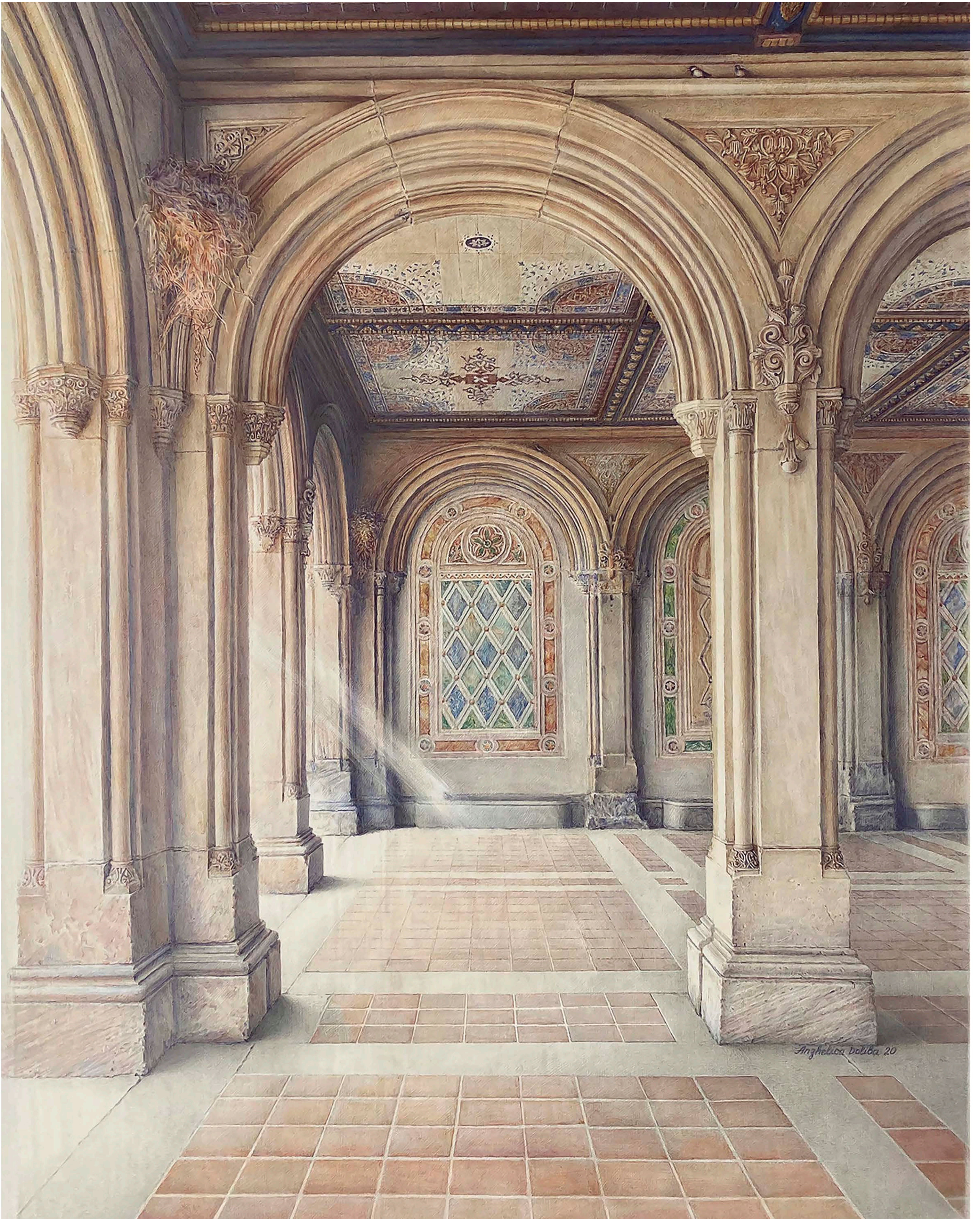
WEEK 39, 2020
THE EPOCH TIMES

ARTS& CULTURE

ANZHELIKA DOLIBA



"Bethesda Terrace," Central Park, NYC, 2020, by Anzhelika Doliba. Silverpoint drawing over thin casein paint layer on wood panel; 18 inches by 24 inches.

Silverpoint Perfection:
Anzhelika Doliba's Art...4

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TRUTH AND TRADITION

CULTURE

Parlez-Vous Français?

Americans and Foreign Languages

JEFF MINICK

Man of letters Samuel Johnson once remarked, "Depend on it, sir, when a man knows he is to be hanged in a fortnight, it concentrates the mind wonderfully."

In the spring of 1974, I learned the truth of that saying.

A graduate student in European history at Wake Forest University, I was on the verge of winning my master's degree and heading north with a fellowship to the University of Connecticut. I'd nearly completed my thesis, and had only to pass an exam in French to finish the program.

The exam, if I recollect correctly, was 60 minutes long, and students were allowed three attempts to pass it. I'd taken French for two years in high school, some of the sources I'd used for my thesis were in French, and I was overly confident. After a few hours of study, I took the exam and failed abysmally.

For the second exam, I studied a bit more, but failed again, though not quite as badly.

At this point my adviser, the beloved Jim Barefield, called me into his office. "If you don't pass this next exam," he said, "you won't graduate, and your fellowship at Connecticut will disappear."

"I've been in tougher places," I said.

The raised eyebrow and the look of incredulity he gave me were unforgettable.

For the next 17 days, from early morning into the evening, I did little but study French grammars and textbooks, frantically crammed vocabulary into my brain, read and interpreted passages, and walked up and down the street outside reciting conjugations. The possibility of losing everything I'd worked so hard for had, as Johnson said, concentrated my mind wonderfully.

I took the third test, received a score of 90 percent, and by fall was in Storrs, Connecticut.

And to this day, though I would never embarrass myself trying to converse in French, I can read my way through a French newspaper with some help from a dictionary.

Why can so few Americans speak and comprehend a second language?

The Scattergun Approach

In addition to French, I'd also studied Latin for two years in high school and for a semester in college, read primary sources in Latin at Wake Forest and Storrs (which I left after a year for personal reasons), and later taught Latin to homeschooling students. In college, I also studied Russian for three semesters. My poor instruction in that language and my own ineptitude have left me unable to say little more than "Hello," "Goodbye," "I love you," "I don't know," "Thank you," and "Don't shoot." (It was a military college.)

I imagine my experiences with foreign languages are typical of many American students. Though I've known young people who became fluent in Russian or Arabic, most of us who sit through French, Spanish, or Chinese in secondary school come away equipped only with common phrases and a short list of vocabulary words.

Why is that? Why can so few Americans speak and comprehend a second language?

Reasons for Failure

In "Why Don't More Americans Know More Foreign Languages?" Steph Koyfman analyzes this deficit. She points out that American geographical and cultural isolation may still play a part in our aversion to learning another language, but even more importantly she draws attention to our system of education: the shortage of qualified teachers, the failure of schools to emphasize foreign languages—only 11 states require a foreign language for graduation—and perhaps most crucial of all, the failure of most of our students to begin learning a second language while in elementary school.

In many other countries, students are exposed to a foreign language, often English, in their early elementary school years. Through that course of study, they leave school with eight to nine years of learning a language other than their own. Not all of these programs are successful. The Japanese concentrate on reading English and learning its grammar rather than speaking it so as to pass written exams for universities, and German students who don't attend gymnasium, our equivalent to high school, often leave school at age 15 without being particularly skilled in the other languages.

Nonetheless, introducing students at an earlier age to a foreign language, and thereby extending the number of years they study it, does bring results. Here I will cite the case of one of my Latin students. I began tutoring him in Latin when he was 7 years old, and just before his 14th birthday, he took the Advanced Placement Latin Exam and scored 4 out of 5 on that test, an above average score.

Is There Any Value in Studying a Foreign Language?

Certainly. Here are just a few of the reasons to do so.

Learning a foreign language puts students in touch with another country. Typically, students studying German, French, Spanish, or Chinese will pick up information about the culture of those nations. My high school French teacher, for example, who had spent a couple of years in that country, taught us French songs, regaled us with tales of living in Paris, and taught us a little modern French history.

The study of a foreign language, like

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Learning a language often involves learning history and culture as well. Julius Caesar's "Commentarii de Bello Gallico" is one of the most famous classical Latin texts.

MAROKE / SHUTTERSTOCK

Of course, it's best if we start learning a language early.

the study of higher mathematics or the sciences, also exercises the mind, forcing students to think more abstractly than they might in a literature or history class.

And learning a foreign language immerses students in the basics of grammar. Given that many American students are weak in that subject, which is often neglected after elementary school, a new language brings into play such concepts as the subjunctive voice or the use of an adjective as a noun.

Those who wish to become teachers add strength to their job prospects if their résumé includes a second language. An example: When I taught homeschoolers Latin, I would tell them that if they decided to pursue the classics, doors into the teaching world might open to them. Five of those young people are today Latin instructors in private schools. This same situation is probably true across the board, for as Steph Koyfman tells us, all of our schools are begging for qualified language teachers.

Finally, becoming fluent in another language opens doors of possibility for future employment and adventure. Our military and our diplomatic corps are always on the lookout for candidates fluent in a language other than English or Spanish, and many companies welcome job seekers who can engage foreign clients in their own language. The young woman I knew who became fluent in Russian—she majored in that and Russian history in college—worked for several years in that country for an American firm.

These last two reasons account for the establishment of the European Day of Languages. Since 2001, the European Union has set aside Sept. 26 to celebrate its diverse languages and as a day to encourage its citizens, both young and old, to learn a new language so that they might enjoy greater opportunities in work and travel.

Maybe we Americans should do the same.

Resources and Help

Certainly we live in the best of times for acquiring a second language.

We can go online and read newspapers from Paris, watch any number of instructive videos on YouTube, enroll in foreign language programs through universities or community colleges, and purchase any number of language programs on CDs and DVDs. We can ask our neighbor, who spent part of her life in Spain, to instruct our children in Spanish. And we ourselves, whatever our age, can partake of these same gifts.

Online resources are more abundant than ever. The Live Lingua Project, for example, offers free instruction in over 130 foreign languages, with each program featuring free e-books, videos, and audios.

Or you might want to try the approach I took so long ago. Fill a desk full of grammar books and readers, chain yourself to a chair, metaphorically of course, and slog away for a few weeks. The method's painful, but it worked for me.

Et Voilà!

At our fingertips are the means and materials to learn a foreign language. What is required is the time and willpower to make those resources our own.

Kathryn O'Brien's "First Year French," the textbook I used 55 years ago, has these lines in the first lesson:

J'entre dans la salle de classe. I enter the classroom.
Je regarde autour de moi. I look around.
Je vois les élèves et le professeur. I see the students and the teacher.
Je dis bonjour au professeur. I say hello to the professor.
Je prends ma place. I take my place.

Young or old, if we want to learn a foreign language, we must enter the classroom, greet the teacher, and take our place.

C'est facile, eh?

Jeff Minick has four children and a growing platoon of grandchildren. For 20 years, he taught history, literature, and Latin to seminars of homeschooling students in Asheville, N.C., Today, he lives and writes in Front Royal, Va. See JeffMinick.com to follow his blog.

THE EPOCH TIMES

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— DELINDA FORSYTHE

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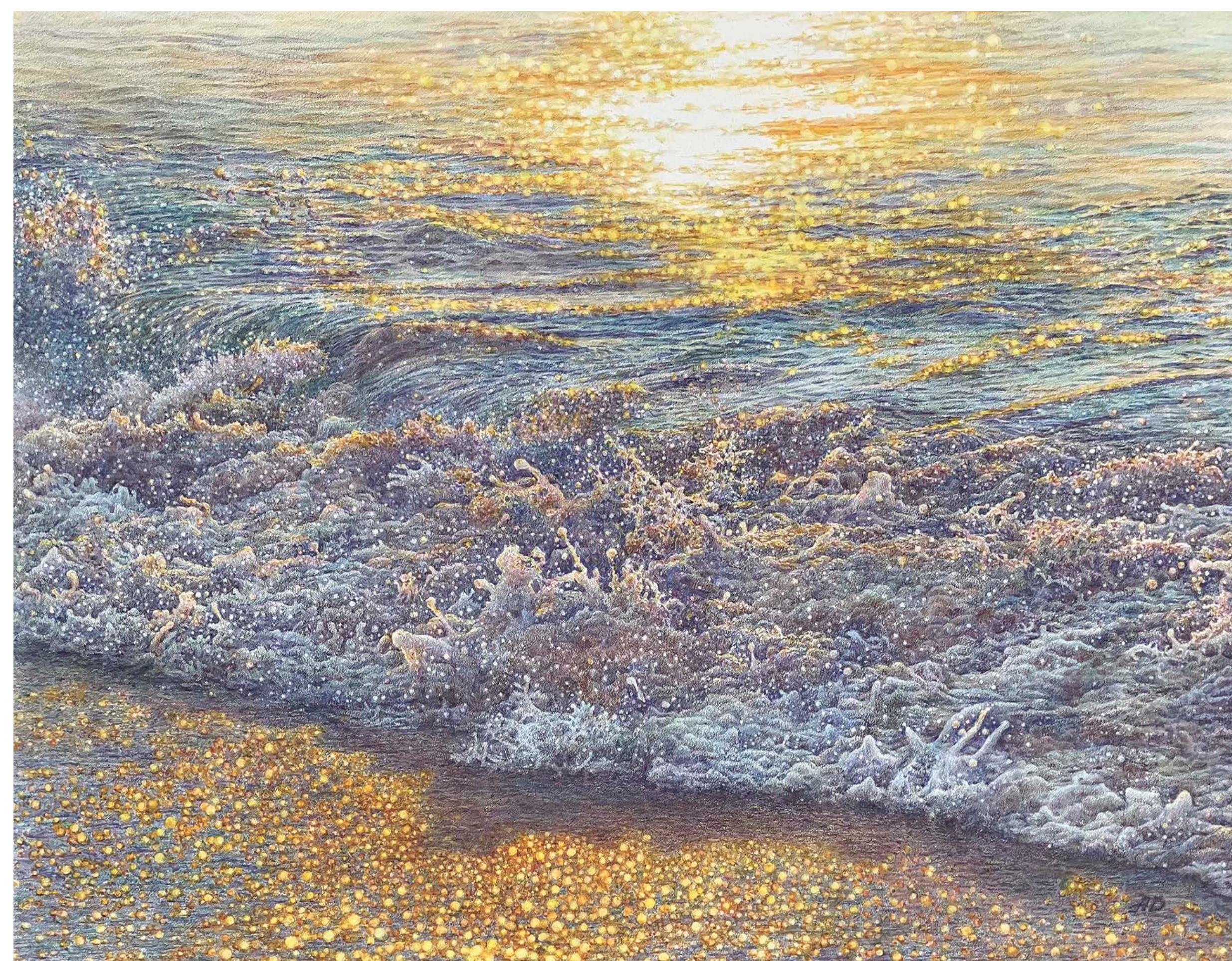
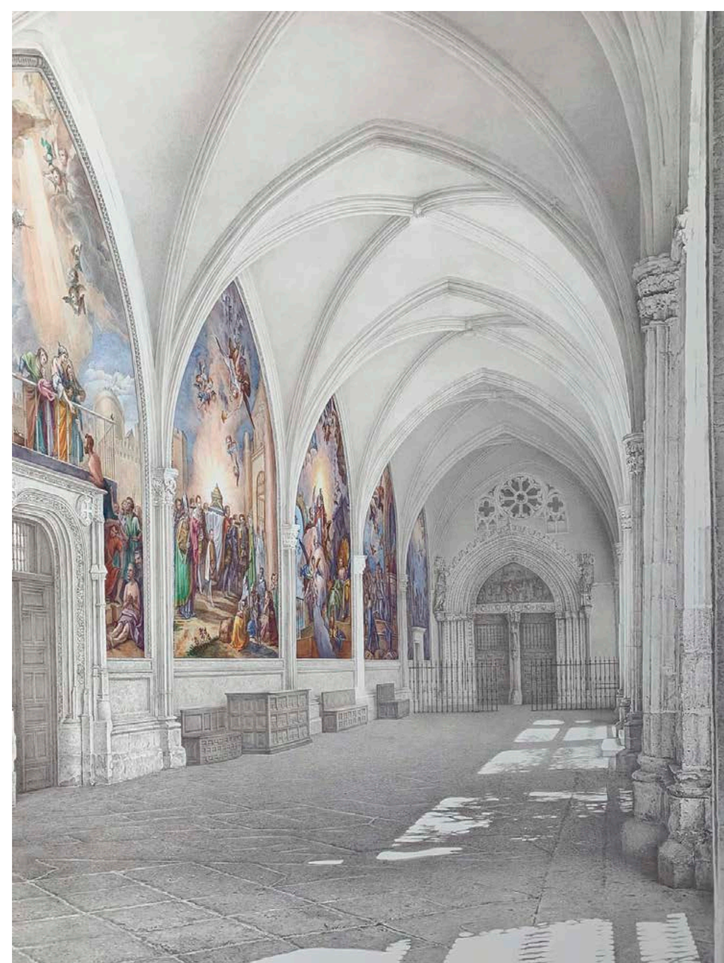


"First Light," 2020, by Anzhelika Doliba. Silverpoint over thin casein paint layer on gesso panel; 14 inches by 11 inches.



"Cathedral of Saint Mary of Toledo," Spain, 2019, by Anzhelika Doliba. Silverpoint on prepared board over casein paint; 24 inches by 24 inches.

FINE ARTS

Silverpoint Perfection: Anzhelika Doliba's Art

LORRAINE FERRIER

Ukrainian artist Anzhelika Doliba distills the evocative beauty of historic places in her architectural silverpoint drawings. "The atmosphere and the mood of any work are the most important elements for me," she said. In each drawing, she tries to convey a certain mystery of the place, and the feeling of that moment.

For as far back as she can remember, Doliba has loved to draw. Her love for architecture arose during her time attending Taras Shevchenko State Art High School, in Kyiv. Part of her art training was to practice the discipline of plein air painting, creating complete works of art on-site in the open air.

Doliba explained that Kyiv's cityscape is unique and diverse: "The buildings and streets of the Ukrainian capital combine more than 30 different architectural styles, [including] gothic, baroque, Moorish revival, Russian classicism style, and art nouveau. The best European, Russian, and Ukrainian architects and artists worked on the buildings."

Doliba went on to graduate from Kyiv's National Academy of Fine Arts and Architecture in 1994, from the architecture department, where she learned to draft everything in the traditional way, by hand, for which she is immensely grateful. In recent years, she returned to see her old teachers in the Ukraine and learned that since the advent of computer-aided design, many architectural students no longer draw by hand.

Although she draws in pencil, pastels, and charcoal and paints in acrylics and oils, three years ago the now New Jersey-based artist began to draw in silverpoint. It is now her specialty.

Her work is held in private collections in America, Europe, and Egypt (where she lived for over 16 years).

About Metalpoint

Silverpoint first emerged in medieval Italy, where it became a popular drawing medium, used with magnificent effect by the likes of Leonardo da Vinci. In northern Europe, German artists Albrecht Dürer and Hans Holbein the Elder rendered splendid silverpoint drawings.

A metalpoint artist uses a fine metal rod of gold, copper, lead, or silver, shaped to a point at the end in order to draw, leaving a metallic mark that shimmers in response to light. An artist needs to be a skilled draftsman to use metalpoint, as any errors are almost impossible to erase or correct because the metalpoint is used over a previously applied ground, which is a layer of opaque paint that sometimes has added pigment.

The ground, in simple terms, allows the metalpoint to make a mark, as drawing without it—with silver, for example, on unprepared paper—doesn't leave a visible mark. In Renaissance times, bone ash and pigment were ground down and made into a paste with water, which was then mixed with animal glue and applied as a ground to the metalpoint drawing support (a panel or paper, for instance).

A self-confessed perfectionist, Doliba loves silverpoint because it allows her to render exquisite details in her architectural drawings. Silverpoint is a slow medium, she said, and it takes time to render the amount of detail involved in her architectural drawings. For instance, a drawing such as "Bethesda Terrace Central Park, NYC," takes around four to five weeks to complete, although she doesn't work on pieces continually, and she doesn't measure the time each piece takes because it's such an enjoyable process for her.

A self-confessed perfectionist, Doliba loves silverpoint because it allows her to render exquisite details in her architectural drawings.

Grayscale

Doliba drew a lot with pencil before she decided to specialize in silverpoint. Drawing with silverpoint can be similar to drawing with pencil, she said. When you draw with silverpoint, the first marks made are like gray pencil, although they have a metallic shimmer, and the darkest of tones that are easily achieved with pencil cannot be made by silverpoint.

Doliba's daughter, commenting on her mother's pencil drawings and early silverpoint drawings, once said to her, "Everything you do is gray." Her early silverpoint drawings certainly were monotone in color, but they were rich in atmosphere.

In a traditional atelier, using grays would be the first step in how artists would learn. Masters would make sure their artists could competently render tones and forms in grayscale drawings before they moved on to paint.

Doliba's first silverpoint drawing was of an Ionic capital on Wall Street in New York. And among her early silverpoint endeavors is a drawing of the exterior arches of the New York Public Library. For that drawing, she prepared her own ground.

Another stunning example of her early silverpoint work is a radiant portrait of one of her two daughters in the drawing "Angelica." Doliba seems to have captured her daughter's personality wonderfully as she looks out to her mother, full of joy and the confidence of youth.

A Touch of Color

While the application of silverpoint is precise and controlled, after the drawing is complete the color of the silverpoint can change over time to brown and sepia tones due to the silver's oxidizing. Copperpoint also changes color over time, from copper to green. "I like these tones because you can't get this hue with another medium," Doliba said.

When she initially learned about silverpoint drawing, Doliba looked at how established silverpoint artists worked and saw that they used casein paint, a paint derived from mixing pigment with the milk-protein casein, to add color.

Now, Doliba applies casein paint much like light watercolors. The light wash helps her bring color to the drawing while still being able to shade the forms in silverpoint. She paints a casein wash and then draws over the paint with silverpoint to achieve the tonal range.

Her silverpoint drawing of Central Park's Bethesda Terrace is a great example of where the light casein underpainting brings warmth and diffused sunlight to the picture. It's the type of drawing she loves to do, just for her own pleasure. Doliba gets a lot of requests to make this drawing available as a print because the terrace is a popular place for weddings or for couples to be photographed. The day Doliba arrived at the terrace it was full of birds. A few of them made it into the picture along with their nests.

In another silverpoint piece, Doliba drew the "Angel of the Waters," the 8-foot bronze statue in the Bethesda Fountain, which stands in the center of the terrace. The angel represents a Bible story in which a paralytic was healed in the waters at Bethesda.

Color features more strongly in the silverpoint drawings Doliba made after a trip to Spain, where she visited Madrid, Barcelona, and Toledo. In her silverpoint drawings of the "Cathedral of Saint Mary of Toledo," she painted the frescoes with casein paint directly over the silverpoint, rather than using casein as an underpaint as she normally does.

Experimenting with different ideas to get the best possible atmosphere for her silverpoint drawings is high on Doliba's priorities. On the same trip, she traveled to the mountains overlooking Barcelona and used a technique similar to the Toledo frescoes. The resulting silverpoint drawing is a Barcelona city view that glows in a delicate blue hue of casein overpaint with a touch of golden light in one of the towers.

Mastering Silverpoint

Having worked with silverpoint for only a relatively short time, Doliba has come to understand how to competently use the medium and observe how it interacts with the different grounds, paper, and paint. Three years on, she still enjoys the process of preparing for her silverpoint drawings and putting metal to paper. "Every time you do art, you learn something," she said.

Each time she draws, she's looking and thinking how best to portray what's in front of her. She asks herself, "How can I draw this?" She observes the different tonal ranges and the color possibilities, and then thinks to herself how she can combine the silver to make the best possible picture.

Sometimes, when traveling to a location doesn't allow enough time to sketch or draw on-site, Doliba takes photographs to devise the composition at home. She then prepares a detailed pencil drawing prior to any silverpoint drawing. "It's not easy to get what you want from the beginning with silver."

"Every time, I do something new," she said. Her silverpoint "First Light" is a good example. Living in New Jersey, Doliba is close to the water. "I really love the sunrise and how the light comes up," she said. Having already captured how the sun hits the water in an oil painting, she wanted to see how the picture would work as a silverpoint drawing. The result is an incredibly luminous picture, in which the golden sunlight shimmers on the sea and sand as the frothy sea foam reaches the shore.

A Love for Architectural Drawing

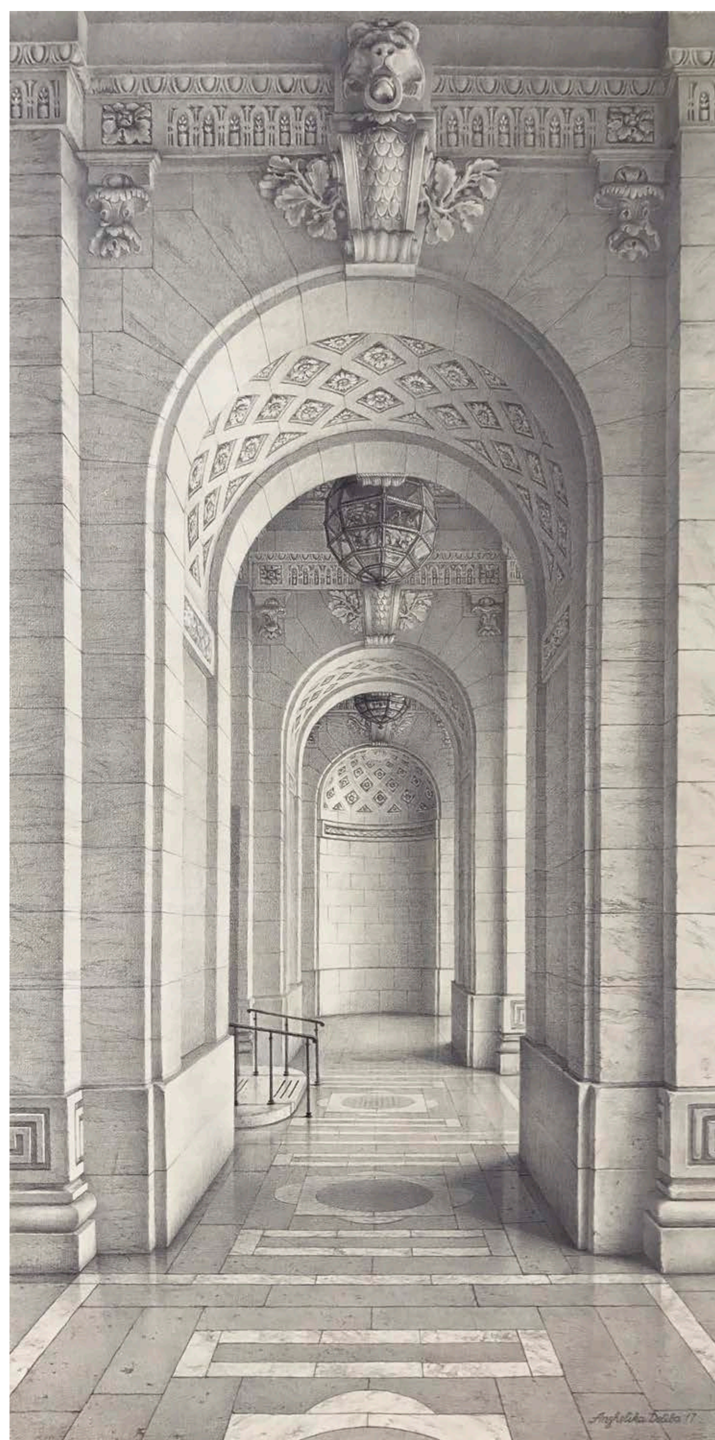
Doliba feels that architectural drawings are her vocation. "Of course, I'm always thinking about drawing figurative art because it's most popular, but always, every time, I'm still drawn to architectural drawings. I love it! I love to do it."

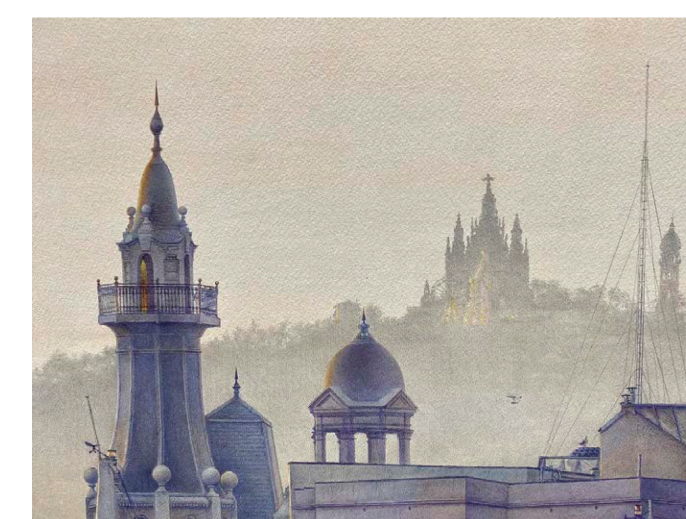
Currently, Doliba is creating a body of architectural drawings as an exhibition to submit to galleries. For artists like Doliba, whose work is quite niche, this can be a challenge. There's not a lot of artists doing her style or type of work; this, she believes, can be problematic for gallery submissions. Galleries want their art exhibitions to reflect or match the idea of what they sell in their gallery, she said.

Of her architectural drawings, Doliba says, "I want to show the beauty of the place." In the same sentiment, she also hopes viewers of her art enjoy each place as much as she does.

To find out more about Anzhelika Doliba's art visit, AngelaDoliba.com

ALL PHOTOS BY ANZHELIKA DOLIBA



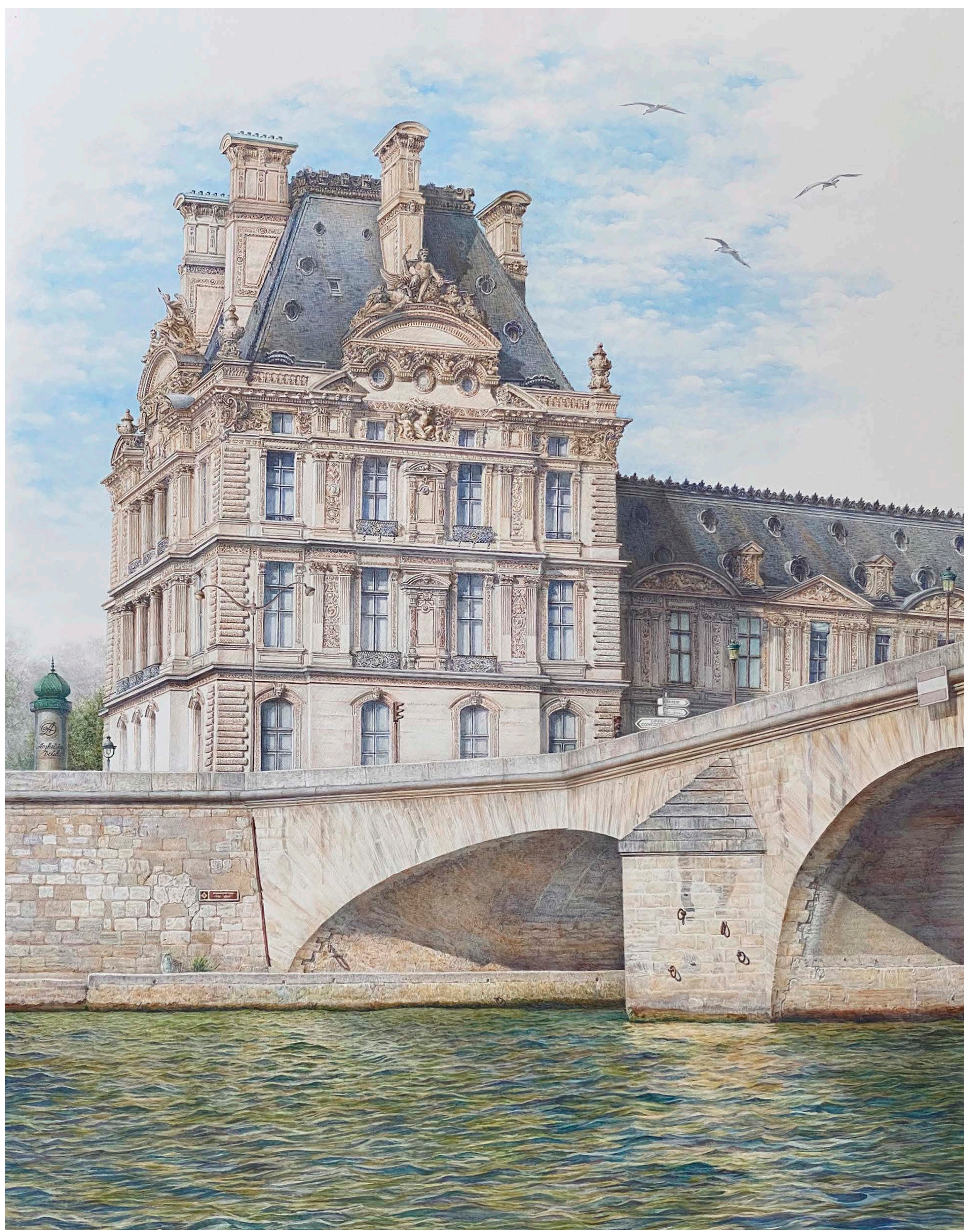


(Clockwise from the left)
"New York Public Library," 2017, by Anzhelika Doliba. Silverpoint on prepared paper; 10 inches by 20 inches.

"Angel of the Waters," 2020, by Anzhelika Doliba. Silverpoint on paper over thin casein paint layer.

"Barcelona," 2020, by Anzhelika Doliba. Silverpoint over casein underpainting on watercolor block; 14 inches by 11 inches.

"Ionic Capital of Wall Street, NYC," 2017, by Anzhelika Doliba. Silverpoint on prepared paper; 8 inches by 9.5 inches.



The Louvre Museum is depicted in "Bonjour Paris," 2020, by Anzhelika Doliba. Silverpoint drawing over thin casein paint layer on prepared paper; 19 inches by 24 inches.

MUSIC

Classical —or— Romantic?

MICHAEL KUREK

Are we living now in a "classical" or a "romantic" musical era? I mean with a small C and a small R. The question may sound rather reductive in today's complex musical world, but art, literature, and music history have long been understood in terms of those two essential elements: intellect versus heart, reason versus emotion, Apollonian versus Dionysian.

Romantic music, for example Tchaikovsky's, is understood generally to have bigger, emotional melodies and temperamental changes in tempo and volume. Classical music, for example Mozart's, flows along relatively evenly, is balanced, and is dispassionately predictable.

It appears impossible for 'classical' and 'romantic' to exist without each other.

Detail of "Apollo of the Belvedere," Roman copy after a Greek bronze original of 330–320 B.C., attributed to Leochares. Vatican Museums, Vatican City.

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In reality, the aesthetic winds that bluster through music history have always formed a rather more hopeless complexity of cross-currents, but historians have nonetheless found this simple dichotomy between reason and emotion useful in understanding at least the main trade-wind routes music has sailed on its way through time.

The Pendulum of the Romantic and Classical in Music History

Let me first take you on a whirlwind (or trade-wind) tour of this essential path through the history of Western classical music. It amounts to this: Each traditional historical era of music began with relatively "classical" simplicity and symmetry, and then gradually grew into a more impulsive, emotional "romantic" beast, until it was brought under control once again by a new simplification, to begin the next era of restored classical stability.

For example, the high Renaissance in music (late 16th century) had grown into a gorgon of emotional complexity with many voices singing different lines at once ("polyphony"), sometimes on completely different texts in different languages! Then around 1600, the early Baroque composers, like Claudio Monteverdi (1567–1643), clarified this confusing state of music by returning to a single voice in a type of song called "monody," a term borrowed from classical Greek poetry declaimed by a single person rather than by a chorus.

Over time, though, the Baroque couldn't help itself and also grew in complexity into many more or bigger parts. For example, we see this in the imitative fugues of Bach and in spectacularly sumptuous choral oratorios, showy organ music, and brassy brass ensembles.

A new reform was found in the next, so-called Classical (with both a large and a small C) era typified by Mozart and Haydn, beginning with a radical simplification of the Baroque's opera aria, which had become a show-off vehicle of convoluted vocal improvisation. A landmark work here was the classical Greek-themed opera "Orfeo ed Euridice" (1762) by Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787). It radically disallowed any improvisation, in strict adherence to the notes on the page, and those had relatively simple melodies, thus clarifying the romantic muddle back into tidy classical order.

The next swing of the pendulum from classical back to romantic took us all the way through the Classical era and growing continually into the late Romantic era of Gustav Mahler and Richard Strauss, with their version of emotionally extravagant instrumental forces and harmonic complexities. Then, in the 1920s, a cerebral course correction in music was again made, this time by Arnold Schoenberg (1874–1951) with his atonal, ultra-rational "twelve-tone method," rendering emotion practically taboo for decades.

Detail of "Dionysus With Panther and Satyr," A.D. second century. Palazzo Altemps, Rome.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

This incarnation of classicism, in turn, has grown back into today's neoromantic, emotional roller coaster of postmodern collages, mixing all sorts of styles, often at once, as in the work of William Bolcom and Michael Daugherty.

However, the above recycling process in the "closed system" of concert-hall music history has now had its bubble burst by the explosion of popular, world, media, and hybrid musical styles. The fallout lies scattered all about us in a now-open system, though it may feel more like a terrifying mess to the scholar preferring neat models. Yet human emotion and reason remain, and they need to be sorted out in some way.

Has Our Culture Become More 'Romantic'?

In the above cases, space did not permit discussing how all these changes in music reflected similar movements in art, literature, and culture (they did), so let us look at culture now for some help in understanding today's music.

My observation in recent years, at least as a college professor, has been of the dramatic rise of emotion and "feelings" over reason. Last year a student wrote to me, "Why did you give me a B in the course? I feel like I earned an A." I replied, "Alas, I cannot grade on your feelings. You had an 87 average."

The Romantic age has clearly returned in popular film and TV, whose moral compass is often feelings. And in a few cases, heart-on-the-sleeve melodrama has even swelled into brick-through-the-window angst, as raw emotion has burst out into the streets irrationally, in that some do not even seem to know why they are engaging in it or even why they are feeling it.

Even the most passionate music of Wagner or Tchaikovsky would not seem to contain or register this much feeling on its emotion meter. In the light of today's more visceral emotions, it becomes easier to see that such 19th-century romantic music, previously thought to be wildly unbridled in emotion, was actually constructed in a rational way. It was never pure emotion only, as it sometimes seemed, but rather only a more malleable version of classical music. Though leaning further into emotional expression, it was still a combination of both emotion and reason. Tchaikovsky's music owes plenty to Mozart's and has plenty of classical form!

Perhaps the only true musical counterpart to the kind of emotion society is experiencing now would be a music of pure chaos. And just as rampant emotion without reason can become rage and destroy a city, so would it seem that pure emotion alone would become noise and destroy music.

Thus, it appears impossible for "classical" and "romantic" to exist without each other, as with yin and yang. We see that for the arts to survive, as with culture in general, they must remain as they always have been, a balancing act between the two human impulses of intellect and emotion.

American composer Michael Kurek is the author of the recently released book "The Sound of Beauty: A Composer on Music in the Spiritual Life" and the composer of the Billboard No. 1 classical album "The Sea Knows." The winner of numerous composition awards, including the prestigious Academy Award in Music from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, he has served on the Nominations Committee of the Recording Academy for the classical Grammy Awards. He is a professor emeritus of composition at Vanderbilt University. For more information and music, visit MichaelKurek.com

MUSIC

A Golden Flute, A Golden Talent: James Galway

DIANA BARTH

Often called "the man with the golden flute," James Galway earned his nickname. It applies not only to his incomparable warm tone but also to the fact that he plays a flute made literally of gold.

Galway feels that gold imports a warmer tone than is generally heard by a silver-colored instrument, and he does not stint in any way; he owns about 15 flutes of the precious metal, he says in a YouTube video of a ClassicFM broadcast of a concert at Zoomer Hall.

He took up that instrument because "there was one in the house."

It went far beyond that, however, as he went on to become a foremost virtuoso worldwide, still performing publicly as he nears his 81st birthday later this year (Dec. 8, 2020).

Winning prizes even as a child, he went on to study with prestigious trainers, including the famed Jean-Pierre Rampal. Before winning fame himself, however, he served a rigorous apprenticeship, playing as a member of noted symphony orchestras, including Sadler's Wells Opera Company and Orchestra, the London Symphony Orchestra, and the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

After serving as principal flute in the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under the baton of Herbert von Karajan for seven years, he decided to embark on a solo career in 1975.

As he was born and raised in Belfast, it goes without saying that he plays Irish tunes, jigs, hornpipes, and such, with the utmost ease. But clearly, his years of work with classical music orchestras have enabled him to play works by the great classical composers, including Beethoven, Mozart, and Bach.

However, he also features contemporary music in his public performances and on his recordings (which have sold 30 million copies). Some such works commissioned by or for him include works by composers David Amram, Malcolm Arnold, William Bolcom, and others.

James Galway performs during the "BBC Proms in the Park" at Hyde Park in London on Sept. 10, 2016.

JOHN PHILLIPS/GETTY IMAGES

A particular song, "The Swiss Shepherd" ("Il Pastore Svizzero" by Francesco Morlacchi, dating from the 19th century, shows off many of Galway's skills. Beginning as a plaintive melody that exhibits his lyrical gifts, it soars to display exhilarating pyrotechnics, making use of his consummate technique, his trills, his runs—the piece becomes downright explosive, going from lyrical to passionate and back again.

And always, there is the clarity of the perfectionist.

Among his many awards, arguably the most prestigious was being made an Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE). He was knighted by the Queen of England in 2001, making him Sir James Galway. His wife, the American-born Jeanne Galway became accordingly Dame Jeanne Galway. An accomplished flutist herself, she and her husband often concertize together.

As to whether he prefers to be referred to as a flutist or the more formal flautist, his wife says in a video interview with her husband for Teen Kid News that he says he's "just a flute player."

Diana Barth writes for several theater publications, including New Millennium. She may be contacted at diabarth99@gmail.com

Diane Lane plays Penny Chenery, standing with one of the five horse actors portraying Secretariat, in "Secretariat." WALT DISNEY STUDIOS MOTION PICTURES

FILM INSIGHTS WITH MARK JACKSON

Mark Jackson grew up in Spring Valley, N.Y., where he attended a Waldorf school. At Williams College, his professors all suggested he write professionally. He acted professionally for 20 years instead. Now he writes professionally about acting. In the movies.

REWIND, REVIEW, RE-RATE

Secretariat: The Greatest Who Ever Lived

MARK JACKSON

'Secretariat'

Director
Randall Wallace

Starring
Diane Lane, John Malkovich, Dylan Walsh, Margo Martindale, Nelsan Ellis, James Cromwell, Scott Glenn

Rated
PG

Running Time
2 hours, 3 minutes

Release Date
Oct. 8, 2010

★★★★☆

We enjoy tried-and-true food recipes, but we for some reason enjoy complaining about longstanding, successful film formulas. "It's sooo formulaic!" How come you never hear that regarding an impeccably cooked steak? Time-tested film formulas are just as tasty. One such tasty movie would be Disney's "Secretariat," a standard sports-formula film about the most phenomenal race horse of all time, and his owner, Penny Chenery (Diane Lane).

In 1973, the peerless Secretariat won the horse-racing Triple Crown, which includes the Kentucky Derby, the Preakness, and the Belmont Stakes. It's a feat more or less akin to Usain Bolt going to the Olympics and winning the 100 yard dash, the 880, and the marathon. It hadn't been done in a quarter century, and that superhorse set jaw-dropping records that stand to this day.

The Horse

Secretariat, a chestnut thoroughbred stallion who went by the nickname "Big Red," was an animal athlete without peer. (The only other horse in his league in history was Man o' War, of the 1920s, who, interestingly, was another big chestnut nicknamed "Big Red.") Secretariat had a highly charismatic, unique, and amusing personality, similar in many ways to one of his human contemporaries—Muhammad Ali. Both of them were the greatest of all time, and both of them knew it.

Secretariat liked to strut up to the starting gate, imperiously staring down not only rival horses but also, hilariously, their jockeys. He knew exactly what was going on, and loved the competition. Then, being the quintessential closer of all time, he'd lounge at the rear of the stall, come out of the gate like he just woke up, drop to dead last in the pack, have a coffee, smoke a cigar, read the newspaper, look at his watch, and smirk, "Oh, shoot, look at that. I probably oughta get going."

In 1973, the peerless Secretariat won the horse-racing Triple Crown.

He'd then hit full afterburner (it's a jet metaphor now) and smoke the entire field of world-class competitors. And I mean smoke. Afterward, he'd saunter into the Winner's Circle and—knowing full well what a camera was for—start posing for pictures.

The Owner

Penny Chenery Tweedy (Diane Lane), a classic, early 1970s, plaid-slacks-wearing, stay-at-home Denver housewife, was raising four kids. When her mom died, Penny went to Virginia to take care of her dad (Scott Glenn) and see about the family stables. As opposed to her brother (Dylan Baker), she tentatively wanted to keep Meadow Stable going out of a sense of nostalgia.

Then, baby Secretariat was born and Penny's plans—after she sensed a powerful bond with the little red colt with the white star on his forehead and three white socks—changed from a whim to an ironclad obsession. In an unheard-of foreshadowing of greatness, little Big Red stands up almost immediately after being born.

At the film's outset, we learn that Penny lost a traditional coin-toss to her dad's long-term rival, Ogden Phipps (James Cromwell), regarding who'd get the first pick of the two offspring produced by Phipps's stallion, Bold Ruler, and Chenery's mare.

Penny, displaying a keen horse sense and deep intuition about bloodlines and where the ball (of racing talent) would drop on the roulette wheel, knew which horse Phipps would pass on. Phipps, to his credit, later acknowledged he got burned by an inexperienced housewife clearly smarter than himself.

The Trainer, et al.

Using that same, all-that-glitters-is-not-gold instinct, Penny picks flamboyant, dandified ("He dresses like a pimp!") Québécois trainer Lucien Laurin (John Malkovich) to train Big Red. Malkovich's mugging bag-of-tricks is brought in for comic relief, and while his performance lowers the film's quality by bringing a slightly jangling whiff of bad taste, it still works just fine.

Bringing up the rear of Penny's entourage of unsung and underdog heroes are the tough-as-nails Canadian jockey Ron Turcotte (Otto Thorwarth), Eddie Sweat (Nelsan Ellis) as the trainer and groomer tuned into the soul of his horse, and the steadfast Ms. Ham (Margo Martindale) as Penny's personal assistant of 35 years, who was responsible for naming Secretariat.

While much is made of Penny's challenging, in satisfying fashion, 1960s-type misogynistic snide remarks from the good old boy club of thoroughbred racing, "Secretariat" is at its best when it keeps the focus on its subject: the build-up to Secretariat's stunning, unbelievable, never-occurred-before-or-since, 31-length victory in the Belmont Stakes.

Secretariat is ranked No. 35 in ESPN's 1999 Top Athletes of the 20th Century, the only nonhuman athlete on that list. Formulaic sports film? This one'll have you on your feet cheering Big Red on—guaranteed.

'NATIONAL VELVET'

Young Elizabeth Taylor Is Beyond Endearing

MARK JACKSON

'National Velvet'

Director
Clarence Brown

Starring
Elizabeth Taylor, Mickey Rooney, Donald Crisp, Anne Revere, Angela Lansbury

Rated
Not Rated

Running Time
2 hours, 3 minutes

Release Date
Jan. 26, 1945

★★★★☆

"National Velvet" (1945) is one of those classic 1940s American films, like "Gone With the Wind" (1940) and "It's a Wonderful Life" (1947), that get continually referenced in modern American culture because they struck chords that still reverberate.

I'd never seen "National Velvet"; but at the prompting of my editor, I decided to expand my horizons. One of the nice things about this job is that, while it's a challenge to keep up with the deluge of modern movie product out there, the Epoch Times' desire to showcase uplifting films allows for time to go back and sample the good stuff. And I'm here to tell you—"National Velvet" is the good stuff.

See this movie for little Elizabeth Taylor's precocious, bravura performance.

A Girl and Her Horse

"National Velvet" is about 12-year-old British Velvet Brown (the young Elizabeth Taylor in a star-making performance), a butcher's daughter. She's got that all-consuming passion for horses that girls who grow up with horses tend to develop.

With the coaching of an ex-jockey (Mickey Rooney), who Velvet's family adopts for a short time, and a rambunctious, spirited sorrel gelding, Velvet hopes to win the prestigious Grand National Steeplechase racing competition.

Is that perhaps a foolish premise? Is that not folly? Could it take place in reality? The mere thought of a comely, highly feminine, starry-eyed, ultra-naïve, pure-as-the-new-fallen-snow 12-year-old going up against the hardened adult, cutthroat, all-male (at the time) world of professional jockeys, with their world-class lats and ripped abdominals, is sheer folly. Horse racing is highly dangerous!

PUBLIC DOMAIN

Promotional still for the 1944 film "National Velvet," with Mickey Rooney, Elizabeth Taylor, and The Pie.

But who cares?! This is not about reality. This is a fairy tale for inspiring little girls to dream big, which is underscored throughout the movie by Velvet's mother (Anne Revere, who won a Best Supporting Actress Oscar for this role). Mrs. Brown (who in her youth had swum the English Channel) repeatedly notes that it's good, at least once in life, to attempt a "breath-taking folly."

Story and Performances

As mentioned, girl sees horse, girl wants horse, dad buys horse, girl has all-consuming vision of winning the biggest race in history; at the same time, family adopts former jockey, jockey trains girl-and-horse, and off they go to the races.

Velvet learns responsibility and the value of hard-earned success as matriarch Mrs. Brown corrals her daughter's passions and focuses them into discernment; that is, into making decisions of integrity regarding her moral values, and not giving in to her father's flights of financial fantasy, based on her forthcoming fame.

Velvet's dad (Donald Crisp) is, in turn, stern and jovial but has the ability to look within, in retrospection, and recognize his far more spiritually evolved spouse's deadpan humor in cajoling him back to his moral foundations. Their tiny son likes to keep a bottle full of beetles, and at one point Mr. Brown acknowledges that he sometimes, in comparison to his wife's wisdom, feels he might as well be a bug living inside their boy's bug-bottle.

The unrecognizable young Angela Lansbury, as Velvet's boy-crazy older sister, already has the glow of future stardom, in a minor role.

I'd always wondered why Mickey Rooney was a movie star at all. Same with John Wayne. But you have to go back and take a look at movie stars in their prime. Taken in by the Brown family, the homeless drifter (whose past experience as a jockey can't help but fire up Velvet's horse-racing dreams) played by Rooney, with his perfect head of blond hair and boatload of feisty charisma, will make you go, "Now I get it."

The Power of Innocence

See this movie for little Elizabeth Taylor's precocious, bravura performance. Her face is alive with refreshing joy; her voice has the breathlessness of wanting to embrace the whole wondrous world, but having too little time.

We forget, nowadays, the powerful beacons of goodness that young, unsullied, innocent girls can be. We forget what a gift they are. This innocence, purity, and idealism of young girls was most recently seen in "Little Women."

The modern perception of Velvet's energy was recently stated in a Time Magazine article as "an interesting psychological study of hysterical obsession, conversion mania, and preadolescent sexuality." Really? Is that not sad? Is that not disturbing? Life is simpler and more common-sense-filled than modern folks give it credit for being. The powerful passion that Velvet displays, grounded in an unmitigated hewing to truthfulness and tolerance, is the true source of compassion.

Jockey Gemma Tutty has stated that some trainers refuse to use women as riders, despite a new study finding that female jockeys are as good as men. Only 11.3 percent of professional jockey licenses are currently held by women. I wonder how many of those female jockeys found their life's passion and are living their bliss from having watched "National Velvet?" My guess would be—all of them.

REACHING WITHIN: WHAT TRADITIONAL ART OFFERS THE HEART

Finding Rest in Righteousness: 'Elijah in the Wilderness'

ALL PHOTOS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

ERIC BESS

We are sometimes left physically, mentally, and yes, spiritually fatigued. We have jobs, families, studies, interests, and so on. It's easy to often feel exhausted.

But artworks like "Elijah in the Wilderness" by Frederic Leighton (1830–1896), completed in 1878, may leave us with wisdom on how to feel refreshed despite our busy lifestyles.

Elijah in the Wilderness

Elijah was a Hebrew prophet who confronted King Ahab and Queen Jezebel in their worship of Baal. Elijah warned the royals that their worship would lead to a drought in their land. Of course, the king and queen ignored Elijah's warning, and there was indeed a drought.

Soon bread was worth more than its weight in gold, and water was even more scarce. People experienced great suffering.

The angel is our focal point; the halo possesses the most intense yellow in the composition, an intensity that contrasts with the darker values on the face of the angel.

Elijah returned to the king and queen and challenged their priests to produce sacrificial fire through prayer. The priests of Baal tried and tried but were unable to produce fire. Elijah prayed to God, and God delivered fire for all to see. The people were convinced by Elijah and executed the false prophets of Baal.

Queen Jezebel was angered that her priests were executed and vowed to do the same to Elijah. But the prophet fled to the wilderness to escape the queen's wrath.

Elijah was disappointed and depressed in the wilderness. He was tired, hungry, and thirsty. He fell asleep, and in his sleep, an angel touched him and told him to eat and drink. Elijah woke up and found water and cake next to him, which he ate.

Elijah fell asleep again, and again the angel came to him and told him to eat and drink again to prepare for the long journey ahead. Elijah did as he was told and prepared for the rest of his journey.

Sir Frederic Leighton and Elijah's Guardian Angel

Sir Frederic Leighton was a British academic painter who was very popular during the 19th century. He was president of the Royal Academy, was knighted, and was the first English painter to be made a baron.

In "Elijah in the Wilderness," Leighton expertly composed warm, muted colors into a twilight-like scene.

The angel is our focal point; the halo possesses the most intense yellow in the composition, an intensity that contrasts with the darker values on the face of the angel. Leighton also used a complementary color scheme to make the angel stand out a little more than the other elements, especially in the wings where muted yellows, oranges, and reds complement soft blues and violets.

In 'Elijah in the Wilderness,' Leighton expertly composed warm, muted colors into a twilight-like scene.

(Top) "Elijah in the Wilderness," 1878, by Frederic Leighton. Oil on canvas, 92.20 inches by 82.8 inches. Walker Art Gallery, England.

(Above) Self Portrait, 1880, of Lord Frederick Leighton. Oil on canvas, 30 inches by 25 1/8 inches. Private collection.

The angel looks caringly at Elijah and places the water and cake next to his sleeping body. Elijah's body makes a sweeping curve from the middle of the right side of the composition to the middle of the bottom of the composition.

Elijah is painted in muted oranges, the color often used to represent all flesh tones. The orange of his flesh doesn't contrast much with the warmer, brown cloth on which he rests, but does contrast with the blue of the sky where his head reclines and his elbow points to the heavens.

Leighton produced a warm and calm painting. The use of complementary colors can have a jarring effect when they are used at full intensity, but Leighton opted to mute them, even bringing some of the blues, purples, and oranges close to gray. His use of muted, warm tones helps us experience a scene of tranquil warmth.

Resting in Righteousness

How beautiful a moment when this angel comes to Elijah in all of his exhaustion. This painting, with its warmth and sense of safety, made me consider the importance of rest. Not just any rest, however, but a type of rest found in selflessness.

I know quite a few people who rest a lot. They spend a lot of their time relaxing at home, complaining about the world around them. They do little but are restless. It is not any rest that will bring us the tranquility we desperately need.

The angel doesn't appear to just anyone. The angel appears to Elijah and helps Elijah. Why Elijah? Is it because his heart and mind are focused on righteousness above all else? Is this why his elbow points to the heavens and his head faces the heavens with the sky as its background?

Is Leighton telling us that only with our minds focused on the heavens will we be helped by angels and experience the tranquility and sense of safety that come with thoughts of selfless righteousness?

Maybe we're searching for rest in all of the wrong places, and maybe we won't find rest until our hearts and minds are in the right place.

Art has an incredible ability to point to what can't be seen so that we may ask "What does this mean for me and for everyone who sees it?" "How has it influenced the past and how might it influence the future?" "What does it suggest about the human experience?" These are some of the questions I explore in my series "Reaching Within: What Traditional Art Offers the Heart."

Eric Bess is a practicing representational artist.

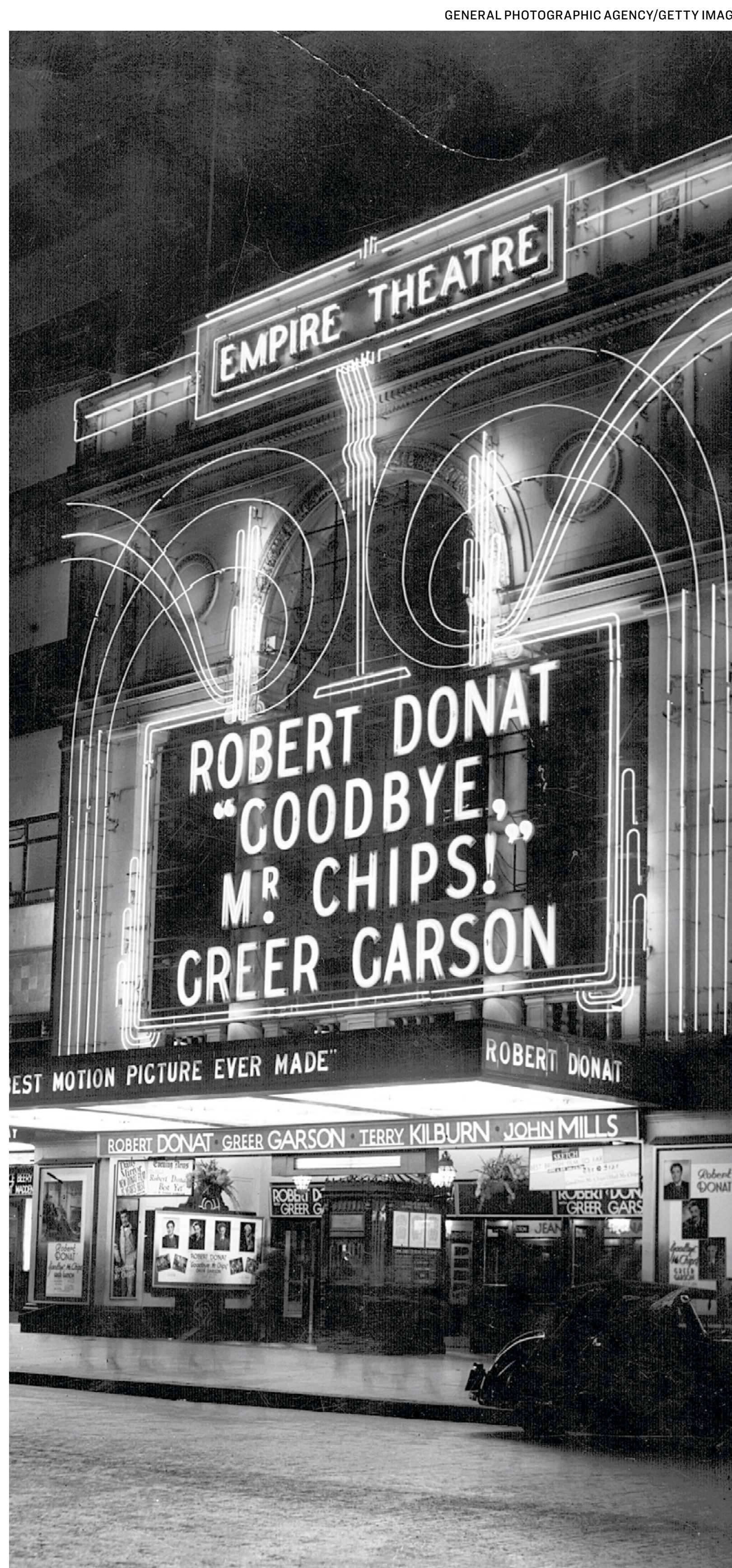
POPCORN & INSPIRATION:
FILMS THAT UPLIFT THE SOUL

The Joys of Teaching

PUBLIC DOMAIN

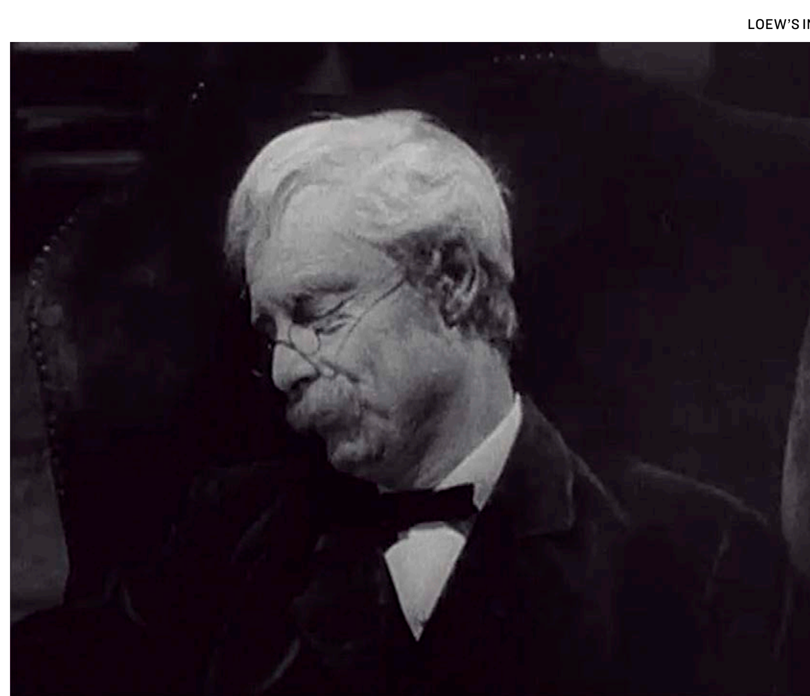
A promotional photograph of Greer Garson and Robert Donat for "Goodbye, Mr. Chips."

GENERAL PHOTOGRAPHIC AGENCY/GETTY IMAGES



The Empire cinema in Leicester Square, London, in 1939.

LOEW'S INC.



Robert Donat received the Oscar for Best Actor for playing a man who ages from his 20s to his 80s.

Nominated for seven Oscars, it was one of ten prestigious nominees for Best Picture (then called Outstanding Production) that year.

'Goodbye, Mr. Chips'

Director
Sam Wood

Starring
Robert Donat, Greer Garson, Terry Kilburn, Paul Henreid, John Mills

Running Time
1 hour, 54 minutes

Not Rated

Release Date
July 28, 1939 (USA)

★★★★★

TIFFANY BRANNAN

Few films honor the teaching profession as nobly as "Goodbye, Mr. Chips" (1939), the first film adaptation of James Hilton's bestselling 1934 novella. Although this title may not be as recognizable as others from Hollywood's "Golden Year," it's a classic that deserves the honors and acclaim it received in 1939.

In 1870, 20-something-old Charles Chippings (Robert Donat) arrives at Brookfield School, a centuries-old boys' boarding school, to teach Latin. The timid young man struggles to gain his students' respect and maintain discipline, so he sometimes leans toward harshness. He becomes a good teacher yet fails to befriend the boys and thus remains a senior master instead of a housemaster.

One summer, a fun-loving German teacher (Paul Henreid) invites Chippings to join him on his Austrian walking holiday. During this trip, Chippings gets stranded in the foggy mountains and meets another solo hiker, Kathy (Greer Garson), a young Englishwoman on a biking tour. They share provisions and get acquainted while waiting for the fog to lift. Although their holidays go separate directions the next day, they happily meet again in Vienna. There, they find romance, though hesitant to admit it. They pledge their love as Kathy's train pulls away and decide to marry.

Kathy wins Brookfield's heart as Mrs. Chippings, helping "Mr. Chips" befriend his students and become a housemaster. Although her untimely death in childbirth devastates the whole school, Kathy teaches Chips valuable lessons that help him eventually become Brookfield's headmaster, guiding the school through difficult times like World War I.

The Forgotten Oscar

Although now less iconic than other 1939 releases, "Goodbye, Mr. Chips" was acclaimed upon its release. Nominated for seven Oscars, it was one of ten prestigious nominees for Best Picture (then called Outstanding Production) that year. The National Board of Review and Film Daily listed it among 1939's Top Ten Films. In May 1939, the Hollywood Reporter's Preview Poll named it best picture. The film was financially successful, earning $1,305,000 according to The Eddie Mannix Ledger (Margaret Herrick Library, Center for Motion Picture Study).

Many believe that Clark Gable won Best Actor at the 1940 Academy Awards for playing Rhett Butler in "Gone with the Wind." David O. Selznick's Civil War epic did sweep the Oscars that year, receiving nine wins from fourteen nominations. However, Best Actor was the only one of the "Big Five" Oscars (Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor, Best Actress, and Best Writing) to elude the blockbuster, instead going to Robert Donat for his performance in "Goodbye, Mr. Chips."

Thirty-four-year-old Robert Donat played Charles Edward Chippings over a period of 63 years by looking both younger and older than he really was. He begins the lengthy flashback as a clean-shaven young man. He begins aging by growing a mustache, which he wears from middle age onward. By the time he is 83, as at the film's opening and ending, he has tousled white hair and a matching bushy mustache. It's hard to believe that this lovable elder is played by the same actor as the shy youth who first goes to Brookfield. Mr. Donat said of his transformation, "As soon as I put the mustache on, I felt the part, even if I did look like a great Airedale come out of a puddle."

Education's Importance

"Goodbye, Mr. Chips" is one of the greatest films about education. As a Brookfield School master, Mr. Chips influences generations of boys. Montages show countless students reporting their names as new semesters begin over the years. Particularly illustrative is the fact that four generations of one family attend Brookfield during Mr. Chips's tenure. The first generation is John Colley, who is succeeded by his son, grandson, and great-grandson. All four boys are played by Terry Kilburn. It is Peter Colley III, the great-grandson, who utters the film's title to the 83-year-old teacher, since he is the last in his family to say goodbye.

Students gain wisdom from professors who, like Mr. Chips, have taught for decades, having themselves learned from their innumerable students. Upon first meeting him, Kathy expresses how wonderful it must be for teachers to constantly live with youth:

"It must be tremendously interesting to be a schoolmaster, to watch boys grow up and help them along; to see their characters develop and what they become when they leave school and the world gets hold of them. I don't see how you could ever get old in a world that's always young."

In 1909, Headmaster Ralston (Austin Trevor) pressures Chippings to retire, citing the professor's reluctance to follow modern trends. Dr. Ralston's eagerness to be progressive makes him ignore how much his students and colleagues love Mr. Chips. Refusing to change or retire, Chips firmly tells Dr. Ralston the importance of education over profits and modernity:

"I know the world's changing, Dr. Ralston. I've seen the old traditions die, one by one. Grace, dignity, feeling for the past—all that matters here today is a fat banking account. You're trying to run the school like a factory, for turning out money-making machine-made snobs. You've raised the fees. And in the end, the boys who really belong at Brookfield will be frozen out, frozen out. Modern methods, intensive training—poppycock! Give a boy a sense of humor and a sense of proportion and he'll stand up to anything. I'm not going to retire; you can do what you like about it."

An Example for Us

As the 2020–21 school year begins throughout America, many schools are offering some or all virtual classes. While students can see teachers on Zoom, work online, and study at home, the methods are inferior to being in a classroom.

School should be protected as one of society's most valuable institutions. While many children flourish with home-schooling, everyone should have the choice of schoolroom education—even during trying times.

Instead of hiding during a crisis, education can encourage us to continue bravely. In "Goodbye, Mr. Chips," Chips becomes interim headmaster during World War I. During a bombing attack, he continues teaching his Latin class, helping the boys find courage and even amusement in translating "Caesar's Commentaries."

This film shows how deeply school and a single teacher can impact students' lives. During his 63 years of teaching, Mr. Chips profoundly influences innumerable students. In fact, caring teachers can influence their pupils so deeply that they become surrogate parents to them. As Mr. Chips lies peacefully on his deathbed, his colleagues pity him for being childless. Mr. Chips replies:

"I thought I heard you saying it was a pity ... pity I never had any children. But you're wrong. I have. Thousands of them. Thousands of them ... and all boys."

Tiffany Brannan is a 19-year-old opera singer, Hollywood historian, travel writer, film blogger, vintage fashion expert, and ballet writer. In 2016, she and her sister founded the Pure Entertainment Preservation Society, an organization dedicated to reforming the arts by reinstating the Motion Picture Production Code.

POPCORN AND INSPIRATION

A Thought-Provoking and Ultimately Uplifting World War II Epic

IAN KANE

World War II films may seem like a dime a dozen these days—virtually to the point of overkill. While many of them are mediocre or worse, there have been some modern-day World War II cinematic efforts that have paid off, such as the slickly produced modern classic "Midway" (2019), and the soulful and harrowing war drama "Waiting for Anya" (2020).

But back in 1980, there was also a very well-constructed and peppily paced World War II epic produced, which many have likely since forgotten, titled "The Big Red One." And it's a real shame because one of the things that make this film so unique is that it was written and directed by a World War II veteran by the name of Samuel Fuller. In fact, it's an autobiographical piece based on Fuller's experiences during the war. The film's character "Zab" is based on him.

The film opens during World War I with an unnamed sergeant (Lee Marvin) somewhere in France (fittingly shot in black and white), attempting to return to his command post. As an immense wooden statue of Jesus Christ looks on, the sergeant spots a German soldier emerging through wispy swaths of battlefield smoke. The German is holding his hands up as if in surrender, but the sergeant ambushes him with his combat knife, killing him.

Later, after making it to the command post, his superior (Charles Macaulay) tells him that the war has been over for some time, and then the sergeant reflects darkly on his earlier actions: killing the German soldier after Germany had officially surrendered.

We are then transported to the coast of North Africa in 1942, where the now grizzled sergeant is going up against Germany again during World War II. We're also introduced to the other main characters who form the core squad mates under his command. They're all inexperienced privates as the first act opens and become increasingly seasoned as the film progresses.

The film is an autobiographical piece based on director Samuel Fuller's experiences during World War II.

There's Griff (Mark Hamill), a thoughtful and sensitive artist; Zab (Robert Carradine), an aspiring writer; Vinci (Bobby Di Cicco), a street kid with musical tastes; and Johnson (Kelly Ward), a farm boy. They are part of the 1st Infantry Division—also known as "The Big Red One."

The sergeant tells his squad that the Americans have dropped leaflets over the French forces who are dug in on the North African coast, far in advance of the U.S. amphibious landing. The leaflets warn the French not to attack them when they arrive. When the sergeant and his squad do touch down on the beaches, a Vichy French (French who are sympathetic to the Nazis) commander orders his soldiers to open fire on them.

The French soldiers refuse to do so and instead kill their commander since they know the Americans are there to help. In his death throes, the commander's trigger finger squeezes down on a French machine gun he was holding and it fires at the American soldiers. A brief battle ensues, resulting in some unnecessary deaths on both sides of the Allied forces. The irony in this scene underpins an absurdist tone that permeates the entire film.

UNITED ARTISTS

The core members of the Big Red One squad: (L–R) Sergeant (Lee Marvin), Vinci (Bobby Di Cicco), Zab (Robert Carridine), Johnson (Kelly Ward), and Griff (Mark Hamill), in "The Big Red One."

As they fight their way inland, the sergeant gets shot and ends up in an Algerian hospital—separated from his men. When the hospital is attacked by German forces, he escapes disguised as a Bedouin.

Later, in a touching scene, the sergeant tracks down his men—they're enjoying a little leisure time along an Algerian beach. Zab narrates: "The old bastard just couldn't face being left behind … he heard we were shipping out to invade Sicily." The sergeant walks up to them, and they gather around him in camaraderie and reunification; they'll never part again.

During the next couple of pivotal years of the war, the sergeant and his squad are involved in the liberation of Sicily, the amphibious assault on Omaha Beach during D-Day, and the eventual emancipation of France. They attempt to do the same in Belgium but are rebuffed back into France.

Each theater of war acts as a separate chapter in the men's lives and is punctuated by an epilogue of sorts narrated by Zab, which reveals more about the character of each squad member.

The film culminates in the squad's final action: They are tasked with liberating a concentration camp called Falkenau, located in Czechoslovakia. Some of the film's final scenes are quite poignant (no spoilers) and cause one to reflect on them long after the ending credits roll.

Although at times morose, "The Big Red One" doesn't simply wallow in the tragic consequences of war; it shows how surreal things can become when men are pushed to the fringes of insanity. However, the movie eventually ends on a relatively uplifting note, showing that amid all of the chaos and thunder of war, there is always hope for a better future.

Ian Kane is a filmmaker and author based out of Los Angeles. To learn more, visit DreamFlightEnt.com

'The Big Red One'

Director
Samuel Fuller

Starring
Lee Marvin, Mark Hamill, Robert Carradine

Running Time
1 hour, 53 minutes

Rated
R

Release Date
July 18, 1980 (USA)

★★★★☆

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