Following his education at the Imperial Academy of Arts, Aivazovsky traveled to Europe and lived briefly in Italy in the early 1840s. He then returned to Russia and was appointed the main painter of the Russian Navy. Aivazovsky had close ties with the military and political elite of the Russian Empire and often attended military maneuvers. He was sponsored by the state and was well @-@ regarded during his lifetime. The saying " worthy of Aivazovsky 's brush ", popularized by Anton Chekhov, was used in Russia for " describing something ineffably lovely."

One of the most prominent Russian artists of his time , Aivazovsky was also popular outside Russia . He held numerous solo exhibitions in Europe and the United States . During his almost $60\ @-@$ year career , he created around $6\ @, @$ 000 paintings , making him one of the most prolific artists of his time . The vast majority of his works are seascapes , but he often depicted battle scenes , Armenian themes , and portraiture . Most of Aivazovsky 's works are kept in Russian , Ukrainian and Armenian museums as well as private collections .

= = Life = =

= = = Background = = =

His father , Konstantin , (c . 1765 ? 1840) , was an Armenian merchant from the Polish region of Galicia . His family had migrated to Europe from Turkish Armenia in the 18th century . After numerous familial conflicts , Konstantin left Galicia for Moldavia , later moving to Bukovina , before settling in Feodosia in the early 1800s . He was initially known as Gevorg Aivazian (Haivazian or Haivazi) , but he changed his last name to Gaivazovsky by adding the Polish " -sky " . Aivazovsky 's mother , Ripsime , was a Feodosia Armenian . The couple had five children ? three daughters and two sons . Aivazovsky 's elder brother , Gabriel , was a prominent historian and an Armenian Apostolic archbishop .

= = = Education = = =

The young Aivazovsky received parochial education at Feodosia 's St. Sargis Armenian Church . He was taught drawing by Jacob Koch , a local architect . Aivazovsky moved to Simferopol with Taurida Governor Alexander Kaznacheyev 's family in 1830 and attended the city 's Russian gymnasium . In 1833 , Aivazovsky arrived in the Russian capital , Saint Petersburg , to study at the Imperial Academy of Arts in Maxim Vorobiev 's landscape class . In 1835 , he was awarded with a silver medal and appointed assistant to the French painter Philippe Tanneur (fr) . In September 1836 , Aivazovsky met Russia 's national poet Alexander Pushkin during the latter 's visit to the Academy . In 1837 , Aivazovsky joined the battle @-@ painting class of Alexander Sauerweid and participated in Baltic Fleet exercises in the Gulf of Finland . In October 1837 , he graduated from the Imperial Academy of Arts with a gold medal , two years earlier than intended . Aivazovsky returned

to Feodosia in 1838 and spent two years in his native Crimea . In 1839 , he took part in military exercises in the shores of Crimea , where he met Russian admirals Mikhail Lazarev , Pavel Nakhimov and Vladimir Kornilov .

= = = First visit to Europe = = =

In 1840, Aivazovsky was sent by the Imperial Academy of Arts to study in Europe. He first traveled to Venice via Berlin and Vienna and visited San Lazzaro degli Armeni , where an important Armenian Catholic congregation was located and his brother Gabriel lived at the time. Aivazovsky studied Armenian manuscripts and became familiar with Armenian art . He met Russian novelist Nikolai Gogol in Venice. He then headed to Florence, Amalfi and Sorrento. In Florence, he met painter Alexander Ivanov . He remained in Naples and Rome between 1840 and 1842 . Aivazovsky was heavily influenced by Italian art and their museums became the "second academy" for him. According to Rogachevsky the news of successful exhibitions in Italy reached Russia . Pope Gregory XVI awarded him with a golden medal. He then visited Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands and Britain, where he met English painter J. M. W. Turner who, " was so struck by Aivazovsky 's picture The Bay of Naples on a Moonlit Night that he dedicated a rhymed eulogy in Italian to Aivazovsky . " In an international exhibition at the Louvre, he was the only representative from Russia . In France , he received a gold medal from the Académie royale de peinture et de sculpture. He then returned to Naples via Marseille and again visited Britain, Portugal, Spain and Malta in 1843. Aivazovsky was admired throughout Europe. He returned to Russia via Paris and Amsterdam in 1844.

= = = Return to Russia and first marriage = = =

Upon his return to Russia, Aivazovsky was made an academician of the Imperial Academy of Arts and was appointed the "official artist of the Russian Navy to paint seascapes, coastal scenes and naval battles." In 1845, Aivazovsky traveled to the Aegean Sea with Duke Konstantin Nikolayevich and visited the Ottoman capital, Constantinople, and the Greek islands of Patmos and Rhodes.

In 1845, Aivazovsky settled in his hometown of Feodosia, where he built a house and studio. He isolated himself from the outside world, keeping a small circle of friends and relatives. Yet the solitude played a negative role in his art career. By the mid @-@ nineteenth century, Russian art was moving from Romanticism towards a distinct Russian style of Realism, while Aivazovsky continued to paint Romantic seascapes and attracted heavy criticism.

In 1845 and 1846, Aivazovsky attended the maneuvers of the Black Sea Fleet and the Baltic Fleet at Petergof, near the imperial palace. In 1847, he was given the title of professor of seascape painting by the Imperial Academy of Arts and elevated to the rank of nobility. In the same year, he was elected to the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences.

In 1848, Aivazovsky married Julia Graves, an English governess. They had four daughters: Elena (1849), Maria (1851), Alexandra (1852) and Joanne (1858). They separated in 1860 and divorced in 1877 with permission from the Armenian Church, since Graves was a Lutheran.

= = = Rise to prominence = = =

In 1851 , traveling with the Russian emperor Nicholas I , Aivazovsky sailed to Sevastopol to participate in military maneuvers . His archaeological excavations near Feodosia lead to his election as a full member of the Russian Geographical Society in 1853 . In that year , the Crimean War erupted between Russia and the Ottoman Empire , and he was evacuated to Kharkiv . While safe , he returned to the besieged fortress of Sevastopol to paint battle scenes . His work was exhibited in Sevastopol while it was under Ottoman siege .

Between 1856 and 1857, Aivazovsky worked in Paris and became the first Russian (and the first non @-@ French) artist to receive the Legion of Honour. In 1857, Aivazovsky visited Constantinople and was awarded the Order of the Medjidie. In the same year he was elected an

honorary member of the Moscow Art Society . He was awarded the Greek Order of the Redeemer in 1859 and the Russian Order of St. Vladimir in 1865 .

Aivazovsky opened an art studio in Feodosia in 1865 and was awarded a salary by the Imperial Academy of Arts the same year .

= = = Travels and accolades : 1860s ? 1880s = = =

In the 1860s , the artist produced several paintings inspired by Greek nationalism and the Italian unification . In 1868 , he once again visited Constantinople and produced a series of works about the Greek resistance to the Turks , during the Great Cretan Revolution . In 1868 , Aivazovsky traveled in the Caucasus and visited the Russian part of Armenia for the first time . He painted several mountainous landscapes and in 1869 held an exhibition in Tiflis . Later in the year , he made a trip to Egypt and took part in the opening ceremony of the Suez Canal . He became the " first artist to paint the Suez Canal , thus marking an epoch @-@ making event in the history of Europe , Africa and Asia . "

In 1870, Aivazovsky was made an Actual Civil Councilor, the fourth highest civil rank in Russia. In 1871, he initiated the construction of the archaeological museum in Feodosia. In 1872, he traveled to Nice and Florence to exhibit his paintings. In 1874, the Accademia di Belle Arti di Firenze (Florence Academy of Fine Art) asked him for a self @-@ portrait to be hung in the Uffizi Gallery. The same year, Aivazovsky was invited to Constantinople by Sultan Abdülaziz who subsequently bestowed upon him the Turkish Order of Osmanieh. In 1876, he was made a member of the Academy of Arts in Florence and became the second Russian artist (after Orest Kiprensky) to paint a self @-@ portrait for the Palazzo Pitti.

Aivazovsky was elected an honorary member of Stuttgart 's Royal Academy of Fine Arts (de) in 1878 . He made a trip to the Netherlands and France , staying briefly in Frankfurt until 1879 . He then visited Munich and traveled to Genoa and Venice " to collect material on the discovery of America by Christopher Columbus . "

In 1880, Aivazovsky opened an art gallery in his Feodosia house; it became the third museum in the Russian Empire, after the Hermitage Museum and the Tretyakov Gallery. Aivazovsky held an 1881 exhibition at London 's Pall Mall, attended by English painter John Everett Millais and Edward VII, Prince of Wales.

= = = Second marriage and later life = = =

Aivazovsky 's second wife, Anna Burnazian, was a young Armenian widow 40 years his junior. Aivazovsky said that by marrying her in 1882, he "became closer to [his] nation", referring to the Armenian people. In 1882, Aivazovsky visited Moscow and St Petersburg and then toured the countryside of Russia by traveling along the Volga River in 1884.

In 1885, he was promoted to the rank of Privy Councilor. The next year, the 50th anniversary of his creative labors, was celebrated with an exhibition in St Petersburg, and an honorary membership in the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts.

After meeting Aivazovsky in person, Anton Chekhov wrote a letter to his wife on 22 July 1888 describing him as follows:

Aivazovsky himself is a hale and hearty old man of about seventy @-@ five , looking like an insignificant Armenian and an bishop ; he is full of a sense of his own importance , has soft hands and shakes your hand like a general . He 's not very bright , but he is a complex personality , worthy of a further study . In him alone there are combined a general , a bishop , an artist , an Armenian , an naive old peasant , and an Othello .

After traveling to Paris with his wife , in 1892 he made a trip to the United States , visiting Niagara Falls in New York and Washington D.C. In 1896 , at 79 , Aivazovsky was promoted to the rank of full privy councillor .

Aivazovsky was deeply affected by the Hamidian massacres that took place in the Armenian @-@ inhabited areas of the Ottoman Empire between 1894 and 1896. He painted a number of works on

the subject such as The Expulsion of the Turkish Ship , and The Armenian Massacres at Trebizond . He threw the medals given to him by the Ottoman Sultan into the sea and told the Turkish consul in Feodosia : " Tell your bloodthirsty master that I 've thrown away all the medals given to me , here are their ribbons , send it to him and if he wants , he can throw them into the seas painted by me . " He created several painting on the events , such as The Massacre of Armenians in Trebizond (1895) , Lonely Ship , Night . Tragedy in the Sea of Marmara (1897) .

He spent his final years in Feodosia . In the 1890s , thanks to his efforts a commercial port was established in Feodosia and linked to the railway network of the Russian Empire . The railway station , opened in 1892 , is now called Ayvazovskaya and is one of the two stations within the city of Feodosia . Aivazovsky also supplied Feodosia with water .

= = = Death = = = =

= = Art = =

During his 60 career , Aivazovsky produced around 6 @,@ 000 paintings of , what one online art magazine describes , " very different value ... there are masterpieces and there are very timid works " . The vast majority of Aivazovsky 's works depict the sea . He rarely drew dry @-@ landscapes and created only a handful of portraits . According to Rosa Newmarch Aivazovsky " never painted his pictures from nature , always from memory , and far away from the seaboard . " Rogachevsky wrote that " His artistic memory was legendary . He was able to reproduce what he had seen only for a very short time , without even drawing preliminary sketches . " Bolton praised " his ability to convey the effect of moving water and of reflected sun and moonlight . "

= = = Exhibitions = = =

He held 55 solo exhibitions (an unprecedented number) over the course of his career. Among the most notable were held in Rome, Naples and Venice (1841? 42), Paris (1843, 1890), Amsterdam (1844), Moscow (1848, 1851, 1886), Sevastopol (1854), Tiflis (1868), Florence (1874), St. Petersburg (1875, 1877, 1886, 1891), Frankfurt (1879), Stuttgart (1879), London (1881), Berlin (1885, 1890), Warsaw (1885), Constantinople (1888), New York (1893), Chicago (1893), San Francisco (1893).

He also " contributed to the exhibitions of the Imperial Academy of Arts (1836 ? 1900) , Paris Salon (1843 , 1879) , Society of Exhibitions of Works of Art (1876 ? 83) , Moscow Society of Lovers of the Arts (1880) , Pan @-@ Russian Exhibitions in Moscow (1882) and Nizhny Novgorod (1896) , World Exhibitions in Paris (1855 , 1867 , 1878) , London (1863) , Munich (1879) and Chicago (1893) and the international exhibitions in Philadelphia (1876) , Munich (1879) and Berlin (1896) . "

$$= = = Style = = = =$$

A primarily Romantic painter , Aivazovsky used some Realistic elements . Leek argued that Aivazovsky remained faithful to Romanticism] throughout his life , " even though he oriented his work toward the Realist genre . " His early works are influenced by his Academy of Arts teachers

Maxim Vorobiev and Sylvester Shchedrin . Classic painters like Salvator Rosa , Jacob Isaacksz van Ruisdael and Claude Lorrain contributed to Aivazovsky 's individual process and style . Karl Bryullov , best known for his The Last Day of Pompeii , " played an important part in stimulating Aivazovsky 's own creative development , " according to Bolton . Aivazovsky 's best paintings in the 1840s ? 1850s used a variety of colors and were both epic and romantic in theme . Newmarch suggested that by the mid @-@ 19th century the romantic features in Aivazovsky ' 's work became " increasingly pronounced . " She , like most scholars , considered his Ninth Wave his best piece of art and argued that it " seems to mark the transition between fantastic color of his earlier works , and the more truthful vision of the later years . " By the 1870s , his paintings were dominated by delicate colors ; and in the last two decades of his life , Aivazovsky created a series of silver @-@ toned seascapes .

The distinct transition in Russian art from Romanticism to Realism in the mid @-@ nineteenth century left Aivazovsky , who would always retain a Romantic style , open to criticism . Proposed reasons for his unwillingness or inability to change began with his location ; Feodosia was a remote town in the huge Russian empire , far from Moscow and Saint Petersburg . His mindset and worldview were similarly considered old @-@ fashioned , and did not correspond to the developments in Russian art and culture . Vladimir Stasov only accepted his early works , while Alexandre Benois wrote in his The History of Russian Painting in the 19th Century that despite he was Vorobiev 's student , Aivazovsky stood apart from the general development of the Russian landscape school .

Aivazovsky 's later work contained dramatic scenes and was usually done on a larger scale. He depicted " the romantic struggle between man and the elements in the form of the sea (The Rainbow, 1873), and so @-@ called " blue marines " (The Bay of Naples in Early Morning, 1897, Disaster, 1898) and urban landscapes (Moonlit Night on the Bosphorus, 1894)."

= = = Works = = =

Landscapes Seascapes Religious paintings

= = = = Armenian themes = = =

Aivazovsky 's early works incorporated Armenian themes . The artist 's longstanding wish to visit his ancestral homeland was fulfilled in 1868 . During his visit to Russian (Eastern) Armenia (roughly corresponding to the modern Republic of Armenia , as opposed to Western Armenia under Ottoman rule) , Aivazovsky created paintings of Mount Ararat , the Ararat plain , and Lake Sevan . Although Mt . Ararat has been depicted in paintings of many non @-@ native artists (mostly European travelers) , Aivazovsky became the first Armenian artist to illustrate the two @-@ peaked biblical mountain .

He resumed the creation of Armenian @-@ related paintings in the 1880s: Valley of Mount Ararat (1882), Ararat (1887), Descent of Noah from Ararat (1889). The unique Valley of Mount Ararat contains Aivazovksy 's signature in Armenian: " Aivazian " (?????????) . In a panorama of Venice expressed by Byron 's Visit to the Mekhitarists on St Lazarus Island in Venice (1898); the foreground of the picture contains members of the Armenian Congregation giving an enthusiastic welcome to the poet .

His other themed works from this period include rare portraits of notable Armenians , such as his brother Archbishop Gabriel Aivazovsky (1882) , Count Mikhail Loris @-@ Melikov (1888) , Catholicos Mkrtich Khrimian (1895) , Nakhichevan @-@ on @-@ Don Mayor ?rutyun Khalabyan and others .

The Baptism of Armenians and Oath Before the Battle of Avarayr (both 1892) depict the two single most memorable events of ancient Armenia: the Christianization of Armenia via baptism of King Tiridates III (early 4th century), and the Battle of Avarayr of 451.

Orientalist themes

= = Recognition = =

Ivan Aivazovsky is one of the few Russian artists to achieve wide recognition during their lifetime. The Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary explicitly described him as the "best Russian marine painter" (???????????????????????????????) in 1890.

Today , he is considered as one of the most prominent marine artists of the 19th century , and , overall , one of the greatest marine artists in Russia and the world . He was also one of the few Russian artists to become famous outside Russia . In 1898 , Munsey 's Magazine wrote that Aivazovsky is " better known to the world at large than any other artist of his nationality , with the exception of the sensational Verestchagin " . Although according to art historian Janet Whitmore he is relatively unknown in the west .

Ivan Kramskoi , one of the most prominent Russian artists of the nineteenth century , praised him thus : " Aivazovsky is ? no matter who says what ? a star of first magnitude , and not only in our [country] , but also in history of art in general . " Another Russian painter , Alexandre Benois , suggested that " Aivazovsky stands apart from the general history of the Russian school of landscape painting . " The State Russian Museum website continues , " It is hard to find another figure in the history of Russian art enjoying the same popularity among amateur viewers and erudite professionals alike . "

= = = In Armenia = = =

Aivazovsky has always been considered an Armenian painter in his ancestral homeland and virtually always referred to there by his original Armenian name , Hovhannes . Aivazovsky is highly regarded in Armenia and his significance in Armenian art is greatly valued . He was the " most remarkable " Armenian painter of the 19th century , and the first ever Armenian marine painter . He was born outside Armenia proper , and like his contemporaries , including Gevorg Bashinjaghian , Panos Terlemezian , and Vardges Sureniants , Aivazovsky lived outside his homeland , drawing primary influences from European and Russian schools of art . His creativity and viewpoint have been attributed to his uniquely Armenian roots . According to Sureniants , he sought to create a union which would have brought together all Armenian artists around the world . The prominent Armenian poet Hovhannes Tumanyan wrote a short poem titled " In front of Aiazovsky 's painting " (*?????????????????????? ?????) in 1893 . It is inspired by painting of the sea by Aivazovsky , mostly likely from the 1870s ? 1890s .

= = Influence = =

Aivazovsky was the most influential seascape painter in nineteenth @-@ century Russian art . According to the Russian Museum , " he was the first and for a long time the only representative of seascape painting " and " all other artists who painted seascapes were either his own students or influenced by him . "

Arkhip Kuindzhi (1841 / 2 ? 1910) is cited by Krugosvet encyclopedia as having been influenced by Aivazovsky . In 1855 , at age 13 ? 14 , Kuindzhi visited Feodosia to study with Aivazovsky , however , he was engaged merely to mix paints and instead studied with Adolf Fessler , Aivazovsky 's student . A 1903 encyclopedic article stated : " Although Kuindzhi cannot be called a student of Aivazovsky , the latter had without doubt some influence on him in the first period of his activity ;

from whom he borrowed much in the manner of painting . " English art historian John E. Bowlt wrote that " the elemental sense of light and form associated with Aivazovsky 's sunsets, storms, and surging oceans permanently influenced the young Kuindzhi."

Aivazovsky also influenced Russian painters Lev Lagorio , Mikhail Latri , and Aleksey Ganzen (the latter two were his grandsons) .

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= = Legacy = =
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Aivazovsky 's house in Feodosia, where he had founded an art museum in 1880, is open to this day as the Aivazovsky National Art Gallery. It remains a central attraction in the city and holds the world 's largest collections (417) of Aivazovsky paintings.

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= = = Posthumous honors = = =
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Monuments in Crimea , Armenia and Russia stand in Aivazovsky 's memory . A statue of the artist can be found in front of the Feodosia Art Gallery , his former home . A statue of Aivazovsky and his brother Gabriel is located in Simferopol , Crimea 's administrative center . Aivazovsky 's first statue in his ancestral homeland was unveiled in Yerevan in 2003 . Aivazovsky 's first and only statue in Russia was erected in 2007 in Kronstadt , near Saint Petersburg .

An avenue in Feodosia (uk) , streets in Moscow (ru) , Yerevan , and Minsk ; an alley in Kiev (uk) and in many smaller cities : all are named after Aivazovsky . A three @-@ star hotel in Odessa , where dozens of his works are displayed , is named for him as well .

The Soviet Union (1950), Romania (1971), Madagascar (1988), Armenia (first in 1992), Russia (1995), Ukraine (1999), Abkhazia (1999), Moldova (2010), Kyrgyzstan (2010), Burundi (2012), and Mozambique (2013) have issued postage stamps depicting Aivazovsky or his works.

The minor planet 3787 Aivazovskij, named after Aivazovsky, was discovered by Soviet astronomer Nikolai Chernykh in 1977.

Several paintings of Aivazovsky from the National Gallery of Armenia hang in the Presidential Palace in Yerevan .

In 2007 when Abdullah Gül became president of Turkey, he redecorated the presidential palace? Çankaya Kö?kü in Ankara? and brought paintings by Aivazovsky up from the basement to hang in his office. According to Hürriyet Daily News 30 paintings of Aivazovsky are on display in museums in Turkey.

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= = = Auctions = = =
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Aivazovsky 's paintings began appearing in auctions (mostly in London) in the early 2000s . His works have risen steadily in auction value . Many of his works are bought by Russian oligarchs . In 2004 , his Saint Isaac 's Cathedral On A Frosty Day , a rare cityscape , unexpectedly sold for around £ 1 million (\$ 1 @ .@ 9 million) . In 2007 , his painting American Shipping off the Rock of Gibraltar auctioned at £ 2 @ .@ 71 million , " more than four times its top estimate " . It was , " the highest price paid at auction for Aivazovsky " at the time . In April 2012 , a canvas belonging to the artist View of Constantinople and the Bosphorus (1856) was sold at Sotheby 's for a record \$ 5 @ .@ 2 million (£ 3 @ .@ 2 million) , " well over its top estimate of £ 1.8m " .

In June 2015 Sotheby 's withdrew from auction an 1870 Aivazovsky painting Evening in Cairo , which was estimated at £ 1 @.@ 5 ? 2 million (\$2? \$3 million) , after the Russian Interior Ministry claimed that it was stolen in 1997 from a private collection in Moscow .

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= = = Ranks = = =
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 1885 ? Privy Councilor (???????????) 1896 ? Actual Privy Councilor (?????????????????????????)

= = = Awards = = =