

SARETZKI:

MALACHOWA

The book of Noah and his Wife is a most unusual work of its kind. Coming from the hand of the gifted artist Maria Malachova, it has its roots deep in folk-art and bears witness to a master hand, combining power and lightness of touch. Maria Malachova is the born interpreter of such a legend, which is in fact the creation of an unknown Russian folk-author, narrating the biblical legend in naive popular style. The artist's own deep feeling for the subjects creates a rare unity of poetic invention and graphic expression. Malachova believes in these things—an artist cannot create without believing in his material—she is primitive and has a light-heartedness of a child, but she is sarcastic without malice and with a delicate perception of humour which is typically Russian. This book is an unit, a whole, and this unity is achieved by means of the wonderful relation of the wood-cuts to the hand-cut text which accompanies them. Maria Malachova was a pupil of the Dresden Academy and later worked in the studio of the Russian painter W. Schuchaieff in Paris.

In her book for children she seems to have been under the influence of the Dresden school, which, however, is no reproach to her—for her artistic achievement is original enough in any case.

The art of Maria Malachova is closely related to the great Russian art of icon and fresco-painting. Her portraits and the "St. George" are fine examples of this.

Trans. by E. T. Scheffauer

