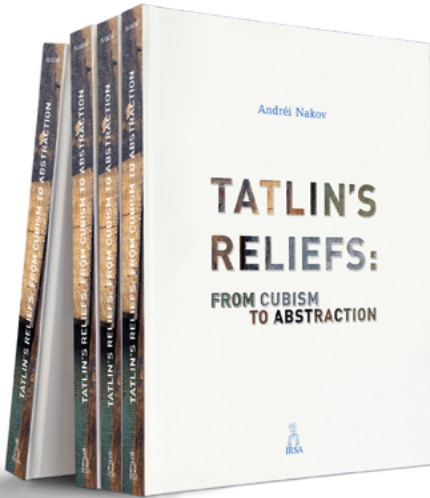


Andréi Nakov

TATLIN'S
RELIEFS:
FROM CUBISM
TO ABSTRACTION



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The Slavic-born, French-educated art historian **Andréi Nakov** has organized major museum exhibitions in the last five decades: Berlin (1977), London (1976 and 1984), Frankfurt (1987), Tokyo (1988), Madrid (1989), Ottawa (2016) and elsewhere. Since 1972, his substantial studies on Futurism, Dada, Constructivism and especially the beginnings of abstract art (Kandinsky, Larionov, Mondrian, Kupka and Freundlich among others) have been published in French, German, English, Italian, Russian and other languages. His publications on the work and writings of Kazimir Malewicz (Paris 1975 and 2003, Stockholm 2010), a four-volume monograph (in French in 2007, English translation in 2010) and a *Catalogue raisonné* (Paris 2002) are regarded as authoritative works on this artist. His works on Constructivism began in 1972 with a French edition of the writings of Nikolai Tarabukin and the first posthumous monograph devoted to Aleksandra Exter. They were followed by the exhibition catalogue *Tatlin's Dream* (London 1973), *2 Stenberg 2* (Paris–London–Toronto, 1975) and the exhibition catalogue *Dada and Constructivism* (Tokyo and Kamakura 1988, Madrid 1989). Several titles by Nakov have been translated and/or reprinted.

Andréi Nakov

Tatlin's reliefs: from Cubism to Abstraction

The creation of the first Non-Objective reliefs by Vladimir Tatlin in the years 1914–1915 has remained almost legendary, as, with a few exceptions, these works have been lost or destroyed. This is the reason most of them have come down to us solely through contemporary documents. Yet when first presented in Moscow, St Petersburg (1914 and 1915), Berlin (1922) and Amsterdam (1923), they were received with curiosity, interest and, in a few instances, rejection, for they signalled a real artistic revolution. They were subsequently overshadowed by the *Monument to the Third International* (1919–1920), an extraordinary utopian construction that Alfred Barr described in 1936 as “the most ambitious Constructivist work” of the century and

which has fascinated generations of artists on both sides of the Atlantic during much of the 20th century.

This book discusses the history and significance of the first abstract reliefs and presents numerous hitherto unpublished documents and an interpretation that casts a new light on the history of modern art, both Russian (Malewicz, Popova, Exter and other artists) and Western (Boccioni or Brancusi). A special place is given to an examination of the Cubist sources (Picasso) that played a decisive role in the artist's bold creative leap. This study of the origins of abstract sculpture is an innovative exploration of a crucial moment in modern art: the passage from Cubism to Abstraction.