**V.A. Tropinin**

**V.A. Tropinin (1776-1857)**

Tropinin is one of the greatest masters of the Russian portrait. Tropinin was bora in the village of Karpovka in Novgorod province in a family of serfs. Tropinin's work is democratic and progressive. He is one of the most original and charming figures in the history of Russian art. His biography is an unusual one. Up to the age of 47. he was one of Count Morkov's serfs. According to the whims of his owner he worked in succession as a butler, a pastry cook and manager of the count's estate in the Ukraine. It was with great difficulty that he entered the Academy of Arts in Petersburg. He studied 'in Shchukin's class in 1798 - 1804. Forced to interrupt^ his studies at the Academy. Tropinin developed his skill independently, constantly painting from life. He reveals a poetic attitude to the world. The portrait studies of the count's children, the Morkov brothers and Natalia Morkova, show a light tonality. The "Portrait of the Artist's Son A.V.Tropinin" (1818) is executed with warmth and serious attitude to the world of childhood.

From the 1820s the artist's life, was completely linked with Moscow. He produced portraits of some eminent figures in Russian culture. But the most popular picture ever created by Tropinin is probably his portrait of Alexander Pushkin for which the poet sat in 1827. The remarkable likeness was stressed by contemporaries. The portrait reflects the powerful mind and inspiration of the poet. In 1823, after receiving his freedom, he was made an associate by the Council of the Academy and in 1824 awarded the title of academician. After his liberation from serfdom he went to live in Moscow. He is considered to be the founder of the 19th century Moscow school of painting, which took themes and subjects from real life.

Visitors to the Tretyakov Gallery often stop to admire Tropinin's remarkable picture "The Lace-make.n> ( 1 823). \ This was the first Russian portrait to depict the city working girl. Tropinin once said that he liked to . paint people "at a happy moment of their life". Tropinin fr"nd pleasure in painting young and attractive faces: young Ukrainiar weavers, lace- makers, goldthread embroideresses, young men with gu4af?cod boys with flutes. In Russia it was he who showed the way to the new i fistic art as "opposed to the abstract classical trend favoured by the Academ> of Arts.

1. Head of a Boy (Portrait of the Artitst's Son), 1818, 40,4 X 3°

2. Lace-maker, 1823, 74,7 X 59,3

3. Alexander Pushkin, 1827

4. The Guitar Player, 4823, 82,5 X 64

5. Self-portrait at a Window with a View of the Kremlin, 1846