

Bibliography

Born 1970, Sofia, Bulgaria

Lives and works in Paris and Sofia

Established artist

Education

1989–1994 – École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France.

1992 – Winchester School of Art, Winchester, United Kingdom.

Solo Exhibitions

2026 – The Innocent Eye, Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2025 – Works at the White House, 51A Washington Street, Michel Rein, Brussels, Belgium.

2023 – HOME, Sarieva @ DOT Sofia, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2023 – Still Life Series and Marbles, Michel Rein Display, Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2022 – Here You Come Again, Emergent, Veurne, Belgium.

2022 – Still Life, Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2021 – Minouk, Le poisson peintre, 1994/2003 video installation, Galerie Vellutini, France.

2020 – I dream I work I dream work, Michel Rein, Brussels, Belgium.

2019 – Be Yourself No Matter What They Say, SARIEV Contemporary, Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

2018 – Rien ne va plus, Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2018 – Sculpture Project, Art Brussels, Tour & Taxis, Brussels, Belgium.

2017 – I Walk a Labyrinth Which is a Straight Line, SARIEV Contemporary, Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

2016 – Bronze, sweat and tears, Michel Rein, Brussels, Belgium.

2015 – Business, Model, Sculpture, SARIEV Contemporary, Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

2013 – If Things Are Not As You Wish, Wish Them As They Are, Galerie Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2013 – Half-Life, SARIEV Contemporary, Plovdiv, Bulgaria.

2010 – Holy Spirit Rain Down, Les Églises Centre d'Art Contemporain, Chelles, France.

2010 – Stefan Nikolaev, I Hate America and America Hates Me, Galerie Traversée, Munich, Germany.

2009 – New Works Old Dreams, Galerie Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2007 – Prestige, ARC Projects, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2007 – Minouk Le Poisson Peintre (1994–2005), The Crouch (Klek)-Art Basement Project, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2006 – Powerful Tips, Centre de Création Contemporaine, Tours, France.

2006 – Sickkiss, Galerie Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2006 – More, Galerie Traversée, Munich, Germany.

2005 – Bad Lux, Zoo Galerie, Nantes, France.

2005 – Come to Where the Flavour Is, CCA – Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow, Scotland.

2004 – My Room, Centre de Création Contemporaine, Tours, France.

2004 – Balkanton, Galerie ATA, Sofia, Bulgaria. Curated by Hou Hanru.

2003 – Frontalunterricht, with Robert Stadler, Espace Paul Ricard, Paris, France.

2003 – One for the Money Two for the Show, Galerie Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2002 – Perfect Day, Temple Bar Gallery, Dublin, Ireland.

2002 – Under Reconstruction, Galerie Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2002 – Ket művész – két kurátor / Two Artists – Two Curators, Budapest, Hungary.

2001 – A Studio Remix Bravo Party, Gallery by Night, Budapest, Hungary.

2000 – VTO Gallery, London, United Kingdom.

2000 – Zwemmer Art, London, United Kingdom.

1998 – Next Stop, Kunstmuseum Thun, Thun, Switzerland.

1997 – Musée des Cartes: Inauguration du nouveau Musée français de la carte à jouer, Issy-les-Moulineaux, France.

1994 – Running with the King, Winchester Art Gallery, Winchester, United Kingdom.

1990 – Phone Your Friend, Galerie Artemide, Paris, France.

Group Exhibitions

2026 – Latency: Lieven Lefere × Stefan Nikolaev, Buysse Gallery, Knokke, Belgium, 3 October–29 November 2026.

2026 – Affirmation!, Michel Rein, Brussels, Belgium.

2024–2025 – Music to the Eyes, Sarieva, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2024–2025 – Sarieva/Gallery Winter Showroom Sofia, Sarieva, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2023 – A Decade in Brussels, Michel Rein, Brussels, Belgium.

2023 – Faites vos jeux!, Les Franciscaines, Deauville, France. Curated by Sébastien Gokalp.

2023 – 10 Years Emergent, Emergent, Veurne, Belgium. Curated by Hilde Borgermans and Frank Maes.

2023 – What Goes Up Must Come Down, Michel Rein, Brussels, Belgium.

2022 – Self-splaining (a Triumph of Empathy), Manifesta 14, Pristina, Kosovo. Curated by Luchezar Boyadjiev.

2022 – L'ami-e modèle, Mucem, Marseille, France.

2022 – Sparks of Imagination: On the Frequencies of Buys, National Gallery, Sofia, Bulgaria. Curated by Vera Mlechevska.

2021 – UNDER DECONSTRUCTION, Sarieva @ DOT, Sofia, Bulgaria. Curated by Vesselina Sarieva.

2021 – In Defence of Solid Material, Sarieva, Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Curated by Vesselina Sarieva.

2020 – Glass, Gas and Electricity, Sariev Gallery, Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Curated by Vesselina Sarieva.

2020 – Souvenirs from the Future, ICA Gallery, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2020 – 25 Years ICA-Sofia, National Gallery, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2020 – Oh les beaux jours (Happy Days), Michel Rein, Paris, France.

2020 – Toutes les lignes droites sont courbes, Villa Carpentier, Ronse, Belgium. Curated by Yolande De Bondt.

2019 – Open Art Files: Notes and Footnotes, Kapana Gallery, Plovdiv, Bulgaria. Curated by Vera Mlechevska.

2018 – On a Clear Day You Can See Forever, Goethe-Institut Bulgaria, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2018 – Sculpture Now, Credo Bonum Gallery, Sofia, Bulgaria. Curated by Vessela Nozharova.

2018 – Present, Musée & Jardins Van Buuren, Brussels, Belgium. Curated by Michel Van Dyck.

2017 – Palais Potemkine, National Gallery / The Palace, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2016 – Transformation, Cobo House, Hong Kong.

2015 – LUX, Shanghai Minsheng Art Museum, Shanghai, China. Curated by Michel Nuridsany.

2015 – Remember Me, Michel Rein, Brussels, Belgium.

2014 – LUX, Le Fresnoy – Studio national des arts contemporains, Tourcoing, France. Curated by Michel Nuridsany.

2014 – Know Thyself, Institute of Contemporary Art – Sofia, Sofia, Bulgaria. Curated by Iara Boubnova.

2012 – A Possible History, Sofia City Art Gallery, Sofia, Bulgaria.

2012 – Why Duchamp?, Sofia Arsenal – Museum for Contemporary Art, Sofia, Bulgaria. Curated by Maria Vassileva.

2011 – Multiples & Co, Villa du Parc – Centre d'art contemporain, Annemasse, France.

2010 – Breaking Walls – Building Networks, Macedonian Museum of Contemporary Art, Thessaloniki, Greece. Curated by Iara Boubnova.

2009 – From Ideology to Economy:
Contemporary Bulgarian Art – 20 Years
Later, State Central Museum of
Contemporary History of Russia, Moscow,
Russia. Curated by Iara Boubnova.

2007 – Promenade au Zoo, Biennale de
Lyon, Lyon, France. Curated by Valérie
Chatrain and Saâdane Afif.

2007 – 52nd Venice Biennale, Bulgarian
Pavilion, Venice, Italy.

2005 – Joy, Casino Luxembourg,
Luxembourg. Curated by Iara Boubnova
and Enrico Lunghi.

2004 – Playlist, Palais de Tokyo, Paris,
France. Curated by Nicolas Bourriaud.

2003 – Smoking / No Smoking, Kunsthal
Rotterdam, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.
Curated by Benno Tempel.

2002 – 4th Cetinje Biennial, Cetinje,
Montenegro. Curated by Iara Boubnova.

2002 – Gwangju Biennale 2002, Gwangju,
South Korea.

2000 – A Shot in the Head, Lisson Gallery,
London, United Kingdom.

1999 – ZAC 99, ARC / Musée d'Art
Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris,
France.

1999 – Côte Ouest – Global Motion,
University Art Museum / Contemporary
Arts Forum, Santa Barbara, USA.

1999 – Glassbau, Soirées Nomades,
Fondation Cartier pour l'Art Contemporain,
Paris, France.

1998 – Les folies du quotidien, Neuer
Berliner Kunstverein, Berlin, Germany.

1998 – Videothèque auf Zeit,
Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn, Germany.

1998 – In vitro e altro, Cabinet des
Estampes, Musée d'Art et d'Histoire,
Geneva, Switzerland.

1994 – Pause, Duck Won Museum of Art,
Seoul, South Korea.

Institutional / Biennial Exhibitions

2007 – 52nd Venice Biennale, Bulgarian Pavilion, Venice, Italy.

2007 – 7th Biennale de Lyon, Lyon, France.

2002 – 4th Gwangju Biennale, Gwangju, South Korea.

2006 – Powerful Tips, Centre de Création Contemporaine Olivier Debré (CCCOD), Tours, France.

2005 – Come to Where the Flavour is, CCA – Centre for Contemporary Arts, Glasgow, United Kingdom.

2003 – Frontalunterricht (with Robert Stadler), Fondation d'entreprise Ricard, Paris, France.

2002 – Under Reconstruction, 4th Cetinje Biennial, Cetinje, Montenegro.

1994 – HLM, École Nationale des Beaux-Arts, Paris, France.

Collections

- Centre de Création Contemporaine Olivier Debré (CCCOD), Tours, France.
- Museum Voorlinden, Wassenaar, The Netherlands.
- Musée français de la carte à jouer, Issy-les-Moulineaux, France.
- Sofia City Art Gallery, Sofia, Bulgaria.
- Vehbi Koç Foundation, Istanbul, Türkiye.
- DOT Sofia Art Collection, Sofia, Bulgaria.
- Florence & Daniel Guerlain, Paris, France.
- Gensollen Collection, Marseille, France.

- Sergues/Wilkinson Collection, Brussels, Belgium.
- Dilyana and Spass Roussev, London, United Kingdom.

Awards

- 2002 – UNESCO Prize for Art, 4th Cetinje Biennial, Cetinje, Montenegro.

Artist-run Initiatives

- 1997 – Founder and co-director, Glassbox, Paris, France.

References

- Michel Rein (2026) Stefan Nikolaev. Artist profile and exhibition history. Michel Rein, Paris/Brussels.
- Sarieva/Gallery (2024) Stefan Nikolaev: Full CV. Sarieva/Gallery, Sofia/Plovdiv.
- Sarieva/Gallery (2026) Stefan Nikolaev: Biography and exhibitions. Sarieva/Gallery, Sofia/Plovdiv.
- Buysse Gallery (2026) Latency: Lieven Lefere × Stefan Nikolaev. Buysse Gallery, Knokke, Belgium, 3 October–29 November 2026.