Iliá Yefimovich Repin (1844-1930)

He was born on August 5, 1844 in the small Ukrainian town of Chuguev. Son of a farmer and exmilitary settler, and like many sons of military settlers, he went to the surveying academy of the military school, where his passion for drawing, painting and sculpture arose. At the age of thirteen he demonstrated his ability to make portraits and dedicated himself to making religious icons and restorations for the Orthodox churches of his town, under the teaching of the iconographer Bunakov.

In 1863, at 19, the young artist went to Saint Petersburg, but since he could not enter the Imperial Academy of Arts, he decided to work with the famous founder of the Itinerant, Kramskoy, to fill his gaps in classical drawing. With the recommendation of his teacher, he entered the Academy a couple of months later, received the best grades for his denoted genius, quickly becoming an Academy student.

Repin completed his studies at the Academy in 1871, and in the competition organized by it he was awarded the Great Gold Medal for his work on the Gospel story "The Resurrection of the daughter of Jairus", and was awarded a scholarship to travel to France.

He married Vera Alekseevna Shevtsova in February 1872, who gave birth to four children: Vera, the eldest, Nadejda, Yuri and Tatiana. Between 1873 and 1879 Repin settled abroad under the auspices of the Academy of Arts, and in Italy and France he met Rembrandt and Impressionism. In 1887 he divorced Vera Alexeyevna. The writer Natalia Borisovna Nordman, who wrote under the pseudonym Severova, was the painter's second wife and accompanied him since the late 1900s. This second marriage tragically ended, since Natalia contracted tuberculosis and died in June 1914.

Repin was friends with great personalities of the time, from the circle of the best painters of his homeland, as well as writers such as Tolstoy, Maxim Gorky and Zinaida Gippius, scientists such as Dmitri Mendeleev and Vladimir Bekhterev; He painted portraits of important figures of the Russian elite, before and after the Revolution, and made works dedicated to the Council of State, Tsar Nicholas, and Kerensky.

Among his vast work are mainly evoked characters from the daily life of the popular classes, as well as important events in rural life, political and religious life, the aristocracy, Cossacks and peasants, folklore, their family, in short, elements from their environment as well as from the past.

He died at the age of 86 in his house "Los Penates", a place that was the residence and, at the same time, the artist's studio; located in Kuokkala — former Finnish territory, which since 1930 has been a province of Leningrad — in whose garden it is buried. In 1947, the Saint Petersburg Imperial Academy of Arts was transferred to Moscow and since then it was called the "Saint Petersburg Academic Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture Iliá Repin", in honor of the greatest teacher of Russian realists. Repin was, is, and will be considered, without a doubt, the greatest painters in his country.

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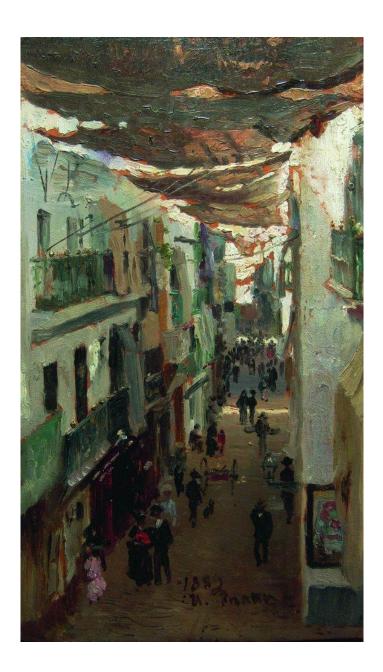
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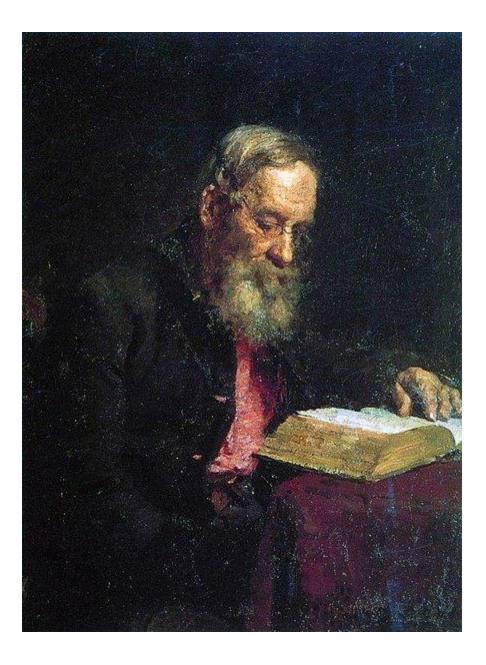
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Portrait of Yefim Vasílievich Repin, father of the artist (1879)