



RA GALLERY

Petr Fomin

(1919 - 1996)

Near the lake

1964

singed and dated lower left

oil on cardboard

35x42 cm

Price on request



Near the Lake is a painting by the well-known Leningrad artist, Petr Fomin, the master of the spiritual lyrical Russian landscape. This work, like other Fomin's creations, expresses devotion to the national scenery and the continuity of the traditions of Russian art in the landscape genre. That poetical manner of the portrayal of nature, romantic interpretation of the world, which is present in the subtle, as though even sketchy landscapes of Fomin, is very characteristic of that genre in the XIX century, thereby passing a connecting thread through generations of artistic development. The painting illustrates a beautiful, fascinating view of the expanse and majesty of Northern nature. It creates an atmosphere of the swiftly flowing clouds on the blue sky, which are reflected in the convoluted, enveloping the surrounding area, lake. Power and wealth of the land are expressed in the vastness of green hills and variety of colours and their shades. This endless array of colour nuances in nature that the artist emphasises is one of the special features in the development of the landscape genre in the 1950s - 1970s. Essentially, the vision of the artist, the individuality of his creative style, along with an intensely subjective perception of reality, with particular attention to what seems significant to the artist, comes to the

fore in such works as *Near the Lake*.

The national landscape, unpretentious and captivating motives of Russian nature, has taken on a fresh meaning after the Great Patriotic War. The recent distress caused artists to take a different look at the world around them. They began to engage with the landscape genre more and more as a way of expression of national spirit, love for the motherland, and strengthening the relation between man and his native soil in the context of surrounding world. It can be seen as an attempt to reconsider the importance of every moment of peaceful life. The Soviet landscape paintings of the post-war years often express a bright, emotional perception of the realm, emphasising the unity of people with the spiritual past of their country. It is as if people can find some support in uncovering personal moral criteria, contemplating the image of the motherland. Despite the fact that the official art of the country at that time was declared as Social Realism, the landscape began to occupy a considerable capacity in the works of numerous artists. In the process of pursuit of self-expression which would be less subject to the strict framework of the Soviet political ideology, and would allow to express himself most sincerely, with his own individual perception of the reality, Fomin, along with other artists, has started to refer to the landscape increasingly. In the 1960s there was an immense fascination among artists with creative journeys to the North, being closer to the serene beauty of untouched nature. Such 'pilgrimage' provided artists with inspiration, a lot of sketches of further work or even finished paintings. Rural landscapes, the images of 'pure' nature, romantic, lyrical sceneries were becoming widespread and favoured among the most renowned artists. Along with Fomin, other distinguished artists such as P. Nikonov, V. Stozharov, N. Andronov, not only dramatically has enriched the figurative, stylistic range of landscape painting, but also created incredibly touching, intense, sincere images of their country. *Near the Lake* is striking in its sense of natural purity and greatness of the view, which, at first glance, does not contain a visible presence of people. However, there is a church on the hill, a temple of God with a gleaming dome, emphasising the connection of this landscape to the history, traditions, moral and spiritual purity of man, who lives in harmony with nature among the native lands.

