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16 February 2026-yil

No. 33

Curatorial Review

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Canadian Collection: “Breath of Creation” Yuliya Alagir is a Canadian-based artist working within the tradition of **lyrical expressionism**. Her artistic practice includes several original series that together form a coherent direction in her artistic research. This review examines the painting series “Breath of Creation,” which reflects an important stage in the transformation of the artist’s creative method.

The series organically developed after the artist’s move to Calgary, Canada, marking a new stage of interaction with the northern natural landscape and expanding the geographical and cultural context of her work. Unlike her earlier projects, this series demonstrates a transition from strictly symbolic structures toward a more constructive and experiential interaction with the natural environment. Within the cycle “*Breath of Creation*,” the landscape ceases to be a distant object of observation and instead becomes a space of presence. This allows the series to be considered within contemporary artistic discussions of landscape as an experienced environment, rather than simply a genre image. In this sense, the series connects with the tradition of contemporary lyrical expressionism. In these works, there is no traditional landscape staging. The artist constructs pictorial space not through frontal representation, but through the experience of immersion within the environment. The viewer’s position transforms: instead of remaining an external observer, the viewer becomes a participant in the unfolding atmosphere. Perception is activated through atmospheric states such as movement of air, changes in temperature and light, the sensation of silence, and spatial tension.

The palette does not merely describe the texture of objects; it conveys the emotional states of the environment—morning quietness, the presence of the sky, the fragility of icy surfaces, and the gentle movement of wind. A key role is played by the temperature of light and by the rejection of rigid, stylized harmony typical of many academic schools of the twentieth century. Color becomes a tool for maintaining attention and shaping the viewer’s internal

perception of space. The technical solution of the series is built on a combination of dense palette-knife overlays and delicate, transparent acrylic glazes. This interaction allows the artist to abandon rigid linear perspective in favor of airy spatiality, where depth is formed through the distribution of light and color masses. The choice of acrylic allows work with multiple layers while preserving the transparency and optical luminosity of light. This enhances the sense of environment and supports the artist's vivid aesthetic.

The compositional structure of the series encourages free movement of the viewer's gaze without a fixed central point. The viewer's gaze moves through the layers of the painting, creating the effect of prolonged visual presence. Such an approach corresponds with practices in contemporary painting where attention shifts from simple representation toward perceptual experience and the process of viewing. This connects the series to the direction sometimes described as "painting of states," in which the image becomes a process of lived experience.

In the context of contemporary artistic discourse, the series "Breath of Creation" can be considered an example of modern lyrical expressionism with a pronounced atmospheric focus, where nature functions not as a genre motif but as an emotionally experienced environment.

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2026
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ALIA V. TURKUNOVA-RAUSCH
A Commissioner for Oaths
in and for Alberta
My Commission expires November 17, 2028