



# Arshile Gorky: Goats on the Roof

**A Life in Letters and Documents**  
**Edited by Matthew Spender**

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- Edited by Gorky biographer Matthew Spender, this volume provides an intimate portrait of the artist through his own words: letters, interviews and personal accounts
- Gorky is considered an important influence on the development of Abstract Expressionism. As a child he fled Ottoman Armenia for the USA. He died by suicide aged 44, in 1948
- Many of the texts collected here are previously unpublished
- This unmissable book includes a text by Spender exploring Gorky's postwar legacy and continued relevance

This publication – edited and introduced by his biographer Matthew Spender – provides an intimate portrait of the Arshile Gorky.

The paintings of Armenian-American painter Arshile Gorky (c.1904–1948) proved nothing less than transformative to twentieth-century art in the US and beyond. Shaped by his experience of fleeing the Armenian Genocide, Gorky filtered influences of Impressionism and Post-impressionism, producing vigorous compositions that were sometimes abstract, other times figurative or a mixture of the two. In this volume, Gorky's gradual reception by the art world is seen obliquely through interviews and personal accounts, many of which are previously unpublished.

Accompanying the letters and key illustrations, an introduction by Gorky biographer Matthew Spender focuses on the artist's postwar influence and continued relevance.

**Matthew Spender** is a British sculptor and author. He has written biographies of his father-in-law Arshile Gorky and his father Stephen Spender, along with a memoir of his own life in Italy.