



Born in Kielce, Poland in 1945, Rafal Olbinski studied architecture before dedicating himself to painting and design. He is best known for his role as an internationally acclaimed designer of opera house posters and for designing the covers of hundreds of magazines, from *Time* to *Newsweek* to *The New Yorker*.

Commissioned by Allegro Music to complete a series of album covers for their opera series, Olbinski has achieved a reputation as the image-maker of opera. *The Nation* hails him as a "latter-day Dali" and *The New York Times* remarks that if you don't know his name, "Odds are you know his paintings."

With a reputation that spans the globe, Olbinski is involved in projects on nearly every continent. In Poland, he is completing three public murals to be unveiled in Spring 2007; In Bangkok, he juried the 2006 International Film Festival; In Germany, an exhibition of his work is currently traveling across the country.

Olbinski's lush images are layered with complex psychology. He does not paint the landscape of scientific reality, but rather maps the interiors of the mind. Like Dali and Magritte before him, Olbinski's work has a poetic resonance – he depicts the mind as a theater of dreams, with new attractions around every corner.

"I believe that every artist falls in love with his work," Olbinski says, "especially when you paint women." Well known for his luxurious depictions of women, Olbinski's nudes are both classical and controversial. He explores the mysterious aura of women who, although aloof, beckon to the viewer. A master of technique, he often draws on the works of Goya and Botticelli for inspiration.

As in Goya's time, the female form has the power to incite controversy. Recent disputes erupted over Olbinski's image of a bare-breasted mermaid, designed for the 2006 Miss World contest in Poland. As a concession to Polish officials, Olbinski painted a scarf across the mermaid's breast.

"Poetic humor is a quality rarely found in the fine arts," says Andre Parinquad, President of the International Arts Salon in Paris. "Rafal Olbinski has this gift. He wants to show us that our imagination is a magical world which we are recreating forever. He draws us into a different universe, and forces us to use our eyes to participate in a marvelous world which is the true dimension of dreams."