

# Shades of Red

On view through  
SEPTEMBER 17, 2011

This exhibition presents sixty-two superb works by Soviet artists created during the decades immediately following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917. The exhibition explains the dynamic art scene in post-revolutionary Russia in which daring avant-garde representations of socialist policies competed for the title of 'proletariat art' with paintings in more conventional styles. Artistic styles of the era reflected highly variable degrees of revolutionary idealism, i.e. 'redness'.

In sharp contrast to the often-oversimplified generalizations applied to Soviet painting, the art scene during the early Soviet era was never static. Dynamic interpretations of social and cultural ideals were an inherent part of the early Soviet regime. The government tolerated avant-garde experimentation as a part of the revolutionary environment. Alternative approaches flourished in the 1920s as both traditional and avant-garde styles competed for public attention and government support. By the early 1930s, however, the atmosphere surrounding Soviet art changed as the state gradually tightened its control over all forms of artistic production.

By the mid-1930s, Stalin had imposed a systemic artistic standard defined as Socialist Realism that was to govern all creative expressions in the Soviet Union for the next fifty years. 'Redness' became codified, as avant-garde artists were successfully silenced and formulaic paintings of heroic workers and Party leaders proliferated. An artistic dichotomy emerged; neo-classical still life and portraits hung in the spacious apartments of the Party elite while proselytizing works of Socialist Realism were displayed in public exhibitions and museums.

## MUSEUM HOURS

Monday through Friday: 10am - 5pm

Saturday: 10am - 4pm

Sunday: 1pm - 5pm

Closed Major Holidays

## ADMISSION

Adults \$7.00

Voluntary donations suggested from students.

Museum members admitted free.

The Museum of Russian Art is a  
501(c)(3) organization.

All contributions are tax-deductible.

## PARKING

Free parking is available across the street at the  
Mayflower Church.

## MUSEUM STORE

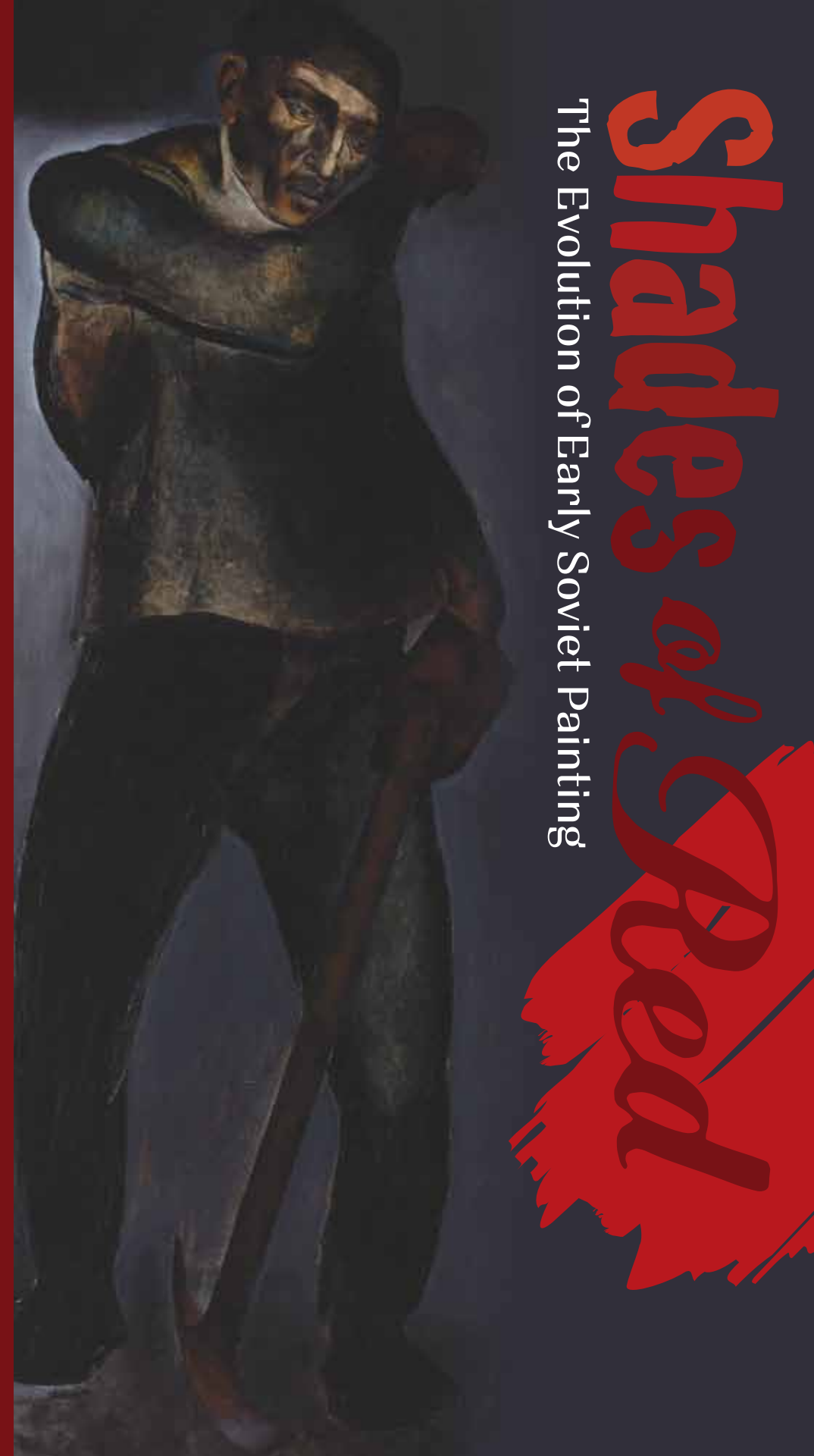
The Izba, the museum's gift shop featuring  
one of a kind artisan products, is open  
during museum hours.



THE MUSEUM OF  
RUSSIAN ART

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612.821.9045  [www.tmora.org](http://www.tmora.org)



The Evolution of Early Soviet Painting

# Shades of Red



Coal Worker, 1925

### ALEKSANDR A. DEINEKA (1899 – 1969)

A graduate of the VKhuTeMas and a founder of the Society of Easel Painters (OSt), Deineka emerged as one of the most prominent artists of the Soviet era. Introducing new themes and new aesthetics, Deineka's art straddled the widening gap between the avant-garde's daring creations and the neo-realism of the 1930s. Widely recognized for his paintings, Deineka also designed many of the famed mosaic installations for the Moscow Metro and Palace of Congresses in the Kremlin. Deineka became a professor at Surikov Art Institute and served as Vice President of the USSR Academy of Arts. Accorded national recognition, he was awarded the title of the People's Artist of the USSR and Hero of Socialist Labor. He was also awarded the Order of Lenin.



Turkish Woman, 1927

### PAVEL P. SOKOLOV-SKALYA (1899 – 1961)

A graduate of VKhuTeMas, Sokolov-Skalya was Chairman of the Bytie art group and a member of the AKhRR group. A firm supporter of Bolshevism, Sokolov-Skalya created numerous paintings glorifying the Soviet people and the Communist Party. Bringing a baroque bravura into his pictorial homage to the new regime, Sokolov-Skalya depicted his visions of his country and its people with passion and enthusiasm. He created a series of murals for the Exhibition of Economic Achievements and the Revolution Museum in Moscow. Sokolov-Skalya also worked as a propaganda poster artist. The artist's conversion to the Socialist realist dogma became complete after being awarded the Stalin Prize in 1942 and 1949.



A Factory Party Meeting, 1932

### GREOGI I. RUBLEV (1902 – 1975)

Nearly forgotten for half a century, Georgi Rublev's paintings were rediscovered in the late 20th century when the legacy of the lost generation of pre-war Soviet avant-garde was rescued from oblivion by Russian art historians. Rublev received his training at the celebrated VKhuTeMas from 1924 to 1930 and began his career as an avant-garde artist exploring Neo-primitivist style. His unorthodox portrait of Stalin, exhibited in 1934, attracted the displeasure of the authorities. Rublev also designed decorations for mass festivals and public buildings and taught at the Stroganov College of Art and Design. His paintings of the pre-war period are very rare.

Bolshevik Revolution 1917	VKhuTeMas Art School created 1920	Founding of AKhRR art group 1922	Death of V.I. Lenin 1924	Start of Forced Farm collectivization 1929	VKhuTeMas closed 1930	Independent art groups dissolved 1932	Principles of Socialist Realism formulated 1934	Stalin's Great Terror 1937-1938
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## ▶ TIMELINE

1918 Commissariat of Enlightenment organized	1922 Stalin becomes General Secretary	1925 OST art Group organized	1928 First Five-year Plan starts	1929 Great Depression in USA	1932 First Union of Soviet Artists created	1935-1936 Campaign Against 'formalism' in Soviet press	1941 Germany Invades Soviet Union
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Trees in Bloom, 1930s

### ALEKSANDR M. GERASIMOV (1889 – 1963)

Trained at the Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, Gerasimov became a prominent contributor to the evolution and imposition of Socialist Realism as the state sanctioned artistic philosophy. As a leading artist amongst the "cult of Stalin," Gerasimov established powerful political connections and subsequently created numerous portraits of prominent Party leaders. He exhibited with the AKhRR group until its dissolution in 1932 and became the chairman of the organizing committee of the Artists Union of U.S.S.R., the only state sponsored art organization in the Soviet Union. He was awarded the Order of Lenin, People's Artist of the U.S.S.R. and several Stalin prizes during the 1940s.



Lying Nude, 1930s

### EVGENI A. KATSMAN (1890 – 1976)

Attending the Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture between 1909 and 1917, Evgeni Katsman became a founding member and director of the publishing program for the influential Association of the Artists of Revolutionary Russia (AKhRR). He participated in major exhibitions between 1922 and 1939, earning a reputation as an unswerving proponent of Realism in Soviet art. Katsman was sometimes called a 'court' painter of Stalinism. A close colleague of Aleksandr Gerasimov, Katsman specialized in portraits and worked extensively in pastels. His paintings are characterized by optical illusionism and meticulous imitation of nature.



The Presentation, 1930s

### ZINAIDA M. KOVALEVSKAYA (1902 – 1972)

Zinaida Kovalevskaya studied at the Kazan Art School between 1922 and 1927. Her teachers were the illustrious Nikolai Fechin and Pavel Benkov. In 1930, Kovalevskaya moved to the ancient town of Samarkand in Central Asia, following her teacher Benkov. There she worked in the ethnographic department of the Uzbek State Scientific Research Institute and taught at the Samarkand Art College, established by Benkov. Kovalevskaya frequently painted Uzbek women, celebrating their cultural unveiling and their active participation in social and political life of the country. Kovalevskaya received the title of People's Artist of Uzbekistan in 1964. Her artworks are now in the Museums of Uzbekistan and Tatarstan as well as in private collections.