

## Welcome to our Anniversary Year – 2012!



"You should see this painter, come along – said one of the most beautiful women working in Moscow Andrea Wine. She spoke perfect Russian and was in love with the country and its art. We went to the studio, rather the apartment on Smolenskaja Embankment together.

This was the painter Alexander Rozhdestvensky, almost 90 years old at that time. Impeccably dressed, black suite all the time, graceful and charming. His graphics were the reflection of the Russian history. Born to the aristocratic family, having attended the best Moscow school and the Kardovsky studio beginning of the 20th century, Rozhdestvensky was the symbol of everything that was interesting and great about the pre-revolutionary Russia. His



mentality was as different from ours as one can only imagine. He kept his grace and carried his dignity through the years.

It was during this visit I realized that his graphics will make the first exhibit in the future NB gallery. The gallery-plan was ambitious and it makes me smile that we actually are approaching our 20th Anniversary. The Rozhdestvensky exhibit was opened 1992 in the gallery's premises. Before was the exhibit "48 paintings" organized by the gallery in the Central House of Artists, in summer 1992. The gallery has been under remount (renovation) for a year and scraping the money for the exhibit at the Central House of Artists was difficult. Not showing the young energetic painters from Krasnodar even more so. The exhibit consisted of paintings by Kurmaz, Sokht, Bugashev, Skripka and Repeshko and was a success laying the ground to the future prolific life of the painters. This exhibit was followed by Elena Kallistova show (already in the gallery premises). Being torn between contemporary art and the post-war painters we first tried to show both trends with the one uniting principle – quality – unfurling each exhibit.



Meeting Grigory Kravchenko and Joseph Pavlishak's family was a breaking point as it released our inner desire to search for the best of the art of the 1950-60s in Russia. This has been by far more complicated than any other form of art. In the post-Perestroika Russia all the galleries dealt with contemporary experimental painters and, never wanting to be part of the mainstream, we completely focused on the art of the 1950s and 1960s. We started to travel extensively covering parts of Russia which were close to Moscow like Kostroma, Vladimir and Kaluga. There we could work through relationship as the painters' recommendation was the only one way to get art on consignment from the artists. Each and every painting was carefully selected and shown at our exhibits.

It was Anna's and Masha's suggestion to show the retrospect of our collection through the anniversary year alternating with our new finds. **Alexander Rozhdestvensky, Alexander Sokht and Svetlana Kurmaz, Nalbi Bugashev and Elena Kallistova, Alexander Rozhdestvensky, Joseph Pavlishak, Alexey Ryabikov, Viktor Medvedev, Eric Rebane, Sophia Uranova, Alexey and Nadezhda Belykh, Yuri Podlyasski, Anatoly Yablokov** – painters first discovered and shown 1992-1998 – will make the core of our first retrospective 2012 exhibit. "Our First Six years" – would be the most appropriate title for the first exhibit.

Please do join us from Saturday, January 21.

Yours,  
Natalia Bykova