



Chambre de commerce et d'industrie franco-russe
Франко-российская торгово-промышленная палата

Agreement with the Louvre to promote Russian art

5 February 2013 – Henri Loyrette, the Director of the Louvre Museum; Gennady Timchenko, President of the Economic Council of French & Russian businesses of the Franco–Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIFR); and Andrei Filatov, a member of the Franco–Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIFR) signed an agreement to support the expansion of the Louvre’s collection in the area of Russian art.

Currently, the collection of France’s largest museum only includes ancient Russian icons. As part of the agreement, the Louvre Museum will expand its collection by adding Russian paintings.

The agreement continues a series of projects aimed at promoting Russian art to an international public. In 2010, the official year of Franco–Russian cooperation, the Louvre held an exhibition “Holy Russia – Russian art from the earliest times through to Peter the Great”, which became one of the highlights of the year and was extremely popular with the French museum’s audience. The exhibition displayed more than 400 artefacts never seen before as a single showcase, assembled from twenty–four different Russian collections. Commenting on the exhibition, the Director of the Louvre Henri Loyrette said: “For me, the absence of Russian art at the Louvre is, frankly, a shocking situation”.

Gennady Timchenko, President of the Economic Council of the Franco–Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIFR), said: “At present, different major museums around the world own individual works by Russian artists, but there are no permanent dedicated collections. Our cooperation with the Louvre is an important step in the advancement of Russian art.

Currently, the primary interest in foreign auctions of Russian works comes from private collectors and most works remain inaccessible to the general public. Working with the Louvre, we want to support the development of a collection that will make Russian art accessible to a wider audience by displaying these masterpieces in what is one of the world’s largest and most visited museum. The collection could subsequently be displayed in Russia and other countries. Through this unique initiative, a huge number of people from all over the world will discover Russian art – and through it, they will also discover the modern Russia.”

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Additional Information:

The Louvre Museum is one of the world’s largest museums, covering an area of 160,000 m². The exhibition halls themselves occupy 58,000 m². Its collections have more than 300,000 items. The Louvre was the first museum to open its doors to the general public in 1793. Every year, more than 10 million people visit the Louvre. The museum’s collection consists of departments for the Ancient East, Ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece and Rome, Artefacts, Sculptures, Fine Art, Graphic Art, and Islamic Arts.

The Franco–Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIFR) is a non–commercial organisation founded to develop commercial cooperation between France and Russia and to undertake joint projects of public interest.

Gennady Timchenko has been President of the Economic Council of the Franco–Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCFIR) since December 2011. He is the founder of a number of charitable foundations, including the Neva Foundation. The purpose of the Foundation is to strengthen ties between Russia and Europe and to undertake projects in the areas of cultural exchange, humanitarian aid, medical and scientific research. The Neva Foundation, which was registered by the Timchenko family in 2008, carries out projects every year to promote Russia’s cultural heritage in other countries. The Foundation regularly organises tours and performances by Moscow and St Petersburg artistes in Geneva. It also supports exhibitions that introduce the iconic Russian literature to the European public. In 2010, for example, the Neva Foundation supported the publication of a French translation of Anna Akhmatova’s poetry. In 2011, it organised and hosted “Solzhenitsyn: the courage to write” — an exhibition at the Martin Bodmer Foundation in Geneva. Much of the Neva Foundation’s work is aimed at promoting the “Russian brand” abroad. The goal of this work is to ensure that when people unfamiliar with Russia discover Russian art, they will find it easier to understand and appreciate the country itself.

Andrei Filatov is an entrepreneur and a member of the Franco–Russian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCIFR). He is actively involved in the implementation of social programs, undertakes philanthropic initiatives, and finances a number of humanitarian programs. He is the founder of the Filatov Family Art Fund, which is dedicated to locating and collecting works of Russian and Soviet art from the period 1917–1991 that left Russia, particularly after the collapse of the USSR. The Foundation researches these works, publishes catalogues, and actively arranges exhibitions. With Andrei Filatov’s support, the State Tretyakov Gallery hosted an exhibition of works by Russian artist Nicolai Fechin and is currently organizing an exhibition dedicated to 150th birthday of Mikhail Nesterov, a prominent Russian artist of late XIX – early XX centuries.

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