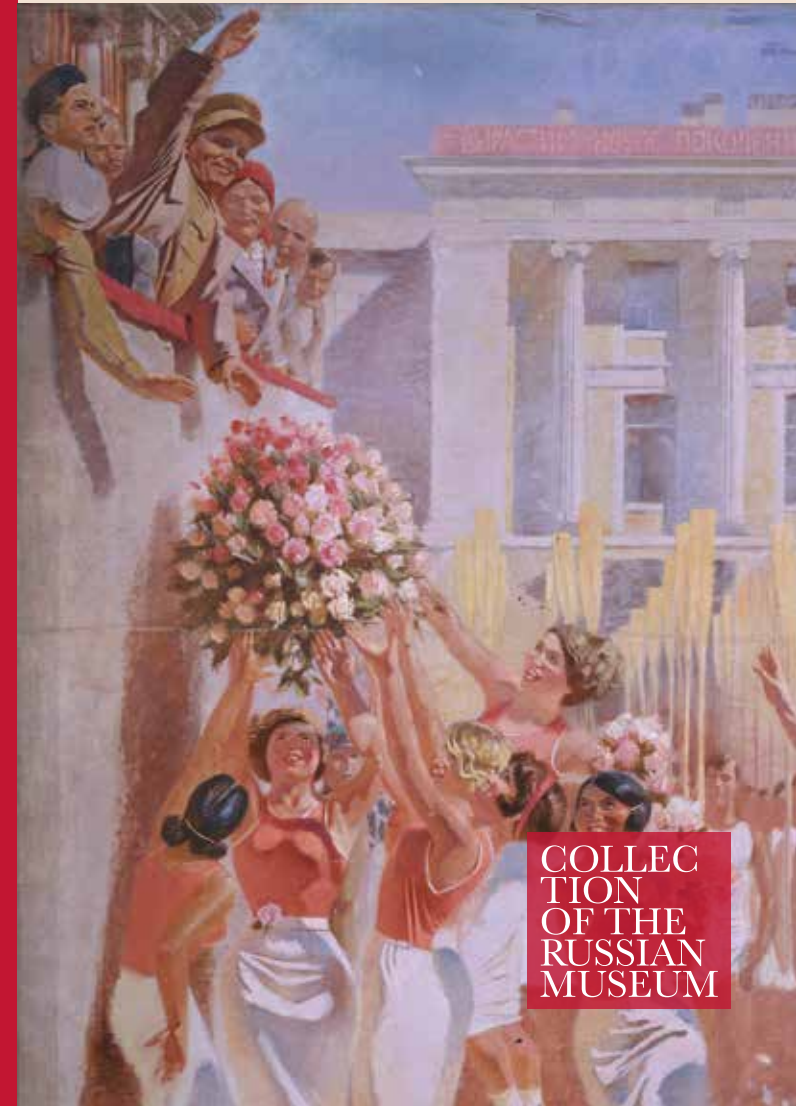


# THE RADIANT FUTURE

## SOCIALIST REALISM IN ART

FEBRUARY 2018 - FEBRUARY 2019



COLLECTION OF THE RUSSIAN MUSEUM

Soviet people perceived reality. A whole army of artists labored to construct this myth, and many of them succeeded in creating extremely talented and impressive works in the process, works which not only complied with ideological demands and norms but also reflected the collective desires of humankind, its age-old dreams of justice, abundance and beauty, dreams that would remain unrealized in life.



SAMUEL ADLIVANKIN,  
*Contest of Young Modellers*  
1931. Oil on canvas  
121 x 95 cm  
State Russian Museum



ALEXANDER SAMOKHVALOV,  
*After the Cross-Country Race* 1934-1935  
Tempera on canvas. 143 x 64 cm  
State Russian Museum

COLLECTION OF THE RUSSIAN MUSEUM  
Avenida Sor Teresa Prat, 15. 29003 Malaga, Spain  
www.coleccionmuseoruso.es  
Phone number: (+34) 951 926 150  
info.coleccionmuseoruso@malaga.eu  
educacion.coleccionmuseoruso@malaga.eu

OPENING TIMES  
From 9.30 to 20.00  
Closing days: Every Monday, January 1st and December 25th  
Last admission is 30 minutes before closing time

PRICES  
• Combined ticket (Collection and Temporary):  
€8,00 (general ticket) €4,00 € (reduced)  
• Collection: €6,00 (general ticket) €3,50 (reduced)  
• Temporary exhibition: €4,00 (general ticket) €2,50 (reduced)

REDUCED FEE  
• Over 65  
• Students under 26  
• Large Family card holders

FREE ENTRANCE  
• Unemployed (accredited)  
• Under 18  
• European Youth Card holders  
• Teachers and Students (Fine Arts and Art History)  
• Museum employees and ICOM members  
• Authorized tourist guides  
• Disabled (accredited)  
• General public (every Sunday from 16.00 to closing time)

PUBLIC TRANSPORT  
• Metro: Princesa-Huelin  
• Bus: lines 1, 3, 5, 9, 10, 15, 16, 22, 27, 31, 40, 91  
• Promenade train: departure from «Muelle Uno»  
• Tourist bus: Line 2

Alexander Samokhvalov, Sergei Kirov Reviews the Athletic Parade. 1935  
Tempera on canvas. 305,5 x 372,5 cm. State Russian Museum  
© Aleksandr Nikolaevich Samokhvalov, VEGAP, Málaga, 2018



**The 1930s through 1950s** was an extremely contradictory period in the history of Russian art. At that time a totalitarian regime was established in the Soviet Union that controlled all aspects of citizens' lives. Artistic production in the country was also regulated by the state. Art's main function became to implement propaganda aimed at "ideologically reshaping and educating working people in the spirit of socialism". Socialist Realism became the mandatory creative method for all Soviet art. Using realistic forms comprehensible to the broad masses of society, artists were to create convincing images of a mighty, just and prosperous country in which all citizens were happy and full of enthusiasm in their labor, thanks to the triumph of socialism.

Soviet art underwent its period of initial formation in the 1920s and early 1930s. Works from these years contain a broad spectrum of assimilated traditions, from archaic art to Constructivism. But after a campaign against formalism waged in the mid-1930s, a realistic style derived from late 19th and early 20th century Russian painting emerged as the one official artistic language. The most successful artists working in this style were Alexander Gerasimov and Vasily Efanov. They created portraits of communist party leaders and military chiefs as well as effective multi-figure formal paintings that recorded important state events such as sessions of governing bodies and official visits and meetings. These "official" works made up the ideological core of Socialist Realist art and fulfilled one of its primary tasks: to create and support the personality cult of Joseph Stalin and other Soviet leaders. A multitude of works in all art forms were devoted to both real and mythical episodes from these leaders' biographies, presenting them in the role of heroic revolutionaries, warriors, wise administrators and "friends of the people".

An important place in Socialist Realism's thematic complex was occupied by works dedicated to labor. Artists lauded the successes of industrialization, construction and agriculture, glorifying high-producing industrial workers and peasants engaged in the process of collectivization.



VASILY YAKOVLEV, *Prospectors Writing a Letter to the Creator of the Great Constitution* 1937. Oil on canvas. 249 x 500 cm. State Russian Museum

G.M. SHEGAL, *Leader, Teacher and Friend* (Joseph Stalin at the Presidium of the Second Congress of Collective Farm Shock Workers in February 1935). 1936-1937 Oil on canvas. 340 x 260 cm. State Russian Museum



Many artworks were devoted to the army and navy. Everyday army life and military exercises and parades; portraits and generalized images of soldiers and officers; weapons and war machinery; and the revolutionary history of the Soviet armed forces—these subjects dominated the official exhibitions regularly organized by the Red Army political leadership. A vivid and entertaining presentation of the Soviet Union's achievements was an important element of propaganda. Its purpose was to mobilize the populace to fulfil political and economic goals set forth by the party and government.

Striking monuments of Soviet art were dedicated to the themes of youth, physical culture and sports. These works also had ideological significance, inasmuch as the image of a new young generation raised by the Soviet system personified the country's bright future. The utopian idea of the creation of a new man, a convinced communist perfect in body and strong in spirit, acquired a visible outline in these works. Within the bounds of this subject matter artists enjoyed great freedom in their work with form. This was facilitated by the nature of sporting activity itself, by its variety of movements and poses. Leading artists in this field were Alexander Deineka and Alexander Samokhvalov, whose work preserves echoes of Neoclassicism.

Within the general context of Socialist Realism the most diverse genres, themes and subjects could acquire an ideological



VASILY EFANOV, *Artists of the Konstantin Stanislavsky Theatre Meeting Students of the Nikolai Zhukovsky Air Force Academy*. 1938. Oil on canvas 297,5 x 375,5 cm. State Russian Museum

resonance. In addition to political orthodoxy, the established canons of Socialist Realism also presupposed dramatism, narrativity and didacticism. This art was addressed to the broadest segments of society and formed an optimistic myth of an achievable communist utopia. Like the myths of ancient times, it wove itself into the fabric of life, acting as a kind of filter through which