

ANDREI PROTSOUK

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"My parents made the decision for me to be an artist when I was 6 years old," Protsouk says. "They were artists also and tried to teach me how to play the piano and be artistic. The piano didn't work."

The early jumpstart his parents pro-

vided in his hometown of Donetsk, Ukraine, benefited Protsouk for the rest of his life. He attended several prestigious art schools to develop his fine-art skills and techniques beginning with the Donetsk School of Art. From there, he went on to the Lugansk State School of Fine Art where he graduated in 1981. Encouraged by his instructors, he applied to the distinguished Repine Academy of St. Petersburg for his Ph.D. in fine art where many of the best Russian artists had preceded before him. He moved to the United States in 1992.

The greatest challenge facing Protsouk in his career is creating new ideas for the art market while keeping the interest of publishers and collectors. "One of my strongest differences [as an artist] is being able to come up with my own original style and ideas," he says. "It's all about the composition, drawing and color. This is not your typical landscape

TODAY'S
TOP
ARTISTS



▲ "Knock Out," a hand-embellished giclée on canvas, 54 x 66 inches, in an edition of 95



▲ "L'Amour Sous Umbrelle," a hand-embellished giclée on canvas, 38 x 32 inches, in an edition of 195



Protsouk likes to concentrate on the simpler, quieter pleasures, such as reading, watching old movies and gardening. Taking the time to love and appreciate the world is always reflected in his work.

In all the pieces Protsouk creates he tries to concentrate on the main theme of love in the surrounding world. "Love is the strongest human emotion," Protsouk says. "To be in love is a great feeling. I think if everybody were in love, then the world would be a much happier place."

This theme makes his artwork truly personal to every individual, but it is still exclusively Protsouk. He describes his pieces as depictions of his own private feelings. "But in a way, these are the feelings of everybody," he says. "If it has deep feeling, then it is good looking."

AWARDS / RECOGNITIONS:

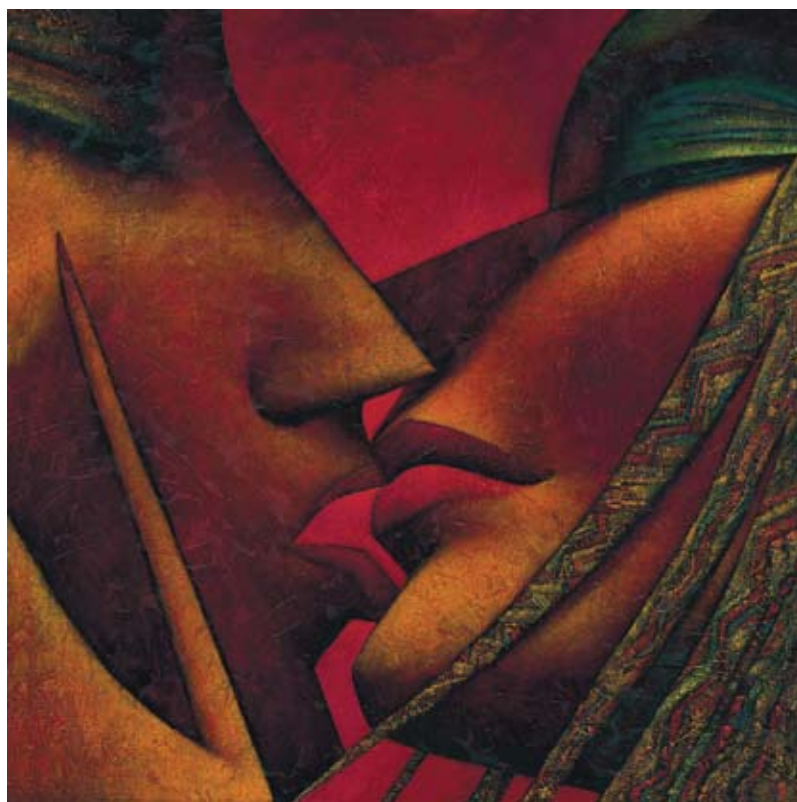
Many corporate and private collections, such as Coca-Cola in Denmark; Johnny Walker Expo Co. in England; Francis Lang Art, Hamburg, Germany; and individual collectors, including President George W. Bush

or vase of flowers the public seems to covet so often."

Protsouk's favorite and most successful piece is always the one he is currently involved with, which is now a piece titled "Matador." "I always wanted to create a Spanish collection," he says. Many artists have influenced him throughout his years, but it's Spanish artists who have had the biggest impact. For instance, the lines Pablo Picasso created have influenced the artist's work. As long as he knows what he's doing, the lines seem to just flow from Protsouk's mind onto the canvas.

The artwork he creates is a reflection of his own life experiences. Protsouk says his style has definitely changed from his days growing up and living in the former Soviet Union. "My work is more vibrant now; there's different subject matter here in a more vibrant culture," Protsouk says. "This is such a beautiful and young country with an appreciation for new art. It's the right place to be for artists."

When he's not working on his art,



▲ "Fever," a hand-embellished giclée on canvas, 36 x 36 inches, in an edition of 195