

## Meet the Artist –



## ELYA DECHINO

Born in 1955 in Tbilisi, Georgia, USSR, Elya demonstrated a passion and natural talent in the fine arts from a young age. His mother was a well-known impressionistic landscape painter, and her artistic discipline and spirit of experimentation left lasting impressions on Elya as a young boy. He participated frequently in TV Art programs and published his work in children's magazines, continually meeting with enthusiastic response.

After graduating from the prestigious Tbilisi Academy of Art in 1979, Elya became more prolific, and his art more experimental.

Profoundly inspired by different styles and schools of thought, Elya presented his work regularly at All-Union exhibitions. Despite his strong opposition to Communist ideology and its oppression of free artistic expression, his talent was recognized by the USSR Union of Artists, which at the time was under the strict censorial control of the Communist regime. Although he had originally planned to become a university professor of painting, his own exhibitions were frequent enough to support his studio.

With the advent of Gorbachev's Perestroika, many artists took the opportunity to exhibit their works in Western Europe and beyond. Elya was one such artist, and his work successfully transcended national boundaries, receiving acclaim wherever it was shown. Following the civil wars in the former USSR, Elya decided to immigrate to the United States, arriving first in New York and eventually establishing residency in Atlanta.

Elya has been happy to settle in the heart of America's Georgia, where he has planted roots – literally – in his elaborate garden, and found powerful inspiration in the complex Southern landscapes and history.

Elya has exhibited his work in Italy, the Ukraine, and across the United States.