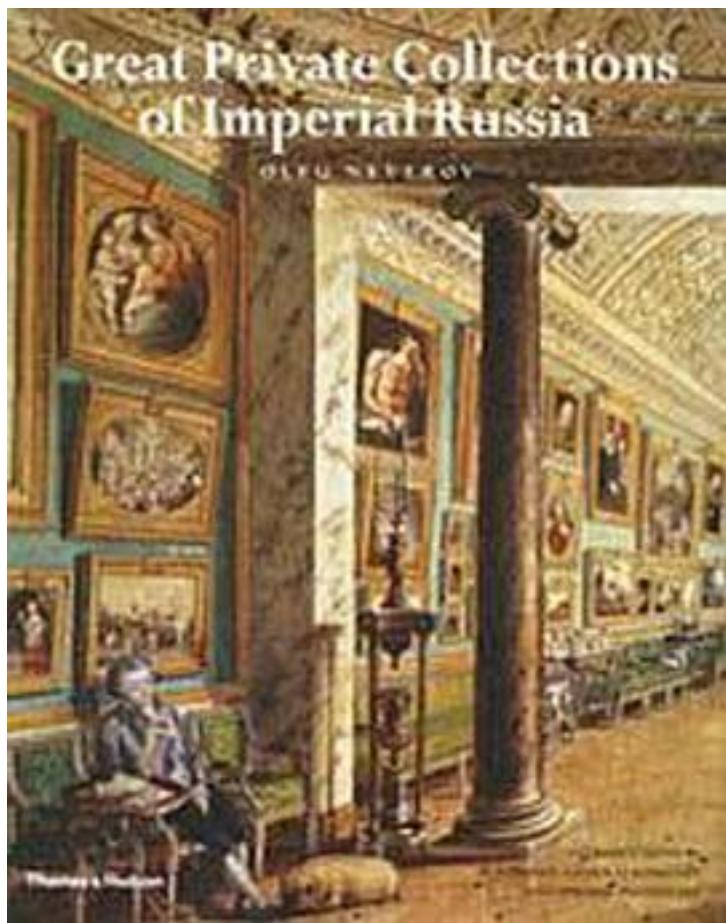


# Great Private Collections of Imperial Russia



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Among the most important private art collections ever created were those of Imperial Russia. Catherine the Great, guided by Voltaire, amassed treasures on a Herculean scale, laying the basis for what is today the Russian State Hermitage. Favorite courtiers built palaces of unprecedented magnificence in St. Petersburg and Moscow for their

vast collections of paintings, antiquities, and decorative arts. In a lively and anecdotal text, Oleg Neverov reassembles these now-legendary private collections—which, after the 1917 Revolution, were dispersed among the Hermitage, Pushkin, and Tretiakov museums, sold to foreign museums, or spirited abroad.

Represented here are works that once belonged to such famed aristocratic families as the Stroganovs and Yussupovs; to the merchant princes Mamontov and Tenischeva; and to the legendary Morozov and Schukin families, the largest purchasers of the early works of Picasso, Matisse, and Braque. Here, portraits of the collectors, period photography, and architectural drawings and watercolors, along with beautiful reproductions of the artworks and texts drawn from the latest research in Russian archives, bring this long-gone era and its treasures back to life. AUTHOR BIO: Oleg Neverov, a Russian art historian, is the keeper of the department of antiquities, Russian State Hermitage. He is the author of catalogues, monographs, and nearly 200 articles. Mikhail Piotrovsky is director of the Russian State Hermitage. Nicholas Romanov is head of the former imperial family.

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