



Anatoli Znak. Pilot. Sketch for "Watchers of the North", 1984.



Vera Nazina. Drawing from a picture of girls in Leningrad.

An Edinburgh Art Festival 2012  
exhibition

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The Scotland -Russia Forum  
Форум Шотландия - Россия  
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The Scotland-Russia Forum is an independent charity whose aim is to promote understanding of Russia and its neighbouring countries.

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## Soviet Grand Designs



An exhibition  
at the  
Scotland-Russia Institute

4 August - 22 September 2012

## Soviet Grand Designs

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Vladimir Burov. *Steeltown USSR*.  
Magnitogorsk, 1960s



Evgeni Kazmin. *Mosaic project. Circus Pavilion*,  
Sochi. 1960s

Soviet Grand Designs is a selling exhibition curated by John Barkes. It features Evgeni Kazmin's drawings for monumental mosaic projects, Sochi, 1960-1980 (above and on front of brochure) and Vladimir Burov's 1960s paintings of Magnitogorsk, "Steeltown USSR" (left) as well as paintings and drawings by other artists of the period.

Russian artists are the best trained on earth. Art school starts at the age of eleven and the brightest and best are twenty six by the time they submit their postgraduate diploma work at the academy, after enduring a system instituted by Catherine the Great.

Teaching methods were left unchanged after the Revolution, but the party was in control. Socialist Realism has always had a bad press. Stalin's injunction "Paint things as they ought to be rather than as they are" is sufficient evidence to damn the entire movement. But artists are artists, creative people in their own studios.

John Barkes has met about 400 artists in the last twenty years. They are attractive and independent, fiercely proud of their work and status. The majority are idealistic communists who have devoted their lives to the best system on offer, as we ourselves would defend democracy. Each artist's studio contains all the preparatory works and oil sketches for every painting they ever produced. These sketches were private and never left the studio. Everything an artist can express in paint, individuality, power of observation, humour, subversion, is there in the sketches, as they saw life going on around them.

John Barkes has assembled an exhibition of about fifty of these works, illustrating the talent and originality of highly motivated artists working in hard turbulent times.



Lidiya Ostrova. *A Good Book*.