

The return of the artist who disappeared– Henri Yagodkin's comeback exhibition in Abu Dhabi

Henri Yagodkin is considered to be one of the most shining current examples of the traditional Ukrainian school of art. So why has the artist been under cover for the past two decades?

First of all, it is important to understand what makes an artist different from other people. The artist has a unique talent to visually express their feelings, thoughts and emotions – a true artists' work is always unique and exclusive, their art becomes a portal to the soul and mind of the artist, thus allowing us to see the world through their eyes. An artist is an artist all the time, they do not clock in and clock out to being an artist from nine to five, and take a break in the week end. They are the ones who always remain who they are – and this is where the beauty of artists lies.

Looking at the curious case of Henri Yagodkin, we see the enigma of an artist voluntarily taking a break from his artist career – but this seems to be the case only on the surface. His career began to flourish in the 70's, culminating in several international exhibitions in the 90s, and on paper, not resuming until now, September 2015, in Abu Dhabi. As irregular of a choice as it is seems to press pause on a professional career, here we see a living example of a man who marches to the beat of his own drum. He chooses to live his life simply, without even owning a cell phone. He paints for pleasure, out of love for the art, in his studio, inspired by the coastal scenes, books, walks in the forest, and attending week long *plein airs*, only to keep his completed works at home with the idea of leaving it as a legacy to his children. Henri Yagodkin is a unique case where his love of creation wins over the desire to expose his work. A man of simple tastes, Henri Yagodkin does not require the limelight or the affirmation. The outcome of his work is his reward. The break in a career is only an illusion, as Henri never stopped being an artist, he simply moved away from the other aspects of the profession which he did not feel the need to maintain. Currently Henri Yagodkin remains a respected and influential figure as a lecturer and professor at the prestigious National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture in Kiev.

Things remained unchanged until 2013, when N2N Gallery, a newcomer on the Abu Dhabi market lead by two Ukrainian art lovers, decided to convince the artist (with the help of his talented and established artist daughter) to expose some of his works in Abu Dhabi. Finally Henri Yagodkin agreed, perhaps with the new found excitement of bringing his art somewhere so new and unexpected, or perhaps prompted by the realization to take a chance to do something remarkable, and represent his country and heritage. The collection that will be shown in N2N Gallery starting September 15th was intended to be left as a legacy for Henri Yagodkin's grandchildren, but as the artist never stops being an artist, he will continue his passion of creation, and meanwhile, the exhibition at N2N Gallery will remain the only opportunity in the world to otherwise see and own the original works of art of Henri Yagodkin.

The solo exhibition "Sunny Portals" of Henri Yagodkin will debut in N2N Gallery, Nation Towers Galleria, Corniche, Abu Dhabi, starting the 15th September at 7.30 PM.

Exhibition duration: 15th September – 6th October, 2015.