

My sincere condolences to Irina Alexandrovna's son and to the museum community for the untimely death of a unique museum director who guided the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts for five decades. Until the very end she astonished with her rich and detailed knowledge of classical art, with an unflinching sharp memory. Irina Alexandrovna also had an open mind for contemporary art, showing photos of Helmut Newton or videos of Bill Viola.

I had the pleasure and the honor of meeting her many times since the mid 1970s and getting Lufthansa German Airlines to sponsor many exhibitions at the Pushkin Museum.

I shall never forget when she agreed to take a ride on Jeremy Iron's motorcycle in the museum front garden before the opening of the Guggenheim exhibition "300 years of Art in America" in 1989.

The Hermitage beat her to publicly showing German trophy art which she denied having knowledge about where it was stored and her dream of reuniting the Shchukin & Morozov collections in Moscow in Moscow did not bare fruit but her legacy of exciting exhibition with loans from major European museums, including Leonardo's "La Gioconda", remains in fond memory of Moscow art lovers and visitors alike.

It is reassuring to know that her successor, Marina Loshak, continues the good work and expand the museum and its content to new contemporary dimensions.

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