

MELBOURNE WINTER MASTERPIECES

HERMITAGE

MASTERPIECES FROM THE HERMITAGE

The Legacy of Catherine the Great

Artwork labels

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Masterpieces from the Hermitage: The Legacy of Catherine the Great

German-born Catherine the Great (Catherine II) came to power in 1762, aged thirty-three, and ruled Russia for the next thirty-four years, until her death in 1796. She saw herself as a Philosopher Queen, a new kind of ruler in the Age of Enlightenment. Guided by Europe's leading intellectuals, she modernised Russia's economy, industry and government, drawing inspiration both from Antiquity and contemporary cultural and political developments in Western Europe. A fluent speaker of Russian, French and German, Catherine was largely self-educated, independent, idealistic and visionary.

While her reign was not always peaceful, Catherine sought to bring order, stability and prosperity to the vast Russian Empire. Her ideals of abolishing serfdom and ensuring the equality of all citizens under the law were ahead of her time, and strongly resisted by the nobility of the day; however, she achieved numerous other reforms, including the introduction of paper money and modernisation of Russia's education system. French philosopher Denis Diderot, who visited St Petersburg in 1773, described an audience with Catherine as being 'more like study than anything else: she is a stranger to no subject; there is no man in the Empire who knows her nation as well as she'.

Catherine the collector

Between 1762 and 1796, the years of her reign, Catherine the Great oversaw a period of cultural renaissance in Russia. The world of ideas in which she was deeply involved from an early age found tangible expression in the material world the Empress later created around herself. The great complexes of imperial buildings Catherine constructed reflected her informed interest in both Classical and Chinese culture.

Catherine not only assembled a collection of Old Master paintings equal in scale and quality to leading European collections, but also paid considerable attention to the acquisition of contemporary art. While the richness and technical perfection of her diverse collections of decorative arts aimed to dazzle and please, they also had the more practical purpose of raising standards of artistic production in Russia. The fact that more than 400 exemplary works of art from her personal collection, including paintings, sculptures, drawings, porcelain, silver and precious gems, are seen here for the first time in Australia is cause for celebration.

Sèvres *Cameo Service*

The Sèvres *Cameo Service* relates to Catherine's great passion for collecting engraved gemstones. Comprising 797 individual pieces designed to serve dinner, dessert and coffee to sixty people, the *Cameo Service* was commissioned from the celebrated Sèvres porcelain manufactory outside Paris as a present for Catherine's court 'favourite', Prince Grigory Potemkin. The Empress's monogram, 'E II' (the Russian version of her name being Ekaterina), woven from garlands of flowers and surmounted by a crown, adorned almost every object in the service.

Production of the service was both time consuming and labour-intensive. The exquisite blue element alone – made from separate layers of copper enamel that gradually seeped into the porcelain and set the pure colour – required five firings. In addition to the hundreds of porcelain objects decorated with painted and sculpted cameos and related silverware, the service also included grand central table decorations fashioned from biscuit, or unglazed cream-coloured porcelain, by the sculptor Louis-Simon Boizot. These decorations illustrated tales from Greek mythology, and were presided over by a grand biscuit statue of Catherine the Great as Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom and the arts.

SÈVRES PORCELAIN FACTORY, Sèvres manufacturer

France est. 1756

Items from The Cameo Service

1778–79

porcelain (biscuit)

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Commissioned by Catherine II as a gift for Prince Grigory Potemkin in 1777; Potemkin's Taurida Palace, St Petersburg from 1779; transferred to the Hofmarshal's Office of the Winter Palace after his death; 1922 transferred to the State Hermitage Museum

**Further details on each item are
available online at ngv.to/sevres**



CLAUDE AUGUSTE AUBRY, Paris

manufacturer

France active 1778–79

Cutlery designed for the Cameo Service

1778–79

silver-gilt, steel, gilt-steel

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Potemkin's Taurida Palace, St Petersburg from 1779; transferred to the Hofmarshal's Office of the Winter Palace after his death; 1922 transferred to the State Hermitage Museum

SÈVRES PORCELAIN FACTORY, Sèvres
manufacturer

France est. 1756

Louis-Simon BOIZOT designer and
modeller

France 1743–1809

**Telemachus and Calypso, figure group
from the Cameo Service**

1778–79

porcelain (biscuit)

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЧ-7203

Jacques-Nicolas ROETTIERS goldsmith
France 1707–84

Pair of candelabra

1770–71

silver

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. Э-7246, Э-7247

Belonged to Prince Grigory Orlov 1770s; in the Hofmarshal's Office of the Winter Palace from 1784; 1922 transferred to the State Hermitage Museum

Louis-Joseph LENHENDRICK goldsmith
France active 1769–1783

Tureen on stand with lid and liner

1769–70

silver, gilt-silver

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no.Э 7301 a-c

Belonged to Prince Grigory Orlov 1770s; in the Hofmarshal's Office of the Winter Palace from 1784; 1922 transferred to the State Hermitage Museum

Jean Louis VOILLE

French 1744–1804

Portrait of Olga Zherebtsova

1790s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the collection of E. P. Oliv, Petrograd, 1923

Inv. no. ГЭ-565

Olga Zherebtsova was the sister of Prince Platon Zubov, a handsome young man who became one of Catherine the Great's court 'favourites' in the early 1790s. After their family fell from favour following the Empress's death in 1796, Olga and another of her brothers, Nicholas Zubov, were implicated in the assassination of Catherine's son, Emperor Paul I, in 1801.

Giovanni OTTAVIANI

Italian 1735–1808

**Moses descending Mount Sinai with
the Tablets of the Law**

1770s

hand-coloured engraving

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1820

Inv. no. OF-122703

Giovanni OTTAVIANI

Italian 1735–1808

Adam and Eve with Cain and Abel

1770s

hand-coloured engraving

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1820

Inv. no. OF-122696

Giovanni OTTAVIANI

Italian 1735–1808

Jacob's Ladder

1770s

hand-coloured engraving

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OF-122711

Giovanni OTTAVIANI

Italian 1735–1808

The three angels before Abraham

1770s

hand-coloured engraving

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OF-122698

Giovanni OTTAVIANI

Italian 1735–1808

Gaetano SAVORELLI

Italian active 1770s

Pietro CAMPARESI

Italian 1726–81

**Compositions with putti, leopards and
grapes**

1770s

hand-coloured engraving

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1820

Inv. no. OF-122735

Giovanni VOLPATO

Italian 1740–1803

Grotesques with birds

c. 1770

hand-coloured engraving

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1820

Inv. no. OF-122740

As Empress of Russia, Catherine was unable to travel to the European cities whose cultures she so admired, such as Paris and Rome, for want of time. Nevertheless, she collected a wealth of information about them to study. The accounts of travellers such as her daughter-in-law Maria Fyodorovna, who visited Rome, were supplemented by architectural drawings and books of engravings after the monuments of Antiquity and the Renaissance. A favourite book was Giovanni Volpato's volume of coloured engravings after Raphael's sixteenth-century decorations of the Loggia in the Vatican, published in Rome in 1772.

Giovanni VOLPATO

Italian 1740–1803

**Grotesques with allegories of Day and
Night**

c. 1770

hand-coloured engraving

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1820

Inv. no. OF-122757

Giovanni OTTAVIANI

Italian 1735–1808

Gaetano SAVORELLI

Italian active 1770s

Pietro CAMPARESI

Italian 1726–81

Grotesque with birds and a porcupine

1770s

hand-coloured engraving

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1820

Inv. no. OF-122732

Elizabeth Louise VIGÉE LE BRUN

French 1755–1842

Portrait of Count Grigory Ivanovich Chernyshov holding a mask

1793

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired, the State Museum Fund, 1923

Inv. no. ГЭ-7459

Count Grigory Ivanovich Chernyshov was the son of Count Ivan Grigorievich Chernyshov who, along with his brother Zhakar, had been a supporter of Catherine II during the troubled short reign of Peter III that ended with his assassination and Catherine's rise to power. Grigory Chernyshov's father was to be rewarded for his loyalty, being made Vice-President of the Admiralty in 1770.

Architecture and Antiquity

The peace that followed the Europe-wide Seven Years War (1756–63) turned Rome into a busy epicentre of archaeological excavations in the late 1760s. Marvels of ancient Roman architecture and sculpture were being unearthed in the recently discovered Pompeii and Herculaneum, to the delight of scholars and collectors alike. The fever for Antiquity struck Catherine – 3000 kilometres away – with great force. Unable to travel to Italy herself, the Empress enlisted artists of all nationalities, from gem engravers to watercolourists, to capture these Classical wonders for herself and, ultimately, for her fellow Russians.

Strange as it may seem today, taking part in the cult of Antiquity during the eighteenth century was to be at the cutting edge of culture. Catherine's interest in architecture had a great influence on Russia. Her taste developed rapidly and her collaboration with Giacomo Quarenghi, Charles Cameron and other outstanding architects led to the creation of buildings that marked the pinnacle of eighteenth-century neoclassicism. During Catherine's reign the grand complex of buildings today known collectively as the Hermitage were systematically constructed along the banks of the Neva River in St Petersburg.

Benjamin PATERSEN

Swedish 1750–1815

**The embankment on Vasilyevsky Island
by the Academy of Fine Arts**

c. 1799

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Transferred from the State Russian Museum, Leningrad, 1950

Inv. no. ЭРЖ-1901

Charles CAMERON

English 1745–1812

**Design for the wall finish in the
Chinese Room in the Palace at
Tsarskoe Selo**

early 1780s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OR-11029

Acquired from Charles Cameron's descendants in London, as part of Cameron's archives, 1822

Charles CAMERON

English 1745–1812

Design for the interior finishes of the Lyons Drawing Room in the Catherine Palace at Tsarskoe Selo

early 1780s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-10975

Acquired from Charles Cameron's descendants in London as part of Cameron's archives, 1822

From her predecessor Empress Elizabeth I, Catherine inherited the Rococo palace at Tsarskoe Selo, twenty-five kilometres outside of St Petersburg, a summer retreat for Russian rulers designed by court architect Bartolomeo Rastrelli. Finding this palace too ornate for her taste, Catherine commissioned English architect Charles Cameron, a renowned expert on the architecture of ancient Rome, to design new private apartments for her within the palace complex.

UNKNOWN, (English)

**Design for a wall finish with
arabesques and trelliswork**

1770s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-11062

Giacomo QUARENGHI

Italian 1744–1817

Plan of the Exchange

1783

pen and ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from Giulio Quarenghi in 1818

Inv. no. OP-9717

Giacomo QUARENGHI

Italian 1744–1817

Façade of the Exchange

1783

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from Giulio Quarenghi in 1818

Inv. no. OP-10507

Benjamin PATERSEN

Swedish 1750–1815

**St Isaac's Pontoon Bridge and Senate
Square from Vasilyevsky Island**

1794

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Transferred from the State Russian Museum, Leningrad, 1950

Inv. no. ЭРЖ-1669

Jean Baltazar DE LA TRAVERS

French 1752– after 1808

View of the Park at Tsarskoe Selo

1786

watercolour, gouache

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-43895

Georg (Yury) VELTEN

Russian 1730–1801

Plan of the Chesma Palace

c. 1774

pen and ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-4514

Georg (Yury) VELTEN

Russian 1730–1801

Façade of the Chesma Palace

c. 1774

pen and ink, grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-45151

Catherine the Great commissioned the Chesma Palace in St Petersburg from her court architect Georg (Yury) Velten as a monument to commemorate the July 1770 naval Battle of Chesma. A defining moment in the Russo-Turkish War, which had begun in 1768, this was the greatest naval defeat suffered by the Ottoman Empire since the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. Russia's victory granted its fleet access to the Aegean.

Benjamin PATERSEN

Swedish 1750–1815

**View of Sennaya Square (the
Haymarket)**

before 1797

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Transferred from the State Russian Museum, Leningrad, 1950

Inv. no. ЭРЖ-1904

Charles CAMERON

English 1745–1812

The Cameron Baths. Section of the Hanging Garden and the Cold Bath Pavilion

early 1780s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OR-11047

Acquired from Charles Cameron's descendants in London as part of Cameron's archives, 1822

An English architect of Scottish heritage, Charles Cameron travelled to Rome in 1768 to study ancient architecture, specifically the design of ancient Roman baths. In 1772 he published *The Baths of the Romans*, and in 1779 was invited to St Petersburg specifically to reconstruct Catherine the Great's private apartments at her summer residence, Tsarskoe Selo, in the Roman manner. His design included a modern version of Roman baths, a hanging garden and colonnaded gallery.

Pavel Lavrentyevich UCHITELEV

Russian active 1790s –1800s

View of the façade of the Agate Rooms at Tsarskoe Selo

1790s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-11071

Acquired from Charles Cameron's descendants in London as part of Cameron's archives, 1822

Charles CAMERON

English 1745–1812

Section of the staircase in the Agate Pavilion at Tsarskoe Selo

early 1780s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-10990

Acquired from Charles Cameron's descendants in London as part of Cameron's archives, 1822

As part of his redesign of Catherine the Great's private apartments at her summer residence, Tsarskoe Selo, Charles Cameron designed a spectacular suite of three rooms, named the Agate Pavilion. These rooms were decorated with jasper, with red agate features.

Marie-Anne COLLOT

French 1748–1821

Voltaire

1770s

marble

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist, 1778

Inv. no. H.ок. 3

Alexander ROSLIN

Swedish 1718–93

Portrait of Catherine II

1776–77

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist, 1777

Inv. no. ГЭ-1316

In 1776 the celebrated Swedish artist Alexander Roslin, who had spent much of his life in France, arrived in St Petersburg at Catherine the Great's invitation. Catherine posed for him in one of her 'Slavonic' dresses, fastened with a diamond buckle by the jeweller Jérémie Pauzié. In her right hand is the sceptre set with the famous Orlov Diamond, which she stretches out towards the bust of her predecessor Peter the Great (Peter I, reigned 1682–1725) in a meaningful indication of her intention to follow his path. Peter the Great founded the new city of St Petersburg in 1703.

Marie-Anne COLLOT

French 1748–1821

Denis Diderot

1772

marble

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist, 1770s

Inv. no. H.ок. 2

Denis Diderot was an established friend of the sculptor Marie-Anne Collot, who had sculpted an earlier portrait of him in terracotta. A model (or cast) of this terracotta was in Collot's luggage when she went to Russia with her teacher, the sculptor Étienne-Maurice Falconet. The portrait was intended as a substitute for the impatient Empress who was anxiously awaiting Diderot's own arrival in St Petersburg (despite the writer's reluctance to make the journey). Falconet wrote to Catherine, assuring her that 'Mlle Collot has added to the realism projected by her model, made more than six years ago, everything that she could recall'.

Benjamin PATERSEN

Swedish 1750–1815

**View of the English Embankment from
Vasilyevsky Island**

1790s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Transferred from the State Russian Museum, Leningrad, 1950

Inv. no. ЭРЖ-1668

Giacomo QUARENGHI

Italian 1744–1817

**Museum halls over the stables of the
Winter Palace. Longitudinal section and
plan**

early 1800s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from Giulio Quarenghi in 1818

Inv. no. OP-9698

Giacomo QUARENGHI

Italian 1744–1817

Cross-section of the Gallery by the Hanging Garden

early 1800s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from Giulio Quarenghi in 1818

Inv. no. OP-9701

The Hanging Garden, next to the Winter Palace in St Petersburg, was designed by Vallin de la Mothe in the early 1760s and constructed under the supervision of Georg (Yury) Velten. In 1765 a two-storey pavilion designed by Velten was added to the south-east side of the Hanging Garden.

Giacomo QUARENGHI

Italian 1744–1817

**Cross-section of the Hermitage
Theatre**

1780s

pen and ink, grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from Giulio Quarenghi in 1818

Inv. no. OP-9630

Giacomo QUARENGHI

Italian 1744–1817

Longitudinal section of the Hermitage Theatre

1780s

pen and ink, grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from Giulio Quarenghi in 1818

Inv. no. OP-9629

Between 1783 and 1787 the Italian architect Giacomo Quarenghi constructed the Hermitage Theatre for Catherine. This was designed in the Palladian manner, a neoclassical form of architecture inspired by earlier classicising works of Venetian architect Andrea Palladio. The Hermitage Theatre could seat 250, and numerous productions were staged there during Catherine's reign. The new theatre superbly embodied the ambitions of Catherine the dramatist, who wrote more than two dozen plays and operas, as well as Russia's first children's literature, dozens of essays on Russian history, politics, linguistics and education and three autobiographies, in addition to thousands of letters.

Giacomo QUARENGHI

Italian 1744–1817

Façade of the Hermitage Theatre

1780s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from Giulio Quarenghi in 1818

Inv. no. OP-9626

Johann Georg MAYR

German 1760–1816

View of Palace Embankment from the Spit of Vasilyevsky Island

1796

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Transferred from the State Russian Museum, Leningrad, 1953

Inv. ЭРЖ-2219

Catherine's passion for modernising architecture in Russia led to the commission of many new architectural projects. As she wrote to her philosopher friend Baron Friedrich Melchior von Grimm in 1779: 'Our mania for building is stronger than ever. It is a diabolical thing. It consumes money and the more you build, the more you want to build'. Catherine initially constructed the Small Hermitage as a place for private retreat (hermitage) from the bustle of court life. Later it expanded into the Great Hermitage in order to house her rapidly expanding art collections, creating a majestic suite of buildings along the Neva River in St Petersburg.

Giacomo QUARENGHI

Italian 1744–1817

Design for the interior finishes of the Hermitage Picture Gallery

early 1800s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from Giulio Quarenghi in 1818

Inv. no. OP-9699

Construction of a neoclassical building next to the Small Hermitage began in 1771. Designed by Georg (Yury) Velten and intended to house Catherine's painting collections and library, this new building became known as the Great Hermitage. After arriving from Italy in 1779, Giacomo Quarenghi also worked on this project. Visitors were granted entry to the Hermitage galleries by the professor of the Academy of Arts and given a printed catalogue of the thousands of works on display, the first version of which was published in 1774.

Georg (Yury) VELTEN

Russian 1730–1801

Main Façade of the north pavilion of the Small Hermitage

1770s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired in 2010

Inv. no.OP-48751

On ascending the throne, Catherine the Great inherited St Petersburg's huge Winter Palace; a 1000-room Baroque masterpiece on the bank of the Neva River, designed by Italian architect Francesco Rastrelli for Empress Elizabeth I in the 1750s. Catherine found this palace too ornate and oppressive, and ill-equipped to house her growing art collections. In 1764 the architect Georg (Yury) Velten designed a two-storey neoclassical building for Catherine, attached to the Winter Palace, where she could enjoy her paintings in a more intimate and private setting. This was enlarged by the French architect Vallin de la Mothe, into the new complex being named the Little Hermitage.

Georg (Yury) VELTEN

Russian 1730–1801

**Cross-section of the north pavilion of
the Small Hermitage**

1770s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired in 2010

Inv. no. OP-48752

Benjamin PATERSEN

Swedish 1750–1815

**View of Palace Square and the Winter
Palace from the Start of Nevsky
Prospekt**

1801

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Transferred from the State Russian Museum, Leningrad, 1950

Inv. no. ЭРЖ-1902

Konstantin UKHTOMSKY

Russian 1818–81

The Raphael Loggia

1860

watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the author in 1860

Inv. no. OP-11741

Between 1783 and 1789 Catherine's preferred Italian architect Giacomo Quarenghi designed an extension to the Great Hermitage that housed complete reproductions of the Raphael Loggias in the Vatican Palace, Rome, commissioned in 1517 by Pope Leo X. Raphael was responsible for the overall concept of the Donato Bramante-designed building, which featured scenes from Holy Scripture complemented by imaginative grotesques. Life-sized copies of the Loggia decorations were made for Catherine in Rome and installed within Quarenghi's architecture back in St Petersburg.

Giovanni VOLPATO

Italian 1740–1803

Pietro CAMPORESI (after)

The Raphael Loggia in the Vatican

c. 1770

hand-coloured engraving

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1820

Inv. no. OF-122691

Engraved gems

Catherine the Great made her first acquisition of engraved gems in 1763, in the second year of her reign, and her interest in these objects soon developed into what she called 'an imperial affair'. The Empress purchased as many important collections of engraved gems she could find. By 1790 she had acquired some 10,000 engraved gems, or cameos, dating from the fourth century BC to contemporary pieces, such the portrait displayed here of her as Minerva the Roman goddess of art and wisdom, engraved by her courtier and daughter-in-law Grand Duchess Maria Fyodorovna.

Gems that could not be acquired instead came to St Petersburg as paste and glass copies, most notably the collection made in the London workshop of James Tassie. In this manner Catherine acquired another 34,000 casts and pastes, which were meticulously catalogued and stored in specially designed cabinets filled with sliding drawers. In her youth Catherine had studied ancient Greek and Roman history and philosophy, and the gems' numerous depictions of Classical history and mythology reignited this passion. In 1785 she wrote: 'God knows how much pleasure there is in touching all this every day; they contain an endless source of all sorts of knowledge'.

Various scenes and portraits

early 16th – late 18th century

glass, gilded paper, rock crystal, sardonyx, chalceony,
cornelian, jasper, emerald, agate, diamonds, marble, gold,
silver

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1764–94

Antoine COYZEVOX

French 1640–1720

Fame riding Pegasus

early 18th century

bronze

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of A. D. Lansky, St. Petersburg, 1785

Inv. no. H.кк. 159

David ROENTGEN and workshop
cabinet maker

Germany 1743–1807

Christian MEYER cabinet maker

Germany active 1787–98

Heinrich GAMBS cabinet maker

Germany 1765–1831

RUSSIA manufacturer

Cabinet for engraved gems

1788–89

Mahogany, Oak, gilt-bronze, brass, veneer

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. Эрп 155

Antoine COYZEVOX

French 1640–1720

Mercury riding Pegasus

early 18th century

bronze

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of A. D. Lansky, St. Petersburg, 1785

Inv. no. H.ск. 158

James WYATT designer

English 1746–1813

JAMES ROACH, London (attributed to)

cabinet maker

England active 1783–90

Cabinet for casts of engraved gems

1783–88

Oak, Fir, Pine, Satinwood, Maple, Ebony, Rosewood, white
paste medallions, engraved marquetry veneer and gilded
bronze

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Commissioned by Catherine II, 1783–88

Inv. no. Эпр 342

Giuseppe MANOCCHI

Italian c. 1731–82

**The ruins of the Temple of Jupiter the
Thunderer in the Roman Forum**

1770s

watercolour, pen and ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-4498

Giuseppe MANOCCHI

Italian c. 1731–82

Architectural fantasy

1770s

watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-4503

Charles-Louis CLÉRISSEAU

French 1721–1820

Design for the paintings in the cell of Father Lesueur in the Monastery of Santissima Trinità dei Monti in Rome

1766–68

pen and black and brown ink, brown and grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist by Catherine II on 5 May 1780

Inv. no. OP-2597

Charles-Louis CLÉRISSEAU

French 1721–1820

The Colosseum

1760s

gouache, pen and ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist by Catherine II on 5 May 1780

Inv. no. OP-2571

Louis-Jean DESPREZ

French 1743–1804

Design for a Temple of Immortality.

Interior

c. 1790

pen and ink, grey wash, watercolour, gouache, gold

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Donated by the artist, 1790

Inv. no. OP-11807

Charles de WAILLY

French 1730–98

Design for a pavilion of the Sciences and the Arts in an English park (View from the side of the entrance to the Temple of Minerva). Sheet from an album

1773

pen and ink, grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-6869

Charles-Louis CLÉRISSEAU

French 1721–1820

Design for the paintings in the cell of Father Lesueur in the Monastery of Santissima Trinità dei Monti in Rome

1766–68

pen and black and brown ink, brown and grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist by Catherine II on 5 May 1780

Inv. no. OP-2598

Charles-Louis CLÉRISSEAU

French 1721–1820

Architectural fantasy (with a portico and sarcophagus)

1782

gouache, pen and brown and black ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist, 1782

Inv. no. OP-16922

Catherine the Great loved collecting images of classical ruins, and acquired some 1000 drawings of this type from French architect Charles-Louis Clérisseau. 'I am passionately interested in books on architecture; they fill my room, but even that is not enough for me', she wrote in 1776, 'Clérisseau's pictures have come in handy, for I use these drawings to decorate my boudoir in Petersburg'. Clérisseau won the Grand Prize for Architecture in Paris in 1746, after which he relocated to Italy to study classical architecture and antiquities. He remained in Italy until 1767, refining his unique repertoire of views of ancient ruins.

Charles-Louis CLÉRISSEAU

French 1721–1820

**Architectural fantasy (with a statue
of Menander)**

1782

gouache, pen and brown ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist, 1782

Inv. no. OP-43672

Charles-Louis CLÉRISSEAU

French 1721–1820

Architectural fantasy with an artist

1782

gouache, pen and brown and ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist, 1782

Inv. no. OP-16926

Italian art

When Catherine the Great began collecting European art, opportunities to acquire fine Italian Old Master paintings were already severely limited. Demand from wealthy collectors was high and the marketplace was saturated with misattributed works, some of which inevitably made their way to the Hermitage and other great collections.

Despite this, Catherine achieved great success collecting sixteenth and seventeenth century paintings, particularly from Venice, including great paintings by Titian, Paris Bordone and the enigmatic Lorenzo Lotto. These are complemented by fine examples of Roman and Florentine paintings, such as the famous *Female nude (Donna nuda)*, by an artist very close to Leonardo da Vinci. This select group of paintings beautifully illustrate developments in figurative art, portraiture and religious art in Italy from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century.

In the early years of her reign, Catherine the Great acquired en masse several large collections of drawings representing all the main European schools. This set the foundations for the current Hermitage Museum's outstanding Cabinet of Drawings. In terms of quality, Catherine's acquisitions of Italian drawings were of the highest standard. The majority of these date from the mid sixteenth to late eighteenth centuries and include many rare and precious works.

Carlo GALLI-BIBIENA

Austrian 1728–87

Interior of a hall with a caisson dome and a sculpture on a pedestal in the middle and a sculpture on a pedestal in the centre

1770s

pen and ink, grey wash and watercolour over pencil

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-206

Giuseppe VALERIANI

Italian c. 1708–62

Design for sets for the opera *Siroe*

1760

pen and brown ink, brown wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-6273

Carlo GALLI-BIBIENA

Austrian 1728–87

**Design for the interior decoration of
a library**

1770s

pen and ink, grey wash and watercolour over pencil

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-231

Domenico FETTI

Italian 1589–1623

Portrait of an actor

1620s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-153

Acquired from the collection of Baron Louis-Antoine Crozat de Thiers, Paris, 1772

Domenico Fetti was court painter to Ferdinand II Gonzaga, Duke of Mantua, when he made this striking portrait of an actor. It is thought to be Tristano Martinelli who made his fame working in the *commedia dell'arte* tradition. It is believed that Martinelli created and popularised the standard role of the Harlequin in theatre. Fetti himself was involved with the theatre in both Mantua and Venice.

Giovanni Battista PIAZZETTA

Italian 1682–1754

Rinaldo and Armida

1720s–30s

black chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP–5028

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

The tragically romantic story of Rinaldo and Armida remained popular with artists from the moment it was published by Italian poet Torquato Tasso in 1582. In this classic tale of unrequited love, the sorceress Armida kidnaps and casts a spell on the young soldier Rinaldo. She detains him in her opulent garden, where eventually he is found by his comrades who break the spell and escape. The story gave artists such as Piazzetta the opportunity to set an unashamedly romantic narrative in an idyllic landscape setting.

GUERCINO

Italian 1591–1666

The raising of Tabitha

c. 1618

pen and brown ink, brown wash, over stylus underdrawing

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-3763

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Saint Peter performed numerous miracles on his journeys while preaching throughout the Middle East. According to the Bible, when he was in Israel at the town of Joppa (current day Jaffa), the pious Tabitha fell ill and died. Her friends asked Peter for aid and he miraculously raised her from the dead. Guercino made a painting of this subject for the Archbishop of Bologna in 1618, to which this drawing is closely related. It has all the hallmarks of Guercino's finest drawings; possessing the incredible energy of a swift and assured hand as well as careful and delicately crafted details.

**Giuseppe CESARI,
called Il Cavaliere d'ARPINO**
Italian 1568–1640

The Archangel Michael
c. 1629
red and black chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-3728

Giuseppe VALERIANI

Italian c. 1708–62

**Vestibule of a palace with numerous
columns and figures**

mid 18th century

pen and ink and grey wash over pencil

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-6261

Tiburzio PASSAROTTI

Italian c. 1555–1612

Loading camels

late 16th century

pen and brown ink, brown wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-1642

Francesco PRIMATICCIO

Italian 1504–70

Jupiter, Neptune and Pluto

1541–47

pen and brown ink, brown wash, heightened with white on light brown paper, squared in black chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-7426

Domenico CAMPAGNOLA

Italian 1500–64

Cupid with a violin

c. 1517

pen and brown ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Inv. no. OP-8207

Francesco SALVIATI

Italian 1510–63

Roman soldier running

late 1540s

pen and brown and black ink, brown and grey wash,
heightened with white

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Inv. no. OP–4654

Paris BORDONE

Italian 1500–71

Portrait of a lady with a boy

mid 1530s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1774–85

Inv. no. ГЭ-70

This work by Venetian artist Paris Bordone is a typical example of formal Renaissance portraiture. Bordone's main aim was to show the high social standing of the sitters, so he painted their luxurious costumes in great detail. He draws our attention to the sumptuous sleeves of this woman's dress, her headgear resembling a turban, as well as her opulent jewellery. Bordone was one of Titian's most talented pupils whose work is characterised by a level of precision not often present in his master's work. This painting entered the Hermitage as a work by Giorgione.

Francesco FRANCIA

Italian c. 1450–1517

Sacrifice with Bacchus

1490s

pen and brown ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. No. OP-4794

Acquired from the collection of Count Charles Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Bolognese artist Francesco Francia's *Sacrifice with Bacchus* is so finely drawn and its texture so rich and beautiful that it recalls the surface of an engraved copper plate. Rapidly marking out the contours of the figures, the artist used short parallel lines and dots, mere touches with the pen, clustered more thickly in some areas to achieve an impression of volume and depth. Francia's monogram at the lower edge suggests that the drawing was a finished work intended for sale or presentation as a gift.

Luca **SIGNORELLI**

Italian 1450–1523

Study of the head of an elderly man

1480s

pen and brown ink, brown wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-7228

Luca Signorelli was a much celebrated and respected Florentine painter and draughtsman who counted Lorenzo de' Medici and Pope Sixtus IV among his many powerful patrons. This lively drawing has a great sense of realism and is probably a study from life, of which Signorelli was something of a pioneer. It seems probable that the drawing is a preparatory work for a monumental painting or fresco, and it is similar to an old man figure in one of Signorelli's famed frescoes of the Apocalypse in the Cathedral in Orvieto.

Bernardo BELLOTTO

Italian 1722–80

**View of Pirna by the Sonnenstein
Castle**

1750s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Inv. no. ГЭ-209

Francesco CAIRO

Italian 1607–65

Portrait of a poet

17th century

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of the Comte de Baudouin, Paris, 1781

Inv. no. ГЭ-38

TITIAN

Italian 1485–90–1576

Portrait of a young woman

c. 1536

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-71

Acquired from the collection of Baron Louis-Antoine Crozat de Thiers, Paris, 1772

Titian is revered for his lifelong exploration of female beauty. His sensual and erotic depictions of the female form singularly reshaped how women were represented by artists. He engaged deeply with the personalities, psychologies and characters of the women he portrayed; shaping their poses, gestures and facial expressions to suit his subject matter. The model who sat for this painting often appears in Titian's work in the guise of the goddesses Venus and Minerva or, as seen here, as an exemplar of ideal beauty who enigmatically combines nudity with a gesture of modesty.

Leonardo DA VINCI (school of)

Female nude (Donna Nuda)

early 16th century

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-110

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

This painting entered the Hermitage collection as a work by Leonardo da Vinci, but is now widely accepted to be by one of his close followers, possibly his pupil Salai. Perhaps more important is that it may be a close copy of a lost painting by Leonardo. *Female nude (Donna Nuda)* also shares some of the qualities of the famous *Mona Lisa*, c. 1503–19, in the Louvre Museum, Paris; namely the repetition of the pose, the position of her hands and the landscape setting seen behind a stone ledge in front of which the figure is set. This is the most refined of numerous variants of this composition in existence.

Domenico CAPRIOLO

Italian c. 1494–1528

Portrait of a young man

1512

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-21

Acquired from the collection of Baron Louis-Antoine Crozat de Thiers, Paris, 1772

Portrait of a young man by the Venetian master Domenico Capriolo captures the intellectual values of Renaissance art. Everything that surrounds this youth speaks of his interests, such as the church that indicates his piety; the statue of Venus that reveals his passion for Antiquity; and the folder (containing verses or drawings) that illustrates the richness of his inner world. The painting is dated 1512 and the artist's name symbolised by a medallion containing a Capreolus, or deer, which is a play on his name. Such allusions were common in Renaissance art and would have been readily understood by his contemporaries.

Lorenzo LOTTO

Italian c. 1480–1556

The Rest on the Flight into Egypt with Saint Justine

1529–30

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1774–83

Inv. no. ГЭ-2204

Lorenzo Lotto is a much admired sixteenth-century Venetian artist. *The Rest on the Flight into Egypt with Saint Justine* has the typical dynamism of Lotto's work, achieved not only through the poses, gestures and movement of the foliage, but also through his intense colour palette and the juxtaposition of resonant blues with red and yellow tones. Here, the Holy Family has been joined by Saint Justine of Padua, martyred in 304 AD, identifiable through her attribute of a sword piercing her breast. Justine was a very popular subject for artists of Northern Italy.

Giulio CAMPI

Italian c. 1508–73

Portrait of a man

1550s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-106

Acquired from the collection of Baron Louis-Antoine Crozat de Thiers, Paris, 1772

Bernardo BELLOTTO

Italian 1722–80

View of the Zwinger in Dresden

1752

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-205

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Bernardo Bellotto was the nephew of the famous Venetian artist Canaletto, with whom he trained and worked as an assistant. Bellotto was independent-minded and at an early age decided to leave the security of Venice to explore Italy and, eventually, central and northern Europe, where he found work at the courts of Vienna, Munich, Warsaw and Dresden. These travels stimulated Bellotto to develop his own distinctive images of towns and landscapes. *View of the Zwinger in Dresden* dates from his very first visit to Dresden when he was employed by Augustus II, Elector of Saxony.

GIAMBOLOGNA

Italian 1529–1608

Hercules and the Ceryneian Hind

c. 1600

bronze

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of A. D. Lansky, St. Petersburg, 1785

Inv. no. H.ск. 222

According to Greek mythology, for the third of his Twelve Labours, Hercules was charged with capturing the fleet-footed Ceryneian Hind, a beloved and sacred pet of goddess Diana. He apparently chased the animal for more than a year before subduing it. In some versions of this myth, Hercules shot the deer in the hind leg, while in others he eventually just ran it to ground. In this energetic sculpture by Giambologna, Hercules wrestles the magnificent animal, emphasising his great strength and musculature.

Luca GIORDANO

Italian 1634–1705

The Triumph of Galatea

c. 1660

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the collection of Hofrat Triebel, Berlin, 1771

Inv. no. ГЭ-9966

In the third century BC, the Greek poet Theocritus wrote of the love felt by the hairy, one-eyed Cyclops Polyphemus for the Nereid, or sea nymph, Galatea. Roman poet Ovid's epic *Metamorphoses* (8 AD) later told of how Galatea herself was deeply in love with the mortal youth Acis. Frustrated by the beautiful nymph's rejection of his affections, which he had expressed through poetry, music and extravagant gifts, Polyphemus took revenge on Galatea by crushing her beloved Acis to death with a rock. To lessen her grief, Galatea then transformed Acis's remains into a river spirit.

Guido RENI (attributed to)

Italian 1575–1642

Building of Noah's Ark

1610s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Inv. no. ГЭ-51

Giulio Cesare PROCACCINI

Italian 1570–1625

The Holy Family with John the Baptist and an angel

1620–25

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1763–74

Inv. no. ГЭ-102

Flemish art

In the seventeenth century, Flanders comprised the Catholic-dominated Southern Netherlands or 'Spanish' Austrian Netherlands, an area larger than modern Belgium. Thanks in large part to the talents of artist Peter Paul Rubens, the Flanders or 'Flemish' school in this era became very prestigious. While chiefly a painter, Rubens had far-reaching stylistic influence on many visual art forms, from prints to silverware and architecture. Every leading artist of seventeenth-century Flanders studied in, passed through or was connected with Rubens's studio.

A diplomat and court insider, Rubens operated on an international stage. His art was correspondingly monumental; characterised by large forms modelled with loose brushstrokes in glowing, brilliant colours. Rubens's pupil Anthony van Dyck and collaborator Cornelis de Vos led the way in bringing new naturalism to portraiture. While they catered to different markets (van Dyck to the nobility and de Vos to a rich merchant class) their mutual influence is apparent.

Flanders was a nation built on trade, and Flemish artists travelled widely, especially to Italy. From Italy they brought back new pictorial trends, such as the theatrical naturalism of Caravaggio. Flemish artists excelled in naturalistic effects, which they applied even to traditionally humble subjects, such as still lifes and animal pictures, seen to brilliant effect in the art of Frans Snyders and David Teniers II.

Theodor ROMBOUTS

Flemish 1597–1637

Card game

c. 1630

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1763–74

Inv. no. ГЭ-522

Inspired by the conversation pieces of Caravaggio seen on his Italian visit between 1616 and 1625, Theodor Rombouts brought back to his native Antwerp a range of novel southern subjects; including parties, card players and musicians. The subject of card players verged on the risqué in Rombout's home country. Associated with cheating and disreputable ways of life, Flemish authorities attempted to discourage the pastime through legislation. If anything, the frisson of illegality may have enhanced the popularity of Rombouts's dramatically lit scenes, which found a ready market in Ghent and made him the foremost exponent of the 'Southern Netherlandish Caravaggist' manner.

David TENIERS II

Flemish 1610–90

Village festival

1646

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of the Duke de Choiseul, Paris, 1772

Inv. no. ГЭ-594

David Teniers II lived outside Antwerp and witnessed Flemish village life and its festivals, known as *kermesses*. His paintings, which celebrated community life, were also opportunities to meditate on private morality and conduct. While the foreground of this work details various ways in which human beings satisfy their basic animal instincts, far off on the horizon a church tower serves as a constant visual reminder of spiritual life. Teniers was passionately admired for his scenes of daily life in the eighteenth century, particularly in France, and his works were found in every collector of note's cabinet.

Cornelis de VOS

Dutch/Flemish c. 1584–1651

**Self-portrait of the artist with his wife
Suzanne Cock and their children**

c. 1634

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Donated by Prince G. A. Potemkin, 1780s

Inv. no. ГЭ-623

Paul BRIL

Flemish c. 1554–1626

Sea harbour

1610–15

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1774

Inv. no. ГЭ-2593

Jacob JORDAENS

Flemish 1593–1678

Saints Paul and Barnabas in Lystra

c. 1616

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-491

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden 1769

The Acts of the Apostles (4:11-13) describe how the apostles Paul and Barnabas visited the city of Lystra to preach. While there, Paul healed a lame man. These actions triggered a riot, during which the people shouted that Paul and Barnabas were gods come to earth. They called Barnabas Zeus and Paul Hermes, the names of local cult figures. This subject has been interpreted as a Protestant critique of the Catholic veneration of saints, and Jacob Jordaens painted it many times.

Peter Paul RUBENS and workshop

Flemish 1577–1640

The Adoration of the Magi

c. 1620

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the collection of Dufresne, Amsterdam, 1770

Inv. № ГЭ-494

Rubens painted the subject of the Adoration of the Magi (Matthew 2:1) more often than any other episode from Christ's life. Rendered at life-sized scale, this painting combines the humility of Christ's birth with splendid, worldly pageantry. Three Kings from the East are shown crowding into Christ's stable (portrayed as a cave, in an allusion to Christ's later interment) wearing gold-embroidered silks and satins, and offering gifts. The eldest king, Caspar, kneels before Christ with gold; behind him is Melchior, with frankincense; and Balthazar with myrrh, used for embalming. With the help of his studio, Rubens produced more than sixty altarpieces during his career.

Peter Paul RUBENS

Flemish 1577–1640

Roman Charity (Cimon and Pero)

c. 1612

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. ГЭ-470

Roman Charity (Cimon and Pero) depicts a story told by the Roman historian Valerius Maximus in his *Factorum ac dictorum memorabilium libri IX (Nine Books of Memorable Deeds and Sayings)*, written around 30 AD. The story involves Cimon, an old man awaiting execution in prison who was not given food. Cimon's daughter Pero visited him, and suckled him at her breast like a child. Pero's nourishing of Cimon was considered an outstanding example of paying honour to one's parents.

Peter Paul RUBENS and workshop

Flemish 1577–1640

The Apostle Paul

c. 1615

oil on wood panel

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1774

Inv. no. ГЭ-489

This life-sized half-length 'portrait' of the apostle Paul is one of a series of the Apostles (minus Judas) that Rubens made in c. 1612. Each apostle was shown with an aged and highly expressive face, clearly a fiction, but consistent with Rubens's Counter-Reformation motivation to make long-distant figures of Christian tradition alive and present to contemporary believers.

Frans SNYDERS

Flemish 1579–1657

Fruit in a bowl on a red cloth

1640s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. ГЭ-612

The tradition of Flemish still life owes much to sixteenth-century Lombard painting greatly appreciated in Antwerp, where such works were held in private collections or 'cabinets'. Snyder brought a new dynamism to the genre, evident in this confection of ripe, autumnal fruit, where each component seems interlinked in a loose and natural manner. Several elements allude to the sophistication of Snyder's seventeenth-century art patrons; the blue and white Kraak or 'Wanli' dish, the black lacquer bowl and the lacquer-rimmed basket evoke the exotic cargoes that passed through Antwerp's thriving port.

Jacob JORDAENS

Flemish 1593–1678

Allegorical family portrait

1650s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Johann Gotzkowsky, Berlin, 1764

Inv. no. ГЭ-485

Jan FYT

Flemish 1611–61

Hare, fruit, and parrot

1647

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. ГЭ-616

Anthony van DYCK

Flemish 1599–1641

Family portrait

c. 1619

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from a private collection, Brussels, 1774

Inv. no. ГЭ-534

Paintings such as this established a standard of official portraiture for centuries to come. Anthony van Dyck's talent as a portraitist was evident from the first period he spent in Antwerp. Around 1618–19 he adopted the intimate family portrait style introduced by his contemporary Cornelis de Vos. The man in this group was formerly identified as the painter Frans Snyders, but is now thought to be landscape painter Jan Wildens, whom van Dyck occasionally painted and whose first child was born in August 1620.

Dutch art

The Hermitage holds the finest collection of Dutch art outside the Netherlands. While Peter the Great (1672–1725) had a passion for Dutch art and acquired some notable masterpieces, Catherine the Great established the depth and breadth of this extraordinary collection, beginning in 1764 with her first acquisitions. In that year Catherine purchased 317 paintings that had been assembled for Frederick II of Prussia by the German merchant Johann Ernst Gotzkowsky. Among this substantial group were more than 100 Dutch paintings by the most notable masters.

In 1769 Catherine purchased the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, which included spectacular landscapes by Jacob van Ruisdael, Isaack Jansz. van Ostade and Aert van der Neer, as well as four Rembrandt portraits, including the wonderful *Portrait of a scholar*, 1631. For the rest of her life Catherine continued to add outstanding Dutch works to her rich collection.

Although the paintings and drawings from the Dutch school included here are only a fragment of the extensive and diverse collection assembled by Catherine the Great, they reveal her artistic preferences and taste.

Jacob DUCK

Dutch 1600–67

Guardroom

1650s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1763–74

Inv. no. ГЭ-1060

Jacob Duck originally trained as a jeweller, reflected here by the inclusion of jewellery and the incredible level of fine detail present in such a large composition. Within the one painting, Duck creates a number of vignettes showing many aspects of a soldier's life. Viewers are drawn into the work by the high level of detail as well as by the figures looking directly back at us, conscious of being observed.

Dirck van der LISSE

Dutch 1607–69

The Rest on the Flight into Egypt

1660s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Johann Gotzkowski, Berlin, 1764

Inv. no. ГЭ-1061

Aert van der NEER

Dutch 1603/04–1677

A town by night

1650

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-925

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Aert van der Neer specialised in painting richly atmospheric nocturnal landscapes. Like many of his contemporaries, van der Neer revelled in capturing fine details, and he also excelled in conveying the effect of diminishing light in darkening skies. Although he is now considered one of the great landscape artists among a remarkably talented generation of painters that included Rembrandt, Jacob van Ruisdael, Jacob Cuyp and Salomon van Ruysdael, van der Neer achieved little success in his lifetime and died in abject poverty. By the eighteenth century, when Catherine the Great was forming her collection, his work had become highly sought after.

Ferdinand BOL

Dutch 1616–80

**Allegorical family portrait
(Bacchus and Ariadne)**

1664

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1763–74

Inv. no. ГЭ-760

Isaack Jansz. van OSTADE

Dutch 1621–49

Frozen lake

1648

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Inv. no. ГЭ-907

Jacob van RUISDAEL

Dutch 1628–82

Waterfall in Norway

1660–70

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-942

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Although Jacob van Ruisdael never visited Scandinavia, this hardly seems relevant considering this breathtaking landscape. Many of Ruisdaels's works are evocative and moody rather than attempts to capture a specific place. They usually contain great tension and drama in their endeavour to capture the raw power of nature. The buildings, people and animals here are dwarfed and there is a sense of nature's dangerous force. That the broken tree to the right will soon be swept away by the torrent reinforces that nature ultimately is uncontrollable.

Philips WOUWERMAN

Dutch 1619–68

The deer hunt

c. 1660

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of the Duke de Choiseul, Paris, 1772

Inv. no. ГЭ-1055

Works by Philips Wouwerman were greatly prized by eighteenth-century collectors. His landscapes and genre scenes were also much admired by contemporaries for their bright and decorative colouring, entertaining subjects and careful finishing. It is hardly surprising that Catherine the Great hunted down works by Wouwerman and eventually she held more than fifty of his paintings, most of them acquired as part of the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl. She continued to add to this already substantial group and paid a huge sum for *The deer hunt* in 1772.

Melchior d'HONDECOETER

Dutch 1636–95

Birds in a park

1686

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the collection of Jacques Aved, Paris, 1766

Inv. no. ГЭ-1042

REMBRANDT Harmensz. van Rijn

Dutch 1606–69

Portrait of a scholar

1631

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-744

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Rembrandt painted *Portrait of a scholar* shortly after moving from his native Leiden to Amsterdam in 1630. He had already established a growing reputation in Leiden and was enticed to the capital by the art dealer Hendrick van Uylenburgh, father of his future wife Saskia. Once completing the move, Rembrandt rapidly became the city's leading artist, mainly on account of dazzling portraits such as this early masterpiece. He then secured the most prestigious commissions from wealthy and powerful citizens of Amsterdam.

Melchior d'HONDECOETER

Dutch 1636–95

Birds in a park

1686

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the collection of Jacques Aved, Paris, 1766

Inv. no. ГЭ-1043

Maerten Fransz. van der HULFT

Dutch active 1635–46

The River Maas near Dordrecht

1643

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. ГЭ-1032

Gerrit van HONTHORST

Dutch 1592–1656

Lute player

1624

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Johann Gotzkowski, Berlin, 1764

Inv. no. ГЭ-718

Gerrit van HONTHORST

Dutch 1592–1656

A convivial fellow

1624

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Johann Gotzkowski, Berlin, 1764

Inv. no. ГЭ-717

REMBRANDT Harmensz. van Rijn

Dutch 1606–69

Young woman trying on earrings

1657

oil on wood panel

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-784

Acquired from the collection of the Comte de Baudouin, Paris, 1781

Rembrandt's range and versatility is remarkable. He not only mastered many genres but also took well-worn themes in new directions. He was particularly talented at capturing intimate and highly personal moments; in this instance he shows us the simple joy of a woman admiring her beautiful pearl earrings. Her sideways glance gives her the best view of her jewellery in the mirror, and the viewer can appreciate both the pearls and her pleasure in wearing them. In Rembrandt's hands, a seemingly unassuming moment is transformed into a very special image.

REMBRANDT Harmensz. van Rijn (workshop of)

Dutch 1606–69

Portrait of a young man in a beret

1640s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. ГЭ-761

There are few subjects in art history more hotly debated than the attribution of works by Rembrandt. Because he established the largest workshop in the history of Dutch art, profoundly affected taste in Holland and influenced most of his contemporaries, works with Rembrantesque characteristics number in the tens of thousands. Debates about his authorship are frequently made, and sadly often obscure the great quality of works no longer attributed to him. A work such as this, deeply indebted to Rembrandt in style and composition but not attributed by the master himself, is nevertheless a magnificent portrait.

Gabriel METSU

Dutch 1629–67

The doctor's visit

1660s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Jean de Jullienne, Paris, 1767

Inv. no. ГЭ-919

Gabriel Metsu belongs to the Leiden school of *fijnschilders* (fine painters) who boasted an extremely refined painting technique. Delicate detail, seen in the beautiful treatment of fabrics, and an intimate examination of Dutch life were qualities much admired by collectors, particularly in France. The subtlety of such paintings also had a strong influence on French genre painters in the eighteenth century, so it is unsurprising that Catherine acquired this work from a French collection.

Frans HALS

Flemish 1581/85–1666

Portrait of a young man holding a glove

c. 1650

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Johann Gotzkowski, Berlin, 1764

Inv. no. ГЭ-982

This painting is distinguished by Frans Hals's highly individual and seemingly spontaneous painting style which makes the sitter's facial expression lively and engaging. The lightness of touch and vibrancy that Hals brought to his work greatly influenced taste in late seventeenth-century Holland and created a shift away from the dark and introspective works of Rembrandt and his followers. Although we do not know the identity of the sitter, legend has it he was a member of the medical profession.

French taste

The Russian aristocracy spoke French and modelled their manners and style on those of the French Court. Catherine followed the vast intellectual strides of the French philosophes with passionate interest. She also embraced the arts, luring French artists, architects and craftsmen to St Petersburg.

Catherine relied on agents and advisors in France and Germany to identify and acquire works of art on her behalf. In this way she acquired the collection of Paris banker Louis Antoine Crozat, Baron de Thiers and other important bodies of work in France. Her holdings of French art came to encompass works by Renaissance masters as well as seventeenth-century landscapes and history paintings.

Catherine also acquired examples of work of her own century by Rococo artists such as Antoine Watteau. The playful, erotic and at times wistful art of Watteau's generation gave rise to the intimate and worldly art of François Boucher, whose pictures Catherine also purchased. The Empress collected modern masterpieces created in reaction to French courtly and decadent styles. Her paintings by Jean-Baptiste Siméon Chardin are premier examples of a new, moralising directness in ambitious French art.

Catherine's buying in France was not limited to French art. Also in this room are paintings by great German, Spanish and Italian masters that were acquired in Paris from prestigious collections under the direction of Catherine's French advisors.

Jean-Antoine HOUDON

French 1741–1828

Comte de Buffon

1782

marble

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist, 1782

Inv. no. H.ск. 225

Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon was a French naturalist and mathematician who revolutionised the study of natural history in the eighteenth century. He was Director of the *Jardin du Roi* (King's Garden) in Paris, a prototype both of the modern zoo and botanical gardens. Buffon's thirty-six-volume *Histoire Naturelle, générale et particulière, avec la description du Cabinet du Roi* (1749–1804) was a compendium of everything known in his day concerning the animal and bird kingdoms. His work fascinated Catherine the Great.

Charles VANLOO

French 1705–65

Sultan's wife drinking coffee

1750s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-7489

Acquired from the collection of Madame Marie-Thérèse Geoffrin, Paris, 1772

The French fascination with Turkey and the East, driven by the writings of *philosophes* such as Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* (1721), extended throughout the eighteenth century. French aristocrats acquired a passion for dressing in Oriental clothes and surrounding themselves with exotic objects, such as Turkish metal pots from which they poured the imported new luxury, coffee. The painter Charles Van Loo specialised in such subjects. In this panel he shows Madame de Pompadour, mistress of Louis XV, attired as an Ottoman Sultana in her boudoir as a servant passes her coffee.

Charles VANLOO

French 1705–65

Sultan's wife embroidering

1750s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-7490

Acquired from the collection of Madame Marie-Thérèse Geoffrin, Paris, 1772

These paintings are wonderful examples of Rococo intimism. They were commissioned by the mistress of Louis XV, Madame du Pompadour, for her Turkish-style room at Bellevue, along with a third panel of a Sultana playing a long-necked lute (now lost). The reference in the pictures to 'La Pompadour' is in itself a witty one. Jeanne Antoinette Poisson had been chosen by the king at a 'Turkish ball', at which the King cast his handkerchief at her in the manner of a sultan selecting a wife. At this signal, his court, dressed in Turkish costume, exclaimed, 'The Handkerchief is thrown!'

Antoine WATTEAU

French 1684–1721

Savoyard with a Marmot

1716

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the collection of Audran, Paris, 1774

Inv. no. ГЭ-1148

In around 1715 Antoine Watteau produced a number of remarkable studies of immigrants from the impoverished Savoy region (then part of Italy) who took up menial and itinerant occupations in the French capital. Contrary to popular trends, Watteau did not see these newcomers as members of a 'dangerous class', but portrayed them with dignity and warmth. This young Savoyard is shown earning a living by playing a flageolet which his pet marmot would dance along to, standing up on its hind legs on top of the wooden box. The scene once had a pendant of a female spinner, untraced since the nineteenth century.

François BOUCHER

French 1703–70

Landscape with a pond

1746

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-1137

Acquired from the collection of Baron Louis-Antoine Crozat de Thiers, Paris, 1772

Jean-Baptiste Siméon CHARDIN

French 1699–1779

The laundress

1730s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-1185

Acquired from the collection of Baron Louis-Antoine Crozat de Thiers, Paris, 1772

This scene of a laundress working with a female colleague nearby was once paired with another scene of woman drawing water at a cistern. Jean-Baptiste Siméon Chardin's paintings of workers reflect the influence of Dutch and Flemish genre painting, with their emphasis upon salvation through honest work. The moral subtext of Chardin's scene is reinforced by the little boy's absorption in blowing a soap bubble, a symbol of life's transience. The artist's images of children chart a remarkable shift during the Enlightenment, in which infancy came to be respected as a special phase of life to be cherished by all of society, rich and poor.

Jean-Baptiste PERRONNEAU

French 1715–83

Portrait of a boy with a book

1740s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-1270

Acquired from the collection of A. G. Teplov, St Petersburg, 1781

Jean-Baptiste Perronneau acquired great fame as a master of the pastel medium, but in the 1740s was overshadowed by the older pastellist Maurice Quentin de la Tour. This may have encouraged Perronneau to develop alternative skills as an oil painter, exemplified in this this startling portrait of a young boy with a book. The work embodies the glowing potential of infancy, a subject of great academic interest during the Enlightenment. The list of Perronneau's works shown at the Salon of 1741 records a portrait in oils, described as 'Young scholar, brother of the author, holding a book'.

Nicolas LANCRET

French 1690–1743

Concert in the park

1720s –30s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1763–74

Inv. no. ГЭ-5624

Sébastien BOURDON

French 1616–71

The death of Dido

1637–40

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-1247

Acquired from the collection of Baron Louis-Antoine Crozat de Thiers, Paris, 1772

As recounted in the Roman poet Virgil's *Aeneid* (29–19 BC), Dido was queen of Carthage on the coast of Africa, where Aeneas and other refugees from the Trojan War sought shelter. She fell in love with the Trojan leader Aeneas but, when later abandoned by him, committed suicide.

CLAUDE LORRAIN

French c. 1604/05–1682

Italian landscape

1648

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-1225

Acquired from the collection of Baron Louis-Antoine Crozat de Thiers, Paris, 1772

Claude Joseph VERNET

French 1714–89

Storm (The gust of wind)

c. 1753

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of the Comte de Baudouin, Paris, 1781

Inv. no. ГЭ-1772

Louis Le NAIN

French 1593–1648

The milkmaid's family

c. 1641

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1763–74

Inv. no. ГЭ-1152

Scholars have struggled to distinguish the works of the brothers Antoine, Louis and Mathieu Le Nain, who shared a studio; were equally attracted to Caravaggio's realism and rural subjects; and signed only with their last name. Their paintings of peasant life reflect a strand of French seventeenth-century philosophy which promoted the virtues of rural workers. While the Le Nains may have idealised the peasant, they did not idealise the French farmland, which often appears as a bleak backdrop to the human figures. The peasant woman shown here appears in a number of Le Nain's rustic scenes.

Jean-Baptiste SANTERRE

French 1651–1717

Two actresses

1699

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1768

Inv. no. ГЭ-1284

Giovanni Paolo PANINI

Italian 1691–1765

A Sybil preaching amidst Roman ruins with a statue of Apollo

1740s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1763–74

Inv. no. ГЭ-174

Giovanni Paolo Panini was an accomplished painter, architect and designer for the stage. A highly prolific artist, he is best known for his numerous views of Rome, many of which took as their inspiration remnants of the city's classical past. This work is a prime example of Panini's *capricci* –fantasy paintings of historical events set among imaginary Roman ruins. The Sybils were pagan priestesses gifted with great foresight and eagerly sought out by Roman rulers for their prophetic wisdom.

Giambattista PITTONI

Italian 1687–1767

Sacrifice of Polyxena

1730s

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-8464

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

In ancient accounts of the Trojan War the Greek hero Achilles fell in love with Polyxena, daughter of the Trojan king Priam. This led to Achilles's death at the hands of Polyxena's brother, Paris, to whom his sister had revealed Achilles's one weakness. This was Achilles's heel, which Paris fatally pierced with an arrow. As he died, Achilles demanded that Polyxena be sacrificed in revenge. Here we see the ghost of Achilles calling for Polyxena's death before his tomb.

Diego VELÁZQUEZ

Spanish 1599–1660

Luncheon

c. 1617–18

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1763–74

Inv. no. ГЭ-389

This painting by Diego Velázquez is an example of a *bodegón*, a category of still-life painting depicting pantry items and kitchen scenes which Spanish Baroque artists developed into a dazzling art form. Although *Luncheon* dates from early in Velázquez's career, when he was working in Seville, it reveals his hallmark combination of austerity and theatrical realism. Ostensibly a peasant scene, the meal that the men share has theological associations. The bread, wine and water symbolise the Eucharist and the pomegranate Christ's Resurrection. The eating of mussels is a ritual of Shrovetide, and symbolises the 'taking away of flesh' during Lent.

Bartolomé Esteban MURILLO

Spanish 1617–82

The Rest on the Flight into Egypt

c. 1655–70

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Jean-Louis de Gaignat, Paris, 1769

Inv. no. ГЭ-340

In 1769 Catherine's agent Golitsyn fought off stiff competition to buy Murillo's *Rest on the Flight into Egypt* from the collection of Louis XV's secretary, Louis-Jean Gaignatin Paris, where it was regarded as an exceptional example of Spanish art. The great French sculptor Étienne-Maurice Falconet told Catherine that it was a painting 'to speak of on one's knees'. The painting was still regarded as a particular highlight of the collection in 1811 when aspiring Russian artists are documented making copies of the painting.

Joachim von SANDRART

German 1606–88

Allegory of vanity

c .1642

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1763–74

Inv. no. ГЭ-776

Born in Germany to a wealthy and well-connected Protestant Flemish family, the talented Joachim von Sandrart joined an international set of artists that included Peter Paul Rubens and Sandrart's teacher Gerrit von Honthorst. During a visit to Italy Sandrart must have come into contact with Matthias Stomer, a Dutch painter noted for his distinctive red and livid yellow colour schemes, a palette seen here in Sandrart's *Allegory of vanity*. Sandrart had a predilection for moralising genre scenes in which he used light to illuminate human folly. This painting of a young woman preening before a mirror was part of a series of the human vices. Other pictures located from the group illustrate *Avarice*, *Gluttony* and *Jealousy*.

Catherine and the world

For Catherine the Great, collecting art was part of a wider economic and diplomatic program designed to stimulate economic and cultural activity at home and abroad. At a meeting in December 1762 with the Moscow Senate, Catherine suggested that consuls be stationed in Spain, Holland and England not only to promote maritime trade but also to source luxury goods and works of art as examples for Russian artists and manufacturers to aspire to.

Through Catherine's consuls and agents, such items began to flow into St Petersburg, steadily elevating that city into a vibrant centre of European culture. While her cultural sympathies were French, Catherine was also very curious about Britain – the economic success story of the age. She informed herself about Britain's trade, commerce, manufacturing, philosophy and political system, and purchased works by modern British neoclassical masters, such as Joseph Wright of Derby and Joshua Reynolds. Examples of Spanish, Italian and German art were often not sourced in their own countries of origin but acquired as a part of larger collections.

Jean-Antoine HOUDON

French 1741–1828

Catherine II

1773

marble

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Transferred from the Stroganov Palace, Leningrad, 1928

Inv. no. H.кк. 1676

Georg PENCZ

German c. 1500–50

Saint John the Evangelist

1525–28

charcoal

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-21

Albrecht DÜRER

German 1471–1528

Study of a seated youth holding scales

1497

pen and brown ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-16

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Study of a seated youth holding scales is a preparatory drawing for Dürer's engraving *Sol Justitiae (Christ as the Sun of Justice)*, 1499. Although this is a life drawing – indicated by the rapidly drawn outlines of the bench, and details such as the cane in the youth's left hand (used to support his outstretched arm during long periods of sitting) – there are also elements of purely Gothic expressiveness and stylisation in the facial features and anatomical structure. In strict adherence to Renaissance principles of optical illusion, Dürer concentrated the superbly soft, vivid and varied lines used to indicate the drapery folds, later transferred to the print almost without alteration.

Daniel LINDTMAYER

Swiss 1552–1604

**Stained glass design with the arms of
Rheinau**

1585

pen and brown ink and wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-4361

Jean COUSIN the younger

French c. 1525– c. 1595

Jupiter and Semele

c. 1568

pen and brown ink, violet wash over black chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-5603

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

According to the ancient Roman poet Ovid, the supreme god Jupiter's wife, Juno, was consumed with jealousy after learning that the philandering Jupiter had seduced Semele. She goaded Semele into asking Jupiter to prove his divinity by revealing himself to her in all his godly glory – knowing that the mortal Semele would be burned to ashes by the splendour of her husband's divine light.

Jacques CALLOT

French 1592–1635

The parterre at Nancy

1620s

black and red chalk, grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-1526

François CLOUET

French c. 1516–72

Portrait of Charles IX

1566

black and red chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-2893

François Clouet's drawings are notable for their extreme refinement and accuracy of detail. This royal portrait of Charles IX, a study for a full-length painted version now in Vienna, shows the sixteen-year-old king with the faintest of moustaches. Clouet produced many portraits of Charles IX throughout his life, the earliest in 1552, and three served as prototypes for paintings. Six years after the completion of this version, Charles bowed to his mother's wish and approved the notorious 'St Bartholomew's Day Massacre' in which thousands of France's Protestant minority, the Huguenots, were slaughtered.

Nicolas POUSSIN

French 1594–1665

Moses striking water from the rock

1650s

pen and brown ink, brown wash, over pencil, touched with white

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-14539

Acquired from Jean de Julliene collection in Paris in 1767 for the Museum of the Academy of Arts.

Transferred to the Hermitage in 1924

Pierre DUMOUSTIER the elder

French c. 1545–1625

Portrait of a youth

1570–75

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. ГЭ-4313

Pierre Dumoustier was part of a dynasty of artists who worked for the French Court. He was painter and *valet de chambre* of Henri III in 1583–84, and painter to Catherine de Medici in 1586. Dumoustier excelled in the traditional, elite *portrait à trois crayons*, in black and red chinks. The present portrait, which may represent the artist's brother, Étienne, is unusual for being an oil on canvas that shows the head filling the picture space. The rarity of painted portraits in this format is such that it has long been speculated that this work was cut down at some stage.

Claude MELLAN

French 1598–1688

Portrait of Nicolas-Claude Peiresc

1630s

black chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-4635

This portrait records the friendship of two remarkable seventeenth-century talents, Nicolas-Claude Peiresc, a French astronomer and scholar, and the artist Claude Mellan, an acknowledged master of black chalk drawing and engraving. Peiresc was acquainted with the leading lights across seventeenth-century Europe and was a great friend of Peter Paul Rubens. In the 1630s Peiresc and Mellan embarked on the production of an engraved map of the moon's surface, but Peiresc died before the project was completed. This chalk portrait, made in the scientist's home town of Aix, bears witness to his illness during the men's collaboration.

Pierre DUMOUSTIER the elder

French c. 1545–1625

Portrait of Etienne Dumoustier

c. 1570

black and red chalk, touches of pastel

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-7400

Simon VOUET

French 1590–1649

Study of a standing male figure

1640

black and white chalk on grey paper

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Inv. no. OP-6402

Jean-Baptiste OUDRY

French 1686–1755

Boar hunt

1730

pen and ink, grey wash, heightened with white,
on brownish-grey paper

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-4872

François BOUCHER

French 1703–70

Study of a female nude

1740

red, black and white chalk on brown paper

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-382

Jean-Baptiste GREUZE

French 1725–1805

The schoolmistress

1760s

pen and grey, black and brown ink, grey, black and brown wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-3746

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

The relationship between artist and patron in the eighteenth century could sometimes produce tensions. The Paris *salonnière* Mme Geoffrin, a friend to many artists, could also be interfering and dictatorial. Denis Diderot railed against Mme Geoffrin's controlling approach and stressed the need for collectors of contemporary art to extend the greatest possible freedom to their artists. Greuze's resentment of his patron found its way into this drawing, in which he depicts her as a bad-tempered schoolmistress, chiding her artists, shown here as a gaggle of unruly little girls.

Pieter Cornelisz. van RIJCK

Dutch 1567–1637

Kitchen scene (Christ at Emmaus)

1605

pen and brown ink, brown wash over lead pencil

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

Inv. no.OP-7833

Jacob van RUISDAEL

Dutch 1628–82

**Landscape with a wooden footbridge
over a canal**

c. 1670

black chalk, grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired between 1773 and 1797

Inv. no. OP-5538

Hendrick GOLTZIUS

Dutch 1558–1617

A courtesan

1606

red, black, and white chalk on light grey paper

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-3742

Lambert Harmensz. DOOMER

Dutch 1624–1700

Bridge across the Loire at Amboise

late 1640s

pen and brown ink, brown and grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-2827

REMBRANDT Harmensz. van Rijn

Dutch 1606–69

Youth in oriental costume

1630/31

red chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-14946

Acquired from Ivan Betskoy collection in 1767 for the Museum of the Academy of Arts. Transferred to the Hermitage in 1924

Aelbert CUYP

Dutch 1620–91

View of Schravendeel

c. 1645

black chalk, brown and yellow-green wash and gum arabic

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-2689

Acquired from the collection of Count Heinrich von Brühl, Dresden, 1769

The remarkable flatness of the Dutch countryside was a quality that was utilised by a vast number of artists who specialised in landscapes during the seventeenth-century. These artists used the deep perspectives and vast open skies of Holland to create various moods. They also sketched out of doors, often making accurate portraits of the towns and cities before them. Few cultures have produced such informative and engaging visual records of life as those created by seventeenth-century Dutch artists.

Peter LELY

Dutch/English 1618–80

Knight of the Order of the Garter

1660s

black and white chalk on grey paper

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-5926

Hendrick GOLTZIUS

Dutch 1558–1617

Bacchus, Venus and Ceres

1606

pen and brown ink on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-18983

Acquired from the collection of Baron Louis-Antoine Crozat de Thiers, Paris, 1772

Monumental in size, executed on prepared canvas and coated with varnish, *Bacchus, Venus and Ceres* was specifically intended for display in a magnificent frame on the wall of a picture gallery, implying that it was perceived as a painting. Yet in essence it is a drawing, since the sole instrument employed in its creation was a goose quill, for centuries the draughtsman's chosen tool. As for technique, everything in the image – the naked figures, landscape background, play of light and shade, endless variety of textures – is conveyed through the use of parallel and crossed monotone lines in a virtuoso imitation of engraving.

Pieter Coecke van AELST

Flemish 1502–50

**Juan III of Portugal and Catherine
of Austria with their patrons Saint
John the Baptist and Saint Catherine
of Alexandria**

1542

pen and brown ink, brown and grey wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-5850

Hans BOL

Dutch 1534–93

Allegory of spring

1579

pen and brown ink, brown wash

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-354

The signs of the zodiac Gemini, Taurus and Acquarius, the goddess Flora and the furious activity of the people, especially farmers, here indicate that it is spring – a crucial season in the lives of the Dutch people. In great detail, Hans Bol shows that the rains of winter have just passed to the right of the scene, which still features leafless trees; while on the left, the sun shines on blossoms and leaves. That the astrological signs chronologically read right to left implies that the drawing was made in preparation for an engraving, which would reverse their order when printed.

Jan FYT

Flemish 1611–61

Fox hunt

1650s

gouache over black chalk on yellowish-grey paper

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-3083

Peter Paul RUBENS

Flemish 1577–1640

Sheet of studies: Head of a man looking up, hand, and lower part of a head in profile

1618–19

black and white chalk on yellow-grey paper

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-5454

Anthony van DYCK

Flemish 1599–1641

Pentecost

c. 1620

pen and brown ink, brown, grey and green wash,
heightened with white

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-14537

Acquired from the Jean de Julliene collection in Paris in 1767 for the Museum of the Academy of Arts.

Transferred to the Hermitage in 1924

Peter Paul RUBENS

Flemish 1577–1640

Abraham DIEPENBEECK

Flemish 1596–1675

The Wedding of the Virgin

early 1630s

black chalk, pen and brown ink, brown wash, grey gouache,
heightened with white

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Count Cobenzl, Brussels, 1768

Inv. no. OP-5523

Joshua REYNOLDS

English 1723–92

Cupid untying the zone of Venus

1788

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-1320

Acquired from the collection of Prince Grigory Potemkin, St Petersburg, 1792

On visiting the Russian Court in 1785 the English diplomat the Earl of Carysfort observed to Catherine that there were no paintings by Joshua Reynolds, Britain's foremost contemporary artist, in her collection; an oversight she soon after addressed. He must have made a similar comment to Catherine's confidant Grigory Potemkin for whom this copy after a work in Carysfort's own collection was commissioned from Reynolds. It shows a coquettish Venus, goddess of love, and is one of the most erotic paintings Reynolds ever produced. After his death, Potemkin's collection was absorbed into the imperial holdings

Joseph WRIGHT of Derby

English 1734–97

An iron forge viewed from without

1773

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist, 1775

Inv. no. ГЭ-3149

One of the first British artists to capture the momentum of the Industrial Revolution, Joseph Wright of Derby borrowed the dramatic lighting effects of the seventeenth-century Caravaggisti to convey the miracles of coal-fired iron manufacturing in the English Midlands. The extraordinary economic and scientific advances in England that Catherine witnessed from afar increased her admiration for the nation – which she already held in high regard for its political freedoms. From Rome in February 1774, Wright wrote to his brother that ‘the Empress of Russia has taken the picture of the Iron Forge’.

Anton Raphael MENGES

Bohemian 1728–79

Saint John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness

c. 1774

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired 1774–83

Inv. no. ГЭ-1332

The German Bohemian painter Anton Raphael Menges became a superstar of the Enlightenment thanks to his promotion by influential writers. Menges was credited with magically fusing the classicism of Antiquity and the Renaissance in his paintings, and monarchs competed to acquire his work. Catherine looked forward to the day when an original painting by Menges would arrive in St Petersburg. She fretted when she heard Menges was ailing in 1777, and after his death in 1779 instructed her agents to buy what they could from his studio, which is how she acquired this version of his celebrated *Saint John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness*.

Jacob Philipp HACKERT

German 1737–1807

Destruction of the Turkish fleet in the Bay of Chesme

1771

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. ГЭ-2048

This painting was commissioned in Rome in 1770 by Ivan Shuvalov at the request of Catherine the Great. It commemorates the Russian fleet's victory over the Turkish squadron in the Bay of Chesme in the Aegean Sea on the night of 7 July 1770. Because the artist Jacob Philipp Hackert was not present at the event, he relied on advice from those involved and used specially produced maps of the location; a Russian ship was also exploded for his benefit in the port of Livorno. In 1772 the completed painting was sent to St Petersburg together with Turkish military trophies.

Jean-Baptiste Greuze's *Filial Piety (The paralytic)*, 1763

In 1763 Frenchman Denis Diderot was the most prolific and widely-read art critic in Europe. When his favourite artist, Jean-Baptiste Greuze, exhibited a painting of a critically ill man tended by his doting family, Diderot wrote:

Greuze is really a man after my own heart ...
This is a moral painting. And why not?
Hasn't painting been devoted to debauchery
and vice long enough? Shouldn't we be
pleased to see it finally competing with
dramatic poetry to move us, instruct us,
correct us, and lead us to virtue? Keep at it
my friend Greuze! Go on teaching morals in
painting and always do it as you do here ...
when I saw that eloquent and pitiful old
man ... it touched my soul.

Excited by the work's positive public reception, Greuze set a price so high that no buyer could be found in Paris; it is said he rejected an offer of 2000 *écus* (the equivalent of \$90,000 AUD today). When word reached Catherine of Diderot's glowing endorsement, she purchased the painting and a vivid suite of preparatory chalk drawings which accompanied it. By so doing she obtained a complete record of Greuze's creative process. Diderot celebrated Catherine's enlightened gesture by naming her an 'August protector of the arts'.

Jean-Baptiste GREUZE

French 1725–1805

Figure of a young man with a plate in his hand (The son-in-law; second version). Study for The paralytic

1760s

red chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-14792

Acquired from the artist in 1769 for the Museum of the Academy of Arts. Transferred to the Hermitage in 1924

Jean-Baptiste GREUZE

French 1725–1805

Study of a seated woman (the paralytic's wife). Study for The paralytic

1760s

red chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-14802

Acquired from the artist in 1769 for the Museum of the Academy of Arts. Transferred to the Hermitage in 1924

Jean-Baptiste GREUZE

French 1725–1805

Filial Piety (The paralytic)

1763

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired from the artist, 1766

Inv. no. ГЭ-1168

Jean-Baptiste GREUZE

French 1725–1805

Head of an old man. Study for The paralytic

1760s

red and black chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-14727

Acquired from the artist in 1769 for the Museum of the Academy of Arts. Transferred to the Hermitage in 1924

Jean-Baptiste GREUZE

French 1725–1805

Study of a boy carrying a cup (Second version). Study for The paralytic

1760s

red chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-14784

Acquired from the artist in 1769 for the Museum of the Academy of Arts. Transferred to the Hermitage in 1924

Jean-Baptiste GREUZE

French 1725–1805

Study of a boy kneeling. Study for The paralytic

1760s

red chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-14798

Acquired from the artist in 1769 for the Museum of the Academy of Arts. Transferred to the Hermitage in 1924

Jean-Baptiste GREUZE

French 1725–1805

Study of a dog. Study for The paralytic

1760s

red and black chalk

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. OP-14770

Acquired from the artist in 1769 for the Museum of the Academy of Arts. Transferred to the Hermitage in 1924

The Walpole collection

In 1779 Catherine the Great acquired 198 paintings from a celebrated collection formed by Sir Robert Walpole, 1st Earl of Orford, Britain's first prime minister. They were bought from the family estate, Houghton Hall, and sold by Walpole's grandson, George Walpole, 3rd Earl of Orford, who approached the Russian ambassador to Britain directly about the sale. At more than £40,000, the price was high, but the transaction was concluded in only two months. Attempts were made to keep this famous collection in Britain, to no avail.

The Walpole collection was outstanding in quality, and significantly enhanced the Hermitage's range of Flemish and Italian works. The Russian ambassador to Great Britain, Alexey Musin-Pushkin, who organised the valuable purchase, wrote to Catherine the Great: 'The greater part of the nobility here are displaying general dissatisfaction and regret that these paintings are being allowed out of this country, and are setting in train various projects to keep them here ... No little assistance comes from Lord Orford's zealous desire to unite [the collection for] the gallery of Your Imperial Majesty, rather than to sell it to parliament itself or, least of all, to divide it through sale to different individuals'.

Godfrey KNELLER

German 1646–1723

Portrait of Grinling Gibbons

c. 1690

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-1346

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

Grinling Gibbons was a celebrated carver in wood and marble who had a particular talent for producing garlands of flowers and fruit that formed arresting details in architectural settings. He received many royal commissions and contributed carvings to a number churches around London, including St Paul's Cathedral. Gibbons also worked extensively at Houghton Hall, the country mansion of the Walpole family. He created a decorative pearwood garland to frame this portrait by Godfrey Kneller when it was at Houghton.

Anthony van DYCK

Flemish 1599–1641

Portrait of Queen Henrietta Maria

c. 1638

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-541

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

Paired portraits, such as the two paintings of the English monarchs seen here, were intended to express marital and political stability. Conveying such a message was vital at this time for the widely unpopular monarch and his Catholic wife, the daughter of King Henri IV of France and Marie de' Medici. Van Dyck painted the queen on numerous occasions, creating a highly idealised image of great elegance and beauty. In van Dyck's works the queen's features are markedly refined and she is made to appear taller than she really was.

Anthony van DYCK

Flemish 1599–1641

Portrait of King Charles I

c. 1638

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-537

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

Anthony van Dyck paid a second visit to England in 1632, ostensibly at the invitation of King Charles I. He was then at the peak of his powers and was soon appointed court painter. Charles I commissioned many portraits of himself and his wife, Queen Henrietta Maria, and their children from van Dyck. Many royal portraits were intended as gifts to fellow monarchs and courtiers to convey the power and majesty of the reigning monarch. There is very little ambiguity in this eloquent expression of the warrior king, shown dressed in armour with sword at hand.

John WOOTTON

English c. 1682–1764

Hounds and a magpie

c. 1716

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-9781

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

John Wootton was a celebrated sporting artist whose work helped define the genre. He was a much admired painter of animals particularly noted for his portraits of racehorses. *Hounds and a magpie* hung above the fireplace in the small breakfast room at Houghton Hall. The work bears an inscription stating that it shows the artist's favourite hunting hounds and a magpie which generally attended them at chase.

Peter Paul RUBENS and workshop

Flemish 1577–1640

Lioness and two lions

1640

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

Inv. no. ГЭ 465

Frans SNYDERS

Flemish 1579–1657

Concert of birds

1630–40

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-607

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

An important place in Flemish seventeenth-century painting is occupied by two specific genres: animal painting and the still life. One of the most important animal and still-life painters was Frans Snyders, a very close collaborator of Peter Paul Rubens who often painted still-life details and animals on the master's canvases. Snyders's superb skill as a painter of animals is revealed by *Concert of birds*, based on a subject from *Aesop's Fables*. It shows a gathering of feathered creatures screeching and singing under the direction of an owl seated on a dried branch in front of an open music score.

David TENIERS II

Flemish 1610–90

Kitchen

1646

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

Inv. no. ГЭ-586

David Teniers II was an outstanding master of the cabinet picture and one of the main proponents of seventeenth-century Flemish genre scenes. He produced hundreds of works over the course of his long life and is said to have declared, 'One would need to build a gallery two leagues long to house all my pictures'. This is one of the largest canvases produced by Teniers, which contains a riot of detail. It is designed to flaunt the wealth and extravagance of the patron, who is most likely the well-dressed man holding a falcon on his arm in the left of the painting.

Frans SNYDERS

Flemish 1579–1657

Jan BOECKHORST

German 1605–68

**Cook at a kitchen table with dead
game**

c. 1636–37

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Johann Gotzkowsky, Berlin, 1764

Inv. no. ГЭ-608

Frans Snyder was the son of the owner of one of Antwerp's largest wine and eating houses. His dramatically realistic still lifes celebrate the exotic variety of rare fowls available at Antwerp's markets. Images of dead animals being prepared for a banquet were understood in Snyder's time as lessons in Christian morality. Many Dutch and Flemish still lifes featuring the sacrifice of an animal for the table functioned as allusions to Christ's Passion and the transience of the flesh.

Gaspard DUGHET

Italian 1615–75

Mountainous landscape

17th century

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

Inv. no. ГЭ-1203

Jean-Baptiste VANLOO

French 1684–1745

Portrait of Sir Robert Walpole

1740

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

Inv. no. ГЭ-1130

Sir Robert Walpole, 1st Earl of Orford, was effectively Britain's first prime minister, a position he held for twenty years. His term in office, the longest of any British prime minister in history, is noted for a subtle shift of power away from the monarchy to the elected parliament. This portrait is a stately image of an extremely powerful man dressed in the robes of the Chancellor, and proudly presents his familial coat of arms. In his left hand Walpole holds a bound document indicating his dedication to office and public duty.

Peter Paul RUBENS

Flemish 1577–1640

The carters

c. 1620

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-480

Rubens first became interested in landscape painting during an Italian sojourn in 1600–08, but did not produce 'pure' landscape works until 1617. His landscapes present nature as a Baroque, dynamic entity, full of turbulent movement and eerie light. In this scene, wagoneers struggle to manoeuvre their cart down a rocky pass just before nightfall, indicated by bats. As with many of Rubens's landscapes, this example was painted on several joined panels, the joins of which can still be seen here after the work's transferral to canvas.

Bartolomé Esteban MURILLO

Spanish 1617–82

The Adoration of the Shepherds

c. 1650

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-316

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

During the seventeenth century Murillo was the most important artist working in Seville in southern Spain. His distinctive naturalistic style gives his works great charm and veracity. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Murillo enjoyed a reputation rivalled only by the greatest masters of the Italian High Renaissance, and no art collection was considered complete without an example of his work. However, poor-quality copies and adaptations of his paintings saw his standing plummet. This has obscured the fact that Murillo was an artist of great quality.

Peter Paul RUBENS

Flemish 1577–1640

Head of a Franciscan monk

1615–17

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

Inv. no. ГЭ 472

Anthony van DYCK

Flemish 1599–1641

Portrait of Philadelphia and Elizabeth

Wharton

1640

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-533

Acquired from the collection of Sir Robert Walpole, Houghton Hall, 1779

This is one of the most charming portraits of children painted by van Dyck, who had particular talent for such works. It is one of a group of family portraits commissioned from van Dyck by Philip, Lord Wharton in the late 1630s. Van Dyck worked in England for approximately ten years and brought a new standard of elegance and style to English portraiture. He largely conveyed this through his flair for painting lavish costumes and sumptuous fabrics, a sensibility he carried through to his portraits of children.

Godfrey KNELLER

German 1646–1723

Portrait of Pyotr Ivanovich Potyomkin

1681–82

oil on canvas

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ГЭ-10584

Acquired from the collection of Prince Grigory Potemkin, St Petersburg, 1792

This state portrait represents the seventeenth-century Russian diplomat and *voivode* (warlord) Pyotr Ivanovich Potyomkin, a distant cousin of Russian Sergeant-Major Grigory Potemkin who later owned the painting. Potyomkin led Russian embassies to Spain and France and was responsible for establishing regular diplomatic relations between Russia and Spain. He was serving as envoy to Tsar Feodor II, brother of Peter the Great, in 1681 when he visited England. Potyomkin made a strong impression wherever he went, insisting on special deference to Russian rulers, wearing exotic Russian dress and accompanied by Russian musicians.

China

Eighteenth-century Enlightenment fascination with the East, particularly China, is reflected by Catherine the Great's architectural and landscaping works completed in St Petersburg and at her summer and winter palaces, as well as by her collecting of Oriental curiosities and philosophical texts. Russian interest in China can be traced to the reign of the Romanov tsars in the seventeenth century, when several missions brought back Chinese treasures and goods to the Russian Court. Importantly, in 1689 the first treaty between Russia and China was signed at Nerchinsk, outlining the border between the countries and rules about caravan trade.

Like many educated people of her time, Catherine was fascinated by the concept of the enlightened ruler thought to be found in China, such as the Kāngxī Emperor (reigned 1662–1722), Yōngzhèng Emperor (reigned 1723–35), and Qianlong Emperor (reigned 1736–95). One of her regular and most influential correspondents was French philosopher Voltaire, who praised the Celestial Kingdom, its monarchs and men of wisdom; only in China, he thought, was a man's life, honour and property truly protected by law. Such a clear link between Catherine's desire for justice and order in Russia and general perceptions of good Chinese government, combined with the Enlightenment fashion for curiosities of all kinds, led to great Russian interest in China in the second half of the eighteenth century.

CHINESE

Toilet mirror with reverse painting on glass, in a frame, with removable pediment: from a Toilet set of 32 pieces

c. 1740–50

glass, mercury amalgam, paper, silver, filigree, parcel-gilt, enamel, wood, silk brocade, kingfisher and peacock feathers, mother-of-pearl, crystals

Pair of caskets with lids

1740s –50s

silver, filigree, enamel, silver-gilt

Pair of boxes on trays

1740s –50s

silver, filigree, silver-gilt

Pair of leaf trays

1740s –50s

silver, filigree

Pair of rose-water sprinklers and stoppers

1740s –50s

silver, filigree, silver-gilt

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ЛС-578; Inv. no. ЛС-1 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-2 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-610; Inv. no. ЛС-593; Inv. no. ЛС-593; Inv. no. ЛС-593; Inv. no. ЛС- 39; Inv. no. ЛС- 40; Inv. no. ЛС-108 а,б.

Acquired before 1789

In seventeenth century Orthodox Russia, toilet services were frowned upon as symbols of vanity. By the next century rich and fashion-conscious ladies could not refrain from acquiring exquisite sets of items to adorn their dressing tables as part of the increasingly elaborate rituals of dressing. Catherine owned a number of toilet sets, including a thirty-two-piece Chinese silver filigree ensemble, the largest known of its kind, and unique. The centrepiece is this mirror, a marvel of oriental refinement. Thought to have been made in Canton, it features reverse glass paintings of pheasants, which are native birds of China, revered for their beauty.

CHINESE

Chair cover with cranes

16th century – 17th century
tapestry silk weaving (*kesi*), gold thread

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ЛТ 8537

Acquired in 1998

This high-back chair cover was one of a set of panels given to Peter the Great by the Emperor Kāngxī in the 1690s. They were once part of the Imperial collection in the Forbidden city. It is an extremely rare and precious example of *kesi* combining gold thread and fine silk that was dyed in a range of colours before being woven like a tapestry to form the intricate image. The extraordinary vessel seen to the right was also a gift to Peter the Great from the Chinese emperor. It too is of the highest quality enamel with silver and gold filigree. Catherine inherited these wonderful objects along with other treasures from the Russian Imperial collection.

CHINESE

Vessel with two handles in the form of dragons and stand

early 18th century

silver, enamel, silver-gilt, filigree; wood

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg Inv. no. ЛС-102; ЗК-388

Acquired in 1719 from the collection of Peter the Great

Georg (Yury) VELTEN

Russian 1730–1801

**Design for a small
Chinese summerhouse**

c. 1766

pen and ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-8754

Georg (Yury) VELTEN

Russian 1730–1801

Design for an open Chinese summerhouse

c. 1766

pen and ink

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-8752

Beautiful Chinoiserie architectural designs from Catherine the Great's collection come from the so-called *Garden Series* by her court architect Georg Friedrich (Yuri) Velten. The series consists of nineteen pen-and-ink drawings of artificial rock faces and garden summerhouses in the Chinese style. These have been regarded as unrealised designs for Tsarskoe Selo, and recall traditional Chinese drawings in their manner of their execution. The fashion for park architecture in the Chinoiserie style in eighteenth-century Russia was purely an imperial phenomenon. Chinese villages and parks were restricted to the highly privileged, a fairytale element found exclusively in imperial summer residences in the Russian countryside.

CHINESE/RUSSIAN

Toilet mirror

1740s –50s

silver, filigree, silver-gilt, wood, diamonds, pearls

The toilet mirror was created in China, and Catherine chose to enrich the design. She added more than four hundred brilliant-cut diamonds and many large Baroque pearls, thus providing a uniquely personal and dazzling touch to an already splendid object.

CHINESE

Pair of egg-shaped boxes with lids on stands

1740s –50s

silver, filigree, enamels, silver-gilt

Two rose-water sprinklers and stoppers

silver, filigree, enamels, silver-gilt

Five boxes

silver, filigree, silver-gilt

Pair of small boxes

silver, filigree, silver-gilt

Pair of leaf trays

silver, filigree, silver-gilt

Pair of crab-shaped box and leaf trays

silver, filigree, silver-gilt

Pair of table decorations in the form of two birds

silver, filigree, enamels, silver-gilt, feathers, mineral paint

Pair of pomegranate-shaped boxes with lids

silver, filigree, silver-gilt

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg

Inv. no. ЛС-472/ 1,2; Inv. no. ЛС-595 а,б,в; ЛС-596 а,б,в ; Inv. no. ЛС-105 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-106 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-594; Inv. no. ЛС-606; Inv. no. ЛС-610; Inv. no. ЛС-593; Inv. no. ЛС-607; Inv. no. ЛС-597; Inv. no. ЛС-611; Inv. no. ЛС- 39; Inv. no. ЛС- 40; Inv. no. ЛС-9 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-10 а, б; Inv. no. ЛС-26; Inv. no. ЛС-27; Inv. no. ЛС-4 а, б; ЛС-5 а, б.

Acquired before 1789

Most of the items here form part of the legendary thirty-two piece Chinese toilet service which was a wedding gift to Catherine. The boxes and sprinklers use both European and Oriental forms, while the decoration consists of traditional Chinese devices and symbols. The boxes decorated with pomegranates are inspired by the Chinese saying, 'May you have as many sons as there are seeds in a pomegranate'. The crab-shaped boxes fashioned from silver and gold were used by Catherine for storing rouge or lipstick. The egg-shaped boxes contained lavender water. The decorative 'tableaux' of cranes, trees and rocks brought a touch of nature to the artificialities of the lady's toilet.

Ilya NEYELOV

Russian 1745–93

**Design for a round two-storey building
in the Chinese Village at Tsarskoe Selo**

1770s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-23373

CHINESE

Incense burner

17th century

silver, filigree, silver-gilt

Pair of caskets with lids with two dragons chasing the pearl

late 17th century – early 18th century

silver, filigree, silver-gilt

Pair of bowls

early 18th century

silver, silver wire, lacquer, mother-of-pearl, semi-precious stones

Pair of saucers

17th century

silver, lacquer, mother-of-pearl, semi-precious stones

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg Inv. no. ЛС-88; Inv. no. ЛС-6 а, б; ЛС-7 а, б; Inv. no. ЛС-236; Inv. no. ЛС-235; Inv. no. ЛН-84; Inv. no. ЛН-85

Acquired before 1789

CHINESE

Two lidded vessels

late 17th century – early 18th century

silver, enamel

Two trays

17th century

silver, enamel

Two teapots with lids

17th century

silver, enamel

Two cups

early 18th century

silver, enamel

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg Inv. no. ЛС-124 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-118 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-255; Inv. no. ЛС-256; Inv. no. ЛС-80 а, б; Inv. no. ЛС-78 а, б; Inv. no. ЛС-131; Inv. no. ЛС-142. Acquired before 1789

The earliest Chinese gold and silver vessels in the Russian imperial collections were gathered by Peter the Great during the beginning of the eighteenth century, and Catherine inherited a large number of them. Many ewers in her collection of traditional shape – with narrow, high neck, long spout, handle and lid (derived from Near Eastern prototypes) – would originally have been used for wine in China; however, in Europe in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, these ewers were used for washing hands, and as vessels for coffee and chocolate. The 1789 Hermitage inventory describes them as ‘coffee pots’ (using the Turkish word *kumgan/kulgan*).

Ilya NEYELOV

Russian 1745–93

Design for a pavilion for the Chinese Village at Tsarskoe Selo

1770s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-23374

A veritable Oriental fairytale was created at Empress Catherine's favourite summer country residence at Tsarskoe Selo. The Chinese village at Tsarskoe Selo was designed by Antonio Rinaldi, built by Charles Cameron and Vasily Neyelov and originally comprising eighteen houses. Its central building, which imitated a Chinese temple, consisted of an octagonal hall with a dome and employed motifs taken from Chinese pagodas. The houses were for courtiers to use when the Russian Court moved to Tsarskoe Selo in summer. These buildings appropriated Chinese elements such as dragons, Chinese characters and curved rooflines.

CHINESE

Hairpin with the longevity character

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, spinel, tourmaline

Pair of hair ornaments with a qin and chequered board

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, mineral paint, pearls, rubies

Hairpin in the form of a sceptre

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, mineral paint, spinel, pearls

Pair of hairpins with an altar set

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, silver, mineral paint, pearl

Ornament with Shouxing, star-god of longevity

17th century – 18th century
gold, rubies, sapphires, pearls

Five rings with figures and flowers

17th century – 18th century
gold

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg Inv. no. ЛС-313; Inv. no. ЛС-305; Inv. no. ЛС-306; Inv. no. ЛС-322; Inv. no. ЛС-312; Inv. no. ЛС-450; Inv. no. ЛС-436; Inv. no. ЛС-417; Inv. no. ЛС-419; Inv. no. ЛС-459; Inv. no. ЛС-460; Inv. no. ЛС-420

Acquired before 1789

In China, Emperors repeatedly sought to regulate the wearing of gold, silver and precious stones, as well as the forms of decorations. In 1759, under the Qianlong Emperor (reigned 1736–95), sumptuary laws were published regulating the wearing of precious items in accordance with rank. For example, gold with red stones (*hung bao shi* – rubies or spinels), sapphires, large pearls and images of phoenixes were only permitted to be worn by the Empress and imperial concubines; diamonds and emeralds were not to be used. The ornaments in this collection are made of pure gold, in the finest filigree technique, and are decorated with precious stones.

Ilya NEYELOV

Russian 1745–93

**Design for a building in the Chinese
Village at Tsarskoe Selo**

1770s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-23372

Ilya NEYELOV

Russian 1745–93

**Design for the gates for the Chinese
Village at Tsarskoe Selo**

1770s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-23370

CHINESE

Figure of Shouxing, the Daoist god of Longevity

17th century
gold

Figure of the Dao immortal Lu Dongbin

17th century
gold

Censer in the form of Shouxing

17th century
silver, silver-gilt

Two lidded vessels

17th century
silver, silver-gilt

Pair of cauldron goblets

17th century
silver, silver-gilt

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg Inv. no. ЛС-285; Inv. no. ЛС-287; Inv. no. ЛС-95;
Inv. no. ЛС-127 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-129 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-49; Inv. no. ЛС-50.
Acquired before 1789

Catherine's Chinese collection included five gold and gilded silver sculptures. These were mainly of Daoist immortals, which in China were thought to ensure longevity and ward off evil spirits, the most popular being Shouxing, Star God of Longevity, and groups of the eight Daoist immortals. Such small but expensive sculptures were presented to imperial Daoist temples or set on palace altars. The pieces are made with hammered sheets of precious metals, engraved and polished, and the silver is partly gilded. These sculptures are extremely rare examples of Kangxi period (1662–1722) Chinese votive figures in precious metals.

CHINESE

Teapot

late 17th century
silver and part gilt

Pair of lidded cups

late 17th century
silver and part gilt

Four teapots

18th century
silver, enamel

Three cups

early 18th century
silver, enamel

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg Inv. no. ЛС-87 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-162 а, б; Inv. no. ЛС-163 а, б; Inv. no. ЛС-66 а, б; Inv. no. ЛС-65 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-55 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-59 а, б; Inv. no. ЛС-143; Inv. no. ЛС-132; Inv. no. ЛС-133.

Acquired before 1789

Ilya NEYELOV

Russian 1745–93

**Design for a pagoda for the Chinese
Village at Tsarskoe Selo**

1770s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-23369

Ilya NEYELOV

Russian 1745–93

**Design for an octagonal Chinese
pavilion with balconies**

1770s

pen and ink, watercolour

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg
Acquired before 1797

Inv. no. OP-23368

CHINESE

Flower adornment

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, ruby

Five phoenix ornaments from the Empress's crown

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, mineral paint, rubies, sapphires and pearls

Crab ornament

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, garnet, mineral paint

Pair of hairpins with a phoenix

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, silver, mineral paint, ruby, spinel, pearl

Three pairs of earrings

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, mineral paint

Hair ornament including jui sceptre (meaning 'all you wish'), musical instrument and scholar's treasures

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, mineral paint, rubies

Ornament: Boy on a Qilin

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, mineral paint

Dragon boat

17th century – 18th century
gold, filigree, mineral paint, spinel

The State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg Inv. no. ЛС-332; Inv. no. ЛС-351; Inv. no. ЛС-363; Inv. no. ЛС-353; Inv. no. ЛС-355; Inv. no. ЛС-356; Inv. no. ЛС-348; Inv. no. ЛС-339; Inv. no. ЛС-340; Inv. no. ЛС-422 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-428 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-426 а,б; Inv. no. ЛС-300; Inv. no. ЛС-437; Inv. no. ЛС-433.

Acquired before 1789

Hairpins were the most common form of female adornment in China, and the material indicated status and rank. Hairpins typically came in pairs and were placed symmetrically on t side of the chignon or a cap, with an additional single, flat, elongated pin in the cap's centre. Small decorations could also be attached to silk hats and forehead bands. Ornaments bearing phoenixes, such as hairpins, possibly decorated the ceremonial headwear of the Chinese Empress herself. Only women from very rich families possessed gold jewellery at this time. The ornaments in this collection are made of pure gold, in the finest filigree technique, and are decorated with precious stones.