

RUSSIAN ARTISTS QUOTES

The Russian Avant works only in the hands of collectors. Interview with Vladimir Tsarenkov

-of Silvia Anna Barrilà | March 6, 2017



When and how he started collecting the Russian Avant-Garde?

I started when I arrived in France in 1980. I married a Frenchwoman and I started by chance working as a dealer of modern and impressionist art. With the profits I started buying some important works of Russian art for myself. So were available on the market and did not cost much, I could not afford them. Not only advanced but also other Russian art periods. At first it was only a couple of pieces, then it became a collection.



Alexandra Exter, Farbkonstruktion, 1921, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

1/15



How many works did in the collection?

I have so many collections. In all around 3,000 pieces. I have the Russian avant-garde, revolutionary ceramics, Russian classical ceramics, manuscripts, classical Russian art, even the greek-Roman antiquities, until contemporary Iranian art.

In what you could buy in the 80s?

A good piece you could buy a few thousand dollars. Today these works are no longer available in the market. At the last auction in November in London, [Sotheby's](#) offered a group of Suprematist works including the watercolor "Construction No.95" Rodchenko which was sold for 3.6 million pounds and a supremacist relief Chashnik that a estimate of 100-150,000 pounds was sold for 2.4 million. Both have scored the record for the artist. In the 80s, a Rodchenko you could buy to \$ 50,000, a Chashnik to 10,000. When I arrived in Paris I bought a painting by Goncharova at the flea market for \$ 2,000. At the time, at those prices, no falsified them. Today it is among the most expensive female artists in the world.

It tells us about the evolution of the market?

In the 80's and early 90's when I was a merchant, there was no Russian money. The art market in Russia was forbidden, as well as the Vanguard. Were the European collectors who were buying. Then, when the Soviet Union fell and the Russians have begun to accumulate wealth, the prices increased 100 times as much. The works have become extremely rare and the market was flooded with fakes that have discouraged potential customers. Today, for every true work of art of the Russian avant-garde, there are 100 false.

How do we protect ourselves from the false?

You have to be to buy yourself a specialist or contact a curator. However, the original has an impeccable provenance, a documented exposure history, should be reproduced in catalogs ... A work that comes out of nowhere to 99.9% is a fake. You have to be very careful to choose the right pieces. Why my Russian avant-garde collection is relatively small, it has a couple of hundred pieces, porcelain excluded.

Tell us about the Suprematist porcelain ...

I have more than 700. I started collecting them twenty years ago, when I realized the importance of this kind. In this field I have only rival (and friend): President of ' [Alfa Bank](#) Petr Aven, which has a fantastic collection of Russian porcelain that are now exhibited at the [Royal Academy in London](#) . Our collections are unique in the world. For years we compete for pieces that nobody else has. Today you can not buy these porcelains because there is nothing left, we bought everything.

What were the prices of these porcelains, before you bought them all?

When we first started buying them they cost between 100 and \$ 1,000. At the height of our contention, a porcelain Natalia Danko representative Nijinsky, famous dancer of the Ballets Russes, from [Sotheby's](#) has reached \$ 700,000. He bought Petr Aven. On the other bank account he is a man, I'm a former art dealer retired.

Where he bought the works in his collection? Auction or gallery?

Everywhere. There were many small galleries in Paris that there are now no more. Then there was [Ingrid Hutton](#) in New York, which has been one of the market pioneers of the Russian Avant in the 60s was buying by the artists themselves, started before the others and all his works were genuine. Other industry galleries were [Annely Juda](#) and [Gmurzynska](#) , which sold to collectors from which I bought back. Today there are more galleries specializing because there are no available pieces. You can only buy back from the collectors to which the works were sold. For example, the works auctioned by [Sotheby's](#) in November were a German collector who bought from these galleries.

What are the most popular artists?

Certainly Malevich, which is the most important and the one with the higher prices, even more than Chagall and Kandinsky. His record is equal to \$ 60 million.

And there is an artist in her opinion still undervalued?

Vladimir Baranoff-Rossiné, who is the father of the cube-futuristic sculpture in color. He started making colorful sculptures in 1913; Picasso only a year later. Arrived in Paris in 1910, he found himself in the right place at the right time. Its production of that time is very important and is located at [MoMA](#) , the [Pompidou](#) , the [Stedelijk](#) , but

you can still buy at reasonable prices, if you have the opportunity - rare, unfortunately. The record of 2008 and amounted to \$ 5.5 million for a piece that came from a German collection. But there are also works in the order of hundreds of \$ thousands.

Tell us the exhibition of his collection in Chemnitz?

To mark the centenary of the Russian revolution, I paid a lot of works to museums, but not the entire collection. Museum director asked me this exhibition, I have visited the museum, and I accepted. I was pleasantly surprised to see all the works gathered together. Otherwise they are scattered throughout my house and deposits.

And what is its relationship with the gallery [Sophia Contemporary](#) ?

It's my son Vassili gallery. It specializes in contemporary Iranian art. My son convinced me to visit Iran and I thoroughly enjoyed the contemporary art of this country, which still has very low price, so I bought several pieces, and I supported my son with my funds, my knowledge and my contacts to open the gallery. The Iranian quality art prices are still ridiculously low by Western contemporary art, but I am sure that the request for Iranian art will grow by both private and museum, despite the current problems with Trump.

Some names that appreciates in particular?

Reza Derakshani, which is one of the best representatives of the Iranian painting, and the young Azadeh Razaghdoost, which was influenced by Cy Twombly, but interprets it through the eyes of an Iranian woman.

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Alexander Deineka, Baseball, 1935, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

2/15



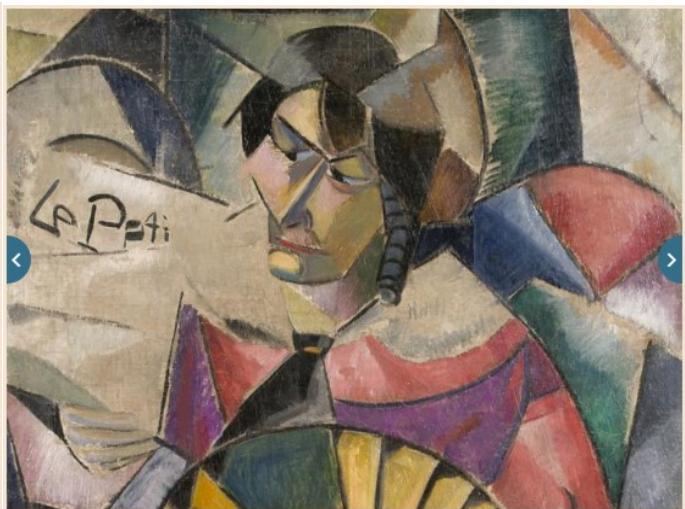
Natalja Gontscharova, Ruderer, 1912, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

3/15



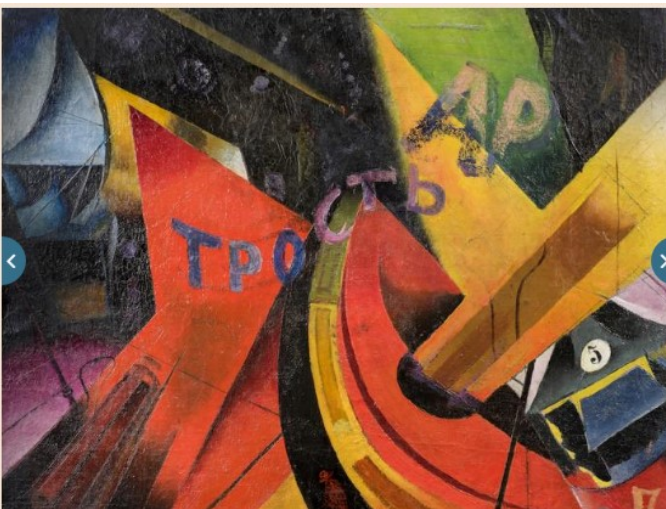
Boris Grigorjew, Paar - Dieb und Prostituierte, 1917, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

4/15



Marie Vassiliev, Dame mit Faecher und Zeitung, 1910-12, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

5/15



Wjatscheslaw Lewkijewski, Straßenbahn, 1913-14, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

6/15



Ljubow Popova, Malerische Architektur, um 1916, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

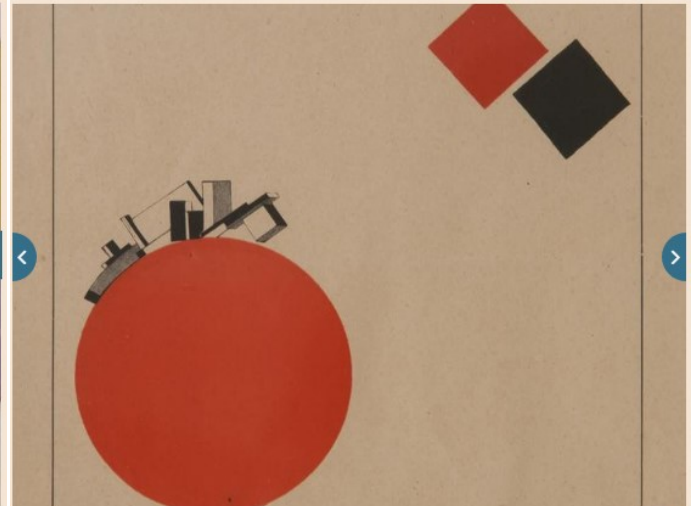
7/15





Vladimir Baranov-Rossiné Selbstporträt, 1914, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

8/15



El Lissitzky, Suprematistische Erzählung von zwei Quadraten in 6 Spielen, 1922, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

9/15



Vassily Kandinsky, cups and saucers, 1921, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

10/15



Kasimir Malevich, Tea Cup supremacist, 1923, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

11/15



Nikolai Sujetin, Schreibzeug Suprematismus, 1923, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

12/15



Vladimir Lebedev, Teller Prawda - Wahrheit, 1919, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

13/15





Natalja Danko, Anna Achmatowa, 1924, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

14/15



Vladimir Baranov-Rossiné Polytechnische Skulptur, 1915, Courtesy Vladimir Tsarenkov Collection, London

15/15

