

SAVA SEKULIC

(1902-1989)

Sava Sekulic, born in the village of Bilisani in Croatia, was first inspired to begin painting and writing poetry by his father who told him, "My child, write with stone on stone. Learn to work with your hands. And if you write down what comes into your mind, nobody will say this belongs to me. Everybody will say this belongs to you."

Following the death of his father in 1912, and the subsequent remarriage of his mother, Sekulic and his sister were sent to live with an uncle and aunt. In 1917, he was drafted to serve in World War I, where an injury caused the loss of sight in his right eye. After returning to Bilisani to find himself unwelcome at his poverty-stricken home, he set out for Belgrade, where he lived for the rest of his life, working at various odd jobs.

Motivated by his father's past encouragement, in 1932 Sekulic began to paint. He tried unsuccessfully to exhibit his art for several years, and in 1943, lost all of his work while moving to a new home. Despite these obstacles and innumerable personal problems, Sekulic kept painting. He took pride in the fact that he had taught himself how to read, write and paint, and he signed his works "CCC," which stands for "Self-Taught Sava Sekulic." In 1964, his work was accepted into a few local group shows, and five years later he was discovered by Katarina Jovanovic, the custodian of a gallery at an adult educational center. Jovanovic gave Sekulic his first show in 1969, and in 1972, introduced his work to the Gallery of Naive Art in Svetozarevo, where he began exhibiting in group shows. Critical acclaim fueled his interest in painting, and he began to devote all of his time to it. In the following years, he had a few more one-man shows, but interest in his work soon slackened. He continued, however, to be committed to his art, and as he grew older, his painting improved. At the time of his death, Sekulic's oeuvre consisted of over two thousand paintings and as many drawings and sketches.

- *Galerie St Etienne*

Solo Exhibitions:

- 1992: Galerie Rudolf Zwirner, Cologne.
- 1991: Galerie Charlotte, Munich.
Galerie Petersen, Berlin.
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- 1990: Galerie Susanne Zander, Cologne.
Galerie Bismarck, Bremen.
Galerie Charlotte, Munich.
- 1988: Galerie Susanne Zander, Colonge (18.3-26.4).
Galerie Charlotte, Munich (16.9-26.10).

- 1986: Galerie Charlotte, Munich (24.10-3.12).
1984: Galerie Charlotte, Munich (25.5-27.6).
1978: Centre Culturel Yugoslav, Paris (May 1978).

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 2021: Naive? Naive Art from the Infeld Collection, Museum Gugging, Klosterneuburg, Austria
Sava Sekulić: From Sava to Sava, Galerie Michael Haas, Berlin, Germany
- 2018: Turbulences dans les Balkans, Halle Saint Pierre, Paris, France
- 2017: The Museum of Everything, Museum of Old and New Art, Hobart, Australia
- 2014: Group Exhibition, Delmes & Zander, Cologne, Germany
- 2012: Gus Fengyi, Sava Sekulić & Charles Steffen, Andrew Edlin Gallery, New York, NY
- 2011: Sous le vent de l'Art Brut, Collection Charlotte Zander, Halle Saint Pierre, Paris, France
- 2010: Intuition, Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester, UK
Hamer Highlights, Galerie Hamer, Amsterdam, The Netherlands
- 2007: Art Without Frontiers: Foreign Masters in the Collection of the Croatia Museum of Naïve Art, Croatian Museum of Naïve Art, Zagreb, Croatia
Recent Acquisitions, Galerie St. Etienne, New York, NY
- 2006: Inner Worlds Outside, traveling exhibition, Sala de Exposiciones de la Fundación "La Caixa," Madrid, Spain;
WhiteChapel Gallery, London, England; Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin, Ireland
Ilija!, Galerie St. Etienne, New York, NY
- 2005: Outsider Art, Tate Britain, London, UK
- 2004: INSITA 2004, Slovenska narodna galeria, Bratislava, Slovakia
- 2000: INSITA 2000, Slovenska narodna galeria, Bratislava, Slovakia
European Self-Taught Art, Galerie St. Etienne, New York, NY
Recent Acquisitions (And Some Thoughts on the Current Art Market), Galerie St. Etienne, New York, NY
- 1997: INSITA 1997, Slovenska narodna galeria, Bratislava, Slovakia
- 1996: Naive Kunst und Art Brut, Museum Charlotte Zander, Bönnighem.

- 1993: Recent Acquisitions, Galerie St. Etienne, New York, NY
- 1992: Art Basel (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Basel.
Art Basel (Galerie Rudolf s, Cologne), Basel.
Art Cologne (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Cologne.
- 1991: Outsiders 3, Galerie Charlotte, Munich.
Art Basel (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Basel.
Art Cologne (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Cologne.
Art Cologne (Galerie Rudolf Znjimer, Cologne), Cologne.
- 1990: Outsiders 2, Galerie Charlotte, Munich.
Art Frankfurt (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Frankfurt.
Art Basel (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Basel.
Art Cologne (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Cologne.
- 1989: Outsiders 1, Galerie Charlotte, Munich.
Art Basel (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Basel.
Art Cologne (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Cologne.
Serbian Naive Art, Art Connection Gallery, Melbourne.
- 1988: L'image du monde et le portrait dans l'art naif, Centre Culturel Yugoslav, Paris.
Kartuse Ittingen, Kunstmuseum des Kantons Thurgau, Thurgau.
Vieux Chateau, Musee de Laval, Laval.
Von Angesicht zu Angesicht, Clemens-Sels-Museum, Neuss.
Stadte und Hafen in der Naiven Malerei und Art Brut, Galerie Charlotte, Munich.
Art Basel (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Basel.
Art Cologne (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Cologne.
- 1987: Meisternjerke, Galerie Charlotte, Munich.
Impulse-Reminizenzen, Galerie Charlotte, Munich.
Art Basel (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Basel.
Art Cologne (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Cologne.
- 1986: Art Basel (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Basel.
Art Cologne (Galerie Charlotte, Munich), Cologne.
Izložba jugoslovenske naive umetnost iz zbirke Muzej naive umetnosti u Jagodini, Kulturni Centar, Sittard.
- 1985: Naive Kunst Jugoslanjiens, Palais Palffy, Vienna.

Collections:

- Croatian Museum of Naive Art, Zagreb, Croatia
Museum Charlotte Zander, Schloss Bönningheim, Bönningheim, Germany

Bibliography:

Feilacher, Johann, Sava Sekulić, Volume 2 of Ausstellungen im Novomatic Salon, Museum Gugging & Residenz-Verlag, Sankt Pölten, 2010.

Outsider Art Sourcebook, (Raw Vision) 2016, p.192 / 2009, p.141.

Inner Worlds Outside, exhibition catalogue, Fundación "La Caixa," WhiteChapel Gallery, Irish Museum of Modern Art & Ediciones El Viso, Madrid, 2006.

Händler, Ruth, "Legend of My Own Life: Sava Sekulić," Raw Vision, #26, Spring 1999.

Sekulić, Sava, Sava Sekulić: Das Werk, Brinkmann und Bose, Berlin, 1993.