

MÁRIA GOSZTHONY

painter and ceramist

She was born on 22 August, 1893 in Bárdibükk. The family spent the bigger part of the year in Budapest. Her father, progeny of family Goszthony from *Nógrád* county, had some lawyer's office of a good repute in the capital. She was educated privately, and passed the examinations in Budapest. As a painter she started her artistic studies in Munich in 1912. She attended the Weisberger Academy of Fine Art. In 1917-18 she went on studying in the Free School of Fine Art runed by Károly Kernstok, Rippl-Rónai, Márk Vedres, that has been formed in passage Haris in Budapest. She was Kernstok's most intimate student, and his enthusiastic aid with organising the life of the school. She got acquainted here with the representatives of the new Hungarian artistic life. Her entellectual interest was influenced by the progressive idealistic society named Vasárnapi Kör (Sunday Circle), where she was a frequenter. Since 1918 she has served as intermediate person between the members of Hungarian Communist Party's Central Committee and the Military Council Later she acted as connecting link between left-wing leaders, that gone underground and were persons in detention. During the Hungarian Soviet Republic in 1919 come into existence an Art Colony in Nyergesújfalu, directed by Kernstok, and she was an indispensable partner with her master in setting up it. The charcoal and tint-drawings, her oil paintings, have been 1917-19 organically assimilate with artistic approach of the era. Her works are characterized by vision of form and matter, vigorous, steady treatment of colours and lines.

After falling the Hungarian Soviet Republic she was forced into exile. She went Vienna first, than with the help of János Vedres to Florence, from there to Villach, to a village that lies under the Alps near the Austrian border, where she has spent nearly one year. Expressive lyric landscapes in water-colour and tint-drawings preserve the memory of the time she has spent there.

In 1920 she succeeded to get to Italy again. She spent a longer time in Florence, Assisi, Perugia and in Rome. She studied etching and painting in fresco in Florence. She made study of Cimabue, Pintoruccio, Giotto, and Simone Martini paintings. In Assisi she become acquainted with Johannes Joergensen, a Danish catholic writer, who had lived there, and to be influenced by him following Franciscan ideas she discovered support in religious belief. She was allowed to come home to Bárdibükk in 1923, where she had got a chapel built and decorated it with frescoes of her own. A true copy of the Saint Demjan church's Cross in Assisi has become the foundation of the little chapel. The Bárdibükk Porciunkula-Chapel has been declared a place of pilgrimage by the Bull of Pope Pius XI. in 1926.

Returned to Italy she graduated from the Academy of Fine Art in Rome between 1928-31. From the early thirties she spent the half of the year in Rome, where she run a studio in Villa Ruffo Art Colony near to Villa Borghese. She painted small winged altars and church-frescoes in the style of italian early masters in Rome, Assisi, Varese, Kocsorc in Slovak had over here at home in Veszprém.

From the mid-thirties with Ida Josipovich, they passed a pottery course in Salerno. Later on they visited ceramics work-shops in Vietri Sul Mare, Florence and Deruta.

They investigated in libraries, and kept collecting motifs. In the beginning they reproduced the Italian maiolica and sold them in Budapest. In the late forties they equipped a workshop in the small manor house in Bárdibükk, where they worked the three of them together with her cousin Sara Goszthony, who joined them later. Amalgamated the classical „Haban” style with traditional motives of Hungarian ceramics and modern elements, but basically relaid on the Italian renaissance traditions, they had developed their particular ceramics style, that became a characteristic feature of the Bárdibükk workshop. The spiritual leader of the workshop was Maria Goszthony.

The sunbearing gaiety of the Bárdibükk workshop lit to a great distance. On this side and on the other side of the frontier she presented countless of intimate tone ceramics, the lover of a conventional taste, hand made pieces of art. These intimate „touch the heart of hearts” everyday articles, which has grown as works of art by this time, preserve the memory of the three artists.

Mária Goszthony gained a honoured name by her ceramics, but she declared herself as a painter. She painted until late sixties. Her postimpressionist oil paintings and water-colours accompanied her life till then. She scored the greatest success with her plain air landscapes, water-colours, that were painted in Somogy and a great part of them have got to England by the London Royal Aquarell Society. She was not involved into the contemporary artistical events. Being held in great affection by numberless friends but as a lonesome artist she worked until her death. She had exhibitions in Budapest and Kaposvár. In 1982 she won the Art Prize of Somogy County Council. She died on 28 March 1989 in Mezőcsokonya. Her mortal remains has been preserved in her chapel in Bárdibükk.

She bequeathed her mansion to Hungarian State to bring a common creative art studio into existence.