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The Perfect Art Vacation

By The Moscow Times

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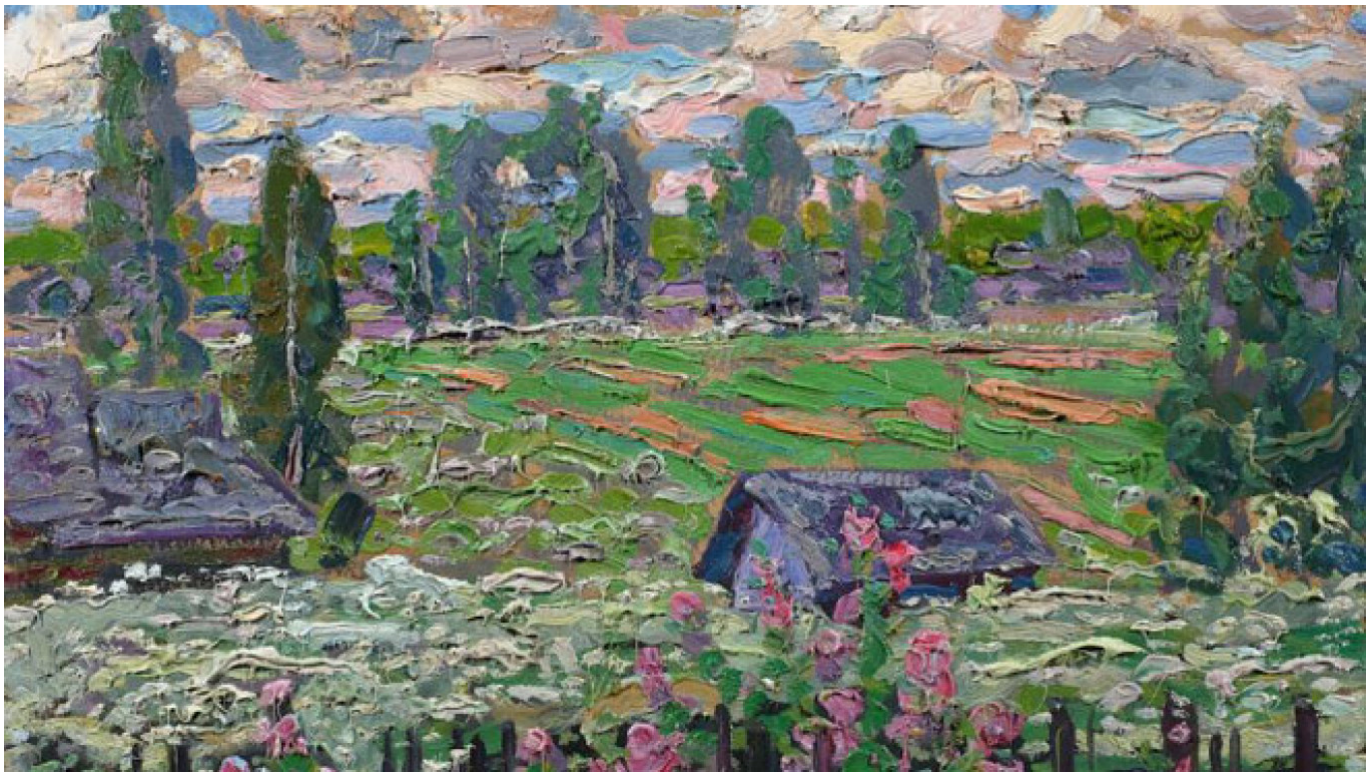

"Summer Landscape," a picture by David Burliuk, is one of the 100 works from Volodchinsky collection displayed at the Museum of Private Collections of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts.

Do yourself a favor one afternoon before summer ends and stop into the Museum of Private Collections of the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts. Go inside, away from the traffic and bad air and noise and clamor of the city center, and make your way down halls and around corners to a small, exquisite exhibition with a rather modest name: "Russian Art of the 19th and 20th Centuries From the Collection of Alexander Volodchinsky." And then spend an hour or so in quiet, blissful, restorative art heaven.

Four halls display over 100 works of Volodchinsky's much larger collection. The works represent genres ranging from impressionism to the avant-garde — with special emphasis on genre paintings, portraits and landscapes — and every major Russian artist who lived and worked in the last 150 years.

The curators of the collection and museum — and even Volodchinsky himself — have difficulty formulating the collector's vision that unites all these works. But somehow

the same eye that chose a delicate, snow-storm white view of the Kremlin by Vasily Vereshchagin also found a Natan Altman line portrait of the theater director Solomon Mikhoels and a soft, pale blue and white seascape painted by Isaac Levitan toward the end of his life.

Four halls are just enough to delight the eye but not overwhelm it. When you return to the real world outside, those beautiful canvases will stay with you like a protective cloak.

Museum of Private Collections, 10 Ulitsa Volkhonka. Metro Kropotkinskaya. Open 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., Thurs. to 9 p.m., closed Mon. 495-697-9578. arts-museum.ru*.*

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