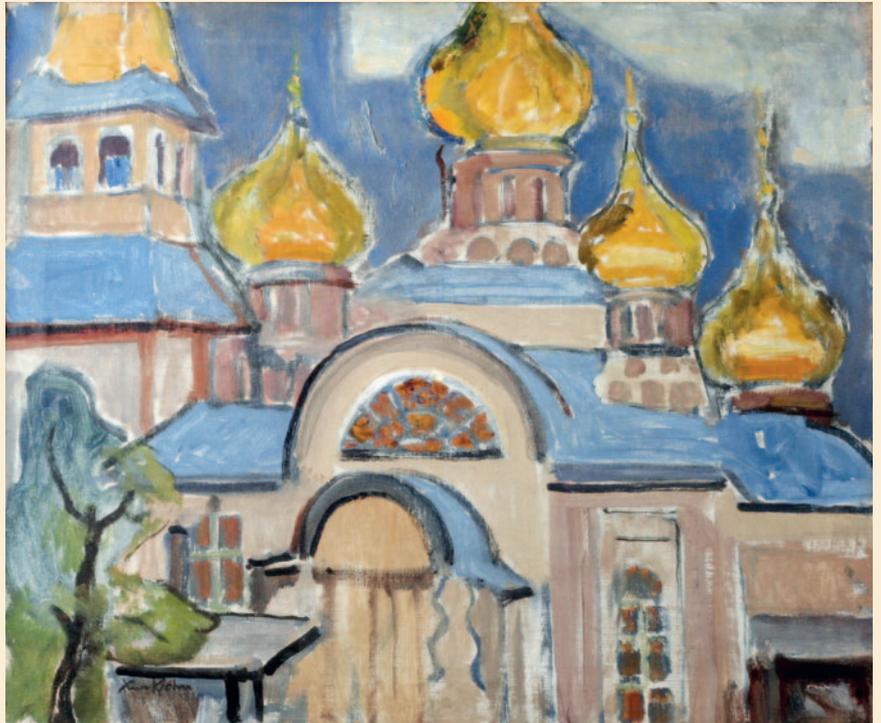




«Rød blomst»

058/7 Olje på lerret 61 x 41 sign n.t.v.



Kirke i Kiev 1911

058/6 Olje på lerret 55 x 66 sign. n.t.v.



Xan (Christian) Krohn was a strange person on the Norwegian art scene. The son of a ship captain, when he was two years old and his sister four they were left behind when their parents emigrated to the USA. The latter never returned and the children were adopted by relatives. Sponsored by his uncle, Xan started his artistic career early. He studied at the Royal Drawing School, and also under Christian Krogh at the Académie Colarossi in Paris in 1902, in Helsinki, and at the Art Academy of St. Petersburg with the highly respected painter Ilya Repin in 1905.

When he was around 20 years old he worked as a stonemason. In Helsinki and St. Petersburg he became a theatre painter, later working at the National Theatre in Christiania. From 1905 to 1917 he spent most of his time in Russia. In 1907 in Paris, he became engaged to, and later married the Russian painter Julie de Holmberg who was from a noble family. Together they formed an art school in Kiev. Here and in Moscow, they lived and worked with major avant-garde painters such as Malevich, the famous Kandinsky, and the sculptor Naum Gabo. They exhibited with and participated actively in the artists groups Koltso and later "Jack of Diamonds".

In the summer of 1910, Krohn was back in his native Bergen and painted a number of pictures that attracted attention in Russia. Krohn and his wife made their debut in Norway at Blomqvist in 1911; their joint exhibition of 89 paintings received excellent reviews, especially their images from Kiev and the Dnieper River. Unfortu-

nately, their exhibition in the same gallery two years later received awful reviews.

In the autumn of 1916, Xan Krohn was back in Bergen and Christiania, mostly with portraits that received great reviews. He and his wife lived for three years in the Caucasus, where he painted frescos for the Georgian Museum in Tbilisi. After his return to Norway in 1918, Xan held several exhibitions in Oslo and Bergen, where he also lectured and spoke to the press about his artistic approach. He was inspired by Malevich's Suprematism but was far less radical than him in his choice of motifs. Xan's portraits of the great businessman and art collector Sergei Shchukin are now in the Hermitage in St. Petersburg. Shchukin's collection of contemporary French and Russian art was considered one of the most important collections of modern art in Europe at that time.

In 1920, Krohn and his wife took a trip around the world, together with a zoologist, travelling to Siberia, India, China, Japan, the Philippines and Hawaii, and later to Morocco, Algeria, Spain and Egypt. His works from Russia, and especially those painted just after the Revolution in 1917, show the influence of Russian avant-garde artists. Although he blends Parisian Cubism and Russian Futurist painting with colourful folk art, Krohn was never as experimental and non-figurative as Malevich and other artists. In 1920 his artistic career was at an end, later works being insignificant.

In 1950 Krohn published the autobiography "A Vagabond Walking On the Earth". He and his wife participated in numerous

exhibitions in Norway, the latest at Blaa-farveværket in 2010 (which included "Steps", a work from my own collection). Today high prices are paid for the best works from Krohn's Russian period.

Represented in numerous museums in Norway, amongst others in Stavanger, Trondheim, Stenersen Collection, Oslo City Museum, the Grieg Collection in Osseana, and especially in the Kornikova Museum and City Museum in Moscow.



Xan Krohn est une personne étrange sur la scène artistique norvégienne. Fils d'un capitaine de navire Conrad Peter Krohn et Ingeborg Krüger. Abandonné par ses parents à l'âge de 2 ans, ainsi que sa sœur de 4 ans (les parents partaient pour l'Amérique), il fut élevé par un oncle à Oslo, qui s'occupait bien de lui. Il partait tôt pour s'éduquer et a fait ses études en tant que peintre au dessin Ecole Royale 1899–1902 et 1903–1905. Il était également à Paris en 1902 à l'Académie Colarossi sous Chr. Krogh, à Helsinki 1905 et à l'Académie des Arts à Saint-Petersbourg en 1905 où Ilya Répin était un des professeurs. Il a également reçu des leçons de Munich, à Paris et en Italie. Pendant ses études il travailla comme tailleur de pierre à Saint-Petersbourg pour gagner son pain. De 1905 à 1917 il résida principalement en Russie, d'abord à Kiev ensuite à Moscou, en collaboration avec sa femme peintre, et avec de grands peintres avant-gardistes tels Kandinsky et Malevitch et le sculpteur Naum Gabo. Ils exposaient avec eux, et participaient activement au groupe d'ar-