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Fine Art Connoisseur



Anna Wypych, "Wild," oil on canvas, 21 x 25 1/2 in. Principle Gallery Charleston

Formal Duality in the Figurative Art of Anna Wypych

Jeffrey Carlson Reporting
Editor, Fine Art Today

Polish artist Anna Wypych boldly challenges the idea that a figurative artist is either traditional or progressive, producing moving works in both modes.

Picasso's biography suggests that expressivity and experimentation in an artist's oeuvre will find much better reception if the artist begins working in a classical realist style. Whether or not one is a particular fan of Picasso, any art lover or collector will have a greater appreciation for the artist after being introduced to his remarkable early figurative drawings. In a way, the precision of Picasso's hand and the certainty of what he could achieve in that manner liberated him to explore.



Anna Wypych, "Hormones," oil on canvas, 31 1/2 x 39 in. Principle Gallery Charleston

Born in 1986 in Gdansk, Poland, Anna Wypych trained at the Academy of Fine Art there and quickly gained recognition for her strikingly realistic and sumptuous figurative work. During her period of study, Wypych earned eight national awards from the Polish Ministry of Culture, the Marshal of the Pomeranian, and the Mayor of Gdansk. She went on to win a Grand Prix in the national contest "Artistic Journey Hestia" in 2010, for which she was rewarded with a month-long residency in New York. All the while, she displayed her paintings in museums and galleries across Poland and Europe, such as the prestigious Academie Royale des Beaux-Arts de Bruxelles in Belgium.



Anna Wypych, "Girl in Red," oil on canvas, 16 x 20 in. Featured in the BP Portrait Award exhibition at the British National Portrait Gallery

The artist works in a particular method that reflects her desire for individualized expression. "At first should be an idea," explains Wypych. "My paintings are not about the particular person but about the concept, problem, or issue on which I wonder at that time. I like to meditate on philosophical issues, and this is the source of my ideas. When I know what I want to paint and how it should look, I look for a model and organize a photo shoot. Then I prepare a draft on the computer; it should show my idea as precisely as possible. Painting starts with applying one color to the canvas. Then I execute the underpainting with acrylic colors, and I start the painting with oils. The whole process usually takes a few months."



Anna Wypych, "Safe Place," oil on canvas, 32 x 39 in. Principle Gallery Charleston

Though her very polished and linear mode is the usual form of expression for Wypych, the artist has found that not every emotional or philosophical state requires a traditional, representational picture. In these moments a more expressive style better visualizes Wypych's thoughts. The artist has explored this primal way of art-making for a number of years, and the expressive paintings now represent a significant part of her artistic personality. Indeed, Wypych's website neatly separates her production into "Realistic" and "Expressive" styles.

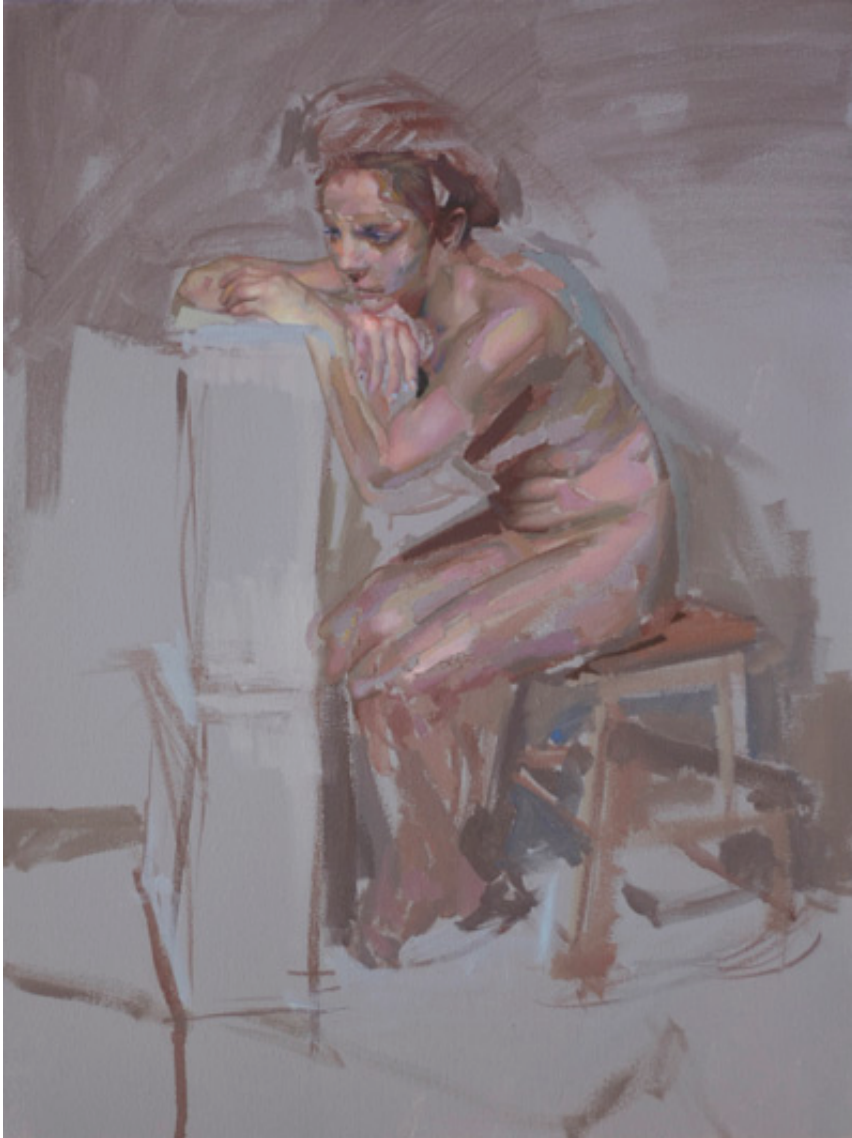
The expressive works are executed with a free and light brush that broadly but effectively suggests colors, forms, and facets. Fascinatingly far from Wypych's realist works, they demonstrate a true range of expression, made all the more impressive by a familiarity with the linear precision and stunning beauty of the artist's classical portraits.



Anna Wypych, "Simple Painting 2," oil on canvas, 16 x 20 in. Principle Gallery Charleston

Paintings like "Hormones" lie somewhere in between the purely representational and expressive styles. In this piece, Wypych has distorted and fractured the space to resemble a broken mirror -- acting as a visual metaphor for the sometimes disconnected emotions the artist experiences from one moment to the next. "I wanted to show the effect of a broken reality, as if the same time were shown in different parallel dimensions," says Wypych.

The artist earned her M.F.A. from Gdansk in 2011 and has continued to grow, finding great success with her seductive figurative paintings. She has raked in more awards in Poland and also gained international recognition. Perhaps most notably, Wypych's "Girl in Red" has been accepted into the prestigious BP Portrait Award exhibition, set to open in June at the National Portrait Gallery in London.



Anna Wypych, "Sketch," oil on canvas, 12 x 16 in. Principle Gallery Charleston



Anna Wypych, "Striped Tights," oil on canvas, 18 x 22 in. Principle Gallery Charleston

No matter which mode she chooses to express herself, Wypych aims to capture an idea more related to her sitters' spirit than their literal appearance: "When I painted 'Wild,' for example, I was not thinking about my model, the appearance or character of this particular person. This is a portrait of wildness. I found the model that could show this magical glint in her eye." For this young and highly talented artist, the vision to select a worthy subject and the most appropriate manner of representing it has been, and will continue to be, vital to her art form.

Anna Wypych is represented by [Principle Gallery](#) in Charleston, South Carolina. To see more art from Wypych, visit the [artist's website](#).

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Print Current Page