

# THE CYNTHIA CORBETT GALLERY

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## BORIS TASLITZKY

### **Boris Taslitzky, 1911-2005 (France) Painter.**

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Three Paintings by Taslitzky are in the Tate Collection:

***The Strikes of June 1936***, 1939, ***Study for 'The Death of Danielle Casanova'*** 1949 & ***Riposte***, 1951.

Taslitzky's life charts the events of the 20th century. Boris Taslitzky had decided to become a professional painter in his teens: a painter he became, and a painter he remained. For Boris, art was a fact of life, an integral part of his life, a part of himself.

In the Montparnasse of the 1920s and 1930s, his stepfather is painted by Diego Ribera, and a friend of Modigliani. Student of Jacques Lipchitz, Boris Taslitzky also studies art at Lucien Simon's studio, where he becomes the friend of Amrita Shar-Gil. Boris Taslitzky is one of the first to join the French Communist Party in 1932 and sees the advent of the groupement of revolutionary painters and sculptors.

From the mid 1930s onwards, he has dealings with Picasso, Matisse, Miro et al., in his capacity as secretary of the "Maison de la Culture", the Communist artists' groupement .

Active in the resistance against nazism during the occupation, he is incarcerated first in the French camps of Riom and St. Sulpice, then is deported to Buchenwald concentration camp. Where he continues to draw, insistently, passionately, beautifully - on any scrap paper, even if it bears nazi propaganda and bullet holes. Hidden by friends under floorboards and mattresses.

He sketched and painted watercolours of his testimony on the paper. He shows that which is unspeakable, the triumph of death. Roger Arnoult, one of the leaders of the camp resistance, helped him to hide around 100 of his finished drawings. After the liberation of the camp, Christian Pineau, who was one of the first to be repatriated, handed them over to Aragon. He brought them together in an album and published them in 1946 under the title "111 Drawings made in Buchenwald."

When he returned home in 1945, Boris Taslitzky painted an enormous fresco from memory, guided by the secret drawings, which depicted the Small Camp of Buchenwald. Then in 1950, he completed the work entitled "***The Death of Danielle Casanova***" 1949 (in the Tate modern collection), who was arrested for being a member of the resistance and died during her imprisonment.

"111 Drawings Made in Buchenwald" represents a cry of humanity, bearing unique witness to the conditions in which the deportees were detained. With drawing skills of incredible delicacy and accuracy, Taslitzky immortalised these prisoners and gave them back their dignity as human beings.

Boris Taslitzky had sketched and drew throughout his time in the Buchenwald concentration camp on scraps of paper. Boris continued to sketch and to draw right until the last days of his life, aged 94 in 2005.

### **Anne Françoise Couloumy *L'Atelier du Peintre*, Oil on Canvas, 152 x 118 cm, 2006**

Boris Taslitzky was a mentor and friend to Anne Françoise Couloumy. ***L'Atelier du Peintre*** is a tribute to him and his practice. Couloumy is known as a very secretive painter, this rare insight into her work allows us to share in her regard for a man whom played a significant role in her artistic and personal life. Couloumy as ever remains an enigma, the clues she gives us although add the narrative, still leaves us with an array of questions and curiosity which after all is what she does best.