

# **THE RUSSIAN EXPERIMENT CONTINUES**

*RUSSIAN AVANT- GARDE ART OF THE 1950s - 1970s  
REPRESENTED BY VLADIMIR NEMUKHIN,  
LEV KROPIVNITSKI AND EDUARD SHTEINBERG*

by  
**Sergei A. Reviakin**

[ Master of Philosophy  
Faculty of Arts  
University of Glasgow ]

**Christie's Education  
London**

**Master's Programme**

**September 2001  
© Sergei A. Reviakin**

ProQuest Number: 13834005

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



ProQuest 13834005

Published by ProQuest LLC (2019). Copyright of the Dissertation is held by the Author.

All rights reserved.

This work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code  
Microform Edition © ProQuest LLC.

ProQuest LLC.  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106 – 1346



12533

## ABSTRACT

The following dissertation attempts to deal with the subject of the unofficial Russian art of the 1960s and its avant - garde role in the development of Russian art as a whole as well as its intrinsic links with tradition and the first Russian Avant - Garde at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The Introduction consists of a brief history of Russian art for a better understanding of its historical links and European influences. The first chapter approaches the subject of the first Russian Avant - Garde of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and chapter two explores the reasons of its decline and triumph of Socialist Realism. In the last three chapters the second Russian Avant - Garde of the 1960s is explored. The most comprehensive way to do this was to study and catalogue works of the three most important artists of the period who may be dissimilar in their styles and techniques but are united in their desire to express themselves, to be recognised and to place Russian art on an international level. The artists' examples were also used to show their milieu and the origins of the ideas of the Avant - Garde of the 1960s and to evoke the atmosphere of the period. The most significant art movements and groups of the 1960s and 1970s are also described. The role of the art of the 1960s is evaluated in the Conclusion. The terms and names in *Italics* are explained in the Glossary.

Total word count: 16 104 ( 17 485 including endnotes ).



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author expresses sincere gratitude to all Christie's Education staff who helped him throughout the year. Special thanks are to Deborah Lambert, International Academic Director, for the attentive supervision of the dissertation progress, to Ian Cox, Director of Studies, Dr Michael Michael, Academic Director, and Dr Debbie Lewer, Lecturer, for the right choice of art historic models and cultural and ideology studies used during the writing of the thesis, and to Patrick Sweeney, Librarian, for assistance with technical matters.

I am also grateful to Mrs Alice Milica Ilich, former head of Russian Departments at Christie's and Sotheby's, New York and London, for advice and suggestions on some issues, John Stuart, former head of Russian Department at Sotheby's, London for his brief on icons, Prince Nikita Lobanov – Rostovski, former consultant of Christie's London, and Princess Nina Lobanov – Rostovski for their support. Also to Rosanna Kelly for her advice and proof reading of the dissertation and to Russian and European collectors especially Valeri Dudakov for showing paintings and objects mentioned in this work. And many thanks to Vladimir Nemukhin, with whom I had many meetings and long conversations which provided inspiration for this work.

*Dedicated to the memory of  
Camilla Grey, the author of  
'The Russian Experiment  
in Art, 1863 – 1922'*

# CONTENTS

List of Comparative Illustrations	2
Introduction. The Ups and Downs of Russian Art	5
Chapter 1. A Russian Experiment in Modernity	10
Chapter 2. The Fall of the Avant - Garde and the Triumph of Socialist Realism	17
Chapter 3. The Russian Experiment Continues	21
Chapter 4. Avant - Garde Art in the 1960s	29
Subchapter 1: Vladimir Nemukhin	31
Subchapter 2: Lev Kropivnitski	34
Subchapter 3: Eduard Shteinberg	38
Subchapter 4: Other Groups and Exhibitions	41
Chapter 5. From Modernism to Postmodernity	43
Conclusion. The Avant - Garde of the 1960s from a 21 <sup>st</sup> century Perspective	47
Catalogue	50
Comparative Illustrations	68
Appendix	101
Glossary	103
References	108
Bibliography	110

# LIST OF COMPARATIVE ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Unknown Master, **Christ the Saviour**, XII century, tempera on board,  
50 x 45 cm, *State Tret'iakov Gallery*, Moscow, Russia. **p. 69**
2. Unknown Artist, **Portrait of Iakov Fedorovich Turgenev**, circa 1700,  
oil, canvas, 105 x 97.5 cm, *State Russian Museum*, St Petersburg,  
Russia. **p. 70**
3. Fedor Rokotov, **Portrait of Alexandra Pietrovna Struiskaia**, 1772,  
oil, canvas, 59.8 x 47.5 cm, *State Tret'iakov Gallery*, Moscow,  
Russia. **p. 71**
4. Alexander Ivanov, **The Appearance of Christ to the People**, 1837 -  
1857, oil, canvas, 540 x 750 cm, *State Tret'iakov Gallery*, Moscow,  
Russia. **p. 72**
5. Pavel Fedotov, **The Gamblers**, 1852, oil, canvas, 60. 5 x 70.2 cm,  
*Museum of Russian Art*, Kiev, Ukraine. **p. 73**
6. Mikhail Vrubel, **Lilac**, 1900, oil, canvas, 160 x 177 cm,  
*State Tret'iakov Gallery*, Moscow, Russia. **p. 74**
7. Viktor Borisov - Musatov, **The Reservoir**, 1902, tempera on canvas,  
177 x 216 cm, *State Tret'iakov Gallery*, Moscow, Russia. **p. 75**
8. Aristarkh Lentulov, **Tverskoi Boulevard**, 1917, oil, canvas,  
229 x 215 cm, *State Tret'iakov Gallery*, Moscow, Russia. **p. 76**
9. Marc Chagall, **Over the Town**, 1914 - 1918, oil, canvas,  
141 x 198 cm, *State Tret'iakov Gallery*, Moscow, Russia. **p. 77**
10. Vladimir Tatlin, **Blue Counter - Relief**, 1914, wood, metal, leather,

- blueing, 79,5 x 44 cm, *private collection*, Germany. p. 78
11. Kazimir Malevich, **Red Square: Picturesque Realism of a Peasant Woman in Two Dimensions**, 1915, oil on canvas, 53 x 53 cm, *State Russian Museum*, St Petersburg, Russia. p. 79
12. Kazimir Malevich, **Portrait of a Woman**, circa 1930, oil on board, 58 x 49 cm, *State Russian Museum*, St Petersburg, Russia. p. 80
13. Pavel Filonov, **A Living Head**, 1926, oil, paper, canvas, 105 x 72,5 cm, *State Russian Museum*, St Petersburg, Russia. p. 81
14. Isaak Brodski, **A DneproStroi Shock Worker**, 1932, oil on canvas, 98 x 125 cm, *I. I. Brodski Museum*, St Petersburg, Russia. p. 82
15. Arkadi Plastov, **Threshing on the Collective Farm**, 1949, oil on canvas, 200 x 382 cm, *Museum of Russian Art*, Kiev, Ukraine. p. 83
16. Geli Korzhev, **Lovers** ( detail ), 1959, oil on canvas, 156 x 207 cm, *State Russian Museum*, St Petersburg, Russia. p. 84
17. Ulo Sooster, **A Red Egg**, 1964, oil on board, 50 x 69,5 cm, *private collection*, Moscow, Russia. p. 85
18. Vladimir Slepian, **Composition**, 1957, oil on canvas, 104 x 97 cm, *collection of I. Lipkov*, Moscow, Russia. p. 86
19. Iuri Zlotnikov, From the cycle **Signal System**, 1956 - 1960, Indian ink on paper, 84 x 120 cm, *collection of A. Erofeev*, Moscow, Russia. p. 87
20. Café ' **Artisticheskoe** ' ( Artistic ), 1960s, Moscow, Russia. p. 88
21. Pavel Nikonov, **Geologists**, 1962, oil on canvas, 195 x 225 cm, *State Tre't'iakov Gallery*, Moscow, Russia. p. 89

22. Vladimir Iankilevski, **Two Beginnings**, 1962, oil on board,  
100 x 280 cm, *Norton and Nancy Dodge Collection*, Rutgers, USA. p. 90
23. Ernst Neizvestni, **An Invalid**, circa 1960, bronze, 11 cm,  
*private collection*, Paris, France. p. 91
24. Boris Zhutovski, **Portrait of Tolia**, 1962, tempera on board,  
102 x 74,5 cm, *private collection*, Moscow, Russia. p. 92
25. Oscar Rabin, **Lianozovo**, 1960, oil, canvas, 90 x 110 cm,  
*collection of V. Dudakov*, Moscow, Russia. p. 93
26. Vladimir Veisberg, **Twelve Columns**, 1976, oil on canvas,  
54 x 52 cm, *private collection*, Moscow, Russia. p. 94
27. Fransisco Infante, **The Soul of a Crystal**, 1962, acrylic plastic and  
metal, 30 cm, *Collection of Contemporary Art*, Tsaritsyno, Russia. p. 95
28. Vitali Komar and Alexander Melamid, **Vam Khorosho!**  
( You are all right! ), 1972, oil and tempera on board, 45 x 56 cm,  
*private collection*, New York, USA. p. 96
29. Lucas Cranach, **The Crucifixion**, 1503, oil on panel, 138 x 99 cm,  
*Alte Pinakothek*, Munich, Germany p. 97
30. none.
31. Vladimir Nemukhin. 1990s. p. 98
32. Lev Kropivnitski. 1980s. p. 99
33. Eduard Shteinberg. 1970s. p. 100

## Introduction.

### The Ups and Downs of Russian Art.

Although the main subject of this dissertation is Russian Avant - Garde Art in the 1960s and 1970s it is important to throw some light on the Russian artistic tradition prior to the 20<sup>th</sup> century in order to understand its origins.

The roots of Russian art lie in icon painting which goes back to the Byzantine Empire and early days of Christianity. The early Russian style was greatly indebted to the Greek tradition. The conquest of the ancient Russian principalities by the Tatars at the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century slowed down the development of art . The liberation from the Mongol yoke at the end of the 14<sup>th</sup> century led to the most innovative and creative period of Russian icon painting which lasted till the mid - 16<sup>th</sup> century. It gradually declined in the 17<sup>th</sup> century with local Northern schools flourishing till the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Russia saw the appearance of her own genius, Andrei Rublev ( 1360 or 70 - 1430 ), and the new national tradition was born with a less severe modelling of faces ( a purely Russian imprint ) and a greater emphasis on colour. The early symbolism included circles, wheels and semicircle - symbols of deity, sword - symbol of unity or heavenly revenge.<sup>1</sup> However, the iconographic canons adopted at the Nicean Council were always adhered to ( fig.1, p. 69 ) . This

conflict of line and colour was addressed only in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when a renewed interest in icons by artists like Kandinsky, Malevich and Tatlin culminated in the dispensation of line and the study of qualities of pure colour.

Dramatic changes introduced by Peter the Great in Russian society in the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century had a tremendous effect on the future of Russian art. At the time the state of art was abysmal by European standards ( fig. 2, p. 70 ). The young emperor decided to abolish almost every single old tradition and custom ( up to a point when the role of icons in Russian art was dismissed and they regained their true place in the national heritage only at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century ). New aesthetics and European values were implanted onto barren Russian soil. Some famous architects and sculptors such as the Frenchman Leblon and the Italian Rastrelli were invited to work in the newly built capital, St Petersburg. Unfortunately, no prominent foreign artist came to Russia and the acquaintance of Russian artists and the public with European art began from pictures bought or commissioned in Europe.<sup>2</sup>

All this established some unique characteristics of Russian art. The first is abrupt and uneven development: Christianity brought Greeks, with their completely new art, into pre - Mongolian Russia; Peter the Great and his descendants invited German Baroque and French Classicism into a still young but medieval country forcing it to leap forward. Russia did not have a Renaissance ( or Middle Ages in the European sense ) but their artists had to satisfy the cultural ambitions of their



despotic rulers overnight. Hence, the second important feature of the development of Russian art - its ability to accept new fashions quickly and adopt them to national taste without developing its own distinctive style based on a natural progression. That is why we can hardly find a pure Romantic or Impressionist painting in Russia. This is especially true for 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian art.

In 1757 the new Imperial Academy of Arts was established in St Petersburg and opened by the Empress Catherine the Great in 1764. In its fine arts department the emphasis was on its " classical " roots and the teachers propagated historical and portrait paintings with genre painting merely being included as a part of the artist's portfolio.<sup>3</sup> A painting was still regarded as a decorative element for a palace interior. But a few artists such as Vladimir Borovikovski ( 1757 – 1825 ), Dmitrii Levitski ( 1735 - 1822 ) and Fedor Rokotov ( 1735 - 1808 ) had already achieved an understanding of the psychological importance of a portrait at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century ( fig. 3, p. 71 ).

Most of the Academy students went on study trips abroad to Italy or France and learnt from European Old Masters. Already in the 1830s Russia saw her first internationally recognised artist, Karl Briullov ( 1799 - 1852 ), who spent 15 years in Italy and whose picture, ' The Last Day of Pompeii ' (1830 - 1833 ), was exhibited in the Louvre. But it is figure of a lonely genius, Alexander Ivanov

( 1806 - 1858 ) who spent twenty seven years in Italy, that embodies the achievements of Russian art by the mid - 19<sup>th</sup> century. His masterpiece, ' The Appearance of Christ to the People ' ( 1837 - 1858 ), marked realistic tendencies in a classical interpretation of a religious scene ( fig. 4, p. 72 ).

The official opening of the Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in 1866 on the premises of so - called ' Moscow art class ' was a turning point in the direction of Russian art towards realism. Pavel Fedotov ( 1815 - 1852 ) is considered a founder of critical realism, a powerful movement, with very strong national characteristics. An ardent admirer of David Wilkie and William Hogarth, Fedotov depicted the life and vices of his contemporary Muscovites ( fig. 5, p. 73 ). Critical Realism dominated Russian art and art criticism in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and was considered a predecessor of Socialist Realism by Soviet art historians.

In 1863 a group of 14 artists rebelled against the strict ' classical ' rules of the Academy. They were influenced by a powerful democratic literary critic Nikolai Chernyshevski who wrote '... that object is beautiful which displays life in itself or reminds us of life ' eight years before.<sup>4</sup> The group headed by Ivan Kramskoi (1837 - 1887 ) and Nikolai Ge ( 1831 - 1894 ) organised the Society of Travelling Art Exhibitions to be known as the Wanderers in 1870. Its aim was to depict ordinary working people and to express their hope and faith in the future in a

realist manner. It included all the best painters in Russia of the time for example Ilya Repin ( 1844 - 1930 ), a famous genre and portrait painter, or Vasili Surikov ( 1848 - 1916 ), a history and portrait painter, both members of the Imperial Academy of Art and exponents of Realist school of painting. The Wanderers were patronised by a Moscow merchant - collector Pavel Tretyakov, a fervent buyer of their paintings, and by others.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian art was going a different direction from the rest of Europe. Where in Paris there was the Impressionist movement emerging at the Salon des Refusés in 1863, in Russia there was a drive towards critical realism in the form of " the revolt of 14 " the same year. The painters of the French realist school from Barbizon for instance, Millet and Courbet were widely admired. But this situation was about to change very soon with a tremendous speed. The tendency '... hitherto been dominant in Russian art: academism and social tendentiousness ...' was to be swelled by a directionless search for individual freedom of expression by the artists.<sup>5</sup>

## Chapter 1.

### A Russian Experiment in Modernity.

The search for new, non - Academic and non - Realist, forms of expression began in the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It started with the increasing interest in Russian history and its culture. The Academy of Art issued a statute allowing liberalisation of art education. Extensive travel and exchange of ideas with European artists, numerous exhibitions by the Moscow Association of Artists from 1886 till 1924 and by other groups and patronage by the wealthy patrons, such as Savva Mamontov, a rich merchant, or Princess Tenisheva, played an important role in developing modern art in Russia.

Mamontov's estate, Abramtsevo, fifty-seven kilometres from Moscow, was situated closely to Troitse - Sergieva lavra ( an official seat of the Patriarch, a chief Russian cleric ), a spiritual centre of Russia. Mamontov and his wife's interest in native Russian art was stimulated by their interest in William Morris and the English Arts and Crafts movement.<sup>6</sup> Mamontov patronised the painters Ilia Repin, Valentin Serov ( 1865 - 1911 ), and Viktor Vasnetsov ( 1848 - 1926 ), a painter of Russian mythological and religious history who was indebted to Surikov in his formation of a Neo - Nationalist style.<sup>7</sup>

Catching up with European art again, Russia went through Symbolism and Impressionism in a span of 15 - 20 years to equal the world in her creativeness by the 1910s. Mikhail Vrubel ( 1856 - 1910 ), a precursor of Russian Art Nouveau, and Konstantin Korovin ( 1861 - 1939 ), an exponent of Impressionism, were supported by the warm welcome of Mamontov ( fig. 6, p. 74 ). Both Korovin and Vasnetsov began to teach at the Moscow Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture challenging a pro - Realist stance of the St Petersburg Academy of Arts since 1901.

Russian art became closely linked to all the latest developments in European art during the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Russian artists saw Fauvist, Cubist and Futurist paintings as well as works by Cezanne, Gauguin, Van Gogh and German Expressionists either while travelling in Europe or in the dazzling collections of Ivan Morozov ( 1871 - 1921 ) and Sergei Shchukin ( 1854 - 1936 ). Matisse himself visited Shchukin in Moscow in 1911. Marinetti came to St Petersburg in 1914 where he was greeted by David Burliuk ( 1882 - 1967 ), a Futurist poet and a Neo - Primitivist painter with an interest in Cubism. Burliuk, the poet Vladimir Maiakovski and other members of the Futurist group became infamous for their eccentric behaviour and much later, in the 1920s, ' Cubo - Futurism' became a derogatory term used for the whole of the Avant - Garde. As never before numerous art groups sprang up in St Petersburg and Moscow. In theatre stage and costume design Russian artists were already setting the world standard.

The Symbolist cultural 'club' '*World of Art*' made a great contribution to the Russian Avant -Garde. The members of the group expressed great interest in German artists such as von Stuck and admired designs by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and graphics by Aubrey Beardsley. The group deplored '... decadence of Classicism and Realism and sentimentalism of Romanticism..'.<sup>8</sup> They supported the Neo - Nationalist movement and aimed to advance towards the West and merge with their cultures which was exemplified in Sergei Diaghilev's ( 1872 - 1929 ) Ballets Russes in 1910s.

In Moscow followers of Viktor Borisov - Musatov ( 1870 - 1905 ), an admirer of Puvis de Chavannes, a student of both the Moscow Art College and the St Petersburg Academy of Art and a pupil of Cormon, formed another Symbolist group '*Blue Rose*' in 1907 ( fig. 7, p. 75 ). The members of the group aimed ' to deconcretize thoughts and feelings, to give abstract expression to ideas of universal significance '.<sup>9</sup> Another member of the group, the rich patron of arts and painter, Nikolai Riabushinski ( 1877 - 1951 ) put forth these ideas in an art magazine '*Golden Fleece*' from 1906 to 1909.

A ' Cezanist - Cubist ' group, the '*Knave of Diamonds*', was formed in 1910. The founding members among others were Piotr Konchalovskii ( 1876 - 1956 ), Surikov's son-in-law, and Aristarkh Lentulov ( 1882 - 1943 ), a fellow student of Metzinger and La Fauconnier in the La Palette Academy in 1911 - 1912

( fig. 8, p. 76 ). The members of the group rejected all their predecessors and contemporaries - Academists, Wanderers and Symbolists. They took their inspiration from lubki ( popular prints ), provincial photography and were also influenced by German Expressionists, Cezanne, Matisse and early Cubists. The exhibitions of the group featured artists like Matisse, Picasso, Braque, Kirchner, Macke as well as Malevich, Kandinsky, Popova, Burliuk and Marc Chagall ( 1887 - 1985 ), the most mythological of Avant - Garde painters who never abandoned figurative narrative in his works also exhibited ( fig. 9, p. 77 ).

From 1911 Vasili Kandinski's ideas on the spiritual in colour and form which he had recently encountered in the vernacular art of Northern Russia were spreading in Russia.<sup>10</sup> His book ' On the Spiritual in Art ' influenced the formation of synthetic/subjective abstraction of Malevich and analytical/objective abstraction of Tatlin.<sup>11</sup> It was in the year 1915 in Petrograd ( St Petersburg before 1914 ) that Vladimir Tatlin exhibited his counterreliefs at the 'Tramway V' exhibition in March and Kazimir Malevich ( 1878 - 1935 ) showed his Suprematists works including ' The Black Square ' at the ' 0.10 ' exhibition in December ( fig. 10 & 11, pp. 78, 79 ). The grand ' Exhibition of Painting. 1915 ' included works of most of the Avant - Garde artists.

After the Russian Revolution in October 1917 the tide initially turned towards ' left ' or ' futurist ' art under which name the Avant - Garde was known. The People's Commissariat of Enlightenment headed by Anatoli Lunacharski was put in charge

of Russian art. All private collections were confiscated ending the age of private patronage. Instead, Museums of Painterly Culture were opened in Moscow, Petrograd and other cities. Their main policy to buy Avant - Garde works continued well into 1920s.

In 1918 the St Petersburg Academy of Art and the Moscow Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture were closed and new Free Artist's Studios ( SvoMa's ) headed by Tatlin in Moscow and David Shterenberg ( 1881 - 1948 ) in Petrograd were established. In Vitebsk Chagall headed the Vitebsk Popular Art Institute till 1919 when Malevich replaced him as a director and the Institute was renamed the Founders of New Art group ( UNovIs ) in 1920. The Higher Artistic - Technical Studios ( VKhuTeMas ) replaced SvoMa's in 1920 in Moscow and grouped the forces of the new art. It was elevated to the level of the Institute in 1927 but eventually closed in 1930.

By 1920 Kandinski was put in charge of the new Institute of Artistic Culture ( InKhuK ) in Moscow. He stayed there until 1921 when Alexander Rodchenko ( 1891 - 1956 ), the founder of Productivist and Constructivist movements, originated by Tatlin back in 1915, took over. The Institute became a part of the Russian ( from 1923, the State) Academy of Artistic Sciences in 1924. Kandinsky was invited to work in Germany and started to teach at the Bauhaus in 1922.



InKhuK's section in Petrograd was headed by Malevich from 1922. Its main task was to explore post - cubist tendencies in art. Malevich published on Suprematism extensively developing the ideas of the Russian philosopher Nikolai Fedorov who believed in the future liberation of humanity from gravitation and in this struggle he saw the essence of human creativity.<sup>12</sup> The Institute became the State Institute of Artistic Culture in 1924 and ran courses till 1926 when it was closed. The artist himself reverted to representational, figurative art after a Suprematist period of 1915 - 1927 and created his second ' Peasant Cycle ' ( fig. 12, p. 80 ).

The twenties saw the further development of abstract art. Mikhail Matiushin ( 1861 - 1934 ) and his pupils explored ' junction of colours ' when two colours give birth to the third one and published the results of his investigations in his 'Reference book of colour' in 1932. Pavel Filonov ( 1883 - 1941 ), an arch - enemy of Cubism and Realism, accused both movements of a ' mechanical and scholastic approach to nature fixating colour and form only and devoid of any other qualities'.<sup>13</sup> His analytical art had a profound influence on future artists and gave rise to a strong school of graphics ( fig. 13, p. 81 ).

Solo exhibitions by Malevich, Tatlin and Kandinsky were held throughout the 20s. Various Avant - Garde exhibitions continued. Many new groups appeared during this innovative period. The ' *Four Arts* ' was formed by the former members of the ' Blue Rose ' and the ' World of Art ' groups; the *Society of Moscow Artists* was

created to be joined by most members of the ' Knave of Diamonds ', and the *Society of Easel Painters ( OSt )* was organised by VKhuTeMas graduates headed by Shterenberg. In many respect those groups continued the traditions of Russian Left Art of the years of revolution.

The years 1910 - 1920 saw the culmination of Russian Left or Avant - Garde art. The 46<sup>th</sup> Wanderers Exhibition, showing Realist works, took place in 1918 when it was dismissed by almost everyone as obsolete. Suprematist posters and paintings were everywhere. The term Comfuturism ( Communist Futurism ) was coined and Malevich and Tatlin were at the top of publishing lists.<sup>14</sup> During the first post - revolutionary years Avant - Garde ideas seemed to be accepted or at least tolerated by the ruling Bolshevik elite. The tide, however, was turning against them.

## Chapter 2.

### The Fall of the Avant - Garde and the Triumph of Socialist Realism.

Already in 1917 A. Benois noted 'the revival of the Classical which can be detected more or less everywhere is assuming larger proportions'.<sup>15</sup> In 1922 the Association of the Artists of Revolutionary Russia ( AKhRR ) was formed and P. A. Radimov, the last chairman of the Wanderers Society, was elected its first chair. In their Declaration they stated their ' civil duty to depict the most important moment in the history of the mankind... , the Red Army, the life of ordinary workers, peasants, revolutionary dignitaries and heroes of labour '.<sup>16</sup> Their first exhibition excluded all works of Russian Avant - Garde and was in aid of the starving in the Volga region in the same year.

The real problems of the Left or Futurist art showed itself when it came to the ideology of the new state. The only philosophical doctrine Bolsheviks accepted was materialism with the Theory of Reflection according to which the material world is reflected in our thoughts, ideas, works of art etc . The notion that the media of expression or the technique of production can have an aesthetic value was alien to them as it was rooted in idealistic or what they would call Kantian 'the thing - in - itself' belief. A painting has only a representational side about it for

a materialist. It should be realistic and simple and easy to understand. The founder of the Socialist State, Lenin, once said about a realistic work of art in his conversation with a group of students: ' It is comprehensible to me, and comprehensible to you, and comprehensible to a worker and to everyone else.'<sup>17</sup>

The political situation of the new state was precarious throughout the 1920s. On an international level, the victory of the Red Army in the Civil War in 1922 led to the gradual recognition of the new state by the majority of foreign powers. Internally, after the death of Lenin in 1924, the struggle was raging for control of the party and the State and its cultural affairs including the arts. The economic regime of War Communism of 1919 - 1922 with its disastrous effects was replaced with a neo - capitalist New Economic Policy. In order to strengthen its ideological stance the party created a cult of Lenin and other founders of the new state. Images and ideas of Lenin, and later his ' rightful ' heir, Stalin, were replacing all other forms of belief. The powerful influence of the visual arts including paintings, sculpture and cinema was exploited to its fullest extent.

Although the avant - garde exhibition ' Left Currents in Russian Art over Fifteen Years ' was held in Moscow in 1925 the realist Association of the Painters of Revolutionary Russia was becoming more and more powerful. By the mid - 20s it had almost a thousand members and enjoyed numerous commissions from various museums of revolution, the Red Army and trade unions in almost every town in Russia. The emphasis on the ' heroic ' depiction of life of the people of

the Soviet Union created almost fantastic images of joyful and happy people building the new society. They intended to hide the grim reality of the slaughtering of millions of peasants during collectivisation in 1929 - 1932 and of forced slave labour during industrialisation in the 1930s ( fig. 14, p. 82 ). De facto ' ... the triumph of ' realism ' in Soviet art appeared to be complete ' by 1928 .<sup>18</sup> Officially, it was done in 1932 when the Union of Artists of the USSR was formed with an outspoken realist ( and from 1934, Socialist Realist ) creed.

Each member of the Union was given several commissions annually. A painter of any other style was almost bound to die of starvation or, later, in a prison camp. The general aesthetic ignorance of the ruling elite held sway. When the wrongly accused Malevich spent three months in prison in 1932, the state interrogator asked of him '... what such a cezanism and a cubism was he talking ' and the AKhR ( former AKhRR ) members were saying: ' Destroy Malevich, and the whole of formalism disappear'.<sup>19</sup>

The doctrine of ' the enemy within ' proclaimed by Stalin in the 1930s heavily influenced the art world as well as every other aspects of life. An all - embracing party line or ' partiinost ' banned left or as it became known from mid - 30s ' formalist ' art out of official existence till Stalin's death. In 1934 Igor Grabar ( 1871 - 1960 ), a brilliant landscape painter and a director of the Tret'iakov Gallery before 1917, talked about ' total harmony on a visual front ' in his speech for painting at the Writer's Congress.<sup>20</sup> The war years of 1941 - 1945 culminated

in a complete ideologization of art when a USSR Academy of Arts was created in 1947. A barrage of attacks on Picasso, Matisse, Henry Moore, Cezanne, Mondrian and Malevich was staged in the press with accusations of anti - Realism. The Museum of Modern Western Art was closed the same year. A 1948 Decree on Culture proclaimed a ban on any search for personal expression and condemned '... all attempts to separate art from politics '.<sup>21</sup> The position of Stalin strengthened; mythologisation of Soviet history and of the life of ordinary Soviet people went to an unprecedented extent. The smiling and happy face of a worker became the official art image in a country beset with *GULAG* concentration camps ( fig. 15, p. 83 ).

Stalin's death in 1953 put an end to the most gruesome period in the history of Russia. His personality cult was officially denounced by Khrushchev in 1957. The period of liberation of art and society known as the Thaw ( after a 1954 novel of Ilia Erenburg ) began. In official art the prevailing invented image of a new happy person in a totalitarian state was challenged by the Severe Style painters . They portrayed the life of working people in a realistic way: a harsh and stoical struggle against everyday difficulties, - a picture far removed from the accepted Socialist Realist icon ( fig. 16, p. 84 ). Amidst a relatively relaxed atmosphere of change and dissipation of the all - pervasive Stalinist fear Avant - Garde traditions in the visual arts were gradually revived by several groups of talented young artists from 1950s onwards.

## Chapter 3.

### The Russian Experiment Continues.

Many terms are used to describe the generation of artists whose most creative years were from 1950 to 1970. It is called ' unofficial ' art in a sense that their art was not recognised by the official Soviet elite. It was not until the years of Gorbachev's Perestroika during which time the Sotheby's Russian Avant - Garde and Soviet Contemporary Art Auction was held in Moscow in July 1988 that their work was given official Soviet approval. Sometimes this art is referred to as ' non - conformist ' meaning that it embraced those artists who did not conform to the rules of the official Socialist Realist art. It is called ' forbidden ' because most of the artists were regularly questioned by the police or the formidable KGB. Although none of the artists actually became political prisoners some of them such as the sculptor Ernst Neizvestny ( b. 1925 ) or the painter Oscar Rabin ( b. 1928 ) were expelled from the Soviet Union in the 1970s. The artists preferred to call themselves ' men and women of the sixties ' ( ' shestidesiatniki ' ), a historical link with the 1860s group of realist painters who revolted against the rules of the Imperial Academy and the Academism ( see Introduction ). Or the ' *New Moscow School* ' ( see Glossary ) as opposed to the Old Socialist Realists.

But they always were ' Avant - Garde ' as ' ... the avant - garde understands itself as invading unknown territory, exposing itself to the dangers of sudden, shocking

encounters, conquering an as yet unoccupied future. The avant - garde must find a direction in a landscape into which no one seems to have yet ventured '.<sup>22</sup> The term embraces very different artistic groups and individuals of the 1950s - 1970s: some of them were intuitive and expressionistic, others - metaphysical and spiritual, the third group studied form and its variation, the fourth - movement, the fifth thought of showing the reality of Soviet existence. But all of them, attempted to reach a new level of individual freedom in their creativity and liberated themselves from the rigid and stale canons of the existing Soviet Realist Academism and to explore problems of individual and society, their present and future with pure and rarefied means of art.

Twenty years of terror made the notion of personal freedom and advancement almost non - existent in the Soviet Union at the end of 1950s. A spirit of collectivism instilled by the state meant a set of formal rules of communal behaviour: everyone was supposed to act in an appropriate prescribed manner. The sameness was virtuous; individuality - sinful and criminal. People accepted their own fate, the misfortunes of their relatives and friends with almost beastly docility. Protest in any forms were discouraged.

The independent artists, non - members of the Union of Soviet Artists, were denied commissions from the state, i.e. stable income, and were forced to earn their living elsewhere, as night - guards or manual workers. While an official artist had free access to brushes, paints and other materials, an unofficial one was



either denied them or paid for them him- or herself. Independence was equal to self - sufficiency.<sup>23</sup> There were no exhibitions of independent art, no art market, no galleries or charitable funds. A small group of private collectors, including George Costakis, a Greek working in the Canadian Embassy, Nina Stevens, a Russian wife of an American journalist, as well as important members of the Soviet elite such as Sviatoslav Rikhter, a world - renowned pianist, Ilia Erenburg, a famous writer, and academics of medicine Miasnikov and Burkovski, tried hard to encourage the young artists at their own risk of being snubbed by the authorities. They helped to organise art evenings and exhibitions in their own flats or artists' flats and studios in the same way as the English Pre - Raphaelites.

In 1951 Vasili Sitnikov ( 1915 - 1987 ), an amateur artist, opened a private art school in his own flat. He was a talented teacher who encouraged his pupils to perfect their technique and to develop their own styles.<sup>24</sup> Former VKhuTeMas professor Vladimir Favorski ( 1886 - 1964 ), a well - known graphic artist, still taught in the Moscow Art Institute as well as Robert Falk a founding member of the ' Knave of Diamonds '. However, most of the painters of the Russian Avant - Garde of the beginning of the century were either already dead, had stopped painting in this manner and destroyed their works or simply did not believe that anyone could become interested in their works. Rodchenko died in 1956, Varvara Stepanova, another famous Constructivist died in 1958 in Moscow, Larionov and Goncharova died in 1962 and 1964 respectively in emigration in Paris. None of them left any direct followers. Nadezhda Udal'tzova

( 1885 - 1961 ), a famous Russian Cubo - Futurist, wrote in 1960 in her diary shortly before her death: ' There is a group of youth in Moscow, searching for new ways in art; unfortunately, the ground on which they are standing is wobbly and unclear '.<sup>25</sup> But was it really true? Although Russian art found itself lagging behind after its undisputable world leadership in the 1910s - 1920s it was just beginning to blossom again at the time of her writing.

In the mid - 50s artists including Uri Sobolev and Moscow - based Estonian artist Ulo Sooster (1924 - 1970 ), just rehabilitated from his prison sentence ' ... decided to go through the whole history of art beginning with the 1930s: were either cubists, or dadaists, or surrealists.... Studied Picasso for almost a year, his classical and cubist sides '<sup>26</sup> They used simple geometric forms and pre - historic images to construct Surrealistic compositions( fig. 17, p. 85 ). They frequented café ' Artistic ' ( 'Artisticheskoe' ), which was established as a base of the promising but unrecognised artists similar to what Café Guerbois on the Rue des Batignolles was for the future Impressionists in Paris in the 1860s . The café became an unofficial art club also frequented by musicians, poets, writers and journalists as well as three other less important cafés, ' Youth', 'Aelita ' and ' Blue Bird '( fig. 20, p. 88 ). An un - official Moscow's Artists' Union was formed in 1951 - 1958 and a tutor from the Moscow Polygraphic Institute, Beliutin, opened his studio to promote his abstract expressionist approach to painting in 1957.

The magazine ' America ', published in the USA, renewed its circulation in the Soviet Union. It was a Russian - language edition propagating American life and Western values as well as art. For years it was one of the few credible sources of information about the outside world. In summer 1957 the VI World Festival of Youth and Students opened in Moscow. It had an artistic studio with almost 4 500 paintings from 52 countries of different styles. Not only Russian artists came to know art that was new to them; their foreign counterparts learnt of Vladimir Slepian ( born 1930 ), Iuri Zlotnikov ( born 1930 ) and many other talented individuals with strong personalities keen to experiment in contemporary art ( fig. 18 & 19, pp. 86, 87 ).

One of the other great cultural events which changed the art scene in Moscow was a sequence of exhibitions in Moscow and St Petersburg which for the first time introduced modern and contemporary Western art to Russia after almost twenty years of neglect. The Picasso Exhibition was held in the Pushkin Museum of Fine Arts in Moscow in 1956; the Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture with works of Calder, Willem de Kooning, Mark Rothko, Arshille Gorky and Jackson Pollock in Moscow in 1959. The Art of Great Britain. 1700 - 1960 featured Ben Nicholson and Paul Nash in the Hermitage in 1960 as well as the German Expressionist Exhibition with Kirchner, Heckel, Nolde and Schmitt – Rottluff the same year. The French Exhibition of 1961 in Moscow presented works of R. Dufy, Leger, Matisse and Soulage among others and in 1963 the US State Department sponsored an exhibition of contemporary American prints by

Jim Dine, Jasper Johns, Robert Rauschenberg in Moscow and St Petersburg. Some artists during these years managed to see hidden works by Malevich, Kandinsky and Larionov in state museums.<sup>27</sup> The multitude of the above influences unleashed the desire for the new and gave rise to a variety of different styles in Russian Avant - Garde movements of the 1960s.

By 1962 the life of many artists revolved in a quite narrow circle of Moscow and St Petersburg bohème. An isolated circle of intellectuals, scientists and artists listened to the poetry of unofficial poets Joseph Brodski, Igor Kholin, Genrikh Sapgir or to the songs of popular bards Bulat Okudzhava, Uli Kim and Alexander Galich. The famous collectors Costakis, Evgenii Nutovich, Alexander Glazer and Leonid Talochkin and the cellist Mstislav Rostropovich actively supported the art. There were some museum curators from Great Britain, Italy, art critics from Poland and Czechoslovakia all of whom played an important role in promoting the self - esteem of the artists deprived of an audience and public attention. Artists exhibited in various scientific institutes, cafes and private flats.<sup>28</sup> Beliutin had his works exhibited in Paris, Gallery Lamber, and Warsaw, members of his group frequently had shows with artists of the official organisation of commercial artists - the City Committee of Book Illustrators, and Graphic and Poster Painters ( often referred to as *GorKom of Graphics* ).

The year 1962 was a memorable date in the story of the second Russian Avant - Garde. In November the House of Teachers hosted yet another of the exhibitions

of Beliutin's studio. It was joined by the sculptor Ernst Neizvestni, painters Sooster, Sobolev and Vladimir Yankilevski ( b. 1938 ) who already experimented with his own, abstract vision of reality, with some linear human faces and figures reminiscent of Joan Miro, combining them with flat coloured surfaces and with familiar Renaissance images ( fig. 22, p. 90 ). This one - day show had a surprise visit of a group of foreign journalists. Thus the existence of the abstract art which was previously ignored by the government suddenly became a fact. Even one of the Soviet leaders, Mikoian, was questioned about it by Western journalists while visiting Cuba.

This was also the year of the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Moscow Section of the Artists' Union ( MOSKh ), a powerful section of the Union of Artists of the USSR. The commemorative exhibition took place in the Central Exhibition Hall ( former Manezh ) opposite the Kremlin on 1<sup>st</sup> December. The Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, was expected to see it. The two - storey building was packed with official Socialist Realist paintings including the artists of the Severe style ( see chapter 3). Numerous accounts tell us that the leader could hardly control himself after seeing Falk's ' Nude ', a tribute to Impressionism and Cezanne, and a painting ' Geologists ' by a Severe style painter Pavel Nikonov. Flat human figures with dark outlines and unmasked white of the canvas in the foreground combined with dark brown and blue in the background could have shocked anyone accustomed to jolly Socialist Realist style ( fig. 21, p. 89 ). On the upper floor there were paintings of those who in November had exhibited in the House

of Teachers. Beliutin who was in charge of the abstract painters section of the exhibition suspected a provocation but tried to look cheerful.<sup>29</sup> Khrushchev's reaction to the abstract art was pre - conditioned. Barrages of obscenities were followed by threats of imprisonment. Valentin Serov, the chairman of the Academy of Arts, and other members of the Politburo supported the leader in his indignation at the sculptures of E. Neizvestni and paintings of B. Zhutovski ( b. 1932 ) ( fig. 23 & 24, pp. 91, 92 ). Luckily for the artists repressions did not follow. In fact, Khrushchev had two meetings with representatives of the intellectual elite including the artists in 1963 but could not comprehend the nature of their art.

## Chapter 4. Avant - Garde Art in the 1960s.

After the Manezh exhibition the Avant - Garde artists were firmly excluded from Soviet cultural life especially after the new leader, Leonid Brezhnev, took over in 1964. Two exhibitions of non - conformist artists, in the Hermitage, St Petersburg in 1964 and in the Workers Club Druzhba, Moscow in 1967 were closed immediately after opening and the directors of these establishments fired. Poet J. Brodski was imprisoned in 1965 for five years ( of which he served one and a half ) for not having a proper employment. Daniel and Siniavski, and later Ginsburg and Galanskov were sentenced for publishing their works abroad and in *samizdat*. This was the beginning of the dissident movement.

With visual art the situation was different. The 1960s saw unprecedented exhibition activity for the Russian unofficial artist abroad in the United States, Great Britain, Switzerland, France, Italy and many other European countries of the Western and Eastern blocks such as Poland and Yugoslavia. Western diplomats and journalist started to buy their art. Artists were able to buy any materials they wanted and to rent private studios. Various groups and movements sprang up. But the authorities continued to show their attitude to the Avant - Garde movement. Beliutin was denied access to the Artist's Union facilities in 1963.

A large group of painters and poets united around E. Kropivnitski ( 1893 - 1970 ), a pupil of Serov and Korovin, and his wife, Olga Potapova (1892 - 1971 ), who

had studied under former members of the ' Knave of Diamonds ' in the 1920s, in a Moscow suburb of Lianozovo. They were Lev and Valentina, their children, Oscar Rabin, Valentina's husband, Vladimir Nemukhin, his wife, Lidia Masterkova, Nikolai Vechtomov, poets Sapgir, Kholin, Vsevolod Nekrasov and Ian Satunovski. Stylistically different they shared a common belief in tradition or rather its lack, experimented and discussed art and poetry. Artists Anatolii Zverev, Eduard Shteinberg, Russian collectors and foreign diplomats and journalists were frequent guests. They were notoriously obstinate in their non - conformist attitude and were nicknamed ' damned ' by the authorities.<sup>30</sup> During the 1960s and 1970s they formed the core of Avant - Garde resistance.

Most of the time they gathered in a barrack room of Oscar Rabin, a future world - famous painter, who got the room because he worked at the railway station. This grim world of communal living experience and Soviet Reality with its grey colours, scarce food, bottles of vodka and other similar attributes would be a recurrent theme in Rabin's works ( fig. 25, p. 93 ) In 1964 Rabin moved to Moscow and the centre of the group's activities moved there. They tried to exhibited together in 1967 in the Friendship Worker's Club ( closed after two hours ) and were in contact till Rabin and his family were forced to stay in Paris during their trip there in 1978.



## Subchapter 1: Vladimir Nemukhin.

Vladimir Nemukhin (born in Moscow in 1925 ) was attracted to painting quite early ( fig. 31, p. 98 ). At the age of 17 he attended a Visual Art Studio at the Trade Union's Council for three years where he got in close contact with P. E. Sokolov, Malevich's assistant in Moscow's SvoMas, and Pavel Kuznetsov, a former member of the ' Knave of Diamonds ' and other Avant - Garde groups. They both taught in Moscow Stroganov's College before the 1917 Revolution and the artist had strong ties with them throughout his career especially with Sokolov. After an unsuccessful attempt to continue his education in the Moscow Institute of Art and a failure to join the Artists Union of the USSR he took up a job at a factory and joined the *Gorkom of Graphics*. He painted landscapes at his parent's summer house on the river Oka and still-lives with stones and corals in an abstract - surrealist manner of Ives Tanguy whose works he never saw.<sup>31</sup>

In 1957 Nemukhin together with others had his most important revelation of seeing 20<sup>th</sup> century art and in 1959 abstract expressionist paintings at the Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture. He began to paint abstract compositions and became one of the most important advocates of this art ( pl. 1, p. 51 ). As with Cubism and Fauvism the Russian artist did not simply copy the paintings but they gave him a ' healing shock ' and prompted to revert to a formal experiment.<sup>32</sup> The abstract art was regarded as an absolute form of rejection of Socialist Realism and its routine. He acquired the new art and the

new faith he was seeking. Later on the term ' abstractionist ' received the same meaning as ' formalist ' in the 30s. The regime used it to veto the unwanted artists out. For Nemukhin and others, in the words of a writer Viktor Shklovski, ' the creation of new forms of art brought back the experience of the world, resurrected things and killed pessimism '.

The artist 'learnt' from Kandinski's idea of ' internal necessity ' and created eight mural - type compositions, each two meters long, reminiscent of Jackson Pollock in the 1960s.<sup>33</sup> In 1965 he sensed that abstract expressionism concentrated only on purely emotional and naturalistic ways of cognition and was becoming too narrow for him. Discovering the limitations of abstract expressionism the artist felt the strong need to ' objectify ' his works. His personal understanding of abstract art and its techniques was accomplished. He might also feel the need to address other problems than himself and his inner world. In the Soviet Union, the outside world of a Soviet citizen consisted of his work and his spare time. He or she was supposed to devote his or her leisure to education, physical exercise or participation in some kind of activities useful for the Socialist society. Games like cards, chess, billiards offered an alternative to those who did not feel obliged to participate in the state regulated leisure. Easy to carry, cards offered the player a good opportunity to ' kill ' spare time while being with his friends at leisure ( pl. 2, p. 52 ).

But a card does not only bear a simple recreational meaning. Traditionally, Russian artists, poets and writers were interested in the mystery of gambling and vicious attachment to it. The poet Alexander Pushkin wrote his famous short story ' The Queen of Spades ' , painter Pavel Fedotov painted his famous ' Gamblers ' ( fig. 5, p. 73 ). From 1965 to 1985 Nemukhin created a whole range of compositions of kings, aces, dames, jokers using oil, watercolour, tempera and collages. Gradually a knave of diamonds with its symbolic meaning and reference to the ' Knave of Diamonds ' group ousts the others ( pl. 3, p. 53 ).

Nemukhin was and is a strong believer in the development of art from within the artist's vision of the constantly changing world.<sup>34</sup> His later paintings are of a paler palette and sometimes he uses almost white canvas without the base colour. The unchecked feelings expressed by colours of his earlier compositions gave way to a very rational geometrical almost Constructivist arrangement of his compositions. His world is not chaotic and boundless anymore and cards are placed in some comprehensible order( pl. 4, p. 54 ).

Interest in alternative mediums marked his transition into the eighties. Some of the works he made are retrospective of the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, others of the 1960s. In the 1980s he devoted himself to making bronze geometric sculptures ( pl. 5, p. 55 ). A theme of retrospectives of the past lurks here again. The choice of media strikingly reveals some of the essential common features of the Modern artists whose forerunner was Cezanne. Other works show the artist's

tribute to his predecessors like El Lisitski whom he admired, teachers like Sokolov who guided him through life or friends like Ilia Kabakov and Francisco Infante who shared his beliefs in the 60s.

In the mid 1990s he created a series of porcelain plates with daring card and geometrical images ( pl. 6, p. 56 ). This tradition of making porcelain or ceramic wares looks back to the 1920s when Rodchenko and others were making revolutionary ceramics at the recently nationalised Imperial Porcelain Factory. It also has direct reference to works of Picasso and Cocteau whom Nemukhin admires. For Nemukhin the intangible ties with Russian and foreign artists is an important requirement of his work. His art is meant to reach everyone. The artist confirms his beliefs and ideas in his ' Credo ' in 1987 which reflects his views on art in a allegorical and poetical way consolidating ideals already expressed in his paintings ( Appendix 1, p. 101 ).

## Subchapter 2: Lev Kropivnitski.

The life of Lev Kropivnitski ( 1922 - 1994 ) was typical of a Russian intellectual of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century ( fig. 32, p. 99 ). Born into an artist's family he wrote poetry and painted from an early age. In 1939 he entered the Moscow Institute of Decorative and Applied Art where he studied under Alexander Deineka ( 1899 - 1969 ), a graduate of VKhuTeMas and one of the most talented Russian painters of the mid - 20<sup>th</sup> century. Kropivnitski's studies were interrupted by the

Second World War and he resumed them in 1944 when he was demobilized after a serious wound. However, from 1946 - 1956 he spent 10 years in the concentration camps on a false accusation of anti - Soviet activities. The artist finally settled back in Moscow in 1956 and actively took part in the unofficial art life of the capital where he became a member of the Lianozovo Group.

For Lev Kropivnitski art is not only a means for individual expression and for understanding universal laws like for Nemukhin. It has its own mission to lead people out of a continuously disintegrating reality. An artist is constantly trying to penetrate the nature of things and with his inner eye sees the world's vibration. Reality is the purpose and the aim of art, which should not embellish life but answer all urgent questions of humanity. And everyday life consists of injustice, war and terror. The artist's goal is then to show this by his own means in order for people to rid themselves of them forever.<sup>35</sup>

Kropivnitski's feelings and desires, hitherto suppressed found an outlet after he saw the abstract expressionist paintings at the Moscow Exhibition of American Paintings and Sculpture in 1959. The artist created a cycle of powerful abstract paintings which he continued till the mid - 1960s. Unlike Nemukhin and his analytical approach to the composition Kropivnitski was preoccupied with expressive qualities of colours through which he was discovering his new Universe. Titles like ' Continuity of Creation ', ' Converter of Life ' were often given to the abstract paintings of that period ( pl. 7, p. 58 ). Colours have an

important place in the artist's visual vocabulary and would interest him till the end of his life ( pl. 12, p. 63 ).

Like Vladimir Nemukhin, Lev Kropivnitski realised that he had given his due to the dynamism of the abstract expressionist techniques by 1964. His need for stability and balance found itself not with abstract or ' abstracted ' art but in figurative images. Experimentation with oil paints and canvases was discontinued for some time. The technique and medium he started to use were ink and paper and, later, printing and linotyping.

The world of colours was replaced by the artist with the world of line and contour. From the mid - 1960s and throughout his career Kropivnitski devoted a great deal of his time to creating illustrations to various novels. His first series were of Alexander Solzhenitsyn's ' Essay ' and ' One Day in the life of Ivan Denisovich ' of which the writer had a very high opinion.<sup>36</sup> Both men shared similar life experiences in the prison camps and the artist's characters were taken directly from life. From his inner tensions and suffering the artist turned to traditional Russian iconic images and to the sufferings of the Redeemer and created a cycle ' On Evangelical Subjects ' ( pl. 8, p. 59 ).

Kropivnitski spent his time studying mythology, philosophy and Old Masters. Mythological bulls and horses appeared in his works. He would use those faces and masks from one work to another. Where Nemukhin's subtly juxtaposed the

objects and meaningfully used their inter - relational space and the potential of the used materials Kropivnitski's approach consisted of his mastery of graphic art combined with an ingenious use of surrealistic symbols derived from his knowledge of human culture and nature ( pl. 4. p. 54 and pl. 9, p. 60 ). He further explored the reality around him through direct observation. He drew animals, birds, plants, flowers and nudes.

From the 1970s from his interest in the religious and mythological, the artist turned to mystical and surreal. A poet himself Kropivnitski eagerly accepted the commission from a Russian publisher to illustrate a book of selected works of Charles Baudelaire at the beginning of the 90s. This work became the culmination of his experiments in graphic arts and especially complex techniques of etching and engraving which the artist extensively uses in his late years ( pl. 10, p. 61 ).

In the 1980s and 1990s the artist's interest in human nature continued in his cycles of oil paintings ' Subconscious Caprices ' and ' That is life ' ( pl. 11, p. 62 ). Many of the paintings are difficult to categorize. He again began to be concerned with his inner self and loathed the absurdity of everyday life. His ideal culminated in an unlikely compromise between form and colour. He wisely expressed it in verse: ' Let it be emotional, let it be rational - There is always an aberration, Vanity of vanities, languor of the spirit - That is our poor life '.<sup>37</sup>

### Subchapter 3: Eduard Shteinberg.

Although Eduard Shteinberg ( b. 1937 ) is younger than Nemukhin and Kropivnitski his most creative years coincide with theirs ( fig. 32, p. 100 ). He was born like Lev Kropivnitski in an artist's family and it was his father, Arkadi, who after returning from the camps in 1954, helped to develop young Eduard's talent. The elder Shteinberg, a VKhuTeMas graduate, settled in Tarusa, some hundred and thirty kilometres from Moscow on the bank of the Oka river. The artist Boris Sveshnikov joined him there. Their duo played a crucial role in the establishment of what is now called the *Moscow metaphysical movement or school* of the 60s whose main protagonist became Vladimir Veisberg ( 1924 - 1985 ) ( fig. 26, p. 94 ).

From 1959 - 1961 Eduard Shteinberg, on the advice of his father, copied Rembrandt's and Callo's drawings, painted landscapes, still-lives and genre scenes echoing early Russian Symbolism of Vrubel and Borisov - Musatov ( pl. 12, p. 63 ). In fact, Borisov - Musatov and Vasili Polenov ( 1844 - 1927 ), the Russian landscape painter, had lived and worked in Tarusa at the turn of the century when the village acquired the name of ' Russian Barbizon '. There was still a large colony of Russian writers and relatives of the two famous poets, Mandelshtam and Tsvetaeva whom the artist met. Shteinberg read Van Gogh's letters which became one of his favourite books. The fact that Van Gogh sold



only one picture in his life made a strong impact on young Shteinberg who decided to become an artist.<sup>38</sup>

From 1961 the artist lived in Moscow. Twice he was on the brink of imprisonment for *parasitism* as he did not have official employment. Shteinberg had to work as a night guard and then as a worker in the Surikov's Institute of Visual Art. There he had an opportunity to collect bent stretchers and pieces of canvas which he used for his paintings. This was the only way to get artistic materials for a non - member of the Moscow Union of Artists.

Shteinberg was always a welcome guest at Lianozovo and he shared many of the group's beliefs and ideas. In the mid - 60s when Nemukhin and Kropivnitski abandoned abstract expressionism Shteinberg stopped painting from life and gradually developed a strong interest in organic and non-organic nature and his palette became paler ( pl. 13, p. 64 ).

In Moscow he came into close contact with other non - conformist artists like Veisberg and Soosters which stirred his interest in metaphysics. He was quickly accepted by the nonconformist artistic circles when the prominent collector, Costakis, bought two of his paintings in 1964.<sup>39</sup> The Costakis collection introduced Shteinberg to the works of Chagall, Kandinski and Malevich and the artist became interested in Constructivism and geometrical forms. In 1967 and

1968 he joined *Gorkom of Graphics* and tried to be a theatre decorator but he soon abandoned both as his allegiance remained with oil paintings.

The artist became interested in Russian mystical philosophers of the beginning of the century, like Berdiaev, Soloviev and others and their metaphysical view of the Universe. He was baptised and befriended a religious philosopher Evgenii Shiffers who wrote an article ' Ideographic Language of Eduard Shteinberg ' linking the artist's symbolism to the one of first Christians. Use of geometrical forms became very important for the artist by the end of the 1960s. Where for Kropivnitski symbols were real images in their traditional historic meaning for Shteinberg geometrical forms became symbolic in a metaphysical and religious sense. Organic and non - organic forms were replaced by crosses, prisms and circles ( pl. 14, p. 65 ).

Like Nemukhin's discovery of his own ' abstracted ' art Shteinberg's Geometrism with its high degree of analyticism became of utmost interest to the artist in the 1970s. Kazimir Malevich and his Suprematism was to be his second love after Russian mysticism. He called his art 'metageometrical ' and aimed to ' ... synthesize mystical ideas of Russian symbolism of 1910s and plastic ideas of Suprematism of K. Malevich '.<sup>40</sup> From 1970 to 1985 he entered his ' white' metageometrical period ( pl. 15, p. 66 ).

In 1980s Shteinberg added colour to his compositions as a further continuation of his dialogue with Malevich. He created a ' Village ' cycle challenging the ' Peasant ' cycle of Malevich of 1928 - 1932 in a capacity of ' not as a nihilistically tuned innovator of the beginning of the century ...but a follower of its esoteric secrets.<sup>41</sup> However, the new colour scheme and outlines of the figurative images only strengthen the artist's geometrism ( pl. 16, p. 67 ).

Vladimir Nemukhin called the ' Peasant ' cycle a ' picturesque photo album of Russian people '. He recollected one Gnostic story which told of a magic formula of happiness inscribed by God a long time ago. He did it in such a way that nothing could erase it. One day a chosen one would find it and read to the future generations. That is exactly what the art of Eduard Shteinberg does. It gives us Faith, Love and Hope.<sup>42</sup>

#### Subchapter 4: Other Groups and Exhibitions.

If the Lianozovo Group chose a non - conciliatory attitude towards the authorities and somehow because of this stance became highly popular abroad other groups enjoyed some public support at home.

The group ' Movement ' ( Dvizhenii ) was founded by Lev Nusberg ( born 1937 ), Francisco Infante ( born 1943 ) and a few others in September 1962. The group

aimed to use new technical devices in the decoration of public interiors, exteriors and celebrations. Lev Nusberg became a theoretician of the Kinetic Art which concerned itself with symmetrical objects made of the new materials ( plastics, films and glass ) in process of movement ( fig. 27, p. 95 ). There was no political agenda and the group was allowed to exhibit from time to time.

After his studio at *Gorkom of Graphics* was closed Eli Beliutin moved outside Moscow. He established his new studio in Abramtsevo, a historic village for Russian art ( see Chapter 1 ). The studio continued to attract many talented artists and had its regular summer exhibitions sometimes joined by the artists of the informal Moscow metaphysical school.

Separate groups of Avant - Garde artists appeared in Leningrad, capitals of Ukraine and Baltic Republics as well in many other major cities of the Soviet Union from the 1960s onwards. Moscow, however, continued to be the centre of non - conformism.<sup>43</sup>

## Chapter 5. From Modernism to Postmodernity.

The 1970s saw the Soviet Union gradually sinking into an almost two decade long period of stagnation in economics, politics and art. It fought anything new but could offer no alternative. The writer Alexander Solzhenitsyn was expelled from the country in 1974 and the creator of the Soviet thermo - nuclear weapons, academic Andrei Sakharov, was exiled to the Northern Volga region for his reformist ideas. The feeble attempts to preserve the empire and its international status resulted in sending troops to Afganistan in 1979. In this climate the non - conformist artists went into direct confrontation with officialdom for their art to be officially accepted.

The infamous 1<sup>st</sup> Open Air Exhibition took place in the Moscow city district of Beliaevo on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 1974. It was supposed to feature the works of around twenty artists including Nemukhin's and Rabin's. The authorities could not forbid it as the artists chose an unwanted and unused space. As Michel Foucault once put it '...there exist no concrete, fixed place which is a seat of rebellions, just as there is not a single formula for revolution '.<sup>44</sup> They decided to stop the participants on the spot using plain clothed KGB agents and bulldozers. At the end of the day many artists and their supporters were arrested and some pictures destroyed. The world press reported this event on the front pages.

The authorities had to have a press conference for the foreign and Soviet press. They negotiated with the artists and allowed them to hold the 2<sup>nd</sup> Open Air Exhibition for four hours in the woodland park ' Izmailovo ' on the 29<sup>th</sup> September 1974. This time the number of participants had almost quadrupled.

To the annoyance of the authorities the number of visitors was extremely high. The reports in the foreign press were numerous and positive. The resulting official reaction took place in the form of creating an unbearable pressure on most of the artists ( interrogations at police stations, moral pressure at work etc.). Rabin, Glezer, Evgeni Rukhin ( 1943 - 1976 ), a pupil of Nemukhin, and two others sent a letter to the Head of the Ministry of Internal Affairs asking them to stop their arbitrary rule.<sup>45</sup> They were never forgiven. Rabin and Glezer were forced to emigrate, Rukhin died in mysterious circumstances in a fire in his studio.

Another important exhibition of Avant - Garde art was held for three days in the ' Beekeeper's ' Pavilion at the Exhibition of the Achievements of People's Economy in February 1975. Nemukhin, Kropivnitski, Shteinberg exhibited among twenty other artists. It was held under patronage of the *Gorkom of Graphics*. As the Anniversary of the Bulldozer Exhibition approached the authorities gave in to pressure from the artists, non - members of the Union of Soviet Artists and allowed another exhibition in the same location but this time at the ' House of Culture ' pavilion on the 20<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> September 1975. The voice of the

non - conformist artists was at last being heard by a wide Soviet audience even through a Russian style ' Salons des Refusés '.

The acceptance of the right of the artist for his own individuality was the victory won by the artists of the sixties like Nemukhin, Kropivnitski and Steinberg. The artists of the 70s came to the direct examination of the outside world so long avoided. For the artists of the second Russian Avant - Garde in the 60s reality did not exist. A lack of formal tradition and the strife against the trappings of Socialist Realism forced them to retreat into the world of the Western European past. Nemukhin admired Zurbaran, his wife, Lidia Masterkova, El Greco and so on.<sup>46</sup>

Ilia Kabakov ( b. 1933 ), an admirer of Vermeer and a member of the Union of Artists, who was an established non - conformist artist by mid - 1965 turned to Conceptualism. He explored life in communal flats in the Soviet Union ( his ' Communal Flat ' installation is displayed at the New Tate Gallery at the time of writing ). Vitaly Komar ( b. 1943 ) and Alexander Melamid ( b. 1945 ) challenged the Soviet ideology in their so - called Sots - Art. They either signed the ' anonymous ' slogans of the state propaganda machine or made additions to the well - known Soviet symbols like the red revolutionary banner giving them new personalised meaning ( fig. 28, p. 96 ).

Groups Movement, *the Nest*, *the Red Star* and *the Collective Actions* organised numerous happenings and performances. Some of them reflected universal ideas of protection of nature ( Nest ) others expressed the atmosphere of Russian pre - perestroika days: the artist's feeling of isolation and his desire to travel ( Collective Actions Group ).<sup>47</sup> Those events were symbolic for the new Russian art which finally started to catch up again with world tradition after a long lag. The struggle of the unofficial art of the 1950s - 1970s for its right to exist was already close to its definite recognition in the 80s.



Conclusion.

The Avant - Garde of the 1960s from a 21<sup>st</sup> century

Perspective.

When one talks about Russian art it is difficult to talk about ' historicism ' in an accepted European art historical sense. It is rather a peculiar form of Russian historicism which comes into play. The society and its art always developed through abrupt and forceful changes divided by periods of relative tranquillity. It had been true whether we talk about the conversion of Kiev's Russia to Christianity in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the two - hundred years Tatar yoke, thrown away in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, Peter the Great' s reforms in the 18<sup>th</sup> century or the Socialist Revolution of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. On all occasions, the country's development was radically altered and the new rules and laws forcefully introduced. These memorable but painful events played an important role in forming Russian national identity and making its spirit, art and culture attached to traditions but highly adaptable to changes and reciprocal to outside influences.

All these characteristics are true for Russian art in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, when it comes to the exact role played by Avant - Garde movements in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it looks quite ambiguous at the first sight. The first Avant - Garde helped to prepare and fulfil the Socialist Revolution at the start of the century, the second one played an important role in finishing off the regime produced towards

its end. The artists of the first were heading all important art establishments; the artists of the second were confined to the underground and were not even members of the Union of Artists of the USSR.

But, curiously enough, under these superficial differences the quite similar aims were hidden: to give a human spirit an unchecked freedom of its artistic expression and an unlimited choice of its means, ways and techniques. It could be either in the form of exploring the ' added element of the Universe ' as it was with Malevich and in the form of Kandinski's ' theory of colour ' or in the form of discovering the ' symbolism of Eternity ' by Nemukhin and ' subconscious caprices ' by Kropivnitskii.<sup>48</sup> With artists like Shteinberg it was more straightforward as they were bridging the gap between the first and the second Russian Avant - Garde directly.

History repeated itself. As the artists of the first Russian Avant - Garde studied icons and the old Russian tradition neglected for two hundred years so the artists of the second Avant - Garde started from establishing their direct links to the heritage of the first one which was forgotten for twenty years. The first ones struggled through time the second through the almost medieval tyranny of the totalitarian regime. Both had been absorbing fresh ideas from European and International art schools but soon shedding the unwanted bits turned themselves into something distinctively Russian. Whereas the first Avant - Garde craved for world recognition and leadership the goals of the second one were more modest.

It was creating a new inhabitant of the global village from a modern civilised Russia instead of an artificial, useless Homo Sovieticus, devoid of initiative and living in the dreams and myths of Socialist Realist art. This may be why their works are highly individual and individualistic. Their primary concern was a human being with his thoughts, worries, fears and hopes.

The artists of the 1960s ingeniously anticipated the world of today. They were the first among the few other intellectuals who turned to the problems of human existence and everyday life in contemporary Russia. In the Soviet Union they were the ones who started to complete or maybe completed the incomplete 'project of modernity'.<sup>49</sup> Time, of course, will value their contribution to Russian and world culture and impartially judge their work and heritage. But it is clear now that those artists have already secured for themselves a well - deserved and reputable place in the history of Russian art in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

# CATALOGUE



## Plate 1.

Vladimir Nemukhin ( b. 1925 )

Tribute to Bach, 1960

Oil on canvas

170 x 94 cm

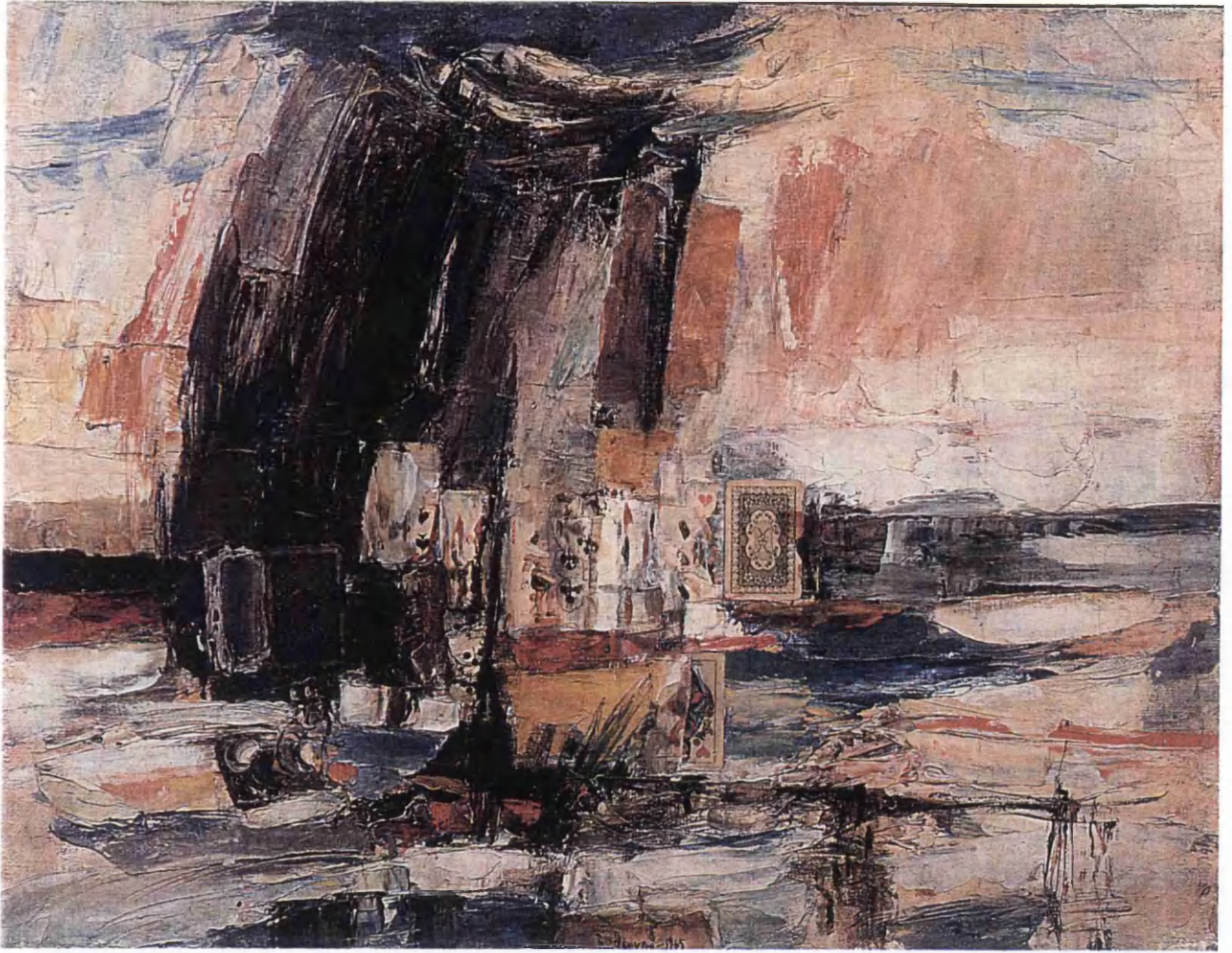
Signed: *VI. Nemukhin* ( in Russian ) and dated: *1960*

Private collection ( Moscow )

After his first encounter with abstract expressionist paintings at the Moscow World Festival of Youth in 1957 the artist created several series of abstract paintings. One of the first was a cycle of town and village abstract landscapes with the paintings ' Spring on the city ' and ' Blue day ' ( both 1958 ) which reflected the artist's love for the Russian landscape from his earlier career.

Music became another source of his understanding of abstract art as both, music and painting, have tonality which determines the mood of the work. The titles of paintings often had direct reference to music. In ' Tribute to Bach ' the patches of vibrant colours are intersected with a number of angular lines. Some of them are reminiscent of open note books, others of imaginary vertical, horizontal and diagonal music scales for the still untamed colours. The artist's use of line, however, might also show his unwillingness to dispose of it altogether. Line will become an important compositional element in his later paintings.





## Plate 2.

Vladimir Nemukhin ( b. 1925 )

Playing Poker on a Beach, 1965

Oil on canvas

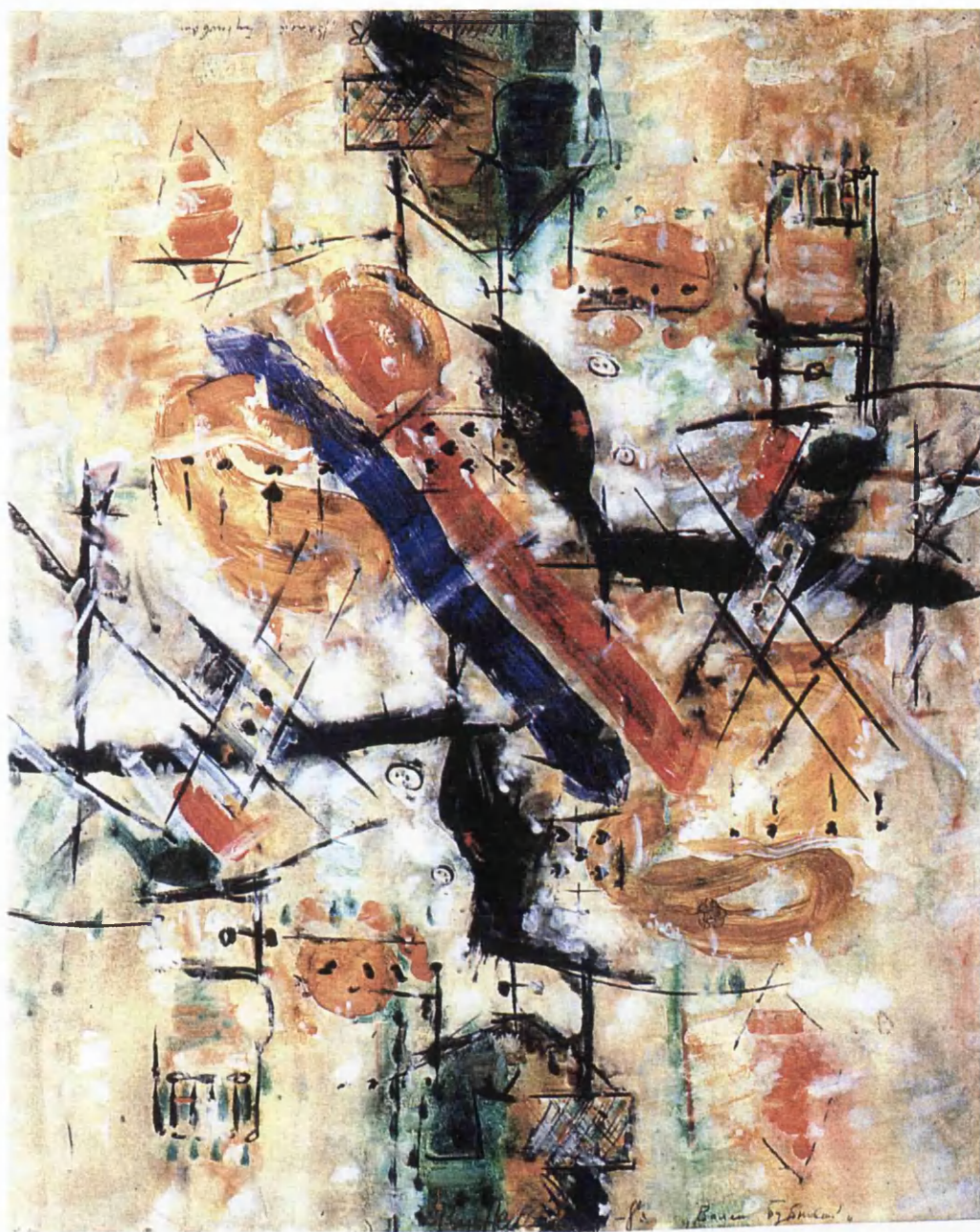
80 x 100 cm

Signed: *V. Nemukhin* ( in Russian ) and dated: 1965

Private collection ( Moscow )

The painting represents one of the artist's first attempts to use playing cards in his compositions. The artist depicts a simple abstract theme where cards are intertwined into the colourful and strong palette of the central part of the painting. The purely decorative function of the cards serves as a useful link between the abstract and representative within the picture. The cards denote human figures indirectly introducing a figurative element into the picture. The use of impasto helps to unify those elements and creates a sense of tranquillity and calm helped by the dominance of light tones which express the white heat of a summer's day quite well. The increasing use of white and literally unpainted surfaces became characteristic of his later paintings.





### Plate 3.

Vladimir Nemukhin ( b. 1925 )

Knave of Diamonds, 1983

Tempera and collage on canvas

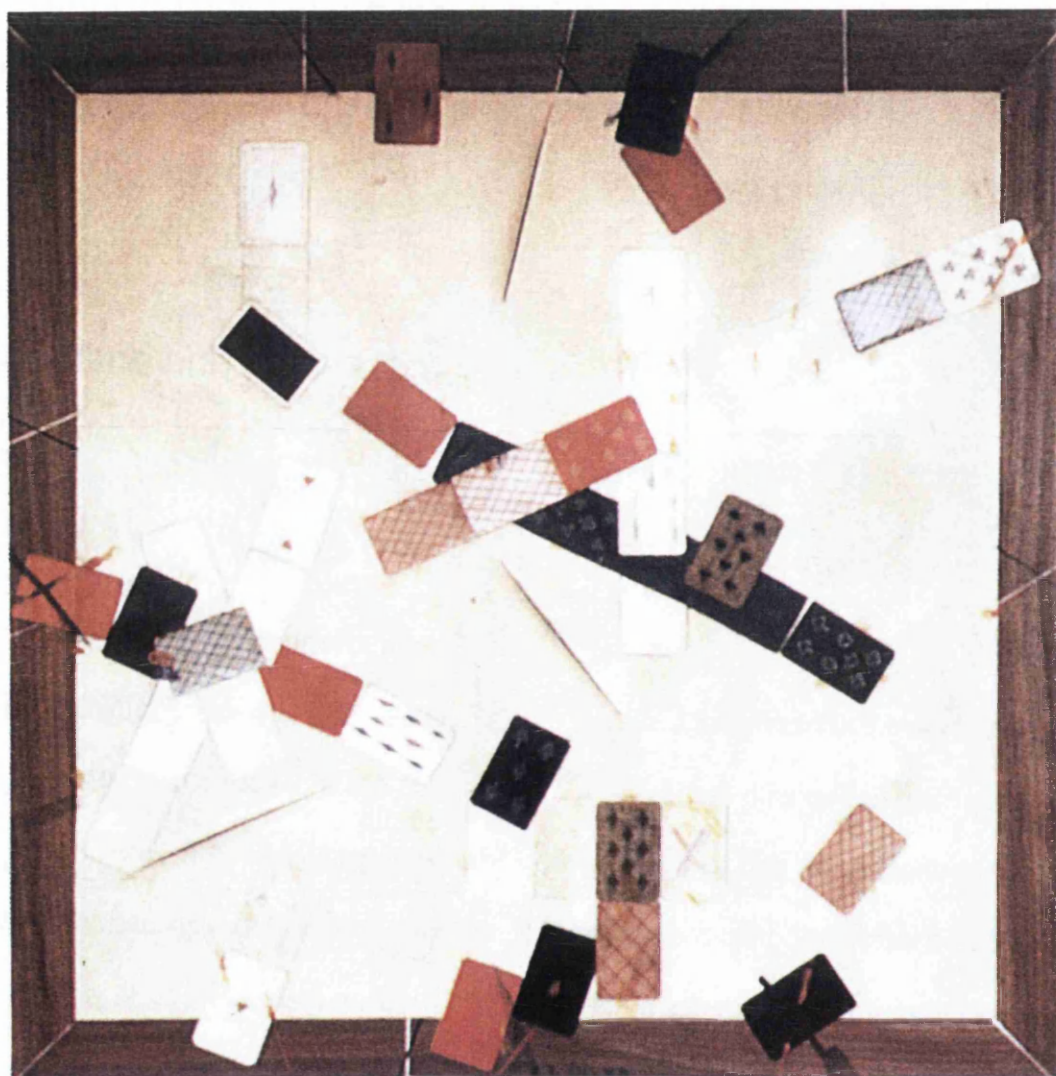
100 x 80 cm

Signed: *Vi. Nemukhin* ( in Russian ), dated: - 83 and entitled:

*Valet Bubnovi* ( Knave of Diamonds )

Private collection ( Moscow )

A playing card gradually becomes the subject of keen attention for the artist as it was for the early Flemish artists as well as for Picasso and Braque. Partly, it is to do with his fascination with the ' Knave of Diamonds ', a Moscow Avant - Garde art group in the 1900s, and its ' unlimited freedom of artistic search '.<sup>50</sup> But the symbolic and eschatological meaning of the card as opposed to its mundane one started to interest Nemukhin ( see his ' Playing Poker on a Beach ', pl. 2, p. 52 ). Everything in the painting is subordinated to the magic of a playing card. The black parallel line remind us of its shape, the red and blue strips - of its colour and shape. Real cards included in the collage though hidden silently guard the borders of the Universe. The artist extensively experiments with various techniques. The impasto is used again uniting the disparate elements of the picture into a monolithic whole.



## Plate 4.

Vladimir Nemukhin ( b. 1925 )

White Play - Table No. 4, 1987 - 88

Acrylic, collage on canvas

100 x 100 cm

Signed: *VI. Nemukhin* ( in Russian ) and dated: 87 - 88

Private collection ( Moscow )

The painting belongs to the period in the 1980s when the artist turns to the monochrome palette. He created a cycle of card compositions on black and white card or playing tables. His compositions turn from abstracted into almost representational. The cards form some complex figures or signs with a purely rational feeling about them. From a sway of multicoloured emotions the artist moves into the world of cold reason ( see his ' Tribute to Bach ' and ' Knave of Diamonds ', pl. 1, p. 51 and pl. 3, p. 53 ). The secret of life, however, is still unsolved. The cuts on the canvas are introducing a third dimension. Their combination with cards gives depth to the picture whereas the dark borders hold the composition within the designated space creating a sense of limitation on which the cards are slowly encroaching. We might even discern slow outward movements started by the cards and we nurture in our breasts a feeble hope that the frame will be eventually broken.





## Plate 5.

Vladimir Nemukhin ( b. 1925 )

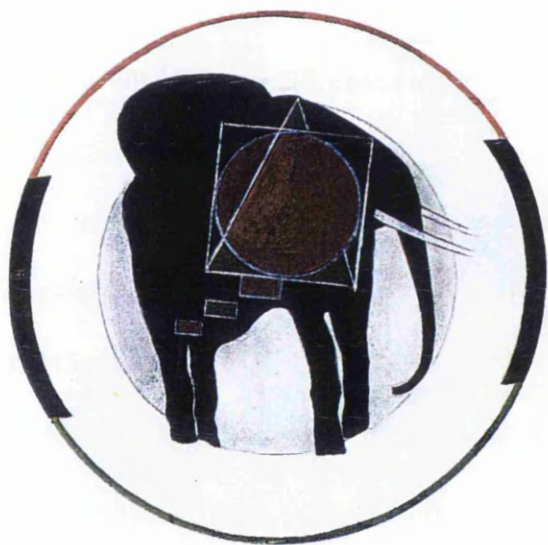
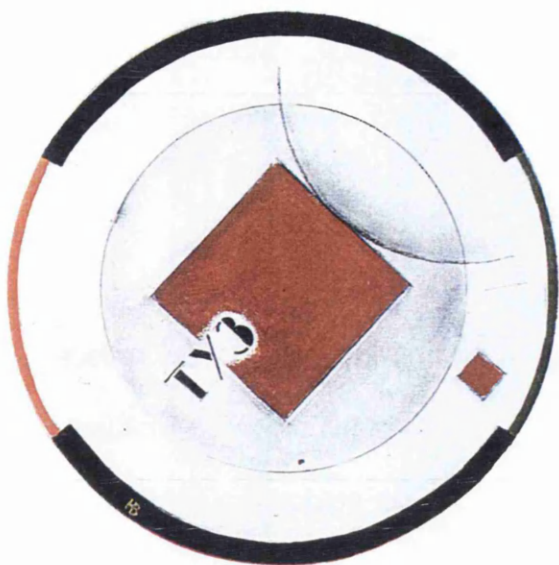
Composition, Dedicated to P. Sokolov, 1986

Bronze, 30 x 28 cm

Signed: *VI. Nemukhin* ( in Russian ) on the side

Collection of V. Dudakov ( Moscow )

This ' object - sculpture ' is a monumental tribute to Piotr Sokolov, the artist's teacher and a life - long friend. It is part of the cycle of his bronze sculptures called ' retro pop - art ' by some of the critics.<sup>51</sup> In our sculpture the artist attempts to bridge limitations of the pictorial surface by 'raising' it. He restrains from making a collage or assemblage but recreates the three - dimensional object - sculpture instead. It looks like the artist reverses the order of things and goes back to a three - dimensional model which originally would be a model for a two - dimensional abstract painting. The Shteinberg's vocabulary of regular Platonic polyhedrons is transformed by Nemukhin ( see pl. 15, p. 65 ). Triangle becomes a pyramid, a circle turns into a sphere, rectangular shapes into columns and steps. The act of creation echoes the words of Grobman: ' he who thinks or prophesies is an artist '.<sup>52</sup> This quest for knowledge may complement his previous interest in the enigma of the playing card. He is searching for the key formula which gives an answer to the symbolic meaning of Sokolov's art and its interconnections with Cezanne, Malevich and others. We feel that by giving to the pictorial new properties of weight, height and substance the artist, indeed, gets quite close to the answer.



## Plate 6.

Vladimir Nemukhin ( b. 1925 )

A set of four hard - paste porcelain decorative plates, 1990s

28 cm in diameter

Signed with the monogram: *HB* on the outer rim

Artist's studio ( Moscow )

The idea of creating porcelain plates came to the artist after Perestroika when he learnt of several factories in France and Switzerland eager to execute the order.

To one of them, the artist submitted several designs of which 10 were chosen and around 50 plates of each were made. The underglazed decoration are abstract and figurative and mostly include elements from his various paintings.

The artist's ' Suprematismus ' cycle of 1989 is repeated in the plate on the upper right, the theme of playing cards, ace and knave of diamonds, is reiterated in the plates in the lower right ( see ' Playing Poker on a Beach ', pl. 2, p. 52 ). The lower right plate is a direct reference to his ' Knave of Diamonds' cycle and the upper left one is mainly dedicated to Kazimir Malevich ( fig. 11, p. 79 ). The inserted geometrical figures into the elephant are developing Nemukhin's interest in the links between reason, geometry and nature, abstract and figurative - both of which explore the world by its own means. Despite the repetition of themes, the plates constitute an important step towards further diversification of the artist's techniques. The decorative elements transferred from their pictorial



context to porcelain do not lose their meaning but preserve it by focusing on their own symbolism. They also retain the artist's manner and essentially concentrate his immediately recognisable style.



## Plate 7.

Lev Kropivnitski ( 1922 - 1994 )

Converter of Life, 1962

Oil, canvas

140 x 80 cm

Signed: *Lev Kropivnitski* ( in Russian ) and dated: 1962 on the reverse

Property of V. & L. Smirnovs ( Moscow )

In 1959 - 1963 when the artist was painting his abstract works he felt that modern art had ' high expressiveness, conflict, movement and sharp individuality '.<sup>53</sup> He had acute feeling for his time as well with its psychological tensions, individual fears, uncertainties and nervousness all of which are expressed in his paintings. For the artist colour was the most powerful tool to influence emotions. This is why he chose bright contrasting colours: red, yellow and blue. The dynamism of the composition is created by throwing the paint without any predetermined plan. The almost Baroque diagonal adds to the overbearing sense of movement. Everything is left to the irrational: squares and rectangular are not carefully drawn but created by a hand throw. In his approach the artist is very close to Jackson Pollock whose works influenced him profoundly. It allowed him to open up his mind and to realise enormous tension within his soul between right and wrong, permissible and possible, eternal and mundane.



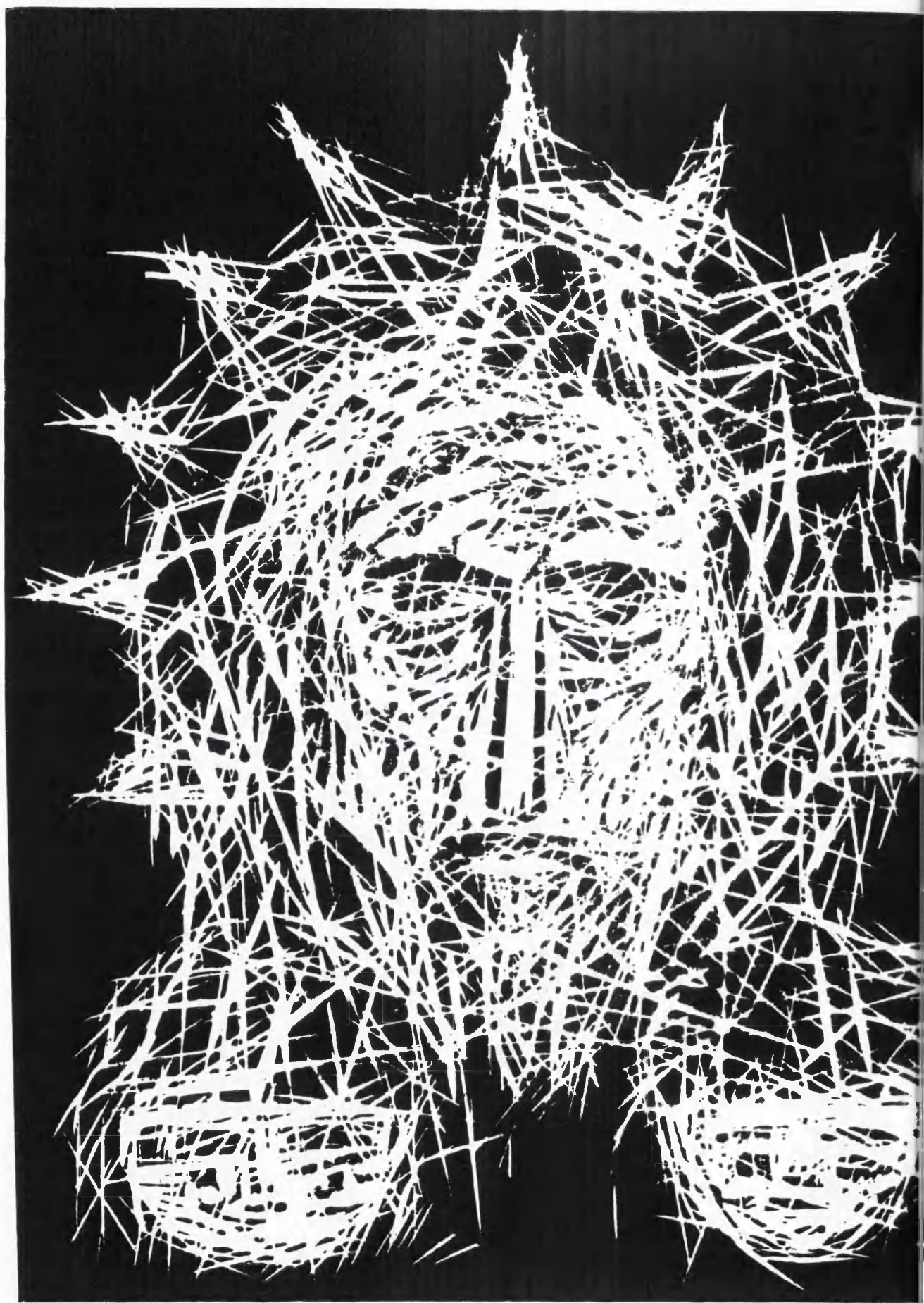


Plate 8.

Lev Kropivnitski ( 1922 - 1994 )

Christ and Two Marys, From the cycle ' On the Evangelical  
Subjects ', 1964

Linocut

29,5 x 23 cm

Signed: *Lev Kropivnitski* ( in Russian ) and dated: 1964

Property of the artist's family ( Moscow )

In his study of the contrasts of everyday life, its contradictions eventually led the artist to choose subject and media more appropriate for this purpose. Christ's passions became a natural choice for the artist to look at the problems of life and death, good and evil, light and darkness. Apart from general scenes such as ' Road to Calvary' or ' Entry into Jerusalem' the artist paid particular attention to the face of Christ. He intentionally creates it in a manner of an accepted iconographic canon ( fig. 1, p. 69 ) The suffering face of Christ disperses light and hope. Numerous narrow white lines creates an effect of evanescent rays exaggerated by the plain black surface of the linocut.





Plate 9.

Lev Kropivnitski ( 1922 - 1994 )

Golgotha. Composition with the Crucifixion and Bulls, 1969

Linocut, watercolours, 35 x 35 cm

Signed: *Lev Kropivnitski* ( in Russian ), dated: 1962 and

entitled: Golgotha ( in Russian ) on the reverse

Property of the artist's family ( Moscow )

By the end of the 1960s the artist's experiments with linocut led him to move away from black and white images and to add a few more colours to his palette.

The theme of the Crucifixion predominated in his works. He admired Peter Bruegel the Elder and Lucas Cranach the Elder and often uses their painting as a direct example for some of the motives ( fig. 29, p. 97 ). He could not, however, stop at this. His work had to refer to the contemporary world with its permanent metamorphosis, mutations and violence. The sinister face of Lucifer which is almost bigger than the Cross is modelled on a man's head from his ' Neighbours ' cycle of 1964 and reminiscent of one of the villain's faces in Cranach's picture. There is only one cross in Kropivnitski's linocut instead of the expected three. The three heads of bulls are the silent reminder of the sacrifice.<sup>54</sup> There is no hope, nor the grief and support of Cranach's mourners. The crucified figure of Christ is alone with red blood around it in the artist's world, full of despair and human isolation.







Plate 10.

Lev Kropivnitski ( 1922 - 1994 )

Gloaming, from the book ' Charles Baudelaire. Selected Works', 1992

Etching, aquatint, dry - point, deep etching, 42 x 31 cm

Signed: *Lev Kropivnitski* ( in Russian ) and dated: 1992

Property of the artist's family ( Moscow )

The ' Gloaming ' is one of a series of six engravings of one hundred and fourteen copies executed by the artist for this book. He called them ' my variations on the related theme '.<sup>55</sup> The choice of Baudelaire, a forerunner of modern art, was more than accidental. Kropivnitski himself wrote poetry and shared the poet's interest in the everyday world and its ugliness. However, the images in the engraving are not frightening apart from a lonely crouching figure in the centre. At first glance the world is pitiful rather than ugly. Everything is suspended in the air rather like in the paintings of Chagall whom Kropivnitskii always admired ( fig. 9, p. 77 ). But the naivety and sadness of the beginning of the century in Chagall's picture is replaced by hidden tension of the fin de siecle. Whereas Chagall's composition retains some hope and optimism, Kropivnitskii emanates agony. The world is not tranquil. Everyone is waiting for something terrible to happen. Grief in the eyes, despair in gestures, lust in nakedness is building up a sense of an imminent world catastrophe or the Last Judgement... And a cold moon is watching it.







Plate 11.

Lev Kropivnitski ( 1922 - 1994 )

Charm, 1989.

Oil, canvas

150 x 100 cm

Signed: *Lev Kropivnitski* ( in Russian ) and dated: 1989 on the reverse

Property of I. Byalsky ( Moscow )

The painting belongs to the cycle ' Subconscious Caprices ' which the artist worked on from the mid - 1980s. The artist's interest in human nature spreads to the human body. He knew and liked the works of Klimt and Schiele and considered eroticism of ' high artistic value '.<sup>56</sup> However, a naked female figure in the picture does not convey to us a direct sexual charge. The muzzles of a dog and a goat take us back to the mythological and mystical.<sup>57</sup> The eroticism is elevated to an almost transcendental value. The use of an expressionist palette makes us think of the earlier abstract period in the artist's career. Now he combines his extremely deep understanding of colour from his abstract paintings with forms which he explored through his graphic arts, a characteristic interconnection between Symbolism and Expressionism.



Plate 12.

Eduard Shteinberg ( born 1937 )

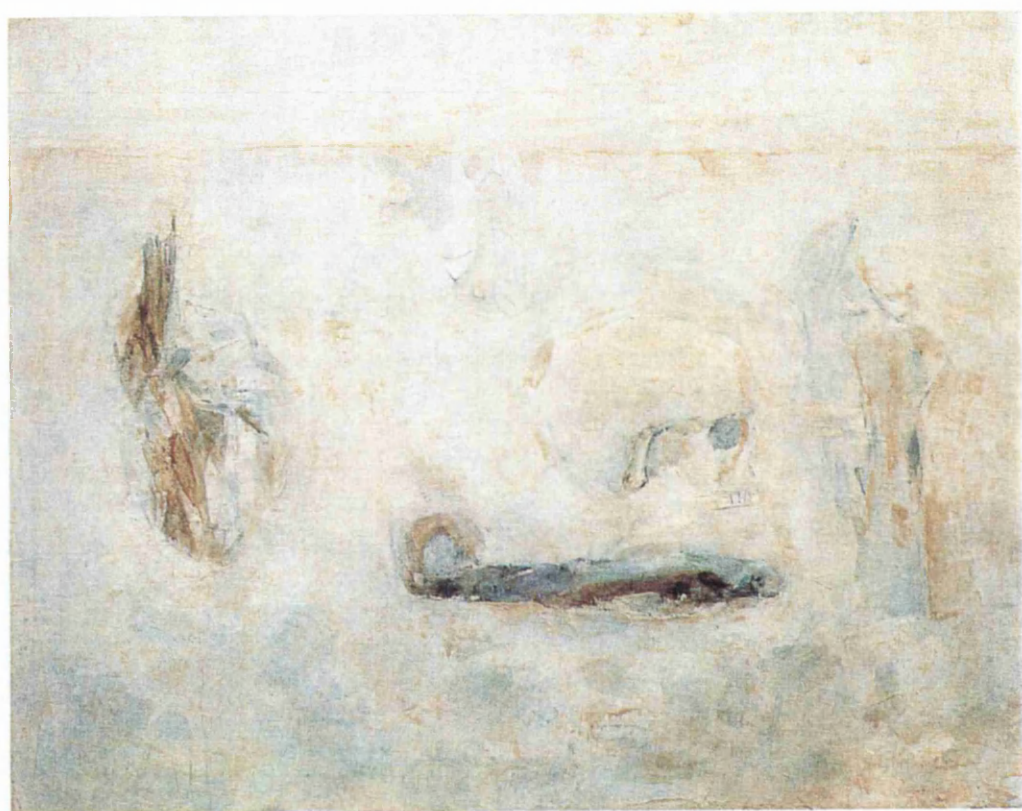
Songs of the Tatars, 1961 - 62.

Oil, canvas

97 x 137 cm.

Studio of the artist ( Moscow )

In 1961 - 1962 Shteinberg painted a series of genre works which reflected his interest in ordinary everyday life. The manner and the palette of his paintings like ' Flower Vendor ' , ' Street Sweeper ' and ' Songs of Tatars ' reflect his increasing interest in Modern art. The colour scheme of the painting echoes Lentulov' s ' Tverskoi Boulevard ' ( fig. 8, p. 76 ). However, there is a clear tendency towards monochromatic palette in Shteinberg painting. He refrains from clashing the opposing colours where he can and gives clear preference to darker parts of the spectre with predominant use of brown and green. His treatment of depth and contours of the figures and objects in the composition also suggests his acquaintance with works of Gauguin and Matisse which he may have seen in the newly opened Museum of Modern Western Art.



## Plate 13.

Eduard Shteinberg ( born 1937 )

Composition with a Skull, 1966

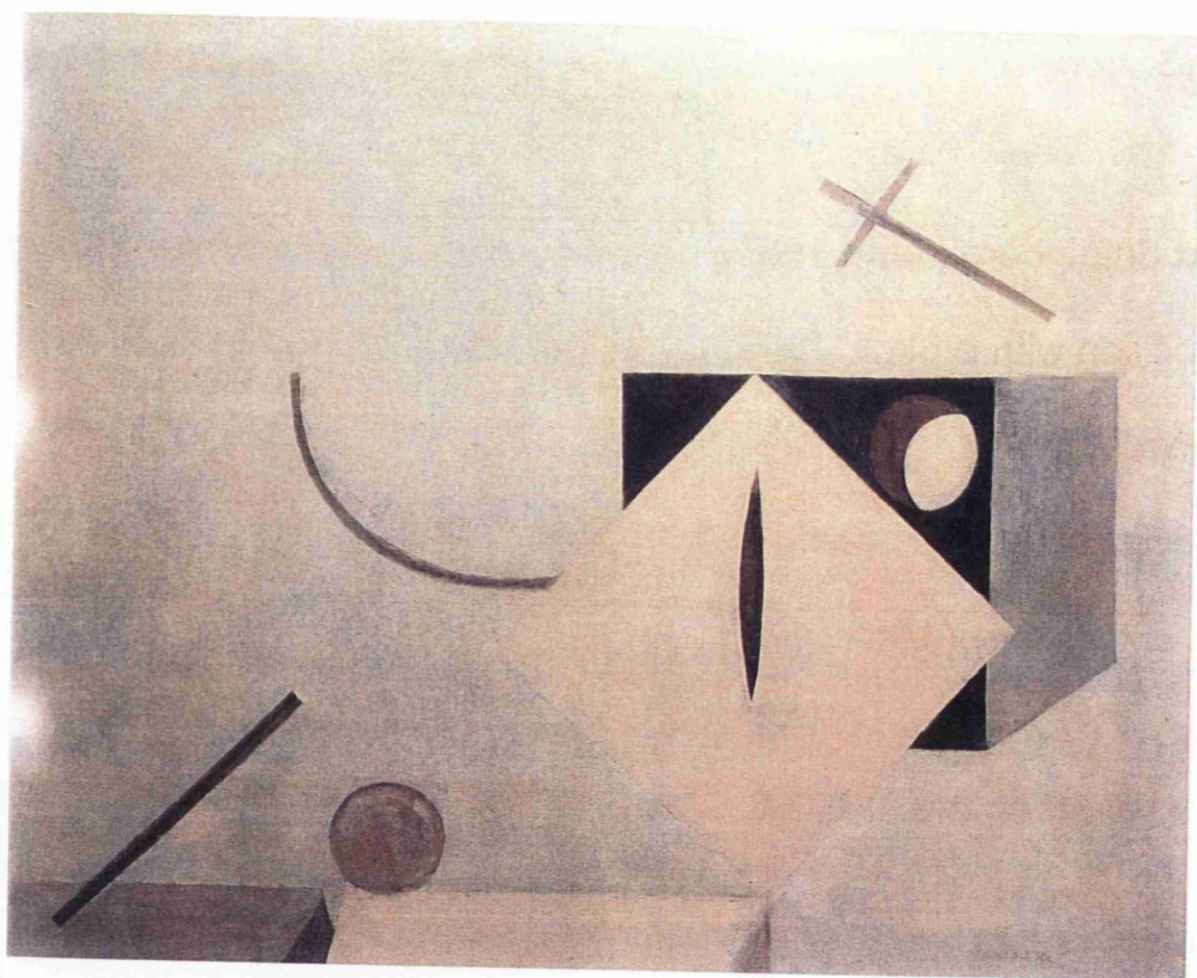
Oil, canvas

97 x 137 cm

Studio of the artist ( Moscow )

The painting is an example of a transitional period in the artist's career. Figurative compositions are becoming of lesser importance. He concentrates on the symbolism of particular objects as well as on their form. A skull, a fish and some other hardly identifiable objects may be symbols of the underwater world. A horizontal line in the upper part of the picture may serve as a borderline between air and water. The predominance of white creates an impression of light fluorescing from within the objects which may point to their link to some supernatural forces and higher powers. The artist himself referred to the paintings of that period as to those where ' first appeared a unique articulation of Sky and Earth ' .<sup>58</sup>







## Plate 14.

Eduard Shteinberg ( born 1937 )

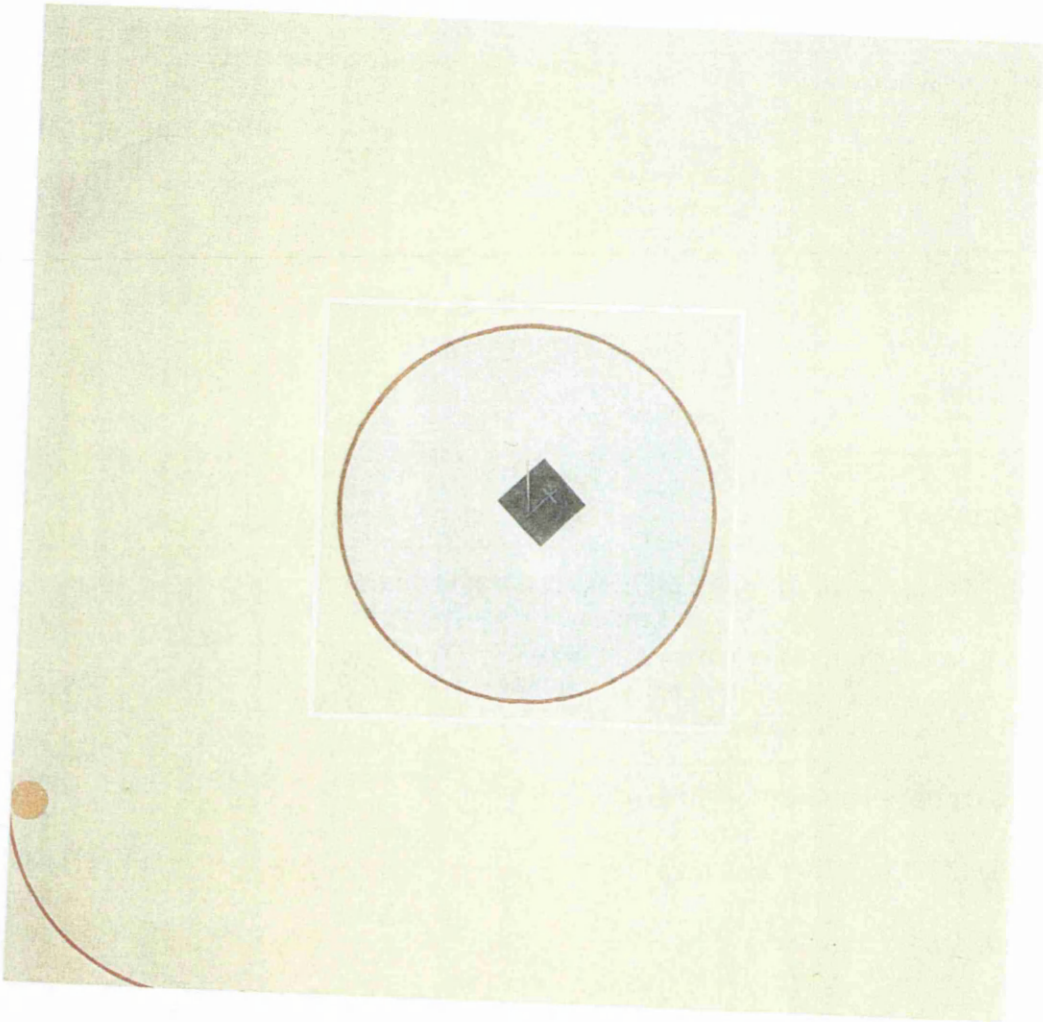
Composition, 1970

Oil, canvas

80 x 100 cm

Private Collection ( Switzerland )

The painting reflects one of the first attempts of the artist to build his own vision of the contemporary world through the combination of different geometric forms. In his painting we now find the Cross and other early Christian symbols ( see Introduction ). His indebtedness to Suprematism is reflected by the inclusion of squares and circles. The part of white stone or cube at the bottom may refer to ' white, nicely fitted together like apostles and bishops ' according to E. Shiffers who also saw a particular kind of heavenly beauty metaphorically expressed in the painting .<sup>59</sup> For Shteinberg the geometrical forms are not a revolutionary break with the past as they were for Constructivists of the 1920s but a careful restoration of the broken metaphysical tradition in Russian art.



## Plate 15.

Eduard Shteinberg ( born 1937 )

Composition ( in memory of Kazimir Malevich ), 1978

Oil, canvas

100 x 100 cm

Studio of the artist ( Moscow )

The composition was painted by the artist in the year of the centenary of Malevich's birth in 1978. It was an important event in the artist's life. Malevich was still neither accepted by Soviet officialdom nor by the Union of Artists. Nevertheless, Shteinberg and Kabakov organised an evening in memory of the artist. Shteinberg also wrote a letter to Kazimir Malevich in 1981 where he described Malevich's Black Square as a symbol of the lowest point of Godlessness of Russian people when religion was replaced by philosophy and Word or Logos could not be spoken. Shteinberg's answer to Malevich is to return the beauty of geometrical figures back to the viewer who is free to judge on his own and has no influence of the artist. This painting was exhibited next to photographs of Malevich's ' Black Square' at the Geometry in Art Exhibition, commemorating the one hundred and tenth anniversary of the birth of Malevich in March 1988 in Moscow.



## Plate 16.

Eduard Shteinberg ( born 1937 )

Portrait with Cross, 1988

Gouache on board

44 x 49 cm

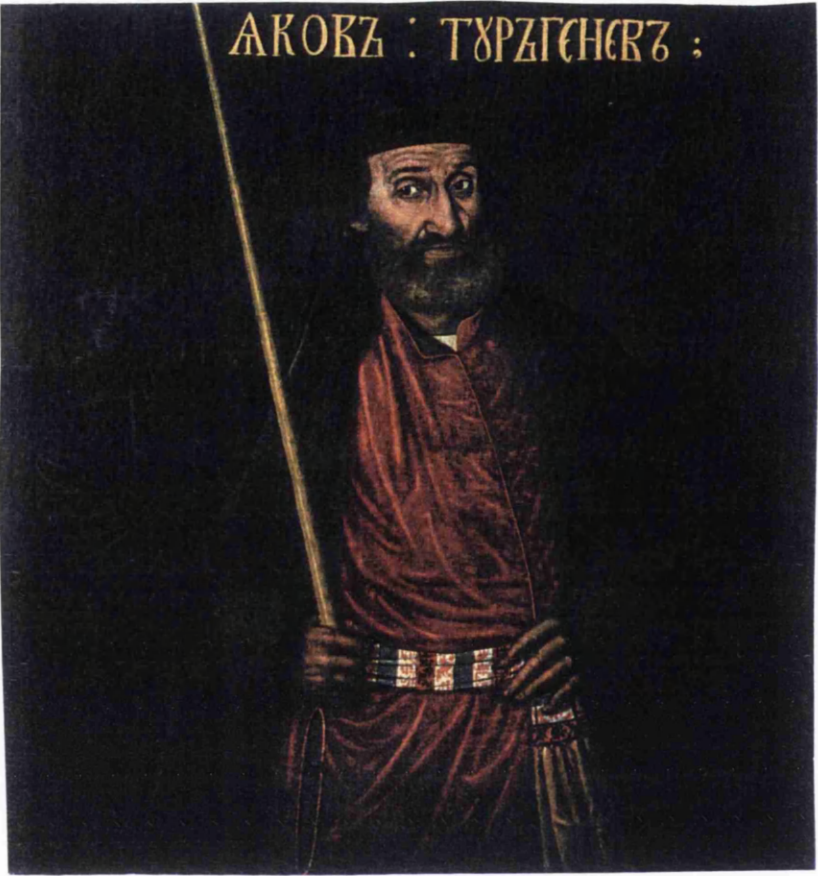
Ludwig Collection ( Cologne, Germany )

The picture represents the artist's return to brighter and more saturated colours after almost twenty years ( pl. 12, p. 63 ). He retains characteristic use of geometrical forms and two - dimensional iconic planography. But the use of figurative images is new which also receive a warmer and earthlier meaning. It is also true if we compare the painting to one from Malevich's second ' Peasant ' cycle which inspired the artist ( fig. 12, p. 80 ). For Malevich the abstract is dominant in his representational. The face is permanently bound in the green background and the sense of something inevitable and permanent is prevailing. The eyes and mouth are the only features alive but imbedded in the chain of colours. In Shteinberg's portrait geometric forms play quite the opposite role. They are the building blocks of the face and are used to express the emerging emotion on the black face as if they realise the tension which Malevich's colours imposed on them fifty years ago. The uneasy question of how to survive through the time of terror imposed on Malevich in the beginning of the 1930s is answered by his spiritual pupil Shteinberg in a different time of hope and great expectations at the end of the 1980s.

# COMPARATIVE ILLUSTRATIONS







2. Unknown Artist, **Portrait of Iakov Fedorovich Turgenev**, circa 1700.





3. Fedor Rokotov, **Portrait of Alexandra Petrovna Struiskaia**, 1772.



4. Alexander Ivanov, **The Appearance of Christ to the People**, 1837 - 1857.



5. Pavel Fedotov, **The Gamblers**, 1852.





6. Mikhail Vrubel, **Lilac**, 1900.



7. Viktor Borisov - Musatov, **The Reservoir**, 1902.





8. Aristarch Lentulov, **Tverskoi Boulevard**, 1917.



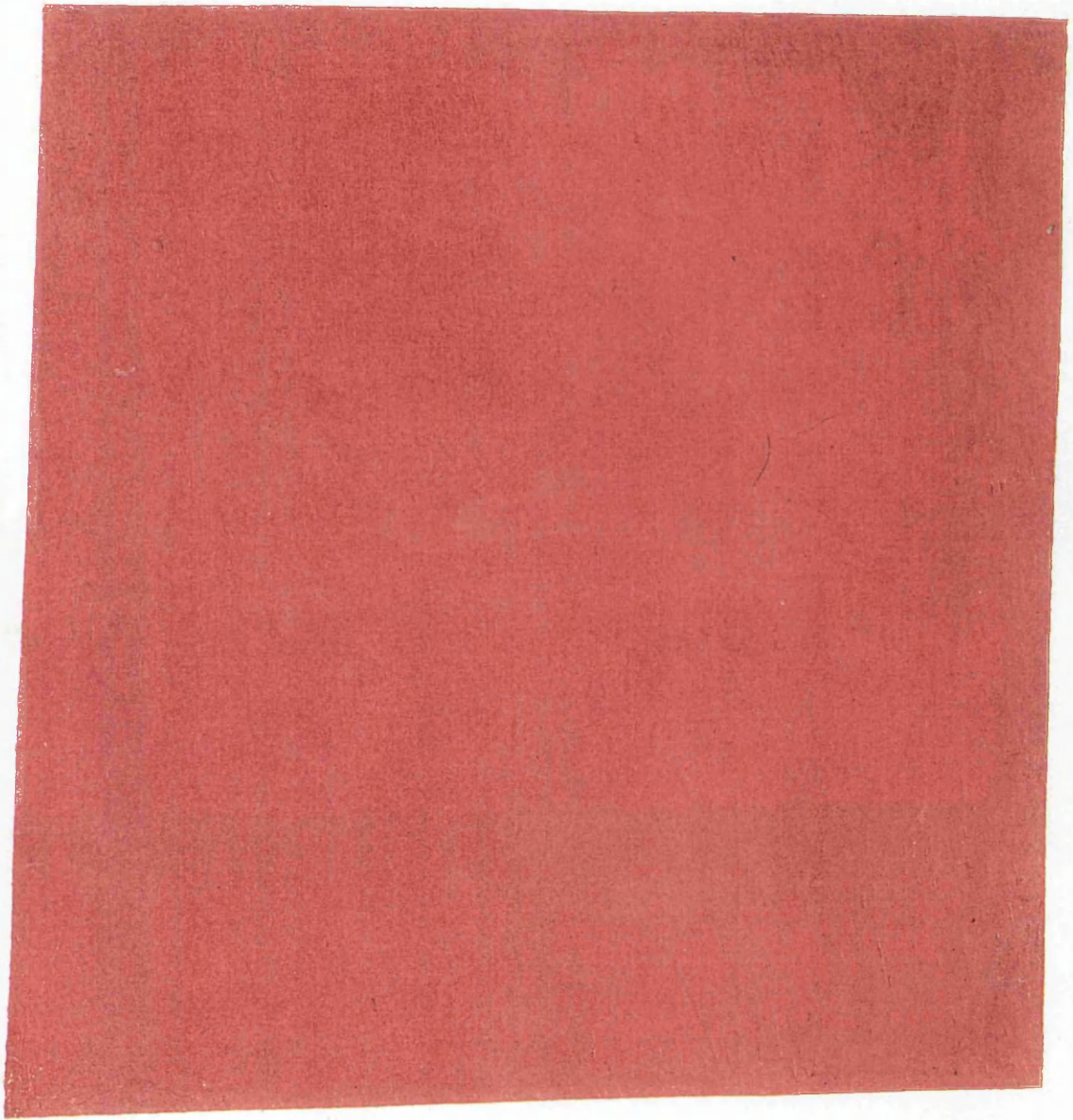
9. Marc Chagall, **Over the Town**, 1914 - 1918.





10. Vladimir Tatlin, **Blue Counter - Relief**, 1914.



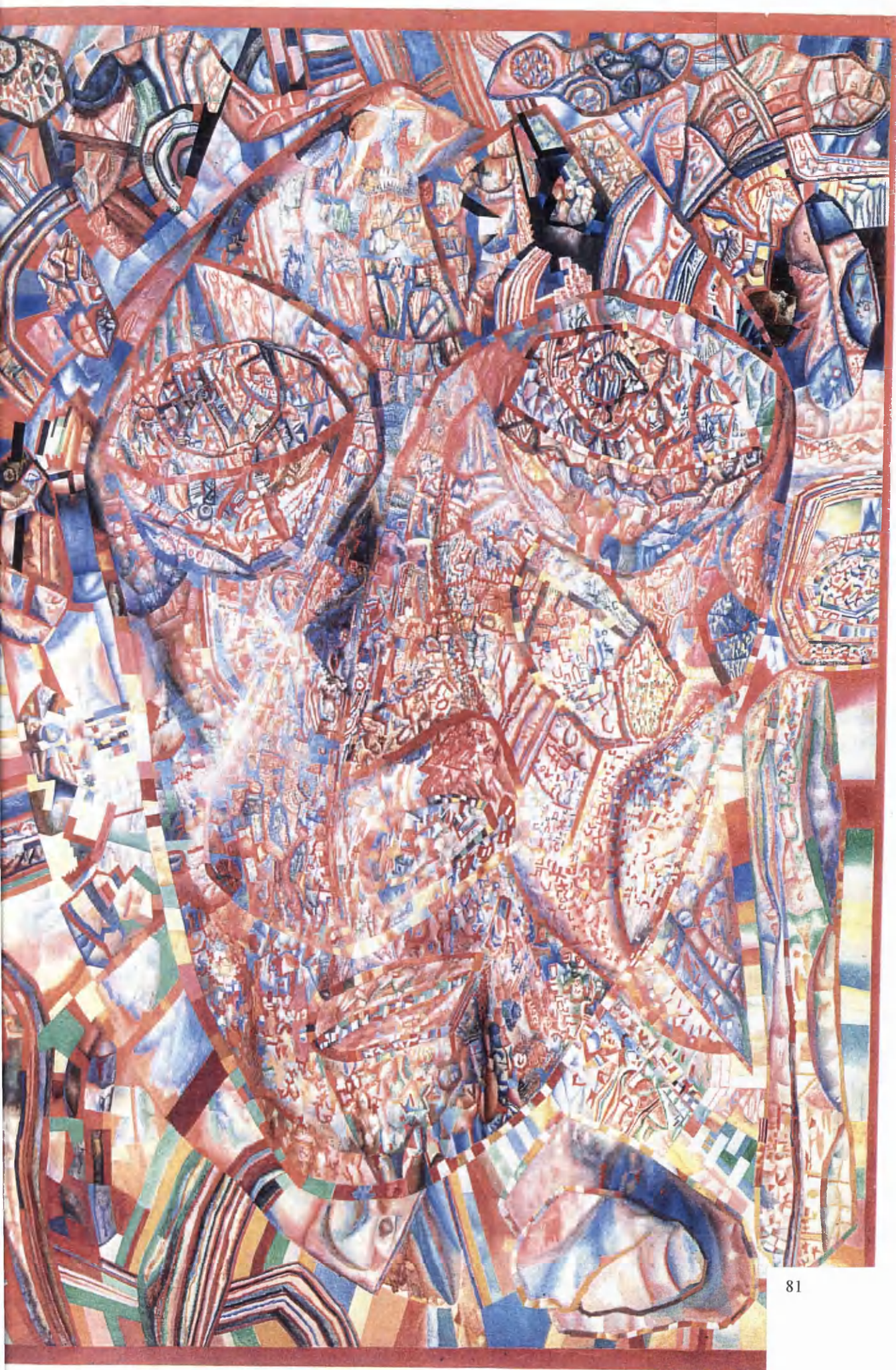


11. Kazimir Malevich, **Red Square**, 1915.



12. Kazimir Malevich, **Portrait of a Woman**, circa 1930.









14. Isaak Brodski, **A DneproStroi Shock Worker**, 1932.

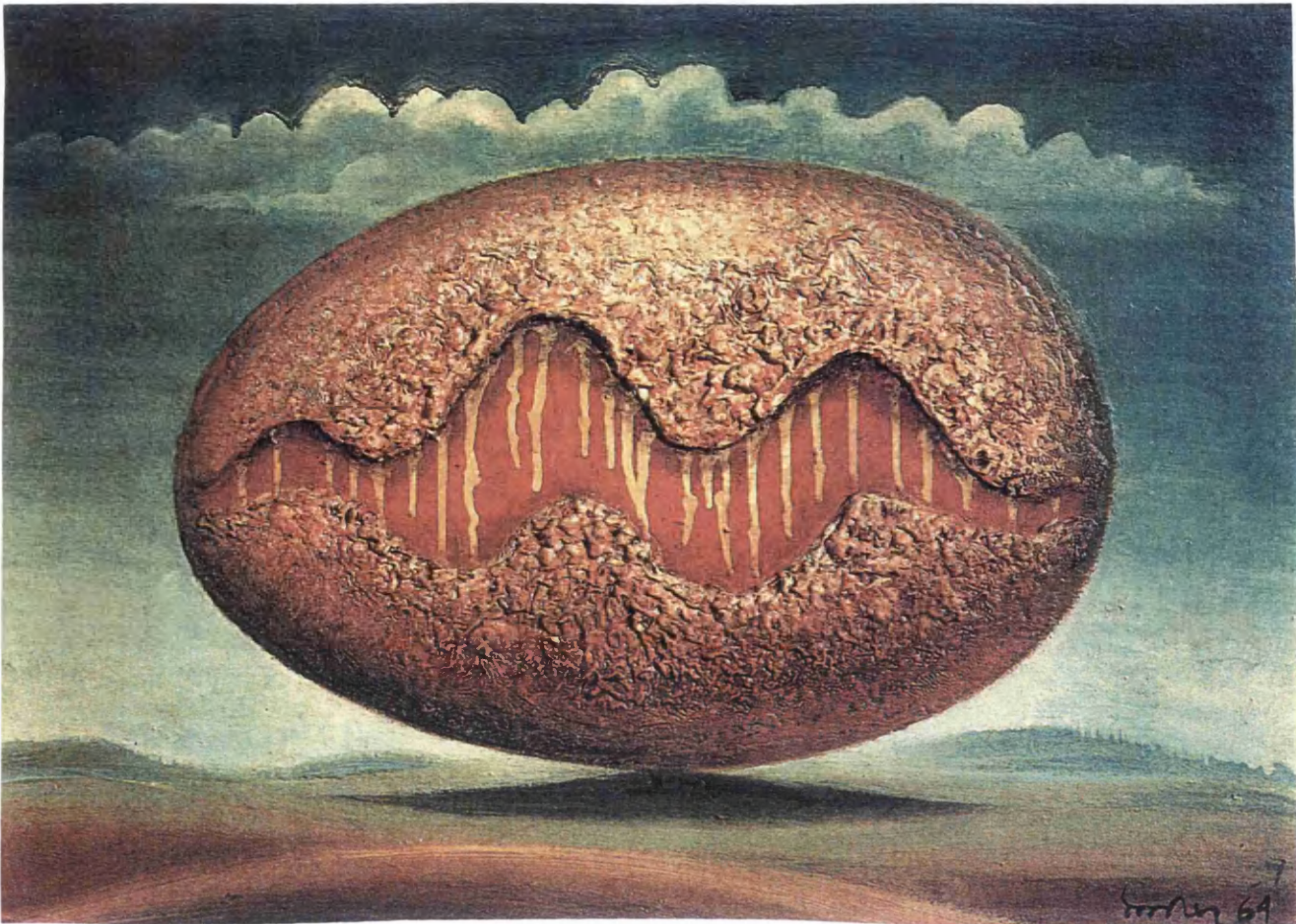


15. Arkadi Plastov, **Threshing on the Collective Farm**, 1949.







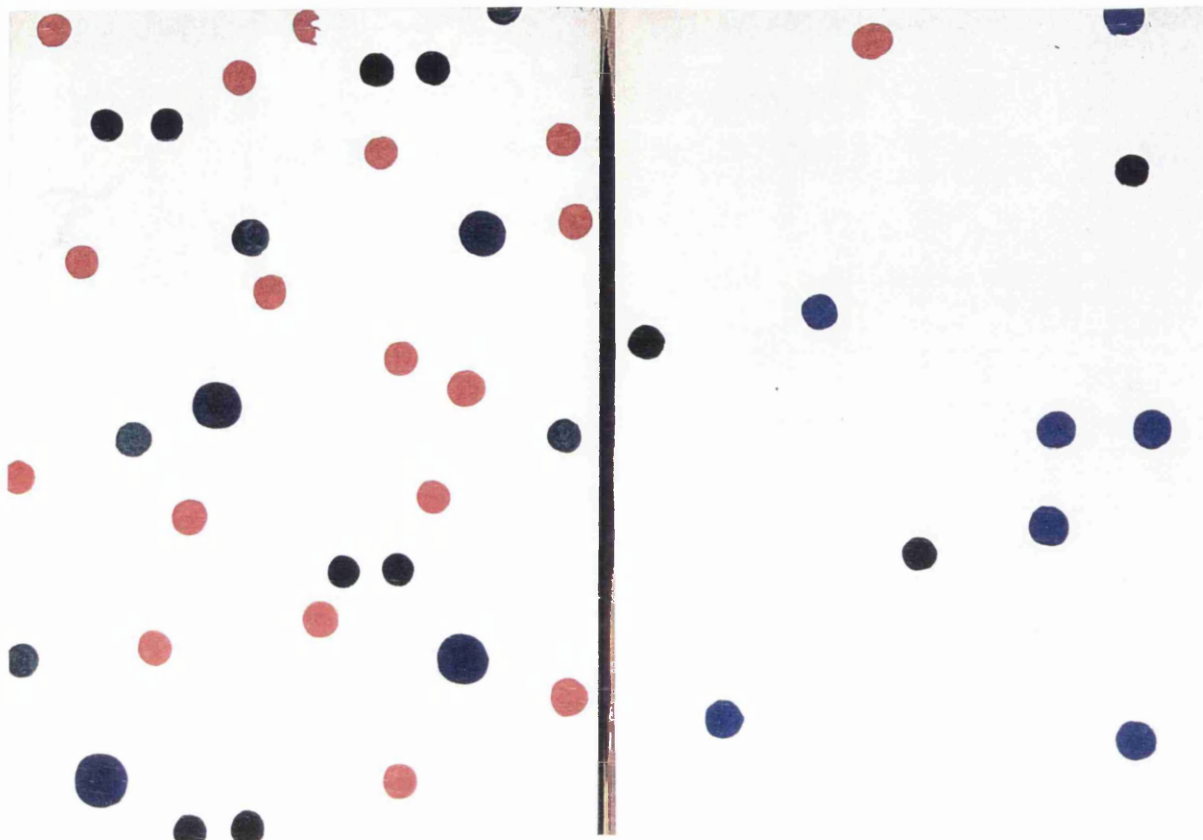


17. Ulo Sooster, **A Red Egg**, 1964.





18. Vladimir Slepian, **Composition**, 1957



19. Iuri Zlotnikov, From the cycle **Signal System**, 1956 - 1960.

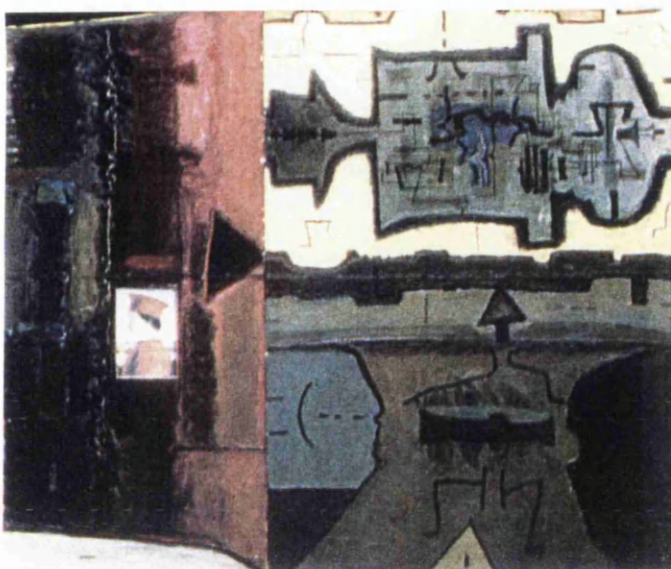


20. Café ' Artisticheskoe ' ( Artistic ), 1960s.





21. Pavel Nikonov, **Geologists**, 1962.



22. Vladimir Iankilevski, **Two Beginnings**, 1962.





23. Ernst Neizvestni, **An Invalid**, circa 1960.



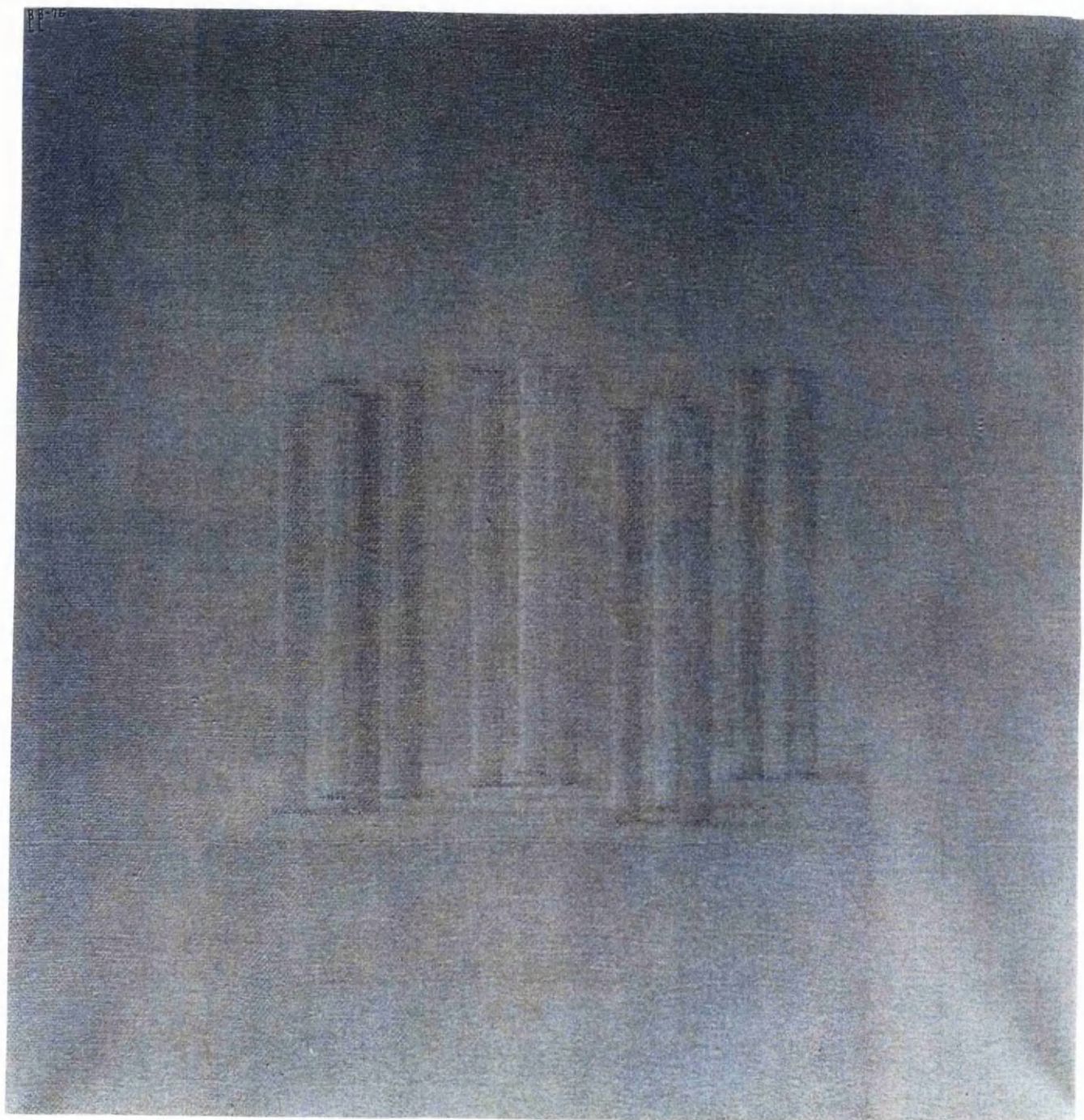
24. Boris Zhutovski, **Portrait of Tolia**, 1962.



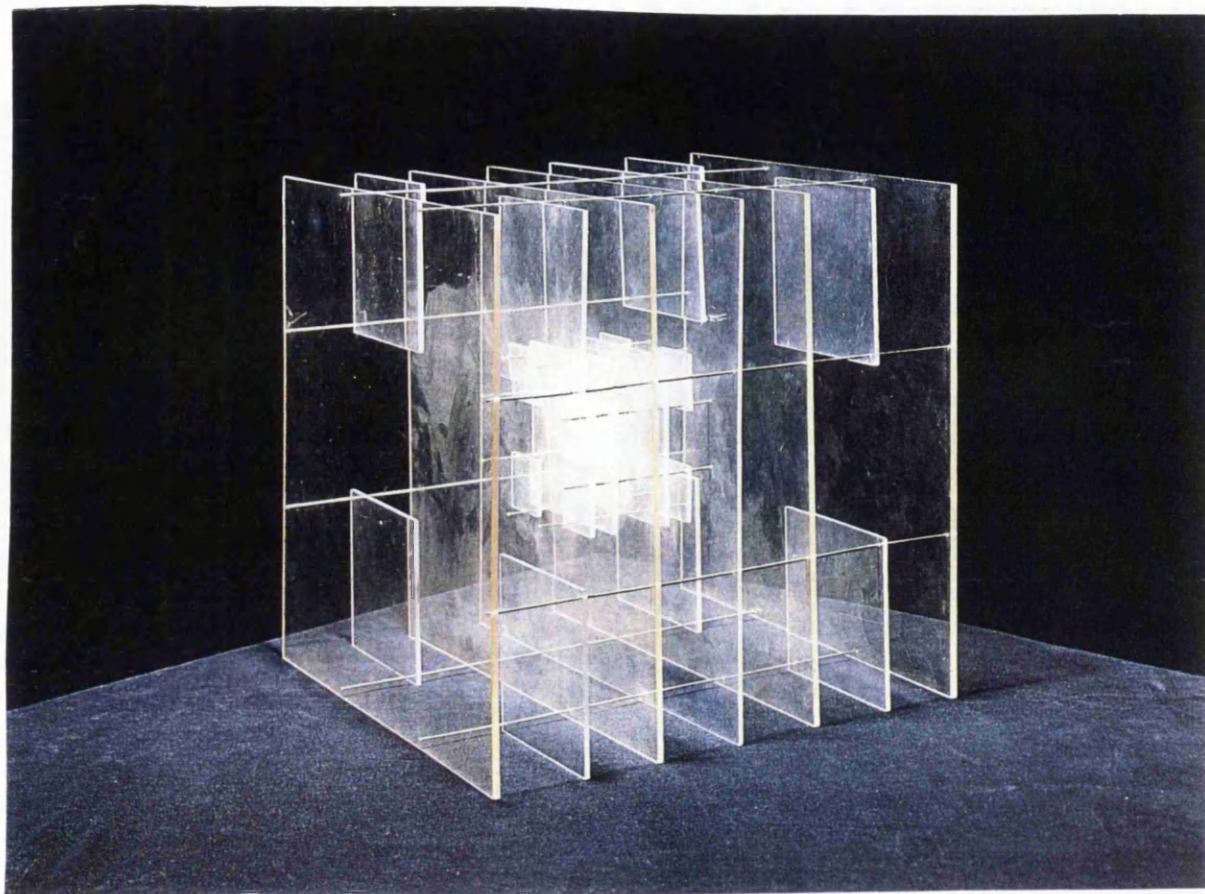


25. Oscar Rabin, **Lianozovo**, 1960.





26. Vladimir Veisberg, **Twelve Columns**, 1976.



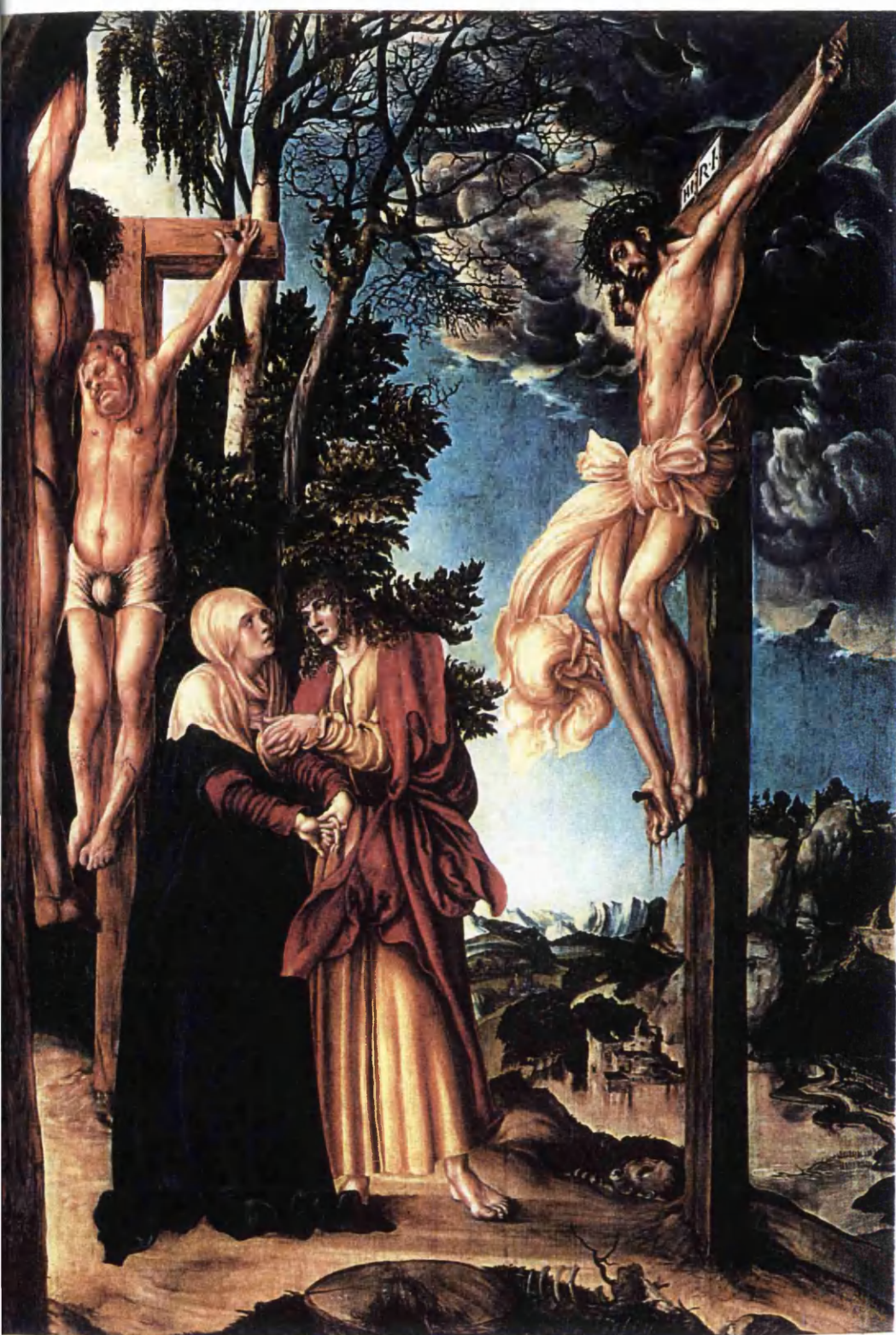
27. Fransisco Infante, **The Soul of a Crystal**, 1962.





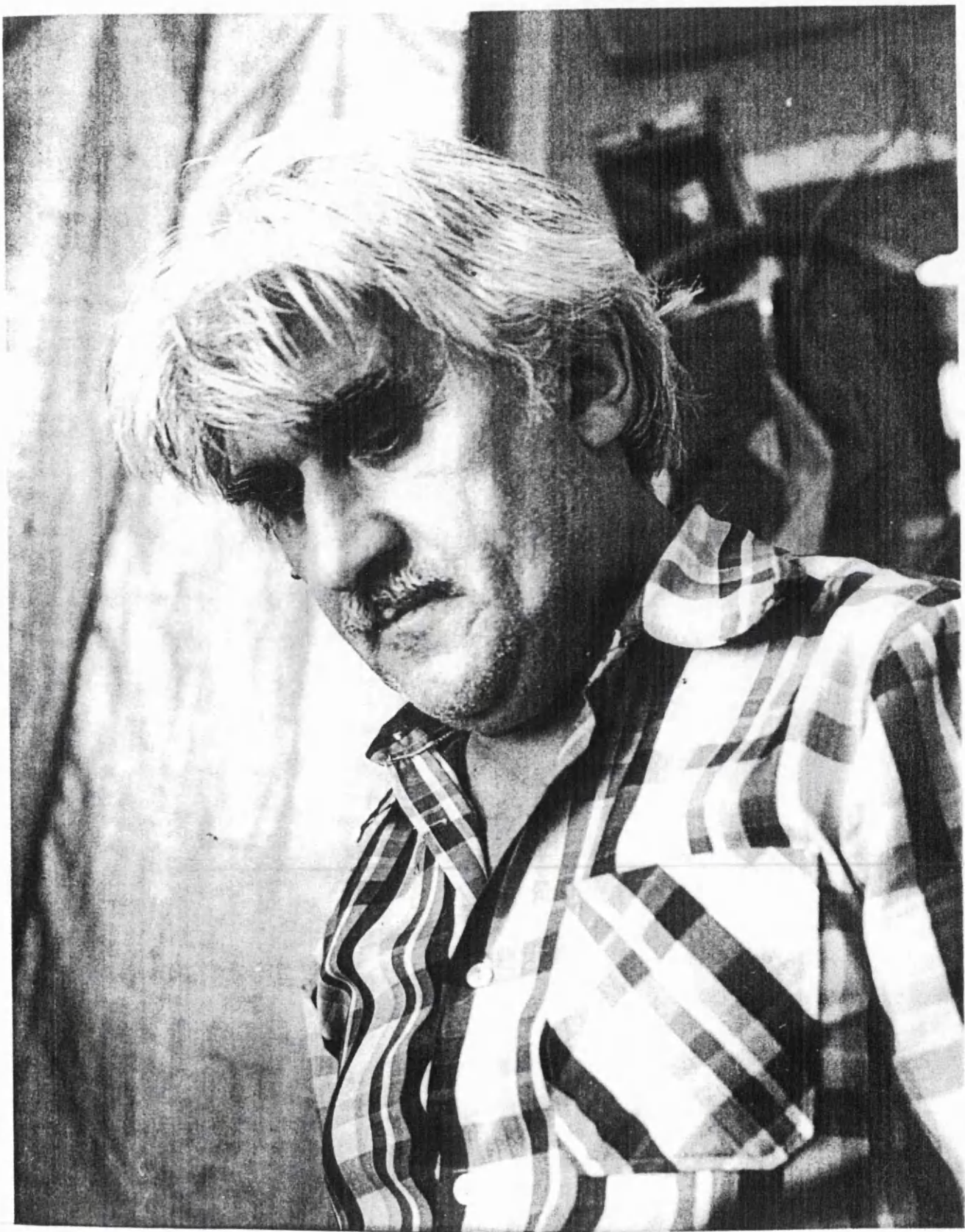
ВАМ ХОРОШО !

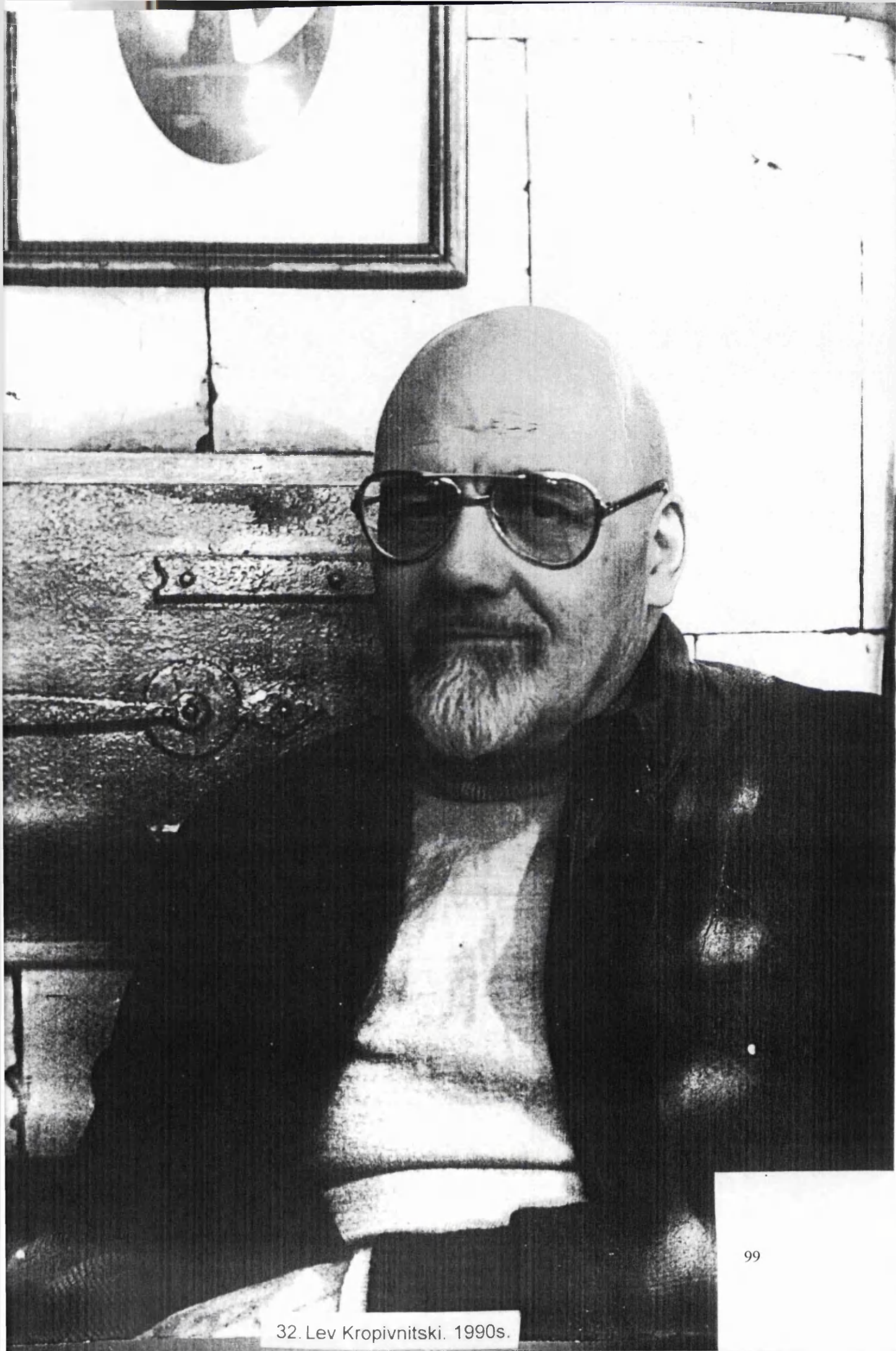
28. Vitali Komar and Alexander Melamid, **Vam Khorosho!**  
( **You are all right!** ), 1972.



29. Lucas Cranach the Elder, **The Crucifixion**, 1502.

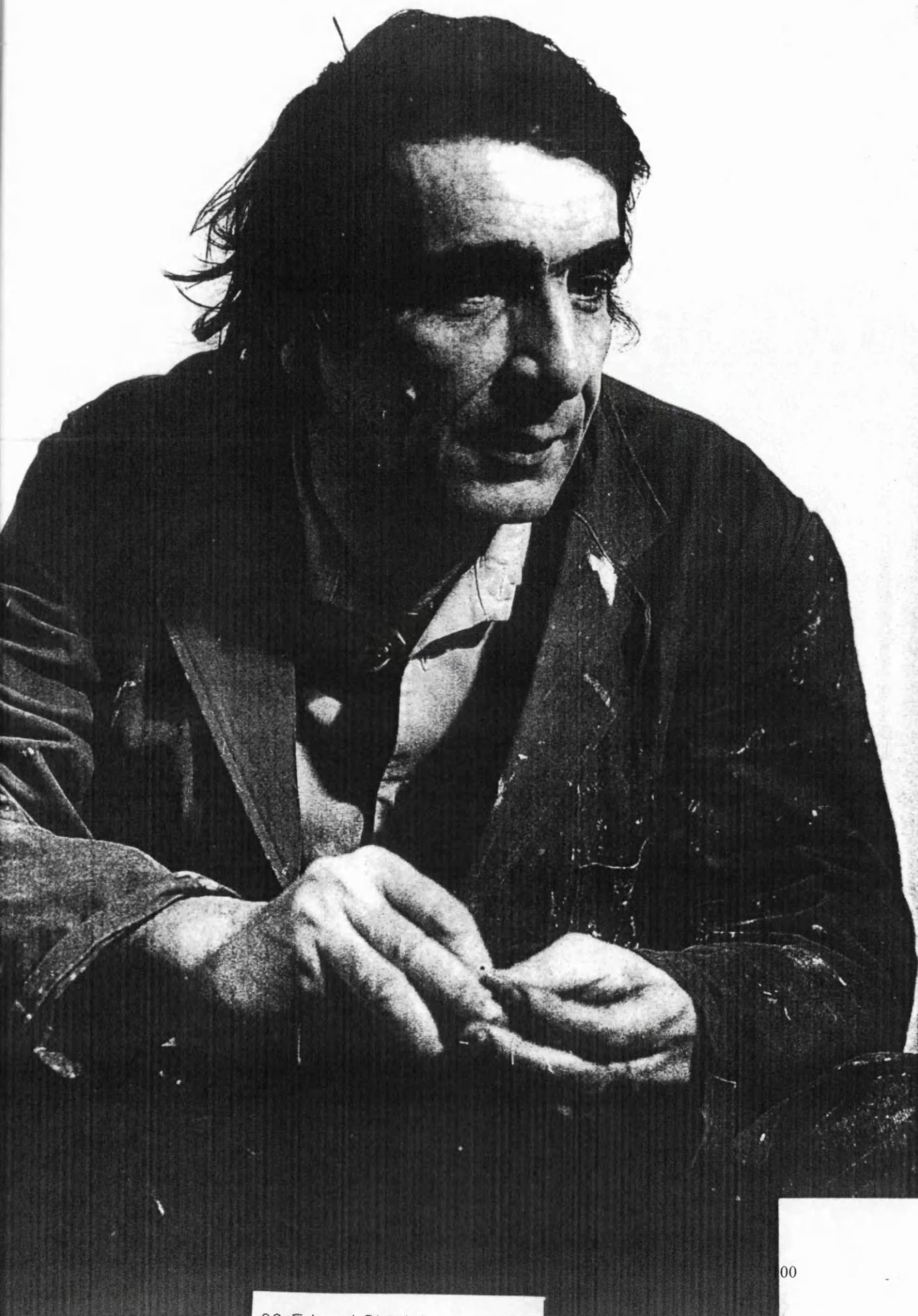






32. Lev Kropivnitski. 1990s.





33. Eduard Shteinberg. 1990s.

# APPENDIX

**C R E D O**

The Sky is the vision of twenty hues of colour.

Blue is a spiritual and emotional vision.

Snow is the vision of twenty hues of colour.

White is a spiritual vision.

The vision of white and black, red and green, yellow and blue  
is a spiritual vision, which is painting.

The surface is the vision of space.

The horizon is a line of spiritual vision,  
and the Earth is the vision of everything that grows  
and moves on it.

The Moon and Sun are spiritual light.  
Mankind is the plot of vision. Vision cannot hear.  
Spiritual vision is fantasy.

Vision of the spiritual is the church.

Moscow, September 3, 1987

Vladimir Nemukhin



# GLOSSARY

**Blue Rose** - the core of the group included painters Pavel Kuznetsov, Piotr Utkin, Martiros Sarian, Kuz'ma Petrov - Vodkin and sculptor A. Matveev who exhibited together as ' Scarlet Rose ' in 1904 in Saratov, a town on the bank of the Volga river in Southern Russia. The artists came from nearby places and towns. Borisov - Musatov and Vrubel joined the exhibition. From 1907 the group called itself ' Blue Rose ' and included Moscow painters Nikolai Sapunov, Sergei Sudeikin and Nikolai Krymov, and later Natalia Goncharova and Mikhail Larionov. The group formally existed till 1910.

**Collective Actions Group** - one of the most active Moscow performance groups for a decade. Originally included Nikita Alekseev, Nikolai Panitkov, Georgi Kizevalter and Andrei Monastyrski in 1976 and existed for ten years. Later joined by Igor Makarevich, Elena Elagina and Sergei Romashko. The group was influenced by John Cage's ideas of ' sounding silence '. Performed ' voyages into nothingness ' to remedy urban pressures and emptiness of Soviet life.

**Four Arts** - a group of painters, graphic designers, sculptors and architects: Kuznetsov, Mukhina, Schusev, Gudiashvili and Petrov - Vodkin hence the name. Aimed at unification of all the four plastic arts. Members included those of *Blue Rose*, *Knave of Diamonds* as well as Malevich and El Lisitskii. Exhibited from 1925 to 1932.

**GorKom of Graphics** - an official organization united commercial artists, i.e. book illustrators, designers and graphics and poster artists. Membership in such organisations was important to receive artistic materials which were not sold freely. The committee played an important role in organising exhibitions of unofficial art in the 1950s and 1960s. Although the artists were supposed to show graphic works many of the works displayed were oil and other mediums as for example from the pupil's of the Beliutin's studio who worked under the auspices of the GorKom.

**GULAG** - literally the State Prison Camps Office. A Soviet Ministry responsible for running the multitude of concentration camps mainly for political prisoners in Stalin's Russia. Was eventually abolished after his death.

**Knave of Diamonds** - the first exhibition under this name was held in 1910 and the group was officially formed in 1911. The main core consisted of Piotr Konchalovski, Ilia Mashkov, Aristarkh Lentulov, Robert Fal'k, Vasili Rozhdestvenski and Alexander Kuprin. Mikhail Larionov and Natalia Goncharova who became interested in Neo - Primitivism later were among the founders of the group but organised their own exhibitions ( ' Donkey's Tail ', ' Target ' and ' 4 ' ) from 1912. The group denied division between genres and were concerned with plastic qualities of the objects they depicted. The exhibitions continued till 1916.

***Moscow metaphysical movement or school*** - a stylistically diverse group of artists in Moscow in the 1960s - 1980s united by a shared interest in transcendental and metaphysical which they tried to express in their works. The leading representatives were Vladimir Veisberg, Mikhail Shvartsman, Dmitri Krasnopevtzev, Ulo Sooster, Vladimir Yankilevski and Dmitri Plavinski.

***Nest ( Gnezdo ) Group*** - formed by Mikhail Roshal, Gennadi Donskoi and Viktor Skersis in 1975. Staged several performances on important national and international issues within three years like ' Hatching Eggs ' at the All - Union Exhibition of Economic Achievements in 1975 or ' Race to Jerusalem ' dedicated to emigration to Israel in 1978.

***New Moscow School*** - a recently used term to describe an Avant - Garde group of unofficial or non - conformist artists of the 1960s. Its core formed by 12 - 15 artists including V. Nemukhin, E. Shteinberg, L. Kropivnitski, Dm. Plavinski, V. Veisberg, O. Rabin and few others.

***Parasitism*** - a term used in the Soviet Union for anyone who was not officially employed in a state enterprise. It was a criminal offence and punished by imprisonment. Most people avoided it by having a nominal post or working once or twice a week.

**Red Star Group** - organised by Mikhail Chernyshov in 1975 to commemorate the thirtieth anniversary of the United Nations. Performed outside Moscow as their ideas of visual combinations of red star and swastika would be criminal in the Soviet Union.

**Samizdat** - literally means ' self - publishing '. The Soviet censorship was quite strict especially under Stalin and later. Many of the Western writers like Samuel Beckett, Franz Kafka or Russian ones like Dostoevski were considered anti - socialist and anti social. A few individuals ventured to spread the knowledge using new copying machines at night all of which belonged to research institutes or government offices. Their unauthorized use was prohibited and severely punished.

**Society of Easel Painters ( OSt )** - a group formed in 1925 and existing till 1931. Wanted to develop their own figurative language, laconic and dynamic to depict industrialisation, sport and life of the city. Among others it included Deineka, Kliun, Labas and Tyshler.

**Society of Moscow Artists** - formed mainly by former members of the *Knave of Diamonds* in 1927. Continued principles of Cezanne and was interested in landscape and still life. Proclaimed an artist's active position to change the outside world and life. Members included Lentulov, Drevin, Rozhdestvenski, Fal'k and up to 70 others. Last exhibition was held in 1932.



***World of Art Group*** - operated from 1898 - 1906 in St Petersburg and included artists like Alexander Benois, Nikolai Rerikh, Leon Bakst, Natalia Goncharova, Mstislav Dobuzhinski and others and was frequented by contemporary philosophers like Lev Shestov and Symbolist poets Valeri Briusov and Alexander Block. The ' World of Art ' was closely connected to the magazine ' Apollon ' heavily sponsored by princess Tenisheva. The group's distinct orientation towards form anticipated the art of Russian Avant - Garde after 1910. The group itself continued to be active in 1910 - 1924 and exhibited in Paris in 1921 and 1927.

# REFERENCES

- <sup>1</sup> Although those facts of the history of icon painting are universally accepted, in the text they are based on M. V. Alpatov's *Early Russian Icon Painting*, Moscow, 1984, pp. 6 -60
- <sup>2</sup> M. Allenov, *Russian Art XVIII - beginning XX cc. ( Russkoe Iskusstvo XVIII - nachala XX veka )*, Moscow, 2000, p. 4
- <sup>3</sup> .M. Allenov, *Russian Art XVIII - beginning XX cc. ( Russkoe Iskusstvo XVIII - nachala XX veka )*, Moscow, 2000, p. 63, 98.
- <sup>4</sup> N. Chernyshevski, *The Aesthetic Relations of Art to Reality ( Esteticheskie otnosheniia iskusstva k deistvitel'nosti )*, Moscow, 1948, p. 10
- <sup>5</sup> Alexander Benois, *History of Russian Painting in the 19<sup>th</sup> century ( Conclusion )*, 1902 ( published in *The Documents of 20<sup>th</sup> - century Art*, ed. by J. Bowlt, New York, 1976, p. 5 )
- <sup>6</sup> John E. Bowlt, *The Silver Age of Russian Art: Russian Art of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the "World of Art" Group*, Newtonville, Mass., 1982, p. 33
- <sup>7</sup> Camilla Grey, *The Russian Experiment in Art, 1863 - 1922*, London, reprint 1996, p. 22
- <sup>8</sup> S. Diaghilev, *Complicated Questions. Our Imaginary Decline*, 1<sup>st</sup> issue, *World of Art Journal*, 10 November 1898, quoted in John E. Bowlt, *The Silver Age of Russian Art: Russian Art of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the "World of Art" Group*, Newtonville, Mass., 1982, p. 69
- <sup>9</sup> Dmitri V. Sarabianov, *Russian Art*, London, 1990, p. 242
- <sup>10</sup> Vasili Kandinski, *the Artist's Text ( Tekst khudozhnika )*, Moscow, 1918, p. 28
- <sup>11</sup> *The Documents of 20<sup>th</sup> - century Art*, ed. by John E. Bowlt, New York, 1976, p. xxvi
- <sup>12</sup> Evgenii Kovtun, *Russian Avant - garde 1920s - 1930s ( Russkii Avangard 1920 - 1930 )*, St Petersburg, 1996, p. 60
- <sup>13</sup> Evgenii Kovtun, *Russian Avant - garde 1920s - 1930s ( Russkii Avangard 1920 - 1930 )*, St Petersburg, 1996, p. 129
- <sup>14</sup> Matthew C. Bown, *Socialist Realist Painting*, New York & London, 1998, p. 48
- <sup>15</sup> A. Benois recollects ( A. Benois razmyshliaet ), Moscow, 1968, pp. 115 -116 as quoted in Selim O. Khan - Magomedov, *Rodchenko, The Complete Work*, London, 1986, p. 23
- <sup>16</sup> *The Struggle for Realism in the Visual Arts of the 1920s ( Bor'ba za realism v izobrazitel'nom iskusstve 20kh godov )*: Materials, documents, memoirs, Moscow, 1962, p. 120
- <sup>17</sup> Quoted in Matthew C. Bown, *Socialist Realist Painting*, New York & London, 1998, p. 62
- <sup>18</sup> Matthew C. Bown, *Socialist Realist Painting*, New York & London, ibid., p. 109
- <sup>19</sup> P. Filonov's *Diaries ( Dnevniki P. Filonova )*, Moscow, 2000, entry of 4 November 1932, also quoted in Evgenii Kovtun, *Russian Avant - garde 1920s - 1930s ( Russkii Avangard 1920 - 1930 )*, St Petersburg, 1996, pp. 100, 101.
- <sup>20</sup> *Russian Avant - Garde Art. The George Costakis Collection*, ed. by Angelica Zander Rudenstine, introduction by S. Frederick Starr, London, 1981, p.32.
- <sup>21</sup> Matthew C. Bown, *Socialist Realist Painting*, New York & London, ibid., p. 227
- <sup>22</sup> Jurgen Habermas, *Modernity - An Incomplete Project*, from *Postmodern Culture*, ed. by Hal Foster, London and Sydney, 1987, p. 5
- <sup>23</sup> Mark Uralski, *Nemukhin's Monologues ( Nemukhinskie Monologi )*, Moscow, 1999, p. 9
- <sup>24</sup> *The Other Art ( Drugoe Iskusstvo )*, Exhibition Catalogue, vol.1, Moscow, 1991, p. 26
- <sup>25</sup> Ekaterina Drevina, *Nadezhda Udaltsova*, Moscow, 1997, p. 75
- <sup>26</sup> Reminiscences of Uri Sobolev, a Moscow artist, from *The Other Art ( Drugoe Iskusstvo )*, Exhibition Catalogue, Moscow, 1991, p. 24
- <sup>27</sup> *Russian Avant - Garde: the way of development ( puti razvitiia )*, ed. by B. Kalaushin, St Petersburg, 1999, p.122
- <sup>28</sup> *Forbidden Art*, Exhibition Catalogue, New York, 1998, p. 107
- <sup>29</sup> *The Other Art ( Drugoe Iskusstvo )*, Exhibition Catalogue, vol. 1, Moscow, 1991, p. 99
- <sup>30</sup> *Lianozovo group: Origins and Lives*, Exhibition Catalogue, Moscow, 1998, p.15
- <sup>31</sup> Kenda & Jacob Bar - Gera, *Wladimir Nemuchin*, Erfurt, 1987, p. 152
- <sup>32</sup> Mark Uralski, *Nemukhin's Monologues ( Nemukhinskie Monologi )*, Moscow, 1999, p. 70

- 
- <sup>33</sup> Kenda & Jacob Bar - Gera, *Wladimir Nemuchin*, Erfurt, 1987, p. 153
- <sup>34</sup> My telephone conversation with the artist on 09 February 2001.
- <sup>35</sup> The artist's thoughts on art were concisely expressed in his article 'Modern Art' published in *Lev Kropivnitsky: 1922 - 1994. Life and Work*, ed. by G. Kropivnitskaya, Moscow, 1995, pp. 17-19.
- <sup>36</sup> *Lev Kropivnitsky: 1922 - 1994. Life and Work*, ed. by G. Kropivnitskaya, Moscow, 1995, p. 87.
- <sup>37</sup> Mark Uralski, *Nemukhin's Monologues (Nemukhinskie Monologi)*, Moscow, 1999, p. 54.
- <sup>38</sup> *Eduard Shteinberg: An Monograph Experiment (Opyt Monographii)*, Moscow, 1992, p. 19
- <sup>39</sup> *Eduard Shteinberg: An Monograph Experiment (Opyt Monographii)*, Moscow, 1992, p. 24
- <sup>40</sup> *Eduard Shteinberg: An Monograph Experiment (Opyt Monographii)*, Moscow, 1992, p. 12
- <sup>41</sup> *The Other Art (Drugoe Iskusstvo)*, Exhibition Catalogue, vol. 1, Moscow, 1991, p. 231
- <sup>42</sup> Mark Uralski, *Nemukhin's Monologues (Nemukhinskie Monologi)*, Moscow, 1999, p. 63
- <sup>43</sup> An extensive and comprehensive coverage of non - Moscow Avant - Garde artists and groups can be found in *Nonconformist Art: The Soviet Experience 1956 - 1986*, general ed. by Alla Rosenfeld and Norton T. Dodge, New York, 1995 and *Russian Avant - Garde: the way of development (puti razvitiia)*, ed. by B. Kalaushin, St Petersburg, 1999
- <sup>44</sup> Michel Foucault, *Histoire de la Sexualite*, vol. 1, Paris, 1976, p. 126
- <sup>45</sup> *The Other Art (Drugoe Iskusstvo)*, Exhibition Catalogue, vol. 1, Moscow, 1991, p. 221
- <sup>46</sup> *Nonconformist Art: The Soviet Experience 1956 - 1986*, general ed. by Alla Rosenfeld and Norton T. Dodge, New York, 1995, p. 90
- <sup>47</sup> *Nonconformist Art: The Soviet Experience 1956 - 1986*, general ed. by Alla Rosenfeld and Norton T. Dodge, New York, 1995, p. 326.
- <sup>48</sup> See for Malevich Evgenii Kovtun, *Russian Avant - garde 1920s - 1930s (Russkii Avangard 1920 - 1930)*, St Petersburg, 1996, p. 83 and for Nemukhin Mark Uralski, *Nemukhin's Monologues (Nemukhinskie Monologi)*, Moscow, 1999, pp. 72, 73.
- <sup>49</sup> Although Jurgen Habermas did not write about Russia in his *Modernity - An Incomplete Project, Postmodern Culture*, ed. by Hal Foster, London and Sydney, 1987, the same problems were and are encountered by artists in Russia.
- <sup>50</sup> Mark Uralski, *Nemukhin's Monologues (Nemukhinskie Monologi)*, Moscow, 1999, p. 73
- <sup>51</sup> Kenda & Jacob Bar - Gera, *Wladimir Nemuchin*, Erfurt, 1987, p. 161
- <sup>52</sup> Quoted in *Forbidden Art*, Exhibition Catalogue, New York, 1998, p. 22
- <sup>53</sup> *The Other Art (Drugoe Iskusstvo)*, Exhibition Catalogue, vol. 1, Moscow, 1991, p. 33
- <sup>54</sup> *Dictionary of Ornament* by Philippa Lewis & Gillian Darley, Devon, 1990, p. 64
- <sup>55</sup> *Lev Kropivnitsky: 1922 - 1994. Life and Work*, ed. by G. Kropivnitskaya, Moscow, 1995, p. 97.
- <sup>56</sup> *Lev Kropivnitsky: 1922 - 1994. Life and Work*, ed. by G. Kropivnitskaya, Moscow, 1995, p. 50.
- <sup>57</sup> *Dictionary of Ornament* by Philippa Lewis & Gillian Darley, Devon, 1990, p. 108
- <sup>58</sup> *Eduard Shteinberg: An Monograph Experiment (Opyt Monographii)*, Moscow, 1992, p. 11.
- <sup>59</sup> An abstract from E. Shiffers's letter to E. Shteinberg, quoting 1- 2 century AD book of Erma 'Shepherd' (as in *Eduard Shteinberg: An Monograph Experiment (Opyt Monographii)*, Moscow, 1992, p. 56)

---

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. M. Allenov, Russkoe Iskusstvo XVIII - nachala XX veka ( Russian Art XVIII - beginning XX cc. ), Moscow, 2000
2. M. V. Alpatov, Early Russian Icon Painting, Moscow, 1984
3. K. & J. Bar - Gera, Wladimir Nemuchin, Erfurt, 1987
4. A. Benois razmyshliaet ( A. Benois recollects ), Moscow, 1968
5. Bor'ba za realism v izobrazitel'nom iskusstve 20kh godov (The Struggle for Realism in the Visual Arts of the 1920s ): Materials, documents, memoirs, Moscow, 1962
6. John E. Bowlt, The Silver Age of Russian Art: Russian Art of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the "World of Art" Group, Newtonville, Mass., 1982
7. Matthew C. Bown, Socialist Realist Painting, New York & London, 1998
8. N. Chernyshevski, Esteticheskie otnisheniia iskusstva k deistvitel'nosti ( The Aesthetic Relations of Art to Reality ), Moscow, 1948
9. Dictionary of Ornament by Philippa Lewis & Gillian Darley, Devon, 1990
10. Dnevnik P. Filonova ( Filonov's diaries ), Moscow, 2000
11. The Documents of 20<sup>th</sup> - century Art, ed. by John E. Bowlt, New York, 1976
12. Ekaterina Drevina, Nadezhda Udal'tsova, Moscow, 1997
13. Drugoe Iskusstvo ( The Other Art ), Exhibition Catalogue, vol.1 & 2, Moscow, 1991
14. Michel Foucault, Histoire de la Sexualite, vol. 1, Paris, 1976, p. 126

- 
15. Forbidden Art, Exhibition Catalogue, New York, 1998
  16. Camilla Grey, The Russian Experiment in Art, 1863 - 1922, London,  
reprint 1996
  17. Vasili Kandinski, Tekst khudozhnika ( The Artist's Text ), Moscow, 1918
  18. O. Khan - Magomedov, Rodchenko, The Complete Work, London, 1986
  19. Evgenii Kovtun, Russkii Avangard 1920 - 1930, St Petersburg, 1996
  20. Lev Kropivnitsky: 1922 - 1994. Life and Work, ed . by G. Kropivnitskaya,  
Moscow, 1995
  21. Lianozovskaia gruppa: Istoki I Sud'by ( Lianosovo Group: Origins and  
Lives ), Exhibition Catalogue, Moscow, 1998
  22. Nonconformist Art: The Soviet Experience 1956 - 1986, general ed. by Alla  
Rosenfeld and Norton T. Dodge, New York, 1995
  23. Postmodern Culture, ed. by Hal Foster, London and Sydney, 1987
  24. Russkii Avant - Garde: puti razvitia, ed. by B. Kalaushin, St Petersburg,  
1999
  25. Russian Avant - Garde Art. The George Costacis Collection, ed. by  
Angelica Zander Rudenstine, introduction by S. Frederick Starr, London,  
1981
  26. Dmitri V. Sarabianov, Russian Art, London, 1990
  27. Eduard Shteinberg, Opyt Monographii ( An Monograph Experiment ),  
Moscow, 1992
  28. Mark Uralski, Nemukhinskie Monologi ( Monologues of Nemukhin ),  
Moscow, 1999

