

ART IN LONDON

Asian Pictures and Low

LOVELY LIONS

[BY OUR LONDON ART CRITIC]

The exhibition of Russian art at No. 1, Thegrave Square will be opened to-night (Tuesday) by the Duchess of Kent. The house, which is the work of the famous architect and ballet-designer, Doboujynsky, now has something of the character of a princely mansion. The walls are painted in a soft cream, the floor is painted a different colour, and the effect room after room of pale greens, yellows, and blues, and Wedgwood tones is very attractive.

The exhibition includes no work by living artists, but it is a most interesting one. It is really a show of pre-war plutocratic art. The peasant tradition, which some of the artists had been studying for years, is far less obvious here. In fact, the national characteristics are by no means as strongly marked as they are in the work of the artists who came after the time, I suppose, of Peter the Great. The French tradition of art and literature, which was well confessed at once by the Exhibition of 1889, is still very much in evidence. One might as well have been at the Walla Collection, so slight were the racial characteristics which one had expected to recognize at a glance.


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The first-floor rooms are devoted to glass, porcelain, silver, jewelry, and 19th century furniture. The most accomplished is Reglin's "Cafe de Paris" which, as its name suggests, is French in inspiration. The room has a lot of things that are of great interest, particularly the latter, which includes many Imperial pieces, such as vases, plates, and other objects, and curious history. Much of the porcelain came from the imperial factory and from the famous Sevres factory, founded by an Englishman, Gorden, in the early 1800s.

On the second floor are shown designs for theatre and ballet, furniture, etc. Bakst, who was a Russian painter and designer of theatrical artists, and his work is wonderfully represented. Leon Bakst died in 1933, but he had been working for years before that. He was a member of the St. Petersburg School of Art, and his work is wonderfully represented. Leon Bakst died in 1933, but he had been working for years before that. He was a member of the St. Petersburg School of Art, and his work is wonderfully represented.

equipped with immense skill. On this floor, too, is a room devoted to links between Russia and England—for example, portraits of Russian grandees the English painters like Lely and Kneller. The silver tankard given to Catherine when the British Fleet visited Russia in 1792 and drawings by Alexander Cozens, the landscape draughtsman who is said to have been a natural son of Peter the Great.

On the third floor are collected textiles, tapestries, books, prints, medals and coins, prints and medals, engravings, and paintings by foreign artists who worked in Russia. The purpose of the exhibits for insurance purposes is to reach a value of £200,000, but it is in fact incalculable.



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