



Alla Shmakova
(born in 1944)

GLORY TO BAZHENOV Tapestry

Moscow, USSR

1989–1990

Wool, linen, hand weaving

About the project

<https://tsaritsyno-museum.ru/events/special/p/lyudi-i-fondy-eng/>





SELECTED BY

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and Exhibition Work in 1993–2023*



The tapestry by Alla Shmakova called ‘Glory to Bazhenov’ is one of the masterpieces in the Tsaritsyno collection. It was created during the restoration of the Tsaritsyno ruins, once built for Catherine the Great by the best Moscow architects — Vasiliy Bazhenov and later Matvey Kazakov. Alla Shmakova was tasked by the Ministry of Culture of the USSR to weave two tapestries honoring the work of each of them. One tapestry ended up in the Tretyakov Gallery, while the other was granted to our museum. I believe it to be the better one. I am always amazed by the classical balance and elegance of the image of Bazhenov's ‘architectural theatre’ created by Shmakova. The figures of flying Bringers of Glory from the Grape Gate grace such refined and at the same time austere decorations. This is a true hymn to the genius of the Tsaritsyno's creator and a very accurate insight into the heart of his work.

I have fond memories of the first exhibitions that we held in the late 1990s and early 2000s in the recently restored Second Courtiers' Quarters and Opera House — the Middle Palace of Catherine the Great. The museum was small at the time, and its staff sometimes had to work both as curators and exhibition specialists, mount exhibitions, and also keep the museum clean. We worked without regard for time and effort. After all, it was so exciting to finally get the opportunity to make exhibitions after many years, to show people the beautiful architecture and our collections — mainly works of modern decorative art, which we had at that time. Shmakova's tapestry became a centrepiece of the first Tsaritsyno exhibitions as a real piece of grand art, similar to Bazhenov's buildings themselves. And after so many years, this beautiful item is inseparable for me from that romantic time.