



*Art has always felt like a celebration
for me.*

*Ivan Sokolov
(1884 - 1972)*



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IVAN SOKOLOV

(1884 – 1972)

The Russian artist Ivan Aleksandrovich Sokolov was born in the family of the Old Believers and died at the age of 88. During his lifetime, his hometown changed its name three times: Dorpat, Yuryev, Tartu. Together with the town and its inhabitants, Ivan Sokolov lived through several wars and state regime changes.

Ivan Sokolov grew up in the tradition of the culture of the Old Believers, was pietistic, acted as a precentor in Yuryev prayer hall, was on the board of the Yuryev Old Believers' Community. In 1928, he took part in the Fifth Old Believers' Convention in Kallaste. Having had a real gift for painting, Ivan Sokolov could have become an icon painter and be a student of Gavriil Frolov, a master of icon painting, just like his friend Mark Solntsev. But instead, in the beginning of the 1930s, he digressed from religion completely. In painting, he selected another way of portraying things while still being young, which he called realistic impressionism.



The artist was born in a large and friendly family with six children. Because of the lack of money, only three younger kids got school education, while three older children, including Ivan, learned the basics of how to read and write from their father and had been doing hard work since early childhood, helping their parents to feed the family. The Old Believers have always put special emphasis on self-education, and the main activities in Ivan Sokolov's life, both in his childhood and later on throughout his whole life, were daily hard work and self-education. Ivan Sokolov had been combining seasonal work in construction and painting all his life, making a living either through manual labour, by selling his paintings, or painting portraits and landscapes on a by-order basis. A pencil and paints were his true companions from his early childhood until old age, and painting was the passion of his life, regardless of recognition or titles. In 1969, the artist said: Art has always felt like a celebration for me.

Sokolov took his first drawing/painting classes from Kristjan Raud, who was a founding father of the Estonian national painting, and who had such high regard for the talent of the young artist that he provided him with a reference letter and sent him to the Academy of Arts

in Saint Petersburg to meet their famous fellow countryman Amandus Adamson, a sculptor and the author of Russalka Memorial, which is dedicated to lost sailors. However, scarce funds raised by his family to finance his trip did not allow Ivan Sokolov to wait for Adamson to return back from Finland to Saint Petersburg. So he went back home, and the two artists never met.

Ivan Sokolov exhibited his works for the first time in 1906 in Yuryev at the Agricultural Exhibition, within the frames of which the exhibition of Estonian artists took place for the first time. Out of the twenty drawings presented by Ivan Sokolov, thirteen pieces were selected and exhibited, the majority of which were preserved down to our days and are deposited in the National Archives of Estonia. Ivan Sokolov took part in this exhibition alongside with the renowned masters of Estonian painting, such as Johann Köler, August Ludwig Weizenberg, Ants Laikmaa, and others.

In the first pencil drawings of Ivan Sokolov we can see the faces of the people who surrounded him: children absorbed in reading, his father sleeping after a day of hard work, his mother and sisters doing handicrafts or washing clothes. His surviving drawings date back to the beginning of the 20th century. They portray the way of life in a typical family of Old Believers in Yuryev: everyday activities grown-ups were engaging in, the games children were playing, home interior, clothes, and hair styles of those times. In his drawings, the young artist managed to portray the emotions of the people he was depicting - mischievous and curious children's looks, pious faces, contemplations and sadness on the faces of old people.

The next exhibition, which took place in 1917, was one-man. It was organised by T. Modestov, who was an Art Teacher at Yuryev School of Science. This exhibition served as a true justification of Sokolov's painting activities in the eyes of his family, because over two hundred paintings of the young artist were sold in two days only, which allowed him to bring some profit to his home. T. Modestov saw a talented artist in Sokolov, gave him several books about the



Self-Portrait with a Palette 1961



Wife with Children 1927

life and work of such great painters as Mikhail Vrubel and Arkhip Kuindzhi, and suggested that he should familiarize himself with the collection of art works at the Tretyakov Gallery.

In 1920, the regional exhibition in Yekaterinburg, where 15 paintings and 26 pencil and ink drawings of Ivan Sokolov were exhibited, was a great success. After the exhibition, the artist was invited to work as a Visual Arts Instructor. In those years, Ivan Sokolov was in evacuation in Chelyabinsk, fleeing from the Germans that had occupied Yuryev in the beginning of 1918. Unfortunately, all of the works exhibited in Yekaterinburg were lost with no trace, since Sokolov was leaving for Estonia in a hurry and did not manage to collect the exhibited drawings and paintings.

In 1922, in the pavilion of the Agricultural Exhibition in Tartu, there was a one-man exhibition of Ivan Sokolov, but he only sold four paintings. In spring 1933, there was a two-day one-man exhibition of Sokolov in the rooms of the Russian Gymnasium, where about three hundred paintings and sketches of the artist were exhibited. He sold 163 sketches and 5 paintings. In 1934, another one-man exhibition of Sokolov in Tartu was a great success. In 1936, the artist exhibited 4 paintings at the exhibition in the Society of Russian Students in Tartu.

In June 1941, in the rooms of the Pallas Art School, an exhibition opened, which also included 16 works of Ivan Sokolov. The exhibition was organised by professional artists, the graduates of Pallas Andrus Johani and Aino Bach, who suggested sending the majority of the works exhibited by Sokolov to Moscow to be included into the exhibition within the frames of the ten-day festival of the Estonian art which was scheduled for autumn. But the war started on the day of the opening of the exhibition.

In September 1944, Ivan Sokolov was admitted to the Estonian Artists' Association and from then on, he could take part in all exhibitions organised by the Association in Tartu and in Tallinn. His works were popular, people were buying them eagerly and placing orders. The largest commission was a Portrait of the Conductor Jaan Hargel, who was the main conductor in Vanemuine Theatre. The painting was commissioned by the Ministry of Culture.

In 1949, Ivan Sokolov celebrated his 65th anniversary. He would take part in exhibitions two-three times a year, but in 1950 Sokolov was expelled from the Association for the lack of ideological orientation in his works. He accepted that decision with irony and continued working. Several years later, the decision was cancelled, I. Sokolov was reinstated in the



Portrait of the Mother 1922



Portrait of a Girl 1950-55



Alyona 1969

Association and awarded a pension. In the middle of the 1950s, he took part in two exhibitions in Pskov Oblast: in Pechorsky Museum of Local Lore, History, and Economy in 1955 and in the exhibition organised by Pskov Artists' Union in Pskov in 1958.

The last one-man exhibition in his lifetime took place in 1969, and it was timed to coincide with his 85th anniversary. Ivan Sokolov passed away in the days when a republican art exhibition took place in the House of Artists in Tartu in October 1972, which also included his paintings. He was 88 years old.

The largest posthumous exhibition of Ivan Sokolov took place in 1984 to commemorate the centenary of his birth. It was organised by his daughter Faina Muromtseva with the help of Tartu Artists' Union. In 2004, the exhibition of the works of Ivan Sokolov took place in Tallinn, which was organised by Nikolai Kormashov and the Russian Museum. In summer 2014, in the year of the 130th anniversary of the artist, a unique exhibition of the works of Ivan Sokolov took place in Luunja near Tartu. It included the works from private collections. 36 paintings were exhibited, the majority of which were only familiar to the artist himself and the owners of the paintings.

The Russian Museum exhibited the works of Ivan Sokolov from its own collection many times. The exhibitions took place in Valga, Keila-Joa, Paldiski.

The works of Ivan Sokolov can be found in different collections in many

countries outside of Estonia: in Russia, Finland, Germany, England, Turkey, Ukraine. His paintings are kept in the National Archives of Estonia, the Russian Museum of Estonia, in Tartu Art Museum, in the Museum of Theatre and Music, and in many other museum and private collections. The majority of his works drawn/painted before 1941 were destroyed by war. Some of the paintings vanished later on in fires and floodings. Based on the lists of the works of the artist, which were made by the artist himself, the art expert Nikolai Jasnetski, and the researcher of the life and work of Ivan Sokolov N. Katajeva-Valk, we can assume that the total number of works of Ivan Sokolov could reach two thousand pieces. They were/are landscapes, the views of the streets in Tartu, portraits of children and adults, still-life paintings, flowers. The works of Ivan Sokolov are drawings and paintings done in pencil, pastel, water colours, oil.

Ivan Sokolov remained in the memory of his contemporaries as a modest, intelligent person, an agreeable conversation companion, a subtle connoisseur of art, an artist enthralled by his work, being far away from politics. He was trying to depict the effects of light and bequeath his vision of the world around him to future generations.

From the materials of the researcher of the life and work of Ivan Sokolov Nadezhda Katajeva-Valk.





Granddaughter Valya Sleeping

29.11.1955

Ivan Sokolov drew his family members very often. He got married late, became a widower early, and raised four children on his own. He drew his children reading, playing, looking out of the window, hurrying to school, bending their heads over books. He was working as a builder to feed his family; after becoming a widower, he undertook the obligations of raising the children and doing household chores: washing clothes,

cooking, stoking the fire, seasoning firewood. The children helped him a lot, but still life was not easy. His relatives would keep on telling him: "Get married! It will get easier!" But he said: "No! No one will replace the mother for my kids. And besides, how will I appear before my Anfisa in the afterlife? No, I can't betray her".

Years went by, the children grew up, retaining the love and gratitude to their father throughout their lives, and soon children's voices could once again be heard in the house - grandchildren appeared. The sincerity of children, their naivety, vulnerability, and helplessness touched the heart of the artist, he admired a huge potential for development, engrained in them by nature itself, their vivid personality traits, and the uniqueness of every single child. They were the real "whyers", asking their grandfather the "Why?" question numerous times, all of them having sweet tooth, being moody at times, enjoying singing and performing. People often say that grandchildren are even dearer and nearer than children. Kids only become alike when they are asleep. The images of sleeping children are the most touching among Sokolov's portraits of his children and grandchildren. The granddaughter Valya was three years old when her grandfather painted her sleeping.



Soldier Reading the Letter

20.10.1916

In the end of 1916, during the First World War, Ivan Sokolov was called up for military service in the army of the tsarist Russia, and he was serving in Finland, in regiment 172, on the isles of Porkkalanniemi archipelago. After the February Revolution, in May 1917, because of poor eyesight he was invalided out of the army and freed from military service.

Porkkalanniemi isles scattered in the sea and their magnificent landscapes inspired both the Russian czar, and Maxim Gorky. These places were immortalized by many artists, including Ivan Sokolov. Quite a lot of masterpieces created by the artist during the Finnish period of his work, which lasted a little longer than half a year, were preserved, one of which has been provided by the Russian Museum for the purposes of this exhibition. Mainly graphic works have been preserved until now, which makes this particular painting, "Soldier

Reading the Letter", done in pastel especially valuable. Letters from home that arrived at places where soldiers were doing military service were the best part of their dull soldier life, and, perhaps, this is the reason why the artist decided to paint this scene. In the evenings, while having some rest, the soldiers who were literate were reading and re-reading news from home. Sokolov would read the letters out loud to other soldiers, too. Many of those letters were known to all of the soldiers in the barrack by heart, but still every time they were listening to him with great attention.

One of Ivan Sokolov's oil paintings "Porkkala Landscape", dated 1916, can still be seen on the isles in Kirkkonummi Museum. In recent years, in the end of July, when everything is in blossom, art camps take place in Porkkala, when both young and prominent landscape painters come together to practice.

Summer Morning in the Vicinity of Peedu 1940

The first year of the war was particularly agonizing, since people who had known nothing about a war before all of a sudden found themselves being divided from peaceful life, from the times that all at once turned into a faraway desired memory, while everything they could see around them were sufferings and death. The Sokolovs lived next to the synagogue where fascists were keeping Soviet prisoners of war, people were arrested and shot down. It was customary among male Old Believers to have long beards, and they were afraid to walk in the streets, since the Germans mistook them for guerilla warriors. Many men among the Old Believers living near Lake Peipus were arrested and deported to concentration camps because of beards. Prisoners of war were dying in the synagogue every single day, and every morning the cart with dead bodies would take them away to the cemetery at the end of Turu street. It was dreadful indeed to live nearby and see all of the atrocities of war with one's own eyes. Those citizens who had relatives in nearby villages were leaving the town and fleeing to the countryside. The people who had known each other before the war, especially friends and relatives, were trying to help one another to find work and food.



An acquaintance helped Ivan Sokolov to find work: painting the walls in the German hospital. The artist showed some of his paintings to the Head Physician, in the result of which Sokolov was selected for the job. He painted a picture of an early morning on a large hospital wall, which was many meters in size: the people in the house with a red roof waking up, a herd of cattle grazing on the river bank, the shore is covered with luscious greenery, with a red boat nearby, the water surface is glistening, the house reflected on it; fir-trees standing thick and dark, while young birches are so white and tender, and their leaves are murmuring gently in the wind. And above this calm and peaceful landscape the vast sky spreading out, reflecting the colours of a peaceful summer morning.

The Russian artist painted the whole world for them - the beautiful and the lost one, stolen by war, wished for by every single person: the artist himself, the doctors who witnessed

death every day, and the people who were lucky enough to evade death while being at the hospital.

The Head Physician was very pleased with Sokolov's work. He bought several landscapes from Sokolov, which had been painted by him before the war. The Head Physician asked the artist to paint in oil a small postcard image. The postcard also depicted the whole new world - a peaceful Alpine meadow, with houses scattered all around, and the high Alps rising high into the sky behind the village. "Ich bin hier geboren / I was born here", said the doctor sadly, and both the artist and the doctor were able to comprehend the pain the other one was feeling.



Weaving Baskets 1949

There were many blind people after the war. Some of them went blind in the result of warfare, while others were blinded in the result of some other misfortunes.

Ivan Sokolov was wearing glasses since early age and was invalidated out of the Imperial Army due to poor eyesight. He always felt pity for blind people, as if he anticipated that he would be half-blind in the last years of his life, too. In Narva street, Tartu, right next to the orthodox church of St. George, there is still a building, in which blind people were working after the war. In the mornings, people were walking to this building in pairs, one of them with a good eyesight taking the blind one to work. Some of them were walking on their own, slowly and carefully, tapping their canes against the pavement. When blind people were walking in the streets, their faces were usually thrown back, towards the sky, as if there were stars in that eternal night that blindness had submerged them into, which helped them to find the way.

Once Ivan Sokolov turned to the Blind Association with a request to allow him to draw blind people working. In the result, several works were created in pastel, depicting blind people. They were weaving baskets skillfully, assembling electrical equipment, knitting, spinning, and winding yarn balls. While they were working, their faces were turned to the objects they held in their hands, as if they were able to see what they were doing with some inner mental vision.



Landscape. Park near Raadi Manor House 1930? 1950?

The artist's daughter Faina Muromtseva recalls that she found this painting after her father's death, while browsing through his works. When she saw neatly trimmed parkways, she remembered that in 1936, being a 10-year-old girl, she and her classmates were planning to go on a river cruise along Emajõgi. They took

sandwiches with them, came to the pier, but suddenly there was a nasty turn in the weather, it started raining, and the teachers decided to cancel the trip. Faina and two friends of hers made up their mind to go to the park near Raadi manor house. In the building of the old manor house there was a Museum of the Estonian People. There was a large piano in the hall, on the right, and paintings on the walls. The girls walked through the rooms and went into the park. Faina was struck with the beauty of the green park: in the shadow of ancient trees there was neatly trimmed greenery, winding along the paths in fanciful patterns, and it seemed as if flowerbeds with flowers and ornamental bushes were basking in the sun, which came out from behind the clouds all of a sudden.

Years went by. In the middle of the 1960s, in the end of January, Faina and her daughters were buying flowers for the artist's birthday at the indoor market. When the seller was handing flowers over to Faina, he asked, who they were for. Faina said that her father was an artist who loved painting flowers. "It will be a great present for our grandfather, he loves flowers, he is an artist", she said. "What is his name?" the seller asked. He was really happy to know that it was Ivan Sokolov. "I know him well. He was painting Raadi park when I was working as a gardener there. Please give him my regards and best wishes".

Krasnye Gory (Red Mountains). Razlog 1914

The artist's mother Praskovya Yefimovna Zhuravlyova came from Krasnye Gory.

Ivan Sokolov's relatives used to live in every other house in Krasnye Gory: his aunts, cousins and half-cousins, their children, godmothers and godfathers, relatives of his sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and other kinfolk. Being extremely wary of strangers, the Old Believers would highly respect kinship, support their relatives and visit them on holidays.



Sokolov would visit Krasnye Gory quite often. We can see this town, which was a hub of the Old Believers in the area of Lake Peipus, in the artist's first drawings made with a pencil. Solid houses on the shore of the lake that was as wide as a sea, which were standing on the high steep above the water, were seen from afar by the fishermen coming home. The sand-clay steep of the mountains hanging over the lake was reddish in colour. This is why the town was called Krasnye Gory (Red Mountains). Razlog is a toponym of the same name. It is a place where a narrow and flat path running down to the lake is a dried-up course of the stream that once would run into Lake Peipus. Razlog is a crevice between high reddish mountains. At present, the path running down to the lake is pebbled. The legend has it that the first settlers of Krasnye Gory went on shore in Razlog. In the past, Razlog was an administrative boundary between the territories of manor houses. One part of Kallaste was located on the territory of Alatskivi manor house, while its another part was on the territory of Kokor. The border was running along Razlog. At present, it accommodates Kallaste beach

with washed-out caves. Just like in olden days, boats and sailing-ships dock here. Along the shore, right near the water, Russian banyas would stand. The Old Believers used to heat banyas every Saturday and hit themselves with bunches of dried branches and leaves. Nowadays the town is named Kallaste, which means "nearshore", but the old-timers still use the name "Krasnye Gory" now and then affectionately. Just a few people who are real experts in history of the Old Believers remember the word "Razlog". Pavel Varunin, who explained to us the history and the content of this Kallaste toponym, is one of them.



In quarantine. 05.07.1921

In the end of 1916 and until May 1917 Ivan Sokolov was mobilized and served in the Imperial Army of the Russian Empire. Because of that he feared that the Germans would send him out to Germany, and in the winter of 1918 he and the two friends of his, who had also served in the Russian Army before, crossed Lake Peipus on foot and walked away to the Soviet Russia. Ivan Sokolov spent three years of his life in Chelyabinsk: from April

1918 until May 1921. However, longing for home and family, a sense of responsibility to his mother and sisters that he had as an older son made him start looking for ways to get back to Estonia.

His return was enabled through option committees that had been set up as part of Tartu Peace Treaty between Russia and Estonia in February 1920 and were functioning until the end of 1923. The purpose of these committees was to help ethnic Estonians and the people of other nationalities, who were of Estonian descent and found themselves outside of the territory of the Republic of Estonia, to get back home. These were the residents who had been displaced at the times of the Russian Empire as well as the people who moved to the territory of Russia due to warfare during the First World War, the Revolution of 1917, and the Civil War. Ivan Sokolov was one of them.

The quarantine for those who wanted to get back to Estonia was in Narva, and after passing through it, Ivan Sokolov came back to his home town that had already changed its old name Yuryev to the new one – Tartu.



Haapsalu. Tchaikovsky's Bench 1959

In summer 1959, Ivan Sokolov decided to visit his relative Voldemar Pill in Haapsalu, who was the husband of his wife's cousin. Women, their wives, departed this life too early, but even after their death men would maintain family ties. They wrote letters to each other, congratulated each other on different occasions, and were really kind

to one another. When Ivan Sokolov read in the letter that Voldemar was sick, he decided to visit him. He wanted to show a beautiful town by the sea to his granddaughters that a great Russian composer Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky enjoyed visiting so much. Before the trip, the artist told his granddaughters that there was a bench in Haapsalu, on the gulf coast, where the great composer used to rest his feet.

So, on a Friday in the middle of July, Ivan Sokolov with his daughter Faina and granddaughters Alya and Nina came to Haapsalu. Voldemar was very happy to see them. They stayed at Voldemar's house (the more the merrier), and on the next day he took them out to show the town. All of the streets were running to the sea. Sea was the main character in the town, it filled the streets, trees, houses, and air with the blue light. On the next day, early in the morning, while the girls were still asleep, the artist went to the sea shore to paint the gulf, the trees above it, and Tchaikovsky's Bench. There were few people taking a morning stroll. The rising sun and the morning freshness intensified the blueness of the gulf even more, and the whole town was coloured blue, just like air and water that Ivan Sokolov enjoyed painting so much.

Lilac in the Ceramic Vase

6.06.1970

In the beginning of June, Tartu was smothered in lilac in blossom. After the war, there was wasteland at the site where houses used to stand, and lilac shrubs, which had been planted by the owners of these houses some time in the past, flourished and took up the whole wasteland area. From the house in Eha 19, where the family of the artist Ivan Sokolov used to live, the road to the centre of the town ran along Tähe street, then along Pargi to the right all the way down to Kalevi street, which was within walking distance from the Town Hall Square. Above Pargi street, on the slope on the left, where houses used to stand before the war, there was wasteland smothered in lilac. Faina, the artist's daughter, and his granddaughters would come home every evening with huge bunches of lilac, and the rooms in the house were filled with its lovely scent. In the evenings, the girls would be looking for "happiness" - unusual flowers with five petals, which were a symbol of luck and happiness and were really hard to find. Sokolov knew how difficult life was, with all of its losses, hardships, and disappointments, and he realized that it was extremely hard to find and keep something called happiness not only in the bunch of flowers, but also in real life, and he was looking at his granddaughters with sadness and tenderness: at Ira, Valya, Nina, Alya, and Alena, while they were looking for "happiness" in the bunch of lilac. Sokolov loved painting flowers, but lilac was his favourite. He was painting lilac both while he was young and in the last years of his life, being half-blind. He painted lilac with painstaking detail, paying extra attention to tender flowers, in large undivided clusters, in vases and without them, of tender lilac and dark purple, white, and dark-cherry colours.



Every single painting was absolutely different from any other, just like people and their destinies differ so much.



Children are watching TV

22.06.1963

The artist Ivan Sokolov had nine grandchildren - five girls and four boys. His granddaughters Ira, Nina, Valya, Alya, and Alena, the children of his daughter Faina, lived in Eha 19, Tartu, together with their grandfather. Their cousins Yura and Vitya, the children of the artist's older son Alexander, used to drop by quite often. Seryozha and Oleg would come to visit them from Leningrad in summer time. Their father Nazariy

Sokolov was a younger brother of the artist. In addition to the grandchildren of his own, the children of Sokolov's neighbours also liked visiting his house, whose parents encouraged their friendship with the old artist, who was a well-read and polite person capable of having positive impact on children in an unobtrusive manner. They became very quiet when the old artist started working, and they were trying to guess the tunes that Sokolov would be humming without words, sitting at the easel. "We were silly then. We could learn so much from him", recalls Ljudmila Znamenskaya, a friend of one of Sokolov's granddaughters. "He had encyclopedic knowledge that covered various fields of life, but we were not able to see the true value of his erudition then".

The Sokolovs were the first family in the street who had a TV set at home. The artist decided that having a TV set at home was truly beneficial for children after Yuri Gagarin's flight into space. He saved some money from selling his paintings and bought a TV set. After that, the artist's house that children had enjoyed visiting enough as it is turned into a real site of pilgrimage. His grandchildren, neighbours' children, even the children from other streets were crowding in the house, and even the classmates of his granddaughters would come by bikes from other parts of the town. It was decided that children should be allowed into the room with the TV set for one hour only, and their number had to equal the number of the chairs.

Others were waiting in the yard patiently. As soon as the screen of the black-and-white TV set was switched on, emitting bluish light, silence would fall in the room, children's faces would go long and serious, and these fidgets would sit quietly, with bated breath, trying not to miss a single word, being ready to stare at the screen for hours.

ABOUT TARTU. WITH LOVE...

In the paintings of Ivan Sokolov, the views of Tartu streets are filled with love: we can see numerous images of parks and streets, both in the centre and at the outskirts of the town, the Emajõgi River, which is not wide, but deep enough, decorative bridges at Domberg and the Stone Bridge over the river, which had been built at the order of the empress Catherine the Great by the convicts of Pugachev's Rebellion and which connects the Town Hall Square, which is the true heart of the city, with the right bank of the river.



View of Tartu. Stone Bridge 1922

The artist spent his childhood and adolescence in Yuryev, which was the name of Tartu at the times of the Russian Empire, at 37 Uus street. Later on his family lived at the far end of Fortuuna street, and in the 1930s they moved to 70 Turu street. After the war they lived in Karlova district at 19 Eha street.



White Night. Stone Bridge 1912

Two paintings depicting the Stone Bridge are included into this exhibition: a silhouette of the Stone Bridge on a white night in Yuryev "White Night. Stone Bridge" painted in 1912 and a water-colour "View of Tartu. Stone Bridge" painted in 1922.

Two pictures displayed at this exhibition were painted while the artist was looking from the window in the house at the end of Fortuuna street, right on the bank of the river. In this house, which survived to the present day, the artist spent the happiest days of his life: the first years of family life of Ivan Sokolov and his wife Anfisa, the birth of their older children, blissful hard work for the welfare of the family, and the real comfort for his soul – his paintings.



Fortuuna Street 1929

From the windows in the flat, the family could enjoy a lovely view overlooking the centre of the town: the dome and the bell chamber of the Cathedral of the Dormition, the spire of St. John's Church, and the spire of the Cathedral of Saint Mary. Over the river, along Fortuuna street, town buildings and the houses of town dwellers were standing closely side by side to each other. Boats with wood and other goods would moor near the



View of Tartu with St. John's Church 1930



Foggy Morning. Angel's Bridge 1936



View Overlooking Tartu from Toome Hill 1960

house where the Sokolovs lived. He painted this view in summers and winters, at dawns and sunsets, searching for the new meaning and colours every single time, and finding them eventually.

A beautiful view of the city opens up from Toome Hill, which was called Domberg in the olden days, and where the town had originally been founded. On the hill, the ruins of Tartu Cathedral, which had been partially renovated, are rising high into the sky, the trees of the park laid out in the beginning of the 19th century stand tall, and the park is decorated with two bridges, whose names take us back into the history of the university.



Backyard on an Autumn Morning 1966

"Foggy Morning. Angel's Bridge" 1936

"View Overlooking Tartu from Toome Hill" 1960

One of the brightest work of the 1960s – "Backyard on an Autumn Morning", 1966 – shows us the backyard of the house where the Sokolovs lived, at 19 Eha street. In that year, the artist turned 82, but, in spite of the transience of time, the painting is filled with optimism and joy of autumn colours.



Raadi Park. View Overlooking Distillery 1934



Raadi Park. Before Unveiling of the Memorial 21.07.1949



Self-Portrait 1968



Vasula Forest 1933



*Old Neighbour Woman
Sitting on a Chair 1917*



Dressmaker's. Blind People Working 1949



Town Landscape. Tartu, Kesk Street 1959?



Autumn. Landscape 1964?



Pühajärve Lake in the Evening 1934



Tartu 26.06.1959 r.



Landscape 12.11.1964



Roses 2.07.1969



Lilac in the Glass Vase 1962



Raadi Park 1936



Small Farmhouse near Yuryev 7.07.1917



Landscape



Viljandi Lake 1942



Growing Darker 1912



Near Chelyabinsk 13.06.1920



Faina Ivanovna Muromtseva

When I think of my father, I always think about how much he took care of us, striving to provide all of his children with education. He would read to us in the evenings and listen to us reading. As a girl, on workdays I used to sit by the window and wait for him to come back home from work. As soon as I saw him, I would take off, running towards him to meet him outside of the house. He took my hand and we went home.

Every morning, my father would do morning exercises. He had read somewhere that it is really useful for your health, and he was doing different physical exercises for 20 minutes every day ever since he had turned 16 years old. He washed himself, drank a cup of tea with a slice of bread, sat down at the easel, and worked on his paintings until lunch time. When the weather was fine, he went to

Toome Hill, Karlova park, or left the town heading to Porimets, which is now called New Ihaste. He drew his sketches from nature and then finished them at home. While working, he would always hum the tunes of Russian folk songs. And we were also singing along with him quietly while doing our own things.

Unfortunately, no single exhibition can provide a comprehensive overview of his work - many paintings were lost or perished during the war. However, every single exhibition revives memories about him, and anyone who will see his paintings, will be able to meet the artist who started painting his pictures over a hundred years ago, be inspired with his works and look at the outside world through his eyes.



Fanja magab 1927



Uka and Aka 1930



Nadezhda Katajeva-Valk

In 1984, after visiting the anniversary exhibition of Ivan Sokolov, I arranged with his daughter Faina Muromtseva to purchase several works by the artist. This is where it all started. Years passed, and paintings by different artists, some of them less and some more eminent, appeared in my house and went on sale, but I never wanted to part with the works of Ivan Sokolov. They win you over with their sincerity, simplicity and ease. That is how I got a wish to write a book about this wonderful person. In three years I managed to collect extensive material about his life and work, working in the archives, meeting those who were acquainted with Ivan

Sokolov, having written dozens of interviews and describing more than six hundred of his surviving paintings, constantly consulting with the artist's relatives, museums and owners of private collections. Sometimes it seems to me that I was his contemporary. Some documents, photographs and descriptions of paintings, as well as texts from my forthcoming book about Ivan Sokolov, were handed over to the Russian Museum to be used in the catalog of this exhibition with the copyright reserved by me.

From the Russian Museum:

Nadezhda Katajeva-Valk graduated from the Department of Russian Philology at the University of Tartu. Later on she also graduated from the Department of Psychology and completed postgraduate studies in psycholinguistics at the same university. She has worked as a research fellow, and a professor at the University of Tartu. At present, she is running the training centre Dialog. Nadezhda Katajeva-Valk writes poems and prose, translates the poetry of contemporary Estonian authors into Russian, studies local lore and history. Her works have been published in literary magazines, collections of scientific articles and poetry. N. Katajeva-Valk is the winner of the award of the Cultural Endowment of Estonia (2014) for the book Tam, Gde Ja Rodilas (The Place Where I Was Born). She is also a two-time winner of the international literary translation contest Muzyka Perevoda (The Music of Translation) and a participant of a number of international literary festivals: Prima Vista, Landscape Poetry Festival, Baltic Circle. In recent years, she has been dealing with publishing activities.



Irina Budrik. Russian Museum.

Ivan Sokolov did not engage with socially sensitive topics nor used shocking motives in his art. Instead, he focused on different ways to express the finest sensations stemming from ordinary everyday life. He sought to “see the moment” and capture its very essence. Exactly those aspects of his art give us a reason to call him an impressionist. On the other hand, it must be noted that in case of his art, the experiences of ordinary life were mixed together with the innermost sentiments of the artist's soul. This is rather common characteristic of Russian artists of that period.

Unfortunately, artistic works of many Estonian Russian artists is scarcely represented by collections of Estonian museums, hence making a

comprehensive examination hardly possible. Yet thanks to collecting and exhibiting activities performed by Russian Museum, the situation is slowly changing.

Collection of Russian Museum contains 27 pieces of Ivan Sokolov's art, which consequentially makes it the primary source of information when it comes to research of artist's work.

Russian Museum is the first and only museum fully dedicated to ethnic minority of Estonia. It has its own unique collection, and performs vast amount of tasks targeted at collection, and preservation of Russian culture of Estonia. The Russian Museum has published artistry catalogue titled “Russian artists of Estonia in the first half of the 20th century”; financed publication of two scholarly works of Sergei Issakov; and in cooperation with Alla Belekhnkova published a book titled “The Guests Arriving to the Manor”, which focused on analysis of a unique collection of name cards from the Fall Manor in Keila-Joa. Additionally, Russian Museum has managed creation of various documentary series, such as “Remaining Russian...”, “Famous People of Estonia”, and “Encyclopaedia of Russian Museum”, which amounts for 73 movies in total, all of which were broadcasted numerous times on ETV.

To our greatest regret, up to this day Russian Museum does not have its own building, therefore all exhibiting activities are performed “on tour”, mainly relying on cooperation with other museums and galleries.

Name “Russian Museum” is patented on the territory of European Union and Estonian Republic respectively.

Best Regards,

Irina Budrik

Russian Museum Executive Board Member

Member of Estonian Museum Association



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to Viktoria Ladõnskaja*



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