



**Invitation to the Press Conference
15th May 2007**

**Russia's Soul
Icons, paintings and drawings of the Tretyakow Gallery, Moscow
16 May – 26 August 2007**

In 1856 Moscow businessman Pavel Tretyakov (1832 – 1898) purchased his first painting of a contemporary Russian artist, laying the foundation for his famous painting gallery. Today his gallery is regarded as the most important collection of Russian art in the world. Around 170 outstanding paintings, icons, and drawings will be selected from this rich collection for the exhibition in Bonn. This exhibition will trace the development of Russian art as it charted its unique course between the pan-European tradition and its own cultural tradition. The paintings range from the courtly culture of the late eighteenth century to the avant-garde movement around 1917.

The focus of the exhibition is on the latter half of the nineteenth century. During this eventful period all of Moscow was seized by an unprecedented painting fever. The influential collector and art patron Tretyakov especially admired the young generation of realist painters such as Ilya Repin, Ivan Kramskoy, Vassily Polenov, Nikolai Ghe, to name a few. Their social critical scenes of life in Russian society, lyrical landscapes, and penetrating portraits are masterly expressions of the fervent and much evoked search for the 'true Russia'. Introducing this extensive group of works are seldom shown paintings from the eighteenth and early nineteenth century. A selection of exquisite icons also provide insight into the spiritual sources of Russian aesthetics. The upheavals that characterised the turn of the century are manifest in the rich diversity of artistic positions, beginning with the symbolism of Michael Vrubel and Victor Borissov-Mussatov and extending to the representatives of Russian modernism.

**The press conference will be held on 15th May 2007 at 11.00 a.m. in the
Art and Exhibition Hall of the Federal Republic of Germany.**

Please register by Fax (+49/228/9171-211) or E-Mail (ferreira@kah-bonn.de). **Extensive essays and photo material are available at the press office or www.bundeskunsthalle.de.** Please direct all requests for interviews to this office.

We are looking forward to your visit.

Maja Majer-Wallat
Press Officer