



# MacDougall's

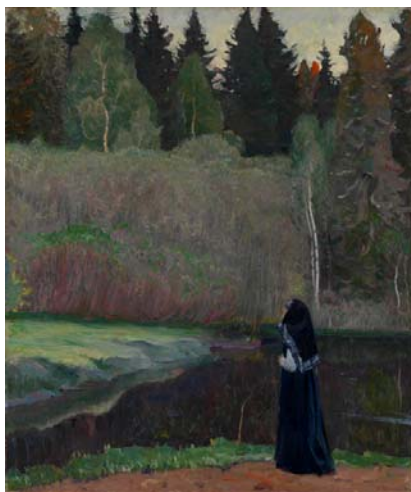
For Immediate Release

## MacDougall's offers over £16m in Russian Art on 1 December 2011



On 1 December 2011, MacDougall's will present Russian paintings, icons and works of art with a total pre-sale estimate of over £16m. The sale is led by Boris Kustodiev's *Merchant's Wife* dating from 1923. *Kupchikhas*, as merchants' wives are known in Russian, are among the artist's most recognisable images. The present example, which is estimated at £1,200,000–1,800,000, was shown at the historic *Russian Art Exhibition* in New York's Grand Central Palace in 1924.

Another highlight of the sale is *Listening to the Bedana*, a rare work by Alexander Volkov. In his works, Volkov combined the local colour and images of his native Uzbekistan with international styles such as Cubism and Futurism. Painted in the 1920s, the work belongs to a new stage in this artist's career in which he experimented with figurative representation. In *Listening to the Bedana* (the same Uzbek word signifies both the quail and the cage which holds him), the artist deals with two of his favourite subjects, those of tea-drinking and music-making. Appearing at auction for the first time, the painting is estimated at £300,000–500,000.



Dating from 1918, Mikhail Nesterov's *The Nightingale is Singing* (est. £600,000–900,000) is one of the earliest versions of his celebrated composition, of which he painted at least four. The original version of 1917 is now lost, while a later version is in the collection of the National Art Museum of Belarus. In this work, the artist addresses one of the most enduring themes in his oeuvre, that of the fate of the Russian woman.

The December sale also features several exceptional 19<sup>th</sup> century paintings, including the particularly fine *Sea Shore. Crimea* by Lev Lagorio, estimated at £250,000–300,000, as well as an outstanding work by Russia's most lyrical landscape painter, Aleksei Savrasov. *Pastoral Scene* (est. £400,000–600,000) is one of the small group of landscapes that the artist painted towards the end of his life, a period from which very few works survive. The small-scale format so beloved by Savrasov is similar to

**MacDougall Arts Ltd**  
**30A Charles II Street, London SW1A 4AE**  
info@macdougallauction.com  
Tel.: +44-20-7389-8160 Fax: +44-20-7389-8170  
Registered Company No. 5175060 in England & Wales



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that of his most celebrated work, *Rooks Have Returned* in the collection of the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.

MacDougall's is delighted to offer a particularly strong selection of Nonconformist works from an Italian private collection. The owner of these works acquired them directly from the artists while working and living in the Soviet Union in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The selection includes 15 paintings by Boris Sveshnikov, some of which date back as far as the 1950s, as well as works by Dmitry Krasnopevtsev and Eduard Steinberg. MacDougall's occupies a leading position in the market for Russian Post-War art, having handled several important Nonconformist collections in the past few years.



MacDougall's **Important Russian Art** and **Russian Classic and Contemporary Art** sales are followed by a specialized **Russian Icons and Works of Art** auction. It is led by an early 20<sup>th</sup> century silver and enamel *Triptych of St George with St Nicholas the Miracle Worker and Alexei the Metropolitan of Moscow*, estimated at £100,000–150,000. The triptych's striking polychrome cloisonné enamel frame is richly coloured and the design is exceptionally refined. The choice of saints suggests that the triptych was commissioned to be

presented to a particularly eminent figure. The saints depicted on the side panels are the namesakes of Emperor Nicholas II and his heir apparent, Tsarevich Alexei Nikolayevich. The depiction of St George and the Dragon on the central panel not only reproduces the emblem of Moscow, but is also laden with triumphal and "victorious" significance.

The sale exhibition will be in London 25-30 November.

## **Part I: Important Russian Art**

Thursday 1 December 2011, 10:30

## **Part II: Russian Classic and Contemporary Art**

Thursday 1 December 2011, 14:00

## **Russian Icons and Works of Art**

Thursday 1 December, 17:00

## **ENDS**

For more information please contact:

Catherine or William MacDougall, Directors

at [william@macdougallauction.com](mailto:william@macdougallauction.com), Tel. +44-20-7389-8160

High-resolution images available upon request. Please contact Reto Barmettler

at [reto@macdougallauction.com](mailto:reto@macdougallauction.com), Tel. +44-20-7389-8160

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