

# Viewing Collections: The Gorski Russia R.S.F.S.R. Collection

by John F. Dunn

In February 2014 Cherrystone Auctions offered the Igor Gorski Collection of R.S.F.S.R. Those initials stand for the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic. Putting it into historical perspective, per Wikipedia, “previously known as the Russian Soviet Republic and the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic as well as being unofficially known as Soviet Russia, Russian Federation or simply Russia, was an independent socialist state from 1917 to 1922, and afterwards the largest and most populous of the Soviet socialist republics of the Soviet Union from 1922 to 1991.”

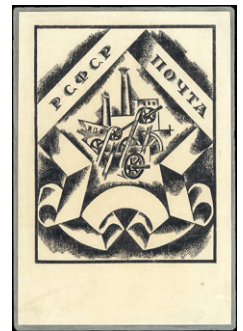
Russia being a specialty of Cherrystone, and the Gorski Collection being an outstanding presentation, this is a unique opportunity to study this area. [All descriptions are those of the auctioneers.]

The first lot in the auction was this master die proof of a submission for the first stamp of the new country.

After the February Revolution, the Provisional Government sponsored a contest for best design of a postage stamp of the new country. Among the many masters of graphic arts to submit their sketches, was Rihards Zarins (a Latvian artist who created many stamp designs, including 5r and 10r Arms, 1913 Romanov series, 1914 Charity issues and others....Employed by the Russian Imperial Printing Office in St. Petersburg for 20 years, Zarins became technical director, in charge of designing State Papers). One of his popular, but unapproved contestants was ‘The Russian Knight’. This lot, a master die proof for inscriptions only, value tablets blank, did not sell.

Next we view the complete Zarins Russian Knight design submission in a combination sheetlet on gummed paper with Zarins’ Chain-breakers design that was accepted, the former in dark blue, value tablet blank, the latter 15k orange brown (side ornaments not finished), folded between stamps, an exquisite treasure of Russian Philately. In keeping with this description, this sheetlet sold for \$26,000.

At the top left of the next column we view another Zarins unaccepted design, St. George Slaying the Dragon, in a 1917 engraved die essay on gummed stamp paper sheetlet in orange brown, signed E. Franck, realization \$8,000.



Above right is an unadapted design for the first, 1918 issue, in the form of an essay by N. Altman, the theme being the

Industrial Landscape, large die essay, card mounted, value tablets blank, realization \$2,700.

Back to the Chain-breakers, Zarins’ design was slightly modified and finally approved for the First Stamp of the RSFSR, on 22 May 1918, by Vadim Podbelski, of the Narkompochtel (People’s Commissar for Posts and Telegraphs). It is seen here with the blue color, with the 10 kopecks denomination changed to 35k for the issued stamp. This perforated and gummed sheetlet without lozenges, side ornaments incomplete, left margin imperforate, sold for \$10,000.



In the issued stamps section, we view two imperforate varieties of the 1918 first issue, which was issued perf 13-1/2, each cut close at right, other margins sufficiently large, used on a 1919 registered cover, addressed locally in Petrograd (16 8 19), with arrival postmark on back, considerable cover cleaning and some repairs, still fine appearing example of imperforate 35k stamps on cover. Scott 149a, Zverev Russia catalogue #1Pa, it realized \$1,500.



Here we view another first issue variety, the 1918 35k blue in a sheet corner margin single imperf at top. Scott 149, Zverev Russia catalog #1Pb, it went for \$750.



Next up is the 70k 1918 first issue in a variety, imperf at top, hinged in margin, stamp n.h., v.f., Scott 150, Zverev Russia catalog #2Pb, realization \$375. [Note that the Scott value for a fully imperf pair, Sc. 150a, is \$16,500 o.g. and \$52,500 n.h.]

Here we view a 1918 70k vertical strip of five, used in combination with Imperial 2x25k green & violet (one defective), all cancelled by crayon on a 5k stationery postal card, registered from "Votkinskaya" (Vyatka gov't.) to Petrograd, with 20 February 1920 departure docketing, faint Petrograd arrival postmark (just tying two stamps), fine and extraordinary usage on a registered postal card, realization \$1,800.



Shown next is an imperforate and gummed sheetlet of 14 1920 essays, unadopted designs, 1r-5r gray blue, showing Karl Marx (2r and 5r), Lenin (2r and 5r), New World Allegory (40r), Worker's Hand with Hammer (20r), R.S.F.S.R. (1r) and Symbols of Industry (5r), designed by the artists E. Lancerey, G. Reindorf and K. Hoppe, proposed but not accepted for general release, folded between stamps, marginal thin, v.f., realization \$14,000.

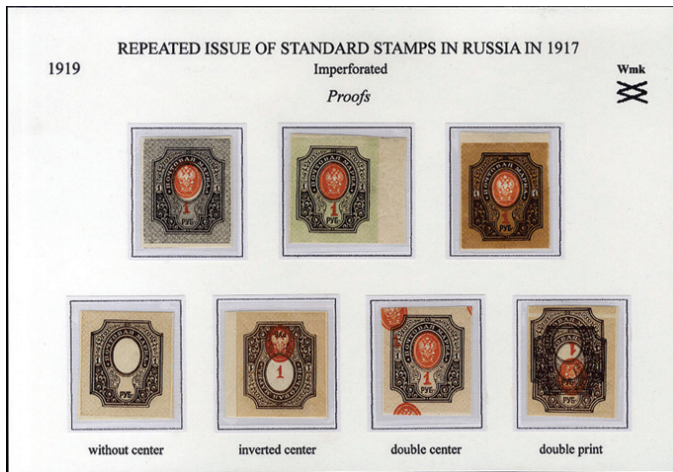


1921 Proofs and Essays included this 1921 Workers of the World Unite rejected design, in 100r olive and 100r gray blue imperforate plate proofs on thin and thick cards, v.f., realization \$1,100.

Next we view an accepted design, in 1921 1r carmine rose, large die trial color proof reduced to stamp size, on glazed card, v.f., rare, realization \$1,600.



At top left on page 3 is a 1921 40r red brown, die proof on wove paper (Sc. 187TC), some erasure marks on both sides, a very fine and probably unique proof, realization \$8,000.



During the early Soviet period, the Tsarist Imperialist Arms issues could still be used. This lot shows the 1919 1 ruble reissue in a selection of seven imperforate items, including three trial color proofs (various backgrounds), varieties without center, double impression, inverted and double center, realization \$1,300.



Overlapping the red brown Trial Color is this 1921 40r dark blue imperforate



trial color proof on ungummed, watermarked stamp paper, v.f., price realized, \$2,100.

In the New Postage Rates section we view Specimens in the form of the 1921 200r brown, 300r green, 500r blue and 1,000r red, each with a single red letter overprint, v.f., rare, Zverev Russia Catalogue #9,11-13S, realization \$1,300.



Below is what was properly described as a magnificent rarity, the 1921 (December) Volga Flood Charity Issue 2,250r+2,250r brown (Sc. B14-B15), block of four printed se-tenant on the sheet margin of the 200r definitive (same color, Sc. 182) block of 10, with additional parts of five stamps at top, separated by gutter, n.h., v.f.

This issue was prepared by the employees of the State Printing Office on their own time. The State authorities,



for various reasons, refused to supply paper. The workers, printed these stamps, on their spare time, on the trimmings from older stamps, some even on top of these older stamps, subsequently divided and sold in sheetlets of four or eight). This is one of the largest known se-tenant multiples. Zverev catalog #18+9, value \$45,000, it sold for \$22,000.



Next we view a spectacular appearing registered cover (opened for display) from Novochoerkassk (11 Mar 23), sent via Moscow to Leipzig, with arrival (21 Mar) postmark, with the 1922 surcharges complete set of six, including a block of four of the 100p+100p, upper right variety "100p+p100", used in combination with additional franking (total of 37 stamps) various issues of RSFSR represented (Zverev Cat. #22-27,23Ka), return address portion of cover excised, still v.f., with 2008 Mandrovski certificate, realization \$2,500.

Here we see the 1922 (January) Volga Famine Relief surcharges 1922 100p+p100 variety in a pair with regular 100p+100p on 70k, h.r., v.f., Sc. B18c, B18, Zverev #23Ka, realization \$600.



Another variety is this 1922 (January) Volga Famine Relief 1922 250p+250p on 35k with red surcharge inverted, n.h., v.f., Zverev #26Ta, \$370, unlisted in Scott, price realized \$280.



Below is a 1922 10,000r on 40r



(over-printed in red), watermark points down, in a vertical pair, imperf as issued, cancelled "Vovchansk na Khark.", folded between stamps, v.f., Scott 200, Zverev #33, \$1,040, realization \$300.

Top left on page 4, from the 1922 New Designs section, we view the 50,000r violet imperforate proof on watermarked and gummed paper,



lightly hinged, v.f., only 625 printed, realization \$3,750.



And above right is another 1922 50,000r violet blue unissued value imperforate proof on watermarked, gummed paper, this one based on the design of the 7,500r, v.f., realization \$6,250.



Next is the 1922 Philately for the Children typographic overprint setting of 20 (top row missing), positions 6-25, struck on wove paper, position 19 missing dash (between 19 8-22), folded between stamps, some creases, mostly fine, a rarity, realization \$6,250.

Here we see an example of the issued 1922 Philately for the Children 1922 1k perforated single, l.h. v.f., Zverev, #49, value \$1,700, Sc. B24, SCV \$550, realization \$600.



To the left is the 1922 Philately for the Children 1922 1k orange major error overprint, inverted and struck diagonally, n.h., v.f., an extremely rare variety, only a few known to exist, ex-Liphschutz and Shtern collections (realized \$24,150), Zverev #49 variety, unlisted in Scott, realization, \$24,000.

From the 1922 Fifth Anniversary of the Revolution section we view a 5r artist's die essay on card, corrected by hand, signed by the artist (I. Dubasov) at bottom right, brown and black colors, with penciled corrections, some adhesive residue on back, v.f. and unique item, realization \$3,000.



To the left is an unaccepted Peasant and Worker Holding Wreath with "Pochta RSFSR 1917-1922" inscription and 150r denomination black photo essay design by artist C. Chekhonin, v.f., rare, but did not sell.

Now for one of the highlights of the Collection, the 1922 Air Post 45r black and green with red propeller overprint, proof sheetlet on thin paper, dated 16 Oct 22, endorsed "Approved" and signed by the postmaster. A unique rarity, ex-Mikulski collection, with his handstamp on back, Zverev #64P, it went for \$72,500.



Below we have the 1922 Air Post Issue 45r black and green with red propeller overprint in a vertical gutter sheet of 50 containing two panes of 25, position 45 showing the damaged propeller, other smaller varieties of the overprint noted throughout, n.h., v.f., Zverev #64,64var, sold for \$6,250.



The 1922 Star Surcharges included this Typographed 1922 40r on 200r on 15k imperforate horizontal pair, n.h., minor gum adhesions, v.f., rare double surcharge, Zverev #72var, realization \$600.



This attention grabbing lot shows the 1922 Star Surcharges lithographed 40r on 15k lilac brown & blue, surcharge double, in a bottom sheet margin horizontal pair, h.r., v.f., Zverev #84Tc, realization \$550.



Below that, from the 1922 Workers and Soldiers Issue, we view the 1922 Worker, large master die proof in the approved



color (blue), on thick card, value tablets blank, signed, with notations at top, creases and archival staple holes at left, fine and probably unique, realization \$6,250.

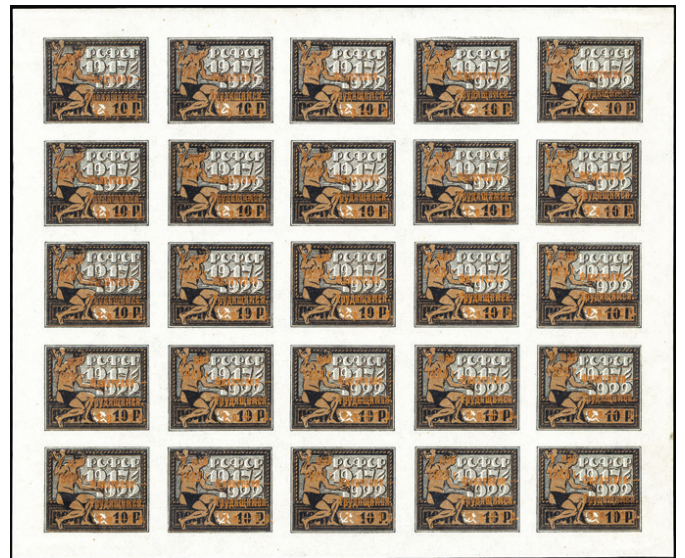
This next lot is the back of a cover from Kiev (12 Sep 23) to Leysin, Switzerland with 38 of the 1922 Worker 10r blue imperforate, plus two later definitives, used in combination with Soviet Union First Industrial Exhibition imperf. 1r and 7r, minor peripheral flaws, otherwise fine, extremely rare RSFSR mixed franking with the first issue of the Soviet Union, Zverev #87, price realized \$2,400.



Next up is the 1922 Workers and Soldiers Red Army Soldier design large master die proof in lilac (color of 70r, Sc. 232), thick card, value tablets blank, dated and signed in red, light creases, fine and unique proof, realization \$4,250.



Below is the 1923 Philately for Labor 1923 1r+1r bronze overprint and surcharge, in a sheet of 25, four corner stamps h.r., others n.h., v.f., stated to be the only known complete sheet, each position with a minor difference, most notably position 4 (double frame at top), position 6 (without the period after first "1p" at bottom), position 7 (color spot after "G"), position 15 (without a period after "G"), Zverev #95, realization \$24,000.



Next we view the 1923 20r lilac definitive, bottom sheet margin imperforate horizontal strip of five, with large part of the printer's imprint at bottom, n.h., some creases, mostly v.f., Zverev #0113S, realization \$1,000.



On page 6 we view the 1922 Rostov-on-Don Hunger Relief Issue 1922 2,000r green (not cancelled), used in combination with Imperial 2k and 4k franking on the back of a registered cover (opened for display) from Rostov on Don (25 April 1922) to Germany, with Berlin arrival (9 May 22), cover defects and staining (resealed), fine appearance. The rate of 60,000r to Germany was correctly paid by the Imperial Arms stamps, which indicates that the 2,000r Charity stamp paid no postage. Illustrated in R.S.F.S.R, Specialized Catalogue of Postage Stamps 1918-1923, Zverev #SI1, it sold for \$1,100.

Next we view the 1922 Rostov-on-Don Hunger Relief Issue 2,000r rose, double impression, printed on the back of cigarette factory paper, v.f., Zverev #SI2var., realization \$1,300.

We conclude this viewing of the Igor Gorski Collection of Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic issues with a 1918 Postal Fiscals 3r and 5r tete-beche block of 16, overprinted "Obrazets" (Specimens), folded between stamps, n.h., v.f., scarce, Zverev #RS10-11S, Scott AR24-AR25, realization \$2,200.



To view the complete collection go to the Cherrystone website, <https://www.cherrystoneauctions.com/auction/index.asp?auction=201402>.

