

Remembering the Stray Dog Cabaret



Stray Dog Cabaret in St Petersburg, Vladimir Vladimirovich Dmitriyev, 1913

t V. V. Putin

In 1912, at the Stray Dog Cabaret,
Nikolay Gumilev founded Acmeism,
poetry's "clear, hard, manly way."
In 1921, the Cheka had him shot
(the Petrograd Extraordinary Commission
no doubt had some clear, hard, manly reason).
They say he took the Iliad to read in prison.

If we could but get a vision
of what may be the final state of play,
what schools, what rules,
might we, *would* we not found today?

Note: Gumilev was shot on or about August 25, 1921. The Cheka (VChK; Extraordinary Commission for Combating Counterrevolution and Sabotage) was established in December 1917, soon after the Bolsheviks seized power in Russia. Putin has proudly called himself a Chekist.