



Newsletter

American-Russian Cultural Cooperation Foundation

Strengthening ties through art and culture

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March, 2011

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Alexander II and Abraham Lincoln The Tsar and the President

The American-Russian Cultural Cooperation Foundation (ARCCF) has just successfully accomplished one of its most interesting and ambitious exhibition projects. "The Tsar and the President," opened in Moscow on February 22, with great fanfare. This dual exhibition represents a unique partnership between the State Archive of Russia and the ARCCF.

"The Tsar and the President" is devoted to the historical parallels between them; their lives, their achievements and their fates. Alexander II and Abraham Lincoln acted almost simultaneously to free millions of Russian and American victims of human bondage. In the same time-frame, Russia's support for our Union discouraged intervention in our civil War by other European powers. Tragically, both were assassinated.

The exhibition presents over 200 unique and precious items, including the original pens used by Lincoln and Alexander II to sign the Emancipation Proclamation and the



Ribbon Cutting - Hon. James W. Symington and Russian Minister of Culture, Alexander Avdeyev.

Photo Vitaly Kislov

Liberation Manifesto. The Lincoln pen was lent to us by the Massachusetts Historical Society. Also included is an exchange of warm letters between the two great leaders. A rare copy of the Emancipation Proclamation (EP) and a heroic bust of Abraham Lincoln, weighing over 650 pounds, are among the major attractions. The EP was graciously lent by the Lincoln Heritage Museum, and the bust came from the U.S. Department of Interior, St. Gaudens National

Historic Site. A large and famous portrait of Lincoln by the artist G.P.A. Healy, on loan from the Chicago History Museum, hangs beside a portrait of Alexander II and served as the backdrop for the Ribbon Cutting ceremony which was performed by ARCCF's Board Chairman James W. Symington and Mr. Alexander Avdeyev, Russia's esteemed Minister of Culture.

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Tsar and the President

(continued from page 1)



The items from the Russian side are equally impressive, and include the actual uniform Alexander II was wearing when he was struck down.

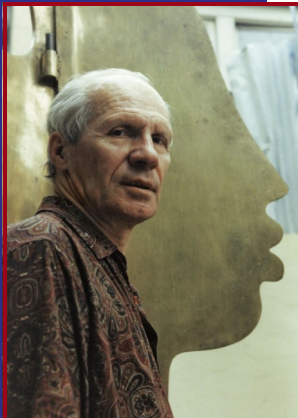
Alexander II's uniform from the State Hermitage and his sword from the Russian State Historical Museum, were reunited for the first time for this exhibition. (A full list of the Lincoln items presented in the Exhibition will be accessible on our new website, A-RCCF.org which is under construction but expected to be up and running soon.)

Following a month on display in Moscow, the entire exhibition will travel to the State Museum "Tsarskoye Selo" near St. Petersburg. It opens there on April 26, and closes on July 31, 2011. This is the height of the tourist season and we anticipate it will be visited by a great number of tourists.

James & Sylvia Symington in front of the State Archive. Statue of Lincoln and Alexander II by A. Bourganov. Photo Vitaly Kislov



Welcoming remarks by US Ambassador



Alexander Bourganov

About the Sculptor: Alexander Bourganov

Alexander Bourganov's sculpture of "Alexander II and Abraham Lincoln" stands outside the State Archive at the entrance to the Exhibition, and has become a symbol of the event.

Alexander Bourganov's works are well known, worldwide, and are located in several European museums. The ARCCF commissioned two important pieces of his work: A tribute to Russia's greatest poet, Alexander Pushkin, stands on the campus of George Washington University at 22nd and H Streets NW, in Washington, DC. The second is a tribute to Walt Whitman, which is located on the campus of Moscow State University. He also created a statue of President John Quincy Adams, which stands in front of the US Embassy in Moscow. Alexander Bourganov was born in Baku (Azerbaijan) in 1935. He graduated from the Moscow State Artistic and Industrial College. In 2001, Moscow granted his studio the status of a Museum.

President Dmitry Alexander II reforms

"The best minds in for these reforms supported and can peror Alexander II rightly called the great reforms were enormous challenge exceptionally courage must not forget th

(www.eng.kremlin)

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Friends,

“Happy people take no account of time,” was written by Alexander Griboedov, a Russian classicist and diplomat of the 19th century. That is why we were surprised to realize that we are fast approaching our 20th anniversary! Over this period we produced many visual and performing arts events, including celebrations of such glorious pages from American-Russian history, as the 50th and 60th anniversaries of our joint victory in WW II, the 200th anniversary of the Russian American Company, the 125th anniversary of Grand Duke Alexis’ Goodwill mission to the US, the Bicentennial of US–Russia Diplomacy, and other tributes to our common heritage. Now it appears we can plan a celebration of our own 20th anniversary!

From the American side there also has been no lack of commentary about “time.” The great Mark Twain said, “Time cools, time clarifies; no mood can be maintained quite unaltered through the course of hours.” These insightful words move us to ponder if our efforts have altered, hopefully for the better, the “moods” of Russians and Americans toward each other. Indeed, we would welcome your thoughts or suggestions in this regard, which, with your permission, we could publish in a future newsletter.

Our events and exhibitions have been enjoyed by over one million Americans and Russians, over the past 19 years, and we have made many friends in both countries.

I wish to express our gratitude to those who have generously sponsored our projects. As this newsletter is devoted to our current exhibition, “The Tsar and President,” I would like to recognize its distinguished sponsors: The US-Russia Foundation, the Abraham Lincoln Bicentennial Commission Foundation, the US Department of State, and our good friend and Board Member, Donald M. Kendall. On behalf of the ARCCF, I must also acknowledge with warm thanks the invaluable

support of the Embassy of the Russian Federation in Washington and the US Embassy in Moscow for supporting this project. Finally, I want to express my whole-hearted thanks to everyone who contributed to our recent “Salute to Michael Kaiser” gala at the Russian Embassy. Proceeds from the gala provided essential support for this exhibition. So “thank you” to all our many generous friends and supporters. SPASIBO!

Alexander Potemkin



Alexander Potemkin

“It is the hope of our Foundation that the exhibit might help to fill the gap; not as a footnote, but a visual text, albeit imperfect and incomplete, which could stimulate additional academic consideration and keener public awareness of a defining moment in the history of human bondage and a Russian-American relationship that has endured the vicissitudes of two turbulent centuries.”

James W. Symington
ARCCF Chairman.



ador John Beyrle. Photo Vitaly Kislov

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The Tsar and the President

You can purchase a catalogue from the 2009 US Tour of "The Tsar and the President." 100 pages, color/black and white photos. Cost: \$25, includes shipping.

Make check payable to ARCCF. Our address: 1050 17th Street NW, Suite 1000, Washington DC, 20036.

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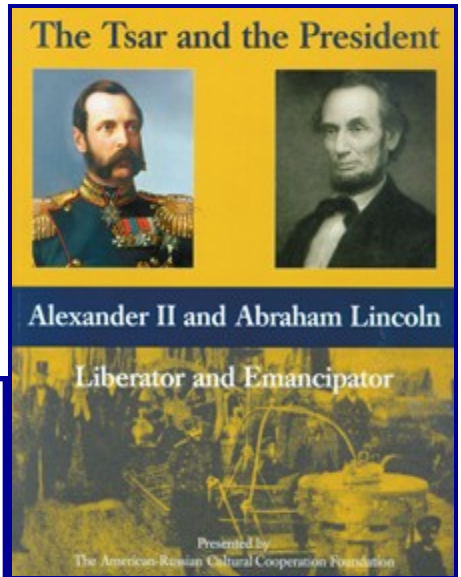
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Editor: Marilyn P. Swezey

*Foreword by the Honorable
James W. Symington*

*Prologue by Dr. James H.
Billington, US Librarian of
Congress*

About the American-Russian Cultural Cooperation Foundation

American-Russian Cultural Cooperation Foundation is a non-profit organization created in 1992 by a group of prominent American enthusiasts in cooperation with the Embassy of the Russian Federation.

The mission of the Foundation is to build ties, and increase trust and understanding between the people of America and Russia through the visual and performing arts, and shared cultural exchange.

ARCCF relies solely on contributions from interested supporters to foster its projects. We are a 501(c)(3) organization. Donations are tax deductible to the extent permitted by law. We welcome your questions and comments at: APotemkin@A-RCCF.org.