

## Diane Flanagan Bio

When I was a teenager I decided to learn how to paint and become an artist. I found a measure of assurance and confidence when I was drawing or painting that I lacked in other areas and it became too important for me to disregard.

Growing up in Atlanta, GA I had the opportunity to study portraiture with renowned Russian artists, Constantine and Roman Chatov right out of high school. Through their careful mentorship I saw the beauty of a portrait come to life in bold strokes and exciting color. Before long I had a small collection of portraits and enough assurance to apply for a job at an antique art gallery which was the perfect place for me to learn about and appreciate 18th and 19th century art. I grew familiar with subdued, earthy palettes, glazes, and transparent colors often used in the earlier art. It was a wonderful apprenticeship.

The training I received proved invaluable and a perfect segue many years later when I moved to Minnesota and began and completed the full time program at the Atelier Studio of Fine Art in Minneapolis where the emphasis of study is Classical Realism.

I believe these three life changing events have defined who I am as an artist today. Perhaps it was the rich, colorful heritage of Russian culture that became part of my artist DNA but every time I stand in front of my easel the first question I ask myself is, "Is the color beautiful?" Over the years I have grown and continue to grow in my exploration of color and by now I know about value, contrast, form, composition etc. and have learned how to make the relationship work, but the one single aspect that makes my heart and soul sing is THE COLOR!