

appears in all the chapters of Fay's book on the post-war period, especially "Public and Private (1948–1953)," "The Thaw (1953–1958)," and "Consolidation (1958–1961)." The ambiguity of his entire activity created a chain of consequences. Since all the conflicting political forces are still in existence—some weaker, others stronger—Shostakovich remains a desirable property for all of them. Since there is no politics without economic interests, the battlefield is getting commercialized. Since there is no device that is forbidden to commerce, it has begun to disguise itself in a musicological mantle, cynically stolen from the "Land of Maya" and confusing discussions with non-scholarly means.

The situation with Shostakovich studies is even more complex since every composer/artist works out some system of codes in his work as well as in his public behavior, and Shostakovich succeeded in encoding himself much more than others. After his death, and especially after the end of the Soviet regime, his codes—considered more or less definitive during his lifetime—were open to reinterpretation by all sides. Given a drastic lack of pure and reliable information, the resulting muddle makes decoding virtually impossible. Breaking this chain requires, first of all, a strict, solid and detailed record of the composer's life. That is what *Shostakovich: A Life* presents. Paradoxically, this book reads like an *Urtext* of musical composition: the more casual the discourse, the more expressive Shostakovich's life, with its triumphs and humiliations, compromises, loss and longings. Fay's book presents the most timely foundation and equipment for Shostakovich studies in any part of the world today.

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Nina Gurianova. *Exploring Color: Olga Rozanova and the Early Russian Avant-Garde, 1910–1918*. Translated from the Russian by Charles Rougle. Amsterdam: G+B Arts International, 2000. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. 210 pp., \$58.00 (cloth), \$28.00 (paper).

Gurianova, an art historian who specializes in the Russian avant-garde, has written a meticulously documented study of Olga Rozanova's work and life, which spanned the tumultuous early years of the twentieth century. This is the first monograph to be written on Rozanova (xii), and one of its major contributions is the establishment of a chronology of the painter's life, which has hitherto been lacking. As Gurianova points out, although Rozanova became the focus of scholarly interest in the late 1970s and early 1990s and the subject of several exhibitions, many critical works contain factual errors (viii); it was only by drawing on materials in private collections and archives in Europe and the United States that Gurianova was able to date many of Rozanova's paintings accurately and piece together the complex relationships among Rozanova, Aleksei Kruchenykh, Kazimir Malevich, Velimir Khlebnikov, Aleksandr Rodchenko (3–4), and other members of her artistic circle.

Gurianova divides *Exploring Color* into three sections: a historical narrative which places Rozanova in the context of both the Russian artistic movements of Neo-cubism and Suprematism and the larger European movement of Futurism; an annotated chronology; and a collection of translated works, including the *Union of Youth Manifesto*, *The Bases of the New Creation and the Reasons Why It Is Misunderstood*, *Cubism, Futurism, and Suprematism*, *Suprematism and the Critics*, and *Only in Independence and Unlimited Freedom Is There Art*. The translations are supplemented by color plates of Rozanova's compositions, black-and-white sketches, and period photographs. Although the tri-partite structure is somewhat awkward—the reader wishes, for example, that correspondence included in the "chronology" had been incorporated into the general text—*Exploring Color* is an informative and exhaustively researched work. Gurianova's accessible prose makes it suitable for undergraduates

interested in Russian art history and culture, as well as for a more specialized research audience.

As Dmitry Sarabianov notes in his introduction, it is the "combination of ordinary and extraordinary that makes [Rozanova's] achievement . . . attractive" (xi). The fifth child of a district police officer and his wife, Olga Rozanova was born in Melenki, Russia, a small town near Vladimir, in 1886. At the age of 18, she moved to Moscow, where she studied painting at the Bolshakov Art Studio, under the direction of Nikolai Ulianov. It was here that she met and began a lifelong friendship with the poet Aleksei Kruchenykh. Their collaboration was to last the rest of Rozanova's life and produced some of the most famous and representative works of Russian avant-garde graphic design, the "transrational" books of poetry and design, *Te Li Le* and *Zaumnaia gniga*. Even after they were no longer in physical contact after 1917 (102), Kruchenykh continued to influence Rozanova and her artistic creation. In 1911 Rozanova moved to St. Petersburg and became an active member of the artistic society, the "Union of Youth," exhibiting her paintings alongside Malevich, Goncharova, and Tatlin. The group's manifesto, which Rozanova wrote, used as its slogan, "The Future of Art Is Uninterrupted Renewal" (187), a theme which was to be echoed throughout Rozanova's life (124). The society lasted until 1914, when disension caused it to disband (150). That year, as war broke out in Europe, many members of the Russian avant-garde were enlisted to serve, and Rozanova, who was profoundly affected by the war, exploring images of the "agonizing birth of an unknown, violent new age of terrible power" (78) in her album of lithographs and poetry, *Voina* (War), again composed with Kruchenykh. 1915 was a watershed year for Rozanova. Malevich, who had been in intense discussion with Kruchenykh and Rozanova about the theory and direction of art, displayed his first Suprematist work at the Moscow exhibition, the Last Futurist Exhibition 0.10 (160). To Rozanova, who also participated in this exhibit, Malevich's idea that "paint is the main thing" corresponded with her own conviction that the source of abstract art is a "love of color" (112). Gurianova's analysis of Rozanova's development as an artist as she embraced Suprematism and experimented with the possibilities of color is excellent. She convincingly shows that as Rozanova strove to combine in her own work "the mystical spiritual element in Kandinsky's theory of color with Malevich's utopian philosophy of form and space" (118), she went further than either artist, conveying in her later works the "immaterial essence of color, its inner energy and luminosity" (118). In a letter dating from 1917, she states, "I found a new way of investigating color" (173), and indeed one of her last paintings, "Green Stripe," with its simplicity and emphasis on the possibilities of pure color, indicates what kind of painter Rozanova might have become had she not died of diphtheria in 1918.

Like many of her contemporaries, Rozanova expressed her considerable artistic and literary gifts in several media and genres: painting, graphic and textile design, the decorative arts, poetry. In 1916, Rozanova moved to Moscow. After the October Revolution, Rozanova was unable to find work as an artist, and designed women's fashion and worked briefly as the head of the Arts and Production Unit of IZO (125). At her death at the age of 32, Rozanova was well-recognized by her contemporaries as a major talent, a situation which lasted until the late 1920s, when, unfortunately, many of her works were destroyed (132). Gurianova, at the turn of a new century, has done a service in presenting a critical and thoughtful analysis of an artist whose contributions to the Russian avant-garde have not been adequately recognized.