PRIVATE WALLS
GALLERY



OSCAR

Anastasia Kurakina

Russia (1987)

Type	Medium	Dimensions
Painting	Oil on canvas	68 cm x 49 cm

Private Walls Gallery
Kleine Reinaertdreef 11
B-9830 Sint-Martens-Latem

Private Walls Gallery - Knokke-Zoute
Zeedijk 759
B-8300 Knokke-Zoute

privatewalls.com
art@privatewalls.com
+32 475 760 760

BIOGRAPHY



In search of the human essence

As an artist, Anastasia Kurakina (°1987, Moscow, lives and works in London) nurtures a great fondness for human beings. Fascinated by the complex psychology of each individual, she repeatedly tries to capture those characteristics that define our uniqueness. This is why she prefers to work from living models. 'If someone is sitting in front of me, I can feel that person much more intensely and arrive at a fascinating pose while talking. I find it even more interesting to portray people in their own environment, because their homes often reveal a lot about who they are,' Kurakina says.

Although she also works on commission, Kurakina does not shy away from addressing people who fascinate her on the street. In this sense, her - main - hometown of London is an inexhaustible source of inspiration. 'Londoners come from everywhere, and often dress very personally. Moreover, on the street you often see people from different backgrounds walking together. That contrast reinforces their individuality. I have a fondness for people who are not too perfect and who radiate a kind of suffering. I find it fascinating to try to capture that inner struggle, and so give my portrait more depth. Through their eyes, I can capture the soul of each person.'

Each portrait starts with the eyes and a few rough, black outlines. These define the image, which then gradually emerges naturally. 'It's like walking in the mist, and the image gradually becomes clearer and clearer. The fact that I myself don't know exactly what will happen makes it fascinating. I only see myself as a participant in a creative process. The colours also arise intuitively and are dictated by the state of mind of the person I am portraying. I pay attention to the smallest details and emotional reactions, and try to translate them into an individual portrait,' Kurakina says.

'Thanks to this psychological analysis, my paintings show emotions that people never experience in the mirror or through a photograph. What they try to hide, I deepen and make visible. I try to penetrate to the essence of their being. Although that scares some people, there is no need for it. Because as Picasso said: in the end, every artist portrays himself first and foremost.'

Pure magic

Although she works with various techniques and materials, Kurakina's preference is for watercolour on paper. 'I love the directness of watercolour. Every painterly gesture is definitive, and therefore surprising. Moreover, watercolour allows you to leave a large part of the background white, so the image dialogues with the background and, thanks to its transparency, acquires a certain lightness. Although I sometimes dare to apply a few strokes of oil paint, as a solid counterbalance to the soft watercolours.'

'Like Henri Matisse and Italian Renaissance painters like Giotto, I experiment with the vibrant power of colours, trying to leave academic knowledge behind. Like Egon Schiele, I play with framing, making my characters seem to want to escape from their frame. Each new work arises instinctively, and is also a discovery for me every time. If other people experience the same emotions afterwards, that is pure magic.'