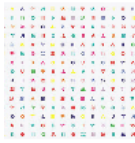


# Nicholas Chistiakov

## ART CATEGORIES



ABSTRACT  
PAINTING



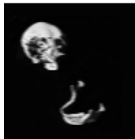
DRAWING



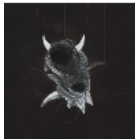
PAINTING



PHOTO BASED  
PAINTING



PHOTOGRAPHY



SCULPTURE

CURATED

BIOGRAPHY ART: Q & A CONCEPTIONS EXHIBITIONS PRESS BLOG LINKS CONTACT



Nicholas Chistiakov (b. 1981) is a contemporary artist best known for his photo-based and deconstructivist paintings. He currently lives in Brooklyn, New York.

Chistiakov, an only child, is from a middle class family in Minsk, Belarusia. His great-grandfather, Alexander Staszewski, served as Minister of Justice for the Belorussian Soviet Republic during the Stalinist era. Accused of espionage, he was executed in 1937. His father was one of the developers of the first Soviet personal computer.

At the age of nine, Chistiakov entered the Minsk Art Lyceum to study fine art; and attended the Belarusian State Academy of Arts from 2000 to 2004. Soon after art school, Chistiakov and his family immigrated to New York. There he had the opportunity to view some of the world's greatest artworks in the city's museums—an experience which is evident in his work at the time. Another formative experience from his first year in New York was his job as a designer for a sign company, which—in tandem with the harsh rhythms of the city and the tensions of immigrant life—led to his replacing the pure Impressionism of his early style with a more objective photorealism. By 2005 he was making extensive use of photography as source material for his work; one image in particular, that of a girl in a museum, began a new cycle of paintings, and a different approach to art.

## TIMELINE



1999



2005



2008



2009



2010



8+1



2012



2013



Share



2014

## RECENT WORK



## UPCOMING EVENTS

Please check later for  
information

SECTION
CONTEMPORARY ART
POSTMODERN ART
BLACK PAINTINGS
WHITE PAINTINGS
ORANGE RED PAINTINGS
NEW YORK CITY
LOVERS
ARTIST CONNECTIONS

Chistiakov had his first solo exhibition in 2007, at New York's Behr-Thyssen gallery. Not long after the show, he was committed to a psychiatric hospital—the result of an unbearable accumulation of stress and other factors. This dark time, however, was also the beginning of an immensely creative period in his life, when he produced a cycle of figurative paintings heavily influenced by Expressionism and Neo-expressionism, which led to a highly personal style— further influenced by cubism and other Modernist movements—he calls deconstructivism.

Since 2008, Chistiakov has been most influenced by conceptual art and post-modern philosophy, which he has applied mainly to a series of semi-abstract and abstract paintings. While maintaining his long-held conception of art based on mathematical objectivity and materialist values, this work radiates perverse sexuality and cynical satire, addressing modern morality and existential questions of life and death and meaninglessness. The aesthetics of sensation and shock, though, are simply means for achieving what he has always been seeking: the point where visual complexity and well-honed compositional effects mesh with exquisite color harmonies, to produce art of singular vitality.

His most significant works include: Midday Suicide (2009), The Red Room (2009), Presence (2009), the Last Judgment (2007 – 2010), Portrait of Charles Saatchi (2013), Adolf (2013), Black Pope (2013), Aunt (2013), and Study for Napoleon in Egypt (2013).

Chistiakov's art has been shown internationally, and his works are held in private collections in the U.S., Russia, Belarus, Sweden, United Kingdom, and Turkey.

Works shown at this site are available for purchase or commission. at the price range starting from \$500 to \$30000. To see a price list, acquire an artwork, or schedule a viewing please e-mail [information@deoxyribonucleiconcept.com](mailto:information@deoxyribonucleiconcept.com)

Text on this site by Adam Eisenstat ([ajeisenstat@gmail.com](mailto:ajeisenstat@gmail.com))

# NICHOLAS CHISTIAKOV

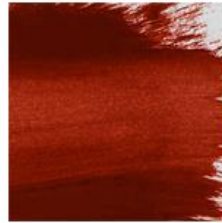


## PAINTING

Art spanning from 2002



Animals



Death



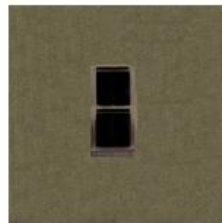
Fight / Murder



Figures



Iconic Figures



Interiors



Landscapes



Monsters



Nudes



Old Masters Inspired



Portraits



Suicide

Chistiakov's painting series represents a transition from realism to abstraction. The works here are characterized by a focus on the color and texture of the painterly surface. Prominent brushstrokes and rich, translucent layers of paint are the signature techniques, and the subjects—portraits, nudes, and landscapes—are mostly abstract, especially the human form. In several pieces it is given a monstrous cast—the inner life turned outwards, to observe the mysterious world of human congress and the play of individual souls running together, or running amok. The portraits are at times executed with a few strokes of paint, dabbing away the unwanted specter of naturalism. In "Midday Suicide" a woman's body is made abstract, with exaggerated attention on the sexual features—the deep recess of eroticism pulled up to the surface. The image is devoid of sharp contours, showing the artist engaged in a primary task of the painterly mode—to marshal brushstrokes into arrestingly colorful surfaces; and create unforgettable worlds of human pain; to celebrate the glories and abjections of living flesh, à la Bacon and Velazquez.



# NICHOLAS CHISTIAKOV

ART < PAINTING



## Animal Paintings



**Study for Cat and Rooster**

2013

painting, oil on canvas

26 x 28 inches

provenance:

Catalogue raisonné



In his animal paintings, Chistiakov uses bright colors and grotesque figures—a fascination with jaws and teeth is evident—even when depicting cats and dogs, providing an air of menace and unfamiliarity to the most seemingly domesticated creatures. The inner monster, this work announces, is never far from the surface, even in “man’s best friend”; the primal urge strains to break free and often does, to searing visual effect, as seen in the violent, orgasmic states of these kinetic beasts, as they scream, fight, barking (and, we can assume, don’t always go in the litter box). “Orange Cat” is a standout in this series—the creamy white cat on the bright orange background is reminiscent of Picasso’s take on female beauty, while screaming through its contorted face like something that darted out of Bacon’s “Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion.”





# NICHOLAS CHISTIAKOV

ART < PAINTING



## Fight / Murder Paintings



**The Arena**

2013

painting, acrylic on canvas

36 x 45 inches

provenance:

Catalogue raisonné



These paintings feature scenes of combat/conflict: wrestlers grappling in the ring, domestic violence. Abstract Indistinct figures, more biomorphic abstractions than human beings, writhe and struggle and combust, fighting for existence in apocalyptic worlds, signified by black settings punctuated by sharp contrasts of yellow, red, orange. "Murder in Istanbul" shows a young woman with exaggerated sexual features, straddling the threshold of life and death. It is reminiscent of Belarusian painter Mikhail Savitsky's work depicting concentration camps, with which he had first-hand experience. Despite the presence of historical and topical sources, Chistiakov uses morbid themes and imagery mainly to evoke strong feelings and personal loss, rather than advance any type of coherent sociopolitical message (s).



# NICHOLAS CHISTIAKOV



## ABSTRACT PAINTING

Art spanning from 2008



Accidental



Decorative



Grids



Mirrors

This section is home to Chistiakov's conceptual abstract art. The paintings here are divided into four galleries: **Accidental**, which includes abstract works the artist produces through several types of painterly accidents; **Decorative** abstractions, characterized by mandala-like images; **Grids**, which are paintings based on geometry; and **Mirrors**, a gallery of paintings with minimalist conceptions of beauty and meaning.

## DRAWING

Art spanning from 2001



**The Lovers 02**

2010

drawing, pencil on paper

8.5 x 11 inches

provenance:

Catalogue raisonné D.



Chistiakov's drawings are primarily minimalist compositions rendered with a few elegant pencil lines. This work epitomizes several aspects of his work/aesthetic: achieve the maximum effect through minimal means; plus an interest in the decorative role of art and design principles. His drawings are mostly figurative studies: men, women, skeletons, and mythical creatures, which he portrays in a variety of forms. Some of the drawings, in the classic style, are an outgrowth of his academic background; while others, executed with a few precise lines, suggest the blazing modernist style found in most of his paintings. Picasso, Goya, De Kooning, and Matisse have influenced Chistiakov's drawings, but his own distinctive style prevails.

"I like to draw subjects inspired by actual occurrences," he says. "My subjects, even the mythical ones, are drawn from real life—things I've seen, situations I've experienced. I tend to avoid naturalism of any sort, though. In drawing, especially, it often leads to kitsch. (There's a place for kitsch, on occasion, but not in drawing).



# NICHOLAS CHISTIAKOV



## IMPORTANT WORKS OF ART

2005 - 2007



**The Chaos and Order**

2006-07

painting, oil on canvas

48 x 60 inches

provenance: Private collection, UK

Catalogue raisonné P.14



Chistiakov paintings from the period 2005 - 2007 show a radical change in style, heavily influenced by the artist's first years in New York, which were characterized by hardship and the expectations that typify the early years of most American immigrants. His style, spurred by the art he was seeing in New York galleries, shifted from impressionism to cold photorealism, dominated by the harsh rhythms of the city. "At the Museum" (2005) was the initial work in the cycle of museum paintings. It features a cold, grayish interior and the lonely figure of a girl looking at art. "Red Room" shows a Matisse-inspired red interior; "Chaos and Order" is a colorful photorealist painting, somewhat influenced by Jackson Pollock and Peter Doig.





# NICHOLAS CHISTIAKOV



## IMPORTANT WORKS OF ART

2008



**The Mourning**

2008-09

painting, oil on canvas

12 x 9 inches

provenance: private collection, United Kingdom

Catalogue raisonné R.4



This was an especially difficult year hard for Chistiakov, when many of his dreams were shattered and gruesome incidents took place. In one such incident, he began destroying his paintings, which led to his commitment to a psychiatric hospital. In the spirit of Van Gogh, he was able to transform this experience into a positive artistic influence; it allowed him to step outside of mundane reality and see himself as an artist straddling the borders of the outer world (society) and his inner world—a recognition that promised limitless possibilities. He produced key works during this period: "Murder in Istanbul," "Torment," and "Mourning." "Torment" depicts a grim monstrous figure—a mix of human, bird, and reptile—screaming in pain, with a sunny orange background. "Mourning" was a response to the news of his grandfather's death in Minsk.