

“GIRL WITH PEACHES” BY VALENTIN SEROV



- **Original Title:** Девочка с персиками.
Портрет В.С.Мамонтовой
- **Date:** 1887
- **Style:** [Impressionism](#)
- **Media:** [oil](#), [canvas](#)
- **Genre:** [portrait](#)



Valentin Alexandrovich Serov (19 January 1865 – 5 December 1911) was a [Russian painter](#), and one of the premier portrait artists of his era.

The greatest works of Serov's early period were portraits: [The Girl with Peaches](#) (1887), and *The Girl Covered by the Sun* (1888), both in the [Tretyakov Gallery](#). In these [paintings](#) Serov concentrated on spontaneity of perception of the model and nature.



Serov painting [Felix Yusupov](#), 1903

- In the development of light and color, the complex harmony of reflections, the sense of atmospheric saturation, and the fresh picturesque perception of the world, there appeared the features of early Russian [impressionism](#) (though Serov was not yet aware of works of French impressionists at the time of making those paintings).



In August 1887, 11-year-old Vera Mamontova ran into the house and took a peach, sat at the table. Valentin Serov, who often visited the Abramtsevo estate, invited the girl to pose. Vera posed for Serov every day for almost two months.

“A Girl with Peaches” was written in [Abramtsevo](#), in the estate of Savva Ivanovich Mamontov, a famous Russian industrialist and philanthropist (patron of the arts), near Moscow. At that time, Serov was not even 20. The original name of the picture: “Portrait of V.M.” (Vera Mamontova, daughter of S.I. Mamontov) was subsequently changed. A new version of the proposal by another artist - I.E. Grabar, who, upon seeing this portrait at an exhibition in 1889, exclaimed: “Girl with peaches!”





Serov later recalled:

“All I wanted was freshness, that special freshness that you can always feel in real life and don't see in paintings. I painted it for over a month and tortured her, poor child, to death, because I wanted to preserve the freshness in the finished painting, as you can see in old works by great masters.”

In 1887 the painting won first prize at the Exhibition of the Moscow Society of Lovers of Art.



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Vera Mamontov was a great and amazing person. Vrubel poetized her in the Snow Maiden, Vasnetsov also often used her image in his works. Her memory is preserved in these works, but mainly in the portrait of Valentin Serov. He managed to capture a very important condition for a person - the transition from childhood to adolescence.

