

# ALEXANDRA ROZENMAN

## Artist Statement

I grew up in the Soviet Union where artistic freedom was repressed. My parents were dissidents and art-lovers. My imagination was stimulated by forbidden freedom and I have been painting since I remember myself. When I became twelve years old I started taking classes with dissident artists and at the age of seventeen I was already part of the Moscow underground artistic life.

In 1989 I came to America as a political refugee where I had to learn everything from the beginning. I had to struggle hard to shape my new personal and artistic identity. That was the moment when my art became intrinsically connected to my life. So much so that I have the impression that every brush stroke in my work is somehow an episode from my life. My biographical story, informed by a life-going introspection about lost identity and otherness, the search for belonging and the journey from Common Place to Foreign Land lies at the core of my work. I bring in my work my own illusions and displacements. I embrace them and I play with them. Russian, European and American folk tales and myths take a utopian and funny dimension in my work. I am absorbing and expressing the psychology of otherness as a fundamental part of my identity and of the contemporary world we live in. In my artwork I'm telling a universal story through a personal one.

Most recently I have been working on a series titled *Moving In...*, which focuses on playful and humorous narratives of me cohabitating with famous artists. By inserting myself into the painting, I point out the irony of "living" with an artist's work as it relates into immersing myself into the lives and works of artists for

inspiration and painterly influence. I use historical research to choose vistas or scenes of domestic life during the eras of the artists with which I metaphorically live. Through this series I want to touch upon questions of artistic influence and dialogue, emulation and creativity, continuity as well as discontinuity in contemporary art and the world as a whole. At the same time, my portrayed place-at-odds can be viewed as a metaphor for immigration and the cathartic journey of re-inventing a new personal and artistic identity.