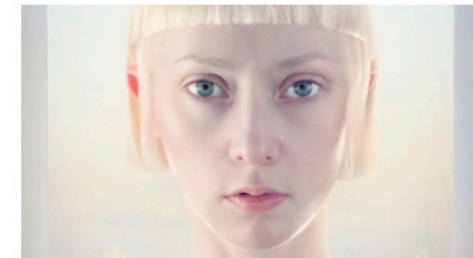


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Unveiling the Creative Soul of Katerina Belkina

Written by Kooness



Katerina Belkina
Artist



Galerie Z22
Berlin, Germany

Katerina Belkina, Russian Artist born in Samara, tells us about how being raised in an artistic household influenced her artistic career. The artist talks in depth about her purpose and the role of art in society. Read the interview to discover more.

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Kooness: Describe what kind of art you focus on.

Katerina Belkina: Professionally and purposefully I have been developing my artistic career for about 20 years, but apart from the desire to achieve my personal goals and take a space in the Art Market, I also would love to be an artist unrelated to exhibitions, sales, success and importance in society. Because above all, for me, being an artist is a way of thinking, a way of expressing thoughts and emotions, a way of communicating to the world. And rather than building it or growing it, I think it's something you either have or not. I was born with it. It is when you spend all your free time fantasizing and can't live without creating something, not even for a few days.

When a game, a creating process, an exploration of yourself and everything around you is your main focus and pleasure. Materials, ways, and themes can change, but the way you live is never changing. I've tried a lot of things: acting in theatre, dance and oil painting, but stopped at the mix of photography and digital painting. I've been doing this well for over 20 years.

Now, I am gradually going towards hybrid art, where, other than my usual graphics, I also include video art, spiritual practices, performances and try new technologies. It seems to me that in the future the boundaries of different forms and genres in art will be increasingly blurred. Visual arts will become as integral as TV and communication on the Internet, and I hope available for everyone.

K: Why do you make this type of art?

KB: There is a nice phrase I stand by «it has happened historically». I'm from a half artists and half mathematicians family. I was born surrounded by a photography passion carried by the male members of my family. I inherited a boundless interest in photography from them. In 4th grade, I signed up for a photography club where I learned to shoot on film, develop it myself as well as print it. Soon enough, I got my first camera. From female members of my family – my mother – I learnt the love for art, because she's a painter. Till some time there were two manifestations of myself – to draw and to take photographs. I tried to work on them in parallel as two hobbies and then my own technique appeared, which is also my method of communication with a viewer and concept - to remove details from the real world and bring something from the fantasy world, or focus on what you want.

K: How do you make your artworks?

KB: At first, I always catch myself on some strong emotions in connection to the circumstance and place. Then, I strive to transform these emotions into an artistic image. At the very moment, I realize what kind of a character I want for the artwork or for the project and what its task is, then I start creating a new world for it. After, some research begins and a wave of insight starts. What, where, how. The brain solves these tasks instantly. I just need to choose what corresponds to the intended world. Sometimes, it seems to me that I do not even have time to half-think, but it floats up and floats to the surface. I just need to select the most suitable details and ideas. This is a quest. I'm getting more and more excited by it all. During this time period, I have a lot of daydreaming and sometimes do some sketches. After all my discoveries, I usually have a shooting, a compilation and start the digital drawing. I think the most time consuming part is the process of thinking and living in the atmosphere of the project necessary for the future artworks, while photography is the fastest and easiest part. The drawing takes two to four weeks. Every detail must be brought to perfection. I love refining details because this way I have time to decide what and how things should work in the image. This applies not only to the elements, but composition, tone and color palette. I know that if I don't finish something perfectly, or I don't know what the solution is at some point, then I will be haunted by it... Then, I print it on paper and I take the artwork into the world, to an independent life.

K: What does your art mean for you.

KB: It's always chronicles of my biography and reflections on what is happening privately in my life, given what is going on around me in the big world. For me, real art is always first-person narrative, not from the society and trendy demanded themes. Of course, they should be covered by someone. And we artists do it anyway. But there is a difference between when some problem of society has touched you personally and you have the opportunity to live it deeply and meaningful through, or as an option going from interest in this topic, be immersed in it, to feel really deep, by channeling yourself.



Katerina Belkina. Moonset, 2022. Courtesy of Galerie Z22

K: Describe how art is important to society.

KB: As I said above, I think and certainly hope that in the future art will become an integral part of everyone's life as work, family, free time, communication. In fact, it has always been very important. Through art, one can judge the cultural trends, social rules, norms, traditions and development of society. Art influences ideologies, values, behavioral characteristics of people and influences the development of the social system as a whole.

Art is the sixth sense and intelligence of society. The development and representation of artworks can show the culture of different places and its population. I believe the pattern of art consumption must change as it should be more supported on different levels.

Overall, I would like to change it by creating high quality artworks, with love and attention to the messages it carries.

K: How do you define success as an artist?

KB: There are two systems of the artist's value and the importance of their art. One social system in the present - respected art institutions represent your art work, accept you into the community, as well as auction games. But again accidentally or naturally with the appearance of social networks artists got the opportunity to show their art independently. It's not easy either, because we all know about algorithms, and now we need to invest in advertising - time and money. But the very fact that such an opportunity has appeared in parallel is encouraging. The institutions have also come there. If a museum does not have an Instagram profile, people count that is not a museum at all - again an attempt not to lose control and power.

The second value system is that it's out of the actual circuits, it's a temporal Universe value system. Unfortunately, during artist's lifetime, an artist often does not know what position their art will take. However, there is hope that their art will definitely live on.

Individually, I focus on the fact that I can live off money from art which I create without betraying myself, do what I want, what I think is important, what drives me. This is what I think the yardstick of success is. And also, when more and more increasingly audacious ideas of mine are being realized. The more free you are in your concepts and production, the more successful you are and vice versa. How the public will accept my art is beyond my control. And there is no desire to control it. In the end, we return to the origins and to the childhood state, when you get caught in the fantasy, realized as you wanted and rejoice even before the first viewer sees it and think about it. More and more I understand how valuable it is to retain this quality.

K: What is the purpose of your artworks?

KB: I think my artworks hold the purpose of using me as a tool for the earthly realization of Space ideas - to be a bridge between two worlds. I understand it sounds ridiculous and grandiose, but there is a truth in that. Everyone can also think about own creative activities in any field the same way. And this will only improve its quality. Be responsible for those ideas which have tamed.

Cover Image: Katerina Belkina. Kuybyshev Square, 2014. Courtesy of Galerie Z22

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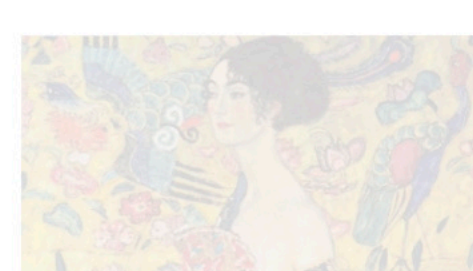
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