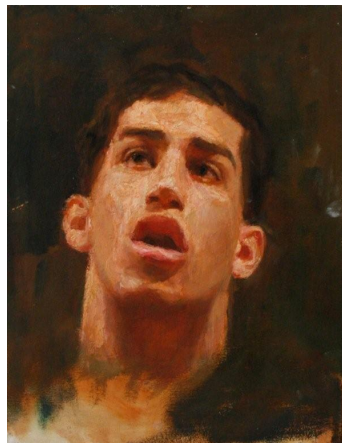


## Ana Cristea Gallery

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Peter Sudar – Kosar 18x14 in.

## Secrets and Confessions

**Peter Sudar**  
**John Stark**  
**Leonard Vartic**  
**Ioan Cristea**

**November 24, 2009 through January 9, 2010**

**Opening Reception:**

**Tuesday, November 24, 6 – 8 pm**

Ana Cristea Gallery is delighted to present a group show, which includes the work of **Peter Sudar**, **John Stark**, **Leonard Vartic** and **Ioan Cristea**. The spectrum of the show lies under the soft gaze of nostalgia. Each of the artists engages the past, with the thrill of capturing its moments. But, as nostalgia remains firmly grounded in the present, the four artists challenge us with their unique vision of the past while sharing their contemporary secrets with the world. Although all of these artists hail from Europe, their work inevitably addresses divergent issues and contains varied themes. Moreover, it reflects individuals who possess their own pictorial language, which is critical to how their distinctive subject matter is conveyed.

**Peter Sudar** (b. 1980) is a Hungarian painter whose masterful brushwork reminds one of nineteenth century French Realist painters. His work, nevertheless, looks anything but passé. The figures that occupy Sudar's paintings appear contemporary to us, resembling close friends, family members, lovers, or most frequently, himself. His subjects are typically dressed in today's clothing - whether it is a stylish pair of sneakers, a military uniform, or a soccer jersey, although at times they might allude to elements of another era. This interplay between eras and styles is clearly conscious, and Sudar toys with its implications.

**John Stark** (b. 1979) is a London-based painter whose distinctive, idiosyncratic imagination permeates throughout his work. Technically, his intricate landscapes call to mind Early Netherlanders Painting of the Northern Renaissance, sometimes referred to as "The Flemish Primitives." Conversely, these settings, with their near-impossible rock formations and ominous skies, allude to a slightly darker, even dystopian, universe. Even though they may contain peculiar figures performing habitual tasks, Stark's mythical worlds simply cannot be read as having a specific narrative or a clear allegorical component. Rather than being a detriment, this opaqueness enables the work to exude a strong visual potency that both necessitates and rewards slow, patient absorption by the viewer.

**Leonard Vartic** (b. 1970) lives and works in Cluj, Romania. He introduces us to the versatile, self reflexive universe of solid textures, liquid shadows and airy colors. His work is a comprehensive interplay between drawing and painting, appearance and essence, surface and depth. Fragments of his everyday life and art history are also paraphrased in canvases that zoom into unexpected, ambiguous spaces that feel borderless.

The Romanian artist, **Ioan Cristea** (b. 1944), is fully devoted to capturing what he deems fascinating in line alone. His myriad of subjects is an extensive cast of characters, each expressing something entirely unique about their personality. While the female nude is a common theme found throughout his pen and ink drawings, there are other figures that are caught in candid poses of a quotidian sensibility. Their offhandedness and grace, along with Cristea's confident and precise use of line, makes one think that they were done of the moment, which only adds to their inspired vitality.