



Artist and story teller

RUSSIAN-BORN ARTIST
ANNA BEREZOVSKAYA HAS
IMPRESSED ART LOVERS WITH
HER DISTINCTIVE STYLE AND
IMAGINATIVE PAINTINGS. UNVEILING
HER FIRST SOLO EXHIBITION AT THE
REDSEA GALLERY, SHE SHARES HER
INSIGHTS WITH VICTORIA LOKE

When and how did you become an artist? I remember that I was always painting, drawing and making play dough sculptures. I was fond of painting my dream house, putting the furniture inside and settling people there with their pets. In school, I was always dreaming. I was so deeply devoted that sometimes I would go home without my school bag.

What do you love most about art? I like paintings with narrative content. I love to invent and paint imaginative pictures where you can find many characters surrounded by landscapes and still life objects. I use landscapes and still life objects to say even more about my heroes. I like to invent parable stories where characters, at first sight, are doing regular things — working, painting, eating, dancing, falling in love — but there is more than just eating or working going on. For example, in my painting, *Feast of Kings*, there are 20 people eating at the table but I was more interested in their mutual relations — who loves whom and who is unhappy and why. I enjoy inventing stories where my heroes live exciting and fascinating lives. It is very interesting when you start seeing, in usual things, something unusual.

Has your age been an advantage or a stumbling block? At 17, I started selling my pictures. The owner of the gallery (the first gallery I started working with) only once mentioned that the price of my works may be a bit high for such a young artist. In a week, when 10 works were sold, the owner asked to raise the prices. No other problems with my age has ever emerged. On the contrary, people are happy that I am a young artist.



Who or what have been the major influences in your career? I was lucky to have met a wonderful teacher. Since then, my childish paintings have obtained professional traits.

You have characterised your own style as "poetic realism". How would you describe your creative process? My ideas come from my daily routine and everything around me. Every evening, I sit at the table and sketch small pictures — 5cm by 5 cm — about something that caught my eye during the day, or what I was impressed with or admired. These small sketches are the basis of my future works.

Tell us about the worlds in your paintings. I try to make my works metaphorical — full of compressed information, feelings and recollections. There must be a parable in it: The paintings represent more than what immediately meets the eye. My pictures are about myself and about things that touch people's minds. I strive to make my work affect the audience so that they can see themselves, their families and friends in my pictures — we are all different, and at the same time are very much alike. My works are about my family, myself and the people close to me. But I portray people in 16th to 19th century garments — this is a kind of technique.

What role do you see yourself playing in the global contemporary art scene? I'd like my pictures to be appreciated and want to have a chance to show my work to as many viewers as possible. I try not to think about my place on the modern art stage. I'm sure that when you do your job well, the audience will find something



that touches their hearts. One of the main issues, for an artist, is to find his or her audience. If the artist is really talented, he will definitely get through challenges successfully. These obstacles are necessary just to separate the wheat from the chaff.

How has fame changed you and what do you enjoy doing when you are not painting? Recognition hasn't changed me a lot. I feel like I'm still 17, as if I just started painting. I remember my first \$100 that I got for my first picture. Nowadays, my works are much more expensive but I'm still the same. When I am not painting, I enjoy horse riding, watching movies and reading. I also love to cook.

Where do you hope to see yourself in 10 years? I will be living here in Russia but I would love to have exhibitions all over the world. 📍

Catch Anna Berezovskaya's first solo exhibition in Singapore at the Red Sea Gallery, 9 Dempsey Road, which will unveil a new collection of more than 25 of her unique paintings. www.redseagallery.com