



Konstantin Makovsky: The Tsar's Painter in America and Paris

Wendy Salmond, Wilfried Zeisler, Russell E. Martin

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Monumental in scale and rich in exotic detail, Konstantin Makovsky's stunning paintings epitomize the charm of Old Russia. His early career blossomed in St. Petersburg in the 1870s, where he became the darling of the Tsar's court. His popularity soon spread far beyond Russia's borders. He lived and worked in Paris and then America, becoming the premier ambassador of traditional Russian culture in the United States.

This beautifully illustrated book, the first full survey in English of Makovsky's career, positions his work at the crossroads between late Imperial St. Petersburg, Belle-Epoque Paris, and America during the Gilded Age. Three great canvases celebrating Russia's traditional wedding customs unify this survey: *A Boyar Wedding Feast* (1883), which launched Makovsky on a long career as a celebrity painter of historical genre scenes, *Choosing the Bride* (1887), and *The Russian Bride's Attire* (1889). All are explored through outstanding photography, including close-up details, published here for the first time.

Four fascinating essays trace the career path of this Russian artist eager for international fame. Wendy Salmond begins by establishing the Russian milieu. Russell E. Martin highlights the historical sources, artifacts and costumes on which Makovsky relied for his scenes of seventeenth-century private life. Wilfried Zeisler reveals the artist's little-known Paris period, exploring also his Orientalist paintings inspired by the Middle East and North Africa. Wendy Salmond investigates the American audience's enthusiastic reception of Makovsky's paintings. That Makovsky's canvases acquired real celebrity status among a broad American public invites intriguing questions about the nature of the international art world and the place there of Russian artists in the late nineteenth century. A valuable bibliography brings together resources on the artist.

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