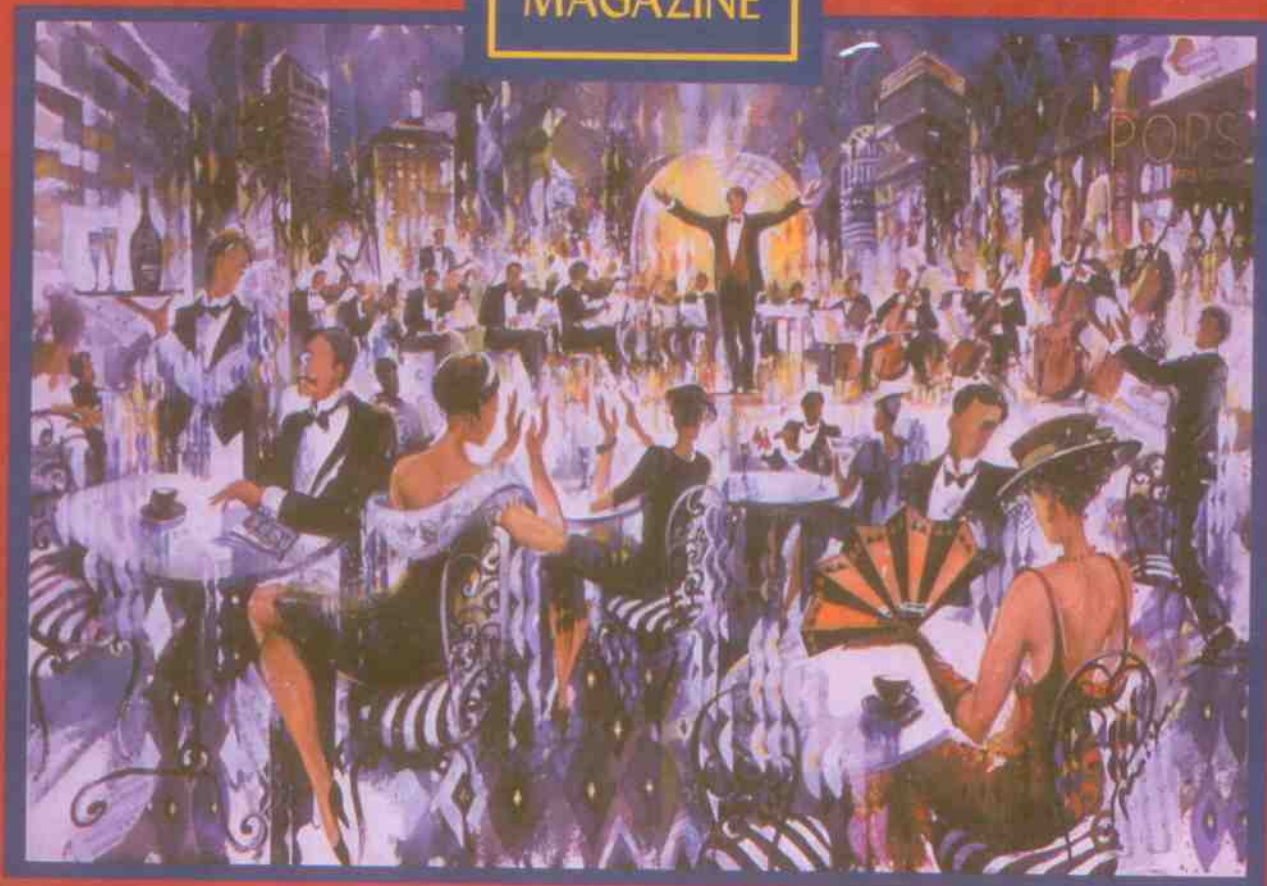


The
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“I want
to be an
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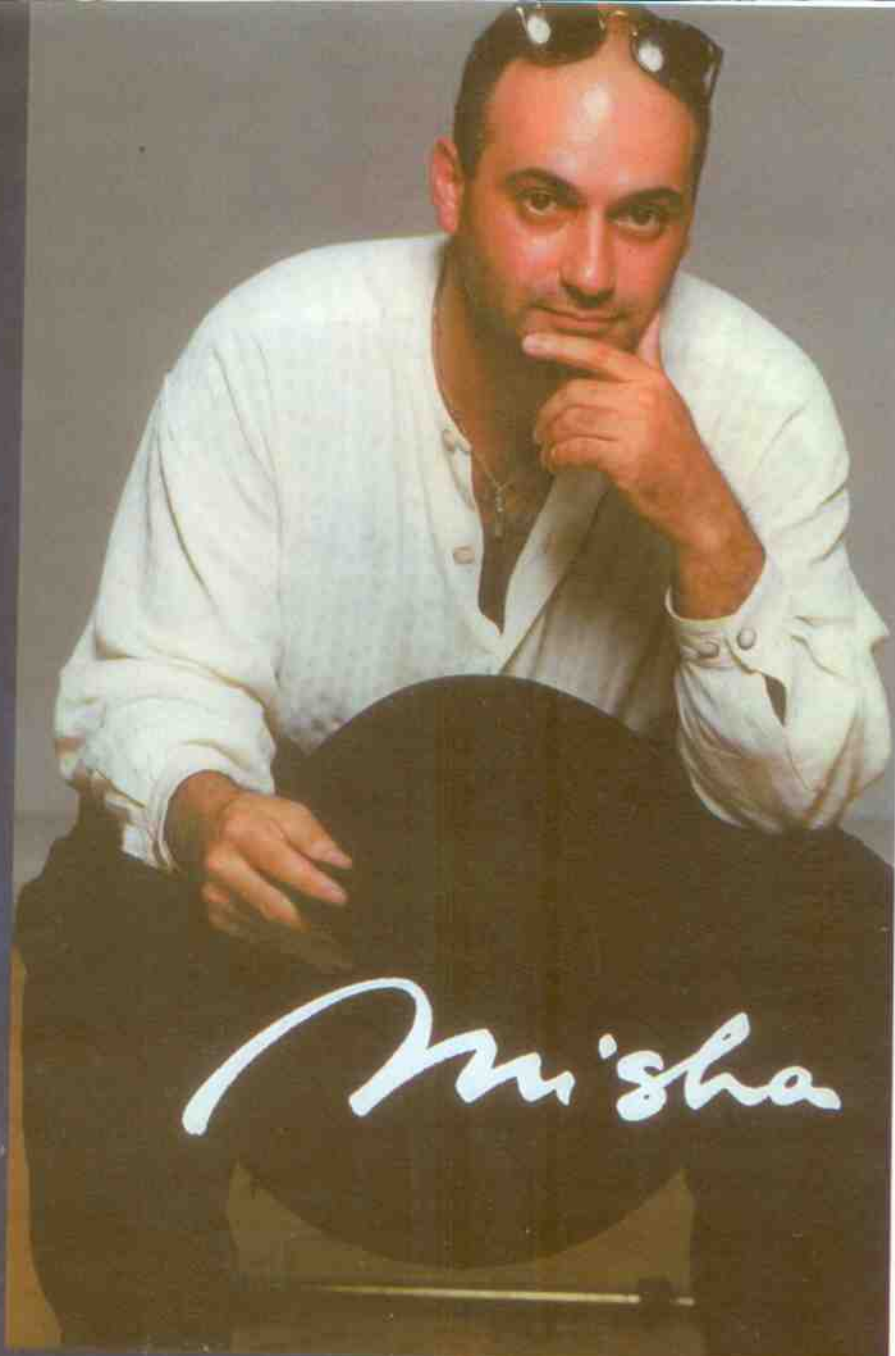
— Misha Lenn

On the Cover

By David Rattigan

In the watercolor painting that adorns our cover, internationally acclaimed artist Misha Lenn creates a scene that is classically timeless. As we admire it, our eyes travel over the festive women in long dresses and men in black ties and on to the fluid orchestra, celebrants in front of a nighttime Boston skyline.

Some viewers might linger on his languid, expressive figures. Others might sense the influence of master impressionists and decorative artists on Misha's work, noting the details in his backgrounds or his choices in color and light. Still others might take in the entire piece, viscerally appreciating it for its feeling of fun and joy.



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The artist knows our level of appreciation may shift according to our own tastes, knowledge, and experience. As with music, he says, “The more one knows, the deeper it goes.”

Misha, an avid pianist, has long recognized the similarities between fine art and music. “Like art, music can express feelings,” he says. “Music is not tangible; you can't touch it. Music gets inside you automatically. By hearing it, you create images in your head.

“I've played music all my life. It reflects myself, and reflects my art. The same feelings go through life from music to art.”

Originally from St. Petersburg, Russia, Misha is a prolific Boston-based artist who has gained international acclaim for his work in a variety of media, particularly mixing pen and ink with watercolor. He frequently lends his talents to events that mix art with music and notes with pride that among his accomplishments is illustrating a CD cover for a collection of works by the great Duke Ellington.

Other performance events he has contributed to include the Tanglewood Jazz Festival (2001), Boston Globe Jazz Street Premiere (1999), and the Dance Umbrella (1998).

"I'm drawn to music and everything connected with it," he says. "In my work, I try to create a visual impression that connects movement with life, as the best musicians can."

Misha's distinctive style reflects the influences of classic impressionists Toulouse-Lautrec, Renoir, and

Degas, along with more decorative artists such as Gustav Klimt. He has a gift for capturing emotion and energy in his subject or scene.

"My work has emotion, which people like," he says. "I believe that as much as the artist gives to the canvas, the viewer gets back. Since I'm an optimist and put forward positive energy and emotion, people who look at the work get it back. I try to work on several levels. One can go deeper and deeper, like looking through the curtains."

Misha graduated with a Master of Fine Arts degree from the prestigious St. Petersburg State Academy of Art and Design. By age 27, he had achieved success and fame in Russia for his art direction of prestigious events such as beauty pageants, ballroom competitions, and musical festivals. His work was displayed in museums and in international exhibitions in Germany, Italy, and Finland. In 1990 he came to the United States, seeking to achieve more. Since then, Boston has been his second home. Misha has had numerous solo exhibitions, and his art can be found in private

and museum collections in the United States, Russia, Canada, France, Germany, Monaco, Sweden, Spain, and Israel.

He has won awards for his work in a wide variety of media, particularly literary illustrations, graphic design and fine art. His prestigious list of clients includes the *New York Times Magazine*, *Time*, *Design Times*, DKNY, Sony, Calvin Klein, the Boston Ballet, Boston Public Library, Prudential, MIT, Harvard and Northeastern universities, Bloomingdale's, Filene's, *Women's Wear Daily*, *Adweek*, and more. His illustrations have appeared in Spanish, French, and Italian textbooks. His work is featured regularly as part of Rockport Publishers' annual *The Best of Watercolor*. His illustrations, logos, and paintings have been honored, published, and displayed in many other venues as well.

His interest in expanding to other media is evident in other projects. In 1996, he created a seven-panel mural based on the Old Testament for the Jewish Community Center in Newton. This year, he created a stained-glass frieze of Marathon Place, a luxury condominium on Boylston Street in Boston.

He is a frequent contributor to charitable causes. As this piece was being written, Misha was planning a trip to New York for a private exhibition to benefit the families of firefighters killed in the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center. He believes that with talent comes responsibility.



Sitting Pretty, Gorbachev
Foundation Collection



Around Town, London Collection