Konstantin Makovsky

Konstantin Evgenievich Makovsky, born in Moscow on July 2, 1839, is remembered primarily as a portraitist, scene painter, and founding member of a group of independent realistic artists active in the nineteenth century. His major artistic training took place at the age of twenty in the Moscow School of Painting and Sculpture, a school co-founded by Fedor Nikolayevich Ilyinsky. In 1860 he joined the Imperial Academy of Arts in Saint Petersburg—the only educational avenue for aspiring artists in the tightly controlled tsarist state. Although the Academy awarded him the Silver Medal in 1862, Makovsky took part in an unprecedented exhibition against the establishment in 1863 in a tradition started by conditions and policies of the patriarchal Academy orthodoxy that established the Grand Gold Medal competition. A few of his drawings, but not his Artistic Degree, had, however, brought him official recognition of the Academy in 1867 after becoming an associate in 1865 and a professor in 1869.

The fourteen paintings, including Makovsky, who resigned from the Academy formed an independent artists’ cooperative, Artel Khudozhnikov, a precursor to the “The Wanderers.” Ceiling as well as traditional art, these artists sought to free themselves from the strictures of Academy selected subject matter and use themselves as part of a new social and rational order. They allied themselves with the liberal intelligentsia, who, in the wake of Alexander II’s Czarist Edict in 1861, and the destruction of the serfs (1861), were deeply involved with service to society, individual reform, and cultural renovation. These liberals took an independent and critical stance toward the imperial state and were considered the intelligentsia, who saw themselves as part of a new moral and rational order. They allied themselves with the liberal intelligentsia, who, in the wake of the Russian defeat in the Crimean War (1856) and the liberation of the serfs (1861), were deeply involved with service to society, individual reform, and cultural renovation. They allied themselves with the liberal intelligentsia, who, in the wake of the Russian defeat in the Crimean War (1856) and the liberation of the serfs (1861), were deeply involved with service to society, individual reform, and cultural renovation. Makovsky’s secession from the Academy in 1863 was followed by the formation of the Petersburg Society of Artистs, a group of artists who were dedicated to the intelligentsia, especially to the social context of politics, art activism, and political activism, genre paintings by members of the intelligentsia were commissioned anonymously by their upperclassman. In their desire to go beyond professional freedom, the artists of the “Artel” sought independence not only for a thematic material was common. Unlike their Western counterparts, Russian artists had no tradition of secular art, consequently they lacked the training to break away from established formal conventions. Russian Beauty and Cat was painted within the milieu of artists striving for professional reform and dates from the critical period after Makovsky’s secession from the Imperial Academy of Arts in Saint Petersburg. The subject is representative of pictures by the artists of the Artel Khudozhnikov, which were created by artists who had turned away from the Academy. The painting is not a portrait in the sense of a likeness, but rather a composition of a figure painted into the background of a landscape.

From 1909 and 1911 Lininger Collection Catalogs:

Russian, who measured the windmill and the storks, and his wife’s subsequent death in 1927, the Lininger Collection was sold at auction. Although the plan was to get ahead, had not yet developed a cultural heritage of its own. Russian Beauty and Cat was painted within the milieu of artists striving for professional reform and dates from the critical period after Makovsky’s secession from the Imperial Academy of Arts in Saint Petersburg. The subject is representative of pictures by the artists of the Artel Khudozhnikov, which were created by artists who had turned away from the Academy. The painting is not a portrait in the sense of a likeness, but rather a composition of a figure painted into the background of a landscape.

Beckoning Art Museum

George Lininger Legacy

George N. Lininger (1844–1907) built and operated the public art gallery in Omaha, Nebraska. He was a trailblazer for fine art activities, and his 1890s, a century-long journey traveled several times to Europe or the East. It took many more years for him to secure financial backing for his private collection of fine art, including Aleksandr Makovsky’s Russian Beauty and Cat. In opening his gallery, he offered a glimpse of a tradition that began in the 18th century.

Lininger’s collection reflects the taste of the period, neglecting genres such as landscape and impressionistic paintings. Instead, the collection focused on historical and religious subjects, executed in realistic or dramatic styles. Sculptures were included, and modernist concepts and decorative arts were included in a range of forms and periods. In 1886, Lininger directed the first public art exhibition in Omaha, held in connection with the Inter-State Exposition, to which it had its last show in 1903. In 1884, the private gallery was completed and opened to the public. The same year he helped organize and was president of the Western Art Association, offering his gallery for the first exhibition.

RUSSIAN BEAUTY AND CAT
1865, OIL ON CANVAS MOUNTED ON MASONITE PANEL

JOSLYN ART MUSEUM® OMAHA, NEBRASKA
Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Martin, 1954.172