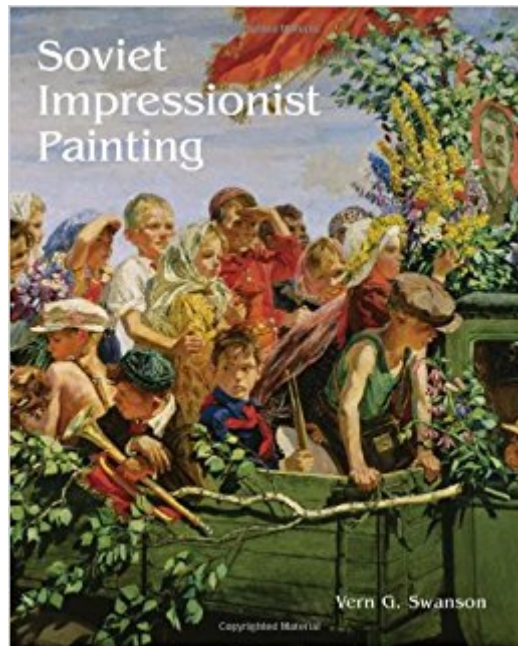




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# Soviet Impressionist Painting



## Synopsis

This book is a completely revised and updated edition of Soviet Impressionism, published in 2001 and quickly sold out. Vern Swanson has included a mass of new information as well as 140 additional colour plates. Soviet Art of the 1930s to the 1980s is now considered the twentieth century's major realist school of painting, although much of it had remained hidden during its heyday due to the politics of the Cold War. Now percipient and adventurous art historians are turning the balance and addressing the presence of Soviet Impressionist paintings. This is a vibrant and powerful school of art. Beautiful colour illustrations throughout and a highly perceptive text make this a reference book no art lover or historian would wish to be without.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Vern G. Swanson, Ph. D. is the author of numerous books, catalogues and articles on Soviet painting, 19th century European classicist artists and American realist art. Swanson is the director of the Springville Museum of Art in Utah, USA, and is a graduate of the Brigham Young University and the Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London.

I thought I would never own this book as the out of print version was running from \$300 up to \$800!!!!?!?. That was for a book only a few years old. This one will be the same. This publisher tends toward the lower print runs so I suspect this item will be history (so to speak). As an artist my point of view is all about the images. I read the books that are honest assesments of the work and not deconstructionis bs (read Michael Fried). This book offers a fair assesment of the work being

shown with no illusions regarding the setting within which the art work was created. In the introduction we read, "...they (critical western writers) imagined that in a controlled society all art was necessarily bad, because artists can only create in absolute freedom. Yet few in the West could name a single Soviet artist or visualize any of their paintings. What we had were blanket dismissals from the ill-informed." This book is about dispelling those blanket dismissals. Apart from all that, when the artwork is taken at face value, the work presented is a mindblowing celebration of talent. With awe I read artists name after name without any recognition and realized the treasure this book begins to expose. The images are beautiful. The editors were not afraid to run an image over the gutter to show its best impact within the confines of the book. This is a book that will be read and studied for years. If you are a fan of Sorok, Sorolla, Fechin, etc....this is the mother load. The cover art is a good representation of the quality and kind of work you will find inside.

This is a really nice book and we were happy to find it at a good price on . I'd recommend it to artist or art lovers that want to learn more about Russian Impressionist the early years.

thank you

It's great that I could appreciate a great realistic art, almost unknown in the western world. I'll take some time to read the wonderful book but just the paintings reproduction are fine.

This book is a very thorough and well illustrated art book, well worth the price!

Good but not great. If you're thinking about Fechin or Levitan quality, you might be disappointed.

Swanson's focus on later work from 1930 forward unfortunately only further helps to bury the contributions of Russia's early impressionist artists of the 1800- and early 1900-hundreds. American audiences did not first have an opportunity to see Russian art in 1924 at the Russian Art Exhibition in New York, as Swanson alleges at the beginning of chapter 29, but twenty years earlier at the World Exhibition in St. Louis. Indeed one of these paintings, The Old Mill by Karl Kahl, graced the Scribner's Magazine March 1908 cover. and thus reached many households across America. Audiences, and organizers, were so impressed with the Russian paintings they saw in 1904 that several of the organizers of the World Exhibition Art Show later organized the 1924 exhibit. It would have been good to read about the struggle the artists went through to get their paintings to St. Louis

in 1904, to hear how these painters influenced the work that Swanson does focus on. Kahl and maybe others were killed at Stalin's command, its too bad that they can't at least get a bit of recognition here.

Covering Soviet realist art from the 1930s to the 1980s, this impressive volume Soviet Impressionist Painting is a revelation. The well written and accessible text is both interesting and informative, explaining the prevailing conditions which influenced the artists and their work. The reproductions of the paintings are interspersed with the text, and vary from smaller than postcard size to the double page spread, one quibble here is that the text and the image to which it refers rarely appear on the same page, but usually two or three pages apart; with illustrations on every page this seems an odd arrangement. It concludes with a twenty five page chronology of Soviet art. Perhaps because of their initial impact, the first impression is that the majority of pictures here depict happy workers off to the field, smiling families and cheerful youths. However this is not strictly the case, there are more pensive portraits and groups, and there is a fair sprinkling of landscapes along with a few still life and some nudes. What really stands out, regardless of subject matter, is the quality of the painting; vibrant and energetic, with lively brush work and a strong sense of light these pictures cannot fail to appeal. Here the quality of the photography and printing come to the fore, one can sense the texture of paint and the brush work, adding greatly to the vitality of the work. The colour reproduction is superb, rich and at times vivid or even luminous; the paintings truly come to life on the page. This is genuinely a sumptuous volume, lavishly illustrated almost entirely in colour. Grab a copy while you can before this one goes out of print.

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