

BOYNES ARTIST AWARD

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INTERVIEW WITH ARTIST MARIIA RASKIN

Apr 29 • Written By Chantal Boynes

Congratulations to Mariia Raskin for earning her place as the Winner of the Monthly Art Award March 2025 Edition!

WHO ARE YOU?

Hello! My name is Mariia Raskin. I was born in 1979 in Kazakhstan and I'm currently based in Turkey.

These days, I focus mainly on creating seascape paintings using bold, expressive palette knife strokes.

I graduated with honors from Moscow Textile University in 2001 with a degree in Fashion Design, and in 2014 I completed my studies at the Triphon Icon Painting School. Over the years, I've explored many art-related professions — from body art master and makeup artist to shop window designer, graphic designer, and both fashion and book illustrator. I also worked as an icon painter for five years.

Since 2019, I've been working as a full-time artist.



“Cozy Coastline”

Acrylic on Canvas

By Mariia Raskin

WHAT INSPIRED YOU TO UTILIZE PAINTING AS A MEDIUM?

After moving to Turkey in 2019 and seeing the breathtaking beauty of the sunlit sea and mountains, I felt an overwhelming urge to become a painter, to capture that beauty on canvas and share it with others.



“Voyage”

Acrylic on Canvas

By Mariia Raskin

HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR WORK?

I create energetically charged seascapes in an impressionistic style. Sometimes they're semi-abstract with touches of expressionism, and other times more realistic, leaning toward symbolism. The signature of my technique is that I work almost entirely with a palette knife, hardly ever using a brush.

Through my paintings, I try to capture a pure expression of a dream — a dream of happiness, of someone feeling the gentle sea breeze, the warmth of the sun, and the beauty of nature.

The mood in my landscapes ranges from calm and peaceful to sparkling with joy. I see my paintings as little “windows” that transport the viewer to their own personal place of power — a space that fills them with energy and a sense of

freedom. Recently, I've started painting bright sailboats that bring a light, carefree feeling to those who see them.



“Sea”

Acrylic on Canvas

By Mariia Raskin

CAN YOU DISCUSS THE INSPIRATION AND THOUGHT PROCESS BEHIND YOUR WINNING WORK?

The painting that won the competition is very special to me. It's the result of my reflections on the greatness of the natural world and how gently it holds and

protects us. God created the world around us so that, by simply looking at it, we could feel joy and be filled with happiness.

The winning piece is called “Children of God.” It shows a man and a woman running toward each other in a moment of pure love, while all of nature around them seems to echo and celebrate that feeling.



“Golden Ocean”

Acrylic on Canvas

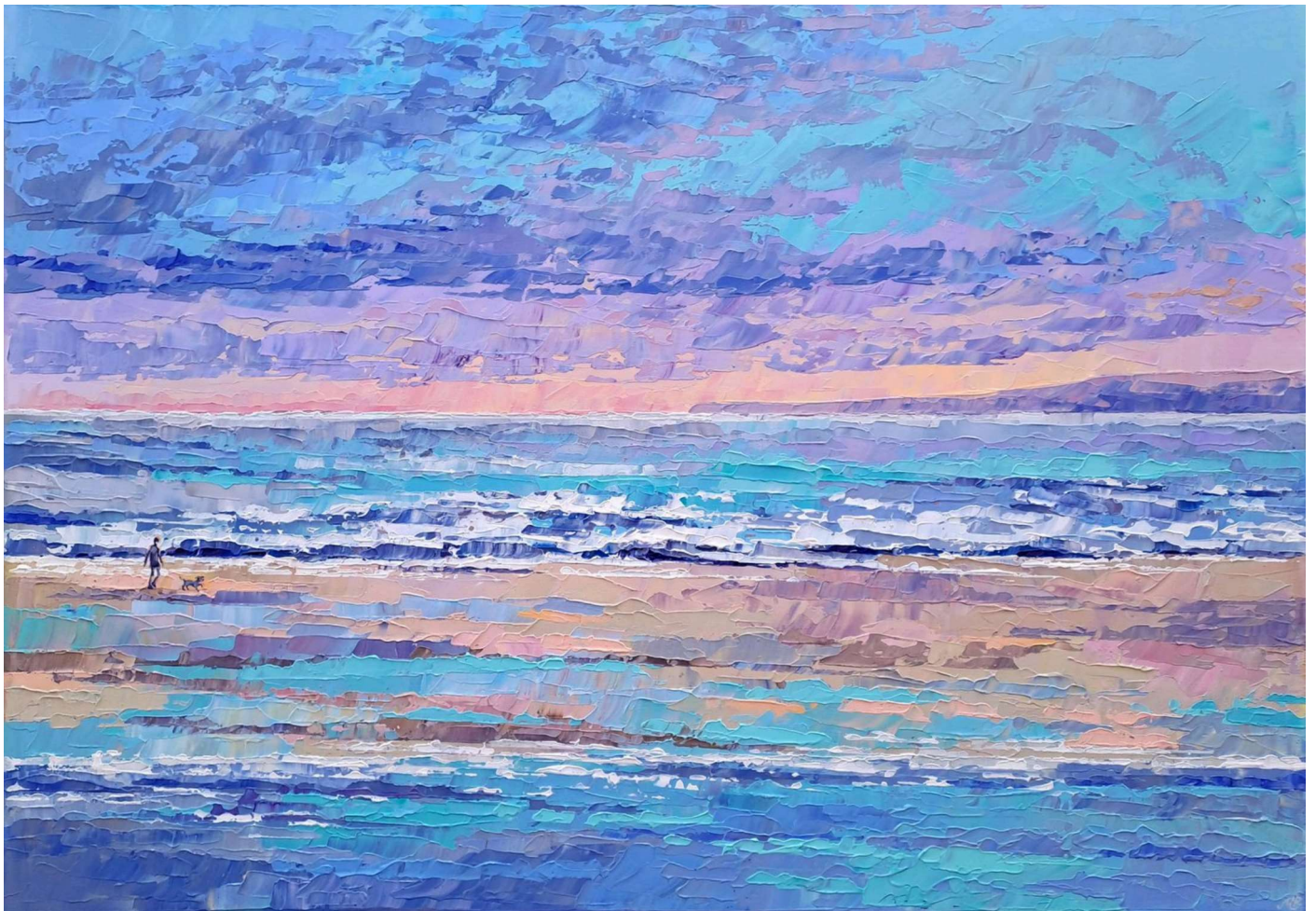
By Mariia Raskin

CAN YOU WALK US THROUGH THE TECHNICAL STEPS OF CREATING YOUR WINNING PAINTING?

Unfortunately, I didn't take any photos of the painting process this time. Sometimes I get so caught up in creating that I just forget to do it.

But I can show you the sketch that the painting started from. Interestingly, the final piece looks quite different from the original sketch. While working on it, I decided to add more movement by painting in some clouds and playing with a wider range of colors.

I can also share a few photos of the finished painting from different angles, including some close-ups, and show how it might look in an interior setting.



“Meeting The Sea”

Acrylic on Canvas

By Mariia Raskin

WHAT DO YOU HOPE TO COMMUNICATE TO AN AUDIENCE WITH YOUR WORK?

I want people who come into contact with my art to feel the joy of simply being and a renewed desire to live. As an artist, I see my mission as bringing beauty and harmony into the world through my work. A painting, in my view, should either bring joy or a sense of peace and gently guide the viewer toward a more optimistic state of mind.

CAN YOU TALK ABOUT YOUR BIGGEST LEARNING EXPERIENCE DURING THE PROCESS OF CREATING YOUR WORK?

Over my six-year journey as an artist, I've changed my style several times, trying to discover which subjects and techniques truly resonate with me. After working with icon painting, which requires long, meticulous work and careful attention to tiny details, it was a real challenge to loosen up and feel free in making bold, sweeping strokes.

I set myself a tough goal: to learn how to paint with confidence, expression, and depth, while still paying attention to the finer details. That's when I started creating sketches before each painting, carefully planning the composition and color palette in advance. This way, the chances of "ruining" a large piece are very low.



“Rainbow Evening”

Acrylic on Canvas

By Mariia Raskin

CAN YOU DISCUSS YOUR BIGGEST SUCCESS SINCE STARTING YOUR ARTISTIC JOURNEY?

As an artist, I feel the greatest sense of success when my paintings are acquired by collectors and find a permanent home.

When it comes to my career in the art world, I’ve had a few meaningful milestones. Around 40 of my works are now part of the public collection at the Cyprus Modern Art Museum (Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus). I’ve had two

solo exhibitions, one of which was opened by Prime Minister Ünal Üstel. I've also been accepted into two notable art associations — the International Association of Art in 2022 and the Eurasian Art Union in 2025.

One of the accomplishments I'm especially proud of is winning the Boynes Monthly Art Award — a prize I had applied for several times before luck finally smiled on me!

Planning plays a big part in helping me reach my goals. I keep a special notebook where I write down my intentions and brainstorm the steps I need to take to get there. I also use spreadsheets in Google Docs to keep track of my paintings and the art competitions I've applied to. Recently, I've started exploring AI tools: I use them to get advice on career strategy and even to better understand the profile of my ideal collector.

CAN YOU GIVE US THE BEST PIECE OF ADVICE YOU HAVE EVER HEARD/RECEIVED?

The best advice I've ever received came from my husband. He told me: "Paint in a way that makes people proud to own your work. Art should bring joy."



“Ruby Sunset”

Acrylic on Canvas

By Mariia Raskin

AS A WINNER, DO YOU HAVE ANY ADVICE FOR ARTISTS WHO WANT TO APPLY FOR AWARDS, COMPETITIONS, RESIDENCIES, ETC.?

I can only give advice based on my own experience. The first and most difficult step is to try to truly understand yourself: your personality type, the style or direction in art that you naturally gravitate toward, the subjects that inspire you, and what your goals really are. Once you have that self-awareness, you can start building your own strategy for moving forward in the art world. Maybe you're drawn to creating large-scale installations with deep philosophical meaning, or maybe you want to paint light, decorative pieces for interior spaces.

Whatever the case may be, it's important to choose competitions, grants, or residencies that align with your goals and help reveal your potential.

I'd also recommend taking the time to carefully research each opportunity before applying. Read the competition guidelines thoroughly, find out who's on the jury, and take a look at past winners' work. Try to objectively evaluate whether the contest is a good fit for you and whether you have a realistic shot at winning. It's often harder to win open-theme competitions than those with a specific topic, simply because the range is so broad. Of course, there's always the chance that you'll get lucky and win a big prize — and that's part of the excitement! You just have to be brave and keep putting yourself out there.

Art is incredibly subjective, so don't take rejections personally. Every experience gives you valuable insight and helps you understand what to improve so you can win next time.



“Walking Along The Sea”

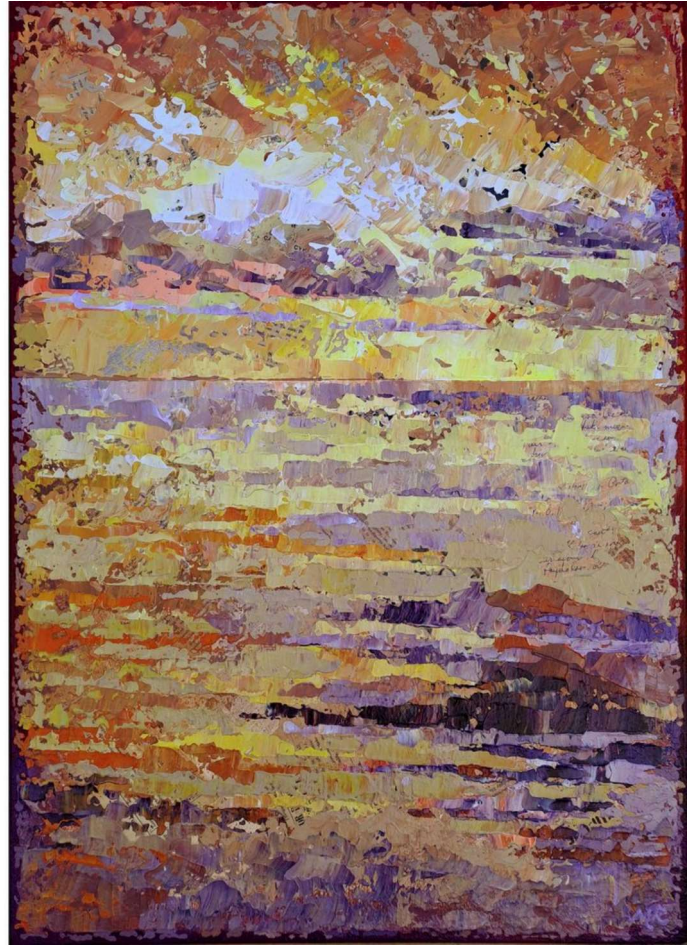
Acrylic on Canvas

By Mariia Raskin

WHAT PROJECTS ARE YOU WORKING ON CURRENTLY? CAN YOU DISCUSS THEM?

Right now, I'm working on a cheerful series of paintings featuring sailboats. I've already created a few smaller pieces as a sort of test run, and I really liked the result. My husband even placed two of them next to his computer and told me they give him a burst of energy every time he looks at them. In this series, I tried out a new technique: painting even the small details with a palette knife and using a brush only when absolutely necessary. I was inspired by the vibrant, colorful sails of the boats, they became the heart of the series.

These paintings are all about the dream of a perfect, carefree getaway — the joy of sailing off to tropical islands, the colors of the Mediterranean, and the happiness of being close to the ocean.



"Vintage Yellow"

Acrylic on Canvas

By Mariia Raskin

WHAT IS YOUR DREAM PROJECT OR PIECE THAT YOU HOPE TO ACCOMPLISH?

I dream of creating a large-scale painting of sailboats using my palette knife technique. The biggest size I can fit into my small studio is 100 by 140 cm. I've worked in this format before, but only with abstract pieces, and abstraction comes more naturally to me than figurative elements. So this new project will be a real challenge, but an exciting one.

I'm also thinking about incorporating embroidery into my paintings and exploring how to do it in a way that feels beautiful and original.



“Way To The Sun”

Acrylic on Canvas

By Mariia Raskin

LASTLY, I LIKE TO ASK EVERYONE WHAT ADVICE THEY WOULD GIVE TO THEIR FELLOW ARTISTS, WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE?

To my fellow artists, I'd say this: be honest in your art. Follow your heart and create what truly speaks to you. Only honest art really resonates, and there will

always be people out there who connect with exactly what you're expressing. Being an artist is a challenging path, but it's also such an inspiring and meaningful one.

I wish all my fellow creatives the best of luck on their journey!

To view more of Mariia Raskin

[Instagram](#)

Chantal Boynes

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