

Glaflira Kotova

(United Kingdom)

Contemporary Art

The interplay of tradition and innovation defines Glaflira Kotova's artistic journey. Trained in academic painting from the Tula Art School, she first embraced the richness of oil on canvas before expanding into digital art, not as a departure but as an evolution of her visual language. Her work thrives on contrasts—order and chaos, permanence and transience—transforming these tensions into captivating narratives. Exhibited internationally and recognized for her distinct approach, Glaflira Kotova invites viewers to reflect on the delicate balance between past and present, memory and modernity, in compositions that bridge the classical and the contemporary.



"My art bridges the timeless traditions of oil painting with the innovative possibilities of digital media, exploring life's dualities — nature and modernity, chaos and order, fleeting moments and lasting connections. Since moving to the UK, I've embraced digital art as a flexible tool, expanding my creative practice without a traditional studio. This shift has allowed me to experiment while preserving the emotional depth and tactile energy of my work. Through each piece, I invite viewers to reflect on their own experiences and the connections that shape our lives."

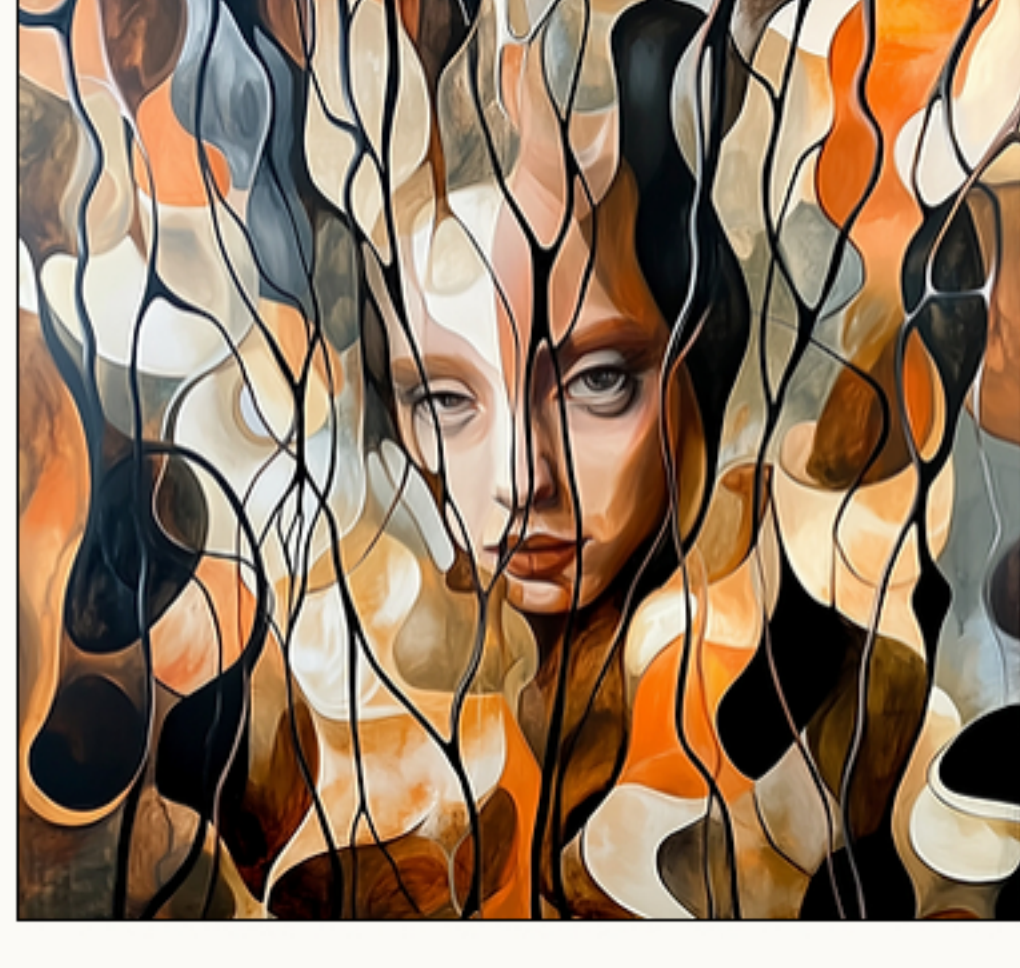
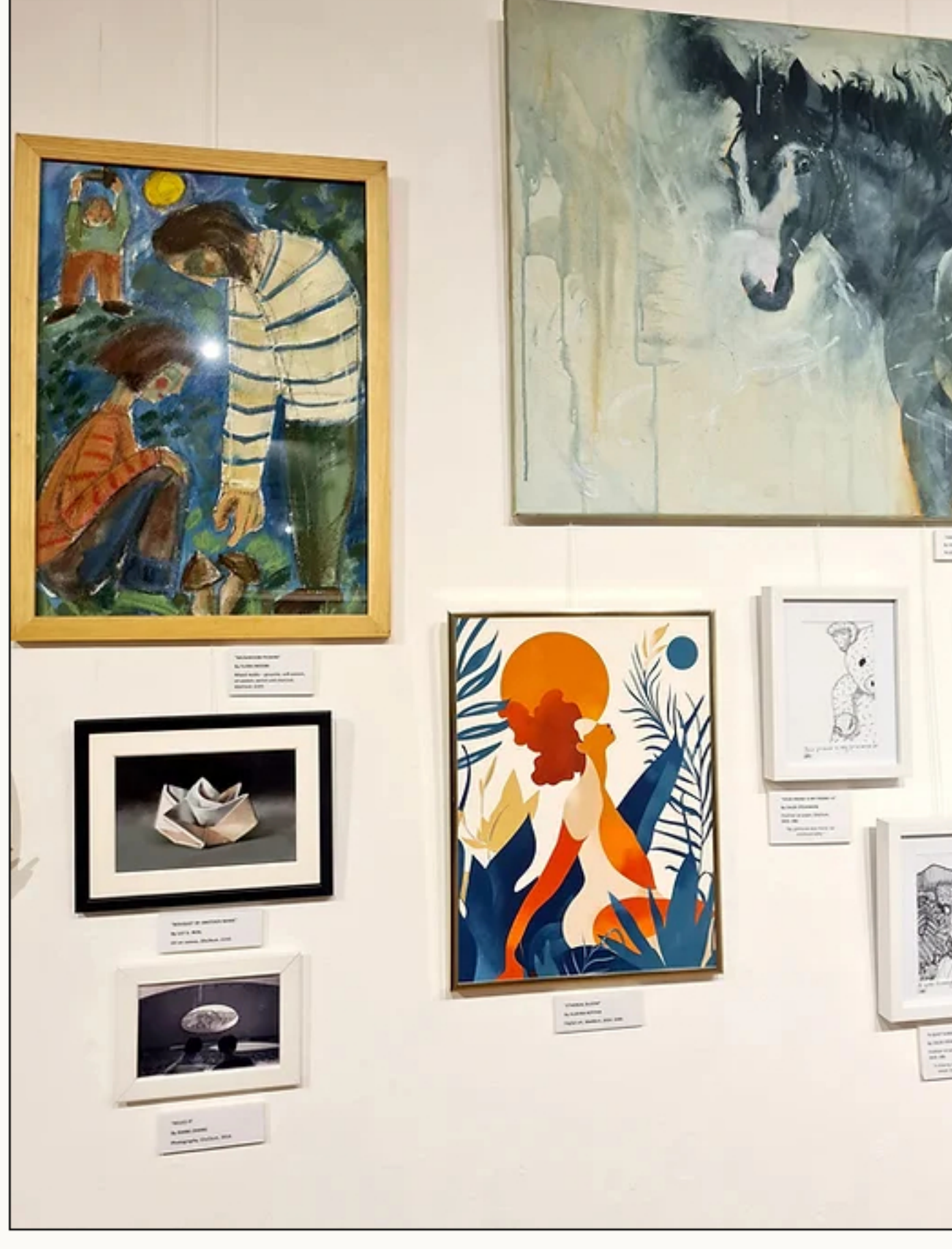
Glaflira Kotova

Your art navigates the tension between tradition and innovation. Do you believe that true creativity is born from the interplay of opposing forces?

„There is a famous saying: "Hard times create strong people, strong people create good times. Good times create weak people. Weak people create hard times." I believe this is absolutely applicable to art. We need to go through certain experiences in life to shape our own vision and be able to share it with the world. Without inner struggle and life's challenges, we cannot grow internally, and without that growth, there can be no profound art."

You transitioned from classical oil painting to digital art. In your view, is there an essential core to art that remains unchanged regardless of the medium?

"I believe there is a significant difference between digital and traditional art. Digital art is quite limited and lacks the tactile qualities that can be essential to perceiving a painting. That's why, for example, I don't create abstract art digitally—without texture, a vast layer of abstract expression is lost."



The shift to digital art initially arose from necessity. Did this transformation alter your perception of yourself as an artist or your connection to the creative process?

"Without a doubt, digital art allows me to create complex pieces much faster. However, as I mentioned earlier, the tactile aspect—something crucial to my process—is missing. That's why I see digital art as a phase for expressing ideas, but eventually, when the opportunity arises, I plan to return to classical painting. In the meantime, I am experimenting with mixed media, which I find fascinating. I start by sketching digitally and then enhance the printed version with paint or collage elements."

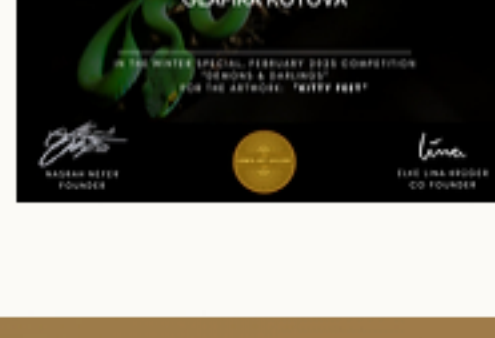
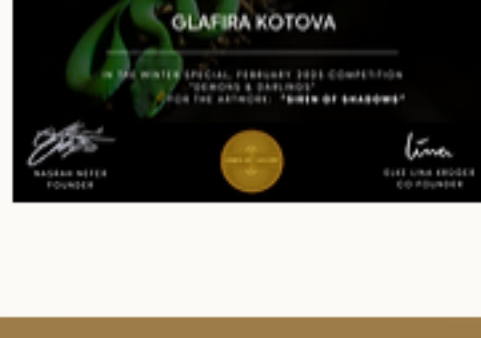
Having exhibited in both Russia and the UK, how has the cultural environment influenced your artistic language and thematic choices?

"Russia is currently very restrictive in terms of cultural expression, and one has to be extremely careful about what is being said. In the UK, I have much more freedom, but I am still adjusting to this lack of limitations. At the same time, I maintain a connection to Russia, which makes me mindful of how my work appears in the public sphere and how it is interpreted."



Your work invites contemplation on time, impermanence, and connection. Are there any philosophical ideas or literary works that particularly inspire your creative vision?

"I often reflect on what art should be. Contemporary art is difficult for many people to understand, creating a barrier between the work and the audience. Literature, on the other hand, often conveys ideas more directly. My worldview has been deeply influenced by Tolstoy, as I was born near his estate and my mother is a Russian literature professor. However, recent world events have made me realize that even though Tolstoy's philosophy was deeply humanistic and anti-war, and many people in Russia have read his works since childhood, this doesn't necessarily translate into their real-life actions. This has led me to question whether art should be easily understandable because even when ideas are clear, there is no guarantee that people will follow them."



Your background includes both fine arts and a degree in Advertising and Public Relations. Do you see parallels between the way art communicates and the language of branding?

"An interesting fact about my background is that I studied Advertising and Public Relations at the Faculty of Philosophy at Moscow State University. For three out of four years, my studies were focused on philosophy and art, with applied PR studies only in the final year. The most important takeaway from this experience is that branding and advertising are also forms of art. To be a strong professional in this field, one must deeply understand the surrounding context and know how to convey it effectively. In essence, communication in branding is an artistic process."



Exhibition titles like Paths Linking Souls and Kindred Spirit suggest a deep interest in human connection. How do relationships—both personal and collective—shape your artistic expression?

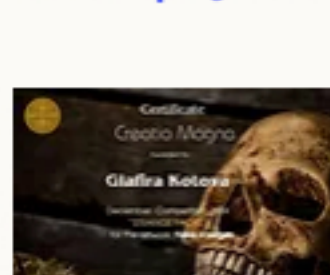
"Human connection is at the core of my work. I see art as a bridge that links emotions, experiences, and histories across time and space. Personal relationships influence my artistic language by adding layers of meaning, while collective experiences shape the broader themes I explore. Whether through shared memories, cultural heritage, or fleeting moments of understanding between strangers, I aim to capture the invisible threads that connect us all."

Your award-winning painting Dinar Sea was recognized for its landscape portrayal. Do you see landscapes as external realities, or do they serve as reflections of internal states?

"This particular work was purely an external portrayal. It was created during my first trip abroad when I was struck by the unique golden sands of Dinar—they looked almost unreal. I wanted to capture my immediate perception of that landscape, preserving that fleeting sense of wonder. However, in a broader sense, landscapes can reflect both external reality and internal emotion, depending on the artist's intent."

Digital art offers infinite possibilities, yet it can sometimes create a sense of detachment from the physical act of creation. Do you ever miss the tactile nature of painting, or does digital art possess its own form of intimacy?

"I do miss the tactile nature of traditional painting—the texture of the brushstrokes, the layering of paint, and the physical interaction with the canvas. Digital art, while incredibly versatile, lacks that sensory dimension. However, I see it as a powerful tool for ideation and exploration. That's why I am now experimenting with mixed media, blending digital and traditional techniques. By printing my digital pieces and enhancing them with paint or collage, I aim to bridge the gap between the two worlds and retain that physical connection to my work."



Looking back on your artistic evolution, is there a particular work or moment that you consider a turning point in your journey?

„One defining moment was when I volunteered in the Ryazan region, immersing myself in rural life for a month to experience the traditions and rhythms of the past. This experience profoundly influenced my artistic vision, leading to a series of landscapes inspired by that time. These works were later praised by a professional artist from the Andriyaka Academy, whom I met through the program. That recognition gave me confidence in my artistic path and reinforced my belief that I could pursue art as more than just a passion—it could be my life's work."

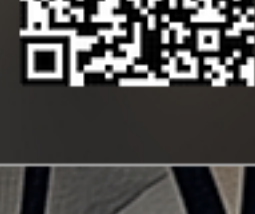


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