





The *art* of the NUDE

By John O'Hern

“**T**he goddess, drowned in a sea of milk, resembles a delicious courtesan, but not of flesh and blood—that would be indecent—but made of a sort of pink and white marzipan.” Thus Émile Zola described the sensation of the 1863 Paris Salon, Alexandre Cabanel’s *The Birth of Venus*. Napoleon III must not have read Zola’s review, since he bought the painting for his personal collection.

Zola, the critic and writer and proponent of “Naturalism” would, naturally, be opposed to Cabanel’s academic, overwrought, thinly-veiled eroticism in a painting of a figure from classical myth. Venus, goddess of love, was born of the sea foam and carried ashore. A safe vehicle for a voluptuous beauty.

The tide was turning in 1863 when the jury of the salon rejected more than 3,000 realists, impressionists, and other non-conformists. Napoleon III, however, decreed that a selection of the rejected work could be exhibited nearby in a Salon des Refusés. The tide rose to elevate the artists of the Refusés and Cabanel and academic realism began to sink. Today, both the virtues of the academy and the breakthroughs of the innovators are celebrated for what they were and continue to influence artists’ representations of the figure.

Beginning with Venus coming in on the tide, the theme of this introduction is the nude and water and the varied symbolism of both.

In stark contrast to Cabanel’s *Venus*, Maxwell Doig’s *Figure in Moorland Water II* is

painted using a complexity of techniques, with an unidealized figure bathing in the brown, nutrient-rich waters of the moors. The painting suggests the mysteries of the moors celebrated in literature by Emily Brontë and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle as the figure’s limbs disappear into the dark water and are distorted by the refraction of the light. Meticulously painted hair, rock, and grass give way to opalescent skin and, eventually to abstraction, with a brushily indistinct surface to the water as it recedes into the distance.

Daniel Catalano delves into quantum theory as he paints his disintegrating (and assembling) figures. He quotes Albert Einstein, “The distinction between the past, present and future is only a stubbornly persistent illusion.” As Doig combines approaches to painting from throughout history into one work of art, Catalano combines moments of movement in time into one figure. As he says, “multiple states of being seem to exist simultaneously.” Expecting to see a solid figure disappearing into a muddled reflection, we see, in Catalano’s paintings, the entire material world in movement.

Carol Coates describes herself as “a pioneer in mixed media; deviating from traditional media and photographic norms, and incorporating work in two and three dimensions. [My] work includes and falls between many worlds.” Whereas realist painters endure the comment, “It looks like a photograph!” Coates hears “It looks like a painting.” Looking at her 5-foot-square mixed media work on canvas, *Epilogue*, we are ambivalent about its materials and

Carol Coates, *Epilogue*, archival mixed media on canvas, 60 x 60". Courtesy the artist.



Alexandre Cabanel, *The Birth of Venus*, 1863, oil on canvas, 51 x 89". Collection Musée d'Orsay, Paris.



Harry Holland, *Boat Twelve*, oil on canvas, 30 x 48". Courtesy the artist and Albemarle Gallery, London.

ambivalent about its space. Not being sure, we can be drawn into enchantment, untethered from cares or solid reality.

Eric Zener's *Woman Falling Into a Dream*, does that as well. Zener has said "...water is a metaphor for a place of renewal and personal transformation—both literally and the ephemeral sense of escape we get when we plunge below the surface." Visually, she begins to dissolve as she sinks deeper into the water, aided by releasing the buoyant air in her lungs. Her land-based being dissolves as she returns to the primordial waters. Fearlessly surfing and swimming in the ocean, Zener is at home in the water and knows it well. With a degree in psychology, he is a self-taught painter, unburdened in a way by tradition and able to translate freely the psychology and physicality of immersion in water.

Harry Holland's figures show a moment of confusion as they bob rudderless and oarless in their overburdened boat. The threatening sky and the even, raking light suggest either the calm before or the calm after a storm. The light hits the figures evenly, giving them a commonality, while each responds to her situation differently—giving Holland the opportunity to express his drawing skills, "the magic of seeing something develop and come into being under my hands."

Recently censored on Instagram, Holland remarked, "Artists such as myself are trying to promote different values and try to place the human figure, including eroticism, into the context of generosity, wonder, celebration, humor and skill."

The paintings of Daniel Barkley exemplify humor and skill as well as a profound respect for his models, each of whom comes across as an individual rather than a stand-in for a human form. Barkley's blues are remarkable. "Blue is a spiritual color," he says. "It is the sky, the sea. A calm, soothing color." Blue was a substitute in a series of paintings of St. Sebastian. Concerned at the possible negative response to paintings of the unavoidably bloody, arrow-filled near martyrdom of the young soldier, Barkley painted the blood in blue. The calm of the blue may have allowed some to recall the story of Sebastian miraculously



Daniel Catalano, *Reflecting Pool 7*, oil on canvas, 36 x 18". Courtesy Glass Garage Fine Art Gallery, West Hollywood, CA.



Eric Zener, *Woman Falling Into a Dream*, oil on canvas, 48 x 60". Courtesy Gallery Henoch, New York.



surviving the arrows—only to be later clubbed to death when he publically berated the Emperor Diocletian.

Blue occurs again in Barkley's series on Icarus in the flimsy plastic wings the intrepid flier fashioned for himself. Barkley's blue comes from an unlikely source—the plastic ponchos worn by passengers on the Maid of the Mist as it tours the base of Niagara Falls.

His latest use of Barkley blue is in a series of paintings of males with large washbasins—the ambiguity of water both cleaning and leaving its mark. But even these images were censored on Facebook.

What is it that left its mark on the 19th-century French who couched their eroticism in classical myths and on a contemporary public that finds straightforward representations of the human form in art indecent and contrary to “community standards”?

W. Somerset Maugham wrote, “The artist produces for the liberation of his soul. It is his nature to create as it is the nature of water to run down the hill.”

Water, as it runs down the hill, wears away the hill. Good art will do the same. ●

Maxwell Doig, *Figure in Moorland Water II*, mixed media on canvas on board, 43.7 x 31½". Courtesy the artist and Albemarle Gallery, London.



HARRIET SAWYER

Richard J. Demato Fine Arts Gallery
(631) 725-1161
rjdgallery.com

Price Range

\$6,000 to \$16,000

Harriet Sawyer has been recognized as a leading textile designer worldwide and received many awards including being honored at The United Nations for The Fashion Institutes' "50 year Star Salute." Her work has been exhibited in the Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, and published in numerous books. Sawyer's paintings have been shown in multiple group and solo exhibitions.

"Nothing was ever as compelling for me as picking up a brush and reaching for a tube of paint. The choice came later," says Sawyer. "Searching for the connection between heart and soul, intellect and skill, and the ability to put it together, has been my lifelong journey. Creating a piece of art that satisfies me completely is a challenge and offers me the ultimate frustration with the pursuit of the highest of rewards. I possess an insatiable curiosity about what life has to offer and it is displayed in my art."

Sawyer marries realism and abstraction, integrating moments from life, snapshots, the small details that make up each day, interweaving each to form an emotional connection with her work. As she explains, the choice of color, light and composition stimulates the viewer—memory springs forth, allowing them to recollect and find a reality of their own.

The synthesis of these intangible truths and themes changes but



Being on the Grid, oil on canvas, 72 x 48"

not her passion. Sawyer is searching, propelled by curiosity, a quest for meaning, an aesthetic pursued through personal expression. Her inner subjectivity is

advocated by the symbolist painters of the late-19th century, and her paintings provide a mix of emotion and reality, expressed as modern symbolism.



PAUL KELLEY

(902) 693-3400
www.paulkelley.ca

Price Range

\$2,000 to \$20,000

Paul Kelley was born in Nova Scotia in 1955. He attended the bachelor's of fine arts program at Mount Allison University from 1973 to 1975 and currently resides in LaHave, Nova Scotia, with his wife and family.

His professional art career began in 1980. He has held several successful solo art exhibitions in Toronto, and has shown with galleries in New York, Nevada, and California. He presently represents his own business affairs. Kelley's work hangs in collections throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe.

A quiet lifestyle belies Kelley's acute sense of the elements of fundamental beauty and sensual allure. According to Kelley, he understands the subtle difference between "sensual beauty" and "sexual eroticism." That understanding, he adds, combined with his expertise in composing elements of his paintings within the parameters of his canvas, makes the artwork both powerful and appealing.

Each painting involves careful manipulation of light and form, color and composition, to create a balanced image that is powerful and sensual, mysterious yet inviting. Kelley paints in oil and his work adheres to the tradition of a full monochrome underpainting, followed by glazing, and a light impasto (no airbrushing). He uses combinations of manual techniques to convey the "feel" of the object being painted and approaches each creation as a new "learning curve," rarely relying on "formulas."



Bay Beach, oil on panel, 10½ x 16"



Wind from the West, oil on panel, 18 x 14"



MARTIN EICHINGER

Eichinger Sculpture Studio
(503) 223-0626
www.eichingersculpture.com

Price Range

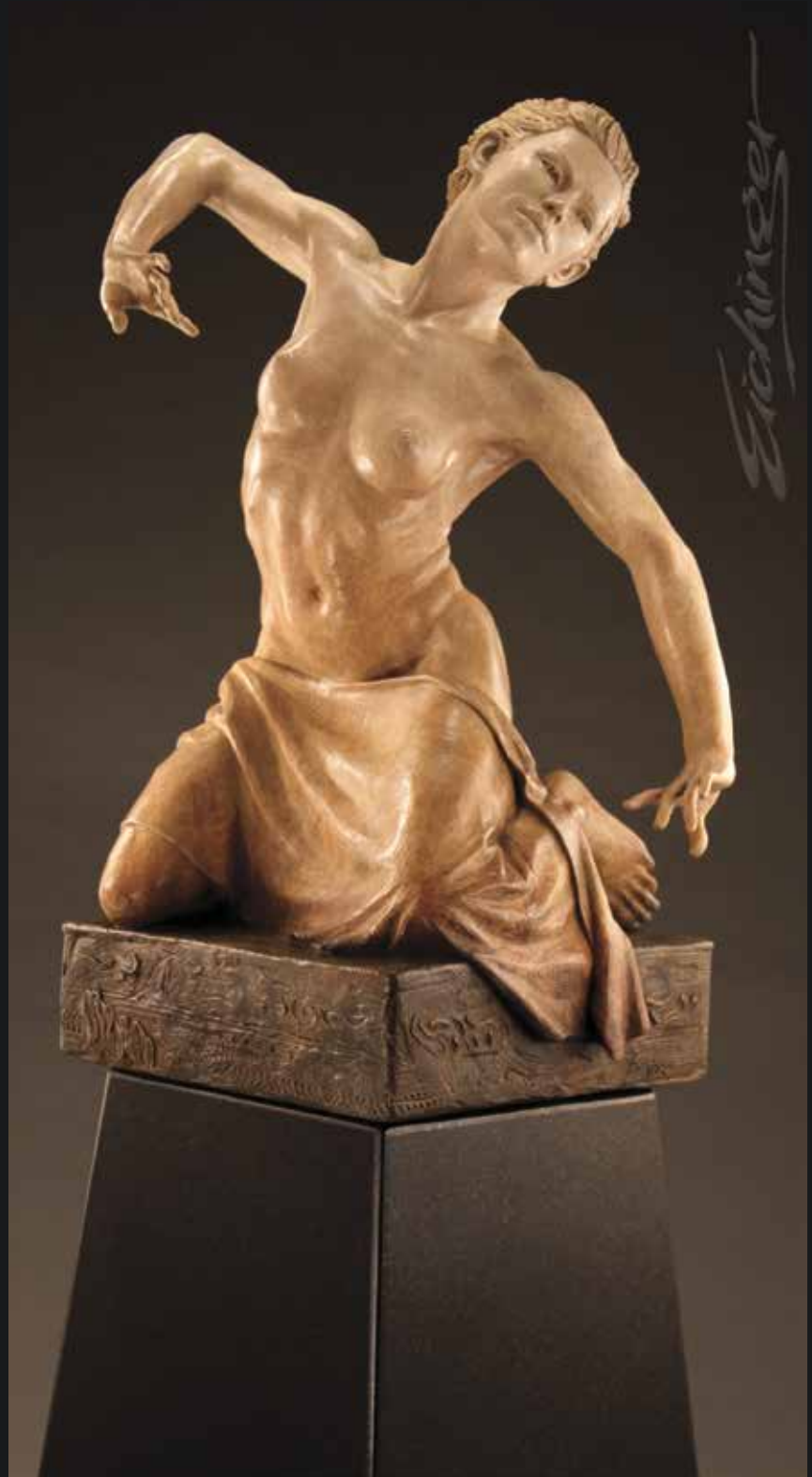
\$2,200 to \$98,000

Idealism, beauty and uplifting the human spirit through romantic, narrative sculpture are qualities that Martin Eichinger says he uses within his works. For three decades he has produced limited-edition sculptures that are visually satisfying and “challenge viewers to re-examine our view of our world.”

Eichinger’s works are found in numerous private and corporate collections with large-scale commissions and public art. In addition to university degrees, the artist undertook independent studies in classical sculpture throughout Europe, and he is a Fellow of the National Sculpture Society.

“The two words—inward and outward—describe my quest as an artist. The themes of my work seem to range back and forth between issues that we might call ‘public’ and others that are more internal to my own insights or ‘personal.’ Some look in, and others look out, but that is only the method that I go through to develop an original idea. After they become sculptures I guess they are all ‘public’ yet are still an internal pursuit or reflection of what I observe or experience,” says Eichinger.

His recently released series, *Meditation*, was an inward search for meaning as a sculptor. It is a collection of four works that were visualized while Eichinger practiced his personal four breath meditation that he has used for more than 30 years to clear his mind and open himself up. A long time ago, Eichinger created mnemonic devices



Fortify My Spirit, cast in bronze, 44 x 20 x 13"

to help him keep track of the deep slow breaths: *One with the Universe* (inhale); *To Love is To Be* (inhale); *Three Options Are Open* (inhale); *Fortify My Spirit* (inhale);

and repeat. These short phrases became increasingly meaningful to him and they became the visions of the four sculptures that share their titles.



LAURI BLANK

Blank Studio & Gallery Inc.
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Price Range

\$6,000 to \$17,000

Lauri Blank's figurative images, along with her passion and devotion, jump off the canvas to create an emotional connection with her viewers. Her style, which she refers to as "romantic figuratism," embodies a sense of peace and awe in her imagery.

"The passion in my heart influences and fuels my love of art and my profession," says Blank of her accomplishments. "The talent of success is nothing more than doing what you can do well, and doing well whatever you do without thought of success."

Blank also adds, "My interpretation of the human figure, especially the female figure, evokes sensuality, yet a sense of innocence. My paintings embody complex imagery, glorious human forms, windswept hair and symbols of nature. It is important for me that my audience, in a very simple way, gets pure enjoyment and pleasure from viewing and living with my art."

Blank's work has been exhibited in galleries throughout the nation. She has worked with the GRAMMY Awards to develop artwork for the awards show and has been commissioned for many projects. Some of the projects have been individual paintings as well as large, on-site projects such as a domed cathedral ceiling in a 19th-century church in Old Montreal, which was a six-month undertaking. Her paintings are available as originals, commissions, and embellished giclées on canvas.

Blank has an upcoming show at the Wynn Las Vegas, December 20 to 22.



Desire, oil, gold leaf on linen, 25 x 21"



Courage to Soar, oil on linen, 37 x 42"



**JASON PATRICK JENKINS,
B.F.A.**

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jasonpatrickjenkins.wordpress.com

Price Range
\$500 to \$5,500

Jason Patrick Jenkins is a traditional oil painter from Newfoundland. "I consider myself a classical realist, though my practice does diverge in some respects from the strictest definitions of the term," he says.

Jenkins is largely inspired by the oil painting of the Netherlands and Italy during the Baroque era and by classical and Hellenistic Greek sculpture. Influences for his work come from both Old Masters—Caravaggio, Vermeer, Rembrandt, and Velázquez—and contemporary artists such as Steve Hanks, John Howard Sanden, Robert Liberace, and David Gray.

"I am consumed by my fascination with oil paint, which dominates my production. I have worked in both direct and indirect styles of painting over the years," Jenkins says. "These days I find myself drawn more to traditional indirect painting, combining elements of the Flemish and Venetian schools, and working with significant emphasis on layering

and underpainting. I have a strong appreciation for traditional subjects, and my work usually consists of portraits, figures, drapery and still lifes. I do not seek to make bold social commentary in my work, or to make statements about our rapidly changing world, so much as to preserve and foster an appreciation for something a little quieter: beauty, transcendence, purpose, and consolation."

Jenkins was formally trained in art at Sir Wilfred Grenfell College where he earned a BFA in 2001. He currently resides and works in South Korea and next year he plans to return to Canada to live and work in Montreal. Jenkins is represented by James Baird Gallery and Galerie Gora in Canada, and by Dami/DM Gallery in Korea.



Desespoir, oil on canvas, 24 x 31½"

JOHN DE ANDREA

Palm Springs Art Museum
(760) 322-4800
psmuseum.org

Sculptor John De Andrea is known for realistic renderings of human figures, dressed and nude, in true-to-life postures. De Andrea is known for extremely realistic polyvinyl or polychromed bronze casts of the human figure that he makes from plastic, polyester, glass fiber with natural hair and painted after naturalistic gypsum castings. De Andrea's work *Joan* (1990), on view at the Palm Springs Art Museum, is part of a collection of gifts and promised works of modern and contemporary art from Donna and Cargill MacMillan Jr. The reclining sculpture of a young and



Joan, ca. 1990, oil on polyester resin with synthetic hair, 17½ x 74¾ x 19".
Promised gift of Donna and Cargill MacMillan Jr.

idealized body asks viewers to consider aesthetics over morality through the legacy

of idyllic recumbent nymphs and goddesses from the classical past, and references

the tradition of 17th-century Dutch realism.



PAMELA FRANKEL FIEDLER

INTRIGUE Gallery
(505) 820-9265
www.IntrigueGallery.com
www.FrankelFiedler.com

Price Range
\$500 to \$20,000

Pamela Frankel Fiedler's figurative work, intentionally devoid of reference to classical mythology and allegory, has a direct contemporary edge. Using a monochromatic palette, unassuming backgrounds and bold cropping, her nudes are emotionally and



Moonlight, oil on silver metal leaf on linen, 30 x 40"

sensually empowered. Fiedler indicates that her nudes spark various initial responses including shock,

seduction and guilt. Moving beyond depiction of mere physical beauty, her work deliberately portrays

the frequently secreted intimacies of human expression. Commissions are welcomed.



Yellow Scarf, oil on canvas, 36 x 23.6"



MAU-KUN YIM

Iris Yim
(919) 636-7571
(213) 820-6908
www.yimaukun.com

Price of Work
\$94,000

Mau-Kun Yim is an award-winning artist whose work has been featured in *International Artist* magazine and others. He won first place at the Portrait Society of America's 2005 *International Portrait Competition* and received

best of show at *Salon International 2005*. His clients include former president of Taiwan Lee Teng-hui, and Prime Minister Lee Huan.

The artist believes that realism is not duplication but a re-invention process that requires imagination, deep thinking, extensive research and solid painting skills. As a realist artist, he believes his mission lies in reflecting the real life of his era and the people and land where he lives.



Platinum, oil on linen, 24 x 18"



WILLIAM A. SCHNEIDER, OPA, PSA, AIS

(815) 455-4972
www.SchneiderArt.com

Price Range
\$1,375 to \$7,600

William A. Schneider loves to paint the figure... primarily from life. Sargent, Zorn, and Fechin have been influences.

His skills were honed during eight years at the American Academy of Art's Saturday Program under Bill Parks and Ted Smuskiewicz. He continued his education through workshops with

artists such as Dan Gerhartz and Harley Brown.

Schneider comments, "I view myself as a perpetual student!"

He has been featured in numerous magazine articles and books and his work has earned recognition in juried exhibitions with Oil Painters of America, the Pastel Society of America, and Portrait Society of America, to name a few.

Schneider was awarded Signature status in Oil Painters of America (OPA), the Pastel Society of America (PSA), and the American Impressionist Society (AIS). A list of galleries can be found on the artist's website.



Sisters, oil on panel, 48 x 36"



JANET A. COOK

(917) 747-6565
www.janetacook.com

Price Range
\$350 to \$10,000

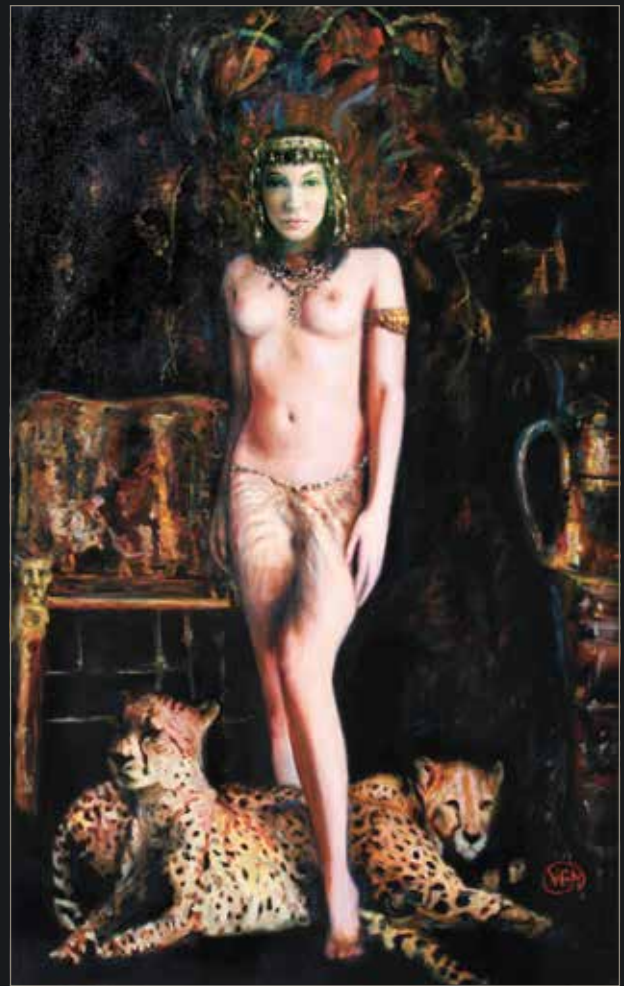
For Janet A. Cook the figure is an endless source of fascination and it is the most demanding of all subject matter. It's "powerful, beautiful and timeless."

Working in the classic tradition of figurative painting, Cook's work is influenced by the artists of the Renaissance and Mannerist periods working in the 16th and 17th centuries. She combines

the fluidity and movement from these Old Masters with a contemporary set of imagery that is not only from this world but also from her imagination.

Abstraction, repetition, pattern and symbolism are important components of her work, but her ultimate goal is to intrigue and engage the viewer.

Cook is represented by Dacia Gallery in New York City.



Cleopatra Meets Marc Anthony, oil, 53½ x 32½"



WILLIAM B. MILLER JR.

(602) 463-5236
billmillerstudio.com

Price Range
\$1,500 to \$8,500

According to William B. Miller Jr., he is interested in "re-imagining the classical nude more suited to the sensibilities of our time. Contemporary society has evolved away from the

standard demure nude to accept that sensuality is more direct."

He continues, "The gaze of a nude subject need not be off placidly in the distance, but can meet the viewer on equal terms. Although many of my themes are based on the old classical temptresses, such as Delilah, Judith, and Salome, I want them to be more directly provocative to reflect a modern idiom. These lavish images are meant for collectors who want other people to notice what is on their walls, just like the great patrons of the past."

Miller's work can be found at Hilliard Gallery in Kansas City, Missouri.



ALEKSANDR FAYVISOVICH

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Price Range

\$5,000 to \$7,500

According to Aleksandr Fayvisovich, in contemporary art with its characteristic variety of styles, the creative work of many artists is focused on finding new art forms that are adequate for our time. In his works, these searches are seen clearly and distinctly. Fayvisovich's understanding of pictorial composition, with an emphasis on developing a color theme, retains the basic features of classical paintings. Simultaneously, the style emphasizes their sketch-like, living nature. The carefully thought-out snapshot of reality becomes the basis of the image, determining the validity and familiarity of the plot. Coloring of the works are developed around a central color theme—the theme of a silver-blue moonlit night or a bright yellow sunny July afternoon. The combination of a classical compositional construction and a light, laidback manner of an image in the style of a sketch is a feature of many works by the artist.

As Fayvisovich explains, his interest toward everyday reality and genuine human emotions continues the tradition of European art of the first half of the 20th century. "Real people, not just stylized conventional schemes, as the main plot of figurative painting, returns to viewers in the paintings of many contemporary artists," says Fayvisovich.

The artist's paintings can be seen in Paris, France, at the annual international exhibition *Salon Art en Capital 2012*; the event takes place November through December. In March 2013, Fayvisovich's works will be on display at *Artexpo New York 2013*.



July, oil on canvas, 30 x 30"



Winter Light, oil on canvas, 36 x 36"



Male Torso, bronze, 28" tall



KIRSTEN KOKKIN

(917) 743-2423
www.kokkinsculpture.com

Price Range
\$900 to \$240,000

Loveland, Colorado-based sculptor Kirsten Kokkin creates works that reflect the European tradition of figurative sculptors such as Michelangelo, Bernini, Rodin, and Vigeland. Despite

close ties to history, she has managed to create her own position with her detailed and strongly feminine style. Originality and strength of expression mark her works, which are executed with accuracy in terms of anatomy and details, and they convey a sensual yet energetic quality.

Kokkin has created a number of monuments, both public and private commissions, and her artwork is found around the world with a majority of the pieces in the United States and Norway.



Rebecca, oil, 36 x 26"



HELEN HORN MUSSER

(972) 524-3368
www.helenmusser.com

Price Range
\$300 to \$4,500

Helen Horn Musser has been painting for more than 30 years and works in several mediums including oil, watercolor, acrylic and encaustic. She studied oil and encaustic at Southern Methodist University, and

has attended workshops with master artists such as Kevin Macpherson, Tom Lynch, and C.W. Mundy. Inspiration and knowledge for her work was gained through many teachers.

Musser's art is a reflection of her everyday thoughts. She creates works of both the past and the present. She currently is working with oil glazes and is inspired by the glow of the colors as the oil is applied.

According to the artist, she "will always paint and looks forward to many more years of creativity."



OKSANA GRINEVA

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Price Range

\$25,000 to \$90,000

Chicago-based artist Oksana Grineva was born in Tomsk, Siberia. At the age of 3 she began drawing and painting. Her parents moved the family to the Ukraine where Grineva attended several private schools. She graduated from Samokisha Art College and received her master's degree from Kharkov Art Academy. She moved to the United States in 1996.

Her light-filled oils are intended to invite viewers to become part of her vision of joy, beauty and elegance. The works show rich color and energetic brushstrokes, adding feelings of movement and life to her art. Over time, Grineva's artwork has evolved. As she explains, her new style is charged with electricity and filled with surprises.

Her female nudes contrast starkly with backgrounds of shimmering, vibrating color. A bit of whimsy comes out as butterflies perch in unexpected places. For the artist, the introduction of butterflies symbolizes new beginning and hope.

Grineva has exhibited and sold nationally and internationally. Her works hang in private and corporate collections.



Madame Butterfly, oil on canvas, 30 x 24"



E.L. STEWART

(509) 327-2456
www.elstewart.com

Price Range

\$350 to \$3,500

This acrylic on canvas painting titled *BREATH* is an example of E.L. Stewart's convergence of realist figure and abstract painting. As a young woman, she studied at a private design school for illustration, graphic design and advertising.

"Since leaving school, I have encountered a lifetime of inspiration through experience and



BREATH, acrylic on canvas, 15 x 30"

exploration," says Stewart. "I have gradually moved into creating work that encompasses both of my loves: a love of rendering the human figure in narrative and an expressive

abstraction, painting honestly with sensitivity using active line and varying intensities of color. I am very pleased with my process and the work that results."

Stewart's work hangs in

many private collections throughout the United States and is included in the art collection of Gonzaga University of Spokane in Washington state.



Morning Bather, oil on canvas, 40 x 30"



**OLGA DICKEY-
DEMCHENKO**

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olgademchenko@yahoo.com

Price Range
\$2,000 to \$20,000

Olga Dickey-Demchenko is a graduate of Moscow University of Culture and Arts. She immigrated to the United

States in 1999 and now resides in Southern California. Her passion to create is her driving force. According to Dickey-Demchenko, she knows there is a "force pushing her to complete her works as hours pass into days." She says that the passion is one of the "most fascinating aspects" of her personality.

She adds that passion

motivates her beyond any other force and her passion for life is seen in many ways. Dickey-Demchenko's artwork reflects how she views life and the artistic passion challenges her to new heights. Moreover, she explains that beneath the surface of her paintings are the elements of this passion.



LIA ALI

(917) 975-9747
www.liaart.com

Price Range
\$1,700 to \$2,500

Lia Ali is an artist born in Sofia, Bulgaria. She graduated at the National Academy of Arts where she learned techniques such as stained glass, printmaking, mosaics, and decorative

interior and exterior murals. After graduation she began to study visual art techniques and worked with programs at New Bulgarian University. For her first show in Bulgaria, *Magic of the Water*, guests were some of the country's famous ministers such as Todor Chobanov and Vejdi Rashidov. Her paintings are found in multiple collections around the world. Since 2011 she has been studying painting at New York Academy of Art where she has worked with painters such as Steven Assael and Edward Schmidt.



Sunflowers, oil on canvas, 72 x 54"



PETER BAGNOLO

(630) 510-7979, x-1
www.ABagnoloart.com

Price Range
\$500 to \$7,500

Artist Peter Bagnolo combines oil and acrylic on canvas for his painting *Olivia At Rest*. The work is an image of Italian born, classically-trained model Olivia. When creating his works, Bagnolo follows his normal regimen of underpainting in thin to medium glazes of water-based or acrylic paint before using the final slightly impasto layers of either oil



Olivia At Rest, oil/acrylic on canvas, 20 x 30"

and/or acrylic.

"It was a pleasure finding someone trained as an artist's model," explains Bagnolo. "Such models

are very difficult to find in the Chicago suburbs but an artist friend mentioned Olivia, so I gave her a call and the result was she looked

at my sketches and other paintings and immediately said yes to posing for me despite the fact that she said she has retired."