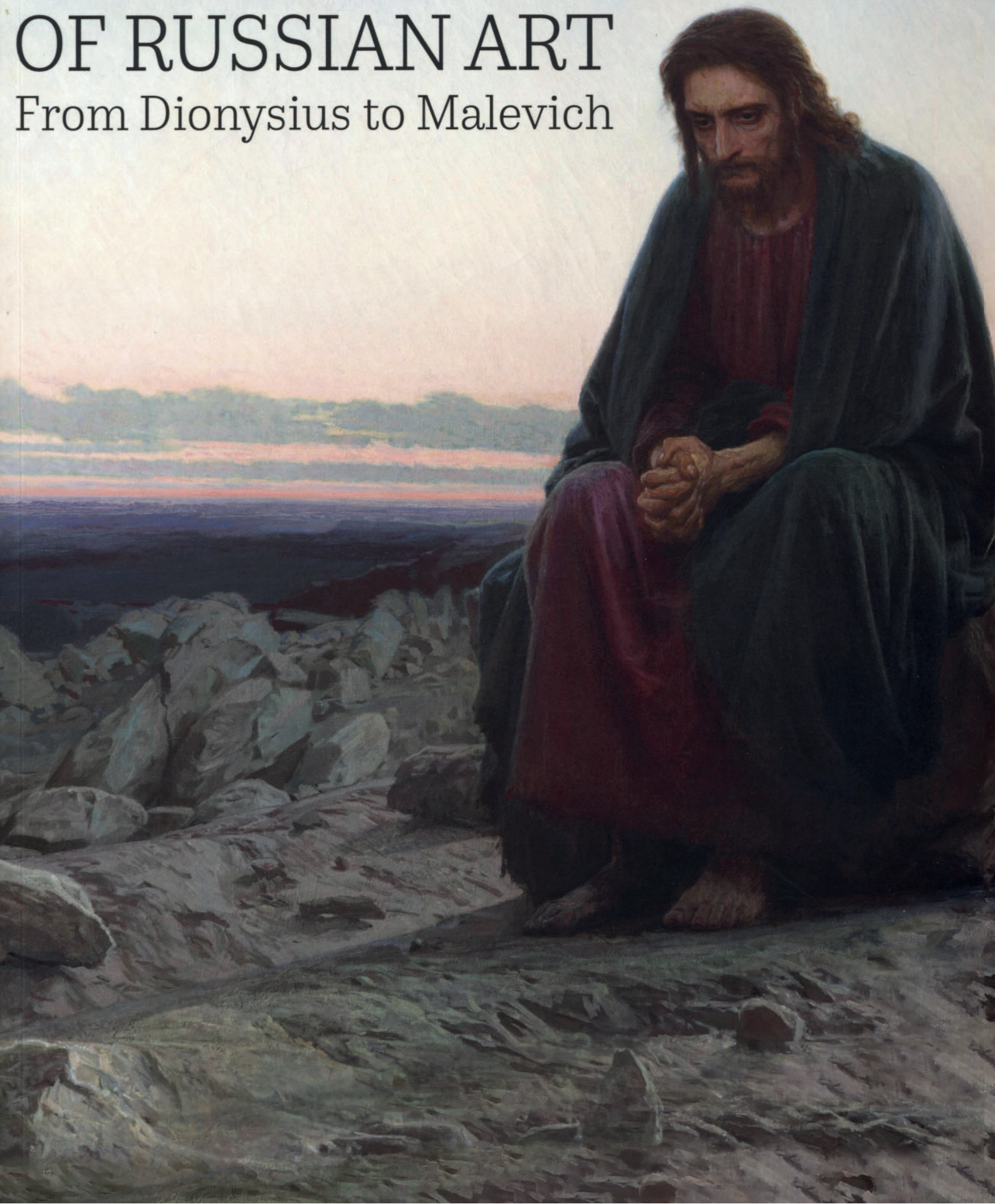


# PILGRIMAGE

OF RUSSIAN ART

From Dionysius to Malevich



Beauty creates bridges, brings different cultures together and makes us all brothers. Art is beauty, whatever shape or form it takes, and always performs its extraordinary function in surprising ways.

Two years ago, the successful artistic collaboration between the Vatican and Russia, saw the staging of the exhibition *Roma Aeterna*, which presented some of the Vatican's greatest masterpieces to the Russian people. It continues today with another exchange — a bridge, in fact — that will enable many visitors to the Vatican to appreciate great Russian painting spanning over six centuries. *Pilgrimage of Russian Art. From Dionysius to Malevich* not only showcases the art of the icon, a medium of spirituality and faith, by exploring different iconographies, colours and methods that evoke the Russian soul. It also offers a fine selection of 19th- and early 20th-century Russian paintings by artists of the calibre of Vasily Perov, Ilya Repin, Isaac Levitan, Natalia Goncharova, Wassily Kandinsky and Kazimir Malevich.

The show features fifty four Russian works of art, some little known in the West. So it gives us great pleasure to display these in the Braccio di Carlo Magno at St. Peter's, the heart of Christianity, in order to share them with pilgrims and visitors to the Vatican, and create that bridge.

I would especially like to thank Zelfira Tregulova, Director General of the State Tretyakov Gallery, and all her staff, for coordinating the whole initiative. My gratitude also goes to Sergey Perov, Director General of the State Museum and Exhibition Centre 'ROSIZO', to all the lender museums and, of course, the State Tretyakov Gallery Support Foundation, represented by Executive Director Olga Dranichkina, for its indispensable help in realizing the project.

A sincere thank-you also to His Excellency Alexander Avdeev, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the Holy See, for his invaluable collaboration.

Lastly, I would like to thank all my collaborators at the Vatican Museums, the Pope's Museums, who have worked to display these Russian masterpieces that have made a pilgrimage to a universal place of art: the Braccio di Carlo Magno.

**Barbara Jatta**

*Director of the Vatican Museums*