The wonderful work of Olga Belopitova

Associate Professor Dr. Vanya T. Popova, art critic

The young Olga Belopitova studied with the classics of Bulgarian fine arts Prof. N. Petrov, and after graduation she became close to another classic, Boris Angelushev. These people are the best representatives of the European and in particular the Bulgarian intelligentsia and were educated in the most renowned institutions of Europe before the inclusion of Bulgaria in the orbit of the USSR in 1944. Thus, in addition to the stratum of artists who blindly obey communist ideology, in Bulgaria circles are created in parallel, which continue the wonderful European traditions and push the development of art to much wider horizons, to individuality, humanity and experimentation in art. This is the real environment in which the young artist and her taste are formed. There are several circumstances: the happy combination of her curiosity and sharp observation with family circumstances and the influence of the best minds and artists on her.

She is a typical painter for whom color and light are most important, whether it is a portrait, still life, seascape or cityscape. Of course, she went through the classical training of drawing with lines, shapes and light shadows and perspective, as can be seen from some of her earlier works, such as "Portrait of My Mother", made in the best realistic traditions. Some of her husband's portraits, also in this style, are presented in the same pose, but with a difference in age. As a portraitist, she captures the most characteristic of both age and individuality and radiance.

The color and its development are also the leaders in the still lifes of the artist, as again she avoids presenting the elements in detail and volume. In some cases they are only hinted at both in shape and color and are minimally treated, the flowers are depicted in their characteristic range, but also summarized and in many cases on a contrasting background. Olga Belopitova often turns to the elliptical shape of the composition or the niche in which the flowers and vases are beautifully placed. The artist has discovered and transmitted an admirable number of finds in the genre of still life. In the first place are some unusual combinations, such as that of a high-hanging wall clock with a low round table and objects on it; more black pianos and armchairs as an unusual still life against the lighted hatched red wall; or the still life with two bottles and the shadow of the higher one. In other cases, it is played on the contrast between the miniature dimensions of the objects and the large frame, or on the obliquely placed stand; or the unsteady sloping line of stacked sunflowers We can also see fish that still seem to be swimming in the sea, even though they are placed on a board on a table or in a plate on the windowsill. These are not the usual still lifes in the usual interpretation, but the personal discoveries in the search for the unusual stylistics of the artist. Over the years, the artist has experimented, as can be seen from the different styles in the images of trees, but never copied something blind, something fashionable or officially appreciated.

On the contrary, very soon she began to look for her place and her own style, as a result of which a whole gallery of portraits appeared, mostly of young women. The only exception is a middle-aged woman with a beret. with very characteristic, almost caricatured features and ¾ head posture, which demonstrates what a wide range of opportunities a portraitist had. But most of the images represent beautiful ladies in a natural pose opposite, whose only richer accessory is a wide-brimmed hat, shading dark eyes without pupils and often hiding the direct view of the viewer. These women look amazingly like the then Western and Bulgarian movie stars and actresses with their aesthetics in clothes, demeanor and personal life. They are very far from the then official ideal because they are attractive, mysterious, elegant and confident. In addition, the color of clothes is usually very richly developed, on a completely neutral or, conversely, on a contrasting background. Olga's women are something new and personally introduced into the fine arts of the era in Bulgaria, reflecting her herself in her young and middle years.

The maturing of the nuances of the color, its pastiness and monochrome in separate sections are even more pronounced in the landscape. There are almost never human figures in it, and small houses are rare. Everything is dominated by the sky, which is never clear, clear and cloudless, but on the contrary - colorful, stormy or saturated with the colors of the sunset. The sky unites not only the color composition, but also reflects a piece of the whole cosmos. This spirit is not exactly melancholy, it is not exactly loneliness, but it is the connection known to every thinking being to something very majestic beyond human scale; not exactly harmonious, but often menacingly rising in the dramatic red-pink or saturated turquoise skies. If the sea is at the bottom, it complements the overall harmony of tension with its colors. The details on the shore are minimalist, the boat looks like a discarded white shell and even the clouds are generalized and sparingly conveyed.

One of the favourite compositional techniques of the artist in the landscape is a short time in a strong perspective right opposite the viewer and the land with a very low horizon. Interesting for her is the contrast between the straight lines drawn by man and the strict geometry of the plowed or sown fields on one side and on the other the dome of the sky and the natural shapes of the hills and mountains. As simple as it may seem, the path is always designed in color in close tones, inviting to mysteriously walk on it and reach its end, probably in both the literal and figurative philosophical sense. The spirit of these landscapes is completely different from the portraits and still lifes of Olga Belopitova, very powerful and influential not in a feminine way, but also very unexpected. Probably in her middle and late years the artist has strengthened this sense of strength and power and herself, which literally erupts in her landscapes, most likely the fruit of her own development and under the influence of many years of collaboration with another Bulgarian artist, I. Vukadinov, with whom she makes a number of successful exhibitions in the country and abroad.

Finally, we must note a more private type of landscape, in which it also brings something distinctive - to the urban landscape, especially from Italy and Turkey. The artist uses the technique of sketching, but brings it to the final version of the painting. She chooses a single element or group of buildings and the first and most basic impression of them to build a composition similar to a child's play. But again the color, now monochrome in the brown-yellow palette, now polychrome, with separate developed bright spots, now with a whitish snow field and gray sky build the vision. Certain receptions of Cézanne and Fauvism undoubtedly had an impact during her travels in Europe, and her canvases acquired greater sonority and saturation, another of Olga Belopitova's many faces.

Her contemporaries remembered her as an elegant, intelligent artist with penetrating deep eyes, and viewers can see how unusual and diverse were her opportunities for self-expression, self-improvement and individuality for the rest of her life.