

# Natalia Goncharova



*Peasants Picking Grapes (1911)*



*Self Portrait With Lilies (1907-1908)*

## Biography:

- Natalia (AKA Natal'ya) was born in Russia
- She studied sculpture at the Moscow School of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture
- Her creative partner (and eventually husband), painter Mikhail Larionov, convinced her to switch to painting
- Her first painting show was in 1907
- She had her most productive period in 1913
- Her work was shown in the second All-Russian Exhibition and in a solo show in 1913
- She was a member of the Moscow Association of Artists and ex-member of Jacks and Diamonds
- Moved to France in the 1920s, nationalized in 1938, and lived there until her death
  - Active member of the École de Paris
- Besides painting and sculpture, she was a stage designer, printmaker, and graphic artist

## Critical Reception:

- Natalia was very much an avant-garde; she liked to shock people — and succeeded
  - Russian government seized eight of her religious paintings for blasphemy
  - 1913 physical, public brawl with Jacks and Diamonds (more traditionalist artist group) led to her arrest

- Her shows were meant to shock and challenge accepted tastes
- Her work was used by ideological opponents to criticize revivalism
  - People also argued that she failed to capture the spirit of folk art
- Her work was very successful/influential and she was allowed to be a full member of three avant-garde artist collectives during her life
  - More recognition and acceptance than most female artists
  - Still lumped in with her partner in reviews, shows, and intellectual discussion

"In August 1913 Goncharova attracted international attention with a one-woman exhibition of over 700 works. As a preface to the catalogue she published a manifesto, which is important as a statement of her attitudes, aims and objectives at this point in her career. In a provocative Neo-primitive vein she dismissed Western art in scathing terms, claiming that the indigenous art forms of her own country were more profound and important than anything in the West, and she declared her intention to turn towards the East and its art forms in order to broaden her outlook."

<sup>1</sup>

## Five Scholarly Sources:

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## My Painting:

- Self Portrait with Yellow Lilies (1907-1908)
- Example of neoprimitivism
  - Simple, unadorned lines
  - "Unfeminine"
  - Simplified the form
- Background showing her old paintings (evolution)
- Idea of beauty: archaic, primitive look harkening back to cave paintings as influences
- Paul Gauguin, Vincent van Gogh and Henri Matisse
  - Brushstrokes are Van Gogh
  - Contouring is Gauguin

<sup>1</sup> Anthony Parton, "Goncharova, Natal'ya," *Grove Art Online*, 2003,  
<https://www.oxfordartonline.com/groveart/view/10.1093/gao/9781884446054.001.0001/oao-9781884446054-e-7000033159>.

- Arbitrary color is Matisse