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SUMMARIES

THE NEWS IN THE EYES OF THE CRITICS

Boika Donevska

With its first creative realizations the Association of New Artists initiated one of the most modern movements in Bulgarian artistic culture during the 1930s. Regarding the artistic views of the *News* there exist a number of publications in spite of the fact that the history and role of the Association in the general context of our visual culture of the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s has not been properly researched. The changes in the political, social and artistic discourse during the different historical periods have led to controversial critical views on their role and place in the artistic processes in the country. Or in other words – the key points that disclose their presence in contemporary art life have been limited to the social position in art of some of the representatives of the *News*, the concentration of the expressive possibilities of the artistic expression and their point of view towards the problem of tradition.

The aim of the present study is to trace the changes in the ‘camera’s point of view’ towards these changes in a number of typical for the critical reflection of those times research. The

accents in the critical reflection of the activities of the *News* exemplified itself quite clearly in the book *New Bulgarian Art* by Nikola Mavrodinov, *The Realism in New Bulgarian Art* by Ljuben Belmustakov, *Bulgarian Revolutionary Graphics* by Atanas Bozhkov, *Chronicles of a Dramatic Decade* by Dimitar Avramov; in the thematic issues of the journals *Art* and *Art Studies Quarterly*, etc. that have been published till the middle of the 1990s. Place in a reverse historical perspective the critical views become quite indicative of the specifics of the social and cultural climate of the times. In the long run the simultaneous study of this critical dialogue helps us define the phenomena from the distance of the present day.

THE ‘NEW ARTISTS’ AND POWER (ANOTHER ATTEMPT OF A NEW INTERPRETATION OF OLD TEXTS)

Tatyana Dimitrova

The article examines one of the aspects of the history of the Association of New Artists (1931-1944) – the connections and relations between the association and state power in Bulgaria. Analyzed are documents of the period of existence of the society and about

it – photographs from exhibition openings of the association, press materials, the statute of the society.

On the basis of the documentary material the author concludes that between the Association of New Artists and state power existed quite good, constructive cooperation. Chronologically wise the examination of the problem *News* and state power is not limited to the time of the association’s existence. It also includes the years following the society’s breaking up. Noted also is the period when the Association of New Artists was not mentioned at all in any publications – that was the period 9.09.1944 till the end of the 1950s. Subject of analysis are also the different, often changing, official versions about the Association of New Artists during the beginning of the 1960s.

„ABOUT THE TREASURER – GOOD OR ANYTHING”. NOTES ON THE „TREASURER’S BOOK OF THE ASSOCIATION OF NEW ARTISTS”

Maria Miteva

The period of the 1930s and 1940s was a time of comparable processes in Bulgaria and the leading European states regarding culture. The Association of New Artists was a spokesman of these

processes in the sphere of the fine arts. The short academic study is based on unknown to researchers up to now document – the “Treasurer’s Book of the Association of New Artists” found in the archive of the Union of Bulgarian Artists. The financial document covers the period 1936-1943, it has to sections – revenues and expenditures, contains also annual protocols from revisions of the control commission of the Association. Besides the book-keeping data and also due to the service as a cashier of the different members of the union from this book we learn numerous facts concerning the membership of the association, the exhibitions that they have organized, the sales, the different loans, celebrations, etc. The lacks of research regarding the art market in the country during that period of time make this book a valuable source of information. With its help the text clarifies the dynamics of art life during that period. Revealed is the gradual but adequate comprehension of the stylistic expressions of the *News*. The study offers many facts that enrich the cultural life of the country at that time that were organized by the Association (the celebration of the 100 year anniversary of Paul Cezanne, exhibition of children’s paintings, etc.). Getting to know the authentic archive materials gives a chance to adequately study the period and more concretely the place and role of the Association of New Artists.

THE IMPORTANCE OF A RETROSPECTIVE. THE EXHIBITION ASSOCIATION OF NEW ARTISTS (1931-1944). 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT AT THE SOFIA ART GALLERY, 2011-2012

Milena Balcheva

The Exhibition *Association of New Artists (1931-1944). 80th Anniversary of the Establishment* at the Sofia Art Gallery is a good occasion to present a different, new view on the activities of the Association. It offers a chance to discuss important questions connected with the development of Bulgarian art during the 20th century. Its realization has one main aim: to reveal as much as possible the art of the *News*, to recreate the creative work of the Association. This great exhibition includes over 500 paintings, sculptures and graphics by 66 authors. Along with the well known and popular works by au-

thors, such as Boris Angelushev, Kiril Tzonev, Bencho Obreshkov, Nikolai Shmirgela, Vaska Emanuilova, Ivan Nenov and many others – authors that have become emblematic for the Association the curators also present a number of unknown and unpublished works, property of many private collectors. Such are the exhibited works by Eliezer Alsheh, Todorka Burova, Kocho Garnev, Bronka Gjurova, Boris Kolev, Preslav Karshovski, Georgi Pavlov-Pavleto, David Perez, etc. In contrast to the retrospective exhibition of 1981 this exposition directs the attention of the audience in two directions – artistic and documentary. The presented documents – photographs, letters, newspapers and journals with review materials from the time of the existence of the Association offer a possibility to the audience to get the flavor of the age of the *News*.

PLOT TREATMENT OF THE FIGURE COMPOSITION IN THE CREATIVE WORKS OF THE NEW ARTISTS (1931-1944)

Tanya Staneva

The study aims to clarify the problems connected with the plot treatment of the figure genre in the context of the creative ideas of the artists – members of the Association of New Artists. The text analyses, examines the main parameters of the genre – the plot, imagery, environment, composition, relationship work-viewer. On the basis of all this a notion of the general tendency and character of the figural composition created during the period from the 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s is presented.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STILL LIFE IN BULGARIAN ART OF THE 1930s

Kristina Dineva

Still life became popular in Bulgaria at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. One of the first artists to work in this genre was Constantine Velichkov, Petko Klisurov, Nikola Avramov, Elissaveta Konsulova-Vazova. By using the artistic-visual principles used by the Bulgarian artists in the beginning of the century the still life turned into a powerful generator of stylistic and formal plastic prob-

lems in the creative work of the New Artists during the 1930s.

As this was the case with the West European artists at the end of the 19th century, still life turned into a unique creative laboratory for the Bulgarian artists from the 1930s. The genre became a starting point for the elaboration of different art problems connected with composition, perspective, form, use of color. As a result of this the New Artists constructed a new type of pictorial system and enriched the genre structure of Bulgarian art.

Almost all artists from the Association of New Artists work in the genre of still life – these were Bencho Obreshkov, David Peretz, Ivan Nenov, Boris Ivanov, Eliazer Alsheh, Vera Nedkova and many others. During the 1930s for the first time in Bulgarian art working in the genre of still life started to be perceived as a pictorial-compositional ‘picture’ problem. Bencho Obreshkov was one of the first Bulgarian artists who openly declared the problem of the painting as a creative category with his still lives.

„ECCE HOMO” BY KIRIL TZONEV – NEW RESEARCH ON THE CREATIVE WORK OF THE ARTIST IN MUNICH

Valery Lalov

Kiril Tzonev in Munich – this is an infinite subject of artistic research. New research on the creative work of Tzonev led to discoveries concerning his paintings as well as archive materials. The great number of new aspects, elaborated on the basis of this material opened up new perspectives for analysis of the creative personality of Tzonev. The present study does not aim to generalize all these aspects but to underline the need of an in-depth view in the details of each one of them, inspired by the portrait of Vladimir Dimitrov Maistora by Kiril Tzonev.

During the study of these well known facts and on the basis of the newly discovered information the analysis logically starts off with the detailed description which points out the key points of this research. The description of the components of the painting shows not only the wonderful skills of the artist Kiril Tzonev but also, comparing it with other works of the same artist, numerous stylistic characteristics.

An additional contribution in widening the possibilities for interpretation of the portrait of Vladimir Dimitrov Maistora were offered when comparison with the artistic works of other authors were made. The subject of the portrait is compared with images of ancient philosophers and proportions. Biographical data supplement the analysis of the painting. Subject of study are the close friendship, spiritual ties and fruitful exchange of ideas between Maistora and Tzonev.

The comprehensive description made of the painting's details present an unknown up to now inscription on the canvas: *Ecce Homo*. This inscription allows for a much more complex interpretation. In order to understand it one has to make an iconographic review of *Ecce Homo* as a motive in art. This analysis offers a possibility for a comprehensive interpretation of a remarkable portrait painted by Tzonev. It is enriched with a mighty message but also proves the creative genius and intellectual might of the artist – a merited chairman of the *News*.

THE UNKNOWN PAINTING HERITAGE OF DIMITAR DRAGANOV

Plamen V. Petrov, Ramona Dimova

The present text aims at presenting the almost unknown as to the general audience as well as to the scientific com-

munity heritage of the painter Dimitar Draganov who becomes a member of the Association of New Artists in 1943. Dimitar Draganov's name has already found its position in the history of the Bulgarian fine art. In spite of that, his life and work remain fragmentary known under the wide spread in our country political doctrine and the imposed ideological platform at that time.

Dimitar Draganov makes paintings without a break during all his path of life. His first preserved painting (known to us) is „Sozopol” (oil paints) of 1936 and his latest attempt at the brush and colour has left the aquarelle untitled (still life with flowers). The main subjects the painter was excited by are cityscape and village landscape as well as the still life. His preferred techniques are oil paints and aquarelle. When he works with oil he uses phaser and rarely canvas. In reference to the colouring Draganov does not resort to an excessive. On the contrary, he often lays pure colours. Despite the great number of his works, toady there is no state collection in our country to posses painting by Draganov in its fund. The generalized examination allows us to say that the „hidden” by the artist himself painting work could be considered as an opposition to the graphic heritage appeared from under his (especially the work created later than the mid forties of the 20th century).

BULGARIAN EXHIBITION IN NEW YORK (1938)

Galina Dekova

The article focuses on a moment of Boris Elisayev's life and artistic development, but also on an interesting episode of the history of Bulgarian art abroad. It points on a Bulgarian event in New York which should not be one of many manifestations of cultural exchange between Bulgaria and USA right in the face of coming WWII. It is the “all-bulgarian exhibition” which was opened on the 23th of January 1938 at the Gallery Fifteen.

The bulgarian painter Boris Elisayev arrived in the USA in July 1937 with his wife, the American Arline Aldridge, whom he met the year before in Warsaw and whom he had married in Bulgaria. He found appreciation in the American art world and many of his works have been showed at a variety of exhibitions at The Art Institute of Chicago. Through the Bulgarian exhibition in New York later some works by the artists Ivan Nenov, Vasil Zakariev and Veselin Staikov were included in the 5th International Exhibition of Etching and Engraving. The Bulgarian exhibition as an example of an American-bulgarian dialogue could be helpful for tracing the Bulgarian and American processes of alignment to modern European art and its perception in during the 1930s.