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REFERENCE INFORMATION PAPERS

# **Nonconformist Artists in the USSR 1956–1986**

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RADIO LIBERTY SPECIAL REPORT

RL 301/74

September 23, 1974

BULLDOZERS VERSUS ART: A DISCUSSION

The following program was broadcast by Radio Liberty on September 16-17, 1974.

**ANNOUNCER:** On Sunday, September 15, a group of Moscow artists were forcibly prevented from holding an open-air art show organized without official blessing. Security police drove bulldozers, sprinkler-wagons and a dump truck through the exhibition. Some of the paintings were torn up, others confiscated and burned. Foreign correspondents who came to view the pictures were forced to leave. Anatolii Kuznetsov, the writer, and Igor' Golomshtok, the author of many studies on fine art and, until recently, a senior scientific associate of the Pushkin Art Museum, discussed this event before the microphone in Radio Liberty's London studio.

**KUZNETSOV:** Just think of it! So much ado about a few pictures which apparently deviated from the permitted norms of socialist realism: the use of brute force, bulldozers, a dump truck, sprinkler-wagons and militiamen against art! Painting would seem to be a real threat to the Soviet authorities. How do you view this affair as a professional art historian, Igor' Naumovich?

**GOLOMSHTOK:** I once read a story - I don't remember where - about a man who tried to shoot a cat. He emptied a whole magazine at it, but as it lay there, a twitching and screaming mess of blood, the man had the feeling that it was going to jump at him. He panicked and began to feel a mystical terror of the animal. It is my impression that the Soviet leaders have a similar feeling about culture. They have destroyed so much in Russian art over such a long period of time that they now feel the works of Russian art could bear witness against them. I think they have really gone too far in this case. They have convinced themselves that painting is a powerful ideological weapon, that it is a potent means of political struggle against the class enemy, and now they have nightmarish visions of this weapon being turned against them!

As far as I know the Moscow artists who took part in this exhibition, they never set themselves any kind of political goal, and their pictures contain no kind of indictment. The artists are not trying to subvert anyone; they couldn't do that with their pictures, anyway. They are creating values, not trying to undermine anyone's principles.

**Nonconformist  
Artists in the USSR  
1956–1986**

Reference Information Paper 6: Nonconformist Artists in the USSR, 1956-1986. Compiled by Olga Zaslavskaya and Bosko Spasojevic, September 1997  
Revised by Csaba Szilágyi *et al.*, September 2001  
Cover design and layout by Iván Székely  
Open Society Archives at Central European University

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**REFERENCE INFORMATION PAPERS** (RIP), compiled by staff archivists, are thematic finding aids aiming to guide researchers to all the relevant archival materials at OSA that relate to a certain topic. Issues of the RIP series are published irregularly, and always reflect the *status quo* of the holdings. The catalogue entries indicate the exact fonds reference, date span, approximate quantity, and, occasionally, medium of the records.

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### ***HU OSA 300-80 Soviet "Red" Archives***

#### *HU OSA 300-80-1 Old Code Subject Files*

These files contain press clippings, wire service dispatches, RFE/RL Background Reports and research materials.

- Выставки [Exhibitions], 1969-1992, 0.075 Im
- Инакомыслящие: общее [Dissenters: General], 1971-1993, 0.17 Im
- Инакомыслящие: преследования [Dissenters: Persecutions], 0.03 Im
- Интеллигенция [Intelligentsia], 1960-1993, 0.05 Im
- Искусство [Art], 1962-1987, 0.07 Im
- Культура: общее [Culture: General], 1962-1993, 0.10 Im
- Художники: общее [Artists: General], 1955-1993, 0.20 Im
- Цензура [Censorship], 1955-1993, 0.10 Im

### ***HU OSA 300-85 Samizdat Archives***

These files contain press clippings, news agency releases and Radio Liberty research reports that are primarily in Russian and English.

#### *HU OSA 300-85-12 Subject Files*

- Инакомыслие: диссиденты [Nonconformism: Dissidents], 1975-1982, 0.03 Im
- Карательные органы: цензура [Punitive Organs: Censorship], 1970-1990, 0.20 Im
- Культура: художники [Culture: Artists], 1967-1990, 0.30 Im
- Права человека [Human Rights], 1973-1992, 0.25 Im

#### *HU OSA 300-85-13 Biographical Files*

- Birger, Boris, 1979-1989 0.03 Im
- Bulatov, Eric, 1985-1989, 0.03 Im
- Filimonov, Vadim, 1975-1990, 0.03 Im
- Iankilevskii, Vladimir, 1976-1990, 0.03 Im
- Kabakov, Ilya, 1985-1990, 0.03 Im
- Komar, Vitaly, 1972-1986, 0.03 Im
- Kropivniskie Evgenii, Valentina, Lev, 1989-1990, 0.03 Im
- Melamid, Alexander, 1976-1986, 0.03 Im
- Neizvestny, Ernst, 1972-1991, 0.07 Im

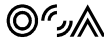
- Nemuhin, Vladimir, 1974-1983, 0.03 Im
- Prigov, Dmitrii, 1980-1992, 0.03 Im
- Rabin, Oscar, 1970-1990, 0.03 Im
- Rukhin, Evgenii, 1975-1989, 0.03 Im
- Rybakov, Uilii, 1976-1990, 0.03 Im
- Shteinberg, Eduard, 1983-1989, 0.03 Im
- Sidur, Vadim, 1965-1991, 0.03 Im
- Siniavin, Igor, 1975-1989, 0.03 Im
- Sysoev, Viacheslav, 1976-1989, 0.03 Im

The *Biographical Files* also contain information (from 1 to 20 pages) on nearly 70 other nonconformist artists and art historians grouped together, such as the following:

Abalakova, Natalia  
Abezgauz, Evgenii  
Avetisian, Lev  
Alekseev, Nikita  
Andronov, Nikolai  
Anufriev, Sergei  
Arefiev, Alexandr  
Babin, Alexandr  
Bakhchanyan, Vagrigh  
Belenok, Petr  
Bulgakova, Olga  
Chemiakin, Mikhail  
Chuikov, Ivan  
Ganikovskii, Igor  
Gerlovini, Valerii and Rimma  
Gumeniuk, Feodosii  
Iakovlev, Vladimir  
Infante, Francisco  
Kalinin, Viacheslav  
Kantor, Maksim  
Kandaurov, Otari  
Kaplan Anatolii  
Kharitonov, Alexandr  
Kizevalter, Georgii  
Kopystianskie, Igor and Svetlana  
Kosmachev, Vadim  
Kosolapov, Alexander  
Krasnopevtsev, Dmitrii



Kulakov, Mikhail  
Ladyzhensky, Yefim  
Lamm, Leonid  
Lebedev, Rostislav  
Leonov, Aleksandr  
Makarenko, Vladimir  
Makarevich, Igor  
Masterkova, Lydia  
Mikhnov-Voitenko, Evgenii  
Monastyrsky, Andrei  
Nakhova, Irina  
Naumets, Vladimir  
Nesterova, Natalia  
Nusberg, Lev  
Orlov, Boris  
Ovchinnikov, Vladimir  
Petrov, Alexander  
Petrov, Arkadii  
Pivovarov, Viktor  
Piatnitskii, Vladimir  
Plavinsky, Dmitrii  
Prigov, Dmitrii  
Purygin, Leonid  
Putilin, Anatolii  
Roginsky, Mikhail  
Roshal, Mikhail  
Roiak, Efim  
Runge, Sire  
Semenov-Amurskii, F.  
Shelkovsky, Igor  
Shemiakin, Mikhail  
Shteinberg, Eduard  
Shnurov, Alexandr  
Shugrin, Anatolii  
Sitnikov, Vasilii  
Skersis, Viktor  
Slepyshev, Anatolii  
Sobolev, Yuri  
Sooster, Ullo  
Sveshnikov, Boris  
Tiapushkin, Aleksei  
Tselkov, Oleg



Filatov, Nikolai  
Vassilev, Oleg  
Vechtomov, Nikolai  
Veisberg, Vladimir  
Volkov, Valerii  
Vorobiev, Valentin  
Yakovlev, Vladimir  
Zakharov, Vadim  
Zhigalov, Anatolii  
Žilius, Valdas  
Zverev, Anatolii  
Zvezdochetov, Valentin

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### **Publications by the RFE/RL Research Institute**

**Press Surveys**, averaging 15 pages each, consist of original language articles or English translations of the most important articles appearing in the East European press. Such surveys were made for Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania.

**Information Items** are based on interviews made in Western Europe with visitors and refugees from Eastern Europe.

**Situation Reports** contain summaries of current developments in Eastern Europe. These reports were prepared by the national units twice a week.

**Background Reports** are special studies providing perspectives on current events and trends in the communist world. The reports were issued on a regular basis, as well as in response to sudden developments, such as government reshuffle or an unannounced meeting of communist leaders.

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The **OSA website** is designed to provide basic description of OSA reference services available online, and other information of interest to **off-site researchers** (including the OSA Restriction Statement, citation recommendations etc.).

**General reference or research questions** may be sent via e-mail, regular mail, fax or phone (see information on back cover). OSA staff does not perform research on behalf of researchers. However, researchers may request that copies of documents relevant to their research interest be delivered by express mail or regular mail, or by fax.

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OSA regularly offers **other grants** to scholars, artists or journalists who wish to carry out projects related to topics covered by the Archives' programs, and exhibitions to be hosted by Galeria Centralis.

Available issues:

- 1 Raoul Wallenberg
- 2 The Environment
- 3 The Roma (Gypsies)
- 4 The 1956 Hungarian Revolution
- 5 Church and Religion
- 6 Nonconformist Artists in the USSR, 1956-1986
- 7 Prague Spring 1968
- 8 Forced Labor Camps Under Communism

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