

# THE KNAVE OF DIAMONDS

TOWARDS A HISTORY  
OF RUSSIAN AVANT-GARDE

JANUARY – JULY 2016



COLLEC  
TION  
OF THE  
RUSSIAN  
MUSEUM



Ilya Mashkov  
*Self-Portrait and Portrait of Pyotr Konchalovsky*. 1910  
Oil on canvas. 208 x 270 cm



Ilya Mashkov  
*Breads. Still Life*. 1913  
Oil on canvas. 105 x 133 cm

## COLLECTION OF THE RUSSIAN MUSEUM

Avenida Sor Teresa Prat, 15. 29003 Malaga, Spain  
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## OPENING TIMES

September 16<sup>th</sup> to June 15<sup>th</sup> from 9.30 to 20.00  
June 16<sup>th</sup> to September 15<sup>th</sup>, from 11.00 to 22.00  
Closing days: Every Monday, January 1<sup>st</sup> and December 25<sup>th</sup>  
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

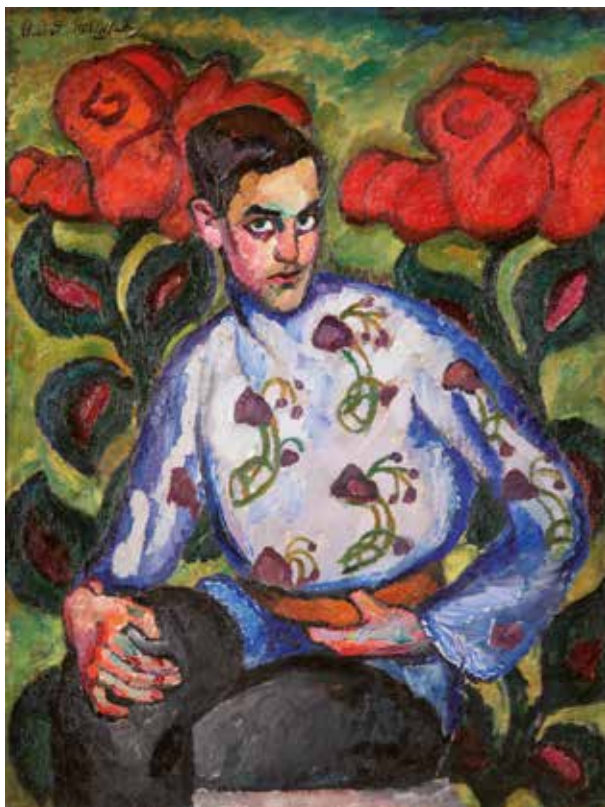


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Collaborating companies:





Ilya Mashkov  
*Portrait of a Boy in a Patterned Shirt*. 1909  
 Oil on canvas. 119.5 x 80 cm

The early 20<sup>th</sup> century in Russia was a period of memorable events in the country's cultural life. One of the most important artistic phenomenon of this era was the Knave of Diamonds group. At the beginning, it was comprised of artists whose work combined a love for European post-impressionism and Russian folk art. The name, conceived by Mikhail Larionov, has been interpreted in different ways over time: a liar, a thief, a cheat. But in its meaning lay the group's outspoken opposition to the then-prevailing symbolist movement. The names of their exhibitions – *Wreath*, *Blue Rose*, and others – recall salon painting, which was rallied against by the youthful artists united around the Knave of Diamonds.

Mikhail Larionov, Natalia Goncharova, Ilya Mashkov, Pyotr Konchalovsky, Aristarkh Lentulov and Robert Falk participated in the first exhibition, which opened 10<sup>th</sup> December 1910. The exhibition's jarring qualities left a strong impression on their contemporaries. Its signature piece was *Self-Portrait and Portrait of Pyotr Konchalovsky* by Ilya Mashkov. Both artists were depicted on the canvas nearly nude, like athletes in their underwear. Their poses and appearance are consistent with photographs of wrestlers and boxers, or popular films of that time. Books with the names of their favourite artists (Cézanne, Matisse), a piano, a violin and sheet music serve as indicators that the painting's subjects are educated. Trays like the ones sold at fairs show their interest in folk art. In this work, Ilya Mashkov expressed the Knave of Diamonds' artistic principles. The simplification of artistic language and its jarring nature, along with the use of motifs borrowed from everyday life are some of the main tenets of this group. Based on these and employing figurative forms, members brought freshness and innovation to various genres. The portraits, landscapes, and still lifes by Mashkov, Konchalovsky, Larionov and other Knave of Diamonds artists stand out for their sharpness and the originality of the subjects depicted.

During the near decade-long history of their exhibitions, the composition of the Knave of Diamonds' membership changed. In 1911, Mikhail Larionov – who was behind their outrageous name – left the group, together with Natalia Goncharova. They did not like the profound influence of Cézanne on the paintings produced by its core members.

Despite such conflicts, between 1910 and 1917 practically all of Russia's avant-garde artists – Kazimir Malevich, Vladimir Tatlin, Alexandra Exter, Olga Rozanova, Marc Chagall and others – exhibited their work at Knave of Diamonds shows. The group's tolerant attitude toward the radicalism of these young artists is a unique quality both of the Jack of Diamonds itself and the exhibitions organized in its name.

EVGENIA PETROVA



Natalia Goncharova  
*Peasant Women*. 1910  
 Oil on canvas. 73 x 103 cm