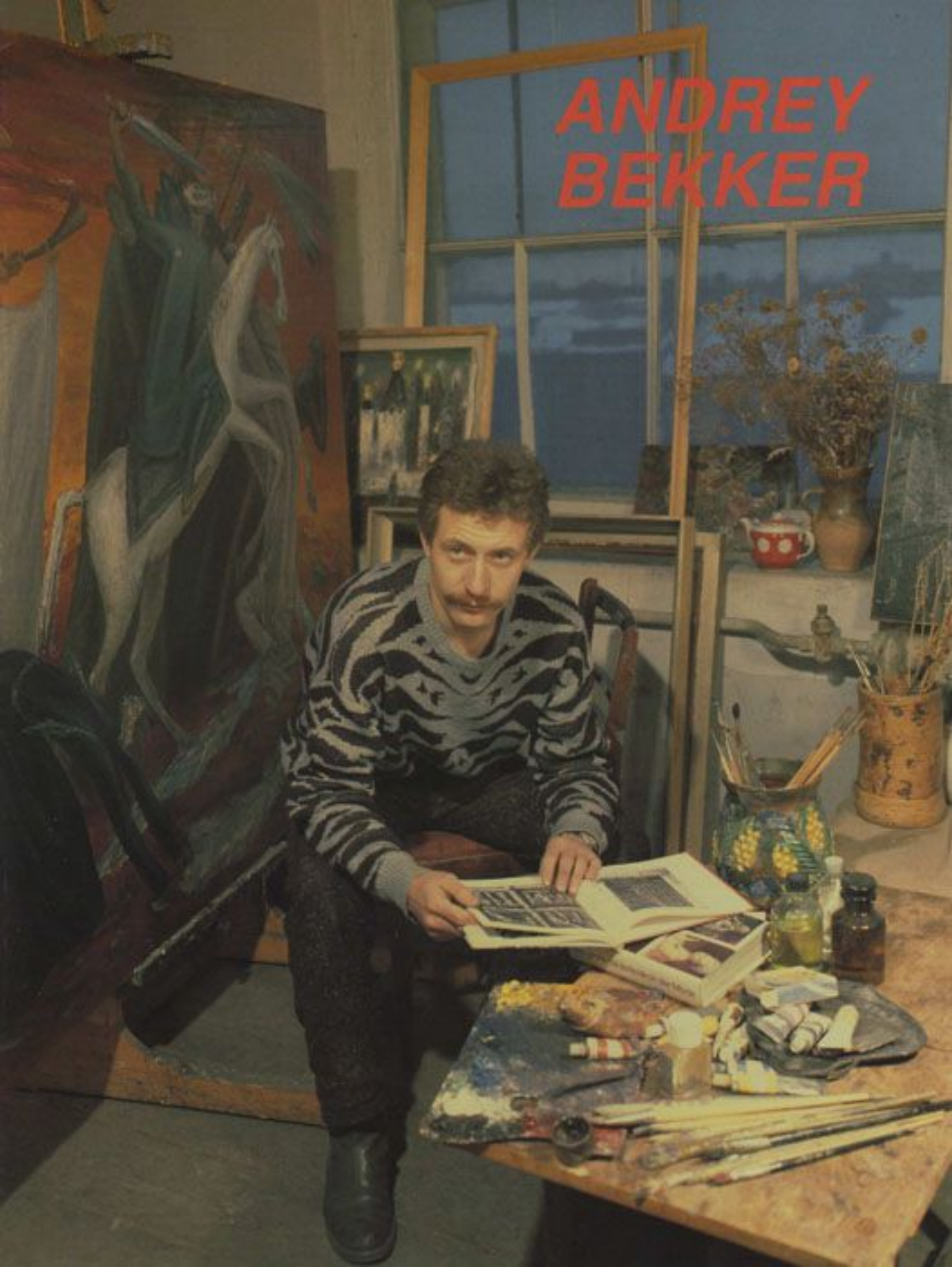


**ANDREY  
BEKKER**



V/O Mezhdunarodnaya Kniga

Presents  
the Leningrad  
Painter

## ANDREY BEKKER

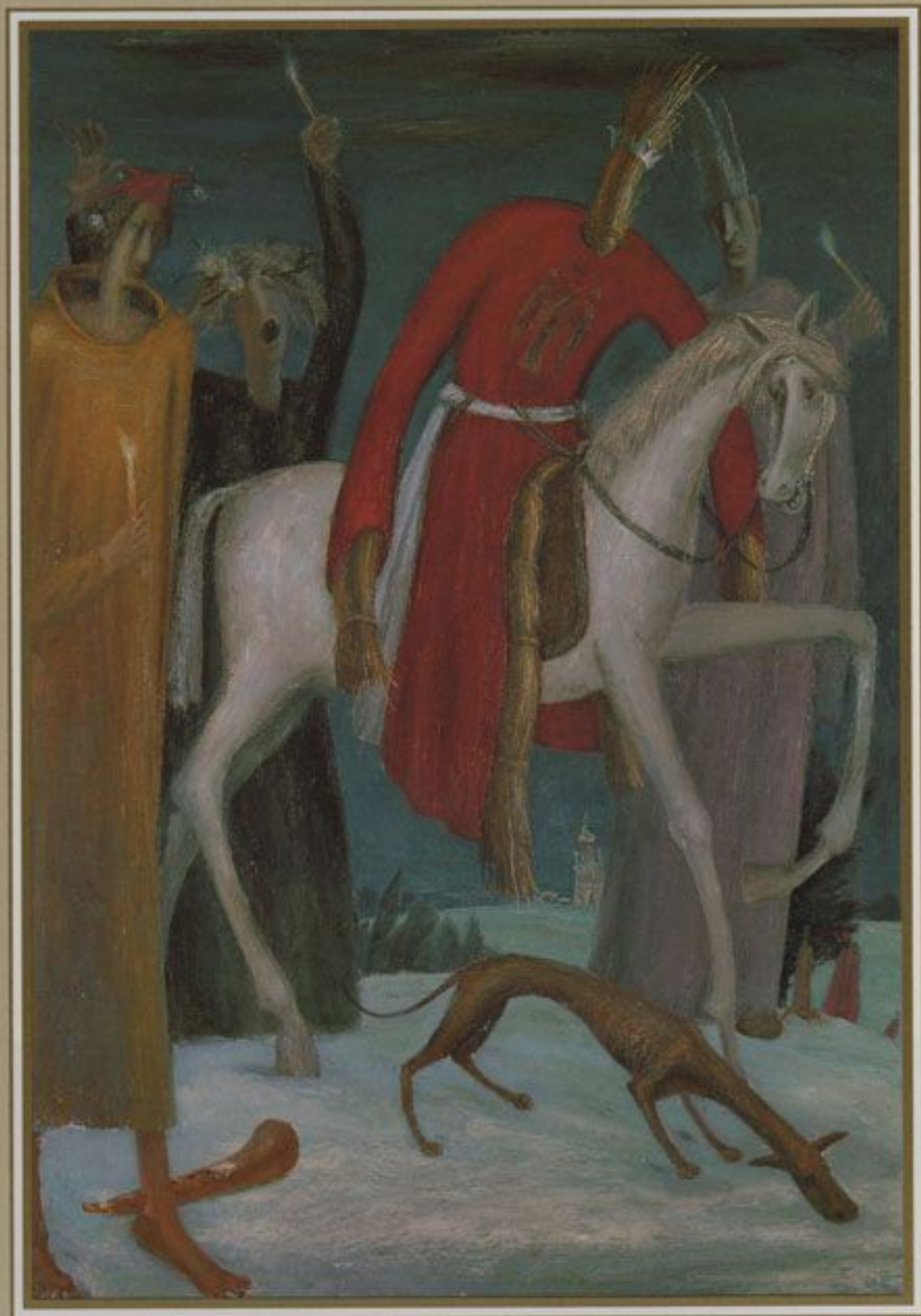


FISHERMEN. CANVAS/OIL,  
99.5×120, 1989

- 1957 — born in Perm Region
- 1977 — graduated from the V. Serov School of Art in Leningrad
- 1983 — graduated from the Painting Department of the I. Repin Institute of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture in Leningrad
- Member of the Leningrad Branch of the USSR Artists' Union
- 1983 — took part in the 'Autumn Art Show,' Leningrad, USSR
- 1985 — took part in art show 'The World and Youth,' Leningrad, USSR
- 1987 — took part in art show 'The Country's Youth,' Moscow, USSR
- 1988 — took part in the National Art Show, Moscow, USSR
- 1989 — London, Great Britain
- 1989 — Finland



















**ANDREY BEKKER** studied art at the I. Repin Institute in Leningrad under Prof. Ugarov. His independent life in art began with his painting still lifes, landscapes and multifigure compositions on everyday themes. His work shows fine organisational structure, energetic colours and a poetic atmosphere. On the whole his early paintings were true to the style of Leningrad painting as represented by masters of the Leningrad Branch of the USSR Artists' Union at art shows of the mid-80's. Andrey Bekker was on the way to discovering his own intonation...

A sharp turn in his art took place in 1988 following his acquaintance with Valaam. The rocky isle on Lake Ladoga, the kingdom of northern stillness embracing monasteries and churches, fuses Russian culture with nature nourished by the hand of man (for scores of years earth was brought to the isle by hermits). It naturally gives birth to the Russian theme.

The canvases of that period show white churches with dark flying domes, shady forest nooks, a monk in a tiny boat, dark heavens, generalised altered forms that seem to have lost their weight. His palette displayed a wide range of dark, cold tones—blues, violets, greens with splashes of red... Bekker's art incorporates the motif of man's isolation, his phantom-like fusion with the tensely and strangeness of silence. Perhaps the Valaam series has stemmed from a fervent desire to find a new fulcrum, to step away from the complexities of the country's recent events with the exhausting chaos of emotional stress. The same state taken from another viewpoint has been reflected in his folklore series on the subject of parables, fables and Russian proverbs.

Far from being direct illustrations of folklore plots they make up a fantastic world—a sad dream never come true: a man and wagon flying across the sky, lovers' ordeals and unbridled merry-making amidst the winter coldness of isolation; the global metaphor of the world's absurdity and the playful irony traditional to the common folk. The characters of this series have lately begun to include a simpleton like the

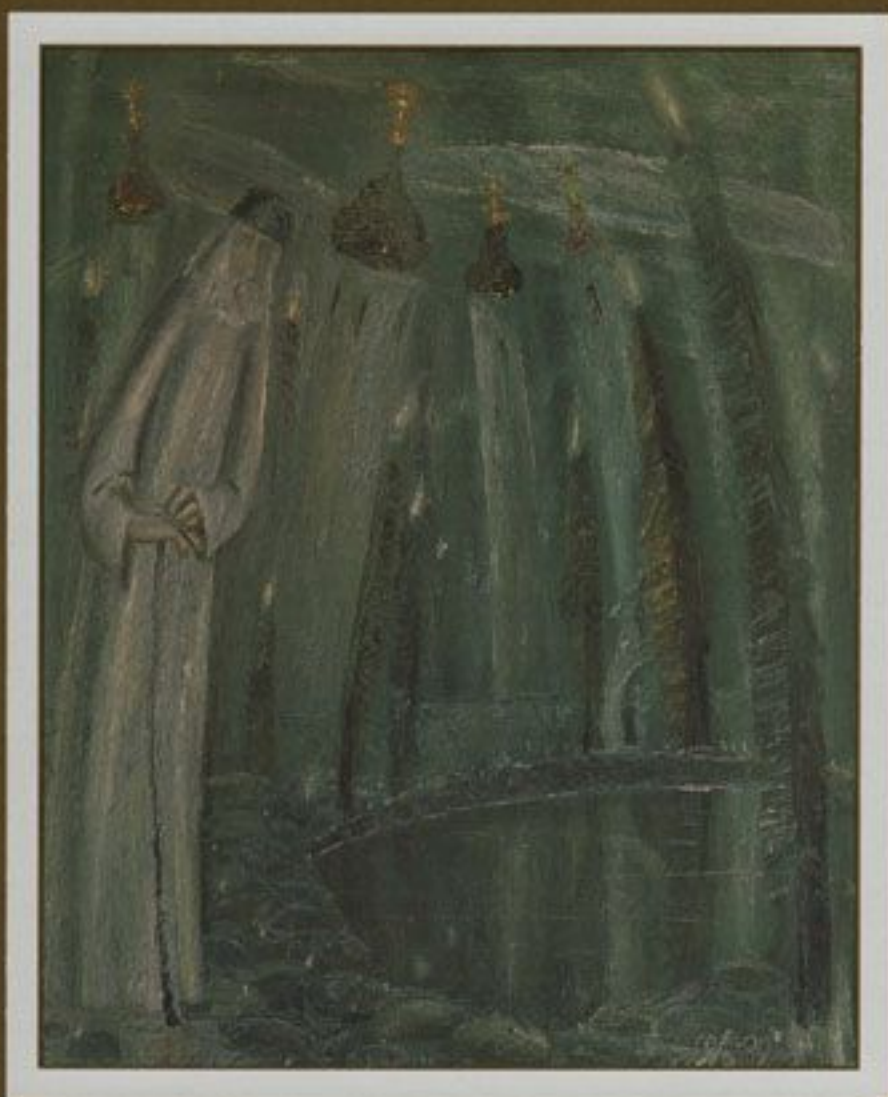
Russian folktale character Ivanushka, the personification of the irrational in national psychology, a believer in the sincerity of goodwill and a champion of world harmony.

A. Bekker's work embraces another chain of plots also connected with the folklore series but singled out into a cycle of its own. The programme is based on Biblical themes like 'Entry into Jerusalem,' 'The Wonderful Catch,' 'Angels Blowing Trumpets'... Being an integral continuation of the folklore series these canvases translate the author's reflections into the worldwide aspect of the cataclysms embracing mankind.

Speaking of Bekker's creative method one must underline his radical distinction from the expressively spontaneous methods that are now penetrating Soviet art, as well as from the combinatory manipulations with preset consciousness stemming from pop-art. The artist's way of thought comes from a reestimation of European and Russian medieval art (icon, lubok). Close to his art, according to his own admission, are the plastic allegories of D. Mantsu and the work of E. Berlakh. On the whole the painter's cultural and historical preferences are rather extensive. What matters is that they are emotionally rehashed by a representative of the late 20th century who is keenly aware of the dramatic collisions of his age.

The organisational essence of his work is the delicate line, its contrasts and blends which derive from the precisely estimated volumes of meaningful colour that go to the building of its spatial aspect. The idea inherent in the plastic organisation of the canvas space and the nature of the depicted forms brings out the deeply natural roots of Russian culture where the ways of organising artistic form has been traditionally regarded as the reflection of life.

Andrey Bekker is a young painter and a hard worker, a regular participant in many art shows. We shall not err by saying that Russia's rich artistic life has made room for a worthy artist who is as traditional as he is contemporary.



МК MEZHDUNARODNAYA  
KNIGA  
MOSCOW. 113095. USSR. TELEX. 411160