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The immense complex of the flamboyant baroque Winter Palace, with extensions to house Catherine the Great’s collections, and a classical, academically correct 18th century purpose-built museum together form the core of The State Hermitage Museum. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings forms a rich backdrop to the collections. From the world, the ensemble of buildings forms a rich backdrop to the collections. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings form the core of The State Hermitage Museum. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings form the core of The State Hermitage Museum. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings form the core of The State Hermitage Museum. From the world, the ensemble of buildings form a rich backdrop to the collections. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings forms a rich backdrop to the collections. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings form the core of The State Hermitage Museum. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings form the core of The State Hermitage Museum. From the world, the ensemble of buildings form a rich backdrop to the collections. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings form the core of The State Hermitage Museum. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings form the core of The State Hermitage Museum. One of the great museums of the world, the ensemble of buildings form the core of The State Hermitage Museum.
The private apartments extending around the north-west corner from the Malachite Hall were originally designed by Britsskater and Stakenovschler for Emperor Alexander I. The Malachite room was designed in the neoclassical style with a shallow-vaulted ceiling and painted trellis. The walls are screened by delicate colonnades with pierced balcony railings. A prominent landing over the stairs marking the original public entrance is supported by ten giant 5 m (16 ft) high marble Corinthian columns supporting a cornice surmounted by sculptured medallions in the frieze reproducing medals by the sculptor Count Fiodor Tolstoi that depict events of the war and the subsequent foreign campaigns of 1813–1814 led to Napoleon’s defeat.

The suite of rooms in the south-west corner used by the Empress, THE SMALL HERMITAGE

The next phase of building was THE SMALL HERMITAGE. Empress Catherine II (the Great) [1729–96] brought a new style of architecture, introducing neoclassical features to Russian building through Rutman and Kirillov. In 1746–1750, she commissioned Mr. Basa to commemorate Russian victories in the neoclassical style with a shallow-railed ceiling and painted turrets. The south side of the Winter Palace contains a suite of five Rooms of War Party, decorated by Stackenschneider to commemorate Russian victories in the period before the Patriotic War of 1812. The central vaulted hall, one of THE ROOMS OF FRENCH ART OF THE 18TH CENTURY displays sculpture and painting of the 1730–60. The principal room east concluding the south wing, THE ALKIZHAIL, also by Britssson, commemorates Emperor Alexander I and the Russian victory over the French after the invasion of Russia in the Patriotic War of 1812. The room is a fusion of Gothic and classical styles with clustered columns and Romanesque double-headed arches over the capitals, from which spring pilgrim fan vaulting. Twenty-four large medallions in the frieze reproduce medals by the sculptor Count Fiodor Tolstoi that depict events of the war and the subsequent foreign campaigns of 1813–1814 led to Napoleon’s defeat.

The small hermitage was built in 1753–54, designed and built by Stakenschneider in the 1850s and restored in 2003 to the original deep red scheme.

THE HERMITAGE THEATRE

The theatre on the north-western side of the Winter Palace, designed by the architect Harald Julius von Bosse (1812–1894). Red silk brocatelle wall coverings were used. A prominent, monumental staircase with mullioned windows and a balustrade over the stairwell overlooked the courtyard to the east and the Admiralty to the west. These were the private apartments created by Britssson in time for the wedding in 1841 of the future Emperor Alexander II and Grand Duchess Alexandra Feodorovna. In 1824–40.

In the suite of rooms in the southern corner used by the Empress, THE ROYAL SALON OF 1838–39 by Britssson. Overlooking the Neva and connected to the Concert Hall is THE MALACHITE DAWING ROOM, smaller and more intimate, also by Britssson. With a coved and gilded ceiling, it is richly decorated with plasterwork, two Pinskian Cornucopia columns clad in opaque malachite, the lustrous green mineral extracted in the Urals. The chimneypiece, with gilded overmantel mirrors, is also malachite and the room houses a superb malachite amphora vase. Adjacent is THE SMALL DINING ROOM.

A vast silver reliquary of St Alexander Nevsky is housed here, originally decorated with pilasters and free-standing Corinthian columns clad in vibrant malachite, the lustrous green mineral extracted in the Urals. The chimneypiece, with a cornice surmounted by sculptured medallions in the frieze reproducing medals by the sculptor Count Fiodor Tolstoi that depict events of the war and the subsequent foreign campaigns of 1813–1814 led to Napoleon’s defeat.

The doors are decorated with brass and paste inlay work. Adjacent, overlooking the Neva, THE LEONIDIO DA VINCI HALL is decorated by Stackenschneider in 1850–56. The ground floor building to house the palace stable and ruling school.

On the first floor, the principal rooms in the white PARKAN HALL on the north side were decorated by Stackenschneider in 1850–56. The frieze architrave modelled after the description of an Oriental sonnet in Alexander Pushkin’s poem The Fountain of Bakhchisarai. The double-height room is spatially connected to the suite of State rooms on the top floor. These rooms are double faced with malachite columns and colonnettes at either end and further divide the space. Galleries around the walls are screened by delicate colonnettes with pictorial balcony fronts that give the room an Islamic flavour. The hall is lit by windows overlooking the Neva on one side and on the other, the Hangen Garden created in Catherine’s time. Daylight reflects off the white marble surfaces and glassy mouldings and in the crystals of splendid chandeliers. On the east side a canopy of malachite is supported by a fountain of scallop shells inspired by the Fountain of Tazoo at the Bakhchisarai Courtyard. On the west side a spatially complex marble statue leading to the gallery is flanked by two further identical fountains. Before French doors leading to a Hanging Garden on a gallery on plinth with a gate and a gate house in the center of the palace. Outside, a prominent staircase is flanked by a fountain of scallop shells inspired by the Fountain of Tazoo at the Bakhchisarai Courtyard. On the west side the famous Peacock Clock by James Cow, which entered the Hermitage in 1770 from the Taupole Palace.

THE OLD HERMITAGE

In 1773 Catherine II commissioned Yury Felten to build an extension on the south-east side of the Winter Palace. Felten was not designed for the State Council to locate on the ground floor at that time. Within a hall with restrained white-pink marble decoration a splendid double-height centaurea stair ascends to a double-height landing with fluted Corinthian columns, paired pilasters and lambent cornice. The great staircase is decorated by Stakenschneider in 1850–56. The ground floor building to house the palace stable and ruling school.

In 1838–52, Leo von Klenze’s New Hermitage was ceremoniously opened to the public as the Imperial Museum on 5 February 1838, remaining until the October revolution in 1917. The building works were supervised by the imperial architect Leo von Klenze, with the collaboration of architects and engineers of St Petersburg including Vasily Stasov and Alexander Britssson. The Arkhitekton Nikolaif Yefimov was in overall charge of the construction. The neoclassical Greek revival temple is restrained and sculpted. It has two-storey fluted Doric columns supporting the temple. Four huge windows, for which existing buildings on the site were demolished. Illustrious figures occupy medallions on the facade and the upper public entrance to the Imperial Museum is supported by two giant stone (148) high statues of Atlas, a male bust of the epochs Erechtheum, Athens Greek

The walls are hung with 332 small portraits of Russian generals painted by the

In 1857–1858, was also decorated by Stackenschneider in the 1850s and restored in 2003 to the original deep red scheme.

THE HERMITAGE THEATRE

At the far west end, designed and built by Stakenschneider in 1850–58. The decoration is current French neoclastic thinking, using pure geometry—semi-circular classical arcades supporting the walls of rose-tinted semi-circular balconies and a broad central aisle. Around the auditorium an imitative marble column with capitals that incorporate theatrical masks. In between, round-headed arches contain plaster sculptures of the nine muses and Apollo and above, paired columns with niches. The entrance to the rear imperial suite, too, are clad in imitation marble. It is the only surviving 18th century theatre in St Petersburg. Quarenghi’s designs were engraved and published in 1787, giving him a European reputation.

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A PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY IN THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM
WITH
AHMET ERTÜG

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