



SERGEI CHEPIK



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For almost twenty years, Sergei Chepik has been hailed by the press as a 'searing visionary', and 'one of Russia's greatest living painters'. This 'unclassifiable' artist has painted portraits of Rudolf Nureyev and Margaret Thatcher (in 1993), has created a monumental series of four canvases – *The Way, the Truth and the Life* (2002-2004) for St Paul's Cathedral in London, which marked the starting point for a new vein of religious inspiration, expressed between 2005 and 2007 by three major works: *The Prophet*, *The Redemption*, and *The Last Supper*. He has lived and worked in Paris since 1988.

Born in Kiev in 1953, to an artist father and sculptress mother, Sergei Chepik grew up in a family anxious to preserve the values and culture of pre-1917 Russia, and started painting at the age of five. Admitted to the prestigious Repin Institut in Leningrad (the St Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts), he graduated brilliantly in 1978 and began immediately to work on his first paintings, while travelling across Russia and perfecting his technique in classes held by the Academician Andrey Mylnikov, a pupil of Igor Grabar who was, together with Alexander Benois, one of the theorists of the prestigious World of Art movement, led by Sergey Diaghilev. Chepik's long years of apprenticeship with demanding and open-minded masters instilled in him a lasting cult of professionalism, a taste for excellence and a deep respect for the artistic heritage of past centuries.

Chepik's masterpiece *The House of the Dead*, painted in 1987 and banned from public display in the USSR, determined his voluntary departure to France, where the painting won the Grand Prix at the 1988 Salon d'Automne. In the following year, his painting *The Tree* won the Monaco City Award. In 1990, Chepik held his first solo retrospective in London, at the Roy Miles Gallery, enjoying unprecedented acclaim. Chepik has exhibited annually in London ever since, first with the Roy Miles Gallery, and, from 1997 with the Catto Gallery. He also exhibits in Paris, having presented a retrospective at the Espace Pierre Cardin in 2004, and in Milan, where a retrospective of his religious paintings was held in 2008.

Well-versed in all media, from watercolour and oil to etching, ceramics and sculpture, mastering all genres from portraiture – at which he excels (portrait of *Vsevolod Mikhailov*, 2009), to composition – his genre of choice, via landscape and still-life, refusing the facile temptation of the *tabula rasa*, and resolutely figurative, Chepik is a scrupulous, rigorous artist who sees art as a difficult, demanding profession, which cannot be improvised, but which in addition to talent and imagination requires hard work, discipline, patience and will-power.

His wide-ranging themes constitute a highly distinctive, immediately recognisable visual world: here are the vast compositions about Russia, in which Chepik – in canvas after canvas – ceaselessly questions and explores the tragic destiny of his native country, as well as his many fantasmagorical and philosophical compositions (*Atlantida*, 2009). There are scenes, too, from his daily life in Montmartre, and his many journeys throughout Europe: Paris and the chimeras of Notre-Dame, Venice and its Carnival (*Venetian Mirrors*, 2009), Arles and its corridas (*Omnes in arena morientur*, 2008 and *Morituri*, 2009), the world of the circus and show business, boxing rings, backstage at the Moulin Rouge and entertainers (*Finita la Commedia*, 2009).

Marie-Aude Albert, 2009



## FINITA LA COMMEDIA

Mixed Media on Canvas

130 x 98 cms







## ROWAN BERRIES ON BLUE

Mixed Media on Canvas

100 x 81 cms





**ROWAN BERRIES ON GREEN**

Mixed Media on Canvas  
81 x 100 cms

## **THE RIDER**

Pastel on Paper  
60 x 53 cms

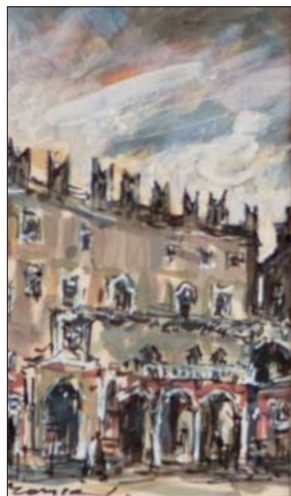






**FOUR VIEWS OF VENICE**  
Pencil, Ink and Watercolour on Paper





**FOUR VIEWS OF VERONA**  
Pencil, Ink and Watercolour on Paper

**SUNFLOWERS FROM ARLES**

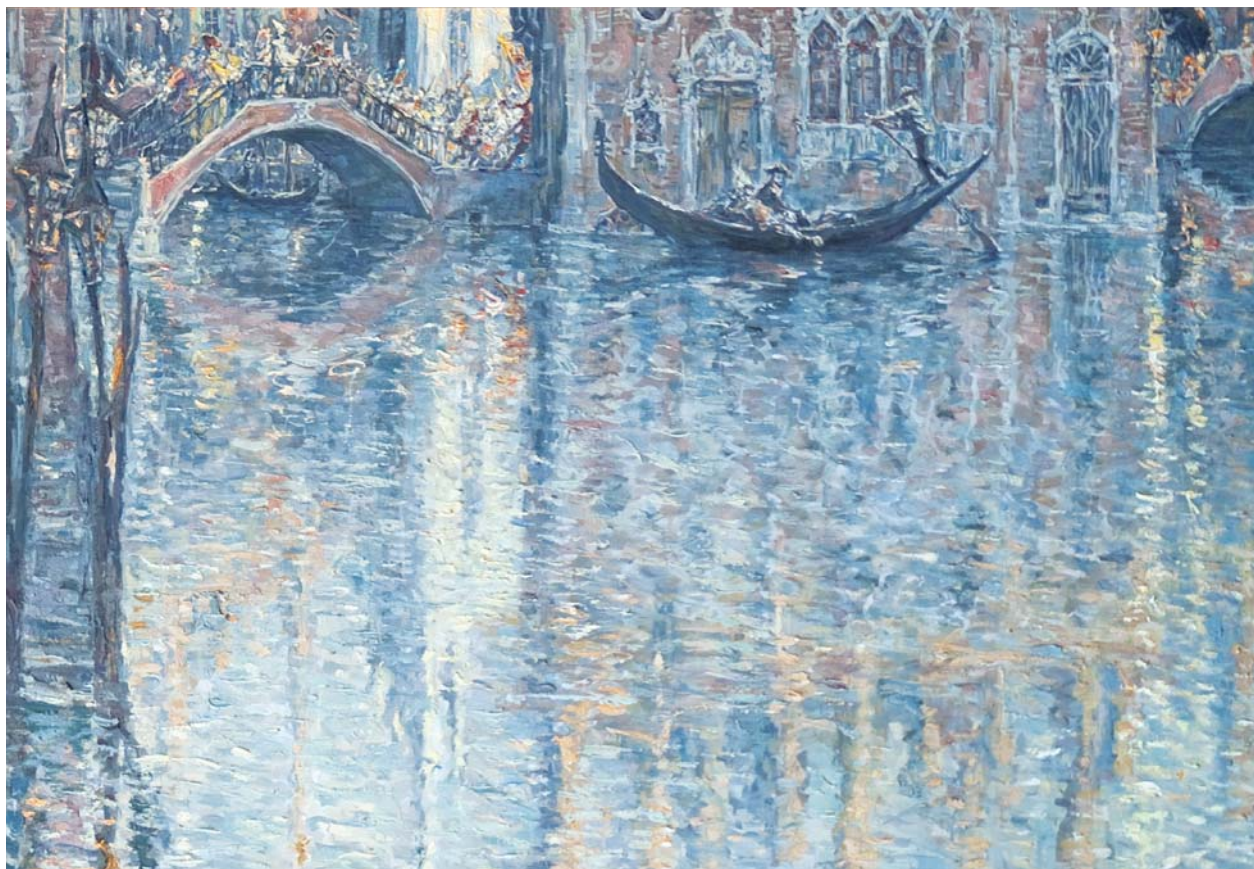
Oil on Canvas

100 x 100 cms

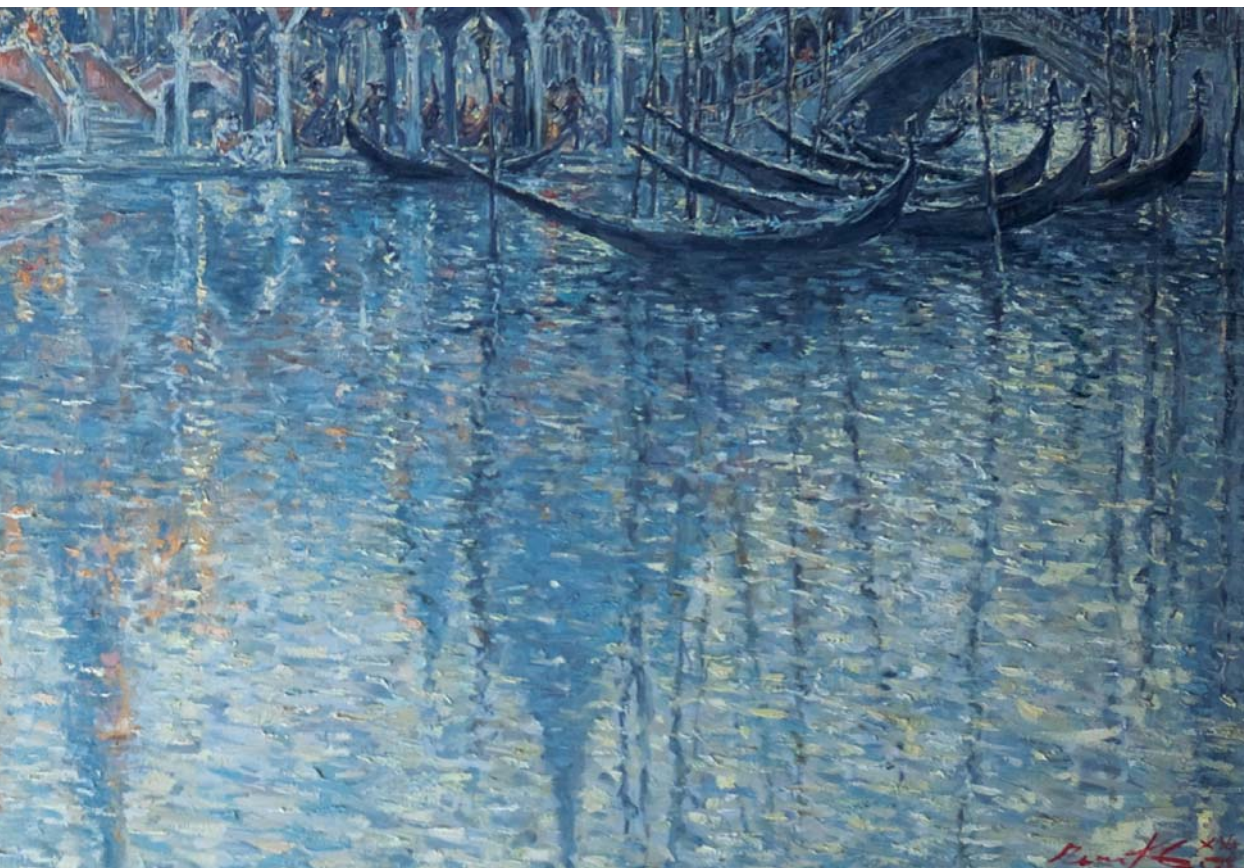












**VENETIAN MIRRORS**  
Mixed Media on Canvas  
67 x 200 cms



**MORITURI**

Work in Progress – (Detail)  
150 x 150 cms





### MORITURI

Preparatory Painting – (Not for Sale)  
150 x 150 cms

**OMNES IN ARENA MORIENTUR**

Mixed Media on Canvas

80 x 80 cms





## HOMAGE TO VAN GOGH

Oil on Canvas

116 x 89 cms







## FOUR VIEWS OF VENICE

Pencil, Ink and Watercolour on Paper





**SIX VIEWS OF VERONA**  
Pencil, Ink and Watercolour on Paper



## VENICE CARNIVAL

Pastel on Paper  
20 x 87 cms



# CHRONOLOGY

- 1953      Sergei Chepik was born in Kiev, on June 24, the son of the painter Mikhail Chepik and the sculptress Ludmila Sabaneeva.
- 1961-1971      Studied in Kiev at a secondary school specializing in arts.
- 1971-1973      Studied at the Shevchenko Art Institute in Kiev.
- 1973-1978      After his father's death, Chepik left Kiev forever and moved to Leningrad.  
Studied at the Repin Art Institute in Leningrad (The former Academy of Fine Arts of Saint-Petersburg).
- 1978      Brilliantly graduated from the Repin Art Institute and entered the Union of Young Artists of Leningrad.
- 1978-1981      Carried on his studies in Professor Mylnikov's studio and worked on his first important works.
- 1981      Became a member of the USSR Union of Artists.
- 1978-1985      Various group exhibitions of young Soviet painters in the USSR and abroad.
- 1985      First Solo Exhibition "Russian landscapes", House of the Union of Artists, Leningrad.
- 1986      Meets Marie-Aude Albert, a French teacher temporarily working at the University of Leningrad.  
First Retrospective Exhibition "Paintings, graphics and ceramics", Youth Palace, Leningrad.
- 1987      Finished *The House of the Dead*, his second masterpiece after *Petrushka* (1984-1986).
- 1988      Chepik emigrates to Paris.  
*The House of the Dead* (1987), which was banned from being exhibited in Leningrad, is awarded the Grand Prix at the Salon d'Automne in Paris and is acquired by the Roy Miles Gallery in London, which opens its exhibition space on Bruton Street to Chepik.  
Group Exhibition "Russian Paintings", Roy Miles Gallery, London.
- 1989      *The Tree* (1982-1984) receives the Monaco City Award at the Monte Carlo International Exhibition of Contemporary Art.  
Salon de l'Ecole Française, Musée du Luxembourg, Paris.  
Group Exhibition "Russian Paintings", Roy Miles Gallery, London.
- 1990      Solo and Retrospective Exhibition, Roy Miles Gallery, London. Chepik received public acclaim and the exhibition was sold out. The Daily Telegraph wrote: "An unknown Russian genius has come to light". Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher congratulated Chepik at the House of Commons.
- 1991      Group Exhibition "Russian Art 1930-1990", Roy Miles Gallery, London.  
Solo Exhibition of watercolours "Travels through France", Roy Miles Gallery, London.

- 1992      Chepik marries Marie-Aude Albert.  
Is elected to become "Sociétaire of the Salon d'Automne".
- 1993      Major Solo Exhibition "New Works", Roy Miles Gallery, London.  
Solo Retrospective Exhibition, Salon de l'Ecole Française, Château de Croissy, Croissy-sur-Seine, France.  
Solo Retrospective Exhibition, Prieuré Saint-Maurice, Senlis, France.  
Paints the portrait of Baroness Margaret Thatcher and finishes that of Nureyev a few weeks after his death.  
Salon d'Automne, Grand Palais, Paris.  
Group Exhibition "Christmas Show", Roy Miles Gallery, London.
- 1994      Major Solo Exhibition "Recent Works", Roy Miles Gallery, London.  
In disagreement with the policies of the Salon d'Automne, Chepik leaves it.
- 1995      Solo Exhibition "New Works", Roy Miles Gallery, London.  
Salon de l'Ecole Française, Chapelle Saint-Léonard, Croissy, France.  
Publication and presentation in London of a first monograph: *Sergei Chepik, works, 1970-1994*  
by Marie-Aude Albert.
- 1996      Solo Exhibition of watercolours, Roy Miles Gallery, London.  
Solo Exhibition of graphic works, Galerie Guiter, Paris.  
Group Exhibition "Hommage au nu", Galerie Guiter, Paris.  
Salon de l'Ecole Française, Chapelle Saint-Léonard, Croissy.
- 1997      Solo Exhibition, Galerie Guiter, Paris.
- 1998      Solo Exhibition "New works", The Catto Gallery, Hampstead, London.
- 1999      Exhibition "*Golgotha*", The Catto Gallery, Cork Street, London, then at St John's Church in Hampstead  
and then at the Château de Gruyères in Switzerland.  
Solo Exhibition, The Catto Gallery, Hampstead, London.  
Retrospective Exhibition at the Russian Embassy in London with the 1999 masterpiece *Russia Crucified*.
- 2000:      Solo Exhibition "Chepik in Venice", The Catto Gallery, Hampstead, London.  
Solo Exhibition, Salon de l'Ecole Française, Chapelle Saint-Léonard, Croissy.
- 2001      Solo Exhibition "Chepik's Moulin Rouge", The Catto Gallery, Cork Street, London.  
Salon de l'Ecole Française, Chapelle Saint-Léonard, Croissy.
- 2002      Solo Exhibition, "Show" Galerie Popoff et Cie, Fbg St Honoré, Paris.  
*Golgotha* is exhibited at Saint-Paul's Cathedral, London.  
Group Exhibition "Parfums de Femmes", Manège, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France.  
*Russia Crucified* is exhibited at the Paris Salon d'Automne.  
Solo Exhibition, The Catto Gallery, Hampstead, London.  
A project for St Paul's Cathedral in London is discussed with the Dean, the Very Revd Dr. John Moses  
and Chepik works on sketches for four large panels illustrating the Life and Passion of Christ.



- 2003 Solo Exhibition, "New works", The Catto Gallery, Hampstead, London.  
Salon de l'Ecole Française, Chapelle Saint-Léonard, Croissy.  
Chepik works on the project for St Paul's Cathedral. The sketches having been accepted by the Dean and Chapter, Chepik starts the work on four large canvases. *The Virgin Mary* (or *The Nativity*) (165 x 240 cm) and *Resurrection* (165 x 240 cm) are completed by December.  
*The Apocalypse of St John* is exhibited at the Paris Salon d'Automne.
- 2004 Chepik paints *The Public Life of Christ* (430 X 240 cm) and *The Passion* (430 x 240 cm).  
Group Exhibition "Masques et Miroirs", Manège, Saint-Germain-en-Laye.  
Salon de l'Ecole Française, Eglise de la Madeleine, Paris.  
Solo Exhibition "War and Peace", Espace Pierre Cardin, Paris
- 2005 Inauguration on January 24 of four canvases, entitled *I am The Way, The Truth and The Life*, by the Dean of St Paul's Cathedral, the Very Revd Dr John Moses in the presence of Baroness Thatcher .  
Solo Exhibition, The Catto Gallery, Hampstead, London.  
Salon de l'Ecole Française, Eglise de la Madeleine, Paris.
- 2006 Solo Exhibition, The Catto Gallery, Hampstead, London.  
Realisation of forty illustrations for Bulgakov's novel *The White Guard*. Publication of a second monograph: *Sergei Chepik: From Red square to the Moulin Rouge, works 1994-2001* by Marie-Aude Albert.
- 2007 New cycle of religious paintings: *The Redemption, The Last Supper*.
- 2008 Solo Exhibition of religious works "Epifania", Centre Culturel Français, Milano.  
*The Last Supper* is exhibited for the first time.  
Solo Exhibition "Tauromachie", Chapelle Sainte-Anne, Arles.  
Publication by Vita Nova Publishers in Petersburg of *The White Guard* with Chepik's illustrations.  
The forty drawings for *The White Guard* are exhibited at the Mikhail Bulgakov's museum in Moscow.  
Publication of a third monograph: *Epiphania, the religious paintings of Sergei Chepik* by Marie-Aude Albert and Sergei Chepik.  
Solo exhibition "New Works", The Catto Gallery, Hampstead, London.
- 2009 Solo Exhibition "La Feria", Galerie Arte Viva, Paris-Levallois.  
Solo Exhibition "Bulgakov's White Guard", Springfield University, USA.  
Solo Exhibition "New Works", The Catto Gallery, Hampstead.



# CATTO GALLERY

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Opening times: 10am - 6pm Mon - Sat 12.30pm - 6pm Sunday and by appointment

EXHIBITION DATES: 26th NOVEMBER - 17th DECEMBER 2009