



VALENTÍN KOVATCHEV

METAPHYSICAL SPACES

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Dessins • gravures • peintures • portraits
Drawing • etching • painting • portrait

BRUXELLES. 3 - 15 Mars 2013

GALERIE ALFICAN

2, Place du Grand Sablon

Vernissage: Dimanche 3 Mars à partir de 11 h

Ouvert tous les jours de 11h à 18h30

Tel. +32 497 156 198

LONDON. 24 May - 6 June 2013

BULGARIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE LONDON

186-188 Queen's Gate, South Kensington

Vernissage: Friday 24th May at 19:00 pm

Tuesday to Sunday, 14:00 pm to 19:00 pm

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www.kovatchev.com



Ambassade de la République de
Bulgarie au Royaume de Belgique



I have had the chance to admire the work of the Bulgarian-Spanish artist Valentin Kovatchev in the past. I did not know then that one day our paths would cross. That is why I feel particularly honoured that the Embassy of Bulgaria in Belgium is able to assist the display of Mr. Kovatchev's new remarkable exhibition "Metaphysical spaces" in Brussels.

Fascinated as a child by Salvador Dali and surrealism Valentin Kovatchev developed his own unique style which brings out the beauty and mystery of Orthodox iconography through masterful etching technique. Today celebrating his 60-th birthday with this exhibition we may safely conclude that the artist has established himself as one of the most famous and successful modern Bulgarian painters.

The opening of the exhibition "Metaphysical spaces" coincides with the National Day of Bulgaria – the 3rd of March. This is a particularly pleasant way to mark this important event. I trust that everyone will enjoy this festive occasion and appreciate the talent, originality and high artistic value of Mr. Kovatchev's work.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have contributed to bringing this exhibition to life.

Vesselin Valkanov
*Ambassador of the Republic of Bulgaria
to the Kingdom of Belgium*

It is a pleasure for Bulgarian Cultural Institute London to host such an ingenious artist as Mr. Valentin Kovatchev. The exhibition is a gift from Bulgaria to the whole London audience.

The Bulgarian born artist based in Malaga has sophisticated touch which in a unique way recreates elements of both Bulgarian and Spanish culture and tradition.

He has lots of prestigious international awards and his works adorn collections worldwide.

Through his art, not only has he built bridge between these two cultures, but he has made us aware of the authenticity of the Spanish character in his innumerable creations –historical, in terms of manners and customs, of cities, and of great masters of Spanish literature and plastic art. Thus from the hand of the artist have been created new links of friendship and trust which strengthen the spiritual ties between people and nations.

Surrealism is always presents in Kovatchev's works, showing a state of mind, a philosophy of life, a mode of being, acting and reflecting in the face of the facts of existence and history. It also appears in the cycles "Don Quixote with a Bulgarian Soul", "Erosion", and "Anatomy of the wild bull." Orthodox iconography fits with 'zograf' precision in Kovatchev's works. His desire to paint icons somehow did not fit in the work projects of the Studio of military artists, where he was appointed some 30 years ago. So he was forced to leave this otherwise calm job as a full-time artist and started his own way sharing the fate of most artists. The technique of engraving he studied at the Art School and then at the Art Academy in Sofia, but after years of practice and endeavours he invented his own etching technique, which became his art emblem.

We are pleased that Bulgaria is represented in the world by this creator of inexhaustible talent and originality, gifted with such a genius style which uniquely combines his wide cultural background with elements of distinct artistic schools, from the traditional to the most modern.

We are grateful to all those who make the exhibition come true in London.

Svetla Dionisieva
Director
 Bulgarian Cultural Institute London

What is particularly charming in the art of Valentin Kovatchev is the encounter between an inner world so enriching, composed of such diverse elements. His art leads us without any boundaries, free of prejudice, taboos and clichés towards a reality that is surrealistic and which very actively tackles our concept of the world, our cultural experiences and our emotional state. For him identity is very important, the particular blend of diverse cultures.

As an artist, Kovatchev follows the ethics of the great masters. It is apparent he works slowly, cautiously and with concentration, like an artisan. Only the result of his work enables him to be a legitimate artist, and not the opposite, which frequently happens. In Kovatchev we feel an artistic conscience that illuminates all his works. In all of them we see that the main figure is in a singular relationship (particular or extravagant) with numerous details that surround it: ladders, ribbons, pieces of newspapers, birds, plants, etc. that make the meaning of the main figures vary and offer new themes and messages.

In this way a genuine richness of possibilities in interpretation is created, yet with the constant preoccupation of not losing traditional values. In his desperation of the loss of spiritual values, in the works of Kovatchev there is always a positive point of view, although ironic, in an attempt to join art and life through a stairway floating in space. The works by Kovatchev during his first years in Spain feature passion, almost self-destructive passion, with the motifs of his new country. He dedicates himself with the best virtuosity to the technique of engraving which he masters with accuracy and virtuosity that requires us to classify him as one of the few international engravers that stand out and are successful. When he arrived to Malaga, he first created the series “Anatomy of the Wild Bull”. Many museums, collectors both private and public, have purchases his works and continue to do so.

If we compare the Series “Erosion”, which was entirely completed in Bulgaria, with “Anatomy of the Wild Bull”, we can see that the technique used, the means and compositional technique of the two sets of works are almost identical.

How is this possible? He has abandoned his native country, has entered a completely different world and in spite of everything, remains true to himself. Kovatchev handles in a very particular way, the encounter with reality of our own world. He thus is transformed into a magician. He transposes the impressions of his external world directly to his inner, very personal world. Thus for him, reality has a completely different importance.

Kovatchev is not a noisy artist; this is also noticeable in his current works. Each work conceived is created anew, felt anew, elaborated with another technique, and the hand of Kovatchev is unmistakable. His works reject the temptation of being catalogued in existing concepts of art. It is not enough to become free of the authority of petrified interpretations found in the world of art and culture of the past. First it is necessary to be very familiar with artistic tradition and only after this, it is possible to undo, re-do, re-invent and recreate. This is very easy to see in the series of “Herman Hesse”, “Picasso”, “Dali” and, in general, all his creations.

This degree of methodology in the trade of the artist requires great effort and time, and talent. Yet only in this way are novel works of art created. Precisely this devotion to work, his perfectionism and the richness of this inner world are the solid base of his philosophical challenges and his social critiques.

Edgar W. G. Just
Art Critic. Bonn



“... Such artists as Valentin Kovatchev can be counted on the fingers of one hand in the world, -those that possess such exceptional sensitivity and, at the same time, have a perfect command of the technique through which to express that sensitivity.

Valentin Kovatchev wins the viewer over because he depicts our feelings, yours and mine. His creations are about us; about what we cannot define but can only name: our soul...”

Darin Kambov

Editor

Cultural Department of Bulgarian TV

Dessins ▪ gravures ▪ peintures ▪ portraits
Drawing ▪ etching ▪ painting ▪ portrait

From the 16th century famed Triavna School in Bulgaria.

The slim sharpened lance, the white armour and steed, all painted here with sombre colours, symbolize that good has triumphed over evil in combat.

The red cape flowing in the wind is a reminder that St. George died a martyr during the Christian persecution.

St. George, protector saint of the poor, as well as of soldiers, is also revered by shepherds. According to legend, St. George liberated the city of Libya of the Dragon that had been terrorizing the population. This dragon had been kept at bay only by the sacrifice of humans. As the king and queen were at a loss about what to do, they resolved to sacrifice their daughter Elizabeth to the monster. But at the crucial moment the young George arrived, charging on his white steed and killing the dragon, which is clearly illustrated in the icon.

Two scenes from his life are missing on either side of the central figure. These have been purposely omitted by the artist to give an even greater sense of "erosion" to the work. The intertwined ropes that give the effect of supporting the icon in different areas are the artist's way of conveying the sense of restriction and lack of freedom. In the lower portion can be seen many men pulling at the cords in an attempt to destroy the icon.

St. George is the Saint Patron of Bulgaria, the icon may be found in the crypt of the Alexander Nevski Cathedral, in Sophia.



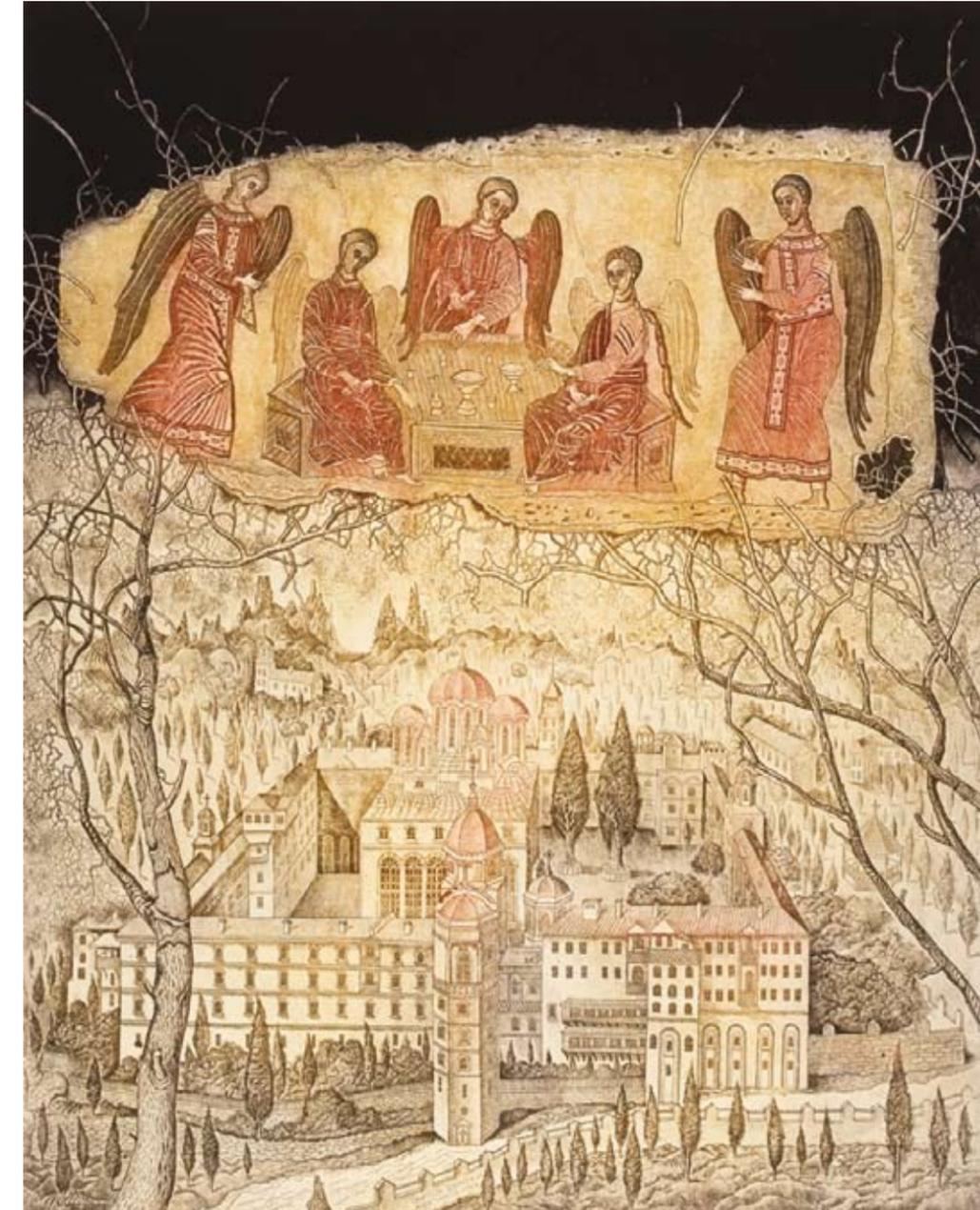
EROSION XII. ST. GEORGE WITH SCENES FROM HIS LIFE

Etching and mezzotint, 41 x 32 cm. 1990

The upper part of this 16th century icon, from the collection of Piotr Sevastyanov, represents the Holy Trinity of the Old Testament. In later Greek art this type of iconography was very popular.

The lower part of the icon shows the Bulgarian Monastery of Zograf, which in Bulgarian means “monk-painter of icons”.

The Monastery of Zograf is found at Mount Athos, centre of Byzantine icons because of its monastic workshops. Even today, this mountainous area of the Greek peninsula Chalkidike has about twenty monasteries which are the guardians of the orthodox faith and its art. Since the foundation of the first monastery in 963 this region has seen the accumulation of an artistic richness unique in its class, particularly in the terrain of icons and handwritten texts. These monks did not invent any personal style, but possess the great merit of having kept alive the iconographic tradition and the original technique of preparing the Byzantine icons.



EROSION VIII. THE MONASTERY OF ZOGRAF

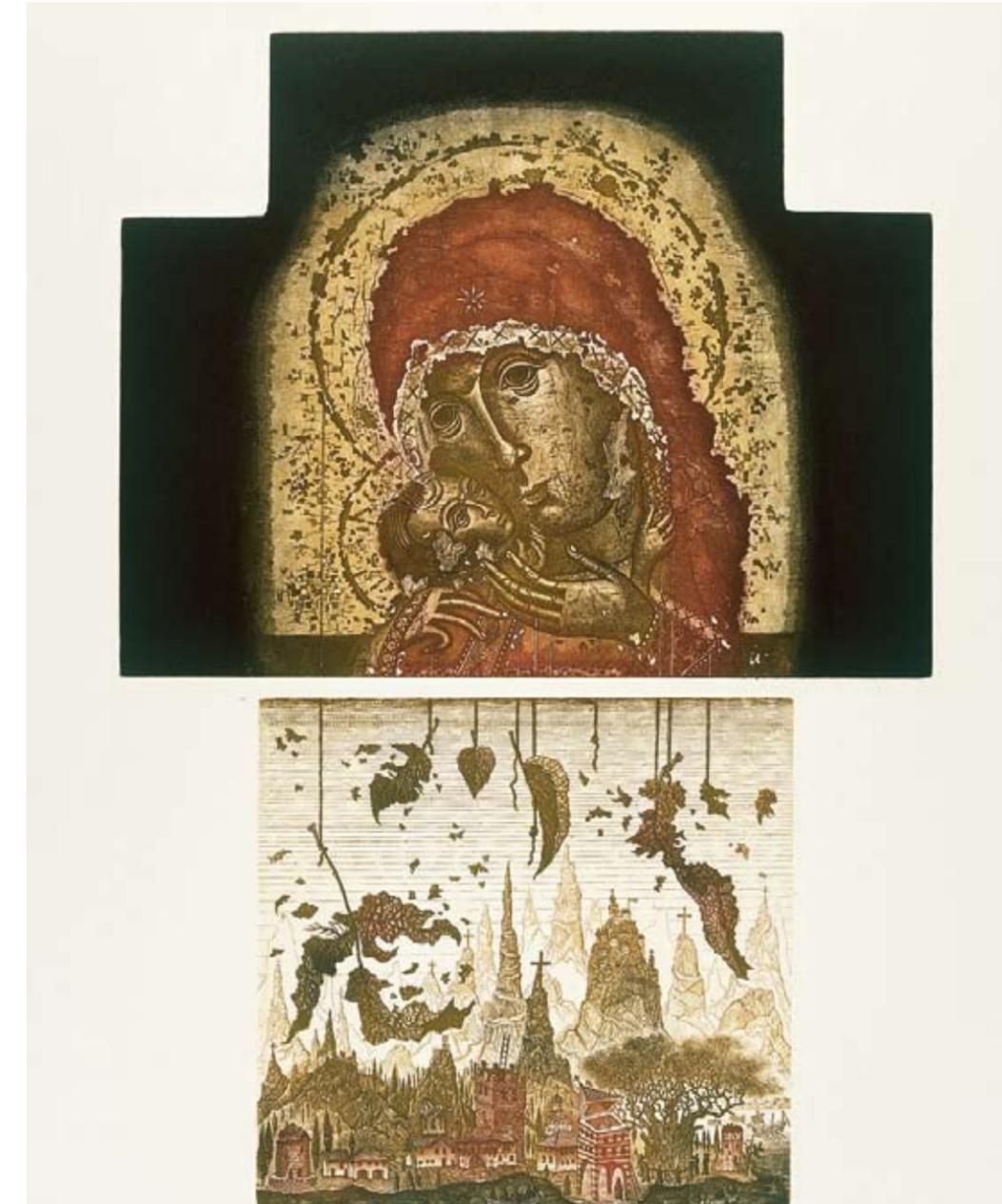
Etching and mezzotint, 41 x 32 cm. 1990

This 16th century Bulgarian icon comes from the Bulgarian Monastery of Zograf on Mount Athos, Greece.

The upper part of the icon depicts the Virgin Mary with the Bay Jesus or Christ Child. In this motif the intimate union between the mother and child is reinforced by the hands of the Virgin which tenderly encircle the head and the hands of the Baby Jesus. Also characteristic of this theme is the hand of the Baby clutching the cape of the Virgin, while he doubles the fingers of the other hand. It is also called the Virgin Hodigitria which signifies in Greek "the Virgin who shows the way".

In the Orthodox church there have been various representations of the Virgin Hodigitria at the right of the Door of the King, her partner on the left being the Pantocrator.

In the lower part of the icon in the foreground one sees the Gateway of the peninsula of Chalkidike, in the Aegean Sea, and in the background Mount Athos, centre of Byzantine painting of icons because of its monastic workshops.



EROSION XVI. THE VIRGIN OF MOUNT ATHOS

Etching and mezzotint, 45 x 30 cm. 1992

This 16th century Bulgarian icon was found at the Monastery of Zograf on Mount Athos, Greece.

The word “pantocrator” comes from the Greek meaning “Master of All Things” or “Master of the World”. It is shown in three different ways: half trunk view from the thorax, standing or sitting on his throne of the Consummate Priest.

Christ raises his right hand (the left in the etching) in a gesture of personal blessing towards the Orthodox Church. Two fingers are extended and indicate that he is man and son of God at the same time. The three bent fingers symbolise the Holy Trinity-Father, Son and Holy Ghost. The Bible explicitly reminds us that he also has the important role of Judge. The dominant red colour symbolises his holiness.

The word “pantocrator” in Bulgarian can be read on both sides of the figure of Christ, “panto” to the left and “crator” to the right.

Representations of Christ Pantocrator are often found in Orthodox churches to the left of the King’s Entrance or Door, while his accompanying Virgin Hodigitria can be found to the right.

The lower part of the icon shows the Rila Monastery that was founded in the 10th century. The monastery, regarded as one of most important cultural, historical and architectural monuments in Bulgaria, was declared a national historical monument in 1976 and became a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1983. Since 1991 it has been entirely subordinate to the Holy Synod of the Bulgarian Orthodox Church.

EROSION XV. CHRIST PANTOCRATOR

Etching and mezzotint, 45 x 30 cm. 1992





“You can see well only with the heart, for to the eye alone what is essential remains invisible”
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry

ARION
Oil and graphite on canvas, 33 x 41 cm. 2013

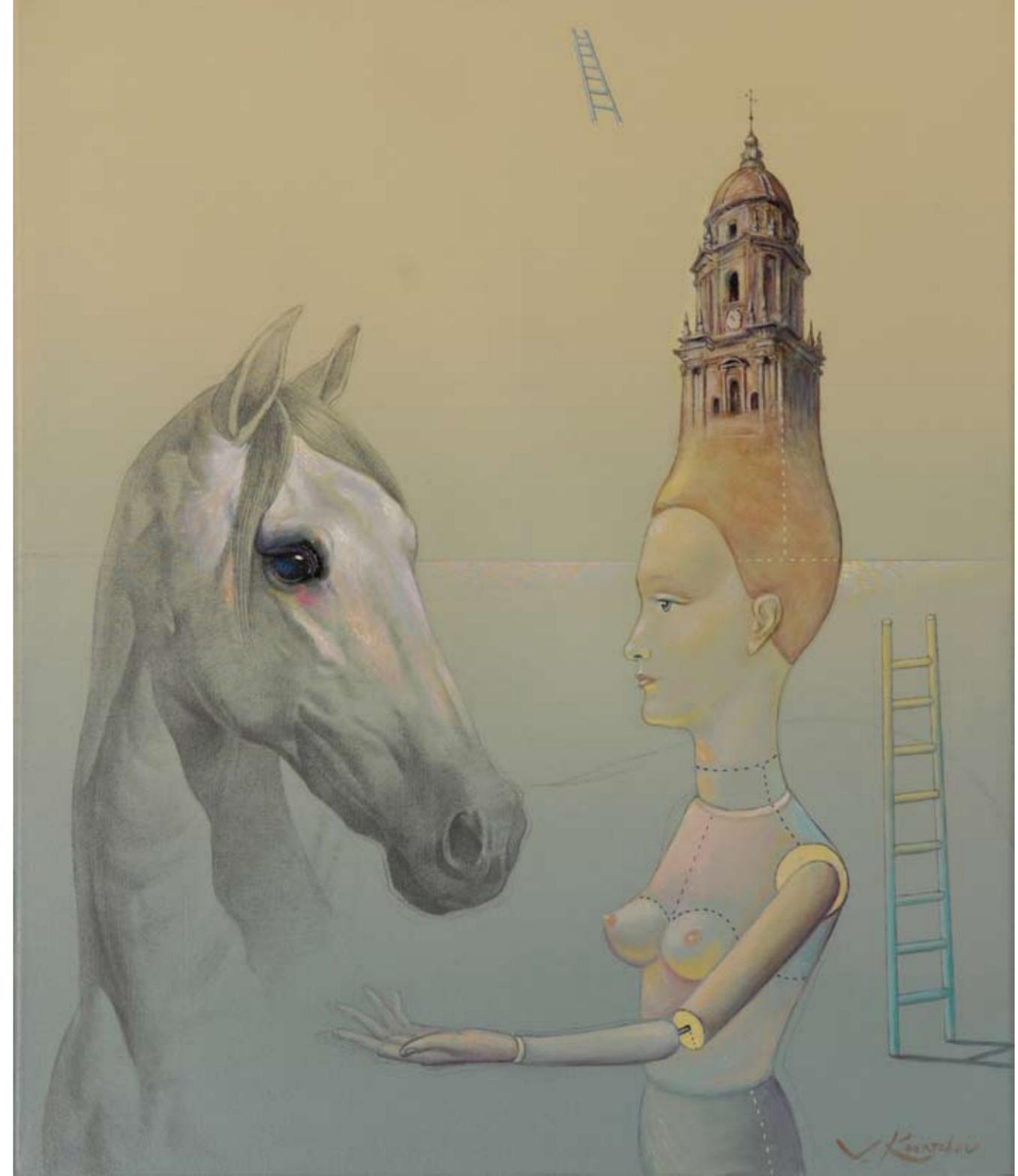


LADY OF THE HORSE II
Oil and graphite on canvas, 46 x 55 cm. 2011





LADY OF THE HORSE I
Oil and graphite on canvas, 55 x 46 cm. 2012





ANDROMEDA III
Pencil drawing, 50 x 65 cm. 1998





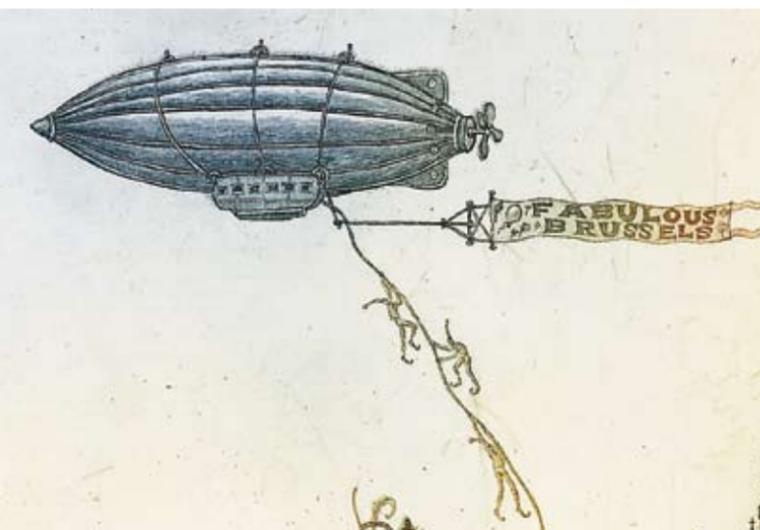
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"In artistic life creations of value always have as their base the use of the past and a recovery of ancient values which have been forgotten"

Hermann Hesse

THE PILGRIMS ROUTE TO SANTIAGO

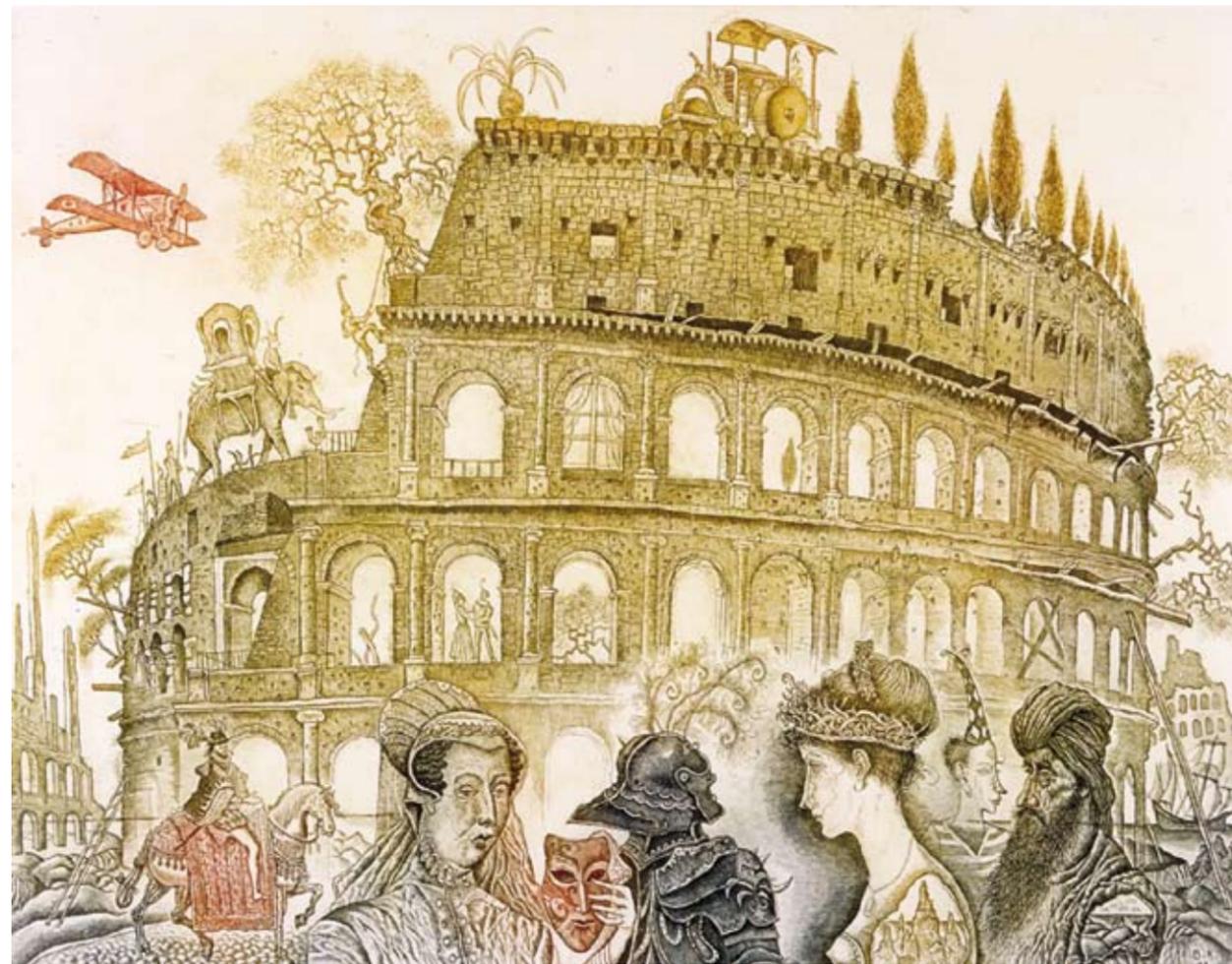
Etching and mezzotint, 46 x 62 cm.1999



FABULOUS BRUSSELS

Etching, 23 x 29 cm. 1992





ROME, DREAM OF A JOURNEY II & III

Etching, 25 x 32 cm. 1991



MADRID, THE GATE OF ALCALA
Etching and mezzotint, 40 x 64 cm. 1995



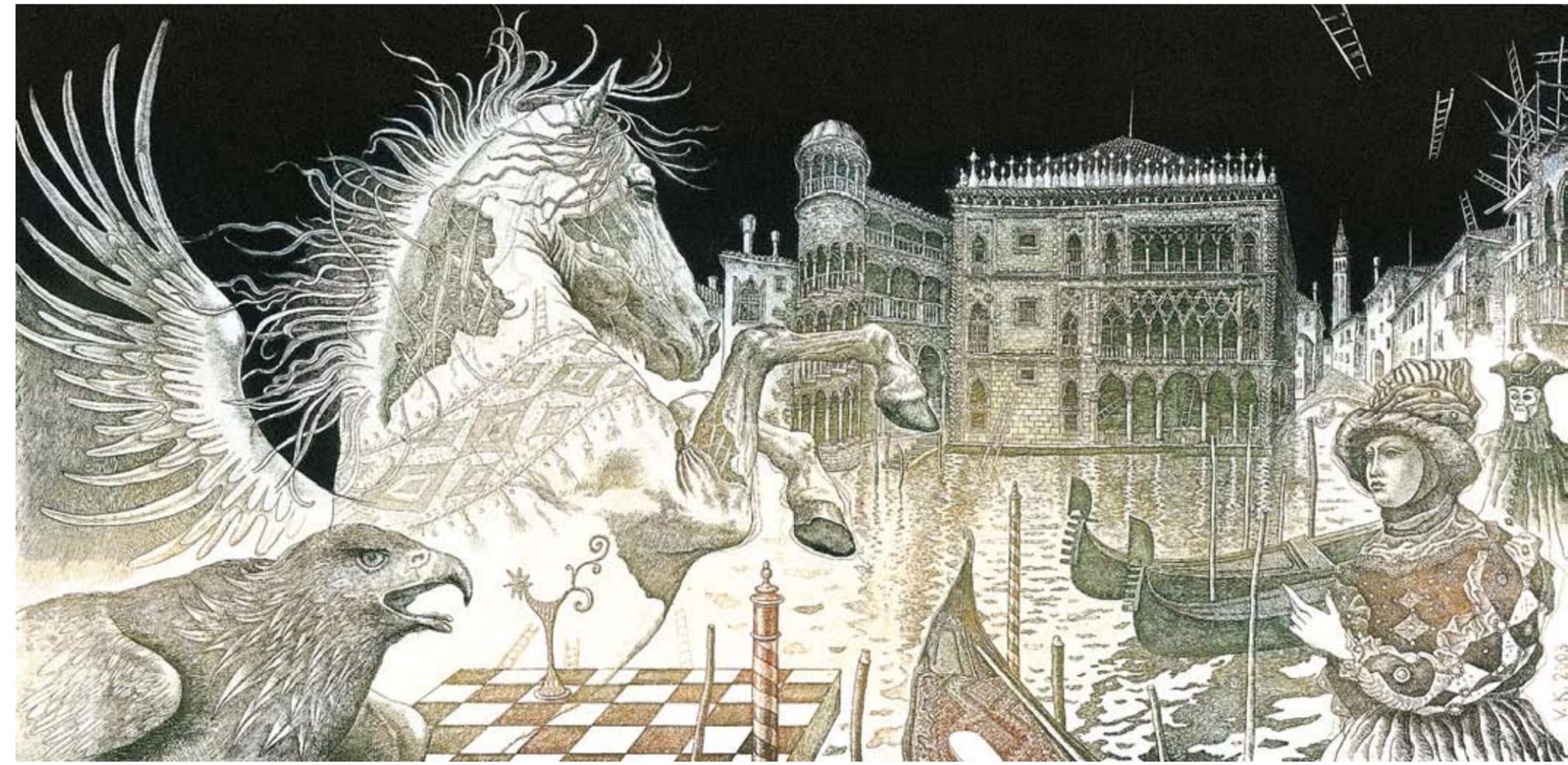
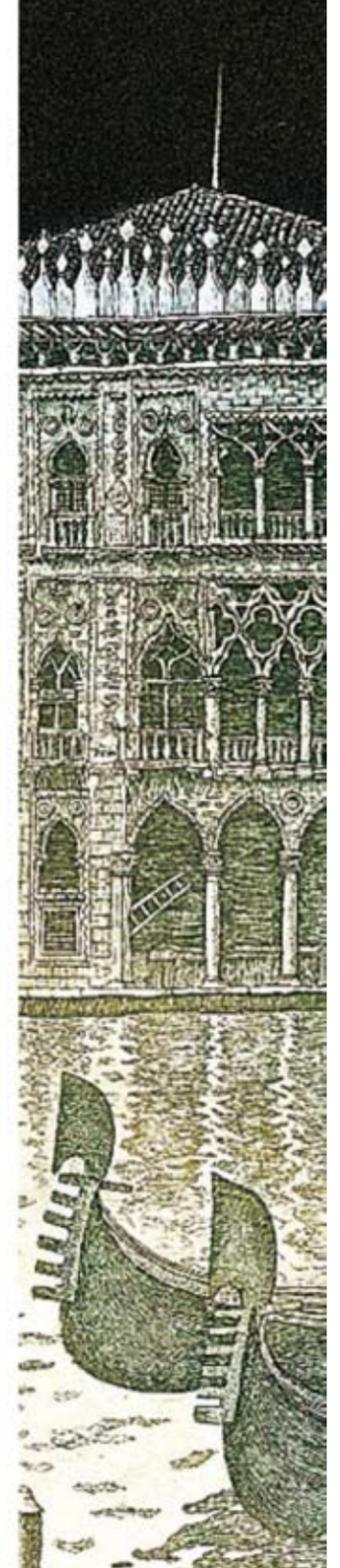


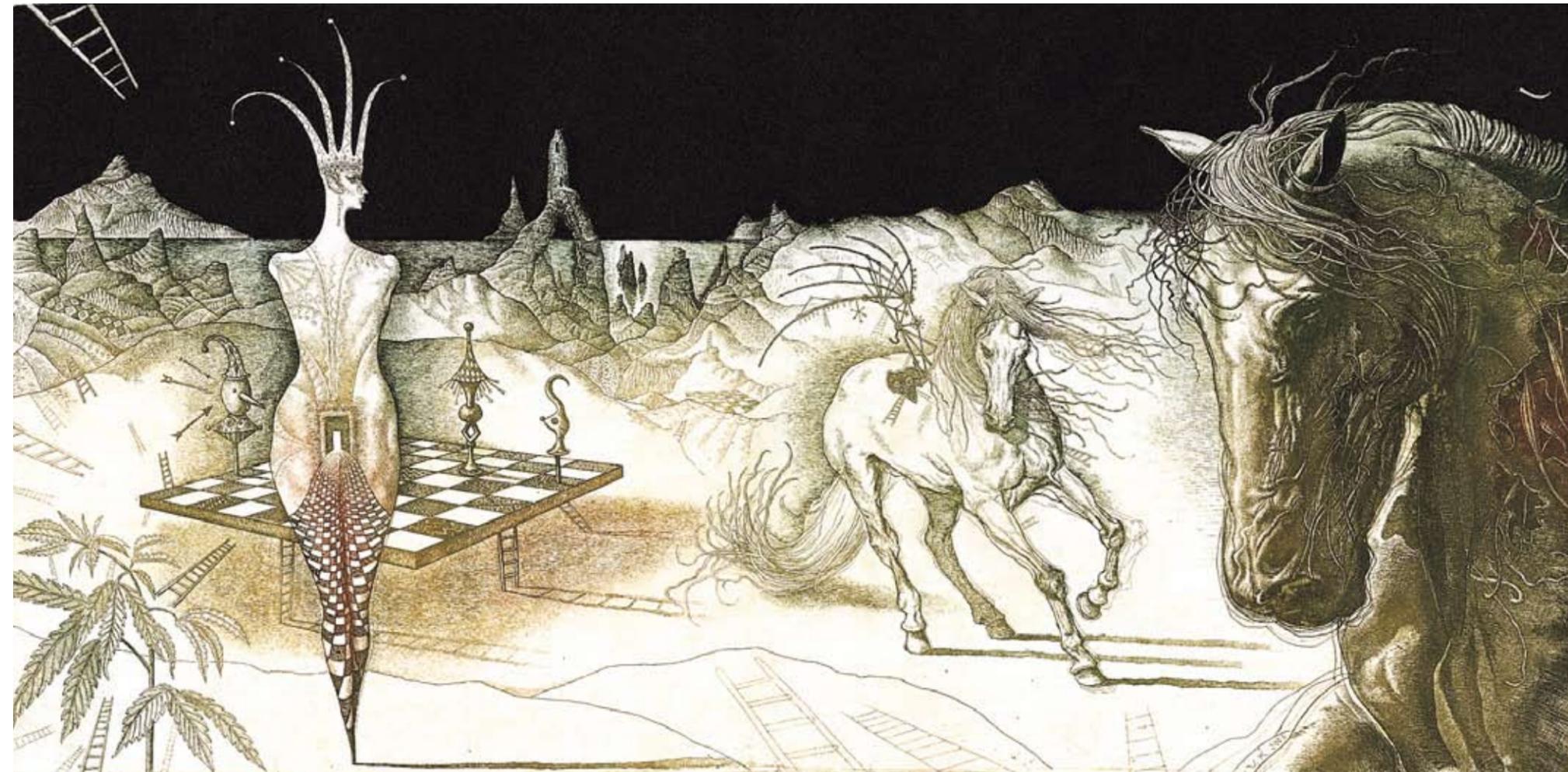
BARCELONA, THE HOLY FAMILY

Etching and mezzotint, 32 x 25 cm. 1995



HORSES AND DAYDREAMS IV
Etching and mezzotint, 28 x 59 cm. 2003





HORSES AND DAYDREAMS III

Etching and mezzotint, 28 x 59 cm. 2003



HORSE IN MOTION I
Oil on canvas, 60 x 73 cm. 2012



HORSE IN MOTION II
Oil on canvas, 60 x 73 cm. 2012

“Wherever the soul does not work together with the hands, there is not art”
Leonardo Da Vinci

HORSE ON THE MOONLIGHT II
Oil on canvas, 130 x 195 cm. 2009





DAWN REFLECTIONS
Oil on canvas, 92 x 65 cm. 2012





BLUE HORSE II
Oil on canvas, 89 x 116 cm. 2009



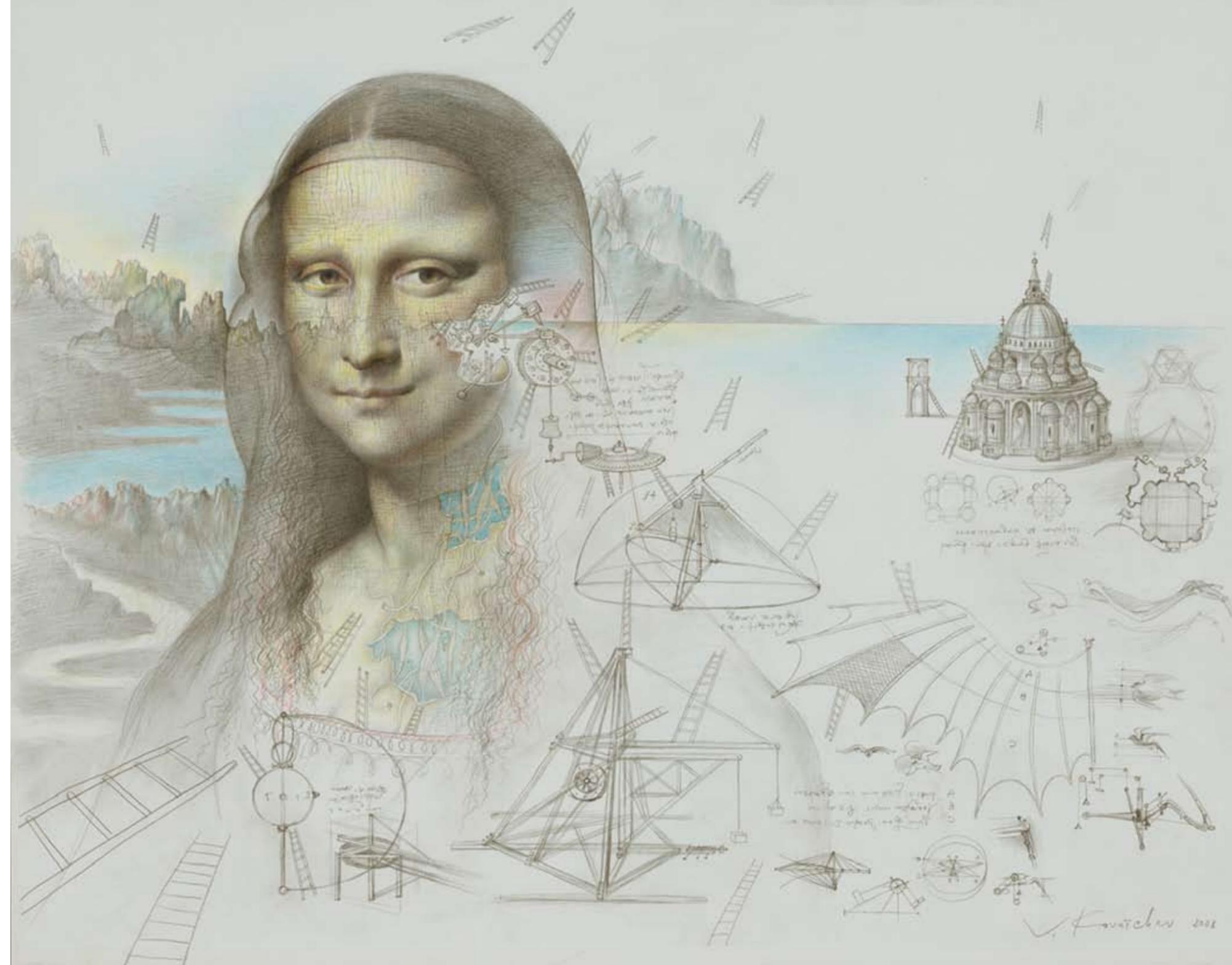
DANCE OF THE MASKS I
 Oil on canvas, 92 x 46 cm. 2011





DANCE OF THE MASKS II
Oil on canvas, 92 x 46 cm. 2011

"In life beauty perishes; in art it is immortal"
Leonardo Da Vinci



MONA LISA
Pencil drawing, 56 x 71 cm. 2008

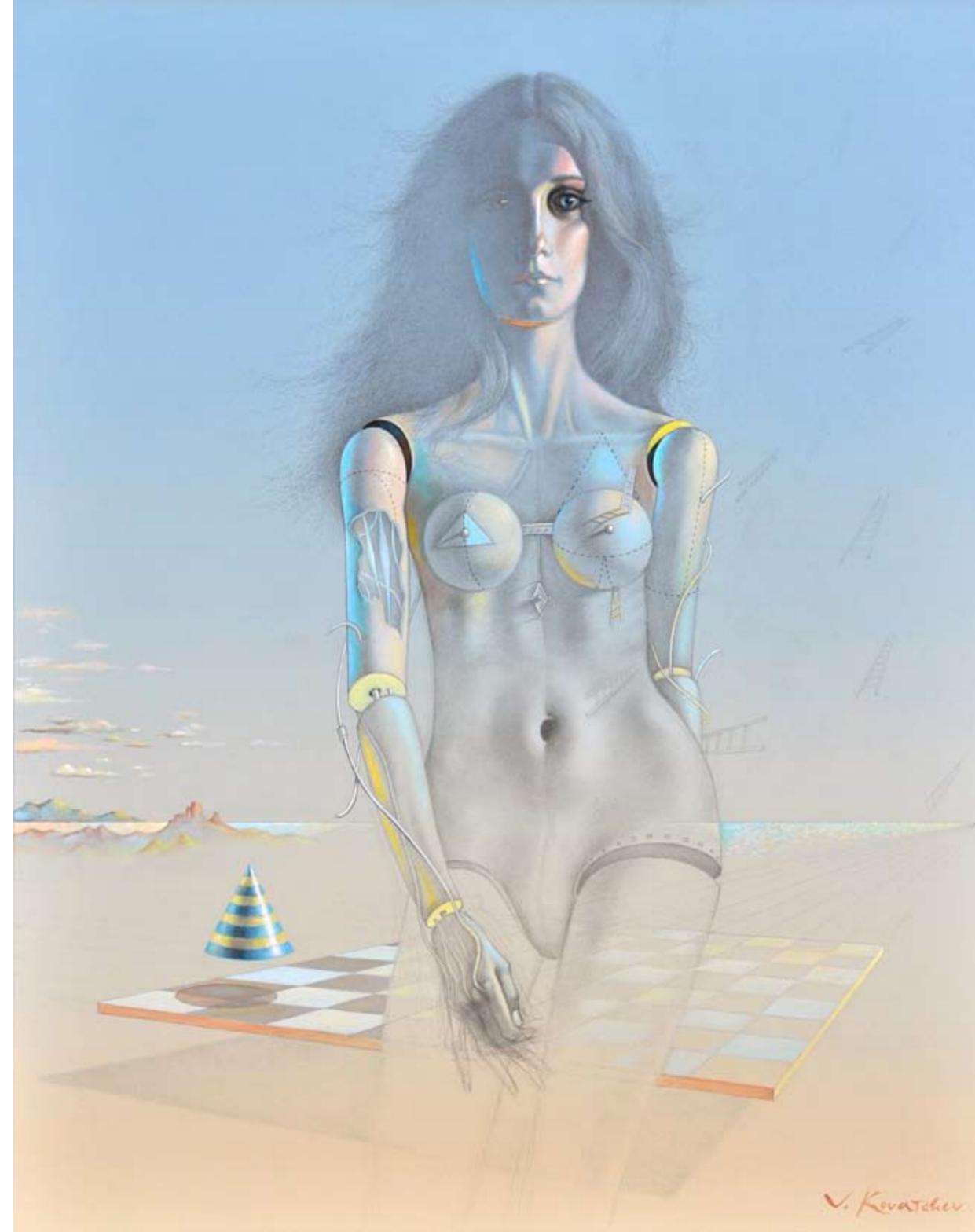


ANDROMEDA II
Pencil drawing, 50 x 65 cm. 1998





ROBOTIKAS I
Oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm. 2010





"Beauty is the other form of truth"
Alejandro Casona

LADY OF THE DAWN
 Oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm. 2011



Kovatsky



JACQUES BRELL

Pencil drawing on canvas, 92 x 46 cm. 2012





JIMMY HENDRIX

Pencil drawing on canvas, 92 x 46 cm. 2012



**MENINA AT THE MIRROR**

Pencil drawing, 72 x 60 cm. 2007





MENINAS AND JESTER
Pencil drawing, 72 x 60 cm. 2007





MENINA WITH BUTTEFLIES
Oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm. 2012





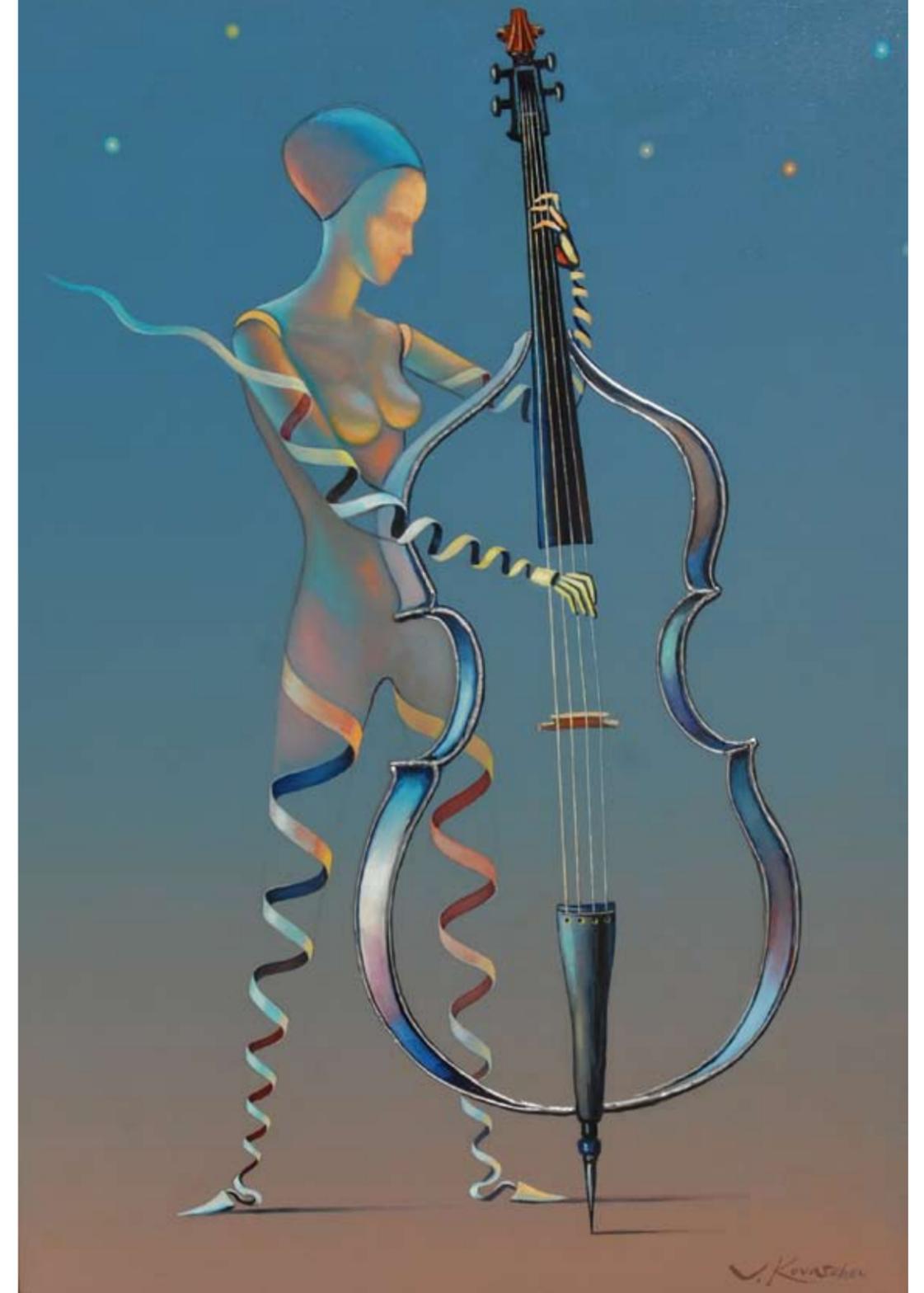
MENINAS DANCE
Oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm. 2013





CONTRABASSIT IN BLUE
Oil on canvas, 92 x 65 cm. 2013

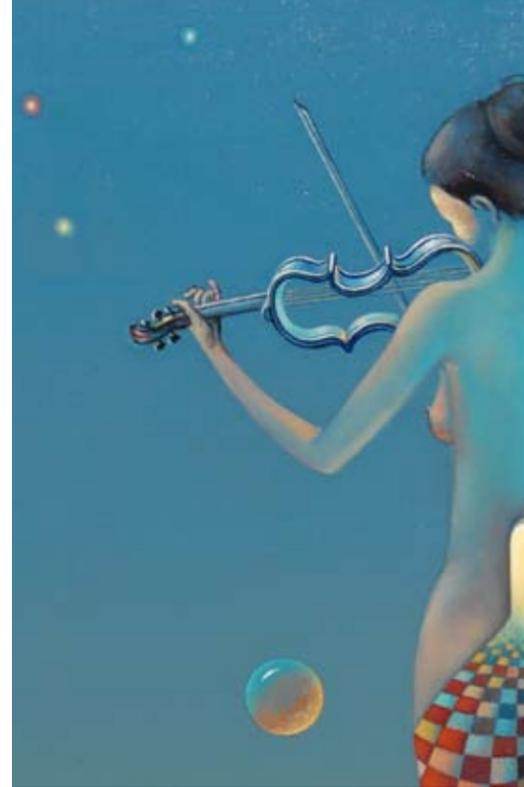
“Painting is mute poetry, and poetry blind painting”
Leonardo Da Vinci





"All knowledge begins through our feelings"
Leonardo Da Vinci

VIOLINIST IN BLUE
Oil on canvas, 92 x 65 cm. 2013



VIOLIN WITH MASK
Oil on canvas, 33 x 24 cm. 20013



CONTRABASSIT IN RED

Oil on canvas, 35 x 27 cm. 2013

VIOLINIST IN RED

Oil on canvas, 35 x 27 cm. 2013



TAVROMAGIA III
Etching and mezzotint, 17 x 27 cm. 2006





TAVROMAGIA I
 Etching and mezzotint, 17 x 27 cm. 2006

“It makes for immense sadness to think that nature speaks while mankind will not listen”
Leonardo da Vinci

ANATOMY OF THE WILD BULL II
Etching and mezzotint, 50 x 60 cm. 1993

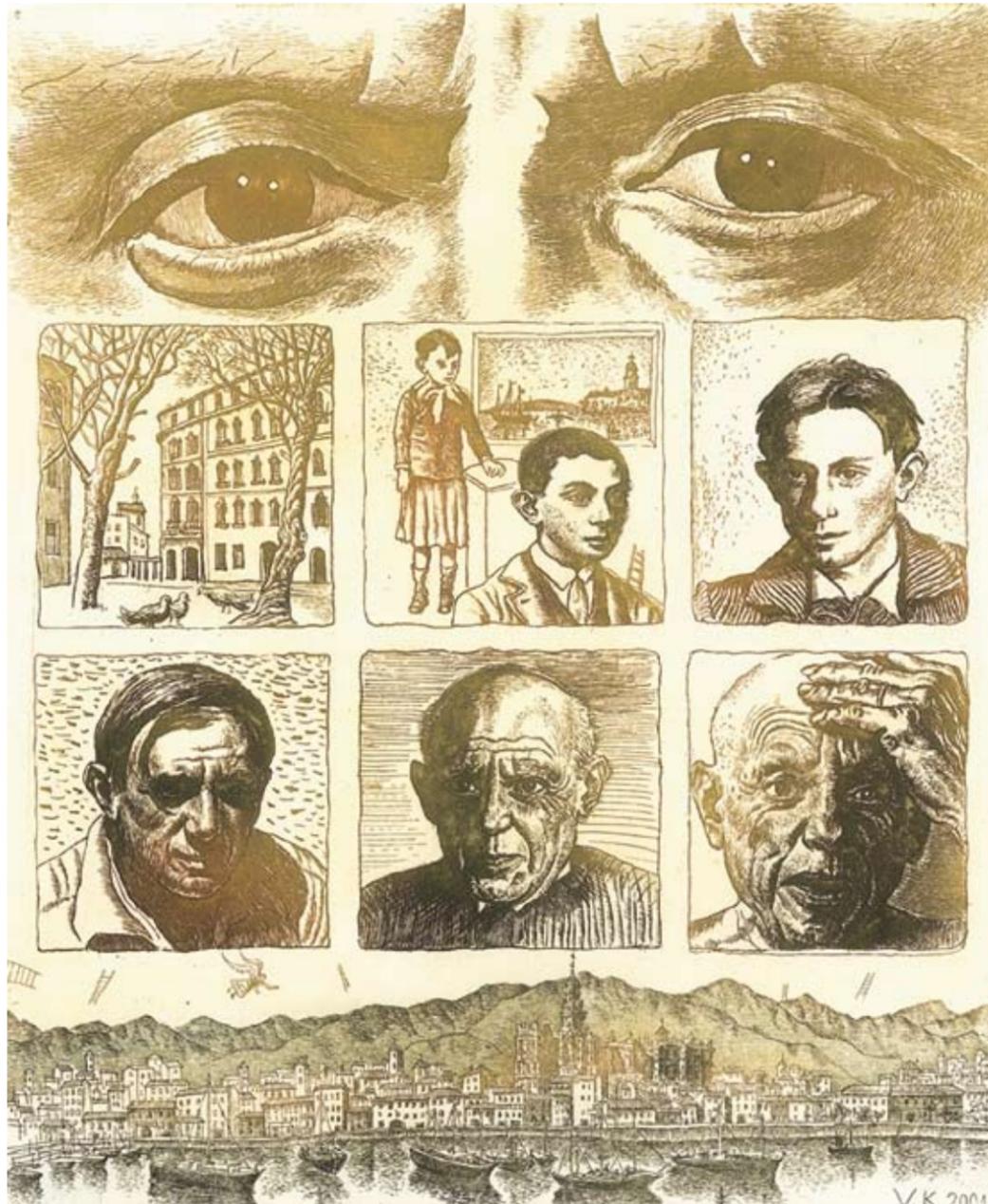




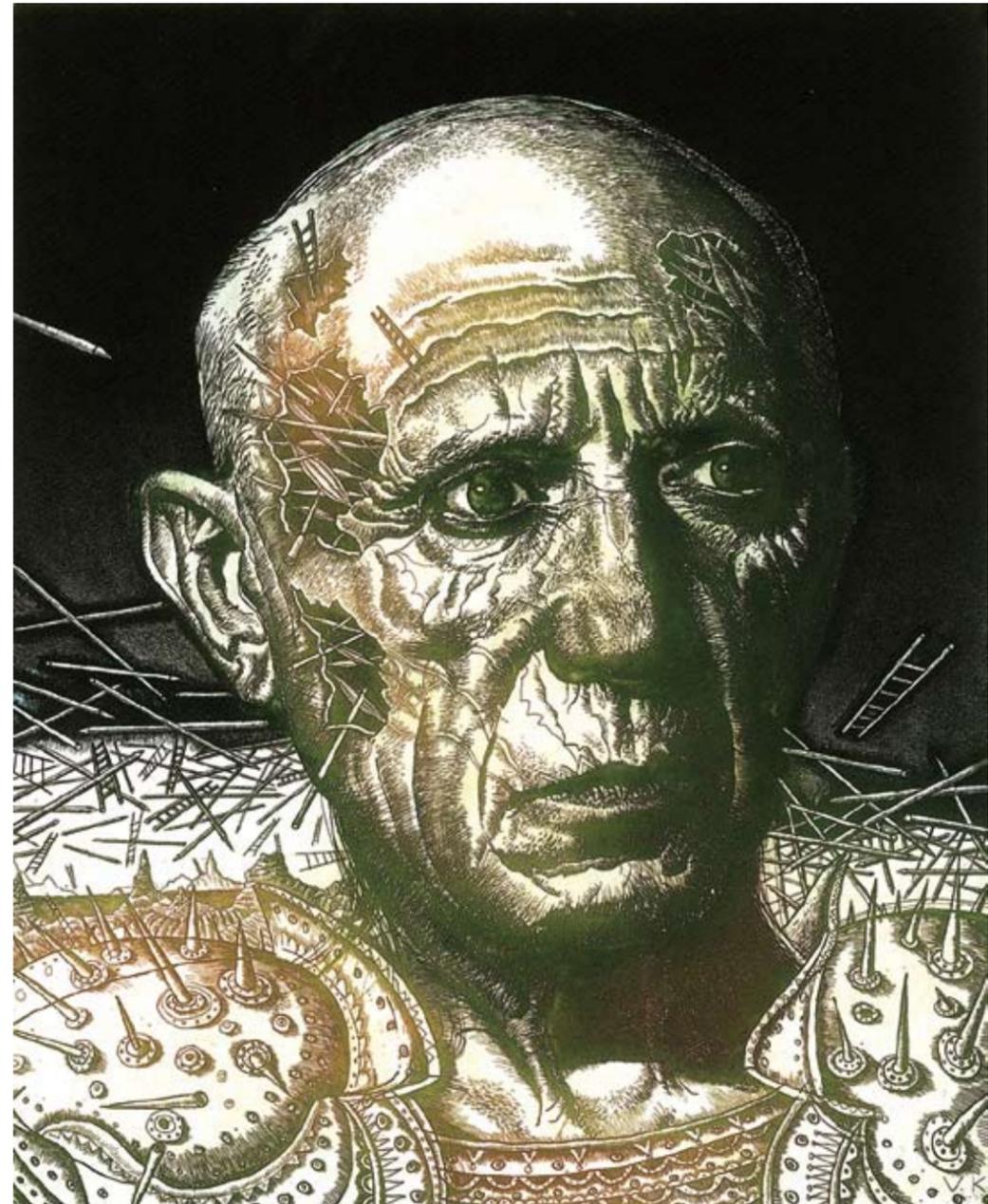
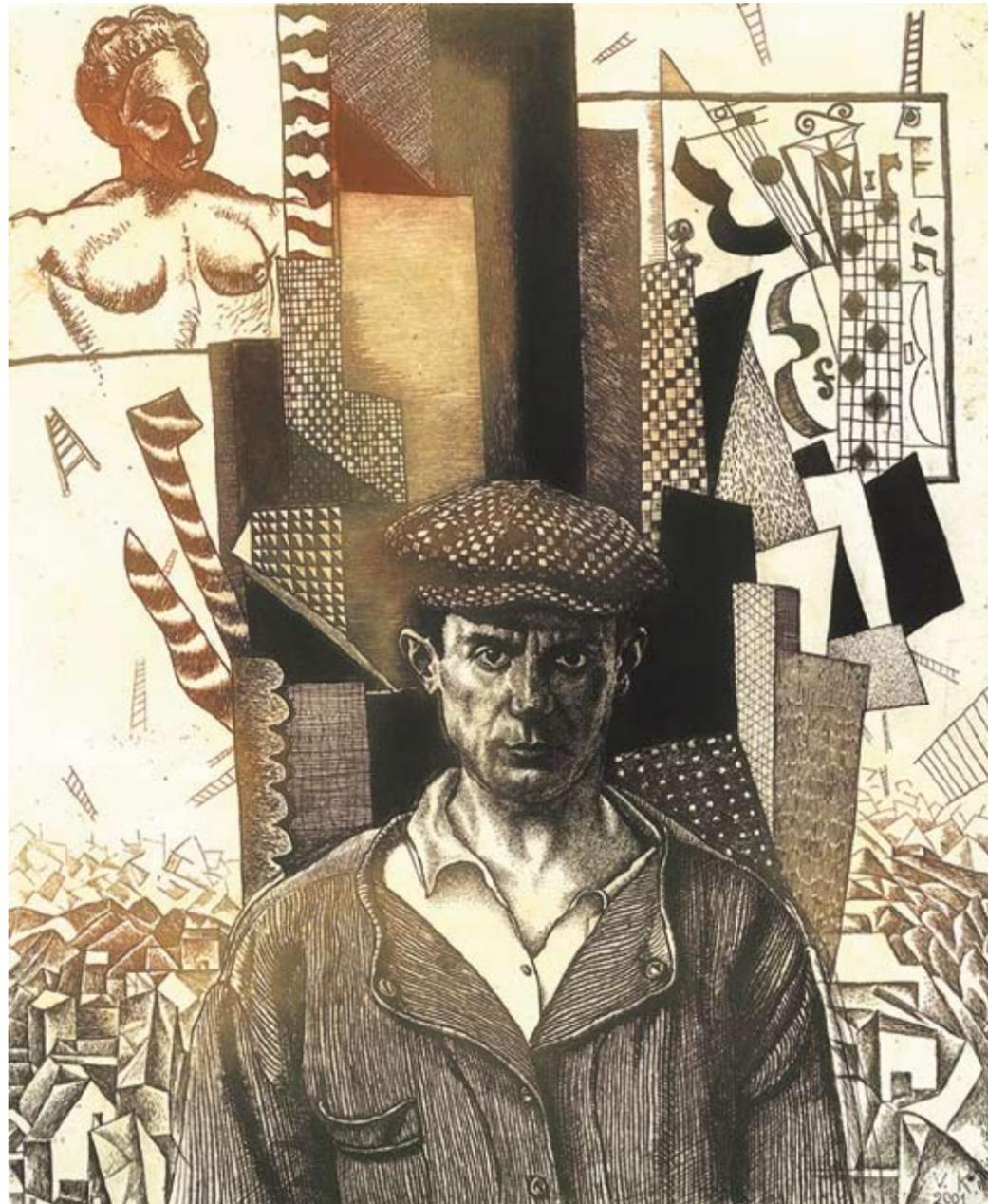
“ ... We do not appreciate what is good until we have lost it ...”
Miguel de Cervantes

SUITE DON QUIJOTE WITH A BULGARIAN SOUL III & VI
Etching and mezzotint, 33 x 25 cm. 2005





SUITE PICASSO I, II & III
Etching and mezzotint, 24 x 20 cm. 2001





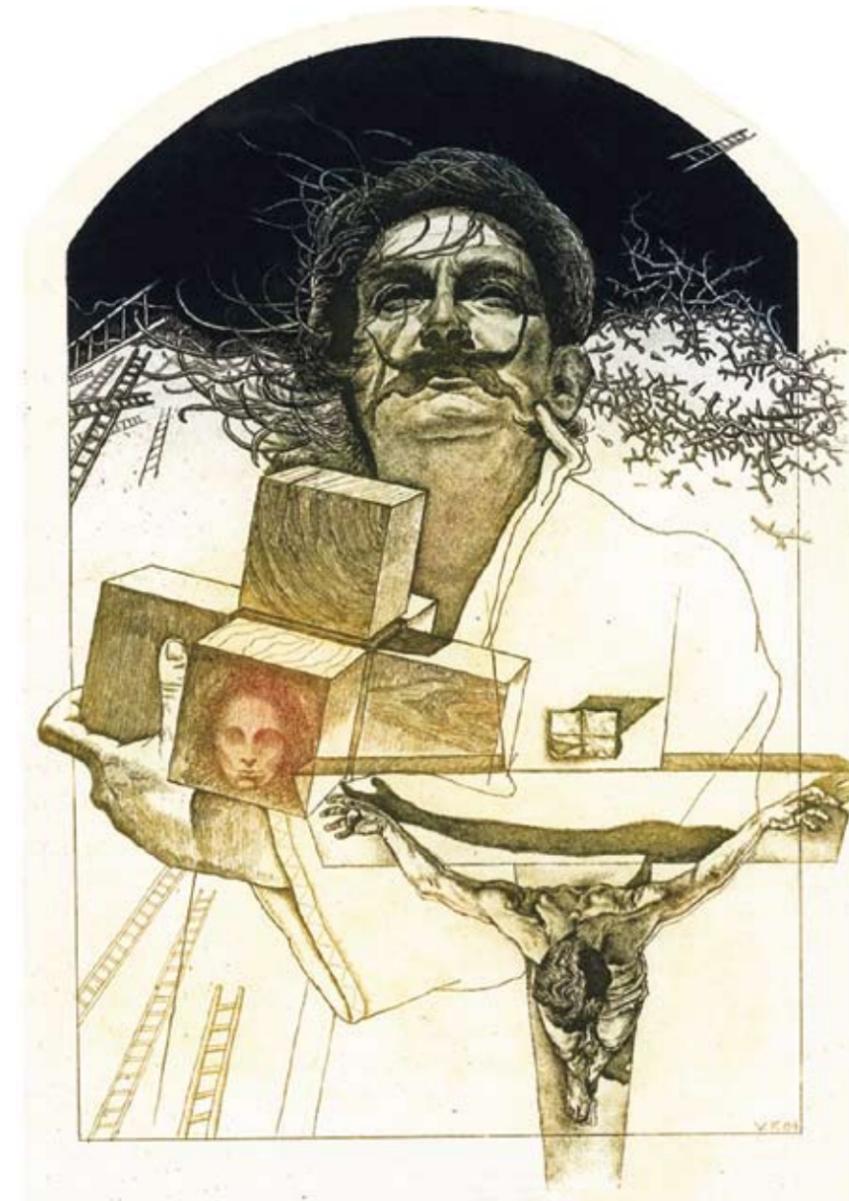
SUITE DALÍ II & V
Etching, 24,5 x 17 cm. 2004





“God: the spirit is at one with itself, beyond all images and diversity”
Hermann Hesse

SUITE DALÍ VI
 Etching, 24,5 x 17 cm. 2004





ANGEL OF GRATITUDE II
Oil on canvas, 100 x 81 cm. 2013





Valentin Kovatchev and his wife Rosario Escobar

Valentin Kovatchev est né à Sofia en 1953.

Diplômé, en 1981, par la Faculté des Beaux-Arts de Sofia, il s'est spécialisé dans la gravure. Depuis 1992 il vit et travaille à Malaga.

Artiste, académicien, conservateur, professeur, éditeur et galeriste, il a participé à de nombreuses foires d'art et expositions internationales en Bulgarie, Japon, Grèce, Hongrie, Autriche, République Tchèque, Hollande, Russie, Etats-Unis, Allemagne, France, Luxembourg, Italie, Mexique, Colombie, Finlande, Belgique, Suisse, Grande-Bretagne, Qatar et Espagne entre autres.

Son oeuvre a été reconnue et a reçu de nombreux prix au niveau national et international, actuellement elle est présente dans de nombreuses collections publiques et privées et dans des musées du monde entier.

Valentín Kovatchev nace en Sofía en 1953.

En 1981 se gradúa en la Facultad de Bellas Artes de Sofía, especialidad de Grabado. Desde 1992 vive y trabaja en Málaga.

Artista, académico, curador, profesor, editor y galerista, ha participado en numerosas exposiciones y ferias de arte internacionales en Bulgaria, Japón, Grecia, Hungría, Austria, República Checa, Holanda, Rusia, USA, Alemania, Francia, Bélgica, Italia, Luxemburgo, México, Colombia, Finlandia, Suiza, Gran Bretaña, Qatar y España, entre otros países.

Su obra ha sido reconocida y galardonada en numerosas ocasiones y se encuentra representada en innumerables colecciones públicas, privadas y museos en todo el mundo.

Valentin Kovatchev was born in Sophia in 1953.

In 1981 he graduated in the Faculty of Fine Arts in Sophia, specialising in engraving. Since 1992 he lives and works in Malaga.

Artist, academician, curator, professor, editor and gallery owner, has participated in numerous international art fairs and exhibitions in Bulgaria, Japan, Greece, Hungary, Austria, Czech Republic, Holland, Russia, USA, Germany, France, Belgium, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Colombia, Finland, Switzerland, Great Britain, Qatar and Spain, among others countries.

His work has been recognised and awarded prizes on numerous occasions and is now presented in innumerable public and private collections and museums throughout the world.

BIOGRAFÍA / BIOGRAPHY

BIOGRAPHY

1953 Valentin Kovatchev was born into a family of jurists and diplomats in Sophia, on 16 April. From his earliest years he showed a special interest in music and the fine arts, being remarkable his earliest drawing portraits of historical personages as Erasmus of Rotterdam, Lenin, Garibaldi, Pushkin, since he was only ten years old. Following his fifteenth birthday, led to his enrolment in Sophia's Lyceum of Fine Arts.

1968-72 Course of studies in Lyceum of Fine Arts, Sophia.

1972-74 Military service in Bulgaria.

1974-75 Studied Languages and glass design in Prague.

1975-81 Graduated in the Faculty of Fine Arts, Sophia, specialising in engraving.

1982-88 Worked as painter and engraver in the art department of the Ministry of Defence in Sophia and gave courses in drawing and engraving in his own art studio.

1986 Came first for the Army Painting Prize, Sophia.

1987 Took part in "Intergraphik'87", Triennial Graphic International in Berlin.

1988 Participated in the Graphic Biennials of Tuzla (Yugoslavia) and Lodz (Poland).

1989 Undertook the "Suite Hermann Hesse", inspired by the German writer and composed of nine etchings and the "Suite From Birds and Men", inspired by Leonardo da Vinci and composed of five etchings. Started his "Erosion" Series, which consists of seventeen etchings of Byzantine icons. Graphic Biennials of Ljubljana (Yugoslavia) and Varna and Plovdiv (Bulgaria). Exhibitions in Moscow, St. Petersburg and Holland.

1990 Abandoned painting in order to devote himself full-time to his own etching technique, a technique he himself was to invent after many years of research and which exercised such a fascination on the artist, as happened with the great masters, like Rembrandt, Dürer, Goya and Picasso, among others. Began a lengthy tour with his own exhibitions covering many countries, including Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Russia, Hungary, Belgium, Holland, Luxembourg, France, Germany, Italy, Austria and Switzerland. Participated in the Graphic Triennials of Kochi (Japan) and Frechen (Germany), being finalist in both.

1991 Won first prize in the "II International Biennial of Graphic Art", Athens, as well as being a prize-winner in the "IV International Biennial of Graphic Art" in Wakayama, Japan. Exhibitions in Washington, London, Rome, Vienna, Hamburg, Munich, Brussels and Humboldt University in Berlin.

1992 Finished the "Erosion" Series. Participated in EXPO'92 in Seville, at the Bulgarian Pavilion. Exhibitions in Vienna, Brussels, Rome and Capodimonte, this last being where he met his present wife, Rosario Escobar Segovia. Moved his home to Torremolinos (Malaga).

1993 Competed in the "I National Engraving Prize" of the Madrid National Chalcography as well as in the "I Graphic Biennial" in Maastricht. He emerged as finalist in both contests. Participated with his series "Erosion" and "Anatomy of the Wild Bull" in the first exhibition of ESTAMPA (International Salon of Contemporary Engraving) in Madrid, an event that will be required in all later ESTAMPA exhibitions.

1994 Exhibition in the Goya Museum of Engraving, and for the first time in Spain he directed an engraving course, which inaugurated the Workshop of the Goya Museum. Honourable Mention in the XLIII Autumn Salon of Seville, the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of St. Elisabeth of Hungary Participated in ESTAMPA.

1995 Was nominated Academician Correspondent in Malaga for the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of St. Elisabeth of Hungary, Seville. Received the "British Institute Prize" in the XLIV Autumn Salon, organised by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. Obtained First Prize in the "Andalusian Fine Arts Contest" of the Seville Athenaeum. Exhibition in Berlin. Participated in the first SIAC (International Art Fair) in Strasbourg, as well as in ARTESANTANDER and ESTAMPA. Obtained First Prize in the "VII City of Burgos Engraving Competition", Spain.

1996 Was nominated Academician of the Senate by the International Academy of Modern Art of Rome. Obtained the Goya Silver Medal, representing Spain, in the "X Biennial of Iberoamerican Art", held in Mexico City, D.F. Gave his first lecture to the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of St. Elisabeth of Hungary, under the title "Goya, Genius of Engraving", so joining in the homage being paid this year to Goya on the 250th anniversary of the birth of this painter of genius. Exhibition of Homage to Goya by the Academicians of St. Elisabeth of Hungary in the Royal Palaces of Seville, where he presented the "Andalusian Spiritual Suite". Exhibition "Bulgarians Abroad", Foundation Kyril and Methodio, National Gallery, Sophia. This same year he turned again to drawing, a technique

which, along with painting, he had put to one side for a very long time, owing, on the one hand, to the artist’s personal need to express himself through the medium of engraving and, on the other, to the extraordinary recognition given to his graphic work and the high demand for exhibitions throughout the world. Obtained the First Prize for Drawing in the “I Bulls and Holidays Contest” held by Madrid City Council. Participated in the “63 Madrid Autumn Salon”, where he obtained First Prize for Engraving. He also participated in ARTESANTANDER, ARTEXPO, INTERART, ESTAMPA and in the “Eleventh German International Graphic Triennial”, in Frechen, where he was a finalist.

1997 Undertook his first exhibition in the Hermann Hesse Museum, Calw (Germany), native city of the illustrious writer, and another exhibition in Bochum. Exhibition of homage to Manolete in Malaga, Cordoba and Santander. Presentation of the award-winning work in the Biennial of Iberoamerican Art and of the “Manolete Suite” in ESTAMPA, in the presence of the Princess Kalina of Bulgaria and the ambassadors of Mexico and the Republic of Bulgaria. Third Medal in the “64 Madrid Autumn Salon”. Participated in ART MULTIPLE DÜSSELDORF (International Engraving Fair), INTERNATIONAL KUNSTMESSE (International Engraving Fair), in Innsbruck and in ALMONEDA (Antiquities Fair and Art Galleries) of Madrid, where he will have a regular presence in future staging of this event.

1998 Moved his residence to Benalmadena (Malaga), where he directs his own art studio, with courses in drawing, painting and engraving, as well as the workshop for printing graphic work. Exhibitions in the Koblenz Chamber of Commerce and in the German cities of Calw (Hesse Museum) and Frankfurt (Buchmesse). Undertook the engraving “Spiritual Andalusia, Virgin of Hope”, in order to commemorate the X Anniversary of the Canonical Coronation of the Virgin, Malaga. Participated in ESTAMPA, where he presented the previous engraving, among other works, as well as in INTERART, ALMONEDA and the ROME FAIR. Invited by the Caixa Ourense to participate in the “V International Engraving Biennial”, in Ourense. Received his first commission for a family portrait of the Lemberger family (Berlin).

1999 Obtained Spanish citizenship. Awarded First Prize in the “IX Gregorio Prieto National Drawing Contest” in Valdepeñas. First Prize in the “I Felipe Orlando National Drawing Contest” in Benalmadena; and was finalist for the “Penagos Drawing Prize” in Madrid. Exhibition “For Peace” in the Hermann Hesse Museum, in Calw. Participated in the Frankfurt Buchmesse, ESTAMPA and ALMONEDA, where he presented the “Suite The Pilgrims Route to Santiago”. Undertook the engraving “Obradoiro” as a commission from the multinational Volkswagen. Exhibition of Bulgarian Art in the City Museum, Madrid, related to the official invitation of their Majesties the King and the Queen of Spain to the President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. Peter Stoyanov. Participated with the “Suite Manolete” and the Series “Anatomy of the Wild Bull” in the travelling exhibition “Bullfighting Arts, Bulls and Bullfighters”, organised by the Caixa Galicia Foundation, including works by Picasso, Caballero, Guinovart, Muñoz, Barjola, Hernandez and others. Portraits commissioned by the Bargel family (Stuttgart) and portraits of the Valenti and Porras families (Madrid).

2000 Exhibitions in London, Helsinki and the Valdepeñas Museum. Participated in ARTEBA (Buenos Aires), FIAC CHILE (Viña del Mar), ALMONEDA and ESTAMPA, where he presented the “Suite Bacchus”. Portraits commissioned by the Christensen family (Copenhagen) and the Sandholzer family (Winterthur).

2001 Returned to painting so as to mark exhibition tribute which Malaga presented to commemorate the 120th anniversary of the universally famous Malaga artist, Pablo Ruiz Picasso. From this year onward his techniques of engraving, drawing and painting were combined in all his creations. Directed an engraving course in the CIEC Foundation (International Centre of Contemporary Print), Betanzos. Participated in the Europ´Art Genève, ALMONEDA and ESTAMPA, where he presented the “Suite Picasso”.

2002 Exhibition in homage to Hermann Hesse to mark the 125th anniversary of his birth in the German cities of Calw and Bad Liebenzell. Participated in ARTESEVILLA, DEARTE, ALMONEDA and ESTAMPA, where he presented the “Suite Hesse”.

2003 Presentation of the series of oils entitled “Chess” in ALMONEDA and of the “Suite Horses and Daydreams” composed of five etchings in ESTAMPA.

2004 Participated in DEARTE, ALMONEDA and in the “XVII Maximo Ramos Engraving Prize”, Ferrol, emerging as finalist. Directed a Master of Engraving class in the CIEC Foundation. Exhibition of homage to Dali, commemorating the centenary of his birth in the Rectorate Showroom of the University of Malaga. This exposition brings together the three techniques: drawing, painting and engraving, the whole composed in two parts: the first is named “Homage to Dali”, with unpublished works which include portraits of the Ampurdanian artist-genius and other compositions undertaken this year; the second part is called “Surrealism in the Work of Kovatchev”, with a selection of works that cover the period from 1983 to 2003, in which is shown the spectacular change which the artist experienced by his move from Sophia to Malaga, as well as the surrealist influence converging in his Bulgarian as well as Spanish production and already latent from his earliest artistic beginnings. Presented in ESTAMPA the “Suite Dali”, composed of six etchings and fifteen drawings.

2005 In this special year that commemorates the publication of “Don Quixote of la Mancha” (1605-2005), the artist has seen another of his dreams come true, which he has already done with Hesse, Leonardo, Manolete, Picasso and Dali; that is, through his singular creations, he has interpreted and given life to the most universal work of Spanish literature and one of the most admirable creations of the human spirit. This project is named “Don Quixote with a Bulgarian soul. Homage to the figure of King Simeon of Bulgaria”, to whom the artist renders, with sincere respect, a heartfelt tribute to the figure of King Simeon for uniting the human and spiritual qualities which Cervantes defended four hundred years ago. This exhibition will be presented in different cities: Madrid, Seville, Leon, Malaga, Barcelona, among others.

2006 On the occasion of the “Nineteenth City of Leon Chess Tournament”, the artist will present a new collection of works, in the exhibition hall of the Castile and Leon Regional Council, under the title “Cosmic Chess”, which will complement the project “Don Quixote with a Bulgarian soul”. Presentation of the series “Suite Tavromagia”, composed of five etchings and inspired on the Greek Mythology in ESTAMPA.

2007 Presentation of the series of oils entitled “The Thracian Horses” in ALMONEDA. Others portraits commissioned by the Sandholzer family (Winterthur), the Martinez-Lopez family (Madrid) and the Arias-Escobar family (Madrid). “Retrospective Exhibition, 1959-2007” at the Benalmadena Arts Centre, which will show the artist’s works since he was six years old. Presentation of the unpublished graphic works by the different techniques of dry point, woodcut, lithography, etching and mezzotint, dated between 1976 and 1986.

2008 Presentation of the series of drawings entitled “Las Meninas” in ALMONEDA, Madrid, and MARBART, Marbella.

2009 On the fiftieth anniversary of his career, Kovatchev is presenting the “Retrospective Exhibition 1959-2009” in the Museum of the Royal House of Money in Madrid, which shows the range of the artist, since early as six years old, in this magnificent compilation which brings together one hundred and fifty works –drawings, engravings, oil paintings and matrix engraving plates. To mark the IV Centenary of the blessing of the image of Jesus Nazareno del Paso in the city of Malaga, its Royal Archconfraternity has commissioned an engraving to commemorate the historical event. The artist makes a drawing and an engraving, which will be presented in the “Retrospective Exhibition 1959-2009” that is to take place in Malaga. Afterwards, the same exhibition will be staged in the Cortijo Miraflores Museum in Marbella. “The Great Masters of Contemporary Engraving” is an international exhibition Organized by the Embassy of Spain in Colombia, which will be staged in the Catholic Kings Cultural Centre and in the National Museum of Colombia. Participates in the Exhibition “Passion for Art” in Doha (Qatar). Preparation has begun for the project “Da Vinci, touched by the falcon”.

2010 Exhibition “Passion for Malaga” in which the artist through his art creates a sisterhood for Malaga, Santiago de Compostela and Rome as symbols of spirituality and pilgrimage. Participation in ALMONEDA and in the first edition of ARTEBILBAO with the new oil painting collection named “Robotikas”.

2011 Participates in the Caja Granada Collection exhibition “Prints, graphic art”, where is side by side with works by Munch, Kandinsky, Warhol, Picasso, Christo, Miro and Chillida, among others, at the Benalmadena Exhibition Centre. For the world premier of Alejandro Casona’s “Lady of the Dawn” translated into English by Donald B. Gibbs and directed by Roberta G. Aaron, he presents an oil painting that represents the main character of the Play and is the front page of the Playbill. For this event which takes place at the Palace of Fairs and Congresses of Marbella as well as an exceptional solo exhibition dedicated to “Lady of the Dawn” with a selection of works dedicated to women in History and during his life long venture in the world

of Art. Presentation of the new series of oils entitled “Matador” and “Sibyl and the horse” in ALMONEDA, Madrid. Preparation has begun for the exhibition “Two souls, one essence” commemorating the centenary of the diplomatic relationship between Spain and Bulgaria, which will be staged at the Palace of the Madraza in Granada and at the Rectorate Showroom of the University of Malaga. Participates in ARTEBILBAO with the new etching “Virgen de Begonia” and the new oil painting collection of miniatures named “Guggenheim I to XVI”, among other works.

2012 Presents a selection of his latest creations in oil painting and engraving in the Alfican Art Gallery, in Brussels, after two decades of his last exhibition in the European capital city. This collective exhibition is organized by the Atelier Las Meninas and supported by the Embassy of the Republic of Bulgaria in the Kingdom of Belgium. Participates in KUNSTART´12, Biennial Art Fair. BOLZANO FAIR, Italy. Exhibition “20 years in Malaga” in the Benedito Art Gallery, in which the artist celebrates his twentieth anniversary of living and creating in Malaga. Participates in AAF HAMBURG.

2013 Participates in AAF BRUSSELS. Presents a selection of his latest works in the solo exhibition “Metaphysical Spaces” in the Alfican Art Gallery, in Brussels, this exhibition is supported by the Embassy of the Rep. of Bulgaria in the Kingdom of Belgium and the Bulgarian Cultural Institute London. Afterwards, the exhibition will be staged in the Bulgarian Cultural Institute London. Participates in ALMONEDA, Antiques and Art Galleries Fair, Madrid.

After many years of research and experimentation, he has invented his own technique of engraving and etching; on the one hand, it is the engraving of the original metal sheet with a fine simple sewing needle, and, on the other, a solution of nitric acid and water, which allows him to submerge the zinc plates in that solution, no less than forty to sixty times. It is through his complex process of precision drawing directly on metal, with its different gradations of acid “bites”, that his engravings acquire their distinct rank of uniqueness.

Furthermore, it should be added that he never makes any sketch or drawing in advance of his engravings, nor of any of his other works, since he always works directly on to the metal plate, which shows the complexity and high degree of perfection and mastery achieved in his graphic work.

Engraving on the metal plates as well as the publication of this extensive graphic work is carried out by the same artist in his studio; which not only distinguishes him but guarantees the number of each work’s pieces existing in the market and their quality.

Not only does he carry out the printing personally, but he conserves its pure essence, using nothing but his own hands.

His work has been recognised and awarded prizes nationally and internationally on numerous occasions and is now presented in innumerable public and private collections throughout the world.

MAIN ONE-MAN SHOWS

1987 Army Showroon. Sophia, Bulgaria. Provincial Museum of Fine Arts. Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria.

1989 UNESCO. Paris, France. L'entrée des Artistes Gallery. Barbizon, France. Les Halles Gallery. Paris, France.

1990 Bavarian-Bulgarian Bank. Munich, Germany.

1991 Vigny Gallery. Munich, Germany. Echancrure Gallery. Brussels, Belgium.

1992 L'angle Aigu Gallery. Brussels, Belgium.

1993 Cartel Gallery. Granada, Spain. Porticvs Gallery. Malaga, Spain.

1994 Goya Museum of Engraving. Fuendetodos, Spain. Tudores Gallery. Puerto Banus, Spain.

Post Office Exhibition Centre. Torremolinos, Spain.

1995 Bremer Gallery. Berlin, Germany. Santiago Casar Gallery. Santander, Spain.

1996 Baron de San Carlos Gallery. Llanes, Spain. "Círculo Católico" Showroom, Burgos, Spain.

1997 "Homage to Hermann Hesse". Hermann Hesse Museum. Calw, Germany.

"Homage to Manolete", Episcopal Palace of Cordoba and Cajamar Showroom. Malaga, Spain.

Perspective Art Gallery. Bochum, Germany.

1998 Aula. Calw, Germany. ARCALE. Salamanca, Spain. "50th Book Fair". Frankfurt, Germany.

Perspective Art Gallery. Bochum, Germany.

1999 "For the Peace". Hermann Hesse Museum. Calw, Germany. ALMONEDA. Madrid, Spain.

"51st Book Fair". Frankfurt, Germany. Town Hall, Torremolinos, Spain.

2000 Coningsby Gallery. London, England. Oljemak Gallery. Helsinki, Finland.

Museum of Valdepeñas, Spain. Armaga Gallery. Leon, Spain.

2001 Europ'Art Genève, Switzerland. ALMONEDA. Madrid, Spain. Museum-Foundation CIEC. Betanzos, Spain.

"Picasso, 120th Anniversary". Cajamar Showroom. Malaga, Spain.

2002 ARTESEVILLA, Spain. ALMONEDA. Madrid, Spain.

"Hermann Hesse Jahr 2002". Reaktions-Bild. Landratsamt Calw, Germany.

"Hermann Hesse und Pablo Picasso". Parksaal des Kurhauses. Bad Liebenzell, Germany. EKUMENE. Madrid, Spain.

2003 "Chess" ALMONEDA, and "Horses and Daydreams" ESTAMPA, Madrid, Spain.

2004 "Homage to Dali". Rectorate Showroom. University of Malaga, Spain.

2005 Advance exhibition of "Don Quixote with a Bulgarian soul. Homage to King Simeon of Bulgaria". ALMONEDA. Madrid, Spain.

Presentation of the exhibition "Don Quixote with a Bulgarian soul. Homage to King Simeon of Bulgaria". ESTAMPA, Madrid, Spain.

2006 "Cosmic Chess". Castile and Leon Regional Council, Leon, Spain.

2007 "The Thracian Horses". ALMONEDA, Madrid, Spain. "Retrospective Exhibition, 1959-2007", Benalmadena Arts Centre. Spain.

2008 "Las Meninas", ALMONEDA, Madrid and MARB ART, Marbella, Spain.

2009 "Retrospective Exhibition 1959-2009". Museum of the Royal House of Money, Madrid, Spain.

"Retrospective Exhibition 1959-2009". Cortijo Miraflores Museum, Marbella, Spain.

2010 "Passion for Malaga", Sala Noble Showroom, Malaga, Spain. ALMONEDA, Madrid. "Robotikas", ARTEBILBAO, Spain.

2011 "Lady of the Dawn", Palace of Fairs and Congresses, Marbella, Spain. "Large format Works", ALMONEDA, Madrid. "Two souls, one essence", Centenary of the diplomatic relations between Spain and Bulgaria. Rectorate Showroom. University of Malaga, Spain.

2012 "20 years in Malaga", Benedito Art Gallery, Malaga, Spain.

2013 "Metaphysical Spaces", Alfican Art Gallery, Brussels.

"Metaphysical Spaces". Bulgarian Cultural Institute London.

PRIZES AND DISTINCTIONS

1986 First Prize "Army Painting Award". Sophia, Bulgaria.

1990 Finalist at the "International Triennial of Graphic Art", Kochi, Japan.

1991 First Prize at the "II International Biennial of Graphic Art". Athens, Greece.

Awarded at the "IV International Biennial of Graphic Art". Wakayama, Japan.

1993 Finalist at the "I National Engraving Prize", National Chalcography, Madrid, Spain.

1994 Honourable Mention at the XLIII Autumn Exhibition. Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Saint Elisabeth of Hungary. Seville, Spain.

1995 First Prize of Engraving in the Andalusian Fine Arts Competition. Athenaeum of Seville, Spain.

Second Prize at the "IV Exhibition of Engraving and Drawing". Madrid, Spain.

Prize "British Institute of Seville". XLIV Autumn Exhibition.

Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Saint Elisabeth of Hungary. Seville, Spain.

First Prize in the "VII City of Burgos Engraving Competition", Spain.

He was appointed as Corresponding Academician in Malaga by the Royal Academy of Fine Arts of Saint Elisabeth of Hungary. Seville, Spain.

1996 He was appointed as Senate Academician by the International Academy of Modern Art, Rome, Italy.

Accesit and Goya Silver Medal at the "X Latin-American Biennial of Art", 250 Anniversary Francisco de Goya. México D.F.

First Prize at the "V Exhibition of Engraving and Drawing". Madrid, Spain.

Finalist at the "11. Deutsche Internationale Grafik-Triennale", Frechen, Germany.

1997 First Prize of Drawing at the "I Bulls ans Festivities Award". Madrid, Spain.

Third Medal at the "64 Autumn Exhibition". Madrid, Spain.

1999 First Prize at the "I National Drawing Award Felipe Orlando". Benalmadena Town Hall, Spain.

Finalist at the "Penagos Drawing Award". Madrid, Spain.

First Prize at the "IX National Drawing Award Gregorio Prieto". Valdepeñas, Spain.

2002 Finalist at the "Penagos Drawing Award". Madrid, Spain.

2004 Finalist at the "XVII Engraving Award Maximo Ramos". Ferrol, Spain.

National Gallery. Sophia, Bulgaria.
Provincial Museum of Art. Veliko Turnovo, Bulgaria.
Provincial Museum of Art. Plovdiv, Bulgaria.
Provincial Museum of Art. Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria.
Provincial Museum of Art. Haskovo, Bulgaria.
Provincial Museum of Art. Varna, Bulgaria.
Municipal Library. New York, USA.
Museum of Modern Art. Wakayama, Japan.
Nakatosa Art Centre. Kochi, Japan.
Art Centre. Athens, Greece.
Provincial Museum. Orense, Spain.
Fuengirola Town Hall, Spain.
Torremolinos Town Hall, Spain.
SEK Foundation. Madrid, Spain.
National Library. Madrid, Spain.
Goya Museum of Engraving. Fuendetodos, Spain.
International Museum Ex Libris. Maastricht, Holland.
Tama Art Museum. Tokio, Japan.
“Saint George” Bulgarian Orthodox Church. Los Angeles, USA.
Museum of Contemporary Art. Ibiza, Spain.
Athenaeum of Seville, Spain.
Racam Etruscan Museum. Capodimonte, Italy.
British Institute of Seville, Spain.
Spanish Tourism Office. Brussels, Belgium.
Burgos Town Hall, Spain.
French Tourism Office. Strassbourg, France.
Royal Academy of Fine Arts St. Elisabeth of Hungary. Seville, Spain.

Spanish Contemporary Museum of Engraving. Marbella, Spain.
International Academy of Modern Art. Rome, Italy.
Foundation Kyril and Methodio. National Gallery. Sophia, Bulgaria.
Bullfighting Museum. Santander, Spain.
Royal Archconfraternity Jesus N. del Paso and M. Sta. de la Esperanza.
Malaga, Spain.
Museum of Nrta. Sra. de Araceli. Lucena, Spain.
Caja Rural Saving Bank of Malaga, Spain.
Museum Hermann Hesse. Calw, Germany.
Stadt Calw, Germany.
Benalmadena Town Hall, Spain.
Ministry of Agriculture. Berlin, Germany.
Museum-Foundation Gregorio Prieto. Valdepeñas, Spain.
Museum-Foundation CIEC. Betanzos, Spain.
Stadt Bad Liebenzell, Germany.
Museum of St. John of the Cross. Ubeda, Spain.
University of Malaga, Spain.
Malaga Foundation, Spain.
Ministry of Culture. Madrid, Spain.
Caja Granada Saving Bank, Granada, Spain.
Malaga Town Hall, Spain.
Embassy of Bulgaria. Madrid, Spain.
Embassy of Bulgaria, Vienna, Austria.
Foundation Vasarely. Aix-en-Provence. France.
Royal Palace of Windsor. United Kingdom.



“Time flies night and day”
William Shakespeare

EXHIBITION

Organizer

Rosario Escobar Segovia

Exhibition Mounting and Design

Galerie Alfican

Bulgarian Cultural Institute London

VK • Art • Studio • Editions

CATALOGUE

Design

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Photography

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

EMBASSY OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA IN THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

GALERIE ALFICAN

BULGARIAN CULTURAL INSTITUTE LONDON

... And to all the people who have made possible the realization of this project

VK



Ambassade de la République de
Bulgarie au Royaume de Belgique

