

# MEDIA RELEASE



## NEW EXHIBITION AT THE DAVID ROCHE FOUNDATION WILL SHOWCASE 150 PIECES OF RUSSIA'S MOST OPULENT ART FROM THE 18<sup>th</sup> AND 19<sup>th</sup> CENTURIES

A new exhibition, *Triumph & Tragedy: Catherine, the Romanovs & Fabergé*, will showcase 150 pieces of some of Russia's most opulent pieces of decorative art from the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, many of which have never been seen before.

David Roche first visited Russia in the early 1990s and was enchanted by the country, its people and its art. He spent the last two decades of his life – with the assistance of Martyn Cook – assembling a collection of nearly 100 pieces of the best Russian art.

*This collection remains the most significant collection of its type in Australia* said Robert Reason, Museum Director of The David Roche Foundation House Museum.

For the first time, David's items are on display together alongside some of the finest Russian pieces from other Australian collections, private and public. The exhibition covers the period from Catherine the Great through to the fall of the Romanov dynasty in 1917, and the tragic end of the Imperial family.



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David was particularly captivated with Catherine the Great; famed for her expansion of the Russian Empire, her attempts to Westernise Russia, and her enthusiastic collecting of art.

*David Roche first travelled to Russia in 1994 and was overwhelmed by the opulent art and palaces of St Petersburg said Robert Reason. This subsequently turned to a passion for collecting Russian art, and in almost 20 years he amassed a singularly unique collection in Australia.*

This is one of the most significant exhibitions the Foundation has staged. People will have the opportunity to view not just imperial portraits, exquisite porcelain and objects that once furnished the palaces of Catherine the Great, the Romanovs and Russia's elite but see the work of Fabergé from the finest private collections in Australia.

Official portraits of Catherine the Great and Emperor Nicholas I reside alongside the personal hand seal of Emperor Alexander I and porcelain especially commissioned for the Hermitage and Pavlovsk Palace.

Highlights from the exhibition include precious objects in malachite, glass and gilt-bronze from the Romanov period which highlights the internationalism of 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia. The final decades of the Russian Empire are remembered for the work of Fabergé.

Robert Reason said *David Roche's Fabergé parasol handle from the collection of Queen Anne of Romania, the Fabergé miniature eggs and precious vases and plates from the Imperial Porcelain Factory are some of the most magnificent works in this exhibition. One of the works in the exhibition is a masterpiece which David Roche considered himself privileged to have in his collection. It is the magnificent ormolu mounted glass vase on pedestal with delicately cut edges trimmed by frosted neoclassical garlands, and a base said to imitate flowing water. He saw it as one of his greatest acquisitions.*

## Details:

### **Triumph & Tragedy: Catherine, the Romanovs & Fabergé**

12 July – 21 December 2019

David Roche Foundation

241 Melbourne Street, North Adelaide

Exhibition only \$12 Adult, \$10 Concession. No booking required.

House and Exhibition \$20 Adult, \$17 Concession. Bookings essential:

[www.rochefoundation.com.au/book-now](http://www.rochefoundation.com.au/book-now)

### **Feast Festival: November 14, 2019 at 5.30pm**

#### **Cost \$35**

Enjoy an exclusive evening viewing Russian treasures with Robert Reason, Director of The David Roche Foundation. Following the tour Russian drinks and zakuski will be served.

For further information please contact: Susanne Briggs [susanneb1@ozemail.com.au](mailto:susanneb1@ozemail.com.au) or 0412 268 320

**Caption:** Fabergé Imperial Kovsh, c. 1907. On loan from a private collection.



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