

Hi everybody! My name is Xenia Prokhorova, I am a painter, a graphic artist and a writer. I would like to tell you something about my new book called Rita and The Sea.







### WHAT IS RITA'S UNIVERSE ABOUT?


This is a realm consisting of uneven joints between paper and wood, ragged edges and margins adjacent to smooth gradient fills; a realm with illustrations that look as if they were made with color felt-tip pens and pictures created using chalk pastels. There is no uniform style in her world, and each element seems to live a life of its own having its own soul!





Rita lives in this world and, since she is a part of it, she is just as changeable from page to page. Everything will be different: her dress and her facial features which may change almost imperceptibly; also the character and the style of the graphics. Her image comes through very sharply in some pictures, done in an expressionist manner, when ragged, uneven lines define Rita's silhouette. Other illustrations show her in a naïve, even primitivist style while still others will depict her outlined with an ethereal art nouveau line as if Rita descended from a pastel drawing of the early 20th century.





Why is she so different? Why is her world so ambivalent? But are we all, you and I, the same every day? Do we feel ourselves as being a constant entity and do we see the world as a static place? I think that this is how Rita experiences herself. In fact, this is a story that was related by the author, but shown through the eyes of the protagonist. We and Rita see the world under two differing angles, so it is not certain that we can see the same things in it—that would have been rather strange and even unlikely! Not only does Rita have a point of view on this story which is different from my angle, but she also shares it directly with the reader.





Rita and The Sea is a graphic poem. Rita is very poetic, and all her life is dedicated to sounds and to dance.





Day in, day out, she follows the same circle—which is her devotional service in a capacity of the lighthouse keeper. Yet how variegated and full is her life: when she helps the ships find their way at night, she can see new hues of the sea every time—for the sea is never the same, even if you look at it for days in a row! This seeming simplicity and adherence to a certain cycle comprises the special feature of the plot in *Rita and The Sea*: every reader will follow this story in his own way as if it were a quest, everyone will order it in accordance with own perception, and every time the reader would get to this story he would get a new perspective on the Sea being a world of its own and also on its heroine.







**Rita and The Sea is a very much a female story from beginning to end. I would describe the narration manner as emotional narrative which is when the story unfolds not from one action to the next, following the logic of the story, but from a feeling to a feeling, from a sensation to a sensation so that that is the only means to experience both the world and the heroine. I do not insist that such narrative is peculiar only to women. I think, however, that today a whole set of prescriptions exists with regard to how a story must be developed, and this is done using a logical male point of view when everything is subject to causal relationships and the main accent of the story is dedicated to events and not to its emotional assessment. As an author, I feel closer to an intuitive, a sensual perspective. And I would like to make it happen that graphic stories would make such a perspective—that is, a female perspective which is sensual, intuitive and sometimes paradoxical—appear as a more meaningful and a more noticeable phenomenon in this world in which I live.**