

**Acta Scientifica Naturalis**

Former Annual of Konstantin Preslavsky University – Chemistry, Physics, Biology, Geography

Journal homepage: <http://www.shu.bg>

**Editorial Note: Where Science Meets Art****“145 years since the birth of the painter Hristo Kazandzhiev”**

Rostislava Todorova-Encheva

The Editorial Board of ACTA SCIENTIFICA NATURALIS has always intended to emphasize on the importance of Konstantin Preslavsky University of Shumen not only as a modern scientific institution, but also as a worthy successor to the Pliska and Preslav Literary School, which spread the Cyrillic alphabet among the Bulgarian and all other Slavic people. Moreover, our University is located in Shumen – one of the most important cities during the Bulgarian National Revival Period where the tradition of the official celebration of St. St. Cyril and Methodius Equal to the Apostles deeds was created. For these reasons, from the very creation of ASN in 2014, it had been decided that its covers would promote not only current knowledge, but also works of significant artists from Shumen, who have left a deep trace in the national cultural heritage of Bulgaria.

Thus, here where science meets art, the first four covers presented to you the paintings “Spring II”, “Before the Mirror”, “Self-Portrait”, and “Portrait of a Girl” by the great female painter Elena Karamihaylova from Shumen (1875 – 1961), who is also the patron of the Shumen Art Gallery. The fifth and sixth covers presented the icon of St. St. Cyril and Methodius Equal to the Apostles, produced by the hand of Nikola Vasilev (1834 – 1918) – the most prominent zographer from Shumen, and the icon of the Nativity of Christ, written by the second great icon  
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Corresponding author: [rostislava@shu.bg](mailto:rostislava@shu.bg)

DOI: 10.2478/asn-2019-0014

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painter from Shumen - Vasil Hristov Bedelev (c. 1835 – c. 1874). The seventh cover presented “Nymphs” - one of the best canvas of the most prominent Bulgarian master of marine art Alexander Mutafov (1879-1957), who was born in Shumen. The eighth cover presented “Landscape with trees” by Trifon Popov (1874-1949) – a painter who spent his life in Shumen. Remaining in the field of painting, current cover represents a piece of art made by Hristo Kazandzhiev (1874-1952) – one of the most talented masters from Shumen.

Hristo Kazandzhiev was born in Shumen in 1874. He attended the Munich Academy of Art together with Elena Karamihaylova and Nikola Marinov and graduated in 1896. After returning home he was admitted among the first batch of students of the State Drawing School in Sofia (now the National Academy of Art). Thus, he received a teacher qualification and started working as a teacher in painting in 1898 at Varna. In 1905 he moved to Sofia and worked as a fine arts teacher until 1908, when he finally returned to his hometown Shumen. After that time he worked as a fine arts teacher in the local Boys’ High School and Girls’ High School. Hristo Kazandzhiev retired as a lecturer in fine arts from the “Dr. Petar Beron” Semi-Higher Institute for primary teachers in Shumen and died in 1952 in Sofia.

Kazandzhiev was very active painter and in 1919 was one of the founders of the Society of North Bulgarian Artists which in 1944 became a part of the Union of the Artists in Bulgaria (now UBA – the Union of Bulgarian Artists). Probably the most famous of his painting is “Hristo Botev conquers steamship ‘Radetzky’ 1876” painted in 1911 at Shumen. This piece of art has been widely reproduced in thousands of copies. Another popular painting by Hristo Kazandzhiev is “Harvesters” painted in 1904, now in the Bulgarian National Bank Collection. Nowadays the “Elena Karamihaylova” Art Gallery collection in Shumen keeps a total of four works by the author – a portrait of the famous Bulgarian writer Iliya R. Blaskov from 1911, a “Portrait of a girl” from 1932, and two copiers of Murillo’s paintings, made in 1896 and 1897. The two copiers were donated to the “Elena Karamihaylova” Art Gallery in 1990 by the painter’s daughter Rayna Kazandzhieva. It is the “Copier from Murillo’s painting - I” on the cover of the present issue of ASN.

The work of Hristo Kazandzhiev is an important part of the artistic heritage of the Bulgarian fine arts from the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries. Like many of his contemporary colleagues, he worked predominantly in the genres of portraiture, landscape, figurative composition and everyday life composition. Although he was

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attracted by the play of colors in the impressionism, which could be seen in some of his paintings mostly in the portrait genre, Kazandzhiev followed the style of academism and the realistic tendencies typical for the Western European art in the late nineteenth century. He focused on the details of Bulgarian life through everyday life and historical scenes, thus creating a vivid portrait of his country. Consciously staying away from the avant-garde trends of his time, Hristo Kazandzhiev leaves behind a memory of a classical painter, moderately conservative and true to the aesthetic ideals of beauty, exquisiteness and perfection in art.

### **Front Cover:**

Hristo Kazandzhiev (1874-1952)

“Copier from Murillo’s painting - I”, oil on canvas, 1897, 120/100 cm

By Courtesy of “Elena Karamihailova” Art Gallery, Shumen, Inv. № 1065