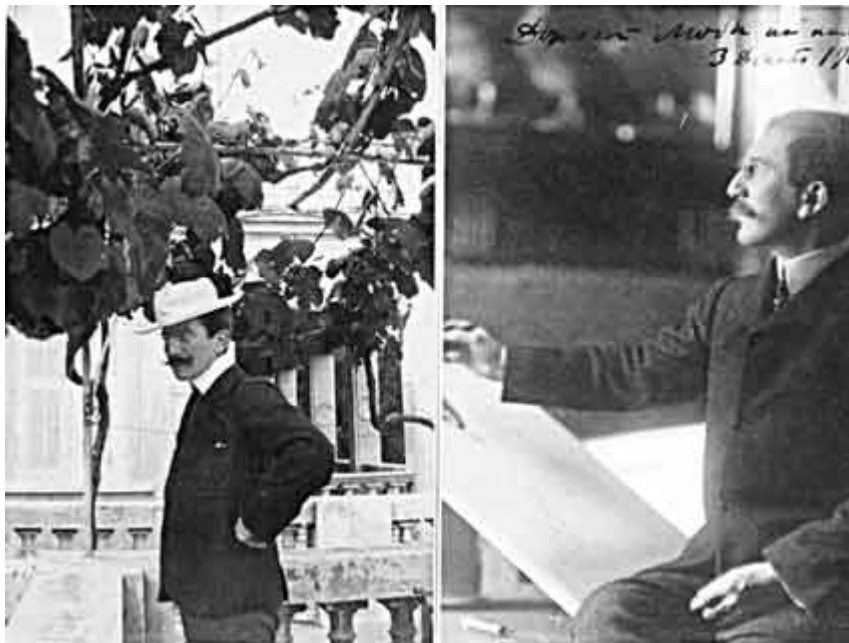


**CHRONOLOGICAL LANDMARKS
IN THE LIFE OF
LEON BAKST
1866-1924**



After Carole Constantinowitz's memoire

1866

Born on April 28 in Grodno, White Russia

Léon Bakst had 2 sisters: Sophie and Rosa

2 brothers: Jasa and Issaï

His grandfather who was a tailor in Paris was noticed by the Tsar during the Crimean War. The Tsar made him an offer to come and work in St-Petersburg as a tailor for the Russian Army. Every Saturday, Léon Bakst paid a visit to his grandfather in his sumptuous apartment near the Nevsky Prospekt. He was impressed by the **magnificent place** that contained so many curiosities. Thanks to his grandfather, the young man received an artistic education.

1878

Léon Bakst won a **drawing contest at school** and decided to become a painter.

His parents did not agree with this project and sought advice from the sculptor Antokolski who had a great influence at the time..

Antokolski advised that their son had undeniable talents but should nevertheless complete his studies first. Yet Bakst decided to **leave college and failed at the Academy.**

1883

Léon Bakst **was admitted to the Academy.**

He met **Serov, Nesterov and Vroubel.**

1887

He took part in a students' contest: "Madonna Morning Christ" and **was evicted from the Academy** because of his pictorial treatment,, which was considered too realistic.

His grandfather died. His parents divorced. Léon Bakst had to take care of his mother, grandmother, sisters and brothers.

Kanaev, writer and friend, found him a job: painting the portraits of member of the "jet set" and teaching drawing. He introduced him to **Albert Benois**, a talented **painter in watercolours**. Benois introduced him to his brother, **Alexandre Benois**. **Alexandre Benois** who was also a painter took part in meetings with **K. Somov**, **W. Vroubel**, **D. Filosofov** and his cousin **S. Diaghilev**. They were all self-taught members of an interesting club which dealt with Russian culture and European culture at large. They all still attended university except Bakst who had already left. Alexandre Benois introduced Bakst to **Count Benkendorf** who wanted to improve his talents as a painter. The Count had many acquaintances at the Court and put him in touch with **Grand Duke Vladimir**, President of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts. The Grand Duke ordered a painting from Léon Bakst: "**Welcome of Admiral Avellan**" for the **Navy Museum**.

1891

Léon Bakst travelled to Germany, Belgium, France, Spain, Italy and Switzerland at his new friends' instigation.

1893

Worked in Paris on "Welcome of Admiral Avellan"

1897

First important exhibition at the Academy of Fine Arts in St-Petersburg. P.Trétyakov purchases a painting by Léon Bakst :

« Evening in the area around [http://www.leon-bakst.com/Ain –Zainfour](http://www.leon-bakst.com/Ain-Zainfour) » .

1898

Foundation of the "Mir Iskusstva" Movement (The World of Art) par les amis d'Alexandre Benois.

1901

Settings and costumes for "Sylvia" for the Imperial Theatres

1902

1902 Settings and costumes for "Hyppolite"

1903

"The Doll Fairy"

Married L. Gricenko, widow of a painter, the daughter of P. Tretyakov who was the Head of the Tretyakov Musuem in Moscow

1904

« Œdipe à Colone »

1905

Decoration of a Russian portrait exhibition hall (Diaghilev).

The Russian Revolution was welcomed by artists who were seeking more independence.

1906

Paintings for Mir Iskusstva presented in St-Petersburg and Paris (Diaghilev).

1906-1910

Taught at the Zwanceva private school with Doboujinski.

1907

Five historical Russian concerts performed in Paris (Chaliapine-Diaghilev) Costumes for A. Pavlova in "Chopiniana", Kchessinskaia in "Eunice", Anna Pavlova in "The Swan", Tamara Karsavina in "Egyptian Nights".

1908

Completed "**Terror Antique**" rewarded in 1910 at the International Exhibition in Brussels.

1909-1913

The Golden Age of Diaghilev's Ballets Russes.

Léon Bakst as a member of **Mir Iskusstva** and Diaghilev's favorite set designer created a magnificent setting for the **Scheherazade** ballet that astounded the Parisian audience in **Paris Opéra Garnier**..

1909

 Léon Bakst exécute

Léon Bakst created settings and costumes for "**Cleopatra**", costumes for "**The Firebird**", the princess's costumes in "**Festin**" and the costumes for the third act of "**Judith**".

1910

Léon Bakst created the settings and costumes for "**Scheherazade**", "**Carnival**" and the costumes for **Tamara Karsavina**, **M. Forkine**, **V. Nijinski** in "**The Firebird**".

1911

Léon Bakst created settings and costumes for "**The Specter of the Rose**", "**Narcissus**", "**La Péri**" (which was never performed) the settings and **Ida Rubinstein's** costumes for "**The Martyrdom of Saint Sebastian**". For the Théâtre du Châtelet, "**Sadko**". For the Gaîté Lyrique Theatre, the settings of "**Ivan the Terrible**".

1912

New productions: settings and costumes for "**Thamar**" in "**The Blue God**", "**The Afternoon of a Faun**", "**Daphnis and Chloe**" and "**Helen of Sparta**" for **Ida Rubinstein**. In the field of fashion, Léon Bakst created:

"**Fantaisie pour un costume moderne**" for Paquin. This triggered some turmoil on the Parisian fashion scene.

When Bakst went back to Russia, he was banned and ordered to leave the country because he was a Jew, having divorced L. Gricenko, P. Tretyakov's daughter, who had allowed him to become an Orthodox.

1913

Created the settings and costumes of "**La Pisanella**" for **Ida Rubinstein**.

1914

Thanks to **Count D. Benkendorf's support**, Léon Bakst was elected as a **member of the Academy of Fine Arts**, which allowed him to go back to Russia. Collaboration with the Ballets Russes. Costumes for "**Butterflies**", "**The Legend of Joseph**". He was in charge of the costumes for "**Midas**" but was affected by a nervous breakdown and replaced by **Doboujinski**.

1917

Settings and costumes for the ballet "**Les Femmes de bonne humeur**".

He was in charge of the settings and costumes for "**La boutique fantasque**" but finally replaced by A. Derain.

1921

Collaborated **one last time with Diaghilev** creating the settings and costumes for the ballet "**Sleeping Beauty**".

1922

Décors de l'Opéra Comique : « **Mavra** »
Evincé par Diaghilev au profit de Surville

1923

Léon Bakst transformed the municipal gym of Baltimore into the **Evergreen Theatre**. After attending an exhibition organized in his honor with the support of his new famous American friends, **the Garrett**, in New York, Bakst stayed on their property.

1924

On the way to a rehearsal of "**Istar**" where he was to meet **Ida Rubinstein**, Léon Bakst had a heart attack. He was immediately taken to a hospital in Rueil Malmaison where he died shortly after.

A crowd of painters, poets, musicians, art critics, actors and dancers attended Léon Bakst's **moving funeral** service in the Batignolles cemetery.

S. Diaghilev sent **Léon Bakst's family** a telegram of condolences.

On that day, no one would have thought that such **a great artist would** one day be rejected and ignored by the very people he had given everything to and by a country **that he had served so well and missed so dearly during his whole existence.**

Collaboration of Léon Bakst with other companies:

for Anna Pavlova, settings and costumes for "The Big Show" follies performed in 1916 at the Hippodrome Theatre in New York, the second act of which was "Sleeping Beauty".

For Théâtre Marigny in Paris: "**Aladin and the Magic Lamp**".

For Théâtre Fémina in Paris: "**Spectacle d'art russe**".

Léon Bakst wrote the librettos of "**l'Adoration**" and "**Lacheté**".

in 1922

For **Ida Rubinstein**: settings and costumes of "**Artémis troublée**"

in 1923 "**Phèdre**"

in 1924. "**Istar**"

Interior decorations for private people.

De 1915 à 1922

From 1915 to 1922, interior decoration of **J. de Rotschild's mansion** in London.

He got his inspiration from "**Sleeping Beauty**".

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