VIEWS and RE-VIEWS

SOVIET POLITICAL POSTERS AND CARTOONS

DAVID WINTON BELL GALLERY, BROWN UNIVERSITY
On view at the David Winton Bell Gallery and the John Hay Library Gallery
September 6 — October 19, 2008
Auxiliary selections from the collection are on view at the Cogut Center for the Humanities and the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library through 2008

Sponsored by the David Winton Bell Gallery, Brown University Library, Cogut Center for the Humanities, and Office of the Vice President for International Affairs

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David Winton Bell Gallery, Brown University
a powerful sampling of more than 160 images from a private collection of 20th century propaganda art.

In their presentation of posters and political cartoons from the Soviet period, curators Jo-Ann Conklin, Director of the Bell Gallery and Abbott (Tom) Gleason, Keeney Professor of History Emeritus, invite us to think about these images in new ways. The stunning images in this exhibition evoke an imagined world of enemies and heroes, set against an historical backdrop of brutality and intense human yearning. How can propaganda open a window into what was actually happening, whether in the world for which they were created or in the world about which they expressed criticism, hostility or humor? Might we imagine now how these images were then received—or rethink our own reactions to them now? How does propaganda communicate? Is it direct, popular, vernacular art, or something made and understood then and now more indirectly?

These images remind us that the music, art, and literature of the mid-to-late Soviet period have often been scorned as politically coerced, their creators to be pitied, and only occasionally admired for their bold aesthetics. VIEWS and RE-VIEWS invites us to reconsider that tradition, perhaps in light of our own era’s rigidities of politics and taste.

Perhaps if we imagine the difficulty of untangling the flurry of media images, communication, and miscommunication surrounding our national election, we may glimpse something of the tortuous labyrinth required to appreciate the real and unreal in these posters and cartoons. Propaganda art can be as much about art as propaganda. Revisiting these images, many of them famous or iconic, may also spur us to reconsider the relationship between the art of the high Soviet Union and that of the West, and perhaps to re-assimilate the art of the twentieth-century Soviet world into the mainstream of European and Western modernism.

Wanting neither to chill the power of each image nor dampen the flourish of our own individual reactions, Conklin and Gleason’s presentation artfully and intelligently engages us in a process of historical revelation intertwined with our effort to discern some element of personal truth and understanding.

On behalf of Brown University, let me welcome you to view—and to review!

Harriette Hemmasi
Joukowsky Family University Librarian
Seventeen years after the demise of the Soviet Union, VIEWS and RE-VIEWS invites a post-Cold War assessment of Soviet graphic arts. The exhibition suggests that artistic merit may be found in the service of political belief and subject to state regulation, and demonstrates stylistic diversity within works that are often simply and dismissively characterized as Socialist Realism. It also exposes uncomfortable truths in Soviet views of the U.S. that can be evaluated anew, thanks to calmer political relations and an historical perspective.

Selected around the concept of “friends and enemies,” the exhibition investigates the tendency within Soviet society to posit a pantheon of enemies of the state and heroes of the revolution. Enemies were identified both within Russia and outside of its borders, in the West. Some were perennial—priests, kulaks (peasant landowners), Mensheviks, Tsar Nicholas, Capitalists, the Entente (Britain, France, and the U.S.). Others moved from enemy to friend or friend to enemy with changing political or economic situations. Peasant farmers, distrusted during the revolution, were incorporated into the communist system via collectivization and industrialization. Thereafter, hard-working and happy collective farm workers were pictured in posters. Heroes included Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders, Stalin, the Red Army, shock workers (individuals who worked tirelessly for the collective, versus enemy slackers), and emancipated women. But even heroes could fall. Gregory Zinoviev, represented on a poster in this exhibition, was purged by Stalin, to say nothing of Trotsky, here represented by the Kukryniksy (a Soviet caricaturist collaborative) as a Fascist lapdog.

The exhibition is drawn from an extensive private collection of Soviet propaganda and includes posters, cartoons, and photomontages. The works span more than six decades, from the time of the Russian Civil War (1918–21) during which the Bolsheviks and their western-backed opponents struggled for control of the new state—into the late Soviet period. The earliest works in the exhibition, some by Viktor Deni, Dmitri Moor, and the artists of the ROSTA Windows, demonstrate stylistic links to nineteenth-century European
art and Russian folk art. Created between 1919 and 1921, the ROSTA Window posters combined rhyming text with images to communicate with the semi-literate population about new decrees and to comment on current events and aspects of daily life in the new communist state. Deni and Moor’s biting political satire, published in cartoons and posters, was a counterpoint to the earnest utopian imagery of the 30s. Posters by Gustav Klutsis, Valentina Kulagina, and Nikolai Dolgorukov from the 1930s and later celebrated the socialist system, its leaders—Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin—its heroic industrial and agricultural workers, and collectivization. Their works encompass many of the stylistic tropes that have come to be associated with Soviet posters: discrepancies of scale that articulate hierarchies (leaders tower over and dwarf the proletarian throngs); prevalence of geometric shapes and diagonals and a limited color palette of red, white, black, and yellow; and the incorporation of photomontage.

During World War II and the Cold War, the Kukryniksy satirized politics in clever and highly entertaining cartoons and caricatures, demonstrating great skill with pen, ink, and watercolor. Alexander Zhitomirsky—like his better-known German counterpart John Heartfield—created political photomontages. During World War II his work ridiculing Nazi leadership and forecasting its defeat was published in leaflets dropped on enemy troops, causing Joseph Goebbels (Hitler’s minister of propaganda) to add him to the “most wanted” enemies list. By the 1950s the Soviet Union had shifted its focus outward. Internal enemies gave way to Western powers: the U.S. and NATO countries. Works by Viktor Koretsky—one of the most prolific poster artists of period—the Kukryniksy, Zhitomirsky, and others called for world peace while decrying America’s imperialism in Vietnam and the Middle East and racism at home.

VIEWS and RE-VIEWS is accompanied by a scholarly symposium, curator’s lecture, brochure, and website, and is a collaborative endeavor of Brown University’s Library, David Winton Bell Gallery, Cogut Center for the Humanities, and Office of International Affairs. As such, many individuals played a part in the organization and implementation of the project. The steering committee for the project included Vice President for International Affairs David Kennedy, who brought this phenomenal private collection to our attention; Harriette Hemmasi, Joukowsky Family University Librarian, who spearheaded the effort to bring the collection to Brown for research and display; Emeritus Professor Abbott Gleason and Bell Gallery Director Jo-Ann Conklin, who curated the exhibition; Cogut Center Director Michael Steinberg, who organized the symposium; Director of Special Collections Samuel Streit; and Assistant Professor of History Ethan Pollack. We would like to thank the talented members of our staffs who accomplished the task: at the libraries, Joseph Mancino, Ann Caldwell, Jane Cabral, Patrick Vott, and Benjamin Yott; at the Bell Gallery, Cameron Shaw, Terry Abbott, and Divya Heffley; at the Cogut Center, Kit Salisbury and Leslie Uhnak. Finally, our sincere and heartfelt thanks is extended to the generous collector who chose to share his collection with the Brown community.

ABOVE
THE KUKRYNIKSY
“This evil enemy won’t get out of the knot we’ve got him in! Treaty of solidarity between the Soviet Union, England, and the United States,” 1942

RIGHT
VALENTINA KULAGINA
“International Working Women’s Day is the day of judging of socialist competition,” 1930

FAR RIGHT
VIKTOR KORETSKY
“We demand peace!” 1950

Jo-Ann Conklin
Director, David Winton Bell Gallery
Abbott Gleason
Keeney Professor of History Emeritus

1 In literature regarding Soviet graphics, the term “photomontage” describes two distinct processes. Klutsis, like his colleagues Alexander Rodchenko and El Lissitzky, incorporated photographs into graphic designs that were issued as lithographic posters. Zhitomirsky worked exclusively with photographs. His photomontages exist in original photo collage and in rephotographed versions that were also issued as photographs.
VIEWS and RE-VIEWS:

Russian culture has long been a polarizing one, both in its upper class incarnation and more fundamentally in the ancient peasant version which lies at its base. Those functioning in the Russian cultural orbit have tended to assume difference rather than commonality of interest, to divide people decisively into those who were on our side and those who weren’t: “ours” and “not ours,” as the Russians say. If you were not one of us, you were seen as likely to be one of them, someone from a different place with different needs or (in modern times) opinions. “They” were always a threat in the old Russian world of straitened circumstances, social isolation, and struggle over resources. Real neutrality was hard to imagine. The world, in other words, was divided into FRIENDS and ENEMIES.

SOVIET POLITICAL POSTERS AND CARTOONS, THEN AND NOW

This attitude survived Russia’s fleeting experience of modernity to become characteristic of the more-or-less closed society that embraced Russia’s elites. The great critic Iurii Lotman discerned in Russia what he called “an underlying binary logic of opposition [in which] individuals and groups conceptualize social life in terms of sets of absolute alternatives that admit of no compromise...either one or the other must be chosen.”

Russians are also famous for their lack of moderation. “Sin greatly, that grace may abound,” describes a point of view that is an extravagant version of what St. Paul wrote long ago in his Epistle to the Romans (5:20) about the relationship between God’s mercy and men’s depravity; there is something very Russian about its suggestion of the powerful linkage of sin and grace. The idea that you should sin as little as possible so that there may be just enough grace for your needs sounds like some moderate, almost smug culture, far away from Russia. Something in the English-speaking world, perhaps.

A recent critic has echoed traditional voices in Russian cultural studies, proclaiming that Russia’s entire culture lacks “middle ground between the ideal of Sodom and the ideal of the Madonna.” What is needed, he goes on to suggest, is a concept of purgatory, something between the ideas of Heaven and Hell, with which the Russian story is so richly endowed.
But both major and minor figures in Russian culture confront Heaven and Hell in rapid succession without even bothering to hypothesize about Purgatory, let alone thinking to stop off there.

Soviet Marxism was famously described as “dialectical,” and no doubt Marxist dialectics intensified the apparent clarity of the polarized contrasts. The precise meaning of this embattled term is not so clear, however. Does it not suggest that in Soviet or even Russian culture, distinctive and often extreme points of view bear within them to some unusual degree their semantic opposites? Are not dualisms and antinomies more common than in tamer cultures further West? To some, for example, it has seemed that the powerful self-assertion so often found in Russian culture coexists with its opposite: deep anxieties and fears of inadequacy, being wrong or not up to whatever the challenge might be. Impulses to desecrate and blaspheme coexist with the joy of self-lacerating repentance. The impulse to innovate radically coexists with a deep, if episodic desire to return to the “good old ways.” The coming of a radically secular regime to Russia in 1917 deprived God and Virtue of official representation for awhile, but it scarcely made Russia more moderate. In a broad sense, it was just as important—perhaps more so—to be in tune with History—meaning the Party—as it had been to be in tune with God and the Church. And the Party’s policies powerfully reinforced the strong polarity between friends and enemies.

Many of these extreme, contradictory and paradoxical impulses can be seen in the exhibition of Soviet Russian posters, caricatures, and cartoons here assembled. The posters were directed first of all at a pre-literate or at least imperfectly literate audience, assumed to have been educated, if at all, by the village priest. The beautiful ROSTA Windows in this exhibition (pg. 5) represent the news-plus-propaganda impulse of the Communist Party in the early days of the Russian Revolution. Stenciled onto paper or plywood by teams of artists, they were sequenced like a comic book and issued abundantly in the very early 1920s. Generally hortatory and idealistic, they reverted only occasionally to satire, and of a kind that peasants could comprehend. But most of the cartoons and satirical drawings also on exhibit here were directed at a later and more sophisticated and urban audience, more caught up in the complexities of Russian culture, especially in attitudes toward the outsider enemy.

The posters and the various forms of visual/verbal assaults demonstrate a keen sense of hostile forces, often disguised or masquerading as friendly. The idea of secret enemies needing to be unmasked (pg. 11) was pervasive throughout the Soviet period but came to an unholy climax during Stalin’s cataclysmic purges. It should be said immediately, however, that the very real hostility of the outside world toward Bolshevism did little to allay the fears of the new Soviet elite and move them toward moderation. In the first days of the Soviet Union and even earlier, while the Civil War still raged, the targeted enemies were most often persons: the White generals (pg. 11) who struggled with the Red Army and the Bolsheviks over the political future, or foreign “bourgeois” nations that intervened from outside (pg. 13, top). But rich peasants (“kulaks”), international finance capitalists, or non-socialist “speculators” might also be fearsomely depicted (pg. 13, bottom). This was a more abstract and sociological enemies list than those of Imperial Russia.

The new Soviet regime was initially sympathetic to artists who were disposed to employ their talents anonymously and/or collectively. Like the artists who brilliantly but formulaically turned out the ROSTA prints, the three artists who called themselves the Kukryniksy developed a composite satirical vocabulary (pgs. 6, 12). Meeting at the state-sponsored Higher Artistic-Technical Studio...
(VKhUTEMAS) in Moscow in 1924, they were soon publishing their caricatures “under a joint signature.” The Grove Dictionary of Art has well characterized their style:

...an acute vision, a peculiarly grotesque three-dimensionality, a certain theatricality..., social awareness and...a sympathy with the traditions of nineteenth-century critical realism...*

But many satirical artists maintained an individual identity, or sought to. Dmitri Moor, whose real name was Orlov (1883–1946) was one of the most notable [pgs. 8, 10, 15]. Born into a Cossack family, he had enjoyed a successful career as a satirist before 1917, but was of a left-wing point of view and readily cast his lot with the new regime; he taught at VKhUTEMAS between 1922 and 1930. Bonnell describes him as the “unofficial ‘commissar of propagandistic revolutionary art.’” Victor Deni [1893–1946], whose last name was shortened from Denisov, was a decade younger than Moor and from an impoverished gentry background; he was not initially as receptive to the Revolution. More of a satirical caricaturist than Moor, his posters were most popular and successful in the early days of the Revolution and experienced a reprise during the Second World War [pgs. 11, 14].

The posters of the thirties were strikingly different from the more anarchic images that preceded them. The promulgation of socialist realism (1934) and the development of the full blown Stalin cult added to the monumentality and uniformity of the images. The principal contribution of Gustav Klutsis (1895–1944) was the introduction of photomontage into posters [pg. 14], an important innovation in the poster making of the thirties. The work of Ukrainian Viktor Koretsky [who was a full generation younger than Moor] had its principal impact during the Second World War and the Soviet “peace offensives” of the postwar period [pg. 7]. The savage caricatures of Alexander Zhitemirsky (1907–1993), with their surrealist and pop-art imagery, both demonized and glamorized the Soviet Union’s Western enemies [pg. 18 and back cover].

It is certainly paradoxical that the great opponent of Russia during the Cold War should have been a culture with a few dramatic similarities to that of Russia but many more contrasts. If Russians hate compromise, Americans may seem to fetishize it, at least publicly. The culture of the United States of America, which has come to emblemize capitalism, must of course embrace deal-making, splitting the difference and making things work—quite unlike the Russians, whose culture is so uneasy about compromise, in olden times associated it with the devil.  

For Russians, the acquisitive individualism of the United States was the opposite of what was considered sacred under the old regime, or what was representative of good citizenship under the new. Publicly reviled as loathsome
and hypocritical, it was often secretly envied by Russians, whose love of “stuff” had to be concealed, unlike the Americans, whose materialism was proof of God’s bounty and special concern for them. If the Americans built their “city on a hill,” it gradually became clear that it would not be an austere or uncomfortable place.

Some of the attacks on American racism or militarism—as seen in the caricatures and cartoons on display here—were largely intended by their creator to make successful careers in a world dominated by the Soviet version of Russian values. Many, however, may well have picked up a little steam along the way from Russian awe at the shamelessness of the Americans: building their “city on the hill,” while lynching “the Scottsboro boys” (pg. 15). (And those Americans don’t even know what hypocrites they are!)

The Americans, during the Cold War, were not disposed to take Soviet criticisms of American life very seriously. Few Americans wanted to risk being seen as pro-Communist or “fellow travelers.” If the Soviet critics charged Americans with racism, the accusation was less serious, because the source was so flawed: everybody knew that Soviet criticism was orchestrated by the Center and ebbed and flowed according to political needs and circumstances. So the nature of the critic actually mitigated the accusation; the Americans could focus on the Soviet critic’s lack of independence, rather than on the truth of what he was saying. Similarly, responding to Soviet criticisms of American “materialism” wasn’t too difficult for us. They’re just jealous of our success at creating affluence, it was commonly (and not entirely incorrectly) said by the Americans.

The rapidity with which friends and enemies could trade places also enhanced Western, particularly American, skepticism about Soviet criticism. Even the most bitter enemies could quickly become friends if circumstances seemed to dictate. In the aftermath of World War I, the British and Americans were portrayed as the most desperate and inevitable opponents of the Revolution, along with the White generals. But after the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in 1939, the British and Americans became Soviet allies, and the Soviet division of the world into friends and enemies altered dramatically and rapidly (pg. 6). After the defeat of Hitler and the onset of the Cold War, however, the older friend-enemy dichotomy returned, but this time with an especially powerful focus on the United States, now the capital of all that was regressive and reactionary in the world. Both the Soviet Union and the United States expended a great deal of time and effort in describing the other as Hitlerian (back cover).

Racism presented a particular challenge to Americans defending their country against the accusations of Soviet
critics. American racism couldn’t be straightforwardly denied; one response was to deny Soviet good faith or moral seriousness in making the charge, another was to claim that the Russian accusation was too sweeping or otherwise exaggerated. But one was constrained to admit there was something in it. Now that both the American society of the middle of the last century and the Soviet Union have slipped into the past, it may be easier to confront the Soviet charge more candidly (pg. 16).

Official America rallied against racism partly because oppression of blacks by whites made the U.S. look bad in the Cold War. Had African-Americans not actively protested the inaction of the American government, President Eisenhower might or might not have forced the integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in September, 1957. But when Louis Armstrong—an unpolitical icon of American pop culture—denounced him as “gutless” and “heartless” it certainly helped propel him into action. The 1957. But when Louis Armstrong—an unpolitical icon of American society

Abbott Gleason
Keeney Professor of History Emeritus

“Retribution,” 1918–1920
Lithograph, 3 x 24 x 1/4

“All-Russian Central Alliance of Cooperative Women, enter the cooperative!” c. 1919
Lithograph, 20 x 29 1/2 x 28

The bourgeoisie of the Entente succumb to the new alliance of workers and peasants. c. 1920
Lithograph, 19 x 27 1/2 x 27

“The Constituent Assembly,” 1921
Lithograph, 29 x 21

The Bedfellows of Capitalism, 1927
Lithograph, 37 x 27 1/2 x 27

“Stalinists! Broaden the front of shock workers” c. 1930
Lithograph, 38 1/2 x 28

“Give your raw materials to socialist industry” 1931
Lithograph, 37 x 28 1/2 x 28

“Protect the harvest from fire and you will secure bread for the nation” c. 1940
Lithograph, 38 1/4 x 26

“Parrot talk” (silly nonsense), 1942
Lithograph, 19 1/2 x 27 1/2

The allied forces destroy the swastika, 1945
Lithograph, 20 x 25 1/2

“Vote list 1 for the communists,” 1948
Lithograph, 41 x 32

“The nations of the world do not want to repeat the horror of war again,” c. 1950
Lithograph, 23 3/4 x 33

“V.V. Lenin died on 21 January 1924.” 1950
Lithograph, 29 x 25 3/4

“Paradise now” in Russian, 1893 –1946

“Death to capital—or death under the heel of capital!” 1912
Lithograph, 28 1/4 x 42

“The dogs of Denikin’s state,” after a poster dated 1919
Offset lithograph, 31 x 5 1/2

“Kholtsch: The hangman of workers and peasants” after a poster dated 1919
Offset lithograph, 31 1/2 x 5 1/2

“The Denikin Gang: Beat the workers and peasants” after a poster dated 1919
Offset lithograph, 51/2 x 8 1/2

“The League of Nations: Capitalists of all countries, unite!” after a poster dated 1919
Offset lithograph, 5 1/4 x 8 1/2

“The Village Virgin” after a poster dated 1919
Offset lithograph, 5 1/4 x 4

“The final hour” 1920
Lithograph, 28 x 21 1/2

“Bread power: Kulak-bloody-suspect: What do I care about the hungry?” after a poster dated 1921
Offset lithograph, 5 1/4 x 4 1/2

Kulak and Priest, 1922
Offset lithograph, 5 1/4 x 4

“International Red Day—The day to mobilize the proletariat of the world against the armies of imperialism” 1929
Lithograph, 20 1/4 x 28 1/2

“Murderers of the five-year plan!” after a poster dated 1929
Offset lithograph, 4 x 5 1/2

“Fulfill the five-year plan not in five years, but in four!” 1930
Lithograph, 21 3/4 x 13 1/2

In the checklist that follows, artist’s titles are in italics, descriptive titles in roman, and inscriptions in quotation marks. The posters are lithographs or offset lithographs; all are listed simply as lithographs. Dimensions are in inches.

NIKOLAI CHOMOV and YURI MERKULOV
Ukrainian 1903 –1974, and Unknown, respectively

“Fulfill the five-year plan not in five years, but in four!” 1930
Lithograph, 21 3/4 x 13 1/2

VICTOR BONI
Russian, 1893 –1946

“Death to capital—or death under the heel of capital!” 1912
Lithograph, 28 1/4 x 42

The dogs of Denikin’s state,” after a poster dated 1919
Offset lithograph, 31 x 5 1/2

“Kholtsch: The hangman of workers and peasants” after a poster dated 1919
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“Murderers of the five-year plan!” after a poster dated 1929
Offset lithograph, 4 x 5 1/2

Mikhail Baljajnov
1892 –1970

“Communism means soviet (popular councils), plus the electrification of the whole country. Let us transform the USSR through socialist industrialization!” 1930
Lithograph, 35 x 27 1/4

BRIGADE KOK
(VIKTOR BORDETSKY, VERA BITSEVICH and DORIS BODENSEK)
Ukrainian 1909 –1938, Russian 1897 –1976 and Unknown, respectively

“Long live International Women’s Day,” c. 1930
Lithograph, 36 1/2 x 23

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5 “KOSTA” stands for “Russian Telegraph Agency,” an agency later more or less replaced by VOSTRO.
8 Bond, Iconography of Power, p. 11.
9 There are excellent biographical summaries of Moor and Den's careers in Stephen White, The Socialist Poster, Yale University Press, 1988, pp. 39–64.
11 In the West, Kori Lotman claims, negotiated agreement has lost its victorious character, while in Russia it has not. Alluding to one’s agreed work was, even in the West, too much of the highest honor, but in Russia’s “service-based on context is bad service.” The new work “self-giving” is the model, in Russian culture, for personal relations of the highest type. Iu. M. Lotman, “Agreement” and “Self-Giving” as Archetypical Models of Culture in Lotman and Upgangy, Semiotics of Russian Culture, pp. 125–140, esp. p. 130.
“A True Aryan Should Be: Tall (Goebbels),
Russian, 1900–1932

“Do not trust him! The kulak is the most
hardenened enemy of socialism!” 1933
Lithograph, 33 1/4 x 21 3/4

“There: elections are directed by monopolistic
American agents; here: free elections such as
never before during the bourgeois regime.” 1934
Lithograph, 20 x 32 1/2

ADOLF HOFFMEISTER
Czech, 1902–1973
J. P. Morgan, 1902
Ink, pencil, and watercolor on cardboard
25 1/2 x 17 3/4

John D. Rockefeller on Friday, October 24, 1933
(Black Friday), 1932
Ink, spray ink, pencil, and watercolor on cardboard,
17 3/4 x 26

I. K. KONDRATIEV
Russian, 1870–1945
Tito joins the West, 1950
Lithograph, 21 1/4 x 16 1/8

RAW KARPOTZKY
1907–1978
“Glory to the great October leaders!” 1952
Lithograph, 21 1/4 x 23 1/2

J. KERSCH
“The Rights of Men; American style.” 1978
Lithograph, 17 1/2 x 27 1/4

DORIS KLINK
1922–1944
“Fire hard at the class enemy!” 1933
Lithograph, 30 1/2 x 20 1/2

VIKTOR KOBETSKY
Ukrainian, 1909–1998
“We are a hero!” 1941
Lithograph, 34 3/4 x 23 3/4

“Red Army soldier, save us!” 1942
Lithograph, 14 x 23

“The motherland will never forget the heroic
deads of its son!” 1947
Lithograph, 34 x 24

“In socialism, there is no place for unemployment!
In capitalism, there are millions of unemployed!”
1955
Lithograph, 23 3/4 x 33 1/2

“We demand peace!” 1950
Lithograph, 46 1/4 x 31 1/2

GUSTAV KLEITUS
Latvian, 1895–1938
“A system of Party Enlightenment—without
revolutionary theory—cannot exist!” 1937
Lithograph, 42 1/2 x 28 1/2

“The honor of Lenin for socialist
construction” 1930
Lithograph, 39 1/2 x 27

“We will repay the country its coal debt!” 1930
Lithograph, 41 x 28 1/2

“The USSR is the Stakhanovite brigade
of the world proletariat!” 1931
Lithograph, 39 3/8 x 41

“Passionate greetings from the inventor
of proletarian literature,” 1933
Lithograph, 81 1/2 x 58 3/4

“Long live the world October!” 1933
Lithograph, 63 3/4 x 40 3/4

“Raise Higher the Banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin,
and Stalin!” 1933
Lithograph, 20 x 37 3/4

“The goal of the alliance is to destroy
bourgeois domination of the proletariat
and to create the new!” 1933
Lithograph, 59 1/2 x 40 3/4

“Long live the USSR, model of brotherhood
among the workers of world nationalities!” 1935
Lithograph, 54 x 23 1/2

“Cadres decide everything.” 1936
Lithograph, 77 1/4 x 27 3/8

H. JENSEN
“The life of Rome; American style.”
Lithograph, 17 3/4 x 27 1/4

ALEXEI KOKORENIN
Russian, 1906–1959
“Thus it will be with the Fascist monster!” 1944
Lithograph, 30 1/2 x 20

VIKTOR KOBETSKY
Ukrainian, 1909–1998
“We are a hero!” 1941
Lithograph, 34 3/4 x 23 3/4

“Red Army soldier, save us!” 1942
Lithograph, 14 x 23

“The motherland will never forget the heroic
deads of its son!” 1947
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“In socialism, there is no place for unemployment!
In capitalism, there are millions of unemployed!”
1955
Lithograph, 23 3/4 x 33 1/2

“We demand peace!” 1950
Lithograph, 46 1/4 x 31 1/2

“You will not strangle the freedom of the
Arab peoples!” 1959
Lithograph, 22 x 33

Collective farm workers urge competition, 1950
Lithograph, 26 3/4 x 40 1/2

“Lenin, always with us!” 1952
Lithograph, 41 1/2 x 80 1/2

“If this is freedom, then what is prison?” 1968
Lithograph, 45 x 21 3/4

“The shame of America,” 1968
Lithograph, 39 3/4 x 27 1/2

American politics at home and abroad, 1970
Lithograph, 20 3/4 x 31

“Their democrazia,” 1971
Lithograph, 36 x 24 x 5 3/8

“On the Leninist course towards communism!”
1976
Lithograph, 41 x 8 1/2

ARTUR KREIBICH
The Red Army, 1927

“The respectable?” CDU/CSU (Straus) is
no better than the non-Nazi HSP, 1970
Ink, gouache, and watercolor on cardboard
15 x 17 3/4

The Agit of the Pentagon, Arrow, 1971
In cardboard, 15 3/4 x 17 1/2

KONTINENT BULGARIA
Russian, 1922–1987
“1905: The Road to October,” 1920
Lithograph, 41 3/8 x 29 1/2

“International Working Women’s Day is the
day of judging of socialist competition.”
1930
Lithograph, 40 1/2 x 28 1/2

“For socialist industry we will produce
8 million tons of steel in 1931,” 1931
Lithograph, 28 1/2 x 20 3/8

“We must work! The Red Army
battles, join the proletarian specialists’ personnel,”
1931
Lithograph, 28 x 28 3/8

FRANTISEK KORPUS
Czech, 1871–1957
“The master of the world is capital, the
golden idol!” 1919
Lithograph, 20 3/4 x 13 1/4

LITKAN
Russian/Ukranian
“The people of the world have
united against the empire and
madmen.” 1931
Lithograph, 40 x 28 3/16

“The bloody path of struggle is over,”
1921
Lithograph, 33 1/2 x 41

“Freedom to the prisoners of Scabbard!”
1922
Lithograph, 40 1/2 x 28 3/16

“The Red Army keeps the capitalist pigs
in check,” 1924
In cardboard, 8 x 13 3/8

“Condemn! We want YOU! Have you signed
on to strengthen our motherland?” 1937
Lithograph, 40 x 28 3/16

Nazi hogs stopped at the gates of the Kremlin
by the Red Army, early 1940s
Ink, pencil, and watercolor on cardboard
16 x 9 3/8
“6. In all, eighty nations or peoples under the banner of Lenin for the second Five-Year Plan!…”

“5. Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaizhan, Sweden, and us−colonies broke the links of their chains,”

“4. America, Africa, Australia are with us−colonies,”

“3. Persians, Turks, Japanese, Chinese, and Romans range themselves under the banner of the international."

“2. The Western Proletariat− France, England, Czech, Romania−hard as reinforced concrete, "

“1. It is, you know, they [industrial workers] who force,”

“Women in the collective farms are a great force.”

All for Farming Equipment Repair Week!“

“1. Those are the weapons our factories used to produce.”

“2. Now we have a new kind of weapon to use.”

“3. For Spring’s arrival we must prepare—“

“4. Get the plough and harrow in full repair,”

“5. Worker! A new front has opened, “

“6. Quickly, go fix the farming equipment!”

“Under the banner of Lenin for the second Five-Year Plan!”

“Get him out of Vietnam!“

“Candidate of the Democratic Party/Candidate of the Republican Party,”

“Capitalism with its friendly Dean Acheson mask,”

“Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, “

“Small Aircraft Corporation, “

“Fulfill the five-year plan for coal in three years“

“Peace! Away with the shameful Paris Agreements! Away with the remilitarization of Western Germany!”

“3. For this I was immediately rewarded, “

“2. I wasted no time and worked with dedication, “

“1. Everyone fulfilled the Soviet plan, “

“Sowing Campaign: Let’s fulfill the decree! “

“Everything for the war effort! Everything for victory!”

Original watercolors for ROSTA Window series #186, c. 1920

ARTIST UNKNOWN

“1. It is, you know, they [industrial workers] who represent countries and peoples,”


“3. Persians, Turks, Japanese, Chinese, and Koreans range themselves under the banner of the East,”

“4. America, Africa, Australia are with us−colonies broke the links of their chains,”

“5. Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaizhan, Sweden, and Norway rise above snowy peaks,”

“6. In all, eighty nations or peoples under the red banner of the international.”

Watercolor pigment and India ink approx. 23 x 17 each.

ROSTA Window series #163, c. 1920

ARTIST UNKNOWN

“1. and a plow,”

“2. and a locomotive,”

“3. and a steamship,”

“4. and our (collective) home,”

“5. the worker creates collective labor,”

“6. and if there is neither a ‘you’ nor a ‘me’, it means we have achieved collective production.”

Hand-cut stencils with watercolor pigment approx. 22 1/4 x 17 each.

ROSTA Window series #42, February 1921

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

Russian, 1889−1930

Sowing Campaign: Let’s fulfill the decree!

“1. Everyone fulfilled the Soviet plan; “

“2. I wasted no time and worked with dedication, “

“3. For this I was immediately rewarded, “

“4. With a prize and a decoration “

Hand-cut stencils with watercolor pigment 18 1/4 x 16 1/4 x 17 16 1/4 each.

ROSTA Window series #81, March 1921

VLADIMIR MAYAKOVSKY

and NIROJK CHECKMOV

Russian

1923−1930 and 1930−1933, respectively

All for Farming Equipment Repair Week!

“1. Those are the weapons our factories used to produce.”

“2. Now we have a new kind of weapon to use.”

“3. For Spring’s arrival we must prepare—

“4. Get the plough and harrow in full repair,”

“5. Worker! A new front has opened,”

“6. Quickly, go fix the farming equipment!”

Hand-cut stencils with watercolor pigment 20 1/4 x 13 1/2 to 21 1/4 x 14 1/4 each.

K. S.

“The power of the bourgeoisie is the power of violence and death.” c. 1919

Lithograph, 21 1/2 x 31

WOLFGANG SCHLICHER

Czech, 1913−1985

“Firm Foundation: Fy Adenauer, formerly Adolf Hitler & Co!” 1953

Lithograph, 23 1/4 x 16 1/2

SERGEI SENKIN

Russian, 1894−1963

“Under the banner of Lenin for the second five-year plan!” 1931

Lithograph, 55 x 39 1/2

BOBBOUŠ ŠTĚPÁK

Czech, 1913−1985

“Yesterday a collaborator/Today an alarmer” c. 1945

Lithograph, 45 1/4 x 36 1/2

IAROKLII TOIDZE

Russian, 1902−1985

“Under the banner of Lenin, with the leadership of Stalin, forward to the victory of Communism” 1940

Lithograph, 47 1/4 x 33

V. VLADU, T. POUZHE, T. ŠIMARKA

“Death to fascism!” 1941

Lithograph, 24 1/4 x 36 1/2

V. TRACHCOV

“Fulfill the five-year plan for coal in three years” 1931

Lithograph, 41 1/4 x 27 1/4

ALEXANDER ZHITOMIRSKY

Russian, 1907−1993

Hysterical War Drummer

“VSTRACHOV

Lithograph, 41

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