Life Drawings by Nikolai Blokhin
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Contemporary Russian Realistic Art

Review by Vladimir London
Nikolai Blokhin is a contemporary fine artist from Russia. He was born in 1968 in St. Petersburg and spent fifteen years studying art from the age of twelve. Since 2000, he has been a professor of drawing in St. Petersburg Academy of Art.

Nikolai graduated from the St. Petersburg Repin Academy of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, where he is teaching drawing now. Repin Academy is the successor to the Imperial Academy of Arts and one of the strongest schools of fine art in the world today.

Many famous Russian artists of the past are associated with this Academy, such as Losenko, Bryullov, Ivanov, Repin, Vrubel, Serov, Malyavina, Feshin, as well as masters of the Soviet era, Moiseenko, Mylnikov and many others.

Nikolai Blokhin has his own unique drawing style. His drawings are very dynamic, full of complex rhythm lines and beautifully rendered. All of his artworks are made with passion and virtuosity. The gamut of lines and marks are very broad – from delicate thin lines, when a drawing tool gently touches the surface, to thick and bold expressive marks done with pressure and confidence.

Many preliminary drawings done by Nikolai are fully accomplished masterpieces in their own rights. Characters on Nikolai’s drawings are full of life, personality, and expression. He skillfully portrays the models’ psychological characteristics and inner world through their facial expressions, postures and drawing compositions.

Personages on Nikolai’s artworks live their days to the fullest. They are lyrical and brutal, hysterical and thoughtful, romantic and sophisticated. Single portraits and multi-figure compositions tell stories of people from all facets of life: ballet dancers, carnival goers, clowns, theatre actors and peasants.

And Nikolai groups his drawings into series, such as “peasants,” “clowns,” “ballet dancers,” “fighters,” and others.

By using minimal means of expression - a silhouette, tone spots, lines and gradations, Nikolai is able to create a phenomenal range of feelings depicted from life. He draws an expressive array of characters, while keeping his own style and viewpoint. They are full of spirit and soaked with Russian soul.

Nikolai Blokhin is continuing the proven, time-honored traditions of masters like Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Rembrandt, and many others, who were interested in depicting the human nature. In all his masterpieces, Nikolai focuses on a human being, on all the complexity of character types, facial expressions, emotions, and relationships.

His realistic yet stylish and vibrant drawings are full of living energy and Russian culture. Contemporary artists like Nikolai Blokhin keep the old traditions of the Russian art school alive. At a time when Western European and North American art is rapidly losing its original roots, the Russian art discipline still stands on the solid ground of traditional drawing skills that have developed since the times of the Old Masters.
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