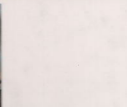
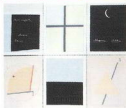


CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN ARTISTS



LEONID EFROS

RUSSIA, 119034, Moscow,
B. LJOWSCHINSKI PER., 8/1
INTERNATIONAL ARTS FUND

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One-man Shows

1978
State Museum of Literature, Moscow.
1990
Museum of F.M. Dostoevsky, Leningrad.
1990-91
State Museums of the Moscow Kremlin.

Represented in Collections of

Her Majesty the Queen of Great Britain Elizabeth II. Buckingham Palace, London.
Her Majesty the Queen-Mother. Claren House, London.
Princess Ann. Buckingham Palace, London.
Moscow Kremlin State Museum.
State Historical Museum, Moscow.
L.N.Tolstoy State Museum, Moscow.
Borodino Battle Panorama Museum, Moscow.
Historical and Arts Museum of Zagorsk.
Petropavlovskaya Fortress Museum, St.Petersbourg, etc.

Born in 1949 in Moscow.

Graduated from the Department of Art of the Moscow Polygraphic Institute.

Author of portraits of:

Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II of Britain; His Majesty King Harold V;

Princess Michael of Kent; Film director Federico Fellini; Violinist and conductor Sir Yehudi Menuhin;

Duchess Alexandra Aberkon, descendant of families of Emperor Nicholas I and Alexander Pushkin.

PORTRAIT OF HER MAJESTY,
QUEEN ELIZABETH II OF BRITAIN SEATED
UPON THE THRONE.
OIL ON CANVAS, 66 X 52.7, 1992-93



The artist's trip to London with the purpose of making a portrait of Elizabeth II could have resulted in a trivial payment of diplomatic devoirs – a fate that often awaits courtier portraits, especially created by guests from afar, – but it did not for two reasons. One reason (internal) was the motivation for the trip: it was not undertaken ad lib, the artist, who «went to London to look at the Queen», was very well equipped. He had with him his «open sesame», a marvellous tool unlocking doors, a unique intuition for the eternal and an integral «sensation of the universe» (if I am permitted to borrow a fairly adequate expression once used by Piotr Mituritch).

The second reason (external) lies within foreign policy and history. Throughout her long reign (exceeding 40 years), her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II has been a symbol of the oldest and, despite all legislative constraints, the most authoritative monarchies in the world. English political establishment regards the Queen as a standard, to which everyone and everything should endeavour to rise. Also, the Queen, a representative of the Windsor dynasty, is a sovereign walking in step with the time. It was not accidental that her coronation in 1953 was the first event of the kind to be broadcast. Subsequently, Elizabeth, to quote a widely used joke of the press, was «the first monarch to go to space»: the first English woman cosmonaut Helen Sharp took with her to space a miniature portrait embedded into a brooch. Middle Ages are intertwined in Britain with Modern History, like art deco style in jewellery combines tradition and avant-garde. For her subjects, the Queen personifying the almost millennium-old tradition of sovereign rule (dating back to William the Conqueror and then continued by the Windsor dynasty) is little less than an animated icon, reminding of the Byzantine grandeur rather than of the simple dignity of Scandinavian Protestant monarchs.

A personality extremely sensitive to real and tangible background of things (in addition to theatrical or historical), Efros lays special emphasis on the iconographic character of his regal model in his extremely official portrait



HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELISABETH II OF GREAT BRITAIN IN THE YELLOW DRAWING ROOM OF BUCKINGHAM PALACE, LONDON, 1992



Portrait from the life of Buckingham Palace
2nd March 1992 Kenneth Scott

PORTRAIT OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELISABETH II OF GREAT BRITAIN.
PAPER, WATERCOLOR, PENCIL, 32 X 34, 1992, LONDON



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

17th November 1994.

Многоблагодарный Господин Эфрос,

It was a great pleasure to see you during the State Visit of The Queen last month, but I was very sorry to learn that you had never received a letter from me thanking you for the splendid portraits of The Queen, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and The Princess Royal, which were forwarded to me by the Consulate-General in St. Petersburg at the beginning of this year. I apologise for this, and would like you to know that The Queen was delighted to have your portrait of her, which will be kept here at Buckingham Palace. The portraits of Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and of The Princess Royal have been sent to Her Majesty and Her Royal Highness.

The Queen much enjoyed meeting you when you came to the Palace in 1992, and sends you her warm good wishes.

С наилучшими пожеланиями,

Kenneth Scott.

(KENNETH SCOTT)

Mr. Leonid Efros.

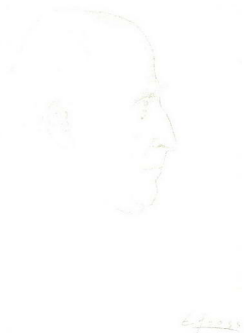


PORTRAIT OF PRINCESS
 MICHAEL OF KENT.
 OIL ON CANVAS, 65 x 48, 1992, LONDON

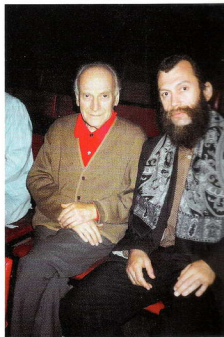


WITH PRINCESS MICHAEL OF KENT.
 POSING SESSION. 1992, LONDON

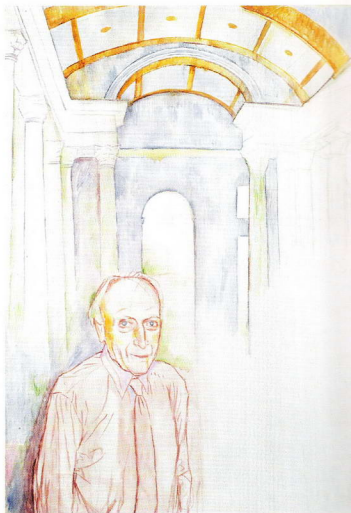
of Her Majesty on the throne. This is achieved by a deliberate simplification of surrounding space and employment of ancient ornaments distinctive by their noble middle-aged patchwork of colours, instead of deeper perspectives. The image is more of a monumental symbol than of an aristocratic lady – a symbol not without human charm, but allowing no questions, interviews or other intrusions from the outside, in strict conformity with the etiquette. If you happen to be there, you may only wait with due respect until the personification of Reign deigns to turn her attention to you. (Elizabeth II, as seen by the artist, resembles a typical work of art along the lines of Plato). Flickering lights or colours would be out of place here: the image, as if vested in invisible armours, is lit with even and paradisaical mid-day radiance, which makes an impression of lasting peace. The background and the dominating mise en scene is the Westminster throne, almost seven hundred years old, where Her Majesty the Queen usually sits at solemn national ceremonies. The neo-classic, or neo-Renaissance, features of this solemn portrait, with obvious repercussion of Holbein the Younger who founded the Renaissance epoch in English painting, are spiritual, lyrical, mitigated, as in other portraits of Her Majesty the Queen and of the Royal Family (particularly of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen-Mother, wearing no regalia). All paintings are harmonic and paradisaical in mood, quite characteristic of the courtier art and correspondent to the idea of highest perfection in nature and glory of the «golden age», of which the Queen and the King have always been symbols. About four hundred years ago, Elizabeth I, a mysterious and wise virgin Astree, as she was called by her contemporaries, thought best when sitting for miniaturist Nicolas Hilliard, to choose landscapes of Paradise for the background of her portrait – «an open and beautiful garden, with no trees or shadows in the vicinity». Since then the garden has been there in all portraits of the «royal cycle» made by the artist: whether as the famous pagoda surrounded by a park in the portrait



A TINTED SKETCH OF SIR YEHUDI MENUHIN.
PENCIL ON PAPER, 32 X 24, 1992, LONDON



AT THE REHEARSAL OF THE ROYAL ORCHESTRA IN ST. JOHN'S CHURCH, LONDON, 1992, LONDON



PORTRAIT OF SIR YEHUDI MENUHIN.
OIL ON CANVAS, 118 X 86, 1992, LONDON



*H. M. King Harald V
Det. Egl. Skott, Oslo
8 marzo 1999*

PORTRAIT OF HIS MAJESTY KING HAROLD V.
WATERCOLOR, PENCIL ON PAPER, 30 x 24, 1999, OSLO



*Efross
The Princess Anne
Lucio Paloma
11 March 1992*

PORTRAIT OF PRINCESS ANNE.
WATERCOLOR, PENCIL ON PAPER, 32 x 24, 1992, LONDON

E' una coppia singolare. Lui si chiama Leonid Efros. E' nato a Mosca 41 anni fa da genitori che provenivano da Vitebsk, la cittadina della Bielorussia dove avevano insegnato Malevič e Chagall, ma vive e lavora da molti anni a San Pietroburgo. Fa il pittore, specializzato in ritratti su smalto. Ha effigiato decine di generali e condottieri. Ora è stato incaricato di eseguire i ritratti della regina Elisabetta e della principessa Anna, per la mostra «I tesori del Cremlino» in programma il prossimo anno al Museo Tower di Londra. Dice: «L'unico ritratto che non sono riuscito a fare è quello di Aleksandr Surovov, il generalissimo dei tempi di Caterina II e di Paolo I. Ho studiato tutti i ritratti che gli erano stati fatti. Ebbene, appariva ogni volta diverso. Era un uomo inafferrabile».

Lei si chiama Rimma Junoseva. E' nata una



co di San Pietroburgo. Fu un colpo di fulmine. Entrambi sposati, non esitarono ad abbandonare i rispettivi coniugi per rifugiarsi in una dacia a Pavlovsk, il paesino di Paolo I ad una trentina di chilometri dal centro, e da quel

Gli risponde Leonid, che d'ora in poi parlerà anche per Rimma, che si limita ad ammirare il regista: «E' la fine di un incubo, di un interminabile incubo. Io, come pittore oltre che come cittadino, ne ho sofferto duramente.

Sopra:
Michail Gorbaciov
in solitudine
(Foto Angelo Palma)
Accanto:
Federico Fellini
(Foto Angelo
R. Turretta/Lucky Star)

of princess Ann, or as tree branches seen through the window in a less official and «homelike» portrait of Elizabeth II (where branches are intentionally drawn so as to make spectator wonder whether they are real or are just bright coloured spots), or even as daedal floral ornament on the gown.

The heavenly atmosphere is at times disturbed by an interference of sharp-cut characters like princess Michael of Kent, whose blond contour looks anxious and severe against the dark, almost black, background. Marquis Alexander Wyemouth in his blazing arabesque jacket resembles an ironic chevalier on the stage.

Practically in all works the idyll and the drama, the epos and the lyrics appear engraved (if I may employ the word) by the artist's brush, prompting to spectator that the delicate courtesy of a courtier artist is a disguise concealing his craft of jeweller, and these two crafts constitute an integral poetic composition.

The English portrait tradition in our century – from Augustus John and Lucien Freud to David Hockney, a chronicler of high society (maybe the best portrait painter of today) – has been always intellectual and refined.

To say nothing of Renaissance and Baroque classics, Efros has to compete now with a large number of portrait painters, in his humble effort to perpetuate the Windsor dynasty. However, in contrast to new English masters, irony is alien to Efros, who thus proves to be standing closer to the classical tradition. He prefers to contemplate his characters with intent respect, far from heraldic rigorism, and evading familiarity inherent in the irony, however subtle it may be. Whatever the subject, it is important for Efros to convey the charm of a mystery, particularly when it concerns such a specific subject as monarchic foundations of the United Kingdom. Anyone admitted to the throne has to be a master in the art of secret-keeping. Other portraits made by Efros are inevitably perceived as additions to the «royal cycle» – which is quite natural. Any master of the well-forgotten art of posing is in some way a sovereign, for whom to keep a posture



PORTRAIT OF NIKOLAI JEGOROV
OIL ON CANVAS, 120 X 94, 1995, MOSCOW

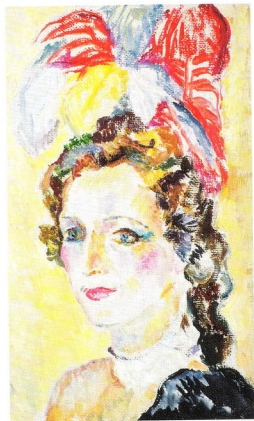


PORTRAIT OF ALEVITINA SONN.
 OIL ON CANVAS, 120 X 55, 1986, ST. PETERSBURG



PORTRAIT OF ALEXANDER,
 MARQUIS OF WYEMOUTH
 OIL ON CANVAS, 90 X 60, 1992, LONDON

PORTRAIT OF ACTRESS DOLORES
 ZAPASHNAYA
 CARDBOARD COVERED WITH CANVAS, OIL,
 34.5 X 20.7, 1990, ST. PETERSBURG



for some time is a must. Once within the frame, a model will unfailingly acquire a particle of the royal charisma. At the same time, his works are multifaceted and multidimensional; at times picturesque, bright and eccentric (portrait of Dolores Zapashnaya), at times reserved, elegiac or reminding of interiors typical for a study (portrait of Felix Kalilevitch). However, all models have one feature in common: they are lost in meditation, recollection and subconsciousness, trying to grasp not an event in the life but the moment when personality becomes an image, travelling across the magic border of the frame. Efros' characters are visible inhabitants of his canvases – plastically individual hermits. This panaestheticism, particularly characteristic of Favorsky, is present in Efros' portraits. This is particularly true for portraits of artists, in the broad sense of the word (e.g. of Sir Yehudi Menuhin), who contribute their own share of poetical endeavour to the composition. Efros seems to revel in working with the Dorian Grey theme, taking a reverse order and proceeding: not from the gloss of high society to the frailty of chaos but from fleeting everyday life to the highest forms of harmony. A realist with a mystical tinge, distant from naturalism and descriptivism, but nonetheless a realist, Efros hardly believes that Beauty can save the world. Still there is no doubt for him that Beauty can at least explain it. This is the reason for him to paint neo-classical portraits.

When in England, Efros felt a desire to paint parks and thus gain an insight into this most voluminous form of realism. He holds to this day that Pavel Muratov's characteristic of the 20th century painting – «The very centre of featured world, that used to be Man, is now gone» – can be contested without necessarily plunging into senseless mystification. The only thing an artist is supposed to do is to turn back to an overlooked twist in the labyrinth. This turn-back would prove a discovery and an act of avant-garde traditionalism that will restore the broken link in the artistic Kronos. Be as it may, but fortune favours the brave.

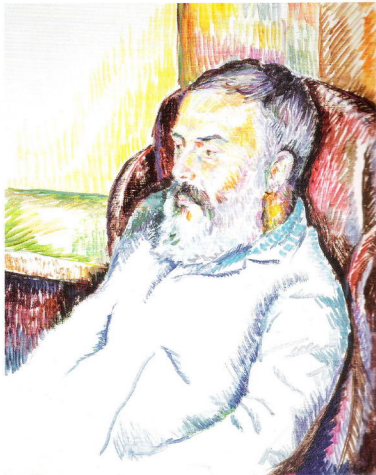
Mikhail Sokolov, Doctor of Art Criticism



A MAN IN FRONT OF THE BLACK SQUARE
BY KAZIMIR MALEVICH.
OIL ON CANVAS, 60 x 46, 1994, ST. PETERSBURG



PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG GIRL.
OIL ON CARDBOARD COVERED WITH CANVAS.
61 x 46, 1994, MOSCOW



PORTRAIT OF FELIX KAPILEVICH.
OIL ON CANVAS, 72 x 65, 1990, MOSCOW

