

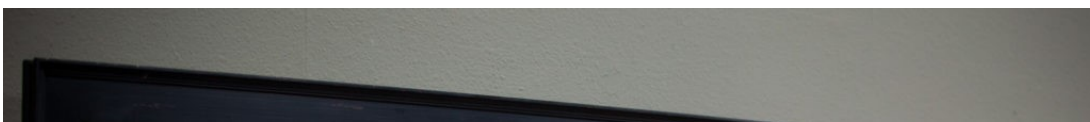


2018

NIKITA BUDKOV: THE SONG BOOK



On the evening of September 29th, 2018, our LAAFA Alumnus – [Nikita Budkov](https://laafa.edu/nikita-budkov/) had his first solo show with us here at LAAFA! His show was titled, “Nikita: The Song Book” and it exhibited collections of current portraits and landscapes named from songs that fill Nikita’s life. Below are some images of the event and a couple quotes from Nikita, detailing his experience of the show.





Q: OVERALL, HOW DID YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR SOLO SHOW?

A: I felt wonderful about my solo show! We had more than 70 people show up and I think it was a great success. That night was full of smiles, positive spirit, and laughs. We had some serious art discussions happening too. I enjoyed the space LAAFA provided me, it was a one of a kind experience. I could not ask for a better solo exhibition.

Q: WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT HAVING YOUR FIRST SOLO SHOW AND WHAT WOULD YOU TELL OTHERS WHO WANT TO DO THE SAME?

A: I learned that the day after the solo exhibition one feels very exhausted, but accomplished too. I would recommend artists to brace themselves and

to have answers for all the countless questions awaiting during the show! Other than that, I felt like we did an excellent job on organizing the space, so there were no flaws.

Q: WHAT IS NEXT FOR YOU NOW? WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE?

A: I am in the process of applying for my so called artist visa to stay in US longer because I am going to have exhibitions almost every upcoming month and I can not miss them! Then there is also a major next Gold Medal show somewhere in the Summer. Contests, grants, I will try to do all of them!

We asked out LAAFA Director, Luke Mohatt to answer a couple of questions regarding his experience for the solo show as well:



Our LAAFA School Director, Luke Mohatt (left), and our LAAFA Director of Education Affairs, Marty

Kline (right).

Q: AS LAAFA'S DIRECTOR, WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE PUTTING ON A SOLO SHOW FOR NIKITA?

A: Working in school administration I have put on numerous events over the years. In my younger days in NYC I was involved in planning shows and events during Fashion Week. So you could say I have a decent amount of experience in this arena... but none of those experiences were art exhibitions. As a lover of the arts putting on this show was truly a magical experience. Working with Nikita, getting into his headspace, understanding his creative process, helping shape the artwork descriptions, all of this added a special, truly human element to this. Really getting to know the man behind the art was by far and away the most special part.

Q: WHERE THERE ANY CHALLENGES THAT YOU CAME ACROSS?

A: Oh, you bet! Helping an artist literally put a price on their hard work, passion, and dedication to their pieces is daunting. In a way it's like asking a parent to put a price on their child. When you bring something to life that holds meaningful, significant emotional value to you, it's hard to let it

go in the first place, but to have to decide at what price you'd let it go, wow. In the old days you would have a business manager that made those decisions for them. This way the artist could focus solely on the process, the art. As one of our long-time instructors told me, it kept the artist above the degradation of having to deal with something as basic as money. Those days, especially for artist's just starting out, are long gone. Today's young artists have to be as business savvy as they are exceptional fine artists. A colleague of mine talks constantly about the importance of our students learning how to "hack" the art world. Build a following. Build your brand. It's why LAAFA students are mentored in the business art from the moment they start the program. We graduate working artists. Period. Nikita is a fine example of this!

Q: WHAT WAS YOUR OVERALL EXPERIENCE THE NIGHT OF THE SHOW?

A: No matter how many events you put on. No matter how much energy is put into promotion. There is always, always the little voice in the back of your head asking "what if nobody shows up?" Add to that my deep desire for this show to be a huge success for Nikita and sure, you could say I

was a bit nervous. As soon as the doors opened our first visitors arrived, and then it was like I blinked and the gallery was packed! Nikita's joy was contagious and the atmosphere was electric. I was so impressed by Nikita's "fans." People drove and flew in from far flung places. Collectors that only knew of Nikita through Instagram. The LAAFA community of faculty, staff, and students. Alumni. Members of our Extension Class family. AND Nikita's mom all the way from Russia. You could see her pride. Getting to talk to all of these people about Nikita was a wonderful experience, and of course, it became really special as artwork sold. I could not be happier about how the show went. Nikita is a true rock star. I can't wait to see how brightly his star will shine in the art world.



“Nikita Budkov: The Song Book” was only on display at our LAAFA Gallery space on September 29th, 2018 from 7pm-9pm.

OCTOBER 26, 2018

0 COMMENTS

BY ADA RUIZ

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