



# Romanov News Новости Романовых

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***The Small Throne Room in Hermitage (Winter Palace), St. Petersburg***



## The Small Throne Room in Hermitage opened after restoration

On 9 of December 2015, during the 'Days of the Hermitage' - its 251 years anniversary - took place the ceremony of opening the Peter the Great (Small Throne) Room after the restoration.



Mikhail Borisovich Piotrovsky, General Director of the State Hermitage, Svetlana Borisovna Adaksin, Deputy General Director and Chief Curator of the State Hermitage, Tatyana Alexandrovna Baranova, head of the Department for Scientific Restoration and Conservation, staff of the Department for Scientific Restoration and Conservation and Guillaume Verzier, owner of the Prelle factory participated in the ceremony.

In his introduction Mikhail Borisovich said: "We are very pleased to be friends with the firm Prelle, which like the Hermitage as a symbol of historical continuity. We welcome Monsieur Guillaume Verzier, who has brought priceless materials kept in the Prelle company archives. We thank everyone who made this remarkable opening possible! Above all, the golden hands of our restorers!"





In turn, Guillaume Verzier thanked the Director and staff of the museum for the opportunity to become involved in the restoration of the Small Throne Room. “It is a great honor for the Prelle factory to reproduce the velvet just as it was made 150 years ago,” he said, “in the very same conditions, in the very same workshops that were used in 1856.”

It is precisely the fabric finish of the Peter the Great Hall which stands out for its exceptional sumptuousness and attracts particular attention: around the whole room – on the walls lined with red Lyons velvet, in the gilded décor of the frieze, in the painting on the vaults – are Russian coats-of-arms, crowns and wreaths of glory. At the start of the restoration work, the velvet, the woven eagles and the needlework were covered in a dense layer of soiling. The silk backing of the velvet was very fragile with numerous cuts. The metal threads in the needlework and eagles were strongly oxidized and blackened. The embroidery had much damage, losses of threads and spangles. Members of the staff of the Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Fabrics and Water-Soluble Paintings under the leadership of Marina Denisova carried out restoration of all the embroidered velvet panels.

All the panels were taken off the walls of the room. The eagles and goldwork pieces were removed from the old velvet and cleaned. All the parts were transferred to new velvet in strict accordance with their historical position. The completely ruined original velvet of the wall panels and the upholstery of the throne were replaced with new French silk velvet made at the Prelle factory in Lyons, the successor to the original manufacturers Le Mire père & fils. Astonishingly, a reference sample for a wall panel was preserved in the factory archive, making it possible to recreate precisely the original color of the lining of the room and also the height and density of the pile on the velvet.



During the implementation of the project for the restoration of the fabric décor in the Peter the Great Hall, lost elements of the decoration were recreated in accordance with 19th-century archive descriptions. The window drapes and shades were made anew. In the State Hermitage’s Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Fabrics and Water-Soluble Paintings specialists embroidered three valances for the windows, adhering to all the technical characteristics of the original 19th-century needlework. The goldwork décor executed with modern gold thread gives visitors an impression of the original brilliance and color scheme of the Small Throne Room.

The work of removing the panels and restoring their wooden parts, making good losses and partially replacing the fillings, was carried out by staff from the Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Furniture (headed by Vladimir Gradov). Specialists from the same laboratory carried out the restoration of the throne and produced the gilded pieces. They then performed the final part of the project – installing the panels and hangings, and covering the dais with cloth.

Cleaning of the goldwork décor, lace, cords, braids, beads and upholstery tacks was performed using a laser by Igor Malkiel, head of the Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Precious Metals. The laser was able to remove harmlessly tin, copper and iron oxides and to vaporize built-up organic compounds that it would have been impossible to get rid of using traditional chemical reagents. The silver works of applied art that adorn the room – sconces, torchères, candelabra and console tables – have been



restored. The staff of the Laboratory for the Scientific Restoration of Precious Metals recreated six lost gilded curtain holders.



The present work on the restoration of the Peter the Great Hall began in 2012 and was carried out by the Department for Scientific Restoration and Conservation with the participation of the company Muzeinye Tekhnologii ("Museum Technologies") of the Department of Restoration and Repairs, under the architectural supervision of Liudmila Akmen, head of the Sector for Scientific Restoration in the Department of the History and Restoration of Architectural Monuments.

Video - <http://www.ntv.ru/novosti/1199858/>





## "Levitsky 'Light-Painting' Studio. Early Russian Photography in the Collection of the State Hermitage Museum "

December 10, 2015 Picket Hall opened the exhibition "Levitsky 'Light-Painting' Studio. Early Russian Photography in the Collection of the State Hermitage Museum."

Following on the exhibition "The Age of Daguerreotype" that was held successfully in 2011–12, "Early Russian Photography" presents the history of the emergence of photographic art in this country.

The exhibition features 87 works produced in one of the most famous and successful ateliers in St Petersburg "Levitsky's Light-Painting" (Svetopis') that was opened in 1849 by the amateur photographer Sergei Lvovich Levitsky. The pictures on display at the exhibition were created in his studio between 1856 and 1859 and clearly demonstrate the search for a new sort of image that characterized that period in Levitsky's creative career. They introduce visitors to the subtleties of artistic cropping, retouching and a variety of methods of finishing prints.



*A group portrait of Grand Duke Nicholas Alexandrovich, Duke Nicholas Leuchtenberg, O.B. Richter, Grand Duke Alexander Alexandrovich and unknown. 1858 , on albumin paper.*

*Note the atelier's name on the bottom-right "Light-painting of Levitsky".*

СВЕТОПИСЬ ЛЕВИЦКАГО.

The exhibits include both examples of the everyday products of the studio and unique prints created by the photographer for the Imperial collection. At the same time many of them are splendid examples of portrait photography and can stand comparison the best works of Russian painting or graphic art in the mid-19th century.



The present exhibition, the first to present the works of the "patriarch of photography" from the collection of this State Hermitage in such quantity, aims not only to acquaint visitors with one of the most striking periods of his career, but also to show the first steps of the collodion wet plate process in Russia. The experiments that practitioners began in the 1840s and continued in the following decade marked what Levitsky justly described as the time of "photographic alchemy", the period of very active experimentation in this field.

Today it is hard to imagine the difficulties that early professionals encountered in their work, beginning with organizing the shooting process, exposing and developing the image and ending with printing and mounting the pictures. To this end the exhibition also includes prints that graphically demonstrate the complexities of a transitional period and bring out the hand-made character of the products.





*Portrait of Princess E. B. Galitzine. 1858, on salted paper.*

A considerable portion of the portraits included in the exhibition come from an album that belonged to Empress Maria Alexandrovna. Alexander II's wife's serious enthusiasm for this new art form facilitated the appearance of an extremely rich collection of photographs from both Russia and Western Europe. She gave preference to the most outstanding practitioners and was convinced that Levitsky occupied a special place among them. From the very outset, he was entrusted not only with the creation of family portraits but also with providing his own works to expand the artistic section of her collection. The photographer produced these prints to a commission from Maria Alexandrovna, who wanted to create a unique portrait collection from the works produced by Levitsky over the period 1856–58. The album contained pictures recording the Empress's family and also members of her close circle to whom she was bound by years of friendship and deep personal devotion. A large portion of the portraits can be numbered among the finest examples of early Russian photography. All the prints were made on salted paper and mounted in one in the same way that was characteristic of Levitsky studio in that period.

Separate mention should be made of the photographic prints of a new type – the carte de visite – also presented in the exhibition. The new format (10 × 6 cm) that was patented in November 1854 by the flourishing French photographer André Adolphe-Eugène Disdéri became the most sought-after and remained so for a period of more than 10 years. The essence of the invention was that one and the same sheet of glass was used to take four, six or eight pictures. Such “visiting cards” make up the largest part of the legacy of Levitsky's studio in the 1850s as they were produced, without exaggeration, in runs of thousands. The collection of the State Hermitage alone contains around 300 examples, the most interesting of which from an artistic and technical viewpoint are included in the exhibition.

Notable within the exhibition is a series of photographs showing Tsesarevich Nikolai Alexandrovich in the company of his friends and mentors. The shots differ from traditional group and single portraits in the originality of the idea and the compositional and technical approaches associated with it. The presentation is based on the ball game jeu de paume, which had been introduced to Russia back in the time of Catherine the Great and remained an elite pastime. In the Imperial family Grand Duke Nikolai Alexandrovich, the heir to the throne, was a keen player. It was his fascination with the game that served as the occasion for the unusual shoot in Levitsky studio. All the pictures in this series testify to Levitsky's creative approach to the photographic process.

This manifested itself most strikingly in the portrait of Otto von Richter, the Grand Duke's mentor. The composition of the picture is carefully thought out with the subject placed in the pose of a player returning a shot. This is when one notices the matter of focus, which is not very obvious at first sight. The flying ball looks slightly larger and more distinct than its fellows scattered across the floor. Its outline, moreover, is fairly sharp with a clearly evident play of light and shade.

This prompts the thought that here Levitsky made use of a technical stratagem he knew that allowed him to create the illusion of an object floating in the air. A drop of liquid was probably applied to the glass negative making it possible to add the imitation of a perfectly regular three-dimensional object to the print. Levitsky made virtuoso use of such photographic tricks in his work. They were, one might say, his foible.





The exhibition “Levitsky ‘Light-Painting’ Studio. Early Russian Photography in the Collection of the State Hermitage Museum” enables visitors to look at the history of Russian photography in the 19th century through the prism of time, avoiding our customary vision of photography shaped by contemporary photographic art with its inherent slogan of the instantaneous snapshot and completely different aesthetic attitudes.

The author of the concept and curator of the exhibition is Natalya Yuryevna Avetian, Candidate of Art Studies, senior researcher and curator of the photography fund in the State Hermitage’s Department of the History of Russian Culture. The State Hermitage publishing house has produced an illustrated scholarly catalogue for the exhibition.

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### **Catherine the Great and Stanisław August: Two Enlightened Monarchs**

On 7<sup>th</sup> of December, Russian Orthodox St. Catherine’s Day, the exhibition “Catherine the Great and Stanisław August: Two Enlightened Monarchs” opened in the Nicholas Hall of the Winter Palace, featuring more than 150 works of fine and applied art from the collections of the State Hermitage, the Royal Łazienki Museum, the State Russian Museum, the State Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts, the Research Museum of the Russian Academy of Arts and the State Museum of the History of Religion.



The exhibition aims to inform visitors about the collecting activities of the two monarchs and to compare their collections.

It is possible to find much in common between Catherine II and Stanisław August: both were brought up on the works of French writers and philosophers, had a love of literature, fine art and architecture and sought to bring enlightenment to their subjects. Stanisław August patronized scholars, artists and performing artists, including those he invited from Italy (Marcello Bacciarelli, Bernardo Bellotto, Tommaso Righi) and France (Jean-Pierre Norblin, André-Jean Lebrun). The King’s representatives and agents commissioned and purchased works of art in Italy, France and Holland, quite often competing in



this with the envoys of Catherine II, who at that same time were acquiring paintings for the Hermitage. For that reason, the similarity between the collections should come as no surprise.

Although Stanisław August lacked the financial means of Catherine II, he did manage to put together a large collection of works of art. By 1795 the manuscript catalogue of his picture gallery contained almost 2,500 works of various European schools, only slightly fewer in number than the paintings in the Hermitage. Stanisław August was unable to buy whole collections, such as those that had belonged to Crozat or Walpole, but he sought to make up for that by having a good selection of works.

The Italian school was represented by 275 paintings. While those attributed to Leonardo, Raphael, Correggio and Giorgione were most likely copies or the works of pupils, the names of 17th-century masters mentioned in the catalogue look entirely convincing (Annibale Carracci, Guercino, Sassoferrato, Andrea Sacchi, Carlo Maratta, Giuseppe Maria Crespi and others).

Among the 225 Dutch paintings there are mentions of works by Hendrick Goltzius, Gerard van Honthorst, Jan Steen and Gabriel Metsu. Modern scholars acknowledge Rembrandt's authorship of three painting that were once in the royal collection, including the celebrated "Polish Rider" (now in the Frick Collection, New York).



132 paintings were allotted to the Flemish school. Here the list included pictures by Jan Breughel, Van Dyck, Jordaens and David Teniers. Twenty-two works were associated one way or another with the name of Rubens, although only four of them were attributed to the master himself.

Among the 113 works by German artists, particular mention should be made of 25 paintings by Christian Wilhelm Ernst Dietrich, who is also strongly represented in the Hermitage collection. Among the collection of French paintings, 18th-century artists predominated, including the King's contemporaries – Boucher, Greuze, Fragonard. Like Catherine II, the Polish King had a high opinion of the art of his own time. The 1795 catalogue included works by Pompeo Batoni, Giovanni Paolo Panini, Angelica Kauffman and Dietrich, who has already been mentioned. Artists in France who worked on special commissions for Stanisław August included Louis Lagrenée, Joseph-Marie Vien, Claude Joseph Vernet and Hubert Robert, all of whom were popular with art connoisseurs in St Petersburg as well.



Despite the losses natural over a 250-year history, Catherine II's picture gallery has in the main survived to this day. Stanisław August's collection had a less happy fate, although at present it is possible to identify some 400 paintings from it. The King's collection was broken up even before his death. He sold or presented over 40 paintings to Russians in St Petersburg. In October 1798, pictures from his collection were sold at a posthumous auction in the Russian capital. In time, some of those works came into the Hermitage by various routes. Stanisław August's chief heir was his nephew, Józef Poniatowski. Then the collection passed to Józef's sister, Maria Teresa Tyszkiewicz, who sold the residence in the Łazienki Park to Tsar Alexander I together with paintings, sculpture and applied art. Additionally, 36 paintings from her collection were acquired by Kazimierz Rzewuski. As recently as 1994, his heirs presented 12 paintings to the royal castle in Warsaw (including two Rembrandts). Finally, the remnants of Stanisław August's picture gallery were bought up in 1821 by someone named Antonio Fuzi.

In 1895, Andrei Somov, the Hermitage's senior curator of paintings, engravings and drawings, who compiled a catalogue of the paintings in the Łazienki Palace, rated the collection highly and commented that at least 22 paintings could take their place "in any of the museums of first rank in Europe". The result was a decision to transfer to the Hermitage five "particularly remarkable works", including Fragonard's *Stolen Kiss*. At the same time paintings from the Hermitage were sent to the Łazienki Palace. In 1915 the pictures from the Łazienki collection were removed to Russia due to the military situation and the capture of Warsaw by German troops. Under the 1922 Treaty of Riga, they were either returned to Warsaw or else the Polish side was offered a substitute of equal value. As a result, the Hermitage and the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow now possess over 20 paintings that were once in Stanisław August's collection. Seven paintings kindly provided by the Royal Łazienki Museum in Warsaw enhance the impression of the royal collection. For comparison works from the Hermitage are also on display. These were selected with the aim of showing the similar tastes in art of Catherine II and Stanisław August.



A few words should also be said about the sculpture collections of the Empress and the King. Catherine's collection included works by Jean-Antoine Houdon and Marie-Anne Collot. In the last years of her life, the Empress developed an interest in ancient sculpture, as evidenced by her purchase of the large collection that John Lyde Browne has assembled in Wimbledon. Catherine II also strove to place commissions with Russian sculptors, Academy graduates such as Fedot Shubin and Mikhail Kozlovsky.

Stanisław August assembled in the Łazienki Palace a large collection of casts from famous sculptures of Antiquity and the Modern Era. These included, for example, a plaster statue of Voltaire seated (similar to the marble one in the Hermitage). Today this collection has been restored and is again open for viewing. Individual works in marble were commissioned from Houdon, including a bust of Alexander the Great now kept in the royal castle. The King also invited sculptors from Italy, notably Tommaso Righi and Giacomo Monaldi. It was in Rome, too, that André Lebrun was taken into his service as "first sculptor". A number of craftsmen worked on commissions from Stanisław August in Italy: Carlo Albacini, Giuseppe Angelini and Antonio d'Este.

Stanisław August brought and presented to Paul I two monumental sculptural groups by Pietro Ceccardo Staggi on subjects from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. These are still in the Hermitage, although



not included in the exhibition due to their great weight: Prometheus and the First Man are in the Jordan Gallery and Pygmalion and Galatea - in the Gallery of the History of Ancient Painting.



For the exhibition the State Hermitage Publishing House has produced an illustrated scholarly catalogue. The exhibition curator is Sergei Olegovich Androsov, Doctor of Art Studies, head of the State Hermitage's Department of Western European Fine Art.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/145479/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/145479/)

### **Faberge and the Great War**

On 29 of December on the third floor of the General Staff Building State Hermitage Museum opened two permanent exhibition rooms in memory of Carl Faberge and one temporary room with the exhibition - "Faberge and the Great War".

In the rooms of the permanent exhibition one can see many precious objects, among which there is so called Easter egg clock "Rothschild". President Vladimir Putin presented it to the Hermitage for its 250th anniversary a year ago. In total, the two rooms displays 110 subjects, among them - the silver clock, silver wedding gift to Emperor Alexander III and Empress Maria Fedorovna (also gifted to Hermitage by Putin), service plates of rock crystal, objects of dinner sets, vases, cigarette cases, and other luxury objects.







The temporary exhibition "Faberge and the Great War" shows a collection of 43 items provided by the Moscow ZAO "Russian National Museum."

On the eve of 1914 about 600 people were employed in the workshops of Faberge. The outbreak of the First World War led to a reduction in the production of precious art, but the company adapted the workshops to the needs of wartime and began to make products for the front.

The exhibition shows different kinds of such products - copper and brass samovars, field kettles, pots and sinks, lighters and cups. The firm made syringes and containers for sterilization.



A pan for sterilizing syringes presented at the exhibition is of great historical value. It is labeled "Infirmary named after Heir Grand Duke Alexei Nicholaevich in the Winter Palace", with the monogram of Empress Alexandra Feodorovna and the Grand Duchesses Olga and Tatiana, who served as nurses in the hospital established in the state rooms of the Winter Palace. Another rare item is a basin with the inscription "The field military hospital train № 143 in the name of Her Imperial Majesty Empress Alexandra Feodorovna."



After receiving military orders the Faberge workshops began to produce shock and remote handset, grenades, and shells. Faberge Moscow factory was renamed to the Moscow Mechanical Plant. Faberge reported that "during the war I opened a mechanical plant, which employs about 600 people, employed exclusively to work related to the defense of the state, and at the present time, the company has already finished the first order for 6.5 million pieces of hand grenades, of which is attached herewith a notarized copy of a certificate of the Central Military-Industrial Committee of the number 4758".



On 23 of March 1917 Alexander Kerensky wrote in a letter to the Minister of Justice, that his "factory accepts a large order of the Main Artillery Directorate for 2 000 000 artillery brass bushings type 1915". The military department repeatedly asked for products from Faberge, due to their accuracy and thoroughness of manufacture.



Video - <http://www.ntv.ru/novosti/1589084/>

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## The Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria burial-case continues

### Tomb of Alexander III will be restored in its original form

1 December. Pravmir - Restorers began to work on the restoration project of the tomb of Emperor Alexander III in the Peter and Paul Cathedral in St. Petersburg.

Work began after the exhumation of the remains of Alexander III, conducted in the framework of a criminal investigation of the murder of the family of Nicholas II and the identification of the remains of the last Russian Tsar.

"Now, after all the necessary procedures related to the exhumation of the remains of Alexander III, in front of the museum there is the task to restore the tomb of Emperor. Today it was decided to start the restoration project " - said an employee of the State Museum of History of St. Petersburg. According to preliminary estimates of experts, the process of rebuilding the historic tombs will take time. Many elements of this monument are unique.



To recreate exactly headstone of Emperor' grave, museum staff and restorers closely followed the process of opening the tomb.

"The tomb, first, unique, and secondly, not acquainted. There's a unique brick, with crosses, lime ligament arches. How all this was done, now nobody knows, " - said the former museum director Alexander Tass Kolyakin.

Experts suggest that for the restoration project of the tomb of Alexander III could be used documents and drawings produced by surviving in 1994 opening of the tomb of the Grand Duke George Alexandrovich, brother of Nicholas II. But they cannot fully serve as a model for restoration work because the tomb of Emperor Alexander III was created differently.

Currently, the place, where it will be restored, is fenced, the rest of the room and Paul Cathedral exhibits available to visitors and worshipers.

### "The family of Nicholas II survived" - the Russian Orthodox Church deals with the main mystery of the Romanovs

10 Dec. MK (Shorten version in English - for full version see here

<http://www.mk.ru/social/2015/12/10/semya-nikolaya-ii-vyzhila-rpc-zanyalas-glavnoy-taynoy-romanovkh.html> ).

Daughter and wife of Nicholas II, Alexandra Feodorovna was not shot and survived to an old age, the body of the Emperor dissolved in acid and splashed in the river, and those buried in the Porosenkov ravine, where the remains of the royal family were found - in fact a fake created by Stalin. Russian Orthodox Church is ready to consider seriously all these versions not to recognize the authenticity of the remains of the Romanovs.

One mystery in the "Tsar case" is solved: the results of the exhumation of Alexander III conclusively assert that there had not been penetration into the tomb of the Emperor. Earlier, representatives of the



Russian Orthodox Church expressed concern that the Royal tombs were opened during the Soviet era, and the dust is in an "undue state."

If this version was confirmed, the Patriarchate appeared to cast doubt on the remains belonging to Alexander III and, moreover, to put the question on the exhumation of the remaining Romanov, buried in the Peter and Paul Cathedral in St. Petersburg.

In this case, the final end of the death of Nicholas II and his family would be lost in the immeasurable distances.

However, assuming that the ending is close, it would be also too optimistic. Indeed, among the studies to establish the relationships of the "Yekaterinburg remains" the Patriarchate does not consider most important the work of geneticists and historical examination.

Meanwhile acquainted with the arguments of historians and trusted church authorities, it casts doubt on the facts and in this case it will never come to an end.



*Academician Veniamin Alexeyev, Bishop Tikhon (Shevkunov) and chairman of the Synodal Information Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, Vladimir Legoyda.*

Of course, it would be an exaggeration to say that the Russian Orthodox Church is ready to subscribe to every word of Academician Veniamin Alexeev. However, their approving attitude to Alekseev "search for truth" can be seen, as they say, by the naked eye.

"We are convinced that the questions he (Alekseev) puts - are serious questions, and cannot be ignored - says the chairman of the Synodal Information Department of the Moscow Patriarchate, Vladimir Legoyda. - We cannot reduce everything only to the genetic expertise. Historical, anthropological expertise - it is also extremely important ... we believe we must take into account all existing versions."

But if the question is, exactly what is the "Tsar case", it has very few chances to be completed in the foreseeable future. The number of "existing versions" that need verification can be stretched to infinity.

Anna Anderson was not alone. At least 34 women called themselves Grand Duchess Anastasia. "Clones" of the Tsarevich counts 81. History has also 53 self-styled Maria, 33 Tatiana, and 28 Olga. In addition, there are two foreign citizens posing as never existed daughters of the Emperor - Alexander and Irina. The latter was allegedly born after the revolution, in exile in Tobolsk, and was with the consent of the Soviet government forwarded abroad.

In total there are at least 230 impostors. This list is not complete: but includes more or less well-known characters.

"Now we do not exclude any version," - said Vladimir Legoyda. If you understand the words of the church administrator literally (well, how else?), then it is necessary to deal with each of these "heirs to the throne."

However, on the way of "search for truth", there is one significant obstacle - the decision of the ROC Council of Bishops, held in August 2000.

The "Council Acts" speaks of "martyrdom" of all seven "in Yekaterinburg on the night of 4 (17) July 1918". So, the authors of alternative versions are questioning not only investigators, but also the validity of the canonization of the majority of members of the Royal family. And then all the Romanovs.

Clearly, declaring eligibility "all versions" ROC risk incurring much greater reputational damage than there is the case with the consent of the investigation. The latter, at least in any point is not contrary to the decision of the canonization of the Royal family.

It is no secret that a large part of the hierarchy considers denial of the Tsar's remains less sin than the recognition that the Church made a mistake. However, some time ago, it seemed: ROC agreed to "honorable surrender". That is willing to revise the previous position, provided: a) the ceremony of reburial of the remains of Alexei and Maria, originally appointed by October 18 of the outgoing year, will be delayed; b) additional studies will be carried out, which this time will be attended by representatives of the Patriarchate. This would allow the church to save face and, last but not least, it would give time to prepare the appropriate flock to soothe the Orthodox community.

### **The remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria transferred to the custody of the Russian Orthodox Church**



23 December. TASS - "The Interagency Working Group on matters relating to the investigation and disposal of those in the State Archives of the Russian Federation remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria Romanov together with the Russian Orthodox Church have made a decision before the end of studies conducted in the framework of investigation of the criminal case number 252 / 404516- the death of 15 members of the Russian Imperial House in the Urals and in Petrograd in 1918-1919, to transfer the remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria Romanov from the State Archives of the Russian Federation to the custody of Russian Orthodox Church" - said Government statement.

It also noted that "now in the criminal case is the International Centre for Genetic epigenetic research Institute of General Genetics, Russian Academy of Sciences conducting comparative studies of the remains of Emperor Alexander III and the remains of Emperor Nicholas II". Researchers plan to obtain first results of these studies in January 2016.

"In parallel, at the request of the Russian Orthodox Church more historical and archival expertise of the circumstances of the death of the royal family is held," - noted the Government.

### **The whereabouts of the remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria**

23 December. Interfax - The Russian Orthodox Church has not yet disclosed the whereabouts of the remains of Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria, which are now in its protective custody, a Russian government spokesperson said.

"The presumed remains of the Tsarevich and the Grand Duchess were put in one of cathedrals of the Russian Orthodox Church," said Bishop Tikhon of Yegoryevsk, the secretary for the Patriarchal Culture Council and a member of special working group set up by the Russian Investigative Committee. He would not name the cathedral, saying only that it was not the Peter and Paul Cathedral in St. Petersburg, and that the presumed remains were at the church for storage only, not on display for worshippers.



## **Novospassky monastery got the alleged remains of the Imperial children**

24 December. RIA Novosti - The remains that may belong to two of the five children of Emperor Nicholas II - Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria, was transferred by the Investigative Committee of Russia to the metropolitan Novospassky Monastery. On the current location of the remains, which were used in genetic analysis, told the head of the State Archives of Russia Sergey Mironenko.

- "We passed the remains to the Investigative Committee, and they took them to the Novospassky monastery" - he said.



## **ROC: the timing of examination of the remains of members of the Romanov dynasty are not limited**

A new group of experts will conduct a comprehensive examination of the alleged remains of members of the Romanov dynasty - Tsarevich Alexei and Grand Duchess Maria. "No date, no hurry, no time limits are not set for the examination of "the alleged remains of members of the Romanov dynasty - Tsarevich and Grand Duchess Maria. This is a new, comprehensive examination. The time of the investigation is not limited, and it is possible that they may take "from two to three years", said Bishop Tikhon (Shevkunov), Vicar of the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia.

"We are very grateful to the leadership of the country today. His Holiness Patriarch was stated that no date, no hurry, no time limits are set for this examination," - said Shevkunov on the TV channel "Russia 24".

On the question of whether or not there are plans to coincide the examination to any date, as reported in the media, the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church said that earlier, in fact, "there were such attempts." "Now we have received assurances that as long as necessary to scientists - let it be two, three years - but these studies will be carried out professionally and in full," - said Shevkunov.

He explained that currently, with the blessing of Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill and after his request to the Investigative committee, a new group of experts is working. "This is the first comprehensive examination that will be carried out - a historical, anthropological and genetic" - said the bishop.



## **Talia the fearless motorcycle racer - and great-great-granddaughter of Tsar Nicholas I**

Olga Lunkova, Pravoslavie, 7 December (Translation by Dmitry Lapa)

I would like to open one of the little-known pages of the book of the imperial Romanov family, and to remember its descendant, who spent almost all her life in the USSR (as a class enemy) and post-Soviet Russia.



*Talia – Natalia Alexandrovna Iskander-Romanovskaya – Natalia Nikolaevna Androsova.*

I got acquainted with Talia (she asked me to call her by this affectionate form of the name “Natalia” during our first conversation) by telephone in the summer of 1996. We agreed to meet in her flat near the “Molodezhnaya” Moscow metro station. She waited for me near the entrance of her block of flats, sitting on a bench surrounded by two mongrels whom as she said, she fed and loved madly. The dogs playfully hung about, licking her hands and trying to reach her face. “They are my best friends,” said Talia, offering her cheek for the dogs’ kisses. “They are more faithful than people.”

When we were about to go to her flat, Talia, to my surprise, took her crutches and suggested: “Let’s walk up the stairs—for physical exercise. I like to walk this way.” And easily maneuvering with her crutches, she climbed the stairs to the sixth floor, to her one-room flat. By the way, she seldom locked her entrance door—only when she went away.

“Whom should I be afraid of?” Talia used to say. “Some people may install five door locks, but they will be robbed all the same. Anyway, there is nothing to steal in my apartment. Maybe they’ll kill me? I am not afraid. My life is going hand in hand with the Lord; I rely on Him in everything.

Talia did not allow me to call her by name and patronymic because she, born Princess Natalia Aleksandrovna Iskander, was for most of her life called Natalia Nikolaevna Androsova, under the patronymic and surname of her stepfather. And when she was recognized as heiress of the House of Romanov her surname became Iskander-Romanovskaya. Even under Stalin Talia began as far as possible to collect information on her ancestors, tying the broken threads of fate. “To be a granddaughter of the Grand Duke and great-great-granddaughter of Nicholas I—was a death sentence,” she related. “My mother was a very cautious person; life taught her lessons, and she never hinted that we were related to the

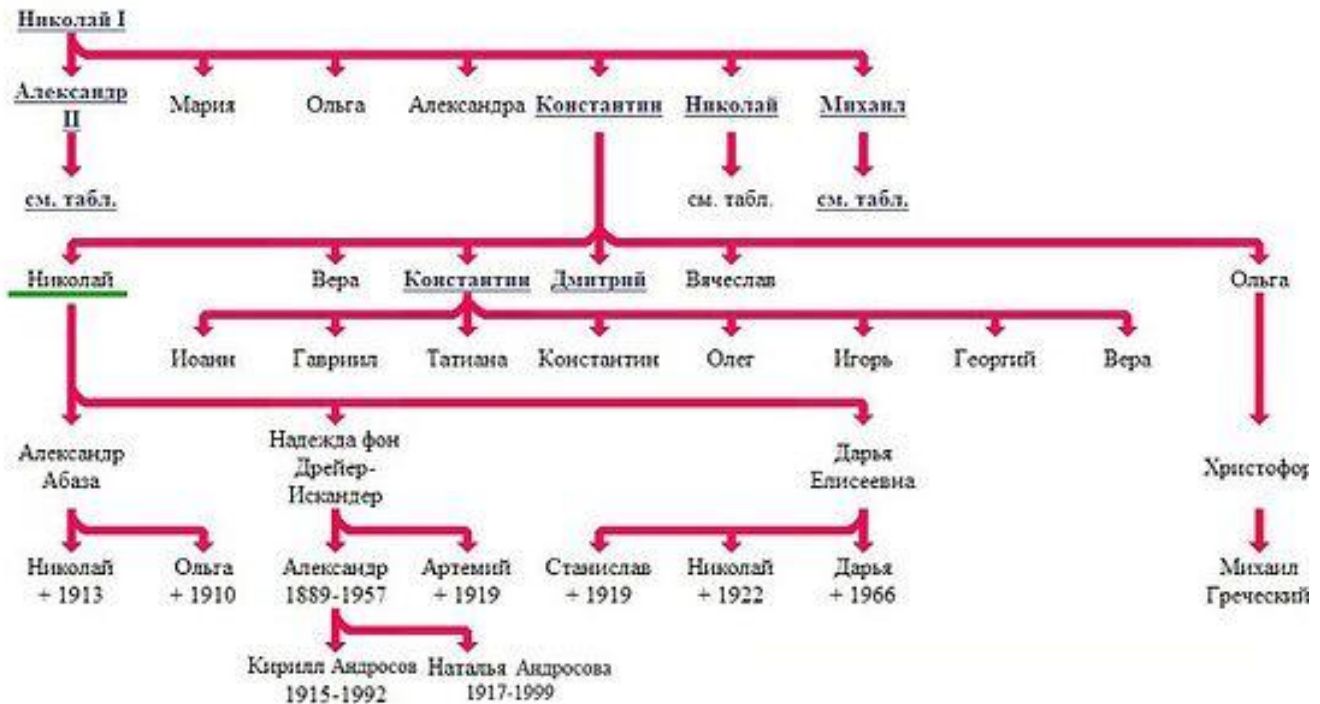


*Natalia Alexandrovna Iskander-Romanovskaya.*



Tsar. But some family photographs of the Romanovs always stood in our house—they were never hidden. I looked at them, knowing that they were our relatives, but nothing more. And when I grew up I learned who my ancestors were.

### Великие князья Константиновичи, их потомки



### Konstantinovichi Family Tree

During our first meeting, Talia briefly related to me the history of her lineage. Thus, one of the sons of Tsar Nicholas I, Grand Duke Constantine Nikolaevich (brother of Tsar Alexander II) - had three children: Grand Dukes Nicholas and Constantine, and daughter Olga (who later became Queen Olga of the Hellenes). The elder son, Nicholas, who was Talia's grandfather, was famous for his desperate fearlessness and reckless behavior. In 1873, as part of the Russian Expeditionary Corps under the command of General Skobelev, Nicholas as a colonel participated in the campaign against Khiva (a former khanate of Central Asia on the Amu Darya River: divided between the former Uzbek and Turkmen Soviet Socialist Republics in 1924) and was awarded with the Order of St. Vladimir of the third degree for personal courage.

Fascinated by Central Asia, he also got carried away with oriental studies, took part in work of the Russian Geographical Society, and insisted on organizing the Amu Darya expedition for examination of the newly annexed lands.

Nicholas was also thoughtlessly involved in temerarious love affairs. His romance with an American woman named Fanny Lear that lasted several years led to a quarrel with his parents. But the worse was still to come. It was said that for this American woman Nicholas stole and sold family treasures. And when diamonds disappeared from the mounting of an icon that had been given to Grand Duchess Alexandra Iosifovna by Emperor Nicholas I on her wedding day, Grand Duke Nicholas was publicly accused. Though there was no compelling evidence against him, Emperor Alexander II at once declared his nephew insane (in order to avoid a great scandal) and sent him to Orenburg in 1874.

Nicholas Konstantinovich again demonstrated his precariousness and penchant for reckless deeds by secretly marrying the daughter of the Orenburg police chief, Nadezhda Aleksandrovna von Dreyer in the winter of 1878. This morganatic marriage resulted in his loss of the grand-ducal title and the right of succession for all posterity. Nearly all the Romanovs condemned Nicholas.

Only his brother, Grand Duke Constantine Konstantinovich (a prominent poet, K.R.) did not support the imperial house members in this. "How long will this trying situation last, from which there is still no way out for poor Nicholas? Even the meekest person could be jolted out of a patient attitude, but Nicholas still has enough strength to endure his exile and moral prison," he wrote at that time. With the assistance of Konstantine Konstantinovich, Emperor Alexander III, who had then just ascended to the throne, allowed this morganatic marriage to be considered valid, but nevertheless sent Nicholas with his spouse to the newly conquered Tashkent - one of the remotest points of the Russian Empire at that time.

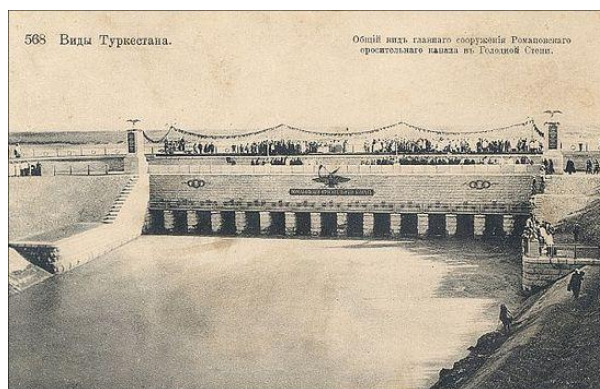


*Grand Duke Nicholas Konstantinovich Romanov, Talia's grandfather*



*Grand Duke Nicholas Konstantinovich with wife Nadezhda Aleksandrovna.*

First, "the Tashkent prince", Nicholas Konstantinovich, lived under the name of Colonel Volynsky, was involved in the construction of irrigation system in the barren steppe for which the grateful local inhabitants nicknamed him "Iskander", that is, "Great". This nickname, which became a surname, was inherited by Nicholas Konstantinovich's sons, Artemy and Alexander (Talia's father).



*General view of the Romanov irrigation channel in the barren steppe, built with funding from Nicholas Konstantinovich*

In 1900, under Nicholas II, by intercession of Queen Olga of the Hellenes (sister of Nicholas Konstantinovich) Artemy and Alexander Iskander were allowed to study in St. Petersburg. After the military school Alexander did military service in the capital and married a Polish woman named Olga Rogowska. They had two children: Kirill was born in 1915 and Natalia in February 1917. Family members tenderly called her Talia, or Talechka. When the Revolution was about to happen, the family moved far away to Tashkent, to their grandfathers palace. Duke Nicholas Konstantinovich became Talia's godfather. In 1918 he was executed by firing squad.





*The palace of Duke Nicholas Konstantinovich in Tashkent*

had tortured the family of Nicholas II in the Ipatyev House and thought, 'Oh my God! How could such young girls, the Grand Duchesses, have such great fortitude? They had to care for the wounded, to work in the yard... And they neither grumbled nor complained.'

After the beginning of the First World War, Talia's father went to the front "for the Faith, the Tsar, and Fatherland;" and when the civil war broke out he fought in the Crimea in General Vrangeli's army with whose remainder he moved to France in 1919. Like the majority of Russian emigres in Paris, he changed many jobs—as a driver, a night watchman, and a cook. And to the end of his days he did not know what became of his wife and children who had remained in USSR.

"I recall how father held me in his arms, and it was such inexpressible happiness," Talia recollected. "When I go to church, a similar thing sometimes happens during the service—as though I am dissolving in happiness, it is embracing me, like my father's arms, and my soul feels such peace. The thread between my me and my father was never broken, I always felt that he was somewhere praying for me, helping me in the most hopeless moments of my life."

Early in the 1920s, Talia's mother married Nicholas Androsov. He saved Natalia and Kirill, giving them his patronymic and surname. In 1922 the family moved from Tashkent to Moscow, where they lived in a communal apartment in Plyushchikha Street. Until the fourth grade Talia studied privately with two noblewomen who were sisters, with etiquette and foreign languages among her subjects.

But this relatively happy life did not last long: a neighbor Bolshevik informed on the "disloyal" tenants to the NKVD, and the Androsovs had to hastily move to a basement on Arbat Street, where Talia lived until 1970.

*Alexander Nicholaevich Iskander,  
Talia's father*



"I always felt connected with my roots," Talia used to say. "This can be described as 'the voice of blood'. I would not say that I used to stick up my nose, but there was something inside me that made me 'hold my head high'. And I did. I never stooped, under any circumstances. Now I realize that that was not always to my benefit; maybe at times I should have pretended, I should have made up to someone and shed a tear. But I always held up my head and smiled, even at time when I could have screamed in pain. I read how the Bolsheviks



*Talia with her elder brother, Kirill*

"People from the KGB were regularly interested in me: more than once they took me to Lubyanka (headquarters) and asked me to collaborate. But I answered them firmly that I did not know how to 'squeal' on others and had no desire to learn," she recalled.

After seven years of school Talia realized that there was no way open for her to go to any college or institute, so she had only occasional earnings to make ends meet, working as a draftswoman or a typist. But Talia found a real outlet for her impetuous temperament in the "Dynamo" sports club.

"I always was an adventurous person; I loved speed, galloping on horseback. I went to a motorcycle club, tried new motorcycles," she recounted. "I inherited this fearless character from my father. As a club member I once took part in a sports parade on Red Square. I imitated a statue of discus thrower, standing immovably on a giant platform, and floated past the mausoleum tribunal where Stalin stood. What did I feel at that time? Certainly not pride. I thought: all of us are walking under God—leaders, princess, and workers, and we don't know what will happen to each of us in the future. Yesterday the Tsar was overthrown, and maybe tomorrow the communists will suffer the same fate. Of course, I thought it without malevolence.

After 1939 Talia worked on the "Motorcycle races on the vertical wall" amusement park of Moscow's Gorky Park, and toured across the country with the circus. Her nomadic life saved her from the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs. In 1941 she worked as a chauffeur: she drove one functionary on 'Lincoln', and when the latter was evacuated, she began driving a one-and-a-half-ton truck, delivering bread to the front line at daytime, and at nights transporting snow from the Alexander Gardens public park for construction of defence barriers near Moscow. In her "spare time" she would put out "lighters" on Arbat Street roofs. After the war, Talia returned to her amusement park.

"I again rode a motorbike on 'the wall of death', - Talia related. "Many times I fell down; I hurt and bruised myself so badly that doctors predicted that I would walk on crutches for the rest of my life. But I rode the motorbike again and again. And I never allowed myself to grumble and bemoan my fate. Then, in the 1940s, I lost one knee: I tumbled down together with my motorbike from a great height. I looked, and saw bones jutting out of my knee. 'Take me to hospital,' I said then. But a year later I rode on 'the wall of death' again. And so it continued until 1967.



*Natalia Androsova*



The beautiful motorcycle racer inspired poets and writers, many of whom dedicated their work to her - Andrei Voznesensky, Yury Kazakov, Yury Nagibin, Alexander Galich...

In the 1950s Talia married the film director Nikolai Vladimirovich Dostal. He had become a widower shortly before, with two small children on his hands—Vladimir and Nikolai. But her happy family life did not last long: in April 1959 Talia's husband died while shooting a film. Talia never remarried, but brought up her stepsons—both of whom, like their father, later became film directors.

During the Khrushchev 'thaw', Soviet newspapers wrote much about the fearless motorcycle racer and, possibly, it was thanks to this fact that the widow of Talia's father from Paris recognized her. "She wrote me a letter that was passed to me in Moscow through acquaintances," Talia recounts. "Thus I learned that my father had died in 1957 and had been buried at a graveyard in Nice. For some time she and I exchanged letters; she was a very kind-hearted Russian woman, and once sent me several stories written by my father. As I read them, it seemed as though I was speaking with him, as if he were alive. I feel we are related not only by blood, but also in spirit. I believe that he and I would have been close friends."



*Natalia Alexandrovna Iskander-Romanovskaya*

I concluded my earlier publication on Talia with the question, "What do you dream of?" "Of visiting my father's grave," she replied simply. "I ask the Lord neither for health (the health I have now will suffice) nor for a larger flat—I can hardly walk in my own flat with crutches. Why would I do with a palace? But my heart aches for my father."

It was a "boomerang" thrown to the world; and, like American Indian hunters' weapons, it returned with game. But it is not my merit. God provided that a certain businessman called up the editorial office and informed that he was willing to sponsor a trip for Talia with an escort to France for a week. That news touched me so much that it nearly made me weep for joy. But Talia did not bat an eyelid, when I came to let her know about that. She expressed no excitement at all, only crossed herself.

"Well, then let's go!" she instantly decided.

"Excuse me, Talechka, are you sure that your health will not give you trouble?" I expressed my doubts, not without reason, since Talia was then eighty years old.

"The Lord will never fail me! I have a great confidence in Him," and her face lit up with joy.

And, putting herself in God's Hands, Talia set off on that week-long journey - not a week-long trip, but, rather a journey that embraced all her life.

Talia did not share with me the agitation common in such moments, and did not expose the whole range of her emotions, as she sat down on a bench near her father's grave. I saw her face at that moment—so bright and peaceful. And not a single tear. She carefully wrapped a handful of earth from her father's grave in a kerchief and with a sense of having fulfilled her duty she came back home.

"Well, there you are. I have fulfilled everything," said then Talia, meaning that for her there was nothing left to do in this life.



*The grave of Prince Alexander Nicholaevich Iskander*

Talia passed away in July 1999. At that time I was expecting a baby and, to be honest, avoided any communication. I blame myself for not having given her enough attention in the final months of her life. What can be easier: to call up, to ask how things are going, support by kind words... She was very lonely and so much needed sympathy. Having been disillusioned by human-beings on more than one occasion, she fell in love with dogs. I repent. And already for the fifteenth year, when I submit commemorative lists for the departed at the Liturgy, I always write in block letters, 'for Natalia'. - But in my mind repeat, 'Talechka'.



*Natalia Androsova (Natalia Aleksandrovna Iskander-Romanovskaya).*

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#### Additional information:

Grand Duke Nicholas Konstantinovich died officially of pneumonia on 26 January 1918 (Thou there are rumors he was shot). He was buried in St George's Cathedral in Tashkent, but it was later demolished by the Soviet regime and the location of his grave is now unknown.

Grand Duke Nicholas married Nadezhda Alexandrovna von Dreyer (1861–1929), daughter of Orenburg police chief Alexander Gustavovich Dreyer and Sophia Ivanovna Opanovskaya, in 1882. Two children were born from this marriage:

- Artemi Nikolaevich, Prince Iskander (or Prince Romanovsky-Iskander) (1883–1919), killed in the Russian Civil War
- Prince Alexander Nikolaevich Iskander (15 November 1889 – 8 October 1935), married on 5 of May 1912 Olga Iosifovna Rogovskaya (1893–1962).

The couple had two children:

- Prince Kirill Alexandrovich Romanovsky-Iskander, adopted the name (via stepfather, Nicholas Androsov) Kirill Nikolaevich Androsov (5 December 1914 – 1992, Moscow)
- Princess Natalia Alexandrovna Romanovskaya-Iskander, adopted the name Natalya Nikolaevna Androsova (2 February 1917 – 1999, Moscow)

Alexander Nicholaievich and Olga were later divorced, and Alexander married Natalya Khanykova (30 December 1893 - 20 April 1982) in 1930. No children resulted from the latter marriage.



## Fabergé - Tsar's court jeweler and the connection to the Danish royal family



Exhibition period: May 12, 2016 to September 25, 2016

Koldinghus opens in May 2016 the doors to an exhibition of jewels art created by the Russian Tsar's court jeweler Peter Carl Fabergé. Through family connections to the Russian Tsar, jewelry, jeweled utensils and large official gifts from the Fabergé workshop was inherited through generations in the Danish royal family. The exhibition will show these rarely exhibited Fabergé objects, each with a unique history and which today still are used by the Danish royal family.

The exhibition "Fabergé - Tsar's court jeweler and the connection to the Danish royal family" presents about 100 objects with loans from members of the Danish royal family and in addition are lent objects from the Danish Royal Collection, in Amalienborg Museum.

Fabergé is best known for his astonishing and extravagant Easter eggs, which he delivered to the Russian tsar and his family from 1885 until the Russian Revolution in 1917. But the Fabergé workshop's work resulted in much more than eggs. Fabergé was able to seize the taste and with its attention to detail, his inventiveness and creativity he transformed the royal and imperial living rooms to adventurous treasure chambers. Oil lamps were small lifelike deer hooves and stomach belts with rubies and diamonds, and frames with family photos were surrounded by colorful enamel and foliage of silver and gold. At the show, the audience will have the opportunity to see both private jeweled utensils and official works that were created on the occasion of coronations, anniversaries or royal weddings.



"It is a great pleasure for me as the museum patron to open this exhibition on the Russian court jeweler Fabergé. As a lender to the exhibition, it is a particular pleasure to be able to share the stories that relate to the objects in a bigger setting. From my father, King Frederik IX., I and my sisters for example has nice frames and boxes that are created by Fabergé and inherited in the family through my grandmother Queen Alexandrine, whose mother was Grand Duchess Anastasia Mikhailovna of Russia. I see personally forward to experience the history of Fabergé and relations with the Russian imperial family and my own family unfolded and to see a number of objects together, which usually form part of private and official contexts separately" said HRH Princess Benedikte, who will open the exhibition on Koldinghus May 12, 2016.

Director of Koldinghus Museum Thomas C. Thulstrup said about the exhibition:

"At Koldinghus we are very proud to have the opportunity to present such a unique exhibition "Fabergé - Tsar's court jeweler and the connection to the

Danish royal family." The exhibition is intended primarily to give the audience an opportunity to get close to the details of the unparalleled craftsmanship and see for themselves how the Fabergé workshop in his jewelery art both embraced contemporary aesthetics, and creating an unworldly imagination in precious stones and metals. But in addition, it has also been the aim to let the exhibition through these breathtaking objects to convey the story of two related families: the Russian Imperial

Family and the Danish royal family. The objects are unique in their precious materials, admirable technique and ingenuity - but even more interesting is what we in the museum language call provenance: the objects' own history. In this exhibition we show not only museum pieces, some of these things are actually in use. A piece of jewelry that is passed down through generations, a frame with old family photos and a cigarette case, used for festive occasions, tells therefore also family and world history and demonstrates that these objects have both sentimental and cultural-historical value. The exhibition can only be realized because we have received crucial support and backing from the Crown and royal family members, Amalienborg Museum and a number of foundations and partners. The exhibition is part of the museum's strategic work with one hand to position the Museum of Koldinghus as a museum focusing on the silver- and goldsmith profession, and partly to position the museum internationally by disseminating the history of Koldinghus as a royal castle in a European context. "



### The history park "Russia - My History" was opened

December 29, 2015 the opening of the history park "Russia - My History" took place at the VDNH Exhibition Center in Moscow. The park was created on the basis of the great success in the past in Moscow's Manezh exhibitions of multimedia historical cycle "My History."

The History Park is located in the revived 57th pavilion of the Soviet Era. The expositions occupy more than 22, 000 square meters on two levels of the pavilion. The creators of the park - historians, artists, film surfers, designers, computer graphics - did everything to make Russian history move from the category of black-and-white textbook into a bright, exciting and at the same objective narration, so that every visitor feels involvement in the events of more than thousand years of history of the Fatherland. The main benefactor of the multimedia exhibitions of the historical cycle "My History" was made by the Foundation of St. Basil the Great.







In the beginning there are opened only exhibitions "Rurikovichi" and "The Romanovs." In April 2016, the exposure will open the part called "From the great shocks to the Great Victory", covering the period from 1914 to 1945. Exposition of the project devoted to the period from 1945 to 2000, is expected to be included in the history park in 2017.



The opening of the history park was attended by the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill and the Mayor of Moscow Sergey Sobyenin.

"I would like to inaugurate the exhibition here, dedicated to the history of our country. History it's not just science, history - it is an experience. The history - it is a philosophy of life. The history - it is the ideological cradle in which the national idea is born. Without this man cannot live, he loses his roots. Lose touch with the past, and therefore becomes unable to aspire to the future"- said the Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia Kirill.

"Your Holiness, your idea of creating such an exhibition, a museum's exhibition of Russian history, has become a unique humanitarian project. When Russian President Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin visited Manezh and looked at this unique exhibition, he gave instructions to find a permanent place, because they deserve it ... they now have their own house. In VDKH is created the country's largest museum and exhibition complex, which house an exhibition that traveled all over Russia", - said Sergey Sobyenin .

Video - 1) <http://www.tvc.ru/news/show/id/83749/>  
 2) [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146533](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146533)

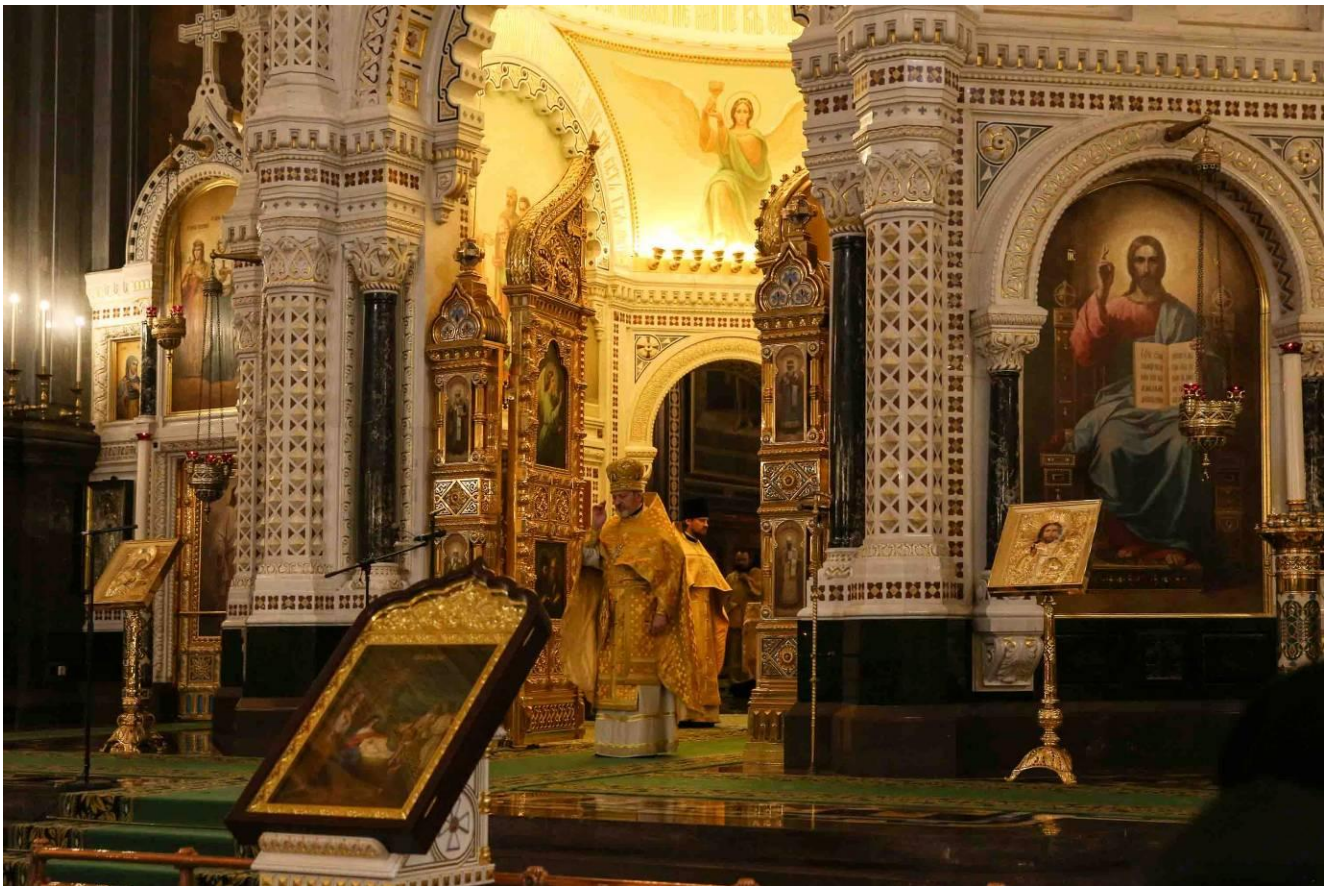
Site link - <http://myhistorypark.ru/>

## Divine Liturgy in memory of soldiers who gave their life for the Faith, Tsar and Fatherland in the Patriotic War of 1812



December 25, in the upper church of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior - the biggest memorial to the heroes in the Patriotic War of 1812, Divine Liturgy was held and the traditional solemn moleben in memory of soldiers who gave their life for the Faith, Tsar and Fatherland.

Archpriest Mikhail Ryazantsev led the service and Archpriest Alexander Ilyashenko, a member of the Synod department for cooperation with the armed forces and the clergy of the church concelebrated.



December 25, 2012, the Day of the Nativity of Christ, Emperor Alexander I the Blessed issued a manifesto "On bringing thanksgiving to the Lord God for the liberation of Russia from the invasion of the enemy."

December 25 Emperor in his second manifesto ordered: "In our capital city of Moscow to create a church in the name of Christ the Savior ... in preserving the eternal memory of unparalleled zeal, fidelity and love for Faith and Fatherland, with which in these difficult times extolled Russian people themselves, and to mark our gratitude to the Providence of God, who saved Russia from the threat of downfall." After the victorious completion of the war in Europe against Napoleon August 30, 1814 Emperor Alexander I the Blessed issued a decree of the Holy Synod in which commanded: "December 25, Christmas Day, will henceforth be a thanksgiving feast day in the church of Christmas of Savior Jesus Christ and the memory of deliverance of the Church and the Russian State from the invasion of Gauls, and twenty languages with them."



The Society of descendants of participants in the Patriotic War of 1812 had invited its members and all others to participate in the solemn prayer and pay tribute to our glorious ancestors and all Russian soldiers.

Among those attending were Vissarion Alyavdin, the chairman of the Society of descendants of participants in the Patriotic War of 1812, Alexey Olferyev, Lubov Slavolubova, Pavel Kutler, Vadim Konev, Ludmila and Paul Kulikovskiy.



*Vissarion Alyavdin, Alexey Olferyev, and Ludmila and Paul Kulikovskiy. Photos by Vadim Konev*

### ***Hermitage keeps traditions***

According to the established tradition, December 25, 2015, the day of the publication of the Manifesto "On the expulsion of the enemy from Russian territory", in the Great Church of the Winter Palace - the State Hermitage Museum, was the traditional solemn prayer.

The rector of Prince Vladimir's Cathedral and of the Church of the Savior Holy Face Archpriest Vladimir Sorokin served litany, and remembered the participants in the War of 1812: "Again we pray for

resting of souls of the departed servants of God Metropolitan Ambrose (Podobedov); Archpriest Paul (Krinsky); Emperor Alexander I, commanders and warriors: Michael (Kutuzov), Michael (Barklay de Tolly), Peter (Bagration), Peter (Wittgenstein), Alexander (Tormasov), Paul (Chichagova), Alexander (Balashov), Sergei (Vyazmitinova) Nicholas (Rumyantsev), Nicholas (Saltykov), Alexia (Gorchakov)... forgive them every transgression freestyle and also involuntary."



Then there was prayed with the proclamation of eternal memory, "In blissful repose Lord grant eternal rest, and the commanders of the soldiers, and all zealous faith and truth in a time of the invasion of the Gauls, and with them twenty language for faith and Fatherland his life laid and create to their eternal memory."



## Russian authorities asked to start a search for the remains of the Romanov dynasty in China

24 December. Interfax - Members of the public urged the Russian authorities to start a search for the remains of those killed by the Bolsheviks of members of the Romanov dynasty, whose remains may be in China.

"The push from the public to do everything to find those remains, I referred the matter to the apparatus of the government. It undoubtedly needs serious discussion" - said the head of the Synodal Department for Church and Society, Archpriest Vsevolod Chaplin.

According to the priest, "some excavations were carried out." "However, there are different versions of what happened to the remains, and where they now may be. So if it be the will of the two countries - China and Russia - the study could well continue. In any case, this question concerns a number of people, and not accidentally put members of the public in their appeals".

Alapaevsk Martyrs are members of the Romanov dynasty and those close to them who were executed by the Bolsheviks on the night of July 18, 1918, the following day after the massacre of the royal family, 18 km from the town Alapaevsk, at the Lower Selimskaja mine:

Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna, Grand Duke Sergei Mikhailovich, Prince Ioann Konstantinovich, Prince Konstantin Konstantinovich, Prince Igor Konstantinovich, Prince Vladimir Pavlovich Paley, Grand Duke Sergei's secretary, Feodor Remez and Varvara Yakovleva, a nun from the Grand Duchess's convent.



*Alapaevsk martyrs*



In October of the same year the remains were found, examined, washed and put in coffins. On October 18, the coffins were solemnly transferred to St. Sergius Cathedral in Alapayevsk and placed in the cathedral crypt, where they remained until July 1919, when on July 14, accompanied by Hegumen Seraphim and two novices all eight coffins left in a freight car by rail from Alapayevsk to Chita.

At the end of August all coffins were placed in the Holy Protection convent in the city of Chita. In March 1920 escorted by Hegumen Seraphim the eight coffins with the martyrs' bodies departed by rail from Chita for China. In mid-April of 1920 all eight coffins arrived in Beijing via Harbin. In Beijing there was an instruction forbidding bringing coffins with dead bodies into the city. The territory of the Russian Spiritual Mission in China was situated within the city wall, in the northeast border of the interior city territory. Therefore, the eight coffins with the bodies of martyrs were placed in the underground crypt of the St. Seraphim of Sarov chapel which was situated in the center of the RSMC cemetery, which was beyond the city wall to the north west of the RSMC territory.



In November of 1920 two coffins with the precious relics of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna and Nun Varvara Yakovleva were taken from the crypt and brought to Jerusalem. The other six coffins remained in the chapel's crypt on the mission's cemetery.

However, during the twentieth century, the remains of the six left, because of different circumstances they were moved four times, now their whereabouts are not known for sure. Now, at what was the northern gate of the fortress wall of Beijing, the Youth Lake Park is situated. It occupies an area of about 170 thousand square meters one third of which is a large artificial lake, and in the assume location of the St. Seraphim of Sarov chapel is a golf course.



## **Good bye, Lenin**

### **- the State Duma will consider a bill on the burial of the remains at Kremlin**

State Duma Deputy Ivan Sukharev (LDPR faction) took the initiative to revisit the issue of burial of Vladimir Lenin and transfer the "Kremlin remains" to one of the capital's cemeteries. The corresponding bill will be introduced in the lower house of parliament.

According to Sukharev, the purpose of the draft federal law is the necessary conditions for the creation and promotion of the new symbols of modern Russia, reflecting the historical stage of unity, awareness of national identity of Russians building a democratic state, free from the domination of ideology, whose symbol is the mausoleum of Lenin.

"Considering the Russian Federation as a modern civilized state cannot be considered an acceptable situation in which at the Red Square - the main square of the country - for many decades is the body of a deceased person which is not buried. The existence of the mausoleum of Lenin is also unacceptable because of the misery and deprivation, brought to our people and our state by this person, incalculable"- said the deputy.

In the explanatory memorandum emphasizes that many of the descendants of immigrants who wish to return to our country, so far unable to do so, identifying the mausoleum of the regime that has brought so much suffering to their families as the reason.

The initiative is supported by Sukharev colleagues in the party. According to Maxim Shingarkin, burial in the city center is not historically justified, since the Bolshevik government came to power by criminal means.

"Bolshevik revolution was essentially a crime against the Russian people. Now we live in a completely different country, but the characters are still in the center of the capital. We must once and for all put an end to this practice and to reconcile the red and white, burying the Bolshevik leaders in an Orthodox rite"- said Maxim Shingarkin.



The world community does not believe that Russia has changed, as long as Lenin's body rest in the mausoleum on Red Square, said LDPR leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky.

"Free the country from the yoke of red, return the historical name of all the cities, squares, streets. Expose the body of Lenin from the mausoleum, condemn the whole ideological Soviet regime, condemn them for what we now have to disentangle, all that they have done,"- said Zhirinovsky.

According to the MP, the mausoleum of Lenin inspires people to fear that sooner or later the Communists could return to power, and, therefore, "they all do not want to live." "The Kremlin did not realize that until Lenin lies, nor Europe, nor the majority of educated citizens of Russia do not believe that we - is another country", - the politician said.

Meanwhile, the government gave a negative review on the bill, citing a legal error. According to the report, the document is essentially a draft legal act of individual values and administrative nature and



not a federal bill, because it is not determined by the social relations for the regulation which requires the adoption of a normative legal act of higher legal force of repeated action.

"In addition, this bill incorrect raises the question of disposal of body of V.I. Ulyanov (Lenin), due to the fact that such a decision had already been taken at the meeting of the II Congress of Soviets of the USSR January 26, 1924 and therefore in the proposed legal act in fact it do not have to go to a funeral, but a reburial. Considering the above, the Government of the Russian Federation does not support the adoption of this bill". Despite the review, the bill is yet to be considered by the lower house of parliament.

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### **Ulyanovsk region opened a museum to Vasily Zuev - a Faberge jeweler**

The event was held on December 23 in Cherdakly. The director of the Cherdaklinsky Center for additional education of children Larissa Terekhina told that for 25 years he lived in Cherdakly, this talented man with a unique destiny.

"Our school has been studying the history of his native village, we have created a museum of local history, so we were looking for material on Zuev and turned to Valentin Skurlov. As it turned out, we met with the secretary of the Faberge Memorial Foundation, the research consultant on Faberge in the Russian department of auction house Christie's. He told us an amazing story of the life of our illustrious countryman" - explained the head of the institution and the organizer of the project.



During a year, the well-known local historian in the Ulyanovsk region, Nina Vasilieva in Cherdakly worked on a book about the artist who created more than 150 miniatures of the royal family. She found the descendants of Vasily Zuev and even his handwritten work, gathered a lot of unique material. The result of a year's work will be presented in a forum. There will be a presentation of the book about the life and work of Vasily Zuev, and a meeting with Valentin Skurlov will be held and a museum dedicated to the life and works of Vasily Zuev opened.

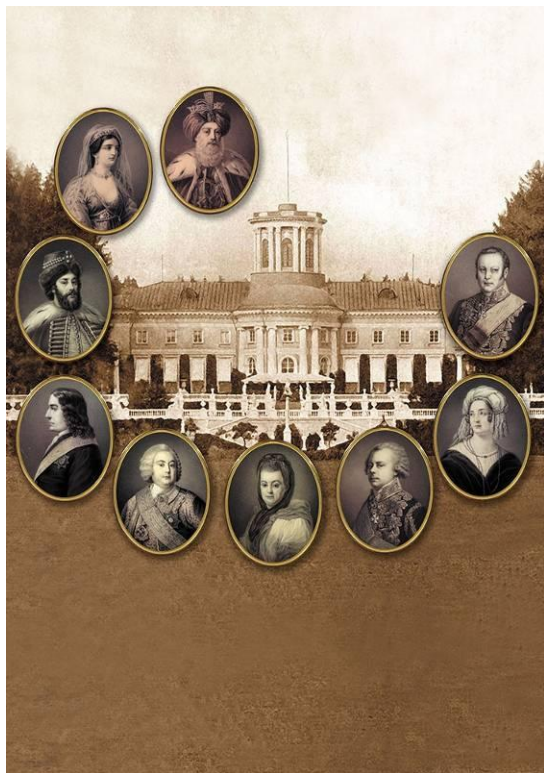
The opening of the museum was attended by representatives of the Ministry of Arts and Cultural Policy and the Ministry of Education of the region, the museum community of the Ulyanovsk region, as well as members of the Historical Archives Commission for the development and implementation of the project "Archives: time, events, people," the clergy of Melekess Diocese of the Russian Orthodox Church, and descendants of Vasily Zuev.

The Museum presents about one hundred exhibits, including handmade copies of works by Vasily Zuev. They are made from pictures which have been kept by relatives of the artist. You can see the master in photos, material on his life and works. In 1903, Emperor Nicholas II in one show drew attention to a portrait of his mother, made by Zuev in the genre of miniature. Soon the artist was invited to the court. Zuev created for the Romanov dynasty more than 150 portraits and in 1908 his collaboration with the house of Faberge began.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146251/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146251/)

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## "Princes Yusupov. A noble family in the history of Russia"



The Arkhangelsky Palace, Moscow. January 2016 - December 2016.

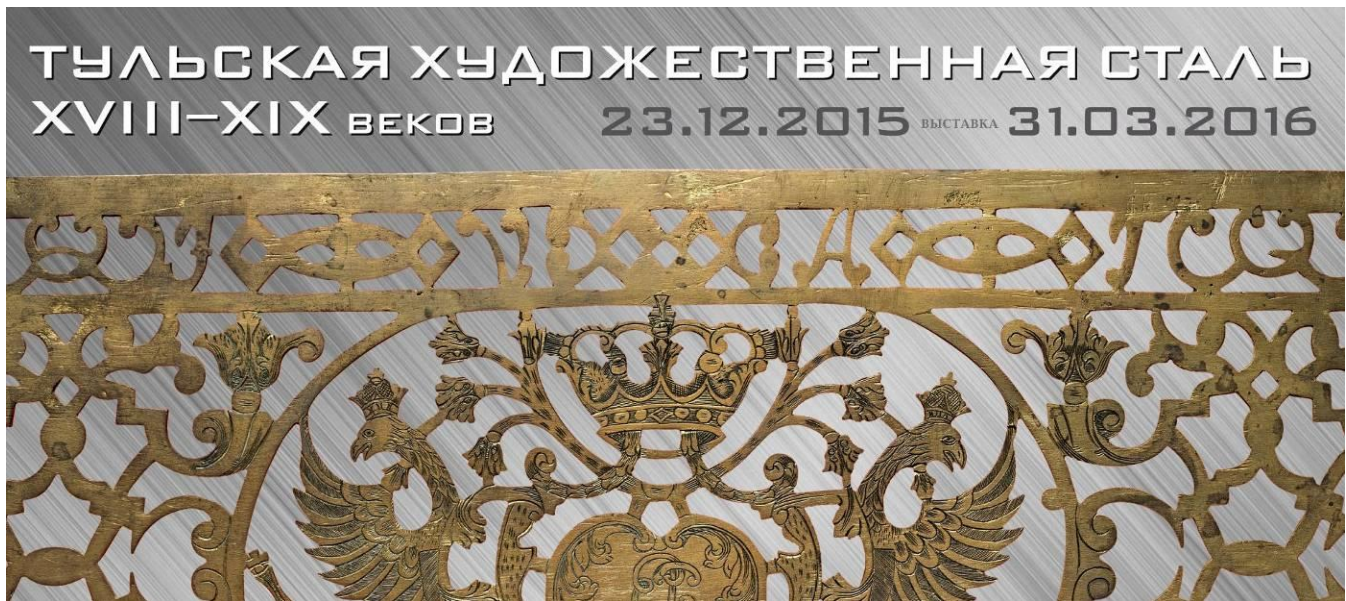
Among the noble families of the Russian Empire, Princes Yusupov occupied a special place as one of the most noble, wealthy and educated families. Since the mid-XVI, and especially since the beginning of the XVIII century, and up to the revolutionary events of 1917, various representatives of this kind held prominent government and military posts, actively have multiplied the family wealth, as a major industrial and agricultural entrepreneurs, a collector of historical and cultural values, and were known for their charity work and philanthropy.

October 2015 marked 205 years since the signing by Prince N.B. Yusupov the deed of purchase on the estate of Arkhangelsky. In 2016, on the second floor of the Palace, will be an exhibition dedicated to the old Yusupov and their modern descendants. This is the first large-scale exhibition devoted to the owners of the Archangelsky. It will complement private interiors of the Palace ensemble which is being successfully restored by museum today.



Left - Prince Nikolai Borisovich Yusupov. End of 1850-1860s. (Father of Princess Zinaida).  
Right - Princess Zinaida Nikolaievna Yusupova, her husband Count (Prince) Felix Felixovich Sumarokov-Elston and their two sons Nicholas and Felix.





### **Tula art is on display in the State Historical Museum**

December 22, State Historical Museum opened the exhibition "Tula art in steel XVIII-XIX centuries." Ludmila and Paul Kulikovsky attended the opening.



The exhibition shows for the first time in its entirety and diversity the phenomenon of the Tula art as an original, artistic style. The foundation in 1712 by decree of Peter I of the Imperial arms factory in Tula stimulated the development and in the second half of the XVIII century the artistic skill of Tula gunsmiths reached its peak. The high level mastering of Tula gunsmiths contributed to the formation of a sustainable relationship to their products as a matter of national prestige. Since the mid-1750s Tula art steel products often were among the ambassadorial gifts.



The demand for artistic goods - army and hunting weapons, and works for a particularistic imperial court and Russian aristocracy is a strong incentive to create genuine artistic masterpieces. Already in the last quarter of the XVIII century steel products of Tula gunsmiths became collectable - they were collected by Empress Catherine II.



*The central pieces in the exhibition is the folding chairs (12 were made) and table, made for Empress Elisabeth.*



Steel, bronze, gold was the metal used to created sets for Empress Catherine II by the Tula gunsmiths, when she on her return from the long trip to New Russia and Tauris (Crimea) visited Tula.

In 1787 the Tula gunsmiths presented her a dressing table, with vases - not a vase for flowers, but for storage of powder for a wig.







Casket for a chess set (with the chess set). 1780s. Master A. Sukhanov. Steel, bronze, silver, forging, casting, embossing, faceting, inlaid work, gilding, bluing. Shows the reconstruction project of the Tula factory - both on the cover and sides are coated perspective and view of the housing of the projected plant. In it there were chess pieces that resemble towers of different shapes. The casket, together with the chess set, was presented to Empress Catherine II by the Tula armors.







*Bed guard. 1782. Master Roman Gnidin. After drawing of Gavriil Kozlov. Steel, bronze, forging, casting, varnishing, embossing, gilding, bluing. It formed a part of the decor of the bedchamber of Empress Catherine II in the Grand Palace of Tsarskoye Selo.*



*A set of working models of firearms in a case. Circa 1785. Master I. Makarishchev. Steel, gold, silver, wood, forging, casting, embossing, engraving, inlaid work, gilding, bluing. Monogram "KP" on the cover of the case. The set belonged to Grand Duke Konstantin Pavlovich.*





In 1803, Alexander I sent a Russian embassy to Japan and as a gift to the Emperor of Japan was made a sword. However, the ships stood off the coast of Japan, and were not accepted by the Japanese Emperor, so the sword went back to Russia and now it is in the Kremlin Armory.

Video - 1) [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146131/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146131/)

2) <http://www.5-tv.ru/news/103106/>

3) <http://www.otr-online.ru/news/v-moskve-v-52103.html>

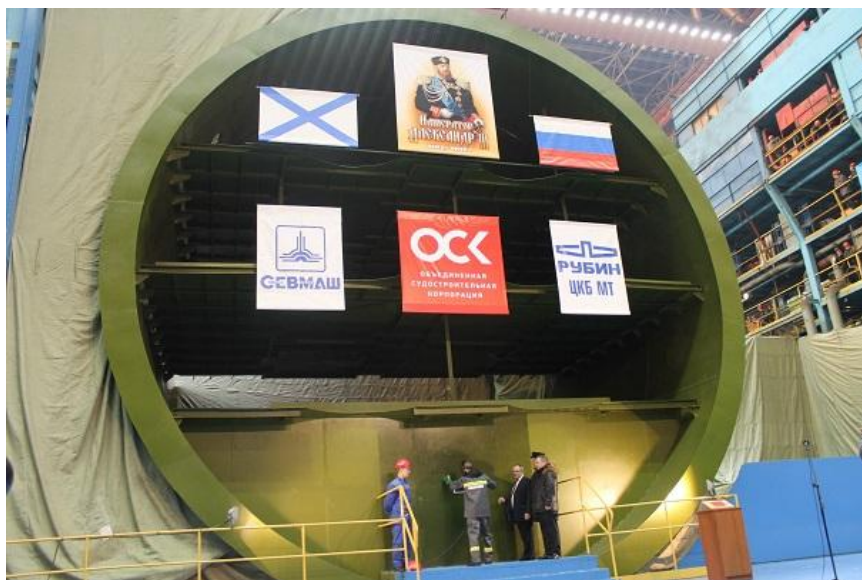
4) <http://ren.tv/novosti/2015-12-23/carskie-podarki-tulskih-masterov-privezli-na-vystavku-v-moskvu-video>



## The seventh submarine in the series "Northwind" named "Emperor Alexander III"

December 18, in Severodvinsk on the Sevmash Shipyard, the ceremony of naming the nuclear submarine Project 955-A took place, and it got the name "Emperor Alexander III".

The event was attended by the commander of the Northern Fleet Vladimir Korolev, the Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky, and the governor of the Arkhangelsk region Igor Orlov.



"The assignment of a new submarine named "Emperor Alexander III" is a landmark event, and demonstrates the continuity of Russian history, the continuity of the time - said Minister of Culture Vladimir Medinsky.

- "The battleship "Emperor Alexander III" was the last ship of the Russian squadron - the latter forming the Imperial Navy - stationed in the French naval base Bezerta in Tunisia. After the descent of St. Andrew's flag in 1924, the ship was no longer to sail under any foreign flags. I am confident that the submarine "Emperor Alexander III" lives up to

its good name, and will be a reliable defender of maritime borders of Russia."

"The St. Andrew's flag of the ship after many years in Australia, through the efforts of the Russian military-historical society, was returned to its homeland and took its rightful place in Sevastopol Military-Historical Museum of Black Sea Fleet in 2014. The return of the relics in Russia is another common thread of history that unites the events of 90 years ago with the present, and symbolizes the invincibility of the Russian fleet."

"The Emperor Alexander III" is the seventh submarine in a row of the project "Northwind". Submarines of this project have a length of 170 m, width 13.5 m, full displacement 24 thousand ton. Each one is armed with 16 missiles R-30 "Bulava".



The name plate before and after being welded to the hull of the submarine "Emperor Alexander III"



## The exhibition "Peter the Great. Time and Places"

From December 17, 2015 to March 2016 iMikhailovsky Castle, a branch of the Russian Museum, presents the exhibition "Peter the Great. Time and Places."

The exhibition is held in the framework of the "Saga of the Romanovs", devoted to the era, decisive for the development of national culture of modern times and associated with the emergence and development of the Russian school of painting. It was at the age of Peter falls heyday of the first Russian painter Ivan Nikitin, Andrey Matveev, as well as outstanding masters of "Rossica" George Gsell, Louis Caravaca, Johann Tannauera and other artists.

The most common painting in Petrovsky time was the portrait genre. Through the activities of Russian and foreign artists has developed a diverse and extensive iconography of the sovereign's family, colleagues and associates of Peter the Great. Neither one of the subsequent periods of development of Russian portrait does not testify about the time of his heroes with such strength and depth, without embellishment and idealization.

The exhibition will include true masterpieces of Russian art of the era, among them - "Peter the Great on his deathbed" and "Portrait of Baron Stroganov" by I.Nikitin, "Portrait of the daughters of Peter I Anna Petrovna and Elizabeth Petrovna" by L.Karavaka, and other works from the collection of the Russian Museum, the State Tretyakov Gallery, the State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg and Moscow suburbs, and also from foreign museums and private collections.



Already on December 16 Mikhailovsky Palace opened the exhibition dedicated to the reign of Emperor Peter the Great, for the participants of the IV Petersburg International Cultural Forum.

Video - 1) <http://topspb.tv/news/news92782/>

2) [http://www.rtr.spb.ru/vesti/vesti\\_2014/upload/18-12-2015/petr.mp4](http://www.rtr.spb.ru/vesti/vesti_2014/upload/18-12-2015/petr.mp4)

3) [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146046/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146046/)

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## Two Imperial monuments may come to Krasnodar

One is monument of Catherine the Great and one - of Nicholas II with Tsarevich Alexei. Alexander Apollonov, sculptor, creator of the main attraction of the city - the four-meter monument of Empress making them. The new version is a small copy of the existing one, and it is the idea of the sculptor that the small Catherine II is to decorate one of the administrative buildings.



“Because the monument is the only one in the south of Russia, it is not anywhere else. It just symbolizes the forces of the Kuban”, - says Alexander Apollonov, Honored Artist of the Russian Federation.

The bronze statue of Emperor Nicholas II will be new to the Kuban capital. Church has ordered this monument . The artist has worked to detail the sketch as an architectural project, but the customer refused - due to lack of funds. So now these works of art, ready for 90 percent, are waiting in the storage.

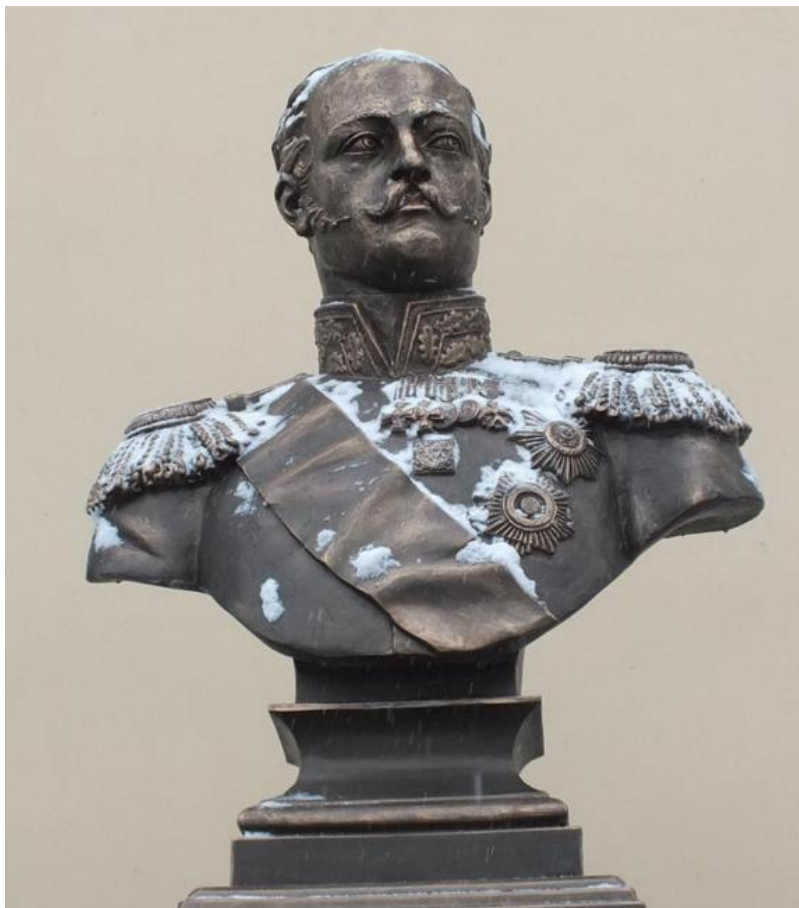
Video -

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG1x\\_kQalwY&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kG1x_kQalwY&feature=youtu.be)





## Saratov school unveiled a monument to Emperor Nicholas I



In the yard of school number 95 in Saratov, on 15 December, a monument to the Russian Emperor Nicholas I was unveiled, in the framework of the project "Alley of Russian Glory".

Installation and grand opening of the bust of Emperor Nicholas I continue to perpetuate the tradition begun in the educational institutions of Saratov region memory of people, whose works and deeds were for the glory of our Fatherland.

The opening ceremony was attended by the Minister of the field - the chairman of the Public Relations Committee and National Policy Boris Shinchuk, chairman of the Public Council under the Ministry of Education of the region, psychologist Sergey Saratov, representatives of local governments of the Oktyabrsky district of the city of Saratov, clergy, representatives of community organizations.

The ceremony took place in two stages: the unveiling of the monument in the schoolyard and a concert prepared by the students of the school, with creative rooms in the style of the XIX century.

Boris Shinchuk addressed the audience:

"Of course, everything that is today at the school - it's great: a museum, a well-dressed student in the "particularistic dresses" of the time. It's like the opening of a monument to the project "Alley of Russian Glory", which is implemented together with our great friend, Mikhail Serdyukov - a lot of work.



Why 95th school? The fact is that in the past, it was the Mariinsky Institute for Noble Maidens of Saratov nobility. The nobility decided 10 years to collect 25 cents for its construction and has made an appeal to Her Imperial Highness Grand Duchess Maria Nikolaevna with a request "to take under her high patronage of the alleged Saratov Institute and allowed to be called the Mariinsky Institute for Noble Maidens of Saratov nobility." This resolution was considered and endorsed by Emperor Nicholas I, which allowed power the ruling nobility of Saratov on the collection of necessary funds and subordinate institution estimated Her Imperial Majesty Empress. The Institute was opened in 1857".

Video - <http://video.sarbc.ru/video/5132.html>

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## Plaque in memory of Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich unveiled in Pushkin house

14 December. TV Saint-Petersburg. - Today in the Pushkin House on the Makarov waterfront a plaque to Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich Romanov was unveiled in memory of his merits. He was one of the founders of the current Institute of Russian Literature of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The ceremony was attended by the former chairman of the Russian Audit Chamber Sergei Stepashin. He noted that the Grand Duke was first and foremost a creative person, a political career for him was always in the background.

Sergey Stepashin, Chairman of the Supervisory Board of "Reform Fund Housing and Communal Services": "Konstantin was not particularly eager for power. He was just a Grand Duke. It shows in his biography. He was not in the government. He was president of the Academy of Sciences, the founder of the Pushkin House. He wrote great poems and songs. I feel better, of course, to understand the power of the economy, the finance, in the budget. Where goes the money you spend, like Pushkin's "Eugene Onegin", remember?"



This year, the Pushkin House celebrates its 110th anniversary. Today there is an exhibition of "The Grand Duke Konstantin. Home Pushkin House ". Documents about the history of the Institute of Russian Literature of the Jubilee Exhibition are on display in 1899 until the mid 1920s.

Video - <http://topspb.tv/news/news92682/>

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## A collector donated belongings claimed to be personal items of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna

12 December. E1 - Yekaterinburg and Verkhoturye Metropolitan Kirill met with Nina Mikhailovna Molev (doctor of historical sciences, candidate of art history, professor, member of the Union of Writers and Artists Union of Russia). The meeting took place in her apartment in Moscow, which holds the memorabilia. Metropolitan Kirill congratulates Nina Mikhailovna on her birthday (December 5 she was 90 years old). And she said that she would like to donate to the Yekaterinburg Museum of the Holy Royal Martyrs belongings of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna.

The claimed belongings of the Grand Duchess were in Yekaterinburg already last year at an exhibition. Then the collector lent them to the museum for the exhibition dedicated to the Tsar's days. Now, however, the collector decided to transfer the valuable exhibits from her personal collection for permanent storage in Yekaterinburg Museum.

"This is a unique event for our museum, located on the site of the





execution of the Holy Royal Family. Nina from a large list of cities and places associated with the royal family, including the Livadia Palace in the Crimea, and Novospassky monastery in Moscow, has chosen our city. Nina explained her decision: "I want to do it because Urals becomes a center of Orthodox Russia!" - Commented Archpriest Maxim Minyailo, senior priest of the Church-on-Blood.

Among the things transferred to the Yekaterinburg museum there are Elizabeth Feodorovna's blouse, a belt - that shows the exact size of her waist - and one glove.



- The most valuable exhibit of the collection donated by Nina Molev to the Yekaterinburg Museum of the Holy Royal Martyrs, has become an icon of the Mother of God "Unexpected Joy", which belonged to Empress Alexandra Feodorovna. The Empress gave it to her Royal sister Elizabeth. Since then the icon has always been on our personal holy table. Metropolitan Kirill expressed Nina Mikhailovna Molev words of deep gratitude for the priceless gift, promising to take care of this collection. Soon things Elizabeth Feodorovna arrive in Yekaterinburg.



### **The belongings of St. Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna arrived in the museum of Yekaterinburg**

14 December. REN TV - Collector Nina Moleva transferred to Metropolitan Kirill the objects of the Grand Duchess for permanent storage in the museum of the Royal Family.

Video - 1) <http://ren.tv/novosti/2015-12-15/unikalnye-veshchi-elizavety-fedorovny-poyavilis-v-muzee-ekaterinburga>  
2) [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146032/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146032/)

## **The museum "Moscow Kremlin" received orders, awards and commemorative medals of the Russian Empire.**

On 9 December, in the St. Catherine hall of the Great Kremlin Palace, President Vladimir V. Putin attended the handover ceremony of orders, awards and commemorative medals of the Russian Empire to the museum "Moscow Kremlin". The lost items were handed over by the head of Rosneft, Igor Sechin - a total of over 100 items. According to experts, since 1917 these items have been missing in the Moscow Kremlin. The unique exhibits were removed from Kremlin and in the 1920-30s sold.



Director of the Moscow Kremlin Museums Elena Gagarina thanked the President for taking the initiative to return the valuables to Russia. "The items were sold through GOKHRAN, and now they are returning to their homeland," - she said. "When they were sold?" - ask Putin and was told that it was in 1922.

One of the most important orders returned is the Polish Order of the White Eagle, which in 1829 was put on Emperor Nicholas I, during his coronation as King of Poland.

"He gave Poland a very great freedom, a constitution ... the freedom of religion - recalled Gagarina. - He treated Poland very well." Nevertheless, it happened that the Polish uprising was brutally suppressed, and those who participated received awards - down to the ordinary soldiers. This marked the highest Polish Order. So this award came down from its pedestal.

President saw the order of St. Andrew, which was created for Catherine II. Its unusual appearance, the cross of smoky quartz adorned with sapphires, under which is lapis lazuli, which makes it even more striking.

Among the returned items the star of the Order of St. Andrew, which belonged to the heir to the throne Pavel Petrovich - the future Emperor Paul I, occupies a special place.



Now in the collection there are the Order of St. George and the Order of Alexander Nevsky, an extremely rare award - with red glass of the XVIII century and with very rare stones - pink beryl, which is almost impossible to find.

There is the Order of Malta, which was awarded to the foreign monarchs, the Order of St. Vladimir (very high rank), a unique female Order - St. Anne and the Polish Order of St. Stanislaus.

No less gorgeous is the collection of gold medals of Peter's time, which was sent to all the courts of Europe in honor of Russian victories and medals in honor of the coronation of the Russian Monarchs.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/145622](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/145622)

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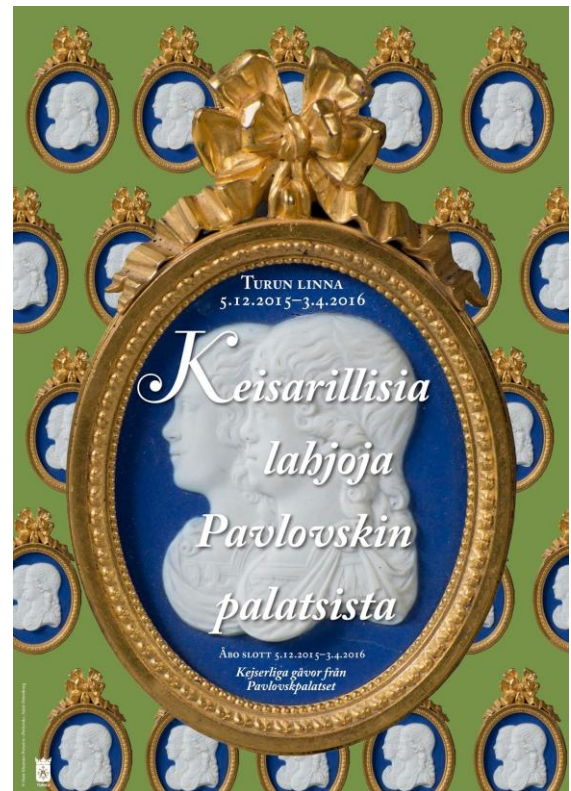


## The exhibition "Imperial gifts from Pavlovsk palace"

December 4, 2015 ancient castle of Turku (Finland) opened the exhibition "Imperial gifts of the Pavlovsk Palace."

The exhibition "Imperial gifts from Pavlovsk Palace" tells about the culture presents of the Russian Imperial family. In the Turku Castle is exposed more than 150 items from the collection of luxury located in Pavlovsk Palace in the suburbs of St. Petersburg. The visitors are presented objects from porcelain dinner services, cigarette cases and snuff boxes, fans, figurines, decorative articles and portraits. Among the exhibits there are also items from the masters of the House of Faberge.

Most of the gifts from the collection of the Pavlovsk Palace belonged to Empress Maria Feodorovna (1759-1828, nee Maria Sophia Dorothea Augusta Louisa Wurttemberg), but the museum's collection also includes a set of gifts associated with the names of other members of the Royal family and kept at other palaces. Considerable attention is paid in the exhibition to two other Romanovs - the last Russian Emperor Nicholas II (1868-1918) and his wife Empress Alexandra Feodorovna (1872-1918), during whose reign the culture of gourmet gifts peaked.



### *Culture of gifts at the Imperial court: the luxury and refinement*

The exhibits are a reflection of the splendor of culture imbued with gifts, which existed at the Royal court in the late XVIII until the beginning of XX century. The gifts were an integral part of both official and private life of the Romanovs. Each of them is a piece of the history of relations within the Royal family, international relations and the significant events of the Russian Empire. Objects are also the epitome of the history of fashion and style, they reflect the preferences of Royal personages and the richness of the spiritual, artistic and social life of the Imperial court.



Numerous diaries, letters and memoirs of the Romanovs tell about the culture of giving gifts by the Royal family. Gifts were made to give at the annual feasts - Christmas, New Year and Easter - or on the occasion of major events in the lives of family members and relatives, such as engagement and wedding, birthday and name day, in honor of the coronation, for birthdays and baptisms of children. They gave usually decorations, small items of gold and silver, which you can use, or to decorate the room. China sets and objects of art also were popular.

The exhibition covers the period of history in which the main direction in art, interior design, architecture and fashion, along with neoclassicism was the Empire - the Imperial style, reached the highest peak in the beginning of the XIX century, during the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte and symbolized the greatness and power of the French Empire. During the reign of Emperor Alexander III, a convinced Slavophile, Russia's increased interest in the history of the country, and it has developed the "Neo-Russian" style.



The exhibition is organized in cooperation with the State Museum "Pavlovsk" and the Museum Office of Lappeenranta. After the Castle of Turku the exhibition will be presented at the Museum of South Karelia Lappeenranta from 29.04.2016 on 10.02.2016.





## Monument to Grand Duke Konstantin Romanov was demolished at the military academy in Odessa

Monument to the representative of the Russian Imperial family, the grandson of Nicholas I, General Grand Duke Konstantin Konstantinovich Romanov was demolished in the Odessa Military Academy (ex. Institute of Land Forces) within the framework of the law on de-communization.

100 years ago, the site functioned as Academy Cadet Corps named after Grand Duke Konstantin Kontantinovich.

"It was dismantled in accordance with the laws of Ukraine. It was moved to where we store things. It is not destroyed. And in the place where monument stood, there is a stele of heroes, graduates of military academies who have died defending their country" - said the Minister of Defense of Ukraine Stepan Poltorak.

The bronze bust was installed in the territory of the Military Academy in 1999. Now, the monument will be stored in a warehouse of the institution.

Note that Grand Duke Konstantin Romanov had no relation to the Bolsheviks and did not even live to see the revolution.



Video - <https://golospravdy.com/v-odesse-snesli-pamyatnik-konstantinu-romanovu-iz-imperatorskoj-semi/>

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## Portrait of Nicholas I and his family revealed in the "Pavlovsky school"

December 1 at the school № 209 "Pavlovskaya Gymnasium" a group portrait of Emperor Nicholas I and his family - a copy of the picture of Horace Vernet "Tsarskoselskaya Carousel" was inaugurated.

The director of the Pavlovskaya Gymnasium Dmitry Efimov said, that the date of unveiling of the portrait is not chosen by chance: December 1, 1825, 190 years ago, Nicholas I ascended the throne of the Russian Empire.

Now everyone who will go up on the third floor of the school certainly witness the portrait of the founder of Pavlovskaya Gymnasium and his family. The canvas, which is a copy of the picture of Horace Vernet "Tsarskoselskaya Carousel", is created by artist Elena Petrusenko. Elena is confident that high-school students will appreciate her work: "Beautiful interior space in XVIII century style, built on the orders of Nicholas I, now will be adorned with this portrait which will emphasize style and gallantry of the institution."



Video - <http://www.ntv.ru/novosti/1579538/>.

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## Activities in Tsarskoye Selo



### *"Undeclared beauty"*

"Tsarskoye Selo" Museum-Reserve presents 39 pictures from the collection in the exhibition "

Undeclared Beauty." The exhibition, opened in the year of the 70th anniversary of the Victory in the Great Patriotic War, tells the example of Catherine (Greater Tsarskoye Selo), the palace, the trials of the war that befell many of the famous monuments of Russian culture.

"Our main task is using rare photos to show one of the pages of the difficult and heroic years as well as pay tribute to the people who were able to save and restore an outstanding monument of world architecture - the Catherine Palace", - says head of exhibitions of GMZ "Tsarskoye Selo" Lyudmila Kanaeva.

Catherine Palace, which was destroyed during the occupation of Pushkin (Tsarskoye Selo) and rebuilt after the war, by the restorers from Leningrad (St. Petersburg), became a symbol of the tragic death and rebirth from the ashes of war, historical and cultural monuments.

The exhibition includes priceless photographs from the collection of the Museum-Reserve "Tsarskoye Selo", which clearly reflect the history of the Catherine Palace in the prewar, war years and the period of recovery and restoration. Among the exhibits are the pre-war photographs of the 1930s; photos taken immediately after the liberation of the city in 1944 and commemorated what was left after the fire and destruction. Some images tell the story of the revival of the palace, its interiors and individual pieces of art decoration, as well as the selfless work of the restorers. Photographic materials introduce the people who kept evacuating during the war priceless works of art, and then revived the museum.

The exhibition will run until 1 of March 2016.



### *"Tsarskoye Selo" enriched with a rare porcelain bowl*

Collection of Museum "Tsarskoye Selo" enriched rare thing - a porcelain bowl with a cover of the XIX century. The bowl was kept in a private collection in St. Petersburg. The Museum acquired it through charitable assistance of the company "Gazprom".

This bowl is quite rarely found today in the Russian antiques market of porcelain collections. It has impeccable shape and high quality of painting.



Bowl with lid is made at the Imperial Porcelain Factory in St. Petersburg in 1850-1870's, as evidenced by the stamp on the bottom of the object: A II, under the Imperial crown.



It can be assumed that the object was made for Maria Alexandrovna - wife of Alexander II. It is made in accordance with the tastes of virtuous Empress, who preferred porcelain decorated at simple gallant and pastoral scenes, floral paintings and images of birds, animals and insects.

The product is decorated with several polychrome composition depicting shepherds, shepherdesses and animals on the background of the rural landscape. The lower part of the lid and the upper edge of the bowl are bordered by orange stripes, entwined with flower garlands. At the edge of the lid is a golden floral pattern.

Round shapes and decorative bowls allow a decision to carry it to a typical example of Imperial Porcelain Factory during the reign of Alexander II.

Similar compositions can be found on many porcelain samples of Historicism - for example, decorative vases and tableware forms. The decor of such products, the creation of which was attended by leading artists of the plant - such as Vivant Beauce, August Spies - carried out by the already established pattern, varying the different artistic techniques.

Bowl with pastoral scenes will be exhibited in the second antechambers of the Catherine Palace, along with the service performed for the Imperial court.



*Tsarskoye Selo celebrates the 100th anniversary of restorer Kazakov in an exhibition*

The exhibition includes archival photographs, sketches Amber Room and Pavilion "Hermitage". More than twenty-five years, the artist was a permanent foreman of the restorers. One of their most important works - the re-establishment of a plafond painting in the Great Hall - 850 square meters painting. According to the complexity and scope of this work it does not have any analogues in the world of restoration practice.

Video - <http://topspb.tv/news/news93412/>





Daughter of an officer in General Wrangel's army received Russian citizenship. Russian President Vladimir Putin signed a decree on approval of the application by Irene von Dreyer, who by her 100th birthday wanted to get a Russian passport. This was told on the official web portal of legal information. Earlier it was reported that the Baroness, who will celebrate 100th anniversary on December 15 wants to restore Russian citizenship.

Irene von Dreyer, a Russian emigrant, is the daughter of a Major-General who served in the army of Wrangel, and now lives in France.

The son said: "She turned to the justice and nobility of the Russian President and asked him to deign to give her, an elderly lady from the Russian nobility, a passport".

She would like to see Russia as a citizen of this country as well, "when the time comes to meet with the Lord, to do it as Russian, as a citizen of Russia."

Father of Irene von Dreyer Vladimir von Dreyer, a Major-General of the Russian army. During two years he had fought against the Bolsheviks in the army of General Wrangel. In November 1920, together with his wife and baby Irina, grandmother and uncle left Russia on one of the ships from Sevastopol. Subsequently, the family settled in France.

Video - <http://www.ntv.ru/novosti/1578903/>



The exhibition "Feat of the honest man" dedicated to the 250th birthday anniversary of Nikolai Karamzin is opened in Saint-Petersburg. The opening of the joint exhibition project of the National Pushkin Museum and the State Museum-Estate "Ostafyevo" was held on December 1, 2015 in East housing estate of the Derzhavin Museum-Estate. The exhibition will summarize the Year of literature and will be the beginning of the jubilee year of N. M. Karamzin.

The venue is not chosen by chance. In 1790 Nikolai Karamzin, returning home from a trip to Europe, visited St. Petersburg and the first address where he went was the home of G. R. Derzhavin on the Fontanka.

The central exhibit of the exhibition and its main relic is a memorial desk of Karamzin, stored in the National Pushkin Museum. It was it where a historian was working on the "History of the Russian State". The exhibition is complemented with unique book editions in Russian and French; several issues of the magazine "Herald of Europe", which was published by Karamzin, publications of "History of the Russian State".

A special place occupies a portrait of Karamzin by V. A. Tropinin, as well as portraits of his daughters Sophia and Catherine.

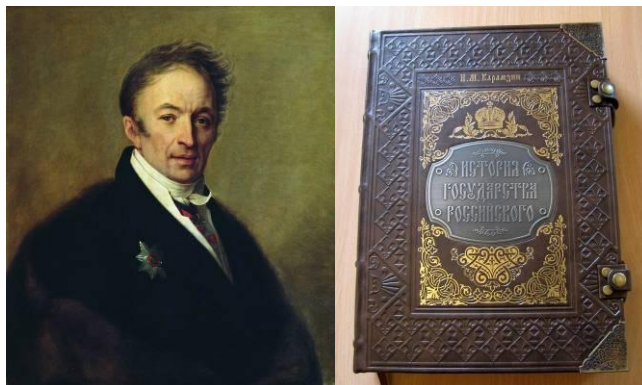
The exhibition also features the original notes of the famous Russian historian, statesman, essayist, memoirist, one of the prominent representatives of the Russian Freemasonry Ivan Vladimirovich Lopuchin.

From the funds of the State Museum-Estate "Ostafyevo" - "Russian Parnassus" are presented an engraving of the XVII century with the image of the Russian tsars, heroes of the "History of the Russian State"; part of a unique collection of medals of the XVIII century, reflecting the events of Russian history, as well as medals of the XIX century and contemporary medalists.

The exhibition is located in three halls. The first tells of the return of the "Russian traveler" from abroad; the second is dedicated to the creation of the "History of the Russian State"; the third recreates the atmosphere of a literary salon of the Karamzins.

The exhibition will run till January 20, 2016.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/145322/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/145322/)







14-16 December 2015 at the St. Petersburg Institute of History of Sciences in cooperation with the State Archive of the Russian Federation, the Saint-Petersburg State University, the State Museum of History of St. Petersburg, the European University in St. Petersburg, as well as the funds D. S. Likhachev and A. A. Sobchak the International scientific conference "The historical memory of Russia and the Decembrists. 1825-2015" is held, dedicated to the 190th anniversary of the revolt of the Decembrists at the Senate Square.

December 14 the conference will be held within the walls of the fortress (the State Museum of the History of St. Petersburg, the Atrium of the Commandant of the house), December 15 - in the classrooms of the Institute of History and Philosophy Institute of the St. Petersburg State University, and December 16 - at the premises of the St. Petersburg Institute of History of Sciences.

During the conference will be held a presentation of new books, will be opened a book exhibitions on the history of Decembrists published in 2005-2015, and archival documents relating to the era of the Decembrists, there will be made posts on the status and plans for basic fundamental documentary publications on the history of Decembrist - series "Decembrist revolt. Documents" (archival materials of the investigation fund and trial of the Decembrists) and a series of "Polar Star" (written heritage of the Decembrists: memories, letters, documents).

The subject of reports and communications of the conference covers a wide range of issues related to the fundamental problem of historical memory in Russia, including relation to the history of Decembrist movement. In the context of the history of Decembrists a special attention will be focused on sources and historiography.

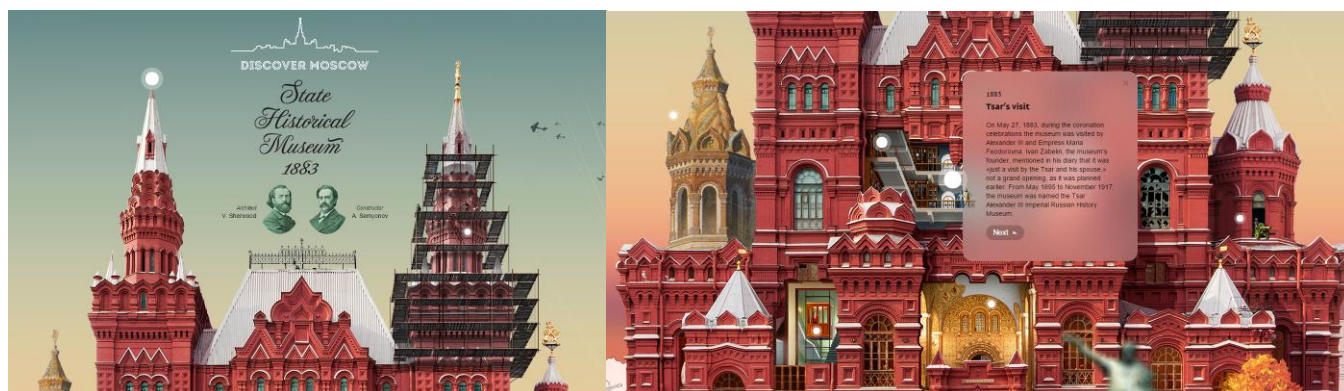


What?.....Yes it is.....Portal "Explore Moscow" includes a page about the State Historical Museum, in which a tiny detail caught my attention - two people are standing there and they looked like Emperor Alexander III and Empress Maria Feodorovna.

The portal tells - "... Once over the front vestibule of the Historical Museum was housed a library, and on the Red Square was trams. Heraldic lions, unicorns and two headed eagles for nearly 70 years left the tops of the towers. And in the museum was established one of the first elevators in Moscow. ... "

Click on the "dots" and read the small stories.

[http://um.mos.ru/promo/gosudarstvennyy\\_istoricheskiy\\_muzey/](http://um.mos.ru/promo/gosudarstvennyy_istoricheskiy_muzey/)



"Roads of glory and victories" about the Russian Horse Guards opened in Museum-Reserve "Gatchina". There are about two hundred exhibits of different kinds from portraits to equipment and awards. This year marks the 285 years since the establishment of the Horse Guards. Horse Guards began in late 1730 by a decree of Empress Anna Ivanovna. From the middle of the XVIII century the elite cavalry units played a crucial role on the battlefield.

"If you want to be beautiful - join the Hussars." Aphorism refers to the type of people who, with a few exceptions, disappeared from Russian life after October 1917, along with a surprisingly colorful layer of military culture.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/145312/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/145312/)



Napoleon's gift to Emperor Alexander I was on show in the Art Museum of Yaroslavl. The unique service, which is among the ten most famous sets in the world, is "The Egyptian service" - from the collection of the State Museum of Ceramics and "Kuskovo".

The service was made by Sevres on order of Napoleon. Bonaparte promised to present this gift to the Russian Emperor Alexander I in 1807 at the conclusion of the Peace of Tilsit, but the service was presented to Alexander a year later. The Dinner set from Napoleon was a reminder of the war of 1812 and, in particular, of the defeat at Austerlitz, so the service was never used for its intended purpose, and therefore is perfectly preserved.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/145532/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/145532/)



A video in the series about the State Hermitage - "Paul I and the Malta order" - 200 years ago, Russia took under its wing one of the oldest military order. Emperor Paul I became Grand Master of the Order of Malta.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/video/show/brand\\_id/59697/episode\\_id/1250500/video\\_id/1414627/](http://tvkultura.ru/video/show/brand_id/59697/episode_id/1250500/video_id/1414627/)



Exhibition at the museum "Streletsky Chamber" devoted to St. George chronicles. Its history begins in the XVIII century, when in 1769, Catherine the Great, decided to celebrate the special military merits of her loyal subjects, she established the Order of St. George. The exhibition is placed in eight halls and combines archival materials of the largest collections of the country, rare items from private collections and multimedia technologies.

In Soviet times, "successor" of St. George Cross became the Order of Glory. In 2000, by presidential decree the Order of St. George was revived. The exhibition - the story is told through the history of the award feats of Russian officers in the War of 1812, the Crimea, Russian-Turkish wars.

The exhibition presents a unique document - the decree of Alexander II on awarding Mikhail Dmitrievich Skobelev Order of St. George IV degrees on November 23, 1873.

Today, the museum was donated an Order of St. George IV class. This award from the family of historian and writer Igor Andrushkevich living in Argentina. This St. George Cross was put on his grandfather, Major-General Yevgeny Envald by Nicholas II.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/145514/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/145514/)



People from Taganrog made a documentary about Emperor Alexander I. The authors tell about his stay in Taganrog and the riddle of his death. One of the main issues that they raise is connected with the revival of the memorial museum of Alexander the Great, which existed in Taganrog nearly one hundred years and was destroyed in the 30 years of the 20th century.

Video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMWm2CbF8is#t=103>



"Nightmare in Red" is a so called "educational film" from USA, which "examines early Russian social/political unrest, mutiny, revolutions and studies influential people such as Leo Tolstoy, Czar Nicholas II, and Vladimir Lenin." It is pure US propaganda, but start watching from 6:45 min. for some original moving pictures. A nice clip can be seen at 9:23 min - Emperor Nicholas II making a photo.

Video - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJe3ayhE2w8>





The documentary "Silentium. The fate of Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna Romanova" is dedicated to the fate and the tragic death of St. Grand Duchess Elizabeth Feodorovna Romanova. (Russia. 2000).

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/video/show/brand\\_id/32447/episode\\_id/634084/](http://tvkultura.ru/video/show/brand_id/32447/episode_id/634084/)



17 December, after 13 years of restoration the Novgorod Museum Reserve has received the unique icon of the XV century "Virgin of Tenderness." Restorer Yuri Alexandrov claims that the icon has not been seen by any since its making. Centimeter by centimeter, under the microscope the specialist cleaned off layers of new paints and varnishes, which almost concealed the original image. That is why the icon for a long time been in the storage. Only when inventory of the iconostasis of Saint Nicholas Cathedral, in Novgorod, were discovered information about the "Our Lady of Tenderness", the icon was sent for restoration. The plot - Virgin and Child in her arms - for Novgorod is rare. But critics have no doubt that it was made by Novgorod icon painters.

Video - 1) [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/145919/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/145919/)

2) [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146662/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146662/)



December 17 White Hall of Livadia Palace hosted a lecture on the greatest jeweler Faberge house - "Faberge: known and unknown." Scientific adviser on Faberge for auction house "Christie's", Scientific Secretary of Faberge Memorial Foundation Valentin Skurlov presented the lecture. "The main aim of the lecture was to familiarize Crimean, and in particular the employees of the museums of the region, with the life and work of the family of Faberge. Livadia Palace for the presentation was chosen as the family Faberge had quite a close relationship with the Romanov dynasty. It

is known that his son Eugene Carl Faberge, came in 1912 to Yalta palace to hand over personally to the Emperor Imperial Easter egg, made specifically for them,"- said the historian of jewelry.

He added that the egg is one of the most expensive in the collection of the Romanovs and is called the "Tsarevich". Inside the egg there was placed jewelry diamond double-headed eagle and a portrait of the Tsarevich Alexei. "Also many not know that the desktop clock, made for the 25th anniversary of the wedding of Emperor Alexander III and Empress Maria Feodorovna made by Carl Faberge to the imperial couple was in the walls of the Livadia Palace" - said Valentin Skurlov.

The lecture showed on a big screen the most popular jewelry and personal portraits of the family of Faberge.



The exhibition "Family Album" was opened in Omsk museum of local history. The exhibition is timed to the upcoming 300th anniversary of the city. The museum asks people to share photos from the family archives and hundreds of residents of Omsk responded.

Photo shows the family of Emperor Alexander III relaxing after a hockey game. From the collection of Novo-Mikhailovsky Palace.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146242/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146242/)





New life to the imperial stables in Peterhof. The Ministry of Culture presented the concept of reconstruction of an architectural monument of federal significance. Recall the former imperial stables have been empty the last three years. Previously, they housed the resort "Peterhof".



Now the stables returns to their historic mission - an equestrian center will be located in it. And also - a museum, riding school, a veterinary unit, shops, restaurant and a hotel. This will in the future hold the World Cup in equestrian sport.

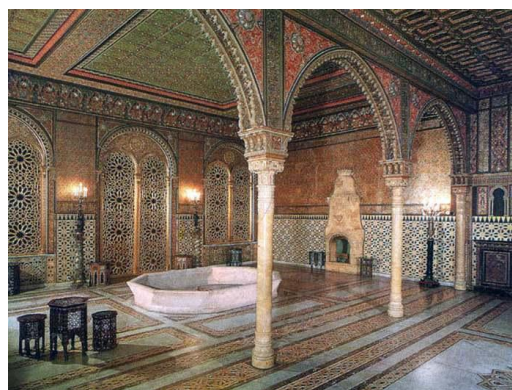
There were presented three projects. All involve the full restoration of the premises, recovery paddocks for horses. The members of the expert council almost unanimously voted for the second project and offered to adapt it to received comments.

Video - 1) [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146382/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146382/)

2) <http://www.ntv.ru/novosti/1587265/>



Restoration of the Moorish room was completed in the Yusupov Palace. In 1681 he arrived at the service of the Russian Tsar Ivan IV and converted to Orthodoxy instead of Islam - Murza was called Dmitry. But Yusupov family kept love for oriental motifs. In the family seat of the princes, is a room with the characteristic pattern, arches and a fountain in the center - the famous Moorish lounge. In the twentieth century, the palace was badly damaged during the siege. Now a long-term restoration of one of the most famous interiors was completed in Yusupov Palace



During the restoration conducted mostly at night (not to interfere with excursions). Over the passages between the halls was found the family crest, which had not previously been known. Complete recovery of a relatively small space required a huge investment - time, energy and money.

"It is absolutely precise geometry. How can this be done in marble? We remember that marble - a material hard, but fragile. An awkward movement here or there, an awkward movement of the chisels - and all will be lost. Therefore, the plane with the ideal geometry, with perfect distance along the edges - this is the miracle of Moorish living room", - explained the head of the department of scientific work of the Yusupov Palace Valentina Nabok.

To re-create the interior, the museum management has attracted the best of the best: artists to restore the painting, engineers for the commissioning of the aqueduct, masons for relaying fire place. For all the work was spent almost 70 million rubles.

After opening of the Moorish room the restorers did not say goodbye. The Yusupov Palace began to restore the White Column Hall.

Video - 1) [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146318/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146318/)

2) <http://topspb.tv/news/news94230/>



Vladimir-Suzdal Museum-Reserve opened the exhibition "Genius proportionate Beauty", dedicated to the 240 anniversary of the birth of architect Carlo Rossi. Largely thanks to him Petersburg has found a new face, becoming the center of a huge Empire. There are dozens of items connected with the name of the architect. Drawings, models of buildings in the city on the Neva, models and pieces of decor. Carlo Rossi, the son of a Venetian nobleman, known as the most prominent representative of high classicism. Before the war of 1812 he worked in Moscow, then - in the county-



level cities in 1816 entered the St. Petersburg Committee for Construction and Water Works. And soon he became the chief architect of the capital. Each of his creations is a masterpiece. For example, the Alexandrinsky Theatre - part of a splendid ensemble of the street that now bears the name of Rossi.

Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146585/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146585/)



Another coin from the series "Imperial Fabergé Eggs" was released on the numismatic market. This one devoted to the egg given by Emperor Nicholas II to his wife at Easter 1911. It's called "The fifteenth anniversary of the reign." It is decorated with miniature portraits of the Imperial family (7 pcs.), As well as images that displays important events in their life (9 pcs.).



In Gatchina Museum Reserve one can learn how to celebrate Christmas at the court of Emperor Alexander III. There is an exhibition dedicated to the Christmas holidays. In the center of the exhibition - a Christmas tree, decorated with antique toys from the collection of the Museum-Reserve.

"At the end of the XIX century it was such a tradition - the tree itself was a gift for the children. It was decorated with honey cakes, marzipan figurines, nuts, which were wrapped in gold or silver paper. The children could not wait when they will be able to taste it all - in the truest sense of the word eat the tree", - told the researcher of the Gatchina Palace Museum Anna Horoshilova.

The Emperor and his family lived in Gatchina Palace throughout the year, so the preparation for Christmas began long before the holiday, choosing decorations - glass, papier-mâché and wood - and then hung them on the tree, always in a strict order: top - a star, and then - the angels. On the third day after Christmas the toys were removed from the tree. The children of the Emperor handed them to children from families of workers. The Emperor sent Christmas gifts to several thousands of people of different ranks and classes. And on all was cards attached to the gifts with Alexander III and his wife signed personally.

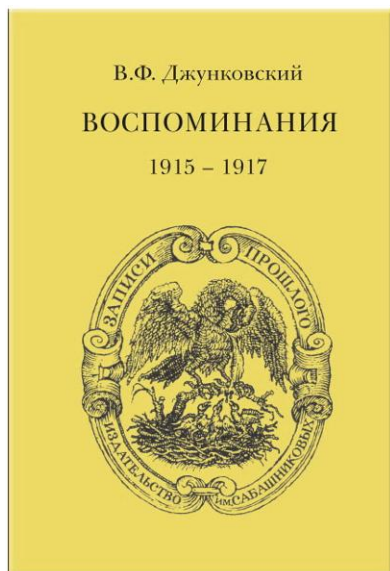
Video - [http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article\\_id/146663/](http://tvkultura.ru/article/show/article_id/146663/)



Auction House Christie's will no longer hold specialized Russian trading in New York. Due to the fact that the last auction of Russian art at Christie's in London were weaker than ever, the auction house decided to cancel the special auction of Russian applied art in New York.

Auction house Sotheby's also after several years have decided to abandon the sale of Russian paintings in New York, but continues to include the works of Russian art in the international trading.

"This strategy has its own meaning, as silver and enamel are of interest not only to Russian buyers, but also Europeans and Americans" - said Deputy General Director of Sotheby's Russia and CIS Irina Stepanova.



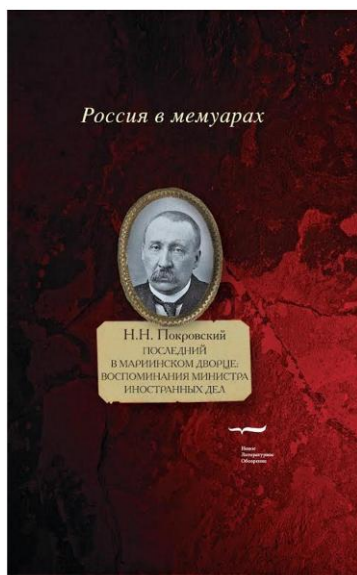
### **Memoirs of V.F. Dzhunkovsky 1915-1917**

In 2015, there is the 150th birth anniversary of V.F. Dzhunkovsky (1865-1938), the suite of Major-General, Governor of Moscow (1905-1913), Deputy Minister of the Interior and the commander of the Gendarme Corps (1913-1915).

In August 1915, V.F. Dzhunkovsky was removed from service on the personal instructions of Emperor Nicholas II, after he presented to the Emperor a note which detailed the ugly facts about the activities of Rasputin.

In the fall of 1915 Dzhunkovsky joined the army and commanded a division, and then the 3rd Siberian Corps, continuing to keep a diary, which became the basis of his memories of 1915-1917. Western Front, intense fighting near Naroch, February and October revolutions, the fall of the monarchy and the collapse of the army, and then by the collapse of the country - all this documented by the eyewitness and direct participant in the events.

*Publisher: Sabashnikov, Moscow. Hardcover + book jacket, size 145 x 215 mm, 728 pages. ISBN: 978-5-8242-0143-7*



### **Last in the Mariinsky Palace: Memoirs of the Foreign Minister**

It is reader's memoirs, written not only by a statesman, but "the scientist in power", prone to confide impartial party doctrine of the data of historical experience. About Nikolai Nikolaevich Pokrovsky (1865-1930) contemporaries spoke as a person of high intellectual, business and moral qualities. He is a lawyer by education and economist by vocation, he had to serve in the various higher (the Committee and the Council of Ministers, the Council of State) and central (Ministry of Finance, the State Audit Office, Ministry of Foreign Affairs), government agencies, and the peak of his career was in 1916, Minister of Foreign Affairs. Detailed chronicle of the last year of the Imperial power, especially the final three days, supplemented with sharp features of Nicholas II and members of the House of Romanov, Royal officials - prime ministers, members of the Council of Ministers, as well as the opposition and public figures. Pokrovsky left the seat of government (Mariinsky Palace) one of the last, and wrote in his memoirs: "Everything that was in my power, I did ...".

*Publisher: New Literary Review, Moscow. Hard cover, Size 145 x 215 mm, 488 pages. ISBN: 978-5-4448-0502-2*



Under the hammer...

**Romanov related items in Auctions**



**Stockholms Auktionsverk, Stockholm, Sweden, on 3 December**

Portrait of Emperor Nicholas II in the uniform of a colonel of the Preobrazhensky Regiment.

Signed V. Damishev and dated 1896. Oil on canvas, 94 x 72 cm.

According to the family of the previous owner, this portrait hung in the Imperial Russian Embassy in Constantinople.

Estimate: 75-100.000 Skr



**Bukowski's, Helsinki, Finland, on 9 December**

A St. Anne's cavalry sword. Russian pattern 1881/1909.

Bras grip with Russian inscription For Bravery and Nicholas II monogram.

Pommel with St. Anne's cross. Length 104 cm. Blade 85,5 cm.

Estimate: 5.000 Eur

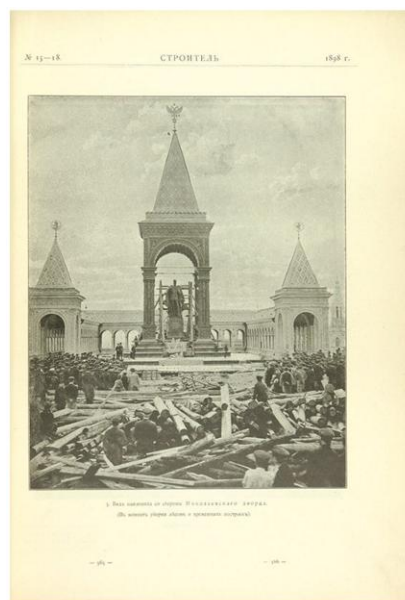
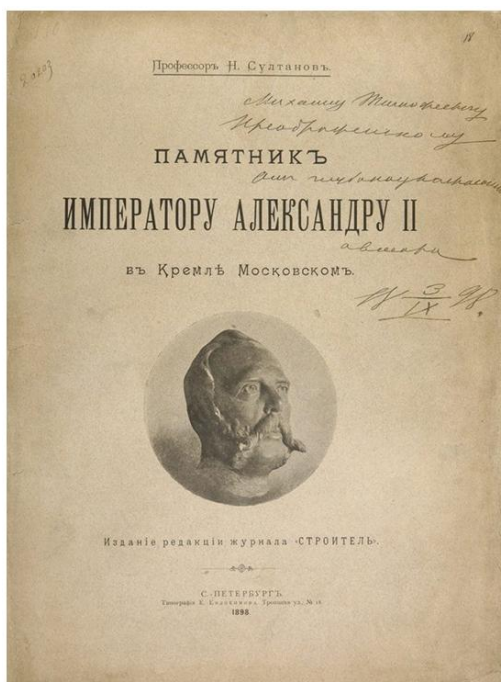


**ADER Nordmann, Paris, France, on 10 December**

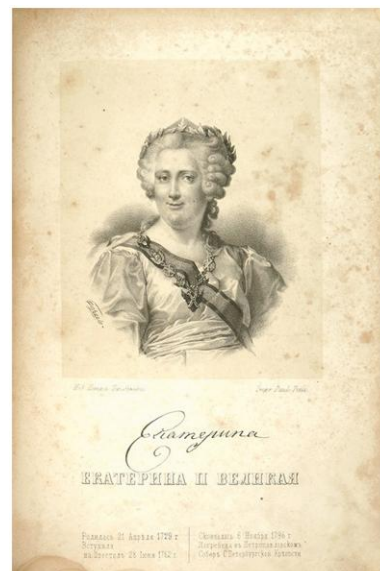
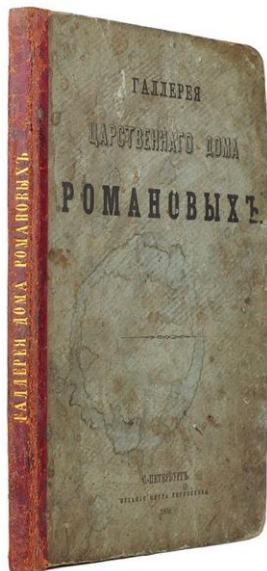
Portrait of Empress Alexandra Feodorovna. Chromolithograph published by Sytin in Moscow in 1913. On the back an oval stamp in purple ink: "On behalf of H.H. Grand Duchess Elisaveta Fedorovna." Size 43 x 31 cm. Estimate: 150 Eur.

**House of antique books in Nikitsky, Moscow, Russia, on 29 January**

Monument to Emperor Alexander II in the Moscow Kremlin. By H. Sultanov, ed. by G.V. Baranovsky. Petersburg. 1898. Reprint from the magazine "Builder". 5 chromolit. 34.3 x 25.5 cm. On the front cover the author's autograph to famous Russian architect: "Mikhail Timofeyevich Preobrazhensky from the esteemed author." Estimate: 24,000 - 25,000 rubles.







"Royal Gallery of the House of Romanov". SPb. Peter Terebenev Edition, 1869. 18 Ill. 28.5 x 20.5 cm. The publication includes portraits of Russian rulers from the reign of the Romanov dynasty to Alexander II, as well as the family coat of arms of the Romanov dynasty. Under each portrait is a facsimile of the signature of the Monarch.  
Estimate: 15,000 - 16,000 rubles.

**Fritz Kunker, Berlin, Germany, on 4 February 2016**



Gold Medal 1709 of S. Yudin and B. Scott (later coinage in 1760). Bravery Medal for officers in the Battle of Poltava on June 28, 1709 (according to the Gregorian calendar on July 8, 1709). Armored bust of Peter the Great, (1682-1725) with laurel wreath and tilted back jacket // view of the battle, in the background r. the fortified town of Poltava. 51.07 mm; 74.40 g. Gold.  
Estimated price: 20,000.00 €.





Gold Medal 1714, by I. Konstantinov (later coinage), the Battle of Storkyro and taking Vasa on 19 February. Armored bust Peter the Great, (1682-1725) with laurel wreath and tilted back jacket // Victory with a laurel wreath and the Swedish flag hovers over the battlefield at Storkyro with the frozen river Kyro Älv and the village of Napo. 47,78 mm; 70.70 g. Gold.  
Estimated price: 15,000.00 €.



Gold Medal 1776 by S. Yudin and JCG Jaeger (later coinage of late 19th or early 20th century), on the 50th anniversary of the Academy of Sciences. Front, a half-length portrait Catherine II (1762-1796) with laurel wreath // Angel hovers on clouds to crown a wreath with the monogram of Empress Catherine II on a pillar, on which base is the monogram of Emperor Peter I. Three children, who give flowers to the angel and in front of them are attributes of Sciences. 52,62 mm; 69.33 g. Gold.  
Estimated price: 40,000.00 €.





Gold Medal, 1797, by C. Leberecht, on coronation of Emperor Paul I (1796-1801) in Moscow. Uniformed portrait of Paul I // Cross. 43,43 mm; 34,25 g. Estimated price: 60,000.00 €.



Gold Medal, 1854, by M. Kuchkin (presumably later coinage). Premium of Nikolaevskaya Military Academy. Bust of Grand Duke Mikhail Pavlovich I. (Younger brother of Tsar Alexander I and Nicholas I.) // Five lines text. 36,38 mm; 34.51 g. Gold. Estimated price: 15,000.00 €.





Gold medal, engraved 1880 by H. Gube. Award medal of the Imperial Institute of Law, presented to students for good behavior and achievements in science. Bust of Nicholas I (1825-1855).// Personalized Justice sitting, in her right hand a scale, in the left a book and sword, next to her a young man is reaching for the book. It includes the engraved name of a graduate. 50.89 mm; 75.94 g. Gold. Estimated price: 35,000.00 €



Gold Medal, 1889, unsigned, on the 50th anniversary of the Imperial Odessa Society for History and Archaeology. The three busts of the Emperors Alexander III, Alexander II, and Nicholas I. Around is laurel oak wreath // A round is laurel oak wreath. 46,09 mm; 43.23 g. Estimated price: 30,000.00 €



***Bruun Rasmussen, Copenhagen, Denmark, on 11 January***

Painting by Grand Duchess Olga Alexandrovna. Still life with fruit and flowers on a table top. Signed Olga. Watercolour on paper. Visible size 39 x 42 cm.  
Price est.: Dkr 10,000-15,000/ € 1,350-2,000





Did you know....



... That Paul (Paolo) Petrovich Troubetzkoy made a model for a monument to Emperor Alexander II. It was however never made in full scale.

The equestrian model of Emperor Alexander II was in 1910 made into a statuette. It is signed, dated and stamped with the foundry mark 'Paul Troubetzkoy 1910' / 'CIRE C. VALSUANI PERDUE' (on the base), painted with inventory numbers SM2851 and a paper label is inscribed 'Comitato Esecutivo per le Feste Commemorative del 1911 in Roma / Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte / Roma 1911 / 817'. It is in bronze with dark brown and black patina. 22¾ in. / 58 cm high.



It was owned by Grand Duke Nicholas Nikolaevich (1856-1929) and then by descent to Prince Nicholas Romanovich Romanoff (1922-2014), who sold it a Christie's, in Geneva, November 17, 1993.

