Ivan Ivanovich Betskoi (1704–1795) was a Russian public official, school reformer and intellectual who played a key role in institutionalizing enlightenment ideas in eighteenth-century Russia. He served as president of the Academy of Sciences, was Catherine's informal advisor on education, and implemented numerous educational projects. Schooled abroad, Betskoi was influenced by Rousseau and Locke, published treatises on pedagogical questions, and proposed a new system of general education intended to shape new citizens of the Russian Empire.

A rare document on Enlightenment institutions in Russia, in a beautifully gilt-tooled contemporary vellum binding, a very unusual instance of the influence of Rococo in Russia. From the famous collection of the German historian and icon collector Martin E. Winkler (1893–1982).

First printing of Betskoi’s detailed regulations for the Smolny Institute for Noble Maidens [Institut blagorodnykh devits], the first all-female school in Russia, and one of the first of its kind in Europe. Betskoi devised Smolny as a closed institution, where girls of noble birth would be educated for twelve years, during which they were not allowed to see their parents. His regulations describe the role of teachers and supervisors, the subjects taught, down to the details of the girls’ housing, personal hygiene, and nutrition; a proposed budget is also appended. The dedication leaf to Catherine the Great – signed by Counts Iakov Shakhovskoi, Ivan Golitsyn and other leading nobles – is dated May 2; the first page notes that Catherine approved Betskoi’s plan on May 5. A ukase confirming the Institute’s creation was issued that same day.

Ivan Ivanovich Betskoi (1704–1795) was a Russian public official, school reformer and intellectual who played a key role in institutionalizing enlightenment ideas in eighteenth-century Russia. He served as president of the Academy of Sciences, was Catherine's informal advisor on education, and implemented numerous educational projects. Schooled abroad, Betskoi was influenced by Rousseau and Locke, published treatises on pedagogical questions, and proposed a new system of general education intended to shape new citizens of the Russian Empire.

A rare document on Enlightenment institutions in Russia, in a beautifully gilt-tooled contemporary vellum binding, a very unusual instance of the influence of Rococo in Russia. From the famous collection of the German historian and icon collector Martin E. Winkler (1893–1982).

Sopikov 12202. Svodnyi katalog 556. Bitovt 1511. KVK and OCLC only show the copy at Göttingen.

Simferopol’: “Proletarskoe delo,” 1923.

Octavo (17 × 13.5 cm). Original pictorial wrappers by M. Shche-glov; 31, [8] pp. With three leaves of plates and eight pages of musical notation. Light fraying to edges; tape repair to front wrapper; owner stamp and Soviet bookstore marks inside rear wrapper; still about very good. € 650

Provincial edition of a stage adaptation of Symbolist poet Alexander Blok’s famous narrative poem “The Twelve,” which was written in 1918 and captures both the excitement and ambivalence of the Russian Revolution. With an interesting preface by the Soviet art and literary historian Stefan Mokul’skii (1896–1960), who acknowledges the poem’s ambiguities, yet insists that it is possible to adapt the work for agitation purposes. The text of the adaptation is followed by eight pages of music for solo voice and chorus (by an anonymous composer – B. B.). We were likewise unable to find more information about the author, V. Bugaevskii. With a striking cover design and three drawings by a local artist, Mikhail Shcheglov (1885–1955). One of 3000 copies. KVK, OCLC show the copies at Basel, Harvard, Indiana, Stanford, and Waseda Libraries.


Eight unused chocolate bar wrappers with six different photographic motifs (two duplicates); measuring 15 × 22 cm. About very good; one wrapper with small loss to upper flap. € 450

Unused wrappers for a series of war-themed chocolate bars, presumably issued in the early months of WWI, before the gruesome reality of the war effort dispelled the early enthusiasm. Each wrapper shows a different motif, such as the transportation of a howitzer cannon or soldiers hiding in the trenches. Borman’s famous confectionary shop in St. Petersburg was founded in 1862 and its flagship store was located at Nevsky Prospect 21.
4. Adámek, Rudolf (1882–1953). Sen, život duše. 10 původních litografií [Dream, the life of the soul. A portfolio of ten original lithographs].


Original portfolio (28 × 25 cm), with lithographed title, colophon, and ten lithographs on separate leaves, with protective calques. Blind-embossed title label affixed to front wrapper. Portfolio lightly worn, with small loss to lower spine and old tape repair to spine; contents very good or better. € 950

Unrecorded portfolio of ten striking lithographs by Adámek, a theosophical and mystic painter and graphic artist who participated in the Sursum Art Association, which defined itself as expressly anti-realist and concerned with “spiritual and cultist” concerns. Among its other members were Emil Pacovský, Josef Váchal, Jan Konůpek, Jan Zrzavý, Rudolf Medek. The Czech critic Gustav Jaroš considered this lithographed cycle not only to be Adámek’s most important work, but saw it as unique in Czech art for its imaginative immediacy; he coined the term “soulpainting” (dušemalba) to describe it. Adámek’s ethereal drawings carry titles such as “The soul’s awakening” and “Approaching the mysterium.” Not located in KVK, OCLC. Not at the Czech National Library.
5. **Soubor prací kruhu přátel Vl. Boudníka panu Hrabalovi k 70. výročí narozenin upravil J. Hampl** [Portfolio of works from Vl. Boudník’s circle presented to Mr. Hrabal on his 70th birthday]. [Czechoslovakia, 1984]. Gray card portfolio, measuring 42 × 30 cm, with eight original photographs or artwork, loosely inserted or mounted in protective paper folders. Fine. €1500

Very scarce samizdat portfolio by artists from the circle of Vladimír Boudník (1924–1968), the Czech artist influenced by Jackson Pollock who coined the term “Explosionalism.” Boudník was close friends with Hrabal, and his friends issued this limited edition portfolio to commemorate the Czech writer’s seventieth birthday.

Among the contents are: a holograph musical score by Vladislav Merhaut; a print by Jaroslav Rotbauer, signed and numbered; an original black and white photograph by Václav Michálek; a paper composition by Josef Hampl, signed and inscribed; an original black and white photograph by Hana Hamplová; two original prints by Zdeněk Bouše, both signed, dated, and numbered; a typescript of a text about Boudník by Jiří Trnka; a folded sheet with 16 mounted photographs featuring portraits of the contributors to the portfolio.

This is copy no. 6 out of only eight. Not located in KVK, OCLC. Not at the Czech National Library.


Three original printed tan and gray three-panel portfolios, with six, ten, and eleven signed plates on stiff boards, 21 × 15 cm each. Folders signed and numbered by Chatrný. Very good or better. € 1200

Three portfolios with illustrations of Chatrný’s conceptual string installation from the early 1970s, as well as drawings that playfully explore the relationship between line, plane, and space. Each illustration signed by the artist; one portfolio is accompanied by text by the concrete poet and artist Jiří Valoch, a key figure in unofficial and experimental Czech art and poetry of the 1960-70s. Chatrný (1925-2012) began as a graphic artist but turned to experimental materials and conceptual approaches in the 1950s. Surveys of the relationship between two- and three-dimensionality are typical of his work regardless of the medium. One of the most well-known Czech post-war artists of the unofficial scene, whose work is widely held in Czech galleries and abroad. The original string installation was shown at Dům umění (House of Art) in Brno, which was directed by Gerta Pospíšilová, a leading figure in Brno independent art in the early 1970s, the first years of the Czechoslovak “Normalization” era. 25 and 50 copies each. None of the portfolios found in KVK, OCLC. Not at the Czech National Library.
A rare reference work which catalogs, illustrates, describes and analyzes the unique woodcut letter forms created for his artist books by the visionary Czech painter and graphic artist, Josef Váchal (1884–1969), who was profoundly influenced by esoteric and mystic thought. The essay by the noted typographer and book designer Karel Dyrynk (1876–1949) is accompanied by many full-page reproductions of Váchal’s letters, including one page in black and red.

This is copy no. 46 of only 60, signed by the author, printed on thick Zanders paper, and published by Arno Sáňka, the Czech bibliographer of fine press editions. Sáňka 3018.

KVK, OCLC show only the copies at the British Library and Yale.

Belgrade: Khimera, 1923.

Octavo (32 × 24 cm). Original pictorial wrappers by Vladimir Zhedrinskii; 20 pp. Four leaves of coated stock with black-and-white reproductions. About very good, save for small tears and fraying to the oversize wrapper edges. € 1100

First (and only) issue of this bilingual literary journal, issued in both Russian and Serbian. The journal was immediately confiscated and closed by the authorities for publishing the first Serbian translation of Alexander Blok’s poem about the Russian Revolution, “The Twelve.” The journal further contains verse by Anna Akhmatova, with an introductory essay on her work by the journal’s editor, the poet Dmitrii Kobiakov. Also included is an article by Aleksei Tolstoi on Blok, a poem by Aleksei Remizov, verse by the Serbian writers A. Shantic, I. Ducic, V. Illic, G. Krklec, M. Trnianski, as well as illustrations of drawings by Leonid Brailovskii.

Evidently even in former Yugoslavia only a single copy has been preserved, at the Belgrade University Library (the Serbian National Library does not hold this title). KVK and OCLC add only the copies at the British Library and University College London.

Octavo (18 × 14.2 cm). Original pictorial wrappers; 14, [2] pp. Five full-page illustrations by Charlotte Veit and small vignettes. Wrappers very lightly creased and discolored; else a very good, uncut and unopened copy. € 280

Bulgarian publication of this Eskimo fairy tale, retold by the expressionist writer and critic Geo Milev, most likely based on Danish geologist Hinrich Johannes Rink’s “Die Geschichte von Kagsagsuk” (Insel-Verlag, 1914). This slim volume reproduces five of the striking black-and-white drawings by Charlotte Veit included in the 1914 Insel edition, which was limited to 200 copies. Published as volume 67 of the “Children’s Joy” series. Milev (1895–1925) was an enormously important poet and translator, who played a key role in bringing Western modernist cultural tendencies to his native Bulgaria.

We locate no copies in KVK and OCLC. The Bulgarian National Library holds the only copy we could trace; the record mentions that the story was first published in 1926, without indicating where.
10. Narezhnyi, Vasilii. **Slavenskie vecheria** [Slavic Evenings], parts one and two (complete). St. Petersburg: V Tipografii Aleksandra Smirdina, 1826. 12mo (16.5 × 10 cm). Contemporary calf; [4], IV, 149, [1] and [1], 141, [1] pp. Binding rubbed to joints and edges; small wormhole to upper board; internally very good. €1,500

First full, or expanded, edition of this early historical novel by Vasilii Narezhnyi (1780–1825), today considered a key predecessor of Nikolai Gogol. The first part was published in 1809, and this stand-alone edition, supplemented with related short stories that had appeared in various literary journals, was compiled after his death in 1825. KVK, OCLC show the copies at Madison Wisconsin (only vol. 2) and at Universitäts-Bibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt (Halle).

*The Foreign Review*, in 1826, notes the appearance of *Slavic Evenings* and finds that it “evinces the popularity of this interesting collection of traditional and historical narratives. They are written in a kind of poetical prose, and have a considerable degree of Ossianic colouring, which well befits their subjects” (vol. 1, 311–12). Influenced by French writer Alain-René Lesage, Narezhnyi made use of picaresque literary techniques and satire to depict Russian *byt* (everyday life). While less known today, he was widely read in his time. Narezhnyi succeeded in combining Russian subject matter with European narrative form, thus advancing the development of the Russian novel. His interest in regional, especially Ukrainian motifs, and the attention to the gray and uncouth sides of Russian life, make him a pioneer of the Russian novel of everyday life. With its occasionally unrefined style, Narezhnyi’s prose also marked a departure from the Sentimentalist tradition toward Russian realism, and he is justly seen as an important predecessor of Nikolai Gogol.

Second edition of Pushkin’s poem, and the result of a curious trade war: A. S. Shiriaev, the bookseller tasked with distributing the first edition (also 1827), felt the price of 105 kopeks to be too low, and announced that he would raise it to two rubles. In retaliation, Pushkin’s friend A. S. Sobolevsky, who had been tasked with the publication, prepared this second edition, with a printed price of only 42 kopeks. But Shiriaev was quicker: he placed an another ad, now announcing that the price of the second edition would be only 21 kopeks. Accepting their defeat, Pushkin and his friends chose to hide most of the second edition, published in 900 copies; it was long considered lost, but a large part of the run was rediscovered in 1915. Scarce in the trade nevertheless.

"The Robber Brothers" (1821-1822; first published in 1825) is considered part of Pushkin’s Southern poems, which include "The Prisoner of the Caucasus," "The Fountain of Bakhchisarai," and "Gypsies," and shows the continued influence of Byron on his work. The Southern poems helped begin the tradition of the Russian romantic lyric poem. Like the other poems in the cycle, "The Robber Brothers" takes place in an “exotic” Russian location—here, the Volga steppe. Pushkin originally conceived of the work as the introduction to a longer, unfinished narrative, "The Robbers." What was published is the only surviving section from a manuscript he burnt. Pushkin expressed his dissatisfaction in a letter to Alexander Bestuzhev (June 13, 1823): “I have burnt the Robbers—which is what they deserved. One fragment survived with Nikolai Raevski; publish it if such native words as tavern, whip and gaol will not affright the gentle ears of Polyarnaya Zvezda’s female readers” (Pushkin on Literature, 67).


First issue of this journal, with the first appearance in print of Pushkin’s famous allegorical poem, “The Cart of Life” ("Telega zhizni"), a witty complaint about the merciless passage of time. This first issue is bound with a supplement of cultural, fashion, and news reports, and a letter from the editor. The Moscow Telegraph appeared from 1825 to 1834 and was edited by Nikolai Polevoi, an important novelist, historiographer, critic and translator. A highly influential journal of literature, criticism, politics and art, it was a key player in the journal wars of the 1820s and, due to its encyclopedic breadth, is considered a forerunner of the Russian “thick” journal. Polevoi’s approach was broad and the journal meant to serve “not just literature and history, or the arts, or scholarship, but all the interests of society.” (Rzadkiewicz, Literary Journals in Imperial Russia, 65). Arguably the leading literary journal of its time, it printed works by such writers as Pushkin, Baratynskii, and Zhukovskii. Polevoi’s increasingly “radical” contributions to the journal resulted in the Telegraph’s suppression in 1834 for offending the Tsar’s tastes.
First edition of this collection of revolutionary essays by Tkachev, a literary critic and political activist whom Nikolai Berdiaev considered “more of a predecessor of the Bolsheviks than Marx and Engels.” During the student uprisings in Moscow of the late 1860s, Tkachev led a small radical faction and was repeatedly arrested. He left Russia in 1871 and began writing for the Geneva socialist journal Vpered! and his own periodical, Nabat (Alarm), which advocated for secret revolutionary cells in Russia and sympathized with terrorist acts. Though Tkachev is typically grouped among the Narodniks, and was largely forgotten after his early death in a French insane asylum, he is an important progenitor of Lenin’s views on the revolution. In an open letter to Friedrich Engels (1875), Tkachev described the Russian revolutionary movement in proto-Leninist terms, as a carefully prepared event organized by a small group rather than a gradual mass phenomenon. Engels wrote a reply to Tkachev in 1875, and added a “postscript” of fifteen pages in 1894, both of which were translated into Russian. Unsurprisingly, Berdiaev compares this dispute to the disagreements between Lenin and Plekhanov, the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks (In his The Origin of Russian Communism).

No. 296 in the Souvarine and Bernshtein catalog (1980). KVK, OCLC show copies at the National Library of Israel, Columbia, Cornell, Harvard, Monash, and Princeton. We find no auction records in Russia or beyond.


Octavo (18 × 11.5 cm). Original printed wrappers; 32 pp. Very good. € 200

First issue from the largely untraceable series *Revoliutsiiia v Petrograde* [Revolution in Petrograd], with political prose by Iurii Volin and the revolutionary ode “February 26th” by Valentin Gorianskii. Volin (1881–1942) was a writer, playwright, and journalist. Following the Russian Revolution, he worked for ROSTA (The Soviet state news agency). Valentin Gorianskii (1888–1949?) was a poet and satirist who published in the journals *Slovo*, *Satirikon* and *Novyi Satirikon*. He published two books of poetry in 1915, as well as long poems, a novel in verse, and a comedy. The revolutionary fervor of his poem about the February Revolution diminished after the October Revolution and in 1920 Gorianskii fled to France, where he contributed to émigré publications. The almanac “Revoliutsiiia v Petrograde” was a short-lived publication that printed short stories, essays, and sketches dedicated to the February Revolution. Not in KVK, OCLC.
About Us

Established in 2012, we specialize in rare books, manuscripts, and ephemera about Russia and Eastern Europe, with a special interest in art, design, history, and literature, the avant-gardes of Eastern Europe and Russian-language émigré materials.

We welcome offers of individual items and collections related to our fields of interest.

We are proud members of the Verband Deutscher Antiquare, an affiliate of the International League of Antiquarian Booksellers (ILAB), as well as the Independent Online Booksellers Association (IOBA), and adhere to these organizations’ strict code of ethics.

Terms

Please call or email to reserve an item. All items are subject to prior sale and remain our property until payment has been received in full.

Unless otherwise noted, all books are first editions and in the original binding; serious flaws, as well as any restorations, have been noted.

Returns are accepted for any reason within thirty days of purchase; we kindly ask for advance notification and returned items must be in the same condition as sent. All items are guaranteed as described; autograph and manuscript materials may be returned at any time if determined to be inauthentic.

Shipping and insurance are additional and depend on value, weight, and destination.

Payment can be made by checks drawn in EUR or USD, wire transfer to our German account, and via MasterCard, Visa, or PayPal.

Institutions may be billed to suit their needs.