

440

GHIKA



Φθινόπωρο 1953

THE LEICESTER GALLERIES
LEICESTER SQUARE, LONDON

Purchases from
THE LEICESTER GALLERIES

have recently been made by the following

Aberdeen Art Gallery
Arts Council
Birmingham, City Art Gallery
Brighton Art Gallery
Bristol Art Gallery
British Council
Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum
Chantrey Bequest
Contemporary Art Society
Harvard College Library
Hull, Ferens Art Gallery
Johannesburg Art Gallery
Leeds City Art Gallery
Manchester City Art Gallery
Manchester, Whitworth Institute
Melbourne, National Gallery of Victoria
National Art Collections Fund
National Museum of Wales
Northampton Art Gallery
Rochdale Art Gallery
Southampton Art Gallery
Swansea Art Gallery
Sydney, National Gallery of New South Wales
Tate Gallery
Toledo, Ohio Museum and Art Gallery
Toronto Art Gallery
Worthing Museum
York City Art Gallery

CATALOGUE OF THE FIRST
EXHIBITION IN ENGLAND
OF PAINTINGS
AND SCULPTURE BY
GHIKA

With a Preface by
MAURICE RAYNAL

ERNEST BROWN & PHILLIPS LTD

Directors:
Oliver F. Brown
Patrick L. Phillips
Nicholas E. Brown
E. C. Phillips

THE LEICESTER GALLERIES
LEICESTER SQUARE, LONDON

WHITEHALL 3375

Exhibition No. 1007

February, 1953

PREFACE

The paintings executed by Ghika between 1938 and 1948 mark an important—I might even say a decisive — stage in the development of this artist's intentions.

Ghika's aspirations have placed him among the heirs of Picasso, Léger, and Juan Gris. Like Beaudin, Borès, Suzanne Roger and others, Ghika has made of his aim, as we all know, to widen the base, as it were, of the cubist problem. He has concentrated particularly on the problem of how to re-create a new reality on the basis of what is already known. But, whereas cubism deliberately set itself to analyse known objects in order to re-create them in synthetic form (and whereas these syntheses, though lyrical and original, were generally *static* by nature), Ghika's ambition has been to distribute those same objects in *dynamic* space; and this dynamic space both justifies his pictures, architecturally speaking, and is justified by them.

With this end in mind, Ghika devoted himself during the period in question to the examination of what is meant by objectivity. This he did with the controlled though passionate lyricism which is characteristic of him. In his own particular way he tries to seek out the secret, plastic life that inhabits

every object—and above all, of course, those objects which woo and win him by their pictorial promises. But Ghika is a man of prudence. No matter how deeply an analysis may engage his sympathies, he never plays with fire, never lets his enthusiasm carry him away. Only when he has broken down the secrets, one by one, will he add something of his own. He is not one to trust to romantic inspiration; he takes care to learn every nuance of the language before beginning his own poems. Or one might say that his pictures are like *studies*, in the musical sense of the word—studies in which every technical resource known to the painter is exploited in turn; and the solidity of Ghika's work derives from the fact that this succession is not accidental, but the result of order and logic. There is in his work a classical proportion — in drawing, composition and colour alike — which might make if disagreeably severe if the artist's hand were not guided, in all that it does, by one invaluable element in his nature.

This nature is dominated by one trait that never fails: that of *elegance*. By this I mean the harmonious—almost “the smiling”—rightness of all the basic elements in a human character. It is the elegance that makes for truth and strength. Ghika looks at the objectiveness of the world with

the amazement of a child who sees everything for the first time. His chosen subject fills him with the wildest hopes and excitements. *Si nous savions, tous les dieux s'éveilleraient*, sang Guillaume Apollinaire. Ghika himself does not despair. But he is always ready, at the same time, to give of himself. In the paintings dated 1948, for instance, we can see that, once Ghika has found the secret he was looking for, he re-assembles what he has taken to pieces. And on the grandest scale: like a great nobleman who asks no security when he lends to Nature. On the other hand, his newest works follow quite a different trend. Ghika now controls and administers his loans to Nature. He enriches Nature, but he also enforces upon her an economy and a sobriety which give his pictures a new degree of intensity and concentration. Ghika never flatters his objects; it is truth—truth to nature—that he is after. And as he is a Greek, the pictorial language which suits him best is, of course, that of geometry. But with him it is really a case of what Voltaire calls “the geometry which is hidden within all the arts of the hand.” “Most artists,” he says, “make use of this without realizing it”—and in Ghika’s case it is the complete and natural expression of the instinctive elegance which I have described above.

So it is that Ghika observes the laws of composition and the disciplines of architecture even — or perhaps especially—when his inspiration is sensual rather than intellectual and he allows himself the indulgence of audacious curves and the whole far-echoing gamut of colour. And in the end it is always to the sober power, the discreet persuasions of line that he returns—not to the insinuations and unfulfilled promises of the curve. At most there may be an occasional arabesque, like the hint of a smile. So far from avoiding difficulties, he goes out of his way to meet them; and he overcomes them with all the elegance of a master of the épée. This is especially noticeable in his handling of colour. Averse to all that is striking or crude, he uses pure colour only very occasionally and by way of accompaniment. On the other hand there are niceties and finesses in his work for which he has actually invented new tonalities—lavender-grey, for instance, beige-pink, and almond-green. And these, combined with his purity of line, the harmonious architecture of his construction, the restrained strength of his feeling, and a general aristocratic distinction of manner—these are the things which are personal to Ghika's art.

MAURICE RAYNAL.

Catalogue

*The Copyright in the Exhibits is strictly Reserved.
Prices may be obtained on application at the desk.*

HOGARTH ROOM

PAINTINGS BY GHKA

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

NICOLAS GHKA. Born at Athens, February, 1906. Studied first at Athens under the painter, Parthénis, and later painting and engraving at the Académie Ranson at Paris.

Held two one-man Shows in Paris, in 1927 at the Galerie Percier, with a preface by Maurice Raynal, and 1933 at the Galerie Vavin-Raspail. Exhibited at the Salon des Indépendants, 1927, Salon des Tuileries, 1928, Salon des Surindépendants, 1931 and 1932. In 1930 exhibited in Canada, Salon des Surindépendants and later in Greece, and also in the Galerie des Cahiers d'Art with a group of four artists, Ghika, Héliou, S. Tauber-Arp, Arp.

From 1934 to 1939 exhibited in Paris, Greece, Venice and New York.

In 1946 exhibited at Burlington House, "Exhibition of Greek Art 2,000 B.C. to 1945," and held a one-man Show at the British Institute, Athens. Exhibited in Stockholm in 1937 and at the Biennale, Venice, in 1950.

1930 to 1950, executed décors and costumes for two ballets, "Saphir" and Mozart's "Petits Riens," Shakespeare's "As You Like It," Molière's "Le Jaloux," André Aubey's "Don Juan," Bernard Shaw's "St. Joan" at Athens, and for a ballet of Karaghioz. In 1951 exhibited at the International Exhibition of the Theatre at Oslo, and executed décors, costumes, masks, etc., for "The Clouds" by Aristophanes at Athens and at the Théâtre de la Comédie Française, Paris, in 1952.

Critical articles on Ghika's work have been published by Maurice Raynal, Paul Fierens, Christian Zervos, E. Tériade, Maurice Sauvage, Anatole Jakowski, Brzekowski, Herbert Read, Sebastia Gash, Eric Newton, Capetanakis, Rex Warner, Henry Miller, D. Patmore, Od Elytis, John Lehmann, Edward Fenton, M. Calligas, Kimon Friar, Robert Levesque, A. Prokopiou, N. Penzikis, T. Spiteris, Evangelides, published in "Cahiers d'Art," "Comoedia," "L'Intransigeant," "Journal des Debats," "The Times," "Life," "Art-Now," "Horizon," "Town and Country," "New Writing," "Country Life," "The Studio," etc.

no.

- 1 The black sun, 1947
(Lent by Lady Norton)
- 2 Shop (in the open), 1935
- 3 Landscape from Hydra, 1950 (*mosaic executed by Mrs. E. Voila*)
- 4 Flute-player, 1948



NO.

- 5 Polygonal composition, Paris, 1952
- 6 Pine-trees, 1948
- 7 Mountain landscape, 1950
- 8 Ulysses and Nausicaa, 1950
- 9 The tree, 1950
(Lent by Eric Alport, Esq.)
- 9A Still Life
(Lent by Mrs. Edward Gage)
- 10 Portrait of John Craxton, 1949
- 11 The fig tree, 1951
- 12 Cafe by night, 1948
- 13 Roofs, Paris, 1952
- 14 Small Hydra landscape, 1952
- 15 Tavern in the country, 1948

NO.

- 16 Heaven and Earth, 1949
- 17 Walls, branches and the sun, 1948
- 18 Bough and moon, 1948
- 19 Buildings, Paris, 1952
- 20 Still life with toys, 1949
- 21 Still life, Paris, 1952
- 22 Two figures, 1946
- 23 Geranium, 1948
- 24 Boats, 1948
- 25 Large Hydra composition, 1948
- 26 Plants, 1948
- 27 Chairs and tables by the sea, 1948

- NO.
28 Still life, 1938
- 29 Two figures, 1946
- 30 Bough and sun, 1948
- 31 Small landscape, 1948
(Lent by Eric Alport, Esq.)
- 32 Roofs and walls, Paris, 1952
- 33 Little fruit shop, 1952
- 34 Countryside with moon, 1950
- 35 Tavern, 1948
- 36 Fig tree, 1951
- 37 Small Hydra landscape, 1952
- 38 Plants, 1946
(Lent by Lady Norton)

SCULPTURE

NO.

- 39 Ulysses (*bronze*)
- 40 Nausicaa (*bronze*)
- 41 Girl playing with a rope (*bronze*)
- 42 Girl playing with a rope (*plaster*)
- 43 Girl (*plaster*)
- 44 Hercules (*plaster*)
- 45 Head (*plaster*)
- 46 Dancing girl (*bronze*)

Since 1954

*Facilities for Hire Purchase have
been available at*

THE LEICESTER GALLERIES



*Payments can be extended over
a year, or longer if desired*



Some examples of these
terms are given below:

Cash Price		Deposit			12 Monthly Payments		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
20 guineas	...	4	4	0	1	9	9
25 ..	...	5	5	0	1	17	2
35 ..	...	7	7	0	2	12	1
45 ..	...	9	9	0	3	7	0
60 ..	...	12	12	0	4	9	3
80 ..	...	16	16	0	5	19	0
100 ..	...	21	0	0	7	8	9

Some Notable
First one-man Exhibitions in England
held at
THE LEICESTER GALLERIES



Burra	(1932)	Maillol	(1919)
Cézanne	(1925)	Matisse	(1919)
Chagall	(1935)	Morisot	(1930)
Degas	(1922)	Picasso	(1921)
(sculpture)	(1923)	Pissarro	(1920)
Drysdale	(1950)	Pryde	(1933)
Ensor	(1936)	Redon	(1925)
Epstein	(1917)	Renoir	(1926)
Gauguin	(1924)	Rouault	(1938)
Guillaumin	(1930)	Soutine	(1937)
Kokoschka	(1928)	Van Gogh	(1923)
		(also 1926 & 1930)	



THE FOLLOWING EXHIBITIONS
HAVE RECENTLY BEEN HELD AT THE
LEICESTER GALLERIES

THE NEW YEAR EXHIBITION
BATESON MASON—Recent Paintings
FELIX KELLY—New Pictures
PAUL MAITLAND—Little Paintings
CLIFFORD HALL—Recent Drawings
THE JOHN PIPER EXHIBITION
E. BELLINGHAM-SMITH—Recent Paintings
CHARLES KEENE — The Lowinsky Collection of
Drawings
IAN STRANG—A Memorial Exhibition
THE W. A. EVILL COLLECTION—A Selection of
Pictures
TERRY FROST—Paintings
WALTER HOYLE—Water-Colours and Drawings
IVON HITCHENS—Paintings, 1940-1952
THE MAX BEERBOHM EXHIBITION
LEONARD APPELBEE—Recent Paintings
THE R. C. PRITCHARD COLLECTION
CAREL WEIGHT—Recent Paintings
THE ZADKINE EXHIBITION
THE J. D. INNES EXHIBITION
KYFFIN WILLIAMS—Recent Paintings
EDOUARD PIGNON—Recent Works
JOHN CRAXTON—New Paintings and Drawings
STELLA STEYN—Paintings
CHIEN-YING CHANG—Water-Colours
CECIL COLLINS—New Paintings
MARY POTTER—Recent Pictures
EDWARD ARDIZZONE—New Drawings
JANKEL ADLER—Water-Colours
HENRY MOORE—New Bronzes and Drawings
EDWARD BAWDEN, C.B.E., A.R.A.—Water-Colours
JOHN SKEAPING, A.R.A.—Sculpture and Drawings
RUSKIN SPEAR, A.R.A.—Paintings
CLAUDE VENARD—Recent Works
IN PARIS NOW—24 Notable Living French Painters
JACOB EPSTEIN—"Lazarus" and new bronzes
*Season Tickets admitting to all Exhibitions for One Year
Price Six Shillings*

Claridge, Lewis & Jordan Ltd., 68-70 Wardour Street, W.1 (Gerrard 7242)