



EXHIBITION

THE TSARS' PORCELAIN

THE ERA OF THE ROMANOVS IN PALACE SERVICES

24 October – 24 November 2023
The National Museum of Serbia





THE HERMITAGE DAYS IN SERBIA



Република Србија
Министарство културе

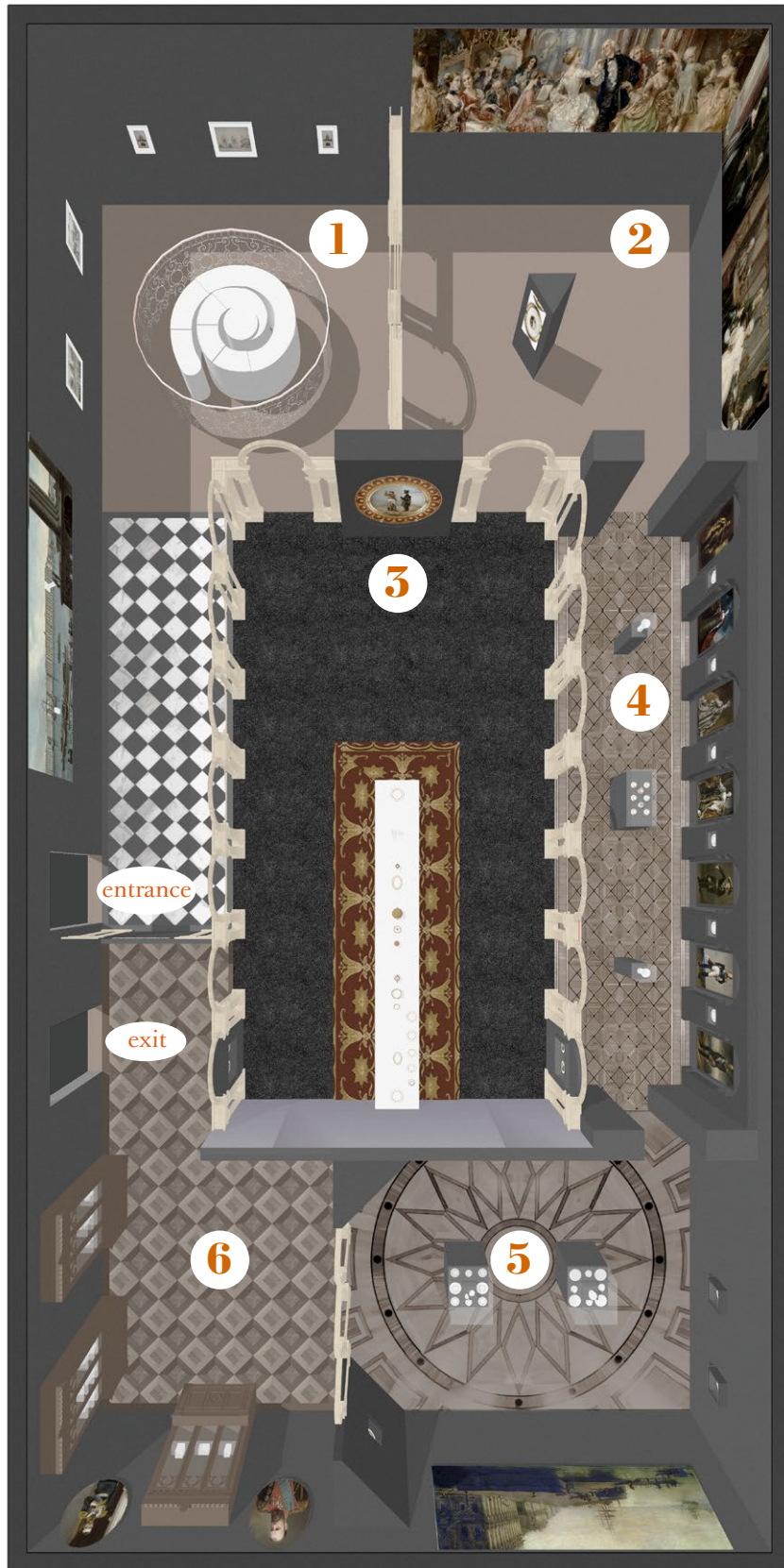
ГОСУДАРСТВЕННЫЙ
ЭРМИТАЖ
The State Hermitage Museum



НАРОДНИ
МУЗЕЈ
СРБИЈЕ



EXHIBITION SCHEME





THE TSARS' PORCELAIN



The exhibition “The Tsars’ Porcelain. The Era of the Romanovs in Palace Services”, held at the National Museum during the Days of the Hermitage in Serbia, features the “Imperial services” collection. Artistic porcelain is presented as the heritage of imperial Russia of the 18th – early 20th centuries. These masterpieces are shown in the context of the history, culture and art of the country itself under the Romanov dynasty.

The core of the exhibition consists of services recreated from the famous historical originals used at banquets, receptions and celebrations held by the royal family at the Winter Palace and their other residences. These wonderful items from the Hermitage collection have been precisely reproduced or artistically interpreted by professional sculptors and artists of the Imperial Porcelain Manufactory in St. Petersburg.

Along with the palace services, the exhibition features ceremonial portraits of the Russian sovereigns, majestic panoramas of St. Petersburg, and depictions of the Tsars’ residences and palace banquets. The media versions of classic paintings allow visitors to get a sense of the spirit of the age and immerse themselves in the special Hermitage atmosphere, which is also evoked by the exhibition’s unusual architectural design, stylized to resemble the museum’s interiors.

Services displayed at the “Tsars’ Porcelain” exhibition:

Elizabeth Petrovna (1741–1761)

The “Elizabeth”, “Own” and “Rendezvous” services. Their prototypes are Elizabeth Petrovna’s own services, which were intended for the monarch’s personal use.

Alexander I (1801–1825)

The “Guryev” (“Russian”) and “Belvedere” service ensembles. The “Guryev” service was designed for breakfast or the final part of banquets during celebrations at the Russian imperial court. The “Belvedere” service was named after the place where the historical “Babigon table and dessert service” was used, the Belvedere palace.

Nicholas I (1825–1855)

The “Cottage” and “Gothic” services were recreated on the basis of museum items from the “Own service of the Cottage Palace”, which was used in the palace of the same name at the Alexandria Park in Peterhof.

Alexander II (1855–1881)

The “Banquet” service was made for the wedding of Grand Prince Alexander Alexandrovich. The “Sea Power” service in the Russian style was based on the ceremonial service for the “Derzhava” yacht, one of the so-called “yacht” services used on the emperor’s pleasure ships.

Alexander III (1881–1894) and Nicholas II (1894–1917)

The “Raphael” service, decorated with motifs from the Raphael loggias in the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg, was used during the reigns of the last two Russian emperors.



1.1 “ELIZABETH” SERVICE

Russia, St. Petersburg
 Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
 Painting and sculptural decoration
 (2013-2014) based on motifs of the
 Own table and dessert service of Em-
 press Elizabeth Petrovna (1756–1762)
 Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
 painting, gilding, pinstriping



The tradition of manufacturing Russian palace services from porcelain has its origin in the first table and dessert service made at the Petersburg manufactory – the Own service of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna, designed for the sovereign’s personal use. Initially, “Her Highness’s Own” service was intended for 25 people. In the era of classicism, the set was not used because of changes in artistic taste. It was taken out of the Service storerooms of the Winter Palace during the reign of Nicholas I, when in 1838 the Petersburg manufactory received a commission to create additional items to replace lost ones, and new forms with the same decoration.

1.2 “OWN” SERVICE

Russia, St. Petersburg
 Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
 Form and painting (2010) after
 the Own tea service of Empress
 Elizabeth Petrovna (1759-1762)
 Form and painting (2010) after
 the Own tea service of
 Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
 painting, gilding, polishing



The painting of the items of the Own tea service of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna features an alternation of hanging garlands of forget-me-nots and roses. The decoration has an effective gilded background, which completely covers the surface of the items. The tops of the lids are sculptured rosebuds. The handles of the cups imitate the natural shape of a green stem with leaves.

1.3 “RENDEZVOUS” SERVICE

Russia, St. Petersburg
 Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
 Painting (2021) based on motifs
 of the Service with blue and gold
 stripes (1916 based on prototypes
 of the 1760s)
 Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
 painting, gilding, pinstripping



The “striped” painting on the porcelain imitates popular 18th century patterns on fabrics, which is why this ornament is called “damask decoration”. The painting also includes medallions with depictions of flower bouquets on a blue background, in which large purple roses stand out.

1.4 “YELLOW CRESTED COCKATOO” AND “MOLUCCAN COCKATOO” SCULPTURES

Russia, St. Petersburg
 Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
 Sculptor G. A. Belash (2011)
 Bisque



The ceremonial serving of Russian porcelain ensembles of the second half of the 18th century, in accordance with European tradition, always included the sculptural surtout de table, which provided table decoration.

In the times of Empress Elizabeth Petrovna, the so-called “French serving” was established in the palace household, when all the announced dishes were served at the same time. Each course was served in this way, from main courses to dessert; the dishes were placed on the table, following a predetermined serving system. Usually there were four courses: entrées, soup, the main course and dessert; each of the courses included many dishes. Complex table compositions could take the form of an imperial crown or monogram, shells or spirals, or other figurative designs.



GATHERING THE GREAT, PAUL I

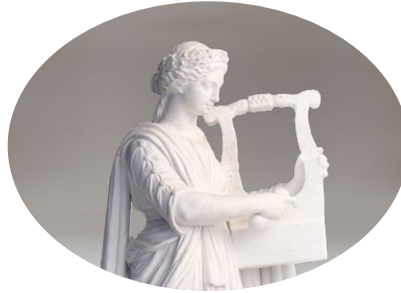


2

3D PRESENTATION



LIQUEUR HOLDER
FROM THE CABINET
SERVICE



"GRATO" SCULPTURE



BOTTLE HOLDER
FROM THE YUSUPOV
SERVICE



TRAMBLEUSE CUP
WITH LID AND DISH



CUP WITH DISH





GATHERING THE GREAT, PAUL I



LIQUEUR GLASS
HOLDER FROM THE
CABINET SERVICE



DISH WITH LID FROM
THE EVERYDAY
SERVICE



POTPOURRI VASE
WITH LID



KVASSNIK WITH LID



TSERKING WITH LID ON A TRAY
FROM THE CABINET SERVICE

3.1 “GURYEV” SERVICE

Russia, St. Petersburg
 Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
 Painting (2022) based on motifs of the
 Guryev (Russian) service (1809-1816)
 Form of items of the tea service after
 the Own service of the Cottage Palace
 (1827-1829)
 Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
 painting, gilding, pinstriping



The Guryev (Russian) service was used for setting breakfast tables or at the final part of banquets during festivities at the imperial court. The original set was created in 1809-1816. As batches of items were produced, they were delivered to the Service Storerooms of the Winter Palace. In 1848, by order of Emperor Nicholas I, this porcelain ensemble was moved to the Service Storerooms of the Peterhof Palace administration. The service continued to grow, and new items replaced damaged ones, until the beginning of the 20th century. A large number of items in the service were manufactured in 1857-1859. After the 1917 revolution, the Guryev service remained in the collection of the nationalized Peterhof palace and park complex. At present, the main part of the service is exhibited in the Catherine Building, part of the Monplaisir ensemble.

Under Emperor Alexander I, from the 1810s the so-called “Russian serving”, more convenient and practical, began to be used in serving banquets. Guests were seated at the table on which there was nothing edible except fruit – which were in fact part of the decoration, along with the flowers. During the meal, courses was served in a planned order, warm and fresh, thus emphasizing the quality of the taste sensations.



3.2

PLATES WITH ARCHITECTURAL AND LANDSCAPE VIEWS

Russia, St. Petersburg
Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
Paintings (2020) based on the dessert
plates from the Babigon service (1824)
Porcelain; overglaze polychrome paint-
ing, gilding, pinstriping



The table and dessert set for 100 persons (“painted with pearl and gold”) was created for the Great Peterhof Palace. It consists of 1,500 items of various forms, and the main element of decoration is an ornamental belt: on a greyish-purple background, golden garlands of large stylized leaves are framed by narrow crimson stripes. The dessert plates feature pictures of suburban palaces and parks, as well as portraits of members of the imperial family. Items of the dessert set are decorated with sculptures of gods of antiquity. The name Babigon appeared in 1857-1858, when the service was transferred to the new “Babigon Pavilion” built near Peterhof, reminiscent of the ancient Greek temple of Erechtheion in Athens (after a design made personally by Emperor Nicholas I; architect A. I. Stackenschneider). Traditionally, a porcelain set was made for each new palace in Peterhof.

4.1 “GOTHIC” SERVICE

Russia, St. Petersburg
 Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
 Painting (2009) based on motifs
 of the Gothic service (1832)
 Form based on the Own service
 of the Cottage Palace (1827–1829)
 Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
 painting, gilding, pinstriping



On the Christmas of 1833, Emperor Nicholas I was presented with the Gothic service, which uses motifs of the ornamentation of Medieval stained glass in its decoration. This set was designed for 150 persons, and by the late 19th century it had increased in size to serve 200 persons. It was supplemented with additional items over the years, and not only at the imperial manufactory, but also at the private porcelain manufactory of the Kornilov Brothers in St. Petersburg. The Gothic service was used for ceremonial receptions until the early 20th century. For example, this ensemble decorated the banquet during the famous masked ball held at the Winter Palace in February 1903.

4.2 VASES FROM THE “GOTHIC” SERVICE

Russia, St. Petersburg
 Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
 Painting (2020) based on motifs
 of works from the first half of the
 19th century
 Form based on a model from the first
 half of the 19th century
 Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
 painting, gilding, pinstriping



- (1) “Flower Kaleidoscope” vase
- (2) “Flowers of Alexandria” vase

4.3 DECORATIVE PLATES FROM THE “GOTHIC” SERIES

Russia, St. Petersburg
 Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
 Painting (2010s) after the dessert
 plates of the Own
 service of the Cottage Palace (1831)
 Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
 decoration, gilding



The “Gothic plates for dessert” were made in 1831 in addition to the main set of the Own service for the Cottage Palace at the Alexandria Park in Peterhof, manufactured in 1829. The palace, designed by architect A. A. Menelas, was a present from Emperor Nicholas I to his wife, Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna. The service, also in the Neogothic style, consisted of table, dessert and tea sets, and numbered 530 items. In 1835 the number of items was doubled.

5.1 “SEA POWER” SERVICE

Russia, St. Petersburg
Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
Painting (2019) based on motifs
of the Ceremonial service of the “Derzhava” imperial yacht (1871-1878)
Form (2013) after the model of the
Banquet service of Grand Prince
Alexander Alexandrovich (1866)
Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
painting, gilding, pinstriping



Built at the New Admiralty in St. Petersburg, the “Derzhava” imperial yacht was launched in 1874 and designed for use in the Baltic Sea. The interiors of the yacht for Emperor Alexander II and Empress Maria Alexandrovna were designed by the court architect and professor of the Imperial Academy of Arts I.A. Monighetti. He also designed the ceremonial yacht service in the “Russian” style for 30 persons, manufactured in 1871-1878. The ornamental decoration includes state and maritime symbols: the initials of Emperor Alexander II, the imperial orb, a depiction of the Russian two-headed eagle, nautical ropes, chains and anchors.

5.2 DECORATIVE PLATES FROM THE “SEA POWER” SERIES

Russia, St. Petersburg
Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
Painting (2019) based on motifs
of a work by A. K. Beggrov
Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
painting, gilding, polishing

- 5.2.1 “Alexandria” dish
- 5.2.2 “Standard” dish
- 5.2.3 “Friendship” dish
- 5.2.4 “Polar Star” dish
- 5.2.5 “Derzhava” dish
- 5.2.6 “Livadiya” dish



5.2.1



5.2.4



5.2.2



5.2.5



5.2.3



5.2.6

6.1 “BANQUET” SERVICE

Russia, St. Petersburg
Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
Form and painting (2013) recreated
after the Banquet Service of Grand
Prince Alexander Alexandrovich (1866)
Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
painting, gilding, polishing



In 1866, this service was made for the wedding of Grand Prince and Heir Apparent Alexander Alexandrovich (Emperor Alexander III from 1881) and the Danish Princess Dagmara, or Maria Fyodorovna in the Orthodox tradition, for the Anichkov Palace, which from that year became their official residence. The service in the neo-rococo style included table and dessert sets. The ornamental decoration in the form of a trellis that adorns all the items has its origins in famous specimens of 18th century porcelain. The dessert plates feature painted compositions dedicated to the theme of love and fertility.

6.2 “РАФАЭЛ” SERVICE

Russia, St. Petersburg
 Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
 Painting (2020) based on motifs
 of the Raphael service (1883–1903)
 Form (2013) based on the Banquet
 service of Grand Prince Alexander
 Alexandrovich (1866)
 Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
 painting, gilding, polishing



In 1883, Emperor Alexander III commissioned the Raphael service, which became one of the finest services of the Imperial Porcelain Manufactory of the 19th century. At this time in Europe, the neo-Renaissance style was very popular, and the 400th anniversary of the birth of the great Renaissance artist Raphael Santi's was celebrated. Work on the project was led by the head of the manufactory's painting workshop, the architect L. L. Schaufelberger. For the design of the service, original ornamental decorations were developed “based on the drawings of the Raphael Loggias in the Vatican”. The porcelain service, originally intended for Tsarskoe Selo, included plates, salad bowls, trays, tureens, cups and saucers. From 1883 to 1903, items from the service were presented to Emperors Alexander III and Nicholas II at Christmas. From the early 20th century the service was used at the Anichkov Palace.



6.3 MINIATURE SCULPTURE

Russia, St. Petersburg
Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
“Lovers” and “Lady with a Mask”
Copies (2012 and 2016) after models
by K. A. Somov (1905 and 1906)
“Lady with a Parrot”
Copy (2012) after a model by V. V.
Kuznetsov and N. Ya. Danko (1916)
Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
painting, gilding



The artist of the “Mir Iskusstva” (World of Art) association Konstantin Somov (1869-1939) took inspiration in his work from the culture and art of the gallant 18th century. Somov prized the “cult of beauty” above all, which he associated with a contemplative attitude to the world. The “Lovers” group stands out for its flawless silhouette and exquisite polychrome paints. Somov’s creative style is distinguished by a taste for details and individual strokes. These features can be seen in the affectedly bent fingers, the heels of miniature shoes, the costume and accessories of his sculpture “Lady with a Mask”.

The new stylistic features of art modern are also displayed by the figure “Lady with a Parrot”. They are expressed in the lyrical pose of the lady, with her head slightly inclined towards the parrot sitting on her raised hand.

6.4 “WATER CARRIER” SCULPTURE

Russia, St. Petersburg
Imperial Porcelain Manufactory
Copy (2019) after a model
by S. S. Pimenov (1820s)
Porcelain; overglaze polychrome
painting, gilding, pinstriping



The famous “Water Carrier” sculpture (or “Girl with a Shoulder Yoke”) became a kind of “calling card” of Russian porcelain sculpture from the time of Alexander I. Models of these figures were made by the graduate of the Petersburg Academy of Arts, assistant professor of sculpture Stepan Pimenov (1784/1833). Skilfully disguising the functional parts (an inkwell and sandbox are contained in the lidded buckets), the master of the empire style, focused on the beauty of the figure, using the art of antiquity as a model. The poeticization of the life of the ordinary people was reflected in the stylized “Russian” costume, the hairstyle and type of face. Since the first quarter of the 19th century, Pimenov’s popular model was frequently reproduced at the Imperial Porcelain Manufactory in Peterhof.



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