FS Colour Series: Abyss inspired by Ivan Aivazovskyâs Night Sea

Description

The Black Sea at night / Ivan Aivasovsky / 1879

Russian Romantic painter Ivan Aivazovsky was entranced by the wild, untameable energy of the sea, painting it in bruised blue and purple tones punctuated by white moonlight. ABYSS linen recalls the deepest tones in Aivazovskyâs brooding seascapes, a rich indigo that suggests tempestuous, brewing drama. In the face of natureâs sheer, destructive force Aivazovsky saw his fragility and insignificance, writing, âThe movements of natural elements cannot be captured by the brush: to paint lightning, a gust of wind, or the splash of a wave from nature is inconceivable.â

FS ABYSS Softened 100% Linen

Aivazovsky was born in the Crimea to a poor Armenian family. His family home had a panoramic view of the sea which led to the busy Black Sea port, where the young artist saw an endless stream of exotic visitorsâ these experiences opened his eyes to the expansive world beyond his small home

and ignited in him a lifelong infatuation with travel and the sea. Aivazovsky studied art at the Imperial Academy of St. Petersburg, where Maxim Vorobiov taught him how to convey light and atmosphere, skills heÂ brought to his immensely popular portrayals of Crimean coastal towns, earning him various awards and accolades.

The Flood / Ivan Aivazovsky / 1864

Aivazovsky spent the early 1840s travelling throughout Europe visiting Berlin and Vienna, before settling for several years in Italy, moving through Rome, Venice, Florence and NaplesÂ where heÂ was endlessly fascinated by the play of water on light. In Naples he made some of his most enduring night-time scenes: *Moonlight in Naples,* 1842 captures soft moonlight as it ignites

the sky and flickers across rippling water, slowly blending outwards into rich purple hues and black silhouettes.

Moonlight in Naples / Ivan Aivazovsky / 1842

After leaving Italy in 1842 Aivazovsky continued to travel throughout Europe, visiting Holland, England and Paris before eventually returning to Russia in his late 20s, bringing ideas from various European artists with him, including those of English painter J.M.W. Turner and French artist Theodore Gericault. In Russia Aivazovsky was appointed as the Russian Navyâs official artist, a role which allowed him toÂ convey his great passion for the sea, as well as

his Russian patriotism, writing, âEvery victory of our forces, whether at sea or on dry land, makes me happy as a Russian, and as an artist gives me the impulse to paint it.â *The Brig Mercury Encounter after Defeating Two Turkish Ships of the Russian Squadron*, 1848, celebrates the famous Russian warship as a potent symbol of courage and bravery, travelling alone across an expansive ocean as huge white clouds above billow through a dark, sombre sky. Made two years later, *The Ninth Wave,* 1850 is one of his most enduring paintings, capturing the awe inspiring and destructive power of the sea as glowering purple shadows gradually engulf a glowing, golden sunset.

The Brig Mercury Encounter after Defeating Two Turkish Ships of the Russian Squadron / Ivan Aivazovsky / 1848

Towards the end of his career Aivazovsky continued to portray the overwhelming power of the ocean, with boats struggling against colossal waves that merge into one with angry skies overhead. In *Sounion in a Tempest*

, 1856 a silhouetted battleship is tossed back and forth by fierce waves that threaten to crash it against looming black rocks. Shrouded by indigo curtains the scene almost descends into darkness, creating a sense of impending doom, although a shaft of moonlight provides a glimmer of hope sparkling across the waterâs surface. In *The Wave*, 1889, a shipâs mast sinks into the depths of an expansive oceanic valley as a huge, bulging wave looms menacingly overhead â violet clouds stain the sky, suggesting the storm is far from over. The boat has completely gone in *Among the Waves*, 1899 as the sea becomes a ferocious, sublime force of energy and light, while deep, inky clouds bleed into the horizon as ghostly spectres of the great unknown.

Sounion in a Tempest / Ivan Aivazovsky / 1856

FS ABYSS comes in Light weight 100% Linen

CATEGORY

1. TEXTILES

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