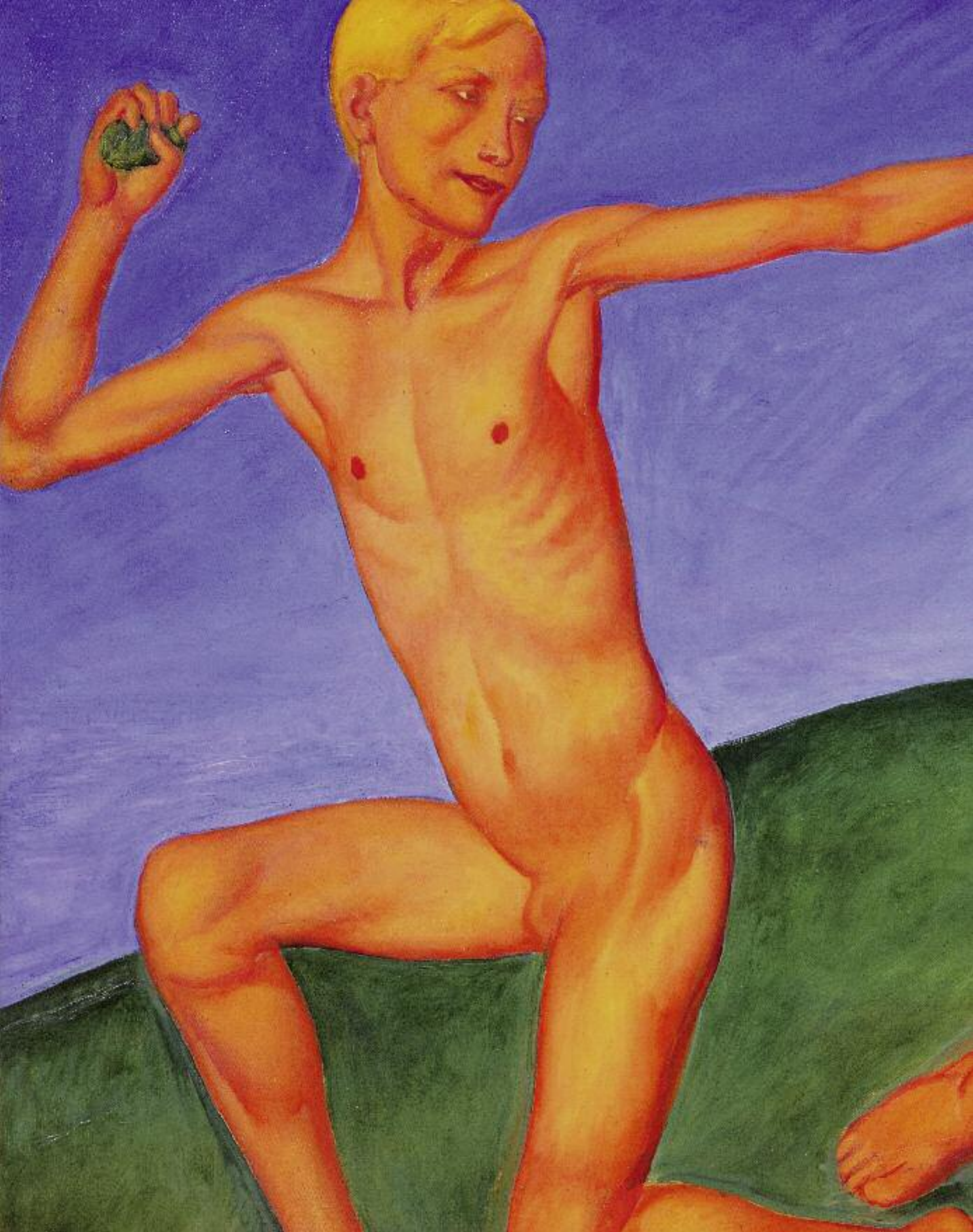
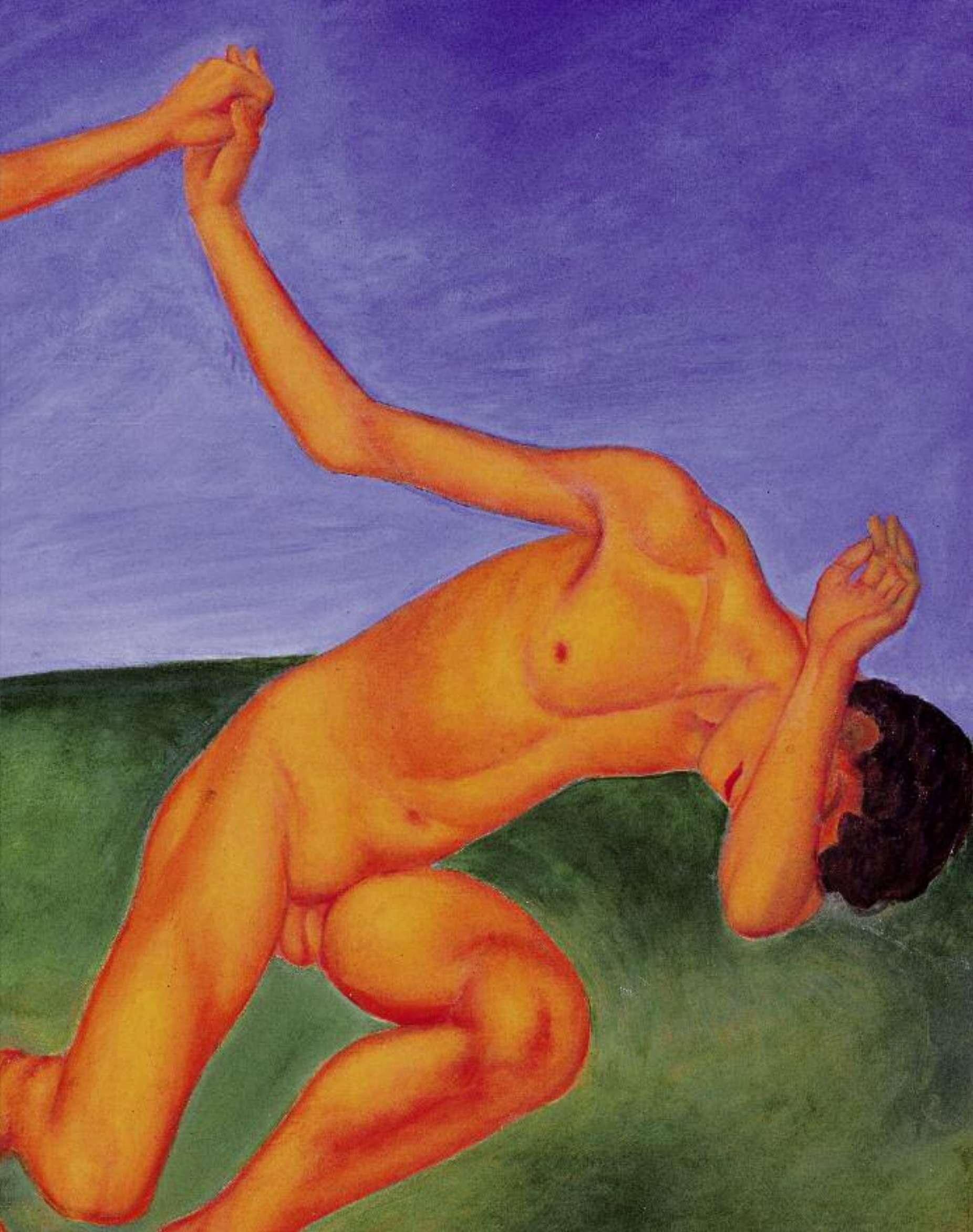


R U S S I A N M U S E U M

PETROV-VODKIN'S CIRCLE







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Introduction

Who could have imagined that the Petrov-Vodkin exhibition that the Russian Museum prepared in the mid-1960s opened then with great difficulty, after months of getting approval from people in high places? But that is how it was. By that time, the Russian Museum had a wonderful collection of the artist's work, which had come from the artist himself (1930s), his friends, collectors, and his family. But the majority of these works were unknown to the public until the exhibition at the Russian Museum. The mid-1960s were a time of discovery of Petrov-Vodkin's work, as it was for other artists who were until then considered to be formalists, or who had left the country and thus were unworthy of remaining in the history of Russian art (Zinaida Serebryakova, Alexander Benois, and others).

But in the mid-1960s and a bit later, museums were able to overcome all obstacles and show examples of the work of formerly forbidden artists who worked in figurative forms. Primarily, it was these works that collectors began to collect and about which books were written. Their works began to be included in various exhibitions.

Once again, it happened that in the shadows of artists who were already famous, there were many of their contemporaries who were often first-rate artists themselves, with their own identities, styles and ideas. It would seem that from the 1970s through the 1990s, when works were still in the possession of families, friends and acquaintances of the artists, we could have added to large collections, organised exhibitions, and published works as well as information about the artists. But at the time, historians and art lovers had moved their focus to the radical avant-garde. It is only now, when the nonobjectivity in the work of Kazimir Malevich, Wassily Kandinsky, Alexander Rodchenko, and other artists has ceased to be an inaccessible and unknown part of Russia's cultural heritage, collectors and researchers have again turned their attention to figurative artists.

This book dedicated to Petrov-Vodkin and his circle is a wonderful example of the great work that has been done in the last decade, by Pyotr Aven, Roman Babichev and Alla Esipovich-Roginskaya in particular. They found and collected works by students, followers and kindred spirits of Petrov-Vodkin. Employees of the Russian Museum – Alexander Borovsky, Olga Musakova, and others – systematised information about the artists, both what had already been published and what has been recently discovered. In the articles preceding this publication, perhaps for the first time, the correlation between what was original and what was borrowed from Petrov-Vodkin's pedagogical system in the work of many artists was analysed.

This is an important stage in the history of Russian art, when not only have the distinctive characteristics of the school come to light, but, in fact, new names have been discovered, along with their artistic identities, styles and manner of working.

E v g e n i a P e t r o v a

Deputy Director of the Russian Museum for Academic Research



Petrov-Vodkin's Circle

First of all, an understanding of the actual term "Petrov-Vodkin's circle" should be formulated. In the Russian art of the first half of the 20th century there are at least three figures that not only loom large in their own right, but also possess a particular, unifying status: they are Kazimir Malevich, Pavel Filonov and Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. They are known not only for the unique quality of their creative being, but also as regards the collective nature of their actions: they fostered many pupils, close associates and kindred spirits, whose destiny for a certain time (and quite often throughout their creative lives) bore the imprint of the names of these outstanding masters. Moreover, in the historical perspective, the differences in the models for the formation of such alliances – or "own communities", to borrow a phrase from modern cultural anthropology – can be seen all the more clearly. For instance, the Filonov School (MAI¹) emerges as a kind of collective body: the creative, philosophical and pedagogical System of the Master was matrix-like in nature, and through it the individual artistic destinies were "imprinted". Any departure from the matrix was perceived in drastic terms – as a betrayal of the common cause: the collective's history is full of such occurrences.

The "Malevich situation" was different. The originator of the concept of suprematism saw in it a universality and a propensity to integrate, and he fuelled his aspirations as the personifier of "absolute creativity". He longed to see his pupils, at least during the Vitebsk period, as followers of the suprematist faith, whose aim was to translate suprematist theory "into everyday practice" (with connotations of universality). Accordingly, the community was built up on the principle of a "Utopia of rank" (as Tatyana Goryacheva² put it concisely): it was an élite group that contained its own hierarchy (a creative committee, the "fire people", as the nucleus). They trained the "workforce". However, the "standard", stage-by-stage, sequential training programme lagged behind the world-building intentions. Globalism demanded extensivity: with his charismatic ardour, Malevich was able to attract to his project not only the young, dedicated UNOVIS³ followers (and later at the GINKhUK⁴ too) and masters whose creativity was only slightly affected by suprematism and sometimes those who were acquainted with these issues indirectly – "through the pupils" – but also major artists who were not connected with suprematism, but who made a great contribution to the avant-garde movement. It was proving impossible to achieve an ideal consolidation around the "objective, invariable, formative element" – suprematism – since the denizens of the territory staked out by Malevich were too diverse. But, as Malevich saw them, the minutiae of creative and human relationships were not substantial: "A single definite base, a firm axis, underlies suprematism. Any individuality wishing to work within suprematism must submit to this base, developing its own features only within the radius of the base." In other words, he was drawing a circle. All the names encompassed by the circle and located inside the circle came within the radius of suprematism's action. They were, thus, "our own" (even if later they might display "departures", a confrontation, etc.). In time, the organisers of the well-known Russian Museum exhibition of 2000 were to bear this form of consolidation in mind when they presented Malevich as the catalyst behind a large array of interlinked art practices, and this enabled them to call the exhibition *In Malevich's Circle*⁵. The preposition "in" here is not a matter of chance: it encapsulates the semantics of Malevich's free choice of "his own persons" (even if there are different degrees of closeness).

Let us move on to Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin and to the vision of belonging, closeness and mutual understanding that seems to have been characteristic of the artist. Specific features are involved here. The first two great artists claimed to be radically altering the reality around them, whereas Petrov-Vodkin did not display any such overtly life-shaping ambitions. He was a predominantly introspective artist, more interested in deepening his personal view of the world. He was a teacher in the more traditional and professional sense: he did not so much energise others with a visual decoding of the world as share his experience of consistently penetrating its essence – the "science of seeing". The notional in the artist's programme was combined with the optical and material – the "organisation of an object's deep craftsmanship". His pedagogical orientation (the three-colour method, the spherical

perspective theory, the “problem of movement”) objectivised the artist’s personal experience as he developed, and this mutual adjustment of theory and practice lent a particular suggestiveness to Petrov-Vodkin’s method. Thus, he seems to have had no need of pupils, missionaries or agents for his doctrine; the prophetic was alien to him. But from whom, then, was Petrov-Vodkin’s “own community” formed? In fact, there would not seem to be any problems here: it consisted largely of his pupils. Petrov-Vodkin was constantly engaged in teaching from 1910 onwards (Elizaveta Zvantseva’s school). From 1918 to 1932, he was a professor at the Academy of Arts – successively reorganised and renamed as VKhUTEMAS, VKhUTEIN and INPII ⁶ and that meant dozens of students. However, at some period, his system was the only teaching methodology, fully internalised and self-contained, so that over a hundred first-year students came into contact, albeit indirectly, with Petrov-Vodkin during that time. It should be borne in mind that, in later course years too, the “attaching” of students to professors was fairly notional, and they could move freely (at least, during the academic year) to work in neighbouring workshops (sometimes this was not reflected at all in the student files). So young artists have sometimes noted the part that Petrov-Vodkin played in their development and have even left recollections of the teaching process, although they never featured in his pupil lists, while numerous “registered” pupils have vanished without trace.

There is a further aspect – certain divergences between Petrov-Vodkin’s influence on a young artist and that artist’s relationship with his school on the methodological plane, with teaching “according to the objective method”. This matter has its own history. Vladimir Kostin wrote back in 1966: “Over the long years of teaching work, many pupils passed through the school of Petrov-Vodkin, but only a few of them have grown into outstanding masters. Above all, they are Alexander Samokhvalov, Alexei Pakhomov, Vladimir Dmitriev, Uga Skulme and the sculptor Boris Kaplyansky. Petrov-Vodkin also had other, more favourite pupils, including Chupyatov, the Proshkin brothers, Golubyatnikov, Priselkov, Lappo-Danilevsky, Cherkesov, Pyotr Sokolov and Vladimir Malagis, but their art did not reinforce the school or their teacher’s pedagogical system.”⁷ Over the decades that have passed, many other names have gained academic currency, such as Vyacheslav Pakulin, Tatyana Kuperwasser, Victoria Belakovskaya, Gerasim Efros, Alisa Poret, Evgenia Evenbach, Maria Lomakina, Israel Lizak and Alexandra Yakobson. An increase in material is a natural result of the expansion of research by art historians. Let us leave aside the question of favourite pupils – that group’s membership constantly changed, and their relationship with the teacher was inevitably influenced by external causes: the higher art school as an institution while Petrov-Vodkin was a professor underwent drastic changes, and the disruption of particular careers was unavoidable. The actual raising of the question of the “reinforcement” and “non-reinforcement of the school” is more substantial. In fact, the functioning of the school as such did, at various times, rest with three pupils – Chupyatov, Priselkov and Golubyatnikov. On the whole, they remained true to Petrov-Vodkin’s teaching system. Particularly in recent times ⁸, including during the preparations for this exhibition, works have come to light that vividly reinforce ideas about the teaching process: they are items that are sometimes remarkable and striking on the training and compositional level too. Incidentally, it is among Petrov-Vodkin’s pupils that the compositions – particularly those using nude models (works by Blagoveshchenskaya, Lomakina and Belakovskaya) – reveal certain overarching objectives that call for special consideration.

By “upholding the school” Kostin evidently meant a more general problem of preserving Petrov-Vodkin’s principle in the personal creative work of those of his pupils who had developed into totally independent artists. But what does Petrov-Vodkin’s substance mean? The artist’s contemporaries had also asked themselves that question. It was already clear to them that “Vodkin” was fundamentally not equivalent to “Vodkinism” (a term that was current in the twenties, not without a certain critically sarcastic tone) – “a purely stylised, outward imitation of certain techniques that seemed to reproduce in full the method of Kuzma Sergeevich,” a student at the time recalls ⁹. Yet it was obvious that the “objective method” as the totality of precepts of a theoretical type was consistently rooted in the material aspect. Being his pupil meant passing through a certain professional qualification procedure: “I haven’t spawned *dilettanti*,” the artist proclaimed.

Thus, there is great historical and cultural significance in the classwork of the Petrov-Vodkin School that has been preserved and discovered – not only as testimony to a highly original artistic training method, but also, to no less a degree, in the context of the evolution of ideas about the canon represented in Russian academic education from the 18th century onwards. The next stage is far more important. That is the existence of a whole series of

young artists who managed to go beyond Petrov-Vodkin's "science of seeing" course and developed into fully independent masters who did, though, maintain a state of direct dialogue with their teacher: this applies particularly to Chupyatov, Golubyatnikov and Sokolov, but not to them alone. The works of several masters (Shikhmanova, Kotovich-Borisyak and Zernov) will be considered for the first time (or for the first time in the context described above). There is also the next level of Petrov-Vodkin's influence – the creative work of the artists who moved quite far from the concrete problems that excited the teacher, but who preserved in their work Petrov-Vodkin's appetite for something that had structure – both as regards the painting and spatial depiction of an image and as regards the organisation of the viewing, i.e. the viewer's navigation "inside the picture".

For instance, certain structural features of Petrov-Vodkin's representational techniques can easily be detected in the work of Samokhvalov and Pakhomov, Lizak and Malagis. So, are we dealing with an original relaying (albeit transformed by each individual artist) in time and space of the postulates of the system – the spherical perspective, the "three-colour method" and the problem of movement? No, there is more to Petrov-Vodkin than that. Natalia Adaskina, who is, perhaps, one of today's most authoritative specialists on the artist's legacy, is justified in writing: "It is important to realise that Petrov-Vodkin really was a man and artist with an archetypal way of thinking; that was how he experienced and interpreted reality.¹⁰" The author takes this archetypal nature to mean the totality of his "narrative, conceptual and situational motifs". Thus, traditional religious and pre-Christian mythological motifs, specific historical allusions, elements of genre art and idylls may coexist in the "Maternity" archetype. In the "Death" archetype are eschatological anxieties and battle realia, natural disasters and social foresights. Naturally, symbolic, mythical and poetic thought forms the basis at all stages in their evolution. The persistence of Petrov-Vodkin's archetypes, which are rooted in the Russian tradition of the understanding of art, has made them the constant components of Russian artistic life over many decades. This includes the late 1920s and the 1930s. To some extent, the artists who distanced themselves stylistically from Petrov-Vodkin do, through the dynamics of their individual development, retain a link with him on the archetypal level. And in the reinterpretation of the art of that period that is taking place today, the discovery of such links may have a considerable historical and cultural perspective. In fact, it may change ideas about the configuration of symbolism in the post-avant-garde period – to say nothing of the elevation of this set of problems to the level of controversy over the different kinds of realism in European art between the two wars.

So the concept of "Petrov-Vodkin's Circle" comes across as mobile and multi-componential, having no semantics of wilful excision, restriction or truncation. Quite the opposite: ideas about the ever-growing concentric circles of the accretion of new materials and interpretations are associated with it.

Petrov-Vodkin's work record shows the entry: "1910–1917. Management of Zvantseva's school of painting"¹¹. Clearly, this was important to him even many years later – he was in sole charge of the artistic teaching process and took responsibility for it. The school was experiencing hard times – Bakst, for whose benefit it had all, actually, been arranged, left after blessing Petrov-Vodkin for his management (even before then he had, in fact, disappeared constantly). The lecture hall was in an uproar, the pupils would sometimes move to other schools and, at other times, return; many never accepted the change of management. The school existed from the outset in opposition, as it were, to all the canons: doubt was cast on authoritative figures, and the pupils felt, in the spirit of the times, that they were not only undergoing the teaching process, but were also running it.

After moving to St Petersburg from Moscow in 1906, Elizaveta Zvantseva, announced the opening of a School of Drawing and Painting under the direction of Bakst and Dobuzhinsky. There were other teachers too. The actual address – 25 Tavricheskaya Street – was historically symbolic: it was on the floor below the "Tower of the poet Vyacheslav Ivanov"¹², the citadel of the Silver Age. But, although the names of the leading teachers were similarly associated with St Petersburg's World of Art culture, the young students immediately refused to see the school as a "branch of World of Art". "... Under Bakst's direction, the young people were brought up on principles that were completely opposed to the foundations of World of Art, setting against its retrospective ethos – the naive eye of the savage and its stylisation – the directness of the child's drawing; against its graphic nature – the exuberant, vivid 'hotchpotch' of painting; and, finally, against its individualism – conscious collectivism."¹³ This passage was written by the artist and writer Yulia Obolenskaya, to whose lively memoirs we shall refer repeatedly. Although they are

unmistakably peppered with the vocabulary of the manifestos and other prescriptive texts from the "avant-garde future", it must be acknowledged that Zvantseva's school proved to be unique in terms of how many of the pupils figured in the history of Russian and European avant-garde art (also unique, incidentally, in terms of the potential discovery of new names that, for various reasons, have vanished from that history and need to be reinstated).

The pupils were a mixed bunch: there were several impoverished geniuses from the provinces, but most were young people from respectable St Petersburg families, at whose expense it was possible to discount the more needy students' tuition fees. Needless to say, there were also, as Yulia Obolenskaya put it, "occasional ladies".

In short, the school's foremost pupils were involved not only in the teaching process, but, at the same time, in the artistic process too.

The most promising painter, to judge from the testimony of her contemporaries, was Nadezhda Lermontova, who, as her legacy comes to light, is being seen increasingly as a major artist. Born into a distinguished and enlightened family (her father was a physicist, a *Privatdozent* at the University of St Petersburg, and a distant relative of the great poet), she had been given an excellent education at home and had completed Bestuzhev courses for women, and, being a person of varied interests, particularly, according to her sister's recollections, in promoting the equality of women, Lermontova chose uncompromisingly, without any hint of dilettantism, the path of a professional artist, rare for girls of her circle. She had attracted attention through the works she produced before the Bakst period. Despite all her inner freedom, Lermontova was, of course, moulded under the influence of Bakst's teaching. As a teacher, Bakst was more radical than he was as an artist. To sum up the recollections of his teaching, culled from various memoir sources, the assignments boiled down to the following. Apparently, as an artist of high calibre, with even a certain dandyism in his pictorial representation, Bakst the teacher did not permit anything "lively, trenchant or affected"¹⁴ in the works produced by his pupils: a simplified silhouette ("not drawn, but painted"), a shape that did not develop in three dimensions, but was rendered with a slight, "subdued" relief, colour that was "seen in real life" – not even pastel was allowed, since it produced ready-made colours, or a palette knife, which introduced unintentional impurities (nothing formulaic, to use the old academy-style language). One memoir writer recalls an assignment to depict a model against a dark-blue background. "One might have imagined... that Chagall and Tyrsa would not abandon their natural tones: Chagall – his uniform, dark-bluish, muted tone; Tyrsa – his very delicate, greenish-light-blue, as though you are looking at something through water ... But nothing could have been said about Lermontova in advance. Any *étude* by her would sometimes strike one by the whole contrast between an unusual light-coloured range of greenish-lemon and dark-yellow shades, while at other times it would develop in stormy, reddish-brown tones. It is impossible to convey in words the totally special quality of her colour: the quantity and variety of the shades that she was able to skilfully derive from it are unequalled."¹⁵

Lermontova was the leader among Bakst's pupils. Her work was imitated. In 1910, in the school's fourth year, Bakst arranged a special exhibition on the premises of the editorial office of the journal *Apollon*. Obolenskaya remembers "Lermontova's huge model, positioned from eyebrows to ankles. The body is on a green background, and the left hand is resting on a box covered with a dark-blue material. The body is painted in unexpectedly gold-tinted, very light tones."¹⁶ The work is described so precisely – seventeen years after the show – that we are able to identify the canvas *Nude Model* (illus. on p. 61) as the work that was shown at the *Apollon* exhibition. (The phrase "from eyebrows to ankles" is a curious one. The compositional truncation of the canvas a medium of expression is important to the artist. Not everyone was aware of that. In her ingenuous memoirs, Lermontova's younger sister seemed to justify that device: "In many of her pictures, everything was still as crowded as in a child's drawing, and the composition often extends beyond the canvas, regardless of its size (yet that does not diminish the picture's expressiveness, but, on the contrary, increases it)."¹⁷ Lermontova and some of her associates were pained by Bakst's departure. Even though Petrov-Vodkin had been invited at Bakst's insistence, he remained a newcomer for her. She herself was already a full-fledged painter who was starting to be widely exhibited (after the *Apollon*, in 1911 – at the *World of Art* exhibition; in the winter of 1912–13 – at the *Union of Youth* exhibition, etc.). Are we right to place Lermontova in the context of Petrov-Vodkin (even allowing for their joint work in 1910, painting the interior of St Basil's Church in Ovruch, restored by Alexei Shchusev)? I think we are. But the context is not so much pedagogical as creative. Their relationship was not teacher-pupil, but was based on a dialogue, in which, to use Mikhail



Nadezhda Lermontova

Self-Portrait. Late 1910s

Oil on canvas. 56 x 49

Private collection

Bakhtin's metaphor, the voices "are reflected in one another... hear one another... and answer one another". Merely placing these masters together in the same exhibition reveals new aspects in the work of both of them.

The authority of Petrov-Vodkin at the time when he took over Zvantseva's school was, of course, incomparably greater. He had already participated (with the works he had produced in North Africa) in the prestigious Paris Salon (1908), had his first solo exhibition at the offices of *Apollon* (1909), experienced a "national scandal" (the artist's own phrase) with his picture *Dream* (1910, Russian Museum), which was mercilessly criticised by Ilya Repin as "a revolting mess by an ignoramus"¹⁸, and heard a prophecy of his future unifying mission, pronounced by Alexander Benois himself. Lermontova had only gained recognition in quite a narrow circle. But, paradoxically, the artists' efforts overlap throughout the 1910s – primarily in the symbolist field. Her *Naked Boy* (illus. on p. 60) with its refined lemon-yellow colour scheme cries out to be put alongside Petrov-Vodkin's *Boys Playing* (illus. on p. 59): they are drawn together by the dialectic of the notional and the corporeal. But there are also more complex links, and they are to be found in the area of the understanding and experiencing of antiquity.

Natalya Adaskina felicitously described a series of works painted by Petrov-Vodkin in the 1910s (*Dream*, 1910; *Youth. Kiss*, 1913; *Boys*, 1911 – all in the Russian Museum; *The Expulsion from Paradise* (illus. on p. 58) and a number of others) as "symbolist formalism". That definition captures Petrov-Vodkin's difference "from the Russian national version of symbolism, which was mainly embodied in the bland, misty and vague painting of the later Borisov-Musatov, the early Kuznetsov, Utkin, Miliotti and others"¹⁹. Vladimir Kruglov precisely describes this "state of mind" of a large group of Russian artists as "nirvana-like"²⁰. There was good reason for Grigory Sternin to use the terms "dual reality" and "double world"²¹, when discussing this typology of the symbolist picture. Describing Borisov-Musatov's picture *Ghosts* (1903, Tretyakov Gallery) as an example, he stresses that the dream in the picture does not need any allegorical interpretation: "it is itself reality"; the elegiac mirage is the ghostliness of life itself. From the outset, Petrov-Vodkin's neo-classical symbolist compositions represent a different existence – a notional, virgin, original world of deep Biblical or ancient antiquity. Actually, "formalism" is the means of performing that task: the form-shaping role of the line, the wrought nature of the plastic, the accentuated notional element, the artificiality of the colour range, the clarity of the planes... Ferdinand Hodler, Hans von Marées, Franz von Stuck, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes and, possibly, the inoculation of a short stay at Ažbe's school – all these artistic forces with which the young artist came into contact during his rather lengthy formation were mustered... The selection of these forces, among other things, was accomplished by rejecting the physiological, directly optical nature of an impressionistic interpretation... The ideal character of that world, its "divine wisdom" (Vladimir Solovyov) and the otherness of what is depicted is also emphasised by the overall state of the subjects – sleepwalking, self-absorbed... Maybe this is symbolism in its crystallised form. As Alexander Etkind puts it, "the new poetry (symbolist – A. B.) is directly compared by Vyacheslav Ivanov with a sleepwalker"²².

Through her archaic "text" (*Eos, Prometheus and Icarus* and *Moses Parting the Sea*, all from the 1910s, private collection; *Leda and the Egg* (illus. on p. 65); *Medea, Jason Charming the Dragon* and a scenery sketch, 1913), Lermontova also came into contact with the main cultural texts of the age of symbolism as a "vital and creative method" (Vyacheslav Khodasevich). It is curious that, for the expression of certain substantive ideas about the world in the vocabulary of the non-scientific thinkers of the first half of the century, from Vyacheslav Ivanov to Mikhail Bakhtin, notions such as "organisation of the popular soul", "genuine referendum of the people's will" and "national unity" were found side by side with the terms "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" and so on. It was ultimately a question of the image of the world – both the primordial world and the imagined or forecast one. Lermontova was undoubtedly involved in this discourse. Not, of course, without the influence of her beloved Bakst, who managed to escape from the field that was flagged with cultural guidelines and to break into the spontaneously sensual, archetypal and primordial – the "living" area (*Cleopatra*, 1909; *Scheherazade*, 1910; *Narcissus*, 1911; *The Afternoon of a Faun* – productions staged over three years during Sergei Diaghilev's famous Paris venture). The theme of the ancient runs through all of Bakst's productions – whether it takes the form of antiquity or the East. And so it is the theme of the deep-rooted, mythological sensuality of the childhood of civilisation, choked and suppressed by later cultural layers. All this inevitably had an effect on Lermontova. But her own sense of the world remained uppermost. There is already a certain break in the early work *On the Sofa. Self-Portrait* (illus. on p. 63). It is conveyed both by

the position of the body – unnatural, angular – and by the prickly decoration of the sofa cushion: one has the impression that sharpened sticks are piercing the model's body. In *Jump* (1910s, Russian Museum), it is overdone in the same way – the circus woman's pose is unnatural: her body is, quite literally, "tied in a knot". The journalistic usage of the time gave rise to the stereotype image of the modern woman, the woman of symbolism and the woman of decadence. They were not differentiated. *In toto*, they embodied the fear of women's emancipation that was felt by the man in the street and was relayed by the conservative press. One passage from a columnist of the *Saint Petersburg News* about the Apollon "Exhibition of female portraits" is typical: "Fortunately, all these 'pragmatic' kinds of *femmes fatales* or, to put it more simply, neurotic, useless, hysterical women, really do have some kind of general resemblance, but they certainly do not represent the 'type' of the real Russian woman – the mother who heroically builds and repairs our collapsing modern home...²³." Serov himself was apprehensive about the fate of his portrait of Ida Rubinshtein, wondering, partly in jest, partly in earnest, who would take care of her: "... my Ida Rubinshtein, if she, poor and naked, is thrown out of Alexander III's museum on to the street"²⁴. These "decadent" notes were clearly present in Lermontova's works, and they were meant to shock (incidentally, she had complete mastery of the techniques of exaggeration, as is shown by her late works *Folk Rhyme* and *White Night*, both from the 1910s, private collection). Grigory Sternin cites some typical recollections by Andrei Bely about how Bakst painted his portrait in a "decadent spirit". He needed the model to be "enlivened to the point of ecstasy", "... I began to suffer from that until a nerve in my tooth opened up, and, as I clutched my cheek, my face was enlivened by grimaces of pain... after every sitting, I endured the feeling that Bakst had broken my jaw; that is how I came out – with a broken jaw. The portrait shouted that I was decadent²⁵." The writer was, of course, overdoing it, indulging in wishful thinking: the decadent artist was obliged, as depicted by the more cautious symbolist writers, to breach the norm (break a jaw) literally as well as metaphorically. In actual fact, Bakst was certainly not that radical, whereas Lermontova was not afraid of "shouting", at least when she was working on an ancient theme. But what is the artist shouting about, and by what means is she seeking to convey the sensation of shouting? At this stage, we do not seem to be dealing with the grotesque. Naturally, Lermontova set herself other tasks. Her image of antiquity is a synthesis of symbolism and of a primitivising principle. Both symbolism and primitivism are here mixed in a purely personal way. "We have never before seen such an ungainly Prometheus," the reviewer of the "Exhibition of Pictures for the Benefit of the Art Workers' Hospital" (1914) writes about Lermontova's work. "It would be better to provide the ancient Greeks too with a synthesis of the myths (in Lermontova's work, Icarus and Prometheus are brought together on a single canvas)." The "timid drawing" is immediately noticeable. And from the dramatic picture *The Poet's Memory* (1914, private collection), which is, in fact, like an epitaph to herself, the critic remembers only the "ugly faces with badly grazed skin"²⁶. Not only Prometheus and Icarus are "clumsy"; so too is *Moses Parting the Sea*. And then, of course, there is *Leda and the Egg*, a work inspired by a verse from Sappho: the accentuated "Greek eyes" (A. V. Lermontova's expression²⁷), the unnatural pose and affected gesticulation – in fact, everything here betrays a conscious primitivisation. The neo-primitivising tendency in Lermontova is in the logic of the development of the avant-garde, especially that of Mikhail Larionov and Natalia Goncharova, but Lermontova came to it much earlier. Yet in her poetics there is neither the "Gauguin inoculation" nor the allusions to provincial folklore – the popular print, the signboard, photographers' picturesque backgrounds or the vulgar "folklore cryptogram" (Dmitry Sarabyanov). That is important: Lermontova's neoprimitivism as poetics is rooted in symbolism, in its philosophical tenets – and in a dialogue with the poetics of Petrov-Vodkin's symbolist works.

"Symbolism transformed the deep levels and altered states of consciousness, which had previously remained, as it were, beyond the pale of culture – dreams and meditative, narcotic, hypnotic and pathological states – into the material of creative work" (Alexander Etkind²⁸). In Petrov-Vodkin's work, the symbolic is clothed in an impeccable neo-classical form and has a markedly conventional colour scheme (the other existence of the symbolist world, otherwise described as ideal essences), whereas Lermontova deliberately lowers the intonation. As for the levels of consciousness, they are clearly not meditative or visionary (let us recall the theme of epiphanies and trances, much favoured by a large circle of symbolists). The thickset Moses parting the sea resembles a peasant sowing seeds, and the recollections of the artist's sister bear witness to the feelings of earthiness and non-canonical naturalness of the *Fantasy on Greek Themes* (the subtitle of the picture *Icarus and Prometheus*): "The right-hand

half of the picture was occupied by a bare cliff with Prometheus chained to it in a crouched position. He looks gloomily at Icarus, who is falling down against the backdrop of a delicate light-blue sky and a calm sea.²⁹ There is no pathos. The myth (Old Testament or Classical) has not yet risen above the reality and has not been mediated by a canon, either narrative or iconographic. Alongside the archaicism, Lermontova also uses the lowering device of playing with certain typological mass ideas and tastes. The man in the street expects “mystery” and sickness from “decadence”. *Sphinx* (late 1910s, private collection) fully meets these expectations. According to ancient Greek mythology, the sphinx was a monster with the head of a woman and the feet and body of a lion... The artist feminises the image: there is a feather in the hairstyle, a dress, a check shawl and even high women's boots. Besides that, there is a typically decadent, twisted and contorted body of uncertain morphology. The first, obvious level of understanding is that it is a kind of taunt directed at the man in the street: if you want mystery, “Here it is!” A second, deeper level forces one to discern, behind the spikiness, mystification and mockery, certain really serious, controversial problems of a gender-related nature, as people would say today.

Lermontova's archaicism is of a more earthy, direct, deliberately “awkward” nature (in the present context, one that is not ideal, that has not passed through – to use the language of philosophical discourse of that time – the stage of final eidetic shaping). Lermontova's symbolism and Petrov-Vodkin's are in contrast, which means that they complement one another. This effect was described metaphorically as: “Like an Attic soldier / in love with his enemy”, by the young Osip Mandelstam, who was also a symbolist at the time.

During the final years of her life, Lermontova, while essentially remaining a developing artist, abandoned the problems described above. In 1914–15, Lermontova's health worsened, and the doctors recommended a dry climate – hence her journey to Bakhchisaray in Crimea and, later, her more lengthy stay in Samarkand. Despite the prosaic need, burdened by difficult living conditions to which she was unaccustomed, for her to be in Crimea and Central Asia, Lermontova was inspired by the oriental theme. The natural ethnography was unsuited to her: as an artist, she had already outgrown her interest in the specific features of exotic genre painting. Her orientalism was a response to certain personal mythological and poetic states, transformed pictorially by language, that gravitated towards the poetics of the Nabis (*Singing Sart*, 1916, Russian Museum).

A second aspect relates to portraiture. Its evolution shows how powerful a resource of portraiture was inherent in Lermontova's creative nature. In *Pablo Casals* (1913, Russian Museum), the portrait features were “captured” with grotesque acuteness, taken to the point of self-denial: the cellist seems to be hiding his face – over it looms a forehead that merges into a massive, shiny, bald skull that optically breaks through the plane. And that is all, as far as the personal is concerned. Deepening it and introducing subtler shades would mean impeding the main task. The artist offers a personified image of perfect phonation and shows a kind of anthropology of the birth of sound. The specific points of the psychological are not so necessary here – in fact, they even get in the way. After all, the artist is setting herself a super-genre task.

In other works (*Woman in Lilac Dress*, illus. on p. 62, and *Late-Summer Flowers*, illus. on p. 67), Lermontova reverts to the idea of portraiture of a more traditional kind. Portraiture is primarily about rapport and ensuring communication. And Lermontova is ready for that: artist and model create an external situation of communicability. But here too Lermontova reformats the task. She effectively blocks out all rapport: the depiction is self-sufficient in nature. There are no attempts to reveal herself psychologically, nothing that is reflective – it is mainly character, a forceful kind. In *Late-Summer Flowers*, it is monumentalised and even archaicised. Yes, she is the inflexible type of the self-sufficient modern artist, the embodied will to paint. Needless to say, in the portrait, Lermontova engages in her own, highly promising range of problems. She is basically an artist who is reacting to the challenges of life. So, in several works dating from the post-revolutionary years, she addresses the socially grotesque. She works for theatres. With her strong-minded pattern of behaviour, which overcame the stereotypes of her circle, with her emancipated kind of awareness and with her totally independent feeling for the new, Lermontova should rightly have featured among the “amazons of the Russian avant-garde”. Regrettably, death unhorsed her early. The artist died in 1921.

The collection of Lermontova's works in the exhibition may be supplemented by Vera Zhukova's *Portrait of Evgenia Kaplan*³⁰ (illus. on p. 70). Of the pupils at the school, Zhukova was the person closest to Lermontova: they had

common interests – philosophy and, in particular, the drive for the equality of women, in which both took a passionate interest³¹. As happened to quite a large number of highly promising pupils at Zvantseva's School, all trace of Zhukova has disappeared thanks to the dramatic circumstances of our history.

Petrov-Vodkin took over the artistic training process at Zvantseva's school in 1910. He had completed his rather lengthy period of development and was mentally ready to teach. It should be remembered, however, that his teaching crystallised much later as a coherent system. His paper "The Science of Seeing" was given only in January 1918. Throughout the 1910s, Petrov-Vodkin did, of course, produce papers, write articles and record his own experience in numerous texts "for himself". Even so, the first generation of Petrov-Vodkin's pupils received, during their training, guidelines that were not fully "standardised"; furthermore, the teaching was somewhat affected by the situation – a dependence on the specific tasks that the teacher was himself pondering.

During this period, he felt himself to be a post-impressionist, in the literal sense – an artist who was hostile to that movement: i.e. had overcome the "main pathological essence of impressionism – the reflex action"³². In the late 1900s and early 1910s, he created a number of works that are overshadowed by the principal work of that period – *Bathing of the Red Horse* (1912, Tretyakov Gallery) – but are particularly important in the pedagogical context. Such are: *Environs of Khvalynsk* (circa 1909, Russian Museum), *Landscape on the Don* (1912, Tretyakov Gallery), *Mill* (1912, private collection), *Portrait of a Boy* (1913, Perm State Art Gallery) and, possibly, *Portrait of Maria Petrova-Vodkina* (1913, Tretyakov Gallery). During that period, the artist provides wonderful examples of, as it were, the archetypal understanding of coloration – where certain symbolic and psychological essences underlie the smoothly coloured, contoured planes of harmonised open local colours. There are cold dark blues, emerald colours, a whole range of reds and shades of pink, and they "enshrine" the mutually resonating universals of the bodily, spiritual, optical and narrative... Something similar can be seen in the hills and slopes found in icons (it was, in fact, during those years that the artist was studying icon painting), where there is the natural component (a mountain), the conceptually "geological" component (rock, cave) and the symbolic component (staircase, ascending), with the latter predominating. Similarly, in *Worker* (1912, Malmö Art Museum, Sweden), the emerald tones (the colour of the islands' vegetation), the deep, cold dark blue (the sea), the reduced dark blue (the bandage around the thighs) and the red-brick colour (the body and sand) convey a symbolic message: it is a hierarchy of colours behind which lies a definite world order. Only the actions of the subject disturb that world order: he is inside it, but he brings into the situation an element of overcoming something through his persistent, strong-willed effort. In the works mentioned above, which are chronologically parallel to the master's somewhat late, but therefore all the more significant, full-bodied symbolism, this "contract" between a colour and its symbolic universals is breached. Direct observation and natural experiences are stronger here. That state would seem to run counter to the main symbolist thrust of Petrov-Vodkin's development. But symbolism, as he understands it, is a matter of personal spiritual development, and he has no intention of "teaching symbolism". His cause is the "science of seeing". There is something of a contradiction here. The symbolist understanding of coloration prescribes deriving local colour from environmental influences: the more a shape is "painted in a single colour, the more real is its effect in relation to another one"³³. But the experience of direct contact with nature, as revealed in the abovementioned works dating from the 1900s to the early 1910s, leads "from the main spectral essences to the 'complex coloration' of natural phenomena". This experience is, apparently, what forms the basis of his practical sessions with the school's pupils. In fact, the environmental approach triumphs in these landscapes: the actual pace of connecting with nature contradicts the standardised generality of the symbolist generation of form. The artist strives to preserve the poignancy and temperature of the state of the landscape that has him in its grip. *Landscape on the Don* is "a little hotter" – Petrov-Vodkin uses almost fauvist means: the reddish-brown slopes of the river bank are literally extinguished by the cold dark blue of the water, but flashes of incandescent colour move across to the relatively calm left-hand side, "setting fire", like lava, to the grass and creeping up on the trees... *Environs of Khvalynsk* is calmer and more epic: the vast breathing of the landscape is conveyed by a sweeping wave of nuanced green, which passes from the foreground to the back of the picture. In these works there is as yet no hint of spherical perspective. But some surreptitious work with space is under way. In *Landscape on the Don*, this happens by means of a seemingly natural composition that proceeds from nature: the flanking sides of the landscape are drawn together over the central

part – the expanse of water. This is a part of the Don, but the artist is in greater need of a natural earthy depression, an aperture full of water. The spatial situation is thereby all the more poignant: there is a forced rounding of the axes of perspective.

How is one to determine the stylistic affinity of these works? They contain post-Cézanne and fauvist impulses. But they have been transformed in an absolutely special way. Unlike the classical members of the Knave of Diamonds, Petrov-Vodkin never sought to tease or shock the public either with his narrative techniques or with his pictorial and plastic ones. But the main point in the appropriation of these impulses *à la* Petrov-Vodkin lies in the actual nature of the understanding of colour. Petrov-Vodkin always avoided the physicality and fleshiness of colour that were characteristic of the Russian post-Cézanne painters. There is no objectification of colour: in his main symbolist works, colour and form are inseparable in the context of an ideal, seemingly impeccably moulded and so mediated, pictorialism... But, in his works, you will not encounter that extravert, texturally physiological, vulgarly cheerful and teasing fleshiness of colour. Petrov-Vodkin deliberately employs a technique that he calls "whitening" or "reduction". "A picture's colour scheme depends not on the number of colours, but on an understanding of the life of each individual colour, on an understanding of how it should be reduced – its effect will differ according to another, neighbouring colour; just as the reductions of each of them are infinite, so too these interrelationships are infinite."³⁴ We should add that reduction *à la* Petrov-Vodkin has not only, as it were, a chromatic or, more precisely, a colour-application significance. It also has a substantive significance – a technique of dematerialisation and the introduction of spiritual connotations. As for the broader range of works dating from the 1910s, one further aspect should be noted – the appearance, as a consequence of the "complex flowering of natural phenomena", of new, complex, contiguous tones (emerald, purple, lilac) around the tones that supplement the primary colours of the spectrum (red, blue, yellow) – mainly violet.

So, many works produced by Petrov-Vodkin's first-wave pupils have to be considered not only in connection with the master's theoretical objectives, but also in their relationship with his artistic practice. This applies primarily to Favsta Shikhmanova (1880–1937?), in whose work this exhibition will, I think, attract particular interest.

Nadezhda Lermontova was a sufficiently accomplished artist to enter into a dialogue relationship with Petrov-Vodkin, at least through their understanding of symbolism, whereas everything was simpler in the case of Shikhmanova. She really was a pupil of his. That is what she wrote on a form: "I received my art training at Petrov-Vodkin's School."³⁵

Her creative work was affected in the most direct way by the problems on which the artist himself was working – particularly, putting into practice the experience of modern European painting, developing a meaningful attitude towards the building of space, and even promoting coloristic fancies.

Shikhmanova's landscape *In Tsarskoe Selo. Autumn* (illus. on p. 72) comes close to Petrov-Vodkin's *Environs of Khvalynsk* through the feeling of a single widespread breathing – nuanced and based on the contiguous tones (violet, dark blue, red, yellow, brick-coloured) of a wave of colour. As in the teacher's works in question, there is a fauvist impulse here that is outwardly even more developed – but also cooler. The effect is a rare one: thanks to the artist's work with warm-cool relationships, the fauvist image is extinguished by an optical, coldish haze. Shikhmanova's *Portrait of a Ballerina* (illus. on p. 71) is a fully mature work that materially supplements our ideas about the genre's development. Everything in the portrait is based on contradictions. There is choreography and showiness. The choreography is of the most direct, pedagogical kind – the table covered with a green cloth, and the country-style shawl as hangings (which is encountered repeatedly in the works of "Zvantseva's people"). The showiness is to be found in the image of the model, a beauty with bare shoulders, wearing a cool, light-lilac-coloured silk dress and elegant, strapped shoes. There is physicality (the bare shoulders and arms and, particularly bold at that time, legs too) and ethereality (the reduced paint makes the body and dress and their material nature unreal); there is truth (Petrov-Vodkin called it "the outward processing of the subject") and metaphor: the dress resembles a pearl oyster shell, and the shawl has blossomed into roses, which slide freely over its yellow field... In the spirit of Petrov-Vodkin's portraits of those years, Shikhmanova avoids any pointed psychological characterisation when depicting the model. It is an idealised image and one that is not devoid of mystery: what wind has blown this silver-age

Venus into the atmosphere of the training studio? By what magic has that environment been transformed into a luxurious theatre set?... *Lady in the Garden* (illus. on p. 70) develops the type of the detailed "mansion" portrait: the view from above enables one to feel the extensive and settled nature of the space – it is not a *dacha*, but an estate, with an avenue receding into the distance and with well-tended hedges. The static nature, orderliness, and the actual retrospective poetics of the work that divorce the image from the everyday world are reminiscent of neo-classicism. The working of the "living form" – the woman and the dog – is tactilely and optically calibrated and links up directly with Petrov-Vodkin's shaping style. And suddenly the idea of an orderly and settled existence is exploded by a paradoxical development of the colour. This unnatural, complex violet colour runs through the picture in a diagonal wave – "hugging" the figure of the model half-lying on a bench and then moving into the background of the picture – following the twists and turns of the path. The optical "entrance" to the background of a picture via a diagonally positioned depicted object is a longstanding technique in academic composition. Here it is being used in a new way: one's glance latches on to the elusive depiction of a shoe, and from then on it is drawn into the drama – not a narrative drama, but one of colour. The violet wave catches the eye, leads it to the top right-hand corner of the picture and then rolls back. Here it encounters an additional colour – the deep lemon-yellow bench – and spreads out as the backdrop (sand, gravel?), revealing – both tonally and tactilely – the image of the dog. The young artist seeks to achieve an amazingly intense inner life for the picture – one that is non-narrative, i.e. one that, according to Petrov-Vodkin, has carried out a "shift of attention to the materials".

Shikhmanova's picture *View onto the Obvodny [Bypass] Canal* (illus. on p. 73) is one of the exciting discoveries in Russian painting of the first quarter of the twentieth century. It is undoubtedly a central link in the still small corpus of that artist's identified works.

Shikhmanova entered the Free Workshop (i.e. without a supervisor) at the Petrograd State Free Art Studios. But she did not lose touch with her teacher. *View onto the Obvodny Canal* makes use of a composition plan drawn up by Petrov-Vodkin: an enlarged figure with a frankly notional interaction with the landscape background (the scale proportions are not just breached: the interplay of scale is procedural, it is a factor that is optical and, at the same time, substantive: one's glance moves constantly – through the relevant optical guide paths (pillars, masts, chimneys, outlines of the embankment and the bridge) – from the depiction of the woman to the urban backdrop. The picture *Students* (illus. on p. 182) by Evgenia Evenbach, another of Petrov-Vodkin's pupils, is constructed in much the same way – but with a more developed, off-centre, grotesque principle. Shikhmanova uses "her own" range of colours – lilac, violet and lemon-yellow tones – which was devised, as we remember, with quite different intentions, far removed from what was then topical. The image of the Obvodny Canal certainly contrasts with everything else that Shikhmanova was doing. It is a district of the proletariat, even the lumpenproletariat. Slightly later, Nikolai Zabolotsky would create an apocalyptic picture of the Obvodny area: "From my window over the whole area, / Obvodny Canal reigns supreme."

Admittedly, Shikhmanova seems to stress that what is proletarian is positive, perhaps futuristic: hence the dynamic landscape. A tram and steam engine-drawn train hurtle past at full speed, and the funnels belch smoke – in short, as one Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia picture was entitled, *Transport Is Improving*³⁶. But the female image in the foreground is unexpected: she is not a proletarian, but a country woman – with stick and churn – in an urban setting. Is this dairymaid a new version of Pushkin's "maid of Okhta"? Or just a peasant woman forced to flee her accustomed places, like thousands of her contemporaries, and seeking a livelihood in the city? It is an interesting and unexpected handling of the theme. It is a picture that is not only of museum standard, but also of unexpected drama, and is unique. Its dynamic spatial structure bears the traces of Petrov-Vodkin's form shaping. And it is certainly not Petrov-Vodkin's imagery: it has a social relevance that is not fully discerned and a symbolic signal that has yet to be read.

The third representative of the first, "Zvantseva" wave of Petrov-Vodkin's pupils is Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak or (after her second marriage) Pomerantseva (1890–1923)³⁷. A Bestuzhev student³⁸, a person of varied interests and, while studying at Zvantseva's school, the wife of a promising musician, she belonged to the same social and intellectual circle as Lermontova and Shikhmanova. In her first independent work, *Self-Portrait with Vase* (illus. on p. 78), she already displayed a bold and confident predilection for decoration: a green tone for the hair and a flesh

colour reduced to a deep yellow and, for the blouse, a “breathing” brick-pink, with a warm underpainting just showing through – here there is a very natural and vivacious fresco style. However, deep retrospective interests can be found in the later *Self-Portrait Against a Stormy Background* (1918, private collection) and also in *Portrait of Vera Isaeva* (illus. on p. 81), the pianist and the artist’s sister, (late 1910s). Petrov-Vodkin, who was certainly not averse to classicising tendencies, evidently supported such a synthesis of stylisation and the contemporary interpretation of form with “sub-cubist” elements (“We all grew up on cubism,” he declared on more than one occasion). Kotovich-Borisyak’s retrospectivism is multilayered – from early Renaissance and strictly classical allusions to the primitive. For instance, in *Portrait of Lieutenant-Colonel K.*³⁹ (no later than 1915, private collection), the artist, while preserving the light shaping of form and Petrov-Vodkin’s hallmark lilac-dark-blue reduced tones, creates an image that manifestly evokes the primitive style typified by the “Cossack Mamai” of Ukrainian folk pictures. The primitivising style, this time painted with a symbolist coloration, is represented by the picture *Toys* (illus. on p. 79).

*Portrait of Andrei Shibinsky*⁴⁰ (illus. on p. 83) shows the level of maturity that the artist had attained in her twenty-eight years. It is, perhaps, one of the most interesting Russian portraits of that period. It depicts Andrei Andreevich Shibinsky, the artist’s step-father, who was a staff captain engaged in geological exploration in Turkish Armenia (the term in use at the time) and Persia – essentially a spy, later on a prominent geologist and oil industry figure; he was repressed, but survived. The image is informal and psychologically profound – that of a Russian officer, cultured and, at the same time, worldly-wise, who is used to extreme situations, against the background of a snowy mountaintop. The portrait paradoxically combines a realistic solidity and distinctly modern visualisation techniques. A light shaping is applied to the form, without detracting from the psychological plane. The natural tones of the greatcoat and sheepskin hat, a reduced blue-grey with an off-white shade, are continued in the lilac-silvery colour scheme of the mountain ranges. They are depicted in a sort of double optic: one alludes to the mound of rock, the other to Petrov-Vodkin’s typical “sub-cubism”. Finally, there is a completely unexpected subject – a loaded camel, skilfully painted into the space, recalling the officer’s travels while on duty. *Portrait of Nikolai Pomerantsev*⁴¹ (illus. on p. 80) is, evidently, Kotovich-Borisyak’s last work. The model is Nikolai Pomerantsev, Kotovich’s second husband, who was to become an outstanding museum specialist, custodian of the Armoury in the Moscow Kremlin and keeper of the Kremlin monuments and artefacts, and who lived a long and selfless life. He spent many years in internal exile. But at this time, he was a colleague of Igor Grabar. Pomerantsev was descended from a renowned family of architects and was an art historian committed to preserving the cultural heritage. In particular, in order to preserve monuments and artefacts, he organised local museums based on the Donskoy and Novodevichy monasteries and those in Zvenigorod, Volokolamsk and Novy Iyerusalim. It is against the background of the Voskresensky Monastery at Novy Iyerusalim that he is depicted – young, elegant and immaculately, even rakishly, dressed. The artist seems to be deliberately emphasising this theme of elegance in the colour scheme – yellow, green, lilac (jacket, waistcoat, tie) – which is echoed by overtones in the warm, baked milk-coloured tone of the monastery wall. The image is fundamentally secular, even Europeanised, despite the fact that a monastery wall and tower stand behind the subject. A synthesis of the old and the new could be sought in this, but that would be a blatantly strained procedure in the modern spirit. It is more likely that the painter is simply admiring the handsome, energetic, busy man who, by a fortunate circumstance, is engaged in a civilised cause that is close to his heart – that of saving, preserving and organising. His gaze is loving, yet representative: that seems to be how the artist sees the progressive, upright man of her time. Historical reality had other preferences. The artist was not fated to see that for herself: she died in 1923 at the age of thirty-three...

Alexander Alexandrovich Lappo-Danilevsky also had a regrettably short life (1898–1920). He sprang from an old, enlightened, noble family that produced several major scientists in the 20th century. The artist’s father, Alexander Alexandrovich, was an outstanding historian and proponent of scientific method. Today the Lappo-Danilevsky family is studied as a “unique cultural micro-community”⁴². Lappo-Danilevsky was given an excellent education at home, and he travelled around Europe with his parents as a teenager. He entered Mikhail Bernstein’s workshop as a fifteen-year-old schoolboy and worked independently outdoors in the summer. He enrolled in Petrov-Vodkin’s workshop at the Academy of Arts. Lappo-Danilevsky was the only pupil to whom the artist dedicated a “modest pamphlet”. It was, in fact, quite short, but it was a very important text, inserted as the foreword into the modest

catalogue for the posthumous exhibition organised by the "Community of Artists"⁴³. It was here that a very skilful analysis of Lappo-Danilevsky's work by P. Loshkarev was printed. Lappo-Danilevsky's authority was long supported by the young artists. In his memoirs, Vasily Vlasov recalled the workshop of Benita Essen (Lappo-Danilevsky's widow), in which many of Petrov-Vodkin's followers, both staff, and fellow-travellers, had worked on their drawing: "Uppermost in the workshop was the spirit of Petrov-Vodkin's late favourite pupil, B. Essen's husband, a huge self-portrait of whom occupied the centre of a large wall."⁴⁴ Why was such importance attached to the legacy of someone who was, essentially, a young artist and had, besides, only studied under Petrov-Vodkin for quite a short time? The young pupil would seem to have grasped better than anyone else the fundamental points of Petrov-Vodkin's understanding of art, which the artist had formulated definitively by 1918, the time when he embarked on his teaching activities at the Academy of Arts. It was not a question of colour, but, primarily, of spatial formation and dynamics.

"But the basic feature of his creative work was an organic understanding of spatiality, and the whole impact of Lappo's drawings lies in that understanding," Petrov-Vodkin wrote. "Lappo-Danilevsky is one of the few adherents of the new attitude towards space and, with a purely youthful eagerness, is resolving the problems of the new visual perceptions, without switching either to sketchiness or to expressionism."⁴⁵ Petrov-Vodkin's definition is supplemented by Loshkarev's pointed observations regarding the dynamics. He finds a language of description that does, to a certain extent, supplement Petrov-Vodkin's postulates: "splitting the spatial form in displacement", "the temporal principle conquers the spatial one, approaching a radically simplified motional perception of the world", "the basic essence of the movement of the human figure, its fragmentation along the axial fault lines, the construction and logic of the body" and "the style of a somewhat schematic, geometrical, constructive approach with the urge to organise the material dynamically".

Lappo-Danilevsky's career is extremely concentrated in terms of time and results. He managed to explore and reject the specific stylised graphic art of St Petersburg, but he appreciated its possibilities: by means of hatched masses, it could "hold a plane" and build spatial designs (*On the Rafts*, 1918, Russian Museum). From Petrov-Vodkin he initially derived the combination of fresco style and genre-like observation (the teacher called it "the problem of the exacerbation of the everyday characteristic and the archetype" – *Girls* (illus. on p. 209): in the watercolour *Ustyug Veliky. On the Bridge* (illus. on p. 211), the silhouettes are piquantly caught and given a rhythm, but the main rhythm – in the colour and the drawing – is smooth and epic (the fresco wholly attracts the artist, and he is among students (Vladimir Dmitriev, Leonid Chupyatov, Maria Sasko, Lev Britanishsky, Benita Essen *et al.*) "who wish to study fresco painting and are petitioning the Petrograd Committee for Fine Art to found a painting workshop for that speciality under the direction of Prof. K. S. Petrov-Vodkin"⁴⁶). However, he is increasingly captivated by the wish to convey dynamics or, as Loshkarev put it, "by love for the moving person". He himself spent the last years of his life in motion: in the summer of 1917, he visited Crimea, involved in dangerous adventures; the following year, in between assignments at the Academy, he went south, driven by hunger, to Kharkov and Odessa, living under the Whites and under the Reds at different times, then he headed north, to Ustyug, settled for a while in the village of Urazovo, where he taught at the school, and then again dashed off to Petrograd. Typhus caught up with the artist, though, and he died in January 1920.

Lappo-Danilevsky possessed a huge, almost genre painter's interest in the event-driven side of the outside world: in scenes from town and country life, in the new character type and in the alogism of an everyday life that had been ripped apart by the realities of the Civil War. He was no social critic, and there was good reason for P. Loshkarev to call his talent "cheerful", although his actual crowd scenes (*Quayside*, *Urazovo* and *Station*, all from 1919, Russian Museum) did go in for a display of somewhat frightening physical features. Yet the critics of the time managed to see even in such a grotesquely depicted reality the "ability to convey the energy of the people's fervour, gaiety and unembellished way of life"⁴⁷.

Petrov-Vodkin was also involved in Lappo-Danilevsky's absorption in the element of motion, just as he was in his enthusiasm for the fresco style, an enthusiasm that was not allowed to develop. He did, of course, carefully examine the drawing of his teacher, who was, during those years, engaged in easel drawing actively and "unofficially", i.e. without any planning that paved the way for future paintings. Petrov-Vodkin thought that the separation

of his own movement as an artist from the external movement being depicted was one of his achievements. This gives rise to the sense of a single "planetary" dynamic context. Lappo-Danilevsky grasped all this in a flash. In the drawing *Bathing* (illus. on p. 210), the motif of the boys who are frozen in their soaring and weightlessness directly echoes Petrov-Vodkin's *Boys Playing* (illus. on p. 59) and *Hurricane* (1914, Russian Museum). But the main thing was not the iconographic echoing and not even the similarity in realising the purely material – drawing with short strokes of the pencil, pen or (with a thin brush) Indian ink – or in the kind of breathing of the attenuated or concentrated hatched masses. That is how – with the addition of Petrov-Vodkin's typical interest in the refraction of rays of light in glass – *Still Life with Coffee Pot* (1919, Russian Museum) was produced. The "planetary context" – the inclination of the spatial axes – was making its presence felt. And more rarely there is a change in the "viewing situation" – replacement of the viewing angles and sometimes too the positions of the artist's body. Thus, in virtually all of Lappo-Danilevsky's "genre" drawings, with some reservations, the depiction is displaced in relation to the main axes: this is not yet the "falling effect" that Yury Rusakov has rightly seen in some of Petrov-Vodkin's drawings, but a sense of instability, sliding and slippage – a visual metaphor for the state of the world that the artist had the time to experience (*Girls* and *Buying a Horse*, both from 1919, Russian Museum). More importantly, the young artist managed to understand the principle, discovered by his teacher, of the actual rationale behind the changed states of viewing. What is meant is the justification for the dynamic shifts – this will be dealt with separately below regarding several paintings by Petrov-Vodkin, Samokhvalov, Chupyatov and others. But here let us look at just one drawing, *Sharpening an Axe* (illus. on p. 209). The axe grinder presses the pedal of his antediluvian grinding machine, at the same time guiding the blade across the grinding wheel. The two movements in different directions convey to the viewer a state of optical uncertainty: he cannot follow the dynamic process with his eyes. A man inside the room, who is leaning against the wall and is evidently waiting for the work to be completed, is indifferent to what is happening – he is even looking the other way. But he too is involved in the dynamics: one has the impression that he remains stable with an effort. The common everyday process takes on a force that is external to it, metaphorical or psycho-physiological. Something similar can be seen in the work *Splitting Firewood* (illus. on p. 215) by Benita Essen, who was very close to the artist in terms of aspiration. The woman's awkward circular swing with the axe makes the eye expect a powerful spherical movement, sweeping away everything in its path – the objective vortex, as Petrov-Vodkin called it. The viewer is ready not only to track that movement visually, but to experience it physically.

As we have already pointed out, Lappo-Danilevsky managed to penetrate his teacher's poetics deeply. Needless to say, though, he was interesting – to Petrov-Vodkin himself *inter alios* – not only for that reason. He managed to find his own continuation to the artist's searches in the conveying of movement. In several works (*In the Bathroom*, illus. on p. 214; *Around the Piano*, illus. on p. 210; *Game of Tennis*, illus. on p. 208, and *Landscape with Houses*, 1918, Russian Museum), a similar technique can be seen – a breach of proportion: the legs or arms seem to be elongated and in a kind of dynamic surge. The dynamics of the body overcome its anatomy. Is this grotesque? The frequency of the technique's occurrence makes one think of something else. Petrov-Vodkin made a thorough examination of the problem of binocularity. "Binocular vision is important to me; it broadens space. I have no mechanical frontal vision." In medicine, looking first with one eye and then with the other is called alternating monocular vision. The artist's approach does, of course, presuppose not so much the physiological as the image-bearing content. Lappo-Danilevsky seems to take "binocular vision" to mean a stepping up of sight: variability of vision gives a sort of optical acceleration, a dynamic extension of form and an energetic surge of it. There is a further point in the development of Petrov-Vodkin's vision that the young artist picked up. Lappo-Danilevsky was an ideal pupil for Petrov-Vodkin: he did not copy, but transformed and developed independently some aspects of his teacher's experience. (His experiments with conveying movement were just such a development; in other directions, including colour, he was advancing in step with others. For instance, Loshkarev recalls "a portrait of Benita Essen painted in red, in a single colour of different tones".) It is because of this independence that he was so valued by Petrov-Vodkin. That is why Lappo-Danilevsky is also being shown to such an extent in this publication, for the first time since 1928.

Petrov-Vodkin's invitation to join the Academy of Arts was couched in the traditional terms: "Dear Mr Kuzma Sergeevich, at a discussion of the question of replenishing the composition of professors at the Higher School of Art, an assembly of the Academy elected you on 20 January 1918 to the position of professor at the Higher School

of Art in the painting section Please accept our assurances of our most profound esteem..."⁴⁸. Subsequently, the phraseology underwent sweeping changes, as did the names of the institutions and the very lives of the professors (slightly more than a year later, the artist was obliged to apply for a certificate of the following kind: "Issued on behalf of the Petrograd Soviet of State Art-Training Workshops to Professor Petrov-Vodkin thereof to certify that he needs a pair of binoculars as an aid in the pursuit of his artistic engagements and the painting of real-life studies."⁴⁹).

Despite all these changes, Petrov-Vodkin the teacher remained true to himself. So much has been written about his teaching system that there is no need to dwell on it here⁵⁰. We shall refer to certain theoretical precepts when considering specific works of a pedagogical (and not only pedagogical) type. It should just be noted that Petrov-Vodkin's "Objective Method" seems to us to be a kind of preliminary study – an introduction to modern art as the teacher understood it. Vasily Vlasov, among many others, noted the teacher's particular interest in the phenomena that were connected with the development, and sometimes the overruling of the system: "... when I got into the Academy and encountered Petrov-Vodkin as my teacher, I became aware almost immediately of his complete 'failure to grasp' that I was a true follower of his. On the contrary, he took a dim view of my 'Vodkinism'"⁵¹ In other words, a student who excelled in the "science of seeing" had to develop independently. By "true disciples" Petrov-Vodkin probably meant those who took part in the teaching process and conscientiously relayed his method. (Such, essentially, were Chupyatov, Sokolov, Priselkov and Golubyatnikov at various times.) In that respect, he was afraid of distortions and any lowering of the standard set. He kept a close eye on them. As far as the others were concerned – those who were not embraced by the teaching – the "true disciple" concept seems to have lost all meaning for him: independence was essential for anyone who had passed Petrov-Vodkin's educational test.

Petrov-Vodkin's teaching career was not trouble-free. He was, of course, the leader: his syllabus was immediately adopted: the old art teaching had collapsed, the new one was being formed, and Petrov-Vodkin was proposing something that was systematic. During the lengthy and difficult merger of two higher educational establishments – the Petrograd State Free Art Studios (the former Academy of Arts) and the Petrograd Higher Art and Technical Studios (the former Stieglitz Higher Applied Art Courses) – his system formed the basis for the teaching work of the now amalgamated institution – the Petrograd VKhUTEMAS (Higher Art and Technical Studios; 1923–25). A decision was taken, "recognising that solid objective data of artistic experience should form the basis of the school syllabus"⁵². At the same time, the system came under repeated attack – from teachers and students alike: "We, the undersigned students of the Academy of Arts, protest against the existing one-sided nature of the art training syllabus. The currently taught 'three-colour method' is nothing more than a laboratory experiment, albeit one that provides some insight into handling materials, but it has been introduced as a system and treated as an artistic end in itself, and it kills the objectivity of the teaching method and, at the same time, the Academy as an educational establishment too. We have not come to study just a single school and a subjective theory – time moves on! The professors – those who run and those who do not run the lessons and who must submit to this narrow system – cannot, as experience convincingly shows, do anything, and so we demand: the immediate revision and redrafting of the art syllabus, the appointment of new professors to the Academy, and the drawing up of a new syllabus jointly with left-wing professors on the basis of real objectivity, containing the history of art and including that subject in the general course curriculum"⁵³. Such demands, their focus and the actual vocabulary are indicative of the times. Here there is a mixture of everything – the activism and sloganising of "progressive", Sovietised young people (who played a big part in the Institute's social fabric: the group leaders and authorised members of the faculty and workshop collectives "approved" any certificates and documents). There is also the spontaneity that was characteristic of the times: life was bubbling over, but Petrov-Vodkin's system required discipline and system! Finally, also present here was the natural wish of the future artists to extend their professional horizons: there were other outstanding masters working alongside, who were setting up their own institutions and schools. Each master had his own system, and artistically-inclined young people had a totally explicable fear: how were they to avoid missing out irretrievably on something really important? The problem was resolving itself, though: the students were not prevented from unofficially attending any workshops, including those that were held outside their own educational establishment. Petrov-Vodkin's teaching activities were made far more difficult by interference "from above". This was



Vladimir Malagis

Composition with Green Bottle. 1927

On the reverse side: Boy with Apple

Oil on canvas. 106 x 71

Russian Museum

ideological in nature and was really dangerous. For example, the rector of VKhUTEIN (Petrograd-Leningrad, 1923–30; previously VKhUTEMAS, Petrograd), Fyodor Maslov, stated in his restructuring plan for the institute: “The ideological task must be pushed forward decisively. ... The social, ideological and production-training face of some of the institute’s academic staff represents a closed academic *milieu*. We must address the issue of how to organise a Marxist-materialist wing among the active members of the professors and teaching staff under the slogan ‘From idealistic outlooks into the ranks of the proponents of dialectical materialism’.” And even: “We must address the issue of how to recruit teaching staff from the educational establishments of Western Europe.”⁵⁴ Despite all these dispiriting attempts to interfere in the teaching process, Petrov-Vodkin remained throughout his professorial career, perhaps, the most authoritative teacher. Advancing illness prevented him from continuing with his teaching. It is to the credit of the heads of the institute that they repeatedly asked the government to arrange for Petrov-Vodkin to be treated abroad. That permission was never received. On 5 October 1932, he sent the rector’s office a request to be relieved of his teaching duties, since he was “totally unable to continue with teaching work”⁵⁵. But he did not break off his contacts with the institute. A touching appeal by some students (to whom?) has been preserved: “Let’s get Petrov-Vodkin back.” It contains a request for him to be sent for treatment to the south of France or to Italy. “P.-V. must be brought back to the institute. This is only conceivable if a particularly caring attitude is taken towards him. An Honoured Artist deserves that. After all, we saved Gorky; we allowed that Giant of Creative Power to exist. Let us follow the example of the care that Lenin displayed for Alexei Maximovich [Gorky].”⁵⁶

Petrov-Vodkin’s system was strong in the coherence of the tasks to be tackled. For the sake of that coherence, he gave up a great deal – for example, the high, sometimes refined level of the painterly dialogue that he conducted with several of “Zvantseva’s people”. Some of them, at least, already possessed a high, sometimes sophisticated understanding of painterliness. Accordingly, the teaching process too was based on individual principles. Things were different at the Academy. Coherence called for a beginning *ab ovo*. In this respect, still-life compositions – “the first stages in the school of vision” – are extremely interesting. Even though memoir writers have noted that they “flooded the academy”, very few of them have remained⁵⁷. At the present exhibition, “classwork still life” is being shown for the first time in such numbers, and through the works of several generations of Petrov-Vodkin’s students. This mini-exhibition shows the care that the artist gave to compositions, immediately (as early as the general course in the painting faculty) eschewing the routine of academic mechanical reproduction of the simplest figural shapes. Petrov-Vodkin saw these assignments as having at least two aspects, where one of them is more naturalistic and optical, while the second is already philosophical in nature. The first is linked with the “study of materials”. These are the “spectral monochromes”: “Primary blue. Primary red. Primary yellow. Their behaviour on a plane and on a geometrical shape. Their combinations – spectral dichromacy and trichromacy. Trichromacy in nature – three-coloured still life. Three coloured bodies”⁵⁸. The second aspect of the compositions is more complex: Petrov-Vodkin straightaway, without any preliminary preparation, immerses the pupils in his relationship with the world around him. “The first impression received by the eye from an object is its shape, i.e. the cubic or surface space that is being displaced in that environment by the object.” The object “rises from its surroundings”, the environment resists from without, “seems to squeeze the object” and gives it the individuality of “external processing”. There is also a third force – gravity, which gives the “object’s axial indicators”. Finally, there is the most important factor, which operates on all levels in the assimilation of the objective world – from pupils’ compositions right up to Petrov-Vodkin’s still-life paintings, which are actually philosophical in their content. And that is the “stripping of the object”, the switching off of its decorative and applied (“adapted for mankind”) functions. For beginners, this is achieved by a simple “transfer of attention” to the materials – no associative or functional meanings, but a purely “unconscious approach”. For the more advanced, the objective essence can be explained in terms of “earthly conditions and laws” (evidently by analogy with the planetary): “then colour is elucidated in its quantities, and the form giving rise to the colour, as well as the reflective echo between the objects, and their density, transparency and weight”⁵⁹. In the modern philosophical language of description, we are fully entitled to speak of the “stripping of the object” as a gesture of the phenomenological cessation of perception. But we shall come to that shortly.

The timid compositions by Rebecca Golovchiner provide literal illustrations of a task that has been set. But certain low currents of objective interactions, aroused by the sensible approach of the teacher, awaken in them too.

Maria Lomakina was trained by Petrov-Vodkin, although she was already an artist with a certain history⁶⁰. She was soon to develop into a remarkable master. The still-life paintings exhibited catch her at the time when she was reinterpreting her past. There is both figural composition and the three-colour method – everything according to Petrov-Vodkin's assignments. But one has no sense of any timidity: in *Still Life with Pyramid and Cubes* (illus. on p. 96), the objects are very energetically deployed in space, visually creating a sort of closed sphere. On the back of the canvas is a still life with a completely different task: the geometrical nature of the objects is hidden, as is the sense of the three-colour spectrum, and the painter seeks to “draw out” complex tones from it by manipulating the luminosity of the colour. It has to be acknowledged that the analytical training orientation pursued by Petrov-Vodkin, an artist of the self-reflecting type, always ready to share his understanding of art, quite literally pushed the pupils towards independence. One of the most interesting elements that record the actual process of this acceleration is the still-life paintings by Alexei Zernov, an artist who is also being exhibited for the first time in a quantity that enables his scope to be appreciated. He had come a long way by the time he moved to the faculty of painting. Zernov was probably the only student who could write in his application form: “I have worked in arable farming.” Following totally in Gorky's footsteps, he tried out a large number of occupations and then enrolled in 1913 at the School for the Encouragement of Arts, fought on the Romanian Front, spent four years working as a draughtsman in Kuznetsk (hence, in all probability, his penchant for “neat” colour washes in his drawings), returned to Petrograd in 1922 and entered the Academy of Arts, firstly in the Printing Department. So, in the mid-1920s, he painted the still life *Blue on Blue* (illus. on p. 99). Three sheets of paper on a surface – a typical classroom assignment on the subject of monochromes: “primary blue on a plane”. But here too, despite the totally official nature of the work, one has the feeling of some grand purpose. The topic lends itself to “*trompe l'œil*”, but there is no illusion: thanks to transitions of warm and cool, to reductions that “illumine” some parts of the canvas, and to thickenings that “extinguish” others, an image of some hidden dynamic arises: thanks to the force of gravity, the surface “holds” the sheets of paper, but they (by some vibration of the air or the careless movement of a hand) are ready to separate from it, surge upwards or slip off. In *Still Life with Two Mugs* (illus. on p. 98), a whole series of assignments can be seen: the behaviour of a primary colour within the dimensions, its influence on the other colours – not by overtones, but by its very presence – the dependence of the figural-spatial relations on the weight of the object and so on. Zernov does everything that is required, but he does, at the same time, perform a further task. The bodies of the two mugs have coalesced like Siamese twins, and the resulting colour form is interesting in its own right. But that is not enough. It must be the heaviest thing in the composition – in terms of its spatial position and the quantity and quality (density, not shades) of the colour. And the artist paints the inside surface of the mugs, which is visible because of the viewing angle chosen, in a uniform, light, warm tone. He creates a feeling not only of hollowness, but of complete weightlessness (a favourite term of the avant-garde). But the pieces of wood placed on either side do, on the contrary, have weight, and they are, furthermore, so positioned in the space that they are ready to slip off the plane of the table, seeming thus to push this strange object – the merged mugs – outwards and upwards. It is, in any case, an image. In his still-life paintings, Zernov shows the full breadth of his ability. In the work *Bottle on Red* (illus. on p. 100), typical Petrov-Vodkin classroom assignments – aiming at transparency, weight and regulation of the luminosity (from an active red to the gradual extinguishing of the other colours) – are performed, but in a muted way, as it were: the main task is to achieve a kind of dematerialisation that occurs through a blending of tones that erodes the objects' boundaries. In *Still Life with Blue Ashtray* (illus. on p. 101), there is also a lot of glass – a bottle, the ashtray and a cut-glass tumbler – a host of possibilities for playing with form, refractions and shifts. But Zernov, on the contrary, creates an image of the solidity, hypermateriality and even ceremonial grandeur of the world of objects.

This is the first showing of two *Still Life* paintings (ill. on pp. 110, 111) by Mikhail Verbov, an artist who is recalled by many memoir writers, but who has left hardly any material trace. They are of interest, since they are a response to the problems of the various periods in the teacher's creative work: the 1910s are represented by the most characteristic of Petrov-Vodkin's paintings of those years, which seem to have been “portrayed” by him on the basis of additional tonal colours – light blues and dark greens. From the next decade there is a glance from above with elements of a panoramic view, and there is also the feeling of a slight shift, an almost indistinguishable movement

of the viewing angle. Olga Bogdanova paints *Apples on Red* (illus. on p. 107) with the same sense of a slight panoramic turn: while one's gaze moves from one apple to the next, positioned quite far away (hence the austerity of the composition: nothing should distract one), their mutual location changes almost imperceptibly: the rear apple, allowing for the flat surface, is taken in a turn, albeit minimal, and it does, besides, manage to sink slightly into the folds of the material. Maria Sasko, an artist who is, unfortunately, little known, since so few of her works have been found, does, in *Still Life with Shell and Vase* (illus. on p. 107), show that same panoramic shift, but pointing in the opposite direction – a kind of reversal of visual perception.

Is there behind the still-life layer a projection of the planetary vision that so engaged Petrov-Vodkin? I do not think that his pupils unanimously adopted that philosophical position, which the artist spent so many years on developing. It is more likely that what is enshrined here is the very principle of a sensible attitude towards the formation of space, the understanding of a total intercoordination in space that involves the artist, the viewer and the objective world. The pupils reflected the objective method precisely as the principle for orientation in the world. And they were grateful to the artist for that.

Zernov's *White Still Life with Mug* (illus. on p. 102) is nothing short of a gesture of homage, and it is made with a degree of freedom that shows that the pupil has developed into a great artist. After all, the "narrative" of the homage is that it has been made "by a method out of the opposite". Outwardly, it seems to be displaying a routine, a weariness of the master's space-analysis assignments. The position occupied by the plate and the table top on different planes hints that the pupil remembers the assignment and is just about to embark on a space-forming demonstration that swings the completely traditional, "community" (as the master used to put it) still life along spatial axes. But no particular swings occur – everything is "in place". The homage "out of the opposite" lies in the articulation of Petrov-Vodkin's deep-seated aestheticism, which he did not manifest when he emphasised the optico-physiological and generally physico-philosophical tasks. But it is always present – in the concern for the noble colour asceticism with which (spectral monochromes) the teacher sharpened his pupils' colour vision. And Zernov draws this asceticism to the surface, creating in its honour a refined orchestration of white – by means of the alternation of warm and cool, luminosity and tactile sensations. And, of course, with the help of the conductor's baton – the black handle of the enamelled cup as the achromatic point of departure.

It should be pointed out that Petrov-Vodkin was fully supportive of his pupils' attempts to progress beyond the method. For example, in Mikhail Noskov's *Still Life with Green Bottle* (illus. on p. 109), Petrov-Vodkin's principle (effects with glass by light refraction) clearly rubs shoulders with the appliqué approach to space, derived from David Sterenberg. Oddly enough, that most devoted pupil Pavel Golubyatnikov too, in *Still Life with Bottle* (illus. on p. 106), comes closer to Sterenberg: he all but materialises the textures. Vyacheslav Pakulin, who was later to become a major independent artist, demonstrates, in *Still Life with Hat* (illus. on p. 117), the ascendancy of the painterly expressive principle over the figural spatial one.

The still-life narrative presupposed, as has already been said, a degree of acceleration: Petrov-Vodkin seems to have been in a hurry to usher his pupils into the adult world of independent creative work (the actual purpose of propaedeutics). And it is certainly the case that still-life paintings of a different type border closely on works in which Petrov-Vodkin's methodology is articulated. In them, the space-analysis culture nurtured by the teacher acts as a means of embodying certain deeply personal tasks. Tatyana Kuperwasser, an artist with a difficult destiny⁶¹, who has recently been attracting increasing interest after several exhibitions (in particular, *Circle of Artists*, Russian Museum, 2007), engages in her effects with space. Her *Still Life with Mirror and Clock* (illus. on p. 115) is "overflowing" with objects and their reflections in a mirror. And they are not "naked" (Petrov-Vodkin's expression) objects: behind them is the arrangement of everyday life and the home. But this representationalism is, of course, a supplementary factor. The main one is the movement of the eye over the circular contours (in various planes) with varying degrees of "correctness": the opening of the jug and the black rim of the plate are slightly compressed, the face of the table clock is depicted as invariable, i.e. as being circular, although the actual clock is represented at an angle. The eye, thus propelled, accelerates over these circular contours, but "does not believe" the still life's cosy figural arrangement. Reflected by the mirror, it returns to re-counting the objects. Launching such an optical "recognition" cycle is evidently one of the artist's tasks.

Leonid Chupyatov is the most consistent of Petrov-Vodkin's pupils, the one who had a profound grasp both of his analytics and of his poetics. It was in still-life painting that he, an artist who had, on the whole, drifted far away along his own, independent path in art, maintained a dialogue with his teacher over many years: his *Still Life. Apples and Lemon* (illus. on p. 105) was painted in 1923, and *White Still Life* (illus. on p. 104) in 1936.

The figural compositions are depicted from above, with the viewpoint (actually, the plane of vision) being removed farther from the still-life's "bearing" plane than was normal in Petrov-Vodkin's work. Chupyatov, who worked in the theoretical field himself, warned against "palpability" in his paper at the Academy of Arts entitled "The path of true realism in painting"⁶². In Chupyatov's still-life paintings, the focus is not on any individual object, but on the colour-space situation as a whole. In *Still Life. Apples and Lemon* (illus. on p. 105), the fruit is on a white tablecloth, and that, in turn is on a table top, with each plane having its own spatial niche. The tablecloth has prominent folds that run in different directions and presuppose some driving impulse – a change in the position of the pictorial plane and the viewer relative to one another. The pieces of fruit are hostages to the movement; they are in a state of unstable balance: gravity is drawing them to slide down, while the folds accumulate the energy to resist. This equilibrium sets the tone here; the actual objects are secondary. In *Stools* (illus. on p. 108), the household articles are depicted upside down. Again they are in a state of equilibrium: they are not resting squarely on the floor, as gravity dictates; they exist in a kind of turning motion or spatial shift. Activity in spatial flows – rather than an independent, everyday, symbolic or optically enticing value (after the type of the archaic genre of *trompe l'œil* that has been in demand at all times) – that is the subject that relays the qualities of a material thing in Chupyatov's work. For instance, the overturned stools are not of interest because of their own history (although it could be examined – there is a reason why the artist so assiduously draws certain numbers and signs on the undersides). With their sensor-like legs splayed out in all directions and with sucking, crater-like holes on the undersides – they form a kind of special apparatus for catching and mediating spatial relations (maybe, the "framework" of which Petrov-Vodkin wrote: "the transfer of the sensations of space by notional frameworks").

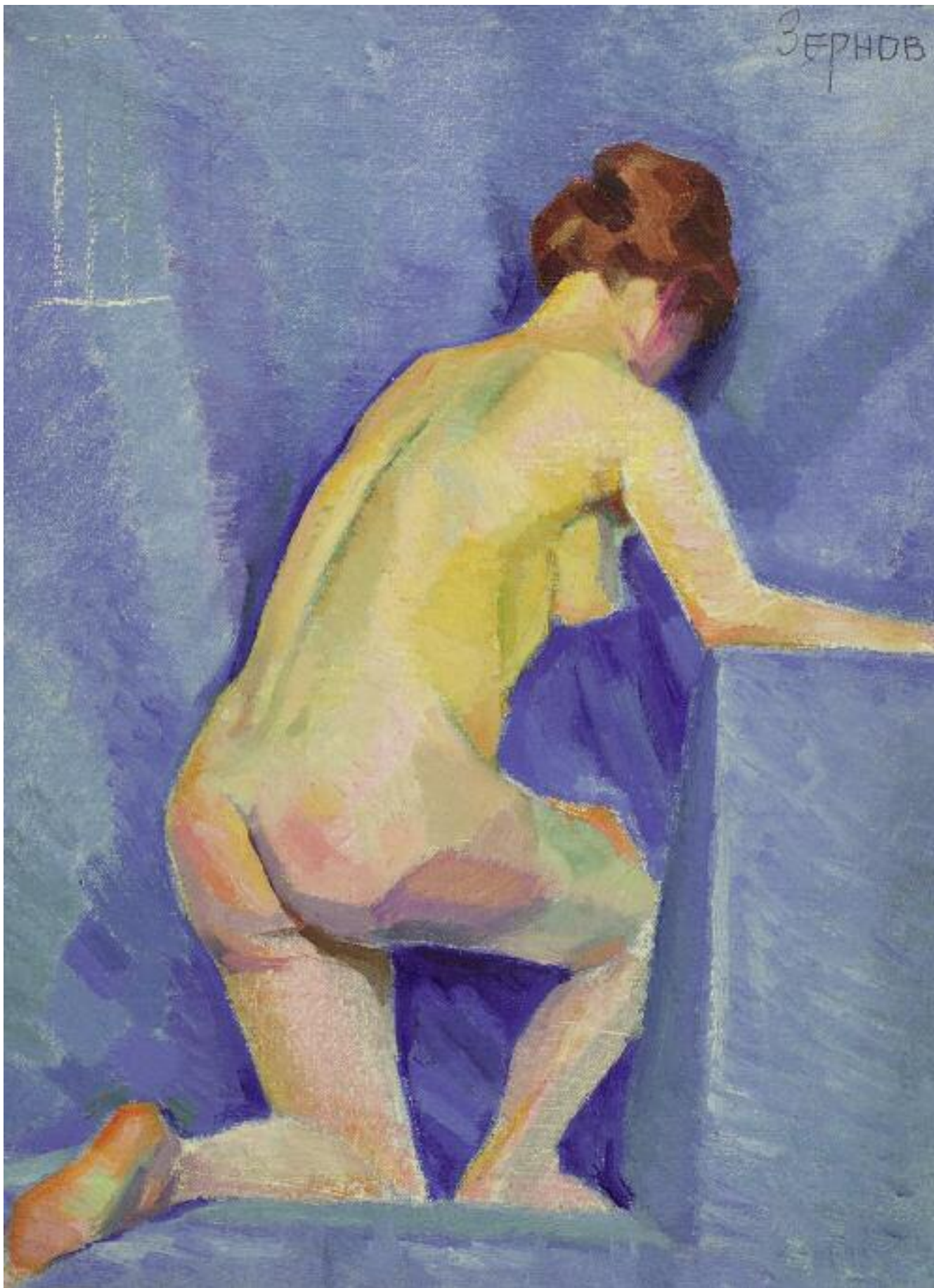
Chupyatov exacerbated the "dialogue with still life" to the extreme by involving it in the dialogue with his teacher as well. The latter wrote that "our feelings are strained by our adaptation to calm". With his figural equilibriums, Chupyatov stretched this "strain" to the limit. While remaining true to Petrov-Vodkin's understanding of space, some pupils also ventured similarly to introduce certain new ideas into their still-life paintings.

Petrov-Vodkin defined his approach to still life as "non-preconditional". As we have already noted, this means, described in different terms, that it is nothing more than a phenomenological cessation of consciousness: the objects are pre-named, pre-designated for use and pre-functional⁶³. Vladimir Malagis and Tatyana Kuperwasser want, on the contrary, to "preload" the still life with external meanings. In *Mourning Still Life* (illus. on p. 113), Malagis deliberately introduces the element of thematisation – both colouristic and textual (quite literally – with a newspaper featuring a government statement about Lenin's death and musical notes from the song "You Fell Victim"). In Tatyana Kuperwasser's work *Religion Is the Opiate of the Masses* (illus. on p. 166; a still life that includes a portrait painting), structured according to the museum exhibition principle, all the objects form part of a museum and propaganda narrative that debunks religious cults, echoing the spirit of the times.

The painterly nude studies, which are quite broadly represented in this publication, are an important indicator of the teaching aspect of the Petrov-Vodkin school. Two reservations must be made here. Firstly, during the early years of Petrov-Vodkin's teaching, the actual need for still-life compositions was challenged as being a manifestation of routine academicism. Secondly, in the culture of that time there existed a sort of compositional mythology, associated with Pavel Chistyakov and his disciple, Vasily Savinsky, and with names of a different order – Dmitry Kardovsky and Vasily Shukhaev. There was talk everywhere of the divine line, but also of the "great form, 'faceting' and the revelation of the edges of planes and volumes"⁶⁴. For Petrov-Vodkin, all this was important and related to his own ideas of form shaping. In this way, his pupils also had an idea, *inter alia*, of the existing canon on composition. All the more so since they worked with the same classical plaster casts from which their predecessors had drawn and painted for two hundred years on end (incidentally, most were destroyed while the above-mentioned Fyodor Maslov was the rector).

Vyacheslav Pakulin's composition *Nude* (illus. on p. 125) is typically à la Petrov-Vodkin on the colouristic level: the naked female body is depicted in gradations of ochre and flesh colour. The dark-blue background is reduced in places, while the drapes appear, thanks to the warm-cool transfers, as close, yet distinguishable, versions of grey-blue. It is a typical work in monochromes or, as Sergei Priselkov, one of Petrov-Vodkin's pupils and the continuer of his pedagogical work, put it, in "colour essences". But the form is radically notional; it is closer to futuristic treatments than the delicately cautious notional nature of shape formation in Petrov-Vodkin's work. There is also something similar in *Nude Standing Against Red Background* (illus. on p. 127) by Tatyana Kuperwasser: a version of the three-colour method is deployed in the colour scheme, but the figure is portrayed with such a level of reduction that the tension between the two precepts gives the classroom assignment an unexpected imagery. That is a generally characteristic feature of compositions painted under the direction of Petrov-Vodkin (or by those following in his footsteps): consciously or not, some grand purpose arises. For example, in Victoria Belakovskaya's *Artist's Model with Yellow Sheet* (illus. on p. 123), the assignment is clear: by tinting the body, the yellow sheet provides an interesting development of the ochre range. The plaster torso is depicted by a cold dark blue in the traction marks (as artists used to say at the time); that is the pre-set, additional monochrome. But a new theme comes into being as a result – the warmth of the flesh, emphasised by the coldness of the old plaster cast, surpasses the official, classroom status of the work. Some extra-compositional narrative about human relationships also appears in a work by Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya, *Double Portrait* (illus. on p. 120), and this is despite the fact that the picture abounds in formal assignments – regarding primary and secondary colours, relief and the revelation of spatial planes. In numerous compositions by Lomakina (*Two Artist's Models*, illus. on p. 121; *Artist's Model with Kouros*, illus. on p. 119; etc.), classicising themes are being blatantly pursued. A neo-classical component was clearly included in Petrov-Vodkin's system (she did, in fact, come to the master, as an already fully professional artist, in search of certain systematising objectives enabling her to overcome what seemed to her to be her lack of focus). Lomakina "squeezed out" of each composition not only the colour-tone possibilities, but also that theme of the relationship with the canon. In *Two Artist's Models*, on the basis of totally traditional visual material (models, plaster, the narrow window opening in the massive wall of the academy building), she produces an evocative and emotional scene. While keeping to the three-colour method (or, more precisely, to her recollections of the three-colour method), Tatyana Kuperwasser develops, on the basis of it, very independent, delicate colour ranges associated with a sensation of physicality (*Seated Nude*, illus. on p. 129). She was disgusted by the formal application of the method: to obliterate the sensation of mere mechanical application, she resorts to the portrait-like depiction of characteristics and even to elements of genre painting... This rapid breakthrough from the student composition to substantive horizons is also typical of *études* of a model's head. The teacher demanded that the task should be performed within a single colour range. "I remember that, in the second year, a student painted a head in just black paint with white pigments. Kuzma Sergeevich came along and was very approving of the work. I remember him saying that the student had managed to turn all this into a painting," Vladimir Malagis recalled⁶⁵. Two compositions in dark-blue tones leave a striking impression – *Head of a Boy* (illus. on p. 130) by Evgenia Evenbach and *Blue Study of a Nude* (illus. on p. 131) by Gerasim Efros. They make a strong impression on the viewer. To put it figuratively, they remind one of the displaying of a positive material undergoing the noble techniques of monochrome printing: the depiction is still half-hidden, and the tinting mediums recall the unremoved traces of metallic silver...

The effect of mystery was not, of course, intended by the artists; that is a result of today's perceptions. But the actual resource of imagery, although not being inherent in the assignment, is objectively present in these works. Evgenia Evenbach was among the first graduates of VKhUTEMAS in 1922 (the year when the Academy of Arts merged with the former College of Baron Alexander Stieglitz). After training for a year under Vasily Shukhaev, who insisted firmly on the study of plastic anatomy, she enrolled in 1919 at Petrov-Vodkin's establishment and soon began to work confidently in monochrome. In her composition works, she already revealed a talent for pointed portrait characteristics and soon became a master of the laconic portrait, executed generally in two or three "colour essences", with typical Petrov-Vodkin-style faceting of form (here the Shukhayev element was not at all opposed to that of Petrov-Vodkin – quite the opposite, since it provided in synthesis a very confident depictive grasp). The typology of devices was in full accord with the tasks involved in creating the conventional portrait (*Portrait of*



Alexei Zernov

Artist's Model Against Blue Background. 1923-1924

Oil on canvas. 41 x 31

Private collection, St Petersburg

a *Student*, illus. on p. 133). In her final year, 1922, she submitted her graduation work *Students*: the characters' faces are depicted in various tones of a single colour – the woman's in gradations of yellow, and the man's in a complex light-lilac colour, with the underpainting just showing through. Furthermore, the faces are fully portrait-like: the man's face is even exaggeratedly typical. In the graduation work, just as in her 1921 work *From a University Window* (illus. on p. 185), apart from the performance of the tasks set, there is a further, noteworthy element. Both works follow the more important, substantive precept that Petrov-Vodkin set his pupils and which some were certainly unable to apply. To all intents and purposes, it is this precept that was the indicator of professional maturity. This refers to independent navigation "inside" the picture, inclusion in its expanse. "I thought up *Students*, Evenbach writes. "He and she are set against the background of a landscape of small red houses, and in the distance is St Isaac's Cathedral. There was a lot of water that year. Whole lakes lay around everywhere. And that enabled me to withdraw into the space (the happy hunting ground for the Petrov-Vodkin student)." ⁶⁶ To "withdraw into the space", Evenbach needed watery surfaces. Another of the master's pupils, Vasily Vlasov, talking about another Petrov-Vodkin student, Pyotr Sokolov, used the term "glassiness": "That glassiness, the effort to look inside the work, does, after all, come from Vodkin: studying the structure and design; when drawing, tracing the axes that have to remain in the finished drawing too: the process of looking, perceiving and depicting must be laid bare." ⁶⁷ By and large, both artists were referring to the same thing – the means of "entering the picture", the element that Petrov-Vodkin pondered so much. Samokhvalov, Dmitriev, Sokolov and Chupyatov, like several others among Petrov-Vodkin's thinking pupils, confronted the problem of navigating inside the space of a work. In more modern language, the term "apperception" is fully suitable to designate that active process of conscious orientation within the space of a work. Among Petrov-Vodkin's pupils, Chupyatov was probably the "keenest" on theorising (i.e. relaying the teacher's message, but introducing modifications from his own experience). He warned against "repulsion" in communing with a picture, when the viewer does not "feel himself in the canvas". "The artist who depicts and what is depicted in a picture have always been opposed to one another in the vertical or oblique, but parallel position; the artist has the "inflexible axis of his body". This leads to a situation in which "the viewer, who senses in the street the 4 sides of his body, is shackled in the museum" and is outside a picture, which does not allow him in and "repels him". ⁶⁸ Chupyatov called his development of Petrov-Vodkin's ideas the "law of relative viewing". In Malagis's work *Legs in Felt Boots* (illus. on p. 114), this law is presented with literal visualisation: the depiction is truncated; the painter, standing firmly on his feet and working with a palette in his hands, seems to "come out of himself" so as to capture his own feet in a complex perspective. To put it in modern descriptive language, the artist has to become the "agent of vision", i.e., according to Rudolf Arnheim, of a specific visual type of thinking. This cultural and anthropological attitude, if one can put it that way, towards the "looking situation" bears highly interesting fruit in the work of Chupyatov himself. In *Composition with Red Figure* (illus. on p. 191), the artist opts for extreme exacerbation of the mutual positioning of the female figure and the urbanised surroundings. The female figure (according to one of Petrov-Vodkin's favourite assignments) is depicted in red with varying degrees of luminosity. Yet the focusing is not on her. Nor is it on any real town: the multistorey nature of the building is clearly exaggerated, as is its architectural dynamic (all these compositional shifts and contrasts with the number of floors do not come from constructivism, but from the visualisation of complex imaginary adverse movements and, in Petrov-Vodkin's precise phrase, the extent of real volumes). The focusing of attention here is on the coupling together of the visions: the woman sees the nearby building in motion as she runs down the stairs (the rainbow-coloured axial line seems to materialise the route of her circular downward motion), and the building, in turn, engulfs her, and the views from the various windows, sent towards one another at an angle, are "externalised" in the form of vertical lines going in different directions. The artist here is a kind of optical mediator: he is looking, from his own, also mobile viewpoint, both at the figure and at the building, and is recording the tracks of the real and potential movements and views ("kinetic meanings", in Petrov-Vodkin's phrase). The dynamic of the "looking situations" here is motivated. This is a very important quality of the most "progressive" (to use a modern term) followers of Petrov-Vodkin. Let us recall Evenbach's "lakes" and Sokolov's "glassiness" as the prerequisites for navigating inside pictures. The motivation of dynamic states also engages Alexander Samokhvalov. In *Head Washing* (illus. on p. 183), the real figural-spatial situation – the spiral staircase – sets the theme of a spiralling movement

and “chimes in” with the real action inside the picture: a little girl is having her hair lathered, and the mother seems to be “twisting the girl’s head”, thus giving a circular dynamic to her vision. In Dmitriev’s *Circus* (illus. on p. 184), the looking-situation tone is set by the circular movement of the merry-go-round. In short, Petrov-Vodkin’s followers work hard on the problems involved in positioning in space in their optical and substantive connotations.

Typical in this respect is the interest shown by a whole series of young artists in the tram motif (the classical Russian avant-garde has repeatedly turned to this theme, but in a different, often eschatological context). The tram was an ideal testing ground for developing the dynamic inside a picture in its real-life causality (the twists and turns of the carriages, the jolting, the “transparency” – the ability to see from outside and from inside – and the dynamics of the pictures in the windows). Apart from that, there is no “repulsion”: both the viewer and the artist are inside a common spatial and real-life situation. One may also recall Petrov-Vodkin’s own late work *In the Tram* (1936, Tretyakov Gallery), Sokolov’s excellent picture *On the Back*⁶⁹ (1924), Kuperwasser’s *Street* (illus. on p. 168) and Lizak’s *Night Tram* (illus. on p. 33). But Chupyatov’s *Tram Depot (Conductress)* (1929, private collection) can be seen quite literally as a textbook on navigating inside a picture. Everything there is motivated by reality: the carriage jolts and pitches at the junctions. The artist is inside the picture (and so “inside the tram”: is this not the direct realisation of what Petrov-Vodkin called the “addition of my own movement (there wasn’t any previously)”⁷⁰?) The conductress is hanging over him, and, as the carriage swings round, she leans to the right. A woman passenger maintains a vertical posture, and the face of a man sitting down is depicted in a rather close-up view, “hazily”. Below, in the centre, is a tram turning round – the same carriage in the previous phase of motion. The mass of the block of flats arches above, with the upper right-hand part of the façade swaying in time to the movement of the carriage. The female images are given detailed treatment, especially the conductress: she has the heavy, tired face of a worker, yesterday’s peasant woman. The female passenger who is standing is the peasant woman of today, who has just arrived in the town. The man is the archetypal town dweller. Chupyatov is clearly not limiting himself to an extremely tense, spatial, dramatic composition: in the silent communion of the self-absorbed characters there is their own contracted (potential) narrative of an all but genre type. There is something similar in Lizak’s *Composition (Stones)* (illus. on p. 189): a figure falling headlong down on to some stones is shown turning round and round, in “corkscrew” fashion. This reflects the despair of a woman who has been expelled from the community.

In 1925, Chupyatov created *Dyer* (illus. on p. 190), one of his best works⁷¹. The task here, as comes to be the norm for the mature Chupyatov, is multilayered. The optical component is obvious – conveying movement that is slowed down by the effect of weight (or, as phrased in the description adopted by the artist, “overcoming the forces of gravity”). The “Law of Relative Viewing” is also in operation: the painting seems to be front-on – the picture and the artist/viewer are positioned parallel to one another. But this not so: the circumference of the tub of paint is depicted with hardly any foreshortening. This sets the viewpoint – from slightly above. And the compositional process – the depiction of a flight of stairs to the right of the walking man – gives the viewer a certain dynamic psychomotor impulse: the upward movement and the effort of visually supporting the dyer’s single combat with a heavy weight. The formal optical task flows smoothly into a thematic one.

These searches for a real, organic rationale for the “kinetic meanings” in the picture’s format appear to be the most vivid manifestations of the individuality of each of Petrov-Vodkin’s followers whom we have mentioned. In these works, they are linked as never before with the Teacher, with his fundamental ideas about the unity of the microworld of the real and the macroworld of the universal, which manifests itself in the context of mutually coordinated movement. This link is revealed in searches for the real rationale for entry into the universe of the picture.

In *Euclid’s Space*, Petrov-Vodkin recalls the real “cause” that urged him towards a new quality of world perception. The planetary nature of the vision was opened up to him at the moment of falling. After hurtling towards the earth, he “saw the earth as a planet”. The planetary/cosmic world view really did affect the artist’s work in a powerful way. At present, it is important for us to note that Petrov-Vodkin always remembered the real, everyday situation that prompted him to discover spherical perspective. On the typological level, this recalls the real rationale for the spatial constructs of Petrov-Vodkin’s followers that were cited above. At the same time, the horizon of the planetary in conjunction with spherical perspective is Petrov-Vodkin’s horizon *par excellence*. As Natalia Adaskina rightly puts it, “... Petrov-Vodkin’s world is intensely subjective: the universe also includes on equal terms the entity that per-



Israel Lizak

Night Tram. 1929

Tempera and graphite pencil

on paper. 44 x 45.8

Russian Museum

ceives.⁷² One timely question: what is the relationship between the specific decisions made by Petrov-Vodkin's followers, as described above, and this horizon? Why does the Teacher remain out of reach in this respect? Does this "entity that perceives" have a figurative thinking horizon that is inaccessible to other artists? The answer is not terribly obvious. Petrov-Vodkin is undoubtedly an artist on a unique scale and with great philosophical integrity. He was always interested in the grand sweep of the universe: eschatological cataclysms (*Ruin (Whirlwind)*, 1914, Russian Museum; *Earthquake in Crimea*, illus. on p. 178) and the state of harmony in the world order (*Midday*, illus. on p. 180). On the social level, he is also interested in major generalisations: "I should like to convey anxiety on a historical scale, the scale of great turmoil." Iconic pictures (*Death of the Commissar*, 1928; 1919. *Alarm*, 1934 – both from the Russian Museum; and even – to be examined in more detail below – *Housewarming*, 1937, Tretyakov Gallery) are also, essentially, perhaps, about a benevolent, but catastrophic change in the actual course of life, according to the artist. The universal themes of motherhood, the provincial peasant world, the family and love are also, as Nataliya Adaskina puts it, an expression of "moral and aesthetic absolutes".⁷³

All these works set a particular humanistic scale – universal and at the same time original, personalised – that is the basis of Petrov-Vodkin's poetics. The artist could share his experience with his pupils, as well as the tools of his own "science of seeing". But he was unable to share the scale and the poetics. Incidentally, the symbolisation and idealisation that are organic to Petrov-Vodkin's communing with the universe were not – let us be clear – transmitted to his pupils in a hurry, at the first approach. The universal sweep of the young Leonid Chupyatov (*Towards the Sun*, 1918, collection of V. Dudakov and M. Kashuro) and Vyacheslav Pakulin (*Changeover. Heroic Realism*, 1925, Russian Museum) did not save these works from being stilted. Yes, Petrov-Vodkin was able to address the "ages, history and the universal", while they could, as yet, only look to their own, personal space. On the other hand, behind this lay the exciting process of independent navigation in a changing world and on their own responsibility. These works mentioned above were of interest to the teacher as well as to others.

It is, perhaps, only with regard to one theme that Petrov-Vodkin can be said, wittingly or unwittingly, to have "hauled" his pupils' awareness towards the horizon of the archetypal nature of his own artistic thought. This refers to the problems posed by religion. Petrov-Vodkin consistently worked both directly with the Gospel themes and with their mediations – revealing (in the direct sense for this context) the symbolism and ethical meanings of Holy Scripture in images and situations drawn from the reality of his own time. Petrov-Vodkin's archetypal Biblical images were so organic to the teacher's poetics that they could not fail to be reflected in the consciousness of his pupils. They were also attracted by the tenacity of the artist, who continued to address religious contexts in the most unfavourable times for relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Soviet state. In brief, it was from the perspective of the religious theme that the pupils' attitude towards Petrov-Vodkin bore an element of the prophetic.

Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak, one of his pupils from among the first, Zvantseva, "recruits", was already painting *St Seraphim of Sarov Against Bolshaya Ordynka Street* (illus. on p. 35). His iconography is not extensive: there are four main iconographic types (basically in reproductions and painted copies from the workshops of the St Seraphim-Diveevo Monastery). Kotovich-Borisyak selects the "religious elder" type, while introducing into it a new, urban motif. Departing from the canon – St Seraphim was usually depicted in a forest – she placed the saint in an urban setting. In the gouache there are the familiar, "Zvantseva-style", reduced purple tones. The plastic echoing of the icon is of interest: the roofs resemble an icon's "hills". But one can also sense a naïve note, one that comes, in this case, not so much from the avant-garde experience as from the religious overtones: St Seraphim personified, above all, peasant, popular, simple-minded faith.

Chupyatov too saw the "peasant saint" in that way (*St Seraphim*, 1920s–1930s, collection of V. Shuster). In the generalised shape of the face, especially in the faceting of the beard, there is an element of primitivisation that is deliberate (i.e. "allowed through" the avant-garde artistic consciousness) and harks back to the day-to-day output of the monastery workshops.

Petrov-Vodkin's work on the image of the Mother of God particularly affected the religious painting of his pupils. Back in the time of the First World War, he had focused on the "Softening of Spiteful Hearts" image of Our Lady. The picture was not an icon in the liturgical sense, but it is undoubtedly an iconic image "in the emotional sense"



Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak

St Seraphim of Sarov Against
Bolshaya Ordynka Street. Late 1910s

Gouache on cardboard, 48.3 x 38.2

Private collection

(to use the artist's own expression). Our Lady is depicted with extended arms, reflecting both the ancient tradition of the images of the Virgin *Orans* and the Grower of Crops, as well as the later Inexhaustible Chalice. In 1920, Vladimir Dmitriev, who was very close to his teacher at that time, also turned to the image of Our Lady. He created a truly dramatic work, *The Mother of God Against the Background of Moscow* (a reaction to the new authorities' theomachist initiatives; illus. on p. 93). The figure of the Mother of God is depicted in the foreground, and behind her is an absolutely desolate city of bell towers, domes and roofs (unexpectedly harking back to the metaphysical art of Giorgio de Chirico and Carlo Carra). As is traditional in icons, the city is depicted on a smaller scale than the figure, which enables it to be shown from above. The axial, planetary lines of the composition "twist" the image from right to left. This dynamic not only maintains the direction of the movement of Our Lady as she leaves the city, but gives it a symbolic, universal meaning: the Mother of God is leaving a doomed city...

In 1924, Chupyatov paints *The Mother of God – the Helper of Women in Labour* (collection of O. Loginov). Like Petrov-Vodkin, he inclined towards an iconographic synthesis. A sense of the canon remains, yet the image is drastically transformed by the colour-dynamic techniques.

But in *The Mother of God of Tenderness* (illus. on p. 88), the representational canon is no longer relevant: a dynamic transformation of the futurist type has gone too far. All the more surprising are the preserved elements of the traditional iconography in the "Tenderness" (The Mother of God of Vladimir) – Our Lady's caressing motion and the foot or "heel" of the Infant Jesus.

There was good reason for Pavel Golubyatnikov's belonging to Petrov-Vodkin's inner circle of associates. He was exceptionally alive to his teacher's main intentions, yet was able to distance himself from stylisation and downright imitation. Even his palette was taken from Petrov-Vodkin – ochres and umbers, purple and emerald green. He also managed to individualise his painting language, primarily through a pastose technique (ochre in a thick layer), the absence of colour reduction and a general "warming" of the colour range. His originality also extended to the handling of form: Golubyatnikov rejected faceting; moreover, seeking a directness of expression, he deliberately applied the techniques of naïve art. More consistently than anyone else among Petrov-Vodkin's followers, he turned to symbolic, and so to religious, resources: in the Teacher's work, the symbolic and the Christian were entwined. What was important to Golubyatnikov was not the specific detail of the Gospel narratives: in figurative terms, the parables, the states of religious transcendence to the celestial world and the Christian metaphors "shone through" the texture of modern life. For example, in *Airplane Above the Village* (illus. on p. 95), the artist takes up a motif that is highly relevant politically: modern technology "explodes" the foundations of the traditional peasant conception of the world. The figural-plastic realisation does, however, bear witness to something else: the cessation of the flow of time (the frozen poses of the characters) and the prayerful self-immersion of the peasants are more likely to be showing the anticipation of an omen than the current state of affairs on the collective farm. *Kiev Woman* (illus. on p. 92) harks back to the iconography of "Our Lady", and *Storm* (illus. on p. 91) to the Biblical narratives about fishermen...

As for the religious theme in the work of Petrov-Vodkin's followers as a whole, one can only be surprised at how persistently his pupils turned to it in the hardest of times. There is a palpable link between Petrov-Vodkin's early *étude* for the painting *Head of a Youth (Red Angel)* (illus. on p. 89) and Chupyatov's *Angry Angel* (1941, private collection). Chupyatov's composition has perceptible links with Petrov-Vodkin's, seen as a mirror image, and the same applies to the colour treatment: with Petrov-Vodkin, to use Wassily Kandinsky's expression, "vermillion sounds like a trumpet". Chupyatov powerfully dramatises the image by adding a bleached coating (a reminder of the technique for reviving personal icon colours). Visualisation of the "feathery fire" of the halo – an interpenetration of red and white – finds an expressive colour-plastic rhyme in the depiction of the wings. Dmitry Likhachev had every reason to describe the image as a "red-faced, apocalyptic angel, full of calm anger ...". We should add that the image was created in 1941...

The first approaches towards portrait painting among Petrov-Vodkin's followers of the second, academic recruitment, as it were, were made back in the early teaching period of work on compositions – a model's head in monochrome. They were distant approaches: the tasks posed by the artist had no portrait component. But, strange though it may seem, there were pupils who were actually prompted by the impersonal nature of the composition

to search for distinctive portrait features. First and foremost, there was Evgenia Evenbach. Even within the framework of the warm-cold gradations of a single colour (dark blue), she sought to attain results reflecting temperament, e.g. in *Head of a Boy* (illus. on p. 130). In the graduation assignment *Students* (illus. on p. 182), despite the extreme limitation of means (each face is painted in a single colour with admixtures of white; in fact, the modelling of dimensions is reduced to a minimum), Evenbach set herself portraiture assignments. Later on, now going beyond monochrome and combining faceting with grotesque silhouette drawing, Evenbach tries to achieve quite subtle portrait characteristics (*Portrait of a Student with Red Plaits*, illus. on p. 134; *Portrait of Sofya Trivush*⁷⁴, illus. on p. 135; *Portrait of a Dwarf*, illus. on p. 136).

In terms of the genre, Petrov-Vodkin himself created two poles of portrait painting. The first was "large heads" (a larger-than-life portrait) of a generalising type, with obvious elements of idealisation and with a search for national overtones. The second was the complex psychological portrait with a high degree of spirituality and historical exactitude. Petrov-Vodkin's followers scarcely aimed at the notional "second pole" (*Self-Portrait*, illus. on p. 154): it was clear that everything there was too coloured by the unique personality of the creator and that no mastery of portrait-painting method would bring them closer to their teacher's spiritual horizon (with the possible exception of two works – the remarkable *Self-Portrait* (illus. on p. 155) by Sokolov, who managed to engage in a dialogue with some of Petrov-Vodkin's portrait images, and Chupyatov's *Self-Portrait* (illus. on p. 152) (⁷⁵); this last painting is a manifesto of the "optical man", who observes and ruthlessly analyses. It is a rare example of the psychological undertone of the screw-like movement in which a portrait depiction bores into space like a corkscrew).

Works that gravitate towards the "first pole" are a different matter. The teacher himself seemed to set "competitiveness" as the objective. He showed "how it was all done" and pointed to the sum total of necessary expressive techniques (active spatiality, the energy of generalisation enshrined in the "chiselling" techniques of shape formation, etc.). In other words, Petrov-Vodkin's *Large Heads* literally brought his pupils closer to searches in the conventional portrait field. What is the substantive modality of that kind of portrait? That is where the questions began. The times demanded the upholding of the new social archetype, a character whose positive nature was, as it were, sanctioned "from above". Petrov-Vodkin had experience with idealisation. Idealisation is not alien to social requirements. It seemed to be easy enough: combining an "idealised" social representation with a form that was "tailored" to the search for the conventional portrait quite literally enjoined one to produce the necessary result. But the method stemming from the directed, prescribed approach to portraiture was completely alien to the artist. He would extract the content (including the social representationalism) from the sum total of his own observations and experiences, but would not in any way endow the type under observation with any superimposed, situationally-determined content. Furthermore, Petrov-Vodkin was capable of capturing the actual procedural nature of the formation of a social type (*Workers*, 1926, Russian Museum). The second title is *Discussion*, which is very significant, since, according to the artist, it is in the process of discussion that social representation comes into being). This experience did not pass Petrov-Vodkin's followers by unnoticed. The typology of the easily approved mode ("portrait of a workers' faculty girl", "portrait of a female delegate", "portrait of a weaver", etc.) did not generally interest them (an exception, perhaps, is Victoria Belakovskaya's work *Steel Horse in the Fields of Ukraine* (1927, Russian Museum); although here a mythological element was "engaged" as a compensating factor). In most of the works, the indication of the person's occupation was perfunctory: the fact that Evgenia Evenbach's model is a student (*Portrait of a Student (Against Blue Background)*, illus. on p. 133), while Maria Lomakina's is an artist (*Portrait of the Sculptor Alexei Petrov*, illus. on p. 139), does not in any way represent the image socially. Where, then, is the generalisation? Why are we entitled to speak of a type? The focal point here would seem to be the character type. What is important is not only the psycho-physiological realia, but also their social and aesthetic time colouring. Among Petrov-Vodkin's followers, the conventional portrait has, thus, a cultural and anthropological dimension. What characters are actually provided, according to Petrov-Vodkin's followers, by Soviet life in the 1920s–30s? The persons depicted by Lomakina (the "sculptor Petrov", already mentioned), Zernov (*Portrait of Artist's Model*, illus. on p. 159) and Lizak (study of a head for the picture *Man on a Pedestal*, illus. on p. 158) belong to the combative type that surmounts the circumstances confronting him – in modern terms, a protester. Accordingly, the shape formation is energetic, and emotional, classicising intonations are also eminently suitable. (The simple situation of

posing may also be among the circumstances confronting someone, which, by virtue of his or her character, the person overcomes. In a work by Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya (*Artist's Model with Green Carafe*, illus. on p. 162), the model seems to be protesting against her being in a subservient (posing) and intimate (the mirror, the carafe) situation. This gives rise to a powerful pictorial pressure, a sense of a hidden dynamic that is seeking to burst out).

An interesting reversal of the theme of independence, separateness, a kind of organic affirmation of their own inviolable place in the world is to be found in the child images produced by Petrov-Vodkin's followers. As a rule, the models are simple country children – from the ordinary people, to coin a phrase. The aspects of everyday life that the artists focus on contradict the features of the idyllically poetic otherness that marks the child types of Petrov-Vodkin (and his early pupils – Shikhmanova, for example, in *Portrait of a Boy*, illus. on p. 69). But principally, this contradicts the tendencies towards unification, the monolithic drive, vocal collectivism and crowd moulding that the times had brought. The perceptual typology of child images in the creative work of Petrov-Vodkin's pupils is the typology of plastic generalisation.

This usually means solidly-built dimensions and a large, clear-cut shape as the basis. Then the originality begins: each artist works according to his own stylistic preferences. In Alexander Samokhvalov's work, for instance, (*Boy*, 1925–26, Tver Regional Picture Gallery; *Fisherman's Family*, 1926, Mashkov Museum of Fine Arts, Volgograd) the volumes are lessened by pictorial effects, while Alexei Pakhomov (*Archers*, illus. on p. 197; *Boy*, 1929, Russian Museum) prefers, regardless of the technique being used, to finish drawing the characteristic details "by volume".

A Chupyatov boy (*Head with Landscape*, 1919, private collection), with a large forehead and the massively moulded traits of a peasant face, is the standard for the moulding of volume – in the pure state, as it were, without the distractions of individual stylistic tasks. Petrov-Vodkin's words about a "force that moulds the object in its facets of cavities and protuberances" may be applied to it. But in this mould there is also a force that resists the pressure from without, i.e. the pressure of the environment. Hence the sensation of the independent, unique and separate nature of these typological images. The shape formation clearly takes on a figurative substantive context here.

There is a different typology in Viktor Proshkin's *Self-Portrait in Green Hat* (illus. on p. 161) and Boris Pestinsky's *Portrait of Slava Kirichenko* (illus. on p. 170) and *Portrait of the Composer Moór in His Youth* (illus. on p. 171). They were painted with the desire that they should be proper portraits – unconventional figures and eye-catching décor. Proshkin shows himself to be an individualist with a romantic sense. Pestinsky's Renaissance allusions are evident not only in his handling of the images of his characters, but, apparently, in the painting technique too. But, paradoxically, romanticisation and idealisation offset the individual psychology, becoming signs of élitism and escapism and, in the actual situation of the 1920s, becoming a factor of social group representation and, so, typology. Something similar happens in the later portraits by Alisa Poret. They leave one with the impression of a naïve and trusting openness, but that is only at first glance. They are not intended for the public at large: behind everything (the details, the décor, the primitivising intonation itself) lie hidden meanings and an appeal to the "insiders" – the narrow circle and the domestic cultural communities (like the "Chinari" literary group, created by the future members of the OBERIU – the Association for Real Art).

By the mid-1920s, a number of Petrov-Vodkin's followers had turned to a new typology, this time one that had a stylistic colouring. As had already happened previously in that "community of insiders", the lead was taken by Chupyatov.

In 1923, he paints *Portrait of E. F. Yushchenko* (illus. on p. 151). In that image there is a strong enigmatic element. The painter captures his model's state of dissatisfaction. But he restrains himself, and no further psychological development occurs. The face is depicted in light post-Cubist faceting, which is too delicate to convey any deep feelings. The emotional state altogether is muted – the theme of adornment, style and fashion is too sonorous. It is announced by the colour range more than by anything else. The developed silhouette principle is underlined by a contrasting colour relationship – regarding the subject; there is no combined or atmospheric effect. The costume and accessories are "chic" and, at the same time, theatrically artistic: there is the kid glove, the exclusive hat and the intricate "wing collar". Everything here – the work's pictorial layout, the handling of the clothes and accessories – is close to the Art Deco style that had already captured the commanding heights in the West and become standard a couple of years later. Even the harking back to the icon (the local colour treatment of the face, the ribbon-finish

on the hat with its sharp bend and geometrical rhythm akin to the border of the Madonna's mantle) operates in that direction – by analogy with the stylistically popular oriental speckles. In *Portrait of Anna Smirnova* (illus. on p. 87), Pyotr Sokolov also addresses the icon form. The analogy operates “on top of the canon” in the literal sense. The visual archetype with its smooth silhouette is seen as the basis on top of which the artist superimposes, by fragile, twitchy, linear brushstrokes, the portrait depiction of the woman, who is extravagant and belongs emphatically to high society. Apart from carrying out the portrait assignment, Sokolov seems to have been making a theme, after reflection or intuitively, out of the very emergence of the new style – not a profound art, operating with fundamental ontological upheavals, but an art that is flexible, permeated by urbanistic currents, sensitive to the current moods of the time, hedonistic and avidly appropriating any visual feature – both canonical and avant-garde. Some of Petrov-Vodkin's followers picked up on the birth of this style. Some things in it were, of course, hard to accept – primarily a certain opposition to the deeply entrenched psychological tradition of Russian portraiture. That is why a degree of discomfiture can be sensed in the models for many portraits by artists whose efforts were bent towards creating a new stylistic typology. So, in Chupyatov's *Portrait of Ksenia*⁷⁶ (illus. on p. 150), the enchanting colour-dynamic spectacle that is unfolding behind her back seems to be intimidating the model somewhat, conflicting with her intimate and even homely appearance. An unknown artist⁷⁷, who is close to this circle (*Woman in Blue Before a Plant (Portrait of Evgenia Evenbach ?)*), illus. on p. 177), while continuing to work with dynamic shifts of form, axial lines of force and other attributes of avant-garde thought, strives to somehow recycle and domesticate all this abstractly entertaining décor: the dynamic colour traction takes on the functional role of a blind, and so on. Nikolai Ionin's *Portrait of Ekaterina Ionina*⁷⁸ (illus. on p. 141) came to be an iconic image of Art Deco style in the version pursued by Petrov-Vodkin's followers simply because the picture's creator had achieved an almost emblematic integrity and clarity.

On the whole, the decorative-symbolic unification of avant-garde techniques (this can be clearly seen in graphic art – the theatrical sketches by Ekaterina Petrova-Trotskaya, the female portraits by Yuri Cherkosov and Alexei Zernov) became an obvious feature of Art Deco stylistics, despite the previously widespread view, which did not pass unnoticed in Soviet Russia.

Yet this version of Soviet Art Deco is also underpinned by philosophical elements. Specifically, the path towards it lay through a certain character type, mainly female, the articulation of artistry and the new élitism, in its Soviet interpretation (this aspect is clearly revealed, for example, in the plasticity of the chinaware produced by Natalya Danko, the artist who was objectively the main protagonist of Russian Art Deco as a whole).

So, during the early period, some of Petrov-Vodkin's followers turn to Art Deco (without actually uttering the name and, in fact, usually avoiding the word *décoratif*, since it had pejorative connotations for a Russian artist). In modern art criticism, as Edward Lucie-Smith rightly put it⁷⁹, the name is something of a lingua franca: it is used very broadly, sometimes to encompass historical and cultural material of various kinds. In particular, the term is applied to such phenomena (which are certainly close, if we are talking about pictorial, rather than applied, art) as *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity), Magic Realism and *Novecento Italiano*⁸⁰, and the slightly earlier term “metaphysical painting”. (That, in fact, is what Lucie-Smith does in his book, grouping together under the heading “Art Deco” painting that represents all these tendencies and even adding a number of works that, in our country, have been traditionally labelled “socialist realism”.) There is good reason to suppose that links have also been seen between this material and the work of the neo-humanists (Christian Bérard, Eugène and Leonid Berman, Pavel Tchelitchev and Francis Gruber), so named by their gallery owner, Waldemar-George. It is figurative art that is, as Gérard Durozoi put it, “tinged with a sleepy nostalgia and a distracted melancholy”⁸¹.

It is obvious today that the creative work produced by the followers of Petrov-Vodkin occupies its own place – surmounting all ideological barriers – in the configuration of these new realisms⁸². (Needless to say, we are here referring to the period of relatively unified aspirations: by the mid-1930s, life was to scatter these artists far and wide). I should not wish to erode the stylistic policy of Petrov-Vodkin's followers who paid tribute to Art Deco. They were concerned by the new urbanism, by the new female type and by style not only as shape formation, but also as stylishness, as a pattern for life. And that is to say nothing about the factor, important to each of them, of giving visual form to the style of a certain national “iconic connection”. So let us remember the adherence of some

followers of Petrov-Vodkin to Art Deco, while not forgetting, though, that such outstanding masters as Chupyatov do not fit in with that style.

But what interests us here is the new points in common. They took shape in the second half of the 1920s on the basis not only of the figural-plastic "precepts of the teacher", but also of certain philosophical rapports. This is shown by Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya's *Boys on Gangway* (illus. on p. 198) and *Street* (illus. on p. 201), Nikolai Sekirin's *Pioneer Camp* (illus. on p. 199), Maria Lomakina's *Family of a Whittler* (illus. on p. 200), two monumental panels by Pavel Ab and Ivan Tarnyagin (ill. on pp. 192, 193) and two particularly large-scale works – Alexei Zernov's *Artist's Model in the Studio* (illus. on p. 202) and Tatyana Kuperwasser's *In the Boat* (illus. on p. 203). What place do they occupy in the narrowed space of realisms of which we were talking?

The works are dominated by that pictorial order "after the avant-garde" (*rappel à l'ordre*) that Jean Cocteau urged and which formed the basis for all of the tendencies listed above. (The reference here is to figurative order, since systematic thought may also exist in abstraction.) The form is mimetic, and the figurative culture fostered by Petrov-Vodkin obliges one to develop the texture, colour and weight of the volumes. These works are highly organised: there is no outburst of emotion, no superficial virtuosity. Yet there is none of the excessive degree of organisation that marks the new objectivity, where everything is strictly controlled, has its own route of advance and formula for the dynamics (a reaction to the rapturous effusions of expressionism). Furthermore, there are qualities that expressly contradict the rapport. Primarily, there is the absence of illusionism (the last work with an openly optical layout that we mentioned was Chupyatov's *Self-Portrait*). It is typical of the new objectivity, while magic realism altogether is based largely on the effects of a "magic glass" (or distorting mirrors). Illusionism is impossible, though, with such a painting system – with fresco-like gleams on the surface and an almost triumphant development of tonalities. A further factor is that of anti-urbanism. Country folk are depicted, even when they are in town and are engaged in handicraft work, and the peasant principle can be seen in the unhurried and smooth nature of their movements. The grotesque exacerbation to which not only Otto Dix and Georg Grosz resorted, but also the more delicate Christian Schad, would have looked out of place. So that Petrov-Vodkin's followers seem closer to the Italians (although "magic realism" was actually a German and Italian phenomenon). Closer too, perhaps, to the Parisian neo-humanists?

Recognition of the connections between the phenomena described above and the artistic practice of Petrov-Vodkin's followers in the middle and second half of the 1920s does not relieve us of the need to address what are, perhaps, more substantial questions. What is it that binds all these artists into some kind of community? What does this community bring to our ideas about art between the late 1920s and mid-1930s that is substantively new?

What is immediately striking is the isolation and self-immersion of all the characters involved. Whatever the situation in which they might find themselves – a joint fishing trip, bathing, buying and selling vegetables or being at home with the family – they are extraordinarily antisocial. Silence, in fact, is the predominant state of this naturally formed cycle. As Michel Foucault wrote of René Magritte: "in sleep, people switch over to silence"⁸³. The state in which people find themselves can hardly be called somnambular; it is, rather, extratemporal. If there is one thing that Petrov-Vodkin could do, it was to regulate the flows of time, and that was what he taught "his circle". Petrov-Vodkin did, in general, possess a remarkable sense of historical time. He showed that even in a picture that is considered a failure – *Housewarming*. In narrative terms, it is devoted to the introduction of new people, proletarians – the artist began to paint the picture in 1922 and continued it in the following decade – into unfamiliar cultural spaces that they had not chosen. The adjustments of the 1930s are so dramatic that the earlier content looks private. The flat, like an ark, is propelled by certain more decisive, powerful historical forces. The flat's new owners are not the owners of life. Uncertainty looms over them as to the reality of their own being (hence the emotional theme of quietness, caution and privacy means confusion). Petrov-Vodkin was hardly able to identify and analyse the situation, but he did capture the course of events.

The cessation of the flow of time in the works of Blagoveshchenskaya, Sekirin, Lomakina, Ab and Tarnyagin that we have mentioned is meaningful. It is also buttressed by national tradition. Here too is the fresco extratemporality. And the cessation as an expression of a person's total merging with the passing of his day-to-day lifespan is an

echo of the poetic charm of what is private, a charm that is inherent in the Venetsianov school (Grigory Soroka. *Fishermen*, second half of the 1840s, Russian Museum). Petrov-Vodkin's followers had their own logic. Historical time unfolds outside those people's hopes and aspirations. It is far away, as far as the aircraft at which the peasants are looking in Golubyatnikov's picture that we have already mentioned. They look in an astonishing silence – and separately. I see no need to talk unnecessarily about the situations confronting the characters in the pictures painted by the followers of Petrov-Vodkin that we have named. When all is said and done, it may just be a fishing trip, a mere domestic scene. But there are works in which the element of chance is swept away by the very nature of the figural-plastic treatment. In the picture *In the Boat*, Kuperwasser presents such a spacious composition, almost emblematic in its completeness, such a sonorous development of white and green, that no doubts arise as to the meaning of all this. The composition in Zernov's work *Artist's Model in the Studio* (illus. on p. 202) is so "non-fragmentary" (to borrow an expression from the Italians' manifesto), the spatial planes are so calibrated, and the tonalities tremble with the pent-up colour force – and such means of expression are not expended on a banal composition. What is more, Zernov goes further in developing this theme of detachment and silence: the model is posing with her eyes closed, and the artist behind the easel is so positioned that he simply cannot physically see her. A certain strange shadow, suprematist in its outlines, falls on to the drapes. Is this a distant echo of metaphysical painting? It is more likely to be the physical sensation of extratemporality, outsiderness (the term is taken "from today" – from sociocultural anthropology), felt by those of Petrov-Vodkin's followers who were the most sensitive to the content of the "historical moment". Apart from his undoubted talent, Zernov possessed that gift. In 1937, he creates the picture *Accident* (illus. on p. 205), which is surprising in its boldness: a toy lorry (very weighty and figural) has run over an equally material teddy bear, and has cut off its head...

The followers of Petrov-Vodkin, representatives of different generations and different social strata (some from the "outdated" classes, others from those that had enthusiastically accepted the revolutionary changes), were people who had a difficult destiny: they were "run over" by time. Some were unable to lead a proper professional life. Others had a career by making many compromises. By and large, they were all affected by the time in which they lived. But this exhibition is least of all a memorial to unfulfilled hopes. Quite the opposite: based largely on the searches and attributions of relatively (and sometimes totally) unfamiliar material, it shows art of the highest artistic quality, integrity and substance. I should like to think that the artists of Petrov-Vodkin's circle as an independent and striking phenomenon will enrich the public's perceptions of the art of the first few decades of the 20th century.

notes

¹ The "Masters of Analytical Art" (MAI) was an association of Pavel Filonov's pupils. The group was formed in 1925 and officially ceased to exist, like all the other artistic associations, in 1932. However, classes in his workshop continued right up to the artist's death in the besieged city of Leningrad in 1941. The membership kept changing, and the association comprised some 70 pupils in all at various times.

² See: T. Goryacheva. UNOVIS: "My budem ognem i dadim silu novo-go" // V krughe Malevicha. Soratniki. Ucheniki. Posledovateli v Rossii 1920–1950-kh (UNOVIS: "We shall be like fire and will convey the strength of the new" // In Malevich's circle. Close associates. Pupils. Fol-

lowers in the Russia of the 1920s-1950s), St Petersburg: Palace Editions, 2000. P. 15.

³ UNOVIS (Champions of the New Art) was an association of Kazimir Malevich's pupils. It was formed in 1919 at the Vitebsk Practical Art Institute. From 1922, it continued to operate in Petrograd at the premises of GINKhUK (see below), of which Malevich had become the director. Similar groups sprang up in several provincial towns in Soviet Russia. It ceased to function in 1926.

⁴ GINKhUK – the State Institute of Artistic Culture. Late in 1922, after spending three years in Vitebsk, Malevich and a group of his pupils moved to Petrograd. It was Malevich and his pupils who were to form the basis of GINKhUK, created from the existing Museum of Material Culture. Research departments were set up to study the latest trends in art. They were the Formal, Theoretical and Practical (later renamed

- the Painting) Department (under Kazimir Malevich), the Department of Organic Culture (under Mikhail Matiushin), the Department of Material Culture (under Vladimir Tatlin until autumn 1925, later under Nikolai Suetin), the Department of General Ideology (under Pavel Filonov, later under Nikolai Punin) and the Department of Painting Techniques, later renamed Experimental (under Pavel Mansurov). A temporary phonological department (under Igor Terentyev) was short-lived. In 1925–1926, GINKhUK had a staff of about thirty. The institute's main aim was to devise a "universal artistic methodology". This overarching goal was attended by constant disputes, since the outstanding left-leaning artists could not overcome their creative differences. As a result, the teaching staff kept changing. In December 1926, GINKhUK closed as an independent research institution. Its museum exhibits were transferred to the Russian Museum and the State Museum Fund.
- ⁵ "V krughe Malevicha. Soratniki. Ucheniki. Posledovateli v Rossii 1920–1950-kh" (*"In Malevich's circle. Close associates. Pupils. Followers in the Russia of the 1920s–1950s"*). 30 November 2000 – 26 March 2001. St Petersburg: Russian Museum, Marble Palace.
- ⁶ The highest art college under the St Petersburg Imperial Academy of Arts was restructured several times and so bore the following names:
1918 – it was turned into the Petrograd State Free Art Studios (PGSKhUM);
1921 – renamed the Petrograd State Art Studios (PGKhUM) under the reconstituted Academy of Arts;
1921–1923 – Academy of Arts (AA);
1923–1925 – Higher Art and Technical Studios (VKhUTEMAS);
1925–1930 – Higher Art and Technical Institute, Leningrad Higher Art and Technical Institute (VKhUTEIN, LVKhTI);
1930 – renamed the Institute of Proletarian Fine Art (INPIL);
1932 – turned into the Leningrad Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (LIZhSA).
- ⁷ V. I. Kostin. K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. Moscow, 1966. P. 90.
- ⁸ A. B. Lyubimova. Zhivopis' studentov VKhUTEMAS v sobranii Russkogo muzeya. Vyyavlennyye pamyatniki // Stranitsy istorii otechestvennogo iskusstva. Vyp. XX. (*Paintings by VKhUTEMAS students in the Russian Museum's collection. Discovered works // Pages from the history of Russian art. Issue XX*). St Petersburg, Palace Editions, 2012. Pp. 128–147.
- ⁹ Manuscript Section, State Russian Museum. Coll. 209, series 14, Sheet 26. V. Vlasov. Vospominaniya (*Recollections*) (hereafter – V. Vlasov. Vospominaniya (*Recollections*)).
- ¹⁰ N. L. Adaskina. K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. Zhizn' i tvorchestvo (*Life and Work*). Moscow, Books Mart, 2014. P. 77 (hereafter – N. L. Adaskina. K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. Zhizn' i tvorchestvo (*Life and Work*)).
- ¹¹ Academic Archive, Russian Academy of Arts. Coll. 7, series 3, rec. 298, sheet 18.
- ¹² The "Tower of Vyacheslav Ivanov" is the name given in the history of the Russian Silver Age to the poet Vyacheslav Ivanov's St Petersburg flat, located in a sixth-floor oriel window at 25, Tavricheskaya Street (now No.35), not far from the Tauride Palace. A round room with a splendid view over the city was the venue, from 1905 onwards, for the famous "Wednesdays", which brought together the *crème de la crème* of artistic and intellectual Russia – poets, artists, musicians and religious philosophers. It was visited by Zinaida Gippius and Dmitry Merezhkovsky, Alexander Blok, Andrei Bely, Fyodor Sologub, Georgy Chulkov, Anatoly Lunacharsky, Vsevolod Meyerhold, Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, Max Voloshin, Anna Akhmatova, Valery Bryusov, Mikhail Kuzmin and Nikolai Berdyayev. Late in 1909, the meetings in the "tower" were moved to the editorial office of the journal *Apollon*.
- ¹³ Yu. Obolenskaya. V shkole Zvantsevoy pod rukovodstvom L. Baksta i M. Dobuzhinskogo (*In Zvantseva's school under the direction of L. Bakst and M. Dobuzhinsky*). Paper given at the Academy of Artistic Sciences. 1927. Publication, comments and concluding remarks by Lina Bernshteyn and Lena Neklyudova // <http://www.utoronto.ca/tsq>. P. 209.
- ¹⁴ *Ibid.* P. 218.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.* P. 221.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.* P. 235.
- ¹⁷ Private archive. P. 2. A. V. Lermontova. Biografiya N. V. Lermontovoi (*Biography of N. V. Lermontova*). Manuscript. The author is Alexandra Vladimirovna Lermontova (1892–1964), a physicist specialising in spectroscopy and the wife of the eminent scientist Academician Vladimir Fok, together with whom she translated Niels Bohr's book "Atomic Physics and Human Knowledge" (1961). The whole family was exceptionally gifted. Her second sister, Ekaterina Vladimirovna (1889–1942), was one of the first women geologists. Her brother, Vladimir Vladimirovich (?–1941), was a physicist and electronic engineer, who worked with the inventor Lev Termen, the father of electronic music.
- ¹⁸ N. L. Adaskina. K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. Zhizn' i tvorchestvo (*Life and Work*). P. 86.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.* P. 45.
- ²⁰ V. Kruglov. Simvolizm v Rossii (*Symbolism in Russia*) // Simvolizm v Rossii. Exhibition catalogue. State Russian Museum, St Petersburg: Palace Editions. 1996. P. 36.
- ²¹ G. Yu. Sternin. "Dva veka. Ocherki russkoy khudozhestvennoy kul'tury" (*"Two centuries. Outlines of Russian Artistic Culture"*). Moscow: GALART, 2007. P. 168.
- ²² A. Etkind. Eros nevozmozhnogo; is toriya psikhoanaliza v Rossii (*Eros of the Impossible: The History of Psychoanalysis in Russia*). St Petersburg: Medusa Publishers, 1993. P. 63.
- ²³ Quoted from: Alexander Nikolaevich Benois. Khudozhestvennye pis'ma (*Artistic Letters*) 1908–1917. St Petersburg, 2006. Vol. 1. P. 344.
- ²⁴ Quoted from: Mastera iskusstva ob iskusstve (*Masters of Art on Art*). Moscow, 1970. Vol. 7. P. 218.
- ²⁵ G. Yu. Sternin. *Ibid.* P. 166.
- ²⁶ Quoted from: Andrei Krusanov. Russky avangard (*The Russian Avant-Garde*). Vol. 1, Bk. 2. Moscow, 2010. P. 561.
- ²⁷ A. V. Lermontova. Biografiya N. V. Lermontovoy (*Biography of N. V. Lermontova*). P. 11.
- ²⁸ A. Etkind. Khlyst. Sekty, literatura i revolyutsiya (*Cultist. Sects, Literature and Revolution*). Moscow, NLO, 2013. P. 201.
- ²⁹ A. V. Lermontova. Biografiya N. V. Lermontovoi (*Biography of N. V. Lermontova*). P. 11.
- ³⁰ Evgenia Maximovna Kaplan (c. 1890 – at least 1915) was an artist who studied alongside Zhukova at Zvantseva's school in the early 1910s.
- ³¹ A. V. Lermontova. Biografiya N. V. Lermontovoi (*Biography of N. V. Lermontova*). P. 16.
- ³² N. L. Adaskina. K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. Zhizn' i tvorchestvo (*Life and Work*). P. 59.
- ³³ Quoted from: N. L. Adaskina. Pedagogicheskaya sistema K. S. Petrova-Vodkina. Ocherki po russkomu i sovetскому iskusstvu (*K. S. Petrov-Vodkin's Teaching System. Essays on Russian and Soviet Art*). Tretyakov Gallery, Leningrad, 1974. P. 28 (hereafter: N. L. Adaskina. Pedagogicheskaya sistema K. S. Petrova-Vodkina (*K. S. Petrov-Vodkin's Teaching System*)).
- ³⁴ Quoted from: N. L. Adaskina. Pedagogicheskaya sistema K. S. Petrova-Vodkina (*K. S. Petrov-Vodkin's Teaching System*). P. 293.
- ³⁵ Academic Archive, Russian Academy of Arts. Coll. 7, series 8, rec. 2997, sheet 4.
- ³⁶ B. N. Yakovlev. "Transport is Improving". 1923, Tretyakov Gallery.
- ³⁷ The author wishes to thank S. Ya. Kagarlitskaya for the material she collected about Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak.
- ³⁸ A Bestuzhev student was one who attended the Bestuzhev courses (1878–1918), higher education courses for women in St Petersburg, founded by the historian, writer and academician at the Academy of Sciences Konstantin Bestuzhev-Ryumin (1829–1897).
- ³⁹ The picture shows the artist's father, V. V. Kotovich, a lieutenant-colonel who was killed at the start of the First World War. The portrait was shown in 1915 at the World of Art exhibition.
- ⁴⁰ It was presented at the First Exhibition of the Professional Union of Artists and Painters. Moscow, 1918.
- ⁴¹ It was presented at the *Fire-Colour* exhibition, 1924.
- ⁴² See: V. P. Korzun. Sem'ya Lappo-Danilevskikh: semeynyy kontekst v istoriograficheskom narrative. Istoriya i istoriki. Istoriograficheskiy vestnik 2011–2012 (*The Lappo-Danilevsky Family: Family Context in the Historiographical Narrative. History and Historians. Historiographical Gazette 2011–2012*). Moscow: Nauka, 2014.
- ⁴³ See: "A. A. Lappo-Danilevsky". Tekst: K. S. Petrova-Vodkina, B. Essen, Ya. Chakhrova, P. Loshkareva (*"A. A. Lappo-Danilevsky", Text by K. S. Petrov-Vodkin, B. Essen, Ya. Chakhrov and P. Loshkarev*). Leningrad: Obshchina Khudozhnikov, 1928.

- ⁴⁴ V. Vlasov. *Vospominaniya (Recollections)*. Sheet 26.
- ⁴⁵ A. A. Lappo-Danilevsky. *Ibid.* P. 6.
- ⁴⁶ Manuscript Section, State Russian Museum. Coll. 240, file 36, sheet 1.
- ⁴⁷ A. A. Lappo-Danilevsky. *Ibid.* P. 12.
- ⁴⁸ Academic Archive, Academy of Arts. Coll. 7, series 3, rec. 298, sheet 1.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.* Sheet 8.
- ⁵⁰ The most thorough commentary on the system seems to us to be that of N. L. Adaskina, whose book has already been mentioned above (see note 33).
- ⁵¹ V. Vlasov. *Vospominaniya (Recollections)*. Sheet 29.
- ⁵² Academic Archive, Academy of Arts. Coll. 7, series 1, file 135 (29.09.22 – 09.10.23).
- ⁵³ *Ibid.* Sheet 53.
- ⁵⁴ See: Plan rekonstruktsii leningradskogo vysshego khudozhestvenno-tekhnicheskogo instituta. Doklad rektora F. A. Maslova (*Plan for restructuring the Leningrad Higher Art and Technical Institute. Report by the rector, F. A. Maslov*). Leningrad. 1929. Offset duplication.
- ⁵⁵ Academic Archive, Academy of Arts. Coll. 7, series 3, rec. 298, Sheet 28.
- ⁵⁶ *Ibid.* Sheet 30.
- ⁵⁷ E. Selizarova even writes: "This version cannot be checked, since not a single such work has been preserved in the Academy's collection." See: E. N. Selizarova. Petrov-Vodkin v Peterburge-Petrograde-Leningrade (*Petrov-Vodkin in St Petersburg-Petrograd-Leningrad*). St Petersburg, 1993. P. 130.
- ⁵⁸ Academic Archive, Academy of Arts. Coll. 7, series 1, file 151, sheet 5. Sylabus for the general course in the painting faculty.
- ⁵⁹ Quoted from: N. L. Adaskina. Pedagogicheskaya Sistema K. S. Petrova-Vodkina (*The Teaching System of K. S. Petrov-Vodkin*). P. 296.
- ⁶⁰ T. A. Ermakova. V plenu zhivopisnykh oshchushcheny (Captivated by Picturesque Sensations) // Maria Vladimirovna Lomakina. Zhivopis'. Grafika (*Painting. Drawings*). Tretyakov Gallery. Moscow, 2009; M. N. Sokolov. Iskustvo i sud'ba. O zhivopisi Marii Lomakinoy (*Art and Fate. On the Paintings of Mariya Lomakina*) // Maria Vladimirovna Lomakina. Zhivopis'. Grafika (*Painting. Drawings*). Tretyakov Gallery. Moscow, 2009.
- ⁶¹ "She consciously sacrificed herself as an artist so as to enable my father, the artist A. Rusakov, to engage in painting, and so that the family could just about survive." (A. A. Rusakov. Izbrannye trudy (*Selected Works*). St Petersburg, 2000. P. 28).
- ⁶² See: A. Borovsky. Leonid Chupyatov // Rakurs Chupyatova (*Chupyatov's Viewing Angle*). Nashi Khudozhniki Gallery, St Petersburg: Petronivs, 2013. P. 148.
- ⁶³ Needless to say, in practice, he himself certainly did not always adhere to this precept: many works in the genre are in fact markedly associative.
- ⁶⁴ A. A. Sidorov. Russkaya grafika nachala veka (*Russian Drawing at the Beginning of the Century*). Moscow: Iskustvo, 1969. P. 110.
- ⁶⁵ A. Borovsky. V. I. Malagis. Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1987. P. 9.
- ⁶⁶ Quoted from: A. Lyubimova. *Op. cit.* P. 130.
- ⁶⁷ Quoted from: Pyotr Ivanovich Sokolov. Materialy k biografii (*Biographical material*). P. 63.
- ⁶⁸ Quoted from: A. Borovsky. Leonid Chupyatov. P. 34.
- ⁶⁹ The drawing is reproduced in edition No. 1 of the journal *Petrograd* for 1924.
- ⁷⁰ Quoted from: N. L. Adaskina. K. S. Petrov-Vodkin: zhizn' i tvorchestvo (*Life and Work*). P. 119.
- ⁷¹ The first version won 1st Prize at the "Worker" contest, organised by the Community of Artists.
- ⁷² N. L. Adaskina. K. S. Petrov-Vodkin: zhizn' i tvorchestvo (*Life and Work*). P. 127.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.* P. 74.
- ⁷⁴ The painting shows Sofya Mikhailovna Trivush (*née* Kusochkova), who studied together with Evenbach at Leningrad State University (Faculty of History and Philology, Department of Material Culture). After graduation, she worked in the palace museums in Tsarskoe Selo (Detskoye Selo) and, when the war ended, at the Leningrad History Museum.
- ⁷⁵ Shown at the 6th exhibition of the Community of Artists in 1925.
- ⁷⁶ The portrait shows the artist's wife, Ksenia Pavlovna Chupyatova, *née* Sholp.
- ⁷⁷ The authors of the catalogue take the view that the portrait can be identified with the picture *Woman in Blue Before a Plant* from the inventory of works that remained in the apartment of Chupyatov and his wife after their death and were then moved for temporary safekeeping, first to the Hermitage and later to the Russian Museum. Pictures by other artists besides Chupyatov may also have been in the flat, so that the question of who painted it remains an open one (information supplied by A. B. Lyubimova).
- ⁷⁸ The portrait shows Ekaterina Nikolaevna Ionina, the painter's wife and the sister of the artist Alexander Samokhvalov.
- ⁷⁹ See: Edward Lucie-Smith. *Art Deco Painting*. Phaidon, 2003. P. 23.
- ⁸⁰ The seven painters of the *Novecento* came together in 1923 on the basis of the key concepts of "synthesis", "composition" and "non-fragmentary construction", and they reorganised themselves in Milan in 1926 to form the *Novecento Italiano* group. The "Roman School" took shape in 1929. The group of artists also united behind the journal *Valori Plastici* (see: *Art of the Twentieth Century. The Artistic Culture between the Wars*. Milano: Skira, 2006. P. 173). None of them denied the achievements of the avant-garde and futurism nor, in particular, did they urge a return to the immediacy of, and direct contact with, real life. Furthermore, they had a complex visuality: they reflected mimesis with mimesis, optics with optics, and medium with medium. Felice Casorati, Antonio Donghi, Achille Funi, Arturo Martini, Mario Sironi and Mario Tozzi seem to have been closest to the followers of Petrov-Vodkin; there is at least a certain echo here.
- ⁸¹ Quoted from: V. Bouvet and G. Durozoi. *Paris between the Wars*. London: Thames and Hudson. 2012. P. 270. True, these names in connection with the work of Petrov-Vodkin himself, have been brought up by E. V. Gribonosova-Grebneva, who presents an interesting problem regarding the contextualisation of the work of the artist in European figurative art in the first half of the 20th century (See: Gribonosova-Grebneva, E. V. *Tvorchestvo Petrova-Vodkina i zapadnoevropeiskie "realizmy" 1920–1930-kh gg. Avtoreferat dissertatsii na soiskanie uchenoi stepeni kandidata iskusstvovedeniya*. Moscow State University, 2009. P. 22).
- ⁸² It should be said straightaway that young Soviet artists had quite a full knowledge of European, particularly German, material. See: Z. Pyshnovskaya. Khudozhestvenny internatsional (*The Artistic Internationale*) // Sovetskoe Iskustvoznaniye-27. Moscow, 1991, and elsewhere. In the mid-1920s, Soviet critics also became closely interested in the problems raised by the new kinds of realism. Back in 1922, Abram Efros, the most sensitive critic of the time, wrote of "the classics now coming into flower", calling them the wafting of a fresh breeze. Those classics were "left-wing, since they have only just separated from the rule of the 'isms'" (quoted from: *Literaturnyye manifesty. Ot simvolizma do "Oktyabrya" (Literary Manifestos. From Symbolism to "October")*. Moscow: Agraf, 2001. P. 306). A few years later, it was the Italians, including Casorati, whom we have just mentioned, who were targeted by the young Alexei Fyodorov-Davydov. Paradoxically, he criticised them for "trying to record once and for all the old achievements of Cézannesque post-impressionism. It is not by chance that the birthplace of (Italian – A. B.) fascism came to be the country of neo-classicism" (quoted from: A. Fyodorov-Davydov. *Stat'i i ocherki (Articles and Essays)*. Moscow, 1975. P. 25). There is much that is strange here – equating post-Cézannism with neo-classicism and then with fascism. Thoroughgoing politicisation was already in the spirit of the times. But the critic was deceived by his foresight: neo-classical painting would very soon become a state requirement in the USSR too. He goes on to write, though: "If we are fated to take something from neo-classicism, it will be the 'carefulness' of its masters' work ... A work of art is, above all, something that is done well." This echoes Petrov-Vodkin's "organisation of an object's deep craftsmanship".
- ⁸³ Quoted from: Devin Fore. *Realism after Modernism. An October Book*. London: The MIT Press. 2012. P. 299.



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Petrov-Vodkin's School

The art of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin is one of the key phenomena of 20th-century Russian culture. The artist's achievements helped contribute to a formal revolution in art, and his deeply original oeuvre was influential in many ways, some of them obvious, others less perceptible.

Petrov-Vodkin's work has been thoroughly studied, and interest in his legacy remains unfaded to this day. The artist's educational activities have been the focus of considerable attention among specialists, first and foremost Natalia Adaskina, whose writings examine the theme of Petrov-Vodkin the educator in the greatest detail and depth.¹ At the same time, the impact of this educational work remains underappreciated today due to a lack of sufficient research devoted to the artist's students and the wide dispersal of their artistic legacy. *Petrov-Vodkin's Circle* is an exhibition of a teacher surrounded by his pupils, among whom there were both "disciples" and imitators; his influence was superficial on some and profound on others, but on the whole it was enormous.

In the first post-revolutionary years the field of education became a battleground of various trends, conceptions and theories. Those artists whose views were too radical to form a basis for practical pedagogy enthusiastically embarked on the creation of new artistic schools. Among them were Kazimir Malevich, Pavel Filonov, Vladimir Tatlin, Wassily Kandinsky and Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. Bearing in mind the contradictions in their creative orientations – which, incidentally, were often more apparent than real – a comparison of these artists' legacies reveals that Petrov-Vodkin's role as artist and pedagogue in shaping the destiny of his age was similar to theirs in scale and significance.

In February of 1917 Petrov-Vodkin begins to get actively involved in public work, seeing himself above all as the organizer of a new artistic school. On 28 June 1917 he publishes his article "On the Science of Seeing" in the newspaper *Delo naroda*, in which he sets forth the basics of his educational method. On 27 July 1917 he's appointed to the commission to reform the Academy of Fine Arts along with the Higher Art School and provincial art schools under its jurisdiction.

By that time Petrov-Vodkin had already acquired significant pedagogical experience. He'd begun work as an educator early, being literally "fettered to teaching", as he put it, from 1910 onwards. Replacing Léon Bakst as instructor at Elizaveta Zvantseva's art school,² Petrov-Vodkin soon achieved conspicuous success, winning popularity among young students. The artist made Zvantseva's school his own, a place where he refined his mastery, brought his theories to light and involved his students as co-participants to one degree or another in his creative evolution. It's probably worth mentioning here that the artist's educational activity, the dawn of which ushered in his coming creative upsurge, was dictated by more than material considerations.³ Inclined from youth to self-examination and philosophical meditations, Petrov-Vodkin always strove to penetrate the essence of phenomena and make his point of view understood to those around him.

The students in Zvantseva's school were chiefly young people from the aristocracy and middle classes. Far from all of them were to become well known and leave their mark on history. The school's student rolls have not survived, and their approximate makeup is known today only thanks to memoirs and a few isolated documents.

Among girls, and they were seemingly in the majority, Vera Zhukova, Favsta Shikhmanova, Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak, Maria Sasko, Yulia Obolenskaya and Nadezhda Lermontova mastered their teacher's lessons with the greatest originality and talent. Lermontova came to Petrov-Vodkin after several years under Léon Bakst's tutelage; information on her precise dates of study is contradictory.⁴ She also worked on the frescoes of St Basil's Church in Ovruch under the artist's direction.⁵

Vladimir Dmitriev, Boris Erbshtein and Petrov-Vodkin's most talented pupil, Leonid Chupyatov, all began studying at Zvantseva's school on the eve of the revolution. Chupyatov, who presumably began in 1916, had studied earlier at the school of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts as well as the studios of Mikhail Bernstein and Jan Ciągłiński.

Petrov-Vodkin was "building his own future in beginning artists", as he wrote in a letter to his mother; he taught them what he himself knew and was striving towards at the time. The period from 1910 to 1917, coinciding with Petrov-Vodkin's teaching at Zvantseva's school, demonstrates his steady progression from Symbolism to Neoclassicism. But he was open to avant-garde influences as well, as would become evident in the future.

With various degrees of talent, the artist's students strove to achieve generalized form and heightened juxtapositions of colour in their work. Petrov-Vodkin constantly warned them against imitating nature, emphasizing the importance of images encoded in colour, compositional rhythm and pictorial detail, images in which value disappears and colour is laid bare, cleansed of reflexes and "converses with a ringing, resonant voice".⁶ To a greater or lesser degree, the pupils' works mirrored the main creative milestones in their teacher's oeuvre.⁷

To advance his views, Petrov-Vodkin makes lecture appearances and writes theoretical articles. In 1912 he publishes the theses of his lecture "The Painting of the Future", where he declares Impressionism a "dead-end", virtually synonymous with naturalism, and stresses the need to avoid mere outward depiction; artists of the new school, as opposed to the old one, where much attention was devoted to subjects, must study the objective bases of the artist's craft, basing themselves on scientific knowledge.

Petrov-Vodkin's creative mottoes are resonant with their time. The science-oriented art of the 20th century aspires to comprehend the laws of creation. Artists compete with each other in their formulations, attempting to prove their innovations' objective basis. Petrov-Vodkin's "The Painting of the Future", "On the Science of Seeing" and "Painting as Craft" are both contemporary with and akin to Kandinsky's *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, Filonov's *The Canon and the Law* and *Declaration of the Universal Flowering*, and Malevich's *From Cubism to Suprematism. The New Painterly Realism*.⁸ For example, the artist's ideas regarding color's dependence on form, "blue in a circle is not the same as blue in a triangle",⁹ clearly resemble those of Kandinsky, and his conception of "spherical perspective", as has been repeatedly noted, is akin to Mikhail Matiushin's "expanded vision". Given Petrov-Vodkin's rich creative contacts, many more such parallels could be drawn, but his essential orientation towards classicism of form, and even more so of meaning, subordinates all these contemporary influences, making them secondary.

Many years later Petrov-Vodkin would recall how Zvantseva's school left him with "some very strange baggage",¹⁰ referring to the majority of its students for whom lessons were simply a pastime. For others, however, art would become their life's work, thanks to the artist's efforts. Nadezhda Lermontova, for example, participated in Union of Youth exhibitions in 1912 and 1913, other students of the school exhibited works at the showing *The Year 1915* on the initiative of Yulia Obolenskaya, and Leonid Chupyatov made his debut in 1916 at a World of Art exhibition.

The closure of Elizaveta Zvantseva's school in 1917 didn't sever the ties between Petrov-Vodkin and his students, who remained by their teacher's side at this critical turning point in history. We should also mention that Petrov-Vodkin and Zvantseva continued to enjoy warm, friendly relations up until the latter's death in 1921.

In 1917 newspapers reported how students from "the Petrov-Vodkin school" – as a group of young artists described themselves on their Academy entrance forms – took the Academy of Fine Arts "by storm",¹¹ occupying part of the building along with young artists from other creative factions. In this way, apparently, led by several of its students, Petrov-Vodkin's school heralded the key role it would play in the renewed Academy of Fine Arts' destiny.

Petrov-Vodkin was among the first professors invited by students to teach at the new Academy. His election took place on 30 January 1918,¹² and his work at the Academy would continue with only minor interruptions until 1932.

Students of Zvantseva's school were among those who petitioned in March 1919, during the Academy's reorganization, to the Petrograd Collegium for Artistic Affairs to study fresco and easel painting with Professor Petrov-Vodkin in the painting studio organized in the Academy's monumental art department. The surviving petition is signed by ten young artists: Maria Sasko, Leonid Chupyatov, Vladimir Dmitriev, Boris Erbstein, Lev Britanishsky, Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky, Benita Essen and three others whose signatures are illegible.¹³

In October 1918 the Academy of Fine Arts was transformed into the Petrograd State Free Art Studios (PGSKhUM). Petrov-Vodkin retained his posts, and with the new influx of students his studio acquired even greater popularity.

When discussing the teaching profession, Petrov-Vodkin often cited the example of Valentin Serov, who strove to be objective with regard to all his students, respectful of their individuality and chary of imposing his opinions. For his students Serov was both a teacher with principled judgments and a friend, and Petrov-Vodkin strove to be the same for his.

Without doubt, it must have been difficult to study with an artist of such magnitude without succumbing to his influence.

Petrov-Vodkin also often referred to Leonardo da Vinci in connection with both artistic creation and pedagogy, justly noting, however: "With Leonardo we don't find students who surpassed their teacher and created their own schools. Indeed, all the so-called 'Leonardeschi' are nothing more than a parody of the original. That's just the thing, that the perfection great masters achieve in their work makes any further movement in their direction impossible... One can learn technically only from isolated stages of a great artist's work; his complete oeuvre teaches us only about the process of his growth and development, and this can't be included in any program of study."¹⁴

What's the answer, then? To open up the secrets of mastery and to "teach how to learn": this is how Petrov-Vodkin regarded the task of the true educator.

In fact, teacher-student relationships in the artist's studio, especially in the post-revolutionary period, resembled those of Renaissance times. The closest of them were with Leonid Chupyatov, Pavel Golubyatnikov and Sergei Priselkov. This was a time of unsurpassed energy and enthusiasm, and for this reason, perhaps, the majority of the artist's followers can be found among this first group of graduates. Petrov-Vodkin's authority was incontestable, and for all his students' talent and individuality their "discipleship" remains evident. Much of the Petrov-Vodkin school's legacy from this period must be viewed in the reflected light of the teacher's works; here it suffices to recall the paintings *1918 in Petrograd (The Petrograd Madonna)* (1920, Tretyakov Gallery), *Self-Portrait* (1918, Russian Museum), *Morning Still Life* (1918, Russian Museum), *Herring* (1918, Russian Museum), *Fruits on a Blue Tablecloth* (1921, Russian Museum), *Madonna and Child. Awakening* (1922, Russian Museum, illus. on p. 86), *Bathing Boys* (1926, Russian Museum) and the Samarkand series (1921, Russian Museum).

The list of those who passed through Petrov-Vodkin's studio between 1918 and 1920 includes Leonid Chupyatov, Sergei Priselkov, Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky, Evgenia Evenbach, Vladimir Dmitriev, Pyotr Akishin, Pavel Golubyatnikov, Favsta Shikhmanova, Benita Essen, Alexander Samokhvalov (who came to Petrov-Vodkin from the architecture department), Nikolai Ionin, Eleonora Messmacher (Kondiain), Gerasim Efros, Yury Cherkessov, Maria Sasko, Pyotr Sokolov and Lev Britanishsky.

On the first anniversary of the October Revolution, a group of thirteen students help their teacher paint a mural to decorate Theatre Square. In his turn, the teacher helps his best students show their works in such serious exhibitions as the *First State Free Exhibition of Artworks* (1919) and the *Exhibition of Pictures by Petrograd Artists of All Trends. 1918–23* at the Academy of Fine Arts. In 1920 Petrov-Vodkin makes a creative trip to Novgorod together with his pupils Leonid Chupyatov and Pavel Golubyatnikov. In 1921 he sets off to Turkestan with Alexander Samokhvalov on the latter's instigation. Everything Petrov-Vodkin's students create is inspired by their teacher's imagery and visual techniques; their affinity with him is obvious. With Petrov-Vodkin's support, Sergei Priselkov and Leonid Chupyatov soon join the pedagogical ranks, with the latter actively helping his teacher advance his educational method from 1921 onwards. True, Petrov-Vodkin is frankly apprehensive that Chupyatov's excessive genius, his "neurasthenia and decadency" in the spirit of the World of Art,¹⁵ might hinder his educational work.

Armed with the knowledge they'd received in Petrov-Vodkin's studio, Benita Essen and Pyotr Sokolov open their own studio on the 3rd Line of Vasilyevsky Island in 1923. Several years later Pavel Golubyatnikov will become the Petrov-Vodkin school's missionary in Kiev.

In early 1922 an attempt was made to create a "Petrov-Vodkin School Society". This little-known fact is evidenced by the society's surviving charter signed by chairwoman Maria Sasko and board members Sergei Priselkov, Leonid Chupyatov, Favsta Shikhmanova and others. The conditions set forth in the document testify that a group of kindred spirits had formed around Petrov-Vodkin, one ready to collectively advocate and defend his declared principles.¹⁶



Nikolai Ionin
Woman in Red. 1925
Oil on canvas. 141 x 54
Russian Museum

It would be worth reminding readers just what the Academy of Fine Arts-PGSKhUM was like in the first years of the Soviet regime. The free choice of instructors, the abolition of examinations and the elimination of a whole series of important disciplines – all of which activists from the “left wing” had particularly insisted upon – plus constantly raging battles of opinions and ideas: against this background Petrov-Vodkin’s studio stood out markedly, justifying its reputation among young artists as an outpost of professionalism.

In accordance with the directives of 8 August 1918 ratified by the Collegium for Artistic Affairs, the State Free Art-Pedagogical Studios accepted all applicants, even those without diplomas, and all former art school students were automatically considered students of PGSKhUM. Applications were accepted year round. Students had the right to choose their instructors, work in studios without supervision and change instructors once a year.¹⁷

Exhibitions of student works held in January and June of 1920 testified to the shortcomings of such educational “freedom”. Once again, the questions of curricula and entrance criteria arose. In 1920 Petrov-Vodkin began work on a new pedagogical system, in 1921 he was appointed dean of the painting department, and in October 1922 he presented his system, which he named the “objective method”. According to memoirists, it was used in the Academy for slightly over a year before its termination. For Petrov-Vodkin, however, its basic principles remained unchanged and were applied later, beginning in 1926, in his studio attached to the monumental and theatrical departments. It was a formal-analytical method¹⁸ based on moving from simplicity towards complexity, the parallel acquisition of basic knowledge in a variety of artistic fields, the combining of theory with practice, and introductions to a number of academic subjects specially chosen to facilitate the understanding of the objective laws of creation, subjects such as mathematics, chemistry, physics and optics. Later, in the 1930s, in response to the question “Can painting be taught?”, Petrov-Vodkin would answer: “We can now take painting as a scientific discipline, break it down into its individual components and build a scientific foundation on that...”¹⁹

None of this seems strange when we consider that a scientific approach to art was dictated by the spirit of the age. Soon the State Institute of Artistic Culture (GINKhUK) would be founded, and earlier, during the discussions about the Academy of Fine Arts’ future, adherents of certain trends had proposed the idea of granting the Academy status as a scientific research institution. That an interest in scientific research was cultivated among its students is confirmed in part by the surviving treatises (or mentions of same) of Sergei Priselkov, Leonid Chupyatov, Alexander Samokhvalov and others.

It must be mentioned that the expanded list of subjects in Petrov-Vodkin’s method was also prompted by educational realities of the time. Unlike the first group of graduates, dominated by students with a good basic art education, students in the ensuing years were for the most part poorly educated.

The most debated aspect of the objective method was the idea of “three-colouredness”. In his creative evening at the Moscow Oblast Union of Soviet Artists in May 1933,²⁰ Petrov-Vodkin accurately characterized prevailing attitudes towards his system: “When they speak of Petrov-Vodkin and his school, the following words arise: ‘three-coloredness’ (very poorly named), ‘tilted perspective’ and ‘sphericity’.” And further: “There are those who say, for example, ‘I studied with Petrov-Vodkin; he paints in one colour.’ I know [the one who said that]. He was [a student] in a certain year and achieved a thing or two; but he didn’t grasp the main thing at all and failed to develop further.” “I’ve arrived at a theory that I experienced rather early on: towards monochromism, based on the fact that if I simplify form then I’m forced to simplify colour too.”²¹ When asked about “three-colouredness” three years later, Petrov-Vodkin explained: “It’s an entire philosophy, you see.”²²

Petrov-Vodkin invited his students to learn “the objective laws of mastery”, to acquire the skills of a craft that could be applied later in other creative fields, and in this his method begs comparison with the “universal system” of Kazimir Malevich. The method’s ultimate aim was mastery of the skills and techniques of monumental painting, which would soon come into great demand. For his system’s degree of elaboration and his extraordinary dedication to his students Petrov-Vodkin was rivalled perhaps only by Vladimir Favorsky.

Petrov-Vodkin’s pupils considered themselves realists, but the *Perezhvizhniki* variety of realism was as foreign to them as it was to their teacher.

Students painted still lifes composed of simple solid figures, first in monochrome and then using the three primary colours, learning economy of means and an understanding of the laws governing paint quantity and its

transition to colour. They began painting nude models almost straightaway, portraying them mostly full height and altering the entourage depending on the assigned task. As Anatoly Proshkin recalled, they painted portraits, or heads rather, "in large format, three times larger than natural size".²³ These were type portraits in which the young artists, following their teacher's lead, aspired to portray the "face of their time".

In order to understand and feel the peculiarities of "inter-object relations", students were assigned still lifes composed of objects with contrasting textures and functions. Composition and draftsmanship occupied an important place in the system. Petrov-Vodkin taught how to perceive objects in space from a moving vantage point, to convey "live appearance" by taking into account the characteristics of binocular vision (and here we can't help but note the classicist Petrov-Vodkin being "led astray" by the theories of the Futurists): "I myself move and turn, and I must observe the painting the way I construct it. These questions are cardinal ones for me, and I try to develop my subjects based upon them".²⁴

The atmosphere of Petrov-Vodkin's studio has been vividly described in the memoirs of students who worked under him in various years.

"For students (regardless of the department they'd chosen) all disciplines were mandatory: painting, drawing, sculpture and architecture," recalled artist Debora Ryazanskaya, who entered the Academy of Fine Arts in 1922. "In painting (according to the Petrov-Vodkin system), the following tasks were assigned: a white piece of paper with jagged contours was hung up and one had to paint it (in oils) in monochrome blue. This was called "stretching the colour blue". One had to render tonal relations (ignoring warmth and coolness) with only ultramarine blue and whiting. This was followed by the same stretching assignment, but this time using red and yellow. In the second and third exercises whiting wasn't used. In drawing, solid geometric figures were assigned, and at the end of the academic year the same figures again, only three-dimensional..."²⁵

"K. S. [Kuzma Sergeevich] taught in a non-standard way," recalled artist Mariam Aslamazian. "He never touched a student's canvas. He assigned very difficult exercises and demanded their precise execution. I remember several of them, and they afforded me no small agony. K. S. assigned one-color exercises and requested they be done using only one colour plus whiting. One had to find each colour's strength and resonance in a given environment. After this, one was given two or three colours to execute a multichromatic exercise. We worked with a limited palette all the time. Once he assigned a still life in white tones and took away our whiting, giving us lemon yellow in its place. One had to paint in such a way that it was perceived as white. Another time he assigned us the following still life: a washbasin filled with water and half covered with glass, a log, a brick, and some polished wood, paper and fabric. One had to paint so that one could feel the material these objects were made of. He often assigned coloured objects in space. Without setting the task of depicting three-dimensional form, he demanded that a coloured spot appear where it ought to in space. He placed a stone, an earthenware pitcher, cotton wool, feathers and gauze before us and demanded we render the weight of each object... He told us that painting, especially monumental painting, was like higher mathematics. One had to calculate everything carefully and place one's brushstrokes precisely. One had to be careful with the surface of the canvas and avoid smearing it."²⁶

"K. S. Petrov-Vodkin often engaged in in-depth discussions about painting while standing by someone's work," recalled artist Anastasia Gareva. "A certain matter would arise while analysing a student work, and this would develop into [a discussion of] the great questions of painting."²⁷ Petrov-Vodkin was convinced that only those with a "theory" had the right to teach, and this spurred him to constantly give lectures and participate in debates. Being an artist with a world-view of unusual integrity, he was overjoyed when he glimpsed signs of serious, inward, spiritual labour in a student.

"Petrov-Vodkin had an excellent command of language and was considered a 'silver-tongued orator' by us," wrote Gerasim Efros. "He was a strict and principled critic who'd achieved by that time philosophical wisdom, objectivity and the ability to see each work's virtues and failings; he treated all students equally and fairly, even the 'dissenters', and frowned upon superficial imitations of his own work." "Many liked the generalized geometric method of developing a drawing, whose founder Petrov-Vodkin was considered to be... Monumental colour theory, a study of pigments, and an analysis of basic colour contrasts and tonal combinations: all this was covered in Petrov-Vodkin's studio."²⁸

Very accurate characterisations of Petrov-Vodkin are found in the memoirs of Lyudmila Ronchevskaya: "Being an extremely well-rounded person and an avid philosopher, K. S. didn't so much discuss individual works in his studio as converse with us on various topics such as icons, his travels, seismological theories and so forth. He'd personally experienced an earthquake in the Crimea, which seared itself in his memory with exceptional vividness. He spoke much about the outdatedness of Italian perspective given the development of the aeroplane and our ability to now look at the world from entirely different points of view. Despite this free approach to teaching, a whole series of painting principles were inviolable for us in his studio. First of all, I'll mention his approach to drawing. Being a brilliant draftsman himself, he demanded not only an accurate depiction but also the logical comprehension of form (i. e. one filtered through the student's brain). He'd say, 'Here's a head. The main thing at first isn't the nose, the eyes or so-called likeness: above all, a head is an egg-shaped form seated at various angles on the neck's cylinder. First of all, one must determine the head's angle of tilt, both in space and in relation to the neck. When drawing the front part of the head, one must think of the back of the neck.' This principle of axial construction informed the whole drawing, as it did most of his compositions... In painting he taught economy of means in colour and a careful attitude towards the canvas. K. S. valued ochre tones very highly. He forced his first-year students to do so-called 'stretchings' of paint. For example, ochre in a thick layer, ochre with transparency, with oil, and ochre with whiting. He taught that simple ochre or umber contain within themselves more potential for warmth and coolness than all other shades of yellow, especially cadmium yellow. His still lifes for the younger classes were arrangements of yellow geometrical solids, fabrics and paper; later, the same volumes, but blue or white, were assigned to teach students to squeeze out maximum potential from a minimal number of colours. Thanks to our youthfulness, we often understood K. S. too literally. Of course, all of this shows the continuity and direct connection of K. S.'s art with Russian icon painting, and this sometimes led to a decorative quality among his pupils. It must be mentioned that K. S. never revealed a number of his secrets. For example, the underpainting in an additional colour, e. g. green or red, that he often used in his paintings. This created luminosity, a marvellous shimmering and softening of the main colour. The canvas, a lingering admiration of its texture, was of first importance for Petrov-Vodkin. All heaping up of the canvas [with paint] he considered uncultured... All his judgments on painting came down to a rejection of static composition and a static point of view. Everything's in motion, everything's in the universe, as we'd say today. An earth-based point of view is by no means obligatory. The earth is round and it rotates. And one must always remember this, just as one must always remember the back of the neck when drawing the nose. Yes, many of K. S.'s theories were dangerous for those who accepted them unthinkingly, unconsciously. None of us students ever became a 'Petrov-Vodkinist'. But our teacher tried to teach us to think and be independent." ²⁹

Petrov-Vodkin's educational work, especially in the first post-revolutionary years, extended beyond the walls of the Academy of Fine Arts. Beginning in 1918, he taught at the Stage Production Courses (KURMASTsEP) organised in Petrograd by Vsevolod Meyerhold. And his teaching there was a success, despite the difficulties he claimed to experience in working in the theatre. These courses were attended by students of the former Stieglitz Academy and the Academy of Fine Arts, usually in parallel with their main course of study. Such was the case with Vladimir Dmitriev and Vyacheslav Pakulin, whose work for the theatre testifies eloquently to the quality of education they received there. While not a student of Petrov-Vodkin's at the Academy of Fine Arts, Vyacheslav Pakulin, the future chairman of the Circle of Artists alliance (1926–32), often spoke of the master's enormous influence on him and the entire younger generation of artists at the time. ³⁰

The *Exhibition of Pictures by Petrograd Artists of All Trends. 1918–23* at the Academy of Fine Arts, the last large-scale showing of the "left wing", was in fact an exhibition of teachers (Malevich, Filonov, Tatlin, Petrov-Vodkin and others) and their students.

While only modestly represented at the exhibition (No. 1196, *Girl*; No. 1197, *Samarkand Study*; and No. 1198, *Retrospective* (pen and ink)), Petrov-Vodkin was now considered the leader of an entire movement. Vladimir Apostoli, Vasily Kuptsov, Boris Pestinsky, Pyotr Sokolov, Alexander Samokhvalov, Semyon Pavlov, Vladimir Dmitriev, Maria Sasko, Benita Essen, Evgenia Evenbach, Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky, Nikolai Ionin, Sergei Priselkov and Leonid Chupyatov all comprised a Petrov-Vodkin circle of sorts, both stylistically and in the distinctive orientation of their subjects.

A special part of the exhibition was devoted to the work of Petrov-Vodkin's talented student Alexander Lapo-Danilevsky,³¹ who'd met an untimely death. Excellent cause to speak of a Petrov-Vodkin school was provided by the exhibited works of students Leonid Chupyatov³² and Sergei Priselkov.³³ These two were the most fearless of all in copying their teacher's motives and subjects; fully confident, however, in the maxim that "the main thing is not what you depict but how", they injected something of their own into the familiar motives and subjects.

The fate of the last-mentioned artist, Sergei Priselkov, is very revealing. One of Petrov-Vodkin's favourite pupils, he became in effect the anointed successor of his teacher's pedagogical system. As a painter he didn't succeed in realizing himself to the fullest, it seems, though it's difficult to judge of this today due to a lack of available works. Lists of his works published in exhibition catalogues of the 1920s testify to the complete accordance of his views and positions with those of his teacher. Among these published works are direct "quotations" of ones by Petrov-Vodkin: they include still lifes with collections of objects close to his teacher's conceptions, portraits of prodigious scale and laconism of expression and, finally, canvases on religious themes.

Petrov-Vodkin was of common birth and therefore fully justified in claiming "proletarian" or "peasant" origins on questionnaires. Highly debatable is the widespread view that the artist accepted the revolution with enthusiasm, based upon such dubious evidence as Boris Kustodiev's sarcastic epithet, "Proletkult",³⁴ directed at him in 1920. The fact is that Petrov-Vodkin believed in God and remained a believer to his dying day. Gleb Savinov, son of the artist Alexander Savinov, Petrov-Vodkin's friend, recalled conversations with his father which made it clear that Petrov-Vodkin had mixed feelings about the immense changes brought on by the revolution. While accepting them with Christian humility, he found them deeply disturbing, and this prompted the artist to turn to religious subjects in his paintings and drawings in the 1919–22 period. In 1919 he writes in a letter to his mother: "Yesterday on the way to the Academy I dropped into a church... It was freezing inside, and they were praying in overcoats, seven or eight in the congregation, but all that made their words of supplication seem all the more profound and eternal."³⁵ In some mysterious way, the artist's religious belief only strengthened his conviction that he must serve the new society with his art. Christian subtexts are visible in many of his subsequent works.

The tendency toward large forms, toward monumentality, evident in the works of Petrov-Vodkin's students proved to be just what the times demanded. In 1923, in her article devoted to the artist's oeuvre in the journal *Russkoe iskusstvo*, Marietta Shaginyan wrote: "Petrov-Vodkin's thoughtful and self-aware art, in addition to the unquestionable innate value it possesses, also plays the necessary role of a purifying reaction, a return to form".³⁶ This same issue also contained an article by Yakov Tugendhold, "Beg na meste" [Running in place], devoted to the Moscow exhibitions, in which the critic outlined the artistic mainstream's future course of development: "To summarize, the new painting has to be, first of all, modern and, secondly, realistic, figurative. This propensity for a neorealism of sorts, for healthy figurativeness and emotional richness, should be understood and justified as a completely natural reaction to the dogmatic abstraction that's led Russian painting into an impasse".³⁷

The young artists of the mid-1920s who'd proclaimed the quest for a *style d'époque* as their goal (the majority of them joined forces in 1926 in the Circle of Artists alliance) regarded their teacher's practical advice and theories as a call to action. These were Lev Britanishsky, Mikhail Verbov, Israel Lizak, Lev Volstein, Tatyana Kuperwasser, Vladimir Malagis, Alexander Samokhvalov, Mikhail Noskov, Ekaterina Gaskevich, Ekaterina Petrova-Trotskaya, Anatoly and Viktor Proshkin, Alisa Poret, Victoria Belakovskaya, Vasily Kuptsov and the sculptor Boris Kaplyansky. Also subject to Petrov-Vodkin's influence were Vyacheslav Pakulin and Alexei Pakhomov: in their works the master's lessons are refracted in somewhat more diverse and unexpected ways, yet the general vector of their explorations remains fully in accord with Petrov-Vodkin's ideas; they demonstrate classicism and innovation in an active process of mutual penetration and enrichment while retaining monumental form and expansive imagery as underlying principles. At a debate devoted to the 1928 Circle of Artists exhibition, educator and alliance member Vladimir Denisov declared: "What kind of painting is the Circle striving for? For monumental painting. The age is calling us to the wall. We must be prepared."³⁸

For all practical purposes, all who entered the Academy after 1925 became Petrov-Vodkin's students at the same time.

In the artist's creative self-report before the Leningrad branch of the Artists Union on 28 March and 5 April 1938, which he jokingly dubbed his "self-flagellation" (by this time he was unable to teach for reasons of health), he had some words for his students: "I feel that among my students there are some who've sought their path, who've been tested by experience, who've received good schooling and become significant artists, but the fact that they've renounced and disagreed with my school and so forth, that's all understandable."³⁹

The disjointedness of the artist's speech captured in this stenographic record testifies to his inner agitation and resentment: he felt abandoned. In his self-report Petrov-Vodkin speaks with regret of the return to naturalism. And it's unlikely that by then anyone among the great artist and educator's contemporaries was able to appreciate the full value of his creative legacy.

The destinies of many of the artist's students turned out to be no less tragic: some perished in prison camps, others died from hunger in the Siege of Leningrad, others were forced to apply their creative abilities in other fields and yet others simply vanished, with traces of their interrupted creative biographies resurfacing only today along with some surviving works: such are the cases of Alexei Zernov, Pyotr Akishin, Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya, Favsta Shikhmanova, Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak, Mikhail Noskov, Rebecca Golovchiner, Olga Bogdanova, Elena Al-adzhalova and others.

Today it's absolutely clear that Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's turn towards pedagogy was something unavoidable given the dialectics of his oeuvre. And the outcome of his choice directly or indirectly affected the development of Russian art over the entire 20th century. In this sense, the exhibition *Petrov-Vodkin's Circle* is a fitting continuation of the exhibitions *Masters of Analytical Art (The Pavel Filonov School)* (Düsseldorf, 1990), *In Malevich's Circle* (Russian Museum, 2000) and *Mikhail Matiushin and his Students* (Academy of Fine Arts Museum, 2008).

notes

¹ N. L. Adaskina, "Pedagogicheskaya sistema K. S. Petrova-Vodkina" [The pedagogical system of K. S. Petrov-Vodkin], in *Ocherki po russkomu i sovetskemu iskusstvu. Stat'i, publikatsii, khronika* [Essays on Russian and Soviet Art. Articles, Publications, Chronicles] (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1974), 280–307; N. L. Adaskina, *K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. Zhizn' i tvorchestvo* [K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. Life and Works] (Moscow: BuksMArt, 2014). This field of Petrov-Vodkin's work has also been discussed in publications by Vladimir Kostin, Elena Selizarova, Yury Rusakov, Sergei Daniel, Tatyana Khristolyubova and others.

² The School of Elizaveta Zvantseva was located in the building where Vyacheslav Ivanov lived, on the corner of Tverskaya Street beyond the Tauride Gardens. From that time onwards Petrov-Vodkin was a frequent guest at gatherings at the "tower"; later, in the 1920s, it was natural that he should join VOLFIKA (The Free Philosophical Association).

³ "The pay's small, that's true," writes Petrov-Vodkin to his mother, "but the matter interests me greatly and gives me in addition a certain standing..." At first lessons were held once a week. Soon the artist be-

gan calling Zvantseva's school "my favourite school". In another letter to his mother Petrov-Vodkin writes: "I've managed to achieve solid success among students and among the youth in general. If Friday, my school day, is exhausting for me, it's also joyful: so wonderful and serious it is to build one's future in beginning artists". Petrov-Vodkin's second teaching job at this time was at the courses of the Mutual Aid Society for Artists, where he gave lessons to beginners, a less taxing assignment in his own words (K. S. Petrov-Vodkin, *Pis'ma. Stat'i. Vystupleniya. Dokumenty* [Letters. Articles. Speeches. Documents], comp., intro., comm. E. N. Selizarova (Moscow: Sovetsky khudozhnik, 1991), 135, 138, 146).

⁴ 1910 was the year of greatest personal contact between Petrov-Vodkin and Nadezhda Lermontova.

⁵ Petrov-Vodkin spoke with great praise of his assistants in a letter to his wife on 13 October 1910: "There are seven of us, five men and two women, and the latter wield their palettes perhaps more energetically than the men" (Petrov-Vodkin, *Pis'ma. Stat'i. Vystupleniya. Dokumenty*, 135).

⁶ OR GRM, coll. 195, rec. 152, sheet 8 (25 May 1933).

⁷ "I was learning myself [along with my students]," Petrov-Vodkin would later recall. "That's why it turned out like this: there were students for

each of my periods: large heads, the colour red and so forth. This was a shortcoming in the way my school was organized then, I think" (OR GRM, coll. 195, ser. 1, rec. 93, sheet 14 (Creative self-report of Honoured Art Worker K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. Shorthand transcript. 29 March 1938)).

⁸ It's worth mentioning that Petrov-Vodkin enjoyed friendly relations with Nikolai Kulbin. He attended the First Congress of Artists, where he listened with interest to Kulbin's delivery of Wassily Kandinsky's treatise *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*.

⁹ K. S. Petrov-Vodkin, *Zhivopis' budushchego* [The Painting of the Future], as cited in N. L. Adaskina, "Pedagogicheskaya sistema K. S. Petrova-Vodkina", 287.

¹⁰ "The thing is that I was left with some very strange baggage of a purely esthetic nature – highly intense, biting but entirely based on taste. What did I need to do? Above all, I needed to cleanse them [the students] of rubbish. With the exception of four or five who'd made their own way in the world, all of them were well provided-for: they painted just to while away the time, and estheticism didn't cost them anything. I needed to shake them up" (OR GRM, coll. 195, ser. 1, rec. 93, sheet 14 (Creative self-report of Honoured Art Worker K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. 29 March 1938)).

¹¹ *Petrogradsky golos* [Voice of Petrograd] (No. 7, 7 Dec. 1917).

¹² "I've been named a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts by the Academy's board (30 January 1918). As honorable or flattering as that may be, it's with great hesitation that I take this great responsibility upon myself. And if it weren't for the difficult times for our Homeland, the danger of art withering away amid the ruin all around us, and for the fact that I have no right to refuse a chance at attempting to improve our Higher School, if it weren't for these considerations I wouldn't have taken up this role. In addition, the artistic youth's inclination towards me also led to my agreement" (Petrov-Vodkin, *Pis'ma. Stat'i. Vystupleniya. Dokumenty*, 200).

¹³ OR GRM, coll. 240, rec. 38 (Petition of students to study under K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. 5 Mar. 1919).

¹⁴ K. S. Petrov-Vodkin, *Prostranstvo Evklida* [Euclidean Space], as cited from S. M. Daniel, *Kuz'ma Petrov-Vodkin. Zhizn' i tvorchestvo. Suzhdeniya ob iskusstve. Sovremenniki o khudozhnike* [Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. Life and Works. Opinions on Art. Contemporaries on the Artist] (St Petersburg: Avrora, 2011), 114.

¹⁵ Petrov-Vodkin, *Pis'ma. Stat'i. Vystupleniya. Dokumenty*, 241.

¹⁶ RGALI, coll. 283, ser. 2, file 574 (Leningrad Oblast Committee of the Trade Union of Art Workers. Documents on the work of art societies and cooperatives (charters, plans, correspondence, etc.). January–November 1922). See Appendix.

¹⁷ NA RAKh, coll. 11, ser. 1, file 107 (I. I. Bekker, *Akademiya khudozhestv v gody revolyutsii* [The Academy of Fine Arts in the Years of Revolution]).

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, sheets 319–327; NA RAKh, coll. 19, ser. 1, file 8 (Brief painting and drawing program for all departments. 1921–22).

¹⁹ NA RAKh, coll. 7, ser. 2, rec. 594, sheet 30 (Evening devoted to meeting with the artist Petrov-Vodkin. 9 Dec. 1936).

²⁰ OR GRM, coll. 195, rec. 152, sheet 4 (1933).

²¹ *Ibid.*, sheet 7 (1933).

²² NA RAKh, coll. 7, ser. 2, rec. 594, sheet 19 (Evening devoted to meeting with the artist Petrov-Vodkin. 9 Dec. 1936).

²³ RGALI, coll. 502, ser. 1, file 17, sheet 8 (Reminiscences of artist A. N. Proshkin).

²⁴ From the lecture "Problema dvizheniya" [The problem of motion], 7 May 1922. Cited from Petrov-Vodkin, *Pis'ma. Stat'i. Vystupleniya. Dokumenty*, 21.

²⁵ NA RAKh, coll. 19, ser. 1, rec. 16 (Reminiscences of artist D. I. Ryazan-skaya. 1965).

²⁶ NA RAKh, coll. 48, ser. 1, rec. 7 (M. A. Aslamazian, *Vospominaniya o K. S. Petrove-Vodkine* [Reminiscences of K. S. Petrov-Vodkin]).

²⁷ NA RAKh, coll. 19, ser. 1, rec. 12, sheet 75 (Reminiscences of artist Anastasia Vasilyevna Gareva. 28 April 1965. Novgorod).

²⁸ NA RAKh, coll. 48, ser. 1, rec. 17 (G. G. Efros, *Vospominaniya byvshego studenta, okonchivshogo zhivopisny fakul'tet v 1924* [Reminiscences of a 1924 Painting Department Graduate]).

²⁹ NA RAKh, coll. 48, ser. 1, rec. 11 (L. A. Ronchevskaya, *Vospominaniya o Petrov-Vodkine* [Reminiscences of Petrov-Vodkin]).

³⁰ See: O. Musakova (Shikhireva), "Vyacheslav Vladimirovich Pakulin", in *Videt' odukhotvorennno. Sem'ya khudozhnikov Pakulinykh. Vystavka proizvedeny. Zhivopis'. Grafika* [To See with Inspiration. The Pakulin Family of Artists. Exhibition of Works. Paintings. Drawings], exhibition catalogue (Manezh: St Petersburg, 2005), 4–9; O. Musakova, "K istorii khudozhestvennogo ob'edineniya 'Krug khudozhnikov'" [On the history of the Circle of Artists artistic alliance], in *Ob'edinenie "Krug khudozhnikov". 1926–1932* [The Circle of Artists Alliance. 1926–32] (St Petersburg: Palace Editions, 2007), 5–18; A. B. Lyubimova, "Zhivopis' studentov VKhUTEMASa v sobranii Russkogo muzeya. Vyyavlennye pamyatniki" [Paintings by VKhUTEMAS students in the Russian Museum collection. Monuments brought to light], *Stranitsy istorii otechestvennogo iskusstva* [Pages in the History of Russian Art] 20 (St Petersburg: Palace Editions, 2012), 128–147.

³¹ Especially riveting among his works are A Play of Current and two paintings entitled A Bare Pier. In 1928 Petrov-Vodkin wrote an article about Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky for a collection dedicated to his talented pupil's memory: K. S. Petrov-Vodkin, B. Essen, Ya. Chakhrov, P. Loshkarev, A. A. Lappo-Danilevsky (Leningrad: Obshchina khudozhnikov, 1928).

³² Exhibited were No. 1175, *Portrait with Architectural Landscape*; No. 1176, *Head with Landscape*; No. 1177, *Convex Surface*; No. 1178, *Melancholy*; No. 1179, *Stool. Still Life*; No. 1180, *Still Life with Grapes* (collection of F. Z. Krimer); No. 1181, *Portrait*; No. 1182, *Pink Still Life*; No. 1183, *Still Life with Shavings*; No. 1184, *Beautiful Apples*; No. 1185, *White Still Life with Fruits*; No. 1186, *Tenderness*; No. 1187, *Black Still Life with Ball and Paper*; No. 1188, *Stools. Still Life*; No. 1189, *Room*; No. 1190, *Angel*; and No. 1191, *News*.

³³ Exhibited were Nos. 1092–1097, *Drawing*; No. 1098, *Foot on Paper*; No. 1099, *Yellow Pitcher*; No. 1100, *Madonna on the Breach*; No. 1101, *Cornflowers on Red*; No. 1102, *Plate on the Table*; No. 1103, *Blue Glass*; No. 1104, *Flowers*; No. 1105, *Three Objects*; No. 1106, *Annunciation*; No. 1107, *Plate*; and No. 1108, *Flowers in the Window*.

³⁴ OR GRM, coll. 7, rec. 580, sheet 200 (Diaries of V. Voinov). Proletkult – the Proletarian Culture cultural educational organisation of the Peoples' Commissariat of Education (1917–32).

³⁵ Petrov-Vodkin, *Pis'ma. Stat'i. Vystupleniya. Dokumenty*, 205.

³⁶ M. Shaginyan, "K. S. Petrov-Vodkin (Eskizy k monografii)" [K. S. Petrov-Vodkin (Sketches for a monograph)], *Russkoe iskusstvo* [Russian Art] 1 (Moscow-Petrograd, 1923), 10.

³⁷ Ya. Tugendhold, "Beg na meste" [Running in place], *Russkoe iskusstvo* [Russian Art] 1 (Moscow-Petrograd, 1923), 90.

³⁸ OR GRM, coll. 127, rec. 69, sheet 11 (Open session of the Art Division. GRM. Lecture by N. N. Punin, "The Circle of Artists Exhibition". Exchange of opinion following the lecture. Shorthand transcript. 13 May 1928).

³⁹ OR GRM, coll. 195, ser. 1, rec. 93, sheet 9 (Creative self-report of Honoured Art Worker K. S. Petrov-Vodkin. 29 Mar. 1938).

appendix: archival materials

RGALI, coll. 283, ser. 2, file 574. Leningrad Oblast Committee of the Trade Union of Art Workers. Documents on the work of art societies and cooperatives (charters, plans, correspondence, etc.). January–November 1922. Sheets 71–73: Society of Artists of the Petrov-Vodkin School.

Name of the society: 1) Society of Artists of the Petrov-Vodkin School.

Purpose of the society: 2) The Society's purpose is to unite artists for self-perfection via the means of painting.

To achieve the society's purpose: 3) Mutual support in work; and 4) Dissemination of the Society's artistic ideas among the broad masses of the population through: a) exhibitions, b) lectures, and c) community work (decoration of buildings).

Rights of the society: 5) The Society is accorded the right of a legal entity; 6) The Society is located in Petersburg but can, by resolution of a General Meeting, open branches outside Petersburg; 7) The Society organizes (with permission) such institutions necessary for the Society as: a) a museum, b) a library, c) a paint shop, d) studios, e) a publishers, f) a club, and g) a mutual aid fund. 8) The Society organizes exhibitions, lectures and the commercial sale of its works through various means; 9) The Society establishes contact with all societies of similar orientation located outside Petersburg; 10) The Society organizes congresses, excursions and trips of its members; and 11) The Society has its own seal kept by the Society's secretary.

The Society's funds: 12) One-time and annual membership dues; 13) Income from exhibitions, lectures, et al.; 14) Donations; and 15) Income from the Society's capital and property.

The Society's makeup: 16) The Society consists of people of like mind regarding their goals in art united by the School's common world-view; 17) The Society's members are divided into founding, full, honorary and candidate members. a) The Society's founders are those who founded the Society and signed its charter. They're considered the Society's first full members. b) Artists of all art forms and all others who share the Society's aims are eligible to be full members of the Society. They're elected by the Board and approved by a General Meeting. Three full members have the right to recommend a candidate. c) Honorary members are elected from among those who've rendered significant services to the Society. They must be recommended by one-quarter of the Society's full members. d) Candidates may be those who've exhibited at the Society's exhibitions as well as professionals of all art forms who share the Society's aims.

The rights and duties of the Society's full members are: 18) to elect and be elected to governing positions of the Society; 19) to participate and vote in General Meetings; 20) free entry to exhibitions and lectures; 21) to pay membership dues; 22) obligatory attendance at the Annual Meeting; and 23) the performance of duties entrusted to them by the General Meeting.

24) Full membership in the Society may be discontinued: a) upon the member's request, or b) by a court of comrades after a two-thirds vote of a General Meeting.

The Society's organs: 25) General Meeting of members. 26) A General Meeting of the Society's members is called by the Board: 1. ordinary meeting: at least once a year; 2. extraordinary meeting: a) by resolution of the Board, b) by order of the Inspection Commission, or c) at the request of one-half of the Society's full members. 27) A General Meeting attended by one-third of all the Society's members is considered valid. 28) In case of attendance by fewer than one-half, a second meeting is convened within a week and is considered valid regardless of the number of members in attendance. 29) The Board consists of: a) The Presidium; b) The Organizing Commission; c) The Executive Committee; and d) The Inspection Commission. 30) The Society's Board is located in Petersburg and consists of seven members. 31) The Administration consists of the Chairman, Secretary, Board members and Treasurer (Treasurers are elected exclusively from among Board members). 32) The Executive Committee consists of two Board members and one full member. 33) The Organizing Commission consists of one Board member [a question mark is present in the text here. – O. M.]. 34) The Inspection Commission consists of one Board member and one full member. 35) The Board and all its positions are elected by a General Meeting of full members for three years. 36) The Society has an office.

Liquidation of the Society: 37) The matter of the Society's liquidation is submitted by resolution of two-thirds of the Board to a General Meeting with the obligatory attendance of all living founding members, even if they were not in the city at the moment of the Meeting's convening. 38) By the same procedure a Board is elected to supplement or amend the Charter. 39) In case of its liquidation, the Society's property becomes the property of the state.

Chairman: M. Sasko.

Secretary: [signature illegible]

Signatures: S. Priselkov, L. Chupyatov, F. Shikhmanova, [illegible]

Resolved: The Painting Committee of the p[rofessional union] o[rganisation] Sorabis endeavours to participate by all available means in the development of artistic societies and petitions before the Bureau of the pr[ofessional union] Sorabis to facilitate the approval of the Society of Artists of the Petrov-Vodkin School.

Committee Chairman: [signature illegible]

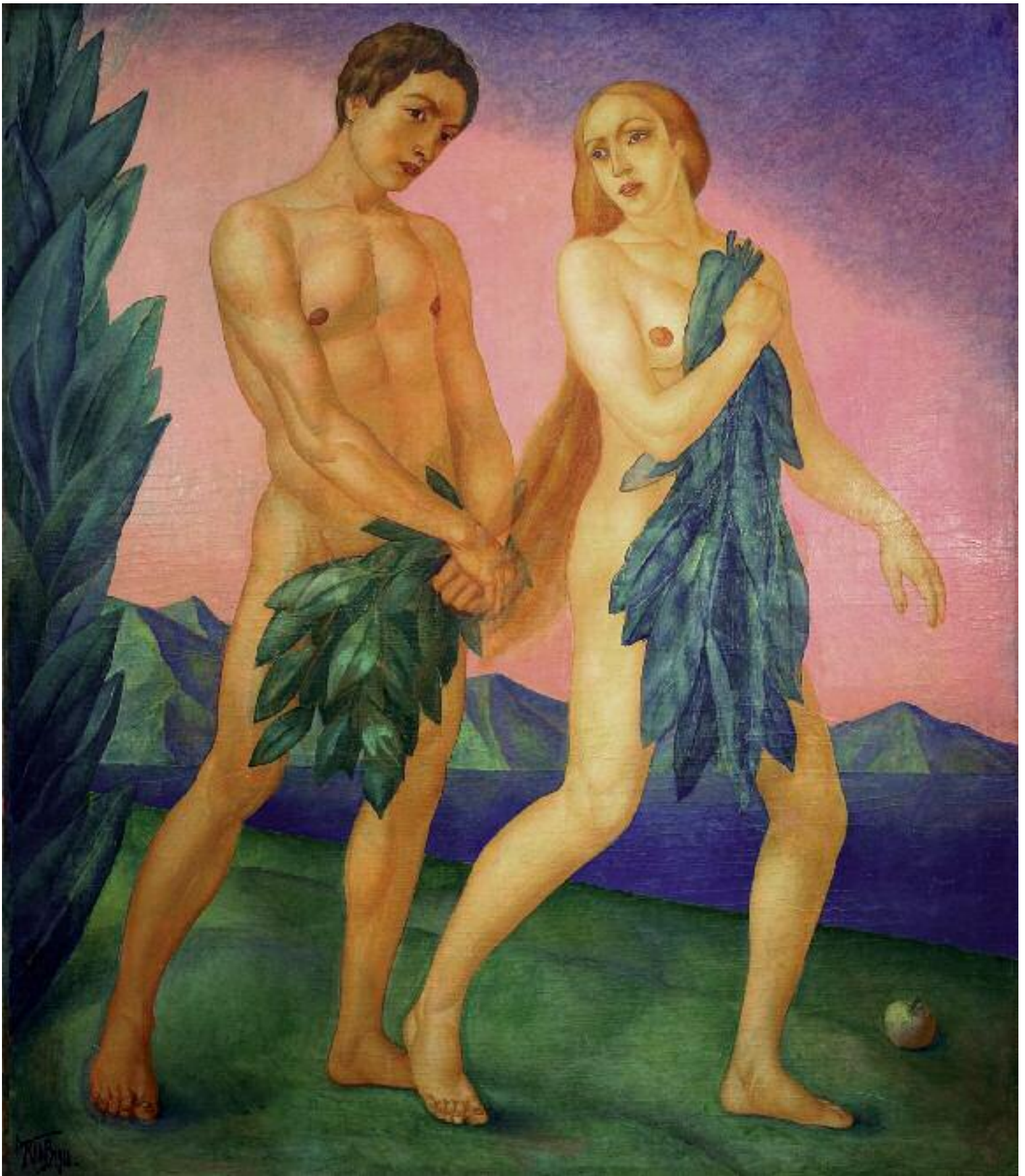
22 Feb. [19]22



PAINTING



Favsta Shikhmanova
In Tsarskoe Selo. Autumn
Circa 1917
Detail



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin
The Expulsion from Paradise. 1911
Oil on canvas. 183 x 160.5
Collection of the Paleev family,
St Petersburg

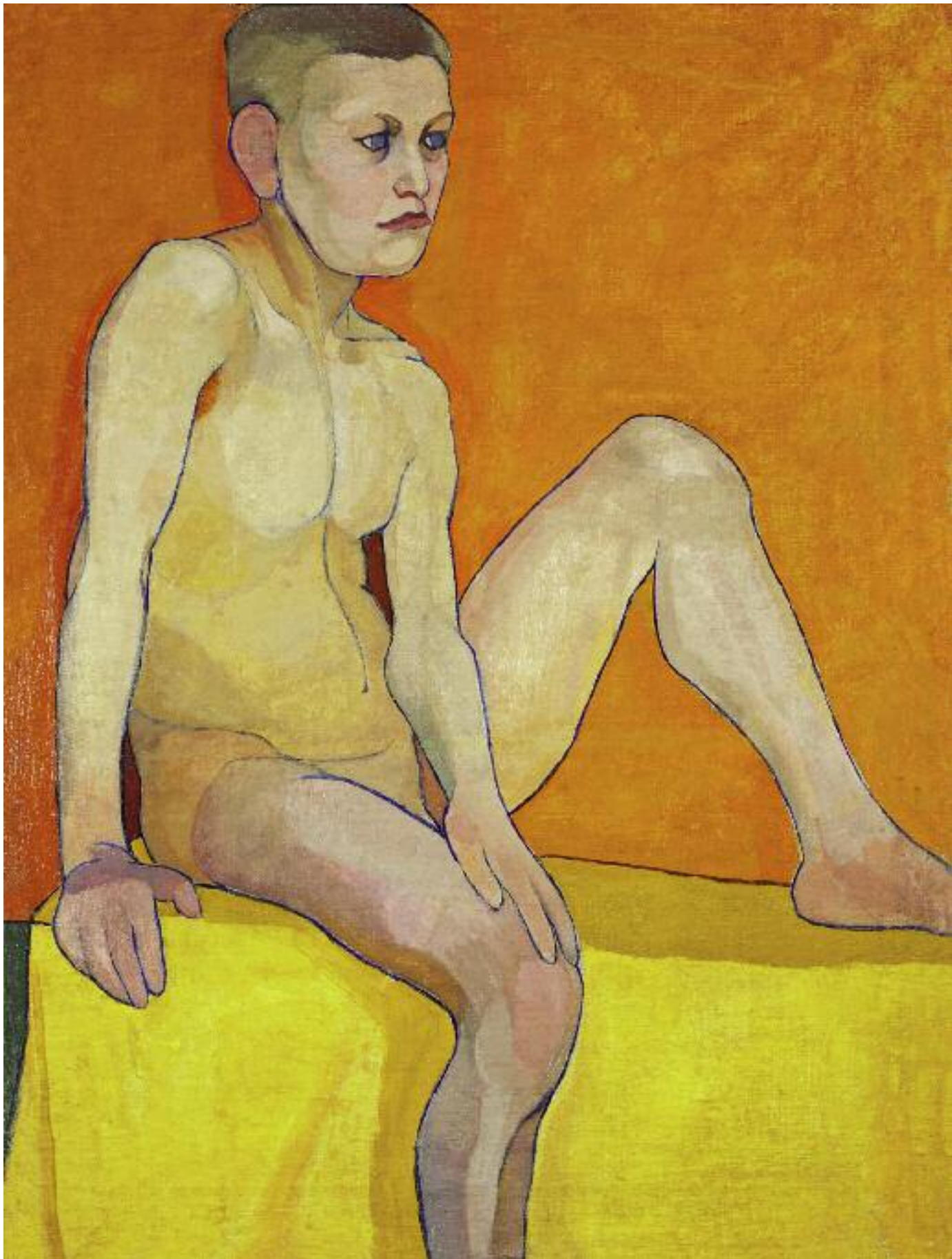


Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Boys Playing. 1911

Oil on canvas. 123 x 155.2

Russian Museum

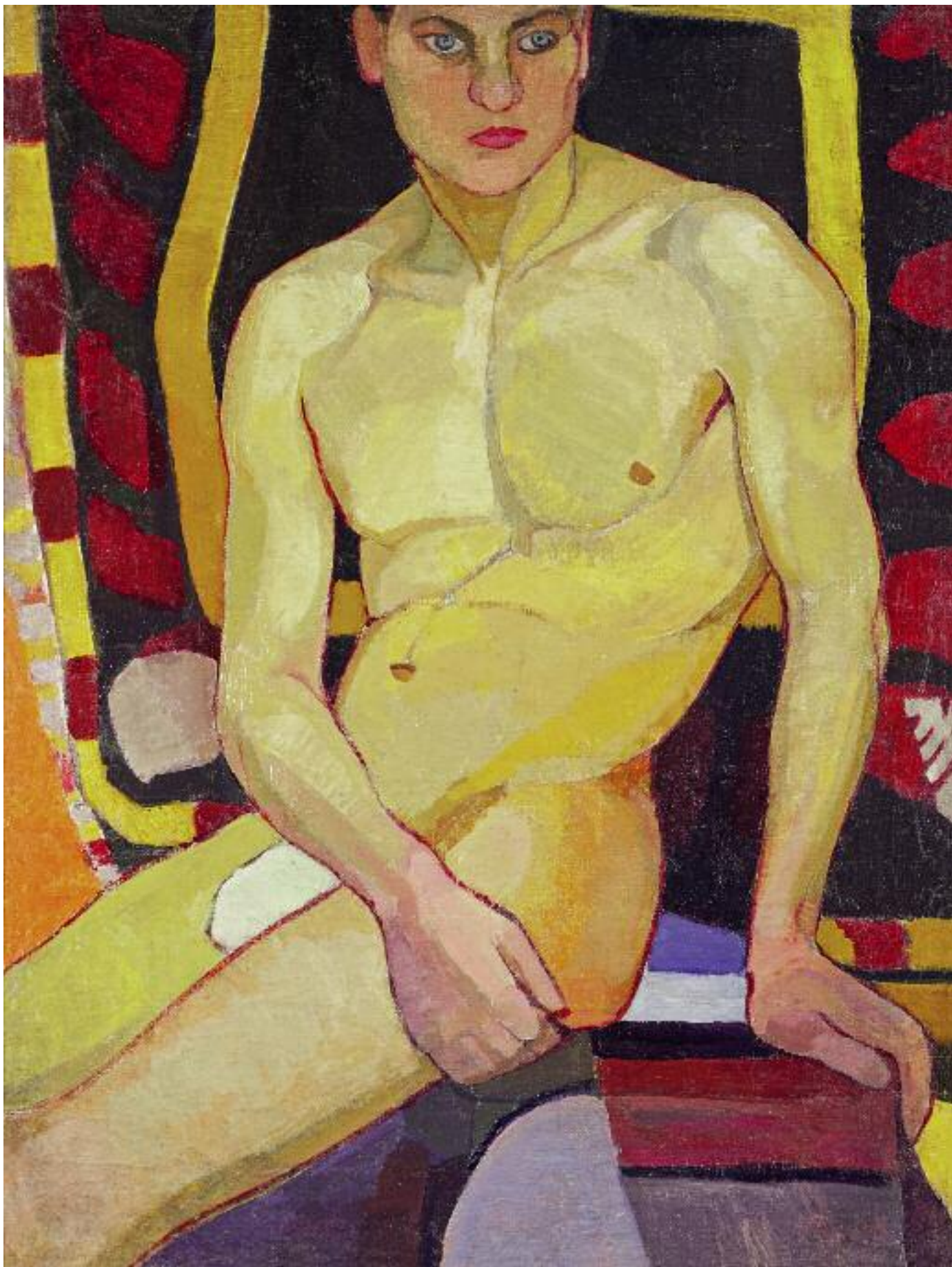


Nadezhda Lermontova

Naked Boy. 1910

Oil on canvas. 89.5 x 67.5

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Nadezhda Lermontova

Nude Model. 1910

Oil on canvas. 89 x 67

Private collection,

St Petersburg



Nadezhda Lermontova

Woman in Lilac Dress

Second half of the 1910s

Oil on canvas. 106 x 78

Private collection,
St Petersburg

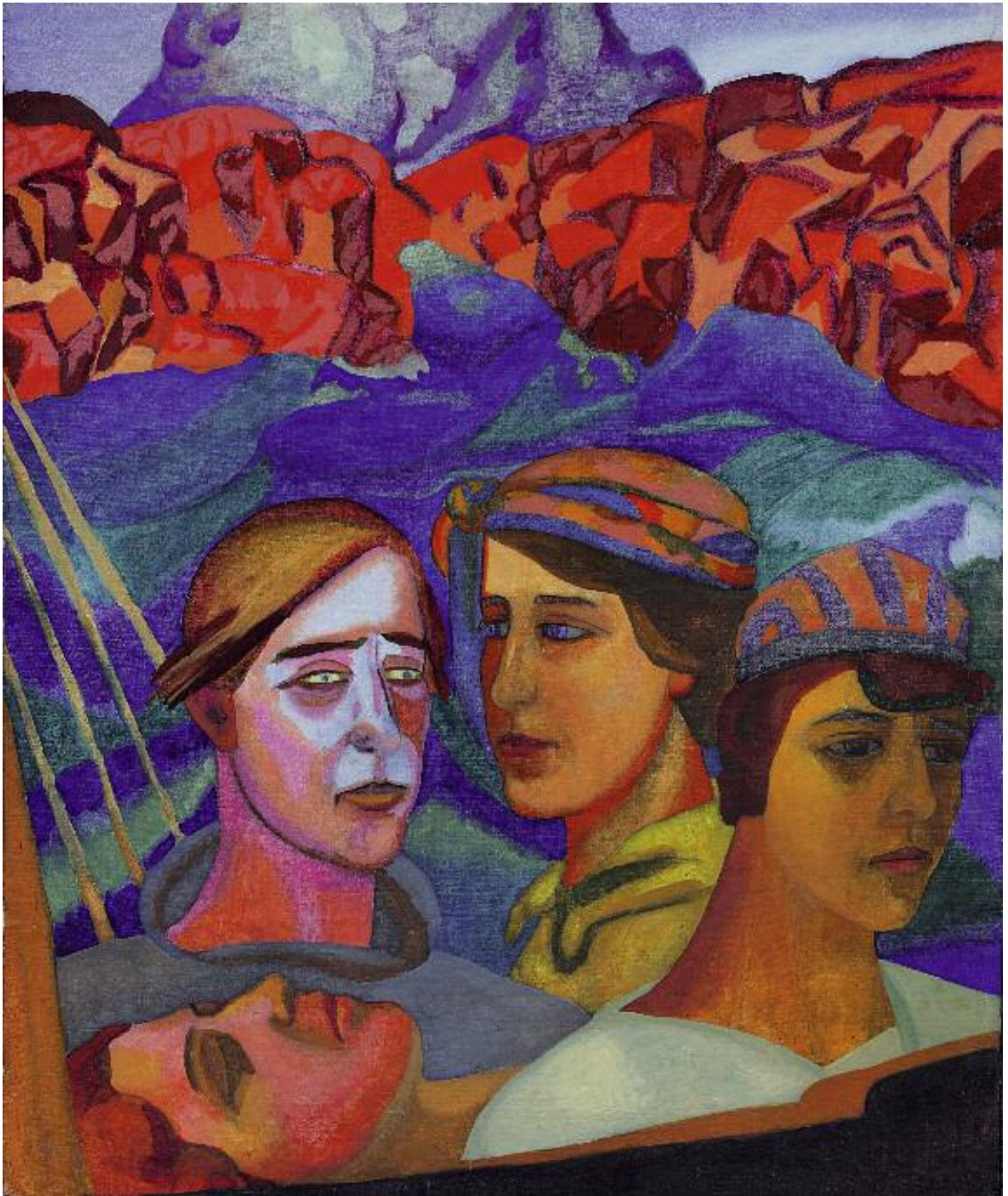


Nadezhda Lermontova

On the Sofa. Self-Portrait. 1910s

Oil on canvas. 106.8 x 124.5

Russian Museum

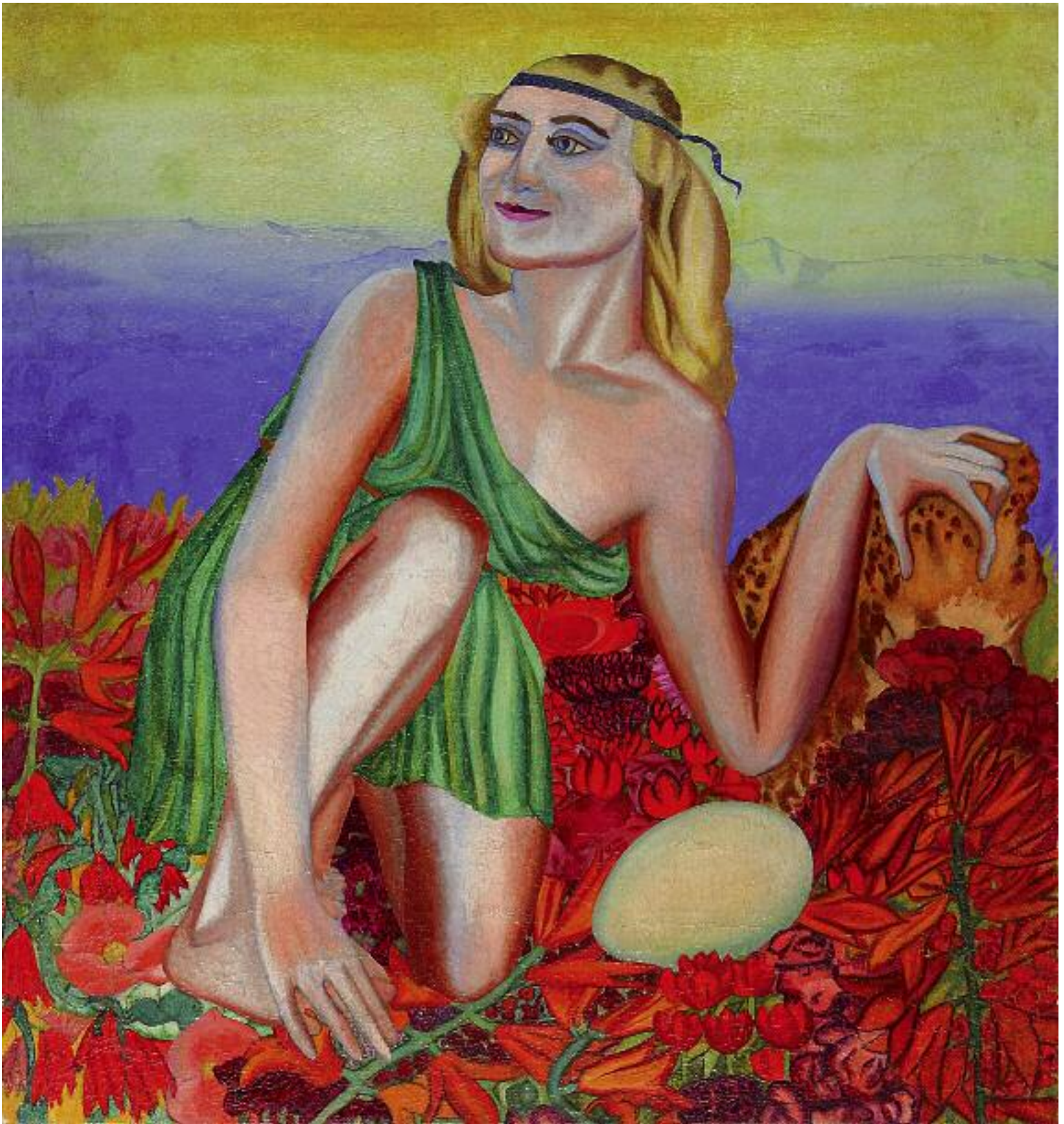


Nadezhda Lermontova

Four Ages. 1914

Oil on canvas. 80.5 x 67.5

Collection of Timur Khairutdinov, Moscow



Nadezhda Lermontova

Leda and the Egg. 1916

Oil on canvas. 88 x 83

Collection of Alexander Kuznetsov and
Pavel Melyakov, St Petersburg



Nadezhda Lermontova

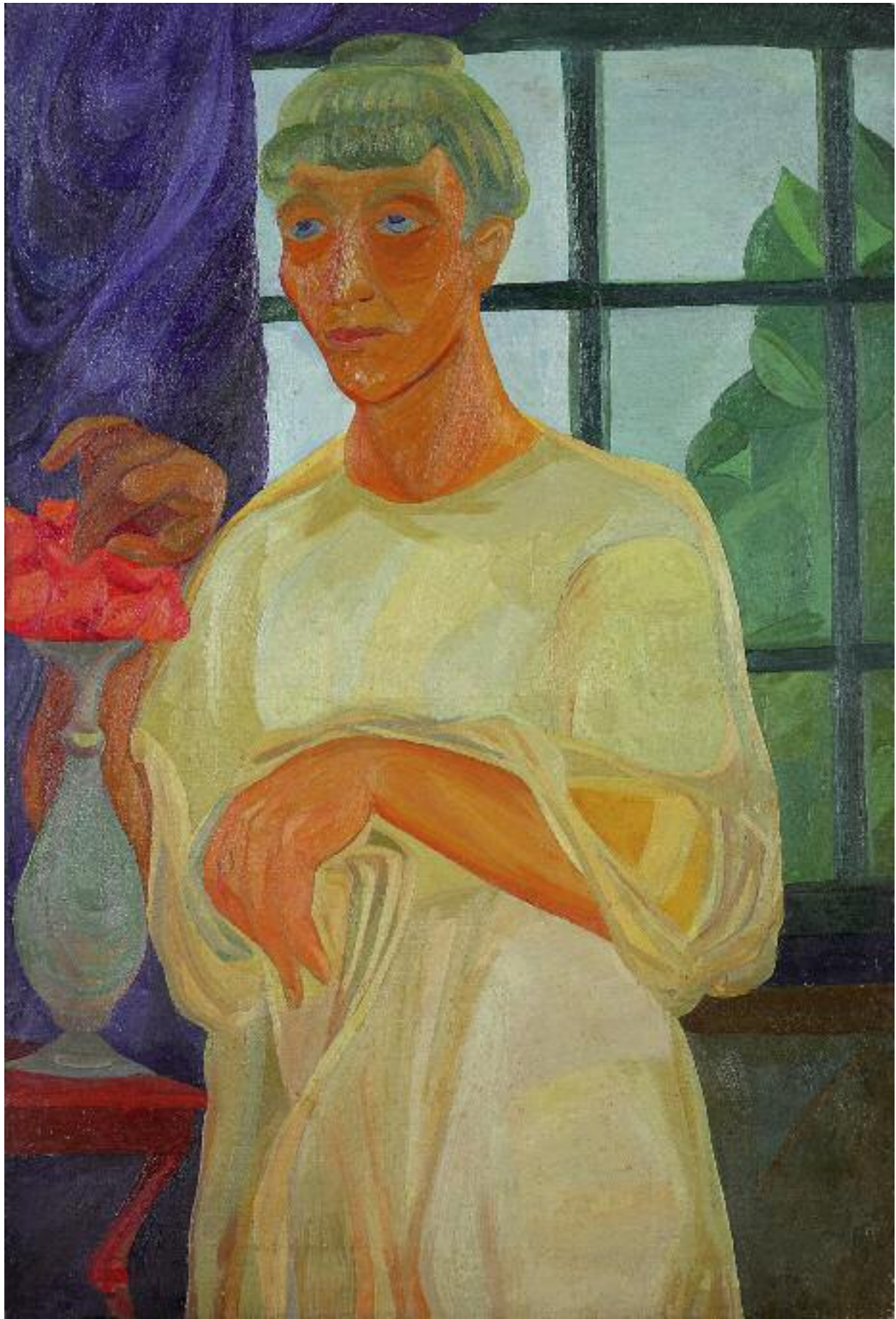
Set with a Dragon. 1918

Set design for Sergei Solovyov's ballet

The Golden Fleece

Oil on canvas. 63 x 78.8

Russian Museum



Nadezhda Lermontova

Late-Summer Flowers. 1916

Oil on canvas. 98 x 67

Collection of Alexander Kuznetsov and
Pavel Melyakov, St Petersburg

Favsta Shikhmanova

Portrait of a Boy (Nikolai Troinitsky)

Mid-1910s

Oil on canvas. 39.1 x 27.3

Private collection,

St Petersburg





Favsta Shikhmanova

Lady in the Garden. Mid-1900s

Oil on canvas. 135 x 178

Russian Museum



Favsta Shikhmanova

Portrait of a Ballerina. Mid-1910s

Oil on canvas. 133 x 102

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Favsta Shikhmanova

In Tsarskoe Selo. Autumn. Circa 1917

Oil on canvas. 49.5 x 73.5

Private collection,

St Petersburg



Favsta Shikhmanova
View onto Obvodny Canal. 1922 (?)
Oil on canvas. 138 x 197
Collection of Pyotr Aven, Moscow



Favsta Shikhmanova

Red Dacha. Late 1910s – early 1920s

Oil on canvas. 39 x 72.5

Collection of Evgeny Malov, St Petersburg



Favsta Shikhmanova

Boy in Red Shirt. Mid-1910s

Oil on canvas. 97.5 x 89

Collection of Alexander Kuznetsov and
Pavel Melyakov, St Petersburg



Yulia Obolenskaya

Winter. Self-Portrait. 1914

Oil on canvas. 62.5 x 84

Private collection



Vera Zhukova
Portrait of Evgenia Kaplan. 1915 (?)
Oil on canvas. 67.8 x 73.5
Russian Museum



Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak

Self-Portrait with Vase. 1914–1915

Oil on canvas. 66.5 x 52.4

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak

Toys. Late 1910s
Oil on canvas. 75 x 46
Private collection,
St Petersburg



Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak

Portrait of Nikolai Pomerantsev. 1922

Oil on canvas. 80.5 x 67.2

Private collection, Moscow

Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak

Portrait of Vera Isaeva

Late 1910s

Oil on canvas. 83.5 x 68.5

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak

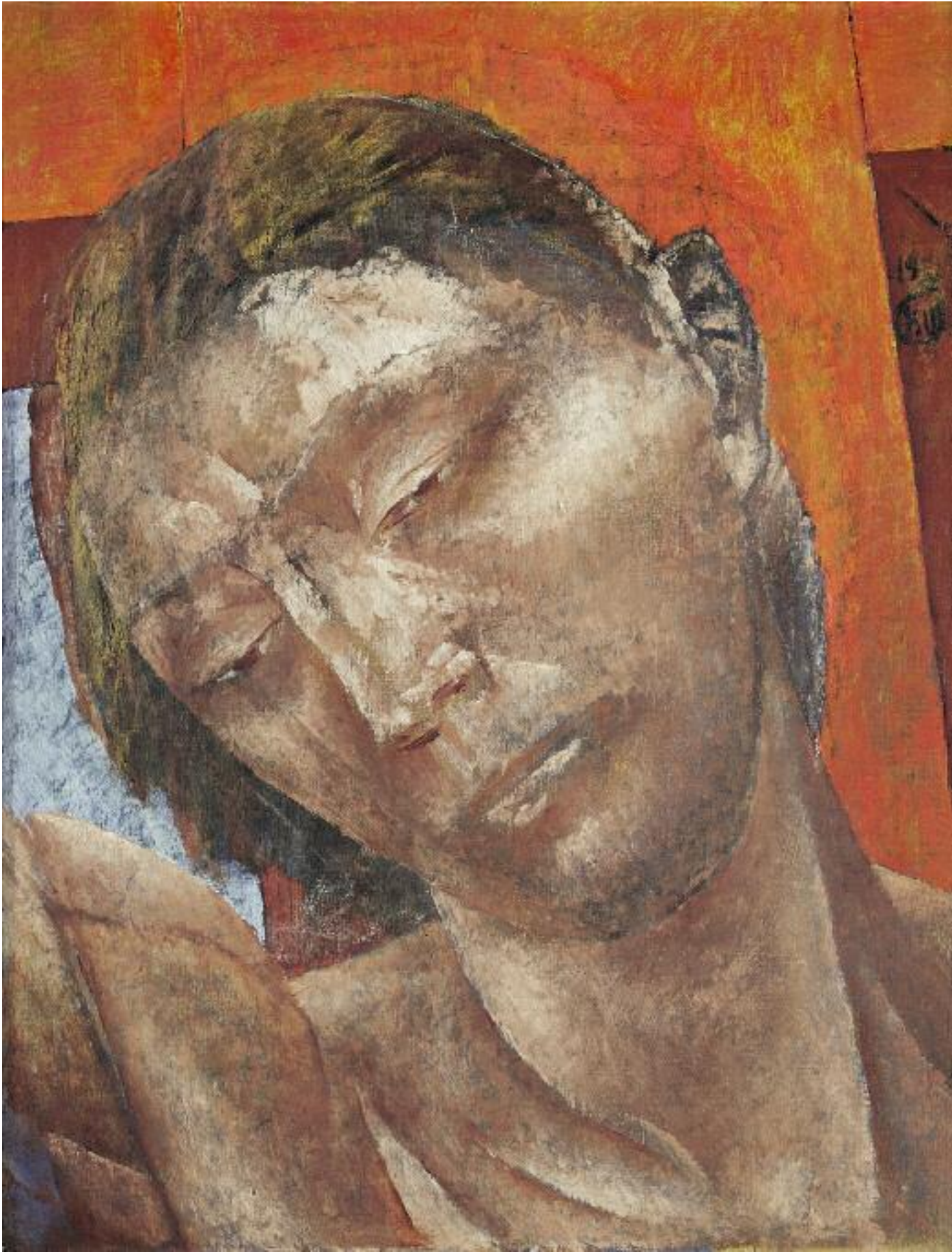
Portrait of Andrei Shibinsky. 1917

Oil on canvas. 74.5 x 73

Private collection,

St Petersburg





Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Head of Christ. 1921

Oil on canvas. 47 x 35.5

Collection of the Paleev family,
St Petersburg



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Madonna and Child. 1923

Oil on canvas. 54.5 x 44

Private collection, Moscow



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Madonna and Child. Awakening. 1922

Oil on wood. 17 x 13.4

Russian Museum



Pyotr Sokolov
Portrait of Anna Smirnova. 1923
Oil on canvas. 64 x 51.5
Russian Museum

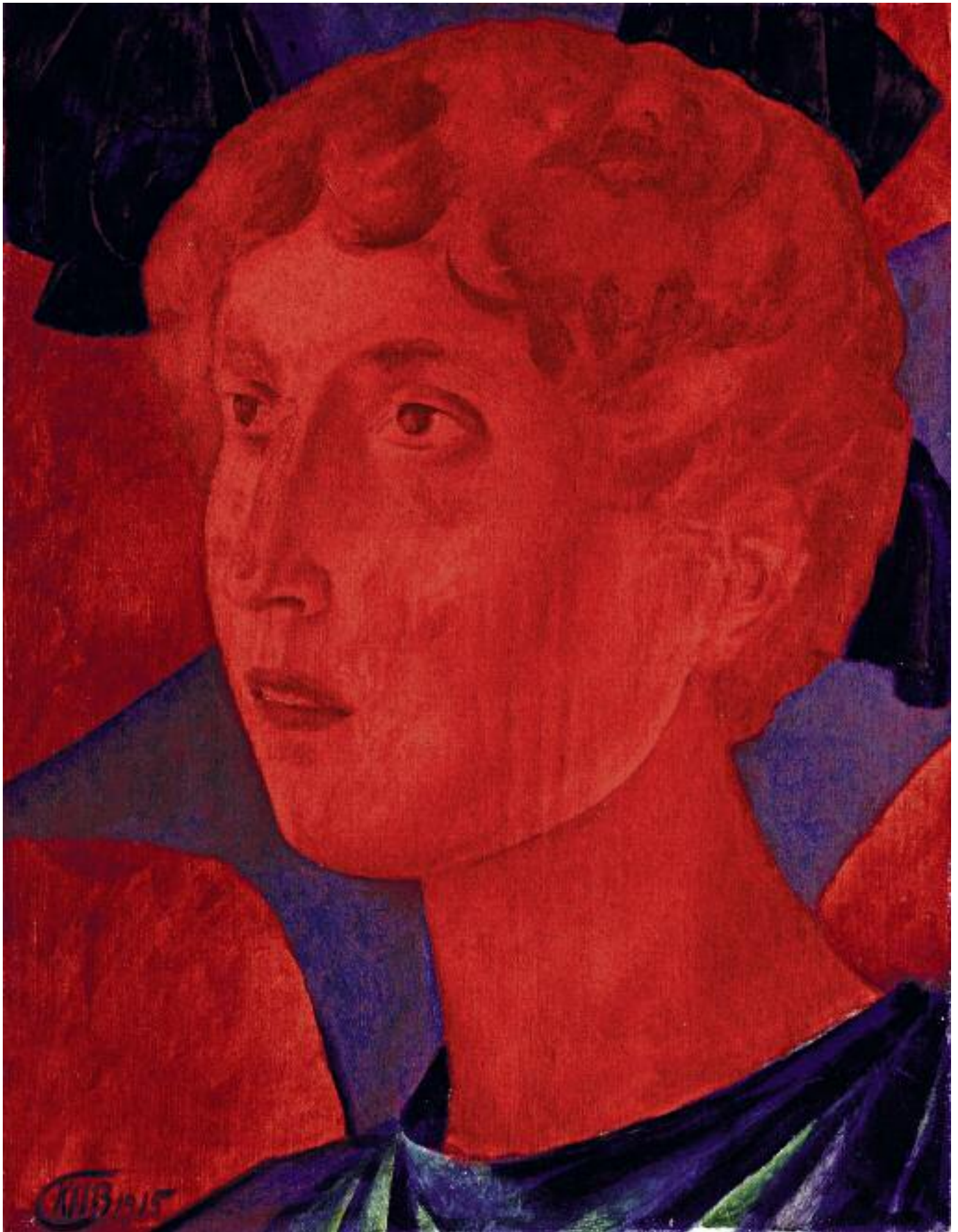


Leonid Chupyatov

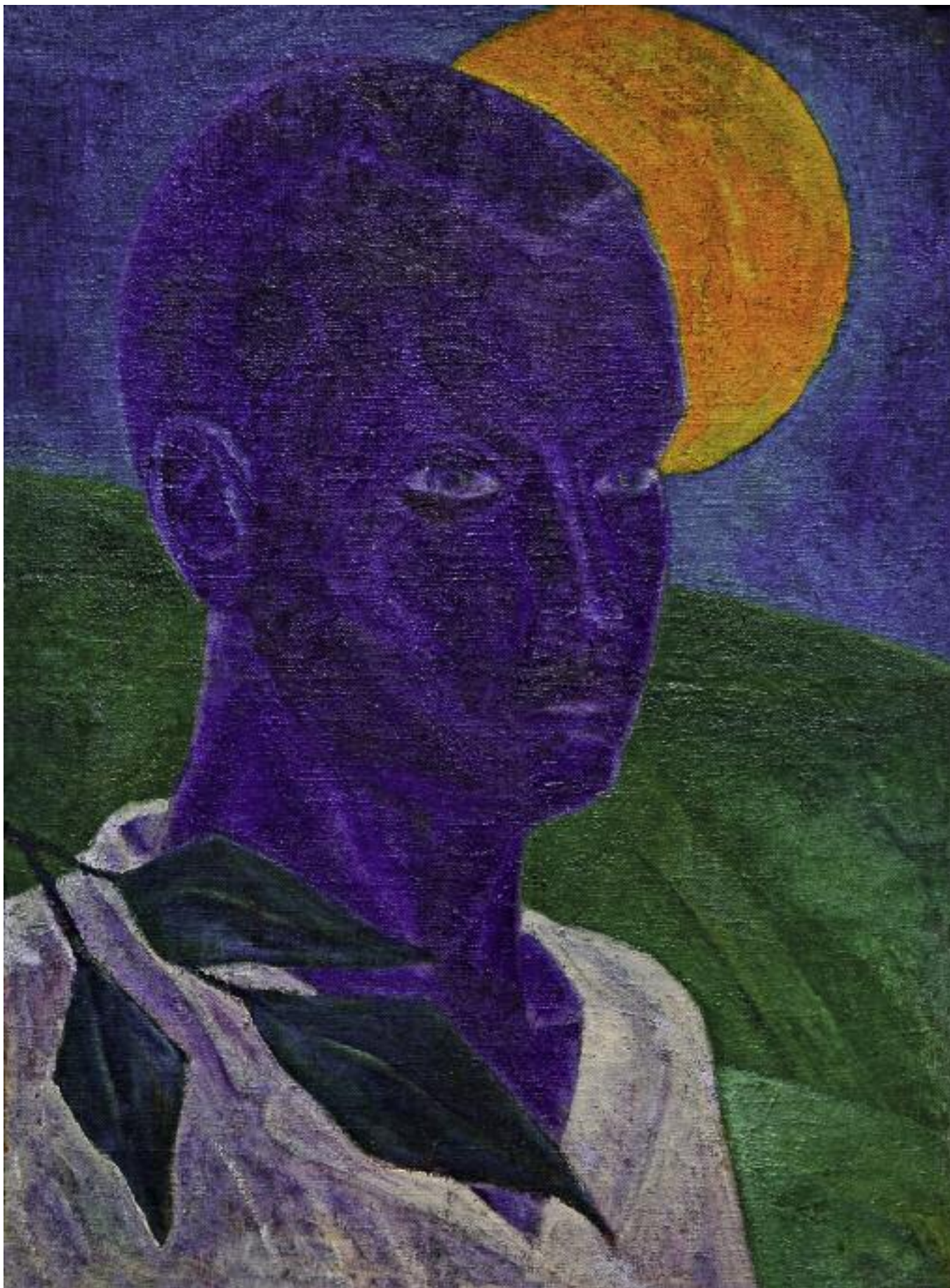
The Mother of God of Tenderness. After 1927

Oil on canvas. 94.7 x 90.5

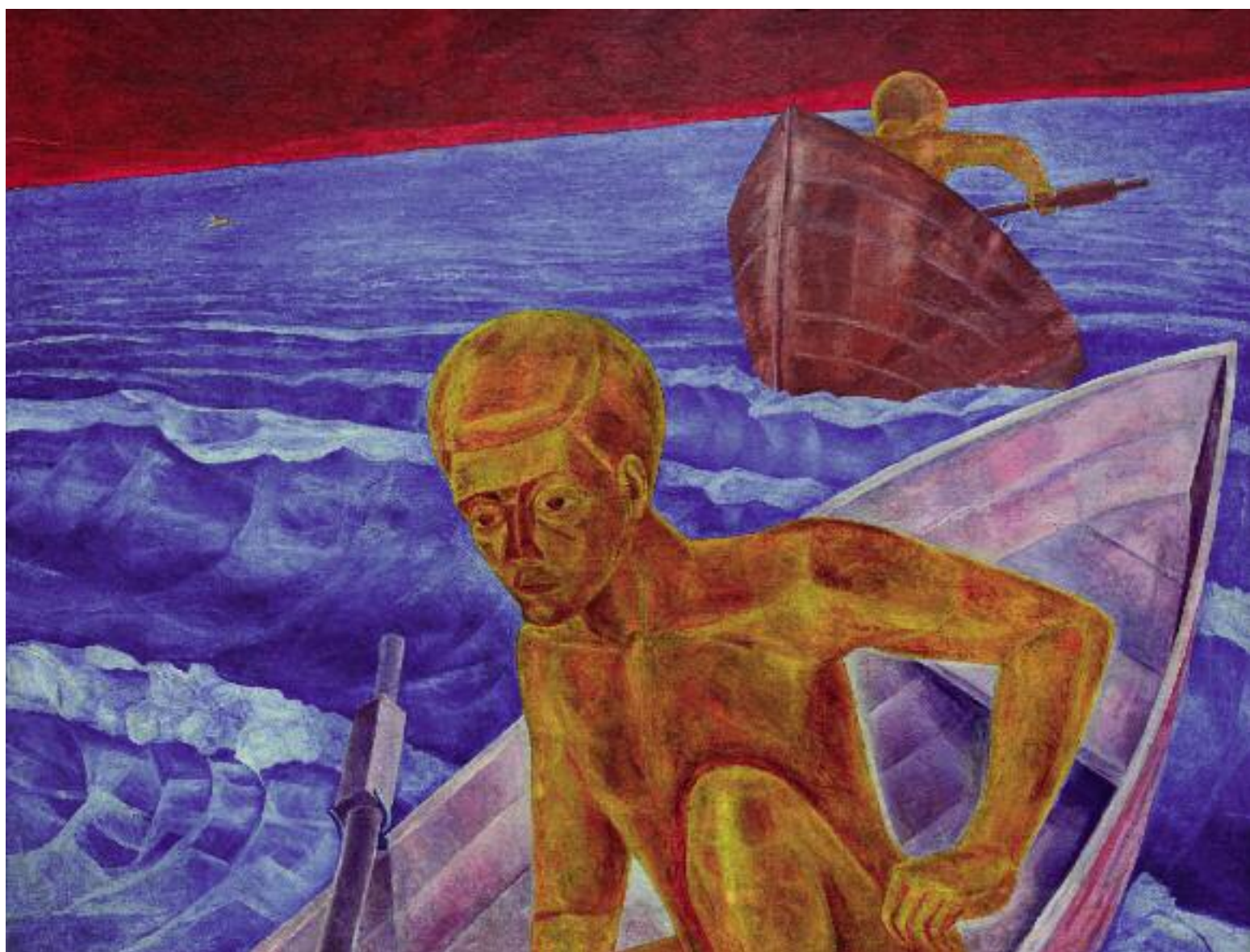
Collection of Evgeny Malov, St Petersburg



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin
Head of a Youth (Red Angel). 1915
Oil on canvas. 65.5 x 50.5
Russian Museum



Pavel Golubyatnikov
Self-Portrait with the Moon. 1931
Oil on canvas. 63 x 47
Nizhny Tagil Museum of Fine Arts



Pavel Golubyatnikov

Storm. 1925–1926

Oil on canvas. 156 x 210

Nizhny Tagil Museum of Fine Arts



Pavel Golubyatnikov

Kiev Woman. 1925–1926

Oil on canvas. 54.5 x 63.5

Nizhny Tagil Museum of Fine Arts



Vladimir Dmitriev
The Mother of God Against
the Background of Moscow. 1920
Oil on canvas. 191.6 x 267.6
Moscow Museum of Modern Art

Pavel Golubyatnikov

Airplane Above the Village. 1926–1927

Oil on canvas. 73 x 88

Nizhny Tagil Museum of Fine Arts





Maria
Lomakina

Still Life
with Pyramid
and Cubes
1923–1924

On the reverse side:

Still Life with Cubes
1923–1924

Oil on canvas. 53 x 58

Collection of Timur Khairutdinov,
Moscow

Rebecca
Golovchiner

Composition
with Geometric
Figures
1923–1924

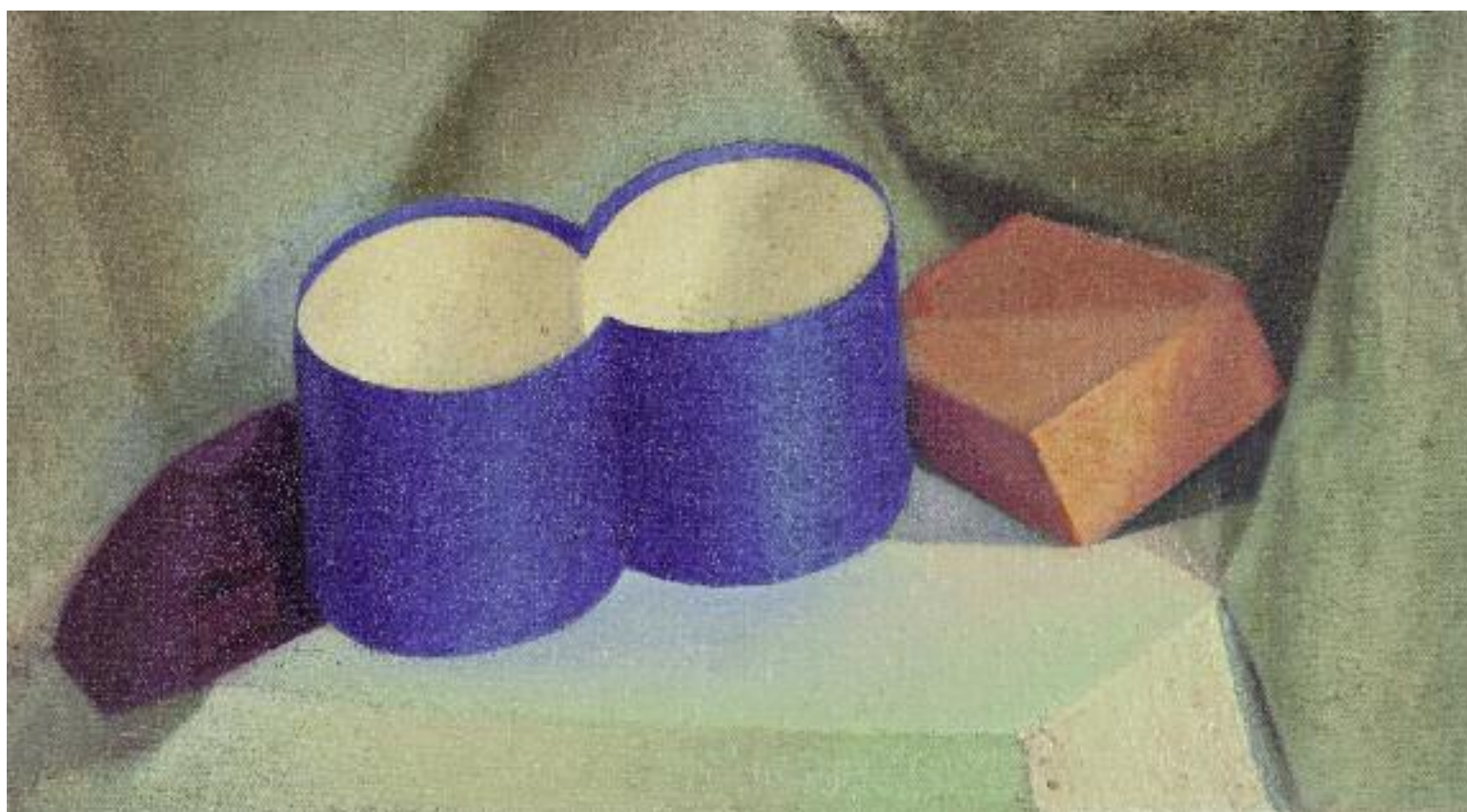
On the reverse side:

Still Life
1923–1924

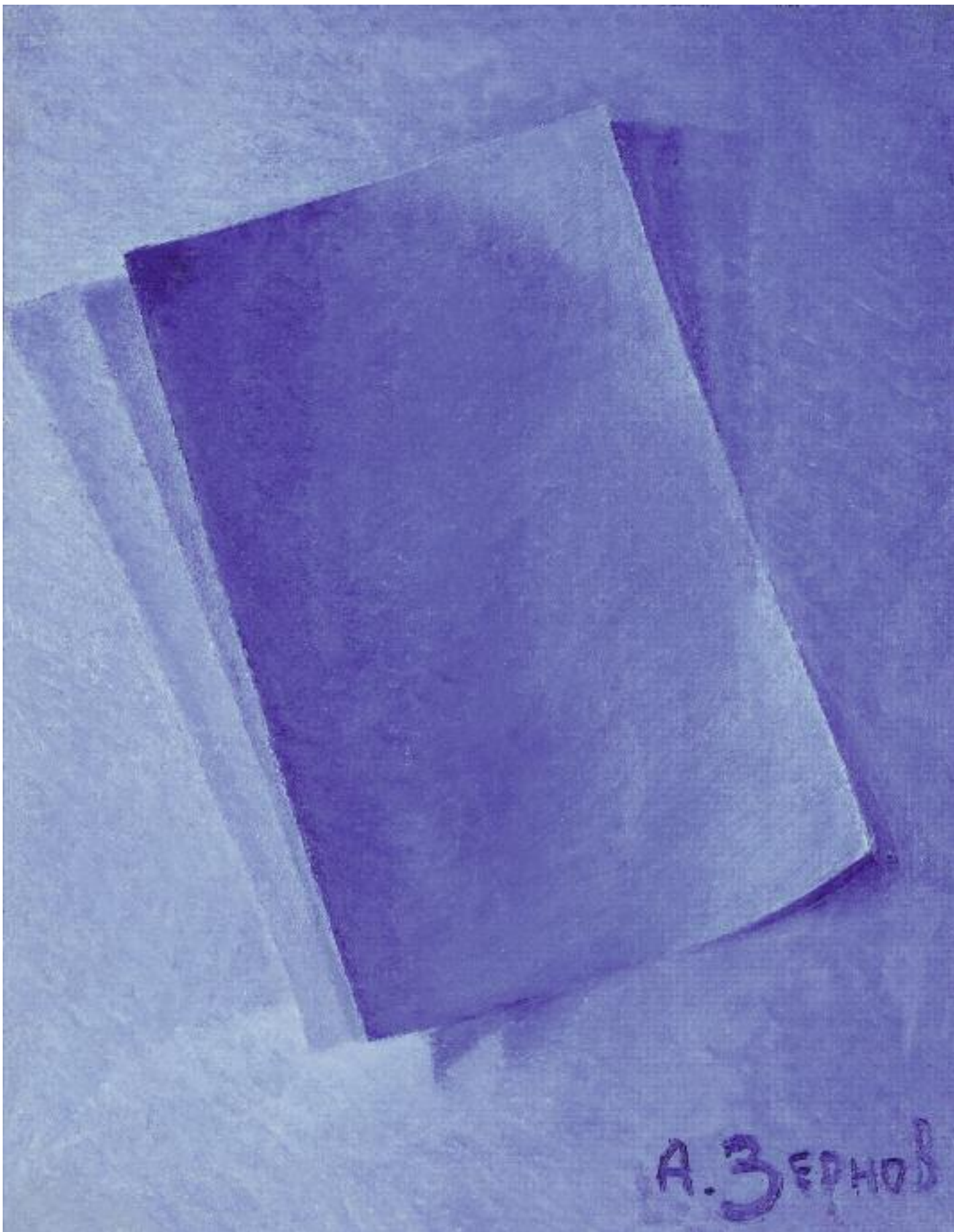
Oil on canvas, 37.5 x 44.5

Russian Museum





Alexei Zernov
Still Life with Two Mugs
1923–1924
Oil on canvas. 30 x 54.5
Private collection,
St Petersburg



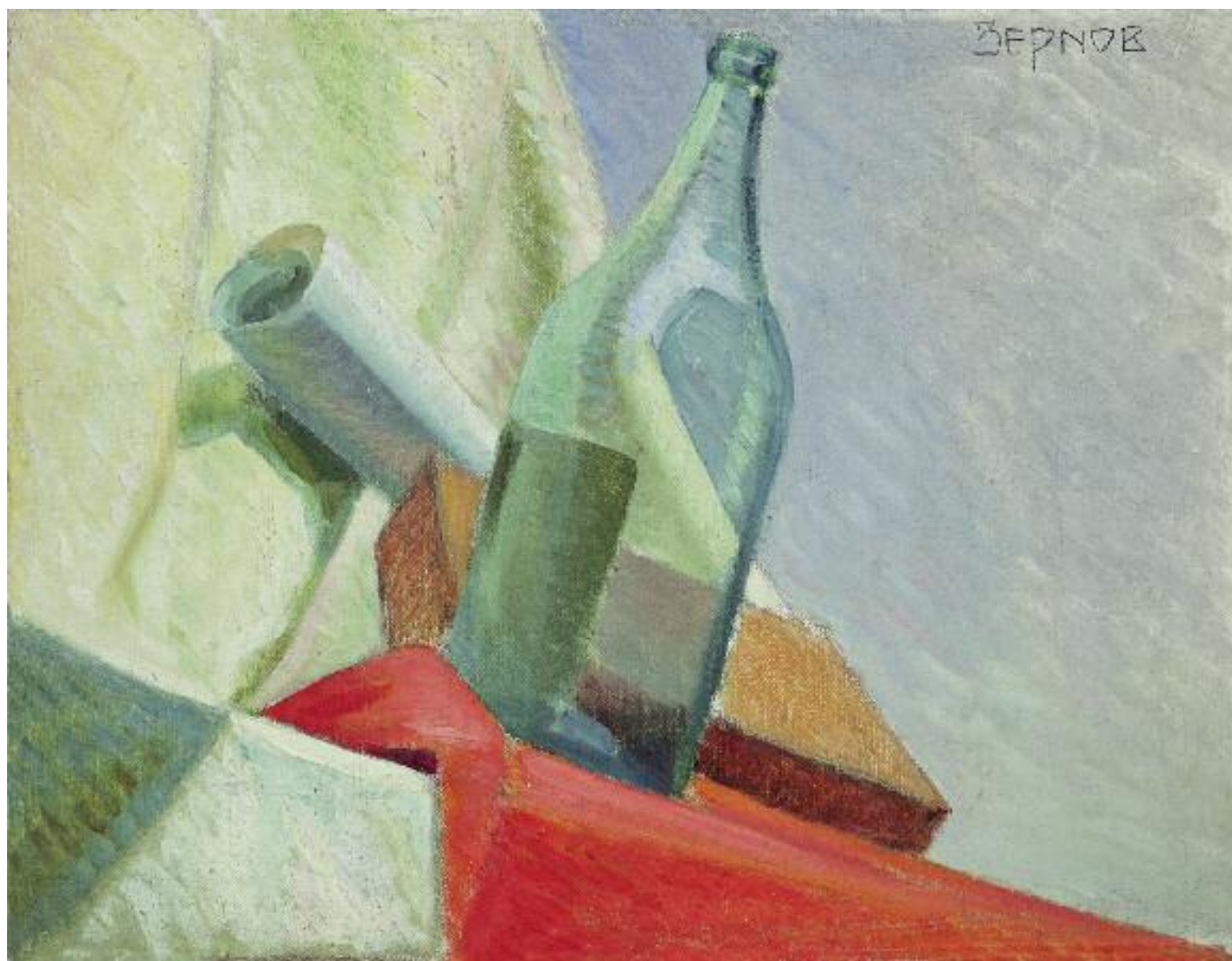
Alexei Zernov

Blue on Blue. 1923–1924

Oil on canvas. 40 x 31

Private collection,

St Petersburg



Alexei Zernov

Bottle on Red. 1924–1926

Oil on canvas. 31 x 41

Private collection,

St Petersburg



Alexei Zernov
Still Life with Blue Ashtray. 1924 (?)
Oil on canvas. 58 x 54
Private collection,
St Petersburg



Alexei Zernov

White Still Life with Mug. 1924

Oil on canvas. 42 x 38

Private collection,

St Petersburg



Leonid Chupyatov
Black Still Life with Sphere
and Paper. 1922
Oil on canvas. 76.5 x 100
Russian Museum

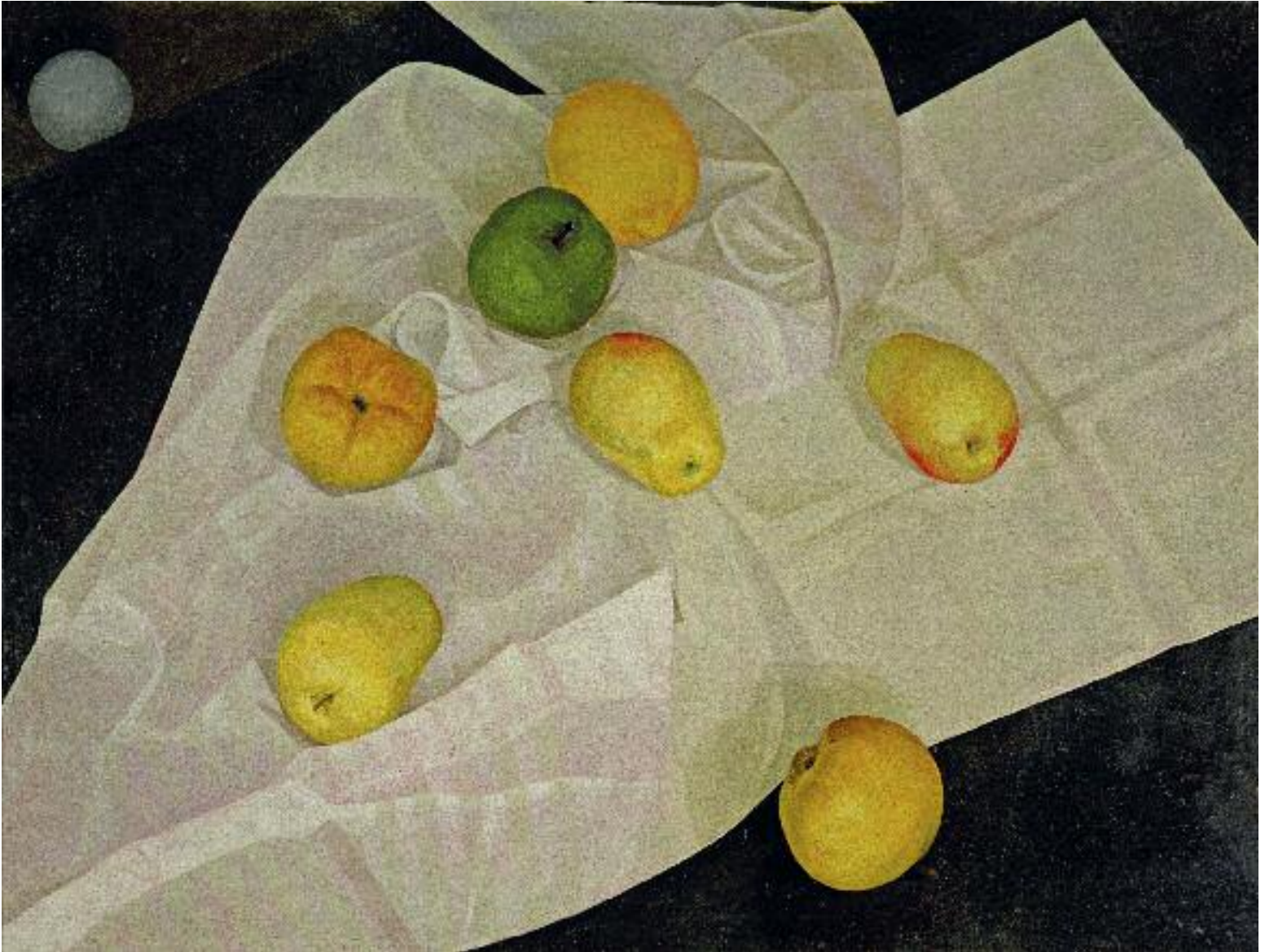


Leonid Chupyatov

White Still Life. 1936

Oil on canvas. 58 x 75

Russian Museum



Leonid Chupyatov
Still Life. Apples and Lemon. 1923
Oil on canvas. 69.5 x 92
Russian Museum



Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin

Apple and Cherry. 1917

Oil on canvas. 40 x 32.5

Collection of the Paleev family,
St Petersburg



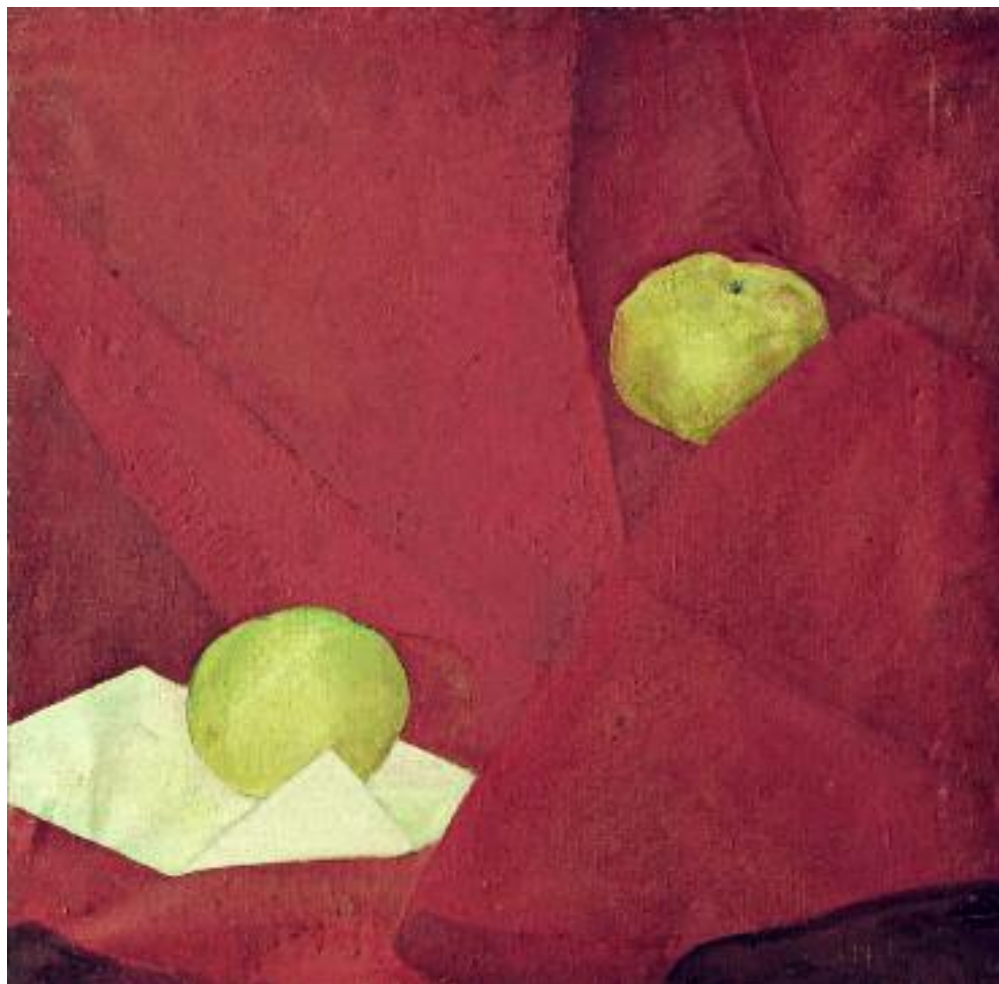
Pavel
Golubyatnikov

Still Life with Bottle

1920–1921

Oil on canvas. 71.5 x 84

Nizhny Tagil Museum of Fine Arts



Olga
Bogdanova

Apples on Red

1923–1924

Oil on canvas, 53 x 53

Russian Museum

Maria Sasko

Still Life with Shell
and Vase. 1921

Oil on canvas, 53.5 x 36

Collection of Timur Khairutdinov, Moscow





Leonid Chupyatov

Stools. 1922

Oil on canvas. 137 x 105.7

Private collection, St Petersburg



Mikhail Noskov

Still Life with Green Bottle. Early 1920s

On the reverse side: Crimean Landscape. 1933

Oil on canvas. 50 x 70

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Mikhail Verbov

Still Life. 1923

Oil on canvas. 55.5 x 45.5

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Mikhail Verbov

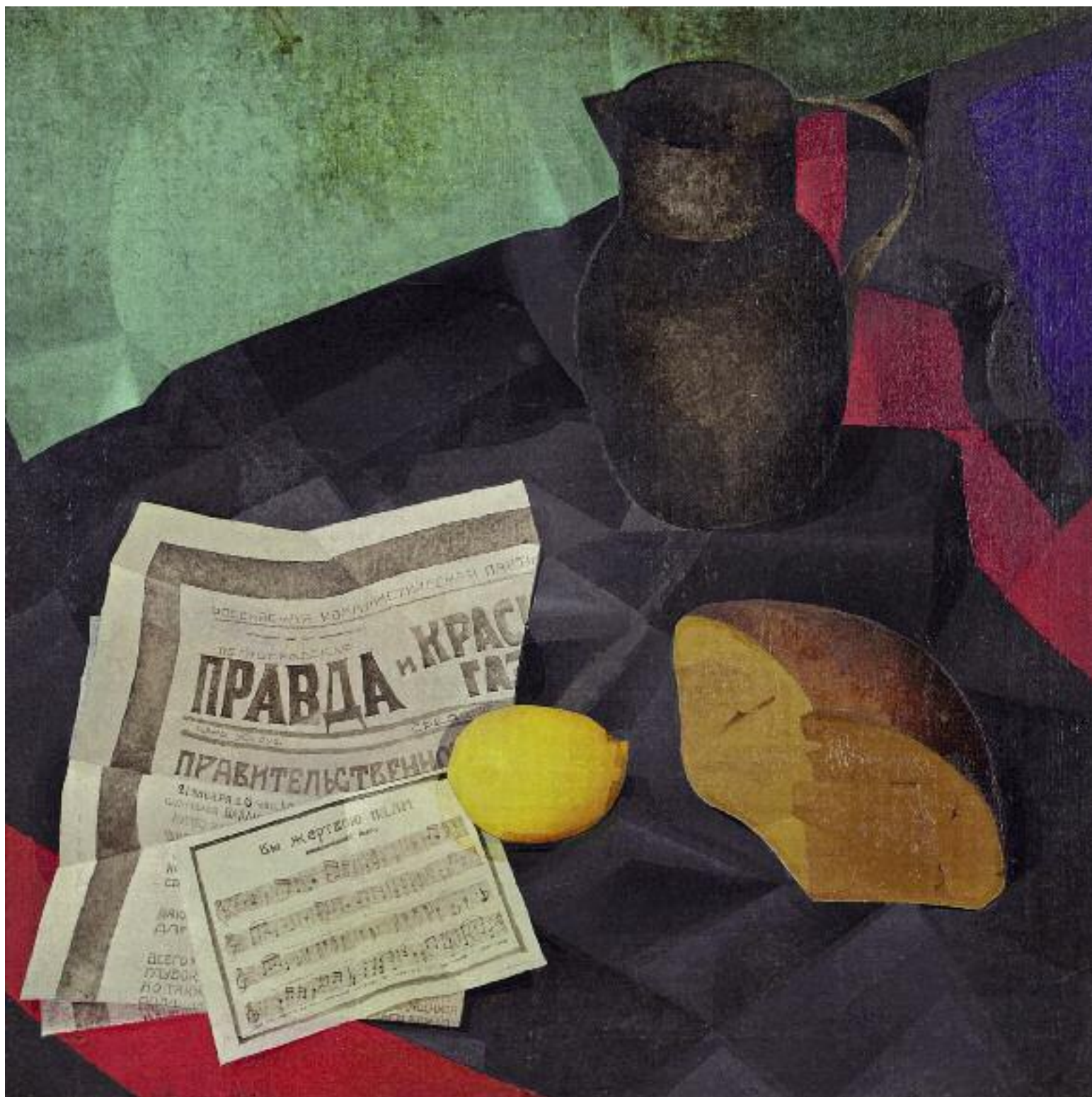
Still Life. 1923

Oil on canvas. 47.5 x 58

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Vladimir Malagis
Still Life with Herring, 1925
Oil on canvas. 65 x 53
Russian Museum



Vladimir Malagis
Mourning Still Life. 1924
Oil on canvas. 74 x 74
Russian Museum

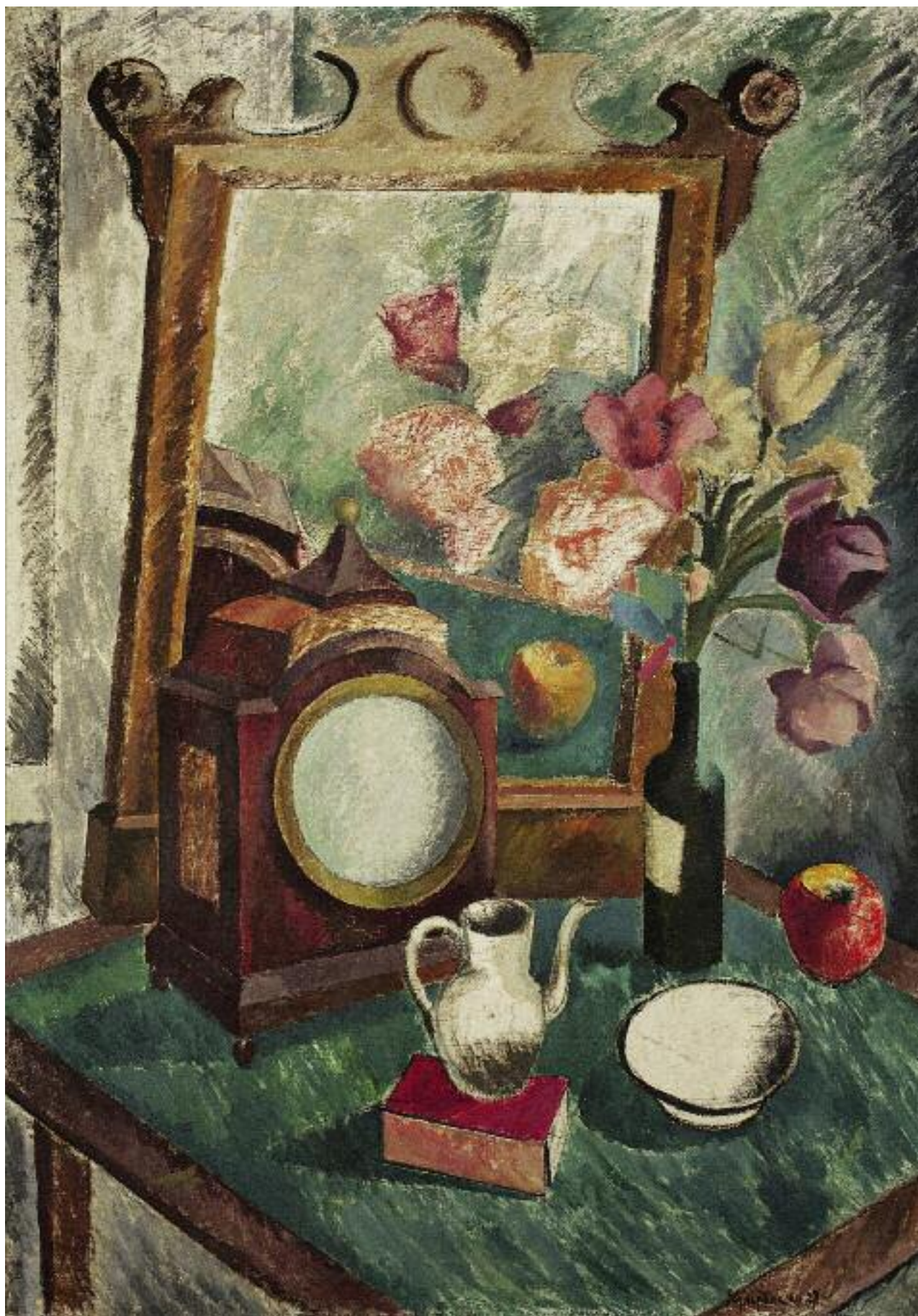


Vladimir Malagis

Legs in Felt Boots. 1925

Oil and tempera on canvas. 110.5 x 78

Collection of Evgeny Malov,
St Petersburg



Tatyana Kuperwasser

Still Life with Mirror and Clock. 1927

Oil on canvas. 125.5 x 87

Private collection,

St Petersburg



Yakov Shur

Still Life with Top Hat. 1921

Oil on cardboard. 31 x 45.5

Private collection,

St Petersburg



Vyacheslav Pakulin

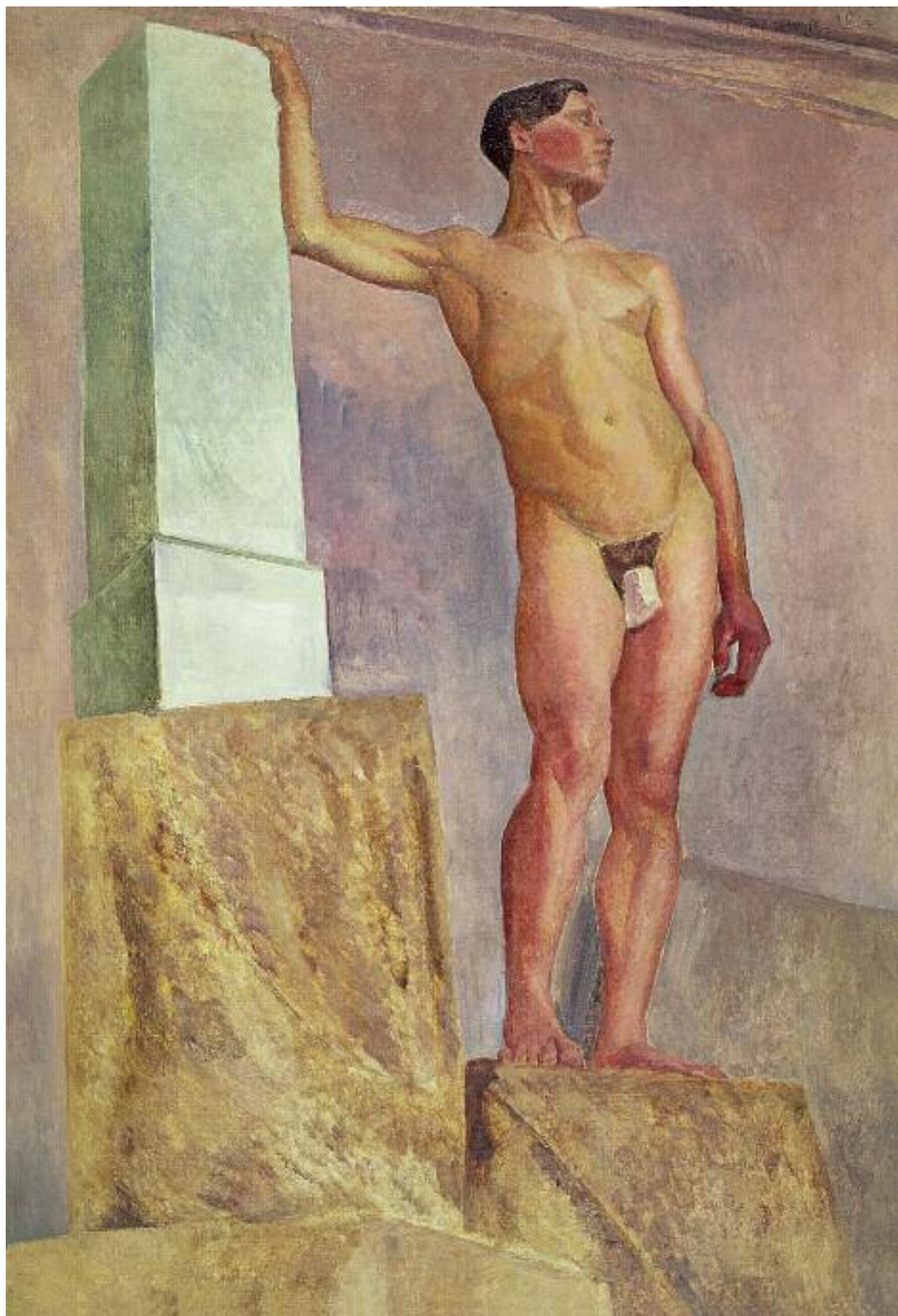
Still Life with Hat. Early 1920s

On the reverse side: Still Life

(Volumes and Planes). Early 1920s

Oil on canvas. 65 x 46

Russian Museum



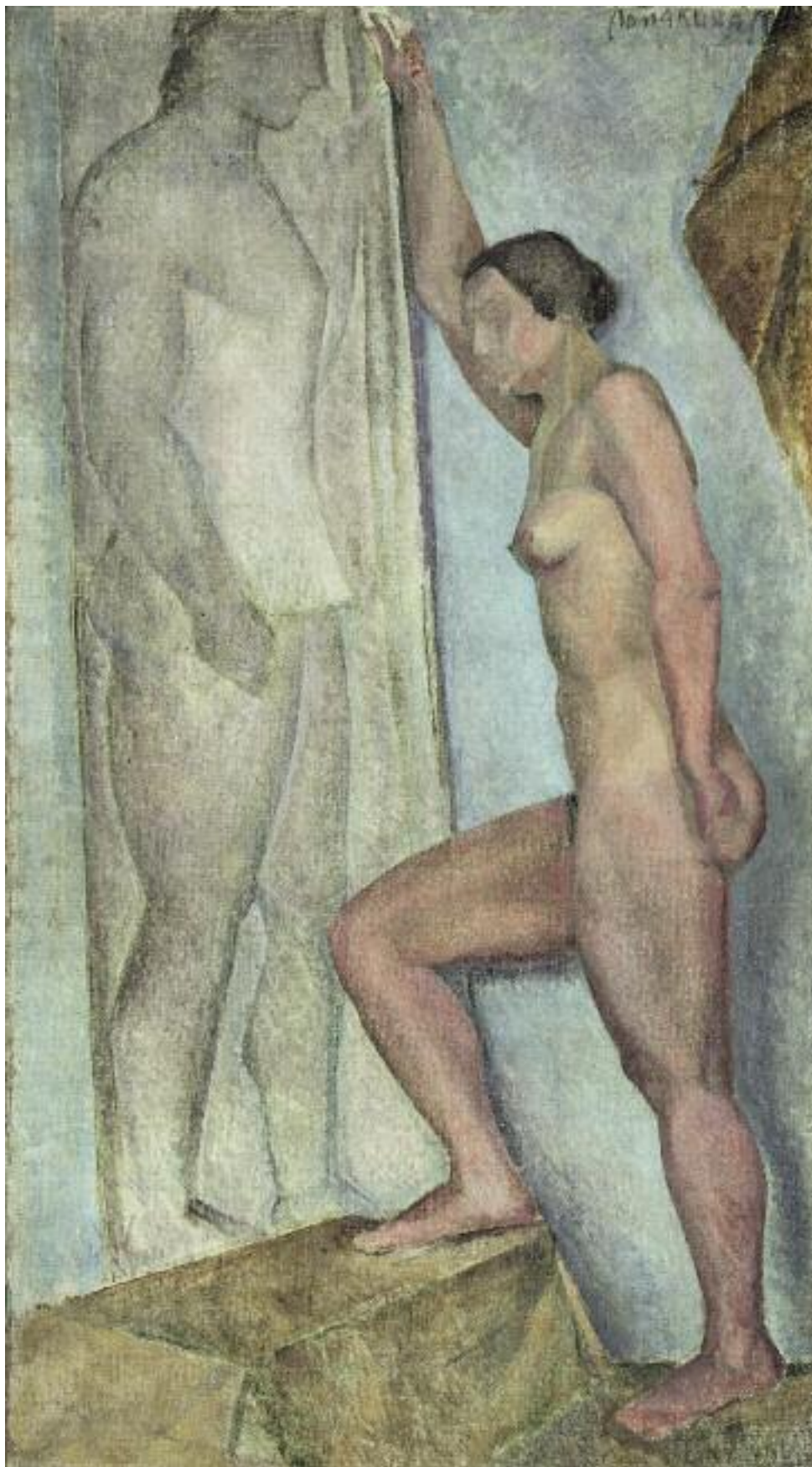
Maria Lomakina

Artist's Model with Geometric Figures. 1923–1927

Drawn from life at Petrov-Vodkin's studio

Oil on canvas. 137 x 94

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Maria Lomakina

Artist's Model with Kouros. 1923–1927

On the reverse side: Artist's Model with Ball

Drawn from life at Petrov-Vodkin's studio

Oil on canvas. 134 x 73

Private collection,

St Petersburg



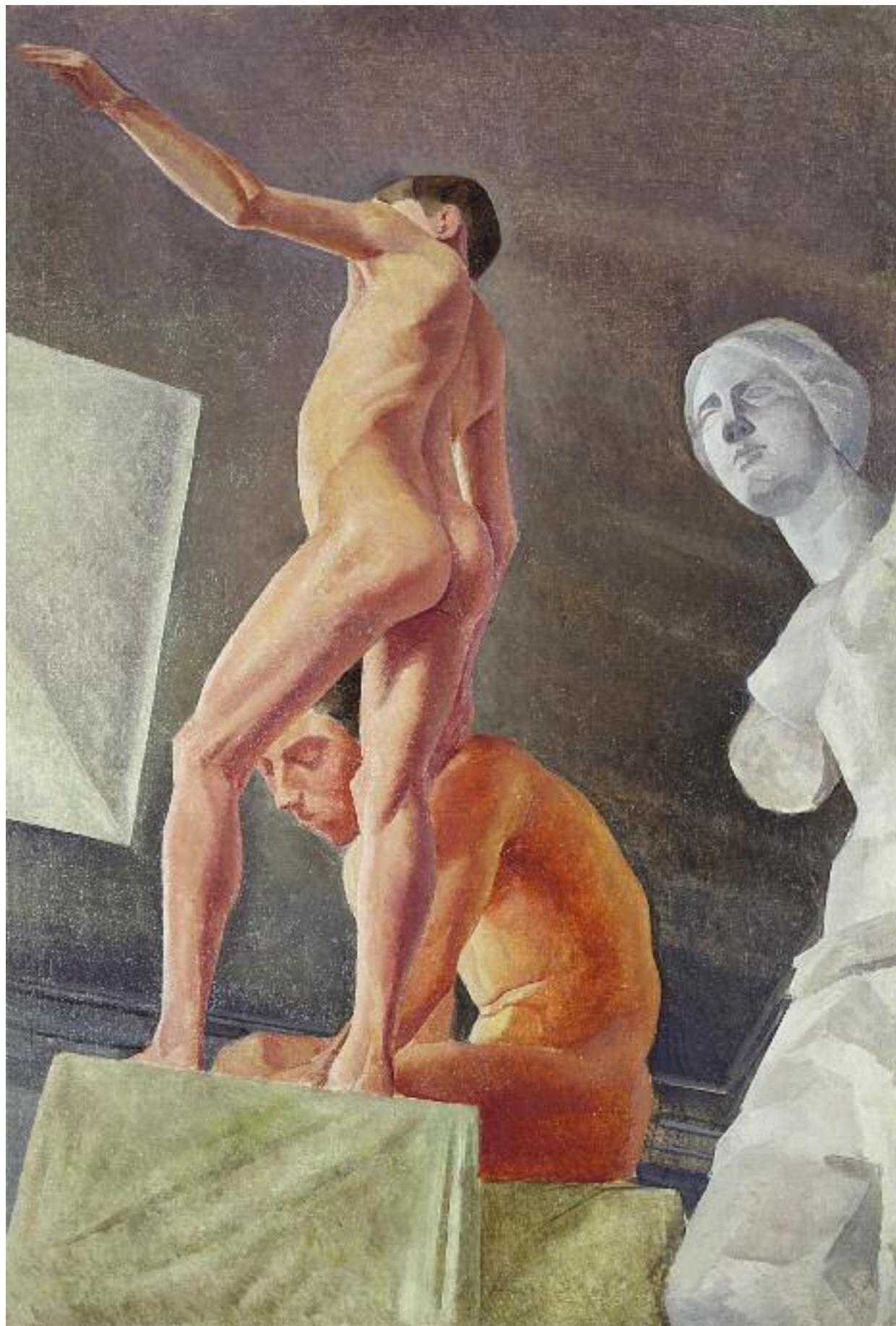
Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya

Double Portrait. Early 1920s

Drawn from life at Petrov-Vodkin's studio

Oil on canvas. 128 x 90

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Maria Lomakina

Two Artist's Models. 1923-1927

Drawn from life at Petrov-Vodkin's studio

Oil on canvas. 137 x 94

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Vladimir Malagis

Reclining Nude. Between 1930 and 1932

Oil on canvas. 125 x 65

Private collection,

St Petersburg



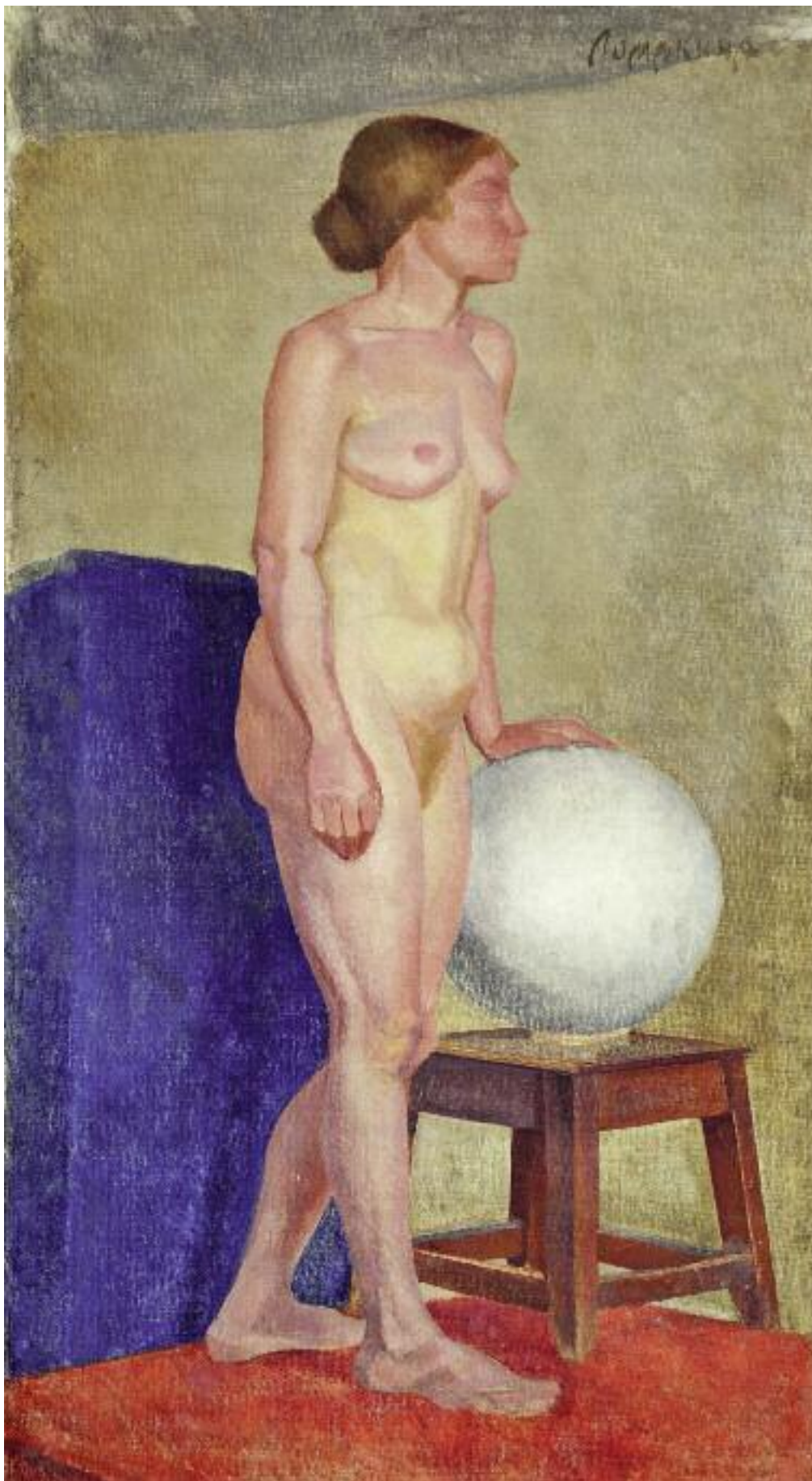
Victoria Belakovskaya

Artist's Model with Yellow Sheet. 1926

Drawn from life at Petrov-Vodkin's studio

Oil on canvas. 147 x 94

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Maria Lomakina

Artist's Model with Ball. 1923–1927

On the reverse side: Artist's Model with Kouros

Drawn from life at Petrov-Vodkin's studio

Oil on canvas. 134 x 73

Private collection,

St Petersburg



Vyacheslav Pakulin

Nude. Between 1922 and 1925

Oil on canvas. 187 x 132

Russian Museum



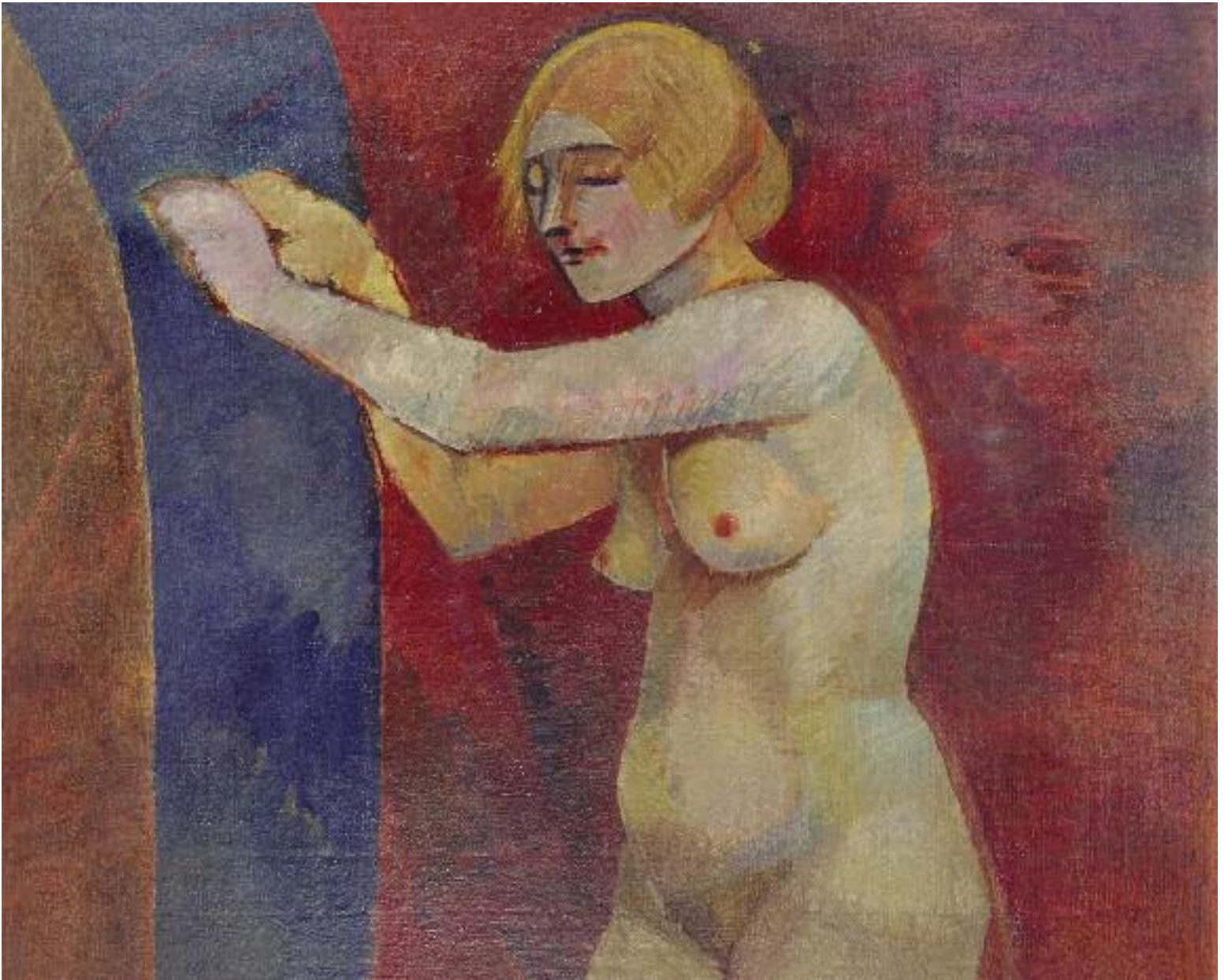
Maria Lomakina

Artist's Model with Drape. 1923–1927

Drawn from life at Petrov-Vodkin's studio

Oil on canvas. 113 x 82.5

Private collection,
St Petersburg



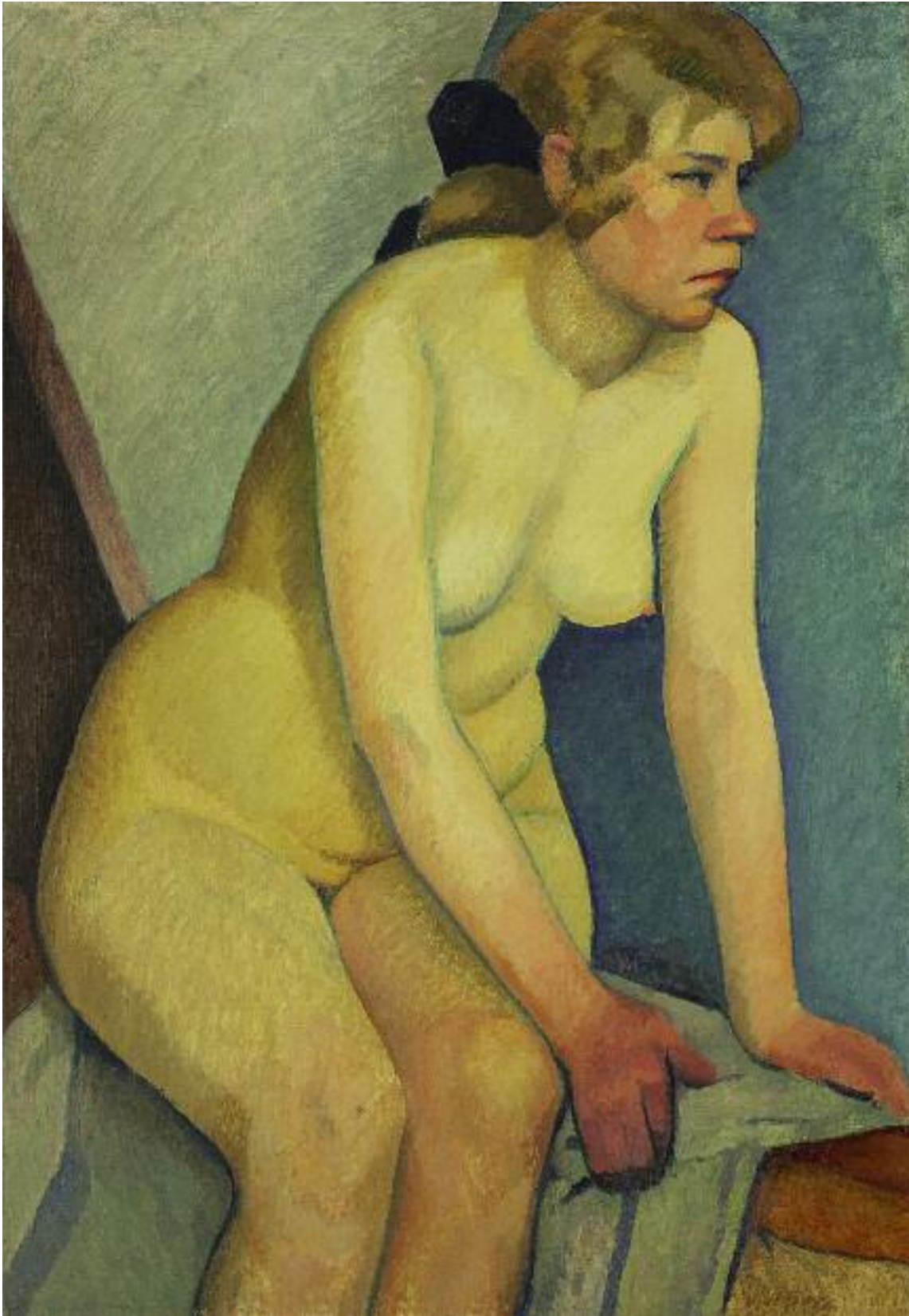
Tatyana Kuperwasser

Nude Standing Against Red Background. 1922 (?)

On the reverse side: Landscape

Oil on canvas. 51 x 68

Private collection,
St Petersburg



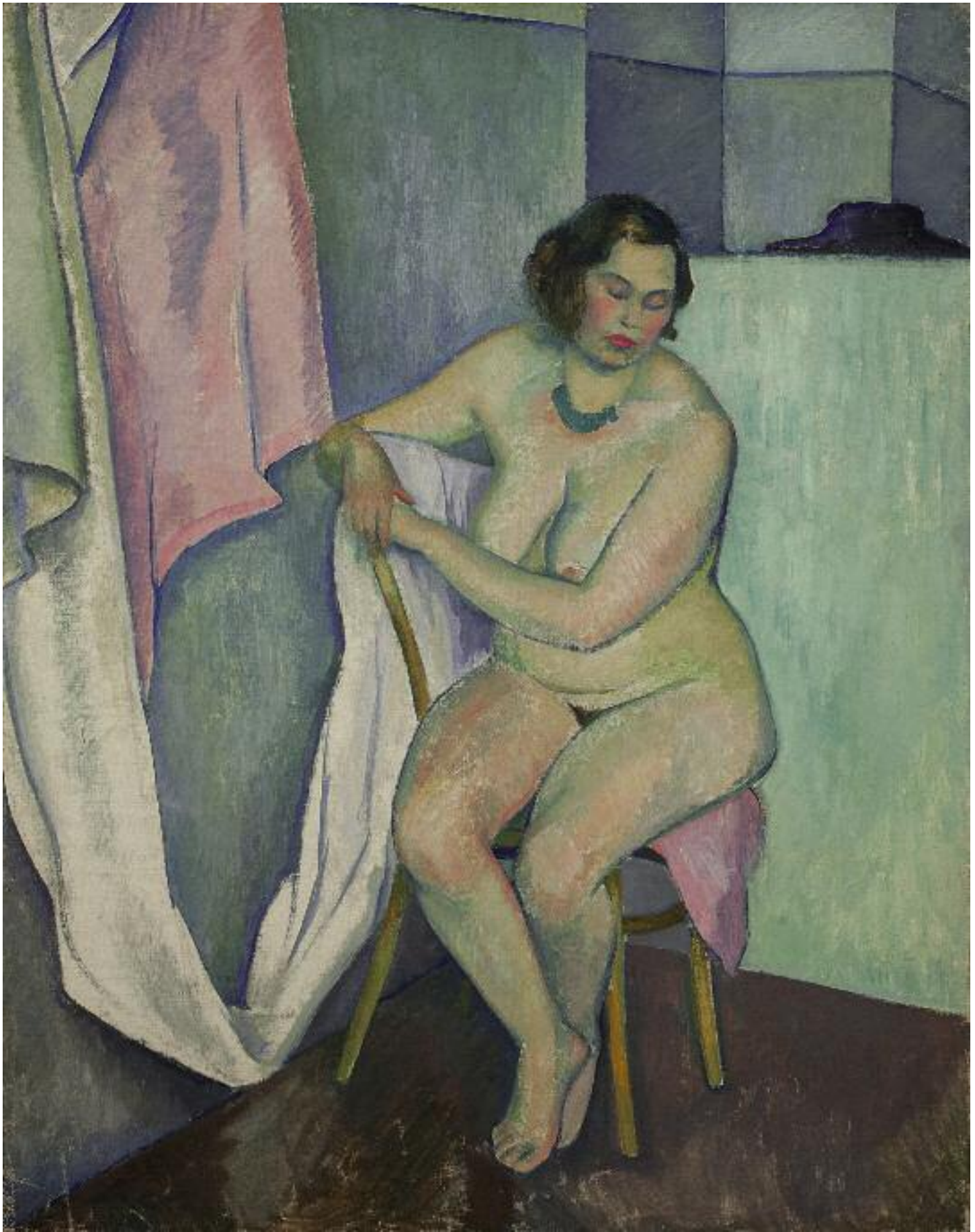
Tatyana Kuperwasser

Nude with Black Bow

First half of the 1920s

Oil on canvas. 89 x 63.5

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Tatyana Kuperwasser

Seated Nude

Second half of the 1920s

Oil on canvas, 102 x 81

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Evgenia Evenbach

Head of a Boy. 1920

Oil on canvas. 55 x 43.5

Scientific and Research Museum,
Russian Academy of Arts

Gerasim Efros

Blue Study of a Nude. 1921

Oil on canvas. 85 x 54

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Evgenia Evenbach

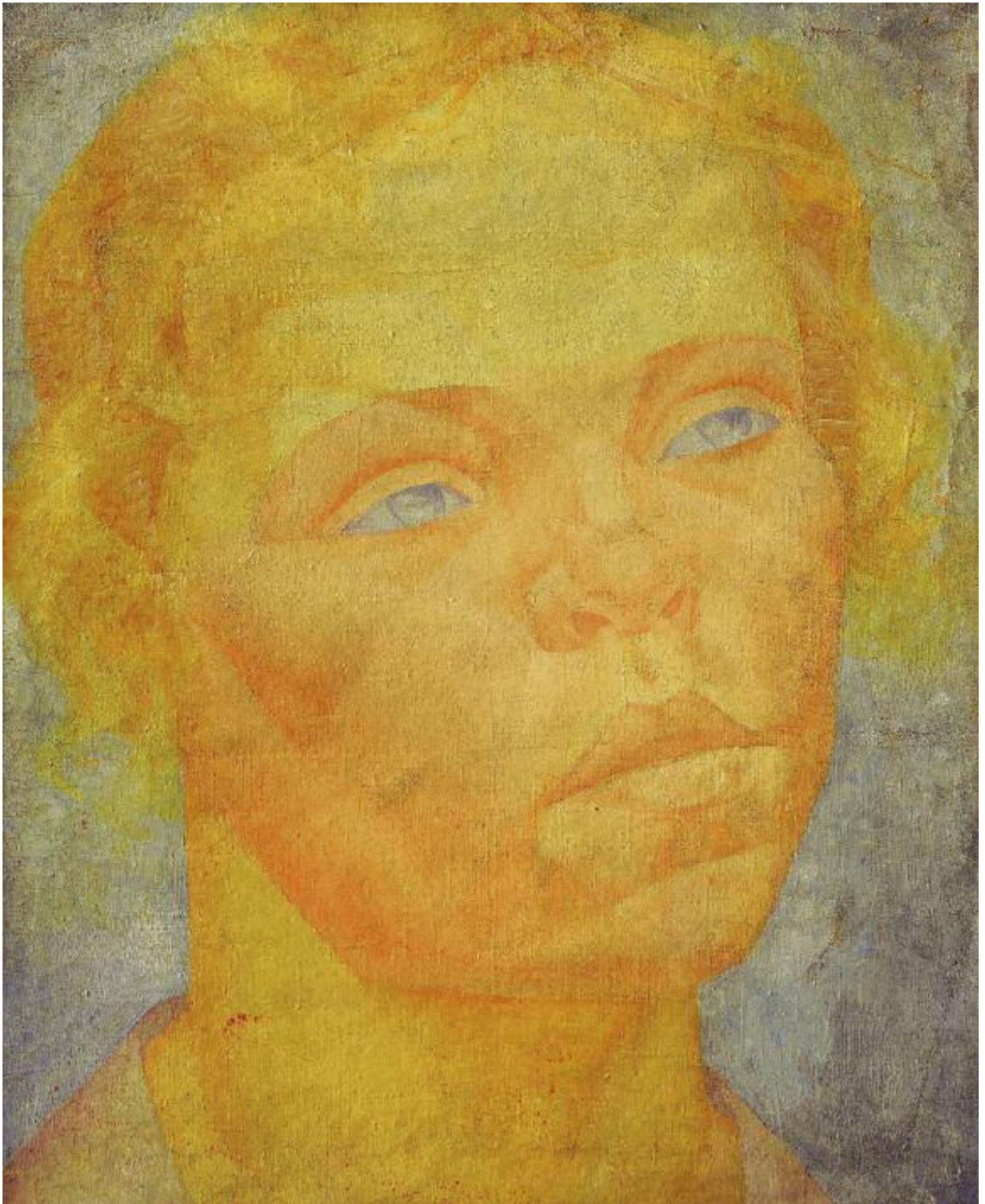
Portrait of a Student (Against Blue Background)

Early 1920s

On the reverse side: Female Head

Oil and wax tempera on canvas. 69 x 56

Russian Museum





Evgenia Evenbach

Portrait of a Student
with Red Plaits. Early 1920s

Oil and wax tempera on canvas. 98 x 62
Russian Museum



Evgenia Evenbach

Portrait of Sofya Trivush. Between 1920 and 1922

Oil and wax tempera on canvas. 62 x 53.5

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Evgenia Evenbach

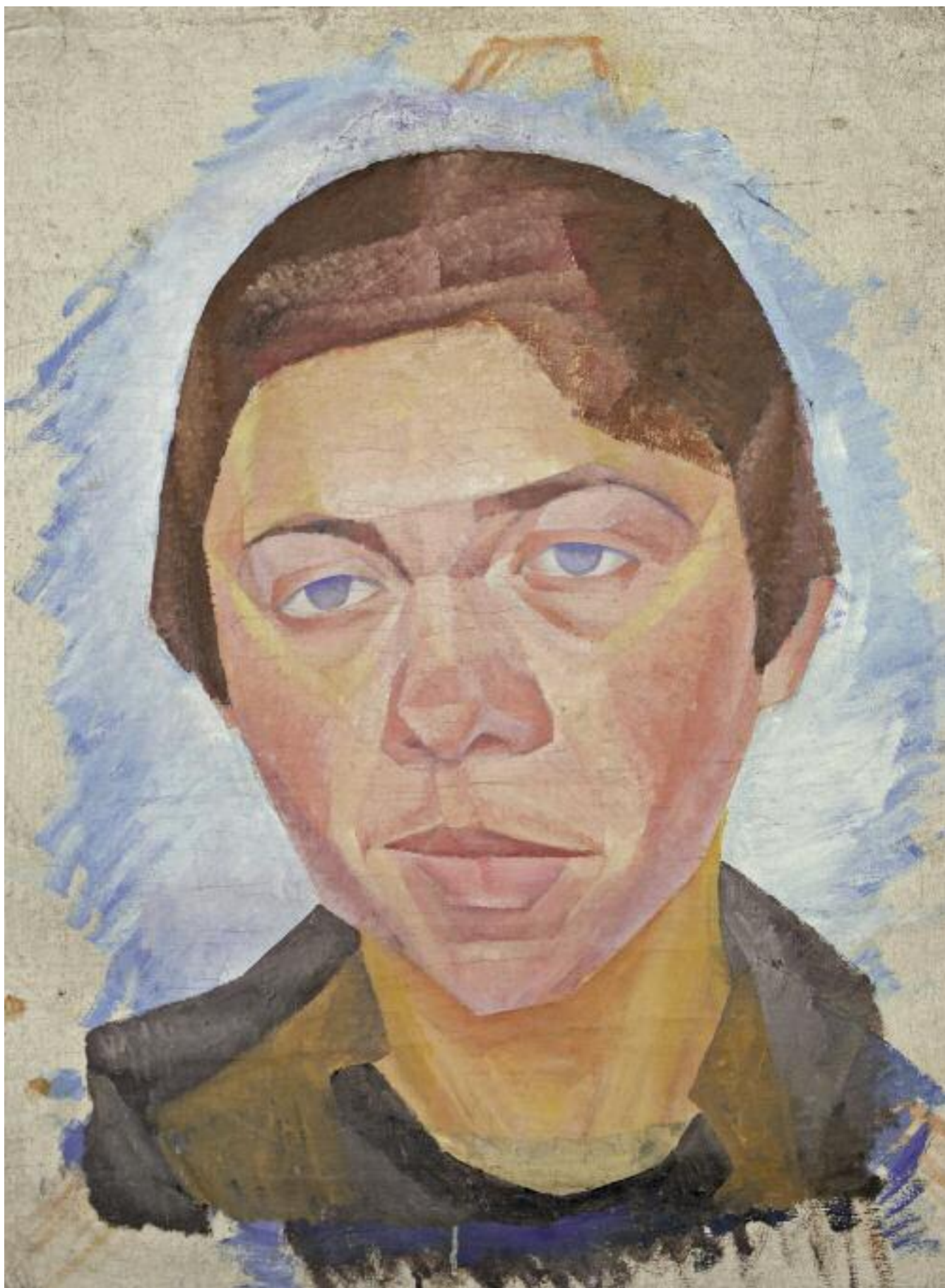
Portrait of a Dwarf. Early 1920s

On the reverse side:

Figure (Without Head) in Red Dress
with Yellow Crosses. Detail

Oil on canvas. 79 x 64

Russian Museum



Evgenia Evenbach

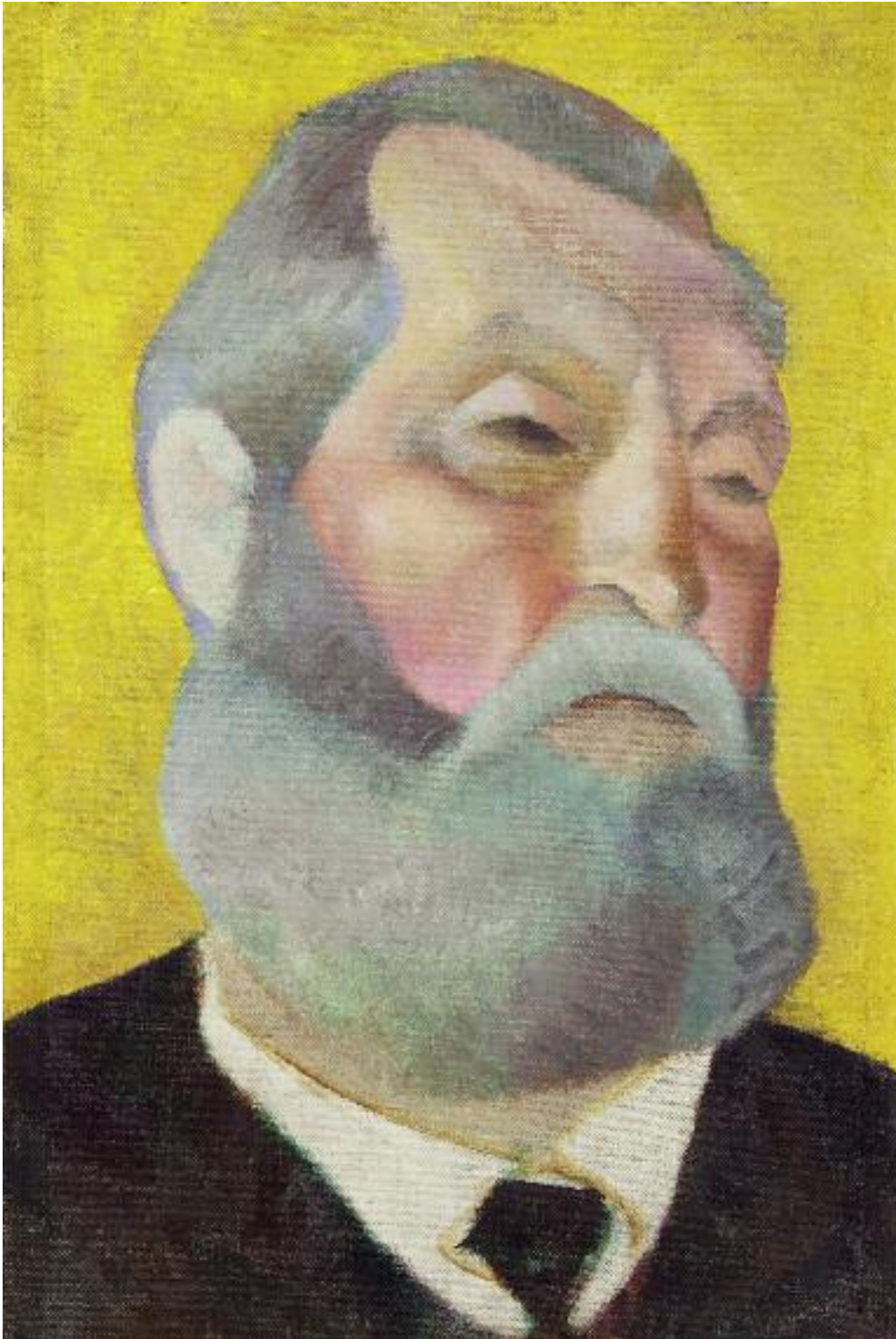
Portrait of a Student (with Dark Hair). Early 1920s

On the reverse side:

Winter Landscape with Red Structures

Oil on canvas. 75 x 56

Russian Museum



Maria Lomakina

Male Portrait. 1920s

On the reverse side: Portrait of Irina Bolgovskaya

Between 1923 and 1927

Oil on canvas. 62 x 41.5

Russian Museum



Maria Lomakina

Portrait of the Sculptor Alexei Petrov

Between 1923 and 1927

Oil on canvas. 68 x 61

Russian Museum



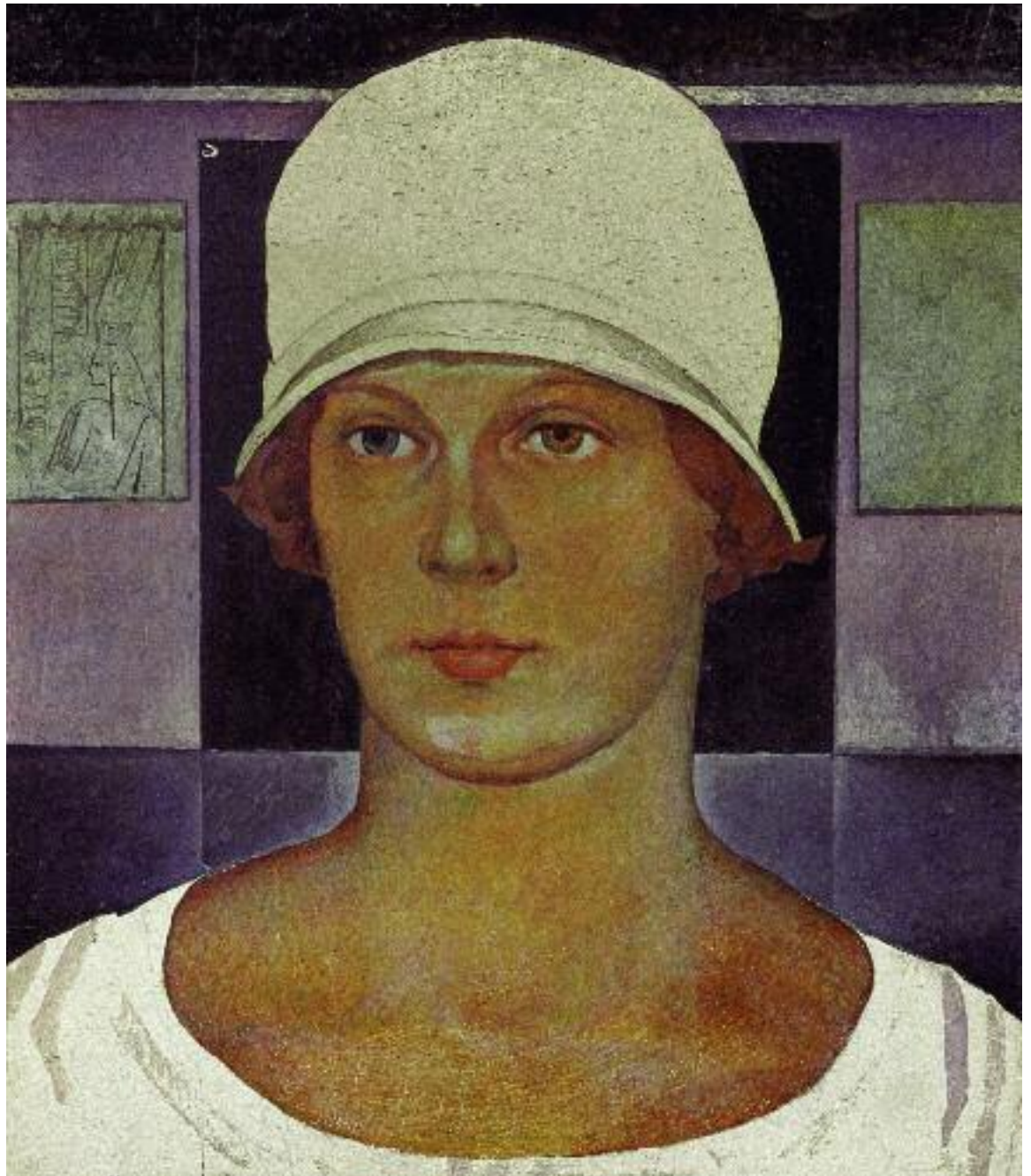
Maria Lomakina

Boy in Fur Cap. 1928

Oil on canvas. 60.5 x 50

Private collection,

St Petersburg



Nikolai Ionin

Portrait of Ekaterina Ionina. 1920s

Oil and gesso on board. 36 x 31

Russian Museum

Maria Lomakina

Portrait of Irina Bolgovskaya

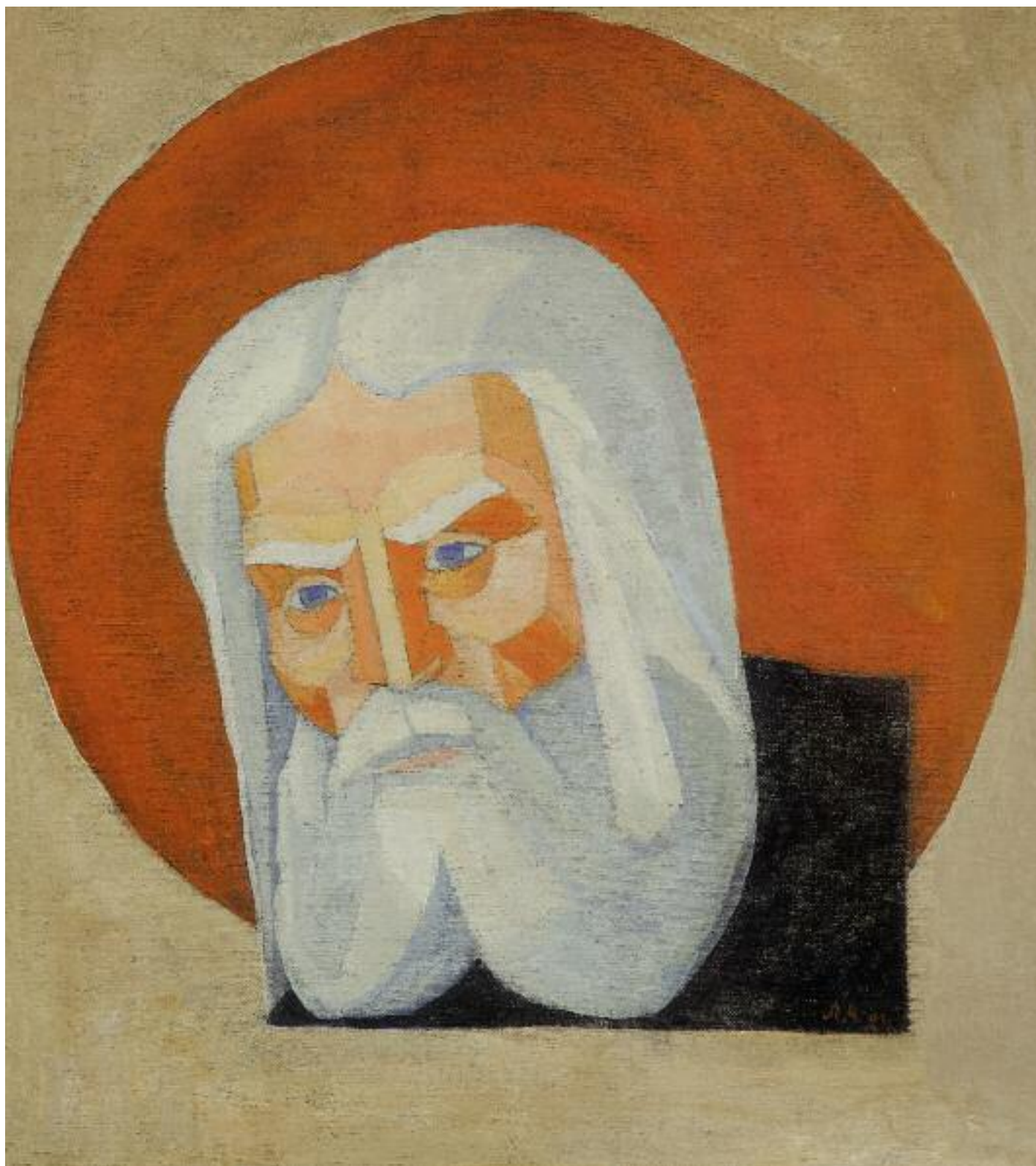
Between 1923 and 1927

On the reverse side: Male Portrait. 1920s

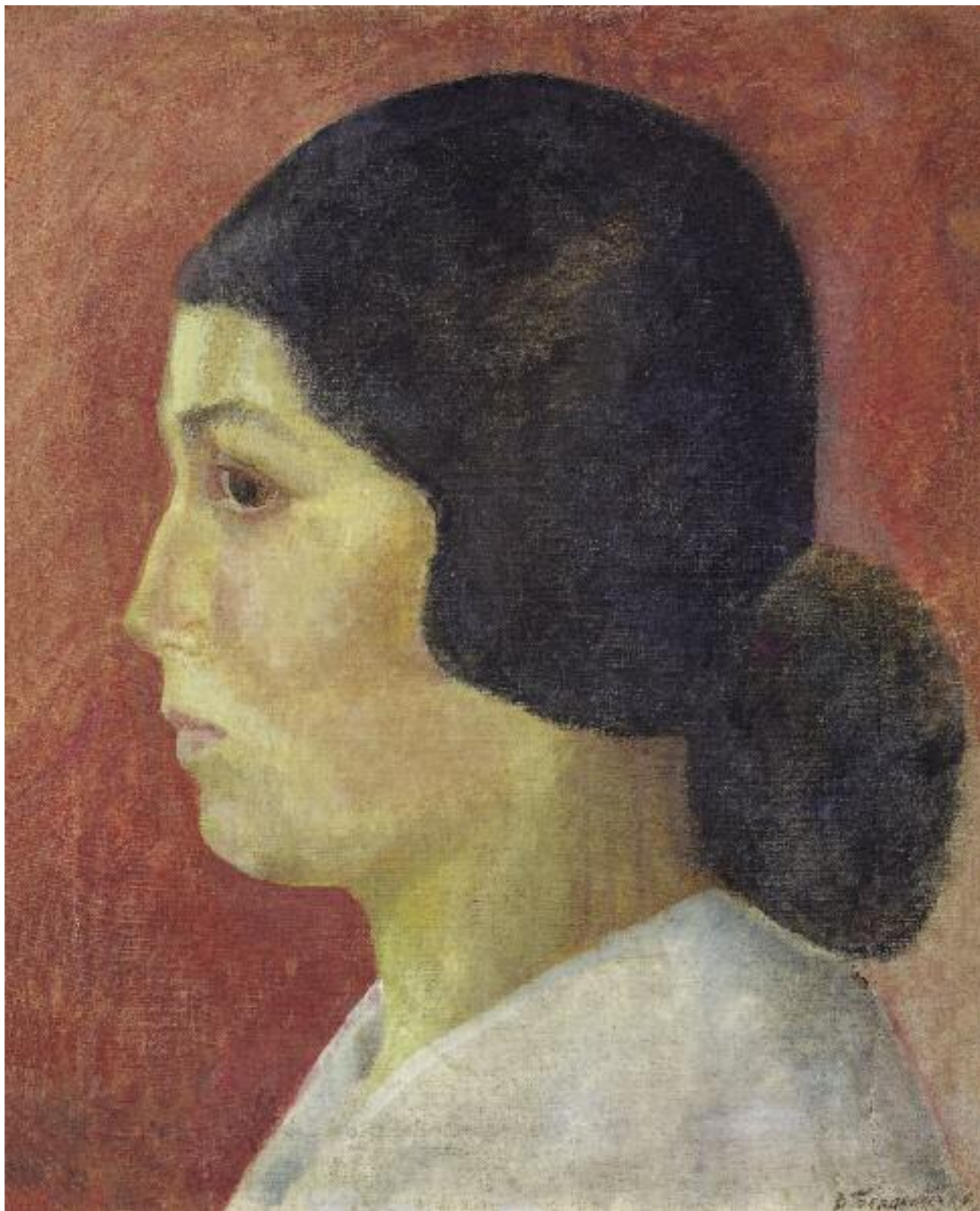
Oil on canvas. 62 x 41.5

Russian Museum



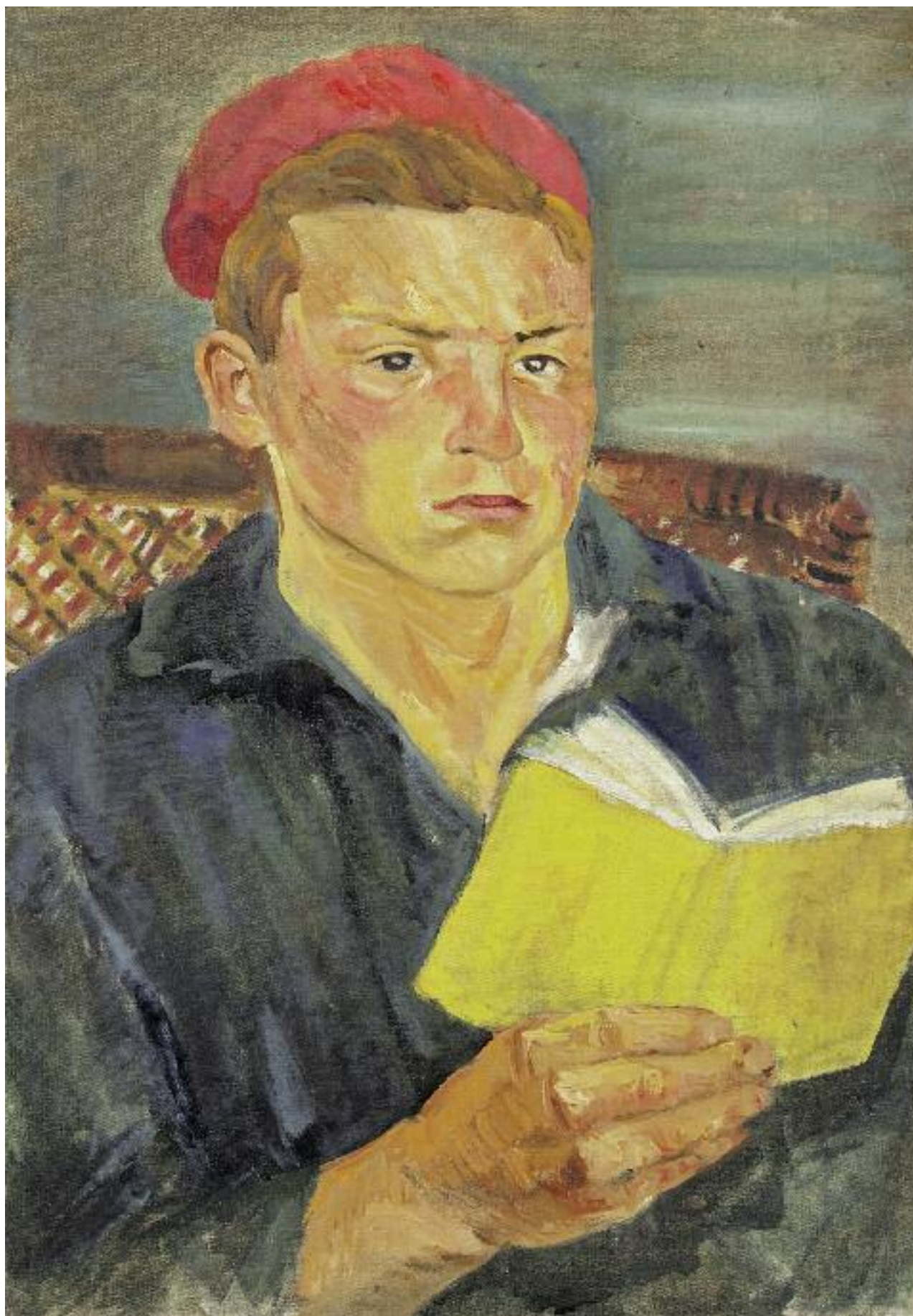


Leonid Chupyatov
St Seraphim of Sarov. 1924
Oil on canvas. 30 x 30
Collection of Vladimir Tsarenkov



Victoria Belakovskaya

Self-Portrait. 1930
Oil on canvas. 66.5 x 54.5
Russian Museum

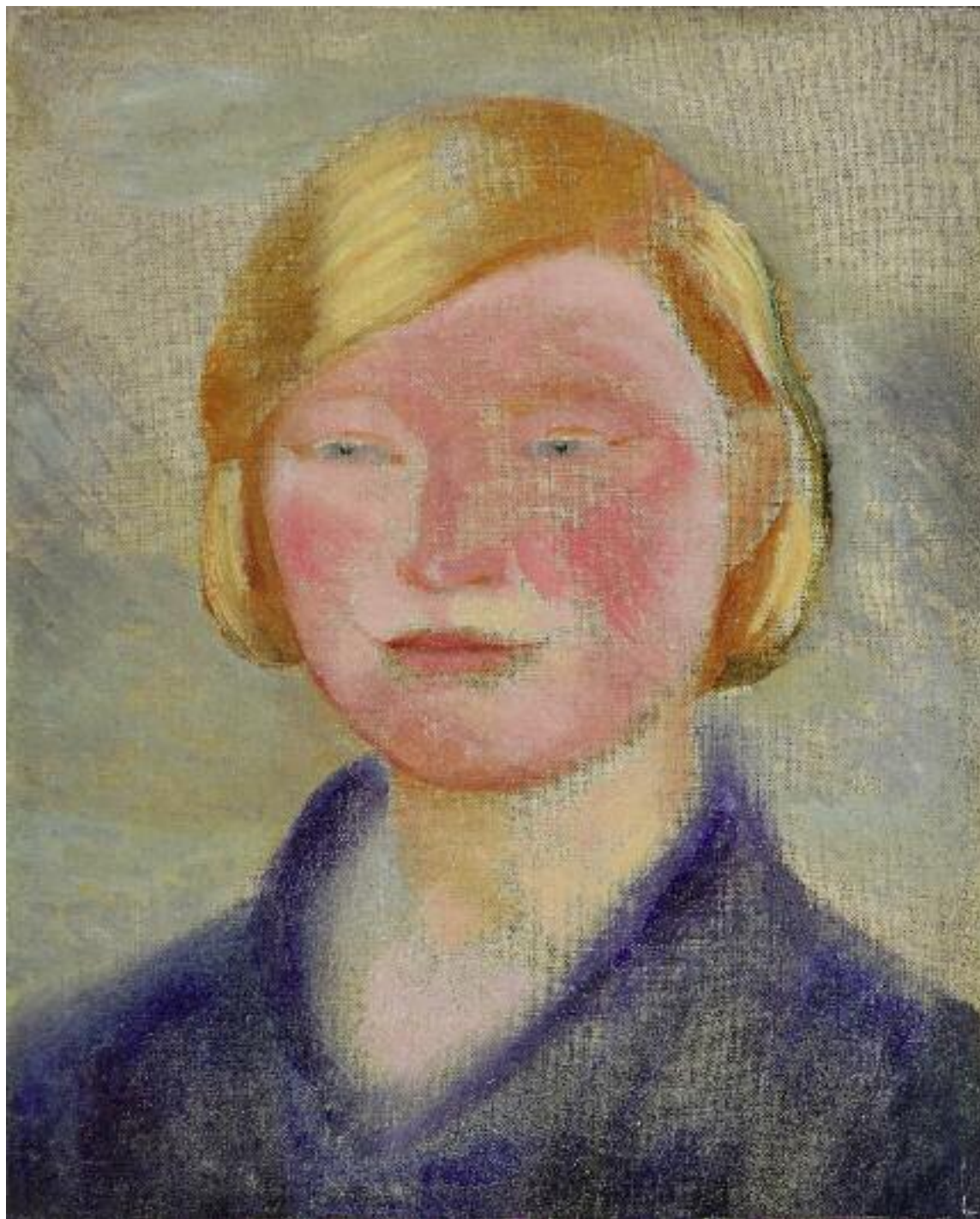


Lev Britanishsky

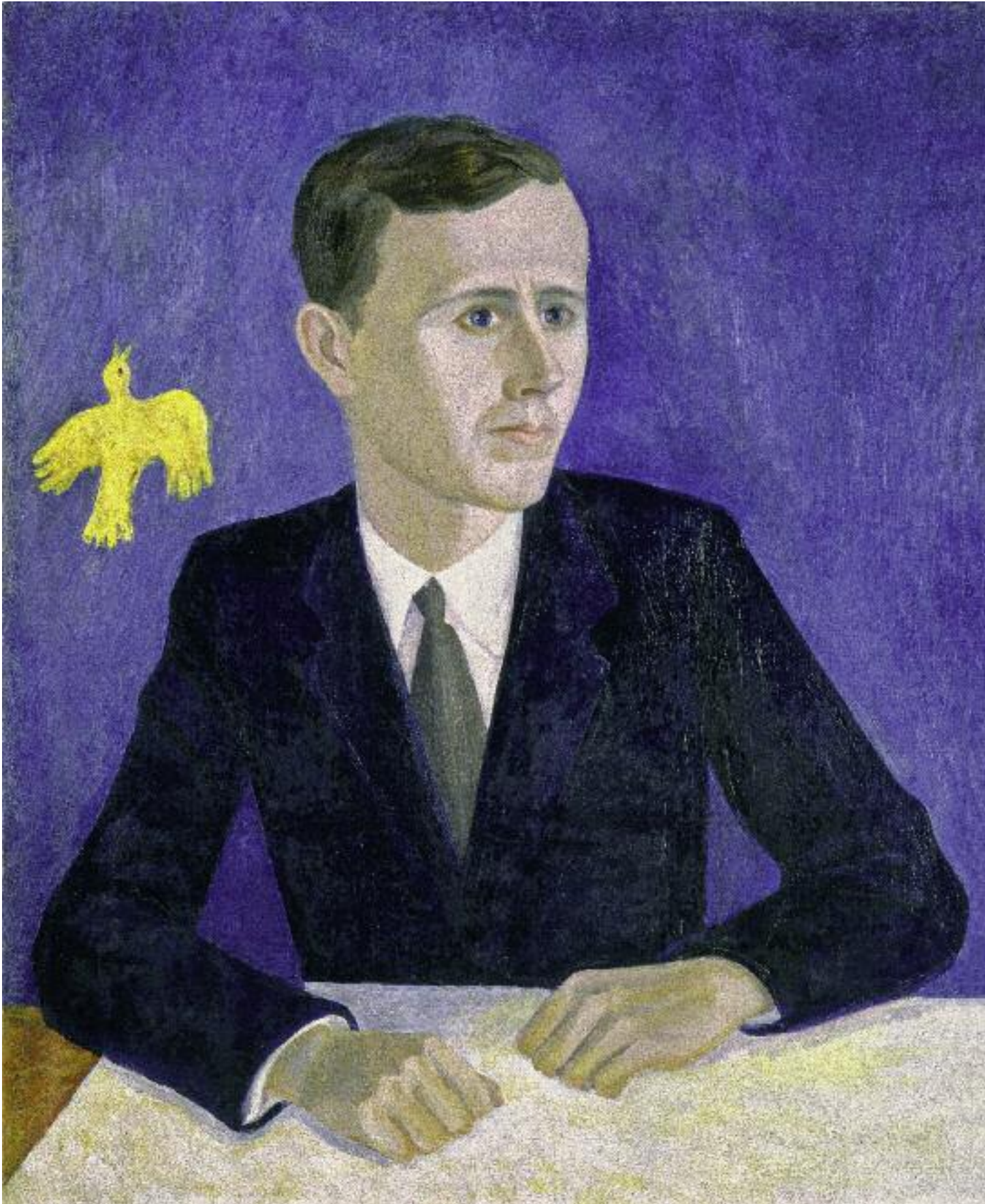
Reader. 1929

Oil on canvas. 64 x 44

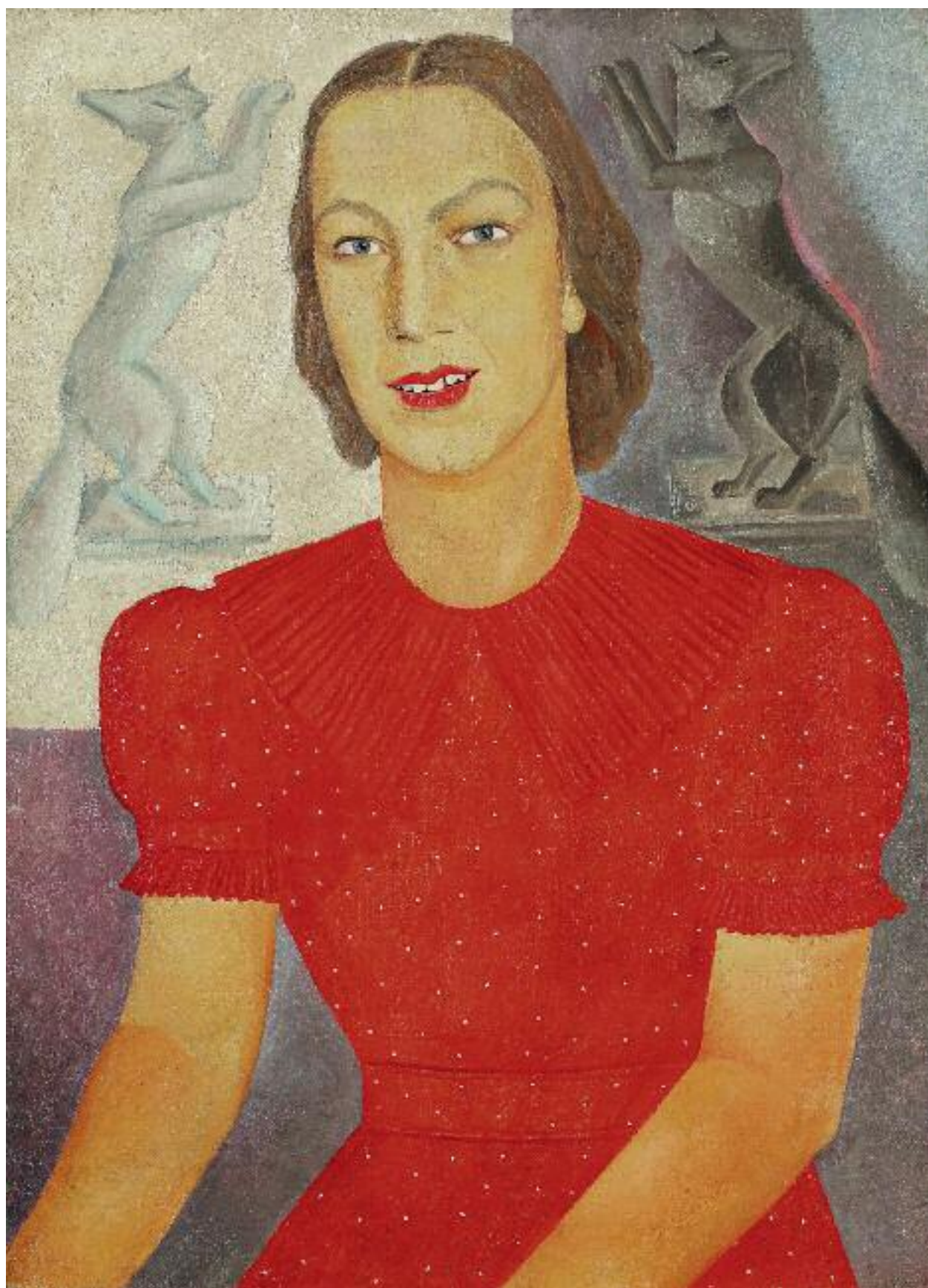
Russian Museum



Alexandra Yakobson
Girl in Blue Blouse. 1931
Oil on canvas. 42 x 32
Collection of Natalia and Igor Denisov,
Moscow



Alisa Poret
Boba Mikhailov
(Portrait of Boris Mikhailov). 1939
Oil on canvas. 73.1 x 60
Russian Museum

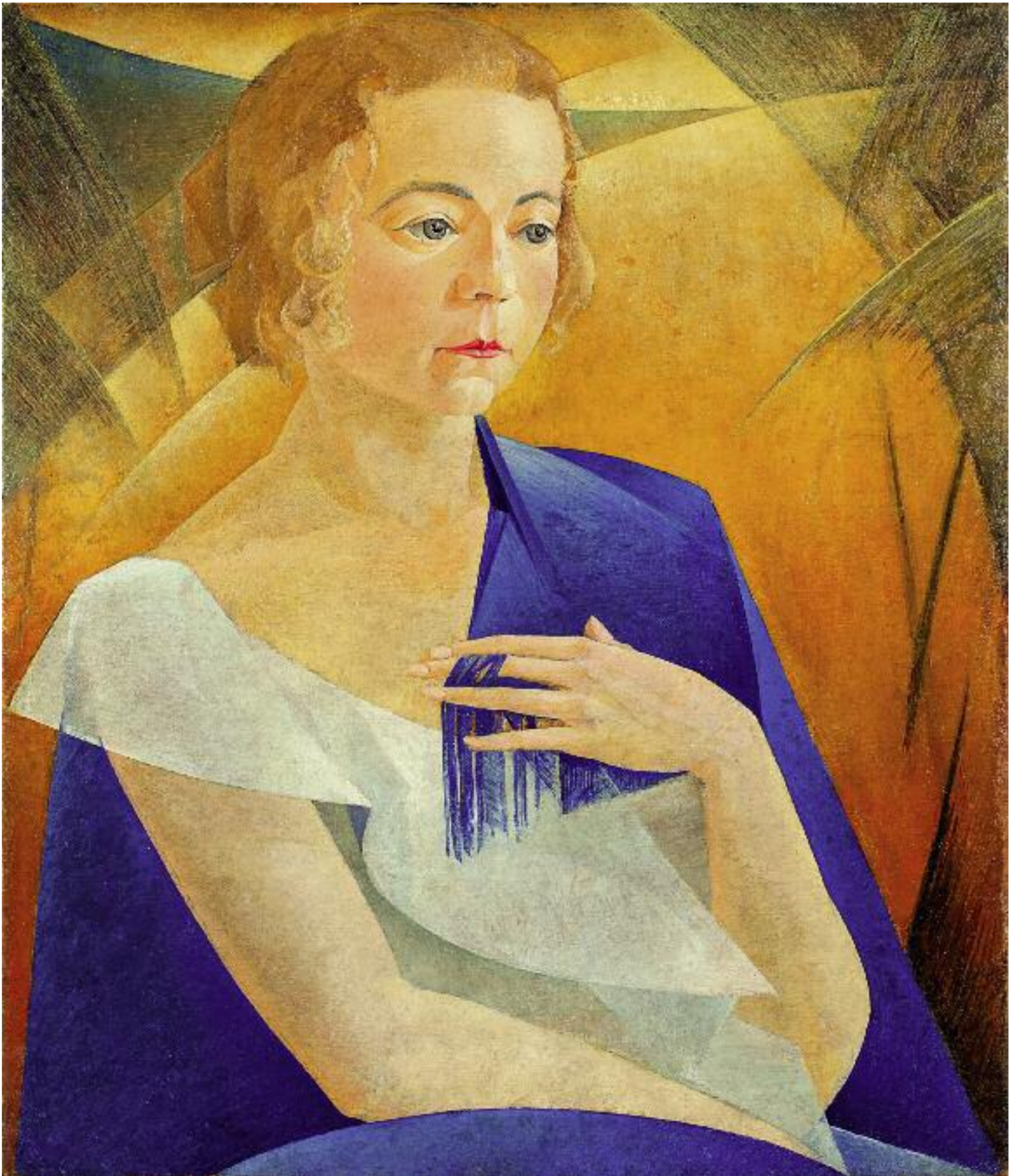


Alisa Poret

Self-Portrait. 1920s

Oil on canvas. 67.5 x 49.5

Collection of Evgeny Malov,
St Petersburg



Leonid Chupyatov

Portrait of Ksenia (Ksenia Chupyatova)

Second half of the 1920s

Oil on canvas. 53.5 x 44.7

Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov,
St Petersburg



Leonid Chupyatov

Portrait of E. F. Yushchenko. 1923

Mixed media on canvas mounted on wood. 35.7 x 26

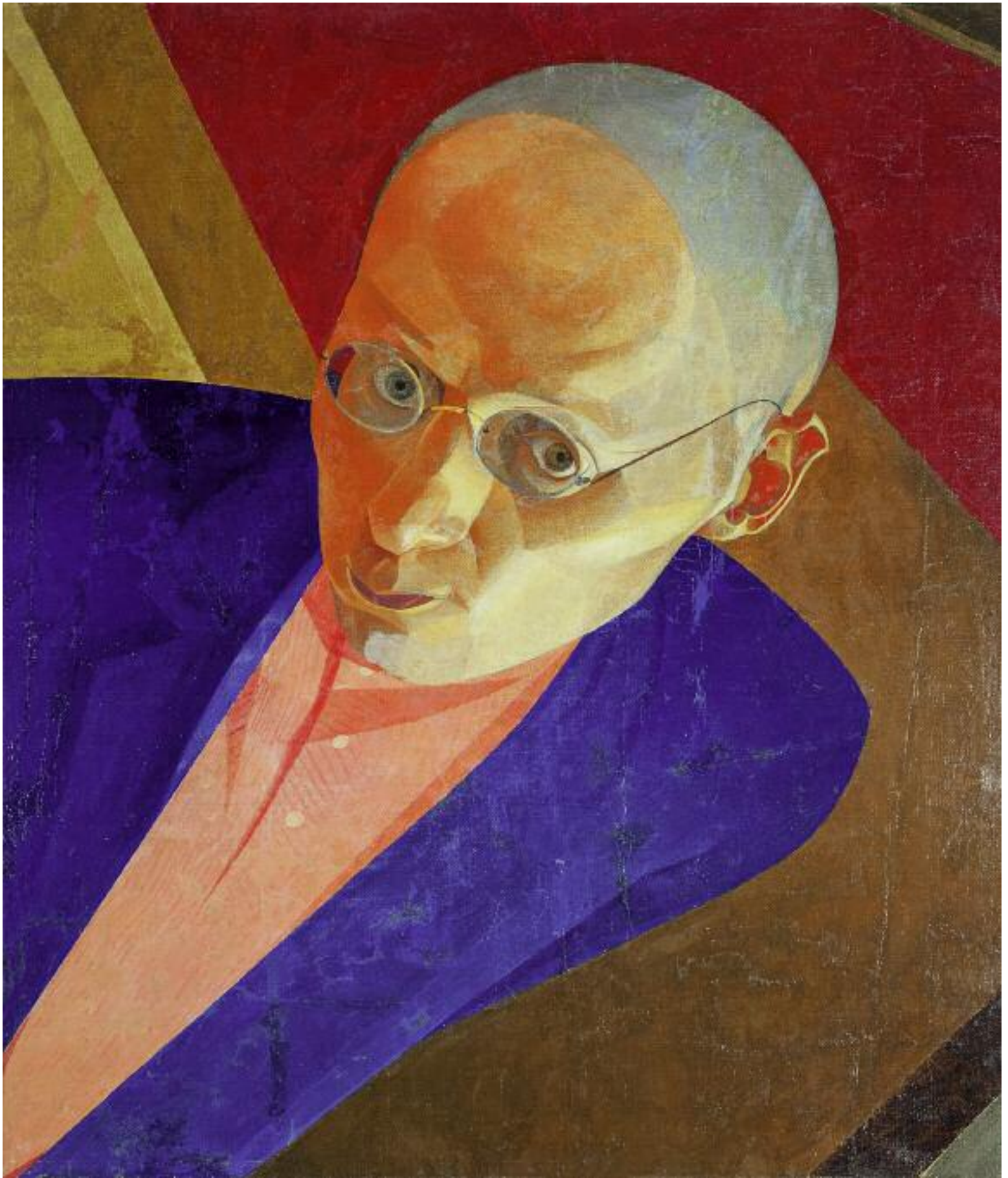
Collection of Pyotr Aven, Moscow

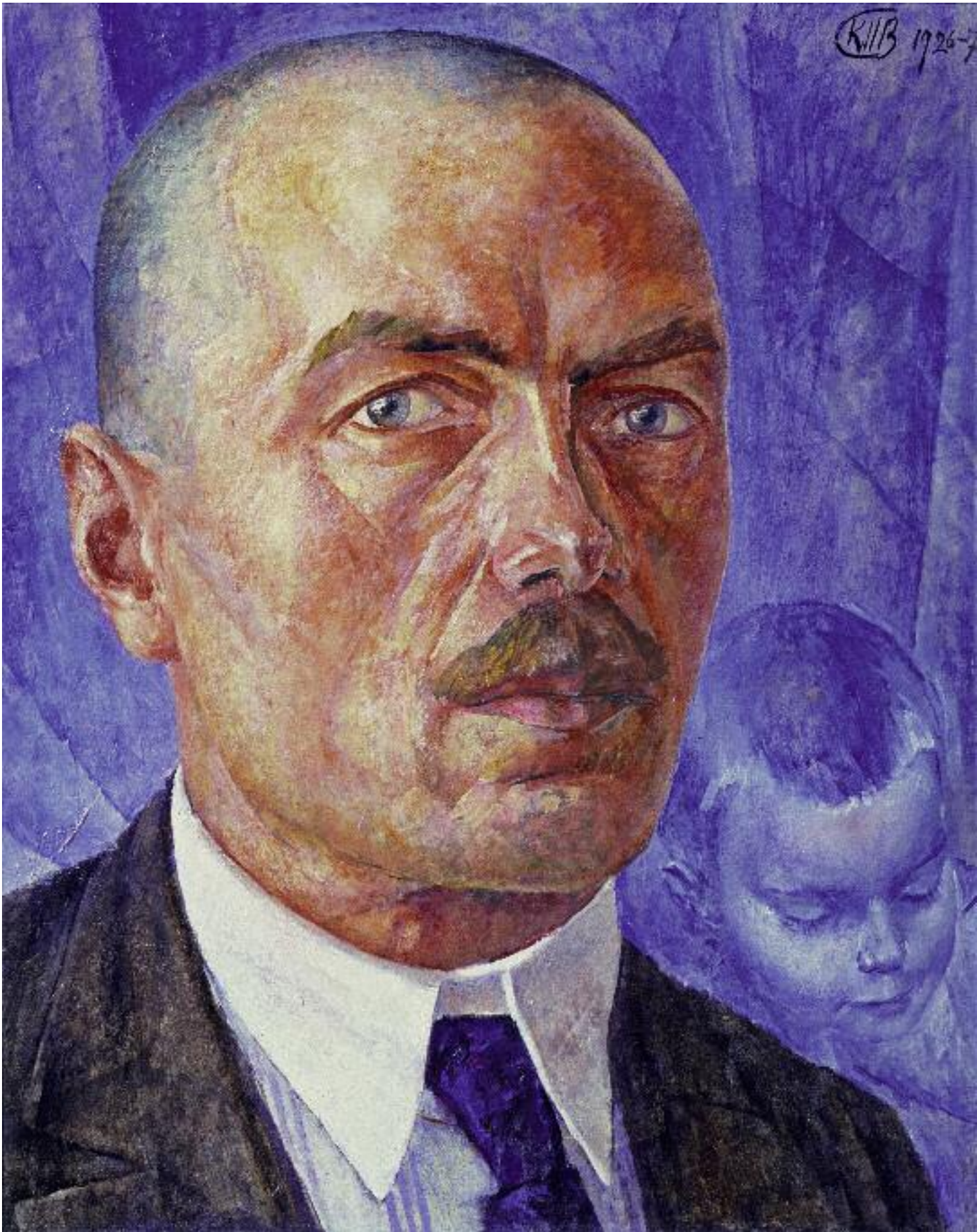
Leonid Chupyatov

Self-Portrait. 1925 (?)

Oil on canvas. 71.7 x 60.5

Collection of the Paleev family,
St Petersburg



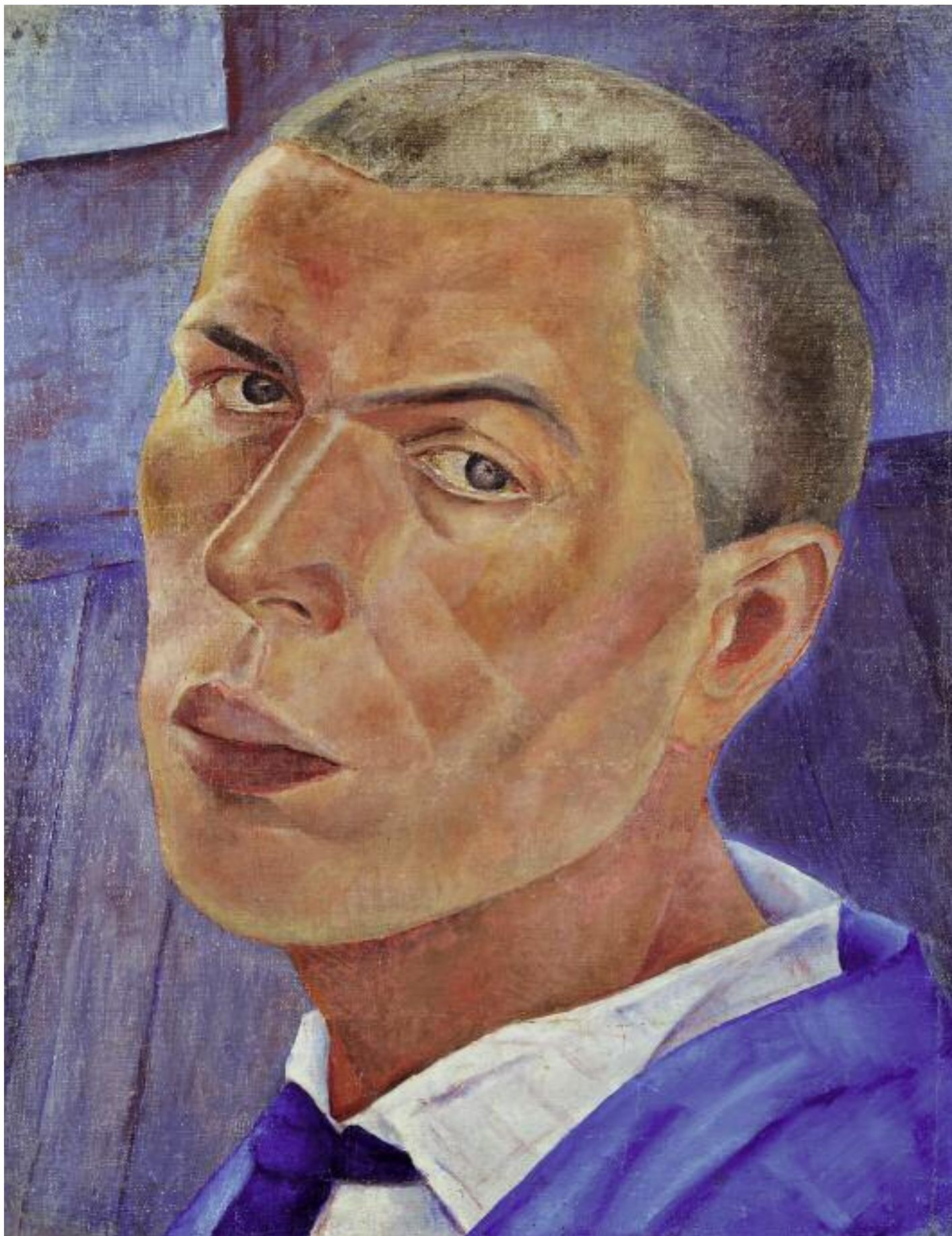


Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Self-Portrait. 1926–1927

Oil on canvas. 80.5 x 65

Russian Museum



Pyotr Sokolov
Self-Portrait. 1920s
Oil on canvas. 68 x 56
Russian Museum



Unknown Artist

Head of a Girl
in Red Kerchief. 1920s
Oil on canvas. 67.5 x 57.5
Russian Museum



Unknown Artist

Head of a Girl
in Red Kerchief. 1920s

Oil on canvas. 75 x 66

Russian Museum

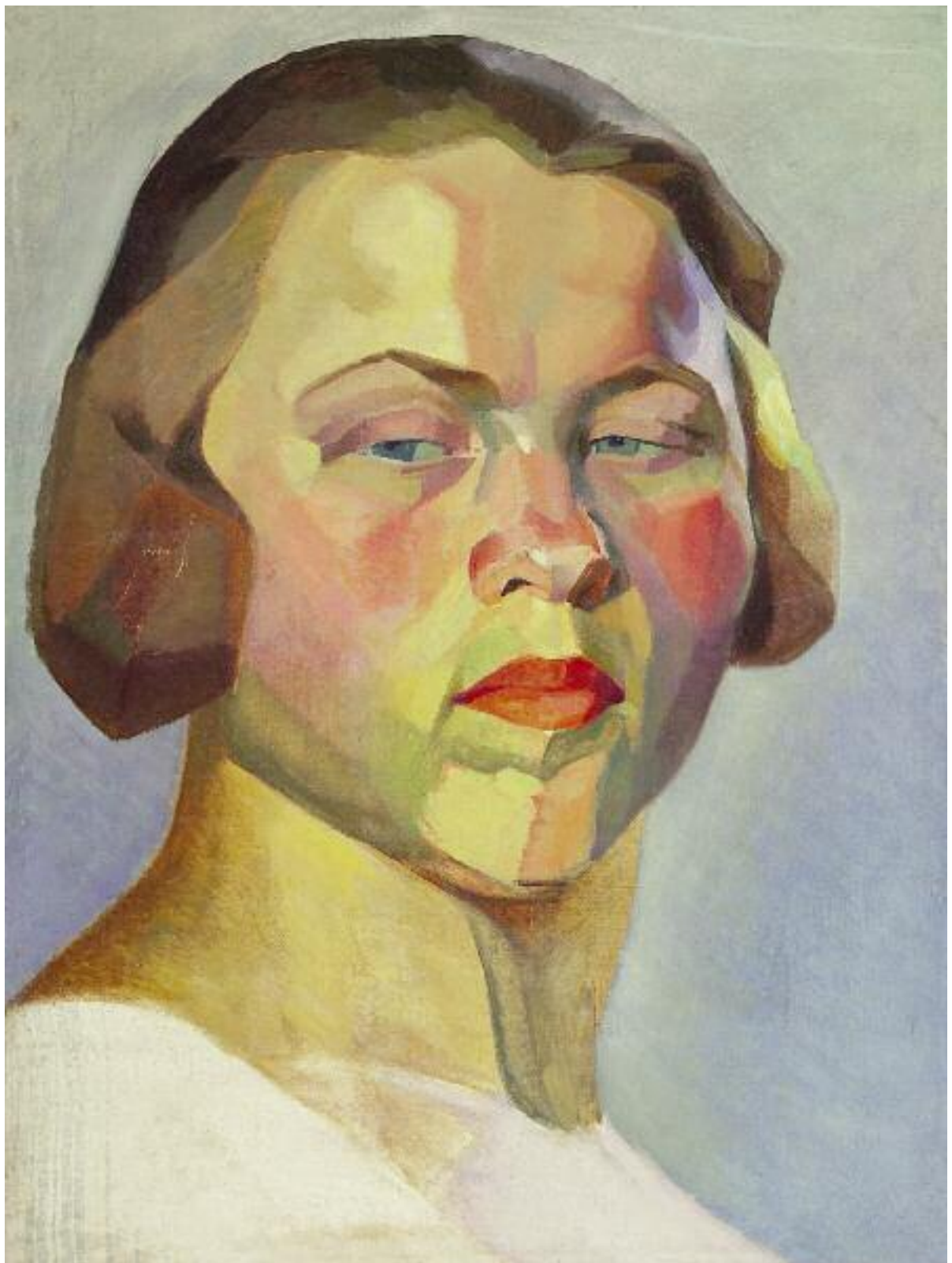


Israel Lizak

Study of head
for the painting *Man on a Pedestal*
(*Invalid of the Imperialist War*). 1924

Oil on canvas. 80 x 62

Russian Museum



Alexei Zernov

Portrait of Artist's Model. 1926

Oil on canvas. 71 x 52

On the reverse side: Accident. 1937

Private collection,

St Petersburg

Viktor Proshkin

Self-Portrait in Green Hat. 1928

Oil on canvas. 50 x 45

Private collection,

St Petersburg





Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya

Artist's Model with Green Carafe. 1923

Oil on canvas. 110 x 79

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya

Mimosa Seller. 1933

Oil on canvas. 103.5 x 66

Collection of Timur Khairutdinov, Moscow

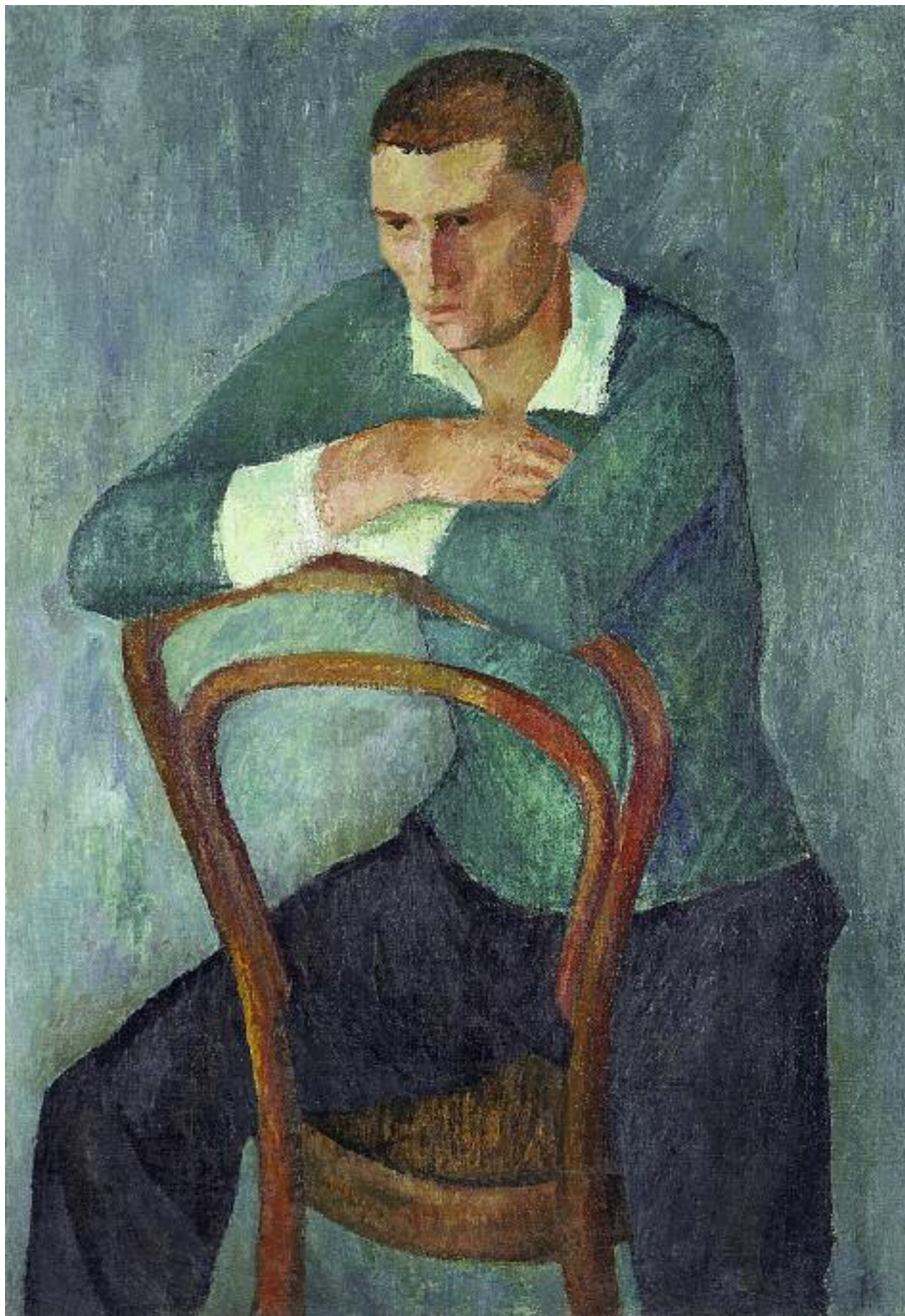


Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya

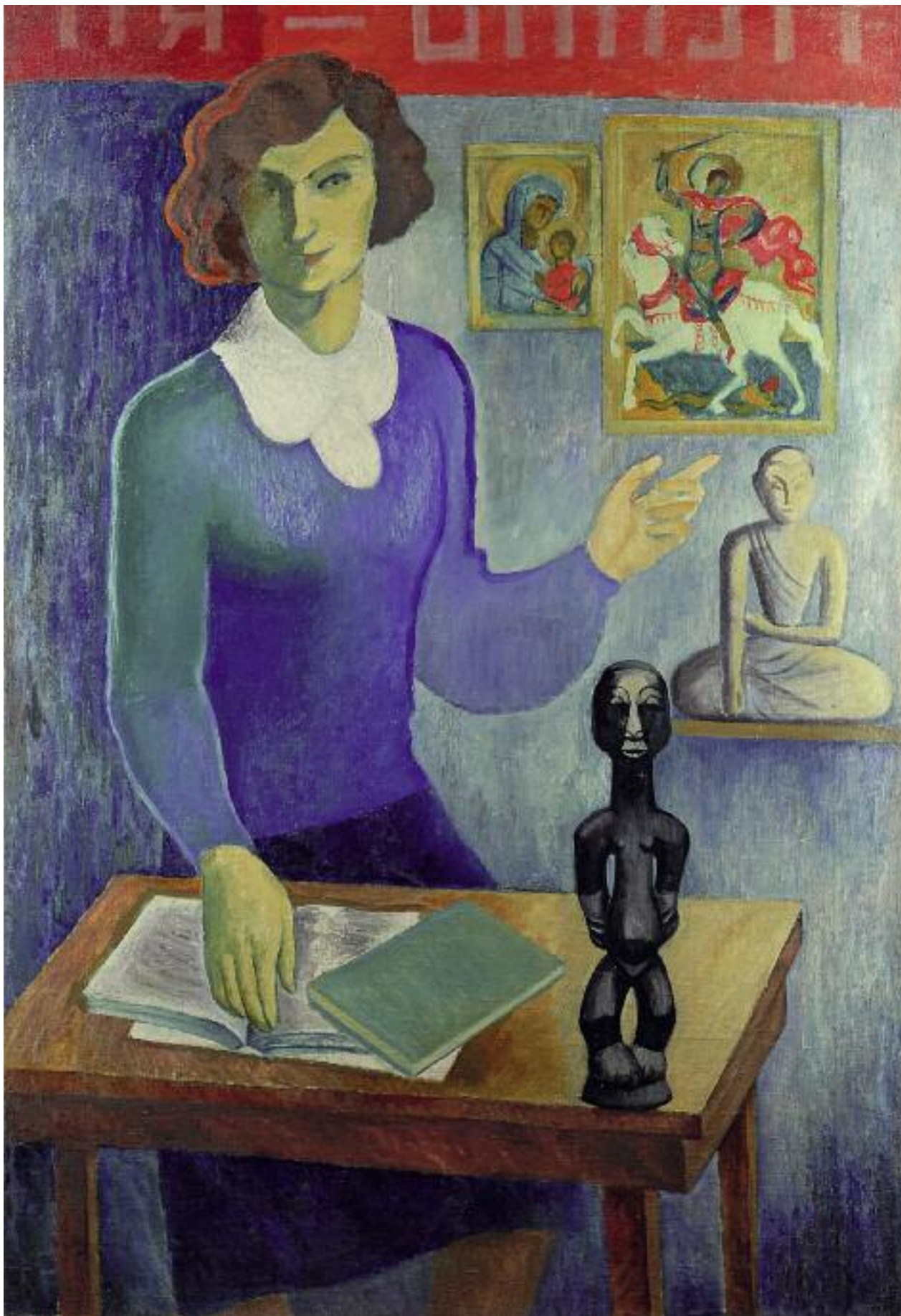
Portrait of the Artist's Sister. 1929

Oil on canvas. 100 x 72

Collection of Alexander Kuznetsov
and Pavel Melyakov, St Petersburg



Tatyana Kuperwasser
Portrait of Worker A. N. Salnikov
Late 1920s
Oil on canvas. 106 x 73
Private collection,
St Petersburg



Tatyana Kuperwasser

Religion Is the Opiate of the Masses

Late 1920s

Oil on canvas. 124.5 x 84

Collection of Roman Babichev, Moscow



Tatyana Kuperwasser

Portrait of E. M. Uflyand. Between 1931 and 1933

Oil on canvas. 73 x 62

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Tatyana Kuperwasser

Street. 1925–1926

Oil on canvas. 90 x 68

Collection of Roman Babichev, Moscow



Tatyana Kuperwasser

Friends. Late 1920s

Oil on canvas. 80.5 x 59.5

Collection of Alexander Kuznetsov
and Pavel Melyakov, St Petersburg



Boris Pestinsky
Portrait of Slava Kirichenko
Between 1923 and 1925
Oil on plywood. 97.5 x 70.5
Russian Museum

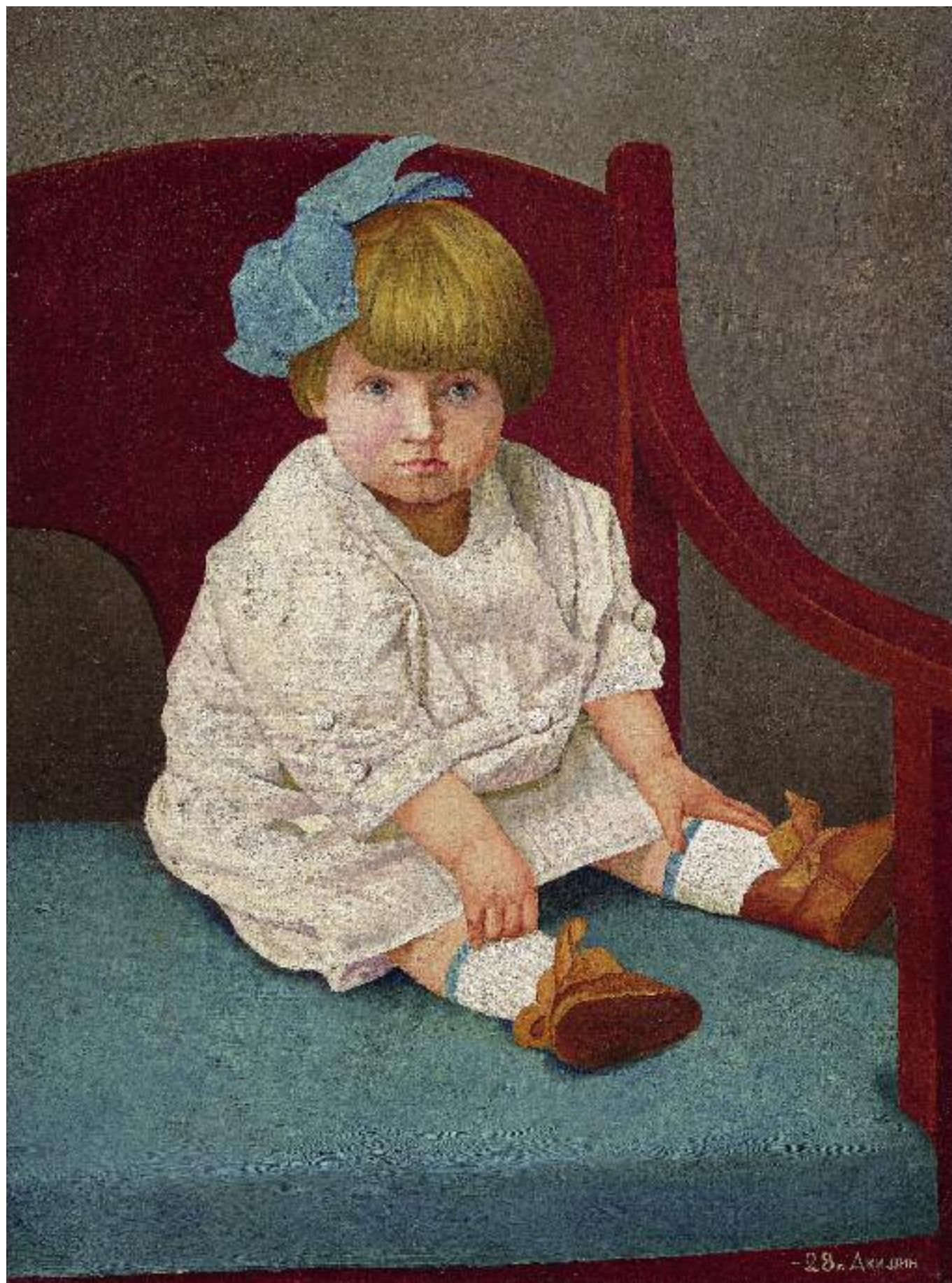


Boris Pestinsky

Portrait of the Composer Moór
in His Youth. 1924–1925

Oil on wood. 44 x 35

Collection of Alexander Kuznetsov
and Pavel Melyakov, St Petersburg



Pyotr Akishin
Portrait of a Girl. 1928
Oil on canvas. 89.4 x 67
Private collection, St Petersburg



Ekaterina Petrova-Trotskaya

Child with Orange. 1927–1928 (?)

Oil on canvas. 141 x 100

Russian Museum

Ekaterina Petrova-Trotskaya

Study for a Portrait. 1930s

Oil on canvas. 106.8 x 68

Museum of the History of St Petersburg





Evgenia Evenbach (?)

Female Portrait. Late 1910s

Oil on canvas. 90.5 x 69

Private collection, St Petersburg



Unknown Artist

Woman in Blue Before a Plant
(Portrait of Evgenia Evenbach ?). Second half of the 1920s
Oil on canvas. 112 x 82
Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov, St Petersburg



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin
Earthquake in Crimea. 1927–1928
Oil on canvas. 96 x 107
Russian Museum

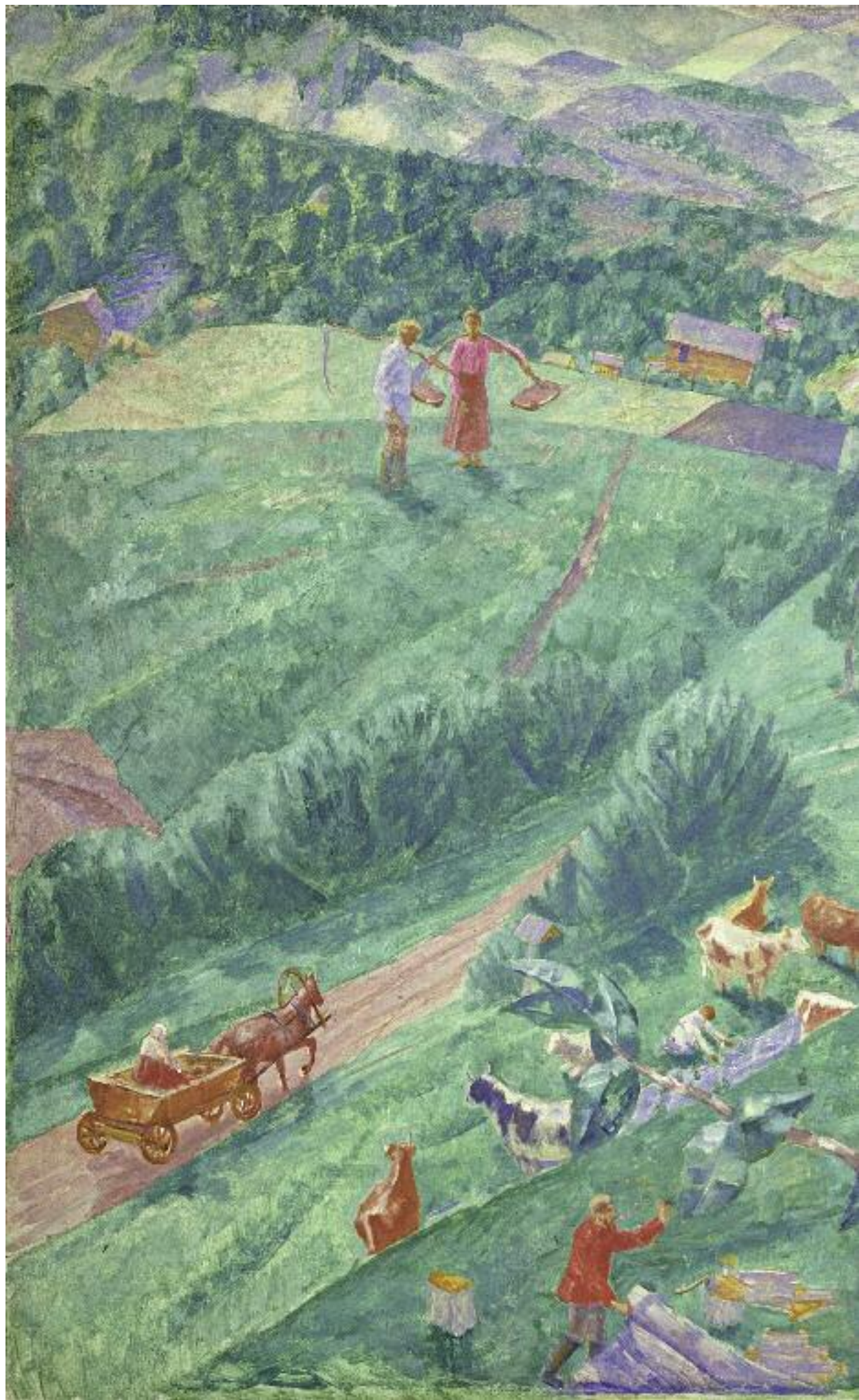


Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

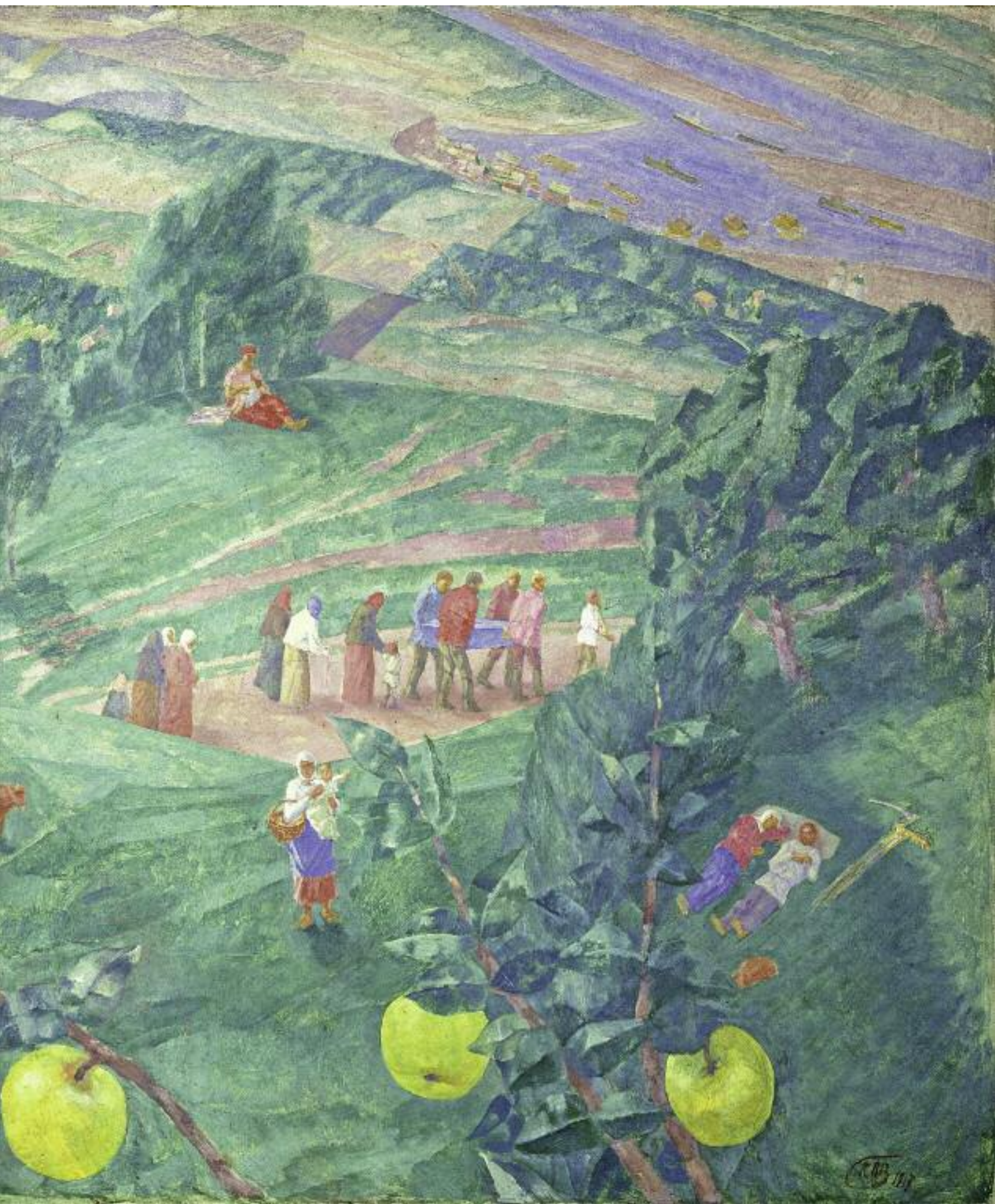
First Steps. 1925

Oil on canvas. 82 x 65

Russian Museum



Kuzma
Petrov-Vodkin
Midday. Summer. 1917
Oil on canvas. 89 x 128.5
Russian Museum





Evgenia Evenbach

Students. 1922

Oil on canvas. 160 x 132

Russian Museum

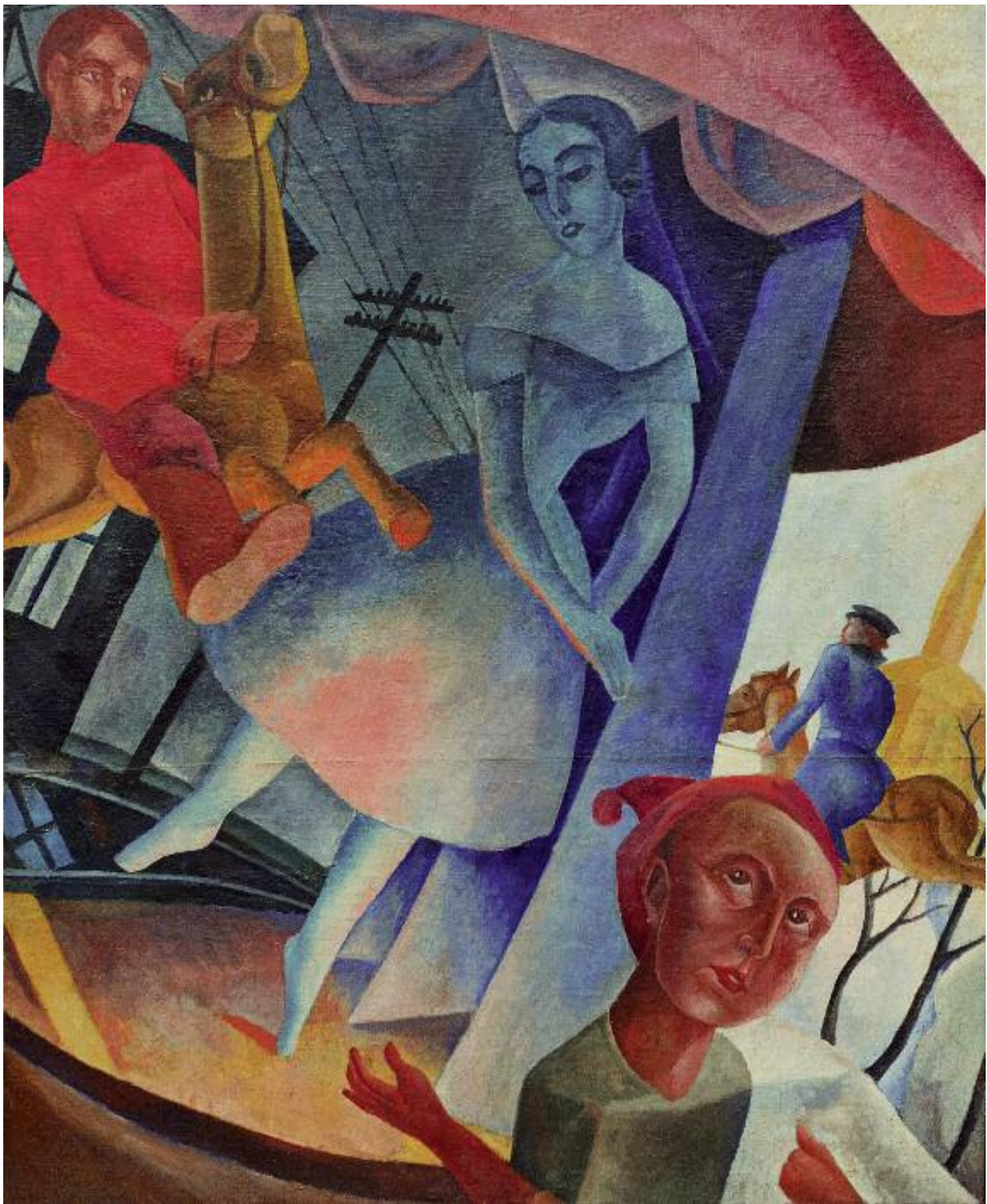


Alexander Samokhvalov

Head Washing, 1923

Oil and tempera on canvas, 132 x 97

Russian Museum

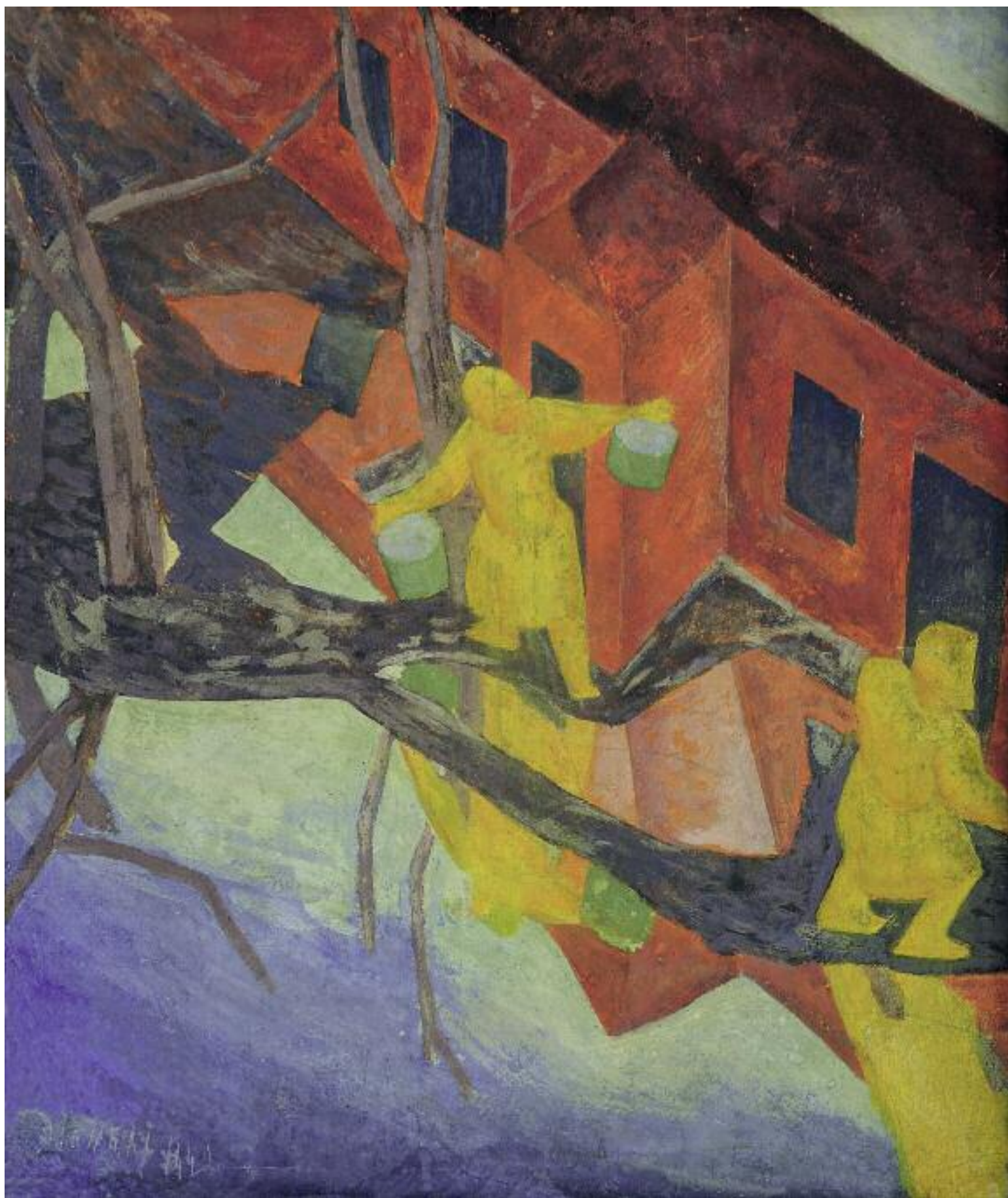


Vladimir Dmitriev

Circus. Early 1920s

Oil on canvas. 151 x 131

Moscow Museum of Modern Art



Evgenia Evenbach

From a University Window. 1921

Tempera on cardboard. 56 x 46.5

Russian Museum



Elena Aladzhalova

1 May Holiday. 1920s

Oil on canvas. 252 x 378

Scientific and Research Museum,
Russian Academy of Arts



Viktor Proshkin
Harvesting Grain. 1929
Oil on canvas. 66 x 80
Collection of Roman Babichev, Moscow



Israel Lizak

Ardour. Panel. 1925
From the *Street of a Capitalist*
City series. 1923–1930
Oil on canvas. 99 x 212
Russian Museum



Israel Lizak
Composition (Stones). 1930
Oil on canvas. 151 x 138
Russian Museum

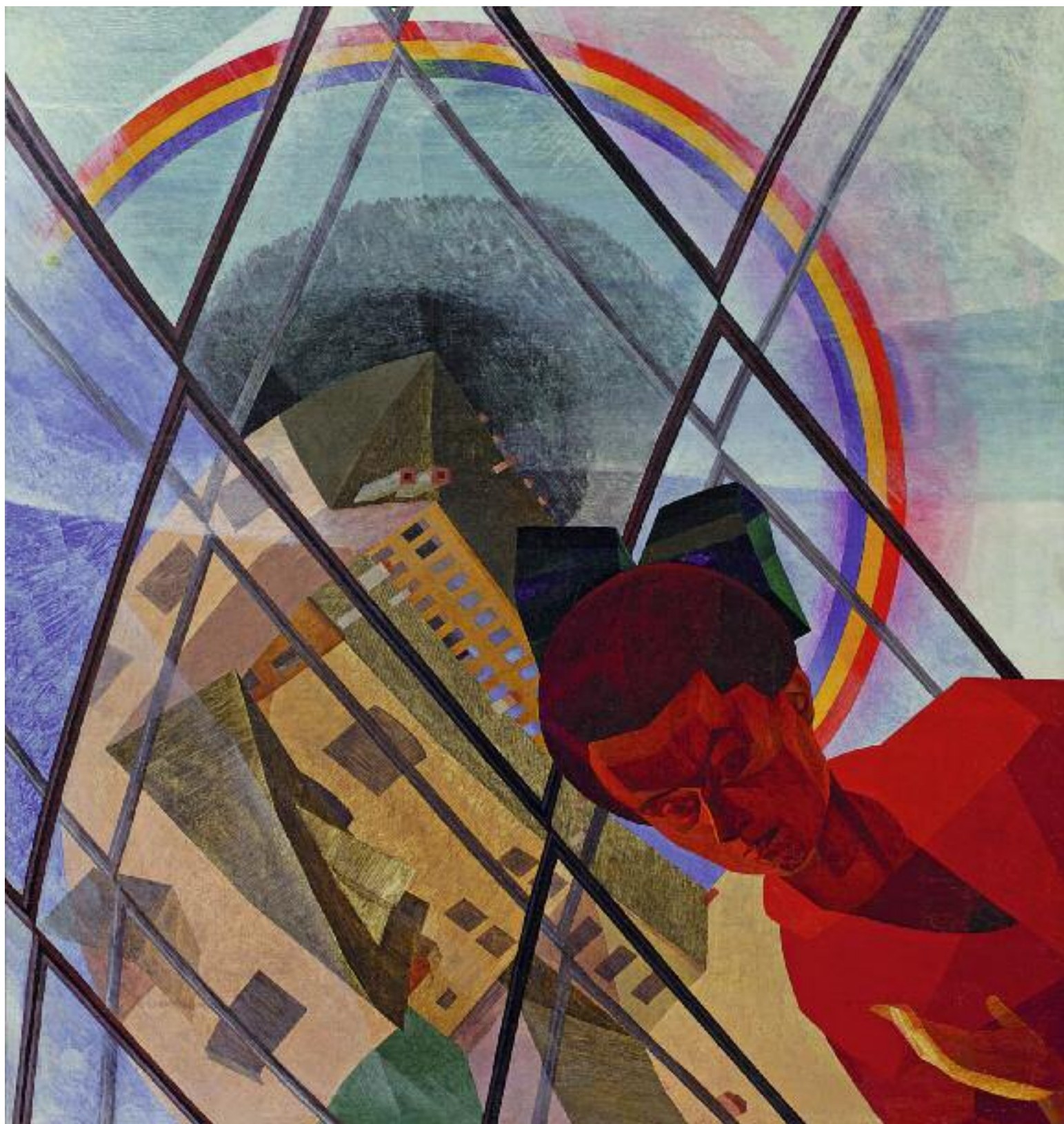


Leonid Chupyatov

Dyer. 1925

Oil on canvas. 152 x 93

Museum of the History of St Petersburg



Leonid Chupyatov
Composition with Red Figure. 1923
Oil on canvas. 132.5 x 124.5
Private collection, St Petersburg

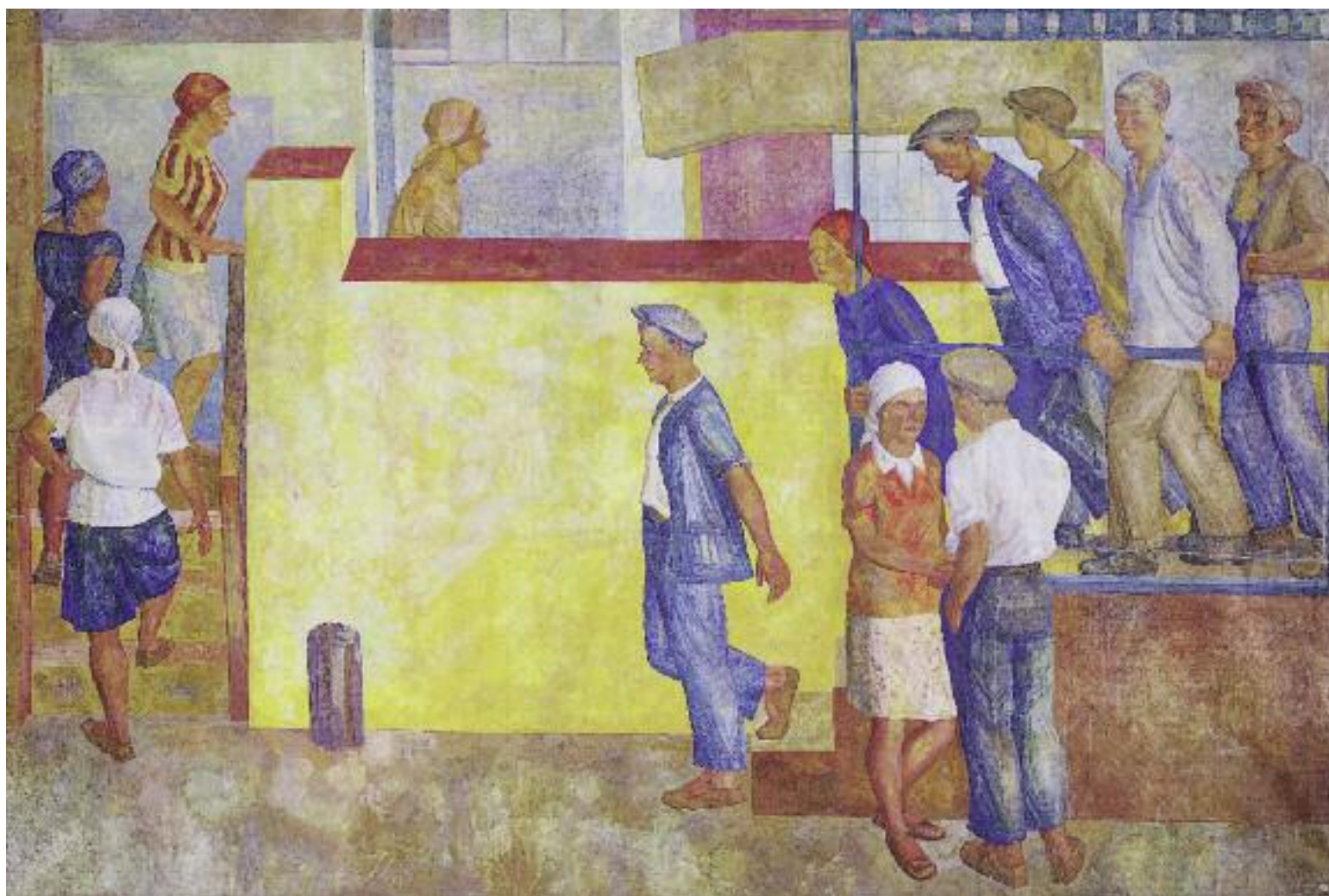


Pavel Ab

Textiles. Panel. 1929

Size paint on canvas. 257 x 380

Russian Museum



Ivan Tarnyagin

Going to Work. Panel. 1929

Size paint on canvas. 253 x 376

Russian Museum



Maria Lomakina

Speedy Harvest of Last Tobacco Plants

Study. 1931

Oil on canvas. 93.5 x 127.5

Russian Museum



Mikhail Noskov

Crimean Landscape. 1933

On the reverse side: Still Life with Green Bottle. Early 1920s

Oil on canvas. 50 x 70

Private collection,
St Petersburg

Alexei Pakhomov

Archers. 1929–1930

Oil on canvas. 107 x 62.5

Russian Museum



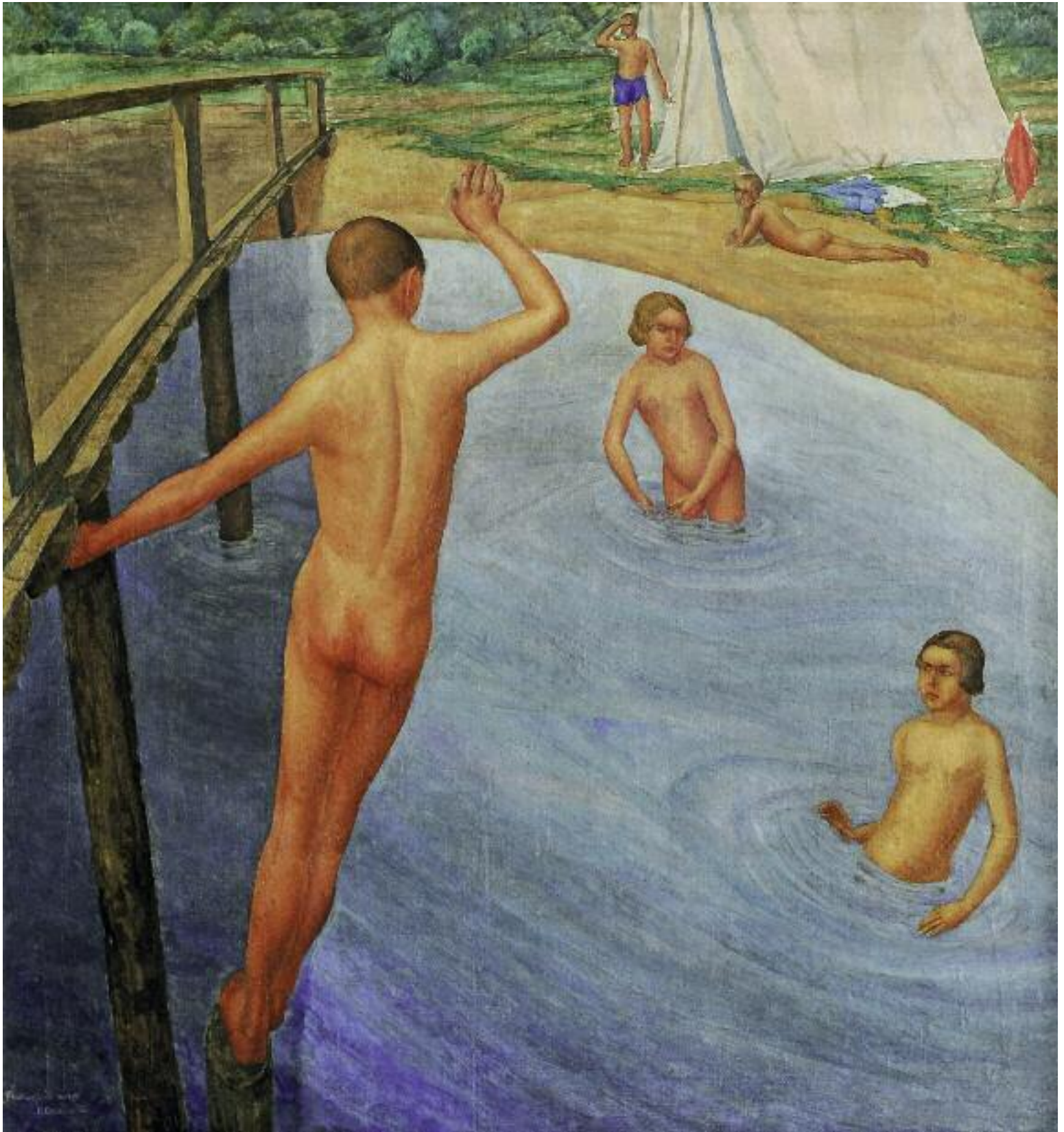


Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya

Boys on Gangway. 1931

Oil on canvas. 147 x 87

Collection of Alexander Kuznetsov
and Pavel Melyakov, St Petersburg

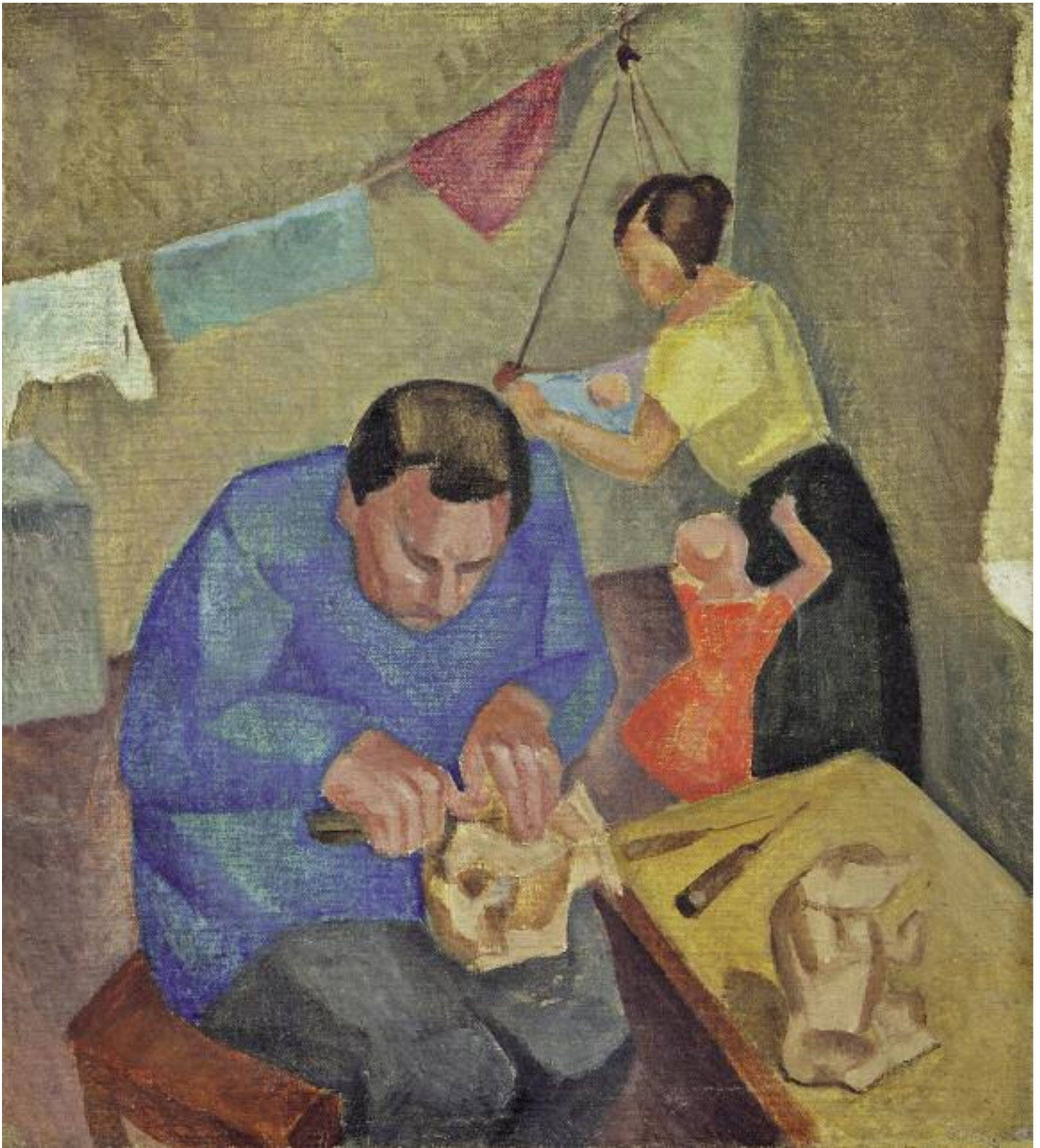


Nikolai Sekirin

Pioneer Camp. Bathing. 1927

Oil on canvas. 104 x 96

Scientific and Research Museum,
Russian Academy of Arts



Maria Lomakina

Family of a Whittler

Between 1929 and 1931

Oil on canvas. 63.5 x 58

Russian Museum



Evgenia Blagoveshchenskaya

Street (Diploma Work). 1925

Oil on canvas. 158 x 141

Scientific and Research Museum,
Russian Academy of Arts

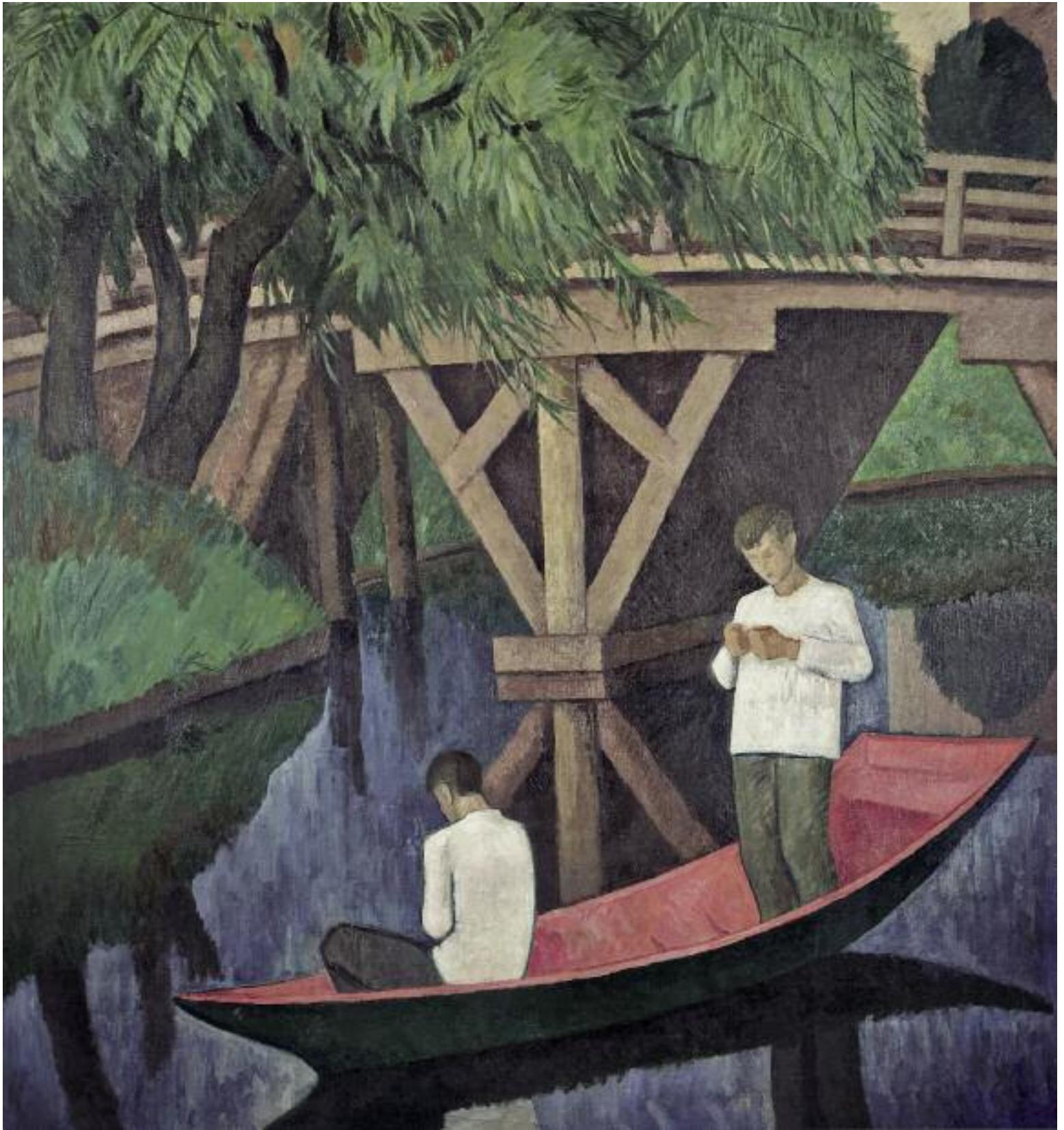


Alexei Zernov

Artist's Model in the Studio. 1926

Oil on canvas. 107 x 147

Private collection,
St Petersburg



Tatyana Kuperwasser

In the Boat. 1929

Oil on canvas. 156 x 144

Russian Museum

Alexei Zernov

Accident. 1937

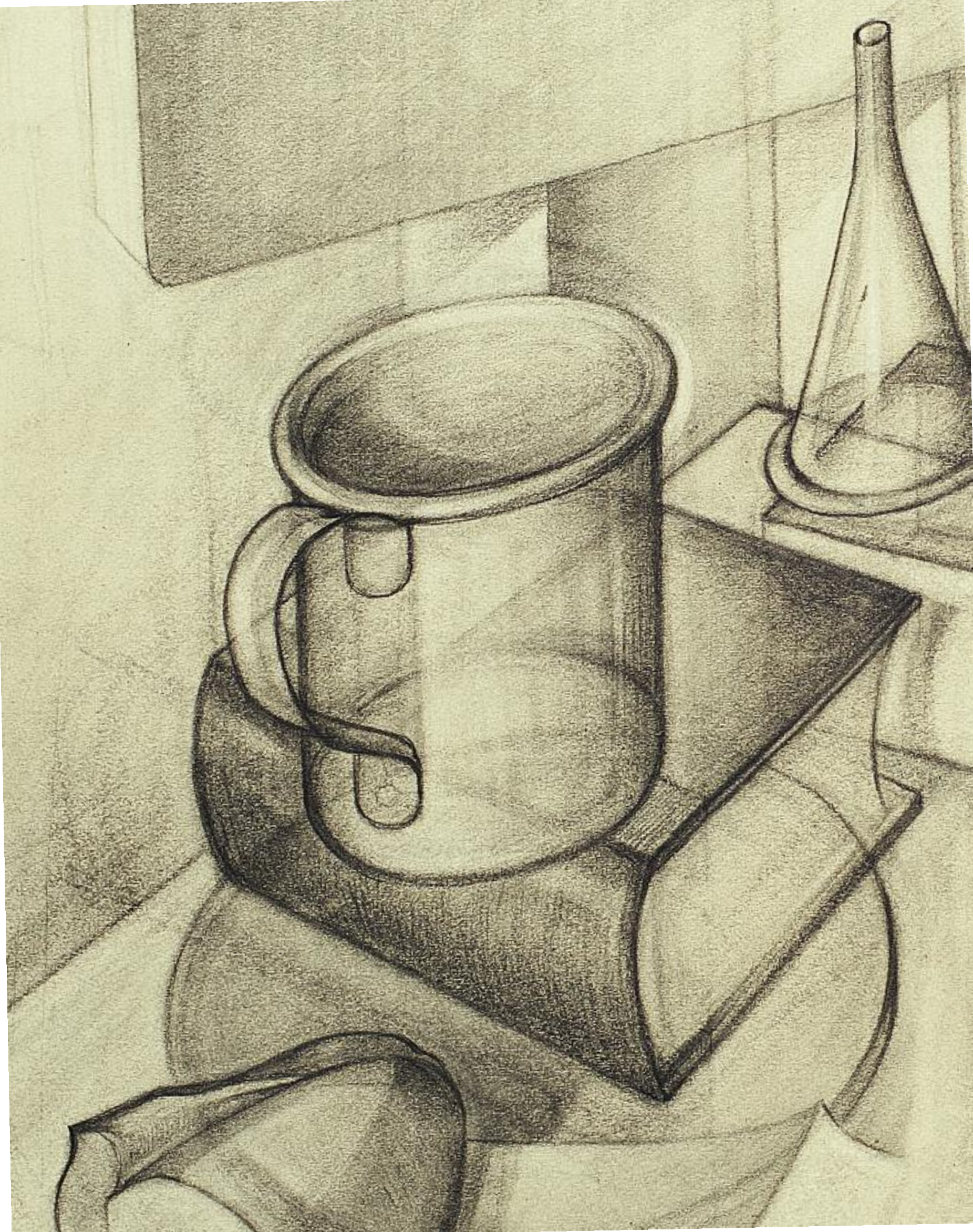
On the reverse side: Portrait of Artist's Model. 1926

Oil on canvas. 71 x 52

Private collection,

St Petersburg

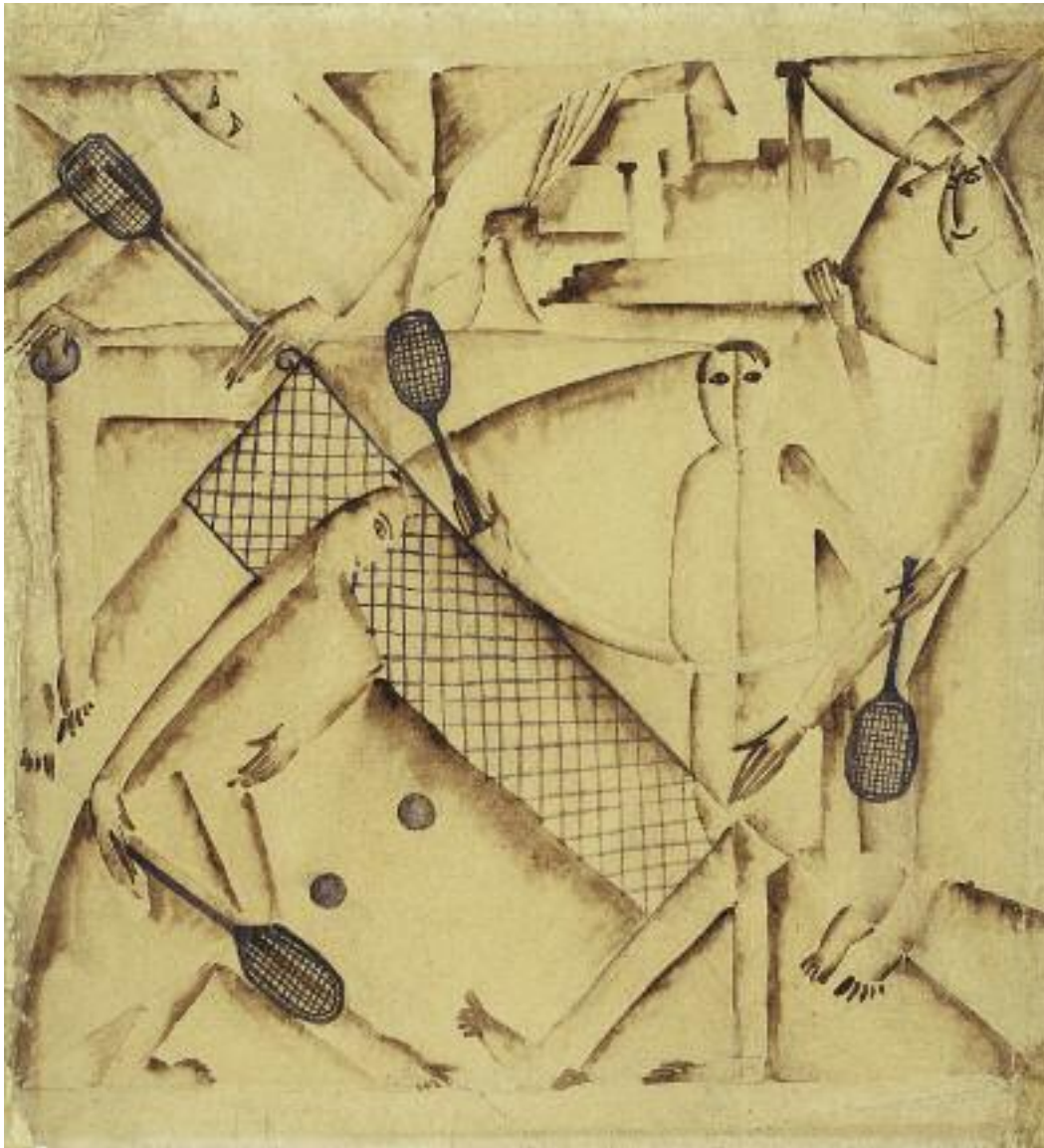




GRAPHIC ART



Alexei Zernov
Still Life with Pipe. 1923
Detail



Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Game of Tennis. 1919

Watercolour and Indian ink on paper. 39.8 x 36.3

Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov, St Petersburg



Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Girls. 1919

Indian ink and quill on paper. 30 x 37.1

Russian Museum

Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Sharpening an Axe. 1919

Indian ink and quill on paper. 28.4 x 30.5

Russian Museum

Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Urazovo (Merchant). 1919

Brown Indian ink on paper. 32.8 x 35.5

Russian Museum

Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Around the Piano. 1919

Watercolour and Indian ink on paper. 36.3 x 41.5

Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov, St Petersburg



Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Bathing. 1918

Italian pencil on paper. 37.8 x 45

Russian Museum



Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

On the Rafts. Ustyug Veliky. 1918

Indian ink on paper. 24.6 x 17.3

Russian Museum



Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Ustyug Veliky. On the Bridge. 1918

Watercolour on paper. 31.8 x 33

Russian Museum

Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Odessa. 1919

Watercolour and Indian ink on paper. 21.3 x 25.8

Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov, St Petersburg

Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Odessa. Sketch from Life. 1919

Watercolour and Indian ink on paper. 24 x 23.5

Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov, St Petersburg



Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Male Portrait in a Peaked Cap. 1919

Watercolour and Indian ink on paper. 27.3 x 20.6

Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov, St Petersburg



Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Set and curtain designs

for William Shakespeare's *Henry IV*. 1919

The Hermitage Theatre. Never produced

Set design. Watercolour on paper. 29.8 x 34

Set design. Watercolour on paper. 24 x 31.5

Set design. Watercolour on paper. 29.7 x 33.7

Set design. Watercolour on paper. 24 x 32

Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov, St Petersburg



Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Curtain design. 1919

Watercolour and brown

and black Indian ink on paper. 30.5 x 41.3

Russian Museum

Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Set designs for Konstantin Lyandau's play *How the Gardener Married the Princess and Punished Bad Ministers*. 1919

Institute of Decorative Art. Never produced

Act II. Watercolour on paper. 50.9 x 61.4

Act I. Watercolour on paper. 49.4 x 61.3

St Petersburg State Museum of Theatre and Music



Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

In the Bathroom. 1918

Mixed media on cardboard. 36.5 x 41

Private collection, St Petersburg

Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky

Set design for the play *Baba-Yaga*. 1919

Institute of Decorative Art. Never produced

Watercolour on paper. 30.5 x 41

St Petersburg State Museum of Theatre and Music





Benita Essen

Fairy Tale. 1922

Watercolour and Indian ink
on paper. 32.5 x 32.5

Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov,
St Petersburg



Benita Essen

Splitting Firewood. Early 1920s

Watercolour and Indian ink
on paper. 29.8 x 27

Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov,
St Petersburg

Boris Erbshtein

Sketches of scenes for Alexander Pushkin's
tragedy *Boris Godunov*. 1918

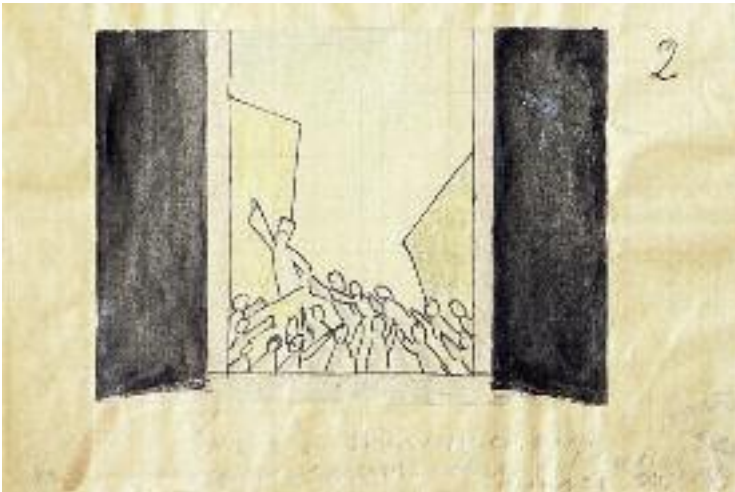
Stage Production Courses

Directed by Vsevolod Meyerhold. Never produced

St Petersburg State Museum of Theatre and Music

Sketch No. 2. Watercolour, Indian ink,
coloured pencil and appliqué on lined paper

Image: 9.2 x 12.2; sheet: 22 x 17.8; support: 22.5 x 17.8



Sketch No. 15. *At the Fountain Scene*. Watercolour, Indian ink
and coloured pencil on lined paper. Image: 9 x 15.3; sheet: 22.3 x 17.7

Sketch No. 16. Watercolour, Indian ink
and coloured pencil on lined paper. Image: 9 x 12.3; sheet: 22.3 x 17.7

Sketch No. 1. Watercolour, Indian ink and coloured pencil
on lined paper. Image: 9 x 12.2; sheet: 22 x 17.8; support: 22.5 x 17.8



Boris Erbshtein

Set design for Boris Zagorsky's
play *When the Sleeping Will Awake*. 1927

State Academic Drama Theatre, Leningrad

Première on 22 January 1925. Directed by Leonid Vivien

Watercolour, pencil and black Indian ink on paper. 45 x 49.5

St Petersburg State Museum of Theatre and Music

Leonid Chupyatov

Set designs for Vladimir Deshevov's
ballet *Red Whirlwind (Bolsheviks)*. 1924

State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet, Leningrad

Première on 29 October 1924. Directed by Fyodor Lopukhov

St Petersburg State Museum of Theatre and Music



Set design. Watercolour, Indian ink and pencil on paper. 51.4 x 46.8



Set design. Watercolour, Indian ink and pencil on paper. 50.2 x 67.1



Set design. Watercolour and Indian ink on paper. 44.1 x 49.8

Set design. Watercolour, Indian ink and pencil on paper. 43.2 x 47.3

Set design. Watercolour and Indian ink on paper. 51 x 44.5



Eleonora Kondiain

Potatoes. 1920

Indian ink and quill

on paper. 15.5 x 18.7

Russian Museum

Sergei Priselkov

Study for poster. 1918–1920

Watercolour and Indian ink on paper

Image: 23.6 x 16.8; sheet: 23.6 x 21.7

Russian Museum

Sergei Priselkov

Design for Vvedenskaya

Square's decoration

on 7 November 1918. 1918

Watercolour and Indian ink

on cardboard. 40.3 x 50.9

Russian Museum

Eleonora Kondiain

Pair in a Boat. 1919

Watercolour and graphite pencil

on paper. 16.1 x 15.8

Russian Museum



Vasily Vlasov

Two Women. 1923–1924

Watercolour and graphite pencil

on paper. 21.8 x 22.6

Russian Museum



Yury Cherkesov

Illustration. 1918–1920

Indian ink and graphite pencil on paper. 21.6 x 21.6

Russian Museum

Yury Cherkesov

At Conversation. 1919

Indian ink on paper. 21.6 x 28

Russian Museum



Pyotr Sokolov

Illustration for
Nikolai Chukovsky's book
*Captain James Cook
and His Three Voyages
Round the World*. 1927

Indian ink and graphite
pencil on paper. 23 x 36
Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov,
St Petersburg



Pyotr Sokolov

Illustrations for Daniel Defoe's
novel *Robinson Crusoe*. 1928

Indian ink and graphite pencil on paper
18.4 x 27.5 (each, on a single sheet)
Collection of Vladimir Levshenkov,
St Petersburg

Pyotr Sokolov

Scene with Indians

Early 1920s
Indian ink, brush and quill on paper
mounted on cardboard. 43.5 x 51.9
Russian Museum



Yury Cherkesov

Female Portrait. 1918–1920

Watercolour, Indian ink and
quill on paper. 40.6 x 45.5
Russian Museum

Yury Cherkesov

Woman with a Yoke
Spherical Composition

1918–1920
Watercolour and graphite pencil
on paper. 48.2 x 62.9
Russian Museum

Yury Cherkesov

Woman Taking a Step. Spherical
Composition

1920
Watercolour on paper. 44.6 x 45
Russian Museum





Victoria Belakovskaya

Study for Diploma Work *Stubble*. 1926

Watercolour, graphite pencil and
white on paper. 21.7 x 23.5

Russian Museum



Rebecca Golovchiner

Laundress. 1920s

Watercolour and graphite pencil
on paper. 16 x 16.9

Russian Museum

Rebecca Golovchiner

Oriental Motif. 1920s

Watercolour and graphite pencil
on paper. 19.8 x 30.7

Russian Museum



Rebecca Golovchiner

Female Figure in
Ukrainian Costume

1920s

Watercolour on paper

Image: 32.1 x 16.8; sheet: 32.1 x 22.8

Russian Museum



Alexandra Yakobson

Fetching Water. 1920s

Watercolour on paper. 15.5 x 19.7

Russian Museum

Ekaterina Petrova-Trotskaya

Costume and set designs for Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's opera *Bastien and Bastienne*. 1925

Opera Studio, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory,
Leningrad. Première in 1925. Directed by Emmanuil Kaplan
St Petersburg State Museum of Theatre and Music

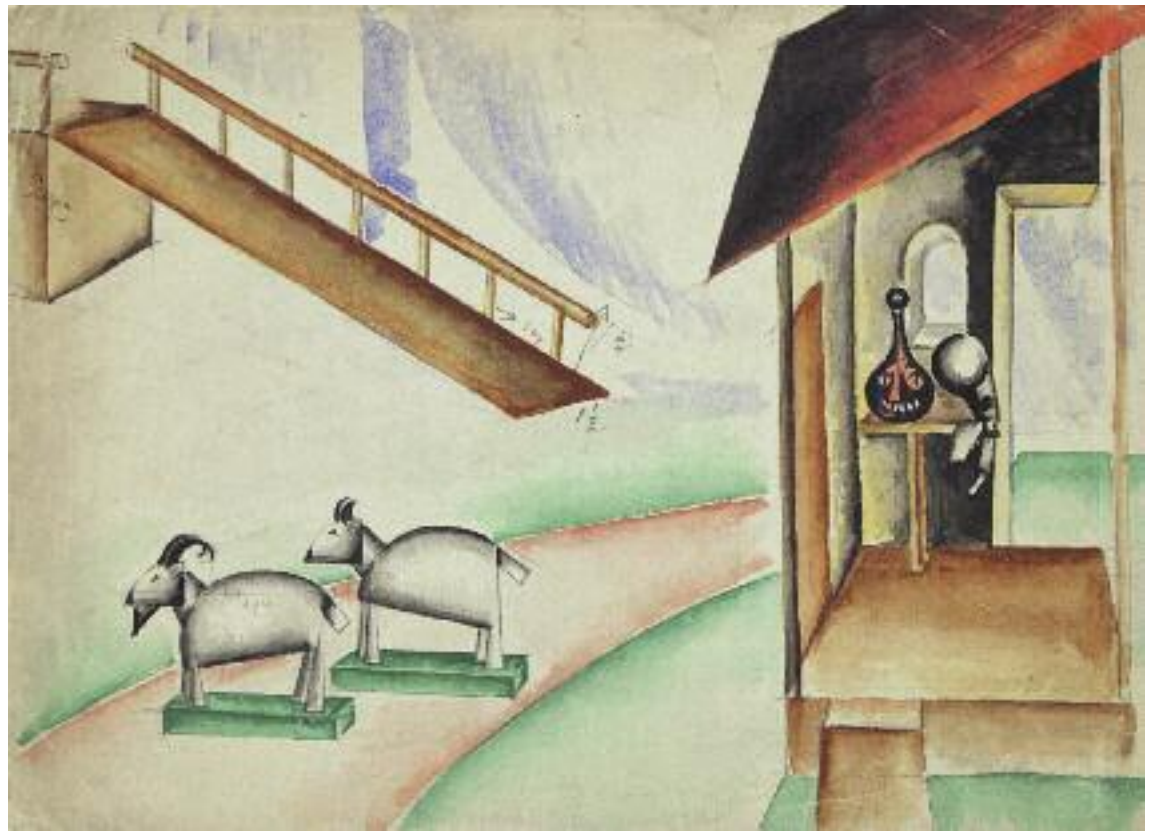


Female costume design. Watercolour and graphite pencil on paper mounted on cardboard. 33.3 x 24.1

Male costume design. Watercolour, bronze paint and graphite pencil on paper mounted on cardboard. 33.3 x 24.1

Set design. Watercolour and graphite pencil
on paper mounted on cardboard. 22 x 33.5
Private collection, St Petersburg

Female costumes design. Watercolour on paper mounted
on cardboard. 24.2 x 33.5





Ekaterina Petrova-Trotskaya

Set designs for Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's
opera *Kashchei the Immortal*. 1926

Opera Studio, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory,
Leningrad. Première in 1926

Private collection, St Petersburg



Set design

Watercolour and Indian ink on paper. 15 x 22.5

Kashchei's Army Is Coming

Watercolour and Indian ink on paper. 23 x 33.5

Set design

Watercolour, graphite pencil and
Indian ink on paper. 14.5 x 21.5

Ekaterina Petrova-Trotskaya

Costume and mise-en-scène designs
for Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's opera
Kashchei the Immortal. 1926

Opera Studio, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory,
Leningrad. Première in 1926

Private collection, St Petersburg



Kashchei the Immortal. Costume design
Watercolour, graphite pencil and Indian ink on paper. 25 x 17.5

Ivan Tsarevich. Costume design
Watercolour and graphite pencil on paper. 24.5 x 15

Kashchei's Army Is Coming. Mise-en-scène design
Watercolour and graphite pencil on paper. 20.5 x 15

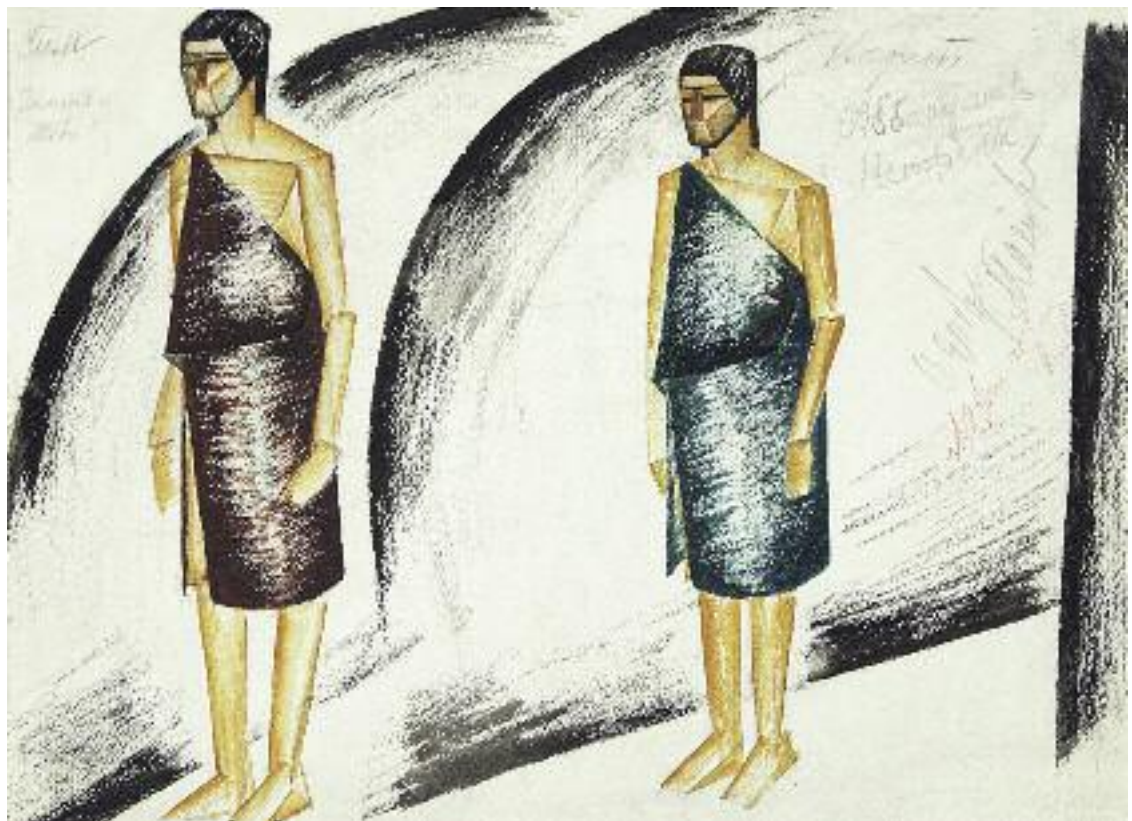


Ekaterina
Petrova-Trotskaya

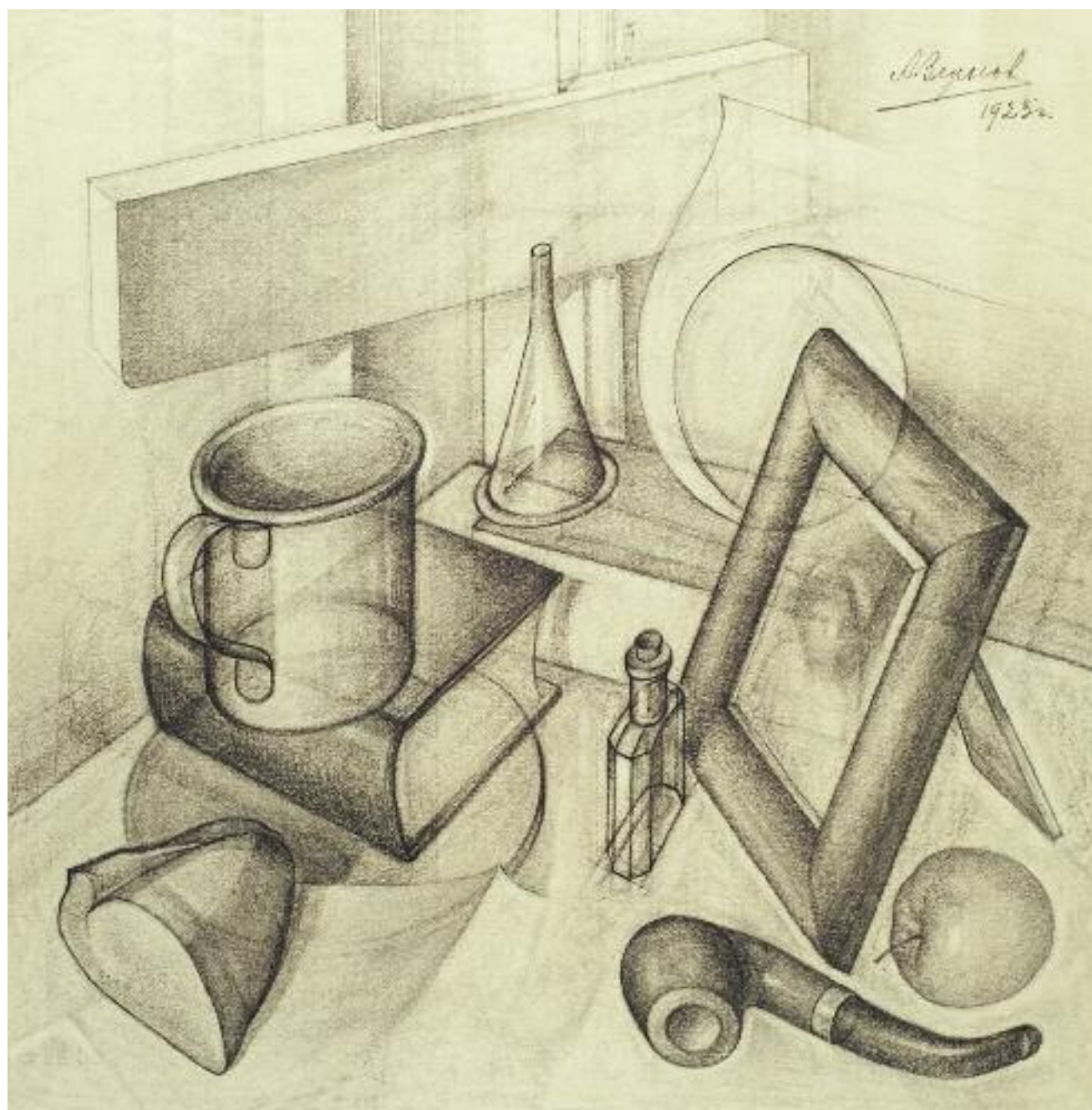
Mise-en-scène designs
for George Gordon Byron's
poem *Heaven and Earth*. 1924
Opera Studio,
Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov Conservatory,
Leningrad. Première on 4 April 1925
Music by Maximilian Steinberg
Directed by Sofya Maslovskaya



Azazel and Samiasa
Watercolour on paper
mounted on cardboard
Sheet: 24.5 x 34; support: 25.7 x 34.6
St Petersburg State Museum
of Theatre and Music



Mise-en-scène design
Watercolour and Indian ink on paper
mounted on cardboard. 24 x 32
Private collection, St Petersburg



Alexei Zernov
Still Life with Pipe. 1923
Pencil on paper. 47 x 47
Private collection



Alexei Zernov

Female Portrait. 1926

Graphite pencil on paper. 68 x 51

Private collection, St Petersburg

Alexei Zernov

Self-Portrait. 1924

Pencil on paper. 38 x 25.5

Russian Museum

Alexei Zernov

Strolling Alone. 1926

Watercolour, Indian ink and quill on paper. 14.5 x 23.5

Private collection



Alexei Zernov

Seated Woman in Lilac Dress. 1926

Watercolour and pencil on paper. 23 x 21.5

Private collection

Alexei Zernov

Portrait of the Artist Nikolai Ionin. 1926

Watercolour and pencil on paper. 13 x 20

Private collection



Alexei Zernov

Female Portrait. 1926

Watercolour, Indian ink and quill on paper. 16.5 x 16.5

Private collection



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Night Fantasy. 1921

Watercolour and graphite pencil on paper. 38.4 x 31.52

Russian Museum

Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Mother. Drawing for the magazine *Plamya (Flame)*. 1919

Indian ink on paper. Image: 27.6 x 26.9; sheet: 30.8 x 29.9

Russian Museum



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

The Denial of Peter. 1919

Indian ink and quill on paper. Image: 21.8 x 25.2; sheet: 24.3 x 27.7

Russian Museum



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Head of Youth. 1916

Watercolour and pencil on paper. 32.5 x 21.5

Collection of the Paleev family, St Petersburg

Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Woman and Boy. Study. 1918

Black watercolour on paper. 30.7 x 37.82

Russian Museum



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Tashkent Study (In a Tearoom). 1921

Watercolour on paper. 21.5 x 28

Collection of the Paleev family, St Petersburg



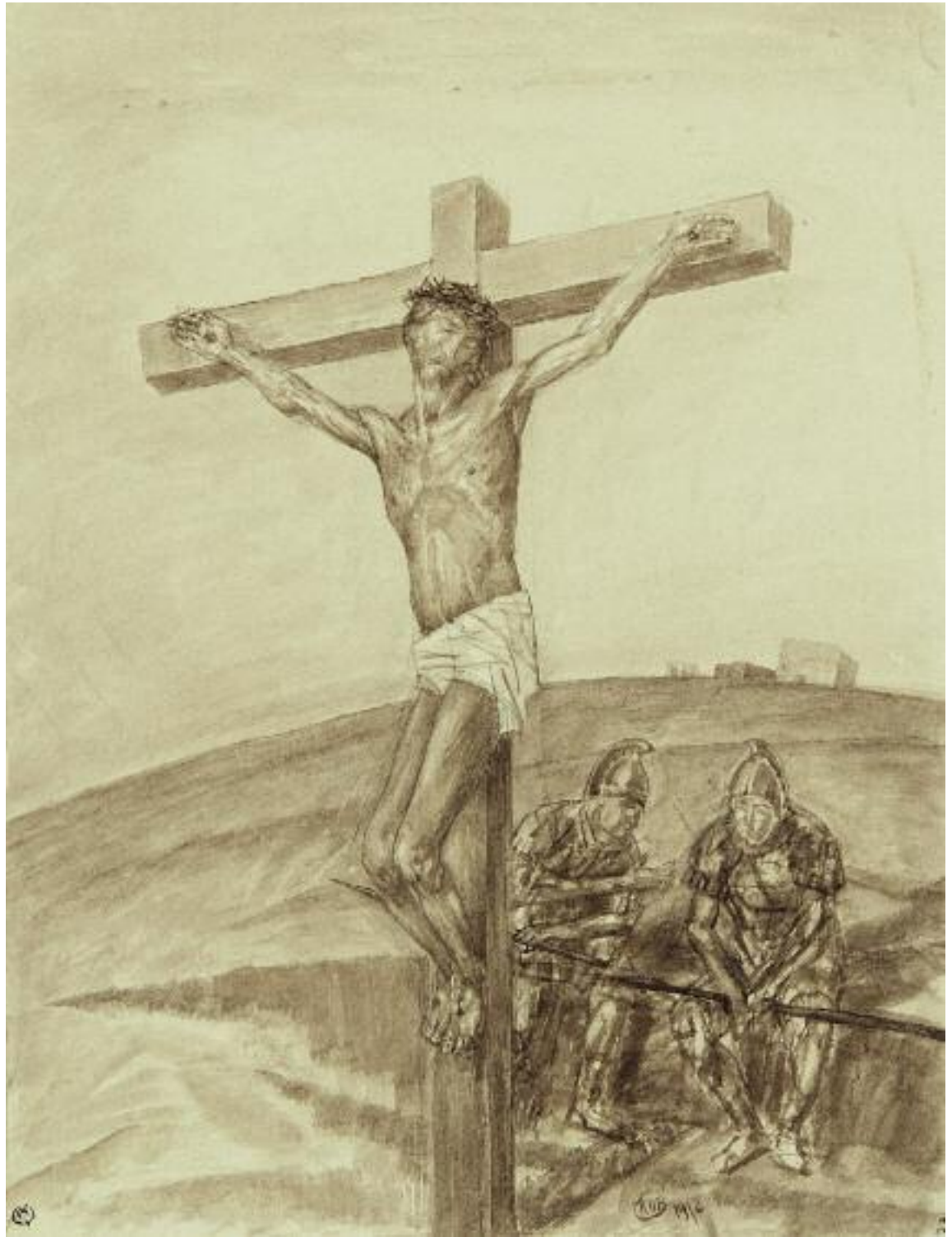
Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Study for the Panel *Stepan Razin*. 1918

Watercolour on paper

Image: 36 x 62.8; sheet: 36.8 x 63.5

Russian Museum



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

The Crucifixion. 1918
Sepia on paper. 41.5 x 31.5
Russian Museum



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Female Head. 1918

Watercolour and sepia on paper. 38 x 30.8

Russian Museum



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Self-Portrait. 1921

Sepia on paper. 38.2 x 31.4

Russian Museum





Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin

Composition with Figures of Boys. 1918

Graphite pencil, sepia and
brush on paper. 33 x 48.8

Private collection,
St Petersburg





Biographies of Artists



Ab, Pavel Efimovich

1902, Oryol – 1974, Leningrad

Painter, monumentalist. Studied under Grigory Redkin at the school of art in Oryol (1921–1923); under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, Alexander Savinov and Vasily Savinsky in the Monumental Painting Department, VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1923–1929); diploma work *Textiles* panel (1929, State Russian Museum) for the concert hall of the Moscow-Narva Palace of Culture; post-graduate courses at the Institute of Proletarian Fine Art / Ilya Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1931–1933). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1929). Member of the Union of Youth of the Association of Artists of Revolution (1929), Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia, Leningrad Association of Proletarian Artists (1930–1932), City Committee of Artists (1933–1941). Member of the Union of Artists (from 1932). Contributed to making *Borodino* and *Perekop* dioramas for the Military-Historical Museum of Artillery, Engineer and Signal Corps (1936); decorated pavilions at the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition (1939); made panels for the Museum of the History of Leningrad (1947). Stage designer assistant at the Theatre of Miniatures, Volobuev Operetta Theatre (early 1920s), Red Army studio (from 1920) reorganised later into Industrial Art workshops of the Oryol Sixth Infantry Division (1922–1923); decorated the city on holidays (1929–1941). Painted portraits, genre and history paintings in the style of Socialist Realism (*Gathering of Shock Workers of the Vyborg District*, 1932; *Listening to the Radio Near the Yurt*, 1936; *Musicians*, 1938 – whereabouts of the three works unknown). Took part in WWII, after demobilisation worked for the Association of Leningrad Artists, took part in creative and exhibiting activities of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists working on the subjects similar to *Pirogov at the Military Medicine Museum*, 1948; *Lenin's Speech at the Admiralty Plant*, 1949; *Comrades*, 1960; *Motherland Guards*, 1961 – whereabouts of all of them unknown. Taught at the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia studio (1929–1930); taught at VKhUTEIN courses (1929–1930).



Akishin, Pyotr Ivanovich

1889, Rasskazovo Village, Tambov Province – ?

Painter. Akishin is known to be a political prisoner before the Revolution, served his sentence in the penitentiary, released under an amnesty and rehabilitated. Exempted from military service (National Archives of the Russian Academy of Arts, collection 7, series 8, file 36, sheet 5 – 1889; sheet 10 – 1886). Worked as a teacher of drawing (occasionally) at the Rasskazovo Public University (1918–1920). Studied at the First State Free Art Studios /VKhUTEMAS in Moscow (1918–1922 (1923?), information on finishing it is missing). In 1922 took a long-term sick leave due to illness. Same year submitted for contest his painting *Thirst* (not finished). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1923): summary exhibition of the Academy of Arts (1923); 6th Exhibition of the Community of Artists (1925); exhibition of paintings of the Leningrad Region House of Artists (1933).

At exhibitions Pyotr Akishin is represented solely by portraits, which gives us grounds to assume that "Portrait of a Girl" (1928, private collection, St Petersburg) is not a rarity among his works of that period. We know that the portrait depicts Ninel Dolgova (1924–1928). Akishin's name is mentioned twice with Petrov-Vodkin. In a review of a competitive exhibition at the Academy of Arts, it was noted that: "There are new pursuits, but they are few, and they go no further than a misunderstood Petrov-Vodkin. For example, Akishin uses an interesting and deeply felt blue; and one wants to say that it is 'well-understood'" ("Konkursnaya vystavka v Akademii khudozhestv". Gorod. Isskustvo. Literatura. Vol. 1. Petrograd, 1923, p. 108. Section "Chronicle"). The level of intimacy and trust between teacher and student is evidenced by the fact that, when leaving for a working trip to Paris in 1925, Petrov-Vodkin allowed Akishin and his wife to stay in his apartment. No information on the artist could be found after 1933.



Aladzhalova, Elena Sergeevna

1904, Bauska, Kurland Province – 1984, Leningrad

Painter. Took first drawing lessons from her father Sergei Aladzhalov (1879–1921). Studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin in the Painting Department, VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1922–1927); obtained her diploma in monumental painting for *May Day Celebrations* (1927, Scientific and Research Museum of the Russian Academy of Arts). When studying became an orphan and worked as part-time field labourer, headed a library. Member and exhibitor of the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (from the late 1920s). Artist at the Soyuzkino-Lenfilm studio (1930s); as a member of the expedition of film workers travelled across Kostroma and Ryazan Provinces, accompanied her husband R. B. Kansky, orientalist and art historian, in his trip across Uzbekistan. Lived in Leningrad during the siege (1941–1944). After the Great Patriotic War (1941–1945) took part in the restoration of palace and park ensembles of Leningrad and its environs, member of the brigade of painters and restorers headed by Nikolai Pertsev (1948–1949). Worked for the Leningrad Branch of the Art Fund (late 1940s – 1950s). Lived in Zatulenie, Luga District, Leningrad Region (after 1959). Member of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists (from 1950, section of painting), in the late 1970s held there her first retrospective solo exhibition.



Belakovskaya, Victoria Markovna

1901, Alexandria, Chersonesos Province – 1965, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist. Studied in the Faculty of Natural Science, Odessa University (1918–1920); under Tit Dvornikov and Pavel Volokidin at the Odessa Free Art Studios (1918–1923) and under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1923–1927). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1924) and held solo exhibitions: Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists (1964); Victoria Belakovskaya, Anatoly Proshkin, Viktor Proshkin. *Painting and Graphic Art* (1993, Manège Central Exhibition Hall); St Petersburg Union of Artists in Leningrad/St Petersburg (2011); *St Petersburg Dynasty: Victoria Belakovskaya (1901–1965), Anatoly Proshkin (1907–1986), Viktor Proshkin (1906–1983), Vladimir Proshkin (born 1931), Marianna Proshkina (born 1939). Painting and Watercolour* in Moscow and St Petersburg in 2004 (Exhibition catalogue. Moscow, St Petersburg, 2004). Member and exhibitor of October (1930–1931) and Creative Union of Leningrad Artists in Leningrad (1935–1941). Member of the Union of Artists (1945; expelled 1949–1953). Got married renowned artist and teacher Viktor Proshkin (1906–1983). Mother of the artist Vladimir Proshkin (born 1931). *By 1927 the curriculum of the Higher Art and Technical Institute (VKhUTEIN) had changed yet again: in addition to a diploma work, students also had to write and defend an academic thesis on theory. "Steel Horse on the Ukrainian Fields" (1927, Russian Museum) is Victoria Belakovskaya's diploma work, while her thesis was written on the topic "A Portrait of Ukraine from the 10th Century to the Present Day".*



Blagoveshchenskaya, Evgenia Vladimirovna

1899, St Petersburg – 1973, Leningrad (?)

Painter. Received art education at a private studio (February–October 1917–1918). Studied under Dmitry Kardovsky (from 1919) and Alfred Eberling (from 1920) at the State Free Art Studios in Petrograd and in Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's studio (until 1925); diploma work *Watermelon Seller (Street)* (1925, Scientific and Research Museum, Russian Academy of Arts). Member of SORABIS (from 1919). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1925). Worked at the Bolshoi Drama Theatre, then at the Central Wardrobe Department (1919–1920).



Bogdanova, Olga Alexeevna

1905, St Petersburg (?) – 1941, Leningrad

Painter. Combined studies at Art Industrial College in Pskov with her work at a toy workshop (1920–1923); studied at the Monumental Painting Department, VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1923–1927). Encouraged cultural activities at the Vera Slutskaya Textile Mill (1925). Alongside with her diploma work *Fighting Homelessness* (for an orphanage, 1927, whereabouts unknown) she defended her thesis "Tracing Features of Archaic Monumentalism in Russian Icons of the 14th–15th Centuries in the Russian Museum".

It was not possible to find information on the artistic biography of Olga Bogdanova after she completed her studies. We can say, from the memoirs of her fellow student artist Anastasia Gareva, that Bogdanova's fate was quite dramatic: she was "repressed". She is remembered warmly: "There was a charming Komsomol member, Olga Bogdanova. Brullov would not have passed her by – she was exactly the same type as his Italian girls. But her life ended tragically... Her childlike purity, gentility, and noble character shone through in her eyes and in her smile." (Research Archives of the Russian Academy of Arts, collection 19, series 1, rec. 12. "Vospominaniya khudozhnitsy Anastasii Vasilyevny Garevoi". 28 April 1965, Novgorod, sheet 75).



Britanishsky, Lev Romanovich (Ruvimovich, Ruvelevich)

1897, Kronstadt – 1971, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist. Studied at the studios of Mikhail Bernstein (1910s) and Savely Seidenberg (1915); took private lessons from Pavel Chistyakov (1912–1915); studied under Pavel Chistyakov and Ivan Bilibin at the Baron Stieglitz Central School of Technical Drawing (1915–1922); under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at the State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS in Petrograd (1918–1923); awarded the title of artist; attended refresher courses of All-Russian Academy of Arts (1934–1935). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1924). Contributed to the exhibitions of Young Artists (1924); Artists of the RSFSR Over 15 Years (1932, Leningrad; 1933, Moscow); Woman in Socialist Construction (1934). Member and exhibitor of Young Art (1917), Circle of Artists (from 1926), October (1928–1930); Leningrad Association of Proletarian Artists (1930–1931). Member of the Union of Artists (from 1932). Studied porcelain painting under Sergei Chekhonin (1920s). Worked at the State Porcelain Factory; tour guide at the State Russian Museum (1926–1928); adviser in the sphere of folk and amateur art at the Leningrad Region Management of the Arts, headed art classes in the Leningrad Region (1936–1941). At the beginning of the Great Patriotic War took part in saving museum treasures from the State Hermitage (1941); in March 1942 moved to Sverdlovsk where he taught at the Ural Art School (1943–1944), took part in decoration railway terminals and houses of culture in Nizhny Tagil. After the war took up industrial drawing and design. Illustrated books for the military publishing house (Voenizdat). Merited Artist of the RSFSR (1967). Awarded a gold medal of the Soviet Culture Fund at the International Exhibition in Moscow (1970).



Cherkesov, Yury Yuryevich

1900, St Petersburg – 1943, Paris

Graphic artist, book designer, painter. Great-grandson of Decembrist Vasily Ivashev and his wife Camille Le Dantue. Graduated from the Vyborg School of Commerce in Petrograd (1917), simultaneously studied under Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, Alexander Yakovlev and Osip Braz at the New Art Workshop (art school founded by Princess Gagarina). In autumn 1918 entered the Painting Department of the State Free Art Studios in Petrograd, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's workshop; from March 1921 studied at Dmitry Kardovsky's workshop, simultaneously studied under Vasily Savinsky and Grigory Bobrovsky. In 1923 changed the faculty to the polygraphic one, studied under Pavel Shillingovsky, Elizaveta Kruglikova, Vladimir Konashevich and Dmitry Mitrokhin; graduated as a book illustrator (1925). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1918), including the exhibition of modern painting and drawing of Nadezhda Dobychina's Artistic Bureau (1918); exhibition of paintings by Russian artists in Pskov (1920), World of Art (19220, exhibition of Russian art in New York (1924), International Exhibition in Paris (1937, gold medal for illustrations to *Hamlet*), etc. Worked as a draughtsman in the Petrograd Commune (1917–1919), a designer in the theatre of the Baltic Fleet (1920–1921); taught at the School of Drawing of the 2nd City District and evening classes of the Baron Stieglitz Higher College of Decorative and Applied Art (1918–1920); collaborated with various publishing houses: Raduga (Rainbow), Mysl (Thought), Vremya (Time), Priboi (Surf), Obrazovanie (Education). In April 1925 moved to Paris together with his wife Anna, daughter of Alexander Benois, and their son. Painted landscapes, practiced xylography, illustrated books. On 22 June 1941 together with his son was arrested by occupation authorities and imprisoned in the Compiègne concentration camp (because the family lived in France with Soviet passports), but freed in a few months. On 31 July 1943 committed suicide after the opening of his solo exhibition in Paris.



Chupyatov, Leonid Terentyevich

1890, St Petersburg – December 1941, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, theatrical designer, art historian and teacher. Studied at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts (1909–1910), Jan Ciągłiński's studio (1909–1912), simultaneously attended Mikhail Bernstein's studio (1916); under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at Elizaveta Zvantseva's School of Art (1916–1917); attended Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's personal classes at the State Free Art Studios in Petrograd (1918; 1919–1921); Research Workshops of the Academy of Arts/VKhUTEMAS (1922–1926, upon completion presented 30 paintings and the *Way of the Genuine Realism in Painting* research report). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1916). Member and exhibitor of the following associations: Jan Ciągłiński Workshop (1917), Free Workshop (1917), World of Art (1916–1917), Fire-Colour (1924), Union of Artists (1925–1927, 1929), Union of Modern Masters of Ukraine (1928), Society of Painters (1929–1930). Member of RABIS (from 1922). From 1924 collaborated with various theatres, advisor and later employee of the Bolshoi Drama Theatre (1933–1934, 1935–1941). Artistic director of the *Fairy Tale of a Stupid Little Mouse* cartoon (1940, Lenfilm). Professor of the Kiev Art Institute (1926–1928); Painting Faculty, VKhUTEIN/Institute of Proletarian Fine Art (1929–1931, associate professor); Theatre and Painting Department, Painting Faculty, Ilya Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1932–1933). Died of hunger during the siege of Leningrad.

Dmitry Likhachev on the painting "Protection of the Mother of God Over the City Under Siege" (1941, private collection): the Mother of God bows her head and looks down in horror, as if seeing everything that is happening in the dark Leningrad apartments, and extends her veil. On her vestment is an image of an old Russian church... This painting has to survive. The soul of the blockade comes through in it more than anywhere else. The heavens have opened and the dying have seen God." (quote from: "Rakurs Chupyatova". Exhibition catalogue. Nashi khudozhniki, Moscow, 2013, p. 48).



Dmitriev, Vladimir Vladimirovich

1900, Moscow – 1948, Moscow

Theatrical designer, painter. Studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at Elizaveta Zvantseva's School of Art (1916–1917) and at the same time at the Petrograd Experimental Theatrical Studio on Borodinskaya Street; under Vsevolod Meyerhold at the Stage Production Courses (1918); under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin in the Faculty of Painting, State Free Art Studios in Petrograd (1918–1921). Being a senior student, taught at the Naval Art School, Political Department of the Baltic Fleet. The Theatrical Department of Narkompros sent him to Moscow to design the production *Dawns* in the State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet timed to the 3rd anniversary of the revolution. Lived in Moscow (from 1938). Designed for Vsevolod Meyerhold's productions, musical theatres in Leningrad and Moscow (1920), Evgeny Vakhtangov Theatre and the Moscow Art Theatre (1930s). Chief designer of the Moscow Art Theatre (1941–1948). Worked for the Sergei Kirov Theatre of Opera and Ballet in Leningrad (1945) and the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow (1931, 1944, 1948). Close friend of Mikhail Bulgakov. Winner of the State Prize of the USSR (1946, 1948, 1949). Honoured Artist of the RSFSR (1944). During his carrier, he designed over 500 productions, including *Egor Bulychev and Others* (Moscow, 1932; Evgeny Vakhtangov Theatre); *Anna Karenina* (1937), *Three Sisters* (1940), *The Last Victim* (1944, all – Moscow Art Theatre); *The Queen of Spades* (1931, 1944), *The Power of the Fiend*, *The Bartered Bride* (Moscow, 1948, all – State Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet); *The Maid of Orleans* (Leningrad, 1945; Sergei Kirov Theatre of Opera and Ballet).



Efros, Gerasim Grigorievich

1902, Kovel, Volyn Province – 1979, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist. Studied at the studio of Mikhail Bernstein (1915–1916); New Art Workshop (art school founded by Princess Gagarina, 1918); at the private studio of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS in Petrograd (1918–1924); Faculty of Architecture, VKhUTEIN (1924–1929, awarded the title of artist architect for his diploma work *Building Exhibition in Leningrad*). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1924). Member of the Union of Architects (1933). Contributed to satirical magazines *Begemot*, *Buzoter*, *Smekhach*, *Krasny Voron*, *Lapot*, *Pushka*, *Revizor*, *Krokodil* (1924–1931) and *The Red Newspaper* (1925–1927). Invited by the architects Vladimir Shchuko and Vladimir Gelfreich to submit his studies *Harvest*, *Aircraft Manufacturers*, *Miners* for the relief frieze and join the completion project of the Palace of Soviets in Moscow (1938–1940). Taught at the Leningrad Civil Engineering Institute (late 1930s–1961); Alexander Herzen State Pedagogical Institute (1962).

Historians of Soviet caricature often resorted to the oeuvre of Gerasim Efros as a satirical graphic artist from the 1960s onwards. Gerasim Efros was first mentioned as Petrov-Vodkin's student in the publication *Efros Gerasim Grigorievich (1902–1979)*. Exhibition catalogue. Articles by A. Borovsky and I. Galeev. Art Divage Gallery, Moscow, 2004.



Erbstein, Boris Mikhailovich

1901, St Petersburg – 1963, Kuibyshev

Painter, theatrical designer, graphic artist. Studied drawing under Isaac Brodsky (from 1909); studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at Elizaveta Zvantseva's School of Art (1914–1917), combined his studies at the private studio of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, State Free Art Studios in Petrograd (1918–1921) with classes at Mastery of Stage Production Courses headed by Vsevolod Meyerhold (1918–1920); Aircraft Technology College (1920 – spring 1922); Painting Faculty, VKhUTEMAS (1922–1923, defended his qualification paper in 1923 and continued his studies in the Painting Faculty). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1923). Worked in the Petrushka Cabaret-Theatre (1918); headed the art section of the political administration of the fleet and the sailors art school of the political department of Petrograd Naval Base (1919). Collaborated with Leningrad and Moscow theatres (1920s–1930s). Cofounder of the Young Ballet company formed by the School of Choreography graduates (1922). Set designer at the School of Choreography. Arrested for being involved in the Daniil Kharms case (article 58-10), exiled to Kursk, then to Borisoglebsk, Petrozavodsk and Saratov where he continued to work for theatres. Released (1934). In September 1941 arrested on the charge of "anti-Soviet activity, propaganda and espionage for Germany" (article 58-6), condemned to 10 years imprisonment and exiled to Siberia. Released (December 1947). First worked as a designer at the Krasnoyarsk Furniture Enterprise, then joined theatre companies touring provincial towns. Received treatment for mental illness in a psychiatric hospital near Leningrad (1949). Moved to Gorky (1952), Kuibyshev (1954) where he worked as a theatrical designer for the Opera and Ballet Theatre, collaborated with a drama theatre. Rehabilitated and reinstated in the Union of Artists. Nevertheless, he failed to return to an active, creative life. Committed suicide.



Essen, Benita Nikolaevna (Elsbeth Elena Benita von Essen)

1893, Reval, Estland Province – 1974, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist. Wife of the artist Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky. Studied at art studios in Penza (?), Paris, Moscow and Petrograd (1911–1918); at the private studio of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, State Free Art Studios in Petrograd (1918, 1920–1922); attended Mikhail Matiushin's private art workshop, State Free Art Studios in Petrograd (23 March 1921 – 19 August 1921). Diploma work *Fairy Tale* (1922, private collection). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1920). Contributed to the Exhibition of Paintings by Petrograd Artists Over Five Years. 1918–1923 (1923), city-wide exhibition of fine arts (1930). Worked for Proletkult (Proletarian Culture) federation of local cultural societies (from 1918). Decorated Petrograd on the October Revolution anniversary (1918). Worked at the Experimental Lithography Workshop in Leningrad. Taught at school No. 17 of the Sverdlov District, Leningrad. Grave illness prevented her from taking part in art life (1952).



Evenbach, Evgenia Konstantinovna

1889, Kremenchug, Poltava Province – 1981, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, watercolourist. Studied under Nicholas Roerich, Arkady Rylov and Jan Ciagliński at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts; studied lithography in the workshop of Vasily Mathé (mid-1910s); attended classes at the Institute of Art History, Higher Women's (Bestuzhev) Courses (1917–1924); State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS in Petrograd (1918–1923 under Vasily Shukhaev, from 1919 under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin), simultaneously attended classes in the Department of Art History, Leningrad University. Contributed to exhibitions (from 1928). Member of the Union of Artists (1932). Had been fond of folk art since childhood, collected and copied national design patterns. During the Great Patriotic War served as sister of charity (1916), headed soldiers (Bolshevik) club (from 1917), draw posters. Together with her fellow students from the studio of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin was sent to Novgorod to measure old architectural monuments and to copy frescoes (1920). Collaborated with publishing houses (1920s–1930s) including Uchpedgiz publishing house, took part in compiling ABC books and first books for Peoples of the North, made tours to Far East (1934–1938). Lived in Leningrad during the siege (1943–1946), evacuated to Altai. In post-war years took up easel graphic art, illustrated books, taught in the Faculty of Graphic Art, Alexander Herzen State Pedagogical Institute (1948–1952). *Evgenia Evenbach remembers*: "Kuzma Sergeevich had the largest number of students. He also had the cleanest, most resplendent paints... My teacher Petrov-Vodkin expanded my worldview..." (quote from: V. S. Matafonov. "Evgenia Konstantinovna Evenbach". *Khudozhnik RSFSR, Leningrad, 1988, p. 22*).



Golovchiner, Rebecca (Lyusya) Moiseevna

1906, Mogilev – 1969, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist. Studied under Vadim Meller in the Department of Theatrical and Scene Art, Institute of Sculpture in Kiev (1922–1923) and in the Faculty of Polygraphy, VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1924–1927). Graduated with the title of graphic artist; her diploma work was design of the book *10 Years of the Soviet Power in Its Typical Manifestations*. Contributed to exhibitions (from 1927 (?)).



Golubyatnikov, Pavel Konstantinovich

1892, St Petersburg – 1942, Leningrad

Painter, teacher. Studied under Nicholas Roerich at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts; in the Faculty of Physics and Mathematics, St Petersburg University (1916–1918) and under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at the State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS in Petrograd (1918–1924). A study of his diploma work *Thunderstorm* was approved in 1921, but due to illness, the defence of the diploma was postponed until 1924. Lived in Kiev (1925–1930), Kharkov (1930) and Leningrad (from 1932). Member and exhibitor of the Association of Revolutionary Art of Ukraine (1925–1927); Union of Modern Masters of Ukraine (1927–1932). Contributed to the exhibitions of the left-wing artists in New York (1926); Venice Biennale (1928); exhibition in the apartment of Ilya Gruzdev, editor of the magazine *Star* (second half of the 1930s); exhibition of works by Pavel Golubyatnikov's students from the art studio, House of Teachers (1939). Member of the Union of Artists (1932). Developed methodological programmes on art, created new painterly technologies (1938, together with physicist D. Forsh) and elaborated a plan of founding the Institute of Applied Arts. Died of hunger during the siege. His wife Olga Golubyatnikova (1898–1984) brought his paintings and archives to the Ural Region. In 1975 and the following years, his wife and daughter V. P. Deryabina (1923–2003) transferred them for storage to the Nizhny Tagil Museum of Fine Arts.

After the death of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, Golubyatnikov proposed creating a laboratory in his name to study the theoretical issues he touched on in his work: colour, space, and movement. In his recollections of Petrov-Vodkin (1939), Golubyatnikov had every basis to write: "Outside of the academy we became close friends, comrades. We went to concerts, to theatres, artists' workshops, exhibitions..." (from the archival materials of the Nizhny Tagil Museum of Fine Art, published on their website).



Ionin, Nikolai Alexandrovich

1890, Navolok, Novgorod Province – 1948, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist. Studied at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts (1908–1913); auditor at the Higher School of Art, Imperial Academy of Arts (1913–1915); State Free Art Studios/VKhUTMAS (1920–1922) first under Dmitry Kardovsky and then under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin (from 1921; on breaks served in the Imperial and Red armies); courses for Raising Qualifications, Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1934–1936). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1915). Member of the Community of Artists (1928–1932) and the Union of Artists (1934). Headed the Art School in Bezhetsk (1919–1921). In 1942–1944, he was evacuated to Kyrgyzstan, where he created a series of plein-air landscapes contrasting with half-starved life in evacuation and personal tragedy (during the war, the artist's elder son died). In the post-war period, he returned to the series *Leningrad and Its Environs*. He created a series of deeply psychological and accurate self-portraits during the last years of his life. Solo exhibition was held in the State Russian Museum in 2007 (catalogue).



Kondiain, Eleonora Maximilianovna

1899, Dresden – 1986, Leningrad

Graphic artist, book designer. Daughter of the architect Maximilian Messmacher (1842–1906) and artist Barbara André (1865–1918); wife of astronomer Alexander Kondiain (1889–1937). Graduated from the women's college, Transformation Church in Petrograd (1918). Worked (1918–1921) and studied at the State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS (1918–1923; in 1919 transferred from Boris Popov's workshop to Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's one). Member of New Man (late 1910s), United Labour Association (1923–1934, member of the commune). Lived with her family in Crimea (1926–1927). Worked as a designer in the Young Guard publishing house (1929). In summer 1934 she participated in the expedition to Eastern Siberia (region of the Vitim and Olekma rivers), gathered material for the Evenk language textbook (a catalogue with Evgenia Evenbach and Eleonora Kondiain's illustrations for primers for the peoples of the Far North, Siberia and Far East was published in Khabarovsk in 2013). In 1936 together with her family travelled along the Sukhumi Military Road. In 1937, convicted under Article 58 of the Criminal Code of the RSFSR on the case of her husband ("family member of a traitor"), exiled to Siberia, where she spent 19 years (8 in corrective labour camps in Narym and 11 in the penal settlement in the Kemerovo Region). Rehabilitated (1956), returned to Leningrad. Illustrated books, created watercolours and quill drawings. Member of the Union of Artists of the USSR.



Kotovich-Borisyak, Raisa Ivanovna

1895, Kishinev, Moldova – 1923, Moscow

Painter, graphic artist. Born to a military family. Lived in St Petersburg (1908–1914). Attended classes in the Faculty of History and Philology, Higher Women's (Bestuzhev) courses (1912–1914); at the same time studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at Elizaveta Zvantseva's School of Art. Lived in Moscow (from 1915). Worked at the Main Committee for Museums; registrar at the Novodevichy Convent Museum (early 1920s). Contributed to the exhibitions of the World of Art (1915, 1917), 1st and 2nd Exhibitions of the Trade Union of Painters (1918), exhibition in the Palace of Arts (1919), IV State Exhibition (1919), exhibition in the State Historical Museum (1923, 1924), Fire-Colour (1924), Thirty Moscow Artists (1924). In 2000, two small solo exhibitions held in the magazine *Our Heritage* and the Central House of Artists in Moscow aroused the attention to the artist's work. She was married twice. Her first husband Andrei Borisyak (1885–1962) was a cellist, teacher and student of Pablo Casals. Her second husband Nikolai Pomerantsev (1891–1986) was an outstanding museum worker and restorer. He worked at the Commission for the Protection and Disclosure of Ancient Monuments directed by Igor Grabar (from 1918); art historian in the Moscow Kremlin; registrar in the Armoury; head of the Kremlin monuments (1919–1934). In 1934, he was sentenced to three years in exile in the Russian North for the "opposition to the demolition of useless ancient monuments", served his sentence in Velsk. He returned to Moscow in 1946, worked at the Central Restoration Workshops.

Fragments of the diary of Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak with commentary and afterword by N. A. Pomerantseva are published in the book: "Teoretiko-literaturnye itogi XX veka". Vol. IV: Chitatel': problemy vospriyatiya. Moscow, 2005, pp. 578–589.



Kuperwasser, Tatyana Isidorovna

1903, St Petersburg – 1972, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist. Took drawing lessons from Varvara Bubnova (1913–1914). Studied under Osip Braz and Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at the State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEIN (1920–1925); diploma work *Landscape*. Contributed to exhibitions (from 1925). Member and exhibitor of the Circle of Artists (1927–1932). Member of the Union of Artists (1946; previously she was excluded from candidate members). In the 1930s gradually retreated from exhibition activities sacrificing her artistic interests in favour of her family: she started to make a living by executing commissions of practical nature, which gave her husband (from 1923), painter Alexander Rusakov, a possibility to exercise his talents. Worked as an artist at the enterprises of the Leningrad textile industry (from the mid-1920s); mainly engaged in design (from the late 1930s; Museum of the Arctic, Museum of the Ethnography of the Peoples of the USSR; Museum of the History of Leningrad, Leningrad pavilion at the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition) and applied graphic art (from the second half of the 1920s: fashion, textile design; after the war: addresses, labels, packaging and trademarks). Worked at the Leningrad branch of the Art Fund of the USSR (1945). Painted mainly landscapes en plein air in watercolour (1940s–1960s); during the last years of her life created predominantly still lifes. After the *Circle of Artists* exhibition in the Russian Museum (2007) the attention to Kuperwasser's oeuvre has increased.



Lappo-Danilevsky, Alexander Alexandrovich

1898, St Petersburg – 1920, Petrograd

Graphic artist. Born to a family of the prominent historian Alexander Lappo-Danilevsky (1863–1919). Studied at the L. D. Leontovskaya Gymnasium (1909–1917); Yakov Chakhrov's studio (1911–1913); Mikhail Bernstein's studio (1913–1917) and in the Faculty of History and Philology, St Petersburg University (1917). Started working at the Studio of Young Artists, Academy of Arts (autumn 1917). In March 1918, admitted to the State Free Art Studios, studio of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, whose student he remained until his death. In 1917, he married the artist Benita von Essen (1893–1974), also a student of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. Contributed to exhibitions (from 1917). Member of Young Art (1917), Community of Artists (1917–1920). Held solo exhibitions: *Studio of Young Artists* (Academy of Arts, 1918); in the halls of the Academy of Arts (1920, posthumous); in the halls of the Community of Artists (1928, posthumous). He was engaged in book and magazine graphic art, collaborated with the magazine *Flame*. Won the first prize at the contest of the Theatrical Design Section, IZO Narkompros, for designing Konstantin Lyandau's play *How the Gardener Married the Princess and Punished Bad Ministers* (summer 1918). Designed Eugen d'Albert's opera *Tiefland* for the Musical Drama Theatre (1919). In winter 1919, made sets and costume designs for William Shakespeare's *Henry IV* for the Hermitage Theatre (never produced). The main legacy of Lappo is comprised of drawings and watercolours created during his trips across the country: Bakhchisarai (summer 1917), Veliky Ustyug (1918) and south of the country (1919): Odessa, Kherson, Skadovsk, Urazovo. While travelling, he was infected with typhus and died in Petrograd on 19 January 1920.



Lermontova, Nadezhda Vladimirovna

1885, St Petersburg – 1921, Petrograd

Painter, theatrical designer, portraitist, author of philosophical and allegorical compositions. Grand-nephew of the poet Mikhail Lermontov. Born to an educated noble family: her grandfather Vladimir Nikolaevich was a general, hero of the Patriotic War of 1812; her father Vladimir Vladimirovich was an experimental physicist and populariser of science, engaged in physical bases of photo process, author of more than fifty articles on experimental physics devices for the Brockhaus and Efron Encyclopedic Dictionary, helped to organise the Physical Society at St Petersburg University. She attended classes in the Philological Department, Higher Women's (Bestuzhev) courses (1902–1907); at the same time studied at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts, in Dmitry Kardovsky's studio (1905); under Léon Bakst at Elizaveta Zvantseva's School of Art (1907–1910) and the Institute of the History of Arts (1918). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1911). Contributed to the exhibitions of the World of Art (1911, 1912, 1916, 1917), Union of Youth (1912–1913), 1915 (Moscow, 1915), New Society of Artists (1917), Russian Landscape (Petrograd, 1918–1919), Theatrical and Decorative Art in the USSR. 1917–1927 (Leningrad, 1927). In 1910, she helped Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, Alexander Blaznov and Nikolai Tyrsa to paint St Basil's Church reconstructed by Alexei Shchusev. She wrote poetry and prose, drew for the magazine *Bohemia*, designed performances for the Petrograd Puppet Theatre, illustrated works by Edgar Allan Poe, Fyodor Dostoevsky and Ovid's *Metamorphoses*.



Lizak, Israel Lvovich

1905, Slavuta, Volyn Province, Ukraine – 1974, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, author of portraits, landscapes and genre paintings. Studied at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts (1916–1918); State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1919–1925) under Vasily Meshkov and Vasily Savinsky (drawing), under Osip Braz and Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin (painting). Attended Alexander Bely's art studio (1922). Diploma work *Man on a Pedestal (Invalid of the Imperialist War)* (1925, Russian Museum). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1923). Member and exhibitor of the Community of Artists (1925–1932), Circle of Artists (1926–1930). Member of the Union of Artists (1932). Worked at the newspaper *Smena* (1930–1935), State Inspectorate for the Protection of Architectural Monuments in Leningrad (1945). Taught drawing in the Department of Sculpture, Vera Mukhina Higher School of Art and Industry in Leningrad (1946–1948). Worked at research and restoration studios (1952–1956); engaged in painterly and restoration works in cathedrals and palaces in Leningrad and its environs. Held solo exhibitions in 1967 (Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists) and 1996 (Russian Museum, catalogue).

"In 1923–1924 I studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin for two years in a row, in the 2nd and 3rd years of the Academy of Arts. The students were all differently prepared. They had previously studied under various professors from studios that had been liquidated in 1921–1922, such as Petrov-Vodkin, Rylov, Braz, Savinsky, Kardovsky, Belyaev, and others. Kuzma Sergeevich always acted very warmly towards me. He apparently appreciated the little experience I did have in drawing. He instructed me without trying to tamper with or break me. ... [Summer 1930. Detskoe Selo.] When talking about me [Petrov-Vodkin] said that my outstanding characteristic was abruptness, and added "and also black and white" (quote from: "Israel Lizak". Russian Museum. Palace Editions, St Petersburg, 1996, pp. 41–42).



Lomakina, Maria Vladimirovna

1896, Kizil-Tash, Yalta District – 1964, Zagorsk

Painter, graphic artist, teacher, craftswoman, author of toys. Graduated from the Drawing School in Kishinev (1913); Faculty of History and Philosophy, Higher Women's (Bestuzhev) Courses (1913–1917) and Konstantin Juon's studio (1916–1917). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1919). Lived in Crimea (1917–1923), headed the Alexander Pushkin Museum in Gurzuf, worked at the State Art Studios. The Crimean SORABIS sent her to Petrograd (1923). Studied monumental painting under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin in the Faculty of Painting, VKhUTEMAS (1923–1927); diploma work – project of the mural painting *Maternity and Child Protection* and thesis *The Artistic Styles of Frescoes in the Church of the Saviour on Neredita in Novgorod*, accompanied by copies of frescoes (recommended for publication). Later, her copies helped to reconstruct the church, which was destroyed during the Great Patriotic War. Taught drawing at School No. 3 in Leningrad (1928–1929), School of Handicrafts in Bogorodsk and courses for raising carvers' qualifications, Bogorodsk Artel (1929–1931). From 1932 lived in Zagorsk (now Sergiev Posad). Worked at the All-Union Scientific and Experimental Institute of Toys; designed toys (1933–1936). Member and exhibitor of the Municipal Committee of Artists (from 1938); painting section, Moscow Branch of the Union of Artists; Moscow Fellowship of Artists (from 1942). Made copies of the Tretyakov Gallery's paintings on commissions for the Committee of Arts, State Historical Museum and the Art Fund (1938–1955). Copied paintings in St Sofia Cathedral in Kiev for the State Historical Museum (1953–1954). Taught drawing and theory of drawing in the Abramtsevo School of Art and Industry (1959–1962). Wife of the sculptor Alexander Petrov (1933). Held solo exhibition in 2009 (Tretyakov Gallery, catalogue).



Malagis, Vladimir Ilyich (Wulf Elja Getzelevich)

1902, Griva, Courland Province – 1974, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, monumentalist, author of genre scenes, portraits, landscapes, still lifes. Studied under Vladimir Plotnikov and Vasily Navozov at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts in Petrograd (1917); under Arkady Rylov, Alexander Savinov, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, Grigory Bobrovsky and Vasily Savinsky at the State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS in Petrograd (1918–1919, 1921–1924) and under Evgeny Lanceray at the courses for Raising Artists' Qualifications, Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1932–1933). Diploma work *Fishermen on the Dnieper* (not survived). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1924). Member and exhibitor of the Circle of Artists (1926–1929), October (from 1930). Chairman of the Municipal Committee of Fine Arts, Union of Art Workers (1931–1933). Member of the Union of Artists (1932). After graduating from VKhUTEIN (1924), collaborated with the Breakers Publishing House, designing headpieces, logos and marks. Taught at the studio of the Moscow-Narva District, Ilya Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1945–1948). In the post-war decades painted portraits, landscapes and actively participated in exhibitions. Honoured Artist of the RSFSR (1969). Held solo exhibitions in Leningrad (1977) and Moscow (1979).



Noskov, Mikhail Vasilyevich

1892, Novoe, Tver Province – 1957, Leningrad

Painter; author of still lifes, landscapes, portraits. Studied at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts in Petrograd/Leningrad (1904–1906); Baron Stieglitz Central School of Technical Drawing/Higher Studios of Decorative and Applied Art (1914, 1918–1919, 1920–1922); transferred to the 3rd course of VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1922–1924) where studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin and Alexander Savinov. Diploma work *Red Army Man* (whereabouts unknown). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1924). Member and exhibitor of the Circle of Artists (1926–1930), October (from 1930). Member of the Union of Artists (1932).

At many exhibitions in the 1920s Mikhail Noskov exhibited still lifes. But at the final exhibition of graduates of the Academy of Arts in 1924, he showed, among his other works, "In the Café". The brushwork used in the still life was in response to an assignment, manifested in "In the Café" and published in the catalogue for the "Modern Leningrad Artistic Groups" exhibition of paintings and sculptures (Leningrad, 1928, p. 24): "Receding planes without using linear perspective. Diagonal canvas. Colour – without lighting influence." "Still Life with Green Bottle" (early 1920s, collection of Alla Esipovich-Roginskaya, St Petersburg) has all of the listed features, which shows that this is an early work from one of Mikhail Noskov's as-yet unknown periods.



Obolenskaya, Yulia Leonidovna

1889, St Petersburg – 1945, Moscow

Painter, illustrator, writer. Daughter of Leonid Obolensky, philosopher, editor and publisher of the magazine *Russkoe Bogatstvo* (Russian Wealth); sister of Leonid L. Obolensky who was one of the founders of sound motion pictures in the country. Studied at the Elizaveta Zvantseva School of Art under Léon Bakst and Mstislav Dobuzhinsky (1907–1913), under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin (1910–1912). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1910). Contributed to the exhibitions of the students of Léon Bakst and Mstislav Dobuzhinsky (1910); 1915 (1915); 4th State Exhibition of Paintings (1918–1919); Association of Graphic Artists, Moscow House of Printing (1926–1928); International Exhibition in Venice (1928); Socialist Construction in Soviet Art (1930–1931); Artists of the RSFSR Over 15 Years (1933) and many other. Member and exhibitor of the World of Art (1912–1917); Free Workshops (1917); Fire-Colour (1924–1929). In collaboration with Alexei Tolstoy and Maximilian Voloshin contributed to completion of Aristarkh Lentulov's decorative design of the Bubny literary and music café in Koktebel (1912). Taught at the Nadezhda Krupskaya House of Folk Art in Moscow (1930s). Executed designs for Gosizdat, Museum of New Western Art. During the war, she was evacuated to Ivanovo; lived in poverty. Experienced difficulties in returning to Moscow (a draft of her letter to Alexei Tolstoy asking for help has been preserved).

In a letter dated 30 December 1914 to the famous artist Konstantin Kandaurov, with whom she was personally and artistically connected for many years, Yulia Obolenskaya writes: "My 'winter' has ended, i.e., the self-portrait with windows. An amusing thing – there is something enchanted about it – some kind of internal content that has nothing to do with me." (L. Alexeeva. "Tsvet vinograda. O Yulii Obolenskoi i Konstantine Kandaurove. <http://sites.utoronto.ca/tsq>. Toronto Slavic Quarterly. 2009–2014. Nos. 29, 32, 35, 41, 43, 49).



Pakhomov, Alexei Fyodorovich

1900, Varlamovo, Vologda Province – 1973, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, monumentalist, book designer, sculptor, portraitist, genre painter, draughtsman, watercolourist, master of easel autolithographs, illustrator of books and magazines for children, poster designer. Studied at the Baron Stieglitz Central School of Technical Drawing/Higher Studios of Decorative and Applied Art (1915–1917; 1920–1922) first under Mstislav Dobuzhinsky, Vasily Shukhaev and Sergei Chekhonin, later – under Nikolai Tyrsa, Vladimir Lebedev and Alexei Karev; VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1922–1925) under Alexander Savinov, Vladimir Tatlin and Grigory Bobrovsky; in the Graphic Department, Academy of Arts (1926). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1921). Member and exhibitor of the Union of New Trends in Art (from 1921); Circle of Artists (1926–1931, one of the founding members). Member of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists (from 1932; 1932–1949 – board member). Served in the Red Army (1919); worked at Okna ROSTA (1921), magazines *Zhizn Iskusstva* (Life of Art), *Chizh* (Siskin), *Yozh* (Hedgehog), *Sovetskie Rebyata* (Soviet Children), *Novy Robinson* (New Robinson), *Kostyor* (Fire), *Murzilka* (1923–1925); collaborated with various publishing houses, member of the artistic board of Detskaya literatura (Children's Literature) and Khudozhnik (Artist) publishing houses. Painted interiors of public buildings in Leningrad (1920s–1930s). Taught at the Ilya Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1948–1973); Professor (1949), headed personal creative workshop. Honorary Artist of the RSFSR (1945), People's Artist of the RSFSR (1963), People's Artist of the USSR (1971), corresponding member of the Academy of Arts of the USSR (1958), full member of the Academy of Arts of the USSR (1964). Winner of the State (Stalin) Prize (1946) for the lithographic series *Leningrad During the War and the Siege (Leningrad Chronicles)* (1941–1944). Gold medal of the World Exhibition in Paris (1937) for the panel *Children of the Soviet Country* at the Soviet pavilion. Author of the book *About My Work* (1968–1969). Held solo exhibitions in the Russian Museum (1961, 1981), Russian Academy of Arts in Moscow (1981), Academy of Arts in St Petersburg (2001).



Pakulin, Vyacheslav Vladimirovich

1900, Rybinsk – 1951, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, theatrical designer. Studied under Alexei Karev and Vladimir Lebedev at the Baron Stieglitz Central School of Technical Drawing/Higher Studios of Decorative and Applied Art in Petrograd/Leningrad (1916–1917, 1919?, 1920–1922), under Alexei Karev and Alexander Savinov at VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1922–1925); under Vsevolod Meyerhold in classes at Mastery of Stage Production Courses. Contributed to exhibitions (from 1922). Influenced by spatial ideas of Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. Member and exhibitor of IZO section bureau of the Leningrad regional branch of SORABIS (1925–1929); Circle of Artists (1926–1932; founding member and chairman); Union of New Trends in Art (1923–1923(26?)). Board member of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists (from 1932). Served in the Red Army (1919–1920). Worked as a designer at the Decorative Institute (from 1922), member of the brigade of artists who created the *Cotton* panel for the All-Union Agricultural Exhibition (from 1935, headed by Alexander Samokhvalov). Contributed to the *Physical Training* panel for the Soviet pavilion at the World Exhibition in Paris (1937). During the siege of Leningrad (1941–1944) created the commonly known series of paintings *Leningrad During the Patriotic War*.

"Despite the unavoidable criticism of Pakulin in press, his landscape series was in a way the face of blockaded Leningrad and was shown at all Soviet exhibitions – at the exhibition of Leningrad artists in Moscow in 1942, in Kiev in 1944, at the "Heroic Front and Home Front" exhibition in Moscow in 1943, the "Leningrad in the Days of the Blockade" exhibition in Gorky in 1943, and the All-Union Exhibition of Victory in Moscow in 1945." (A. Strukova. "Leningradskaya peizazhnaya shkola. 1930–1940-e gody". GALART, Moscow, 2011, p. 229).



Pestinsky, Boris Vladimirovich

1901, Vladivostok – 1943, Tashkent

Painter, graphic artist, pedagogue, gerontologist. Studied at the Geographical Institute (1920) and the State Free Art Studios/VKhTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1919–1925) under Dmitry Kadrovsky, Alexander Savinov, Vasily Savinsky and Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. His diploma works were *Skiers* and *Dispute* (location of both works unknown), as well as *Portraits*. Contributed to exhibitions (from 1923). Member and exhibitor of the Commune of Artists (1928–1930), Association of Artists of Russia (1928), Guild of Leningrad Artists (1932). Worked as a researcher at the Geographical Institute (1920–1922); a zoologist at the Leningrad Zoological Garden and at the Lakhta Excursion Station; at the Museum of the Nature of the Northern Coast of the Neva Bay; as a graphic designer and illustrator at Krasnaya Gazeta Publishing House and the magazines *Vokrug Sveta*, *Yuny Proletary* and *Leninskie Iskry*. In March 1932, he was arrested and sentenced to exile in Central Asia for three years (freed 21 March 1935). Lived in Bek Budi (currently the city of Qarshi), and then in Tashkent, where he worked as the head of the herpetology department at the Uzbek Zoological Garden, Scientific Committee Council of Peoples' Commissars of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic. Member of the Union of Artists of the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic (1938). Taught in the Drawing Department, Central Asian Industrial University (1938, assistant, art history and drawing). Headed the Fine Arts Studio of the Central Palace of Pioneers in Tashkent (1938–1943).



Petrova-Trotskaya, Ekaterina Mikhailovna

1900, St Petersburg – 1932, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, theatrical designer. Studied at the girl's high school in Kolomna; School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts, under Vasily Belyaev at the State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS in Petrograd (1920–1924) and at Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's studio. During her studies met Emmanuil Kaplan, a musical theatre director and Vsevolod Meyerhold's follower. Jointly with him staged for the Conservatory Opera Studio: *Sky and Earth* by Mikhail Steinberg (1925), *Bastien and Bastiene* by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1925, shown at the Salzburg International Festival) and *Koschei the Immortal* by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1926). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1928). Member and exhibitor of the Circle of Artists (from 1928). Wife of the constructivist architect Noel Trotsky, sister of the film director Vladimir Petrov.



Petrov-Vodkin, Kuzma Sergeevich

1878, Khvalynsk, Saratov Province – 1939, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, art theorist, writer, teacher. Studied at Fyodor Burov's classes of painting and drawing in Samara (1893–1895), Baron Stieglitz Central School of Technical Drawing in St Petersburg (1895–1897), under Abram Arkhipov and Valentin Serov at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1897–1904), at Anton Ažbe's School in Munich (1901) and at private academies in Paris, including Filippo Colarossi's studio (1905–1908). Took up writing in 1890. Contributed to exhibitions (from 1897). Contributed to the exhibitions of the Salon d'Automne in Paris (1906–1908), Sergei Makovsky Salon (1909), Union of Russian Artists (1909), Golden Fleece (1909), Izdebsky Salon (1909–1910), Union of Youth (1910), World of Art (1911–1924; member from 1910), First State Free Exhibition of Art Works (1919), Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (1923, 1928), exhibition of paintings by Petrograd artists of all trends (1923), Fire-Colour (1924), Four Arts (1925–1929; member from 1925). Taught at Elizaveta Zvantseva's School of Art in Petrograd (1910–1917), professor and head of the personal studio at the State Free Art Studios in Petrograd (1918–1922), professor of the Painting Department, VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN/Institute of painting Sculpture and Architecture (until 1932). Lived in Paris (1924–1925). Author of the *Samarkandia* book (1923). Worked on the autobiographic trilogy: *Khlynovsk. My Story* and *Euclidian Space. My Story* (unfinished, 1930). Member of the Union of Artists (1932; first Chairman of the Leningrad Branch). Honoured Artist of the RSFSR (1930).



**Poret, Alisa (Alla,
Alisa-Ekaterina-Ada) Ivanovna**

1902, St Petersburg – 1984, Moscow

Painter, graphic artist, book illustrator, worked in decorative and applied arts and monumental art. Studied at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts (1917–1919) and under Alexander Savinov, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin and Pavel Filonov at VKhTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1921–1925). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1925), including the First Exhibition of Leningrad Artists (1935), 6th Exhibition of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists (1940), *Self-Portrait* (Tretyakov Gallery, 1977), solo exhibition (Tretyakov Gallery, 1979), *Soviet Art of the 1920s and 1930s* (Russian Museum, 1988), and others. Member and exhibitor of the Circle of Artists (1926), Masters of Analytical Art (1926–1941). Participated in the collective work of Filonov's followers: a panel for the House of Printing (1927, *The Destitute, or the Lumpenproletariat*; Tatyana Glebova's Prison is on the second half of the canvas); did design work for the Karelian-Finnish epic *Kalevala* (Academia Publishing House, 1932–1933). From 1926–1933, she created several works with Tatyana Glebova, including illustrations for over 16 books. Worked in the Children's Department of Gosizdat (from 1924; under Vladimir Lebedev); at the magazines *Chizh* and *Yozh*; at the Lomonosov Porcelain Factory in Leningrad; and at the Chamber of Commerce (books and trademarks). Began illustrating children's books in 1927 and illustrated more than 40. The first illustrator for the Russian translation of A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh*. Was evacuated to Sverdlovsk (1942–1945); moved to Moscow in 1945. Was friends with Daniil Kharms (1930–1933), and in 1980 published *Recollections of Daniil Kharms*. Kept a sketchbook her whole life, parts of which have been published as *Alisa Poret: Writings, Drawings, and Recollections*. Barbaris, Moscow, 2013.



Priselkov, Sergei Vasilyevich

1892, Kamyshlov, Perm Province – 1959, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, theatrical designer, author of papers in art history, teacher. Studied in the Physics and Mathematics (1911) and History and Philology Faculties, St Petersburg University (1912–1918, completed 4 courses), simultaneously attended the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts; for some time worked in the private workshop of Lev Dmitriev-Kavkazsky and in the New School of Dmitry Kardovsky; studied at the First State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS in Petrograd (1918–1922, from 1919 under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, received certificate of completion in 1923). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1921). Member and exhibitor of the Union of New Trends in Art (1922); Community of Artists (1924–1929, member from 1923). Member of the Union of Artists (1932). Published drawings in magazines. Worked as an assistant designer at the Theatre of Music Drama (1916–1917); designed performances *Stenka Razin*, *Le Bourgeois gentilhomme* and *The Barber of Seville* for the Theatre of New Drama (1920–1921). Completed works commissioned by the Decorative Institute (Petrograd, 1919). Taught at the Higher State Free Art Studios (1921–1922, drawing); VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN/Ilya Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1922–1959), Professor (from 1925), headed the administrative unit (1932–1933), Dean of the Painting Faculty (1935–1937), engaged in organisation of the Special Graphic Faculty (dean from 1948). Associate professor, Ph.D. in Art History. In 1929 together with his wife Stella Vengerovskaya was named in a case of the "Voskresenie" right intellectuals conspiracy ("Alexander Meyer case"), exiled to Arkhangelsk. In 1932 was allowed to return to Leningrad and reinstated in a job at the Ilya Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture.

Sergei Priselkov is the closest thing to a successor to Petrov-Vodkin's pedagogical activities. From 1922–1925 he taught the general (preparatory) course using Petrov-Vodkin's programme, and in the 1925–1926 academic year developed a 1st year course in a special discipline for the main section "Colour in painting materials: its rules and depictive effect. Subjects of observation".



Proshkin, Viktor Nikolaevich

1906, Oboyan, Kursk Province – 1983, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, book designer. Studied at the School of National Economics in Kharkov (1921–1923); Nikolai Starozhevsky's School of Art (1920–1923); under Vasily Savinsky, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, and Alexei Karev at VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN in Petrograd (1924–1930). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1931). Member and exhibitor of October (1929–1930); Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (1930–1932). Founding member of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists (1932; member of the board of governors in 1937–1942; Executive Secretary of the board of governors in 1938–1945). Decorated the city (1930s); artist of the Volodarsky District (1934–1938). Contributed to the committees of Lenizo, Vsekokhudozhnik, State Purchasing Committee, from 1938 – Committee for Arts Issues; Deputy Chairman and Chairman of the City Committee of IZO (1934–1937); member of the Regional Committee of RABIS (1937–1938). In 1942 sent on mission to the partisan headquarters in Malaya Vishera, Leningrad Region. Taught at the Leningrad Institute of Industrial Construction (from 1938, drawing); Leningrad Higher School of Art and Industry (from 1948, in 1951 – founded the department of general painting). Professor (1967). Husband of Victoria Belakovskaya, brother of Anatoly Proshkin (1907–1986) who studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin in 1926–1927. The exhibition *St Petersburg Dynasty: Victoria Belakovskaya (1901–1965), Anatoly Proshkin (1907–1986), Viktor Proshkin (1906–1983), Vladimir Proshkin (born 1931), Marianna Proshkina (born 1939)*. *Painting and Watercolour* was held in Moscow and St Petersburg in 2004 (Exhibition catalogue. St Petersburg, Moscow, 2004).



Samokhvalov, Alexander Nikolaevich

1894, Bezhetsk, Tver Province – 1971, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, book designer, sculptor, architect. Studied in St Petersburg in Yakov Goldblat's classes for preparation to the Imperial Academy of Arts entry trials; Faculty of Architecture, Higher School of Art under the Imperial Academy of Arts (1914–1917); under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at the State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS in Petrograd (1920–1923). In 1923 applied for enrolment in the Research Workshops of the Academy of Arts with the *Spectral Synthesis. Concise Extraction from Experience in Systemisation of Painterly Issues* theoretical paper. Contributed to exhibitions (from 1917). Member and exhibitor of the World of Art (1917), Fire-Colour (1924), Circle of Artists (1926–1929), October (1930–1931, Chairman of the Painting and Sculpture Section of the Leningrad branch). Member of the Union of Artists (from 1932; 1932–1937 – member of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists board of governors; 1939–1941 – Deputy Chairman of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists; from 1950 – Honorary member of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists board of governors). As an illustrator collaborated with Vladimir Lebedev, stood at the origins of children's book design. Taught at the Leningrad Higher School of Art and Industry (1948–1951, Professor). Awarded a gold medal at the International Exhibition in Paris (1925) for an agitation poster; grand prix for book graphics, grand prix for monumental painting and gold medal for an easel painting (*Girl in a Football Jersey*, 1932, Russian Museum) at the International Exhibition in Paris (1937). Honoured Artist of the RSFSR (1967).

Alexander Samokhvalov's diploma work is given in VKhUTEIN's documents as "In the Interior" (genre), while at the Fire-Colour exhibition in Moscow (1924) this same painting was called "Interieur with Figures". The picture later received the name "Head Washing" from Petrov-Vodkin (Alexander Samokhvalov. "Moi tvorcheskyy put'". Khudozhnik RSFSR, Leningrad, 1977).



Sasko (née Solovyov), Maria Andreevna

1882, Warsaw – ?

Painter. Graduated from Alexandra Duchinskaya's high school for girls (1900); studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at Elizaveta Zvantseva's School of Art (1917); in Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's personal workshop at the State Free Art Studios in Petrograd (1918–1922). In 1922 enrolled as a candidate in the Research Workshops of the Academy of Arts, but almost did not work there. Contributed to exhibitions (from 1923). There are no other data regarding Sasko's creative work. It is known, that on 30 July 1904 she married Georgy Sasko (1880–1938). On 22 March 1938 her husband, an economist, was arrested on the charge of anti-revolutionary activities (Articles 58-10 and 58-11) and died on 19 December 1938 in the Kryazh prison during investigation; rehabilitated in 1991.



Sekirin, Nikolai Petrovich

1899, Ivanovo-Voznesensk – 1962, Ivanovo

Painter, graphic artist. Born to the family of a chaser, practiced this profession; member of the Union of Metal Workers (1918–1924). Served at the Ivanovo-Voznesensk ammunition depot and in the Red Army (1918–1921). Studied at the Art and Industry Workshops in Ivanovo-Voznesensk (1921–1923); under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin and Vasily Savinsky at VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1923–1927, in 1924 changed the common course to the Easel Department of the Painting Faculty); diploma work *Pioneer Camp* study (Scientific and Research Museum of the Russian Academy of Arts), as well as thesis *Landscapes by Alexander Ivanov* recommended for publishing "after detailed workout". After he received the title of painter returned to Ivanovo. Taught at the Mark Malyutin Art School in Ivanovo (1930–1946). Painted landscapes, still lifes, pictures dedicated to life and work of Ivanovo textile workers, and portraits; created a series of paintings dedicated to history and revolution; contributed to Moscow and regional art exhibitions. In 1959, a solo exhibition dedicated to the 60th birthday of the artist was held in the club of the Zinovyev Factory in Ivanovo.



Shikhmanova, Favsta Nikolaevna

1880, St Petersburg (?) – (?) arrested on 16 December 1937

Painter, graphic artist; her few famous paintings are mostly landscapes and portraits. Studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at Elizaveta Zvantseva's School of Art (1910s); State Free Art Studios in Petrograd without a tutor (1918–1922); attended Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's workshop (1922). Presumably, *View onto Obvodny Canal* (1922 (?), collection of Pyotr Aven, Moscow) was her diploma work. Contributed to exhibitions in Petrograd: Young Artists (1917), Free Studio Society (1917), World of Art (1917, 1918), First Free Exhibition of Works of Art (1919). Chairperson of the Free Studio Society (1916–1917). Member of the "left wing" of the Union of Art Workers (1917–1918). *Favsta Shikhmanova was born into an aristocratic family. She received her general education at the private girls' gymnasium of Lyubov Tagantseva. Her grandfather, Yakov Shikhmanov (1796–1877) was a full admiral and Hero of the Defence of Sveaborg. Her father, Nikolai Shikhmanov (1840–1904), a retired seaman, kept himself busy looking after domestic affairs and was the chair of the Russian Bee-keeping Society. The Shikhmanovs were closely related to the very wealthy Ratkov-Rozhnovs, and therefore, as a representative of the family, he was Chairman of the Management Board of the "Samolet" company as well as a number of other enterprises. There is not very much information available about the artist herself. It is known that in a decision from the Painting Faculty approved by the Management Board of the Academy of Arts on 7 September 1922 she received the title of artist for the "artistic rendering of her painting" (Research Archives of the Russian Academy of Arts, collection 7, series 8, rec. 2997, sheet 5 (with her name written as "Faveta")). We also know that on 16 December 1937 she was arrested. There is no further record of her.*



Shur, Yakov Mikhailovich

1902, Soloki Village, Kovno Province (now Salakas, Lithuania) – 1993, Leningrad

Painter, author of dioramas; practiced decorative and applied arts. Studied at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts; State Free Art Studios/VKhUTEMAS in Petrograd (1920–1925) under Osip Braz and Alexander Savinov and under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin in the last years. Member and exhibitor of the Circle of Artists (from 1926). Member of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists (from 1932). Artist at the House of Sanitary Culture, designed the museum and educating exhibitions; decorated the city (1930s, chief artist of the Oktyabrsky District). Painted dioramas for Leningrad museums (1938–1939, from 1945). During the Great Patriotic War fought in the militia troops near Luga, later was attached to the House of Defense, contributed to masking of large objects. After the war, the family returned to Leningrad. The flat on Vasilyevsky Island where the artist had lived before was occupied by other people, and the pictures were lost. The artist was granted a room on the Tuchkov Embankment with the view onto the Malaya Neva River and the Peter and Paul Fortress. From 1948 practiced predominantly applied arts. From 1953 recommenced painting: painted cityscapes, in summer created studies in Ukraine and Belarus, after 1959 – in Ust-Narva. Up to 85 years old was an active member of the artistic board of the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists. The last years of the artist were marked by the creative upsurge: he painted about a hundred of small-scale lyrical landscapes.



Sokolov, Pyotr Ivanovich

1892, Moscow – 1937, Novosibirsk

Painter, theatrical designer, graphic artist, book designer, teacher. Attended Ivan Kopylov's studio of drawing and painting in Irkutsk (1912–1913); studied at private studios in Paris (1913–1914); State Free Art Studios in Petrograd (from March 1918 at the Architecture Department, from September 1918 in Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin's personal workshop). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1920). Taught at Benita Essen's studio (1923); Northern Faculty, Avel Yenukidze Oriental Institute (1926–1928). From 1930 worked as an artistic director of the State Academic Bolshoi Theatre (Moscow); designed for Soviet theatres (1932–1934). On 10 January 1935 was arrested in Leningrad, convicted of the "Kirov case"; served sentence in Dolinka, Kazakhstan. At the beginning of 1937 freed on parole. Collaborated with the Red Torch Theatre in Novosibirsk. On 3 December 1937 was arrested again on the charge of "implication in an anti-revolutionary rebel cadet and monarchy organisation" (Article 58), shot on 9 December 1937. Rehabilitated in 1957.

From the remembrances of Alisa Poret: "I studied in the Academy of Arts under Petrov-Vodkin. Chupyanov, Benita Essen, Lappo-Danilevsky, and Pyotr Sokolov were all in my last-year studio. Vodkin said of Sokolov that 'If I had one-tenth of his talent I would be at peace knowing that I could do something. Come, I'll show you his studio.' We climbed the cast-iron staircase to the upper floor. In the huge studio in front of a large brush stood a tall man with a negroid-type face. Petrov-Vodkin introduced us and asked Sokolov to invite me when he was going to do outdoor scenes. 'He'll teach you better than I can,' he said, leaving." ("Alisa Poret rasskazyvaet i risuet: iz alboma khudozhnika". Published by Vladimir Glotser. "Panorama isskustv". Issue 12. Sovetsky khudozhnik, Moscow, 1989, p. 405).



Tarnyagin, Ivan Alexandrovich

1904, Arefinskaya Village, Shenkursk District, Arkhangelsk Province – 1941 (perished at war)

Painter, monumentalist, graphic artist; author of genre paintings, landscapes. Studied under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin, Alexander Savinov and Vasily Savinsky at the Monumental Department, Painting Faculty, VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1923–1929); under Alexander Savinov as a post-graduate student of the Mass Production Department, Painting Faculty, Institute of Proletarian Fine Art/Ilya Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1930–1934). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1929). Member of RABIS (from 1923). Member of the Union of Youth of the Association of Artists of Russia; Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (1930–1931 – Executive Secretary of the Leningrad Branch of the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia, 1931 – member of the Central Board of the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia in Moscow); Leningrad Association of Proletarian Artists. Headed and taught at the IZO studio (former studio of the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia, 1929); pre-entry courses for workers, Institute of Proletarian Fine Art (1930). From 1934 editor of *LenIZOGIZ. Going to Work* was put out in mass editions in the IZOGIZ publishing house (1931, Leningrad).

One of Petrov-Vodkin's students remembers: "The talented Vanya Tarnyagin and Semyon Podorozhny lived in the dormitory and studied as if they were first-year students. Tarnyagin was from the north. His teachers and fellow students found his work to be very strong, but his life? He was very reserved, rarely would he laugh. It's a shame if he was unhappy." (Research Archives of the Russian Academy of Arts, collection 19, series 1, rec. 12. "Vospominaniya khudozhnitsy Anastasii Vasilyevny Garevoi. 28 April 1965, Novgorod, sheet 74 verso).



Verbov, Mikhail Fyodorovich

1900, Ekaterinoslav – 1980, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, monumentalist, genre artist, landscapist, portraitist. Studied at VKhUTEMAS in Moscow (1921), transferred to the State Free Art Studios in Petrograd (finished in 1925). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1925). Member and secretary of the Circle of Artists (1926), contributed to all its exhibitions. Member of RABIS (from 1929). Member of the Union of Artists (from 1944; applicant from 1932). Stamp operator at a tannery (1919–1920); joined the Red Army (1920–1921). Taught at a reformatory (1920s), Art Industrial College in Leningrad (1929–1934).

At the exhibition of graduates of the Academy of Arts in 1925, Verbov exhibited two still lifes in oil in addition to his diploma work "Composition" and drawing "Roofer" ("Katalog vystavki zaklyuchitel'nykh rabot studentov Leningradskoi Akademii khudozhestv". Academy of Arts, Leningrad, 1925, p. 7, Nos. 6 and 7). We can confidently assume that the still lifes in this publication signed and dated 1923 were part of that exhibition. In 1935, at the First Exhibition of Leningrad Artists, the Russian Museum acquired "Portrait of a Senegalese Woman". (Later, in connection with the policy of increasing the "battle against formalism", it was returned to the artist, and has not survived.)



Vlasov, Vasily Andrianovich

1905, St Petersburg – 1979, Leningrad

Graphic artist, draughtsman, lithographer, illustrator. Father of the artist Boris Vlasov. Received his first artistic education from Ilya Repin. Studied at Alexander Savinov's private studio; under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin and Alexander Savinov at VKhUTEIN (1925–1927); under Leonid Trauberg and Grigory Kozintsev in the Cinema Department of the Higher State Courses of Art History, State Institute of Art History (1927–1928). As an illustrator entered the close circle of the followers of Vladimir Lebedev. Subjected to repression and exiled (1932–1934). Artist at the Lenfilm studio (art director of the "Vyborg Side" film, 1938), contributed to Detgiz and Lenizdat publishing houses. Created wartime posters (1941), member of the editorial body of the Leningrad Headquarters of the Partisan Movement at the Volkhov Front (1942–1944). Painted portraits, posters and other propaganda material – *Anti-Fascist Playing Cards*. Taught at the Leningrad Institute of Engineers of Communal Construction (1934–1940); art studio of the House of Architects (1934–1940); Ilya Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (1944–1946); studio at the Leningrad Cinema House (1946–1952). Illustrator, created a series of nude drawings, drawings and lithographs on the subjects of sport and circus (1960s–1970s). Wrote memoirs (Manuscript Department of the State Russian Museum). Solo exhibition dated to the centenary of the artist was held at the exhibition hall of the St Petersburg Branch of the Union of Artists.



Yakobson, Alexandra Nikolaevna

1903 (1905?), Irkutsk – 1966, Leningrad

Graphic artist, children's book illustrator, autolithographer, painter. Studied under Ivan Kopylov at the First State Art Workshop in Irkutsk (1920–1925); under Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin and Alexander Savinov at the Monumental Painting Faculty, VKhUTEIN (1925–1930) combining his studies under Pavel Filonov (1925–1929). Member of SORABIS (from 1923). Contributed to exhibitions (from 1934). Member of the Union of Artists (1941). Worked at the Detgiz publishing house, design department headed by Vladimir Lebedev (late 1920s–1930s); Experimental Polygraphy Workshop (1938–1940). Leading Leningrad illustrator of Russian fairy tales and children's books in the post-war period. Author of the famous lithographic cycles: *Novgorodchina*, *Street*, *Chastushki* (Humorous Rhymes). Solo exhibition at the Leningrad Branch of the Union of Artists (1957).



Zernov, Alexei Ivanovich

1891, Tushitovo, Bezhetsk District, Tver Province – January 1942, Leningrad

Painter, graphic artist, teacher. Born to a peasant family, studied at a parish school. Being a teenager, worker as a shepherd. Ran away to the city, set to different jobs: gofer in a small shop, newsboy, draughtsman in the Bessarabian Railways Administration (1917–1918). Studied at the School of Drawing, Society for the Encouragement of Arts (1908–1913); under Alexander Bely at the Art and Craft Studios, Society for the Encouragement of Arts (1921) and under Alexander Savinov and Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin in the Faculty of Painting, VKhUTEMAS/VKhUTEIN (1922–1926). Member of the Union of Education Workers (from 1917); Council of the Student Section of the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia, senior student of the studio (1923–1924). Taught at schools and orphanage in Petrograd (1921–1924), art clubs, secondary schools and higher educational establishments in Leningrad. In his work of the 1930s, he developed an individual pointillist method: combination of surfaces covered with black and coloured points with solid colour filling and pieces of white paper. He worked for "himself", did not exhibit his works, felt the repression period keenly (his brother, an ordinary carpenter, was arrested). It was conveyed in *Accident* (1937, collection of Alla Esipovich-Roginskaya) and in unrealised paintings of critical orientation. Died of hunger during the siege.



Zhukova, Vera Ivanovna

Circa 1890, St Petersburg (?) – after 1918, Petrograd (?)

Painter. Studied under Léon Bakst, Mstislav Dobuzhinsky and Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin at Elizaveta Zvantseva's School of Art (late 1900s – early 1910s). Member of the Free Studio Society (1917) and SORABIS (1918). Sister of the scientist and physicist Ivan Zhukov (1880–1949) who received the Mendeleev Prize of the Russian Society of Physics and Chemistry at the age of 28; later – corresponding member of the Academy of Sciences of the USSR.

"And then there was Vera Zhukova. Her appearance was somewhat strange – she wore trousers and styled and cut her hair like a boy's (back when it was not common), and always had a cigarette between her lips... She was intelligent and had received a broad education. It is assumed that N. L. liked her because she could discuss various philosophical topics, and also because she was an avid supporter of equal rights for women – two qualities that were sorely lacking in all of the other artists she knew." (Private archive. A. V. Lermontova, "Biografiya N. V. Lermontovoi. p. 16)"

* The person in the photograph is presumed to be Vera Zhukova



Mstislav Dobuzhinsky and
"Zvantseva's students".
1912 (?)
First row sitting (left to
right): Anosova (?), the
third – Evgenia Kaplan (?),
Mstislav Dobuzhinsky,
Elizaveta Zvantseva;
second row standing (left
to right): the second –
Natalya Grekova, Magda
Nakhman, Klimovich (?),
Yulia Obolenskaya



Mikhail Noskov (right) with his brother. 1910s

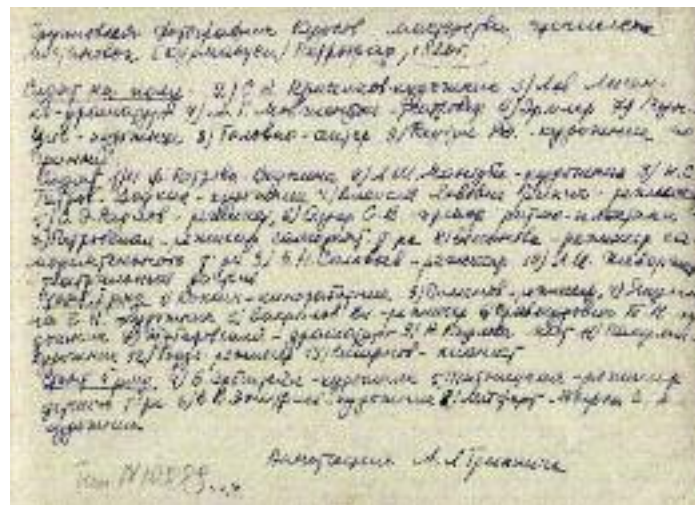


Evgenia Evenbach (left) with her friend. 1910s



Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin with his students (Zvantseva's School). 1913
 First row sitting (left to right): Magda Nakhman, Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin;
 second row standing (left to right): Natalya Grekova, the third – Klimovich (?),
 the sixth – Yulia Obolenskaya, Vera Zhukova (?), Elizaveta Zvantseva,
 Nadezhda Lermontova, Raisa Kotovich-Borisyak





Students of the Stage Production Courses. 1920
St Petersburg Museum of Theatre and Music

Sitting on the floor:

- 2) Sergei Priselkov – artist,
- 3) Lev Lisenko – playwright,
- 4) Alexander Movshenson – dramatic historian,
- 6) Mark Ermler,
- 7) Muncis – artist,
- 8) Golovko – actor,
- 9) Rudolf Raugul – make-up artist.

Sitting:

- 1) Maria Petrova-Vodkina,
- 2) L. Sh. Mantugi – artist,
- 3) Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin – artist,
- 4) Alexei Gripič – director,
- 5) Sergei Radlov – director,
- 6) S. V. Auer – teacher of rhythmic and plastics,
- 7) Petrovskaya – director of an amateur theatre,
- 8) Bessonova – director of an amateur theatre,
- 9) Vladimir Solovyov – director,
- 10) Lev Zheverzhev – art worker.

Standing in the first row:

- 1) Kokkin – cinema worker,
- 3) Pimenov – director,
- 4) Elizaveta Yakunina – artist,
- 5) V. Bakhrylov – director,
- 6) Tatyana Pravosudovich – artist,
- 7) Tugеровsky – playwright,
- 9) Anna Radlova – poet,
- 11) Vyacheslav Pakulin – artist,
- 12) Godz – director,
- 15) Smirnov – pianist.

Standing in the second row:

- 4) Boris Erbshtein – artist,
- 5) Pyatnitskaya – director of a theatre for children,
- 6) Vladimir Dmitriev – artist,
- 8) Elena Leifert-Tyrsa – artist.



Academy of Arts. Group of students of the Monumental Department,
Painting Faculty. Between 1926 and 1929
First row (left to right): Maria Lomakina, Ivan Tarnyagin, Lyudmila
Ronchevskaya; Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin (in the centre);
second row (left to right): Nina Petrova, Elena Aladzhalova (?),
Olga Safonova, Elena Khmelevskaya, Mikhail Mikhailov, Olga Bogdanova



Monumental Department, Painting Faculty. 1928
Alexander Savinov and Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin in the centre



In Benita Essen's studio. Early 1920s
Benita Essen (right), Vasily Vlasov (second from right)



Painting class of Professor Kuzma Petrov-Vodkin. 1927

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Abbreviations

INPII – Institute of Proletarian Fine Art
KURMASTsEP – Stage Production Courses
NA RAKh – Research Archives of the Russian Academy of Arts
OR GRM – Manuscript Department, Russian Museum
PGSKhUM – Petrograd State Free Art Studios
RGALI – Russian State Archives of Literature and Art
SORABIS (Rabis) – Union of Art Workers
VKhUTEIN – Higher Art and Technical Institute
VKhUTEMAS – Higher Art and Technical Studios
VOLFILA – Free Philosophical Association