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On The Fields of Russian Abstractionism

Sweet Samson's artworks display on exhibition 'Landscapes of Abstraction' and modern Russian Abstract Art

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Sergey Kupriyanov – a president of Union of Russian Abstractionists and one of the most notable figures in Russian modern abstract art said once: “Abstractionism, as quality associated with emancipation conveys in itself instances of unrestricted individuality, unrestraint creation, liberated thinking. Sometimes it might be a bit challenging for a western thinker to relate to the abstract Russian soul.”

It is known fact that abstractionism has Russian roots. The very first abstractionist, a legendary Kandinsky is a part of the art history, as well as, Malevich, Lisitsky and Rodchenko. Despite cultural heritage of Russian abstract arts, with all potentials of its artists that could keep Russia on the forefront of abstract art scene, as well as, many brave and progressive ideas that originated here, somehow conflicting attitudes about abstractionism in Russia often prevailed in the past and even today it is so. Abstract art started over 100 years ago and it can hardly be called novelty nowadays, although current development of different variations of abstract art flourishes like never before.



Wassily Kandinsky 'On White II' (1923)

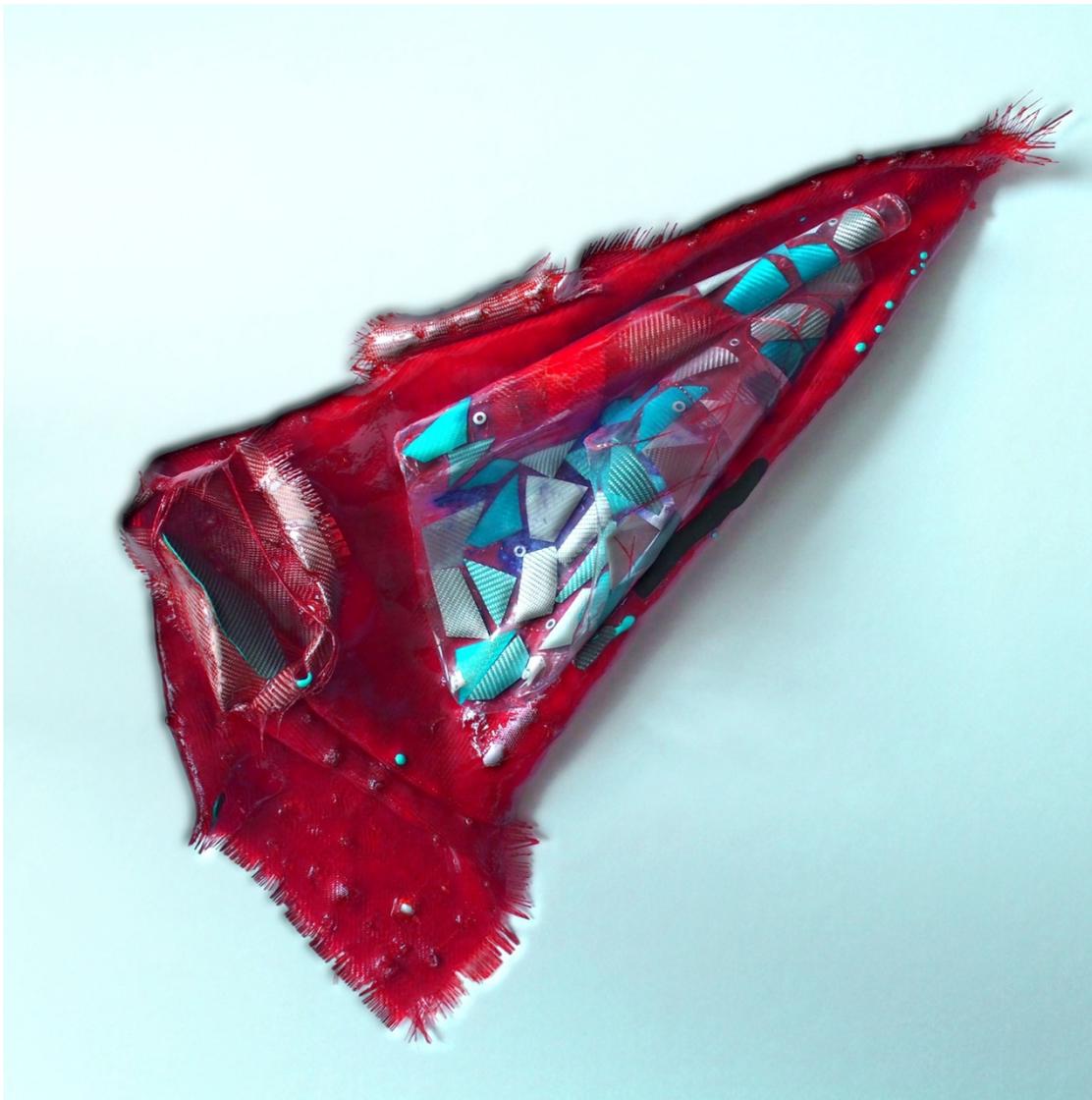
Besides already mentioned artists, the evolution of early abstractionism was marked by Piet Mondrian, Robert Delaunay, Pablo Picasso and in the mid of XX century continued in the form of abstract expressionism of Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko, Hans Hofmann, Willem De Kooning, Franz Kline and others. At that period abstractionists of Russian origin such as Sergey Sharshun, Andre Lanskoj, Serj Polyakov, Nicola De Stael had strong impact on the abstract art globally. After that, the multitude of abstract movements blossomed – from Minimalism, Neo and Post Conceptualism, Pop and Op Art, mixed and digital art to multimedia and tech art, as well as, many more forms that have been developing up to the present day. For example, a new American painting style, 'post-painterly abstraction', had its peak in works of Frank Stella and Ellsworth Kelly and it expanded further by the end of the XX century.

Just recently, an international exhibition “Landscapes of Abstraction” closed its doors at the Central House of Artists. More than 70 artists from different countries participated in the exhibition. One of the brightest apologists was Sweet Samson, an artist of Russian origin who lives in California. Never ending question remains, what genuinely new and distinctive could be added to the contemporary art nowadays? So much is already created, shown, written and said. Still, Sweet Samson added a new twist and received warm recognition from art connoisseurs, gallery experts and art critics. She creates outstanding and daring forms based on polymer composites, in particular carbon fiber.



Alexander Rodchenko 'Composition' (1917)

Novelty in abstractionism, participation in numerous exhibitions, vivid international experience and education from top art schools shaped Sweet Samson in a way that she is one of the most prominent young artists of today, who sets the tone in art that requires to be contemplated about. 'Dynamic Carbon' is distinctive direction that Sweet brought to the art. At the exhibition, several winners have been selected in categories painting, graphic, photography and object. Some of the laureates demonstrated their affinity to the cutting edge abstract styles, which was noted by the expert committee.



Sweet Samson 'Composite Lobstering' (2015)

We have interviewed artist Sweet Samson after the exhibition where she was awarded a Laureate.

“In Russia there are many initiatives and undertakings in the field of abstract art that are well worth attention. Viewers’ interest confirms that process moves in right direction. For artists-abstractionists it is very important to keep it going further and never stop.

For example, in the West, greater part of galleries, collectors and art lovers are wholeheartedly open to abstract, conceptual and experimental arts. Artists do not shy away expressing their views. Major world art spaces exhibit newer artists, as well as, already established ones. Of course, I cannot say I like everything, but there is another point here. Reaching new horizons and novelty are appreciated. This allows for regeneration, art is not stuck, it evolves.

Abstractionism is a way of communication, a starting point for a dialog with oneself and others. If abstract work evokes a thought that nothing can be understood, it is a great start for contemplation why it is so, what is the reason? In the world leading art cities, an art education focuses chiefly on critical thinking, as well as, the ability to think conceptually and develop multilayered comprehension of ideas. It’s a sort of a philosophical approach bordering with metaphysical aspects. It seems that global crisis of human consciousness played its role, too. Due to technological and informational overload, a kind of reset, unloading and less linear thinking is required. Abstractionism in art is somehow looking for solutions here. Thinking abstract is not strange to Russians, and Russian art could have much stronger positions in this field quite naturally”, concluded the artist.

Altogether, our national cultural space is quite fruitful, unique and has a lot to show to the local and international audiences. It continues traditions of being innovative and with a stance. Although the art is a subtle matter, without doubt it can be noted that Russian abstract artists continue strongly on their paths pursuing creativity and progressive ideas.

Many abstract artists of younger generations have been working hard on searching new and original ideas. It cannot be overestimated how important are efforts of the Creative Artists Union of Russia under supervision of Konstantin Hudyakov and the Union of Russian Abstractionists led by Sergey Kupriyanov. Together with art institutions, creative associations and individual artists they are instrumental to continuous development of abstractionism in cultural life of modern Russia.

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