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# THREE CENTURIES OF EXCELLENCE



275 YEARS OF THE IMPERIAL PORCELAIN MANUFACTORY IN ST PETERSBURG



ST PETERSBURG  
PROPYLAEA ART PUBLISHERS  
2019

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## TAKING PRIDE IN PORCELAIN



The Hermitage annals have many records associated with all kinds of artistic porcelain.

The collection of porcelain is the pride of the museum. It contains unique items and famous services, produced both in Europe and in Russia. The Hermitage knowledge of porcelain, subtleties of its manufacturing and use became a source of pride with the Hermitage research work, which encompasses China and Sèvres, Berlin and Japan, Kashan and London... And last but not least, it deals with St Petersburg and its Imperial Porcelain Manufactory – the glory of Russia and a symbol of its technical, artistic and business prowess. The Hermitage preserves the best examples of what the factory's artists and craftsmen created and permanently reminds to the museum's visitors about those unique technologies of manual casting and filigree painting, for which the enterprise had been famous. The artists of the factory have retained great traditions in both quiet and most difficult years for world art as a whole and for fragile national art in particular. It was at the factory that the styles of the World of Art Society, Art Nouveau, Suprematism and Neo-Classicism got a new lease of life. The factory afforded an opportunity to create for many artists and thus added to their glory. The age-long tradition to present their recently created articles in the Winter Palace has been revived today in popular Hermitage Christmas exhibitions.

There are many brilliant episodes in our shared history. During the siege of the city porcelain production was kept alive in the Hermitage thanks to the mighty spirit of art. It was here that Mikhail Mokh painted and fired porcelain miniatures for the celebrated festivities dedicated to Alisher Navoi and Nizami Ganjavi. Fragile porcelain proved to be more durable than war.

We have coped with other disasters together, too. During the stormy period of privatization the historical collection of the factory was saved by its transfer to the Hermitage as its independent department. This episode became an example and model of cooperation between the museum and the factory.

Porcelain artists make wide use of the rich Hermitage collection: they explore it and draw inspiration from it, turning to it to improve their mastery and to develop traditions. A well-organized system has been evolved for these pursuits. The artists of the factory participate actively in the work of the Hermitage museum, contributing to its collective and individual exhibitions.

Our collaboration has also led to the emergence of another useful practice – combined projects of the state museum and private individuals. Regular contacts with the porcelain factory and its Overseeing Committee, personally with its head, Galina Tsvetkova, serve as an embodiment of joint efforts for rescuing national artistic production (the destiny of the Factory of Artistic Glass is an illustrious example) and for its steadfast revival.

We take pride in the accomplishments of the Imperial Porcelain Manufactory and wish the best of luck and further success to the entire factory team – its artists, craftsmen, owners, organizers and art patrons.

*MIKHAIL PIOTROVSKY, Director General of the State Hermitage,  
Full Member of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Full Member of the Russian  
Academy of Arts*



275  
ЛЕТ

The idea and supervision of the project  
by Tatyana Tylevich

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Text for the chapters "Imperial Porcelain: 1744–1917" and "Soviet Porcelain: 1918–91" have been compiled from materials published in the edition:  
Galina Agarkova, Natalia Petrova. *250 Years of Lomonosov Porcelain Manufactory, St Petersburg: 1744 –1994*, Moscow, 1994.

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Imperial Porcelain Manufactory Co. expresses thanks for the assistance in the preparation of the edition to  
the State Hermitage  
The State Peterhof Museum-Preserve  
The Hermitage Hotel

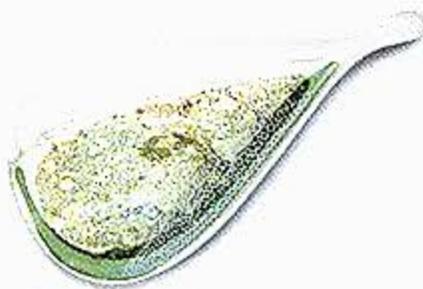
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ISBN 978-5-6043334-0-2

Printed by Diton Printing House

On p. 3: Vase: *Gossipers*. 1806–07, 2018 (plinth). Model by Pierre Thomire from a drawing by Jean-Démosthène Dugourc. Peterhof State Museum-Preserve  
On p. 8: Vase: *Russia*. 1828. Decoration by Denis Moreau, shape by François Davignon. State Hermitage





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**THREE CENTURIES OF EXCELLENCE**  
*275 Years of the Imperial Porcelain Manufactory in St Petersburg*

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**ISBN 978-5-6043334-0-2**

Printed by Diton Printing House  
Lit. M, 60, Bolshoy Sampsonievsky Prospekt, St Petersburg  
Order No 0276B



This publication is timed to coincide with the 275th anniversary of the Imperial Porcelain Manufactory, the earliest porcelain enterprise of Russia. In the course of a little less than three centuries the factory has remained a generally recognized centre of Russian porcelain art. The works created at this enterprise in different historical periods are the pride of museums and private collections in Russia and abroad.

This art book offers a survey of the most significant periods in the history of the enterprise from the date of its foundation to the present time. The texts are accompanied by lavish and colourful illustrative material providing a vivid glimpse of the birth, development and preservation of the traditions of Russian artistic porcelain. Amply represented in the volume are works by contemporary artists of the Imperial Porcelain Manufactory, some part of which are published here for the first time.