

MAXIM SANTALOV

Maxim Santalov (1988, RU) first started drawing after school whilst waiting for his grandmother to finish work at the hairdresser's salon in the outskirts of Moscow. He created small drawings on the covers of magazines. This daily practice soon developed into a serious passion without ever compromising his youthful spontaneity. Santalov is a self-taught artist, describing this experience as attaining his 'diploma of higher self-education'. By stubbornly following his intuition and not being sensitive to external influences, he obtained a signature style in his work. Santalov views art as an outlet against the pressures of the modern world, a way of escaping from and reacting against the harsh reality of life.

Using acrylic paint, pencils, crayons, and mixed media the artist produces complex textural drawings that illustrate movement and desire with simple shapes, scratches, and strong colour contrasts. His works play on a child-like longing for space and freedom, juxtaposing rural subjects with urban cityscapes. Santalov switches effortlessly between meticulous geometric drawings and figurative work, staying true to his self-proclaimed 'Ävantgraphic' technique. He describes his work as being a window through which he wants to lighten up life. Santalov's recognizable style has won him prestigious prizes in Moscow and his works have been featured in the Ekaterina Foundation "New Voices" exhibition as well as the Moscow Biennial.