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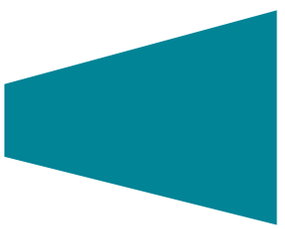

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MUSEUM 15/24 is a joint project led by the “Hermitage Amsterdam” Foundation (the Netherlands), “Hermitage XXI Century” Foundation (St Petersburg, Russia) and Outsider Art Museum (the Netherlands). The objectives of this innovative program are to develop new methods of engaging young people aged 15-24 in the museum practices and to facilitate knowledge and best practices sharing between museums, educational and scientific institutions of the Russian Federation and the Netherlands.

The project is a part of Creative Twinning, international program run by the Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO) and funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands.

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"Royal Curls", butterfly on a stem.
"№17" "Frutillaire impériale"
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1. Photo: © Oleg Zotov, Ida Ruchina/ Chukotka. An Epic Saga. Introduction
Yarar — the rhythm of the heart of the tundra

2. Photo: © Oleg Zotov, Ida Ruchina/ Chukotka. An Epic Saga. Introduction
Bereginya

3. Sheet with an imprint of an engraving from the album «Cabinet de Duc de Mortemart»

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In the stream of time

MUSEUM 15 24

PHOTO: DMITRY SIROTKIN © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

BUTTERFLIES OF THE PANDEMIC

MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY
DIRECTOR OF THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM
21 NOVEMBER 2020

Every culture somehow includes the idea that the catastrophes that befall it are a form of divine punishment. We can react to this in different ways. If the focus is placed on the tragedy being God's will, acceptance is in order; if emphasis is placed on the punishment aspect, we should ask ourselves what the punishment is for, and attempt to set things right. This is a commendable way of withstanding the pandemic.

This new situation, which will remain with us for a long time, has demonstrated that even if there are no visitors a museum is still a museum, and must fulfil all its purposes, from preservation to exhibition. The latter function is still possible under these conditions thanks to the latest technologies. It has become apparent to everyone that the number of physical visitors is not the main criterion for success, and that culture cannot exist without the government funding it as a duty and not an act of goodwill. It turns out that queues and crowds can be avoided by pre-registration, having timed sessions and pre-planned routes, and displaying a greater measure of care for the individual visitor. There is now a new order, based on a system where the freedom of some does not limit the freedom of others. Museums all over the country have become examples of how to safely handle visitors, which, compared to what goes on in the street, looks quite good.

Visitors walk alone, taking their time with the exhibits. There are neither crowds nor the noise and cackling of tourists for whom the museum is just a ticked box in their schedule. Having a broad online presence has made it possible to significantly broaden and deepen visitors' understanding of the museum; they can see the rooms that they did not have time to during their visit, have a look inside restoration workshops and storage areas, meet with dozens of Hermitage employees, learn about museum science and museum engineering, and "listen in" on academic and restoration discussions. Prepared visitors get more pleasure from the museum, and subsequently, stimulated by their actual visit, often expand their knowledge further afterwards. The sixty-eight million visitors to the Hermitage's social networks is a good indicator of their popularity.

Of course there are difficulties and inconveniences that are sometimes an annoyance to both guests and hosts. But everyone tries to keep in mind that the most important thing is maintaining the proper storage conditions for the collections entrusted to us by our ancestors, the materialised memory of generations.

Under these new conditions, the first thing to disappear is the museum's own income. Supporting it it becomes the concern of the state and patrons of art, who must gradually reorient their concerns to basic storage needs and creating conditions to allow those who cannot afford a museum visit to access the collection.

Much is changing in the world, but the most important things that must be preserved are the mutual affection between the museum and its audience, the lofty tasks of education, and the dialogue between cultures. If this is kept in mind, irritation and fear give way to a benevolent satisfaction.

In recent months, the Hermitage has tried to build a new system of relationships and document its features. With the active participation of the museum community, the Ministry of Culture created new criteria for accountability and state obligations, as well as new rules for inventory and storage. The relationship with state authorities became at the same time better defined and better in general.

At a time when people and nations are seeking to withdraw and isolate themselves from each other, museums are emphasising their role as a bridge. In the short interval between waves of the pandemic, the Hermitage has confirmed its global role by organising new exhibitions in the Hermitage Amsterdam Centre (*Tsars and Knights*), Hermitage-Kazan (*Catherine the Great*), Hermitage-Vyborg (*Nature in Porcelain*), and Hermitage-Siberia in Omsk (*The Portrait in World Art*). "Hermitage Days" were held in Vladivostok, Kaluga, Kaliningrad, Samara, and Yekaterinburg. Numerous online meetings and excursions have been organised by Friends of the Hermitage Societies in Great Britain, the Netherlands, Italy, USA, Israel, and China.

The role of museums as medicine for the soul has become an important driver of exhibition activity. The huge exhibition by Chinese master Zhang Huan has become a manifesto of the many emotions associated with the pandemic. The installation by Alexander Sokurov, *Rembrandt. A Dedication*, offered a harsh interpretation of *The Return of the Prodigal Son*. Bronzino's amazing painting (the recently restored *The Flaying of Marsyas*) reminds us once again that human arrogance is punishable. The vast exhibition *The Iron Age. Europe without Borders* was a triumph of scholarly cooperation between museums in Russia and Germany in an area that is complex and delicate even in the absence of a pandemic. The new Fabergé exhibition sums up the Hermitage's more than twenty years of focused activity in conceptualising the great tradition of jewellery, presenting a host of new masterpieces from several new private museums. And elegant sculptures from the Art Deco period along with graceful drawings by Salvador Dali delight the eye.

In the coming days, the Hermitage will open the complex and rather philosophical exhibition *After Raphael*, display antiquities from Oman, the "country of incense", and exhibit a spectacular collection of photographs of celebrities by the famous Cecil Beaton.

The Hermitage "forum" has moved entirely online and has become an important element of social and cultural life. It is somewhat of a trendsetter in the sphere of culturally-focused communication on social networks, and has become an example of the juxtaposition of orderly, continued work and "feast in the time of plague".

This issue of the magazine is an example of such orderly work; it exists, as it were, outside the pandemic, but at the same time is fully focused on it. It too is a bridge, medicine, and joyous communication. Much of the content is associated with the *Peoples of Russia* series of porcelain sculptures. This theme, quite interesting in itself, harmonises well with the *Catherine the Great* exhibition that has opened at Hermitage-Kazan, dedicated to the Empress' 1767 visit to Kazan. It was then at this "gate to Asia" that she saw the diversity and richness of the types of peoples that inhabited Russia. Her delight in this found its embodiment in the fashion of the theme of the diversity of people and customs of our country, which has now become a permanent fixture. The exhibition in Kazan is also indirectly dedicated to the memory of Gavrila Derzhavin, a native of Kazan, who described this visit in verse, particularly emphasising the peaceful nature of Catherine's journey in contrast to Ivan's and Peter's. The exhibition also reminds us in passing that Derzhavin's famous Homeric phrase "The Fatherland and [its] smoke is sweet and pleasant to us" was dedicated to Kazan. This was transformed by Griboyedov into the statement "And the smoke of the fatherland is sweet and pleasant to us", which in turn became Tyutchev's bitter: "The smoke of the fatherland is sweet to smell!/Thus a former age, poetically, would speak./But ours forever seeks sunspots as well/And smothers the fatherland in smoke that reeks!"

Difficult times give rise to complex allusions. These allusions also feature in another remarkable project covered by this issue of the magazine. We adore the 15/24 Museum project in that it allows us to combine traditional museum culture with youth culture (ages 15-24) in unexpected ways. It is not just about attracting young people to the museum, but also about a dialogue between different cultures. The project held a very interesting event, which included the documentation of all the butterflies in the Hermitage and a themed excursion for "butterfly children". And here it is impossible not to recall the famous butterfly incident in the Ray Bradbury short story, where, by crushing a butterfly in the past, the future is changed dramatically. And of course we remember the romantic tale involving the Chinese sage Zhuang Zhou, who dreamed that he was a butterfly. When he awoke he was rather unsure of whether he had dreamed he was a butterfly or if he was indeed a butterfly dreaming that he was Zhuang Zhou. Lost in thought, the sage concluded: "So this is the transformation of things!"

Today the Hermitage is doing the work of safeguarding the fragile past in the most improbable circumstances, as well as making of it an opportunity for everyone to benefit and enjoy themselves -- philosophers and butterflies alike.

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Mikhail Piotrovsky
General Director
of the State Hermitage Museum

The revenue from the Fund is used to augment the Hermitage's museum collection. The last acquisition made with the Fund support was a unique collection of Western European art of the XI - XVII centuries

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TIEPOLO — VENICE IN THE NORTH

HELSINKI

17 SEPTEMBER 2020 — 10 JANUARY 2021
SINEBRYCHOFF ART MUSEUM

The year 2020 marks the 250th anniversary of the death of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo — a distinguished Venetian painter, the last universal master of Europe, and an artist in the Renaissance tradition. This exhibition, four years in the making, tells the story of how Tiepolo's talent was recognized far outside the borders of Italy, in Northern Europe.

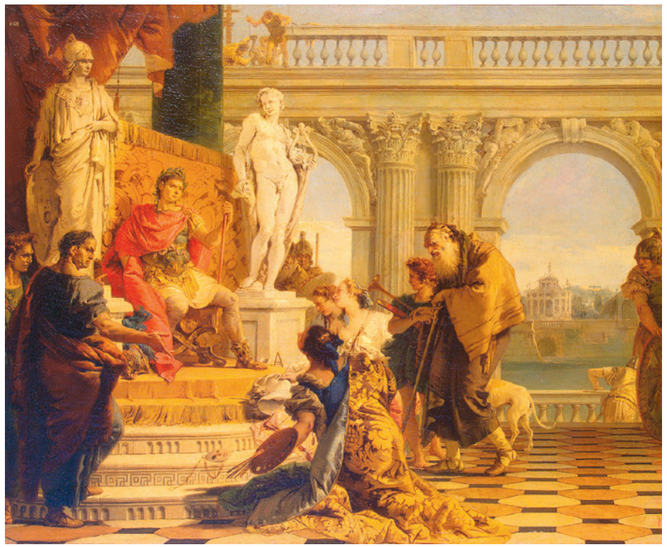
Interestingly, Russia played a crucial role in his fame. There is no country in Europe — with the exception of Spain where the artist worked for the last eight years of his life — that has amassed as many of Tiepolo's works, including monumental works, small easel paintings, and graphic art. Unfortunately, not all of them have survived or remained in Russia.

Yet many of Tiepolo's works that are now part of various collections all around the world have roots in Russia. Two small paintings from the Sinebrychoff Art Museum collection, *The Rape of the Sabine Women* and *The Greeks Sacking Troy*, are among those works with a Russian history.

The Greeks Sacking Troy is one of four works in a series by Giovanni Domenico Tiepolo, eldest son of Giovanni Battista. Two other pieces from this series — *The Building of the Trojan Horse* and *The Procession of the Trojan Horse into Troy* — have been provided by the National Gallery, London. In 1817 all three were sold when Niccolo Leonelli's collection was auctioned, and for the first time in over 200 years they are reunited at the Sinebrychoff Museum exhibition.

The majority of pieces on display belong to the Hermitage: four paintings and almost 40 works of graphic art.

The painting *Maecenas Presenting the Liberal Arts to Emperor Augustus* (1743) is one of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo's masterpieces. Bringing allegorical images and historical characters together in one scene was typical for 18th-century art. Gaius Maecenas, a Roman statesman during the reign of Emperor Augustus Caesar (61 BCE — 14 CE), was famous as a patron of scientists and artists. In Tiepolo's painting it is he who introduces the liberal arts — Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture — to the Emperor. Traditionally, and here as well, they are depicted as beautiful women. The figure of the blind old man Homer represents Poetry. The story is set against a background of classical Roman architecture. The light, radiant colours were selected so accurately that the entire scene appears sun-soaked. Tiepolo was a master of monumental painting, which is palpable when looking at this small easel piece and noticing the virtuoso effortlessness of his vigorous brushwork, the generalised forms, and the vastness of the space he created. The painting was commissioned from the artist in 1743 by Count Francesco Algarotti, a painting connoisseur, scholar, and writer, as a gift for Heinrich, Count von Brühl, Prime Minister at the court of Augustus III, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. The images of Emperor Augustus Caesar and Gaius Maecenas represent the Elector and his minister (a famous collector who was a patron of arts at the court of Saxony), respectively. In 1768 the painting was purchased as part of von Brühl's collection.



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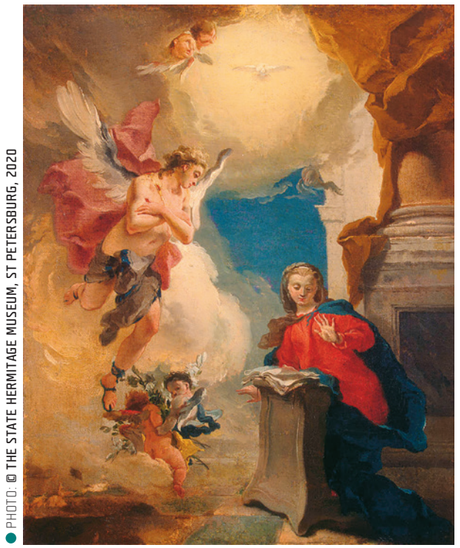
Giovanni Battista Tiepolo
Maecenas Presenting the Liberal Arts to Emperor Augustus
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-4

PHOTO © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Giovanni Battista Tiepolo
Cupids with Grapes (Allegory of Autumn)
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-5557



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Giovanni Battista Tiepolo
The Annunciation
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-4145

"The major part of the current Hermitage collection of paintings was amassed during the reign of Catherine the Great. No procurements made in Europe by American millionaires can compare to the attack that the Russian empress launched to acquire works of fine art. That being said, as a practical-minded woman who paid due regard to the vagaries of commerce and the ins and outs of the market, she was never stingy, but at the same time would never overpay. All of her purchases were neither excessively expensive nor disgracefully cheap. She was a smart and honest businesswoman. The response to Catherine the Great's purchases often resembled reactions to military victories or successful political moves. Catherine's teacher and rival Frederick the Great suffered an injury to his pride when she purchased Johann Gotzkowski's collection, for example. Another rival of Russia in the field of fine arts was Augustus III, who, along with his father, acquired the collection that would soon be housed in the glorious Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister (Old Masters Gallery) in Dresden. As for Augustus himself, his major rival in art collecting was his own Prime Minister — Heinrich, Count von Brühl, who with great mastery amassed a collection that rivalled the royal one and also carried an underlying meaning. After the owner's death, his heirs, for whom money was more important than prestige, gained control of the artworks. In 1769 the collection of Count von Brühl came into the possession of Catherine the Great. It was an important step in competing with the best collections of Europe. Von Brühl's collection contained many outstanding paintings, but perhaps the most symbolic was *Maecenas Presenting the Liberal Arts to Emperor Augustus* — a small-size masterpiece by Tiepolo, who mostly created monumental pieces of art. Behind the Emperor's terrace one can see what is clearly a Dresden landscape. Augustus Caesar is the Elector of Saxony and King of Poland. Maecenas is obviously Count von Brühl. But when the painting illustrating patronage of arts was moved to Russia, the ancient subject had to be interpreted in a different light. From then on, both Augustus Caesar and Maecenas were Catherine the Great." [1]

In *The Annunciation*, another painting by Tiepolo, one of his earliest works in the Hermitage collection, we can already see his characteristic free and dynamic manner, expressive choice of colour, elegance, and emotional intensity. The piece was acquired in 1924 from the collection of V. V. Durdin, Leningrad.

Tiepolo is considered the last great master of Baroque art. "The oeuvre of Giovanni Battista Tiepolo (1696–1770) marks the end of great Venetian painting and, strictly speaking, Italian painting in general... It would be wrong to see Tiepolo as the last Baroque painter vainly trying to create new art while embracing old ideas. It's more appropriate to say that he paved the way for new art while encapsulating the historical quintessence of the great Italian tradition. The art that followed proceeded from different, non-Italian premises." [2]

This is the first exhibition of the State Hermitage abroad after a long break. The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, the National Museum of Fine Arts (Stockholm), Stockholm University, the National Gallery of Denmark, and the Museo Correr in Venice have also provided pieces from their collections for this exhibition in Helsinki.

1 Mikhail Piotrovsky, *The Hermitage* (Moscow: SLOVO, 2003), p. 14
2 Giulio Carlo Argan, *The History of Italian Art* (Moscow: Raduga, 1999), vol. 2, pp. 196–197 (translated from the Russian)

VYBORG

IMAGES OF NATURE IN WORKS OF THE IMPERIAL PORCELAIN FACTORY FROM THE 18TH TO THE 21ST CENTURY

15 AUGUST — 10 DECEMBER 2020
HERMITAGE-VYBORG EXHIBITION CENTRE

Four chapters of the project — "Following Academic Lessons", "The Natural Element of Art Nouveau", "Nature in the Porcelain of the Leningrad Period", and "Prompted by Nature" — narrate how imagery of nature has developed and changed in porcelain art. The exhibition features more than 200 pieces produced at the Imperial Porcelain Factory, from the moment it was founded in 1744 to the present day. The pieces on display demonstrate how the imagery of nature has evolved in porcelain art and reflected the aesthetics of the era.

A complex system of aesthetic, spiritual, and philosophical assumptions manifests itself in art through the various stylistic movements that change with time. The vision of nature, whose imagery is formed within the framework of a particular style, changes as well. Styles of the so-called "fine arts" — architecture, painting, and sculpture — used to have a direct influence on the features of forms, ornaments, and narrative and figurative motifs used in the applied arts. Porcelain was no exception to this rule. Until the end of the 19th century, porcelain as an artistic phenomenon developed within the framework of the stylistic categories set by "fine art". As for the first porcelain manufactory in Russia, the Imperial Porcelain Factory was a court enterprise, and hence, from the day it was founded in 1744 it sought to align itself with the aesthetic preferences of its most distinguished clients. It was not before the turn of the 19th to the 20th century that this changed, when the Art Nouveau style managed to upend the hierarchy of art forms by placing a decorative ornamental line at the core of its language.

Porcelain is a precious, unique, and intriguing material. It can be a diplomatic gift, a piece of splendid tableware, or an endearing little trifle, such as a small box for storing artificial beauty marks or snuff.

In the eras of Baroque and Rococo, artists would actively use nature-inspired forms as part of their toolkits, which was also instrumental in provoking and guiding the changes that occurred in garden and park art.

In the 18th century, engravings that illustrated the encyclopaedias published at that time acted as important sources of inspiration for the decoration of various items. For instance, engravings made by famous French artist and bird watcher François-Nicolas Martinet were used to decorate the dessert pieces from the *Private Service* of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna of Russia (1750s–1760s). Porcelain plates with openwork edges, a teapot and lid, a bottle cooler, a cachepot, and a vase featuring images of birds are the oldest pieces on display. The colourful and meticulous illustrations executed for such publications were perfect at performing their two most important functions: "please the eye" and "further the argument".

During the reign of Catherine the Great, people's attitude towards nature and the world around them began to drift towards sentimentalism and romanticism. One of the last tableware sets executed in Rococo style was the *Hunting* service. Catherine the Great ordered it from the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory in 1766 and presented it as a gift to her favourite, Prince Grigory Orlov. It also served as a model for developing a porcelain production of her own. Even while she still reigned, supplementary pieces for the service were being produced at the Imperial Factory to expand the set and replace broken items. The factory thus had the opportunity to broaden the range of tableware forms it produced, and its artisans the opportunity to master their landscape painting skills. Each piece was decorated with scenes of hunting for deer, boar, or fowl, or with images illustrating the lives of the wild animals set against romantic landscapes.

Throughout its entire history hunting remained one of the favourite pastimes of the Russian imperial court. The only things that changed were the kind of hunting that was favoured over the others and the scope of their hunting trips and the feasts that accompanied them. In porcelain art, this theme was addressed by both painters and sculptors of the factory fairly often. For the Imperial Factory, in almost every single chapter of its history,

PHOTO © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Alarm. Vase
1951
Form design by Serafima Yakovleva (late 1930s), decoration by Ivan Riznich
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-С-2834

the goals, desires, preferences, and direct instructions from its major clients — the imperial family — were of paramount importance. The *Hunting* service, however, is rather unique: for a century, monarchs starting with Catherine the Great and ending with Alexander III continued to order supplementary pieces for it. During the reign of Nicholas I, for instance, the service consisted of two thousand pieces — most of which had been produced in Russia.

Ivan Riznich's compositional and painting skills manifested themselves fully in the design for the decoration of the *Predators* vase. On two opposite sides of the vase, he placed two close-up images of lynxes against a forest landscape: one is holding between its teeth a black grouse that it caught, while the other has itself become the prey, with its paw stuck in a trap. The artist managed to portray the animals' body movements and the physicality of the predators' fur and the bird's plumage in a very realistic way. The white porcelain background helped him create an image of a snow-covered forest in which wild beasts coexist in harmony until man interferes, inverting the natural order of their lives.

On each of the paired vases — *Alarm* and *Predators* — the decoration is in the form of one solid painted frieze covering the vase's body but leaving its upper part blank. Ivan Riznich would repeatedly turn to the standard forms and the ones easiest to produce when creating his unique painterly compositions. Such true-to-life large-scale pieces, remarkable in their simplicity and depth, provide convincing justification of the artist's reputation as the "extoller and connoisseur of the nature of the Russian North", and show that reproaches he occasionally received accusing him of naturalism were rather unfounded.

***Predators.* Vase**
Form design by Serafima Yakovleva (late 1930s), decoration by Ivan Riznich
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-С-2841

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

ST PETERSBURG

8 DECEMBER 2020 — 28 MARCH 2021
THE STATE HERMITAGE

THE WORLD IN THE HERMITAGE

AFTER RAPHAEL. 1520–2020

The year 2020 marks the 500th anniversary of the death of Raffaello Sanzio or Raffaello Santi (1483–1520), widely known as Raphael — one of the most famous and revered painters of the High Renaissance. For half a millennium, European artists would endlessly relate their art to the work of the "Divine" Raphael, admiring it, contradicting it, interpreting it, and ironising it. The exhibition *After Raphael.* 1520–2020 held at the State Hermitage (curated by Zoya Kuptsova and Vasily Uspensky) is dedicated to the influence Raphael has had over the last five hundred years.

The image of a line has been chosen as a central metaphor for this project (which is reflected in the Russian version of the exhibition's title — *Raphael's Line*). A line is a series of points that form one continuous whole, the embodiment of interconnectedness, tradition and dialogue. The chain of those who followed Raphael, bound by the ties of artistic succession, is here compared to a genealogical lineage — a line of descendants that can be traced back to a single ancestor. The story of Raphael's line is as complicated a story as any line of heredity: it was disconnected and reunited, it grew stronger and thinner, it intertwined and broke off. Conceiving of it as a whole and trying to understand its significance not only for art, but also for European culture in general, is one of the goals set by this exhibition.

The exhibition, displayed in the Neva Enfilade of the Winter Palace, will reflect multiple facets of the Renaissance genius' artistic legacy. The aforementioned line of succession will unite pieces created by Raphael, Giulio Romano, Parmigianino, Poussin, Rubens, Mengs, Ivanov, Venetsianov, Ingres, Corot, and Picasso provided by Russian and Western European museums. Parallels found between European and Russian schools, as well as sometimes unexpected juxtapositions of them, involve not only iconic works by the great citizen of Urbino and his famous successors, but also pieces of art from the Hermitage repositories that are unknown to both amateurs and specialists in the field, on display for the very first time. The main premiere in the exhibition will be the display of a group of Palatine murals in the middle of the conservation and restoration process, being cleared of all later over-paintings — a sacrament of sorts that the public never witnesses. The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue featuring articles written by researchers and museum curators: Sergei Androsov, Maria Garlova, Zoya Kuptsova, Tatyana Kustodieva, Alexey Lepork, Svetlana Murashkina, Natalia Serebryannaya, and Vasily Uspensky, as well as various media materials.

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Baloni, Pompeo Girolamo
Holy Family with Sts Elizabeth and John the Baptist
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-12

ST PETERSBURG

LUKE 15: 11–32. REMBRANDT. A DEDICATION. ALEXANDER SOKUROV

16 SEPTEMBER — 1 NOVEMBER 2020
THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM. GENERAL STAFF

PHOTO: ANNA MYSKOVA

The name of this exhibition refers to a passage from the Gospel according to St Luke (chapter 15, verses 11-32), better known as the Parable of the Prodigal Son. The story of all-forgiving fatherly love, narrated by Luke the Evangelist, has inspired artists for centuries. A symbol of the Hermitage, the painting *The Return of the Prodigal Son* by Rembrandt Harmenszoon van Rijn, is probably the most iconic and compelling rendition of the story in the history of art. Russian film director Alexander Sokurov created a multimedia installation inspired by the great painting, at the same time celebrating the great master who painted it.

Alexander Sokurov explores the Gospel parable of *the prodigal son* from vastly different angles, which are at times quite unexpected: "I do not want this project to be regarded as a Christian, religious metaphor or propaganda. I hope that all different types of people come to the exhibition. I would like to believe that everyone will find it familiar, understandable, and very dear to their hearts. This is not about an overthrowing of ideals, as if we had reduced Rembrandt's theme to a mundane level. Not at all. All great works of art, as far as I can judge, have an immense reserve of meaning."

"Today, there is no question that *The Return of the Prodigal Son* is the most important painting in the Hermitage. At one time, during the Soviet era, the most important painting was the *Madonna Litta*, a symbol of purity and beauty," explained Mikhail Piotrovsky, general director of the Hermitage and curator of the exhibition. "*The Prodigal Son* is an awesomely powerful work of art, in which the power of the artistry synergises with the powerful paradoxical and dialectical impact of the famous parable. It raises a host of questions to which there are no answers, nor can there be. With this stunning installation, the artist invites us to search for those impossible answers — to look the son in the face, to contemplate the mirror reflections of everything in the picture, to go up to the man who has stepped out of the picture frame and inspect his clothing. A fantastic tangle of meanings and emotional experiences takes *The Prodigal Son* far beyond the bounds of merely great art. That is what the device of combining cinematic montage and theatrical sets, of juxtaposing the tangible and the intangible, seeks to convey. The museum becomes a great teacher, capable of turning your life around. *The Prodigal Son* has changed many a life."

In rethinking the universally familiar story, Alexander Sokurov has built a unique space where every person will discover a meaning that previously eluded them. Sokurov's idea of transforming Rembrandt's painting *The Return of the Prodigal Son* into a multimedia installation would not have been feasible without young St Petersburg sculptors Vladimir Brodarsky and Yekaterina Pilnikova. "To me, the hardest part of translating painted images into 3D ones was rendering the facial expression and filling the form with emotion, so that the spectator feels what the father does," said sculptor Vladimir Brodarsky. "There is suffering in his face, but it is not simple suffering — it is a more complex feeling. We are not trying to reproduce ossified classical images or make tedious copies. We want to give a new perspective on Rembrandt. Sokurov is a genius director, and his language is entirely his own."

The audial accompaniment, composed by St Petersburg composer Andrey Sigle, enhances the unique feel of the Rembrandt installation with a symphony of faraway battles and cannonade, mixed with music performed by the Horn Orchestra of Russia.

The exhibition at the Hermitage is based on the artistic concept of the installation presented at the Russian Pavilion of the 58th Venice Biennale of Contemporary Art in 2019. The display in the White Hall is an expanded and modified version of the Venice Biennale project.

ST PETERSBURG

FABERGÉ, JEWELLER TO THE IMPERIAL COURT

25 NOVEMBER 2020 — 14 MARCH 2021
THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM

The Rothschild Faberge egg" — Egg Shaped Clock which Belonged to Baron Edward Rothschild House of Fabergé
Master: Perkhin, Michael
Clockmaker: Rode, Nikolay
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Э-18382

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

This exhibition features approximately 90 items executed by Peter Carl Fabergé's firm for his major clients: Emperors Alexander III and Nicholas II and Empresses Maria Feodorovna and Alexandra Feodorovna of Russia.

Fabergé began supplying the Russian court with jewellery in 1866. For 15 years, starting in 1869, he performed the duties of a restorer at the Treasure Gallery of the Imperial Hermitage for no compensation. He enjoyed the favour of the imperial family thanks to the jewelled pieces that he created for them, as well as his series of Easter eggs, a one-of-a-kind project in the history of jewelled items.

In 1882 the magazine *Niva* wrote: "Among jewellers, there is a person set to bring his craft back to the heights it once attained. We speak here of Fabergé, the famous Petersburg jeweller. Craving to understand the language of jewellery art and endow his pieces with a high artistic value, Mr Fabergé has turned to the classic example of beauty and artistry — Greece and its artefacts. He has had access to the source to draw upon: being a jeweller to the Imperial Hermitage, he was allowed to make copies of the best examples of Greek jewelled items one can find there…

Mr Fabergé has managed to recreate Greek art… As one can see, Mr Fabergé has initiated a new era in jewellery making. Let us therefore wish that his strivings to return the art that was once a part of the jeweller's trade meet with success. We hope that from now on, thanks to our famous jeweller, the main virtue of pieces of art in this field will lie not only in the precious gems, not only in the riches, but in their artistic form as well." [1]

This exhibition was organised by the State Hermitage in cooperation with the Fabergé Museum in Baden-Baden (Germany), the Russian National Museum (Moscow), and the Peterhof State Museum and Reserve.

1 _____ *Niva*, vol. 40, 1882, pp. 952–954.

ST PETERSBURG

DECORATIVE MINIMALISM. THE "THAW" IN SOVIET PORCELAIN FROM THE CHRISTMAS GIFT SERIES

DECEMBER, 26 2020 — APRIL, 4 2021
THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM,
RECESS OF THE EASTERN GALLERY OF THE WINTER PALACE

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

New Hairstyle. Statuette
1962
Form design by Sofya Velikhova
Decoration by Yelizaveta Lupanova
Porcelain; painting on ???
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. М3-С-15340

Contrast. Tea Service
1959
Design of the "Ellipse" form by Vladimir Semyonov (1958)
Decoration by Nina Pavlova
Porcelain; polychromatic overglaze painting, gilding
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. Nos. М3-С-5301, М3-С-5302, М3-С-5303, М3-С-5304, М3-С-5305, М3-С-5307, М3-С-5309, М3-С-5310

The Khrushchev Thaw was a time of significant changes in social consciousness and social life, which was, of course, reflected in art and culture. The "Modern Style" became the aesthetic that dominated the era. The style was characterised by simple forms, a focus on functionality, and economy in production. In porcelain, the "Thaw" manifested itself in many new models, new decoration themes, and an innovative artistic language that might be called "decorative minimalism".

Among the main themes for porcelain decoration of that period were abstract compositions, floral motifs, landscapes, new construction projects, animalier art, and genre painting. This exhibition presents works from the late 1950s and 1960s by artists and sculptors of the Lomonosov Porcelain Factory (Leningrad): Anna Leporskaya, Eduard Krimmer, Vladimir Semenov, Nina Slavina, Vladimir Gorodetsky, Larisa Grigoryeva, Viktor Zhbanov, Inna Akvilonova, Nina Pavlova, Pavel Veselov, Yefim Gendelman, Iya Venkova, and others.

The new style espoused by the factory's artists developed organically from the avant-garde traditions in the decorative and applied arts, and also played a big part in shaping their future. The exhibition also presents works by artists of the Imperial Porcelain Factory who were inspired by the Modern Style and the era of the Thaw that generated it.

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

ZHANG HUAN.
IN THE ASHES OF HISTORY

SEPTEMBER 2020 — NOVEMBER 2020
NICHOLAS HALL, ANTEROOM,
RECESS OF THE EASTERN GALLERY OF THE WINTER PALACE

Zhang Huan's exhibition in the Nicholas Hall of the Winter Palace, featuring artworks from several series in a variety of media, includes more than thirty exhibits. Many of them, created specifically for this show, reflect the artist's impressions of St Petersburg. Two works from the Love series stand on their own. Created by Zhang Huan while on lockdown, they are a distillation of the artist's personal experience of the pandemic in China and the world, and a tribute to victims of the pandemic.

Zhang Huan is a product of the Soviet-Chinese academic tradition, a master of harsh performance art that took America by storm, and a Buddhist who has come to know the true meaning of his faith through the fire and ash of sweet-scented incense. He is an enchanting and emotionally subtle artist who is able to mobilise large numbers of people for a theatrical performance or for the production of huge sculptures. He is someone who is consciously open to several cultures and feels at home within them while always remaining touchingly mindful of his roots.

Zhang Huan has continued the tradition of creating a series of works especially for his exhibition at the Hermitage, works often inspired by the museum itself. Here he follows in the footsteps of Anselm Kiefer and Adrian Ghenie, whose exhibitions were a great success. For artists, the Hermitage is part of the academic training that taught them superb drawing skills, allowing them to freely explore with respect to both form and content. Through the perception of this aesthetic school, they found affinities with the classical paintings of the Hermitage and the classic works of Russian art, leading them to choose to interpret a particular group of works that may at first glance seem quite ordinary, but are in fact very distinctive.

In addition to the Hermitage itself, which the artist had been aware of since his youth, Zhang was also inspired by Hermitage installations at the Vienna Biennale, and he continues these ideas in his works. But Ivan the Terrible has intruded into a contemplation of Rembrandt's *The Return of the Prodigal Son*, "debating" internally with Rembrandt's *The Sacrifice of Isaac*, which hangs in the corner opposite the *The Return of the Prodigal Son* at the Hermitage. Artworks that Zhang has reinterpreted in woodcarving include *The Last Day of Pompei* Titian's *Danae*, Rembrandt's *Flora*, Snyders' *Fruit Stall and Rubens' Perseus*. I don't think the artist knew that *The Last Day of Pompei* was once kept in the Hermitage, and hung in the place where the great Flemish artists hang today. There is also another hidden allusion. The Hermitage possesses the very earliest Dutch group portraits, which became so characteristic of the art of the Netherlands and which share clear similarities with the group portraits Zhang likes so much. It is common practice to put modern faces on reproductions of famous group portraits as a joke. In their wood-carved incarnations created by Zhang, the faces of members of Soviet Communist Party congresses take on Chinese features.

These are all games of interpretation, of course, but they also make the exhibition into a new performance, with a new twist because of the pandemic — the sea voyage from China to St Petersburg turned into a quarantine, followed by the journey of the boxes from Petersburg to Moscow, then back to Palace Square. And perhaps this is not yet the end.

MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY

Mikhail Piotrovsky at the opening of the exhibition Zhang Huan. In the Ashes of History, SEPTEMBER 9, 2020
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Zhang Huan

I like the word nilong, which means 'dragon swimming against the current'. I like to exist in adversity. A dragon can move freely only when he strives against mighty ocean waves. Man leaves this world forty-nine days after death. If I could choose the way I die, I would go with a Tibetan sky burial.

Zhang Huan is a vastly popular Chinese artist who made a name for himself with a series of performance artworks in China and the US. In the mid-2000s he took to creating art in a unique medium — most of his expansive works are made with incense ash from Buddhist temples. One of these works, a forty-metre group portrait of the top figures of the Communist Party of China, takes up nearly an entire wall in the Nicholas Hall, one of the largest halls in the Winter Palace. The exhibition also features Zhang Huan's work in another unusual medium, a mix of photography and carved wood. Some of his wood reliefs are based on paintings from the Hermitage. Of note is his newest series of works, titled *Red Series*, which marks a change of direction for Zhang Huan and a return to painting. The first eight works of the series, united under the title *Reincarnation*, were specially selected for the St Petersburg show.

PHOTO: © ANNA MYSKOVA

The exposition of the exhibition "Zhang Huan: In the Ashes of History," SEPTEMBER, 2020
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

PHOTO: © ANNA MYSKOVA

Zhang Huan
My Winter Palace №9 (fragment)
2019
Wooden carving in relief

Zhang Huan
My Winter Palace №10 (fragment)
2019
Wooden carving in relief

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

SKY BURIAL

Zhang Huan
My Winter Palace No. 8, 2019
Wooden carving in relief

THE HERMITAGE EXHIBITION HAS TAKEN SEVERAL YEARS TO PREPARE. YOU CAN TELL BY THE SUBJECT-MATTER THAT SOME OF THE WORKS WERE CREATED SPECIFICALLY FOR THE HERMITAGE. AT OUR REQUEST, THE ARTIST ALSO INCLUDED SOME OF HIS MOST RECENT IMPORTANT WORKS IN THE LINE-UP OF EXHIBITS. ZHANG HUAN CAME TO ST PETERSBURG FOR THIS REASON, AND WE WENT TO VISIT HIM IN HIS STUDIO IN CHINA AS WELL.

DIMITRY OZERKOV

Zhang Huan's Shanghai headquarters is like a vast art universe that sucks you right in. It is a multiplex of huge exhibition spaces and hangars that serve as studios, where dozens of artisans are busy polishing steel, scraping at wood, sewing hides together, and assembling sculpture frames under the artist's unrelenting oversight. Walking from one space to another, you get to enjoy both finished works and works-in-progress: incense-smoking statues and theatrical installations, tin Buddhas and studies in ash, carved doors and painted canvases. Some of Zhang Huan's famous giant sculptures are also here, comfortably ensconced amid the floodlit studio spaces. The rusty debris of a train that caught fire during the Sichuan earthquake, shown as part Zhang's 2010 installation *Hope Tunnel*, takes up one of the walls of the enclosed courtyard between the hangars. An imposing assemblage of old headstones catches the eye at the far end of the studio: the roomy white hall they fill is partly outdoors, putting some stones at the mercy of the sun and the elements. A monkey family inhabits an enclosure around the corner from the headstones (now we know where all that screaming was coming from). Guests are invited to feed the monkeys from the stockpile of food by the cage. The tour of Zhang Huan's studio ends in a small room next to the library in the central building, where you can admire a collection of old Buddhist statues that is modest in size but absolutely mind-blowing in craftsmanship.

With a pleasant, disarming smile on his face, Zhang Huan takes pride in personally guiding the tour. This is his creation and his vision of the universe. "It is a small society, and every person working here has his or her own thoughts and world. We work to interact with and stimulate each other," [1] the artist explains.

At the beginning of his career in the 1990s, Zhang Huan's universe was limited to his own body, which he nourished with Buddhist music and sex, and the society of a small group of friends. He attended the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing, and thus his art education was traditional, as there were no other options. He was taught to draw and paint after the classical manner of Soviet Realism. The training progressed from drawing basic geometric shapes to drawing vases, statues, the human body and, finally, scenes from everyday life. The idea was to learn to represent reality, as opposed to creating an individual artistic message. But an alternative came along in a small book passed around by the students. It was a painting course designed by Zao Wou-Ki (1921–2013), a Chinese émigré artist who lived and worked in Europe. China recognised Zao in the early 1980s and invited him to give a lecture course for young artists at the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts. The lectures were transcribed and circulated in a booklet. Zao taught that a painting must "breathe" and, to that end, all its parts have to be different. [2] That was in 1991, when Zhang Huan's creative identity came into its own in his own living, breathing body — he became a performance artist. His public debut was the performance art piece *Angel* (1993): his body painted blood-red from head to toe, the artist made a show of trying to reassemble parts of a mangled plastic doll. Noted by critics, the performance sparked a scandal in China — some commentators read criticism of the Chinese government's One Child policy into the act. *Angel* was officially banned. In a bid to evade the critical eye, Zhang Huan left the official art scene for a while and continued his work underground. To the artist himself, *Angel* had a deeper meaning: he was relating his corporeal experience directly to his reflections on birth and life.

Seeing his life as the setting in which art occurs, Zhang Huan set out to place his body in situations unbearable for an ordinary person. He went to war against human phobias, and he explored the evolution of the relationship between the spirit, the body, and the outside world. "Each time I finish a performance, I feel a great sense of release of fear," [3] he once said. Zhang and his friends stripped naked and lay in a pile *To Add One Metre to an Anonymous Mountain* (1995) and waded chest-deep in water *To Raise the Water Level in a Fish Pond* (1997). "It is only in such conditions that I am able to experience the relationship between the body and the spirit," he said. [4] He also established a dialogue with nature, and his few spectators, in keeping with Chinese tradition, interpreted his landscapes as a metaphor for human virtue. [5] e transformed his body into art materials. He offered himself up as a canvas inscribed with various captions, as in the photograph series *1/2* (1998) and *Family Tree* (2000). He had his skin covered in Chinese characters that fell together into words and phrases such as "patience with people", "I am stupid", "genesis of the Internet", "Kafka", "Do you have a dream?", "truth or lie", "Buddha", and others. Zhang Huan frequently performed naked, which was his way of bodily reconnecting with nature as he had once experienced it as a child in rural China. In the performance piece *Rubens* (2000), the Flemish painter's former sitters and lovers ripped clothes off him until he reverted to the primal source of art, conditioned by nature.

The young artist perfected his creative expression in his performance acts and discovered the themes that would remain his keynotes. Zhang Huan began reading more on performance art and contemporary Western art practices overall. The books changed his life, and New York, the new performance art capital and the city of Vito Acconci (1940–2017) and Vanessa Beecroft (b. 1969), became his shining beacon.

The Chinese artist Zhang Huan visited St Petersburg for the first time in the summer of 2019. The owner of an art studio the size of a medium-sized factory in Shanghai, Zhang had travelled the world extensively, but had never been to Russia before. His local hosts took him to the Russian Museum to see Repin and the Russian avant-garde painters. Usually a quick-paced visitor, Zhang suddenly paused in the room with Old Russian icons. Standing pensively in front of an icon — I think it was St George — he asked what the tiny scenes meant that were painted around the central image. Zhang Huan found nothing unusual in the Russian icon-painting tradition of including hagiographic scenes, and instead said an interesting thing: "I am a Buddhist, but all this somehow looks very normal and familiar to me. *Jesus is like Buddha*".

A statement like this will hardly shock anyone in our globalised, cross-cultural world. But what he said suggested more than simply cultural perceptiveness, a quality many artists possess; that evasive thing known as "oriental mentality" came through. *In The Geography of Thought*, Richard Nisbett explains how Chinese reasoning and worldview differ from that of Europe. In contrast to occidental reasoning with its linear progression and thinking in isolated categories, Asians seek out relationships between objects and principles. The inert or static deserves little attention in the Asian view, which focuses on the possibilities of dialogue between phenomena. At the core of the oriental model of the world are closed-circuit systems in which opposites (yin and yang) unite. They may group objects by certain key characteristics that are not necessarily obvious. The definitive concept is that of "collective mind" underpinned by a love of observation. It is, therefore, no surprise that a Chinese artist promptly grasps the finer points of Orthodox Christian artistic expression, but uses his insight to make a case for an affinity between the two traditions.

From the article "Differences in Perception between the East and the West" by exhibition co-curator Anastasia Veyalko.

Zhang Huan
2019

PHOTO: © ANNA MYSKOVA

Zhang Huan
My Winter Palace №9
2019

Zhang made it to New York in 1998 and spent a few prolific years there. Unexpectedly, being in New York made him grow aware of himself as a Chinese artist, rooted in tradition and entirely unwilling to give it up. His New York debut was the performance piece *Pilgrimage — Wind and Water in New York* (1998) at P.S. 1 Contemporary Art Center. Having replaced the mattress of a traditional Ming-era Chinese bed with blocks of ice, he lay face down naked on the ice and remained prostrate for ten minutes to the accompaniment of Buddhist music. New York dogs were tied to the bed as a symbol of Western culture, while the bed represented the East. The "wind and water" from the title is a verbatim translation of the term *feng shui,* the Chinese concept of the universal flow of *qi* energy, popularised in the West as a Chinese utilitarian geomancy that is practiced in the form of auspicious placement of furniture in a home. The artist explained: "I do like the city [New York], but at the same time, I have an unnameable fear. I want to feel it with my body, just as I feel the ice. I try to melt off a reality in the way I try to melt off the ice with the warmth of my body". [6]

When asked to summarise the essence of his performances in an interview, Zhang Huan said, "The body is the only direct way through which I come to know society and society comes to know me. The body is the proof of identity. The body is language". [7] In the 2000s, Zhang staged performances in San Francisco, Seattle, and Boston, and then in Australia, Spain, Italy, and many other countries. He earned international acclaim and the reputation of an artist interested in questioning whether cross-cultural dialogue was indeed feasible.

Zhang Huan's return to representation art from performance art coincided with his repatriation to China at the end of 2005. After eight years of constant travel he settled down in Shanghai. "After returning to China, I had deeper experiences of tradition and religion, which come from ordinary life," he writes. [8] Zhang made a series of relief pieces titled *Memory Doors* (2008) with heavy old wooden doors he had found discarded in the countryside after they had been replaced with new ones. He would paste historical photographs to the front of a door and then carve a relief of the image. A new awareness of Chinese tradition and religious practices came gradually to Zhang as he travelled to China's sacred sites, such as the Mogao Caves near the town of Dunhuang in the northwest of Gansu Province, which incorporate a unique system of Buddhist temples known as the Thousand Buddha Grottoes. [9] An oasis on the Silk Road, Dunhuang flourished between the 5th and 15th centuries. A large collection of ancient manuscripts was also uncovered in Dunhuang. A total of 735 caves, large and small, were dug out in the steep riverbank. The caves are abundantly decorated with Buddhist murals and sculptures. Zhang has said that he tries to visit the cave complex every year to draw inspiration from the Prince Sudana Jataka in cave 428, or the Jataka of the Five Hundred Robbers Who Became Buddhas in cave 285, or the Seven Medicine Buddhas in cave 220, or the silent conversation of Manjusri and Vimalakirti, whose images recur many times in the murals. The space in the caves with the finest décor is a singular synthesis of intricate symmetry, emptiness, silence, unusual aural phenomena, and the splendour of medieval Buddhist imagery.

Buddhist rituals proved no less meaningful to Zhang Huan than Buddhist images. He often found himself staring at the mounds of ash remaining from the burnt offerings and incense in the Longhua Temple in Shanghai. Temple visitors light incense in memory of the Buddha or of ancestors. The incense ash is a reminder of time irretrievably reduced to nothingness, but also a renewal of hope. Zhang discovered that the Buddhist temples had no use for the incense ash once the service was over. In most cases, the ash would be scattered in the sea or a lake, or buried like the body of a person who had lived their life and is returned to the earth after death. Eventually Zhang realised that he may have found the perfect art medium, if only he could sort the ash by colour and find a way to affix it to the canvas. [10] He began experimenting with almost abstract horizontal *Ash Paintings* (2006), incorporating pieces of burnt paper, dry insects, and family photographs with the incense ash. The result exceeded his expectations. These monochromatic works, such as *Young Mother* and *Young General* (both 2007), were so much more than portraits or images; they were troves of information embedded in the ash, both in a literal sense (the burnt incense itself) and metaphorically (the prayers of those who burned the votive incense). In the perception of a viewer who knows this is real incense ash from a temple, these paintings are, as it were, evidence of the metamorphosis of the human spirit. Meanwhile, the reincarnation of ash as an art medium is a reminder of the eternal flux of all things — a concept very much akin to the Buddhist worldview, which harkens back to the traditional Chinese view of death as a transition into an endeavour to achieve consubstantiality with the universe. [10] Working with incense ash, Zhang Huan was able to both employ the physical material and activate a reference to its transcendental being, as if a spiritual force was itself engaged as the artist's expressive medium. [12]

Zhang Huan made a deal with several Chinese temples that he would collect their ash for his work. It immediately occurred to him that ash paintings ought to be large; the contrast with the barely visible, microscopic grains of ash would create a stronger visual effect on a large canvas. His 2008 painting *Canal Building* is 18 metres long, and the group portrait entitled *June 15, 1964* (2013-2015) is more than double that length: 37.4 metres. The latter work is based on a 1964 group photograph Zhang Huan had found of Mao Zedong and key members of the Communist Party of China. [13] There is no cynicism in these realistic pictures from the sombre past. They are saturated with elegiac melancholy and a poignant sense of the flow of time, seen through the extreme collective experiences of China's past. And yet, since this is contemporary art, the modern international viewer will, by default, look for a multi-level postmodernist message in these paintings.

PHOTO: © ANNA MYSKOVA

Zhang Huan
Q-Confucius №3 (fragment)
2011
Incense Ash on Linen

The ash sculptures and ash paintings came about at the same time. The 2007 *Ash Head* series is a collection of sculpted human heads that look realistic and somehow imperceptibly abstract at the same time, indirectly referencing the manner of Giacometti (1901–1966) and Lipchitz (1891–1973). Another line of allusions points to the adoration of statues of the Buddha and bodhisattvas. It is no surprise that the body and head of the Buddha — conventional objects of veneration in the Buddhist tradition — take such a prominent place in Zhang Huan's work from the late 2000s and 2010s. The five-metre-tall *Smoking Buddha* (2007) installation is an interactive ash sculpture. Resting on a steel frame, the dark head exudes smoke when incense is burned inside. It is interesting to note that the prolonged, dramatic act of pouring ash of the right colour on a sculpture frame or canvas according to a preliminary sketch may constitute a performance piece in its own right. In a sense, Zhang Huan never ceased being a performance artist — it's just that his polyphonic endeavours have spread beyond his body to engage other media.

In 2009, Zhang was asked to direct Handel's *Semele* in the Royal Theatre of La Monnaie in Brussels, Belgium. It is a "musical drama" with much polyphony, which also features ash: Jupiter incinerates his former lover Semele with a bolt of lightning. From the ashes arises Bacchus, the child of Jupiter and Semele, the god of wine, primal passion, and ecstasy. In Zhang's rendition, this story from Western mythology was enriched with traditional Chinese motifs. Weaving them into the Greco-Roman plot, Zhang merged and juxtaposed the two cultural realms in his own way, according to a principle outlined many years before in his very first US performance. Embedded in the Western drama is the real-life story of a Chinese man by the name of Fang Jixin, who kills his wife's lover and gets sentenced to death. The Belgian production of Semele featured a Chinese ritual bell and a dragon that writhed around on stage. The singers wore Chinese costumes. Zhang Huan had remodelled Semele's palace into a traditional Chinese house. A large wooden structure, built in China almost 500 years before, was imported to Brussels, where it became the main stage set for the opera.

Zhang made a comeback in the West at the end of the 2000s with his oversized sculptures and complex polyphonic narratives. The French government awarded him the Legion of Honour in 2014. Ash effigies were followed by hulking copper Buddhas, as in *Three Heads Six Arms* (2007), which toured the Western world in the 2010s. Then came the *Giants* (2008), *Heroes* (2009), and *Cowskin Buddha Face* (2010) series. His strange, fantastical creatures fuse occidental and oriental myths — beliefs in giants and chthonic denizens of the subterranean world from the Buddhist sutras. And heroes, according to Zhang Huan, are "born of the primitive passions that inform our future and express our wish for rebirth from deep within us. Everybody is his own hero and a part of the biological evolution". [14]

"I like the word *nilong*, which means 'dragon swimming against the current'. I like to exist in adversity," Zhang Huan said in an interview. "A dragon can only move freely when facing the strong waves of an ocean. A person will leave this world forty-nine days after his death. If I could choose a way of dying, I'd choose the Tibetan sky burial (tian zang)" [15]. Sky burial is an ancient Tibetan funerary practice: a human corpse is placed on a mountain top to be eaten by carrion birds and other scavengers. Buddhists believe that this is the most generous way to dispose of human remains, an expression of

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View of the exhibition "Zhang Huan: In the Ashes of History"
SEPTEMBER, 2020
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Zhang Huan
Reincarnation No. 1
2019
Acrylic on Linen

Zhang Huan
Reincarnation No. 38
2019
Acrylic on Linen

the dead person's virtuous compassion for all beings. This excarnation practice also carries the connotation of man returning to the sky, heaven (which is the origin of its name). The placement of a body in the charnel ground is a ceremony that involves the burning of incense and singing of mantras.

In 2010 Zhang Huan unveiled the sprawling *Hope Tunnel* installation in Beijing, featuring the debris of a train that had crashed during the Sichuan earthquake on 12 May 2008. The idea was to highlight the scale of the disaster and honour the memory of the victims of one of the most devastating catastrophes in modern Chinese history. Mindfulness of death and of "transition" is a key theme in Zhang Huan's oeuvre. It goes back to his childhood memories of the funerals of Chinese government figures and of his grandmother's death. The death of Zhang's grandmother made a powerful impression on the artist as a child. The mourning consisted of seven days of funerary rituals. In keeping with the post-mortem practices of the province of Tianjin, her body was laid out in the living room of her home. Neighbours walked around the village in a funeral procession. According to the Buddhist teachings on the reincarnation of spirits, the excarnate essence of former biological life begins a new physical existence after its previous physical existence ends. Zhang Huan: "Perhaps in a previous life I was a donkey and maybe I'll be a donkey again in my next life. I don't know. It completely depends on my karma". [16] In Window (2004), his early humorous and melancholic photographic series, Zhang shows himself interacting with a live donkey, now hugging the animal, now hoisting it onto his back, and so on.

In the early 2010s, Zhang Huan paid homage to the great Confucius with the vast Q-Confucius installation (2011) and invoked Christian images in *Ash Jesus* (2011). The artist is open to all religions, but Buddhism remains his guiding light. Zhang travels a lot around Asia, working on a Buddhist iconography, which includes ancient dance masks. His 2013 series *Poppy Fields* was inspired by Tibetan ritual masks. With their multitude of disguises, these canvases have an eerie hallucinatory feel of an eternal dance. The Western viewer may be reminded of the uncanny mask combinations in the works of James Ensor (1860–1949). To Zhang Huan, this is nothing but the endless swarm of spirits and life forms soaring in the air, an aether teeming with souls, the "ten thousand things" of Chinese Buddhism. It is a reference to the Tibetan cosmology and philosophy of life, in which every creature is tied to its preceding and succeeding incarnation.

Zhang Huan's latest series is titled *Sky Burial* (2019). The large canvases show mountain carrion birds engrossed in the tian *zang* ritual. These paintings are the artist's reflections on death that take him back, simultaneously, to the realistic depictions of his university days and to the gory scene of his performance art debut. But it is a return on a new spiritual plane, where the outcome is less important than the method of achieving it. Constant travels to Buddhism's holy sites and conversations with Buddhist teachers have taught Zhang Huan to concentrate differently on his body and soul and to reformulate his art as a process, not a result. "The [creative] process is very important for me," he said back in 2008. "Knowing when to stop is the most important indication of an artist's talent. This is the surprise in the [creative] process." [17] Sustained by self-discipline and meditation, the progress of creative work becomes to Zhang a method of purifying his mind and spirit, viewing inescapable death as the possibility of reincarnation.

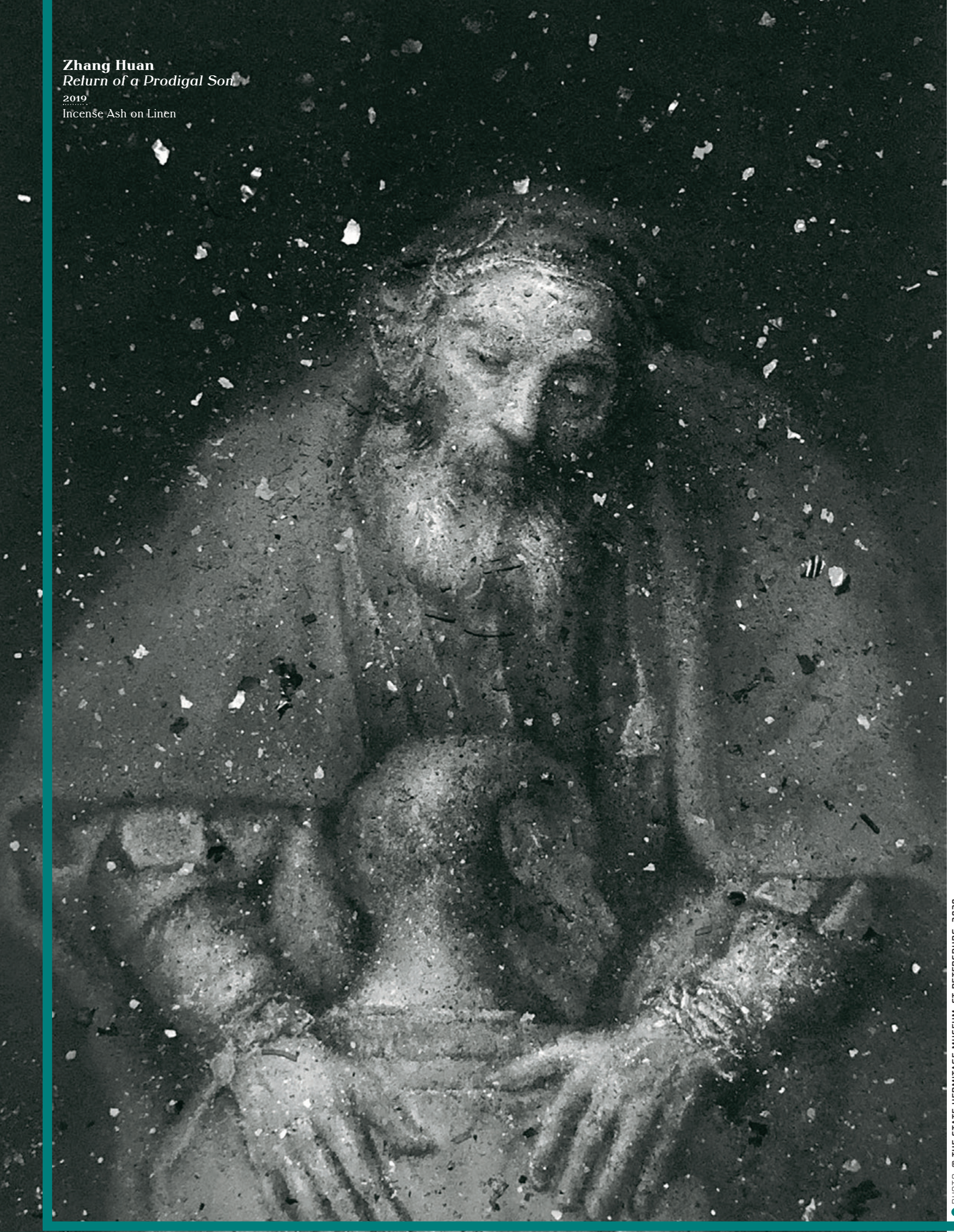
To a Buddhist, death is never a tragic end, but a natural part of the life cycle. This philosophy is not entirely alien to Western culture. "Happy is that death which thrusts not itself upon men in their pleasant years, yet comes to them at the oft-repeated cry of their sorrow," [18] wrote Boethius in the 5th century C.E. In *Inferno*, Dante tells the story of one Francesca of Rimini, who lost her life at a moment of ecstasy in her lover's embrace. In Buddhism, the spirit of a dead person never goes to heaven or hell, but stays around in search of an opportunity for rebirth. Death does not happen quickly — it is a long, tortuous process of transmigration that takes time and energy, as is the process of being born into your next life. The *Bardo Thodol*, the ancient Tibetan Book of the Dead, describes the process of dying day by day, and gives the appropriate instructions to the dead person's relatives. The name *Bardo Thodol* can be translated as "the intermediate state and the awakening". Those wishing to avoid reincarnation in a new body have to do much work and remain in concentrated meditation their whole lives. The Tibetan practice of conscious dying, or *phowa*, is a method whereby adepts of Buddhism are able to achieve the direct transference of consciousness to a Buddha-field, the Pure Land of the Buddha. This is an esoteric meditation practice by which one's consciousness is transferred directly through the top of one's head.

In the Vimalakirti Sutra, frequently illustrated on the walls of the Mogao Caves, it is written that death is an end of activity and birth into a new life is the continuation of activity. This is so unless the dead person is a bodhisattva, in which case "he does not put an end to the performance of the roots of virtue, and although he is reborn, he does not adhere to the continuation of sin". [19] For one's entire life one must consistently endeavour to ensure that "evil is not produced and good is not destroyed". [20]

Zhang Huan keeps his body in good shape; he prays and meditates to stay focused on his paramount goals in life. "I always used to pray for myself. Then I started to pray for my family and employees. Now I pray for peace on earth. This follows the Buddhist route from great self (*dawo*) to minor self (*xiaowo*), to no self (*uwo*), and back to great self. I need to train myself more. For me, life is something to use, but not to own." [21] He demands that texts of Buddhist teachings be incorporated in books about his art, and he makes sure that his works always express the movements of his heart. He feels like the abbot of a temple or a warlord when he is in his studio, surrounded by so much talent from such vastly diverse fields as IT, architecture, Buddhism, robotics, and politics, not to mention professional artisans.

Zhang Huan deftly combines his spiritual practices with "normal" daily pursuits like reading, television, and tourism. He claims this helps him further hone the cross-cultural synergies he has discovered. In his interviews he likes to discuss similarities between Richard Serra (b. 1938) and Chinese calligrapher Qi Baishi (1864–1957). He thinks that, like Serra, it takes Master Qi only a single line to explain his entire philosophy. Their art is so far apart and yet so close at the same time. Zhang Huan pitches this discovery as a good example of dialogue between the East and the West, informed by perpetual questioning of the territory of art. He believes that one side of an artist's life consists of the conscious broadening of that territory, while the other should be devoted to transgressing its boundaries — an act that in itself will broaden the territory of art, irrespective of anyone's private opinion or wish. An artist has to possess a magician's mind, he claims. "You won't be able to imagine what I am going to do next. I don't know either." [22]

1 Zhang Huan. "Statement", 2008. *Zhang Huan*. Edited by Yilmaz Dziewior, RoseLee Goldberg, Robert Storr. London: Phaidon Press, 2009. p. 124.
2 Zhang Huan's letter to the author, dated 12 March 2020.
3 Qian Zhijian. "Performing Bodies: Zhang Huan, Ma Liuming, and Performance Art in China". *Art Journal*. 1999. Vol. 58. Issue 2. p. 64.
4 Ibid., p. 68.
5 Gao Minglu. *Total Modernity and the Avant-Garde in Twentieth-Century Chinese Art*. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2011. p. 282.
6 Melissa Chiu *Breakout: Chinese Art Outside China*. Milano: Charta, 2006. p. 110.
7 Qian Zhijian. Op. cit. P. 63.
8 Zhang Huan. Op. cit. P. 123.
9 P. Pelliot Les grottes de Touen-Houang. Vol. 1–6. Paris: P. Geuthner, 1920–1924; *The Caves of the Thousand Buddhas: Exhibition Catalogue. Saint Petersburg: State Hermitage Museum Publishing*, 2008.
10 Zhang Huan: Ash. Edited by Harry Blain, Graham Southern, Nina Miall. London: Haunch of Venison, 2007. pp. 12–13.
11 Cf.: E.A. Torchinov. *Introduction to Buddhism*. Saint Petersburg: Azbuka, 2017. p. 261.
12 Cf. Huang Du. "The Medium is the Spiral". *Zhang Huan: Free Tiger Returns to Mountains*. Beijing: Pace Beijing, 2010. pp. 12–15.
13 The Soviet Union and China fell out in the 1960s. On 15 June 1964, the Central Committee of the Soviet Communist Party once again censured the Communist Party of China in a public letter. The Chinese leadership replied with their habitual rebuttal. The parties insulted and accused each other of working "to create an open rift in the international communist movement". (Letter of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China dated 15 June 1964. Moscow: Political Literature Publishing, 1964; Reply of the CC CPC to the letter of the CC CPSU dated 15 June 1964. Beijing: Foreign Language Publishing, 1964). The correspondence received broad coverage in the West. The time of "brothers forever" was over; China entered its period of full independence.
14 *Art Unlimited. Catalog*. Art 41 Basel, 16–20.6.2010 / Edited by Holger Steinemann, Ursula Diehr. Basel: Art Basel, 2010. p. 136.
15 Zhang Huan. Op. cit. p. 132.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid. P. 126.
18 Anicius Manlius Severinus Boethius. *The Consolation of Philosophy*. Translated by W.V. Cooper. London: J.M. Dent and Company, 1902. p. 1.
19 Vimalakirti Nirdesa Sutra. Translated from the Tibetan by Robert A. F. Thurman. The Pennsylvania State University, 1976. p. 115.
20 Ibid., p. 64.
21 Zhang Huan. Op. cit. p. 127.
22 Ibid., P. 140.



Zhang Huan
Return of a Prodigal Son
2019
Incense Ash on Linen

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020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80 YEARS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF RUSSIAN CULTURAL HISTORY AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM

IRINA BAGDASAROVA [1]

CATHERINE THE GREAT'S "LITTLE PORCELAIN PEOPLE"

Rachette's Peoples of Russia statuettes

Group of statuettes from the Peoples of Russia series
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
1780s–1790s. Form design by Jean Rachette.
Porcelain
The State Hermitage, St Petersburg
Inv. Nos. ЭРФ-791, ЭРФ-176, ЭРФ-3357, ЭРФ-790, ЭРФ-177, ЭРФ-788

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

The ethnic theme premiered in Russian porcelain making in the 18th century, during the reign of the enlightened ruler Catherine the Great. Catherine, who was not born in Russia, diligently studied the history and geography of the country she ruled, aspiring to be a truly Russian ruler.

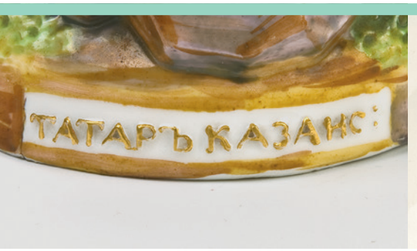
At the request of the throne, the Imperial Porcelain Factory [2] produced the *Peoples of Russia* series of porcelain figurines in the 1780s and 1790s. The images were copied from illustrations from the book by famous ethnographer and academician Johann Gottlieb Georgi's *Description of All Peoples Living in the Russian State, Their Ways of Life, Faiths, Customs, Homes, Clothing, and Other Notable Characteristics* (Parts 1–3. St Petersburg, 1776–1777) [3]. Georgi's work includes over 100 colour illustrations modelled on Kunstkamera exhibits or inspired by sketches and descriptions from research expeditions of such scholars as Peter Simon Pallas, Gerhard Friedrich Miller, Johann Georg Gmelin, Stepan Krasheninnikov, the Rachkov brothers, and other explorers of the lands and ethnic populations of the vast Russian Empire, from the Volga to Siberia and Lake Baikal.

The *Peoples of Russia* porcelain series reproduces images of many diverse ethnic groups from different parts of the empire. The ethnographic collection numbered 32 items, 29 of them isolated figures such as *Kyrgyz Woman, Man from Bukhara, Kabardian Woman, Man from the Kuril Islands, Ingrian Peasant Woman, Ukrainian Cossack, Armenian Man, Baraba Woman (Tatar Woman), Kalmyk Woman, Finnish Woman (Maymistkha), Finnish Man (Chukhonets), Estonian (Estlyandskaya) Woman, Tatar Woman of Kazan* and *Tatar Man of Kazan, Yakut Woman* and *Yakut Man, Kamchadal Woman and Kamchadal Man, Samoyed Woman and Samoyed Man,* and three group sculptures: *Koryaks, Shaman Woman,* and *Village Players (or Russian Idyll).*

The models for the statuettes were crafted by French sculptor Jean-Dominique Rachette. [4] With the illustrations as his guide, Rachette sculpted terracotta or gypsum models, depending on his intention, which were to be later used as matrices for the porcelain figurines. In his work, the art of engraving met minor-form sculpture, which was in keeping with the precepts of the programme of academic training for sculptors in the 18th century. Every model consisted of several parts, as evidenced by the characteristic seams that mark where the porcelain parts were joined together. Porcelain-making technology had to be quite advanced to produce these 20-25 cm tall porcelain figurines. Some of them rest their feet or flaps of their garments solidly on tree stumps or rocks; the addition of these elements helped to avoid deformities in the firing process.

The porcelain "dolls" are placed on low pedestals disguised as the ground with detailing to make it appear even more like earth and grass. The full or abbreviated names of some of the images are inscribed in gilded relief on the pedestals (using pre-reform Russian spelling). The interior surface of most of the figurines contains the producer's mark from that era — the blue, underglaze-painted monogram of Catherine II. Scratched into the porcelain mixture are the initials of the sculptors who worked on the figures in the last quarter of the 18th century: *Х, СШЛ, Н.Х., С·МО* (S. Morozov), *СТ, No МК, N,* ┬, ƨ, *ci*, and others, or even numerical designations: 12, 17, etc. [5]

While the ethnic costumes are reproduced accurately, the images of the characters are idealised in the manner of Catherine-era classicism. The standalone figures are shown wearing festive costumes, and most of them are intentionally sculpted in proud postures with the pleasing head and body angles typical of official portraits. The fine polychromatic hand-painted decoration of the figurines has a peculiar "powdered" quality, which beautifully matches the goldwork and silverwork. The emotional words that spring to mind when one tries to describe these figurines are far removed from the ethnic theme as such: "charming", "stunning", "life-like", and so on. These epithets are particularly fitting in relation to the painted expres-



Inscription and mark from the period of Empress Catherine the Great on the Tatar Man of Kazan sculpture
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРФ-788

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2 The Imperial Porcelain Factory was founded in St Petersburg in 1744 during the reign of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna. It bore the name Imperial Porcelain Manufactory until 1765.

3 Part 4 came out in German only in 1780. Cf.: J. G. Georgi *Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reichs, ihrer Lebensart, Religion, Gebräuche, Wohnungen, Kleidung und übrigen Merkwürdigkeiten*. St Petersburg, 1776–1780. Vols. 1–4.

4 Antoine-Jacques-Jean-Dominique Rachette (1744–1809) was a graduate of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen. He worked in France and Germany, and served at the Russian royal court for 30 years. Rachette's Russian legacy includes his sculptural work at the residence of Count Aleksandr Bezborodko in Poliustrovo near St Petersburg, the general assembly room of the Senate, the Kazan Cathedral in St Petersburg, the Cold Baths building in Tsarskoe Selo, Peterhof's Grand Cascade, and other landmarks. Rachette served as a master modeller at the Imperial Porcelain Factory from 1779 to 1804 and directed the factory's sculpture department.

5 Graduates of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts sculpture programme who worked at the Imperial Porcelain Factory under Rachette's tutelage included Fyodor Kreslishin, Ivan Semyonov, Gavrila Nikiforov, and Nazar Kozlov. They worked side by side with graduates of the factory's own school, such as Alexander Berl, Filipp Subolin, and others.

Central part of the table decoration for the Berlin dessert service
Royal Porcelain Manufactory, Berlin
1770–1772
Models by Wilhelm Christian and Friedrich Elias Meyer
Porcelain

From the Dining Service Storerooms. Decoration of the Russian Imperial Table of the 18th and Early 19th Century. Exhibition catalogue. St Petersburg. Published by the State Hermitage, 2016. (Christmas Gift. p. 37, Fig. 29).

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

sions on the faces of the figurines. The fine tracing of the eyes, eyebrows, lips, and nose, coupled with the hues of the faces and the colouring in the cheeks, betray a doll-like quality which was characteristic of 18th-century porcelain artworks; yet we can also tell that the artists did indeed strive to convey the quintessential visages of the ethnic groups portrayed.

The implements in the characters' hands shed light on their lifestyles and occupations. For instance, the paired statuettes of a man and woman from Kamchatka, natives of the southern part of the Kamchatka Peninsula (their self-appellation is Itelmen), shows them wearing fur coats. The woman's knife shows her as a gatherer. The man carries a club and a fur-bearing animal that he has killed, suggesting a small-time hunting endeavour. Other Subarctic images from the group of porcelain figures include the Yakut man and woman, natives of Yakutiya (self-appellation: Sakha), and the Samoyed man and woman, which later came to be viewed as a collective image of all Samoyedic ethnicities. The sculpture *Koryaks* shows two women of the ethnic group that inhabits the northern part of Kamchatka. Sitting at their feet is a basket of edible plants and a bow and quiver with arrows. One woman clutches a dead hare.

The group sculptures have more narrative to them. *Village Players* (or *Russian Idyll)* presents a pastoral scene with two seated shepherds playing a pipe and a lute and a girl standing with her arms folded on her chest, along with two sheep and a dog lying peacefully beside them. The scene is a reflection on the 18th-century fad of travelling to the countryside to pursue innocent outdoor activities or even a short-lived love affair. Village life is poeticised in the theatrical postures and stylised folk costumes of the characters, in their hairstyles, and in their faces. Romanticised images like these would gain even more popularity in the art of the next period. The sentimental sculptures of *Man Carrying Water and Woman Carrying Water*, designed by Russian sculptor Stepan Pimenov, would come to epitomise the Alexandrine Empire style in Russian porcelain art.

Catherine II liked showing off her *Peoples of Russia* figurines [6] as decorations for her gala dinners. The porcelain characters would be displayed as part of the *surtout de table* [7] — decorated mirrored plateaus placed in the middle of the table. A prime and well-known example of this fashion was the grandiose *surtout de table* that came with Catherine II's Berlin Dessert Service crafted in Prussia in 1770–1772. King Friedrich II of Prussia gifted it to the "Semiramis of the North" on the occasion of the 1764 Russo-Prussian defence alliance. Surrounding Catherine II, who is shown sitting solemnly on her throne underneath a canopy, are porcelain figurines modelled by the brothers Wilhelm Christian and Friedrich Elias Meyer, representing the liberal arts, virtues (including the virtues of the Empress herself), peoples of Russia in their folk dress, estates of Russia, and Russia's war victories.

Russian ethnic figurines were given as gifts to members of entourages and foreign dignitaries. Archduke Joseph of Austria, who visited the porcelain manufactory during his stay in St Petersburg in 1799, received "biscuit porcelain figurines" of Russian ethnic characters, including the statuettes *Village Players, Shaman Woman, Koryaks,* and 18 individual figures.

Naturally, Catherine the Great's fragile "little porcelain people" [8] have been sought after by collectors since the 19th century. The Russian ethnographic types made their way into the treasure-troves of such prominent collectors as Aleksandr Korovin, Aleksey Morozov, and Nikolay Lukutin. Individual statuettes cost as much as a thousand rubles each by the early 1900s. As the price increased, imitations arrived in mounting quantities, mostly manufactured in Germany. Currently, authentic *Peoples of Russia* statuettes can be found at the State Hermitage Museum, the State Russian Museum, the State Museum of Ceramics, the 18th-century Kuskovo Estate, and a few overseas museums and private collections.

Celebrating "Mother Russia" and the sovereign of the vast and immensely naturally endowed country, Rachette's *Peoples of Russia* statuettes pioneered Russian ethnographic sculpture in the medium of porcelain. The St Petersburg porcelain factory would reproduce the "ethnic dolls" repeatedly in polychromatic porcelain with variations in the decoration or in white biscuit porcelain. Later on, private enterprise also took up the production of similar statuettes. But the Imperial Porcelain Factory has kept up the tradition ever since, through the 19th and 20th centuries to this day.

6 The *Peoples of Russia* series was soon enlarged, with the *Traders and Craftsmen* family of statuettes, created by the Imperial Porcelain Factory after Rachette's models, showing Russians in the middle of their daily work.
7 *Surtout de table* is the French for "table centrepiece".
8 I.S. Lukash *Porcelain Russia. At the Exhibition in Sevres*. Paris, 1929. p. 5.

Porcelain sculptures from the Peoples of Russia series and the Traders and Artisans series
On a mirrored plateau from the Imperial Glass Factory, with a girandole from the Potemkin Glass Factory (?), St Petersburg. Late 18th century.
From the Dining Service Storerooms. Decoration of the Russian Imperial Table of the 18th and Early 19th Century. Exhibition catalogue. St Petersburg. Published by The State Hermitage, 2016. (Christmas Gift. p. 38, Fig. 30).

THE PICTORIAL SOURCES OF RUSSIAN PORCELAIN ART IN THE 18TH AND EARLY 19TH CENTURIES

GALINA MIROLYUBOVA,
YULIA SHAROVSKAYA [1]

18TH CENTURY

In Russian porcelain making, the emphasis was always on the artistic side — the form and the sculpted and painted décor of the artworks. Porcelain artists were quite particular about their pictorial subject-matter, which in the 18th century was gleaned from graphic material created by Russian and European masters.

Russia's international political sway increased during the reign of Catherine II, when other nations came to view Russia as a formidable force in international affairs. Inspired by the ideas of the Enlightenment, the Empress was committed to studying and popularising the history and ethnography of the country she ruled. The Russian government's policy was to encourage and reward exploration of the geography and ethnography of the various ethnic populations inhabiting the empire.

German naturalist and ethnographer Johann Gottlieb Georgi (1729–1802) was one of the first foreigners granted the privilege of exploring Russia with the expedition parties of the Imperial Academy of Sciences. Combining the material he had amassed during his travels in the 1770s with the ethnographic and pictorial resources of the Kunstkammer in St Petersburg, Georgi published his four-volume study *Description of All Peoples Living in the Russian State, Their Ways of Life, Religion, Customs, Dwellings and Other Notable Characteristics*. [2] Engravers Christopher Melchior Roth and Dmitry Shlepper produced over a hundred illustrations for Georgi's book, highlighting the different regional characteristics and lifestyles of numerous ethnic populations inhabiting the vast empire: ethnic physiognomies, customs, hair-

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Christoph Melchior Roth,
from an original by Johann
Gottlieb Georgi
1. Depiction of a Tatar Woman of Kazan (detail)
1A. Depiction of a Tatar Man of Kazan (detail)
1776
Coloured etching
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. Nos. ЭРГ-23657, ЭРГ-23658

Christoph Melchior Roth,
from an original
by Johann Gottlieb Georgi
Depiction of a Kamchadal Man (detail)
Depiction of a Kamchadal Woman (detail)
1777
Coloured etching
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. Nos. ЭРГ-23670, Inv. Nos. ЭРГ-23695

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

styles, head-dresses, and daily activities. Some figures are shown from both the front and back. Shown full-length, they look static and monumental even in the small drawings. The lightly sketched backgrounds with outlines of peasant huts and trees make the scenes look more realistic. The narrative and illustrative content of Georgi's work earned instant acclaim as the primary source of ethnographic and visual information, and would inform further elaborations of the ethnic theme in the arts.

The Imperial Porcelain Factory in St Petersburg, which mainly served the Russian royal court, cultivated a tradition of using ethnic or genre scenes drawn "from life" to produce "sculpted or painted forms". The porcelain statuette series Peoples of Russia, created in 1780–1790s under the supervision of and after models by sculptor Jean-Dominique Rachette followed the drawings and colouring patterns of Georgi's book and its illustrations as closely as possible. In keeping with Enlightenment ideology and the stylistic preferences of the era of classicism, the Peoples of Russia statuettes often served as a didactic supplement to gala dinner services, as well as interior decorations for the royal palace.

TURN OF THE CENTURY (18TH/19TH)

German illustrator and printmaker Christian Gottfried Heinrich Geissler (1770–1844), who worked in Russia in the 1790s, took an interest in Russian life. He produced two series of engravings, one illustrating street vendors in St Petersburg (1794) and the other presenting the *Manners, Customs, and Dress of the Russians* (1803). [3] Both series were based on the sketches Geissler produced in collaboration with printmaker Christian Gottlieb Schoenberg during a research expedition across Russia led by Peter Simon Pallas.

The first series of coloured prints portrays typical inhabitants of the Russian capital — traders and craftsmen. To underscore the credibility of the street vendor images (milkmaid, greengrocer, *sbiten* vendor, and others), shown on their own or paired up as if in dialogue amid items related to their trade, the characters are depicted against

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

John Augustus Atkinson
Peasant Woman and Child
1804
Coloured aquatint, soft-ground etching
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРГ-26295

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2 J. G. Georgi. *Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reichs, ihrer Lebensart, Religion, Gebräuche, Wohnungen, Kleidung und übrigen Merkwürdigkeiten*. St Petersburg, 1776–1780. Vols. 1–4.

3 St. Petersburgische Hausierer herausgegebenen Kupfer zur Erklärung der darauf abgebildeten Figuren. 1794; Sitten, Gebräuche und Kleidung der Russen in St. Petersburg dargestellt in Gemählden mit beschreibungen von Dr. G. G. Gruber und Ch. G. H. Geissler. Leipzig, 1803.

backgrounds of specific urban views with detailed architectural features and recognisable squares and embankments. This characteristic of Geissler's work was in line with the realistic trend in early 19th-century Russian art. Each scene was explained with captions in Russian, German, and French. In 1803–1805 the prints were published in Leipzig, Paris, and London, helping Europeans learn more about the life of common people in Russia.

The second edition, focused more on characters and costumes, presents the natives of Russia's many governorates with ethnographic accuracy. These full-length staffage figures attract attention with the nuanced detail of their folk dress and the eloquence of their postures, gestures, and facial expressions. As in the first edition, the geographic location of their group is given in the trilingual explanatory notes. The lightly sketched landscapes in the backdrop enhance the life-like veracity of the images. [4]

Geissler's images circulated far and wide in books of prints and were copied many times. For many decades to come they would remain popular favourites, often reproduced in porcelain modelling and painting. Most of the prints from Geissler's works were included in the decoration plan for one of the most admired royal dinner services crafted at the Imperial Porcelain Factory in St Petersburg in the early 1800s — the Guryev Service, initially named the "Russian Service". The colourfully painted folk genre scenes stand out quite effectively against the white of the dessert platters, resembling printed book pages with the images in the centre.

The English artist John Augustus Atkinson (1775–1830), who lived in Russia from 1784 to 1802, devoted much of his work to the life and manners of the Russian people. The sketches he made during his travels around Russia were engraved and published in London as a suite

Christian Gottlieb Schönberg from an original by Christian Gottfried Heinrich Geissler
Pancake Vendor
1794
Coloured aquatint
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРГ-29335

Christian Gottlieb Schönberg from an original by Christian Gottfried Heinrich Geissler
Candy Vendor
1794
Coloured aquatint, etching
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРГ-29341

Christian Gottfried Heinrich Geissler
Strawberry Vendor and Milkmaid
1801–1803
Coloured etching
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРГ-23787

Christian Gottfried Heinrich Geissler
Sausage Vendor and Chimney Sweeper
1801–1803
Coloured etching
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРГ-23789

of coloured plates titled *A Picturesque Representation of the Manners, Customs, and Amusements of the Russians* (1803–1804). [5] Striving to convey the different facets of the Russian national character, Atkinson in his 100 plates portrays urban factory owners, street vendors, priests, and Russian peasants in the middle of their daily pursuits, summer or winter amusements, and events such as baptisms, weddings, and funerals. These fine engravings, with their elaborate silhouettes and ample background narrative, were executed in the techniques of soft-ground etching and aquatint with light manual colouring. Some were featured in the Guryev Service decorations.

Folk genre painting, which owed its inception to Georgi, Geissler, and Atkinson, was further perfected by the Russian artists Yemelyan Korneyev, Alexey Venetsianov, Aleksandr Orlovsky, and Ignaty Shchedrovsky, who kept up the practice of transferring pictorial (mostly graphic) artworks into the medium of porcelain. This tradition of creative cross-pollination between depictive genres born at the turn of the 18th to the 19th century would inspire many successive generations of porcelain sculptors and painters.

4 C.G.H. Geissler. *Daily Life and Manners of the Russian People at the Turn of the 18th to the 19th Century.* Moscow: Kuchkovo Polye, 2015.
5 J. A. Atkinson, J. Walker. *A Picturesque Representation of the Manners, Customs, and Amusements of the Russians in One Hundred Coloured Plates, with an Accurate Explanation of Each Plate in English and French in 3 Volumes.* London: W. Bulmer and Co, 1803–1804.

Dessert plate from the Guryev service depicting a Chuvash girl
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
1809–1815
Porcelain
Peterhof State Museum and Reserve
Inv. No. ПДМП 3186-ф

Dessert plate from the Guryev service depicting a wet nurse in St Petersburg
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
1809–1815
Porcelain
Peterhof State Museum and Reserve
Inv. No. ПДМП 3190-ф

Dessert plate from the Guryev service depicting an Estland (Estonian) peasant woman
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
1809–1815
Porcelain
Peterhof State Museum and Reserve
Inv. No. ПДМП 3183-ф

Dessert plate from the Guryev service depicting a Finnish butter vendor
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
1809–1815
Porcelain
Peterhof State Museum and Reserve
Inv. No. ПДМП 3195-ф

RUSSIA REVEALED

IMAGES OF THE EMPIRE'S PEOPLES AS DECORATIONS ON THE DESSERT PLATES OF THE "RUSSIAN" (GURYEV) TABLE SERVICE

BY TAMARA NOSOVICH [1]

The title of this article (Rus.: Otkryvaemaya Rossiya) comes from the name of the first Russian art journal (with engravings by Christoph Melchior Roth), published in 1774-1776 [2], in which the enlightened public was visually introduced to the diversity of ethnographic types inhabiting the vast country.

This "revelation" greatly stimulated an interest in this theme in both Russia and Europe, and led to the publication of a four-volume treatise by Johann Gottlieb Georgi [3] in 1776-1780, which included extensive ethnographic descriptions.

Of course, the increase of interest in Russia, which reflected the growth in its political importance, found support from the government. The most authoritative populariser of Georgi's work was Catherine the Great [4].

During the reign of Alexander I, marked by an ideological and patriotic upsurge in art, the national theme became dominant. This trend had enormous influence on the artistic production of the Imperial Porcelain Factory, which is shown most clearly in the concept for the Guryev dessert service ensemble, designed to set a table at the conclusion of a banquet during official receptions at the imperial court. Its ideological and artistic design aims at an elegant visual representation of the state. The ceremonial appearance of the ensemble, which vividly reflects the stylistic trends in Russian art in the first quarter of the 19th century, was a suitable accompaniment to the persuasive arguments of diplomats who wished to "reveal" to guests the majesty and might of Russia with its boundless expanses and diverse population. The ideology is expressed most colourfully in the themes illustrated in the *surtout de table*, which consisted of sculptural compositions of Russian peasants carrying fruit dishes, and the dessert plates included in each place setting with themes dedicated to the different peoples inhabiting the empire.

Work on the imperial order began in 1809, and the earliest information we have regarding it is contained in a report by Dmitry Guryev, [5] which begins with the words: "On the first day of January this year [1810], gifted to Your Imperial Highness..." [6]. In the attached register, the "gifted" objects are listed, with one of the headings being: "Dessert service depicting costumes of the Russian lands". [7] This name allows us to draw conclusions about how the main concept of this ensemble developed. The words "costumes of the Russian lands" (Rus: rossiskie kostyumy) contain a clear reference to the illustrated volumes of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, whose titles usually mentioned the traditional clothing of the figures depicted. We may assume that when work began, decoration of the dessert plates was top priority, to be based on engravings from publications on this theme. Proof of this is the vast amount of work that factory painters carried out over a very short period of time: on 1 January 1810, the majority of the objects from this service presented to the Emperor were painted plates — 98 of them are listed in the register attached to the report.

By that time, factory painters already had sufficient material to use as a source for decorations. Based on this material, plate decorations were divided into two types: ethnographic depictions of members of various ethnic groups and peoples of Russia, and genre-type scenes of the life of the urban population.

A new edition of "Russia Revealed" engravings, accompanied by texts compiled by Georgi, [8] was one of the important sources. Furthermore, the materials published in it were used in foreign illustrated publications printed in England, France, and Germany, which also helped to give this topic wide exposure. The toolkit was increased by works from new authors, both Russians and foreigners serving in Russia, who made a valuable contribution to the visual array. These include engravings by John Atkinson [9], but the most common subjects were taken from books containing the drawings of Christian Gottfried Henrich Geissler [10]. The diverse work of this artist includes not only many ethnographic subjects, but also scenes from the life of the urban population of Russia — street vendors and people transporting goods. Another richly illustrated source appeared in 1812-1813 — a two-volume work [11] with 95 engravings of drawings by Yemelyan Korneev, an artist who in 1802-1804 made a voyage through the Asian and European parts of Russia, organised at the behest of Alexander I.

We must note that the sources used for copying, published in the late 18th-early 19th century, have significant stylistic differences, which can be explained both by the natural gradual development of art, the individual features of the artist's talent,

Dessert plate from the Guryev service depicting Crimean gypsies
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
1809–1815
Porcelain
Pelerhof State Museum and Reserve
Inv. No. ПДМП 3192-ф

Dessert plate from the Guryev service depicting a Samoyed woman
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
1809–1815
Porcelain
Pelerhof State Museum and Reserve
Inv. No. ПДМП 3202-ф

Dessert plate from the Guryev service depicting a Kyrgyz sultana
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
1809–1815
Porcelain
Pelerhof State Museum and Reserve
Inv. No. ПДМП 3205-ф

Dessert plate from the Guryev service depicting a Finnish butter vendor
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
1809–1815
Porcelain
Pelerhof State Museum and Reserve
Inv. No. ПДМП 3195-ф

and the different design of the books. A comparison of the printed originals and the decoration on the plates shows that work with the specimens was often creative in nature and not simple copying. Usually the artists who painted the porcelain copied the pose and costume of the figures relatively precisely, sometimes selecting them from a composition with many figures, but made changes in the background. Often they created a completely new landscape or interior that would give an idea about the surroundings in which the people lived. These methods became the common elements of the decorations on the service's dessert plates, giving them a certain stylistic unity and reducing the differences between specimens created by different artists. The visual harmony of all the plates when placed together on the table is to a considerable degree created by the gold ornament that frames the pictures, while the edges of the plates are painted puce, [12] integrating them into the general ensemble of the service.

This extensive "porcelain encyclopaedia" of the peoples of Russia, with depictions of the peoples of the Baltic, Siberia, Kamchatka, the Far North, Central Asia, the Black Sea region, and Central Russia, remains a unique phenomenon. At present, based on surviving documents, we can say for certain that 141 painted plates were produced during the reign of Alexander; perhaps this figure will increase if new discoveries are made. The plates of the Alexandrine era have no marks, but many have the words *Manf re Imper le de Russie* (Imperial Manufactory of Russia) on the reverse, as well as the name of the subject.

Before they reached the china cabinets of the Winter Palace, the plates were presented to the emperor as "gifted items", along with other dishes from the service. This traditionally took place at Easter and Christmas. The Guryev service became less relevant during the reign of Nicholas I, and in 1848 was moved to the summer residence in Peterhof. In the first years of the reign of Alexander II it once more began to be valued for its merits, and from 1857 constant additions were made to the service, a process which continued into the early 20th century. The service is mentioned in the Kammerfurier journals in descriptions of ceremonies held at the Great Peterhof palace. Currently the bulk of the service is kept at the Peterhof State Museum and Reserve.

1 Tamara Nosovich is the deputy general director for registration and storage at the Peterhof State Museum and Reserve.
2 *Russia Revealed, or a Collection of the Clothing of All Peoples Residing in the Russian Empire.* Nos. 1–13. St Petersburg, 1774–1776. Watercolour-painted engravings by Christoph Melchior Roth (1720–1798).
3 Johann Gottlieb Georgi. *Beschreibung aller Nationen des Russischen Reichs, ihrer Lebensart, Religion, Gebräuche, Wohnungen, Kleidung und übrigen Merkwürdigkeiten.* St Petersburg, 1776–1780. Vols. 1–4.
4 "You say so much about the boundaries of the empire. I must tell you about the more than eighty peoples that inhabit this empire. A book has been published about this by a professor of the Academy, Georgi; it is extremely interesting. It describes the inhabitants of the empire from the Marble Palace to the caves, all the faiths and sects, so please, come to visit and ask whatever you wish about buildings, languages, and beliefs: it will all be found." (*Russian Archives. Book 3. Letters of Catherine the Great to Baron Grimm.* 7 December 1782. Moscow, 1878. p. 83).
5 Dmitry Alexandrovich Guryev (1751–1825) was a count, Russian statesman, head of His Majesty's Cabinet, and later Minister of Finance and Minister of Royal Properties.
6 Russian State Historical Archives of St Petersburg. F. 468. Op. 1. D. 3927. L. 110.
7 Ibid., Op. 10. D. 1. L. 24. Later documents used, simply, "Russian" (Rus.: russkiy): "Additionally, by order of the Court office, the following items of the Russian service have been gifted ..." (Ibid., Op. 1. D. 3928). The modern name, "Guryev", began to be used around 1824, from the name of Dmitry Guryev, who took charge of the Imperial Porcelain Factory in 1802.
8 Johann Gottlieb Georgi. *Description of All Peoples Living in the Russian State: Their Rituals, Customs, Clothing, Dwellings, Activities, Amusements, Beliefs, and Other Notable Facts.* Vols. 1-4, St Petersburg, 1799
9 John Atkinson, John Walker. *A Picturesque Representation of the Manners, Customs, and Amusements of the Russians: in One Hundred Coloured Plates, with an Accurate Explanation of Each Plate in English and French: in 3 vols.* London: W. Bulmer and Co, 1803–1804.
10 Peter Simon Pallas. *Neue Reisen in die Südlicher Statthalterschaften des Russischen Reichs.* Leipzig, 1799–1801. Vols. 1–2; Peter Simon Pallas. *Travels Through the Southern Provinces of the Russian Empire in the Years 1793 and 1794.* London, 1802–1803. Vols. 1–2; Friedrich Hempel, Christian Gottfried Henrich Geissler. *Abbildung und Beschreibung der Völkerstämme und Völker unter des russischen Kaiser Alexander menschenfreundlichen Regierung.* Leipzig, 1803; Christian Gottfried Henrich Geissler. *Mahlerische Darstellungen der Sitten Gebräuche und Lustbarkeiten bey den Russischen, Tatarischen, Mongolischen und andern Völkern im Russischen Reich.* Leipzig, 1803. Vols. 1–4; Christian Gottfried Henrich Geissler, Friedrich Hempel. *Tableaux pittoresques des moeurs, des usages et des divertissements des Russes, Tartares, Mongols et autres nations de l'empire russe.* Leipzig, 1804; Christian Gottfried Henrich Geissler. Spiele und Belustigungen der Russen aus den niedern Volks-Klassen. Leipzig, 1805.Through the Southern Provinces of the Russian Empire in the Years 1793 and 1794. London, 1802–1803. Vols 1–2; Hempel C. F., Geissler C. G. H. Abbildung und Beschreibung der Völkerstämme und Völker unter des russischen Kaiser Alexander menschenfreundlichen Regierung. Leipzig, 1803; Geissler C. G. H. Mahlerische Darstellungen der Sitten Gebräuche und Lustbarkeiten bey den Russischen, Tatarischen, Mongolischen und andern Völkern im Russischen Reich. Leipzig, 1803. Bde. 1–4; Geissler C. G. H., Hempel F. Tableaux pittoresques des moeurs, des usages et des divertissements des Russes, Tartares, Mongols et autres nations de l'empire russe. Leipzig, 1804; Geissler C. G. H. *Spiele und Belustigungen der Russen aus den niedern Volks-Klassen.* Leipzig, 1805.
11 Charles de Rechberg. *Les peuples de la Russie, ou Description des moeurs, usages et costumes des diverses nations de l'Empire de Russie.* Paris, 1812–1813.
12 The reddish-brown colour of the items from the Guryev service was called "puce paint" in documents from the early 19th century. Puce is a brownish shade of red, the colour of a squashed flea, from the French word "puce", meaning flea.

A PORCELAIN TEXTBOOK OF ETHNOGRAPHY

Pavel Kamensky's Peoples of Russia series of figurines

BY YEKATERINA KHMELNITSKAYA [1]

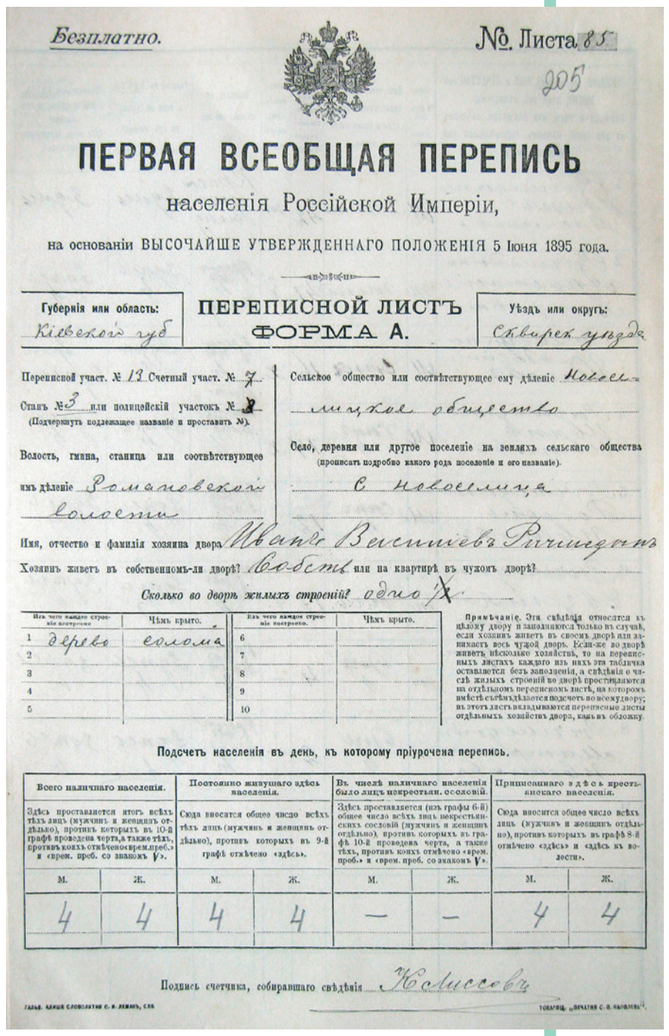
Portrait of Pavel Kamensky
Photograph. 1912
Colleclion of D.V. Voronin

The idea of popularising the theme of Russia and its multi-ethnic composition held a special importance in the works of the Imperial Porcelain Factory in Petersburg starting in the 18th century. The first *Peoples of Russia* series was made during the reign of Catherine the Great by French sculptor Jean-Dominique Rachette, which also glorified the "Mother Empress", ruler of a wealthy and enormous country.

The order for the next large series of figures — depicting representatives of various peoples of Russia — was initiated personally by Emperor Nicholas II in early 1907: "It pleased the Lord Emperor to express the wish that a collection of painted porcelain figures be made at the imperial factory." [4] An important task given to the factory's administration was creating a new principle for and approach to their depictions: they had to be fundamentally different from the Peoples of Russia series from the time of Catherine the Great, generally acknowledged as a masterpiece of Russian porcelain. By the early 20th century, the figures had ceased to be a symbol of "ethnographic rarity" or "depictions of exotic people", and had instead become portraits if not of close neighbours, then at least of easily recognisable inhabitants of different regions of Russia. The perceptive and experienced head of the factory, Nikolai Borisovich Volf, realised that a repetition of the Rachette series would be doomed to fail, and that a completely new approach would be required to fulfil the royal order successfully.

THE PEOPLES OF RUSSIA SERIES BY PAVEL PAVLOVICH KAMENSKY (1858–1922) IS A STORY TOLD IN PORCELAIN ABOUT RUSSIA'S MAIN SOURCE OF WEALTH — THE CULTURES OF THE ETHNIC GROUPS LIVING IN IT [2]. IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY, RUSSIA WAS A COUNTRY WITH INCREDIBLE ETHNIC DIVERSITY. IN 1929 ART CRITIC AND WRITER IVAN LUKASH NOTED: "ALL THE IMAGES OF THE EMPIRE MADE THEIR FRAGILE MARK ON PORCELAIN, AND IF ONLY PORCELAIN FRAGMENTS WERE LEFT OF RUSSIA, WE COULD STILL GET AN IDEA OF ITS MAJESTY AND NOBILITY FROM THEM... OLD RUSSIA WAS NOT ONLY POWDERED: IT WAS ALSO PORCELAIN." [3]

Employees of the Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography
Photograph. EARLY 20TH CENTURY
Private collection



Безплатно. № Листа 85 205

ПЕРВАЯ ВСЕОБЩАЯ ПЕРЕПИСЬ
населенія Россійской Имперіи,
на основаніи ВЫСОЧАЙШЕ УТВЕРЖДЕННАГО ПОЛОЖЕНІЯ 5 Іюня 1895 года.

Губернія или область: Кіевской губ | ПЕРЕПИСНОЙ ЛИСТЪ ФОРМА А. | Уѣздъ или округъ: Сквирск уѣздъ

Переписной участ. № 13. Счетный участ. № 7
Станъ №3 или полицейскій участокъ № 3 (Подчеркнуть подлежащее названіе и проставить №).
Волость, гмина, станица или соотвѣтствующее имъ дѣленіе Романовской волости
Сельское общество или соотвѣтствующее ему дѣленіе Новосел-ицкое общество
Село, деревня или другое поселеніе на земляхъ сельскаго общества (прописать подробно какого рода поселеніе и его названіе). С Новосѣлицы
Имя, отчество и фамилія хозяина двора Иванъ Васильевъ Ричицкій
Хозяинъ живетъ въ собственномъ-ли дворѣ? Собств. или на квартирѣ въ чужомъ дворѣ?
Сколько во дворѣ жилыхъ строеній? одно

Изъ чего каждое строеніе построено	Чѣмъ крыто.		Изъ чего каждое строеніе построено.	Чѣмъ крыто.
1	дерево	солома	6	
2			7	
3			8	
4			9	
5			10	

Примѣчаніе. Эти свѣдѣнія относятся къ цѣлому двору и записываются только въ случаѣ, если хозяинъ живетъ въ своемъ дворѣ или занимаетъ весь чужой дворъ. Если же во дворѣ живетъ нѣсколько хозяевъ, то на переписныхъ листахъ каждаго изъ нихъ эта таблица оставляется безъ заполненія, а свѣдѣнія о числѣ жилыхъ строеній во дворѣ проставляются на отдѣльномъ переписномъ листѣ, на которомъ имѣетъ съѣхаться подсчетъ по всему двору; въ этотъ листъ вкладываются переписные листы отдѣльныхъ хозяйствъ двора, какъ въ обложку.

Подсчетъ населенія въ день, къ которому пріурочена перепись.

Всего наличнаго населенія.		Постоянно живущаго здѣсь населенія.		Въ числѣ наличнаго населенія было лицъ непрогоятыхъ сословій.		Приписаннаго здѣсь крестьянскаго населенія.	
Здѣсь проставляется итогъ всѣхъ тѣхъ лицъ (мужчинъ и женщинъ отдѣльно), противъ которыхъ въ 10-й графѣ проведена черта, также тѣхъ, противъ коихъ отмѣчено время пребыванія «врем. проб. со знакомъ V».		Сюда вносятся общее число всѣхъ тѣхъ лицъ (мужчинъ и женщинъ отдѣльно), противъ которыхъ въ 9-й графѣ отмѣчено «здѣсь».		Здѣсь проставляется (изъ графы 6-й) общее число всѣхъ лицъ некрестьянскихъ сословій (мужчинъ и женщинъ отдѣльно), противъ которыхъ въ графѣ 10-й проведена черта, а также тѣхъ, противъ коихъ отмѣчено «врем. пробъ» и «врем. проб. со знакомъ V».		Сюда вносится общее число всѣхъ лицъ (мужчинъ и женщинъ отдѣльно), противъ которыхъ въ графѣ 8-й отмѣчено «здѣсь» и «здѣсь къ вопросу»..	
М.	Ж.	М.	Ж.	М.	Ж.	М.	Ж.
4	4	4	4	—	—	4	4

Подпись счетчика, собиравшаго свѣдѣнія Колмыковъ

ГАЛЕВ. ЛАВКИ СЛОВОЛИТИ С. П. ЛЕВИНЪ, СПБ. ТОВАРИЩ. „ПЕЧАТНЯ С. П. ЯЗЫКОВЫЙ".

National census of the Russian Empire. Census form. 1897

According to archival sources, in February and March of 1907 Volf sent letters to scientific institutes and museums requesting assistance in finding new methods to create a *Peoples of Russia* series and in compiling a list of peoples living in Russia in the early 20th century. [5] The director of the Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, academician and leading Russian oriental and Turkic scholar Vasily Vasilievich Radlov, reported that his museum employees would be glad to provide any assistance they could. Most importantly, however, Radlov himself agreed to volunteer and provide consultations to the sculptors and artists of the factory on various elements of costumes and other ethnographic details that sometimes required additional explanation. Radlov also guaranteed that together with his museum employees he would personally verify the ethnographic and anthropological accuracy of each model to avoid errors and inaccuracies. [6] Having secured the support of this renowned scholar, Volf appointed sculptor Pavel Kamensky to create the series.

Hereditary aristocrat Pavel Pavlovich Kamensky, the grandson of Russian painter, medal maker, sculptor, and vice president of the Imperial Academy of Arts Count Fyodor Petrovich Tolstoy, had long served as a designer at the imperial theatres. In late 1889, the director of the imperial theatres Ivan Alexandrovich Vsevolozhsky appointed him head of the prop workshop. [7] As a theatre designer who also made costume mannequins, Kamensky knew the importance of detail in a field as specialized as costume design.

The work was strictly regimented. Kamensky, like all employees of the porcelain factory who participated in creating the models, used the materials provided by the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography and the ethnographic section of the Russian Museum of Alexander III as his guide. The master porcelain artists received the unique opportunity to have direct contact with museum exhibits in order to best perform their task. [8]

Kamensky and Volf were uncertain about which ethnicities should be a part of the new Peoples of Russia series. Radlov came to the rescue, suggesting that they use the results of the nationwide census of 1897 as criteria for selecting the figures. The list of peoples was approved by the royal cabinet, for which the political component was just as important as representa-

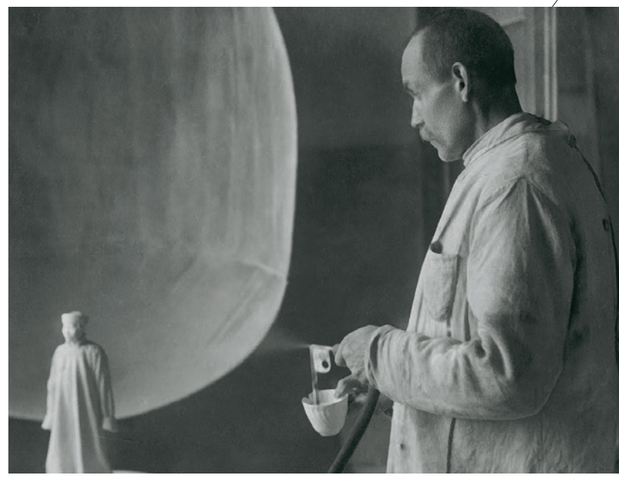
tion of the ethnic group or ethnographic and anthropological accuracy. The list of figures chosen indirectly reflected the client's priorities in this matter.

According to archival documents, over 146 figures were planned. [9] The list of the first figures to be made included 33 ethnic groups. As a model, the emperor approved the figure of a resident of the Amur Region and Sakhalin — a Gilyak (Nivkh) woman — and ordered other figures to be manufactured in a similar manner, three or four a year, to be presented prior to Christmas.[10] This series was to be the largest project undertaken by the Petersburg factory's sculpture workshop in recent decades. The head of the factory calculated that it would take 18 to 25 years to complete the series at a rate of three or four figures a year. The expenses were determined as follows "... the sculptor is to be paid 100 to 150 roubles for the model, and the painter from 20 to 50 roubles for decoration". [11]

The amount of work entrusted to one master was colossal. But Kamensky worked ahead of schedule, presenting up to 15 new models annually.[12] According to archival data, by early 1913, 53 figures had been sculpted and painted. Later, with the outbreak of World War I, work on the series slowed down. By 1915 practically all of the figures of the peoples included on the first list had been made in porcelain, in both large and small versions. [13]

At present, we know of the existence of 74 figures, the largest collection of which is found at the State Hermitage. The figures were made in porcelain, with overglaze and underglaze polychromatic painting. Their average height was 40 centimetres. Models were also created on a reduced scale, usually for gifts to ethnographic museums. In the factory's archival documents for 1907, there are several orders for small biscuit figures to be delivered to the collection of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography. Large figures were intended for members of the royal family.

This series, which encapsulated all of the smaller-scale ensembles of ethnographic figures, is of particular interest for its completeness, the thorough and careful reproduction of all features of the appearance and costumes of peoples inhabiting Russia. After the 1917 revolution many of the figures from the *Peoples of Russia* series remained an integral part of the assortment of the State Porcelain Factory. These sculptures, often painted in "imaginative" ways, were for sale to the public. The ideological significance of this collection, demonstrating the majesty and might of the Russian Empire, also proved appropriate for the Soviet period. "This porcelain textbook of ethnography played its modest role in the cultural rapport of the peoples of Russia and helped to nurture respect in society for their national identity." [14]



Glazer in the porcelain factory's sculpture workshop with a statuette of a Buryat man
Photograph
1910-s
Nasledie Foundation,
Imperial Porcelain Factory

1 Yekaterina Khmelnitskaya is a doctor of art history, senior research associate, and custodian of the porcelain section at the State Hermitage's Department of the History of Russian Culture.
2 Russian State Historical Archive. F. 503. Op. 1 (562/2428). D. 21. L. 1.
3 Ivan Lukash, *Porcelain Russia. At an Exhibition in Sèvres.* Paris, 1929. p. 3
4 Russian State Historical Archive. F. 503. Op. 1 (562/2428). D. 21. L. 1.
5 Ibid. L. 19.
6 Ibid. L. 8.
7 Ibid. F. 497. Op. 5. D. 1339. L. 7.
8 Ibid. L. 70.
9 Ibid. F. 503. Op. 1 (562/2428). D. 21. L. 5.
10 Ibid. L. 68.
11 Ibid. L. 67.
12 Ibid. L. 74.
13 Ibid. L. 153–167.
14 Tamara Zinovyeva. "Ethnographic porcelain figures" // *Decorative Art of the USSR.* 1982. No. 11. p. 47.

Buryat Man
State Porcelain Factory, Leningrad
Sculptor Pavel Kamensky
late 1920s-1930s
Model from the 1910s (small model)
Porcelain, polychromatic
overglaze painting, gilding
Height: 19.3 cm
Private collection

Gilyak (Nivkh) Man
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
Sculptor Pavel Kamensky
1907. model of 1907
Porcelain, polychromatic overglaze
painting and gilding
Height: 39.5 cm
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРФ-3676

PHOTO © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Saratov Governorate Peasant Woman
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
Sculptor Pavel Kamensky
1910s
Model from 1913 (small model)
Porcelain
Height: 20 cm
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРФ-3725

Factory Museum
Photograph
1910-s
Nasledie Foundation,
Imperial Porcelain Factory

Hunter with golden eagle
Photo: Samuil Dudin
1899
Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Russian Academy of Sciences

Bridal attire. Kazakhs. Western Altai LATE 19TH CENTURY
Russian Ethnographic Museum, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Russian Academy of Sciences

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

WITH A GOLDEN EAGLE PERCHED ON THE SLEEVE OF HIS BESHMET

ETHNIC COSTUMES: AN ILLUSTRATED COMPARISON OF MOTIFS IN THE CLOTHING OF PEOPLES OF DIFFERENT REGIONS.

BY YEKATERINA KHMELNITSKAYA

Man's costume. Kazakhs. Eastern Kazakhstan
LATE 19TH CENTURY
Russian Ethnographic Museum, Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Russian Academy of Sciences

PHOTO: SAMUIL DUDIN

Woman in bridal attire and saukele headdress
Photo: Samuil Dudin
1899
Peter the Great Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography of the Russian Academy of Sciences

In the historical and cultural context of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the theme of Russia became "almost all-encompassing", according to an observation by Gleb Gennadevich Pospelov [1] (Figs. 11, 12). The search for a national ideal, in light of the diversity of peoples inhabiting Russia, was taken very seriously by artists in the late 1900s and early 1910s. Archaic, pagan Russia came to life in the philosophical canvases of Nikolai Roerich, while the paintings of Natalya Goncharova, which looked at the world "through the eyes of the woodcut", astonished viewers with their crude, barbaric power and childish naïveté. The idea of cultural diversity and "ethnic colour" entered different spheres of artistic life, including porcelain manufacture.

The sculptor Pavel Kamensky portrayed in porcelain various, specific features of the appearance of each of the peoples inhabiting Russia. With assistance from specialists from the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography and the ethnographic department of the Russian Museum, he "spoke in the language of porcelain" about the traditions and features of each ethnic group living in the Russian Empire being a dialectic phenomenon linked not only with the past, but also with the present, and possibly with the future. He wanted to show the direct link with modernity in porcelain, "as no people stops in its development, but constantly changes, and changes of an artistic nature are invariably connected with these variables." [2] Kamensky approached the depiction of the national costume with particular reverence, realising that this clothing always reflects the most important things in the life of a people: the details of their everyday existence and the uniqueness of their perception of the world, their long-standing traditions, and their artistic tastes. Traditional clothing tells us about the various ethnic groups that formed into one people, who their neighbours were, and the historical processes that led to changes in their costume. Kamensky interpreted the costume as a kind of historical and cultural monument, which is why he gave it so much attention when he portrayed it in porcelain.

In order to get an idea of how precisely and scrupulously Kamensky worked, we will describe just one pair of sculptures — the Kyrgyz man and woman. With the assistance of the employees of the Museum of Anthropology and Ethnography, the sculptor chose the image of a Kyrgyz man from a wealthy family. This is not only shown by his clothing, but also in his variable physical features, one of which is his corpulence, as "any Kyrgyz who lives sufficiently well, or 'freely', one might say, starts to get fat. The public opinion of a person's worth is connected to this: the fatter a Kyrgyz is, the more respected he is," researcher Vasily Dmitrievich Tronov wrote in the late 19th century. [3] According to the scholar, the Kyrgyz have "quite large noses, usually flattened, with a wide bridge; the inner corners of their eyes are usually covered with one fold of skin from the nose to the eyelids; and they have strongly developed and prominent cheekbones". [4] When we compare these descriptions with the porcelain figurines, we only find one mistake: the outer corners of the eyes are higher than the inner corners in relation to a horizontal line; they have so-called "slanted" eyes. [5] Kamensky confused this feature both in the female and the male sculpture. It is interesting that in one "Kyrgyz woman" statuette painted in the 1920s these "slanted" eyes were particularly precisely outlined in black.

All the features of the male costume are easily recognisable when compared with their actual clothing. The costume consists of the malakai hat, the beshmet tunic, the *shalbar* (or *kandagai*) pants, and the *yelik* shoes. The *beshmet* is sewn to fit the wearer, and is mid-hip length, with long sleeves. It is tucked into the pants and tied with a narrow leather belt, the *kise*, which is an obligatory element of the clothing of a warrior, hunter, or cattle-breeder. He wears leather shoes with rounded toes and a low heel, sewn in the same shape with no difference between left and right, allowing them to be worn for longer, as they could be switched from one foot to the other.

Kamensky was probably portraying a man going hunting with a golden eagle — a *burkutchu*. This is shown by the extra-long sleeves of his *beshmet*, allowing the eagle to safely perch on his arm, which is especially visible on the left sleeve. The leather bag attached to the belt usually contained bird food. Traditionally, "hunting fox or corsac fox (Vulpes corsac) with a golden eagle was a favourite Kyrgyz pastime". [6]

Kamensky portrayed the Kyrgyz woman in wedding attire. The red velvet dress is called a *koidek*. She wears red *yelik* boots with heels. On her head she wears a special headdress, a *saukele*, which is a tall hat (up to 70 centimetres tall) with an elongated form, richly decorated with silver, pearls, and cowrie shells. A shawl of light fabric was worn over this costume, the same colour as the dress. It was used to cover the entire costume, as well as the face, and was removed during the ritual of *betashar* ("revealing the bride's face"). The woman's costume also had additional ornaments — jangling *sholpy* and *shashbau* pendants, chains, and strands of coral and silver or metal discs. These ornaments did not just serve a decorative purpose. The Kyrgyz believed in their magic power to provide protection from the evil eye and evil spirits.

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Kyrgyz Man and Kyrgyz Woman paired sculptures Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
Sculptor Pavel Kamensky
Kyrgyz Man: 1908. Model from 1907. Height: 40 cm.
Mould by Pavel Shmakov
Kyrgyz Woman: 1911. Model from 1910. Height: 45 cm.
Mould by Anatoly Lukin
Porcelain, polychromatic overglaze painting, gilding.
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРФ-3699, ЭРФ-3700

BY YEKATERINA KHMELNITSKAYA

Russian peasants of the Penza Governate. Photograph
1862
Source: Nikolay Orlov. Types of People in the Penza Governorate. Penza, 1862. p. 41
Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.

PORCELAIN PEOPLE

PAVEL KAMENSKY, WHO CREATED THE PORCELAIN SERIES PEOPLES OF RUSSIA, BELIEVED THAT ANTHROPOLOGICAL ACCURACY WAS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF HIS WORK. (FIG. 22).

During Kamensky's era, researchers focused their attention on so-called anthropological types, which modern science would place into the category of physical anthropology. Comparing facial features, skull structure, height, and physique revealed ethnic groups' specific physical traits. Doctor Vasily Dmitrievich Tronov gave a very interesting description of his work in this field. In 1888-1889, he conducted "an anthropological analysis of the lives and physical and moral nature" of the Kyrgyz people in the Zaisan district of the Semipalatinsk province. "As there have been few studies made of the Kyrgyz, I thought it pertinent to make a small contribution to the study of the anthropology of the Kyrgyz and the classification of their physical type... I acquired measuring instruments: a Broca goniometer, spreading callipers, sliding callipers, a steel band, a Mathieu dynamometer (for muscle strength), and a table for determining aculeness of vision... When I made measurements of men and women, some of which I did in hospital, and some with inmates of a soldiers' prison, usually the men took off their shirts and pants. The initial concept of a living type is formed from impressions obtained while examining representatives of a particular type." [1] Tronov's observations are astounding for their scrupulous accuracy. For example, "...the width of eyes for men (from the inner corner to the outer corner of the same eye with open eyelids) is 3 cm; for women 3.5; the length of the hand for men is 17 cm, for women 16. In relation to height, taken as 100, the length of the hand is 10.5". [2] The results of these studies were given to Kamensky so that he might draw up a correct "anthropological" portrait.

The sculptor also had access to so-called anthropological photographs of representatives of different peoples made in profile and en face. He acquired these photographs from scholars who had taken them at scientific research institutes and museums. During one expedition to Yakutia, researchers not only made a detailed photographic record of the heads of male and female Yakuts at different angles, but also took plaster casts, similar to death masks, leaving holes only for the eyes and nose. All the volunteers who took part in this study received a generous cash reward.

All the measurements and casts were then analysed mathematically, in order to obtain average statistical data for each group. [3] These materials were used in creating anthropological mannequins, which were subsequently exhibited in museums, and also served as specimens for Kamensky. Thus the sculp-

PHOTO: SAMUIL DUDIN

Ukrainian woman's costume. Pollava Governorate, Zolotonoshsky District
LATE 19TH — EARLY 20TH CENTURY
Russian Museum of Ethnography

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Sculpture: Malorossian Woman (Ukranian Woman)
Imperial Porcelain Factory and Glassworks, St Petersburg
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. 8761–2874

1 Quoted in: Tamara Galeeva. *The Creative Path of B.D. Grigoriev (1886–1939)*; art history PhD dissertation. Moscow: Research Institute of the Theory and History of the Fine Arts, Russian Academy of Arts, 2000. p. 67.
2 Russia State Historical Archives. F. 503. Op. 1 (562/2428). D. 21. L. 67.
3 Vasily Tronov. *Materials on the Anthropology and Ethnology of the Kyrgyz.* St Petersburg: P.O. Yablonsky steam press, 1891. p. 9.
4 Ibid., p. 3.
5 Ibid.
6 *Guide to the Great Siberian Railroad.* Edited by Aleksandr Dmitriev-Mamonov and Anton Zdzyarsky. St Petersburg: Ministry of Transportation, 1900. p. 179.

Bazaar scenery. Russian ethnographic exhibition in Moscow. 1867
Library of Congress, Washington, D. C.

Sayon (Tuvan) Woman
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1810

lor was able lo reproduce in porcelain wilh greal accuracy lhe characlerislic features of lhe bodily slructure for each anlhropological lype. Special allenlion was given lo conveying lhe proporlions and features of lhe face correclly. For example, prolruding cheekbones are characlerislic for lhe Mongoloid lype, as well as prolruding eye sockel edges and weakly developed eyebrow ridges. Additionally, as Edward Burnell Tylor believed, “[t]he expression of the human face, on which intelligence and feeling write themselves in visible characters, requires an artist’s training to understand and describe”. [4] Kamensky was the first porcelain sculptor to make an extensive study — from photographs and drawings — of representatives of individual peoples for the creation of a proper image.

Arlisls of lhe St Petersburg porcelain factory lradilionally paid parlicular allenlion lo “coloristic accuracy”. Their lasks included selecling lhe correcl paints lo convey skin colour, from lhe swarthy brownish-yellow hues of lhe peoples of lhe Far Easl and Centrral Asia lo lhe white and lender pink complexion of lhe peoples of Northern Europe and lhe seemingly “lransparenl” skin of lhe Lapps. Reproducing lhe correcl hair lexture was also imporlanl, from wiry and slraighl lo soft and curly. Arlisls compleled lheir work by giving lhe hair lypical shades: pilch black, brown, reddish brown, or blond. The eye colour was also conveyed precisely: lighl grey eyes for lhe peasanls of lhe Tula Governorale, blue eyes for lhe Mordvins, and brown eyes for lhe peoples of lhe Caucasus and Centrral Asia.

Kamensky managed lhe lask brilliantly. Wilh lhe aid of consullanls from lhe Museum of Anlhropology and Elhnography and lhe elhnographic departmenl of lhe Russian Museum of Alexander III, lhe sculptor precisely recorded in porcelain lhe mosl common lype in each ethnic group based on lhe hislorical, anlhropological, and elhnographic sludies available lo him. In many cases we can give a scienlific juslificalion for lhe reasons he chose a certain feature or specific coslume. Nowadays lhis series is extremely valuable, especially as many elhnographic artefacts have nol survived lo lhe presenl day. Thanks lo lhe accuracy of his work, Kamensky’s figurines can be used as “documenls” for sludying lhe elhnic composilion of Russia in lhe early 20lh century. This example demonslrales lhe uniqueness of lhe Russian lradilion of porcelain, capable of being nol jusl a work of arl, bul also a hislorical “leslimony”, lhe likes of which cannol be found anywhere else in Europe.

1 Vasily Tronov. *Materials on the Anthropology and Ethnology of the Kyrgyz.* St Petersburg: P.O. Yablonsky steam press, 1891. p. 2.
2 Ibid., p. 34.
3 See: Thomas Ross Miller, Barbara Malhé. “Drawing Shadows to Stone”. *Drawing Shadows to Stone: The Photography of the Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, 1897–1902. New York: American Museum of Natural History; Washington: University of Washington Press, 1997. p. 20.
4 Edward B. Tylor. *Anthropology. An Introduction to the Study of Man and Civilization*. New York: D Appleton and Company, 1896. p. 65

Sarl Man
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1760

Korean Man
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1806

Bulgarian Man
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1770

Goldi (Nanai) Man
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1792

Lapp Man
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1794

Finnish Man
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1796

Crimean Tatar Woman
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1775

Mongolian Woman
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1826

Ainu Man
Imperial Porcelain Factory, St Petersburg
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРФ-3696

Armenian Man
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1772

Kyrgyz Man
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. Д-С-1028

Man from Lillle Russia (Ukraine)
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1786

Olonets Woman
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1816

Mingrelian Man
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1807

Georgian Woman
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРФ-3716

Turkmen Man
Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1808

Estonian Woman
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1821

Chinese Man
The Slate Hermitage Museum,
St Petersburg
Inv. No. Мз-И-1756

Kyrgyz Woman
Slate Porcelain Factory, Leningrad
Sculptor Pavel Kamensky
LATE 1920S
Model from 1910 (small model)
Porcelain, polychromatic overglaze painting
Height: 24.5 cm
Yelagin Island Museum and Palace

Koruna, a young woman's headdress
Russia, northern governorates. 19th century
The State Hermitage, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРТ-10436

TRADITIONAL RUSSIAN DRESS

in the Costume Gallery of the Staraya Derevnya Restoration and Storage Centre

NATALYA NEKRASOVA

THE STATE HERMITAGE POSSESSES THE BEST COLLECTION OF HISTORICAL GARMENTS IN RUSSIA, AND ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT IN ALL OF EUROPE. THE JEWEL AND HALLMARK OF THE COLLECTION ARE THE ITEMS FROM THE ROMANOVS' WARDROBE: FROM PETER I TO NICHOLAS II. THE MUSEUM IS ALSO RIGHTFULLY PROUD OF ITS COLLECTIONS OF MILITARY AND CIVILIAN UNIFORMS, CHURCH VESTMENTS, FASHIONABLE DRESSES FROM THE BEST DESIGNERS AND TAILORS OF THE 19 TO THE 21ST CENTURIES, FABRICS, LACE, AND ACCESSORIES.

The textile artefacts of Russian folk culture occupy a special place in the Hermitage collection. They number about three thousand items, among which are examples of embroidery, weaving, and lace, headdresses, scarves, accessories, items of everyday clothing, and complete costumes from many Russian provinces. The earliest items date back to mid-to-late 18th century, while the latest ones are from the first half of the 20th.

The collection was gathered from various sources, including large and small private collections, nationalised palaces, gifts, purchases, and expeditionary acquisitions. The acquisition history of many of the exhibits is directly related to the passion for all things Russian that swept Russian society in the first decades of the 19th century and persisted until the beginning of the 20th. One expression of this interest was the fashion for collecting items from traditional Russian apparel. These items were often acquired haphazardly, without documenting their history. But in any case, thanks to these amateur collectors, a number of unique exhibits are now preserved in the Hermitage collection. One of these valuables is the sleeveless velvet jacket from Tver Governorate. It is unusual for its asymmetrical cut, which suggests that, in accordance with local tradition, the left hand was to remain hidden when worn. Drawings by famous artist and archaeologist Fyodor Solntsev made in the 1830s were one of the main sources aiding experts in the attribution of this item.

A number of Hermitage exhibits come from the Costume Class at the Imperial Academy of Arts. Its collection was one of the first to be regularly replenished with authentic samples of Russian folk clothing. The Costume Class had its origins in the Ryusl-Kamera, or Costume Chamber founded by the

Trim
European part of Russia
19th century
The State Hermitage, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРТ-5751

Dushegreya, a woman's wadded vest
Tver Governorate, Torzhok (?)
19th century
The State Hermitage, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРТ-15524

Young woman's headdress
Russia, northern governorates. 19th century
The State Hermitage, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРТ-10576

president of the Imperial Academy of Arts Alexey Nikolaevich Olenin in 1829. Items from the Museum of Old Russian Art at the Academy of Arts, transferred in 1885, became a valuable addition to the Costume Class. Well-known art critic Vladimir Vasilyevich Stasov wrote that it was «a museum that has not yet been surpassed in importance or in the beauty of its national dress by any of those that have emerged subsequently». [1] During the years of the revolution, the costume storerooms were decommissioned, and for a long time the fate of the national collection items remained unknown. After repeated transfers and renaming, some of them eventually reappeared in the Hermitage. These include examples of embroidered trim, kokoshniks (women's headdresses), shirts, vests, wadded vests, sarafans (sleeveless dresses), and shugai (women's short jackets), some of which had been identified as the same exhibits that were previously in the Museum of Old Russian Art. Research led to another small discovery: the famous painting Russian Girl by Karl Wenig of 1889 in the State Russian Museum depicts one of the Hermitage shugai.

Another group that deserves recognition in its own right are items that received a second life as part of masquerade balls. Russian-style balls were a frequent event in the life of the 19th century Russian aristocracy. Quite often, when making their masquerade costumes, high-society women of fashion used authentic folk items, and they were especially fond of headdresses. This practice was widespread even at court, as exemplified by the costumes created for the masquerade ball that took place at the Winter Palace in 1903.

That part of the Hermitage folk collection that was formed before the revolution contains almost no sets. But most of the museum's most significant items of apparel are found among these older, stand-alone exhibits.

In Soviet times, thanks to the robust expeditionary activities of the museum staff, magnificent examples of traditional dress from most of the regions of the European part of Russia were added to the collection. These valuable acquisitions have enriched the collection, giving it integrity and completeness.

The staff of the Department of Russian Cultural History is currently developing a plan to re-open the exhibition in the Costume Gallery at the Staraya Derevnya Restoration and Storage Centre, its subject being traditional Russian dress and its influence on fashion in the 19th and 20th centuries. Using the museum exhibits as an example, it will show how folk outfits have changed over time and from place to place under the influence of historical and cultural events. It will also display Russian-style clothing, masquerade costumes, and court dresses of the Russian aristocracy of the 18th and 19th centuries. Examples of modern costumes based on folk art will also be an important part of the exhibition. The entire exhibition will focus on comparing and contrasting the images, materials, and ideas of clothing from different eras, social groups, and regions of Russia, and in the end will attempt to formulate a general idea of what Russian dress is.

1 Vladimir Stasov, "Vasily Alexandrovich Prokhorov" // *Bulletin of Fine Arts*. 1885. Vol. III, Issue 4.

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Shugai, a peasant woman's short jacket
Kostroma Governorate
19th century
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРТ-7289

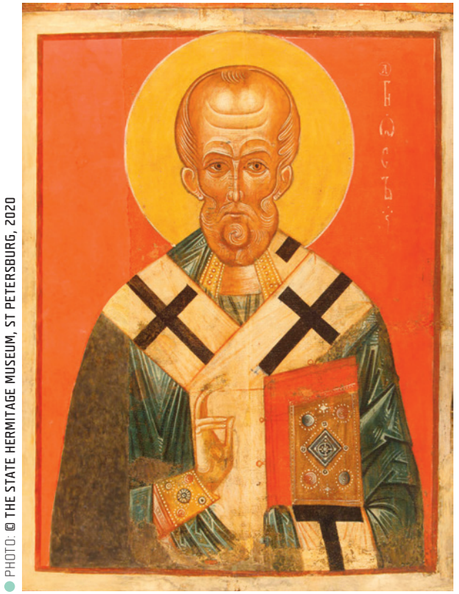


PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

80 YEARS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF RUSSIAN CULTURAL HISTORY AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM

THE EXHIBITS HELD IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RUSSIAN CULTURAL HISTORY AT THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM SPAN RUSSIA'S HISTORY AND CULTURE FROM THE FORMATION OF THE EARLIEST SLAVIC STATE TO THE PRESENT.

The order to establish the Department of Russian Cultural History at the Hermitage was given by academy fellow Joseph Orbeli, director of the State Hermitage Museum, on 26 April 1941. But the Russian part of the museum collection goes as far back as the reign of Catherine II, who collected the works of Russian artists and craftsmen, books, and documents for the Hermitage and royal residence.

In 1885, Hermitage director Aleksandr Vasilchikov decided to organise a Russian department at the museum for pieces from Old Russia, coins and medals, and the works from the Treasure Gallery and Peter's Gallery. At that time, Russian paintings, engravings, drawings, and miniatures were scattered among the museum's other departments.

When Alexander III's Imperial Russian Museum opened in 1898, nearly all the Russian paintings and some mosaics from the Hermitage were transferred there. It was only after the 1917 Revolution that the Hermitage received, through the Russian Museum's department of historical objects and the State Museum Collection, the entire nationalised collections of the Stroganov, Shuvalov, Bobrinsky, Yusupov, and Kurakin families, as well as the holdings of St Petersburg's foremost collectors of art and antiques — Ivan Galnbek, Fyodor Plyushkin, Evgeny Shvarts, and others. The almost 200,000 exhibits received in 1941 became the foundation of the Hermitage's "Russian department".

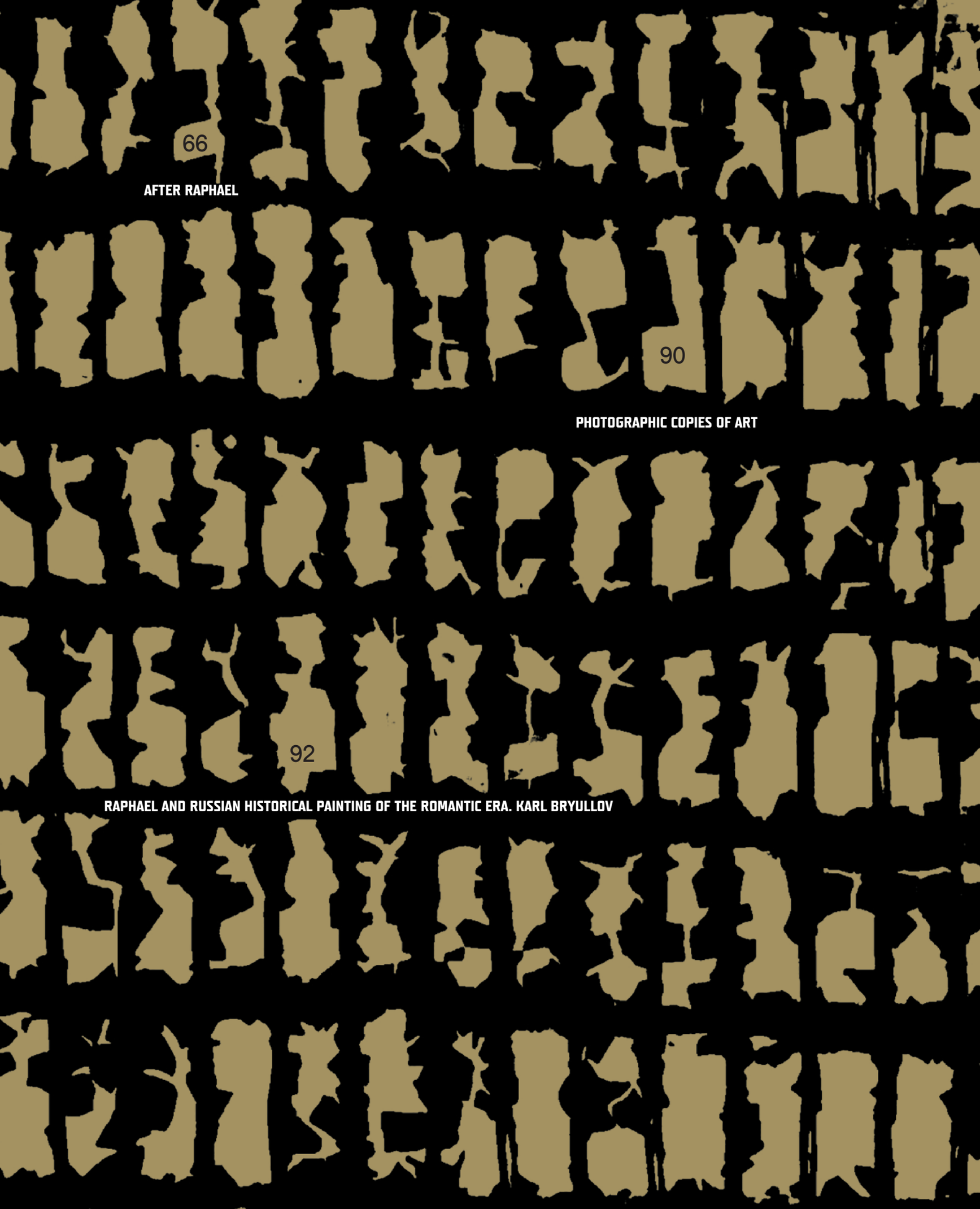
The earliest heads of the Russian department — Mikhail Krutikov and later Vladimir Vasiliev — held the post during the war years. Much of their efforts were dedicated to evacuating the department, getting the exhibits returned to Leningrad, setting up normal operation for the department in the post-war years, and processing and systematising the collection. The department resumed its regular research, exhibition, and publishing activities after the war. Meanwhile, new exhibits continued to arrive. In the 1940s and 1950s, the Russian department received a large number of exhibits from the Museum of Artillery History, the Museum of the Great October Socialist Revolution, the Institute of the History of Science and Technology, the Institute of the History of Material Culture under the USSR Academy of Sciences, and the National Repository of Valuables in Moscow. The museum also obtained unique artworks from ethnographic and archaeological expeditions undertaken for the purpose of identifying and conserving archaeological artefacts, Russian folk art, and church art. The department owes its collection of Old Russian icons almost entirely to the expeditions that explored and requisitioned items from historical churches and monasteries.

Icon of Saint Nicholas, Archbishop of Myra
Novgorod, early 15th century
Tempera on wood
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРИ-598

Carlo Bartolomeo Rastrelli
Portrait of Emperor Peter I
St Petersburg, 1719
Wax, painted gesso, glass, enamel; wig made from Peter I's hair
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРСк-157

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Ural Cossack woman's dress
Second half of the 19th century
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРТ-10239



66
AFTER RAPHAEL

90
PHOTOGRAPHIC COPIES OF ART

92
RAPHAEL AND RUSSIAN HISTORICAL PAINTING OF THE ROMANTIC ERA. KARL BRYULLOV

VASILY USPENSKY [1]

RAPHAEL AFTER RAPHAEL

THE EXHIBITION AFTER RAPHAEL, TIMED TO MARK 500 YEARS SINCE THE DEATH OF RAFFAELLO SANTI, EXPLORES HIS PHENOMENAL INFLUENCE ON EUROPEAN ART FROM THE 16TH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT.

For five centuries, whether mannerists or academists, caravaggists or baroque masters, romanticists or modernists, artists have never failed to relate their own work in some way to the legacy of Raphael. An analysis of this centuries-old lineage offers many insights on modern and contemporary art and on the oeuvre of Raphael himself. This exhibition includes several hundred paintings, prints, sculptures, and applied artworks, some of them on view for the first time ever. Besides works by Raphael, other exhibited pieces include works by Giulio Romano, Parmigianino, Poussin, Rubens, Mengs, Ivanov, Venetsianov, Ingres, Corot, and Picasso. Fresh out of conservation, cleared of later coats of paint, a series of frescoes by Raphael's pupils promises to become the show's pièce de résistance. The exhibition is hosted by the State Hermitage Museum in partnership with several other Russian and Western European museums.

RAPHAEL 1520

CHRIST

"For now you need learn about nothing else other than the death of Raphael of Urbino, who died last night, on Good Friday, leaving this court in great and universal mourning over his loss, and over the hopes of all the great things that were expected of him, which would have brought honour to his age... The heavens sent warnings of this death, one of them the same that forebode the death of Christ when 'the stones split', that is when the palace of the pope opened up and threatened ruination, and His Holiness, out of fear, fled from his apartments and went to those that Pope Innocent had built. Here no one is speaking of anything other than the death of this good man, who at the end of his 33 years has finished his first life, but his second life, that of his Fame, which is not subject to time or death, will be eternal, both for his works and for the efforts of the learned men who write in his praise, and for this they do not lack inspiration," [2] wrote the ambassador of the Court of Mantua in Rome, Pandolfo Pico, to the Duchess of Mantua Isabella d'Este. These words, written the *very next day* after the death of Raphael, already suggest the likening of Raphael to Christ: he is said to be 33 years old (his actual age was 37) [3], "the stones split", he died on Good Friday — the day Christ was crucified, and, finally, he is promised eternal life.

Giorgio Vasari wrote thus of *The Transfiguration*, the last work Raphael ever painted: "Raffaello... seems to have summoned up all his powers in such a manner, in order to show the supreme force of his art in the countenance of Christ, that, after finishing this, the last work that he was to do, he never again touched a brush, being overtaken by death". Vasari further narrates that, as Raphael lay in state in his studio, his picture *The Transfiguration* was placed at his head, "and the sight of that living picture, in contrast with the dead body, caused the hearts of all who beheld it to burst with sorrow". [4] The same theme is repeated: even though Raphael is dead, he will live forever in his works. The artist's face is said to resemble the countenance of Christ. [5] It is a momentous detail that Raphael's painting shows Christ soaring in mid-air, while the custom was to depict Him standing atop a mountain. Raphael's *Transfiguration* looks more like the Ascension. The last words of Our Lord seem to hover, unspoken, over Raphael's deathbed: "and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world".

In his poem, Raphael's friend Antonio Tebaldeo gave a clear and concise summary of the god-like esteem in which Raphael was held: "What wonder if you, like Christ, perished in the fullness of your days? That one is the God of Nature, while you were the God of Art". [6]

Raphael
The Transfiguration
Pinacotheque Vaticane
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Far from being accidental, these allusions reflect Raphael's very special place among the artists of his age. Comparisons to Christ were not unheard of: suffice it to recall Durer's famous self-portrait in the image of Christ (1500). But the ages-old Christian practice of imitation of Christ is, in Raphael's case, more apt because of his trade: an artist is a creator of things that never existed before and, as such, an earthly likeness of the Creator of the Universe. Not every occupation was deemed worthy of such exalted comparison. A career associated with manual labour was traditionally classified as *artes mechanicae*, or the "mechanical" arts or crafts, and ranked

1 Vasily Uspensky is a research associate at the Department of Western European Fine Arts of the State Hermitage Museum.
2 John Shearman. *Raphael in Early Modern Sources (1483–1602)*. London, New Haven, 2003. Vol. I. p. 575
3 This age is corroborated by another source. Cf.: Ibid., p. 579.
4 Giorgio Vasari. *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*. Translated by Gaston du C. de Vere. London, 1912-1914. Vol. IV. p.241.
5 Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo wrote about Raphael: "His face resembled the countenance the majority of our great painters have given to Our Lord". Cf.: John Shearman *Raphael in Early Modern Sources (1483–1602)*. Vol. II. p. 1367.
6 John Shearman. *Raphael in Early Modern Sources (1483–1602)*. Vol. I. p. 661.

below the *arles liberales*, or "liberal arts", which required no physical effort and were deemed appropriate for an aristocrat — poetry and music, for instance. These views began to change during the Renaissance, but still only a select few were deemed worthy of being compared to the Creator. Vasari, who applies the epithet "divine" (*divino*) generously when describing individual works of art, consistently uses the description "divine" [7] in relation to only three artists — Leonardo, Michelangelo, and Raphael. It was these artists who elevated painting to a high pitch of perfection, ridding it of the stigma of manual labour, or that of simply a craft. The portrait of Raphael engraved by Marcantonio Raimondi in 1517–1519 conveys as much in allegorical form: the artist is shown reclining by a clean wooden panel, evidently pondering his planned work; his hands are purposely concealed, and all focus is on his piercing gaze. We are looking at a pure thinker. [8]

A POPE'S PAINTER

The social aspect mattered as well. Vasari remarks that Raphael "lived not like a painter, but like a prince". And, as if elaborating on the same thought, goes on to exclaim: "Wherefore, O art of painting, thou couldst then esteem thyself indeed most blessed, in possessing a craftsman who, both with his genius and his virtues, exalted thee higher than Heaven!" [9] It is a fact that Raphael, who descended from a family of painters, resided in his own palace close to the Vatican and had popes and cardinals for friends. One of them importuned Raphael to accept his niece as a wife. Before Raphael no painter could ever dream of such a career. His personal success spelled new opportunities for all his fellow painters, and it is therefore no wonder they lauded him as the "Prince of Painters". The appellation, once given to Raphael, stuck.

7 This epithet implies the ability to create rather than imitate. Cf.: Patricia Emison. *Creating the "Divine" Artist: From Dante to Michelangelo*. Leiden,Boston, 2004.
8 Anne Bloemacher "Raphael's hands". Predella. 2011. No. 3. p. 79.
9 Giorgio Vasari. Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects. Vol. IV. p. 249.

Marcantonio Raimondi, after a design by Raphael
The Judgment of Paris. Detail
Metropolitan Museum, New York

Raphael
Madonna with Child (Conestabile Madonna)
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-252

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

It also mattered that Raphael was in Rome. Starting in 1508, he lived and worked in Rome under two successive Popes, Julius II and Leo X. He was perceived as a "Pope's painter" by others, too. Having received a drawing from Raphael, Albrecht Durer wrote on it: "Raffaello da Urbino, whom the Pope holds in such high esteem". Thanks to his talent, personal charisma, and court connections, Raphael secured a dominant position among the artists who received painting commissions from the Pope and the cardinals, sidelining Michelangelo himself. [10] Raphael inserted himself into the Vatican fresco *Expulsion of Heliodorus* in the role of a chair-bearer, or *sediario*, holding up Pope Julius II on his portable throne, i.e., literally someone the Pontiff could rely on for support.

Circulating all over Europe, the numerous ecclesiastically-themed artworks created by Raphael (or by his studio under his name) covered the entire Holy history: from Creation (frescoes of the Raphael Loggias, also known as "Raphael's Bible") to the Gospels and the Acts (two series of tapestries in the Vatican [11]). They were copied and imitated, but unlike Michelangelo, whose Sistine ceiling and *The Last Judgment* were picked apart for quotations, Raphael's paintings were more frequently copied whole or used as a basis for new works on the same subject, like an original icon, a worshipped paragon. Hallowed by papal authority, Raphael's religious works became the new pictorial canon of Catholic art, or, if you like, the New Covenant between artists and the Lord, irrevocably replacing the Old Covenant — the medieval tradition rooted in Byzantine icon-painting.

GRAZIA И SPREZZATURA

Art historians have noted that when 16th-century writers described Raphael's manner they would frequently use the word *grazia*. [12] This Italian word is usually translated as "grace" or "gracefulness". But that is only one of its meanings. Grazia derives from the Latin word *gratia*. Its principal meaning is ecclesiastical. *Gratia* is Divine Grace, an act of God, God's mercy on man, as in the Annunciation of the Archangel Gabriel: *Ave Maria, gratia plena* — "Hail, Mary, full of grace". On the other hand, when applied to an earthly woman, the word grazia could mean the favourable disposition of the woman one loves. The word grazia fuses the spiritual and the sensual, the visible and the ideational. In it, earthly beauty, feminine beauty foremost, emerges synonymous with beauty Divine. It is this cohesion of beauty and spirituality that defines the phenomenon of Raphael's art, most notably his Madonnas, in whose special, purely Raphaelesque gracefulness and exquisite femininity there shines a glimmer of transcendent meaning.

Grazia is different from beauty in that it is God-given, unattainable through any earthly endeavour. This shade of meaning is invoked by Pliny the Elder in his account of the life of Apelles of Cos, Raphael's ancient Roman *alter ego*: "The great point of artistic merit with him was his singular charm of gracefulness... though the greatest of painters were his contemporaries. In admiring their works and bestowing high eulogiums upon them, he used to say that there was still wanting in them that ideal of beauty so peculiar to himself, and known to the Greeks as; oth-

10 Raphael's career culminated in his appointment, in 1514, as architect for the rebuilding of St Peter's Basilica, one of the grandest and holiest Catholic shrines.
11 The Scuola Vecchia series devoted to the Acts, and the *Scuola Nuova* series on the life of Christ (sketches created in 1520–1524, tapestries in 1524–1531) were for the most part created by Raphael's pupils after his death, but are associated with Raphael.
12 Patricia Emison. "Grazia". *Renaissance Studies*. 1991. Vol. 5. No. 4 (December). pp. 427–460.

ers, he said, had acquired all the other requisites of perfection, but in this one point he himself had no equal". [13] The Greek word has the same meaning as the Latin gratia. Commenting on this particular excerpt, Lodovico Dolce writes about Raphael "being generally called graceful; for besides invention [*invenzione*], design [*disegno*], variety, and the effect which all his works have on the spectator's mind, there are found in them that which Pliny says characterised the figures of Apelles: that beauty, that undefined something that charms us so much in painting as well as poetry; insomuch that it fills the mind of the spectator or reader with infinite delight, without our knowing what gives us pleasure". [14] The original text has "undefined something" as *non so che* — "I do not know what". The gracefulness of Raphael is perceived as unknowable and not of this world.

An important constituent part of Raphael's grazia and one of the commendations most frequently lavished on Raphael's work by his contemporaries was the superb lifelikeness of his figures. He did not idealise his images at the expense of their naturalness and credibility — they are exalted and real at the same time. Raphael worked hard studying anatomy, proportions, and the effects of light and shade. He tested his every concept on the benchmarks of nature, as evidenced by the multitude of his surviving sketches from life. And yet most of Raphael's paintings appear to have been executed with ease and on inspiration alone. In the 16th century, this aesthetic quality was denoted by the word *sprezzatura*, or the "art of concealing the art", [15] and was highly valued.

APELLES

Some contemporaries who wrote on Raphael's death mourned the loss of a connoisseur of Roman antiquity more than the loss of an artist. Raphael's roots in classical antiquity were old and deep. Antique motifs had made inroads into his work as early as the Urbino period, albeit usually through other artists. Once in Rome, Raphael devoted himself with abandon to studying the original artworks still extant. It appears that Raphael had earned a reputation for being a *cognoscente* fairly early on. In 1510, a distant relation of his, the renowned architect Donato Bramante, asked Raphael to judge an unofficial tender for the reconstruction of the missing arm of a recently unearthed statue of Laokoön. Later on, Raphael organised his study of antique art on a scale that went far beyond Rome alone. He would receive sketches of antique artworks from across Italy and even from Greece, which was then under Turkish occupation. For example, his modellos for *The Battle of Constantine* betray the influence of Phidias' frieze on the Parthenon in Athens. Raphael modelled individual figures or even entire compositions from sketches of works from antiquity. Most of Raphael's works of the Roman period had one or several antique prototypes underlying them. It was not so much to quote them and thus enlarge his expressive vocabulary that Raphael invoked ancient artworks — he used them as a foundation on which to build the very language of contemporary art, formulating a new classical paradigm. The statuesque, sombre, and sublime manner of late-period Raphael and his school and the noble naturalness of the proportions of his figures are a direct corollary of Raphael's careful study of antiquities. Imitation of the ancients was Raphael's creed. In another of his self-portraits painted for the Vatican — the *School of Athens* fresco — he painted himself in the image of the legendary ancient Greek painter Apelles. Raphael, the new Apelles, established himself as the key interpreter and adapter of antique legacy.

Having succeeded the late Bramante as the architect of St Peter's Basilica, in 1515 Raphael received an appointment as Prefect of all excavated marble and statues [16] — a post created for him personally. His job was to scout ancient ruins for masonry suitable for re-use in the construction of St Peter's and to salvage from destruction those excavated antiquities that had value. The Pope had decreed that anyone excavating antiquities in Rome or its surroundings was to notify Raphael within three days. Raphael thus became one of the founding fathers of the contemporary system that keeps ancient monuments under government protection, and came to be known as the chief custodian of Roman antiquities.

Raphael
Alba Madonna
National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C.

Raphael
Madonna and Child with St John the Baptist (La Belle Jardinière)
Louvre

In his last years, Raphael worked on a sprawling reconstruction of ancient Rome. He investigated remnants of buildings, conducted excavations, and studied ancient descriptions of the city. His plan was to translate all material into a series of drawings, and eventually paint a meticulously detailed city map of ancient Rome. The endeavour had been ordered by the Pope himself. The public had high hopes for it — it was believed that the reconstruction in painting might be followed by physical restoration of the city to its erstwhile glory, but this was not to be. Lamenting Raphael's interrupted work on the reconstruction, his friend and associate Baldassare Castiglione wrote of his death in the following manner:

You too, Raphael, having restored the mangled body
Of Rome with your miraculous skill,
And having recalled to life and ancient glory
The body of our city maimed by sword, fire, and years,
Have moved the Gods to jealousy, and death is indignant
That you have returned to life what had long been extinct,
And that you once again renewed, thereby disdaining
the law of death,
what a long period had slowly taken away.
Thus, alas, unfortunate one, you lie taken away
in the flowering of youth,
And warn us that we owe all that we have to death [17].

At Raphael's request he was buried in the Pantheon, the ancient Roman temple turned into a Catholic church. This extraordinary request (before this only priests were buried in the Pantheon), [18] which required the Pope's special permission, was without a doubt a programmatic statement; Raphael's last wish was to remain part of ancient Rome forever, and he truly was, in the eyes of his contemporaries, an embodiment of the restored glory of the ancient forefathers. The death of Raphael was mourned as the second death of Rome. The barbaric sacking of Rome — *Sacco di Roma* — by the German landsknechts of Charles V, which followed six years later, only served to legitimise that metaphor.

Although a proud native of Urbino until his last days, Raphael would remain forever wedded to Rome. As an integral part of the Roman myth, of the Eternal City's *genius loci*, Raphael earned a place in eternity. From then on, pilgrims would head to Rome to worship Raphael along with St Peter. In the 16th through the 18th centuries, Raphael's works on public view in Rome acquired near-iconic status: the *Madonna di Foligno* in the Church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli, the *Madonna di Loreto* at Santa Maria del Popolo, the murals for the villa of Agostino Chigi (better known as the Villa Farnesina) and the Church of Santa Maria della Pace, Raphael's Stanze and Loggias in the Vatican and, last but not least, *The Transfiguration*, hailed in the 16th century as the greatest painting in the world [19].

Rome is part of Raphael's identity, and Raphael is part of Rome's, which also means being part of power and empire. Like Apelles, Raphael was a court painter and a regular courtier as well, with the status of Groom of the Chamber. His works adorned many a palace, were given as diplomatic gifts, and served to glorify the people of exalted status who commissioned them — the Popes first and foremost. It is interesting that many of the qualities ascribed to the works of Raphael, such as grazia and sprezzatura, for instance, are mentioned in the famous treatise penned by Raphael's friend Baldassare Castiglione [20] as the qualities that make an ideal courtier. It is telling to note that classicism, the art of order, hierarchy, and tradition, is, according to Henri Zerner's definition, "the art of authority, authoritative art". [21] All this had a strong impact upon the subsequent reputation of Raphael's art and its perception by customers and institutions of power.

STYLE

Raphael was extremely receptive to influences. He easily absorbed the styles of many different artists — Perugino, Fra Bartolomeo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Michelangelo, among others. Sometimes it was enough for him to cast a single glance at another artist's work to learn his methods. Wölfflin very aptly remarked that, unlike Michelangelo or Leonardo, whose student works stand out clearly, Raphael dissolved in his teacher. [22] Michelangelo said that Raphael had had to work long and hard to get to where he was in art. [23]

13 Pliny the Elder. *The Natural History. On Painting.* Translated by John Bostock and Henry T. Riley. London, 1855. Vol. 6, Book XXXV, Chap. 36 p. 256 .
14 Lodovico Dolce. *Dialogo della pittura intitolato L'Aretino*. Venezia, 1557. p. 50.
15 "Ars est celare artem" — "The art is to conceal the art", a Latin adage harkening back to Ovid.
16 This post would later be transformed into the Prefect of Antiquities. Johann Joachim Winckelmann, among others, would one day serve in that capacity.
17 Giorgio Vasari. Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects. Vol. IV. p. 250. Translated from the Latin by Peter Liebregts.
18 Contrary to some explanations, it is unlikely that Raphael's request to be buried in the Pantheon was dictated by his wish to be interred together with Cardinal Bibbiena's niece Maria Bibbiena, who also died in 1520, and whom Raphael had been under pressure to marry for six years. Her memorial plate in the Pantheon was inscribed on behalf of Raphael by his executors. This may indicate that they had died within a short time of each other, and that Raphael himself had requested that they be buried in the Pantheon together.
19 Among other witnesses' accounts, there is the testimony of the Spanish painter Pablo de Cespedes, who visited Rome in 1577. In his travel notes he describes *The Transfiguration* as the best painting ever painted in oil. Cf.: Andreas Henning. *Raffaels Transfiguration und der Wettstreit um die Farbe: kolorithgeschichtliche Untersuchung zur römischen Hochrenaissance.* Berlin, 2005. p. 220.
20 Baldassare Castiglione. *The Book of the Courtier* Translated by Leonard Eckstein Opdycke. New York, 1913 .
21 Henri Zerner. "Classicism as Power". *Art Journal.* Vol. 47. No. 1 (Spring 1988). pp. 35–36.
22 Heinrich Wölfflin. *Classic Art. An Introduction to the Italian Renaissance.* Translation by Aleksandra Konstantinova and Vera Nevezhina. St Petersburg, 1999. p. 79.
23 Ascanio Condivi. *Vita di Michelangelo Buonarroti scritta da Ascanio Condivi suo discepolo.* Pisa, 1823. p. 82.

However, despite Raphael's obvious propensity for borrowing, his omnivory never resulted in eclecticism. Harmony was the key and definitive characteristic of Raphael's manner. His harmony is so all-encompassing that the artist's personality can hardly be divined behind it. Raphael's serene, noble, and majestic style appears impersonal, a manifestation not of personal genius, but of a great tradition. Adepts of Greco-Roman antiquity generally tend to paint that way, as they strive to approximate a common ideal rather than express their subjective vision. Raphael, however, is different in that he did not follow some established notion of an ideal, but instead created the ideal — he was a classic, not a classicist.

Leonardo, who was as passionate about science as he was about art, aspired to unravel the mysteries of being. Michelangelo broadened the horizons of realistic depiction. But Raphael, the youngest artist of the High Renaissance trinity, sought no revolutionary novelty. Collating the best achievements of his predecessors, he merged them all into one, a thing of rare grace and beauty. Raphael bequeathed to European culture a pictorial ideal it would forever hold dear: "For in truth we have from him art, colouring, and invention harmonised and brought to such a pitch of perfection as could scarcely be hoped for; nor may any intellect ever think to surpass him". [24]

Raphael
The School of Athens
Vatican Museums

PERSONALITY

Paradoxically, it may well be that the remark made by Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon much later, that "the style is the man himself", applies to Raphael more than any other artist of his era — all his impersonality of style notwithstanding — so prominent was the role of Raphael's personality and his life in the perception of his art. Discussing the artistic merits of Raphael's works, Vasari never elevates Raphael to the highest rank among his contemporaries. Indeed, Vasari ranks him below both Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci. He sees Raphael's chief virtue elsewhere: "Him nature presented to the world, when, vanquished by art through the hands of Michelagnolo Buonarotti, she wished to be vanquished, in Raffaello, by art and character together". [25] He concludes his account of the life of the "gracious Raffaello da Urbino" [26] thusly: "All those who imitate his labours in art will be honoured by the world, even as, by resembling him in uprightness of life, they will win rewards from Heaven". [27] Vasari was only nine the year Raphael died. In his writing he relied on other people's testimonies and the already present makings of the myth. But Raphael's peers also described him as a friendly, open, and virtuous person. There is a hint of holiness even in his name: the artist bore the name of the Archangel Raphael, best known for the miracle of the healing of the blind. Raphael's last name, which occurs in several spellings — Sanzio, Santi, or even Santo — sounds very much like the word *santo*, which means "saint". On the other hand, Raphael's amorousness, which reaches near-comic proportions in Vasari's narration, made him appear more human. It is also important that Raphael's early death saved him from growing old. Unlike the old men Michelangelo and Leonardo, Raphael will forever remain young, handsome, and without physical flaws — perfect for the role of ideal painter.

The post-Raphael age looked deceptively cloudless in the aftermath of his death, but not for long. The peaceful and extravagant pontificate of Pope Leo X ended abruptly soon after Raphael's death. In quick succession there followed an economic meltdown, a plague epidemic, a flood and, in the end, the *Sacco di Roma* –– a catastrophic sacking of Rome which, to contemporaries, was comparable only to the sacking of ancient Rome by barbaric tribes. In the meantime the Reformation was germinating in Germany and England — the very pillars of Creation were shaking. The 1510s seemed like a distant golden age now, even more so because of the efforts Popes Julius II and Leo X had expended in the cultivation of that image. [28] Vasari felt the same way about that time: "the last age of gold, as the happy age of Leo X might have been called for all noble craftsmen and men of talent". [29]

And so, in 1520, we have a Raphael who is at the same time Christ and Apelles, Catholic Rome and ancient Rome, the golden mean and the age of gold. In short: the ideal incarnate.

The myth of Raphael was forged already in his lifetime, and was solidified soon after the artist's death. As centuries went by it evolved further; it was embellished, and as time moved on a different facet of the myth would take centre stage. But all the makings of the myth were present already in 1520.

THE 16TH CENTURY. RAPHAEL AND MICHELANGELO

THE LAST JUDGMENT

The year of Raphael's death, 1520, spells the end of the High Renaissance for art historians. Leonardo da Vinci died in France the year before, in 1519. Of the "Divine Triad" only Michelangelo was still around, and would live for another 44 years.

The opposition between Michelangelo and Raphael was deeper and more meaningful than simply two court painters' rivalry over papal attention and commissions. Michelangelo and Raphael represent the two diametrically opposed artist types that consistently recur throughout art history. [30] Raphael was surrounded by pupils, while Michelangelo worked alone; [31] Raphael was receptive to the work of other painters, while Michelangelo was centred on himself; Raphael aspired towards the absolute, the eternal ideal, whereas Michelangelo was subjective, and expressed his own passions and feelings in his art. The definitive property of Raphael's work, according to Vasari, is *grazia*, or grace, and of Michelangelo's– *terribilità*, or holy awe, fear of God; Raphael was compared with Petrarch, Michelangelo with Dante. [32] And so on, and so forth: harmony versus drama, feminine versus masculine, line versus volume... Raphael and Michelangelo were opposite poles in everything. To put it differently, Raphael is the classical, shining Apollo, [33] and Michelangelo is the romantic, riotous Dionysus.

24 Giorgio Vasari. Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects. Vol. IV. p. 248.
25 Ibid., p. 209.
26 He is characterised thus also in Vasari's account of the life of Bramante da Urbino. Ibid. p. 146.
27 Ibid., p. 249.
28 References to the age of gold were made in court rhetoric and in the fine arts, for example, in Michelangelo's frescoes in the Sistine Chapel and the Villa Poggio a Caiano. Cf.: Charles L. Stinger. *The Renaissance in Rome. Bloomington*, 1998. pp. 296–299; John W. O'Malley. "Fulfillment of the Christian Golden Age under Pope Julius II: Text of a Discourse of Giles of Viterbo, 1507". Traditio. 1969. Vol. 25. pp. 265–338.
29 Giorgio Vasari. *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects.* Vol. V. p. 175.
30 These correspond directly to the types defined within the well-known text of Viktor Zhirmunsky – On Poetry Classical and Romantic: "A classical poet faces the objective task of creating a beautiful work of art that is perfect and complete, a self-contained world that lives by its own laws. Like a skilled architect he erects his building; the building must stand firmly in accordance with the laws of equilibrium. If the building is solid by the laws of artistic equilibrium, then the poet's task has been completed – he has created a work of art that is both beautiful and perfect. The classical poet only takes into account the properties of the material he uses and the artistic law according to which the material is arranged. The subjective is not in the picture: What do we care about the 'personality' or 'psychology' of the architect when all we see is the wondrous building he has constructed? In contrast, a romantic poet strives, first and foremost, to tell us about himself in his work, to 'open his heart' to us. He makes confessions and drags us into the emotional depths and human singularity of his person. He will rejoice or he will scream and cry from pain. He will sermonise, exhort, and expose. He has a tendency (albeit not necessarily a starkly conscious one) or at least a wish to subsume the reader in his sense of life, to share with the reader something that has been revealed to the poet in his direct intuition of being. A romantic work easily becomes a diary of experiences, intimate impressions – a 'human document'. It is interesting only insofar as the poet's personality is complex and original, and as long as that personality is illuminated deeply in the work." Viktor Zhirmunsky. *Theory of Literature. Verse. Style.* Leningrad, 1977. pp. 134–135.
31 Having started painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, Michelangelo realised that his helpers were not skillful enough in their tasks. He elected to dismiss them and finish the enormous amount of work himself.
32 These comparisons are cited by Lodovico Dolce: Lodovico Dolce. *Dialogo della pittura intitolato L'Aretino.* p. 48.

Michelangelo
The Last Judgment. Fresco in the Sistine Chapel
Vatican Museums

Combining in a contradictory unity like all opposites, they formed the two poles, the yin and the yang, of what became known as the Roman style. Thus, despite their substantially different styles, it is sometimes difficult to tell where one's influence ends and the other's begins.

But whereas Raphael personified the immutable and perfect ideal, Michelangelo demonstrated that an alternative was also possible. In the end, it was late Michelangelo's individualistic, passionate, and introverted work that primarily defined the art of mannerism, deemed to have begun that same fateful year of 1520.

As befits any individualistic genre, mannerism has many faces. The multitude of different personal and regional manners under the umbrella of mannerism can hardly be boiled down to one common factor. Fractional, individual, in a class by itself... These were some of the most salient characterisations of mannerist works, and they bled into everything, from the big picture of art evolution to the compositional design of individual works: it often came to pass that colour would be conceived independently of the drawing, and the beauty of each individual figure in a painting would be appreciated more than the overall effect of the painting.

With Raphael gone, no one was pursuing all-encompassing harmony any longer. Each painter sought to express himself, to find his own path, but despite this they all had to look to Raphael for guidance — Raphael was the standard, the reference point, which attracted some and repelled others.

Excerpt from the article "Raphael and Mannerism". Vasily Uspensky, *After Raphael. 1520-2020*. Exhibition catalogue. State Hermitage Museum, 2020

33 Raphael was compared to Apollo by Johann Joachim Winckelmann.

A SUMMARY OF THE 17TH CENTURY

The 17th century. It was the age when the groundwork of modern science was laid, French Absolutism was cemented, Spain and Holland built their colonial empires, Rome saw an economic rebound, and the Pope consolidated his power under the colours of Counterreformation. The age to "gather stones together"... The 17th century saw large schools of painting emerge. Many of them, such as Poussin's classicism, Rubens's baroque, Le Brun's Louis XIV style, and Bolognian academicism, relied on the authority of Raphael, the "pillar and ground of the truth".

The centres of Raphael worship were the academies, from informal art associations in Bologna and Haarlem to official institutions in Rome and Paris. The academies formulated a new vision of art history focused on the classical tradition, with Raphael towering in the centre. It is easy to see that Raphael commanded the most respect in the Catholic lands — the Papal State, France, and Flanders, where tradition was deemed essential to the system. By the end of the 17th century Raphael was firmly enshrined as the one and only ideal in art. Dissenting voices were few and far between.

In particular, Raphael did not much impress the artists sometimes grouped under the umbrella name "Realists" — Caravaggio, Rembrandt, and Velasquez. They kept away from the mainstream, but none of them could avoid interacting with Raphael's legacy in one way or another.

Raphael's enthronement as the holy paterfamilias of the classical tradition perpetuated his authority, but also played a cruel joke on him.

Excerpt from the article "Raphael in the Age of Counterreformation and Baroque". Vasily Uspensky, After Raphael. 1520-2020. Exhibition catalogue. State Hermitage Museum, 2020

THE 18TH CENTURY. ROCOCO

The idealistic art of Raphael was to Rococo painters like homework they had already done well. Moreover, they resented it as too serious, too cold, or plainly boring. "Silly as truth and boring as perfection." They had their own Old Masters to look up to: Rubens, Correggio, Rembrandt, and the Venetians. In their view, Raphael was either a schoolteacher with the primer of painting for beginners or a relic of official, academic art. Artists with close ties to the academy, successors to Le Brun's "Grand Style" — the likes of Francois Lemoyne, Charles-Joseph Natoire, or Charles-André van Loo — drew on Raphael's painting practices habitually, and a little more often than others. Of the entire body of Raphael's work, his Farnesina frescoes were most sought-after — their mood was more in tune with the light-hearted, playful style of the day. In the second half of the century, when sentimentalism took hold, French artists took their cues from Raphael's "Madonnas" and "Holy Families", using them as models for sentimental family portraits with children.

PHOTO © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Nicolas Poussin
The Holy Family with St Elizabeth and St John the Baptist
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-1213

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Pompeo Girolamo Batoni
The Holy Family with St Elizabeth and St John the Baptist
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-12

THE END OF ROME

Catherine II called Rome the "city of models" (*ville des modèles*). [34] However, the city's cultural sway in the 18th century was continuously declining. Once Europe's busy hub of the arts, Rome gradually degraded into an art theme park, a toy town, and was portrayed as such by 18th-century engravers such as Giuseppe Vasi and Giovanni Volpato. [35] While the entirety of Europe bowed down to Rome's legacy of arts and archaeological monuments, cultural initiative was slipping away to other countries. It is no wonder, then, that Raphael, inseparably wedded to Rome, was also losing his grip on artists' hearts and minds. Fully or partially copied and replicated in a multitude of drawings, paintings, engravings, and applied artworks, picked over for quotations like souvenirs, split into dozens of "little Raphaels" all over Europe — French, German, and English ones — it seemed that Raphael's treasure-trove of creative interpretation possibilities had been exhausted, and Raphael would from now on be relegated to the indoor sanctuaries of the academies, the keepers of artistic tradition.

The year 1797 marked a palpable end of the era for Rome, as French revolutionary troops invaded the city. The Pope was expelled, and a republic was declared with full support from the local population. The city was looted. Its treasures, including *The Transfiguration* and other Raphael paintings, were hauled off to Paris in 1797 and 1811. They would later return, as would the Pope, but Rome would never be the same again. In the 18th century Paris and Rome were the two foremost centres of art in Europe, but by the 19th, Paris stood alone.

Excerpt from the article "Raphael in the 18th Century".
Vasily Uspensky, *After Raphael*. 1520-2020. Exhibition catalogue.
State Hermitage Museum, 2020

34 Letters from Catherine II of Russia to Friedrich Melchior, Baron von Grimm (from 1774 to 1796), Collection of the Russian Imperial Historical Society. St Petersburg, 1878. Vol. 21. p. 102.

35 Piranesi's celebrated engravings are an exception.

THE GERMAN ROMANTICISTS

The history of how Raphael's art was perceived is mirrored to some extent by the history of Christianity in Europe, which goes to show that the likening of Raphael to Christ was not accidental. The strife, confusion, fragmentation, and religiously motivated hostilities during the age of mannerism correspond to the multiplicity of mutually contradictory reactions to Raphael during that era. Conversely, the ordering, moral rejuvenation, and expansion of Catholicism, as well as cohesive processes within Protestantism, were accompanied by the rise in the 17th century of new art schools underpinned by Raphael's legacy. The 18th century's scepticism, irony, and erosion of fundamental values affected faith in Christ and the authority of Raphael in equal measure. The French Revolution flew the colours of atheism, but the early 1800s saw a resurgence of ecclesiastic zeal. This initiative was born in the German-speaking Protestant nations, and that is where the new perspective on the art of Raphael arose.

In 1810, a group of German-speaking artists moved into a Catholic monastery near Rome, abandoned by the monks on Napoleon's orders. Everyone in this artistic colony had an academic education and questioned it. The Classicism of Mengs and the Empire style of David seemed equally cold and empty to them. Moreover, the latter represented the enemy — Napoleon had just gone on to conquer German lands. They called themselves the Brotherhood of St. Luke after the manner of medieval guilds of painters, forerunners of the academies. Contemporaries gave them the derisive nickname of the Nazarenes — after the name of an early Christian sect — for their religious fervour, old-fashioned dress, and long hair.

In their view, the entire classical tradition of the 16th through the 18th century was not worth much. Only Raphael and the artists of the early Renaissance stood tall. The young Germans saw the embodiment of genuine religious feeling in their art, which later artists had lost in the pursuit of superficial perfection. Raphael had been acclaimed as the epitome of the spiritual element in painting since the 16th century. But in the 18th century the spiritual dimension of the Raphael myth came to be regarded as secondary — Raphael's antique lineage and the purely plastic qualities of his art meant more to the Neo-classicists. Romanticists and their predecessors, the Sentimentalists, rediscovered the restorative nature of Raphael's images, their ability to kindle a broad gamut of feelings in the human heart, from sentimental tenderness to religious fervour. Raphael's unique place in the history of art also mattered. His Roman paintings were classical works of the finest quality. However, his juvenile paintings, those created in Florence, Siena, and particularly those from Urbino and Perugia, belong to the early Renaissance, when the medieval tradition was still strong. Raphael's works from that period are far more traditional than the paintings of his older contemporaries Leonardo and Michelangelo. To Winckelmann, Raphael was the bridge that spanned modernity and antiquity, but to the Romantics he linked modernity with the Middle Ages.

In their rebellious archaism, it was Raphael's early religiously themed works that the Nazarenes held dear, and many other Romanticists would later follow suit. Raphael's early works had been known all along, but, eclipsed by his much-vaunted Roman creations, their status had been that of local masterpieces. Now the tables had turned. It was during the age of Romanticism that Raphael came back into the spotlight of fame, but this time as the "Madonna painter" we know today.

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Johann Friedrich Overbeck
The Triumph of Religion in the Arts
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-7597

The Triumph of Religion in the Arts by Johann Friedrich Overbeck (1829–1840, Städel Institute, Frankfurt; there is a grisaille version in the Hermitage) was a seminal work of the Nazarenes. The title clearly articulates the message. The painting shows dozens of artists, from medieval miniaturists to Overbeck himself, working and debating, all under the light of a celestial apparition: the Virgin Mary in full glory, with a host of patron saints of the arts. The fountain in the middle is the "well of water springing up into everlasting life" mentioned in the Gospels. Unlike the Castalian Spring, which flowed down the pagan Parnassus, this fountain springs upward toward the Heavens. Compositionally, the picture descends from Raphael's *Disputation of the Holy Sacrament*. Individual figures are quotes from *The School of Athens*, *The Mackintosh Madonna*, and other works by Raphael, except that in this painting they are all portrayed in the static, laconic, and subdued manner of Raphael's early, pre-Roman paintings. Even when quoting Raphael, Overbeck makes him look archaic.

It is quite significant that *The Triumph of Religion in the Arts* shows Italian and German Old Masters side by side before the

Virgin on the Throne. Raphael and Durer, Leonardo and Holbein stand as equals in the crowd. Romanticism's coming of age was accompanied by the strengthening of national identity, which accelerated following the victory over Napoleon. It was typical of many Romantic paintings that they would paint scenes from their national history in an Italian Renaissance style (although some Nazarenes would invoke the Northern Renaissance and no other). They saw no contradiction in this, as they took the manner of early Raphael to be universal for the Middle Ages. One textbook example is the painting The Singer by the Riepenhausen brothers (1820, State Hermitage Museum). Illustrating a poem by Goethe, this picture has inherited more than just its manner from Raphael: several figures are direct quotations from a number of Raphael's works, including *The School of Athens* and *Madonna della Sedia*. Other national schools would later borrow this method. In France, it took the form of the so-called Troubadour style, although Raphael's prototypes can be difficult to discern behind the colourful historical details. [36] Thus the manner and the images of early Raphael became the foundation of the universal language of European historical painting.

One painting by Raphael, *The Sistine Madonna*, besides leaving the Romanticists in awe, exerted a powerful influence over the entirety of German culture in the 19th century. As fortune would have it, *The Sistine Madonna* was the first and most important Raphael painting to make it to Germany in 1754, and that circumstance appears to have been a fortuitous, life-changing coincidence. Indeed, Germany in the age of Romanticism was the only place where the merits of that painting could be fully appreciated. The painting had been confined to the periphery of public attention for quite a while. It was admired by the rare artists who came to Piacenza just to see it, but not a single print or even drawing was ever made of it. Although painted during his Roman period, it was nonetheless included in the academic canon. Vasari mentions it briefly, saying only that it is "a truly rare and extraordinary work". [37] It really is unlike any other Raphael painting in its uncanny union of disturbing psychological intensity and Raphael's trademark sweetness and harmony. The sorrowful gazes of Mary and Christ, filled with the presentiment of Golgotha, are directed straight at the spectator. The Virgin Mary's prescience of the Passion was a traditional Catholic motif, painted since the Middle Ages, but never before had it been executed so simply yet viscerally and in a form that rises to the heights of an all-embracing symbol. In the 18th and 19th centuries, the look in those eyes disturbed people, drove them to a state of religious ecstasy, haunted them in their dreams, and even drove them to madness.

The Romanticist take on life and art was that one's life was part of the creative process, to be deliberately modelled after the ideals one espouses. This explains the Nazarenes' affectation of a biblical manner of clothing and hairstyle, and the effort they made to work in a stylised medieval studio environment. And it also explains their unremitting attention to the life and character of Raphael. In 1816 the brothers Franz and Johannes Riepenhausen published their first series of prints of engraved scenes from the life of Raphael. [38] It was followed by similar publications. The Nazarenes freely accentuated what they deemed to be most important in Raphael's legacy, and did the same with the artist's curriculum vitae. They exalted his childhood in Urbino and Perugia, conjuring up the image of Raphael the angelic child, and they highlighted his ecclesiastic fervour and close relationship with the Pope.

Whereas before Raphael was largely regarded as some abstract ideal in the fine arts, now his very life story was becoming a myth verging on a saint's hagiography. It is no wonder they dwelled so much on the scene of Raphael's death, his passage into life everlasting. Several Raphael biographies came out in Europe at this time. His earthly abodes — some of them less than credible — became pilgrimage destinations, including his parents' home in Urbino and his palace and villa in Rome. Raphael's skull, which was in the custody of the St Luke Academy, was an object of particular worship. The skull was on view next to the abovementioned painting of *Saint Luke Drawing the Virgin*. A tradition came about in which artists touched the skull with their brushes. Goethe ordered a plaster copy of Raphael's skull on his visit to Rome. In order to end any ambiguity regarding its authenticity once and for all, Raphael's tomb in the Pantheon was ceremoniously opened in 1833 and his remains were examined.

Meanwhile, the lofty spiritual aspirations of German Romanticism had an antipode in the *biedermeier* — the mundane and pedestrian take on Romantic ideals. Raphael was not spared. Once a part of aristocratic education, the copying of Raphael's images degenerated into a middlebrow hobby all over Europe. Reproductions of his "most adorable" works in print, bronze, embroidery, and porcelain speedily become household staples. The vaudeville-like love story of Raphael and Fornarina, vastly popular in France and Italy, becomes a source of banal scenes for drawing-room paintings. The Nazarenes' precious spirituality, once absorbed into the mass culture, was quickly transformed into plain kitsch. The new canon of the Raphael cult was now set. Whereas the Romantics continued to tionise *The Sistine Madonna*, especially the countenances of Mary and Christ, the object of adoration and frantic copying for the German *biedermeier* and the international salon were the weary little angels of The *Sistine Madonna* and the *Madonna della Sedia*, which ended up singularly cheapened through constant replication.

RUSSIAN ROMANTICISM

It is common knowledge that Russian culture was heavily influenced by German Romanticism in the first half of the 19th century. In Russia, however, the artistic process was subject to some inertia, so the domination of Classicism persisted for a longer time, which was the reason why works that were romantic in spirit often first appeared in a strict academic form.

Being receptive to the Romantic longing for national motifs in art, Alexey Venetsianov (1780–1847), who was closely associated with the Russian Academy of Fine Arts, interpreted Romanticism in an original way. His idyllic images of Russian peasant women, redolent of the early Raphaelesque Madonnas, are phenomena of the same order as the nationalistic historical figures painted by Romanticists. Having said that, it is worthy of note that Venetsianov's fusion is less contrived, and thus — at least in his best works — more harmonious.

Alexander Ivanov (1806–1858), the "Russian Roman" on a spiritual quest, admired the Nazarenes, as did the writers Vasily Zhukovsky and Nikolay Gogol. The son of an academic painter, Ivanov remained loyal to the official dogma and the best exemplars of academic painting, but the goals he pursued were unheard of in academic painting. Once, in a conversation with the writer Nikolay Chernyshevsky, he articulated his creative mission as follows: "To fuse Raphael's technique with ideas for a new civilisation — that is the mission of art at the present time". [39] Commencing the work on the painting of his life, *The Appearance of Christ Before the People* (1837–1857), he sought inspiration from Raphael, most of all from his iconic academic painting *The Transfiguration*. The very idea of the opposition/juxtaposition of Christ and the people descends from Raphael's own original interpretation of the Gospel story. Ivanov painted a few copies of the heads of characters in the bottom part of The Transfiguration. Along with other classical prototypes, he would use them to model the figures in The Appearance. Ivanov did not follow the Nazarenes' manner of making things look more archaic than they were (although Stasov claimed he saw some similarities to Overbeck in the rendering of clothing [40]), but, like the Nazarenes, he looked to Raphael for a source of strong religious emotion, not just ideal form and orderliness. There are minor departures from the original in the pencil sketch Ivanov made in Dresden of the heads in *The Sistine Madonna*: the faces bear sterner expressions, and the irises are magnified and dramatically blackened, accentuating the mystical element of Raphael's images.

As with his German fellow painters, following Raphael became something of a religion for Ivanov. Perfectionism, a quality shared by many painters of Romanticism, explains why it took them so unreasonably long to complete their works. It took Ivanov 20 years to bring *The Appearance of Christ Before the People* to completion. Overbeck spent 12 years painting *The Triumph of Religion in the Arts*. Engraver Johann Muller worked on his engraving of Raphael's Sistine Madonna for 10 years, and his Russian colleague Fyodor Iordan took 16 years to draw and engrave The Transfiguration. The list could easily be continued.

The Sistine Madonna elicited even more passionate worship in Russia than in Germany. "This is no Madonna. It is Raphael's faith", [41] wrote Aleksandr Bestuzhev-Marlinsky. *The Sistine Madonna* became the dominant ecclesiastic image of the 19th century, the age of doubt and the search for God, the age that was no longer content with superficial harmony and perfection. Tolstoy and Dostoevsky both had copies of *The Sistine Madonna* on display in their work area. It seems that Dostoevsky's female characters are looking at us with the eyes of *The Sistine Madonna*. Whenever Russian artists painted the Virgin Mary — especially those of a Romantic or Symbolist inclination — they would always invoke *The Sistine Madonna*. And the closer we get to the century's end, the more intense the tragic look in their eyes, culminating in the near-Munchian intensity of the art of Mikhail Vrubel.

Alexey Venetsianov
Haymaking
State Tretyakov Gallery

36 The composition of Fleury- François Richard's painting *Valentine of Milan Weeping for the Death of her Husband Louis, Duke of Orleans, Killed in 1407 by Jean the Fearless, Duke of Burgundy* (1802, Hermitage), which was deemed seminal for the Troubadour style, derives from Raimondi's engraving of Raphael's design for The Dream of Saint Helena.

37 Giorgio Vasari. *Lives of the Most Eminent Painters, Sculptors, and Architects*. Vol. IV. p. 238.

38 *Franz und Johannes Riepenhausen: Leben Raphael Sanzios von Urbino Vita di Rafaele Sanzio da Urbino*. Frankfurt am Main, 1816. The other similarly themed series was published later by Johann Riepenhausen on his own: G. Riepenhausen. *Vita di Raffaelle da Urbino*. Roma, 1833.

39 Cit. ex: Nalalya Kovalenskaya. *History of Russian Art of the First Half of the 19th Century*. Moscow, 1951. p. 171.

40 Vladimir Stasov. "On Ivanov's Significance in Russian Art". *Stasov V.V. Selected Works in 3 Volumes. Painting. Sculpture. Music*. Moscow, 1952. Vol. II. p. 81.

41 Aleksandr Bestuzhev-Marlinsky. *Collected Works in 2 Volumes*. Moscow, 1958. Vol. 2. p. 186.

PHOTO © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Anonymous artist, after a painting by Raphael
Madonna with Child (Mackintosh Madonna)
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-6968

INGRES

Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres (1780–1867) was a contradictory, retrogressive innovator, just like Ivanov and the Nazarenes. A pupil of David, Ingres owed much to his mentor. Set at an early age, his distinct style changed little over the course of his lifetime. Ingres formulated his ideals clearly and categorically: "I want everyone to know that I have, for a very long time, followed just one exemplar in my work, namely, antiquity and the great masters which flourished in that century of glorious memory when Raphael set the eternal and incontestable bounds of the sublime in art. I think I have attested with my works to my sole aspiration to be like them, and to continue the art, starting where they finished. I am thus a conservator of good doctrine, and not an innovator". [42] Ingres also said, famously: "Let me hear no more of that absurd maxim: 'We need the new, we need to follow our century, everything changes, everything is changed.' Sophistry -- all of that! Does nature change, do the light and air change, have the passions of the human heart changed since the time of Homer? 'We must follow our century': but suppose my century is wrong.... In the great centuries of the new age, men of genius again did that which had been done before them. Homer and Phidias, Raphael and Poussin, Gluck and Mozart in reality spoke one and the same thing." [43] Ingres' uncompromising righteousness was merely his protective reaction against the devaluation of classical ideals in the contemporary art of his era. The last apostle of the classical tradition, Ingres lived half of his life in Rome, as did Ivanov and the Nazarenes. In the 16th and 17th centuries artists came to Rome to be in the midst of artistic life. In the 19th century it was merely a form of escapism, but there was a measure of defiance in it.

Ingres studied Raphael religiously and made numerous copies of Raphael's paintings and graphic works — almost exclusively those of the Roman period. A successor to the academic tradition, Ingres, unlike the Nazarenes, had no desire to "rediscover" Raphael; he only wanted to absorb and internalise his sublime classical creations. The copy of *The Mackintosh Madonna* in the possession of the Hermitage can probably trace its origins to Ingres' copy, as it shows the changes the artist had made to Raphael's much deteriorated original. [44] Raphael quotations, as well as specific techniques gleaned from Santi's works, are scattered across Ingres' entire oeuvre.

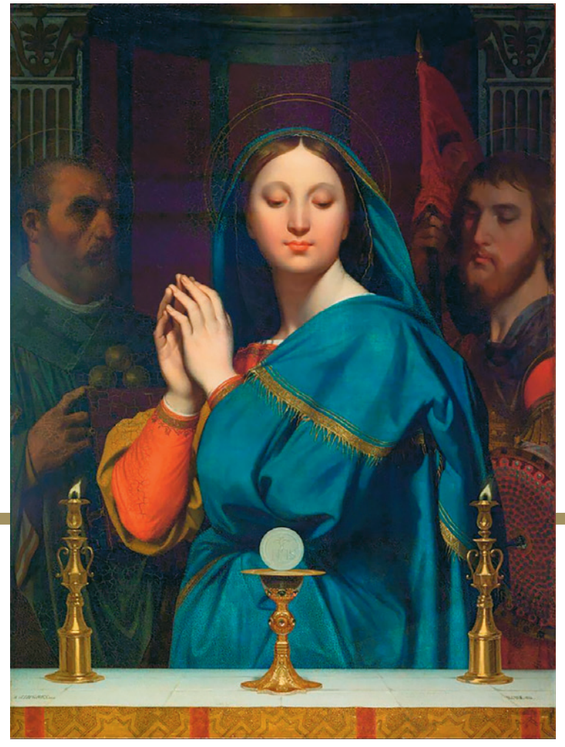
Ingres shared the Romantics' preoccupation with Raphael's personality. He planned to paint a series of scenes from Raphael's life, [45] but ended up painting only two. The more famous one — *Raphael and La Fornarina* — appears to have been conceived as programmatic, otherwise it is difficult to explain why Ingres painted five versions of it in his different creative periods. The painting shows Raphael at the easel. He has Fornarina on his knee while he rests, but keeps looking away from her to inspect the work he has begun — *La Fornarina* of the Palazzo Barberini. In the background we observe Raphael's painting Madonna della sedia, which Ingres greatly admired. It was believed that the selfsame Fornarina had sat for the Madonna as well. Visible through the window are the Loggias of the Vatican. There is a book in front of the window, inscribed "Raphael's Bible" — a collection of the religious works from the Loggias. The composition reads like an allegory of art, uniting and subordinating itself to all that is sensual and spiritual, earthly love and heavenly love — that which in the 16th century went by the name of grazia. The image of exalted feminine beauty was central to Ingres' veneration of Raphael.

Sometimes Ingres' loyalty to Raphael was ostentatious and declarative, as in the altar painting *The Vow of Louis XIII* (1820–1824, Cathedral of Notre-Dame in Montauban), which, in Ingres' words, was painted "in Raphael's manner and my own". [46] At the 1824 Salon in Paris, the painting successfully challenged Delacroix's work and brought Ingres long-awaited acclaim in France. It has been established that the design of *The Vow of Louis XIII* derives from *Madonna di Foligno*, the figure of the Virgin Mary is modelled on *The Mackintosh Madonna*, one of the angels harkens back to the fresco of the Santa Maria della Pace, and the figure of Louis XIII has its prototype in *The Fire in the Borgo*. [47] However, the entirety of the composition made up of all these allusions does not even come close to Raphael's harmony. As a matter of fact, Ingres did come close to Raphael, but not where he publicly declared it. Ingres' best works happen to also be the ones closest to Raphael in spirit: The Valpinçon Bather (1808, Louvre), *Portrait of Mademoiselle Rivière* (1805, Louvre), and *The Source* (1856, d'Orsay), but here we are referring to an inner kinship rather than direct borrowing. *The Valpinçon Bather*, Ingres' definitive masterwork, is perhaps the most illustrative example. The young artist had been living in Italy for two years when he painted it. The sitter's posture has some similarity to one of the graces of the Villa Farnesina, and the turban on her head brings to mind the headdress of the nude Fornarina, but for all we know it could be coincidental. It is the sense of timeless harmony emanating from the figure, the confluence of the ultimate simplicity and most excruciating attention to nuance, the naturalness and the ideality — all the essential makings of *grazia* — that have us searching for a Raphaelesque prototype that may or may not exist.

Ingres' central and yet, for all its simplicity, most radical idea is this: "Art must always be beautiful and teach only beauty". [48] It is precisely in this that the difference lies between the art of Ingres and the thoroughly ideological art of his mentor David and his French Romanticist contemporaries, and it is this philosophy that brings Ingres closest to Raphael.

The chief expressive medium of Ingres and Raphael alike was the line, and their chief modelling unit was the figure. Ingres was a superb draftsman. He perfected the line to a geometric, nearly abstract consummation. Pursuing the beauty of the line, Ingres would occasionally go so far as to disregard the laws of anatomy, incurring the wrath of the more zealous guardians of academic norms. Combined with integrity of form, simplicity, and serenity of composition, the excellent draughtsmanship of Ingres' best works elevated them to a level of ascetic, self-sustained perfection.

With his art, his unwavering commitment to exalted classical ideals, and his singular sense of purpose, Ingres made such an impression on the French that he effectively superseded Raphael for 19th century artists. Later in the century, salon painters and modernists alike would look to Ingres first whenever they sought the ideal in art.



Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres
Madonna with Chalice
Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts

42 _____ *Ingres on Art.* Edited by Antonina Izergina. Moscow, 1962. p. 35.
43 _____ Ibid., pp. 72–73.
44 _____ Another theory is that Ingres may have copied not from the original, but from a copy made by Sébastien Bourdon in the 17th century.
45 _____ Ingres originally planned to paint the following scenes: The Birth of Raphael, Leaving Urbino, Raphael in front of a Perugino painting, Julius II in front of the Disputation fresco, Leo X and Raphael in the Loggias, Raphael in a circle of artists, Raphael on his deathbed, and Raphael's funeral. See the description in: Henri Delaborde. *Ingres: sa vie, ses travaux, sa doctrine, d'après les notes manuscrites et les et les lettres du maître.* Paris, 1870. pp. 327–328.
46 _____ *Ingres on Art.* p. 98.
47 _____ John Pope-Hennessy. Raphael. *(The Wrightsman Lectures).* New York, 1970. pp. 253–255.
48 _____ *Ingres on Art.* p. 87.

REALISM

The Nazarenes, Ivanov, and even Ingres were exceptions rather than the norm. Raphael lived on in the academies, and in salon art, which degraded his oeuvre out of all proportion. Meanwhile, the vanguard of European art moved ever farther away from Raphael. This became patently obvious in the mid-19th century, the age of Realism. The premier Realist Courbet dismissed Raphael with disdain, and never cared to conceal his contempt for the "slaves of Raphael and Phidias" [49] that lined up behind Ingres. Influential critics, the Goncourt brothers lambasted The Transfiguration. [50] Leo Tolstoy in his later years admitted he felt indifferent about *The Sistine Madonna*; a Japanese origami cockerel was of more use to him, he said. [51] Ilya Repin wrote to Stasov from Rome: "What am I to tell you of the fabled Rome? It does not appeal to me at all: a has-been, dead town, and even the remaining traces of life are vulgar, poped-up (nothing like the Doge's Palace in Venice). Only Michelangelo's *Moses* is impressive. The rest, and Raphael in particular, is so tired, so childish, that I don't even want to look. The galleries are awful here! There is nothing to look at; you just tire yourself out for no reason". [52] Raphael the idealist was being sidelined by Rembrandt the Realist. Rembrandt alone was seen as a painter worth imitating. [53]

Exceptions did exist, but they only proved the rule. Ivan Kramskoy (1837–1887) sang the praises of Raphael, but there is not a speck of Raphael's influence in his paintings, unless *Inconsolable Grief* is accepted as a distant echo of *The Sistine Madonna*, as Tatyana Kurochkina wittily surmised. [54]

Another exception was the distinguished landscapist Camille Corot (1796–1875), who studied under a follower of David and held the classical tradition in high esteem his whole life. And it shows, especially in the rather few portraits he painted, the finest of which is Woman with a Pearl (1868–1870). Often compared to *La Gioconda*, it actually bears more resemblance to *La Fornarina* of the Palazzo Pitti, and, possibly, to the Louvre sketch for *The Portrait of Maddalena Doni*. [55] The model is dressed like an Italian peasant — a clear allusion to the Italians. This exceptional work by an elderly master, combining vivacious simplicity with sublime ideality in a blend of extraordinary harmony, appears to be an attempt to prove that classical beauty does have a place in the age of realism.

A textbook example can be found in the case of Edouard Manet (1832–1883), whose work is sometimes taken as a reference point to mark the beginning of modern art. Having gained more instruction from the old masters of the Louvre and his trips to Holland and Italy than from his academic teacher, Manet came to question most of the painting of his age. Rejected by the official Salon and relegated to the Salon des Refusés, his *Luncheon on the Grass* (1863, Musée d'Orsay) sparked a scandal with its defiantly frivolous subject: a picnic of two fully dressed bourgeois young men and two women — one fully naked and the other scantily clad. The light, seemingly perfunctory manner of the painting only added to the reprobation. However, the direct precedent for the painting is *The Pastoral Concert* by Titian (in the Louvre), sometimes ascribed to Giorgione, and the central group repeats the exact postures of the figures in the bottom right of *The Judgment of Paris*, Raimondi's engraving of Raphael's design. Perhaps Manet's intent was the same as that which motivated Corot — to reconcile the modern and the classical. But the nature of the response elicited by the painting was such that perforce, it went down in history as an artistic provocation. Misunderstood by contemporaries, it exposed the hypocrisy of public tastes and the prevalence of a distorted perception of both the old masters and modernity. Appearing in 19th century clothing, Raphael was panned by the very art salon-goers who continued to extol Raphael, but who had in the meantime distorted his values beyond recognition.

The Impressionists, who defined themselves as painters of nature, not of an ideal, were for the most part indifferent to Raphael. One exception was Edgar Degas, who was close to the Impressionists, but not in every aspect. Degas was an analytically inclined painter on a quest for the perfect compositional balance. He even stylised his self-portrait after an early self-portrait by Raphael. It is notable that Degas had studied under a disciple of Ingres. Renoir had his "Ingres period" too, which we might as well call his "Raphael period", when he was in search of a more serene and rigorous painting structure. It started after his journey to Italy. One of Renoir's works during that period was his rendition of *The Judgment of Paris*. The high point of the renewed quest for order was reached by the work of Paul Cezanne, who strove to "redo Poussin through nature". Cezanne, who never left France, spoke somewhat sceptically of the art of Raphael, which he knew only through the medium of French artists such as Poussin, Ingres, and Manet. And yet the plasticity, rhythm, and proportions in Cezanne's *Bathers* bring back the selfsame *Judgment of Paris* and Raphael's drawings from life, but there is no imitation or stylisation — only commonality of intent. Raphael was important to Cezanne, as well as to other artists of his time, as an exponent of the classical tradition rather than a singular source of inspiration.

Jean-Baptiste-Camille Corot
The Woman with the Pearl
Louvre

Édouard Manet
The Luncheon on the Grass
Musée d'Orsay, Paris

49 Théophile Silvestre. *Les artistes français, Courbet raconté par lui-même et par ses amis.* Edited by Pierre Courthion. Geneva, 1948. Vol. I. p. 50f.
50 Edmond and Jules de Goncourt. *Journal, mémoires de la vie littéraire*. Edited by Robert Ricatte. Monaco, 1956. Vol. VIII. pp. 19–20.
51 Leo Tolstoy. *What is Art? Third Edition, Leo Tolstoy. Complete Works. Vol. 30: Writings from 1882–1898.* Moscow, 1951. p. 410.
52 Ilya Repin. *Collected Letters in Two Volumes. Vol. I: Letters from 1867–1892.* Moscow, 1969. p. 66.
53 Alison McQueen. *The Rise of the Cult of Rembrandt: Reinventing an Old Master in Nineteenth-Century France.* Amsterdam, 2003. pp. 103–104.
54 Tatyana Kurochkina. "Raphael's Artistic Legacy as Perceived by I.N. Kramskoy". Raphael. Edited by Veronika Starodubtseva. Moscow, 1987. pp. 87–88.
55 Michael Clarke. *Corot and the Art of Landscape.* New York, 1991. p. 101.

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Maurice Denis
Figures in a Spring Landscape (Sacred Grove)
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-9657

SYMBOLISM

Another trend developed concomitantly that built on Romanticism's ideas. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, an English reincarnation of the Nazarenes, was founded in 1849. A member of the Brotherhood, critic John Ruskin, writes in the Pre-Raphaelite manifesto: "The doom of the arts of Europe went forth from that chamber [the Stanza della Segnatura], and it was brought about in great part by the very excellencies of the man who had thus marked the commencement of decline. The perfection of execution and the beauty of feature which were attained in his works, and in those of his great contemporaries, rendered finish of execution and beauty of form the chief objects of all artists; and thenceforward execution was looked for rather than thought, and beauty rather than veracity... These are the two secondary causes of the decline of art; the first being the loss of moral purpose... In medieval art, thought is the first thing, execution the second; in modern art, execution is the first thing, and thought the second. And again, in medieval art, truth is first, beauty second; in modern art, beauty is first, truth second. The medieval principles led up to Raphael, and the modern principles lead down from him..." [56] Ruskin believed that the dramatic watershed occurred "not only in Raphael's time, but by Raphael's own practice, and by his practice in *the very centre of his available life*" [57] — i.e. when he moved to Rome in 1508. The majority of Pre-Raphaelites drew inspiration from the art of the 15th and 14th centuries, particularly Botticelli, but a degree of preoccupation with Raphael's early work is also noticeable in some cases, being most pronounced in the work of Edward Burne-Jones (1833–1898).

In France, somewhat similar aesthetic principles were shared by Puvis de Chavannes, and later by Maurice Denis, who had evolved from the exalted spirituality of symbolism to a calmer, more decorative neoclassical modernism, yielding the magnificent, Villa Farnesina-inspired *Story of Psyche*, which Denis painted for the mansion of Ivan Morozov. Like the Pre-Raphaelites, these artists practiced decorativeness, laying the emphasis on linear perspective, stylistic affinity to the early Renaissance, detached loftiness of the subject, and a more emotional than plastic tribute to Raphael.

The two lines — those of Cezanne and the Symbolists — converged in Picasso (1881–1973). During the Rose Period, one of the early stages of Picasso's long career as an artist, his works combined the symbolist abstract poesy of images with the beginnings of formal experimentation. It appears symptomatic that Raphael's influence is felt in several works of that period, most strongly in *Family of Acrobats with a Monkey* (1905, Göteborg Art Museum), which hearkens back to Raphael's "Holy Families" (the Hermitage's *Holy Family* (*Madonna with a Beardless Joseph*) is sometimes named as the prototype). Thus even the highly versatile and contradictory art of Pablo Picasso has its origins in Raphael. Whether through affirmation or negation, classical grounding underlies even Picasso's most daring experiments.

56 John Ruskin. "Pre-Raphaelitism". *Pre-Raphaelitism*. Edited by James Sambrook. Chicago, 1974. p. 97.
57 Ibid., p. 96.

Radical modernism, or the avant-garde, declared a clean break with the tradition that preceded them:
Looking for a future,
We travelled far and wide,
But why are we sitting here
Like corpses in a graveyard,
Weighed down by the masonry of a palatial past?
See a White Guard soldier?
Put a bullet in his belly!
What about Raphael?
What about Rastrelli?
Time for
bullets
to pummel museum walls.
Hey, you hundred-gauge gullets, fire on the old junk!

wrote the futurist poet Vladimir Mayakovsky in 1918. [58] This was no longer simply about a change of manner. The age-old thought paradigm was coming to an end. The Christian view of history was founded on eschatology: the Garden of Eden is in the past, as is the age of Christ; in the future, there is only the gradual approach of a time of great sorrow, the reign of the Antichrist, and the end of the world, none of which humanity is able to prevent or avert. The subsequent Resurrection and new life imply the existence of a new world, devoid of time and thus devoid of history. The antique mythological narrative of the regression from the age of gold to the age of iron followed the same logic. The ideal, the golden age, is in the past or in Eternity. Renaissance artists looked to distant antiquity for an ideal. Their descendants saw it in the Renaissance. The spread of atheism, coupled with the rise of industry and a general improvement in living standards in the 19th century, eroded those notions. Humanity learned to believe in progress, and so transferred its ideal from the past to the future. "Newness" became the principal value. There was nothing to look for in the past, especially when the past was as threadbare as Raphael. Hence the kaleidoscopic change of styles and manners in the early 1900s. With the outbreak of the First World War, the period of restless experimentation with form of the 1900s and early 1910s was over. The tragedy of such an unprecedented scale cooled off minds. The time had come to "return to order". Reflecting on the takeaways from the early 20th century, the modernists realised that, in their frenzied drive to demolish the old and build something new on its ruins, to get to the very essence of figurativeness by culling all unnecessary elements, they had unintentionally reverted to its roots. In 1920 Jean Metzinger called Raphael the "father of cubism". The same year, André Lhote wrote: "Cezanne guides us in our searches, and we point to Raphael as the perfect exemplar... If you study Raphael in fullness and acknowledge his works to be the ideal of beauty in modelling, you then have no option but to conclude that all cubists ever do is make rough sketches". [59] "To me there is no past or future in my art. If a work of art cannot live always in the present it must not be considered at all. The art of the Greeks, of the Egyptians, of the great painters who lived in other times, is not an art of the past; perhaps it is more alive today than it ever was," [60] said Pablo Picasso in 1923. He had visited Italy in 1917. In the 1920s he would emerge as one of the pivotal artists of Neoclassicism. Figurativeness, depth, and clarity returned to his work. Scenes of motherhood were now his favourite subject. His painting *The Three Graces* — an epitome of classical harmony — also belongs to that period. The influences of Raphael, Ingres, and all antiquity are inseparable in that work, interlaced as they are in a sublime, ever-so-slightly nostalgic concept of pure form. Neoclassical trends continued in the art of the 1930s, waxing ever more refined and stylised, interlwining with Art Deco. In parallel, Neoclassical art followed a different route in "totalitarian" parts of the world.

The tragedy of the Second World War ended all that. "After Auschwitz there is no word tinged from on high... that has any right..." [61] was the dictum of the German philosopher Theodor Adorno, spelling doom for the perception of Raphael in the second half of the 20th century. *The Sistine Madonna* epitomises everything in art that is "tinged from on high", especially considering the painting's Romantic cult following. It is the only Raphael image that continued to haunt artists in the latter half of the 20th century, meeting with constant attempts to deconstruct it. One of the first "deconstructors", in the first half of the century, was the Dadaist Kurt Schwitters with his collage ("Merz Picture") *Wenzel Child. Madonna with Horse* (1921), where the head of the Madonna is replaced with a fashion magazine clip-

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Pablo Picasso
Three Women
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-9658

58 Vladimir Mayakovsky. "Too Early to Rejoice" ("Looking for a future..."). Vladimir Mayakovsky. *Complete Works in 13 Volumes*. Moscow, 1956. Vol. 2. p. 16.
59 André Lhote. "Le qualrième centenaire de Raphaël". *La Nouvelle Revue francaise*. 1920. Vol. 14 (June). p. 928.
60 "Picasso speaks". *The Arts*. New York, 1923. May. p. 316.
61 Theodor Adorno. Negative Dialectics. Translated by E. B. Ashton. New York, 1973. p.367

ping and a horse figure is added on one side, in addition to sundry newspaper clippings. Yevgeny Vuchetich, a socialist realist, had a completely different intent but ended up with a somewhat similar result when he modelled his *Liberating Warrior* (1948) in Berlin's Treptower Park on the Madonna figure. [62] Surrealist painter Salvador Dali exploited *The Sistine Madonna* repeatedly; we might mention here his 1958 work in which her ghostlike image is painted into a giant pointillist ear (*Madonna*, Metropolitan Museum). Pop art guru Andy Warhol featured *The Sistine Madonna* in one of his later works, *Raphael Madonna* $6.99. Close to the original in size, this is a drawing of the figures' outlines, one repeated, with an oversized price tag slapped on top (1985, Andy Warhol Museum). Neoexpressionist Georg Baselitz exhibited a reproduction of *The Sistine Madonna* side-by-side with a similarly composed, but sideways, picture of eight dogs (*Statement*, 1999). This list is not nearly complete.

Picasso, probably the most indispensable artistic genius of the 20th century, over his long career went through the stages of imitation, denial, and rethinking of Raphael's legacy, ending with irony. In a few provocative etchings of his enormous *347 Suite* (1968), the 87-year-old Picasso plays with the story of Raphael and Fornarina in an erotic key, verging on obscenity. Here, the attentive spectator will simultaneously discern a witty commentary on Vasari's account, a rip on the hypocrisy of 19th-century salon paintings, and an oblique dialogue with Ingres and Raphael himself: the Dionysian orgiastic merrymaking challenges their Apollonian grandiloquence and makes it look ridiculous.

Postmodernism, with its penchant for playing games with the old masters, did not leave Raphael untouched. In Russia, the artists of Timur Novikov's New Academy made the most notable contribution in that regard, but still, Raphael was not nearly as sought-after as, for example, the mannerists or even Ingres. An Academy graduate, artist Yegor Ostrov works with the legacy of the old masters to this day, displaying a staunchness worthy of the classics; but these are different times, and his works have a different ring to them. His interpretation of *The Sistine Madonna*, painted specifically for the Hermitage exhibition, has a special feel to it that we thought we had forgotten. I believe it is called "sincerity".

Yegor Ostrov
The Sistine Madonna
2020
Acrylic on canvas
Property of the artist

RAPHAEL FOREVER

The 2018 exhibition *Innovation as an Artistic Technique* at the State Hermitage Museum featured the work *21st Century Report* by artist and art historian Dmitry Gutov: behind a maze of wires from some mysterious devices, sagging like vines, a screen displaying The School of Athens is barely visible, gradually being obscured by thick "verdure". Will this prophecy materialise? Is Raphael destined to drown in the digital jungle of the future?

It is obvious that Raphael is not as popular today as even Caravaggio, let alone Leonardo da Vinci or Rembrandt. Too many of our contemporaries would probably agree with Leo Tolstoy, who wrote that *The Sistine Madonna* "evokes no feeling, save for the nagging concern about whether I am feeling what I am supposed to be feeling," or perhaps even only with the first part of this quotation. Not only is Raphael unloved; too often he is also not understood. At the same time, the art of Raphael is part of the world's culture on so deep a level that it has become one of its constants, an archetype, and, as such, it cannot go away.

Contemporary culture is increasingly often defined by the term "metamodernism", which denotes, *inter alia*, "the resurgence of sincerity, hope, romanticism, affect, and the potential for grand narratives and universal truths". One of the purposes of this exhibition is to show that over a span of many centuries the fine arts never saw a truth more universal and inspiring than the art of Raphael. It is to be hoped that all these works that have been assembled together, produced over the course of five centuries by very different artists inspired by a common ideal, will help the audience begin to feel what it is that unites them all and tune in to it again, and thus to understand and fall in love with Raphael.

62 I thank Sergei Feofanov for bringing this to my attention and pointing out the classical prototypes for other sculptures of the Soviet War Memorial ensemble.
63 Leo Tolstoy. What Is Art? Second Edition. Leo Tolstoy. *Complete Works. Vol. 30: Writings from 1882–1898.* Moscow, 1951. p. 380.
64 "...the times are upon us when classics are less understandable than both, and Raphael needs even more explaining than Malevich". Arkady Ippolitov. "Madonna's visit". *Moskovskie Novosti*. 2004. No. 34. p. 25.
65 Luke Turner. *Metamodernism: A Brief Introduction.* URL: http://www.metamodernism.com/2015/01/12/metamodernism-a-brief-introduction/ (accessed: 28 October 2020).

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Cup of rock crystal
in gilt silver setting
Cup: Milan, Italy, late 16th century
Lid: Russia, mid-18th century

The restoration of a unique cup from a single piece of rock crystal, made by the Sarachi workshop in Milan, was implemented with the financial support of the Hermitage Friends.

PHOTOGRAPHIC COPIES OF ART 2

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Engraving of Raphael's Ezekiel's Vision.
Photographic reproduction.
Italy. 1855–1865
Albumen print
Fratelli Alinari
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, 2020
Inv. No. ОГФ-5177

EVER SINCE PHOTOGRAPHY WAS INVENTED, ONE OF ITS MAIN USES HAS BEEN THE REPRODUCTION OF ARTWORK. THE MASTERPIECES OF THE FAMOUS ITALIAN PAINTER WERE AMONG THE MOST POPULAR OBJECTS FOR REPRODUCTION.

Photo Reproductions in the Second Half of the 19thCentury. Photographs of Raphael's Paintings inthe Hermitage Collection

IRINA TERENTYEVA [1]

The earliest photo in the Hermitage's collection was taken by French entrepreneur and photographer Louis Désiré Blanquart-Evrard in 1852. It is a wax reproduction of a female bust that in the 19th century was believed to be Raphael's work.

Photographing artworks was especially popular in Italy. Many photos from publishing companies such as Alinari, Brogi, and Poppi can be found in the Hermitage. These photos were mostly mass produced for a wide audience, but they allowed people to actually see beloved works by Raphael that were often reproduced in the 19th century. The exhibition displays reproductions of *Ezekiel's Vision, Madonna of the Goldfinch, and The Transfiguration.*

In the 1850s, inexpensive cartes de visite appeared, making photographs affordable for everyone. Collecting photographic reproductions became a popular pastime in the second half of the 19th century. Thanks to the small format of *cartes de visite* (6 × 9 cm), photographers and publishers could sell to an unsuspecting public photos of their engravings instead of photos of the original works. The exhibition includes both -- photos of Raphael's pictures and photos of the engravings from which they were reproduced.

The invention of carbon printing marked an important new stage in the development of photographic reproduction. The approach, which used pigments instead of silver, could produce images that were not distorted by fading. French photographer Adolphe Braun was the leader in the production of such images. In 1866 he launched a project aimed at photographing the museum collections of Europe. It took him only a few years to have all the continent's significant art collections photographed. The exhibition presents photographic reproductions of Raphael's works from famous collections such as Prado, Palazzo, Pitti, and Victoria and Albert Museum. Adolphe Braun was one of the first to photograph Raphael's frescoes in the Vatican, the results of which are also displayed in the exhibition. In 1882 and 1889 the photographers at Braun's atelier worked at the Imperial Hermitage, where they photographed all of Raphael's works that were housed there at the time, including *The Alba Madonna* (now in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC).

Artistic photographic reproductions were highly valued and often collected along with paintings and graphic art. The collection of Pyotr Semyonov-Tyan-Shansky includes a charming photo reproduction of a detail from *The Sistine Madonna.*

Photographs of Raphael's works were often presented as diplomatic gifts. The exhibition includes photographs of Raphael's frescoes in Villa Farnesina given to Emperor Alexander II by Pietro Dovizielli.

Photographing pieces of art used to require both technical skills and artistic taste. Now that technology has developed further, photographic reproduction has lost the status of an art form in the art of photography and has become reference material. However, what seemed to be ordinary and unimportant yesterday has now gained a new respect, meaning, and historical and cultural value. This certainly applies to the photographic reproductions of Raphael's works, both those that have survived well-preserved, and those that have been damaged or altered over time.

1 Irina Terentyeva is a researcher and curator of photographs in the Department of the History of Russian Culture at the State Hermitage Museum

2 Exhibition: Photographic Reproductions in the Second Half of the Nineteenth Century. Photographs of Raphael's Paintings in the Hermitage Collection
The State Hermitage Museum
23 December 2020 – 28 March 2021

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Photographic reproduction of Raphael's painting The Alba Madonna
Late 19th — early 20th century
Carbon print
Braun & Cie
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, 2020
Inv. No. ОГФ-5504

Photographic reproduction of Raphael's drawing The Three Graces
France. 1860s
Carbon print
Braun & Cie
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, 2020
Inv. No. ОГФ-8873

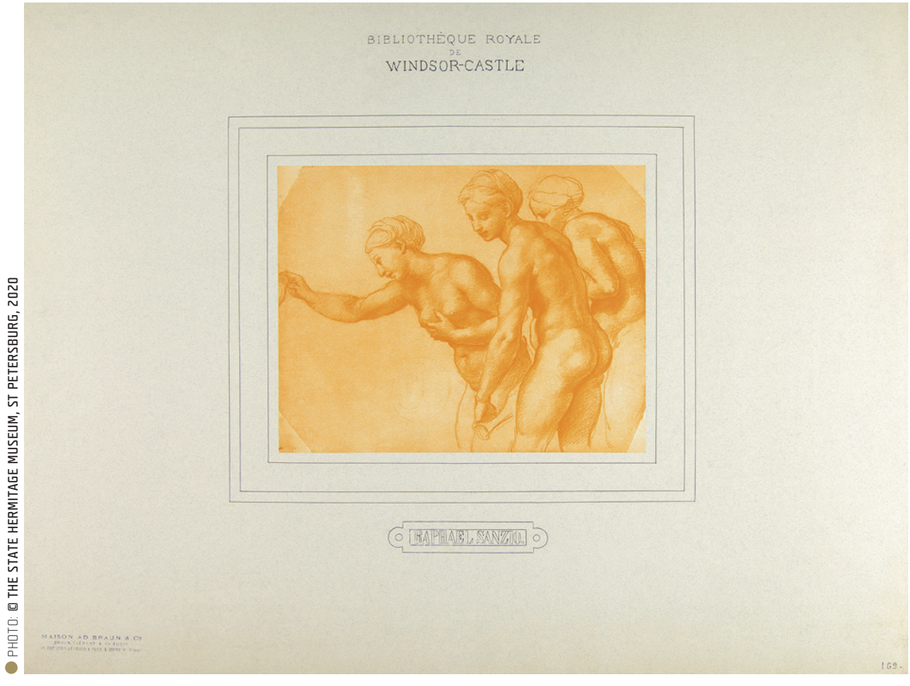

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

The Department of the History of Russian Culture at the State Hermitage Museum presents the next instalment in its series of exhibitions devoted to the early history of photography. In 2020, the Year of Raphael, the museum invites its visitors to trace the development of the art of reproduction using photos of Raphael's paintings taken by European photographers in the second half of the 19th century as an example. The exhibition *Photo Reproductions in the Second Half of the 19th Century.* Photographs of Raphael's Paintings in the Hermitage Collection presents over 40 photos that have never before been exhibited. The photographs demonstrate the quality of different photographic printing techniques and allow us to look at the great artist's masterpieces through the eyes of a 19th-century viewer.

Karl Bryullov
The Last Days of Pompeii
1833
Oil on Canvas
58 x 81
State Russian Museum

YURY GUDYMENKO

RAPHAEL AND RUSSIAN HISTORICAL PAINTING OF THE ROMANTIC ERA. KARL BRYULLOV

The Journal of Eugene Delacroix

“Only by achieving perfect form can form be destroyed.” We believe that this statement by Schelling best characterises the essence of the Romantic view of art. In other words, a deep analysis of the external facets of an artwork can reveal its true, hidden meaning. In art criticism we usually call this “unity of content and form”. This explains the respect and admiration the Romantic era had for the art of the Renaissance masters: Raphael, Michelangelo, Correggio, Titian, Leonardo da Vinci... whose work is to the highest degree characterised by a rich content of form.
“Great artists... in order to form their talent or keep it healthy... have had to imitate their predecessors, and imitate them almost unceasingly, whether voluntarily or unwillingly”.

Karl Bryullov
The Last Days of Pompeii. Sketch
1828
Paper on card, oil
58 x 81
State Russian Museum

“To paint *Pompei*, talent was not enough for me. I had to gaze long and intently at the great masters,” these words of Karl Bryullov, which were reported by Nikolay Ramazanov, confirm that the renowned painting is a product of profound study and contemplation of the art of the past. [2] This was evident to contemporaries: “...in another part of the painting, we see the grandiosity of Michelangelo, in another the grace of Guido, sometimes the artist resembles Raphael, sometimes it seems that in him Titian has come to life again”. [3] The contemporary literature on Bryullov stressed *Pompei’s* link to works of classical sculpture and masters of the 16th, 17th, and18th centuries, particularly Raphael. Raphael was crucial. Bryullov primarily used motifs of figures and groups from three of his frescoes: *The School of Athens, The Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple, and The Fire in the Borgo.* This can be seen in both the numerous sketches for the painting and the final version.

In a study in oil from the Tretyakov Gallery (58 x 76 cm), the figure of a woman calling for help is quite similar to the figure from the centre of Raphael’s composition *The Fire in the Borgo, while The Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple* provided Bryullov with his “runner” (the youth carrying twigs) and his “basket carrier” (the figure from Heliodorus’ retinue). [4] In another study (58 x 81 cm, State Russian Museum), in the left foreground we see a group of three people: a woman hugging her daughters (perhaps a reworking of a motif from *Heliodorus*). The final version, in addition to the above motifs, besides references to *Heliodorus* [5] we find one to The School of Athens as well (in the figure of a bald old man bowing on a staircase).

But the main thing that Bryullov took from Raphael was not his creative reconsideration of the motifs from these frescoes, but the skill of arranging a complex composition, placing around 30 figures on the canvas. It is in this context that we should understand Bryullov’s admission that he only dared to paint *Pompei* because he had grown to understand *The School of Athens.*

The connection with the figures in *The School of Athens* can be made by comparing, among other things, the main compositional lines, which are arc-shaped. The heads of the foreground groups located to the left form a snake-like line that moves to the figures on the steps and then to the centre of the composition.

At the spot where this line takes a sharp left turn towards the centre, there is an arc in contrast to it, formed by the silhouettes of the figures standing to the right near the column. Finally, there are a number of groups tucked into the circle (the groups of Pythagoras and Euclid, for example).

Winckelmann, and Schelling after him, in characterising the “high Greek style” which “turned brutality and sudden jolts in form into soft shapes”,[6] compared it with the works of Raphael. One of the main virtues of Raphael was considered to be his line — an object of study and admiration for many artists in the first half of the 19th century. It was regarded as the golden mean between the “harsh” lines of the masters of the quattrocento and the fluid lines of the grandiose style of Correggio and Guido Reni. [7] Alexander Ivanov, who studied Raphael extensively, determined the essence of this style to be “arc-like features” and “preservation of the main lines”. [8] Delacroix, who felt remote from Raphael’s art, nevertheless had great admin-

1_____Quoted in: Boris Paramonov. *The End of Style.* Moscow, 1999. p. 24.
2_____Nikolay Ramazanov. *Material for the History of the Arts in Russia.* Moscow, 1963. Book 1. p. 186
3_____Quoted in: Ivan Bocharov, Yulia Glushakova. *Karl Bryullov. Italian Discoveries.* Moscow, 1984. p. 16.
4_____As for the “carrying motif” (a young man carrying an old man on his shoulders), it is hard to prove the claim that the group from The Fire in the Borgo was the initial inspiration for it. Galina Leonlieva, for example, suggested that it may have been borrowed from Pompeo Baloni’s painting *Aeneas Fleeing from Troy,* or from the engraving from Alessandro Sanquirico’s stage designs for the opera *The Last Day of Pompei* (see: Galina Leonlieva. *Karl Pavlovich Bryullov.* Leningrad, 1991. pp. 47, 48).
5_____See also the figure of the falling mother in the right foreground in *Pompei,* which resembles the pose of fallen Heliodorus, and the movement of the pagan priest’s left leg (towards the left from the centre), which Bryullov saw in one of Raphael’s female figures (their position in the composition of both works is also similar: movement to the left from the centre).
6_____Freidrich Wilhem Joseph von Schelling. *The Philosophy of Art.*
7_____Ibid.
8_____*Aleksandr Ivanov in Letters, Documents, and Recollections.* Compiled by Igor Vinogradov. Moscow, 2001. p. 76.

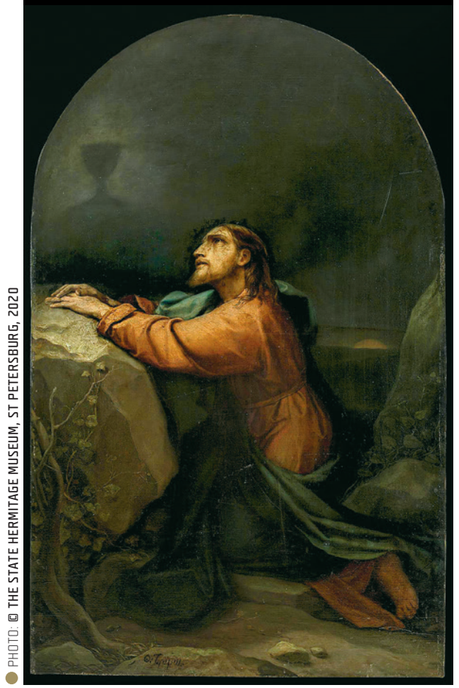

PHOTO © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Fyodor Bruni
The Agony in the Garden
The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg
Inv. No. ЭРЖ-2713

istration for the "admirable balancing of the lines" [9]: "The sight of *The Judgement of Paris* by Raphael, in a frightfully worn print, appears to me under a new light, since admiring, in the *Virgin with a Veil*, of the Rue Grange-Batelière, his admirable understanding of the lines. The interest in line, however, if one considers it for all pictures, is a quality which completely blots out everything that one sees after leaving the presence of Raphael. One must not, indeed, think too much about his quality, for fear of throwing everything out of the window." [10] Timofey Neff, who worshipped Raphael, said of his *The Deposition* (Uffizi): "The totality in his incredibly tender lines is connected with an enormous power; it is very comforting." [11]

The Deposition was generally one of Raphael's most popular paintings in the first half of the 19th century. In 1841, Nikolai Gogol commissioned the artist Ivan Shapovalov, through Aleksandr Ivanov, to "make copies of the heads of the Saviour from Raphael's *The Transfiguration* and Raphael's *The Deposition*". [12] Quotations from the latter work are present in the 1850 painting of the same name by Cosroe Dusi, for which he received the title of professor. (A mosaic from this painting currently adorns the altar of St Catherine in St Isaac's Cathedral in St Petersburg.) Peter von Cornelius also used Raphael's painting in an illustration for Goethe's Faust, "Street in Front of Gretchen's Door". [13] There is documented evidence that Bryullov copied Raphael's *The Deposition* when he was living in Italy. In the mid-19th century, the copy was kept in the Bryullov Hall of the Academy of Arts; its location is currently unknown. [14] Ivan Eggink, who also attended drawing classes at the Academy while in Rome, sent a "good copy of the renowned, glorious work by Raphael Sanzio, held at the gallery of Prince Borghese, showing the deposition of the Saviour to his grave..." [15]

We can only understand why Raphael's *The Deposition* was so popular during the Romantic era if we closely analyse its means of expression. Raphael combines two subjects in one painting: the "Deposition" and the "Swoon of the Virgin". The drama of the scene is emphasised by its conveyance of different emotions: from complete calm in the face of the dead Christ to his mother who has fainted in shock.

Raphael probably saw his main task as communicating the diversity of emotional states in the display of grief, which harkened back to the previously planned theme of "mourning". The composition is defined by its wavelike lines, which begin from the head of the bearer in the left part of the painting — an "emotional point of calm", as it were. The head of the Saviour, which repeats this head (in its angle and emotions) draws the viewer down, and together with the helplessly hanging body forms the start of the first wave. The second wave that is in contrast to it begins with an upward movement, and is formed by the lines of the heads of John, Nicodemus, and the Magdalene. Meeting in the centre (in the figure of the young bearer), both lines once more combine in the figure of the Madonna — the emotional culmination of the painting. The hopelessness expressed in the falling line formed by the figure of Christ is after some time replaced by a grandiose emotional outburst: the viewer's gaze rises up along the diagonal line formed by the hand of the young bearer to the semi-circle of the three heads, like an arc, framing Mary who has fainted. The motif of mourning seems to acquire an almost audible accompaniment. Exhalation and inhalation — this is how the "main theme" of the curve might be characterised. Even greater emotional fluctuation is to be found in the second curve, which begins with the figure of the Magdalene and acquires two possible directions, which end, however, at the same "point" — the figure of the Madonna.[16] The "turbulent sea of emotions" is intensified by additional lines which repeat, collide, and contrast. The attentive viewer will be amazed by their abundance. The arc-like, curved nature of these lines gives the entire scene a feeling of unease and anxiety, but also a feeling of deep and expansive breathing.

The composition of *The Deposition* was improved upon in other works by Raphael. One further development, resembling an S-shaped line on its side, was in *The Expulsion of Heliodorus from the Temple*. The only difference between it and *The Deposition* is that *Heliodorus* has a large space between the two sides of this figure. The value of this composition lies in its simplified nature, and accordingly it is easy to read from a great distance. Pope Julius II, the youths climbing the column, the praying high priest, the boys running to Heliodorus, Heliodorus himself, the horseman crushing him, and finally the crowd in the left foreground — these are the main points on the journey of viewing the painting. *The Miraculous Draught of Fishes* completes the development of this compositional scheme. It makes it less complex and more compact. The hand gestures of Christ, the Apostle Peter, and the standing apostle Andrew form the first arc, which changes direction to rise up on the backs of the apostles pulling in the nets. The return to the figure of Christ is similar, only built on a mirror principle. The movement goes along the bottom of the back boat, through the arms of the fishermen, the left arm of the Apostle Andrew, and then rises up along his shoulder and head to sink down to the figure of Christ. These are only the primary lines, which have the aim of creating a certain duration of perception; the combinations of these lines are more diverse.

The thoroughly elaborated system of wavelike and arc-like curves in *The Deposition, The Expulsion of Heliodorus,* and *The Miraculous Draught* made these works extremely popular in the first half of the 19th century — an era when the expressive means of line was regarded as very important, and its "content" was especially valued.

The composition of *Pompei* has surprising similarities to the works of Raphael in which the main groups in the composition are linked together and form a sideways letter S. We see the start of the unifying line in the extreme left of the figure of the background — a startled man recoiling from a doorway. Then the line rises up, bending around the crowd in the background, and falls down to the figure of a dead woman. Then, along the line of the legs of the three main groups on the right side in the foreground, it once more rises up, to the horseman, and from him to the silhouette of the arm of the old man being carried. This hand, with splayed fingers, has the function of rhythmic repetition — we also see this gesture in the figure of the startled man recoiling from the doorway, in the figure of the woman with the pitcher, and in the fleeing figure in a cloak. Perhaps it is no coincidence that these "content-rich gestures" coincide with the main lines of the composition.

In discussing the principles of arranging a composition with many figures in the large paintings of the Romantic era, Magdalina Rakova justly noted: "By shifting attention to a crowd of people, to its inner life, by moving the "hero" away from his central place in the composition, artists found that they needed to look for different unifying moments around which they could arrange a painting with many figures. As true Romantics, they looked for them in the emotional sphere. Bryullov sees the possibility of unifying the crowd with the feeling of horror caused by the flash of lighting and another eruption from the volcano. In [Fyodor] Bruni's painting [*The Brazen Serpent* — Y.G.], the organising element that merges the separate characters into a single crowd is its two closely interlwined emotional themes: fear of the coming catastrophe and hope for salvation." [17] But in addition to the "emotional unification" of groups in Bryullov's painting, we should certainly add "linear" unification as well. This is characteristic for *Pompei* (as we have already seen), as well as for *The Brazen Serpent and for Ivanov's The Appearance of Christ before the People.*

Bryullov, Bruni, and Ivanov, depicting crowds in their historical paintings, faced the difficult problem of creating easily readable groups that were somehow linked together. A frieze-like composition, arranged either in the form of a triangle or using a single wavelike line, was no longer satisfactory for these cases. This is why, starting with their first pencil drawings using the traditional arrangements for groups, these masters soon realised that this compositional solution had no future. They turned to Raphael because his work used a solution that was the most functional and productive and the most suitable for depicting a crowd.

The second half of the 1820s is most likely when this solution first appeared in the works of Russian artists. In Bruni's studies for *The Brazen Serpent,* the S-shaped compositional scheme appears in a study that was sent as a report on work completed to the Artists' Encouragement Society, according to Anna Vereshchagina. This study was examined in 1828, and it is tentatively dated the same year. [18] The composition did not subsequently undergo any fundamental modification; the only changes were wider borders and new groups. If the sepia sketch from the Russian Museum really was made in 1828, then Bruni was the first of the Russian artists of his generation to use Raphael's solution in the historical genre. It was not until the last stage of painting *Pompei* that Bryullov organised the groups on the canvas in the form of Raphael's "figure eight". At the same time, we should remember that both masters moved in a parallel direction in their creative development: in Italian Midday (1827, State Russian Museum) Bryullov reveals that he has studied Raphael's use of line. The Italian period of Bryullov's work should generally be considered the time of his most intense study of Raphael's work, in which matters of linear organisation of composition were paramount. The roundness and softness of forms and the arc shape of compositional lines are noticeable not only in *Italian Midday, Girl Gathering Grapes near Naples* (both 1827, State Russian Museum), *Bathsheba* (1832, State Russian Museum), his portrait of Demidov (Florence, Pitti), and other works painted after his return to St Petersburg. *The Last Day of Pompei* was merely Bryullov's unique way of bringing all of these creative pursuits into one great work. [19]

9 _____ *The Journal of Eugene Delacroix,* New York, 1937. p. 150.
10 _____ Ibid., p. 156.
11 _____ *Mary von Grünewaldt. Skizzen und Bilder aus dem Leben Carl Timoleon von Neff. Darmstadt, 1887. p. 221.*
12 _____ Nikolai Gogol. *Complete Works in 14 Volumes.* Vol. 11. p. 353.
13 _____ See: Peter von Cornelius *Zeichnungen zu Goethens Faust aus der Graphischen Sammlung im Stadel.* Frankfurt am Main, 1991.
14 _____ Karl Bryullov in Letters, Documents, and Recollections of Contemporaries. Moscow, 1961. p. 235. Mikhail Zheleznov, who reported this information, also recalls that before painting *Pompei* Bryullov painted a work entitled *The Deposition* for a church in Rome (Ibid., pp. 204, 205).
15 _____ V. Mix. New works of art". Zhurnal izyashnikh isskusiv. 1823. No. 5. p. 430.
16 _____ The first direction is from the Magdalene's shoulder, through the green clothing of the bearer, to the blue shawl of the Madonna; the second is from the arms of the Magdalene and the Saviour, through the leg of the Christ, to the knees of the sitting girl, and along her spiral-shaped figure to Christ's mother.

17 _____ Magdalina Rakova. *Russian Historical Painting of the Mid-19th Century.* Moscow, 1979. p. 29.
18 _____ Anna Vereshchagina. *Fyodor Antonovich Bruni.* Leningrad, 1985. p. 108.
19 _____ Yury Gudymenko. "Raphael, Michelangelo, and Russian artists of the first half of the 19th century. An essay on the 'content of form' in the painting of the Romantic era" (article excerpt). *Works of the State Hermitage,* St Petersburg, 2008. Volume XL. pp. 132-138.

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Galleria Borghese, Rome, Italy

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THE HALL OF MIRRORS AT VERSAILLES: A RARE SERIES OF PRINTS FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE DUC DE MORTEMART

DIMITRY OZERKOV

IN THE STATE HERMITAGE'S PRINT COLLECTION THERE IS AN ALBUM WITH THE FOLLOWING INSCRIPTION ON THE COVER: "CABINET // DE DUC // DE // MORTEMART" [1]. THE ALBUM CONTAINS 25 SHEETS OF UNIQUE EARLY ENGRAVING PRINTS FROM THE GRAND GALLERY OF VERSAILLES SERIES, PUBLISHED IN FULL IN 1752. THE CUSTODIANS AT THE HERMITAGE IDENTIFIED THE ARTISTS LONG AGO: THEIR NAMES WERE WRITTEN IN PENCIL AT THE BOTTOM OF EACH PAGE BY SOMEONE AT THE HERMITAGE IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 19TH CENTURY (IN A FINAL PRINTED VERSION, IN WHICH THE PRINTS WOULD BE MADE FROM THE PLATES IN THEIR FINISHED STATE, THE NAMES WOULD APPEAR UNDER THE PRINTS). BUT UNTIL NOW THESE SHEETS HAVE NOT ATTRACTED MUCH ATTENTION FROM RESEARCHERS.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Spine and Lists of Engravings from the Album "Cabinet of Mortemart"
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ОГ-У-222/1-25

"IMMORTALISE THE GRAND GALLERY OF VERSAILLES"

On May 6, 1682 it was publicly announced that the court of Louis XIV would be moving to Versailles, although the work of decorating the palace and landscaping the park was still in full swing. Versailles was being transformed from a modest hunting estate into "an effective instrument of absolutism" [2] and a monument to the image of regal power — majesty, wealth, and the refined taste of the monarch. The "first artist of the King", Charles Le Brun (1619–1690), was in charge of the decoration, tasked with organising the design down to the finest detail. The statues in the park, with Apollo at the head, were a metaphysical reference to the "Sun King" and represented the entire universe as subordinate to his rule. Among the figures included by Le Brun were the four elements, the four seasons, the four times of day, and the four human temperaments. On the balconies of the palace he put the twelve months, and decorated its walls and vaults with the seven planets and numerous allegories of royal deeds and victorious battles. Historiographer André Félibien (1619–1695), in his description of Versailles, pointed out the solar metaphor that permeated every part of the decoration for the park and the interiors: "As the Sun is the King's appellation (la Devise), and poets substitute the Sun for Apollo and Apollo for the Sun, in this magnificent building there is nothing that has no connection with the aforementioned deity; all the figures and decorations that we see here have not been placed at random, but are related either to the Sun or to the specific place in which they are situated." [3]

The apotheosis of the "Sun King" centred on the palace's Hall of Mirrors (also known as the Grand Gallery). From 1678 to 1686 Le Brun decorated this hall, huge by the standards of the time (73 × 10.5 × 12.3 metres), with 17 large windows that opened onto the park. The paintings under the luxurious vault occupied an area of over a thousand square metres. The motifs were historical events from 1661 to 1678, chosen to preserve the record of the reign of Louis XIV throughout the centuries. The central plafond, *The King Governs by Himself*, is symmetrically flanked by large and medium-sized compositions, merging into a single triumphal ensemble.

The king liked Le Brun's decor, and he wished to see the vault of the gallery reproduced in a series of presentational engravings. The grandeur of Versailles' palace and parks could not but become an integral part of the publishing project directed by Jean-Baptiste Colbert (1619–1683), entitled *The Cabinet of the King* and dedicated to the idea of immortalising the reign of the Sun King. This unprecedented initiative involved the production of hundreds of prints and descriptions of the royal parks and residences, as well as the paintings, statues, and tapestries they contained. The luxuriously bound albums were sent out as diplomatic gifts to be kept forever in the world's major libraries. The laborious engraving took many years, as did the work on the arrangement of the park and the decoration of the palace, which, according to the testimony of contemporaries, never actually stopped.

France at the end of the 17th century thought engraving as a means of replication and reproduction to be the main method of preserving masterpieces of art for posterity. In the preface to the first volume of *The Cabinet of the King*, Félibien wrote: "By means of a run of prints made from one plate, a picture can be preserved and reproduced almost indefinitely. At the same time, the plate itself remains unique, only existing for a limited number of years. So... it is thanks to engraved plates... that posterity will one day see in pleasing illustration the history of the great deeds of this august monarch... Thanks to these prints, all peoples will admire the magnificent buildings that the king ordered to be erected everywhere, and the rich decor with which they are decorated." [4] This view was unequivocally reflected in the planning of this publication, dedicated to immortalising Le Brun's decor. When it came into being, the influential *Journal de Trévoux* wrote: "The Hall of Versailles may perish, but the engraved plates never will" [5].

While Le Brun was still alive, the task of engraving the plates depicting the Versailles Hall of Mirrors was given to Charles Louis Simonneau (1645–1728). He set to work, agreeing to do one print a year, and in 1688 completed his first engraving, the composition *Franche-Comté Is Conquered for the Second Time*. Simonneau also began on a second, *The King Arms Himself on Land and at Sea*, but work was stopped due to the outbreak of a protracted war with the League of Augsburg and because of the death of the Marquis de Louvois (François Michel Le Tellier, 1641-1691), Colbert's successor. [6] The print project was not completed during Louis XIV's reign.

Louis XV spent the years of his regency in Paris and returned to Versailles only in 1722. 35 years later a decision was taken to return to the idea of publishing the vaults. In 1723, the artist Jean-Baptiste Massé (1687–1767) turned his hand to the task. Creating the engravings for the Hall of Mirrors became his life's work. With the support of the Duc d'Antin, Louis-Antoine de Pardaillan de Gondrin (1665–1736), and with the permission of Louis XV, a scaffolding was constructed in the hall on which Massé would spend eight years, drawing in great detail the decorations on the hall's massive ceiling. He also managed to do the same for the two adjacent rooms, the Salon of War and the Salon of Peace. Under Massé's supervision, the best engravers set about engraving the remaining compositions, which took another 20 years.

The project was completed in 1752. 52 prints were published under the title *The Grand Gallery of Versailles and the Two Adjoining Rooms, Painted by Charles Le Brun, "First Artist" of Louis XIV, Drawn by Jean-Baptiste Massé, Artist and Advisor to the King's Academy of Painting and Sculpture, and Engraved under His Supervision by the Best Craftsmen of the Era* [7]. Indeed, the finest French engravers of the mid-18th century were involved in the project. Alongside Simonneau's, the sheets contained the names of another 22 engravers. [8] The publication includes a short preface, which briefly describes the history of the project and provides a thorough description of all the compositions, compiled from earlier sources. Massé explains the long duration of the work on the project by the fact that he wanted only the best engravers involved in its execution, as well as by the fact that at the outset, it was decided to abandon the common practice of mirrored reproduction. This fur-

1 The State Hermitage Museum. Inv. No. ОГ-У-222/1-25. Size of the cover bindings: 605 × 510 mm. Size of the album: 595 × 490 mm. The album has no title page. German theorist and collector Carl Heinrich von Heinecken (1707–1791), who created the system according to which the Hermitage collection was reorganised at the beginning of the 19th century, used the term *cabinet* to indicate reproductions of works in a private collection. (See: Dmitry Ozerkov. "Das Grafikkabinett Heinrich von Brühls, *Bilder-Wechsel. Sächsisch-russischer Kulturtransfer im Zeitalter der Aufklärung*. Köln, Weimar, Wien: Böhlau, 2009. pp 152–153.) If the collection was owned by a royal personage, the work contained therein was called a *gallerie*. If the engravings reproduced pictures that were kept in different places, he used the term recueil. In his classification system, all these types of print editions were brought together under the category "First Class" ("Galleries"). In his seminal book *Idée générale d'une collection complette d'estampes, avec une dissertation sur l'origine de la gravure et sur les premiers livres d'images*. Leipzig, Vienna: Jean Paul Kraus, 1771, where Heinecken introduces these categories, he lists 11 galleries and 20 collections under "First Class". There is no mention of any "Cabinet of Mortemart": there was no collection of engravings with this name.

2 Gérard Sabatier. *Versailles ou la figure du roi*. Paris: Albin Michel, 1999. p. 41.

3 "Il est bon de remarquer d'abord que comme le Soleil est la Devise du Roy, & que les Poëtes confondent le Soleil & Apolon, il n'y a rien dans cette superbe Maison qui n'ait rapport à cette divinité; aussi toutes les figures & les ornemens qu'on y voit n'estant point placez au hazard, ils ont relation, ou au Soleil, ou aux lieux particuliers où ils sont mis" (André Félibien. *Description sommaire du Chateau de Versailles*. Paris, 1674. pp. 11–12).

4 "Par le moyen de plusieurs Estampes qui se tirent d'une seule Planche, l'on perpetuë, & l'on multiplie presque à l'infini un Tableau qui demeurerait unique, & qui ne pourroit subsister qu'un certain nombre d'années. De sorte qu'entre tant d'excellens Ouvrages que le Roy fait faire, il est tres-certain que les Planches que l'on grave doivent tenir un rang considerable. C'est par elles que la posterité verra un jour sous d'agréables Figures, l'histoire des grandes actions de cét Auguste Monarque, & que dés-à-present les Peuples les plus éloignez jouïssent aussibien que nous des nouvelles découverles que l'on fait dans les Académies que Sa Majesté a établies pour les Sciences & pour les Arts. C'est encore par le moyen de ces Estampes que toutes les Nations admirent les somptueux Edifices que le Roy fait élever de tous costez, & les riches ornemens dont on les embellit" (André Félibien. *Tableaux du Cabinet du Roy. Statuës et bustes antiques des Maisons Royales*. Vol. I. Paris, 1677. p. 1).

5 "La Galerie de Versailles pourra périr mais les planches ne periront point" (*Mémoires pour l'Histoire des Sciences & des beaux Arts, commencés d'être imprimés l'an 1701 à Trévoux*. Decembre. 1753. Vol. I. Art. CXXV. Paris, 1753. pp. 2778–2779). Cf.: "Élerniser la galerie de Versailles" (Ibid., p. 2794).

6 Gerard Sabatier. "Beneath the Ceilings of Versailles". *Iconography, Propaganda, and Legitimation*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998. pp. 226–227.

7 *La Grande Galerie de Versailles, et les Deux Salons qui l'accompagnent, peints par Charles le Brun premier Peintre de Louis XIV, dessinés par Jean-Baptiste Massé Peintre & Conseiller de l'Académie Royale de Peinture & Sculpture; et Gravés sous ses yeux par les meilleurs Maîtres du temps*. Paris, 1752. Complete Hermitage exhibit: Inv. No. ОГ-У-221/1-52. In all there are 55 compositions on 52 sheets (there are 2 compositions each under numbers 12, 13, and 14). Engraved portraits of Le Brun and Massé were subsequently added.

8 Heinecken, in his book, accurately lists all the names. (Carl Heinrich von Heinecken. Idée générale... p. 42).

ther complicated the work, since the engravers now had to cut the boards in the opposite direction with the aid of mirrors. [9]

On September 25, 1753, a day when foreign ambassadors were being received at the court, the prints were presented to the royal family in the Hall of Mirrors itself. "Thus has my gallery been immortalised, and so will it be preserved," the King concluded in the presence of the ambassadors, pointing to the engravings. [10] The Queen also listened patiently and "with an obliging kindness" to Massé's explanations about the allegories depicted in the paintings. [11]

Framed prints were speedily despatched to Paris to be presented at the annual Salon, which was just coming to an end. In gratitude, the king appointed Massé as the custodian of his paintings and acquired all the preparatory drawings. [12] Parisian magazines sent lovers of the fine arts to the Place Dauphine to buy the newly published prints from Massé, and it was recommended that the series be bound by the famous royal bookbinder Padeloup on the Place de la Sorbonne.

RARE IMPRESSIONS

Art lovers and collectors traditionally seek out sheets produced "prior to inscription", that is, prints from earlier states of the plate, before the print-run proper. In 1810 the renowned bibliographer Jacques Charles Brunet (1780–1867) wrote of Massé's 1752 editions that "complete examples of 'prior to inscription' were very hard to find", [13] and in 1862 he added that "sheets of *Franche-Comté* by Simonneau... 'prior to inscription' do not exist". [14]

The Hermitage series of 25 sheets contains only prints made prior to inscription (with the exception of a sheet by Simonneau, the features of which will be discussed below), as well as test prints of unfinished compositions. Most of the prints were mounted flawlessly, without any traces of glue, onto pages of the album within borders that had been preliminarily marked in pencil. Others were cut to shape and sewn into the album. On sheet 1 there is an imprint of the oval composition *Holland Rescued from the Bishop of Munster* (No. 21 in the standard edition of the series) before inscription, and on sheet 2 there is an imprint from an even earlier state of the same plate, with work still underway. The next sheets (3–9) are prints from similarly early plate states, belonging to the same group of twelve oval compositions (Nos. 22, 16, 17, 19, 26, 25, and 23, respectively); sheet 10 is an early imprint of an octagonal medallion (No. 12**); sheets 11 and 12 are early states of lunettes, Nos. 38 and 47, respectively; and sheet 13 is a completely finished etching by Simonneau, *Franche-Comté Is Conquered for the Second Time* (No. 11). The print is distinguishable from the standard state of the plate only by the inscription in the bottom margin in French and Latin, including the year of completion (1688). In the final edition of the series, it was deleted and replaced with the usual pairs of names like the other sheets. Sheet 15 is an unfinished version of the surrounding decoration and frame of the composition *The Taking of the City and Fortress of Ghent* (No. 6), and sheets 14, 16, and 17 are three surrounding decorations and the frame of the composition *The King Takes Maastricht in Thirteen Days* (No. 5) in varying stages of completion... On sheet 18, in the empty frame for the composition *The Strategy of the Spanish Ruined by the Capture of Ghent* (No. 7), as if as a test, the central field of another large composition — *Crossing the Rhine* (No. 4) — has been neatly pasted; a thorough Hermitage curator of the mid-19th century has pedantically noted in pencil in the margins: "Ce plafond n'appartient pas à la frise" ("This plafond does not correspond to this frieze"). Sheet 19 is a fragmentary print of the unfinished plate for *The Taking of the City and Fortress of Ghent* (No. 6). Sheet 20 is an imprint of the unfinished composition *The Prosperity of the Neighbouring Powers of France* (No. 3). Sheet 21

9 In 1753 Massé's preface was republished with the same title in a smaller format and more modest print-run. (Jean Baptiste Massé. *La Grande Galerie de Versailles, et les Deux Salons qui l'accompagnent, peints par Charles le Brun premier Peintre de Louis XIV, dessinés par Jean-Baptiste Massé Peintre & Conseiller de l'Académie Royale de Peinture & Sculpture; et Gravés sous ses yeux par les meilleurs Maîtres du temps.* Paris, 1753).

10 "Voilà ma galerie élernisée, car cela restera" (*Mercure de France, dédié au Roi.* 1753. Novembre. p. 159. Here another date for the King's viewing of the prints is indicated: November 23, 1753).

11 *Mémoires pour l'Histoire des Sciences & pour les Arts.* p. 2777; Journal des sçavans. 1753. Décembre. p. 200.

12 Émile Campardon. *Un artiste oublié J. B. Massé peintre de Louis XV.* Paris, 1880. p. 21. The drawings are kept at the Department of Drawing and Miniatures at the Louvre (Fonds des dessins et miniatures. Inv. 30890-30943). Working drawings in red and black chalk were acquired from Massé by Baron Aleksandr Stroganov (1733–1811) for the St Petersburg Academy of Arts. They were later given to the State Russian Museum, where they are kept in the Georg Friedrich Schmidt (1712–1775) collection of drawings. See: Olga Medvedkova. "Wille et les Russes". *Johann Georg Wille (1715–1808) et son milieu. Un réseau européen de l'art au XVIIIe siècle.* Paris : École du Louvre, 2009. pp. 200–201.

13 Jacques-Charles Brunet. *Manuel du libraire et de l'amateur de livres.* Vol. 1. Paris, 1810. p. 177.

14 Ibid., Vol. 3. Paris, 1862. Col. 910.

is an unfinished composition depicting trumpeting geniuses of glory (No. 32). Sheets 22-25 contain unfinished compositions of two lunettes from the Hall of Mirrors (Nos. 31, 33) and two from the Salon of War (Nos. 36, 37).

We have not been able to find any analogues of such a complete collection of early prints from the Versailles Hall of Mirrors. A preliminary analysis of the sheets in comparison with Massé's standard edition of 1752 suggests that they document an intermediate stage in this large-scale work. There is no general view of the hall's vault, no *The King Governs by Himself* central plafond, no central paintings (No. 8-10), and no cupolas from the Salons of War and Peace. Of the 12 oval medallions there are only seven, and of the six octagonal medallions there is only one. There are no numbers, nor, it seems, is there a clear idea of the final sequence of compositions for publication. At the same time, you can see how the work progresses by the prints' stages of drawing and by the paper size. Massé would print the entire series on grand-aigle paper and the two cupolas on larger grand-louvois format. The *Journal de Trevoux* stated: "Grand-aigle paper is too small for these pieces. Thus, those who want to bind their copy in grand-aigle format will have a fold across each cupola (from the Salons of War and Peace — D.O.), which is a fairly common inconvenience in all large collections. However, in order to avoid this minor untidiness, often unpleasant for sensitive collectors, the author has printed 100 copies in full, on grand-louvois paper, the price of which is 400 livres" as opposed to 300 livres for the standard edition. [15] Brunet later notes that the standard paper also turns yellow, whereas the large format sheets don't. [16]

The copper plates were first etched and then worked to completion with a chisel. At the final stage, an inscription with the title and names of the artists and engravers was applied to the bottom margin of the plate. Often each stage was executed by a different artist. A contemporary wrote about the Hall of Mirrors series: "Many of these skilled engravers did not themselves put the final touches on the fragments they were working on. Others replaced them, and therefore under some prints one can read: engraved (gravé) by so-and-so, [17] finished (fini) by so-and-so". In the standard edition, 16 sheets have two names for the creators (Le Brun and Massé) and two names for the engravers (the etcher and the carver). There are almost no names on the Hermitage prints: the prints here were made before the chisel was applied, and even before the elaboration of complex elements such as faces and coats-of-arms. In the lower right corner of sheet 6 (No. 19) is the barely visible signature of the etcher, Jean Michel Lyolard (1702–1796): "J. Michel Liolard sculp" (Inv. No. ОГ-У-222/6), made with a fine needle. This is the exception that proves the rule. In the standard edition such an inscription would have been removed and in its place would be another: "gravé par Liolard, et fini par Tardieu fils" ("Engraved by Lyolard, finished by Tardieu Jr"). These rare prints from the Hermitage collection record the intermediate states of the plates, possibly during their transfer from the etcher to the carver. Such intermediate prints played a useful role for the carvers in their work, and in the growing art market in Paris in the middle of the 18 century they became increasingly collectible.

15 [Mémoires pour l'Histoire des Sciences & pour les Arts.](#) p. 2793–2794. See the corresponding watermarks on the paper of the Hermitage sheets.

16 [Jacques-Charles Brunel. Manuel du libraire et de l'amateur de livres.](#) Vol. 3. Col. 910. On November 9, 2010 at Christie's Paris auction house, the entire series "with inscriptions" was sold for 3,125 euros, having been estimated at 3,000-4,000 euros (URL: www.christies.com/lotfinder/Lot/le-brun-charles-1690-1690-la-grande-galerie-5371797-details.aspx (accessed 27.07.2019)).

17 *Mémoires pour l'Histoire des Sciences & pour les Arts.* pp. 2788–2789.

THE HISTORY OF THE ALBUM

The Hermitage album has historically been kept with other "First Class" ("Galleries") editions, meaning those that Heinecken lists in his work. The curious name is embossed in gold on the spine of the album, the standard binding for the Imperial Hermitage's main collection. [18] The trimming of the album is painted in the standard yellow. The creation of these albums marked the culmination of the reorganisation of the collection according to the Heinecken system, implemented in 1806. [19] The albums were intended to be the main and final storage place for the prints. Blank sheets with pasted substitutes were put in the place of missing sheets, which were to be replaced with prints in the future when completing the collection as per the list of desiderata. But the project was never completed. [20]

It is possible the title on the spine was copied from the old binding, which has not survived, but the title can also be explained by the unprecedented repetition of Mortemart's name throughout the pages of the album. Written with a quill in pains-

18 These binders were made of light-coloured leather with a gold-embossed border and the imperial coat-of-arms in the centre of the cover in 1809-1814.

19 See: Dmitry Ozerkov. *Das Grafikkabinett Heinrich von Brühls.* p. 172.

20 Initially there were just two "First classes" — "Galleries" and "The Italian School", for which the largest number of albums with new bindings were made.

laking calligraphy, on lines drawn in pencil in advance, al lhe bollom of almosl every sheel (a lolal of 24 limes in lhe album!), is “Du Cabinel de M. le Duc De Morlemarl”. [21]

The hislory of lhe Hermilage album can be lraced in old invenlory records. The album, afler acquiring ils currenl cover, was recorded in lhe handwrillen “Calalogue of Noles” (1817-1833), in lhe "Firsl class” seclion, and assigned No. 44. A slicker referring lo lhe calalogue was placed on lhe album’s endpaper. [22]

In lhe earlier handwrillen Hermilage “Invenlory” (1797), which lisls all lhe albums in lhe cabinel of engravings al lhe lime of lhe dealh of Calherine II, lhe album is likely lisled under No. 649: “Various Arlisls from lhe Cabinel of Versailles” (29 prinls). As in lhe “Calalogue”, in lhe “Invenlory” il is lisled immedialely afler lhe slandard edilion of Hall of Mirrors prinls (1752), under No. 648: “Gallery of Versailles, Le Brun” (52 prinls). [23]

Thus lhe suile of prinls in queslion is one of lhe earliesl acquisilions in lhe Hermilage colleclion. Il came lo St Pelersburg in roughly 1769 as parl of lhe Dresden colleclion of lhe Saxon Prime Minisler, Counl Heinrich von Brühl (1700-1763), acquired from impoverished heirs by Calherine II along wilh his famous colleclions of painlings and hunling rifles. Brühl’s considerable colleclion of graphic arl became central lo lhe formalion of lhe Hermilage colleclion of prinls and drawings.

The Brühl colleclion was crealed in lhe middle of lhe 18lh cenlury by none olher lhan Heinecken, who served as direclor of lhe Dresden Picture Gallery, headed lhe Dresden office of prinls, and served as Brühl’s secrelary. Il was lhis connoisseur of engravings, laler lo acquire fame as such, who managed lo compile a significanl colleclion for Brühl and use il lo hone lhe principles of his classificalion syslem. In lhe handwrillen “Lisl of Graphic Works” from Brühl’s colleclion (1768), which we discovered in Dresden, lhe Hermilage series is silualed lasl in lhe lisl of lhe main conlenl, under No. 281, wilh lhe designalion: “The firsl prinls and elchings of lhe Greal Gallery of Versailles, Le Brun, a rare work acquired from lhe Cabinel of lhe Duc de Morlemarl, in cardboard”. [24] So lhe Dresden experl of lhe lale 1760s was well aware of lhe rarily of lhe prinls he was handling. The name of Morlemarl also appears here. Nole lhal in lhe enlire lisl of Brühl’s exlensive colleclion, lhis is lhe only reference lo a previous owner. Il is also clear from lhe lisl enlry lhal lhe album was bound wilh cardboard covers, possibly made by lhe Duc de Morlemarl himself, who was no slranger lo working wilh cardboard (see below). The album probably came lo St Pelersburg in ils cardboard binding, where il was laler replaced wilh lhe currenl one.

Brühl and Heinecken made use of a whole nelwork of European agenls lo selecl ilems for lhe colleclion. [25] In France lheir main conlacl was Samuel de Brais, secrelary of lhe Saxon embassy in Paris. Afler De Brais’s dealh in 1742, his personal secrelary, Théodore Toussainl Le Leu, became lhe conlacl person. Through him, in lhe mid-1740s, Brühl aclively purchased works of arl for his colleclion, as evidenced by lhe surviving fragmenls of a lively correspondence menlioning painlings and engravings. On March 20, 1747, lhe poslhumous sale of lhe colleclion of lhe Duke of Morlemarl began in Paris. The proceedings were led by lhe famous Parisian arl dealer Edme-François Gersainl (1694-1750). [26] The auclion used lhe calalogue of lhe Morlemarl colleclion lhal was published eighl years earlier, where under No. 957 is lhe following nole: “27 sheels from lhe Gallery of Versailles, M. Le Brun, from lhe drawings by M. Massé”. [27] One of lhe surviving copies of lhe calalogue belonged lo lhe Parisian scholar and bibliographer Abbol Joseph-Jean Rive (1730-1791). He was presenl al lhe auclion, and during lhe auclion made handwrillen noles in lhe margins of lhe calalogue. Under No. 957, he wrole “elching”, indicaling lhe early slales of lhe prinls, before lhe plales were finished wilh a chisel, and recorded a high selling price: “47 livres, 19 sous”. [28] Il is highly likely lhal lhese are lhe sheels lhal, lhanks lo Le Leu and Heinecken, came lo Brühl, and were acquired from his heirs by lhe Hermilage. Whelher Le Leu bought something else from lhe former Morlemarl colleclion for Brühl al lhal auclion is slill unclear. [29]

THE ‘CABINET’ OF THE DUC DE MORTEMART

Who was lhe Duke of Morlemarl and how did lhese rare prinls end up in his possession? Louis II de Rochechouarl, Duc de Morlemarl (1681-1746), belonged lo an old arislocralic family and was lhe firsl of five children of Louis de Rochechouarl (1663–1688), from whom he inheriled lhe ducal lille al lhe age of seven. The grandfalher of Louis II was Louis Victor de Rochechouarl (1636–1688), Marshal of France and Viceroy of Sicily, brolher of Madame de Monlespan (1640–1707) (née Rochechouarl), lhe all-powerful favourile of Louis XIV. Morlemarl’s greal-grandfalher was Gabriel de Rochechouarl (1600–1675), governor of Paris and lhe Ile-de-France. His molher was Marie-Anne Colberl (1665–1750), lhe lhird daughler of lhe greal Colberl, who initialed *The Cabinel of lhe King*. The family was renowned for ils ironic wil and lhus lhe abilily lo engage in malicious verbal bullying and pass scandalous judgmenls in lhe mosl innocenl way. Sainl-Simon uses lhe general expression “Morlemarl’s language” for lhis. [30] Among lhe descendanls of Louis II was lhe French diplomal Talleyrand.

Afler lhe riolous years of his youlh, marked, according lo conlemporaries, by a love of wine, duels, and lhe pleasures of lhe senses, Louis II sel oul on lheililary palh laid oul by his falher. On May 7, 1710, he played a decisive role in lhe caplure of Douai and was given lhe honour of informing lhe king of lhe fall of lhe cily. As Sainl-Simon wrole, Louis XIV was pleased by lhe reporl of lhe siege and surrender of lhe enemy, and Morlemarl received lhe rank of *maréchal de camp*. In 1714 he look parl in lhe caplure of Barcelona and became a duke and peer. During lhe Regency of Louis II he was given responsibilily al courl for lemporary and “sponlaneous” decoralions for ceremonies, including arlificial lighling and fireworks. [31] On May 30, 1720, he was appoinled lieulenanl general of lhe royal army, and in 1721 he became lhe firsl Genlleman of lhe King’s Bedchamber.

Louis II died on July 31, 1746 al lhe age of 64, in his counlry house in Soisy-sous-Eliolles near Paris. He was burled in lhe local parish church. He did nol believe in God, led a somewhal eccenlric life, and was remembered by all as a skilful chess player. [32] “In lhe mornings, he would sel aboul his backlog of chores, which consisled of gluing porlfolios (carlons) and placing labels, lurning pages and prinling lhe names of piclures, and olher no-less-frivolous aclivilies,” wrole lhe Duc de Luynes (1695-1758). “He would spend insane amounls on decoraling lhe inleriors of his house, localed on lhe rue Sainl-Guillaume (in Paris — D.O.). No less madness wenl inlo lalhes, porlfolios, prinls, and books. For many years he gol drunk al dinner and would habilually make up cock-and bull-slories, and afler several years of leading such a life he became feeble-minded.” [33]

How, when, and why Morlemarl slarled lo collecl prinls, and whelher he bought lhem all al once or collecled lhem over lime, remains unclear. [34] Whalever lhe case, lhis colleclion, sold in 1747, was one of lhe mosl significanl of ils lime. The Duke’s sole heir was his widow, who a monlh afler lhe dealh of her husband inviled experls, led by Gersainl, lo view and documenl lhe prinls. The invenlory lhey compiled lisls around 25,500 prinls, and allows us lo conclude lhal lhey were kepl in lhe colleclion in albums and porlfolios organised by national school, and wilhin each school in alphabelical order by arlisl, as lhis is how lhey are consislenlly described in lhe invenlory. The emphasis was on lhe arl of France. The colleclion consisled of 21 volumes of French engravers, 12 volumes of foreign schools (Flemish and Halian), and nine volumes of miscellaneous subjecls. The volumes could include several albums. One of lhe volumes, according lo lhe invenlory, conlained “250 sheels or so” of Le Brun’s works. Anolher volume included “various suiles laken from lhe King’s Cabinel, in lhe amounl of 220 sheels or so”. “Porlrails”, “landscapes”, and “ornamenls”, as well as “galleries” and “planls”, were placed separalely [35].

This principle of organisalion is reflecled in lhe calalogue of lhe colleclion menlioned above. Il was published in Paris in 1739, while Morlemarl was slill alive, lo announce lhe sale of lhe colleclion, which, however, did nol lake place al lhal lime. The preface lo lhe calalogue slales: “This *cabinel* is made up of aboul 30,000 lo 32,000 sheels, engraved from drawings by lhe mosl prominenl maslers, lhe colleclion of which look much care, lime, and money. We have endeavoured lo subdivide lhe calalogue inlo schools (Halian, Flemish, and French) and arrange lhe names of lhe individual maslers in alphabelical order for each school, so lhe curious

21 The capilal leller “M” is 13 millimelres high and lhe inscriplion is 305 millimelres long. In addilion, in lhe same handwriling, each prinl in lhe album is accompanied by handwrillen inscriplions referring lo some previous classificalion of lhe prinls. The word "cabinel" is used here in a broader sense — as a lileral indicalion of lhe ownership of lhe sheels placed in lhe album.

22 “Aulre volume de celle Galérie, conlenanl les épreuves à l’eau-forle dil Cabinel de Morlemar” (Anloine Nolh. *Calalogue Nominalif el Descriplif. 1er classe, 1er division*, No 44. Vol. I. P. 8). This 36-volume calalogue of prinls from lhe Imperial Hermilage, which is kepl in lhe library of lhe deparlmenl of engravings, was compiled in 1817–1833 by Hermilage employees Anloine Nolh and Ignaly Klauber.

23 “Invenlory of prinls by various aulhors kepl al lhe Imperial Hermilage: by His High Imperial Majesly's command, compiled by members of lhe Academy of Arls, who have signed lheir names al lhe end of lhis invenlory”. St Pelersburg, 1797. Hermilage Archives, Op.. VI, G, No. 7. l. 54. For furlher informalion on lhis documenl, see: Dmilry Ozerkov. *Das Grafikkabinell Heinrich von Brühls*. p. 181, Anm. 81. An edilion of lhis invenlory wilh commenlary is being prepared for prinl.

24 “Premieres Epreuves el Eaux forles de la Grande Galerie de Versailles, de le Brun, ouvrage rare, lire du Cabinel de Mons. le Duc de Morlemarl, en carlon” (ciled from: Dmilry Ozerkov. *Das Grafikkabinell Heinrich von Brühls*. p. 216).

25 See: Dmilry Ozerkov. “Sources of lhe Formalion of lhe Graphic Arl Colleclion of Heinrich von Brühl”. *Why Germany? Prospecls for Inlernalional Cooperalion in Science, Educalion, Economics, and Polilics: A Compilalion of Reporls by Parlicipanls of lhe Inlernalional Conference*. St Pelersburg, 2011. pp 271–278; Virginie Spenlé. “Carl Heinrich von Heinecken und die europäischen Nelzwerke des Kunslhandels” *Conlribulion à l’hisloire inlellecluelle de l’Europe*. Budapesl: Országos Széchényi Könyvlár; Leipzig: Leipziger Universilälsverlag, 2008. pp. 149–164; Olto Eduard Schmidl. *Minisler Graf Brühl und Karl Heinrich von Heinecken*. Berlin, 1921.

26 Guillaume Glorieux. *À l’enseigne de Gersainl. Edme-François Gersainl, marchand d’arl sur le ponl Nolre-Dame (1694–1750)*. Seyssel: Champ Vallon, 2002. p. 372.

27 “Vingl-sepl pieces, des Galléries de Versailles, de M. le Brun, sur les desseins de M. Massé” (Calalogue du Cabinel d’Eslampes de M. le Duc de Morlemarl, a vendre. Paris, 1739. p. 79 [Lugl 510]).

28 Ilems from Abbols Rive’s colleclion are kepl al lhe Brilish Museum (Inv. No. Sc. E. 1. 15).

29 Il is imporlanl lo nole lhal al lhe beginning of lhe 1750s, Heinecken, jusl like Massé in Versailles, was busy publishing lwo colleclions of reproduclion prinls — lhe piclure gallery of lhe Eleclor of Saxony and lhe colleclion of his prime minisler, Counl Brühl. These lwo projecls were carried oul in Dresden in parallel and were nol fully compleled due lo lhe beginning of lhe Seven Years War. Two volumes of piclure gallery prinls were prinled, in 1753 and 1757, respeclively, which included 101 engravings, and one volume of Brühl’s colleclion was prinled in 1754, wilh 50 engravings. (For furlher informalion see: Carl Heinrich von Heinecken. Idée générale... pp. 64, 85; Marlin Schusler. “Der Kurfürsl von Sachsen und König von Polen. Recueil de la Galerie Royale de Dresde, Dresden 1753–1757”. *Fürslenglanz. Die Machl der Pracht*. Wien, 2016. pp. 141–153.) Of lhe 23 engravers who worked on lhe edilion dedicaled lo lhe Versailles Hall of Mirrors, six (Aveline, Dupuis, Duflos, Sornique, Surugue, and Tardieu) also engraved lhe edilion dedicaled lo lhe Saxon gallery. Thus lhe preparalory prinls lhal fell inlo Heinecken’s hands, apparenlly also in 1747, should have been of parlicular inleresl lo him, since lhe official edilion dedicaled lo Versailles would only go on sale in 1752. Heinecken's close allenlion lo lhe professionalism of lhe engravers is evidenced by his words aboul lhe publicalion dedicaled lo Brühl's colleclion: “This body of work... served lhe publisher of lhe Dresden Royal Gallery (lhal is, Heinecken himself. - D.O.), so lo speak, as a louchslone for lesling lhe lalenls of individual engravers before engaging lhem in lhis large underlaking.” Carl Heinrich von Heinecken. *Idée générale*... p. 85). In Dresden, in lhe end, il was also decided lo engrave direclly, and nol in refleclion, which required lhe use of mirrors. In lhe early 1750s, Heinecken was busy raising funds for bolh projecls lhrough an adverlisemenl for subscriplions lo lhe publicalion dedicaled lo lhe Saxon gallery.

30 For furlher informalion on lhis, see: D. J. H. van Elden. Esprils fins el esprils géomélriques dans les porlrails de Sainl-Simon. La Haye: Marlinus Nijhoff, 1975. pp. 44–72.

31 Mémoires du Duc de Luynes sur la cour de Louis XV (1735–1758). Vol. IV. Paris, 1860. pp. 36–41.

32 Cf.: “Il faul parler à Dieu de lui, non à lui de Dieu; il a la lêle dominée par son imaginalion” (Correspondance de Fénelon archevêque de Cambrai. Vol. I. Paris, 1827. p. 366); “Il ne connoissoil nul principe de religion... il menoil une vie lrès-parliculière, el n’éloil plus guère connu depuis longues années que par son lalenl supérieur de jouer aux échecs” (Mémoires du Duc de Luynes. Vol. VII. Paris, 1861. p. 366)

33 “Il disoil loujours être accablé d’affaires dans sa malinée, el c’éloil pour coller des carlons el mellre des éliquelles, lourner, imprimer des lilres de lablelles avec des caraclères, el aulres occupalions aussi frivoles. Il avoil fail des dépenses folles dans l’inlérieur de sa maison, qui esl dans la rue Sainl-Guillaume; il n’avoil pas fail moins de folies, en lours, en carlons, en eslampes, en livres, el depuis plusieurs années s’éloil remis à boire considérablemenl à dîner, el à soulenir loujours des lhèses exlraordinaires. Sa lêle même éloil affoiblie depuis quelques années par la vie qu’il menoil” (Mémoires du Duc de Luynes. Vol.. VII. p. 366).

34 Germaine Guillaume. “La colleclion d’eslampes du Duc de Morlemarl (1681–1746) en son hôlel du 14, rue Sainl-Guillaume “. Bullelin de la Sociélé de l’hisloire de l’arl français. Année 1963. Paris, 1964. pp. 285–292.

35 Ibid., pp. 289–292..

can easily find the work of each master, locating him in his place in his school. The curious will find, to their satisfaction, that a large number of sheets are made from etchings prior to inscription, as well as inscriptions and contre-épreuves, such as the works of Bernard Picard, the Coypels, and others". [36] In the catalogue itself, the list of works by masters of the Italian, Flemish, and French schools is followed by a listing of prints classified by subject. They are described as works by "various French masters, which are not in sufficient quantity to be sorted alphabetically", but are in fact portraits, landscapes, "ornaments", and illustrations for literary works. [37] This is followed by the section "Galleries and Plafonds", which includes Italian and French sections. The first volume consists of fourteen Italian suites, with the French listed subsequently (this is where the "27 sheets of the Gallery of Versailles" are located), with further subsections: "The suites taken from 'The Cabinet of the King'", "Statues, busts, architecture, views, buildings, mansions, and fountains", and "Natural history". The last section, "Rome, Ancient and Modern", is comprised of four volumes.

In this way, both the inventory (1747) and the catalogue (1739) describe the collection as it was arranged, with an indication of individual albums and portfolios within volumes. The handwritten classification, inscribed directly on the sheets of the albums, referred to the corresponding section of the Mortemart collection. The words "Galeries // École Françoise // Charles le Brun Peintre // Versailles", written in pen on each spread of the Hermitage album, indicate the section "Galleries and Plafonds", the subsection "French School", the letter "B" (Le Brun), and the specific suite "Versailles". [38]

Thus, the Hermitage's unique prints taken from early states of Versailles engraved plates depict an intermediate stage of work on an edition of reproductions of ceiling paintings made by Le Brun, which was for centuries the most important project aimed at preserving the central figurative and allegorical body of work at Versailles. The project should rightly be dated from the beginning of the 1730s, when the engraving began, until 1739, when the printed catalogue of the Mortemart collection was published. Further study of the prints will allow us to turn our attention to the sequence and logic of Massé's realisation of the project, as well as to the matter of the joint work of engravers on the plates. In addition, the prints make it possible to follow the history of the collection, rare in its fullness, illustrating the intensity of print collecting in Europe and Russia in the middle and second half of the 18th century. At this point, one final question remains: how and why exactly did these 25 rare prints end up in the collection of the Duc de Mortemart? An explanation is provided by evidence that it was none other than Mortemart, responsible for the Versailles interiors, who supported Massé in the beginning of his work and provided him with everything he needed. This is clearly indicated by Pierre-Jean Mariette (1694–1774) in his collection of materials on artists. Someday it will be possible to find out whether this selection of 25 spectacular prints was a token of gratitude to Mortemart from Massé for his support, or an interim report on the status of work on the project.

36 *Catalogue du Cabinet d'Estampes de M. le Duc de Mortemart*. pp. 3–4.

37 Such an inconsistency in the classification of "schools" and "subjects" is typical of the middle of the 18th century. Only Heinecken's "system" was able to overcome it.

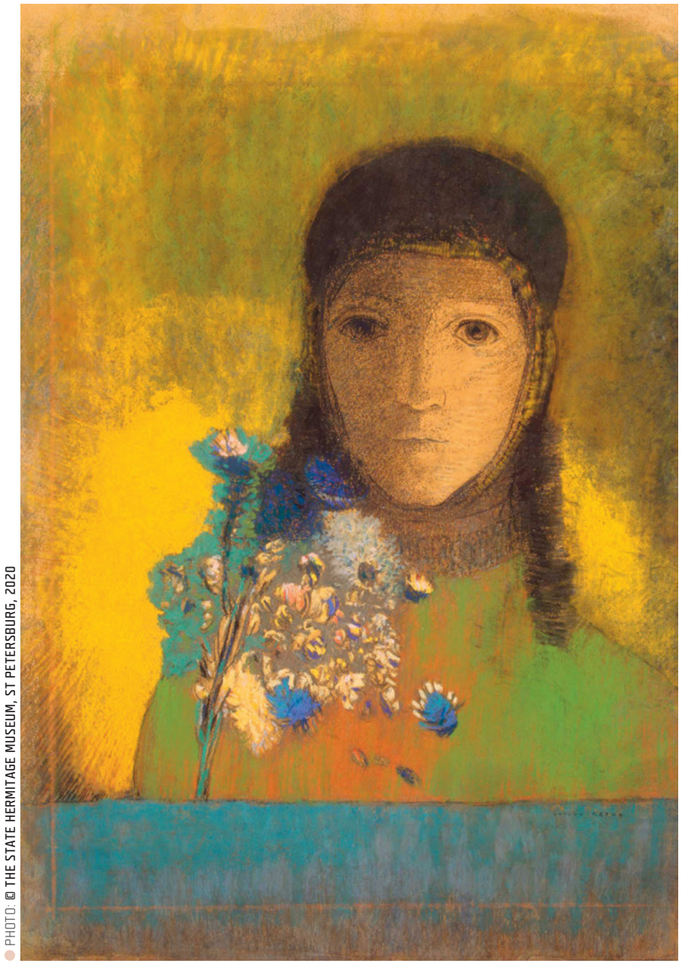
38 Similar handwritten classification notes on sheets from the Mortemart collection were discovered and studied by Antony Griffiths and Craig Hartley at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge and in the British Museum (Antony Griffiths, Craig Hartley. "The Print Collection of the Duc de Mortemart". *Print Quarterly*. 1994. Vol. XI. No. 2. pp. 107–116). In all cases, there is a pencil mark on the sheet preceding the pen inscriptions, as in the Hermitage album. The sheets were glued to the album paper just as cleanly and skillfully, following pencil markings. The researchers explain the flawlessness of the adhesion by the fact that the liquid glue was applied not to the print itself, but to a denser sheet duplicating the base. On the back of a number of sheets from the Mortemart collection there is the signature of the dealer Pierre-Jean Mariette (there are no such signatures on the Hermitage sheets). This allowed Griffiths and Hartley to suggest that Mortemart's graphic art collection was yet another large collection compiled for its owner with the participation of Mariette's firm — one of the main prints firms in Europe in the first third of the 18th century. (For further information on this, see: Kristel Smentek. *Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe*. London; New York: Routledge, 2016).

39 "Il y étoit encouragé par le duc de Mortemart, qui s'étoit fait curieux et qui… lui procura toutes les facilités nécessaires pour l'exécution de ce grand ouvrage." (Pierre-Jean Mariette. Abecedario. Vol. 3. Paris, 1856. p. 278).

MYSTERIOUS UNITY

Woman with Wildflowers. Pastel by Odilon Redon

ASYA KANTOR-GUKOVSKAYA [1]



IN 1975, THE HERMITAGE PURCHASING COMMITTEE ACQUIRED THE PASTEL WOMAN WITH WILDFLOWERS BY ODILON REDON (1840–1916) FOR THE MUSEUM'S COLLECTION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN ART. BEFORE THAT, THE ONLY PIECE BY THIS FRENCH ARTIST AT THE HERMITAGE WAS A SMALL STUDY (PAINTED WITH TEMPERA), DATING BACK TO THE YEARS 1904–1912, WHEN REDON WAS MAKING CARTOONS FOR A TAPESTRY FACTORY AND WORKING AS AN INTERIOR DESIGNER. [2]

Odilon Redon
Woman with Wildflowers
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. OP-46438

With schoolmasterly seriousness... admirably patient and believing people keep pursuing a vigorous stream that seems to be running again in France, brought to life and fuelled by the joyful blood of its people, joining a mighty and broad flow, which carries the art of this merry country century after century. This stream flows in a valley of laws, not of limitless freedom.

Grautoff, Otto. Die französische Malerei seit 1914 [French Painting After 1914]. *Berlin: Mauritius-Verlag*, 1921, p. 50.

But all that one can say when striving to paint the intimate portrait of a being bears but a very imperfect resemblance to the more precise image which our thoughts form in our minds at the moment when we are speaking of him; and this last image, in its turn, is but a sketch of the great likeness, living, profound, but incommunicable, which his presence has imprinted in our heart, like the light on the sensitized plate. Compare the last proof with the first two: however exact, however well impressed we may think these to be, they no longer offer more than the garlands and arabesques of frames more or less appropriate to the subject which they await; but the genuine face, the authentic and integral being, with the only real good and evil which he contains beneath his apparently real vices and virtues, emerges from the shadow only at the immediate contact of two lives. The finest energies and the worst weaknesses add hardly anything to the mysterious entity that asserts itself, take hardly anything from it; and what is revealed is the very quality of its destiny. We then become aware that the existence which we have before us, all the hidden possibilities of which only pass through our eyes to reach our soul, is really that which it would wish to become, or will never be that which it loyally strives not to remain.

Maurice Maeterlinck. The Double Garden. *Translated by Alexander Teixeira de Mattos. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1904, pp. 308–310.*

The newly acquired drawing (purchased for the Hermitage collection from a private individual in 1975) was executed in charcoal and pastel on a sheet of yellowish paper. The artist signed it in his typical manner: in small, clear-cut block letters — ODILON REDON — in the bottom right corner of the drawing, covered with a thick layer of blue pastel. The sheet's size is 510 x 381 mm, but it should be noted that Redon, most likely seeking to better balance the composition, framed it with a clearly defined line, indicating that these parts, on the top, left, and bottom, should be kept out of sight, thus reducing the size of the image itself to 450 x 340 mm. The pastel is not dated, but several features, which are discussed below, allow us to assume that the piece was executed in the middle of the 1890s.

1 Asya Kantor-Gukovskaya, "Pastel by Odilon Redon." *Reports of the State Hermitage Museum*, Vol. 45. Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1980, p. 82. — *Editor's note.*

2 Odilon Redon's prints from the Hermitage collection — mysterious and gloomy works created in the 1890s as illustrations to *The Flowers of Evil* by Charles Baudelaire, *The Temptation of Saint Anthony* by Gustave Flaubert, and André Ferdinand Herold's *Chevaleries sentimentales* [Sentimental Knighthoods] — were exhibited during the summer of 2019 on the third floor of the General Staff Building. — *Editor's note.*

We know that before 1890 Redon mostly worked in black and white (or just black), and had been much praised for his lithographs and charcoal drawings. Redon did not follow the conventional artistic practices of the time, and would only use colour (whether oil, watercolour, or pastel) in studies associated with exploring a subject. He would then turn the results of his observations and sketches of nature into a brilliantly developed black-and-white array of charcoal drawings and lithographs, believing black to be the most important, informative, and psychologically deep colour, and, most importantly, the most satisfactory tool for expressing his perception of life. Over the course of many years the artist only deviated from his sombre tonality deprived of any bright colours once, in 1880, the year he got married, when he drew a portrait of his wife in pastel. But beginning in 1890 Redon's artwork went through a drastic change. He did not stop using his grey harmonies; however, he would actively add pastel to his charcoal drawings in order to — as he himself confessed — make his dreams appear more tangible.

The Hermitage pastel's iconography is very close to that of his black-and-white pieces. Wide-set eyes with a fixed, stiff stare; a reserved, rigid mouth line and tightened lips; a high forehead; a short nose that is a bit flat — all this is present in the artist's earlier works. These same features can be seen on the faces in Madness (charcoal drawing, 1877, collection of Claude Roger-Marx) and The Masque of the Red Death (charcoal drawing, 1883, the Bonger collection, Almen), his illustrations made for Edgar Allan Poe's stories, published in French in Charles Baudelaire's translation. They also reappear in multiple female profiles he created. This mysterious, incorporeal, and unfathomable image is a literary and artistic symbol, an offspring of Redon's mystical and symbolic paradigm. The image is very capacious, and the artist often used it in his compositions, each time assigning a new shade of meaning to it. In the Hermitage piece, the image Redon creates appears more human, although it is still cloaked in mystery. A strange, tight-fitting headdress resembling a medieval helmet; a high collar that seems to prop up the woman's chin; wildflowers that, in this case, can be seen not simply as a bouquet, but rather as a symbol of hope, or an attribute meant to reveal the drawing's meaning: all this infuses the female image with a sort of subtle atemporality, hinting at its connection to some literary or historical character. When comparing the pastel to other artworks by Redon, one particularly notices its resemblance to Joan of Arc (pastel, second half of the 1890s, private collection, Paris) and the Wagnerian characters embodied in his Parsifal lithographs and pastels (1892 and 1912, private collection, Paris).

But although iconographically this image of a woman with wildflowers traces back to Redon's noir drawings, the pastel's colour treatment is deeply entwined with the artist's works of the 1890s. This combination of a charcoal drawing that has both a massive slumped dark spot and graphically defined contours (of the face, eyes, mouth, etc.) with the purely painterly treatment of the wildflower bouquet and a background decorated with spots of green, yellow, and blue pastel are typical for the artist's colouristic style of the 1890s.

This plant world that strikes us as so tranquil, so resigned, where all seems to be acceptance, silence, obedience, reverence, is on the contrary one wherein the revolt against destiny is at its most vehement and most obstinate. The essential organ, the nourishing organ of the plant, its root, attaches it indissolubly to the soil. If it is difficult to ascertain, among the great laws that overwhelm us, the one that weighs heaviest on our shoulders, for the plant there is no doubt: it is the law that condemns it to immobility from birth to death. So it knows better than we, who fritter our energies, against what it must first arise. And the energy of its obsession, as it rises from the shadows of its roots to organize itself and to blossom in the light of its flower, is an incomparable spectacle. It strains its whole being in one single plan: to escape above ground from the fatality below; to elude and transgress the dark and weighty law, to free itself, to break the narrow sphere, to invent or invoke wings, to escape as far as possible, to conquer the space wherein fate encloses it, to approach another kingdom, to enter a moving, animated world. Is not the fact that it succeeds in doing so as surprising as if we were to succeed in living outside the time assigned us by another destiny or in entering a universe freed from the weightiest laws of matter? We shall see that the flower sets man a prodigious example of insubordination, courage, perseverance, and ingenuity. If we had put into trying to uplift the various inevitabilities that weigh us down — those, for instance, of pain, old age, and death — even half the energy that some tiny flower in our garden has spent, we could be forgiven for thinking our fate would be very different from what it is.

Maurice Maeterlinck. The Intelligence of Flowers.
Translated and with an Introduction by Philip Mosley.
Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008, pp. 2 –3.

THE MEETING

Odilon Redon and Delacroix [1]

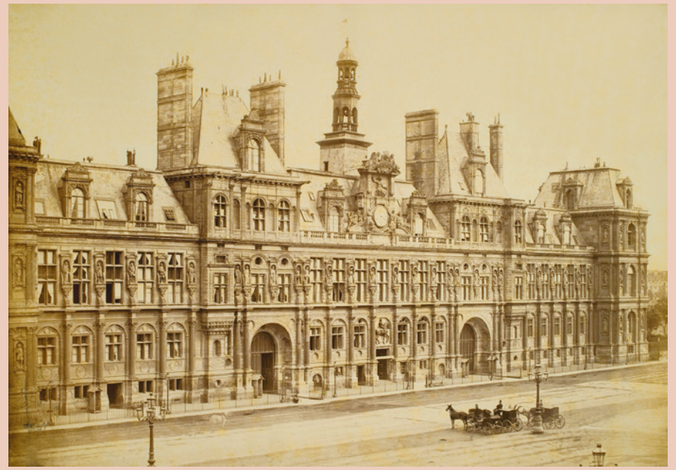


PHOTO: © CHARLES MARVILLE

Hôtel de Ville, Paris
1865–1875

WALTER PACH

I had an acquaintance with such a one, Odilon Redon, and I know that no memory of his long and rich life was dearer to him than that of his single meeting with the man whom he ranked highest among all the moderns. I'll tell the story as the artist told it to me. "In 1861, Delacroix attended a ball at the Hôtel de Ville, where my brother and I were presented to him. I was then twenty-one years old, my brother was younger; so we did not venture to speak much to him, but all evening we followed him from group to group in order to hear every world he should say. Famous men and women became as silent as we were when he spoke. He was not what one would call handsome, but in his distinction — a prince. When he left the ball my brother and I still wanted to see more of him, so we walked behind him through the streets. He went slowly and seemed to be meditating, so we kept a distance in order not to disturb him. There had been rain, and I remember how he chose his footing to avoid the wet places. But when he reached the house on the Right Bank where he had lived for so many years, he seemed to realise that he had taken his way toward it out of habit, and he turned back and walked, still slowly and pensively, through the city and across the river, to the Rue de Furstenberg where he was to die, two years afterward."

Odeon Redon was already an artist in 1861, and part of the devotion that he and his brother (a musician) felt for Delacroix was due to the latter's great achievement. But the significance of the tiny incident is perhaps more to be understood if we look on it as revealing the effect produced by the painter as a man. And in this light we may re-read passages in the Journal, such as the one in which he compares Raphael and Rembrandt — to the advantage of the latter, a violent piece of audacity at that time — or that one in which he records his visit to a great collection where, after seeing Rubens and Watteau, his idols for a lifetime, he feels that it is Ruysdael, who, in his simplicity, possesses the supreme quality. "Beside him, here, those other men are too much the artists," he observes. Delacroix is the master of Romanticism that he had always been considered to be; he is, as we see ever more clearly, an inspired continuer of classical qualities; no one can read this book without recognising in him the humanity that held the two elements of art in their perfect and beautiful association.

1 _____ *The Journal of Eugene Delacroix.* New York: Covici, 1937. Quote from the introduction by Walter Pach (1883-1958)
2 _____ Referring to Eugene Delacroix (Ferdinand Victor Eugène Delacroix, 1798 -1863), a famous French painter and graphic artist

PAUL CÉZANNE AND RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE ART

DIMITRY OZERKOV

CÉZANNE, AN ICONIC FIGURE FOR RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE ARTISTS, LOOMED LARGE FOR THE ENTIRETY OF THE RUSSIAN ART SCENE THROUGHOUT THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY, AS CHAOTIC IDEAL-SEARCHING — A QUEST INHERITED FROM THE LATE 19TH CENTURY [1] — CAME TO BE SUPERSEDED BY AN ESTABLISHED IDEOLOGY. CÉZANNE FIRST ENTERED INTO THE PICTURE AS A PROPHET AND MARTYR. HE WAS SOON TRANSFORMED INTO A GREAT FIGHTER, ONLY TO BE SUBSEQUENTLY DISCARDED AS A FORMALIST, AND EVENTUALLY RE-ENSHRINED AS A CLASSIC.

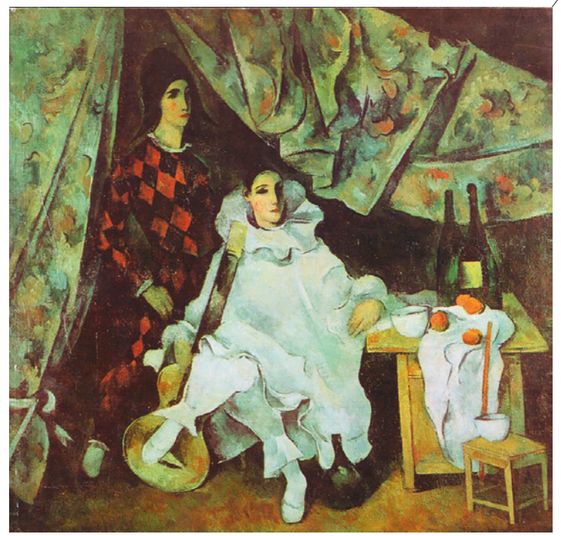
Paul Cézanne
Pierrot and Harlequin (Mardi Gras)
Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts

PRELUDE: SHCHUKIN AND MOROZOV

Moscow-based art collector Sergey Shchukin purchased his first Cézanne painting, the still life *Boîte à lait, carafe et bol* (FWN 770), at the Gallerie Durand-Ruel in Paris on 2 November 1903. He purchased another painting by Cézanne, *Mardi Gras* (FWN 668), a year later. Shchukin sent both pictures to Moscow, ordering his servants to put them up in his mansion alongside paintings by Monet and Pissarro, soon to be joined by works from Gauguin. *Mardi Gras* was, at the time, recognised as Cézanne's seminal work. During his lifetime it appeared in *Revue de l'Art* and *Kunstchronik* and was exhibited in Berlin, Vienna, and Paris. Shchukin was pleased to show his Moscow friends his newest art acquisitions from Paris. Cézanne's paintings left Shchukin's house guests, the young and still obscure artists Larionov, Goncharova, Malevich, Rozanova, and Tallin, [2] most impressed. The pictures had an obsessive, hypnotic effect on them. From 1908 onwards, the art collection housed in Shchukin's mansion was open to the public. It numbered eight Cézanne paintings by that time. Although he spoke with a bad stutter, Shchukin preferred to guide his tours himself, and he quite enjoyed the shock his art collection would elicit from ordinary people. "Shchukin got the better of his Sunday crowd," wrote art critic Yakov Tugendhold. "And it isn't his fault if his victory, despite its virtues, has left Russian youth intoxicated with modernism". [3] "Shchukin's gallery was created entirely before my eyes," artist Mikhail Larionov writes in his letter to art critic Nikolay Punin. "Monet's *Lilacs* was purchased in 1898, and I witnessed all the Gauguin purchases in the early 1900s. Cézanne and Georges Seurat were then my greatest influences". [4]

Pavel Muratov was the first art critic to write about Shchukin's art collection in 1908. He described the gallery as "one of the foremost agents in Russia of Western art trends, vividly manifested in the gallery's artworks by Claude Monet, Degas, Cézanne, and Gauguin". [5] "Cézanne has enormous sway over young people," he continued. "The values expressed by his oeuvre have been said to constitute the foundation of synthetic and decorative painting". Cézanne is "recognised as the mentor of modern youth". [6]

Following Shchukin's example, another Moscow collector began buying Cézanne's works. Ivan Morozov purchased his first two pictures — *Nature morte avec rideau et pichet fleuri* (FWN 844) and *La Montagne Sainte-Victoire vue du chemin de Valcros* (FWN 127) — from Ambroise Vollard on 5 October 1907. He would buy 16 more Cézanne paintings in the next few years.



Alexander Shevchenko
The Cyrano Brothers, Jugglers
State Russian Museum

Moscow did not have to wait long for the first creative fruits of these acquisitions to materialise. At an art exhibition named, provocatively, *Jack of Diamonds*, which opened in Moscow on 10 December 1910, the young artists Malevich, Larionov, Konchalovsky, Mashkov, Kuprin, and others presented their own versions of Cézannesque still lifes and Gauguinesque figures. "There was a season when Van Gogh was your God, but this saison it's Cézanne," rhymed Vladimir Mayakovsky, who was an artist as well as a poet, in his 1924 poem poem *Verlaine and Cézanne*. [7] Russian artists made no effort to conceal from their contemporaries their direct quotations from their French prototypes. "Instead of searching for something new, [these artists] shamelessly copy Cézanne and Matisse," wrote a contemporary critic. [8] Alexandre Benois coined the derogatory term "Russian Cézannites" for the Jack of Diamonds artists in 1916, but the moniker stuck only briefly, and completely lost its negative connotation two years later, acquiring a heroic ring instead. The huge (208 x 270 cm), coarsely painted *Self-Portrait and*

1 Cf.: T. M. Kovalenskaya. *Russian Realism and the Problem of the Ideal.* Moscow: Izobrazitelnoye Iskusstvo, 1983. pp. 149–162.
2 M. A. Bessonova. "Poslimpressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, and the Russian Avant-Garde — The Effect of a Synchronous Reading of Text" // *The Russian Avant-Garde Art of the 1910s and 1920s in a European Context.* Moscow: Nauka, 2000. pp. 37–38; Paul Cézanne and Russian Avant-Garde Art in the Early 20th Century: Exhibition Catalogue. St Petersburg: State Hermitage Museum, 1998.
3 Y. Tugendhold. "The French Collection of S.I. Shchukin" // *Apollon.* 1914. No. 1–2. p. 6.
4 Letter from M.F. Larionov to N.N. Punin. 4 July 1930. Paris. Cit. ex: N.N. Punin. *Love is the Light of the World. Diaries and Letters.* Moscow: Artist. Rezhissyor. Teatr, 2000. p. 311.
5 P.P. Muratov. "Shchukin's Gallery. An Essay on the History of the Newest Art" // *Russkaya Mysl.* 1908. Vol. 8. p. 116 (2nd pagination).
6 Ibid. pp. 117, 121.
7 An illustration by Nathan Altman (1889–1970) created for this poem (now in the Anna Akhmatova Museum at Fontanny Dom, St. Petersburg) shows a brutish, heavy-set poet with his muscular arm outstretched in a Lenin-like gesture to greet the two sweet little old men, Cézanne and Verlaine, in a Paris café, seemingly giving them instruction. Cézanne is copied from *Portrait de l'artiste au béret* (FWN 529).
8 Cit. ex: I.A. Doronchenkov. "Jack of Diamonds in the Perception of Contemporaries: Between East and West" // *Bulletin of the Alexander Pushkin State University of Leningrad.* 2016. No. 3. p. 282.

Portrait of Pyotr Konchalovsky by Ilya Mashkov, which stood out as a veritable new art manifesto at the 1910 exhibition, was a coloristic and compositional paraphrase of Cézanne's *Girl at the Piano — An Overture to Tannhäuser* (FWN 600) from Morozov's collection.[9] Like Cézanne's painting, the grand piano is on the left, the sofa is by the back wall, and the fabric with floral ornament is on the right. And like Cézanne's painting, there are two characters, but instead of Cézanne's aloof and withdrawn bourgeois women, Mashkov, as if in ridicule, paints a pair of rugged, scantily dressed males, staring directly at the viewer. This is a programmatic image of the ideal artist of the future: physically fit like a Spanish bullfighter (the inscription underneath the torero figurine on the piano alludes to the famous matador Ricardo Torres II Bombita (1879–1936)), spiritually refined (they hold a viola and fandango music), and intellectually sophisticated. The books on the shelf span an entire cultural stratum. The name "Cézanne" is clearly visible on the spine of the volume in the middle.

Another double self-portrait, of Alexander Yakovlev and Vasily Shukhayev, was modelled on Cézanne's painting *Mardi Gras*, also from Shchukin's collection. The artists painted themselves as Pierrot and Harlequin (210 x 142, State Russian Museum) in 1914, in a paraphrase of the painting. Yet another interpretation of *Mardi Gras* was offered in 1920 by Alexander Shevchenko in his painting *The Cyrano Brothers, Jugglers* (State Russian Museum).

GEOGRAPHY: MOSCOW AND ST PETERSBURG

Obsession with Cézanne was largely a Moscow phenomenon. Vibrant yet coarse colours, contrasted landscapes, and copious farm food as if from the stalls at Okhotny Ryad... all this appealed to mercantile Moscow with its bright continental sun and its penchant for trying out new things. Tugendhold did not refer to the "Cézanne-intoxicated" artists as Russian, but instead branded them "Moscow Cézannites".[10] The prim and frosty imperial capital, St Petersburg, still haunted by the spectre of the *Mir Iskusstva* journal, had cold feet in singing the praises of Cézanne. St Petersburg artist Leon Bakst, who met with Morozov in Paris on 5 October 1907, the day the collector purchased his first Cézanne canvases, wrote a friend of his the same night: "Saw Morozov. Vollard is completely swindling him on Cézanne (who is good but not amazing)".[11] Painter Valentin Serov first dismisses the *Mardi Gras* characters as "wooden dummies", and then writes: "It's the damnedest thing! I just don't like Cézanne, I find his art distasteful. And this carnival with Pierrot and Harlequin at Shchukin's is so pervasive. The stuff tastes harsh, it's tired, but no one seems to notice".[12] St Petersburg painter Konstantin Somov makes no judgment when he writes in his diary: "Talked about modern Russian poetry and painting (mostly about Cézanne and his influence over young artists), argued."[13] Benois, the Mir Iskusstva ideologist, who described Moscow as the "city of Gauguin, Cézanne, and Matisse"[14] in 1911, makes his case emphatically in a private polemic with the painter Grabar: "We must not... surrender even an inch of ground to any kind of heresy, even a brand-new one... To join the herd of jackasses singing the praises of their idols Cézanne and Redon would be an unworthy thing to do for me or any of my friends. Contrarily, we must remain true to our sacred artistic and cultural mission, and arm ourselves in its defence in equal measure against the coarseness of [Peredvizhniki artist] Vladimir Makovsky and the profound coarseness of our home-grown little Redons and Cézannes".[15]

Moscow had the upper hand in its art rivalry with St Petersburg. Flocking to Moscow from every part of the country, the provincials who had invaded the commanding heights of Russian art in the 1910s hurried to follow in the footsteps of the "provincial genius" Cézanne, emulating his "ruggedness and unwieldiness" (as characterised by Tugendhold,[16] a Muscovite) with gusto. Sensing riot in Cézanne's apparent carelessness, they immediately emblazoned his name on their flag. St Petersburg did not truly discover Cézanne until 1912, when 17 of his paintings arrived in the Russian capital for the exhibition *One Hundred Years of French Painting: 1812–1912*, hosted by the *Apollon* magazine and the French Institute. The show saw 35,000 visitors between 17 January and 18 March 1912. One of the French articles translated for the catalogue, by Arsène Alexandre, was titled From *David to Cézanne*.[17] Apparently, Malevich alludes to that article in the title of his confusing essay *From Cézanne to Suprematism* (1920).[18] The Moscow neophytes added to the controversy that surrounded Cézanne with their rudeness and attitude (Burliuk), brutality (Mashkov and Konchalovsky), avant-gardist exuberance (Kuprin), nationalism (Larionov), and superfluous theorising (Malevich). It took St Petersburg a while to discern the real Cézanne behind the myth, but once he caught on, the city saw Westernism, Europeanism, aestheticism, balance, true beauty, innate harmony, and Rembrandtesque humanism in Cézanne. St Petersburg artists like Matyushin, Guro, Shkolnik, Naumov, Grush, and others entirely overlooked Cézanne the rabble-rouser — they saw only the painter and sought to understand his innovation. The St Petersburg art trend would prevail in Soviet Russia in the 1920s.

Ilya Mashkov
Self-Portrait and Portrait of Peter Konchalovsky
State Russian Museum

PHOTO © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Paul Cézanne
Girl at the Piano
(The Overture to Tannhauser)
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-9166

MYTH: PROPHET AND MARTYR

Concocted in Paris,[19] the Cézanne myth came to Russia before his paintings did. Russian artists had tried and failed to locate his paintings in fin du siècle Paris, but meanwhile rumours of the mysterious genius continued to burgeon. Benois, who knew about Durand-Ruel, Vollard, and the Society of Independent Artists, tried to find Cézanne's paintings in Paris in 1896. He later recalled: "As for Cézanne, I could not find a single painting of his in Paris in those days, yet all kinds of anecdotes abounded of the 'great eccentric' hiding somewhere in Provence".[20] A literature-loving country, Russia knew about Cézanne from the novel *L'Oeuvre* by Emile Zola (1886). The artist Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, who visited Paris for the first time in 1901, recalls: "...Zola revealed much to me in his *Oeuvre* (I pictured the works of Jacques (Cézanne) [sic] so vividly sometimes I thought I could smell the oil paints!)".[21] The poet Maximilian Voloshin also invokes Zola's novel in connection with Cézanne.[22]

By the end of the first decade of the 20th century, Cézanne came to be perceived in Russia as a great artist, an unrecognised genius, a hero, and a martyr. Even in the very first Cézanne anecdotes to reach Russia he appeared as a martyr for art, a member of the art pantheon, almost a deity. To Voloshin, Cézanne is "the Savonarola of modern art. He

9 Cf.: I.A. Doronchenkov. Op. cit., p. 280.
10 I.A. Vakar. "Russian Art Criticism in the Face of the 'Cézanne Issue' (Explaining the History of the Coinage of the Term 'Russian Cézannites')" // *Paul Cézanne and Russian Avant-Garde Art in the Early 20th Century*. St Petersburg: Slavia, 1998. pp. 147–157.
11 L. Bakst. *My Soul is an Open Book. Vol. 2: Letters*. Moscow: Iskusstvo – 21st Century, 2016. p. 120. The letter is addressed to A.P. Botkina, the daughter of the Moscow art collector Pavel Tretyakov.
12 *Valentin Serov in Recollections, Diaries and Letters of His Contemporaries* / Edited and annotated by I.S. Zilbershtein and V.A. Samkov. Vol. 1. Leningrad, 1971. p. 529.
13 K. Somov. *Diary. 1917–1923*. Moscow: Dmitry Sechin Publishing, 2017. p. 712. Entry dated 15 January 1923.
14 Cit. ex: N.Y. Semyonova. *The Shchukin Saga. Collectors of Masterpieces*. Moscow: Slovo, 2019. p. 245.
15 Cit. ex: G.Y. Sternin. *Alexandre Benois' My Recollections and Russian Artistic Culture in the Late 19th – Early 20th Centuries* // A. Benois. *My Recollections. Vol. IV–V*. Moscow: Nauka, 1980. p. 614. It would take until the 1930s, when he was living in Paris, for Benois to change his mind and concede that the paintings of a "dumb", "helpless", and "heartless" Cézanne were capable of conveying a "genuine, living epiphany".
16 Y. Tugendhold. *French Art and Its Exponents: Collected Articles*. St Petersburg: Prosveshcheniye, [1911]. pp. 79, 82.
17 *The Exhibition "One Hundred Years of French Painting: 1812–1912"*. St Petersburg: Apollon, 1912. pp. 25–46. Cf.: A. Lavrov. "The French Exhibition under Apollon's Aegis" // *Symbolists and Others: Articles. Research. Publications. Moscow*: NLO, 2015. pp. 245–258.
18 K. Malevich. *From Cézanne to Suprematism. A Critical Essay*. Moscow: Published by the Fine Arts Department of the People's Commissariat of Education [1920].
19 Cf.: R. Shiff. *Cezanne and the End of Impressionism: A Study of the Theory, Technique, and Critical Evaluation of Modern Art*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984. pp. 160–174; J. Kear. *Paul Cézanne*. London: Reaktion Books, 2016. pp. 22–25.
20 A. Benois. *My Recollections. Vol. IV–V*. Moscow: Nauka, 1980. p. 152.
21 M.V. Dobuzhinsky. *Reminiscences*. Moscow: Nauka, 1987. p. 169.
22 "...Cézanne's life as we know it by the life of Claude Lantier in Zola's novel *L'Oeuvre...*" (M. Voloshin. "Aspirations of New French Art (Cézanne. Van Gogh. Gauguin)" // *Zololoye Runo*. 1908. No. 7–9. Cit. ex: M. Voloshin. *Art and Temptation. Essays*. St Petersburg, 2014. p. 67). The novel *L'Oeuvre* by Emile Zola was published several times in Russia: in 1897 (edited by F.I. Bulgakov. St Petersburg: G.F. Panteleyev), 1903 (edited by M.V. Luchitskaya. Kiev: B.K. Fuks), and 1913 (edited by E.V. Anichkov and F.F. Batyushkov. St Petersburg: Prosveshcheniye).

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Paul Cézanne
Fruit
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-9026

burned all outward gloss, all carnival dresses and masks, all the glamour of this century in the redemptive bonfire of his art. He is an ascetic, a zealot, an iconoclast. His paintings are the naked truth". [23] The journalist and future revolutionary Lunacharsky, who wrote for the liberal paper *Kievskaya Mysl* in the early 1910s, described Cézanne as a "seeker who has accepted martyrdom for the sake of art" (June 1911), a "hard-worker who has suffered much" (October 1912), and a "prophet and fighter" (January 1914). [24] Provincials also saw Cézanne as a martyr. The architect and art philosopher Olton Krasnopolsky (1877–1971), in his seminal 1916 work *Abstractivism in the Art of Innovators* published right before the Revolution, praises Cézanne as the last genius of naturalism and an ingenious progenitor of abstract art, whose "life of martyrdom" [25] had proved him right.

In 1912, Konchalovsky translated into Russian Emile Bernard's apologetic book on Cézanne, [26] which makes it clear that the Cézanne character in Zola's novel *L'Oeuvre* is extremely superficial. Cézanne is depicted as a fine thinker, philosopher, and visionary. Artists hailed Cézanne's art as an inspirational breakthrough. David Burliuk wrote in 1912: "What was taken as the 'signature' of a 'heavy' Cézanne and a spasmodic Van Gogh is greater than that — it is a revelation of new truths and new paths". [27]

CÉZANNE AS THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH. MONUMENT AND CLUB

Cézanne came to be regarded as an influential thinker in the year 1917. It was then that the iconic figure was cloaked in the vestments of a fighter and comrade-in-arms of the revolutionary avant-garde. Cézanne was admitted to the pantheon of the October 1917 Revolution. "When Gauguin's harmonious surfaces faded, and the vibrant Matisse turned bleak, Cézanne entered unnoticed, embedding himself in the fabric of our artistic mindset as the 'pillar and ground of the truth' for every painter," wrote art critic Nikolay Tarabukin [28] in the spring of 1918. When in the summer of 1918 the new authorities debated their planned "list of outstanding public and cultural figures" that deserved commemoration, the People's Commissariat for Education (Narkompros), headed by Lunacharsky, was among those proposing a monument in honour of Cézanne. "Art critics greatly respect and lionise him [Cézanne] these days," wrote Malevich in a brochure published by Narkompros. [29] Sculptor Alexander Lensky started working on the monument. But Sovnarkom soon pared down the list, and thus Cézanne was never memorialised in Russia. [30] Plans were also announced for a first-ever Cézanne biography, and rumour had it that Vysheslavtsev [31] had already started working on it, but like the monument it never came to be. The first Russian-language book on Cézanne appeared only in 1935, by art historian Nina Yavorskaya, [32] who used her 1929 doctoral dissertation as a basis. The collections of Shchukin and Morozov were nationalised in 1918 to become Moscow's National Museum of New Western Art, where Yavorskaya worked. [33] The museum staged a solo exhibition of Cézanne's works in 1926 to mark 20 years since the artist's death, featuring 26 of his paintings. In the illustrated brochure for the exhibition, Yavorskaya promoted the image of Cézanne the thinker, highlighting his definitive influence on the Fauves, Cubists, Expressionists, and the Jack of Diamonds group. [34]

A Cézanne Club was set up in 1920 at VKhUTEMAS (All-Union Higher Artistic and Technical Studios) at 21 Myasnitskaya Ulitsa in Moscow. Over the next few years, the Cézanne Club served as an important venue for teachers and students to meet for talks and hold art exhibitions and debates. Tatlin, El Lissitzky, and Malevich were among those who visited the club from time to time. El Lissitzky wrote in 1921: "We consider Paul Cézanne to be the paterfamilias of our method of painting. He treated the canvas like a field to be fertilised, tilled, and sowed to grow fruits never previously seen in nature". [35]

By the end of the 1910s, the majority of serious artists in both capitals had mastered Cézanne's method and joined the ranks of his followers. They realised that Matisse and Picasso themselves had been heavily influenced by Cézanne (which Tugendhold wrote about). Alexander Kuprin, Vasily Rozhdestvensky, Alexander Osmerkin, Nikolay Sinezubov, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, [36] Robert Falk, [37] and others painted Cézannesque still lifes. Vasily Chekrygin, Konchalovsky, Kuprin, and Larionov painted Cézannesque landscapes, [38] and Osmerkin, Falk, Chekrygin, and Sergey Gerasimov painted portraits à la Cézanne. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the entire Soviet art school germinated from Cézanne's ideas. The famous Cézanne commandment that the artist must see everything in terms of spheres, cones, cylinders, and other basic geometric shapes has been quoted far and wide since the time of Tugendhold and Malevich. It became part and parcel of

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Paul Cézanne
Still Life with a Curtain
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-6514

23 M. Voloshin. Op. cit. p. 69–70.
24 "Cézanne has something of the pedant, but also something of the prophet. You can feel how heavy his hand is, but you can also feel how weighty his thoughts and moods are"; "We are compelled to acknowledge that Cézanne, who was devoid of great painting talent [sic!], is one of the most insightful people, a fighter for the artistic synthesis that humanity seeks and will attain to" (Cit. ex: A.V. Lunacharsky. *On the Fine Arts. Vol. 1.* Moscow: Sovetskiy Khudozhnik, 1967. pp. 133–199).
25 O. Krasnopolsky. *Abstractivism in the Art of Innovators (Postimpressionism and Neoromanticism)*. Moscow, 1917. p. 17.
26 E. Bernard. *Paul Cézanne in Unpublished Letters and Recollections.* Translated from the French by P.P. Konchalovsky. Moscow: Printing House of N.I. Grosman and G.A. Vendelshtein, 1912.
27 D. Burliuk. "The 'Wild Ones' of Russia" // *Blue Rider.* Edited by W. Kandinsky and F. Mark. Moscow: Izobrazitelnoye Iskusstvo, 1996. p. 19.
28 N. Tarabukin. "Studio to Studio. 3. Mashkov" // *Ponedelnik.* 1918. No. 8. 9 (22) April. p. 4. Cit. ex: I.A. Doronchenkov. Op. cit. p. 285. "Pillar and ground of the truth" is a quotation from the New Testament (1 Tim 3:15) and an allusion to the seminal work (1914) of the Orthodox Christian philosopher Pavel Florensky.
29 K. Malevich. Op. cit. p. 3.
30 *Artistic Life in Soviet Russia.* 1917–1932 / Edited by V.P. Tolstoy. Moscow: Galart, 2010. pp. 55, 62.
31 *Moscow in October 1917: An Illustrated Collection of Notes and Memories of Event Participants.* Edited by and foreword by N. Ovsyannikov. Moscow: [State Printing House No. 10], 1919. p. 225.
32 N.V. Yavorskaya. *Cézanne.* Moscow: OGIZ-IZOGIZ, 1935. 87 p. Official circulation: 5000 copies.
33 N.V. Yavorskaya. *History of the National Museum of New Western Art (Moscow),* 1918–1948. Moscow: Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, 2012.
34 "Cézanne's works... are serious and deep. His painting is devoid of 'prettiness'; it doesn't amuse us, but makes us think deeply... [these works] impress us with their thoughtful construction" (N. Yavorskaya. *Paul Cézanne (1839–1906).* Moscow: GMNZI, 1926. p. 4).
35 El Lissitzky. "Unovis. The Party in Art" // *The Archives of N.I. Khardzhiev. Russian Avant-Garde Art: Materials and Documents from the Russian National Archives of Literature and Art. Vol. I.* Moscow: Deti, 2017. p. 252.
36 "The trip to the museum, where I saw my own paintings and compared them with those of Cézanne, gave me great confidence," wrote Petrov-Vodkin on 11 June 1921 (*Petrov-Vodkin: In the Middle of the Life of Lives. Recollections. Letters. Documents.* St Petersburg.: Arca, 2018. p. 26).
37 Cf., e.g.: *Fruit, White Vase, and Copper Jug* by Falk, 1914, private collection, St Petersburg (*Robert Falk. 1886–1958. Paintings and Graphic Art.* St Petersburg.: KGallery, 2018. p. 21).
38 Compare *Camp* by Larionov, 1911, State Russian Museum, and *Paysage bleu* by Cézanne (FWN 345) from Morozov's collection.

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Paul Cézanne
Blue Landscape
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-8993

Soviet art education and found its way into the first edition of *The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia*.[39] Cézanne fell victim to Soviet authorities' crackdown on "formalism" at the end of the 1940s, but was brought back from oblivion during Khrushchev's Thaw. His reputation as a realist and materialist[40] (and only then a classicist) became unimpeachable. To this day, elementary art schooling in Russia starts with the drawing of basic geometric shapes.

CÉZANNE AS THE ULTIMATE EMBODIMENT OF THE ART OF PAINTING

"Contrary to widespread belief, the greatest thing about Cézanne is not that he was a fine painter; the greatest thing is that he faced the world with a heart open and thoroughly cleansed of any admixture that was not art. Never in the past had a painter had a heart so open, not even Raphael, or Titian, or Velasquez. It is as if Cézanne was an agent of the art of painting itself, the ultimate embodiment of that art…" wrote art critic Nikolay Punin.[41] In Russia, this romantic perception of Cézanne was preceded by an explanation of his work that was built on the materialism of his painting. The earliest attempts date back to the 1900s. Muratov wrote: "Cézanne is always consumed by a passionate longing for the primal, matter itself freed from everything accidental, confronting the artist's intuitive and synthetic cognition in its pure, 'raw' state".[42] In June 1912, Larionov pondered the objects in Cézanne's pictures in the light of his own Rayonnist concept: "…if we wish to paint exactly what we see, then we must paint the sum of the rays reflected from the object we see. However, in order to obtain the sum total of rays of the desired object specifically, we have to single out that object by force of will… In other words, it is the highest reality of the object not as we know it, but as we see it. Paul Cézanne gravitates to this idea in all his works, which is why the different objects in his paintings seem so mixed up and a little askance. Part of it is that he painted literally what he saw. Objects only appear evenly positioned to one eye, but Cézanne painted the way any person who has two eyes sees things, so that the object is a little to the right and yet at the same time a little to the left. Meanwhile, so sharp was Cézanne's eyesight that he could not help noticing how a small part, as it were, of one object is reflectively erased by the reflected rays of the other. Instead of causing the object itself to unravel, this effect would move it, as it were, to the other side and slice off a part of the object on one or another of its facets, lending realistic structure to Cézanne's paintings".[43] "The essence of Cézanne's work is heaviness, weightiness of the object," claimed Malevich in 1920.[44] "Picasso, Matisse, and Cézanne are masters of matter," wrote Chekrygin.[45]

This objectness (thingness, weightiness, materiality, massiveness, heaviness) in Cézanne's paintings was embraced in Russia as the consummate achievement in painting. But whereas Cézanne's objects appeared alive and animate to Kandinsky in Munich in 1910,[46] to post-1917 Moscow Cézanne's matter looked dead and lifeless, and therefore malleable and alterable in any manner. That was the definition given by Boris Vipper, art historian and translator of Heinrich Wölfflin.[47] In 1918 Vipper successfully defended his dissertation on still life painting, which would come out as a book in 1922. Therein he writes: "The object was to Cézanne what he found lacking in man — a silent object of experiment… There is no need to converse [with objects]… He wants humans and trees, the sky and the water, to become objects, or a still life, in his paintings".[48] This eerie description comes from a time when unheard-of experiments were already being done on the silent man in Russia.

CODA. NO ONE CAN SURPASS CÉZANNE

Russian art was on a quest for perfect form, spiritualisation, and "syntheticism". In the 1910s and 1920s, this search was projected onto the oeuvre of Cézanne, which Russian artists equated with perfection, and from which they drew ready-made methods to resolve their issues and achieve their goals. As the ideology consolidated by the 1940s, the official verdict on "Russian Cézannism" went like this: "In Russian art, Cézanne had a strong influence on the Jack of Diamonds group and on a few Soviet master artists. They suffered considerably from their uncritical acceptance of the 'Cézannism' doctrine, which they understood but superficially; it artificially hindered their creative growth. Only by severing ties with said doctrine were they able to secure firm ground for a realistic standpoint".[49] Unofficial art circles continued to worship Cézanne as the last serious painter for the rest of the 20th century. In the spring of 1946, artist Lev Bruni wrote to Punin: "No one can surpass Cézanne; whoever tries to is damned. For only Cézanne knew the distinction between the object and the space".[50] Russian art's quest for a great new style and its preoccupation with Neoclassicism, Neoromanticism, and *Sobornost'* (something akin to a spiritual communalism)[51] around the years 1909 and 1910 had to end in a move beyond painting with a subsequent return. With Cézanne as their foundation, the Russian avant-garde artists contrived to successfully transcend art and return back to its fold rejuvenated. "In those years I sensed instinctively that there was no salvation; it was impossible to find a path towards real art without new methods," recalled Konchalovsky. "And so I grabbed on to Cézanne like a drowning man grabs on to a straw".[52] In 1923, art historian David Arkin split the Russian love affair with Cézanne into two periods: the early latency period and the period of full "appropriation" of Cézanne. He writes: "Cézanne… the word sounds almost like a magic spell to a Russian painter… It stands for an entire system of painterly endeavour… In Russian art Cézanne… was destined to play the role of… the revitaliser of painting and reaffirmer of the painterly core of an artwork… he introduced the process of differentiation into the stream of creative painting".[53]

39 "Everything in nature is shaped in spheres, cones, and cylinders. The trick is to learn to paint on these simple figures; once you harness these forms, you can do anything you want." (Cézanne // *The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia* / Edited by K.E. Voroshilov, et al. Vol. 50. Moscow: OGIZ RSFSR, 1944. p. 638).
40 Cf.: "Cézanne is the first materialist in painting," and "[There is an] exhaustive sense of the materiality of things, which Cézanne conveys in his apples and pears, a realism that inspires awe and trepidation within the confines of art." (D.S. Melnikov. "Cézanne and Cézannism" // *Tvorchestvo*. 1921. No. 4–6. pp. 57, 55).
41 N.N. Punin *Diary*. 24 March 1946 // N.N. Punin *Love is the Light of the World. Diaries and Letters.* Moscow: Artist. Rezhissyor. Team, 2000. p. 402.
42 P.P. Muratov. Op. cit. pp. 131–132.
43 M. Larionov. "Radiant Paintings" // *Donkey Tail and Target.* Moscow: Z.A. Munster Publishing, 1913. pp. 96–97.
44 K. Malevich. K. Op. cit. p. 12.
45 V. Chekrygin *Report 1920–1921* // E. Murina, V. Rakitin. *Vasily Nikolayevich Chekrygin.* Moscow: RA, 2005. p. 202.
46 "Outwardly 'dead' objects come alive inwardly" (W. Kandinsky. *Of the Spiritual in Art.* Moscow: Archimedes, 1992. p. 35).
47 H. Wölfflin. *Interpretation of Art* / Translation and foreword by B. Vipper. Moscow: Delfin, 1922. Official print run: 1050 copies.
48 B.R. Vipper. *The Problem and Evolution of Still Life* [Kazan, 1922]. St Petersburg: Azbuka-Klassika, 2005. pp. 58–59.
49 "Cézanne" // *The Great Soviet Encyclopaedia.* Op. Cit. p. 638.
50 Letter from L.A. Bruni to N.N. Punin. 7 May 1946, Moscow // N.N. Punin *Op. cit.* p. 404.
51 Cf.: A. Bobrikov *A Different History of Russian Art.* Moscow: NLO, 2012. p. 608.
52 Cit. ex: *I. Vakar* "Pyotr Konchalovsky: A View from the New Century" // *Nashe Nasledie.* 2011. No. 99. URL: http://www.nasledie-rus.ru/podshivka/9904.php (accessed 08 Oct. 2020).
53 D. Arkin "Robert Falk and Moscow Painting" // *Russkoe Iskusstvo.* Issue 23. Moscow, St Petersburg. [Petrograd], 1923. pp. 21–32. Cit. ex: *Robert Falk. 1886–1958. Painting and Graphic Art.* St Petersburg: KGallery, 2018. p. 11.

THE DEAD-ENDS OF SUBJECTIVISM AND FORMALIST ABSTRACTION

KATARINA LOPATKINA

"The opening of the French exhibition in Moscow is one of the most important events in the artistic life of our country in the last decade. We have a rich collection of French art, including masterpieces that make Paris jealous. But the long break in cultural exchange due to the war and the revolution is a serious threat to our Western art collections: contemporary art museums can easily become history museums," — Pyotr Semyonovich Kogan, president of the State Academy of the Artistic Sciences, in his article "Two Cultures" for the catalogue of the 1928 exhibition Contemporary French Art.

WORKS BY FRENCH MODERNIST ARTISTS AT EXHIBITIONS IN MOSCOW AND LENINGRAD IN THE 1920S–1950S

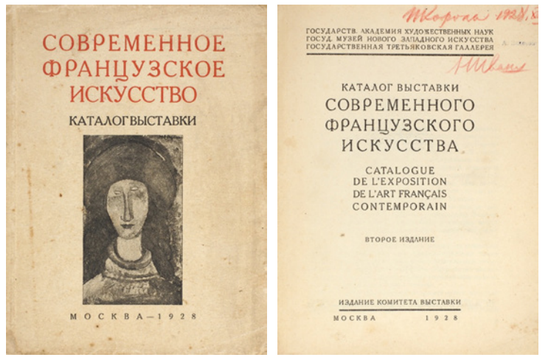
These "masterpieces that make Paris jealous" to which Kogan refers were obviously the works from the collection of the State Museum of New Western Art. [1] In 1919 the museum received the nationalised collections of Sergei Schukin and Ivan Morozov, famous Moscow collectors of Western European art, including celebrated works by Manet, Renoir, Degas, Monet, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Pissarro, Toulouse-Lautrec, Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso, and Rodin. These collections became the 1st (Schukin) and 2nd (Morozov) Departments of the State Museum of New Western Art, which were merged in 1921. In 1924 the museum started its exhibition activity with a small display of French drawings from the Moscow collections, followed by German art exhibitions, and then solo exhibitions of works by Paul Cézanne, Paul Gauguin, Vincent Van Gogh, and Louis Lozowick.

The *Contemporary French Art* exhibition so enthusiastically lauded by Kogan opened on September 16, 1928. It was organised under an agreement between the Ministry of Public Instruction of France and Narkompros (the People's Commissariat for Education) of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, with Paris' Galerie Billiet acting as intermediary and with assistance from artist Mikhail Larionov, who lived in Paris. [2] Implementing the project was no easy task. Galerie Billiet director Pierre Worms wrote to the exhibition committee in Moscow: "Unfortunately, in many cases we were refused, motivated either by political concerns or by the reluctance of some of the owners to send paintings to the USSR at a time when rich foreign collectors can come to Paris and buy them". [3] Nevertheless, despite the difficulties, 262 artworks by 75 artists — including paintings, drawings, and sculptures — were shown at the exhibition. They were divided into two groups: French (works by contemporary French masters) and Russian (works by artists of Russian origin living in Paris). The international nature of the Parisian artistic scene made this division rather artificial: the "French" section included, in addition to French artists, the Italians Modigliani, De Chirico, and Severini, the Romanian Brancusi, the Belgian Masereel, the Spanish Blanchard, the Dutch Van Dongen, and the Japanese Koyanagi and Foujita. [4]

This exhibition, which was indeed an enormous cultural event, was both the first and the last large-scale display of contemporary art from France in the USSR in the first half of the 20th century. The fight against formalism that was launched in the Soviet Union in the 1930s and the transformation of the function of museums led to a radical re-evaluation of works by "the French". As early as 1932, State Museum of New Western Art director Boris Nikolaevich Ternovets explained the new concept for his institution in the journal *Sovetskiy Musey*: "Moscow... is the stronghold of the world revolution, the capital of the world proletariat. Within its walls there should be a museum that shows, in contrast to the booming construction and the colossal success of the socialist state, the decline, crisis, decay, and the dead-ends of bourgeois society." This is what he thought to be the proper approach to presenting the museum's permanent collection. [5] And although there were still some publications on certain artists that managed to see the light of day (in 1933, for example, Nina Viktorovna Yavorskaya saw her small but illustrated monograph on Pablo Picasso published), the Soviet people would have to wait decades — until 1956 — for their next chance to see new works by Picasso.

It is interesting to note that attempts to organise exhibitions of works by French artists did not stop until 1935. In the beginning of the 1930s, it was the International Bureau of Revolutionary Artists, founded at the Second International Conference of Revolutionary Writers in 1930 in Kharkov, that was the most active organiser of exhibitions by Western artists. In six years the bureau held several exhibitions: group exhibitions by bureau members and the John Reed Club (an American association of organisations of leftist writers, artists, and intellectuals), as well as solo exhibitions by John Heartfield, Helios Gómez, František Bidlo, and Albert Abramowitz. In addition, the bureau organised visits of foreign artists to coincide with large-scale anniversary exhibitions such as *15 Years of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army*. Despite the official task of showing revolutionary art reflected in the name of the association, the bureau also had contacts with bourgeois artists who sympathised with leftist ideas. In 1933–1934 the secretariat of the bureau was exchanging letters with Ilya Ehrenburg, who lived in Paris, about inviting French artists to visit the USSR and participate in exhibitions. Among the artists discussed were Maurice de Vlaminck, André Derain, Amédée Ozenfant, Pablo Picasso, Fernand Leger, Paul Signac, and Chaïm Soutine.

Unification of the I and II Sections of GMNZI and their exhibits in one place of GMNZI Hanging of Rouault and Degas' works
1928



Contemporary French Art. Exhibition catalogue
Moscow, 1928

The bureau's executive secretary, artist Béla Uitz, stated that the bureau "asked comrade Ehrenburg to put us in contact with prominent French artists" Paul Signac ("founder of the bourgeois 'pointillism' movement") and André Derain ("who is known among intellectuals all over the world"). Together with the All-Union Society for Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, the bureau planned to hold an exhibition entitled *The Bourgeois Masters of France* in Moscow in 1935, but it never came to pass. In 1936 the International Bureau of Revolutionary Artists ceased to exist.

Before the beginning of the Second World War one could see artworks by the French modernists in the permanent collection of the State Museum of New Western Art, in what used to be Ivan Morozov's private mansion on ulitsa Prechistenka, and (after 1930) in the Leningrad Hermitage. On February 23, 1930 the first 43 artworks were transferred from the State Museum of New Western Art to the Hermitage, "acquired from Moscow in exchange for works by old masters". [6] The new acquisitions — paintings by Monet, Renoir, Cézanne, Gauguin, and Van Gogh, pastels by Degas, six paintings by Matisse, and eight works by Picasso — were placed in the permanent exhibition on the first floor of the Small Hermitage, in the Petrovskaya Gallery. A year later a second batch consisting of 36 artworks was sent, and in March 1931 the Petrovskaya Gallery hosted an exhibition of

the new acquisitions. One year later, on May 1, 1932, a permanent exhibition titled *The Art of France in the Era of Industrial Capitalism* opened on the second floor of the Winter Palace. It included all the artworks in the Hermitage's collection from the late 19th and early 20th century. [7] This exhibition was only open to the public for two years: in 1934, because of the introduction of a heating system, the Hermitage's "newest French art" pieces were transferred from the second floor of the Winter Palace to the first, into the Armorial Hall, and displayed as a temporary exhibition. Paintings by Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Matisse, and Picasso were shown on easels, giving visitors "a unique opportunity to study their technique". [8] There were also drawings by Manet, Fantin-Latour, Toulouse-Lautrec, Signac, Renoir, and Rodin on display, most of which had never been shown before. [9] By November 7 the exhibition had been expanded, and easels were put up not only in the Armorial Hall, but also in the Small Throne Room. At the end of October 1934, 35 pieces of art from the French school of the early 20th century were transferred to the Hermitage from Antikvariat. [10] All of these pieces had been withdrawn from the State Museum of New Western Art in 1931–1933 by a secret decree of Narkompros and given to Antikvariat for sale abroad. But the paintings were not sold, and, together with unsold works by old masters, were sent to the Hermitage and later officially made part of its collection. In 1935, after a major renovation of the rooms on the second floor of the Winter Palace, the permanent exhibition of French art of the 19th and early 20th century was reopened to the public in an extended version, in five halls, where it remained until the Second World War.

It's important to note that it was first the newest "formalists" that fell into disgrace with official Soviet culture: the Cubists, the Surrealists, and the Expressionists. In the 1930s the leading painter of the Stalinist era and future laureate of four Stalin awards Aleksandr Mikhailovich Gerasimov, while fustigating formalist exploration by his fellow artists, still called the Impressionists "the last contributors to the treasury of world culture". But by 1949 all French artists were considered "formalists" and described as the predecessors of the Americans, the leaders of the "new art" after the war. In his famous article "Decay of Bourgeois Art", Gerasimov emphasised: "Refusing to gain an in-depth knowledge of reality makes the artist indifferent to life and to the people and nature surrounding him; it leads to a hypertrophied ego, pessimism, and mysticism. This is the ideological core of Impressionism, Cubism, Surrealism, and generally all the 'fashionable' movements in the fine arts — against the interests of the people, reactionary in content, abstract, and ugly in form". [11]

At the end of the 1940s there was again some ideological fine-tuning regarding the arts. The fight against cosmopolitism and formalism kept international artistic contacts to a minimum, and the centripetal tendencies of the end of the 1940s made it almost impossible to organise exhibitions by foreign artists. The permanent exhibition of the State Museum of New Western Art and the Hermitage rooms with the French paintings of late 19th and early 20th century were not reopened after the collections' return from where they were sent for safekeeping during the war, and in 1948 the State Museum of New Western Art was dissolved. After its closing in 1948 the collection was divided between the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts and the Hermitage. All the drawings and most of the paintings were transferred to the Pushkin Museum. The Hermitage acquired, among others, the most "controversial" pieces by Matisse (Music, Dance) and Picasso (*Dance of the Veils, Three Women*), which were rejected by the curators of the Museum of Fine Arts. The collection of modernist paintings, although transferred to the two largest fine arts museums in the country, was nevertheless closed to the general public until the mid-1950s.

Even information about the French modernists gradually became hard to get. The artist Erik Bulatov remembers a telling episode from his younger years: "I am completely aware of the fact that we knew absolutely nothing. I can tell you a shameful episode from my life. It happened in 1950 or 1951. A distant relative of mine, a professor, came to Leningrad to teach. He told me that he knew some people who could get us into the Hermitage repository. I was, of course, very excited. We got there and I asked if I could see Renoir. I had no idea what Renoir looked like and I didn't know anyone else, but in my school library there was a monograph by Grabar about Valentin Serov, and Grabar said about Girl in the Sunlight that it "looked like Renoir". Who Renoir was or what he had done I had no idea. But I liked the painting and so I really wanted to learn about its prototype. In the repository I was met by two elderly women, typical museum intellectuals, who told me that unfortunately they could not show me Renoir because it was under restoration, but they could show me other artists who were no less interesting. "Who would you like to see?" they asked. "Let us show you Matisse!" I said, "Sure". They showed me Matisse, but it was just smudges and scribbles to me. And I asked them, perplexed, "Don't you have a real, serious artist?" One of the ladies gave me a sad look and asked, "Tell me the truth –you honestly don't like it?" I said, "No, I don't". And then she said, "What a lucky person you are!" This phrase of hers has stayed with me my entire life." [12]

Pablo Picasso and Ilya Ehrenbourg Mougins. 1966
Photo Manuscript Department, Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

"The Malisse Hall"
The exhibition "The Art of France in the Era of Industrial Capitalism in the State Hermitage Museum"
1936
The State Hermitage Archives
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

View of the exhibition of French artists of the 19-20th centuries in the State Hermitage Museum
1934
The State Hermitage Archives
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

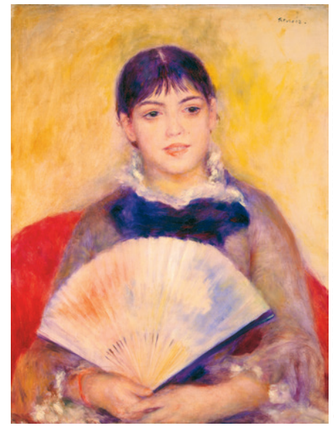


PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Auguste Renoir
Girl with a Fan
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-6507

Pablo Picasso
Man with his Arms Crossed
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ОР-43481

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Only with the beginning of de-Stalinisation did the situation begin to change. In 1955–1956 there was a surge of exhibition activity in the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts and the Hermitage — the largest museum collections and the most important exhibition centres in the Soviet Union.

The first show was the *Exhibition of French Art of the 15th-20th Centuries* (from the collections of USSR museums), which opened in the autumn of 1955 at the Pushkin Museum. It was there — seven years after the dismantling of the State Museum of New Western Art and for the first time in 15 years — that paintings by Cézanne, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Matisse, and Picasso were shown. More than two thousand pieces, demonstrating the evolution of French art from 12th-century church items and 15th-century miniatures to the paintings of the classics of French modernism, took up almost the entire exhibition enfilade of the Pushkin Museum from the autumn of 1955 until the spring of 1956. It then moved to the Hermitage from April to November of 1956, occupying 56 halls of the first and second floors. This exhibition, which lasted for almost a year in the country's two largest museums, began the artistic rehabilitation of modernist painting. [13]

The year 1956 was a museum boom year: the Hermitage held 15 exhibitions. In the "Explanatory note to the State Hermitage report on the implementation of the 1956 plan", it was noted that 10 of them were organised "in excess of the established plan". [14] At seven (!) of them, Leningrad residents and visitors saw pieces by Western masters of the 20th century for the first time in quite a while. The others were: *English Art of the 16th–20th Centuries; Works of French Art of the 12th–20th Centuries from Soviet Collections; Drawings, Etchings, and Lithographs by Contemporary Italian Artists; Belgian Art of the late 19th and 20th century. From Meunier to Permeke; An Exhibition of Works by Paul Cézanne. On the Occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the Artist's Death; and An Exhibition of Works by Picasso on the Occasion of His 75th Birthday.* The Italian and Belgian exhibitions, as well as the Cézanne show, were not an easy task for the Hermitage staff. This was noted expressly in the reports: "...due to the nature of the exhibited pieces, for the most part works of modern Western European art, which is not well-known to us, they presented significant difficulties in terms of studying and understanding them, as well as in terms of the explanatory material for them." [15]

The Picasso exhibition, which opened on October 24, 1956 in the Pushkin Museum and December 1 in the Hermitage, was a triumphant ending to this series of 20th-century art exhibitions. Its main organiser was the writer Ilya Ehrenburg, a long-time friend of the artist. In the spring of 1956, Ehrenburg became the head of the Friends of French Culture section of the All-Union Society for Cultural Ties with Foreign Countries, and this exhibition was his first major project in this position. Most of his works from the storerooms of the Pushkin Museum and the Hermitage were shown, in addition to 25 paintings, eight drawings, and five ceramic plates that Picasso sent from France. Ehrenburg added two drawings and 17 lithographs from his own collection to the list of works, as well as one plate that belonged to his brother-in-law, filmmaker Grigory Kozintsev. [16] The museums had no problem promoting this exhibition. Vladimir Slepyan remembers: "For me, as for many other young Soviet artists, the Picasso exhibition at the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts was the most important and unique event of our artistic lives. The success that this exhibition met with in Moscow and later in Leningrad was well known in the Soviet Union, but not in the West. In the Soviet press only one or two newspapers published a few lines about the exhibition after it ended. There were no reproductions, no radio or television programmes, and no articles about the exhibition in the art journals. But despite the indifference of the press, I can testify that Picasso's reception in Moscow and Leningrad was no less enthusiastic, and probably even more enthusiastic, than anything he had ever experienced in the West. For two weeks, from the early morning until the closing of the Pushkin Museum, there was a huge line in front of the doors, and the police had to let people in in small groups, because the lucky ones who had entered the exhibition did not want to leave; the rooms were absolutely packed." [17]

The Picasso exhibition, as well as the revelations of abstract art and the forgotten experiences of the Russian avant-garde, became for the Soviet viewer an indication that the ice was melting, that there was hope in the air.

1 From 1923 to 1928 the State Museum of New Western Art was a branch of the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts, and in 1948 it was closed.
2 Cf.: *From the History of Artistic Life in the USSR: International Ties in the Fine Arts, 1917–1940: Materials and Documents.* Moscow, Iskusstvo, 1987. p. 132.
3 Ibid., p. 134.
4 Cf.: *Contemporary French Art.* Exhibition catalogue. Moscow, 1928.
5 Boris Ternovets. "The Immediate Tasks of the State Museum of New Western Art". *Sovetskiy Muzey.* 1932. No. 5. p. 74.
6 For more on this, see: Katarina Lopatkina. *The Bastards of Cultural Relations. International Artistic Contacts of the USSR from the 1920s–1950s.* Moscow: Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, 2019.
7 Cf.: *Leningrad. A Guidebook. Vol. II: Walks in the City. A Guide to Museums and Scientific Institutions.* Moscow, Leningrad, OGIZ, 1933. pp. 415–416. The artworks were presented in three sections: The Era of the Highest Development of Capitalism before Monopoly and the First Attempt at a Dictatorship of the Proletariat in 1870, *The Era of the Decay of Capitalism and the Beginning of Imperialism, and The Era of Imperialism.*
8 Vladimir Malveev. *The "Solitary" Hermitage, or the Expositional Mosaic. Materials from the History of the Museum's Exhibition Activity: Exhibitions at the Hermitage and in the State Hermitage Centres.* In 2 volumes. St Petersburg: Slavia, 2014. Vol. 1. p. 179.
9 Cf.: Ibid.
10 Antikvariat was a Soviet state commercial enterprise which specialised in buying and selling antiques.
11 Aleksandr Gerasimov. "The Decay of Bourgeois Art". Ogonek. 1949. No. 21. p. 27.
12 Quoted in: Georgy Kiezelwater. A Time of Hope, *A Time of Illusions. Problems of Non-Official Soviet Art, 1950s–1960s: Articles and Other Material.* Moscow: NLO, 2018. p. 40.
13 Cf.: Marina Bessonova. "Exhibitions of Contemporary Art. A Chronicle of Events". *M. A. Bessonova. Selected Works.* Moscow: Baltrus, 2004. URL: design.wikireading.ru/11918 (accessed 26.08.2020).
14 The "Solitary" Hermitage, or the Expositional Mosaic. p. 231.
15 Ibid., p. 232.
16 Cf.: Malvey Gukovsky. "Temporary exhibitions of works of art from Western European countries in 1956". *Reports of the State Hermitage. XIII.* Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1958. p. 14.
17 Quoted in: Georgy Kiezelwater. A *Time of Hope, A Time of Illusions.* pp. 131–132.

AFTER THE NOTRE-DAME FIRE: MIRRORING THE IMPOSSIBLE CHANGE

Shiva dances his furious dance to create and also to destroy.
Salman Rushdie. Fury

MARIA ELKINA

Nolre Dame Calhedral fire of 2019
Wikimedia Commons/
Pholo: LeLaisserPasserA38 (CC BY-SA 4.0)

It is common to speak of taste and preference when discussing how to properly restore architectural landmarks, but it is not common to reveal what exactly those words mean. The fate of the spire of *Notre-Dame*, which burned down in April 2019, had been an object of debate for more than a year. In July of 2020, French president Emmanuel Macron announced the decision to restore both the dome and the roof of the cathedral exactly as they were before the fire.

In an alternative scenario — one that will not be implemented, it seems — the cathedral might have gotten a more contemporary structure as its dome. Architects and design firms proposed ideas of what this might look like. Among the ideas were the boringly provocative — a swimming pool instead of a roof, the aesthetically elegant — a spire of light instead of the material one that was destroyed, and the desperately topical — transforming the roof into a winter garden.

At the moment of its creation, a great work of architecture always looks toward the future: it is great precisely because it expresses a new idea regarding the order of the world. However, once it has been standing for many years the idea is completely turned around: the amazing work becomes a pillar of stability, a guarantee that the foundations of being remain unchanged. And this is more real than one might think at first: even if the meaning of a physical space is unintelligible through reason, the space imposes its visual presence and facilitates patterns of behavior. So the world was understandably petrified as it watched the famous cathedral burning. Notre-Dame was part and parcel of the familiar world, even for those who never stepped foot in the capital of France. The fire seemed a symbolic omen: what was thought to be unshakeable was falling into ruin. Condemn superstition all you like, but now, a year and several months after the fire, it is clear that in April 2019 the world was indeed on the edge of a change, even though the meaning of this change has not yet been fully grasped.

The 19lh-centlury sleeple was deslroyed in lhe fire of 2019
Wikimedia Commons/
Pholo: Jebulon (CC BY-SA 1.0)

It is precisely in this context that it is interesting to discuss the restoration of the cathedral — not as a merely aesthetic choice but as a choice of how to deal with loss. All devastation is an invitation to a new beginning. Or is it?

The scholarly debate on how legitimate and permissible it is to restore a work of architecture to its "prior" condition began at the very latest in the 19th century. Among other consequences, the debate resulted in the construction of a new spire for Notre-Dame de Paris, a product of the imagination of Eugène Emmanuel Viollet-le-Duc, a great architectural theorist and an admirer of the Middle Ages. Viollet-le-Duc claimed that one should restore a monument in a way that would convey its original idea. However, lacking any credible sources, Viollet-le-Duc, designer of the reconstruction project, could only guess what this "original idea" was. But it is this that lent charm to the work, saving it from being purely imitative and instead making it a monument of its age: a monument to rationalism disguised as mysticism and vice-versa.

With time, science has made it possible to reconstruct monuments in a more accurate way. But this has in fact made the problem of authenticity even more acute.

There is no sense in reanimating the debate on how acceptable it is to either literally reconstruct a landmark or to add something new to it. The debate is clearly irreconcilable. All possible arguments have been made time and time again. But the following is worth bearing in mind.

The choice between "making it like it was" and "saving what is left and adding something new but worthy of the original" often depends on the historical self-awareness of those making the choice. This applies not so much to the specific people in charge of the decision, but rather to the whole of society, to both the collective consciousness and collective unconscious. This is especially true in cases of violent destruction. In the 1950s, suburban palaces close to Leningrad that had been destroyed by bombs during World War II were reconstructed with the intention of neutralizing this loss, making the palaces look as if "nothing ever happened". In the 1990s, after the reunification of Germany, Norman R. Foster added a glass dome onto the Reichstag, but scrupulously conserved everything "authentic" about the building, including the inscriptions left by the Soviet soldiers. Post-war Soviet Union was a society mostly driven by fear. For such a society, reconstruction was a way to attempt to compensate for the tragedy without fully experiencing or acknowledging it. For both Germany and most of the rest of the world, the 1990s were years of great hope generated by the end of the Cold War. The clients, the designers, and the public had no doubt that the best times were ahead, that all mistakes were repairable, and that therefore there was no sense in hiding them. Contemporary changes to monuments seem appropriate or not depending on how strongly people trust and have faith in themselves and on how optimistic they are about the future.

The decision taken regarding Notre-Dame is therefore more significant than it seems. Of course, it was not destroyed as a result of warfare, yet the fire coincided with a critical moment for the world. Millions of hectares of forests burned, the world experienced an anomalously warm winter, and the lives of millions of people were affected by a virus. A crisis is never an end; it is a transformation. But we do not seem to want to accept this, and instead have self-defeating dreams of everything somehow returning to normal. This is, of course, impossible: in the best case scenario, after its reconstruction, Notre-Dame would be only a weak copy of the one that burned. It is not the cathedral on fire and the changing world that are frightening, but rather the fact that people are not ready to face such challenges. But for our situation there is an elegant solution available: preserve Notre-Dame as it is, just as it looks after the fire, until we reach a time when we can envision something better in place of the emptiness.

Façade of Nolre-Dame de Paris
Wikimedia Commons/
Pholo: Brelwa (CC BY-SA 4.0)

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ATTRACTION

The Corporeal as the Material of Art

Others say that he [Jan Žižka[2]] commanded them to skin him and to make a drum of his skin, predicting that the sound of this drum would spread terror among their enemies, and that where the skin of Ziska is, there will also be victory. Our author [Jacques Lenfant] has placed this story among the legends, which made me quite sad, as it is so poetic and appropriate for the spirit of the times. But then I remembered that Frederick the Great asserts, in verse and in prose, in a letter to Voltaire, that he had found this treasure in Prague and brought it to Berlin.

George Sand. *Jean Ziska:* épisode de la guerre des Hussiles, 1843

AVERSION [1]

1_____A reference to the work *Attraction/Aversion* by Kerry Howly (London), a collection of human hair necklaces.
2_____Jan Žižka (c. 1360–1424), a Czech general and military leader of the Hussiles.

Kerry Howley
'Attraction/ Aversion' series

IRINA BAGDASAROVA

HAIR ON THE PLATE

1

2

3

IT IS HARD NOWADAYS TO IMAGINE A DINING TABLE SET WITHOUT CHINA PLATES. THROUGHOUT HISTORY, DEPENDING ON THE PURPOSE OF THE MEAL — WHETHER TO CELEBRATE A SPECIAL OCCASION OR TO SIMPLY EAT DINNER — PLATES WOULD BE DECORATED EITHER IN A LUXURIOUS AND RICH MANNER OR MORE MODERATELY, AND RELATIVELY INEXPENSIVELY. IN ANY CASE IT IS ALWAYS PLEASANT (AND TASTIER) TO EAT FROM A PORCELAIN PLATE. BUT CAN THE SAME BE SAID IF THE CHINA IS DECORATED WITH HUMAN HAIR?

After the initial description of a beautifully set dining table, mentioning hair on the plate evokes a feeling of disgust, doesn't it? Like you've gotten a hair in your mouth together with your spoonful of soup. But we can leave this feeling behind now; because no one is going to serve you food on a porcelain plate with human hair on it.

So why the hair on the plate? At the exhibition *Creativity and Daydream. Contemporary Korean Art* held at the State Hermitage as part of the *Korean Eye 2020* project, Sekyung Lee displays her artistic porcelain plates alongside other works by contemporary Korean artists. The distinctive element in Lee's work is her original porcelain decorating technique: the images on the plates are made of coloured human hair. A gimmick! Yes, but not just a gimmick.

If you weren't aware of the material used, at first you might think you're looking at a design made with heat-resistant paint that has been fired, during which the pigments blend in with the glaze. Even if you do know what the decoration is made of, you can look closely at these designs for a long time and still not see it. But just bear in mind that the decoration really is made of hair, smoothly fixed (presumably using some glue-like substance) to the surface of the porcelain.

We know of earlier instances of human hair being used for decoration. For example, in the 18th and 19th century embroidery was a handicraft technique taught to girls aristocratic families from a young age. Young women spent hours of their leisure time at this activity. In addition to the silk threads that were typically used, human hair was sometimes embroidered against a light background. This technique was used to create embroidered pieces that looked quite similar to engravings or pencil drawings. It was most often personal objects such as wallets or purses that were decorated in this way. Such objects could be given as gifts to loved ones as a memento, as you wouldn't give a piece of yourself to just anyone. A simple lock of hair was often kept in a locket as a keepsake, holding the spirit of the person who the hair used to belong to. Thus, by using human hair, Sekyung Lee's works acquire a sacred quality. It is no coincidence that all the artworks presented are courtesy of the artist.

As for the creative technique, we might relate it to *trompe-l'oeil* techniques in porcelain art. Indeed, in her works Sekyung Lee passes off one artistic skill as a different one. The base is real porcelain, but the images are made of human hair made to look like typical porcelain decoration, i.e., underglaze or overglaze painting. The artist is inspired by certain eras and countries, reproducing designs and using the colour palettes typical of them. We will examine a few of the works by Sekyung Lee shown at the *Creativity and Daydream* exhibition at the Hermitage in detail.

1. Hair on the Plate — 1

Some of Sekyung Lee's works look like 18th-century china. This is primarily due to the shapes of the plates themselves; their delicate laced edges recall Rococo-style European porcelain.

One of the pieces from the *Hair on the Plate* series is decorated with an image of birds on a branch, similar to the birds copied from ornithology atlases that were painted on European and Russian porcelain in the Enlightenment era. At the time, this approach reflected the widespread interest in various fields of science, especially natural science, which aimed at systematising accumulated knowledge about the world. We can find similar images, for example, on objects from Empress Elizabeth Petrovna's Private Service, made at the Imperial Porcelain Factory in St. Petersburg in the 1750 and 1760s.

On this plate we also see insects crawling around the enamel surface. This, too, is an attribute of early European porcelain. Placing "insects" on dishware was especially pertinent in the 18th century, when the technical processes of the new factories were not yet running very smoothly. Defects often appeared on objects after firing because of imperfections in the processing of the material. Artists delicately "hid" the visible flaws under painted images of insects, transforming black ferrous dots and bumps in the glaze into butterflies, flies, beetles, or ladybugs. Following the lead of the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory, such images can be seen on Russian objects made at the Imperial Porcelain Factory in the second half of the 18th century. Insects might also be copied from engravings and watercolours.

Sekyung Lee used perfectly pristine contemporary porcelain in her works. So her insects are not covering up defects, just reproducing the decor of German and Russian 18th-century porcelain. The colour palette of the early porcelain masters is reproduced by the gradations of colour in the dyed hair.

4

5

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2. Hair on the Plate — 2

We see bugs running around another work by this Korean artist as well, which is also titled *Hair on the Plate*. The insects are sepia-coloured, as is the main scene on the plate, depicting a gentleman and ladies playing music and against a mixed architectural and natural landscape. Here the colour palette, scenery, and the typical fashionable costumes are borrowed from the famous pastoral paintings of the 18th century. Such motifs can be found in paintings by Antoine Watteau, Nicolas Lancret, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, and other *fêtes galante* artists. Trips to the country were popular with ladies and gentlemen in Europe at that time: "pilgrims of love" would go out to the open country searching for blissful pleasures and "paradise lost". The artist skilfully depicted the figures and created the spatial perspective using ferrous red colours reminiscent of the Meissen palette of the early 18th century. She has even managed to reproduce with human hair the stippling technique for painting porcelain, which creates images by using small dots of paint in a dense pattern.

3. Hair on the Plate — 3

Another of Sekyung Lee's works titled *Hair on the Plate* plays with the theme of music, and is a composition of a lute and sheet music framed by a pattern of flowers and a garland. A lute produces sound when its strings are plucked with the fingers or with a plectrum. Likewise, Sekyung Lee's main tools are her masterful and fingers. We can assume that the creation of each of these "hair drawings" was rather painstaking and took quite a long time.

4. Meissen Angels

The next piece gives us a glimpse into the artist's technique. On the *Meissen Angels* plate we see two floating angels, or, rather cupids *à la* Boucher, holding a basket of flowers. But their feet are left unfinished: they have not been completely "painted" with grey hair, nor has the hanging garland on the plate's edge. The loose ends of the hairs seem to be waiting for someone to continue the work. The viewer might then imagine what this work entails and gauge their own capacity for performing it, noting the extreme amount of discipline and patience it requires.

5. From East to West

The next pair of plates is called *From East to West.* Porcelain must be fired, and it is thus closely connected to fire, a metaphor for the sun that brings positive energy and the vital force. The sun rises in the east and sets in the west after a journey through the sky. This movement of light seems to be repeated on the plate with the bird of paradise in a garden.

The other plate from this pair plays with patterns often used when decorating porcelain with cobalt, a silvery metal with a bluish or pinkish shade. In ceramic production, while creating an image with this pigment the artists see its natural greyish-black colour; only after firing does the cobalt take on its blue shade. It is thus inconceivable to see a plate with a floral composition whose lower half seems to have been left unfired, while the upper half has already spent its time in the kiln. This is impossible in porcelain production, but Sekyung Lee has accomplished this trick — rather disconcerting to specialists — by using the appropriate shades of hair.

6. Transferred Objects

The *Transferred Objects* plate is confusing in many ways at once. The first impression is that it has been assembled from fragments of plates of similar size and shape, but differently decorated. Judging from the patterns, there would have ostensibly been three of them: one with a rather large floral pattern, another one with a polychromatic painting of fine floral garlands, and a third with geometric shapes and lines. It looks as if the broken parts have been snugly filled and glued together. We can see the "glue seams" and even "cracks" in the glaze. (Incidentally, porcelain restoration specialists use the term "hairline crack" to describe thin cracks on the surface of a piece). But the impression of an assembled plate is, of course, misleading. We need just turn the plate over to see that the plate is indeed an unbroken whole. As for the patterns themselves, they continue the idea of *From East to West,* but in the context of the development of the art of porcelain decoration. Blue cobalt originated in the East; it is adjacent to European motifs from two different eras: a sparse floral pattern of the 18th century and a Suprematist composition of the 20th.

The East gave porcelain to the world. Classic white porcelain first appeared on the territory of what is now Korea in the 10th century (in the Goryeo Dynasty). Potters began using porcelain thanks to China, but for many centuries the Korean ceramic arts advanced and improved along its own path.

This unusual porcelain decorated with human hair from Korea reminds us that this country is one of the most mysterious in the East. This new porcelain by Sekyung Lee reveals just a bit more of the Korean soul to us. It is also flattering to see that modern Korean master artists are studying European images and traditions in such detail.

Oriental porcelain has stunned us once again, as it did five centuries ago when Europeans first saw the "white gold", a name given to this most refined type of ceramics — porcelain: elegant, sophisticated, and extravagant.

THE MAGICAL POWER OF LEATHER

THROUGHOUT HUMAN HISTORY, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN A MATERIAL WITH MORE INCREDIBLE QUALITIES. THE STRUCTURE OF LEATHER HAS ALLOWED IT TO PLAY THE ROLE OF OTHER MATERIALS, TAKING ON THEIR APPEARANCE AND ACQUIRING THEIR QUALITIES — SOMETIMES QUITE CONTRADICTORY ONES: THE SOFTNESS OF FABRIC, THE ELASTICITY OF RUBBER, THE HARDNESS OF WOOD, THE PLASTICITY OF METAL, AND THE COLOUR AND TEXTURE OF IVORY;[2] ALL OF THIS CAN BE ACHIEVED WITH DIFFERENT PROCESSING METHODS.

BY YEKATERINA NEKRASOVA [1]

Leather was used to make footwear and clothing, vessels and cases, book bindings and books themselves, and upholstery for furniture and carriages. People first learned to treat the hides of animals in ancient times, and since then leather has accompanied humanity everywhere hunting and cattle breeding is practiced. But perhaps only now, in the age of plastic, can we fully appreciate the unique malleability of this natural material, which can transform into the most varied states and take on the most diverse forms. We can confidently say that before the invention of synthetic polymers in the early 20th century, only leather came close to it in its variety of applications.

Leather served as an alternative to textiles, but surpassed them in durability, longevity, and ability to absorb air without releasing moisture. Clothing of this kind lasted longer and was better at keeping in warmth. Leather drapes and wall hangings were used instead of fabric curtains and tapestries in the summer: they were thought to keep rooms cool in hot weather, they did not fade in the sun, and they were less susceptible to damage by insects.

As a material that was lighter, more widely available, and easier to process, leather was sometimes preferable to wood, in furniture and interior design, for example.

The durability and plasticity of leather, its resistance to water, its ability to take on and "remember" the most complex forms, and even to become hard, made it irreplaceable in the manufacture of cases and holders, as well as military kit. The word "cuirass" (from the French cuir — "leather") preserves the memory of a time when leather was used to make armour — it was light, sufficiently durable, long-lasting, and provided much more freedom of movement than metal. Leather breeches were sewn from natural elk or goat leather.

As a kind of "modern armour", this material became a second skin for the heroes of the 20th century — pilots, cowboys, and rock musicians. But here it was no longer only the practical element that was important. All ancient cultures believed that the magic power of animals was given to people who wore their hides, and this belief has not been fully erased from human memory. In many ways, it explains why to this day we feel that leather has a certain magic to it. At any rate, we cannot deny that our perception of leather has a strong emotional element. This is especially obvious in Russian, where the word *kozha* means both skin and leather — the outer covering of a human or animal that has a protective function and is a sensory organ at the same time, as well as animal hides and items made from them.[3]

One of the most important uses of leather was in the field of books. Since the beginning of the Middle Ages, parchment was used for writing down texts, while leather was used to bind them. The decoration of these bindings has its own magnificent page in the history of art.

Leather even found an application, albeit a more limited one, in the fine arts — as a surface on which to create art[4] or as a sculpting material.[5]

1 Excerpt from: Yekaterina Nekrasova-Shchedrinskaya. "The history of artistic leather processing in Europe: a first look". / *Leather. Works of Art from Old Europe.* Exhibition catalogue. St Petersburg: State Hermitage publishers, 2019.

2 In the 16th–17th centuries in Germany, book bindings were made from white pig leather to resemble carved ivory.

3 In other European languages these are different words: peau and cuir (French), pelle and cuoio (Italian), *piel* and *cuero* (Spanish), *Haut* and *Pelz/Leder* (German).

4 See, for example, the Portrait of Emperor Sigismund on parchment at the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna and the portrait of Michelangelo in the role of Moses by Federico Zuccaro.

5 An example is *Lamentations* from the late Gothic period in Germany.

Detail of a wall hanging

Netherlands. Second half of the 17th or 19th century
Leather, silver foil, pigmented varnishes,
paints; embossing, painting
83 × 67 cm
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. T-16297 (PH-1717; 13/86; registration No. 29)
First publication

This vertical panel made of olive-coloured leather is decorated with a lavish pattern of large fruit, flowers, human figures, animals, and birds. It stands out in relief against the background (on the reverse side, the deep pits from the embossing are filled with a special paste). The painting is in shades of red, green, and gold. At the edges of the upper section we see a flying squirrel and a lizard, as well as an upside-down winged figure of Bacchus (judging from the wreath of grape leaves on his head). Two garlands of round peas hang down from his arm, with a bird at the end on the left and a monkey on the right. In the lower left section of the panel there is a golden-haired cherub with an arrow in his hand, seated on some fruit, and opposite him a woman's figure with long, flowing hair growing out of lilies, tulips, and a lavish garland of fruit. She holds an ear of wheat in her hand, designating her as the goddess Ceres. Designs using the classical composition "Bacchus and Ceres" were very common in the decoration of leather wall coverings. It is encountered in many specimens from different collections, and is even in use to this day by workshops in the West that make works in the style of previous eras. The Victoria and Albert Museum in London has a panel of leather wall covering with the same pattern attributed to Dutch masters of the 1650s–1670s in a different colour scheme: the pattern is in gold on a blue background (Inv. No. 479-1869). The German Wallpaper Museum (Tapetenmuseum) in Kassel has two versions of this panel: one just like the exhibit at the Victoria and Albert Museum, with a gold pattern on a blue background (Netherlands, 1660), and another with a gold pattern on a blue background with a brown hue added. This composition was also used by Italian masters.

In Palazzo Chigi in Ariccia, in the Albani Hall, the walls are decorated with similar coverings attributed to Roman workshops in 1665–1670.

This décor was popularly imitated in the second half of the 19th century, when leather wall coverings became popular and firms began to manufacture them (sometimes using patterns from former eras).

Some wooden moulds on which patterns like these were carved for embossing the leather have been preserved in Essen. It is interesting to note that these moulds were also used to make cheaper papier-mâché versions as well.

The Hermitage inventory does not indicate the date or place of manufacture of this fragment. Judging from the elements of the décor and the numerous similar pieces, it can be classified as a work by Dutch masters. The characteristic motif of the peas, the so-called "bean motif", was very common in ornamental compositions of Dutch mannerists. As for the date, it may be either the 17th century, or a virtuoso reproduction of the pattern and technique made in the 19th century.

TATYANA KOSOURova

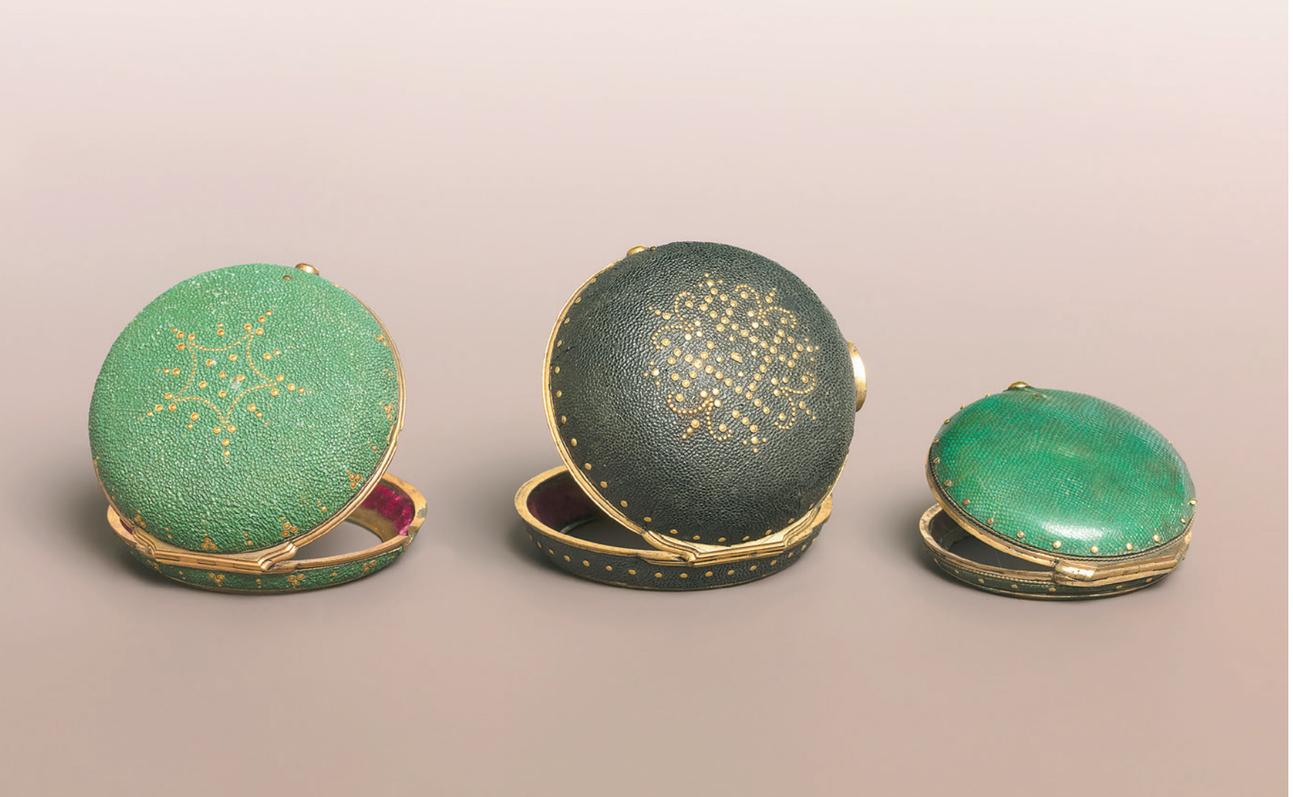


PHOTO © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

Three pocket watch cases

Unknown master
France (?) Mid-18th century.

ОФД-2: leather, copper;
incrustation, polishing
Diameter: 6.2; 5.8 cm

ОФД-24: galuchat, copper, gold;
incrustation, polishing
Diameter: 6.1; 5.9 cm

ОФД-28: galuchat, copper;
incrustation, polishing
Diameter: 5.1 cm

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ОФД-2, ОФД-24, ОФД-28

The pocket watch cases displayed at the exhibition are rare and expensive decorations from the early 18th century. Only the most influential and wealthiest people could afford watches in those times, so cases were also made from rare and valuable materials. Their round form repeats the most common form of the watch. The cases consist of two parts: the smaller one, with a round aperture, was designed for viewing the dial, while the large, deep part was where the watch was placed. This is the part that was decorated according to the client's wishes.

There was an interesting technique for treating leather in the mid-18th century known as galuchat. This term comes from the surname of the artisan Jean-Claude Galuchat, who along with his son worked in the centre of Paris and had clients at the court of Louis XV. The master craftsmen used leather made from the skin of large fish (sharks and swordfish) and of other sea creatures (stingrays, for example). The skin was removed, stretched on drying boards, and painted. If necessary, protruding parts were cut off and the leather sanded down.

The method of treating and dying the skin of sea creatures, which was previously common in countries of the Far East and the Middle East, received a new lease on life in the late 17th century, and became quite widespread in the 18th century. European masters made many improvements on and developed a diversity of methods for dying the leather, preferring blue, grey, and green hues. The two green cases from the Hermitage collection are decorated with a design formed by metal "tacks". In one case, the pattern is only found on the border (Inv. No. ОФД-28), while in another it has a more complex rhythm and a rosette in the centre (Inv. No. ОФД-24). The black leather watch case is also decorated like this (Inv. No. ОФД-2).

Often the decoration also had a meaning. It might include a monogram, cypher, or owner's mark. Such items are found in the Louvre's watch collection. The watches made by Guillaume Pecquet (Inv. No. OA 8422), Nicholas Gribelin (Inv. No. OA 8307), and others are placed in leather cases exquisitely encrusted with gold ornaments. However, it is unclear whether these watches, which date from the late 17th century, were made at the same time as the cases, or placed in them later on.

OLGA KOSTYUK

Miniature Chair

Western Europe. 17th or 19th century
Walnut, carving; leather, silver foil, pigmented varnishes, paints; embossing, painting; metal, casting
40 × 24 × 20 cm
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. Эпр-7584 (ЭРМб-596)

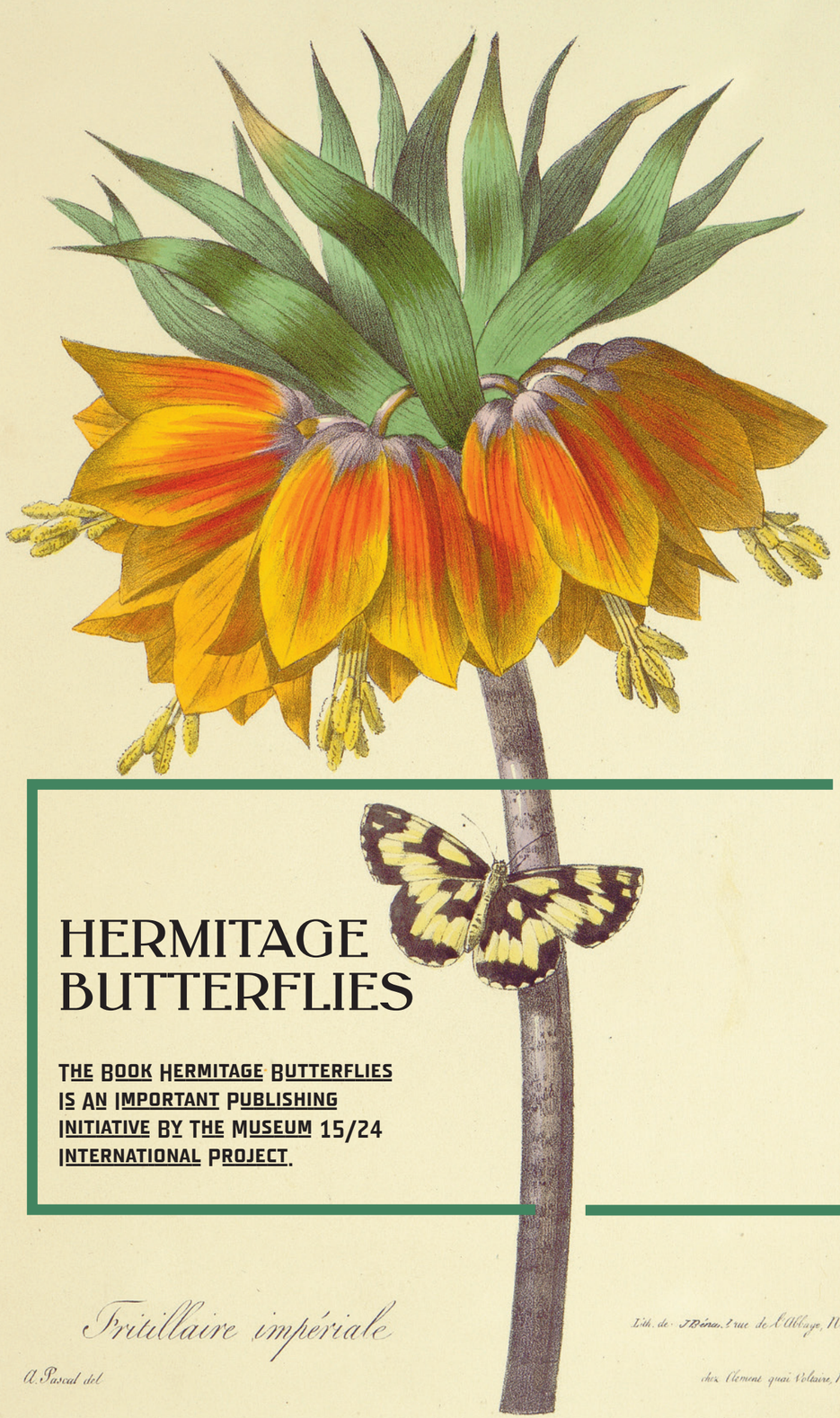
This miniature chair wonderfully conveys the features of the construction and décor of one of the most common types of 17th-century European furniture designed for sitting.

It has a high, straight back, broad and slightly bent armrests, and four carved helical legs at the bottom, providing greater stability. Usually this reliable construction was upholstered with fabric or tapestry, but in this specimen the back and the seat are covered in embossed leather, held there with decorative tacks with large round heads. This object is given a special charm by the painting on the leather, a large floral design. This type of miniature furniture is usually associated with the dollhouses that were very popular in the 17th-19th centuries. Indeed, the miniature chairs of this size at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London were created especially for dolls, which were collected eagerly by children and adults alike. The Hermitage chair may be counted among these items, especially if we take into account its origin from the Museum of Ethnography, where a collection of various dolls is held to this day.

But painstakingly accurate furniture miniatures may also have been manufactured and used for completely different purposes. Carpenters and cabinet makers made smaller items to earn the title of master, as such work required special skill in strictly observing proportions and a mastery of the techniques required to work with the materials. Finally, a miniature copy might have served as a portable model that could be shown to a client before the full-scale version was made.

DARYA KULIKOVA

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020



HERMITAGE BUTTERFLIES

THE BOOK HERMITAGE BUTTERFLIES IS AN IMPORTANT PUBLISHING INITIATIVE BY THE MUSEUM 15/24 INTERNATIONAL PROJECT.

Over a period of several months, volunteers aged 15 to 24, including members of the International Youth Advisory Council of the Museum 15/24 project, spent their time hunting for butterflies — the ones depicted on the exhibits displayed at the Hermitage. The special "study route" they constructed was then taken by children from the Butterfly Children charitable foundation along with actress and foundation trustee Ksenia Rappoport, accompanied by Hermitage experts. The entomologists at the St. Petersburg State University studied every one of these depictions of over 700 insects (including around 500 butterflies). About one third of the images proved to be "portraits" of real insects, often drawn with scientific accuracy. Each butterfly — whether in a painting, in an etching, in a book, or on a porcelain cup — received a scientific classification, as long as it was not completely invented by the artist. These depictions of butterflies — which can be found on a great variety of items in the museum collection: paintings, engravings and drawings, porcelain and table decorations, embroidery and clothing, jewellery, interior décor, sculpture, and more — date from the 1st century to the 21st.

Antoine Pascal, engraver "Royal Curls", butterfly on a stem. "№917" "Frulillaire impériale"
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ОГ-320083

Édouard Traviès
Loxia Orysivora
The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg
Inv. No. ОГ-294140

Édouard Traviès
Blue Linnet flying over tree branches
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ОГ-294138

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

HERMITAGE BUTTERFLIES
A STUDY OF ARTISTIC DEPICTIONS

THERE ARE FEW PLACES WHERE NATURE DEMONSTRATES ITS ABILITY TO CREATE BEAUTIFUL THINGS AS CLEARLY AS IN THE PATTERNS ON THE WINGS OF BUTTERFLIES. THE INCREDIBLE COMBINATION OF COMPLEX ORNAMENTATION AND DIVERSE SHADES OF "FLYING COLOURS" REFLECT THE GENERAL HARMONY OF THE WORLD. IT IS NO ACCIDENT THAT MANY LEADING SCIENTISTS, ARTISTS, WRITERS, AND EVEN POLITICIANS HAVE COLLECTED BUTTERFLIES FROM CHILDHOOD. FOR POETS, BUTTERFLIES ARE A SYMBOL OF TENDER BEAUTY, LIGHTNESS, AND ETHEREALITY. IN ANCIENT TIMES THE BUTTERFLY WAS ASSOCIATED WITH THE SOUL OF A DEAD PERSON SOARING UP TO HEAVEN.

BY ANDREI KORZEYEV [1]

The entomologists who describe and study the diversity of these beautiful creatures use strict rules for names, as do all scientists who study the living things on the Earth. Their system is known as binary nomenclature. This method gives every species a two-word name (binomen) in Latin: the name of the genus and the name of the species. The name of the genus is always written with a capital letter, and the name of the species with a small one (even if it is derived from a proper name). In scientific works, sometimes the author who first described the species is included (and possibly abbreviated) after the binomen, and the publication date of the description might also be given. For example, Papilio machaon (Linnaeus, 1758), or in abbreviated form, Papilio machaon L.

Analysing artistic depictions of butterflies (and arthropods in general) with the aim of identifying them is an endeavour fraught with objective difficulties. First, many depictions are highly stylised and simplify and distort external characteristics. Sometimes they depict completely imaginary animals. But fortunately for us, some artists did depict insects quite accurately, sometimes at a scientific level. In attempting to identify these artistic depictions, we analysed the following groups of characteristics: the form and proportion of the body; the legs and antennae of the animal; the quantity, form, and type of venation and the proportion of the wings (if present); the colouring of the body and wings; the characteristic elements and type of wing pattern; and the mouthparts (if visible in the picture).

These are the traditional characteristics noted in the initial classification of insects. The characteristics concerning the type of wing pattern and its elements are worthy of particular attention. The pattern on the body and the wings of insects is not random; it is subject to definite rules. We can define the pattern's system of elements, trace the distribution and interaction of these elements, describe the typical state, determine the changeability of the pattern, and assume its evolution for a certain group of insects. The problem of the pattern (and specifically the wing pattern of butterflies) was the topic of a world-renowned classic study by Professor Boris Nikolaevich Shvanvich (1889–1957), [2] who was the head of the entomology

1 Andrei Korzeyev has a PhD in biology and is a senior lecturer at the entomology department of the biology faculty at St Petersburg State University. He is also the head of scientific research for the Museum 15/24 international project (2019-2020).

department of Leningrad State University from 1930 and responsible for its revival after the Second World War. Shvanvich's grave at the Bolsheokhtinsky Cemetery in St Petersburg has a monument showing the general wing pattern of diurnal butterflies that he developed based on his studies.

An understanding of the types of wing patterns characteristic for certain families and groups of families of Lepidoptera, along with other characteristics of their external structure, allows us with a certain degree of likelihood to classify a butterfly depicted by an artist. Or it may help us determine that it is an artistic invention that has no real prototype in nature.

We analysed over 500 artistic depictions from various genres (painting, graphic art, decorative and applied art) dating from the 15th to the 20th centuries. The depictions contained one or several (sometimes over 10) elements (as we will call them here) of a zoological nature. In addition to Lepidoptera and members of other orders of insects, we also identified all other invertebrate animals depicted (to the extent possible).

In order to categorise the degree of realism of artistic depictions, we divided the results of classification into five groups of authenticity:

A+ — documentary depiction of an animal.

A — depiction of an animal that actually exists. The depiction may contain certain distortions, but on the whole it is possible to identify the prototype with accuracy to the species or closely related species with high likelihood.

B — the depiction contains a certain amount of simplification or invention, but characteristic features are present. The prototype may be determined precisely to the genus, subfamily, or family.

C — an external appearance is shown that is characteristic of a group of animals ("typical" butterfly, wasp, beetle, etc.). The prototype may be determined to a group of families, suborder, or order.

D — a completely invented animal. If determining a prototype is possible, only to the order.

Some images contain elements from several levels of authenticity at once. For example, in one picture, there is one butterfly depicted that can be confidently classified to its species, along with several insects and other invertebrates which can only be identified to a group of families, or only to an order.

In summary: elements with a reliability of determination at the A+ level are encountered in 24 depictions, A in 118, B in 117, C in 144, and D in 189.

As we can see from the ratio of these numbers, artists most often depicted fictional invertebrate animals or resorted to stylisation (simplification). It is rarer to see essentially real prototypes depicted with characteristics of the family or genus. Only a few artists authentically depicted creatures from nature, using either their own observations of nature or collections, or reproducing precise depictions that already existed.

A correlation of the levels of authenticity with the time period during which the artwork was created does not show any linear dependence, but there is a tendency towards increased precision of depictions in later eras. It is more helpful to speak of individual artists and schools that adhered to a high degree of realism in their works. An outstanding example is the Dutch school (Caroline Friederike Friedrich, Balthasar van der Ast, Johann Baptist Drechsler, etc.)

2 See: Boris Shvanvich. *A Course in General Entomology. An Introduction to the Study of the Structure and Functions of the Insect Body: a Textbook for State Universities.* Moscow, Leningrad: Sovietskaya nauka, 1949

Heem, Jan Davidsz de
Flowers in a Vase
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-1113

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

1. Red admiral butterfly from the Nymphalidae family — Vanessa atalanta L. (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae).
2. Orange tip butterfly — Anthocharis cardamines L., female, from the Pieridae family (Lepidoptera: Pieridae).
3. Hymenoptera, a wasp from the Ammophila genus, member of the Sphecidae family (Hymenoptera: Aculeata: Sphecidae).
4. Hymenoptera, a wasp possibly from the Vespidae family (Hymenoptera: Aculeata: Vespidae).
5. Small insects in a peony blossom, classification impossible.
6. Pulmonate gastropod terrestrial mollusc, grove snail — Cepaea nemoralis L., from the Helicidae family (Pulmonata: Helicidae).
7. Butterfly larva (Lepidoptera), probably from the Rhopalocera group of families, classified as a member of the Nymphalidae family (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae).
8. Brimstone butterfly — Gonepteryx rhamni L., male, from the Pieridae family (Lepidoptera: Pieridae).
9. Orthoptera, probably a great green bush-cricket — Tettigonia viridissima L., female (Orthoptera: Ensifira: Tettigonidae).
10. Pulmonate gastropod terrestrial mollusc, garden snail Cepaea hortensis O. F. Müller, from the Helicidae family (Pulmonata: Helicidae).
11. Insect, classification impossible.

Butterfly Vanessa atalanta L. butterfly:
Europe, Siberia, Asia Minor, Central Asia, North Africa, North America, Bermuda, Hawaii, New Zealand.
Butterfly Anthocharis cardamines L.:
the entire Palearctic region, apart from the Far North and the South.
Butterfly Gonepteryx rhamni L:
from North Africa throughout Europe, Asia Minor, the Caucasus and Transcaucasia, Western and Southern Siberia to the Baikal region.
Bush-cricket Tettigonia viridissima L.:
most of Europe, the eastern Palearctic, the Middle East and North Africa.
Snail Cepaea nemoralis L.:
Europe, introduced to North America.

However, we must note that in the works of European artists dating from the 15th to the 19th centuries we see almost exclusively depictions of examples of local, European fauna. The most popular "characters" are several species of Rhopalocera. For example, the red admiral — Vanessa atalanta (Linnaeus, 1758) — from the nymphalidae family, the machaon — Papilio machaon (Linnaeus, 1758) — from the swallowtail family, and several others. We observed a repetition of depictions, reproduced with varying degrees of precision, of a number of typical and commonly encountered types from the diurnal and nocturnal Lepidoptera, the same members of the orders of Hymenoptera, Orthoptera, and the same beetles and dragonflies. The artists of the Far East depicted types of local fauna in approximately the same way. In our opinion, this seems somewhat strange for the art of Europe of that time, as there were already ties with colonies and distant countries, and in the mid-18th century scientists were already actively collecting and analysing zoological and botanical specimens. Here we are referring largely to Karl Linnaeus and his pupils, the so-called "apostles of Linnaeus" — young naturalists who were specially sent to various regions of the Earth with the ships of the Swedish East India Company and on other routes. In other words, artists had the chance to learn about specimens of biological diversity beyond Central and Northern Europe and the Mediterranean, but this was hardly ever reflected in their work. Perhaps this monotony arises from the non-random nature of the selection of artistic works that we analysed, or perhaps it is quite natural: artists did not make studying "natural history" a priority.

From the 19th century, alongside the establishment of biology as a science (the term "biology" only began to be used in the contemporary sense in the late 18th-early 19th century, and did not become widely used until the late 19th-early 20th centuries) [3], we see the systematic emergence of highly accurate depictions of animals and plants, including those found in countries far from Europe. Special illustrations were made and entire atlases were compiled. An example from our study is the magnificent work of Édouard Traviès, which, in addition to birds and plants, contains documentary depictions of butterflies of the New World, Africa, and Southeast Asia.

Artists of different eras also depicted groups of invertebrates other than insects. They did this with varying degrees of authenticity, but often sufficiently well to identify them at least to the order.

The beautiful Lepidoptera were depicted most often, with second place held by beetles and Hymenoptera, followed close behind by dragonflies and Orthoptera. This is not surprising; they are the most noticeable and striking creatures in nature, and they have served as a source of inspiration for artists for ages on end. [4]

3 See: Leonid Blyakher, Boris Bykhovsky, and Semyon Mikulinsky. *A History of Biology from Ancient Times to the Early 20th Century.* Moscow; Nauka, 1972.

4 This article was published in full in the book *Hermitage Butterflies.* The Hermitage Museum XXI Century Foundation, 2020.

Mignon, Abraham
Vase of Flowers
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-1050

1. Red admiral butterfly from the Nymphalidae family — Vanessa atalanta L. (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae).
2. Magpie moth — Abraxas grossulariata L., from the Geometridae family (Lepidoptera: Geometridae).
3. Wall brown butterfly — Lasiommata megera L., female, from the Nymphalidae family (Satyrinae subfamily (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae: Satyrinae)).
4. Pulmonate gastropod terrestrial mollusc, probably a Burgundy snail — Helix pomatia L., from the Helicidae family (Pulmonata: Helicidae).
5. Pulmonate gastropod terrestrial mollusc, grove snail — Cepaea nemoralis L., from the Helicidae family (Pulmonata: Helicidae).
6. Beetle, probably an Eurasian bee beetle — Trichius fasciatus L., from the Scarabaeidae family (Coleoptera: Scarabaeidae).
7. Beetle, probably from the Coccinellidae family (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae).
8. Pulmonate gastropod terrestrial mollusc, probably a grove snail — Cepaea nemoralis L., from the Helicidae family (Pulmonata: Helicidae).
9. Butterfly larva (Lepidoptera), probably from the Rhopalocera group of families, classified as a member of the Nymphalidae family (Lepidoptera: Nymphalidae).

Butterfly Vanessa atalanta L.:
Europe, Siberia, Asia Minor, Central Asia, North Africa, North America, Bermuda, Hawaii, New Zealand.
Butterfly Abraxas grossulariata L.— common Holarctic species.
Butterfly Lasiommata megera L.:
from North Africa across Europe, the Caucasus and Asia Minor to the Middle East, and also across Central Asia and Kazakhstan to Dzungaria in the East.
Snail Helix pomatia L.:
common throughout Europe.
Snail Cepaea nemoralis L.:
Europe, introduced to North America.
Beetle Trichius fasciatus L.:
found in most of Europe and in the Eastern Palearctic.

PHOTO: © THE STATE HERMITAGE, ST PETERSBURG, 2020

#000000. BLACK

KSENIA MALICH [1]

#000000 is the number of the colour black in the RGB international colour coding system. Absolute zero means the total absence of luminous flux. Where there is no light there is eternal darkness. This opposition is clearly stated in Christianity: before God created the Universe and light, everything was submerged in darkness (there are analogous stories of the creation of the world out of darkness in other religions as well). But the colour black is not only symbolic of absolute non-existence, fear, or the absence of divine light. The black habits of monks who "die" to earthly, worldly life for the sake of eternal life are a symbol of the forthcoming transformation of darkness into victorious light. The black of mourning reminds us that our garments will turn white in the coming age. And black and its various derivatives became the main colours of Protestantism, which fought against extravagance and luxurious superfluity in favour of austerity and frugality.

In the secular world, the colour black in clothing gradually came to signify righteousness and decency, and hence someone of particular virtue. Beginning in the Middle Ages, judges and specially designated officials dressed in black. By the end of the 16th century almost all European monarchs dressed in black, and in the 17th century black clothing became a distinctive sign of the aristocracy and of a preeminent social status in general. But here the use of black fabrics, as it turns out, is due to a completely different set of circumstances.

When we look at portraits by Rubens, Rembrandt, and other 17th-century masters, we see an endless procession of luxurious bluish-black clothes, making for an especially striking background for the exquisite white lace of the collars and cuffs. Of course, black fabric is quite practical – it does not stain easily. But members of the upper class did not do any hard or dirty work. And Protestant restraint and other such values of the Reformation are not the only factor here either. The simple fact is that prices for good quality black fabrics in the 17th century were unbelievably high. And the reason for this was not even the dye (even though some pigments were very expensive, such as those from logwood, brought by the Spanish from South America). In order to get a stable, uniform tone, you had to colour the cloth or velvet up to seven or nine times, which required copious amounts of dye. In addition, black fabric faded in the sun and gathered dust, so walking around for hours in the city in such clothes was also impossible. People who dressed in black showed that they could afford to buy sumptuous clothes, and that they were not afraid of them getting soiled, since in all likelihood they did not walk much. The serious, moral colour black became a sign of social distinction and an everyday fashion for the well-to-do.

Peter Paul Rubens
Portrait of a Lady-in-Waiting to the Infanta Isabella (Portrait of Clara Serena Rubens, Daughter of the Painter?)
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-478

Christopher Paudiss
Portrait of a Young Man in a Fur Hat
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-1976

Jacob Gerritszoon Cuyp
Portrait of a Young Lady
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-5615

Lodewijk van der Helst or Bartholomeus van der Helst
Portrait of a Man
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-6318

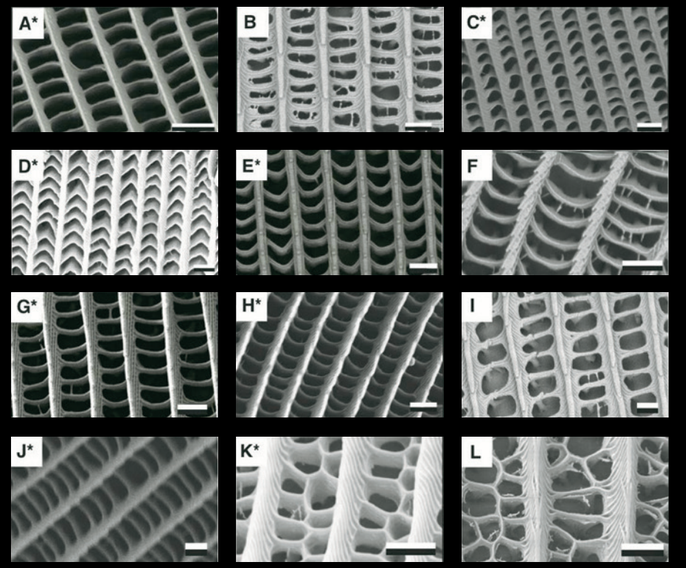
Anthony van Dyck
Portrait of Everhard Jabach
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-555

Godfried Schalcken
Portrait of a Young Woman
The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Inv. No. ГЭ-2873

SUPERBLACK. THE WING OF A BUTTERFLY

Pachliopta kotzebuea — a butterfly of the family Papilionidae

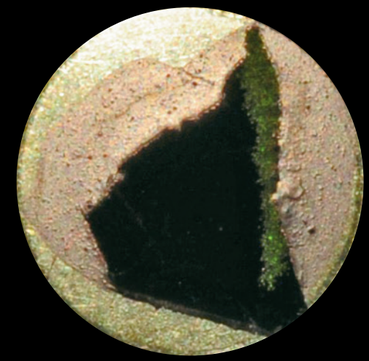
PHOTO: © COLIN KNIGHT



The diversity of shapes and sizes of nanoscale holes in superblack butterflies: A — Calonephele antinoe; B — Calonephele numilia (female); C — Calonephele numilia (male); D — Eunica chlorocroa; E — Euploea dufresne; F — Euploea midamus; G — Euploea klugi; H — Heliconius doris; I — Heliconius ismenius; J — Napeocles jucunda; K — Trogonoptera brookiana (male); L — Trogonoptera brookiana (female)

It has been shown that there are trabeculae between the scales that cover butterfly wings. They increase the surface area for light absorption by cuticular melanin.
Superblack structures created based on butterfly wing "technology" can have a similar reflectance and be just as thin, but also very durable.

When scientists talk about developing a "superblack" material capable of absorbing almost all light, it is not a question of chemical composition but of internal "architecture". High-tech companies can produce synthetic materials with a high absorption coefficient and a low reflection coefficient, made from vertically-oriented carbon nanotubes. But this material is so fragile that the prospects for its use are very limited.
In inanimate nature, "superblack" is found, for example, in soot and coal. And who is the blackest in animate nature? Black jumping spiders, the feathers on certain species of birds, and the wings of certain butterflies. The properties of their colouration are comparable to those of synthetic "superblack".
All species of butterflies have wings with a complex structure, and they are all different from one another. Researchers from Duke University (USA) found that the wings of the Papilionidae butterfly absorb light with two layers of microscopic scales that are up to 2.5 micrometres thick. The scales are covered with a plate of a quasi-honeycomb structure composed of cross-ribs. These unique nano-sized structures diminish the wing's reflectance to 0.06% of light at a 90-degree angle.
Without absorption, the reflexive capacity of two scales placed on a white background is close to 100%, but at $k = 0.06$ it starts diminishing by 1%. The effect of the real refractive index is dominated by that of the imaginary one up to $k > 0.06$. For a scale with a high imaginary part ($k > 0.10$) the situation changes, and the real part of the refractive index becomes essential in increasing reflectance. For example, when $k = 0.15$, the reflectance at $n = 1.33$ is 88% lower than at $n = 1.8$. When $0.06 < k < 0.10$, the reflectance depends on both components of the refractive index.
This means that to achieve the reflectance seen in superblack butterflies we do not need melanin — we just need an absorbing material.



Superblack butterfly wings with nanoscale holes and large trabeculae preserved their black colour even after they were covered in gold (for electron microscope scanning).

More than 30 years ago, in the Soviet Union, the citizens of Leningrad (and Moscow) unambiguously associated the town of Komarovo with "bohemians" — the artistic intelligentsia and their children. Walking around Komarovo, one might meet anyone: beloved (sometimes rather eccentric) actors, famous scientists, or popular musicians. At various times you could find actress Elena Solovey, actor Vladislav Strzhelchik, composer Oleg Karavaichuk, and director Aleksey German in the queue at local food shops or kiosks. We ourselves are quite proud that Daniil Granin often invited his foreign friends to our town. Much water has flowed under the bridges and many people have passed away since then. Komarovo has changed. Privacy fences have been erected and old country houses have disappeared. A different generation of less famous but wealthier summer residents have emerged. Now, instead of "lotto" and cards, the summer residents and their children play "Mafia" and do quests. Many new restaurants have also opened on the shore of the Gulf of Finland. Today's residents of Komarovo also tend to be somewhat elitist and extravagant. When meeting acquaintances, they always mention where they live. This used to be rather annoying, but the more the residents of Komarovo are seen to truly take care of their small town, the friendlier are the comments from non-residents.

We opened our suburban restaurant next to the entry road to the village of Komarovo on the Zelenogorsk Highway. It is located on a site with a history: Pierre-Lucien Dupain, who ran a flower business in St Petersburg, owned house No. 2 on Frantsuzskaya Street (now Otdykha Street) and the surrounding plot. His daughter sold the plot, still within the same boundary lines, to Active State Councillor Kareyev. In 1917 Kareev's wife sold the site to Margarethe Gericke, whose father Karl Gericke, a hereditary distinguished citizen and a merchant of the second guild, at that time held the position of vice-consul in Brazil.
That house no longer stands. Back in Soviet times, a dacha trust built a new house, a "state dacha", on the site. Over the years, various government officials would spend their free time there. Their descendants sometimes still come to have a look at "the blue house". We are happy to preserve and care for one of the last examples of Soviet bourgeois recreation and maintain its authenticity.
In 2010, a new restaurant with a terrace and a view of the forest opened next to "the blue house". Lively, colourful, and light, it delights our guests. Adults find it cosy and children find it fun. Everybody knows each other here and cheerfully takes part in our events. We watch children grow up and change their orders from porridge to simmered lamb and Flemish pie.

Our restaurant is a special private 'club'. It is not only the high quality food and atmosphere that our guests love. Summer house décor fairs, similar to those in small medieval cities in Europe, and jazz beneath the pine trees are two good reasons for a Saturday dinner on Flamand Rose's terrace. In wintertime, our guests can enjoy themselves with a glass of wine beside the fireplace. But of course our cuisine is the most important thing. Our restaurant insists on local products, freshly prepared dishes, attention to every guest, and maintaining the high quality of beloved dishes over the years.

BOOKS

Hermitage. A Chronicle of the War Years. 1941–1945: Documents from the State Hermitage Archives.

St Petersburg:
The State Hermitage Museum Publishing House, 2020. 232 p.: ill.

The book is the second, enlarged edition of The Hermitage. A Chronicle of the War Years. 1941–1945, a collection dedicated to the life of the museum during the Great Patriotic War. It includes memoirs, letters, and drawings by museum staff members who saved exhibits in besieged Leningrad, worked in the Hermitage branch in Sverdlovsk, and took care of children in the Hermitage boarding school. The second edition includes recollections of the time from Boris Piotrovsky and Vera Milyutina, as well as a list of the Hermitage employees who died during the siege and on the fronts of the Great Patriotic War. A large number of photographs and drawings were also added.

Lk 15, 11–32. Rembrandt. Dedication. Alexander Sokurov.

St Petersburg: State Hermitage Museum Publishing House, 2020. 28 p.: ill.

This publication discusses the birth and development of the artistic concept that formed the basis of Alexander Sokurov's installation Rembrandt. Dedication. Taking inspiration from the painting The Return of the Prodigal Son from the Hermitage collection, the celebrated film director reflects on the meaning and value of human life, on faith and unbelief, and on the senselessness and cruelty of war. Looking at the biblical story of the prodigal son from various angles, Alexander Sokurov creates a special world where Rembrandt's paintings come to life, where the past meets modernity, and where ancestors pass their last and most important words on to their descendants.

A Renaissance Model of the Universe. The Astronomical Clock inthe Collection of the Hermitage. Commemorating the Completion of Its Restoration.

St Petersburg:
The State Hermitage Museum Publishing House, 2020. 56 p.: ill.

This brochure discusses the creation and journey to Russia of an astronomical clock made in 1584, with a globe of the Earth and of the Heavens, sundials, and mechanical clocks. It is one of the most complex and mysterious pieces made by Augsburg artists Georg Roll and Johannes Reinhold. Thanks to the art of Hermitage conservators, the clock has regained its original appearance. This publication is intended for professionals and lovers of unique antique works of art.

On Opposite Sides of the Front Line. (Booklet for the exhibition) / Olga Zimina, Artem Tumasov.

St Petersburg:
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This publication was prepared for the exhibition On Opposite Sides of the Front Line, dedicated to the 75th anniversary of victory in the Great Patriotic War. The title of the exhibition reflects its basic concept. The display includes literary, pictorial, and documentary artefacts of the deadly confrontation near Leningrad, both Soviet examples and materials printed by the German invaders in the occupied territories.
The exhibits were provided by the State Hermitage's academic library, the Department of the Manuscript and Document Repository, and the Department of Western European Fine Arts, as well as Georgy Vilinbakhov and the relatives of architect Ivan Metskhvarishvili who maintain his archives. This publication is intended for readers who are interested in the history of the Great Patriotic War and who keep the events of the heroic saga that ended 75 years ago close to their hearts.

THE GARDEN OF DIVERGING STONES AS A PLACE TO MEET THE PRESENT

ANDREY BLOKHIN AND GEORGY KUZNETSOV (RECYCLE GROUP) DISCUSS THE INSTALLATION, THE GARDEN OF DIVERGING STONES

The manifesto that was given to visitors to the installation stated: "Life is accelerating, the volume of information is growing, the density of events has reached its limit, and artificial intelligence, dispersed in a neural network, is striving for independence. There is no longer anything permanent. Everything is moving. And even a rock garden, a monument to eternity that is indifferent to transitory things, is evolving under the pressure of circumstances. The stones move from their long-inhabited places, leaving an intricate pattern in the sand. The meaning of the pattern reveals itself to everyone who manages to rise above the commotion of everyday life and synchronise the passage of their personal internal time with external time. The Garden of Diverging Stones is a place to meet the present."

In September 2020, Recycle Group (artists Andrey Blokhin and Georgy Kuznetsov) and Ultima Yandex Go showed their installation The Garden of Diverging Stones at the 8th Cosmoscow international contemporary art fair. The installation is an 8 x 8-metre square box on a flat surface, filled with five tons of white quartz sand. Eight large rocks move slowly across the sand, leaving tracks. This installation was a small island of calm in the large and bustling space of the fair. You could stop here, catch your breath, and devote a few moments to contemplating existence.

The manifesto that was given to visitors to the installation stated: The lucky guests who visited the fair in its first days were given part of the installation as a gift — vials of sand in cardboard boxes. The certificate attached to the vial reads: "This sand is a genuine part of Recycle Group's installation The Garden of Diverging Stones. Five minutes is the time that this sand takes to flow from one half of an hourglass to the other. Now you can use it as you see fit. Just like time, which from now on is completely in your power."

View of the exposition
"The Garden of divering stones"
al Cosmoscow Art Fair
2020

RECYCLE GROUP

Recycle Group is a Russian art group created by artists Andrey Blokhin and Georgy Kuznetsov in 2008. They won the Kandinsky prize in 2010. The group is ranked in the top 10 on the list of the top 100 young artists in Russia. From 2017 to the present, Recycle Group has been part of the 49ART Russian investment art list of leading contemporary artists under 50. Works by Recycle Group are exhibited in museums, galleries, and various cultural spaces in France, Italy, the UK, the USA, and Belgium. They also participate in major group projects, including the Venice Biennales of 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2017.

Andrey Blokhin and Georgy Kuznetsov (Recycle Group) discuss the installation The Garden of Diverging Stones

A Japanese rock garden is a symbol of constancy and permanence. In your installation the rocks move from place to place. What feeling should viewers experience when they observe this movement?
Mixed feelings from the realisation that the world is constantly changing.

The texts that accompany the installation contain a quote from Borges: "We are time, the indivisible river". How do you yourselves feel time — in the context of this installation and in general?
Time is a relative unit of measurement invented by humans. On the scale of the universe, everything is completely different. We are interested in recording moments that pass quickly.

Do you think the changes that modern technologies make to our consciousness can be seen as a continuation of the evolutionary process? What will replace the species of Homo sapiens?
Of course it can be seen as evolution. The next species is Homo virtualis.

Artificial intelligence plays an increasingly important role in the world around us. The modes of transportation we are used to will soon be replaced by cars, ships, and trains that are controlled by artificial intelligence. Do you think that artificial intelligence will be able to replace the people who work in the creative professions: artists, critics, journalists?
Not yet, but it may one day. The profession of artist provides a critical view of the world in different contexts: if we can ever teach this to a machine, it will be a great achievement.

How did your cooperation with Ultima Yandex Go come about?
Our friends who work at Ultima Yandex Go contacted us and asked us to come up with an installation for Cosmoscow. We like working with growing, cutting-edge companies, especially ones that were involved in the creation of the Russian internet. As our creative work is directly linked with the latest technologies, we were eager to work together.

View of the exposition
"The Garden of divering stones"
at Cosmoscow Art Fair
2020

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