

**Report on the content of the Museum Ludwig
archives**

on the painting

Still Life with Crayfish (1907)

by Mikhail Larionov

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Report editors: Jilleen Nadolny and Petra Mandt
Location and date of the report: Museum Ludwig, Cologne, February 2017

1. Provenance

There are a few notes on the painting's provenance which are listed in the archive of Museum Ludwig. The painting probably is of the artist's studio. It was inherited by Alexandra Tomilina-Larionova, Mikhail's second wife¹, in 1964 and became part of her private collection in Paris.² There is no information when the Gallery Gmurzynska, which was located in Cologne that time³, bought the painting *Still Life with Crayfish*. The painting was acquired by Peter and Irene Ludwig (Ludwig collection in Aachen) in 1981. In December 2011 it was donated as artistic legacy to the Museum Ludwig in Cologne after Irene Ludwig's death in 2010 (28 November 2010).

table 1: listing of the painting's provenance.

probably after Larionov's death in 1964	Paris, private collection of Alexandra Tomilina-Larionova (Mikhail Larionov's widow and second wife)
1976	Everest Collection, Lausanne ⁴
until 1981	Cologne, Gallery Gmurzynska (Galerie Gmurzynska)
since 1981	Aachen, collection Ludwig (collection of Peter and Irene Ludwig) 1981-2011: loan to the Museum Ludwig in Cologne
since 20.12.2011	Donation/ artistic legacy to the Museum Ludwig, Cologne

References in general for the paintings exhibition history and bibliography, see:
<https://www.kulturelles-erbe-koeln.de/documents/obj/05020019>

¹ Mikhail Larionov and Alexandra Tomilina married in 1963 and she became Ms. Tomilina-Larionova "Tomilina, who had been his mistress for more than 30 years, moved into his apartment on the rue Jacques-Callot, and in May 1963 they were married." (Akinsha et al. 1997: 80).

Akinsha, K., Kozlov, G. and Hochfiel, S. 'The Strange, Illegal Journey of the Larionov-Goncharova Archive', *ARTnews*, March (1997), pp. 80-85, esp. p. 82.

² Generally it is known that "on her death in the early 1990s, Madame Tomilina-Larionov left the entire collection of works in her possession to the Soviet State

"Tomilina's property consisted of the archive and the art collection of her husband, Mikhail Larionov, and his first wife, Natalia Goncharova." (Akinsha et al. 1997: 80). "Tomilina's estate had two parts. The first consisted primarily of the extensive Larionov-Goncharova archive. In addition to the archive, there were some artworks. All these things were kept in Tomilina's apartment. The second part of the estate consisted entirely of artworks: more than 600 paintings and works on paper, including some of the most important canvases by both artists. These were kept in an art-storage warehouse in Paris." (Akinsha et al. 1997: 82).

³ Founded in 1965 in Germany Gallery Gmurzynska is now located in Switzerland.

⁴ Mentioned on the paper label for the exhibition: *Rétrospective Larionov, Gontcharova*, 29 April to 6 June 1976, Musée d'Ixelles, Brussels.

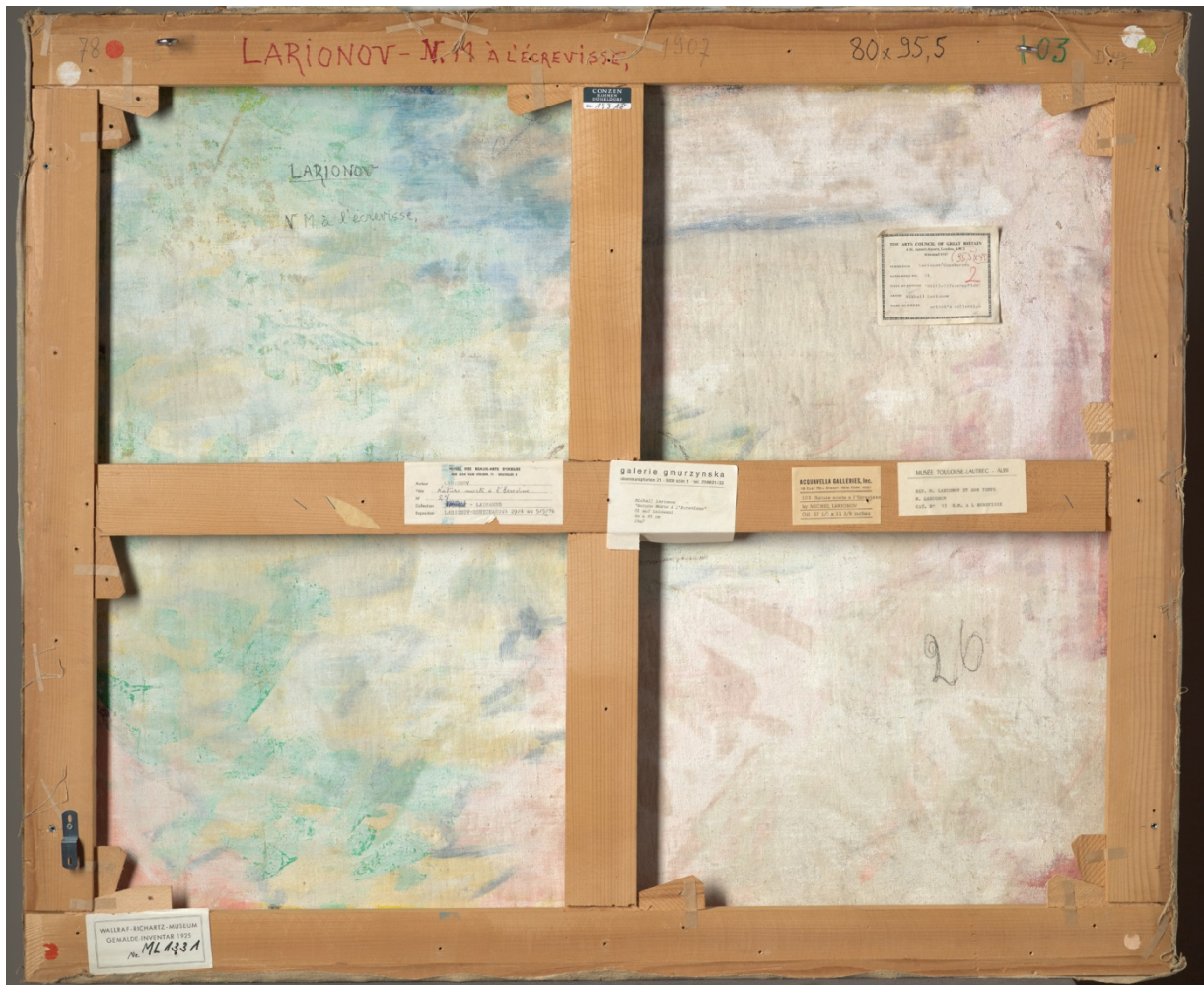


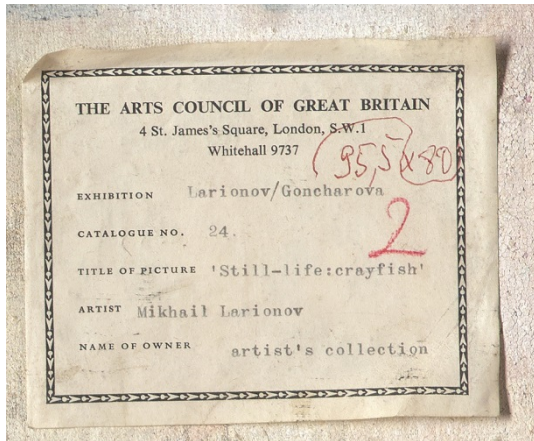
Plate 1. Mikhail Larionov, Nature morte à l'écrevisse (Still Life with Crayfish), c. 1907, collection Museum Ludwig: Inv. Nr. ML 1331. Verso, visible light.

Rheinisches Bildarchiv Köln, Patrick Schwarz, rba_d050883_02, www.kulturelles-erbe-koeln.de/documents/obj/05020019

The painting is one example of Larionov's re-use of canvas.

The reverse of the canvas shows an unfinished composition, now covered with a thin white colour, possibly painted by the artist.

The inscription « LARIONOV N. M. À L'ÉCREVISSE on the stretcher (done with a red marker pen) containing artist's name and title in French is presumably done by A. Tomilina-Larionova. The inscription was repeated on the canvas.



THE ARTS COUNCIL OF
GREAT BRITAIN
4 St. James's Square, London,
S.W.1
Whitehall 9737
EXHIBITION Larionov/
Goncharova
CATALOGUE NO. 24
TITLE OF PICTURE 'Still-
life: crayfish'
ARTIST Mikhail Larionov
NAME OF OWNER artist's
collection
80 x 95,5
2

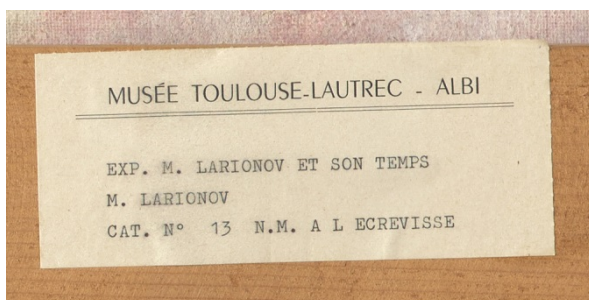
Larionov and Goncharova: a retrospective exhibition of paintings and designs for the theatre [exhibition catalogue, 9 September to 16 December 1961, Leeds City Art Gallery; Museum and Art Gallery, City of Bristol; Arts Council Gallery, London], Chamot, M. and Gray, C. (ed.?) London: Arts Council (1961), unpagged (with photo), cat. no. 12.



ACQUAVELLA GALLERIES,
Inc. 18 EAST 79TH STREET.
NEW YORK 10021
103 Nature morte a l'Ecrevisse
by MICHEL LARIONOV
Oil 37 1/2 x 31 3/8 inches

Michel Larionov

[exhibition catalogue, 22 April to 24 May 1969, Acquavella Galleries], text by François Daulte (ed.?) New York: publisher not identified (1969), unpagged (with photo), cat. no. 26.



MUSÉE TOULOUSE-
LAUTREC -ALBI
EXP. M. LARIONOV ET SON TEMPS
M. LARIONOV
CAT. N° 13
N. M. A L ECREVISSE

Michel Larionov et son temps [exhibition catalogue, June to September 1973, Musée Toulouse-Lautrec, Albi], editor not identified, Albi: Musée Toulouse-Lautrec (1973), cat. no. 13.



MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS
D'IXELLES RUE JEAN VAN
VOLSEM, 71 – BRUXELLES
5

Auteur LARIONOV

Titre Nature morte a l'Ecrevisse

N°25

Collection **EVEREST** -
LAUSANNE

Exposition **LARIONOV-
GONTCHAROVA 29/4 au
5/5/76**

Rétrospective Larionov – Gontcharova [exhibition catalogue, 29 April to
6 June 1976, Musée d'Ixelles, Brussels], text by Goldman, J. and Daulte, F.
(ed.?) Brussels: Musee D'Ixelles (1976), cat. no. 28.



galerie gmurzynska
obenmarspforten 21
5000 köln 1

tel. 236621/22

Michail Larionow

„Nature Morte à
l'Ecrevisse”

Öl auf Leinwand

80 x 95 cm

1907

Paper label former owner:
Gallery Gmurzynska.

2. Art historical information, a few notes

Various dates have been suggested for the painting *Still Life with Crayfish*: 1907⁵ and slightly later, 1908/09⁶.

Larionov's *Still Life with Crayfish* combines elements which were decisive for his development as artist. In the first decade of the 20th century, Larionov was influenced by French art.⁷ The paint application of Larionov's *Still Life with Crayfish* demonstrates the influence of Impressionism and the manner of paint application used by Matisse. The palette employed and the arrangement of table, tablecloth and objects as well as the inverted perspective reveal Cezanne's influence on Larionov (Weiss 1993: 10, 143).⁸ Quite un-French, in comparison, are the motifs on the painted tin tray and the colourful wallpaper of the background (Weiss 1993: 143)⁹ with its toy-like figures. These elements recall Russian folk art and contrast to the crayfish in the foreground.¹⁰ A similar tray with landscape is seen in *Self-portrait with Tray* dated 1912 by Kontschalowski (Weiss 1993: 143).¹¹ It should be mentioned that the influence of peasant and folk-art forms in Larionov's art was not restricted to stylistic considerations alone, for folk-art artifacts, which he appreciated for their intrinsic qualities, often appear in his paintings (Parton 1993: 90).¹²

⁵ <<https://www.kulturelles-erbe-koeln.de/documents/obj/05020019>> (01.03.2017).

⁶ Note: painting *Still Life with Crayfish* is dated to 1908/09 according to: *Nathalie Gontcharova, Michel Larionov* [exhibition catalogue, 21 June to 18 September 1995, Centre Georges Pompidou], Paris 1995, p. 38. It is also mentioned in: Baudin, K. *Der Kubofuturismus und der Aufbruch der Moderne in Russland. Russische Avantgarde im Museum Ludwig*. Museum Ludwig. Cologne: Wienand (2010), pp. 74, 77 (note no. 1).

⁷ *Ludwigs Lust. Die Sammlung Irene und Peter Ludwig* [exhibition catalogue, Nuremberg, 1993], Eissenhauer, M. (ed.) Nuremberg: Verlag des Germanischen Nationalmuseums (1993), p. 311.

Rough translation of the following German text into English: „Bedeutend für Larionow's Schaffen im ersten Jahrzehnt des Jahrhunderts war die Begegnung mit der französischen Malerei“.

⁸ *Von Malewitsch bis Kabakov: Russische Avantgarde im 20. Jahrhundert. Die Sammlung Ludwig* [exhibition catalogue, 16 October 1993 to 2 January 1994, Josef-Haubrich- Kunsthalle], Weiss, E. (ed.), Munich: Prestel (1993), pp. 10, 143.

Rough translation of the following German text into English: „...wie Larionow's >Stilleben mit Hummer< von 1907, das, im Farbauftrag an Matisse erinnernd, im Aufbau des Tisches und des Tuches sowie in der leicht verschobenen Perspektive deutlich Einflüsse von Cézanne erkennen lässt“.

⁹ Rough translation of the following German text into English: „Ganz unfranzösisch sind dagegen die Folklore-motive des bemalten Tablett in der Mitte und der Tapete im Hintergrund“.

¹⁰ Wilmes, U. *Moderne Kunst. Museum Ludwig. Die Kunst des 20. Jahrhunderts und der Gegenwart im Überblick. Katalog des Museum Ludwig*. Cologne: Dumont (2006), p. 85. Note: The text refers to the following German text: „In dem Märchenmotiv der fröhlichlärmenden Tapete, zu der die exotisch wirkende Gestalt des Hummers einen schrillen Farbkontrast bildet...“.

¹¹ Rough translation of the following German text into English: „Ein sehr ähnliches Tablett mit Landschaft ist im Selbstporträt mit Tablett, 1912, von Kontschalowski dargestellt“.

¹² Parton, A. *Mikhail Larionov and the Russian Avant-Garde*. Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press (1993), p. 90.