

**Art of the
Avant-Garde
in Russia:**



**Selections from
the George Costakis
Collection**

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by Margit Rowell and Angelica Zander Rudenstine

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

Published by

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation,

New York 1981

ISBN: 0-89207-29-3

Library of Congress Card Catalog Number: 81-52858

© The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, New York, 1981

Cover: El Lissitzky

Untitled. 1919-1920 (cat. no. 138)

EXHIBITION 81/4

10,000 copies of this catalogue,
designed by Malcolm Grear Designers,
have been typeset by Dumar Typesetting
and printed by Eastern Press

in September 1981 for the Trustees of
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation
on the occasion of the exhibition

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Preface

The name of George Costakis has been well known throughout the art world for some time. A citizen of Greece who had spent his entire life in the Soviet Union, he accomplished the extraordinary and unique feat of amassing a private collection of twentieth-century Russian and Soviet art in which the great names of the avant-garde are often represented by numerous works and in a variety of media. Over the years, many a visitor from abroad was privileged to visit the Costakis apartment to find exquisite examples illuminating a little-known chapter of modern-art history. The works were hung or merely placed in an informal and unselfconscious setting over which the collector-proprietor presided with authoritative knowledge and unflagging enthusiasm.

Visitors who came in 1977 or thereafter could no longer see the entire collection in George Costakis's home. But during the 1977 ICOM conference, it was possible to glimpse a few examples from it in a segregated area at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. It was subsequently announced that about eighty percent of Costakis's art holdings was to remain at the Tretyakov as the collector's generous gift to the country that, his Greek citizenship notwithstanding, had always been his own. Costakis and virtually his entire family emigrated with the remainder of the collection and settled in Athens.

The first public showing of the part of the collection brought out of the Soviet Union was arranged in 1977, almost immediately upon its arrival in the West, by Wend von Kalnein, then director of the Düsseldorf Kunstmuseum. This event, together with a slide presentation of the collection at the Guggenheim Museum in 1973, indirectly resulted in the current exhibition.

Many visits, first to the Costakis home, then to the Tretyakov Gallery and eventually to Düsseldorf, were made by Margit Rowell, Angelica Rudenstine and myself. They led us to approach Costakis with a proposal to entrust the collection now in the West to the Guggenheim Museum for thorough study, conservation and documentation as necessary preliminaries to a selective exhibition at the Guggenheim and subsequent extended circulation to other museums under our auspices. Mr. Costakis agreed to this undertaking, and Margit Rowell, as Curator of Special Exhibitions, with Ad-

junct Curator Angelica Rudenstine, brought the project to its present stage. Both engaged in extensive scholarly research in order to arrive at the carefully considered selection on display and to produce a catalogue rich in new and reliable information. That other Guggenheim staff members, who are acknowledged elsewhere in this publication, have provided essential support does not in any way diminish the importance of the contributions of the co-curators.

The part played by George Costakis as collector and lender is too obvious to be belabored in this preface, but it should be stressed that the owner of this extraordinary collection remained in close touch with all aspects of the project, freely providing valuable, previously unpublished data and asserting a lively interest though not a determining voice throughout the process of selection.

The Guggenheim Museum has embarked upon this project, as it has upon comparable exhibitions in the past, in order to contribute to the expansion of knowledge of the twentieth-century art that remains outside the already codified and by now familiar mainstream. The collector's willingness to enter into a professional relationship with the Guggenheim Foundation represents his response to our initiative.

I therefore take great pleasure in expressing the Guggenheim's gratitude to George Costakis for joining in a friendship that we hope will endure long beyond the occasion of the current exhibition.

Thomas M. Messer, Director
The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation

Acknowledgments

Many scholars and friends have generously shared their knowledge of the Russian and Soviet field with us. Among them we would particularly like to thank the following individuals without whose invaluable assistance we could not have produced the present exhibition and catalogue:

Vasilii Rakitin, the Soviet art historian, provided us with extensive biographical information about the artists and a checklist of many of the works in the George Costakis collection. Much of the information he supplied has been incorporated into the catalogue.

Translations were undertaken by Chimen Abramsky, Sarah Bodine, Christina A. Lodder, Tatyana Feifer, Arina Malukov, Marian Schwartz, Eleanor Sutter and Steven Wolin.

Christina A. Lodder, by generously putting her manuscript, *Constructivism: From Fine Art into Design* (New Haven, Yale University Press, 1982), at our disposal, provided us with illuminating insights and information in the field of Constructivism.

We are further grateful to the following scholars and friends for their contributions to our research: Nina Berberova, Sarah Bodine, John E. Bowlt, Ellen Chances, Jean Chauvelin, Sophie Consagra, Cleve Gray, Alma H. Law, Arina Malukov, Jean-Claude Marcadé, Marc Martin Malburet, Zoia Ender Masetti, Andrei B. Nakov, Dmitrii Sarabianov.

We would also like to thank present and former members of the Museum staff and the intern program who have made vital contributions:

Philip Verre coordinated all aspects of the exhibition and assisted us in innumerable ways from the inception of the undertaking: it could not have been brought to a successful conclusion without him.

Elizabeth Funghini helped to prepare the initial inventory. Lucy Flint and Ann Husson contributed research and handled demanding technical and organizational matters with extraordinary dedication. Saul Fuerstein and his staff, Joan Insa, Robert D. Nielsen, William Smith, tackled intricate and delicate framing requirements and successfully solved innumerable logistical problems over a long period of time.

Anne Hoy, editor of the catalogue, has provided sensitive and thorough guidance and expertise

in the face of an unusually demanding production schedule.

We are grateful to Antonina Gmurzynska, Cologne, and a private collector who prefers to remain anonymous for lending works formerly in the Costakis collection.

Finally, to the appreciation expressed by Thomas M. Messer, we would like to add our thanks to George Costakis. The opportunity to work with his collection has been a rare and incomparable experience for us both.

M.R. and A.Z.R.



George Costakis seated in living room of his Moscow apartment, 1974

The George Costakis Collection

by Angelica Zander Rudenstine

Georgii Dionisevich Costakis was born in Moscow, of Greek parents, in 1912, the third of five children. His father, Dionysius Costakis, had emigrated to Tsarist Russia in about 1907, seeking his fortune. He settled in Moscow, where there was a sizable and flourishing Greek community, joined a large tobacco firm, and within a few years had become the owner of the entire business.¹

Costakis's mother also belonged to the world of Greek tobacco interests: her father, Simeon Papachristoduglu, had been a highly successful tobacco merchant in Tashkent who had married into the well-known aristocratic Sarris family. Though he had then lost his fortune and abandoned his wife and children, they had — through Sarris connections — been taken in by a Greek official living in Moscow who provided them with upbringing and education.

When the Bolshevik Revolution came in 1917, the Costakis family, like many other Greeks, remained in Moscow. They were not supporters of the Bolshevik cause: as pious orthodox Christians they could be expected to oppose it on religious grounds alone. Furthermore, they — like many others — did not expect the regime to last. As time went by, and their expectations were disappointed, they accommodated themselves to new conditions.

As George Costakis was growing up in the 1920s, the Bolsheviks were restructuring the entire educational system. Lenin's aim had been to raise cultural standards, and to expand literacy through mass education, but the actual situation during these years (when open admissions were established, but admissions quotas were simultaneously instituted for the bourgeois) was one of confusion and limited opportunity. Costakis's family was of some cultivation (his mother knew six languages), but he had little in the way of formal schooling. By the time he was seventeen years old, in 1929, he was clearly expected to be independent. Fortunately, his older brother Spiridon (who was, interestingly enough, a national motorcycle racing hero) helped him to find a job in the Greek Embassy. Later Costakis obtained a position at the Canadian Embassy, where he remained for the next thirty-five years — his entire working life.

During the same year that Costakis began his embassy career, 1929-1930, Kazimir Malevich had a one-man show at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow; Vsevolod Meierkhold produced *Klop* (*Bedbug*) by the poet Vladimir Maiakovsky, with designs by Alexandr Rodchenko, and *Babi* (*Bathhouse*) with designs by Alexandr Deineka; the director Dziga Vertov presented his Constructivist film *Man with a Movie Camera*. But these events went unnoticed by the young Costakis, and — to be sure — by most of his contemporaries. Indeed, the

1. Facts about Costakis's life are published in much greater detail by S. Frederick Starr, to whose research I am indebted (R., S., C., *Costakis*, pp. 26-51). My own research, like his, has been extensively based on interviews with Costakis himself.

avant-garde movement in the arts was by then waning. Costakis had been far too young to witness its dynamic flowering between 1915 and 1922, and he was not attuned to the succession of events that signaled its approaching end. In 1929–1930 Maiakovsky committed suicide; a retrospective of the work of Pavel Filonov, scheduled to open at the Russian Museum in Leningrad, fell victim to conservative opposition and was canceled; Anatolii Lunacharsky, the cultural minister (director of the People's Commissariat of Enlightenment, *Narkompros*), who had been a sympathetic supporter of much that the avant-garde movement represented, resigned. In 1931 the Russian Association of Proletarian Artists formulated its conception of art as ideology, “a revolutionary weapon in the class struggle,” and in 1934 Socialist Realism was adopted as the exclusive style for all forms of Soviet art. The era of the avant-garde had come to a close.

Meanwhile, Costakis at age nineteen had married Zinaida Panfilova, a bookkeeper at the Java Tobacco Factory. They settled modestly in a one-room apartment in Moscow, and he began to show the first signs of becoming a collector. The fields he chose were conventional: Russian silver, porcelain and sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Dutch paintings. Within a decade, he had amassed a considerable collection in these areas. Two important factors helped in the thirties and early forties to produce a favorable climate for collecting, and they gave added impetus to Costakis's natural inclinations. First, the Government, which desperately needed foreign currency in order to purchase industrial machinery, had from 1928 ordered massive sales of paintings and antiques to foreign buyers; simultaneously, it also encouraged sales to Soviet citizens who could buy similar items in state-owned “commission stores.”² Second, art collecting was entirely legal in the Soviet Union, and — because currency fluctuations were then so volatile — investments in art and antiques were highly desirable.³

This environment was totally transformed, of course, by the severe hardships of World War II. Indeed, by the end of the War, extreme conditions of poverty and famine, and shortages of all kinds had forced most people — including Costakis — to sell much of what they owned in order to acquire food, clothing and other vital necessities. Costakis at this point still had a collection of about thirty Dutch pictures, but he was beginning to tire of them: their somber colors depressed him, and he no longer derived great satisfaction from owning them.

He entered the field of the avant-garde quite by accident.⁴ One day he was shown a brilliantly hued abstract painting by Olga Rozanova, an artist of whom he had never heard. Its impact upon him was instantaneous: “I was dazzled by the flaming

colors in this unknown work, so unlike anything I had seen before.” The identity of the artist, her origins, the historical and aesthetic environment from which she came — all these became the subject of immediate inquiry. Costakis sold his entire collection and began what would become a thirty-year quest for the works of the avant-garde and for information about the history of the movement.

There were a number of reasons why that history was essentially a closed book in 1946. The most compelling reasons were of course political and ideological. The Bolshevik regime had initially encouraged the ambitions of the avant-garde to create a major revolution in art, comparable in its implications to the political revolution which had just been achieved. Kandinsky, Malevich, Rodchenko, Vladimir Tatlin, Osip Brik, Viktor Shklovsky, Nikolai Punin and others were placed at the top of the new artistic hierarchy — in charge of the Government's Section of Fine Arts — and were asked to “construct and organize all art schools and the entire art life of the country.”⁵ As Lunacharsky later claimed: “No other government has responded so well to artists and to art in general as the present one.”⁶

This situation, however, lasted only a short time. The avant-garde was of course a minority among artists, and they soon became deeply divided even among themselves. Innumerable disagreements and dissensions developed along aesthetic and intellectual lines. In addition, Lunacharsky's official support for this revolutionary cadre came under attack from the very start. As early as 1920, there was significant organized opposition from within the artistic community: many artists felt that the avant-garde's formal, abstract approach was far too limited in its appeal, that its work was essentially unintelligible and that the complete break with the past advocated by the Section of Fine Arts was destructive rather than regenerative. Lunacharsky's attempts to mediate were in the end ineffective, and Lenin finally insisted on a reduction of the authority of the avant-garde group.⁷ This was the beginning of official political opposition to the avant-garde — an opposition which grew steadily over the course of the next decade and more.

It would be a mistake, however, to ascribe the disintegration of the avant-garde entirely to political attitudes and events. As mentioned before, the hostility of other artists was a significant force — quite apart from the fact that the different groups within the avant-garde movement scarcely tolerated one another. In addition, Costakis and others have long held the view that under the pressure of these various antagonisms, some members of the avant-garde began to suffer a serious loss of confidence in their own methods and goals. Once the initial period of enthusiasm and activity — particularly the

2. Starr's discussion of the history of collecting in Russia provides much new information on this subject. *Ibid.*, pp. 22–26.

3. R., S., C., *Costakis*, p. 30.

4. The earliest reports about Costakis's collecting activities were in the press. Notable among over two hundred articles are: Hermann Pörzgen in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, No. 110, May 13, 1972; Bruce Chatwin in the *Sunday Times Magazine*, London, May 6, 1973. See also

Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf, *Werke aus der Sammlung Costakis, Russische Avantgarde 1910–1930*, 1977; and Douglas Davis in *Art in America*, Nov–Dec. 1977.

5. “Otchet o deiatelnosti Otdela izobrazitelnykh iskusstv,” *Vestnik narodnogo prosveshchennia soiuza severnoi oblasti*, Nos. 6–8, 1918, p. 87, quoted by V. D. Barooshian, “The Avant-Garde and the Russian Revolution,” *Russian Literature Triquarterly*, fall 1972, p. 348.

years 1913–1924 — had passed without favorable public response, many of them found it difficult (not surprisingly) to sustain the same degree of conviction that had characterized their original efforts and formulations. Far from advertising the art of their early years, some of them turned away from it: they transformed their styles, and neglected and, in some cases, even lost or destroyed the work of their youth. In this way the “record” of the avant-garde suffered yet another form of destruction: in addition to the incalculable losses caused by sheer political suppression, there was the cumulative damage that resulted from the change in attitudes and feelings on the parts of artists themselves.

In this connection, it is important to note that one of the leading art critics and theoreticians of the movement, Nikolai Tarabukin, whom Costakis met several times, shared Costakis’s view on this point. Tarabukin had abandoned hope that the avant-garde would ever be revived, and he agreed that his compatriots had suffered significant blows to their self-confidence as their achievements went unappreciated by both the public and by the Bolshevik regime.⁸

It is of course impossible to determine the extent to which such changes in attitude were the result of simple fear in response to pressure and hostility, or of a quite human desire to conform, or of an actual loss of faith in the achievements of avant-garde art. All of these — and other — factors were undoubtedly at work. Meanwhile, ideological attacks on individual artists began in earnest during the early 1930s. The journalist V. Grishakin, for example, published an extremely critical article concerning Rodchenko’s photography in *Zhurnal-ist*, stating that Rodchenko’s use of various forms of “distortion” was in fact anti-Revolutionary. Osip Beskin published a book in 1933 entitled *Formalism in Painting*, in which the term “formalist” (synonymous with bourgeois decadence) was applied to a number of artists, including Alexandr Drevin. By 1938, Drevin had been arrested, and he was never seen again. Immediately thereafter, his wife Nadezhda Udaltsova destroyed every one of her own earlier works still in her possession.⁹

Costakis’s long, painstaking quest in search of the avant-garde, therefore, can without exaggeration be described as a private archaeological excavation. By the late 1940s, the names of many of the artists had been virtually forgotten, information about their very existence was difficult to find and many of their works had been packed away in attics, lost or destroyed. The chronology of the movement as a whole was uncharted. The various groups within the movement were little known and poorly defined: their stylistic differences, their various interrelationships, their philosophical, social and religious attitudes — all these and many other factors

required rediscovery and careful reconstruction.

In the course of his own collecting, Costakis gradually created his own “map” of the avant-garde terrain, and he eventually dated the beginning of the movement as ca. 1910. During that year, the newly established “Union of Youth” (*Soiuz molodezhi*) opened its first exhibition in St. Petersburg with the participation of, among others, David and Vladimir Burliuk, Natalia Goncharova, Pavel Filonov, Mikhail Larionov and Alexandra Exter. In Moscow, also in 1910, the newly established “Jack of Diamonds” group (*Bubnovyi valet*) held its first exhibition with the same artists, together with Kandinsky, Malevich, Aristarkh Lentulov, Alexei Morgunov, and many others. The artistic activity of those who later became prominent in the avant-garde obviously antedated 1910, and Costakis himself purchased some works that were painted during the previous decade. (See, for example, cat. nos. 1–5.) But his conviction that the innovative nature of the movement and its emerging self-consciousness as a “movement” date from about 1910 is certainly plausible. During the years 1910–1921, the artistic climate in Moscow and St. Petersburg (Petrograd) was characterized by continuous experimentation and an increasing preoccupation with the concept of an avant-garde. Constant and rapid developments in styles and theories were instantly reflected in the many exhibitions organized to bring new work to the attention of the public. Alliances were formed and broken, theories were formulated and revised, all at a remarkable pace. The exhibition catalogues of the period, the manifestoes and the reviews provide essential documentation of these changes, and it was partly to these documents that Costakis turned as he sought to learn the names and identities of the individual artists and the groups from this period. He soon concluded that the movement as a whole could in no sense be described in terms of “progress” or a clear line of “development.” Rather, it was, as the Soviet art historian Vasiliï Rakitin has recently described it, “a permanently mobile condition of the artistic consciousness of an epoch.”¹⁰

It is natural, as one looks back on the era, to seek to establish its various parameters, to fix important points and to define stylistic and philosophical issues in such a way as to suggest the steady development and even the coherence of events. Thus, for example, the first Futurist books by Velimir Khlebnikov and Alexei Kruchenykh, the invention of their transrational (*zaum*) language and the contemporary related alogical paintings of Malevich and Morgunov, all date from 1913–14. Malevich’s Suprematism was first articulated in theoretical and visual form on the occasion of the December 1915 *0.10* exhibition. The first moves towards a “constructive” definition of form oc-

6. Barooshian, p. 358, fn. 9.

7. *Ibid.*, pp. 355–57.

8. Costakis had several conversations with Tarabukin and others on this subject. (Interview with the author.) For extensive information on Tarabukin and his theory, see A.B. Nakov, ed., *Nikolai Taraboukine. Le dernier tableau*, Paris, 1972.

9. Andrei Drevin, son of the artist, related this to Costakis, and the facts

are confirmed by other sources. Some early works by Udaltsova were in other hands by 1938 and were thus preserved. Andrei Drevin also discovered a few additional early works after Udaltsova’s death, and — according to her wishes — offered them for sale to Costakis.

10. “The Russian Avant-Garde Movement. Freedom and Necessity,” unpublished manuscript, collection G. Costakis, trans. E. J. Cruise with A. N. Tiurin.

curred in Tatlin's reliefs of 1913–15, while the full emergence of Constructivism may be said to have occurred in 1920–21. Clarifications of this kind are extremely helpful — indeed, essential — and they serve to illuminate the landmark-moments of the period. They also, however, serve to blur the countless subtle and complex similarities as well as distinctions between one artist and another, and one group and another; they tend to overlook the variety of stylistic expression within any individual movement, as well as the often inexplicable and apparently unjustifiable stylistic changes within the work of a single artist.

It is important to remember, therefore, that when Costakis set out to build his collection, he had no established “framework” for the period. Rather, he approached the entire span of two decades as a vast panorama embracing a multitude of characters and events; he focused not simply on those which were “important” and even well-known, but also on those which seemed minor, or idiosyncratic or even insignificant. As he has often repeated: “The army was huge. Most art historians whom I met as I began to learn about the avant-garde told me of a dozen artists, or at most fifteen: Tatlin was mentioned, Malevich, Larionov, Goncharova, Exter, Kandinsky, Chagall, Lissitzky, and a few others. But these art historians had too narrow a view. There were Generals, Majors, Colonels, Captains, Sergeants, and — not to be forgotten — many foot soldiers. If you forget these, you do not understand the avant-garde. I collected the work of about fifty-eight artists; I'm sure that there were many more; probably three hundred.”

With this basic conviction, Costakis naturally tried to leave no stone unturned in his pursuit of the avant-garde. While he feels strongly that he missed collecting the work of many artists — through bad luck, unfortunate timing or lack of knowledge — his overriding principle was always to fill in the picture with more and more artists, and to show them in the various stages of their stylistic developments.

Very soon after World War II, in 1946, Costakis met Rodchenko and Varvara Stepanova, a couple who were to become his close friends. Rodchenko was at that point a quiet, depressed figure, who had — as Costakis put it — “totally lost confidence in his early work.” In his apartment, he exhibited works that he had painted in 1930–35 (circus figures, clowns), some late abstractions, but little else. Although Rodchenko continued to be fascinated by photography — an interest he had pursued all his life, and with special intensity during the 1920s and early 1930s — the rest of his creative achievement seemed to have lost all significance for him. Indeed, Costakis himself had not been especially aggressive in his acquisitions of

Rodchenko's early work. It was not until several years later, after Alfred Barr's visit to Moscow in 1956 (and in response to Barr's enthusiasm for Rodchenko's art), that Costakis began to purchase the artist's avant-garde work on a larger scale. Though he had always known about Rodchenko's leadership earlier in the century, he had somehow been influenced by the artist's own sense of demoralization. When he finally did begin to buy whatever he could, the works were difficult to find: he discovered one large painting that was being used — “face down” — as the covering for a table top; he unearthed the last surviving *Hanging Construction* of ca. 1920 in a pile of old newspapers lying in a storage space. Meanwhile, Rodchenko continued to be surprised at any interest shown in his avant-garde achievement — almost to the time of his death in 1956.

Of Stepanova, Costakis says: “She was the general of the family; very masculine, very strong. I didn't like her work as much and I acquired very little; but now I think I was wrong. She was a fine artist.” Tatlin was also an early acquaintance. Costakis met him in Moscow in 1949, and used to visit him in Petrovsky Park where he lived in a squalid apartment. Costakis remembers him as bitter, demoralized and critical of almost all the early members of the avant-garde. Rodchenko was one of the few artists he praised, one of the few he regarded as truly creative. Through Tatlin's memories, Costakis gained an insight into some of the fiercest antagonisms of the Revolutionary era, the deep intolerance of one artist for another, the passion and intransigence with which philosophical and aesthetic convictions were often held.

Costakis's early search for the work of Olga Rozanova brought him to the poet Kruchenykh, whom he came to know very well. Kruchenykh lived in the same apartment as Udaltsova — she in a room to the left, he to the right, with toilet facilities between. His room was about ten feet square, and contained only a chair, a sofa and a table. Every remaining inch was taken up with papers and books piled helter-skelter, waist high upon the floor. Kruchenykh talked of the poetry of Khlebnikov, of literature and philosophy, but never of his young wife Rozanova who had died so tragically in 1918. Her dramatic painting of 1917 — the *Green Stripe* (cat. no. 105) — had been given to Costakis as a present years earlier, but — search as he might — he was never able to find more paintings by this artist whom he regarded as perhaps the most gifted of all the avant-garde painters.

Liubov Popova's extraordinary stature was recognized by Costakis by the early 1950s. She, like Rozanova, had died while the avant-garde movement was still in full swing. Costakis, however, managed to meet her brother, Pavel Popov, a dis-

tinguished, elegant professor of philosophy who lived in a comfortable five-room apartment, and the two men became friends. Although Popov had a large collection of his sister's work, he had no deep appreciation of it. Costakis purchased literally dozens of paintings from him (later giving many of them away to friends); Popov often seemed somewhat relieved to see the large, cumbersome panels taken out of the closets where they were stacked. Costakis also came to know Popov's stepson and acquired most of his several hundred Popova drawings and gouaches from this source.

Gustav Klucis, who perished during World War II, was another early discovery for Costakis. The artist's widow Valentina Kulagina received Costakis warmly, and they came to know one another well. She is, as he put it, "a wonderful woman, beautiful, charming, one of the few widows of painters who really understood the quality of their husbands' contributions." She had by then already donated a considerable collection of her husband's work to a museum in Riga. She allowed Costakis to purchase much of what was left, including the single remaining "axiometric" painting (cat. no. 150). The art historian Nikolai Khardzhiev also appreciated the work of Klucis and shared Costakis's view of the Latvian's originality and brilliance. Few others did.

Ivan Kliun, whom Costakis had encountered once or twice about 1940 at exhibitions in Moscow, died in 1942. When Costakis began combing through exhibition catalogues in the late 1940s, he became convinced that Kliun was an important figure. He started to look for surviving relatives, and after many frustrating attempts, located one of Kliun's daughters. She was amazed and delighted to encounter, for the first time in her life, someone who was interested in her father's work. The dozens of drawings and watercolors in her possession had remained piled in unopened dusty packages for decades. Similarly, the paintings (stored with a sister) were stacked carelessly in corners. Costakis purchased everything by Kliun that he could find, although an incalculable number of the artist's works had been destroyed during the War, as had all of his early constructions—some of wire, others of wood.¹¹

During the 1950s, according to Costakis, it was difficult to find people who took the art of Rodchenko, Popova, Rozanova and Kliun seriously. As he gradually gathered the works of these artists into his apartment, he was often ridiculed by family and friends. Nonetheless, he continued to collect, increasingly confident about the importance of his venture. There were certain artists whose reputations he knew well, but whose works eluded him for many years, and others whose work he never found. Thus, although he was able rather

early on to purchase Malevich's *Portrait of Matiushin* from Nikolai Khardzhiev (who helped him in many ways), it was years later before he was able to purchase works from the collection of Malevich's brother.¹²

In the case of the painters in the circle of Mikhail Matiushin (see pp. 74–107), Costakis had known of the existence of Matiushin himself and of Boris Ender for many years, and he knew that Ender was still living in Moscow, a close friend of Khardzhiev. But Ender was reluctant to show his work, and Costakis was unable to make contact with him, in spite of many attempts. One day, Costakis was approached by a friend who asked him to come to the hotel where he was staying. When Costakis arrived, he was shown about a thousand watercolors by the Enders (Boris, Yurii, Mariia and Ksenia) and three oils by Matiushin, all of which had been recently bought from the Ender family in Leningrad. Costakis, who was instantly struck by the originality and quality of the paintings, purchased the entire collection on the spot, for a modest sum.¹³

Ivan Kudriashev was a close friend from the mid-1950s. Costakis initially felt no special interest in his work, but the two men often talked of Suprematism, of the City of Orenburg, of Unovis (the group founded by Malevich), and of Kudriashev's own experiences as a friend and follower of Malevich. Ultimately Costakis purchased virtually all the surviving early work of Kudriashev, although he readily acknowledges that he recognized its importance rather late.

Other discoveries also came belatedly in Costakis's collecting career. The "engineerists" Kliment Redko and Mikhail Plaksin lived into the 1960s, but Costakis never met them. His interest in their branch of the avant-garde enterprise (see pp. 305, 307–308) developed about 1965, and his friend the art critic Vladimir Kostin helped him to locate Redko's widow. She herself had only recently discovered her husband's work of the twenties (which he had hidden away and never shown her). As late as the mid-1960s, Costakis was still the first person interested in buying the art of this group.

Costakis had heard about Sergei Senkin's work, but he could scarcely find examples of it; Ermilov's he regarded as important but it too eluded him. He totally overlooked the Constructivists Konstantin Medunetsky, Alexei Babichev, Boris Korolev, Karel Jørganson, Nikolai Ladovsky and others, until he acquired the important Inkhuk portfolio from Babichev's widow in about 1967. He blames himself for not having sought them out earlier. (See pp. 226–227.)

Solomon Nikritin and Vasilii Chekrygin were also important discoveries for Costakis. They represented an aspect of the avant-garde characterized by spiritual tension, anxiety and romantic ex-

11 See cat. nos. 85, 192. Also R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 255–58, 289–90, 293–98.

12 See R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 474, 476–78, 480–82.

13 Approximately eight hundred of these works were later stolen from Costakis's home in the Soviet Union.

pressiveness. Like Plaksin and Redko, they also explored cosmic themes. Nikritin's work, in particular, became one of the major centers of his collection (with several hundred examples). Chekrygin, who died in 1922 at age twenty-five, left almost 1500 drawings, but very few paintings. Several of those which survived entered the Costakis collection.

• • •

This brief introduction has — necessarily — provided only a sketch of Costakis's collection and of his basic approach. His fundamental aim, over the course of more than thirty years, has been to represent as broadly as possible the full diversity of the Russian avant-garde achievement. Virtually every avant-garde artist who worked between ca. 1910 and the 1930s has, in his view, a legitimate place in the history of the movement, and each stage in an artist's career is worthy of study.

In arriving at our selection for the current exhibition, we have taken several important considerations into account. In contrast to the 1977 presentation of the collection in Düsseldorf, which demonstrated the breadth and scope of Costakis's present holdings, this second exhibition has a rather different focus: it is selective and concentrated in its approach, and it singles out a set of individual artists and groups for presentation in some detail. Many of the works in the exhibition are being shown in the West for the first time. Although much is omitted (the collection contains approximately 1200 items),¹⁴ our hope has been that through the particular orientation of our selection we will contribute to a fuller understanding of certain aspects

of the avant-garde than has been possible hitherto.

There are five areas of concentration here: the work of Popova, which is represented with unusual breadth in the Costakis collection; that of Kliun; that of Klucis; Matiushin and his school; and certain aspects of the discipline of Constructivism. In order to elucidate the contexts within which these works were produced, we have used seven conventional stylistic groupings in this catalogue. But in doing so, our intention is not to emphasize the theoretical or stylistic uniformity suggested by the headings. The label "Suprematism," for example, tends to blur the important distinctions that developed among the works of Malevich, Kliun, Popova and Rozanova, as they formulated their independent approaches to the basic issues embraced by the style. The varieties of approach that coexisted within every one of the avant-garde's innumerable groups and the mobility of the artists between one group and another must be borne in mind, and the headings given in the catalogue should therefore be understood as only general designations for what often constituted internally inconsistent and diverse tendencies.

Though we have included some examples of the figurative tradition, and some works illustrating the cosmic and technological utopianism of the 1920s in which Costakis has demonstrated extensive interest, we have not attempted to do full justice to these artists and their work. Given the complexity of the avant-garde movement as a whole, and the particular nature of Costakis's present holdings, we have chosen rather to place our emphasis upon a few, clearly discernible strands.

¹⁴ The precise number of works given by Costakis to the Tretyakov is not known. Costakis's present holdings, together with 125 of the works from the Tretyakov's Costakis holdings, are reproduced in R., S., C., *Costakis*

New Insights into Soviet Constructivism: Painting, Constructions, Production Art

by Margit Rowell

The selection from the George Costakis collection exhibited here offers surprises that challenge us to reexamine certain premises about the Russian and Soviet avant-garde as we thought we knew it. The exhibition contains substantial bodies of work by artists whom we knew partially, as well as lesser bodies of work by artists of whom we knew little or nothing. This fragment of the lifetime pursuit of an enlightened and impassioned *amateur d'art* provides us with a broader picture and a fuller understanding of a moment in the history of art that is fundamental to our comprehension of the art of our century.

A proliferation of exhibitions and publications over the last decade has given Western scholars unprecedented exposure to the art of pre-Soviet and Soviet Russia. At the same time, this exposure has engendered a sense of frustration because real understanding based on a complete grasp of the material continues to elude us. The works and documents that have come to the West are often fragmentary and without provenance, and sometimes have attributions that cannot be easily confirmed owing to our lack of knowledge. The immense value of the George Costakis collection is that it is the creation of a single man who was intimately involved with the art and the artists of the period 1910–1930 and who, in this context, brought together an enormous group of works in the Soviet Union, drawing only on primary or confirmed secondary sources.

As the present catalogue makes clear, the collection reveals many areas of formerly uncharted terrain in Russian avant-garde art. Among them, three areas that are particularly well represented seem to us worthy of discussion: the painting of Liubov Popova (1889–1924); the constructions of the Moscow Inkhuk (the Institute of Painterly Culture; 1918–1924) and the utilitarian or “production art” which represents the final stage (after 1921) of the Constructivist enterprise. Large bodies of works in the Costakis collection illustrate these diverse aspects of Constructivism, which heretofore have been difficult to define.

CONSTRUCTIVIST PAINTING: LIUBOV POPOVA

Up to now, American and European scholars have studied the art of Liubov Popova on the basis of works dating from the mid-teens to the early 1920s scattered throughout the West. Despite the sparseness of this material, it has been generally agreed that she was an exceptionally gifted artist. The approximately 160 of her works that George Costakis brought out of the Soviet Union (only a fraction of which are exhibited here) provide us with a fuller



fig. 1
Liubov Popova
Still Life. 1908
Oil on canvas, 29 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 21" (74.5 x 53.5 cm.)



fig. 2
Liubov Popova
Study of a Female Model. n.d.
Pencil on paper, 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 8" (27.1 x 20.2 cm.)

understanding of this artist's evolution and objectives; they are, as the Soviet art historian Dmitrii Sarabianov has perceptively suggested,¹ emblematic of the development of Russian and Soviet art between 1912 and 1924.

Early works by Popova in the Costakis collection include a large quantity of individual studies and five sketchbooks from the pre-War period. A few isolated pictures dated 1906–08² already show an instinctively sure hand and the clear brilliant palette that will characterize her production throughout her career. Although one sketchbook is dated 1914, some may represent the period 1907–08 when Popova was studying in Moscow with the painters Stanislav Zhukovsky and Konstantin Yuon. The academic exercises — portrait sketches and life studies of male and female models (fig. 2) — in these sketchbooks reflect the conventional form of artistic discipline that prevailed in Moscow as it did in every other European capital at that time.

Popova, who belonged to a wealthy and cultivated bourgeois family, traveled early and wide. Her first trips, starting in 1909, took her across Russia, to St. Petersburg, Kiev, the ancient cities of Novgorod, Pskov, Rostov, Suzdal, Pereslavl and others (famous for their icons), and then to Italy in 1910. Although she probably discovered Cézanne, Gauguin and the Impressionist tradition under Zhukovsky's and Yuon's guidance, her interest in

modern painting is thought to date from approximately 1912 when she entered Vladimir Tatlin's studio.³ That same year, she was probably introduced to Sergei Shchukin's great collection of modern French art in Moscow, as indicated by the Cézannesque sketches of foliage in the Costakis collection which predate her first trip to Paris in 1912 (figs. 3 and 4). Contemporaneous sketches of trees, some of which show a marked primitivism — in their use of heavy ink lines, almost childlike awkwardness and complete lack of perspective or illusionism — reflect her contacts with Natalia Goncharova, Mikhail Larionov and the "World of Art" group (*Mir iskusstva*) animated by Sergei Diaghilev in the 1890s (fig. 5). These studies show no attempt at verisimilitude but rather an effort to distill the fundamental structural patterns and organic rhythms of her subjects (fig. 6).

In the fall of 1912, Popova left for Paris where, along with the painters Nadezhda Udaltsova and Vera Pestel, she studied with the Cubists Le Fauconnier and Metzinger. Upon her return to Moscow in 1913, she worked once again with Tatlin and with Alexei Morgunov. In 1914, she traveled once more to France and Italy, but when war broke out, she returned to Russia.⁴

Beginning in 1913, Popova's studies of nudes became radically different from her earlier academic exercises. Some (fig. 7) make direct reference to

1. Dmitrii Sarabianov, "The Painting of Liubov Popova," in LACMA, pp. 42-45.

2. For example, fig. 1.

3. There she worked alongside the painters Viktor Bart, Kirill Zdanevich and Anna Troianovskaia. Sarabianov, in LACMA, p. 42.

4. The sketchbook dated 1914 contains copy drawings of mythological subjects and Baroque sculpture presumably made on this Italian trip.

fig. 3
Liubov Popova
Study of Foliage. n.d.
Ink on paper, 14 x 9⁷/₈" (35.5 x 22.5 cm.)



fig. 4
Liubov Popova
Study of Foliage. n.d.
Pencil and ink on paper, 14⁷/₈ x 8⁵/₈"
(35.4 x 22.1 cm.)



fig. 5
Liubov Popova
Study of Trees. n.d.
Ink on paper, 14 x 8³/₄" (35.5 x 22.4 cm.)

fig. 6
Liubov Popova
Study of Trees. n.d.
Ink on paper, 14 x 9⁷/₈" (35.6 x 22.5 cm.)



fig. 7
Liubov Popova
Study. n.d.
Pencil on paper on paper, 10½ x 8¼" (26.7 x 21 cm.)



fig. 8
Vladimir Tatlin
Study. 1912-14
Pencil on paper, 16¼ x 10¼" (43 x 26 cm.)
Collection State Archives of Literature and Art, Moscow

Metzinger's form of Cubist painting. Others (cat. nos. 15, 16), through the reduction of the body to a play of open, nested cones, appear to echo Boccioni's *Development of a Bottle in Space* (see p. 46, fig. b) which Popova probably saw in the Italian Futurist's Paris exhibition in the early summer of 1913. Still others may reflect Tatlin's influence in their rigorous structural and axial articulations which underscore the fulcrums of the body's movement (compare fig. 8 and fig. a, p. 51 with cat. nos. 10, 11).

The years 1914-15 may be identified as Popova's mature Cubo-Futurist period. At the outset, her paintings reveal her assimilation of Western pictorial devices; these gradually submerge in her later, more synthetic and autonomous style. The earlier works of 1913-14 show definite French and Italian influences: in her choice of subject matter, her palette (predominantly greens and browns), her disjointed geometric volumes and her weaving together of subject and environment through a continuous rhythmic pattern of modular forms. In some paintings, such as *Italian Still Life* of 1914 (fig. 9), she uses collage and letters from the Roman alphabet. Her *Portrait* (cat. no. 18) and the closely related *Philosopher* (fig. 10), both of 1914-15, contain Roman lettering as well.⁵

By 1915, however, by which time Russian artists had become acutely conscious of being cut off from the West by the War, Popova was using the Cyrillic alphabet, a more brilliant palette inspired by native Russian art and simulated wall-paper textures and patterns rather than real collage. Also by 1915, her swift diagonals, circular rhythms and arabesques softly highlighted with white echo those in Balla's 1913-14 studies of the effects of velocity and light, some of which were published in Boccioni's *Scultura pittura futuriste* of March 1914, which conceivably she could have seen. These devices structure her paintings quite independent of subject matter and recall Boccioni's introduction to his 1913 exhibition catalogue, where he wrote: "One must completely forget the figure enclosed in its traditional line and, on the contrary, present it as the center of plastic directions in space."⁶

The Russian encounter with French Cubism and Italian Futurism was timely in that the artists of all three countries were seeking the bases of a new formal language. In Russia, as in France and Italy, avant-garde painters and poets alike were investigating devices for breaking up traditional patterns of expression. In the summer of 1913 the poet Nikolai Kruchenykh enunciated the perspective that was shared by the visual artists: "A new content can only be obtained when we have worked out new devices, when we have worked out a new form. The new form therefore implies a new content, and thus it is the form that defines the con-

5. The letters "LAC" and "RBA" seen in the two Moscow paintings suggest a reference to the Italian magazine *Lacerba*, published 1913-15.

6. Umberto Boccioni, Preface, *Ière Exposition de sculpture futuriste du peintre et sculpteur futuriste Boccioni*, June 20-July 16, 1913, in Paris, Galerie La Boétie; translated and quoted in Robert L. Herbert, ed., *Modern Artists on Art*, Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1964, p. 49.



fig. 9
Liubov Popova
Italian Still Life. 1914
Oil, wax and paper collage on canvas, $24\frac{3}{8} \times 19\frac{1}{4}$ "
(61.9 x 48.9 cm.)
Collection Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow



fig. 10
Liubov Popova
The Philosopher. 1914-15
Oil on canvas, $22\frac{7}{16} \times 15\frac{3}{4}$ " (57 x 40 cm.)
Private Collection, Moscow

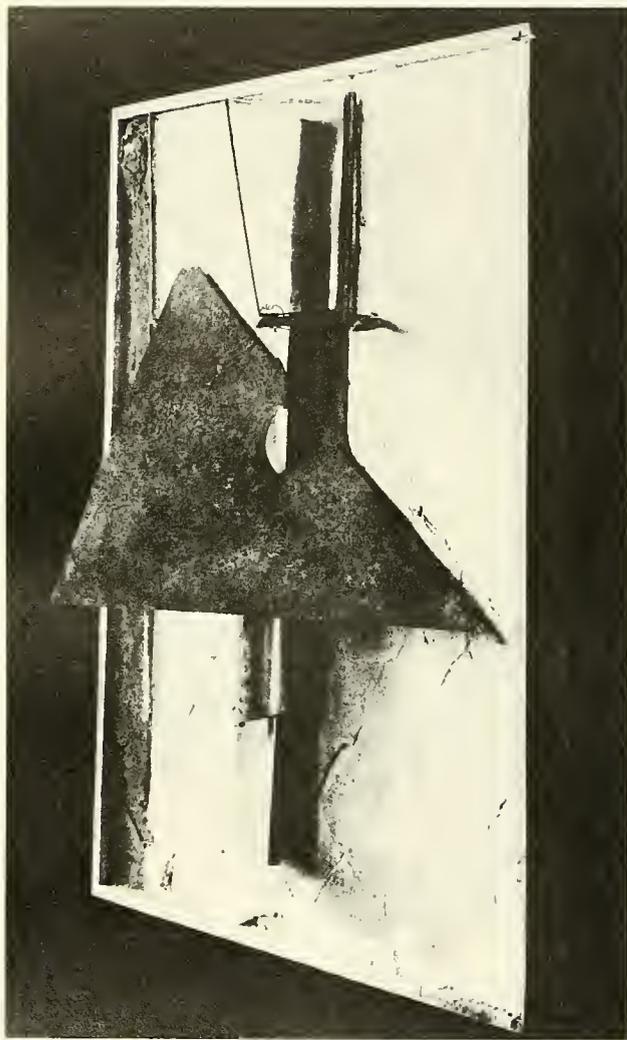


fig. 11
Vladimir Tatlin
Painting Relief. ca. 1914
Wood, metal, plastic and glass
Now lost

tent.”⁷ The orientation of both poets and painters as reflected here identifies content with formal structure, not with subject matter. Although the artists’ motivations and premises were quite dissimilar from one country to another (and indeed it may be said of Picasso and Braque that they had no theoretical program at all), the breakthroughs in the visual arts occurring in the West provided Russian artists with plastic devices for revitalizing their vocabulary and syntax, even though they rejected aspects of the French painters’ practice as “passive” and anecdotal, as opposed to “active” and “constructive.”

Tatlin’s visit to Picasso’s studio in Paris in the spring of 1913 and his encounter with Picasso’s constructions coincided with his own search for a way out of established pictorial conventions. By late 1913–early 1914, he was working on the abstract constructions he called “painting reliefs” and later “counter-reliefs” (fig. 11), possibly referring to their aesthetic position counter to conventional bas-reliefs. Little by little Tatlin elaborated a compendium of forms that he believed corresponded to the properties of his materials. According to principles he developed at this time, each material, through its structural laws, dictates specific forms. These forms exist in the simplest everyday objects. For example, the basic form of wood is a flat geometric plane; the basic form of glass is a curved shell or flat pane; the basic form of metal is a rolled cylinder or cone. Tatlin believed that these laws and their respective forms should be considered in the conception and execution of a work of art, and this would assure that the work would be governed by the laws of life itself. Only then could the work have significance, according to the new aesthetic and social imperatives regarding art’s function that were evolving during the pre-Revolutionary period in Russia.

Popova worked closely with Tatlin in 1912 and again in 1913, prior to her first trip to Paris and after her return from Western Europe. Her painting of 1914–15, *Portrait* (cat. no. 18), suggests a knowledge of his premises, even though the work remains figurative and has no three-dimensional elements added to its surface. The flat black planes, the curved conic shapes — which appear to project from the surface and enclose space — and the transparent zones in the lower foreground evoke the basic forms as Tatlin defined them for wood, metal and glass. The painting also recalls aspects of the work of Alexander Archipenko whose studio in Paris Popova visited during her 1912–13 sojourn in the French capital.⁸ She may have visited him again in 1914. Precisely at this time, the Ukrainian sculptor was working on mixed-media anthropomorphic constructions, using wood, metal and glass. In the same years Boccioni too was working on mixed media constructions, and he exhibited some of them in 1913 at the Galerie La Boétie.

7. Alexei Kruchenykh, “The New Paths of the Word,” in *Troe (The Three)*, 1913; translated and quoted by A. B. Nakov, Introduction, in Edinburgh, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, *Liberated Colour and Form: Russian Non-Objective Art 1915–1922*, Aug. 10–Sept. 10, 1978, p. 11.

8. Vasilii Rakitin, “Liubov Popova,” in *Women Artists of the Russian Avant-Garde*, p. 198.

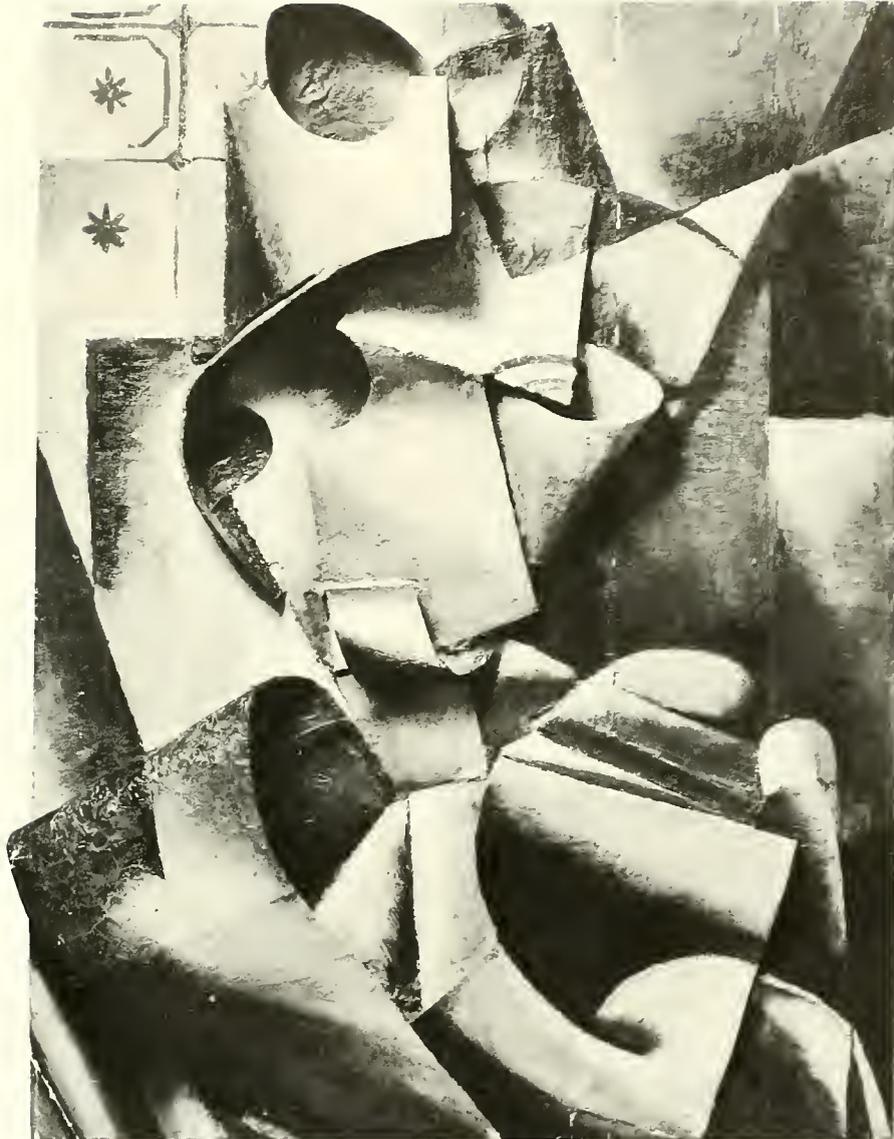


fig. 12
Liubov Popova
Relief. 1915
Painted papers on cardboard, 26 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 19 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
(66.3 x 48.5 cm.)
Museum Ludwig, Cologne (Ludwig Collection)

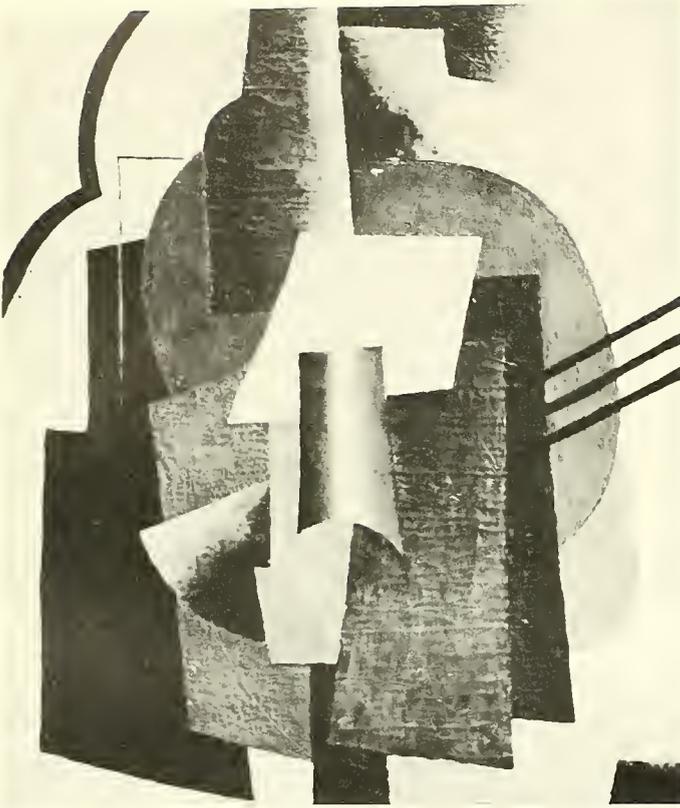


fig. 13
Liubov Popova
Architectonic Composition. 1917-18
Oil on canvas, 41 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 35 $\frac{7}{16}$ " (105.5 x 90 cm.)
Private Collection, Moscow

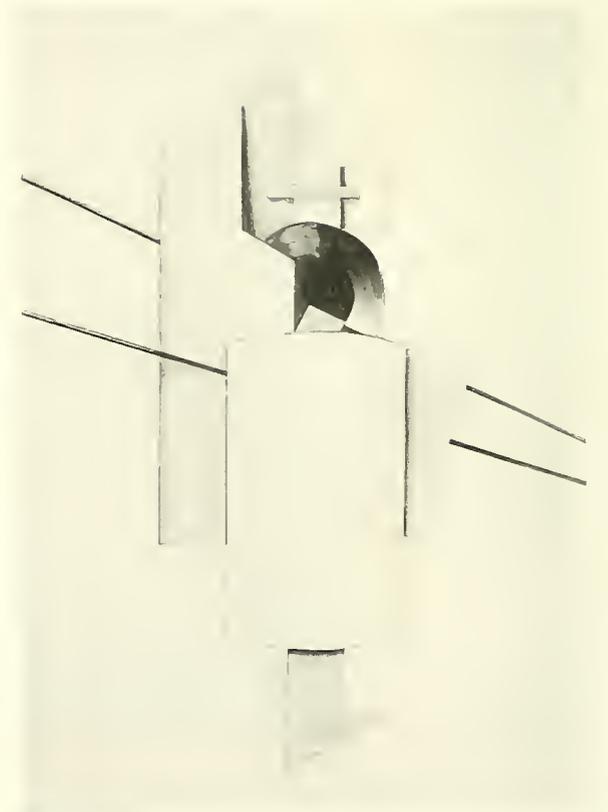


fig. 14
Vladimir Tatlin
Study for a Counter-Relief. 1914
Gouache and charcoal on paper, 19 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 13 $\frac{7}{16}$ "
(49.3 x 34.2 cm.)
Collection The Museum of Modern Art, New York,
Gift of the Lauder Foundation

9. As opposed to bas-reliefs. Two of these reliefs are still extant. *Jug on the Table* (see fig. c, p. 47), Collection Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow (ex-Costakis collection); and *Relief*, Museum Ludwig, Cologne (Ludwig Collection), fig. 12 here (cf. Tatlin's *Painting Relief*, ca. 1914, fig. 11). The third (fig. f, p. 47) is presumed destroyed but was reproduced in Arp's and El Lissitzky's *Kunstisimen* in 1925, fig. 62, p. 31, and there dated 1916. *Jug on the Table* is definitely dated 1915 and there is reason to think that the other two reliefs were executed the same year.

In 1915, Popova made three reliefs that are documented.⁹ Aside from the choice of forms and their projection from the wall, the works are unlike Tatlin's counter-reliefs. Popova's use of bright colors and painterly shading define these as "plastic paintings," as she chose to call them.¹⁰ They are "paintings in relief" belonging to her Cubo-Futurist mode, rather than works that can be called Constructivist, as Tatlin's work exemplified the term — that is, of specific forms dictated by specific raw materials.

In 1916, Popova's allegiance temporarily shifted away from Tatlin to the "Supremus" group which centered on Kazimir Malevich and included Ivan Kliun, Olga Rozanova, Alexandra Exter, Vladimir Markov, Udaltsova and Pestel among others (see fig. a, p. 110, and cat. no. 106). Yet Suprematist theory could not truly satisfy her because she was already deeply involved in the spatial and conceptual premises of Constructivism which were incompatible with Malevich's more mystically oriented aesthetics of nonobjectivity. Nonetheless, her work of this period, like that of her friend Udaltsova (see cat. nos. 116–18), shows a formal debt to Malevich in its open space, floating planar forms and clear flat color. In this period Popova produced beautiful works which bear her personal stamp, but the phase was short-lived.

An anomalous period of post-Cubist abstraction followed in Popova's art (cat. no. 107). The works identified with this phase are generally dated 1917–18. In these paintings, some motifs can be read as fragmented reminiscences of Cubist still lifes. The colors appear arbitrary; the highlighting recalls Malevich's rather stiffly rendered modeling in his paintings of around 1912 where it does not shape volumetric form. Popova's planes overlap, but without a strong structural logic. Further, the frontal organization, cylindrical and conic shapes and diagonal lines seen, for example, in *Architectonic Composition* (fig. 13) recall features of some of Tatlin's counter-reliefs (see fig. 14 and cat. no. 161).

Popova arrived at her most personal idiom in 1918. Between 1918 and 1922, her canvases illustrate the clearest and most consistent conception of Constructivism in painting to appear in the Soviet Union or anywhere else. These works demonstrate how Constructivism, generally understood through Tatlin's ideas as a sculptural idiom which reflects and embodies the true nature of materials, encompassed painting in the theory and practice that evolved among Tatlin's followers.

Tatlin's original experiments starting in 1913–14 — his counter-reliefs — emphasized the use of real materials in real space. The most famous group of Constructivists, who adopted the name in 1921 and exhibited under it for the first time that same year, were artists who worked in three-dimensional

form. Yet in the Russian concept of *faktura*, a philosophy of materials that may have been at the origin of the Constructivist aesthetic, paint itself was considered an autonomous expressive medium. Nikolai Tarabukin, a Constructivist artist and theoretician, wrote in 1923: "If we apply this general definition [of construction] to painting, we must consider as elements of pictorial construction, the material and real elements of the canvas, which is to say the paint or medium, whatever it may be, the texture, the structure of color, the technique and other elements unified by the composition (as a principle) and constituting altogether the work of art (as a system)."¹¹

Briefly then, according to the principle of *faktura*, not only wood or metal, but the substance of the paint surface itself — its thickness, glossiness, technique of application — was considered a texture or fabric (a *faktura*) that generates specific forms.¹² And it was believed that this fundamental premise would change the function and significance of the work of art. The narrative function of figurative art would be replaced by a self-contained system.

Thus, artists such as Popova, Exter, and Alexandr Rodchenko concentrated on the qualities and potential of paint as an autonomous medium of expression, the vocabulary unique to the painting experience. They set out to remove all references to illusion, narrative or metaphor from their art. As Rozanova stated in 1913, the painter should "speak solely the language of pure plastic experience."¹³ This was an idea she expressed in an astonishing painting of 1917 (cat. no. 105). Through her contact with Malevich in 1916, Popova had acquired the pictorial notion of the plane freed in space. But upon her return to Tatlin's studio, she reverted to a more materialistic concept of painting, focusing on color, plane, line and texture as entities to be manipulated to create dynamic compositions and new content. Whereas Malevich sought to etherealize space and render it less determinate, Popova sought to materialize it and render it active, palpable, complex.

Two of Popova's paintings, both titled *Painterly Architectonics* and both of 1918–19 (cat. nos. 176–77), are eloquent examples of pure spatial articulation defined by the materials, which is to say the artist's use of paint. In both paintings, the planes do not so much overlap (a technique that implies at least a shallow spatial depth) as interpenetrate. Even the small black motifs in cat. no. 176, although they recall Malevich, do not float. They are set, as though encrusted, in the single plane that defines this composition. The diagonal thrusts solicit a perspectival reading while simultaneously defying it. The use of white creates ambivalent effects of transparency and reflection. Both paintings are executed with small busy brushstrokes which create subtle

10. A postcard dated October 25, 1915 (Costakis collection) from Popova to her friend Adda Dege shows a reproduction of *Jug on the Table*, under which Popova has written "Nature morte" (in French) and "plastic painting" (in Russian). R. S. C., Costakis, pls 815-16.

11. Nikolai Tarabukin, "Ot molberta k mashine," trans. into French as "Du Chevalet à la machine," in A. B. Nakov, ed., *Nikolai Taraboukine. Le dernier tableau*, Paris, 1972, pp. 42-43. (All translations from the French are by the author.)

12. For additional information on the concept of *faktura*, see Margit Rowell, "Vladimir Tatlin: Form/Faktura," *October*, no. 7, winter 1978, pp. 83-108.

13. From an unpublished manifesto of the "Union of Youth" group, St. Petersburg, Mar. 28, 1913, edited by Rozanova; quoted in Nakov, *Liberated Colour and Form*, p. 4.

gradations and tonal passages from one area or hue to another. Cat. no. 177 is purely about space; one can hardly speak of planes for they appear dematerialized.

In 1920 Popova joined the Moscow Inkhuk (the Institute of Painterly Culture) where the concepts of "construction" and Constructivism were debated throughout the winter of 1920–21. But already by 1918–19, the dates of the paintings discussed above, Popova had used the term "constructive" and formulated ideas that were obviously in the air:

What is of importance now is the form or part of a form, line, color or texture that takes an immediate part in the painterly construction. . . . Hence it is clear why an objective¹⁴ form is quite superfluous — such a form always possesses a constructive components. . . . A transformed form is an abstract one and is completely subject to architectonic necessity and . . . to the general constructive objectives. The artist gains complete freedom in absolute nonobjectivity, orienting and constructing the lines, planes, volumetrical elements and color weight. Depictive art can never be an authentic art. . . .¹⁵

A common itinerary followed by the Constructivist painter (as exemplified by Popova and Rodchenko in particular) was from experiments with color and plane to experiments with line. As early as 1915 Rodchenko had emphasized the line as an objective anonymous element of painting; and by way of illustration, he used a compass to point up the pure function of line, which to his mind defied individual sensibility, subjectivity or style. In 1919 Popova wrote: "Line as color and as the vestige of the transverse plane participates in, and directs the forces of, construction. . . . Energetics = direction of volumes + planes and lines or their vestiges + all colors."¹⁶ By 1921, Popova was working intensively on more linear experiments such as the *Spatial Force Constructions* (cat. nos. 180, 182). Her works of this period were often executed directly on wooden panels, reflecting the artist's allegiance to Tatlin's ethic of "truth to materials." Because she now considered color superfluous, she reduced her palette, generally to black and white and sometimes red. The circles in *Spatial Force Construction*, 1920–21 (cat. no. 180), are drawn with a compass. The straight lines are less precise. The linear components of the work are painted with smooth, somewhat glossy paint. In the "shaded" areas, the paint is thicker and more matte and appears gritty. Here is an exemplary illustration of Tatlin's theory that the material dictates the technique and the technique the forms: thin smooth paint demands a precision instrument, whereas thicker paint requires a

dabbing technique and produces, as a result, less precise configurations. Popova's works from this period are more austere than her earlier paintings. They contain no spatial ambiguities, no light reflection, no "transparency." At the same time the physical presence of paint is more aggressive, as for example in *Spatial Force Construction* (cat. no. 182).

This premise — that different mediums impose specific techniques and generate different kinds of imagery — appears in the work of other Moscow Constructivists, which confirms that they typify Constructivist painting practice. A case in point is the painting of Gustav Klucis. Between 1919 and 1921, Klucis attended the Svomas/Vkhutemas,¹⁷ the state-run art studios, and was already in close contact with Malevich in 1918–19, and with Naum Gabo and Antoine Pevsner in 1919.¹⁸ He was thus exposed to the tenets and practices of both Suprematism and Constructivism, and his painting *Dynamic City* of 1919–1921 (cat. no. 150), for example, is a unique synthesis of these ideas. It demonstrates a Constructivist awareness of the diverse effects of glossy and matte textures in a composition painted on board. However, the results are quite different from those of Popova. The lighter areas are painted in such a way as to produce the effect of a shiny enamel; yet somehow these glossy surfaces have an almost ethereal transparency and evoke a cosmic spatial continuum. In contrast, the grittiness of the blacks evokes the texture of cement. The inherent contradictions of the central image, drawn with a compass and ruler and endowed with a presence which is at once aggressively physical and dematerialized or illusionistic, and the Suprematist space in which it floats, create a truly unsettling image.

In 1920, the year he painted his *Linearism* (cat. no. 171); Rodchenko formulated a text for a lecture to the Moscow Inkhuk group on the significance of the line:

Recently, having devoted myself exclusively to the construction of forms and to their system of construction,¹⁹ I have introduced in the plane-surface *the line* as a new element of construction. This led to a definitive clarification of the line's significance, both in its function as a limit and border, and as a major factor in the construction of every organism in life: skeleton, base, framework or system. The line is a beginning and an end in painting, as, more generally, in any construction. . . .

Thus the line has won a total victory and reduced to nothing the last bastions of painting: color, tone, texture, and the plane-surface. . . .²⁰

Having stated the primary importance of the line as the element which alone allows for con-

14. In this context, "objective" should be understood as "representational" and as opposed to "nonobjective."

15. Rakitin, "Liubov Popova: From Her Manuscripts and Notes," in *Women Artists of the Russian Avant-Garde*, p. 211.

16. From the artist's contribution to the catalogue of *X Gosudarstvennaia vystavka, Bespredmetnoe tvorchestvo i suprematizm*, Moscow, 1919, p. 22; translated and quoted by John E. Bowlit in "From Surface to Space: The Art of Liubov Popova," *The Structurist*, nos. 15/16, 1975-76, p. 85.

17. See p. 25 here.

18. Naum Gabo's and Antoine Pevsner's 1920 *Realistic Manifesto* is of crucial importance to the understanding of the history of Constructivism

but its discussion falls outside the scope of this study. Although the Pevsner brothers preferred to refer to the subject of their program as "Realism" (denoting the "reality" of the self-contained, self-referential object), this manifesto laid out the fundamental premises of Constructivist theory and practice. (See Stephen Bann, ed., *The Tradition of Constructivism*, New York, 1972, pp. 3-11, for a complete translation of the *Manifesto*.)

19. Rodchenko is referring not only to his paintings but to his hanging spatial constructions. See cat. no. 172.

20. Andrei B. Nakov calls attention to the fact that as early as 1914 the Ukrainian Futurist Alexandr Bogomazov had foreseen a conflict between

struction and creation, we by the same token repudiate all aesthetic of color, as well as factual concerns [concerns for *faktura*] and concerns for style. . . .

The line has revealed a new vision of reality: to construct, literally, and not to represent, to be in the objective or the nonobjective, to build constructivist functional equipment in life and not from life and outside of life.²¹

This text on the line helps clarify Rodchenko's linear experiments both on a painted surface and in space. Further, it provides a point of departure for understanding the concentration on dynamic structural line in the three-dimensional constructions which were the prime examples of Constructivism between 1919 and 1922. It announces new priorities and, in so doing, elucidates the shift of emphasis from surface to space, from planar constructions referring in one way or another to a two-dimensional surface, to open freestanding structures in space.

II

CONSTRUCTIONS: THE MOSCOW INKHUK

A study of the three-dimensional Constructivist works produced in the early 1920s has been difficult up to now, owing to a lack of documentation and an understanding of the distinctions and interrelations as well as the motivations and objectives of the various groups and single artists involved. Artists used the term "constructive" or "construction" during the period 1920–22 sometimes with what appear as contradictory meanings. Those most actively and consistently involved with defining Constructivist theory and practice were the Inkhuk and the Vkhutemas (Higher State Art-Technical Studios, which originated as the Free State Art Studios). The Inkhuk, founded in May 1920 at the initiative of Kandinsky, was essentially a theoretical and research-oriented group. After May 1920, under the new leadership of Alexei Babichev, it redirected its program of formal analysis toward a definition of "the constructive" or the basic premises of Constructivism. The Vkhutemas, on the other hand, was a pedagogical institution comparable in many aspects — and in particular in the conception of its first-year course — to the better-known Bauhaus. Originally formulated in 1918 as the Svomas or Free State Art Studios, the Vkhutemas like the Inkhuk was reorganized in late 1920 according to a decree by Anatolii Lunacharsky, the People's Commissar of Enlightenment. Its new statutes reflected a greater commitment to Constructivism (although it had not yet been formally named), and its objec-

tive was to train artists for the new Communist society and economy. These two institutions complemented each other in their respective dedication to theory and practice; furthermore, many Inkhuk members, such as Popova, Exter, Rodchenko, Kliun, Varvara Stepanova, and Alexei Babichev, were professors at the Vkhutemas.

Although at one time it was common among Western scholars to divide the history of Constructivism during the period 1919–1922 into a "laboratory" phase (emphasizing formal experimentation) and a "Productivist" phase (directed towards utilitarian objectives), as new evidence has become available, it is increasingly clear that in reality the situation was more complex: both approaches existed simultaneously by 1920–21.

Babichev's program for the Inkhuk, presented in December 1920, proposed a "Working Group of Objective Analysis," which would devote itself to both "theoretical" and "laboratory" investigations of the basic elements of the work of art, identified as "color, *faktura*, material, construction, etc."²² The underlying premise was "that the structure of a work arises from its elements and the laws of their organization (construction, composition, and rhythm of the elements.)"²³ The program was further defined as follows:

Neither the creative process, nor the process of perception, the defined aesthetic emotion, is the object of analysis, but those real forms which, created by the artist, are found in the already finished work. Consequently the form of the work and its elements are the material for analysis, and not the psychology of the creation, nor the psychology of aesthetic perception, nor the historical, cultural, sociological or other problems of art.²⁴

This explication was formulated in direct opposition to Kandinsky's statement of aims for the Inkhuk which drew upon the psychological and physiological effects and subjective responses produced by each constituent of the work of art.²⁵

Babichev's concept of a "material self-contained object"²⁶ lent itself to a broad range of interpretations: it could be anything from an abstract structure to an industrial object. Eventually a controversy arose between those for whom material and formal concerns were paramount (the "objectists"), and others for whom this idealized conception of the object represented merely a transitory phase on the path to truly productive or utilitarian art, which they considered the only worthy aim.

In 1921, the "Working Group of Objective Analysis" split into subgroups, one of which, the "First Working Group of Constructivists" —

the line (as non-representational) and the plane (as representational). The opposition would lead to "a struggle in which total victory is impossible for this would mean the destruction of the pictorial plane . . . and the pictorial plane cannot be eliminated for every representation which lays claim to the status of plastic art is linked to the pictorial plane." Bogomazov. "Painting and Its Elements," unpublished manuscript of 1914, quoted in Nakov, *Liberated Colour and Form*, p. 9.

21. Alexandr Rodchenko, "The Line," *Arts Magazine*, vol. 47, May-June 1973, pp. 50-52, translation and notes by A. B. Nakov.

22. Report on the Inkhuk, in *Russkoe iskusstvo*, nos. 2-3, 1923, p. 85; translated and quoted by Lodder in *Constructivism*.

23. Khan-Magomedov, "The Inkhuk Discussion," p. 43 (trans. Marian Schwartz).

24. Nikolai Tarabukin, unpublished and undated manuscript, private archive, Moscow; translated and quoted by Lodder, *Constructivism*.

25. See Vieri Quilici, *L'architettura del costruttivismo*, Bari, 1969, pp. 485-86, for Kandinsky's program. Also see pp. 226-27 here.

26. See Lodder, *Constructivism*. The term in quotation marks is taken from the 1923 Inkhuk report.

assembled in March 1921 — included Rodchenko, Stepanova, Konstantin Medunetsky, the Stenberg brothers and Karel Joganon. Lectures and discussions were held under the auspices of the Inkhuk in an attempt to determine the basic elements of art and their organizational laws. A number of sessions addressed the formal and functional distinctions between *composition* and *construction*, during which the definition of *construction* emerged as the central issue for debate, partially based on the understanding that this was the form of creativity which corresponded to the character and answered the needs of the new Communist society. Often the debates were supported by visual material illustrating the issues at hand. According to the Soviet art historian S. O. Khan-Magomedov,²⁷ most of the artists presented two works in the course of these theoretical discussions, one representative of a “composition,” the other of a “construction.”

In the autumn of 1921, the publication of a collection of theoretical essays and illustrative material was planned, to be called *From Figurativeness to Construction*. Not surprisingly, the penury of the times prevented its appearance. A group of drawings devoted to this subject was preserved in Babichev’s personal archives and is now in the Costakis collection (see cat. nos. 184–208). The dates that are sometimes inscribed on the front of each drawing indicate that the works were executed throughout the year 1921; many bear the inscription “composition” or “construction,” confirming their origin in the discussions of that year, and perhaps as well their relevance to the planned publication.

Notwithstanding the clarity of the minutes of the meetings in which the artists discussed the functional distinctions between these two forms of creative activity, at first glance the visual differences are not always clear. For example, the theoretical conclusions drawn up after the first session were:

Construction is the effective organization of material elements.

The signs of Constructivism:

- 1) The best possible organization of materials.
- 2) The absence of excess elements.

The plan of Constructivism is the conjunction of lines and the planes and forms defined by them; it is a system of forces.

In general, most of the artists seemed to concur that a construction was an organization of materials based on necessity and function, whereas, in Popova’s words, “composition is the regular but tasteful distribution of materials.”²⁸

A closer examination of the works reveals certain visual characteristics that do relate, in one way or another, to the theoretical positions of the artists. The “composition” drawings tend for the most part to emphasize two-dimensionality and a

harmonious pictorial organization that relates in many cases to the format of the support. They include elements that are aesthetically pleasing but not structurally essential. Lines do not strictly define forms or suggest materials; the integral organization creates visual balance rather than tension. Moreover, many of these drawings are executed in soft, sometimes colored, pencil, reinforcing the intentionally pictorial character.

Conversely, the “construction” drawings imply a three-dimensional vision, and depict closed planar shapes which correspond to the vocabulary of specific sculptural materials. The forms interact according to a tensional articulation based on the structural logic of the image. Often the medium is hard pencil or ink, evoking the technique of industrial “shop” drawings.

Since most of the Inkhuk artists by this time considered “construction” the language of the future and “composition” an idiom of the past, many chose to differentiate deliberately between their illustrations of the two. For example, Stepanova’s “composition” (cat. no. 204) is a flat figurative image (of a head and torso) typical of her painting production around 1920–21 (see cat. no. 174). Her “construction” (cat. no. 205) is radically different. Entitled “Planar Structure” by Khan-Magomedov,²⁹ it is a collage in which every component is essential to the whole, and it is close in concept to the collages in her 1919 book *Gaust Chaba* (cat. no. 183). As she said:

When one of its parts is separated from it, a composition does not decisively lose its sense and is not destroyed; it merely requires some rearrangement of the remaining parts or the addition of other parts. In construction the removal of any part entails the destruction of the whole construction.³⁰

At a later date, Stepanova elaborated further, stating that in a composition, the artist “strives ‘to transmit his feelings consciously from reality’” whereas a construction

is linked with the real making of the object, apart from representativeness, apart from contemplativeness or the artist’s conscious attitude toward nature. Construction is the creation of an absolutely new organism. . . . Genuine construction appears only in real objects operating in real space.³¹

Vladimir Stenberg’s training as an engineer is visible in his “construction” (cat. no. 203), which reflects an engineer’s vision and drafting technique. Yet his “composition” (cat. no. 202) is a pure graphic arrangement, without depth,³² tension, or any suggestion of materials. The contrast between Medunetsky’s “construction” and his “composition” (cat. nos. 197 and 196 respectively) may be described in analogous terms. Medunetsky, trained

27. Khan-Magomedov, p. 61.

28. Khan-Magomedov, “The Inkhuk Discussion,” pp. 54–55.

29. In Khan-Magomedov, see fig. 18, p. 75. Khan-Magomedov’s titles derive from an inventory list in the State Archives, Moscow.

30. Paraphrased *ibid.*, p. 49. This statement dates from January 28, 1921.

31. May 25, 1921. Quoted *ibid.*, p. 60.

32. The notion of “depth” derives from Gabo’s and Pevsner’s *Realistic Manifesto* (see fn. 18). It does not denote illusionistic perspective but rather the real, multidimensional “spatiality” of a work.

as a painter, by this time thought differently about his former discipline: "It is good that we have moved away from savoring surfaces, from textural beauty in painting. Materials demand construction, and in spatial objects there is none of the old savoring of materials."³³ Yet Ioganson criticized Medunetsky's spatial constructions (fig. 15) as "merely the representation of technical construction" because they showed no respect for specific materials.³⁴

Boris Korolev and Babichev, both trained as sculptors, seem to have approached the problem with a more acute sense of its implications. Each appears to have attempted to use the same repertory of formal components for the two projects. Korolev analyzes the premise of the proposed publication *From Figurativeness to Construction* quite literally. His "composition" (cat. no. 193) shows a schematized human figure of somewhat arbitrary organization. Parts of this depiction are reiterated in his "construction" (cat. no. 194), distilled to their geometric essence of lines and planes and newly organized according to an austere structural logic. Babichev's "composition" (cat. no. 184) is frontal, static and balanced; the shapes express little function or content. By contrast, his "construction" (cat. no. 185) is a profile organization of the same elements so tightly related that their interdependence creates the integrity of the whole; the elimination of one part would cause the image to collapse. Some months before he executed these two drawings, Babichev had stated:

In any art the form of active interaction has meaning only as an expression of a known force.

Therefore we replace the concept of the relation of forms with the relation of their work, their forces, their functions. . . . Construction is the organic unity of material forms attained through the exposure [revelation] of their [intrinsic] functions.³⁵

Both Rodchenko and Babichev, echoing Tatlin, emphasized materials as form-dictating agents. Further, most of the artists claimed that their "constructions" were projects to be executed in "real materials" and "real space." Yet visibly, the focus had shifted from Tatlin's original preoccupation with materials to a study of the interrelations between forms and forces in interaction, expressed through line, depth and tensional organization; from a respect for the laws of "plastic necessity" to a respect for the laws of "mechanical necessity";³⁶ from the inspiration of observed reality to the abstract conception of the forces underlying that reality. This may help explain why the "spatial structures" that were actually built in the early twenties by Medunetsky, the Stenberg brothers and Ioganson (see fig. 16) stand in stark contrast to Tatlin's and Gabo's first planar structures of 1913–15. Technological form or "technical con-



fig. 15
Konstantin Medunetsky
Construction No. 557. 1919
Tin, brass and iron, h.: 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (27.6 cm.), base, painted metal, 7 x 7 x 7" (17.8 x 17.8 x 17.8 cm.)
Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, Gift of Collection Société Anonyme

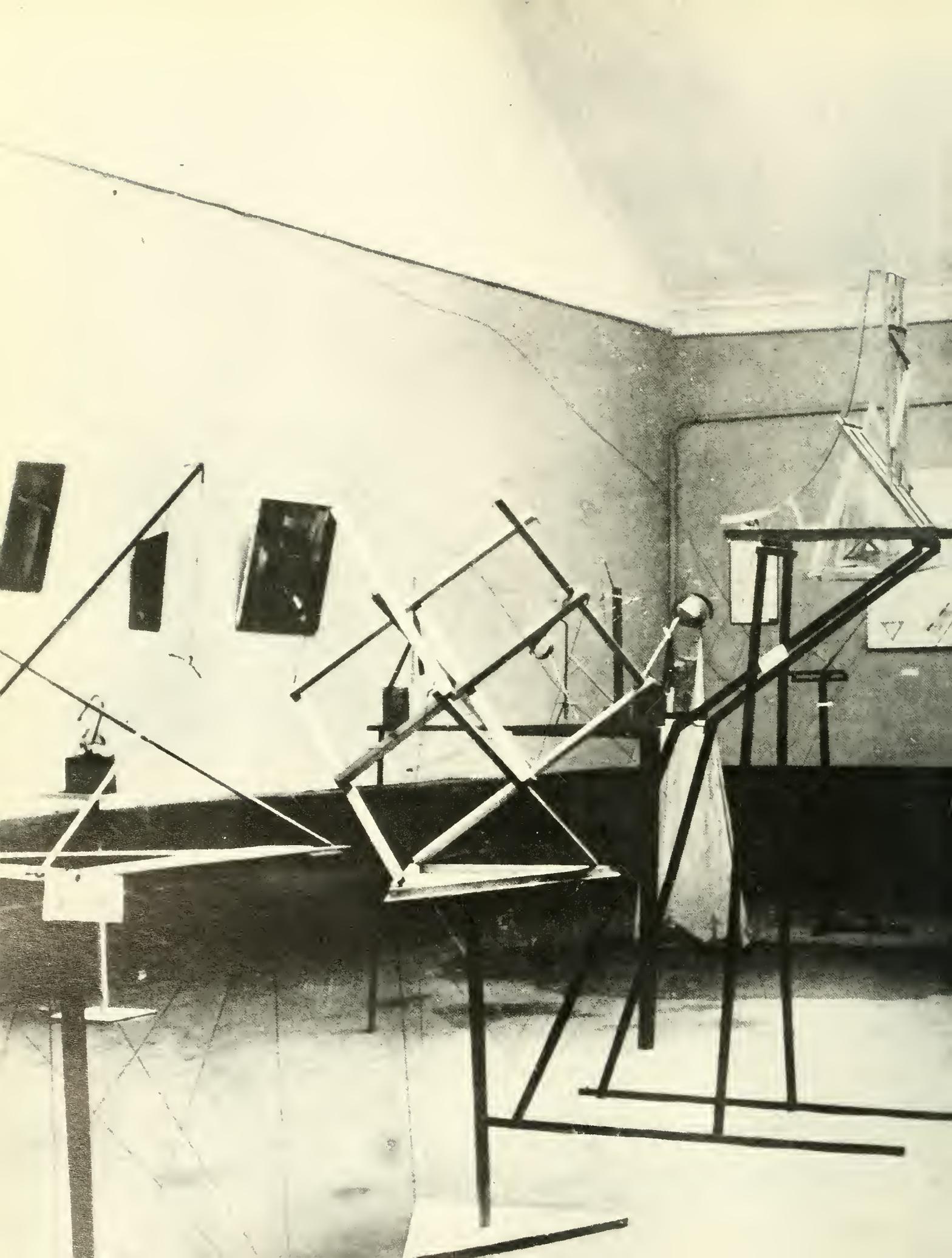
fig. 16 (pp. 28-29)
Installation view of Third Obmokhu Exhibition, Moscow, 1921
Linear constructions by Stenberg brothers (central area), Ioganson (on l. and r.) and Medunetsky (r. background) were included as well as hanging constructions by Rodchenko (upper center and r.)

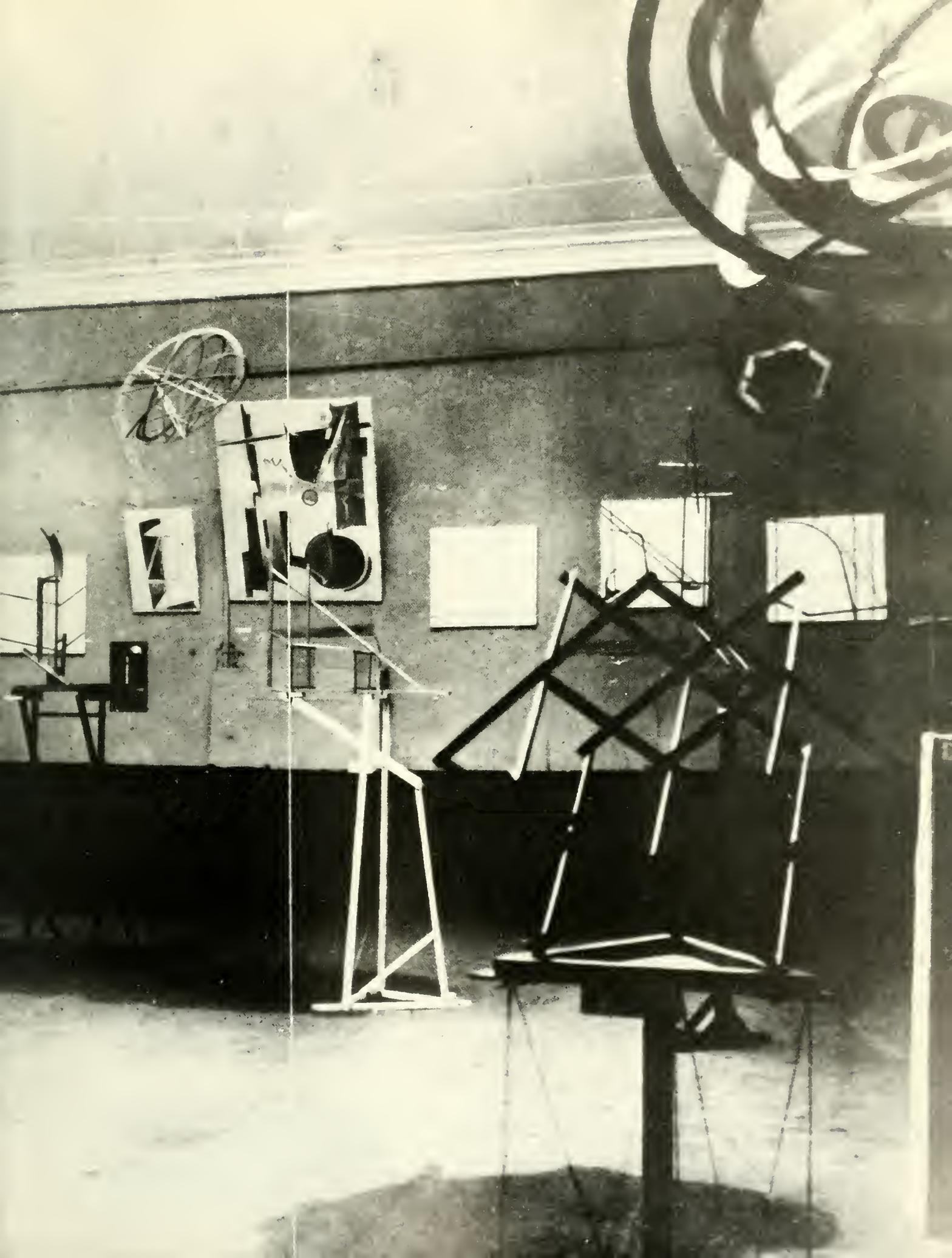
33. Quoted in Khan-Magomedov, "The Inkhuk Discussion," p. 59.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 53.

35. At the first session of discussions held at the Inkhuk by the "Working Group of Objective Analysis," Jan. 1, 1921. *Ibid.*, p. 46.

36. These terms, initiated by the architect Ladovsky, were used throughout the Inkhuk discussions.





struction” as a concept had replaced the notions of “truth to materials” and “construction in art.”³⁷

In 1921 the Third Obmokhu (Society of Young Artists) exhibition in Moscow³⁸ brought together a number of these constructions and presented them to the public for the first time (fig. 16). Most of the works reflected an architectonic and technological approach to materials; indeed, the materials appear reduced to their essence, the forms seem pure ciphers of the materials’ intrinsic functions. Stripped of mass and weight, and in some cases attempting to defy gravity, these dematerialized linear equations express the tensile strength of metal, the transparency of glass, and define an almost palpable volume of space. Analogous to Tatlin’s 1920 model for the “Monument to the Third International” (fig. 17), but quite different in the source of their inspiration and imagery,³⁹ they show a synthesis of dynamic force and stability, technology and creativity, anonymous statement and personal expression, modern materials and ideal forms. These models, representing the new Constructivist syntax in its purest state, are both metaphors of modern technology and, by extension, dynamic images of the new Communist society.

Tatlin’s awareness of the shift of meaning within the term Constructivism is evident in the phrase “constructivists in quotation marks” he would come to use. “Existing forms,” he wrote in 1932,

when used in constructional art (in architecture, technology and, especially, aviation), exhibit a certain schematic quality which has become established. Usually this is the conjunction of straight line forms with the simplest of curved forms. . . . The constructivists in quotation marks used the same materials to solve formal problems, but in an abstract way, mechanically adding technology to their art. The constructivists in quotation marks did not consider the organic connection of the material with its application and function. . . . An indispensable form is not simply born as a result of the dynamics of these interrelationships.⁴⁰

Even within the Inkhuk, as it progressed toward a more Productivist orientation, the criticism of these “projects” was severe. Despite their attempted references to technology, they were attacked as “formalist” as opposed to socially useful objects. Nikolai Tarabukin made the following assessment in 1923:

By the term construction, we generally mean a material installation of a determined kind, endowed with a utilitarian character, without which it loses all meaning.

However, the Russian constructivists, who do not want to be considered artists and who waged a battle “against art” in its conventional, mu-



fig. 17
Vladimir Tatlin
Model for the “Monument to the Third International.”
1919–1920
Destroyed

37. These terms are also attributed to Ladovsky.

38. This subgroup of the Vkhutemas was founded in 1919 initially to promote the cause of agitprop (“agitational propaganda”) art. By 1920–21, its exhibitions included abstract experimental constructions.

39. See Rowell, “Tatlin,” *October*, pp. 100–03 for a discussion of Tatlin’s inspiration for the monument.

40. Quoted in I. Matsa, “Constructivism: An Historical and Artistic Appraisal,” *Studio International*, Apr. 1972, p. 143. The translation uses the British term “inverted commas” which we have converted to the more common American usage of “quotation marks.”

41. Tarabukin in Nakov, *Le dernier tableau*, p. 39.

42. Quoted in Rakitin, *Women Artists of the Russian Avant-Garde*, pp. 212, 214.

seum sense, allied themselves with technique, engineering and industry, without possessing the specific understanding necessary and all the while remaining artists *par excellence* deep down inside. In their hands, the constructivist objective takes the form of naïve and dilettantish imitations of technical constructions, imitations which solely refer to a hypertrophied veneration for the industrialism of our century.

Constructions of this kind cannot even be qualified as models, since they are not projects of technical installations but merely totally autonomous objects, justifiable only on their artistic merits. Their authors remain fundamentally “aesthetes,” champions of “pure” art, despite their disaffection for these epithets.⁴¹

These models or structures were generated by a theoretical rhetoric which proved to be their strength (as highly innovative and original forms) and their limitation (in regard to practical application). In November 1921, after a second reorganization of the Inkhuk under the leadership of Osip Brik, Boris Arvatov and Tarabukin, twenty-five artists—including Popova, Alexandr Vesnin, Stepanova, Rodchenko and Exter — announced their withdrawal from theoretical activity and “laboratory” work with forms to devote their energies to “production art,” by which they meant a utilitarian, socially useful art form.

In December 1921, the new governing board of the Inkhuk commissioned an article from Popova, in which she explained her position in regard to the earlier Inkhuk program and her new allegiance to “production art”:

It is quite obvious that the revolution that has taken place in the aims, objectives, media and forms of art has set us — art production workers — a particular aim: “to organize the material elements of industrial production in an expedient manner” instead of “depicting this or that” Even the new objective method of analyzing the formal elements of each individual “art” . . . is still, ultimately, concerned with the same old depictive formal elements. . . . Essentially, emphasizing the formal element serves merely as a point of transit, filling in the gap between two worldviews, a bridge whereby the timid and irresolute try to get to the other side. . . . The aim of all this should not be the synthesis of elements “in abstracto,” but rather the concrete productional object to which this entire technology will relate. . . .

[We must] find the paths and methods that lead away from the dead impasse of depictive art and advance through knowledge of technological production to a method of creating objects of industrial production, products of organized, material design.⁴²

III

PRODUCTION ART: THEATER AND INDUSTRIAL DESIGN

The major apologists for the “production art” interpretation of Constructivism were Brik, Tarabukin and Arvatov who launched the third or Productivist phase of the Inkhuk (1921–24). Arvatov wrote in October 1922:

Constructivism is socially utilitarian. Its application is situated either in industrial production (engineer-constructor) or in propaganda (constructor-designer of posters, logos, etc.). Constructivism is revolutionary not only in words but in acts. It is revolutionary by the very orientation of its artistic methods.⁴³

The notion of “production art” encompassed architecture, public sculpture, theater sets and costumes, industrial and graphic design. Activity in these areas was viewed as more socially pertinent to the Russian people than all the earlier attempts by artists to contribute to the “organization of life.” During this period, many Constructivist artists turned to the theater which they considered an exemplary discipline by which to shape the minds and tastes of the masses.⁴⁴ The objective was not to stage plays in the traditional sense, but productions conceived for popular participation. This was theater permitting “the unification of the stage with the auditorium,” as the theater director Vsevolod Meierkhold said in October 1920.⁴⁵

Meierkhold’s eminence in the history of theater is based on his development of “Biomechanics,” an actor-training technique. The Biomechanical method consisted of a repertory of twenty exercises, purported to have been drawn from the observation of the “scientific organization of labor in America and Russia.”⁴⁶ The director explained:

If we observe a skilled worker in action, we notice the following in his movements: (1) an absence of superfluous, unproductive movements; (2) rhythm; (3) the correct positioning of the body’s center of gravity; (4) stability. Movements based on these principles are distinguished by their dance-like quality; a skilled worker at work invariably reminds one of a dancer; thus work borders on art.⁴⁷

Meierkhold’s method, deriving from the study of the human body as a raw or elementary material to be manipulated according to its inherent capabilities, relates it to the sources of Constructivism, or Tatlin’s initial “truth to materials” premise. As Meierkhold stated,

In art our constant concern is the organization of raw material. Constructivism has forced the artist to become both artist and engineer. Art should be based on scientific principles; the entire creative act should be a conscious process.

43. From the article, “Two Groups,” published in *Zrelishcha*, no. 8, Oct. 17, 1922, translated into French by Andrei B. Nakov and Michel Petris in *Change* (Paris), nos. 26–27, Feb. 1976, p. 253.

44. In fact, the Constructivist artists’ attitude to the theater was ambivalent; in principle they rejected this art form for its inherently suggestive and associational nature.

45. In a speech, “To the Company of The RSFSR Theater,” October 31, 1920. Quoted in British Film Institute, *Futurism, Formalism, Feks*, London, 1978.

46. Edward Braun, “Constructivism in the Theater,” in London, Hayward Gallery, *Art in Revolution*, Feb. 26–Apr. 18, 1972, p. 67.

47. Meierkhold, from a lecture on “Biomechanics,” June 1922. Translated by Edward Braun in *Futurism, Formalism, Feks*, p. 67.

The art of the actor consists in organizing his material; that is, in his capacity to utilize correctly his body's means of expression. The actor embodies in himself both the organizer and that which is organized (i.e., the artist and his material).⁴⁸

In 1921 Meierkhold invited Popova to teach a design course in his Theater Workshop. During this experience she worked on the set design for the Biomechanical production of *The Magnanimous Cuckold*, a play by the Belgian author Fernand Crommelynck which was presented in April 1922 (see cat. nos. 251–55).⁴⁹ Popova's sets involve no images or illusionism. Her open linear frames, wheels, catwalk and slides — the barest skeletons of theater flats — are her attempt to replace accepted aesthetic traditions with a functional design, illusionistic props with real materials and structural patterns, backdrop conventions with a working platform for the actors. In line with Meierkhold's emphasis on the physical as opposed to the psychological in his conception of theater, this stage architecture was designed to reinforce and articulate the scenic action. The revolving wheels, turning at different moments and speeds, dramatized moods and emotions which were only suggested by the actors' emblematic movements. The concerted synchronization of these formally organized modes of expression identifies *The Magnanimous Cuckold* as the first true example of Constructivist theater.

Structures in the streets for Revolutionary pageants or for communicating propaganda were another form of Constructivist expression in which art was to be integrated with Soviet life. Gustav Klucis's agitprop constructions were designed in 1922 to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the October Revolution and the Fourth Congress of the Comintern (see p. 259 and cat. nos. 218–229). These display stands, screens for projecting visual propaganda, rostrums and radio loudspeakers were made of wood, canvas and cable and painted black, white and red. Klucis's preoccupation with easily assembled and collapsible multipurpose structures evolved from the same principles governing Meierkhold's conception of ideal scenic devices: practicality and economy. The variety of Klucis's linear invention combined with functional technology echoes Popova's work for Meierkhold and the Stenberg and Ioganson constructions of the same period. His taut linear structures cast the values of the new society in a new formal syntax that underscores the dynamic graphics of the slogans and their specifically agitprop messages.

Consistent with their new role as "art production workers," by 1924 Stepanova and Popova were working at the First State Textile Factory in Moscow, designing patterns for printed fabric (see cat. nos. 236–243). Although these patterns are

supremely decorative, they also corresponded to a principle: that all fabric and clothing should be designed according to an understanding of the body's articulations and movements. After 1922, Popova also worked in graphic design (cat. no. 245), and Stepanova wrote articles on "industrial dress" and related subjects for the Constructivist magazine *Lef* (1923–25). Klucis produced posters, postcards (cat. no. 232), exhibition designs and photomontage. Vesnin, Medunetsky and the Stenberg brothers worked for the theater and the Stenbergs designed remarkable posters for the film industry. Tatlin and his students at the Petrograd Vkhutemas designed clothing, furniture and other household items, while Rodchenko worked prolifically in advertising graphics, propaganda production, photography, cinema, typography and book and poster design.

• • •

Thus, in the space of a few short years, the ideology of Soviet Constructivism evolved radically and rapidly from an emphasis on materials and the self-referential object to a focus on the interrelations or "forces" of materials and their distillation into abstract formal metaphors, and finally to the utilitarian object, or industrial design. The socially valuable content implicit in the earlier phases of Constructivism became explicit in the third, a phase which was virtually a synthesis of the first two. It can be concluded that without the artists' understanding of the intrinsic nature of ordinary materials and of the "necessary" forms they generated, a formally meaningful utilitarian production probably would not have come about.

Paradoxically, the idea of social necessity, which was one of the fundamental catalysts of the Constructivist ethos and aesthetic as far back as Tatlin's initial counter-reliefs in 1913–15, would lead to the demise of the original premise of Constructivism: that of a pure materialist syntax without reference to extra-plastic concerns. In its idealism, early Constructivist ideology expressed a time and place, an inchoate social consciousness and a naïve political perspective. Although the technological or "industrial" Constructivism of post-1921 dissipated the purity of Constructivism as it was originally defined, the latter form corresponded more fully to the objective of the organization of daily life. The theory and practice of the pioneers of Constructivism — their attention to the expressive autonomy of materials, color, line and space — represent a fundamental contribution to the shaping of our twentieth-century environment.

48. Meierkhold, "The Actor and Biomechanics" (1922), in *Art in Revolution*, p. 80.

49. Alma H. Law calls attention to the fact that these sets were begun by other hands (among them the Stenbergs and Vladimir Liutse) and that Popova took over after much work had been done. See Alma H. Law, "The Revolution in the Russian Theater," in *LACMA*, pp. 68–69. See also here, p. 293.

The Catalogue

by Angelica Zander Rudenstine

Notes for the Reader

ORGANIZATION

The catalogue is divided into seven sections: I. "Symbolism and Origins"; II. "Cubo-Futurism"; III. "Matiushin and His School; Pavel Filonov"; IV. "Suprematism and Unovis"; V. "The Inkhuk and Constructivism"; VI. "Productivism and the Theater"; VII. "Parallel Trends: The Figurative and the Cosmic."

Several of the artists naturally appear in more than one of these sections. Thus, for example, Malevich and Kliun are represented within "Symbolism," "Cubo-Futurism" and "Suprematism," Popova within "Cubo-Futurism," "Suprematism," "Inkhuk" and "Productivism," etc. The location of the work of any individual artist throughout the catalogue may be easily established through the use of the index, p. 319.

Though the headings provide an important structure, they run the risk of suggesting a narrow definition of style and of theoretical foundation. It is our hope, however, that they will serve an additional purpose, indicating in their conjunction with this group of works the difficulty inherent in such labels, and the essentially complicated nature of the movement as a whole.

INSCRIPTIONS

Inscriptions, unless otherwise indicated, have been translated from the Russian. Signatures and dates, unless otherwise indicated, have been transcribed from Cyrillic to Latin characters. The transliteration used is a modified version of the Library of Congress system, but the soft and hard signs either have been omitted or have been rendered by "i" (e.g., Vasilievich), and "x" has been substituted for "ks."

DIMENSIONS

Dimensions are given in inches and centimeters, height preceding width.

INVENTORY NUMBERS

The numbers appearing after the acquisition data refer to an inventory prepared by The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in connection with Mr. Costakis's loan of his collection to the museum.

ST. PETERSBURG

The city of St. Petersburg underwent a series of name changes: until 1914 it was St. Petersburg; in August 1914 it was renamed Petrograd; following Lenin's death, January 21, 1924, it received its present name, Leningrad.

DATES

Russian dates in the biographies and other text sections follow the so-called Old-Style calendar in use in Russia before January 1918 and are, therefore, thirteen days behind the Western calendar.

ABBREVIATIONS

Ginkhuk

Gosudarstvennyi institut khudozhestvennoi kultury (State Institute of Painterly Culture [Leningrad])

Inkhuk

Institut khudozhestvennoi kultury (Institute of Painterly Culture [Moscow])

Lef

Levyi front iskusstva (*Left Front of the Arts*)

Narkompros (NKP)

Narodnyi komissariat prosveshcheniia (People's Commissariat for Enlightenment)

Obmokhu

Obshchestvo molodykh khudozhevikov (Society of Young Artists)

OST

Obshchestvo khudozhevikov-stankovistov (Society of Studio Artists)

Petrosvomas

Petrogradskie gosudarstvennye svobodnye khudozhestvennye masterskie (Petrograd State Free Art Studios)

Proun

Proekt utverzheniia novogo (Project for the Affirmation of the New)

Svomas

Svobodnye gosudarstvennye khudozhestvennye masterskie (Free State Art Studios)

Unovis

Utverditeli (also *Utverzhenie*) *novogo iskusstva* (Affirmers [also Affirmation] of the New Art)

Vkhutemas

Vysshie gosudarstvennye khudozhestvenno-tekhnicheskie masterskie (Higher State Art-Technical Studios)

Zorved

Zorkoe vedanie (See-Know, literally, "sharp-sighted knowing")

SHORT TITLES

Bowlt, *Theory and Criticism*: Bowlt, J. E., *Russian Art of the Avant-Garde: Theory and Criticism, 1902–1934*, New York, 1976.

From Surface to Space: Cologne, Galerie Gmurzynska, *From Surface to Space/Von der Fläche zum Raum*, 1974.

Khan-Magomedov: Khan-Magomedov, S. O., "Diskussiiia v inkhuke o sootnoshenii konstrukttsii i kompozitsii" ("The Inkhuk Discussion of the Relationship Between Composition and Construction [January–April 1921]"), *Tekhnicheskaia estetika*, no. 20, Moscow, 1979, pp. 40–78.

LACMA: Los Angeles County Museum of Art, *The Avant-Garde in Russia, 1910–1930: New Perspectives*, ed. S. Barron and M. Tuchman, Los Angeles, 1980.

Lodder, *Constructivism*: Lodder, C. A., *Constructivism: From Fine Art Into Design, Russia, 1913–1933*, New Haven (in press)

R., S., C., *Costakis*: Rudenstine, A. Z., S. F. Starr, G. Costakis, *The Russian Avant-Garde: The George Costakis Collection*, New York, 1982. A comprehensive illustrated publication on the Costakis collection and its history.

Women Artists of the Russian Avant-Garde: Cologne, Galerie Gmurzynska, *Women Artists of the Russian Avant-Garde/Künstlerinnen der russischen Avantgarde 1910–1930*, 1979.

I Symbolism and Origins

Kliun and Malevich met in 1907, and in their work of 1907–1910 both demonstrated strong ties on the one hand to Russian Symbolism, and on the other to the palette of Gauguin and Matisse.

In Kliun's *Portrait of the Artist's Wife* (cat. no. 7), the frailty of her health (she would die of consumption) finds an expressive correspondence in the tracery of indeterminate natural forms against which she is silhouetted. There is a mysterious unreality to this landscape in which a recumbent white haloed figure — the premonition of death — floats suspended in the middle distance, as if between the present and the future, while the space behind them both is peopled with shadows which appear to come from another world. With an acutely Symbolist intention, Kliun has created a suggestive, equivocal floral setting which echoes and illuminates his melancholy subject.

Malevich's *Woman in Childbirth* (cat. no. 2) depicts a mask-like female face framed by three disembodied forearms and hands and emerging from a red tapestry-like ground covered with images of minute, writhing fetuses. The allusion to the pain of labor, the felt but invisible aspects of the child-bearing experience, and the depiction of the internalized "idea" of childbirth rather than a realistic portrayal of it, combine to create an image of profound Symbolist sensibility.

Kliun and Malevich were strongly influenced in these years by the Symbolist painters Mikalojaus Čiurlionis and Pavel Kuznetsov, and their debts to Matisse and Gauguin can be traced to the numerous works in the collections of Sergei Shchukin and Ivan Morosov and at the *Golden Fleece* exhibitions of 1908 and 1909. In Kliun's *Family* of 1911 (cat. no. 6), the treatment of the darkly outlined silhouettes against the vivid flat red background distinctly echoes Gauguin's treatment of color and space. In Malevich's self-portrait (cat. no. 3), the Symbolist echoes are still clearly present in the tapestried veils of color in the background and in the subtly differentiated shading of the flesh and eyes. In his later portrait (cat. no. 4), the starkly contrasting Fauve colors of the face, the dark black outlines and the vibrant unified ground are more clearly suggestive of Gauguin and Matisse.

At this early stage of their friendship, the two artists already shared strong aesthetic affinities. These affinities were to grow and become even closer during the development of Suprematism from 1915. (See below, p. 111.)

KAZIMIR SEVERINOVICH MALEVICH

1

Untitled. 1904-05

Oil on board, 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 7 $\frac{7}{16}$ " (30.8 x 19 cm.)

Signed l.r.: KM

Inscribed on reverse: *K. Malevich N2-5p*

Acquired from the artist's brother, M. S. Malevich

C508



K. S. MALEVICH

2

Woman in Childbirth. 1908

Oil and pencil on board, 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (24.7 x 25.6 cm.)

Signed and dated l.l.: *Kazimir Malevich 1908*

Acquired from the artist's brother, M. S. Malevich

138.78



K. S. MALEVICH

3

Self-Portrait. ca. 1908

Watercolor and varnished gouache on paper, diameter
9 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (25.1 cm.)

Private collection



K. S. MALEVICH

4

Portrait. ca. 1910

Gouache on paper, 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (27.7 x 27.7 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's brother, M. S. Malevich

140.78



5

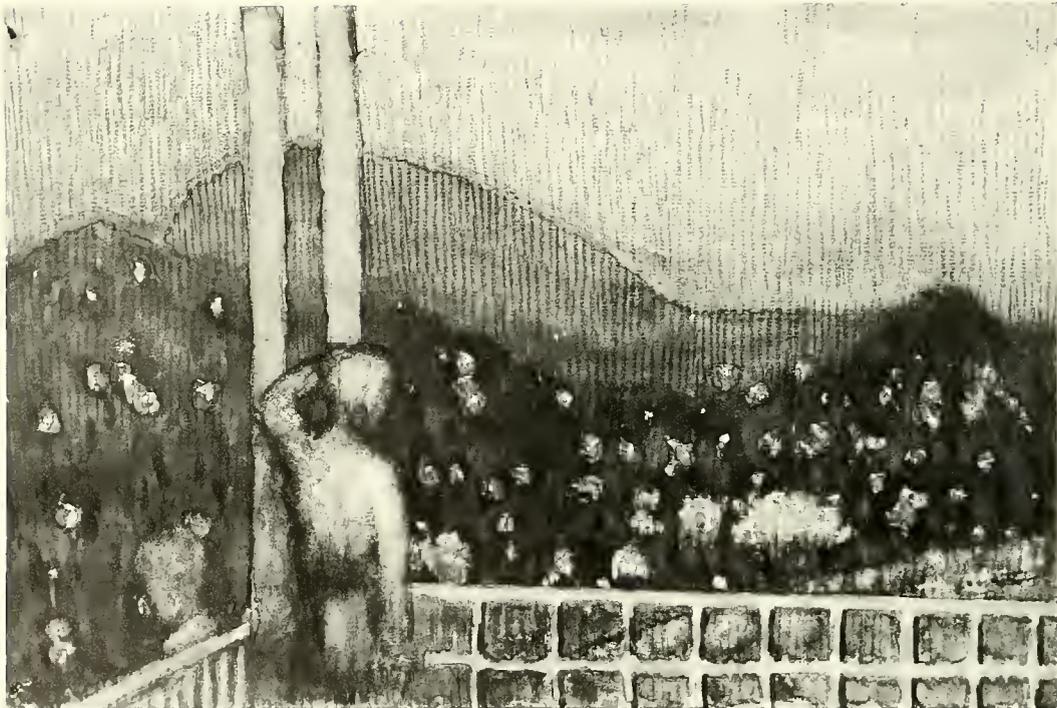
Untitled. 1908

Watercolor, gouache and pencil on paper, 6 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 10"
(17 x 25.3 cm.)

Inscribed on the reverse by the daughter of the artist:
*I guarantee that this is the work of my father,
I. Kliun. S.I.*

Acquired from the artist's daughter, Serafima Ivanova
Kliun

804.79



I. V. KLIUN

6

Family. 1911

Oil on board, 18¼ x 14⅞" (46.4 x 36.3 cm.)

Signed l.l.: *I. Kliun*

Signed, titled and dated on reverse: *I. Kliun Family 1911*

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

85.78



I. V. KLIUN

7

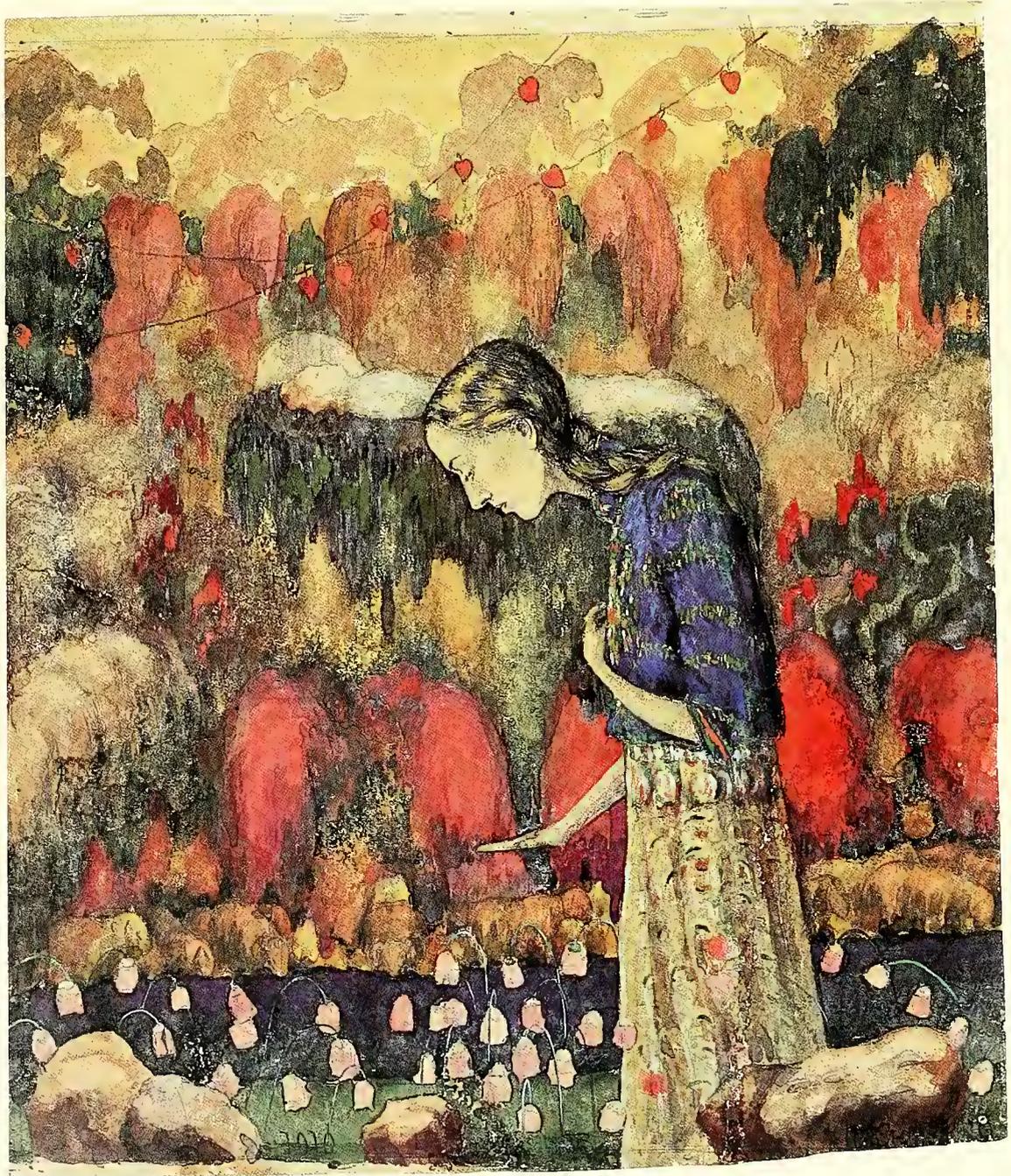
Portrait of the Artist's Wife (Consumption). 1910

Watercolor, charcoal and pencil on paper, 13 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
(34.2 x 29.1 cm.)

Dated l.c.: 1910

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

C549



VLADIMIR EVGRAFOVICH TATLIN

8

Nude. ca. 1910–12

Pencil on paper, 16 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (42.8 x 25.8 cm.)

On reverse, a second nude (repr. R., S., C., *Costakis*,
pl. 1105).

Acquired from the artist's widow, A. M. Korsakova
271.78 recto



II

Cubo-Futurism

Popova's development between 1912 and 1916 is characterized by the assimilation of several different influences and by her establishment of a mature style. If one examines the works produced during those years, certain dominant stylistic issues emerge, and it becomes possible to map out a plausible chronology.

The drawings datable to 1912-13 clearly betray French influence, especially that of Le Fauconnier (see R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 754 and 771). But by the middle of 1914 Popova had embarked upon a more complex path, in which the combined influences of Tatlin and Boccioni are dominant.

Popova's relationship to the work of Tatlin has been noted by the art historian Dmitrii Sarabianov, among others (see pp. 51-53).¹ Tatlin's formulation of the figure, with limbs hinged at the joints as if encased in armor, is echoed in Popova's studies of the nude of 1914-15. Moreover, Tatlin's use of structural planes governing the figure's shoulders and thighs in his work of ca. 1913-14 recurs with regularity in Popova's work of the same period (see cat. nos. 9, 11, 12). In addition, however, her stylistic evolution is clearly indebted to the example of Boccioni, both in theoretical and visual terms.

The 1912 *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* was published in Moscow in 1914, and an article on Boccioni's sculpture appeared in *Apolon* in 1913.² Popova must have known these texts, and she almost certainly also saw important examples of Boccioni's work at his one-man show in Paris in June-July 1913.³ In Popova's *Jug on the Table* of 1915 (p. 47, fig. c), in a large series of nudes — some of which are exhibited here (cat. nos. 13, 15-17) — and in *Seated Figure* (cat. no. 20), the full extent of Boccioni's influence is apparent.

One of Boccioni's central concerns (clearly articulated in his manifestoes, as well as in his work) was the relationship between object and environment. In the *Manifesto on Painting*, he wrote: "To paint a human figure you must not paint it; you must render the whole of the surrounding atmosphere. . . . Our bodies penetrate the sofas upon which we sit, and the sofas penetrate our bodies." In the *Sculpture Manifesto*, he spoke of sculpture becoming a "translation in plaster, bronze, glass, wood, or any other material of the atmospheric planes which bind and intersect things." He envisaged "the absolute and complete abolition of definite lines and closed sculpture," insisting instead on "breaking open the figure and enclosing it in its environment."

In Boccioni's work of 1912-14 — for example, the painting *Materia* (p. 57, fig. d), the sculptures *Development of a Bottle in Space* (p. 46, fig. b) and



fig. b
Umberto Boccioni
Development of a Bottle in Space. 1912-13
Bronze, 15 x 24" (38 x 61 cm.)
Lydia and Harry L. Winston Collection
(Dr. and Mrs. Barnett Malbin), New York

1. See D. Sarabianov, "The Painting of Liubov Popova," in LACMA, p. 42.

2. Nakov, *2 Stenberg 2*, London-Paris, 1975, p. 56, fn. 31.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Repr. J. C. Taylor, *Futurism*, New York, The Museum of Modern Art, 1961, p. 93. This work is destroyed.

Head + Houses + Light,⁴ and the series of works titled *Horse + Rider + Buildings* (p. 57, fig. e) — he managed to translate these theoretical concerns into pictorial and sculptural form. Thus, the *Bottle in Space*, with its complex and dynamic centrifugal motion, is literally and metaphorically opened to include surrounding space. The curved planes create both the environment and the object itself. Meanwhile, in *Materia*, and in *Horse + Rider + Buildings*, the large “planes which bind and intersect things” serve to integrate the central figures and their surrounding ambiance.

Popova's 1914–15 *Portrait* (cat. no. 18) and *Traveling Woman* (cat. no. 19) are still clearly dependent upon a Cubist formulation of space and form,⁵ though the latter also suggests some response to Futurism. But in the drawings for *Seated Figure*, in the painting itself (cat. no. 20) and especially in its final version,⁶ Boccioni's “atmospheric planes,” including their painterly handling, have suddenly become a central factor in Popova's notion of composition. The very title of this final version (*Person + Air + Space*) is a clear reference to Boccioni's own terminology. Meanwhile the structure and method of articulation first used by Popova in *Jug on the Table* (fig. c), and the interlocking cones of light which constitute the shoulder, hip and knee joints of the figure in *Person + Air + Space* (as well as the curved planes throughout) reflect a fuller understanding of the *Bottle in Space*.

In her immediately succeeding works, such as the now lost relief (fig. f), and *Painterly Architectonics* (cat. no. 107), there are still traces of recognizable objects (guitar, table, numerals, etc.), but these have now been substantially subordinated to the interplay of those dynamic planes which have clearly become the artist's major focus. Finally, in Popova's developed and mature style of 1916–19, the planes are unambiguously the actual subject matter of an art that is thoroughly nonobjective (cat. nos. 112–115 and 176).

In short, by tracing Popova's work through its series of complex stages in the years 1914–16 it is possible to see that in addition to Tatlin's example, Boccioni's too provided her with a crucial catalyzing force: it was partially through an understanding of his art and its theoretical foundations that she was able to formulate her own powerful and fully mature style.



fig. c
Liubov Popova
Jug on the Table (Plastic Painting). 1915
Oil on cardboard mounted on wood with wood attachment, 23 x 17 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (58.5 x 45.5 cm.)
Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow, gift of George Costakis (repr. color R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 817, where evidence for the 1915 date of this work is offered)



fig. f
Liubov Popova
Relief (early photograph owned by George Costakis).
Medium, dimensions and present whereabouts unknown.

5. Works such as Picasso's *Bar Table (Bottle of Pernod and Glass)* of 1912 (P. Daix and J. Rosselet, *Picasso, The Cubist Years, 1907-1916*, Lausanne, 1979, no. 460) had been visible at Shchukin's since 1913 and undoubtedly helped to shape Popova's Cubist style.

6. Repr. color, C. Gray, *The Great Experiment. Russian Art 1863-1922*, New York, 1962, p. 185; Collection The Russian Museum, Leningrad.

LIUBOV SERGEEVNA POPOVA

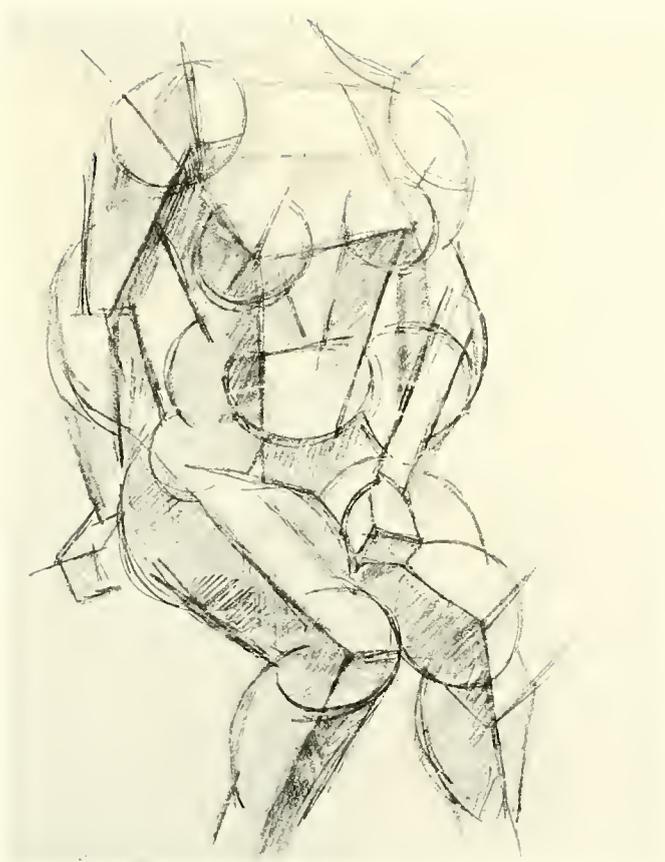
9

Seated Figure. ca. 1913-15

Pencil on paper, $8\frac{7}{16} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ " (21.5 x 16.6 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C70 recto



10

Anatomical Study. ca. 1913-15

Pencil on paper, $6\frac{5}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{2}$ " (16.8 x 21.6 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C76 recto

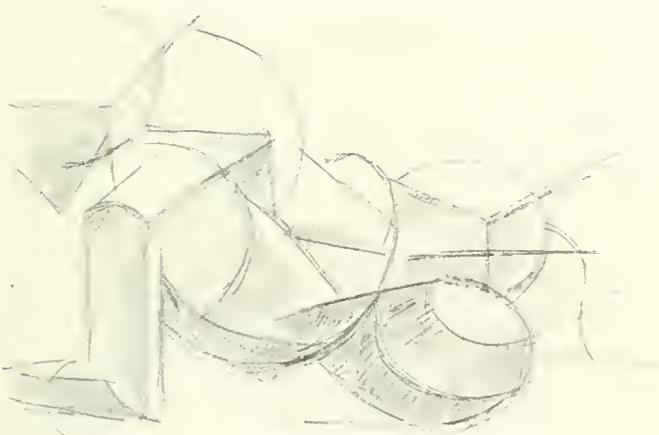
11

Standing Figure. ca. 1913-15

Pencil on paper, $10\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$ " (26.8 x 21 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C78



L. S. POPOVA

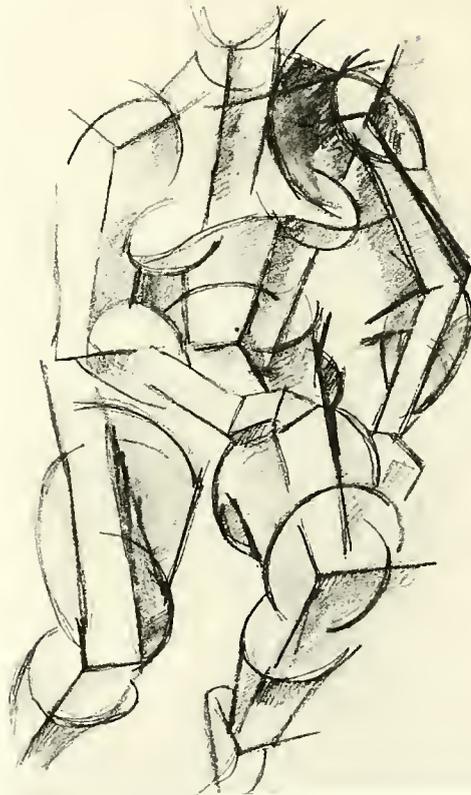
12

Seated Figure. ca. 1913-15

Pencil on paper, 8½ x 6⅞" (21.6 x 16.8 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

Page 62 from Sketchbook C313



13

Anatomical Study. ca. 1913–15

Pencil on paper, 10½ x 8⅛" (26.7 x 20.6 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C3 recto



fig. a

Vladimir Tatlin

Page from a Sketchbook. ca. 1913–14

Pencil on paper, 16⅓/16 x 10¼" (43 x 26 cm.)

Central State Archives of Literature and Art, Moscow,
fond 2089, Archive 1, no. 2.

L. S. POPOVA

14

Standing Figure. ca. 1913–15

Pencil on paper, $10\frac{3}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{16}$ " (26.5 x 20.5 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

Page 273a from Sketchbook C2

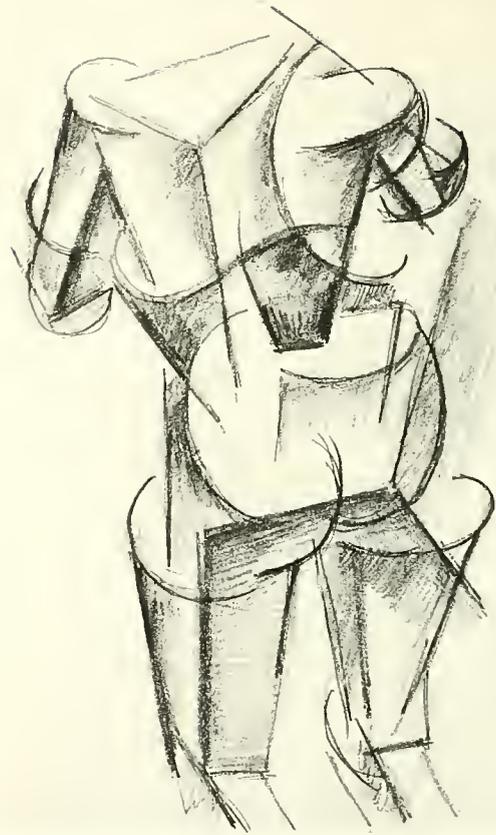
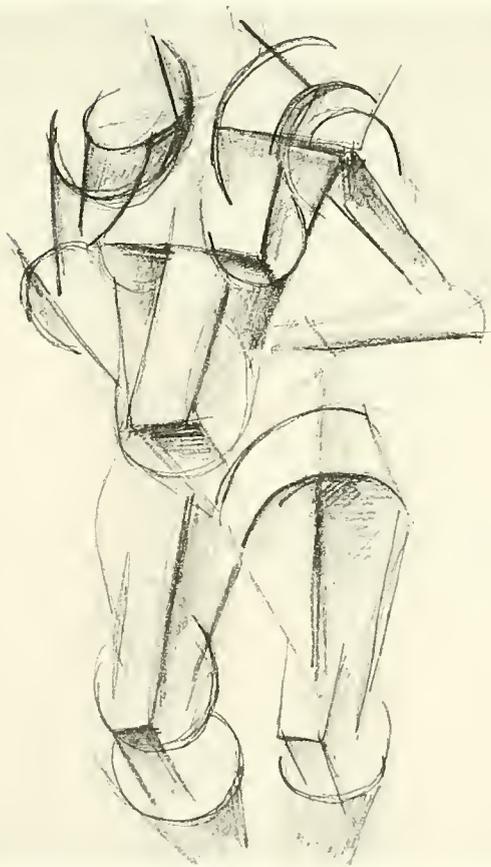
15

Standing Figure. ca. 1913–15

Pencil on paper, $10\frac{3}{8} \times 8\frac{1}{8}$ " (26.5 x 20.5 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

Page 274 from Sketchbook C2



L. S. POPOVA

16

Standing Figure. ca. 1913-15

Pencil on paper, 10½ x 8¼" (26.7 x 20.5 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C68

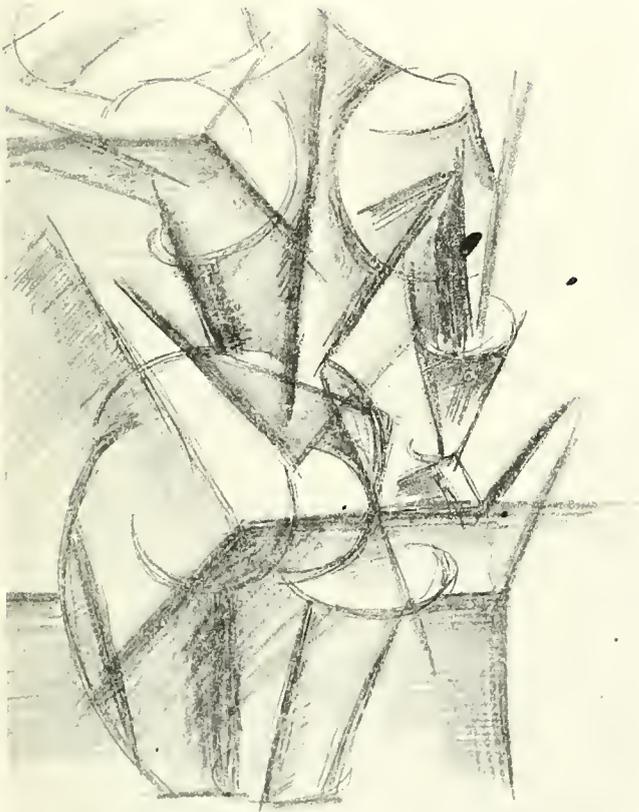
17

Anatomical Study. ca. 1913-15

Pencil on paper, 10½ x 8¼" (26.7 x 20.6 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C4



18

Portrait. 1914-15Oil on paperboard, 23 ⁷/₁₆ x 16 ⁷/₁₆" (59.5 x 41.6 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's brother, P. S. Popov

183.78

19

Traveling Woman. 1915Oil on canvas, 62 ³/₈ x 48 ⁷/₁₆" (158.5 x 123 cm.)

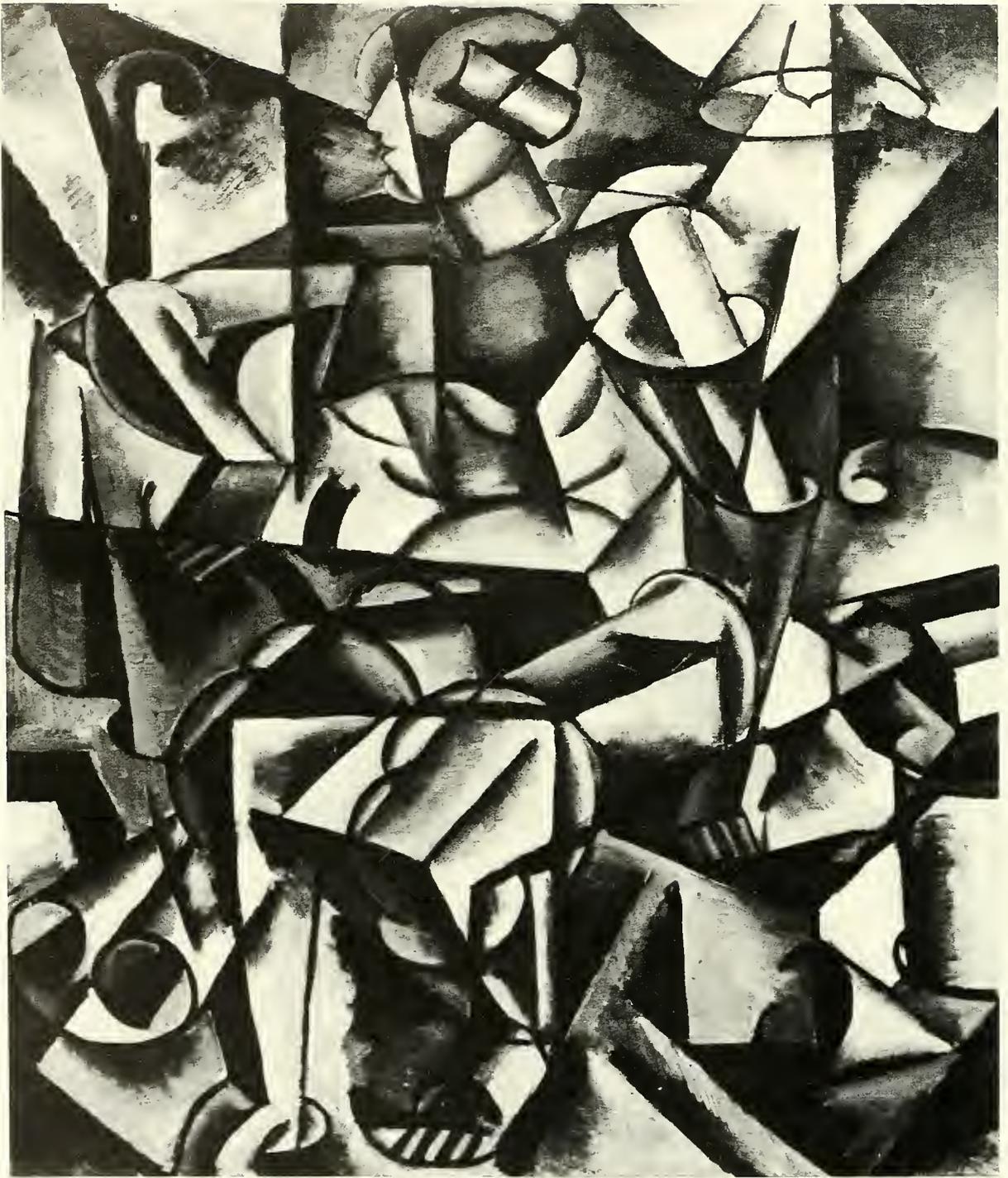
Acquired from the artist's brother, P. S. Popov

177.78

A second version of this composition is in the collection of Norton Simon. One of the two appeared as cat. no. 92 in the *oro* exhibition of December 1915–January 1916 and as cat. no. 151 in the exhibition *The Store (Magazin)*, March 1916. The Simon picture appears in the installation photographs of Popova's posthumous exhibition of 1924 (and is no. 18 in the catalogue). The Costakis version may also have been shown in this exhibition, but documentation for its appearance has not yet been found.







20

Seated Figure. ca. 1914-15

Oil on canvas, 41 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 34 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (106 x 87 cm.)

Collection Peter Ludwig, Cologne; formerly Costakis collection

(Not in exhibition.)



fig. d

Umberto Boccioni

Materia. 1912

Oil on canvas, 88 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 59 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (222.7 x 150.5 cm.)

Gianni Mattioli Collection, Milan

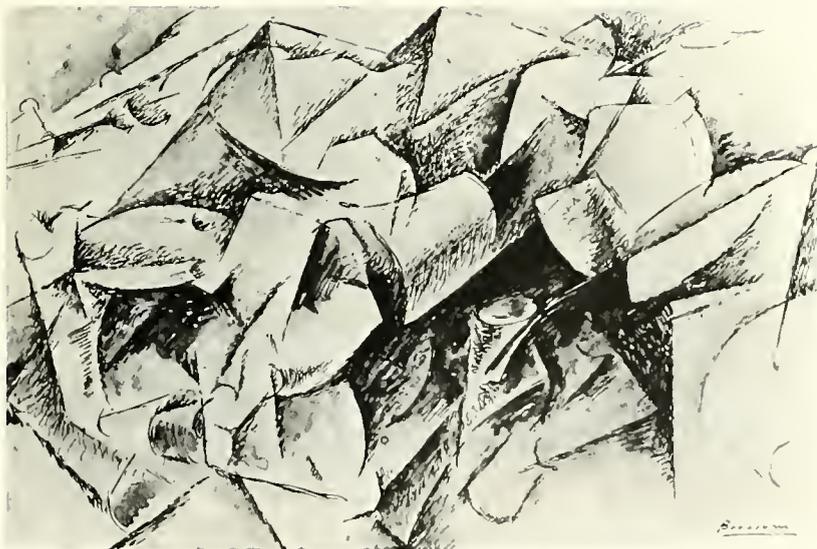


fig. e

Umberto Boccioni

Horse + Rider + Buildings. 1914

Ink and watercolor on paper, 8 x 11 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (20.3 x 30.1 cm.)

Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni, Castello Sforzesco, Milan

L. S. POPOVA

21

Landscape. 1914-15

Oil on canvas, 41 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (105.2 x 69.6 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's brother, P. S. Popov

184.78

This work appeared in the artist's posthumous exhibition of 1924 and is visible in the installation photographs. For preparatory drawings, see R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 818, 819.

excellent
color



22 i

Study for *Cubist at Her Dressing Table*.¹ ca. 1914

Pencil on paper, $3\frac{5}{8} \times 3"$ (9.2 x 7.6 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, Serafima Ivanova
Kliun

293.80 A

22 ii-v

Studies for *The Musician*

Pencil on paper

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

ii, C 552 B, $4\frac{3}{8} \times 2\frac{1}{4}"$ (11.1 x 5.7 cm.); iii, C 552 C, $4\frac{1}{8} \times 2\frac{3}{4}"$ (10.5 x 7 cm.); iv, C 559 D, $4\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{3}{4}"$ (11.5 x 7 cm.); v, C 552 E, $4\frac{1}{8} \times 2\frac{3}{4}"$ (10.5 x 7 cm.)



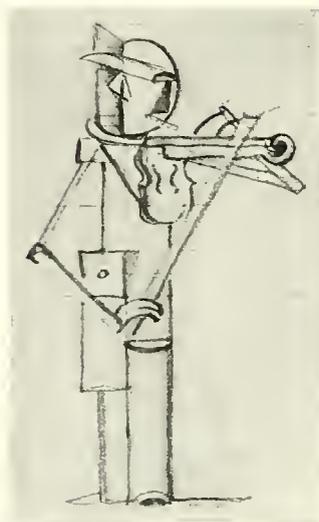
i



ii



iii



iv



v

1. Cat nos. 22 and 24 i-iii belong to a series of sixteen double-sided sheets of mounted drawings, possibly constituting part of Kliun's personal oeuvre catalogue. For a discussion of these sheets and full reproductions of all of them with the drawings of their original positions, see R., S., C., *Costakis*, pp. 175-195.

In the years 1914–17 Kliun produced a number of sculptures, almost all of which have apparently been destroyed. Surviving are two strikingly original works: *Landscape Rushing By* of ca. 1914–15 (p. 63, fig. a, Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, formerly Costakis collection),¹ and *The Musician* of 1917 (Tretyakov Gallery, repr. here, fig. b).

The Landscape is a vivid combination of painted wood, metal, wire and porcelain, for which two studies are shown here (cat no. 23). The relief clearly evokes Futurist conceptions of speed and motion; moreover, through the inclusion of porcelain and wire — allusions to telegraph poles seen by a traveler speeding by — Kliun calls specific attention to the materiality of the sculpture while also introducing pictorially expressive juxtapositions.

In the now lost *Cubist at Her Dressing Table* (fig. a) and in *The Musician* (fig. b), Kliun again achieves his effects partly through the handling and juxtaposition of unexpected materials. Glass, metal, celluloid, copper, wood and porcelain are combined to create figures that are in various ways evocative both of Archipenko's and of Picasso's constructions, but which possess a strong stylistic identity of their own.²

Both *Landscape Rushing By* and *Cubist at Her Dressing Table* were exhibited (together with fourteen other sculptures by Kliun) at the December 1915 0.10 exhibition. All trace of the other pieces has apparently been lost, and Kliun's clearly innovative contribution in construction is thus recorded only in the two surviving pieces and some drawings. His statement written on the occasion of the 1915 exhibition is revealing: "Before us sculpture was a means of reproducing objects. There was no sculptural art, but there was the art of sculpture. Only we have become fully aware of the principle: Art as an end in itself. . . . Our sculpture is pure art, free from any surrogates; there is no content in it, only form."³

Though the "content" was on one level obviously recognizable, Kliun's interest was intensely focused upon the *faktura* and the *tektionika* of his medium.



fig. a
I. V. Kliun
Cubist at Her Dressing Table. ca. 1914–15
Mixed media, dimensions unknown, presumed destroyed

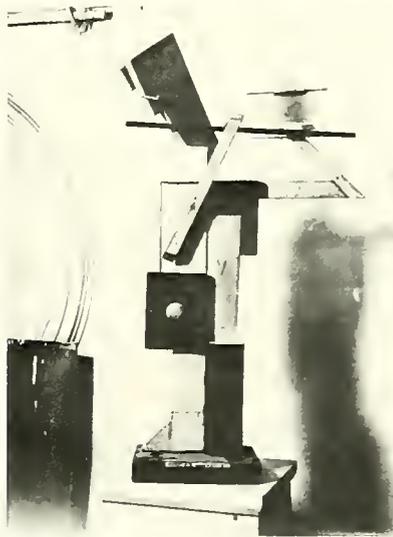


fig. b
I. V. Kliun
The Musician. 1917
Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow. Dimensions and medium unknown.

Documentary photograph owned by George Costakis. On reverse of photograph, the media are identified as glass, metal, wood, celluloid, copper. The photograph was taken in a hitherto unidentified exhibition.

1. Repr. color, R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 135.

2. *Cubist at Her Dressing Table* is most closely related to Archipenko's *Woman in Front of a Mirror* (destroyed, repr. M. Rowell, *The Planar Dimension*, New York, The Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1979, p. 21). Though Archipenko remained in close touch with his Russian colleagues

after his move to Paris in 1908, and was a corresponding member of "Supremus," the Suprematist group, from 1916, it has not hitherto been possible to establish the specific nature of the interaction between him and Kliun during the years 1914–15.

3. Trans. Bowlt, *Theory and Criticism*, p. 114

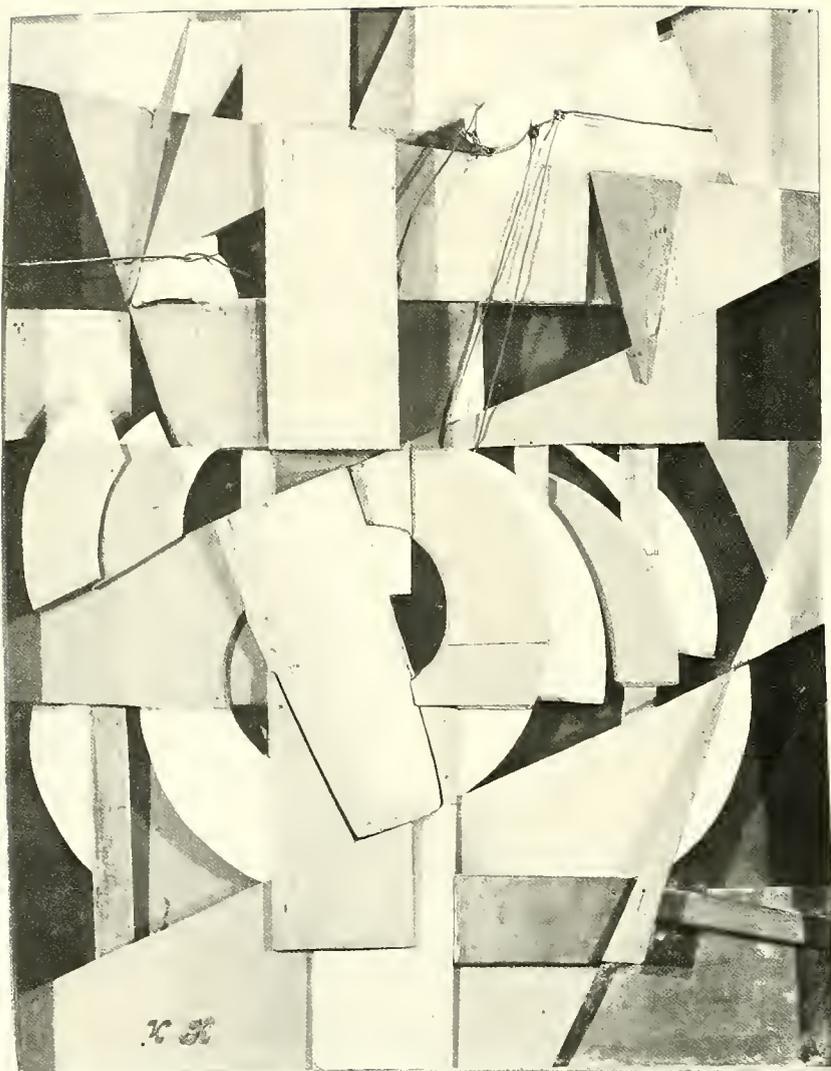


fig. a
I. V. Kliun
Landscape Rushing By. ca. 1914-15
Oil on wood, wire, metal and porcelain, $29\frac{1}{8} \times 22\frac{1}{16}$ "
(74 x 58 cm.)
Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow, gift of George Costakis

23 i-ii

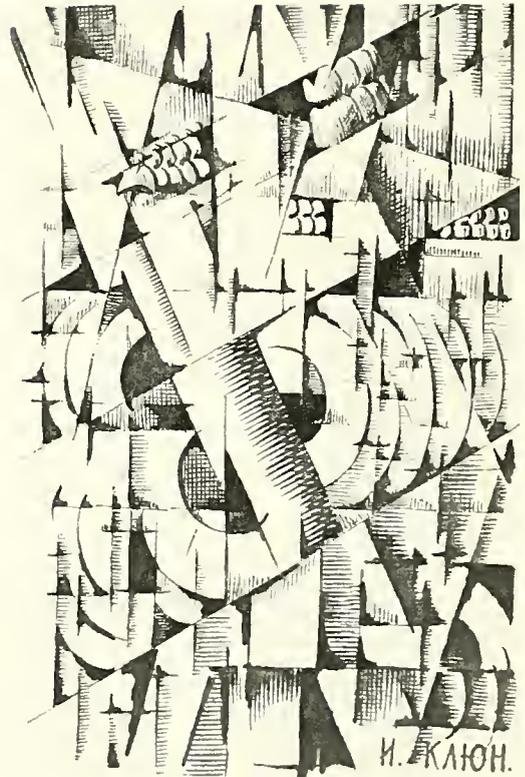
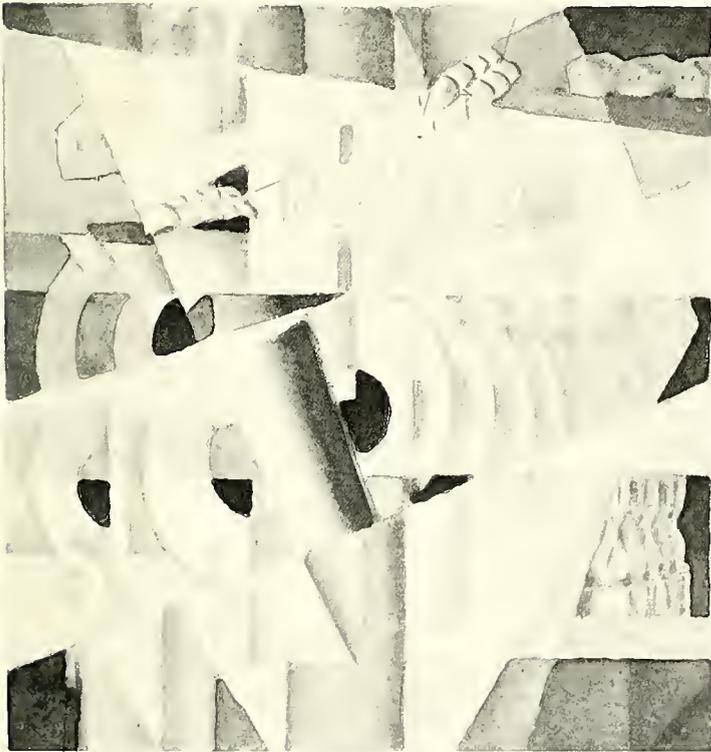
Studies for *Landscape Rushing By*. ca. 1914-15

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

Left, i, 274.80: wash on paper, $6\frac{5}{16} \times 5\frac{15}{16}$ " (16 x 14.8 cm.); inscribed across the center: *POKROV*

Right, ii, 273.80: ink on paper, $5\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{7}{16}$ " (13.4 x 8.7 cm.)

Signed l.r.: *I. Kliun*



I. V. KLIUN

24 i

Untitled. ca. 1914-15

Pencil on paper, 2 x 2" (5 x 5 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

C368A

24 ii

Untitled. ca. 1914-15

Pencil on paper, 3³/₈ x 3³/₈" (8.6 x 8.6 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

C368B

24 iii

Study for Self-Portrait with Saw. ca. 1914-15

Watercolor on paper, 5⁵/₈ x 3¹/₂" (14.4 x 8.9 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

C559C

24 iv

Study for Self-Portrait with Saw. 1917

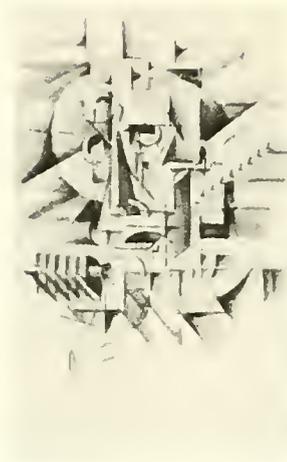
Pencil on paper, 8⁷/₈ x 7¹/₄" (22.2 x 18.4 cm.)

Signed l.l.: I.K.

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

822.79

i



iii

ii



iv



25

Whereas Kliun's constructions of the years 1914-15 bear no relationship to the contemporary work of Malevich, his painting and drawing of the period provide continued evidence of a close rapport between the two artists. Kliun's drawings for *The Woodsman* (cat. nos. 24 i and ii), and for *The Self-Portrait with Saw* (cat. nos. 24 iii and iv), though much more explicitly Cubist in their conception of space and form, are reminiscent in many details of Malevich's 1911 *Portrait of Kliun*¹ and of his 1913 *Portrait of Matiushin*.² The 1914 oil version of *Self-Portrait with Saw* (present whereabouts unknown) was followed in 1922 by a second version, which Costakis gave to the Tretiakov Gallery in Moscow (R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 155).

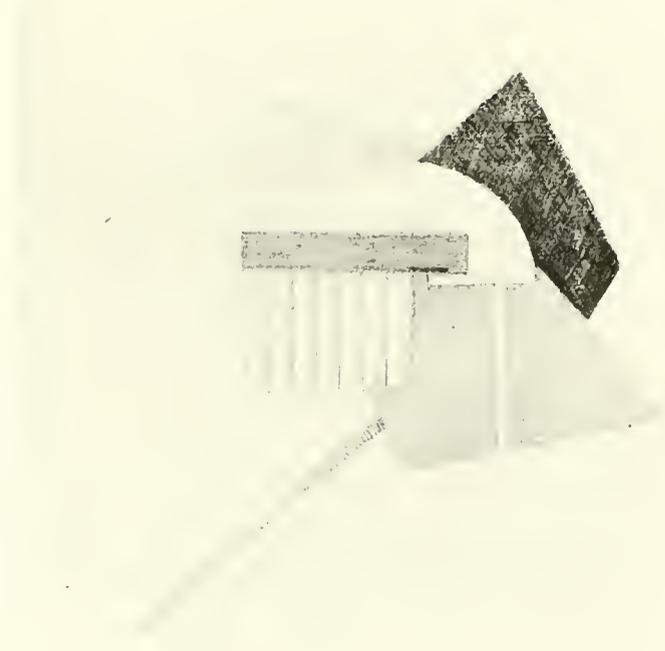
Untitled. 1915

Pencil on paper, 6 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{5}{16}$ " (15.4 x 11 cm.)

Signed and dated l.r.: *I. Kliun 1915*

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

267.80



1. Russian Museum, Leningrad, oil on canvas, 43 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 27 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (111.5 x 70.5 cm.), repr. T. Andersen, *Malevich*, Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum, 1970, p. 22.

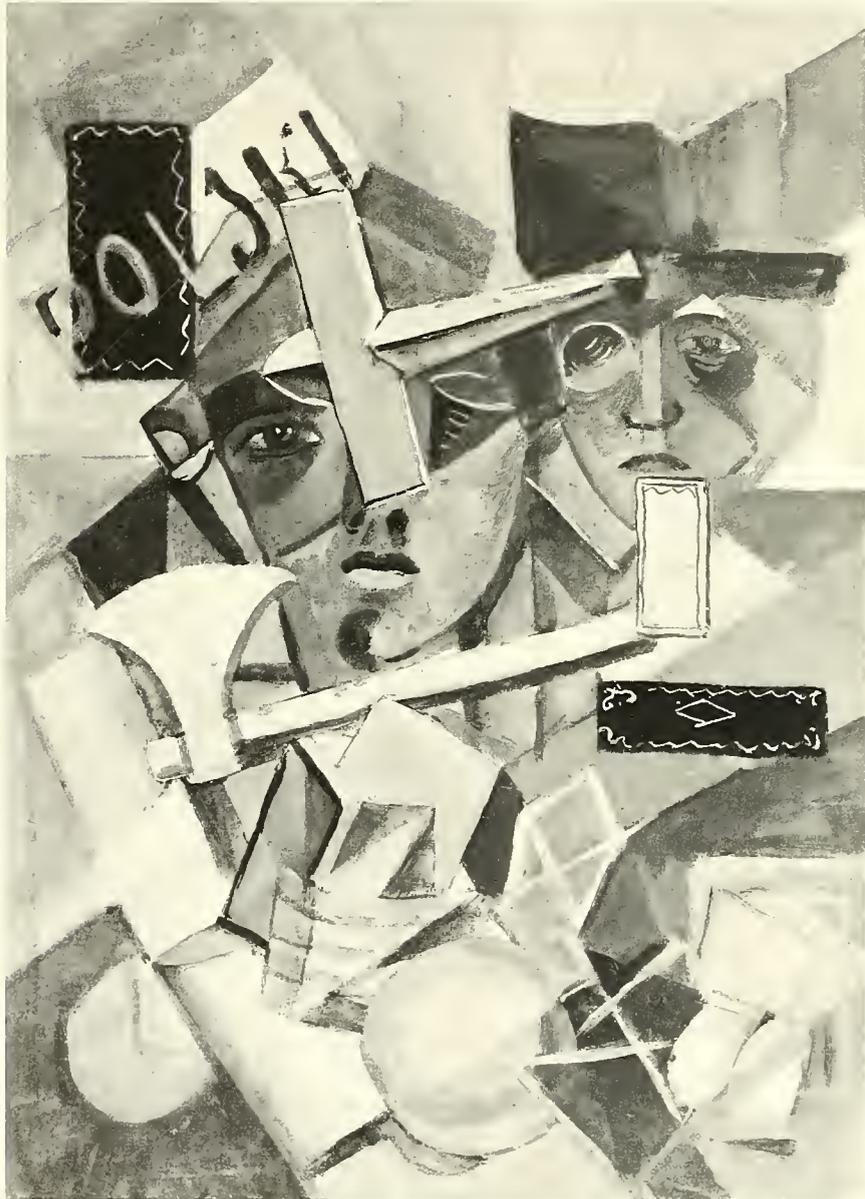
2. Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow, gift of George Costakis, oil on canvas, 41 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 42 $\frac{3}{16}$ " (106 x 107.5 cm.), repr. color R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 482.

26

Aviator's Workroom. 1913
Gouache on canvas (relined), 28 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 17 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
(50.5 x 36 cm.)
Acquired from the artist's daughter
159.78

According to V. Rakitin, this work was shown in the last *Union of Youth* exhibition (*Soiuz molodezhi*), St. Petersburg, December 13–January 1914 (cat. no. 85 there); also in *Tramway V*, Petrograd, March 1915 (cat. no. 38 there). (Information from private archives, Moscow.)

For information about the work of Morgunov, see O. Obolsina, "Zabytye stranitsy sovetskogo iskusstva," *Iskusstvo*, no. 3, Moscow, 1974, pp. 32–37.



27

Violin

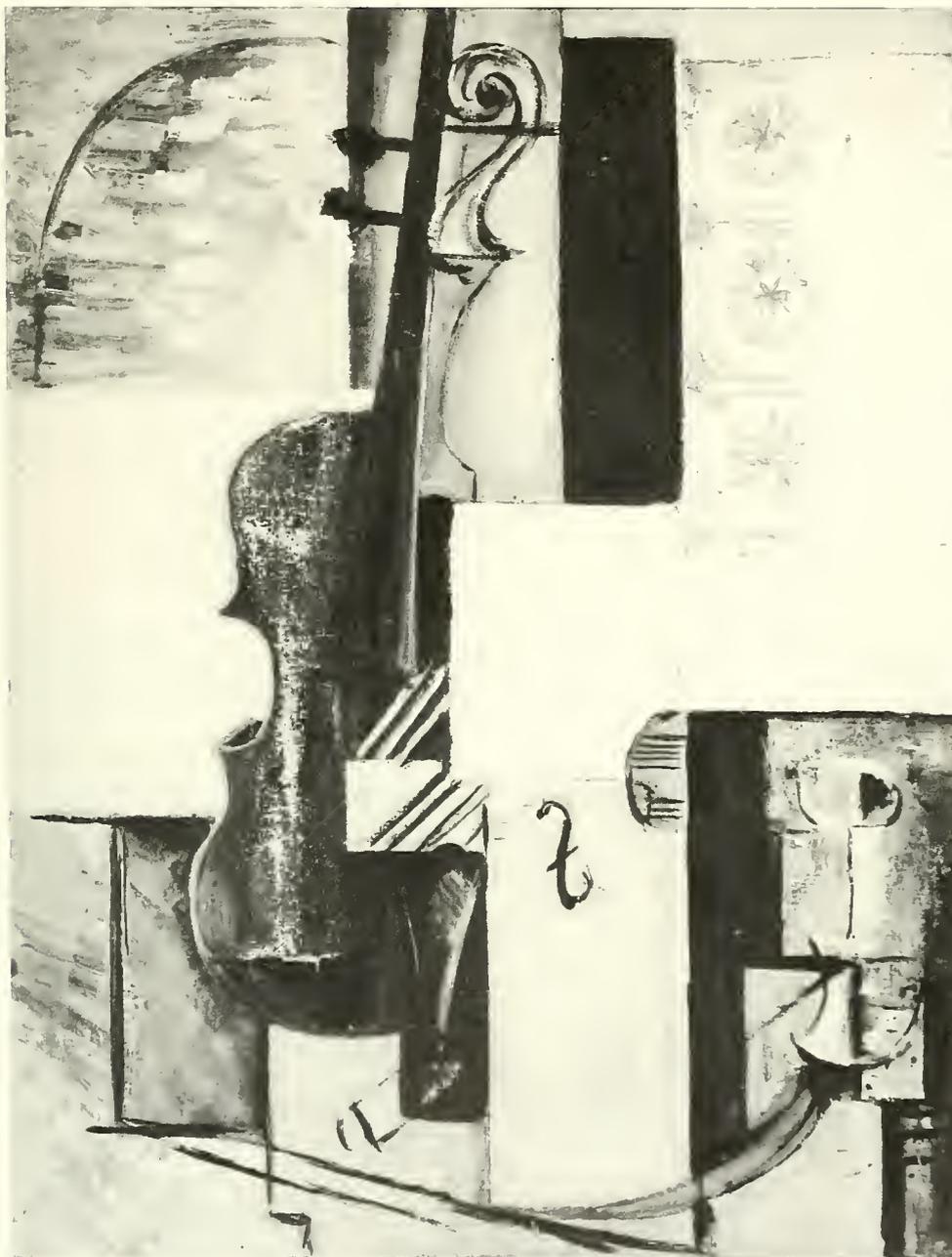
Oil on canvas, 27 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 21 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (70.3 x 53.4 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse: *Mal*

Acquired by Costakis from A. A. Drevin, the son of
Alexandr Drevin and Nadezhda Udaltsova

282.78

The attribution to Malevich is by E. Kovtun and the
sister of Udaltsova. According to Kovtun, there is a
closely related work, similarly signed on the reverse, in
the collection of the Russian Museum, Leningrad.



Advertisements for three books by Kruchenykh illustrated by O. Rozanova. 1913

Lithograph and watercolor on paper, 7¹/₁₆ x 9³/₈" (18.6 x 24.5 cm.)

Acquired from A. Kruchenykh
301.80С (A and B not illustrated)

The advertisement is titled "New Books Take the Air." The three books advertised, all of 1913, are *Duck's Nest of Bad Words*, *Forestly Rapid* and *Explodity*.

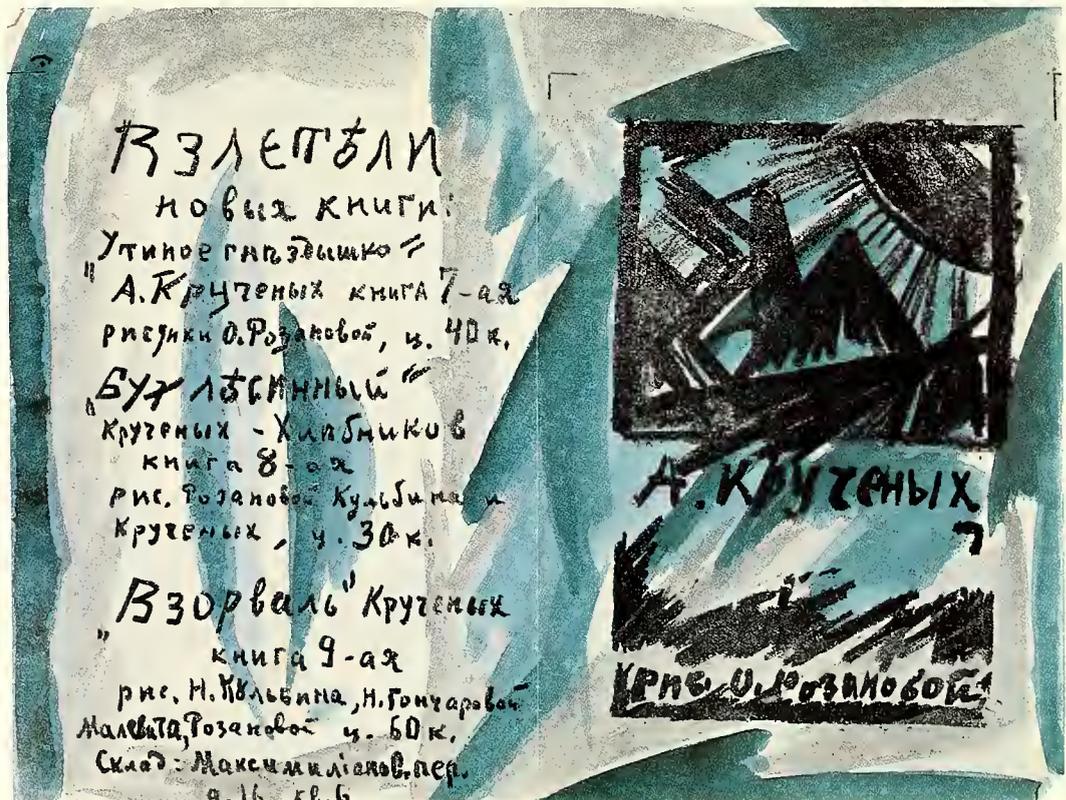
Folded at the center, pages of this design were bound into published copies of *Duck's Nest of Bad Words*, the advertisements appearing as the final page.¹

The three books written by Kruchenykh advertised here were central to the early book production of the Russian Futurist group. In her illustrations for *Duck's Nest of Bad Words* published by EUY (Kruchenykh's own imprint), St. Petersburg, June 12, 1913, Rozanova introduced a new use of color, which also occurs in the advertisements: the black drawings and manuscript text were lithographed on gray paper, but the illustrations and the printed pages of text were separately colored. In the text of this book, as in that of the books *Forestly Rapid* and *Explodity*, the ambiguities of Khlebnikov's and Kruchenykh's *zaim* ("transrational") language, developed during the summer of 1913, were given early expression. The intention was to create a universal language that would be "broader than sense" but not lacking in meaning; words or individual phonemes would be juxtaposed in bizarre, seemingly irrational combina-

tions and by the very juxtaposition of them, new "meanings" would be established. Malevich and Morgunov, closely allied to the poets, concurrently developed their "alogical" style of painting. Thus, in *Englishman in Moscow* by Malevich and *Aviator's Workroom* by Morgunov (cat. no. 26), incongruous images are juxtaposed, with scale, context and perspective intentionally violated, and the fragmentation produces a new form of "conceptual" illustration. (In the Morgunov, for example, the appearance of the airplane, out of scale, within the interior of the workroom, suggests the mental preoccupations of the pilot as he prepares for flight.)

In his illustrations for Khlebnikov's "Wooden Idols" (cat. no. 30) — Filonov's only contribution to the book production of the Futurists — the artist achieves a new level of originality in the relationship between text and illustration. He illuminates the letters (as well as creating separate illustrations) and thus, with an expressive handwriting which is essentially phonic and ideographic, he intensifies both the musical quality of the poetry and the visual associations of sound.²

The innovations in book production during the early Cubo-Futurist movement of ca. 1913-14 continued through the teens, when some of the most striking examples were produced once again by the partnership of Kruchenykh and Rozanova. (See cat. no. 102.) She illustrated more than ten volumes for him alone — some of them in collaboration with Malevich, others on her own.



29

Prayer. 1913

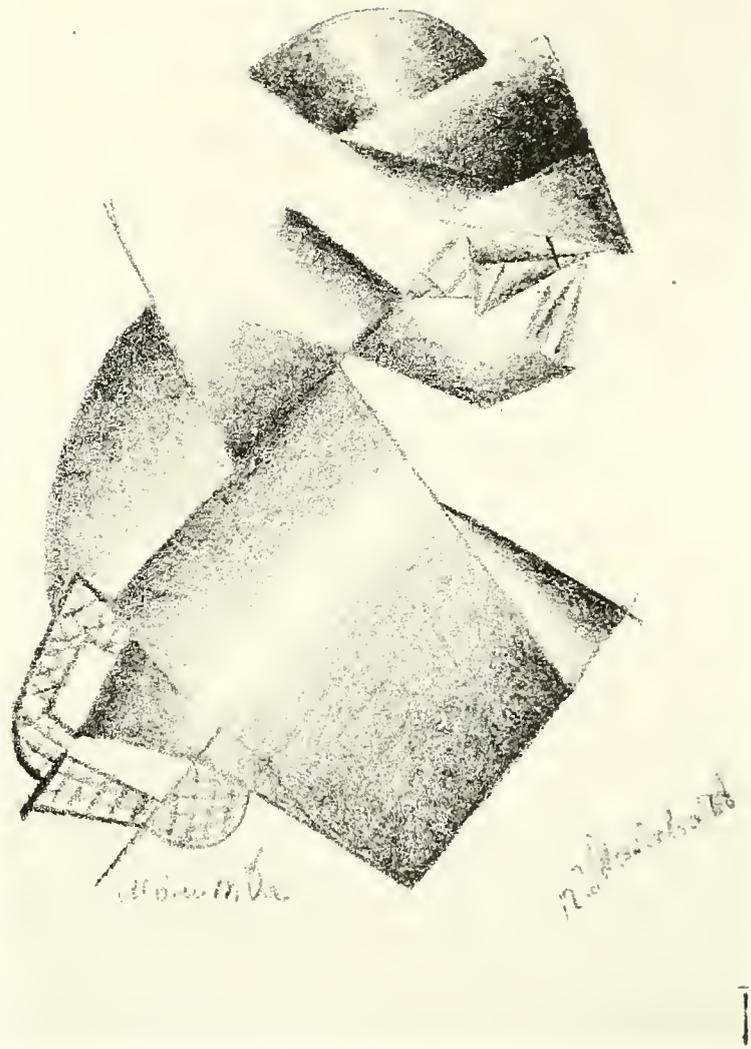
Lithograph, $6\frac{7}{8} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ " (17.5 x 11.5 cm.)

Signed and titled in the stone: *Prayer K. Malevich*

Gift of A. Kruchenykh

C528

Illustration for A. Kruchenykh's *Explodity (Vzorval)*, 2nd edition, St. Petersburg, 1914 (identical with one in the first edition of 1913).



1. A copy of the book owned by the Leonard Hutton Galleries contains the folded wrap as first and last page. The Costakis examples were probably extra loose sheets rather than parts of dismantled copies of the book.

2. "Varvara Stepanova's Anti-Book," in *From Surface to Space*, p. 60.

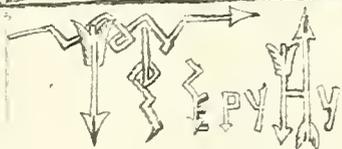
30 i

Drawing for "Wooden Idols" (*Dereviannye idoly*) by V. Khlebnikov. 1914

Ink on paper, 7 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (18.3 x 12.2 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's sister, E. N. Glebova, Leningrad

58.78



ИЗЪ КНИГИ
"ДЕРЕВЯННЫЕ ИДОЛЫ."

30 ii

Drawing for "Wooden Idols" (*Dereviannye idoly*) by V. Khlebnikov. 1914

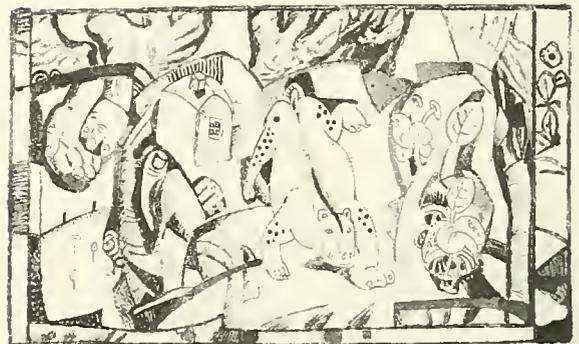
Ink on paper, 7 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{15}{16}$ " (18.4 x 12.6 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's sister, E. N. Glebova, Leningrad

57.78

The book, *Selection of Poems 1907-1914 (Izbornik stik-
bov 1907-14)*, in which these illustrations appeared, was
published in March of 1914.

О ДАШ МЕЛЬКЛЕРОБРАЗЪ РЪШЕН
ИНОГДА ГЛАЗА ПРОКОЛЕТ
НАМ РЫБАЧЬЯ ОСТРОГА
РУЧЕЙ НЕСЕТ И ХОДИТЬ
И НЕСЕТ СКВОЗЬ БЕРЕГА
ЛУСКАЯ КЪ ПЛЮТЪ ТОМУ ПРИЛЬНУЛА
ТУША БЛАЯ ОВЦЫ
И КЪ СВИРЬЛИ ПРОТЯНУЛА
О НАЖЕН ЧЕ РЪЗЦО



EL LISSITZKY
(LAZAR MARKOVICH LISITSKY)

31

Cover design for *The Spent Sun — Second Book of Poems* (*Solntse na izlete: vtoraya kniga stikhov*, 1913–16) by K. Bolshakov. 1916

Black ink on paper, 6¾ x 5¼" (17.1 x 12.8 cm.)

Dedicated along lower edge: *To a friend, a poet, Konst. Arist. Bolshakov, a bundle of visions, as a memento — Lazar Lissitzky.*

Acquired from the widow of Alexei Babichev, N. Babicheva

441.80

The book was published in 480 copies (with a lithographic cover by Lissitzky) by Tsentrifuga, Moscow, 1916. Dimensions of the book cover, printed in ocher and black on gray stock: 9¼ x 7¾" (23.4 x 18.8 cm.) (repr. color, S. P. Compton, *The World Backwards, Russian Futurist Books*, 1912–16, London, 1978, pl. 18).

Lissitzky's style and imagery are clearly indebted to examples of Italian Futurism, such as Carlo Carrà's *Ritmi plastici* of 1911.



32

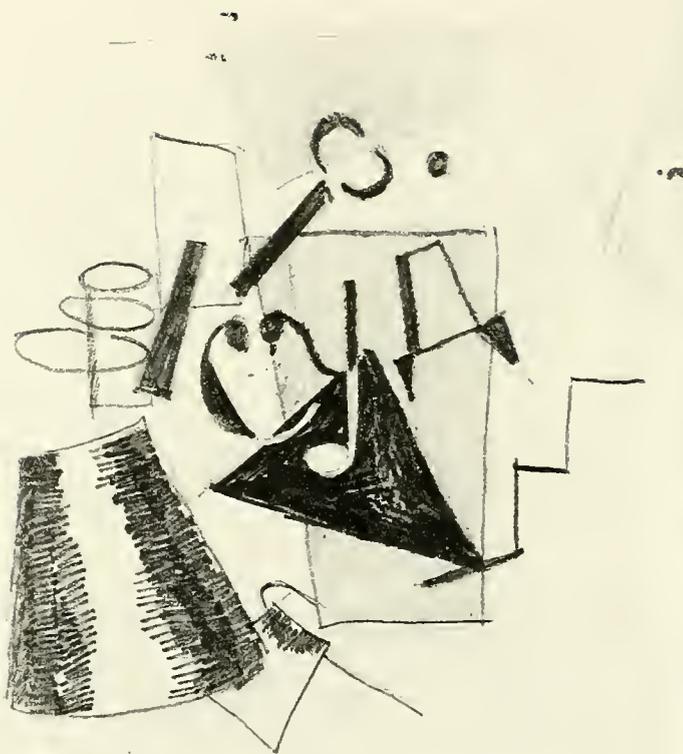
Composition. 1915-16

Pencil on paper, 6 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (16.7 x 11.8 cm.)

Inscribed along lower edge: *The Understanding Court*

Acquired from a relative of the artist in Leningrad

C295



33

Untitled. ca. 1915-16

Pencil on paper mounted on paper, $3\frac{7}{16} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ "
(8.8 x 9.6 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse: *Good Old Time*

Acquired from a relative of the artist in Leningrad

C296

34

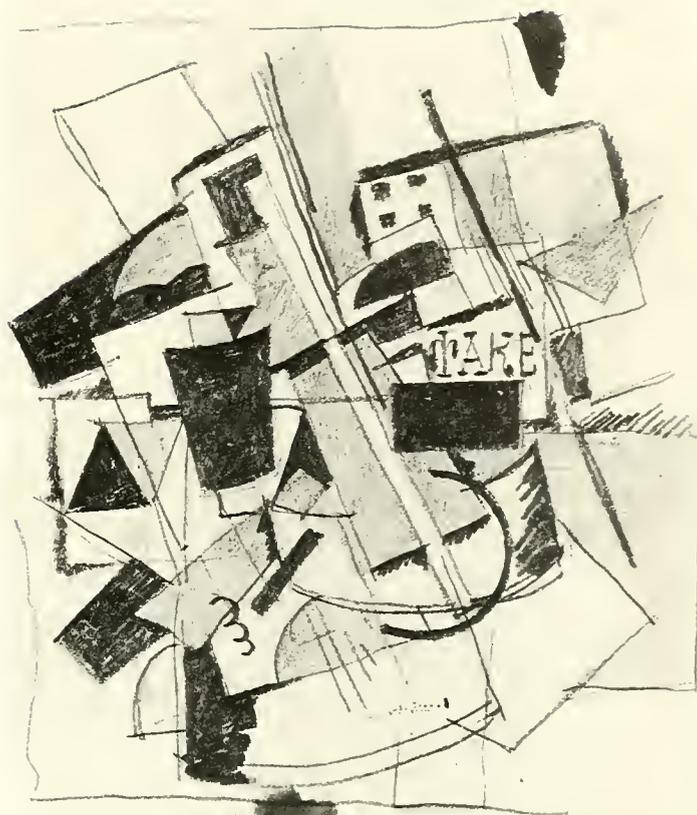
Untitled. ca. 1915-16

Pencil on paper, $6 \times 4\frac{1}{8}$ " (15.3 x 10.5 cm.)

Inscribed u.r.: *Funeral of Sentiment*

Acquired from a relative of the artist in Leningrad

C297



III

Matiushin and His School

Pavel Filonov

The Costakis collection's important holdings from the Moscow Inkhuk (cat. nos. 184–208) are matched by a striking body of work produced in the years 1918–1927 by Mikhail Matiushin and his school at the Petrosvomas (Petrograd State Free Art Studios) and later at the Institute of Artistic Culture in Leningrad (Ginkhuk). While the former may be said to represent the early development of a Constructivism based on principles of technology, on economy of expression leading to a utilitarian view of art, and hence to Productivism, the latter represents a continuing and fundamental commitment to painting, a concentration on the study of nature and on the idea of organic form.

Matiushin — composer, violinist, painter, theoretician and publisher — was born in 1861, and was a mature artist in his fifties in 1912 when he became intimate friends with the much younger Malevich. They collaborated (in 1913) with Kruchenykh on the revolutionary opera *Victory Over the Sun*. Malevich confided in Matiushin (and in him alone) as he struggled in 1915 to formulate the early theory and practice of Suprematism, and Matiushin published Malevich's first text on the subject at the end of that year: an intense series of letters from Malevich to his older colleague (written between 1913 and 1917) bear witness to the importance he attached to this close relationship.¹ It also seems likely that Matiushin's interest in the concept of a fourth dimension fostered Malevich's own ideas on this subject. They shared a view of the artist as visionary, although Matiushin's particular emphasis — and contribution — lay in his concentration on the physical process of seeing, as well as on the physiological and psychological aspects of perception.²

In his studio of "Spatial Realism," with his students Nikolai Grinberg and the four Enders, Matiushin conducted elaborate experiments intended to expand man's capacity to see, partly through a physical retraining of the eye, partly through a kind of "clairvoyance" or an "inner gaze." The intended result was to be a "perspicacity and a penetration" of extraordinary power.³ His system, which in 1923 he named *Zorved* ("See-Know"), represented an effort to combine the powers of keen, physical sight with those of mental perception and cognition. The system depended on the study of physiology (especially of the relationship between retina, central brain and cerebral cortex) and on the psychological dimensions of perception. Thus, for example, Boris Ender in-

1. E. Kovtun published ten of the forty-nine letters in Centre Pompidou, *Malevich, Actes du colloque international, mai 1978, Centre Pompidou*, Lausanne, 1979, pp. 171-189. See also C. Douglas, *Swans of Other Worlds: Kazimir Malevich and the Origins of Abstraction in Russia*, Ann Arbor, 1980, pp. 61-62, 71 ff.

2. A. Povelikhina, "Matiushin's Spatial System," *The Structurist*, nos. 15-16, 1975-76, p. 65. This important article, part of a larger study, was the first analysis of Matiushin's work published either in the Soviet Union or the West. See also L. Shadova, "Il sistema cromatico di Matjušin," *Rassegna sovietica*, no. 1, 1975, pp. 122-30; M. Matiushin, "An Artist's Experience of the New Space," trans. C. Douglas, *The Structurist*, nos. 15-16, 1975-76, pp. 74-77; Z. Ender Masetti, E. C. Masetti

and D. A. Perilli, *Boris Ender*, Rome, 1977; Z. Ender and C. Masetti, "Gli esperimenti del gruppo di Matjušin," *Rassegna sovietica*, no. 3, 1978, pp. 100-07; B. Ender, "Materiali per lo studio della fisiologia della vista complementare," trans. C. Masetti, *Rassegna sovietica*, no. 3, 1978, pp. 108-25. All of these sources are based upon unpublished manuscript materials housed in The State Museum of History, Leningrad; The Manuscript Section, Institute of Russian Literature (Pushkin House), Leningrad; TsGALI (The Central State Archive of Literature and Art), Moscow, and in various private archives. Probably the most important of these is Matiushin's manuscript *Opyt khudozhnika novoi mery* of 1926 (TsGALI, fond 134, op. 2, ed. khr. 21).

3. A. Povelikhina, p. 65.

vented a series of experiments in which — with his eyes blindfolded — he recorded his “visual” responses to a new, totally unfamiliar physical setting. These results were then compared to subsequent responses recorded with the blindfold removed. A remarkable level of consistency in response was observed.⁴ Similarly, one of Matiushin’s experiments required that two people walk toward one another, pass one another, and then describe one another’s subsequent motions without turning their heads. This capacity to see “through the back of one’s neck” — expanding one’s field of vision by 180° — could be learned, they felt, through a new understanding of the mechanism of perception.⁵

With this new and expanded vision, an artist would be able to depict (and the viewer to grasp) nature in an entirely new way: a “world without boundaries and divisions,” one that encompassed what was behind as well as in front of an individual observer, above as well as below. As Matiushin wrote in 1926: “When you see a fiery sunset and for a moment turn around into the deep blue violet cold, you understand and feel the material influence [of both] on the organs of the central perceptions, and you will recognize and sense that they both act on you at once and not separately.”⁶ In effect, every person was believed to have the capacity to absorb and understand what was occurring behind him while actually observing what lay in front. The effect of these theories on the actual landscape paintings of these artists was in some instances a tendency to flatten the picture plane, to move the horizon line toward, or even beyond, the top of the canvas, and to establish a perceptual “center of gravity” near the middle of the canvas, so that some aspects of the landscape seem to be below and behind this center, others above and in front of it (cat. nos. 49–53). In some other instances, a series of receding, spiraling forms created a new and intensified sense of depth, of the limitlessness of space, in which “the fiery sunset and the deep blue-violet cold” were combined, as it were, in a single image. (See R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 679.)

That Matiushin was a professional musician, and that the Enders were also accomplished instrumentalists, undoubtedly contributed to their common desire to include acoustical perceptions in the general program to expand man’s ability to grasp and depict his environment. They devised experiments to expand the sense of hearing as well as sight, and they painted pictures intended to be actual “transcriptions of sound” (*zapisi zbuks*).⁷ Matiushin wrote in 1926: “Sound has the same oscillation as color; the words ‘a crimson tone,’ a

thin, thick, transparent, brilliant or dull sound, determine and show very clearly that our eye, as it were, can *hear* and our ear can *see*.”⁸ Boris Ender, meanwhile, had created a “table” of speech sounds for A. Tufanov’s book *K zaumi* (1924), in which Matiushin’s theories about the relationship between image and sound were described in some detail.

“See-Know” — and the spatial theories that emerged from it — provided the foundation for an elaborately developed theory of color which was discussed at the Ginkhuk during the years 1923–26 when Matiushin was directing the Department of Organic Culture. Color tables showing the results and conclusions of the experiments were drawn up with explanatory texts, and some of them were taken to Berlin by Malevich in 1927 (and are now in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam); others were published in *Conformity of Changeability in Color Combinations. Reference Book on Color (Zakonomernost izmeniaemosti tsvetovykh sochetanii. Spravochnik po tsvetu*, Moscow and Leningrad, 1932). These were to be aids to textile designers, ceramicists, architects, etc., and were clearly pragmatic in their purpose. Boris Ender had considerable success as a designer of architectural interiors during the 1930s, moreover, and it is clear that his general practice was based upon the conclusions reached with Matiushin during the previous decade.⁹

Because of the collaborative nature of the Ginkhuk enterprise — in which the artists worked closely with one another to solve a set of common problems — and because few of their works are signed, it is often difficult to make confident individual attributions. The 156 works by these artists now in the Costakis collection, of which a selection is shown here, offer important new insights into the total contribution of the group as a whole. Inevitably, the individual attributions and dates offered here are to some extent tentative, and further study of the Ender, Grinberg and Matiushin holdings in the Soviet Union and elsewhere will be necessary in order to arrive at a clearer definition of the various hands.¹⁰

4. B. Ender, pp. 108-25.

5. M. Matiushin, pp. 75-76; B. Ender, pp. 108-09. Also Mariia Ender, unpublished report, “On Complementary Form,” Nov. 1927, Pushkin House Archives, Matiushin Archive 656. This manuscript, kindly drawn to my attention by Z. Ender, contains a discussion of the concepts of “visual perception” and “visual conception.”

6. M. Matiushin, p. 76.

7. See R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 629, 631.

8. “Science in Art,” 1926-27, quoted by A. Povelikhina, “Matiushin,” *The Structurist*, p. 69.

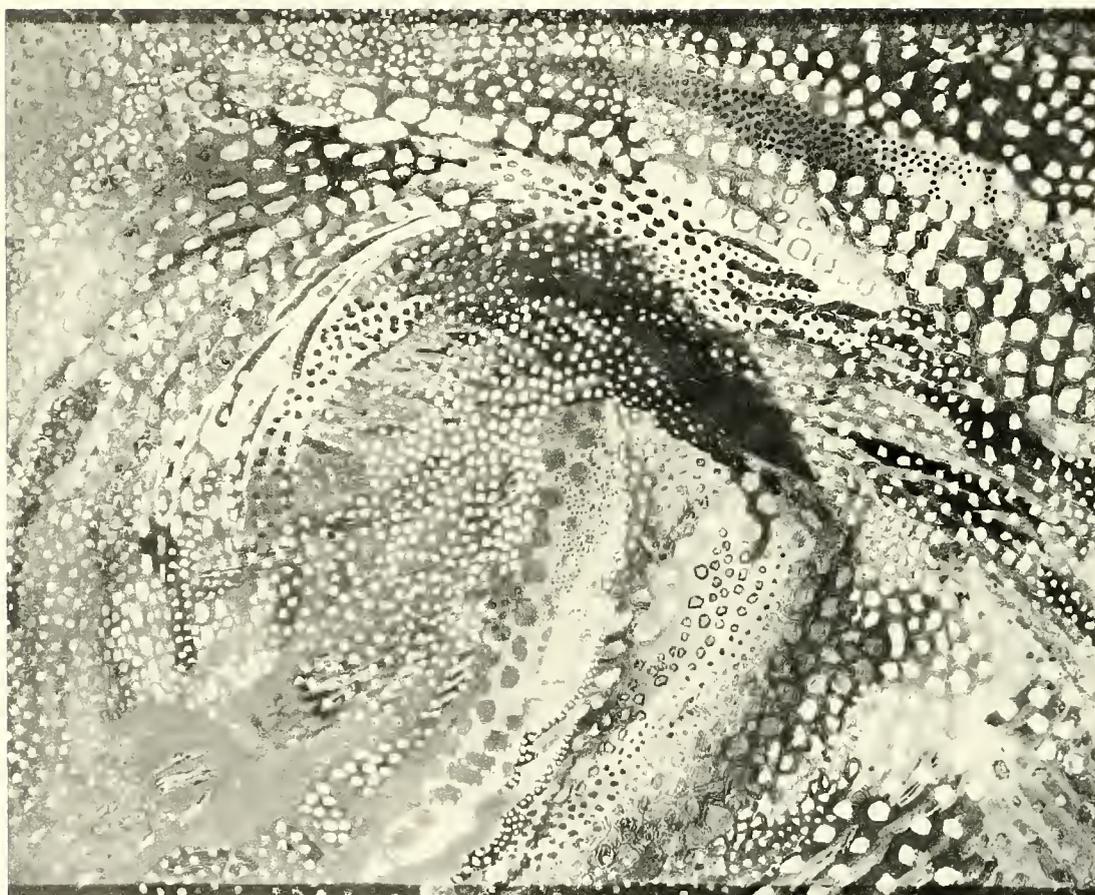
9. Boris Ender worked with his sister Mariia on the interior design of the Soviet pavilion for the *Exposition internationale* in Paris, 1937, and at the New York World’s Fair, 1939, among other projects. He also worked extensively with architects during the 1930s on various questions relating to polychromy in architecture. See L. Shadova, “Il colore e l’ambiente cromatico secondo Ender,” *Rassegna sovietica*, no. 6, 1975, pp. 81-87, a trans. by C. Masetti from *Tekhnicheskaja estetika*, no. 11, 1974, pp. 5-8.

10. For color reproductions of all of the works by these artists in the Costakis collection, see R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 526-682.

35

Painterly-Musical Construction. 1918
Oil on board, 20 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 24 $\frac{13}{16}$ " (51 x 63 cm.)
Acquired from the Ender family, Leningrad
155.78

According to V. Rakitin, this work and cat. no. 36 were exhibited at the *First Free Exhibition* at the Winter Palace in Petrograd, 1919. (Information from private archives, Leningrad.)



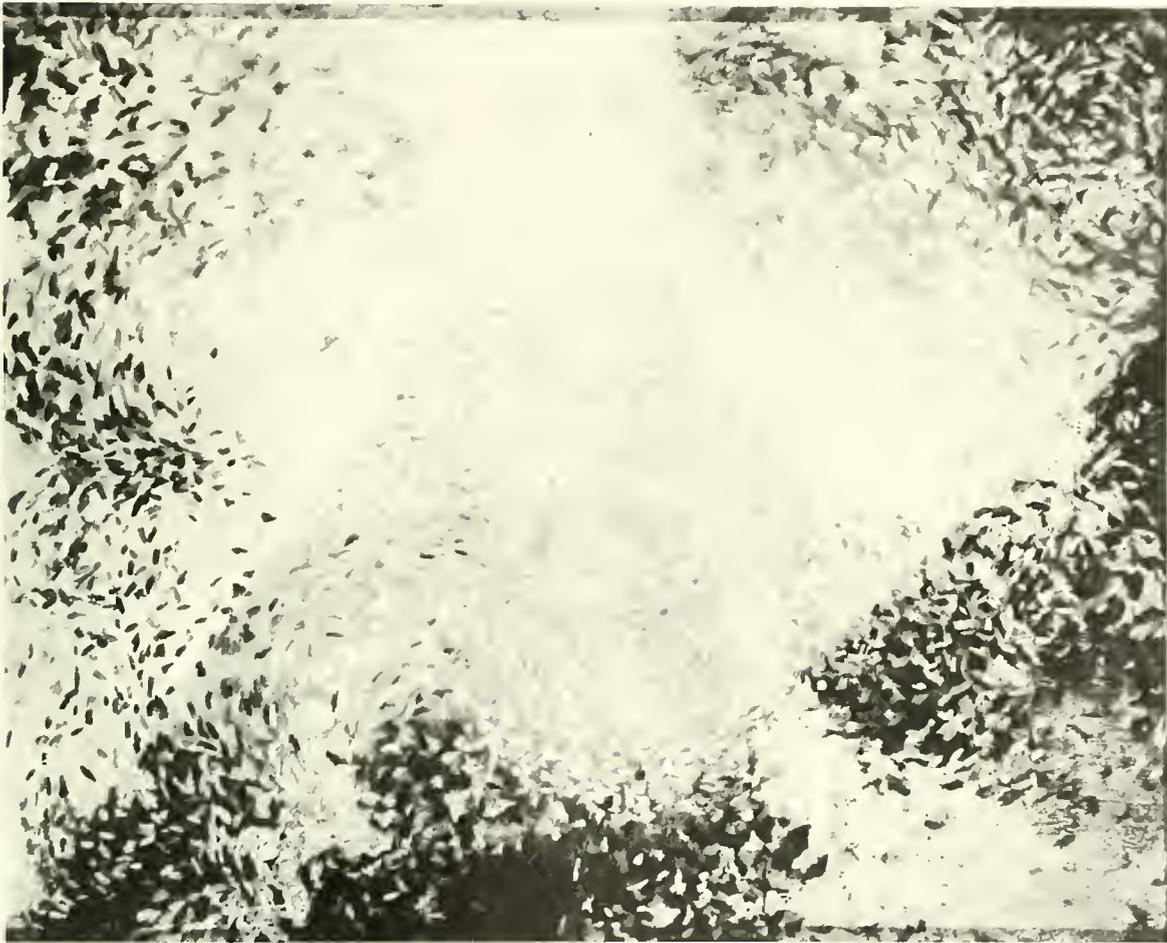
36

Painterly-Musical Construction. 1918

Gouache on cardboard, $20\frac{1}{4} \times 25\frac{1}{16}$ " (51.4 x 63.7 cm.)

Acquired from the Ender Family, Leningrad

154.78



ELENA GURO (ELEONORA
GENRIKHOVNA VON NOTENBERG)

37

Untitled. ca. 1908-10

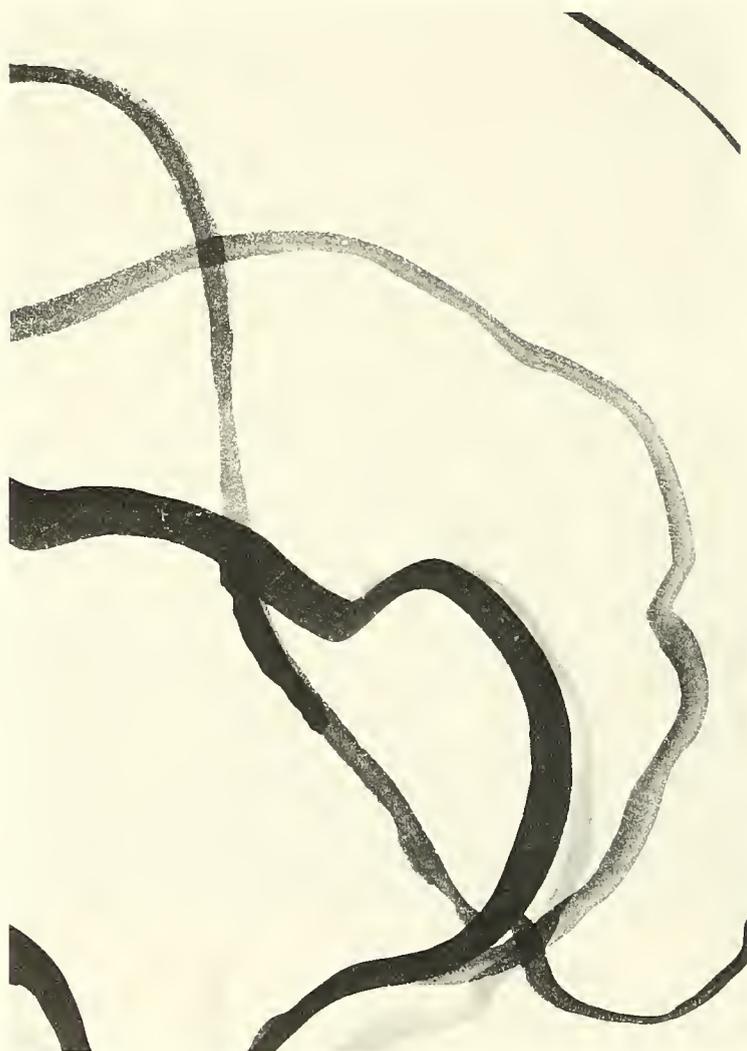
Ink on paper mounted on paper, 9 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
(23.9 x 16.5 cm.)

Acquired from N. Khardzhiev who dated it 1908.

Rakitin has dated it ca. 1910.

63.78

For information on the life and work of Guro see
N. Khardzhiev, "E. Guro," *Knizhnye novosti*, no. 7,
Moscow, 1938; E. Kovtun, "Elena Guro. Poet i khudo-
zhnik," *Pamiatniki kultury. Novye otkrytiia, Ezhegod-
nik*, 1976, Moscow, 1977, pp. 317-326; K. B. Jensen,
Russian Futurism, Urbanism and Elena Guro, Arhus
(Denmark), 1977.



38

Movement of Organic Form. 1919

Oil on canvas, 40¹⁵/₁₆ x 39³/₈" (104 x 100 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

13.78 recto

On reverse, *Abstract Composition.* ca. 1921, repr., color,
R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 534



B. V. ENDER

39

Untitled

Watercolor on paper, 17 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (43.4 x 32.2 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse in the hand of Andrei Ender:

Boris Ender

Acquired from the family of the artist

45.78



B. V. ENDER

40

Untitled

Watercolor on paper, 14 x 10⁷/₈" (35.7 x 27.6 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

C287



B. V. ENDER

41

Extended Space. 1922–23

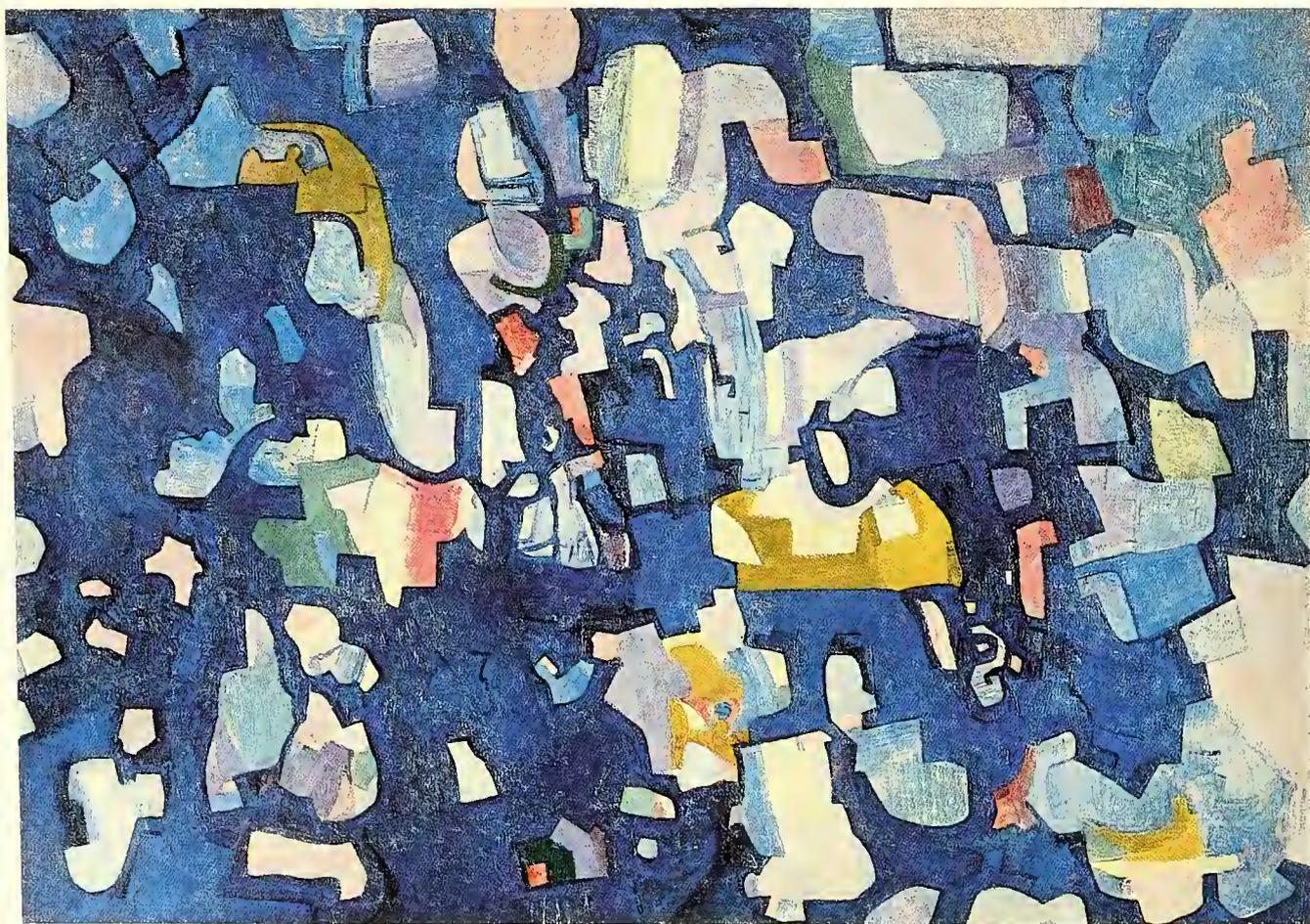
Oil on canvas, 27 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 38 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (69.1 x 97.8 cm.)

Signed on reverse: *Boris Ender*

Acquired from the family of the artist

14.78

This work appeared in the 1924 Venice Biennale, cat. no. 1456, as "*Spazio allargato.*"



42

Untitled. 1924

Pencil on paper, $7\frac{7}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ " (20.1 x 19.2 cm.)

Signed and dated on reverse: 19 July 1924 B. Ender

Acquired from the family of the artist

C272



NIKOLAI IVANOVICH GRINBERG

43

Composition. 1920–21

Gouache on cardboard, 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 20 $\frac{15}{16}$ " (28.4 x 53.2 cm.)

Acquired from the Ender family

61.78



44

Untitled

Oil on canvas, $15\frac{1}{16} \times 11\frac{3}{4}$ " (39.8 x 29.8 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

15.78



K. V. ENDER

45

Untitled

Oil on canvas, 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{3}{16}$ " (30.9 x 40.2 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

20.78



46

Untitled. ca. 1924-25

Watercolor on paper, 11½ x 11¼" (29.4 x 28.7 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

25.78



K. V. ENDER

47

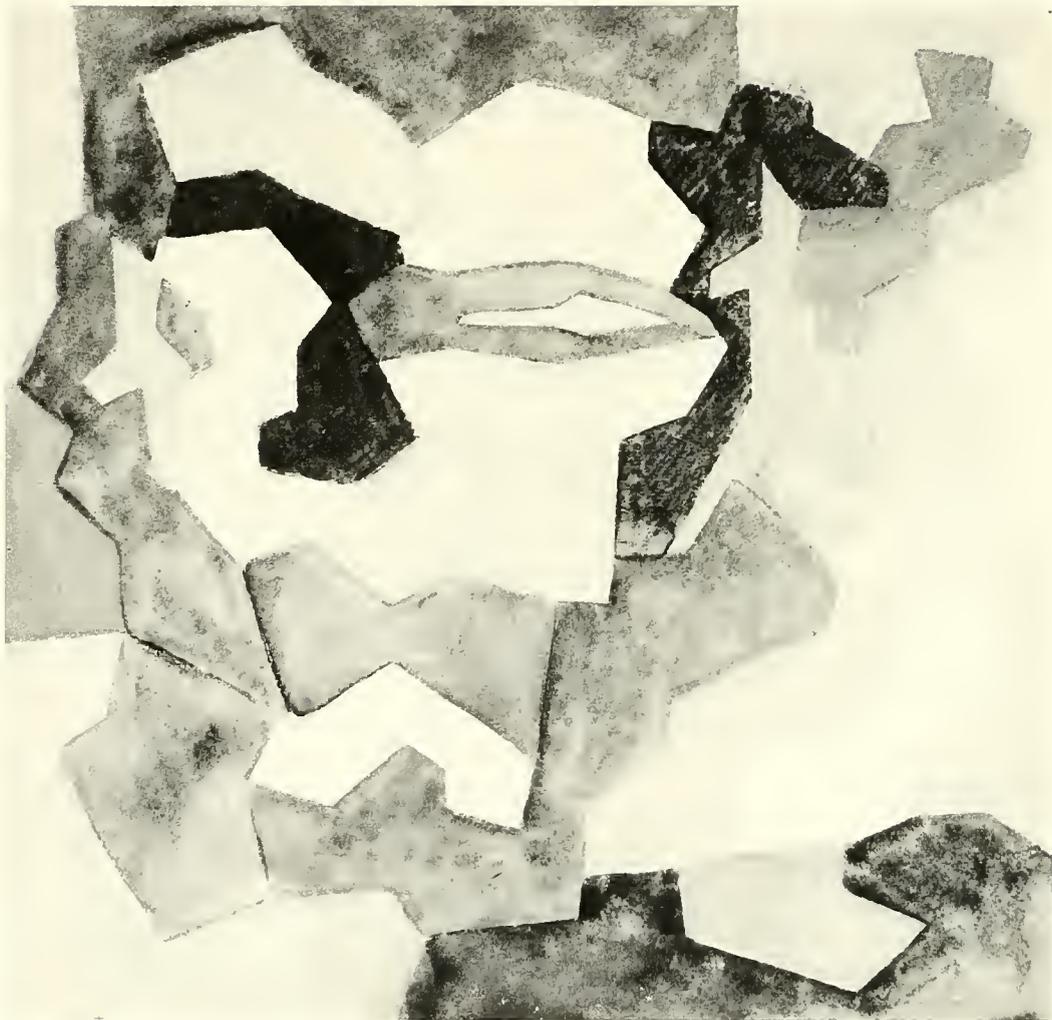
Untitled. 1925

Watercolor on paper, $13\frac{3}{8} \times 13\frac{3}{16}$ " (34.1 x 33.6 cm.)

Dated on reverse: 24 July 1925

Acquired from the family of the artist

36.78



48

Untitled. 1925

Watercolor and pencil on paper, 13½ x 13¼"
(34.3 x 33.7 cm.)

Dated on reverse: 24 July 1925

Acquired from the family of the artist

C271



K. V. ENDER

49

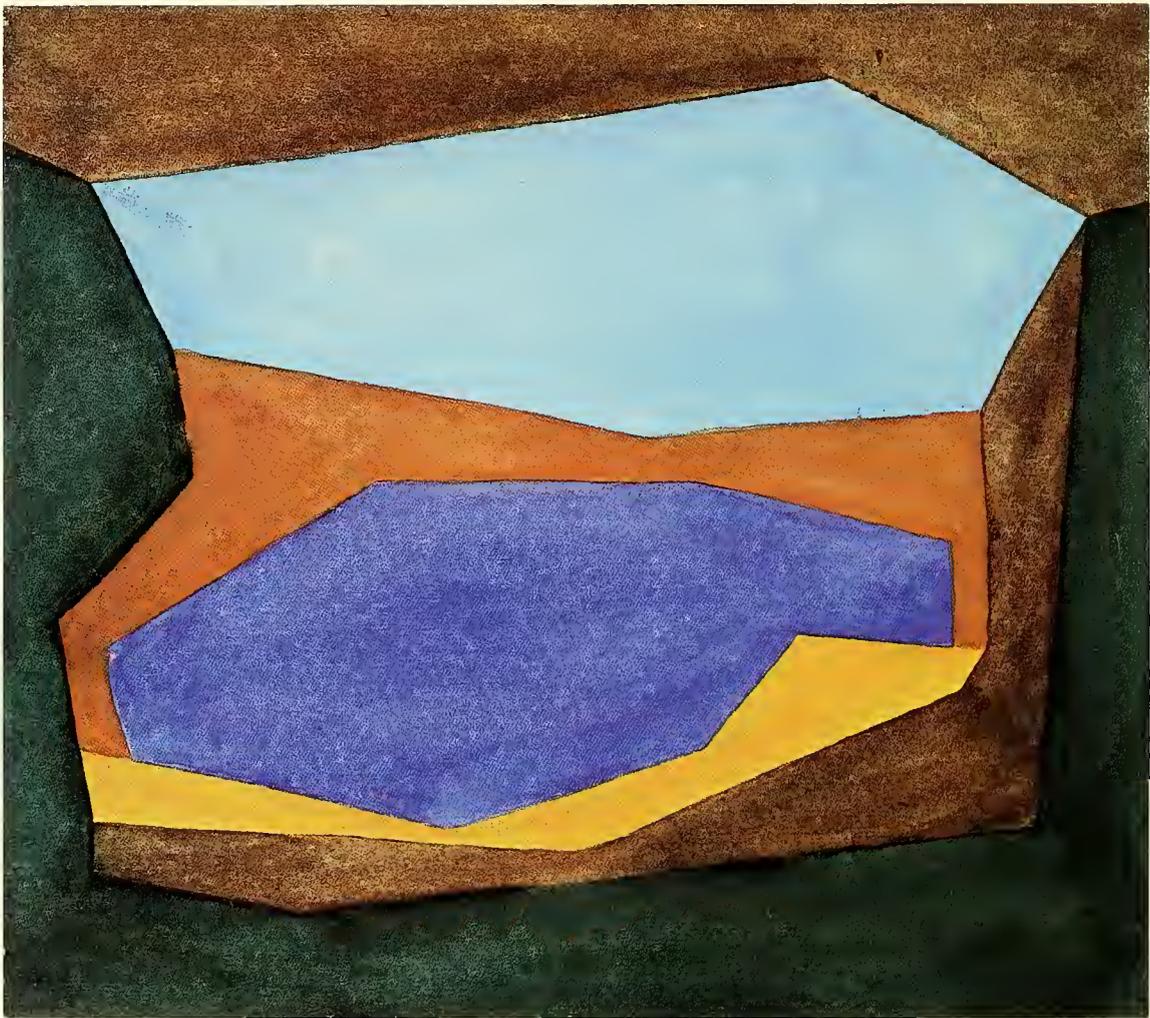
Lake. 1925

Watercolor on paper, 9 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (24 x 27 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse: *Tarchovka Lake 1925*

Acquired from the family of the artist

43.78



50

Lake. 1925

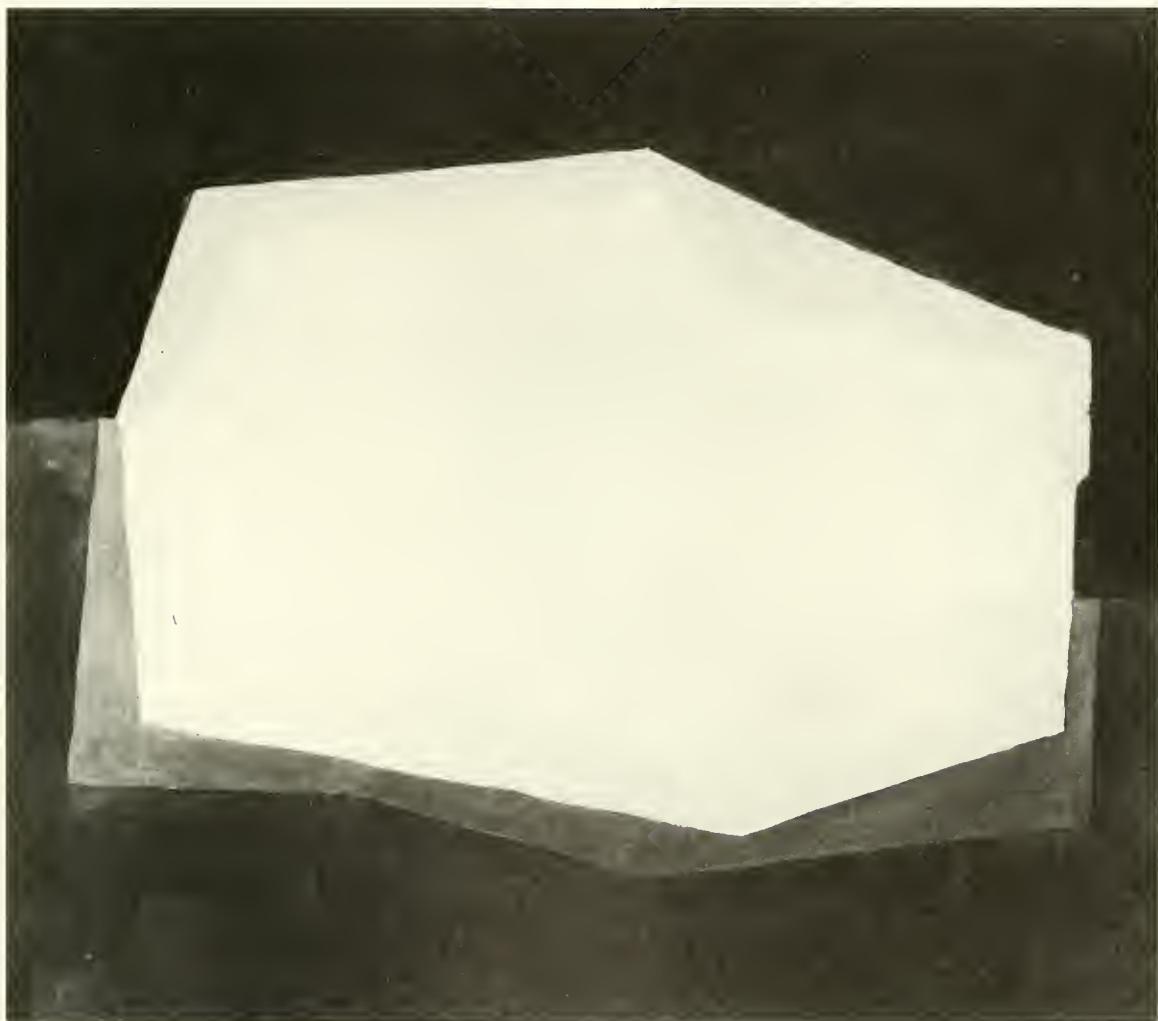
Watercolor and pencil on paper, $9\frac{7}{16} \times 10\frac{1}{2}$ "

(24 x 26.8 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse: *Tarchovka Lake 1925*

Acquired from the family of the artist

44.78



K. V. ENDER

51

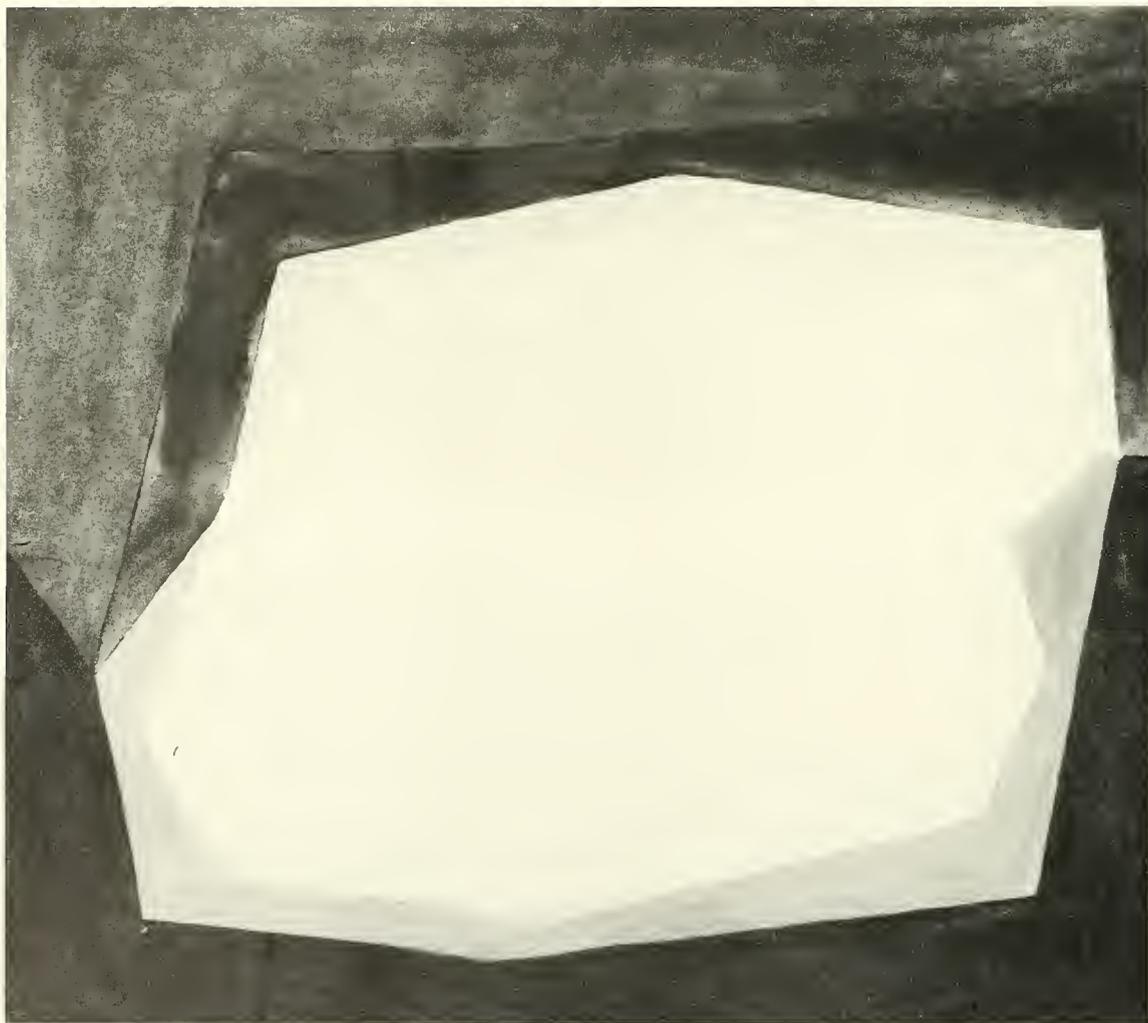
Lake. 1925

Watercolor on paper, 9 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (24 x 27 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse: *Tarchovka Lake 1925*

Acquired from the family of the artist

C269



52

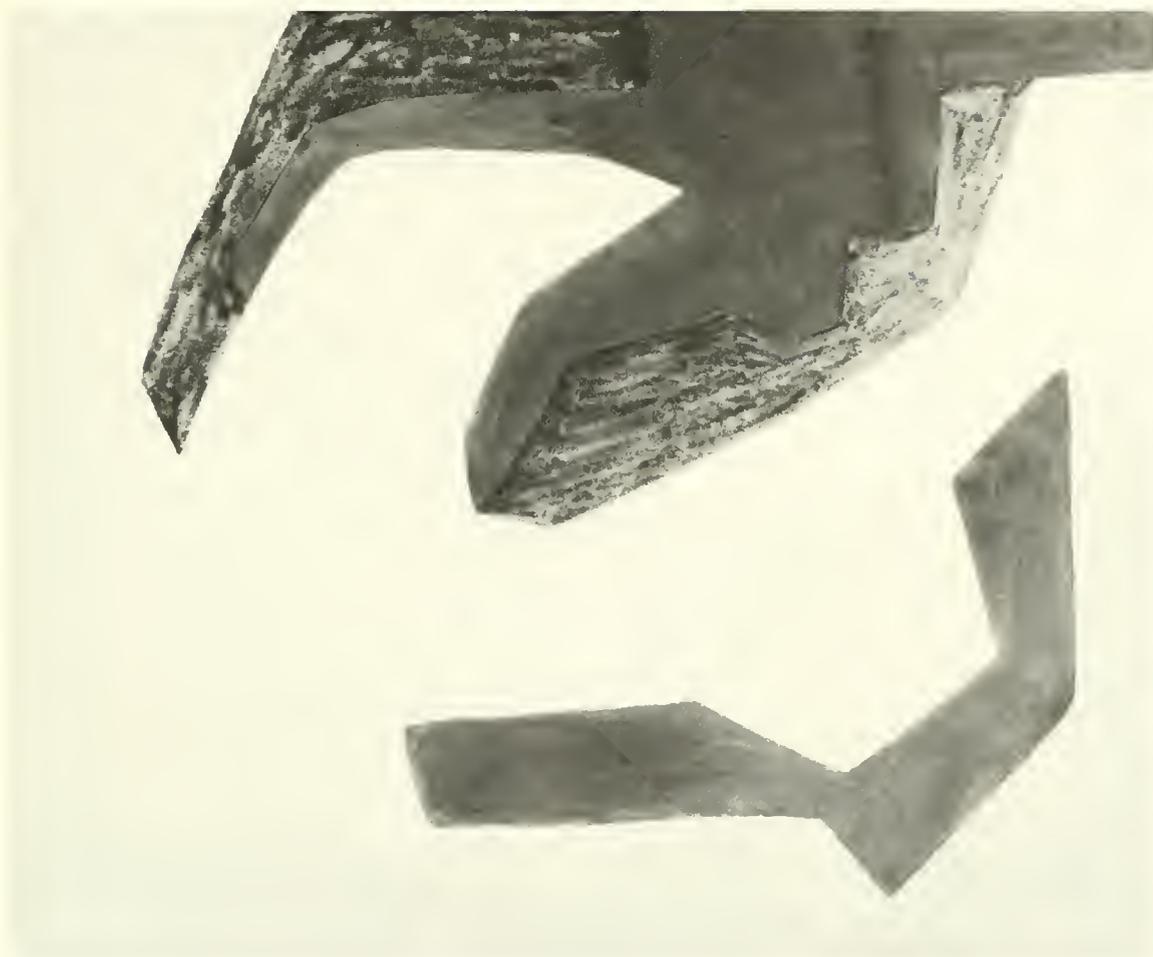
Lake. 1925

Watercolor on paper, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (22.2 x 27 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse: *Tarchovka Lake, 1925*

Acquired from the family of the artist

21.78



K. V. ENDER

53

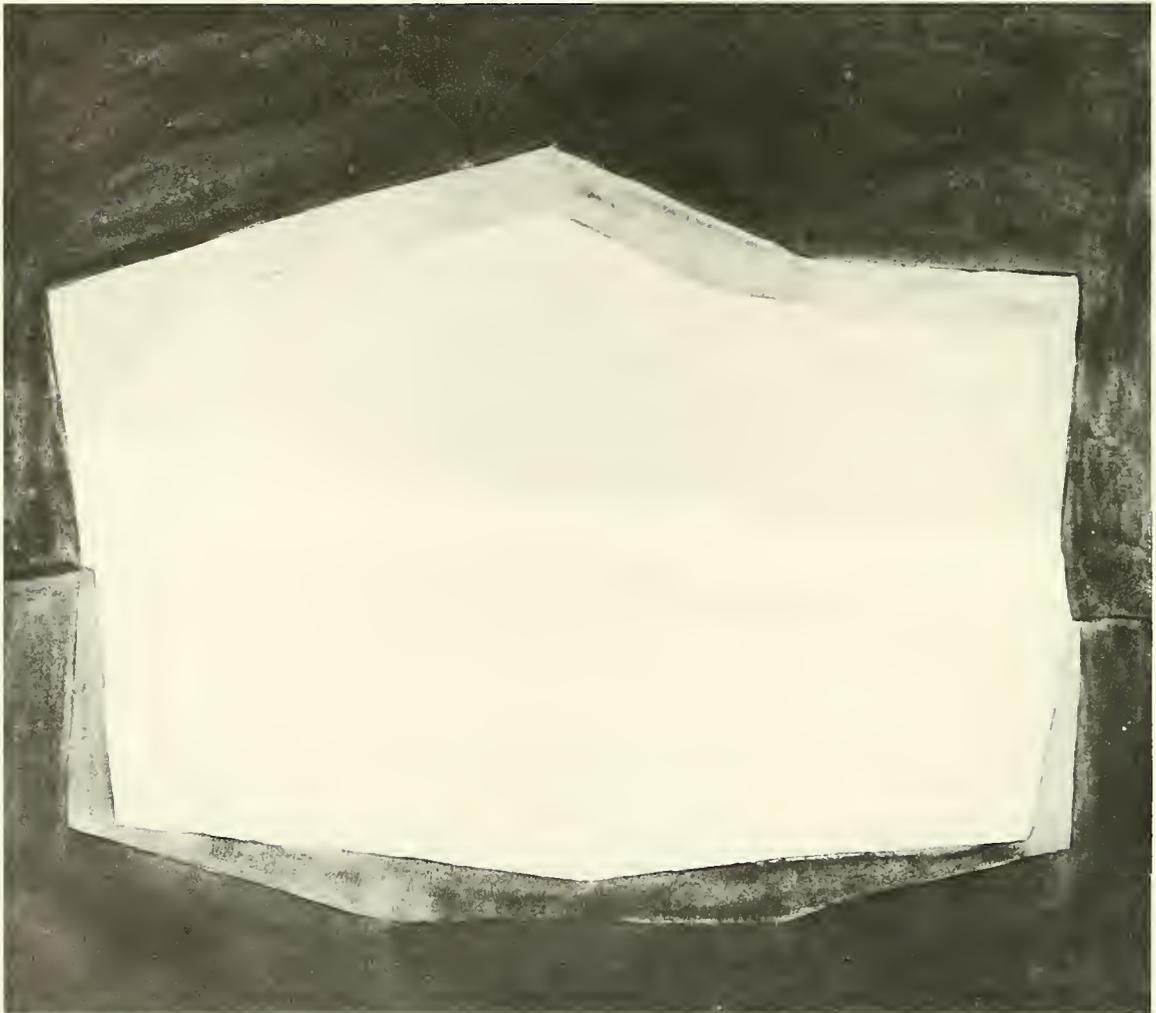
Lake. 1925

Watercolor on paper, 9 $\frac{9}{16}$ x 10 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (24.4 x 27.7 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse: *Tarchovka Lake 1925*

Acquired from the family of the artist

31.78



54

Untitled

Watercolor on paper, 7½ x 6" (19.1 x 15.4 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

27.78



K. V. ENDER

55

Untitled. 1924-26

Paper collage on paper, 15 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (39 x 34.5 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

C121



56

Untitled. 1924-26

Paper collage on paper, 15 3/8 x 13 5/8" (40.3 x 34.6 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

C122



K. V. ENDER

57

Untitled. 1924-26

Paper collage on paper, 10³/₈ x 7³/₈" (26.5 x 18.7 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

37.78



58

Untitled. 1924-26

Paper collage on paper, $11\frac{5}{16} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$ " (28.7 x 17.4 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

38.78



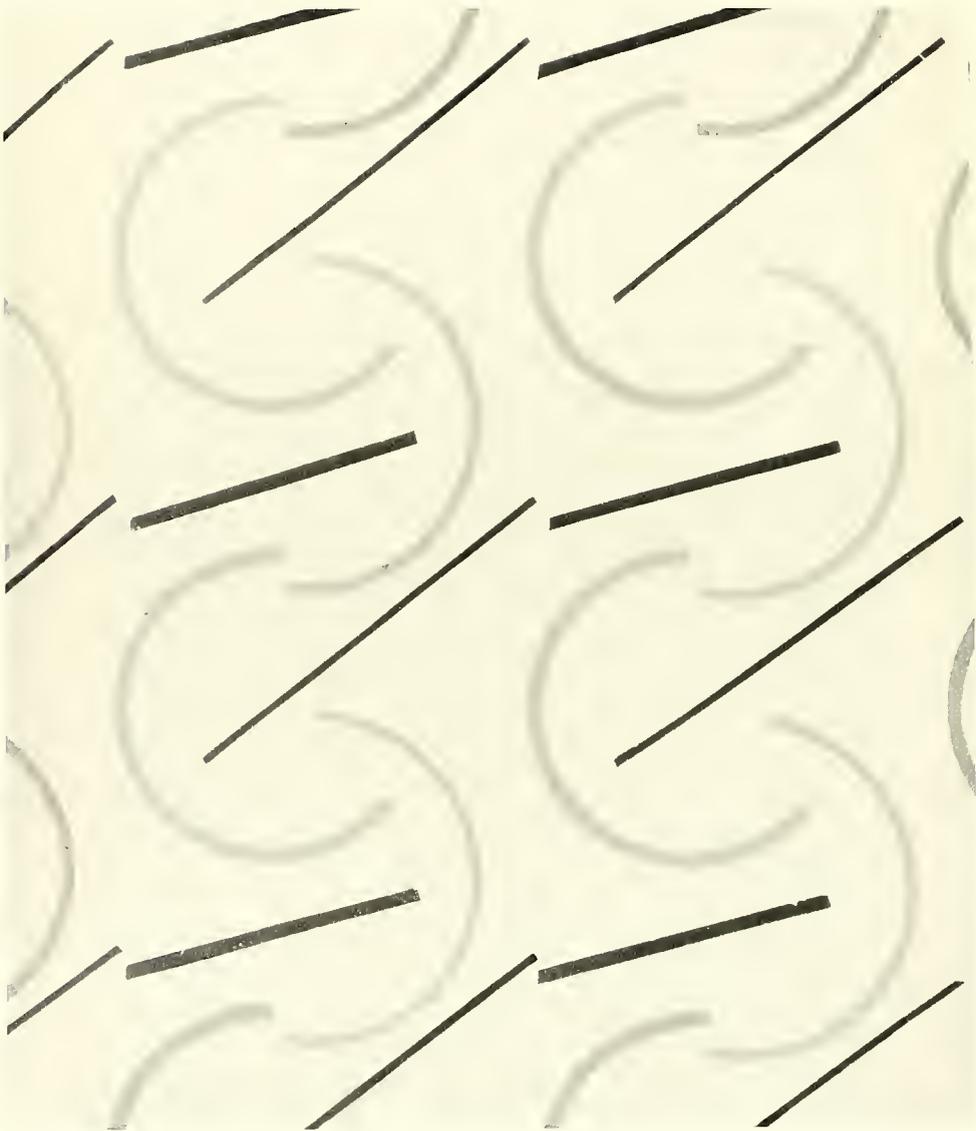
59

Untitled. 1924-26

Paper collage on paper, 12½ x 10¼" (31.8 x 27.2 cm.)

Acquired from the family of the artist

Cr20



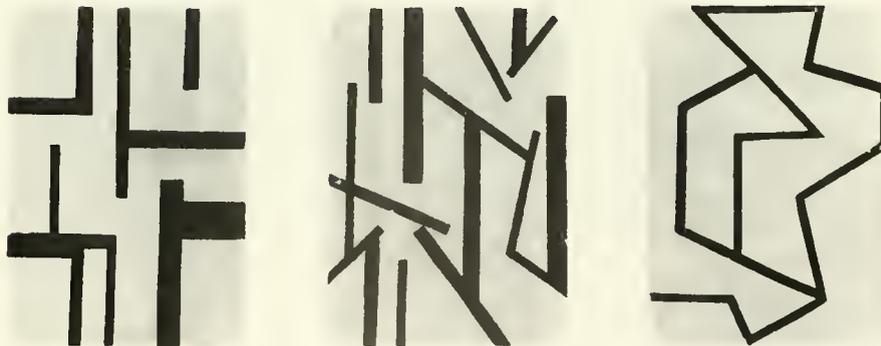
60

Designs for a Cigarette Case. 1926
 Paper collage on paper, sheet: 9 x 15" (23 x 38 cm.);
 each image: 4 5/16 x 3 1/16" (11 x 7.8 cm.)
 Dated u.l.: January 1926
 Inscription: *Government Decorative [Arts] Institute,
 Dept. Organic Culture. "Cigarette Box." Work by the
 artist Ksenia Ender. Teacher M. Matiushin.
 January 1926.*
 Acquired from the family of the artist
 40.78-42.78

61

Designs for a Tobacco Box. 1926
 Paper collage on paper, 4 1/4 x 10 7/8" (23.5 x 27.7 cm.)
 Dated u.l.: January 1926
 Inscription: *Government Decorative [Arts] Institute,
 Dept. Organic Culture. Work by the artist Ksenia
 Ender. "Tobacco Box." Teacher M. Matiushin.
 January 1926.*
 Acquired from the family of the artist
 39.78

Государственный декоративный институт
 Отдел Органической Культуры. Работа художницы Ксении Эндер
 „ТАБАКЕРКА“



62

Untitled. 1920

Watercolor on paper, 13 x 9 ⁷/₁₆" (33 x 24 cm.)

Dated u.l.: *Dec. 2, 1920*

Signed on reverse: *M. Ender*

Acquired from the family of the artist

C429



M. V. ENDER

63

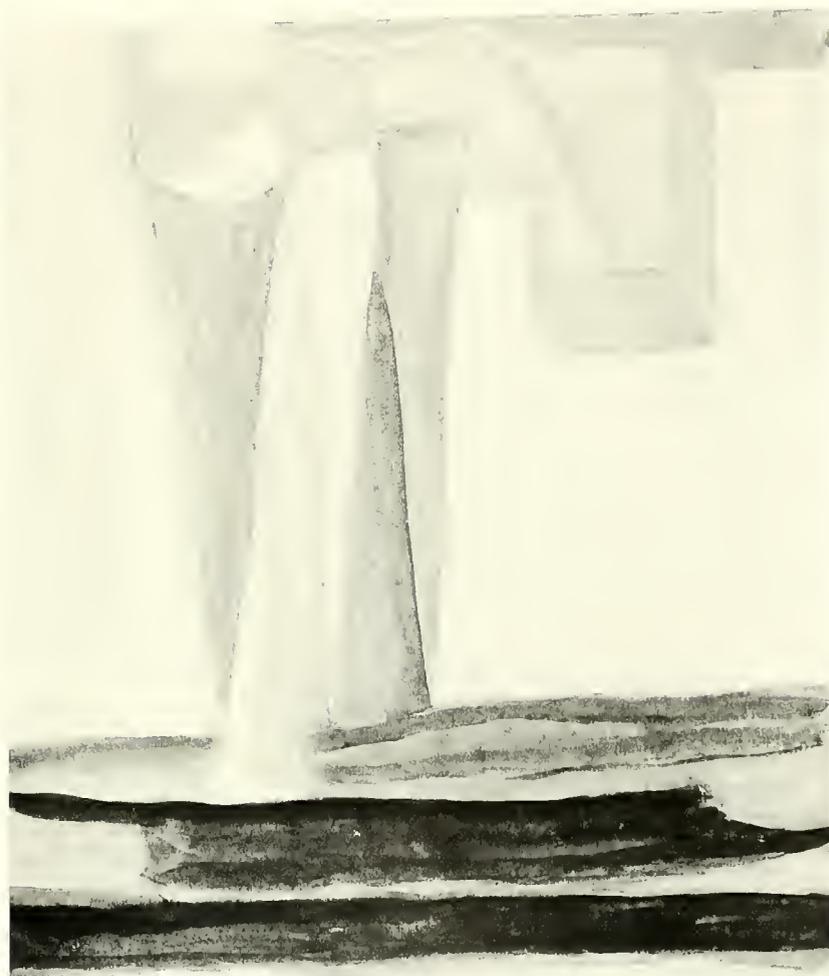
Untitled

Watercolor on paper, 10 x 8 $\frac{5}{16}$ " (25.5 x 21.1 cm.)

Signed on reverse: *M. Ender*

Acquired from the family of the artist

C281



M. V. ENDER

64

Untitled

Watercolor and pencil on paper, 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
(25.8 x 29.9 cm.)

Signed on reverse: *M. Ender*

Inscribed on reverse: *To Natasha from Mullenki.N36.*¹

Acquired from the family of the artist

C462



65

Untitled

Watercolor on paper mounted on board, 12 x 8¹¹/₁₆"

(30.5 x 22.1 cm.)

Signed on reverse: *M. Ender*

Acquired from the family of the artist

C457



66

Untitled

Watercolor and pencil on paper, 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
(25.8 x 37.6 cm.)

Signed on reverse: *Martyshkino/M. Ender*

Inscribed: *To Galia from M. N19.*¹

Acquired from the family of the artist

C424



1. The inscription was added by one of the daughters of Ksenia Ender.

67

Untitled. 1927

Watercolor and pencil on paper, $9\frac{1}{2} \times 12\frac{1}{16}$ "

(24.1 x 32.9 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse: *Odessa 1927*

Acquired from the family of the artist

C260



Head. 1925–26

Oil and gouache on paper backed with cardboard,
34 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 23 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (86.7 x 60.7 cm.) (sight)

Acquired from the artist's sister, E. N. Glebova,
Leningrad

59.78



Pavel Filonov, like Matiushin and Tatlin, directed one of the departments of the Museum of Painterly Culture in Petrograd, which was established under Malevich's direction in 1923. He remained in the position only a few months, and differed with all of his colleagues on matters of artistic policy. Moreover, he is in almost all respects impossible to place within a specific group, though he did for some time work in the same environment as Matiushin, Malevich and Pavel Mansurov.¹ His own "Collective of Masters of Analytical Art" (the *filonovtsy*) was initially set up in 1925 within the framework of the Academy of Arts in Leningrad, but from 1927 to 1932 it was run as an independent venture, and it became the center for his own exploration of a "Theory of Analytical Art," as well as for his teaching of painting.

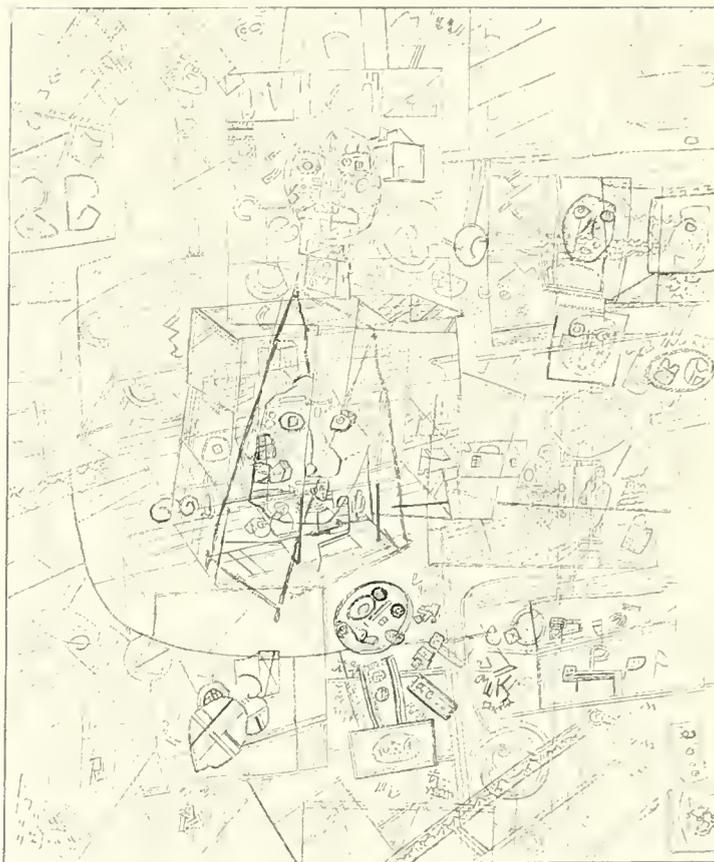
While recognizing the fundamental differences between the art of Filonov and that of Matiushin, Charlotte Douglas has drawn attention to certain compelling similarities between the theoretical thinking and aesthetic convictions of the two.² Both artists were committed to easel painting, and they therefore found the Productivist program alien. Both viewed the creative process as analytic in nature, rejecting the notion that it depended on emotional or intuitive inspiration, and insisting rather on its extraordinary intellectual and even physical aspects. Thus, Matiushin's new way of seeing and depicting nature required a complete retraining of the eye, and of the mental processes behind the eye. Filonov's pictorial aims, meanwhile, demanded exhaustive attention to detail—a "control" and "exactness" in the handling of the minutely worked surface of the painting—in order to realize the goal of "madness" (*sdelannost*) which he strove to achieve. The physical presence of the work of art, and the deliberateness of the craft involved in its production, were thus intimately bound up with Filonov's notion of content. The lapidary detail of his intricately built-up forms, and the actual physical process of creating them on the canvas were—in Filonov's eyes—both a part of the actual substance of his art.

Although the analogy between Filonov and Matiushin should not be pressed too far, it is clear that they both viewed the art of painting as a complex process involving highly self-conscious analysis and an emphasis on the actual physical process of creative work: the goal in both cases was an integration or fusion of the intellectual and the physical in order to achieve new ways of "seeing" or new ways of "making."

*Untitled*Ink on paper, 10 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (26.4 x 21.7 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's sister, E. N. Glebova, Leningrad

203.80



1. See J. E. Bowlit, "Pavel Filonov," *Russian Literature Triquarterly*, no. 12, 1975, pp. 371-392; *idem*, "Pavel Filonov: An Alternative Tradition," *Art Journal*, no. 34, 1975, pp. 208-216. See also T. Andersen, "Pavel Nikolaievich Filonov," *Signum*, Copenhagen, 1963, no. 9, J. Kriz, *Pavel Filonov*, Prague, 1966.

2. "The Universe: Inside & Out. New Translations of Matyushin and Filonov," *The Structurist*, nos. 15-16, 1975-76, pp. 72-74.

IV

Suprematism and Unovis



fig. a

Liubov Sergeevna Popova

Cover Design for *Supremus*, Periodical of the "Supremus" Society of Painters. 1916-17

Ink on paper, $3\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{16}$ " (8.8 x 7.8 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother, Pavel Sergeevich Popov

C752

In the months following the December 1915 *0.10* exhibition, the "Supremus" group, including Malevich, Rozanova, Popova, Udaltsova, Exter, Kliun, Pestel, Mikhail Menkov and Natalia Davydova, began to take shape.¹

Plans to publish a Suprematist periodical, with Malevich as the editor, were developed during the winter of 1916-17, when the group met fairly regularly. However, the publication never materialized. Popova made several designs for the cover, some of which bear the date 1917.²

1. Paris, Centre Pompidou, *Malévich, Actes du colloque internationale, mai 1978*, Lausanne, 1979, pp. 181, 187-88.

2. For other examples of these designs in the Costakis collection see R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 824-25.

Kliun's friendship with Malevich, which had started in 1907 (see p. 37), became especially close in 1915–18 when Kliun was a strong supporter of Suprematism. His work of this period (see, for example, cat. nos. 70–79) is concerned with the depiction of clearly articulated form and pure color. The relationship between his work of 1916–17 and that of Popova is in some instances strikingly close, and the nature of their overlapping concerns requires further study and elucidation. (See, for example, cat. nos. 79 and 106.)

By 1919, however, after Kliun had been professor at the Svomas for a year, his development had become more complex. His Suprematist style had reached full maturity (see, for example, R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 145–151, 163) and he began to explore the possibilities of what one might call a Suprematist Constructivism. A group of drawings in the Costakis collection (cat. no. 85 iii–vii) record Kliun's plans for a series of hanging constructions, formulated out of purely Suprematist planar elements. Whether he actually made any of these "mobiles" is not known.¹ Certainly they must be seen within the context of Klucis's contemporary experiments with hanging constructions (see p. 195), and those of Rodchenko (cat. no. 172). But in a fundamental sense Kliun's constructions differ from both: far from arising out of a Constructivist aesthetic, his are conceived entirely in planar, and indeed pictorial, terms. Seen beside studies for his contemporary paintings (cat. nos. 84 and 85 i–ii) they reveal the firmly pictorial nature of his sensibility.

At about the same time, Kliun's treatment of color and form underwent profound changes. Color in his work from about 1920 on is often characterized by a *sfumato* technique, a blurring of the edges of his forms which creates shimmering, atmospheric effects. In many of his paintings of this period his concern is with overlapping veils of transparent color, and the Suprematist juxtaposition of pure elements has disappeared. In a statement written for the catalogue of the *Tenth State Exhibition: Nonobjective Creation and Suprematism*, which opened in January of 1919, he wrote: "In Color Art the colored area lives and moves, affording color the utmost force of intensity. And the congealed, motionless forms of suprematism do not display a new art but reveal the face of a corpse with its eyes fixed and dead."²

Kliun's break with Suprematism as Malevich defined it was certainly complete, though he continued to evolve his own formulation of it, and indeed exhibited several works with the title *Suprematism* in the 1919 exhibition. His growing concern during the early 1920s was to depict the movement of light through a color mass, and even when working in a limited color range, this issue absorbed him. In his 1924 painting *Composition* (p. 126, fig. a), an image that Malevich and Ilia Chashnik had conceived in opaque color and articulated outline, Kliun's distorted form, transparency of color and shimmering outline seem almost to offer a critique of Suprematism as originally conceived.

1. Five of Kliun's entries in the 1919 Tenth State Exhibition were "nonobjective sculptures." No evidence apparently survives to identify these works, but it cannot be ruled out that they were hanging constructions based on these drawings.

2. Trans. Bowlit. *Theory and Criticism*, p. 143.

IVAN VASILIEVICH KLIUN

70

Untitled. ca. 1917

Oil on paper, $10\frac{5}{8} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$ " (27 x 22.5 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, Serafima Ivanova Kliun

90.78 A

According to V. Rakitin, cat. nos. 70–76 were exhibited in the 1917 *Jack of Diamonds (Bubnovyi valet)* exhibition in Moscow. (Information from private archives, Moscow.)



I. V. KLIUN

71

Untitled. ca. 1917

Oil on paper, $10\frac{5}{8} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$ " (27 x 22.5 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

90.78 B

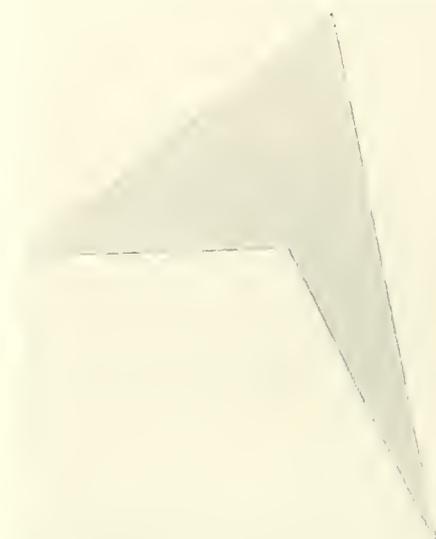
72

Untitled. ca. 1917

Oil on paper, $10\frac{5}{8} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$ " (27 x 22.5 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

90.78 C



73

Untitled. ca. 1917

Oil on paper, 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (27 x 22.5 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun
86.78

74

Untitled. ca. 1917

Oil on paper, 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (27 x 22.5 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun
87.78



75

Untitled. ca. 1917

Oil on paper, 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (27 x 22.5 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun
88.78

76

Untitled. ca. 1917

Oil on paper, 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (27 x 22.5 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun
89.78



77

Suprematism: 3 Color Composition. ca. 1917

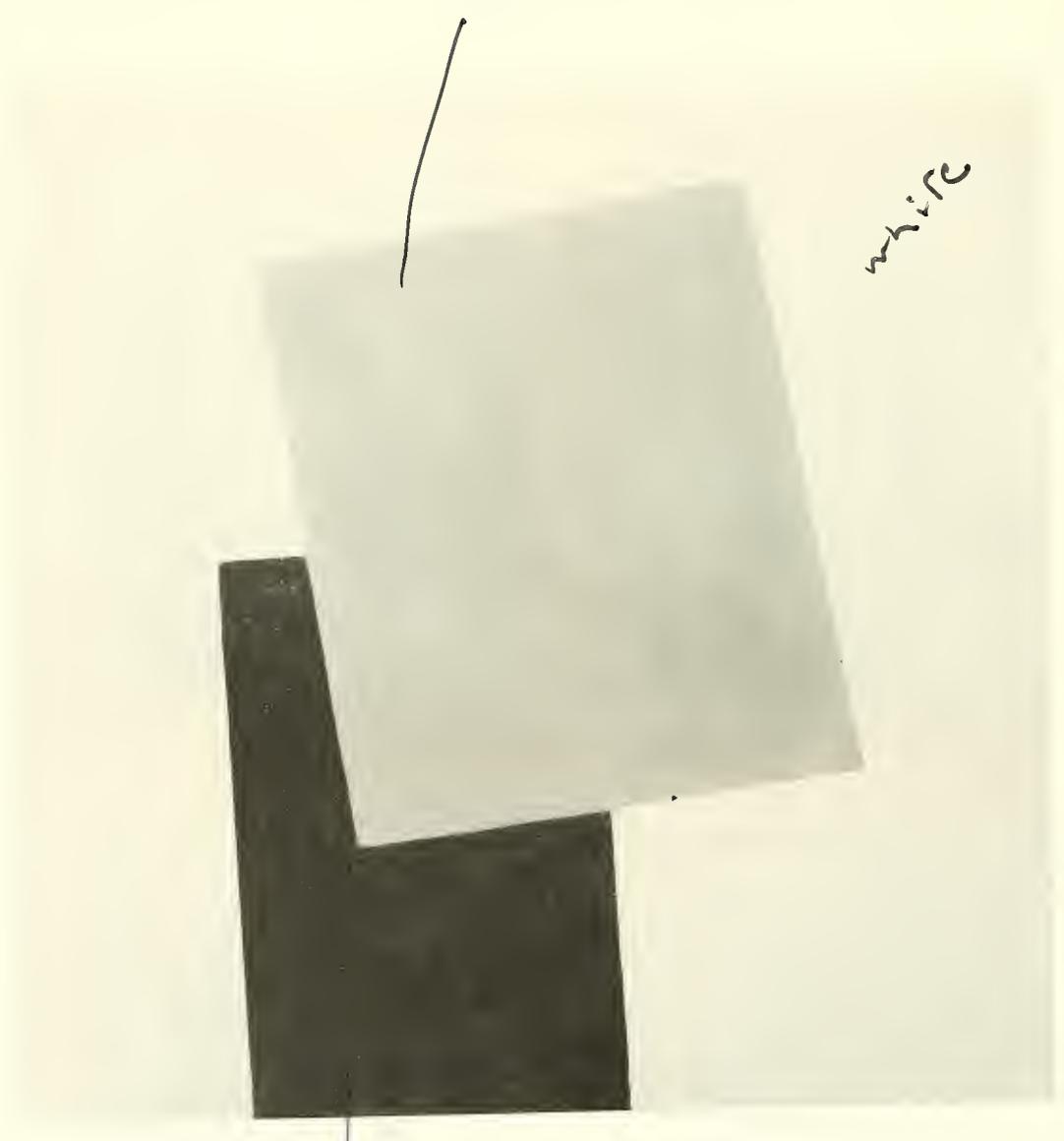
Oil on board, 14¹/₁₆ x 13¹³/₁₆" (35.7 x 35.2 cm.)

Signed and titled on reverse: *I. Kliun / Suprematism / 3 color composition*

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

82.78 A

According to Rakitin, this work and cat. nos. 78–82 appeared in the 1917 *Jack of Diamonds* exhibition in Moscow. (Information from private archives, Moscow.)



Suprematism

white

dark purple

78

Suprematism. ca. 1917

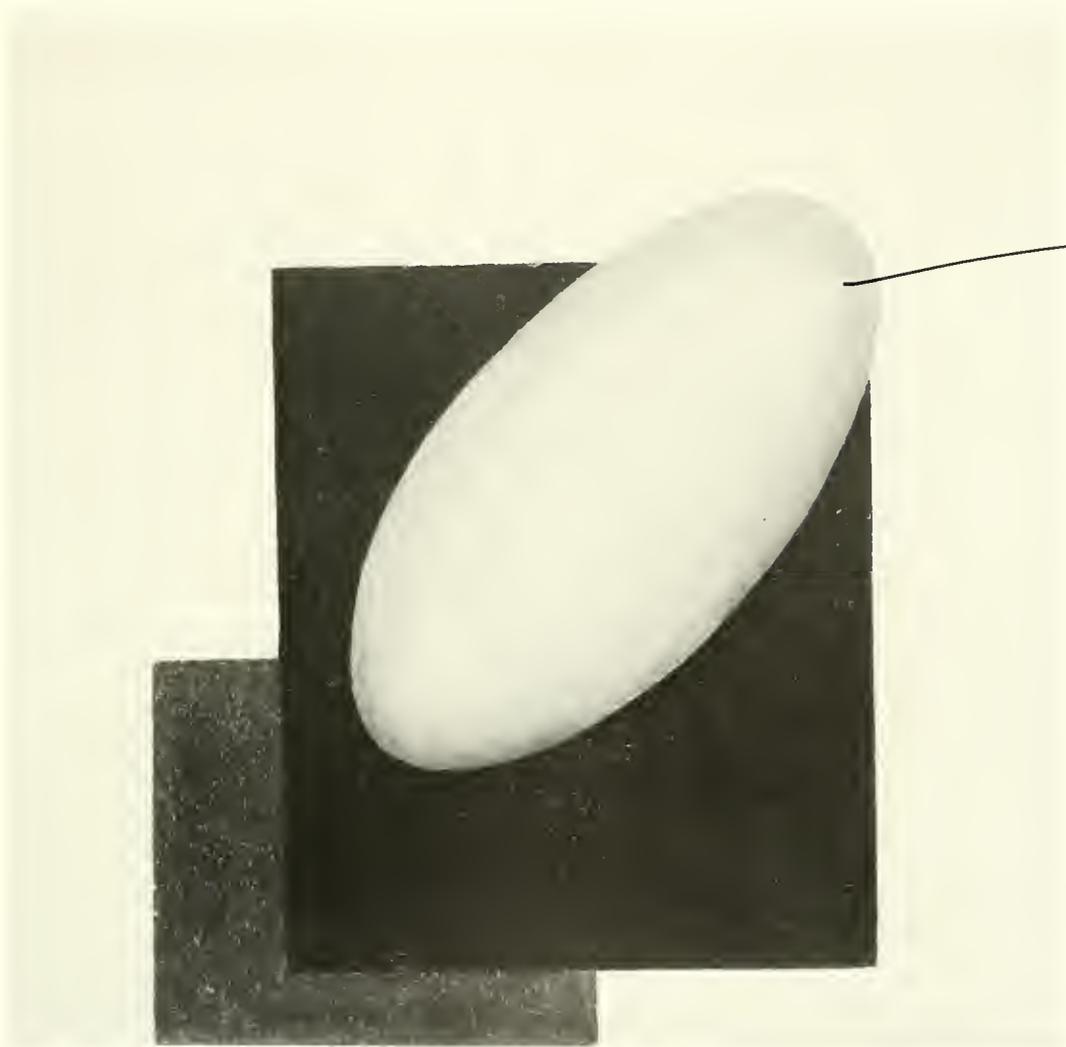
Oil on panel, $13\frac{1}{16} \times 14\frac{1}{8}$ " (35.3 x 35.8 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse, probably not in the artist's hand:

Kliun / Suprematism / 2^e

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

76.78



I. V. KLIUN

79

Suprematism. ca. 1917

Oil on panel, 14 x 14¹/₁₆" (35.6 x 35.7 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

77-78

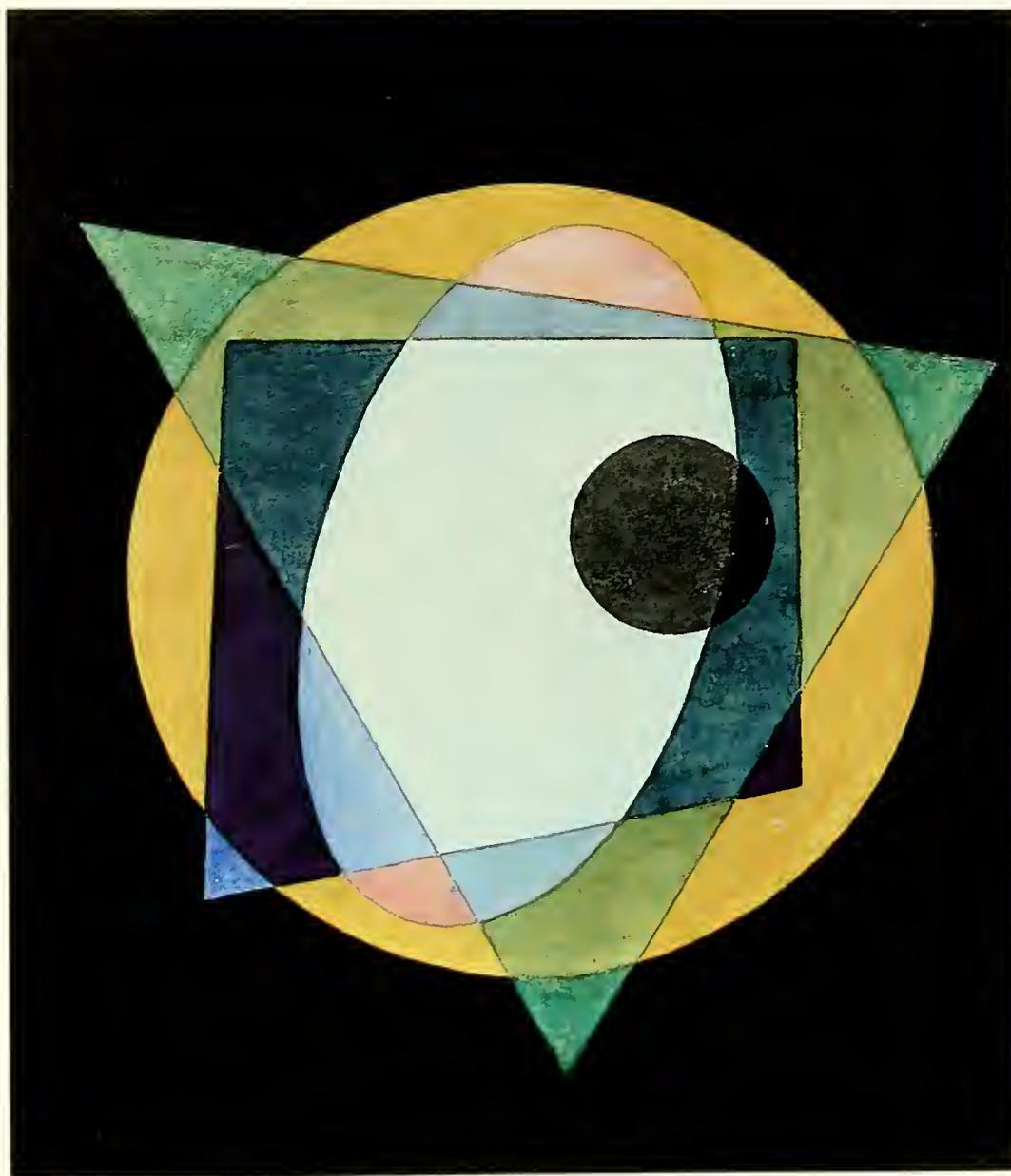


Untitled. ca. 1917

Watercolor and ink with pencil on paper, 12 x 10 $\frac{1}{4}$ "
(30.5 x 26 cm.) (sight)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

75.78



I. V. KLIUN

81

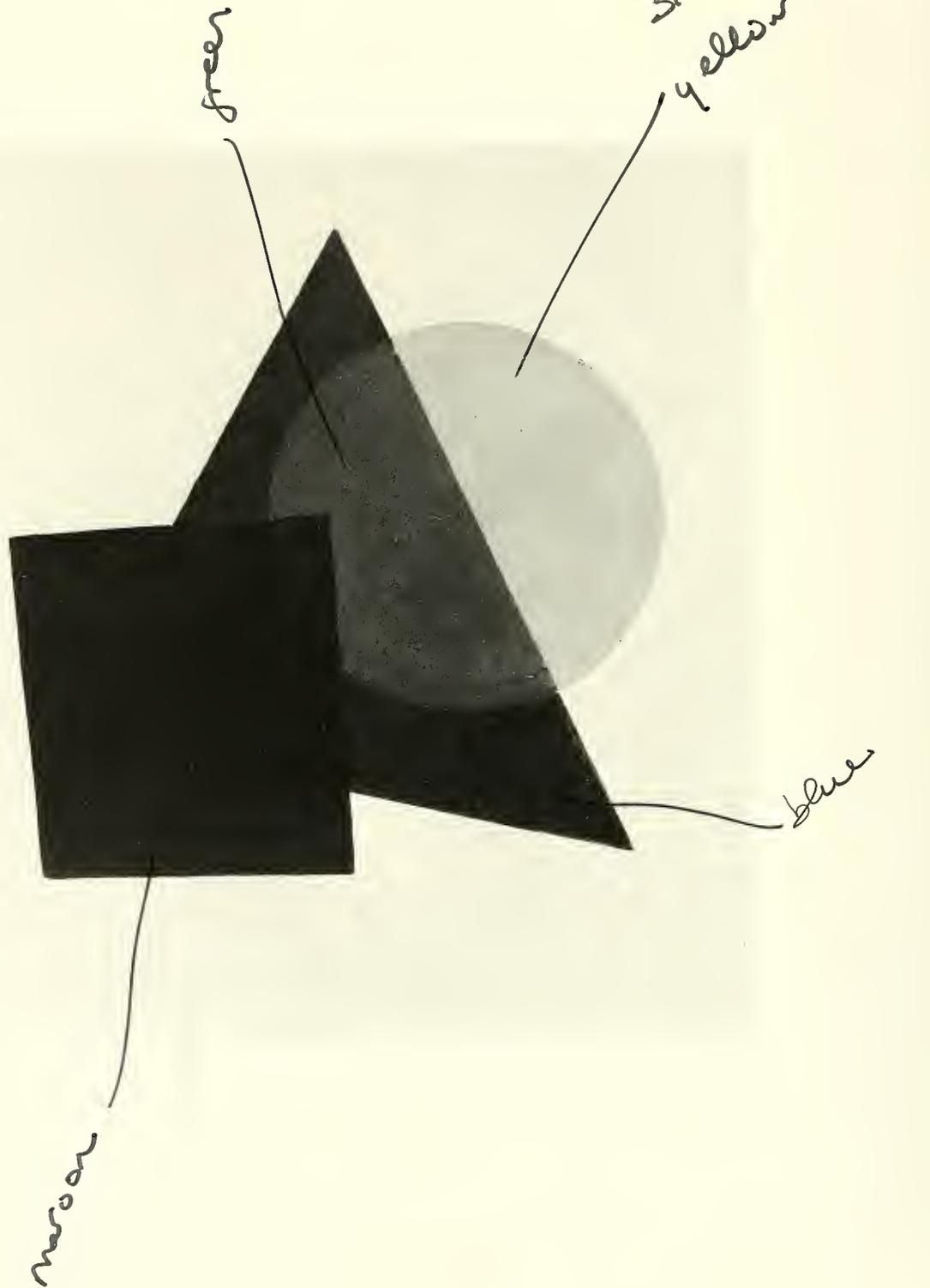
Suprematism: 3 Color Composition. ca. 1917

Oil on board, 14¼ x 13⅞" (35.7 x 35.2 cm.)

Signed and titled on reverse: *I. Kliun / Suprematism / 3 color composition*

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

82.78 B



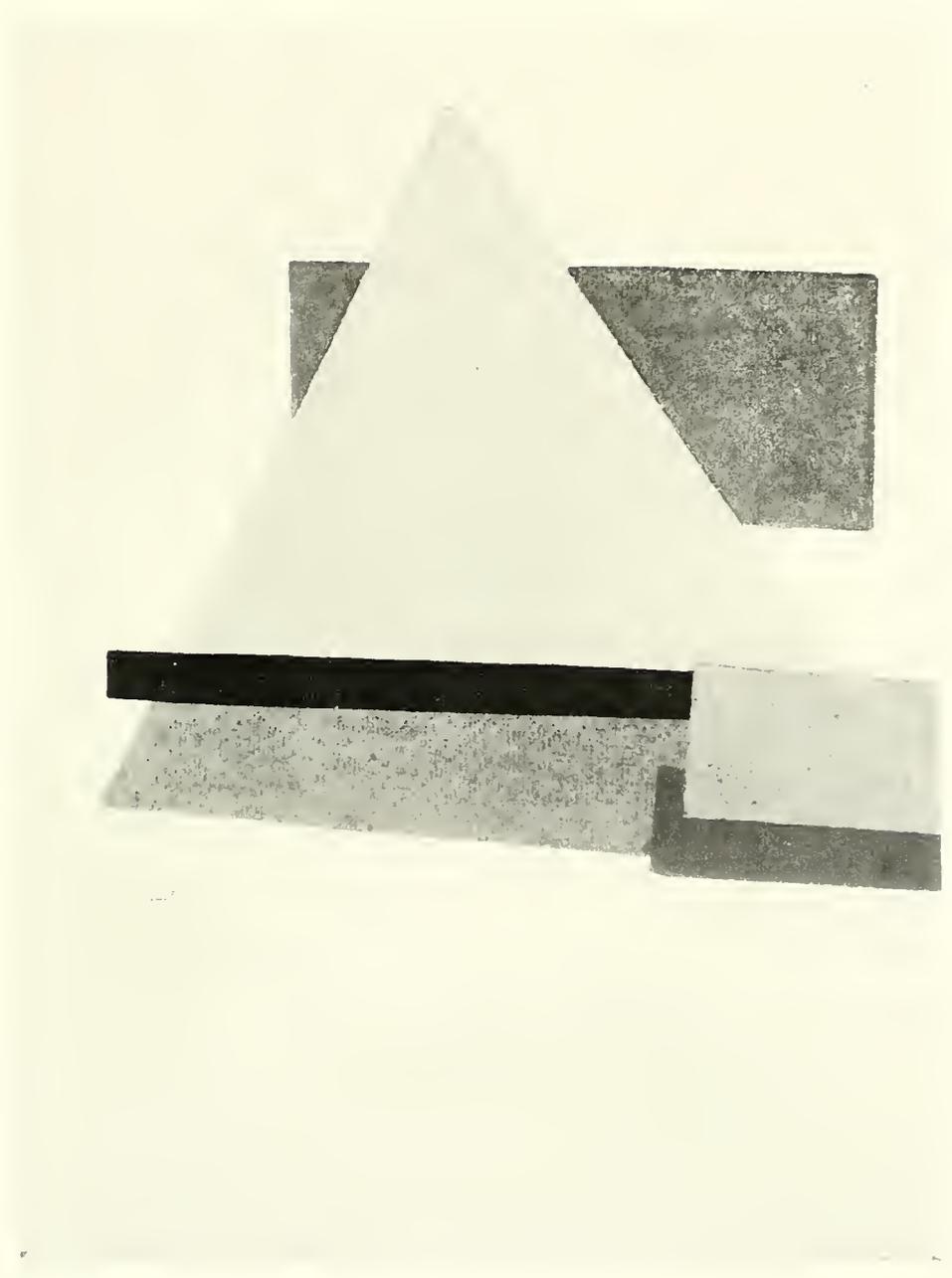
82

Untitled. ca. 1917

Gouache, ink and watercolor on paper, 12 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
(31.3 x 22.5 cm.) (sight)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

74.78



I. V. KLIUN

83

Untitled. 1918

Gouache on paper, 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{5}{16}$ " (30.8 x 28.8 cm.)

Signed and dated: 1918

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

177.80

too dark
yellow



84 i-ii

Untitled. ca. 1918–19

Left, 255.80: watercolor and pencil on paper, $7\frac{3}{16} \times 6\frac{3}{8}$ "
(18.3 x 16.2 cm.)

Right, C559 A: watercolor on paper, $5\frac{1}{2} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ "
(14 x 8.9 cm.)¹

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun



1. This drawing and cat nos. 85, 87, 88, 89 are from the oeuvre catalogue sheets. see p. 60, fn. 1.



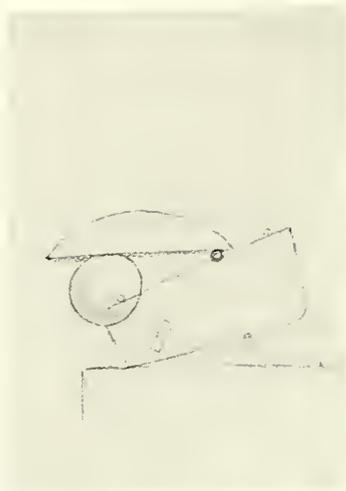
i



ii



vii



vi

85 i-vii

Seven Drawings. 1918-19

Pencil on paper

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

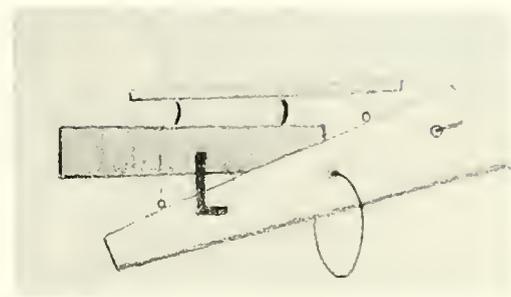
Clockwise from u.l.: i, C552 A: $6\frac{1}{8} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ " (15.6 x 9.5 cm.); ii, C559 B: $5\frac{1}{4} \times 3\frac{1}{2}$ " (13.3 x 8.9 cm.); iii, C563 A: $4 \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ " (10.2 x 9.5 cm.); iv, C563 D: $2\frac{1}{2} \times 4\frac{1}{4}$ " (6.4 x 10.8 cm.); v, C672: $4 \times 2\frac{3}{8}$ " (10.2 x 6.7 cm.); vi, C563 C: $4\frac{1}{8} \times 2\frac{7}{8}$ " (10.5 x 7.3 cm.); vii, C563 B: $3\frac{1}{8} \times 3\frac{1}{8}$ " (8 x 8 cm.)



iii



v



iv

I. V. KLIUN

86 i-ii

Two Designs for a *Monument to Olga Rozanova*.

1918-19

Pencil on paper

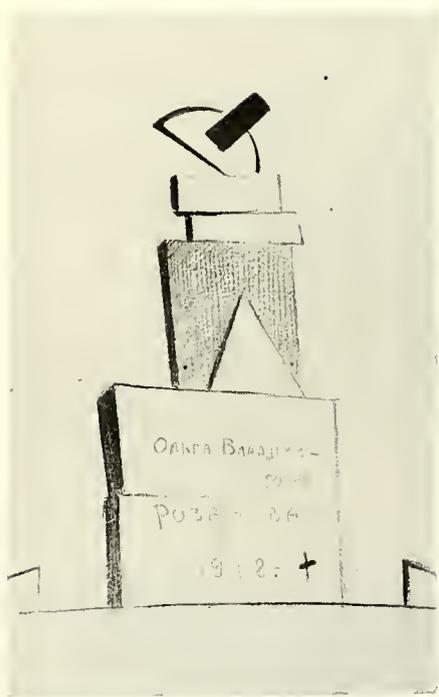
Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

Left, 294.80: $6\frac{3}{16} \times 4\frac{7}{16}$ " (17.7 x 11.2 cm.)

Right, 252.80: $7\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{7}{8}$ " (18.3 x 17.5 cm.)

Kliun's close friend Rozanova died November 8, 1918, of diphtheria. A posthumous exhibition of her work was held in Moscow in January 1919, and then again later in the year, within the context of the *Tenth State Exhibition: Nonobjective Creation and Suprematism*. Kliun wrote the obituary for the catalogue, which included 270 works, and he made a series of designs for a memorial to her (these two works and cat. no. 87 i-v). His final entry in the exhibition catalogue was "Project for a Memorial to O.V.R. [Olga Vladimirovna Rozanova]. The memorial was apparently never built.

Several of the drawings for the memorial make explicit visual reference to the imagery of Rozanova's *Bicyclist*, the construction of 1915 (see pp. 138-139), indicating his sense of that work's significance in her oeuvre.



i



ii

I. V. KLIUN

87 i-v

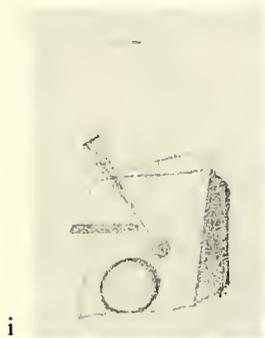
Five Drawings for a *Monument to Olga Rozanova*.

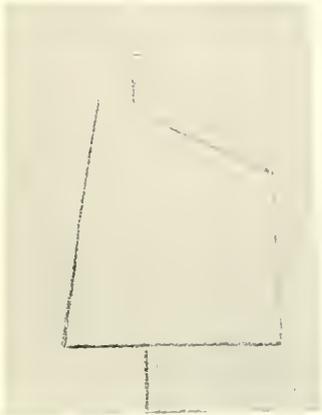
1918-19

Pencil on paper

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

Clockwise from u.l.: i, C551 A: $2\frac{3}{4} \times 2''$ (7 x 5.1 cm.);
ii, C551 B: $2\frac{5}{8} \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$ (6.8 x 5.7 cm.); iii, C563 E: $3\frac{1}{2} \times$
 $2\frac{3}{8}''$ (8.9 x 6.8 cm.), inscribed l.r.: N 12; iv, C551 D:
 $2\frac{3}{8} \times 2\frac{1}{4}''$ (6.8 x 5.7 cm.); v, C551 C: $2\frac{7}{8} \times 1\frac{7}{8}''$ (7.3 x
4.8 cm.)





i



ii



iii



fig. a
I. V. Kliin
Composition. 1924
Oil on cardboard, $16\frac{1}{4} \times 16\frac{1}{4}$ " (41.2 x 41.2 cm.)
Staatsgalerie Stuttgart (formerly Costakis collection)

88 i-iii

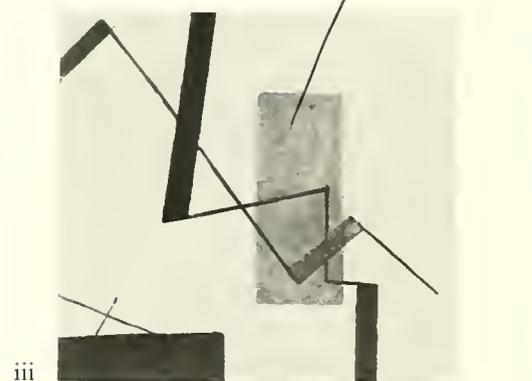
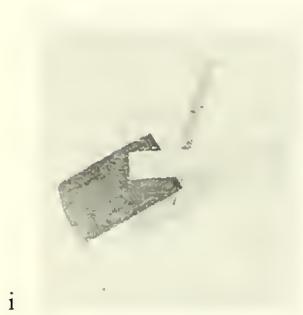
Three Drawings. 1918-19

Pencil on paper

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

Left to right: i, C551 E: $2\frac{1}{16} \times 2\frac{1}{16}$ " (7.3 x 5.2 cm.); ii, C551 F: $3\frac{1}{8} \times 1\frac{1}{16}$ " (8 x 4.1 cm.); iii, C551 G: $3 \times 2\frac{1}{8}$ " (7.6 x 5.4 cm.)

It cannot be ruled out that these three drawings are also related to Kliun's preliminary ideas for a memorial to Rozanova.



89 i-iii

Three Drawings. 1919-1920

Pencil on paper

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

Left to right: i, C553 A: $3\frac{3}{8} \times 3$ " (8.6 x 7.6 cm.); ii, C552 D: $3\frac{7}{16} \times 3\frac{5}{16}$ " (8.8 x 8.4 cm.); iii, 284.80 A: $4\frac{3}{8} \times 4\frac{3}{8}$ " (11.1 x 11.1 cm.)

Closely related to Kliun's Suprematist paintings and gouaches of 1919-1920, these studies combine planar with more decorative linear elements, the pencil shading and cross-hatching suggestive of Kliun's constant experimentation with the interaction of texture and form.

I. V. KLIUN

90

Untitled. ca. 1919-1921

Gouache on paper, 15 x 11 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (38 x 29.3 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

178.80



I. V. KLIUN

91

Untitled. ca. 1919–1921

Gouache and watercolor on paper, 13¹⁵/₁₆ x 10¹/₂"
(35.4 x 26.6 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

179.80

*really more
vivid colors*



I. V. KLIUN

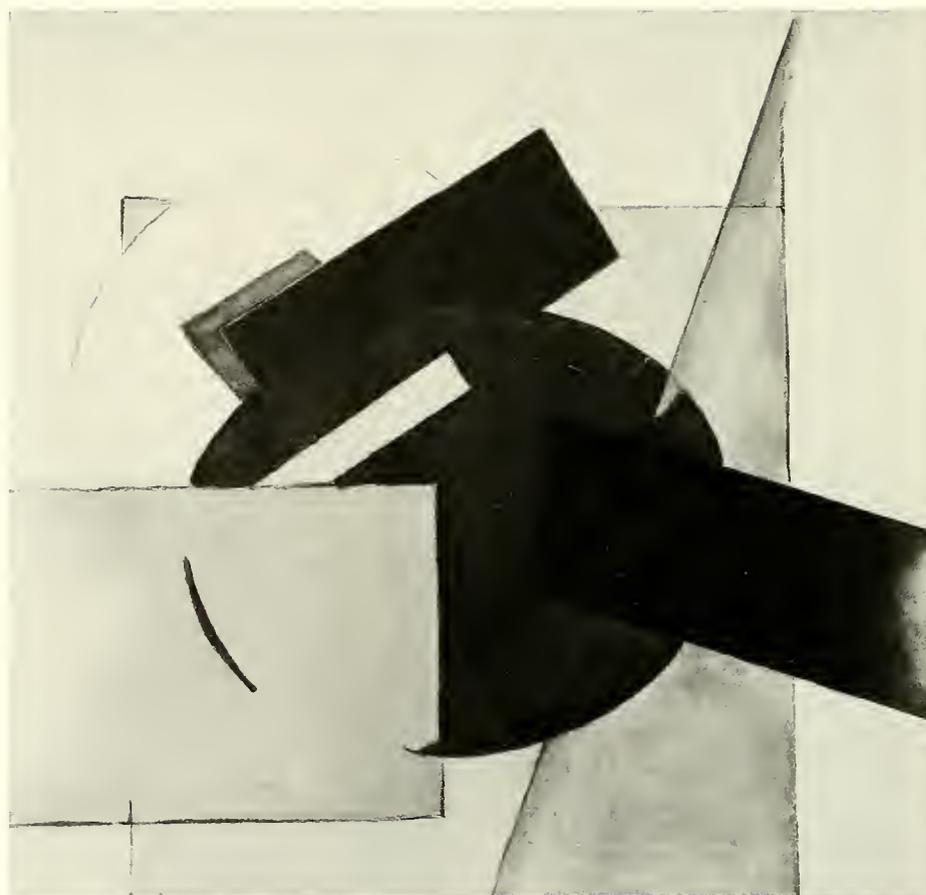
92

Untitled. ca. 1919–1921

Charcoal and gouache on paper, 10 x 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
(25.4 x 27 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

181.80



I. V. KLIUN

93

Untitled. 1921-22

Pencil and colored pencil on graph paper, $4\frac{3}{8} \times 3\frac{1}{8}$ "
(11.1 x 7.9 cm.)

Signed l.l.: *KL*

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

265.80

94

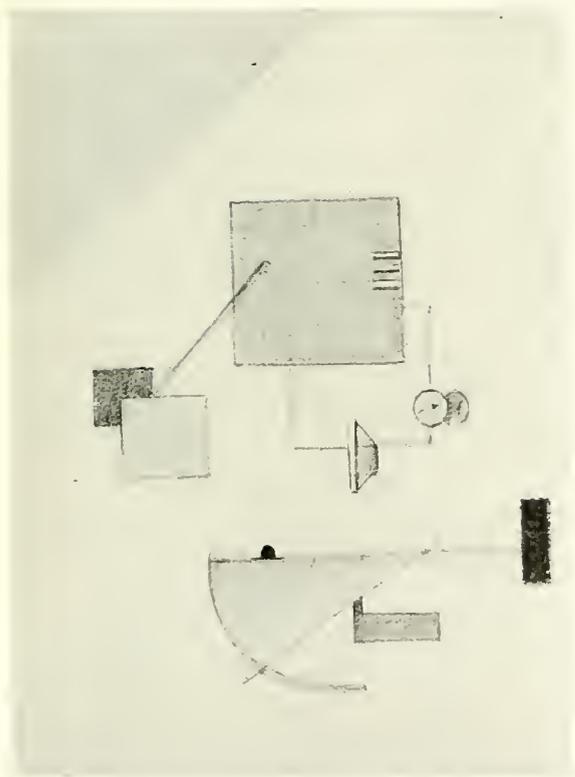
Untitled. 1920

Watercolor on paper, $6\frac{11}{16} \times 4\frac{3}{8}$ " (17 x 11.2 cm.)

Signed and dated l.r.: *I. Kliun XX*

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

261.80



I. V. KLIUN

95 i-iii

Three Drawings

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

Left, i, 800.79: dated l.r., 1920, colored pencil on paper,
7 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 5 $\frac{3}{16}$ " (18.2 x 13.5 cm.)

Middle, ii, C554 A: ca. 1921, pencil on paper,
4 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (11.9 x 8.9 cm.)

Right, iii, C554 B: dated in pencil l.r., 1921, pencil on
paper, 5 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 3 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (13.2 x 9.8 cm.)

These drawings of 1920-21 are typical of Kliun's
sfumato style as he moved away from Malevich's
much more rigorously outlined definition of form.

I. V. KLIUN

96

Untitled. ca. 1920-21

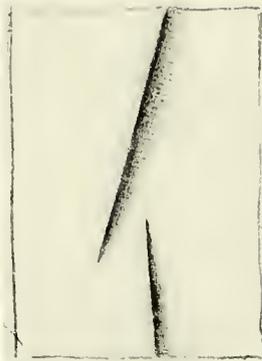
Oil on board, 29 x 24" (73.6 x 60.9 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun

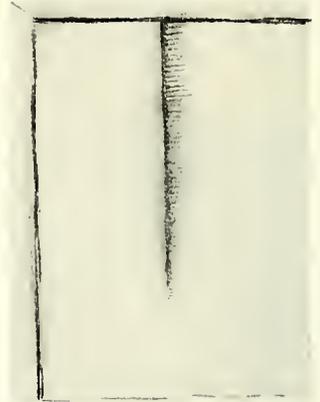
81.78



i



ii



iii

not very
good condition



pts.
in con-
centric
draw

more Ten-
draw

I. V. KLIUN

97

Untitled. ca. 1921-25

Oil on canvas, 28³/₁₆ x 17¹/₈" (71.5 x 43.5 cm.) (sight)

Signed l.r.: I. Kliun

80.78

The date of this work is suggested by Rakitin.



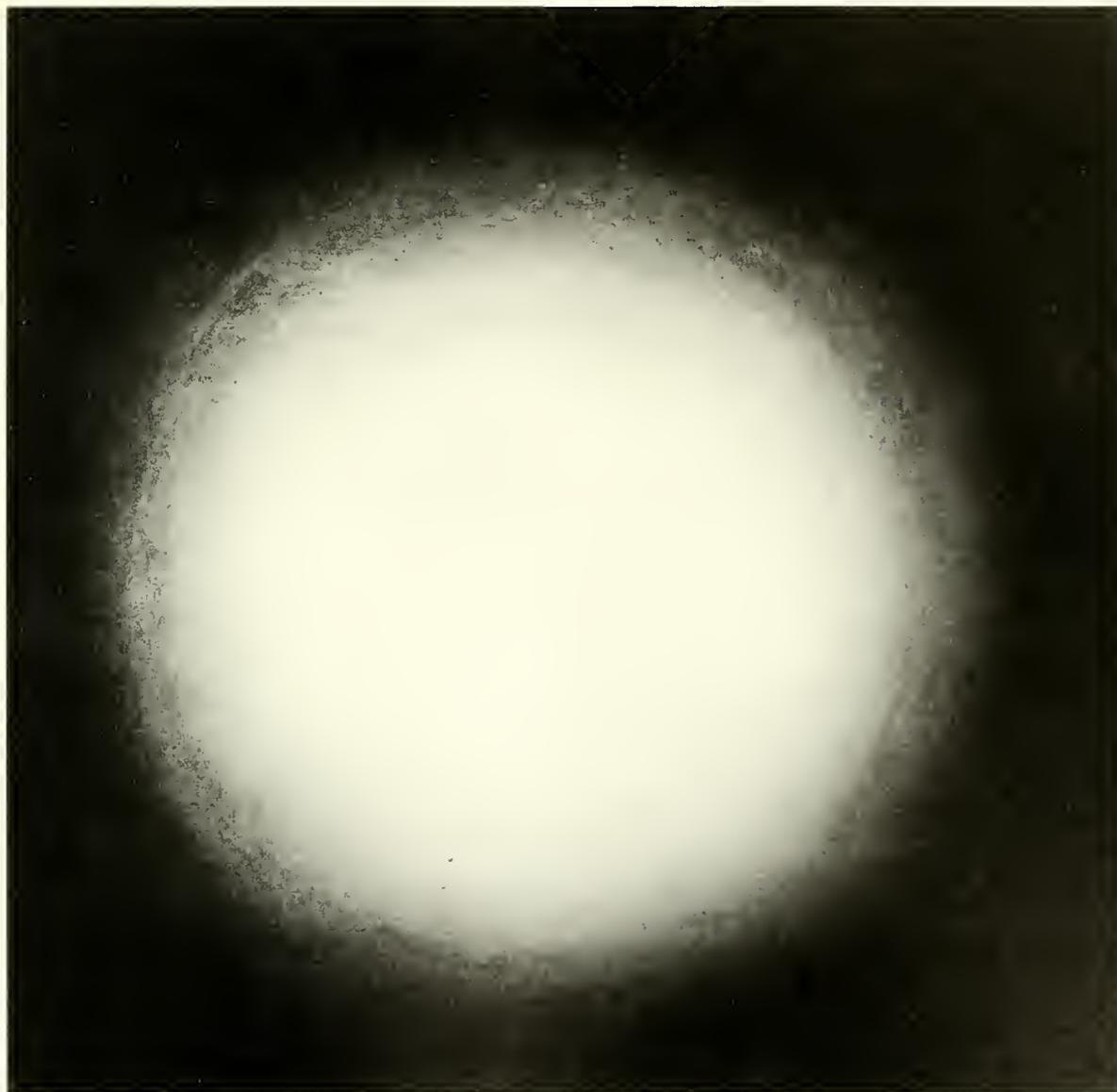
Purple

98

Red Light, Spherical Composition. ca. 1923
Oil on canvas, 27¼ x 27¼" (69.1 x 68.9 cm.)
Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun
84.78

very dark
orange-red

red over dark
black-brown



99

Spherical Suprematism. ca. 1923–25
Oil on canvas, 40 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 27 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (102.1 x 70.2 cm.)
Signed l.l.: *Kliun*
Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun
71.78

The title is inscribed on the reverse, though not in the artist's hand.

According to Rakitin, this work was exhibited in 1925 at the first exhibition of OST (the Society of Studio Artists). (Information from private archives, Moscow.)

100

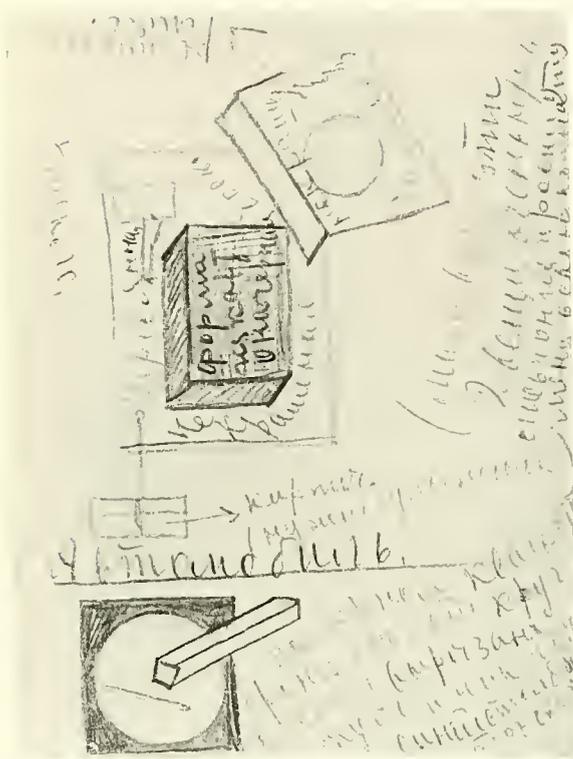
Spherical Non-Objective Composition. 1922–25
Oil on canvas, 40 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 27 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (101.8 x 70.7 cm.)
Signed, titled and dated on reverse: *I. Kliun, Spherical nonobjective composition, VI / 1922–II / 1925*
Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Kliun
83.78





101 a

Preliminary Sketch for the Construction *Automobile*.
1915



101 b

Preliminary Sketch for the Construction *Bicyclist*. 1915
Both: pencil on paper, 5 5/16 x 4" (13.5 x 10.1 cm.)
C353 recto and verso

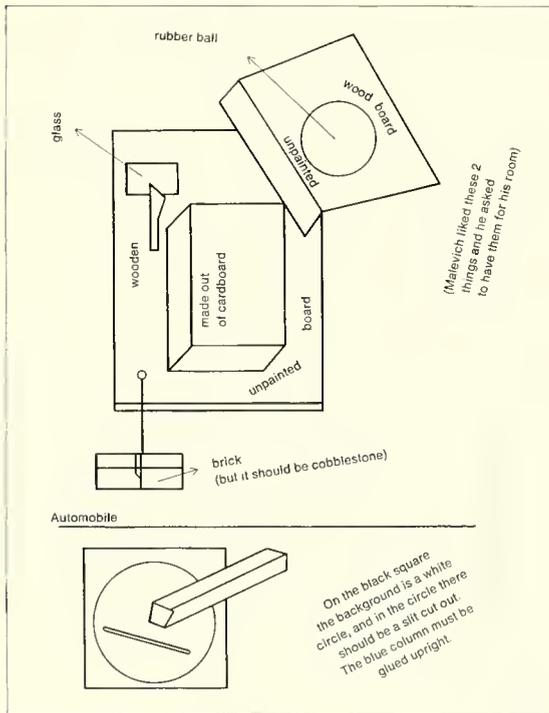
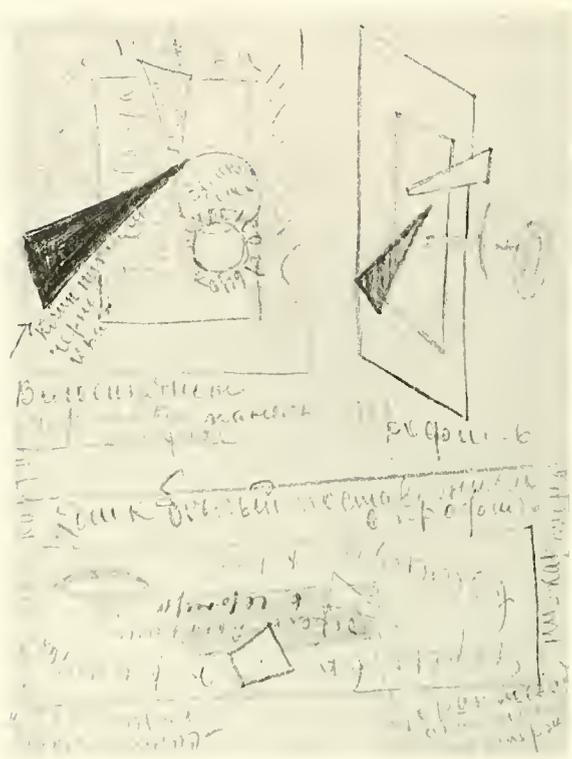


fig. a
Diagrammatic rendering of *Automobile* sketch.

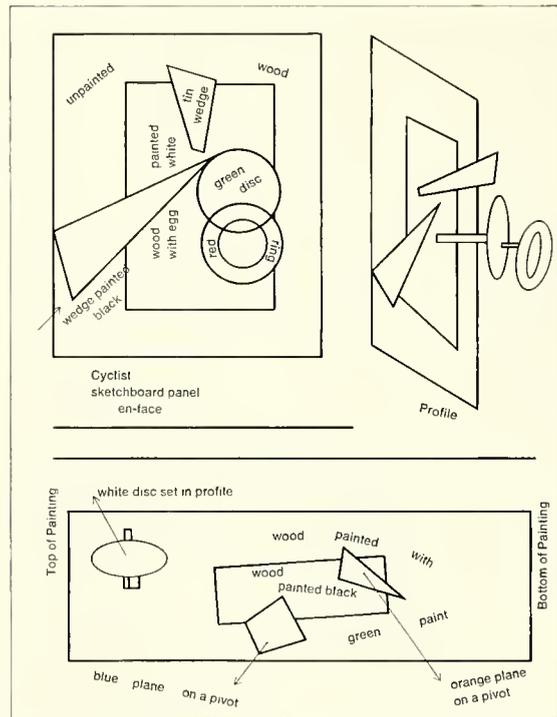


fig. b
Diagrammatic rendering of *Bicyclist* sketch.

These two pages of sketches (recto and verso of a single sheet) are the only known surviving record in Rozanova's hand of the two constructions she exhibited at 0.10 (December 19, 1915–January 19, 1916).¹ In addition, the lower portion of each page shows a sketch for another, otherwise unknown construction.

The two exhibited constructions (nos. 121 and 122 in the 0.10 catalogue) were *Automobile* and *Bicyclist*, and they were reproduced in a review of the exhibition published on January 3, 1916 (fig. c). Though they became famous at the time, they have long since been lost, and the Costakis drawings provide the first clear evidence of the materials used and the actual appearance of the objects. Composed partly of raw materials (unpainted wood, tin, glass), partly of painted elements (black,

white, green and red), and partly of found objects (a rubber ball, a brick or cobblestone), Rozanova's images suggest on the one hand her strong adherence to the Suprematist principles of Malevich's contemporary painting, but also her interest in an iconography that is more systematically related, though in a complex and allusive way, to actual objects in the world. It is this original combination of tendencies — the fusing of abstract form with a nonrepresentational and elliptically referential vocabulary — that Rozanova continued to develop in 1916 and 1917. (See cat. nos. 102–05.) It is interesting to note that when her close friend Ivan Kliun designed a memorial after her death in 1918, he returned specifically to the imagery of the *Bicyclist* in his search for a suitable motif (cat. nos. 86–87).

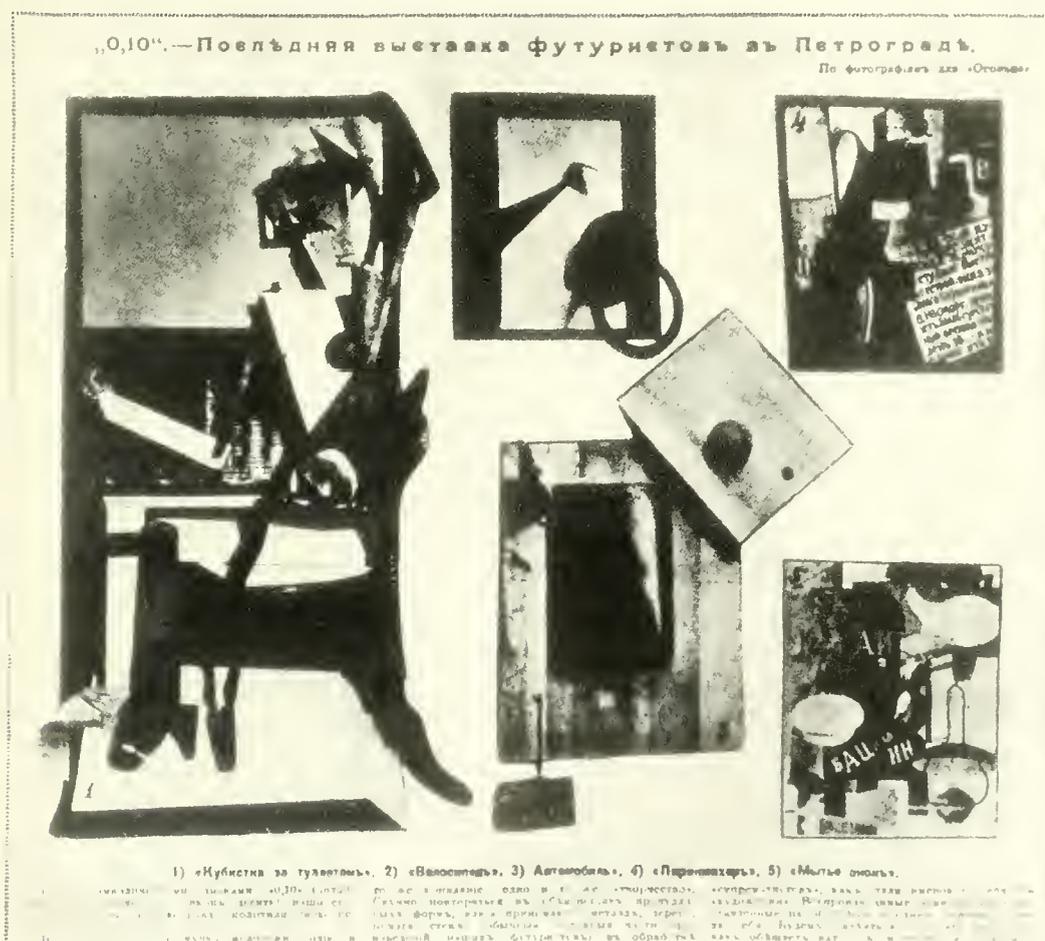


fig. c
A page from *Ogonek*, Jan. 3, 1916, illustrating works in the 0.10 exhibition. On the far left, Kliun's *Cubist at Her Dressing Table*; in the center, the two Rozanova con-

structions, *Bicyclist* (top) and *Automobile* (bottom); on the right, Puni's *Barbershop* and *Window Dressing* (bottom).

1. For a discussion of several important aspects of this exhibition see C. A. Douglas, "0.10 Exhibition," in LACMA, pp. 34-40.

The Universal War (Vselenskaya voina). Petrograd,
January 1916

Paper and fabric collage on paper, printed covers, 2 pp.
printed text, 11 pp. collage illustrations. Published in an
edition of 100 handmade copies.

Each page: 8 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{7}{16}$ " (21 x 29 cm.); book: 8 $\frac{11}{16}$ x 13"
(22 x 23 cm.)

Gift of A. Kruchenykh

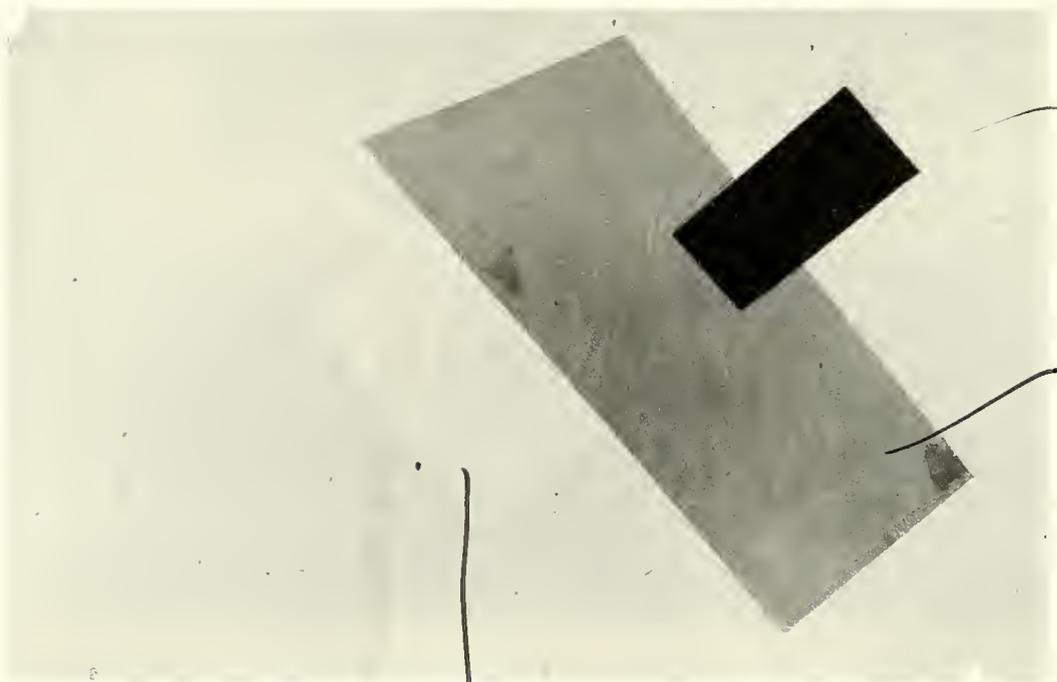
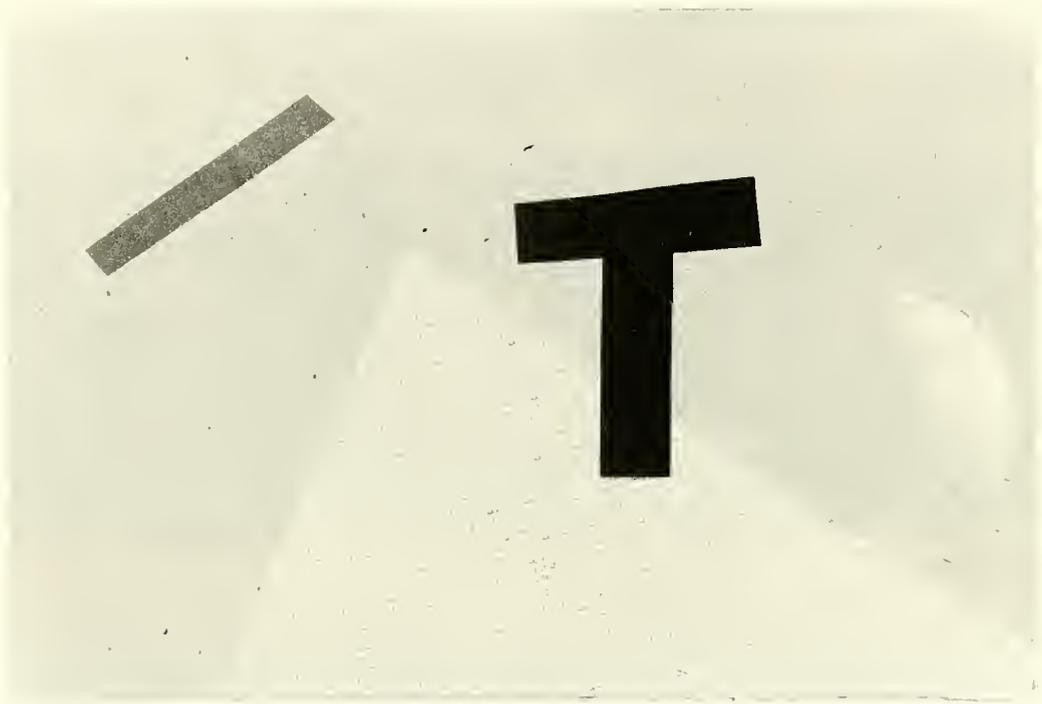
130.80

Rozanova's illustrations to Kruchenykh's *The Universal War* demonstrate the striking originality and coloristic purity of her nonobjective style of 1916, and Kruchenykh's preface to his book stresses the innovative nature of her experiments. His invention of a *zaum* language, in which the sound of a word is exploited apart from its contextual meaning, was clearly echoed in the new pictorial language which Rozanova created to illustrate the volume's twelve poems (predicting the outbreak of a universal war in 1985). Originality *per se* was clearly of great importance to her. In an essay on "Suprematism and Criticism" published in *Anarkhia*, in March 1918, she wrote: "The greatest satisfaction in creativity is to be unlike anything else. . . . Only he can create who feels that he is new, unlike anything else."

As Hubertus Gassner has argued, though the various collages carry titles borrowed from the text, the works themselves are clearly lacking in "subject matter."¹ The particular stress on asymmetry and dissonance represents a clear departure from the carefully calculated equilibrium of Malevich's contemporary Suprematist compositions.

1. "Olga Rozanova," *Women Artists of the Russian Avant-Garde*, p. 235. This article contains a discussion of Rozanova's contributions in the field of book production.





black

bright blue

bright
blue

103

Untitled. 1916–17

Collage on paper, 8¹¹/₁₆ x 13" (22 x 33 cm.)

Acquired from A. Kruchenykh

253.78

104

Untitled. 1916–17

Paper collage on paper, 8⁵/₈ x 13¹/₈" (21.9 x 33.4 cm.)

Acquired from A. Kruchenykh

254.78

This collage, and cat. no. 103, must originally have been intended as illustrations for the book *The Year 1918 (1918 god)*, a miscellany by Vasilii Kamensky, Kruchenykh and Kirill Zdanevich, published in Tiflis in 1917. The book was handmade, and each copy included individual collages by Rozanova. A copy of the entire book in the collection of Alexandre Polonski includes collages which are on paper that is identical in nature (color, texture, size) to that used as the ground in the present two works. In addition, the paper of the actual collage elements (including the turquoise embossed paper used in cat. no. 103) is identical to that used for collage elements in the Polonski book.

It is not clear whether the two collages in the Costakis collection derive from a dismembered copy of the 1917 book, or whether they were simply extra pages that remained unused.

Untitled (Green Stripe). 1917

Oil on canvas, 27⁵/₁₆ x 20⁷/₈" (71 x 53 cm.)

Gift from I. Kachurin, who acquired it from a close friend of Rozanova

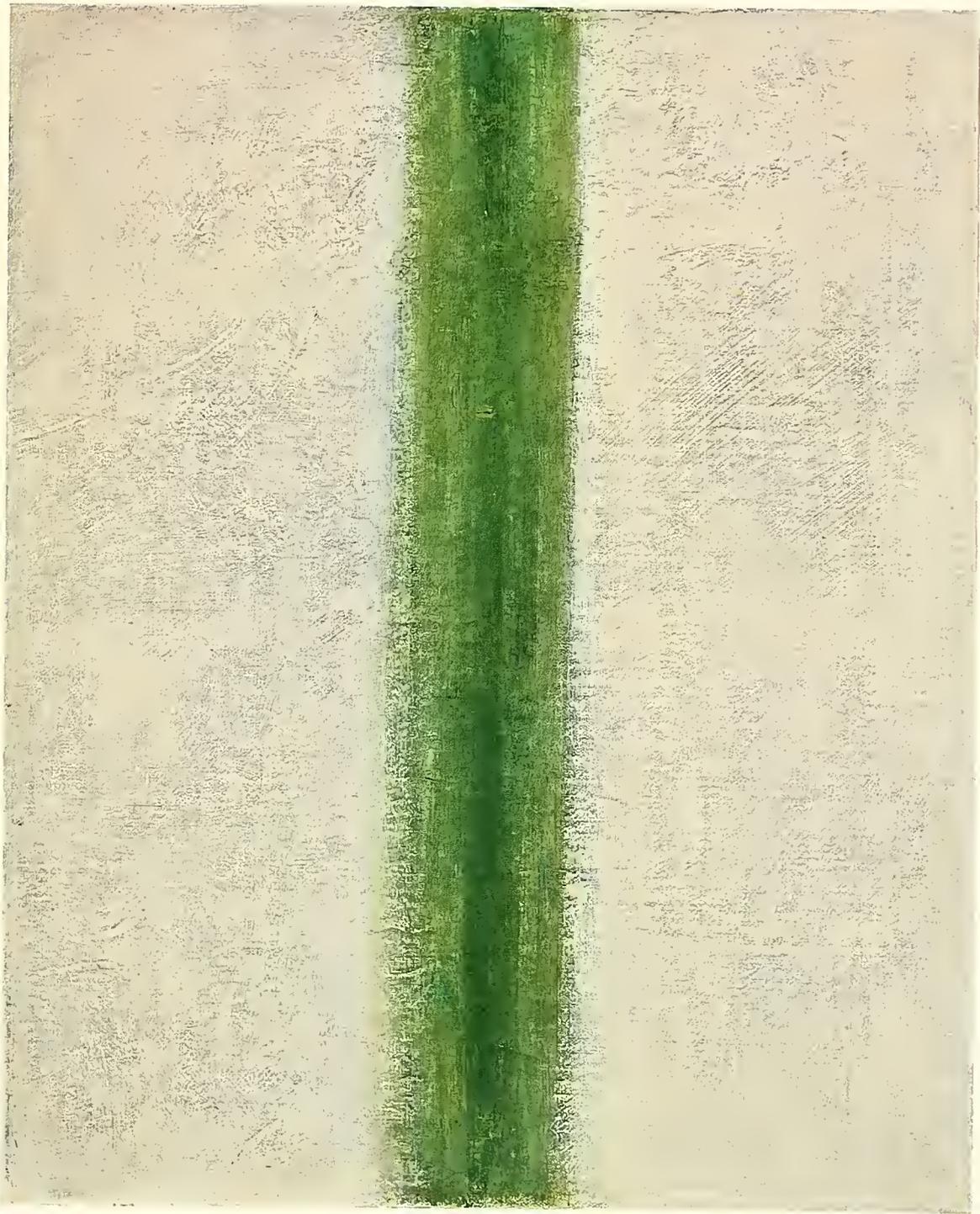
251.78

According to Rakitin, this work was included in Rozanova's posthumous exhibition, held in Moscow in 1919, which included twenty-two "Suprematist non-objective compositions." Ivan Kliun wrote the catalogue preface. Rakitin has also drawn attention to the existence in a Soviet collection of a similar work with a yellow stripe on a white ground. These unusual compositional experiments demonstrate yet again Rozanova's emphasis on innovation, originality and the breaking of new ground. As early as 1913, she had written:

Each moment of the present is dissimilar to a moment of the past, and the moments of the future will contain inexhaustible possibilities and new revelations. . . . There is nothing more awful in the World than repetition, uniformity. Uniformity is the apotheosis of banality. There is nothing more awful in the world than an artist's immutable face, by which his friends and old buyers recognize him at exhibitions — this accursed mask that shuts off his view of the future. . . .¹

In Rozanova's collages of 1916, Suprematist forms are arranged upon a ground that is clearly distinct from them, and the forms appear suspended in a large pictorial space. In this painting, however, and presumably in others of this moment, Rozanova destroys the notion of a ground as such. The green, interpenetrated at its edges by the white, exists on the same plane with it and the entire surface of the canvas thus becomes a flat juxtaposition of color masses. Though Rozanova still regarded herself as a Suprematist painter, she — like Kliun — was developing an independent formulation. (See p. 111.)

1. "The Bases of the New Creation and the Reasons why it is misunderstood" (*Osnovy novogo tvorchestva i prichiny ego neponimaniya*), 1913, trans. Bowit, *Theory and Criticism*, p. 109.



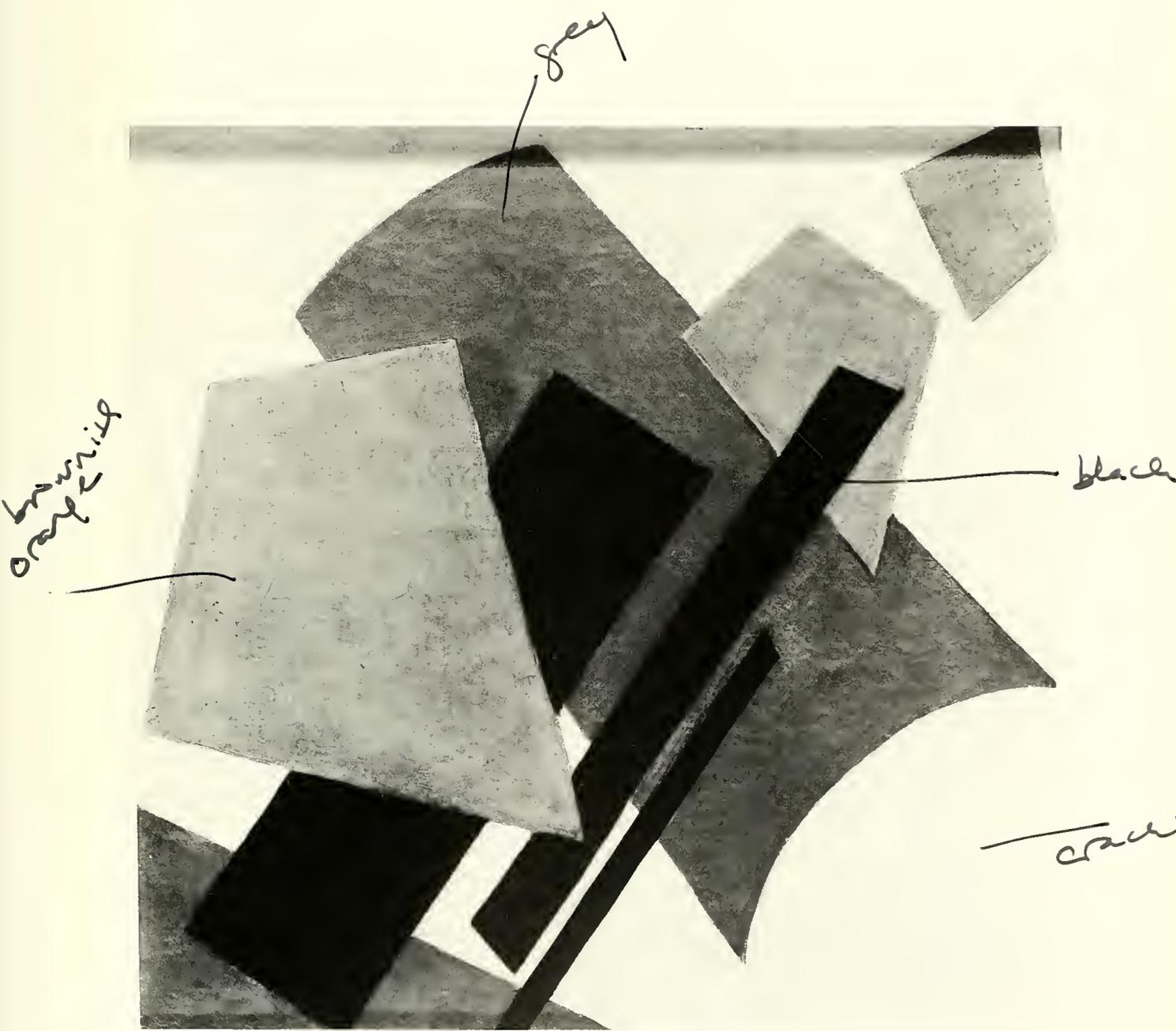
106

Painterly Architectonics. 1916-17

Oil on canvas, 17 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (43.5 x 43.9 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's brother, P. S. Popov

182.78



L. S. POPOVA

107

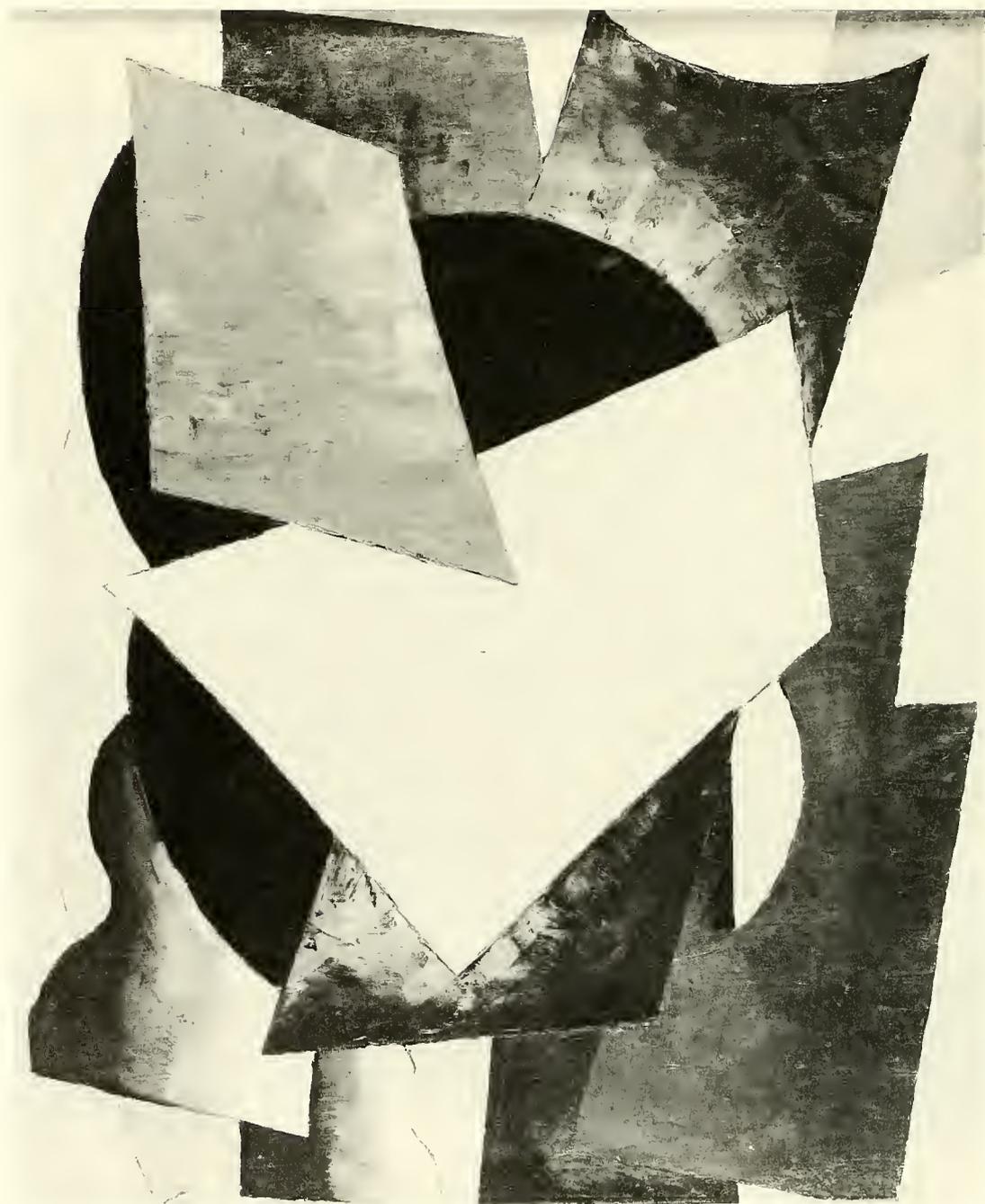
Painterly Architectonics. 1917-18

Oil on canvas, 37 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 30" (94.1 x 76.3 cm.) (sight)

From A. Vesnin to D. Sarabianov; acquired from Sarabianov

176.78

According to Rakitin, this work and cat. no. 106 both appeared in Popova's posthumous exhibition of 1924.



108

Untitled. ca. 1917-19

Paper collage on paper mounted on paper, 13 x 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ "
(33 x 24.3 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

186.78



109

Cover Design for a Set of Linocuts. ca. 1917-19
Linocut on paper, 16 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (41.7 x 29.9 cm.)
Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov
188.78

Several of Popova's linocuts appeared in her posthumous exhibition of 1924 and are visible in the installation photographs.



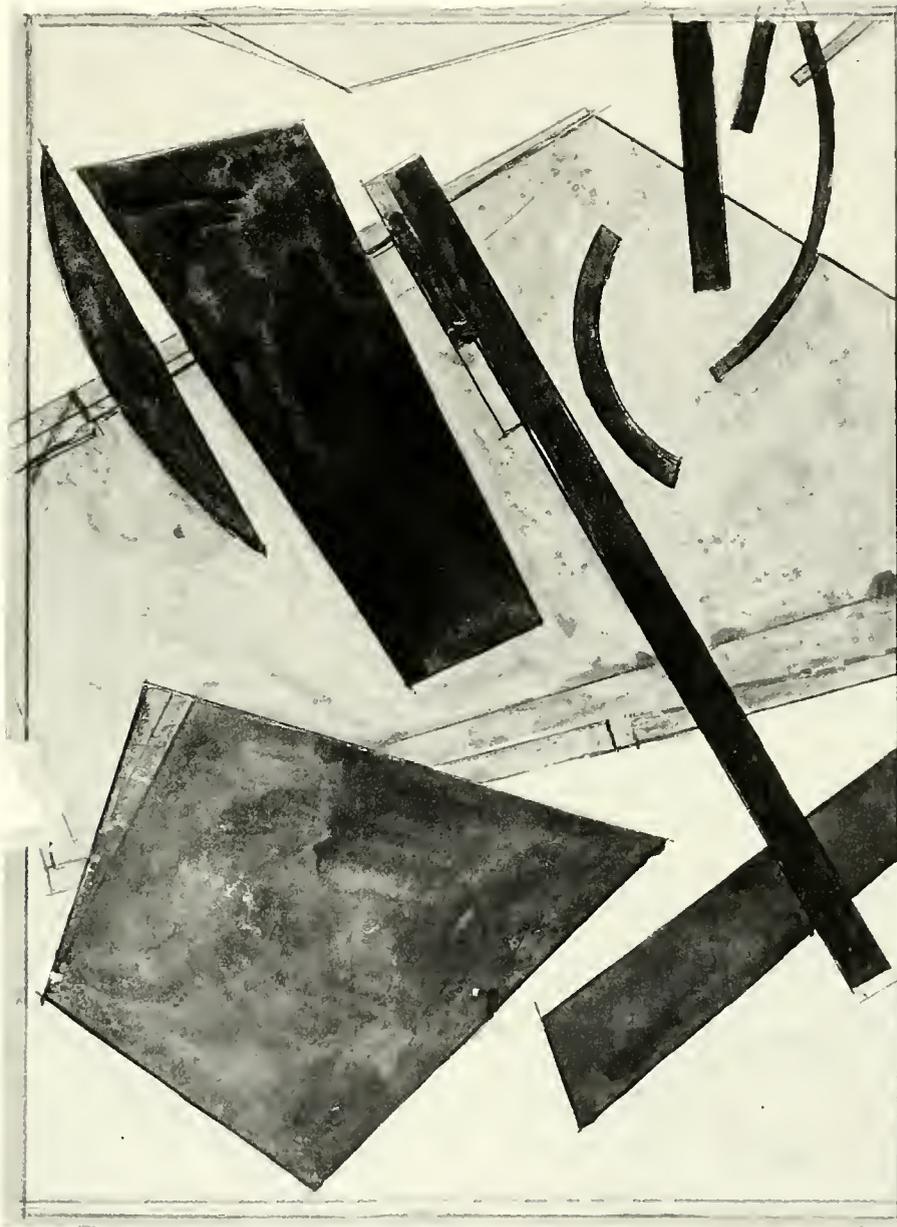
110

Untitled. ca. 1917-19

Gouache and pencil on paper, $12\frac{15}{16} \times 9\frac{9}{16}$ "
(32.9 x 24.3 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

187.78



L. S. POPOVA

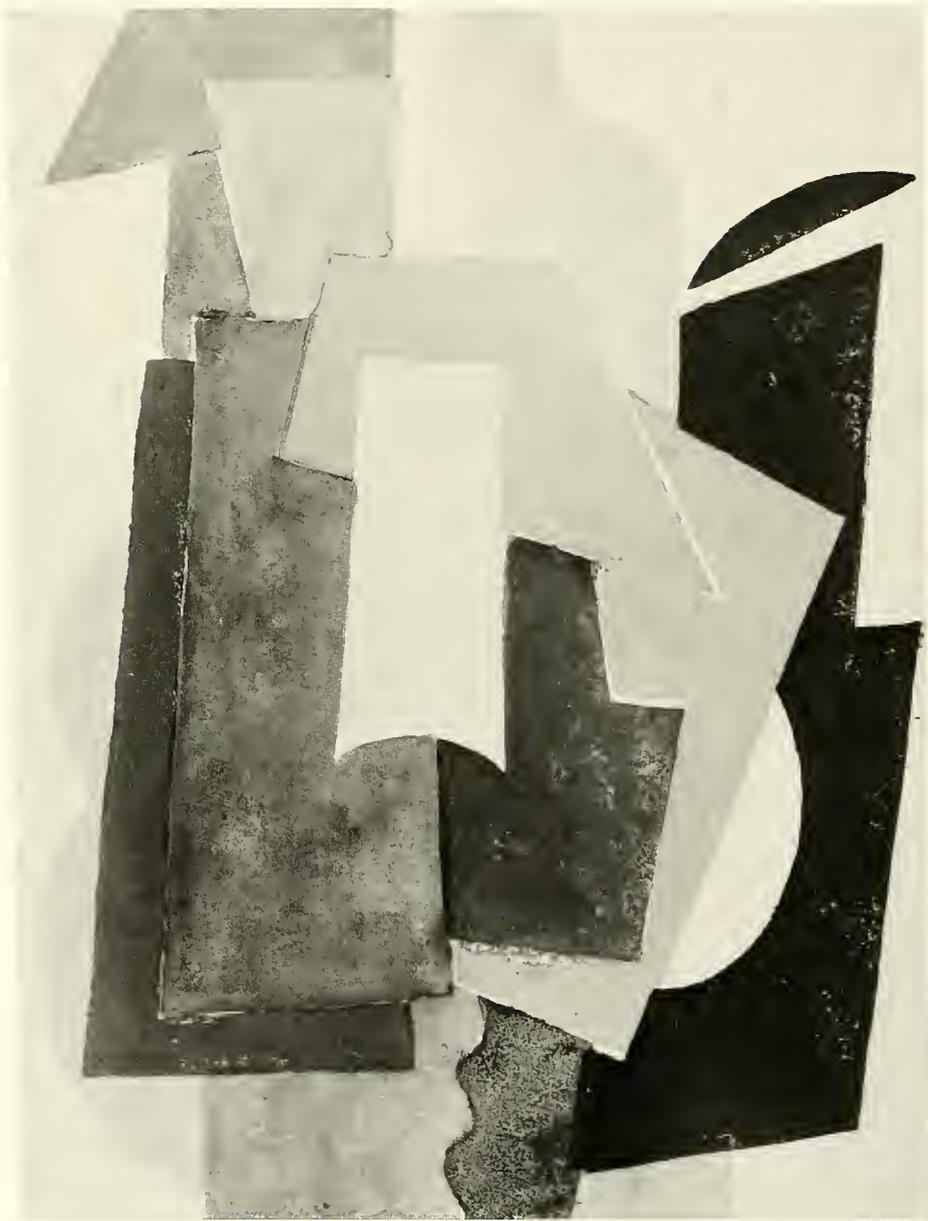
111

Untitled. ca. 1917-19

Linocut on paper, 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 10 $\frac{3}{16}$ " (34.1 x 26.1 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

189.78



112

Untitled. ca. 1917-19

Linocut on paper, 12¹⁵/₁₆ x 9⁷/₁₆" (32.9 x 24 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C390



L. S. POPOVA

113

Untitled. ca. 1917-19

Linocut on paper, $13\frac{3}{16} \times 10\frac{3}{16}$ " (34.5 x 25.9 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

192.78



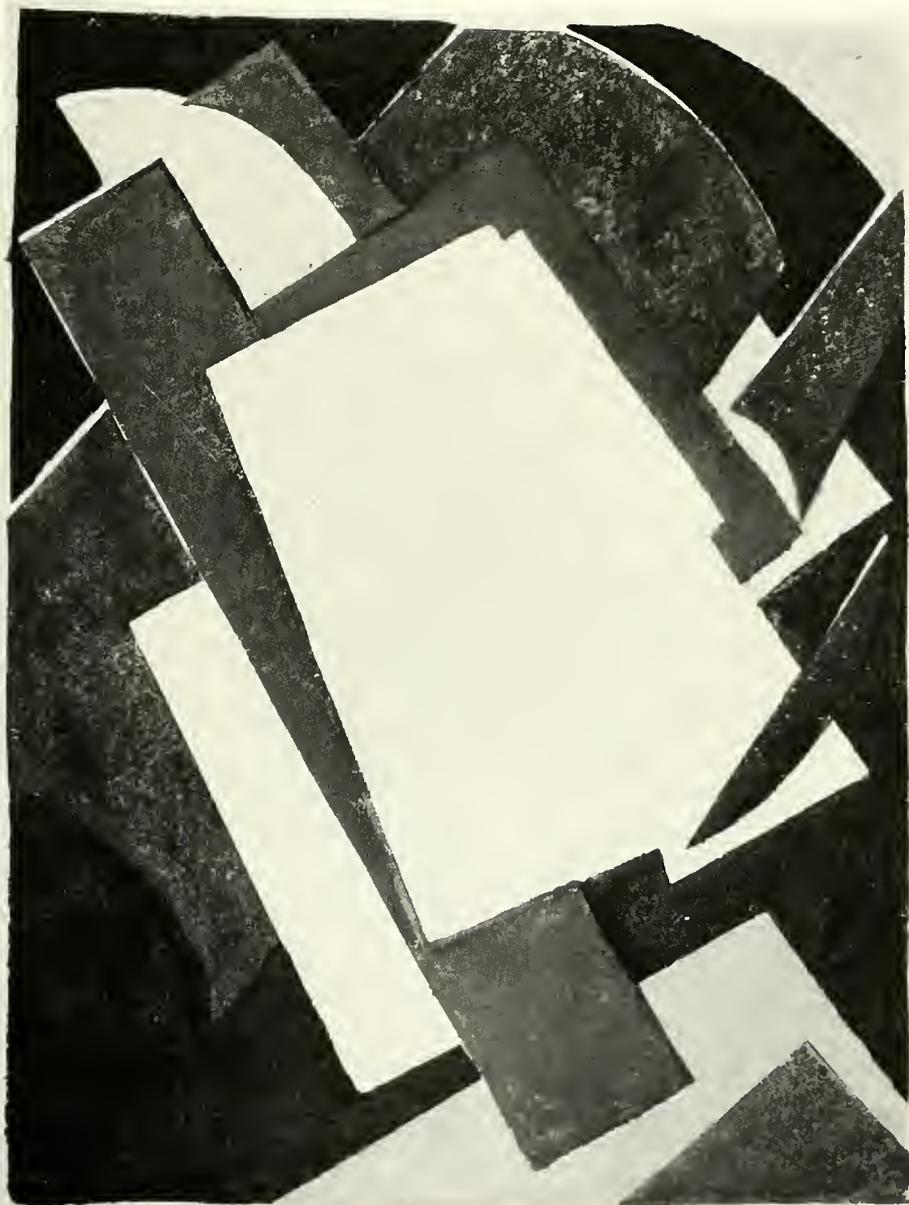
114

Untitled. ca. 1917-19

Linocut on paper, $13\frac{5}{8} \times 10\frac{3}{16}$ " (34.4 x 25.9 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

193.78



L. S. POPOVA

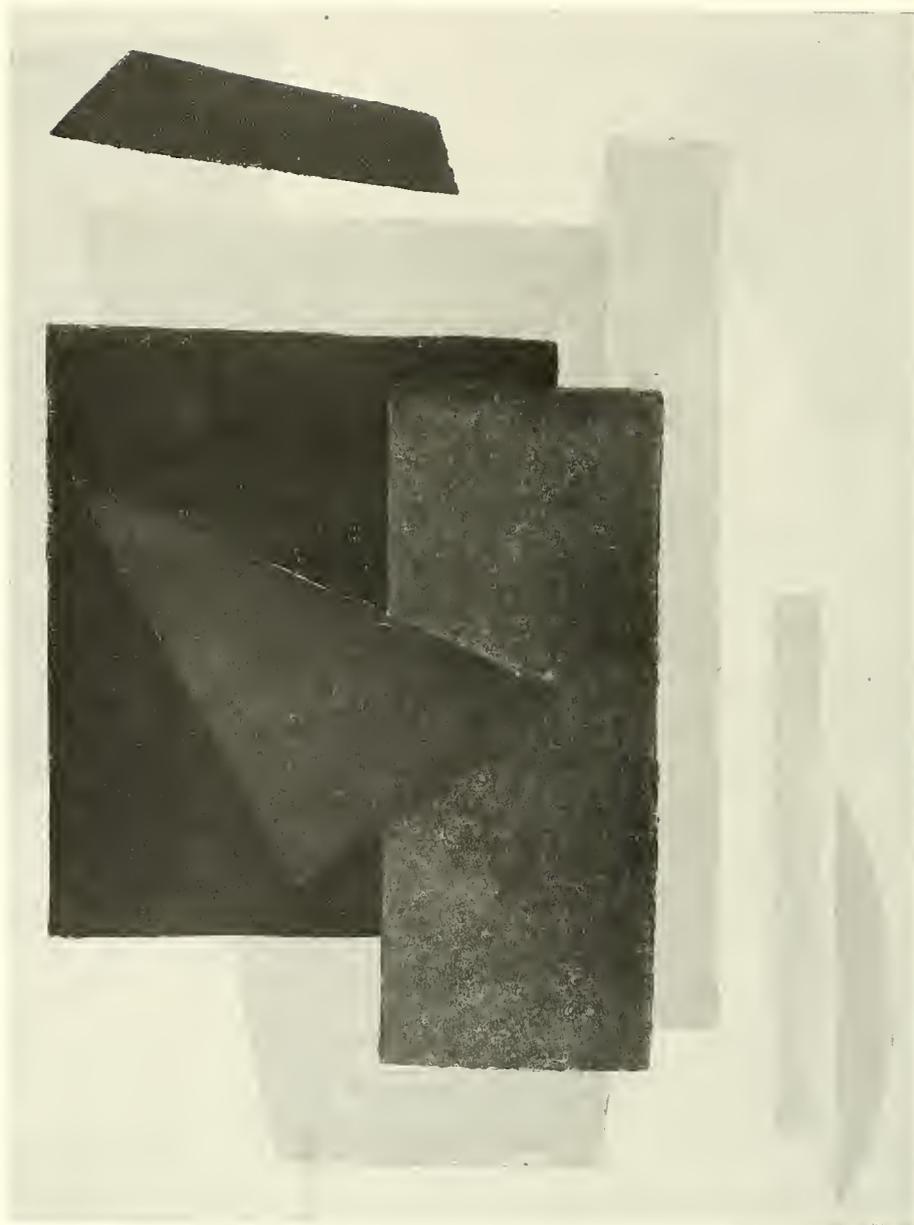
115

Untitled. ca. 1917-19

Linocut on paper, $13\frac{3}{16} \times 10\frac{3}{16}$ " (34.5 x 26 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

191.78



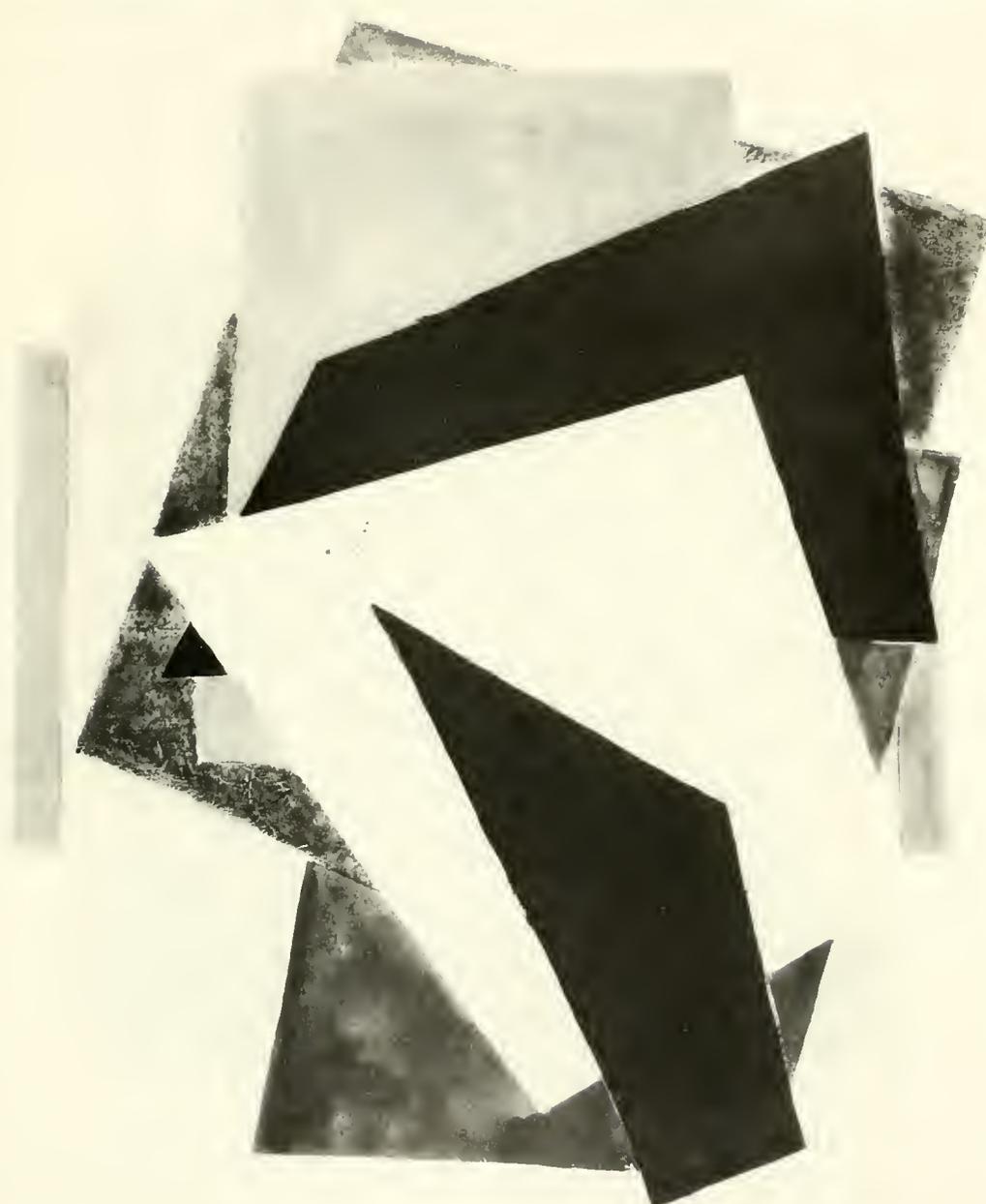
116

Untitled. ca. 1920

Gouache on paper, 25 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (64 x 44.5 cm.)

Acquired from A. A. Drevin, son of Alexandr Drevin
and Udaltsova

ATH.80.18



117

Untitled. ca. 1920

Gouache on paper, $18\frac{7}{8} \times 15\frac{3}{16}$ " (48 x 38.5 cm.)

Acquired from A. A. Drevin, son of Alexandr Drevin
and Udaltsova

ATH.80.19



118

Untitled. ca. 1920

Gouache on paper, $12\frac{3}{16} \times 9\frac{7}{16}$ " (32.5 x 24 cm.)

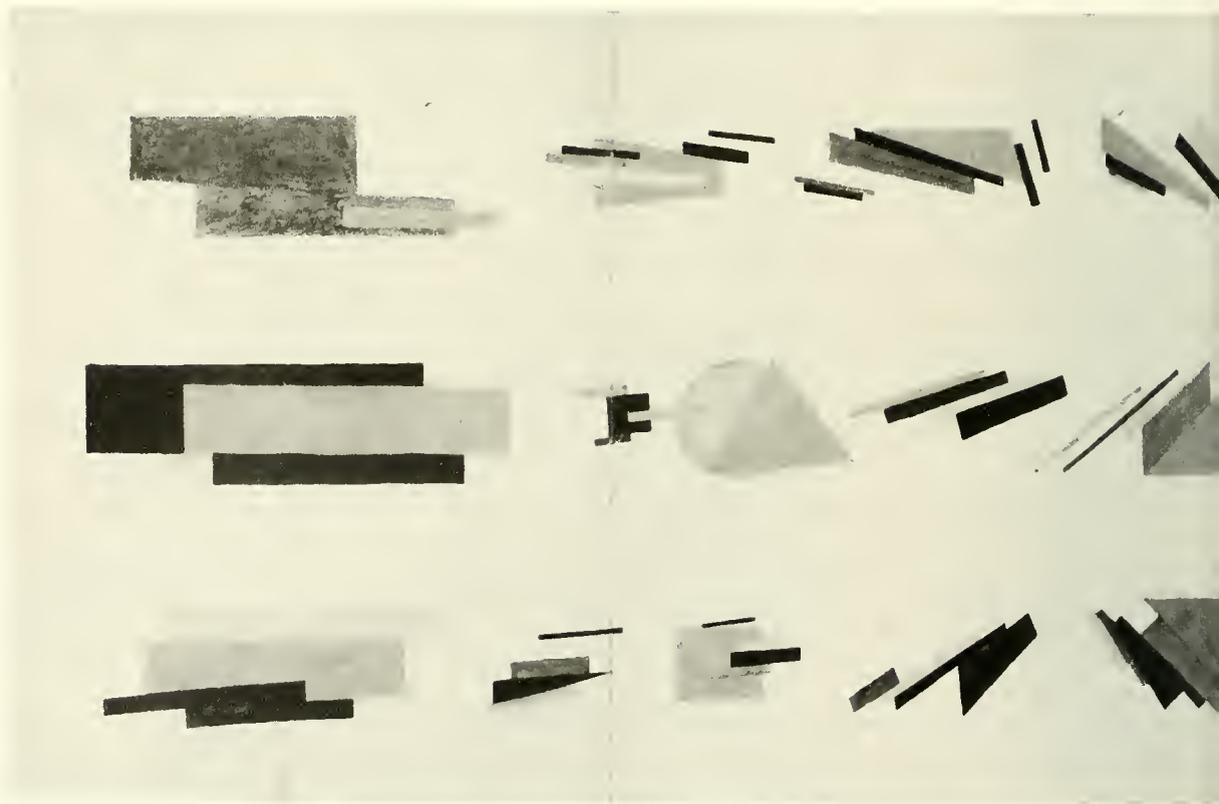
Acquired from A. A. Drevin, son of Alexandr Drevin
and Udaltsova

ATH.80.20



KUDRIASHEV IN ORENBURG

After the Revolution, Ivan Kudriashev was admitted to the Free State Art Studios in Moscow (Svomas), where he studied with Malevich and also met Kliun, Gabo and Pevsner. In 1919 he was sent to Orenburg to establish the Svomas there, maintaining his contact with Malevich through correspondence and occasional visits, and in 1920 he organized an Orenburg branch of Unovis.¹ Orenburg's theater, dating from 1856, was renamed — in 1920 — The First Soviet Theater, and Kudriashev's Suprematist designs for its interior decoration were exhibited in that same year.² It has not been possible to establish whether the designs were ever carried out.



1. An unpublished letter from Malevich to Kudriashev, addressed to him in Orenburg and dated Vitebsk, April 14, 1921, bears witness to a continued shared interest in the development and dissemination of Suprematist ideas and principles (Costakis collection, 143.80). Malevich writes about his own activities, about the progress of the Suprematist movement, about attitudes towards the Unovis movement and about Kudriashev's work ("Your mural is good — it must be really good in

the original, and luminous." He presumably had a photograph of part of the theater decoration.)

2. For an installation photograph, see R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 406. For color reproductions of these designs, and of an additional oil for the project now in the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, see *ibid.*, pls. 407-10.

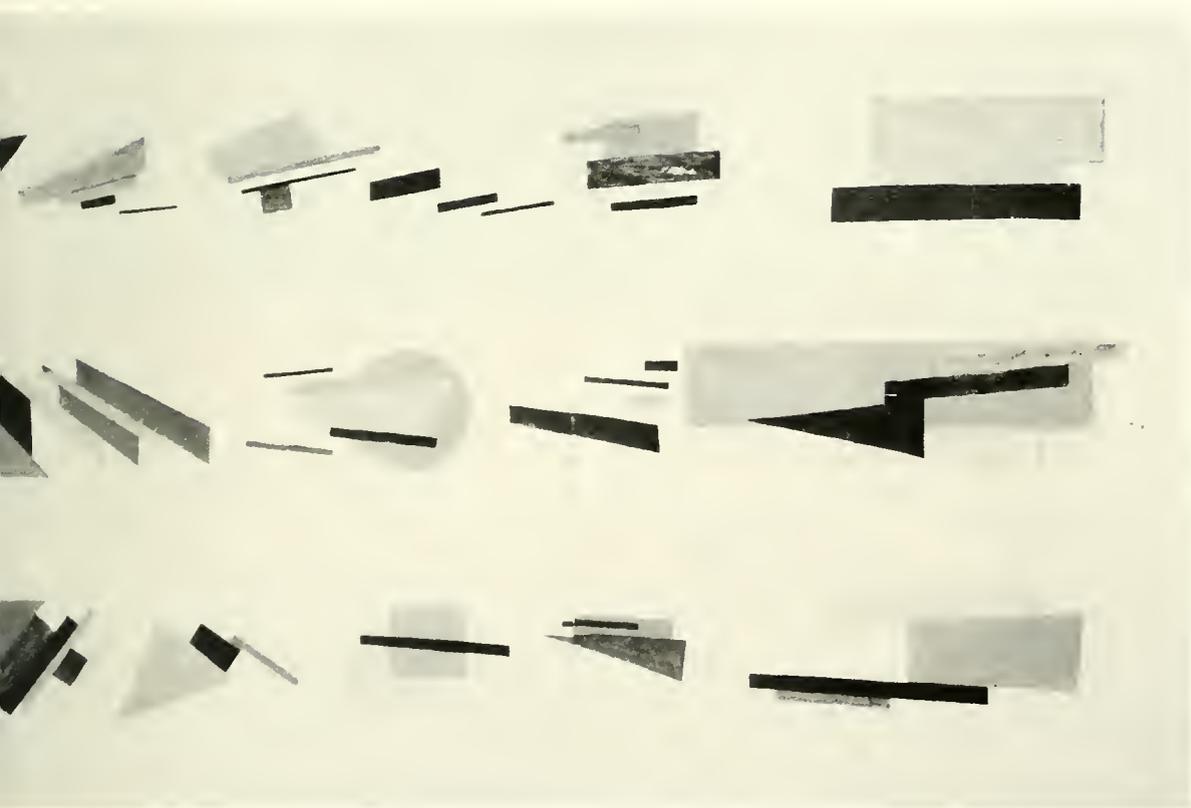
119

Design for The First Soviet Theater in Orenburg. 1920

Pencil and gouache on paperboard, 13 x 41"
(33 x 102.5 cm.)

Acquired from the artist

127.78



I. A. KUDRIASHEV

120

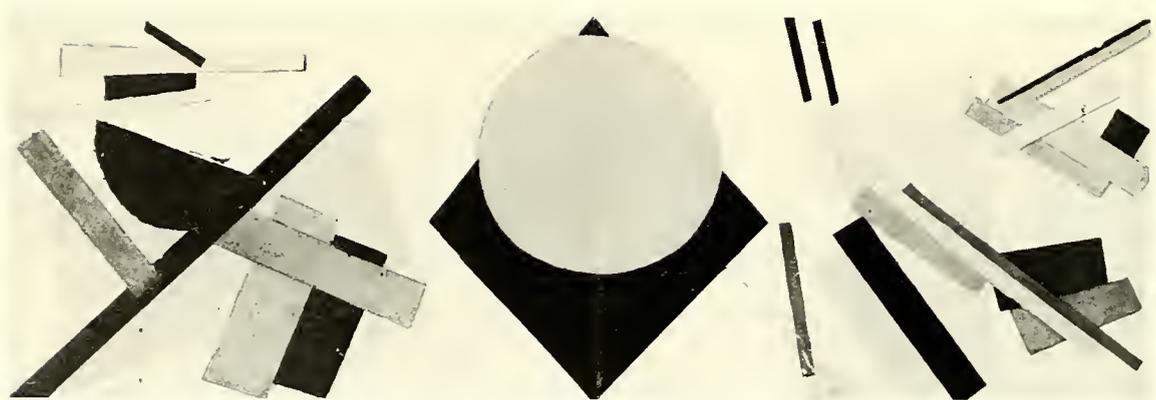
Design for The First Soviet Theater in Orenburg. 1920

Watercolor, gouache and paper collage on paper,
5 ³/₁₆ x 15 ³/₈" (13.3 x 39 cm.)

Inscribed on mount: *Foyer/lateral wall*

Acquired from the artist

132.78



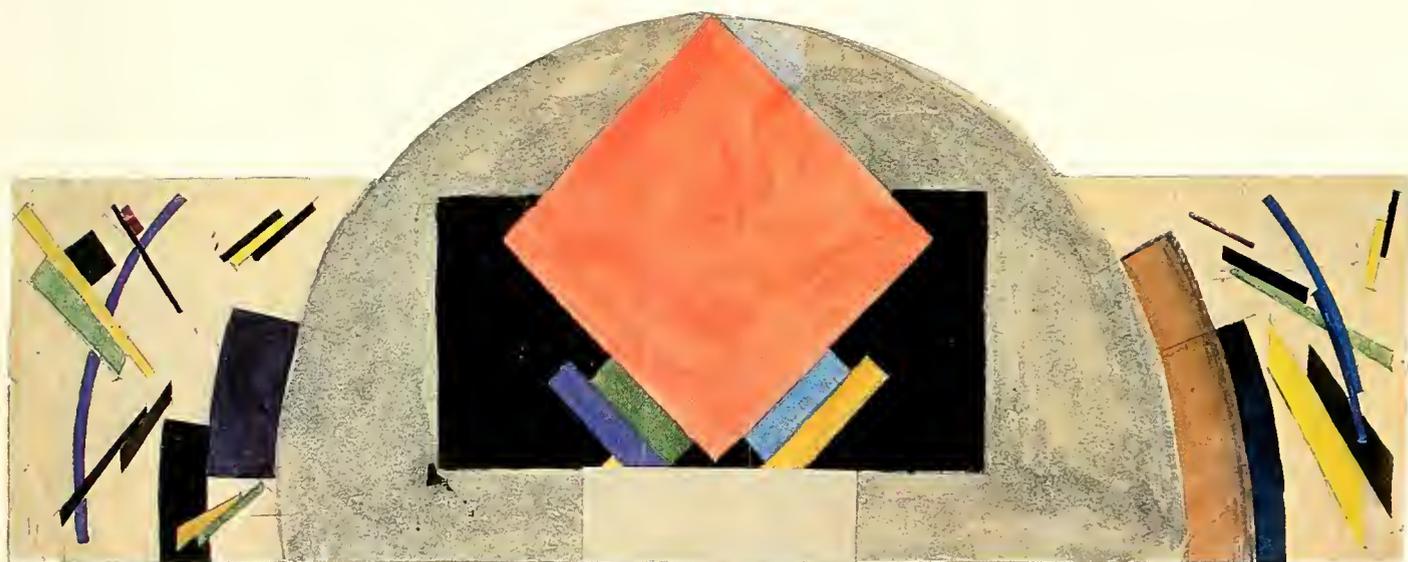
121

Design for The First Soviet Theater in Orenburg. 1920

Watercolor, ink and pencil on paper on board, 8 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 21"
(21.2 x 53.4 cm.)

Acquired from the artist

133.78



ILIA GRIGORIEVICH CHASHNIK

122

Suprematist Cross. 1923

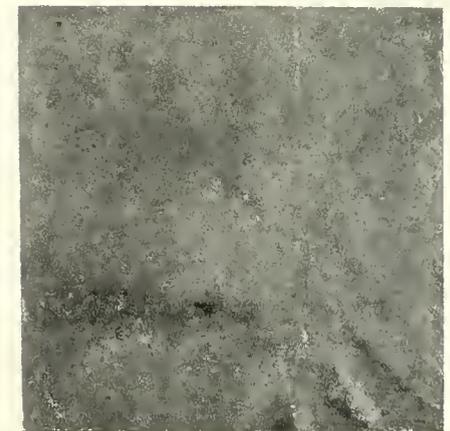
Oil on canvas, 52 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 52 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (133.2 x 133.4 cm.)

Signed, dated and inscribed on the reverse: *Unovis II. Chashnik, 23*

Acquired from a private collection in Leningrad

795.79

For information on the life and work of Chashnik see S. von Wiese, A. B. Nakov, *et al.*, *Ilja G. Tschaschnik*, Kunstmuseum Düsseldorf, 1978; *Ilya G. Chashnik*, New York, Leonard Hutton Galleries, 1979.



*Black Quadrilateral*Oil on canvas, 6¹¹/₁₆ x 9⁷/₁₆" (17 x 24 cm.)

Gift from a close friend of the artist

ATH.80.10

Malevich exhibited his first black quadrilaterals at the 0.10 exhibition in Moscow, December 1915. A rectangular form on a light ground was also exhibited on that occasion and is visible in the installation photographs.¹

Malevich's radical break with the pictorial traditions of the past, represented by these 1915 compositions, has been widely discussed in the literature.² As both Crone and Marcadé have pointed out, Malevich specifically described these works as "quadrilateral" (*chetyreugol-*

nik), rather than as square, and indeed none of them can be described as conforming strictly to a geometrical form; rather they are quadrilaterals tending towards the square or the rectangle. It was the "quadrilaterality" that concerned Malevich, and as such they represented a departure from a "triangularity" which until then had been historically seen as a symbol of the divine. He wrote: "the form of modernity is the rectangle. In it four points triumph over three points."³ The specificity of his references to the "icon" in his writings of the period further intensifies this association. Thus the works function on one level as extreme examples of the absolute planarity of the pictorial surface; on another as "non-figurative" expression of the "nonobjective world" rendered visible.⁴



very individ.
brushwork
old gray white
tests in white
etc.

1. A. B. Nakov, *Kazimir S. Malevič: Scritti*, Milan, 1977, p. 153. The dating of these works is often difficult to establish, since Malevich himself continued to produce variants well into the 1920s and several were produced in his studio at the Inkhuk. On this point, see T. Andersen, *Malevich*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 1970, p. 40, fn. 13.

2. See, for example, J. Golding, "The Black Square," *Studio International*, vol. 189, no. 974, Mar.-Apr. 1975, pp. 96-106; L. Henderson, "The Merging of Time and Space: 'The Fourth Dimension' in Russia from Ouspensky to Malevich," *The Structurist*, nos. 15/16, 1975-76, pp. 97-108; S. Compton, "Malevich's Suprematism and the Higher Intuition," *Burlington Magazine*, no. 118, Aug. 1976, pp. 577-585; E. Kovtun, "The Beginning of Suprematism," *Kasimir Malevitsch: zum 100. Geburtstag*, Galerie Gmurzynska, Cologne, 1978, pp. 196-231; R. Crone, "Zum Suprematismus — Kazimir Malevič, Velimir Chlebnikov und Nicolai Lobačevskij," *Wallraf-Richartz Jahrbuch*, vol. XL, 1978, pp. 129-162; J. C. Marcadé, ed.,

Malévich. Actes du colloque international (Centre Pompidou, Paris, May 4 and 5, 1978), Lausanne, 1979; *idem*, "K. S. Malevich: From *Black Quadrilateral* (1913) to *White on White* (1917): from the Eclipse of Objects to the Liberating Space," LACMA, pp. 20-24; C. Douglas, *Swans of Other Worlds: Kazimir Malevich and the Origins of Abstraction in Russia*, Ann Arbor, 1980.

For Malevich's own writings on Suprematism see A. B. Nakov, *Kazimir S. Malevič: Scritti*, Milan, 1977; J. C. Marcadé, "An Approach to the Writings of Malevich," *Soviet Union*, vol. 5, pt. 2, 1978, pp. 225-240.

3. Quoted by J. C. Marcadé, LACMA, p. 21, from an otherwise unpublished manuscript in a private archive in Leningrad.

4. For a discussion of this point see J. C. Marcadé, LACMA, pp. 21-22; E. Martineau, *preface to K. Malévich, Ecrits, II, Le Miroir Suprématisse*, Lausanne, 1977, p. 33.

124

Single Page Autograph Manuscript, dated July 1, 1916
Colored inks, crayon and pencil on paper, 10 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
(26.3 x 16.2 cm.)

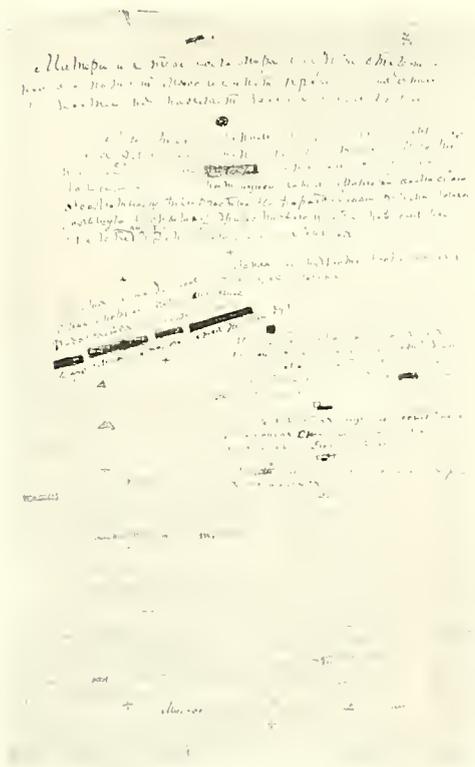
Page numbered u.r.: p.27

Acquired from the collection of S. Lissitzky-Küppers,
Novosibirsk

164.80

This single page in Malevich's hand is apparently part of a longer manuscript or diary. Some passages are recognizably taken from Malevich's essay "From Cubism and Futurism to Suprematism: The New Realism in Painting," which appeared for the first time in connection with the December 1915 *0.10* exhibition and was published in its most complete form (third edition) in Moscow, January 1916. Other passages are closely related to Malevich's concepts and ideas of the period. He was drafted into the armed forces in the middle of July and apparently did not write again for some time.

For the most detailed discussion and publication of Malevich's writings see A. B. Nakov, *Kazimir S. Malevich: Scritti*, Milan, 1977; J. C. Marcadé, *K. Malevich, Ecrits, Le Miroir Suprématiste*, 2 vols., Lausanne, 1977.



125

Front and Back Program Covers for the First "Conference of the Committees for Peasant Poverty, Northern Region 1918"

Color lithograph on heavy folded paper. Page: 19 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 25 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (48.5 x 64.8 cm.), recto image: 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (29 x 29 cm.), verso image approx.: 7 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 7 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (20.1 x 19.7 cm.)

Signed in the stone within the image, l.r.: KM

Front cover: *Conference of the Committees for Peasant Poverty, Northern Region 1918*.

Back cover: *Proletarians of all nations unite!*

CI61

The creation of the Committees for Peasant Poverty in late 1917 and early 1918 marked the beginning, in Lenin's words, "of the Revolution in rural districts." The first Conference took place November 3-8, 1918 in Petrograd and the pamphlet designed by Malevich originally contained three texts: the speech made at the Congress by Grigorii Zinoviev (pseud. Radomylsky, 1883-1936) who was head of the Party and Soviet organization for Petrograd; the speech delivered by Anatolii Lunacharsky, the Commissar of Popular Enlightenment, on behalf of the workers of Petrograd; and instructions to the village and country Soviets on peasant poverty.¹

The size of the edition is unknown, but less than half a dozen copies of this cover are recorded. N. Khardzhiev has suggested that the pamphlet, which was printed on unusually fine paper, was destined only for the official delegates, and that it would thus have been printed in a very small edition. Bowlt states that the lithographed pamphlet was produced in an edition of ten or twelve copies, and he attributes the rarity of the document to the participation of Zinoviev: because the latter was an enemy of Stalin and an ally of Trotsky, copies of the pamphlet were, by the mid 1920s, being seized or destroyed.

Malevich's lithographic cover had an extraordinary impact on the development of typography and design in the years following its 1918 publication. (For discussion and bibliography see R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 497-98).

1. "The 'Vasari' Diary," *Art News*, vol. 75, no. 5, May 1976, p. 25, reporting information supplied by J.E. Bowlt.



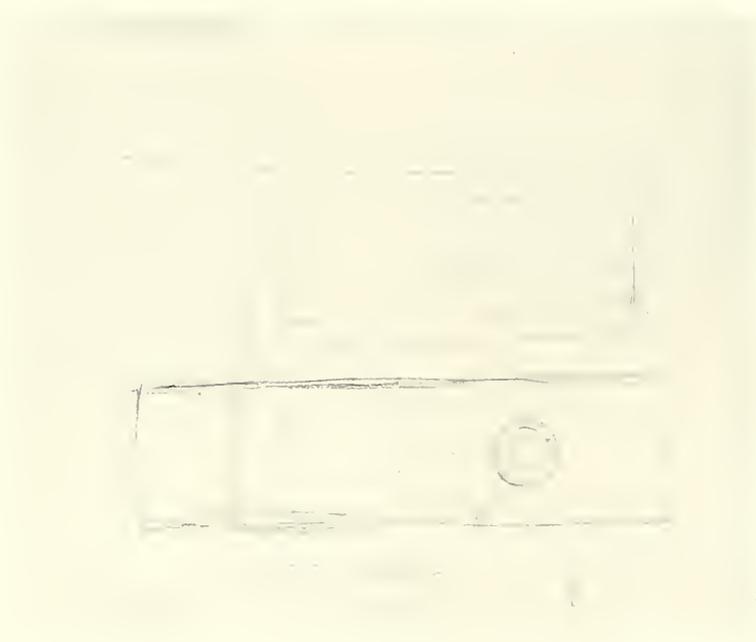
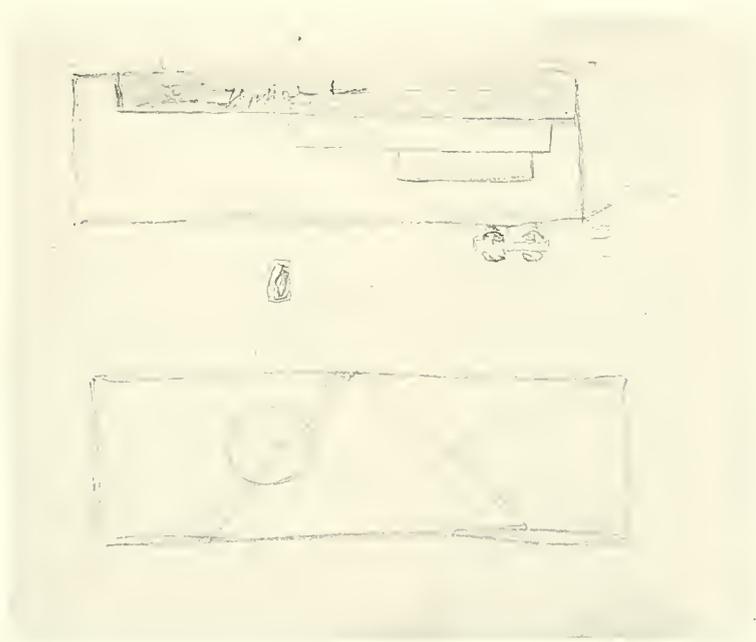
During the 1920s and early 1930s, the artists of the avant-garde produced an extraordinary range of "agitational" posters, designs for decorating agitprop trains and trams and other materials to be used in the battle against capitalism, against illiteracy and for the progress of the Revolution. The trains traveled across the country during the civil war, distributing Bolshevik propaganda, and although Malevich has not hitherto been identified with the decoration of such trains, he did participate in the propaganda effort starting in 1918. (See *Agitatsionno-massovoe iskusstvo . . .*, Moscow, Izdatelstvo iskusstvo, 1971, p. 96; L. Shadowa, *Suche und Experiment*, Dresden, 1978, pls. 174, 176.)

126 a

Sketch for Agitprop Train. ca. 1920
Pencil on paper, 7 x 8 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (17.9 x 21.5 cm.)
Acquired as a gift from I. Kudriashev
C525 recto

126 b

Sketch for Agitprop Train. ca. 1920
Pencil on paper, 7 x 8 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (17.9 x 21.5 cm.)
Acquired as a gift from I. Kudriashev
C525 verso



127

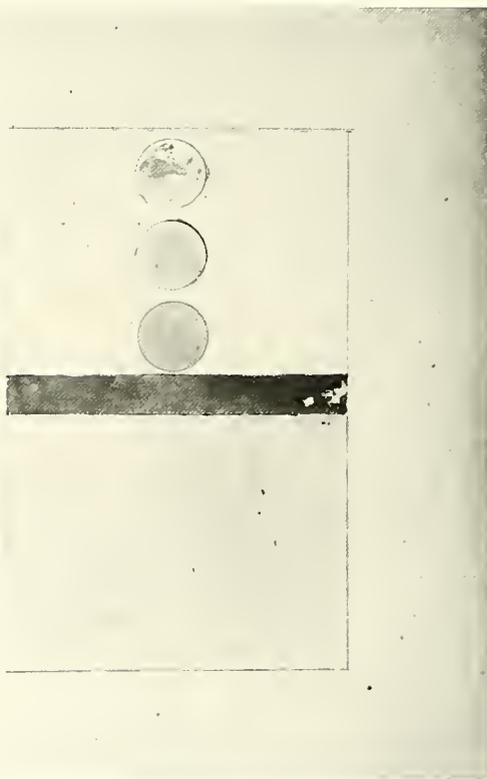
Revolutionary Propaganda
Lithograph, 7 x 17⁷/₈" (17.9 x 45.4 cm.)
Text: *Proletariat of the World Unite. Organization of
Production Victory Over a Capitalist Structure*
Acquired from the collector, Evgenii Platonovich Ivanov
139.80

128

Revolutionary Propaganda
Lithograph, 8³/₄ x 23¹¹/₁₆" (22.2 x 60.1 cm.)
Text: *Create the Week of the Red Gift Everywhere*
Acquired from the collector, E. P. Ivanov
276.78



The following eight drawings are stylistically related to the work of the Malevich school in Vitebsk and were probably produced there in about 1920–21. The penciled notations on the drawings (“1st room,” “2nd room,” “3rd room,” “ceiling,” etc.) identify the series as studies for a Suprematist interior. A 1919 manuscript by Malevich outlines principles for the decoration of “a wall, a surface, an entire room, or a total interior according to the system of Suprematism.”¹ It is clearly within this context that the present series was created. Malevich and his students Chashnik, Vera Ermolaeva, Nikolai Suetin and Lazar Chidekel also produced designs for the decoration of rostrums (tribunes) and other Revolutionary festival structures; the hands of the various participants in these projects are difficult to distinguish.²



129

Untitled

Gouache and pencil on paper, 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 11 $\frac{5}{16}$ "
(37.5 x 28.7 cm.)

Acquired from I. Kudriashev

C200

130

Untitled

Gouache and pencil on paper, 14 $\frac{15}{16}$ x 11 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
(37.8 x 28.9 cm.)

Acquired from I. Kudriashev

C201



1. Partially published by L. Shadowa, *Suche und Experiment*, Dresden, 1978, p. 317.

2. See, for example, *ibid.*, pls. 157, 162-63, 166-67, 173.

131

*Untitled*Gouache and pencil on paper, 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 22 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
(37.4 x 57.7 cm.)Inscription: *1st room*

Acquired from I. Kudriashev

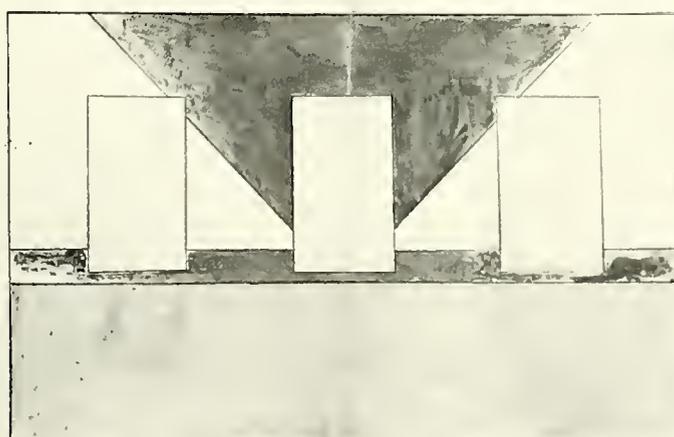
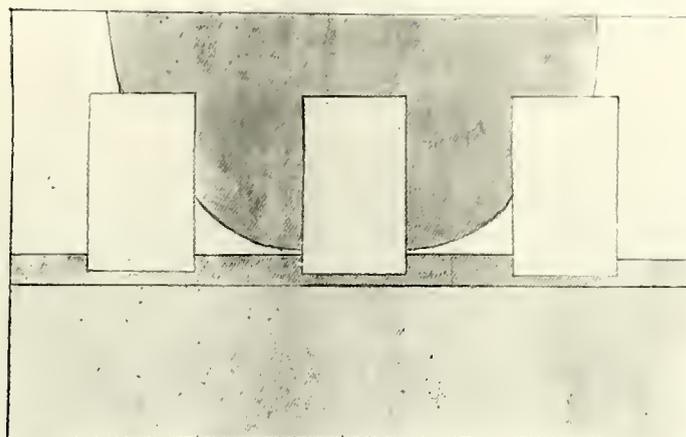
C202

132

*Untitled*Watercolor and pencil on paper, 14 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 22 $\frac{11}{16}$ "
(37.5 x 57.6 cm.)Inscription: *1st room*

Acquired from I. Kudriashev

C206



133

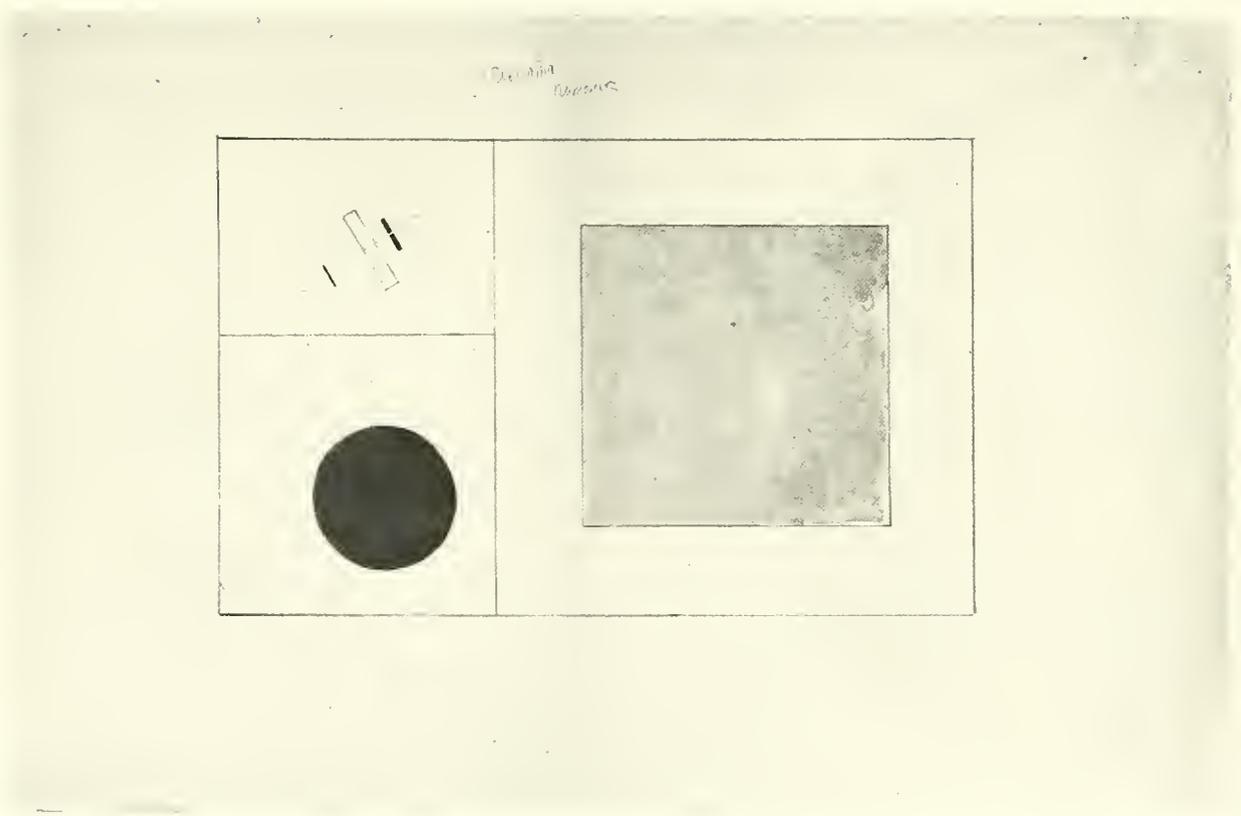
Untitled.

Watercolor and pencil on paper, $14\frac{13}{16} \times 22\frac{3}{4}$ "
(37.7 x 57.8 cm.)

Inscription: *1st room ceiling*

Acquired from I. Kudriashev

C207



134

Untitled

Gouache and pencil on paper, 14¹⁵/₁₆ x 22³/₄"
(37.9 x 53.6 cm.)

Inscription: *2nd room*

Acquired from I. Kudriashev

C203

135

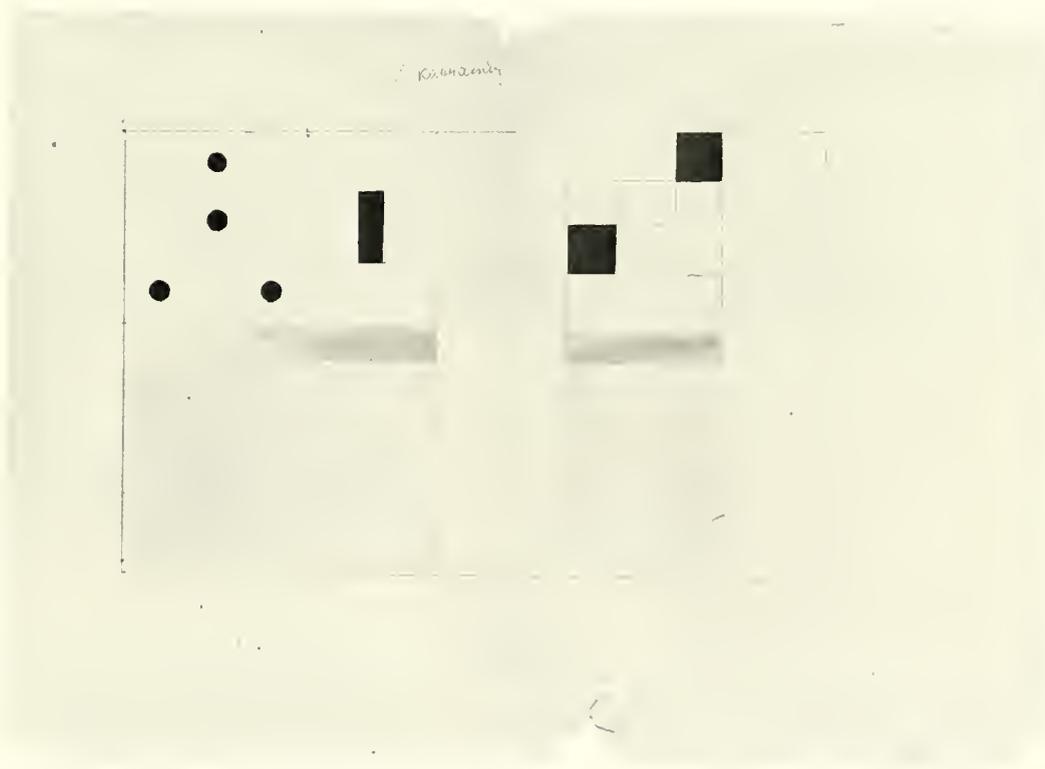
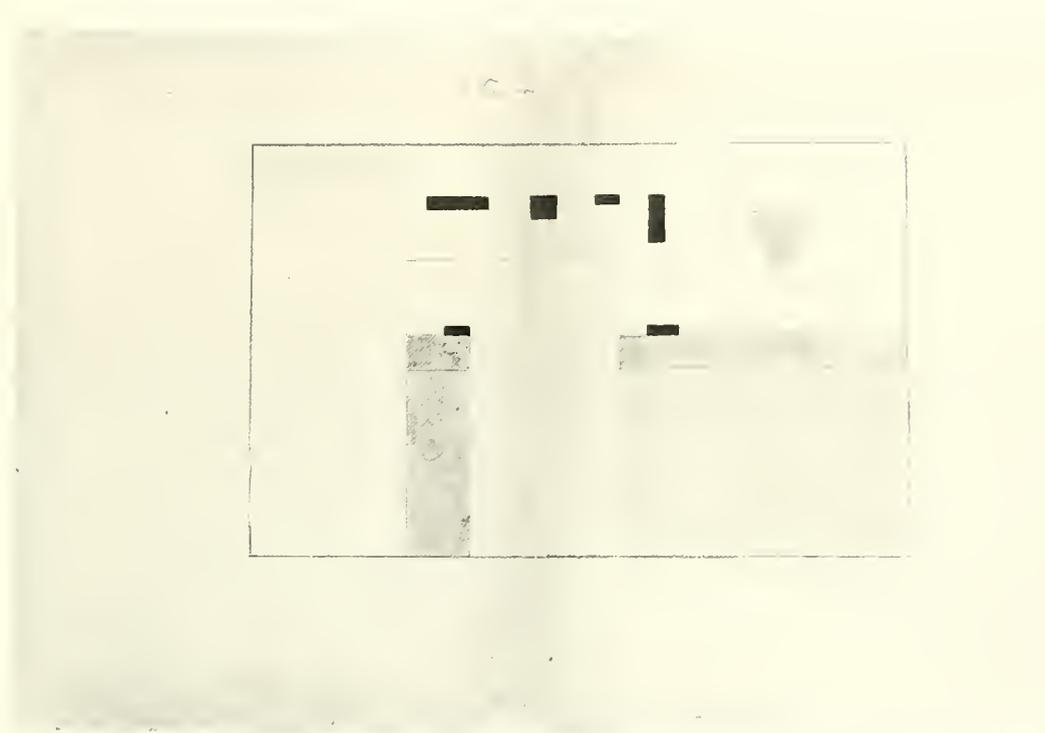
Untitled

Gouache and pencil on paper, 14⁷/₈ x 21¹/₈"
(37.8 x 53.6 cm.)

Inscription: *3rd room*

Acquired from I. Kudriashev

C204



136

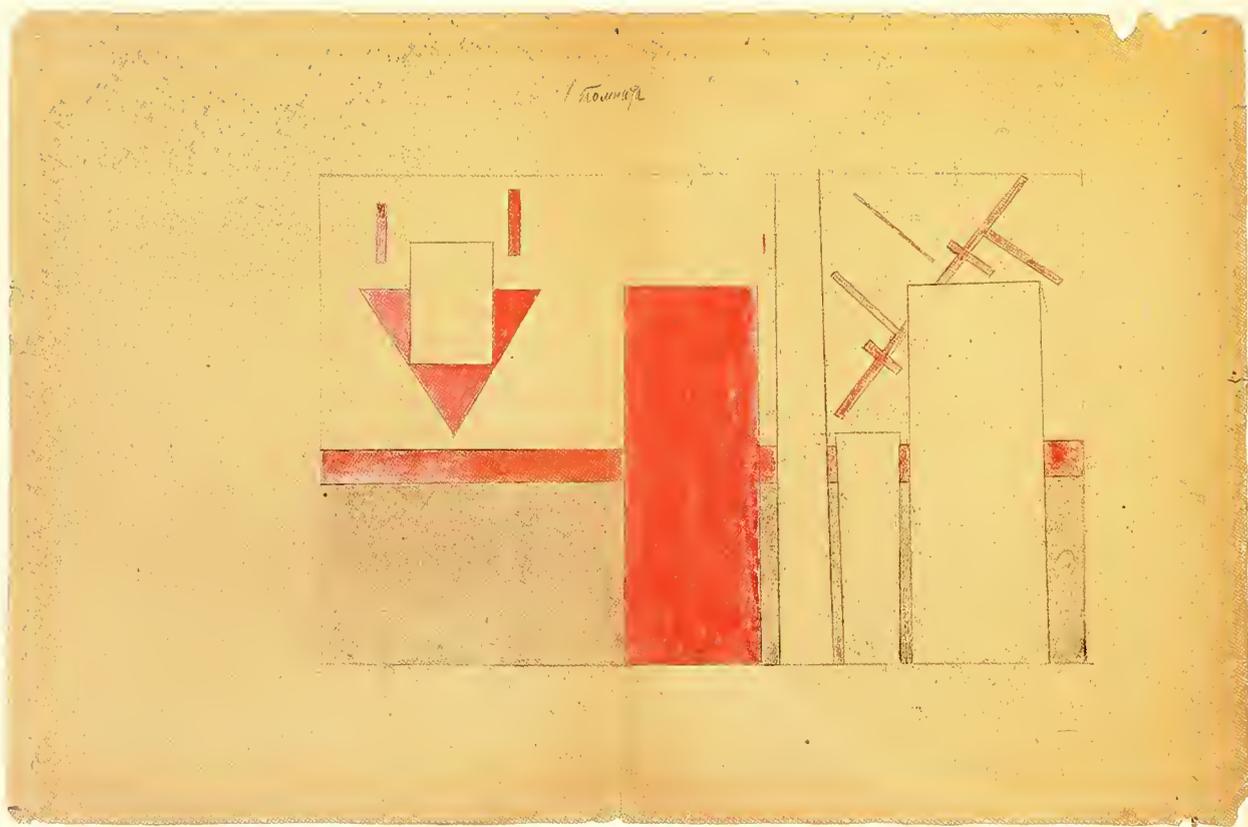
Untitled

Watercolor and pencil on paper, $14\frac{1}{16} \times 22\frac{1}{16}$ "
(37.9 x 57.6 cm.)

Inscription: *1st room*

Acquired from I. Kudriashev

C205



Addressing the Inkhuk in 1924, Lissitzky said:

In continuing to paint with brush on canvas, we have seen that we are now building and that the picture is burning up. We have seen that the surface of the canvas has ceased to be a picture. It has become a construction and, like a house, you have to walk around it, to look at it from above, to study it from beneath. The picture's one perpendicular axis (*vis-à-vis* the horizon) turns out to have been destroyed. We have made the canvas rotate. And as we rotated it, we saw that we were putting ourselves in space. Space, until now, has been projected onto a surface by a conditional system of planes. We began to move on the surface of the plane towards an unconditional distance. . . .¹

When Lissitzky moved to Vitebsk in the summer of 1919 at the invitation of Chagall, he clearly did so in order to work more closely with Malevich (whom he had met in 1918) and to absorb and develop what he perceived to be the possibilities of Suprematism. He was invited to teach in the Studio of Graphic Arts, Printing and Architecture at the Popular High School of Art, and his program, as he defined it, involved teaching the students "the basic methods and systems of architecture and . . . the art of giving graphic and plastic expression to their constructional projects (working on models)."² It is clear that his concept of "Proun" was developed within this context, and that architecture played a crucial role in Lissitzky's development of the idea. He wrote:

The painter's canvas was too limited for me. The connoisseur's range of color harmonies was too restricted; and I created the Proun as an intermediary station on the road between painting and architecture. I have treated canvas and wood panel as a building site which placed the fewest restrictions on my constructional ideas.³

In works such as *Proun 6^B* (cat. no. 148), and *Proun 1* (cat. no. 141), Lissitzky gave expression to his desire to destroy the limitations imposed by the format of the painter's canvas: the work is to be seen from all four sides, to be rotated. In *Proun 1^E*, *The Town* (cat. no. 142), the viewer is to be projected into space and made to look down "at it from above."

The architectural thinking articulated in the Prouns was part of a more general movement around 1920. Many artists (only some of whom were architects) became involved with the ideological effort to create new "architectural" forms that

would embody the aspirations of the Revolution. For example, Tatlin's "Monument to the Third International," Anton Lavinsky's "City for the Future," Malevich's studies in volumetric Suprematism and Lissitzky's own "Wolkenbügel," all in different ways shared the utopian characteristics of this phase of Constructivism: they were all in some sense seeking cosmic paradigms for the new age.

Klucis's *Dynamic City* (cat. no. 150) and his drawings and prints of these years (cat. nos. 151–57) belong to the same tendency. They are essentially visionary and imaginative conceptions of technological developments rather than practical, structurally feasible designs. Like Lissitzky, Klucis clearly intended his ideas to have an impact on the society in which he lived: Valentina Kulagina wrote in her diary in 1922, "Gustav . . . intends to rebuild the world and the universe. . . ."⁴ But the results were more symbolic and aesthetic than truly functional. In his strikingly original constructions of this period (p. 195, fig. a, and p. 196, fig. a) Klucis created coherent spatial formulations which greatly impressed his contemporaries,⁵ and which — seen in conjunction with their pictorial counterparts (p. 195, fig. b) — have extraordinary resonance. Klucis's photomontage *Dynamic City* (p. 189, fig. a), with "workers of a future society" placed at strategic places on its perimeters, is on one level a purely utopian fantasy, but a fantasy based on the notion that architecture is the fundamental language of the future. As Lissitzky had written: "It is in architecture that we move today. It is the central issue of modern times."⁶

The dating and chronology of Klucis's work of 1919–1922 and the contemporary work of Lissitzky pose certain problems. The artists certainly knew one another by 1918, and both were, by then, admirers of Malevich. From 1919 to 1921, when Lissitzky was in Vitebsk, Klucis (who first studied at the Moscow Svomas, then became a member of the Inkhuk and of the Vkhutemas) remained in close touch with Malevich, and even exhibited with the Unovis group in Vitebsk in 1920. As he and Lissitzky developed their independent Suprematist idioms during these years, it is clear that similarities of approach existed, and that each learned important things from the other. Until further evidence emerges to elucidate the nature of these mutual influences, however, only tentative efforts can be made to establish the chronology of their separate careers during these years.⁷

1. El Lissitzky, lecture delivered at the Inkhuk, October 24, 1924, trans. J. E. Bowlit, in Cologne, Galerie Gmurzynska, *Lissitzky*, 1976, p. 66.

2. *Journal of the Governmental Soviet of Peasant, Red Army Worker and Labourer Deputies*, no. 169, July 17, 1919, p. 3, quoted by V. Rakitin, "El Lissitzky," *Architectural Design*, Feb. 1970, p. 82.

3. S. Lissitzky-Küppers, *El Lissitzky*, London, 1980, p. 325.

4. Quoted by V. Rakitin, "Gustav Klucis: Between the Non-Objective World and World Revolution," in LACMA, p. 61.

5. *Ibid.*

6. Lecture at the Inkhuk, October 24, 1924, trans. in Bowlit, *Lissitzky*, p. 71.

7. For additional information on Klucis see V. Kalmykov and A. Sarabianov *Sto pamiatnykh dat*, Moscow, 1974, pp. 17–20; N. Lapidusova, "Gustav Klucis," *Umenia remesla* (Prague), no. 3, 1977, pp. 24–28; H. Gassner and E. Gillen, eds., *Zwischen Revolutionskunst und Sozialistischen Realismus: Dokumente und Kommentare Kunstdebatten in der Sowjetunion von 1917 bis 1934*, Düsseldorf, 1979.

EL LISSITZKY
(LAZAR MARKOVICH LISITSKY)

137

Proun 1 C. 1919

Oil and collage on wood, 26¾ x 26¾" (67.5 x 67.5 cm.)

Titled, signed and dated on reverse: *Proun 1C El Lissitzky 1919*. Painted on reverse, a red square within a circle; inscribed below the square: *UNOVIS*

Collection Antonina Gmurzynska, Cologne, formerly Costakis collection

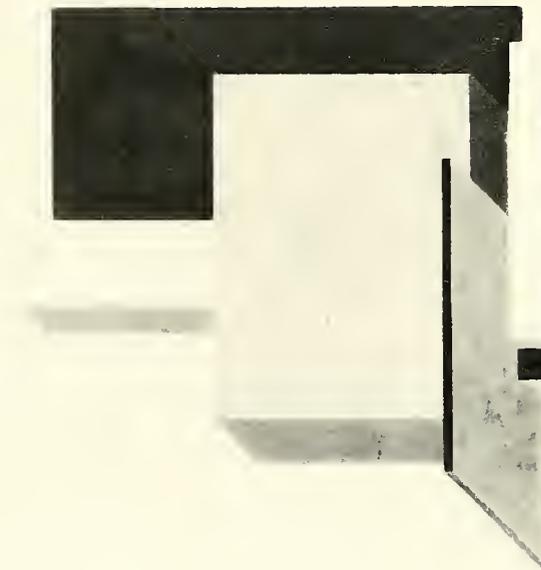
Acquired from the collection of Sophie Lissitzky-Küppers, Novosibirsk

(New York only)

very cracked

black over red

dark blue



*all
grey
white*

*blends
has notched
beveled
surface*

Untitled. 1919–1920

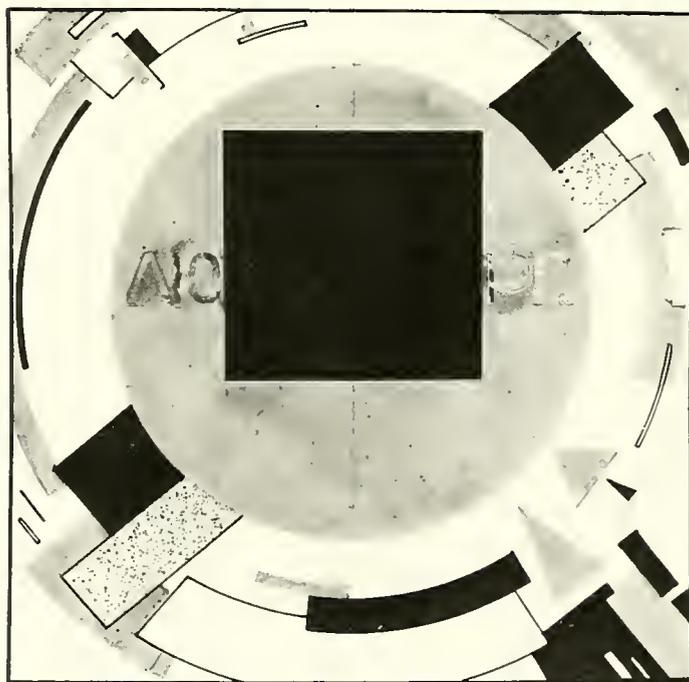
Gouache, pencil and ink on paper. Page: $3\frac{7}{8} \times 3\frac{7}{8}$ "
(10 x 10 cm.); image: $3\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ " (9.7 x 9.7 cm.)

Written across center of black square, barely visible:
Rosa Luxemburg

Acquired from the collection of S. Lissitzky-Küppers,
Novosibirsk

440.80

A larger version of this composition, lacking the Rosa Luxemburg inscription, is in the collection of the Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (gouache, 52 x 50 cm., no. 2.0271.L24). As part of the Plan for Monumental Propaganda initiated by Lenin in May 1918, artists were encouraged to create monuments of all kinds to major revolutionary figures. In this connection a 1919 issue of *Art of the Commune (Iskusstvo kommuny)* carried the announcement of a competition for a monument to Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg who were assassinated that January. The present gouache may have been destined for the cover of a memorial brochure dedicated to Luxemburg, either arising out of the competition or some other context. Later Lissitzky apparently abandoned the project and painted out her name.



139

Cover Design for *Proun* Portfolio. 1921

Gouache, watercolor and pencil on paper. Page: 19 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 14" (48.5 x 35.7 cm.); image: 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (16 x 16.5 cm.)
Signed I.L. in gray within composition: *El*

Acquired from the collection of S. Lissitzky-Küppers, Novosibirsk

I46.78



140

Design for cover of the publication *Prouns: A Lecture Read at the General Meeting of Inkhuk, September 23, 1921*

Black and red gouache, ink and pencil on gray folded paper. Page: 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 9 $\frac{7}{16}$ " (37.7 x 24 cm.); diameter of image: 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (11.5 cm.)

Inscribed in gray ink around edge of circle: *May the overthrow of the Old World be imprinted on the palms of your hands*

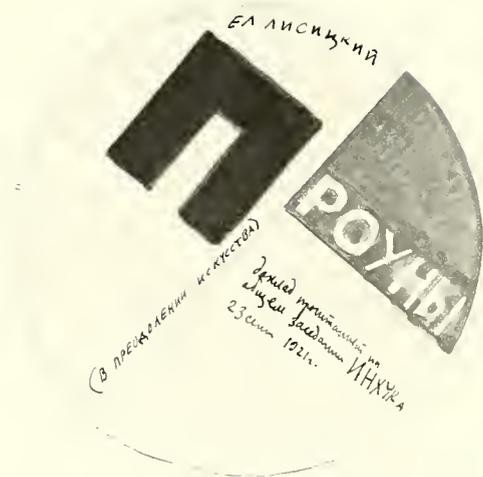
Signed in black ink: *El Lissitzky*

In parentheses along diameter line in black ink: *In overcoming art*

Below title in black ink: *Lecture read at the general meeting of Inkhuk Sept. 23 1921*

Acquired from the collection of S. Lissitzky-Küppers, Novosibirsk

C518



Lissitzky's lecture on the Proun ("Proekt utverzhdeniia novogo," "Project for the Affirmation of the New") was delivered at the Inkhuk on September 23, 1921. The original Russian text has apparently not survived, though the existence of this cover design confirms the fact that publication was planned. Lissitzky did publish essays based on the lecture in *Vesch/Gegenstand/Objet* and *De Stijl* in 1922. (For further information see R., S., C., *Costakis*, p. 244.)

141

Proun 1. 1919–1921

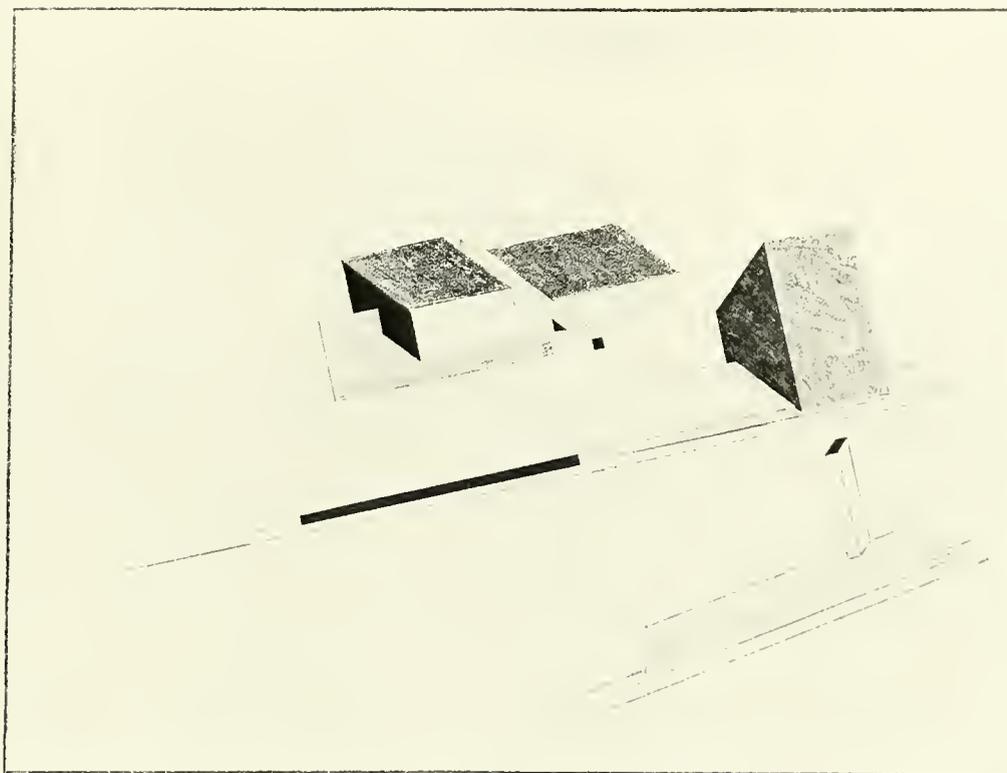
Lithograph on paper mounted on paper. Page: 13½ x 17⅞" (34.4 x 45.5 cm.); image: 10 x 13½" (25.5 x 34.4 cm.)

Inscribed in pencil, one word on each of three sides:

Along the path of a circle; l.l.: P 1

Acquired from N. Babicheva

148.78



142

Proun 1E, The Town. 1920-21

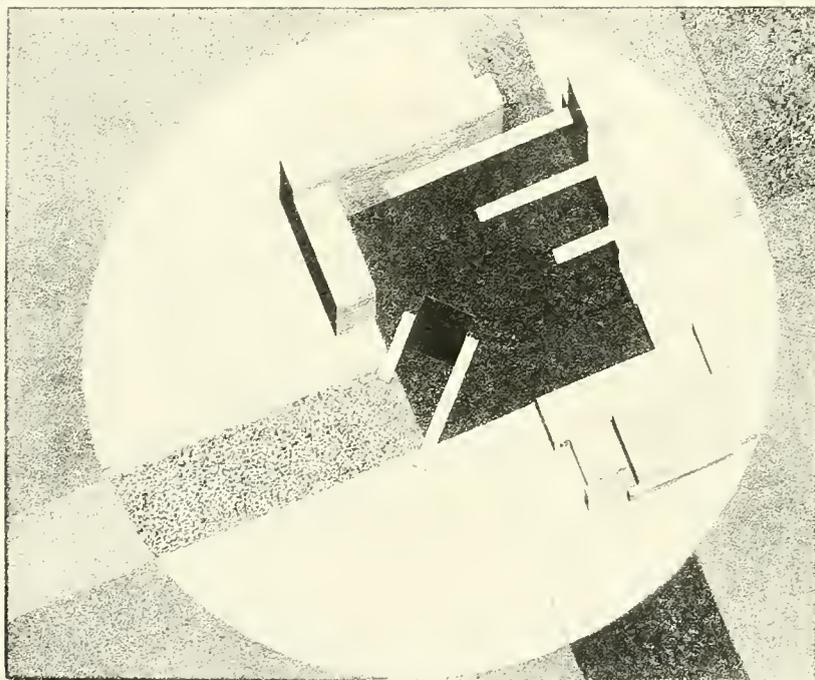
Lithograph on paper mounted on paper. Page: $13\frac{9}{16}$ x $18\frac{1}{4}$ " (34.4 x 46.1 cm.); image: $8\frac{7}{8}$ x $10\frac{3}{16}$ " (22.5 x 27.4 cm.)

On mount l.l.: *P 1E*; l.r.: *Plan of a city square*

Included in the first Proun portfolio, Moscow, 1921

Acquired from N. Babicheva

151.78



143

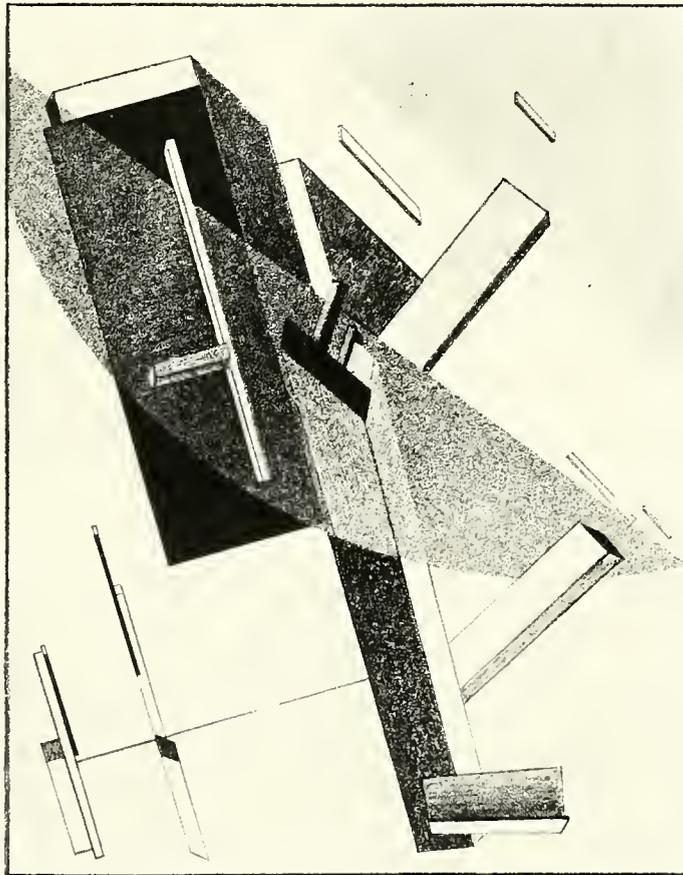
Proun 2B. 1919–1921

Lithograph on paper mounted on paper. Page: $13\frac{3}{16} \times 17\frac{7}{8}$ " (34.5 x 45.5 cm.); image: $10\frac{1}{2} \times 8\frac{3}{16}$ " (26.7 x 20.9 cm.)

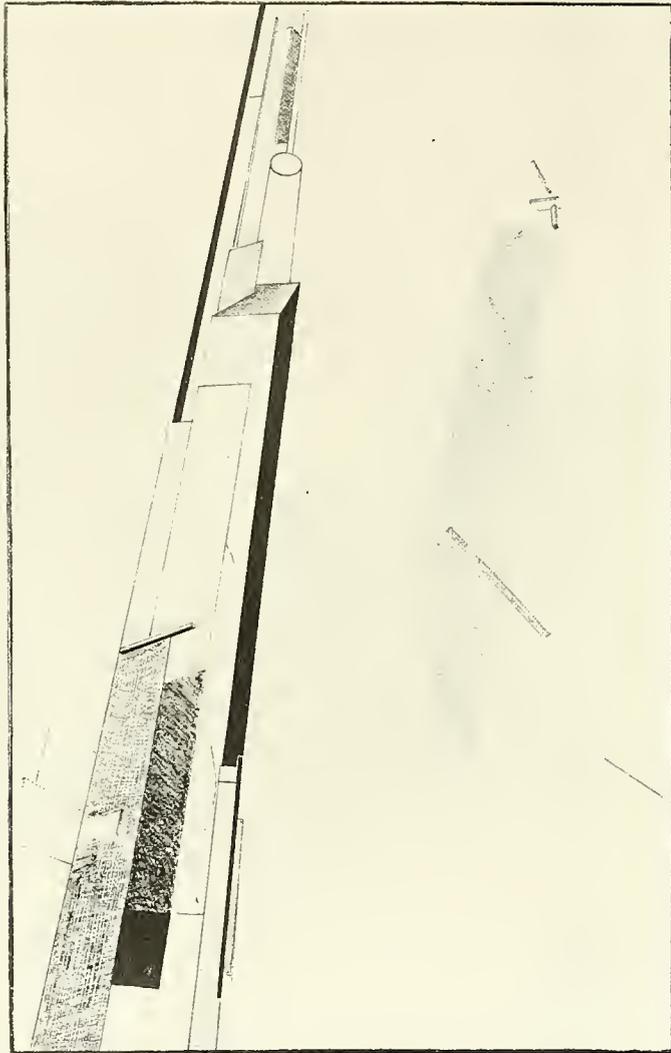
Inscribed in pencil on mount l.l.: *P 2B*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

147.78



17 17



112^p

144

Proun 2D. 1919-1921

Lithograph on paper mounted on paper.

Page: $18\frac{3}{16} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ " (46.2 x 34.4 cm.); image: $14\frac{1}{16} \times 8\frac{3}{4}$ " (35.8 x 22.4 cm.)Inscribed in pencil on mount: *P 2D*

Included in the first Proun portfolio, Moscow, 1921

Acquired from N. Babicheva

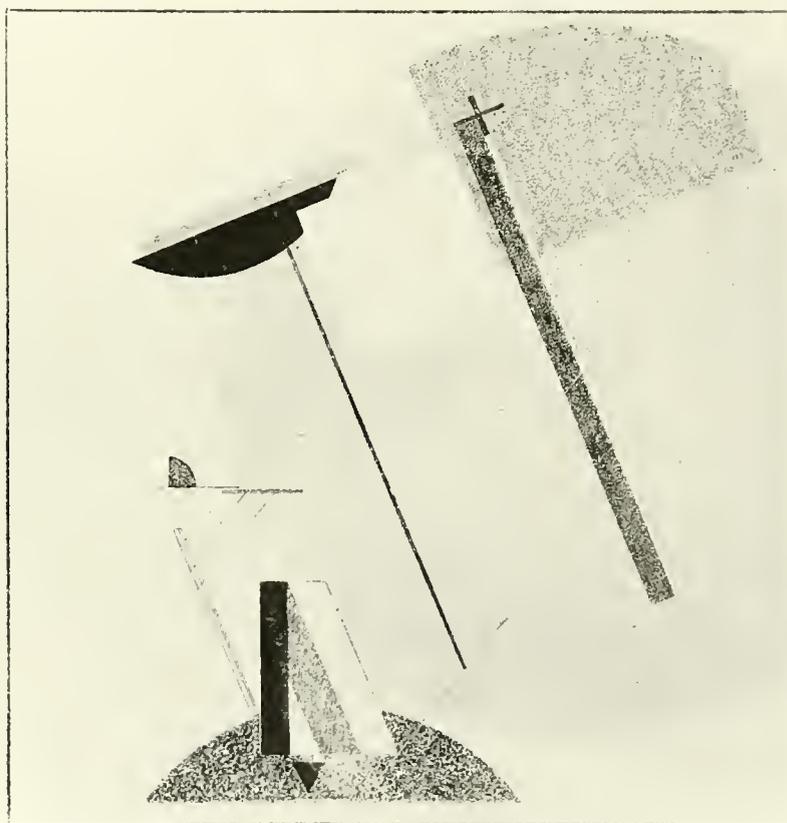
149.78

145

Proun 3A. 1919-1921Lithograph on paper. Page: $11\frac{3}{16} \times 10\frac{5}{16}$ " (28.5 x 27.8 cm.); image: $10\frac{7}{8} \times 10\frac{5}{16}$ " (27.6 x 26.2 cm.)Inscribed l.l. in pencil below image: *P 3A*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

142.78



146

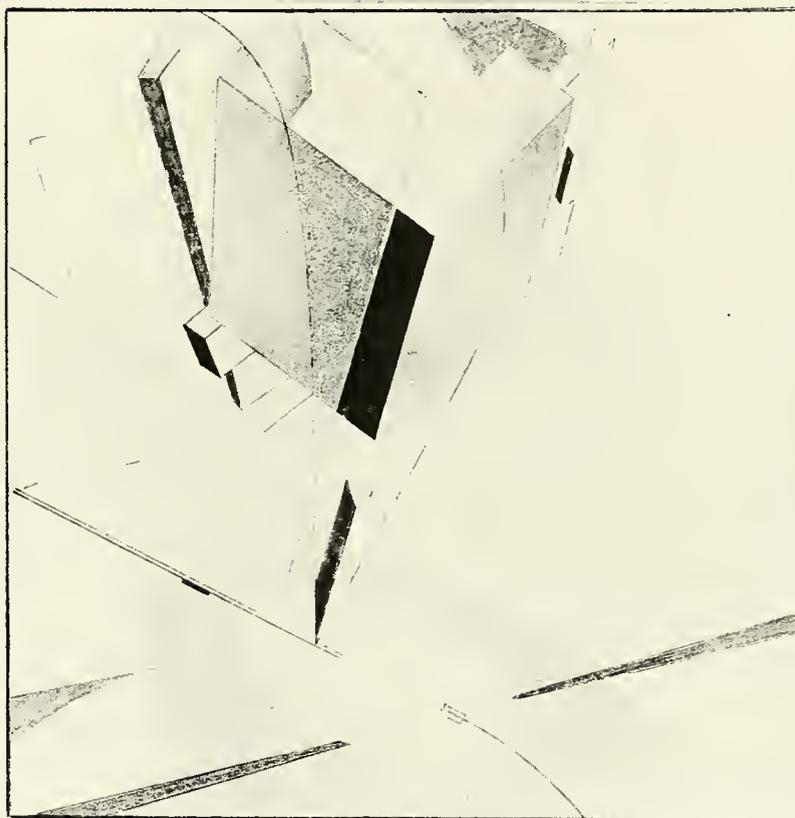
Proun 5A. 1919-1921

Lithograph on paper mounted on paper. Page: $18\frac{3}{16} \times 13\frac{3}{16}$ " (46.2 x 34.4 cm.); image: $10\frac{13}{16} \times 10\frac{1}{4}$ " (27.5 x 26.1 cm.)

Inscribed l.l. in pencil on mount: *P 5A*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

145.78



P 5A

147

Sketch for *Proun 6B*. ca. 1919–1921

Gouache and pencil on paper. Page: 13 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 17 $\frac{1}{16}$ "
(34.6 x 44.7 cm.); diameter of image: 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (24.6 cm.)

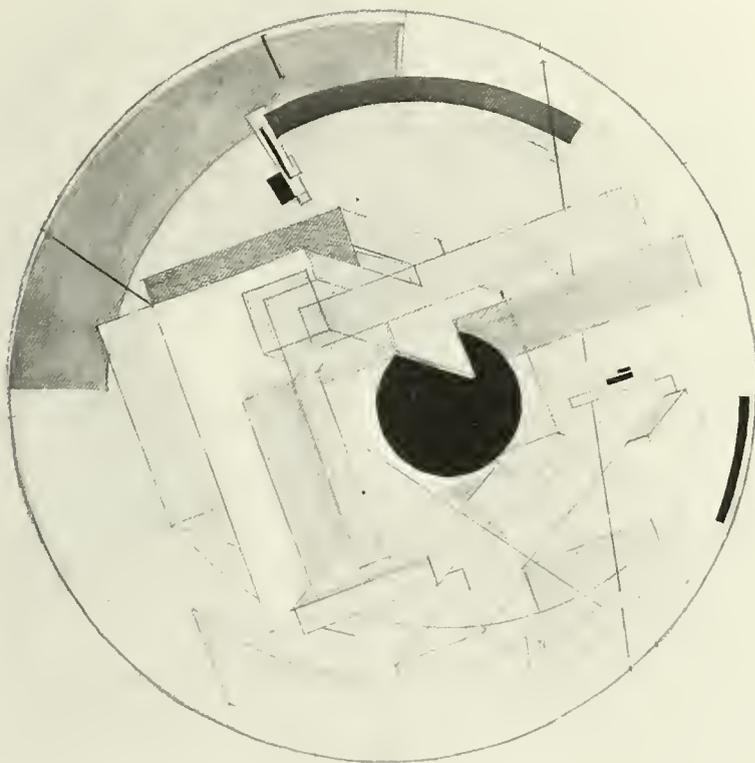
Signed: *el Lissitzky*

Penciled title in three places: *P 6B* (indicating that the work should be viewed from all directions)

Acquired from the collection of S. Lissitzky-Küppers, Novosibirsk

438.80

The circular painting that closely follows this study was exhibited at the International Art Exhibition in Dresden in 1926, and then entered the collection of Ida Bienert. It is presumed lost (repr. S. Lissitzky-Küppers, *El Lissitzky*, London, 1980, p. 26). The lithograph was included in the first Proun portfolio of 1921.



148

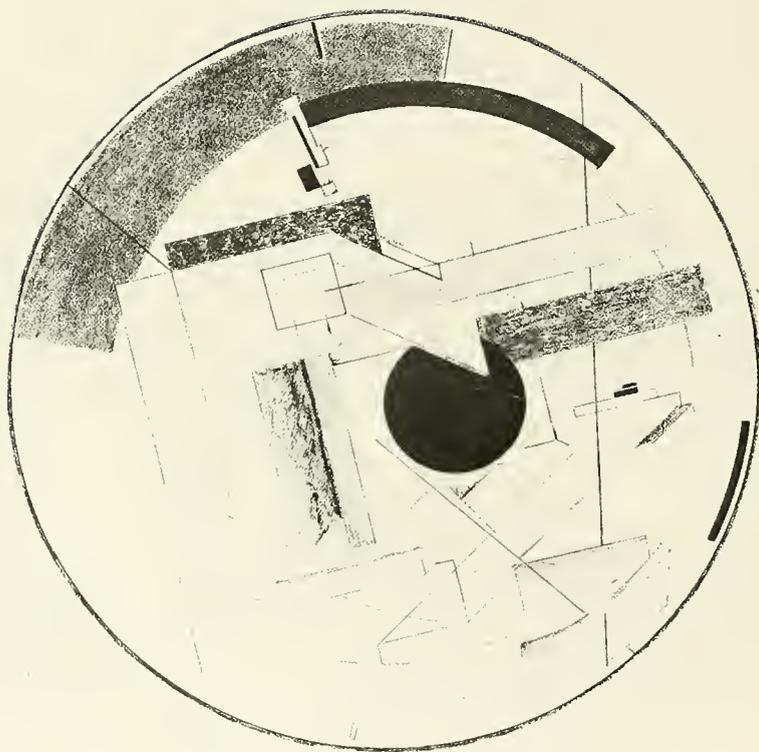
Proun 6B. ca. 1919-1921

Circular lithograph on paper mounted on paper:
diameter of image: 9 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (25.2 cm.)

Inscribed in pencil on mount: l.l.: *P 6B*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

150.78



Proun 100, ca. 1919–1921

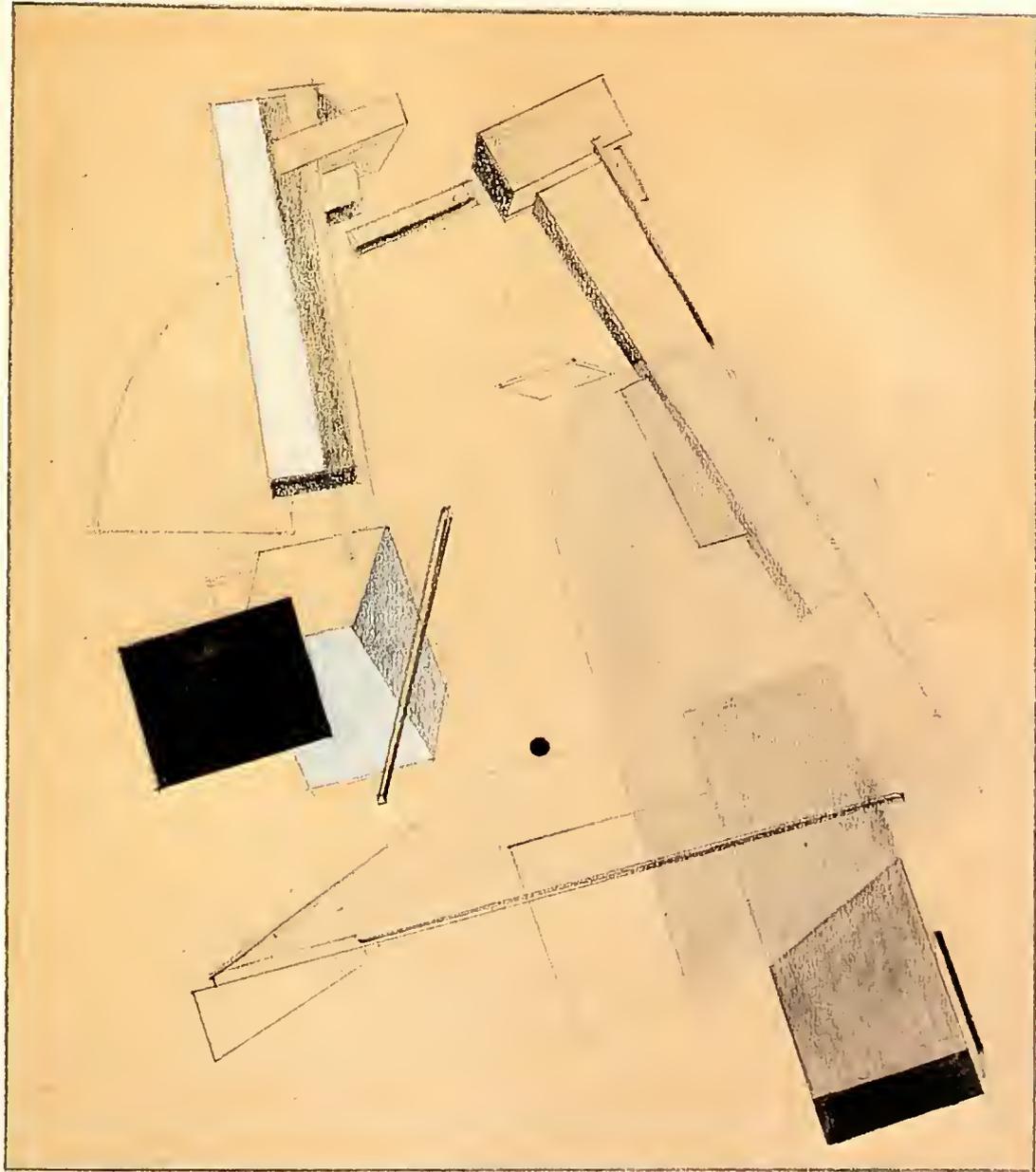
Gouache and pencil on buff paper. Page: $10\frac{1}{16} \times 9\frac{1}{16}$ "
(27.9 x 23.1 cm.); image: $8\frac{5}{16} \times 7\frac{1}{4}$ " (21.1 x 18.5 cm.)

Inscribed in pencil u.l.: No 21; l.l.: *Proun 100*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

439.80

Though this design was undoubtedly intended for realization in lithographic and/or painted form, Lissitzky never carried it out. The gouache remains a unique example of the image.



whole
black
had send but within it,
some area
darker



150

Dynamic City. 1919–1921

Oil with sand and concrete on wood, $34\frac{1}{4} \times 25\frac{3}{8}$ "
(87 x 64,5 cm.)

Signed on reverse: *G. Klucis*

Acquired from the artist's wife, Valentina Ivanova
Kulagina

94.78

According to Rakitin, this work was shown at the
Moscow Unovis exhibition of 1921.

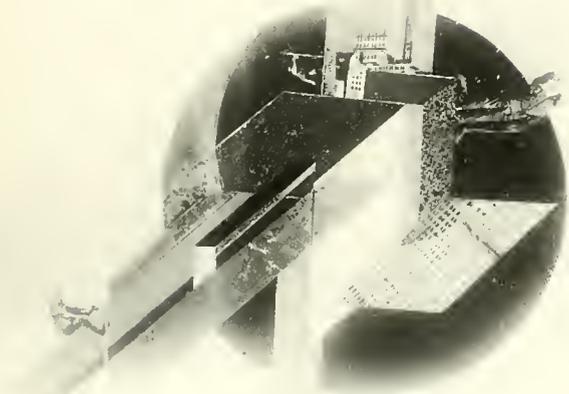


fig. a

Documentary photograph (printed from Klucis's own negative owned by Costakis) of photomontage. Present whereabouts unknown. Ca. 1919–1920.

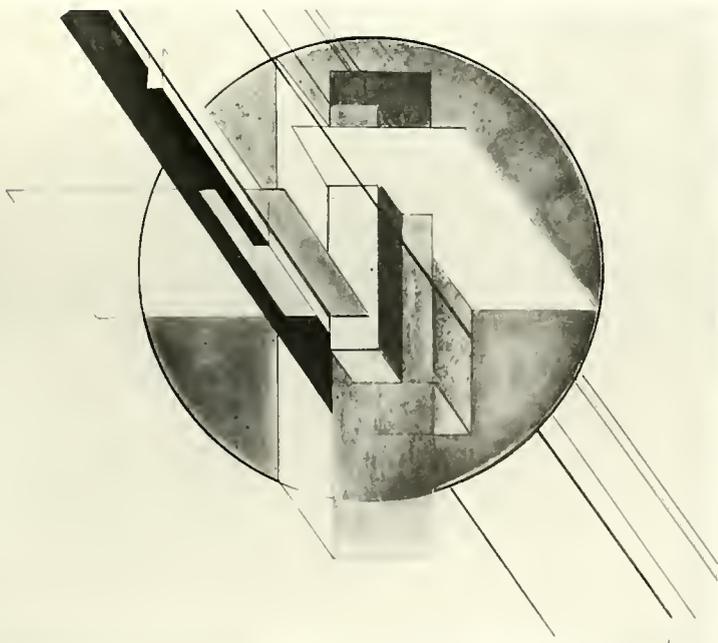


fig. b

Documentary photograph (printed from Klucis's own negative owned by Costakis) of an ink, pencil and gouache (?) drawing, signed l.r.: *G. Klucis*. This hitherto unpublished drawing (collection Riga Museum) appears in an installation photograph of Klucis's one-man exhibition held in Riga in 1970. Though its dimensions are not known, its juxtaposition in the installation with works of known size implies dimensions of ca. $18\frac{1}{16} \times 20\frac{7}{8}$ " (47.5 x 53 cm.). Its chronological relationship to the *Dynamic City* has not been established, though it probably dates from approximately the same time.

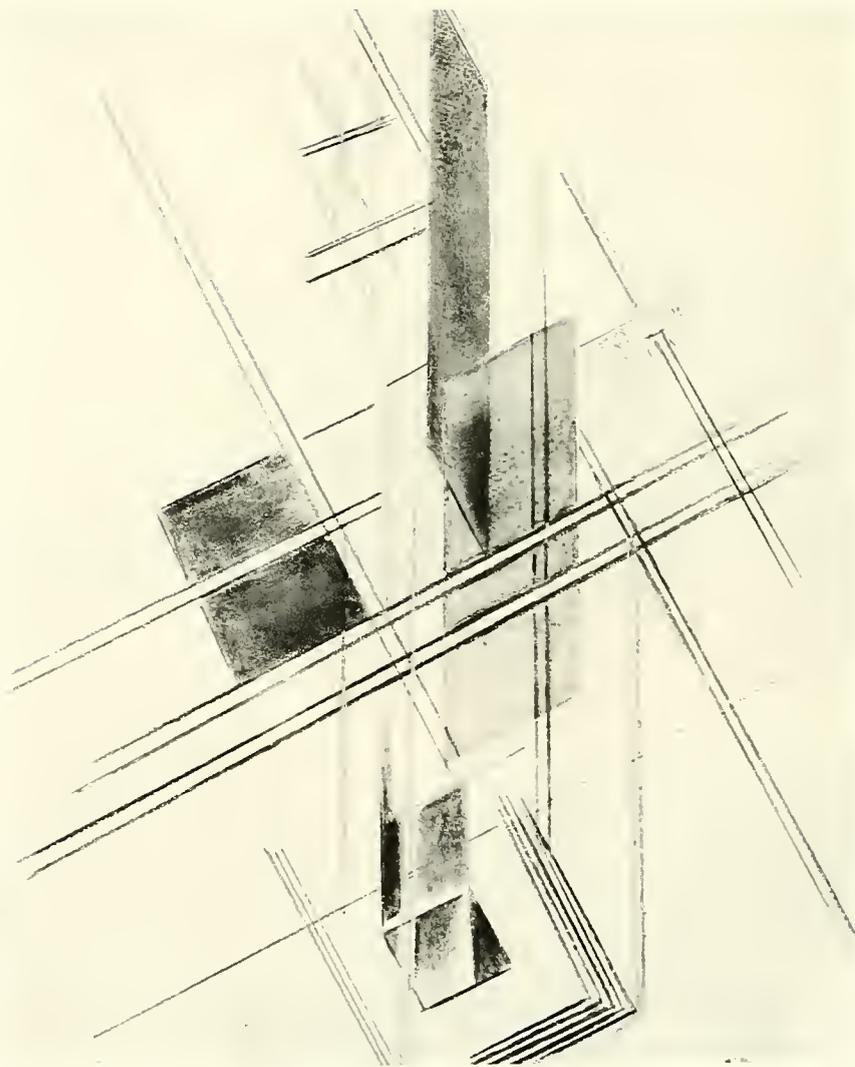
151

Construction. ca. 1920-21

Pencil and gouache on paper, 11 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 9 $\frac{5}{16}$ " (28.5 x 23.7
cm.) (sight)

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

95.78



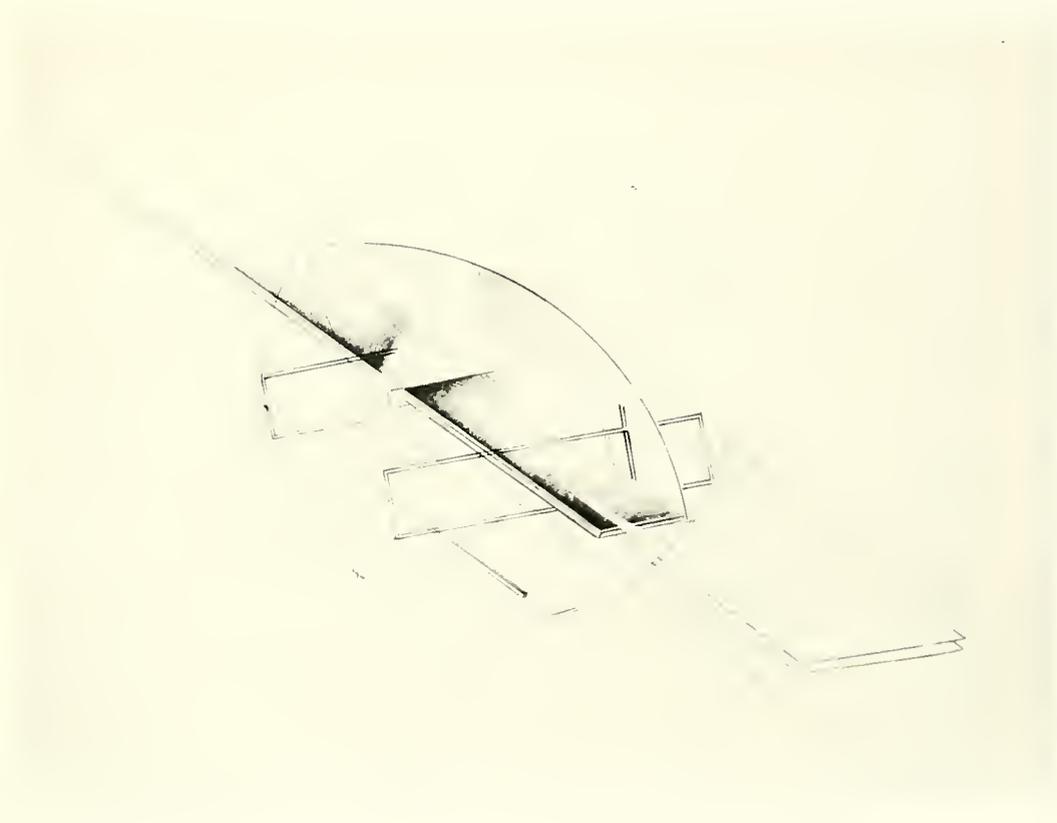
152

Construction. 1920-21?

Colored ink and pencil on paper, 11 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
(28.5 x 37.9 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

99.78



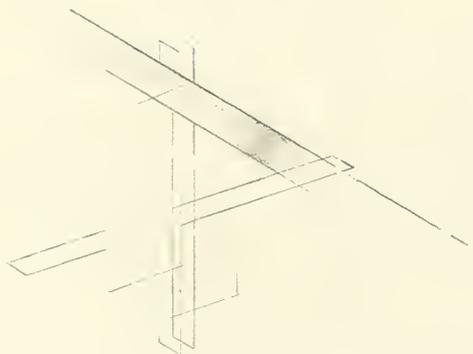
153

Architectural Drawing. ca. 1921?

Pencil and red crayon on paper, $9\frac{1}{4} \times 10\frac{1}{16}$ " (23.5 x 26.9 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

C480



154

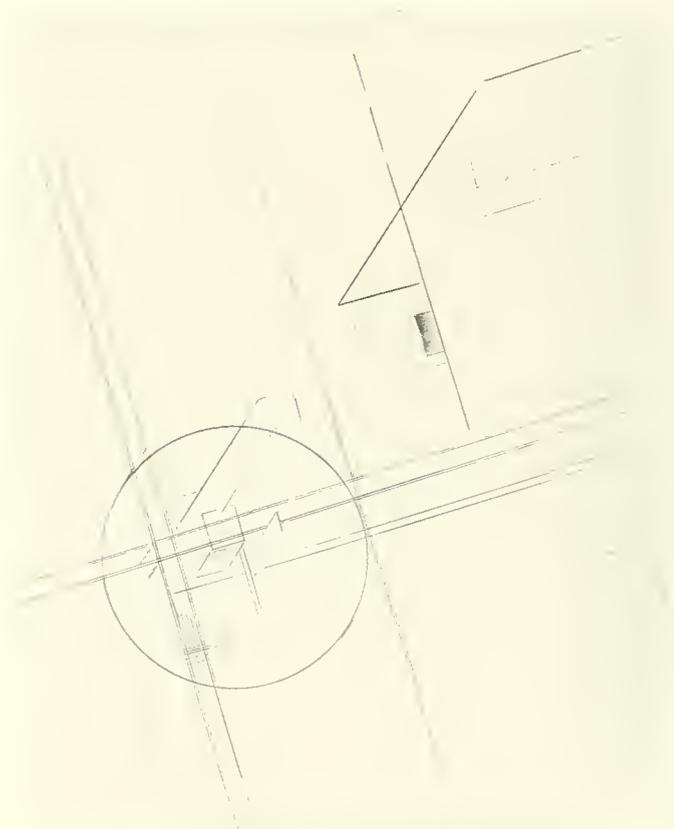
Architectural Construction. ca. 1921-22?

Pencil on paper, $17 \times 13\frac{1}{8}$ " (43.2 x 33.3 cm.)

Signed l.r.: Klucis

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

102.78



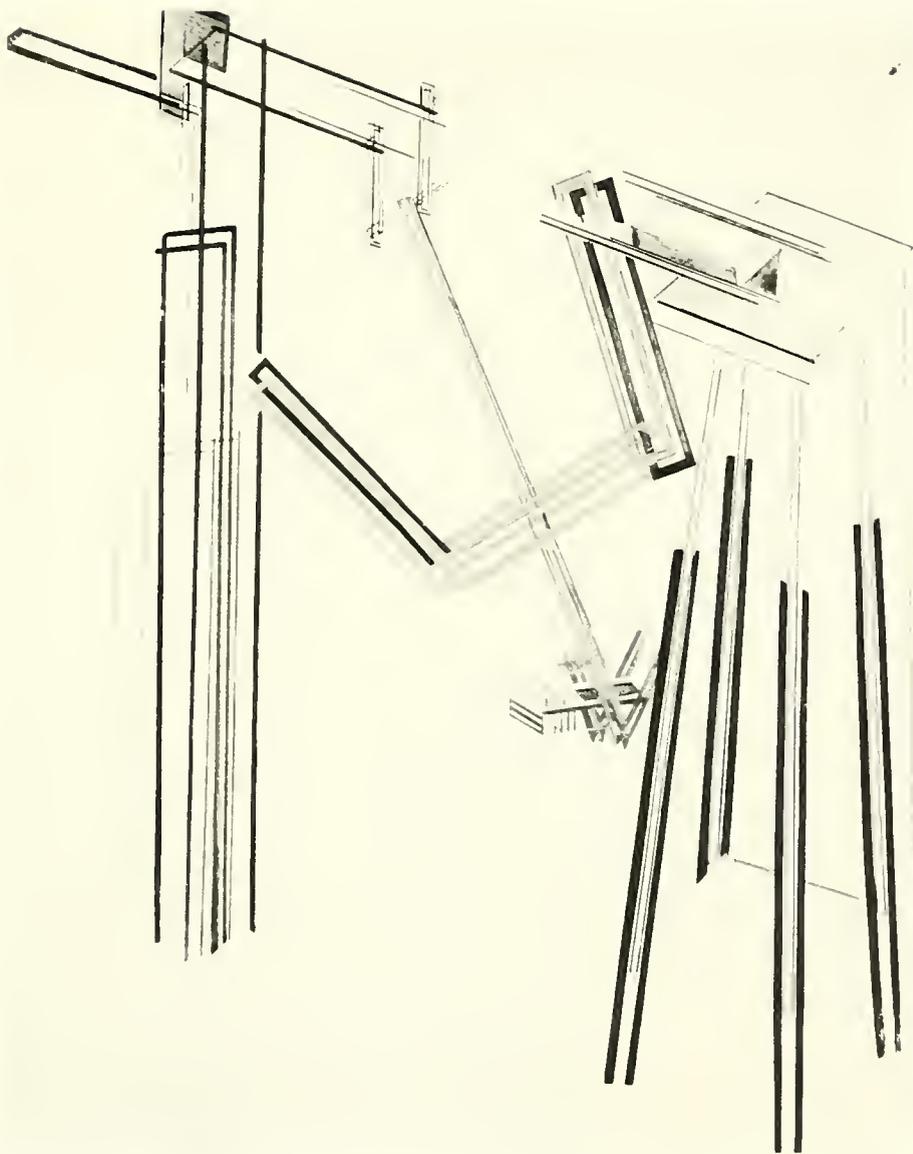
155

Construction. ca. 1921-22

Ink, gouache, pencil and watercolor on paper, 10½ x 8¾" (26.8 x 21.3 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

98.78



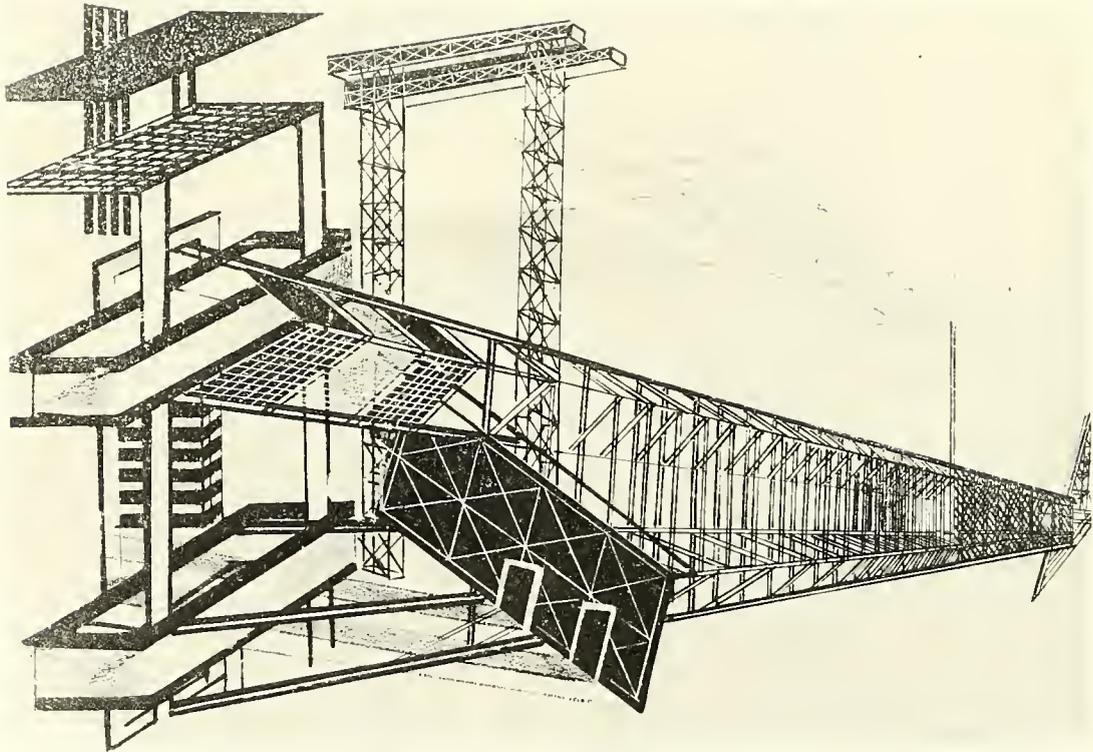
156

Construction. 1922-23

Lithograph on paper, $6\frac{1}{16} \times 8\frac{11}{16}$ " (15.5 x 22.1 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

121.78



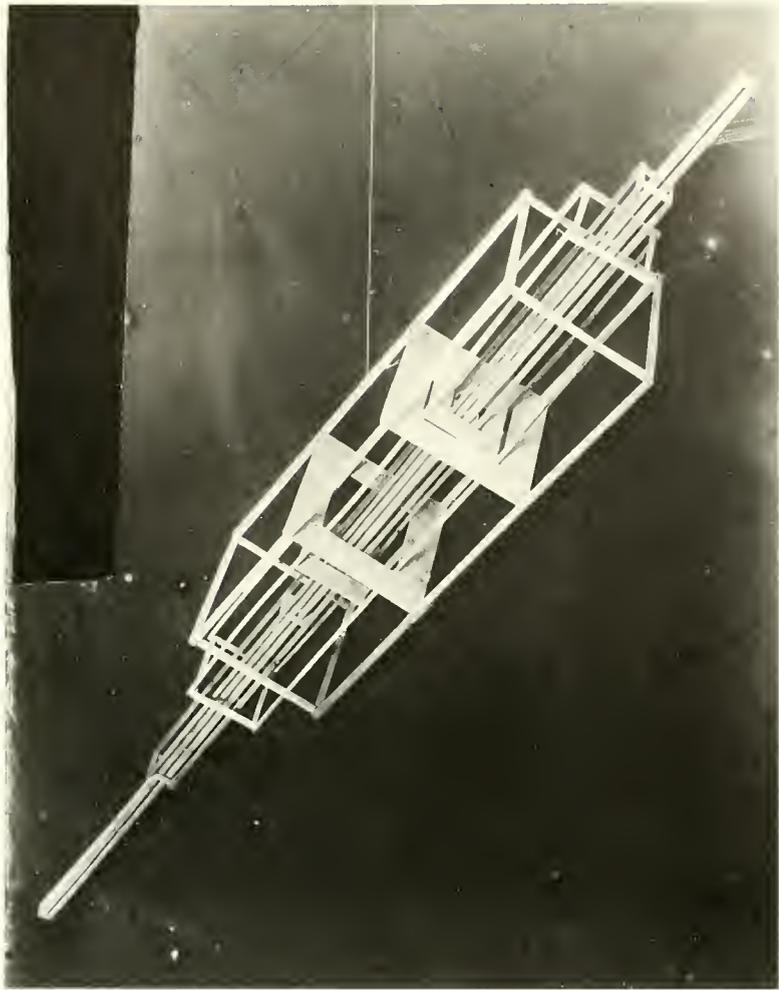


fig. a
Gustav Klucis
Construction. 1920-22
Dimensions and whereabouts unknown
Photograph Costakis collection, printed from Klucis's
negative

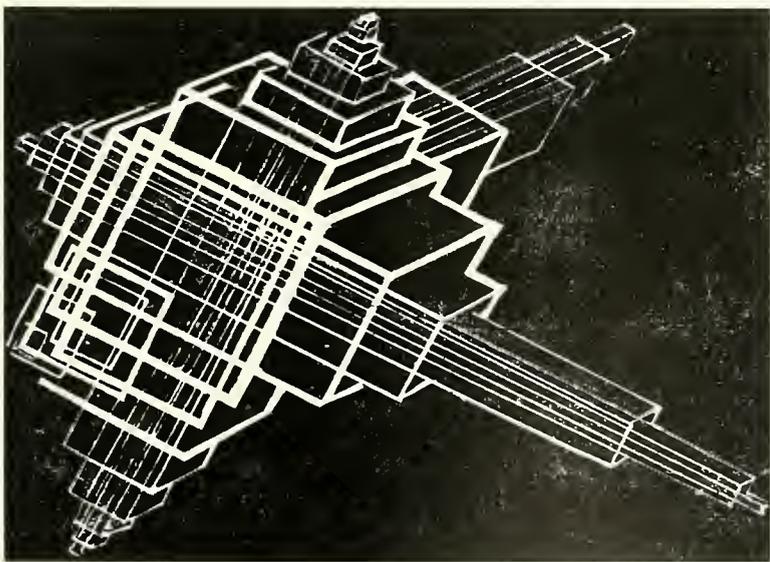


fig. b
Gustav Klucis
Construction. 1920-22
Lithograph, $7\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{15}{16}$ " (19.7 x 15 cm.)
Acquired from V. I. Kulagina
C476

157

Construction Project. ca. 1922–23
Linocut on paper, 8 ⁷/₁₆ x 5 ³/₈" (21.5 x 14.2 cm.)
Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina
122.78

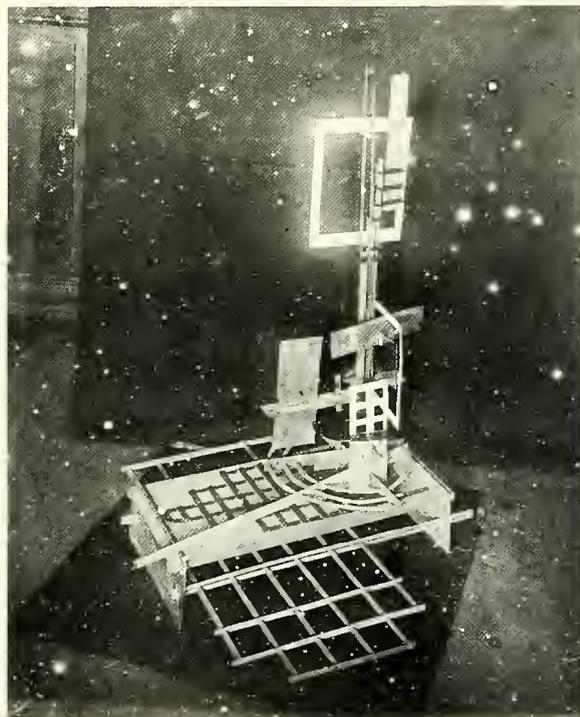
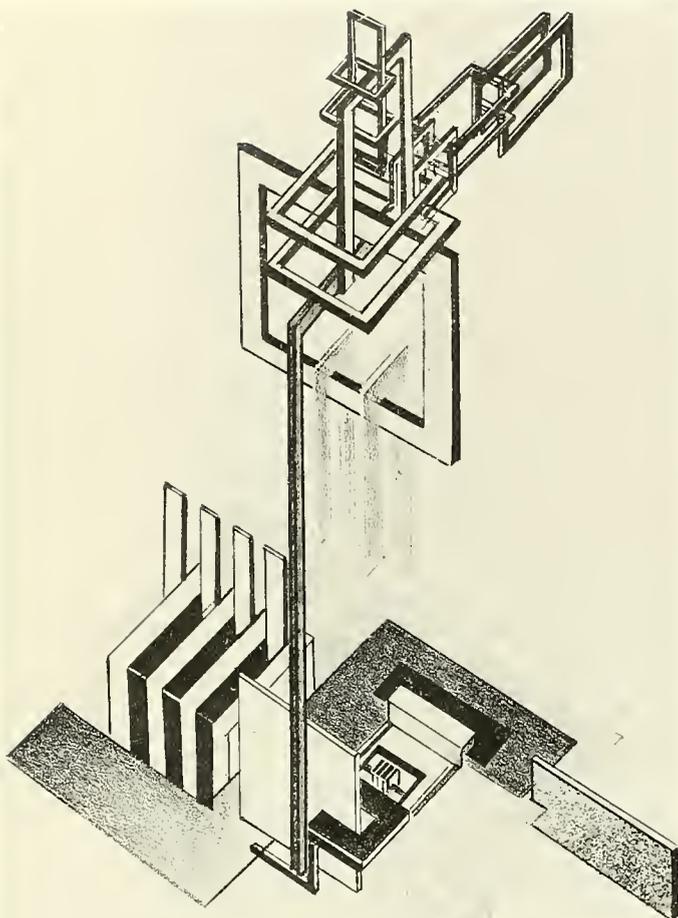


fig. a
Gustav Klucis
Construction. ca. 1920–22
Dimensions and whereabouts unknown
Photograph Costakis collection, printed from Klucis's
negative

158

Construction of Three Forms, Unovis. 1919

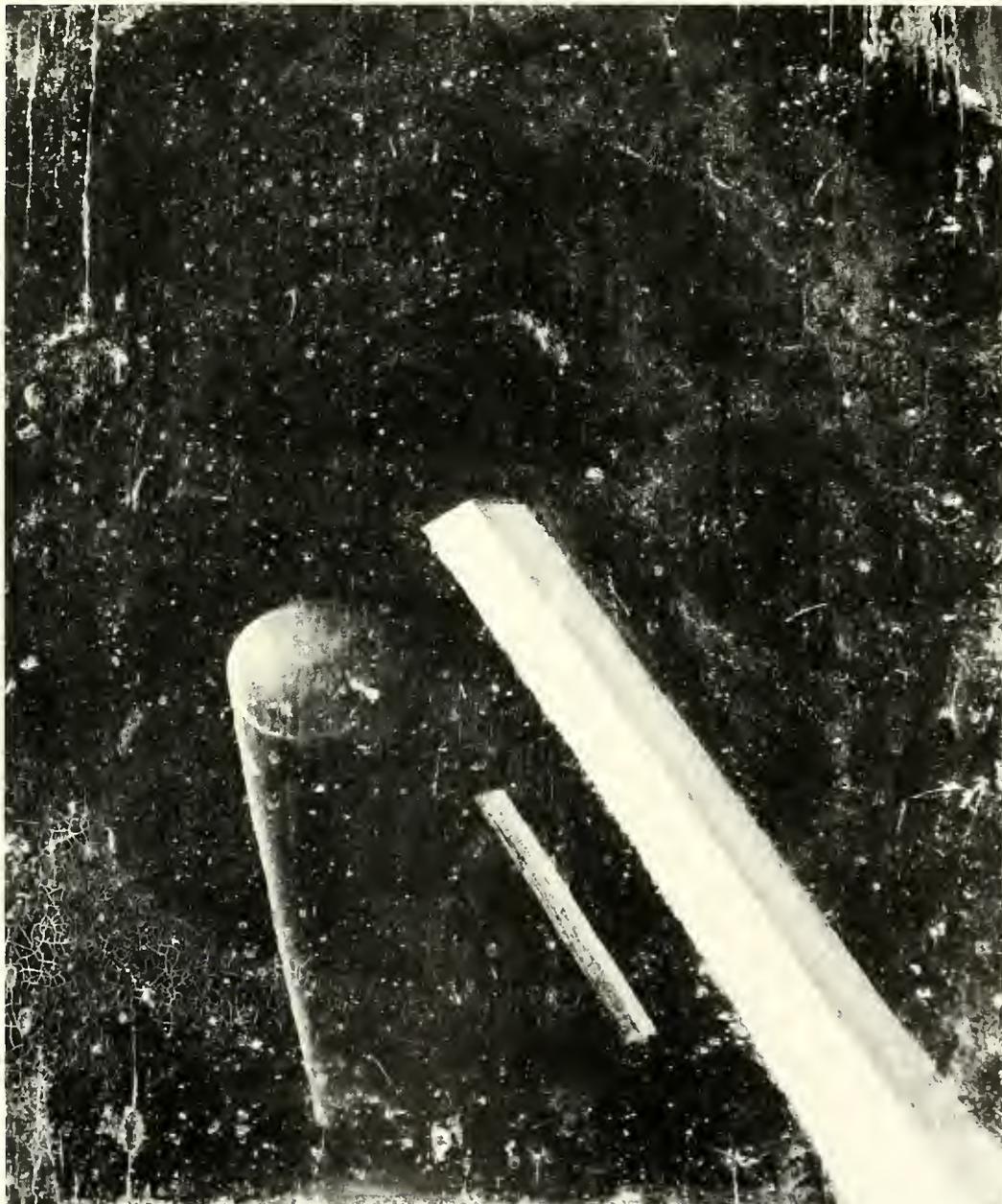
Oil on plywood, 19 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 16 $\frac{1}{8}$ " (49.8 x 41 cm.)

Signed and dated l.r.: S. 19; on reverse: *Senkin 1919*

Acquired from the collection of the artist's daughter,
N. S. Senkina

255.78

According to Rakitin, this work was executed in the winter of 1919-1920 during Senkin's first visit to Vitebsk where he joined the Unovis group. He became close friends with Klucis and they later shared a workshop in photomontage at the Unovis.

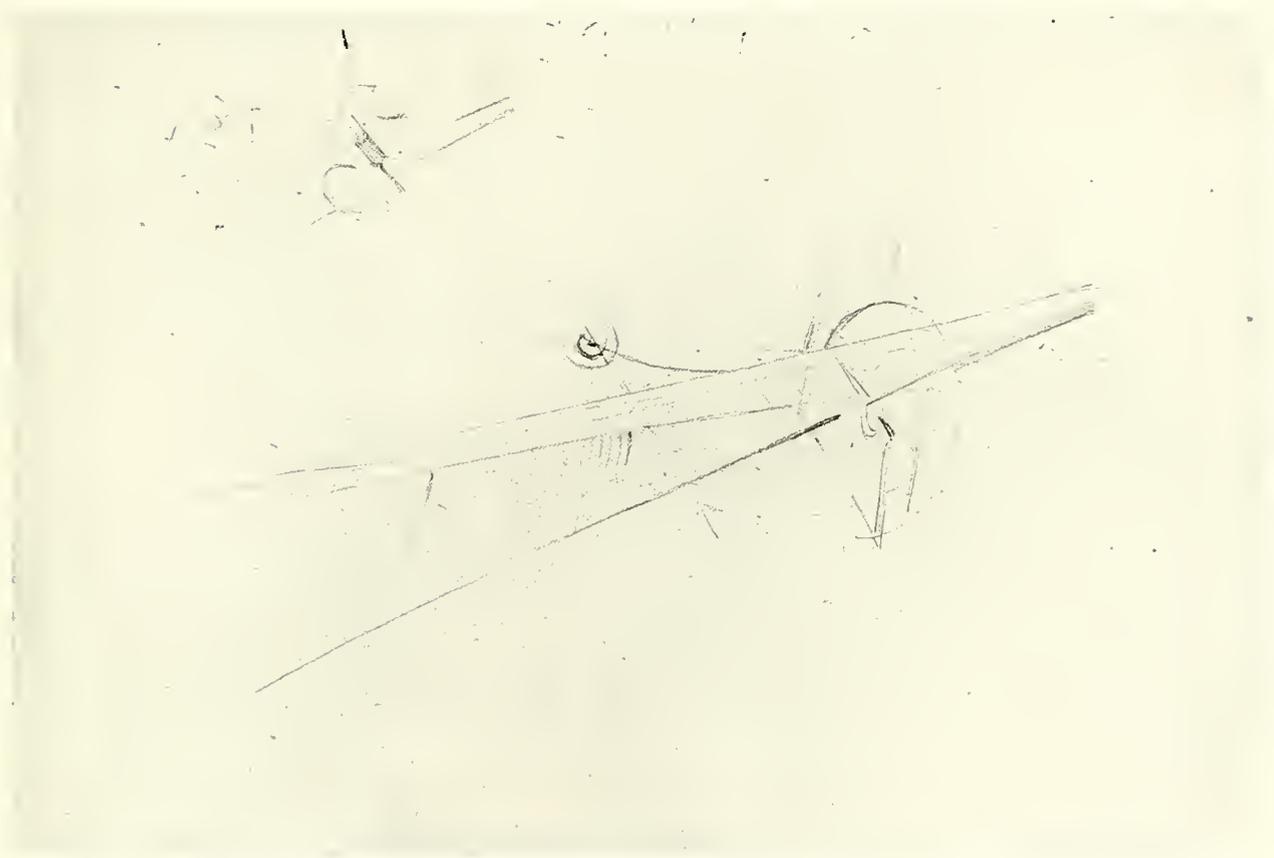


V

The Inkhuk and Constructivism

159

Drawing for a Counter-Relief(?) ca. 1915
Pencil on paper, 6 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 9 $\frac{1}{4}$ " (15.7 x 23.5 cm.)
300.80



160

Drawing for a Corner Counter-Relief. ca. 1915
Charcoal on brown paper, 9³/₁₆ x 6³/₁₆" (23.3 x 15.7 cm.)
299.80

Preparatory drawings for Tatlin's corner reliefs are almost unknown. This drawing may be an initial study for the relief shown at the December 1915 0.10 exhibition and reproduced in the journal that was distributed on that occasion (cat. no. 161).

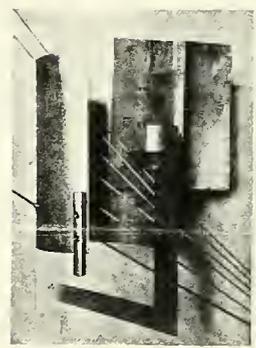
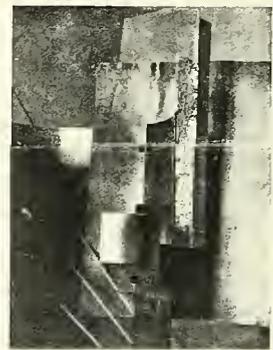


161

New Magazine for Everyone (Novyi zhurnal dlya vsekh.) Petrograd, December 17, 1915
4 pp., 14⁹/₁₆" x 10⁷/₈" (37.1 x 27 cm.)
140.80

This printed brochure about Tatlin was distributed at the 0.10 exhibition.

Владиміръ Евграфовичъ
ТАТЛИНЪ.



В. Е. Татлинъ. Угольный контррельефъ. 1915—1916 г.

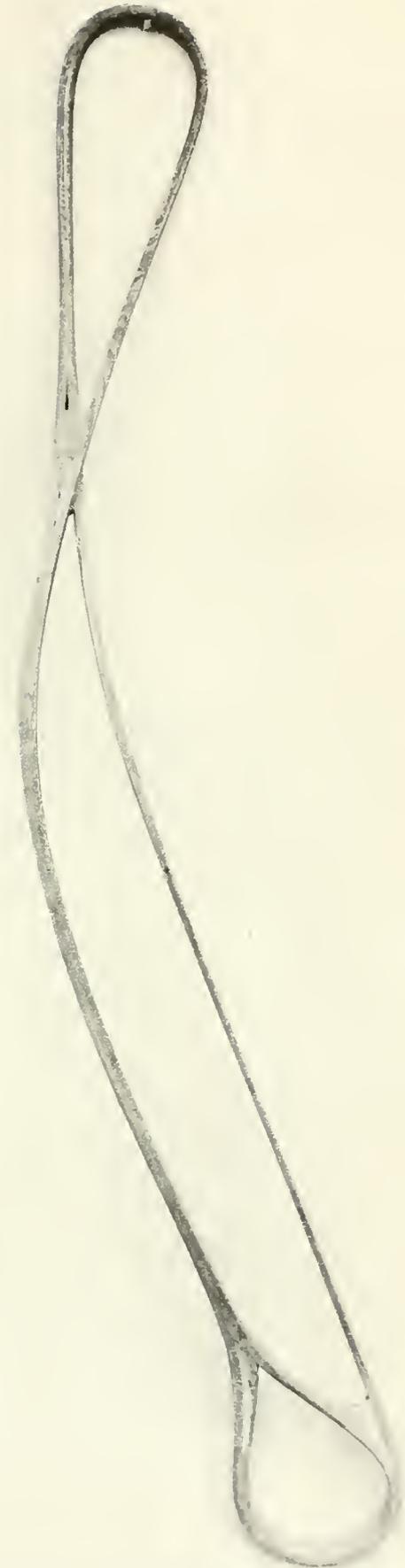
Изданіе «Новый журналъ для всѣхъ». Петроградъ, 1915 г., № 12.

Wing strut for *Letatlin*. 1929–1932
 Willow and cork, length: 94½" (240 cm.)
 Purchased from K. Zelinsky's widow
 273.78

Tatlin worked on his invention the *Letatlin* for several years, starting in 1929. His intention was that the "air bicycle" (propelled by man, not by motor) would be put into general production and used by ordinary people. The *Letatlin* — a word coined by the artist out of the Russian verb "to fly" (*letat*) and his own name — was thus conceived simultaneously as a utilitarian construction and as a work of art. Tatlin was utterly persuaded of both its practicality and its aesthetic quality: "Now art is entering into technology." He based his technical solutions on his observations of birds, specifically a group of young cranes that he kept and watched closely, and probably on a set of calculations by the leading pioneer in rocket research, K. E. Tsiolkovsky.¹ Upon its completion in 1932, the *Letatlin* was exhibited in Moscow at the State Museum of Art (Pushkin Museum).

As the pilot K. Artseulov wrote in 1932, the materials were chosen with extreme care entirely on the basis of their flexibility and their ability to function. The willow wood was split rather than sawed or cut, so that the internal fibers were preserved full length. With the help of steam, the long strips of wood were then molded, pressed and twisted into complicated octagons of bent wood, giving them strength, elasticity and powers of resistance to the rotation and movement of the wings. The ratio of the weight of the wings to the weight of the entire mounted machine was 1:6 — corresponding to the ratio of wing to body in most birds.

Tatlin's projects for utilitarian objects throughout the 1920s show a consistent involvement with organic form as opposed to technological design. This wing strut, an eloquent example of this concern, is the only part of the construction that has apparently survived.



1. See Troels Andersen, in Stockholm, Moderna Museet, *Vladimir Tatlin*, July-Sept 1968, pp. 9-10.

For important information on Tatlin see also V. E. Tatlin: *Zasluzhennyi deyatel iskusstva RSFSR Katalog vystavki proizvedenii*, Moscow, 1977.

163

*Nonrepresentational Construction of Projected and
Painted Surfaces of a Complex Composition with
Colors.* 1917

Varnished watercolor and gouache with pencil on paper,
14½ x 11½" (36.8 x 29.2 cm.) (sight)

Signed and dated l.r.: A. Rodchenko 1917

Gift of Varvara Fedorovna Stepanova

242.78

The titles of this and the following work (cat. no. 164)
were supplied by Rakitin, and are based on material in
the Rodchenko Archive in Moscow. According to notes
in that archive, both works were included in the *Fifth
State Exhibition (From Impressionism to Nonobjectiv-
ity)* held in Moscow in 1919.



164

Nonrepresentational Construction of Projected and Painted Surfaces of a Complex Composition with Colors, Circle and Line Composition. 1917

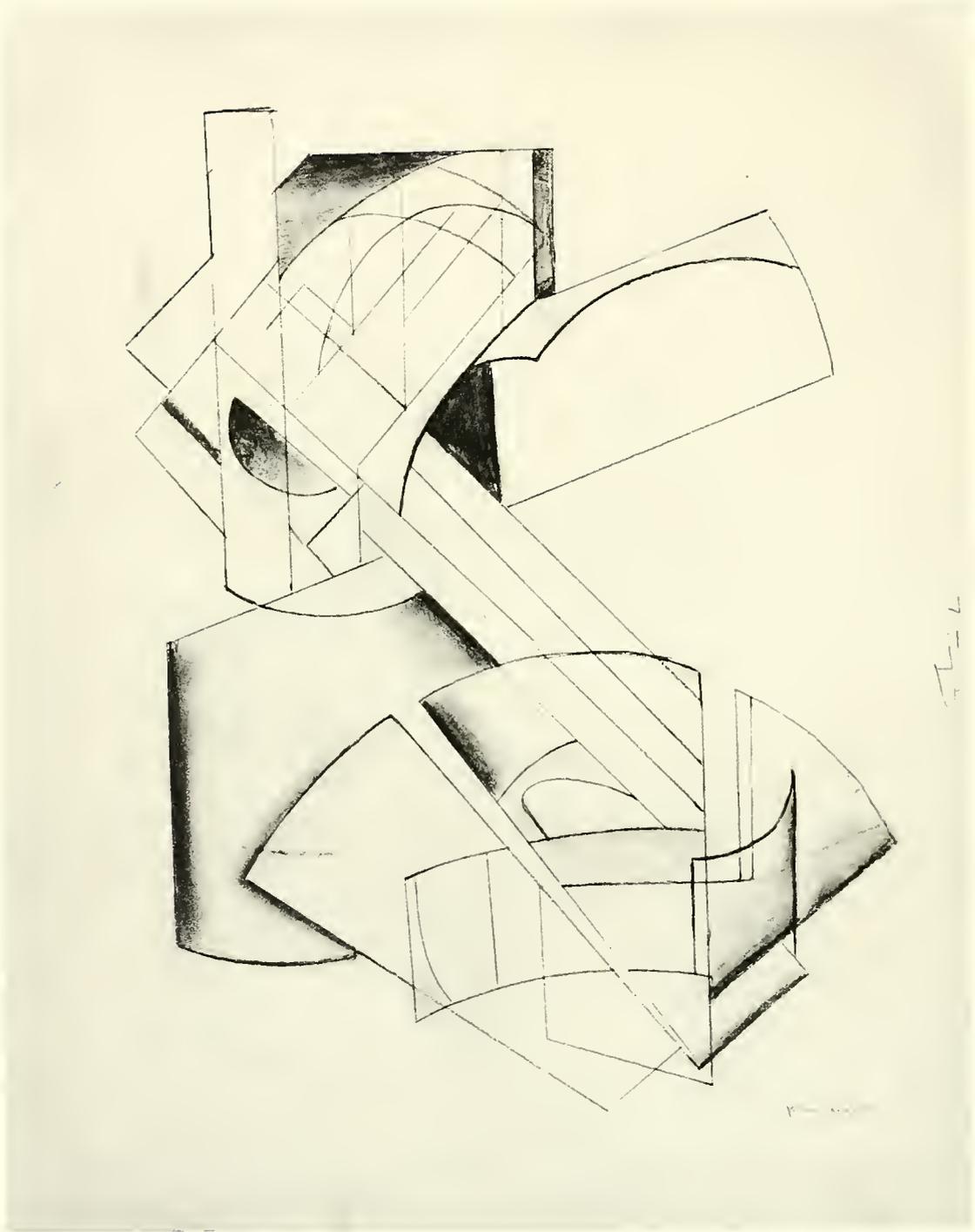
Gouache, ink and watercolor on paper, 10 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 8" (26.6 x 20.3 cm.) (sight)

Signed and dated l.l.: *A. Rodchenko 1917*

Gift of V. F. Stepanova

243.78





4-4

165

Untitled. 1917Charcoal on paper, 26 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 20 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (66.7 x 52 cm.)Signed lower edge: *Rodchenko*

Gift of the artist's daughter, Varvara Alexandrovna Rodchenko

246.80

This drawing is closely related in style and composition to some of Rodchenko's designs for the Café Pittoresque,¹ though it seems unlikely that it was preparatory to any functional aspect of that project. Though lacking the decorative surface treatment of works such as cat. nos. 163 and 164, it does share some of their formal vocabulary and probably dates from not much later.

166

Composition: Two Circles. 1918Varnished oil on paperboard, 10 x 8 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (25.4 x 21.3 cm.)

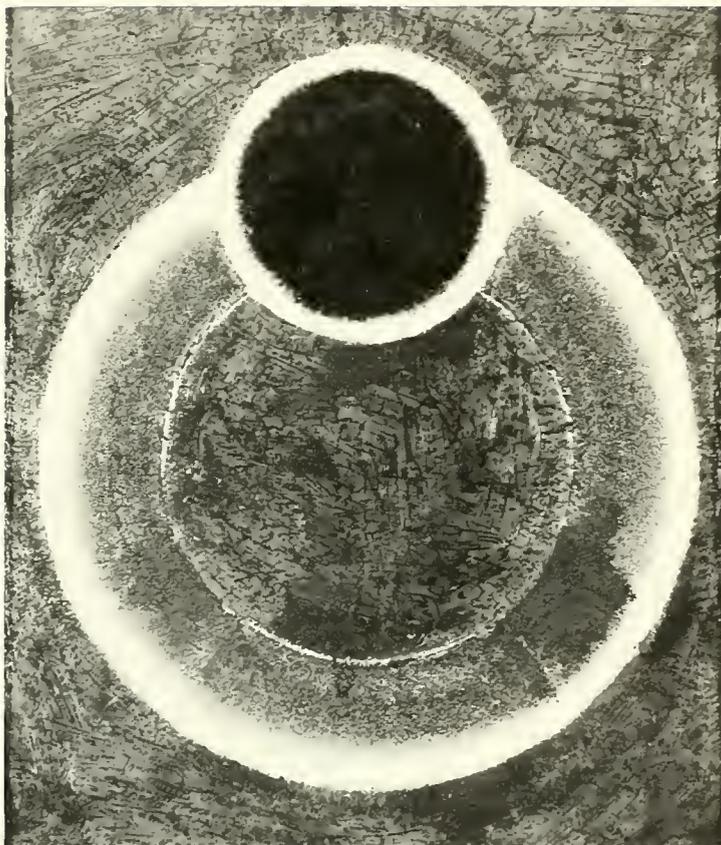
Gift of the artist

245.78

According to notes in the Rodchenko Archive in Moscow, this work appeared in the *Nineteenth State Exhibition* in Moscow (December 1919) and the *Exhibition of Four* (Moscow, 1920).²

During the course of debates held at the Inkhuk January–April 1921 (see below, pp. 226–227), a painting by Rodchenko entitled *Two Circles* (closely related in composition to this work, though painted in enamel) was discussed at length, as an example of construction in painting. Rodchenko commented that in order to achieve construction in painting, materials should always be used with extreme sensitivity to their natural properties. Though he was cautious about accepting the definition of “construction” for this painting, preferring to describe it as “striving towards construction,” several other members of the group felt it did achieve its goal, and it was brought up again for further discussion at a later session.

Rodchenko's desire to achieve a “halo” of *sfumato* light around each circle apparently resulted in his exploration of the potentialities of various media. His experimental approach to matters of style and technique intensified considerably during the years 1918–1920, and he produced works of such diversity during those years that the establishment of a chronology or a sense of stylistic development becomes almost impossible. (See below, cat. nos. 167–171.)



1. See, for example, G. Karginov, *Rodchenko*, London, 1979, pls. 69 and 70.

2. No detailed information on this exhibition has been found. According to Rakitin, it included the work of Kandinsky, Rodchenko, Stepanova and Siniezhov, but whether a catalogue exists has not been established.

167

The Clown Pierrot. 1919
Gouache and ink with pencil on paper, 20 x 14"
(50.8 x 35.6 cm.)
Signed and dated l.r.: *Rodchenko 1919*
Gift of the artist
244.78

One of seventeen costume designs for the revue *We* planned by Alexei Gan. Gan never actually wrote the revue, and the costumes were thus not produced.

According to notes in the Rodchenko Archive, the designs were all shown at the June 1923 exhibition in Moscow, *Moscow's Theatrical Art: 1918-1923*. They were subsequently included in the 1925 *Exposition internationale des arts décoratifs et industriels modernes* in Paris (cat. nos. 141-157, "dessins de costumes pour *Nous autres* de A. Gann" [sic]).



Composition No. 117. 1919

Oil on canvas, 15 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 13 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (40.3 x 35.1 cm.)

Stenciled signature and date on reverse: *Rodchenko*
1920; in black ink: *N. 117*

Purchased from the artist

239.78

According to Rakitin, the title and date correspond to those recorded in the Rodchenko Archive in Moscow, which also indicates that the painting appeared in the *Nineteenth State Exhibition* of December 1919, and in the *Exhibition of Four* (Moscow, 1920; see above cat. no. 166, fn. 2). The stenciled date on the reverse was thus presumably added later.

Gustav Klucis saw this canvas in the 1920 exhibition, and in a letter to Kudriashev spoke of a work "by Rodchenko . . . a black picture with little dots of color . . . a work of extraordinary genius."¹

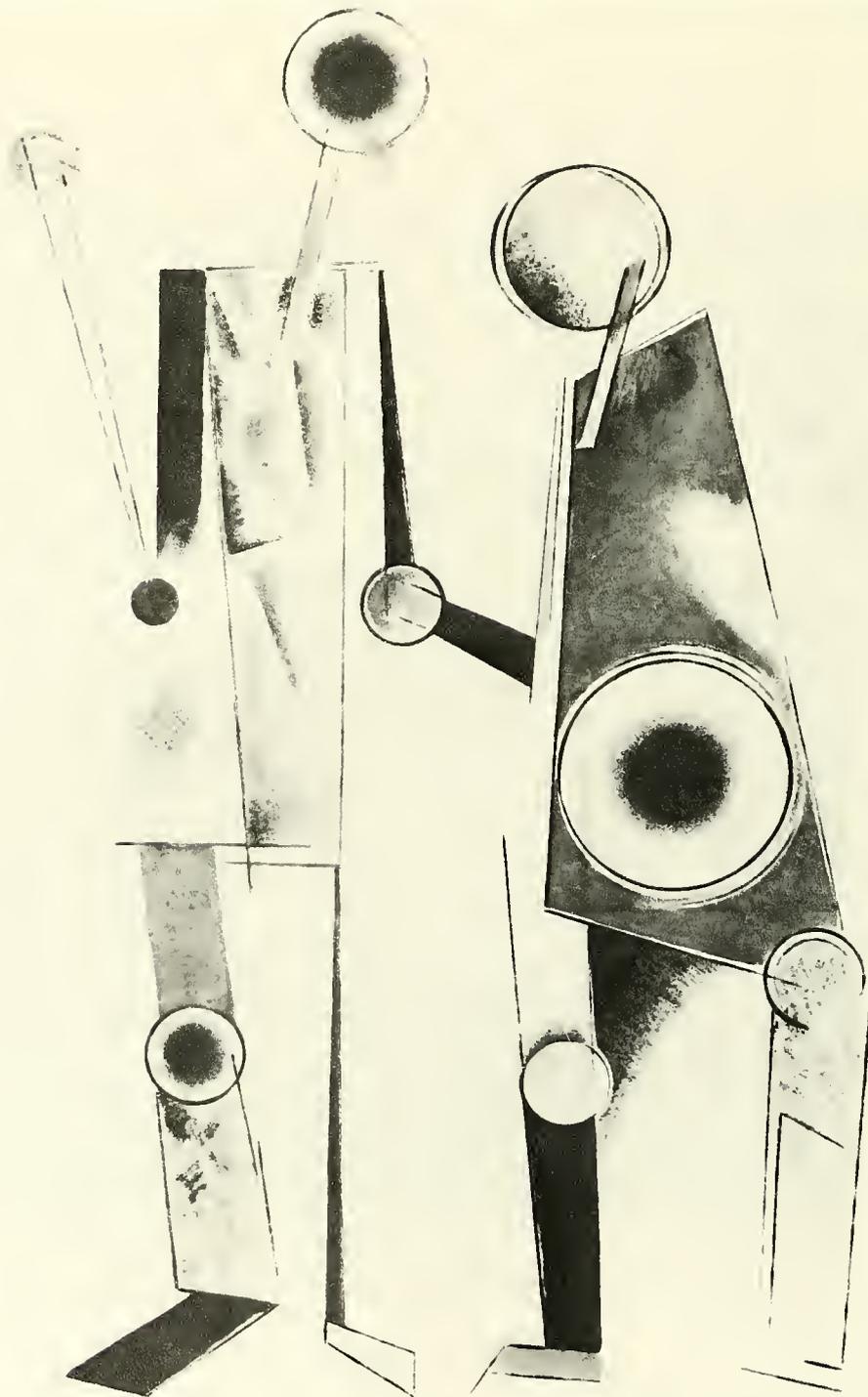


1. According to Costakis, the letter is preserved in a provincial museum in the USSR.

169

Construction on White (Robots). 1920
Oil on wood, 56¹¹/₁₆ x 37¹/₈" (144 x 94.3 cm.)
Stenciled signature on reverse: *Rodchenko*
Gift of the artist
249.78

According to notes in the Rodchenko Archive, this work was shown at the *Nineteenth State Exhibition* in Moscow (December 1919) and at the *Exhibition of Four* (Moscow, 1920; see above cat. no. 166, fn. 2).



170

Composition no. 125. 1920

Oil on canvas, 54 x 37¹/₁₆" (137.2 x 95.7 cm.)

Stenciled signature and date on reverse: *Rodchenko*
1920; in ink: *N. 125*

Purchased from the artist

248.78

According to Rakitin, the title corresponds to that recorded in the Rodchenko Archive in Moscow, which also indicates that the painting appeared in the *Exhibition of Four* (Moscow, 1920; see above cat. no. 166, fn. 2).



Linearism. 1920

Oil on canvas, 40½ x 27⅞" (102.9 x 69.6 cm.)

Signed and dated on reverse: *Rodchenko / 1920 /*

No. 104

Purchased from the artist

240.78

Rodchenko's paper on Line¹ prepared for the Inkhuk in the autumn of 1921, reflects his commitment at that moment to the essential significance of line within the enterprise of "construction." This polemical position, which claimed for line a "victory" over the very nature of painting (color, tone, *faktura* and plane), was taken at a moment when discussions about the theoretical formulation of Constructivism were at their height.

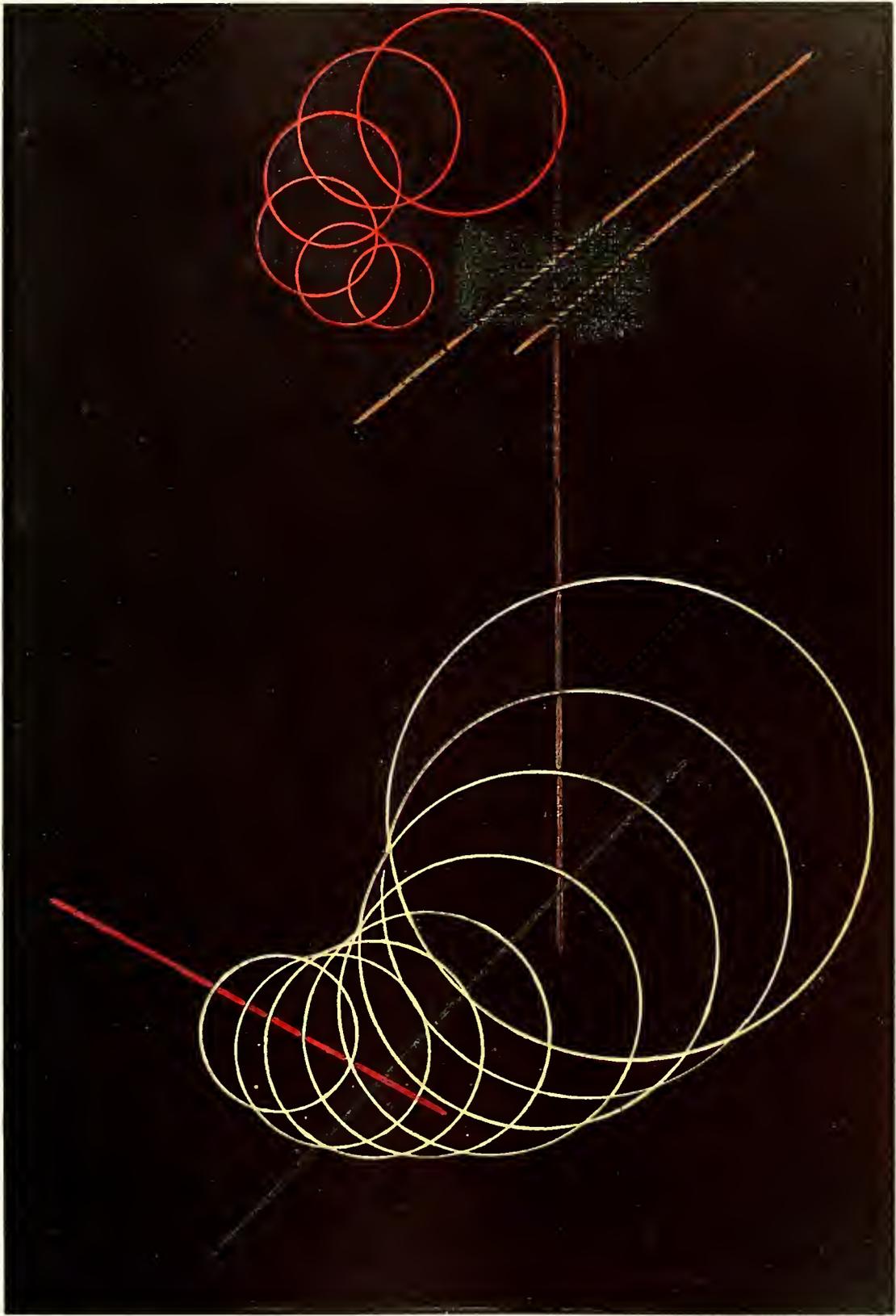
Linearism and *Oval Hanging Construction*, no. 12 illustrate clearly the theoretical basis of Rodchenko's Constructivist thinking. They are, however, only a part of what constituted his actual practice during these crucial years. A. Nakov has written cogently about the radical nature of stylistic change within the entire chronological development of Rodchenko's oeuvre.² But equally striking is the coexistence within a few short months (in 1920) of these Constructivist tendencies with painterly works in which color, tone, *faktura* — the very process of making art — are essentially the subject of the work.³ In 1943 Rodchenko's continued preoccupation with such issues is manifested in a single composition consisting entirely of elaborately interwoven skeins of color (see cat. no. 173).

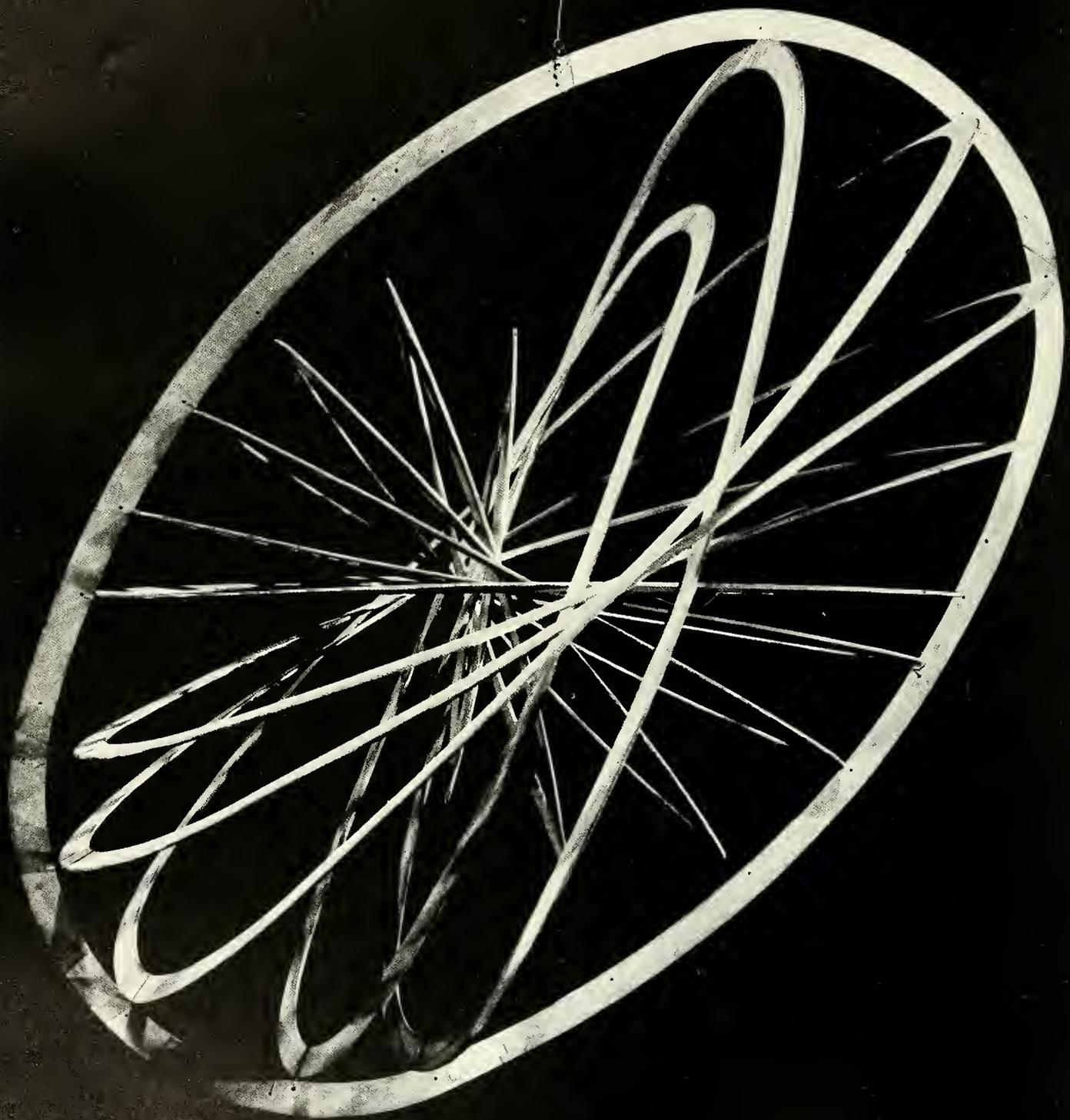
The complexity of Rodchenko's restless experimental career, and his ambivalence about the "death of painting" require considerable further study. Elucidation of many aspects of these issues may lie in the surviving notebooks, diaries, drawings and gouaches in various archives in the USSR.

1. The manuscript of this essay, which was never published in Russian, is in a private archive in Moscow. For information on the English translation, see Rowell, pp. 24-25, fn. 21.

2. "Stylistic changes: Painting without a referent!" Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, *Rodchenko*, 1979, pp. 56-57.

3. See for example, *Painting no. 125*, cat. no. 170, or *Abstraction (Rupture)* of late 1920, repr. color, R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 1020.





172

Oval Hanging Construction, no. 12. ca. 1920
 Painted plywood and wire, $32\frac{7}{8} \times 23 \times 17\frac{1}{16}$ "
 (83.5 x 58.5 x 43.3 cm.)
 Gift of the artist
 246.78

Between 1918 and 1920, Rodchenko executed several freestanding and hanging constructions, which reflect an interest in manipulating forms in real space. The identification of this piece as *Oval Hanging Construction, no. 12* was found in the artist's archives.¹

The hanging constructions, probably executed in 1919–1920, are based on the principle of repetition of a single form: a rhomboid, circle, hexagon, oval, etc. The oval construction was made from a single sheet of plywood which the artist cut in concentric bands from the outer circumference to the center.² Closed, the structure represents a flat oval plane, whereas opened, it becomes a skeletal structure of graduated linear ellipses revolving around a central axis. Tiny bits of wire hold the open ribs in place.

Whereas in Rodchenko's earlier constructions, the artist appears to have placed more emphasis on materials,³ the constructions of ca. 1920 represent a linear modeling of space. That one face of the object is painted silver further testifies to Rodchenko's waning interest in the real substance of materials and contributes to the disembodied effect of the whole.

Rodchenko's hanging constructions were shown for the first time at the Third Obmokhu exhibition in May 1921 in Moscow (see fig. 16, pp. 28–29). This piece is thought to be the only hanging construction to have survived.

173

Expressive Rhythm. 1943–44
 Gouache on paper, 24×68 " (61×172.7 cm.)
 Signed in monogram l.r.: A. R.
 Gift of the artist's daughter, V. A. Rodchenko
 241.78

The work appears in a wedding photograph of Rodchenko's daughter and on this basis is datable no later than 1944.



1. Information supplied by V. Rakitin. According to J. E. Bowlt, there were ten freestanding and six hanging constructions ("The Construction of Space," in *From Surface to Space*, p. 9).

2. Photographs from the period suggest that this method was not followed in the other constructions.

3. See C. Gray, *The Great Experiment Russian Art 1863–1922*, New York, 1962, pl. 175, p. 257.

174

Two Figures. 1920
Oil on board, $35\frac{3}{16} \times 28\frac{1}{16}$ " (89.4 x 72.3 cm.)
Purchased from the artist
266.78

According to Rakitin, this work appeared in the *Nineteenth State Exhibition* held in Moscow, 1920. (Information from private archives, Moscow.) It was also shown in *5 x 5 = 25*, Moscow, September 1921 (cat. no. 4 or 5 in that catalogue); and at the *Galerie van Diemen*,

Berlin, at the *Erste russische Kunstausstellung*, 1922 (cat. no. 211 in that catalogue).

For information about Stepanova's theory of painting, see V. Agrarykh (Stepanova), "Bespredmetnoe tvorchestvo," *10-ya Gosudarstvennaia vystavka*, Moscow, 1919, trans. into English and German in *Women Artists of the Russian Avant-Garde*, pp. 272, 276. See also *Stepanova, Varvara Fedorovna 1894-1958, Katalog*, Kostroma, 1975.



175

The Connection of Painting and Architecture: Tectonics

1919

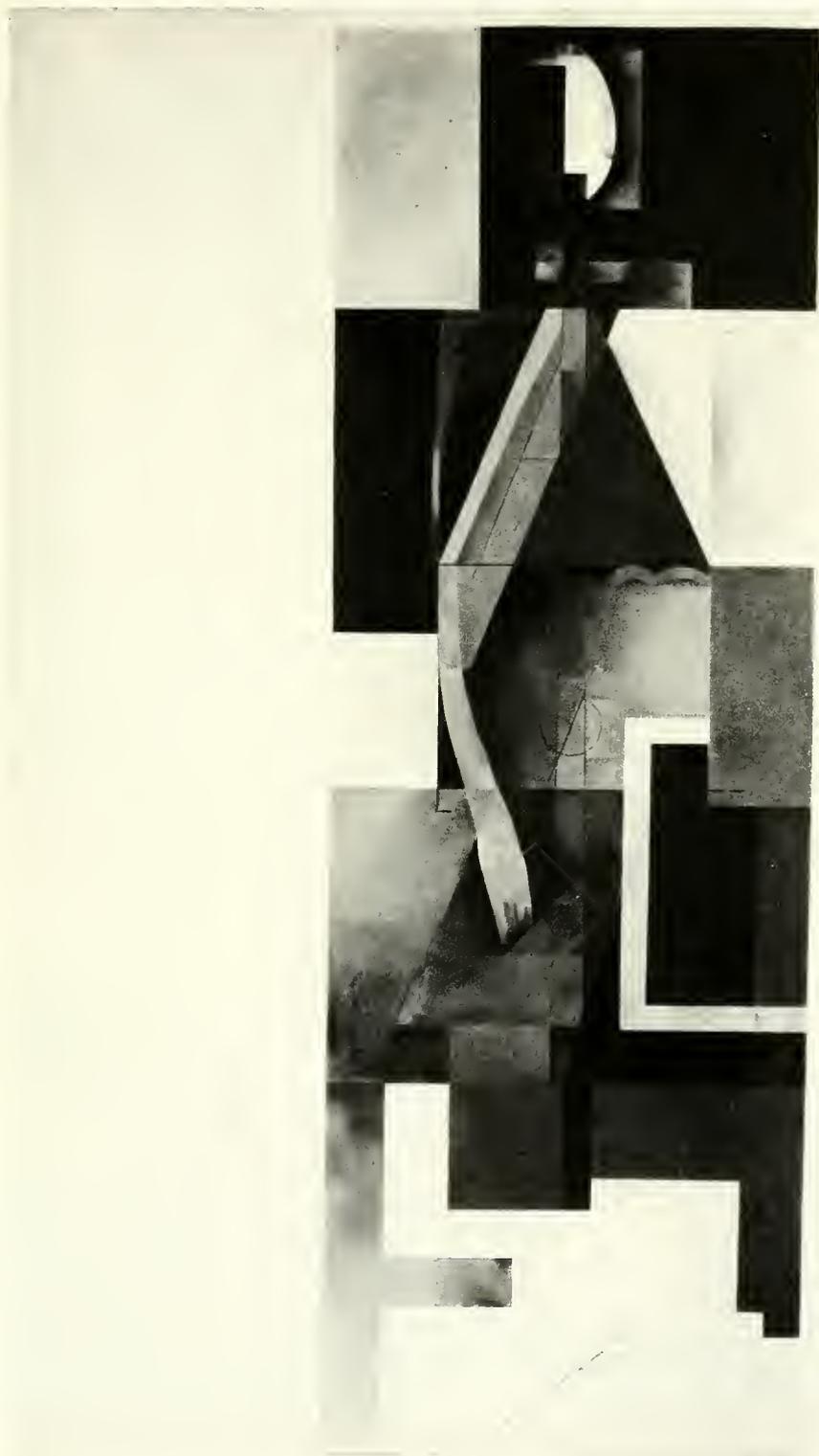
Oil on canvas, 68 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 51 $\frac{5}{8}$ " (175.1 x 131.1 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse: 1919, S. Nikritin, *Composition*

Acquired from the artist's widow

163.78

The title above is given by Rakitin, who dates the work 1920-21.



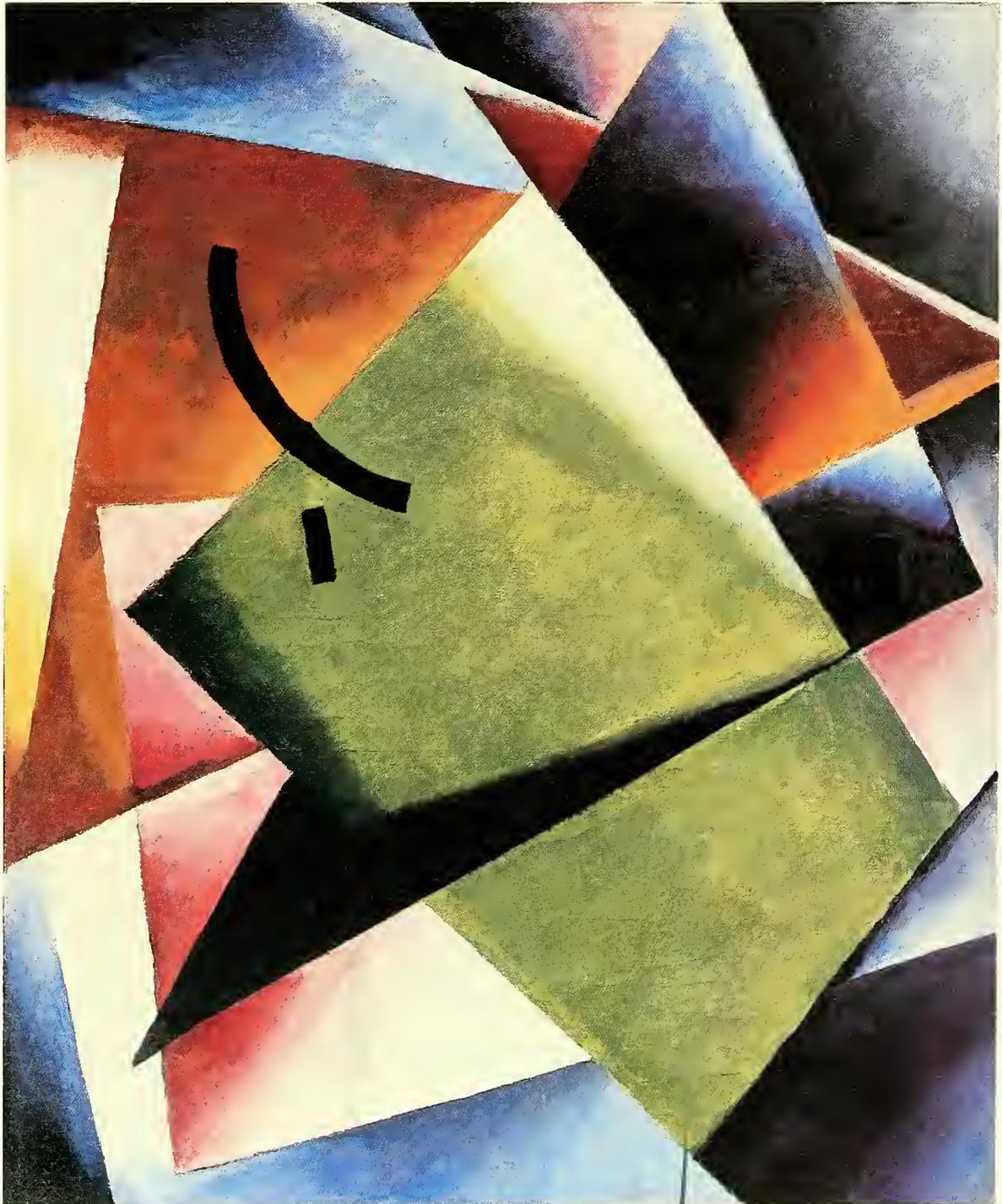
176

Painterly Architectonics. 1918-19

Oil on canvas, 27 7/8 x 22 7/8" (70.8 x 58.1 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's brother, Pavel Sergeevich Popov

178.78



brighter
leaves
for

177

Painterly Architectonics. 1918-19

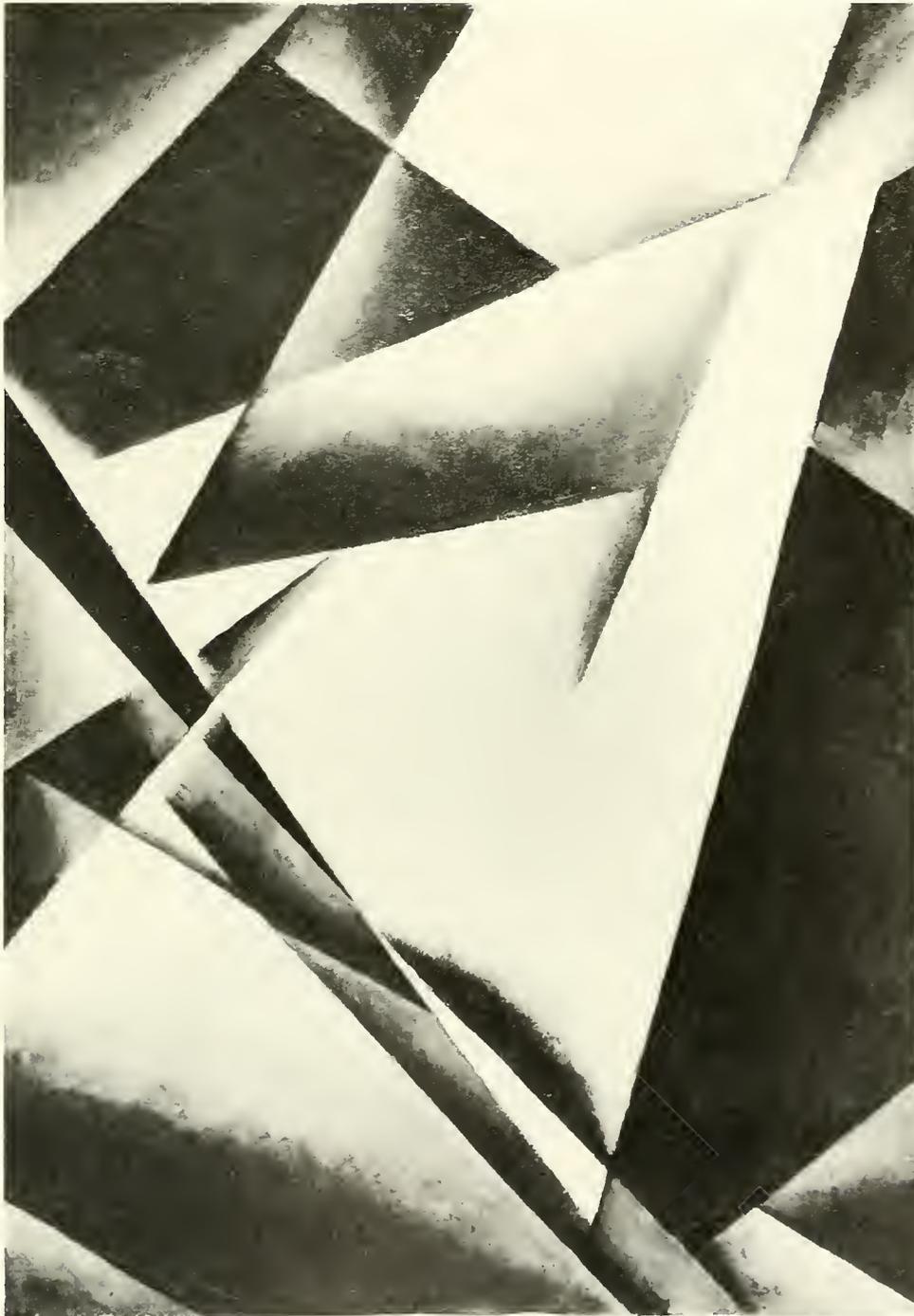
Oil on canvas, 28¾ x 18½" (73.1 x 48.1 cm.) (sight)

Acquired from the artist's brother, P. S. Popov

180.78

According to Rakin, this work and cat. no. 176 appeared in Popova's posthumous exhibition of 1924.

dark blue, gray
white - black



178

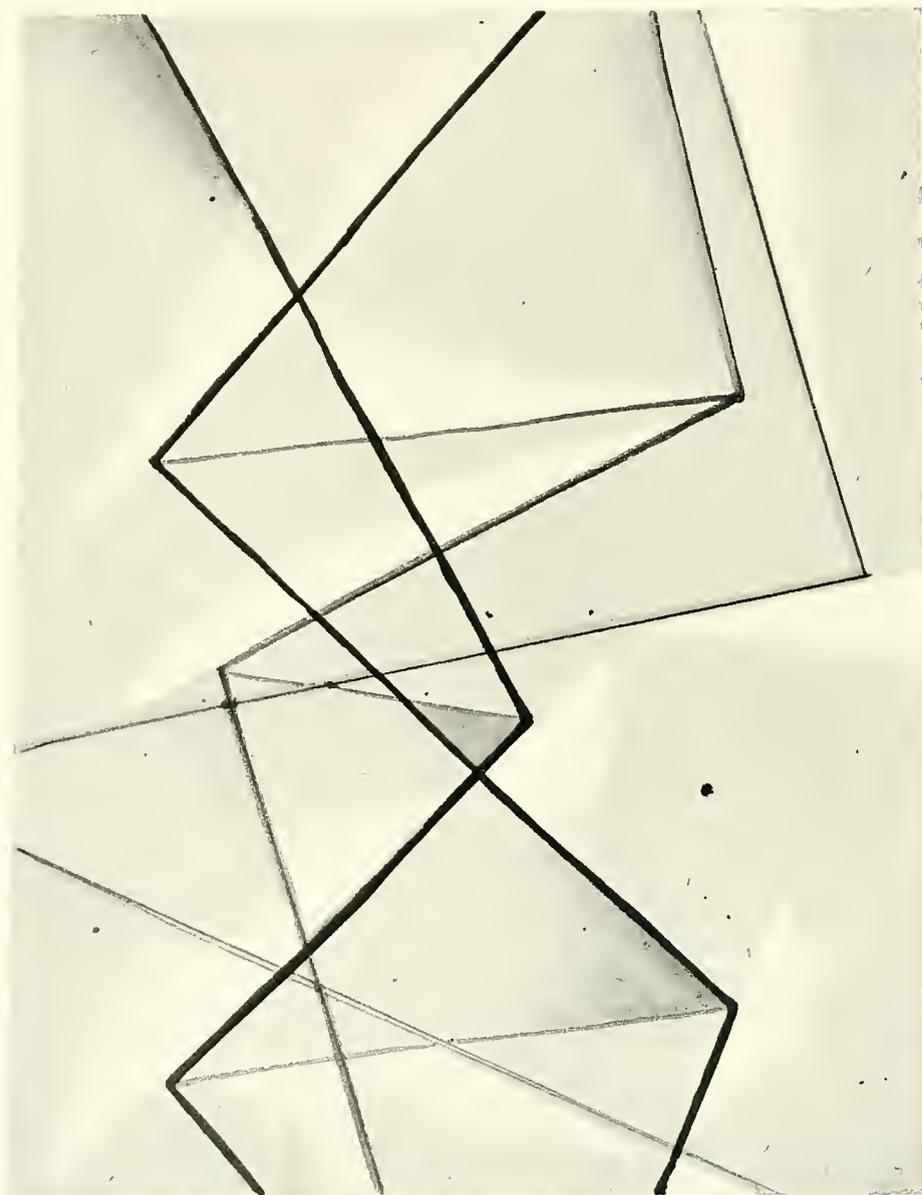
Untitled. 1919-1921

Gouache and watercolor on paper, 13¹/₁₆ x 10⁷/₁₆"
(35.1 x 26.5 cm.)

Dated on reverse in Vesnin's hand: 1921

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

19578



179

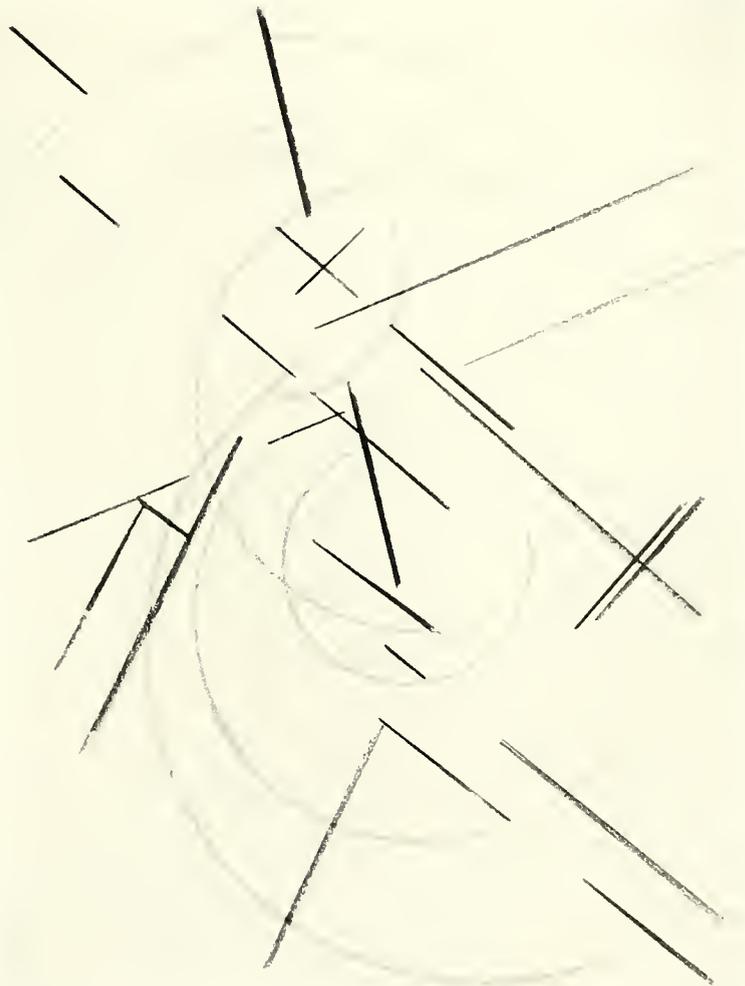
Untitled. 1920-21

Crayon on paper, $10\frac{1}{16} \times 8\frac{1}{16}$ " (27.5 x 20.6 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C73

Probably a study for the painting formerly in the Costakis collection, now in the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow. A closely related drawing in a private collection (colored pencil on paper, $10\frac{1}{16} \times 8\frac{1}{16}$ ", 27.5 x 20.5 cm.) is reproduced in *Women Artists of the Russian Avant-Garde*, p. 194, no. 71. It is said to be dated on reverse 1922, though this could be in Vesnin's hand.





180

Spatial Force Construction. 1920-21

Oil with marble dust on wood, $44\frac{3}{16} \times 44\frac{3}{8}$ "
(112.6 x 112.7 cm.)

Dated on reverse: 1921

Acquired from the artist's brother, P. S. Popov
175-78

This work and cat. no. 182 appeared in Popova's posthumous exhibition of 1924 and are visible in the installation photographs.

181

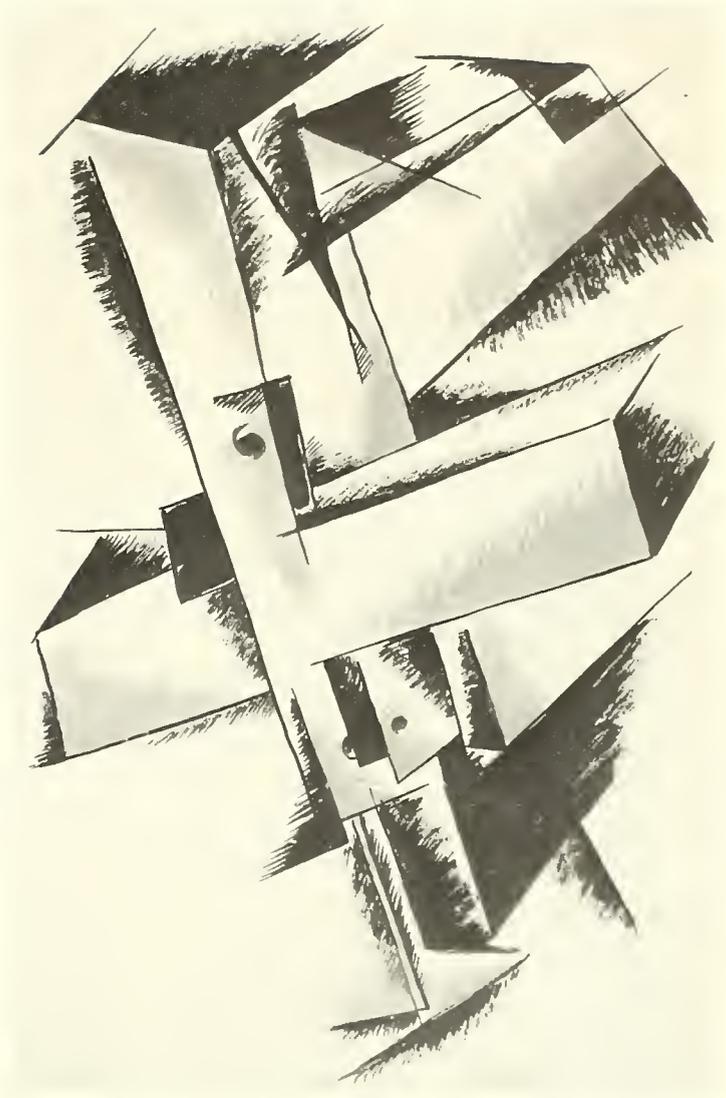
Spatial Force Construction. 1921

Ink on paper, $17 \times 10\frac{1}{16}$ " (43.2 x 27.5 cm.)

Dated on reverse: 1921

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov
196.78

According to Rakitin, this work was also shown in Popova's posthumous exhibition of 1924.



182

Spatial Force Construction. 1921

Oil with marble dust on plywood, $27\frac{1}{16} \times 25\frac{1}{8}$ "
(71 x 63.9 cm.)

Dated on reverse: 1921

Acquired from the artist's brother, P. S. Popov
179.78

Popova's contributions to the hand-made catalogues for the 1921 exhibition $5 \times 5 = 25$ include a linocut (fig. a), closely related to the present painting. Several other *Spatial Force Constructions* of 1921 are variations on this imagery. (See R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 872-73.)

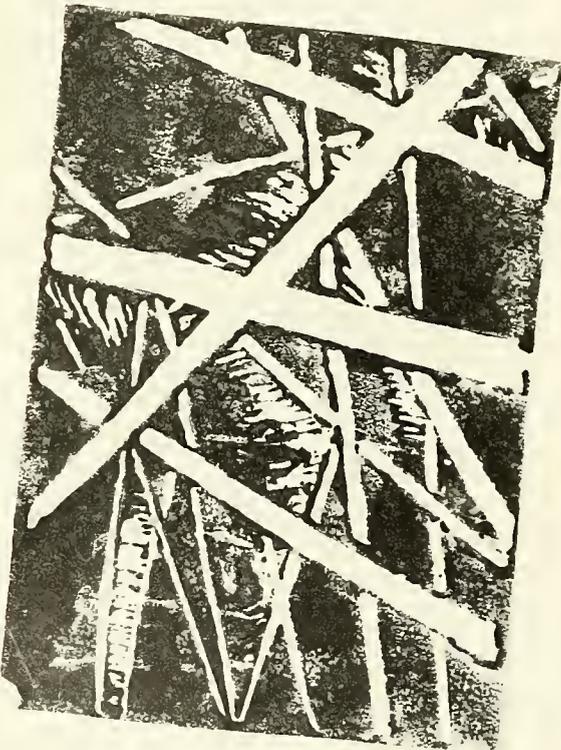
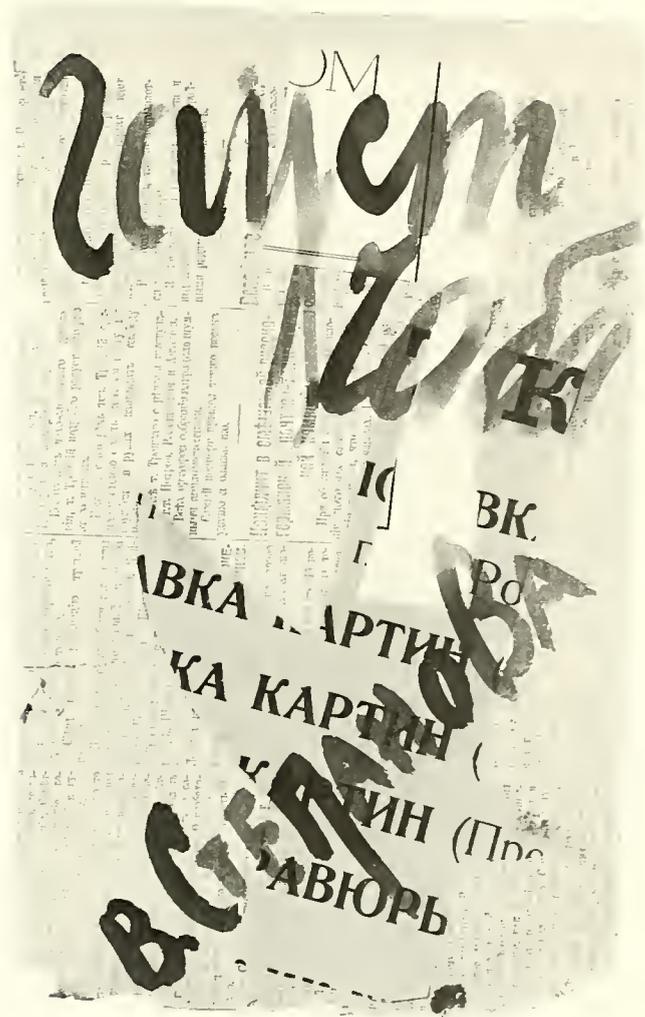


fig. a
L. S. Popova
Linocut from catalogue for $5 \times 5 = 25$, page 8, 1921
(see cat. no. 216).



new dimension to this process and created what Evgenii Kovtun has described as an “anti-book.”² Her “stock” was newspaper — a choice that in itself sets up a series of antitheses. Thus, the typeset newspaper text was denied its own communicative function by the superimposition of Stepanova’s manuscript text. Her poems were explicitly *zaum*, while the underlying newspaper text was, of course, thoroughly prosaic. While the latter might — with difficulty — still be “read,” it was made essentially incomprehensible by being placed laterally in relation to the viewer holding it in a conven-

tional way. Meanwhile, collages and poems were diagonally superimposed upon it. The poems in turn were written in a language that was — to the ordinary reader — incomprehensible, although it was intended ultimately to carry a larger meaning. Some of the collages were themselves made from typographical elements, thus converting words into pictures. As a final inversion, Stepanova placed the title page at the back of the book; as Kovtun observed, all that remained of a “book” in the conventional sense was the fact that its pages could be turned.



2. *From Surface to Space*, p. 57.

The following group of drawings and watercolors (cat. nos. 184–208) were acquired from the collection of Alexei Babichev and date from his association with the Inkhuk (*Institut khudozhestvennoi kultury*, the Institute of Painterly Culture).¹

The Inkhuk was founded in May 1920, initially under the direction of Kandinsky. Its original aim was to formulate an ideological and theoretical approach to the arts based upon scientific research and analysis. Kandinsky's program, published in Moscow in 1920,² was detailed and ambitious. It clearly reflected his own convictions about the psychological implications of art, and the essentially subjective nature of aesthetic experience.³ This led to disagreements with other founding members of the Institute, and by the end of 1920 he had left. The administration was then reorganized by Rodchenko, Stepanova, Babichev and Nadezhda Briusova — the nucleus of what was to become the Working Group of Objective Analysis.

Babichev, a sculptor and theoretician who had been trained first in mathematics and then in art, drew up the new program.⁴ The subjective, psychological issues were rejected. Instead, the program was rooted in an objective analysis of form, and its essentials were framed under two headings:

1. *Theoretical*: the analysis of the work of art, the conscious definition of the basic problems of art (color, *faktura*, material, construction, etc.).
2. *Laboratory*: group work according to independent initiative or according to a task. For example, all members were presented with work on the theme "composition and construction."

It is within the context of the Institute's Laboratory section, and specifically in connection with the theme of "composition" and "construction," that the present group of drawings must be studied.⁵

Eighteen of the drawings carry on their verso an Inkhuk stamp, with a handwritten number between 2 and 27 (e.g., cat. no. 187); the two drawings by Ladovsky carry a circular Inkhuk stamp with no number. Gaps in the numbering indicate that the portfolio is incomplete, and in fact a list of the entire original group of drawings, said to be preserved in the archive of the Group of Objective Analysis, cites thirty works.⁶

During the four months January–April of 1921, the Working Group of Objective Analysis held nine sessions during which the issues of "composition"

and "construction" were discussed (January 1, 21, 28, February 11, 18, March 4, 18, 25, April 22). Shorthand reports of these sessions were kept, recording the positions taken by various participants. The drawings themselves were apparently used for analysis at the final session on April 22.⁷ The record of the theoretical discussions, together with the visual evidence provided by the drawings, throws important new light on the developing theory of Constructivism and ultimately that of Productivism as they were being formulated at the Inkhuk during 1921.

Attendance at the sessions fluctuated, but almost all of the artists represented in the portfolio participated with some regularity. There were considerable differences of opinion regarding the categories under discussion. The architect Nikolai Ladovsky, for example, stated that "the chief sign of construction [is] that there be no superfluous materials or elements in it. The chief distinction of composition is hierarchy, coordination." He defined technical construction (as opposed to pictorial construction) as "the union of shaped material elements according to a definite scheme for the achievement of a force-effect."

The sculptor Babichev gave a slightly different definition: "Construction is the organic unity of material forms attained through the exposure [revelation] of their [intrinsic] functions. . . ." According to his view, it is possible in "composition" to encounter situations in which the material itself dictates and prescribes the form; in construction, however, it is essential to dominate the material.

Bubnova and Popova at one point prepared a joint definition according to which construction is characterized by necessity, whereas composition is characterized by the regular, tasteful arrangement of elements. Popova, adopting the essence of Ladovsky's definition for technical construction, also applied it to painting, stating that if the material elements in their combination achieve the goal set by the artist, and if there is nothing redundant in the work, construction is achieved. She thus expressed the view, shared by others, that one of the central issues for construction was the ability to create in such a way as to make efficient and economical forms that were absolutely consistent with the intrinsic nature of the materials being used: there should be nothing merely added, nothing superfluous.

Rodchenko, focusing on construction in painting, distinguished between the construction of the forms themselves, independent of their placement

1. Six works — three by Bubnova, two by Loganson, one by Popova — were acquired by Costakis with the Inkhuk portfolio and are therefore included in this context, though they carry no Inkhuk stamp (and in the case of the Logansons postdate the group as a whole). Similarly, two works by Kliun and one by Rodchenko, all dating from the same Inkhuk period, are included here. All of the works not specifically part of the Inkhuk numerical series are identified with an asterisk.

2. I. Matsa, *Sovetskoe iskusstvo za 15 let. Materialy i dokumentatsiia*, Moscow, Leningrad, 1933, pp. 126–39.

3. E.g., while Kandinsky included physics, physiology, optics and medicine under the study of color, he did so in order to intensify his examination of the deeper emotional effects that he believed colors to

have upon the psyche. Similarly the study of form and line was to be based upon rigorous mathematical and geometrical analysis, but only in order to arrive at conclusions about the power of certain linear and formal combinations to evoke feeling and sensation. A questionnaire he devised early in 1920 and circulated at the Inkhuk included such questions as "Describe how certain colors affect you"; "Don't you think that a triangle has a greater sense of humor than a square?" etc. See R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 63–64.

4. Published in *Russkoe iskusstvo*, nos. 2–3, 1923, pp. 85–88. For extensive information on Babichev, see D. Sarabianov, *Alexei Babichev Khudozhnik, teoretik, pedagog*, Moscow, 1974. Also A. Babichev, "O Konstruktsii i kompozitsii," *Dekorativnoe iskusstvo SSSR*, no. 3, 1967, pp. 17–18.

on the canvas, and the construction of the work as a whole. He went so far as to suggest that since authentic construction was “utilitarian necessity,” the achievement of such construction in painting was probably impossible. One could try to approach it by creating “constructive compositions”—compositions in which the materials are used with particular regard for their appropriateness and for their intrinsic properties, but the overriding aesthetic considerations in painting may well present insurmountable obstacles. Babichev, meanwhile, rejected a highly restrictive notion of “utilitarian necessity.” He felt that the categories applicable in technology were not strictly applicable in art, and that the two should be kept separate. He suggested that a law of “mechanical necessity” and a law of “plastic necessity” could coexist in the same work.

Stepanova’s views were similar to—but also slightly different from—those of other members in the group. She agreed with Ladovsky’s basic distinction between composition and construction, but stated the dichotomy even more strongly. In construction, she felt, there is an unequivocal necessity for economy in the use of materials and elements, while in composition the actual reverse is true, since “everything rests precisely on the excessive. . . . The flower on a teacup is absolutely unnecessary for its constructive appropriateness, but it is necessary as an element of taste, a compositional element. . . .” The essential distinction between the two concepts could, Stepanova argued, rest upon the fact that if one part of a “composition” is deleted, the whole does not lose its meaning; it merely requires rearrangement of the remaining parts or the addition of some others. In construction, on the other hand, the removal of a single part entails the destruction of the whole.

In time, discussions at the Institute focused increasingly on construction *per se* (rather than its relation to composition) and the majority gradually came to the conclusion that construction could not be achieved in painting. Rodchenko, clearly moving toward the questions that were to become the basis of Productivist theory, summarized the issues in the following manner: “Technical construction cannot be brought into painting. Our attraction to construction is an expression of the modern consciousness, which comes out of industry.” He defined construction “as a goal or task executed according to one definite system in which the organization of materials accounts for the specifics of their purpose, their appropriate use, and the absence of a single redundant element.”

The process of formulating definitions for “construction” and “composition” forced the various participants to refine their individual theoretical convictions and thereby to clarify the differences among them. Thus, on March 18, 1921, the “First Working Group of Constructivists” emerged as a unit and held their first meeting (Rodchenko, Stepanova, Medunetsky, Karel Ioganson, and the Stenberg brothers). On March 26 the “Working Group of Architects” was formed with Ladovsky, Vladimir Krinsky, and others. On April 8, Korolev announced the formation of a group of sculptors, and on April 15 the “Working Group of Objectivists” (Drevin, Udaltsova and Popova) held their first session. To some extent, therefore, the drawings discussed at the final session on April 22 reflect the more strongly defined tendencies of these different groups.⁸ For example, Kliun’s “construction” (cat. no. 191) was conceived by him as the collision of two states: the static (in the background) and the dynamic (in the foreground). The color of the different elements (not indicated in the drawing), as well as the precise placement of the forms, would be determined by the different functions they performed in expressing the basic static-dynamic theme of the work.⁹ Nevertheless, the essentially pictorial nature of Kliun’s “construction” does suggest, in spite of his analysis, the degree to which his own sensibility was quite alien to that of the Constructivists, and it is not surprising that he left the Inkhuk shortly after the April 1921 sessions. By contrast, Medunetsky and V. Stenberg—both of whom exhibited constructions at the Third Obmokhu exhibition in May 1921—produced work that consistently showed a strong correlation between Constructivist theory and actual artistic practice. Indeed, they were, with Babichev, the only members of the group to submit “constructions” that were feasible designs for the creation of actual objects in space.

At one point, the Inkhuk group developed plans for a publication (*From Figurativeness to Construction*) summarizing their conclusions and presenting examples of their works, but the project was never realized. Nonetheless, the surviving materials do give extremely important insights into the development within the Inkhuk and the Vkhutemas of the theoretical issues that led these artists to move from pictorial concerns to Constructivist ones, and finally to “production art.”

5. In connection with this subject, see Khan-Magomedov, pp. 40-79. Also Lodder, *Constructivism*. Both Khan-Magomedov and Lodder base their discussion on the unpublished records of the sessions held at the Inkhuk during this period; the present discussion of the theoretical issues is entirely indebted to their researches.

6. Khan-Magomedov refers to this list, though he does not publish it. He reproduces all of the drawings in the Costakis group; in addition he includes seven others: two by V. Krinsky, one by G. Stenberg, a second work by Popova (formerly owned by Costakis), a second work by Rodchenko, a third work by both Korolev and Tarabukin. Of the original thirty on the list, missing works are, according to Khan-Magomedov, by Drevin, G. Stenberg, Udaltsova (one each), and Bubnova (two). In the case of Bubnova, it cannot be ruled out that the drawings reproduced here (cat. no. 186), which were acquired by Costakis with the portfolio, originally

formed a part of the group, though they carry no stamp or number. For color reproductions of all the works in the Costakis portfolio, see R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 65-90. The hypothetical presentation of the portfolio in the latter publication is attributable to the fact that the material published by Khan-Magomedov was not available when the book went to press.

7. Identical pinholes at the top of each of the drawings in the Costakis portfolio suggest that they were tacked to the wall during the discussion.

8. The April 22, 1921 session was attended by Babichev, Bubnova, Drevin, Ioganson, Kliun, Korolev, Krinsky, Ladovsky, Medunetsky, Popova, Rodchenko, V. and G. Stenberg, Stepanova, Tarabukin and Udaltsova.

9. Khan-Magomedov, records of the April 22 meeting.

184

Composition. April 22, 1921

Pencil on paper, 19½ x 13⅝" (49.5 x 34.5 cm.)

Dated on reverse: *April 22, 1921*; Inkhuk stamp no. 19

Inscribed on reverse by N. Babicheva: *According to the Inkhuk Archives this work is entitled "Composition" and is dated 22/iv/21.*

Acquired from Natalia Babicheva

C170



185

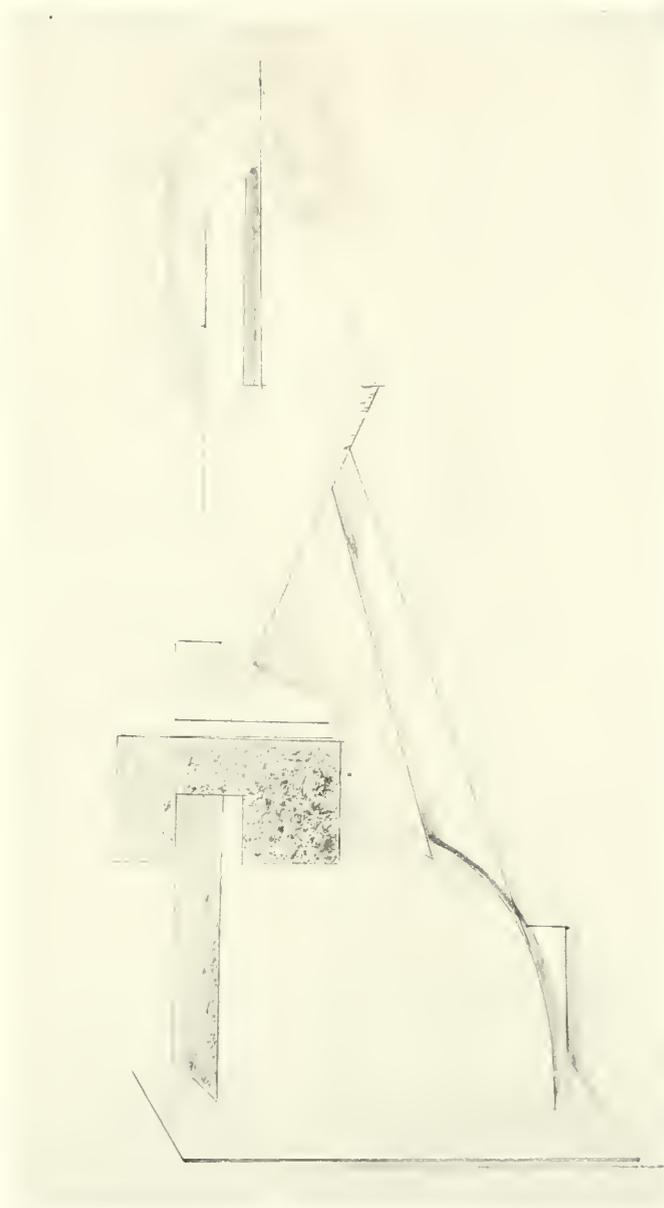
Construction. ca. 1921

Ink, gouache and pencil on paper, 20½ x 11⅛" (52.1 x 28.2 cm.)

On reverse, Inkhuk stamp no. 20

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C169



186 i

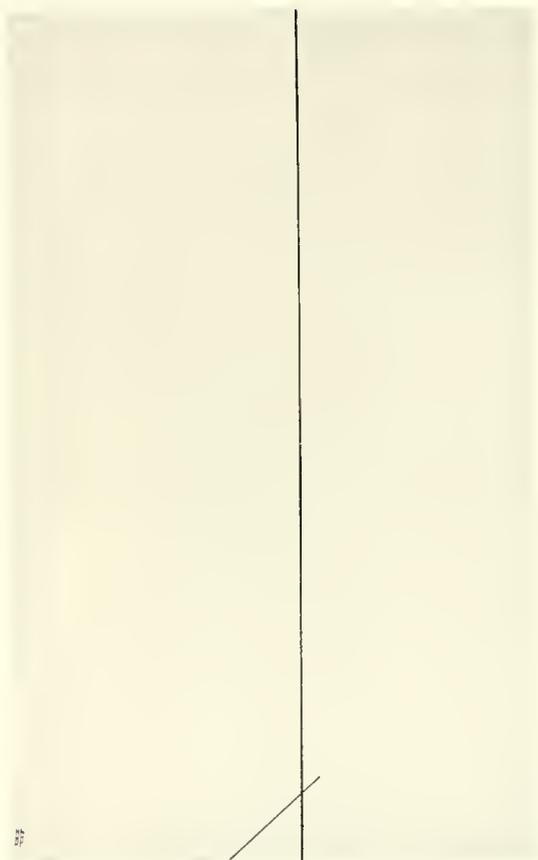
**Untitled*Ink on paper, 14 x 8¹¹/₁₆" (35.6 x 22 cm.)

Signed l.l.: V.B.

Numbered u.l.: I

Acquired from N. Babicheva

Cr84

**See p. 226, fn. 1.*

186 ii

**Untitled*Ink on paper, 14 x 8¹¹/₁₆" (35.6 x 22.1 cm.)

Signed l.r.: V.B.

Numbered u.l.: II

Acquired from N. Babicheva

Cr83

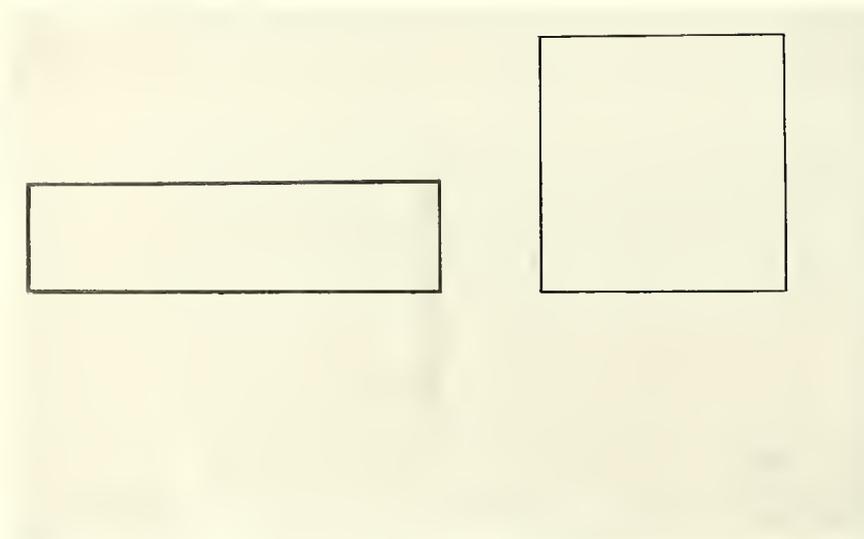
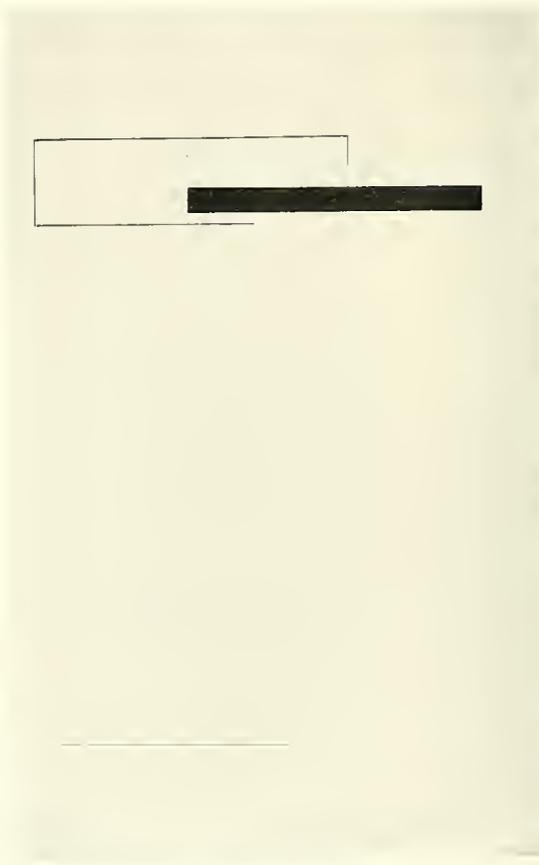


fig. a.

V. D. Bubnova

**Untitled*Ink on paper, 8⁵/₈ x 14" (21.9 x 35.6 cm.)

Signed l.l.: V.B.

Numbered u.l.: III

Acquired from N. Babicheva

Cr82

187

Composition. April 7, 1921
 Colored pencil, ink and pencil on paper, 9½ x 12½" (24.1 x 32.3 cm.)
 Signed and dated on reverse: Karel Ioganson, April 7, 1921; Inkhuk stamp no. 18
 Acquired from N. Babicheva
 CI86 recto

Verso of Composition

Inscribed: *Plan for a composition: Nature-Morte. / The composition on a plane and in space is their geometrization. / Objects: Apple, bottle, glass, table, and fabric*
 CI86 verso

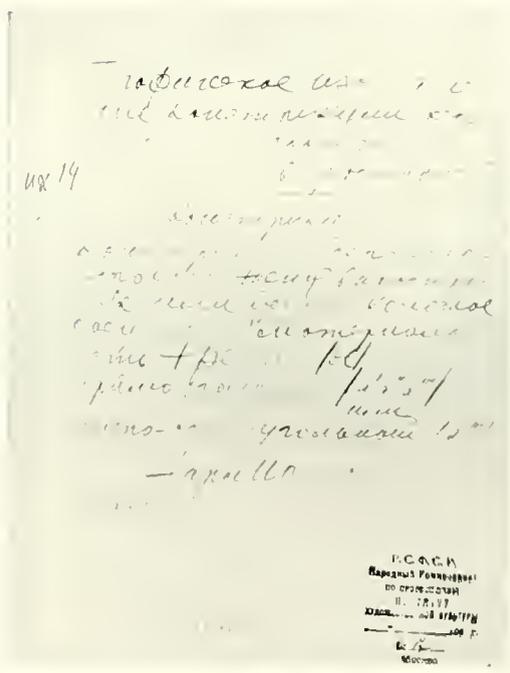
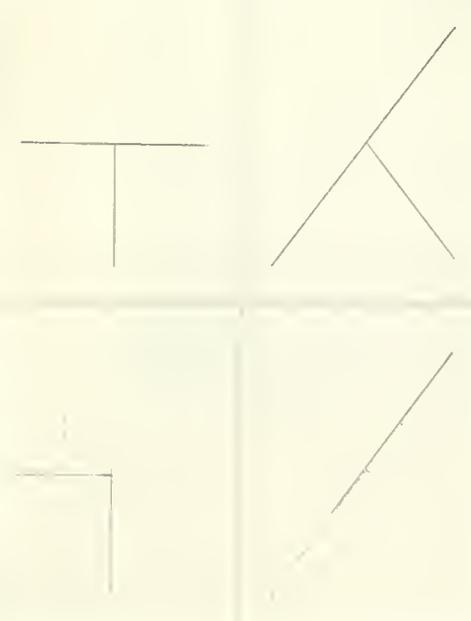
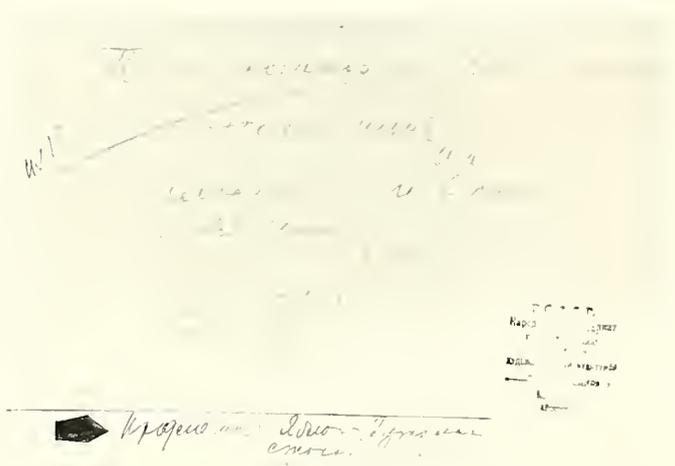


188

Construction. April 7, 1921
 Colored pencil and pencil on paper, 12½ x 9¾" (31.8 x 24.3 cm.)
 Signed and dated on reverse: Karel Ioganson, April 7, 1921; Inkhuk stamp no. 17
 Acquired from N. Babicheva
 CI85 recto

Verso of Construction

Inscribed: *The graphic representation of a construction of a complete cold structure in space. / Construction / The Construction of a complete cold structure in space or any cold combination of hard materials is a cross (A) either right-angled (a' a'' a''') or obtuse and acute-angled (a''')*
 CI85 verso



И. С. С. К.
 Республиканский Институт
 по искусству
 И. С. С. К.
 Москва

189

*Construction. February 23, 1922

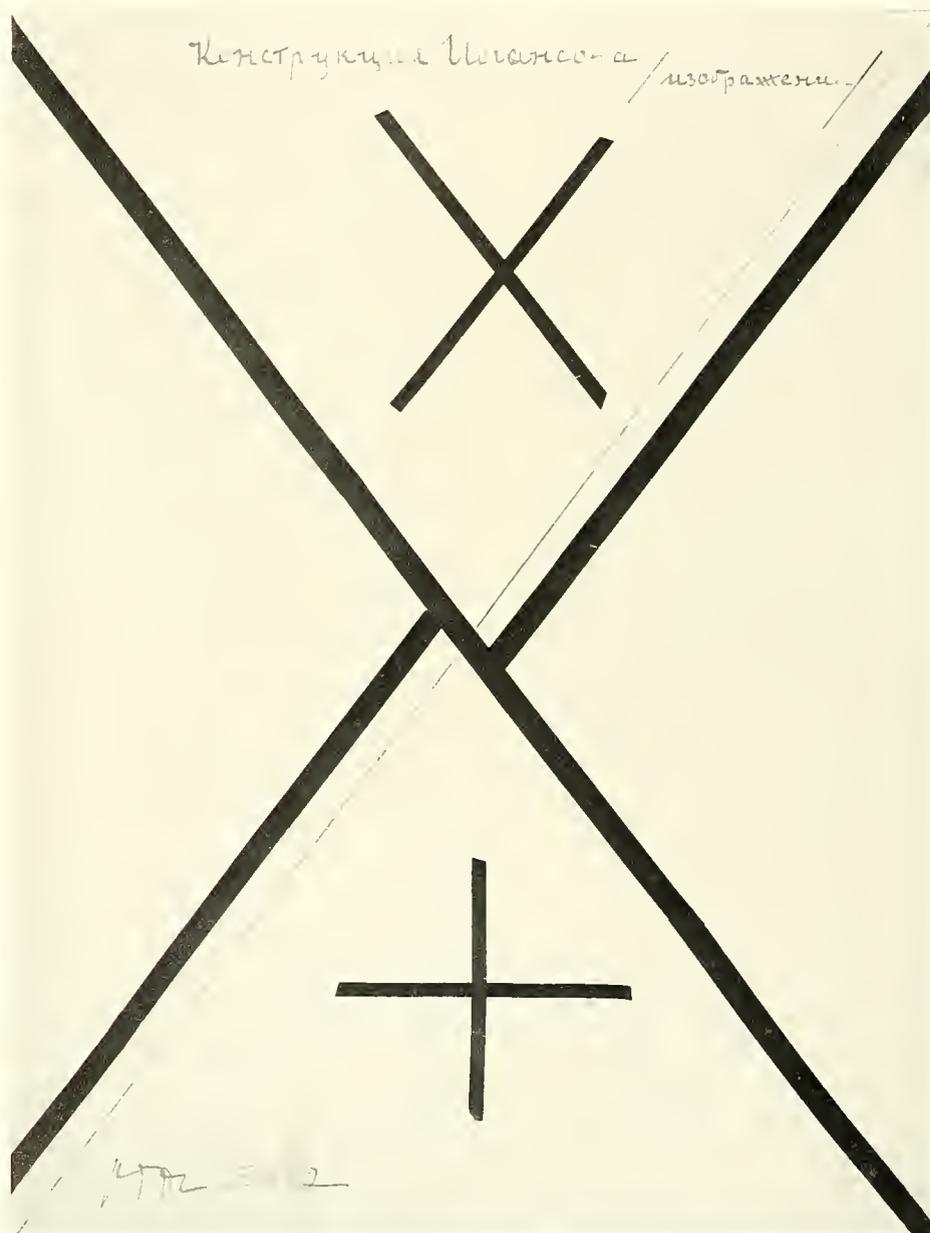
Paper collage, graphite and colored pencil on paper,
17¹/₁₆ x 13³/₁₆" (45.5 x 33.7 cm.)

Signed and dated l.l.: Feb. 23, 1922

Inscribed at top: *Construction by Ioganson/Depiction;*
on reverse: *Ioganson. 23.II. Moscow*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

196.80



190

**Electrical Circuit (Depiction)*. February 23, 1922

Paper collage, graphite and colored pencil on paper,
17¹/₁₆ x 13¹/₄" (45.4 x 33.6 cm.)

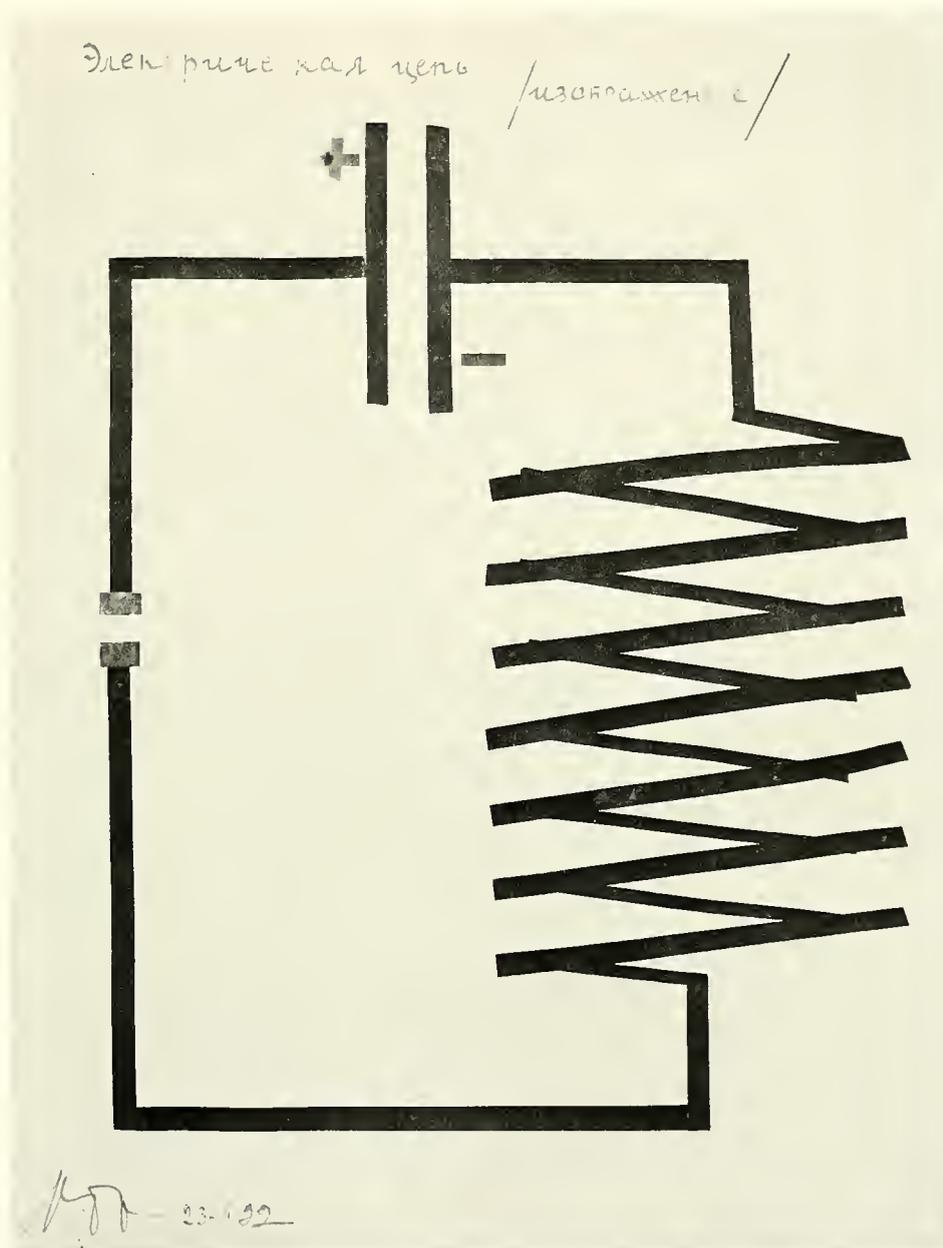
Signed and dated l.l.: *February 23, 1922*; on reverse:
Karel Ioganson 23 II.22

Inscribed at top: *Electrical Circuit/Depiction*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

197.80

These two additional drawings by Ioganson, also acquired with the Inkhuk portfolio but dating almost a year after the debates, probably relate to a teaching project, though an almost total lack of biographical information about Ioganson makes it difficult to pinpoint the precise context.

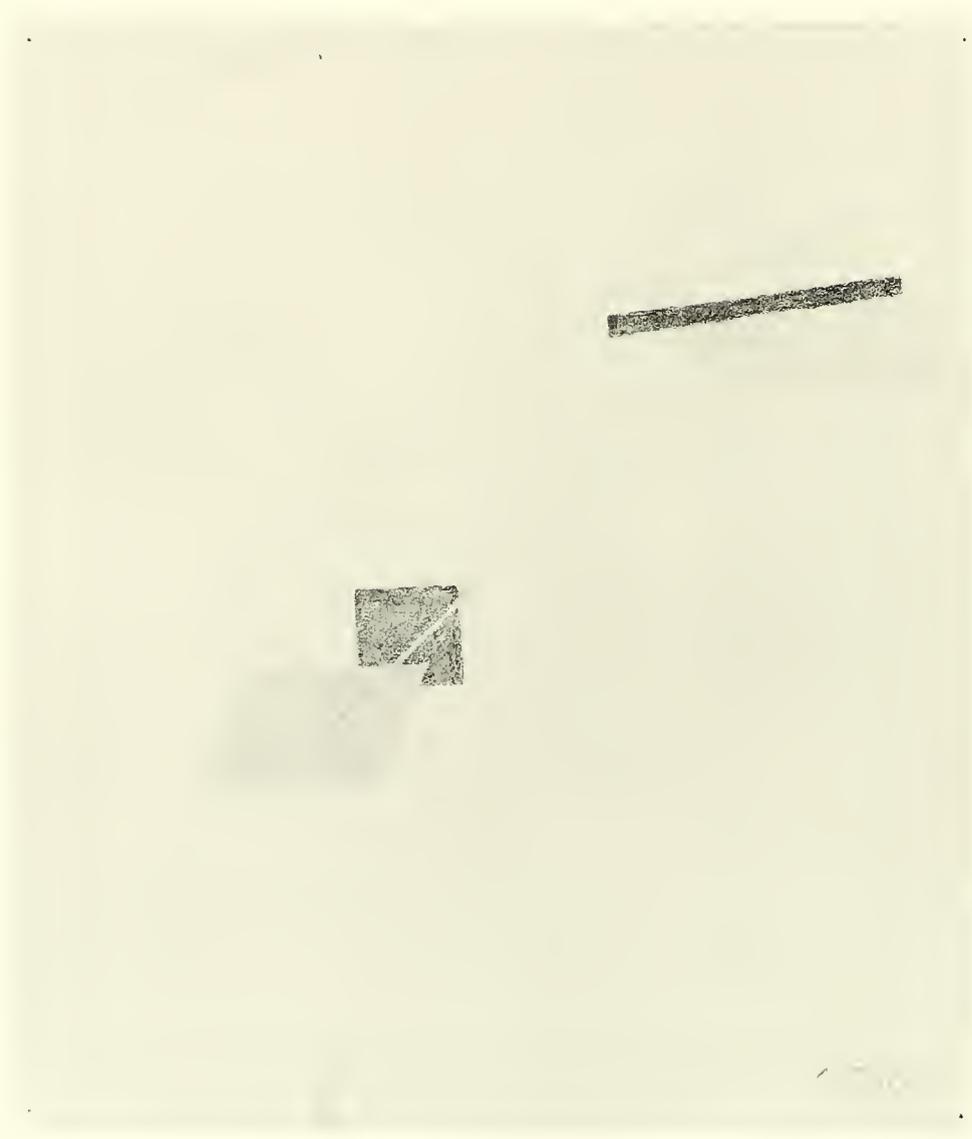


IVAN VASILIEVICH KLIUN

191

Work no. 2 for the Task Construction. ca. 1920
Pencil on paper, $9\frac{1}{16} \times 7\frac{13}{16}$ " (23 x 19.8 cm.)
Inscribed u.l.: *Work no. 2 for the task Construction*;
l.r.: *Ivan Kliun*
On reverse, Inkhuk stamp no. 25
Acquired from N. Babicheva
180.80

An almost identical work, similarly inscribed, but of slightly different dimensions ($7\frac{3}{4} \times 7$ ") is in the collection of the Grosvenor Gallery, London. Kliun's studies for a memorial to Olga Rozanova, and the related studies for constructions, are closely linked to this work. (See cat. no. 86 ii.)



I. V. KLIUN

192 i-ii

*Two Drawings. 1920

Pencil on paper

Each inscribed along lower edge: *Wire sculpture 1920*

Acquired from the artist's daughter, S. I. Klinn

i, 254.80; $6\frac{1}{16} \times 4\frac{3}{16}$ " (17.3 x 10.6 cm.)

ii, 257.80; $4\frac{1}{16} \times 6\frac{9}{16}$ " (12.6 x 16.6 cm.)

i

ii

193

Composition. April 8, 1921

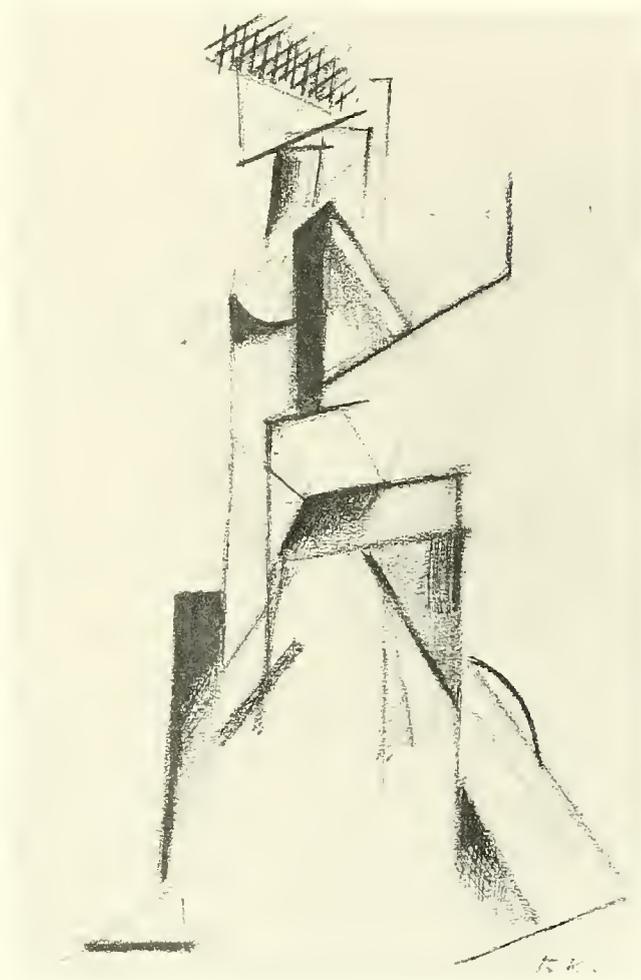
Pencil and pen on paper, $6\frac{3}{8} \times 4\frac{3}{16}$ " (16.1 x 10.6 cm.)

Signed l.r.: signed and dated on reverse: *April 8, 1921*;
Inkhuk stamp no. 3

Acquired from N. Babicheva

CI76

For information on Korolev see L. Bubnova, *Boris
Danilovich Korolev*, Moscow, 1968.



Construction. April 19, 1921

Pencil on paper, $13\frac{15}{16} \times 10\frac{3}{16}$ " (35.4 x 25.9 cm.)

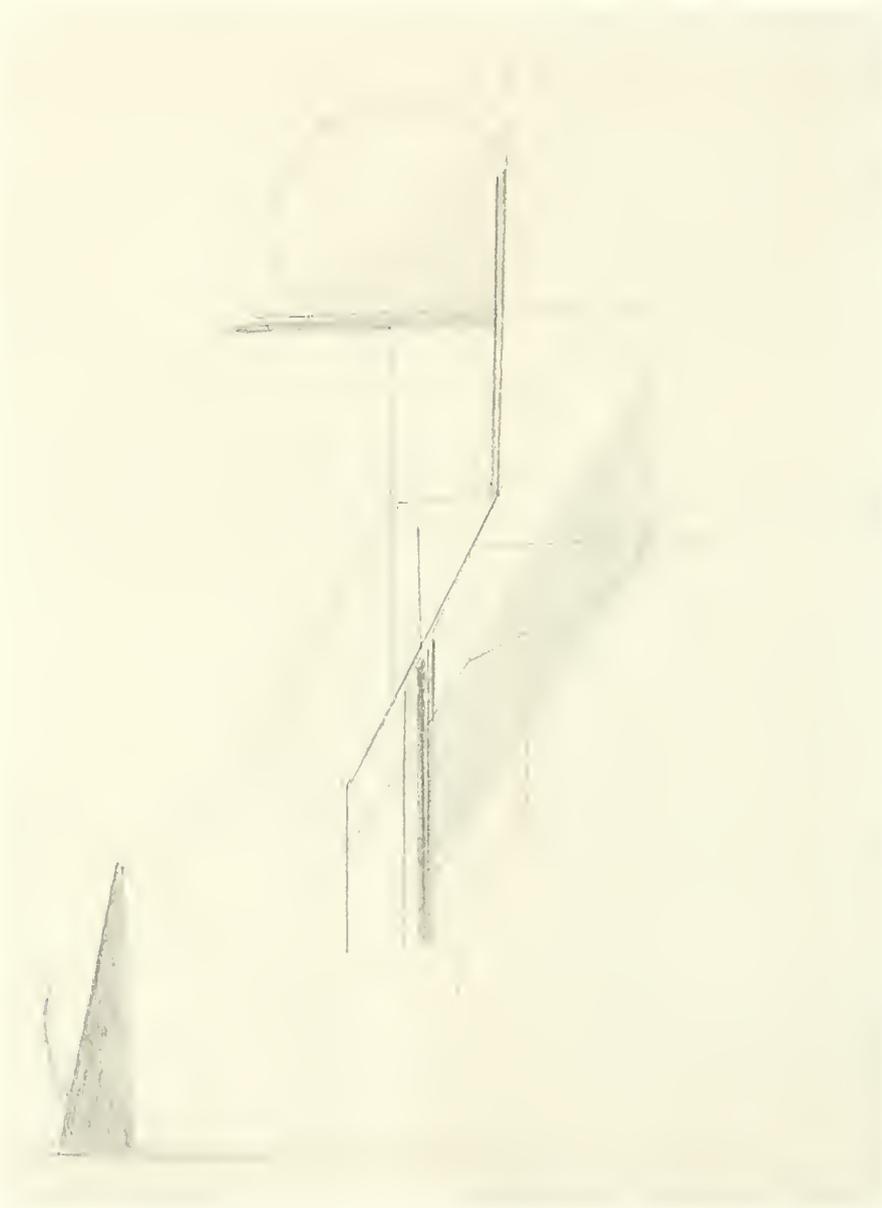
Signed l.r.; inscribed, signed and dated on reverse:

Construction for Inkhuk, B. Korolev, 19 April 21;

Inkhuk stamp no. 4

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C177



195 i

Example of a Composed Structure. April 15, 1921
 Ink, pencil and wash on cardboard, 14¹⁵/₁₆ x 10⁷/₈"
 (38 x 27.5 cm.)

Signed and dated l.r.: 15 April 1921; on reverse, circular
 Inkhuk stamp with no number

Inscribed n.l.: *Scheme of the structure of the composi-
 tion; c.r.: Example of a composed structure; l.l.: The
 entire structure is governed by the rectangle A which
 generates geometric similarities and displacements for
 which A is the center*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

CI75



Ladovsky, who was on the architecture faculty at the
 Vkhutemas, had already developed the basis for a
 theory of architecture by October of 1920, when he
 formulated a series of problems on this subject. He
 introduced the theory with the statement:

Architectural rationality based on economic prin-
 ciples is very similar to technological rationality. The
 difference lies in the fact that technological ration-
 ality is an economy of labor and material for the
 creation of an expedient structure, while architectural
 rationality is the economy of psychic energy for the
 perception of the spatial and functional qualities of
 a structure. The synthesis of these two rationalities in
 one structure is rational architecture.¹

Ladovsky's contributions to the debates on "composi-
 tion" and "construction" arise directly out of his general
 program at the Vkhutemas and are consistent with his
 emphasis, shared by others in the group, on the need
 for economy, functionalism, expediency.²

195 ii

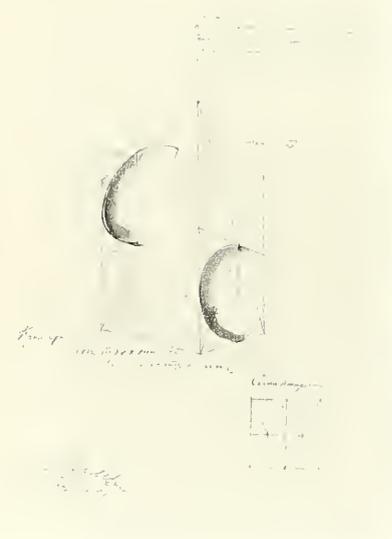
Model of a Constructive Structure. April 15, 1921
 Ink, pencil and wash on cardboard, 14¹⁵/₁₆ x 10³/₄"
 (38 x 27.3 cm.)

Signed and dated l.l.: 15 April 1921; on reverse, circular
 Inkhuk stamp with no number

Inscribed u.r.: *Given 2 planes A and B, forming a bi-
 planar angle, it is necessary to make a constructive
 structure which reveals both the angle and the given
 properties of each of the planes; l.l.: A model con-
 structive structure; l.r.: Scheme of the structure*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

CI74



1. Trans. Judith and Steven Wolin, *The Institute for Architecture and Urban Studies, New York, Art and Architecture, USSR, 1917-1932*, 1971, p. 15.

2. For further information on Ladovsky see M. Barkhin and Yu. Yarolov, *Mastera sovetskoi arkhitektury ob arkhitekture*, vol. 1, Moscow, 1975, pp. 337-364.

196

Composition. 1920

Pencil and orange crayon on paper, $10\frac{1}{16} \times 9\frac{1}{4}$ "
(26.8 x 23.4 cm.)

Signed l.r.; on reverse, Inkhuk stamp no. 26

Acquired from N. Babicheva

Cr79

197

Construction. 1920

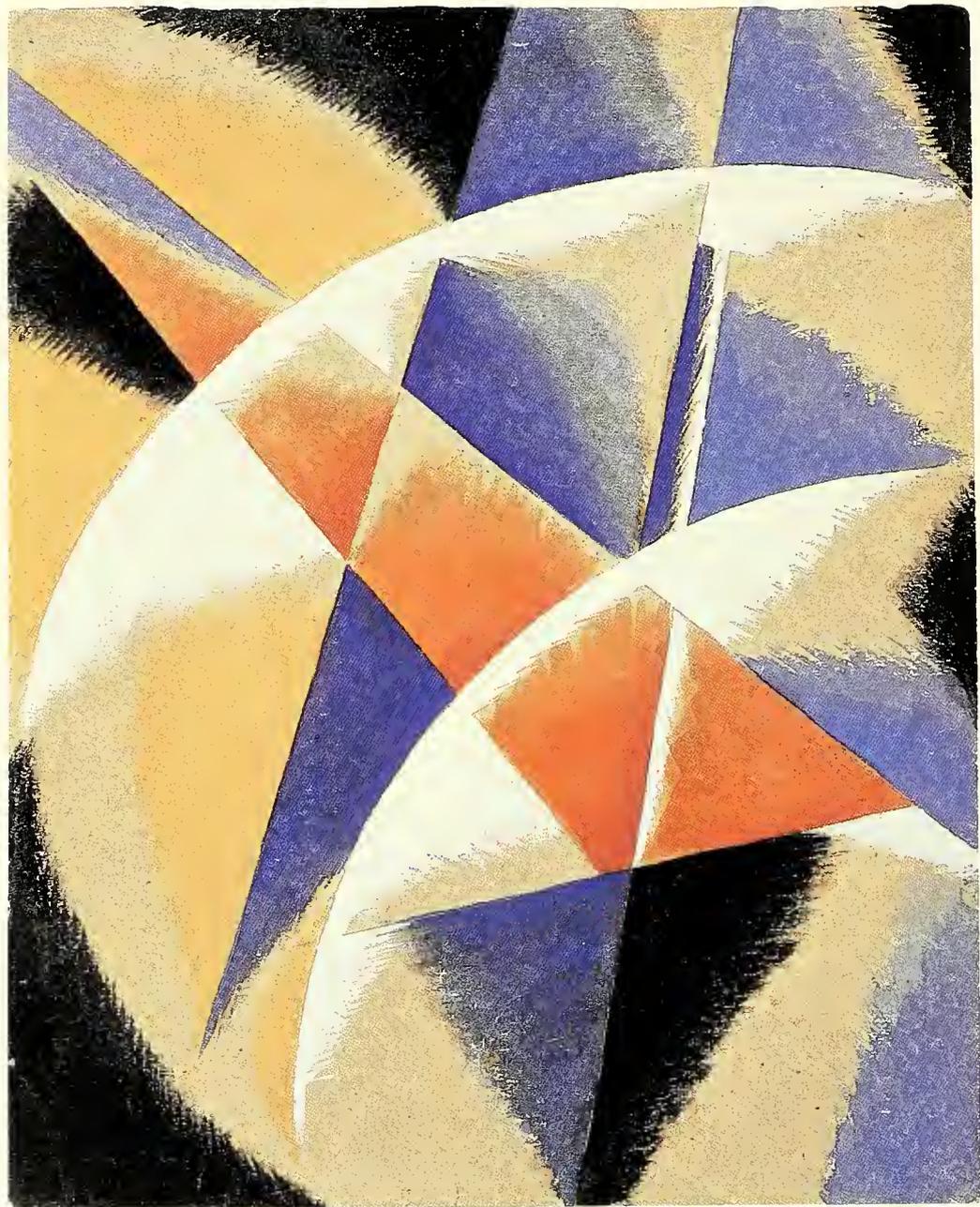
Brown ink on paper, $10\frac{5}{8} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$ " (27 x 19.1 cm.)

Signed, titled and dated l.r.: 1920

On reverse: *Construction* 1920; Inkhuk stamp no. 27

Acquired from N. Babicheva

Cr178



198

Composition.¹ 1921Gouache on paper, 13½ x 10¹/₁₆" (34.3 x 27.5 cm.)Signed and titled on reverse: *L. Popova Composition*;
Inkhuk stamp no. 2

Acquired from N. Babicheva

190.80

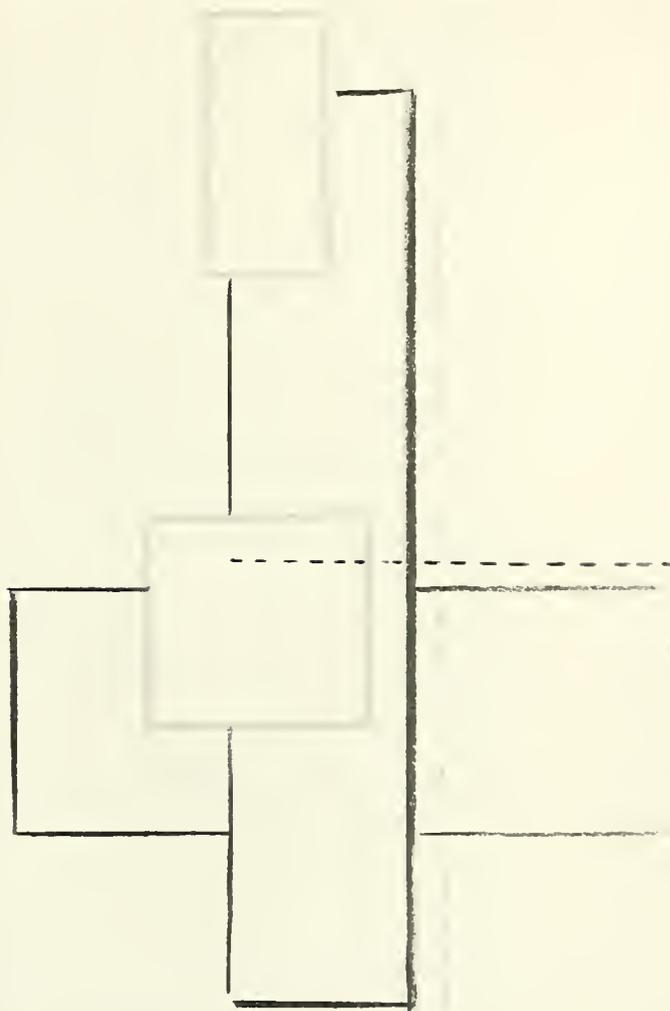
Popova's second work for the Inkhuk portfolio formed part of the Costakis gift to the Tretyakov Gallery and, according to Khan-Magomedov, its title is "Representation of a Spatial Organization (Construction)."² Whether this work carries an Inkhuk stamp on its reverse is not known. In addition, a third work, almost identical to cat. no. 198 and dated 1921, was given by Costakis to the Tretyakov (repr., color, R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 866).

199

Untitled. December 1921Red and black crayon on paper, 10⁷/₈ x 8³/₁₆"
(27.6 x 20.7 cm.)Signed and dated l.r.: *L. Popova XII 21*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C188



1. Khan-Magomedov gives the title as "Representation of a Spatial Organization (Composition)," p. 74.

2. *Ibid.* This work is reproduced in color in R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 81, gouache on cardboard, 13³/₁₆ x 10⁵/₁₆" (33.5 x 27 cm.).

Composition. 1917

Pencil and colored crayon on paper mounted on paper,
10½ x 8½" (26.6 x 21.5 cm.)

Signed and dated l.r.: *Rodchenko 1917*; Inkhuk stamp
no. 11

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C171

This drawing is one of a series of designs for lamps that Rodchenko made for the *Café Pittoresque* in 1917. Georgii Yakulov supervised this project, which was intended as a synthesis of fine arts, literature and the theater.¹ Rodchenko's decision to submit this earlier work in the context of the "construction" and "composition" debate at Inkhuk becomes plausible in the

light of his comments during the debate. In arguing for "construction" in real objects he said:

Let's take a lamp. You could examine it as a composition together with all its decorations and base, but there are expediently built lamps — that is, lamps in which goal and use are exposed as constructively as possible; such a lamp permits construction alone without the aesthetic compositional combining of goal with the decorative moment.²

The *Construction* published by Khan-Magomedov as Rodchenko's second work for the portfolio, described by him as a "project for a lamp," precisely illustrates this more explicitly "constructive" or expedient approach.



1. See R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 1168. Also G. Karginov, *Rodchenko*, London, 1979, pp. 91 and 92.

2. Khan-Magomedov, p. 51.

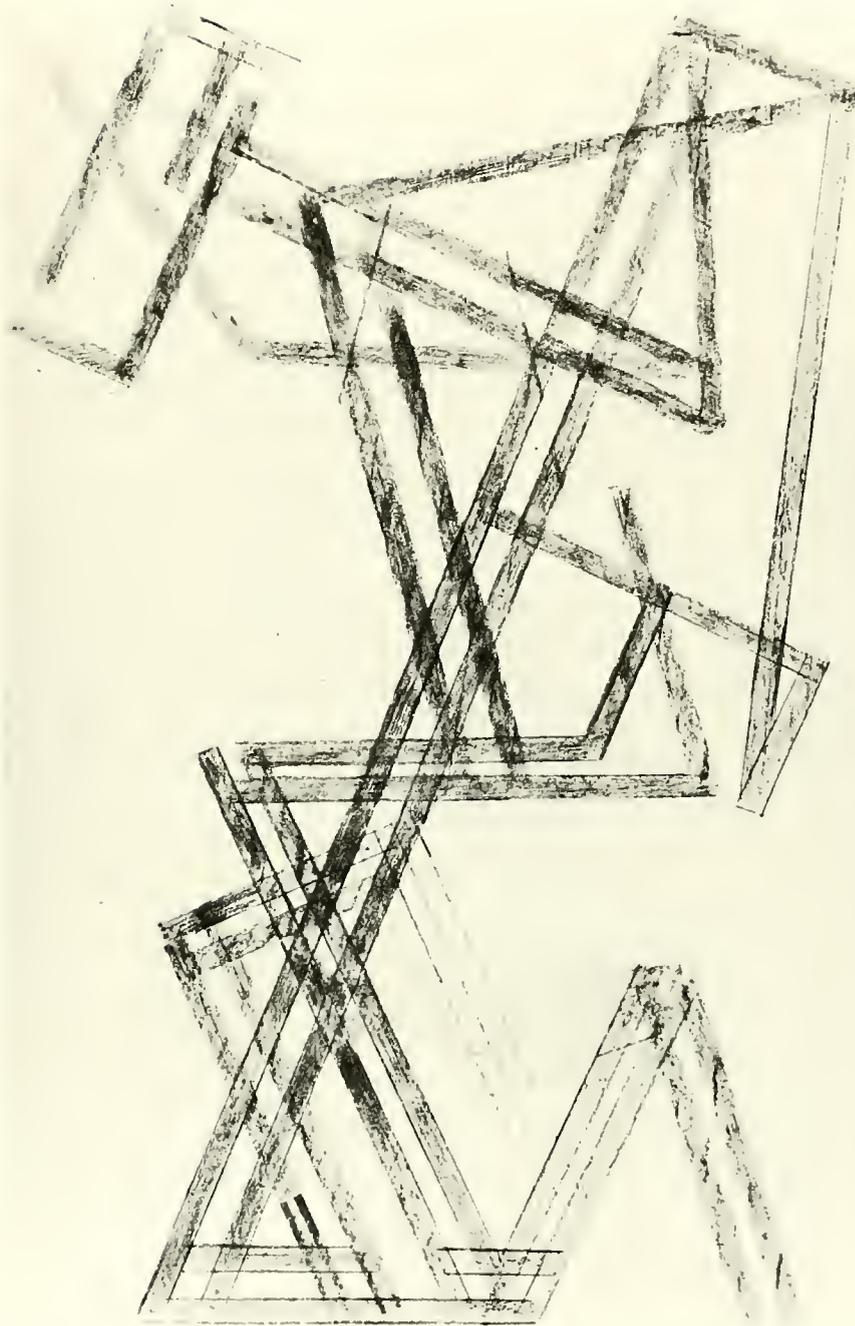
201

Untitled. October 1921

Red and blue wax crayon on paper, 19 x 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
(48.3 x 32.4 cm.)

Signed lower edge: *Rodchenko N3 1921 X*

C198



202

Composition. 1920

Colored pencil on paper, 8 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ " (21 x 13.9 cm.)

Signed, titled and dated on reverse: *Composition 1920*

V. Stenberg; Inkhuk stamp no. 5

Acquired from N. Babicheva

182.80



203

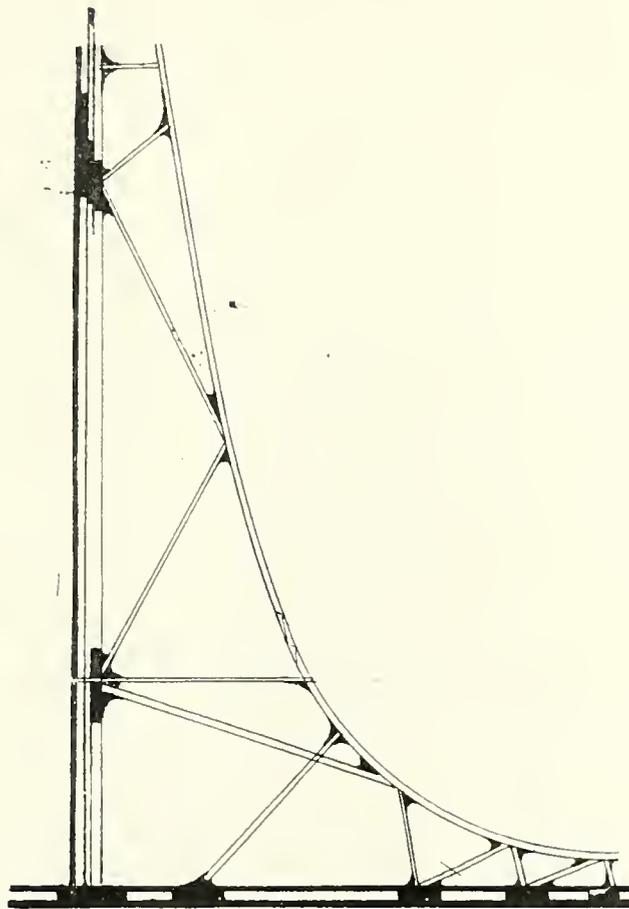
Construction. 1920

Ink on paper, 10 x 7⁵/₈" (25.4 x 19.3 cm.)

Signed l.r.; Inkhuk stamp no. 6

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C165



V. STENBERG.

204

Composition. ca. 1920-21

Gouache on paper mounted on gray paper, $8\frac{13}{16} \times 7\frac{3}{16}$ " (22.3 x 18.5 cm.)

Signed l.l. on mount: *Varst*; Inkhuk stamp no. 15

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C172

205

Construction. ca. 1920-21

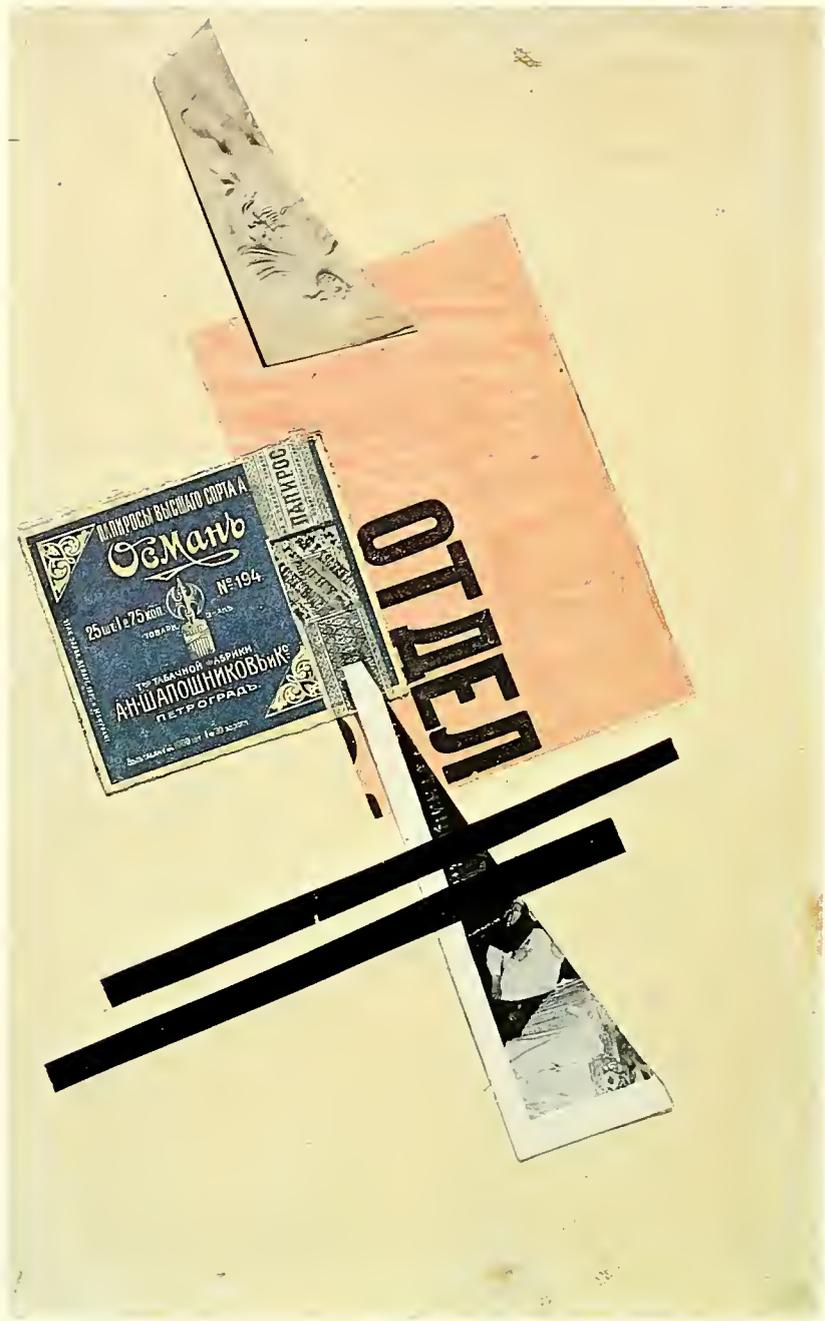
Collage on paper, $14\frac{1}{8} \times 9$ " (35.9 x 22.9 cm.)

Signed on reverse: *Varst*; Inkhuk stamp no. 16

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C173





206

Linear Composition. ca. 1921Pencil on paper, 8¹/₁₆ x 7¹/₁₆" (22 x 17.9 cm.)

Signed l.r.: N. T.

On reverse, in N. Babicheva's hand: *N. Tarabukin*;

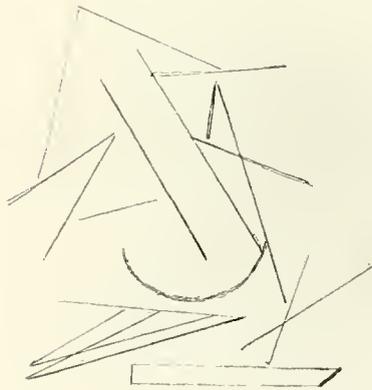
Inkhuk stamp no. 13

Inscribed along lower edge: *Linear composition*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C181

In his 1923 essay "Toward a theory of painting" ("Opyt teorii zhivopisi"), Tarabukin has a section on "Composition and Construction," which elaborates upon the position taken by him during the debates. (Trans. into French in A. B. Nakov, ed., *Nikolai Taraboukine. Le dernier tableau*, Paris, 1972, pp. 124-27.)



H.T.

207

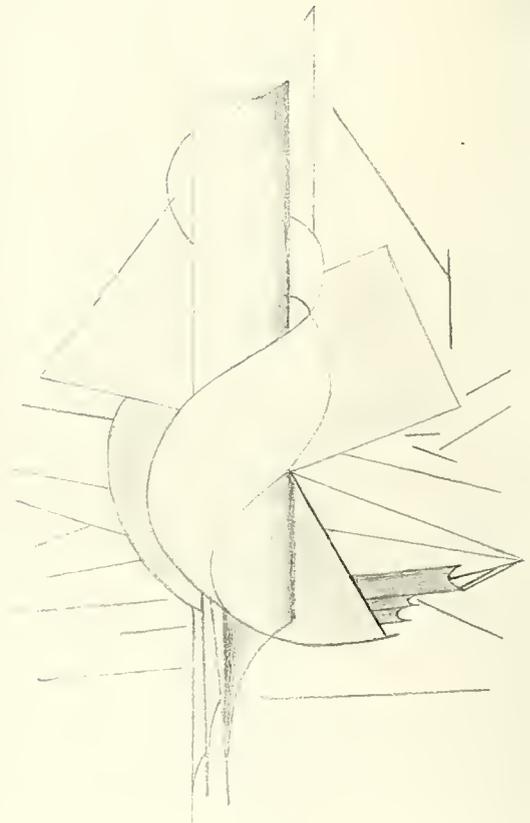
Static-dynamic, planar-volumetric compositional constructiveness. ca. 1921Pencil on paper, 14¹/₈ x 8³/₄" (35.8 x 22.2 cm.)

Signed l.r.: N.T.; Inkhuk stamp no. 14

Inscribed along lower edge: *Static-dynamic, planar-volumetric compositional constructiveness*

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C180



H.T.

208

Untitled

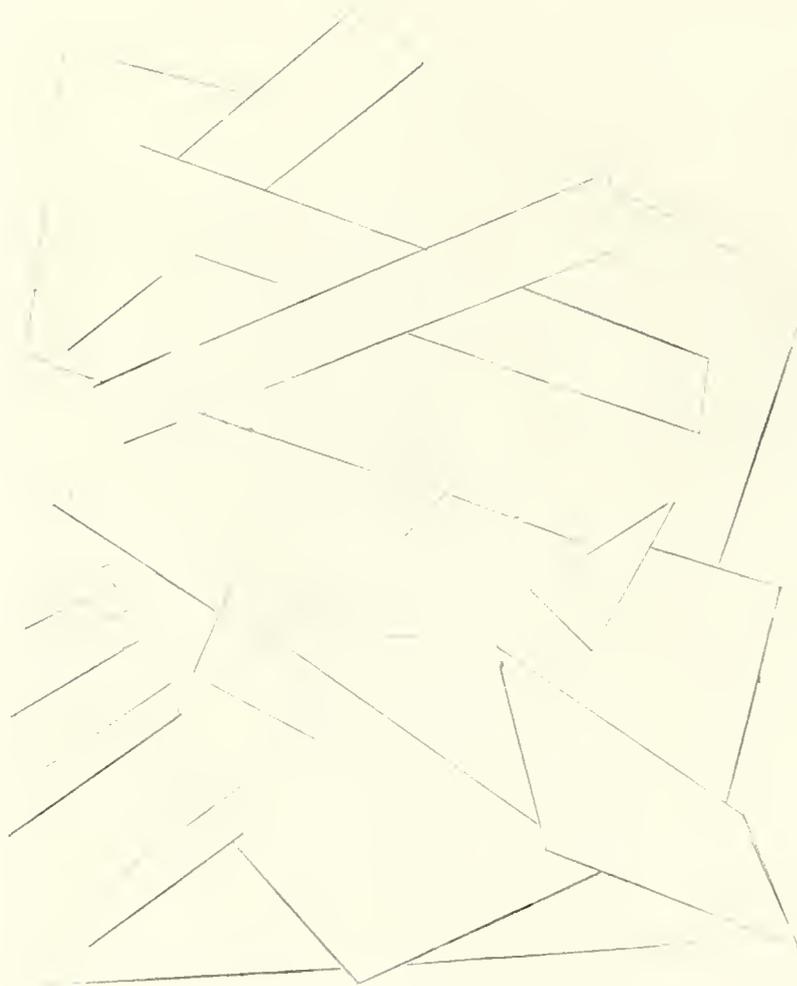
Blue ink and pencil on paper, $13\frac{5}{8} \times 10\frac{1}{16}$ "
(34.5 x 25.5 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse, in N. Babicheva's hand:

Udaltsova; Inkhuk stamp no. 24

Acquired from N. Babicheva

C189



209

Untitled. 1922

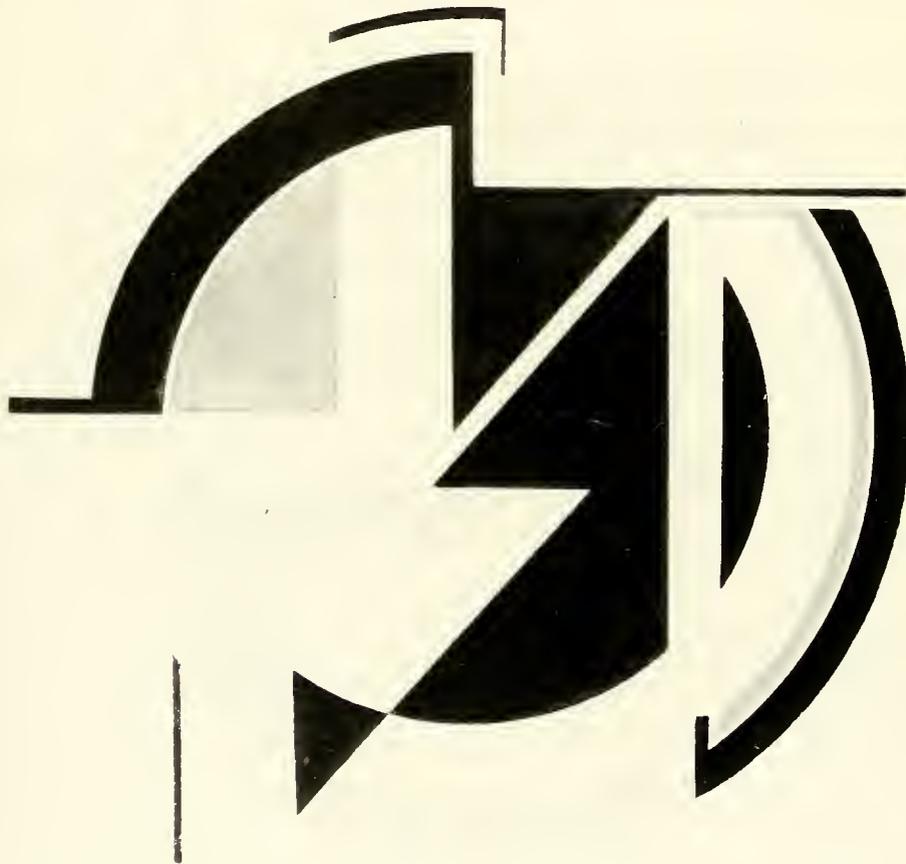
Ink and watercolor on paper, 8½ x 8⅝"
(21.6 x 21.1 cm.)

Signed and dated l.r.: 22

Acquired from the artist's daughter

264.78

Sofronova taught at the State Art Studios in Tver (now Kalinin) from 1920 to 1921, but in the fall of 1921 she moved to Moscow and for two years worked on a large series of Constructivist drawings in pencil, charcoal and colored inks. During these years she became a close friend of Nikolai Tarabukin, and in 1923 designed the cover for his book *From the Easel to the Machine* (*Ot molberta k mashine*).



АСЕ
22

210

Untitled. 1922

Ink and watercolor on paper, 8¾ x 7⅛"

(22.2 x 18.2 cm.)

Signed l.r.: AFS (in monogram)

Acquired from the artist's daughter

261.78



AFS

211

Untitled. 1922

Charcoal on paper, $8\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{16}$ " (21.3 x 15.4 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter

257.78



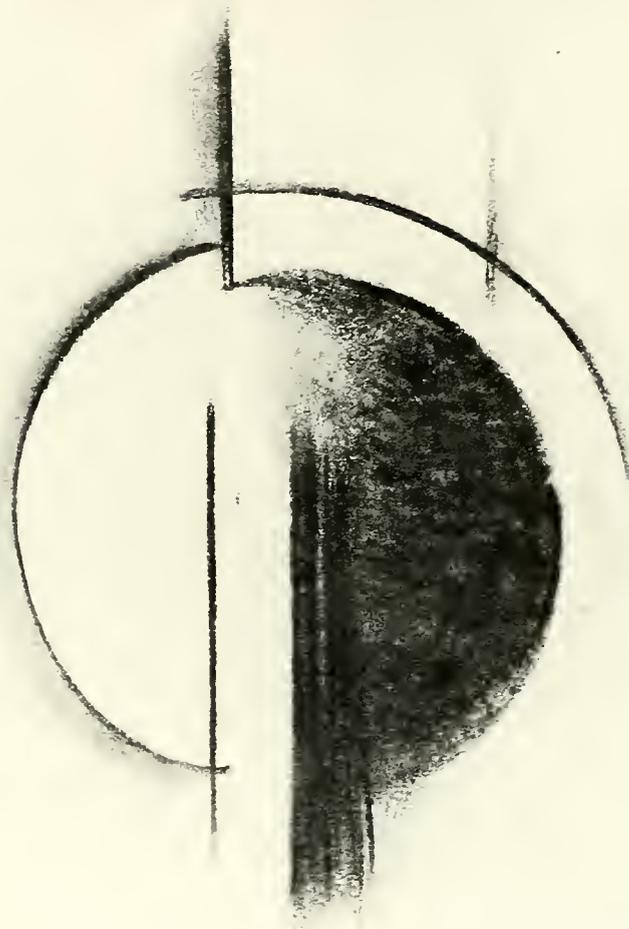
212

Untitled. 1922

Charcoal on paper, $7\frac{11}{16} \times 6\frac{3}{16}$ " (19.5 x 15.7 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's daughter

260.78



213 i-ii

Two Designs for Constructions. 1922

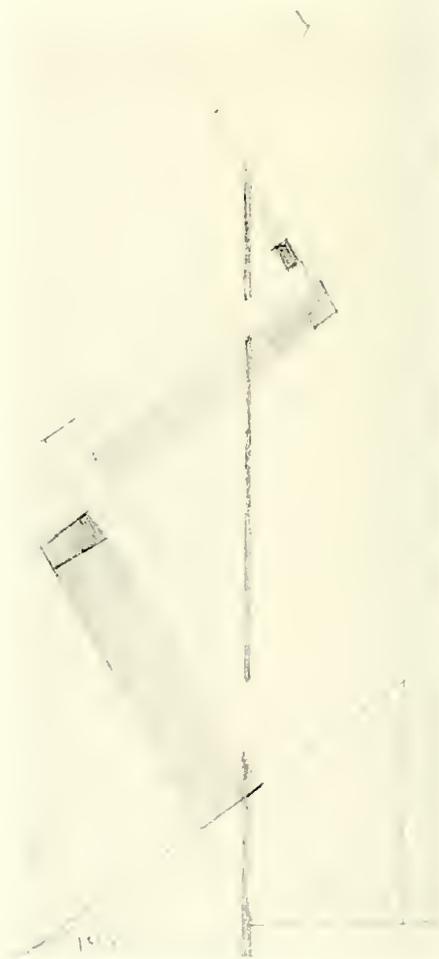
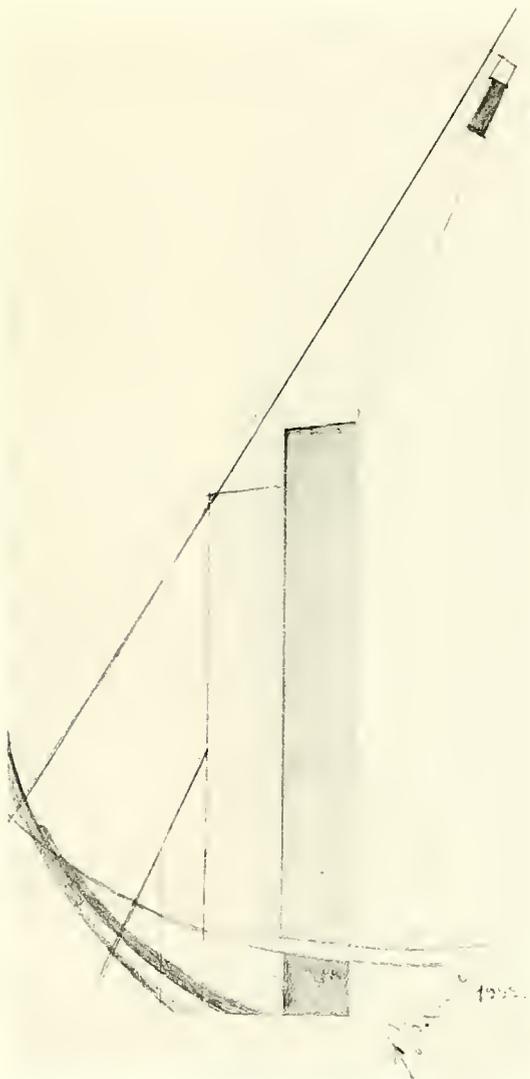
Pencil on paper, mounted on paper

Left, i, 815.79B: $9\frac{1}{8} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ " (23.2 x 12.1 cm.), dated 1922

Right, ii, 815.79A: $8 \times 3\frac{5}{8}$ " (20.4 x 21.3 cm.), dated 1922

Purchased from the artist

During the late teens Vialov studied under Lentulov and Morgunov at the Svomas, but from about 1921 he was at the Vkhutemas, where all of the students were required to take the Basic Course. His theatrical designs (cat. nos. 261-62), as well as his construction projects, were clearly indebted to the Vkhutemas training in "the fundamentals of spatial relationships." (See S. Bojko, "Vkhutemas," in LACMA, pp. 78-83; Lodder, *Constructivism*.)



214

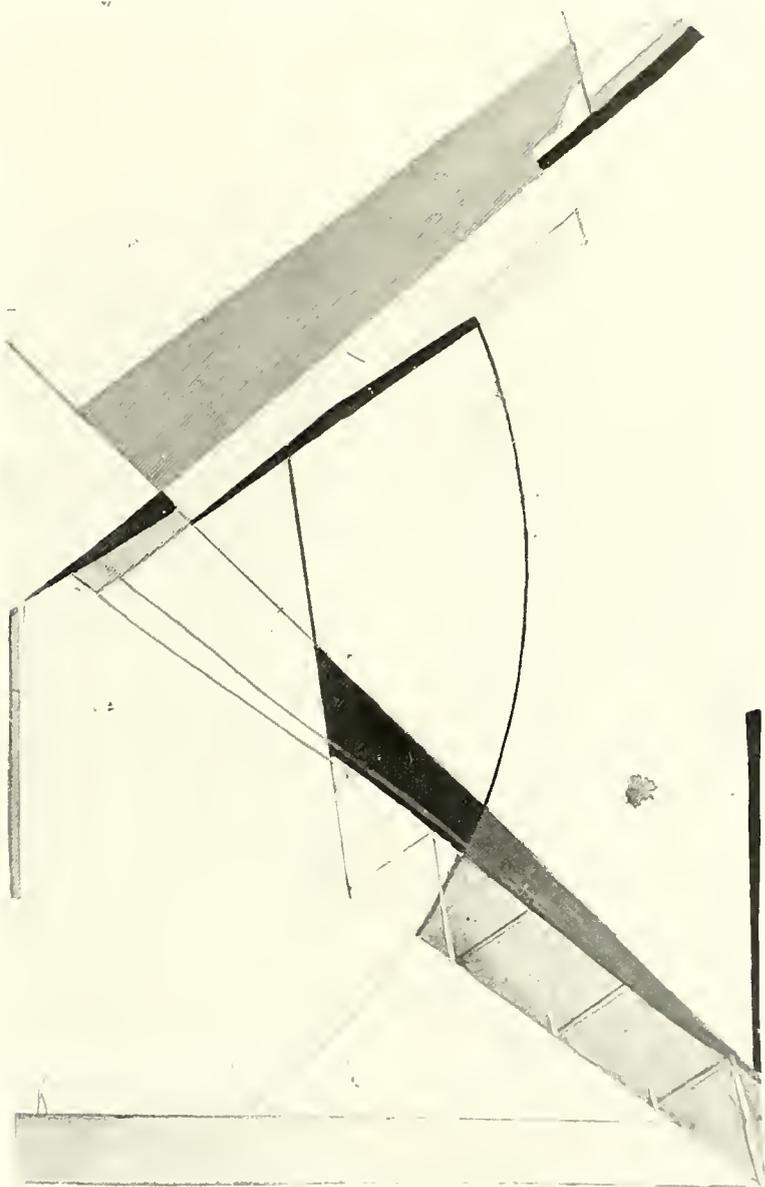
Design for Construction of Theater Set (?) 1923

Gouache and pencil on paper formerly mounted on
purple paper, 10 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (25.7 x 16.2 cm.)

Signed and dated l.r. on mount: 1923 *K. Vialov*

Purchased from the artist

816.79



215

5 x 5 = 25 Exhibition Catalogue. Moscow, September 1921

Handmade catalogue with cover by Stepanova and original works by Popova, A. Vesnin and Stepanova. Numbered on upper left of cover and title page: 146
Paper collage, gouache, hectography and ink (10 pp. including cover). Cover: $7\frac{5}{16} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ " (18.6 x 12 cm.); interior sheets: $7 \times 4\frac{3}{8}$ " (17.8 x 11.2 cm.)

Gift of Alexandr Rodchenko

146.80

In September of 1921, an exhibition took place under the auspices of the Inkhuk on the premises of the All-Russian Union of Poets Club (VSP). The five artists who participated — Popova, Rodchenko, Stepanova, Exter and Vesnin, each represented by five works—conceived it as a “farewell to pure painting.”¹ Stepanova declared the end of the contemplative role of art, and Popova described her works as “preparatory experiments towards concrete material constructions.”²

Illustrated: cover (left); Popova collage (right)



Within the context of the Inkhuk debates, the exhibition was an important turning point. By November of that year, Osip Brik's resolution proclaiming a Productivist aesthetic doctrine was adopted by the Constructivist group, the majority of whom produced no further paintings.

The catalogues for the exhibition were handmade, each artist contributing original works, and every copy having a unique identity. The size of the edition is not known. Of the two copies exhibited here, cat. no. 215 lacks the works by Rodchenko and Exter. The inclusion in it of a collage by Popova (instead of the more commonly used linocut) may be unique.

216

5 x 5 = 25 Exhibition Catalogue. Moscow, September 1921

Handmade catalogue with cover by Vesnin and original works by Stepanova, Vesnin, Popova, Rodchenko and Exter

Dedication on verso title: *to Costakis from Varvara Rodchenko*

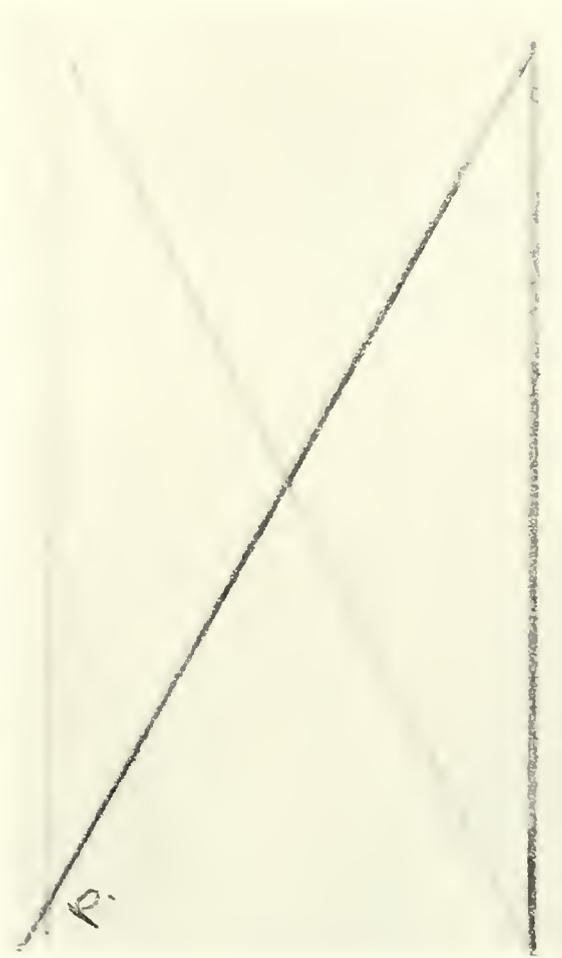
Charcoal and colored crayons, gouache, ink, linocut, pencil and hectography (14 pp. including cover).

Cover: 8 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{15}{16}$ " (22 x 12.5 cm.); interior sheets: 7 x 4 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (17.8 x 11.2 cm.)

Gift of Varvara Rodchenko

145.80

Illustrated: cover (left); Rodchenko drawing (right)



217

Ten Cubes. 1919-1921

Cardboard cubes with gouache; each approx. $2\frac{3}{16} \times 2\frac{3}{16} \times 2\frac{3}{16}$ " (5.6 x 5.6 x 5.6 cm.)

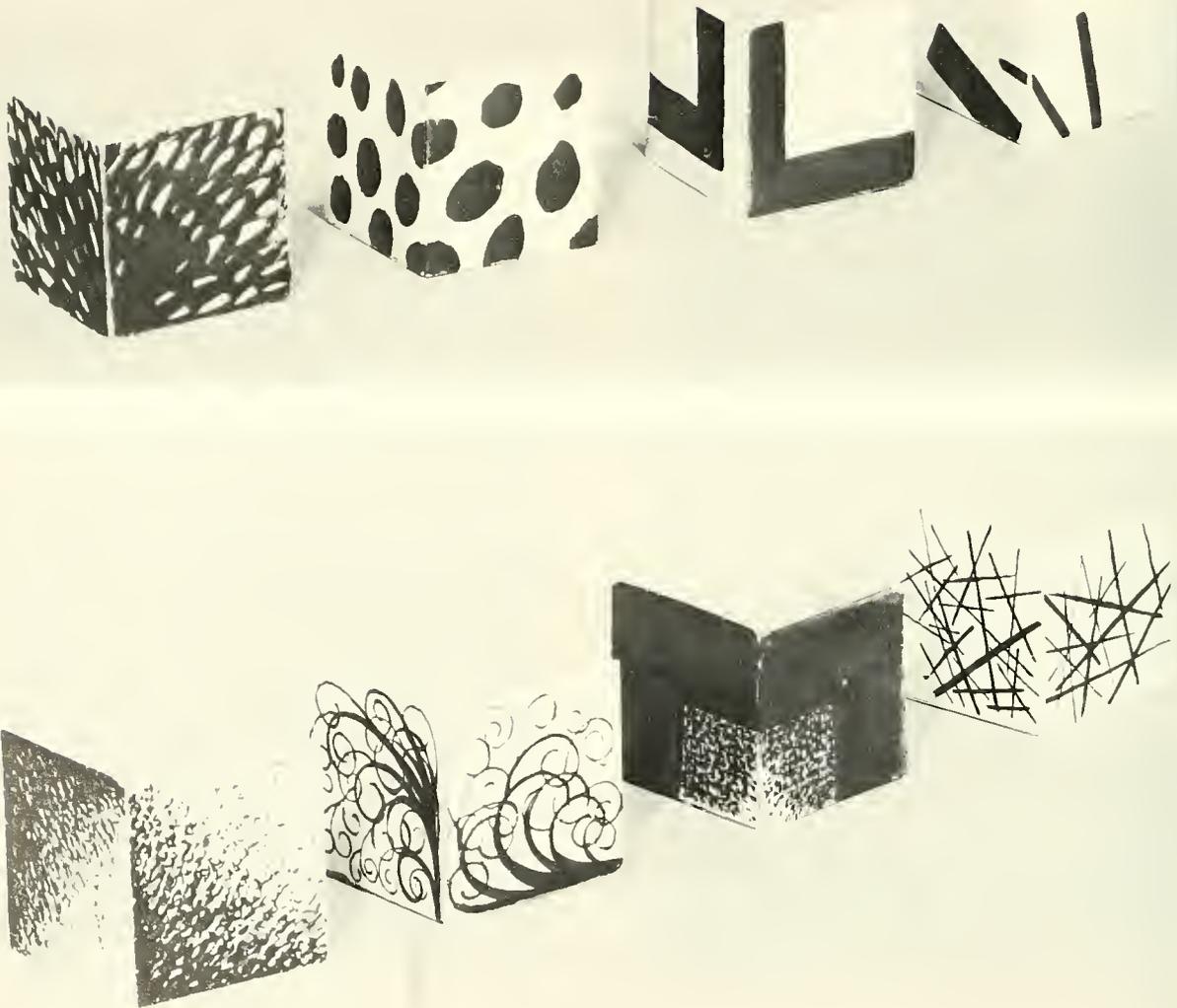
Gift of M. Miturich, son of the artist

313.80

Miturich's cubes, each of which is constructed out of only three sides, all decorated with gouache designs, are closely related to his "spatial" paintings of the same

period. In both sets of works, he explores the relationship between volume and space and the means by which graphic elements interact with those which are experienced spatially. Since each of the cubes is painted on all three sides, a constantly shifting relationship between the viewer and the objects in their various combinations occurs.

(For a discussion of Miturich and his career see N. Rozanova, *Petr Vasilievich Miturich*, Moscow, 1973; also Lodder, *Constructivism*.)



VI

Productivism

Working at the Inkhuk as a member of the Productivist group in the summer and autumn of 1922, Klucis designed a group of "Radio Orators" or loudspeakers in connection with Moscow's preparations for the Fourth Comintern Congress (Congress of the Communist International). Closely adhering to Constructivist principles (and differing, therefore, from the essentially utopian conceptions of 1920-22), the kiosks were designed with maximum economy of material and efficiency of construction. They were to be lightweight and collapsible, made of wood, canvas and rope, with every nut and bolt exposed. Skeletal cages were to hold the propaganda apparatus. There were loudspeakers for the broadcasting of speeches by Lenin, Zinoviev and others; screens for the projection of newsreels and slides; speakers' rostrums; and signboards for the display of posters and other propaganda.

Only two of the kiosks were actually built, including the "International" which was installed on Tverskoi Boulevard outside the Hotel Nerezee, where the Comintern delegates were staying.¹ Wood and paper models of the others were prepared for the convening of the congress in November 1922, and the designs for all the constructions were published in separate lithographic editions.

There is a striking structural and conceptual relationship between Klucis's designs and the "KPS" structures shown by the Stenberg brothers at the Third Obmokhu exhibition in 1921,² and it is likely that Klucis was influenced by the Stenberg example as he developed the ideas for his own Comintern project of 1922.

1. L. Oginskaia, "Khudozhnik-agitator," *Dekorativnoe iskusstvo*, no. 5, 1971, p. 27.

2. Konstruktsiia prostranstvennogo sooruzheniia (construction of a spatial apparatus), A. B. Nakov *2 Stenberg 2*, London-Paris, 1975. See esp. "KPS 13" and its stand and "KPS 6."

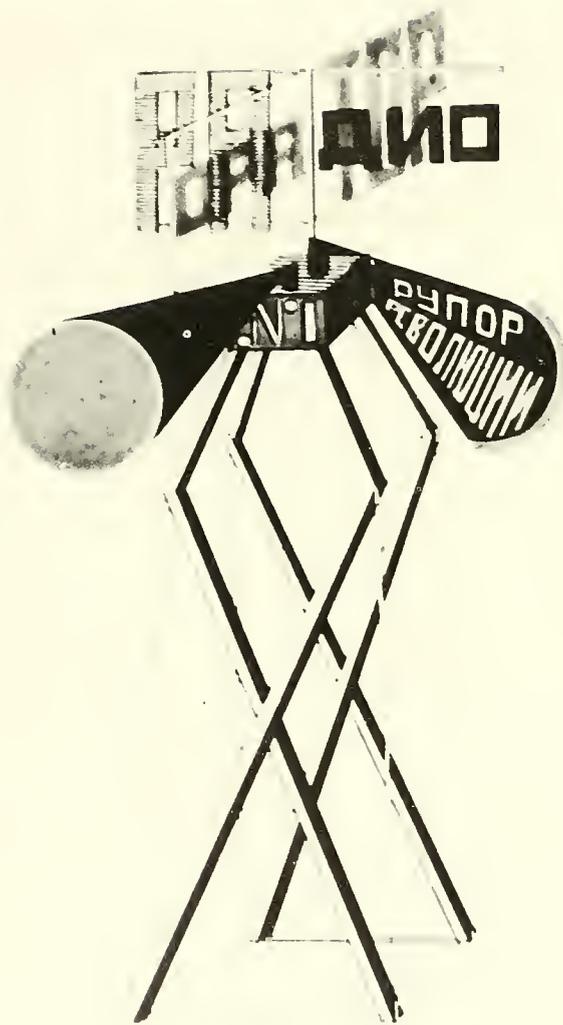
218

Designs for Loudspeakers. 1922

Ink and gouache on paper, 7 x 9¹/₁₆" (17.8 x 24.3 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's wife, Valentina Ivanova
Kulagina

100.78 A-B



G. G. KLUCIS

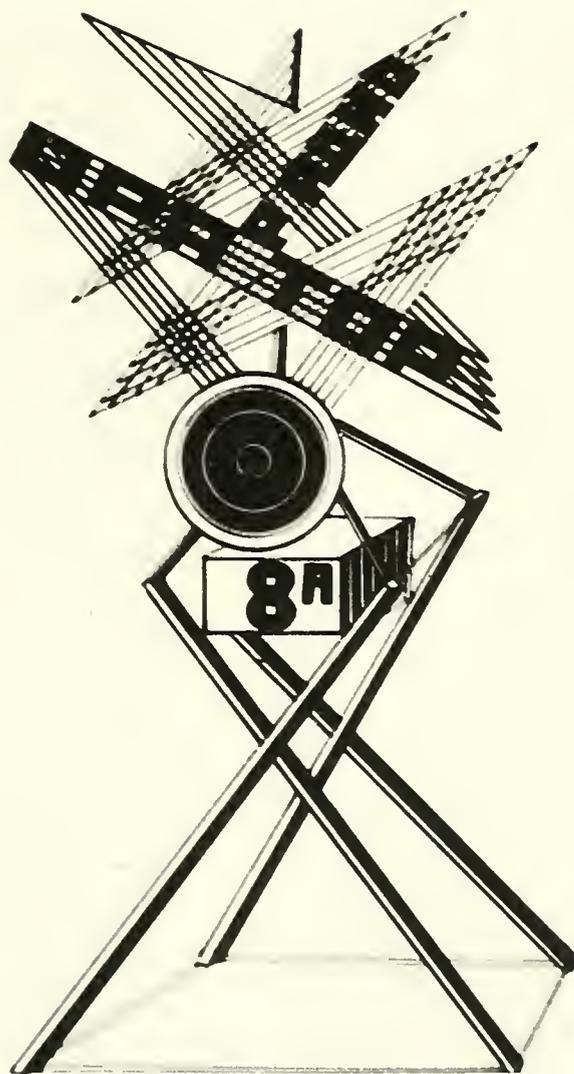
219

Design for Loudspeaker. 1922

Ink and gouache on paper, $6\frac{15}{16} \times 5\frac{15}{16}$ "
(17.7 x 13.8 cm.)

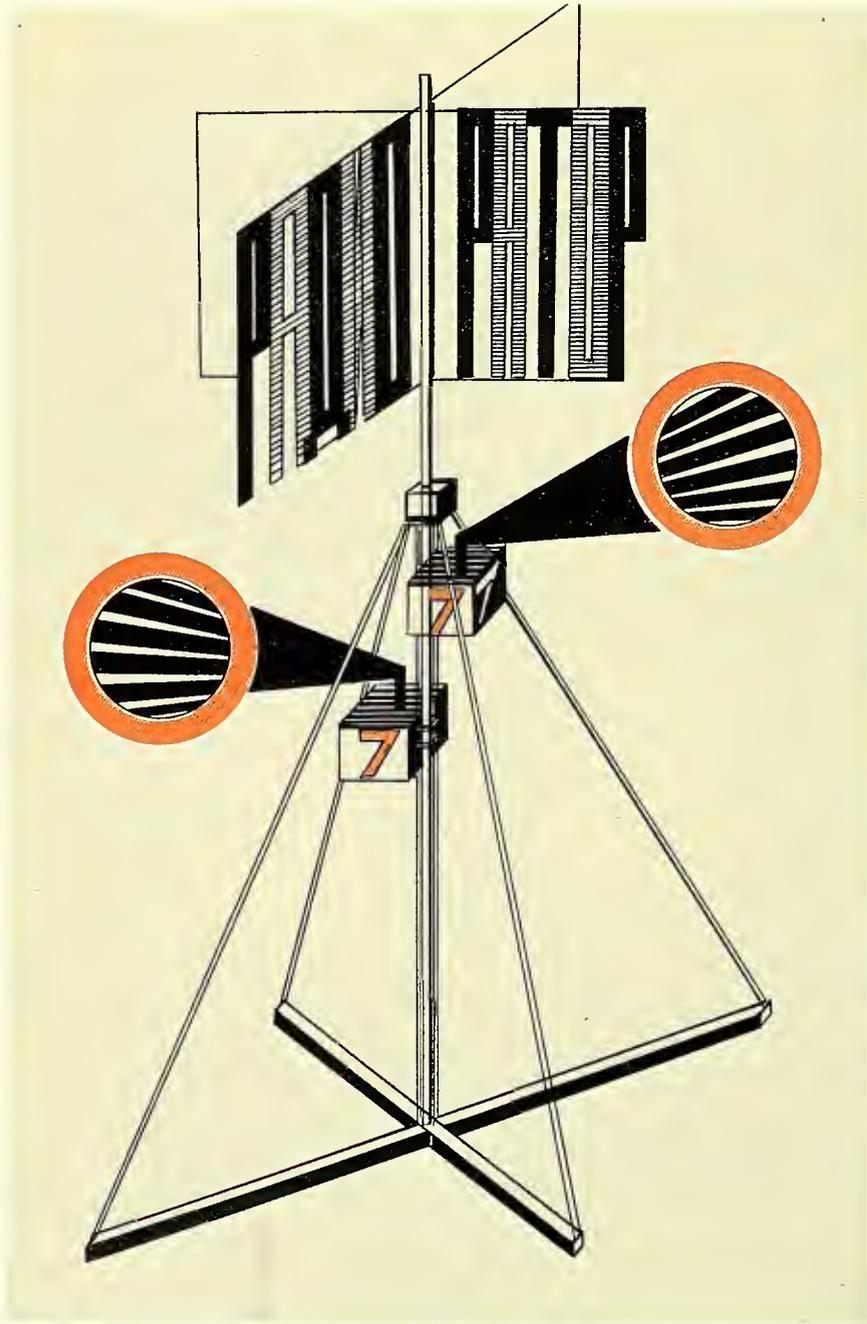
Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

100.78 D



220

Design for Loudspeaker no. 7. 1922
Gouache, ink and pencil on paper, 10 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 6 $\frac{1}{16}$ "
(26.9 x 17.7 cm.)
Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina
106.78 B



221

Design for Loudspeaker no. 3. 1922

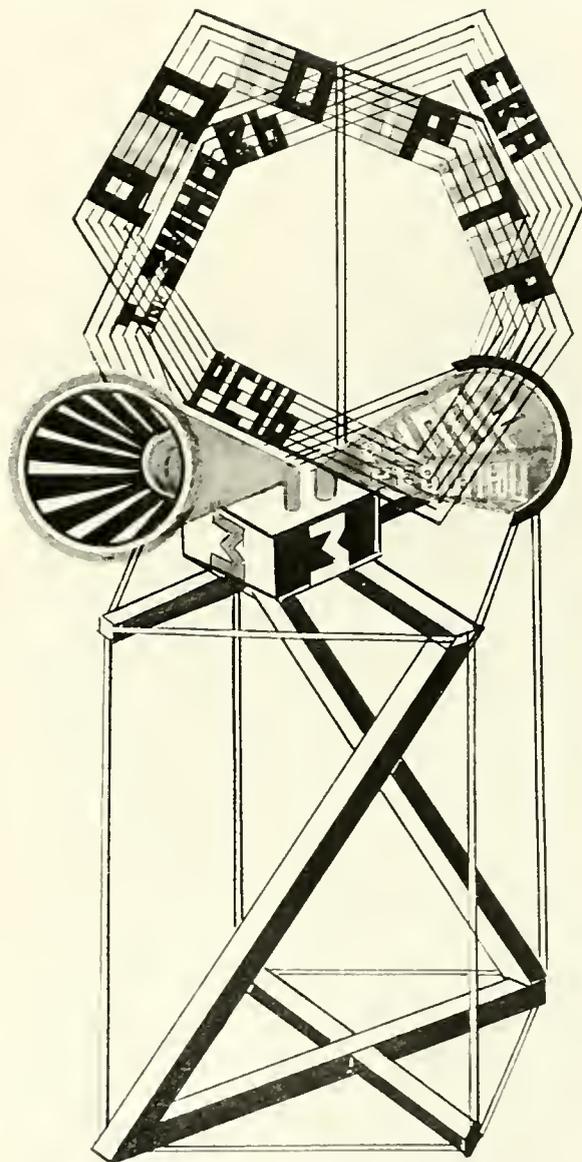
Watercolor and ink on paper, $7\frac{1}{16} \times 5\frac{5}{16}$ "

(17.9 x 13.5 cm.)

Inscribed: *Speech of Comrade Zinoviev*

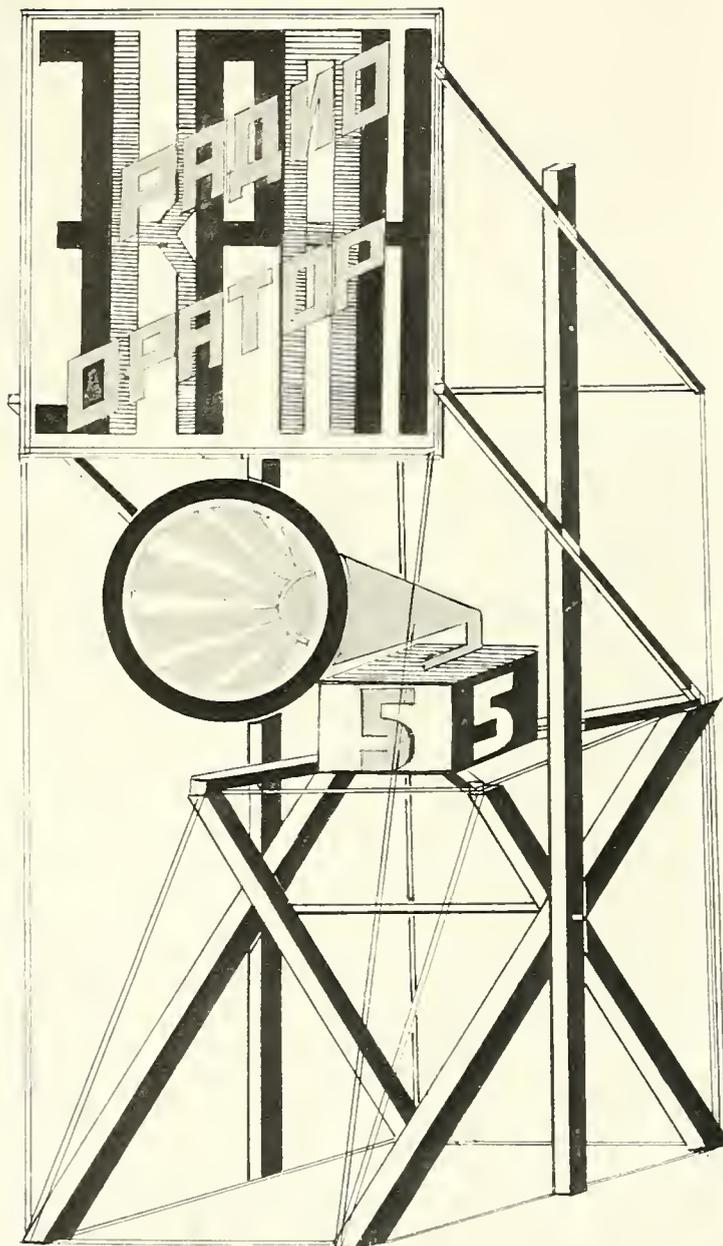
Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

C385



222

Design for Screen-Loudspeaker no. 5. 1922
Colored inks and pencil on paper, 10½ x 5 7/8"
(26.6 x 14.7 cm.)
Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina
106.78 C



223

Design for Screen, Rostrum and Propaganda

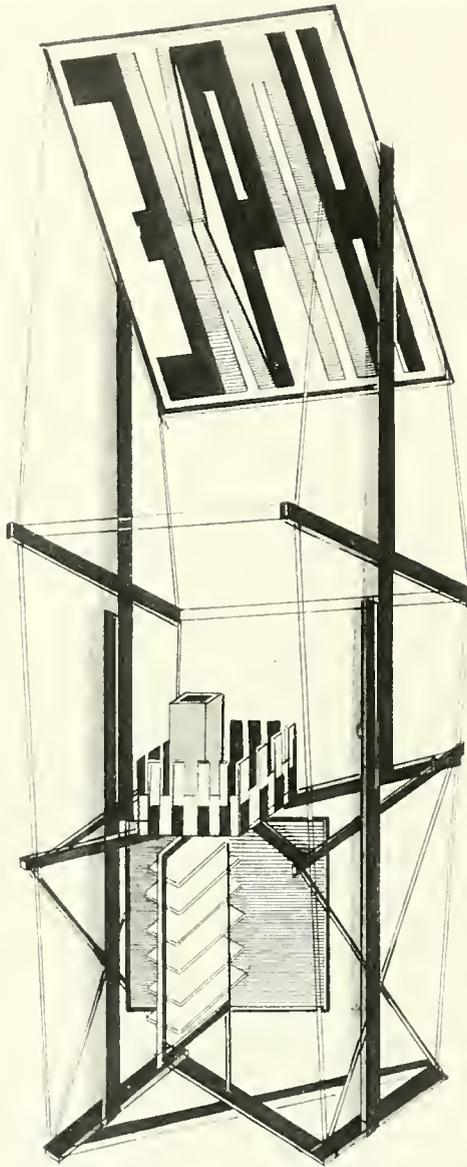
Stand. 1922

Watercolor, pencil and ink on paper, 13½ x 7⅞"
(34.3 x 18.9 cm.)

Inscribed in pencil along lower edge: *Screen-Rostrum*
IV Comintern Congress, 1922

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

109.78



224

Design for Screen. 1922

Watercolor and ink on paper, $9\frac{5}{8} \times 6\frac{1}{2}$ "
(24.6 x 16.5 cm.)

Signed and dated l.l.: G. Klucis 1922

In Klucis's hand on reverse: *Screen—Rostrum—Kiosk / for the 5th anniversary of the October Revolution and the IV Congress of Comintern. / Size: height 6 m; with the screen (in vertical position)=7.2 m; width 2.1 m. Material: wood, rope, canvas.*

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

116.78

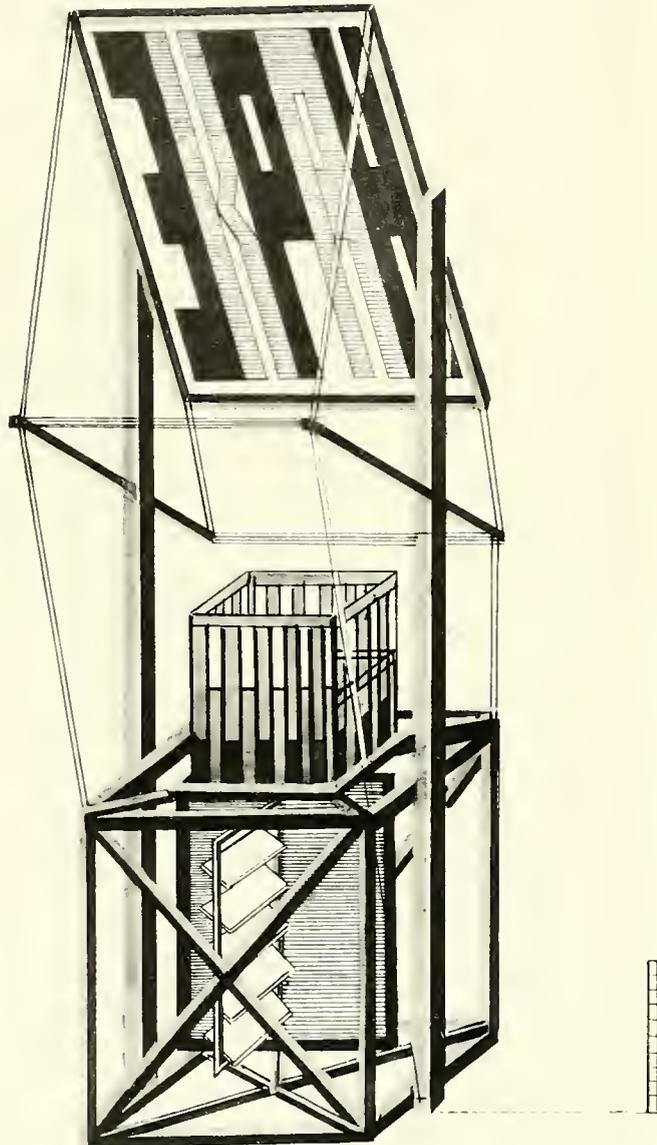


Fig. 22.

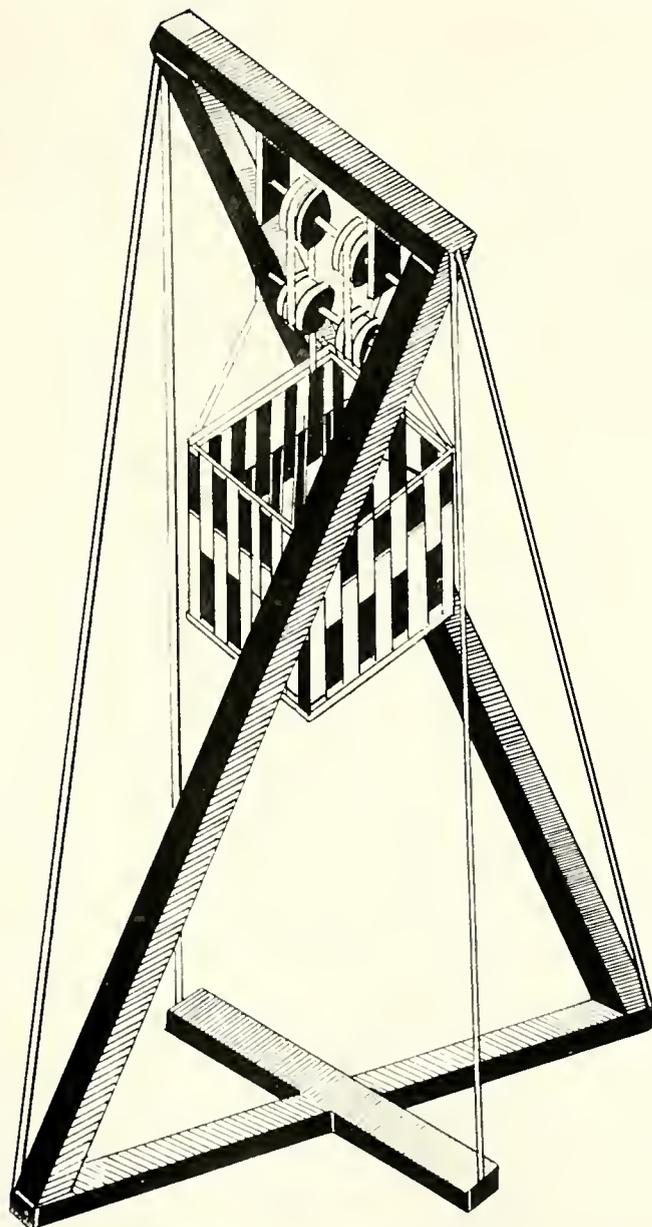
225

Design for Rostrum. 1922

Ink, pencil and gouache on paper, $10\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{15}{16}$ "
(26.7 x 17.6 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

114.78



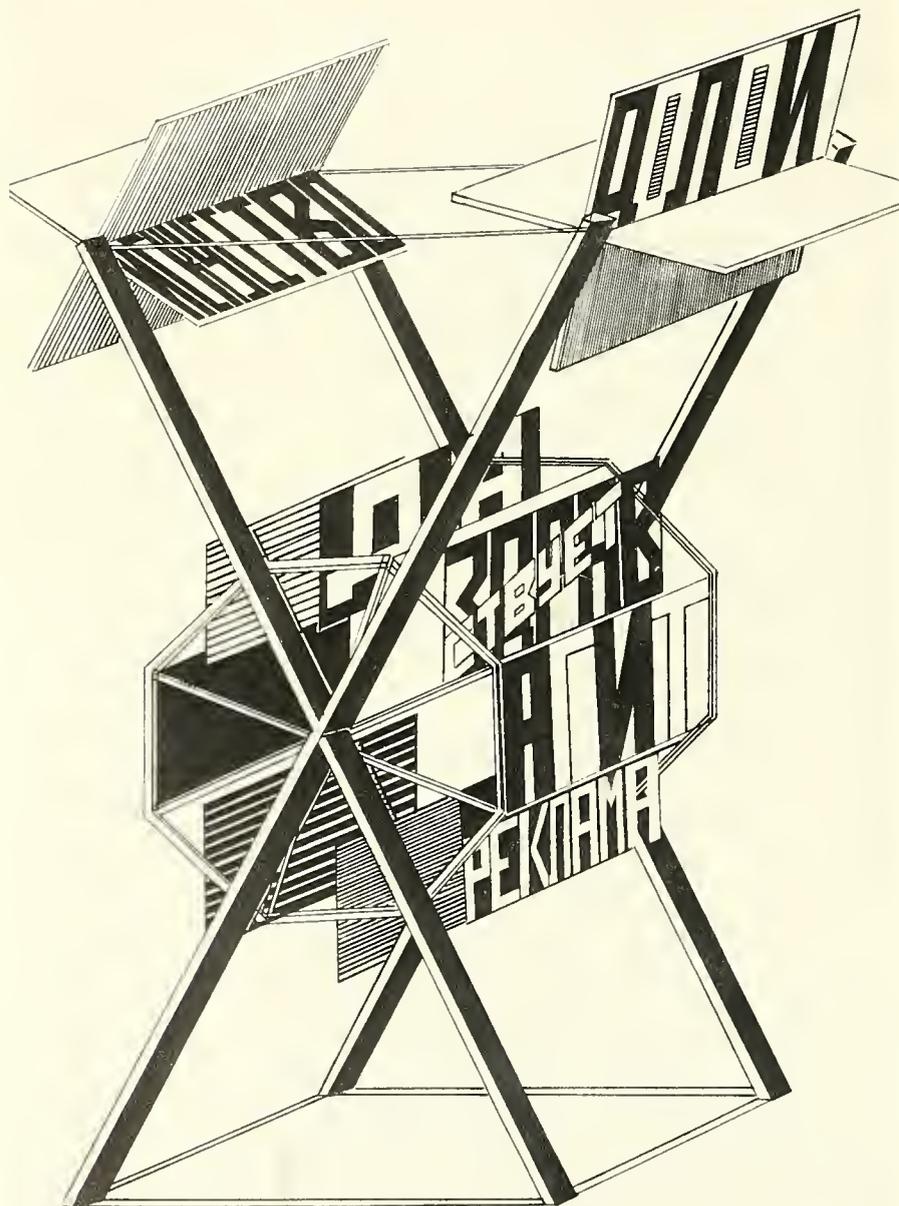
226

Design for Propaganda Kiosk. 1922

Ink and gouache on paper, 10⁵/₁₆ x 6¹/₁₆"
(26.3 x 17.4 cm.)

Inscribed: *Down with art, Long live agitational
propaganda*

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina
III.78



G. G. KLUCIS

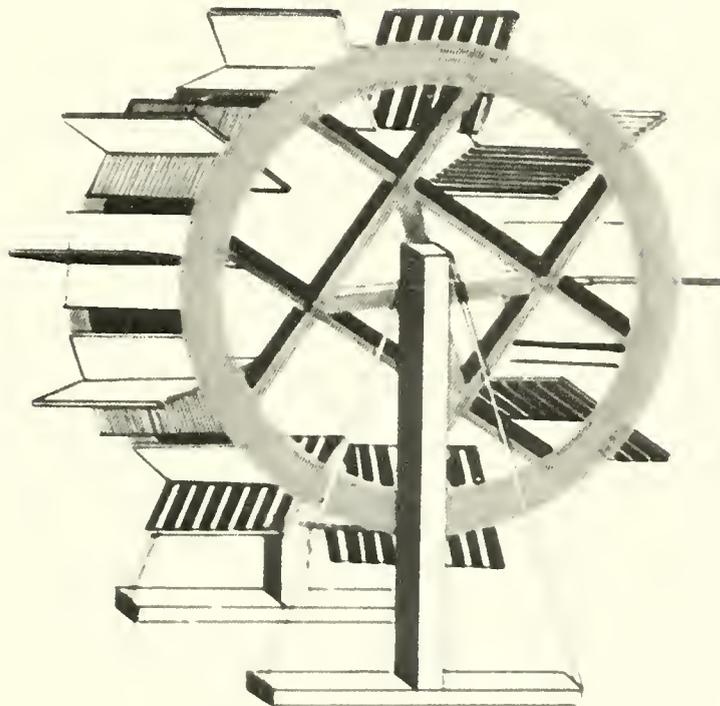
227

Design for Propaganda Kiosk. 1922

Ink and gouache on paper, 6 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (17.4 x 12.6 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

100.78 c



228

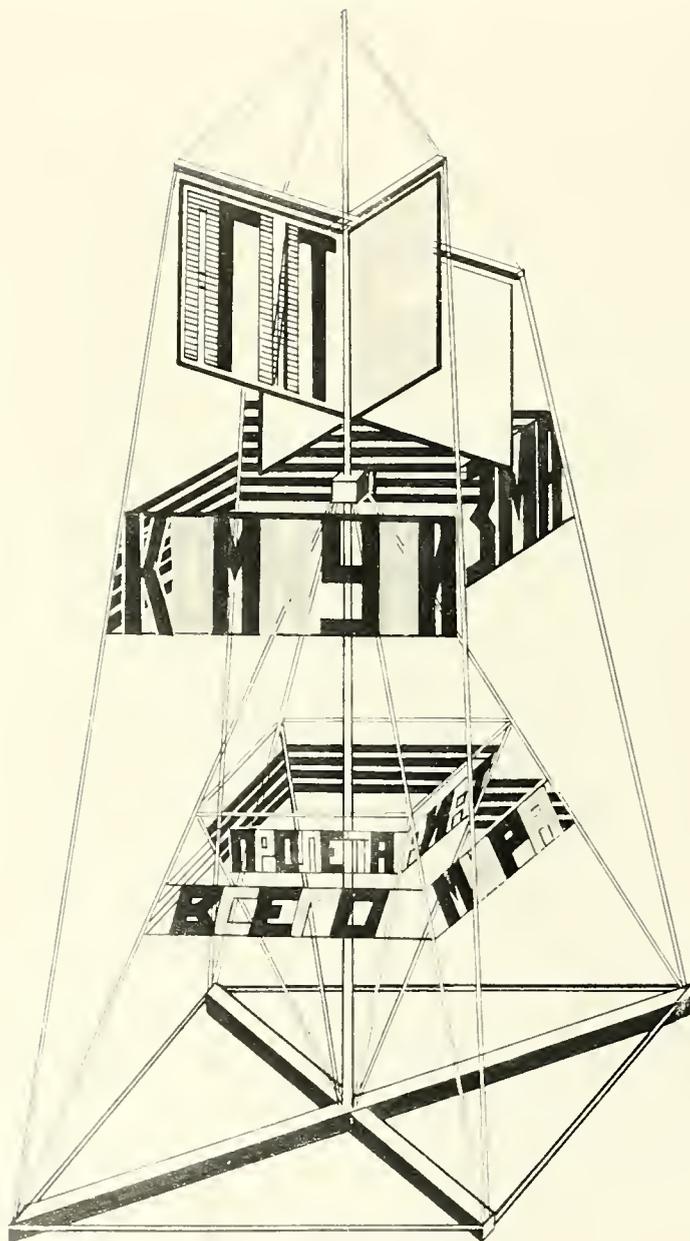
Design for Propaganda Stand. 1922

Ink and gouache on paper, 10 $\frac{7}{16}$ x 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (26.5 x 17.2 cm.)

Inscribed: *Agitprop for Communism of the proletariat of the whole world*

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

113.78



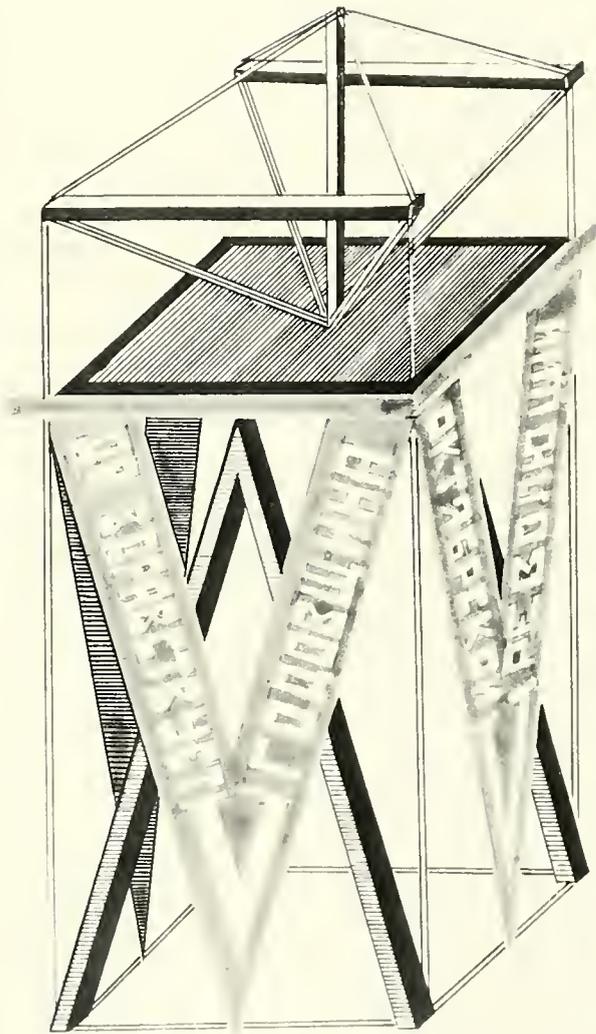
Design for Speaker's Platform. 1922

Gouache and colored inks on paper, 10½ x 6½" (26.8 x 17 cm.)

Slogan on the platform: *Long live the anniversary of the October Revolution*

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

112.78



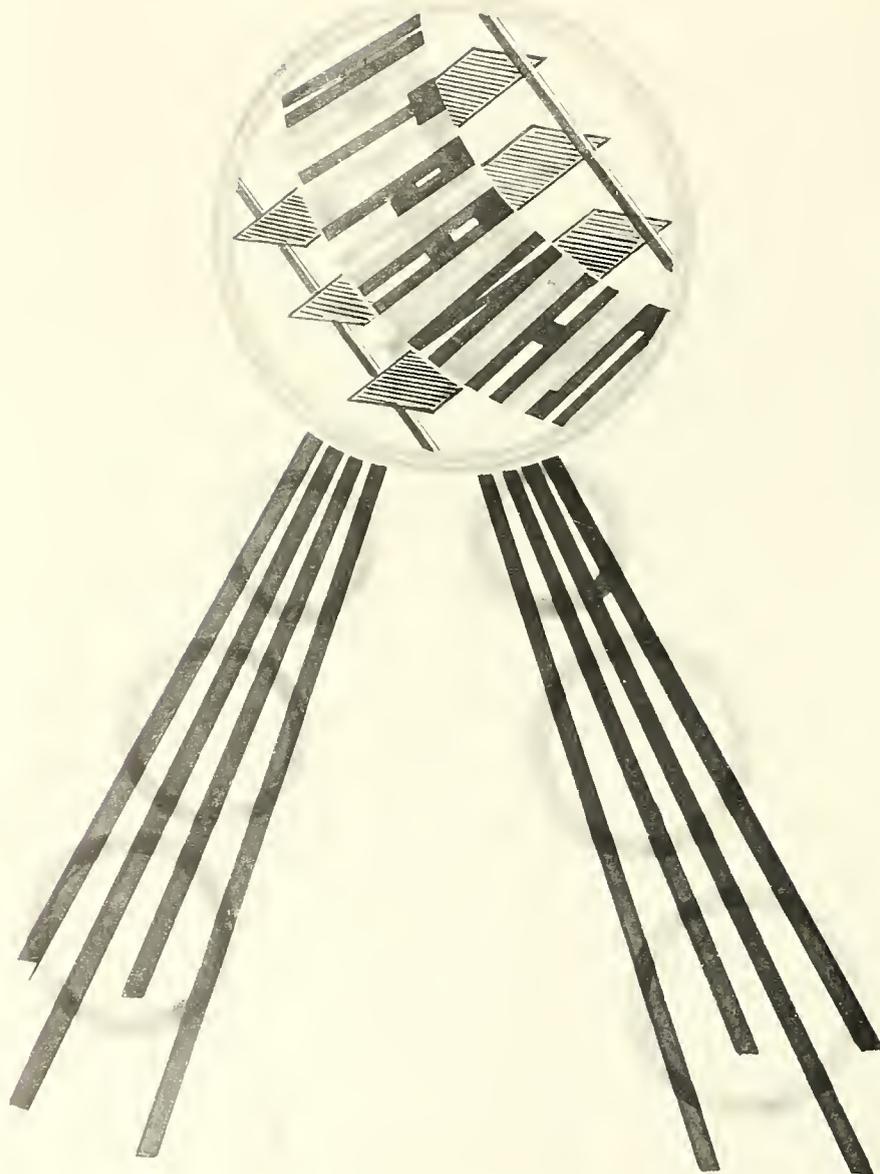
230

Design. 1922

Gouache, ink and pencil on paper, 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 7"
(27.1 x 17.8 cm.)

Inscribed across center of circle: *International*
Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

110.78



231

Principles for the Scientific Organization of Labor.
mid-1920s

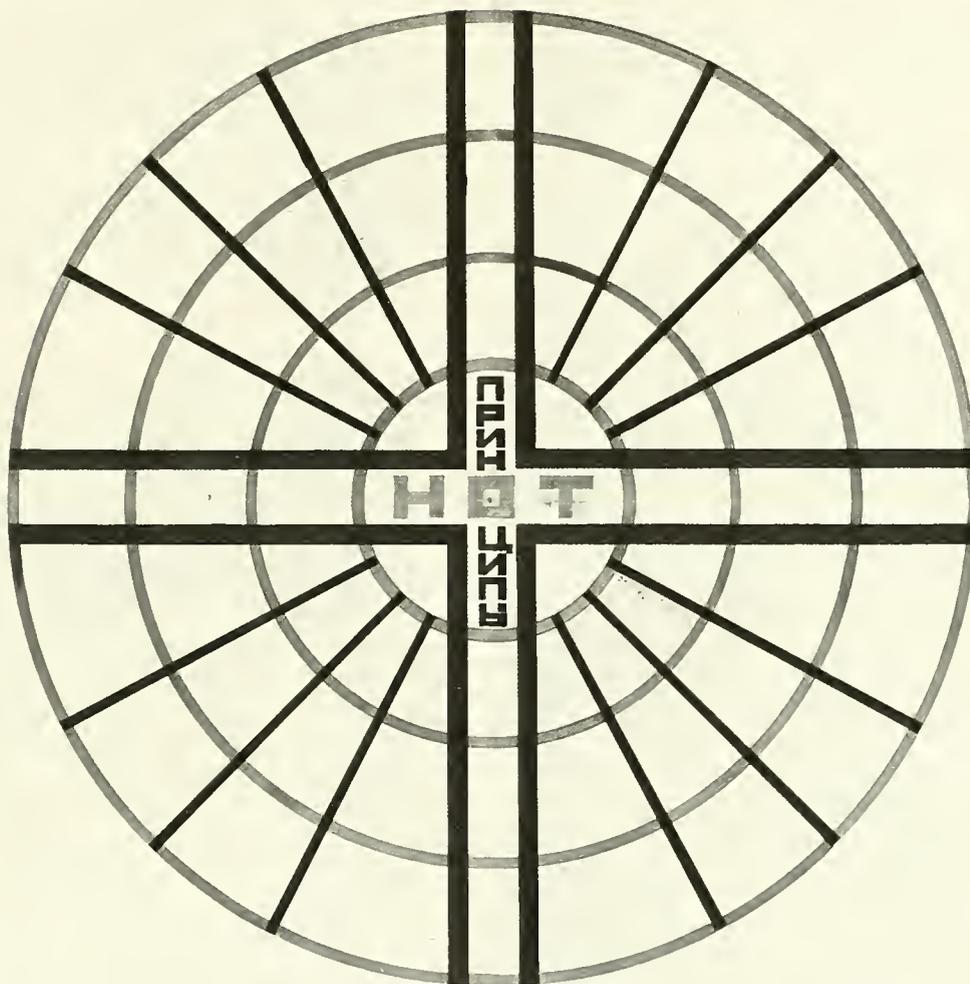
Ink, pencil and watercolor on paper, 19 7/8 x 23 1/2"
(50.5 x 59.6 cm.)

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina

C479

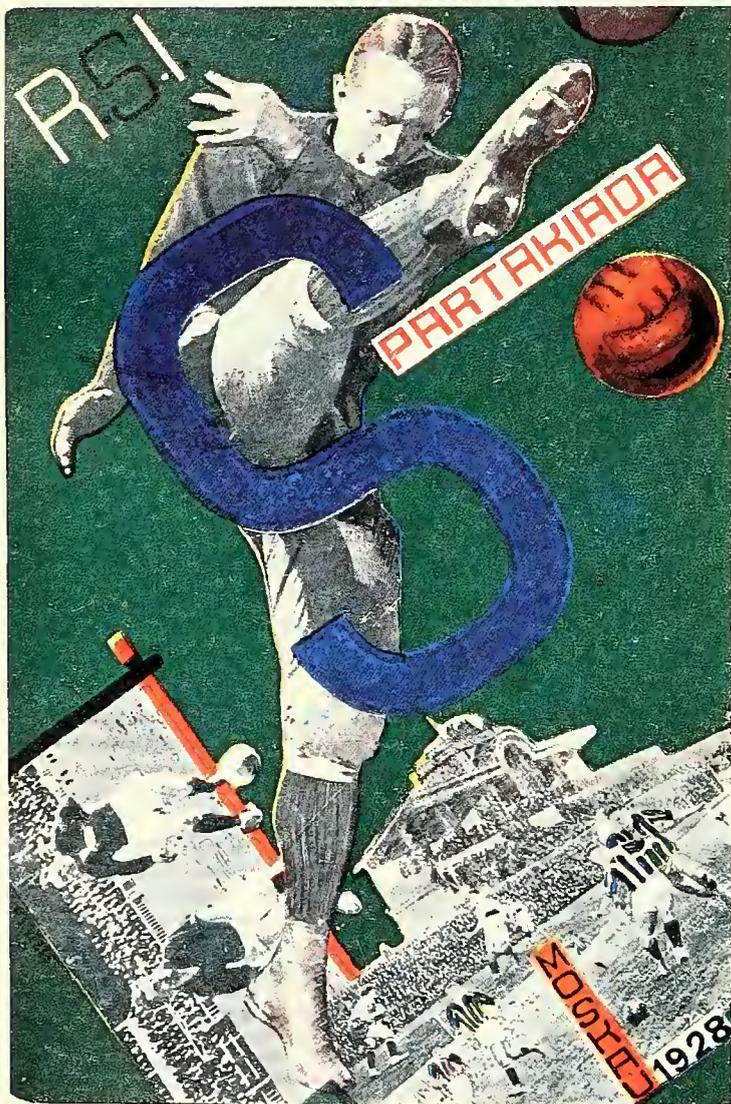
The "wheel" is divided into four sections titled "Entertainment," "Daily Life," "Advertising" and "Agitprop." The "Principles of NOT" (the "Scientific

Organization of Labor" group, *Nauchnaia organizatsiia truda*) indicate those spheres of the new Communist society in which the artist can make useful contributions.¹ Although the purpose of this diagram is not precisely known, it probably dates from the time of Klucis's agitprop work at the Vkhutemas. In the diagram he lists the artist's potential roles in each section, reflecting his own strong Productivist conviction by this date.



1. For a full translation of the wheel, see R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 974

During the 1920s and 1930s Klucis was actively involved in the agitprop work of the Productivist movement. At the Vkhutemas—where he proposed the creation of a single “Workshop of the Revolution” to replace traditional faculties—he designed posters,¹ exhibition installations, books and postcards, often using his powerful gifts in the field of photomontage. Published in connection with the sports event known as the All Union Spartakiada under the Central Communist International of the USSR, the set of postcards in the Costakis collection is essentially ideological, identifying the success of the Revolution with physical prowess, youth and the working class.



232 i

Photomontage Postcard. 1928

Color printing on postcard, 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 3 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (14.6 x 9.1 cm.)

Signed as part of image: *Klucis*. Text: *Spartakiada / Moscow / 1928*. Printed on reverse: *Only in the country of the proletarian dictatorship does physical culture completely serve the interests of the workers*

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina
1089.80

232 ii

Photomontage Postcard. 1928

Color printing on postcard, 6 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 4" (15.3 x 10.1 cm.)

Signed as part of image: *Klucis*. Text: *For healthy tempered youth / Moscow / Spartakiada, 1928*. Printed on reverse: *All Union Spartakiada. A blow to the bourgeois sport movement*

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina
1088.80

232 iii

Photomontage Postcard. 1928

Color printing on postcard, 5 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 4" (14.9 x 10.2 cm.)

Signed as part of image: *Klucis*. Text: *Our physical cultural greetings to the worker sportsman from all over the world / Spartakiada / Moscow / 1928*. Printed on reverse: *For the United International of Workers' Sport*

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina
1087.80

232 iv

Photomontage Postcard. 1928

Color printing on postcard, 5 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 4 $\frac{3}{16}$ " (15.1 x 10.6 cm.)

Signed as part of image: *Klucis*. Text: *Every sportsman must be a sharpshooter / Moscow 1928 / Spartakiada*. In German: *Every worker-sportsman / must be a / soldier of the Revolution*. Printed on reverse: *Physical culture is the means of preparing the work and defense of the Soviet Unions*

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina
1090.80

232 v

Photomontage Postcard. 1928

Color printing on postcard, 5 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (14.4 x 9.4 cm.)

Signed as part of image: *Klucis*. Text: *Spartakiada / Moscow / 1928*. Printed on reverse: *The physical culture of the worker is the kernel of socialist construction*

Acquired from the artist's wife, V. I. Kulagina
1091.80

1. A number of these posters, which belong to the Riga Museum, were included in Klucis's one-man exhibition in Riga in 1970. (See *Katalog vystavki oroizvedenii Gustava Klutsisa*, Riga, Gosudarstvennyi khudozhestvennyi muzei, 1970). Several are visible in the installation

photographs. For Klucis's own concept of the role of photomontage in agitprop contexts, see G. Klucis, "Fotomontazh kak novyi vid agitatsionnogo iskusstva," *Izofront klassovaya borba na fronte prostranstvennykh iskusstv*, Moscow-Leningrad, 1939, pp. 119 ff.



ii

ЗА ЗДОРОВУЮ ЗАКАЛЕННУЮ МОЛОДЕЖЬ

iii



НАШ ФИЗКУЛЬТУРНЫЙ ПРИВЕТ РАБОЧИМ СПОРТСМЕНАМ ВСЕХ СТРАН



iv

КАЖДЫЙ ФИЗКУЛЬТУРНИК ДОЛЖЕН БЫТЬ МЕТКИМ СТРЕЛКОМ

v



233

Design for a Banner for the All-Russian Union of Poets.
ca. 1921
Wash and wax crayon on paper, $6\frac{5}{8} \times 37\frac{5}{8}$ "
(16.9 x 95.6 cm.)
Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov
C52

234

Design for a Banner for the All-Russian Union of Poets.
ca. 1921
Colored pencil and wax crayon on paper, $5\frac{7}{8} \times 29\frac{3}{8}$ "
(14.9 x 74.7 cm.)
Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov
C53

The All-Russian Union of Poets Club (VSP) was located at 18 Tverskoi Boulevard in Moscow. It was organized by 1921 and remained in existence for approximately six years. Ivan Aksenov, its chairman, was a close friend of Popova, and undoubtedly was the person who commissioned her to design banners to hang over the entrance to the building. Other members of the club were Andrei Bely, Riurik Ivnev, Anatolii Mariengof, Mikhail Kuzmin and Georgii Chulkov. It was under the sponsorship of this group, and on the premises of the club, that the $5 \times 5 = 25$ exhibition was held in September 1921. (See cat. nos. 215–16.) At least two other designs for banners by Popova have survived (LACMA, cat. nos. 252, 253).

Popova's textile designs, of which a few examples are shown here, date from the final stages of her career. Both she and Stepanova regarded textile design and clothing design as natural outgrowths of their commitment to Productivism, and during 1922–23 they formulated a theory and methodology linking the two. First and foremost they emphasized the functional aspects of clothing, and while they clearly invested a good deal of imagination in the execution of their designs, they rejected what they considered to be purely "aesthetic" considerations.

Probably late in 1923 or very early in 1924, though the date is a matter of some dispute, they actually entered the industry, taking jobs at the First Textile Printing Works in Moscow, where fabrics were being produced.¹ An article had appeared in *Pravda* describing the need for artists in the textile industry but they and Rodchenko were the only three who responded.² They started work at once, and although they met with some resistance, they ultimately succeeded in their desire to be involved in the industrial part of the process. Their designs were an unprecedented success.³



1. O. Brik, in an article in *Lef*, no. 2, 1924, p. 34, states that they were invited by the director of the factory, but gives no date. A. Abramova, "Odná iz pervikh" *Dekorativnoe iskusstvo*, 1963, no. 9, p. 19, states that it was in 1924; J. E. Bowlit, "From Pictures to Textile Prints," *The Print Collector's Newsletter*, no. 1, 1976, pp. 16–20, suggests late 1922; T. Strizhenova, *Iz istorii sovetskogo kostiuma*, Moscow, 1972, suggests 1921; Lodder, *Constructivism*, gives no precise date but implies a preference for late 1923. For important information on the history of textile and clothing design within Productivism, see all of the above.

2. Abramova. She does not give the date of the *Pravda* article.

3. Abramova. For further information on the textile design of this period, see Varst (Stepanova), "Kostiium segodniashnego-dnia-prozodezhda," *Lef*, no. 2, 1923, pp. 65–68; V. Stepanova, "Ot kostiuma k risunku i tkani," *Vecherniaia Moskva*, February 28, 1929 (reference supplied by Lodder, *Constructivism*).

235

Textile Design. ca. 1921(?)

Watercolor and pencil on paper, 10⁷/₈ x 7⁷/₈"
(27.6 x 20 cm.)

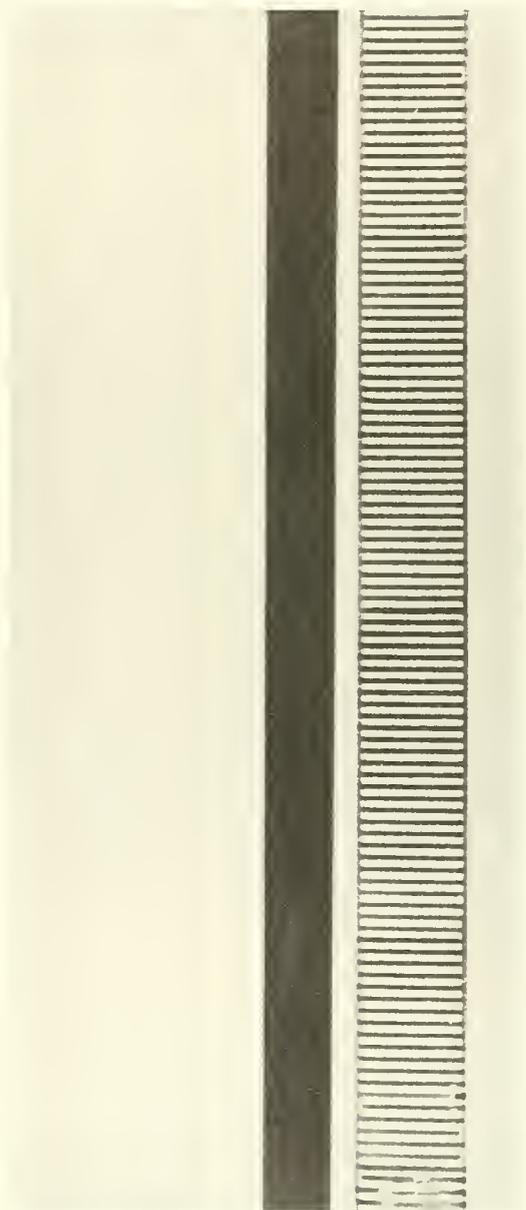
Acquired from A. A. Drevin, son of Alexandr Drevin
and Udaltsova

198.80



236 i

Textile Design. ca. 1923-24
Gouache on paper, $6\frac{1}{16} \times 2\frac{1}{16}$ " (15.5 x 6.9 cm.)
Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov
241.80 recto



236 ii

Textile Design. ca. 1923-24
Gouache and ink on paper, $5\frac{5}{16} \times 2$ " (13.6 x 5.1 cm.)
Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov
240.80



237

Textile Design. ca. 1923–24

Ink on paper, $7\frac{1}{16} \times 5\frac{1}{2}$ " (19.6 x 14.1 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C44

This work appeared in the artist's posthumous exhibition of 1924 and is visible in the installation photographs.



238

Design for Embroidered Book. ca. 1923-24

Colored inks on paper, $6\frac{3}{4} \times 1\frac{7}{8}$ " (17.3 x 4.8 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C84

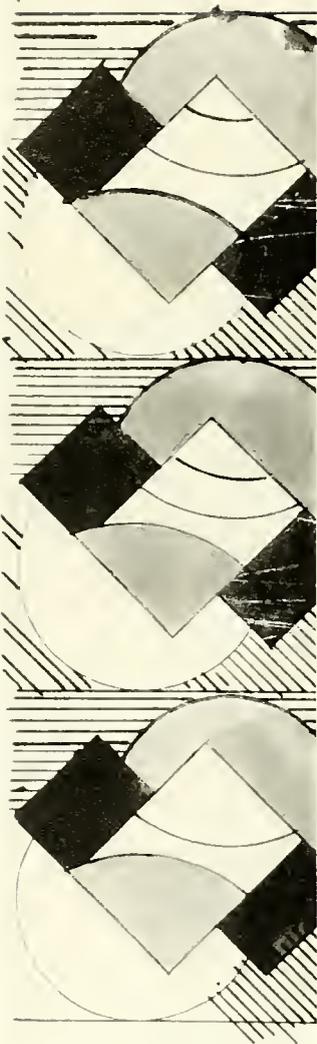
239

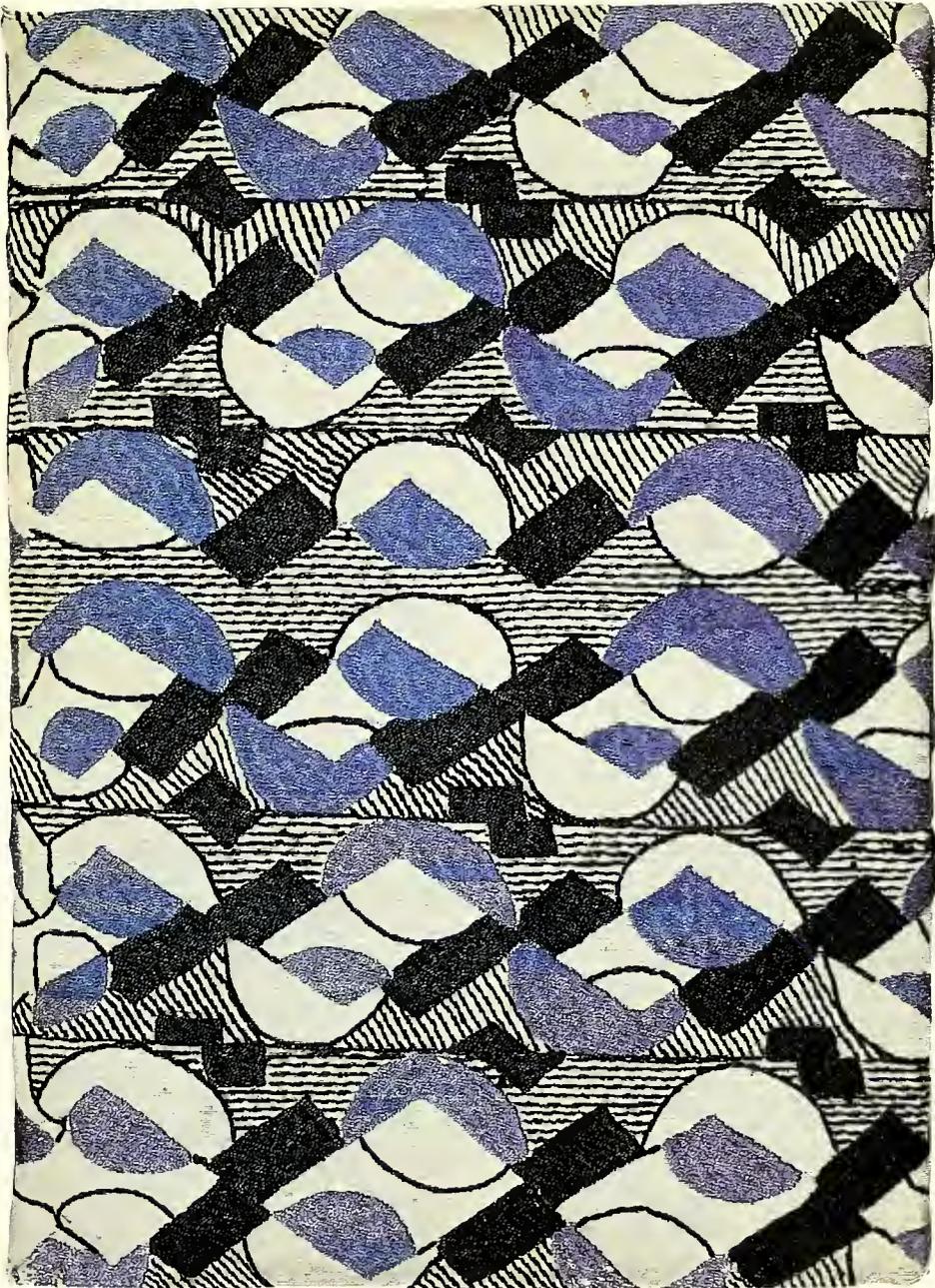
Embroidered Book Cover. ca. 1923-24

Silk thread on grosgrain, $17\frac{13}{16} \times 12\frac{3}{8}$ "
(45.3 x 31.5 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C164





240

Textile Design. 1923-24

Gouache on paper, $6\frac{1}{4} \times 12\frac{7}{16}$ " (16 x 31.6 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C47

This work appeared in the artist's posthumous exhibition of 1924 and is visible in the installation photographs.

241

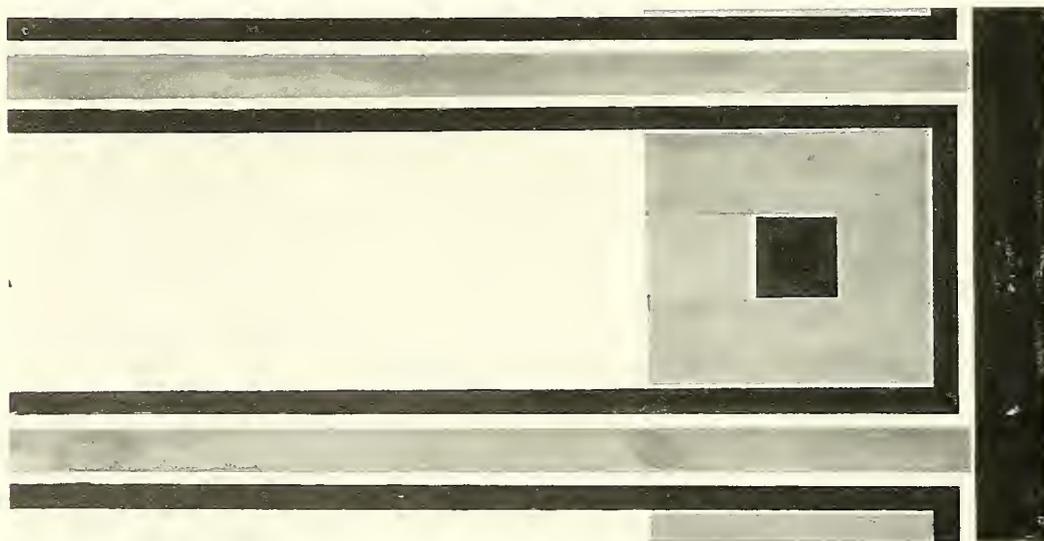
Textile Sketch. 1923-24

Gouache and pencil on paper, $13\frac{3}{4} \times 11$ " (35 x 28 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

223.78

This work appeared in the artist's posthumous exhibition of 1924 and is visible in the installation photographs.





242

Textile Design. ca. 1923-24

Gouache and ink on paper, $9\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{5}{16}$ " (23.5 x 14.2 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C46



243

Textile Design. ca. 1923-24

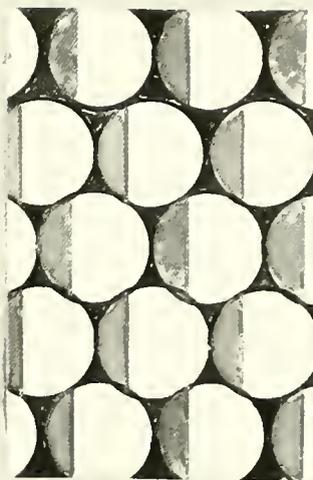
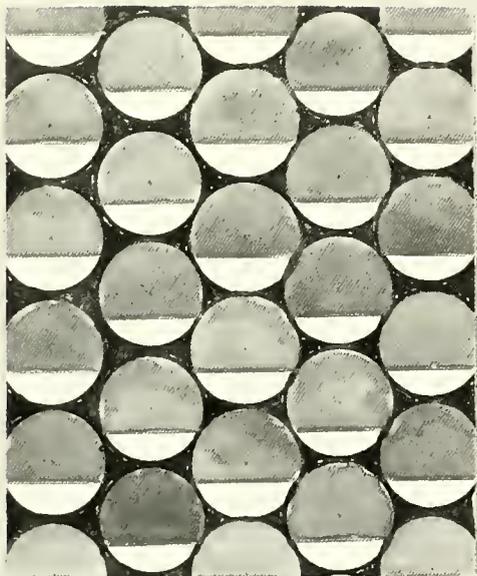
Watercolor and ink on paper, $5\frac{3}{8} \times 6\frac{11}{16}$ "

(13.7 x 17 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,

P. S. Popov

C377

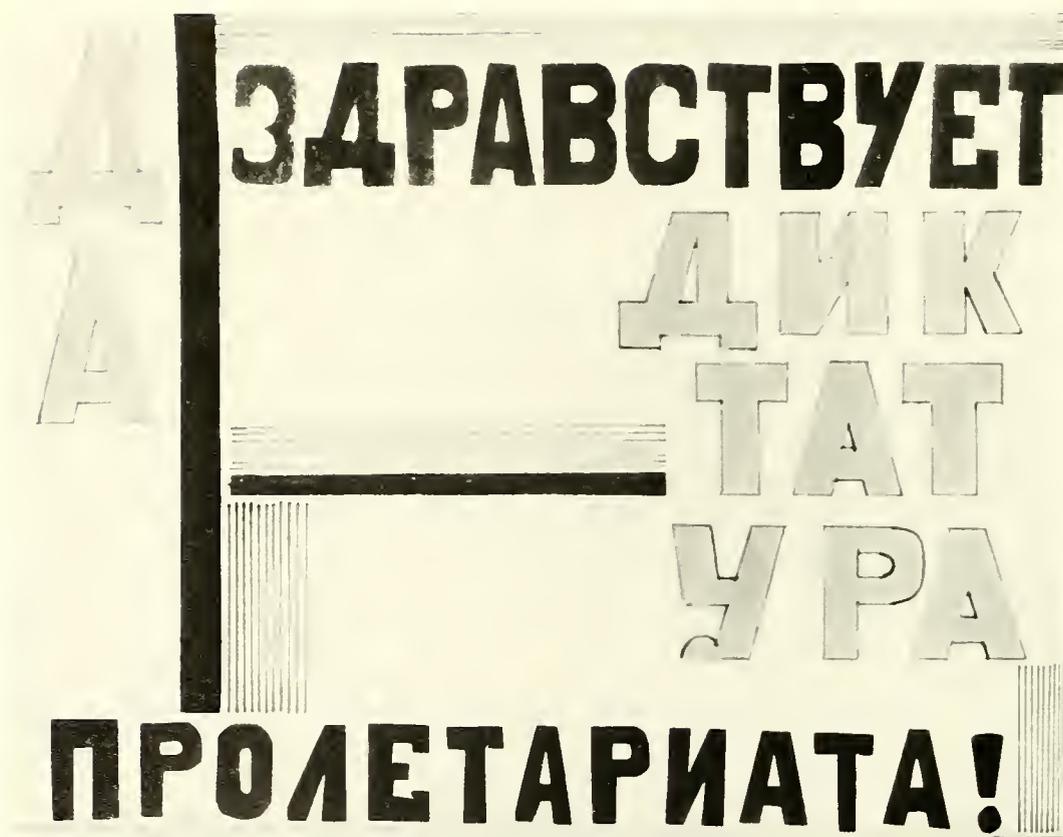


Design for a Poster (?) *Long Live the Dictatorship of the Proletariat.* 1922–23

Paper collage, gouache and ink on paper, 8 x 9¹⁵/₁₆" (20.2 x 25.1 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother, P. S. Popov

C59



245

Design for Cover of Periodical *Film Performers 2*
(*Artisty Kino 2*). ca. 1922

Gouache on board, 9 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 6 $\frac{3}{16}$ " (23.4 x 15.8 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

C58



246

Catalogue of the *Posthumous Exhibition of the Artist-Constructor L. S. Popova*. Moscow, 1924

21 pp. with color lithographic cover, $6\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{16}$ "
(17.1 x 14.1 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

147.80

The cover of this catalogue is said to have been designed
by Rodchenko. (C. A. Lodder, in conversation, April
1981.)

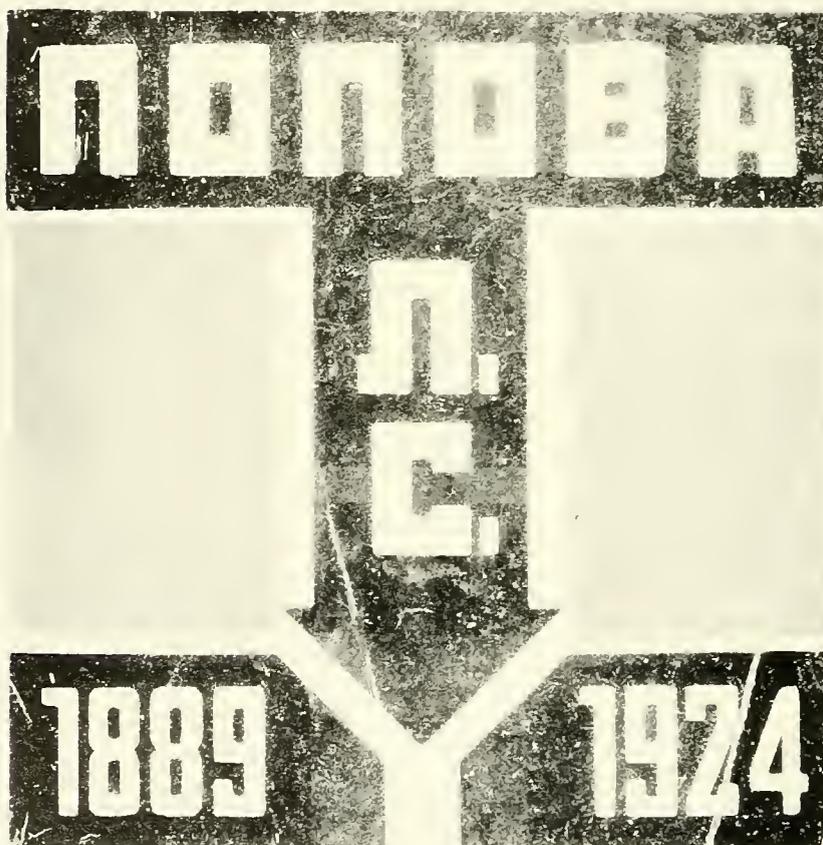
247

Poster Announcing the Opening of Popova's Posthu-
mous Exhibition. December 21, 1924

Color lithograph in red and black, $36\frac{7}{16} \times 24\frac{9}{16}$ "
(92.6 x 62.4 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

486.80



ОТДЕЛ ПО ДЕЛАМ МУЗЕЕВ ГЛАВНАУКИ НАРКОМПРОСА.

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248

Costume Design for Oscar Wilde's *Salomé* (?) 1917
Gouache on cardboard, 27 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 15 $\frac{3}{4}$ " (70.2 x 40 cm.)
Acquired from the collection of A. G. Koonen, Moscow
56.78

The production of *Salomé* directed by Alexandr Tairov had its premiere at the Kamernyi (Chamber) Theater in Moscow on October 9, 1917. Although it has not been possible to establish with certainty that this costume was used in the production, it is stylistically compatible with those which were.



249

Costume for Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. 1920–21
Oil and gouache on board, 22 $\frac{3}{16}$ x 17 $\frac{3}{16}$ "
(56.4 x 43.7 cm.) (sight)
Acquired from the collection of A. G. Koonen, Moscow
55.78

The production, directed by Tairov, had its premiere at
the Kamernyi Theater on May 17, 1921.

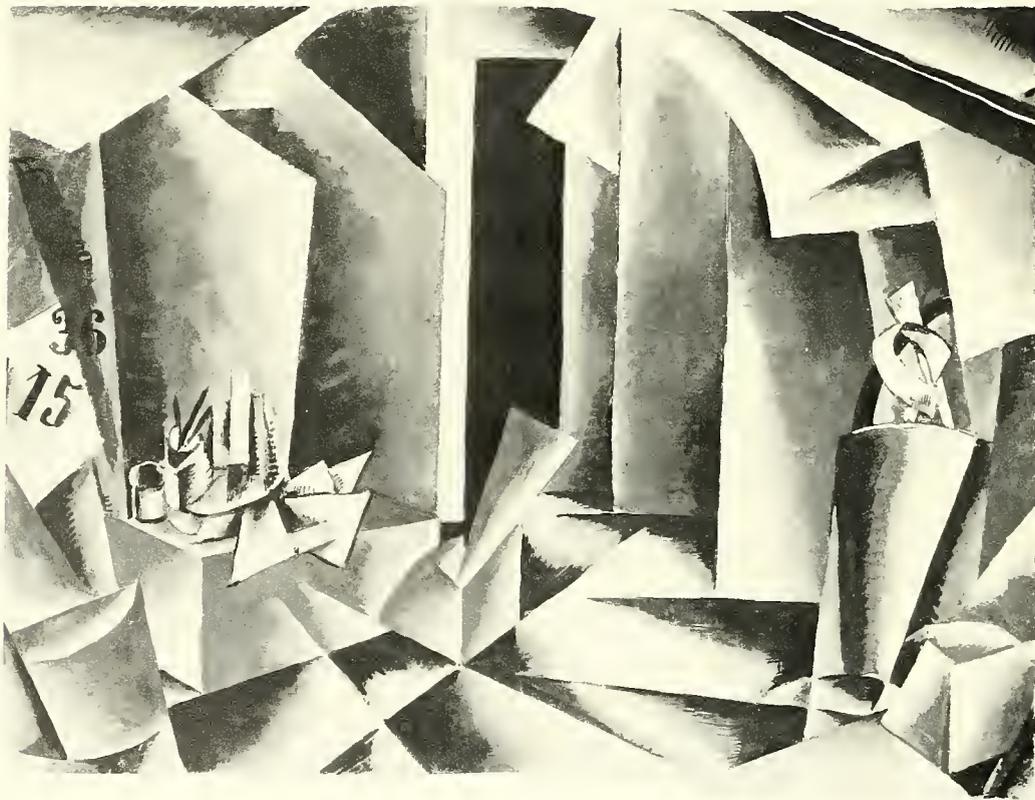


250

Sketch for Stage Set. 1920-21
Gouache on paper, $10\frac{7}{16} \times 14$ " (26.5 x 35.5 cm.)
Gift of D. Sarabianov
C91

This sketch was for Anatolii Lunacharsky's play, *The Locksmith and the Chancellor*, first performed at the Korsh Theater in 1921.¹ The design bears some resemblance to those made by Popova for Tairov's 1921 production of *Romeo and Juliet* at the Kamernyi Theater in Moscow.² These latter designs were pictorially elaborate, and, in their original form, totally impracticable. Alexandr Vesnin revised and simplified them, but ultimately they were not used.

Vsevolod Meierkhold assumed the directorship of the State Higher Theater Workshop in 1921; in that fall he had been profoundly impressed by the exhibition $5 \times 5 = 25$. In the work of the Constructivists, and especially in that of Popova, he saw new possibilities for stage design, and he immediately invited her to join the faculty of his workshop to teach a course in "material stage design" or "set formulation" (*veshchestvennoe oformlenie spektaklia*). A few months later, in January 1922, Meierkhold began work on his production of *The Magnanimous Cuckold*, a contemporary play by the Belgian writer Fernand Crommelynck. It had opened in Paris on December 18, 1920, and had then been translated into



1. Information supplied by V. Rakitin, G. Costakis, and D. Sarabianov.

2. One is reproduced in J. E. Bowlt, "From Surface to Space: The Art of Liubov Popova." *The Structurist*, nos. 15-16, 1975-76, pp. 86-87. Bowlt indicates that Popova's designs were eventually used, but this seems not to be the case.

1. For a full discussion of Meierkhold's production and details about the set and its function, see A. Law, "Le Cocu magnifique de Crommelynck." *Les Voies de la création théâtrale*, vol. VI, Paris, 1979, pp. 13-43. For a discussion of its impact on the development of architectural design, see C. A. Lodder, "Constructivist Theatre as a Laboratory for an Architectural Aesthetic," *Architectural Association Quarterly*, vol. II, no. 2, 1979, pp. 24-35.

2. I. A. Aksenov, "Prostanstvennyi konstruktivizm na stsene," *Teatralnyi Oktriabr*, no. 1, Leningrad-Moscow, 1926, pp. 31ff.; also, *idem*,

Russian by Ivan Aksenov. Meierkhold had chosen it as the vehicle for his first demonstration of his actor-training method known as “Biomechanics” (see pp. 31–32) and of the Constructivist stage set.¹

Tracing the origin of the set itself is somewhat complex. According to Aksenov, who wrote two articles in 1926 on the importance of the project in the development of Constructivist theater, the set was entirely conceived and executed by Popova.² Other evidence indicates, however, that Meierkhold originally commissioned the Stenberg brothers and Medunetsky to submit designs, that they did so in a preliminary form but did not carry the project through to completion.³ A model for the set was then prepared in the Theater workshop under the direction of the young designer Vladimir Liutse, but Popova intervened to make extensive changes, and the responsibility for the final resolution is generally acknowledged to be hers.

The set as executed was extraordinarily powerful in conception and effect, and Aksenov’s claims for its influence on the future of the theater were not exaggerated. Two platforms of uneven height with stairs on either side were joined by a bridge (cat. no. 251). A slide ran from the right platform down to the floor, and the lower part of this mounting was called the “cage.” A support divided the facing side into two unequal halves, the left of which contained a window that was hinged to open diagonally. The cage and window (visible at the lower right of fig. a, p. 294) were used for entrances and exits, as well as for an acting area. Three wheels, one white, one red, and one a large black disc bearing the letters “CR-ML-NK,” rotated clockwise or counterclockwise at erratic speeds underscoring the “kinetic meaning of each moment in the action.”⁴

The three Costakis drawings that clearly elaborate details for the cage (cat. nos. 252–54), in one case including notations for proportions and dimensions, present a structurally sophisticated solution for that area, and support the notion that Popova was centrally involved in the design. These drawings, and the stage set, demonstrate a new structural conviction that is indebted to the KPS constructions of the Stenbergs and to the Constructivist theory that had been developing at the Inkhuk in the preceding year. As Bowlt has pointed out, Popova’s immediately preceding theatrical venture (the *Romeo and Juliet* designs for Tairov of May 1921; see cat. no. 250), had been fanciful, pictorial and almost entirely impracticable. The *Cuckold* set, on the other hand, was governed by utilitarian and practical considerations, and was to a considerable extent the natural consequence of Popova’s aim, expressed in a statement

in the $5 \times 5 = 25$ catalogue, to create “concrete material constructions.” Its execution is difficult to imagine without the example, on the one hand, of the Stenbergs’ KPS constructions (exhibited in January 1921), and, on the other, of her own involvement in the Inkhuk debates of March–April 1921 (see pp. 226–227). Even the terminology that Popova used in her description of the *Cuckold* (in a report to the Moscow Inkhuk on April 27, 1922) is reminiscent of the language of the debates on “construction” and “composition.” Her aim was: “The organization of the material elements of a production as equipment, as a form of mounting, or as a device for a given action. . . . The criterion should be utilitarian suitability and in no case the solution of any formal, aesthetic problems. . . .”⁵

Similarly, the costumes for the production (cat. no. 256) were strictly utilitarian in conception: a blue work uniform (*prozodezhda*) served as the basic dress for all of the characters—with flared jodhpurs for the men and calf-length skirts for the women. Details such as red pompons, a white handkerchief, a cape, a stick or a monocle, were the only means used to differentiate one character from another. As Popova stated in her 1922 report to the Inkhuk, “we put aside the aesthetic principles of historic, national, psychological, or everyday costume. In this particular task, we wanted to find a general principle of work clothes for the actor’s professional work based on what he needs for the contemporary aspect of his professional *emploi*.”⁶

The set was not regarded as a complete success. Popova herself acknowledged the difficulty of abandoning “outmoded aesthetic habits,” and also drew attention to important determining characteristics that were inherent in the play itself: “the action had a built-in visual character which prevented the consideration of an action solely as an on-going working process. . . .”⁷ Nonetheless, as Elena Rakitina has suggested, the innovations in the conception were powerful and influential ones, perhaps most of all in their kinetic elements: “We will never understand [the set] correctly if we regard it statically. It is not a picture to be admired. Rather it is a kind of machine which takes on a living existence in the course of the production.”⁸ Popova’s exploration of the use of kinetic devices in stage design did not, of course, end with the set for *The Magnanimous Cuckold*. New devices were extensively used in Popova’s next theatrical venture, the set for *Earth in Turmoil* (cat. nos. 257–260).

¹ “Proiskhozhdenie ustanovki ‘Velikodushny rogonosets.’” *3 Atisha TIM*, 1926, pp. 7–11.

² E. Rakitina, “Liubov Popova, iskusstvo i manifesty.” *Khudozhnik, stsena, ekran*, Moscow, 1975, p. 162; Law, *Les Voies de la création théâtrale*. Lodder, *Architectural Association Quarterly*; also J. E. Bowlt, “From Surface to Space: The Art of Liubov Popova.” *The Structurist*, nos. 15–16, 1975, pp. 86–87. Vladimir Stenberg’s memories of the events will be published by A. Law in a forthcoming issue of the *Art Journal*, edited by G. Harrison Roman.

³ L. Popova, quoted and translated by Law, from a manuscript in a private archive, Moscow. This text is also partially quoted by Bowlt, “Popova.” *The Structurist*, p. 87.

⁴ Trans. A. Law, from a manuscript in a private archive, Moscow.

⁵ *Ibid*.

⁶ *Ibid*.

⁷ Quoted by Law, *Les Voies de la création théâtrale*, p. 23.

251

Set Design for *The Magnanimous Cuckold*. 1922
Pencil, colored pencil and wash on paper, 9 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 14 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
(23.1 x 37.8 cm.)
Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov
202.78

A second watercolor depicting the entire set was formerly in the Costakis collection (Tretiakov Gallery, Moscow, repr. color, R., S., C., *Costakis*, pl. 882). The latter gouache was almost certainly made after the set was complete, rather than at a preparatory stage.

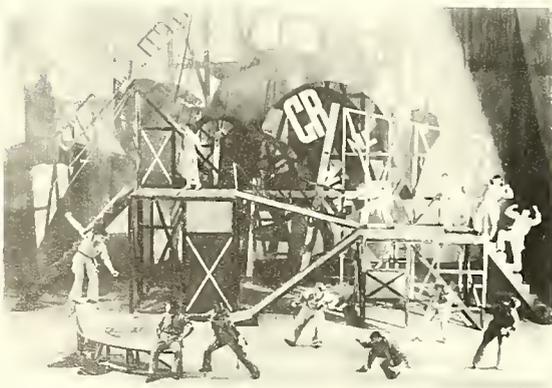
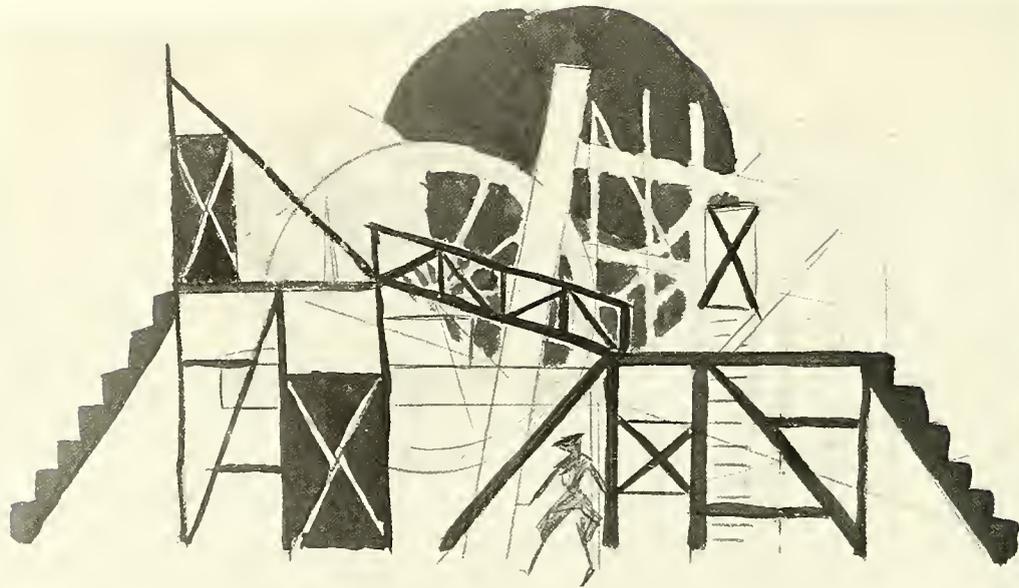


fig. a
Documentary photograph, courtesy Alma H. Law, of
Popova's original stage set in use, 1922

252

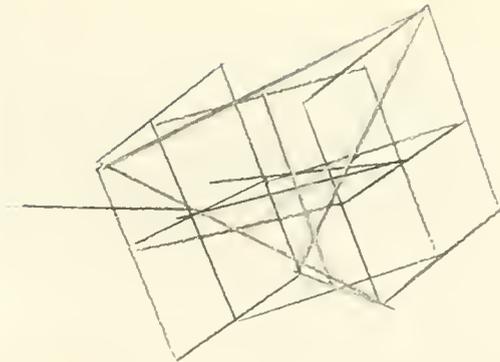
Untitled. ca. 1922

Crayon and pencil on paper, $10\frac{1}{8} \times 7\frac{7}{8}$ " (25.7 x 20 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

201.78

Design for the "cage" section of the set of *The Magnanimous Cuckold*.



253

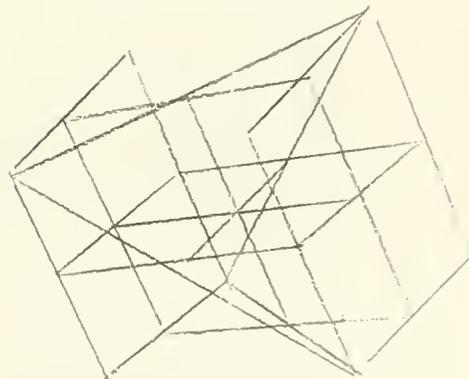
Untitled. ca. 1922

Black crayon on paper, $9\frac{5}{16} \times 8$ " (25.3 x 20.4 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

200.78

Design for the "cage" section of the set of *The Magnanimous Cuckold*.



254

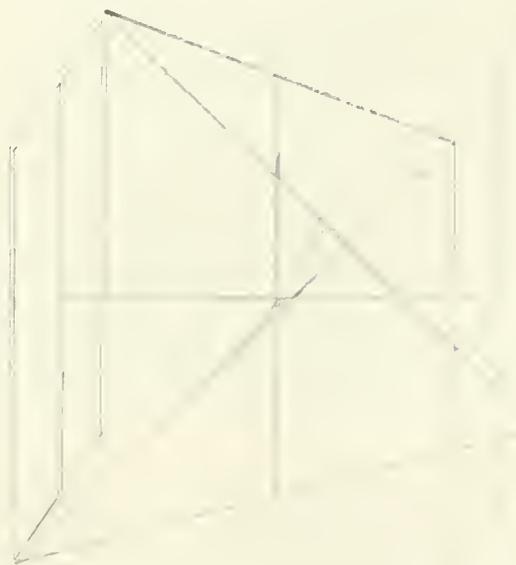
Untitled. ca. 1922

Ink and pencil on paper, $16\frac{15}{16} \times 12\frac{3}{16}$ " (43 x 32.5 cm.)

Inscribed on reverse, not in the artist's hand: "Cage for
the production *Magnanimous Cuckold*"

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

199.78



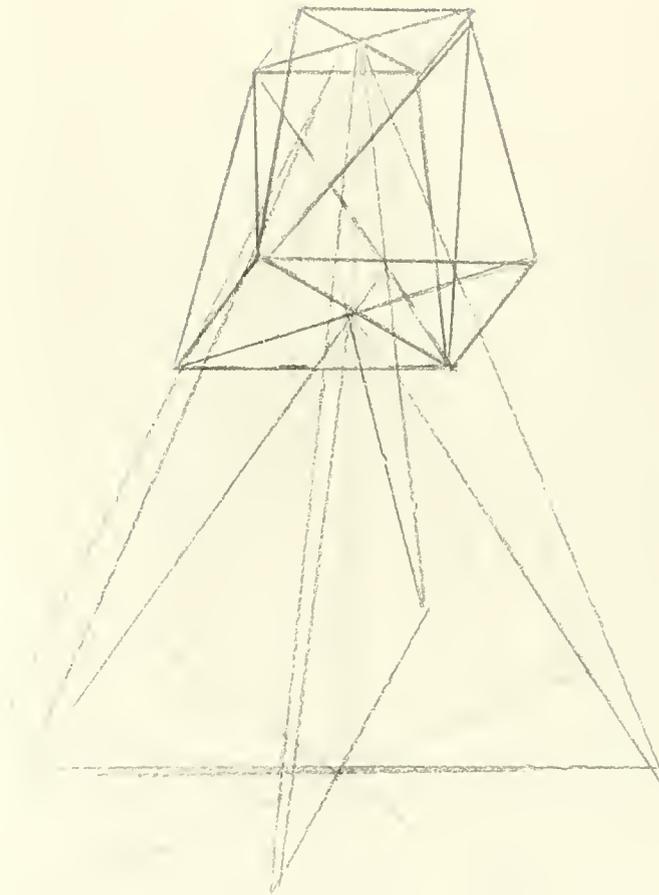
255

Untitled. ca. 1922

Colored pencil on paper, 14⁹/₁₆ x 9¹/₁₆" (37 x 23 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

198.78



256

Costume Design for *The Magnanimous Cuckold*. 1922
Gouache, ink and paper collage on paper, 12 7/8 x 9 3/8"
(32.7 x 23.8 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov
203.78

The costume has been identified as that of the Burgher-
master. (A. Law, in conversation, January 1981.) For the
nursemaid's costume, see A. Law, "The Revolution in
the Russian Theater," in LACMA, p. 68. Some of the
other costume designs for the production have been
published elsewhere, erroneously identified as designs
for magazine covers.



ПОПОВА, "EARTH IN TURMOIL"
(*Zemlia dybom*)

On March 24, 1923, the fifth anniversary of the founding of the Red Army, Meierkhold staged *Earth in Turmoil*, Sergei Tretiakov's agitprop adaptation of Martinet's verse drama, *La Nuit*, originally published in 1921. The five acts of the drama were divided into two major sections with a total of eight episodes: Down with War; Attention; Truth in the Trenches; The Black International; All Power to the Soviets; The Revolution Betrayed; Shearing the Sheep; Night.

Popova designed the production, which in some respects built upon her experience with *The Magnanimous Cuckold*, but in many ways differed from it. The set consisted again of a large construction made of wood, dependent for much of its structural vocabulary on objects such as the KPS inventions of the Stenbergs. However, unlike Popova's previous set, this was conceived almost as an industrial object; it resembled a giant gantry crane and functioned strictly as a background.¹ The actors performed in front of it, rather than using it as a machine within which to work. It was therefore not a genuinely active component in the drama. Kinetic elements were included, but now they consisted of lighting effects, cinema and slides, rather than of structural elements. Political slogans relating to the structure of a new society (electrification, industry, the mechanization of agriculture) as well as references to the Revolution

were continuously flashed onto a screen suspended from the crane. Newsreels and other films were also projected. The actors were illuminated with military searchlights, and the props were taken from everyday life: a car, a tractor, motorcycles and a machine gun.

In a note published in *Lef*, no. 4, 1924, p. 44, Popova's principles of "set formulation" for the production were reprinted. In it she described the purpose of the set as "agitational," not aesthetic. The intention of the specific devices used was to create and reinforce the "agitational" effect. The artist's primary function was now to select and combine objects from the "real world" and other material elements in such a way as to serve the social and propagandistic goals of a new art. The notion of a Productivist art, in which design was placed entirely at the service of society's needs, had consequently been taken a step further, and Popova felt no longer trapped by what she had described as her own "outmoded aesthetic habits" (see p. 293 above). As C. A. Lodder has cogently argued, this development followed directly from the Constructivist principle of rejecting "creativity" or aesthetic quality *per se*. The production of *Earth in Turmoil* thus marked a stage in the process whereby Constructivism, "setting out to transform the environment, was itself being transformed by that environment, returning to existing reality as a source of inspiration, of imagery. . . ."²

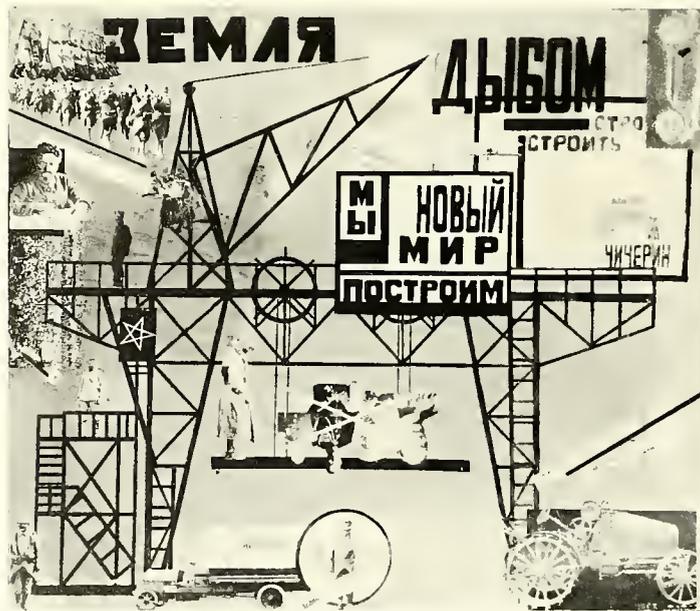


fig. a
Documentary photograph, owned by George Costakis,
of Popova's design for *Earth in Turmoil*.

1. Popova would have preferred to use a real crane if the stage floor could have supported it.

2. Lodder, *Constructivism*

257

Part of the Design for the Stage Set for *Earth in Turmoil*.

1923

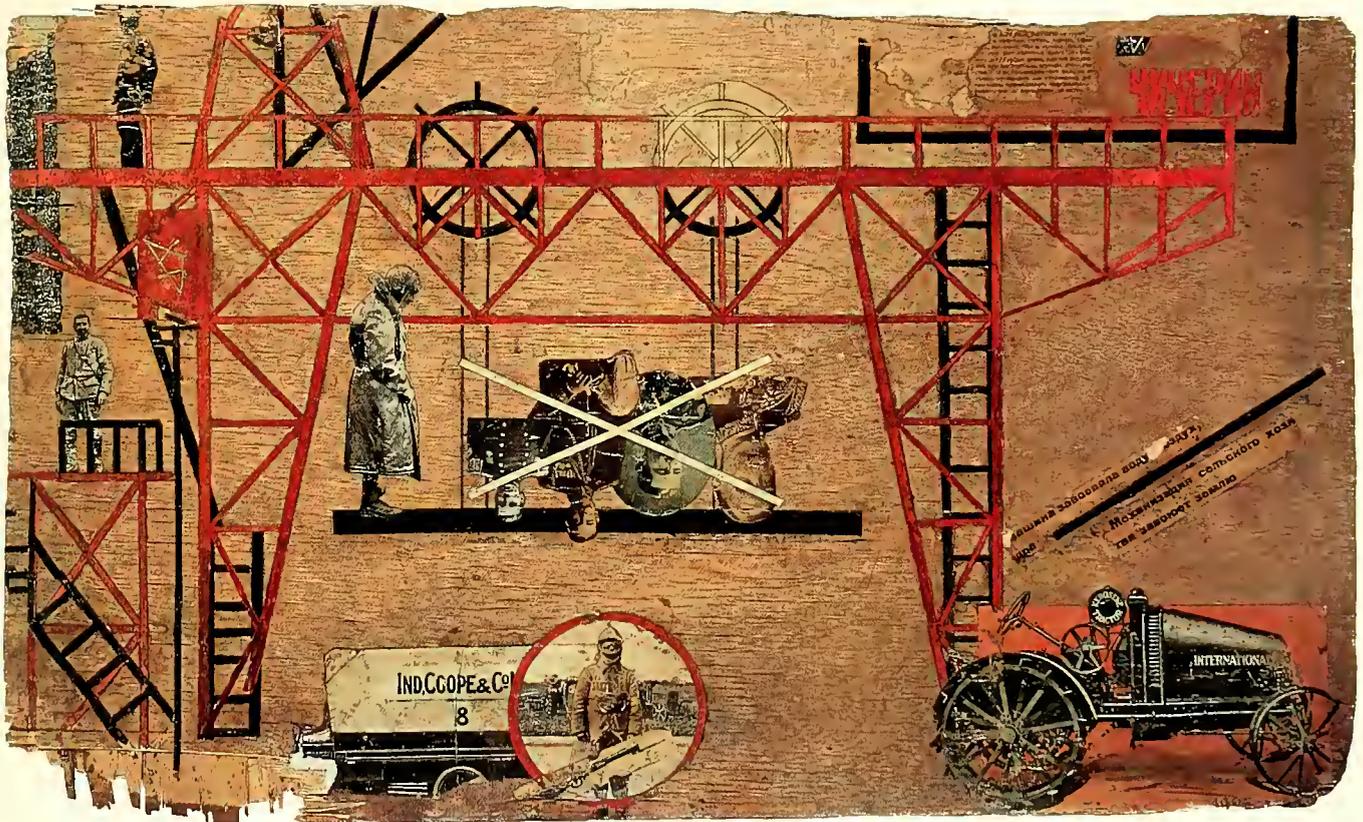
Photomontage, gouache, newspaper and photographic paper collage on plywood, 19 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 32 $\frac{1}{16}$ " (49 x 82.7 cm.)

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,

P. S. Popov

204.78

A contemporary photograph (fig. a) records the original appearance of Popova's design. The slogans "Earth in Turmoil" and "We will build a new World" are combined on this backdrop with pictures of Tsar Nicholas II and his generals shown upside down and symbolically "deleted" from society.



258

Political Slogan for *Earth in Turmoil*. 1923

Gouache, ink and paper collage on paper, 8½ x 10⅞"
(21.6 x 27.7 cm.)

Text: *Youth to replace the oldest. Long live Komsomol!*

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

205.78

This and the following two slogans were among those designed by Popova to be flashed onto the screen at the back of the set during the performance of the play. The Costakis collection includes thirteen additional designs for such slogans, as well as titles for two of the eight episodes. (See R., S., C., *Costakis*, pls. 888-906)

259

Political Slogan for *Earth in Turmoil*. 1923

Gouache, ink and paper collage on paper, 7 x 9"
(17.9 x 22.9 cm.)

Text: *Soldiers to the trenches—workers to the factories*

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

209.78

260

Political Slogan for *Earth in Turmoil*. 1923

Gouache, ink and paper collage on paper, 7 x 9¾"
(17.8 x 24.8 cm.)

Text: *The fight against counterrevolutionary speculation and sabotage*

Acquired from the collection of the artist's brother,
P. S. Popov

217.78

НА СМЕНУ
СТАРШИМ
ДА
ЗАРАВСТВУЕТ
СОЛДАТЫ
В ОКОПЫ
РАБОЧИЕ
К СТАНКАМ

ПРОТИВ
КОНТРРЕВОЛЮЦИОННОЙ
СПЕКУЛЯЦИИ
И САБОТАЖЕМ

261

Sketch for Production of *Stenka Razin* by Vasili Kamensky. 1923-24
Gouache and pencil on paper, 6 x 5 5/8" (15.2 x 14.3 cm.)
Purchased from the artist
812.79

Vialov was responsible for designing the sets and the costumes for Kamensky's play, which had its premiere on February 6, 1924 in Moscow at the Theater of the Revolution. The director was Valerii Mikhailovich Bebutov, a student and colleague of Meierkhold.

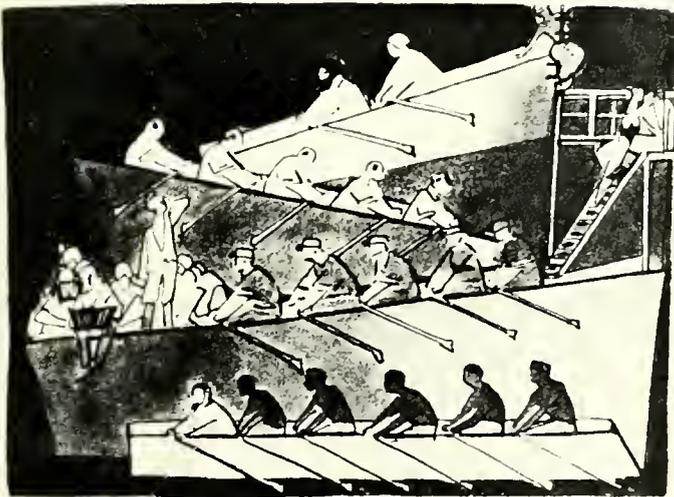


fig. a
Scene from production of *Stenka Razin*. Contemporary drawing, photograph courtesy of Alma H. Law.

K. A. VIALOV

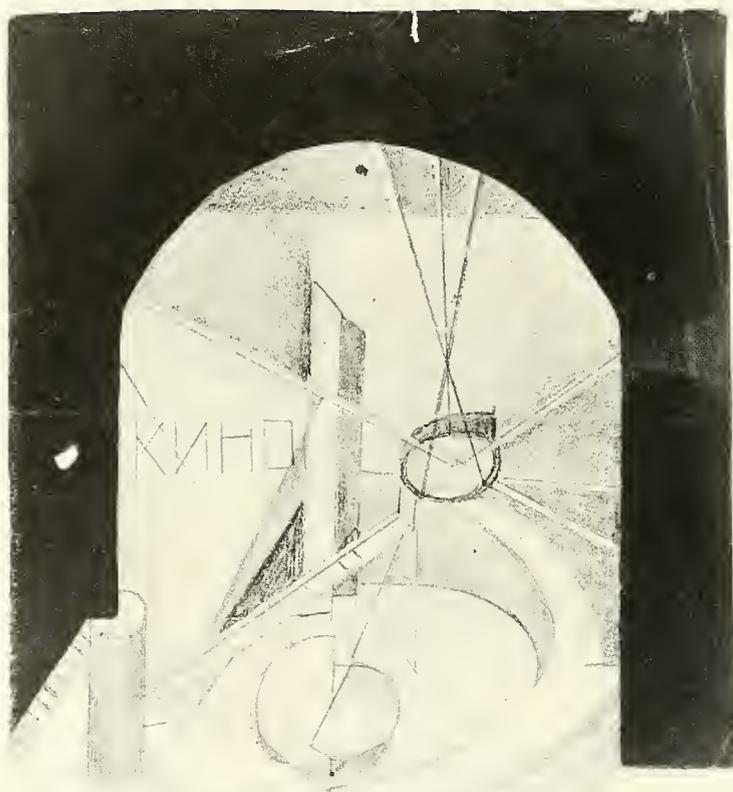
262

Set Design. ca. 1924-26

Ink and pencil on paper, 6 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 5 $\frac{5}{16}$ " (16.7 x 14.2 cm.)

Purchased from the artist

813.79



263

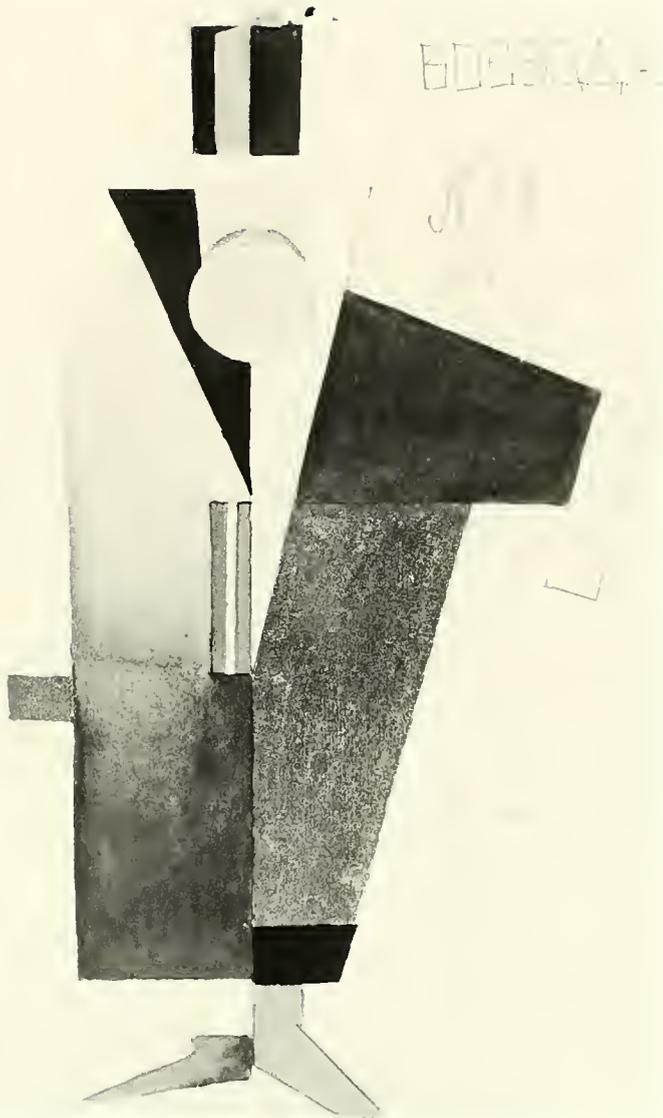
Costume Design for Production of *Stenka Razin*.

1923-24

Watercolor, pencil and gold paint on paper, 10 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 7"
(26.8 x 17.9 cm.)

Purchased from the artist

817.79



VII

Parallel Trends: The Figurative and the Cosmic, 1918-1930

During the 1920s, Kudriashev turned gradually away from Suprematism to an increasingly cosmic form of abstraction, influenced to some extent by his friendship with the rocket and space pioneer K. E. Tsiolkovsky. In an unpublished manuscript of the early 1920s, he described the gradual shift in his own work from an abstraction of pure color and form (such as that in the Orenburg Theater decorations, cat. nos. 119-121) to one inspired by “the contemporary perception of space.”¹ He came to believe that space and the cosmic universe would become the content of contemporary abstract art, and that “spatial painting” would demonstrate the “limitlessness of the cosmic world” while also providing art with a powerful expressive imagery. The new art, in its “intuitive” interpretation of spatial phenomena, was intended to parallel contemporary scientific discoveries about the universe, and reflect the extent to which such discoveries were influencing man’s consciousness.

Kliment Redko, Mikhail Plaksin and Solomon Nikritin—all of whom belonged to the so-called Electroorganism group in the 1920s—shared Kudriashev’s conviction that art could derive important inspiration from the world of science, exploration and spatial discovery. Redko, who (like Kudriashev) began his career as a Suprematist, wrote in his diary of 1921: “We are moving into the world of science, and this is the first unmistakable sign of the rebirth of art. . . .”² In the “Electroorganism” manifesto of 1922, he wrote: “Light is the highest manifestation of matter,” and he—together with others in the group—came to see luminescence, luminism, electricity, and even the lighting ramifications of “Roentgenology” as the subject matter of their art.

1. Private Archive, Moscow. Passages from the text courtesy of Vasiliï Rakitin, Moscow.

2. Private Archive, Moscow. Diary entry for Oct. 14, 1921, courtesy of Vasiliï Rakitin, Moscow. Further quotations from Redko’s unpublished diaries are translated into German and published by H. Gassner and E. Gillen, *Zwischen Revolutionskunst und Sozialistischen Realismus. Dokumente und Kommentare Kunstdebatten in der Sowjetunion von 1917 bis 1934* Düsseldorf, 1979, pp. 335-37.

264

Seated Woman. 1918

Oil on canvas, 26 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 20 $\frac{3}{8}$ " (66.1 x 51.7 cm.)

Signed, dated and inscribed on reverse: *Study for a fresco painting by V. I. Chekrygin, 1918*

Acquired from L. F. Zhegin

274.78

For information about the life and work of Chekrygin see *Vasilii Nikolaevich Chekrygin*, *Izobrazitelnykh iskusstv imeni A. S. Pushkina*, Moscow, 1969, with texts by E. Levitin, L. F. Zhegin and B. Shaposhnikov.



265

Planetary. 1922

Oil on canvas, 28 $\frac{5}{16}$ x 24" (71.9 x 61 cm.)

Signed and dated on reverse: *Plaksin 1922*

Acquired from the collection of the artist's second wife,
A. N. Varnovitskaia

174.78

According to V. Rakitin, this work was shown in an exhibition organized by the "Electroorganism" group in Moscow in 1922, and in the *First Discussional Exhibition of Associations of Active Revolutionary Art* which opened in Moscow, May 1924. (Information from private archives, Moscow.)



266

Dynamite. 1922

Oil on canvas, 24¹¹/₁₆ x 18³/₁₆" (62.8 x 47.5 cm.)

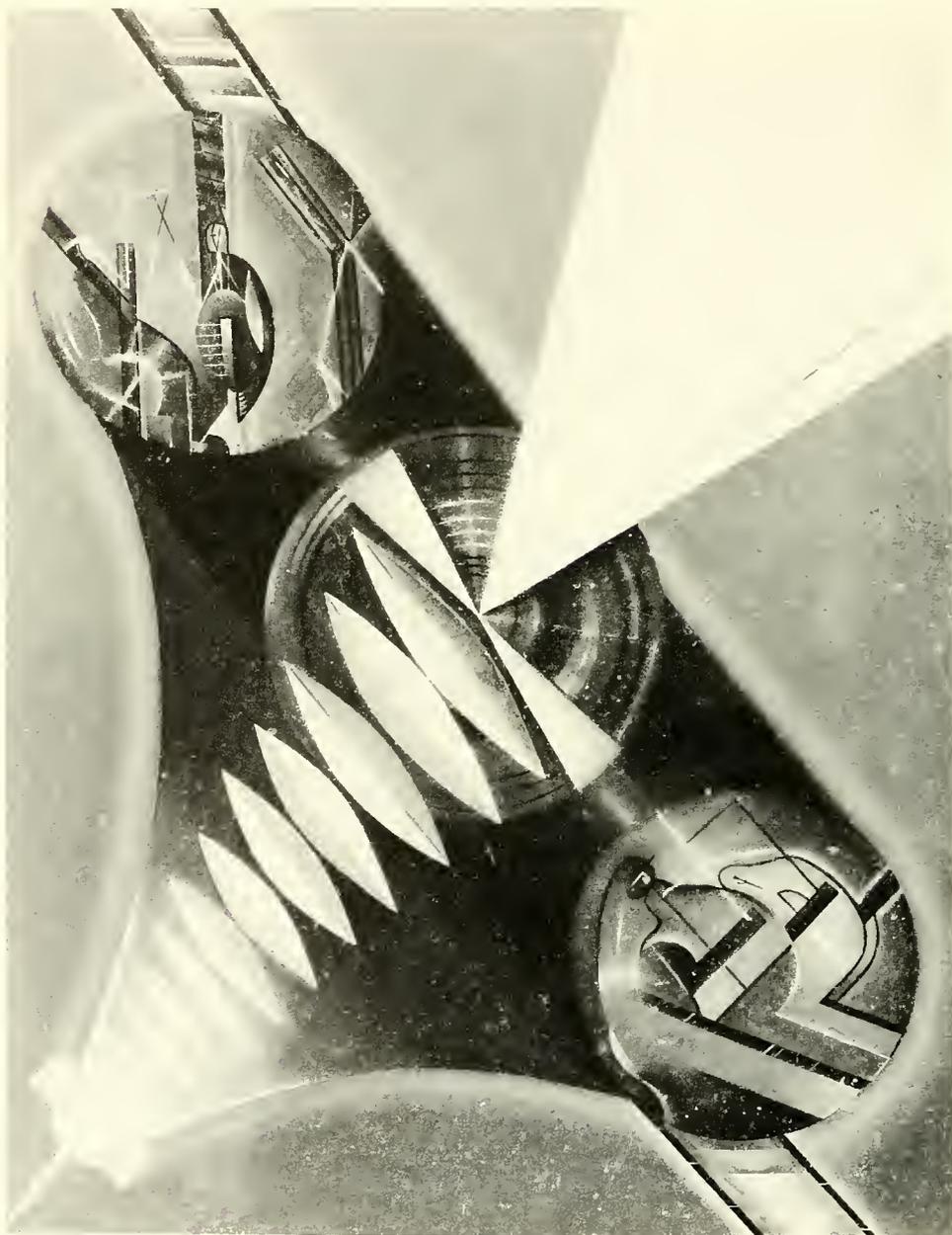
Signed and dated on reverse: *K. Redko 1922*

Acquired from the artist's widow (his second wife)

236.78

According to Rakitin, this work was exhibited in Redko's one-man show held in Moscow in 1926 and appeared as the cover illustration of the catalogue. (Information from private archives, Moscow.)

For information about the life and work of Redko, see V. Kostin, compiler and author of introductory essay, *Kliment Redko. Dnevnik. Vospominaniia Staty*, Moscow, 1974.



267

Luminescence. 1926

Oil on canvas, 42 x 27¹⁵/₁₆" (106.6 x 71 cm.)

Signed and dated l.r. and on reverse: *I Kudriashev 1926.*

Acquired from the artist

128.78



268

Landscape with Two Figures. 1930
Oil on canvas, 27 $\frac{1}{16}$ x 33 $\frac{5}{16}$ " (68.7 x 84.6 cm.)
Acquired from the artist's son, A. A. Drevin
10.78

According to Rakitin, this work was shown in an exhibition in Moscow in 1931. (Information from private archives, Moscow.)

For information about Drevin, see M. Miasina, ed., *Stareishie khudozhniki o Srednei Azii i Kavkase*, Moscow, 1973; *Alexandr Davidovich Drevin 1889–1938*, *Katalog vystavki*, Moscow, 1979.



269

Man and Cloud. 1930
Oil on canvas, 56 x 56" (142.3 x 142.3 cm.)
Acquired from the artist's widow
160.78

For information about the life and work of Nikritin, see K. London, *The Seven Soviet Arts*, London, 1937, pp. 223-29; V. Kostin, "Vystavka rabot. zhivopis i grafika," in the exhibition catalogue *Solomon Borisovich Nikritin 1898-1965*, Moscow, 1969.



Biographical Notes

Much of the biographical information included here has been supplied by Vasilii Rakitin. For more extensive biographical information on these artists, see R., S., C., *Costakis*; LACMA; Lodder, *Constructivism*; and Bowlt, *Theory and Criticism*.

ALEXEI VASILIEVICH BABICHEV

Born Moscow, March 2, 1887; died Moscow, May 1, 1963.

From 1905 to 1906 studied in the Department of Mathematics of Moscow University and simultaneously at the private studios of Ivan Dudin and Konstantin Yuon. From 1907 to 1913 attended the Moscow Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. From 1918 to 1920 taught at the Svomas in Moscow, from 1920 to 1921 was professor at the Vkhutemas, and late 1920 until 1923 was a member of the Inkhuk in Moscow, where he emerged as a theoretician.

VARVARA DMITRIEVNA BUBNOVA

Born St. Petersburg, May 4, 1886; lives Sukhumi, Abkhazian Republic.

From 1907 to 1914 studied at the School of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts, taking lessons from Nikolai Dubovskoi. From 1914 participated in numerous exhibitions, including the *Sixth*, *Eighth* and *Ninth State Exhibitions* in Moscow (all 1919) and the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen, Berlin (1922). Ca. 1920 began to take an active part in the administration of IZO Narkompros in Moscow.

ILIA GRIGORIEVICH CHASHNIK

Born Lyncite, Latvia, June 20, 1902; died Leningrad, December 4, 1929.

Spent childhood in Vitebsk; from 1917 to 1919, studied art with Yurii Pen. In 1919 attended the Vkhutemas in Moscow but soon transferred to the Vitebsk Art Institute to study under Chagall, then Malevich, who took control of the school in the winter of 1919–1920. Participated in the organization of the “Posnovis” (“Followers of the New Art”) group, later renamed “Unovis” (“Affirmers of the New Art”), and contributed to all exhibitions of the Unovis group. In 1922, when the Unovis was forced out by the local authorities and Malevich left Vitebsk, Chashnik, Suetin, Ermolaeva and Yudin all followed and joined the Ginkhuk in Petrograd. Worked as a designer with Suetin at the Lomonosov State Porcelain Factory.

VASILII NIKOLAEVICH CHEKRYGIN

Born Zhizdra, Kaluga Province, January 18, 1897; died near Moscow, June 3, 1922, after being struck by a train.

In 1913, through school friends Vladimir Maiakovsky and Lev Zhegin became close to the Larionov group and participated in Futurist events. From 1920 lived in Moscow. In 1922 cofounder of the “Makovets” group, supported by the philosopher Pavel Florensky. At the first Makovets exhibition, April 1922, in Moscow, showed 201 works. Later in 1922 a posthumous exhibition was held at the Tsvetkov Gallery in Moscow. In 1922 his work was included in the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin.

ALEXANDR DAVIDOVICH DREVIN

Born Vendene (Ventspils), Latvia, July 15, 1889; died in exile in the Altai region, 1938.

Moved to Moscow in late 1914. Participated in the *Fifth State Exhibition* in 1919. From 1918 to 1922 worked in both figurative and abstract styles and wrote poetry. From 1920 to 1921 member of the Inkhuk; left, with Kandinsky, Udaltsova and Kliun, in disagreement over the rejection by the Constructivist-Productivists of pure "easel art." From 1920 to 1930 professor of painting at the Vkhutemas/Vkhutein; he and Udaltsova met there and were later married. In 1921–22 participated in the *World of Art (Mir iskusstva)* exhibitions in Moscow. In 1922 sent work to the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. In the late 1920s returned to landscape and naturalistic painting.

BORIS VLADIMIROVICH ENDER

Born St. Petersburg 1893; died Moscow, 1960.

In 1917 studied in Matiushin's studio. In 1918 studied under Petrov-Vodkin in the Petrograd Svomas and also with Malevich. 1919–1921 a member of Matiushin's studio in "Spatial Realism." In 1923 became a member of the "Zorved" (*Zorkoe vedanie*, See-Know) group, with other Matiushin students. From 1923 to 1927, research at the Department of Organic Culture of the Museum of Painterly Culture (later the Ginkhuk) in Leningrad. In 1928 moved to Moscow. In addition to continuing his painting, from 1930 to 1931 worked on polychrome architecture with, among others, Hinnerk Scheper, a German artist from the Bauhaus. Also designed interiors, exhibitions, books and costumes.

KSENIA VLADIMIROVNA ENDER

Born St. Petersburg, 1895; died Leningrad, 1955.

From 1919 to 1922 she studied in Matiushin's studio at the Petrosvomas and worked with his "Zorved" (*Zorkoe vedanie*, See-Know) group. Between 1923 and 1926, research in the Department of Organic Culture of the Museum of Painterly Culture (later the Ginkhuk), headed by Matiushin. From the mid-1920s, research with Matiushin and Boris and Mariia Ender on color theory.

MARIIA VLADIMIROVNA ENDER

Born St. Petersburg, 1897; died Leningrad, 1942.

In 1919 studied at the Petrosvomas in Matiushin's studio. In 1923 became a member of the Museum of Painterly Culture in Petrograd and participated in its Department of Organic Culture directed by Matiushin. From 1925 to 1926 directed the laboratory on form-color perception at the Ginkhuk. In 1927, after the closing of the Ginkhuk, entered the Art History Institute in Leningrad. From 1929 to 1932 taught the theory of color in the Department of Painting, Sculpture, Ar-

chitecture and Graphics at the Fine Arts Academy in Leningrad. Continued to devote herself to the problems of color in architecture; collaborated with her brother Boris on the Soviet pavilions for the World's Fairs held in Paris in 1937 and New York in 1939.

ALEXANDRA ALEXANDROVNA EXTER

Born near Kiev, January 6, 1882; died Fontenay-aux-Roses, near Paris, March 17, 1949.

Graduated from the Kiev Art School in 1906 and also attended the Académie de la Grande Chaumière, Paris, where she set up a studio in 1909; became acquainted with Picasso, Braque, Apollinaire and the Italian Futurists Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and Giovanni Papini. Participated in all *Jack of Diamonds (Bubnovyi valet)* exhibitions between 1910 and 1916 and in *Union of Youth (Soiuz molodezhi)* exhibitions in 1910 in Riga and in 1913–14 in St. Petersburg. Between 1914 and 1924 participated in almost all the important exhibitions of the Russian avant-garde, including *Tramway V* in 1915 in Petrograd and *The Store* in 1916 in Moscow. In 1916 began theater work for Alexandr Tairov at the Moscow Kamernyi (Chamber) Theater. From 1920 to 1922 taught at the Vkhutemas and in 1921 participated in the $5 \times 5 = 25$ show in Moscow. In 1924 emigrated to France, where she continued to design theater productions and to illustrate books.

PAVEL NIKOLAEVICH FILONOV

Born Moscow, January 8, 1883; died Leningrad, December 3, 1941.

Was a member of the "Union of Youth" (*Soiuz molodezhi*) group and participated in their 1910, 1912 and 1913–14 exhibitions in St. Petersburg, and the *Donkey's Tail (Oslinyi khvost)* in Moscow. From 1916 to 1918 served on the Rumanian front. In Petrograd in 1919 was represented at the *First State Free Exhibition of Works of Art*. In 1922 participated in the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. From 1923 taught at the Petrograd Academy and briefly headed the General Ideology Department at the Museum of Painterly Culture. In 1925, with a group of students and followers, established the Filonov school in Petrograd, which lasted until 1932.

NIKOLAI IVANOVICH GRINBERG

Born St. Petersburg, 1897.

In 1918 was a student of Malevich, and from 1919 to 1922 studied with Matiushin. Was a member of the "Zorved" (*Zorkoe vedanie*, See-Know) group. From 1923 worked at the Petrograd Museum of Painterly Culture, later the Ginkhuk. During the late 1920s ceased artistic activity, and almost none of his work has survived; his fate is unknown.

ELENA GURO (ELEONORA GENRIKHOVNA VON NOTENBERG)

Born in St. Petersburg, 1877; died Usikirkko, Finland (now in the USSR), May 6, 1913, of leukemia.

From 1890 to 1893 studied at the School of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts; from 1903 to 1905 studied at the private studio of Yan Tsioglinsky, where she met her future husband, Mikhail Matiushin. Guro and Matiushin were both members of Nikolai Kulbin's "Impressionists" group and exhibited in its shows of 1909–1910. Her paintings were shown first at Kulbin's *Exhibition of Contemporary Trends in Art* (*Vystavka sovremennikh techenii v iskusstve*) in 1908. Also participated in the *Union of Youth* (*Soiuz molodezhi*) exhibitions; her 1913–14 posthumous exhibit in St. Petersburg was under its auspices. A writer as well as a painter, she published her first story in St. Petersburg in 1905. Her first book *The Hurdy-Gurdy* (*Sharmanka*) was published in 1909; *Autumn Dream* (*Osenii son*) in 1912; *Baby Camels in the Sky* (*Nebesnye verbluzhata*) in 1914.

KAREL IOGANSON

Biographical information about Ioganson has been unobtainable.

IVAN VASILIEVICH KLIUN (KLIUNKOV)

Born Kiev, 1873; died Moscow, late 1942.

During the 1890s studied art in Warsaw and Kiev while earning a living as a bookkeeper. In 1907 met Malevich. Contributed to the last *Union of Youth* (*Soiuz molodezhi*) exhibition in 1913–14 in St. Petersburg. In 1915 contributed to the exhibition *Tramway V* in Petrograd. In 1915–16 participated in the major avant-garde exhibitions, including *0.10* in Petrograd, *The Store* in Moscow, and the *Jack of Diamonds* (*Bubnovyi valet*) in Moscow. In 1917 was named director of the Central Exhibition Bureau of the Narkompros. From 1918 to 1921 was professor of painting at the Svomas, later the Vkhutemas; in 1921 was a member of the Inkhuk. Participated in the 1919 *Fifth* and *Tenth State Exhibitions* in Moscow. In 1922 sent work to the *First Russian Art Exhibition* (*Erste russische Kunstausstellung*), at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin.

GUSTAV GUSTAVOVICH KLUCIS

Born near Volmar (Valmiera), Latvia, January 4, 1895; died 1944 in a labor camp.

1913 to 1915 attended the Riga Art Institute. Moved to Petrograd and from 1915 to 1917 attended the School of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts. From 1918 to 1921 studied in Moscow at the Svomas, later the Vkhutemas, under Malevich and Antoine Pevsner. In August 1920 participated with Pevsner and his brother Naum Gabo in a show at the Tverskoi Boulevard pavilion in Moscow. In 1921, with other students of Malevich, contributed to the Unovis exhibition in

Moscow. From 1921 to 1925 was a member of the Inkhuk, and in 1922 contributed to the *First Russian Art Exhibition* (*Erste russische Kunstausstellung*), at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. From 1924 to 1930 taught a course in color at the Vkhutemas.

BORIS DANILOVICH KOROLEV

Born Moscow, December 28, 1884; died Moscow, June 18, 1963.

From 1902 to 1905 studied in the scientific section of the physics and mathematics department at the University of Moscow. From 1910 to 1913 studied at the Moscow Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. In 1913 traveled to England, Italy, Austria and Germany, and to Paris, where he worked in Alexander Archipenko's studio. From 1918 to 1924 taught at the Vkhutemas in Moscow and from 1929 to 1930 at the Leningrad Academy.

IVAN ALEXEEVICH KUDRIASHEV

Born Kaluga, 1896; died Moscow, 1972.

From 1913 to 1917 attended the Moscow Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, and from 1918 to 1919 studied with Malevich at the Svomas in Moscow; met Kliun, Antoine Pevsner and Naum Gabo. In 1919 was sent to Orenburg to establish the Svomas there, and organized a branch of the Unovis group. In 1921 went to Smolensk, where he met Katarzyna Kobro and Wladyslaw Strzeminski, Polish followers of Malevich. Returned to Moscow, and from late 1921 worked as a designer. In 1922 sent work to the *First Russian Art Exhibition* (*Erste russische Kunstausstellung*), at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. From 1925 to 1928 showed his abstract works at the first, second and fourth OST exhibitions.

NIKOLAI ALEXANDROVICH LAVOVSKY

Born Moscow, 1881; died Moscow, 1941.

From 1914 to 1917 attended the Moscow Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. From 1919 to 1920 worked on experimental architectural projects with a group of young architects including Konstantin Melnikov. In 1919–1920 was a founding member of the Commission of Painterly-Sculptural-Architectural Synthesis (*Zhivopisno-skulpturno-arkhitekturnyi sintez*, or *Zhivskulptarkb*). In 1920 helped found and then taught at the Vkhutemas/Vkhutein; was a member of the Inkhuk. In 1923 founded the "formalist" group of new architects, ASNOVA. Designed monuments, theaters and a metro station in Moscow.

EL LISSITZKY (LAZAR MARKOVICH LISITSKY)

Born Polchinok, Smolensk Province, November 23, 1890; died Moscow, December 30, 1941.

Grew up in Vitebsk; attended technical high school in Smolensk, the Technische Hochschule in Darmstadt

and in 1916 received a diploma in engineering and architecture from Riga Technological University. In 1919 was invited by Marc Chagall, director of the Vitebsk Art Institute, to become professor of graphics and architecture. Later sided with Malevich; became a member of Posnovis and Unovis. 1921 lectured in the architecture department of the Vkhutemas in Moscow. Exhibited a Proun and other works at the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin and created his Proun Room for the *Great Berlin Art Exhibition (Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung)* of 1923. From 1925 to 1930 taught in the wood and metalwork department of the Vkhutemas/Vkhutein in Moscow. In 1928 planned and directed the installation of the Soviet Pavilion at the *International Press Exhibition ("Pressa")* in Cologne.

KAZIMIR SEVERINOVICH MALEVICH

Born near Kiev, February 26, 1878; died Leningrad, May 15, 1935.

Lived in Kursk from 1898 to 1901. Attended the Moscow Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in 1903. In 1910 showed at the *Jack of Diamonds (Bubnovyi valet)* exhibition and in 1912 at the *Donkey's Tail (Oslinyi khvost)* exhibition. Associated with the "Union of Youth" (*Soiuz molodezhi*) group and took part in their exhibitions in 1911 to 1914 and in the *Target (Mishen)* exhibition in Moscow in 1913. Designed the scenery for Alexei Kruchenykh and Mikhail Matiushin's opera *Victory Over the Sun (Pobeda nad solntsem)* in 1913. Exhibited in *o.10*, December 1915, Petrograd, in *Tramway V* also in Petrograd, and in 1916 in *The Store* in Moscow. From the autumn of 1918 was professor at the Svomas in Moscow and was active in IZO Narkompros. In 1919 wrote *On New Systems in Art (O novikh sistemakh v iskusstve)*, and in September of that year began teaching at the Vitebsk Art Institute, where, after philosophical disputes, soon replaced Chagall as director. Organized the Unovis group, including El Lissitzky, Vera Ermolaeva, Chashnik, Suetin and Yudin. In 1919–1920 held a one-man show of 153 works in Moscow at the *Sixteenth State Exhibition*. In 1922 showed at the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. In Petrograd joined the new branch of the Inkhuk formed by Tatlin. In 1927 traveled to Poland for a one-man exhibition in Warsaw and to Germany, where his work was shown in a separate section at the *Great Berlin Art Exhibition (Grosse Berliner Kunstausstellung)*. In 1929 held a one-man show at the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.

MIKHAIL VASILIEVICH MATIUSHIN

Born Nizhnii Novgorod, 1861; died Leningrad, October 14, 1934.

From 1878 to 1881 attended the Moscow Conservatory

of Music and worked from 1881 to 1913 as a violinist in the Court Orchestra in St. Petersburg. Studied at the School of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts until 1898. Helped to found the "Union of Youth" (*Soiuz molodezhi*). In 1910 contributed to the first volume of the Futurist almanac *Trap for Judges (Sadok sudei)* and was the publisher of the second volume. In 1913 collaborated with Kazimir Malevich, Alexei Kruchenykh and Velimir Khlebnikov to publish *The Three (Troie)*—under his own imprint—in memory of his wife, Guro, who had died that year. Also wrote the music for the Futurist opera *Victory Over the Sun (Pobeda nad solntsem)*, with libretto by Kruchenykh and stage sets by Malevich. Published a number of other books under his own imprint, including a translation of *Du Cubisme* by Albert Gleizes and Jean Metzinger. From 1918 to 1922, at the Petrosvomas, conducted a studio in "Spatial Realism" for his group, known as "Zorved" (*Zorkoe vedanie*, See-Know).

KONSTANTIN KONSTANTINOVICH MEDUNETSKY

Born Moscow, 1899; died ca. 1935.

In 1914 studied at the Stroganov Art Institute in Moscow, specializing in stage design. In 1919 was a founding member of the Obmokhu and contributed to its first, second (1920) and third (1921) group exhibitions. Became a member of the Inkhuk in 1920. In January 1921, with the Stenbergs, organized an exhibition entitled *The Constructivists* of sixty-one nonutilitarian constructions at the Poets' Café in Moscow. Was represented in the 1922 *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. In 1924 worked with the Stenbergs on stage sets for Alexandr Tairov's Kamernyi (Chamber) Theater in Moscow. Also designed film posters. In 1925 sent work to the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris.

PETR VASILIEVICH MITURICH

Born St. Petersburg, September 12, 1887; died Moscow, October 27, 1956.

From 1906 to 1909 attended the Kiev Art Institute. During World War I was wounded at the front while serving as a signalman for the Eleventh Siberian Division, and in 1917, during the October Revolution, was again wounded and discharged. Contributed to the *Exhibition of Painting: 1915 (Vystavka zhivopisi 1915 god)*, in Moscow; the 1916 *Exhibition of Contemporary Russian Painting (Vystavka sovremennoi russoi zhivopisi)*, in Petrograd; and the *World of Art (Mir iskusstva)* exhibitions from 1915 to 1918 in Petrograd. In 1922 contributed to the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. From 1923 was professor in the graphics and architecture departments at the Vkhutemas.

ALEXEI ALEXEEVICH MORGUNOV

Born Moscow, 1884; died Moscow, February 1935.

In the early 1900s studied at the Stroganov Art Institute in Moscow and at the private studios of Sergei Ivanov and Konstantin Korovin. From 1904 to 1910 exhibited at the Moscow Association of Artists, where he met Malevich and Kliun. Joined the "Jack of Diamonds" (*Bubnovyi valet*) group, and participated in its exhibitions of 1910, 1913 and 1914. Also showed with the "World of Art" (*Mir iskusstva*) group in 1911–12 in Moscow and St. Petersburg. In 1912 contributed to the *Donkey's Tail* (*Oslinyi khvost*) exhibition in Moscow; participated in three *Union of Youth* (*Soiuz molodezhi*) exhibitions in St. Petersburg, in 1911, 1912 and 1913–14. In 1915 contributed to *Tramway V* in Petrograd and in 1916 to *The Store* in Moscow. From 1918 to 1920 was professor of painting at the Svomas in Moscow. In 1918 was a member of IZO Narkompros. Exhibited at the 1918–19 *Fifth State Exhibition* in Moscow.

SOLOMON BORISOVICH NIKRITIN

Born Chernigov, December 3, 1898; died Moscow, December 3, 1965.

Graduated from the Kiev Art School in 1914. From 1917 to 1920 was a decorator for Revolutionary celebrations for the city of Kiev. From 1920 to 1922 completed his artistic education at the Vkhutemas in Moscow. In 1921, with Redko, Plaksin, Alexandr Tyshler, Sergei Luchishkin and Alexandr Labas, organized the "Electroorganism" group, which held an exhibition at the Museum of Painterly Culture in Moscow in 1922. Sent work to the *First Russian Art Exhibition* (*Erste russische Kunstausstellung*), at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. In 1923 formed the Projectionist group called "Metod" (Method). Participated in the *First Discussional Exhibition* of the Associations of Active Revolutionary Art in 1924 in Moscow, and signed the Projectionists' group declaration in the catalogue.

MIKHAIL MATVEEVICH PLAKSIN

Born Shlisselburg, near St. Petersburg, May 15, 1898; died Moscow, May 22, 1965.

Began his artistic training as a lithography student and studied with Nikolai Roerich and Alexandr Yakovlev at the School of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in St. Petersburg. Under the influence of Alexandr Labas, became interested in abstract art. In Moscow from 1920 onward, studied at the Vkhutemas in Robert Falk's studio. Was a member of the "Electroorganism" group. Participated in the *First Discussional Exhibition* of the Associations of Active Revolutionary Art in Moscow in 1924, and signed the declaration of the Projectionists' group in the catalogue. Gradually gave up painting and worked for the theater, on books, and on setting up agricultural and printing exhibitions. From 1920 on worked on inventions, including a color movie camera and stereo projection systems.

LIUBOV SERGEEVNA POPOVA

Born near Moscow, April 24, 1889; died Moscow, May 25, 1924, of scarlet fever.

Studied in the private studios of Stanislav Zhukovsky and Konstantin Yuon in Moscow. In 1912 worked in the Moscow studio known as The Tower with Tatlin, Viktor Bart and Kirill Zdanevich. That winter traveled to Paris and worked in the studios of Le Fauconnier and Metzinger with Udaltsova and other Russian artists. Returned to Russia in 1913, and in 1914 again traveled through Italy and France. Contributed to the 1914 and 1916 *Jack of Diamonds* (*Bubnovyi valet*) exhibitions in Moscow, the 1915 *Tramway V* and 0.10 in Petrograd, and *The Store* in Moscow, 1916. Participated in the 1918–19 *Fifth State Exhibition* and the 1919 *Tenth State Exhibition*, both in Moscow. From 1918 taught at the Svomas and Vkhutemas. From 1920 to 1923 was a member of the Inkhuk. Participated in the $5 \times 5 = 25$ exhibition of 1921 in Moscow and contributed to the *First Russian Art Exhibition* (*Erste russische Kunstausstellung*), at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin in 1922.

IVAN ALBERTOVICH PUNI (JEAN POUIGNY)

Born Kuokkala, Finland (now Repino, Leningrad District), May 6, 1894; died Paris, November 26, 1956.

In 1910 left for Paris to attend the Académie Julien; also traveled to Italy. In 1912 returned to St. Petersburg and met Nikolai Kulbin, the Burliuk brothers and Malevich. Married the artist Ksenia Boguslavskaja in 1913. Participated in the 1912 and 1913–14 *Union of Youth* (*Soiuz molodezhi*) exhibitions in St. Petersburg. In 1915 exhibited at *Tramway V* and organized 0.10 in Petrograd; released a Suprematist manifesto with Boguslavskaja, Malevich and Kliun. In January 1919 went with Boguslavskaja to Vitebsk, where he taught at the Art Institute at the invitation of Chagall. In the autumn of 1920, emigrated to Berlin. In 1922 showed at the *First Russian Art Exhibition* (*Erste russische Kunstausstellung*), at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin; in 1924 settled in Paris.

KLIMENT NIKOLAEVICH REDKO

Born Kholm (now Khelm), Poland, September 15, 1897; died Moscow, February 18, 1956.

In 1910 enrolled in the icon painting school at the Kievo-Pechersk Monastery. From 1914 to 1915 attended the School of the Society for the Encouragement of the Arts in Petrograd. From 1918 to 1920 studied at the Kiev Art School, and helped decorate the city for Revolutionary celebrations. Settled in Moscow in 1920. After a short period of Suprematist work lasting until 1921, was one of the initiators of the "Electroorganism" group. In 1924 participated in the *First Discussional Exhibition* of the Associations of Active Revolutionary Art in Moscow. Had a one-man show in Moscow in 1926, and from 1927 to 1935 lived in Paris. Returned to Moscow late in 1935 and turned to landscape painting.

ALEXANDR MIKHAILOVICH RODCHENKO

Born St. Petersburg, November 23, 1891; died Moscow, December 3, 1956.

From 1910 to 1914 attended the Kazan Art School, where he met Varvara Stepanova, whom he later married. After graduation, entered the Stroganov Art Institute in Moscow. Participated in *The Store* in Moscow in 1916. In 1918 painted *Black on Black (Chernoie na chernom)* as a polemical response to Malevich's *White on White (Beloe na belom)*. Was active in IZO Narkompros in the Subsection of Applied Art, headed by Rozanova. Showed work in the 1919 *Tenth State Exhibition*. Was a founding member of the Inkhuk in 1920 and, that same year, was one of the initiators (with Kandinsky) of the creation of a network of art museums throughout the country. Also became a professor at the Vkhutemas/Vkhutein. In 1922 participated in the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. From 1923 worked on the design and content of *Lef* and *Novyi Lef*, contributing articles, photographs and typography. In 1925 designed a workers' club, which was exhibited in the Soviet Pavilion at the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris.

OLGA VLADIMIROVNA ROZANOVA

Born Malenki, Vladimir Province, 1886; died Moscow, November 8, 1918, of diphtheria.

From 1904 to 1910 studied at the Bolshakov Art College and Stroganov Art Institute in Moscow. Lived in St. Petersburg from 1911 onward. By 1911 was one of the most active members of the avant-garde art movement in St. Petersburg. Was a member of the "Union of Youth" (*Soiuz molodezhi*) group and contributed to its exhibitions from 1911 to 1914. Exhibited in all the major avant-garde shows of 1915–16, including *Tramway V, o.10* of 1915 in Petrograd and *The Store* and *Jack of Diamonds (Bubnovyi valet)* of 1916 in Moscow. From 1916–17 member of the "Supremus" group. In 1918 member of IZO Narkompros. With Rodchenko was in charge of the Subsection of Applied Art of IZO Narkompros and helped to organize Svomas in several provincial towns. In 1919 a posthumous exhibition of her work was held in Moscow. Her work was also exhibited at the 1922 *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin.

SERGEI YAKOLEVICH SENKIN

Born Pekrovskoe-Stresknevo, near Moscow, 1894; died Moscow, 1963.

In 1914–15 attended the Moscow Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture. In 1918–19 studied at Malevich's studio at the Svomas in Moscow. Continued his education at the Vkhutemas in 1920. From 1918 to 1922 was closely associated with Klucis and Lissitzky.

In 1922 his Suprematist works were shown at the *Association of New Trends in Art (Obedinenie novykh techenii v iskusstve)* exhibition in Petrograd. From 1923 was a member of *Lef* and wrote an article with Klucis for that journal entitled "Workshop of the Revolution." In the 1920s and 1930s worked as a designer and made extensive use of photomontage. In 1928, with Lissitzky, made a large "photofresco" for the Soviet Pavilion at the *International Press Exhibition ("Pressa")* in Cologne.

ANTONINA FEDOROVNA SOFRONOVA

Born Orel, March 14, 1892; died Moscow, May 14, 1966.

In 1913 entered Ilia Mashkov's private studio in Moscow. Contributed to the 1917 *World of Art (Mir iskusstva)* exhibition in Moscow. From 1920 to 1921 taught at the State Art Studios in Tver (now Kalinin). Friend of Nikolai Tarabukin; returned to Moscow and in 1923 designed the cover of Tarabukin's book *From the Easel to the Machine (Ot molberta k mashine)*. Did illustrations for newspapers, journals and posters.

VLADIMIR AVGUSTOVICH STENBERG

Born Moscow, April 4, 1899; lives Moscow.

Born to a Swedish father and a Russian mother; worked closely with his younger brother, Georgii (1900–1933). From 1912 to 1917 studied at the Stroganov Art Institute in Moscow. From 1918 to 1919 attended the Svomas in Moscow. He and his brother became members of the Obmokhu and showed work in the second Obmokhu group exhibition in May 1920; became members of Inkhuk. As early as 1915 the brothers designed stage sets and film posters. From 1922 to 1925 they also designed stage sets for Alexandr Tairov at the Kamernyi (Chamber) Theater in Moscow. Exhibited works at the 1922 *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin, and at the 1925 *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris. From 1929 to 1932 taught at the Architecture Construction Institute in Moscow.

VARVARA FEDOROVNA STEPANOVA

Born Kaunas (Kovno), Lithuania, November 5, 1894; died Moscow, May 20, 1958.

In 1911 studied at the Kazan Art School; there met Alexandr Rodchenko, later her husband. In 1912 moved to Moscow and studied under Ilia Mashkov and Konstantin Yuon before entering the Stroganov Art Institute in 1913. Showed work at the 1918–19 *Fifth State Exhibition* and the 1919 *Tenth State Exhibition* in Moscow. Also participated in the *Exhibition of Four* (with Kandinsky, Rodchenko and Nikolai Sinezubov) in 1920, and the 1922 *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. Starting in 1918 associated with IZO Narkompros and from 1920 to 1923 was a member of the Inkhuk. In 1922 designed the costumes and sets for

Alexandr Sukhovo-Kobylin's *Death of Tarelkin (Smert Tarelkina)* under the direction of Vsevolod Meierkhold. From 1923 to 1928 was associated with Maiakovsky's *Lef* and *Novyi Lef*. Taught in the textile department of the Vkhutemas from 1924 to 1925. In 1925 participated in the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris.

NIKOLAI MIKHAILOVICH TARABUKIN

Born Moscow, 1899; died Moscow, 1956.

Before 1918 studied at Moscow University, specializing in history and philosophy. From 1920 was secretary of the Inkhuk and took an active part in the debates on Construction and Production art in the group, which included Brik, Lissitzky, Rodchenko and Stepanova. Wrote such theoretical works as *For a Theory of Painting (Opyt teorii zhivopisi)*, and *From the Easel to the Machine (Ot molberta k mashine)*, both published in Moscow in 1923, and *The Art of Today (Iskusstvo dnia)*, published in Moscow in 1925.

VLADIMIR EVGRAFOVICH TATLIN

Born Moscow, December 12, 1885; died Moscow, May 31, 1953.

Son of an engineer; spent his childhood in Kharkov, where he completed technical high school. 1902 went to sea with the Russian Steamship and Trade Society as a merchant seaman. In 1909 entered the Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in Moscow; expelled. In the winter of 1911 organized a studio, The Tower, in Moscow. From 1911 to 1914 participated in all the *Union of Youth (Soiuz molodezhi)* exhibitions in St. Petersburg. Took part in 1912 *Donkey's Tail (Oslinyi khvost)* exhibition in Moscow. In 1913 traveled to Berlin and later to Paris, where he visited Picasso's studio and almost certainly saw Picasso's Cubist constructions. After returning to Russia began to work on his own reliefs and counter-reliefs. In May 1914, in his Moscow studio, held an exhibition of his first reliefs. Lived in Moscow but spent long periods in Petrograd, where a circle of young artists formed around him, including Lev Bruni, Petr Miturich and the critic Nikolai Punin. In 1915 participated in all the major avant-garde shows, including *Tramway V* and *0.10* in Petrograd. In 1916 organized *The Store* exhibition in Moscow, in which Malevich participated, but showed no Suprematist work. From the summer of 1918 headed IZO Narkompros and in January of 1919 was appointed head of the Department of Painting at the Moscow Svomas. From early 1919 to 1921 was an instructor in the Petrosvomas. In 1921 became head of the Department of Sculpture at the restructured Academy of Arts in Petrograd. In 1922 showed work in the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin. Starting in 1923 was involved with the Inkhuk and in 1924 helped to form the Petrograd Ginkhuk. In 1925 sent

work to the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* in Paris. Taught the "culture of materials" in the departments of wood and metalwork at the Vkhutemas/Vkhutein.

NADEZHDA ANDREEVNA UDALTSOVA

Born Orel, 1886; died Moscow, 1961.

Beginning in 1905 studied at the Moscow Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, and in 1906 attended Konstantin Yuon's private art school. In the winter of 1912, with Popova, visited the Paris studios of Metzinger, Le Fauconnier and Segonzac. In 1913 in Moscow worked in Tatlin's studio, The Tower. Participated in the 1914 *Jack of Diamonds (Bubnovyi valet)* exhibition in Moscow and in 1915 in *Tramway V* in Petrograd. Also contributed to the 1915-16 *0.10* in Petrograd and *The Store* exhibition in Moscow, 1916. From 1916 to 1917 was a member of the "Supremus" group, and worked on the journal of the same name, which never appeared. Worked in IZO Narkompros and from 1918 onward taught at the Svomas in Moscow—first as an assistant to Malevich and later as a professor of painting. Member of the Inkhuk in 1920-21. From 1921 to 1934 taught at the Vkhutemas/Vkhutein; met Drevin, whom she later married. In 1922 sent works to the *First Russian Art Exhibition (Erste russische Kunstausstellung)*, at the Galerie van Diemen in Berlin.

KONSTANTIN ALEXANDROVICH VIALOV

Born Moscow, April 6, 1900; lives Moscow.

From 1914 to 1917 attended the Stroganov Art Institute in Moscow, specializing in textile design. From 1917 to 1923 studied in Moscow under Lentulov and Morgunov at the Svomas, later at the Vkhutemas. In 1925 became a member of OST and participated in its exhibitions from 1925 to 1928. Worked as a stage designer, poster designer and book illustrator. At the end of the 1920s turned to painting simple landscapes.

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