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17 June, 2016

Anthology of exquisiteness

Art show of Valentin Kovatchev inaugurated in Madrid

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Photo: private archive
Valentin Kovatchev (L-R), his wife Rosario, Queen Margarita and King Simeon II.

MARIA KOLEVA
17 June, 2016



Erosion XII. St. George with scenes from his life (Etching and mezzotint).

An outstanding cultural event - this is how the Spanish media called the exhibition of Bulgarian artist Valentin Kovatchev, which was inaugurated in the Prado Hall of the iconic Madrid Athenaeum. The name of the art show is Anthology and the event marks the 25th anniversary of the artist's life and work in Spain.

At the opening ceremony Bulgarian Vice President Margarita Popova underlined the exceptional talent of the artist, putting his name alongside renowned names of Europe's cultural treasure. The vernissage was attended as well by King Simeon II and Queen Margarita, ambassadors of 18 countries and many admirers of Kovatchev's exquisite masterworks.

In many of his etchings and drawings the author interlaced Eastern Orthodox iconography touch with the inconceivable surrealistic flights, visions and fantasies. This code, deeply rooted in his works, can be seen clearly in the 'Suite Don Quixote with a

Bulgarian soul VI' and the extensive 'Erosion' cycle, with the presented works 'The Monastery of Zograf', 'St. George with scenes from his life' and 'St. Peter and St. Paul'.

Bulgarian Ambassador to Spain Kostadin Kodzhabashev said about the exhibition: "This cannot be considered as just another art exhibition, as it is an anthology bringing together an extraordinary selection of pieces from different periods of the artist's career; in which he offers the essence and excellence of his life's works in paintings, etchings, drawings, sculptures and portraits". Kovatchev's contribution to the art world, with the invention of his exceptional engraving and etching technique, has received international praise and acclaim, he pointed out, adding that the quality and spirituality of his work fills us with pride and fascinates a wide audience of both professional critics and regular art fans alike.

The ambassador also recalled that back in 1992, when Kovatchev had just arrived to Malaga from Sofia, he had already been labelled "the Rembrandt of the 20th Century" by the acclaimed member of the International Association of Art Critics, Jose Manuel Valles, a founder of the Spanish Contemporary Engraving Museum in Marbella.

What you have achieved is unparalleled; you have made your name with your engraving and from here will return to painting. You are unique, famous Jose Manuel Valles said then to Kovatchev.

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'Anthology' will be open to visitors until 29 June. The collection of the current exposition is presented in a specially issued full-colour bilingual catalogue in Spanish and English. Its author and designer is Rosario Escobar, or Charo, Kovatchev's wife, who has always been next to him over the past 25 years. She is also his muse and curator of his exhibitions around the globe. In the current catalogue can be seen, among others, different stages of the work on the portraits of Queen Elizabeth II (oil and drawing on canvas) and Queen Letizia (oil on canvas). After Madrid, the exhibition will be shown in Luxembourg.



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