

Glossary

Academy of Arts, St. Petersburg: The primary center for art education in Russia/USSR and the ultimate authority for maintaining artistic standards and controlling the content of exhibitions and commissions. Founded in 1757, the academy became the major influence on the development of Russian painting. After the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917, the academy's main functions were to implement the Communist Party line in the fine arts and to oversee the training of Soviet professional artists. In the 1920s, the academy was also referred to as *Vkhutemas*. After 1947 its name was changed to I. E. Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture of the USSR.

All-Union: USSR-wide. The term refers to all republics in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

agitprop: "Agitational propaganda" art of the post-Revolutionary period that promoted Soviet state ideology. The term is applied to public art, street decorations, posters, and decorative arts.

AKhRR/AKhR: The AKhRR (Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia) was organized in 1922. Based on the traditions of the *Wanderers*, this conservative association advocated a return to representationalism in the form of Heroic Realism; its members laid the groundwork for *Socialist Realism* and functioned primarily as an exhibition society based in Moscow. In 1928 the name was changed to AKhR (Association of Artists of the Revolution). The group was disbanded in 1932.

Apt Art: An underground alternative socio-artistic movement created by nonconformist artists that centered on artists' apartments or studios.

Asnova: The Association of New Architects (1923–32).

BelGoset: See *Goset/Goset*.

Belyutin Studio: A private studio of experimental artists in Moscow, headed by E. M. Belyutin. Formed in 1956, it was tolerated by state authorities. Members were invited to participate in the 1962 show *Thirty Years of Moscow Art* at the Manezh, thus providing artwork for Khrushchev to attack.

Bund: Also known as the General League, a Marxist/Social Democratic labor organization of Jewish workers in Russia and Poland formed in 1897. Lithuania was added in 1901.

Constructivism: An artistic movement that emerged in Petrograd after a series of debates on composition and construction in art. Widespread in the 1920s, the movement initially focused on sculpture created from industrial materials, reflecting contemporary engineering and building techniques. The Constructivists first advocated the abandonment of fine art for *productivism*, but later allowed abstract explorations in painting.

CPSU: Communist Party of the Soviet Union.

Donkey's Tail: A group organized by Mikhail Larionov in 1911. Its one exhibition in Moscow in 1912 included contributions by Natalya Goncharova, Larionov, Kazimir Malevich, Alexander Shevchenko, and others.

Evsektsiya: The Jewish Sections of the propaganda department of the Communist Party, 1918–30. They were committed to assimilating Jews into the new Soviet system, often by eradicating traditional culture.

Ginkhuk: State Institute of Artistic Culture. Ginkhuk was the Petrograd/Leningrad counterpart of *Inkhuk*, which developed from the Petrograd affiliation of the *MZhK* in 1923.

Goset/Goset: State Jewish Chamber Theater, 1920–25; State Jewish Theater, 1925–49. Originally founded as the Jewish Chamber Theater studio in Petrograd (1919–20) by Alexander Granovsky, the group relocated to Moscow in November 1920. It was directed by Granovsky until 1938, then by chief actor Solomon Mikhoels until his death in 1948. The organization was also known as the Kamerny Theater or Yiddish State Theater. BelGoset, the Belorussian State Jewish Theater in Minsk, was organized in the 1920s and closed in 1948.

Habimah: Hebrew theater founded in Moscow (1917) following the Revolution. Relocated from the Soviet Union in 1926 to Israel.

Haskalah: An Enlightenment movement within Jewish society in Europe from the late 1700s through the late 1800s that promoted secular studies and occupations and contributed to the assimilation of Russian Jews.

Inkhuk: Institute of Artistic Culture. Inkhuk was established as a research institute in Moscow in 1920. Its aim was to formulate an ideological and theoretical approach to the arts based on scientific research and analysis. Inkhuk had affiliations in Petrograd, Vitebsk, and other cities.

Izo Narkompros: Fine Arts Department, People's Commissariat for Education. The art department founded in 1918 under Shterenberg. Izo Narkompros was responsible for art exhibitions, official commissions, art institutes, art education, etc. At first, many of the avant-garde artists were involved in its activities.

Jack of Diamonds (Jack of Diamond): Group organized by Larionov in Moscow in 1910 and supported at first by many radical artists, including Goncharova and Malevich. After its first exhibition in Moscow in 1910–11, the group split into two factions, one led by Larionov—giving rise to *Donkey's Tail*—the other including Falk, Petr Konchalovsky, Aristarkh Lentulov, and others. The Jack of Diamonds organized regular exhibitions in Moscow and St. Petersburg between 1910 and 1917, some of them international in scope.

JSEA: Jewish Society for the Encouragement of the Arts. A Jewish arts society in Petrograd between 1915 and 1917. Branches were formed in Kiev and Kharkov.

Kamerny: Popular name for the Jewish Chamber Theater. Founded by Granovsky as a studio at the end of 1918 in Petrograd, formally named in 1919, and relocated to Moscow in 1920.

kheder: A Jewish elementary school for boys.

Komfut: The Communist Futurists.

Kultur Lige: A Yiddish cultural organization founded in Kiev in 1916 that sponsored art workshops, publications, and exhibitions. When it was taken over by the *Evsektsiya* in 1920, its leaders moved to Warsaw.

La Ruche: "The Beehive," an artists' residence with studios in Paris that served as a home to many East European and Russian Jewish artists from 1902 on.

Lianozovo Group: A group of artists organized by Rabin whose focus was on the immediate environment. Members employed the detritus of life in their work to show off the absurdity of the Soviet system.

lubok (pl: *lubki*): Russian hand-colored popular prints or broadsides generally used for entertainment and instruction. Often depicting allegorical, satirical, or folk figures from ordinary life, most *lubki* were copper engravings, but wood-engraved and manuscript examples were also common.

Makhmadim (Precious Ones): An artists' group centered at *La Ruche* whose members were interested in developing Jewish art. They published the journal *Makhmadim* (1912), considered to be the first modern Jewish art journal.

Manezh: The Central Exhibition Hall in Moscow.

mestechko: Literally "small town," the Russian-language equivalent of *shtetl*.

MOSSKh: The Moscow Section of the Union of Soviet Artists, formed in 1932. In 1938 it was renamed Moscow Union of Soviet Artists (MSSKh) and in 1957, Moscow Organization of the RSFSR Union of Artists (MOSKh).

MUZhVZ: Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture, and Architecture. Founded in 1843, this was the main Moscow art school at which many of Russia's nineteenth- and twentieth-century artists studied, including most of the avant-garde. In 1918 it was integrated with the *Stroganov Art College* to form *Svomas*.

MZhK: Museum of Painterly Culture, Moscow (1919–29).

NEP: New Economic Policy. An economic reform program initiated by Lenin, allowing limited return of private ownership and commerce (1921–28).

numerus clausus: The quota system that regulated Jewish enrollment in Russian Imperial educational institutions between 1882 and 1917.

OSA: Society of Contemporary Architects. Active in Moscow from 1925 until 1930, this group was founded by A. A. and V. A. Vesnin and M. Ia. Ginzburg. Between 1926 and 1930, it regularly published a journal, *Contemporary Architecture (SA/Sovremennaia arkhitektura)*, the principal journal on Constructivist architecture in the Soviet Union.

OST: Society of Easel Painters. Founded in 1925, the group's four exhibitions, held between 1925 and 1928, demonstrated its orientation toward figurative art. Most of the members were former *Vkhutemas* students who often used Expressionist and Surrealist styles.

Pale of Settlement: The area of Tsarist Russia in Poland, Lithuania, Belorussia, Ukraine, Bessarabia, and the Crimea to which Jews were confined by laws of 1791 and 1835. Residency outside the Pale was regulated by permits. The Pale was abolished in March 1915.

Peredvizhniki: Shortened form of Association of Itinerant Art Exhibitions; also known as *Wanderers* or *Itinerants*. The Wanderers determined the development of Russian art during the second half of the nineteenth century. They rejected the dominant academic styles, concentrating primarily on contemporary Russian themes in order to express their populist humanism. They took their exhibitions to several cities, including Kiev, Odessa, and Kharkov.

pogrom: A Russian word indicating an attack by one social group on another, used to describe the numerous massacres of Jewish populations within the *Pale of Settlement* and Poland from the 1880s through the end of the Civil War in 1921.

productivism: A practice advocated by promoters of *Constructivism* and others. Productivists wanted to extend their experiments in purely abstract art into the real environment by participating in the industrial production of useful objects.

Rayonism: An abstract painting movement started in Russia by Larionov and Goncharova (1911–12).

shtetl: Yiddish term for a small town.

Socialist Realism: An ideology enforced by the Soviet state as the official standard for art, literature, music, etc., established and defined in 1934 at the First *All-Union* Congress of Soviet Writers. Socialist Realism was based on the principle that the arts should promote political and social ideals set by the state in a readily comprehensible manner. The approved artistic styles initially derived from realism, but varied over time.

Sots Art: A term coined by the artists Komar and Melamid in 1972 to describe a Soviet/Soviet émigré art form that originated in the 1970s. It represents a play on words with "Sots" from "Socialist" in Russian and "Pop Art." Sots artists based their works on Soviet propaganda posters and paintings; their approach was frequently ironic and politically oriented.

Stroganov Art College: Central Stroganov Institute of Technical Drawing, Moscow, also known as the Stroganov Art and Industry Institute. After 1917 it merged with the *MUZhVZ* to form *Svomas*.

Suprematism: Malevich originated the term "suprematism" in 1915 to describe "the supremacy of feelings." Suprematist art provides a nonobjective image of the generalized order of nature. According to Malevich, Suprematism was divisible into three stages: black, red, and white. All three of these stages took place between the years 1915 and 1935. Suprematist ideas were applied to architecture and the decorative arts in the 1920s and provided the foundation for the ideas of *Unovis*.

Svomas/GSKhM: State Free Artistic Studios. In 1918 *MUZhVZ* and the *Stroganov Art College* were integrated to form *Svomas*, and leading art schools in other major cities, including the *Academy of Arts* in Petrograd, were also disbanded. In 1920 *Svomas*, Moscow, was renamed *Vkhutemas*, and the academy in Petrograd was reinstated. Many avant-garde artists, including Popova, Alexander Rodchenko, and Vladimir Tatlin, contributed to the radical pedagogical and administrative developments that accompanied these name changes.

Union of Soviet Artists: The single official artists' union of the Soviet Union, authorized and controlled by the state. Proposed in 1932, it was fully realized in 1957.

Union of Youth: A group of artists, critics, and aesthetes initiated by Vladimir Markov, Olga Rozanova, Iosif Shkolnik, and others in St. Petersburg in 1910. The group published an art journal under the same name in 1912–13 and sponsored a series of exhibitions between 1910 and 1914 to which many of the avant-garde contributed.

Unovis (Affirmers of the New Art): A group of Suprematist artists founded by Malevich in Vitebsk at the end of 1919 which included Chashnik, Kogan, Lissitzky, and Nikolai Suetin. Unovis had affiliations in Smolensk, Samara, and other cities and held exhibitions in Vitebsk and Moscow.

Vkhutemas/Vkhutein: Vkhutemas (Higher Artistic and Technical Studios) was formed in 1920. Although its structure was altered during its existence, it comprised seven basic departments: painting, sculpture, architecture, ceramics, metal and woodwork, textiles, and typography. It replaced *Svomas* in 1920 and was itself replaced by Vkhutein (Higher Artistic and Technical Institute) in 1926.

Wanderers: See *Peredvizhniki*.

White Russia: Belorussia. The independent Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic (BSSR), comprising the districts of Vitebsk, Gomel, Minsk, Mogilev, and Polese and those of Western Belorussia, was annexed in 1939. As of that year, approximately one-tenth of its total population were Jews.

World of Art (Mir iskusstva): A group of St. Petersburg artists, critics, and aesthetes founded by Alexandre Benois, Sergei Diaghilev, and others in the late 1890s. They published an art journal under the same name between 1898 and 1904 and sponsored a series of exhibitions between 1899 and 1906 in order to disseminate contemporary art. In 1910 the group was revived as an exhibition society,

lasting through 1924. World of Art artists created stage designs for the Ballets Russes (1909–29) and also contributed to the renaissance of book design and illustration in Russia.

YKUF: The Yiddish Culture Association (Yidischer Kultur Farband), which existed in New York during the 1930s and the 1940s.

Zhdanov decrees: Resolutions adopted by the Central Committee of the Communist Party in 1946. Formulated by the Party's secretary and cultural boss, Andrei Zhdanov, these decrees called for stricter government control of the arts and promoted an extreme anti-Western bias.

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1890-1990



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