

COLNAGHI

Est. 1760



Olga Sacharoff

(Tbilisi 1881 - 1967 Barcelona)

Female Bust

1913 - 15

oil on canvas

73 x 60 cm.;

28 3/4 x 23 5/8 in.

signed in the lower right corner:

Olga Sacharoff

Provenance

Private collection, Barcelona.

Literature

M. L. Borràs & M. L. Artigas, *El món d'Olga Sacharoff: exposició antològica, exh. cat.*, Fundació la Caixa, Barcelona 1994, p. 65.

Barcelona, Fundació Caixa de Catalunya, *El món d'Olga Sacharoff*, 1994.

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The first time that Olga Sacharoff can be linked to Paris is in 1912, when the press echoed her participation in the *Salon d'Automne*, in which she exhibited two works, a portrait and a still life. She shared the room with Henri Matisse among other artists. However, as occurred with other artists who had to relocate due to the war conflicts of the 20th century, very little of Sacharoff's output from before 1916 has survived. Works on canvas and paper dating from the first and second decades of the 20th century, which display the Cubist preoccupations she was familiar with during her Parisian period. Still lifes and portraits, in which she sometimes used collage, show her first-hand knowledge of the early Cubism developed by Picasso and Braque (regulars at the Académie's canteen). What is exceptional about the present portrait we present by Sacharoff is that it is so typical of that period: it belongs to the same visual culture as the Cubist drawings in which she experimented with shapes and flat planes.

After Sacharoff and her partner Otho Lloyd – also an artist – fled Paris escaping from World War I, they settled in Carrer Albigesos in Barcelona, alternating their stays there with long periods in Tossa de Mar, in the Costa Brava, a place they fell in love with and where they found an ideal landscape to inspire them and work on their respective works. At the end of the war they returned to Paris, although they continued to spend their summers in Tossa de Mar until the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Later, fleeing World War II, Sacharoff and Lloyd returned to Barcelona, where they settled permanently in a large mansion in the Putxet district.

Olga Sacharoff's painting evolved from Cubism to a highly personal primitivism with which she articulated an iconographic world of her own that was critical of the established morality of the time, particularly with regard to the position of women in marriage. She was an undervalued and partially forgotten artist, although in the 21st century she was recovered and vindicated as one of the great avant-gardes. Her roots in Catalonia, which were so important for her personal life and her work, are indisputable and explain why she is so well known and appreciated in that region.