

JOSEF KOTE



The paintings of J. Kote are symphonies of light and color. They are lyrically stunning and romantic, edgy and current. Kote achieves this delicate balance of seemingly contradictory qualities through his complete mastery in technique, and through years of experimenting to find his own unique style. With the lightness of a true master's hand he combines classic academic and abstract elements, fusing these, literally letting them run into each other with dripping rivulets of riveting colors and light.

Kote's trade marks are his bold brush work and sweeping strokes of vibrant colors applied - more often than not - with a pallet knife, while other areas of the canvas are left monochromatic and devoid of detail creating a negative space that lets the eye drift to infinity. The results are paintings that tremble in stillness with energy and light. Influenced by many places where he lived, Albanian born artist Kote began his journey towards artistic self-discovery in his youth and never looked back.

From very young age he was endlessly drawing and had the innate urge to create. By the age of 13 he had made up his mind to become an artist and devote his life to the arts. He focused on getting accepted into the finest art high school of his native Albania. Ultimately, after competing locally and nationally, he was awarded a coveted spot at "National Lyceum of Arts" in Tirana. In 1984 Kote followed this amazing feat by being accepted into the "Academy of Fine Arts" of Tirana, where he was educated in the traditional approach of the old masters. Yet even as a student he wanted to break loose of the limitations, he wanted to experiment and grow, sometimes leave paintings seemingly unfinished, shatter the boundaries of classic realism.

In 1988 Kote graduated with a diploma in painting and scenography. The years of practice and his solid art education had prepared the young artist well to pursue his life's quest of living and breathing art. It had set him on his lifelong journey to find his own unique style and language, to create stupendous paintings pulsating with the light and energy that he sees all around him.

In the late 90s the 26-year-old artist grew restless and decided to debark to Greece, where the warmth of the Mediterranean sun and brilliant light infused his paintings in tone and style and lent them a more impressionistic air.

After a very successful 10 years in Greece, Kote was weary to rest on his laurels, and he moved to Toronto. Already renowned for his beautiful portraits and scenic paintings, Kote now garnered additional kudos for his gorgeous urban scapes, and snow scenes. His color and style moved away from the impressionistic influence toward a more expressionistic feel. The paintings from this period, many of them masterpieces, are a clear indication of the continual development of Kote's style and his fluidity and growth as an artist.

Like a rolling stone Kote moved to New York, The Big Apple, in 2009. Here his paintings and style morphed again. The colors grew bolder and his style became so unique that it cannot be ascribed to an existing genre. This highly prolific painter, who works on his craft almost daily and long hours, is never satisfied, always seeking, always experimenting, and always growing.