

Artist Statement.

I remember in my second year of college in 1997 when my professor told me to know all the techniques in the world is not going to get you far. An Artist has to learn to think so that his work speaks to people. I didn't pay too much attention to his words at that time. Only in 2002 when I graduated from L'viv State College of Decorative & Applied Arts named after I.Trush and I was faced with my first solo exhibition did I realise that I had not been thinking. My art show was a good example of well executed techniques and nothing else. It was a combination of portraits, landscapes and weird abstractions. Looking back, I realise that I was in search of myself and of my own style. And I did find it, a few years later.

My work began to centre itself on figurative art, and not merely just figurative art, but sacred images of women. The images of women in my work can either be strong or weak, happy or sad, and often impudent and glorious, yet always desirable. In the last ten years I have been weaving myself into blank canvases and to be reborn into the bodies of my women. The hearts of my women are like labyrinths and puzzles with pieces of my own soul that are trying to reach an audience. And if one will stop for a minute and find a little echo of themselves in my paintings - then I have succeeded.

I always start my work by painting the canvas in one solid colour usually with warm shades of red, orange, yellow or ochre. Bright backgrounds help me to fuse mood and excitement in my paintings. I love to play with texture in the backgrounds – to create ornamental, abstract patterns, which correspond to the character and mood of my heroines.

I frequently use bright red colour in my paintings. There is no other colour than red that could accentuate passion, audacity, pure frankness and heat. Nearly at the end of work on the painting I just put a few bold finishing touches with red paint,

heating everything up and making the painting whole. Nothing is more mysterious or appealing to me than a red haired woman with green eyes.

I think that there is no such a thing as modern art. Art is immortal. It transcends the elements of time. I would call my works a combination of experienced goodness with contemporary up-to-date motifs. But for me, one thing always remains unchanged; the sole purpose of art is to evoke emotions either in its joy or sadness. If art cannot be emotionally provocative, then to me, it cannot be called art. With my paintings, I aim to bring a little more of the beauty of emotion to my audience. The beauty of my art allows the world to appreciate and comprehend its own subtle complexities.

Biography.

Classically trained in Eastern Europe, Oksana began her career as an artist in L'viv, Ukraine. Oksana entered the Ivan Trush College of Decorative Arts in 1996. There, she studied all aspects of art and decided to make painting, especially of murals, her specialty. In 2001, she held her first solo exhibition at the L'viv University of Ivan Franko. It was in preparing her works for this show that she realized she had a love for the medium of oil. She finds that the truest hues are to be found in this medium due to its prolonged drying time and its ease in mixing. She finds it best to begin her work, not on a crisp, blank canvas, but on one that has been coloured, and or stained to allow her chosen medium to release its inner beauty and charm. Although aptly able to capture any image with an artist's eyes, Oksana's work as of late has revolved around the theme of woman in various stages, poses, and emotions. She equates her disdain of starting on a blank canvas to that of simply painting woman as an exercise in figure. In her view,

woman is neither crisp nor blank, but coloured and tinged;
each being an image or an iconoclast that is warm, or perhaps
cold, but always strong, alluring, full of mystique, and of
course, true inner beauty.

Oksana Zhelisko

www.zheliskoart.com

ksushabelaja@hotmail.com