

VISUAL ART JOURNAL





— Intro

Hello, dear reader!

You are holding the tenth issue of our magazine, and I am incredibly happy that it has gained such popularity and demand. Our entire team works tirelessly to introduce you to the most interesting and inspiring contemporary artists.

Autumn is a time of change, and the shift in seasons inevitably leads us to reflect on the impermanence of life and how we perceive the world around us. In this issue, we wondered: can our mood or circumstances affect how we experience art? Is it possible that the same painting reveals itself to us in a different way on different days, as if we are viewing it through the prism of our own emotions?

Or perhaps art itself has the power to amplify our feelings? Those moments when a painting perfectly reflects your emotional state, and you live through that experience together with it, become truly special.

We invite you to try a little experiment. Come back to this magazine in a week and flip through it again. Perhaps your attention will be drawn to entirely different pages than today, and the impressions you have of what you see may change.

Until we meet again, and may art continue to inspire you to unexpected discoveries!



Anna Gvozdeva

Curator of
Visual Art Journal

On the Front Cover:
Katherine Dossman
Serie Tropico - Chontaduro

On the Back Cover:
Keita Wirawan
Figure in Magenta Pink

We invite artists to submit their works for publication in our magazine: <https://visualartjournal.com/call-for-artists/>

Critical Review

Artist: Green (Yong Woon Park)

By Anna Gvozdeva,

Curator of Visual Art Journal

Galvanized by Dostoevsky's critique of utopian thinking that predicted many of the horrors of 20th-century totalitarianism, Green's artistic practice satirizes the hyper-competition and idyllic sentiments of contemporary society. The South Korean artist forces us to confront some of the more uncomfortable tendencies of modernity that push individuals to belligerent competition and loss of their 'own' selves.

His movements are expressions of a sophisticated and impulsive technique. Thick and energetic oils, often straight from the tube, are coupled with palette knife strokes cutting the canvas impetuously. These stronger coatings are contrasted with other more delicate linear marks drawn on the canvas with oil sticks. Sizable canvas cloth is also preserved and shows in large areas. These are not random choices in Green's artistic practice; they are instead symbols of a calculated maneuver to draw the audience's attention to elements of absence and presence, strength and weakness, all coexisting as notes of a harmonic symphony. Audiences are left to surgically analyze the narratives of his paintings, to discover their inner meanings, to evaluate what he is trying to convey.

Green's innovative practice is an emotional synesthesia, where sensory stimuli are involuntarily associated with an emotional response not yet fully controlled by this artist. His persona is struggling to be revealed in its entirety, and this is visible in the restiveness and agitation of his technique, also representative of the general struggle of emerging artists trying to succeed in the competitive arts field.



Green (Yong Woon Park) | Poaching | 2024

Green's paintings *Poaching* and *The Nasty Politician* can be described as intense and visually captivating. In both paintings, layers of bold, textured, and colorful strokes create evocative ambiguous representations of what the artist sees in this world. In *Poaching*, the fish's life is sucked out by a shark — the weak being eaten by those on top of the food chain. In *The Nasty Politician*, the ambiguous figure gives the audience a hollow and evil smile, as they are subjects of his dark will. His inspiration comes from his life and corporate experience as a Designer in South Korea, one of the most competitive countries in the world, where the artist always strived to be an eater rather than being eaten.

Green (Yong Woon Park) | The Nasty Politician | 2024



Similar to Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina* and Jean-Michel Basquiat's masterpiece *Defacement*, the audience is asked to engage in a critique and resistance to societal systems oppressing individuals. Peer-to-peer competition, corruption, and inequality are key messages Green is striving to convey. These concepts are relevant to modern art discourse as they are significant for those living within modern societies themselves. Audiences are invited to reflect upon the loss of their individuality and their passive acceptance of imposed societal norms. His practice invites humanity to 'cease being so focused on perceptions, those in society overlook their own inadequacies,' while inspiring them to be the creators of their own triumph. Green's artistic practice is violently beautiful, and there is no doubt it will bring a positive impact on the contemporary Visual Arts field.

— Interview

Green (Yong Woon Park)

Your art is deeply rooted in your emotions and experiences in South Korea, particularly the societal pressures you describe. How has your move to London influenced your artistic practice and your expression of these emotions?

Moving to London has been a key influence in my life and in expanding and expressing my artistic practice focused on a strong criticism of inequality and peer pressure. Similarly to South Korea, the UK is a social class society where political and/or socio-economic status dictates the class each citizen fits into. High social status and wealth belong to a few in these class systems, where the rich dominate over the poor. In this environment, it seems natural to me to express my anger, regret, and disappointment toward the treatment of the latter group through violent, aggressive, and colorful oil paint strokes. I purposely leave large empty areas of raw canvas in the hope that audiences will use it as a vehicle to find themselves and reflect upon acceptance or critique of societal norms. The subjects used (for instance satirical figures, natural creatures, and Korean traditional imagery) are representative of my criticism toward the injustices and inequalities I see and experience in my daily life in London. In this country, the rise of economic inequality, the increase of homelessness, and the struggle of ethnic minorities and those differing from the "norm" are key concepts inspiring the narratives of my paintings. Yet, unlike South Korea (still a homogenous society for the most part), London is also a positive forum to express my own individual persona as an artist, while having the opportunity to access London's diversity. In this



Photographed by Marie-Nelika Clerc

city, I have the chance to meet people from different walks of life, learning from their experiences and cultures — these are all elements inspiring my art. Moreover, here I have fewer inhibitions; I am not required to abide by the traditional set of rules that Korean society imposes on me. I can be myself; I can express my feelings of anger and regret freely while denouncing what makes both societies alike.

You mention that your artworks are an "emotional outcry" against societal issues like competitiveness, inequality, and peer pressure. How do you think your art speaks to audiences facing similar issues globally?

My art message is not particularly subtle; the meaning is often right there in the titles of my paintings. My art is an anti-capitalist narrative that depicts the wealthy as parasites, sadists, and indifferent to the working class, who are, quite literally, struggling to keep their heads above water. Nowadays, our global economies are collapsing, wars and conflicts are raging, and the gap between the rich and the poor is becoming wider and wider. In this environment, the least fortunate fight to stay afloat, pushing each other down. My art aims to represent their voices, their struggles to survive, and to denounce the parasitic lifestyle of the corrupted in our societies. Through my art, I would like to alert audiences to the danger of capitalist societies, and how through their own actions, they can be the drivers of positive change, bringing equality and equity among us all.

The use of vibrant colors, harsh brush strokes, and thick textures plays a key role in your work. Could you elaborate on how these visual elements reflect your internal experiences and personality?

I have a burning and honest personality. Texture represents my anxiety, restlessness, and agitation; feelings that drive the hand that builds the 'thickness' on my canvas. I balance that with the use of vivid colors applied after carefully pre-imagined color compositions. Color represents my softer side, the gentler sentiment of innocence and love for beauty I have within myself. I always feel in a rush, in need to complete my paintings in one night, and this is visible in the way I use colors, sometimes applied straight from the tube. This dichotomy between 'thickness' and 'brightness,' 'harshness' and 'softness' is truly representative of my multi-faceted personality. I am curious, creative, and open to learning and new experiences. But I am also emotional and impetuous as the world is oppressing me.

You integrate elements of Korean folklore and mythology into your pieces. How do these traditional elements interact with the modern societal issues you're addressing in

your art?

As a South Korean artist, I feel compelled to bring elements of my heritage into my artworks. These are deeply rooted in my understanding of the arts and how I see the world around me. For instance, I sometimes paint subjects wearing traditional Korean masks (also known as 'gamyeon') as a satire against modern pressure to abide by collective unattainable standards. The powerful are sometimes represented as wearing these masks, making fun of all of us, of our need to be all 'pretty' and 'successful.' Moreover, the use of traditional Korean Goblins (or 'Dokkaebi') in some of my paintings is representative of good fortune and prosperity for my audiences. I encourage them to be happy with their own lives without feeling pressured or obliged to fight for the scraps that modern societies have to offer. On the other hand, as ambiguity is within the contrasting nature of a painter, I use Goblins to depict the higher classes bringing bad omens to humanity, as they are the few who want to be the sole beneficiaries of all resources available to all of us instead.

You've mentioned that you feel like a bystander in life, a feeling many can relate to in today's fast-paced society. How do you think art can help individuals reclaim their voices or identities in such an environment?

As an artist, the direct intention of my artworks is to encourage individuals to release themselves from 'hibernation,' from passively accepting what society dictates, and to release their uniqueness. I aim to encourage them to find their own voices, to reflect upon what's right and wrong in their lives and in the society they live in. I would like humanity as a whole to think about their actions and the impact these have on the wider society. I would like my audiences to ask themselves questions such as: 'What am I doing here?', 'Why do we fight?', 'Why do we compete?', 'In what kind of world would I like to live in?', 'How can I express myself fully?' and ultimately 'How can I help those less fortunate?', 'What can I do to change this world?' Nowadays, people rarely begin processes of self-reflection; they are more concentrated on the way their character and life are shown and evaluated by others — they all

Green (Yong Woon Park) | Nagging | 2023



become bystanders focused on meeting the expectations of the 'whole,' rather than expressing their own identities and saying 'no' to injustices. My artworks are vehicles for self-reflection, to foster personal expression and positive change. I was able to liberate myself through painting, and this is visible in my frantic technique characterized by an intense expressive subjectivity. I hope that others can liberate and express their full selves via my stimulation.

Your work often critiques the status quo, particularly in societies that you believe attempt to shape individuals into "particles of their rotten core." What are your hopes for how your audience will interpret and respond to these themes?

I would like my audiences to ponder the huge divide between the upper and lower classes and how inescapable poverty can be. Similar to the great neo-expressionism artists who often asked audiences to explore deep emotional and psychological themes, such as personal experiences, societal issues, and the human condition, I hope that my audiences will be able to reflect upon their lives and the individual contributions they can make to foster equity and equality in our world. I would like to inspire more people to use their voices in condemnation of



Green (Yong Woon Park) | Brave Monkey | 2023

racism, discrimination, oppression, economic inequality, and unfair competitiveness — these are idiosyncrasies of contemporary societies. These are elements forming the contemporary status quo, and these are influences that make people passive and indirectly willing 'particles of its rotten core.'



Green (Yong Woon Park) | Walk on Eggshells | 2023

Katherine Dossman

Born in Colombia and residing in Argentina, she holds a degree in graphic design from the Fine Arts School of Cali. She worked for 10 years as an art director in advertising for agencies such as Young & Rubicam and McCann Erickson. In 2006, she moved to Buenos Aires to study animation. In 2010, she definitively shifted to illustration and began working as a freelancer for clients in Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Spain, and the United States. To this day, she continues developing her artistic work, focusing on creating fantastical characters.

She works in both digital and analog formats, ranging from painting, sculpture, ceramics, and muralism, and has participated in both collective and solo exhibitions in galleries and many street art festivals in Argentina, Colombia, and the United States.

ELEPHANT SHREW:

Great heroes don't need to be big.

"A few years ago, I learned about the elephant shrew. I didn't just discover a tiny, brave creature; I also realized that something majestic can come in a small form. For them, fragility is a part of everyday life. They are constantly moving, running to feed, running to survive in a giant and hostile world. Knowing that its short life is filled with adversity reminds me of our own fragility and our need to keep moving to survive in this universe. Being an immigrant made me feel a connection to this fragile yet strong animal. I wanted to immortalize them, to make them big and strong by creating a fantastical world in their size."





— Interview

Marco Urano

Your background is in fashion and illustration. How did your experience in fashion influence your move into concept art and larger mediums?

As a fashion student I think it was an encounter and exchange that often happens between people doing things like that, in any case illustration was more geared toward expressing something on a smaller medium. Larger media appeal to me trivially more because of the size.

Can you tell us more about your creative process when working with stencils, and how it differs from traditional illustration techniques?

I usually work on photos on the PC, once



they are finished I figure out how big I want to make them and adjust the size of the canvas or roll of paper.

Then I print out what I have worked on the custom paper, after which I start cutting out the figures I need with the cutter and apply them to the canvas with the color already put on (to make the stencil stick more and, consequently, to improve the rendering). Then I add the spray or paint, then peel everything off and voilà, the job is done. As for illustrations, I've experimented from charcoal, graphic pen, watercolor, colored pastels to trying to create something with melted wax.

How does your Italian heritage, especially being from the south of Italy, shape your art?

A little bit, I'm very proud of my southern origins, I think looking around in certain contexts can make you realize both what you want to do and what you don't want to do. Italian politics and the figure of TV presenters and characters about whom you



know everything and nothing is very fascinating to me.

What role do societal themes such as freedom and identity play in your works, and how do you convey these themes using different mediums like guitars and canvas?

They play a pretty important role, especially identity. I think we currently live in a situation where everyone is something, and that creates anxiety for my generation.

Can you talk about the evolution of your style from smaller illustrations to more conceptual and large-scale pieces?

The evolution has been mostly on a visual level, the concept instead evolves with experiences, with what happens around me and what I see in the different contexts around me.



Marco Urano
Make great Sex
2024

How do you see your work evolving in the future? Are there any new mediums or themes you're interested in exploring?

Honestly I don't know yet, there are some types of work that don't satisfy me while others I would like to explore, in any case something that has on a visual level a medium that is not small.



What message do you hope to convey with your recent works like "Libertas" and "Make Great Sex"?

With Libertas, of trying to come to grips with what we are being told and conveyed by music, TV and film, you could falsify everything and everyone would repeat that person's phrase without knowing what it is. With Make great sex I liked to say something by taking some things from the original slogan with a font and colors that represent something "serious."

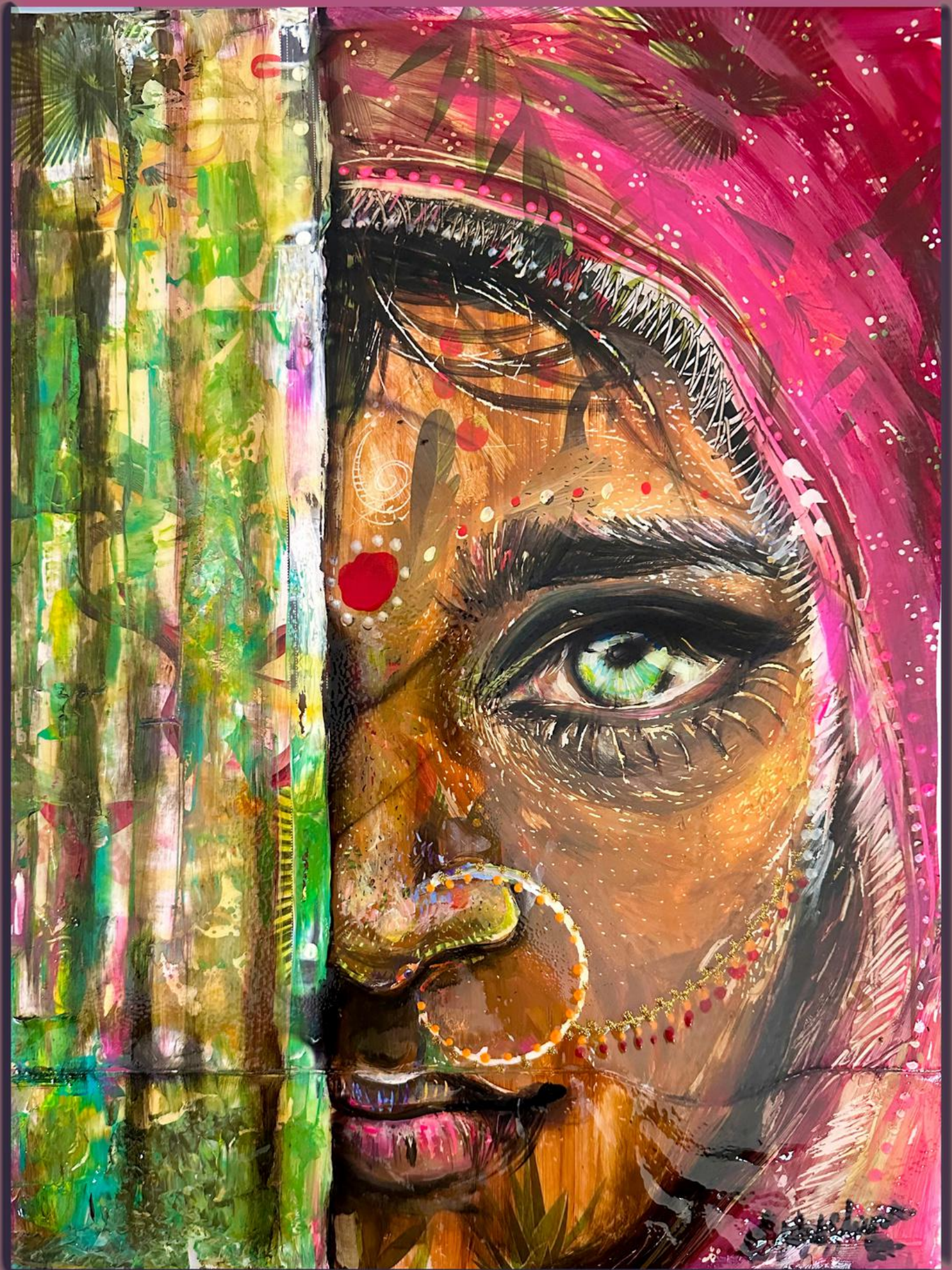
Marco Urano | Libertas | 2024

My paintings are normally on the themes 'inclusion, diversity, unity' based on local inspirations, childhood memories and stories I have heard from my roots. Through my art, my intentions are rooted in promoting harmony, understanding, and acceptance within this modern society. My aim is also to inspire individuals of all ages to embrace non-violence, empathy, and bring people together, regardless of their backgrounds, beliefs, or differences. I believe that Art has the capacity to evoke emotions and cultivate empathy. Paintings can definitely tell stories, convey emotions and provoke thought. I invite viewers to reflect on their own beliefs and biases, challenging them to confront prejudice and discrimination and embrace values of tolerance and acceptance for my future exhibitions. With paintings of local Mauritian themes, childhood memories and fantasy spirituality as main subject, I promote and contribute to the cultural diversity of the art world.

— Darshinee Choollun



Darshinee Choollun | Old woman working in salt pan



— Interview

Luz Belen

Can you tell us more about your journey from Peru to Amsterdam and how both places have influenced your artistic process?

I left my country long time ago, I have lived in Spain, England and now in this beautiful city Amsterdam, where I have always mesmerized by the flowers on the street. Furthermore, where I have been more in contact with my roots, perhaps the nostalgia of being so long away from home has impacted my artistic work.

How does your culture influence your work, and how do you incorporate elements of your Peruvian heritage into your illustrations?

I am so proud of the richness of my culture and history. The texture, colors, flavors and the nature is captivating and I like to mix them with my memories and experiences.

You are part of an artist collective in Amsterdam that focuses on textiles. How does working in such a collaborative environment shape your artistic expression?



Yes, I am part of Warmi Kuyen collective. Our different ways to express our art through our different experiences and techniques. It helps me to be more open to the beauty of diversity and how you learn from each other.

You mentioned that "pain shouldn't be wasted, something amazing can grow from it." How do you translate personal emotions, especially painful ones, into your creative process?

I believe that through art is the great excuse to express yourself unapologetically. Unfortunately pain is a great teacher, and we shouldn't scape from it, we can learn in a meaningful way about ourselves, and we can become stronger and wiser.

Could you share more details about your recent children's book and how

you approached illustrating it?

“Mallki and the lost star” born in a difficult time in my life, but it helped me to dream and think that life is a journey, with a happy ending. Most of the illustrations are my memories as a child mixed with fantasy.

As an artist living in Amsterdam, what are some of the unique challenges or opportunities you’ve encountered in this new creative landscape?

Amsterdam is a very artistic place with

very talented people from everywhere, therefore can be very competitive. But your uniqueness is the only way to open the doors. Personally I like challenges.

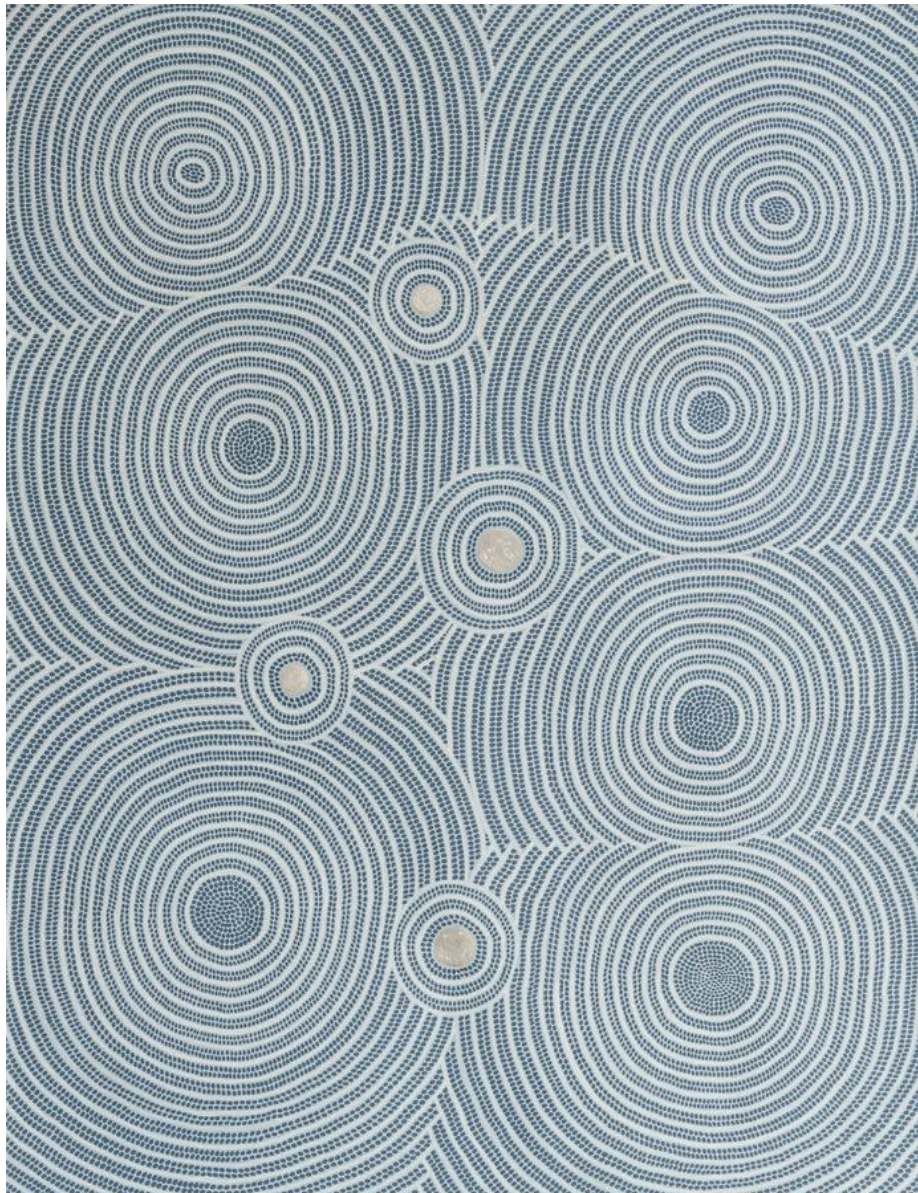
What advice would you give to aspiring artists who want to blend their cultural background with personal emotions in their work?

Don’t do it for impress people and don’t think about money, think about your worthiness. And the most important do it because this is something that your soul needs and it fills your heart.



Luz Belen | Water for the flowers

Born in 1982, **Julien Gavard** is a French artist living and working in France. For over fifteen years, he has been exploring a variety of artistic disciplines, from music and poetry to the visual arts, such as collage and painting. This year marks a significant milestone in his career, as he decides to share his creations with the public for the first time. Using marker on paper as his main medium, Julien Gavard is distinguished by a style of geometric abstraction. His work is deeply influenced by Aboriginal art, whose symbolic richness fascinates him. His engineering background is also reflected in his love of symmetry, constraints and algorithms, which imbue his compositions with a mathematical rigor. Julien Gavard also draws inspiration from abstract art, sashiko, Japanese motifs and natural forms. Each work he creates is “visual poetry”, a composition that goes beyond mere aesthetics to tell a story through symbols, textures and color harmonies.



Julien Gavard | Opposition | 2024



— Interview

Ladislav

Your work merges surrealism with ecological themes, creating what you call "eco-surrealism." How did you come to combine these two ideas in your art?

I think that this artistic "Imaginarium" that I'm building appeared bit by bit as I was experimenting. In high school when I was studying the history of Arts I discovered classic paintings and was always impressed by the Italian Renaissance paintings (Botticelli, Rafael or Michelangelo...). The surrealism of Salvador Dalí, and René Magritte were also works that influenced me. This style merged my attraction for figurative paintings + my attraction for dreamlike worlds.

For years, I created and searched for my personal style, focusing on building my technique. The ecology and connection to nature has been something I was interested in since adolescence I guess, but it never occurred to me that I could actually talk about these subjects in my Art.

It was not until I moved to Barcelona to be surrounded by more creatives and artists (in a creative coworking) that my personal illustration projects highlighted this aspect.

The first project I did that mixed ecology nature and surrealism is called "Citizens Of The Jungle". I spent my childhood and adolescence in a village in the south of France. I was missing this proximity with nature in this new life in the big city, so I started to paint portraits of urban citizens included in some surrealistic jungles made of all sorts of animals and plants. The project started with 1 portrait and I ended up doing 10 portraits for this series. This was the beginning of me finding my artistic voice and personal style that I call "eco-surrealism".



Ladislav Chachignot | The Flowing woman | 2022

What role does nature play in shaping the bold colors and intricate patterns in your works?

Nature is like an infinite source of inspiration for humans.

Since we were able to draw on walls in the prehistoric ages, humans have been representing it. I continue to do the same throughout my creations. Nature is very complex, animals, insects and plants are in constant evolution and adapt themselves by developing new features: incredible colors, or patterns. So many things that are always serving as a base for my paintings and creations. It fuels creativity.

How do you hope your artwork will influence people's perception of the environment and sustainability?

As I'm growing up, I have the opportunity like everyone else to be a witness of our modern societies. We're living fast and are more and more relying on the digital technologies. We have less time to walk in nature with our busy lives. This fact is directly leading most of us to a great disconnection with the natural world. We start to

categorize species, separating animals from human beings. In fact, we're just other "animals" on this earth, there is no separation possible, but in our minds we got used to thinking there is.

Often, we don't pay too much attention anymore to the incredible life all around us, the diversity, the richness of all this that is making this planet unique. Through my art, I hope I can operate a sort of "emotional reconnection" of the public with the natural world. I take elements that are existing all around us and combine them in new ways, to spark the curiosity and interest of the public, but also to transmit messages, preoccupations that I feel and things I see in our societies.

Could you explain your process when transitioning between digital and traditional media?

Sure, I can say I mainly learned to paint thanks to the digital tools. I was always so amazed by the digital paintings and illustrations. I studied History Of The Art, so I had the chance to discover and watch many classic paintings from many art movements. I always wanted to draw in a more "realistic" way, but I never studied the painting technique in a "fine art" course.

At the age of 30, I remember I was kind of lost, I feared a lot to start and dedicate my energy, money and time to this art journey. I was thinking it was too late to become an artist and do it professionally.

I joined an online community called "Pencil Kings" and the person who was developing this project, "Mitch" convinced me to start following my guts and put some dedication to get better.

I bought a Wacom cintiq 12" at the time and started to draw daily on the computer, using adobe photoshop. Then I started to add colors, it was easy as there was no canvas to buy, nor brushes or paints... I was able to correct, retouch the drawings and paintings. It felt more secure to fail (many times) and being able to correct my digital painting better and better over the years.

In 2018, I started to explore in parallel to my digital painting, traditional works on small



Ladislav Chachignot | The Vase Of Faces | 2023

formats A4, A3.

I began to use watercolor and then by using the same technique I was using digitally I started to paint a few small canvases with acrylics. It took me some time to get the skills of painting with real brushes and getting faster with it. But this is a process every artist is going through.

Nowadays, I use the digital and traditional in most of my creation process (at least for the canvases). I sketch and prepare a composition/color test version on the computer. Then, once I'm satisfied with it, I use this digital sketch as reference for a painting on a canvas or wooden board. My traditional painting is always more detailed and rendered than my digital sketch, but this digital sketch is very important for me.

What challenges or freedoms do you experience in each format?

The digital tool allows me to experiment. I feel safe to try new things, can move each element very easily, and modify things faster. I work with lots of layers, so each element is separated from

the others. This is the big plus of the digital tool. The big plus of the traditional is that I get a lot of pleasure from using real paintings and brushes. I can build more textures, seeing the colors mixing up together. I love the smell of acrylic painting (it doesn't smell as much as oil), mixing colors on the palette, and having a final object that you can touch, that has subtleties of textures, and brushstrokes. It's something the digital tool cannot give you, in my opinion.

In your opinion, what responsibilities do artists have when addressing environmental concerns in their work?

Each artist has its own way to create and also its own goal / objectives when it comes to the things he/she wants to transmit in his/her art. Artist has always been some witnesses of our world. And beautiful pieces of art appeared from their minds in every corner of the world, in every era. The environmental crisis we're embarked in comes from mistakes of the pasts and behaviors that we have to correct if we want to continue living in a "healthy planet".

In my opinion (or at least this is what I want to



Ladislav Chachignot
The Intricate Ways That Are Leading To Freedom
2022



Ladislav Chachignot
Cascade
2024

pursue in my career) artists have the power to inspire, question, entertain and interact with the public in a very special way.

Building an emotional connection that is definitely not similar to politics, for example. In an era where many people don't trust our politics and governments, art is a tool to show these societies' problems in some alternative ways.

If an emotional connection can be created with the public, there will be a higher chance that the same public itself will start to spread the message and start acting for the protection of our planet (where governments and many people in power don't want to operate this necessary change).

You've mentioned that reconnecting humans with nature is a central goal of your art. How do you approach this concept in specific projects?

Yes, I think this is my main objective and what I

hope to inspire when people are staring at my paintings.

To operate this concept I often use humans, animals, and plants in my compositions. I don't limit myself to the "laws of physics", that means for example in a painting I can mix fishes with birds. I represent this world as a whole, not the perception we have of it, with rules and laws that goes with this.

I'm creating situations where these characters are interacting with the environment. To question to public and to open within themselves reflections about what they're seeing, what's their interpretations of it.

Then with some small guidance, I can put the focus on the significance of some elements of the painting.

But it's also important to leave a wide space for personal interpretation. It's like this that people can search within their emotions, what they're feeling by exploring the painting.

By showing these surrealistic sceneries I show them elements they probably saw somewhere in a new way. This might spark curiosity, and attention to question themselves about what they see. Giving them the motivation to learn more about these creatures and plants, and see the beauty of nature transcribed and interpreted through the artist's scope. All this can lead to an emotional reconnection with nature, and the necessity to immerse yourself within it and experience it.

As a self-taught artist, what advice would you give to aspiring artists who are exploring digital painting or eco-art?

I would say a few things that I discovered over the years :

1) Each artist has its own way of tracing its path in the art world. There are many people out there who are saying they can sell you the secrets to be a successful artist. I recommend that you follow in priority your "inner voice" and personal taste when creating your art. It's important you connect with peers and learn from people who are also following an artistic path but don't get their words for sacred speeches.

2) Your path will appear while you're committing to the creation (can be pursued as a hobby or

professionally). Passion is what is sparking the fire. Commitment and repetition is what build the artist. Patience and resilience over difficulties are quite important. I always see this artistic life as a marathon, not a speed race. If you intend to pursue the professional. Path, and sacrifices along the way might be necessary in order to dedicate yourself to this passion career.

3) Eco-art is still something a bit unconventional when it comes to art creation. So if you feel you'd like to explore these thematic, you should see yourself as a kind of adventurer who is exploring new places. Explorers sometimes feel they're lost or don't know which path to take. Sometimes there's no clear path. Your mission is to trace one.

4) In my opinion, I suggest you be true to yourself, you'll meet people who will understand your art and some others won't. But you should create what you really like as much as possible to get good at it. I think this is how your artistic identity will appear by itself with time.



Ladislav Chachignot
Le rythme des vagues
2024

I am a 24 year old street photographer from NYC! I love shooting both film and digital!

— Hannah Osinoff





— Interview

Keita Wirawan

At such a young age, you already explore complex themes in your art. How did you first become interested in depicting dreams and darker aspects of the human mind?

My art style started about 2 years ago when I started sketching without any references and just started to draw these creatures with only my imaginations. I take inspiration from anything I find to be interesting, Movies, Tv Shows, even YouTube videos.

Your work is influenced by both Francis Bacon and Salvador Dali. How do you combine the surreal elements of Dali with the intense emotion of Bacon in your paintings?

In my paintings, I really try to incorporate things that are familiar to the human eye without being too obvious. I do that by maybe putting it in an unusual place or maybe I paint a figure that has too many features in its face. Emotion is something really crucial I think in any art form. Most of the time, I paint by just letting it happen. Not much thought is put out. I just do what I feel. Sometimes it doesn't really go well, sometimes it does. That's why there are many occasions where there is a painting within a painting, because I didn't like what I was doing in the first part of the painting.

I say that I am inspired by both Francis Bacon and Salvador Dali because I am very interested in their work. Salvador Dali for his imagination from



his dreams and Bacon for the dark nature of his paintings.

The 'Depictions of Dreams' series mixes real-life objects with dreamlike figures. Can you share the process of how you choose the objects and figures for each piece?

As I said above, there isn't really much thought that is put out in choosing the objects that I want to paint. Sometimes it just happens. But other times there is a personal meaning such as hydrangea flowers which are the favorite flowers of someone I cherish very much.

Do you recall a particular dream or moment that inspired one of your artworks? Can you describe the experience and how it translates into your canvas?

Actually, there are a lot of moments in my life where I thought "This could be a good drawing or painting.". I love movies, music album covers, and other visual arts. After I watched a movie or a video about a visual art piece, that sometimes translates to what I dream about at night. The figure that is shown in "Figure in Magenta Pink" is actually the one that takes a lot of imagination. I took inspiration from my earlier drawings from my sketchbook that I kept a long time ago, and most of my sketchbooks are works I took from

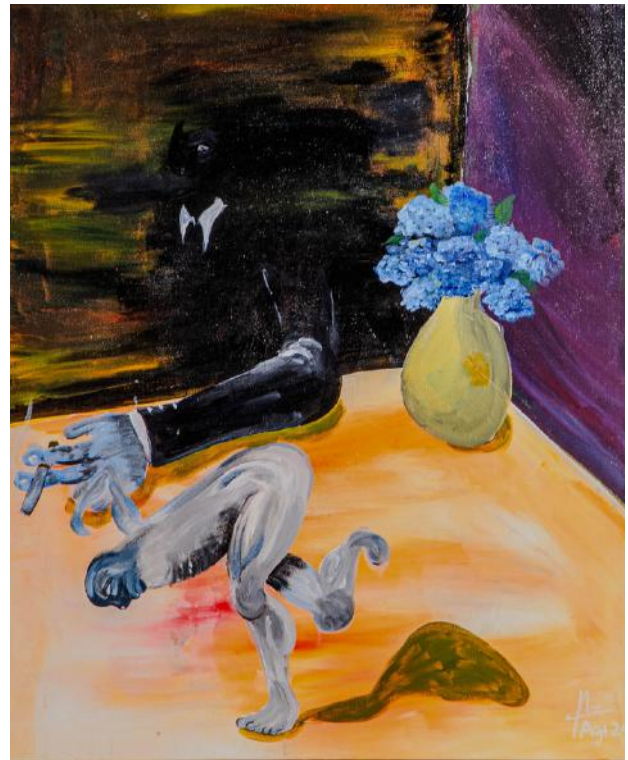
my dreams after a long nap.

How do you balance between reality and fiction in your artwork? Do you often find yourself leaning more towards one than the other?

I lean towards fiction. I've not always been like this. When I was a kid, I wanted to be able to draw hyper realistic drawings and paintings because I thought that was the way to actually showcase talent. As I grew older, I started to think art is just a representation of the artist. If the artist wants to draw something, they just draw it. Why make hyper realistic art when there's already cameras and phones to take pictures? I like that nowadays, art is mostly from imagination.

You mentioned that your parents supported your early interest in art by enrolling you in lessons. How did these early experiences shape your current artistic style?

It really did. I've always been interested in art since I was in kindergarten, which I think my parents noticed. I used to draw these really bad drawings with crayons, but my dad insisted on hanging them in his office. When I was in



Keita Wirawan | 1/2 Figures in a Room

elementary school, I started taking really hard drawing lessons. I even learned how to draw human anatomy when I was just in 3rd grade. The result of this now is that I don't really need to think much about anything when I'm drawing. I just do it. I draw eyes, hands, torso, etc. by just muscle memory alone. Those lessons really are a big part of my artistic journey. That's why I don't want to waste my talent in art. I want to do this because of my father who was really supportive towards my talent as an artist since a very young age. If he was still with us, I just know my drawings and paintings would still be hanging in his office.

What role does your cultural background as an Indonesian artist play in your creative process?

My cultural background isn't really shown in my drawings and paintings, but I do want people to know that Indonesians have a lot of talented artists. I myself want to be in the conversation of great Indonesian artists such as Heri Dono, Nyoman, Roby Dwi Antono, and many more. There are already a lot of talented Indonesian artists in my generation and I want to be known as one of them and for people from around the world to get to appreciate the artworks of Indonesian artists.



Keita Wirawan | Man with a Room

In my work, I strive to create a world where childlike perception and imagination coexist with the adult desire to structure reality, giving it clarity and meaning. A wide range of styles and techniques allows me to balance, sometimes leaning toward naivety, and other times toward geometric precision. Through acrylics, I can freely experiment on any surface, fully expressing my need for bright, pure colors. Meanwhile, working with markers and fineliners enables me to achieve the desired specificity and sharpness. Lately, I've been increasingly drawn to humorous projects that sit at the intersection of fairy tales and science fiction. I enjoy creating stories that make the viewer smile and offer them a refuge from reality in a world of gentle dreams. Ultimately, my works end up somewhere "in between" - between painting and graphics, metamodernism and constructivism, science and myth.

— Arina Menshikova





FOR RENT MARS N3. FOR RENT

DELIVERY

— Interview

Humans Sato

Your background spans theoretical physics, financial industry, and computational biology. How do these diverse fields influence your approach to creating art?

The objects described by classical mechanics and the theory of relativity are robust processes that follow classical causality. The objects that quantum mechanics, finance, and living things deal with stochastic progress, and are therefore considered fragile. I believe that the universe and macroscopic things are robust, while humans and things created by humans are fragile. I create works that use robust theoretical physics and geometric concepts as motifs, as well as fragile statistical mechanical approaches to mathematical biology that target humans and life. I also create works that are critical of financial engineering.

How do you integrate concepts from mathematical oncology and computational neuroscience into your artworks?



Humans Sato | Tree

In mathematical oncology, I have created works using the process that follows the evolutionary model of cancer, and in computational neuroscience, I have created works using models of neural firing themselves and images visualized from fMRI image data, but I tend to deal with themes in theoretical physics, geometry, and mathematical biology rather than mathematical oncology or computational neuroscience. In theoretical physics, I often deal with the cutting-edge research results of cosmology, superstring theory, and modern physics, in geometry, concepts that appear in differential geometry and algebraic geometry, and in mathematical biology, I often deal with the stochastic or statistical mechanical models of biological evolution.

Your artist statement mentions the loss of humanity due to over-concentration on physics. How do you ensure that your current work balances science and human experience?

I try to live my daily life neither too focused on research nor too focused on art. Doing music is part of that. Whether I can get success as an artist or not, I have no intention of quitting my job at the moment. This is to keep a balance in my daily life and mental state, and also because I don't want to lose my identity as a scientist. Also, I eat dinner at an izakaya once a week.

You are influenced by artists such as Wassily Kandinsky and Salvador Dali. How do their styles or philosophies resonate with your scientific background?

I am also influenced by the Bauhaus and Surrealism of Wassily Kandinsky and Salvador Dali, but I am most strongly influenced by Japanese artists. The spiritual pillar of my art is the Japanese avant-garde artist Taro Okamoto. With more time spent at home due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I was triggered to create art after reading his book "Today's Art" when he was still alive. I was impressed by the words in the book, "It doesn't matter if you're not good at it, there's meaning in ordinary people drawing," and I started creating art. In terms of style, I think I am strongly influenced by Shinro Ohtake, a living Japanese artist who also creates avant-garde works. My initial goal when I went



to an exhibition of his work was to be like Shinro Ohtake, who can also create digital works.

Could you elaborate on your creative process when fusing visible and invisible concepts in your artworks?

In a word, it means looking at things from various aspects and consolidating various representations into one work. It's like writing a paper. A paper is composed of the results of hand calculations, computer simulations, references, etc. Hand calculations, simulation results, and references are each image that makes up my collage works. These are consolidated into one work. Many of these images are conflicting each other, and objects that promote or alleviate the conflict are placed on the screen. Two or more opposing things are placed and sublimated to create a single work. This is what Hegel calls "Aufheben." Taro Okamoto called the same thing

"oppositionism." In my research, new discoveries and theories are created by fusing different fields of thinking and ways of looking at things from various angles. The approach I take when I come up with an idea for an art piece is the same approach I take when I come up with a new idea in my study.

What role does augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) play in your artistic vision?

VR works is that it invites visitors into an immersive experience. Moreover, because it is done in a digital space, it can be achieved at low cost. My immersive experience started when I soaked in the Naoshima public bath " I LOVE Bath" created by Shinro Ohtake on the island of Naoshima in the Seto Inland Sea, Japan. I was able to fully enjoy the world of Shinro Ohtake by soaking in the bath surrounded by his works. This autumn, I will also be experiencing the three-dimensional mandala of Toji Temple in Kyoto, created by the esoteric Buddhist monk Kukai nearly 1,200 years ago.

What is the significance of J-pop music in your creative process, and how does it influence your visual or conceptual approach?

I am also working on a music piece to add background music to my VR and video work. This is essential to the immersive experience of my work. I thought that even when artists create music, it is necessary to have music that ordinary people find comfortable, not

just music that sounds like noise, so I started training by learning pop music theory with the aim of being able to create such music.

In my personal life, I am a geek for the J-POP idol group Nogizaka46. The lyrics by lyricist and producer Yasushi Akimoto, which are sometimes inspirational and sometimes emotional for everyone from adolescent students to mature adults, the melodies created by a great composer, the dances and live performances backed by a lot of practice, and the mental strength and professionalism of the girls. All of these things combine to make this a very attractive group. Besides Nogizaka46, I also like songstress Aimer, anime song singer group fripSide, and contemporary rock star group King Gnu.



Humans Sato | Black Hole Hard Disk | 2024



Beatrice Sartori is a contemporary collage artist of Spanish-Italian-Swiss origin, born in 1968 in Bern. Self-taught, she has developed her own technique of artistic cutting and collage, a discipline that she explores with passion. Author and illustrator of books for young people, writing is also part of her life. Her latest imaginary tale was released last year. She is currently working on a new youth project. Her work has been exhibited in Switzerland and internationally, and published in art magazines. Beatrice Sartori is a professional artist based in Switzerland.

Artist Statement

My inspiration comes spontaneously from the elements that surround me. These elements can be the shape of a scrap of paper, a reflection on a material, a shadow in foliage... I create my works by cutting out, with scissors, every detail of a painting. When all the pieces are cut out, I carefully assemble and glue them. Some areas can contain up to 8 overlapping elements. For pieces that are too small to handle with fingers, I use tweezers. My tools are simple: a pencil, scissors, tweezers, glue, and paper of a variety of textures and a rich range of colors. I like exploring new graphics; I compose the shapes then carefully select the colors. My works are characterized by a personal and unusual production technique. My style is precise, graphic, modern and colorful. I address themes that are close to my heart such as joy, respect, peaceful relationships. My interest in the environment is also reflected in my creations, emphasizing the importance of nature and our relationship with it.





— Interview

Wang Jianhong

Your work often emphasizes the connection between humans and nature. Can you tell us how you develop this theme in your paintings?

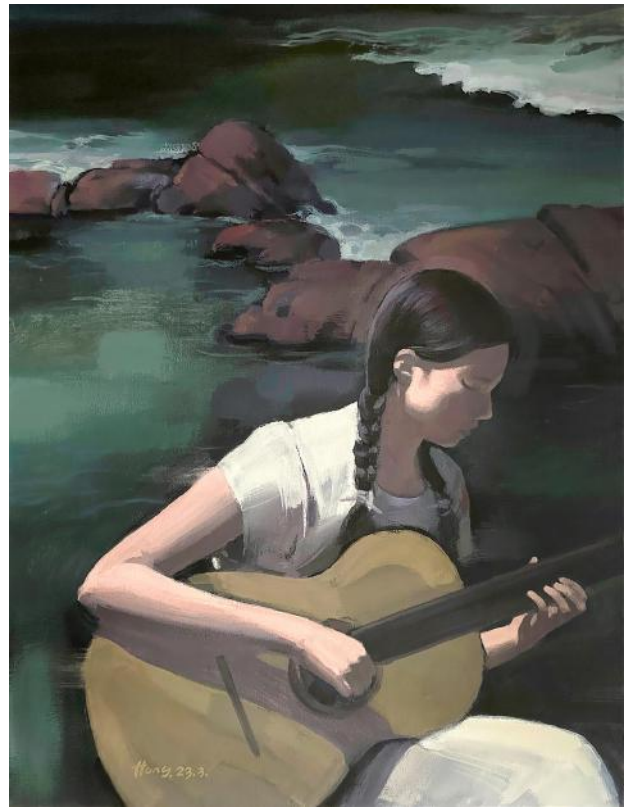
In 2020, the epidemic spread, and people came to the jungle, the mountains, the suburban wilderness to "take refuge in nature," hiking for fitness and finding comfort. People realized that nature is the most worthy of attachment. This also inspired me to pay attention to the relationship between nature and people, and to integrate it into my painting creation. The performance of sacred and eternal life must be the priority of landscape painting, and I aim to show this through personalized language. I focus on the interaction with nature, reflecting the human dependence on and respect for it in our life, culture, and art, leading to introspection and kindness toward nature, binding us with fate to achieve a true sense of harmony with it.

As a member of both the Canadian Artists Association and the Vancouver Chinese Artists Association, how do you navigate the fusion of different cultural influences in your work?

The transition between different contexts and the collision of different cultures is a challenge in itself.



Wang Jianhong | Melting | 2023



Wang Jianhong | Chord | 2023

Painting builds its own territory in these changes, creating an attitude towards life and helping me find myself. It is interesting and meaningful to adopt a more global approach to art style, and finding a highly recognizable new art form is worth exploring. It is not confined by Eastern or Western traditions, allowing art to become more diversified and healthier. Artistic creation should be rooted in my own identity. I am constantly switching between worlds, experiencing the outside world with a patriotic feeling while finding my own artistic resources. I explore new ideas of artistic creation in the context of East and West, aiming to be a builder of different cultures and bridges.

In 2024, you won first place at the Canadian Landscape Exhibition. How do you approach landscape painting, and what challenges do you encounter?

Of course, everyone will have a different understanding of a landscape. What you see may ignite mystery and the desire to explore, while someone else may feel terror or repression from the same picture, as people have different opinions and judgments on the meaning of life. Kenneth Clark, an art historian, said, "Maybe nothing unites people together more than a good sight." I believe that landscapes with "love" in the "scenery" have a more powerful appeal. Most of us, especially those who love art, come to Vancouver to meet

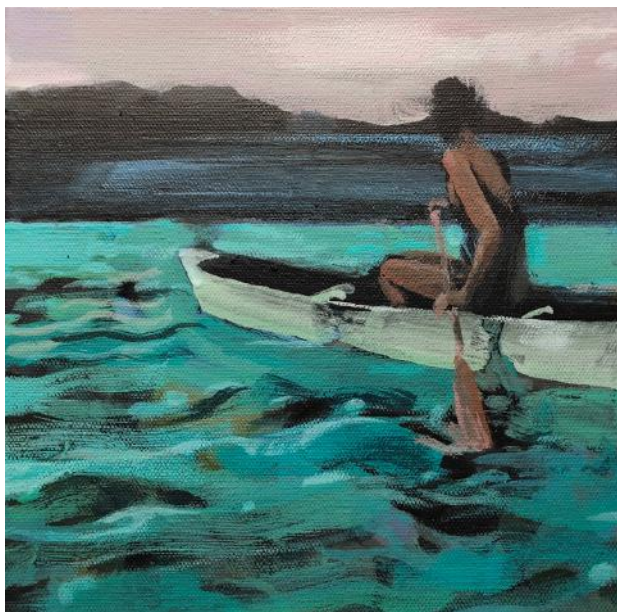
challenges, create, and appreciate beautiful scenery, which aligns with our desires for superior living environments.

Your paintings seem to reflect not only nature's beauty but also deeper philosophical reflections. How do you balance aesthetic beauty with the introspective elements of your work?

Thinking and observing bring us closer to nature and allow us to hear its sounds. Appreciating excellent landscapes helps us find our own way to express the colorful spiritual world. Landscapes have important elements: to show the majesty and sacredness of the forest, necessary material reorganization is required. Through thematic implications, construction, and rendering, including exaggerated color contrasts, a strong and distinct visual impact is created. This leads to spiritual communication and resonance with the audience, while making the work full of musical and poetic rhythm.

What techniques or materials do you find most essential in your creative process, and how have they evolved over time?

Each creation and every piece of work should be viewed as an attempt and exploration. Each picture, every detail, should be readable. Over time, creative ideas will evolve, and innovation becomes necessary. If we only rigidly adhere to history, genres, or techniques, inspiration will be stifled, creative thinking will be limited, and independent art will not flourish. The artist's creation must truly reveal the heart—this is your magic weapon. Combined with experienced judgment, it will lead to wonderful results. Sometimes, seizing this emotional connection is more important than just mastering artistic techniques.



Wang Jianhong | The other shore | 2023



Wang Jianhong | Flutter | 2023

Your work has been described as reflecting "humanistic care." Can you elaborate on what this means to you in the context of your art?

In turbulent times, everyone yearns for art to bring warmth, peace, and harmony, but this mindset is established after enduring storms. The ups and downs of the times, social changes, and different ideologies impact people, touching the soul and influencing creative moods. Therefore, the best state of your work should include individual elements plus the context of the times. Every choice in art, from observation and thinking to performance, combines art with life. Focusing on the mutual influence between humans and nature, humans and society, makes the process of art and life interconnected. Every achievement is a deep experience, and art, like mountain climbing or surfing, reflects the richness of life practice.

You've participated in both domestic and international exhibitions. How does exhibiting your work in different cultural settings affect the way you think about your art?

Avoiding plagiarism and imitation is essential in my work. Without any hint of ingratiation, I focus on the potential value. There's no obvious ethnic tendency or specific cultural attribute, but rather an attempt to absorb and integrate the essence of Eastern and Western cultures. It's consensus-based and international. I don't concern myself with what previous masters have said or set fixed styles for myself. Every artist's life is vivid, and each perspective is unique and valuable. Every moment of life should be a dance, and every artist represents a palette of vivid colors. Each era will flourish in a riot of color.

Artist's statement by **Emilia Gałęcka-Kościańska**

Her art is a journey through the world of emotions, captured on canvas using colorful patches and abstract forms. She works primarily with acrylics on canvas, enriching compositions with watercolor pencils and finishing them with satin varnish, which gives her paintings a subtle shine and depth. Nature is her constant source of inspiration. She translates its forms, colors, and rhythms into the language of abstraction, creating emotional landscapes. Every color combination, every patch of color in her paintings, is an echo of lived experiences and feelings. In her artistic work, she closely examines emotions - both past and present. She analyzes their impact on her life, personal growth, and creative development. The painting process becomes a form of meditation and self-reflection for her. Through applying successive layers of paint, mixing colors, and creating abstract compositions, she tries to understand and process her inner experiences. Her paintings are an invitation for the viewer to embark on their own emotional journey. The abstract form allows for individual interpretation, enabling everyone to find echoes of their own experiences and feelings in them. She believes that art has the power not only to express the artist's emotions but also to evoke them in the viewer, creating a bridge between their inner worlds. Through her art, she strives for a deeper understanding of herself and the world around her. Each painting is not only a record of an emotional state but also a step in the process of personal growth and self-awareness. She hopes that her works inspire others to engage in similar reflection and to discover the richness of their own emotional lives.



Emilia Gałęcka-Kościańska | Joy Sketch | 2024



Emilia Gałeczka-Kościańska | Hope Sketch | 2024

— Interview

Andre Villanueva

You mention that discovering Photoshop during your studies was a game-changer for you. How has it influenced your approach to digital art compared to traditional mediums like drawing on paper?

Growing up, I was always drawing. Mixed media was the focus in my twenties. Then I discovered Photoshop while in school for web design, and I knew I found the ultimate art machine. An infinity of brushes, nigh-unlimited layers, wicked effects. So powerful!

Once I was able to create decent art in Photoshop, I got rid of all my traditional art supplies. Perhaps not the best move, but I did go all in on digital and was able to sharpen those skills.

After doing digital for many years, I began to miss art in the physical realm. Now I'm trying to balance digital and real-world art, staying true to my past and welcoming future possibilities.

How do you balance your role as a team leader in a Fortune 500 company with your personal creative



projects? Do these two areas of your life influence each other?

The yin-yang of my two main creative outlets (corporate design and personal art) keeps me going!

Corporate work is bound by brand guides and stakeholder input. While typically strict, these limits help focus my creative energy.

Personal work is completely free, and it can be the perfect antidote for when the pressures of corporate work start to build up. The anything-goes approach of personal art is truly liberating ... but having an infinite horizon of possibilities can become so daunting that I eventually start to yearn for the focused regimen of corporate work.

And so the push-pull endures, and I'm continually reinvigorated.

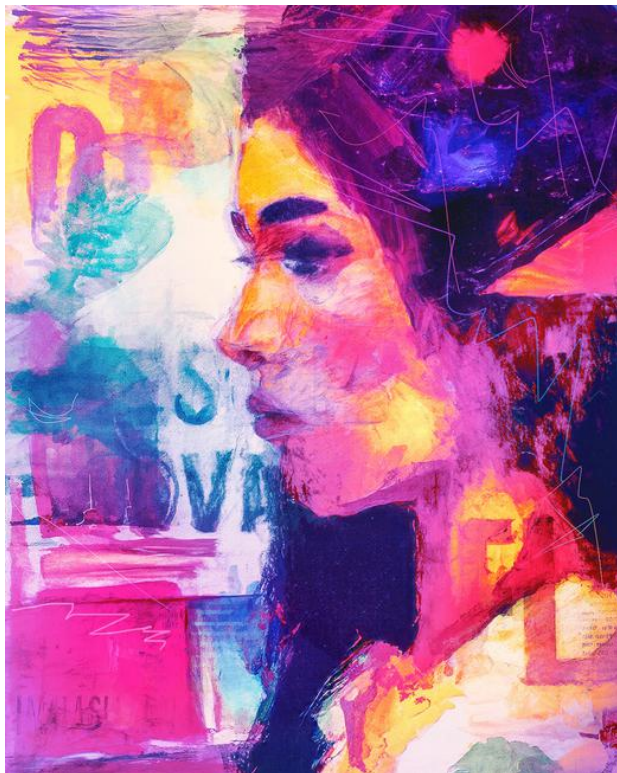
Your works are published in several renowned art publications. How has this exposure affected your career as both an artist and a designer?

I actually think I started getting published a little too early. I needed more experience. But I was given a chance, and boy did I jump on it!

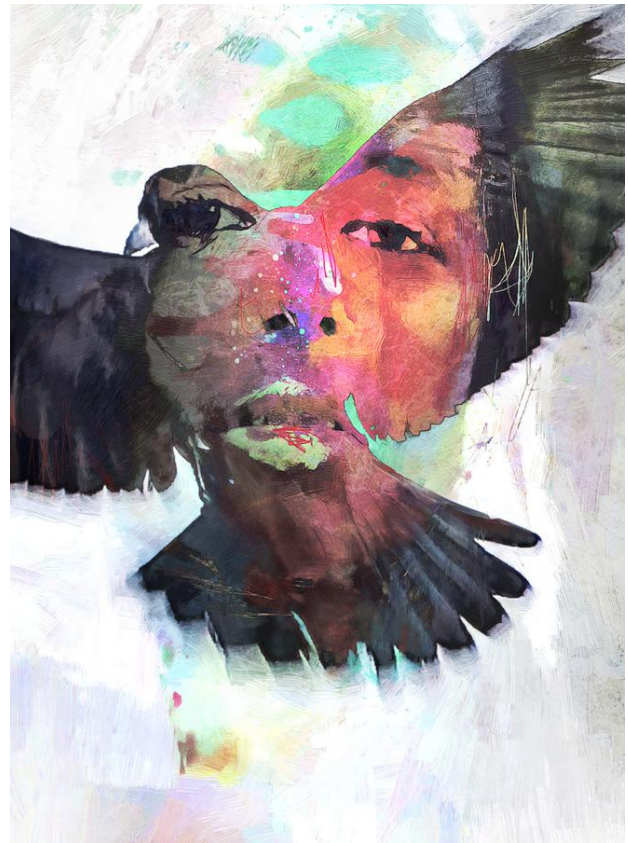
In the first year or so of having regular commissions, I really focused on developing my craft. I was learning as I went, and yes, some of that early work was (in the parlance of today's youth) a little cringe. Having an international audience drove me to push myself.

As a writer and artist, do your two creative outlets intertwine? Do you ever draw inspiration from your writing to create visual works, or vice versa?

I used to write and illustrate my own



Andre Villanueva | Thoughts | 2024



Andre Villanueva | Faith or Flight | 2012

little booklets and stories when I was a kid. I wish I held on to some of those!

Nowadays, my writing and art are strictly platonic. Perhaps one day I can wed the two once again.

Many of your pieces use vibrant color schemes and dynamic textures. How do you approach color theory in your work, and what do you hope to evoke with your palette choices?

I guess I don't have an official color strategy for my personal work. At one point I really tried to work up palettes before I started a piece (or at least early in the process), but it usually just seemed to quash my initial momentum.

Now, when a composition starts to crystallize, I may finally close in on a palette. More often than seems

reasonable, the palette magically reveals itself, especially when I'm in the zone and importing textures, mixing layers, and using blend modes with brushwork. And one of the great things about doing art in Photoshop is the ability to non-destructively adjust color at any point.

As someone with experience in web design and digital art, what do you see as the future of digital art in terms of both creative freedom and technological advancements?

AI is a big topic these days. It seems most programs have AI features, including Photoshop and other creative apps. AI will probably continue to play a bigger and bigger role in art and design.

I do use AI features for my art, but I strive to treat them as simply more tools in my creative arsenal. They can help me jump-start the creative process or joggle

the artboard with a random generative effect, or apply the perfect finishing touches when I'm at an impasse in a composition.

AI features can be very impressive, but I never want to just click a few buttons to produce a new piece.

Lastly, can you share any advice for aspiring digital artists who are trying to find their voice in a rapidly evolving art world?

I got some of my first opportunities in the publishing world by just being myself. I try to follow art trends, sure, but I don't necessarily feel the need to be bound by them.

Perseverance and craft are key. Every rejection made me want to both practice more and pitch my work to another editor.



Andre Villanueva | Flowerchild | 2024

I am a boy.
I am seven years old.
The house is small.
My mom is a teacher.
I collect stars.
I have a brother.
I go to school.
My hair is red.
My mom is a teacher.
I am a boy.



Michel Jegerlehner, a versatile artist, has been passionately involved in the world of visual arts for many years. In 1987, he founded his own company specializing in illustration and photo retouching. In parallel with his work as an illustrator, Michel Jegerlehner launched into the art of tattooing, winning numerous awards at dedicated conventions. His creations on the skin have been featured in specialized magazines and have been published in a book dedicated to tattoos, under the direction of the renowned fantasy artist, Anne Stokes. These various enriching experiences have allowed him to refine his own artistic language. As a contemporary artist, his graphic style, colorful and precise, has earned him participation in collective and solo exhibitions. Michel Jegerlehner continues to explore the multiple facets of his art, constantly pushing the limits of his creativity and sharing his passion with an ever-wider audience.

Artist Statement

My inspiration comes from a multitude of observations, the shapes and structures of a building, the shadows and lights captured on objects, the colors of a stained glass window, a flower, a street, the reflections and contrasts on glass surfaces. I use all of this to create my paintings. I paint mainly with acrylic paints and markers to accentuate the sharpness and contours of my subjects. I like to change styles and try new techniques. I find it fascinating to succeed and give emotion to an image with simplified and precise shapes. I like bright colors and strong contrasts, playing with light and shadow. My works are characterized by a modern and graphic style with bright colors. When I paint, time is suspended.





Nataša Skerk, known artistically as **Pastel de Nata**, is a digital illustrator whose work radiates joy, color, and emotional depth. Born in Trieste, Italy (1995), her journey into art began early, but it was in Barcelona where her creative vision truly flourished. She graduated in Design from the Fakulteta za Dizajn in Ljubljana, Slovenia (2020), and has since thrived as an artist in Barcelona, Spain. For Nataša, art is an exploration of human emotion through the language of color and imagery. She believes that the right combination of colors can transform not only a canvas but also a mood. Her work is distinguished by its vivid use of color, where each hue serves as an emotional catalyst. Blending and altering tones is more than just a technique—it's a true way of sharing emotions and beauty. In addition to digital illustration, Nataša incorporates photography into her artwork. She imagines her pieces as collages of different elements, transforming photographs into new scenarios. This mix of media allows her to create layered narratives, where the real and the fantastical merge. In 2020, she was selected by the Photon Gallery in collaboration with the Centre for Creativity, winning an international creative photography masterclass program "Fotonična šola," placing among the ten artists chosen in Slovenia. Her early work in photography gave her a deep understanding of visual composition, which guides her during the art development. In Barcelona, her role at Listlab, designing architecture book covers, sparked an enduring love for illustrations. She has exhibited her digital artworks as Fine Art in Barcelona, New York, Girona, and Castelldefels. In May 2024, she presented the series "Beyond Dimensions: The Relationship Between Space and Time" at Raima in Barcelona, the largest stationery/art store in Europe. This series reflects her ongoing interest in the intersection of imagination and reality, inviting viewers to question their perception of the world around them, combining tangible elements with dream-like visions. In June 2024, she was selected and awarded at an event on climate change at El Modern in Girona. She presented her work "Study of Climate Change Through the Eyes of the Earth," a profound vision of the current environmental crisis centered on the region of Catalunya. Most recently, in July 2024, Nataša exhibited her collection "Body Colors: A Celebration of Self-Love and Healthy Eating" at One Art Space in Manhattan, USA, curated by PitturiAmo. As a member of the artistic collective "Image," founded in Barcelona in 2024, Nataša is now collaborating with emerging international artists to organize mixed media events that celebrate self-expression.

Artist Statement

For me, making art without having fun is a waste of time. I hope that my art fills the walls of those who love to smile and have fun, and share this mood with others. I want to have this in common with those who purchase my works. To me, colors represent moods, and blending them together fulfills me with joy.



— Interview

Larisa Botnaryuk

Your artwork features a unique blend of textures and materials. Can you explain your creative process and how you choose the materials for each piece?

An idea or a thought comes first: what I want to express through my art. Then an image forms in my mind, and from that image, I determine the format and materials that will best convey my vision.

You've studied various disciplines, including puppet design and interior art. How have these diverse educational experiences shaped your artistic vision?

Studying different disciplines has given me experience working with a variety of materials, which allows me to combine them. I enjoy experimenting with methods, combining techniques and materials, and breaking traditional molds.



Your works often include fantastical and surreal elements. What artists or movements influence your creative approach, and how do you incorporate those influences into your work?

I am inspired by the works, signature styles, and philosophies of artists such as Kay Sage, Giorgio de Chirico, and Salvador Dalí.

Reading about Salvador Dalí, I noticed that he often shocked audiences, who were used to calm landscapes and portraits, with his bold presentations and perspectives. He wanted to show everyday things and topics in a different light. Overall, what attracts me to surrealism is its focus on deep emotional expression through artistic vision and free associations, along with its "reliance" on psychoanalysis in creativity. I'm fascinated by delving into the subconscious.

You are involved in various creative forms like sculpture, graphic art, and tattoo design. How do you balance these different mediums, and how do they complement one another in your overall artistic practice?

By nature, I am someone who is always curious to learn something new. Interestingly, I have both a need for solitude and a need for learning and change. Depending on the idea and inspiration, I easily switch from one activity to another. This



Larisa Botnaryuk | The Search for Harmony | 2024

creative rhythm gives me a lot of energy. Sculpture allows me not only to see but also to feel volume, and I use these skills when applying color to a flat surface. Sometimes, I even incorporate sculpting elements into my paintings. Tattooing is a unique form of art. Sometimes, it involves depicting volume on a living, three-dimensional surface, considering the distortion of lines and shapes when a person moves. The body's curves and hollows require intentional distortions of proportions when designing a sketch. In this regard, anatomy and sculpture are my main assistants. Additionally, choosing pigments is crucial—one must calculate which pigment to use so that, once healed and settled into the skin's lower layers, it produces the desired color and tone, taking the person's skin tone into account. Here, my skills in working with color in painting are invaluable.

You mentioned that your art is inspired by surrealists, nature, and books. Can you share a particular book or natural scene that sparked a recent artwork?

I love the country of Abkhazia—this small patch of land holds all the beauty of nature: the sea, rivers, waterfalls, mountains, caves. In one country, there are eight climate zones, with a corresponding vast variety of vegetation. You can see both a summer rich in fruits along the coast and snowy winter high in the mountains. Such a rich combination of colors, light, and textures in this country's nature can be found in my work through the principles of combining various techniques, materials, and the interplay of light and color, harmonizing different



Larisa Botnaryuk | The Path to the Dream | 2024

forms.

Every book or article I read resonates with my life experiences or the experiences of others that I wish to express through my paintings. My creativity is a way to convey the wisdom and philosophy of life through the visualization of images.

The creation of my latest paintings "The Path to the Dream" and "Dreams and Goals" was inspired by reading three books:

Irina Gibermann's "I Live as I Want"—this book is about building a relationship with oneself that allows you to peek behind the curtains of your own psyche, put everything in place, and start confidently looking to the future.

Anna Babich's "Inner Support"—in this book, the author talks about tools for creating internal support.

Barbara Sher's "It's Not Too Late to Dream"—this book helps anyone turn their vague desires and dreams into concrete results.

So far, I've transferred only two key ideas from these readings onto canvas, but I plan to continue exploring this topic since I haven't said everything yet.

Your work seems to invite viewers to reflect on personal growth and harmony with the world. How do you think art can serve as a tool for personal or societal transformation?

Yes! I firmly believe that through creativity, an artist can guide a thoughtful person toward a certain direction of development. They may agree with my thoughts and continue reflecting, or they may disagree and seek arguments within their own ideas. Either way, the very process of thinking on the highlighted topic is already a path to personal growth and transformation.



Larisa Botnaryuk | The Mask | 2024

Mirka Walter is an emerging visual artist and designer from Cologne, Germany. It was here where Mirka got first in touch with surrealism, as the painter Max Ernst was born in Brühl, a city close to Cologne. But what has been especially influencing Mirka's worldview is art by feminist surrealist such as Remedios Varo and Leonora Carrington. Her favorite materials are watercolor and ink in all its expressions. She also holds a great love for papercut artwork. Mirka tries to depict the human body in motion, the beauty, banality and brutality of the everyday and a fantastic representation of the natural world. Throughout her career she has been participating in various exhibitions and publications.



Mirka Walter | Professore



— Interview

Zenab Khan

Your work "Panopticon" plays with the theme of paranoia and the uncanny. Can you explain how you chose the elements for this piece and how they contribute to this theme?

Funny story about this piece. I had decided to do my contextual thesis on Lovecraftian horror since I was really eager to explore the genre of horror in different types of visual mediums and the ways in which it's conveyed. We were doing collages that day, something I'd never really experimented with before. I was a bit surprised at how enjoyable I found it to be! I think a very interesting element of horror is the way eyes are utilized to unsettle the viewer. The way I used eyes in my piece both on the subject and the surroundings was to exacerbate the idea of 'is the woman being watched or is she watching you?'

How does your South Asian background influence your approach to art, particularly in terms of identity and belonging?

I think I'm someone who has always struggled with identity, since I've spent my teenage to adult years in different places



around the globe. While I don't make it super blatant, I think all my art is a product of my lived experiences. Themes of androgyny, gender, belonging and not fitting in a box always resonate with me and I've always wanted to make people who relate not feel like they're alone in this.

In your artist statement, you mention inspiring creatives from underrepresented groups. How do you feel the industry can better support these communities?

I think the first step is always to acknowledge that there is a problem that needs to be addressed. Only about 11.4% of the creative industry jobs are filled by Black, Asian and other ethnic minorities. Along with cultural and societal biases towards creative careers, when you hardly see yourself being represented in these fields it really does make you feel like maybe you're not welcome here, and that sucks! There are however, many initiatives being launched to support these groups as of late which is great! But once again, there's certainly a bias

in hiring that should be eliminated.

Collage seems to be a key medium for you. What draws you to collage, and how do you decide which materials to use for your mixed media pieces?

I think collages are fun! My only creative outlet used to be drawing, but sometimes you want to channel it in other ways too. I've found working with mixed media to be cathartic, the limitations of it almost works to your advantage because you start thinking of other creative ways to achieve an artistic vision. If there's something I feel I can't achieve on paper by using newspapers and old magazines then I move to digital to enhance it further. The possibilities are endless!

What role does the uncanny play in your work, and how do you ensure that the viewer experiences this emotion when looking at your pieces?

I think having an audience of some kind to gauge your work certainly helps! For my MA thesis I did a lot of research and asked people what they think via questionnaires and even added a bonus question of what they consider to be their own personal favourite piece of horror media. I feel this really helped me figure out a visual style for my work.

Can you talk about the relationship

Zenab Khan | Editorial portrait



Zenab Khan | Panopticon

between traditional mediums (like magazines) and digital elements in your artwork? How do you blend these worlds?

I think traditional mediums give your work a more organic feel, there's textures and lighting effects you can certainly mimic digitally but they truly shine best when it's, say, a photograph of a cutout from a magazine. While digital can be used to enhance this by further allowing you to add, remove and cut any parts of the image to your liking without the fear of destroying it permanently.

What advice would you give to young creatives from underrepresented communities who are looking to break into the art world?

I think my main and biggest advice is to never stop trying. While it's great that art is becoming more accessible to more and more people nowadays, with resources and tutorials being free to access online, it's also gotten much more competitive. It's easy to get discouraged and give up. To that I'd say keep doing what you love and push through. Remember that art is something you can create and learn at any age, at any point in your life.

Kannaki Bharali

I discovered the world of art at a young age, but my time in fashion design school led me to diverse experiences and opportunities with life drawing. For me, drawing figures and portraits have been something that I've always loved. My first book, *Fashion Rendering*, published in 2011, was about rendering techniques. This book provides quick and simple rendering techniques and serves as a guide for making accurate, professional, unique illustrations using locally available color mediums in the market. I hold a Ph.D. degree in Sociology from The Graduate Center, CUNY, New York.

Artist Statement

My figurative work is mostly based on digital drawings, charcoal, chalk pastel, and colored pencils. I embrace a minimalist style and realistic drawings. I explore diverse subjects, human emotions and gestures in my portrait sketches. Negative space, minimalist composition, and a limited color palette are the main elements of my drawings. Infused with subtle color, my daily sketches exude soft contrast and delicate blending. Instead of trying to fill every corner, I strategically leave blank spaces to create a sense of balance and visual interest.



Kannaki Bharali | Demure | 2024



— Interview

Catelyn Perkins

How has growing up in the countryside influenced your artistic vision and subject matter?

In one of my first painting classes, I learned the importance of painting what you know and painting it life-size. My immediate instinct was to paint cows, because they were a familiar part of my daily life before I moved to Savannah. The open pastures, the winding back roads, and even the trees of the farm where I grew up were all significant influences too. Growing up in this environment not only inspired my work but also instilled in me a deep appreciation for the natural world. As a result, my art reflects the beauty of rural landscapes and the connection I was taught to have with the earth we live in.

Your work blends different media, from painting to fibers. How do these two forms of expression complement each other in your practice?

I like to approach the creative process of each in different ways, with each being an outlet to explore new techniques and ideas. Both revolve around color and visual art, but what I love about both is how they engage different parts of my mind.



Painting allows me to enjoy the process of studying an image closely, recreating it, and interpreting its colors and shapes in a more literal way. When it comes to fibers, particularly weaving, I find it allows me to break down complex images into simpler forms, which is something I struggle with in painting or drawing. Weaving gives me a unique way to explore shape and color in a more abstract way, which I find really freeing. On the other hand, working with natural dyes brings another level of connection to my art. I love the idea of using the same plants I might paint pictures of to create dyes, transforming them into colors that I can incorporate into fabric— so it's like painting, but in a different form.

Moving forward, I'm excited to keep pushing myself to explore even more mediums because the possibilities for creating are endless.

In your project statement, you mention exploring nostalgia. Can you share a specific memory or experience that deeply influences your work?

When I think of nostalgia and my art practice, a core childhood memory immediately comes to mind. I was very young when my great-grandmother passed away, and around the same time my aunt did too. I vividly remember sitting in the backseat of my mom's car as we drove down a winding road. The sun was setting, casting the most vibrant shades of pink, purple, and blue across the sky. My mom told my sister and I that our loved ones, who had gone to be with Jesus, were up there painting the sky for us. That image has stayed with me ever since. Even now, whenever I witness a stunning sunrise or sunset, I'm reminded of that moment. Though I know it's not how the sky actually changes colors, I still find comfort in the idea. God is creative, and He made us to be creative, too—so I like to imagine Him painting the sky, reminding us of the beauty and connection between heaven and earth.

How does your connection to nature and the landscapes around Savannah, GA, manifest in your paintings and textile pieces?

I first moved to Savannah to go to college, and was drawn there by its beautiful landscape and the unique feeling of being immersed in nature, even within the city. Nature has always been my inspiration: the vibrant trees, flowers, and plants, each so captivating. I'm constantly trying to capture



Catelyn Perkins | Kudzu Rd. | 2020

that beauty and engage with it through my art. The environment we live in shapes us, and I believe setting plays a crucial role in our stories and who we become. Places hold memories and tell stories, just like art does. After living in Savannah for six years, the city has become an integral part of me. Its many special locations continue to inspire me as I grow, and Savannah will always be a part of who I am and therefore will probably always show up in my art.

You emphasize the importance of personal memories in your art. How do you decide which moments to immortalize in your work?

The previous mentioned class where I was encouraged to paint what I know and to paint on a large scale took place in 2020. At the time, I hadn't been home to our 20-acre property in months, and my parents had just told me they were selling the farm and moving to the Gulf Coast. After that, much of my work became a way of processing the loss of that home, which felt like a part of my

identity. I don't think I consciously choose which moments to try to immortalize; it's more about recreating whatever I'm missing or longing for in the moment, whether through a sketch, a painting, or weaving. Often, I don't even realize what I'm processing while I'm creating, but later, the act of creating helps me understand my emotions more clearly.

As someone who incorporates both fine art and fiber art, do you approach each medium with a different mindset or do they merge seamlessly?

Both painting and weaving serve as creative outlets for me, but I approach them in very different ways. With painting, my goal is to capture an image more literally, focusing on representing it as it is. There's a special feeling that comes from mixing colors and experimenting with different brushes. The experience changes dramatically depending on the scale I'm working on—painting something small feels completely different from tackling an 8-foot-tall canvas, which I'm currently working on. Each size presents its own challenges and rewards, but both are equally exciting in their own way. I love the fine detail of small pieces, while larger works let me fully immerse myself in the physicality of painting. Weaving, on the other hand, offers a meditative experience as I break down colors and textures, enjoying the



Catelyn Perkins | Handwoven Textile 1 | 2024

rhythm of the loom. Each practice brings its own unique joy, and I appreciate them for the different creative processes they allow me to explore.

How has your education at the Savannah College of Art and Design shaped your technique and approach to art?

I definitely wouldn't be where I am today, nor have the same understanding of how to use my tools, without the classes I took at the Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD). In fact, I probably wouldn't have even been introduced to fibers if it weren't for my time at SCAD. I decided to minor in fibers during my sophomore year, just to try it out, and instantly fell in love the moment I started weaving by hand. That same year, I also painted with oils for the first time. My experience at SCAD really pushed me out of my comfort zone, encouraging me to explore new mediums and embrace experimentation, even when it meant facing challenges. I started discovering what I truly enjoyed creating, and I found that the process of making art—even in my homework—helped me work through a lot of personal experiences. I'm incredibly grateful for my time there, especially for the professors who saw my potential, encouraged me, and offered invaluable wisdom for both my life and career.

Catelyn Perkins | Handwoven Textile 5 | 2024



Catelyn Perkins | HCoan Dr. | 2022



Catelyn Perkins | In The Porch Light | 2022



Ma Yanhong

She settled in Beijing, China. She graduated from Communication University of China and worked in the photography department of newspaper. After that, she has been a lecturer in the art department of Adult College for more than 10 years. Her specialties are portrait and street photography, nature photography and still life photography. She believes that photography is the closest art form to human life and is worth observing and recording every moment. In April of 2023, she participated the online exhibition of the ACAA Asian Artists' Union and invited artists' interviews. The published book of her personal photographs album, which is named "Let it be," and an academic paper on photography in the British academic journal [Art and Society]in June of 2023.

Artist Statement

[The fusion of Chinese ink and water] This series of black and white digital photographs is the artist's latest creative photography works. She grew up loving Chinese traditional culture and Chinese painting and calligraphy. The artist chooses the Chinese traditional painting and calligraphy pigment ink and the most familiar water as the creative shooting material, in the water and ink fusion between tangible and intangible, looking for the best visual performance screen. Black and white perfectly interprets the essence and connotation of traditional Chinese culture. The oriental charm is deep and low profile, Chinese cultural heritage and generous, ink and water blend of the moment thousands of forms by the artist freeze-frame the moment just right, this group of photographic works in the visual image has a strong ornamental, artistic and philosophical.

Ma Yanhong | [The fusion of Chinese ink and water] | 2024





— Interview

Yana Gushchina

Could you share what first inspired you to become an interior artist and decorator?

I have always been passionate about art, especially painting. As a child, I often drew and dreamed of becoming an artist. When I grew up, I realized that I enjoyed working with interiors and creating beautiful and functional spaces. This inspired me to become a textile designer and interior artist. I believe that anyone can become inspired and find their path in life if they truly want to. The main thing is to believe in your dreams and not be afraid of challenges.

How do you approach the process of creating a custom painting for a client? What key elements do you consider?

Oh, it's always an interesting yet complex process. To create a custom painting for a client,



I first ask what the client wants from the artwork. Is it simply a desire to have a certain object or landscape depicted, or do they want to imbue the painting with specific meanings? For this, I conduct a small research session with the client or ask them to fill out a brief to understand what techniques they like, what forms and colors suit their future painting, and what energy and message they wish to see on the canvas. Next, we decide on the shape and size of the canvas, and I create a sketch. Finally, I begin working on the painting using the selected techniques and materials, striving to make it individual and unique for the client.

Your work combines modern trends with traditional design elements. How do you achieve a balance between the two in your artworks?

Modern design trends are constantly changing, and as a designer and artist, I keep up with these changes to create relevant and stylish projects. However, traditional design elements, such as symmetry, proportion, and harmony, are also important for creating a balanced composition. To blend modern trends with traditional elements, I use different methods and techniques. For example, I can create a painting

with geometric lines and shapes that reflect modern trends while still maintaining traditional proportions and symmetry, as seen in my painting "Paths of Development."

What is the significance of flowers in your artwork? Why do you think they resonate so strongly in interior spaces?

Flowers are an important element in my paintings, as they symbolize life, beauty, and harmony. Interior paintings featuring flowers set a certain mood in a space. Flowers add elegance and sophistication to interiors, infusing energy and life into the space, and can even create a cozy and comfortable atmosphere.

Do you collaborate closely with interior designers during your projects, or do you prefer a more independent creative process?

I work with interior designers and people who want to surround themselves with beauty and aesthetics. Creating a custom painting for a client is always challenging and interesting, as it requires a personal approach that reflects the uniqueness of each client. Working with interior designers is often easier, as they already know what they want to achieve or come to me with ready references, chosen colors, and even textures.



How do you think your art transforms the atmosphere of a room or space?

Interior paintings can significantly change the atmosphere in a room or space. They add texture, volume, color, and even mood to the environment. Each space has its own request: sometimes it's necessary to add color to create energy, or a painting may serve as an accent to draw attention, creating balance and mood when positioned correctly. Undoubtedly, paintings enhance the perception of a space, beautify it, create atmosphere, and make a room unique.

Where do you find inspiration for your new pieces? Do you have a specific creative routine?

Like any other artist, I find inspiration in various sources. This can be nature, travel, music, literature, or simply everyday life. I understand that inspiration doesn't come on schedule, so I establish a certain creative routine for myself. For example, I create a work plan for each painting, defining deadlines for each stage. Of course, I set aside time for rest and relaxation to create and maintain my creative energy. For instance, during my travels, I take many photographs that can later serve as references for my interior paintings.

Alexandria Howard is a LGBTQ+ pastel-goth artist who does art with a cute and horrific edge. She has a BFA in Illustration at Rocky Mountain College of Art + Design. Alexandria also has an Associates in Graphic Design. She has also been in a couple art contest finals. Alexandria has always loved making art since she was a young child ; and has big dreams of becoming a character artist. She is inspired by media such as anime, manga, comics, fashion dolls, and everything in between! Alexandria loves cute girly things ; as well as more gothic and horror things. Ultimately she hopes to make people smile.

Project Statement

For this character artwork I wanted to design a pastel-goth zombie girl. I wanted the artwork to actually be positive ; since it's about the undying true self. The zombie girl is being true to herself no matter what people say. Her self doubts and other people's negative comments are dead. Her soul will never die hence " My Spirit will Never Die ". I first sketched out the character, then did the line art in Adobe Illustrator. I then did the digital painting in Adobe Photoshop. I had so much fun designing her look! I want her hair and outfit for myself.

Alexandria Howard
My Spirit will Never Die
2024



RIP

Insecurities
Doubts
Anxieties

Your Opinion
of Me

MY SPIRIT WILL NEVER DIE

I have a hard time enduring winter and feel a physical need for warmth – through creativity, through color. My favorite color is yellow. I see the world through yellow-tinted glasses. Exotic fruits, exotic characters, exotic colors. That's what my art is about. For a long time, I worked in theater workshops, creating different textures, working with various materials and forms. Everything in the world has a surface. The skin that wraps around the essence. My art is a kind of close-up, a view under a microscope. When I paint, I explore the world around me and capture life on canvas. Painting for me is an attempt to stop time. It's a process of searching and reflection. I want to speak simply, beautifully, and vividly. I always choose the shortest path, the simplest means, to tell a story. My art is my garden, and I want to introduce you to its inhabitants.

— Stepan Lysenko

Stepan Lysenko | Catch the Balance | 2023





— Interview

Théo Gerbert

Can you tell us more about your journey from studying art in Nîmes and Brussels to focusing on illustration and linocut techniques?

I first studied in an art and design class based in Nîmes, where I started to take an interest in making video and installation. After two years, I decided to follow a more artistic school, the ERG (School of Graphic Research) in Brussels. I was in a video class, but I had the opportunity to work with various mediums, which led me to take a break from my studies to focus on learning new technical skills like linocut. I am eager to learn different practices to explore creation in another way.

I also had more time to work on personal projects, such as the tarot card game or writing movies that I am still working on.

Your work is deeply inspired by nightmares and death. How did these themes become central to your artistic practice?

When I was a child, I was terrified of dying and afraid of everything linked to death. I had so



Théo Gerbert | Zig et Zag in Salem | 2024

many nightmares about it that I was scared to sleep. As I grew up, I began to turn this fear into something inspiring in my work. It became a way to express these fears, and now my artworks feel like a release. It's a way to try to understand death, and approach it with poetry.

I also draw inspiration from my dreams. I love working on images that seem to come from dreams, as I believe the dream-making process is full of inspiration.

You mention "ecomysticism" in your statement. Could you explain how this concept influences your work and how you connect it to insects and their metamorphosis?

What I call ecomysticism is inspired by Bruno Latour's reinterpretation of Kafka's *Metamorphosis*, where he explains that humans should become insect-humans. I like to think about ecology, imagining a world of insectoid creatures in harmony with nature. I try to create works that feel like they come from a dream, populated with insects and nature's spirits. I explore the process of insects shedding their skins and humans transforming into insects as an extension of nature's rebirth. Transformation is important in my work, and I express it through



Théo Gerbert | Tarot écomystique | 2024

movement and performances, as if moments of dance represent stages of transformation or liberation.

What is the significance of Christian iconography in your work, especially when combined with insectoid figures?

I grew up in a Christian family, so this imagery surrounded me in childhood. It intrigued me, and art helped me reclaim it. Nowadays, I like using saints' imagery to emphasize the idea of consecration: whether through the transformation of a character in my narrative works or through the lighting of fears. I am particularly interested in dark, viscous things we hide deep inside, and I highlight them through rituals of consecration. These rituals are important in my work, representing a passage from the dread, symbolized by insects, to its illumination through Christian imagery.



Théo Gerbert | Le joueur de flute | 2024

How do you approach the subject of death in your art, and what do you hope to communicate to your audience through these explorations?



Théo Gerbert | Anatman | 2022



Théo Gerbert | Au bord de l'eau | 2023

Death is omnipresent in my work, even in pieces that don't directly address it. It's always part of my thoughts and connected somehow.

I try to look deeper into it, using my work to create something poetic from what usually scares me. I want to present death in a softer, more poetic way, helping others to see it differently.

I also like to explore the connection between death and rebirth, often using metaphoric death in my works to imagine the transformations that follow, which can make real death feel less frightening.

Can you describe the process behind creating your tarot deck and how it reflects your concept of ecomysticism?

I created my tarot card game by imagining a graphic universe filled with insectoid figures, inspired by the imagery of the Marseille Tarot and Christian figures of saints and martyrs. The cards transform into insect-icons, like forest spirit guides.

The metamorphosis of insects fits well with the magical, symbolic nature of the tarot and its themes of transformation. I made the illustrations, engraved them in linocut, and printed a series. I also drew a parallel between the linocut lines and tree veins, so my drawings feel like trees' engravings that came to life, deepening their connection with nature and ecomysticism.

What advice would you give to other artists exploring themes of nature, death, and transformation in their work?

The most important thing in creation is to stay open to everything around you, as anything can be a source of inspiration.

Natalia Okoń-Rudnicka (NatalyaO.), artist born in 1980 in Wrocław (Poland). I graduated with honors from the State Secondary School of Fine Arts in Wrocław. I started studies at the Wrocław Academy of Fine Arts, at the Faculty of Industrial Design. I graduated in 2005 with a diploma in the visual communication studio and a painting annex. Since then, I have been involved in painting, illustration, applied and artistic graphics. I'm teaching graphic design in the high school I graduated from. I am passionate about art history, literature, and above all, painting, illustration and design. I try to never stop developing creatively. I had many individual and group exhibitions.

Natalia Okoń-Rudnicka | The Box | 2020





My art is a way to feel my inner freedom. To allow myself to be completely open, sincere. To express thoughts in a language unspoiled by strange external rules. In dialogue with my inner self, looking into the eyes of my characters, a sense of involvement in the mystery arises. One way or another, all my works reflect my attitude toward the world around me, and my search for a place in it.

— Anatoliy Yakushin



Anatoliy Yakushin | The Curtain | 2023



А. С. Сушин

— Interview

Monique D Proulx

Your artistic journey is quite unique, merging both music and painting. How do these two creative outlets influence each other in your work?

These two creative outlets are two parallel ways of expressing what I feel and who I am! And they are so similar in many ways... A lot of musical terms refer to the visual world: tones, harmonies, lines, ascending or descending. In fact, a melody is a line, a succession of notes. That's the equivalent of the subject in a painting. As for rhythm: it's movement and it creates texture, like a gesture on the keyboard of a piano determines the sound quality. Color also shares the table with music! Color is vibration, just like sounds. It is not surprising that when painters began to focus on color, painting quickly became abstract, as music inherently is. Even the color wheel, that we use to learn the law of colors, is almost identical to the cycle of fifths, which is the basis of harmony in tonal language. All this is integrated within me. I see colors as sounds that react to each other, with hardness or softness, consonance or dissonance... There are scales in music and scales in color!

We can also listen to sounds for themselves, paying attention to their material quality and



ignoring the melody, just as when we contemplate the textures of a canvas without worrying about the subject. I am nourished by this interplay of realities and the resulting emotions. And I love so much these two types of experience, these two modes of expression, that I can't do without either! Often, people look at my paintings and find them musical. And conversely, how many times have I been told that my music evokes images? Probably that unconsciously, I use music to paint and my visual imagination to compose! ;-)

You mentioned that you often integrate old musical scores into your paintings. Can you share more about the process and how you choose which scores to incorporate?

I come from a family of musicians and I inherited a collection of old scores that belonged to my grandfather, my aunts, my

mother... The sheets are yellowed, and they are often pieces I don't want to play, but for which I love the writing, the paper, the alignment of the notes and even the titles or nuance marks. These are cultural and visual artifacts that create for me a special connection with the work in progress and my personal history. So, when I start a painting, I often glue samples of these scores onto the canvas, choosing them somewhat at random, depending on the shapes I want to obtain. I tear them to shreds, trying to leave aside their musical meaning and retain only their graphic aspect. I cover them with transparent medium, so that the paper doesn't stain and remains visible as long as possible. And then I paint without worrying too much about them. Sometimes they disappear under the various layers of paint, sometimes they remain and I integrate them into the composition, and sometimes I place them specifically to obtain a whitish or greyish stain. This presence of music in my paintings makes me smile, like a funny secret. It brings me joy, a sense of coherence between my work and my life.

The pandemic inspired many artists to explore new avenues. How did the online courses you took during this time impact your artistic style and approach?



Like many others, I took online courses during the confinements. And the most memorable was with the Californian painter Nicolas Wilton, whose work and approach I really like. It transformed me. Firstly, his teaching gave me an extraordinary amount of knowledge about composition, values, textures, processes and product-related techniques. Secondly, I've gained freedom, as his approach advocates first and foremost having fun, identifying the areas you prefer, reiterating them, and thus finding your own unique and singular voice. It's a wonderful way to get to know yourself. I've also come to realize that a painting acquires depth when you take risks, for example by completely covering certain parts of the canvas — sometimes even the ones you like best. It's a question of not getting too quickly attached to what we do, in order to go beyond the limits we are inclined to give ourselves, and to bring life into the work. During this playing stage, I scratch, sand, add, remove, stick, use diverse objects to leave traces on the support. Often, this reveals images that I would never have created if I had decided everything in advance. Now, when I start a painting, I have no idea where things are going to go. It's almost a work of the unconscious! I choose some colors that I like, I make spots and blobs, then react to these by establishing

contrasts of shapes, textures and hues. Little by little, something emerges from this operation focused on the pure pleasure of covering a surface and watching it transform, as children do. It then remains to carry out a sort of cleaning up the mess, or “curate” it, removing what's excess, adding what's missing and highlighting the parts that give meaning to the composition. In this stage, I search to express the spirit of synthesis that characterizes me, while retaining spontaneity. It's a constant dance between reason and intuition.

In this way, I've produced several paintings that astonished me. I don't even know how I made them! But I know that while working, a song would pop into my head. The titles testify to this, and I like the idea of combining a pictorial work with a musical one. The painting becomes a means of materializing the poetry that inhabits me, with all those tunes running through my mind, and all these images and colors that fill my head. The adventure is sometimes scary, but always exciting. It takes me on paths full of surprises where I want to move forward, in order to create a work that is increasingly personal, increasingly free, and — above all — increasingly fun!

Your paintings are described as not imitating nature, but rather reproducing the feeling it gives you. Can you elaborate on how you translate these feelings into



your visual art?

What drives me to paint is the wonder I feel in front of nature and life, but I do not seek to reproduce reality. I have neither the taste nor the means. I seek rather to show the structure of forms, the brilliance of colors and the magic of light. And thus manage to offer others my own glasses. The result is a style that is both schematic and nuanced. I want you to see the structure of a subject at a glance, but upon closer inspection you discover a world of textures and details. I am on the border between figurative art and abstraction. Sometimes I evoke into my paintings a very small human presence to give the measure of things. It can be a boat, a roof, a silhouette or...a musical sheet!

Living in an old henhouse that serves as a showcase for your creations is quite poetic. How does your living environment influence your creative process?

I bought this building at a lower cost because the place didn't look like much, and there was a lot to do. But it allowed me to need less money to live. I was finally able to devote myself to my personal projects, as I had dreamed of. When I arrived, I set about writing a book on the importance of music in human development. I'd had this project in mind for several years. And it's like a pregnancy, I had to give birth! The book was published in 2015 in Montreal, Quebec, and it is called “Why Music?” Since my house is a sort of old barn, I turned it into a loft, where all the functions are combined: living room, dining room, kitchen, office and piano. As for my workshop, I've installed it in a part of the building that was once used as a grain store! I can leave my brushes and canvases lying around. The walls, here, have seen thousands of chickens lay thousands of eggs, and I have the feeling that something has remained: a mission, a vocation. This is a

place for creation. An egg is a simple little thing, but beautiful, perfect, and full of promises. It's a project in itself. So, I think that I'm living in a place made to lay spiritual eggs: paintings, music, books. In the early years, I worked hard to create a garden where there was only asphalt! It was like sculpting a living place. I planted hundreds of trees, shrubs and flowers. I've set up little nooks all over the grounds, where I go depending on the season, the sunshine and the time of day. What's more, this exceptional building sits on the banks of a majestic river where I have my rowboat and whose view enchants me. I want to paint all that! It's a magical place, made for creating magical pieces. I try to pay tribute to it by using it wisely!

You seek to unite poetry and reason, structure and fantasy in your work. How do you balance these elements while maintaining your artistic voice?

I think it's precisely these oppositions that underpin my artistic voice. It's the constant search for a balance between reason and feeling, instinct and mind, spirit and matter, dream and reality. I believe that these multiple back-and-forth movements, sometimes harrowing and agonizing, give rise to my style, which has something both childish and mature, joyful and sad, down-to-earth and dreamy! I start with the concrete by getting my hands dirty, and then I bring in my critical thinking.

I do the same with music. I improvise freely on the piano until I notice certain musical ideas that come back and stick in my head. Then it's time to pick up a pencil and write down these ideas. It's also time for logic, as in a chess game: you move a piece, or a note, and that leads to another move,



another note, and a new dynamic. These twists and turns, and all the choices I make as I go along develop my language.

What do you hope viewers take away from your paintings, especially those that include musical elements?

The first person I want to touch is myself. I want my painting to bring me a vision of the world where order, beauty and joy exist. It's also what I want people to see. I would like them to feel a hidden story, with a whimsical and dreamlike atmosphere. To guess the mysterious link that is woven between different modes of expression, different languages, different levels of reality, different aspects of me and themselves. The roof of a house made of sheet music is first and foremost a texture and a design, but it can also be a sign, an allusion to what's going on inside this house, where the piano is being played, perhaps? A piece of sheet music next to a bird could mean that the bird is singing... The door is open to the imagination, even if my primary intention is more formal than anything else. Above all, I love the graphics of these scores, but you can't help seeing symbols in them too. And I assume all these dimensions linked to my little yellowed pieces of paper! What I'd like viewers to take away from my paintings? A poetic, moving and sparkling atmosphere...



Delia Bocioaca | Fever Dream | 2024

My name is **Delia Bocioaca**, I am 24 years old and I paint out of passion. Painting offers me the possibility to express emotions and experiences and I am always following my intuition in my works. In my art, I also like to explore different surrealistic themes. I sometimes make use of different textures because I think it brings more dynamic to the art works.

Delia Bocioaca | Leopard | 2024



— Interview

Rachael Bertholino

Your art combines elements from various media, including clay, glass, dye, watercolor, and ink. How do you choose which medium to work with for each project?

In a way I think of all my work as one continuous project flowing through me. I am just beginning to scratch the surface of materials I will use to make. I enjoy exploring and seeing what comes out in each, or a mix of them. Each material has its own voice that bring something special and unique. In the beginning I started with the most accessible in art school: paint and clay, and have since continued following my curiosity into inks and dyes for painting, and glass as another challenging material. I want to start combining glass and clay.

You describe your process as intuitive and spontaneous. Could you walk us through your creative process when working on a new piece?

When working with canvas painting I work on the floor. I will often prepare the canvas by cutting it to the appropriate size and then rubbing a solution over the entirety of it until soaked. I then begin mixing dyes until I have reached several desired colors. I spill colors on to the canvas partially at random unless I already have an exact plan for what I want to paint. Sometimes I move the color with my fingers or brushes, or at times I let the canvas dry and come back and see if what is standing out to me has changed. The paintings are like my own sort of ink blot tests. I often turn the canvases in different directions to see what calls out to me, and at times I'll draw and add other mediums like raw pigment, tempera sticks, water soluble pencils or waxes, until I see forms emerging. I keep playing with the piece until I am satisfied and sometimes I get stuck and need to set it aside for another time and start something else.

How does your background in psychology and clinical social work influence the themes and subjects of your artwork?



Rachael Bertholino | She | 2024

I like to think of my art as taking note of the full spectrum of life. - Not just the life of one person, but of the lives of many. In my work you will see splashes of color, androgynous faces, beings and creatures, flora and fauna. My experience is that of a woman in this lifetime which I understand is starkly different from that of a man, but I know my experience in some ways is not unique. Just one life one can experience an incredible range of experiences. I read that almost half of Americans have experienced some kind of trauma. How fortunate we are to live in a time when people, who have suffered from unthinkable life crippling atrocities, can get the kind of help they need to put their lives back on a healthy track. This phenomena is relatively new in the history of humanity. In a way I'm trying to capture multiple emotional experiences, and these experiences also extend beyond myself and the physical form, and more specifically that of male, female, this, or that, here or there.

The female form appears frequently in your artwork. What draws you to explore this subject, and what message do you hope to convey through it?

The female form is very much a powerful experience for me in this lifetime. My body has had a very broad range of experiences. It was both empowered and objectified in the fashion industry while I worked as a fashion model for 12 years from the age of 14 until 26. I was also objectified as a younger child having endured childhood sexual abuse by adult family members. I have also had the privilege of giving birth to my daughter naturally without any drugs. I think I have experienced acutely what it means to the world that I am a female. My work absolutely confronts these experiences on a broad range and I hope to convey a voice of resilience, intelligence, and

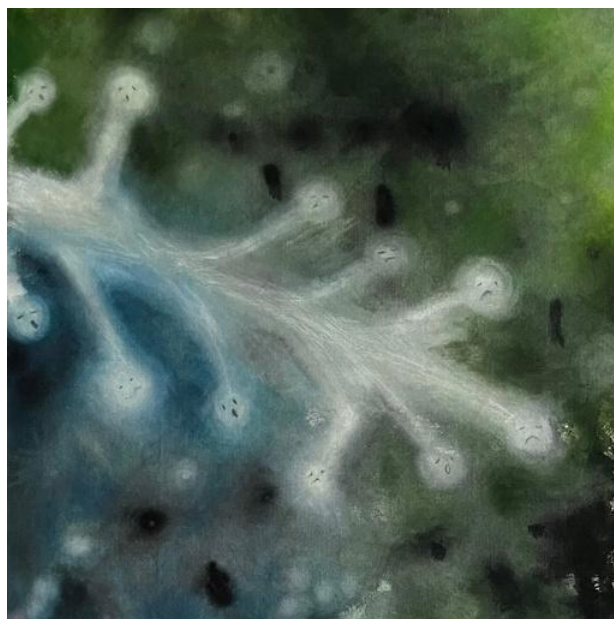
empowerment over and through it all.

How do your experiences working in mental health shape the emotional depth and narratives within your art?

This is how the narrative goes beyond my own. Stories directly from others' experiences, and again through me, inform all of the work. Traumatic experiences by nature are isolating and can bring about feelings of shame and a desire to hide. In the work I do with others, whether they know it or not (usually they don't), I feel connected and less shame about what has happened to me, and research supports that when patients share their experiences they feel the same. As we hope, traumatic events often happen in smaller pieces of time when considering the overall length of an entire lifetime. With healing it is possible to also have much joy and a returning to the full spectrum of what life has to offer. I hope to leave none of this out of my artwork.

You mention the interplay of opposing forces like pain and pleasure, sanity vs insanity, and terrestrial vs extraterrestrial in your work. Can you share an example of how these themes manifest in one of your pieces?

Besides what is happening internally there is also what is being experienced externally. Another big component of my work is the great mystery of why we're all here and what it all means. Consciousness, unexplained phenomena, myth, religion, and esotericism are a big point of curiosity and exploration for me. I have read that physicists disagree on the



Rachael Bertholino
Sprout
2024

number of dimensions in our universe. String theory suggests there are 10 dimensions. People often think of unexplained phenomena as potentially extraterrestrial, but what if it's all here, existing simultaneously, beyond our limited three dimensional perception? I often wonder what is the true definition of what or who is here and not here with us. Scientists also describe how what we view to be solid mass is actually not solid. Energy can greatly influence other energy whether within close proximity or physically far apart. While looking at my work you may notice I do not often depict forms as solid and distinct. I tend to blur the edges of subjects and objects, if you can make them out at all, suggesting things do not begin or end where it seems. Also regarding the facial expressions, are they ecstatic or anguished? All of our past experiences lead us to the understanding we have of the present. So much is here happening at the same time and humans tend to believe we are separate from one other, but are we really?

What advice would you give to emerging artists who are balancing multiple passions, like art and mental health work?

Find the will and the time to make. No matter what you do, just make. If the calling nags at you and never stops nagging, the world needs your work. We need your art. Have faith in your journey through your work. You won't feel complete inside until you make your art, so just do it! The best book I ever read was *The War of Art* by Steven Pressfield. I highly recommend it to anyone who has the desire to be a creative professional. There are many, many other books I love about creating, but that's a good place to start.



Rachael Bertholino | Whispers | 2024

Banafshe Ahmadzadeh was born in 1971 in Abadan, Iran. She started her artistic activity in 1999 in the field of painting and illustration, and after that she focused on painting and producing volumetric works. Ahmadzadeh's artworks have been exhibited in several group exhibitions and a solo exhibition. She has also participated in the London Art Fair and an exhibition in Dubai. Ahmadzadeh has been the curator of various exhibitions and workshops, including the workshop of the Italian Embassy in Iran, and has collaborated with the municipality organization for many years. She also has a history of cooperation with a famous Italian publisher in her artistic career. Among other prominent activities of Ahmadzadeh's art is her membership in the Board of Directors of the Association of Illustrators for three years. Banafshe Ahmadzadeh's concern is focused on Iranian architecture and forms, which can be seen in her artworks. She uses metal material to produce her artworks. The use of Iranian motifs and native architectural elements are among the characteristics of her artworks. Decay and destruction in the urban landscapes is her main concern, which she expresses by recreating familiar forms and sections of Iranian architecture. "Passing" is the title of his artwork that participates in this exhibition.





— Interview

Bella Wilhm

Your connection to the ocean seems very profound. Can you tell us more about how surfing and the ocean influence your creative process?

I think for a lot of people surfing and time immersed in the ocean is a form of escapism, a way of being in a flow state and connecting ourselves with nature and I feel this speaks volumes about my creative process also. I try all different creative techniques, I'm not afraid to experiment, and yet I find myself always drawn back to vibrant blues, messy textures and fluid abstract pieces. I think this is because it's where I find peace. Whether surfing, swimming or painting, being present and immersing myself fully into my moment, with no expectation of the outcome other than enjoying the process allows beautiful things to happen.

The piece "Breathe Through Grief" is deeply personal. How did creating it help you process your emotions related to grief?



Bella Wilhm | Breathe Through Grief



That's the thing about grief, it is so very personal and we all respond differently but yet it's something we are all connected by. I'm only in my 30's and have experienced a huge amount of grief in all forms, from the loss of meaningful relationships to multiple close bereavements. As a sensitive and emotional person this has had a profound impact on my life and creativity has always been there as a constant, a comfort. The hardest periods of my life have seen me reconnect and strengthen my bond with creative practices. I think the ability to pour emotions into a canvas has so many benefits in helping understand feelings. This piece has really helped me through another very difficult time. When I could barely face the world, painting it gave me hope. When I felt anger, splashing colour around was a release. When I felt calm the affirmation of words and brighter colours filled me with joy.

You mentioned that the ocean has 'saved your life many times.' Could you share a particular moment or story that deeply impacted your art?

I wouldn't say it's one particular story (I do have plenty) but I owe so much of my wellbeing to the ocean, as mentioned my life has not been easy but sitting by the ocean, immersing myself in its cold water (particularly here in the UK!) it refreshes me. It provides comfort when I feel lonely for it is always there, and sometimes just like us, it is angry and full of energy and other times it's calm and inviting. I think it's a very

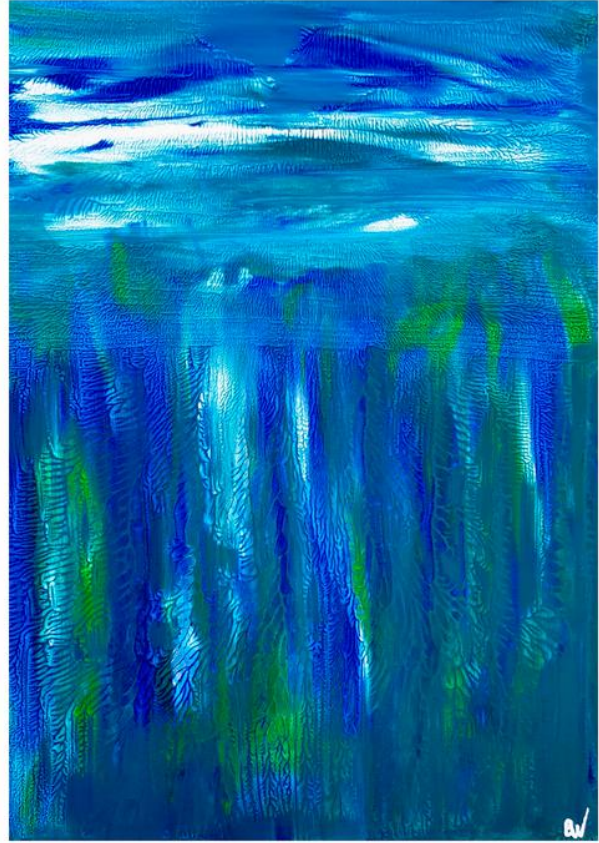
visual reminder for me of how complex nature is and how much we can be affected by external factors for both better and worse. I tend to always sketch my initial ideas when by water and translate them into more meaningful pieces when I'm ready.

The five stages of grief are a powerful theme in this work. How did you decide to represent each stage within the composition?

I love this question because people who have seen the work all have different interpretations of how these are represented! For me though, it's important that the "five stages" overlap as they are never a linear journey. Denial for me is represented by the moon, a powerful impacter of tides. It got me thinking about how when in denial we do not stop to notice what phase we are in, we just continue day after day. Anger represented by the stormy waves and slashes of lines through the canvas. Bargaining, stepping out of the shadows and finding the light through pain. Depression, the blues, blacks and heavy rain like drops, the weight of emotion on your shoulders. Acceptance, for me this was the feminine shape being reborn out of the water towards the sun, brighter days are coming. I'm intrigued to know what readers interpretations were though!

Mixed media allows for a wide range of textures and layers. What materials did you use for this piece, and how do they reflect the emotional depth of the work?

This piece has so many layers, there's old canvas work cut up and glued on, layers of acrylic paint everywhere, watercolour and pastel features, cuttings from magazines and newspapers and paint was even applied with my hands, smearing colour around the canvas. Bearing in mind this piece is 120cms x 100cms it was a huge piece to



Kelp Forest by Bella Wilhm

work on. I guess all of this reflects the messy chaos of grief, no plan, just step by step following your intuition until you make it through.

How do you feel that working without a plan influences your art? Do you find that this process is more freeing or more challenging?

I think I find it very freeing, and actually that is creativity for me. I also do a lot of digital illustration and that's more precise and planned so painting for me really allows me to go a bit rogue. I guess that speaks more about my character. Just messy, rogue but raw and mostly beautiful!

You talk about finding beauty in grief. How do you hope viewers interpret the message of beauty amidst pain when they see your work?

I mean I'd love to know how people interpret this piece and grief in general, maybe that's a follow up piece! But mostly I think art gives us the power to connect with each other and be kind. I hope mostly that if this piece does resonate with viewers, that if in the depths of grief they find comfort in knowing they're not alone, it's okay for it to feel messy and consuming. On the contrary, if they've come through a journey of grief, they can look and go "Wow I made it through and that's something really beautiful that I can be proud of".

Submerged by Bella Wilhm



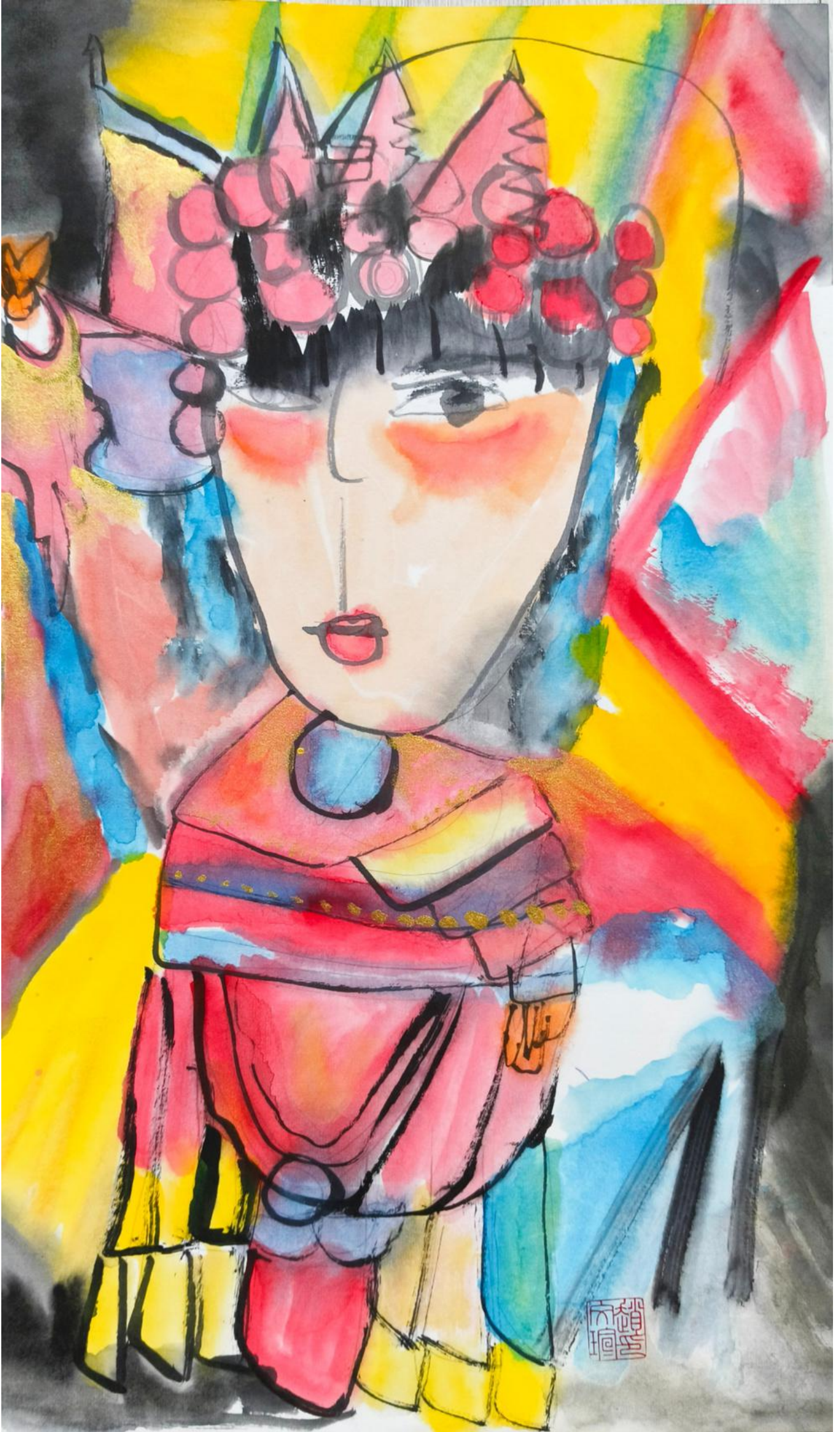
Zhao Wenxuan, female, 23 Years old, currently resides in Yantai, Shandong, China. Her works have been selected and won the Silver Award in the Youth Group of the 2023 Andersen (International) Art Award, as well as the Excellence Award in the "Self Construction" - 2023 Contemporary Chinese Art Exhibition. She has also been selected and won the "Most Popular Artist" award in the online exhibition of the "Blooming Life" Global Art Competition, and the Silver Award in the Youth Group of the 2023 Picasso International Youth Painting Competition.

Artist Statement

I strive to seek to paint with my genuine feelings in creation, using innocent and simple color lines to express the truth, goodness, and beauty of life.



Zhao Wenxuan | Dramatic Characters 6 | 2024



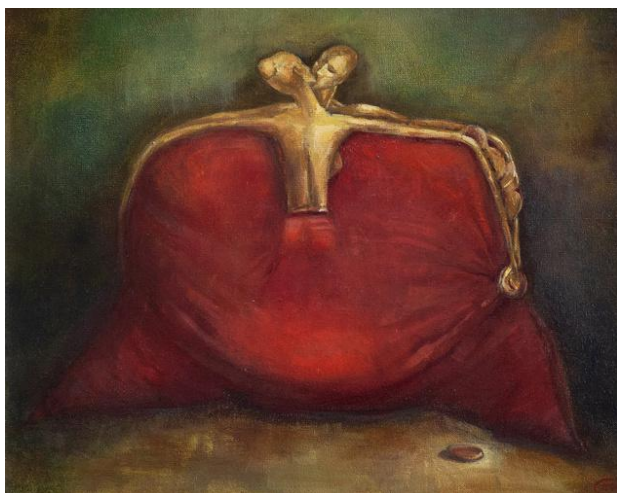
— Interview

Tatiana Soboleva

Could you tell us about the process behind combining different materials such as oil paints, acrylic, metallic dust, wood, and charcoal in your work? How do these elements help convey the themes of your art?

I call this “Mixed Techniques.” By using this method, I am free from restrictions—it's a creative field where experimentation is possible. I'm inspired by shapes, color, and geometry. I enjoy the process of turning the intangible into the tangible. Wood, charcoal, or other materials express my state of mind. With these materials, I can bring my ideas to life on canvas and share my understanding of the world.

Your art explores the connection between consciousness and the subconscious, as well as the boundary between dreams and reality. Can you



share how these themes have developed in your work over time?

Dreams and reality, paradoxical combinations of forms and factors, mysteries and puzzles in drawings—all of this merges in surrealism. Surrealism itself is unique; it contains everything that one cannot see in reality, only in the subconscious. It can all be depicted on canvas. Something bold, unusual, and unique—everything that excites and inspires me. I began my journey with realism, then moved on to surrealism and abstraction. The deeper I delved into these styles, the further I moved away from realism. After completing a series of works in these styles, I realized they were close to me.

How do you approach the philosophical reflections on human nature in your pieces? Are there any specific thinkers or philosophies that inspire your work?

I'm inspired by images from nature; I like turning simple things into complex narratives. I enjoy creating compositions that make the viewer think. Overall, I apply unusual images and illusions. My inspiration is the German artist Anselm Kiefer. I find him brilliant. I'm also interested in Wassily Kandinsky's theory of color. I admire the works of surrealist masters Salvador Dalí

and René Magritte.

Surrealism and abstraction often leave room for personal interpretation. Do you have a particular message or emotion you hope viewers take away from your paintings, or do you prefer to leave your work open-ended?

My works are always infused with metaphorical meaning and mysteries. My goal is to inspire you to journey into a world of imagination, where reality and surrealism intertwine. My themes are important to me and to you, as they allow each person to find their own unique meaning and inspiration in the art.

Could you share how your personal experiences influence your exploration of the inner world and subconscious themes in your art?

I tell a story, filtering it through my inner world, and try to convey the meaning that lies within each of my works. I believe everyone can express themselves, and I'm glad that I am able to do so.



How do you decide on the balance between abstract elements and recognizable forms in your compositions? Is there a particular formula you follow, or is it more intuitive?

In my art, abstract elements only complement the main composition. I don't consciously track the balance. Yes, it's more of an intuitive process. Associations arise involuntarily.

Could you describe a particular painting of yours that holds a special significance to you and why?

The diptych "Ballerina & Chimney Sweep" was inspired by the lines of a poem by the poet Vadim Lavrinenko. The words touched my soul, and the images came to me immediately. This turmoil of feelings gave me no peace. I love St. Petersburg. I was painting Love. Love and mystery, sadness and admiration.

Susan Pollet has been creating arts and crafts since she was a small child. She has studied at the Art Students League of New York, Cooper Union and the 92nd Street Y, all in New York City. While creating art, she was also a public interest lawyer for forty years, primarily in family court, a former President and officer of women's bar associations, and, to this date, an advocate for the rights of women, children and families. Her artwork reflects her interests in domestic themes. Susan uses various forms of media as art expression, including collage, paints, and drawing instruments of all sorts and on all surfaces. She is also a published author of two books of poetry, seven adult fiction books and three children's books. She created the covers for the adult books, and the illustrations and covers for the children's books.

Artist Statement

Drawing inspiration from a combination of her interest in color, composition, dreams, and personal emotions, Susan Pollet's work is a reflection of her search for beauty and meaning. Through the use of pastels, ink, collage or acrylics, she strives to communicate with viewers in a positive and optimistic way. Susan is a New York City-based artist whose eclectic style arises out of a desire to explore a diversity of vehicles. Drawn to haunting landscapes, warm interiors, and dream-like human forms, her works include both impressionistic and abstract themes. She has been a member of the Arts Students League of New York since 2018, and her work has appeared in many group shows and publications.



Susan L. Pollet



Susan L. Pollet

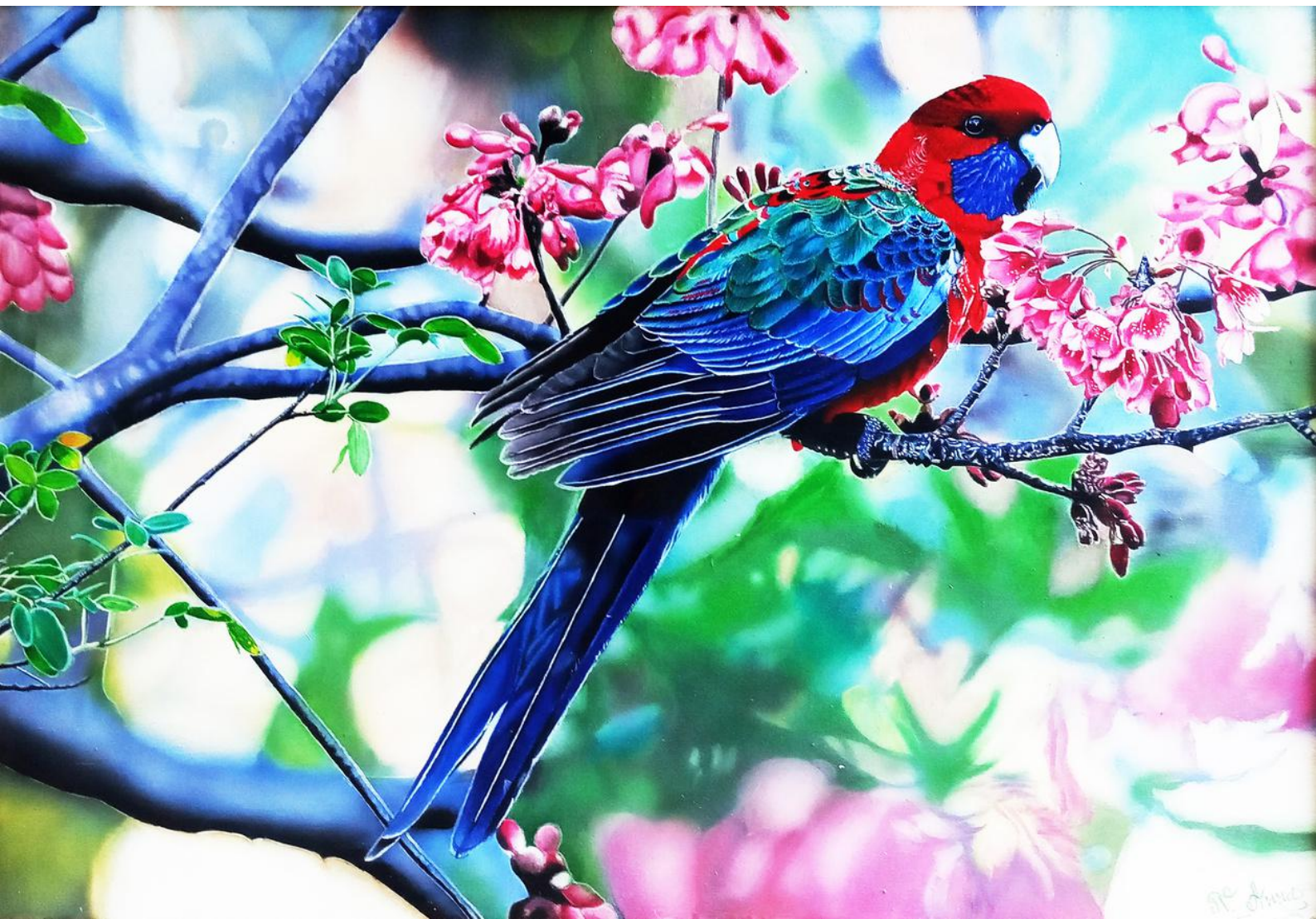


Susan L. Pollet

Anna Petrenko

Since childhood, I loved to draw. Of course, these were not professional works, but I drew everywhere, on everything, and with anything. Since then, I had a dream: when I grow up, I will become an artist, and the dream came true. I started painting. Then I studied, got married, and moved to another place where I had the opportunity to become a professional artist, attending exhibitions, receiving certificates and diplomas. I worked as a ceramics artist, and now I am an artist working with granite.

Anna Petrenko | Parrot





Anna Petrenko | Red Panda



Anna Petrenko | Tiger

— Interview

Michelle Renee Pupetz

You mentioned that you began painting seriously last year and have painted every day. How has this daily practice influenced your growth as an artist?

Before I had my two children, I was painting with acrylic on canvas. I also took some art classes: color theory, working with acrylics etc.. but mostly just loosely painted. I stopped painting completely to raise my children and work. Two years ago I suddenly developed a 24/7 vestibular migraine. I was homebound for months. My father died during that time and there was so much to do and I couldn't even be in a moving vehicle. I couldn't look at anything moving, watch television/screens, go shopping etc.. Last year I thought I would try painting or drawing again. I found myself immersed and it didn't trigger my migraines so much. All I could really do was paint and it was all I really wanted to do. I especially enjoyed watercolor and gouache. Having all of this time to paint daily has really given me lots of opportunities to develop my skills;

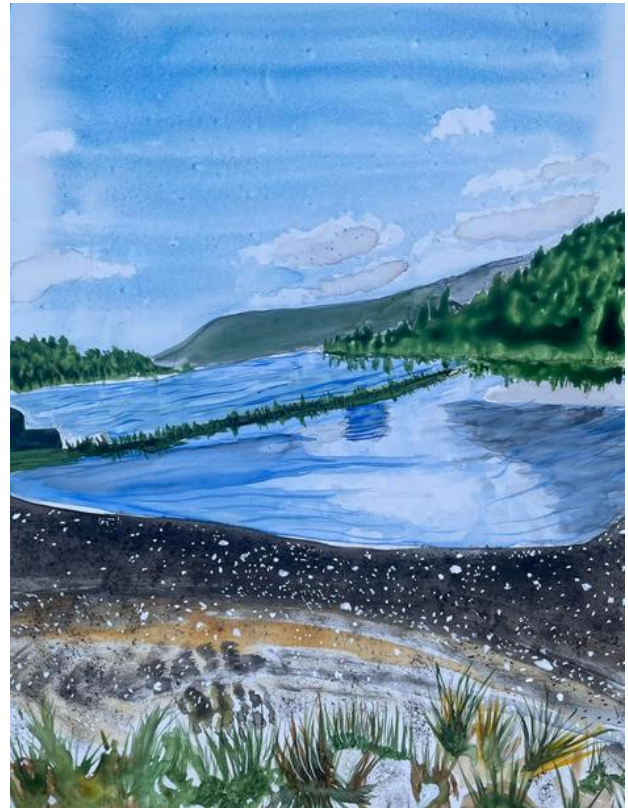


intuitively and technically. I have no reason to stop. I no longer work at my former job and my children are teenagers now. I'm now doing this full time.

Being surrounded by artists your whole life, what lessons or techniques did you absorb just from observing them?

Well, I remember looking at my grandfather's art when I was young and feeling so proud and fascinated by what he did and how he did it. He would do paintings. Usually with a religious theme. I think he even did a mural in a hospital. He liked to make ships and sailboats. Really intricate detailed ones. I would look them over and study them and ask questions like how did he do the smoke

from the ships' smoke stack? etc... My father used to do wood carvings/whittling of animals when I was a child. I always thought they were quite good. He would do it in front of me with a bucket in front of him and would tell me what he was doing and get me to try. I was afraid of cutting myself but he would always try to teach me these things. I was told later that he was also artistic in other ways as well. I was in a relationship with someone while he was in Art school. I would often be his subject in his photographs/projects etc and went along with him on various assignments and also spent a lot of time in the dark room learning how to develop film and watch and learn how to use old cameras etc..I think I was absorbing everything because I can see the skills I learned or observed in photography in my artwork.. I like to paint my own photos. Sometimes I will paint other people's photos. It usually starts there.



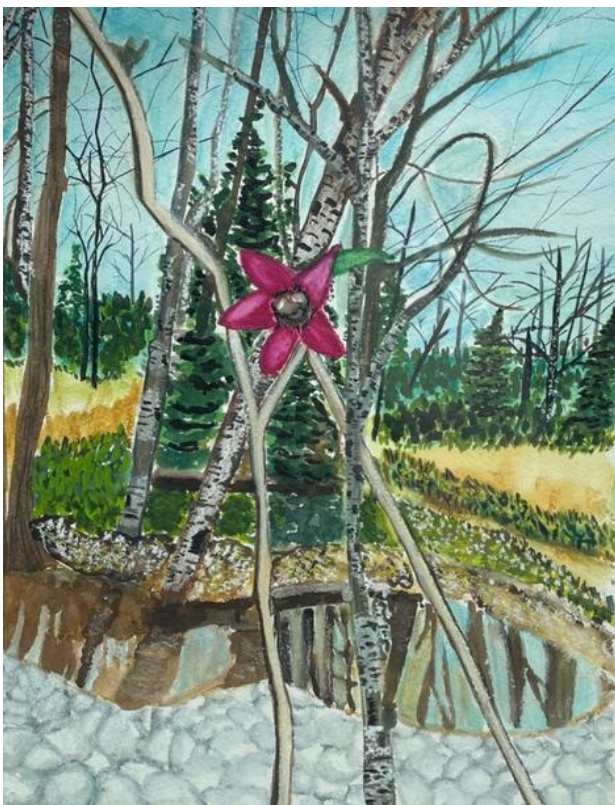
Michelle Renee Pupetz | The inlet

Composition is very important to me. It's probably the most important part of the process for me. The first thing that makes me jump up and run to the table to start painting. Being brave and delving into new territory in my art I get from my father...

Your health challenges have clearly had a profound impact on your art practice. How do you think painting helps you cope with your vestibular migraine?

When I paint, time stops for me. I am fully engaged in the process. This is definitely very therapeutic for me and my condition. It also placed me in a zone where I feel completely free, honest and myself. I have been working through the grief of the loss of my father and also the loss of the many things I can no longer do. My former life. I have also discovered parts of myself I have never known

Michelle Renee Pupetz | Salmon berry blossom in winter



before. Hidden treasures. It feels like I have started a very important chapter in my life. Whereas before, at one point, I couldn't see a way out of the mess I was in.

How has your experience of nature changed since you started painting, especially in terms of finding beauty in the 'dullest' places?

I think what I was trying to express was that nature has all of these beautiful details that may seem 'boring' or 'dull' to some and even myself before I started this process. I get excited over pretty much any cloud or the way a tree is moving in the wind. Everything in nature excites and inspires me now. Even the smallest details. It's great to be alive!

You often choose subjects in nature that are overlooked, like a Salmonberry bursting out of winter. What draws you to these details?

That's a tough one to answer. I'm not entirely sure what 'draws' me to them but I've always been attracted to things that are 'different' or even 'odd' . I'm always on the side of the underdog in a sense. I find beauty in the strange and also the lonely.. The salmonberry is probably my favorite painting. It was while discovering, photographing and painting this scene, that I realized that this is where I belong. Perhaps it's also because I can identify with that salmonberry blossom. I can feel its joy of being alive in winter. Even though it's the only Salmonberry blossom, it's not

truly alone. Maybe an allegory of my own circumstances.

Can you describe your process when you paint nature scenes that aren't typically portrayed as "beautiful" in mainstream art?

Usually, I'm out wandering with my children or just myself. I live in a very beautiful, lush area. The salmon run is just a couple of blocks from here. The ocean, beaches, lakes and rivers are nearby. I live surrounded by mountains. We have bears and other animals, birds, vegetation etc. So lots of opportunities to find subjects for artwork close by. But I usually take photos of things that inspire me. Sometimes, If I find something intriguing I will photograph it and take it home and paint it right away but usually I take several photos that I save to look at another time and I often get inspired by a certain detail in the photo and build the scene around it. Sometimes I add or remove details to make it more in line with my aesthetic or I will just have an idea or image pop up in my mind and go from there.

How has the connection between painting and healing influenced your relationship with art and life?

I have more trust in the process of living and feel more confident going forward in all areas of my life. I see the world differently now than I did before I embarked on this journey. I appreciate life so much more.



Adriana Rocha was born in Bolivia. She is a psychologist who has been writing for five years and was published in three languages. She has also been participating in virtual galleries sharing her views of the world. She believes in the healing power of art, and she has found in art both a way of expression and reflection.

Artist Statement

Color harmony and capturing moments is imperative. We all are a piece of time, pictures have the ability to freeze those moments and capture the essence of life.

Adriana Rocha | Night | 2023





I have been drawing ever since I can remember. My life as an Artist started in 2005 when I commenced studying Art, Craft and Design at South West TAFE. I am inspired by people, animals and landscapes. These works are about wallabies(kangaroos), wind farms, landscapes and people. I paint acrylic on linen. I partner with my dad and we make plywood wallaby sculptures. I make linocuts and I draw. I also paint on paper.

— Matthew Clarke



Matthew Clarke | Wallabies | 2023



Matthew Clarke | My Green Hair Day No Pants Friday | 2023

— Interview

Bradly Couch

What initially drew you to explore satellite imagery, and how did this evolve into your artistic practice?

I have a love for castles, palaces, and chateaux. I enjoy spending time viewing satellite imagery of their formal gardens. I'm fascinated by their beautiful and ornate designs. One day, I noticed what looked like a beautiful flower. I decided to shade it pink using Google's polygon tool that allows users to draw shapes on a map. Little did I know that seeing that flower would cause pareidolia to bloom inside of me. Since then, I've locked myself away from the outside world to work on a project about the outside world—a project inspired by landscape, influenced by ancient myths, and driven by pareidolia.

Could you elaborate on the process of uncovering ancient myths in the Earth's topography?

I scan the satellite imagery looking for features of Earth's surface that resemble a character of a myth. Once found, I quickly draw a simple polygon to shade that area so it doesn't become lost in the randomness. This first polygon is always like coloring outside the lines in a coloring



Bradly Couch | Michelangelo's Jonah | 2024



book and needs a lot of refining (that's why some things look so elementary). Eventually, enough objects become shaded where I'm able to visually tell the whole story in a confined geographic area. This is a key point of my work. I'm finding these stories full of quirky details in their entirety, in close proximity, and in the same logical order defined by ancient narratives.

How do you choose the locations or areas of the Earth to focus on in your work?

Ancient myths are very bizarre stories. The characters in these myths tend to have distinctive and often exaggerated traits. They're often interconnected and have overlapping storylines. Characters from one myth might appear in another, or a recurring theme might be in multiple stories. These are like clues to what I should expect to find in close proximity when working with any given character. It's important for readers to know that I don't just add stuff to my map so it looks correct. I strictly adhere to following natural features within the landscape, which defines who, what, and where I draw.

Your work involves both ancient civilizations and contemporary audiences—how do you bridge these two worlds in your art?

I hypothesize that a civilization far more advanced than we are today must have been sent back to the Stone Age by a massive flood. The survivors knew it would take a very long time for humanity to get back to their level of sophistication and technical ability. Their time of remembrance was finite because, after a few

generations of cavemen, their existence would surely be forgotten. It is my belief that those survivors created these fanciful stories based on their knowledge of Earth as seen from the heavens. They did this to ensure that only space-going people could solve their puzzle because only space travelers would be advanced enough to comprehend their advanced civilization. That was their only hope of being brought back into the human narrative, and my work is the bridge that connects their world to ours.

What is your methodology when interpreting topographical features as mythological figures or symbols?

I was born in a small town and raised in a Southern Baptist home. My view of the world was naive and narrow-minded, especially when it came to other religions and their beliefs. Because of this, I always have a supporting video, informative web page, or related images pulled up on my second monitor while I am working.

Can you explain how satellite technology has transformed the way you view and interpret Earth's surface?

Remote sensing technology, satellite imagery, and digital maps give us "angelic" vision, an artificial sixth sense with a heavenly view that we can employ to better perceive our world. You wouldn't be interviewing me if they didn't exist; they are crucial to my work. I hope one day to ride on Virgin Galactic to see with my own eyes the things that I've been able to discover through satellites. That would be a beautiful thing and is high on my bucket list.



Bradly Couch | Jonah and Whale | 2024



Bradly Couch | Foxes Have Dens | 2024



Bradly Couch | Birds Have Nests | 2024



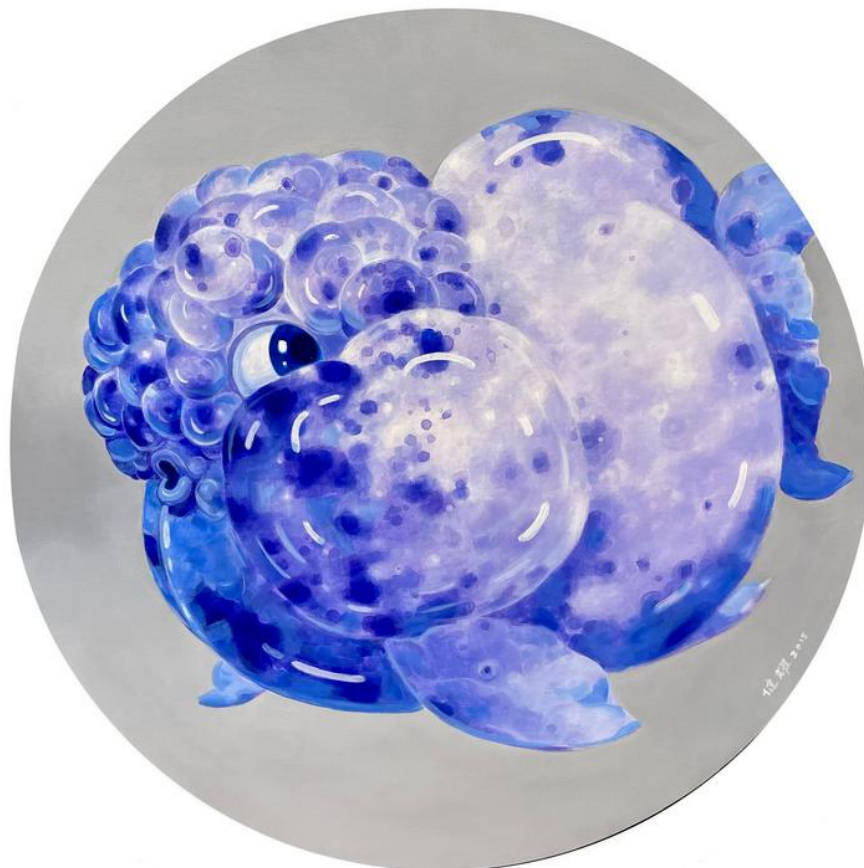
Bradly Couch | Son of Man Has Nowhere To Lay His Head | 2024

What has been the most surprising discovery you've made while exploring satellite imagery for your artwork?

Hands down, I still get chills thinking about it. My most surprising moment was when I compared the face of my Jonah with that of Michelangelo's. I split the two images in half and lined them up beside one another. I was blown away by the result. It appeared that the face of Michelangelo's Jonah was superimposed over my map. Whenever Michelangelo changed his paintbrush to apply a different hue in his work, it matched exactly the color and hue of my map. Wherever the mountains created a unique texture on my map, Michelangelo chose to place an identical texture on his ceiling fresco in the Sistine Chapel. It's so crazy to me.

Gao Jianyao

Professional artist known for his iconic "Happy Fish" theme. Gao Jianyao's artistic journey spans over 20 years, with multiple joint exhibitions and solo exhibitions held in Beijing and Ningbo. He is committed to international cultural exchange, exhibition cooperation, and participation in the 2022 and 2024 China US University Art Summits. His art is characterized by warmth and joy, crossing cultural boundaries and creating a friendly feeling among different audiences, resonating with global audiences and inviting people to contemplate peace in modern complexity. Being unique in the field of contemporary art, it provides a new way of thinking and path for the future of contemporary art. The works have been collected by well-known institutions such as Today Art Museum and private collections around the world.



Gao Jianyao | Happy Fish 4 | 2014



Gao Jianyao | Happy Fish 3 | 2014

— Interview

Rishik Sen Vishwanathan

You started drawing at the age of 4. What inspired you to start so early, and what keeps you motivated to create?

I used to doodle and draw all the time, and was lucky that my parents recognised this in me and put me in art classes at a young age. I always was particularly fascinated by animals and this fascination always manifested itself in my artwork! I keep motivated to create through my desire to keep experimenting, an endless exercise with art! To try and capture a subject using different techniques and from different perspectives is something I continue to love doing.

Your work has been auctioned by various animal welfare organizations. How did you get involved with these organizations, and what impact does supporting wildlife through art have on you?



Thanks to the sage advice of my art teacher, I applied for the opportunity to auction my work at multiple animal welfare charities and was successful! From there, I have formed long lasting connections and have had the privilege to draw live, as well as exhibit my works to raise money for these organisations and their causes. Supporting wildlife through art has been a great honour and it feels most rewarding to see the work of these organisations, such as a visit I paid to the Wildlife SOS bear sanctuary in India, and the idea that I am contributing whatever little I can so they can continue their vital work.



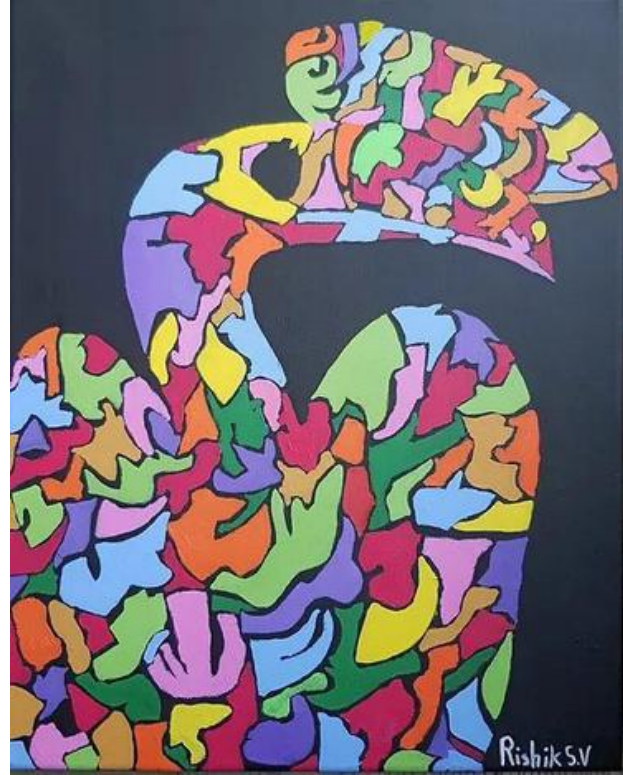
Rishik Sen Vishwanathan | Colours in the Desert | 2016

You have a clear passion for drawing animals, especially elephants. What is it about elephants that captivates you the most?

Elephants' features provide much for an artist to work with. They are unique with their tusks, large ears and majestic trunks. I always attempt to try and capture their huge presence on the canvas, as if it were in real life.

In your latest works, you experimented with color in unconventional ways. Can you explain your artistic process for pieces like 'By The Watering Hole' and 'In Conversation'?

I always find colour is a great way to provoke different reactions to the art and express different feelings with the same subject. In 'By The Watering Hole', I watered down my acrylic paints to create a more watercolour-esque blending of colours whilst still keeping the strength and boldness of the acrylic paints in darker parts of the canvas. 'In



Rishik Sen Vishwanathan | Majestic Hornbill

'Conversation' was far more experimental- the idea of bringing the elephants' characters to life by a sort of bright 'jigsaw' style appealed to me, particularly acting in contrast to the black background.

Do you prefer sketching from memory rather than from reference photos? What challenges or advantages does this method bring to your art?

I have sketched from memory from a young age. This has always meant that each project has to be thought through as I cannot research an image or use one of my own to inspire how I lay out my work. However, I always felt a sense of freedom through this method- I can use my imagination to create stories on the canvas.

How do you balance your collaboration with charities and your personal artistic projects?

I find that the two work completely hand in hand. Commissioned work by charities often provides me with inspiration for personal projects. I have also been very fortunate that charities have been very happy to take lots of my personal project works for their auctions.

Audrey Scotto le Massese is a scholar and artist working in Film and Photography. She received her Masters from the University of Oxford and will start studying for a PhD in 2025. Currently, she teaches young people going through academic disengagement in France. She believes that art is a way of cultivating togetherness and of finding values to guide one's life through times of uncertainty.

Audrey Scotto | Untitled 3 | 2022





Audrey Scotto | Untitled 2 | 2022

Artist Statement

Project "Urban Anonymous" Moments of waiting, suspended states-of-being. When there are no clients. When there is no order. When it's nearly time to go home. Neither projecting professionalism nor their intimate selves, these people are here and there. Present, but already at home. They are their own homes.

— Interview

Teh Guat Hwa Monica



When did you first realize that art was your calling, and how has your journey evolved since you began painting in 2011?

In 2011, I fell sick and was admitted into hospital for 73 days. During my stay, I was invited to Art & Craft sessions as therapy every morning. As I drew and drew every single day, I slowly began to pick up interest in abstract painting. After my discharge from hospital, I continue exploring various types of drawing and painting to express my emotions and thoughts.



Your focus on partial abstraction in portraits and nature is quite unique. Can you elaborate on what draws you to this style and how you approach these subjects?

Initially I focus on abstract painting for the first few years. But then I felt that I needed to expand more than abstract to convey my passions of my artworks. So I incorporated woman figure in them. I also added in animals as a mean to show my heart's returns to nature.

How have your experiences in the NAFA Advanced Western Abstract Painting course and the La Salle College of the Arts influenced your current work?

Both courses that I attended provided me the basic skills that I needed so that I can convey my message in a more coherent way.

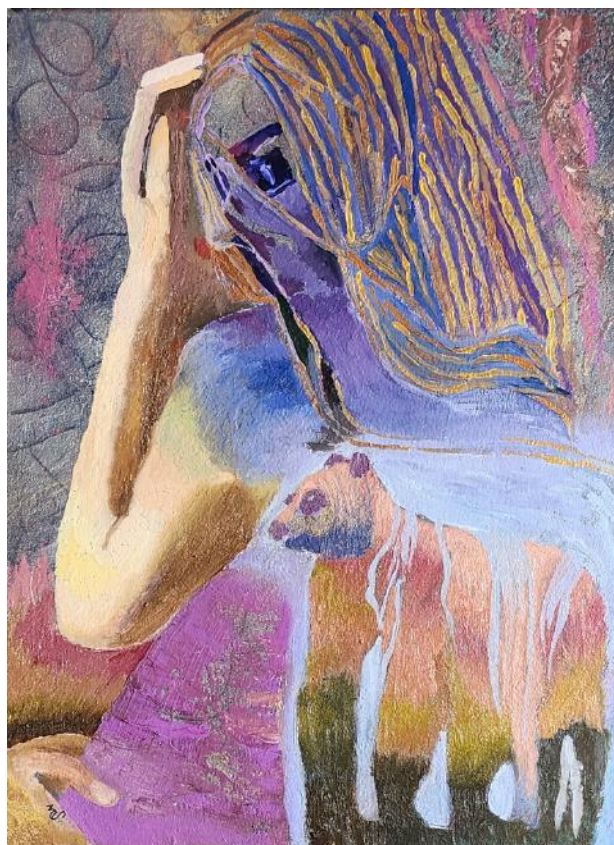
Could you walk us through your creative process when combining oil and acrylics? How do these mediums complement each other in your work?

I usually starts by using Acrylic for a broad background and base for elements. Then I applied oil paint for a stronger emphasis of areas that I wanted to highlight and also to create depth for my paintings.

Your paintings exhibit a strong connection to nature. What elements of nature inspire you the most, and how do you convey these in your art?

Animals in the wild, living in freedom are the ones that inspired me to paint more of them to convey my message of love for freedom and Mother Nature.

So I will choose an animal that can relate to my thoughts or emotions to blend with a female figure in my artwork.



In your portrait work, do you focus more on capturing the essence of the subject or the emotion behind the image?

In my artworks I focus more on conveying my emotions and thoughts that the image can bring out from my Mindfulness of my present feelings and thoughts.

What advice would you give to emerging artists who are looking to explore abstraction in their work?

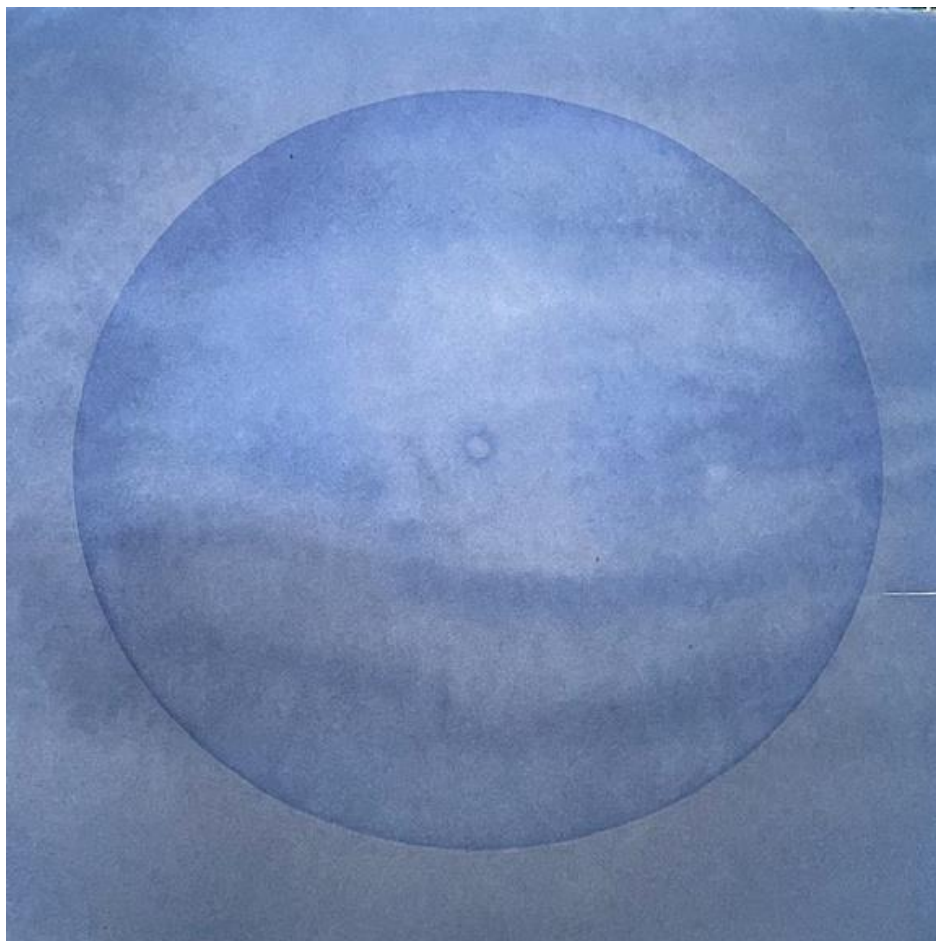
There's no rules, boundaries, nor notions of right or wrong in Abstract. The best thing is that there's no such things as mistakes! Every splash, every stroke is a testament to your unique perspective. You don't have to use only brushes to apply paint. Use anything that you can lay your hands on within your house! Do lots of layering with mixed media in your artwork.



Eve Jones is an artist from Massachusetts. She has a Bachelor's degree in printmaking as of 2024. She mainly does monotyping and mono printing.

Artist Statement

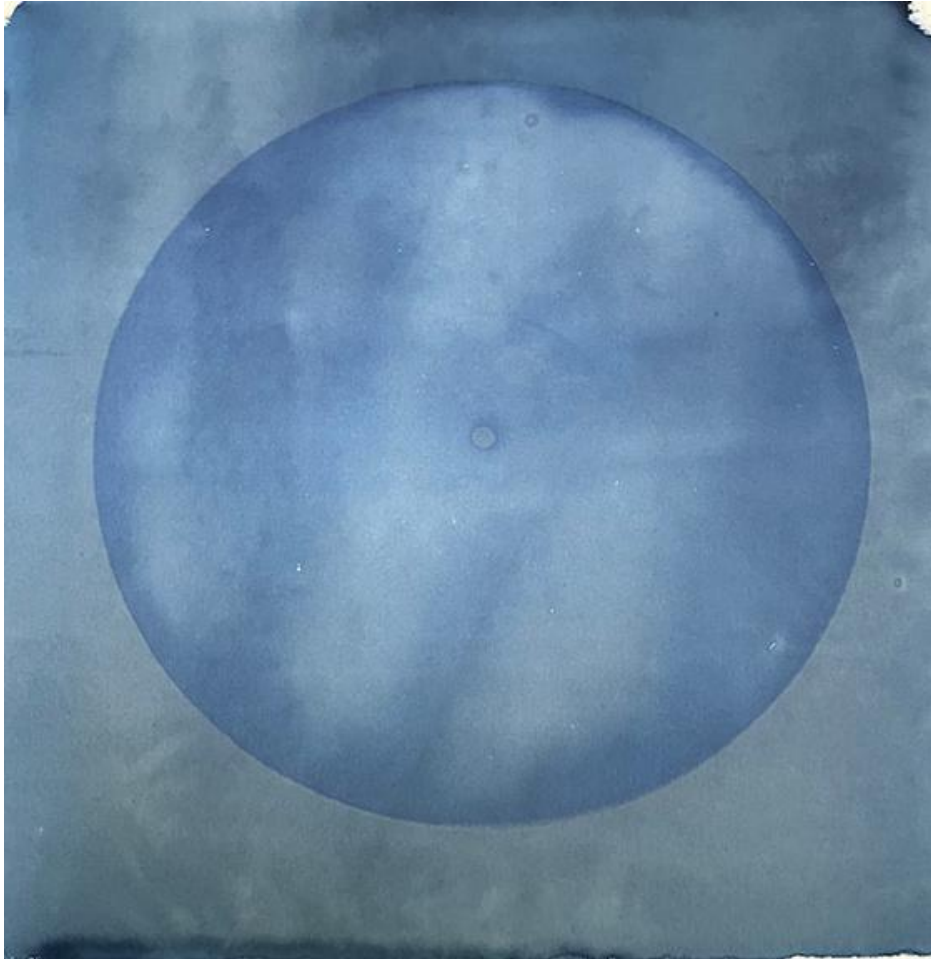
My work is about girlhood and womanhood. I've been using vinyl records to document music I love and grew up with.



Eve Jones | 1999 series | 2024



Eve Jones | 1999 series | 2024

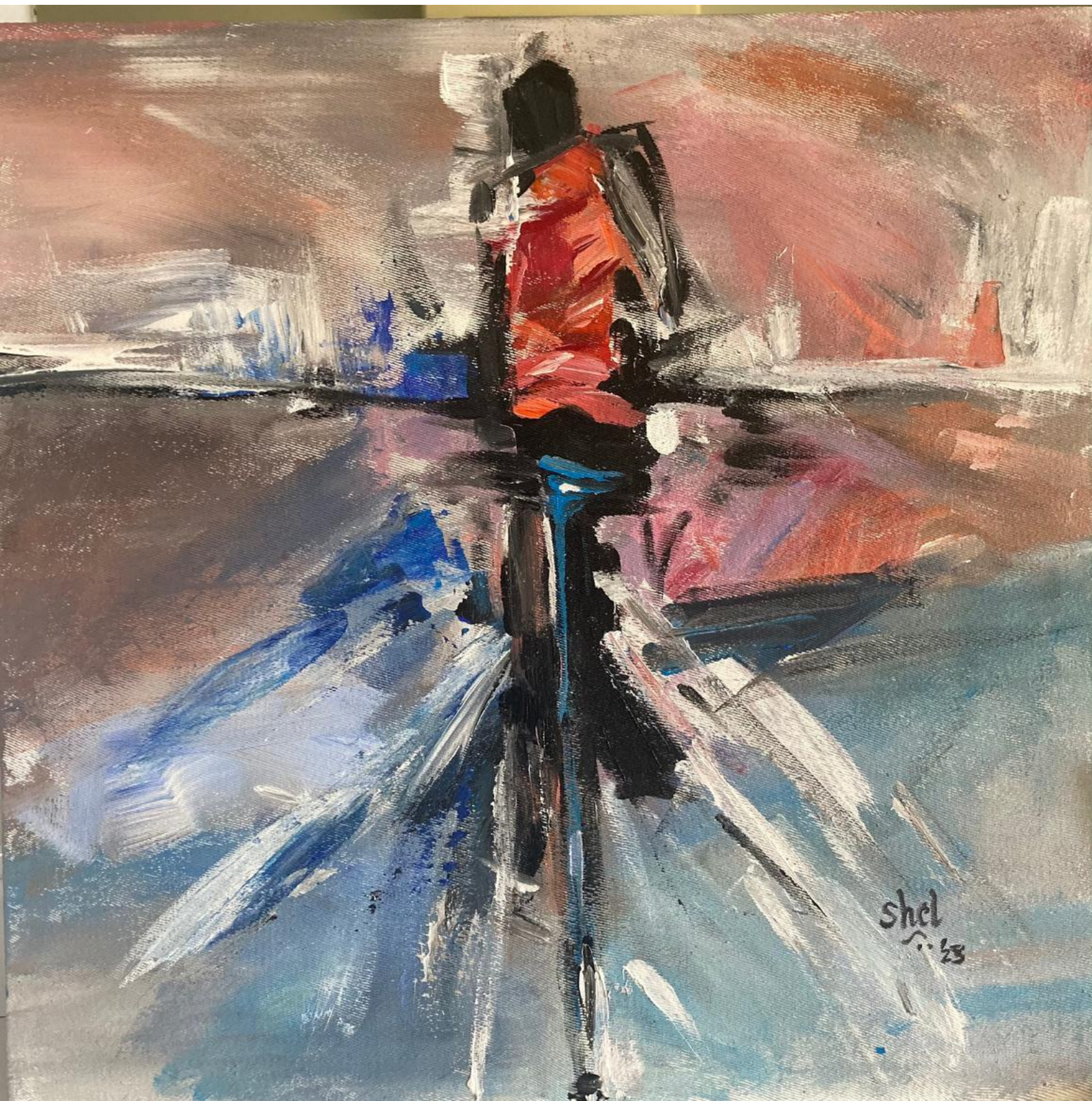


Eve Jones | 1999 series | 2024

Art has allowed me to dip my brush into my soul and paint away my fantasies. The imaginary places and dreams that I express on the canvas permit me to lose myself and fulfil my inner longings by bringing them alive in a painting. My art also combines challenging concepts that give me a sense of achievement when done. Colour is also my powerful symbolism as it reflects my happy persona and my ideal world imagery.

— Shelina Khimji

Shelina Khimji | Cycle in to the unknown | 2023





shel
🌸

Dennis Lamers

Could you tell us more about your journey as a two-time dropout from the Royal Academy of Art? How did those experiences shape your current artistic path?

The Royal Academy of Art is a very prestigious art school in The Netherlands. So getting accepted twice and dropout twice is defying the gods. They were not very happy, but I am by nature a very stubborn individual, and somewhat arrogant. Getting my film made based upon the novel *The Jewish Messiah*, based on the novel by Arnon Grunberg. A couple of years before embarking on this particular project I had been continuously working on a script based on Dutchbat, the Dutch military unit in Srebrenica. I even went location scouting in

Bosnia, Srebrenica and Potocari. I was in talk with a famous Dutch actor, but the process became eventually in dire straits and I couldn't get it made. I was in need for something completely different and fresh. Four months into my study Photography at the Academy, I was doing none of the assignments but went on doing my own photography assignments. I was sending one of the early drafts to producers in The Netherlands, but got rejected every time. After four months I quited the Academy and went for the next couple of years making video art and kept writing new drafts of *The Jewish Messiah*. In 2019 I started on the eight draft, but consequently in an English version for an international production. The academy couldn't teach me all that I know now. By doing everything myself —



shooting, directing, financing, producing — I created the best academy for me. And after seeing professional editors editing your project, you have to learn and understand yourself cuts to make. I decided to cut E-Motion and La Rioja myself. I should have figured it out in 2008 and 2017 that photography could not prevail my love for cinematography. I would never had any grasping of the basics in psychology and kinetics if I had stayed on the academy. I don't know if I ever reach the Ithaca of Art, but I prefer to just float instead and see where it takes me.

As a self-taught video artist, what challenges have you faced compared to those with formal education in filmmaking?

I had no idea where to begin. I relied, and still do, on watching all kinds of movies. I have seen so many, and many of them over and over and over again. The cuts in movies, the camera movements, the lighting. I have no idea how to write a script, so I had to do a lot of research, and lots of reading scripts. All video art-projects started with a vision, sparked by a piece of music, a moment, a conversation, a piece of writing, it could be anything. First project — 'in search for Srebrenica' — was sparked by my interest in Dutchbat, the second — 'Trans|Formation' — was inspired by Chelsea Manning, the whistleblower, and took three years to make, the third — 'E-Motion' — was solely of therapeutic nature because I required something easy to do after three years on making 'Trans|Formation' and I learned to edit my own project. La Rioja was not planned. The script for The Jewish Messiah got stuck. I was disillusioned. One day I was having a drink with my girlfriend and the bottle of La Rioja wine just stood there on the dinner table. Thus, La Rioja was born, and after minutes and hours of cutting, and

getting it visually right, it had turned into hardcore guerrilla training. Everything for the right frame. The right cut. It had to be perfect. A piece of art, a 'Caravaggio' shot, a 'Monet' shot. Are there rules of formal education of filmmaking? I don't know. I gave myself one rule, in the words of Warhol: 'the idea is not to live forever, but to make something that will.' In the aftermath of finishing La Rioja, the script got moving again and the ending is almost there.

You've been working on a feature film script for over two decades. Could you share what drives you to continue refining this project, and what it means to you?

Madness. Working on this script is madness and not advisable. I like what Terry Gilliam one said: "If it's easy, I don't do it; if it's almost impossible, I'll have a go." That's in a nutshell what should be on my tombstone. The main character, in a very abstract opposite, is a very modern kolonel Lawrence (of Arabia), and The Jewish Messiah is basically a very abstract opposite of Lawrence of Arabia. I am fascinating with characters like Lawrence, or Odysseus, and his voyage back to Ithaca. The main character reminds me of Odysseus, but instead of returning home, the main character is trying to reach his own Ithaca. The book is practically impossible to adapt for the screen, so finding the correct rabbit-hole for a cinematic adaptation is crucial. You have to be mad to embark on this mad endeavour, in a same way Lawrence was. When writing the script it sometimes reminds me of Lawrence dragging himself through the Sinai desert. It's madness, but his madness is positively persuasive and compelling. I like that.



How do you approach the intersection of video art and traditional storytelling in your work?

My video art are basically creative results from a mind stuck in a sort of creative twister. This has settled down in the years following. Especially 'Trans|Formation' got lost and it went all over the place. In the editing I tried to save it as much as possible but failed miserably. Storytelling is very important. Having a vision and then construct the movie very carefully to convey what you want to convey. A lesson for me learned the hard way, a big continuous process of trial & error. When you lose direction as a creator in the midst of making it, the storytelling goes straight out the window before it is even finished. I find video art to be a tremendous specificity for me to make very, exceptional art that encapsulates both the creator's creative mind - its fluctuations, pitfalls and highs - and the story. One and the other, to my believe, have to be understand like cars on a two lane highway, and both going one direction, next to each other. In the beginning when I started out storytelling and

video art went in the same direction, but moving at different speed. It doesn't work. You'll crash and burn.

Can you elaborate on the themes of your current video art projects? What are you trying to convey through these works?

I felt to make every video art something that lives forever, in the pursue of my Warhol-rule, and make a product of deeper psychology. Dutchbat, Chelsea Manning are political engaged, La Rioja is not so much a matter of wine addiction and the subconscious, but has history too in it. My projects visualize and tell my fascinations and interests for specific political subjects, history, individual extravagance, made in different visualizations, either in color, black and white or chairoscuro. I want people to challenge themselves, to motivate to go on their own quest in life like Lawrence, Chelsea Manning and Odysseus, seek the boundaries of life and the impossibilities. With 'E-Motion' I wanted to make an abstract, paradoxal visualization which could be a somewhat very futuristic car commercial of the far future. The adaptation I am working on is

too about someone on his own odyssey, like me. There is a very specific narrative in my storytelling. I think everyone is stuck in a narrative and my work hopefully contributes to unlock these narratives.

The concept of a woman exploring a new level of alcoholism in her subconscious is intriguing. How do you translate such complex psychological themes into a visual medium?

The subconscious by itself can be beyond comprehension and is still being written about. Nietzsche, Jung, Freud, they conveyed beautifully, intellectually, philosophically the psyche, its psychoanalysis and the wonders emerging from it. With that, the sophisticated symbioses with the elementary functions of the brain. An individual is perfectly competent to dream grotesque, visually compelling, construct beautiful dreams and horrible nightmares. Something as simple as wine is brutally unique in its sublime simplicity to spark enough force of cognitive and mental energy to empower an imagination that is impossible to grasp, but also possible due to the psyche being a complex universe. The woman in La Rioja drank too much and constructs her own universe when she passes out. Her subconscious supplies her with everything that she went through, she experienced, she has seen, she felt, her needs and consequently her subconscious multiplied these basics psychologically with

different settings, history, text, colors and visuals. The outcome is La Rioja. I am merely the instigator, the director behind her subconscious and shapes all into a intellectual visual storytelling. I translate so much as a composer translates his notes with the outcome being perhaps an overture or a symphony.

What do you hope audiences feel or reflect on when they view your work?

I hope that they say exactly what they feel and reflect when they view my work. Art is arbitrary as much as it is a medium to reflect the truth or spirit as much as it an instrument to project an opinion, point of view as it is to tell a narrative. I hope it inspires viewers to travel into their subconscious and construct their own artistic world. To see how beautiful art can be, to see how free art can be. I just hope that I have begun paying off just a little bit of the guilt and honor the artistic inheritance of the great masters in art, whether they are painters, sculptors, filmmakers or video artists. Lincoln once said: 'government of the people, by the people, for the people. Now, replace 'government' for 'art' and I think that sort of stipulates free interpretation of art being a free and rightfully ours, of everyone, no matter gender or skin color. I am just a man among the people. If within that man is an artist, well, I let others to be the judge of that in their free interpretation and articulation.



Contents

Interviews

Green (Yong Woon Park)	4	Yana Gushchina	60
Marco Urano	10	Théo Gerbert	66
Luz Belen	14	Monique D Proulx	72
Ladislav	18	Rachael Bertholino	78
Keita Wirawan	24	Bella Wilhm	82
Humans Sato	28	Tatiana Soboleva	86
Wang Jianhong	34	Michelle Renee Pupetz	92
Andre Villanueva	38	Bradly Couch	100
Larisa Botnaryuk	46	Rishik Sen Vishwanathan	104
Zenab Khan	50	Teh Guat Hwa Monica	108
Catelyn Perkins	54	Dennis Lamers	114

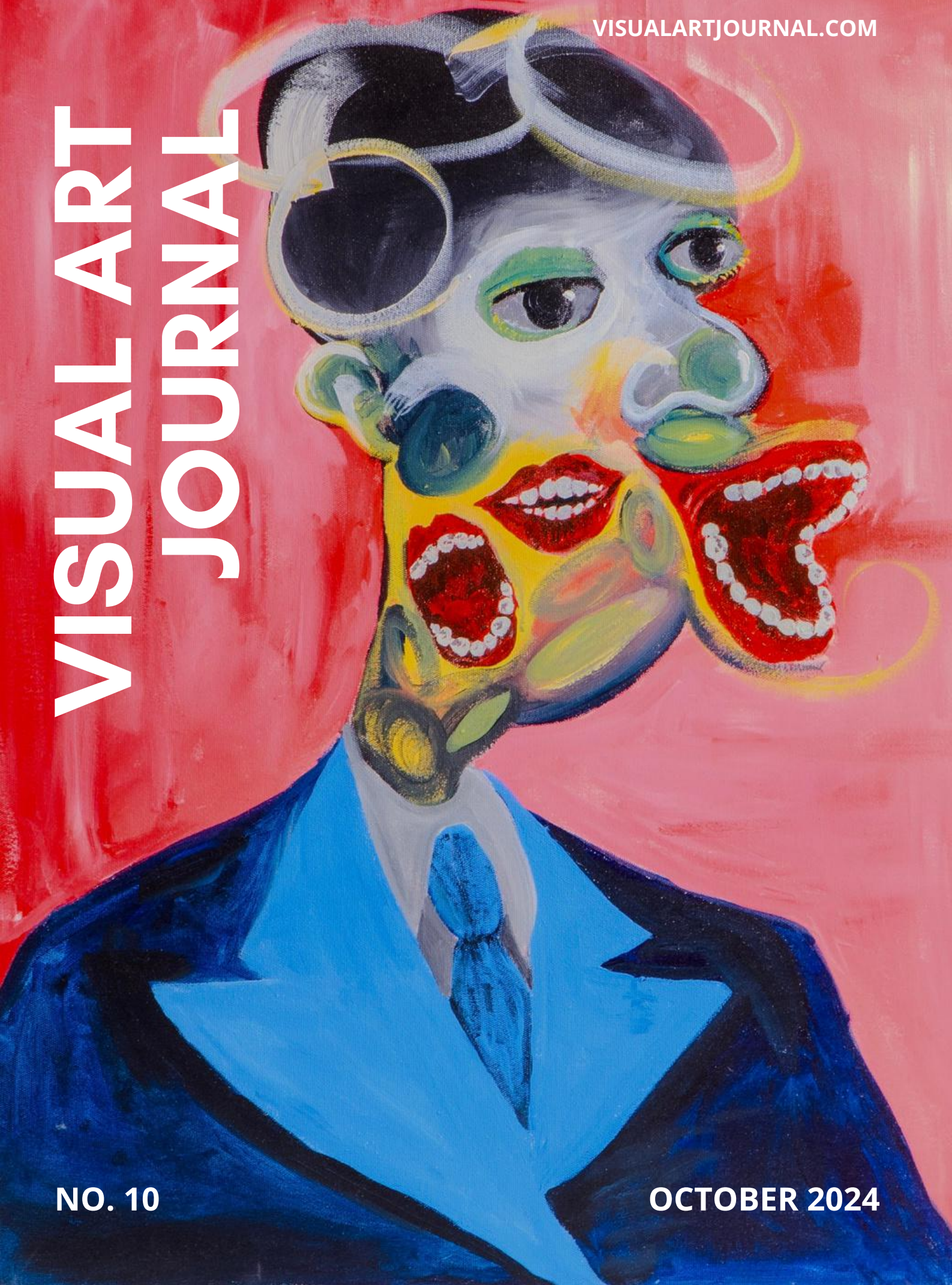
Featured artists

Katherine Dossman	8	Natalia Okoń–Rudnicka	68
Darshinee Choollun	12	Anatoliy Yakushin	70
Julien Gavard	16	Delia Bocioaca	76
Hannah Osinoff	22	Banafshe Ahmadzadeh	80
Arina Menshikova	26	Zhao Wenxuan	84
Beatrice Sartori	32	Susan Pollet	88
Emilia Gałęcka-Kościańska	36	Anna Petrenko	90
Michel Jegerlehner	42	Adriana Rocha	96
Nataša Skerk	44	Matthew Clarke	98
Mirka Walter	48	Gao Jianyao	102
Kannaki Bharali	52	Audrey Scotto le Massese	106
Ma Yanhong	58	Eve Jones	110
Alexandria Howard	62	Shelina Khimji	112
Stepan Lysenko	64		



VISUAL ART JOURNAL

VISUALARTJOURNAL.COM



NO. 10

OCTOBER 2024