



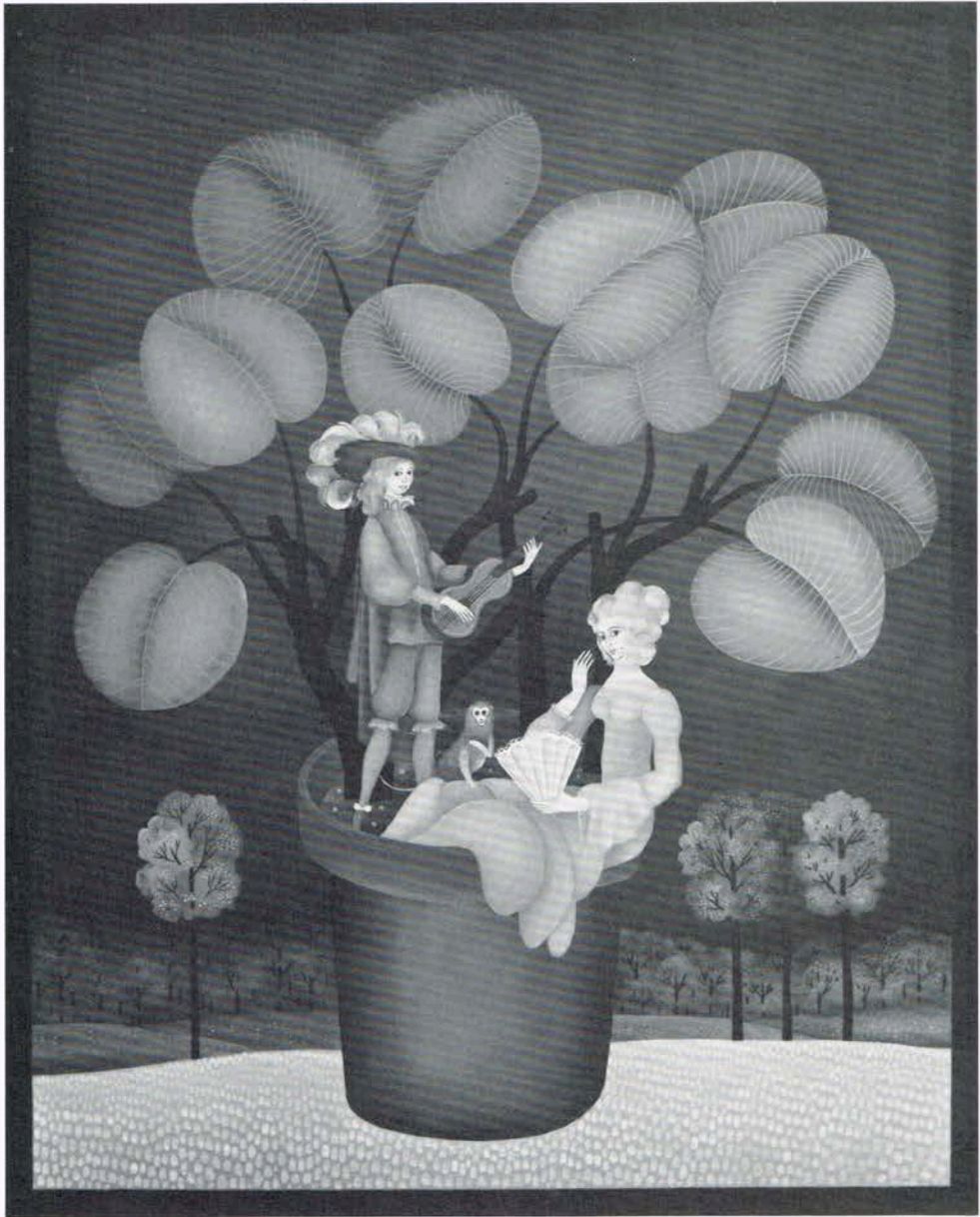
ГАЛАНІН
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cover:
IMPRESSIONS OF THE TRIP TO BOSTON
acrylic on wood
24" x 30"

you are cordially invited
to meet the artist
at the opening
saturday 15 march 1975
6-9 pm



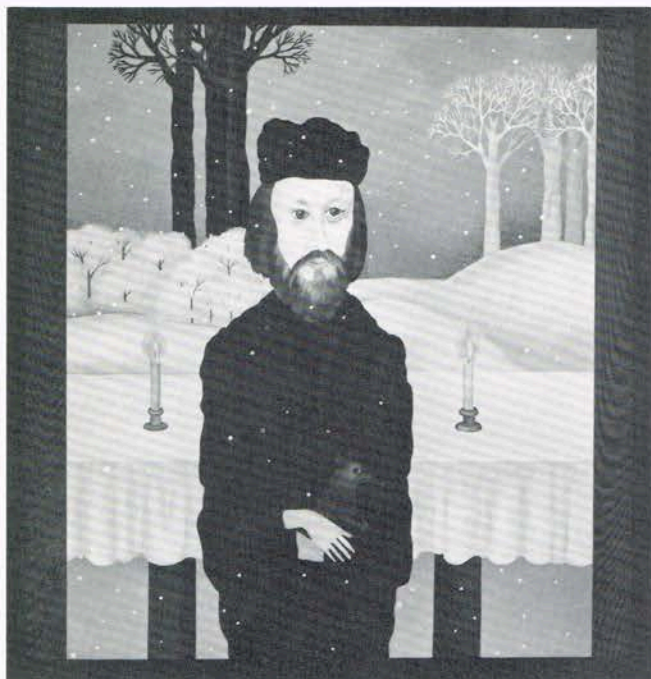
BIDDING FAREWELL TO MY FRIEND PHILIP
acrylic on wood
32" x 48"



IMITATION OF WATTEAU
acrylic on wood
19" x 24"



PORTRAIT OF NATASHA
acrylic on wood
18" x 24"



SELF-PORTRAIT
acrylic on wood
19 3/4" x 20 7/8"

IGOR GALANIN

I remember his studio in Moscow. Underground in the literal sense: it was a huge cellar. With walls that seemed to be greenly fluorescing either because they were mouldy, or originally green and losing this greenness from dampness — moulting and sloughing. And with sculpture (Igor went in for sculpture and ceramics too) standing on tiered platforms like souls in the kingdom of the dead. And with the paradisiacal children frolicking among paradisiacal butterflies, the lonely monks with lonely skies and lonely waters overturned into each other, the women playing strange violas with huge black apples behind, the austere landscapes dwarfed by bottles, cats or owls, the white islands with a glass and a fish, and here was Galanin himself, a self-portrait, with a seraph bringing him the brush.

These visions on the walls were, essentially, oblongs of wood. Why wood? Icons? Perhaps the tremulous tranquillities of icons — large calm surfaces, reassuring, almost dormant yet alive as in a child's dream. Primitif? Yes, in the sense of the primitif of a dragonfly's wings: intricate, detailed, translucent iridescence.

The visitors were invited to sit down to a tree stump the size of a good round dinner table in the middle of the studio and have some tea which was always brewing in a chemical flask.

Every artist who wishes to be indepen-

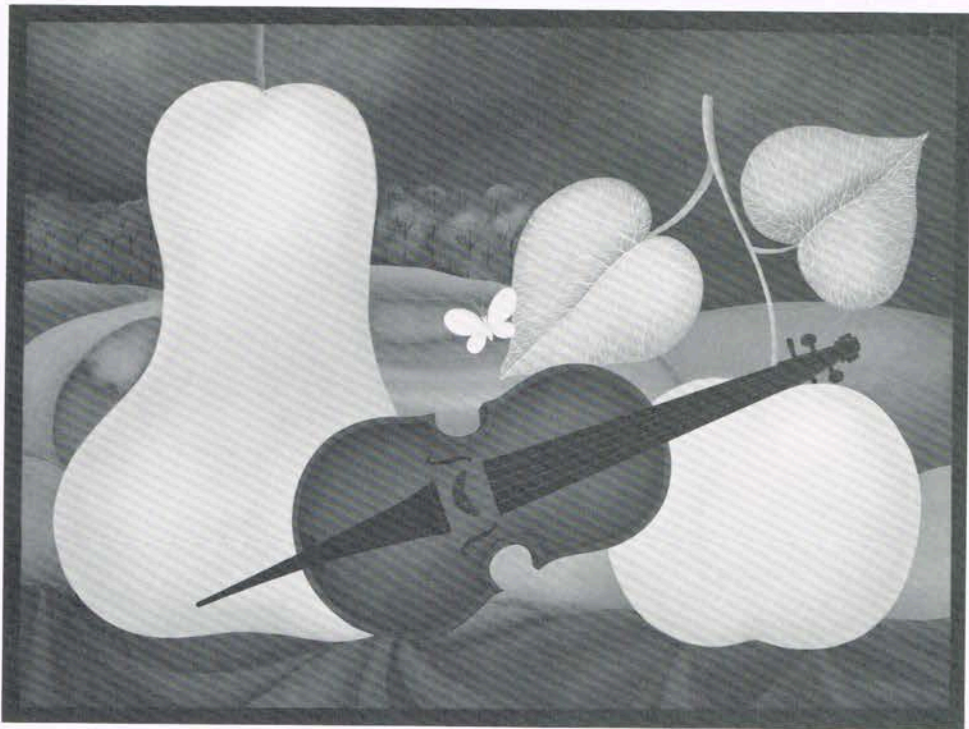
dent in Russia must have an undercover profession, and Galanin's was the illustration of children's books. The profession brought him fame and money. He was a great success. Naturally enough: does not his painting have a lot to do with the world of children?

Still, that tree stump for bouts of tea-drinking remained where it was. Except that for several months before Galanin's departure it entertained unusual visitors. An American correspondent sat at this tree-stump table. Activists of the Jewish exodus gave him all the information on the prosecution of those who applied for exit visas. Without this kind of communication with the outside world, no one would have been able to leave Russia. But why Igor's studio, of all places? Because it had two entries from two different streets. The correspondent entered a certain door on one street. We arrived by an entirely different route, slipped into an entrance on another street, and after an intricate journey through communicatory catacombs, we met the correspondent.

And this is partly why that year's exodus was successful for those who had been desperately trying to leave Russia, including myself.

Fairy tales must have a happy end. And here is Igor Galanin and his paintings, safely on these hospitable shores.

—Lev Navrozov



"GHOST" TRIO acrylic on wood 24" x 33 1/8"

GALANIN: THE PAINTINGS

Two different historical sources may be traced from the paintings of Igor Galanin. One, the Old Russian icon, is obvious, given the country of the artist's birth and upbringing. The other, the Mannerism of sixteenth century Italy, may spring to mind less readily, but may be the closer cousin to his works than the religious paintings.

The most icon-like in form of the works shown here are the *Self-Portrait* (p. 4) and the cover painting, *Impressions of the Trip to Boston*. The symmetry and quasi-religious setting of the *Self-Portrait* easily conjure up images of Russian saints, though the pup held in the artist's arms lends an irreverent note. *Impressions . . .* seems to have been derived from a specific icon in the collection of the Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow; its structure, if not its subject, parallels that of a sixteenth century St. Jerome and the Lion. In Galanin's secular version, however, the cast has been changed to the title characters of Mikhail Bulgakov's once-suppressed satirical novel, *The Master and Margarita* (a subject that Galanin has treated before). The craggy saint is replaced by a swan-necked woman swathed in red, the lion metamorphosed as the Devil, and their mutual concern is no longer a thorn in the paw, but two hands of playing cards. The artist has added the decorative dwarf trees, the comic fish, and the buildings at right to make a more theatrical composition out of the original. Most significant of all, the jagged, rough lines of the St.

Jerome have been smoothed to create the Mannerist sense of sophistication and grace achieved through the extreme stylization of reality.

Galanin is especially fond of the theatrical fantasy for which the Mannerists showed such a penchant. No figure in his work escapes the air of self-consciousness of the actor; each strikes an attitude, faces the audience, seems to await a response. The three very graceful Graces of *Bidding Farewell to My Friend Philip* (p. 1) look not at each other but out at the spectator. The same with the elegant couple and their monkey in the potted plant of *Imitation of Watteau* (p. 2). And so, too, with the members of *My Family* (p. 6) afloat in a prop boat on a stage set sea.

Mannerism is totally opposed to the "modern" esthetic with its form-following-function tenets. Yet, it has a unique charm in its irrational and decorative aims, and Galanin has embraced its ideas in pursuit of those aims. In his figures arms and legs are not structurally attached to the body. Extreme elongation of the human form, exaggerated sizes and scales set artificial canons of proportion to suit the caprice of the artist. Colors themselves function like bird-songs — not for expressive purpose, but to please the senses. Galanin's art, then, is food for the epicurean taste — a far cry from the loaf of daily sustenance, but a dainty cake to sweeten the harshness of life.

—P.T.N.



THE WAKE
acrylic on wood
20" x 24"

IGOR GALANIN

born: June 19, 1937

immigrated to U.S.: May 11, 1972

studied: 1956-60 with G. Shchetinin, and later with B. Chernyshev.

background: 1962-71, freelance artist for Moscow publishing houses, including Detgiz, Sovetskaya Rossiya; illustrated over twenty books; artist, set, costume designer for Moscow TV, Moscow Art Theatre, Bolshoi Theatre, Moscow Operetta Theatre; 1972-74, illustrator of children's books for Macmillan Publishing House, nominated for Newbery-Caldecott Award for illustrations to Marko the Rich and Vasily the Unlucky.

exhibitions and awards:

- 1965-71 participated in All-Moscow and All-Russia Art Exhibitions
- 1967 Soviet Pavilion, Expo '67, Montreal
- 1967 prize-winner, best children's book of the year, All-Russia Competition.
- 1968 Exhibition of Contemporary Russian Art, New York City
- 1970 Soviet Pavilion, Expo '70, Osaka
- 1972 one-man show, Paesi Nuovi Gallery, Rome
- 1973-74 exhibitions, Fishers Island, Connecticut
- 1974 one-man show, Village Gallery (Croton-on-Hudson, N. Y.
- 1974 selected for "Young Artists '75" for May, 1975