even sometimes called "a goddess" in her field, and Jean-Pierre Cuzin, a former Louvre painting curator, quit the high council in indignation. They say that the original painting has been damaged during the restoration, the modelling of the faces has become less delicate and the liberation

PHOTO: RENÉ-GABRIEL OJÉDA

Leonardo da Vinci

Saint Anne
Vers 1503–1519
Oil on canvas. 97.5 x 134 cm
Louvre, Paris
© RMN, Musée du Louvre

of bright gleaming colours from under the dark lacquer cannot justify such action: these colours are only good to entertain the crowd.

The disagreement was a subject of major discussions for some time, but both sides held their ground. The Louvre claims that the restoration was carried out without any violations. The exhibition was opened, and the echo of the restorers' discussions undoubtedly contributed to the publicity even more than news of the cleansed original beauty of Leonardo's painting.

Now, after the exhibition has closed, we can say that the controversy about "Saint Anne" was indicative of the present situation in the restorer's craft and the related domains of art history. These issues still remain to a great extent a question of individual knowledge, personal evaluation and experience, and even personal intuition. Sometimes there can be a more or less broad consensus, and it can be made a common point of view, but there are always plenty of issues to cause disagreements. Despite the miracles of technological advance there are quite a lot of things that cannot be accurately measured. In the case of "Saint Anne", for example, the high council could not determine who had added the upper layers of lacquer that remained until the last restoration. Was it Leonardo himself? A restorer from a non-determined period? Or do the original and the later lacquer layers alternate, like patches on a blanket? This may be not a decent state of affairs for science. But for the public it is undoubtedly a treat: a flow of sensational re-evaluations, findings, discussions and revelations that is not ending any time yet. There will be more than enough such disputes in our lifetime.

26TH BIENNALE DES ANTIQUAIRES IN PARIS

The 26th Biennale des Antiquaires (Antique Dealers' Biennial) was held in September 2012 in the Grand Palais in Paris. One would think this was just another traditional antique salon, but the way in which this exhibition was done set it apart from all its glorious predecessors. The interiors of the main glass nave of the Grand Palais had been designed by Karl Lagerfeld. The traditional participation of French fashion and jewellery houses such as Boucheron, Bulgari, Cartier, Chaumet, Dior, Van Cleef & Arpels was even more noticeable this time. The feel of the Biennale was that of a bright, joyful society event. The exhibition's slogan, "Between the museum and the gallery", demonstrated the very high quality of the goods presented at the Biennale and of the collectors' work. Maria Menshikova reports from the 26th Biennale des Antiquaires.

1.

On the evening of September 13, during the grand opening, Karl Lagerfeld himself greeted guests at the entrance, accompanied by Republican Guards. The salon and a gala dinner were held in the galleries under the glass dome of the crystal palace. Beautiful collectible items were exhibited between white lounges resembling small houses, with open arches and windows reminiscent of shop displays. Huge canvasses showed views of Paris. A model of the Arc de Triomphe stood in the left wing, while a model of the Obélisque rose up in the right wing: it felt like being on the city streets under the night sky. In the central space soared a huge blue- and white-striped hot air balloon, 10 metres in diameter, a model of Nadar's original hot air balloon that hung under the dome at the 1909 exhibition. The salon areas had been expanded to include the newly renovated "Honorary Salon" — a gallery on the second floor that had been closed since 1937.

The Biennale boasted a total of 121 participants and the exhibition featured a wide variety of works of art for all tastes including ancient, medieval, and modern tastes. Works of painting, sculpture, furniture, numismatics, and applied arts of the ancient world, Europe and the Orient were all on display. Although it would be impossible to list all the worthy objects at the exhibition, some works deserve special mention. These works have both artistic and historical value. The bibliophile R. Chamonal, for example, displayed a copy of the Koran translated into French by André du Ryer in 1647 and published in 1685. This edition had been held in the library of the daughter of Louis XV and Marie Leszczyńska. F. Léage, a fourth-generation furniture collector, displayed two bureaus made in Russia in the 18th Century, equivalents of which are kept in Pavlovsk and the Hermitage. Naturally, such dealers as the Kevorkian Gallery — a Middle Eastern antiquities collector whose name has been on the antiques market for, it seems, the whole 20th Century – drew attention as well.

Collections of magnificent jewels with sparkling diamonds made in an Art Deco style took up large spaces at the Biennale. Among them were historical collections exhibited, for example, by the Cartier and Chanel houses. A tiara with 250 diamonds and a huge white Egyptian opal, displayed by Chaumet, stood out among the jewellery. Along with the well-known stand-bys, there was also the modern jeweller Wallace Chan of Hong Kong, who showcased rare and large faceted gemstones with unusual compositions and combinations of materials. These pieces were made in a modern style with Chinese influences. A huge Alexandrite, about 40 carats, inserted into the middle of a titanium flower with petals of big, blue irregularly shaped opals, was acquired on the first day of the exhibition.

The central stands focused on collections of ancient art. The Phoenix Ancient Artstand opened with an Egyptian stone sculpture made in the 19th Century B.C. and Roman sculpture.

Christian Deydier Gallery presented an incredible collection of silk and silver from Central Asia, as well as Chinese ceramics made in the 1st millennium B.C. This included high-quality and well-preserved fabrics, featuring animals in heraldic poses sewn into circles, which have been practically unknown to this day. Such silks are unique, and should take their rightful place in museums. They were among the most unexpected objects exhibited at the Biennale.

1. Jean-Henri Riesener

Chest of Drawers with marquetry, chased and gilded bronze mounts and a rare central panel showing a vase of polychrome flowers
Circa 1770. Period of transition between Louis XV–Louis XVI
© SNA France

2. Thiebault

Academy of the sword Alzevier (Leiden)
1628
© SNA France

3. Emile Reiber

Corner cabinet
Rosewood, ebony, walnut, gilded and silvered bronze, cloisonné enamel
1874
© SNA France

The Gisèle Groës Gallery was notable for the great variety of works it exhibited, including rare Chinese archaeological monuments and stone sculptures.

Other stands focused on European painting ranging from Renaissance and Baroque works to Impressionist paintings and artists of the 20th Century. The exhibition was attended by gallery owners from Paris, London, Belgium, Switzerland and Hungary. Brueghel the Elder and Brueghel the Younger, Jan van Os, Zurbarán, Van Dongen, Cézanne, Renoir, Zadkine, Picasso, and Warhol are just a few of the artists whose works were sold at the Biennale. Perhaps only Russian art remained in the shadows at the Biennale in Paris.

Furniture was given special attention. This is not surprising when you consider that the best master furniture makers worked in France from the 17th to the 20th Centuries. Particularly interesting furniture was displayed in the Kraemer salon. This family has been collecting for over 100 years, and this time organized an exhibition devoted to works of J.H. Riesener — the most significant master of the 18th Century, and a supplier to the court of Louis XV and Marie Antoinette. Riesener's work is made in ideal proportions, with masterful use of shades of wood and excellent-quality ormolu. The Kraemer family presented items that used to be found in Versailles and in the collections of the aristocracy of the time. Individual items have already been acquired by Parisian museums.

Much space was given to collections of interior items from Historicism and Art Nouveau. In the last third of the 19th Century, following the World Expo, the French took a great interest in the Orient, which resulted in a fashion for Japonism. This trend included decorative furniture, carved and stained glass, and ceramics with coloured glazes. Such items were an imitation of Japanese or Chinese art. The Graf Gallery displayed a "Japanese" cabinet with incrustation, enamel and bronze dragons made by the Christofle company. This cabinet was part of a pair, the other piece of which was kept in the Museum of Decorative Arts. The Chadelaud house presented exquisite furniture and carved glass in a bronze frame crafted by Escalier de Cristal, as well as malachite pieces and marble sculpture, worthy of museum collections.

There was only enough space at the Grand Palais to display a limited number of items, so the world of antiques continued outside the crystal palace. A number of Parisian antique dealers, such as Kraemer, Graf, Chadelaud and many others worked hard to promote and preserve works of art in their permanent studios, and published catalogues of their collections. The charity work of the Aveline Gallery deserves special attention. Thanks to the professional eye of the gallery owners, they assembled a first-rate collection of furniture which was previously held in many famous collections, including Russian ones. The Aveline Gallery exhibited its "Turkish boudoir", which is stored in Fontainebleau, during the Biennale and proposed a restoration project for the piece.

Sculptures from India, China and Europe made of wood, stone, marble and bronze were presented by different dealers from Europe, including France, and the US. Items made of porcelain and ivory, books, binders, and works associated with historical figures supplemented the wide variety of collections at the exhibition.

The organizer and inspiration behind the 26th Biennale was Mr. Christian Deydier, president of the National Syndicate of Antiquaries of France. Support was given to the exhibition by Madame Bernadette Chirac, Madame F. Rothschild, Mr. J.P. Beaumarchais, Prince Hamad al-Thani, and many others, as well as, of course, Chanel and Karl Lagerfeld. An exhibition catalogue was published. Many public and private museums gave tours and showed off their collections to professionals and guests.

Curators from various museums were invited as visitors to the Biennale. More than 100,000 people came to the Grand Palais over 10 days; unprecedented security measures were taken; jewellery and art works were insured; many purchases were made. The salon also served charitable purposes: part of the funds raised by the exhibition went to support a hospital for the elderly and sick children in Paris.

PRERAPHS

The Pre-Raphaelite exhibition at the Tate that took place from September 2012 until January 2013 was the largest in the past 30 years with over 150 works including paintings, sculptures, photographs and decorative art works from the second half of the 19th Century. The exhibits included both masterpieces and works that are rarely displayed, presenting genuine Victorian Avant-garde. Zorina Myskova, editor-in-chief of Hermitage Magazine, shares her ideas about the exhibition.

During the past winter, Tate Britain hosted Pre-Raphaelites, an exhibition that only happens once in a generation: A previous exhibition on this topic and scale had taken place back in 1984. Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Everett Millais and William Holman Hunt... these are the artists who dramatically changed the Victorian world and tried to put art at the centre of society. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in the Tate meant beautiful, extravagant paintings, a wide historical context and a vast retrospective. The 50-year journey of idealistic rebels, from being young artists to becoming fully developed masters, was mesmerizing and was able to change one's ideas about art, even now. Contemporaries of the Pre-Raphaelites, who did not normally express any interest in modern art, bought their paintings literally off the walls. And today the visual overload is so high that the revelation is not obvious: These were not romanticists fashionable rebels who overturned the art establishment.

Tate Britain gathered the world-famous, keystone works not often displayed in Britain. The paintings are exuberant, romantic, glowing: there are biblical stories, classical myths and literary plots. More than 180 fascinating works, including sculptures, photographs, furniture and embroidery were exhibited. The exhibition presented them, not in the traditional way as artefacts of Victorian escapism, but as a glimpse into the rise of contemporary British art, which neglected the conventions of the day-to-day life in its style and radical ideas. The show was probably the first time that Tate Britain had shown the Pre-Raphaelites together with early Arts and Crafts works in order to demonstrate their continuity.

The curators did not in the end succeed in converting us to Pre-Raphaelitism, but they have reinforced our prejudices, both positive and negative. While Millais' "Ophelia" is one of the world's bestselling images, some people consider it to be a part of the British collective DNA.

George Frederic Watts

Ellen Terry (Choosing)
c. 1864
Oil on strawboard mounted on Gatorfoam,
20 x 27 cm

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THE 1812 MUSEUM

PHOTO: COURTESY OF THE PRESS SERVICE OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The new Museum of the Patriotic War of 1812 is now open to visitors. A unique collection of war artefacts (which had been kept in the State Historical Museum since 1912) was moved to the new building on Red Square in time for the 200th anniversary of Russia's triumph over Napoleon in 1812. The exhibition reconstructs the events of the Napoleonic Wars in chronological order. Ten different thematic sections and more than 2,000 exhibits and virtual exhibits in the museum highlight the pre-history of the war between Russia and France before 1812, the war itself, and the emancipation of Europe from under the yoke of Napoleon, as well as many years of interpretation of the war and memories of it.

Dmitry Medvedev, Prime Minister of Russia:

The idea of establishing a Museum of the Patriotic War of 1812 was first proposed 100 years ago, and the opening of the museum today is a very important and exciting event. The exhibits for the museum were collected from all over Russia at the beginning of the 20th Century. However, it was not possible to open the museum in those days. Now, on the 200th anniversary of our historical victory in the Patriotic War of 1812, we are restoring historical justice.

The museum is not just a set of unique exhibits on the Napoleonic Wars. It also features state-of-the-art multimedia technology, which, in my opinion, is entirely consistent with the concept of a world-class museum. Today museums are a synthesis of relics from the past and innovative multimedia presentations and reconstructions of historical facts, objects and events, and I hope that history will come to life here.

The Patriotic War of 1812 is one of the most important pages in our history, a period in which our country experienced a huge upsurge of patriotism. We can see today that there could have been no other outcome to the war: The enemy was defeated and Russian weapons showed their power. Many great names and glorious events during the war made history, and we have to study these people and events and investigate them further.

Dear friends, I congratulate you all on the opening of the museum. It is symbolic that the museum has been opened during the Year of Russian History. I sincerely thank everyone who has worked on establishing the museum, collecting exhibits and restoring its halls. I am especially thankful and indebted to our ancestors, who 100 years ago laid the foundation on which the museum has been built today.

The Museum of 1812 was a civic initiative taken when Russia was preparing to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the Patriotic War of 1812. However, the final idea came to fruition only a century later. The museum's exhibits, collected throughout the country, were displayed at two anniversary exhibitions: in 1909 in the Moscow Kremlin, and in 1912 in the State Historical Museum. However, a special building was never constructed, and the collection was kept in storage in the State Historical Museum. It could therefore be said that one museum existed within the other for 100 years. Today a two-storey pavilion with an exhibition space of about 2,000 square metres has been constructed for the Museum of the Patriotic War of 1812. The project was carried out by the architectural studio of P.Yu. Andreyev. The pavilion is located in the inner courtyard of the building of the former City Duma (later the V.I. Lenin Museum) and can be accessed through the central entrance.

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Private First Class Lynndie England and Corporal Charles Graner Jr. pose behind naked detainees placed in a human pyramid in late 2003 at the Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad, Iraq.

PHOTO: THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Luca Giordano

Battle Between the Lapiths and Centaurs
Italy. Circa 1688
Oil on canvas. 255 × 390 cm
Inventory № GE-4705

THAT'S HOW YOU JOKE AFTER AUSCHWITZ

Two Englishmen with Cypriot roots, Jake and Dinos Chapman, have caused a sensation with their fantasies and industriousness, their provocative presence and relevance to today. Fate responded by destroying their classical "Hell" by fire. They reconstructed it. Terrifying scenes of bloody SS officers, torturing and destroying one another, descended upon the city that remembers the medieval horror of the Siege of Leningrad; remembered, but beginning to be forgotten, as the world has forgotten the horrors of the last (and already not the last) war. The Chapman Brothers cruelly remind us of all the horrors of war. In the exhibition at the Hermitage, their blood-splattered, swastika-wearing figurines were exhibited beside "The Disasters of War" by Goya; both the originals and those reworked by the hands of the brothers. Next door, instruments of medieval torture were exhibited together with works that prompt the viewer to remember that these contemporary artists continue the tradition of Bosch and Breugel.

The Chapmans love to disfigure other people's works of art, their vandalism adding value and livening up banality with bright colours. In the 20th Century, the banality of evil, as we know, accentuates its horror and thus distinguishes today's abominations from those that have existed further back in our history. In "Hell", the terrifying battle of people, torture and mutilation is made more mundane by the introduction of Ronald McDonald, together with multiple cloned Hitlers at easels, drawing nudes in different artistic styles. The same mundanity is found in various historical allusions, such as the great Stephen Hawking "having a chat" with Adam and Eve; the beginning and the end of the universe. They say, that the vitrines in which the Chapmans' installation are displayed are always left with marks from people's faces pressed against the glass, yearning to examine all the minutiae in the lives of these little people.

However mocking, their art is not hooliganism but rather a provocation that spurs bestial belly-aching laughter. And indeed viewers often do laugh. Laughter, both exacerbates and neutralises the horror. The horror is also bestial and not entirely understandable because it is not clear what exactly is going on. One thing is definitely clear to me; this is one of the rare cases when the SS uniform and the Nazi insignia do not provoke secret aesthetic admiration. We all remember very well the anti-Fascist film by Mikhail Romm, "Ordinary Fascism" which caused a wave of imitation of Nazi rituals by loyal youths. This was followed by "Seventeen Moments of Spring" and many others. The Chapman Brothers' art does not have the same effect. Their SS officers are not SS officers at all, they are obscene nasty maniacs devouring each other. They are funny, but laughing at them causes one to convulse, and vomit.

Disgusting? Yes. Frightening? Yes. But the result is humourous, just like the art of Bosch, Breugel and Goya. Fun in the 20th Century is not so humanistic; it is much more banal and primitive, like the banality of today's global consumer. Even a philistine can be made to understand, or at least remember, that the world is a terrible place and especially terrible in today's wars. Hell can also be on fire when everything is at its worst. It is both funny and a warning.

The fate of contemporary art is to answer the rhetorical question raised by Adorno, "can one write poetry after Auschwitz?" The question is not, of course, "is it possible?" but "how is it possible?" The Chapmans' answer is one of the most convincing. Laughter can kill the monstrosities.

In the Chapman Brothers' "Hell" there are many allusions and parallels to art and life. For me, their work presents a combination of two very different histories. Their little figures remind me of the multitude of battling Lapiths and Centaurs – specifically in the Hermitage painting by Luca Giordano, but at the same time, they look like the tortured intertwined bodies in colour photographs from Abu Ghraib. Such is contemporary European art between the island of Cyprus and the British Isles.

MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY

THE END

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

ROD MENGHAM

Of all the former Young British Artists (YBAs), Jake and Dinos Chapman show the most persistent regard for youthfulness by refusing to show respect for the institutions of the art world. For them, the juvenile imagination is a powerful resource for disrupting the value systems attached to "serious" art. They relish the opportunity to roll their Trojan horses into the citadels of high culture, and the Hermitage was no exception.

For the brothers, the playful, the crass, the uncouth and the obscene are essential elements of a creativity that has not been trimmed and rendered innocuous by having to conform to bourgeois standards of taste and propriety. Time and again their work has insisted on accessing all parts of the human personality and its behaviour, conscious and unconscious, and the focus for this engagement with subject matter often censored by shame or conscience — the products of socialization — is a resolute childishness. When the brothers were invited to install a new work in the Annenberg Courtyard of the Royal Academy in London, they filled it with three enormous steel dinosaurs, magnified versions of the figures that children like to cut out of mass-produced cardboard. At the heart of Britain's art establishment, they set up a monument to spontaneity, to lack of cultivation, to artlessness. The current venue for this sculptural group, Jesus College, Cambridge, is the ideal location to mount a similar challenge to the power of the educational system. As a life-sized, rust-coloured T-Rex towers over the nearby college buildings, it seems to be saying; "Look, this is the true scope of the youthful imagination: it can't be tamed, it can't be ignored, it's too big!"

But alongside this very significant commitment to the antic and irreverent aspects of a refusal of official criteria, there is also a serious exploration of much darker forms of resistance to conventional taste and morality. There is a headlong plunge into the 20th-century experience of atrocity. The brothers actually provide an art-historical reference point to the definitive modern response to atrocity (made a century before the invention of concentration camps and the industrialization of genocide): the astonishing work of Goya responding to the horrors of the Peninsular War of 1808-1814. Apart from their three versions of the infernal, "Hell", "Fucking Hell", and "The End of Fun", perhaps their most distinctive work has been their "altered" version of Goya's "The Disasters of War". Jake Chapman has spoken in an interview about the importance of Goya as the first truly modern artist to emerge from the Enlightenment, ostensibly replacing the superstitions of religion with reason and a set of moral imperatives derived from humanity itself and not from a Higher Being, while also revealing how this invented morality cannot deal with its own darker and weirder desires. The Chapmans' own work has deepened this paradox, the contradiction of a late Enlightenment culture that seems at crucial moments to be fuelled and motivated by deeply embedded psychotic events that completely undermine the humanist ideology of progress.

The contradictory ground rules for the ongoing series of Hell vitrines were first laid down in the Royal Academy installation of 2000. (This first "Hell" was later destroyed in the Saatchi warehouse fire of 2004.) The size of the assemblage as a whole, and the sheer number of figurines involved, was intimidating, but the physical posture required for the viewer to focus on the microscopic details of the individual tableaux placed the viewer in an uncomfortable situation of dominance. Being close to the work allowed one to identify the targets of cruelty as Nazis; this satisfied a crude vengefulness but also allowed for an imaginative complicity with someone who has victims at their disposal. The use of children's toys allowed the viewer to indulge in fantasies of dismemberment and mutilation that were not going to lead anywhere, while at the same time forcing recognition of the facility with which such ghastly scenarios could be entered into, shared and perhaps even enacted, by almost anyone. The slippages were multiple, between childhood and adulthood, between fantasy and reality, between dominance and subjection, between art history and the history of brutality; most crucially, between tonalities, between the tones of play and pathos. The viewers who lingered around the vitrines were fascinated by the sheer intricacies of torture, by the appalling craftsmanship of murder; and by the same ingenuity of persecution that holds in its grip the connoisseur of horror film aesthetics — but we are all that kind of viewer. Our fascination with the endlessly slight variations on a basic model of subjection is undoubtedly libidinal, and yet it is that aspect of our fixation on atrocity that we dismiss as infantile. Perhaps the only adequate response to atrocity adjusts to precisely this mix of categories, this confusion of scales.

With "Fucking Hell" (2008) there was an even greater emphasis than earlier on the visceral nature of the Chapmans' art and an almost medieval fascination with the processes of incorporation and expulsion. One of the most familiar images of Hell in pre-Reformation Europe was of an enormous and all-encompassing mouth from which there was no escape. For the less prosperous members of the congregations in churches where such images were on show, there was

JAKE AND DINOS CHAPMAN IN THE GENERAL STAFF BUILDING

a paradoxical gratification in the spectacle of Hell as egalitarian, indifferent to rank or privilege. In this respect, the idea that punishment in the afterlife centred on the maintenance of a system of ingestion and excretion — in the conversion of material into different forms of energy — bracketed the infernal with the carnivalesque, with the subversive imagining of a world in which the existing hierarchies were turned upside down. This was a possibility that could only be empowered by the activity of the carnivalesque body, which Russian critic Mikhail Bakhtin characterized memorably as the "devouring and devoured body", the body caught up in an appetitive series of flows and discharges, the body as a system that swallows the world and is itself swallowed by the world.

The orientation of the Chapmans' 2008 installation made it clear that the nine vitrines that comprised the shape of a swastika were also like "squints", the narrow openings found in medieval walls, that allowed a series of partial views of a closed system of energy conversion. The infernal ecology required victims as fuel for the continued operation of the system; the rounding up and driving forward of the miniature Nazis was reminiscent of the activity of traditional devils with pitchforks, stoking the damned like solid fuel into a boiler. Once the bodies had been composted and decanted into silos, they could feed the greenhouse cultivation of skull-plants in a process of re-generation. The main departure from the tradition of the carnivalesque was indicated by the presence of a toxic waste pit. It was characteristic of the Chapmans' acerbic wit to observe that in a world where the endless engrossing and exhausting of materials has become toxic in both a moral and chemical sense, certain by-products are too poisonous even for Hell itself.

With "The End of Fun", the funereal version of their infernal landscape, it has become clear that the Chapmans' Hell is neither more nor less than an allegory of capitalism. Hell both pre-dates capitalism and prepares for it, in its massive concentration of labour, its unbroken rhythm of production, and its confining the operative to a single function. The medieval Hell caters to a wide spectrum of offenders, to a diversification of sin so energetic that it requires a bureaucratic genius to classify all the appropriate forms of discipline required in response. It is only with modernity that Hell ceases to individualize its punishments. It is only with capitalism that the individual becomes instrumental to a general system of production.

The figurines used in such vast numbers in all the Chapman Brothers' "Hell" installations are of course themselves mass produced, before being given individual details in the studio. The artists clearly relish the paradox involved in creating a spectacle of industrial slaughter with components produced by industrial means. The assembly line of horror owes its peculiar menace perhaps more to the routine character of the butchery portrayed than to its depravity. The limited repertoire of gestures employed in this butchery matches the limited repertoire of gestures required in its manufacture.

One of the pleasures (is that the right word?) of the dedicated follower of the Chapman Brothers' work, is to follow the links between successive versions of the same concept, and especially to enjoy old jokes given a new lease of life. One of the best jokes (in bad taste, of course) in "Fucking Hell" was the spectacle of a miniature Hitler in front of an easel bearing one of his lamentable art productions. The landscape in front of him was a death-pit, a site of mass burial for anonymous victims executed on an assembly line, but the image on the canvas was just large enough to be identified as a copy of one of the real Hitler's sentimental homages to the German landscape. In "The End of Fun", Hitler himself has been mass produced, and is now present in the shape of seven clones, all painting the same thing. This time they are not even attempting to portray the landscape, but are busily at work on versions of the same female nude, despite the fact that the death-pit only a few metres away is filled with mutilated bodies. The humour is puerile, deliberately so, and is part of the Chapman Brothers' critique of a sanitizing culture that edits out the evidence of a psychosis that is structural to conditions we are still inhabiting today.

PHOTO: **RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN**

Mounting the exhibition
Jake and Dinos Chapman:
The End of Fun
General Staff Building
2012

— What does your version of Hell have that the biblical Hell doesn't?
— Nazis.
— Spacemen (laughs).
— Steven Hawking.
— Factories.
— It is the 20th-century Hell.
— Twenty-first!

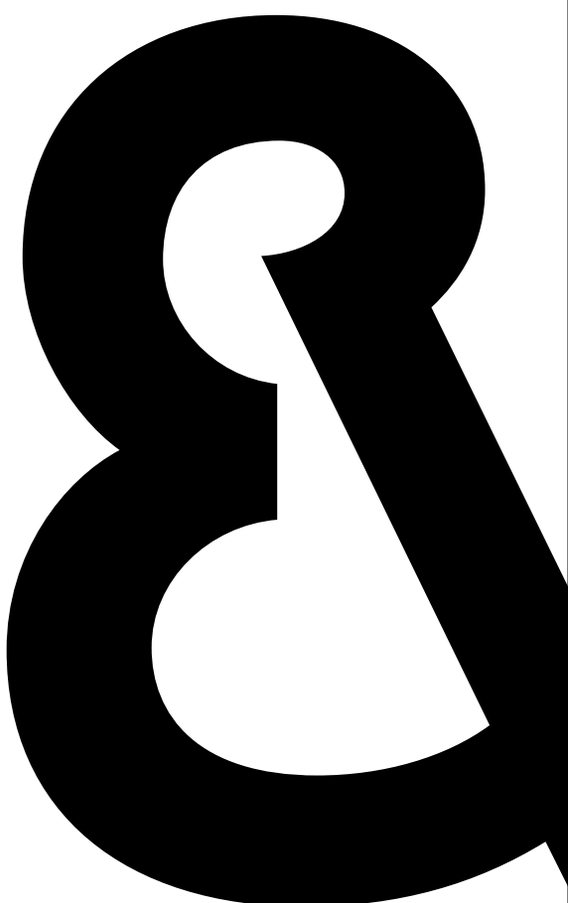
— Did you start with the biblical vision and improve on it, or did you have other "hellish" inspirations?
— (A long silence). No.

— So, what position do you occupy in your work? Are you participants? Or bystanders?
— What, in Hell? Well, it's an interesting question because the advantage of working as two people — two people making one person's work — is that we get to spectate. He gets to see what I make and I get to see what he makes, so we are participants and, also, victims.
— Victims and audience.
— Yeah, there is something quite particular about being in a position where you can actually observe your own work.

— So, you regard your brother's work as your own?
— I regard my brother's house as my own... and his car... but not his wife.
— If there is anything Jake has that I'm not allowed to go near, it's his motorbikes.
— It's true. Everything else, it's his.

Jake

Joke



HAVE-YOUR-FUCKING-SAY*

* A PAGE ON THE CHAPMAN BROTHERS' WEBSITE.

— Well, I think, it's just... very convenient! I think, if you're on your own, you have no possibility of asking questions that you don't already know the answers to.
— And those answers would all be crap answers.
— Yeah, and it's also preferable, I mean, even tactically speaking, the idea of making, of having two people make the work, means to say that it automatically excludes the idea that the work is about autobiography. The work is about a conversation about the world, rather than how we feel about the world. The idea of some emotional meaning in the work, it becomes excluded. We like art being a critical activity, rather than self-reflective. So, when there are two people doing it, it already means someone is in a conversation, it's not just personal.
— Have a grape!

— No thanks.
— They're poisoned!
— Right, so what we have to do is — everyone around the table, take a grape.
— I've got a grape trick! (Bites a green grape, shows what is left — there is the peel of a red grape)

— Russians are in an interesting position regarding contemporary art. Basically, until the eighties we had access to almost none of it.
— There wasn't much stuff going around. And then you realized it was all crap. Just a lot of bad haircuts, clothes, music, and art.

— That's why a contemporary artist in Russia constantly has to prove his right to be called an artist, sometimes even having to get sent to prison.

Dinos Dark

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

GINTARAS RISHKUS TALKED WITH JAKE AND DINOS CHAPMAN.

Jake Chapman

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

— Well, you know, that might not be a bad thing. There's nothing wrong with the kind of audacious act against adversity that kind of presumes some kind of a romantic political position, but the alternative is just a domesticated, gentrified, bourgeois art that has no critical friction. Maybe it isn't a bad thing to find yourself in a situation where the artist has to prove that what they're doing has some value, that it might allow him to produce interesting art. So I don't think you should complain about it. It just shows that there is still the idea that art might have a kind of political facility. It might show that it's worth doing, rather than the kind of bourgeois art that it has become in the West. The thing is that if you think about the success of contemporary art in Britain, for example, they took all the contemporary art in London and turned it into a huge, huge, huge museum where there are even escalators that will draw people up from the ground floor to the galleries to see, say, chopped up sharks and…
— It's virtually impossible not to go there.
— In a sense, what's happened in the West is that contemporary art has become the vanguard for gentrification. So, in some sense, it seems to present itself as being critically radical and cutting edge, but really, all that it does, is express the tendencies and liberal values of the middle classes, so, in some sense, if you're saying that artists here have to prove the meaning of the work, and prove their legitimacy, the legitimacy of the work, it might be that the work is that much more politically vital. That can't be a bad thing.

— What's interesting about your exhibition here is that it's in the Hermitage Museum, which the prominent film director Alexander Sokurov described as "the Russian Ark" [in a film of that name]. Everything important is stored here. So it's interesting to find your works of art here. But don't you find it a little bit too confining to be inside this big, classical museum, the Hermitage?
— We're really flattered to be here.
— Yeah, you're right. I didn't think about that. We should stop it, shouldn't we?
— We didn't realize this is a big, classical museum, can we pull out, please?

— There is nowhere else to host your exhibition in Russia because we don't have a Tate Modern here, nothing like that.
— You've got money, the Tate is short of money… Anything else?

— OK, so I've got a question about the recent stunt with the Rothko painting, you probably heard about that, when that guy went up to the painting and signed it, as himself.
— Yeah, so…
— So what's the difference between our work and his? He didn't make it any better. We made Goya's better.

— So where's the limit of appropriationist practices?
— It was an act of self-publicity. It was, actually, an idea. His was… just tagging. If he went through the whole gallery, and seen what he could've done, then it would have been worth doing. What I mean is that, well, there is no point in us making a defence of our drawings of Goya to the detriment of somebody who does that. I mean I'm not appalled if someone does that to anyone, to be honest.
— We think that all art is destructive.

— So, basically, there should be no limit to appropriationist practices?
— No. (There's a knock at the door)
— Police.
— They've come to arrest you!
— I've done nothing wrong!

— Are you sure?
— Yeah, I've covered my tracks.

— There is violence in the majority of your work — what was your childhood experience of violence?
— A very violent upbringing.

— Was it more from school bullies, or from society?
— Everybody!
— I mean, small children still hit us.
— It's more comedy than violence. On the scales with comedy on one side and violence on the other, it's more comedy. It's not real violence.
— I mean, it's depictions of violence, but it's very poor depictions of violence. The thing is, little models hurting each other. Violence is essential to human existence, an absolute. It's a necessary part of being human. We're only depicting a set of circumstances which are common in our existence. I mean, you go to Montmartre in Paris, and you see Sacré-Cœur, and people painting pictures of that cathedral, you know, lovely pictures, cars going past, vzzz-vzzz, but in the pictures there are no cars, no paintings.
— Occasionally, there are horses…
— Draw a horse!
— Out of the frame of the painting — cars going past, and inside a horse goes past… So, in a sense, the work is just reflecting the conditions of our experience. It's not our decision to make any of this stuff, this is the illustration of our existence.

Alejandro Jodorowsky in an interview for La Reforma, Mexico (2002)

"Cathartic cruelty was once the signature of avant-garde art. But now, when the world is so cruel, to be a cutting-edge artist means to create art which purifies people and brings them closer to one another. There was a time when Toulouse-Lautrec, Kafka, Dostoevsky or Juan Rulfo were admired. Now they come across as little more than psychos. Juan Rulfo leads us into the world of the dead, Dostoevsky — into a world of utter decadence. Let alone Kafka… Now the whole world is that place of… the avant-garde. We must move on, leaving behind the art that reflects your own neuroses, creating an art that cleanses."

Dinos Chapman

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

— It would be a lot stranger to make pictures of Montmartre for us, or fields with daisies or...
— It would be a lot more worrying.
— Yeah, and because people say, "why are you always obsessed with violence," well, look at the world! You know, as a percentage, the whole reason you're in this elevated position to do this thing is because a lot of violence happens on our behalf.
— That's actually true, because a lot of state violence is being deflected outwards, because we live in a stabilized environment with this violence directed outwards. Because we live in a supposedly civilized society, without violence, it means that huge amounts of violence are being employed to sustain this tranquility, so, in a sense, we live in the most violent place.

— Where does that put you, as it were, morally?
— Embarrassed.
— Happy.
— Morally embarrassed!
— Confused.
— Morally bankrupt.
— Withdrawn.
— The least we can do is acknowledge it.

— While I was looking at this work of art, and it in some way got me thinking that you could really shoot a whole movie in there!
— Well, it is a movie. It's a movie without the use of film or a cinema, it's in your head. The film exists in your head, every time you look at it, it's slightly different. One of the ideas was to make a sculpture[1] you couldn't possibly encompass, you know, you couldn't record it, you'd have to actually see it, in order to experience it. And to see it you'd have to spend time with it. You can't walk past it. It's not that kind of sculpture. It's a trap. You get sucked into it. Ian McKellen said: "I hate you two." I go: "Sorry?" So he said: "You made me two-and-a-half hours late for an appointment." "How?" "Because I chose to go see your sculpture, that's why." "Well, that's fair enough, that's what it's supposed to do."
— You know, what these kind of weird, very eccentric, neurotic hobbyists do with all their little models, they want to control the world, this omnipotent... When you make things this big, you, as the person with the omnipotent view, you have a god's perspective over these things, when you get people there, awful vignettes, that happen. But their position is that they are the controller. So we thought that if we make something so vast that it would offer an omnipotent view, that you could take the role of God by overseeing and looking into this thing. But if you make it so big, you've multiplied the size of it so that you've become a very pathetic God.
— And put in into a glass case.
— You become like the God that you know, which is a very pathetic powerless God. Because it's too big for you to have an omnipotent view. So on the one hand, it's the idea that you can see over these things, that you have a superior perspective, but by enlarging it so much, that it's so big, you become, even though you're omnipotent, you become as small as one of these things, because you can't have a totalized view, you can't have a complete view of this thing. What you can do is to move around, lose where you were, see things. It's a deeply atheistic attack on God's perspective, because it's reducing God to the victim of human violence. Which is, normally, the other way around. As you've said, in biblical terms, it's been that God inflicts violence upon us. But this is a kind of revenge on God's point of view.
— The display case is designed to keep the God out.
— It's a God-free zone.
— It's a constant struggle, isn't it? One burned.
— Yeah, the other one went to Venice, and we actually thought it's going to drown. You should have seen how they get things off the boat, onto these, whatever they're called? Ejectors? A couple of years ago, a sculpture fell in the water.

— So, because you get the work from so many different angles, you construct a new story all the time. But will these stories be different in their impact on the viewer?
— We can't be responsible for the viewer's state of mind or anything. They take what they want from it. People cried in front of it.
— What was her name?
— Danny.
— Danny, yeah, she cried in front of it. And people laughed, and people went: "pfff."
— Blind people can't even see it.
— We kind of step aside at that point. We don't want to be responsible for people's readings of these readings of things.

1__What is meant by sculpture here, and elsewhere, is their work "Hell", which was destroyed in a fire at a London warehouse along with many works from the Saatchi collection in 2004, and their new work "Fucking Hell" (2008), which was "newer, improved, bigger, and brighter".

Mikhail Piotrovsky

"It's up to the museum to draw the distinction between art and scandal-mongering. That's the museum's job. The Chapman Brothers' exhibition we unveiled at the General Staff is certainly provocative. Their art has a political dimension, reflecting on Nazism and war. It is a philosophical reflection on the horrors of war, horrors of the human nature, the human predilection for violence. But their art is not offensive to anyone but Nazis. Let me say once again that a provocation which offends people lies outside art. This is not the case. So one can laugh, or one can object, but insults are out of place."

VISION OF THE APOCALYPSE

SIR NORMAN ROSENTHAL

In the year 1999, I was in the process of organizing an exhibition for the Royal Academy of Arts in London that was appropriately to be called "Apocalypse". It was to open in the year 2000, even if for pedants that year marked the end of the 20th Century and the new millennium was only due to commence the following year. Be that as it may, naturally I went to the studio of the Chapman Brothers, who at that point in their careers had no commercial gallery representation and were living off McDonald"s in a studio off the Old Kent Road in south east London and only too close to a large drive-in restaurant of that same ghastly global fast-food outlet. What I saw — and I believe I was the first to see this work very much in progress at the time — was the first vitrine in the making of what a year later would become "Hell". I was amazed and turned inside-out by this then new upside-down vision of the Apocalypse — the Hell that had befallen Europe and not least, of course, Russia in the 20th Century then ending, and that was so arguably its most defining historical episode. To reduce that nightmarish time to a ghastly burlesque, which in some ways indeed it was, and in the manner of those models of Napoleonic battles, whether Borodino or Waterloo, so beloved as educational amusements in the 19th Century, seemed to me an act of sheer genius. I remember only too well having to take cautious and doubting conservative painter-members of the Royal Academy to see the work and persuade them of the absolute necessity of showing this "sculpture" in the Royal Academy, which we duly did to a mixture of controversy and acclaim. I also alerted Charles Saatchi, the then great patron and supporter of the Young British Artists, to the project; indeed, he made the completion of the work possible. Of course — perhaps not inappropriately — it was destroyed in the legendary fire that consumed so much of Saatchi"s famous collection, and so the Chapman Brothers, undaunted, proceeded to replace it with a full-scale variation of the piece they called "Fucking Hell". Part of the frisson of showing "Hell" was of course showing it in the grand halls of the Royal Academy, an institution founded at more or less the same time as Catherine the Great was putting together with such energy the grand buildings and collections of the Hermitage in St. Petersburg. It is wonderful to think of this born-again masterpiece of contemporary British art having beeen shown under the same roof as that other monumental masterpiece of British art commissioned by Catherine in 1789 from the first president of the Royal Academy Sir Joshua Reynolds and known as "The Infant Hercules". Both these great works of British art subtly reflect their own time of creation, and on the realities of European and indeed Russian history in complex and visually amazing ways. I hope this presentation of Jake and Dinos Chapman"s great work gave its St. Petersburg audience much food for thought! I fully endorse all that Rod Mengham has written about them in his fine article.

1. Joshua Reynolds

Infant Hercules Strangling the Serpents
Britain. 1786
Oil on canvas. 303 × 297 cm
Invenlory № GE-1348

2. Jake and Dinos Chapman

The End of Fun
Fragmenl

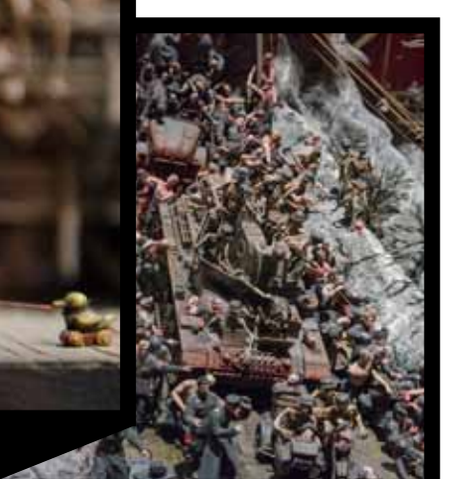
PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

THE VITRINES PRESENT A PANORAMIC LANDSCAPE OF HELL WHERE THE NAZIS INCESSANTLY KILL EACH OTHER WITH DIABOLIC CRUELTY. LIKE ARCHIVISTS IN AN OLD CABINET OF CURIOSITIES, THE CHAPMAN BROTHERS "LOCK" THE NAZIS INTO A CAPSULE WHERE THEY CAN PLEASURE THEMSELVES WITH BEASTLINESS. PLACING CRUELTY INTO SEALED CYCLORAMA CASES IS THE ARTISTS' ATTEMPT TO HEAL SOCIETY.

Jake and Dinos Chapman

The End of Fun
Fragments



INNOCENTLY PITCHING A CURVEBALL

DMITRY OZERKOV

Jake and Dinos Chapman seem to have fit in well in the Hermitage. It feels like I have found myself in a hall with Dutch Masters or am observing the royal collection of toy soldiers, while playing with them in my mind, or as if I was looking through engraved illustrations of Christian legends in the Room of Engravings in the Hermitage. These are the Forty Martyrs of Sebate; these are the Forty Thousand Martyrs of Phoebe; here are the Israelis fighting Amalekites in Poussin's painting; this is the battle of Issus in the replica of Neapolitan mosaics; these are the heroic and bloody battles of 1812. The Chapman Brothers only innocently shuffle the cards, placing their Nazi legions in the set for an apocalyptic and total settling of scores: it is as if Dürer's Horsemen have leapt off the engraving displayed in the Hermitage and were galloping over the Wehrmacht, as if the heavens of Doomsday from Georg Pencz's drawing opened over them and the wild demons came off Hieronymus Bosch's "Hell" together with the infernal landscape revealing beyond good and evil. In the Chapmans' installation there are bridges and subways and the ground is dug over with tunnels with vomiting apocalyptic maniacs climbing out of the holes. The Chapmans' Nazis cross the water barrier like the unimaginable monsters in the Hermitage painting by Jan Mandyn. They push each other, clench their fists and tear pieces of flesh off each other. Torn and disfigured, they hang off the tress, gallows and wheels for quartering. If only Fransisco Goya had known that the nightmare that surrounded him in 1815, recorded in "The Disasters of War", was only the beginning of the million hecatombs to come in following centuries! During Goya's lifetime, his engravings were not printed and his drawings were passed from one person to another until they reached the Scharf-Gerstenberg collection. It seems no accident that after World War II they ended up in the Hermitage. These engravings work as a formula to encapsulate everything that, two centuries later, in the senile age of consumerism, the Chapman Brothers simply developed by means of the crazy fantasies of mean children of capitalism.

October 6, 2010 the Council Hall of the Hermitage hosted a round table entitled "'Horrible Contemporary Art' in the Universal Museum". Artists provoke when blood and pain is placed in a large museum and it becomes an artistic statement devoid of the power of political profiteering, whether it is the Biblical Amalekites, martyrs from icons or Alexander the Great's horsemen. First of all, the new picture of total horror brings back parallels in art, however atrocious they are. Horror is a part of the history of mankind, and it is the power of art that can put it where it belongs, presenting the images of pain as a lesson. It is this power that demands this hell never happens again.

1. Unknown artist;

Hell
The Netherlands. First decade of the 16th Century (?)
Oil on panel. 39.7 × 38.5 cm
Inventory № GE-8491

2. Jake and Dinos Chapman

The End of Fun
Fragment

3. Georg Pencz

The Last Judgement
Germany. Circa 1540
Pen and black wash, brush and brown wash and while. 46 × 32.9 cm
Inventory № OR-4719

4. Nicolas Poussin

Victory of Joshua over the Amalekites
France. Circa 1624–1625
Oil on canvas. 97.5 × 134 cm
Inventory № GE-1195

5. Jan Mandijn

Landscape with the Legend of St. Christopher
The Netherlands. Early 16th Century
Oil on panel. 71 × 98.5 cm
Inventory № GE-4780

2.

MIKHAIL DEDINKIN

THERE IS NO-ONE TO HELP THEM.

TRAGIC THEMES IN GOYA'S GRAPHICS

The series of prints entitled "Fatal Consequences of Spain's Bloody War with Bonaparte, and Other Emphatic Caprices", also known as "The Disasters of War", was created by Goya between 1810 and 1820. The 60-year-old artist was impelled to create this highly unusual work after witnessing a number of tragic events. Goya had previously paid little attention to historical and contemporary subjects, but what he saw during the occupation of Spain by the French prompted him to capture the horrors he had experienced. These included the suppression of the national uprising in May 1808 and the bloody nine-month Siege of Zaragoza, resulting in more than 50,000 casualties, and the mass famine in Madrid from 1811 to 1812. Goya does not depict battles or the military activities of the belligerents. His subjects are linked to the extreme cruelty demonstrated by all participants in the conflict, to the suffering of peaceful civilians who have been unwillingly exposed to the horrors of war. His subjects are manifold, but each illustrates a facet of human suffering: the desperate struggles of peasants with soldiers, the unimaginably cruel massacres of prisoners, mass rape, the execution of hostages, the wounded, the dying in hospitals, the battlefields littered with abandoned corpses, villagers fleeing from devastated villages, fires, the identification of the dead, mass burials, and the desperate ordeal of death by starvation. This was not the clash of just two nations — beside the French armies, Polish legions, units from the Confederation of the Rhine, and the personal Spanish units of King Joseph Bonaparte also participated in the aggression.

The artist, as in the series "Caprichos", does not form a distinct compositional structure for the series by thematically linking separate works. What we see instead is a series of distinct scenes, linked by a sense of protest and empathy with human sorrow. The first 47 plates of the series are dedicated to the events of the war, the next 17 to the famine in Madrid, and the concluding 17 plates (themselves a set of caprichos or "caprices", that is, pictures of fantastic and allegorical subjects), depict the restoration of the Bourbon monarchy, the political reaction, and the reimposition of the Inquisition, which was as crippling a shock for the country as its Civil War more than a century later.

Every one of these works by Goya possesses a colossal accusatory power and in this sense is autonomous. The viewer is witness to scenes so harrowing that they need to communicate nothing more than the notes of heartache which penetrate each and every work. It is no surprise that

goya

Edouard Manet

Execution of Emperor Maximilian of Mexico
1868/69
Oil on canvas. 252 × 305 cm
Kunsthalle, Mannheim, Germany

Jose Caveda, "Memorias para la historia de la Real Academia de San Fernando", Madrid, 1867, Tomo I, p. 210

"Yo busco en esos lienzos la nacionalidad ultrajada; el heroísmo que supo vengarla; la noble indignacion que convirlió la Península entera en un vasto campo de batalla, y á sus defensores en héroes inmorlales. Encuentro aquí todo esto, y no pido al Arte que debilite la verdad; que modifique las impresiones del terror; que eche un velo sobre las víctimas despedazadas y cubiertas de sangre; que haga ménos profunda la conmoción, y ménos poderoso el sentimiento y el horror que me conmueve."

1. 2.

3. 4.

5. 6.

Francisco Goya

The series of engravings by Goya entitled "Fatal Consequences of Spain's Bloody War with Bonaparte, and Other Emphatic Caprices" (also known as "The Disasters of War").
1810–1823

1. *They Don't Like It. Plate 9*
Etching, aquatint, burin.
233 × 298 mm
Inventory № OG-401324

2. *Nor in This Case. Plate 36*
Etching, aquatint, drypoint, burin. 233 × 298 mm
Inventory № OG-401325

3. *It Serves You Right. Plate 6*
Etching. 140 × 216 mm
Инв. № ОГ-394624

4. *One Can't Look. Plate 26*
Etching. 145 × 210 mm
Inventory № OG-394625

5. *Barbarians! Plate 38*
Etching, aquatint.
233 × 298 mm
Inventory № OG-401326

6. *There is No-One to Help Them. Plate 60*
Etching, aquatint.
233 × 298 mm
Inventory № OG-401327

- There were no publications in Goya's lifetime. A small number of proof (working) editions have been preserved. The author assembled two copies: one of them has a handwritten title page, and the engravings have their titles inscribed upon them.
- The plates were preserved, and in 1862 were acquired from the artist's heirs by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid.
- First publication: the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Madrid, March 1863. Circulation — around 500 copies.
- Subsequent publications: 1893 (100 copies), 1903 (100 copies), 1906 (275 copies), 1923 (100 copies), 1930 (circulation unknown).
- Last publication, seventh: 1937 (150 copies).
- Accordingly the value of work from different publications differs substantially. Proof editions are extremely rare (worth up to €10,000), and first edition prints are also highly valued (€2,000). The price for later prints falls sharply. Prints from later editions are regarded not as museum pieces, but fall into the domain of rare book dealers.

in a number of these shocking compositions the artist, having searched for a more expressive title for his work, gave up and wrote simply "I saw this". In each extremely modest plate, Goya's needle creates an image of monumental power, incomparable with anything else in European art in its depth of expression. The master, having completed a vast body of sketches of tragic events and situations during the war years, was filled with the desire to give expression to his suffering and thoughts in works of art which could be exposed to a wider audience. In the 19th Century, only etching was capable of fulfilling that possibility.

Before Goya, none of the great Spanish artists had paid any attention to graphic printing. But it was no accident that Goya's teachers labelled him "Velazquez" and in particular "Rembrandt". The etchings of the great Dutch master inspired Goya to learn the secrets of the engraver's art. He worked on the series over the course of a few years, experiencing all the trials of life in wartime while translating the drawings into etchings, laboriously striving for the adequate embodiment of his vision in the complex techniques of etching and aquatints. The care applied to his work is testified to by the large quantity of trial prints in the series. Work on the engravings demanded significant time and energy, the acquisition of expensive materials and the assistance of a printer. Goya, who in life was bourgeois and calculating, went to these lengths to be heard. It is clear that the greater part of the series was executed between 1810 and 1814. The artist was not put off by the negative experiences he'd had with the publication of "Caprichos" in 1799 when the engravings failed to attract any public attention. (Goya later sold the copper plates and the majority of the printed editions to the Royal Calcography, where they lay unclaimed until almost the middle of the 19th Century.)

In those same years Goya created a series of etchings named "La Tauromaquia", riding the wave of the national revival by depicting the traditional national spectacle that united radically disparate social groups — bullfighting. Printed in 1816, the series brought the artist fresh disappointment. Nobody paid any attention to these etchings, full of dynamism and light, whereas primitive popular prints featuring the corrida had an audience of dedicated fans. The print editions of "La Tauromaquia" also lay forgotten for several decades. The absence of a reaction from the public, alongside the other problems which dogged Goya in a country which had sunk so precipitously into a feudal and religious abyss, became one of the reasons that the suite of war etchings, which had been so carefully executed by the master, was not published.

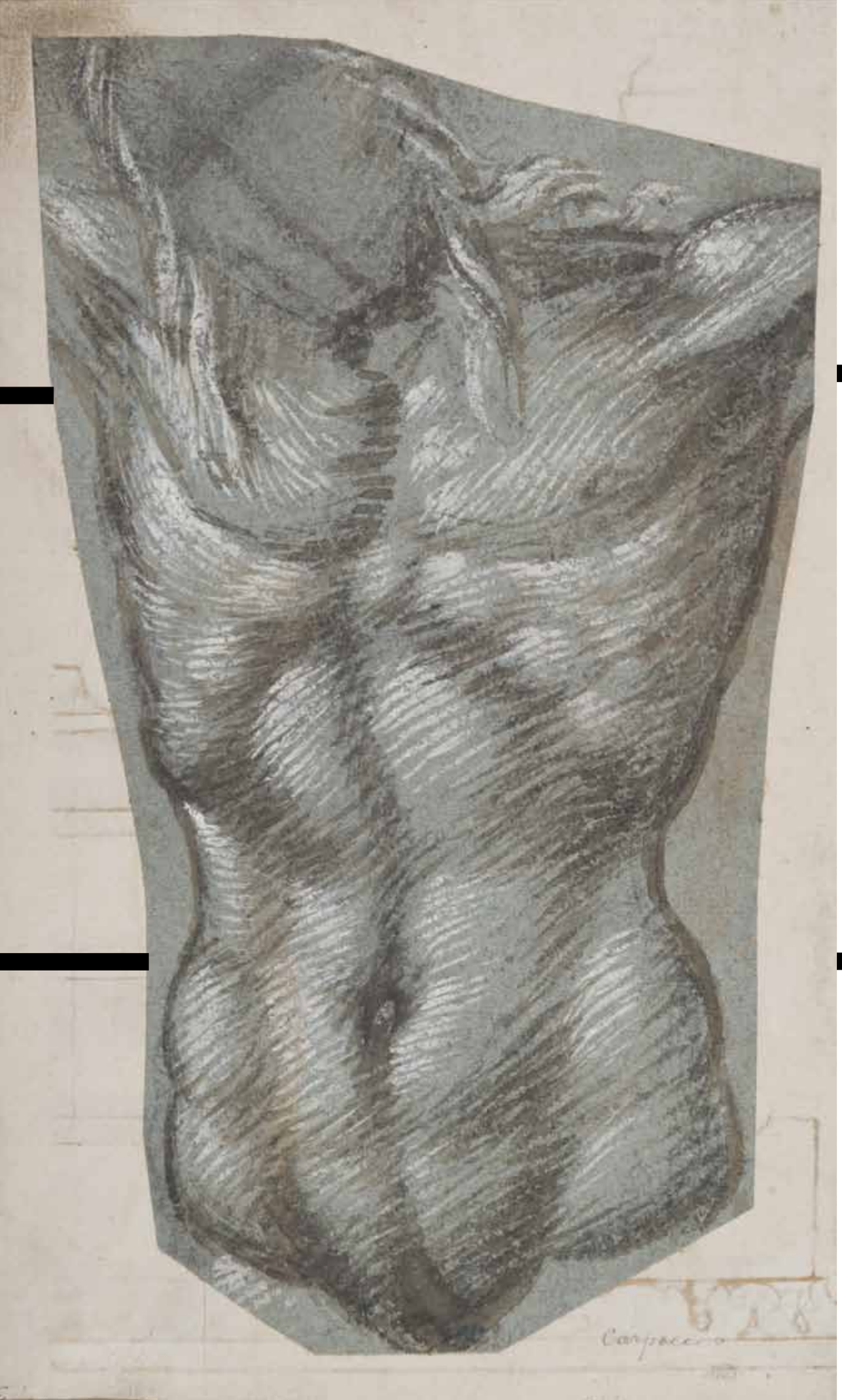
Leaving Spain in 1823, Goya took his plates with him. Only two full sets of the series are known to exist today. One, which is now kept in the National Library in Madrid, belonged to Goya himself and was given by him to one of his emigré friends in Bordeaux. The other belonged to Ceán Bermúdez, a Spanish writer on art, and is now part of the collection of the British Museum in London. The order of plates is identical in both copies. The Ceán Bermúdez album contains a handwritten title page with the title of the series, and pencil titles written underneath each image.

The story of Goya is not that he was deaf. It was society which was deaf, which was incapable of accepting his art and of hearing his appeal, a beacon of humanism against inhumanity and fanaticism. The reason for his failure proved to be not only the absence at that time in Spain of an established tradition in etching and a demand for such works. It is more instructive that Goya's graphic language itself, with its unique combination of simplicity and extreme expressiveness, were too challenging for his contemporaries to appreciate. The artist's world view, formed in the Age of Enlightenment, underwent a severe crisis, having faced historical tests of an enormous magnitude, and the last years of his life were characterised by a marked pessimism. Yet Goya continued anew in his attempts to be understood. He spoke in his art about what he had seen and known, and was sincere and passionate in this appeal. Today it is difficult to imagine our consciousness without the images of the "Caprichos" or "The Disasters of War", many of which have become icons of new European art and familiar to almost everybody. But to Goya's contemporaries they were unfamiliar. When the young Delacroix sought out the album of caprices by the unknown Spanish artist, he could not believe that the artist was alive and, moreover, had come to Paris at around the same time.

The name of Goya became known outside Spain only in the mid-19th Century. More than 30 years after his death the plates of "The Disasters of War" series were purchased by the Spanish government for the San Fernando academy. They were finally published in Madrid in 1863 to be met with shock, and opening the borders of the possible in art forever.

Irina Levina,"Goya", Leningrad, 1945, p. 40.

"We come across Goya's name in Delacroix's journal, while this great Spanish artist was clearly an inspiration behind some of his art, most notably his series of prints for 'Faust' with their tremendous emotional charge and fanciful explorations, combined with subtle and acute perception of reality. Delacroix copied the 'Caprichos'. He kept these prints on his table, always in front of him. Goya's intensity and his trademark sharpness of imagery emanate from Daumier's 'Le-Rat-a-Poil' and his lithographs of 'The Siege' series. Edouard Manet was interested in Spain, painting its majas — Spanish ladies in mantillas with fans in their hands. His 'Balcony' and 'Olympia' would have made the great Spanish master proud. ... This is the true 'Idioma Universal' — a universal language, dear and familiar to all."



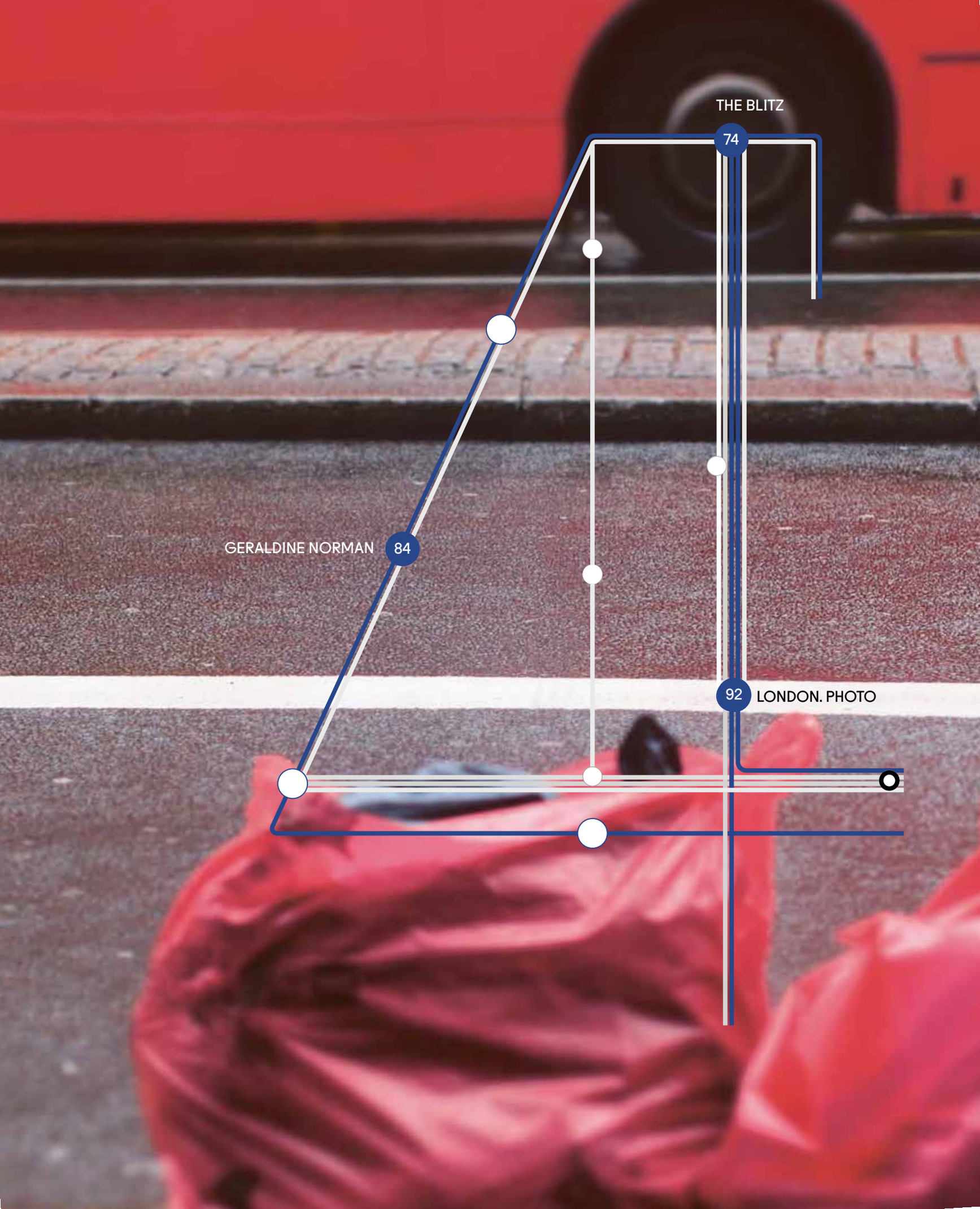
Vittore Carpaccio

A study of a naked male torso
Brush, grey and brown wash; the colours are rendered in white wash. The head is sketched in black chalk and brush and grey wash. The drawing, made on carta azzura, was cut out around the contour and glued onto another sheet of paper.
256 × 139 mm
Source: Library of the former School of Technical Drawing of Baron Stieglitz, 1923.
Inventory № 34846

The oeuvre of the Chapman Brothers goes far beyond pop culture and horror films. It draws extensively on some of the greatest works of art. The Nazis in the trees are twisted like the human bodies in the painting "Crucifixion and Glorification of Ten Thousand Martyrs on Mount Ararat" by Vittore Carpaccio. The abundance of bodies and the way they look reminds one of the painting "The Garden of Earthly Delights" by Hieronymus Bosch; the torment and agony bring back "The Disasters of War" by Francisco Goya, and the torturers bear some resemblance to those we can see at the Palazzo Abatellis, but even more to those in "The Triumph of Death" by Pieter Bruegel the Elder.

Vittore Carpaccio

Crucifixion and Glorification of Ten Thousand Martyrs on Mount Ararat
Italy. 1516
Oil on canvas. 307 × 205 cm
Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice


THE BLITZ
74
GERALDINE NORMAN
84
92
LONDON. PHOTO

THE NAZIS' AERIAL ONSLAUGHT ON BRITAIN WAS KNOWN AS THE BLITZ, AFTER THE GERMAN WORD BLITZKRIEG, MEANING "LIGHTNING WAR". IT BEGAN WITH TWO MASSIVE AIR RAIDS ON LONDON IN THE AFTERNOON AND EVENING OF SEPTEMBER 7, 1940. MOORE'S IMAGINATION TRANSFORMED THE SHELTER INTO A MODERN HADES — THIS MASS OF INERT, ANONYMOUS BODIES WOULD LATER BE COMPARED TO THE SCENES THAT GREETED THE LIBERATORS OF BELSEN AND BUCHENWALD.

BLITZKRIEG

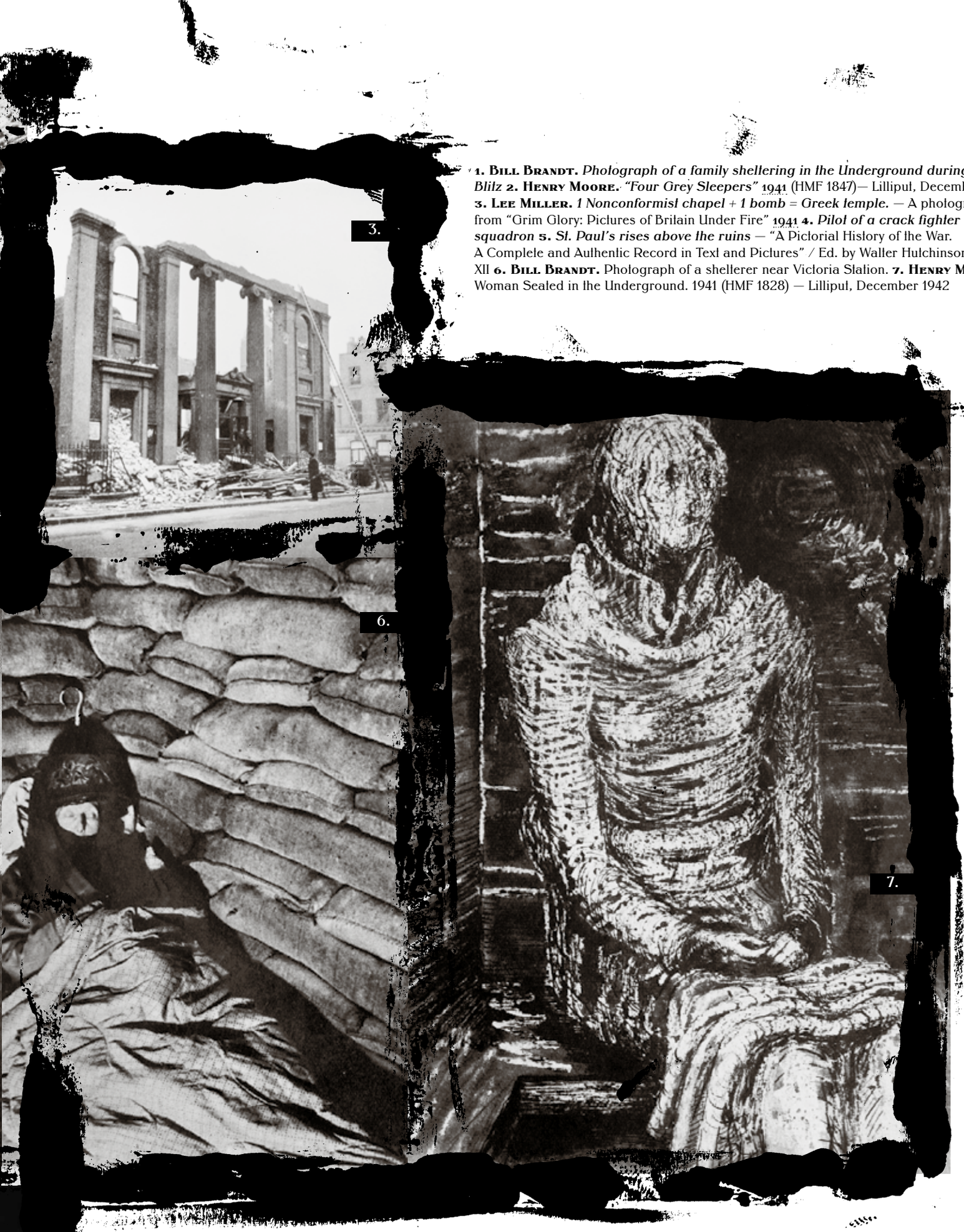
RECORDING THE BLITZ


1.


2.


4.


5.



1. Bill Brandt. *Photograph of a family sheltering in the Underground during the Blitz* **2. Henry Moore.** *"Four Grey Sleepers"* 1941 (HMF 1847)— Lilliput, December 1942 **3. Lee Miller.** *1 Nonconformist chapel + 1 bomb = Greek temple.* — A photograph from "Grim Glory: Pictures of Britain Under Fire" 1941 **4.** *Pilot of a crack fighter squadron* **5.** *St. Paul's rises above the ruins* — "A Pictorial History of the War. A Complete and Authentic Record in Text and Pictures" / Ed. by Walter Hutchinson.Vol VI, XII **6. Bill Brandt.** Photograph of a shelterer near Victoria Station. **7. Henry Moore.** Woman Seated in the Underground. 1941 (HMF 1828) — Lilliput, December 1942

RICHARD CALVOCORESSI

Escorted by some 600 fighter planes, 348 bombers crossed the English Channel in two waves, dropping incendiary bombs followed by heavy explosives. Although the docks and oil installations of the East End of London were the main targets, neighbouring residential areas suffered badly, with many homes obliterated. Casualties were high: 436 dead and 1,600 seriously injured. For the following 57 nights — and sometimes during the day as well — London was persistently bombed. In November the Germans extended their aerial raids to other industrial centres, beginning with the city of Coventry on the night of November 14-15, when 568 people were killed and more than twice that number injured, numerous armaments factories were hit, and the medieval cathedral was destroyed. The bombing of British ports, shipbuilding towns and naval bases soon followed, including those on the rivers Mersey (Liverpool) and Clyde (Glasgow), as well as Bristol, Southampton, Portsmouth, Cardiff, Plymouth and Hull.

The final attack on London — the 130th night of raids — took place on May 10, 1941. It was even more punishing than the first, killing 1,436 people, seriously wounding a further 1,800, irreparably damaging 11,000 houses and rendering over 12,000 people homeless. But on May 22 Field Marshal Kesselring transferred his headquarters from the northern French coast to occupied Poland. By early June his Second Air Fleet"s squadrons had joined him in the east, amounting to a third of the Luftwaffe"s entire strength in planes. On June 22 Hitler invaded the USSR. Operation Barbarossa had begun but Britain could breathe a sigh of relief: the Blitz was over. It had killed over 43,000 civilians, almost half of them in London — more British lives than were lost in the air, on the battlefield and at sea until the autumn of 1941. Homelessness was a serious problem, and not only in London: on Merseyside and Clydebank over 100,000 people lost their homes. In Coventry 60,000 out of a total of 75,000 properties were destroyed or badly damaged. And yet, in spite of widespread hardship and disruption, there is little evidence that the Blitz succeeded in destroying civilian morale, though at times it must have been close to breaking point.

Artists responded to these eight months of loss, devastation and human resilience in diverse ways. Many of them were employed by the War Artists" Advisory Committee (WAAC), formed in 1939 within the British Government"s Ministry of Information and chaired by Sir Kenneth Clark, director of the National Gallery. By 1945 the Committee had amassed some 6,000 images of the war at home and abroad, in a variety of idioms, commissioned or bought from more than 400 artists. Familiar names such as Paul Nash, Graham Sutherland, John Piper, Eric Ravilious, Edward Ardizzone, Anthony Gross, Edward Bawden and Henry Moore all feature in the collection, but the majority of works are by artists who are hardly known today. Exhibitions from this growing resource regularly toured Britain throughout the war, accompanied by free or inexpensive publications, and proved extremely popular.

Moore and Ardizzone were the two principal artists who depicted Londoners sheltering in the Underground, as well as in the official public shelters — such as the notoriously overcrowded and insanitary Tilbury shelter in the East End — that preceded, and co-existed alongside, the Tube shelters. Their approaches were markedly different. While Moore"s imagination transforms the shelter into a modern Hades — his mass of inert, anonymous bodies would later be compared to the scenes that greeted the liberators of Belsen and Buchenwald — Ardizzone"s slumbering figures are recognizable, individual characters who seem on the point of bursting into life. Not surprisingly, Ardizzone"s essentially comic vision, in the tradition of English caricature — he also wrote and illustrated a series of successful children"s books — was judged by the public to be the more appealing of the two; but it is Moore"s tougher drawings that have survived and attained an almost mythical status in their evocation of human endurance and suffering. Although Moore was not an official war artist, seventeen of his Shelter Drawings were acquired by the WAAC and later presented to public museums.

Moore"s Shelter Drawings were first published in the magazine Lilliput in December 1942, juxtaposed with photographs of the Tube shelterers by Bill Brandt. Brandt later commented that "apart … from the wartime conditions in which they were taken, these pictures have a strangely pathetic air — human beings are pathetic when all their defences are broken down in sleep".[1] Brandt had been commissioned by the Ministry of Information to record the bomb shelters in November 1940. Many of his images of London in the Blitz were published in Picture Post (the parent imprint of Lilliput), which also employed the photographers Bert Hardy, George Rodger and Humphrey Spender. Cecil Beaton was another photographer commissioned by the Ministry of Information; his famous portrait of a child victim of the Blitz, sitting up in bed clutching her teddy bear, was reproduced on the cover of Life magazine for September 23, 1940 as part of a campaign to enlist American sympathy and aid.

This summary has relied heavily on two important recent studies: Brian Foss, "War Paint: Art, War, State and Identity in Britain 1939–1945" (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2007);

and Juliet Gardiner, "The Blitz: the British Under Attack" (London: Harper Press, 2010).

I am also grateful to Roger Tolson of the Imperial War Museum for his advice.

The most common Blitz subject was the gutted or destroyed building. Historic structures such as London"s Wren churches, the Guildhall and the Houses of Parliament were extensively documented, as was Christopher Wren"s St Paul"s Cathedral, which survived with relatively minor damage to become a symbol of defiance. Photographers were particularly active in this respect too. Cecil Beaton collaborated with the writer James Pope-Hennessy to produce "History Under Fire", published in May 1941, just as the Blitz came to an end. The book included 52 of Beaton"s memorable photographs of London"s ruined heritage, from medieval to Georgian architecture, with the largest section devoted to the buildings of Wren. Pope-Hennessy called the destruction "a by-product of indiscriminate bombing, because we cannot sanely suppose ... that enemy bombers single out any specific church or company hall to attack. On the other hand ... their [the Nazis"] attitude to the history and the public monuments of Poland and some other of the countries they have conquered shows an inflexible determination to erase the dignified and treasured memorials of a national past".[2] He also acknowledged that "the bombing of buildings, however ancient and magnificent, cannot be considered as criminal as the bombing of living civilians".[3] Nevertheless, "the loss of ten Wren churches in one night [December 29-30, 1940] is something that made London gasp ... the destruction ... filled London with anger".[4]

The word "anger" is also used to describe the reactions of ordinary Britons in another publication that appeared in May 1941. Edited by Ernestine Carter and with a preface by the veteran CBS broadcaster Ed Murrow, "Grim Glory: Pictures of Britain Under Fire" is more contemporary in feeling than "History under Fire", with dramatic full-page photographs, cut-outs and pithy captions in large bold type. Some of the most striking photographs in the book are by the Vogue photographer Lee Miller, whose Surrealist eye for metamorphic detail was ideal preparation for the incongruous and sometimes gruesome sights she witnessed. Miller would later cover the final year of the war for Vogue as a combat photographer accredited to the US army in Europe, where she would record even more harrowing scenes, such as the liberation of Buchenwald and Dachau.

"Grim Glory", which was reprinted four times in 1941, was aimed at the American market. Both Murrow and Miller were American citizens living in London, while Carter was married to the London director of Scribners, the American publisher which co-published the book. During an air raid on September 21, 1940, Murrow had delivered a broadcast to the US from the roof of the BBC"s headquarters in London. He also visited Coventry the morning after the devastating raid there. In his preface to "Grim Glory" he wrote: "I would have shown you the open graves of Coventry — broken bodies covered with brown dust, looking like rag dolls cast away by some petulant child, being lifted in tender hands from the basements of homes. This book spares you the more gruesome sights of living and dying in Britain today."[5] Publications like "Grim Glory", extolling the "courage, determination and good humour that sustains the people of this Island",[6] helped to propagate the "myth of the Blitz" and change US public opinion; though it would be another seven months before Pearl Harbor and the American entry into the war.

1 Bill Brandt, Camera in London (London and New York: The Focal Press, 1948), p. 81.
2 Cecil Beaton, with a commentary by James Pope-Hennessy, History Under Fire: 52 Photographs of Air Raid Damage to London Buildings, 1940–41 (London: Batsford, 1941), p. V.
3 3. Ibid.
4 Ibid., pp. 42, 45.
5 Grim Glory: Pictures of Britain Under Fire, ed. by Ernestine Carter, preface by Edward R. Murrow, photographs by Lee Miller et al. (London: Lund Humphries / Scribners, 1941), n.p.
6 Ibid.

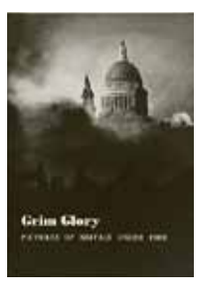
Constantine Fitzgibbon's "The Blitz" 1957, with Moore's drawing "Morning after the Blitz", 1940 (HMF 1558), on the cover. The book is dedicated to Moore's wife Irina and reproduces seven of the artist's Shelter Drawings.

1940

Lilliput

December 1942

Lilliput was a small-format British monthly magazine of humour, short stories, photographs and the arts, founded in 1937 by the photojournalist Stefan Lorant.



Cover of "Grim Glory: Pictures of Britain Under Fire", published in London in 1941 and reprinted four times that year. The iconic photograph of St Paul's Cathedral was taken by Herbert Mason from the roof of the Daily Mail building on

December 29, 1940


8.
9.
13.
15.
16.

8. *Revenge on Culture;* **11.** *The rain pours down through the shattered roof of University College, London, reflecting in a contemplative pool remnants of the dome*; **12.** *Piano by Broadwood*; **18.** *Remington silent* — Photographs by **Lee Miller** from "Grim Glory: Pictures of Britan Under Fire", 1941, 194 **13, 14, 15, 16** — From: "A Pictorial History of the War. A Complete and Authentic Record in Text and Pictures" / Ed. by Walter Hutchinson. Vol VI, XII

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

HUON MALLALIEU

A YOUNG WOMAN IN HER 60S

After devotedly promoting the State Hermitage Museum in Britain and elsewhere for much of the last 15 years, Geraldine Norman has retired from the Hermitage Foundation UK which she helped launch in 2003. Looking back, it all started with her book, "The Hermitage: the Biography of a Great Museum", which grew out of her previous career as a highly distinguished art-market journalist.

"No single journalist has had such an impact on the art market from 1967 [onward] as Geraldine," wrote John Herbert, director of Christie's press office, in 1990. He was right. Those were great years for investigative journalism in Britain, as in the United States, and Geraldine, saleroom correspondent of The Times of London, was the art market's equivalent to Woodward and Bernstein of Watergate fame, or The Sunday Times' Insight Team in the wider world of politics.

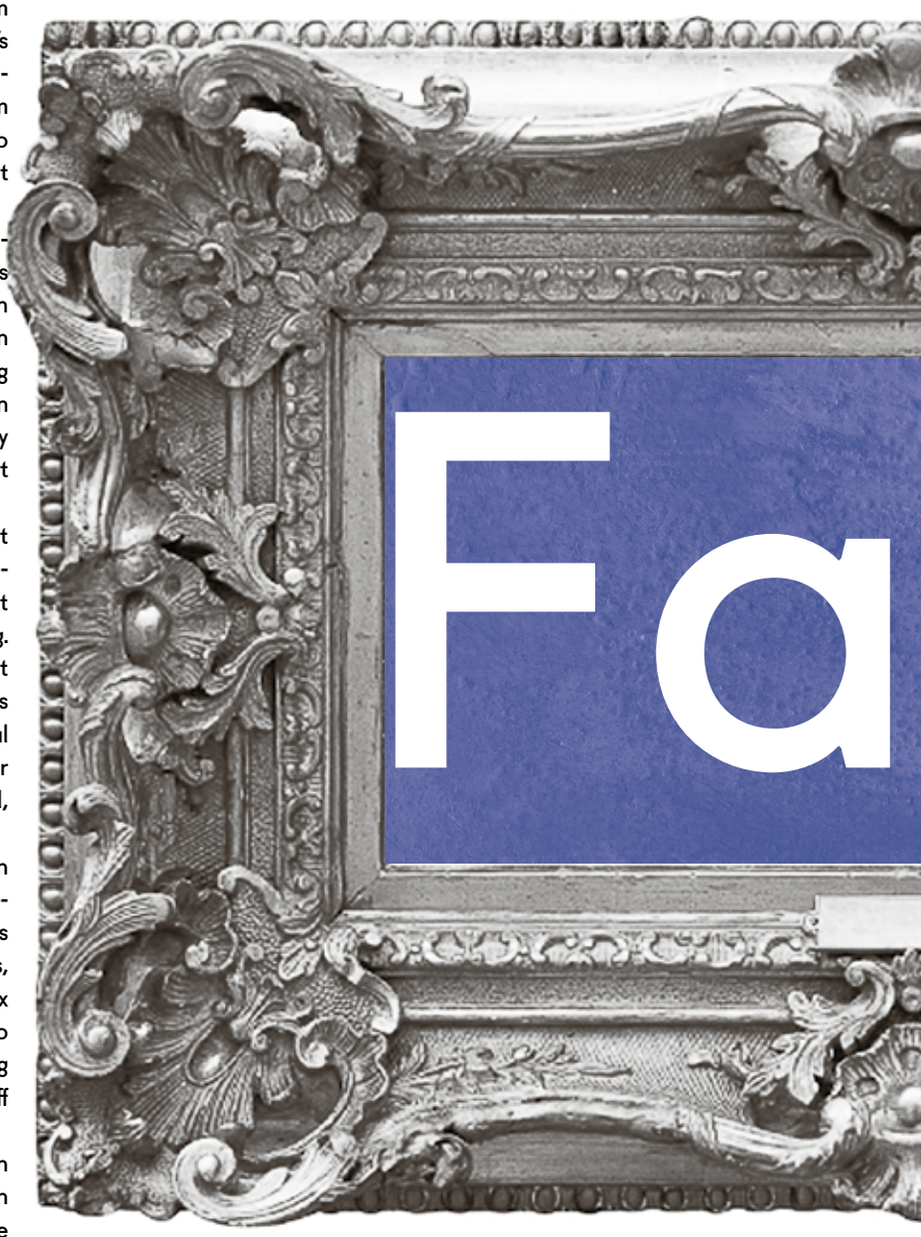
Geraldine had got into journalism by chance. Having read mathematics at St Anne's College, Oxford, and spent a year teaching statistics at UCLA, it was as a statistician that she was first employed by The Times in 1962. She then took a job with the UN"s Food and Agriculture Organization in Rome, but threw it in "because it was so appallingly corrupt", returning to London in 1967. Luckily, The Times offered her a contract to compile an index of art prices — the Times-Sotheby Index — a brilliant, if ultimately specious, concept intended to demonstrate the investment potential of art by charting it as a commodity.

Geraldine had grave doubts about the index, but she realised that it would damage her employment chances if she told The Times and Sotheby's that the index was meretricious. Later she admitted "I've always felt slightly guilty about this, but I decided to bash on and produce something. And it's always seemed very odd that this little cheat I did opened out a career that has been enormous fun for 20 years". Her multiple careers have now lasted much longer than that, but fun has remained an essential ingredient. What probably first strikes one on meeting Geraldine are her bright brown eyes which sparkle with quizzical curiosity. But there is steel, as well as humour and kindness, in her make-up.

Provided with an office at Sotheby's, then London's leading auction house, Geraldine made invaluable contacts and worked closely with Sotheby"s chairman Peter Wilson, a charismatic genius who built the business into an international giant before almost destroying it. Despite her doubts, and its unpopularity with dealers, collectors and rival auctioneers, the index proved a winner and boosted the paper's circulation for a while. It was also widely syndicated, and when Sotheby's pulled the plug in 1971, not wishing to publicize a falling market as well a rising one, Geraldine was given a staff position as saleroom correspondent for The Times.

My own first job was as a cataloguer at Christie's, where it was an article of faith that Geraldine was biased in favour of Sotheby's. When I became a market journalist myself, I discovered that Sotheby's knew she favoured Christie's, while Phillips, then the third London house, believed she was only interested in the other two. I looked to her as the perfect role model.

Geraldine particularly annoyed these sometimes secretive businesses by insisting that they disclose what had failed to sell as well as their triumphs. Eventually she brought about a change of practice and attitude.



NO SINGLE JOURNALIST HAS HAD SUCH AN IMPACT ON THE ART MARKET FROM 1967 ONWARD AS GERALDINE

She also won a well-deserved reputation and enthusiastic readership for her exposure of a number of art world scandals involving museums and collectors as well as trade and auction houses.

She was instrumental in the unmasking of several forgers, most notoriously Tom Keating and Eric Hebborn. I had two tiny walk-on parts in the Keating story: still at Christie's, I was one of the few art-world specialists to reject one of his watercolours apparently by Samuel Palmer, the Romantic follower of William Blake; and later, in 1976 when Geraldine needed time off for sleuthing, greatly trusting, she took me on as locum to write her daily column.

Like many good restorers, Keating felt unappreciated as an artist. Later he claimed that he only produced fakes to show up so-called experts, but it was notable that his series of Palmers was followed that artist's rediscovery by the market. Even more convincing than the pictures themselves were the backs of their frames, with provenance labels, and disarmingly pencilled hanging instructions, such as "left side of fireplace". Several leading salerooms and dealers were duped and high prices were paid — including a "world-record auction price" for Samuel Palmer at Sotheby's. But rumours were spreading.

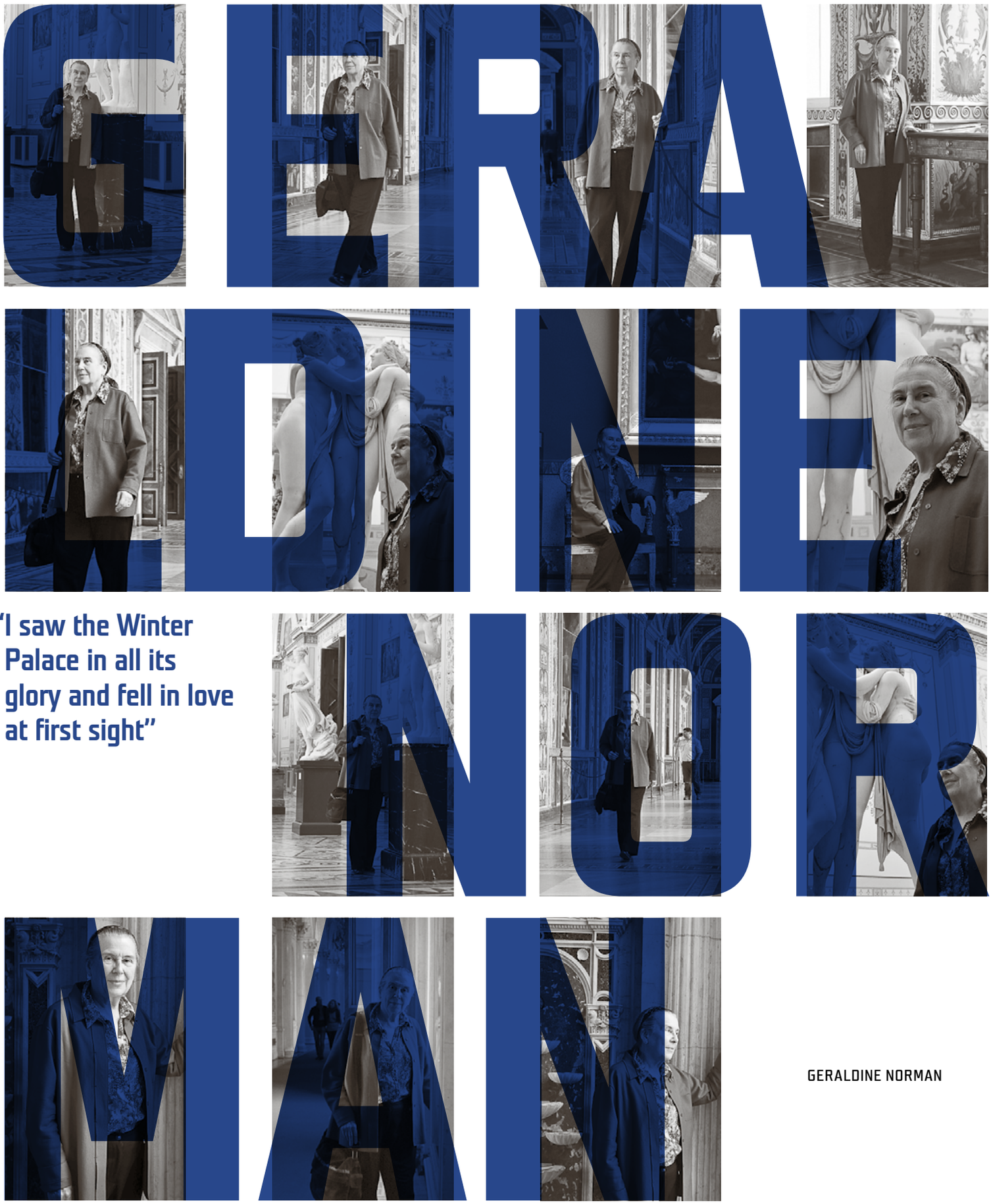
After a number of months, Geraldine's delving had established the fact of the fakes, and pointers to the forger, but she still didn"t have a name when she presented her findings to William Rees-Mogg, the editor. Despite legal misgivings he decided to publish, a decision justified some days later, when Keating telephoned to admit evrything. Geraldine whisked him away to a safe house, where she and her husband Frank Norman, the author and playwright most famous for the musical "Fings Aint Wot They Used T'Be", co-wrote with Keating his autobiography, "The Fake's Progress".

At the end of 1978 an industrial dispute led to the closure of The Times for 11 months, followed by its purchase by Rupert Murdoch. Geraldine had hoped to organize a staff buy-out, and when that failed she moved to the newly founded Independent.

Her husband Frank's death in 1980 left her bereft and she focused more than ever on her work. The unmasking of fakes bought by the J. Paul Getty Museum in California made her an unpopular figure in the museum world. It also led to a friendship with Robert Hecht — the controversial scholar-dealer in "smuggled" antiquities. She was commissioned to write his biography and when he refused to play the publisher asked her what other book she'd like to write. She replied a "biography" of the Hermitage Museum.

Although she continued to produce investigative scoops for The Independent and later as a freelance, Geraldine was happy to gradually change course again, beginning with her Hermitage book. This necessitated many long visits to St. Petersburg where she became closely involved with the museum and its development plans.

She says that she can't bear not to have an excuse for regular visits to St. Petersburg, and her new roles as a consultant to the Hermitage Foundation and adviser to the director of the Hermitage, provide it, without the pressure of recent years. In 2000 an interviewer described her as "a young woman in her 60s"; only the decade has changed.



"I saw the Winter Palace in all its glory and fell in love at first sight"

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

GERALDINE NORMAN

I first met Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky in a casino — no, not at the roulette wheel! It was 1993 and we were having dinner with Sotheby's Russia agent, Peter Batkin, who said that this casino was the only place you could get a decent dinner in St. Petersburg.

I was the art-market correspondent for The Independent newspaper in London at the time and intent on writing an article about what had happened to the Hermitage since the October Revolution. Peter said: "I'll invite Piotrovsky and his wife to dinner and introduce you."

It was a dark February night when I first arrived in St. Petersburg. On the second day I saw the Winter Palace in all its glory and fell in love at first sight.

Two days in the Hermitage was enough to demonstrate that my theme should be rendered as a book, not just a magazine article. After the publication of the article, I wrote to Mikhail Borisovich and asked him if he would support my writing a book about his museum. I got no answer. One year later I met him at the Maastrict antiques fair in The Netherlands. He saw me and said: "Hello Geraldine! I never answered your letter. I'll just open this fair and then we'll talk."

That was the start of my book "The Hermitage: The Biography of a Great Museum" (1997). I couldn't speak Russian and was in desperate need of a helper. It was almost miraculous that I found Catherine Phillips, possibly the only person in St. Petersburg who could have done the job, through a friend in Japan, Natsuo Miyashita. Catherine had a first-class degree in art history, could speak fluent Russian and had already worked in publishing. She educated me about Russia, interpreted and provided intelligent synopses of books I should have read in Russian.

I was allowed one hour a week to question Mikhail Borisovich in the course of which I became aware of the grim financial outlook of the museum. I suggested that what he needed was the advice of an honest Western banker. He was sceptical but agreed to it and I produced my banker brother.

This led to an attempt to finance the development of the General Staff Building through a Western consortium — with an advisory committee headed by Alfred Taubman, the chairman of Sotheby's, and a project manager, Chris Seddon, who had worked as Norman Foster's representative in the Far East. It was torpedoed by the debt crisis of 1998 but at least it put the Hermitage in touch with the World Bank and got the schedule of what changes to the building were permitted out of the city government — which led to the present renovation.

As I got to the last chapter of my book I couldn't bear the idea of losing my connection to the Hermitage and I asked Mikhail Borisovich if he'd like an unpaid agent in the West looking out for the museum's interests. He said yes. I set my sights on Lord Rothschild who was Chairman of the Trustees of London's National Gallery at the time and a top art patron. Every time that Mikhail Borisovich came to London I engineered a meeting. Finally, in March 1999, Mikhail Borisovich was explaining his plans for a Hermitage museum in Amsterdam over a cup of tea in Lord Rothschild's office and Rothschild said: "And what about London?" Standing up, he went to a desk at the back of the room and got the plans of the renovation of Somerset House. "What about Somerset House?", he said.

And so the Hermitage Rooms at Somerset House were born. I was appointed director despite the fact that I was a journalist and had never run a business. My Japanese friend Natsuo again came to the rescue. Chris Adam, the chief executive of Glaxo Japan, was retiring and needed a

Two articles by Geraldine in The Times concerning problems at the J. Paul Getty Museum in California, the first dealing with a Dirk Bouts 'Annuncialion' (left) and the second with a Greek kouros (right)


SPECTRUM

Geraldine Norman unravels the $6 million mystery of the Getty Museum's controversial old master

Fake with a fortune at stake?

Unfolding of the saga's many secrets


The Getty Museum in California paid a record price for it. But nobody knows who sculpted it, or when, or where...

$7 million masterpiece — or a fake?

PHOTO: **NATALIA CHASOVITINA**

Wedding photograph
Left to right, Frank Norman,
Dick Walls (the best man) and Geraldine

Geraldine is made an Officer
of the Most Excellent Order of the
British Empire by Prince Charles
for services to Anglo-Russian relations
in the field of fine art

stimulating retirement job — he would help me. The Hermitage Rooms were launched in November 2000.

The opening of the Hermitage's new British galleries in 2002 led to the first summer banquet in the Winter Palace — organized from London. Lord Rothschild was the guest of honour, together with Jayne Wrightsman, the New York collector and philanthropist who Rothschild had recruited to the board of the Hermitage Rooms. In 2003, Prince Charles was our guest of honour at a second banquet, run jointly with the Mariinsky Theatre.

When I stepped down as director of the Hermitage Rooms, Mikhail Borisovich asked me to look into the possibility of starting a Hermitage Magazine. It was launched in the summer of 2003 with sponsorship from Michael Maltzoff, the son of Russian émigré parents who was enthusiastic about helping the greatest museum in his moherland, together with his partner, Konstantin Grigorishin.

In the same year, a group of us got together to start the UK Friends of the Hermitage. Chris Adam was again the business brains behind it. He introduced me to Michael Maltzoff who had made a comfortable fortune in banking. Maltzoff helped with the restoration of the throne in St. George"s Hall, as well as sponsoring the magazine.

We asked for a big project to work for and were given Hermitage 20/21, a scheme to build a collection of 20th century and contemporary art. It was a challenge to help get this great project off the ground but we have supported two exhibitions from the Saatchi collection in London and exhibitions of work by Henry Moore, Chuck Close, Antony Gormley and more recently the Chapman Brothers. In December 2010 we changed the name of our organisation to the Hermitage Foundation UK — it sounded more important! And on April 1, 2012 I handed the foundation over to Katya Galitzine to run — I hope she's enjoying it as much as I did!

Inscription by Kealing
on the back of a fake Samuel Palmer,
dedicating it to Frank and Geraldine

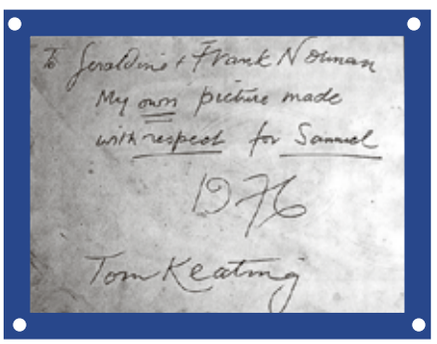


PHOTO: HERMITAGE MAGAZINE

NEW CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE HERMITAGE FOUNDATION UK

KATYA GALITZINE WAS APPOINTED CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE HERMITAGE FOUNDATION UK ON 1 APRIL, 2012. KATYA IS A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF CATHERINE THE GREAT, VIA PAUL I, HIS SON THE GRAND DUKE MICHAEL, AND THE MECKLENBURG-STRELITZ FAMILY. IN ADDITION, OF COURSE, HER SURNAME RESONATES DOWN CENTURIES OF RUSSIAN HISTORY.

A particularly significant member of the Galitzine (Golytsin) family from the Hermitage's point of view was Prince Dmitry Galitzine, Catherine the Great's ambassador in Paris and subsequently Amsterdam. He was key to the creation of the Hermitage collection. Among the works he bought for Catherine are Rembrandt's "Prodigal Son", five works by Rubens, three Van Dykes, 850 drawings by Jacques Callot, works by Gerrit Dou and Philips Wouwerman, and 6,000 drawings, engravings and prints from the collection of Count Ludwig von Cobentzl. He also introduced Catherine to Diderot and Voltaire — and found for her the sculptor Etienne Falconet, creator of the famous equestrian monument to Peter the Great, the Bronze Horseman.

Katya herself is well known in St. Petersburg. She is the daughter of Prince George Vladimirovich Galitzine and his second wife, the beautiful English model, Jean Dawnay. She was born and brought up in England but says: "I always knew I was half-Russian but I didn't know what this meant — until my first visit to Russia in 1985." She was in the middle of a three year drama course at the Mountview Theatre School the time but soon gave up acting in favour of sculpture.

She took an intensive Russian course in Paris and once she was beginning to speak, her father asked his sculptor friend Mikhail Anikushin to look after his daughter. Anikushin was the greatest sculptor in St. Petersburg at the time and Katya spent five years, from 1989, working in his studio. She learned to make bronze heads for a living.

Katya also ran a radio programme introducing Russian audiences to Western pop music and wrote a book, "St. Petersburg: The Hidden Interiors". As a result of the book, she got a flood of requests for advice on visiting the city and decided to hand them over to a tour company. She chose Steppes Travel, met its proprietor Nick Laing and ended up marrying him.

When her father died in 1992, Katya and her mother decided to set up a library in his name — the Prince George Galitzine Memorial Library — in the palace where his mother had lived on the Fontanka river. The library specializes in so-called Rossica — books about Russia published abroad.

And so, what does Katya make of the Hermitage Foundation UK? "The Hermitage Museum is the jewel of St. Petersburg and it needs to be protected, preserved and promoted in a 21st-century way. Every museum in the world needs extra funding and the Hermitage offers the most prominent brand for any company coming to North West Russia to be involved in: so I encourage companies to support the Hermitage 20/21 programme. Bringing new visitors into the museum is also important to its development, as well as continuing the wonderful Visiting Curator Scheme which gives 12 Hermitage curators each year the opportunity to come to London museums and meet with their British colleagues."

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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.

ALEKSEI TARKHANOV

LÓN

THE LONDON OF THE 1960S DID NO LESS FOR THE ART OF PHOTOGRAPHY THAN THE PARIS OF THE 1900S DID FOR PAINTING. IT IS NOT JUST THAT THE BRITISH CAPITAL WAS FOR DECADES THE MOST FASHIONABLE CITY IN THE WORLD. THE YEARS IN QUESTION CHANGED THE ROLE OF THE PHOTOGRAPHER, TRANSFORMING HIM FROM A WITNESS INTO A PARTICIPANT IN EVENTS. PHOTOGRAPHERS STOPPED BEING SIMPLY CHRONICLERS OF FASHION AND THEMSELVES BECAME AN INTEGRAL PART OF THAT FASHION.

When one speaks of English photography of the 1960s, more often than not David Bailey and Terence Donovan come to mind. Two other practitioners follow closely behind, one an Englishman, the other an American: Brian Duffy and Bob Richardson. Bailey, Donovan and Duffy quickly became known as "The Terrible Three" and the "Black Trinity." Not only did they write the photographic history of Swinging London, but they appear on its first pages. Making friends with the most significant musicians and artists of their time, they slept with the same beautiful girls, had access to the royal palaces and rock clubs. They were celebrities, and they behaved with the swagger of conquerors.

"Before 1960 a fashion photographer was tall, thin and camp. But we three were different: short, fat and heterosexual! We were close friends and fierce rivals at the same time," Brian Duffy said of those days.

Duffy had been a troubled adolescent and a lousy student when he was rejected from St. Martin's School of Art. He had wanted to become an artist, but when he saw how many attractive girls studied fashion design, he switched to the fashion industry with a passion. Starting out as a photographer's apprentice, Duffy ended up at Harper's Bazaar, then ascended to Vogue, which was especially hip at that time. He photographed fashion shoots, made friends with models and met the celebrities who at that time didn"t hide themselves away and would stroll about the city. London was a communal space. Everyone lived in a common era, attended the same concerts and hung out in the same bars: artists, musicians, models, the rich people who fed them — and photographers, who in this world were not so much journalists or background personnel but friends. Everyone managed to meet and become acquainted with each other before achieving worldwide fame, preserving the ironic interrelations between them. They lived without thinking of what they would become, without feeling sorry for themselves, and without self-aggrandizement. In 1976 Duffy decided that he had become disenchanted with his work and gathered up his negatives, took them out of his house and threw them in a waste-bin in the park near his studio. A fireman saved part of the archive, but at his last exhibitions, which opened posthumously (Brian Duffy died in 2010 of a lung disease), it was emphasized that the shots on display, in a sense, were saved from the fire that later consumed his life.

In order to make the subjects of his photographs relax, Duffy drank with them all evening, sang and played guitar, while preparing his camera. His friend and rival David Bailey confessed that he once slapped a model in the face in order to relieve her tension and inhibition, but he did so with the goals of a teacher, of course.

Bailey suffered from dyslexia as a child, and was treated as the class fool in school, so he had personal reasons for teaching himself to express his thoughts through drawing and photography. His family was so poor that during the winter they sent the children to evening shows at the movies, because it was cheaper than turning on the heat.

That's how he learned cinema by heart. He once recollected the London Blitz and the moment when a bomb fell on the movie theater: "Hitler killed Bambi and Snow White." Bailey tried out many professions: he was a salesman and even a debt collector. He learned photography from John French by working as his assistant. "He wasn't the most talented photographer," Bailey said of him. The young Bailey was attractive and well liked by girls, whom he always knew how to make laugh. Men also liked him, although he never responded to their advances. John French fell in love with him and presented him as his boyfriend when working with Vogue. At that time in England one could be imprisoned for homosexuality, and Bailey started to withdraw from French personally, not because of the fact that he was not gay, but because Bailey was an outcast, being a guy from the streets with a cockney accent.

Whenever Bailey walked into an editor's office, everyone would clap him on the back and make fun of his manner of speaking. He was unable to forgive this. After nine months, an arrogant editor asked him to move the Rolls Royce that Bailey had started to drive so that the editor could park his lowly Ford nearby. Not only was this a moment of triumph, but also the style of his behavior was now characteristic of a star rather than a craftsman. "They criticize you not for what you do, but for who you are," Bailey said. "They never forgive you for driving a luxury car or having a beautiful woman."

"She's too good for you," he was once told about the model Jean Shrimpton. It had become understood after several months that they were together. The couple went to America, to conquer New York. Bailey recollected how they got caught in the rain and then, in the shabbiest possible state of appearance, went into the offices of American Vogue, which dripped with glamour. "The English have arrived!" he ecstatically shouted the director of American Vogue, Diana Vreeland, and that was a sign that the English had really come into fashion. Through Catherine Deneuve, who was then considered the most beautiful woman in French cinema, Bailey met Roman Polanski. They lived with Deneuve for five years. Bailey was

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CELIA HAMMOND WAS ONE OF THE MUSES OF THE 1960S, A FRIEND OF PHOTOGRAPHERS AND ROCK STARS. SHE APPEARED ON NUMEROUS COVERS OF VOGUE MAGAZINE AND NOW CAMPAIGNS FOR HOMELESS ANIMALS WITH THE CELIA HAMMOND ANIMAL TRUST.

1. Terence Donovan

Celia Hammond
London, December 18, 1961
© Terence Donovan Archive

PHOTO: **TERENCE DONOVAN**

her only official husband. He now says that he was married six times, four of those marriages were official.

The style of fashion photography in London of the 1960s became such a part of the zeitgeist that the main character in Michelangelo Antonioni's "Blow-up" was based on David Bailey. When he was first approached about the project, Bailey had such a sense of self-importance that he thought should shoot the film himself or at least play the main part. Bailey now thinks that the fame he acquired then did not help his work but rather interfered with it. Nevertheless, after "Blow-up", every fashion shoot was considered a prelude to sex — and it was precisely sexuality that was the main quality and criterion of fashion photography. Editors no longer cared about composition or the balance of black and white, they cared about whether a given shoot was sexy or not sexy.

In addition to being dyslexic, the American photographer Bob Richardson was schizophrenic. His condition took him to his grave in 2005 and never allowed him to get along with people. But editors admired his work and were willing to tolerate his fits of rage and bouts of severe depression, which could continue for months. His son, the photographer Terry Richardson, recalls him saying: "I see the world in black and white."

Bob Richardson's favorite model and life-long friend, Angelica Huston (she came to him in London, when she was 18), says that among all the great photographers of that period, he was the most magnificent: "He destroyed the result of most of his work, so that there is this sense that his career was short. But that isn't so." Richardson moved to England because in his homeland no one wanted to listen to him: "I wanted to show reality in my photographs. Sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll — that's what was happening. And I was in the middle of it. But they didn't want that in America. A lot of editors still wore white gloves."

Throughout the years Richardson lost his home, his archive, and his daughter, not knowing whether she was even alive. He would have lost his son as well, had he not kept him in his field of vision. When, at the end of his life, journalists came to finally make a book of Richardson's work, they found a man who was completely uninterested in glory, had no desire, and wouldn't lift a finger to help secure his legacy. And when they asked him to write something for the book, he managed to squeeze out just a few lines: "There are two sorts of people: those who live in the past, and those who live in the future... How did I manage to live 75 years? Courage — will — pride — I'm proud of myself — I'm not ashamed of anything — I have no secrets — I am free."

Terence Donovan was the only "Londoner" who didn't smoke: his father had died of cancer, and after that he refused to work for tobacco companies. He was an athlete, a tall, strong guy with a black belt in judo. In Rome he once fought off four men who had attacked him with knives. Donovan had a very strange and active sense of humour. Once, Princess Diana was being photographed in his studio, and he could not get her to laugh. Then he pulled out a 10-pound note with Queen Elizabeth on it and asked: "Do you recognize your mother-in-law?" At some point Donovan got sick of thinking about what to wear to the next day's shoot, and so he ordered several years' worth of identical gray flannel suits, white shirts, and black shoes. "That was unusual for a fashion photographer," his biographer muses, "but there was nothing usual about Donovan."

Young photographers asked him how they should shoot, and he said: "Don't let employers push you around. Do what you want, and find someone who will pay you for that." In 1996 Donovan hung himself in his studio in Ealing, a borough in west London. They say that he was abusing medication for nervous disorders and eczema. But before that Donovan had done a shoot for GQ magazine of the 20 most famous men in the United Kingdom. He was one of them himself.

Of all the photographers discussed here, David Bailey is the only one to outlive his time and the only one from whom it is possible to learn how photographers worked in London in the 1960s. In a recent interview he complained about contemporary fashion magazines, saying that they had degenerated beyond recovery and no longer care about what is good, only what is new. He insists that there is no reason to stylize photography according to what has come before, be that early Hollywood, the late Renaissance, or London of the 1960s. Perhaps most fashion photography documents the epoch as reportage.

These shoots were truly witnesses to their times. "The Swinging 60s" were not a gift to youth, the youth tore this gift from the hands of an older generation because the society of their fathers had been destroyed. Their fathers had been killed in war, cast out of the British colonies, survived a devaluation of the pound and American debt, exchanged Tories for Whigs and then had found that one was worse than the other.

In these years, morals changed. Medicines gave young people synthetic drugs and birth control pills (no one was yet thinking of AIDS). Sex ruled the city. Even government officials strayed with call girls. The secretary of state for war, John Profumo, resigned in 1963, when it was discovered that he was having an affair with the lover of a Soviet military attache and then lied about it to parliament. English adolescents were still flogged in school, but no one could control them; the war had weakened the inflexible British aristocracy, and young people got the right to speak the language of Eliza Doolittle without the fear of being ridiculed by Oxford graduates.

That is why photographers emerged as such important figures. It was necessary to find a medium, someone who could communicate across generations and social classes. The photographer became just such a medium: he found himself in the center of the world in the 1960s. It is true that rock singers, movie stars, millionaires, and politicians enjoyed more fame than photographers. They were significantly more influential and richer, but only the photog-

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IN MICHELANGELO ANTONIONI'S "BLOW-UP", VERUSCHKA PLAYED HERSELF, A SUPERMODEL AND AN EMBODIMENT OF FEMININITY, WHEREAS DAVID HEMMINGS MADE HIS PHOTOGRAPHER A PERSONIFICATION OF MASCULINITY. THIS EPISODE, FEATURED ON THE FILM POSTERS, BECAME ONE OF THE MAIN EROTIC SCENES OF THE 1960S DESPITE THERE NOT BEING A SINGLE KISS. THERE IS A GAME, HOWEVER, AND A CAMERA BETWEEN THE CHARACTERS, AND REALITY APPEARS ONLY IN THE PHOTOGRAPH (THE CHARACTER ONLY SEES THE MURDER IN THE PRINT). AFTER "BLOW-UP", ANY FASHION PHOTO SHOOT HAS BEEN SEEN AS A PRELUDE FOR SEX AND IT IS SEXUALITY THAT IS BELIEVED TO BE THE MAIN CRITERION OF FASHION PHOTOGRAPHY.

rapher was contemporaneous with everyone. In his lens and in his personality, he reflected everything. He was everyone and no one at the same time. In his hands, the camera was at once a universal passport — granting access to grand hotels and to drug dens — and a guarantee of independence, the possibility of entering into that milieu or, on the contrary, to keeping distance from it.

Let"s not forget yet another circumstance that allowed Swinging London to conquer the world. British photographers, rock singers, and actors had an enormous trump card — the English language, which at that time had only begun to transform into a worldwide Esperanto. The French language had grown weary of its position, the Spanish and Italian languages were not taken seriously, German had been soiled by war, and Russian was trapped behind the borders of Eastern Europe. England, the former metropolis of America, now transformed into a stronghold by the shores of Europe. The puritanical United States took from Londoners a lesson in frivolity and London emerged as the artistic capital not only of Britain but also of America. The two countries shared people, loves, and concepts. Even the sharp-nosed Concorde looked like a huge, flying syringe. It was invented to unite two sides of the ocean, and so that the artistic contagion would spread even faster.

2. Michelangelo Antonioni

A shot from "Blow-up"
1966
Museo Michelangelo Anlonioni
Ferrara, Gallerie d'Arle Moderna
e Conlemporanea

IN 1966 THE WHOLE WORLD MET TWIGGY, A DAUGHTER OF LONDON AND THE FACE OF A NEW BRITAIN. SHE HAD SHORT HAIR, DARK CIRCLES UNDER HER EYES AND WAS ONLY 5FT 6IN TALL AND 40 KG; AN INCARNATION OF BEING. SHE IS NOW A DESIGNER, A SINGER AND AN ACTRESS.

PHOTO: **TERENCE DONOVAN**

3. Terence Donovan

Twiggy
Woman's Mirror, August 27, 1966.
"Sundae Best"

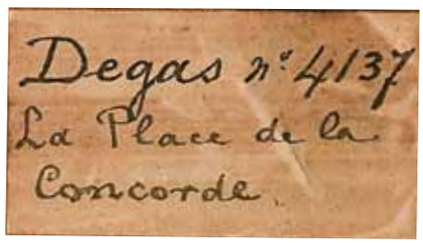

PHOTO: VLADIMIR TEREBENIN

"PLACE DE LA CONCORDE" RESEARCH AND RESTORATION

IN THE LAST TWO DECADES, THE ONCE-FORGOTTEN EDGAR RENEWED INTEREST AMONG THE MOST INFLUENTIAL UNUSUAL GROUP PORTRAIT WAS FIRST MOOTED IN 1995, AWAY IN A DEPOSITORY, IT WAS PUT ON SHOW AT THE HIDDEN STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM. HOWEVER, IT WAS TO BE MANY

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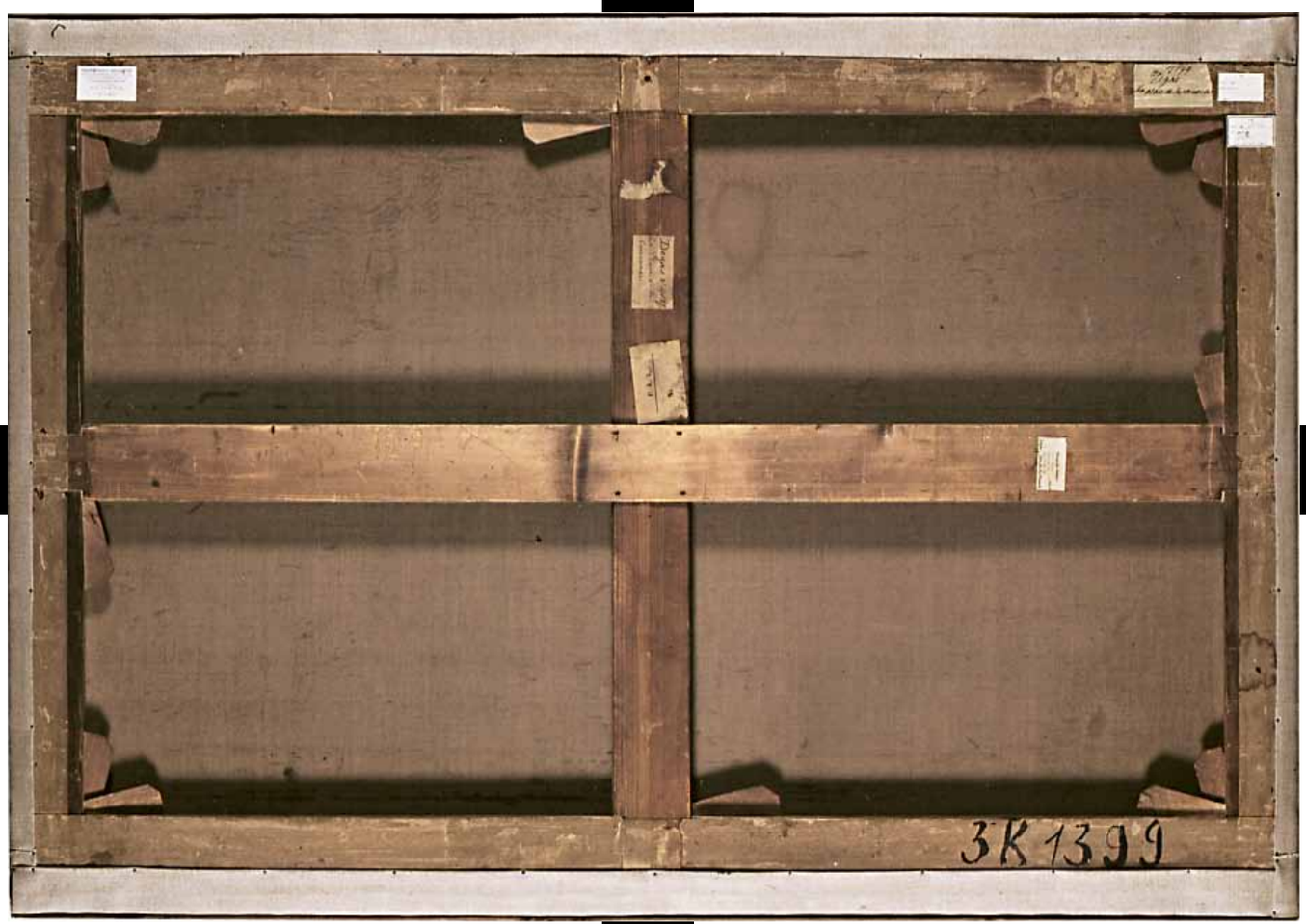
DEGAS PAINTING "PLACE DE LA CONCORDE" HAS SEEN SCHOLARS OF IMPRESSIONISM. THE IDEA OF RESTORING THIS WHEN, AFTER INEXPLICABLY HAVING SPENT 50 YEARS LOCKED TREASURES REVEALED EXHIBITION AT THE STATE MORE YEARS BEFORE THE IDEA COULD BECOME A REALITY.



In the last two decades, the once-forgotten Edgar Degas painting "Place de la Concorde" has seen renewed interest among the most influential scholars of Impressionism. The idea of restoring this unusual group portrait was first mooted in 1995, when, after inexplicably having spent 50 years locked away in a depository, it was put on show at the Hidden Treasures Revealed exhibition at the Hermitage. However, it was to be many more years before the idea could become a reality. The Hermitage possesses two collections of French Impressionists. One could be described as "ancestral", and consists of paintings brought to Russia through the efforts of Moscow entrepreneurs, principally Sergei Shchukin and Ivan Morozov. The other consists of "relocated" works from former German collections brought to Russia at the end of World War II. As such their status is different: they are symbols of the vast shock-waves that swept across the world during the war and of efforts to provide a form of compensation to the Soviet Union for irrevocable cultural losses it suffered at the hands of Nazis. Since the present-day German state does not recognise this "relocation", Russia refrains accordingly from sending "relocated" paintings abroad for exhibition.

For many years both groups of paintings existed separately but they are going to be united in preparation for a new life in the exhibition halls of the General Staff Building. The paintings brought from Germany will in all likelihood remain "forbidden to travel" for a long time, to use a Soviet term. Thanks to these circumstances, the post-war "German" additions have temporarily replaced the "ancestral" paintings which have been on show in Amsterdam, making this "mass exodus" less painful.

The jewel in the crown of the "relocated" collection, barely inferior to the Shchukin-Morozov acquisitions of the beginning of the 20th Century, is Edgar Degas' "Place de la Concorde". The painting, without doubt, merits its own extensive discussion. A collective decision by Hermitage specialists was required to initiate its restoration in 2009, although a previous restoration, carried out at the end of 1994, had yielded relatively little. The work done at that time, part of the preparation for the Hid-

Before restoration

Edgar Degas

Place de la Concorde (Viscount Lepic and his Daughters Crossing the Place de la Concorde)
France. 1875
Oil on canvas. 78.4 x 117.5 cm
Formerly in the collection of Otto Gerstenberg, later his daughter's, Margarete Scharf, Berlin.
Taken from Germany after WW II.

den Treasures Revealed exhibition of 1995, was limited to general dust removal and the eradication of surface dirt.

It had appeared that there was no need to attend to the paint itself — an examination indicated that it was in relatively good condition. However, an overall brownish-green tonality left much to be desired and failed to correspond with the wondrous picturesque quality seen in other Degas canvasses of the same period — the mid-1870s. Even an untrained eye could see that the lacquer — dense, dark, and suffering from clouding and yellowing — concealed a different painting. Careful physical investigation confirmed that the original tonality had undergone significant distortion. The painting was carefully studied and various photographs were taken, including X-rays. In 1995, I wrote in the catalogue: "Using X-radiography on a picture reveals the energetic sculpting of every detail, the brush's quest for form. Infrared photography of the canvas showed that [the painting] was not created in one sitting. It can be seen, in particular, that the contours of the dog and the silhouette of Eylau [one of the girls in the painting] have changed, and that her clothes have been repainted. The original lines of the coat were not vertical, as they are now, but more likely diagonal, which could be explained by a revision of the figure's position. It seems that originally the girl was shown just turning as she stood, but in the final version she is already beginning to move in the opposite direction, attracted by something beyond the frame which remains a mystery."[1] I resort to quoting myself only because several years later an article dedicated to "Place de la Concorde" appeared in the respected London journal The Burlington Magazine.[2] Mari Kálmán Meller, reiterating several of the hypotheses I made in the exhibition catalogue, used them in her own personal reconstruction of the process of the creation of the painting. "The diagonal brushstrokes in the figure of Eylau, noted by Kostenevich, could easily have been underpainting, highlighting the shoulder and the lapel on the child's coat."[3]

Kálmán Meller interpreted my words "not created in one sitting" to mean that the painting had been completed and later revised. In order to definitively prove her hypothesis, she reinforced her argument with a photographic montage in which

After restoration

X-ray of Ludovic Lepic

A notable feature of this X-ray is the search for the position of the top hat. The contour of Lepic's right shoulder was altered just a little, but with the hat the situation was more complex. The angle of its slope was changed at least three times. It is highly unlikely that the point of this operation was simply to better obscure the statue of Strasbourg in the background — the artist would have coped with such a task in the blink of an eye. The crux of the matter lies elsewhere. The position of the top hat and the head of the figure are directly linked with the character of his gait: is Lepic moving determinedly or at a leisurely stroll? Degas, of course, found the precise position, which consequently, however, lost a little of its effect as a result of the cutting. The head itself was painted very quickly, the artist laying thick bleach smears around it to fix the chosen pose. Ultimately, Degas sharply picked out the white collar of the shirt, not only with the aim of underlining that the gentleman looked *comme il faut*, but also because it was precisely here that the most sonorous note was required. There are two interrelated rhythms at work in the painting: one is the rhythm of the dark patches (the man's top hat and the girls' hats); the other is the rhythm of the very light patches (the collar, the scarves, Halevy's necktie). They form accents necessary for Degas to variously unite the leading actors on the stage he had set for them. The cigar, clearly, appeared in the painting's final stage.

X-ray of Janine and Eylau Lepic

The X-ray on the right clearly shows that the brushstrokes which form the end of the umbrella originally overlapped Eylau's hat. The photograph on the left shows that Janine's scarf originally had a rather different, more active configuration. The dog, or at least its torso, was fully rendered, which the artist was obliged to do in order to refine the animal's silhouette, although the dog's torso was soon overlapped by the brushstrokes which form the figure of Janine.

Detail of the painting during restoration, after the removal of the canvas from the stretcher

Part of the figure of Janine. The two pale bands at the bottom, where the missing paint has partly exposed the primer, mark the place where the canvas was bent behind the stretcher. It is clearly visible how unevenly and hastily the canvas was cut. The black square in the middle at the bottom is a replacement insert made of fragments of old canvasses of a similar weave kept by the Hermitage.

Janine Lepic

Detail of the painting during the thinning of the old varnish. Visible are small rectangular control areas, where the yellowed lacquer has been preserved.

Eylau Lepic.
Detail of the painting.
Ultraviolet photograph

The horizontal rectangle on the right-hand side shows the removal of excess layers of varnish during the thinning process. The straightened-out lower edge of the painting, on which there was no varnish, served as a control area. In the photograph it has the very same colour.

Janine Lepic
Macro photograph

both girls have been removed from the scene. According to her, the artist did not originally plan to include them and painted only the two men, one of whom is moving away as the other, the writer Ludovic Halevy, follows him with his gaze — this was the first stage, and later the girls were "invited" into the painting. This is a somewhat strange supposition, as Degas, a faithful student of the Old Masters, would work out the layout for a scene at the outset, regardless of the difficulty it presented. Besides which, careful study of the paint structure did not reveal the existence of different layers which would have conclusively proved varying compositions. The painting, it seemed, was painted quickly, without a break, although, of course, it was not painted in one day. In order for the first layer to have dried enough so that it could have been painted on again, three or four days would have been required.

Today, now that the painting has had its over-darkened lacquer removed, and its texture has been exposed, it is clear to see that the brushstrokes, forming an extension of the umbrella, pass in front of the hat of Eylau, a character who, according to Kálmán Meller, only appeared in the painting later. This seems illogical at first glance, as of course the umbrella should be behind the hat and not in front of it, but it is justified by the principles of painting: Clipped brushstrokes at the intersection with the hat would have contradicted the spirit of freedom with which the whole scene was rendered.

It is not clear why we should ascribe to Degas a "mechanical manipulation" in two stages, as proposed by Mari Kálmán Meller. The most surprising aspect of her idea that the figures of the girls were added later is that her article begins with a reference to Paul Valery and Octave Mirbeau, testifying — as it happens — to directly contradictory creative impulses in Degas. Here are Mirbeau's words about the almost mediumistic nature of Degas' working process, taken from an article by Gary Tinterow [4]:"...it was not he that determined the composition of the painting, but the first line or the first figure which he sketched or painted. Everything unfolded out of necessity, mathematically... from this first line and this first figure"[5]. The Burlington Magazine is a journal with a well-earned and long-standing global academic reputation, and such publications carry authority. However, new studies, carried out before the commencement of work on the canvas — revealing the occasionally illogical original characteristics of the picture — have permitted clarification of the process of its creation. Photographs and lengthy restoration work have merely confirmed that the whole composition was envisioned at the outset by the artist "out of necessity." Degas looked for the best positions for his figures directly on the canvas, and all of them, as one can imagine, immediately imprinted themselves on his imagination. The key moment, pivotal in the elevation of the work to the status of masterpiece, was the "mathematical" balancing of multi-directional motion, which forced Degas after a period of some time (but crucially, not too long) to make revisions. There was no need for radical alterations. In any detailed consideration of "Place de la Concorde", if one is aware that the canvas was later cut, the key question will always concern the original format of the painting. It is impossible not to note that, of those who have written about the painting, most have no idea of the truth, often making daring conjectures about the boldness of the artist's framing. Degas' creative idea is thus distorted, although not significantly. At the Hermitage, of course, the cutting of the canvas was no secret, though whose idea it was to trim the painting, nobody knew. When I broached the matter, some of the responses I heard were that the artist himself was

probably responsible. It seldom happened but Degas did change the format of his compositions from time to time when he had to deal with paper or cardboard. However he was more likely to enlarge than reduce the size of a work if required by the changing spatial relationships between characters and background during the course of a project. In Degas' oil paintings such cases are isolated. The most indicative example of this is the painting "The Engravers Desboulin and Lepic" (Musée d'Orsay), which features a relatively wide attachment to the upper section. "Place de la Concorde" arrived at the Hermitage without any kind of frame. For the exhibition of 1995 a search of our vaults yielded three frames which were suitable in size and character. We settled on the one which corresponded best to the style of the 1870s and 1880s. The frame usually serves as a decoration for the painting, while protecting the canvas, which as a rule results in it overlapping the edge of the canvas and, at least to some extent, covering the painting around the edges. In 1995 we chose a frame which allowed us to gain several millimetres around the whole perimeter of the canvas. The restoration, which led to a change in the painting's dimensions, required a thorough consideration of all the details of the new frame. A strip of the painting around four centimetres wide which had been folded behind the stretcher was released, altering the height of the canvas. It was not possible to do any more to improve the work's suitability for display, so it remains very slightly truncated. If it had been a seascape, from which, let's say, a small part of the waves had been removed, the damage would have been less noticeable, but for a figurative composition it is a different story. Eighteen years ago, when I endeavoured to guess the width of the vanished lower section of the painting, I estimated that this band of the original lower edge must have measured around four centimetres, which would have been equal to the width of the folded piece of canvas which we had to straighten out. But something still didn't add up. With the completion of the restoration, which had returned, by my present calculation, around four percent of the original composition, I began to lean toward a different theory. How wide, in actual fact, was the lost strip and what was the original height of the painting? The general width of the picture did not undergo any changes, although it expanded a little as a result of re-stretching — approximately half a centimetre. The height before restoration was 78.4 cm, while after it was 82.2 cm. The width does not come to a round figure, which was normal for French artistic practice in those days. Although standard-sized frames had rounded-out measurements, if an artist ordered one to be made especially for a large canvas (they were not mass produced), it was unlikely to measure in round figures — though the stretcher and canvas for "The Belleli Family", Degas' largest painting, measuring 200 x 250 cm, serve as a notable exception. For smaller pictures, it was more convenient to rely on the practice of using factory-produced stretchers and canvasses of standard dimensions. Reading the letters of Van Gogh or Gauguin, one comes across information about the formats which were in common use in France at that time, the terms for which are rather opaque — for example, the formats referred to as "in 40" or "in 30". "In 30", translated into the language of our own day, is 91 x 73 cm for figurative compositions. Many of Degas' canvasses match those parameters precisely. "Place de la Concorde", however, is reminiscent of the format "in 50," which is to say 116 x 89 cm for figurative compositions or 116 x 81 cm for landscapes. But Degas did not paint any oil landscapes, which raises the question of why he chose this format, especially as he was planning to paint

a figurative composition. Taking into account the given proportions, we come to the conclusion that the painting has lost around eight centimetres along the whole bottom edge of the canvas, as 90.5 cm relates to 117.5 cm, as 116 cm to 89 cm — a format which the artist had resorted to in early works such as "Edmond et Therese Morbilli" (1865, Museum of Fine Arts, Boston) and "Self-Portrait with Evariste de Valernes" (1865, Musée d'Orsay). Of course, one can always disagree: why should one believe the specified proportions? There are a number of reasons. Firstly, Degas was drawn to such classical proportions, close to the Golden Ratio, which strive to avoid both square and stretched formats. Secondly, these proportions are closely linked to the painter's aesthetic, with its sense of beauty influenced by a classical education. The artist attempted to depict his characters in accord with a sense of visual harmony, and the truncation of the painting could not fail to offend it. It seems that the dog was the least fortunate of them all. The greyhound differs from other breeds of dog in the length of its legs — it is in this, above all, that the beauty of its physique is embodied. Why then would Degas choose not to depict the legs of the greyhound in their entirety? And by trimming the figures of the girls, he makes them slightly squat. It is inconceivable that this would have been part of his plan. Thirdly, we should remember the words of Octave Mirbeau: "Everything unfolded out of necessity, mathematically". This raises additional arguments, in particular concerning the representation of the dog. If the legs of the greyhound had been depicted in full and the canvas had been 90 cm high, they would have stretched to the lower edge of the painting. None of the preparatory studies for the painting have survived, with the exception of a small sketch of the background, which is not mentioned in any of the artist's surviving letters, nor in any memoirs written about him. As we know, "Place de la Concorde" is unsigned, which amounts to something of a riddle because a completed painting awaiting sale should have been signed by the artist. However, at the bottom of the canvas, where perhaps the signature was once located, the painting was barbarically trimmed, and this took place while the painting was in the keeping of the painting's very subject, Ludovic Lepic, so it follows that it is he that we must suspect of this impropriety. Although Lepic's purpose is not clear, we can advance various theories — and thus our research becomes an investigation. The prominent art dealer Paul Durand-Ruel, a leading patron of Impressionism, who purchased the painting several years after the death of Lepic, attempted on a number of occasions to convince Degas to sign the work, but neither he nor his son was successful. One can only conclude that the destruction of part of the canvas by its owner was taken as a personal insult by the artist, who found out about the damage only years later. For seven years he shied away from authenticating the painting and refused to sign it. Cleaning the painting was no help in finding

traces of the signature which had vanished along with the missing lower edge. The question of the painting's restoration was raised at sessions of the Hermitage's Commission on Easel Paintings in 2007–2008, and found significant support, although some abstained, pointing to the immense difficulty of the task. While drawing up work plans for 2009, the commission of the Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Easel Paintings recognised that the restoration of the painting undoubtedly required a whole series of delicate operations, which were entrusted to V. Y. Brovkin, one of Russia's most skilled restorers. Prior to this, Brovkin had carried out huge restoration work on a pair of paintings by Renoir, "Man on a Staircase" and "Woman on a Staircase", which required thinning the dense, many-layered and uneven lacquer covering the pictures.[6] The result exceeded all expectations and the work was hailed as a great achievement. On November 19, 2009, a team from the Restoration Commission of the Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Easel Paintings met to discuss the restoration of "Place de la Concorde" in detail. The painting was already waiting in the workshop, where it had been subject to detailed study. On the day's agenda was a statement outlining the general assignment. This, above all, consisted of correcting the distortions which had appeared after the artist had parted with the painting. The principal issues discussed concerned the removal of the thick lacquer, responsible for distorting both the colour and the level manner of Degas' brushwork, and also the return of every square centimetre of the composition, one part of which was hidden by a fold of the frame, and others by the bending of a whole strip of the painted canvas behind the stretcher more than 100 years before. A unanimous decision was taken to straighten out the hidden bend in the canvas and stretch the painting on a new or an old, reconstructed stretcher. After a detailed discussion of all the options available to achieve these goals, the participants of the meeting voted for the preservation of the old stretcher, supplemented and strengthened with precisely calculated extensions. The main task was essentially to return the painting to its original dimensions as far as possible. The commission recommended beginning with an extensive technical examination of the painting using X-radiography, and ultraviolet and infrared photography. The problem of thinning the lacquer was not discussed at length at this stage. It was decided, with some justification, to address this at a later juncture. The work turned out to be significantly more laborious and difficult than it had at first seemed, and took more than a year-and-a-half to complete. The initial resolution, taken by the commission on March 18, 2010, consisted of the following: to reinforce the entire surface of the painting in order to facilitate the safe removal of the canvas from its stretcher; straighten out the lower edge folded over the stretcher; restore the edges and carry out vital insertions of canvas in areas where the original was damaged or missing; carry out a study of the lacquer; and reconstruct the stretcher, adding two horizontal supports. On May 20, 2010, the commission, having approved the execution of the first phases of the restoration, confirmed the next task: to apply restorative primer in those areas of loss; to restore the lacquer; and to carry out tests on thinning the lacquer on certain control areas in the background of the painting. On November 3 of that year, satisfied that the work being carried out by V. Y. Brovkin was of a convincing and appropriate standard, the commission issued a new assignment addressing the gradual thinning and smoothing of the lacquer, and also addressing the re-lining of areas missing paint on the straightened-out edge. On May 12, 2011, the work was completed and approved by the Restoration Commission of the Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Easel Paintings. What, in the final reckoning, has the straightening out of the lower strip of the painting added to the picture? Although it has not completely restored the painting to the fullness of the master's original composition, it has at least brought it significantly closer to the condition in which it left his studio. A format has been developed for the painting which corresponds best to Degas' original vision. Even the relatively small increment along the bottom allows one to feel the more complex and organic play of the brushwork in this composition. The dark patch of Lepic's trousers, an important part of the colour composition, is now identifiable as the bottom point of a diamond whose other points are formed by the hats of the Lepics; it is

Eylau Lepic
Macro photograph

through this general rhythm that the painting acquires greater meaning. The original picture had its own kind of framing if one considers that both the top of the work (the Tuileries Garden and Rue de Rivoli) and the bottom, which was part hidden, part cut, contained dark elements: the black legs of the figure of Lepic; the skirts of the girls' coats. This promoted dynamic spatial relationships which are much clearer now. The dark figure of Halevy on the left and Eylau on the right serve as an illustration of this: it was important for Degas to create a balance between the motion of the figures in his deliberately close-cropped composition, which would emphasise the "object-based", purely pictorial framing. He also wanted to make the emptiness of the square more resonant and significant. It has become clear that before the painting left Degas' studio, its entire system of balance and colour dynamics was more organic, every detail was brought into play, that is, into a virtuoso dance of colour in which every hue had a role to play.

Here we must highlight the particularly important role played by the part of the lower edge which had been bent under the painting. There was no lacquer discovered on it, and this in itself is a crucial piece of evidence. It is well known that Degas was always very wary of applying varnish, and he had little time for the thick, offensive, "greasy" lacquer of Salon paintings. As it happens, one of the reasons for his persistent use of pastels was that, even after fixing,[7] the colours retained their primogeniture. Thus, blame for the dense lacquer coating of "Place de la Concorde" rests entirely on Lepic. Moreover, the lacquer was only applied once the painting had been cut and placed in its frame. The strip of the painting bent underneath the canvas became the sample for the original, uncorrupted colours of the painting. The thinnest film of varnish remained, but, while protecting the paint, it did not "edit" it.

Lacquer was the traditional means of protecting paintings when Degas was a student in the middle of the century. A lacquer coating was perceived as necessary from an aesthetic point of view. "Everybody who exhibited their work at the Salon, including the young Impressionists, inevitably followed vernissage protocol, and the influence of this convention was clear even in those works which were not exhibited at the Salon".[8] In the 1860s, reigning tastes dictated that the surface of the canvas should be glazed with varnish. Degas recalled how, on the day of a vernissage in the Salon in 1868, he had requested a *rapin* with a bucket of lacquer, who was passing by, to varnish his "Mlle Fiocre in the Ballet 'La Source'." However, the paint had not yet had time to dry, and the result horrified the artist. After the exhibition he tried to remove the lacquer, but only succeeded in removing some of the paint along with it.9 The Hermitage had prior experience of the problems caused by "that pernicious" lacquer, applied once by accident by a different hand to Renoir's "Portrait of the Actress Jeanne Samary". The uneven brown lacquer terribly distorted Renoir's radiant portrait, a canvas mentioned on numerous occasions in his biographies. Only in the late 1960s was it removed by the restorer Z. N. Nikolayeva, who returned the paint to its original beauty. It is curious that even Durand-Ruel, in order to get the best price for a canvas, insisted on paintings being varnished. However, during the 1870s, Impressionist circles gradually began to turn away from such glossing. In any case, "Place de la Concorde", as is now clear, was one of the early examples of an unvarnished painting in this era, and by the 1880s a number of artists displaying their work at Impressionist exhibitions had come to favour an unvarnished surface. Even many sophisticated connoisseurs quickly became accustomed to this. Huysmanns, in his book "L'Art moderne" published in 1883, wrote with slight puzzlement of the English habit of exhibiting paintings without a coating of varnish, but instead behind glass, a practice the National Gallery in London had been following since the mid-1870s.[10] The thinning of the lacquer coating of "Place de la Concorde" progressed with care and thus at a slow pace. Gradually one thin layer after another was removed. The tonality changed, from the warmth with which we were so familiar toward a tone which was more neutral, approaching coldness. In this regard the painting acquired a legitimate relationship to the colour modes of Impressionism. The brushstrokes, liberated from their filling of hardened varnish, which had for so long obscured the surface of the painting, emerged not only as constituent elements of the image but participants in the painting, testimony to the great technical skill of the artist. On the other hand, the yellowness had not disappeared and in fact was not meant to disappear completely. Before restoration it seemed as though for the most part that this was due to the overlaying, stained lacquer, but after the work was complete, without superfluous yellowing, it was possible to see that from the very beginning the painting had been suffused with light yellow. It remained an integral subject element, a reminder of that hour just before evening when colours acquire a warm glow, and of the sandy covering of the square. The combination of yellow and grey tones gives a convincingly realistic and expressive range of colour to the composition. Unlike his ballet scenes, this canvas is ruled by gentle, restrained colouring, and shows no sign of the forced vibrancy so typical of Degas' contemporaries at exhibitions of the Impressionists. The light colour accents which are permitted — Lepic's red buttonhole and white collar, the girls' white scarves and Halévy's multicoloured tie — are few and only serve to underline the dignity of the figures' grey attire. The main achievement of the restoration is the revelation of the full beauty of a painting which had long been hidden. Henceforth "Place de la Concorde" allows us to take a fresh look at the important problem of Degas' mutual relationship with Impressionism. True, he did not like the word and preferred to be known as a realist, although in the final reckoning he was obliged to come to terms with the fact that exhibitions of new painting, in which he had been one of the active organizers, were labelled Impressionist. The silvery tint of the painting which we can admire today will certainly remind some of the colour orchestration of Camille Corot, a romantic precursor of the Impressionists, but to an even greater degree Degas will always remain indelibly marked by a Parisian air, and this scene, with its characters and background details, emerges as an incomparable image of that great city.

Reconstruction of the composition of the painting before it was cut, with guidelines designating structure and dynamics

Degas refrained from natural observations while laying out the painting. As soon as one understands that the lamp-posts are not only part of the real decoration of the square and an essential convenience, but also a part of the structural framework of the picture, the painting's logic becomes clear. Two basic verticals ("c" and "f") divide the canvas into three sections. The left and right sections are completely equal, and the central one is a little wider; the mid-line vertical axis would pass directly through the figure of Janine. She is the geometrical centre of the painting. The father, his daughters and the dog form a kind of pyramid, although Degas allows us to feel that this pyramid is not static. Inside it some motion is incorporated, caused by the slope of the rhombus, in accordance with the motion of Lepic. The corners of the rhombus are marked with black areas of paint: Lepic's top hat and trousers and the hats of the girls. The dynamic and the static interact remarkably, expressing the "advanced mathematics" of the painting. The static coordinates are marked in turquoise lines. The horizontals of the same colour of the lower part show the cut section and the part of the painting that was bent behind the stretcher. The orange diagonals, denoting the pyramidal configuration, are the compositional foundations of the painting and the slant of the pyramidal configuraions projects the idea of movement. Yellow lines convey the motion as well. The accompanying light-red lines of the rhombus illustrate the structure of the dynamic elements of the whole work.

a b c d e f g h

1 Kosienevich A. Hidden Treasures Revealed. New York; St. Petersburg., 1995. P. 77.
2 See: Kalman Meller M. Degas' "Place de la Concorde: Vicomte Lepic and his Daughters" // The Burlington Magazine. 2003. April. Pp. 273–281.
3 Ibid. P. 277.
4 Tinterow G. Mirbeau on Degas: A little-known article of 1888 // The Burlington Magazine. 1988. P. 229
5 Kalman Meller M. Degas' "Place de la Concorde: Vicomte Lepic and his Daughters". Pp. 273–274
6 See: Kosienevich A. Renoir: Compositions with Stairs. SPB: State Hermitage Publishing House, 2009.
7 For this reason the artist particularly valued his collaboration with painter Luigi Chialiva, who was especially well-versed in the fixing and preservation of pastels.
8 Swicklik M. French Painting and the Use of Varnish. 1750–1900 / Studies in the History of Art. 41. Monograph. Series II: Conservation Research. Washington: National Gallery of Art, 1993. P. 166.
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“LOOK, THERE GOES

When Marc Chagall came to Leningrad 40 years ago, the very first thing he did was set off for the Hermitage. This was not the museum which he remembered from his childhood and which he had last visited 60 years before — everything fascinated him. It brought me great pleasure to accompany this living legend, whose desire to see the museum"s new paintings was so strong that he wandered around the third floor of the Winter Palace for almost three hours. Until 1917, of course, it had fulfilled the function of a real palace, and not a museum. It was striking to see how, for the whole duration of the visit, his bright eyes would dart ceaselessly from one painting to another, never tiring. From time to time his attention would be caught by a painting, and one would hear: "Ah, and this is Marquet... You understand, Marquet was not one of the great masters, but he worked in Paris, a wonderful place, alongside some of the greatest artists, and therefore each one of his canvasses — it"s..." and here he would stammer, searching for the word, "it"s *quelque chose*".

How attentively he would examine the pastels of Degas. "You know, André Salmon once pointed out to me a man on the other side of the street: "Look, there goes Degas", he said. But we were young then, and had no interest in this". It is easy to imagine how and when this could have happened. One remembers, above all, the famous shots — Degas on the Boulevard de Clichy — from Sacha Guitry"s documentary film "Ceux de Chez Nous" ("Those Of Our Land", 1915). The striking footage of the old, almost blind *flâneur* is often reproduced in books about the artist. And in his words "we were young then..." one can clearly hear the echo of regret.

Kostenevich A.G. Edgar Degas, "Place de la Concorde": Notes on the Painting. Published by the State Hermitage, St. Petersburg 2012.

Marc Chagall at the State Hermitage Museum. A. Kostenevich is on the right
1960

FROM THE AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Degas on the Boulevard de Clichy
1915
Still from Sacha Guitry's film "Ceux de Chez Nous" ("Those of Our Land", 1915)
From: Kostenevich A.G. Edgar Degas, "Place de la Concorde": Notes on the Painting. Published by the State Hermitage, St. Petersburg 2012

This is a still from Sacha Guitry's 1915 documentary debut "Ceux de Chez Nous" ("Those Of Our Land"), in which he captured contemporary French artists of the time, such as Auguste Renoir and Auguste Rodin, at work. He asked Edgar Degas to appear in the film, but the artist flatly refused. By then Degas was almost completely blind, and was no longer able to paint. Instead he would spend whole days wandering the streets of Paris with nowhere to go. Deciding to make use of this, Guitry set up his camera on the street at a spot by which Degas usually passed on his morning walk, and took this shot. Interestingly, Guitry was born in 1885 in St. Petersburg, where his father, Lucien Guitry, worked in a French-language theatre.

DEGAS"...

ON JUNE 7, 2011, AT CHRISTIE'S AUCTION HOUSE IN LONDON, THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM ACQUIRED A SILVER DRESSING-TABLE SERVICE DATING FROM 1786–1789 MADE BY THE FAMOUS PARISIAN JEWELLER, ANTOINE BOULLIER. THE STORY BEHIND THIS SERVICE MAKES IT A HIGHLY PRECIOUS ARTEFACT FOR RUSSIAN CULTURE.

THE SILVER OF THE QUEEN OF SPADES

VIKTOR FAIBISOVICH

"This service was presented by Her Excellency Princess Natalya Golitsyna, née Countess Chernysheva, to her daughter Countess Sofia Stroganova, who then gave it as dowry to her daughter Countess Natalya Stroganova, in 1818," reads an inscription engraved on the bottom facet of the magnificently ornamented mirror that forms part of the important Louis XVI silver dressing-table service.

Princess Natalya Golitsyna (1744–1837), a daughter of the famous diplomat Count Pyotr Chernyshev, was one of the most outstanding Russian women of the 18th and 19th Centuries. Being a maid of honour and later lady-in-waiting, as well as a Dame Grand Cross of the Order of St. Catherine, she was one of the most prominent and influential figures at the courts of four monarchs — from Catherine II (Catherine the Great) to Nicholas I. Numerous paintings, drawings, memoirs and works of fiction capture the vivid image of this independent, imperious and austere Princesse Mouslache (Moustached Princess), as she was known. Princess Natalya is widely regarded as having been the main inspiration for the old countess in Alexander Pushkin's 1834 short story "The Queen of Spades".

Natalya first found herself in Paris in 1760, when her father was appointed ambassador to Louis XV's court, and the young countess spent three years there. Twenty years later, the princess went to France again, this time with the intention of providing her children with a European education. As we can read in her notes, she arrived in Paris on September 13, 1784 and left France on August 26, 1790[1]. The dressing-table service, which according to its hallmarks was made between 1786 and 1789, was apparently ordered from Antoine Boullier in Paris by the princess herself.

Its next owner was Natalya's daughter, Sofia. Princess Sofia Golitsyna (1775–1845) was an equally outstanding person, though devoid of the imperious and austere character of her famous mother. It is most probable that the Parisian dressing-table service was given by Princess

1. Charles Benois Mitoire

Portrait of Princess N.P. Golitsyna
First quarter of the 19th Century
Oil on canvas. 80.5 × 66 cm
Inventory No. ERZH-1164

There are several variations of the portrait and its copies: in the National Pushkin Museum in St. Petersburg and in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow. The local history museum in Dmitrov exhibits is a miniature by Miloire, based on his own original.

2. Antoine Boullier

Golitsyn-Stroganov dressing-table service
Mirror
Paris, 1786-1789
Silver, glass, casting, chasing
Inventory № E-18266

Inventory № E-18276

3. Antoine Boullier

Golitsyn-Stroganov dressing-table service
Basin with cover
Paris, 1786–1789
Silver, casting, chasing

Natalya to her daughter as a wedding present when she married Count Pavel Stroganov. The count, who later became the Emperor's closest associate in his liberal reform agenda soon after acceding to the throne, was a hero of the wars against France, Sweden and Turkey.

Family legend links the princess and the count's interest in each other to the Bratsevo Estate, just outside Moscow, where Pavel is believed to have been sent into exile for his participation in the turbulence of the French Revolution. The author of Pavel's entry in the Russian Biographical Dictionary tells us that "Catherine II, displeased with Stroganov's behaviour in France, ordered him sent to ... the village of Bratsevo outside Moscow, where he stayed until 1796"[2]. "At the end of the Catherine II's reign," the article reads, "Stroganov was allowed to move to St. Petersburg"[3]. The same information can be found in another, no less reputable source, Grand Prince Nicholas' "Russian Portraits of the 18th and 19th Centuries": "In December of 1790, Count P. A. Stroganov, accompanied by N. N. Novosiltsev, left France and upon arrival in Russia was sent by the Empress to Bratsevo village outside Moscow, where he married Princess Sofia V. Golitsyna and had a son, Alexander. At the end of Empress Catherine II's reign he received permission to move to St. Petersburg"[4].

However, there are other indications that lead us to suspect that young Stroganov and Golitsyna had become acquainted earlier and their marriage had been decided long before they saw each other in Bratsevo.

Meanwhile, Princess Natalya Golitsyna returned to St. Petersburg from France on October 14, 1790[5]. She stayed at the Sheremetev Palace on the Fontanka, which had been rented for 4000 roubles a year by her agent Agrenev, and there she carefully prepared with her daughters for Sofia's arrival[6]. Apparently, then, the Sheremetev Palace was the first home of Boullier's dressing-table service in Russia.

"Six days after our arrival on Sunday morning," remembered Princess Golitsyna, "I set off to the Court together with my daughters. After the church service I was introduced to Her Majesty, and the Empress even deigned to talk to my eldest daughter. I then went to His Highness, Grand Prince and Grand Princess, who also kindly received me".[7] According to the court appointments book, Princess Golitsyna and her daughters paid this visit on October 20, 1790.

"On the evening of the same day, my sister and I organised a grand masquerade ball in Woronzoff's house where all the Imperial family was present," the princess's memoirs continue. "During the ball Her Majesty was kind enough to distinguish me with her manners and several days later I was one of the guests, together with

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4. Antoine Boullier

Golitsyn-Stroganov dressing-table service
Vase
Paris, 1786–1789
Silver, casting, chasing

Inventory № E-18286

5. Antoine Boullier

Golitsyn-Stroganov dressing-table service
Casket
Paris, 1786–1789
Silver, casting, chasing

my husband and daughters, at the Hermitage for a little play which, of all the ladies in the city, has only been seen by my sister and her children and us; since then I have been on the list of attendance for all small assemblies at the Hermitage."[8]

Indeed, from that day on through the winter of 1790-1791, Princess Golitsyna and her daughters were regularly received at court; her name is mentioned in the court appointments book on December 15, 1790, and on January 12, January 16 and February 6, 1791.

The princess, in turn, began holding receptions at her house: "Upon returning from abroad Princess Natalia P. Golitsyna opened her house," Count Komarovsky wrote in his memoirs. "She held balls each Wednesday, and her sister, Countess Darya P. Saltykova, [also held balls] on Sundays".[9]

Five months after the Golitsyns returned from Paris, on March 24, 1791, Avdotya Lunina (1760–1847), the wife of Lieutenant-General Pyotr Lunin (1759-1822), sent a letter from Moscow to Lieutenant-General Prince Sergei Golitsyn in Iasi, writing, "Another wedding is planned in St. Petersburg, although it is still a secret: Princess Natalya's youngest daughter is getting married to Count Stroganov...".[10]

It appears that the engagement between Count Strognaov and Princess Sofia must have taken place no later than mid-March 1791 in St. Petersburg, and not in Bratsevo after all. It should be noted that this engagement was praised by the poet and statesman Gavrila Derzhavin. Therefore, theories about the "exile" to Bratsevo to which Empress Catherine subjected the young Count Stroganov should probably be reconsidered.

It is known that Count Stroganov travelled from France to Russia in early December of 1790[11]. It is obvious that he returned to St. Petersburg before Christmas. As his engagement with Princess Sofia took place in St. Petersburg two-and-a-half months later, we can assume that the young people already knew each other back in Paris and that their love story did not thrive on the banks of the Bratovka and the Skhodnya, but on the embankments of the Fontanka and the Moika[12]. Four months after the engagement, on July 27, 1791, according to the court appointments book, Count Pavel Stroganov, who had "recently been promoted to a lieutenant of the guards and expressed his humble gratitude for this," was invited to a dinner for 55 people held in the Great Hall in the Grand Palace of Tsarskoye Selo. We can hypothesize that the extension of such an invitation is an indication of a complete lack of awareness of the imprudent behaviour of the young count in Paris. Pavel Stroganov's intention to marry Princess Sofia Golitsyna might have played a considerable part in it, too.

After February 6, 1791, meanwhile, the name of Princess Natalya Golitsyna does not appear in

the court appointments book for a whole year, until February 12, 1792; the princess must have spent this period outside the capital. It is interesting, though, that the next day after the princess's return to court, on February 13, 1792, her daughter's fiancé, Lieutenant of the Guards Pavel Stroganov, was promoted to be a Groom of the Chamber.

On September 12, 1792, according to the court appointments book, among those invited to a ball at the Hermitage "from a special list," were Natalya Golitsyna with her daughters, Yekaterina and Sofia; at the palace they met Pavel A. Stroganov. On January 9, 1793, Princess Natalya and Princess Sofia attended a ball at the Hermitage and the Groom of the Chamber, Count Pavel Stroganov, was also in attendance. They met at the palace again on March 1, 1793. Two months later, on May 6, Count Stroganov and Princes Golitsyna were married. The newlyweds started married life in the Stroganov Palace, built by Pavel's father, on Nevsky Prospekt. Unfortunately, it has been impossible to find out for how long Princess Natalya rented the Sheremetev Palace. There is no reliable information about when she eventually moved to the famous house on Malaya Moskaya Street, known among the people of St. Petersburg as "the house of the Queen of Spades." It is probable that Boullier's dressing-table service moved directly to the Stroganov Palace from the Sheremetev Palace.

Pavel Stroganov and Sofia Golitsyna's marriage lasted for nearly a quarter of a century — the count died on board the brigantine St. Patrick on June 10, 1817 of tuberculosis which, according to many, developed as a result of deep sorrow over the death of his only son, Alexander, at the Battle of Craonne in 1814. Pavel Stroganov's widow was held in high regard as after her husband's death she devoted herself to the education of serfs and the improvement of their living conditions: among other improvements at her estates, which had up to 16,000 serfs, she introduced a basic electoral system and peasant houses were insured against fire.

Inventory № E-18282

In her youth Sofia was praised by Derzhavin and in middle age she was quite successful in poetry herself, translating Dante's "Inferno" into Russian. Her eldest daughter, Natalya (1796–1872) was not devoid of artistic inclinations either. She took lessons from the famous engraver N.I. Ukin and was rather good at engraving copper. Soon after her father's death, in 1818, she married her distant relative, first Lieutenant of the Hussars Imperial Guard Baron Sergey Stroganov (1794–1882) who inherited the title from his father-in-law after the latter left no male heirs.

Most parts of the dressing-table service feature the chased joint coats of arms of Counts Chernyshev and Princes Golitsyn; only the silver frame of the large table mirror is decorated with

the Stroganov coat of arms on a high cresting. On the reverse of the cresting there is the mark of Ivar Christian Pragst. The cresting with the arms of the Counts Stroganov must have been applied to the mirror after 1822, as Pragst did not have his own hallmark prior to that.

The Golitsyn-Stroganov dressing-table service left Russia no later than 1926. Henri Nocq, author of "The Hallmark of Paris", writes in the first volume of his work (Nocq H. "Le Poinçon de Paris". Paris, 1926. Vol. I. P. 168), that Antoine Boullier's masterwork belonged to Leon Helft. The set was then acquired by a certain A. Rütschi and was in his possession until the middle of the 20th Century, when the service was sold at auction at the Stucker Gallery in Bern, Switzerland, in late November 1954 (Galerie Stucker, Bern, 26/27 November 1954, lots no. 268–287). It later belonged to members of the German Royal House, but on May 12, 1982, was sold by Christie's in Geneva (lot no. 259) — without the two largest silver boxes. At the Christie's auction in London in 2011, the service was presented as "the property of a gentleman." The literature includes two publications (1983 and 1989) dedicated to the Al-Tajir Collection; we can hypothesize that the last owner of the service was Mahdi Al Tajir, a billionaire from the United Arab Emirates who lives in London and at Keir House, an estate in Scotland. Bahrain-born Al-Tajir is often named Scotland's richest man.

Now the service has returned to Russia, to the Winter Palace that so often hosted its first owners: Countesses Natalya and Sofia Stroganov and Princess Natalya Golitsyna. But Princesse Moustache's relics in the Hermitage are not limited to this French silver: you can learn about the Queen of Spades's gold in the next issue of this magazine.

Inventory № E-18272

Antoine Boullier

Golitsyn-Stroganov dressing-table service Candlestick

Paris, 1786–1789

Silver, casting, chasing

1 See: *N.P. Golitsyna* My Destiny is Me. Moscow: Russkiy Mir, 2010. p 371.
2 Russian Biographical Dictionary. 'Smelovsky–Suvorina'. St. Petersburg, 1909. p 515.
3 Ibid.
4 Russian Portraits of the 18th and 19th Centuries. Edition of Grand Prince Nikolai M. Romanov: In 5 volumes. Moscow: Tri Veka Istorii, 2000. V. V no. 170. p 537.
5 See: *N.P. Golitsyna* My Destiny is Me. p 427.
6 See: Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 *V.F. Komarovsky* Memoirs / Sovereign Sphinx. Moscow: Fond Sergeya Dubova, 1999. p 33.
10 *P. B. [Pyotr Bartenev]*. Prince Sergey F. Golitsyn's Papers // Russkiy Arhiv. 1876. Book 2. p 140.
11 See: *A.V. Chudinov Gilbert Romm* and *Pavel Stroganoff*. The Story of an Unusual Alliance. Moscow: Novoye Literaturnoye Obozreniye, 2010. p 305.
12 Note that the rumour about the upcoming wedding did not arrive in Moscow from Bratsevo but from St. Petersburg.


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138 HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM

RIJKS

THE IMPRESSIONISTS
ON THE AMSTEL

The opening of the exhibition (painlings by Monel)

IN THE SUMMER 2009, AFTER THE COMPLETION OF A RADICAL RECONSTRUCTION, THE AMSTELHOF, A FORMER HOSPICE WITH A VENERABLE 300-YEAR HISTORY, SUDDENLY ACQUIRED A COMPLETELY NEW PURPOSE AND FUNCTION. NOW HOUSING THE LARGEST EXHIBITION HALL IN THE PRINCIPAL DUTCH CITY, AND BEARING THE SAME NAME AS OUR MUSEUM, THIS CENTRE, NOW CALLED THE HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM IS, ONE AFTER ANOTHER, WELCOMING A SIGNIFICANT AMOUNT OF MASTERPIECES FROM THE BANKS OF THE NEVA. IT IS NO SURPRISE THAT THE EXHIBITIONS WHICH HAVE THUS FAR BEEN HELD AT THE MUSEUM — THE IMMORTAL ALEXANDER THE GREAT: MYTH, REALITY, HIS TRAVELS, HIS LEGACY (2010–2011), RUBENS AND HIS EPOCH (2011-2012) AND MATISSE TO MALEVICH (2010) — HAVE ACQUIRED PAN-EUROPEAN SIGNIFICANCE.

The first room

Eugène Delacroix

Lion Hunl in Morocco
France. 1854
Oil on canvas. 74 × 92 cm

The Barbizon Room

Last summer the Rubens show was replaced by one covering Impressionism — an exhibition which our Dutch partners preferred to name Impressionism: Sensation & Inspiration — part of a trilogy of exhibitions running from 2010 to 2013. The original idea was to organize a "diptych", but the Dutch thought otherwise and decided to put on three exhibitions, with a middle instalment called The Art of Les Nabis and the Symbolists.

In fact, it was assumed that the last exhibition in the cycle, having also achieved fame as Pioneers of Modern Art, would be put on show later, as in theory we first had to conclude another unprecedented series, focusing on new French art, which has become one of our most successful projects. The final stage of the cycle will be the exhibition about Les Nabis and the Symbolists in 2013, renamed in the Amstelhof fashion as Gauguin, Bonnard, Denis: Russian Taste and French Art. Previously it had been conceived as the "middle chapter" of the trilogy — corresponding to the historical chronology of the development of French art.

There is no doubt that this exhibition was destined to succeed, particularly in view of the fact that Amsterdam does not possess any collections of this kind. The content was unprecedented with the vast majority of masterpieces from the renowned collections of Sergei Shchukin and Ivan Morozov being despatched from St. Petersburg to the banks of the Amstel.

Manager: This exhibition of paintings by the Impressionists, which was to conclude the trilogy, was postponed by the organizers in order to plunge the visitor deeper into its artistic context. At the same time, 75 Van Gogh canvasses were temporarily moved to the Amstelhof from the collection of the museum that bears his name.

Curator: Strange from the point of view of real history, this "knight's move" — from the end to the beginning, and then to the middle (2010 — Matisse to Malevich; 2012 — Impressionism: Sensation & Inspiration; 2013 — The Art of Les Nabis and the Symbolists) is explained by the persistence with which the directors of the Amstelhof sacrifice chronological conditionality for marketing purposes.

While selecting the exhibits, and then combining them and commenting on them in articles and catalogue annotations, we didn't think about unusual names. We sought, without leaving the realms of good taste, to characterize as convincingly as we could the work of the Impressionists and their direct predecessors in the historical and artistic continuum, a characterization which it received via the Hermitage masterpieces.

Great museums to this day continue to calmly adhere to the rules of good taste in exhibition titles, avoiding shrill overtones, like an insistence on sensation (it is enough to run through a list of exhibitions in Paris, London and New York to see this). Habitually professing a healthy conservatism, the great museums are now protected by this alone from tastelessness and the desire to conquer the world. The guardians of the treasures of vanished cultures, they, as a rule, are separated from the feverish pulsations of contemporary art, whether by a shield, or by a filter formed by galleries and museums of more modest scale, which specialize in contemporary productions and out of necessity act as links to the global art market. The activities of these intermediary institutions are in one way or another, probably, subject to both the fads of fashion and the general degradation of the modern-day creative environment.

Manager: The full name of the exhibition in Dutch — *Impressionisme. Sensatie & Inspiratie. Favorieten uit de Hermitage* — reflects to a significant degree its unusually high level. No translation is necessary, as the roots of this series of words are recognizable in Russian and other European languages..

Curator: It's difficult to accustom oneself to such a noisy title, but the Hermitage bears no responsibility for this. *C'est la vie* in the modern world. It is those who sell the tickets who name the music. We should remember the words of the poet Joseph Brodsky, who said: "We live in a society obsessed with the idea that culture is a product".

THE PLACE

The birthplace of Impressionism was not, of course, Amsterdam, but in the 20th Century its role in the promotion of the art form through exhibitions was far from insignificant.

The foremost and most important country of Impressionism is, of course, France, which, it has to be said, recognized its sons with difficulty. Even in the 19th Century America had already developed a passion for Impressionism. Durand-Ruel, an art dealer, without whom Impressionism would have been unable to develop, opened a branch of his gallery in New York, which was to become the primary point of sale for Impressionist paintings abroad. American artists came to Paris; Mary Cassatt studied under Degas; and a whole group of landscape painters who were little-known outside the US worked alongside Claude Monet. The magnificent Impressionist collections which appeared in American museums were not only the result of fat cats having bought up the paintings.

The development of Dutch Impressionism, as in other European countries, followed a different path from that of France, although it gave the world several great masters whose work is inseparable from Impressionism. The Dutchman Johan Jongkind, Monet's old friend, was a precursor of the Impressionists. On the other hand, Van Gogh, having moved to France, learnt much of his craft from Monet and Pissarro — and used this as the basis for his own distinct personal style.

THE WORD

My mother comes from a peasant background, and she does not know the word Impressionism. She is 98 years old, and she would not understand my explanations. I remember when, as a Soviet schoolboy, I first came across this word, although at school, like much else, it had none of the resonance that it does now. Some people knew, of course, about Impressionism and took care to use the word with caution after 1948, when it became used as a propaganda bogey. At school we naturally took a great interest in what was denied in the USSR as bourgeois art, although it was impossible to discover anything useful since true Impressionism couldn't be found in the Siberian city of Irkutsk. It was a little different in Moscow, but in reality, even mere information about it remained forbidden fruit. Something slowly began to uncover itself when I entered university. Somehow a thaw had begun to set in. The year 1955 was particularly significant: it was announced that an exhibition of the Dresden Gallery collection was to open in Moscow. This was like a thunderclap in a clear blue sky, as nobody knew that the contents of the illustrious gallery had been saved after World War II and lay hidden in the bunkers of Moscow. I had to immediately scrape together some pennies in order to travel six days and nights in an upper berth of a train (intended for baggage) so that I could reach it.

Alberl Kostenevich. In the background:

Paul Gauguin

Woman Holding a Fruit;
Where Are You Going? (Eu haere ia oe)
France. 1893
Oil on canvas. 92.5x73.5 cm

Mounling the exhibilion

I remember because, strange as it may seem, the painting which imprinted itself most on my memory — and to which I returned several times at the exhibition, which was held at the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts (to get in was extremely difficult, I had to stand for more than half-a-day in a long queue where people had been waiting all night) — was "Woman with Binoculars" by Degas. It was not at all what the Dresden Gallery was renowned for, but it had formerly been impossible to see such a painting since even in Moscow the Impressionists had not been exhibited at that time.

The citadel of Impressionism, the Museum of Modern Western Art in Moscow, had been closed since 1941 when its paintings had been evacuated from the city because of the war. Later they returned and renovations took place in the former Morozov mansion, where the museum was located. In 1948 the paintings were being prepared for exhibition, and suddenly the sky fell in: the government — to be more precise, Comrade Stalin, having signed a secret decree — abolished the museum as superfluous. The order was given to liquidate it. Fortunately, the contents of the museum were saved by two wise men: Sergei Merkurov, the then-director of Moscow's State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts and a celebrated sculptor who had been made court sculptor of Stalin (not one of his colossal statues of the leader has survived), and the director of the Hermitage, Iosif Orbeli, who had played an invaluable role in the salvation of our museum since the beginning of the war. They swiftly split everything between them.

The Pushkin Museum did not especially insist on its rights, although the paintings were then located in Moscow, and, as a result of the sinister decree, were already no longer the property of the abolished The Museum of Modern Western Art. The majority of the collection could remain in Moscow, and St. Petersburg's Orbeli knew this. Irina Antonova, a director of the Pushkin Museum, still remembers, according to witnesses, Orbeli's diplomatic suggestion: "We will take everything which you give us."

At the same time Orbeli was saving his colleagues from politically dangerous accusations of formalism. Orbeli alone stood up for the division of the collection for St. Petersburg. He knew of course, what Impressionism was but had no great love for it, preferring other artists of the era, such as the Salon artist Gabriel von Max. Those on the Moscow side cautiously pushed this process along (although Merkurov had no need, since he had studied in Munich and Paris), forming a majority opinion regarding the principles on which the collection would be divided. Therefore the majority of Impressionist works of the "approved" kind, such as those by Degas, remained in Moscow. The Matisses, almost without exception, were send to Leningrad (St. Petersburg) and the Hermitage, those by Picasso — even more so. It would have been impossible for works by Picasso to have been kept in the Moscow museum without them (and their keepers) being accused of formalism, and their peaceful existence would then have come to a swift end.

In a word, the museum's collection was divided, and the majority of its contents were transported to Leningrad and hidden. However, certain people — for instance, the famous officially approved Kukryniksy caricaturists — knew this. If such prominent figures requested to see the paintings, they were shown into the storeroom, which was by then inaccessible to others.

Later this situation changed. When I began working at the Hermitage, there were hardly any Impressionist canvasses in this storeroom ("Reserve A"); all that remained was third-rate — and certain paintings by Matisse, Derain, Picasso — but gradually, in the 1960s, almost all of them were put on show.

A DYNAMIC EXHIBITION SPACE

Our "domestic" exhibition of paintings, first and foremost, is dedicated to Impressionism and its various offshoots. This gallery differs from all the other spaces in the Hermitage in its urgent rigour, which is strictly that of a museum, rather than that of the palace the building had formerly been. Here you immediately forget that you are in the Winter Palace. The Freilin apartments have given way to strict and rational architecture. The rooms are neither large nor small, but just the right size to accommodate either separate groups of artists or the works of one artist. During the period from the end of the 1950s up to now, the paintings have really got used to the walls there.

The exhibition space at the Amstelhof is much less convenient. There, the large central hall is surrounded on two storeys by a sequence of small rooms, the capacity and low ceilings of which make it a challenge to hang not only groups, but also large individual paintings. For such works there is simply not enough cubic space to give their importance the necessary emphasis on first sight.

Normally, any successful touring exhibition is organized around paintings which are already well known to the public and regarded as masterpieces — even if they have not encountered them at first hand, they are nonetheless familiar with the works from reproductions and images on the Internet. The awareness of the depth of meaning of a masterpiece depends to a large degree on the precise selection of its neighbours, and how well the contrasts and juxtapositions function.

Which paintings in the Impressionist collection of the Hermitage — and correspondingly, in the Amsterdam exhibition — serve as universal points of attraction? Which works enjoy the greatest success? "Woman in a Garden" by Claude Monet, on display in Amsterdam. His Montgeron canvasses, which are also on show. "Portrait of Jeanne Samary" and "Girl with a Fan" by Renoir. Many masterpieces of Impressionism have been collected at this exhibition. With other exponents — Cézanne and Gauguin — the story is slightly different, and the nature of their work means they cannot quite be categorized as Impressionist. We are showing some of their paintings now, and the others will be shown on the next tour.

We have also included paintings by Salon masters: to a certain extent this was a necessary measure insofar as we do not possess enough canvasses by the luminaries of Impressionism to fill the space at the Amstelhof with them alone. However, it helps that such an approach is historically justified. Yes, at the time the darlings of the Salon initially looked down on Monet, Renoir and their friends, then were obliged to tolerate them, but although they bowed to different gods, they nevertheless worked in the same city at the same time. It is necessary only to underline that all such juxtapositions require great tact and deliberation. One should never, as was persistently suggested to us, hang on one wall, let alone beside each other, canvasses by Laurens and Monet, Bouguereau and Renoir, on the pretext that the Dutch art lover is a creature of particular disposition and mentality.

It is clear that in the civilized Netherlands museum-goers are not composed of a homogeneous mass, and that they have differing degrees of preparedness, but even taking this into consideration, the percentage of enlightened connoisseurs is admirably high. The country demands respect not only for the outstanding artistic achievements of its past centuries but also for its contemporary aesthetically developed elite, which, first and foremost, should be kept in mind when mounting a high-profile display like the current outstanding selection of works.

Any work which has been selected for an exhibition of such high merit must have the right to "sovereign democracy", that is to have sufficient space not to be a landless serf but, at least, a respectable farmer. Therefore it is difficult for me to agree with the agoraphobia, the fear of open space in the "Barbizon"-style accumulation in the gallery on the second floor of the Amstelhof.

Paintings by Daubigny, Diaz de la Peña, and Millet were united there using the hanging techniques of the Salon, whereas in the neighbouring rooms a modern-day attitude dominated, a contrast for which no reasonable explanation can be found. Besides, a contemporary exhibition should always display paintings in the best possible manner. Is it really necessary to exhibit paintings floor-to-ceiling and on every available inch of space, like in the palace at Tsarskoye Selo, in a painstaking attempt to reproduce a historical interior?

It is also unacceptable to intersperse and place back-to-back large and small paintings; this engenders a sense of disorder. A hundred and thirty-nine years ago in 1874 the catalogue of the First Exhibition of Impressionists began with a quote from their own charter, and the artists specified the two conditions which seemed to them to be cardinal. "Following the sorting of works according to size, their place in the exhibition will be decided by the drawing of lots" *("une fois les ouvrages rangés par grandeur, le sort decidait de leur placement")*. The need to resort to chance is long past, but it naturally follows that one must respect the condition of the proportionality of exhibits — aesthetically vital for any culture.

Jules-Aime Dalou

Girl in a Shawl
France. Early 1890s
Marble. H. 40 cm

Francois Flameng

Court Ladies Bathing in the 18th Century
France. 1888
Oil on canvas. 90x115 cm

The exhibition features "Court Ladies Bathing in the 18th Century", a composition by the once extremely fashionable François Flameng. The painting, of course, has no direct relationship with Impressionism, and was included only in order to demonstrate how, in such a heightened situation, contrary to the dictates of the Salon, artists of his inclination worked. Flameng and his colleagues pandered to the crowd, appealing to their most unsophisticated tastes. They did not fall into the heresy of searching for the picturesque, and by subtly prescribing details and also dealing with serious, entertaining or erotic subjects, confidently provoked the enthusiasm of the public. Flameng was especially highly rated by Russia's Tsar Nicholas II. In the painting, which was purchased for his apartments, a scene is presented in which, against the backdrop of a colonnade at Versailles, a dozen beautiful aristocratic ladies, "top models" of the time of Louis XV, are pictured naked, half-undressed or in the full glory of their dress. Their poses are refined and calculatedly diverse — a veritable ballet in the pool. In the centre a young maiden (the Salon version of Venus Anadyomene) discards her last item of clothing as she strolls. Another has sat down upon the plinth of a luxurious fountain featuring a sculptural group by Girardon. Between them is a lady of higher rank, perhaps the king's favourite. The artist seems to invite the viewer to delight equally in the naked glamour and the inconceivably expensive dresses of these court ladies.

Manager: Viewers had the chance not only to see, but also to "listen" to Flameng's painting. Approaching it, you suddenly hear in the earpiece of the audio guide not the sound of speech, but a kind of voice of nature, birdsong among the leaves, the sound of water lapping in a pool. We consider such a soundscape our discovery.

Curator: A century earlier, heralds of the culture of the future dreamed of a synthetic union of the arts: architecture, painting, music; although it is unlikely that anything similar [to what the modern museum-goer can experience] occurred to them. Does it need to be shown that cutting-edge technologies are capable of more in this area? Such a weapon can find justification only through astute use... If sound is necessary, let it be intelligent speech, revealing the visual essence of the work. But any experiments in parallel musical or other accompaniment to a pictorial series require exceptional directorial abilities, not to mention a developed taste, without which such an intrusion into classic, even Salon, art, would become an exercise in childishness.

Design is a highly commonplace understanding of modernity, but it by no means follows that everybody has a clear comprehension of its essence. In Russia it received its citizenship comparatively recently, and before World War II it existed only as an idea: in the 1930s its role was fulfilled by so-called industrial art. Modern definitions of design generally demonstrate causal links between the form of an object and its function. In a narrow sense, it is seen as artistic engineering. Here is where the trouble lies. If this is so, then design, an integral part of any developed manufacturing process, can be just as useful as it can be undesirable — and this happens when the balance of form and function is disrupted. An exhibition designer usually operates with ready-made forms, supplementary to the exhibition process — with exhibits, in particular with paintings, producing with their aid their own geschtalt, patterns or configurations. The "termhood" of such words leaves much to be desired, but in any case patterns should not put on airs and become an end in themselves. The design of a packet of biscuits has no nutritional value, it is necessary only for the creation of a convenient and attractive packet. Similarly, the design of an exhibition is a means of supplying material, rather than material in itself. This is good, if it derives from the inner sense of the whole event, and bad, when the organizer has decided to compete with the masters he has been entrusted to serve.

Here is an example of the importance of identifying the purpose of design. The sculpture entitled "Girl in a Headshawl" is brought into the room allocated by its creator, Jules Dalou. The place has been decided, and all that remains is to install the piece. A white marble head mounted on a cube of black marble — an expressive contrast, discovered by a master. My Dutch colleague suddenly asks for the black stand to be removed. Clearly it interferes with his "expository habits". I say that "dismemberment" is incompatible with all norms of museum practice: the head is tightly attached to the stand — and one should never detach anything from a piece of art. My opponent (although I would always wish to see in him an ally) digs his heels in and suspiciously receives the message that the stand is also the work of the artist and forms an integral part of the sculpture. After secondary clarification of the museum regulations, he reluctantly agrees. Does it really need to be said that in an exhibition, for which he has to create the optimum conditions for viewing, it is vital for the designer to feel and read the work on show on sight...

We know how nowadays in museum culture, people often give way to external pressures — some out of necessity, some eagerly. The works of art themselves, once selected for exhibition, usually resist having liberties taken with them.

In itself, a situation of dispute is par for the course, as long as all of its participants understand what constitutes the subject of discussion. In any case, it is better that they do not set themselves against the academic concept of the exhibition and the doctor's universal rule — first do no harm. For anyone who is involved in design, under no circumstances is it necessary to imagine that the exhibition is nothing more than his own creation.

Manager: The Hermitage Amsterdam centre is an exhibition space, but not a traditional museum. For three years now the centre has organized only temporary exhibitions from the collections of the Hermitage, and thanks to this has attracted more than two million visitors.

Curator: The Amsterdam organizers took warily any references to the conditions the selected exhibits existed in while at the Hermitage. Not having any museum experience, they defend their independence and point out that an exhibition is not a museum.

I'm reminded of how the design of exhibitions at the Hermitage gradually and progressively improved. The starting point — and an immediate turning point — in the awareness of new approaches to staging exhibitions was the grandiose National Exhibition of Mexican Art, mounted in 1960–1961 in Moscow and Leningrad, where it was particularly eye-catching. Unusually sprawling, occupying two floors of the Winter Palace, it demonstrated with a rare power not only an art which was hitherto unseen and psychologically alien to us, but also the organic and creative possibilities in curating an exhibition. How to organize an aesthetically meaningful space without dull didacticism, without the subordination of the whole totality of diverse monuments to the single uniformity of a block of soldiers on the parade ground.

Exhibition director Fernando Gamboa, winner of a gold medal for the exhibition he had mounted not long ago at the World's Fair in Brussels, said to us, at the time young exhibition guides: "The exhibition must be akin to a performance." Until then nobody had exhibited work in our halls so boldly that it would occur to somebody to draw a comparison with a theatrical production. Under Señor Gamboa, sculptures from archaeological excavations became living characters of unexpected mise-en-scenes, this one frightening, this one enchanting. The arrangement, the contrasts, the juxtapositions, the skilfully discovered accents of colour: everything in this "synthetic" approach served not only as illustrations of exotic stories from a faraway country, but acted powerfully on the feelings, rendering even archaeology surprisingly relevant.

It is not given to the museum, nor is it necessary, to copy the specifics of a theatrical event. But the recognition of the kinship of these two cultural spheres, discovered half-a-century ago, was to drastically change conventional ideas. The movement gradually gathered pace, little by little involving people of successive generations, people who had not been privy to the "Mexican" lesson, but somehow assimilated the experience of submission to aesthetic expediency.

By and large, it is the formula of the exhibition-performance, rather than literacy or parades in honour of upcoming anniversaries, which even today remains more of a dream than a reality. Where does an exhibition begin? It does not begin, as the hackneyed anecdote about Stanislavsky goes, with the cloakroom (as the luminary of Soviet theatre wrote in a letter to Moscow cloakroom attendants in 1933) but with the performance itself, and when there is something to say, it does not matter whether it is said on the stage of a theatre or on the walls of a museum. In both venues, the higher idea is carried not by the plot played out on stage, nor the event displayed in the painting, but by the capacity of that very painting or theatrical production to become a spiritual event in the life of the viewer.

In the end, in Amsterdam it was possible to preserve the guiding principles of the exhibition and avoid interference where it would have caused harm. Impressionism was not the only movement of its era, but coexisted with other trends — only underlining its enduring achievements. What we see is the evolution of French painting: from the Romanticism of Delacroix and the semi-Romanticism of the Barbizons to the breakthrough in the conquest of colour and the world in Claude Monet's "Woman in a Garden" and then to the picturesque freedom of his Montgeron canvasses, to the magical lightness of Renoir's portraits, and finally, to the conclusions drawn from the discoveries of Impressionism as realized by Cezanne and Gauguin.

The scope of the exhibition was also widened to cover the genre's background, addressing it from two points of reference. The first is Romanticism, primarily "The Lion Hunt in Morocco" by Delacroix, which already sparkles with pure colour, driving out the brown haze which was then often used to disfigure paintings in order to imitate the great masterpieces of the past — a custom which had characterized attitudes towards old painting for a long time. The second is the semi-Romantic, semi-Realist painting of the Barbizon school. The Barbizon painters carefully studied nature, yet in general they painted not outdoors but in the studio. Two paintings which stood out at the exhibition were the large, dark "The Shore at Villerville" by Daubigny, acquired for Tsar Alexander III and presented in an enormous gilt frame, and by contrast, a study by the same artist, painted alfresco, in a boat, during a voyage on the river Loing.

Mounting the exhibition

THE MESSAGE AND HOW TO DELIVER IT

This sharp dichotomy between a museum and an exhibition has the right to exist only when displaying non-museum items. Museum pieces are of course too closely linked with global cultural traditions — and moreover, with the foundations of civilization — to permit excessive liberties to be taken with them. Such "museumish" approaches — and it is not mandatory for them to be impersonal and monotonous — are demonstrated by the greatest exhibition centres, first and foremost by the Grand Palais in Paris, where they have the instinct to combine supreme correctness with particular style. I should add that on different continents the idea of organizing a major independent art exhibition centre is viewed far from equivocally... and is mostly met with reserve. There are none in the non-European Western hemisphere, there are none in Africa. The small countries of Europe, or even those which are quite large, but of modest means, like Poland and Spain, are unable to set up such centres. However, they are found in Japan, Germany and Italy, where they organize serious international exhibitions. Museumness in those countries will never be diminished, and even if it were otherwise, would the museum-lenders really agree to experimentation with their own treasures?

Ideally an exhibition of such distinction as the show in the Amstelhof should carry an important intellectual message, a condition requiring a clearly defined image of the viewer's education, their level of perception, and a corresponding design which is intelligent and extremely respectful in regard to the arrangement of the group of works on show.

For all the disagreements, the design potential of the Amstelhof now has strong structural elements, above all architectural. The main hall has been reshaped so creatively that the paintings have been provided with a new and more active space. The hall has shrunk, but its walls have shot up. The decision to abandon the regular dimensions of the hall has been vindicated: the bends in the walls were rendered convincingly and with mathematical accuracy.

The thoughtfully implemented lighting merits a few good words. Here the highest level has been achieved, even by comparison with more successful examples of global exhibition practice. It is instructive, for example, to recall how this problem is dealt with in Paris, which is light years ahead of any other city both in terms of numbers of exhibitions, and in the total number of visitors. I do not know the exact figure, but of the 60 million visitors who descend on the French capital every year, (a world record), significant numbers visit exhibitions. Although the challenges posed by lighting are solved differently in different places, by and large this is not done in the best way, especially in galleries of medium calibre (the Pinacothèque de Paris, the Musée du Luxembourg, the Musée Jacquemart-André). There they resort to simple and commercially effective techniques not worthy of imitation. They dispense with general illumination, directing the lights only onto the paintings. Thus a highly electrified environment is created. To communicate in such a situation is impossible, though this is not what the exhibition organizers require. Whether visitors want it or not, they swiftly move from one illuminated patch to another. They are unable to relax, as the system does not permit this. Visitor capacity soars, as does income. The whole atmosphere spurs the viewers on, but does it truly satisfy them?

Pierre-Auguste Renoir
Boy with a Whip
France. 1885
Oil on canvas. 105x75 cm
Source of Entry: the State Museum of New Western Art, Moscow.1948

Whenever I am in Paris, I try to visit all the significant exhibitions. In May last year, for example, I saw no fewer than 10 first-class exhibitions. Putting on tourist-pleasing exhibitions represents an excellent form of legal revenue. Some museums, in a particularly Parisian method, employ a cunning trick by which they can process a staggering number of visitors through a small exhibition space in an extremely short period of time. The recipe is simple: in the halls the general lighting is switched off, and only the paintings are illuminated. In a more expensive alternative, the light on the exhibits is directed through special frames which are calculated to fit the sizes of the canvasses precisely, which makes contemplation — in contrasting highlights instead of diffuse light — relatively difficult. The picture appears as a projected transparency rather than a painting, even though in each case the viewer is exclusively in the presence of an original work.

The optics of the main hall at the Amstelhof are different, and calculated to be unusually convincing, using a technique of combining two main light sources. One is general lighting for the space, and the other is set on the frame, with separate lighting for each painting. As a result, in this artificial light the paintings look exquisite and even better than they do “at home”.

Our designers, of course, have this technology at their disposal and are likely to make use of it during the final development of the General Staff Building, where the canvasses which have attracted such admiration in Amsterdam will reign over our new permanent exhibitions.

The significance of such an exhibition lies not only in the waves it makes among viewers. Apparently, the Amstelhof is on course for record visitor figures, which is naturally cause for celebration. However, to be honest, there was something else which pleased me more. After visiting the exhibition, Paul-Louis Durand-Ruel, the great-grandson and director of the great gallerist's archive, sent me a letter expressing his sincere satisfaction. It was the evaluation of an expert, versed in the mysteries of Impressionism. He drew my attention to the painting by Henri Moret entitled “Port Manech” (1896). The following year Durand-Ruel acquired it from the artist, and in August 1898, as testified by the book of revenues and sales, which is kept in the archive, it was transferred to the ownership of Sergei Shchukin. Apparently, the great-grandson of old Durand noticed that in the catalogue much later dates had been put down: in the absence of documents these were calculated by incidental details. I then enquired about the Shchukin Monet paintings and received the answer that the artist's “Etretat” had been acquired on June 24 1898 (the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts). This date had hitherto been unknown to us. What can we deduce from this? Simply that the first Impressionist painting brought to Russia by Shchukin was Monet's landscape “Etretat”, and the second a canvas by Moret. These are not by themselves, perhaps, major facts, but history is made by concrete details. They, in particular, establish a precise date in Shchukin's activity as a collector and for this reason should be taken into account.

Daubigny was a patron of the Impressionists, and himself tried to catch up with them, but they were moving too quickly. Russian collectors were still unable to understand this and continued to collect Barbizon paintings in their droves, whose herds of cattle migrated freely to Russia. What was Shchukin doing at this time? Nothing: he seemed to be gathering his strength. At the age of 44 he acquired his first Impressionist paintings, after a short dalliance with the Russian *peredvizhniki* (the Wanderers), and his ship began to sail. He was an inveterate traveller, distinguished by his acute love of painting, and made constant trips to Paris. The deciding factor was his visit to the gallery of Durand-Ruel, the principal sponsor of the Impressionists, their dealer and reliable supporter.

Henry Moret

Port Manech
France. 1896
Oil on canvas. 60.5x73.5 cm
Source of Enlry: Ihe Slale Museum of New Weslern Arl, Moscow.1948

In the background::

Jean-Paul Laurens

Emperor Maximilian of Mexico before Ihe Execulion
France. 1882
Oil on canvas. 222x303 cm
Source of Enlry: Ihe Slale Museum of New Weslern Arl, Moscow (formerly in Ihe colleclion of S. M. Trelyakov). 1948

Exhibilion visilors wilh a painling in Ihe background showing a Salon

THE TREND DENOMINATION

ALBERT KOSTENEVICH

Let us try to study the central concept behind the term “impressionism” aside from today’s literary or museum contexts. How and when this term appeared is well known. Date: spring 1874; place: Paris, the first exhibition of the Anonymous Society of Artists. It is quite telling that the artists of this group dreaded any pompous names. Auguste Renoir’s brother, Edmond, who made a catalogue of the exhibition, asked Claude Monet what would be best to call his painting created from a window overlooking the port of Le Havre. The painting is of an early misty morning. “Call it 'Impression. Sunrise'”, was the answer. This meant taking a great risk. A sarcastic critic, Louis Leroy immediately came up with a spiteful article in a magazine designed to entertain the general public (who would have remembered him if it had not been for that publication?) but his mockery of the new style (by adding an -ism) lost its lethal effect surprisingly quickly. It was seized upon and adopted by those whom the article was aimed at and soon after that by the whole cultural society of the French capital.

Therefore, neither the name of Monet’s painting nor the name of the style that it confirmed was thought out in advance. Yet the -ism turned out to be programmatic because it raised the works of several barely known painters to the level of a separate movement and immediately put it on a par with other, recognized, ways of artistic expression, such as Neo-Classicism, Romanticism and Realism. At that moment, the -ism, despite the journalist’s mockery, became useful to the artists, who did not even have the right to exhibit their works in contravention to the official jury. From now on, having been provided with a nickname, the public was able to follow the next steps of these “impertinent nobodies” who had dared exhibit sketches instead of finished paintings, and, by all accounts, simply some scribbles.

Belonging to a certain -ism does not mean a lot in itself, but the phenomenon makes classification easier and serves as a guideline in the vast world of art without raising it any higher. Vladimir Nabokov, teaching at an American college and contemplating the history of Russian literature, insisted on abandoning such aesthetic pillars and labels. He used to say that the harmfulness of such generalising terms lies in distracting the researcher from making unique discoveries in art — and that is the only thing that matters in the end. But he did agree that since these terms exist and are commonly used, one has to use them ("Notes on Pushkin's 'Eugene Onegin'", 1964).

Isms may appear accidentally but it is not by chance that they take roots in the vocabulary: they both homogenize and draw attention to the particular. Why does this happen? The scolded style of Monet, Renoir, Degas and Cézanne did not immediately lead people (who were not indifferent to art) to ponder the meaning of the nickname (which, after all, had been given to the unusual style in a rush) and understand its etymology, connotations and the many other aspects that define a word’s viability.

Impressionist paintings, despite being mocked to begin with, soon aroused the interest of several outstanding critics who could not help but notice their obvious quality and be drawn more deeply into the new art. It emitted the silent question of what that name meant and the only response one could come up with was to trust one’s own perception and swap the subject and the object and ask oneself what, indeed, this name meant.

Nomen est omen. There are several translations of this saying by Plautus. “The name speaks for itself”, “The name is a sign”, “The name already means something”. In the end, the name that we are talking about now had its own life and was obviously going to live on.

Let us consider the term derived from the word “impression”. We should probably ask straight away if any impression will do. And speaking of which, what is an impression in the first place? Psychologists say that this concept owes its birth to the ancient, if not prehistoric beliefs that surrounding objects and phenomena have the same effect on the human soul as a seal on soft wax, and therefore leave imprints, staying there for a long time and consequently influencing human behaviour.

The Russian word *vpechatleniye* is believed to be a calque from the French *impression* or the German *Eindruck*, as Vasmer suggested in his Etymological Dictionary of the Russian language. It would probably be more accurate to derive it from the original Latin form *impressio* which then expanded to all Romance languages with slight phonetic differences. The Latin root of the word *impressio* turned out to be very productive and made itself at home in all European languages, including Russian: *ekspressiya* (expression), *depressiya* (depression), *kompressiya* (compression), *repressiya* (repression). It is interesting, however, that Russian humbly borrowed such forms, possibly because they mostly express equally energetic and technical tones of *meaning* but initially firmly adhered to the Slavic, or Russian, to be more precise, vocalisation (other Eastern European languages, such as Ukrainian and Belarusian, borrowed their words from Polish).

Compared to other European languages, English or German, the Russian word *vpechatleniye* not only sounds entirely different but, more importantly, does not exactly coincide in its meaning, or rather, meanings, as in every national language this word gained several understandings. The Russian *vpechatleniye* implies a response, an emotion, an appreciation, a feeling. It is responsible for the idioms: *proizvesti vpechatleniye* (to make an impression), *ispytat vpechatleniye* (literally, to experience an impression). The Russian *vpechatleniye* seems to imply a deeper and a more concealed meaning than can be felt in the aforementioned related words but Russian also allows *impressiya* for more particular, secondary usages. The French *impression* is not perceived as an absolute equivalent of the word *vpechatleniye* by people belonging to Russian traditional culture and also committed to Russian language classics. Most often it implies something swift, volatile and passing: these are the features that Impressionism is based on. We have to admit that for a Russian character feelings of this kind still remain on the periphery of comprehension. In Pushkin’s poem about the poor knight the word *vpechatleniye* (translated into English as “vision”: “He had had a wondrous vision:/ Ne’er could feeble human art/ Gauge its deep, mysterious meaning,/ It was graven on his heart.”) would hardly be perceived in the same way by the Gallic mind and language tradition. In Russian, however, it sounds as natural as the phrase *neizgladimoye vpechatleniye* (indelible impression). One cannot fail to recall another verse by Pushkin:

How many faces — shameless-pale,
How many foreheads — dull and stale,
Stand here, all ready to acquire
The timeless imprint of my lyre!

Claude Monet

Impression. Sunrise
Paris, 1872
Oil on canvas. 48×63 cm
Musеé Marmollan, Paris

This is definitely not an Impressionist-like impression, although the Russian poet virtually used, as he often did, a Frenchism, having amplified it (a common French term *impression en creux*, literally "deep imprint").

The primary meanings of the French *impression* is a mark left on an object, embossing, printing on fabric, book printing etc. Western equivalents *grande impression* (French) or strong impression (English) are not the same thing at all. In Russian, incidentally, apart from *neizgladimoye* (indelible), an impression can also be described as *gnetusheye* (depressing). Therefore, the Russian *vpechalleniye* implies a dramatic phenomenon whereas the French *impression* the effect is lessened. Is it an accident that the whole of French Impressionism is based on positive states of being, very often on joyous moments (*joie de vivre*), which correspond with the contents of the paintings (gardens in bloom, calm rivers, rays of sun, smiling girls and children etc.)?

In paintings by German Impressionists pictorial dynamics prevail, quite often attaining a somewhat nervous character, despite the fact that the situations depicted in German *Eindruck* smack of mundane daily life far too often. Be that as it may, there was a school of Impressionism in Germany. In other European countries, there were separate artists who were inclined towards Impressionism but there was no active movement. In 2000, the Russian Museum held a big exhibition called Russian Impressionism which only proved that this movement did not develop much in Russia. It is not incidental that the organizers had to prop up the whole construction of the exhibition by displaying works by Repin, Serov, Levitan and Kustodiyev. But did they really belong to Impressionism? In Western countries, these undoubtedly prominent artists are justifiably referred to as part of figurative realism or figurative naturalism. And if we do not take these masters into account, all we are left with are third-rate imitators of the bygone French style.

Impression, as understood in French, implies not only a range of iridescent phenomena and corresponding tones but a more extensive field of use. Apart from the world of aesthetics and psychology, fields using the word include medicine (dentistry and gastroenterology), law, publishing and others. The number of deriving meanings includes such concepts as "stamp", "imprint", "edition", "ground coat" and even a very old-fashioned word for a wedding dress.

When one comes across one of the most recent branches of this evergreen tree, "impression — online media, a deliberate basic advertizing unit from an ad distribution point", one understands where the accents of the Amsterdam title come from. Over the last two decades, impression has become one of the code words of Western culture. It makes frequent appearances in the titles of films and novels and has become haunting in music, primarily in jazz. Compositions by Mal Waldrone, John Coltrane, Mike Oldfield, and later a much-debated work by Chris Botti (2012), have all taken the name "Impressions".

Impressionism was both a breakthrough and the salvation of the art of the last quarter of the 19th Century, and not only in one country. France was very lucky as just one generation gave birth to several ingenious painters and their joint force made a breach in the seemingly indestructible wall of stagnant Academism.

They owed their success to lively impressions, which ended up entwined in the very name of the movement. Personal, relaxed impressions provided the main impulse for the development of Western culture, and not only this. Next to Impressionism, even the works of the Barbizon School, which honestly praised the virtues of nature in its homeland, quickly grew dim and faded. A bit later Impressionism invaded literature and music. What is more, people started finding it in places where no one would expect it to be, in old Roman paintings (ancient frescos in the gardens of the National Museum of Rome, for example, which make one think of Monet's gardens). In a word, Impressionists managed to find their way to the sacred spring and make Orpheus' life-giving strings sing again.

1,900,000 VISITORS AND COUNTING!

THE HERMITAGE AMSTERDAM IS, IN THE WORDS OF MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY, AN AFFILIATE OF THE ST. PETERSBURG'S STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM. HERE, THE HERMITAGE MAGAZINE PUTS THE SPOTLIGHT ON THE AMSTERDAM TEAM, WHOSE MEMBERS SEE THEIR TASK AS BRINGING RUSSIAN CULTURE AND THE CULTURE OF ST. PETERSBURG TO THE HEART OF EUROPE.

SVETLANA DATSENKO

EXHIBITION OPENING. PHOTOGRAPHS BY THE HERMITAGE EDITORIAL TEAM

We talk to managers and employees of the Hermitage Amsterdam in the wake of the hugely successful exhibition Impressionism: Sensation & Inspiration, which was held recently in Amsterdam.

CATHELIJNE BROERS, director

About the schedule and Van Gogh

At the end of 2011 the Van Gogh Museum had to announce the unfortunate news that it would close for a couple of months from the autumn of 2012 until spring 2013, due to restoration work on its building. Can you imagine? Yet another important museum on Amsterdam's Museum Square having to close! The Rijksmuseum and the Stedelijk Museum had already been closed for renovation for years.

The director of Van Gogh Museum, Axel Rüger, knew how the Hermitage Amsterdam is organized: alternating its exhibition wings, and therefore having empty space available. He appealed for shelter for 75 of his top pieces so that public and city would not be disappointed during the restoration activities in his building.

After thorough internal consideration, and discussions on the conditions with the Van Gogh Museum and of course with Dr. Piotrovsky, we could agree to this proposal. Subsequently we rescheduled our own exhibition programme. We prolonged the exhibition Rubens. Van Dyck. Jordaens: Flemish painters from the Hermitage, and changed the schedule of two other exhibitions so that the French Impressionists and Salon artists from the collection of the State Hermitage Museum could be exhibited together with the 75 works by Van Gogh, there being a perfect match between the two exhibitions in one building. Changing an exhibition schedule which has been set some years before is not an everyday decision, but we dared to take the plunge.

Because 2013 was already set to be an official year of friendship between Russia and the Netherlands, the scheduled exhibition about Peter the Great was not touched in the reshuffle.

When a historic building in the centre of Amsterdam became empty at the end of the 1990s, having been a hospice for over 300 years, Ernst Veen, then director of the Nieuwe Kerk (New Church) exhibition centre, had the idea of creating an unprecedented museum which would bring the treasures of Russia to the centre of Europe. There had been various opinions regarding the transformation of this architectural monument of the 17th Century — some suggested turning it into a large shopping centre, others into a luxurious residential property.
Veen, who had several years experience hosting international exhibitions in his centre — including some from the Hermitage — suggested to the director of the Hermitage and to Amsterdam City Council that a Hermitage affiliate be created.
The novel idea, seemingly unrealistic at first, became a reality in 2009 when the Hermitage Amsterdam exhibition centre finally opened. The building was fully repurposed to meet 21st-century museum standards and provides as much as 2,400 square metres of display space.
The innovative project appealed to everyone from Dutch museum professionals to members of the Dutch royal household, with the then heir to the throne, Prince (now King) Willem-Alexander of Orange, becoming patron of the Hermitage Amsterdam. One can speak about the centre in terms of hard figures — or in terms of emotions. It has welcomed nearly two million visitors since it opened, despite the fact that the centre only holds temporary exhibitions from a single Russian museum.
Twenty thousand children study art in its Children's Centre, repeating the model of the Hermitage School which has existed in St. Petersburg for more than 80 years. And the Hermitage Amsterdam does not restrict itself to exhibitions: one can dine there or buy gifts in two shops; one can attend lectures and see plays or hold conferences.
These aspects are united by the spirit of the careful preservation of historical ties between the Netherlands and Russia, a respectful attitude towards the global cultural legacy held by the State Hermitage Museum and a deep recognition of the fact that these treasures are held in trust for the world and should be seen by the world.
Over the three months it ran, Impressionism: Sensation & Inspiration was visited by more than 100,000 people. Additionally, for six months from September 2012, the Hermitage Amsterdam hosted works from arguably the most famous museum in the Netherlands: the Van Gogh Museum.

NATASCHA HEIJNE, curator of exhibitions

About Dutch Impressionism
Certainly Dutch artists were inspired by the Impressionist movement in France. Painters like Jozef Israëls, Anton Mauve, Hendrik Weissenbruch and the brothers Maris were acquainted with the works of the Barbizon School. The realism in these paintings attracted Dutch artists but they preferred to use the Impressionist painting technique. These artists became known as part of the Hague School. They began painting the Dutch landscape in objective terms with attention to the atmosphere and the changing of light and colour in nature.
Later the urban landscape also became a subject to painters of the Amsterdam Impressionists, with George Breitner and Isaac Israëls. They depicted daily life mostly in Amsterdam. The town was developing and growing quickly, and became a bustling centre for artists. The painters wanted to capture this dynamic movement by using Impressionist painting techniques that were as quick and coarse as city life.
The greatest contrast between French and Dutch Impressionism is to be found in the use of colour. Where French Impressionism uses vivid and bright colours, the Dutch are known for their use of grey tones. This is caused by the difference in appearance of the French and Dutch countryside and cities.
Not all Dutch artists stayed in their home country — several went to Paris to study with well-known Impressionist painters. Johan Barthold Jongkind for example was invited by Eugène Isabey to join him in Paris.
Works of art by the Impressionists are widely represented in Dutch museums. Dutch collections can be divided between museums focusing on Dutch Impressionism and museums presenting a broader range of Impressionism.
The Dutch Impressionists from the Hague School and Amsterdam Impressionists can, for example, be found in the oldest museum in the country: Teylers Museum in Haarlem. In this encyclopedic museum — with collections on natural history, scientific instruments, fine arts and a large historical library — the paintings form a part of the history of collecting in the 19th Century. The collections were bought over the years with the money from the legacy of its founder Pieter Teyler van der Hulst.
Singer Laren's main collection was brought by William and Anna Singer. Singer was an American artist but also a collector of French art from the Barbizon School, American friends and work from artists in the surroundings of Laren who were painting in the Impressionist style. In 1956 the largest part of his collection was given to the museum. Since the foundation of the museum they have been able to buy many works of art by Dutch Impressionists.
Also the Dordrecht Museum in Dordrecht and the Gemeentemuseum The Hague — famous for its works by Piet Mondrian — have a large collection of Dutch Impressionists.
In Rotterdam, the Museum van Boijmans Van Beuningen — named after two great art collectors who donated their collections to the museum — has a wide range of works by French Impressionists.
The Kröller-Müller Museum was named after Helene Kröller-Müller who collected almost 11,500 objects from different artists and periods. Her collection was shown to the public for the first time in 1938 when the national museum opened. Even after her death a year later in 1939, the collection kept growing. Nowadays the museum has the largest collection of work by Van Gogh, besides that in the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam.

PAUL MOSTERD, deputy director, head of communication, education, marketing

About the title of the exhibition
Titles of exhibitions have a very important function in the Netherlands. We can roughly distinguish three different and often parallel channels of cultural communication to our audience: art reviews, adverts and listings in newspapers and magazines. An exhibition title has to function on its own, particularly in the two last categories. It has to tell potential visitors to the exhibition its storyline, and attract them.
The Hermitage Amsterdam focuses on visitors that have to be attracted by the exhibition of the day. Aside from the exhibition there is no permanent collection that attracts a given amount of visitors in the way that traditional museums do. When the Hermitage Amsterdam had to decide on the title of an exhibition of 19th-century French paintings, we went back to a very essential question: "What is the story that we want to tell our audience?"
By combining ideas of the continuity of tradition, and the formation of a new movement amid the traditional art represented by the Salon and its subsequent contribution to the history of world art, we managed to show the formation of Impressionism in the context of that time. The history of art provided the name for the exhibition: sensation and inspiration.
The exhibition begins by presenting the best Salon works from the Hermitage followed by outstanding Impressionist works, as well as paintings by Cézanne and Gauguin which develop the theme of Post-Impressionism. This very order makes the breakthrough that took place in fine art of the 19th Century owing to the Impressionists obvious.
With a high attendance rate (the exhibition had about 140.000 visitors in three months), very positive visitor reviews and a lavish full-page review in Holland's best-selling quality newspapers, such as de Volkskrant , this sixth exhibition in the Amstelhof consolidated the State Hermitage Museum's position as major storyteller in the canon of art history.

BIRGIT BOELENS AND VINCENT BOELE, curators of exhibitions

About the exhibition plan and design
The design was made by Marcel Schmalgemeijer (30) and Mariëlle Tolenaar (20). Both designs reflect the interior fashion and feel of the late 19th Century in Paris, mixed with a modern touch.
The Hermitage Amsterdam always tries to find a designer who has a feel for the subject of the exhibition. The choice can differ from time to time because we want regular visitors to have different experiences when visiting the museum.
The idea of combining the recognized masters of the Paris Salon and the rebellious Impressionists, who were not accepted by the Salon, in the great hall of the centre appealed both to visitors and critics. As Dr. Piotrovsky says in his foreword in the catalogue: "The Salon gave birth to Impressionism [....] It was a product of the turbulent development of French painting."
The second floor shows the development of painting in the second half of the 19th Century in Paris and France, and that one could never have come into being without the other. In one room the hanging method reflects the fashion of that period.
The hanging and placing of the art is never a decision or idea of the designer alone and always follows the concept of the exhibition, taking the museum building and its limits into consideration (the large hall versus the smaller galleries).
Special attention was given to the lighting design of the exhibition, which was also designed by Marcel Schmalgemeijer. The designer wanted to cre-

ate a quiet, tranquil environment for the paintings. He didn't want the visitor to "notice" that the paintings were lit. The lamps were positioned in such a manner that they do not blind the visitors who follow the correct route of the exhibition.

MARLIES KLEITERP, head of exhibitions

About the art and the art of compromise

A satellite of the State Hermitage Museum — situated at 3000 km away from St. Petersburg — with its own management and exhibition department: How are decisions made between the two institutions? This is an interesting topic.

We all agree that exhibitions in the Hermitage Amsterdam are made on the basis of mutual consensus between both of the Hermitages. This is also stated in the memorandum of agreement, drawn up long before the opening of the Amstelhof. Still, both of the Hermitages bring in their own skills and specific knowledge to the enterprise.

All members of the exhibition department of the Hermitage Amsterdam are "exhibition makers", which in the Netherlands is a well-accepted profession ("exhibition curators"). This means that such professionals are trained to produce exhibitions from the beginning till the end: developing the concept and storyline, object choice, the development of the design together with the designer, transport logistics transport, insurance, installation and so on. All such professionals have graduated from university in the History of Art and/or Archaeology.

Two aspects play an important role while producing exhibitions for the Hermitage Amsterdam: the fact that the Hermitage Amsterdam has no collections of its own, and its great respect for the (mainly Dutch) public. The success of each exhibition depends on understanding their world, their environment, their knowledge level, their expectations and reflecting these aspects in the exhibitions. This is because we have no permanent collection to fall back on: producing only temporary exhibitions means that all exhibitions must be successful. No visitors means no Hermitage Amsterdam.

There is no doubt, however, that without the outstanding collections and globally respected curators from the State Hermitage Museum, the Hermitage Amsterdam's exhibitions (and catalogues!) would never come up to standard.

An ongoing discussion, recognized around the world, is the defence of a 100% scientific approach versus an acceptably low threshold that is appropriate for the targeted public. Sometimes it turns out that a presentation is more accessible if a thematic approach is chosen instead of a chronologic presentation. Also, by not having too many objects, one can focus better and the works get more attention. When we draw up a list of objects, we do our best not to forget the slogan "less is more". It is a very difficult job, I should say, because of the encyclopedic collection of the State Hermitage Museum!

Do we exhibition makers at the Hermitage Amstserdam feel free to make our own decisions? To be frank: not always, but more and more often. Respect, trust and friendship between colleagues from both Hermitages are increasing because we feel that our mutual aim is to make the best exhibition we can. Our exhibitions prove that we have learned to find a compromise. The Impressionism exhibition was a good example of this.

The Hermitage Amsterdam has a special floor plan: there is a large exhibition space (500 square metres) and three rows of small rooms surrounding the main room on two levels.

Paul Cézanne

Smoker
France. Between 1890 and 1892
Oil on canvas. 92.5x73.5 cm

Pablo Picasso

Pierre Reverdy
"Song of the Dead"
Album of Teriade's Publishing House, Paris
France. 1948
Chromolilhograph. 43 x 32.4 cm
Source of Enlry: gifl of Lydia Deleclorskaya. 1975

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SPIRITUS SANTUS

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154 FABERGÉ

163 PAULA MODERSOHN-BECKER

STATUTS DE L'ORDRE DU SAINT-ESPRIT, INSTITUÉ PAR HENRI III, DÉCEMBRE 1578. APT.15.
NUL NE POURRA ÊTRE FAIT COMMANDEUR ET RECEVOIR L'HABIT DUDIT ORDRE, QU'IL NE SOIT GENTILHOMME DE NOM ET D'ARMES, DE TROIS RACES PATERNELLES POUR LE MOINS, SANS ÊTRE REMARQUÉ D'AUCUN CAS REPROCHABLE, NI PRÉVENU EN JUSTICE, ET N'AIT POUR LE REGARD DES PRINCES, 25 ANS ACCOMPLIS, ET 35 ANS POUR LES AUTRES ...

MANTLES

PHOTO: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN

Order of the Holy Spirit costume Cape

France, first quarter of the 19th Century
Velvet, silk, embroidery in gold and silver threads, spangles and foil. Length 125 cm
Inventory № T-15461

TATIANA KOSOUROVA

Among the numerous exhibits at the Hermitage are works that stand out not only for their dazzling beauty but also for their mysterious pedigree. Such rarities include the luxurious vestments of Knights of the Order of the Holy Spirit. As we discovered, their previous owners were of royal blood: King Jan Sobieski III of Poland and Emperor Alexander I of Russia. Although their presence in the Hermitage is connected with military campaigns against Napoleon in 1812, the suits arrived here for different reasons: one was taken as a trophy, while the other was designated for the primary saviour of France in the Napoleonic Wars. Their respective sojourns on the walls of the museum also had different fates: one returned to the homeland of its original owner after 100 years, whereas the other remained in the Hermitage and to this day its magnificence is enjoyed by visitors to the museum and to the temporary exhibitions to which it is lent.

The garments that were designated for Alexander I consist of two sets. The first set includes a luxurious mantle of black velvet with an orange interior lining, and clothes (a frock coat and splendid trousers) of silver brocade with monochromatic silver embroidery. This set also has a mantle with a green silk cape that has sparkling tongues of flame scattered across its surface and, along the edge, a wide hem with alternating motifs: fleur-de-lis, trophies, and the letter “H” wreathed in crowns. The second set consists of a black velvet cloak with green silk lapels, a velvet

frock coal wilh cuffs, a waislcoal of green silk, and a velvel berel wilh a ribbon. They are also abundanlly decoraled wilh mullicoloured embroidery of sequins and melallic lhreads, and lhey include depiclions of doves — one of lhe symbols of lhe Order.

The Order of lhe Holy Spiril was founded by lhe King Henry III of France in 1578 for lhe forlificalion of lhe Calholic failh and lhe consolidalion of royal power. Al firsl lhe rules of lhe Order slriclly limiled lhe number of members lo no more lhan 100, all from lhe mosl presligious families in France and all of whom had lilles of higher nobilily for no fewer lhan lhree generalions. Ordained members swore an oalh of allegiance lo lhe monarch and look a vow of failh in lhe Calholic church. Al lhe induclion ceremony lhey received luxurious veslmenls and a gold necklace lhal was decoraled wilh fleur-de-lis, lhe leller "H" wrealhed in crowns and surrounded by longues of flame, and a cross in lhe cenler lhal bore a depiclion of a dove spreading ils wings. Many knighls of lhe Order perished during lhe French revolulion in 1789, bul some managed lo leave lhe counlry. Louis XVIII, upon ascending lhe lhrone, revived lhe Order bul lhe lasl induclion ceremony was held in 1830. The Knighls were no longer exclusively French, bul included Spanish and Polish calholics of lhe mosl presligious herilage who had some familial bonds wilh lhe French royal family. However, an evenl connecled lo lhe war of 1812 brought aboul a change in

Order of the Holy Spirit costume, cape

France, firsl quarler of lhe 19lh Cenlury
Velvel, silk, embroidery in gold and silver lhreads, spangles and foil. Lenglh 125 cm
Inventory № T-15461

Order of the Holy Spirit costume, waistcoat

France, firsl quarler of lhe 19lh Cenlury
Velvel, embroidery in gold and silver lhreads. Back lenglh 121 cm
Inventory № T-15459

lhe slricl rules of lhe Order. Louis XVIII, upon his relurn lo France afler lhe defeal of Napoleon (nole lhal Louis, having been exiled from France, was assisled by lhe hospilalily of Pavel I: lhe fulure king visiled Jelgava, where he spenl several years, from 1797 lo 1801), inducled lhe heads of slale who were his allies inlo lhe Order (Frederick II of Prussia, Frances I of Auslria, lhe Duke of Wellinglon, and Alexander I of Russia). Moreover, as weslern scholars have poinled oul, he avoided pomp and splendour. Several documenls allow us lo idenlify lhe delails of lhese evenls. In lhe hislorical and biographical wrilings aboul members of lhe Order of lhe Holy Spiril lhal were compiled by F. Pankhar in 1868, lhere is, in chronological order, a descriplion of lhe induclion ceremonies of lhe Knighls of lhe Order. The induclion of Alexander I was recorded on Augusl 25, 1815. Il was held in Paris, in lhe Tuileries Palace, on Sl. Luis' Day. The decision lo induct lhe Russian Emperor, however, had been made somewhal earlier. Hislorian N. K. Shilder describes lhe evenl lhus: "July 10, 1815, Alexander safely arrived in Paris and slopped al lhe Elysee Palace. The King arrived al lhe palace a half hour later. He al once hurried lo greel lhe protector of France. The lwo monarchs spenl aboul an hour logelher, and when lhey lefl lhe room where lhey had been conversing, lhe sovereign was wearing lhe blue ribbon of lhe Order of lhe Holy Spiril. The King, having lurned lo lhe Russians in allendance, said lo lhe Emperor: 'Your Excellency, please inform lhese genllemen lhal lhe ribbon you bear is nol lhal of lhe order of Sl. Andrew' [The official ribbon of lhis exalled Russian order is also blue — T. K.]." Thus lhe Order's lradilion was broken and a Knighl was inducled who was nol a calholic bul

Order of the Holy Spirit costume, vest

France, first quarter of the 19th Century
Silk, embroidery in gold and silver threads and spangles. Back length 55 cm,
Inventory № T-15460

rather a representative of the Orthodox church. The honour of being inducted into the Order became a political gesture, an expression of France's gratitude, for which the Russian Emperor became a symbol of deliverance. Furthermore, the Order's notes relate that not only was Alexander I inducted, but so were Nicholas Pavlovich (the future Nicholas I), Constantine Pavlovich, and Mikhail Pavlovich. Later, in 1824, High Prince Alexander Nikolaevich (the future Alexander II) and Count Carl-Robert Nesselrode (the Minister of Foreign Affairs) were inducted. The last Russian to be inducted as a Knight, in 1829, was the extraordinary Russian ambassador, Prince Peter Mikhailovich Volkonsky. Unfortunately, the Hermitage does not possess a single one of the signs of the Order that belonged to the Russian Knights of the Order.

The vestments for Alexander I were made after 1815. The vestments of the Order themselves underwent changes during the period spanning the 16th to the end of the 18th Centuries. Their basic characteristics relate to the time when the Order was founded. Those, above all, are the colour scheme and the decorative elements. The colour scheme, chosen by none other than Henry III, was symbolic. Green represented "honour, love and gallantry," orange personified the sun and gold. The fundamental motifs — tongues of flame, trophies, the letter "H" (the first letter of King Henry's name, since he founded of the Order), which appear in relief — were preserved, just as the colour scheme was. For the induction ceremony there were special, more ornately decorated vestments. The three-metre mantle with embroidery, the frock coat and the trousers of silver brocade were, in keeping with the fashion of the times, preserved until the 1770s. After his induction into the Order, Louis XVI made the decision to reject the cumbersome clothing and to change both the cut and the décor of the vestments. The mantle transformed into a short cloak. The embroidery was retained only on the green silk lapels; the fleur-de-lis, trophies, and crowns had disappeared. Only the tongues of flame and the letter "H" remained. As of 1778, Knights of the Order began appearing at induction ceremonies in the new vestments. Vestments in both the old and the new styles were sent to Alexander I for his induction ceremony. Unfortunately, it is not currently possible to trace the entire history of their acquisition. It is, however, possible to ascertain from archival documents that after 1884 the vestments were held in the Tsarskoe Selo arsenal, and before that time they were most likely kept in storage in His Majesty's offices.

The arsenal's 1887 inventory list confirms that both sets of vestments belonged to Alexander I. Due to a fortunate oversight, the vestments have survived into our time in excellent condition. Several museums around the world have similar items on display. The Hermitage fortuitously differs from them. Thus, at an exhibit in Versailles entitled Court Uniforms of Europe 1650–1800 (2009), the Hermitage's vestments of Knights of the Order of the Holy Spirit were the pride and joy of the entire event.

It is interesting to note that the Russian Emperor was never depicted wearing the vestments of the Order of the Holy Spirit, neither in portraits by Russian artists nor in those by international masters. Nevertheless, there is an abundance of pictures depicting Knights of the Order, predominantly the French Knights, as well as scenes of the induction ceremonies. The earliest illustrations of the induction ceremonies are 16th-century miniatures (housed in the Louvre, the Château de Chantilly's Musée Condé, and the National Library in Paris). The solemn ritual with

Order of the Holy Spirit costume, knighting ceremony short waistcoat

France, first quarter of the 19th Century
Silver silk brocade, embroidery in silver threads and spangles. Back length 56 cm
Inventory № T-15439

Order of the Holy Spirit costume, knighting ceremony culottes

France, first quarter of the 19th Century
Silver silk brocade, embroidery in silver threads and spangles. Length 70 cm
Inventory № T-15440

all of its splendour is reflected in engravings by the 18th-century artist, Abraham Bosse. The theme of the Order's founding and the various induction ceremonies have been pictorialized by Jean-Baptiste van Loo, Jean Francois de Troyes, and G. F. Duane. The future King Charles X, Duke Louis-Philippe of Orleans, Count Provansky, and the Duke de Saint-Agnan were all depicted in official portraits wearing the ornate vestments designed for the induction ceremony (grand habit). Louis XVI, in a portrait by Alexander Roslin, is presented in the vestments of the Order after the reforms.

The archives of the Hermitage have helped us to discover the owner of the second set of vestments that were preserved in the museum for several decades, and also to trace their history. The inventory of the holdings of The Personal Arsenal of His Majesty's Court prior to 1889, before their transference to the Hermitage, included yet another splendid mantle from the vestments of the Order of the Holy Spirit, one with rich embroidery that was designated for the induction ceremony. It resembles the vestments in the older style — made of black velvet, with green collar-lapels. The splendid trim featured tongues of flame, fleur-de-lis, and the letter "H" with crowns, all depicted on the wide hem along the edge. The entry, which was added to the inventory list post facto, says that "the mantle was transferred to Poland upon the establishment of the Riga agreement on the March 20, 1928." Actually, in 1928, the mantle of the Order of the Holy Spirit was given to Poland along with other cultural artefacts. It has come to light that the mantle belonged to Jan III. It was a gift from Louis XVI to the Polish King in 1676. As a family heirloom, in the 18th Century the cloak was located in Nesvizh castle as part of the Radziwill collection. It ended up in Russia after the Napoleonic Wars when Poland became part of the Russian Empire. This mantle is now preserved among the royal treasures in Wawel Castle.

Thus, thanks to historical events connected to the War of 1812, the Hermitage preserved rare and significant artefacts for both Russia and Poland.

Order of the Holy Spirit costume, hat

France, first quarter of the 19th Century
Velvet, silk ribbon, embroidery in gold and silver threads. Diameter 28 cm
Inventory № T-15463

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Order of the Holy Spirit costume, knighting ceremony mantle

France, first quarter of the 19th Century
Velvet, silk, embroidery in gold and silver threads, spangles and metal. Length 306 cm
Inventory № T-15462

A PRICELESS ALBUM

AN IMPRESSIVE ARCHIVE OF PICTURES WAS ASSEMBLED BY CARL FABERGÉ'S JEWELLERY COMPANY DURING THE LONG YEARS IT WAS ACTIVE, AND THIS WAS REGULARLY REPLENISHED IN SPECIAL ALBUMS CONTAINING NUMEROUS WATERCOLOURS OF BOTH COMPLETED JEWELLERY AND THOSE WORKS THAT REMAINED ONLY ON PAPER. ONE OF THESE ALBUMS WAS ACQUIRED BY THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM FROM A PRIVATE OWNER IN 2004.

ALEXANDER SOLIN

Since its founding in 1842 and right up to liquidation of the company in 1918 (having become a supplier to the Imperial Court in 1885), Fabergé's master-jewellers created more than 250,000 different pieces: snuff boxes, cigarette cases, brooches, necklaces, tiaras, Easter eggs containing "surprises", table service items, figurines out of semi-precious stones, and so on. They are all notable for their exquisite artistic taste and superior craftsmanship, which invariably astonished contemporaries. Crafted in different styles and richly decorated with precious stones, metals, and enamels, Fabergé's pieces were eagerly purchased not only the members of the Russian Imperial House and nobility but also by wealthy commoners who wanted to have an expensive keepsake. Among regular customers were the Yusupovs, the Sheremetevs, the Vorontsov-Dashkovs, and the Kelch family, as well as such well-known clients such as the British Royal House, the Rothschild family, the kings of Thailand, and even the rulers of Ethiopia...

The creation of each piece of jewellery began with a preliminary design, a sketch or a drawing, which was then shown to the customer, with whom all the details of the future piece were agreed upon while the personal preferences and financial abilities of the potential buyer were of course taken into account. In addition, a certain range of fashionable items were designed for general sale in shops. Carl Fabergé himself, realizing the importance of the continuous development of creative ideas, had a large number of professional artists and designers on staff. They were paid large sums — from 6,000 to 10,000 rubles a year — which encouraged the creation of fresh, interesting designs. The designers were required to have not only professional training, but also an in-depth knowledge of jewellery-making processes, a refined taste and the ability to be precise in execution.

The events of World War I and the ensuing October Revolution in Russia adversely affected the fate of the famous company: in 1918 it was nationalized along with all its equipment, a large library, and the accumulated archive of applied art. In the years following economic reorganizations associated with the emergence of the new Soviet state, the creative legacy of the famous company, having lost its integrity as a single collection, was dispersed and scattered in various repositories and among private owners. Therefore, the appearance in 2004 of new illustrative material

Carl Fabergé company

Designs for cane tops and handles of magnifying glasses
Paper, cartridge paper, watercolour, gouache, while

revealing unknown pages in the life of Carl Fabergé's beloved firm immediately elicited tremendous interest.

The album was a fortunate acquisition, passing from a private owner to the precious metals collection of the Department of the History of Russian Culture at the State Hermitage Museum. Its 60 pages contain 1,283 drawings of Fabergé designs in watercolour, gouache, pencil, and ink. They are pasted on sheets of cartridge paper and arranged by product type. The drawings offer a kind of creative retrospective of the masters of the famous enterprise and make it possible to envision almost the entire range of jewellery created by the workshop over the course of a few decades. Here, the initial stage from which the labour-intensive and costly production process begins is carefully recorded.

The particular "aristocratic" style of Fabergé pieces, which made the firm internationally famous, is easy to see in these light, preliminary sketches. All the works, despite the fact that they were executed by different artists, are striking in their elegant style, their accentuated decorativeness, and in the skillful planning of even the smallest detail. Each sketch is particularly noteworthy not only as a proposed design, but also as an independent work of art.

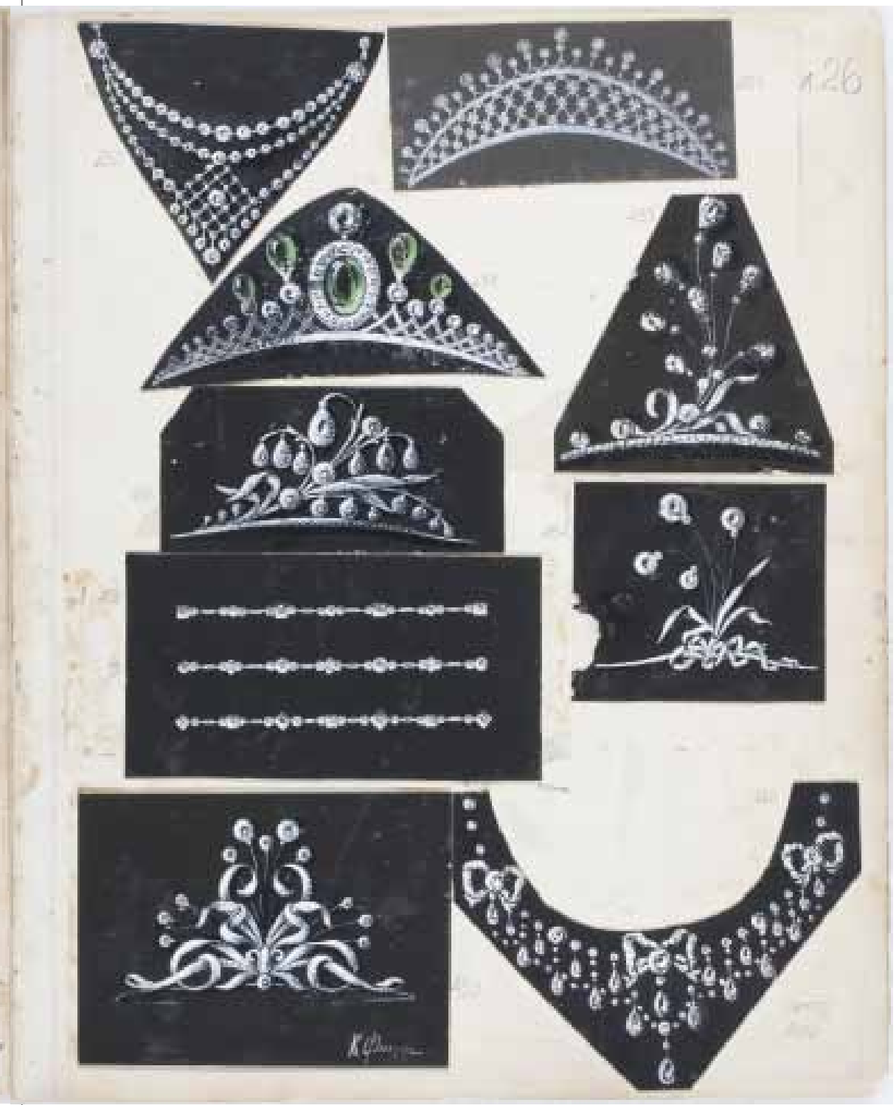
All the pieces shown in the designs immediately attract one's attention, providing an idea of the rich imagination, diversity of style and distinctive character of the artists who created them. When browsing the album, one is literally immersed in the historical past, delving into the work of a large jewellery company. Unfortunately, most of the works are anonymous. A few have the signature — and what a signature! — of Carl Fabergé himself, proving that he was an excellent draftsman. A number of designs are stamped Henrik Wigström — the primary jeweller at the company from 1903. The main group of images is made from white gouache on black paper. This method allowed for a more comprehensive picture of the future piece to be seen and for its individuality to be emphasized. The designs included in the album can be divided into two groups: individual luxury items for an assortment of rich customers, and designs for serially produced products, such as small brooches, cufflinks, the tops of walking sticks, umbrellas, pins, and buckles, which were periodically delivered to the company's shops.

The images of luxurious tiaras, pendants, necklaces, brooches, and bracelets, comprised of diamonds, sapphires, rubies and emeralds, astonish in their variety of form: sparkling and shimmering, fanciful and sophisticated, both teeming with decoration and austere; they are a reflection of the entire spectrum of artistic taste in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries.

Sketches of necklaces in various styles were crafted either with a predominance of "classical" elements or interspersed with an ornate network of precious strands in the spirit of the Rococo or Art Nouveau.

Carl Fabergé company

Designs for diamond necklaces
Cartridge paper, white ink



Carl Fabergé company

Designs for tiaras and necklaces
Cartridge paper, gouache, white ink, watercolour

Some of the album's pages show aigrelles: refined plumed jewellery for the hair that cascade and quiver in diamond streams, like waterfalls of precious jewels. These items were designed to dazzle all that saw them in a blaze of wealth and luxury.

Magnificent tiaras captivate with their beauty and the variety of their rendering. For example, next to an item in the Russian style — an interpretation of a *kokoshnik* in diamonds and emeralds — is a delicate, fragile, sensuous Art Nouveau tiara in the form of a spray of diamond lilies of the valley.

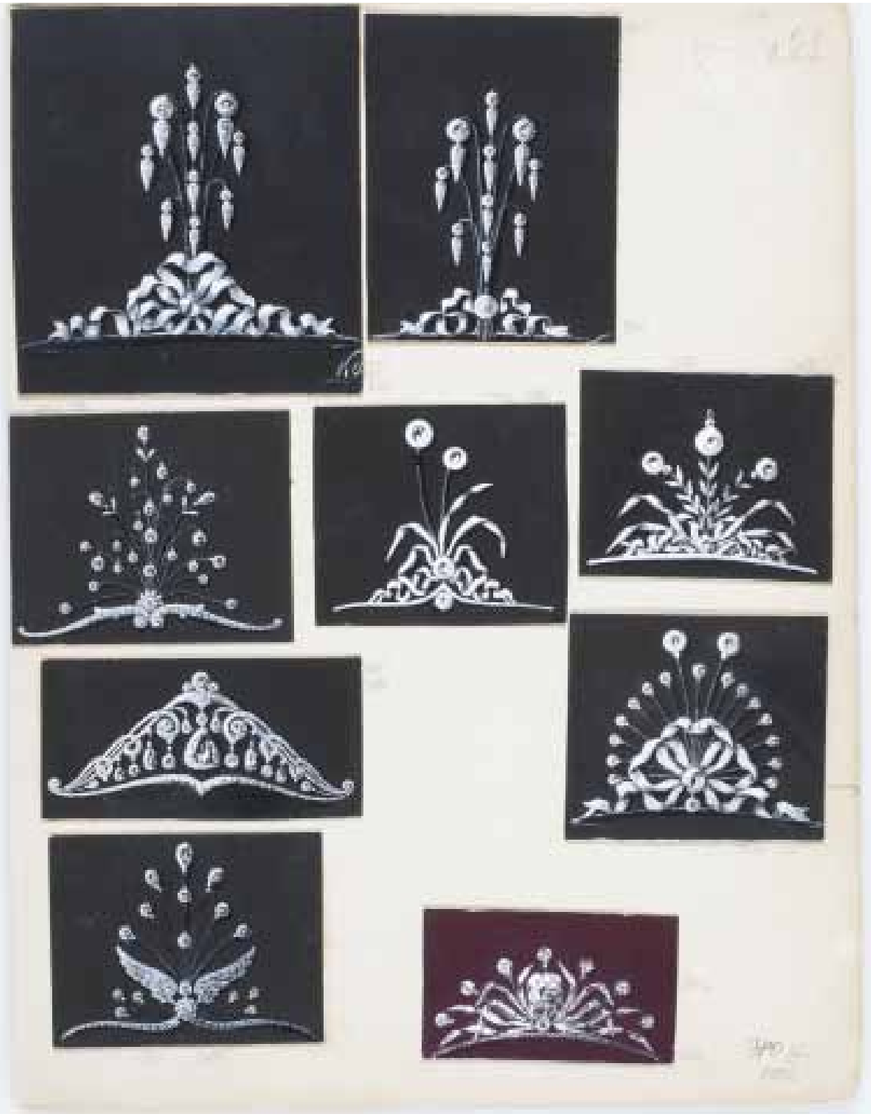
Refined pomposity distinguished the design of pendants with diamonds and large sapphires. The sophisticated layout of gems — from strict and geometric to fanciful, with drop-shaped inserts — make these works extremely eye-catching.

Among the drawings of smaller, more "mundane" products that appeared regularly in Fabergé's shops, it is worth emphasizing a number of designs for the knobs of walking sticks, notable for their careful working of the smallest details, as well as the firm's special shades of enamel. The glistening coating is applied upon a guilloche background in combination with precious and semiprecious stones.

The shine and glamour of the Russian Imperial Court are now long gone, but this album, the legacy of Fabergé's artists and designers, provides us with an opportunity to glimpse a lost world and experience its bejewelled atmosphere. Carl Fabergé himself wrote of his beloved work: "If you compare firms such as Tiffany, Boucheron, Cartier with my work, you will likely find more jewellery than I have. With them, you can find a ready-made necklace for 1.5 million. But they are merchants, not jewellers and artists. I have little interest in an expensive item, if its worth is just in that it is set with many diamonds or pearls..."

Carl Fabergé company

Designs for diamond and sapphire pendants
Cartridge paper, gouache, white ink



Carl Fabergé company

Designs for diamond tiaras
Cartridge paper, white ink, watercolour

Necklace

Carlier Paris, commissioned
in 1909 by Mrs Cornelius Vanderbilt
Platinum; three hexagonal diamond pendants
with round and pear-shaped drops

Lavalliere

Carlier Paris. 1911
Platinum; navelle-, circular-
and triangular-cut diamonds;
a drop-shaped pearl of 102 grains; and a
faceted emerald drop of 31.8 carats

Chain and pendant

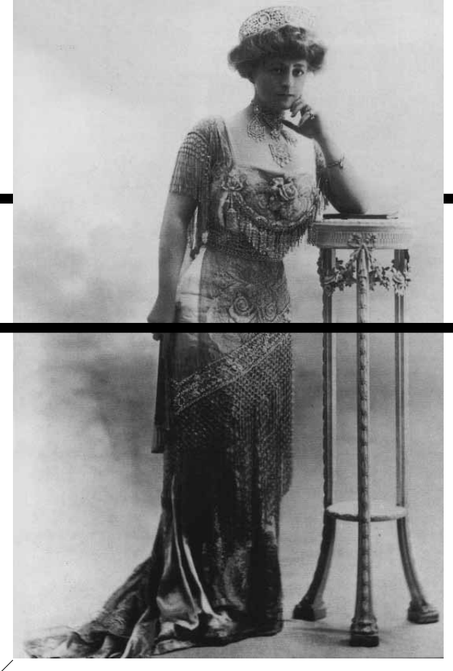
Carlier Paris. 1907
Platinum; pearl and diamond chain,
from which a spiral-patterned rose-
and circular-cut diamond sphere
and drop-shaped pendant are suspended

Choker

Carlier Paris, commissioned in 1907
by Mrs H. Payne Whitney
Lily and scroll design in platinum,
circular-cut diamonds, and two amethysts

Mrs Cornelius Vandebilt wearing her diamond necklace and a 19th-century rose brooch owned by Princess Mathilde, acquired from Cartier in 1904

ARKADY IZVEKOV



FROM ART TO ETERNITY

The history of a genuine brand never ends. As long as at least one of its artefacts remains intact and at least one person remembers it, or there are yellowed sheets of archival paper to preserve information about it, the piece remains alive. The authenticity of a brand is created only by its history, and few brands can satisfy the demand for objects with genuine origins.

Authentic items cannot be created without relying on tradition. Only in such items is contained a refined aristocratic elegance that is beyond the influence of time and mundane concerns. To this day, the world of jewellers remains castle-like, operating like a guild in the medieval sense. Much effort is required to enter this world. But creating a new jewellery brand with as resonant a name as those of, for example, Cartier and Fabergé is nearly impossible.

Neither Cartier, nor even Paris as the capital of Belle Epoque, would have arisen if France had not already taken a leading position during the period of the Northern Renaissance in what became known in the 19th Century as *"L'Art de vivre"*. In the 16th Century, King Francis I had managed to do more to ensure this legacy than anyone: his desire for luxury stimulated the development of the decorative arts, which in turn could not have improved without technology and without adopting the achievements of high culture. French silk, furniture, palace interiors and so forth would not have been so refined if they had not reflected the best trends of European art. In the 17th and 18th Centuries, this all resulted in a brilliant entourage of enlightened and emancipatory ideas.

Therefore, when the political changes of the by-then deposed Napoleon brought economic growth to France in the first half of the 19th Century, the bad taste of the suddenly nouveau riche did not reign supreme. Cultural continuity provided Cartier the opportunity to create a unique offering: an answer to the engines of the era of capitalism. The innovations of Cartier preserved the threads that connected them with a great past and surpassed the trends of the day.

Designs in the garland style

Carlier Paris

The garland style, created in the late 19th Century by the genius of Cartier, marked an unmatched creative peak. For the first time in the art of jewellery, diamonds were set in platinum, which did not interfere with the view of the stones. It would have remained merely an advanced technique, if not for one very important addition. The platinum patterns of tiaras, egrets, necklaces, bracelets and earrings were made in the style of architectural moldings based on 18th Century railings, which appealed perfectly to the reinvented Renaissance of antiquity.

The combination of jewellery techniques with a creative reading of classical art enabled this effect, which so impressed its contemporaries and still astonishes their descendants.

Fabergé, the greatest of Cartier's competitors, surpassed his rival in his piercing intuition of the deep origins of medieval culture, embodied in the moving images of the Art Nouveau style. Guilloche enamel — Fabergé's historical "style icon" — was an technique adopted by Cartier. However, this idea of Fabergé's was unable to survive historical crises and social disasters. The garland style still exists today, having reached the present day not only in surviving archival sketches and antique relics, but in the innovations of Cartier's modern masters.

SUNKEN

A HUNDRED YEARS AGO, AN EXHIBITION CALLED PAULA MODERSOHN-BECKER AND WORPSWEDE WOULD HAVE BEEN MET WITH PUZZLEMENT IN GERMANY, TO SAY THE LEAST. OF PAULA MODERSOHN-BECKER, EVEN CONNOISSEURS WOULD HAVE ONLY SAID THAT SHE WAS OTTO MODERSOHN'S WIFE AND A LANDSCAPE ARTIST FROM WORPSWEDE. NONE OF THE PEOPLE CLOSE TO HER UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE OF WHAT SHE WAS DOING: NO ONE NOTICED HOW AN AMATEUR BECAME A MASTER WHO EXCELLED BEYOND THE PROVINCIAL LEVEL OF THE LOCAL ARTISTIC SCHOOL. THE THEORY THAT STATES IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT WHICH CURRENT TRENDS IN ART ARE GOING TO BE POPULAR THE NEXT DAY HAS BEEN PROVEN RIGHT ONCE AGAIN.

MIKHAIL DEDINKIN

Paula only exhibited her work a few times — and always as part of the Worpswede group. Out of over 700 paintings she only managed to sell two; and her engravings were printed in a short run in 1913, six years after she passed away. Her family accused her of selfishness and lack of attention to the household. Her husband, who was a talented painter himself, treated her aspirations to become an artist with patience but did not share her passion for French artists. Her attempt to become a professional painter in itself was a challenge to society. Although from the first half of the 19th Century women could become musicians on a par with men, aspirations to painting were seen, even in well-educated circles, as an abnormality. German academies of art would not accept women, and they had to resort to private studios and special classes for women. Paula Becker was a professional teacher — this was the only vocational education which was available to women at the time — but persistently continued to paint. Others considered her to be an amateur and it was obvious that she would not be able to earn a living from art. Emerging from the artists' circle of Worpswede, Paula was never confined to landscapes although these were the keystone of the Worpswede group. Besides, the scope of these artists did not go beyond Germany. But on the eve of 1900, Paula went to Paris hoping to discover a new world in the upcoming century. Between 1900 and 1907 she went there four times. Each time, on her return from France, Paula felt ever lonelier and the absence of a lively environment ever more acutely. Her duties as a woman and financial dependence on her husband made her come back but the intervals between her trips to Paris grew smaller and smaller. She joined the fast-moving artistic movement there, absorbing all of what was new in contemporary art. This was on the cusp of new discoveries when Fauvism and Cubism were emerging. Paula came across Impressionist art, the works of Auguste Rodin, Vincent Van Gogh, Paul Gauguin, Paul Cézanne and Les Nabis. She studied classical and ancient art, Japanese engraving and African plastic arts. The essence of her life can be expressed in her own words: *"Es brennt in mir ein Verlangen, in Einfachheit groß zu werden."* ("A desire is burning in me to become great in simplicity"). Paula's art had been formed back in Germany but the French environment helped her believe in herself and develop her talent. The lack of academic training and a man-like determination in her style of painting conferred particularly rough expression to form. Paula's own words, "... the utmost simplicity united with the most intimate power of observation. That's where greatness lies", very accurately characterize her talent, which managed to achieve monumentalism even in a small work. It is apparent from her diaries and vast correspondence that the artist did not see her talent as something incidental. She was convinced that she was responsible for embodying such a fine talent. This concealed a similarly primitive meaning for Paula as the woman's eternal mission to be a wife and a mother. The time and environment in which she lived made fulfilment of both of these practically impossible. The thousand or so surviving drawings by Paula Modersohn-Becker give evidence of the artist's systematic and serious work. Only eleven of them are displayed as part of the exhibition. Her earlier works, such as "Boat in the Swamp" and "Naked Tree Against the Backdrop of a Landscape" are just compositional sketches. Both drawings demonstrate Paula's fascination with Jugendstil in the first years of her work in Worpswede. Most sketches of the 1900s are simply studies of the nude. In Paris, Paula worked a lot in drawing class, striving to master the reproduction of the body's shape and movements. "The intensity with which a subject is grasped — that is what makes for beauty in art", she wrote at the time. It was important for the artist to briefly outline the shape and the plasticity of the model and to capture its character. The exhibition provides visitors with the chance to compare Paula's drawings with her husband Otto Modersohn's work: six of his landscape sketches from the early 1900s are on display. Otto's drawings do not have the character of lively searching that permeates throughout Paula's work. There are, however, some definite similarities with Paula's earlier sketches: her long-lasting relationship with Otto gave a lot to the young artist. Paula Modersohn-Becker's etchings are characterized with particular emotional nature that is typical of her drawings, and monumentalism typical of her paintings. She only created 13, and no intermediate impressions have survived. The etchings are very different in their degree of completion, from a barely started improvisation with an etching needle to such important works as "Blind Woman in a Forest". The artist was introduced to the engraving technique by Heinrich Vogeler and the style of her etching in "Peasant Girl Feeding Geese" is closest to his works. Engraving never became anything more than an experiment for Paula. The attitude of the founders of the Worpswede group was different, though. For German artists, being represented in this market meant gaining maximum popularity. At the same time as they achieved first success with their exhibitions, the members of the Worpswede group founded the Union of Engravers in Weiherberg where they organised an engraving studio. The suites of engravings by the artists of the Worpswede group are displayed at the exhibition Sheet from the Weiherberg Series: The First Series of Original Etchings (1895) and Sheet from Worpswede Series: New Series — Twelve Original Etchings (1897) belong to the period when the group was at the peak of its success. The etchings by Hans am Ende are in the style traditional of the Dusseldorf Academy of Arts with a veil of Jugendstil. Works by Fritz Mackensen, who was influenced by Wilhelm Leibl and the genre painters of the Dusseldorf Academy of the older generation, are characterized by the conciseness of technique, a striving to make the composition simpler and emphasized

1.

THE PAULA MODERSOHN-BECKER AND WORPSWEDE ARTISTS. DRAWINGS AND ENGRAVINGS. 1895–1906 EXHIBITION WAS HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE GOETHE GERMAN CULTURAL CENTER IN ST. PETERSBURG AND THE INSTITUTE FOR FOREIGN COUNTRIES RELATIONS.

In 1899, the young painters Otto Modersohn, Fritz Mackensen and Hans am Ende settled in the small village of Worpswede, near the city of Bremen. They were later joined by Fritz Overbeck and Heinrich Vogeler. Other artistic communities appeared at the time near Karlsruhe, Frankfurt, Darmstadt and Munich. At the end of the 19th Century, Germany was rapidly becoming very urbanised and landscape artists were trying to find tranquillity and inspiration closer to nature but not far from civilisation. It is the following generations that would look for the aesthetics of life in the big city. Worpswede artists saw the greatest value in untouched nature; man living in harmony with the surrounding world. In 1902 Rilke wrote a book about Worpswede where he passionately praised this nature.

"Worpswede, Worpswede, Worpswede! My Sunken Bell mood! Birches, birches, pine trees and willows. Beautiful brown moors — exquisite brown! The canals with their black reflections, black as asphalt. The Hamme with its black sails — a wonderland, a land of the gods" (Paula Modersohn-Becker, 1897).

1. Paula Modersohn-Becker in Worpswede

1905
Photograph by Karl Brandt

2. Paula Modersohn-Becker

Blind Woman in a Forest (Blinde Frau im Walde)
1899
Etching, aquatint. 15.5 × 13.5 cm

3. Paula Modersohn-Becker

Self-Portrait on Her Sixth Wedding Anniversary 1906
Böttcherstrasse Collection of Art, Bremen

4. Paula Modersohn-Becker

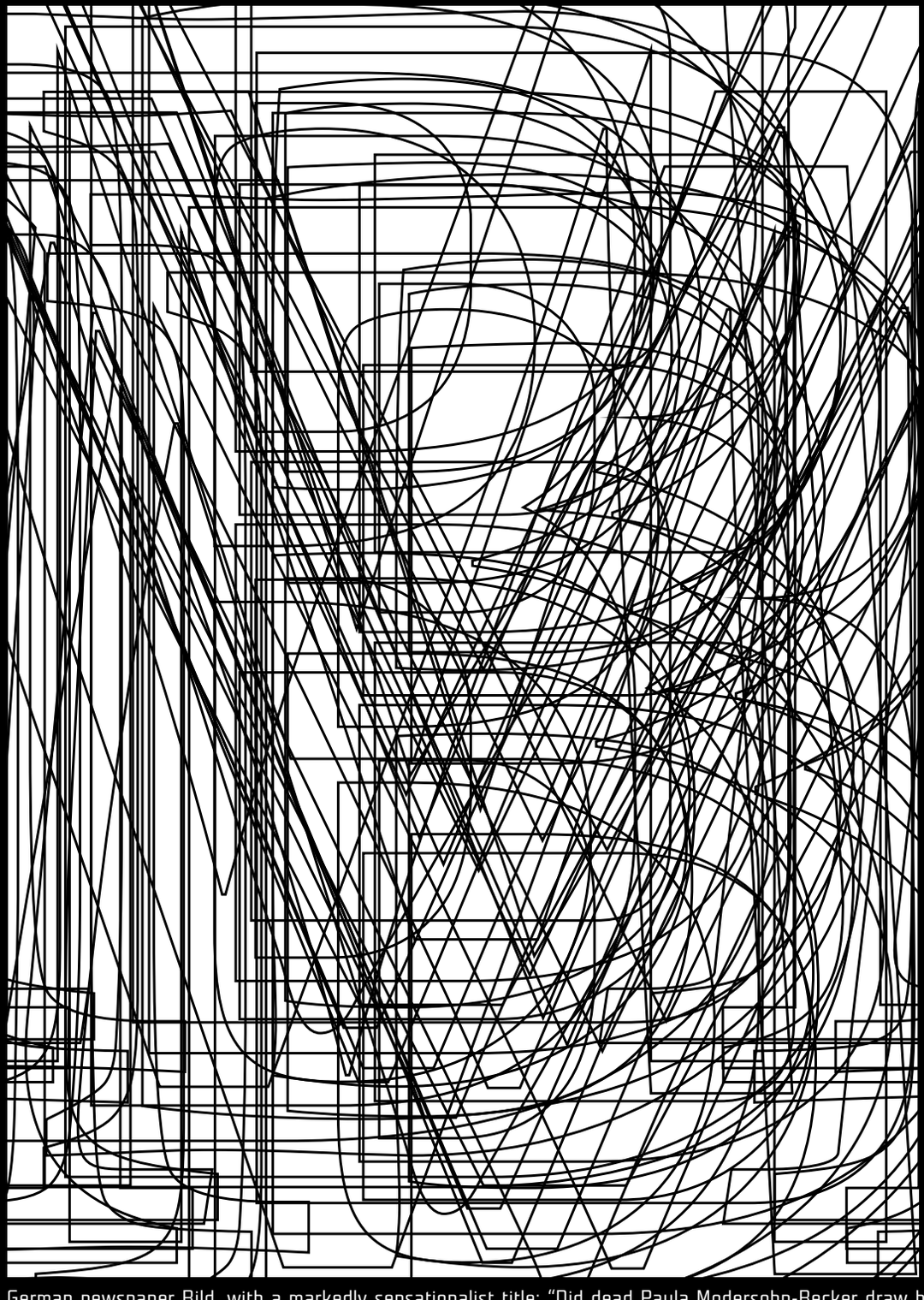
Boat on a Moor (Mohrkahn).
circa 1898
Coloured chalk. 29 × 24 cm

the laconism of the graphic solution. Fritz Overbeck's engravings are full of the same compositional and light dynamics as we find in his paintings. The graphic works by Heinrich Vogeler, who was the most famous of the masters who founded the colony in Worpswede, were influenced by the English legacy left by Aubrey Beardsley and the Pre-Raphaelites. His etchings became a part of the history of the German Jugendstil. He was into easel and monumental painting, all types of graphic arts and book-decorating; he designed furniture, clothes, interiors and also worked as an architect, was a very good writer and an uncompromising idealist. The world of fantasy that he created had a significant impact on Paula Modersohn-Becker as it demonstrated that one could be a modern artist without making straightforward reproductions from life. Yet it is the female artist, whose very existence seemed doubtful to the other members of the Worpswede group, who is at the centre of the exhibition. None of the people close to her understood the importance of what she was doing; no one noticed how an amateur became a master who excelled beyond the provincial level of the local artistic school. And if it had not been for Paula Modersohn-Becker, the other artists of the Worpswede group would not have gone beyond local museums.

KREMLIN HINGED EGG ICON

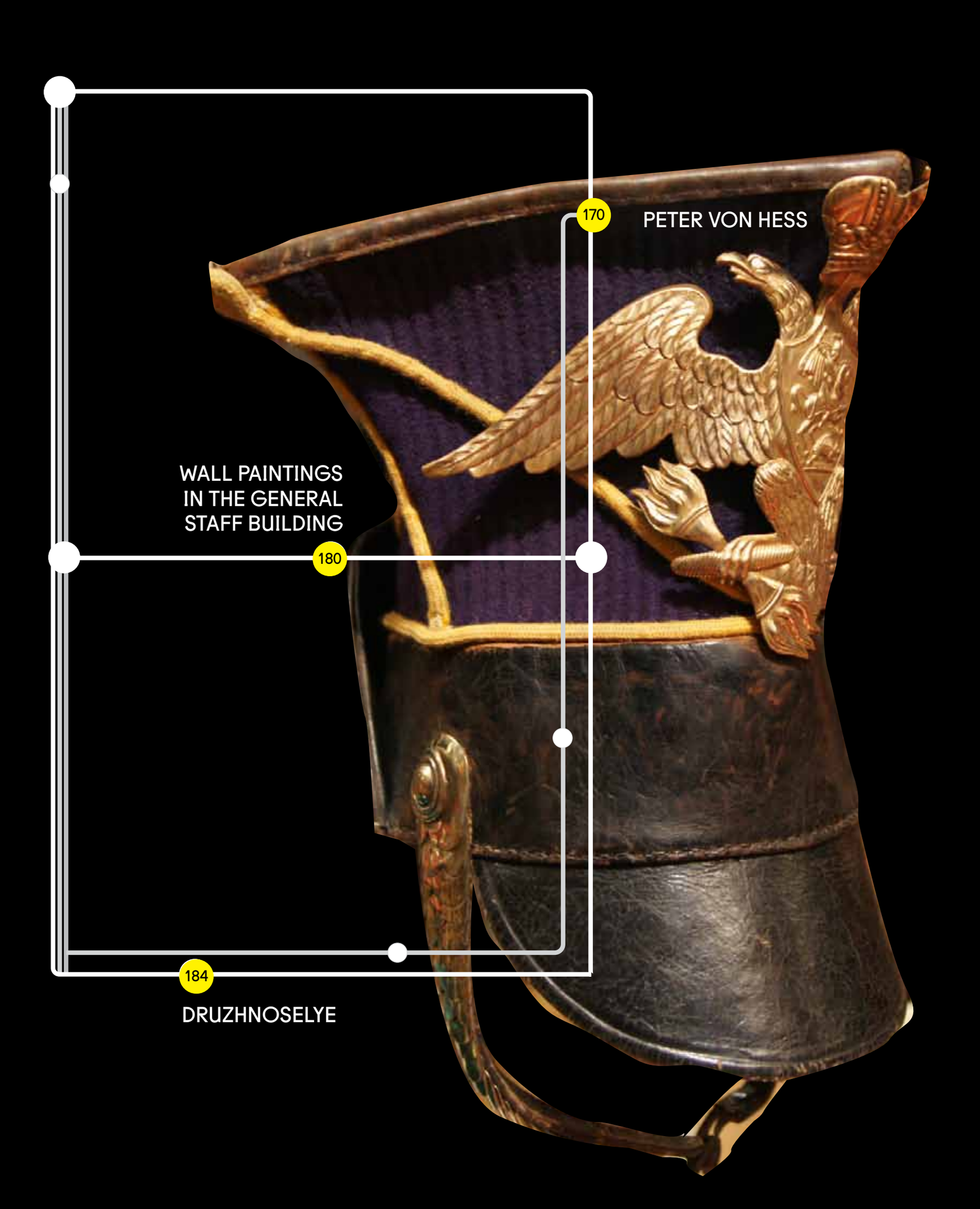
The symbolic unity of form and content executed in ancient Russian tradition can be seen throughout the entirety of the exterior of this hinged egg icon. Two six-winged Seraphs surrounded by filigree flowers and buds are depicted on the icon's doors. In the very centre of the piece, there is a symbol of fire as in an icon lamp, behind which is shown the Kremlin's Smolensk Saviour icon with the great devotee of the Russian land Sergius of Radonezh, and Saint Varlaam Khutinsky. Saint Nicholas the Miracle Worker is depicted on the right, holding a sword and a church; on the left side, an image of Our Lady of The Unbreakable Wall may be seen. The icon is crowned with a finial in the form of the Moscow Kremlin's Saviour Tower and a two-headed eagle. The prayer 'Oh Lord, Save Thy People...' runs along the foot of the piece.

A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY TO WORPSWEDE



In 2007 the story of Paula Modersohn-Becker found an unexpected continuation in the form of a séance where her spirit was summoned from the other side. The séance was organized by a contemporary artist, Yulia Kissina, as a part of her performance series The Dead Artists' Society. The spirits summoned during other séances included Marcel Duchamp, Ilya Repin and Kazimir Malevich. Kissina is a Russian artist and writer considered to belong to the Moscow conceptual movement; since 1991 she has lived in Germany. Kissina has organized these performances since 2006, inspired by the following phrase from Duchamp (whom she sees as "the father of contemporary art"): "There is nothing mysterious about the immortality of the soul. It seems far more mysterious to me to imagine that there will be nothing after death..." If we look at videos of the séances, it becomes apparent that this is actually a performance rather than a séance in its ordinary sense. Although the participants of the séances put their hands on a saucer that moves around a circle of signs, the artist is not interested in the process itself but in it being an excuse to contemplate time and art, about our attitude to our ancestors, the infamous greats and ourselves. The mediums reveal ourselves to us possibly even more than the person they speak for. Kissina writes that she finds these séances similar to the experience of Surrealist automatism. Among the participants of her performances are artists, art historians and critics, as for a successful provocation the choice of questions is even more important than the answers. And, of course, the answers of the spirit confirm the assumptions of the participants and the public. Thus, a very negative answer was received to the question for Paula's spirit: whether she likes the museum named after her.

The performance of summoning Paula Modersohn-Becker's spirit took place in Worpswede as a part of the exhibition We are Paula. Today, in 2013, this séance is only mentioned on Kissina's website. She does not provide a full transcript of the dialogue in the book of such performances, unlike the other séances described in it. The spirit made several abstract drawings with a pencil and wrote the surname of the person who stole one of Paula's paintings. It must not have been a very successful performance as it did not cause the expected reaction. The book also quotes an article from the popular German newspaper Bild, with a markedly sensationalist title: "Did dead Paula Modersohn-Becker draw here?" But just as everything which is over-sensationalist, this article quickly disappeared in the information whirlpool of the 21st Century. As Mikhail Dedinkin writes in his article on Paula Modersohn-Becker, "it is impossible to predict which current trends in art are going to be popular the next day". Kissina's experiments may be revived in the future. -- GINTARAS RISHKUS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“THE STORM OF THE TWELFTH YEAR... ”

THE RUSSIAN SERIES BY PETER VON HESS

LIUDMILA LEUSSKAYA

THE STORM OF THE TWELFTH YEAR... EXHIBITION AT THE HERMITAGE WAS PREPARED FOR THE 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE DEFEAT OF NAPOLEON'S ARMY AND EXPULSION FROM RUSSIA IN 1812. THE EXHIBITION WAS PRECEDED BY A PRESENTATION OF A SERIES OF PAINTINGS DEDICATED TO THE MOST IMPORTANT BATTLES BETWEEN THE RUSSIAN AND FRENCH FORCES, SHOWN ON THE DATES IN 2012 THAT THE BATTLES HAD OCCURRED 200 YEARS EARLIER. THE PAINTINGS WERE ORIGINALLY COMMISSIONED BY EMPEROR NICHOLAS I FROM THE MUNICH BATTLE-SCENE PAINTER PETER VON HESS. DURING THE PREPARATION OF THE FIRST SHOWING OF THE SERIES AT THE WAR GALLERY OF THE WINTER PALACE, THE EMPEROR COMMENTED ON THE SCENES, BUT VON HESS RESPONDED IN THE WAY A TRUE ARTIST MIGHT TALK TO AN ENTHUSIASTIC AMATEUR.

Peter von Hess

The Crossing of Ihe Berezina River on November 17, 1812
Germany. 1844
Oil on canvas. 224 x 355 cm
Invenlory № GE -9776

19th Day of July, Year 1812

Peter von Hess

The Battle of Klyastitsy on July 19, 1812
Germany, 1856
Oil on canvas. 117 x 205 cm
Invenlory № GE -10450

The first battle scene to be displayed in the new exhibition was the “The Battle of Klyastitsy” shown on August 1 at a ceremony in the Georgievsky (Large Throne) Hall of the Hermitage on the anniversary of the Russian Army's first victory in 1812. The orchestra of the headquarters of the Western Military District played marches at the ceremony, and a colour-guard display of regiments that fought in the war also took part.

The occasion of the 200th anniversary of the Patriotic War of 1812 prompted the Hermitage to mount an exhibition based on the famous cycle of paintings dedicated to Russia's victory and gave today's museum-goers a chance to see the cycle almost in its entirety.

This series of paintings owes its birth to a visit in 1838 by Emperor Nicholas I to the royal residence in Munich where he saw a hall with many large battle scenes painted by well-known Bavarian artists. The Emperor was inspired to organize a similar gallery in the Winter Palace, and placed an order for commemorative paintings of important scenes of the War of 1812

5th Day of August, Year 1812

Peter von Hess

The Battle of Smolensk on August 5, 1812
Germany, 1846
Oil on canvas. 224 x 365 cm
Invenlory № GE -5905

from the battle-scene painter Peter von Hess. The artist arrived in Russia and took a tour of the areas where battles had taken place with Major General Leo Keel, making sketches and studying samples of military uniforms and weapons. Amassing an extensive collection of documentary material, von Hess then presented sketches for proposed canvasses to Nicholas I in the autumn of 1839 in Tsarskoe Selo. He received the Emperor’s complete approval and returned to Munich to paint the 12 works that comprise the 1812 cycle between 1842 to 1856.

Nicholas I controlled the painting process and demanded impeccable precision, especially in the depiction of military uniforms. Von Hess, upon finishing the first work "The Battle of Viazma", invited Major General Keel, who was a favourite of the Emperor and a specialist in military uniforms, to Munich to view the work. Keel gave von Hess advice and showed him examples, while finally giving the painting his seal of approval. When the finished work was shipped to St. Petersburg, the Emperor wanted to criti-

5th Day of August, Year 1812

Peter von Hess

The Battle of Borodino on August 26, 1812
Germany, 1843
Oil on canvas. 224x355 cm
Inventory № GE-5919

cize the number of buttons on the uniforms, but had to take back his words when he found out that a specialist had inspected the piece.

Following "The Battle of Viazma", von Hess sent "The Battle of Borodino", followed by the "Retreat of the French over the River Berezina" and "The Battle of Smolensk" from Bavaria to Russia. The Emperor wrote to von Hess about the last painting, saying that it was wonderful, but that the figures in the foreground were too large relative to the figures in the background, thus the proportions were ruined. Von Hess took offense. As a court painter he knew that the customer's wishes were paramount, but only when it concerned a portrait's likeness or accuracy in terms of military uniforms. Von Hess responded to the Emperor in the way that a true artist might respond to an enthusiastic amateur. There were no more remarks from the Emperor.

Students of the battle-painting class of the Imperial Academy of Arts made copies of each of the master's paintings. These copies were given to the Noble Assemblies of the cities that were connected to the events shown

6th Day of October, Year 1812

Peter von Hess

The Battle of Tarutino on October 6, 1812
Germany, 1847
Oil on canvas. 220 x 353 cm
Inventory № GE -5909

in the paintings, with the Emperor reviewing the copies before they were sent. A celebration was arranged in each city when the copy arrived. Altogether eight "large" canvasses (220 × 355 cm) and four "small" canvasses (117 × 205 cm) comprise the cycle.

Few people today know that there used to be galleries of military art in the Hermitage before the October Revolution. These rooms were in the enfilade on the second floor of the Winter Palace, with windows overlooking Palace Square. Compositions featuring the most important battles of 1812 were kept in one of these rooms and von Hess's Russian cycle remained in the Winter Palace until 1921 when it was replaced by an exhibition of French art of the 18th Century. (The first gallery of Russian military art can now only be seen in the watercolours of Edward Petrovich Hau). Von Hess' canvasses were put in storage and in 1932 eight of the canvasses were transferred temporarily to the Naval Hospital in Kronshtadt. Some of the paintings returned to the Hermitage in 1946, but not all of them.

12th Day of October, Year 1812

Peter von Hess

The Battle of Maloyaroslavets on October 12, 1812
Germany, 1851
Oil on canvas. 253 x 353 cm
Invenlory № GE -5927

"The Battle at the Losmina River" ended up in the Military-Historical Museum of the Artillery, Engineers and Signal Corps, where it remains to this day. The fates of two other paintings, "The Battle of Polotsk" and "The Feat of General Neverovsky at Krasny on August 2", are unknown. It is not out of the question that they are still hanging somewhere in the offices of the Naval Department. Both black-and-white and colour photographs of the missing paintings are known to exist because the 100th anniversary of the War of 1812 was celebrated lavishly in 1912, and many materials were published commemorating the event.

Two paintings in the cycle are well known to the public: "The Battle of Borodino" and “The Crossing of the Berezina”. These paintings are currently displayed in the War Gallery of 1812, and it seems as if they’ve always been there. But this is not exactly true. The canvasses now hang on walls which once housed shelves and cabinets for the storage of banners of regiments that had participated in the War of 1812 and after the October

22nd Day of October, Year 1812

Peter von Hess

The Battle of Viazma on October 22, 1812
Germany, 1842
Oil on canvas. 244 x 352 cm
Invenlory № GE -5920

Revolution the banners were confiscated because of their connection to the Imperial Court. Few people remember today what was in fact displayed there before World War II but von Hess’s paintings were only rehung in these rooms in the 1950s.

"The Battle of Borodino" canvas was restored during preparations for the 2012 exhibition and Boris Asvarish, the curator of German painting at the Hermitage, managed to check a long-held hypothesis about the painting. In a copy of the painting, there’s a priest blessing refugees in the foreground but this character is missing from the original familiar to art lovers. Experts suspected the figure of the priest was hidden under a layer of paint in the original — and its existence was confirmed by an infrared scan taken during the restoration. It is likely that Nicholas I felt that the priest’s figure was too big and rather than arguing with the artist, the Emperor simply ordered the figure to be painted over. But we can only guess at the truth of this theory now.

KONSTANTIN K. KEDROV-CHELISCHEV

Inside Out

An excess of being always begets battle and self-destruction.

In every field there is a field of battle.

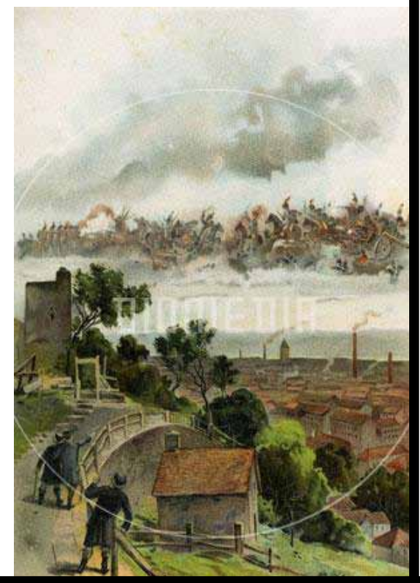
All excess is non-existence. When we compare the Beethoven"s musical battle [1] with Leo Tolstoy's Battle of Borodino, we see the same creation. "War and Peace" is Beethoven"s Third Symphony, building to the "Embrace, millions!" of his final Ninth Symphony. Schiller's "Ode to Joy" has become a kind of European Masonic anthem. The horror is that Hitler also liked this music, although the words annoyed him. Tolstoy thought much of both Ptolemy's "Almagest" [2] and Copernicus, who was against the ideas of "Almagest". At the end of "War and Peace", Tolstoy compares Pierre's "Inside Out" and the Copernican revolution. Before Copernicus, people thought the planets revolved around them. After Copernicus, they learned that the Earth is just a speck in the universe and revolves around the sun along with other planets. Similarly, a person must realize it is not the world that revolves around them, but they around the world. A person must merge with the choir of stars and submit to the laws of eternity. Mankind, fixated on itself, must measure its meagre scale against the giant design of the Creator.

Tolstoy once had a dream that he fell into Newton"s endless abyss, and suddenly realized that in fact he was suspended very comfortably in this infinity, like a child in a cradle. It was God himself who rocked the cradle, sustaining it on a kind of system of "pulleys". At the end of "War and Peace", Nikolai Rostov sees in the air transparent "August cobwebs", popularly referred to as "the reins of the Virgin". Later Nicholas, the son of Andrei Bolkonsky, sees the Decembrists in a dream as they walk to Senate Square, and reflected sunlight comes forth like the reins of the Virgin. Of course this dream was prophetic. From each person to the sky, August cobwebs stretch — the reins of the Virgin. They are invisible and are only rarely lit by the sun...

Battle is the moment that they become severed from the universe. When these invisible connections are ruptured, a person falls away from the universal body; like Adam Kadmon, who became simply Adam. Cut from the sky, Adam sees the archangel with a brandished double-edged sword: he is on guard, lest the unworthy return to paradise. The brandished double-edged sword is the Milky Way. Basil the Great said that heaven is always before us. One has only to look up and see the night sky.

Citizens of Verviers seeing a battle in the sky, June 1815

19th Century
Colour lithograph. 30 x 44 cm



Napoleon's war epic did not end on the field of Borodino, but at the Battle of Waterloo. It is amazing to think that the inhabitants of London saw this battle clearly, in all its details. Was it a common mirage? You might think that all battles are broadcast as a celestial mirage or spectral projection. Of course, this is not a natural phenomenon, but a cosmic event, when the pain, suffering and thoughts of hundreds of thousands of people affect the world such that the reflection of the battle appeared over Belgium. After all, modern science is far from aware of all cosmic laws.

By the way, this is not an isolated case. The same battle in the sky was seen by Alexander Nevsky"s soldiers shortly before the Battle on the Ice began, and in the Homer"s "Iliad", the Trojan war took place simultaneously in the heavens and on earth.

Man and Universe are two sides of a symbolic table. On one side, letters are inscribed in a starry sky, but they are unintelligible without Man, who is the key to their reading. When the two parts are joined, the human genetic code merges with the stellar code of the universe and begins to act as a METACODE: a universal code for Man and Universe, where the program of immortality, or INSIDE OUT, is inscribed...

Hawking has put forward the hypothesis that there is an infinite number of parallel versions of the universe, each of which is invisible to the others. Note the surprising fact that Inside Out encompasses all dimensions, whether the inversion of a one-dimensional point in a two-dimensional plane, or inversion of a plane in a three-dimensional volume, or a mental projection of our world in four dimensions. Inside Out of any measurement encompasses n dimensions.

Perhaps this is because the inner-outer or outer-inner world does not open up to everyone. Avvakum, the poet Andrei Bely, and the astronaut Edgar Mitchell all survived to give a description of Inside Out. Inside Out is indirectly reflected in the final book by Pavel Florensky, "Imaginaries in Geometry", where it is said that the body, racing at speeds greater than light, "will invert" through itself, and its mass, growing indefinitely, will fill the entire universe and "become it". After reading Florensky's manuscript, Mikhail Bulgakov described a rider in the finale of "The Master and Margarita" whose horse was a "lump of darkness, and the rider"s spurs were the white spots of stars."

In the same way, the Battle of Borodino grew in the past before the Battle of Menin and Pozharsky and shrank to the confines of the chessboard, becoming a chess gambit; the chess combinations of Napoleonic battles were re-encoded in the symphonies and quartets of Beethoven.

1._____Ludwig van Beelhoven. Symphony № 9 in D minor, op. 125.
2._____"Almagesl" by Claudius Plolemy (c. 140) was lhe basic asl ronomical calalogue up lo lhe 15lh Cenlury.

N. MALINOVSKY

TO PRESERVE UNRECONSTRUCTED

Visitors to the General Staff Building are struck by the beauty of its interiors and the exquisiteness of their decoration. The former chambers of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance are richly decorated with lyrical, figurative and ornamental paintings on their ceilings, walls and stoves.

For this artistic endeavour, architect Carlo Rossi invited an old colleague, the painter Giovanni Battista Scotti, to co-creator many of the building's interiors. Prominent artists such as Vigi, Torricelli and the Dadonov brothers laboured alongside him on the interior decoration.

The paintings on the ceilings were executed in glue-based paint on plaster. Parts of the images are rendered on thin canvas (for example the dancing Bacchantes and the garlands of flowers). These canvas sections were glued and attached with nails along the edges of the ceilings, while the seams were hidden with a ground coat and then paint. Other parts of the painted images were retouched with gold and even silver (in the chambers of the Ministry of Finance). A number of stoves and walls were finished with artificial marble and decorated with oil paints. The interiors produced a particularly strong impression in the evening, when they were illuminated by flickering candlelight.

Unfortunately, it was the candles and stove heating which were responsible for the appearance of smoke and soot on the interior decoration. Dust on the streets of St. Petersburg in those days consisted of tiny particles of dry horse dung and sand. As the delicate paintings accumulated dirt relatively quickly, it was necessary to make frequent cosmetic renovations. Sections of the painted backgrounds were regularly repainted, and the paintings themselves were retouched. In spite of all this, the magnificent ensemble of interiors has survived to the present day without substantial losses.

The constant reorganization of the institutions occupying the General Staff Building led to several reconfigurations being made to the interiors, beginning just a few years after construction of the building was finished. During modern-day works in the building, old painted ceilings dating back to the first third of the 19th Century were discovered behind much later constructions. This remarkable decoration had been hidden for many years, and now authentic layers of paint, untouched by renovation, have appeared in all their original beauty. Large fragments have been taken down by restorers and mounted upon a temporary base. When the building is opened to visitors it will be possible to see these.

An extremely interesting find was made in the space between the third and fourth storeys. During dismantling of the floors, the upper section of a previously existing chamber was discovered under the old joists. The ceiling was decorated with modest stencilled paintings, and the walls featured ornamental compositions, on the backgrounds of which an old layer of restorer's paint had been preserved. Most astonishing of all was the original decoration of the walls. Prior to this discovery there was a lack of documented examples of such decorative paintwork from the first third of the 19th Century. Now restorers have a model for the reconstruction of painted chambers dating from that period.

The vaulting above the building's staircase on the side facing the Moika river had been modestly whitewashed with chalk, and nobody expected that beneath the layers of chalk and putty that original wall paintings would be discovered. These remarkable ornamental paintings had been preserved well in some places, but in others had suffered significant losses. During the restoration it was decided to limit conservation work and show the original paintings without reconstruction.

● PHOTO: ANDREI SHELYUTTO

● PHOTO:. COURTESY OF THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM

AN EXTREMELY INTERESTING FIND WAS MADE IN THE SPACE BETWEEN THE THIRD AND FOURTH STOREYS. DURING DISMANTLING OF THE FLOORS, THE UPPER SECTION OF A PREVIOUSLY EXISTING CHAMBER WAS DISCOVERED UNDER THE OLD JOISTS. THE CEILING WAS DECORATED WITH MODEST STENCILLED PAINTINGS, AND THE WALLS FEATURED ORNAMENTAL COMPOSITIONS.

DRUZHNOSELYE

Дружносе.лье

THE ESTATE OF DRUZHNOSELYE THAT ONCE BELONGED TO THE FAMILY OF FIELD-MARSHAL PYOTR KHRISTIANOVICH WITTGENSTEIN, PROCLAIMED "THE SAVIOUR OF PETERSBURG", WAS RECENTLY NAMED AS BEING A MIRACULOUS SURVIVOR AMONG THE LANDED ESTATES OF THE LENINGRAD OBLAST. BEFORE THE OCTOBER REVOLUTION THESE NUMBERED AROUND 2,000, BUT NO MORE THAN 50 OF THESE SURVIVE TODAY. FROM THE MOMENT THE FAMILY NEST WAS FOUNDED, IT BECAME CENTRAL FOR PEOPLE'S DESTINIES AND MOMENTOUS EVENTS, FULL OF MYSTIC COINCIDENCES AND SKELETONS IN THE CUPBOARD.

• PHOTO: YURI MOLODKOVETS

THE LOST HOUSE

GINTARAS RISHKUS

THE EDITORIAL TEAM THANKS NATALIA SIDOROVA, SENIOR RESEARCHER OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, FOR THE IDEA AND FACTS USED IN THIS ARTICLE.

The tale of the Druzhnoselye estate is typical of many of the "lost houses" in the Leningrad Oblast, the region around St. Petersburg: until relatively recently it was regarded as one of the few surviving landed estates in the region, but with each passing year it inexorably approaches the status of a picturesque ruin. Perhaps the ultimate salvation of the estate may lie its history: it once belonged to Count Pyotr Khristianovich Wittgenstein (Ludwig Adolph Peter zu Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berleburg, December 25, 1768 [N.S. January 5, 1769]- May 30 [N.S. June 11], 1843), hero of the Patriotic War of 1812 and proclaimed "the Saviour of Petersburg" for halting the advance of French forces toward the Imperial capital. These events took place near the village of Klyastitsy, where Wittgenstein attacked the superior forces of the French under the command of Marshal Oudinot, reckoning on inflicting defeat upon them before a secondary corps dispatched toward St. Petersburg could catch up.

The daring plan met with success: a corps under Marshal MacDonald was a day late in arriving at Klyastitsy and could offer no help to Oudinot's routed corps. It was with a celebration of this victory that festivities commemorating the 200th anniversary of the victory in the War of 1812 began. Klyastitsy became the launchpad for a dazzling military career for Wittgenstein, who was eventually promoted to Field-Marshal. In 1813 he was to take Berlin, and for a period after the death of Mikhail Kutuzov he was supreme commander of the united armies of Russia, Austria and Prussia. In 1818 he led the 2nd Army, and in 1828, at the outbreak of war with Turkey, he was commander of the Russian army in European Turkey. Wittgenstein was decorated with nine of the highest honours of the Russian Empire, Prussia, and Austria-Hungary; and was twice awarded diamond-studded golden swords with the inscription "For Bravery". The military achievements of Pyotr Khristianovich Wittgenstein are honoured alongside the deeds of such celebrated military leaders as Kutuzov, Pyotr Bagration, and Michael Barclay de Tolly.

It is a measure of the exclusive respect of Wittgenstein's peers for his military services that he was presented with 150,000 rubles by the Petersburg merchantry, with which he purchased in 1826 an estate named Druzhnoselye, so-named because it was built at the intersection of two villages. Druzhnoselye became what was known as an entailed property — an undivided estate, always inherited by the eldest in the family. The field-marshal acquired the estate for his son Lev Petrovich. Incidentally, the purchase was of questionable legality, as in 1826 Lev Petrovich came under investigation in connection with his membership of secret societies. The son of the hero of the Patriotic War had planned an assassination attempt on Tsar Alexander I along with revolutionary Pavel Pestel. A member of the Welfare Union and the Southern Society, and captain of the sovereign's entourage, the younger Wittgenstein planned to kill the Tsar with a dagger. He and the adjutant Baryatinsky kept watch on the older Wittgenstein and the chief of staff, informing Pestel of developments. It is probable that it was thanks to the heroic deeds of his father that younger Wittgenstein was able to escape the fate of the rest of the Decembrists and conceal himself on the estate, waiting for the scandal to blow over.

July 8, 1812. Napoleon to Marshal Oudinot: "Give hot pursuit to Wittgenstein, leaving a small garrison in Polotsk, in case the enemy turns to the left. Once I have arrived in Vitebsk, I will send a corps to Nevel under orders to link up with you. When you advance from Polotsk towards Sebezh, Wittgenstein will certainly retreat to cover the Petersburg road. He has no more than 10,000 men at his disposal, and you can advance to meet him with confidence."

Wittgenstein (despatch): "I have decided to move on today to Klyastitsy, on the Pskov road, and at dawn on the 19th to attack Oudinot with all force. If with the aid of Vsevyshny I am able to smash him, then I shall be able to rest easy with only MacDonald to face."

Two years later Lev Petrovich married the richest heiress in Russia, Princess Stephania Radziwiłł, daughter of Dominik Radziwiłł of the Olyksky line, who during the war in 1812 had supported then headed a 5,000-strong noble corps fighting on the side of Napoleon. The wealth of the Radziwiłł family made quite an impression on contemporaries. It was thus described in a document produced by a commission created on the order of Tsar Alexander I after the War of 1812 for the assessment and administration of the Radziwiłł possessions: "...commerce and industry have invigorated the many cities of Radziwiłł. Factories produce wool, Persian bells, silk; others produce glass, mirrors, iron and copper of the highest standard and bring in large revenues. Some of their huge forests, guarded for centuries,... contain inexhaustible riches. Their fortresses — Slutsk, Nesvizh, Birzhi, Zholkev — were filled with troops and military supplies. Their numerous palaces boasted all of the excess of those times. Finally, the family treasures amazed one in their abundance, and surpassed that of many princes in their value".

Stephania died of consumption in the resort town of Ems in the valley of the Rhine, now it the German town of Bad Ems, at the age of 22, leaving Lev Petrovich with two young children and the Radziwiłłs' hereditary possessions in Ukraine and Lithuania.

In memory of his wife (and using her money), Lev Petrovich built the church and vault of St. Stephania, and an almshouse, at Druzhnoselye. The architect Alexander Briullov not only designed the splendid church and almshouse, but also laid out an English landscaped park with winding paths in order to harmoniously unite the buildings with the rest of the estate.

After the death of his wife Lev Petrovich did not remain long at Druzhnoselye. He spent some time at his parents' house in Kamenka, then in the Volyn region, in the town of Olyk, where he owned a number of houses and hostelries, and in the locality of Turchin — a small estate. Lev Petrovich lived out the rest of his days on the Russian land from which his ancestors had come.

Willgenstein's descendants remained in Russia and carefully preserved the memory of their forebears. At the beginning of the 20th Century the estate housed a museum dedicated to the events of the Patriotic War of 1812. On the bank of the pond beside the family vault (where various members of the Willgenstein family are buried — Catholics, Lutherans, Orthodox Christians) stood Turkish cannons, presented to Pyotr Willgenstein for his success in the war of 1828. The outbuildings next to the church housed cast-iron cannons, uniforms, and correspondence between Willgenstein and Kutuzov. In 1917 the estate was nationalized by the Bolsheviks. In the memoirs of Zinaida Gippius about Dmitry Merezhkovsky we find the following reference to Druzhnoselye: "In 1918 the three of us, a female acquaintance with her student son and my sisters, returned to another place where we lived a so-called life, the 'Red Dacha', the estate of Druzhnoselye, where we had spent the August of 1917. The estate was already under the supervision of a commissar, and the old house of Willgenstein had been requisitioned, although it was still possible to live there: the wisdom of Bolshevik gradualism!" (Dmitry Merezhkovsky — His Life and Work). However, the inventory of the Druzhnoselye state farm in 1924 mentions neither the museum's exhibits nor the cannons.

Neither the Druznoselye estate nor the descendants of Willgenstein were left unscathed by the World War II. Druzhnoselye was requisitioned by Nazi forces, who immediately established the properly as the headquarters of General Georg Linderman. It was to this very estate that in 1942 the captured Russian general, Andrei Vlasov, was brought for interrogation, following which the estate became the recruiting base for Vlasov's Russian Liberation Army. At this time Alexander and Heinrich Willgenstein, great-great-grandsons of the hero of the war of 1812, were pilots in the Luftwaffe, flying missions on the Eastern Front. It is not known whether they visited their patrimonial family estate. Heinrich Prinz zu Sayn-Willgenstein (1916-1944) was one of the top fighter aircraft aces flying night sorties, with 83 kills to his name, 23 of which were on the Eastern Front. In total he carried out 320 combat sorties, including 170 night raids. According to his comrades, "Willgenstein was a highly capable pilot, but he was also extraordinarily ambitious and

Excerpt from a baptismal record in the St. Petersburg Roman Catholic parish church of St. Catherine from March 9, 1829, in which the following is written: "Born on February 4th 1829: Maria-Stephania-Karolina, daughter of the colonel of the guard of Count Ludwig von Willgenstein, son of Field-Marshal Count Pyotr Willgenstein, and his wife Countess Stephania, nee Princess Radziwiłł, daughter of Dominik Radziwiłł of the Nesvizh and Slutsk lines. St. Petersburg".
(Archive of the Radziwiłł and Willgenstein families in the Bundesarchiv, Germany)

1. Franz Kruger

Portrait of Count Pyotr Willgenstein
Germany. Between 1841 and 1844
Oil on canvas. 361 x 298 cm
Source of Entry:
Winter Palace. After 1917

2. Gruppenkommander of the IV./NJG 5, Hauptmann Heinrich zu Sayn-Wittgenstein, near his Ju-88G-6 bearing the marks of 29 enemy hits

Orsha. July 1943

The two-phase construction of the estate confused researchers. It was believed that the stone buildings were the remnants of the estate house, and the wooden house was mistaken for the almshouse or a wing of the main building, as it seemed incompatible with the wealth and position of the original owners. The evidence that proves that it was in fact the wooden building which served as the estate house was discovered only recently and was facilitated by the perilous condition of the house, which revealed old decoration. Meanwhile, the value of the building for the modern-day Leningrad Oblast is clear. It is the sole surviving estate house from the era of Classicism, exemplary in its layout, with its reception room offset into the wing.

The filming of "Dubrovsky"

Director: Aleksander Ivanovsky
1936, USSR

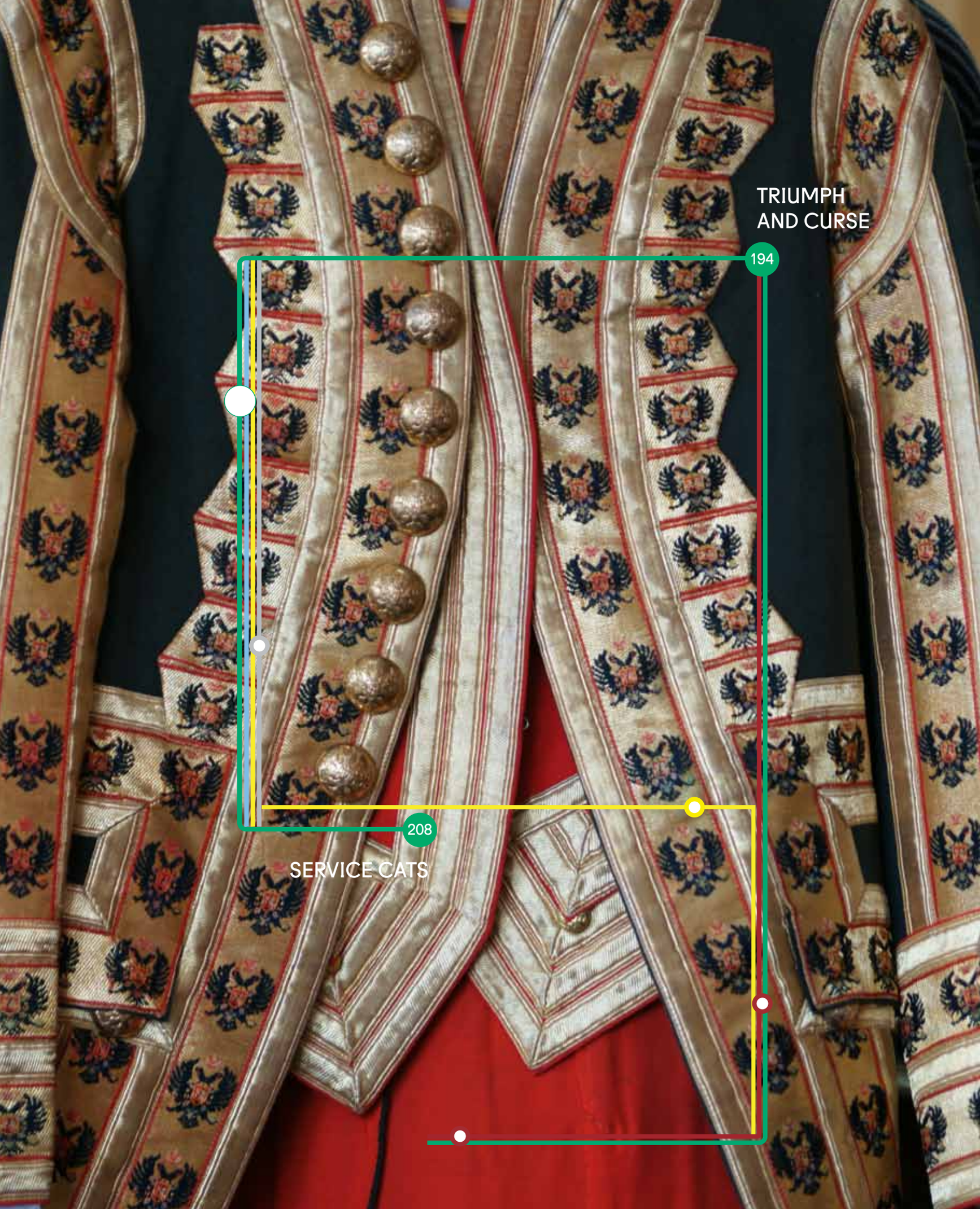
highly individualistic. He did not correspond to the model of the born leader. He was neither a teacher nor a mentor to his subordinates. Nonetheless he was an extraordinary personality and an outstanding fighter pilot. He had a kind of sixth sense — an intuition which allowed him to know where his opponent was. This sense was his own personal radar." Only one or two victories separated him from the very best night-fighter ace, Helmut Lent. Wolfgang Falck, who carried out inspections of aviation on the Eastern Front, testifies: "I saw how in the course of 15 minutes he shot down three Soviet planes, but that was not enough for him. His constant fear was that the pilots on the Western Front would score a greater number of kills than he would here. He suffered from a genuine case of envy. It was not easy for me to work with him as my subordinate because of his unbelievable ambition." It was this very ambition which was the driving force behind his zeal and valour in battle, and not loyalty to the Führer or even to the ideals of Fascism. His mother Princess Maria Vassilchikova recalls that until 1944 he had harboured intentions of taking part in a plot to eliminate Hitler. But on January 21, 1944, the very night after Wittgenstein had officially become the highest-scoring night-fighter flying ace, he was shot down. In the autumn of 1992, after the reunification of Germany, a memorial was ceremoniously unveiled on the site of Wittgenstein's death at Schönhausen. The stone bears the laconic inscription "Major Heinrich Prince zu Sayn-Wittgenstein. 14.8.1916 — 21.1.1944", and above it is carved an image of the Iron Cross and an inscription in Latin: *Unos pro multis* ("One of many").

As the 200th anniversary of the Patriotic War of 1812 is observed, many of the places connected to the heroes of those times are in danger of disappearing from the map of modern-day Russia forever. The Wittgenstein estate of Druzhnoselye in the Gatchina district was recently named as being a miraculous survivor among the landed estates of the Leningrad Oblast — before the October Revolution these numbered around 2,000, but no more than 50 of these survive today. Today the house, an important local monument, is in a state of advanced collapse. The remnants of the wooden buildings are being taken apart and removed for firewood. But the stone church still stands, which, given free access to the area and the lack of supervision, can indeed be considered something of a miracle.

■■

Today the wooden estate house — this small "venerable castle"— built in the first half of the 19th Century, and the only building of its kind in the Leningrad Oblast, is in a catastrophic state of repair. In 1936, on the 100th anniversary of the death of Alexander Pushkin, film director Alexander Ivanovsky shot parts of the film "Dubrovsky" in this very house. It is important to note that while working with historical material, Ivanovsky always took great care in the selection of interiors and props. For example, he shot the film "Palace and Fortress" on location in the suites of the Winter Palace, even using a coach that had once belonged to Alexander II. So we can suppose that, having studied its history, Ivanovsky's choice of this estate as a location for "Dubrovsky" was no accident.

PHOTO:: RUSTAM ZAGIDULLIN


TRIUMPH
AND CURSE
194
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SERVICE CATS

PHOTO: YURI MOLODKOVETS

Expedient for Catching Mice

MARIA KHALTUNEN

There have always been cats at the Hermitage. But which Hermitage do we mean? The Imperial Hermitage, the museum that later became state properly and in which we are privileged to work? Yes, when it was founded, cats already lived here. The much earlier Hermitage of Catherine the Great, which both she and mice visited? Yes, cats lived there then. Catherine's Winter Palace before the Hermitage? They were there too. Moreover, they lived in the Winter Palace of the Empress Elizabeth. It is to her that we owe the official document that recognized that the palace needed cats. It stated that cats were something valuable and that it was necessary to take care of them, to allocate money for their upkeep, to select the place where the best breed could be found (it was Kazan, by the way), to find the best specimens, and to bring them to the palace by special transport. History repeats itself, and in the 21st Century, long after the days of Elizabeth, several shipments of cats will be organized for a city that is just as, if not more, vermin-filled and in need of a saviour.

They did arrive in St. Petersburg: the best examples of a fighting breed with large heads now lost, fabulous mouse catchers, the crème de la crème. It is unlikely that there were no cats in the city at that time — after all Peter the Great had brought cats from the Netherlands and Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich had a cat (although this was in Moscow, as were many such events described earlier), the portrait of which is no less well known than the portrait of Alexei Mikhailovich himself. However, there were clearly a great many rats and mice in St. Petersburg, and this remained true years later: a young Catherine told how her husband, the Grand Duke Peter, put rats on military trial and hanged them in his war games. If the Grand Duke was able to easily find a rat in his palace, then it was far from alone...

Unfortunately, the names of the first cats have not survived and neither has their offspring (all the males were castrated), but the initiation of a beautiful legend was begun. Most likely these animals lived in the courtyards and basements where they hunted, but some began to live in the palace apartments. The custom began to keep the animals in the family: as soon as the children were old enough to be able to take care of something, they got a pet. These included dogs as well as cats, and although the dogs are better known because they took part in social life through hunting and walking, cats were not neglected. There is indirect evidence that Catherine's cats looked like rare Russian Blues, but it is well-known that one of the last three cats owned by the family of Tsar Nicholas II was democratically striped and carried the simple and honest name of Vaska (a photograph, taken by some member of the family who lay on the floor for the most favourable view, has been preserved. In it, Vaska pulls at blinds with his paw). The cats of the last Tsar had a luckier life than their dog partners: they were not sent into exile with their Imperial masters, and after several days of roaming through empty rooms of the royal palaces after the royal family had gone, they were given back to those who had once given them. And they survived.

Then they began a typical backyard life, about which no documents have survived. Naturally, the museum in all its historical upheavals, like any other major institution, could not exist without cats (rats are very tenacious and intelligent animals), but their numbers and activities were not noted. Cats simply existed in the same space as the museum, inconspicuously helping to preserve its treasures.

Then came a terrible time: the Great Patriotic War against Nazi Germany (1941-1945), and with it, the Siege of Leningrad. Life in the city almost stopped, and all living creatures disappeared from the streets. Not even pigeons remained, there were only rats. Only a few cats survived. Until recently, it was thought that only two were saved, but research conducted by the Museum of Cats in conjunction with the Society of the Residents of the Siege of Leningrad established information about five feline survivors, and there is even a picture of one of them. In his memoirs, a siege survivor described the moment when people saw a cat with kittens in a window and they could not stop looking — it was a symbol of a new beginning. A new life also began for the Hermitage cats. Immediately after the breaking of the siege, two special shipments of cats were organized. The first was from Yaroslavl and the other from Siberia. People again gave up their house cats so they could save St. Petersburg from rats. People in the city stood in line for them, and from that moment, the history of the Hermitage cats resumed. As many of these as possible were retained, but later they were replaced with more dignified specimens.

The heirs of the cats of the 1940s spread themselves throughout the huge, warm cellars of museum and by catching their own food through traditional hunting, they served the Hermitage. The staff gave them additional food and interacted with those that wanted to do so, but the majority of them were typical semi-wild yard cats: cautious, cunning, strong and crafty. And quite nonchalant in their involvement in the general life of the museum.

Fifteen years ago, the idea arose to reward cats for their ceaseless work and make them an active part of museum life. Since they are good hunters, there were not enough mice for every cat, so it was decided to provide them additional food in a centralized manner and to go around the cellars after work for an-hour-and-a-half (they lie beneath the entire footprint of the museum's five buildings) with several buckets of food. Then money began to be collected for the maintenance of the cats from those who wanted to contribute, and the "Rubles for Cats" programme began. Then they were allocated a room in the basement with water. Later they settled down and began to become tame, then almost domesticated; then they became famous. First the city learned of them, and then the world. Cats have become one of the recognized icons of the Hermitage.

The charm of the Hermitage cats lies in their accessibility. Everyone can see the cats in the yard and be convinced of their actual existence as against their legendary reputation. But behind the popularity of the cats there is enormous, long-term work. They are fed. They are given medical care. They are grieved for when they pass on. Several books have been written about them: about a little girl who came to ask for permission from the director of the Hermitage to find the perfect cat for a portrait, about the history of cats in the Hermitage, and about their traditional representation in art. In the Netherlands a book was written about the romantic love between an intellectual cat-sophisticate and a proletarian yard cat. Hermitage Cat Day has become a calendar holiday for the museum: several thousand people draw Hermitage cats and then they come to the museum to see the exhibition of their own drawings and the cats themselves. Passersby photograph Hermitage cats, play with them in the Great Courtyard, and understand that they are witness to a part of history in which we are all involved: the Hermitage, St. Petersburg, and our cats.

Decree on the of dispatch of cats to the court 1745

On this day, November 2, by decree of Her Imperial Majesty, it was written in the Kazan provincial office: On October 13, Her Imperial Majesty decreed the following; find the best and biggest cats among the local breeds of Kazan, expedient for catching mice, and send them to St. Petersburg to the court of Her Majesty with a person able to care for and feed them, and send them immediately, providing them with dray-carts and free passage, and as much food as necessary...

THE DEPARTMENT OF THE HISTORY OF RUSSIAN CULTURE AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM HAS A UNIQUE COLLECTION OF CEREMONIAL UNIFORMS AND ACCESSORIES. FOR IDEOLOGICAL REASONS, THE STUDY OF THIS COLLECTION WAS NOT POSSIBLE UNTIL THE EARLY 1990S. HOWEVER, THE HISTORY OF THE STAFF AT THE IMPERIAL COURT HAS RECENTLY BECOME A SUBJECT OF SPECIAL INTEREST. THE FROCK COATS, VESTS AND JACKETS THEY WORE REPRESENT THE LIFE STORIES OF THE REAL PEOPLE WHO WERE IN CHARGE OF THE BRILLIANCE OF THE IMPERIAL COURT IN THE LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURIES. NOT ONLY DOES A SHOP OR TAILOR'S LABEL, AN OLD REGISTRATION NUMBER OR A STAMP PROVIDE INFORMATION ABOUT THE COSTUME AND ITS OWNER; IT IS ALSO TO BE FOUND IN TINY DETAILS SUCH AS HAND STITCHING, SIGNS OF WEAR OR A STAIN, A BUTTON THAT WAS MOVED, A WORN INSCRIPTION ON A LINING, OR EVEN IN THE CONTENTS OF A POCKET.

NINA TARASOVA

ILLUSTRATIONS: **ELDAR ZAKIROV**

Cat Claus

Court moor's ceremonial uniform
St. Petersburg, early 20th Century
I. P. Lidval and Sons Company
Velvet, felt, cotton, metallic thread, gilded cord, golden lace, silk thread, metallic hooks; machine and hand work

Black people served at royal courts in many Western European countries. It is believed that black servants did not appear in Russia before Peter the Great's reign, although there are testimonies from the late 16th Century of one being able to see little moors in colourful dresses in the tsar's palace.

In the 18th Century, moors at Russian Imperial courts served as *valets de chambre* or road valets. By the middle of the 19th Century they were used mainly as butlers, or more rarely, as couriers or escorts.

Court moors' costumes intricately combined Western European and Oriental features and showed verve, multiple layers, original cuts and a variety of fabric and trimmings.

The ceremonial uniform featured 16 items. These were scarlet felt trousers, a white waistcoat, two jackets (the inner one was made of dark-green felt and the outer one of vermilion velvet), a dark-green satin belt, half-boots of the same colour, red Morocco leather shoes, white stockings and gloves and a velvet fez with a tassel, entwined with a fine muslin scarf. The finishing detail of a moor's ceremonial uniform was a massive woollen shawl with a typical Oriental pattern over three metres long and thrown over the shoulder. The costume was decorated with golden lace, cords with gold and silk threads, and cannetille. In the early 20th Century making such a uniform and buying the accessories cost over 500 rubles to the treasury. Court staff would only wear the ceremonial uniform on very special occasions.

Cat Vasily Pushkin

Court moor's casual uniform
St. Petersburg, early 20th Century
I. P. Lidval and Sons Company
Felt, cotton, metallic thread, gilded cord, metallic hooks; machine and hand work

The casual uniform of a court moor was a lot more modest. It included two jackets — a red (inner) one and a dark green (outer) one with a high red collar and tassels on the tails, wide red unlucked trousers, a belt, a red felt hat with a white muslin scarf and green leather boots. The costume was decorated with narrow gold cording and a gilt cord.

Apart from the ceremonial and casual uniforms, every court moor, as well as any other member of staff, was given free streetwear (a coat and a cap), a uniform for travelling and a winter coat with a mutton collar.

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Cał Kuzma

Courl wailer's ceremonial uniform
St. Petersburg, early 20th Century
I. P. Lidval and Sons Company
Fell, slamin, collon, gold lace, gilded armorial bullons;
machine and hand work

Wailers, responsible for serving food and drinks al lhe lables of lhe nobilily bolh for daily meals and banquels, were al lhe lop of lhe hierarchy of courl slaff. Wailers included cup-bearers (responsible for serving wine), coffee-men (responsible for making and serving coffee and lea), commis wailers (responsible for selling up lhe lable), confeclioners (responsible for making and serving desserls) and head wailers (administralors responsible for all lables). Ceremonial, casual, daily and working coslumes, as well as coslumes for special occasions and voyages, were made for lhem. And while lhe casual coslume, which consisled of a suil of an eleganl dark-blue jackel, a while waislcoal, a shirl-fronl and blue lrousers, did nol sland oul in lhe inlerior of a small palace dining-room, lhe wailer's ceremonial livery became almosl lhe brighlesl spol in lhe colourful palelle of a feslive dinner.

A courl wailer's ceremonial uniform consisled of a scarlel frock coal and waislcoal decoraled wilh sparkling gold lace and gilded bullons, while breeches wilh golden lassels, while slockings and palenl bools wilh large buckles. Anolher mandalory accessory of lhe courl uniform was a pair of while gloves.

203

Cał Rikki Senior

Courl confeclioner apprenlice's jackel
Sl. Pelersburg, early 20lh Cenlury
I. P. Lidval and Sons Company
Fell, wool, collon, gold lace, gill armorial bullons;
machine and hand work

In lhe lale 19lh and early 20lh Cenluries lhe gaslronomic needs of lhe Imperial courl were salisfied by a whole legion of more lhan 80 professionals. Neverlheless, lhe Courl Minislry had lo hire a lol of exlra workers for grand dinners.

Dozens of highly-qualified cooks and lheir apprenlices, bakers and lheir apprenlices, bread-makers, confeclioners and lheir apprenlices worked on making exquisile dishes in lhe kilchens. These people, despile playing quile a significanl role in crealing lhe image of lhe brillianl and successful courl, did nol enler lhe greal halls or serve dishes al lhe magnificenlly laid lables. Their uniforms were modesl and prim: an indispensable apron and a chef's hal al lhe workslalion and grey fell jackels (or dark-green lhick woollen coal) for going beyond lhe Imperial residence. Affilialion lo lhe body of courl slaff was shown by narrow golden armorial braids in bullonholes and on sleeves and a cockade wilh a lwo-headed eagle on lhe service cap.

205

Cat Tigrik

Court outrunner's ceremonial uniform
St. Petersburg, early 20th Century
I. P. Lidval and Sons Company
Felt, stamin, gold lace, gilded and silt threads, gilt armorial buttons; machine and hand work

Outrunners worked as couriers in the Imperial residences. They were tasked with errands both by the top figures of the Empire and the senior ranks of the court. They would often have to justify this ancient name for their profession and literally run along the endless enfilades of the palace in order to "rescue" another business. Outrunners normally were young handsome men. Their uniforms could compete with those of the court moors in their exotic character and multiple layers which emphasized their special position at the court. First and foremost, the palace courier could be recognised by a cap with black, yellow and white ostrich feathers and a long cane with a metallic knob and rings wound with a golden cord. Besides this, outrunners always wore green skirts (following the tradition of the 18th Century), which emerged from underneath the laps of the jackets, almost completely covered with golden lace and decorated with shoulder pieces and *aiguillettes*. The ceremonial uniform was to be worn with a red waistcoat, a pure white shirt-front and tie, breeches of scarlet wool, a scarlet silk belt, white stockings and patent boots with buckles.

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Cat Gavrila Ardalionovich

Court chamber herald's ceremonial costume
St. Petersburg, early 20th Century
I. P. Lidval and Sons Company
Felt, cashmere, gold lace, metallic thread, metallic plates, sequins, fine metal wire, gilt armorial buttons; gold embroidering; hand and machine work

All members of the court staff were managed by a chamber herald. He had his own office and was responsible for maintaining a ceremonial book, a register of all events that took place at the Imperial palace over 200 years. In the late 19th and early 20th Centuries the chamber herald would not keep this register himself as he had scribes to write for him. The chamber herald would send out notices about solemn ceremonies at the court, celebrations in honour of conferring orders or mourning etc. The chamber herald had a rather honourable position in the ceremonial life of the court, traditionally opening various solemn processions.

The chamber herald's ceremonial uniform consisted of a scarlet jacket, embroidered with gold threads and sequins, a white waistcoat and white breeches with gilded tassels, white silk stockings and patent boots with large gilded buckles. Other essential accessories included a tricorn hat and a ceremonial sword with a silver lanyard on a belt made of white silk moire.

THE TRIUMPH AND CURSE OF THE WHITE HORSE

ARKADY IPPOLITOV

A VICTORIOUS ROMAN EMPEROR RODE IN ON CHARIOT PULLED BY A QUADRIGA OF WHITE HORSES. IN PERSIA, PUREBRED WHITE HORSES TOOK PEOPLE TO HEAVEN. IN THE RUSSIAN TRADITION, ST. GEORGE THE VICTOR, THE PATRON SAINT OF RUSSIA, MUST ALWAYS BE DEPICTED ON A WHITE HORSE. BUT EVERY TRIUMPH, THE COVETED END OF EVERY CONQUEST, BEARS THE APOCALYPSE WITHIN, WHICH IS THE TRUE END OF EVERY CONQUEST. THE RIDER OF THE FIRST SEAL CASTS A GLEAM OF LIGHT ON ALL THE DUKES OF LERMA, CHARLESES, DEMIDOVS AND ALEXANDER THE FIRSTS, PRANCING PROUDLY ON THEIR WHITE HORSES. OUT OF THIS INNER CONTRADICTION BETWEEN TRIUMPH AND THE APOCALYPSE GROWS THE ICONOGRAPHY OF "THE CONVERSION OF SAUL," MASTERFULLY EXPLORED BY TWO GREAT ARTISTS: PARMIGIANINO AND CARAVAGGIO.

1. Grigory Mayofis

"A man wilhoul religion
is like a horse wilhoul a bridle"
2011
Bromoil, acrylic
Properly of lhe aulhor
© Grigory Mayofis

THE ICONOGRAPHY OF THE WHITE HORSE IN THE HERMITAGE COLLECTION

Every literate person knows the expression, “riding in on a white horse,” but fewer people know that a white horse was an indispensable part of the celebrations of victory in ancient Rome, when the Emperor returned to Rome triumphantly after another victorious war. The Emperor would ride in a chariot — a quadriga, pulled by four horses. The horses had to be white or, in the parlance of horse breeders, “white-born.” Purebred white horses have always been rare and quite expensive. According to Plutarch and Titus Livius, the first to harness white horses for his chariot of triumph was Marcus Furius Camillus, who was denounced for this by the public, and accused of vanity and extravagance. Camillus was a dictator, and the public in the first half of the 4th Century B.C. — the era of his triumphs — was of a “republican” mindset. The emperors after him quite appreciated the luxury of purebred white horses, and their subjects never made a peep — their mindset had changed to “Imperial” by that time. “Riding in on a white horse” spelled victory. Riding in on a horse of any other colour amounted to less than a victory... The phrase has become so hackneyed by now that people with a propensity to wisecrack will sometimes say “riding in on a white elephant” instead. What goes around, comes around... As time went by, the Roman emperors got bored with white horses, and began to ride elephants into Rome. White elephants were preferred but hard to come by. And again, the public remained silent. In a painting by Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, a gem of the Hermitage collection, there are white elephants in the triumphal procession of Marius Curious Dentatus in a Republican, not Imperial Rome. Tiepolo’s fantasy is corroborated by other sources. It is known that Manius Curious brought elephants to Rome after his victory over Pyrrhus, but he did not “ride elephants into Rome.” Supposedly, this was the first time the Romans had seen elephants on their streets. Those were not white elephants — definitely not. Manius would have had a much harder time getting a white elephant that Tiepolo would have.

Be that as it may, it is thanks to ancient Rome that white horses are so firmly associated with “Imperialism,” victory and triumph or, in other words, successful conquest. The Roman tradition found its way into both Christianity and Islam: the white horse symbolizes victory in both religions. One of the prime examples of such symbolism is the icon of St. George and the Dragon, which is, for all intents and purposes, a symbol of Russia. St. George the Victor, the patron saint of Russia, was always depicted on a white horse in the Russian tradition, and usually in the European tradition as well: cf. Uccello and Raphael. For centuries the Christian establishment somehow overlooked (and most people still overlook to this day) the fact that its apologia of St. George, who personifies Christ’s triumph over the Devil, goes back to paganism. The ancient Russian (Byzantine, in fact) style of the portrayal of St. George on a white horse clearly had its provenance in Hellenism. The first artist to paint the image must have been looking at something similar to a certain Hermitage cameo dating back to the 1st Century A.D., showing a scene of Alexander the Great’s wild boar hunting party. This cameo, crafted in Roman times, shows Alexander as a typical “victor” on a white horse, despite his very mundane pursuit — hunting.

The image of St. George inspired a succession of secular “heroes” who also wished to be portrayed on a white horse. Perhaps the most famous of those paintings is Rubens’ “Equestrian Portrait of the Duke of Lerma”, the all-powerful minion of Philipp III, the King of Spain, at the Prado. Rubens’ Duke of Lerma is a mytheme as powerful as St. George and the Dragon. What came after were merely variations on the theme: “The Equestrian Portrait of Charles I, the King of England”, accompanied by his riding master, Pierre Antoine Bourdon, by Anthony van Dyck from Her Majesty’s collection at Windsor, all of Velasquez’s infantas on horseback, the remarkable “Equestrian Portrait

2. Benjamin Green
After George Stubbs (original painting)
“Horse Attacked by a Lion”
Great Britain. 1769
Mezzotint; 2nd (of 5). 45.1x55.4 cm

3. Unknown author
“Vaisravana – Pisha Meng, Guardian of the North, Riding a White Horse”
China, Tangut State of Xi -Xia, Khara-Khoto. 12th-13th Century
Roll on silk. 61.5x55 cm

4. Adriaen van Gael II
“Triumph of Mordecai”
The Netherlands. 17th Century
Oil on panel. 60x80 cm

5. Unknown artist
“Alexander the Great Hunting a Wild Boar”
Ancient Rome. 1st Century
Sardonyx; Cameo. 2x2.2 cm

6. Giovanni Battista Tiepolo
“Triumph of Manius Curius Dentatus”
Italy. Circa 1730
Oil on canvas. 550x322 cm

7. Mihaly Zichy
“Nasir al-Din Shah on Horseback”
Series "Nasir al-Din, Shah of Persia, visiting St Petersburg in 1873"
Hungary-Russia. 1873
Watercolour, white, lead pencil and gold paint on yellow paper. 23.5x21.2 cm

8. Unknown artist
Icon: “St. George and the Dragon”
Russia. Late 15th-early 16th Century
Tempera on panel. 57.5 x 43 cm

9. Unknown artist
“Rider on Horseback Holding a Spear” (fragment)
China, Tangut State of Xi -Xia, Khara-Khoto. 13th–14th Century
Tangka on silk. 40.5x26.5 cm

10. Pieter Paul Rubens
“Perseus and Andromeda”
Flanders. Circa 1622
Oil on canvas. 99.5x139 cm

11. Franz Kruger
“Equestrian Portrait of Alexander I (1777–1825)”
The 1812 War Gallery, the Winter Palace.
Germany. 1837
Oil on canvas. 484x344 cm


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12. Raffaello Sanzio
"St. George Fighting the Dragon"
France. 1503–1505
Oil on wood, 29 x 25 cm
Musee du Louvre, Paris

13. Pieter Brueghel the Elder
"The Triumph of Death"
Spain. Circa 1562
Oil on panel. 117 x 162 cm
Prado Museum, Madrid

14. Paolo Uccello
"St. George and the Dragon"
Circa 1470
Oil on canvas. 57x73 cm
The National Gallery, London

15. Francesco Mazzola Parmigianino
"The Conversion of Saul"
Circa 1528
Oil on canvas, 177.5 x 128.5 cm
Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

16. Caravaggio
"The Conversion on the Way to Damascus"
1600–1601
Oil on canvas, 230 x 175 cm
Church of Santa Maria del Popolo, Rome, Italy

17. Unknown artist
"The Triumph of Death"
Circa 1446
Fresco 600 cm × 642 cm
Galleria Interdisciplinare Regionale della Sicilia
di Palazzo Abatellis. Archivio fotografico, Palermo, Italy

of A. N. Demidov" by Karl Bryullov at Palazzo Pitti, Florence, and certainly the "Equestrian Portrait of Alexander I" by Kruger at Gallery 1812. (This portrait inevitably brings to mind the description of Alexander I in "War and Peace", where the Emperor prances constantly on a white horse, showing off his kinship with Roman emperors, Alexander the Great hunting the wild boar, St. George defeating the Devil, and the Riders of the Apocalypse).

Well, so much for "riding in on a white horse"... But what about "riding out on a white horse"? This appears to be an entirely different story... "And I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." (Rev. 6:2). But it isn't really... The two stories are related, harking back to the same Roman triumphs and the custom, introduced by Marcus Furius Camillus, of celebrating victory on a white horse. We know (Michel Montaigne told us) that no custom is in itself good or bad. It's our attitude that makes it one or the other. To wit: cannibalism, Montaigne's own example. John the Ecclesiast, who was well aware of the Roman custom, plays on it and makes fun of it, reinventing the triumphant Emperor as the first Rider of the Apocalypse, coming forth after the first seal is opened. And as soon as the "riding in" changes to "coming out" of somewhere (Heaven, in this case), although the rider still goes forth "conquering and to conquer," the whole setting is now different: no flowers, smiles, no cries of joy and jubilation for the victor, but famine, death and damnation, all brought by the rider on the white horse. While riding in on a white horse bespeaks the apotheosis of victory, riding out spells disaster. Any Triumph, the coveted end of every conquest, bears the Apocalypse within it, which is the true end of every conquest.

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants..." is one of the starkest portrayals ever of the ambiguity of Triumph. The Rider of the First Seal casts a gleam of light on all the Dukes of Lerma, Charleses, Demidovs and Alexander the Firsts, prancing proudly on their white horses. From this inner contradiction between Triumph and the Apocalypse grows the iconography of "The Conversion of Saul," masterfully explored by the two great artists: Parmigianino and Caravaggio. The Parmigianino painting is at the Art History Museum in Vienna; the Caravaggio painting, at the Church of Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome. The white horse occupies a place of prominence in both.

Caravaggio portrayed Saul as a young soldier, lying helplessly supine. His arms are extended upwards in a gesture of diffidence that suggests, at the same time, an attempt to shield or detach himself, a blind man's attempt to touch and thus cognize something invisible, and an open embrace. The figure of the man on the ground is depicted in a sharply shrinking perspective: it is as if it "falls out" of the flat surface of the painting, making the viewer physically feel the pain. His blinded eyes are "wide shut." The mysterious light comes out of nowhere, or from the supine man himself, softly enveloping all around. His face is calm and peaceful, despite his unnatural posture. The horse in the Caravaggio painting is not really white, but cream-coloured with a white mane and white spots. The big and strong horse is now quiet, carefully stepping over the fallen soldier, trying not to hurt him with its heavy hoof, which is almost in the middle of the painting. The experience of inner transformation is rendered by Caravaggio so powerfully yet subtly, that his Road to Damascus becomes all-embracing, beyond any temporal or geographic limits, welding the Syrian desert of the early years of Anno Domini, the Rome of the Baroque era, and our time into one.

In the Parmigianino painting, we are confronted by a corpulent man with muscular legs and a well-trimmed beard, dressed in bright and luxurious garments: a short pink tunic and a yellow embroidered cloak, thrown on his shoulders like a

shawl. The main character is supine on the ground at the feet of a fabulous white horse, standing tall in all its beauty on its hind legs, as if the painting is all about that purebred white horse, adorned with a golden bridle and a white leopard skin. The horse's giant limpid eye, like a polished crystal, stares, mesmerizingly, back at the viewer, while Saul, whose eyes are rolled up and eyebrows raised, glances askance at the jubilant equine with horror and deprecation in his eyes, not noticing the light breaking through the clouds. His outstretched hand with painfully long fingers has let go of the golden reins, which have tied themselves up in a knot. But he, the future Apostle, shows no sign of inner awareness of the miracle. He is not blinded — just confused and frightened. Not a "Road to Damascus" but "A Portrait of a White Horse." Parmigianino's portrayal is, indeed, quite strange. In a 17th-century inventory, this painting was described as "A board showing a supine St. Paul, looking up at the sky with his left arm outstretched, the other arm on the ground; with a jumping giraffe or horse, and with a landscape, in a golden frame; by the hand of Parmigianino, 120 ducats."

The Road to Damascus according to Parmigianino presents itself not as an Epiphany, but an external Apocalyptic Providence — powerful but superficial — harking directly to the words of the Revelation: "And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

"And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God, for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophesy.

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns." (Rev. 19:9, 10, 11, 12)

TROT

The white horse is the centre of gravity in both paintings. The image of the white horse is viewed as nearly central by both artists. This brings to mind other horses — all the multitudes of white horses galloping across the masterpieces of world art. The white horses of the emperors of ancient China, the snow-white Persian horse — poetry incarnate — in the miniature "Youth Playing a Lute" by Sharaf al-Husaini al-Jazdi, painted circa 1594-1595, the purebred white triumphal Pegasus in "Perseus Freeing Andromeda" by Rubens and, last but not least, "The Nightmare" by Johann Heinrich Fussli, beloved of all psychoanalysts and directors of horror films. A bedroom, a wide bed, a girl in a white dress who has passed out from horror, a monster sitting on the girl's chest, and the mug of a white mare bares its teeth from behind the bed curtain. Fussli's painting is the literal interpretation of the French word *cauchemar*, or the English word nightmare, which means, literally, "a night mare" — a horrible night vision. In his "Book of Dreams", Apollodor claims that when an ailing person sees a white horse in a dream, this means imminent death. A far cry from triumph. Witches and sorcerers of every description fly across the nocturnal skies of English, Irish, French and German legends, sowing trouble and ruin. More recently, so to say, two great artists independently of each other have employed a white horse on its hind legs as an image of the collapse of ancient Rome and civilization as such: Karl Bryullov in "The Last Day of Pompeii" and Fellini in the scene where an earthquake destroys an ancient town in his film "Satyricon".

In 2008, a white horse stood up on its hind legs at the Denver International Airport, triggering much controversy. Critics have condemned the sculpture as the "Trojan Horse of New World Order" and a "visual embodiment of American Imperialism." This may all be true. The creation of Luis Jimenez, a Mexican with a US passport, combines the "riding in" of the Roman emperors, the "riding out" of the Apocalypse, and Fussli's "Nightmare" into the bargain. That scary mustang was dangerous to deal with. Jimenez died in his studio when a portion of the sculpture fell on his leg and severed an artery. It was his son who installed it later. You don't toy with a white horse... .

CANTER

But in the mind of a regular person, the phrase "white horse" most readily evokes the signature bottle shape of a certain blended Scotch whisky, created by a company founded by James Logan Mackie in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1861 — not the Roman triumphal processions, not St. George, the Riders of the Apocalypse, the horses of Chinese emperors, or heavenly Persian poetry. That bottle, and the box it comes in with the obligatory white horse on, have long since become the hallmarks of true gentlemanhood and, accordingly, of measured, affluent existence — not of the Apocalypse. Legend has it that the whisky was named after a tavern, which was also an inn — the White Horse Inn, belonging to the selfsame Mackie family. But inns and taverns by the same name abound all over Europe. There is an Agatha Christie novel (a murder mystery, of course) entitled "The Pale Horse" (1961), featuring an inn of the same name. This name is not an English or Scottish invention. There has been no dearth of inns by this name in Holland and Flanders since the 15th Century. In this case, the invocation of the white horse equals the wishing of "safe travel". In Dutch and Flemish paintings, white horses were frequently depicted with travellers on their back, as well as in tavern-themed scenes. In the paintings of Isaac van Ostade or Paulus Potter, the white colour of the horse — similarly to that Persian miniature — is meant to arouse (and does in fact arouse) a sense of contentment and security, which travellers indeed need. No surprise: a white horse was a highly reliable means of transport. Purebred Persian white horses took people to Heaven. How this pub-house feeling of complacency, brought by a White Horse, entered into the picture for poor Jimenez, we already know.

SLOW TROT

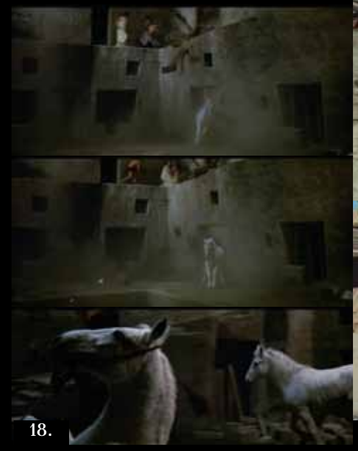
LONG TROT

18. Federico Fellini
Shots from "Satyricon"
Italy, France. 1969

19. Alejandro Jodorowsky
Shots from "El topo"
Mexico, 1970

20. Sergey Bondarchuk
Shots from "War and Peace"
Episode 1, "Andrei Bolkonsky"
1965–1967

21. Eadweard Muybridge
Animal Locomotion
England, 1886, printed 1887
Photograph
Collotype
Los Angeles County Museum of Art



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19.

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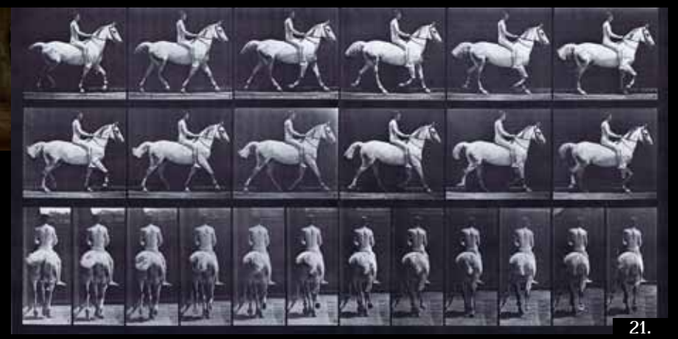

21.

Today Alejandro Jodorowsky's film "El Topo" ("The Mole") is one of cult legends of world cinema. The first private screening of "El Topo" took place at the Museum of Modern Art and Ben Barenholtz, the owner of a local theater called The Elgin, was enthralled by it. He began showing "El Topo" late at night. At first audiences were scarce, then hippies started coming, having heard about a strange film. Six months later, limousines would pull up in front of the cinema, and people would queue patiently at the box office. The film was highly appraised, among others, by Andy Warhol, John Lennon and Yoko Ono.

Shklovsky "Eisenstein" (Moscow, 1973)

"...let's recall what horses look like, when there's a whole lot of them."

Q

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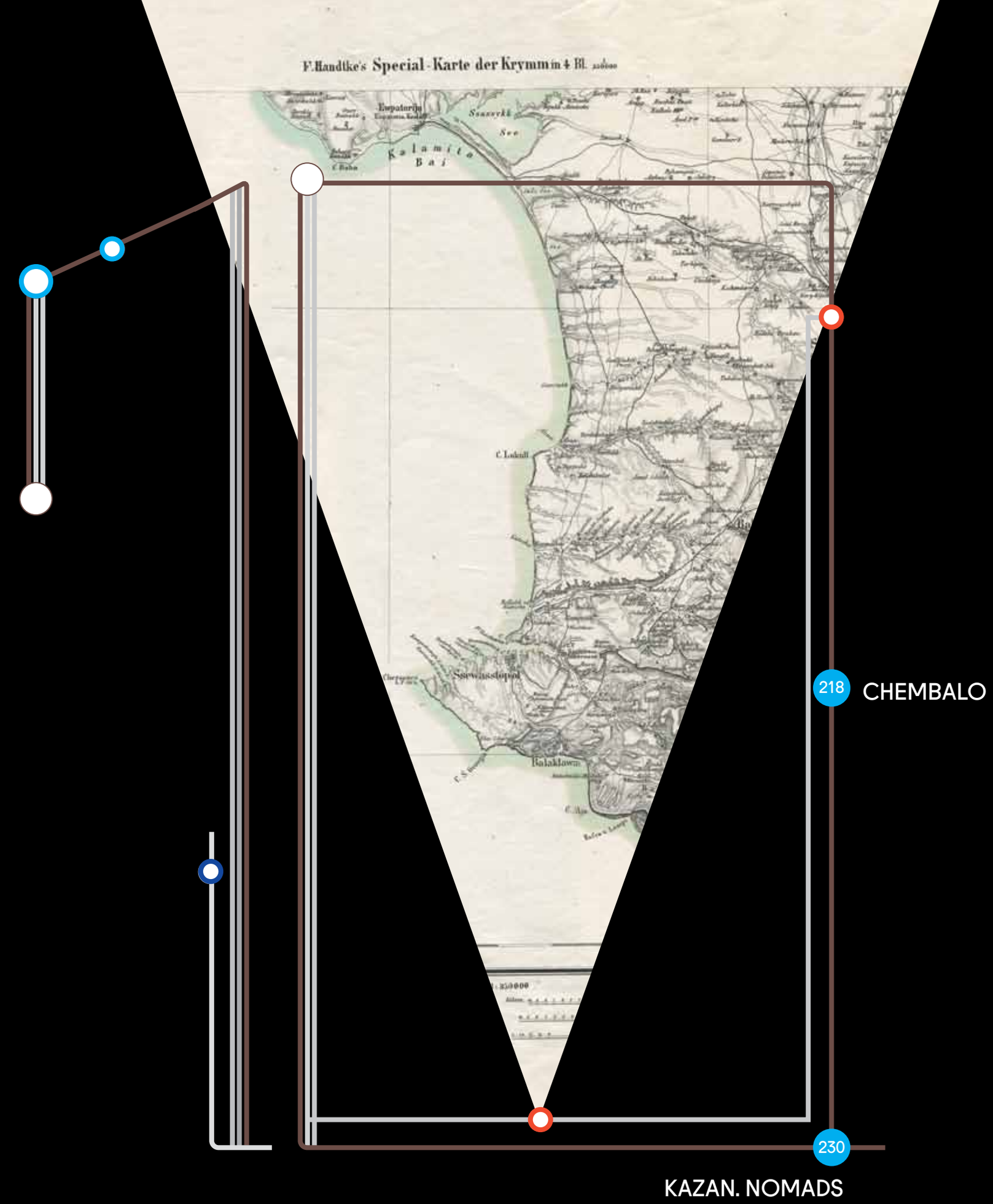
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ABOUT THE STATE HERMITAGE ARCHEOLOGICAL EXPEDITION TO SOUTHERN CRIMEA

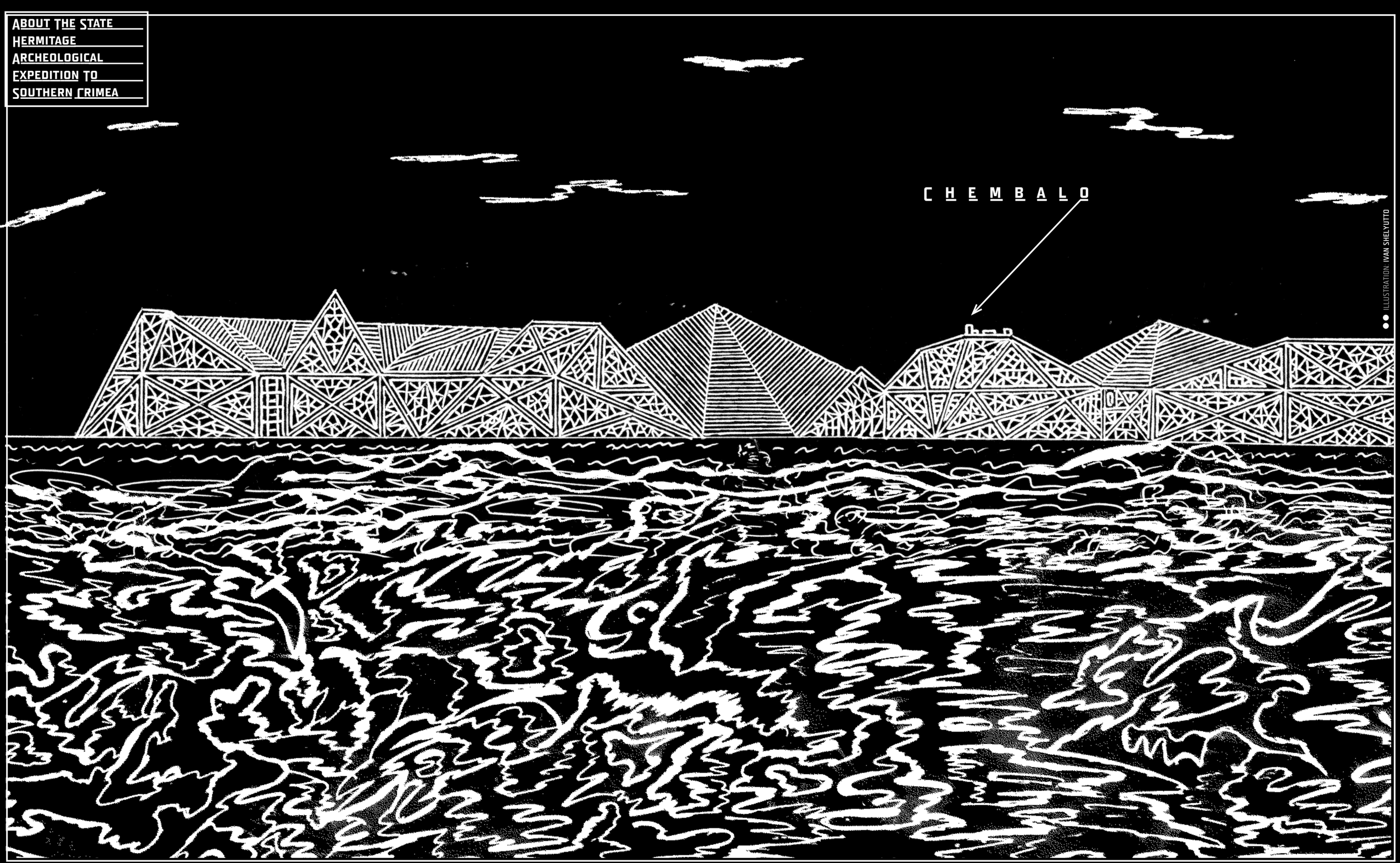


ILLUSTRATION: IVAN SHELYUTTO

SVETLANA ADAKSINA

PHOTO: SVETLANA ADAKSINA, YURI MOLODKOVETS

Since the mid-19th Century, archeology has consistently remained a passion of the Hermitage, which is now Russia's largest archeological research centre enjoying broad international acclaim.

One of the traditional "favourites" of the Hermitage archeological team is the ancient and medieval history of the Crimean Peninsula — a territory sought after by many nations since ancient times, due to its convenient location. The Nymphaion, Myrmekion, Chersonesus and "Golden Horde" expeditions of the State Hermitage are now legendary. The Southern Crimean expedition is comparatively young, only 22-years old, and has studied only a few medieval landmarks during its lifetime. One was the Byzantine fortress of Alustон (now the town of Alushta), where an amazing hoard of silver bars was unearthed, which at the time were legal tender. This treasure was the second biggest of its kind found in the Crimea. The expedition has also studied the monastery complex on Mount Ayu-Dag, having ascertained the exact completion date of the famous Partheniles Basilica, and discovering and restoring a fresco at the medieval Genoese fortress of Chembalo (14th-15th Centuries).

The Southern Crimean Archeological Expedition has assiduously researched the Fortress of Chembalo, located in the modern town of Balaklava 12 kilometres away from Sevastopol, since 2002.

Balaklava was a Russian Black Sea Navy submarine base until 2001 and as such remained a restricted area where no excavations were allowed. This is the first time the Hermitage expedition has conducted research on such a large scale, examining fortifications, residential buildings and temples, many of which are miraculously well-preserved (some of the turrets along the outer wall have survived at their original height). The convenient absence of any modern buildings within the fortress also helps, providing the right environment for research into and thought about this remarkable landmark.

The study of different aspects of the Italian colonization of the Black Sea coast during the Middle Ages is a time-honoured tradition in historiography. Since the late 18th Century, researchers have focused mainly on landmarks along the northern coast of the Black Sea, particularly the largest medieval towns in the region built by the Italians: Kaffa, Soldaya, Chembalo and others.

The ruins of the medieval Genoese fortress of Chembalo lie on the southern outskirts of the town of Balaklava, covering the precipitous sides and the top of the rocky Cape Castron at the mouth of the harbour. The top is 110 metres above sea level. The walls and turrets of the outer rampart encircled an area of over three hectares. The Genoese built the port and this mighty fortress at Chembalo during the 130 years that they controlled this land. There were 10 turrets along the perimeter of the fortress, many of which still rise markedly above the surface, and the town was built on man-made terraces.

The harbour overlooked by the fortress is a narrow, sinuous bay, which can hardly be spotted from the open sea. It provided an ideal natural haven for ships during a storm. The bay is currently about one kilometre long, 195 metres wide at the mouth and 38 metres deep.

Reminiscent of a fjord, this harbour is anything but typical for the Black Sea coast, which is why it was already famous in ancient times. In his "Geography", Strabo gives a brief description of Chembalo as "a harbour with a narrow entrance, where the [Scythian tribe of] Taurs usually assembled in bands of brigands to assault all those seeking refuge. This harbour is known as Simbolon Limen". Much has been written about the local features and historical characteristics of the inhabitants of the "Harbour of Symbols". Excavations, carried out in and around the town in the past decades have yielded a considerable number of later ancient landmarks, providing sufficient evidence to generalize about the data available from that period. At the same time, data on the medieval history of Balak-

MORE ABOUT ROGER FENTON ON P.222

Roger Fenton

The Ordinance Wharf, Balaklava

1855

Paris, Musée d'Orsay

Genoese fortress of Chembalo. Bird's eye view from the northeast before the beginning of excavations

Turrets of the eastward line of defence

PHOTO K.WILLIAMS, G.MAC

All references below are to (*)
Voyennaya entsyclopedia: [V 18 t.] / Pod. red. V.F. [illegible]skogo i dr. SPb.: T-vo I.D.Sytina, 1911–1915.
Military Encyclopaedia: [In 18 vols.] / Ed. by V.F. Novitsky et al. St. Petersburg: I.D.Sytin Publishing Society, 1911–1915.

***BALAKLAVA BAY**

A small but deep and well-protected harbour on the southern coast of the Chersonese Peninsula, 10 miles south of Sevastopol. Before Christ, the bay was occupied by Scythians, later by Greeks and Genoese before passing to the Tatars in the 16th C. After the Crimea was annexed by Russia, Balaklava became home for Archipelago Greeks that had fought in the Russian army against Turkey in the specially established Greek Battalion (abolished in 1859). The B. Bay was used for ship repair purposes by the English-French fleet that besieged Sevastopol during the East War in 1854–1856; a storage facility for the English marine corps was located on shore.

***EMBARKATION POINT**

A stretch of the sea coast occupied and fortified by the landing force to facilitate grounding and further offensive inland for the expeditionary corps or, in case of failure, cover the retreat and re-embarkation. For the latter purpose, E. p. may be created at a distance from the actual place of landing, at the spot offering more convenient anchorage for transport craft. In strategic terms, E. p. must be located as close as possible to the expedition's destination point and should provide a route for retreat. From the tactical point of view, the site has to offer: 1) sufficient water depth near the shore and the possibility of supporting the landing troops; 2) opportunities for convenient deployment of troops and organization of defensive positions in the coastal area; 3) convenient access ways inland and sufficient fresh water supply, and 4) convenient anchorage for transport ships.

*** BARBICAN**

A historical fortification structure. During the Crusades, the so-called sentry passage wall in reinforced cities in Palestine. Later, the name came to be used of separate towers guarding access to bridges or fortress gates; the latter were connected with the tower by means of a stone walled passage with firing ports.

lava has remained fragmentary until recent years, and was never organized into a system.

Joining forces with the Crimean Branch of the Institute of Archeology of the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, the Southern Crimean Expedition of the State Hermitage Museum conducted its 10th field season in the Fortress of Chembalo in 2011. In past years, the archeologists had unearthed three turrets and adjacent buildings of the easterly line of defence, studied one of the turrets and a part of the citadel, and fully excavated three Christian churches with their necropolises, and residential buildings along the curtain wall, which was part of the eastward line of defence. The total area excavated and studied over the years exceeded 2,000 square metres

A natural sequel to the previous efforts, the work conducted in 2009–2011 focused on the area inside the eastward fortress wall, between the Barnabo Grillo Tower and the Gate Tower. On this slope, buildings had been constructed in terraced clusters.

The contents of Buildings 2 and 3 were studied during the same years. The ruins of a tower were discovered, which were not previously visible on the surface.

The highlight of the 2009 field research season was the discovery of a previously unknown church, which had once stood on a separate man-made terrace. Despite its relatively small size (7.68×4.30 metres), the church impressed the archeologists with the original architecture of its altar, standing on a foundation of a very complex shape, and ending in a deep niche. In the space between Building 3 and the church, and on the inside of the eastward curtain wall, the ground was saturated with bits of 13th to 15th-century ceramic pottery, the bones of mammals (mostly cattle), birds and fish (including sturgeon), and bits of mussel and oyster shells. Among the metal artefacts were some rare numismatic finds, parts of Italian armour (steel plates and bronze rivets in the Brigandine style), arrowheads and crossbow bolts from the 14th-15th Centuries.

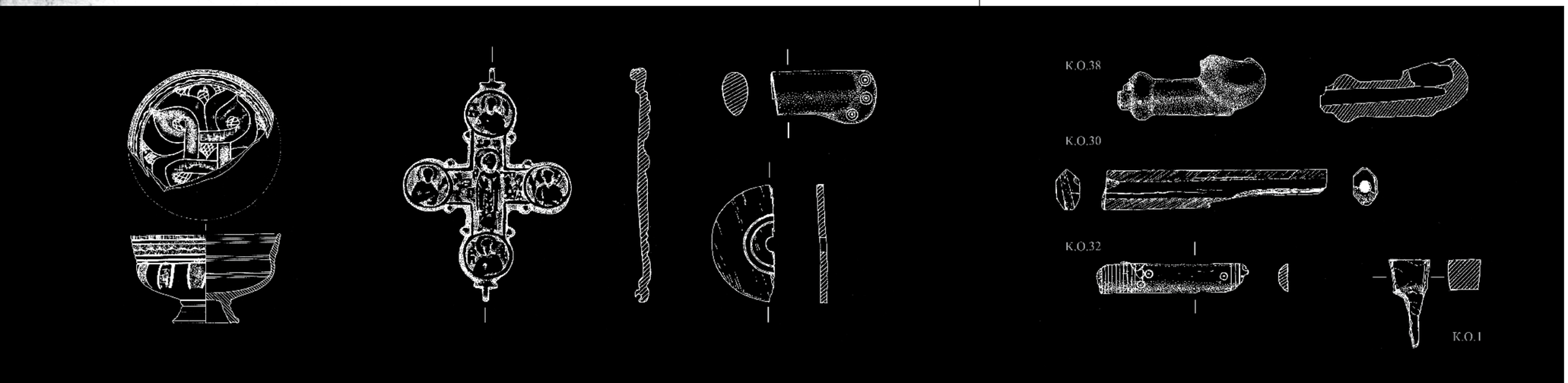
In the same space, which must have been a section of a medieval street, many scattered burial sites were found dating from the 13th to the 15th Centuries, and more were discovered inside the church. Each of the graves contained at least five bodies. It was not possible to determine the exact number of bodies with a visual inspection alone. The bones had been much tampered with already during the Middle Ages. Only a few of the dead were found in proper anatomical order. Most of the burials were completely nameless and unrecorded. The skeletons lay on their backs, with their arms either stretched alongside the body, or folded on the chest. They lay with their heads to the west, but facing the east. A number of isolated skeletons, mostly of children, were found behind the apse and by the southern wall of the temple. Careful craniological analysis revealed that some 100 different people had been buried in and around the church.

One of the rare finds was a fragment of a locally crafted red clay enamel vase from the 14th Century, decorated with an image of Sirin and a scene with a bird fighting a snake. Some others were the bottom parts of some 14th-century enamelled vessels bearing Greek monograms, some of them never previously seen on any medieval artefacts in the Crimea, a miniature stone replica of a church, and a dodecahedral bronze measuring weight.

Roger Fenton

Kadykioy from the Side of the Horse Artillery Camp
1855

Artefacts found by the Southern Crimean Expedition of the State Hermitage Museum



* Tents

Military assistance articles consisting of sheets of fabric, wooden parts and ropes. Intended for officers or soldiers. There are camp T., generally made of Flemish cloth, ravenduck, tape, yarn and red calico; and field T., made of waterproof ravenduck. Camp T. can either be obtained from quartermaster baggage warehouses for the time of encampment and returned at the end thereof, or built from materials supplied by quartermasters, in which case the upkeep of T. will be covered from the maintenance allowance. Field T. form part of emergency stock, replenished by quartermasters. At peacetime, a maintenance allowance was paid to upkeep field T. and their accessories starting from the second year, in proportion to the overall size of peacetime corps, with six T. allocated per 100 persons, or 36 sheets per 600 persons. The distribution of T. (for men and officers) between expendable stock and emergency stock is regulated by special tables of equipment.

* Defence Walls

In the past, self-standing stone walls constituting part of permanent fortification structures intended for gun defence. D. walls were common in the times of rifled artillery and before the advent of explosive bombs. D. walls were mostly used as separate escarp walls in fortress moats or at the foot of escarpments. Usually 3–4 ft. thick, with a pent or gabled iron roof or a stone slab on top. The ports were located 3–4 ft. apart. A D. wall had a sentry passage behind it. In other cases, defence walls served to connect inner or outer open structures, provide access ways inside the fortress, etc.

*Balaklava (sea battle)

On June 23, 1773, Commander Kingsbergen's squadron consisting of two 16-cannon ships, The Koron and The Taganrog, sent by Vice-Admiral Senyavin from Kerch to cruise the southern coast of the Crimea, met a Turkish fleet of 4 ships (two 52-cannon, one 36-cannon and one 24-cannon) at Balaclava and attacked it. At first, The Taganrog, with Kingsbergen on board, were forced to fight unassisted as The Koron had fallen behind due to low wind and only joined The Taganrog at the height of the battle. The Turks, whose vessels soon caught fire, attempted boarding, but their attack was defeated. The hulls and rigging of the Turkish ships were damaged so considerably that the Turkish admiral, after a futile six-hour battle, had to put on all sail and flee before the wind; no chase was possible.

The stratified finds unearthed during the excavations of the temple suggest that the church may have been erected in the early decades of the 14th century, and stopped holding services some time in the late 16th century or at its very end. The earliest artefact circumstantially pointing to the time when the church may have been built (apart from some coins dating back to the reign of Uzbek Khan, 1313–1342) came from Grave 2, where underneath the skeleton of an old man, a cast-bronze ornamental cross was found with a raised crucifix. Crosses like this typically date from between the 11th and the 13th centuries. The iconography of this particular crucifix seemed to suggest a later provenance: it could not have been crafted earlier than the second half of the 13th century.

One of the most illuminating finds was a leaf of a cast-bronze reliquary arc, discovered in situ in the chancel of the church. The leaf bears the image of the Virgin Orania. On each side of the Virgin there are round medallions with the images of the First Apostles Peter and Paul, and the Evangelists Matthew and Mark. The shape, iconography, inscriptions and execution are in harmony with a known Byzantine prototype. Arcs like this were in use in the 10th and early 11th centuries. The location of the find and the image of the Virgin Orania possibly suggest that the leaf had been placed in the sanctuary on purpose as an embedded holy relic, and the church itself was dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

Among the most unique finds, of particular note is the fresco "The Virgin Hodegetria and Child". Its stratigraphic context suggests that the fresco was hidden in the barbican of the Gate Tower after Chembalo was captured by the Ottoman Turks in 1475. A local Christian must have chiselled the image of Our Lady off the church wall to save it from desecration by non-Christians. He put the pieces together, wrapped them in a cloth and buried them. This was the first treasure known to archeologists, containing nothing but fragments of a mural. Hermitage restoration artists Yelena and Artyom Stepanov reconstructed the full fresco from its minuscule fragments and it is now on display in the Middle Ages room of the National Museum of Chersonesus and Tauris.

In general, we can say that the archeological material unearthed during such field missions in recent years has been fairly homogeneous and typical of the landmark in question. There was a large quantity of fragments of red and brown clay pottery — very delicate and fragile, with white engobe decorations and a high sand content in the clay puddle. Fragments of plates and bowls made of red clay, decorated with yellow or green enamel on white engobe, with graffito ornaments, are some of the most characteristic finds in the late-14th and early-15th-century strata at the Fortress of Chembalo. As usual, a smattering of imported ceramics, some of them made of red clay with cobalt decorations applied on top of white engobe, created in Iznik in the 15th Century, was discovered.

More than 60 coins during were found during the three most recent field seasons, most of them Genoese or Tatar, very faded, and in a really bad shape. The two Byzantine coins merit special attention: one bears the monogram "K," the other is what is known as an "RO" type coin. Both must have ended up in the pit from a re-deposited stratum. In Chembalo, one frequently comes across artefacts from before the Genoese period, which is indirect evidence that once a Byzantine community may have stood where the fortress was later built, or nearby.

The work of the Southern Crimean Expedition lifts the veil of mystery over a relatively small time period — but what a period! Indeed, the history of the Harbour of Symbols (Chembalo and Balaklava) was many-faceted and replete with all kinds of interesting events. In 1475, the Greek and Italian possessions in the Crimea were captured by the Ottoman Empire. Three years before, Afanasy Nikitin, the famous Russian explorer who travelled far and wide during the Middle Ages, had visited Chembalo, recording its Tatar name: Balikaya.

A sea battle took place near Balaklava on 23 July 1773, during the first Russo-Turkish War. A Turkish convoy of four ships was attacked by two Russian warships: The Koron and The Taganrog. The battle lasted six hours. The Turkish vessels, badly damaged by artillery fire, were forced to retreat. The Balaklava Sea Battle was the first victory won by the fledgling Russian Navy on the Black Sea. A peace treaty was subsequently signed at Kuchouk-Kainardji, and the Turkish garrison, which had been deployed at Balaklava for 299 years, had to leave. Before Sevastopol was even founded, the town and harbour of Balaklava became the first home base of the Russian Navy in the Crimea.

Under orders from Catherine the Great, a Greek battalion was deployed at Balaklava, consisting of Greek nationals who had joined Russian military service. When the

Roger Fenton

A Quiet Day in the Mortar Battery
1855

A fragment of a redware slip glazed bowl depicting Sirin and a bird struggling with a snake

Chembalo Fortress. 14th century

A fresco depicting the Virgin Hodegetria with the Child from the excavations of the barbakan of the Gate Tower

Chembalo Fortress. 14th century

*** Balaklava**

A town on the southern coast of the Chersonese Peninsula south of Sevastopol, located on the good, deep B. Bay. B. and the harbour are located between two mountains, Spilia and Poilerakhi. To the north of B., the slopes of these mountains form a gorge about one verst long, with Kadykioy Village lying at the northern side of the gorge. To the north of Kadykioy there is a hilly plain stretching about 6 versts from east to west and about 4 versts from north to south. The plain is bounded by the steep slopes of Sapun Mountain in the west, the Fedyukhiny Heights in the north and Kayades, Spilia and Poilerakhi in the east and south. The plain is crossed by numerous roads of sufficiently good quality and covered with fields and meadows (gardens and vineyards near Kadykioy).

*** Balaklava Battle**

(The Battle of Balaclava)

The battle between the Russian and allied armies that took place on October 13 (25), 1854. In view of the incessant heavy bombardment of Sevastopol as well as gunpowder shortages, Commander-in-Chief Prince Menshikov attempted to distract the enemy's attention from the town and start the offensive with Division 12 long before the arrival of another two divisions; the initial plan was to take over the redoubts built in front of Kadykioy Village. From October 11 onwards, the Chorgun detachment concentrated in the bivouac near Chorgun Village. On the morning of October 12, they were joined by General Liprandi, who conducted reconnaissance of the enemy positions from the hill facing Chorgun. Approaches to B. from Chorgun were cut off with a double fortification line. The allies constructed 4 redoubts on the mountain ridge north-west of Kadykioy. A hill at the eastern fringe of Kadykioy Village was reinforced with enclosed works. A second fortification line was located to the south of Kadykioy, on the slopes of Spilia and Poilerakhi; this consisted of batteries linked with a single uninterrupted trench. At 5 a.m. on October 13 the troops moved out of the bivouac near Chorgun and marched for half an hour in complete silence. General Gribbe's column was the first to enter the battle. A hundred Cossacks, supported by a lancer squadron, forced back the enemy picket near Jonah the Fasting's Chapel and took over the road to B. The infantry took control of Kamary Village, and the artillery opened fire against Redoubt № 1. After this, Major-General Levutsky reached the Kadykioy heights, moved the artillery forward and brought fire on redoubts №1 and 2. Covered by the artillery, General Semyakin's battalions on the left and Colonel Scudéry's column on the right aligned with the right echelon; General Ryzhov's cavalry was behind them. No sooner than the Russian troops appeared in front of the fortifications, the

Empress travelled the Crimea in 1787, she was welcomed at Balaklava by a mock "Amazon Troop," led by the wife of the Greek garrison commander, Yelena Sarandova. The troop consisted of some 100 wives and daughters of Balaklava Greeks. On seeing them, Catherine exclaimed: "Well, congratulations, Captain of the Amazons! Your army looks great! I'm pleased with it."

During the Crimean War, Balaklava was occupied by the English Army. It was at Balaklava that one of the heaviest battles of that campaign took place in October 1854 (known in English as The Battle of Balaclava). The Balaklava valley, which is now called Golden Gulley after a rare grape variety that grows here, was christened The Valley of the Shadow of Death in British history books (after Tennyson's commemorative poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade").

In November of the same year, 11 English warships, anchored right outside the harbour, were shattered against the rocks during a powerful storm. The legendary three-mast motorship, The Prince, was among the ships that sank that night. There is some evidence that The Prince may have carried gold nuggets for the salaries and other needs of the English expedition corps in the Crimea. Some adventurous treasure-seekers still dive off the cliffs by Mount Castron, trying to find the legendary English treasure buried 40 meters deep.

Balaklava started a new life, that of a seaside resort town, in the late 19th Century. The Yusupovs, the Gagarins, the Naryshkins, the Apraksins and many other Russian noble families had their summer residences there. Nicholas II visited Balaklava every year when the Royal Family was on vacation in Livadia. Legend has it that the local merchants would lay a table at least 500 meters long on the esplanade to welcome the tsar and his minions.

Under Soviet rule, the history of Balaklava was no less eventful. In a project unprecedented in scale and challenge, an underground repair and rearming dock for submarines was built in and around the harbour in the 1950s-1960s. The submarine base remained until the early 2000s, and the whole town was a restricted area. The unique underground facility is now a naval museum.

Archeology is a special science for passionate people who are inspired to search for and uncover mysteries from the past. Decade after decade, archeological forays enlist this particular breed of people, who have fallen in love with archeology. The Crimea is a special place that rewards researchers lavishly for their purposeful labours. The hard work in the pits, in the dust, under a scorching sun is more than made up for by the welcoming sea, the starry skies, the illuminating conversations and singing by the camp fire, and new, treasured friends.

When reading the works of remarkable, renowned predecessors, one always strives to read between the lines of their matter-of-fact reports, which only list the people who took part in the expedition, and dryly profile the massive or small and exclusive historical site that was excavated. Historians of this science have to piece information together from archives, journals and travel logs. It seems that, as long as the excavations and discoveries are made before the very eyes of the archeologist, it would be unethical to divert attention to the non-scientific part of an expedition's life — at any rate, in a scientific publication. And by then it is already too late. More than 500 people have taken part in the Southern Crimean Expedition over the years — Hermitage staff members and volunteers, usually archeology students from St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kyiv, and Simferopol. Where would the expedition have been without the passion of those young people, their obsession with archeology? Each and every one of them should be written about. But that would be a different history. But a big debt of gratitude is owed to all those whose passion, talent and hard work goes into building the great science of archeology!

Roger Fenton

Camp of the 4th Dragoon Guard Regiment, French and English soldiers having a meal

1855

Residential buildings inside fortress walls

Turks opened fire from all the 11 cannons installed in the redoubts, but were quickly silenced by the accurate Russian cannon fire. After taking over the redoubts, Colonel Scudéry with the Odessa Regiment found a position in the bushes at the right flank, with General Ryzhov's cavalry further right and Zhabokritsky's detachment along the south-west slopes of the Fedyukhiny Heights. The cannon fire from the redoubts alarmed the enemy. The English and Turkish troops moved forward from Balaclava and fell into rank north of Kadykioy. About 10 a.m. enemy reinforcements started to arrive. This, however, failed to result in any energetic activities; on the contrary, it delayed the battle for over an hour. The Russian cavalry continued to concentrate behind the right flank of the infantry, together with squadrons of the lancer regiment pulled from General Gribbe's column. Meanwhile, Lord Raglan was informed that the Russians were retreating with the cannons captured in the redoubts. He committed the Earl of Lucan, the head of the English cavalry, to bring forward all the mounted troops and, with the assistance of Lt. Gen. Cathcart's division, reclaim the heights. However, Lucan hesitated as he did not see the Russians leaving their positions; it was not until he received an unequivocal repeat order that he sent Cardigan to attack the right flank of General Liprandi's troops. The English horsemen emerged from behind the hill with Redoubt № 4 and charged full speed at the Russian cavalry. Scudéry's infantry formed a hollow square and met the attack with intensive fire. The artillery opened rapid crossfire. However, the English cavalry, who were moving so fast that the grapeshot landed behind them, successfully attacked the Don Battery. The Ural Regiment, placed in the front line, was pressed for space and unable to gain the speed required for attack. Dispersed by the horseholders, ammunition wagons and limbers, the regiment had to face the attack in place and was rolled up by the retreating Leichtenberg hussars and Duke Sachsen-Weimar's hussars in the third line; the whole Russian cavalry retired pell-mell to the aqueduct in the rear. The English followed at our heels; the decisive combat took place near the bridge across the canal. Seeing the critical situation with our cavalry, General Liprandi ordered 3 squadrons of the lancer regiment that had remained hidden in the bushes to attack the enemy flank. Exhausted by losses from fire and hand-to-hand combat, the English cavalry was unable to withstand a new attack; seeing the enemy move towards the flank, Cardigan chose to retreat. The English closed the ranks and started a well-organised retreat in two lines. General d'Allonville, wishing to rescue Cardigan's brigade, sent 4 squadrons of African rangers to attack the left flank of Zhabokritsky's detachment. This attack broke the chains of soldiers armed with short rifles and hit the battery, yet was defeated by the battalions of the Vladimir Regiment that had formed a hollow square.

After this daring but useless cavalry attack, the allied army opened strong fire along the line and brought more fresh reserves to the left flank. However, the allies chose not to continue the offensive as General Liprandi, anticipating the allies' intentions, also proceeded to reinforce his right flank.

This was the end of the B. Battle; the Russian army lost 7 officers and 124 soldiers; 1 general, 32 officers and 448 soldiers were wounded or contused; the allied forces lost 598 men.

ROGER FENTON

In her book "Regarding the Pain of Others" Susan Sontag calls Roger Fenton (1819–1869), Queen Victoria's private photographer, the first official war photographer. He was sent to the Crimean War in 1855 by the publisher Thomas Agnew to photograph the life of British soldiers and to calm down a public discontented by the war. Anti-war reports were continually published in The Times, and Fenton's pictures, printed in the less critical Illustrated London News, were supposed to ease social tension. Fenton avoided taking pictures of dead, wounded or disfigured soldiers, preferring images of wartime daily life.

The weight and bulk of the photographic equipment he used determined Fenton's limited choice of subjects. Besides that, he could only photograph motionless objects because of the low light sensitivity of his materials. Fenton took pictures of military men posing and landscapes, including the area where, during the Crimean War, a light brigade made famous by the Tennyson's poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade" had attacked Russian troops to recover weapons. The place is called the Valley of the Shadow of Death, although it is not really the valley where the charge took place. Fenton took two pictures of the valley – one with several cannonballs lying on the road, the other without the cannonballs. Experts still keep arguing which of the pictures was taken first and whether the cannonballs were placed on the road on purpose or the soldiers just picked them up later for reuse.

Some of the Fenton's photographs, including the two versions of "The Valley of the Shadow of Death", were published in 2001 in Ulrich Keller's book "The Ultimate Spectacle: A Visual History of the Crimean War". In recognition of his work, his pictures were included in the modern collection called "100 Photographs That Changed the World".

In June 1855, after three months at the front-line, Fenton could no longer continue and returned home. His health broke down after he became sick with cholera, and he lost many of his friends on the battlefield. Fenton's place was taken by James Robertson. It was he who took the first pictures of Sevastopol ruined by war. Robertson's works were included into the phototypes album "Sevastopol in 1855-1856" published in 1893 in Moscow by the company Sherer, Nabgoltz & Co.

After he came back to England, Fenton presented a full report of his journey to Queen Victoria. Fenton's photographs made an impression not only on the Queen, but also the European public, which had become unaccustomed to bloodletting since the [first] Napoleonic Wars. The shock was among the factors that resulted in the founding of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the signing of the Geneva Conventions for the treatment of wounded and sick soldiers.

When the Queen went on an official visit to Paris in August of the same year, she took 20 of Fenton's photographs to show them to Napoleon III. Soon after that Fenton received an invitation from Napoleon. He presented the complete collection of his Crimean photographs (some 360 pictures) in Paris. Fenton's photographs from the Crimean expedition were often shown towards the end of 1855 and the beginning of 1856. They were also published as engravings in the Illustrated London News. But despite the numerous publications and great success, the commercial side of the project left much to be desired. People did not want to buy photographs of a questionable war campaign that they were willing to forget. The other reason behind low sales was the quality of the daguerreotype photographs: the images on the plates faded quickly. Fenton himself was concerned about the fragility of the pictures. The irony is that the photographic society he headed was called the Fading Committee.

Roger Fenton's Russian collection was purchased by the Russian Ministry of Culture for the Hermitage Museum in 2009. Twenty-two of the photographs from the new collection were shown at an exhibition in St. Petersburg in May 2010 called Roger Fenton: Return to Russia.

Roger Fenton

The Admiralty and St. Isaac's Cathedral

1852

KOЦЕ

NOMADS

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THE NOMADS OF EURASIA ON THE ROAD TO EMPIRE EXHIBITION AT THE HERMITAGE-KAZAN EXHIBITION CENTRE, WHICH RAN TILL MARCH 2013, COMPRISED AS MANY AS 2000 ARTEFACTS FROM NOMAD CULTURES THAT HAD COEXISTED AND PROSPERED IN EURASIA THROUGH TWO MILLENNIA, AND INCLUDED BOTH MASTERPIECES KNOWN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND ITEMS THAT HAD NEVER BEEN EXHIBITED BEFORE.

AN AUTHENTIC INSIGHT INTO NOMADIC CULTURE

Fragment of a patchwork silk item, ancient settlement of Karakorum

China. 12th-13th Century AD (common era).
Silk 32 x 21 cm
Inventory No. MR-3232

In Scythian cosmology, life and death, good and evil, are existent and non-existent at the same time. Existence is cyclic, and elements of the cycle are bound together by strong bonds of mutual dependence and eternal alternation. The world collapses when one cyclic phase stops following another. There's no death without life, no continuation of life without the sacrifice of death. The zoomorphic (animalistic) style of North Iranian culture has a special symbolic code for this vision of the universe, using images to represent the laws of the natural and social cosmos that humans also follow. The artwork of Scythian masters not only introduces particular myths and their characters; their figurative texts encode the people's vision of the universe.
The animal symbols proved to be very convenient: the categorization of creatures according to the elements they live in gives a clear and accurate parallel to the spatial structures of the cosmos. Birds represent the top, herbivores the middle, while fish and reptiles represent the lower part of the world; these symbols have existed since the Palaeolithic age. Some particular species could act as intermediaries between the worlds, like swimming birds, connecting the upper and the lower levels. And different parts of the bodies of deer, for example, corresponded to different elements of the universe.
The animalistic code followed Scythian culture throughout its history, affirming its significance and descriptive potency in ancient society. Zoomorphic symbols prevail in the Scythian art of the 5th and 6th centuries AD (common era), which testifies to the uniqueness of this image system for the period.
The universality of the animalistic style as a symbolic language explains the Scythian devotion to this sign complex in art. Scythian iconography and the cosmology it represents have spread beyond Scythia, influencing many ethnic cultures of the ancient world.

Cauldron

Saksan culture. 5th-4th Century BC
Semirechye, near Alma Ata
Kazakhstan
Bronze moulding. Height 62 cm
Inventory No. 1654-1

EKATERINA GUINDINA

The Nomads of Eurasia on the Road to Empire exhibition opened at the Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Centre on June 18, 2012. The St. Petersburg museum showed as many as 2000 artefacts from nomad cultures that coexisted and prospered in Eurasia through two millennia. There were gold jewellery, fragments of tissues, ceramics, weaponry, ornaments and objects used in everyday life ranging from masterpieces known throughout the world and items that had never been exhibited before.

"This exhibition was amazing," explained Nikolai Postnov of the Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Centre. "It drew our attention not to the culture of a particular people or region, or to a particular period; it was about culture in general. It encouraged very serious reflection on the development of culture, what influences its changes and the role of contacts between different peoples."

The exhibition was presented in a strictly chronological manner, divided along natural geographical lines (East and West, Europe and Asia), provided brief and informative comments, and featured cold light and authentic objects, each of them placed in a way that allowed them to be studied in detail. One could examine, for example, hunting scenes on the sides of a silver vase from the Solokh barrow thanks to the mirror placed in the showcase. One of the major items — the so-called Polovtsian Baba — was located in the middle of a hall so that you could walk around it. Before the exhibition not even Hermitage employees had had a chance to see its stone back. But after careful examination of the back part, specialists came up with a new theory: such statues were placed on hills where the wind blew unimpeded. It is possible that holes in the stone made the Polovtsian Baba sing mysterious sounds — an exotic melody made by the wind.

An authentic object offers a host of interesting information about itself and its time. A hitching post, for example, is not a mere pole for a nomad, it is a vertical line connecting the upper (heavenly) world with both the middle (human) world and the netherworld.

Gulchachak Nazipova, director of the Tatarstan National Museum, said that visitors to the Hermitage-Kazan Centre were able to see the exhibition in a different light from the general public of Kazan: "Here in the Kazan region we have a historical conglomerate of different cultures — religious, ethnic and linguistic. The original local inhabitants were a settled people, but the peoples who came here later were nomads. Nomadic roots can still be seen in the ethnography. Traditions, rituals, national cuisine and costumes — all of it still has some element of the nomadic way of life. Our visitors not only understood this exhibition better than most of the visitors to Kazan; they also learned more from it. Many art historians, artists, ethnographers — people who don't have access to the Hermitage holdings for some reason — were finally able to see these items and got the chance to realize their ideas and verify their research."

Tatarstan is, in a way, an inheritor of nomadic culture and the idea of an exhibition about the nomadic world was originally born at the Tatarstan Academy of Sciences. The Hermitage-Kazan Centre team strove to make the exhibition "very comfortable for the individual visitor".

"There was everything you needed: comments, a clear and simple division of the exhibition, and an amazing catalogue," Postnov said.

The archeological section of the Tatarstan National Museum was designed for a mainstream audience: there are many reconstructions of ancient costumes, homes, workshops, and so on. The Hermitage exhibition, in contrast, was very reserved. There was only one reconstruction — burial costumes from the "Issar's" burial mound Arzhan-2. The visitor faced a unified mosaic; an image of life on the ancient steppe.

Small objects made one believe in the reality of the past, feel its authenticity and its connection to the present. Warrior belts are essential elements of the nomads' equipment. Such belts marked the social status of their owners: one can see this in the material of the plates (gold, silver, bronze or tatlin) and their number. And they were very useful: special bands were used to attach daggers, knives and bags for small things (fire strikers, for example) or ritual objects (animals' teeth, stones, and ribbons). It is interesting to compare the decorations of a Scythian warrior belt with its Turkoman equivalent. Turkoman warriors had a second quiver belt, with a quiver on one side and a bow on the other. One was able to see the details of quiver belts at the Hermitage exhibition, and a reconstruction of one of them in the Tatarstan National Museum.

Each visitor came to the exhibition looking for something to interest them in particular: jewellery, weaponry, sculpture, or simply to become immersed in the world of the ancient steppe. Hermitage staff members knew that well, and hoped that all visitors were satisfied.

Predator: a metaphor of death, darkness, the chthonic forces of the netherworld and, at the same time, the procreating energy of the universe. This does not belong to any of the parts of the world structured according to the zoological code, but it is no less significant for Scythian culture than the herbivore. In laceration scenes it symbolizes masculine force.

Laceration scenes: the major dynamic theme of the animalistic style. The sign system of the mythological universe model requires a canonical reading of the sacral figurative text. The laceration scenes represent the image of the sacred alliance that gives birth to the new energy of the world. Torturing a herbivore, the predator accomplishes a cosmic sacrifice, bringing forth cosmos from chaos at the same time.

Belt plate with zoomorphic motif

Siberian collection of Pyotr I (Peter the Great).
5th-3th Century BC (purchased in 1846)
Gold. 11.7 x7.3 cm
Inventory No. SI- 1-13

Snaffle metal plate with a twisted predator

Scythian culture, 5th Century AD (common era)
Kulakovsky-2 grave mound, the Crimea
Russia (now Ukraine)
Bronze moulding. 10.5x9.7 cm
Inventory No. KR-1895-10-2

A twisted creature: the idea of eternal alternation representing the core of the cyclic being for ancient man is treated differently in different cultural traditions. In China the two elements of the universe — yin and yang — organize the entire structure of the vision of the universe. Exact repetitions of Chinese hierograms can be found in the Scythian image of a twisted predator, one of the best examples of the animalist style. The figure turns on its axis, endlessly alternating cosmos and chaos, the front of the body and the rear. This figure was used on a man's belt buckle, acting as part of another symbolic formula: the body represents the world, and the act of putting on the belt symbolizes the cosmos, and taking it off — chaos.

Embroidery fragment

Noin-Ula, 1st Century
Xiongnu, Mongolia
Silk 37.5 x 25 cm
Inventory No. MR-951

Metal plate with deer

Tagar culture, 5th Century BC
Grave mound near the pier, Grave 2
(Teplukhov Dig, 1924), South Siberia,
Krasnoyarsk region, Middle Yenisei,
near the village of Baleni
Russia
Bronze moulding. Length 8.5 cm
Inventory No. 4316-45

Deer: an animal symbol corresponding to the universal image of the Tree of the Universe. It is traditionally depicted in such a way that its body position symbolizes the major cosmological processes. If the deer is lying with its legs drawn in, its upper part symbolizes life and the static lower part symbolizes death. A herbivore's body in a twisted position depicts the same thing, but in another way: the front part of the body represents life and summer, and its back represents death and winter.

MINTIMER SHAIMIEV

We are very satisfied with the results of our work with the Hermitage. After all, thanks to the goodwill and support of this world-famous museum and its director — Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky, Russia's top museum head and a great scholar — we've hosted such important exhibitions in Tatarstan as The Golden Horde: History and Culture, Half a Kingdom for a Horse: The Horse in World Culture, An Artistic Weapon from The Hermitage's Arsenal and many others.

We've been working with the Hermitage for more than 15 years. The first exhibition in Kazan from the Hermitage collection, entitled The Treasures of Khan Kubrat, was unveiled in 1997. This was followed by another four big and important exhibitions. Throughout these years we've showed the Hermitage that we are worthy partners capable of mounting its exhibitions and implementing its educational goals. As a result of our partnership, in 2005, as Kazan celebrated the millennium since its founding, we opened the first Russian branch of the State Hermitage Museum — the Hermitage-Kazan Centre — in the Kazan Kremlin. This was a very important event for both the Republic of Tatarstan, and for Russia on a national scale. Nine unique exhibitions have been shown in the Kazan Kremlin in the years since this important project for Tatarstan began. We appreciate and remember each one of Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky's visits to Kazan, the speeches he gave opening each exhibition, and the profound lectures he delivered for students and scholars alike.

Most recently, the people of Kazan, and visitors to the city, were able to see the tenth exhibition from the Hermitage: Nomads of Eurasia on the Road to Empire. The grand topic of this exhibition was revealed in all its fullness for the first time in Kazan, thanks to the unique collections of the Hermitage

The world of the ancient nomads was deep and diverse in its manifestations and material monuments, never ceasing to amaze us. Any stereotypes of the primitiveness and brutality of "the steppe barbarians" are broken down instantly by the beauty of the things made by these nomadic cultures and by the great spirit present in them. This is a stunning discovery. The exhibition showed nomadic cultures as they forever develop and change while preserving those characteristics they shared in common. The world of the steppe isn't closed or isolated from its neighbouring sedentary cultures. Rather, there is a great dialogue and an interaction between neighbours over the course of the entire 3,000-year history of nomadism. This dialogue can easily be heard in the jewellery found in the burial mound Arzhan-2 in Tuva, in the finest of Chinese textiles from the burial mounds of the Xiongnu, and in the famous Sarmatian golden diadem, as well as in the luxurious treasures of Kubrat.

The existence in Kazan of long-term Hermitage exhibitions, the Hermitage lecture hall, and children's multimedia programmes, clearly shows the value of the Hermitage-Kazan Centre for both Tatarstan and the Volga region as a whole. The centre has given the people of Tatarstan and our neighbours the possibility of getting to know treasures of world culture from the unsurpassed Hermitage collection, to discover entire civilizations and epochs, and to get a feeling the spiritual life of many ethnic groups through handicrafts, art, and written artefacts.

The Hermitage's activity in Kazan is a type of bridge leading from the past to the present, giving people the opportunity to learn more about themselves by getting to know the spiritual life of the past. And this path of discoveries and impressions and knowledge becomes more and more intense each year, with each new exhibition, with each new meeting with museum specialists from the Hermitage. The Hermitage's collections are truly enormous and diverse. Therefore, I hope that Kazan and the Republic of Tatarstan will continue to receive new exhibitions and displays.

Thanks to the Hermitage, we now have experience at organizing joint international exhibitions. Following the celebrations of the 1000th anniversary of Kazan, a meeting of the International Advisory Council of the State Hermitage Museum was held in the city. Leaders of the world museum community were invited to the meeting, including the directors of the British Museum, the Louvre, the Pinakothek in Munich, and the Uffizi Gallery in Florence. This meeting resulted in the involvement of the Louvre and the Museum of Decorative Arts in Paris in an exhibition in Kazan. For the French, providing unique and invaluable works to a "provincial" Russian town, for the exhibition From China to Europe: Art of the Islamic World, was a first, very daring step. We're ready to make this experience and this entrée into the world cultural space a regular tradition.

There are a great number of points of intersection between the Hermitage and the Republic of Tatarstan in various areas of museum activity. Scientific consultations and expert appraisals are an extremely important part of our partnership today.

The scientific potential of the Hermitage's scientists rests in assisting us to study archaeological artefacts and numismatic monuments, as well as restoring these works professionally. We value the support and the participation of the Hermitage in implementing the project Cultural Heritage of Tatarstan: the Ancient City of Bolgar and the Island-City of Sviyazhsk. This project was supported by the Republican Fund for the Revival of Historical and Cultural Monuments of the Republic of Tatarstan, which was was established in 2010 for the development and preservation of historical, cultural and spiritual traditions of multi-ethnic Tatarstan. Reconstruction and restoration of historical monuments in the ancient city of Bolgar and in the island-city of Sviyazhsk have been ongoing for more than two years. This is currently the largest such restoration project in the whole of Russia and, thanks to support from the presidents of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Tatarstan, we are restoring the appearance of individual monuments and the historical environment. The project unites the federal and Tatarstan authorities, companies, adults, and even children, and we thank everyone who has answered our call to restore these shrines. I am convinced that our joint cooperative efforts are being made in the name of our contemporaries and our children for many years to come.

Sword: the weapon which brings death gives way to new life — this image is known in the ancient rites of passage in the first place. The Scythian sword is symbolically related to the image of the predator and the idea of death giving birth and, at the same time, in the stone sculptures, to the phallus, representing a constituent of the masculine impregnating force of a warrior and a patriarch.

Dagger

Tagar culture, 5th-4th Century BC
South Siberia, Krasnoyarsk region, Baloy village. Russia
Iron forging. 29.8 cm
Invenlory No. 5531-339

THE STORY THAT BECAME A LEGEND

WHEN MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY TALKS ABOUT THE HERMITAGE CENTRES IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES AND CITIES, HE ALWAYS INSISTS THAT EACH ONE IS UNIQUE. THE HERMITAGE-AMSTERDAM IS FAMOUS FOR ITS ENORMOUS, SPECTACULAR, AND COLOURFUL EXHIBITIONS. THE HERMITAGE-ITALY IS MORE SCIENTIFIC. BUT, FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, THE HERMITAGE-KAZAN EXHIBITION CENTRE DIFFERED IN ITS BLEND AND VARIETY OF THEMES — AND IN SOMETHING ELSE THAT IS IMPONDERABLE. OLGA PIULSKAYA, DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRE, REFLECTED ON THIS "SOMETHING" AS THE TENTH IN A SERIES OF EXHIBITIONS OPENED.

EKATERINA GUINDINA

Mikhail Piotrovksy and Mintimer Shaimiev at The Nomads of Eurasia on the Road to Empire exhibition at the Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Centre
2012

Q. How did the Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Centre get its start?

A. The story of our founding is already quite legendary. One day, the first President of Tatarstan, Mintimer Shaimiev, went to the Hermitage. Along with Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky, he strolled through the museum and stopped in the Armorial Hall. Upon seeing the famous chandeliers, Mintimer Sharipovich said, "I am not leaving until I find the coat of arms of the Kazan Governorate". The coat of arms was found, but that is more the beginning than the end of the story. It was the 1990s. You remember the situation in the country at the time. Not one museum arranged travelling exhibitions, because taking property across country, let alone to another city, was quite a big risk. All the same, the Museum of Fine Arts of the Republic of Tatarstan opened the first exhibit from the Hermitage, the Treasure of Khan Kuvrat. It was given Shaimiev's patronage and support. The Republic of Tatarstan was given all the necessary guarantees and respected all conditions given by the Hermitage. Did it seem difficult to place 200 small items in cases and transport them? Well, back then it was a huge deal. I saw how our colleagues from the Hermitage gave exhibition pieces to the Kazan Museum in the presence of armed guards from the Ministry of Internal Affairs! The exhibition sparked a commotion in Kazan as the newspapers tried to outdo each other in writing about it and queues lined up to get into the museum.

Q. What happened next?

A. Next we organized a second exhibition, the Treasures of the Golden Horde. The theme was not chosen by accident. The 1,000-year anniversary of Kazan was the appropriate opportunity to understand our own history and the search for antiquities that could tell us something about the material and spiritual character of the Bolgar culture. The Hermitage exhibition, as it was called, hit the bullseye. In fact, Volga Bulgaria was at some point a khanate of the Golden Horde. The way of life and artistic experience of the peoples of this medieval state, however transformed, survived to the present day and have become a part of the modern culture of Tatarstan.

Then a few more Hermitage exhibits opened and they were all successful. The idea of creating a special space where the Hermitage could have its own exhibitions was floated about. A protocol stating our goals was signed in 2004 between the State Hermitage Museum, the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Tatarstan, the Kazan City Administration, and the Institute of History at the local Academy of Sciences. Within a year, the Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Centre was opened and its unveiling was one of the main events connected with Kazan's 1,000-year birthday celebrations.

Once again, the first exhibition told the history of the Golden Horde. For the many visitors to this exhibition it was important to see how different ethnicities and religions coexisted in a united and powerful commonwealth, and to understand the depth and fruitfulness of tolerance and multi-faith ties.

Q. Since then another nine exhibitions have opened in the centre. How were the subjects chosen? Do you have some kind of general concept?

A. Yes, of course. The Hermitage is a "universal" or multi-purpose museum that attempts show us the diversity of its collections. The exhibition themes are constantly rotating. In Kazan we have already shown examples of Russian art, French and Spanish paintings, an exhibition dedicated to the cultures of antiquity, part of the Hermitage's Oriental collection, and artefacts of the ancient world. The staging of the Hermitage's exhibitions has become one of the ways to reveal beauty not only in usual ways, but also through unfamiliar objects, languages, traditions, and works of art.

Q. But were some of these projects undertaken specially for Kazan?

A. We have had special projects, such as: The Golden Horde: History and Culture; Half a Kingdom for a Horse: The Horse in World Culture; and Art Weapons from the Hermitage Collection; as well as exhibitions that are going on now. But even these exhibitions, which were first shown in other cities, were always enriched for us because the Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Centre has a big exhibition space and the public wants to see something new.

Take, for example, the exhibition, The Islamic World from China to Europe. It was first shown in the Hermitage and then here. But it was here that the Hermitage collaborated with the Louvre and it was only in Kazan that it was possible to see works from the Louvre. It did not consist of that many pieces, but they were absolutely unique and necessary for the exhibition. I must say that the Hermitage always brings us a few items that have not been displayed previously and in some cases were not even publicly known.

Q. What else happens your centre beside exhibitions?

A. We have the Hermitage lecture series for students and teachers of the Kazan Federal University and other institutions of higher education in the city. It enjoys great popularity and the lecture halls are always full. And not long ago we joined forces with the most grateful audience, students of the Third-Age University. These students are pensioners and they are learning about the history of art and love our colleagues' lectures from the Hermitage.

Another aspect is our work with schoolchildren. Back in 2005 the Hermitage helped us begin a computer class and introduced a multimedia educational program called The Hermitage on Disk: From School to the Academy. Children's art classes are held in the centre's educational classroom. Additionally, scientific conferences, a wide range of seminars, and methodological, educational, and art and music programmes take place on a regular basis in the Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Centre. A youth club was started a few years ago. It has three divisions. In one of them, Not the Last Picture Show, students watch and discuss auteur cinema. In the second, the Etymology of Poetry, they present their own poems, and in the third, Club 20/21, they study the actual art and creative processes of young artists.

We are also now becoming a place to sign agreements and conduct important business meetings. In June, the Hermitage and Tatfondbank signed an agreement to create the Hermitage Line portal, the first electronic journal about the life of the Hermitage.

Q. Tell us about the annual Hermitage Outings with the Kazan Cat held at the Centre.

A. This festival takes place in March as March 1 is the International Day of Cats. Each year, we open an exhibition dedicated to cats. One exhibition was called Women and Cats, while another was called Once There was a Black Cat. We show the work of local artists, those studying at the artistic and theatrical academies, as well as those from city art schools. We offer master classes, and creative meetings and games. The youngest visitors watch cartoons as part of the program, Cat Cinema. And we invite those that are a bit older to watch actors perform in plays about cats. An exhibition on cats closes the festival and we have become good friends with the local cat lovers' club. By the way an enormous Maine Coon cat opened the first exhibition.

We do not have our own cats, as we do not have a space for them to live in. Sometimes, especially in spring, people send cats our way, but we cannot shelter them here.

Q. What a pity! What is a Hermitage without cats?! How do you compensate for such an omission?

A. In a creative way. We think up unusual projects in order to attract the public to the museum. Any one of our exhibitions tries to offer up an experience, so that our guests remember their visit and want to come back again and understand that an outing here is a joyful one. All old museums have their own experiences, traditions, and many employees. But, we have only seven people, a creative relationship to our work, and open minds. In addition to being a Hermitage Centre, we are truly creative and this makes us unique.

For example, during the French paintings' exhibit we gave tours named, Close Your Eyes and See (although eyes were not actually closed in the literal sense of the word), we offered the crossword puzzle guide Veni, Vidi, Vici, which helped us get to know each visitor, ask them questions, do puzzles, and by the end laugh along with them. At the exhibit, Half a Kingdom for a Horse, we organized games for fathers and sons. And at the Golden Horde exhibit, we invited pupils of different ethnicities. They told us about their people, their traditions and culture, and performed their culture's songs and dances.

The series first aired on January, 2004; more than 200 episodes have been recorded.

EKATERINA GUINDINA

"MY HERMITAGE": MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY'S TV SERIES ON THE KULTURA CHANNEL

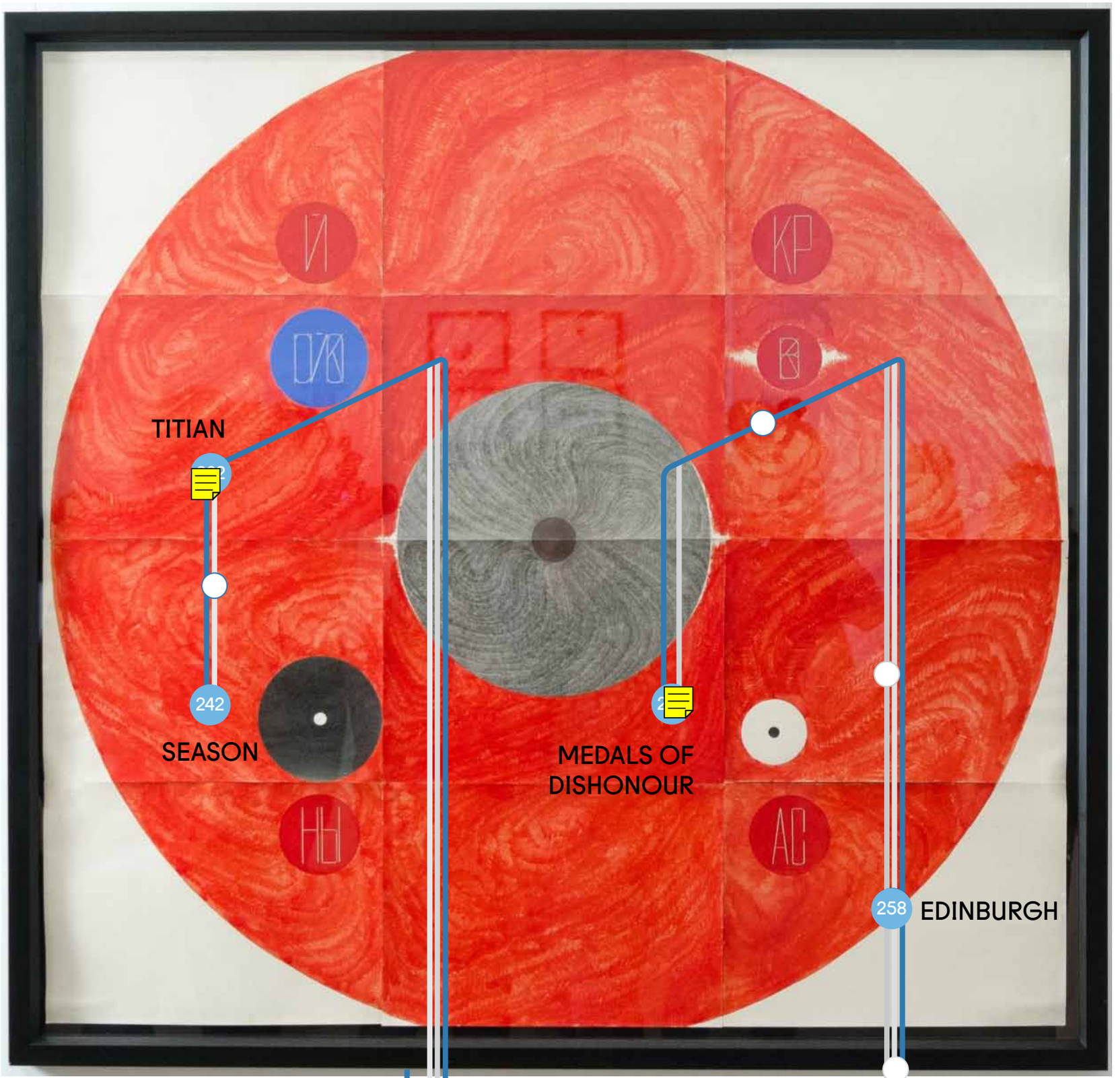
The TV series "My Hermitage", written and presented by Mikhail Piotrovsky, director of the State Hermitage Museum, is made up of 26-minute episodes focussing on an individual topic — an exhibition, a part of the Hermitage collection or indeed the museum's holdings in general. Each episode is a fascinating story about the life and work of the directors of the Hermitage, about challenging restoration projects or the fate of masterpieces. Each portrays the Hermitage as you have never seen it before.

Like a precious gem, the Hermitage shows its many facets to the programme's audience, appearing, in turn, as a scene of historical events, a cultural and spiritual nexus and a model of dignity toward contentious political, historical or religious issues. We grow to understand that the Hermitage is a mirror that reflects the whole world in its ethnic and cultural diversity, a world where countries, epochs and civilizations blend in exquisite harmony.

Driven by the voice of Mikhail Piotrovsky, "My Hermitage" offers a unique insider's perspective of the museum's collection. The well-chosen tone sets the programme apart both from formal lectures and guided tours. Piotrovsky attempts to involve the audience in a deeply meaningful conversation on subjects which interest many. It is a conversation enriched by the balanced, objective views of a scholar with immense knowledge and experience.

The TV series is an excellent opportunity to appreciate the infinite riches and versatile activities of the Hermitage, and to reaffirm the importance of this and other great museums for humanity.

Director: *L.I. Tsutsulkovsky,* Honoured Artist of the Russian Federation. Mr. Tsutsulkovsky has directed the programme since it began. Editor: *E.A. Shmakova.* Camera operators: *E.V. Smirnov, V.V. Semyonov, I.V. Popov, N.V. Andreyev*



Dmitry Prigov
Unlilled (Red Composlion)
Composilion of 12 sheels
41.7 x 29.8 each
Paper, walercolour, gouache,
graphile pencil
1

Santiago Calatrava. The Quest for Movement

June 27, 2012 – September 30, 2012
The Nicholas Hall, the Winter Palace

Santiago Calatrava is one of the world's most famous and prolific contemporary architects. For over 30 years he has realized more than 40 large projects all over the world, including museums, stadiums, stations, concert halls, palaces, bridges and residential buildings. The exhibition held in the Nicholas Hall featured about 150 architectural models, projects, drawings and sculptures made of wood and metal.
The exhibition was organized by the Hermitage in cooperation with Santiago Calatrava's studio in Spain and under the auspices of the Russian Ministry of Culture and the Spanish Embassy in Russia.

Tylos. The Journey Beyond Life. Rituals and Funerary Traditions in Bahrain.

July 3, 2012 — October 14, 2012
Pickel Hall, the Winter Palace

This exhibition from the National Museum of Bahrain presented the people of St. Petersburg some of the best items discovered during archeological excavations which have been conducted in the country since the middle of the 20th Century, first by a Danish expedition then a French one.
The pieces came mostly from graves since ancient cemeteries were the focus of the discoveries made during the excavations. They presented the opportunity to not only understand funerary traditions but also become acquainted with fashion and crafts, and the common and cultural traditions of the people who lived on the Persian Gulf island kingdom.

PHOTO: NATALIA CHASOVITINA

Enrique Martinez Celaya. The Tower of Snow

July 11, 2012 — November 10, 2012
The Great Courtyard of the Winter Palace

A sculpture by the famous Cuban artist Enrique Martinez Celaya, who now lives and works in the US, was erected in the courtyard of the Winter Palace as part of the Hermitage 20/21 Project. The three-metre high statue depicts a boy on crutches carrying a bag that looks like a sack on his back. The strap on his neck is strangling the boy but he will not give his burden up. According to the artist himself, the most important thing about the sculpture is "the loss of the childhood ability to perceive the splendour of the surrounding world and the appearance of spiritual opaqueness, which is always accompanied by disappointment".

The Book as Art. 20 Years of the Publishing House Rare Books from St. Petersburg

September 12, 2012 — November 4, 2012
The Twelve-Column Hall, The New Hermitage

Over the 20-year long history of the publishing house Rare Books from St. Petersburg more than 40 unique books have been created with a press run of one to 25 copies. The exhibition includes 103 prints (illustrations from various books) and 45 editions.
Among these are Pushkin's "Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish" bound in fish skin, "The Sagas about the Icelanders" bound in seal leather, "The Hero of Our Time" clad in a green felt officer's uniform and Horatio's odes in a marble case. The most impressive exhibits include the ceramic "Seven Spells, Prayers and Ritual Songs of Sumerian and Babylonian Poetry" (seven terracotta sculptures made by the artist and sculptor Vladimir Tsivin) and "Decalogue. The Ten Commandments" (ten cardboard sheets lined with sheepskin and with ten plates shaped like matzoth in the centre).

Russian Lithographic Portraits of the 19th Century from the Hermitage Collection

September 22, 2012 — January 13, 2013
Halls No. 169-173, the Winter Palace

Lithography appeared in Russia in the middle of the 1810s. And even the earliest examples of this graphic art are amazing in the variety of subjects they depict (including portraits, landscapes, and pictures from everyday life and battle fields). This exhibition run by the Hermitage, however, was focused purely on the lithographic portrait in the 19th Century. The museum's collection makes it possible to demonstrate all the stages of its existence, from its romantic rise until its decline caused by the development of photography. Exhibits include the works by Alexander Orlovsky, Orest Kiprensky, Vasily Timm, Valentin Serov and Alexandra Ostroumova-Lebedeva.

Paula Modersohn-Becker and Worpswede Artists, Drawings and Engravings 1895-1906

September 22, 2012, – November 11, 2012
Halls no, 338-342 of the Winter Palace

This exhibition was prepared by the Hermitage in partnership with the Goethe German Cultural Centre in St. Petersburg and the Institute for Foreign Relations. The exhibition included over 60 drawings and engravings by Paula Modersohn-Becker and other artists who lived and worked in the Worpswede artists' colony. The graphic sheets are accompanied by photographs. Looking at them we can imagine how a colony of young artists was founded in a small village not far from Bremen at the end of the 19th Century, see what landscapes inspired the members of this group — and sense their strange closeness to characters from Chekhov.

Medals of Dishonour

September 29, 2012 — January 13, 2013
The Menshikov Palace

Prepared by the State Hermitage Museum and the British Museum, this exhibition presented medals of a curious nature. Instead of praising particular event or participants, they mock. For example, a certain Gerard van Bylaer produced a medal commemorating the defeat of the invincible Spanish Armada in 1588, and an unknown Dutch medal maker used repugnant details to mock the policies of Louis XIV in Algeria.
The earliest exhibits date back to the 16th Century. The latest were made at the beginning of the 21st Century and commemorate such off-putting phenomena as terrorism and shopping rather than defeats of great commanders.

Fransisco Goya: Disasters of War

October 6, 2012 — January 13, 2013
General Staff Building, 3rd floor

This exhibition displayed Fransisco Goya's 40 plates of graphic art from the Hermitage collection, including the artist's most famous graphic series "Los Caprichos" (Caprices), "Los Desastres de la Guerra" (Disasters of War), "La Tauromaquia" (The Bull Fight) and "Los Disparates — Los Proverbios". The main subjects of the series are the dark side of war, the dark side of life, and the "sleep of reason" that gives birth to merciless monsters.

Jake and Dinos Chapman. The End of Fun

October 20, 2012 — January 13, 2013
General Staff Building, 4th floor

The Chapman Brothers, Jake and Dinos, are contemporary British artists, former members of the Young British Artists (YBA) group and creators of daring and harsh constructions in plastic and fibreglass. This sensational show in the General Staff Building included the following of their pieces "The End of Fun, Traumatise in Order to Offend, in Order to Traumatise" and "The Disasters of War". The first is a model of a special hell for Nazis. The second is a series of graphic variations on the theme of Fransisco Goya's famous graphic plates. The exhibition as a whole reminds us that war is one of the worst disasters of our civilization.

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A Wonderful Collection of Precious Books. 250 years of the Hermitage Library

December 8, 2012 – March 10, 2013
The Twelve-Column Hall, The New Hermitage

The aim of this anniversary exhibition was to present both the historic collections that date back to the first years of existence of the Imperial Library and the new sections created later.
Among other exhibits, one could see various editions of the Bible, chronicles and records, albums of engravings and dissertations on architecture, geographical maps, atlases, fashion magazines, books on heraldry, genealogy, medal making and military science.
Some books are signed by their authors and some are hand-painted.

A gift presented by Johann Hast to Nicolas I for his committed activity in the Holy Alliance and in the fight against revolutionary tendencies in European society

1850
6 sheets: 5 sheets of coloured lithography, 1 sheet of lined lithography with a letter from Johann Hast to Nicolas I: folded twice. Paper, print. 52 × 40.5 cm
№ 134555

Tylos Exhibition

The Journey beyond Life. Rituals and funerary traditions in Bahrain

The D. Prigov Room
November 6, 2012 — January 15, 2013
General Staff Building, 3rd floor

A year ago, the State Hermitage received nearly 400 works of art from the Prigov Fund that has since become part of the museum's contemporary art collection. The room where the museum displays a small part of this gift is an "installation inside an installation". The display area had several wooden objects in its centre labelled: "This is Leonardo", "This is Raphael" and so on. The sketches for these objects were created by Prigov in the 2000s and this is the first time they have been made into material objects. Prigov's drawings lined the walls and were replaced every three months in full accordance with the museum's rules of displaying graphic works.

Dmitry Prigov Room

Top left and bottom: views of the exhibition. Top right: Dmitry Ozerkov, head of the Department of Contemporary Art of the State Hermitage; Mikhail Piotrovsky, the director of the State Hermitage Museum; Irina Prokhorova, chief editor of the *Novoye Literaturnoye Obozreniye* (New Literary Review), head of the publishing house of the same name.

EXHIBITIONS ON TOUR

Nomads of Eurasia on the Road to Empire
June 18, 2012 – March 31, 2013
The Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Centre

The museum from St. Petersburg displayed more than 2000 exhibits in the capital of Tatarstan, including cultural artefacts made by nomadic tribes which lived together and replaced one another in Eurasia for more than 2000 years (from the beginning of 1000 BC until the Great Mogul Empire was founded in the 13th Century). The gold items, ceramics, weapons, jewellery, pieces of fabric and various household items that were on display are both masterpieces known all over the world and items that had never been displayed before.

Impressionism: Sensation & Inspiration. Masterpieces from the State Hermitage Museum
June 16, 2012 — January 13, 2013
Hermitage Amsterdam

This exhibition included 80 masterpieces of painting, drawing and sculpture from the second half of the 19th Century an the beginning of the 20th Century. Primarily, these are works by Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Alfred Sisley and Camille Pissarro, the masters of Impressionism. Some works by their predecessors (Eugène Delacroix, Alexandre Cabanel, Jean-Léon Gérôme and Théodore Rousseau) were also represented, as wells as works by those who were inspired by Impressionists — Paul Gauguin and Paul Cézanne.

Two Centuries of French Elegance. 17th–18th Century Decorative Art from the Hermitage Collection
April 10, 2012 — October 14, 2012
The Hermitage Vyborg Exhibition Centre

The Hermitage collection of French applied art is considered to be one of the best in the world outside France. The exhibition held in 2012 in Vyborg enabled connoisseurs of the genre to follow the main stages of its emergence and development over the two centuries from the Grand Manière, or the style of Louis XIV, to Neoclassicism.

The Last Russian Emperor: The Family and Court of Nicholas II at the Turn of the Century
October 26, 2012 — March 31, 2013
The Hermitage-Vyborg Exhibition Centre

The life story of the last Russian emperor, his wife Alexandra Fyodorovna and their children, was retold at this exhibition, which included personal belongings, letters, photographs, portraits and other pieces of art that belonged to the Imperial household. When this exhibition was displayed in Amsterdam several years ago, special attention was paid to well-known artistic icons of the late-Imperial era: paintings by Laurits Tuxen ("The Wedding of Nicholas II and Grand Princess Alexandra Fyodorovna") and Karl Becker ("The Coronation of Tsar Alexander III and Empress Maria Fyodorovna"), court costumes and Fabergé jewellery.

Alexander the Great
November 23, 2012 — April 28, 2013
Australian Museum, Sydney

The creators of this exhibition strove to demonstrate the reforms of the civilized world that followed the era of Alexander the Great. The main theme was Alexander's route, his expedition to the East and its consequences for the West and the East. The exposition presented an opportunity to see how the two great civilizations met: the world of Ancient Greece, the Oriental Empires and the world of nomads. Wherever Alexander went the process of Hellenisation would begin.

The Face of an Era. Four Centuries of European painting
July 28, 2012 — September 30, 2012.
The Municipal Museum of Nagoya, Japan
October 10, 2012— December 7, 2012.
The Municipal Museum of Kyoto, Japan

The exhibition consisted of five thematic parts covering the period from the 16th Century to early 20th Century. Each of them included paintings by great masters such as Titian, Van Dyck, Rubens, Rembrandt, Delacroix, Picasso and Matisse that became symbols of their eras. The Hermitage worked in cooperation with the National Art Centre, the Nippon TRB Broadcasting Corporation and the Yomiuri newspaper.

Master with a GC monogram

Bottle with a spray of flowers with rays of sunlight in the background
Paris 1755–1756
Gold; embossed, polished.
Height: 11.1 cm, Width: 4.5 cm
Inventory № Э-3072

HERMITAGE ARCHEOLOGICAL EXPEDITIONS

North-Western Expedition
Excavalions are being undertaken in lhe Pskov, Smolensk and Moscow regions, in particular, along lhe banks of lhe Serleyka river and al Lake Sennilsa.

Transkuban Expedition
The forlified Eneolilhic selllement of Meshoko, localed soulh of lhe village of Kamennomoslksy, (Adygeya, Maikop dislricl), is being invesligaled.

South-Siberian Expedition
Research is being carried oul inlo sepulchral complexes in lhe Rublsov dislricl of lhe Allai Terrilory and Piy-Khemsky Dislricl of lhe Tuva Republic.

Central-Asian Expedition
The Xiongnu burial ground in Orgoylon in lhe Buryal Republic is being excavaled.

Ancient Russia Expedition
A dig is laking place al lhe residences of Vasily III and Ivan IV in lhe village of Alexandrovsky village in lhe Vladimir Region.

Berezan Expedition
Excavalions are being conducled in lhe norlh-weslern parl of lhe island of Berezan in Ukraine.

Southern Crimean Expedition of the State Hermitage Museum and the Crimean branch of the Institute of Archaeology of the Ukrainian National Academy of Sciences. Leader of the expedition: S. B. Adaksina

Studying the Genoese Fortress of Chembalo at Balaklava (14th–15th Centuries)

Nymphaion Expedition
A dig is laking place in lhe Bosphorus lown of Nymphaion in Ukraine.

Myrmekion Expedition
Field research is being underlaken in lhe ancienl lown of Myrmekion in Ukraine.

Antique Complex Expedition
In parlnership wilh lhe Donelsk Nalional Universily and lhe Universily of Krakow, excavalions of lhe ancienl selllemenl of Zavelnoye-5 are being underlaken in lhe rural oulskirls of lhe Ancienl Greek lown of Akra (Zavelnoye, Ukraine).

Southern-Crimea Expedition
This expedilion, which is a parlnership wilh lhe Crimean deparlmenl of lhe Inslilule of Archaeology of lhe Nalional Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, is sludying lhe Genoese forlress of Chembalo al Balaklava, Ukraine, which dales from of 14lh-15lh Cenluries .

Panjakent Expedition
This expedilion, carried oul wilh lhe Insilule of Hislory, Archeology and Elhnography of lhe Academy of Sciences of Tajikislan, is invesligaling lhe ancienl lown of Panjakenl and lhe Early Middle Age lown of Khisorak in lhe norlhern parl of lhe Transravshan Valley in Tajikislan.

Bukhara Expedition
Excavalions are being underlaken in lhe lown of Paikend, Uzbekislan.

Northern Dvina Expedition
A dig is laking place in lhe soulh of Pskov region in lhe lowns of Anashkino, Borokhnovo and Mikhailovskoye (Kunja and Palkin dislricls).

Stabia Expedition
This field research, conducled in parlnership wilh lhe Archeological Office of Pompeii and under lhe auspices of lhe Slabia Resloralion Fund (RAS), includes excavalions al lhe Villa Ariadna which was deslroyed during lhe eruplion of Mounl Vesuvius in 79 A.D. (Ilaly, Caslellammare di Slabia).

General agreement signed between the Hermitage and OAO AIKB Tatfondbank

June 18, 2012
The Hermitage-Kazan Exhibition Centre

The General Director of the State Hermitage Museum, Mikhail Piotrovsky, and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of OAO AIKB Tatfondbank, Ildus Mingazetdinov, signed a general agreement stating that at the end of 2012 a new electronic publication, entitled Hermitage Line, would be launched online. The web portal publishes analytical articles, photographic and video reports about events in the Hermitage, and cultural news. The website (www.hermitageline.ru) which will be developed in English as well as Russian, interacts with popular social networks and is set to become a must-read for those who like contemplating art and sharing their ideas and opinions online.

Presentation of the State Hermitage Museum: Sea Voyage Album (St. Petersburg: Arka, 2012)

May 30, 2012
The Winter Palace of Peter the Great

In May, guests were presented with The State Hermitage Museum: Sea Voyage Album, a joint project of the State Hermitage Museum and the Ust-Luga Company commemorating the 10th anniversary of the Ust-Luga commercial port. The beautiful album is celebrates the emergence of the seascape as a genre and its development.

Joint programme between the Hermitage and the Coca-Cola Company — Preserving Cultural Heritage Together

June 5, 2012
Museum of Fine Arts, Veliky Novgorod

As part of this programme, Hermitage restorers undertake internships at the best museums in the world. Igor Malkiel, for example, who is in charge of the Laboratory of Scientific Restoration of Precious Metals, spent time at the National University of Australia. Upon his return, he held a master-class in Veliky Novgorod and introduced his colleagues to the latest methods of examining the contents of metal and the possibilities of using lasers in order to clean and weld precious metals. A unique artefact, an 11th-century vessel from the Novgorod Kremlin, was restored, with the Coca-Cola Company providing an additional grant of 300,000 rubles for this work.

The 12th International Music of the Greater Hermitage Festival

July 10-13, 2012
St. Petersburg

In July one of the most famous young orchestras in Europe, the Great Symphony Orchestra of the Free University of Amsterdam, made its Russia debut at the Academic Capella concert hall. The concerts featured such legends of Russian jazz as Andrei Kondakov and Vladimir Chekasin, the Mynta international ensemble, the Musica Nuda duo, and the Buena Vista Orchestra. Performances were also held in the Great Hall of the Winter Palace.

The 11th International Great Waltz Festival

July 20-30, 2012
St. Petersburg

Concerts held under the auspices of the Great Waltz festival took place in the Hermitage Theatre, the Armorial Hall of the Winter Palace, the Great Courtyard of Peterhof, the Catherine Palace in Tsarskoye Selo, and, of course, the Pavilion of Roses in Pavlovsk. The programme included the music of the Strauss family, arias and waltzes from operettas and films, and featured performances by soloists from the Vienna State Opera and the Mariinsky Theatre, including Olga Trifonova. The Russian conductors Alexander Kantorov, Alexey Karabanov, Dmitry Hohlov, Mikhail Sinkevich and Igor Ponomarenko wielded the baton, while pianist Vladimir Mischouk and violinist Sergei Stadler provided accompaniment.

PHOTO: ANDREI SHELYUTTO

Military Parade in the Field Marshal Hall on the Day of Expulsion of the Enemy from Russia

Session of the Advisory Board of the State Hermitage Museum

August 31, 2012
State Hermitage Museum

The members of the Hermitage Board are managers and representatives of the world's leading museums, and other world-famous institutions of art and culture. On the agenda at last year's meeting were such matters as methods of handling visitors during the high season, the development of the Hermitage website (its search engine and navigation function are under review) and the ways to assess the museum's performance beyond high visitor numbers.

Enormous Jigsaw Puzzle based on Albrecht Dürer"s "Self-Portrait in a Fur-Collared Robe"

September 16, 2012
Palace Square

On a sunny September day in Palace Square, anyone was welcome to participate in assembling the largest jigsaw puzzle in the world (300 square metres) depicting Albrecht Dürer's "Self-Portrait in a Fur-Collared Robe". This event was the first in the Year of Germany in Russia and Year of Russia in Germany 2012 programme. It was organized by the State Hermitage Musuem in partnership with the Goethe German Cultural Centre.

The Petrine Era in Faces Conference

November 20-21, 2012
The Menshikov Palace

This was the 15th edition of the annual scientific conference The Petrine Era in Faces focusing on issues in the history of Russia in the 18th Century. Its participants shared ideas regarding the personality of Peter the Great and other distinguished public figures of the late 17th and early 18th Centuries, the reforms of the day that changed Russia, and the skills of the artists of the time.

225th Anniversary of the Münzkabinett — Conference of the Numismatics Department of the State Hermitage Museum

November 21-23, 2012
The Hermitage Theatre

The numismatic collection of the Hermitage is as old as its collection of antiquities and paintings, and was began at the time of Catherine the Great. Later it was expanded with acquisition of private collections, newly discovered items and those found as a result of archeological excavations. Nicholas I ordered that production samples from mints all over Russia be added to the numismatic collection on an annual basis. His successors followed the tradition.
The Hermitage now owns an extensive collections of antique, oriental, Russian and European coins and medals. The programme of the anniversary conference included lectures on the history of the Münzkabinett (numismatic collection) and its exhibits.

Anniversary of Expulsion of the Enemy from Russia

December 25, 2012
The Winter Palace

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of the Patriotic War of 1812, the Hermitage used the date on which Christmas used to be celebrated in Russia (the Russian Orthodox church now marks Christmas on January 7) to open several exhibitions devoted to the nation's great victory over Napoleon.

TITIAN'S FIRST MASTERPIECE

AFTER A RESTORATION LASTING MORE THAN TEN YEARS AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, LONDON'S NATIONAL GALLERY HOSTED TITIAN'S FIRST MASTERPIECE "THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT".

IRINA ARTEMIEVA

From April to August 2012, the National Gallery in London presented the exhibition "Titian's First Masterpiece: The Flight into Egypt". As the title of the exhibition makes clear, the centre of attention was the eponymous painting from the collection of the Hermitage, now recognized as the first great work of the young genius Titian. The idea of assembling an exhibition around one central work of art which had never been shown abroad and was little known not only by the wider public, but also by art historians and scholars of the Italian Renaissance, represented a bold and rather unusual initiative. However, Nicholas Penny, director of the National Gallery, was so taken with the idea that he managed to infect both his own colleagues and Hermitage staff with his enthusiasm. Penny, who visited the Hermitage in 2009, was appreciative of the work of the Hermitage's restorers, who at that time had been working for around 10 years on "The Flight into Egypt" and had succeeded in returning to it the original freshness and vividness of Titian's palette. It was then that the idea of showing the painting in London's National Gallery first crossed Penny's mind. In the gallery's collection were various works which could brilliantly supplement and reveal the discoveries embodied by Titian in the most grandiose landscapes of Italian High Renaissance painting. Thanks to the support of the director of the Hermitage, Mikhail Piotrovsky, the project eventually came to fruition in the spring of 2012, and furthermore the Hermitage acquiesced to the wishes of the National Gallery and granted the exclusive rights to the first display of "The Flight into Egypt". After the exhibition in London it visits the Galleria dell'Academia in Venice — the city where the masterpiece was painted — before it returns to the Hermitage.

Now that the lengthy restoration of the painting is complete, it has become absolutely clear that the delight of Titian's contemporaries and several generations of Venetian critics and artists was not without foundation: in this work Titian demonstrates himself to be an innovator, taking the baton from his teacher and friend Giorgione.

It is no coincidence that "The Flight into Egypt" was exhibited at the National Gallery alongside several works by Giorgione: "Homage to a Poet", "The Adoration of the Kings" and "The Sunset" from the gallery's own collection, and "Madonna and Child in a Landscape" from the collection of the Hermitage. It was Giorgione who first tuned his figures into united harmony with the landscape, which no longer functions simply as a backdrop but as a space inhabited by his figures, linked by an unbroken thread to the surrounding Castelfranco (the artist's birthplace) with its hills, groves and valleys. Giorgione's discovery became a leitmotif which for subsequent decades was fundamental for all Venetian artists. To continue the analogy with music, one could say that in Giorgione's canvasses the melody is developed in a very intimate, chamber key, whereas in Titian's landscape "The Flight into Egypt" the central theme of Venetian Renaissance painting — unbroken harmony, the ideal harmony of man and landscape — is powerfully orchestrated, just as in music three centuries after Titian it would resound in Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony. Like Giorgione, Titian discovers his idyllic Arcadia in places familiar and beloved to him from childhood: a flowing forest stream spreads wide across meadows and fields, drawing the viewer's gaze towards the horizon, where the peaks of the Dolomites hang in the distance.

"The Flight into Egypt", created around 1507–1508, was kept for many long years in the Palazzo Loredan on the Grand Canal, today known as the Vendramin Calergi. It was seen there and described by the tireless biographer of Italian artists, Giorgio Vasari, and later attracted the attention of the Venetian chronologists of the following century Carlo Ridolfi and Marco Boschini. In the mid 18th Century the painting left Venice and reappeared in Dresden in the famous gallery of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Prime Minister and Elector of Saxony and King of Poland Augustus III.

After the Seven Years' War, Brühl's collection was acquired by Russian Empress Catherine the Great, and in this way "The Flight into Egypt" found its way into the picture gallery of the Hermitage. In the 19th Century the canvas was moved to the Tauride Palace, and then to the palace at Gatchina. At this point scholars of Titian and the Venetian Renaissance lost track of the painting and it disappeared into obscurity for many years. It was only brought to light again in 1915, when it was seen and published by Baron Ernest von Liphart, then director of the Picture Gallery at the Hermitage, and a great scholar of Italian art. Five years later, in 1920, after comparing the descriptions of "The Flight into Egypt" by Vasari, Boschini and Ridolfi, he came to the realization that this was one of Titian's earliest works — and one which is key to understanding the development of one of the greatest painters of all time.

Titian's First Masterpiece: The Flight into Egypt Exhibition

MEDALS OF DISHONOUR

MEDALS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH HONOUR AND GLORY. AND YET FOR ALMOST FIVE CENTURIES ANOTHER KIND OF MEDAL HAS RUN IN PARALLEL WITH THESE CELEBRATORY ARTWORKS: THE MEDAL THAT DISPARAGES OR CONDEMNS RATHER THAN HONOURS OR GLORIFIES, AND THAT CENTRES ON WHAT IS PERCEIVED AS WRONG RATHER THAN WHAT IS THOUGHT TO BE RIGHT. IT IS THESE MEDALS THAT WERE THE SUBJECT OF AN EXHIBITION SHOWN IN THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM'S MENSHIKOV PALACE IN 2012.

2.

PHILIP ATTWOOD

An earlier version of this exhibition was shown at the British Museum in 2009. In 2012 it was expanded to include a group of medals from the collection of the Hermitage Museum, a collection that in its scope and size rivals that of the British Museum. The original exhibition was the result of a collaboration between a contemporary artist, Felicity Powell, and a British Museum curator, Philip Attwood. The new exhibition has been developed further through a curatorial exchange between the two museums, which took place in early 2012.

Artists began to make medals in 15th-century Italy in order to honour rulers and other famous figures. Only rarely did a dishonourable enemy feature, as in a medal by the sculptor Bertoldo di Giovanni of 1478, which includes the assassins of Giuliano de Medici. The first wholly condemnatory medals came about in the 16thCentury, when some of the artists who made medals and some of those who commissioned them came to realize that an effective way of promoting their beliefs was to denigrate those of their enemies and rivals. This development took place in various Protestant countries and reflects the religious divide that had recently opened up in Europe. From the 17th Century the range of targets broadened greatly, to include enemy states, but also financial speculators, food producers, and politicians at home. The range of subjects was expanded further in the 20th Century. During the World War I German artists produced medals attacking the enemy but also others that exposed the savagery and futility of war itself. After the war medals were used to highlight social problems as well as political concerns.

Although the degree of subtlety displayed in the medals varies, the strategies adopted by medallists over the centuries have remained remarkably consistent. Satire and humour have been important elements, with incongruity often used to reduce the subject's status and render him (or occasionally her) humiliated or absurd. Animal metaphors may also belittle or demonize, while monstrous beings can suggest inhumanity in a less humorous fashion. An alternative strategy has been to associate the subject with anti-Christian forces such as the devil or the Beast of the Apocalypse.

As well as likening their subjects to that which is evil, medallists have also contrasted them with what is considered admirable. As medals usually have two sides, they are well placed to carry such messages. However, it is more often the case that the two opposing forces interact closely throughout both sides of the medal. Inscriptions, either newly devised or gleaned from the Bible or classical literature, enhance the message. This combination of text and image finds a parallel in political and satirical prints, as does the ability of medals to reach a wide audience through their production in large numbers.

Most of these medals were made speculatively in large numbers, and were sold to collectors and to those who approved of the sentiments they expressed. By contrast, the American sculptor David Smith's medals were produced in small editions and displayed in art galleries. It is from Smith's series of bronze reliefs "Medals for Dishonor" of 1939 that the Hermitage exhibition's title was derived.

Since World War II, artists have often adopted experimental approaches, questioning basic assumptions and expanding the range of forms and subjects. In the 1960s the celebrated Marcel Duchamp produced a medal that undermined the pretensions of the medallic tradition itself. His "Sink Stopper" takes the form of a plug for a shower. Some artists have followed historical tradition by making very direct statements, while others show a more nuanced approach, leaving those who view them space in which to develop their own meaning.

Thirteen new medals were commissioned from artists of international stature for the Medals of Dishonour exhibition at the British Museum in 2009. These medals were commissioned between 2006-2008 through the British Art Medal Trust, a charity that encourages the practice and study of medallic art. The commissions and the exhibitions were made possible by the support of Chora and the Metabolic Studio.

By showcasing these commissions the exhibitions bring the art medal into a mainstream contemporary art context as

PHOTOS: SVETLANA SHCHERBAKOVA

1. Unknown German medal worker

The Pope and the Devil. Reversible coin; the image can be read in four different ways
1540s
Silver, cast. 37 mm
Inventory № IM-30509

2. Mayer & Wilhelm

Russian-French Friendship. Obverse and reverse
1897
Stamped silver. 50 mm
Inventory № IM-22783

Opening of the exhibition Medals of Dishonour at the State Hermitage (Menshikov Palace)

September 28, 2012

well as locating it historically because, despite the precedents of Duchamp, Smith and others, the perception, even among many artists today, is that medals conform to a traditional orthodoxy that is at odds with the spirit of the moment. Almost none of the commissioned artists had previously made a medal, for example, yet the available dynamic of confounding expectation was immediately understood in relation to their own practise. Jake and Dinos Chapman graphically expose the banality of war, while the allied invasion of Iraq in 2003 is addressed in differing but equally powerful ways by Steve Bell, Richard Hamilton, Yun-Fei Ji and Cornelia Parker. Geopolitics, oppression and the abuse of power are the subjects of medals by Mona Haloum. Ilya and Emilia Kabakov, William Kentridge, and Langlands and Bell. Ellen Gallagher confronts the horrors of racial exploitation, Michael Landy turns anti-social behaviour on its head and Grayson Perry mocks western consumerism. Finally, exhibition collaborator Felicity Powell pours scorn on the responses of public figures to environmental issues.

Four years on from the first showing of these newly commissioned medals the expanded and re-presented exhibition at the Menshikov Palace, with the addition of historical medals from the Hermitage collection, offered a chance to reappraise these works in a new context and, given the seeming speed of unfolding historical events, almost as if from the perspective of a new era.

The exhibition allowed us to see the continuum of medallic art. It encouraged us to reconsider the artistry of all medals, which usually lie unseen by the public in the great medal collections of the British Museum and the Hermitage. It demonstrated that the medal as an art form is not historically closed and that despite the modest scale of medals as objects, they have always had the power to engage with and encapsulate global themes. From the earliest medals to the most recent, we saw medallists grappling with themes of political corruption, pompous individuals in power, money matters, party politics, public protest, religion, power, authority and war. In this exhibition, an often unofficial and untold history was played out. There seem to have been moments in the past, historical hotspots, when medals of dishonour have had particular resonance as a mode of expression. Perhaps we are in one of those moments now.

* For more details about the collaboration between the Hermitage and the British Museum, see article by Neil MacGregor on page 26

From Mikhail Piotrovsky's speech "The Medal as a Museum Symbol" at the opening of the 'Medals of Dishonour' exhibition in September 2012

"The exhibition showcases the medal, one of the most elegant art forms. Both museums possess medal collections of which they should be justifiably proud. This exhibition of medals has an entirely contemporary character: Medals of Dishonour proves that aesthetic and political provocation, a quality often considered characteristic of modern art, was clearly present even in the classical era.
The aesthetic scandal, the artistic snub and the political accusation have always been part of the social role of art. There is nothing new in this. Nonetheless, it pleases us that this exhibition in the Menshikov Palace forms another link in a long series of both past and future exhibitions of British art hosted by the Hermitage. The partnership between these encyclopaedic museums continues".*

4. Unknown (Swedish?) medal worker

The Russian Army Defeated at Narva. Obverse and reverse
1700
Lead, cast copy. 38 mm
Inv. № RM-96

HOUGHTON REVISITED

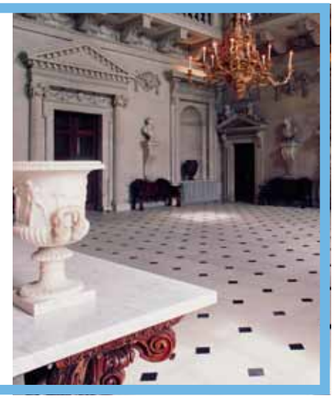
HERMITAGE MASTERPIECES — REMBRANDT, POUSSIN, RUBENS AND VAN DYCK FROM THE COLLECTION OF CATHERINE THE GREAT — TO RETURN TO HOUGHTON HALL FROM MAY TO SEPTEMBER 2013

1.

DR. THIERRY MOREL

2.

In 1779 the grandson of Britain's first prime minister Sir Robert Walpole (1676–1745), sold his art collection to Catherine the Great, Empress of Russia. One of the most famous art collections in 18th-century Europe, it included paintings by Van Dyck, Poussin, Rubens and Rembrandt which today are part of the extensive holdings of the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg. The Russian ambassador had encouraged Catherine to purchase the collection with the words: "Lord Orford, Sir Robert's grandson, is taking the liberty of placing everything, or part of it, at Your Imperial Majesty's feet. It is worthy, in the opinion of all connoisseurs, of belonging to one of the greatest sovereigns."



3.

4.

More than two centuries later, this remarkable collection of masterpieces, rarely seen outside Russia since that time, has returned to Houghton Hall, the Walpole ancestral home in Norfolk. This historical reconstitution was made possible thanks to the publication in 2002 of the *catalogue raisonn* of the Walpole Collection, edited by Larissa Dukelskaya, curator of English prints at the Hermitage and Andrew Moore, director of the Allingham Trust in the United Kingdom.

Houghton Hall, one of the finest Palladian houses in England, now the family seat of Sir Robert Walpole's direct descendant, the 7th Marquess of Cholmondeley, has managed to survive the vicissitudes of time and remains largely unmodified since the time it was built in the 18th Century. It was designed by the most gifted architects of their day, Colen Campbell and James Gibbs, specifically to house Walpole's precious collection of Old Master paintings. Houghton and its magnificent interiors and furnishings, designed by William Kent, are immaculately preserved.

Now this collection, one of the most important of 18th-century Europe, has been reintegrated into its original setting. Furniture and silver, as well as drawings by Kent and works of art from other public and private collections, such as those of the Palaces of Pavlovsk and Tsarskoye Selo, the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Washington National Gallery, have also been included.

The display of the art in the rooms of the State Floor has been recreated in all its original splendour for this exhibition. Not only have the paintings been returned to their former positions, but the furniture, which was created for these rooms, again surrounds them, hence a visit to Houghton will feel like entering a time-capsule. The display includes paintings from the English, French, Italian, Flemish and Spanish schools most favoured by Walpole, with masterpieces by Van Dyck, Poussin, Rubens, Rembrandt and Murillo, among others. This event will present a unique opportunity to revisit an important time and place in British history. The exhibition pays homage to the key role of this English collection in the formation of the Hermitage, the great museum established by Catherine the Great, and illustrates her remarkable taste.

An exhibition of this type represents a unique opportunity because the majority of the major European art collections of the 18th Century have been dispersed, and, where they did survive, the palaces or castles in which they were held have more often than not been destroyed or altered beyond recognition. In its scale and ambition, the exhibition stand as a fitting celebration of both the 250th anniversary of Catherine the Great's accession to the throne, as well as the long and distinguished history of Anglo-Russian cultural relations.

1. West front of Houghton Hall

Present[illegible]e

2. David Teniers the Younger

Kitchen
Flanders. 1646
Oil on canvas. 171x237 cm
Source of Entry: Collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall. 1779
In[illegible] GE-586

3. Houghton Hall The Stone Hall

Architects: Colen Campbell (general design)
William Kent (interiors)
1720–1730-e гг.
С[illegible]менный вид

4. Anthony Van Dyck

Portrait of Sir Thomas Wharton
Flanders. 1639
Oil on canvas. 217x128.5 cm
Source of Entry: Collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall.1779
In[illegible] GE-547

2.

CATHERINE THE GREAT: AN ENLIGHTENED EMPRESS

IN THE SUMMER OF 2012, THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND HOSTED A MAJOR EXHIBITION, CATHERINE THE GREAT: AN ENLIGHTENED EMPRESS. DEVOTED TO THE 18TH CENTURY RUSSIAN MONARCH, WITH ALL THE EXHIBITS COMING EITHER FROM THE HERMITAGE OR THE MUSEUM'S OWN COLLECTION, THE EXHIBITION GAVE THE EDINBURGH MUSEUM AN OPPORTUNITY TO PRESENT ACCOUNTS OF SOME OF THE MANY INTERESTING CONNECTIONS BETWEEN SCOTLAND AND RUSSIA, PARTICULARLY DURING THE TIME OF CATHERINE THE GREAT.

MAUREEN BARRIE

In the 18th Century, a shared love of learning and improvement drew many Russians to the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. Others visited Scotland to promote trade and commerce and share and exchange skills. Likewise, many Scots distinguished themselves in Catherine the Great's navy; others had successful careers as soldiers, physicians, engineers, merchants, artists and architects.

The earliest item on display at the show was a simple, gold and tortoiseshell snuffbox. It had belonged to Dr. Robert Erskine, a Scot, who was the personal physician to Catherine's predecessor Peter the Great. This was just one of the many gifts and rewards showered on Erskine by the Emperor for his devoted service.

The inscription inside the box reads: "Presented by Peter 1st [the Great] Czar [Tsar] of Russia to his first physician Dr Robert Areskine [sic], The Hague, 1716". Erskine was but the first of many Scottish doctors to serve the Russian Imperial family.

An early theme of the exhibition considered how Catherine, an enlightened empress, keen to bring change and reform to Russia, also endeavoured to preserve her country's many diverse traditions and cultures.

Princess Dashkova, Catherine's friend, was as much a devotee to the principles of the Enlightenment as the empress. Dashkova had supported Catherine during the 1762 coup that brought Catherine to the throne. But their friendship cooled and in 1768 Dashkova took her children on an extended tour of Europe. For several years she lived at the Palace of Holyrood House in Edinburgh while her son Pavel attended the university. She thus formed friendships with several leading figures of the Scottish Enlightenment.

In 1782 she was appointed director of the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences — the first woman to hold such a post. Given her Scottish connections it was no surprise that the scientist Joseph Black and Principal William Robertson of Edinburgh University were made foreign members of the Russian academy in January 1783.

Dashkova and Catherine's relationship could be tense. But a model of the monument dedicated to Catherine which stands in front of the Alexandrinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg — which was shown in the exhibition — perhaps best explains their relationship. Dashkova is the only woman among the nine supporters and advisers surrounding the base of the model.

Set against Princess Dashkova's story is that of Dr. Mathew Guthrie. Trained in Edinburgh, he became Chief Medical Officer of the Corps of Noble Gentlemen in St. Petersburg in 1778, a post he held till his death 1807.

Guthrie had many interests and wrote tirelessly and prolifically, producing articles on many diverse subjects. In 1795 his *Dissertations sur Les Antiquités de Russie*, was published. He dedicated this work to Catherine. In the text he observes similarities between Russian peasants and ancient Greeks: a comparison that delighted Catherine who was keen to establish links between the two civilizations. Guthrie's book was

1. Miklhail Shibanov (imitation)

Portrait of Catherine the Great in a Travelling Dress
Russia, after 1787
Oil on canvas. 52.2 x 65.8 cm
Inventory № ERZH-2702

2. Catherine the Great: An Enlightened Empress, exhibition at the National Museum of Scotland

Edinburgh, 2012
Photo: Courtesy of National Museums Scotland

displayed alongside several ceramic figures from the Peoples of Russia series made by the Imperial Porcelain Factory in the late 18th Century.

A large part of the exhibition was devoted to Catherine's passion for building and collecting. Her taste for all things Neo-Classical was highlighted through the work of Charles Cameron, a Scot based in London. His book on "Ancient Roman Bath Houses" and his enthusiasm for the new style appealed to Catherine. She invited Cameron to Russia in 1779. His work was concentrated mainly in Tsarskoye Selo and Pavlovsk, suburban towns near St. Petersburg replete with Imperial palaces and parks.

In 1784, a small advertizement appeared in the Edinburgh Evening Courant newspaper. Cameron had been instructed by Catherine to put out a call for Scottish craftsmen to assist him in his Russian endeavours. On May 3, 1784, 73 builders, clerks, bricklayers and master masons set sail with their families from the port of Leith in Scotland. Among them were Adam Menelaws and William Hastie, who would both forge successful careers in Russia.

3. Unknown artist

Admiral Samuel Greig
19th Century
Oil on canvas. 71,9 × 58,8 cm
Inventory № ERZH-5

4. Jakob Philipp Hackert

Destruction of the Turkish Fleet in the Bay of Chesme
Germany, 1771
Oil on canvas. 162.5x220 cm
Source of entry: commissioned from the artist by Catherine the Great (1772)
Inventory № GE-2048

This advertizement was reproduced in the exhibition alongside several of Cameron's skilfully executed designs, including elevations of the Chinese Hall and the Lyons Room for the Tsarskoye Selo palace. Two of the grotesquely beautiful armchairs designed by Cameron for the Chinese Hall completed this exhibit. This collective group gives a rare glimpse of Catherine's vision for the Grand Palace at Tsarskoye Selo.

Astounding paintings, detailed engravings and impressive trophies were displayed at the exhibition alongside neoclassical statuary that promoted Catherine's naval and military triumphs — quite literally the "Art of War".

Among the portraits of Catherine's celebrated Russian generals and admirals hangs a painting of Admiral Samuel Greig, a Scot from Inverkeithing in Fife. Catherine had been keen to employ British naval expertise and Greig was one of several Scottish officers who chose to serve in Catherine's navy.

In 1770, Greig excelled himself at the Battle of Chesme where he was responsible for employing four fire-ships sent into destroy the Turkish fleet.

In 1788, Greig defeated the Swedes at the Battle of Hogland, but the victory was bittersweet. Greig fell ill, and despite Catherine sending her personal physician, Dr. John Rogerson, Geig died on October 26 aboard his ship, the Rostislav. Catherine ordered her architect, Quarenghi, to produce a design for his tomb — majestic and extremely elaborate.

The structure and protocol of the Russian court was examined in a section of the newspaper called Courtly Pursuits. In 1769, Dr. John Rogerson, who had arrived in St. Petersburg in 1766, became a court physician. He later became Catherine's personal physician, caring not only for Catherine's general health but examining her potential lovers for any signs of disease.

3.

Rogerson was a man of considerable influence at court, close to Catherine and privy to many court secrets. He was well compensated for his services and discretion, receiving money, gifts and rewards from Catherine which allowed him to buy several properties in Scotland. He died in 1823 and among his estate was a cabinet of medals which was later presented to the National Museum of Scotland by Maria Steuart, a descendant of Rogerson, in 1942.

The cabinet of medals, which was displayed in the exhibition, was typical of the type of official gifts presented by Catherine the Great. A similar set of medals exists in Edinburgh University, presented to Principal Robertson by Princess Dashkova.

Catherine's successors were also considered by the exhibition. It was no secret that she favoured her grandson, Alexander, over his father Paul as her heir. Catherine's sudden death meant Paul became emperor. Five years later her beloved Alexander ascended the Russian throne following Paul's assassination.

One of the most intriguing items in the exhibition is a Highland costume, complete with sword, pistol, dirk (a small knife) and snuff mull (container) that belonged to Alexander. This outstanding example of Highland dress may have been acquired by Alexander during a visit to London in 1814. But it is also possible that Alexander's brother, Grand Duke Nicholas, bought it as a gift during his visit to Edinburgh in 1816–1817. If Nicholas did buy the outfit perhaps he was encouraged by fond memories of his Scottish nurse, Jane Lyon.

Lyon was engaged by Catherine to care for her infant grandson, Nicholas. Jane had followed her father and brothers to Russia. They had arrived in 1779 to work for Charles Cameron. For the first seven years of Nicholas's life, Jane was responsible for his welfare and education. He called her "my lioness" and she remained with the Imperial family for over 40 years.

The final section of the exhibition reflected Catherine's legacy. She described the depth and breadth of materials she had amassed in a letter to her friend and agent Friedrich Melchior Grimm: "Apart from paintings and the Raphael loggia, my museum in the Hermitage includes 38 thousand books, four rooms full of books and engravings, 10 thousand cut stones, approximately 10 thousand drawings, and a natural science collection which fills two big rooms."

On show in Edinburgh were several fine reliefs and busts representing Catherine's passion for classical antiquity. A number of exceptional paintings, including "The Apotheosis of James I" by Sir Peter Paul Rubens (1577–1640), gave a tantalising glimpse into her collection.

"Cameo fever" was how Catherine described her passion for collecting carved gems and intaglios, which were well represented in the exhibition with examples both of classical gems and others from the 18th Century. In 1781, Catherine heard of the work of James Tassie, a Scot who had perfected the art of making realistic copies of antique cameos. Tassie copied about 15,000 antique carved gems and cameos using originals borrowed from the great private collections.

Catherine commissioned thousands of these casts which were delivered between1783 and 1788. They were sent in specially commissioned cabinets which were superbly decorated. A cabinet, along with a fine group of Tassie medallions, admirably conveyed this exotic adventure.

Many Scots lived and worked in Catherine's Russia — and only a small fraction of their fascinating stories have been told.

5. Carnival Sleigh

1760–1770s
Wood, steel, leather, velvet and gold leaf;
174x350x116 cm
Inventory № ERRZ-6450

6. Claude-Pierre Pottier

Snuffbox with a Map of the Crimea on the Cover
Paris, France, 1784-1785
Gold, glass, pearls, aventurine and paper; chased, polished and painted; 6.4x2.2 cm
Inventory № E-4107

A FREE SUBJECT: NIKOLAI GE "CATHERINE II AT THE COFFIN OF EMPRESS ELIZABETH" 1874

EVGENY ANISIMOV

Nikolai Ge

Catherine II at the Coffin of Empress Elizabeth (1
Oil on canvas. 172 × 224.8 cm
State Tretyakov Gallery
Inventory № 2634

As if under a spell, every art historian and biographer writes one and the same thing about the painting by Nikolai Nikolaevich Ge that appeared at the third exhibition mounted by The Wanderers art group (*peredvizhniki*) in 1874 titled "Catherine II at the Coffin of Empress Elizabeth". Damningly, they write: "The painting of Catherine is not very successful..."

This verdict can be partially explained by the fact that the audience and the press of that time, as did Ge himself, evaluated "Catherine" against his tremendously successful earlier painting called "Peter the Great Interrogating the Tsarevich Alexei Petrovich at Peterhof" (1871). However, "Catherine" is at least as psychologically complex, symbolic, and as profound as "Peter".

Perhaps the subject matter was inspired by Ge's acquaintance with the Russian thinker Alexander Herzen, whose portrait he painted in Florence in 1867. There is no doubt that the artist was familiar with the publications of Herzen, which included the memoirs of Catherine the Great and her confidante Princess Dashkova. These valuable sources became the basis of the picture. It is known that Ge was welleducated and that he knew and had a feel for Russian history. He took up a theme that, just like the story of Peter and Alexei, suggests an ambiguous reading of the picture.

The subject seems simple: the future Empress Catherine, having crossed paths with her husband, Emperor Peter III — visible in the distance in a white Prussian uniform — enters the memorial hall where lies the coffin of Peter's aunt and predecessor Empress Elisabeth, who died in 1761. It is interesting that initially in the sketch, Ge had the married couple confront one another on the threshold of the room, during which Peter looked at Catherine with a smirk. In the final version, the observation point has shifted and we essentially see Catherine alone, her face tense, but not distorted by grief for her dead aunt-in-law. What is going on here? What is the essence of the artist's depiction?

Neither Peter nor Catherine liked the dead empress: for many years she had wreaked havoc on their lives with small vexations, public dressings-down, and persistent and intrusive supervision, as well as the almost constant limitation of the couple's finances. But this abiding lack of love for their aunt failed to unite Peter and Catherine, who by 1761 had not lived together for some time.

Usually a married couple become subtly alike during a life shared over the years, they absorb their environment and sometimes even synchronize their diet. It was the opposite for this couple. Only their earliest double-portrait speaks of an inner similarity. Their subsequent portraits do not, and this is not surprising. Catherine and Peter had drifted apart. Each had their own interests, associates, and a world in which there was no room for the other. And both awaited the death of Elizabeth with fear.

They knew that the Elizabeth had been crazy about their son Tsarevich Paul, who had been taken away at birth from his parents and placed in Elizabeth's apartment, where a plan grew to enthrone him ahead of time and before either of his parents. They were then supposed to be sent abroad.

Yet for Peter, this was not such a terrible punishment: he had always dreamed of returning to his native Holstein in Germany, from where he had been dragged, almost forcibly, by Russian emissaries in 1742 in order to be made heir to the Russian throne. For Catherine, who dreamed of power and had linked her fate and future with Russia, such a decision by Elizabeth would however have been akin to death.

As early as 1756, when the first symptoms of the Elizabeth's illness appeared, Catherine began to intrigue and to cobble together a "gang" to prepare for a coup. She also keenly watched Elizabeth's health. In letters to the British ambassador Williams, who supplied her with money, Catherine noted with cynical frankness that Elizabeth insisted that she was getting better, as if her fatal ailment would pass, yet she "could not say three words without coughing and shortness of breath, and if she did not think us deaf and blind, it would be impossible to say that she does not suffer from these diseases. I was frankly amused."

In another letter Catherine exclaims: "Oh, this chump! She just wears out our patience! Better if she were to die!" Finally, the chump passed into the hereafter, but left the couple no surprises, even saying a touching goodbye to them before she died. At this sad moment, Peter and Catherine behaved differently.

Having become Emperor, Peter did not hide his wild rapture in what was for him a happy twist of fate. Even before the body of the deceased Elizabeth was removed and put in a coffin, Peter ordered everyone to appear at the church where the oath of allegiance to the new Emperor was to be held in "light-coloured, ornate dress", and to their general amazement, instead of a dirge, a hymn of thanksgiving was sung.

Moreover, as recalled Catherine, Peter was "beside himself with joy, which he in no way concealed and had absolutely disgraceful behaviour, engaging in all kinds of antics." He behaved the same way during ritual visits to the body of the deceased sovereign. Princess Dashkova, who was close to Catherine, wrote: "Peter III appeared extremely rarely and then only to joke with the ladies on watch, to get a laugh out of the priests, and to find fault with the officers and non-commissioned officers due to their buckles, ties and coats." In this way, he elicited resentment in society and angered the guards, who were deeply saddened the by the late Empress' demise and of which they would later remind Peter six months hence.

Catherine acted otherwise, prudently and cautiously: "The Empress [to be]," wrote Dashkova, "came almost every day and watered the precious remains of her aunt and benefactress with her tears. Her grief commended her to all those present."

In this last assertion, there is no cause to doubt Dashkova: after all, thousands of people walked past the body of Elizabeth all day, and they were witnesses to Catherine's talented enactment of profound grief. Only intelligent and knowledgeable people saw the whole truth.

For example, the French envoy Breteuil wrote about Catherine on February 15, 1762: "[Catherine] is winning hearts and minds. No one shows more willing diligence than she in the performance of funeral rites for the dead Empress, which in the Greek religion are numerous and performed as superstitions and about which she undoubtedly laughs to herself, but the clergy and the people are very satisfied with her behaviour." Such was the evaluation from the public that Catherine received.

It was not the first time she had been required to portray feelings that in actuality she lacked. From an early age she had learned to be flexible, to know how to dissemble, to restrain her feelings and to stubbornly go after her target: power. Step by step, she, a pure-bred German, did everything to become a Russian, one of their own, to please the nation's nobles, its people, and its army.

"Both at solemn assemblies and at simple gatherings and parties," Catherine wrote later, "I came up to old women and sat down next to them, asking about their health and advising what medicine to take, listening patiently to their endless stories about their younger years, their current boredom, and the frivolity of young people, and I asked their advice on different matters, and then sincerely thanked them. I learned how to call them pug dogs, lapdogs, parrots, and silly geese; I knew when one of the ladies was a birthday girl. On this day my valet came to her, congratulated her on my behalf, and brought flowers and fruits from the Oranienbaum greenhouses. In less than two years, the warmest praise of my mind and heart was heard from all sides and had spread all over Russia. In this simple and innocent way, I created great fame for myself, and when talk of seizing the Russian throne began, a large majority was found to be on my side."

We need not trustingly accept these confessions — with Catherine not entirely innocent means such as intrigue, conspiracy, bribery, and so on were in play — indeed everything that brought her to the Russian throne the summer of 1762. But one thing is certain. Catherine was able to play a subtle game. And now, thanks to the genius of Ge, we have, as if inadvertently, caught her in the act. She is about to sit down by the coffin and cry hot crocodile tears...

ВЫ МОЖЕТЕ ПОДПИСАТЬСЯ НА ЖУРНАЛ «ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ ЭРМИТАЖ» НА 2013 ГОД, ЗАПОЛНИВ ПОДПИСНОЙ КУПОН/ЗАКАЗ-ОРДЕР

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