

PRESS RELEASE

Intesa Sanpaolo, official sponsor of the Puškin Museum in Moscow

SCHULTZ COIN COLLECTION DONATED TO MUSEUM

- **One of the largest private Russian collections put back together**

Moscow, 6 April 2009 – As part of the Italo-Russian mission promoted by Confindustria, Abi and ICE, **Intesa Sanpaolo has officially become the sponsor of the Puškin Museum.**

Today the bank donated the Schultz coin collection to the Puškin Fine Arts Museum.

One of the biggest private Russian collections, it includes literary masterpieces from between 1500 to 1800, Russian prints, stones and semi-precious metals. Thanks to government financing, a few years ago the collection was bequeathed to the museum.

However, the collection remained incomplete without its third part, or rather, the coin collection. Comprising 100 coins (56 in gold and 44 in silver), the coin collection includes a number of artefacts from the famous Byzantine period, the Roman Empire circa 600 B.C., and the mint of the Tsar with silver roubles from Peter I to Nicholas II.

Thanks to the contribution of Intesa Sanpaolo, **the collection has finally been put back together again and displayed to the public.** This will also allow for an interesting development of numismatics studies in the country.

The Puškin Museum has the largest collection of European art in Moscow with works by Monet, Picasso, Renoir, Degas, Cézanne, Chagall and Van Gogh. It first opened its doors to the public in May 1912. Originally named after Alexander III, the first works displayed were copies of ancient statues, deemed essential for the education of art students. With Moscow having become the capital city of Russia in 1918, the Soviet government decided to transfer thousands of works from the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg to the new capital, and these formed the first nucleus of works in the Puškin Museum. The most significant arrival of works only came about in 1948, however, with the donation of private collections of impressionist and post-impressionist paintings by two Russian traders, Sergey Shchukin and Ivan Morozov. These collections still comprise the main bulk of the art on display. Having changed its name in 1937 in honour of the poet Pushkin, during the Second World War, and for 10 years in all, the museum hosted the Gemäldegalerie collection of Dresden. This collection was eventually given to East Germany despite the opposition of the museum's curators. Nevertheless, the museum remains one of the principles troves of Priam's Treasure, discovered by Heinrich Schliemann in Troy and confiscated from the Pergamon Museum of Berlin by the Red Army.

For further information

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