

Over recent years unique treasures of Russian and foreign art from the State Museums of the Moscow Kremlin have been seen not only by visitors to exhibitions at these six museums, but by people in many regions of our country, from the Baltic sea to lake Baikal. Exhibitions held abroad in the USA and Germany, Hungary and Spain enjoyed particular success. The exhibition hall of the Kremlin Museums, situated on the ancient Cathedral Square, offers lovers of history and art the opportunity to see for themselves outstanding works of art, many of which form part of our extraordinarily rich national collections.

The spring of 1990 saw the ceremonial opening in this hall of an exhibition in which many foreign museums took part, as did also collectors of works by Faberge. The year ended with an exhibition which marked a new and very important page in the history of the Kremlin Museums. All the previous exhibitions by the Museums, were devoted to the art of the past, from antiquity to the early 20th century. In 1988, however, the Kremlin Museums turned their attention to the Theme "Tradition and the Modern Age", displaying their exhibits alongside examples of Soviet jewellery at an exhibition held in Italy (Alessandria).

Some of these items by contemporary Soviet jewellers were exhibited among new museum acquisitions — proof that serious work has begun to build up a collection illustrating the contemporary jeweller's art in the Soviet Union. And then came the first, if still rather small exhibition devoted to the work of two modern artists, two enamelists from Leningrad, Alexei Maximov and Leonid Efros, who are continuing and further developing the art of the enamel portrait miniature of the 17th—19th centuries. The combination of superb technical skill and profound artistic content has made it possible to exhibit works by these two artists in the Kremlin Armoury.

We would like to believe that this exhibition will start a tradition of familiarising the public with the best works by Soviet jewellers, and will serve to promote further co-operation between them and the Kremlin Museums, enabling the latter to enrich their collections with outstanding works by talented modern artists.

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