

EXHIBITION

# RED STAR OVER RUSSIA:

## A Revolution In Visual Culture 1905–55

To mark the centenary of the October Revolution, this autumn Tate Modern will present Red Star over Russia: A Revolution in Visual Culture 1905–55.



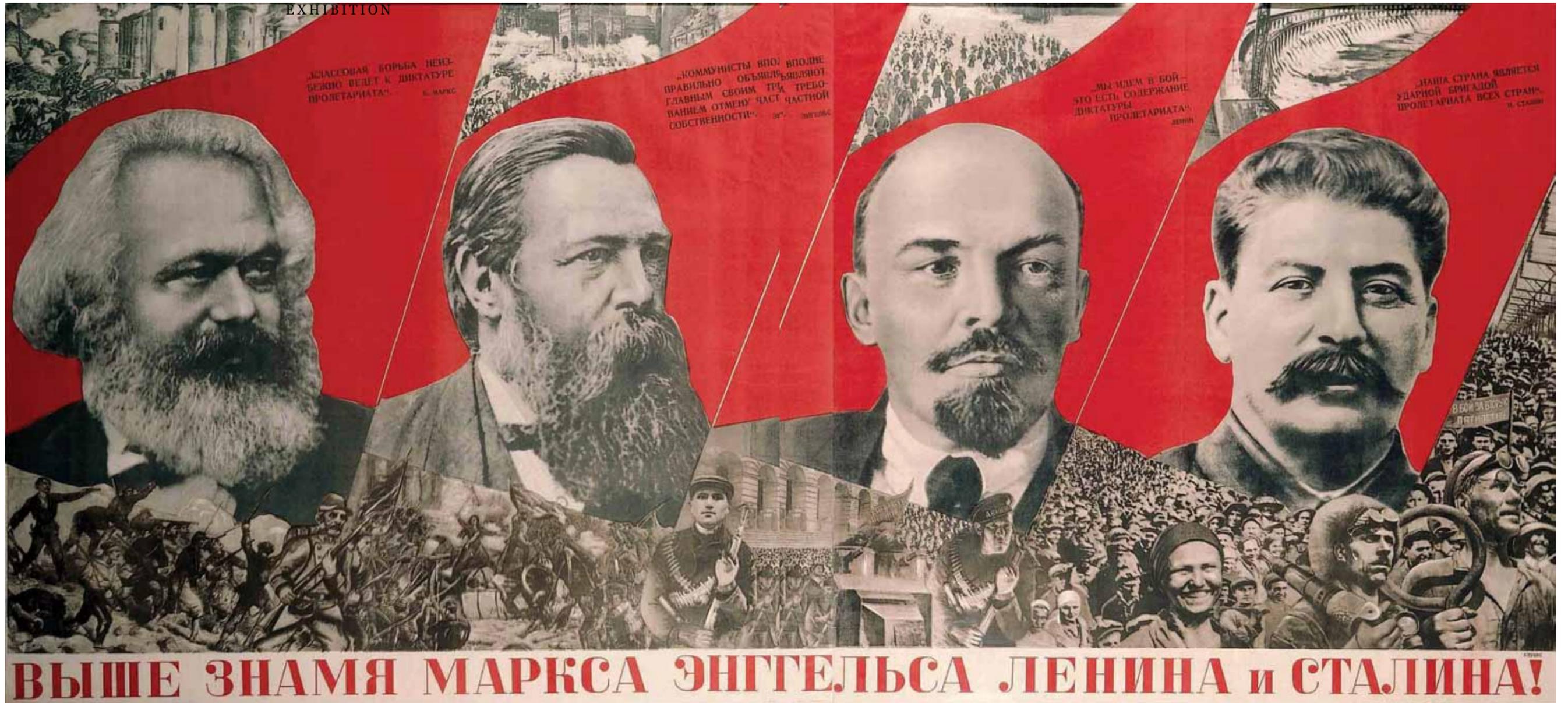
Adolf Strakhov  
Emancipated Woman — Build  
Socialism! 1926  
Lithograph on paper  
883 x 635 mm  
Purchased 2016.  
The David King Collection at Tate

Valentina Kulagina  
Soviet Union Art Exhibition (Kunst  
Ausstellung der Sowjetunion,  
Kunstsalon Wolfsberg), Zurich 1931  
Poster. 1250 x 900 mm  
Ne boltai! Collection

Foto: © Tate Modern



Foto: © Tate Modern



Gustav Klutsis (1895 — 1938)

Raise Higher the Banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin! 1933

Lithograph on paper

Purchased 2016. The David King Collection at Tate

**D**rawn from the remarkable collection of the late graphic designer David King (1943 — 2016) the exhibition will offer a visual history of Russia and the Soviet Union. From the overthrow of the last Tsar and the revolutionary uprisings of 1917, through to the struggles of the Civil War and Stalin's campaign of terror, the show will reveal how seismic political events led to the social transformation that inspired a wave of innovation in art and graphic design across the country.

Throughout his lifetime David King assembled one of the most comprehensive collections of Russian and Soviet material in the world, consisting of over a quarter of a million artefacts by famous and anonymous photographers, artists and designers. Featuring over 250 posters, paintings, photographs, books and ephemera, many on public display for the first time, Red Star over Russia will be

a rare opportunity to explore this unique collection. It will provide a chance to understand how life and art were transformed during a momentous period in modern world history, and see how artists such as El Lissitzky, Aleksandr Rodchenko and Nina Vatolina captured the revolutionary hopes of a nation in an extraordinary outpouring of visual material.

From 1905 to 1955 Russian and Soviet citizens struggled against the odds to build a new society. The exhibition will explore how new popular art in the form of posters, periodicals, leaflets and banners informed, educated and entertained the people, filtering into the everyday lives of tens of millions of citizens. One of the new propaganda tools developed by the Bolsheviks was 'agitprop trains', which were decorated with vivid murals and travelled the country carrying public speakers, pamphlets, film shows and a printing press to disseminate the policies of the

new government. Following the October Revolution, art was taken onto the streets in the form of street performances and pageants, monumental sculptures and propaganda posters, which were displayed on public squares, factories and inside people's homes. The exhibition will feature striking examples of posters by artists such as Adolf Strakhov, Valentina Kulagina and Dmitrii Moor, whose depictions of heroic, industrial scenes and expressive use of typography captured the revolutionary fervour of the age.

A section of the exhibition will explore the impact of the 1937 'Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques' in Paris, which provided an international stage for the Soviet Union to promote the achievements of its art and culture. The magnificent centrepiece of the USSR Pavilion was a giant mural by Aleksandr Deineka which was destroyed when the exhibition ended. A highlight of Red Star over Russia will be the large-scale studies

which formed the basis for this dramatic mural. In stark contrast, a further section of the exhibition will be dedicated to the memory of the millions who perished in Stalin's purges, uncovering some of the personal stories of figures erased from history. It will include poignant prison mugshots of the people who lived in tumultuous times, such as Lenin's closest allies Lev Kamenev and Grigori Zinoviev, both executed on false charges, and poster artist Gustav Klutsis, whose works adorned the cities squares long after his execution in 1938. Red Star over Russia will also reveal how images were manipulated during a period of widespread state censorship, as political figures were airbrushed from official photographs and images were montaged in order to celebrate the end of the Second World War.

Foto: © Tate Modern

Foto: © Tate Modern

