

Gifts to the Tzars 1500-1700: Treasures from the Kremlin (精装)



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Focusing on the diplomatic gifts presented to Russian tsars from Ivan the Terrible to Peter the Great, this detailed and well-researched work serves as the catalog of a traveling exhibition now showing at the Indianapolis Museum of Art. General editors Walton (art history, NYU) and Shifman (curator of decorative arts, Indianapolis Museum of Art) have assembled exquisite photography of the 95 gifts selected for the exhibition, along with seven essays. The photos reveal the splendor of Russian court life, while the essays focus on different aspects of diplomacy and Russian foreign relations, as well as on treasures ranging from gold and silver to furs and textiles to jewelry and decorative arts. The catalog is arranged by the gifts' country or empire of origin, and each section is accompanied by brief introductory remarks about each of the treasures on view. The book concludes with short biographies of each of the tsars, patriarchs, and donors. This dazzling and fascinating book is essential for any collection on Russian culture and history and is highly recommended for art collections in general. Stephen Allan Patrick, East Tennessee State Univ. Lib., Johnson City

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This lavishly illustrated exhibit catalog presents some astonishing works of fifteenth-, sixteenth-, and seventeenth-century European and Asian decorative arts found in the Kremlin collections. The monograph's seven essays offer background information on the diplomatic practices of the period and the ritual pomp of the Russian court, as well as discussions of the tradition of giving decorative art objects as diplomatic gifts. The catalog itself is organized by gifts from specific governments, from the Christian East to Schleswig-Holstein. Magnificent illustrations are accompanied by text that is not too specialized and yet is packed with information that provides a vivid social and cultural context for these invaluable and elaborate objects, remarkable examples of three centuries' worth of historic luxury. Regina Schroeder

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