

THE 
GRIFFIS ART CENTER

INTERNATIONAL ARTIST-in-RESIDENCE PROGRAM – MAISON des ARTISTES
NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT USA



STEFAN CHURCHULIEV

2016 International Artist-in-Residence
Bulgarian-American Creative Society
from Sofia, Republic of Bulgaria



"I started experimenting with sand because sand gave me the richness of colours that nature alone can offer. I began to collect sand from all over the world: from Bulgaria, from the Mediterranean, the islands of the Pacific, from the Sahara and Dubai. My friends brought me sand from wherever they happened to go. While working, I imagined their experiences of the journeys they had been on, but then I had no idea how many other associations, thoughts and dreams that would invoke. I felt the pleasure of the hand from which sand flows out as in an hourglass. I had no idea about the uniqueness of that moment and how it slips away from my hand onto the painting; I was not aware of the force of time that analogically ran through my fingers.

"Time flows out of my hand, and like sand, it leaves a trace, a trace I paint with ... a trace that remains in the painting. While drawing, I can keep control of time. I can slow it down or accelerate it, but I cannot stop it because if I stop it, the drawing will disappear. Time exists only while I draw.

"My paintings are not decoration, but a sequence of moments and emotions, a challenge to the viewers to tune their senses and to extract the energy from them. The energy of the time stored in them. Time that goes on running through my fingers onto the canvas!"

Born 1968 in Sofia, Bulgaria

1987 Bachelor of Design in New Bulgarian University
1998 Exhibition – Gallery Vitosha -Sofia
1999 Exhibition – City gallery – Dimitrovgrad
2000 Became member of the Union of Bulgarian Artists
2007 Exhibition – Gallery Krug+ – Sofia
2008 Exhibition -City Gallery – Haskovo
2008 Exhibition – City gallery – Dimitrovgrad
2010 Exhibition – Gallery "George Papisov" – Plovdiv
2011 Exhibition in the University of Upsala, Sweden
2012 Exhibition – Gallery "Vivacom Art"

2013 Exhibition – City gallery – Dimitrovgrad
2014 Exhibition – Gallery "Sofia" London
2014 Salon d' automne – Paris

International Symposiums:

1998 Donau river "Vidin – Belgrad"
1999 Gamsigrad, Serbia
2000 Sombur, Serbia
2001 Ochrid, Macedonia
2008 Kavarna, Bulgaria
2009 Rusalka, Bulgaria
2010 Dimitrovgrad 2010" Bulgaria



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“If the external expression of the form is a reflection of the inner emotional life of an artist then Stefan is an artist of fine poetic sensibility that intertwines nostalgia for the past with the lessons of a modern artistic expression.

“If the structure of a painting is a manifestation of the inner essence of its author then the world of Stefan Churchuliev is a world of silence, of mastered plastic space where the living rhythm of the line is both an object’s characteristic and a musical phrase.

“If the thematic coherence brings out something more than the beauty of an object then the paintings of Stefan Churchuliev are beyond the realistic substantiation. They are in a place where colour, line, form – plastic substance in its totality has been transformed into a poetic reality.

“The works of Stefan Churchuliev are both an expression of the daily routine of life and plastic messages from a neo-archaism, experienced, internalized and materialized in deep ochre, brown, complex oil green and violet spaces. The silence of the artistic medium is cut through by flexing black lines which are both a characterization of the form and signals from another reality which reach us living and free, independent and unencumbered by the burden of the complex and rich texture.

“The stylistically defined and plastically refined art of Stefan Churchuliev seems to come from the world of dreams and reveries like a silent cry against the noise and vanity of a sick time... A day comes to an end; the quiet evening hour welcomes the secrecy and mystery of the night. Time has stopped somewhere amidst memory, nostalgia and reality.”

Svetlin Roussev

“Memories, dreams, feelings, thoughts – all produced in a dim light shimmer. Faced with Stefan Churchuliev’s expressive images many emotions are brought to life, difficult to verbalize. Here are the memories and recollections of something that could be your own dream world. A pleasant mystery is mixed with an earthy authenticity, both in terms of colour options as in the unique material that is so central to the paintings – sand. The artist makes the most of the elements themselves – stone and earth. In his own association with these elements, he creates the world again – reminiscent of the old world, but at the same time so different.

“The experiences we face are many. Visiting Stefan’s studio in Sofia is in itself an unforgettable experience – like taking a break from the “normal” life’s surface, diving under it and disappearing into an experience of the unconscious. In seclusion from the noise of the outer world, timelessness is created where life takes on new forms. Dream and reality are united. Through sensitive, expressive brushwork, through the sand colour and texture, new worlds are created – a microcosm – that will change by your own experience. Here is a genuine meeting between the self and something larger. The external world is transformed into your mind by Stefan Churchuliev’s playful, sensitive and stylish transformation of elements. To all who yearn to be immersed in a moment of existence, and mysteries, and to unify with them, I would recommend spending time with Stefan’s paintings.”

Anders Kaliff