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20th century realism collection and soviet art expert Joining the international VELVENOIR network

VELVENOIR offers its own vetted 20th Century Realism Collection which was carefully selected by Soviet Art expert Myroslava Hartmond who joined the international VELVENOIR network with her expertise and know-how to support and guide clients through the Soviet Art market.

Kiev, 01. November 2017. VELVENOIR, international art consultancy and concierge, today announced the latest collaboration with Soviet Art expert Myroslava Hartmond. Through this collaboration, VELVENOIR has exclusive access to a curated 20th Century Realism Collection and an expert who is available to guide through the Soviet Art market.

The demand of social realism art has been growing over the last years. Social Realism known for its striking monumental canvases depict the vast and varied landscapes of the former Soviet Union, the lives of its hardworking people, as well as scenes from important historical events. Indeed, Socialist Realism has been the rising star of the global art market in recent years. It makes for a particularly attractive investment for private and corporate clients, and forms the basis of museum collections.

We have created a selection of works by some of Eastern Europe's most renowned landscape painters, including Anatolii Fomin, Aleksandr Mynka, Yevgenii Chuikov, Nina Prokhorova, Leonid Zaborovskii, et al. The expressiveness and technical mastery of their works are rooted in strong academic training and the relative isolation of the artists during a unique period in art history. These paintings are characterized by a raw sense of truth, compositionally and chromatically tasked to convey a sense of presence before the beauty of a real scene: whether a seascape, a forest clearing, or an urban landscape.

'Realism never goes out of fashion,' says Myroslava Hartmond, expert in our network. Many clients quietly admit to me that they do, in fact, prefer traditional landscape or still life to contemporary art that is often more abstract. With today's tendency towards eclecticism in interior design, I adore introducing classic pieces into minimalist interiors. Twentieth-century realists are also a sound bet for investors looking for art that will steadily gain in value due over the coming years.'

The artists, whose work forms part of the 20th century realism collection, created in the Soviet period, when the artist relied on the state for patronage. It is true the state had control over artistic output – access to art materials was given only to members of an Artists' Union, who went through the traditional art academy route. The academies took their cue from 19th-century realism, and rejected the modernist ideals propagated by their Western counterparts. Under communism, no art market existed as such: the state commissioned artists to create uplifting, motivational, and technically accomplished artworks to decorate public buildings.

This led to the creation of a hermetic body of work – technically accomplished, true to life, and expressive within the rigid canon of academic painting. Many of these works were acquired in the early 1990s directly from the artists' studios, as well as local dealerships during the early years of Ukrainian independence. Art of the Soviet period has entered the market, and has gained a steady following among collectors and investors alike due to its high quality and scarcity.

Artists include:

Anatolii Fomin (1925-2013)
Nina Prokhorova (1925-2002)
Yevgenii Chuikov (1924-2000)
Nikolai Karmaz (1927-2001)
Aleksandr Mynka (1938-1999)
Anatolii Liashkov (b. 1923)
Boris Portnoi (b. 1937)
Leonid Zaborovskii (b. 1967)

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"Operating at a global level, with a lot of different enquiries and demand for all sort of art – for us it was essential to bring another expert on board who has direct access to social realism art as well as is able to guide our clients through the soviet art market." Alexandra Schafer – Managing Director, VELVENOIR

"I started to take a professional interest in 20th-century realist painting by Ukrainian artists in 2009, when I took part in the Russian Art Fair in Knightsbridge, London, curating a selection of works from my family collection of Soviet artworks. My parents, long-time collectors, have long understood the unique value proposition of this often-overlooked category of fine art. By the 2000s, there was an established market for Soviet artworks in the West. In the UK alone, top auction houses Sotheby's and Christie's featured them twice a year in their Russian art sales, while Soviet works formed an integral part of the MacDougall's agenda. However, as time went by, collectors looked beyond the initial 'kitsch' factor of Socialist Realism, discovering the high academic training and art-historical value of the works through the work of such experts as Matthew Bown and Boris Groys. Since then, I have vowed to become an expert in art of the Soviet period, its various genres and currents, and the way it fits into global art history --- and the global art market. What appeals to me about art of the Soviet period is its historicity, a quality that imbues both the official Socialist Realist art and the Non-Conformist art created by dissident artists. These works belong to a time, a place, a historic context, and that determines their aesthetic. I have often worked with first-time buyers who are looking for a quality period piece that won't lose value over time, and one that they 'understand'. This is the appeal of figurative art, especially one that takes its cues from French academic painting of the 19th century... it radiates harmony and beauty. 20th century realist artworks often look surprisingly chic when placed in an eclectic setting. I like to experiment with innovative framing approaches. For example, an academic landscape (created to decorate the hall of a public building), may lend a minimalist contemporary interior a grandeur and a sophistication that it might otherwise lack. Collectors sometimes like to experiment also with genre-paintings (showing scenes from life) and still life paintings, and sometimes even political artworks, but landscape oil paintings remain the steady bestsellers." – Myroslava Hartmond VELVENOIR

Through this collaboration, VELVENOIR and its international network of art experts are able to offer access to a 20th century realism collection, curated by Myroslava Hartmond as well as guidance and advisory during the acquisition.

About VELVENOIR

At VELVENOIR our raison d'être is about unfolding the potential of art as an investment, as an identity, and as an experience. Providing bespoke art advisory and consultancy services to collectors, designers, project managers and property developers in respect of their hospitality, residential and commercial projects, across the globe in collaboration with an international network of art, hospitality and branding experts. At all price levels, VELVENOIR implements a curated and tailored approach towards the art collection, marketing and branding, to truly communicate the art investment with our client and their audience. Through VELVENOIR – we created a full-service boutique art concierge and consultancy that sets us apart by assisting our clients in adding financial and aesthetical value to the newly developed projects as well as private collections. From sourcing to marketing the entire collection to the relevant audience, we cover it all and go beyond the conventional art consultancy service. velvenoir.com

NOTES TO EDITORS

Contact: Antonia Hoelke
antonia@velvenoir.com

Website: velvenoir.com

Social Media:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/VELVENOIR/>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/Velvenoir>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/velvenoir/>

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