

VISUAL ART JOURNAL





— Intro

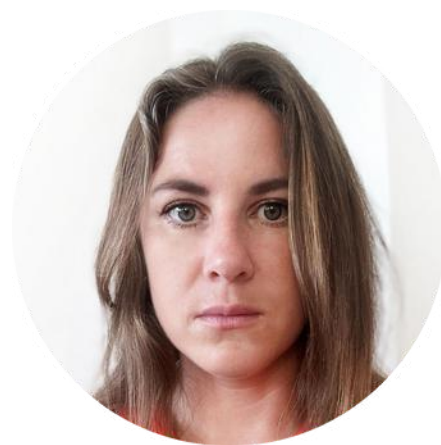
Hello dear reader,

In your hands lies Issue 41 of our magazine - a collection woven from wonders and dreams.

Can a dream or a vision be captured on canvas? As I turn the pages, I believe the answer is yes. Perhaps we can't fully hold onto those fleeting moments, but we can at least brush against their magic - the magic of something unreal, joyful, and sometimes even surreal.

But can dreams also be nightmares? Of course. In such moments, it feels especially right to cast them out of one's mind and give them a home on paper. Speaking with many artists, I've often sensed the deeply therapeutic nature of art. This is hardly a revelation - entire fields of art therapy are built around it - but it remains one of the gentlest ways to express what lives inside us. For many, this need became the true beginning of their creative path: not for recognition, but for healing.

Thank you to everyone who continues to support us and to all who take part in our shared journey. Wishing you an inspiring read - and beautiful dreams.



Anna Gvozdeva

Curator of
Visual Art Journal

On the Front Cover:

Stephanie Kilgast
Moving Pictures
2024

On the Back Cover:

Qi Liu
QiQi Chairs Fair
2024



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

— Interview

Marcin Jucha

Could you tell us about your first encounter with linocut and cyanotype? What drew you to these specific techniques?



Marcin Jucha | Andy Wrrhau | 2025



I first tried linocut back in primary school, but honestly, I didn't touch it again for decades. For many years I worked professionally as a photographer, and at some point, I started feeling the need for something different, something more hands-on, something that would let me slow down a bit. I wanted a process that required precision, patience, and the kind of focus that only comes when you're fully in the moment, working with your hands.

Cyanotype came later, and it felt like a natural step in my photographic journey. It's still about images and light, but it's also about chemistry, time, and unpredictability. Unlike digital photography, it forces you to think and work differently, more like a craftsman in a studio than a photographer behind a screen. In both techniques I've found a balance between control and surprise, which keeps me coming back to them every day.

Your works often combine humor, pop culture, and everyday life with deeper layers of history and symbolism. How do you balance the playful with the profound?

For most of my life, art felt a bit too serious and complicated to really connect with. I've always preferred things that are light, funny, or simply pleasant to look at. When I eventually started creating art myself, I realized there are many people like me - people who want meaning, but don't necessarily need it wrapped in heavy theory or highbrow symbolism. So I try to build that bridge, to say something that can make you smile first, and then maybe think a little deeper afterward. Humor and pop culture are just tools, but underneath them there's usually something more personal or reflective. I like when a piece can work on both levels, you



can enjoy it for what it is, but if you stop for a second, there's a story waiting underneath

Photography seems to play a key role in your practice. How does your background as a professional photographer influence your printmaking and cyanotypes?

Printmaking, in a way, became the opposite of photography for me. Everything I was missing in photography, I found there, the physical work, the tools, the smell of ink, the slow and deliberate process. It brought back that sense of craft and connection that's easy to lose when you spend years behind a screen.

Cyanotype, on the other hand, was a natural next step in my photographic path. As a commercial and stock photographer, I was used to working fast and efficiently, but I started craving something slower - a way to spend more time with a single image, to really live with it. Cyanotype lets me do that. It's not about sharpness or perfect white balance anymore; it's about emotion, light, and the imperfect beauty that appears when you let go of control.

Dogs appear frequently in your linocuts. What role does your own dog play in your artistic process and storytelling?

I'd dreamed of having a German shepherd dog since I was a kid, and when it finally happened, my world turned upside down, or maybe right side up, just with paws on top. She completely changed how I saw things. I started to understand what really matters in life and how important it is to follow your passions. Around that time, I decided to fully dedicate myself to photography and make it my main path. My dog, Kila, was my biggest support through all those years,

a quiet presence that somehow gave me direction. We were inseparable, so it felt natural that she became one of my greatest inspirations. After 14 years together, she passed away this February, and I made a linocut called *Danse Macabre* in her memory. Her spirit still finds its way into my work, and I think it always will.

Many of your works carry a sense of irony or absurdity. What inspires this approach, and how do you see the dialogue between the sacred and the absurd?

I think irony and absurdity are just part of how I see the world. Life itself is often a strange mix of beauty and nonsense, you can't separate one from the other. I like to capture that tension in my work. Sometimes something that looks funny at first might hide a bit of sadness or truth underneath, and I enjoy that contrast. As for the sacred and the absurd - I don't really see them as opposites. To me, they exist side by side all the time. The most ordinary moments can feel almost spiritual, and the so-called "serious" things often turn out to be kind of ridiculous. Maybe that's why I'm drawn to this in-between space, where humor and reflection meet and start a quiet conversation.

Your work seems to exist at the crossroads of tradition and contemporary culture. Where do you see printmaking evolving in the future?

This technique has been with us for hundreds of years, and I honestly believe it's here to stay. It might sound obvious, but in the age of artificial intelligence and advanced digital printing, handmade printmaking is actually gaining new life, both among artists and collectors. There's something deeply human about it, something that can't be replicated by machines.

Of course, the narrative is changing. We're seeing more mixed and experimental methods, but the foundation remains the same - that tactile, traditional craft. I think the future of printmaking lies in this dialogue between the old and the new: combining traditional processes with digital tools or personal, hybrid techniques that reflect the artist's own story.

Finally, what projects or themes are you currently exploring, and what can we expect next from your artistic journey?

Right now, I'm working on a linocut about the complicated relationship between people and bears in my country, especially in the Bieszczady Mountains. It's sort of a continuation of my earlier work *The Hunter's Funeral*, which carried a clear anti-hunting message. At the same time, I'm still expanding my series *Great Artists - Under the Dog*, which already includes five linocuts, and I'm continuing my collection of famous animals like Laika, Hachiko, and Jumbo. Since quite a few of my collectors are between five and twelve years old (laughs), there will definitely be some happy dogs and cats too. I also want to appear more often at exhibitions, including international ones - to open up a bit more to the world. And I plan to return to designing socially themed posters, of course in my own way. But above all, I just want to keep enjoying what I do and continue creating with the same curiosity and joy that got me started in the first place.

Francisco Ratti spent his early years and first encountered painting in the dry, windy Patagonian climate. He obtained his Bachelor's degree and is a professor of visual arts with a focus on painting from the Faculty of Arts at the National University of La Plata. In this city, he currently lives and works.

In 2023, he received an award from Itaú Foundation and El Mirador to participate in the Artists for Artists Program in 2024. He also awarded a scholarship to study the AB-ELE program with the curators Carla Barbero and Javier Villa. In 2021 and 2022, he participated in the UTDT Artists Program, in addition to training with Pablo Siquier, Mercedes Azpilicueta, Carlos Huffmann, Silvia Gurfein, Leila Tschopp, Mónica Girón, Marcelo Pombo, and Mariana Tellería.

He is a MuCa (Musea Constructora) member and teaches Drawing at the University of Fine Arts.

He founded and self-managed Vincent, a contemporary art gallery and workshop space.

His work addresses the idea of surfaces, establishing possible dialogues between the digital and the analog.

In 2021, he received an Honorable Mention at the Itaú Prize. He was also awarded the First Acquisition Prize at the 10th National Painting Salon of the Banco de Córdoba, the Honorable Chamber of Senators Award at the Young Art Salon of the Provincial Museum of Fine Arts, and an Honorable Mention at the Provincial Painting Salon of the Council of Surveyors.

In recent years, he has held solo exhibitions at the Pettoruti Museum, the Argentine Theater, the MAC in Salta, and Camargo 1020. He has participated in the group exhibitions Misshapes at Praxis New York, Infinite Learning at the Museum of Modern Art in Buenos Aires, Light on the Meridians at the UTDT, Code of Origin at the French Society of Tucumán, Crossing the Mirror at Praxis, Hyper Romantiks at Hijas del arte, Kölner Liste (Germany), and an exhibition at the Gaudí Gallery (Madrid). He was also selected for the Flamantes catalog and participated in the Madriguera residency.

Project Statement

His artistic practice revolves around the various processes of image creation, engaging with tradition and art history through a contemporary lens. He seeks to craft images that are porous to the present and reality, fostering a direct discourse with the digital image. His exploration of traditional painting intersects with new media and diverse modes of perceiving and interpreting reality. Notably, all his paintings are executed by hand, meticulously emulating digital techniques, blurring the boundaries between the analog and the digital.

A fundamental inquiry permeates his work: How does the viewer regard a painting, and how does one interact with a screen.

Francisco Ratti | Nature | 2021





— Interview

SALY

Can you tell us about the first time you felt that painting was more than just an experiment, but truly your personal path of self-discovery?

I grew up surrounded by creativity. My cousin, Valerie Mandia, is a painter, and her studio was where I first discovered the joy of exploring color and form. Those early moments were playful and intuitive, filled with experiments that felt more like discovery than creation. My family always encouraged curiosity and valued having passions, so art was something I was gently guided to nurture rather than pursue with pressure.

It wasn't until my early teens that painting began to feel like something deeper. I remember losing track of time while blending colors and shapes, painting not for a finished result but for the pure joy of being present. That's when I realized painting wasn't just an activity, I realized painting was natural for me, kind of a natural extension of myself that didn't require overthinking. As I grew older, my style began to evolve with me, shaped by travel experience, encounters, and personal growth. Painting became a quiet dialogue with myself, a way to understand and express what words often



can't. It continues to be my path of self-discovery, a mirror that reflects who I am and who I'm becoming.

How did your early experiences in your cousin Valerie's studio shape your relationship with art?

My early experiences in Valerie's studio deeply shaped how I approach painting today. I remember watching her move with effortless freedom, blending colors and textures as if speaking a secret language. She would hand me brushes, scraps of canvas, or unexpected materials like fabric, sand, even coffee grounds, and simply say, "try." Those hours of open exploration taught me that art isn't about perfection, it's really about discovery. Valerie showed me the alchemy of layering, how a canvas evolves through patient additions and subtle changes. She encouraged me to go beyond the flatness of a surface, to embrace materials, and to see potential in what feels unfinished.

At the time, I didn't realize how formative those moments were, but they shaped my belief that art is a process of uncovering. I learned to trust intuition, to erase and begin again, and to recognize when a piece feels complete. This freedom to explore without boundaries continues to define my relationship with art, guiding my practice as one of constant discovery and evolution.

Your works often unfold slowly and reveal hidden nuances over time. How do you balance spontaneity and control in your process?

The balance between spontaneity and control in my work reflects how I approach life itself. Each piece begins with preparation, my technique requires a certain structure,



careful cuts, and precise measurements. Once the elements are in place, I allow spontaneity to take over. As I assemble and layer, I respond intuitively to the materials and forms. Then I step back to refine, applying control where needed to create harmony. I never aim for perfection; I aim for a balance between what emerges naturally and what I intentionally want to preserve.

You use unconventional materials and layering techniques. What draws you to experiment with these approaches?

My cousin encouraged me early on to explore different materials and techniques, so experimentation has always been part of my artistic journey. Over the years, I've explored many mediums, but I've been most drawn to those that allow texture and depth to emerge naturally. The layering process, for me, mirrors the way experiences accumulate in life, nothing truly disappears; it simply transforms. Experimentation keeps me curious, pushes me beyond predictability, and helps me find beauty in imperfection. Through layering, I build depth not only in form but also in meaning, creating works that slowly reveal themselves over time.

Impermanence and transition seem central to your practice. What do these concepts mean to you personally?

The concept of impermanence and transition is reflected in how I explore perception through my art, no matter where you stand in front of a piece, you'll see it differently. My work

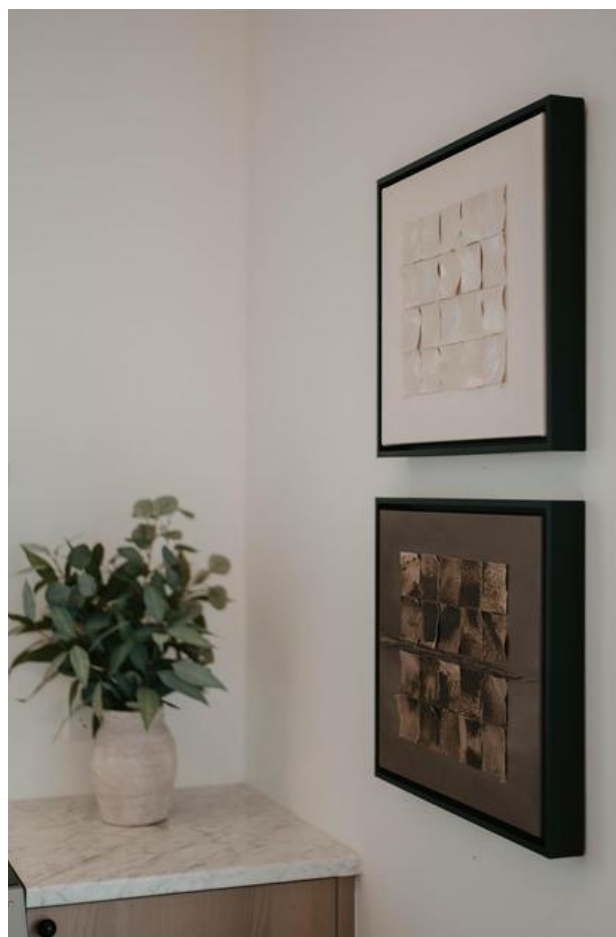
seeks to capture that quiet, in-between space before something changes. In many of my paintings, it feels as if the pieces could drift away with the wind. Transition, for me, is where meaning lives: in the movement, not the destination.

Do you consider your work more minimalist or more emotional—and how do you see the interplay between those qualities?

I don't view my work as purely minimalist or emotional—it combines both. My minimalist approach uses clean lines, simple compositions, and muted tones to create a structured, uncluttered surface. This simplicity acts as a framework that highlights emotional depth, expressed through layered textures like ash or torn fabric and raw materials that carry a tactile energy. The interplay allows subtle emotions to emerge gradually, encouraging viewers to linger, reflect, and find personal meaning in the work's evolving details over time.

How do you want audiences to feel when they stand in front of your work?

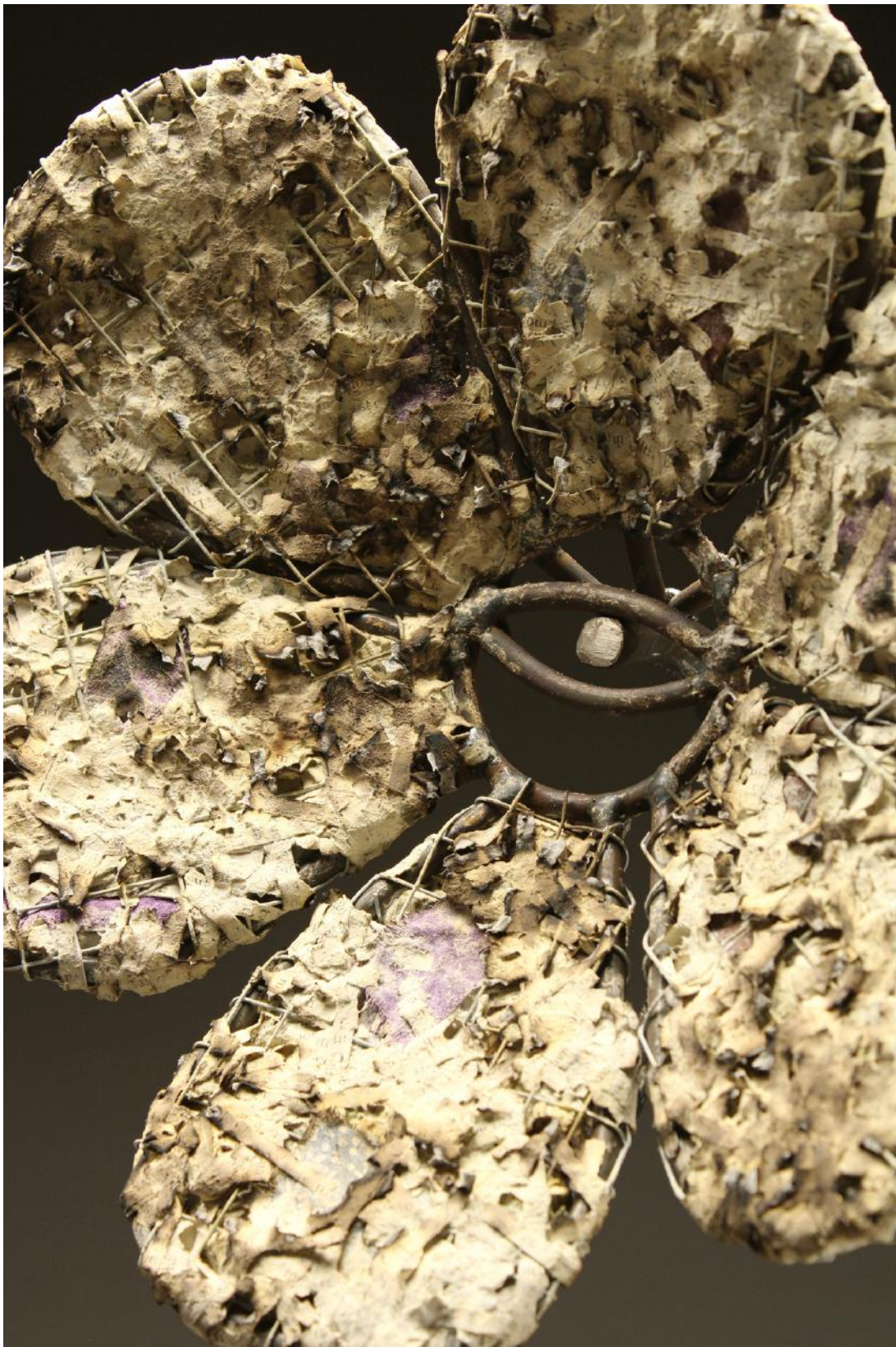
I want viewers to feel calm and curious when they engage with my work. My pieces aren't meant to shout; they whisper. I want viewers to linger long enough to notice the shifts, the textures, the hidden layers and maybe recognize something of themselves in that stillness. My paintings, with their layered textures like ash or torn fabric and subtle details, encourage people to slow down, reflect, and connect personally with the work's quiet presence, discovering nuances that unfold over time.



Isabella Clark grew up in Norman, OK, and is currently working on her BFA in Studio Arts at the OU School of Visual Arts. Her focus is sculpture with a secondary focus in photography. She primarily makes her sculptures from wire, steel, and ceramic. Outside of school, Isabella works as the event director for a local non-profit coffee shop.

Project Statement

I enjoy creating works that convey a sense of playfulness. Having grown up with anxiety, I've had difficulty expressing my thoughts, ideas, and personality to others. Making art allows me to let go of these anxieties temporarily, and create things that are authentic to myself. I've never been able to stick to one medium, and enjoy working with wire, steel, clay, watercolor, gouache, and more. Much of my work contains floral and musical elements, inspired by my love of music and interest in horticulture.



Isabella Clark | Spiral | 2025



— Interview

Stephanie Kilgast



Your sculptures seem to grow organically from discarded human-made objects. What initially inspired this fascinating fusion between the artificial and the natural?

Around 2014, I learned about the environmental impact of meat production from a friend, which opened a door of realization and change in my own life. I gradually became mostly vegan and rethought all my consumption habits. Until that time, my work consisted of creating miniature replicas of food, but the moment I saw the world differently, I needed to talk about it somehow in my work. In 2015, I decided to sculpt one miniature fruit or vegetable every day, in order to showcase the great

variety of edible plants and talk about the environmental impact of meat production, but in a positive light. I consider this to be my first artwork, as it linked personal worldview, technique, and aesthetics.

After that, I was a bit at a loss on how to approach that topic differently. I rapidly settled on creating representations of a growing nature onto something that symbolically represented human activities.

At first, I tried sculptural paintings, and the human recklessness was represented by abstract painting. But eventually, I decided to put the growth on an empty jam jar and it clicked.

Growth on human-made objects. It made perfect sense, nature taking over what we leave in our wake. I started this series in 2017 and it has evolved by using various trash and thrifted objects, expanding in my paintings into landscapes that showcase buildings or machines that are being overgrown.

I always strive to find a balance between the object and the growth, as for me this balance is what we have lost, and what is so crucial for us to find back.

Many of your works have a “cheerful post-apocalyptic” feel, as you describe. What does that phrase mean to you emotionally and philosophically?

In my artwork, humans are gone, leaving their objects, buildings, and trash behind; that’s the post-apocalyptic part. And in those ruins, nature has created new environments for other animals to live in, thus creating a beautiful vibrant world, rich in life. It’s cheerful and hopeful. It reminds us that nature has the capacity of growing back, of regaining its place on this planet, making it not only beautiful but hospitable.

You transform objects of waste into living, colorful ecosystems. Do you see this as a metaphor for hope, renewal, or resistance?



Stephanie Kilgast | Chi Va Piano | 2024



Absolutely. I always find that reassuring to remember, that nature always finds a way to bounce back. We might not be part of that future, but life will keep on going, somehow.

Could you tell us more about your creative process — how do you select the objects that will become the base for your sculptures?

I tend to keep trash that is interesting, especially when I travel. I often have to refrain myself from taking all the trash back home. And then I enjoy flea markets and similar second-hand shops, the really cheap ones, where it's a jumble of objects nobody really wants anymore. I just browse and pick up things that spark something. Sometimes I have a very clear idea in my head, for instance, right now, I have collected a lot of empty boxes, as I plan to create a show around those. But sometimes I just see an object and I grab it because I see potential. Same for my paintings, I often work using photography I take when traveling or walking around, and it's about keeping an open eye for something that picks my interest.

Your textures and patterns are incredibly detailed. How long does it usually take to complete one sculpture, and what materials or techniques do you use most often?

The bare minimum for a sculpture is two weeks, and that is if everything runs smoothly. More often than not, it will stretch over a month, because I'm unsure about certain shapes or colors. I tend to fight with my artworks until it works. The longest I actively tried to figure out a sculpture was 6 months, I just couldn't find the correct colors nor materials, so I kept changing until it finally worked out.

The color palette in your works feels almost bioluminescent. How do you approach color — is it intuitive, symbolic, or both?

It's not symbolic, I've always been too lazy to look into the symbolism of colors. I just really like colors, so it's more intuitive and by phases. Sometimes I cannot get enough of a certain color combination, so it will pop up in every artwork I create. I really enjoy painting with colors, be it 3D or 2D, it just makes me so happy.

Using such vibrant colors has a double reasoning: first, it's about hope in my work. Since the topic is dark, I want to keep the spirits up, nothing worse than losing hope, as it paralyzes and nothing can change. Second is personal: my joy of using so many colors. Seeing colors makes me happy, so in a way I communicate with others through my work with details and colors. I like those, so I reach out to people who will enjoy these as well.

Do you consider your art more of a personal meditation or a form of activism?

A bit of both. I like to delude myself into thinking my work will have some meaningful impact, but deep down, I think it's mostly a way to process a global issue.

But it's not really activism, as I'm not trying to preach anything. Sure, I tend to encourage consuming less, but I would not write it in caps on my artwork. It's more about talking about a contemporary problem we face as a society, but through my lens. It's a way of questioning more than anything else — and also a way to attract attention to the beauty of nature, especially the more forgotten species, like lichen, fungi, or insects.



I'm **Sarolta Bodo**, an illustrator and designer based in Transylvania. I work full-time in marketing, where I blend creativity and strategy while designing visuals, campaigns, and content that connect with people. I studied Audio-Visual Communication and Multimedia at the University of Arts in Târgu Mureș, and visual art has always been my passion. My style leans toward comics and 2D animation, and lately I've been learning Blender to expand into 3D as well.

Sarolta Bodo | Monument Valley | 2025

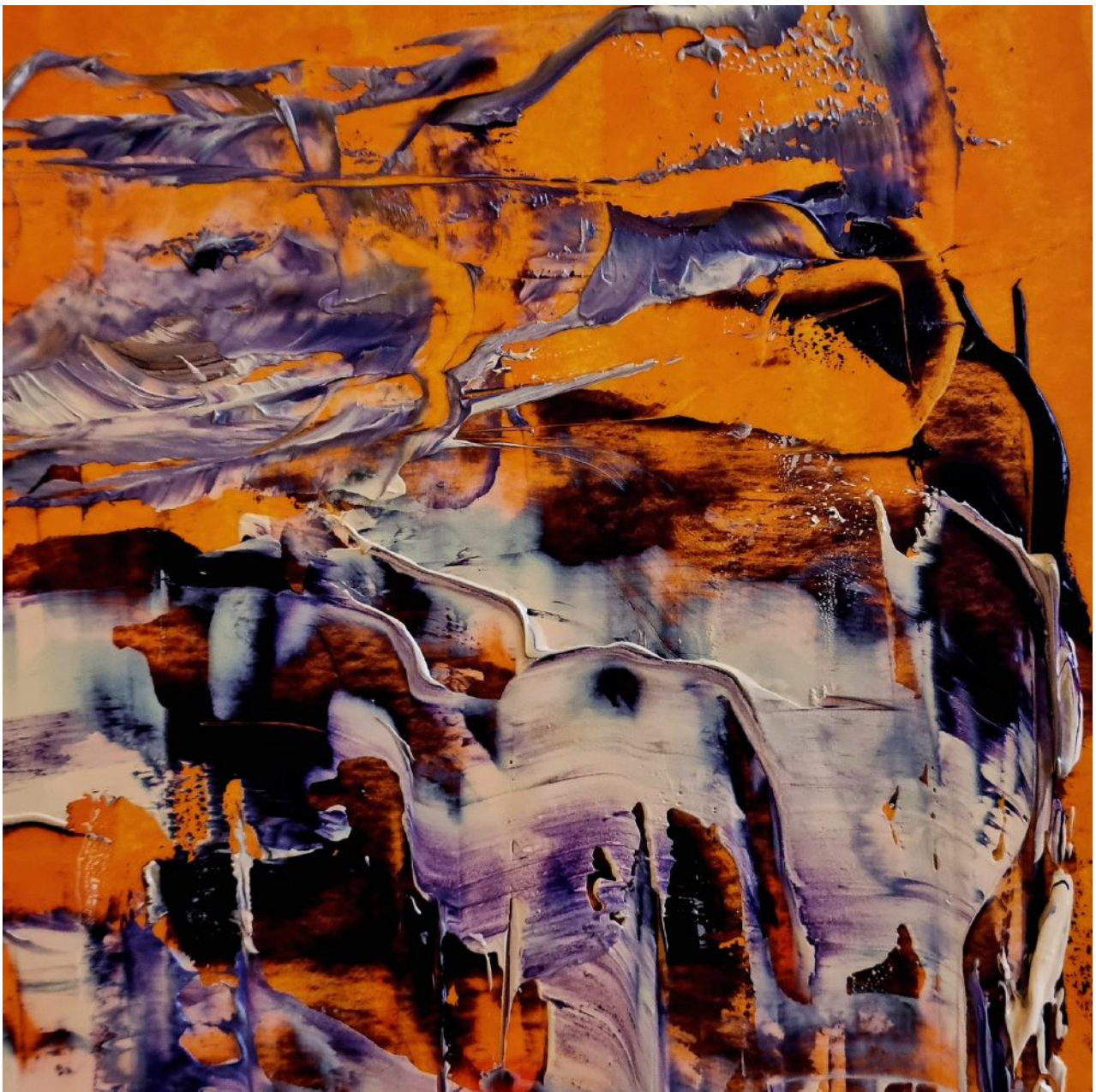


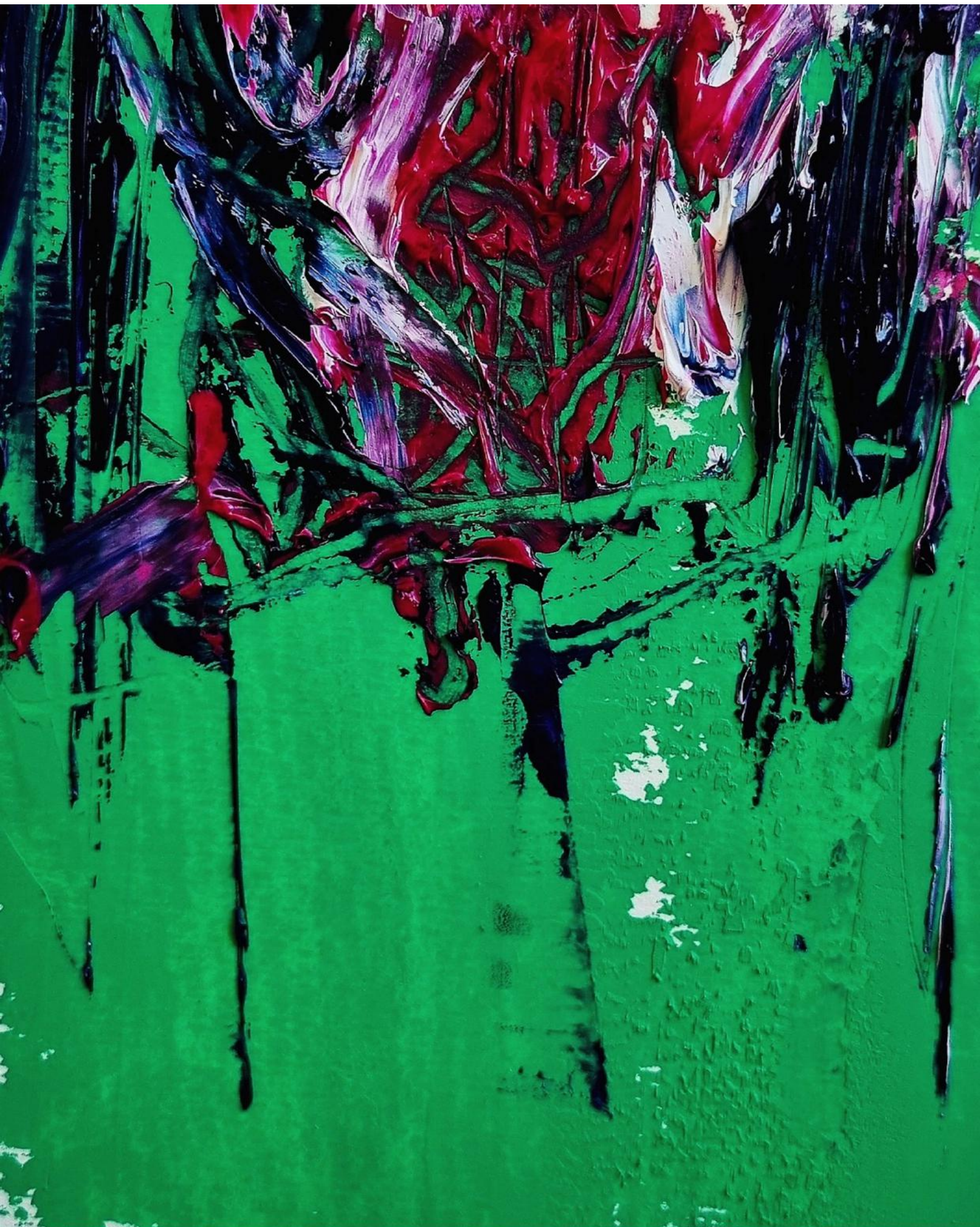


SAROLTA
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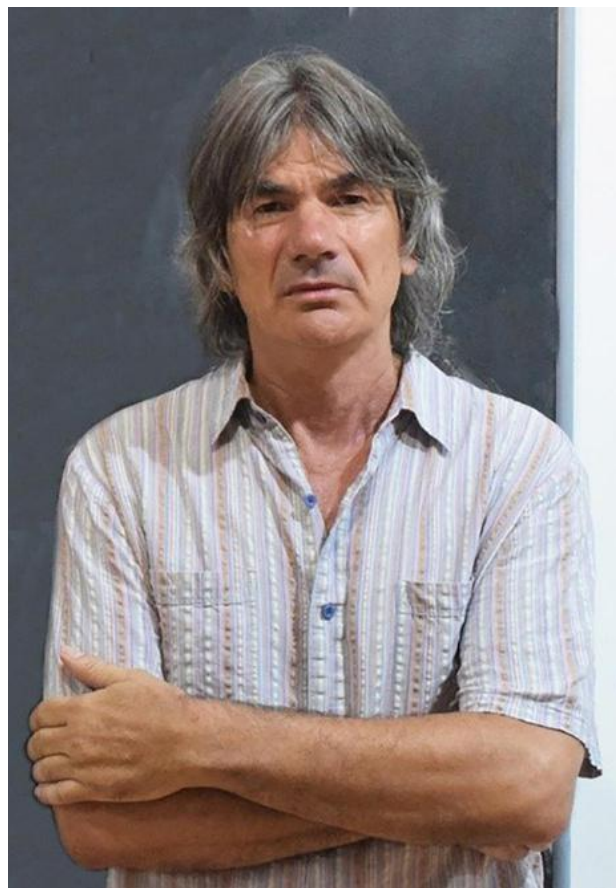
Ishika Guha is a self-taught abstract artist based in London. She loves pushing her artistic boundaries by crafting visually striking narratives. Ishika sees her art as a balance between spontaneity and intention- both in traditional and digital formats. To Ishika her abstract is a direct channel for intuition, a visceral dialogue between her subconscious and the canvas. She paints without premeditation, allowing instinct to guide each brushstroke, colour choice, and form. Her process is an act of surrender—trusting the unseen currents of emotion, memory, and energy to manifest in vibrant hues, dynamic textures, and fluid compositions. Ishika has exhibited and published her paintings internationally in more than 15 countries around the world earning her prestigious awards.

Ishika Guha | Where Shadows Rest | 2025





Dragan Marković Markus



my view of life, of art. I try and try to achieve honest and powerful art, and I define it as art identical with the inner being of the creator of the work.

What first drew you to the theme of The Scream?

My artistic expression changed according to my personal maturation and development of my whole personality. Through the earlier cycle, "Figure I Space", which I started at the end of the Academy, and continued for a long time, I wanted to show human isolation and alienation. It took me 20 years of creative creation and reflection to realize that all these lonely figures, surrounded and opposed to gray-black space, were nothing but my Cry at everything I had experienced, learned and understood about life, about meaning and meaninglessness in general. . So I turned all my painting and life experiences into a depiction of a screaming head created by powerful and fast-moving, deformed forms in the spirit of the original expressionists. My paintings are

You describe the scream as a "metaphor for human denudation." Could you expand on what this means in your work?

The scream as a theme is the product of my inner unrest, a manifestation of a kind of human denudation, denudation to the color of the flesh. Denudation is metaphorical, not natural - descriptive. Although, the red color, whether we wanted it or not, indicates blood, live flesh. If the most dominant experience of the scream as a reaction to fear, the hopelessness of a situation or state, then it indeed is human uncovering to the core. It is a dead end, we are powerless, scared, we do not know where and how - we are looking for help. Whether or not we are aware of it, every scream is a call for help. It is this primordial nature of man as a socialized being, where we are turned towards one another, and that is the only way we can survive.

Why do you prefer acrylic as your main medium for this series?

In order to express myself as expressive as possible , acrylic paints, being quick-drying, have become the ultimate choice. Thus, the path to the embodiment of an idea is somewhat shorter and more direct. The power of the initial impulse is not lost too much, because there is no long drying process as with oil paints. On the other hand, acrylic has the same possibilities of painting with lazure and impasto techniques, and also possesses the fullness of oil paints.

Dragan Marković Markus | Scream | 2000





Your paintings use powerful red and black tones. How do you choose your color palette?

The red color was not accidentally chosen. I wanted to bare the human figure as much as possible, not only to make it naked, to the skin but also to go beyond, conditionally speaking, under the skin and to show the body as a flesh. I considered painting the red heads on a white background as one of my higher instances of the liberation of the outpouring of the inner charge in the scream reification. There is neither factual space nor real or associative one, only a mass of head opposed to the 'clean' background. The color black, for me, carries within itself the strength and essence of all other colors. With black, and gray as its variation, I symbolize loneliness and meaninglessness, as well as the darkness from which we all came and to which we inevitably return.

How do audiences usually react to these intense, emotionally charged works?

The reactions have been very encouraging for me, because over time it has become clear that my paintings resonate with people, and that they feel their weight. I want to throw my truth in the viewer's face, to challenge their courage to confront their own truth (especially if it is disturbing and terrible). This is my cry, but also that of anyone else's. Are the reactions to pain, fear, helplessness, and existential or life-threatening situations of anyone on this planet different from one another? No, the cry is our common thread, a symbol of the universal desire for survival. I do not want to impose my opinion on anyone; I just want to challenge the viewer to a dialogue. Thanks to my first international presentation of two paintings, "The Scream" (Florence Biennale of Contemporary

Art, 2017), I received many invitations from professionals in the field, including curators and gallerists, to present myself at various exhibitions, in magazines, and galleries. It was a great honor for me that the esteemed Austrian gallerist Sommer showcased my screams in his gallery in Graz. I also received several international awards, especially for the Scream paintings. This only indicates that sincere art will find its way to endure and survive.

How did your time studying in France and Italy shape your approach to painting?

Spending some time in countries with such a rich artistic tradition gave me insight into different artistic reflections and understandings, which served as an additional incentive for me to further deepen my artistic being in the search for my own artistic expression. An artist must never confine themselves to a narrow framework, but must remain open to various other impulses and experiences, which will enrich and expand their artistic and intellectual horizons.

Do you plan to continue exploring The Scream as a motif, or are you moving toward new themes?

The essence of the paintings from the Scream cycle, as my reaction to personal and global existential challenges, will still be present in my work, but presented in a different way, not directly as a screaming head. In the meantime, I have been working on other cycles that, through their achromatic approach, indicate a visual connection with the paintings from the Figure and Space cycle. I strive not to repeat myself, to avoid quoting myself, which would be disastrous for any artist.



Barbara Puto

Warsaw | painter

Barbara Puto is a painter, engineer, and manager with an MBA degree. She graduated in technical studies and for many years held executive positions in large energy companies. Her technical background influences her artistic vision – her paintings reveal an attentiveness to structure, order, and rhythm, which she combines with an intuitive approach to color, emotion, and light. In her work, precision meets sensitivity, and analytical thinking intertwines with a spiritual search for meaning.

She is the author of numerous painting cycles that reflect various directions of her interests and artistic explorations, including: "Essences" – about light and emotions emerging from within, "Unobvious Identities" – about human nature and intuition, "In the Arms of the Sun" – about the harmony of light and landscape, and "Your Cosmos" – about spiritual space and the energy of existence.

In her art, light is both a physical phenomenon and an inner state – a bridge between the world of the engineer and the world of the artist.

Project Statement

In my paintings, femininity takes many forms – from tenderness and intuition to rebellion, humor, and self-irony. I paint to speak about emotions that build our shared humanity – about the light that endures even in darkness, and the strength that needs no declaration.

My technical education shapes my creative process: I combine order and construction with intuition and expression. I like when composition follows a clear logic, yet the paint is free to surprise me – when precision meets spontaneity.

In the series *Woman in Curls*, I explore contemporary femininity with warmth and gentle irony – capturing everyday emotions, subtle humor, and sincere closeness. In *The Liberated Ladies*, I engage in a dialogue with art history, portraying women as conscious participants of culture rather than its ornament. The series *Humanity* – featuring *Father of the Forest and Tenderness* – reflects on the relationship between strength and fragility, on what is human, vulnerable, and kind within us.

For me, painting is a meeting place – between reason and feeling, humor and reflection, femininity and humanity.

Barbara Puto | A Woman in Curls Conquers the Peak | 2025





Barbara Puto | Father of the Forest | 2025



Barbara Puto | Tenderness | 2025

Wei-Fang Chang

How do your Taiwanese roots and your life between New York and Los Angeles influence your creative perspective?

Wei-Fang Chang | Danton's Death | 2025



Wei-Fang Chang | Closed Tomorrow | 2023

Living abroad was the first time I truly felt I had roots back home in Taiwan. I didn't realize how much my identity was shaped by that place until I stepped away from it.

Los Angeles was the first city I lived in after moving to the States. It is a city experienced mostly through movement, through the window of a car and the rhythm of driving alone. Physically I move fast, but mentally I slow down. My attention often turns inward because the city is so vast, and it makes me more aware of my inner landscape. New York, on the other hand, pulls my energy outward. I take in the city at the pace of walking, where everything unfolds close to the skin. It is fast in rhythm but intimate in scale, and the density of encounters makes me feel closer to others, as if my movement is part of a larger rhythm shared with the crowd. Taiwan carries both qualities, the introspection of Los Angeles and the sense of shared presence I find in New York. It feels both grounded and fluid, and that duality continues to shape how I see and create. My work often moves between these two states: inner reflection and external observation, translating movement and place into visual language.

Are there specific artists, technologies, or cultural moments that have shaped your visual language?

In my first MFA class on integrating video for live performance at CalArts, our professor showed us a recording of OR by Dumb Type, a Japanese experimental collective. I still remember the flashing sound line moving across the stage, the rhythm, the light, and the tension between motion and stillness. Sitting in the dark screening room, I was completely pulled into the world of liveness. Liveness has become an essential part of my visual language. I am drawn to moments of conflict, disappearance, and witnessing within the environments created by video. Video as light, video as self-image, video as graphic form, video as system, video as message, video as liveness.

You frequently use TouchDesigner and live cameras. How does the choice of software or



hardware guide or challenge your storytelling?

Being a creative technologist working in the field of video, or a video designer working in the field of technology, I try to find a balance where technology is not the subject of the work but rather a support for it. I am aware of how easily new tools can become demonstrations of their own possibilities. Technology sometimes limits me, yet it also leads me in unexpected directions through trial and error. I enjoy the dialogue between using the tool and responding to its feedback. Both TouchDesigner and live cameras carry a sense of real-time presence, a kind of noise that cannot be fully controlled. This unpredictability fascinates me; it makes the machine and the system feel more organic, alive, and full of surprise.

Can you describe the collaboration process with performers, choreographers, and directors? How do you integrate video as a living element rather than a static backdrop?

When collaborating within a team, I often begin by asking myself, "What would be lost if there were no video?" This question helps me approach video through subtraction rather than addition. I see video not as something to decorate the stage but as another layer of information or a character talking to the audiences. In rehearsal, I try to sense the rhythm of the room, to breathe with the movement on stage. Feeling comes first, and then the image follows, finding its place within the space.

The idea of the "screen-based self" and a sense of displacement appears throughout your projects. What draws you to exploring identity and self-perception through technology?

What draws me to this idea is realizing that in a video meeting, I can never truly see my own eyes. I can see my face, but my gaze never meets itself. That subtle distance created when a live camera is used as a mirror became the starting point of my curiosity. In my installation works, I use cameras as mirrors to capture

the viewer's portrait, deliberately positioning the monitors and cameras to create a logical conflict, an outsideness that reveals the uncanny gap between a screen-based body and a physical body. Spectators see themselves through the eyes of another viewer, and I am fascinated by the idea that this "other viewer" is oneself, the way the screen-based self exists within the context of video. This disconnect creates a split subject, a distance between how one experiences the self and how the self is mediated on screen. I am drawn to this in-between state, where the image is both familiar and strange. The viewer's discomfort when faced with their not-quite-right reflection becomes a way to question perception and the reliability of vision.

Your projects often involve audience participation or touch interaction. What does "audience agency" mean to you in the context of theatre and installation art?

The spectator is integral to the completion of the work. The essence of installation art lies in participation, in creating an open-ended invitation for the viewer to enter the piece. Audience agency is not something I impose but something the form itself demands, turning spectatorship into a form of collaboration. I often use live cameras in my video installation works; without the audience, there is no subject to be captured, no image, and ultimately no work.

What message or experience would you like audiences to carry with them after encountering your installations or performances?

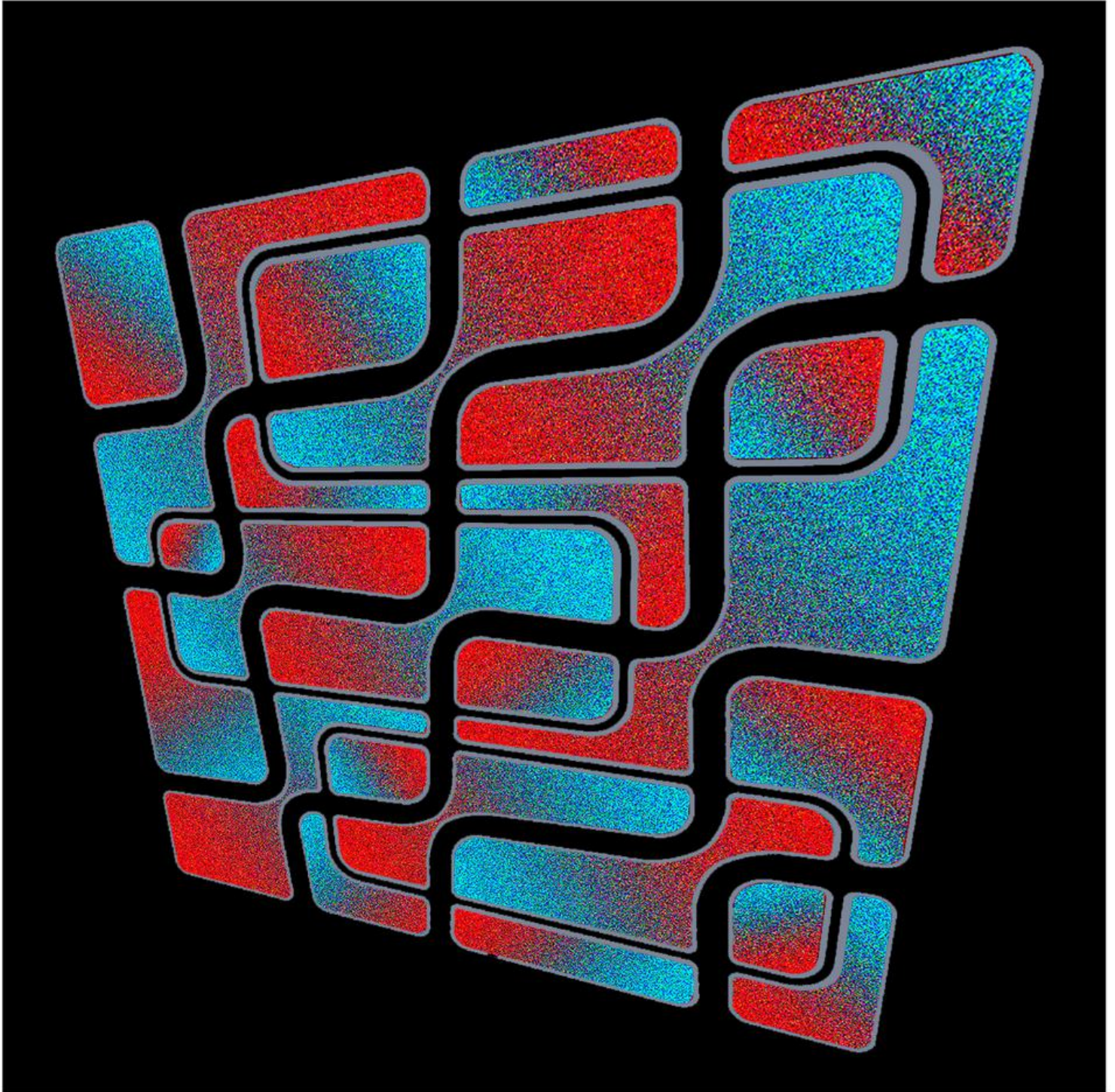
I'd love for audiences to see themselves in my work. Sometimes literally, by seeing their own face reflected in the piece, and sometimes emotionally, by recognizing a feeling or state of being. What matters to me is that they sense their own presence within the work, that quiet moment of recognition, maybe even with a small smile, a moment of self-awareness when they think, "Oh, this looks familiar," or "I've felt this way before."



My artist name is **ZequalsZ2plusC** which is similar to the formula for fractals. Fractals are what inspired me to begin making art nearly eighteen years ago. Almost all of my work begins in a paint program in a video game. It is then captured and then combined and heavily edited in Photoshop. My work has been featured in several other international art magazines and one of my pieces received Honorable Mention in the 2019 San Diego County Fair.

ZequalsZ2plusC | Abstract





ZequalsZ2plusC | Split Levels

— Interview

Marid.K

You grew up in Basrah. What are your earliest memories of making art there, and how did that environment shape your way of seeing?

My earliest memories of making art were very simple: drawing on scraps of cardboard or paper, using whatever I could find. Electricity would go out for hours during war time, and I'd sit by the window tracing the way light shifted across the walls. The environment shaped me in ways I didn't understand at the time. War and silence coexisted; beauty and destruction stood side by side. That duality taught me to look beyond appearances to see what's hidden between layers of dust, shadow, and memory.



Marid.K | Purple Forest | 2025



You work across oil, acrylic, watercolor, charcoal, and graphite. How do you choose the medium for a given idea, and what textures or techniques are you chasing with each?

Some ideas require something immediate or raw, I use charcoal because it leaves a mark that feels alive, almost trembling. Oil and acrylic come when the idea has more density, when it demands color, atmosphere, or a sense of time. Each medium is a language, and I don't force them to say the same thing. I let the material lead me, and through its texture I find the emotion of the work.

Years of war and instability in Iraq deeply marked your vision. How do you translate that experience into images without reducing it to mere reportage or illustration?

I don't try to paint the events themselves; I paint the residue they leave behind. What interests me is not to paint the explosion itself, but the stillness after it, the way dust hangs in the air, the way a room remembers absence. I translate that feeling into light, into texture,



into the tension between what's visible and what's fading. My work is not reportage; it's remembrance. It's how memory breathes when history grows heavy.

In the works we're showing—an intimate embrace, a fragmented profile emerging from darkness, the violet/green forest with reflections, and The Bride with birds—what do these recurring motifs (concealment/revelation, water, dusk, doves) mean to you?

Those motifs return because they feel like parts of the same dream. Water and dusk are thresholds. Water reflects but also distorts; it's memory made visible, I think of the sensation of that moment.

"The Bride" isn't about marriage in the literal sense, but about the delicate moment before transformation, innocence touching awareness, freedom meeting longing. I think of painting as an act of uncovering, not to expose, but to understand the beauty of what remains partially veiled.

Your palette often leans toward deep violets, greens, umbers, and luminous grays. What emotions or places does this color language come from, and how do you think about light in your paintings?

It depends on the mood and the subject, it's not necessarily decorative but more of an emotional connection in that moment, as an inner feeling. I think

of light not as a source but as a witness, it reveals what time has touched. It's the identity of any shape construction. Every painting begins in shadow, and light slowly finds its way in.

You left Iraq and arrived in the U.S. in 2012. How did displacement—and later the landscapes and culture of Louisiana—alter your themes, symbols, or working process?

I felt both distance and connection. The South has its own ghosts, its own stories of loss and endurance. Over time, my paintings became less about place and more about the space between places, where identity floats, uncertain but alive.

Displacement didn't take something from me, it changed the lens. It taught me to paint not where I am, but where I am still arriving.

You move between realism, modern classicism, expressionism, abstraction, and conceptual approaches. Where do you place yourself today on that spectrum, and what does your process look like from first spark to final layer?

I don't think of style as a destination. For me, realism, expressionism, abstraction, they're all different climates of the same inner landscape. Some days clarity feels right, and I lean toward realism. Other days, emotion takes over, and form begins to dissolve. What guides me isn't style, but the truth of what the painting wants to feel like.

My process begins with something simple, an idea in mind, gesture, memory, a piece of music. Sometimes I sketch quickly, sometimes I don't sketch and I just use paint that travels straight to the canvas, or using a palette knife that mixes the paint and applies it, sometimes I scrape some wet paint, sometimes I use sandpaper to blur the edges of a dried paint.

If I had to place myself now, I'd say I live between control and surrender, between what the hand remembers and what the heart chooses to release.



Alberto Millan Galindo

B. 2001, Cádiz, Andalusia. My name is Alberto Millán, and I'm an artist and illustrator who recently graduated from Pratt Institute with a BFA in Communication Design (Illustration). Born and raised in Spain, I moved to the United States at fifteen to study abroad — a turning point that led me to pursue art professionally. This journey eventually brought me to New York to study illustration at Pratt.

My work is grounded in narrative. I often draw inspiration from the cultures, histories, and personal memories that connect me to my roots. Through this lens, I explore identity and belonging, weaving together elements of the familiar and the surreal. The result is a body of work that feels both personal and distant — a collection of layered stories that contain stories within them.

I create primarily through digital media, using contemporary tools to draw and paint in a manner that evokes traditional techniques. This process allows me to merge modern technology with the tactile sensibility of classic illustration, bridging past and present in my visual storytelling.

Alberto Millan | Almadra | 2023





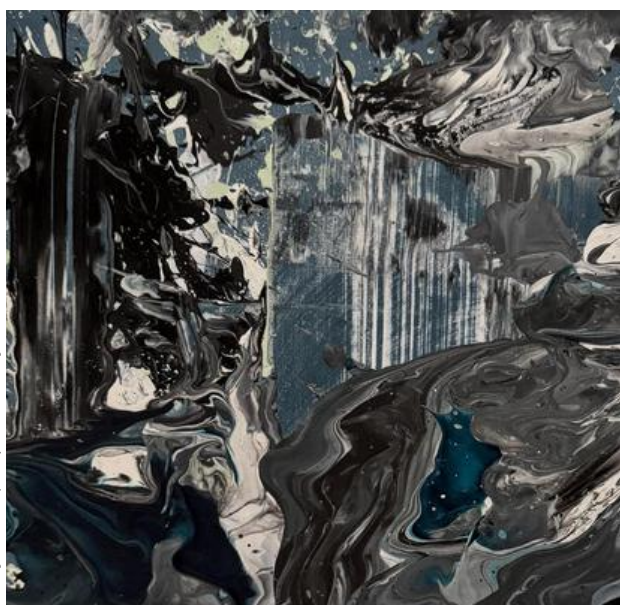
Lucky Foster

Your artist statement mentions working between instinct and intention. How do you find the balance between those two forces when painting?

It's more of a dance than a balance, I dance between the two rather than finding the perfect equilibrium. Both guide each other, almost like a waltz.

You describe your creative process as “praying in color.” Could you tell us more about the spiritual or emotional dimension behind your work?

I consider each of my pieces to be a contribution, new existence within existence itself. I channel into a space/state that makes me work almost automatically allowing the way to guide the way. Also known as the



Lucky Foster | Neptune's Prayer



Dao in Taoist teachings, which is said if were to ever be perfectly explained would cease to exist. It's this I've learnt to access and translate, a sacred fragment of the universe, which allows me to speak fluently in colour. I translate emotions that don't yet have names, emotions we haven't even fully defined. It's not uncommon for me to cry while I paint. After outbursts where I've thrown and slashed paint at the canvas I apologise to my creation by apologising gently through the brush. If I were to alter this process my work couldn't be complete or honest. I am not a painter, I am merely a translator.

Many of your pieces feel like they capture a moment of transformation or release. What role does emotion or catharsis play in your process?

Emotion and catharsis are central to my work. I almost always feel everything at once or almost nothing at all, each piece is the end of an emotional cycle and the start of another. Each piece is a form of release. It's not a hobby or a choice, it's something I have to do. Without it I would drown in the height of my emotions.

Do you usually begin with a specific concept in mind, or do your paintings evolve spontaneously as you work?

I start with a feeling with determines the entire piece. I begin with creating the environment for whatever will later inhabit it. Varying everytime I work, and I truly believe the outcome couldn't exist without its habitat. There can be many layers before the piece is ready for its home. For example although redemption is black and white its environment was dark greys, darks yellows and even darker greens, which set the direction for everything that followed. Each movement



provides a guideline for the next until the piece eventually completes itself. It's a process of acknowledgement. Acknowledging the form as it emerges letting the acknowledgement of the initial feeling shape the entire journey.

Your palette often moves between darkness and light — deep blacks, metallics, and luminous tones. What guides your color choices?

My choices are guided by my immediate emotions at the time, I consider my work to be very honest. So my colour choices are very literal, darker tones are a direct translation of darker emotions i.e grief, sadness even anger and regret. I paint in darker colours because I don't use the colour red. I've never used it and don't see a day I ever will. If I have the luxury, I generally buy a range of acrylics in different colours and sizes based on my current state of mind, a selection of oil paints and sometimes spray paints combined with whatever materials I have left over from previous works. I balance the initial habitat by detailing in oils to create the environment. I then continue balancing intentionally acknowledging forms that start to form eventually allowing the piece to complete itself.

Texture and movement are central in your

paintings. What materials or techniques do you use to create such depth and energy?

I paint on the floor, I've been told it's action painting, but I'm more deliberate than that. Moving around the canvas as I work. Sometimes even obviously working upside down, unaware until I analyse the finished result which announces itself once I see it at the end. There are definitely elements of raw intuitive movement, but in contrast there's also intention, kindness and acknowledgement to my pieces too. I know when to explode in colour, but also when to be gentle and deliberate. And most importantly, I know when to stop.

In your opinion, is abstraction a language of its own — something that can express what words cannot?

Absolutely, I believe abstraction is a language of its own, and can express what words simply cannot. In English we lack the vocabulary for so much of what we feel and experience. It's like we only have a fraction of the words to describe how we are and what's going on. Abstraction gives us a tangible visual language to express those things we feel but cannot articulate. That's the beauty of abstraction. It gives life to emotions or feelings that would otherwise leave us feeling suffocated. Abstraction gives the unspoken parts of us a voice, a voice that's universally understood.



Sara Daher is an engaged and feminist artist, Lebanese, based in Paris.

Originally from Beirut—a chaotic, cosmopolitan, post-war city where space feels overcharged, almost haunted—she aims to create immersive universes and mental projections through a transversal practice of digital arts, sculpture, short films, photography, recycling, poetry, and painting. Sara sees her work as a companion, evolving continuously alongside her.

Sara Daher's artistic production and reflection lie at the intersection of visual arts and sciences. Indeed, her works take the form of aesthetic and sensory experiences, often drawing from sociological observations and practices.

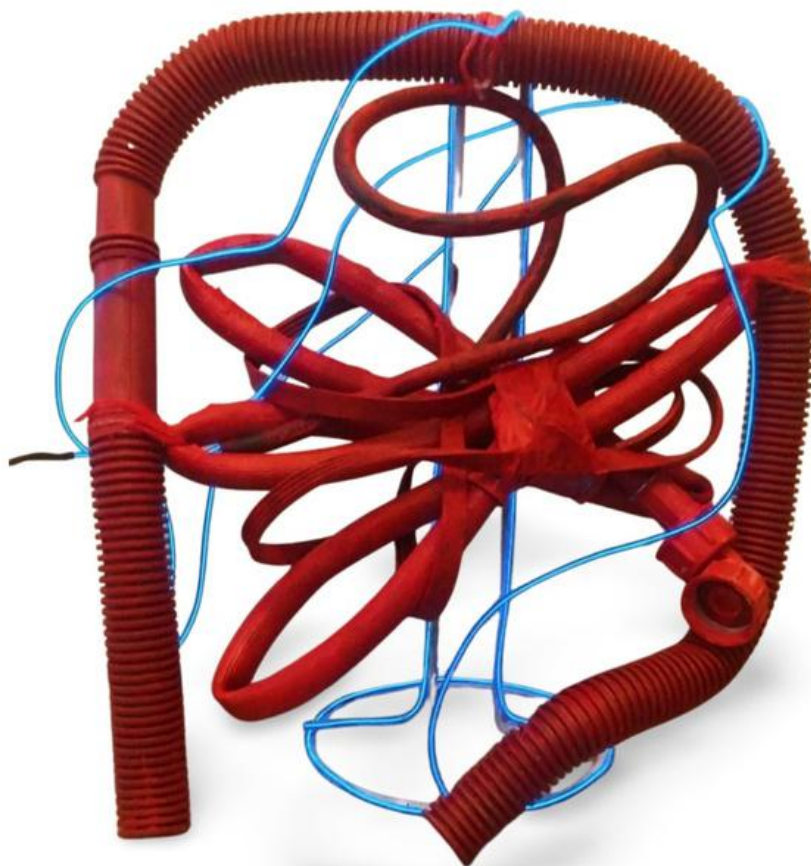
The subjects and tools Sara uses are always part of a quest for the New, universality, and contemporaneity. It is a diligent and minimalist practice of research and of aesthetic and political commitment.

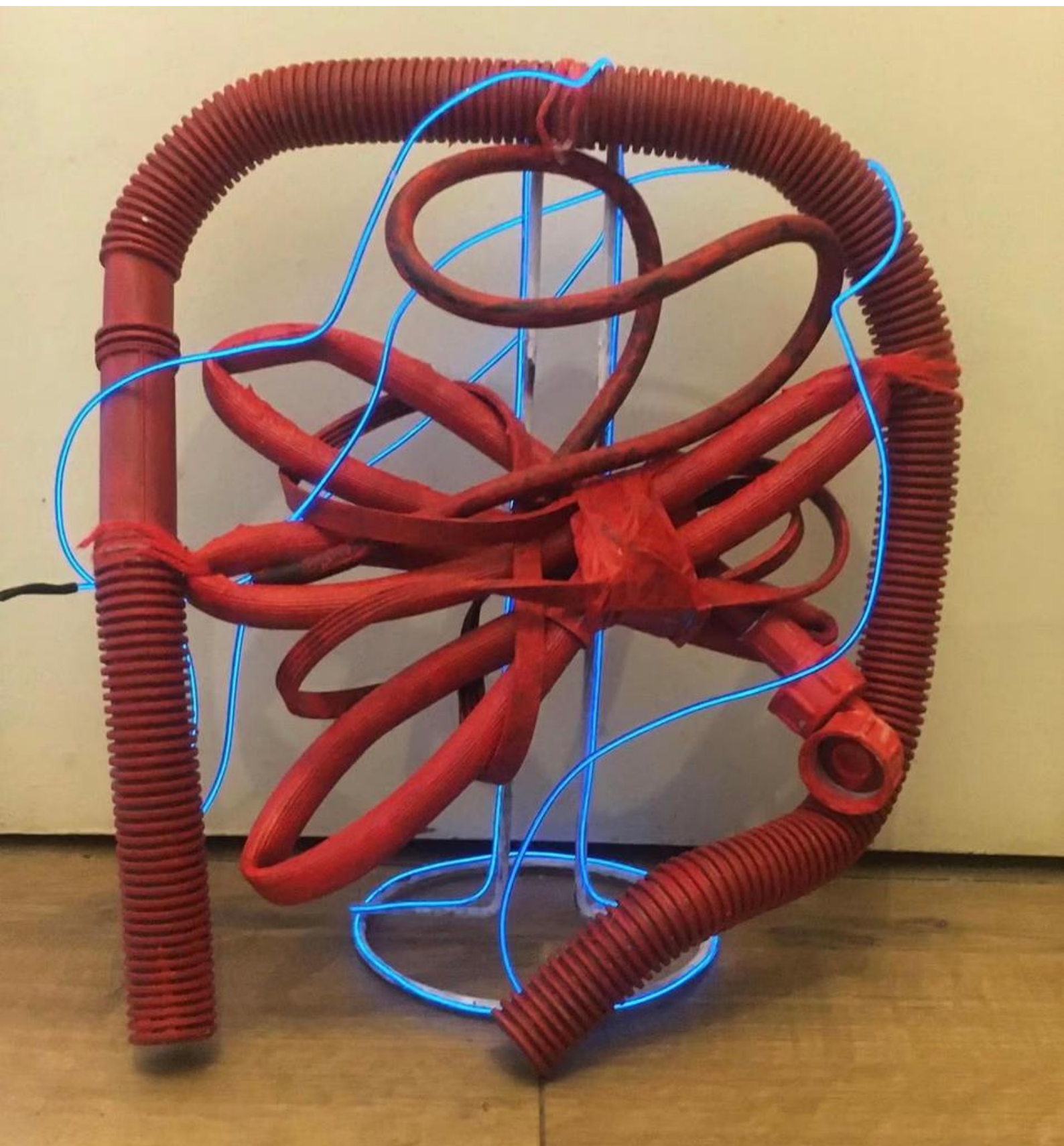
Project Statement

Life is a Great Feast

"The Body Without Organs by Deleuze and Guattari, inspired by the works of Antonin Artaud, guided me in this creation: Human organs sculpted from recycled industrial materials." Sara Daher.

Sara Daher | Life Is a Grand Feast | 2021





Sara Daher | Life Is a Grand Feast | 2021

Timka Szoke



Your works often blend Renaissance and Baroque aesthetics with pop-surrealist elements. How do you balance these historical influences with modern visual language?

These two eras are extremely inspiring to me, as is Gothic.



Timka Szoke | Just Asking For A Little More Time | 2023

The characteristics of the given eras also play a role in the conception of a new image. For example, from the Renaissance, the effect of light and shadow, the natural landscape serving as the background of the figure/portrait, and the beauty features of the given era, such as the hairstyle, which for me is most evident in the depiction of strands of hair falling softly, naturally, in waves.

And from the Baroque, the realization of fairy-tale, sometimes illusion-creating, charming, sometimes mystical themes is formulated in my mind. The illusion turns into a special reality, as if we were entering an enchanted dimension. Furthermore, I complete the composition with the characteristic, decorative motifs and elements of the Baroque. I combine these with my own style, often displaying them in my images in a collage-like manner.

To answer this question, one of my works like that is "The Countess", a mixed media painting inspired by Renaissance, Baroque and a bit Gothic, which is an illusion of a stained glass painting. The central element is a female portrait winking at us in typical Renaissance attire, between symmetrical, richly decorated columns. The popsurrealism character of the composition is given by the specific facial expression, I wanted to break the seriousness and drama of Renaissance stained glass paintings with playfulness/gag, and also with a brighter color palette.

Many of your portraits feature strong emotions



and expressive facial mimicry. Why is capturing human expression so important in your work?

I have always been fascinated by portraits in painting, it is my favorite means of expression because it is much more expressive to convey a subject through facial features. I find the different emotions that appear on the human face amazing. It is amazing how the facial muscles work and how we are able to show emotions and thoughts. During a conversation, all feelings are shown on our faces because sincere facial expressions make communication authentic. One of my favorite themes is depicting instinctive basic emotions such as joy, surprise, interest, anger and sadness in my work. As many facial features exist in the world, the same feelings can appear in as many ways because no two faces are the same. Our specific features give us our character, which makes us unique from everyone else, and these character traits are all so special. What I like to observe in people (among other things) is the movement of their eyebrows during communication. The frontalis and the adductors of the eyebrows together can enhance the expression of a wide range of emotions, like an essential spice without which the expression of emotions would not be so dramatic. So, it's amazing how nature created this.

You mention being inspired by both classical art and comics. How do you see the dialogue between these two worlds in your paintings?

I combine the styles of classical paintings with a comic-like presentation. I am a great lover of Western and Asian comics, I passionately collect volumes of my favorite manga and classic comic artists and my favorite stories. For example, I wrote my university thesis on the development of manga, which developed from Japanese scrolls/woodcuts, and I was fascinated by the evolution of this art style. Of course, I feel the same way about American and European comics. In classical art, a significant part of portraits did not feature the depiction of certain facial expressions, which artists began to better depict in the 20th century, for example.

In this regard, Pop art initiated the use of typical features of comics as a painting theme, as did Roy Lichtenstein and Andy Warhol.

For my part, the dialogue between classical art and comics is represented by breaking the rules of the usual trends. Here I am thinking of more pronounced contours, more vibrant colors, the expression of emotions through facial expressions, and the presentation of sets and motifs related to the interaction of the characters in the composition, which would not work without each other.

Color seems to play a major role in your compositions. How do you choose your palettes, and what emotional meaning do colors have for you?



I remembered two quotes from Goethe on color theory:

"Colors are in the light."

"Colors are the deeds and sufferings of light."

For me, colors play an extremely important role in my paintings. Certain feelings of mine have their own nuances. I express the cavalcade of feelings in my head with these nuances, without them the composition would be dead, because colors give that indispensable vibration, magic, energy boost with which they form a symbiosis.

When a theme develops in my thoughts, which is either inspired by an external stimulus or an idea that has been preoccupying me for a long time, then the colors of the composition appear first and only then the figure, the character himself, which although plays the main role, would be empty without the background.

The choice of color palette depends on my mood, what exactly I want to express. I like to use pastel colors the most, because they always calm and fill me up, and they also fit perfectly with most of the topics I have in my head.

A good example of this is my painting "Candy girl", which I painted during a difficult, sad period of my life, and it was precisely the concentrated use of these pastel colors that started to shake me out of this gloomy, melancholic state. This gave the additional positive impulses to new and new inspirations, several of which I realized.

So, back to the point, colors have amazing power.

Several of your works evoke dreamlike or fantasy atmospheres. What role does imagination play in your art?

Imagination is the essence of my art. I couldn't exist without it, as I've always been a very dreamer character. My teachers and classmates at school often told me that I was "enchanted", and they were right. Any story I read or heard as a little child immediately appeared visually in my head, as if there was a slide show in it that illustrated the given information. I really loved and still love various fairy tales, mythologies, legends, they have an extremely inspiring effect on me. Fantasy is one of my favorite genres, it is an inexhaustible source of inspiration for me. This style creates a dimension in a person in which she can most fully realize herself, because the knowledge that anything can happen, we can be anyone or anything we want, because there are no limits to imagination. So this takes our thoughts further into a dream-like world, where our story, the idea that will become the muse of my paintings and drawings, continues to take shape.

How do you approach the representation of



Timka Szoke | Countess | 2019

femininity in your portraits?

I strive for naturalness. Every artist has their own ideal of beauty, and so do I. I like to portray features in portraits that give character to the face and show a natural, unique charm. I don't want to cater to the expectations of a specific beauty trend, but rather combine a bit of a more classic, timeless femininity with a more realistic look. What I mean by this is that I don't want to apply an overly idealized aesthetic, but rather a realistic depiction in my work. One such portrait is my painting "Jeanne", which was inspired by the figure of Joan of Arc. I really loved working on this image because I tried to portray this iconic hero in her naturalistic reality, who (in my opinion) was a completely natural and incredibly brave, special young girl. Every time I read about her, I imagined a bold, feisty, yet sophisticated character, a bit like a modern-day comic book action heroine, but there's so much more to her. When I look at her in a contemporary context, she's a stereotype-defying, rebellious, cool, strong, feminist woman who stood by her beliefs to the end in an extremely dark, cruel historical era. For me, she's clearly an extremely important, exemplary female character.

You studied stained glass and enamel design — do these early experiences influence the way you structure light and form in your paintings?

I studied sculpture at the Secondary School of Visual Arts for five years, where I expressed my ideas in a



Timka Szoke | Jeanne | 2018

plastic way. This was a great help in thinking not only in a plane (2D), but also in space. Then came stained glass design, which was a different direction. I was always very interested in painting, graphic design (illustration) and how I could take it further in combination with other materials, in this case with flat glass and metal sheet, as well as enamel mud. The biggest challenge in these processes is that you have to prepare the surface you want to paint on and burn it several times to achieve the final result you imagined. The sgraffito scratch technique of fire enamel reminded me of copper etching when I later

studied graphic design, so I had a bit of a déjà vu feeling. I felt the same way in the painting department, because it reminded me a bit of the period when I was learning to design and paint stained glass. That is why my stained glass-like painting compositions were born, which I designed with the same division as I would make with flat glass.

In summary, these studies of mine have significantly influenced my painting, my adaptation to materials, and my countless experiments with light-shadow and form effects, which I try to continuously develop with great passion.

Ivanna Stepanova is a graduate of the Russian Academy of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture of Ilya Glazunov (Moscow) (2021). Participant in numerous exhibition projects in various Russian regions. Participant in international exhibitions, including “Young Russian Culture in Italy” (2018), “Cultural Mission in Italy” (2021). Paintings are in the collections and museum of the Russian Academy of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture, also in the Zvenigorod Museum-Reserve (Tsaritsyn Chambers), and in private collections.

Project Statement

I explore the beauty of everyday life, the fragility of nature. I reflect on the flowing of time and the meaning of the human path. My works are dedicated to the personal memory of the viewer in its conceptual and lyrical perception.

Ivanna Stepanova | Circle of Life | 2025





Ivanna Stepanova | The Choice | 2024

— Interview

Mane Yengibaryan

Your background is in architecture and graphic design — how have these disciplines influenced your approach to creating visual art?

Studying architecture trained my eyes to read structure everywhere — even in things that look chaotic. I still instinctively notice grids, proportions, and how elements sit in relation to each other. Graphic design came later and opened a different side of me — the side that plays, edits,



cuts, distorts, and questions formats. Architecture gave me discipline and a way of thinking; design gave me permission to experiment and move faster.

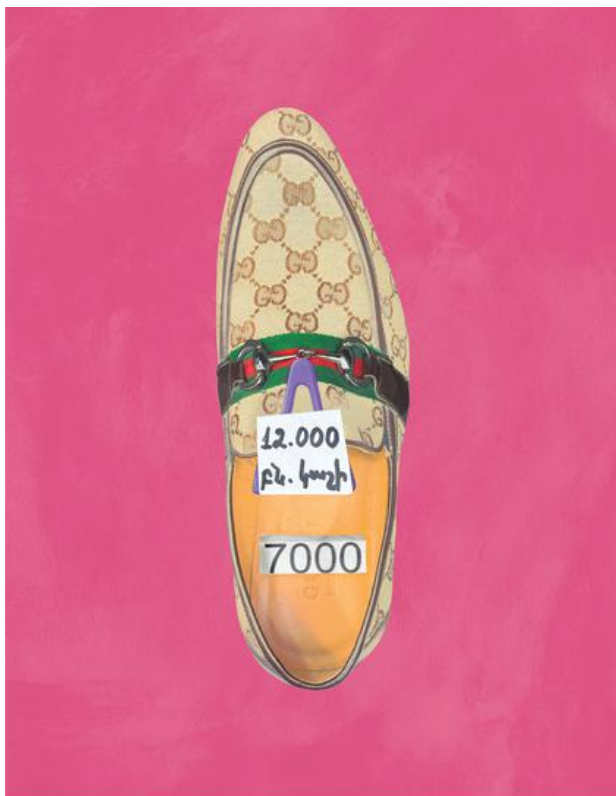
When I work now — especially when I turn photographs into patterns — I constantly feel those two worlds overlap: the architectural mindset that searches for logic, and the designer's curiosity that keeps breaking it to find something new.

In your works, everyday scenes from Armenian life are transformed into vivid patterns and compositions. What draws you to these specific moments and details?

I am drawn to things that are so ordinary that people stop seeing them. Markets, kiosks, improvised displays, objects arranged out of habit — all of that is a visual language that tells a lot about who we are culturally. When I photograph these scenes, I'm not looking for something "beautiful," I'm looking for what feels honest and uncurated.

Later, when I turn these photos into patterns, I strip the moment from its context and let it live as a pure visual unit. Repetition gives these everyday fragments a new dignity — something that was overlooked becomes central, something informal becomes a formal composition. I think this act of re-framing is what interests me the most: revealing meaning in things that normally pass unnoticed.

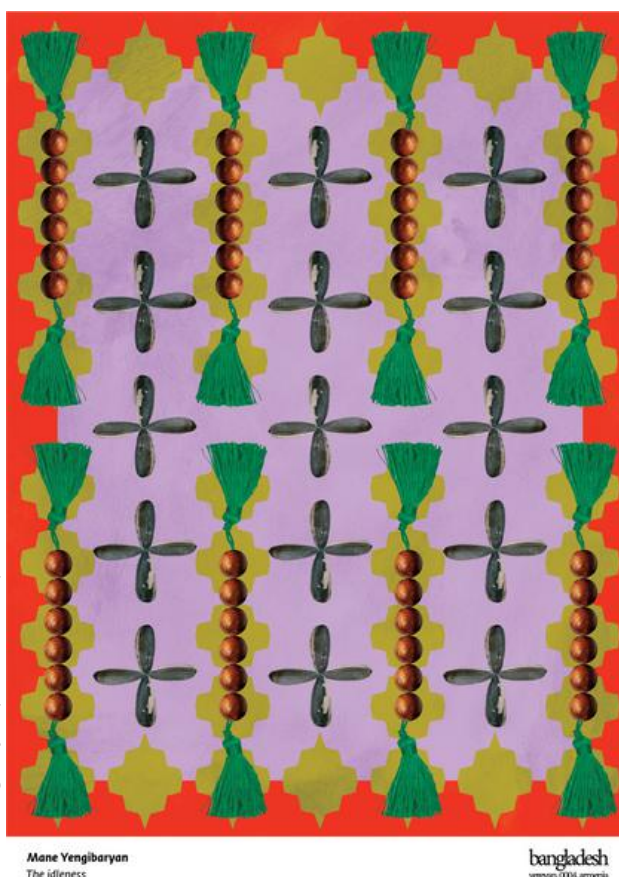
Many of your images explore the intersection of tradition and modernity. How do you see Armenian visual culture evolving today?



Mane Yengibaryan | Market value | 2025

Mane Yengibaryan
Market value

bangladesh
persian, 009, armenia



Armenian visual culture today is in a crossover stage. The old codes — craft, textiles, religion, rural gestures — are still very present, but they now coexist with global aesthetics, digital tools, and fast consumption. This creates a visual tension: nothing is purely “traditional” anymore, and nothing is fully “modern” either. You see this mix in typography on the street, in market branding, in how people arrange objects in their homes, even in public space.

What I find important is that a new generation of artists and designers are no longer repeating tradition as a souvenir; they are digesting it, distorting it, translating it into new forms. Armenian culture is shifting from preservation to reinterpretation — and I feel my work is part of that shift.

Could you describe your process of turning photographs into patterns and collages? At what stage does a documentary image become an artwork?

My process always begins with documentary photography — I capture scenes as they are, without staging or aesthetic correction. Later, when I revisit the images, I start dismantling them: I isolate shapes, repeat elements, build grids, or rotate motifs until the original narrative disappears. The transition from photo to artwork happens the moment I stop describing reality and start constructing a new visual logic.

Even though I often remove the context, scale, and spatial information of the original photo, I preserve its emotional energy through color. I exaggerate or refine the colors so that the intensity of the real moment is not lost, only reorganized. The pattern becomes a new system where there is no “main subject” — the thing that was once documentary turns into a rhythmic, vivid structure. This is the point where documentation turns into art.

Color plays a striking role in your works — intense, sometimes unexpected combinations. How do you choose your color palette?

Color is my way of keeping the emotional temperature of the scene alive, even after the image loses its realism. When I remove context, faces, or spatial cues, something essential could be lost — color is what prevents that. I don’t choose colors to be “pretty”; I choose them to preserve the vibration of the original moment.

Sometimes I amplify what was already there, pushing it to a more synthetic or exaggerated tone. Other times I deliberately introduce unexpected contrasts to emphasize tension, irony, or cultural layering. I see color not as decoration but as an active narrative tool — it replaces what I subtract from the photo and carries the energy forward.

The series shown here portrays vendors, objects, and street textures with humor and precision. How do you balance critical observation with affection for your subjects?

When I photograph vendors, objects, or street scenes, I try to approach them as both a participant and a witness. I notice quirks, improvisations, and contrasts — the things that might feel amusing, unusual, or chaotic — but I never see them as flaws. There is a human rhythm to these scenes that I deeply respect, and my affection comes from understanding the effort, creativity, and resilience behind these small arrangements of everyday life.

I’m always in touch with the people I photograph. I talk to them, show them the photos, and involve them in the process. Even the presentational photoshoot for this series was done right in the market, and the vendors were helping me — arranging objects, adjusting displays, or just encouraging me. Humor appears naturally because life in the streets is often playful, but it is never at the expense of the people I photograph. By focusing on their inventiveness, energy, and the logic behind their arrangements, I can observe critically while maintaining warmth, trust, and intimacy. In a way, being connected to my subjects is what allows me to see them clearly.

What does “identity” mean to you in the context of contemporary Armenian visual culture?

To me, identity in Armenian visual culture is layered, fluid, and constantly in dialogue with its own past. It is not a single, fixed narrative; it emerges from the intersections of history, daily life, craft, architecture, and personal expression. Contemporary Armenian identity is visible in the way people arrange their homes, how markets organize themselves, the typography on a shop sign, or the gestures and habits that travel across generations.

I see identity as both inherited and invented. Artists, designers, and ordinary people all participate in shaping it — sometimes by preserving traditional forms, sometimes by distorting or recombining them in ways that reflect contemporary life. In my own work, I’m drawn to the fragments that reveal this tension: traces of the past alongside hints of globalization, subtle gestures that feel unique to Armenia yet resonate universally. Identity, for me, is the ongoing conversation between memory, environment, and creativity — a living, visible pulse of culture.

Eugenia Babini

I'm an Italian illustrator and photographer based in Milan. My work as an illustrator began with a trip to South Korea, where I used my Moleskine to draw landscapes, people, and situations, all live. This trip became a book. The format has remained the same as the travel illustration, in black and white style and done in ink full of details.





Raul Farias is Portuguese, although he initially graduated in Architecture. He maintained his passion for drawing and painting, which later led him to pursue a degree in Visual Arts. As a child, he discovered his talent for drawing and painting, but was primarily inspired by masters such as Salvador Dalí and Pablo Picasso, creating his own style to represent his inspirations.

A self-taught artist, he honed his techniques over the years. His works often feature strong, vibrant colors, using everyday life, landscapes, and people as sources of inspiration, creating distorted images or simply representing what he sees, yet clearly conveying his intentions and inspirations.

In his work, he emphasizes the lightness of curved lines and the depth of feeling in each concept or moment represented, creating a poetry of shapes, colors, and emotions, offering the viewer the opportunity to experience a moment of pleasure and reflection before the work. He believes that art primarily serves to connect people through a universal language: feeling, leading each observer to a unique experience. He draws and paints what he feels, conveying a simple message: the greatest works of art that exist are people, landscapes, and life.

Project Statement

Art is the realm of encounters and disagreements between reality and imagination, where we express what we see and feel. I draw inspiration from everyday life, from the people and places I see, from scenes that go unnoticed in the hustle and bustle of the world, adding my own personal touch to how I see and feel.

Simple scenes like a person reading a newspaper in a square are enough to create something that captures attention and inspires reflection, because in art we find a way to express to the world what many don't see or don't want to see.

Raul Farias | Community | 2024





Raul Farias | Forms | 2024

Ivana Babic is a multidisciplinary artist and designer based in Milan. Her visual work explores the thresholds between visible and invisible worlds — where identity, memory, and transformation intertwine. Through acrylic paintings, poetic symbolism, and layered compositions, she creates dreamlike spaces inhabited by hybrid figures, birds, roots, and fragments of time. Her artistic language bridges reality and imagination, guided by a fascination for archetypes, nature, and the unseen forces shaping human consciousness. Babic's work has been exhibited internationally and featured in publications such as 100 Artisti d'Italia. She is also the author of the bilingual poetry collection *Tra i Mondi / Između Svetova*, which deepens her exploration of the intersections between the outer world and the inner one — where visible and invisible realities meet.

Project Statement

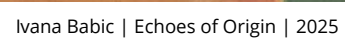
My work explores the fragile intersections between memory, identity, and the natural world. Through a fusion of abstraction and figurative elements, I create visual narratives that evoke a sense of transition, emotional entanglement, and existential reflection.

In my paintings, nature and human presence intertwine, forming a delicate balance between the physical and the ethereal. Birds, trees, and organic textures emerge as symbols of freedom, guidance, and transformation, while fragmented figures and geometric structures represent the shifting landscapes of our inner and outer worlds. The connection between humans and animals in my work reflects a shared experience of solitude, resilience, and migration—a reminder that we, like nature, are in constant motion, shaped by time and environment.

My process involves layering textures, deconstructing forms, and integrating raw, expressive lines to create compositions that feel both structured and fluid, much like the patterns found in nature. The earthy tones and muted hues reflect the duality of experience—the known and the unknown, the past and the future, the seen and the unseen.

Ultimately, my work is a meditation on the invisible threads that bind us to one another and to the natural world. It speaks of the quiet, unspoken dialogue between humans, animals, and the landscapes we inhabit—inviting the viewer to pause, reflect, and find meaning in the spaces between presence and absence.





— Interview

Cellographic

How did the idea of transforming a traditional cello into a translucent, projection-based instrument first come to you?

It began with a very different idea. My original plan was to rebuild a cello out of translucent acrylic, embedding music-sequenced LEDs and a reflective backing to create an infinity-mirror cello. During construction, I realized that while visually striking, it felt limited—more of a novelty than a work of art. I wanted to create something with greater artistic depth. My build partner, Keith Vic, and I started brainstorming new directions. Our next idea was to use the cello's interior as a miniature art installation space for micro-artists, who could submit small sculpted environments to be placed inside the instrument. We planned to design a servo-controlled camera system with a moving fisheye lens to explore these environments, projecting the live feed onto a screen behind the performance. We're still considering that concept for a future project.

Ultimately, we shifted toward video projection for two main reasons. First, the mechanical camera setup seemed too fragile for touring—if it failed, the whole concept would be compromised. Also, we discovered a compact, ultra-short-throw projector perfectly suited for close mounting to the cello. That technology became the key that made Cellographic possible.

What challenges did you face when reconstructing the cello with acrylic materials, and how did you overcome them?



In the year or so that it took to develop cellographic, we would meet most a couple of times per month to spend an afternoon building the cello together. In that time we overcame a number of challenges. One challenge we had was that our first attempt at creating a translucent fingerboard was fouled by air bubbles in the resin we poured. So I created a new mold and repoured while applying some suction to pull the air bubbles from the just poured resin. Another challenge has been that Cellographic is quite heavy and cellos are not constructed to withstand the forces inherent in a project like this. Our solution was for Keith to fabricate a custom threaded and sleeved bolt system with recessed nuts that would connect rear and front panels together though the instruments original brace points, we essentially reinforced the instrument with steel rods at the same locations where the cello's original creators had built in supports.

How does the projected imagery influence your music in real time? Do you compose with visuals in mind, or do visuals come after the music?

Ah what comes first, the chicken or the egg. In this case the music comes first, these themes are first improvised live in front of an audience. When I compose a theme that I really enjoy, they most often evoke feelings and visions to me. Some after performance interpretations become so strong that I won't remember the original thought or emotion that spawned the theme, the new thought/vision becomes the meaning. A good example of this is the song Krypton, 4th song on my Apollo's Reach LP (available on all streaming platforms except for Spotify 🇵🇸). The morning I first played this song I was feeling particularly emotional, I can't remember why. But it brought out this powerfully sad but yearning voice. After the song was performed and I was listening back to it, I imagined it being the music for a planet that was lost in an instant of destruction, an explosion that in a sudden and brief moment ended the lives of millions, an unfathomable tragedy. This song became not about that defining moment but about the dust and ashes exploding outward, the final echoes of a civilization, drifting through space and time for eternity. That meaning became fundamental to the song and greatly influences my feelings when listening to or

performing the theme.

Another big part of this process was born out of a related creative project. Back in 2023, I reached a landmark moment in my music career. I had been living in some degree of isolation, at least musically. My day job and other life duties had pushed cello into the background of my life for a number of years. Between 2016 and 2023 I had only 1 public performance. I spent so much of that time honing my looping skills and developing a catalog of themes. It was in 2023 that I realized I needed to break out and get my music out into the public. As part of that outreach, I began to create music videos from vintage footage that I found on archive.org. That process of creating music, identifying/defining its core meanings, seeking footage that captures that spirit and editing it to display with my music all began in this moment. It was a powerful time. I went on an intense creative marathon effectively making 59 music videos in 59 consecutive days. I have slowed the output a bit these days but overall I created 70 music videos that can still be viewed @scottallencello on instagram and YouTube.

Your music blends classical training with effects, looping, and improvisation. How do you balance structure and spontaneity during live performances?

Well I am, by my nature, a very unstructured person. I have a pretty severe form of ADHD. As a result, I flow from moment to moment, neither looking far ahead or behind, like a bumble bee hopping from flower to flower. It is like this with music as well. I come to my performances with no idea what I am going to play. In any given moment, I might compose a completely new and unique theme or dial in a theme previously recorded on my looper. Once I make these choices, I simply follow where they lead. I never think my way through the process, I feel. If I'm thinking, I'm not doing my work properly and I probably won't like what I play. It's very essential for me as a player to enter a psychedelic, meditative dream state where my mind shuts down and my body takes over. I might think for a moment at the beginning of a tune about how I'm going to define the chord progression I'm following, but beyond that initial moment, I'm likely day dreaming, thinking what I'm going to do later or about a conversation I had the day before, meanwhile my body is playing and my observer mind has been effectively removed from control, instead it's there to appreciate. I have moments all the time where I'm playing and a sequence goes by that I think is really cool, I'm observing it like an outsider, the thought, 'Wow, look at that series of notes I just played', flitting across my mind as the notes echo through the air, meanwhile my body continues on uninterrupted. So intrinsically, it's all about the magic of spontaneity for me. But with the Cellographic performances, since there has been pre-edited video created, I now have to go into my performance with a loop in mind and a trajectory for that loop that fits the content. This has been an interesting learning process. One that I am still responding to. This project is in constant development and I fully expect that this project's relationship of music and video will continue to evolve as I collaborate with other artists and as the project matures.

You describe your style as "psychedelic thematic space cowboy experimental blues." Could you elaborate on what this means to you?

Well we live in a time when everyone wants to know what your genre is. That is hard when you play my feral brand of electric cello. Is my music classical, no but it's certainly inspired and informed by my classical upbringing. Is my music rock, no but it has beats some times and is built on repeated chords in a structure. Is it Jazz, no but often the themes meaning really takes shape after I've found the hook. None of these larger genre's effectively captures what I am doing so defining my music has been a challenge. I tried to narrow it down to something digestable this description is one I've used because it captures some of my identity. I guess if I had to reduce myself into the smallest linguistic unit, I would call my music psych-cello or psychedelic cello because my creativity is born of that strong current of psychedelic dreams that flows through me as I play. A current of musical inspirations that flow through me like feelings. I have lately been thinking of it as a soundtrack to life's experiences, like themes to a day dream.

What role does storytelling play in your performances, both musically and visually?

Storytelling is to me as an interpreter is to a speaker of a foreign language. My music is without words but has meaning. The notes and the feelings that I play define an emotional journey that I share with my audience. After I've interpreted one of my themes, I discover a story that captures the spirit and intention of my song in ways I didn't imagine in it's first playing. As I mentioned with the story about the song, Krypton, this applied meaning becomes fundamental to the song as it moves away from me and to the minds of my audience.

Cellographic seems to be as much about visual art as about music. Do you see yourself primarily as a musician, a visual artist, or a hybrid of both?

I am certainly a musician first. Expressing visual arts has always been important to me, a desire to create vision that evokes meaning is a very strong appeal and one that I'm constantly exploring as a graphic artist, video editor, and functional sculpturist. But performing cello is more than just an interest or desire, it satisfies a need, a need to express my heart and soul, a need to be seen in my most open and vulnerable moments, and to feel that connection with my audience, to be known in my deepest and most profound moments.



Qi Liu is an artist living and working in Los Angeles. Her practice explores social issues, including gender and environmental concerns, through reflective and dialogic approaches. She often interrogates her own perspectives and invites viewers to engage with the questions her work raises. By examining the intersections of society, nature, and personal experience, Liu aims to create pieces that encourage reflection, dialogue, and heightened awareness of pressing contemporary topics. Her work seeks to foster connections among individuals, prompting audiences to reconsider the world around them.

Project Statement

"QiQi Chairs Fair" consists of one hundred uniquely styled chairs. Chairs are highly practical pieces of furniture in households. They have simple and functional designs. Having several supporting legs and a flat surface to bear the weight is enough, the rest of the design serves as embellishments. We seldom expect chairs to have intricate mechanisms or provide astonishing user experiences, as they are fundamentally the most basic furniture.

Chairs are used in a wide range of scenarios, whether for dining, working, or socializing with friends, where we seek comfort and relaxation. However, when asked about the most important piece of furniture in your home, you probably will not immediately think of "chairs." After all, chairs are too simple and commonplace.

To me, women in society and in families are akin to chairs. Regardless of how chairs are designed, chairs are always chairs. We have numerous requirements for chairs – they should be sturdy, durable, comfortable, stable, and so forth. When discussing chair requirements, we would list a series of keywords, as nobody wants a "useless" chair. Similarly, society treats women as if they must be "useful" to be recognized.

Women must constantly play their roles well while also understanding their position in society. People expect women to be friendly, gentle, adept at household chores, caring, beautiful, slim, undemanding, unselfish, polite, modest, uncomplaining, and never engage in anything inappropriate... Most women have to deal with various expectations every day to gain societal approval. However, in the end, they may twisted into an inextricable knot.

"QiQi Chairs Fair" is dedicated to all women, hoping that they can possess the ability to think independently and strive to break free from traditional thinking patterns. Although the patriarchal society continues to impose various restrictions and oppressions on them, they can help and remind each other, preventing their peers from falling into the lies and gaslighting of the patriarchal society, and striving to break free from these shackles as soon as possible to embrace their true selves.

Lastly, although "chairs" will always be "chairs," they can also be unique and irreplaceable.

Qi Liu | QIQI Chairs Fair | 2024





Ojolo (Abel García Jiménez) is a Mexican visual artist and creative director based in Mexico City. His work explores introspection, emotional memory, and daily delirium through digital media, painting, installation, and collage. With an aesthetic that fuses the brutal and the lyrical, he creates images that speak to viewers on a symbolic and sensory level. His background in design, visual storytelling, and global campaigns adds a unique communicative power to his artistic practice. He has been featured in digital platforms, emerging art calls, and independent curatorial spaces. Ojolo's goal is not just to exhibit but to provoke deep, intimate reactions—eyes that see differently, gazes that transform.

Project Statement

My work begins with intuition and chaos, an emotional archaeology in constant tension between the inner self and the collective. I work with fragments: dreamlike shards, overflowing symbols, textures that scrape memory. I explore the idea of seeing with different eyes, internal, stubborn, unsettling. Using digital tools, painting, and collage, I build visual spaces meant to disorient and reconnect. I don't aim for answers, but for resonance. Each piece is a grasp at what slips away: the unnamable, the uncertain, the burning that doesn't burn. My visual language merges the brutal and the poetic, because that's how I feel the human soul operates. In a world overloaded with empty images, I strive to create presence. Ojolo is the eye that looks within.

Ojolo – Abel García | Objective Eye | 2025





ojolo.com.mx

Esra Yesilli

You describe your art as a reflection of invisible scars caused by war, trauma, and the pursuit of money. How did these themes first begin to influence your work?

As I grew older and began to live more independently, I started reflecting deeply on both my past and the world around me. With maturity came a clearer understanding of how experiences—especially those tied to war, trauma, and the pressures of chasing money—leave marks that aren't always visible, but are deeply felt. These scars, whether personal or collective, began to surface in my thoughts and naturally found their way into my art. It became a way for me to process, question, and express what can't always be put into words.

What role does the color red play in your art, and how has its meaning evolved for you over time?

Red has always held a powerful presence in my life. As a child, it was my favorite color—bold, vibrant, and full of life. Over time, my preferences shifted and I explored other colors, thinking red no longer represented who I was. But when I returned to drawing, I realized red kept reappearing in my work, almost unconsciously. It became clear that red still lived in me.

To me, red symbolizes courage, visibility, and the feeling of being truly alive. Even as someone who feels both



extroverted and introverted, red somehow reflects that inner duality. It's loud and quiet at the same time. I once thought I didn't have a "red personality," but my art told me otherwise. Red also speaks for me when I stay silent. It shows the things I haven't said in my personal life—the thoughts and emotions I've kept inside. In that way, red becomes my voice. By being so bold and apparent in my work, it reveals that I do have something to say—even when I don't say it out loud.

Many of your pieces are filled with intricate patterns and symbolic elements. How do you decide which symbols to include in a work?

First of all, I still carry the curiosity of a child—something my friends often tease me about in a loving way. They find it funny and endearing, but for me, that curiosity is essential. It constantly pushes me to explore more—about life, the unknown, and everything in between.

When I learn something new, it settles somewhere deep in my mind. Later, when I begin drawing, those pieces of information resurface naturally and start connecting with each other—almost without my conscious effort. Somehow, my mind finds a correspondence between what I've learned and the patterns I create. It's like my own visual language, shaped by how I understand life.

I also keep a notebook where I write down ideas, emotions, and symbols that speak to me. It's an important part of my process. When a concept or image comes to mind, I often jot it down first—and eventually, I translate it onto the canvas through my own perspective.

That's why the intricate patterns in my work may not carry obvious meaning for others, but each one holds significance for me. They're not random; they are personal reflections, shaped by knowledge, emotion, and the silent connections I make between the two.

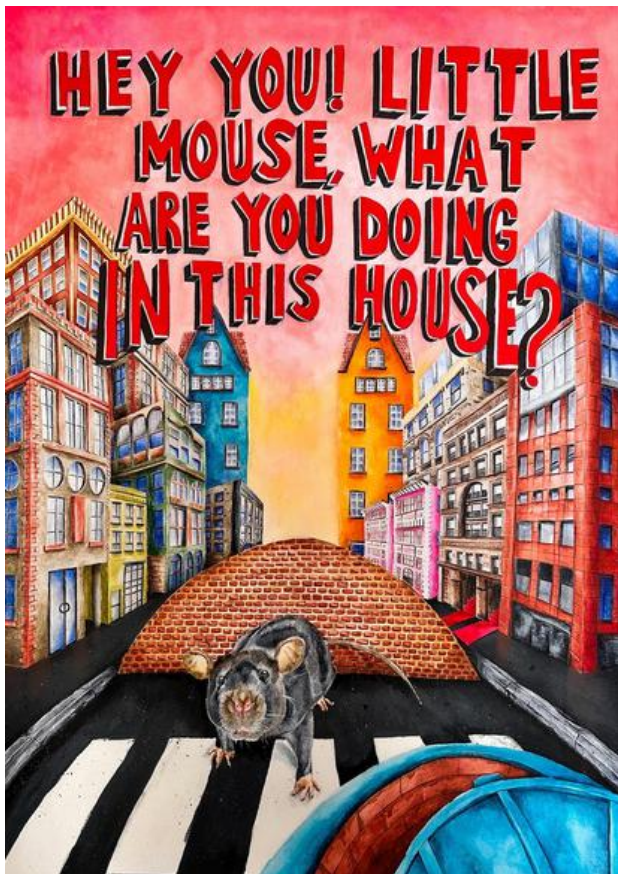
Nature appears in many of your works, often in surprising or metaphorical ways. What draws you to these natural forms?

I've always had a deep love for nature and animals. They comfort me, especially during difficult or sad moments. I often find myself speaking to them—not always with words, but through presence and emotion. Nature has a way of listening without judgment, and that makes it incredibly healing.

Living in a city surrounded by skyscrapers, buildings, and



Esra Yeşilli | Lonely Pluton Amidst The Billiard Balls | 2022



concrete, it's easy to forget where we come from—and where we truly belong. Through my art, I want to remind people that our true freedom, our sense of peace, still lives in nature. It's there we can rediscover life beyond the noise, beyond the concrete.

As I mentioned earlier, when I take in the world around me—especially nature—I reshape it in my mind. It transforms into something symbolic, something personal. That's why the natural elements in my work often appear metaphorical. They are not just trees or animals; they are reflections of emotions, memories, and meanings I carry within me.

Your works balance between digital and traditional mediums. How do you navigate that intersection in your creative practice?

At heart, I'm a traditional artist. I feel most connected to my work when I'm drawing or painting by hand—the textures, the imperfections, the physical process all feel more personal and emotional to me.

But because of my professional life as a designer, I've also become comfortable working digitally. Sometimes I turn to digital tools when I need to work quickly, experiment with ideas, or capture a moment of inspiration without overthinking. It allows for a kind of speed and flexibility that traditional media doesn't always offer.

I also enjoy keeping up with technology and exploring how it can complement my creative process, rather than replace it. For me, it's not about choosing one over the other—it's about letting each medium serve its purpose. Traditional work grounds me, and digital work keeps me moving forward.

As an artist based in Istanbul, how does the city's cultural and emotional atmosphere shape your art?

A friend once joked that Istanbul is the “Turkey version of China”—because it's just that crowded! And it's true—there's constant movement, noise, and energy. But beyond that, Istanbul is incredibly authentic and layered. What makes it truly special is the mix of cultures that coexist here in ways you rarely find elsewhere.

In one neighborhood, you might feel like you're in Europe, with its architecture and lifestyle. Just a few streets away, you're surrounded by a much more conservative, traditional atmosphere. This contrast is everywhere—in the people, in the streets, in the daily rhythm of the city.

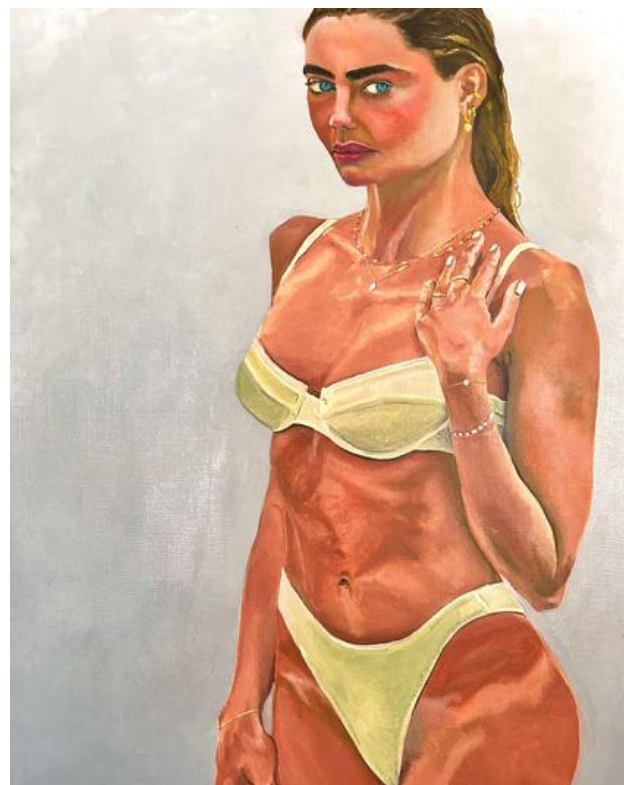
Istanbul is not just crowded—it's complex and intricate, much like my drawings. There's beauty in the chaos, stories in every corner, and a deep emotional atmosphere that you can't ignore. Being surrounded by such cultural diversity constantly inspires me. It reminds me that identity isn't fixed—it's made of layers, contradictions, and coexistence. Just like this city. Just like my art.

What message or feeling do you hope people take with them after viewing your work?

Some artists prefer to stay unseen—but for me, it's the opposite. I felt invisible for a long time, and now I want to be noticed through my art. I want people to feel that I have something to say—and that drawing is the only way I can truly express it.

We live in a world that's loud. Everyone is talking, but very few are really listening. Through my work, I'm saying, “Hey—stop for a moment. Just listen.” Art became my way of doing that. It became my way of being heard.

Creating is also my salvation. It's the space where I'm not judged, not criticized, and where I don't have to explain or justify myself to anyone. I hope that when people see my work, they not only see the colors and shapes, but feel the silence behind it—the need to be understood. And maybe, just maybe, it helps them feel a little more seen too.



Vojislava Jankovic

I'm Vojislava, self-taught artist based in Belgrade, Serbia. I make my art by using professional colored pencils to draw nature scenes, flowers, fruits, books... I hope to capture simple moments of ordinary life and things.

Vojislava Jankovic | Vase





03

— Interview

Brittany Ellis

Your works often feature a sense of movement—whether through swirling clouds or drifting stars. How do you approach the concept of time and motion in your art?

Clear and opaque swirls are added to the backgrounds of my space and cloud narratives to represent motion and movement, rather than serving as a representation of time. In my junior year of college, I began studying the artworks of Van Gogh and experimenting with assemblage materials. I aspired to integrate his principles of movement, balance, and texture into my paintings, but in ways that translated to my compositions. The acrylic swirls pay homage to Van Gogh's *Starry Night*, representing turbulent flow. The swirls are clear within the paintings to avoid overworking the complexity of the composition, while also revealing the layers beneath the surface.



Brittany Ellis | Havana Summer Night



Brittany Ellis | In The Beginning

You incorporate a variety of tactile materials—wood, paper, glitter, and paint. How do you choose which textures to use for a specific piece?

The textures I use vary based on the concept for each composition I'm creating. The artworks I create often possess the staple materials of acrylic, glitter paper, and a molding material such as clay or papier-mâché. After each artwork's completion, I review the artwork and decide if it needs other materials that would enhance the artwork. I am very careful to review the artwork in the final stages to avoid overworking the art.

Many of your works feature books and pages as central motifs. What books or authors have personally inspired your artistic vision?

I would read many science-based textbooks when I was younger that sparked my love of science, which I began to meld with my love of art. As an adult, my artworks are inspired by instances, moments, or even objects I have seen that spark an idea for the compositions I create. The books I decide to paint in color are models after art books I possess, based on artists such as Helen Lundeborg, Van Gogh, and art history textbooks.

Can you describe a moment when an unexpected material or "mistake" transformed a piece for the better?

I've never made a mistake that transformed any of my works because usually the mistakes I've made are detrimental, being issues that can cause structural effects. There are always unexpected materials that I



use that have become signature materials within the paintings I create. Celluclay from Activa products has become a staple material I began to use in the majority of my paintings. I became familiar with Celluclay in a mixed media course I took in college. At first, the material was hard to use until I began using it as a material enhancer to the sculpture forms, I began using. I first began using the material to strengthen structures I was creating, until I began experimenting with the material to form structures.

Some of your works include grids, charts, and numbers. Are these references to science, or do they carry symbolic meaning for you?

Using a grid is a reference to scientific elements as well as a representation of the viewer and daydreamer transitioning from reading to the realm of imagination, in addition to the vertical format of the artwork. Although the text at the bottom of the narratives is seen as an afterthought, they are still a feature that grounds the viewer within the narrative. Whether they begin to question why it's there or notice the stark difference in texture to the smooth section of the canvas, the separation is there as a juxtaposition of the differences between the daydream and reality.

Your pieces feel both dreamlike and structured. How do you balance free expression with intentional composition?

Being artistically aware is how I balance expression with my intentional compositions. I've always been an

aware artist who painted with feelings, which allowed me to know when to stop painting to avoid overworking them.

What role does color play in your storytelling, especially the frequent use of blues and silvers?

Phthalo blue is a prominent color that I use in almost all of the space-themed paintings I create. I experimented with various blue colors, such as ultramarine, cerulean, and cobalt, before I gravitated to Phthalo blue. I loved the versatility of the depth, the tone, and the color possessed from light applications vs dark applications. I wanted to express a realistic representation of space with some colors our eyes aren't able to capture, being able to see only the visible light spectrum.

You mentioned "transitioning from reality into the daydream state." Are there any recurring symbols in your art that represent that moment of crossing over?

There aren't any symbols that represent the transition; however, there are elements I incorporate to represent the stark distinction, such as the flat aspects of the painting vs the bold 3D elements. Books, being a 3D element that sparked the daydream, are a marker of reality, while the flat parts of the composition, such as the flat text and areas that lack texture, are not.



Ariel Williams is an oil painter and art educator born and raised in Central New Jersey. Her art focuses on her roots and confronting her greatest insecurities. Many of her works are a visual account of her experiences battling chronic illness, emotional well being, and body issues. Each piece she creates is a mix of sweetness and nature which evolves into a self portrait of the artist as well as a glimpse of a surreal ecosystem. Her goal is to expose hard truths and emotions through visual means that audiences of all walks of life may relate too. Her works have been featured in various local and international exhibitions, magazines and art books.

Project Statement

Cake is meant to be something beautiful and desirable, but that is not always the case. This series started out as a way to communicate the emotions that came with the low points in my life, that I struggled to process on my own. During the lifespan of the average human being, we go through ups and downs. Sometimes our downs feel like more than we can handle, and can be difficult to express in words.

In this series, I tackle chronic illness, mental health, body issues, and grief using visual symbolism. The use of fungi, insects, and other creatures helps to create a visual representation of emotions and physical insecurities. I am inspired by the symbols and meanings of different parts of nature within various cultures, myths, and religions. The meanings and symbols help to paint a clear picture as the cakes decay and fill with nature.

The symbols in these paintings display duality, each symbol has positive and negative attributes and is a common theme that can be found throughout my art. For example, mushrooms are a sign of death and decay of an underground root system and other organic matter. Mushrooms can be symbiotic, they can be used as medicines and hold healing powers but coming in contact with the wrong mushrooms can be your biggest downfall, they can cause illness, or death. The tunnel systems throughout the series are a sign of life and a symbol of the ugliness and pain hidden under the surface of sugar and frosting. The duality helps to create a story and a cautionary tale where you can't judge a book by its cover, until you see what's underneath.

Ariel Williams | A Slice of Turmoil with Chaos and Vanilla Frosting | 2024





Ariel Williams | Sweet Growth | 2024

— Interview

Terrence Chambers



When did you first start drawing, and what inspired you to pursue traditional art?

It's hard to pinpoint when exactly I first started drawing. It's safe to say that it all began either before or after I started elementary school. Like most beginning artists, I started out doing stick figures before everything evolved in time. Among the things that inspired me to pursue traditional artistry are T.V. shows (cartoons in particular), comic books, and children's books. Inevitably, these gave me the knowledge to create my own stories in the later years. In the beginning, I drew my own cartoons until I decided to try my hand at making other forms of art, just to add to my credentials. While I have participated in art classes in school, I pretty much became a self-taught artist, which paid dividends for me here and there.

You mentioned being a member of The Center for Emerging Visual Artists - how has this experience influenced your artistic development?

Truth be told, I've only been a member The Center for Emerging Visual Artists (or CFEVA for short) for a year and a half now. So my experience hasn't been that big. Add on to the fact that my involvement with CFEVA has been limited due to my strict work schedule in my hometown, among other things. However, I continue to be on the lookout for any special occasions hosted by CFEVA, as well as other opportunities to showcase my craft and do some networking. In recent times, I've submitted some artwork for some exhibitions on at least a couple of occasions. Unfortunately, my efforts came to nought. While my experience wtyh CFEVA has been mixed at best, I'm still watching out for future opportunities with them.

Which materials and techniques do you most enjoy working with, and why?

Since my art is more traditional, the materials I've used tend to vary. Usually, these materials consist of artist pencils, as well as special artist pens. I've also utilized ordinary office supplies (#2 Pencils, rulers, etc.) whenever necessary. My style is very simplistic: freehand drawing/sketching/illustrating. One of my more favorite technique I enjoy the most is adding details, including shading, in order to make an image stand out for a sense of authenticity. All the same, I've made it my point to keep both my style and technique pretty consistant.

Several of your drawings convey strong social messages -

Terrence Chambers | Deadly Diabetes Grip | 2025





from health awareness to global unity. What inspires the themes behind these works?

It's actually very simple: most of these projects were inspired by current events as well as my own personal experiences in life. Health issues, especially among the less fortunate, are one topic that always require some strict attention. One health problem I continue to cope with is Diabetes (diagnosed since October of 2001). A recent artpiece I made was my way of showing how my condition has affected me while also giving me the strength to deal with it. As for global unity, it should come to no surprise that I'd made world peace-centric artwork owing to the chaotic and unnerving times we live in. One such project I've made features a dove. Since the dove is referenced in The Bible (The Book of Genesis to be exact), it's only appropriate that at least one of pieces of art features a dove. An acquaintance of mine once commented that there should be more peace on Earth, something I agreed with 100%. Whatever the topic may be, I'm hoping to use my talents to not only raise awareness on these issues but to also send a message to the world at large for the sense of making a change for the better.

Your works combine vivid color with comic-style storytelling - do you see them as part of a larger narrative or world you are building?

I'd have to say it's a combination of both. Drawing cartoons has always been one of the things I love to draw the most. So it was inevitable that create my own universe. Yes, I enjoy doing my own storytelling and world building. But at the same time, I also wanted to write stories that focused on particular real-life issues: child abuse, poverty, bullying, climate change, to name some. After all, art tends to imitate life. These are topics I feel a certain way about owing to my own experiences over the years. Like most writers and artists, I'm also utilizing my art to not only entertain but to also educate, especially when it comes to writing stories that resonates and draws parallels to real-world issues. For instance, when drawing editorial cartoons or any other piece of art, the purpose is to make things relatable and appealing to everyday people. For a sense of doing a public service, my hope is for any organization to reach out to me, seeking my talents to either write a story, or at least do some piece of art, help raise awareness, and reflect, on society's ills.

What message or feeling do you hope people take away after viewing your work?

While this may sound like a longshot, I'm hoping to use my artistic skills to give the general public, including the children, some hope for a better and brighter tomorrow. Likewise, at the very least, I'm also hoping to inspire others to take up the creative arts so that it would give them a chance to express themselves about the world around them in a certain way. For those who are already pursuing a career in the arts, I'd encourage them to use their gifts to not only entertain but to also make strides to help make a change. Should they come across an opportunity to utilize their talents to send a positive message for the better, they should seize. There's always more than one way to make a difference in a rapidly changing world. And most of all, never give up on your dreams, no matter what.

If you could use one of your drawings to inspire change, which one would it be - and why?

If there's one drawing that I'd use to inspire social change it would have to be one of my world peace-related artworks. As mentioned earlier, we live in a very dark and scary time, especially when there's way too much hatred, war, and poverty. Needless to say, there's hardly any togetherness among society, wherein a lot of guys couldn't make peace with each other. It's a time of great uncertainty, but it doesn't have to be all gloom and doom. Humans can get organized and get better for the sake of change for a better and brighter tomorrow. Should my artwork succeed in helping establish global unity someday, in some trickle down effect, then dealing with the rest of society's ills would be easy if everybody works together. More importantly, global unity begins with our children if we teach them well. I'd like to thank some of my relatives, friends and acquaintances who make up my support system, and assisted me throughout my endeavors. It really means a lot.



Cecilia Turrubiates (based in 2004, Houston) is an open book artist in which their works take on illustrating, photo, and digital media. Growing in a local environment that had many artistic eyes to judge, they had developed a heartedly interest for design and drawing. By always using several formats on paper, taking it on a device expanded their imagination. They have been in college and will graduate with an Arts & Design Certificate for Associates this December 12, 2025, in San Jacinto College.

Cecilia's work dives into the distinct and familiar mannerisms they have learned throughout their childhood years. Now, by applying more of the collective techniques of light and shadow, as well with implementing photos and effects to them. Their works usually are monochromatic/B&W but with objects that represent the settings that they appeared to be in, this can signify many meanings rather than one for users to delve more into their imaginations of what this memory can make it into fluidity.

With an Adobe Certified Professional certificate received in high school in Dr. Kirk Lewis Career and Technical High School, this is only the beginning to apply more knowledge towards many of the Adobe programs that are needed for this pathway.

Based in Houston, Cecilia is continuing to pursue the career of Graphic Design to adapt more findings into future works for their own digital designs.

Cecilia Turrubiates | Stillnessin Memories | 2025





— Interview

Trupti Dave Wehner

Your work bridges chemistry, physics, and art. How do you see the relationship between scientific discovery and artistic creation?

The most common thing between artists and scientists is that they always ask questions, no matter what. The distinction between them is a modern age phenomenon. Until the late sixteenth century the artists were also alchemists in search of the materials – pigments which they were using for their paintings or in search of formula to understand the world, the so called “Philosopher’s stone”.



Trupti Dave Wehner | Pyramid



You mentioned that your paintings come “from Galaxy into Gallery.” Could you tell us more about how cosmic origins inspire your creative process?

Yes. When I started spending my time intensively with painting many questions came to my mind. What is a color chemically and how it is made. A journey to find answers to these questions led me finally to the origin of life itself. We are literally and actually children of the stars. Every atom of calcium in every bone in our bodies, every atom of iron in our blood, was shot out of a star billions of years ago. The three cosmic stages through which the chemical elements were formed are:

1. Soon after the big bang, nucleosynthesis formed the light elements: H-Hydrogen, He-Helium, and Li-Lithium.
2. Stellar formation and evolution formed heavier elements from Be-Beryllium to Fe-Iron.
3. Stellar explosion, or supernova, formed the elements heavier than Fe-Iron.

Let us take the three basic pigments, red, yellow and blue. In the past, Cinnabar red which is Mercury sulfide, was used as red pigment. Cobalt aluminate was used for blue and Cadmium sulfide was used for yellow pigment. These are heavier elements than iron and were formed during the formation of Galaxies or stellar explosions. So, I thought all paintings come from galaxy into gallery! This always inspired me and also reflects in my paintings.

How do you choose the colors and materials you use — do you think about their chemical composition while painting?



Yes, I do.

Now a days, not only pigments but also many organic dyes are used. So, when I take blue color in my hand I think of Cobalt as metal and which chemical form of this metal is used to make this color, that I am taking out of the tube. Why Prussian Blue is different than Ultramarine Blue? Because they are chemically different materials. Blue is a very special pigment and plays a very crucial role in the art history. For example, naturally occurring Lapis lazuli was used as blue pigment and mainly used for sacral paintings because it was as precious as Gold. In 1824 a French chemist Jean-Baptiste Guimet developed a chemical process to synthesize ultramarine. After that an industrial production made it accessible to common use. So, chemistry played an important role in the development of art.

As someone who has worked in the chemical industry, what led you to transition from laboratory research to artistic experimentation?

In history, art and chemistry or alchemy were always two sides of a coin. Artists were inspired by alchemists and alchemists made art possible. Jan Stradanus (1525-1605), a Flemish artist who worked for the Medici paid homage to alchemists in his famous painting "Alchemist Laboratory" (now in Palazzo Vecchio, Florence).

Many of your paintings seem to reflect the birth of matter or life. Do you consider them as visual metaphors for nucleosynthesis and evolution?

Yes, my paintings reflect different imaginary phases of a process of how life was formed on earth – from primordial soup to the formation of an eukaryotic cell. I try to imagine how a cosmic second in the cosmos would have looked like during a certain phase of evolution. I try to transform an imaginary forest of molecules into aesthetic visible forms.

When combining digital and acrylic painting with polymeric materials, what kinds of textures or effects are you aiming to achieve?

My digital paintings are made on i-pad. These virtual paintings are made of just light. But when I print them on acrylic sheet, they become matter. The same phenomenon happened in the universe. Light became matter. One of my exhibitions of digital paintings and plastics was on "Light and Matter". One object I made with such printed acrylic sheets is a trigonal pyramid. Ammonia was the first molecule in the early earth atmosphere. It has a structure of a trigonal pyramid. Amino acids, the building blocks of human life were synthesized in the primordial soup from ammonia, methane and water.

Do you think that your scientific background gives you a unique perspective on light, color, and energy in visual art?

Light carries information. Pigment or dye is the chemical substance that imparts color, while color is what the human eyes see. We see the light as wavelengths reflected or absorbed by that substance. Light transports energy.



Giorgio Lupano, born in Vercelli on November 5, 1964, is a photographic artist whose work stands out for his mastery in using light as an expressive tool. His artistic research unfolds within a culturally rich environment, where every shot becomes a visual story filled with meaning. His ability to paint with light allows him to create evocative images that capture not only the attention but also the emotions of the viewer. His works, characterized by meticulous attention to detail and an original interpretation of reality, have been featured in numerous exhibitions both nationally and internationally, solidifying his reputation within the contemporary art scene. Giorgio Lupano is a point of reference for those seeking an innovative language in photographic art, placing at the center of his poetics the dialogue between light and shadow, reflection and immediate visual impact.

The Artistic Narrative of Giorgio Lupano: A Journey Through Light and Shadow

Giorgio Lupano, an artist whose creativity is expressed through a visual language rich in meaning, invites the viewer to embark on a unique narrative journey within the contemporary art landscape. His artworks do not merely represent inanimate elements through lights and shadows that define the artistic scene; they act as windows into intimate reflections and profound explorations of the human soul. Each shot created by the artist is an invitation to enter a universe of imagination, where shadows dance in synergy with light, giving life and harmony to artistic scenes and evocative compositions.

In his studio, enveloped in darkness, the artist uses a specially designed flashlight to illuminate these hidden worlds. This choice requires technical mastery that goes far beyond the simple act of photographing. Light becomes an "invisible" instrument, capable of emphasizing forms and textures, igniting latent emotions in every artwork. Lupano does not simply capture images; he creates atmospheres — visual stories in which every object becomes a symbol and a means of communication.

The artistic scenes he composes are the result of thoughtful inner research and palpable sensitivity. Every element is carefully selected and placed with precision, demonstrating his desire to control the interaction between light and shadow. In this creative process, lighting plays a crucial role: it evokes suggestions, reveals otherwise invisible details, while at the same time concealing aspects, stimulating the viewer's curiosity. It is in the interplay between light and scenic composition that Giorgio Lupano's true art is revealed, allowing the observer to explore not only the context of the artwork but also their own inner world.

Giorgio Lupano's artistic journey is not only a celebration of his singular vision; it is an invitation to reflect on the power of the image and on the ability of art to evoke emotions. Each of his artworks becomes a story that transcends time and space, allowing his creations to be experienced as intimate and deeply personal encounters.

Giorgio Lupano | Thread of Light | 2025





Giorgio Lupano

Vincenzo Guarneri

Born in Sicily, Italy, on July 29, 2007, **Vincenzo Guarneri** has demonstrated remarkable creativity and a natural talent for the arts since childhood. Influenced by his father, an architect, he was introduced early to the fascinating world of architecture; a discipline that soon became both his passion and future aspiration.

He currently studies at the "F. Juvara" Art High School in San Cataldo, Sicily, specializing in Architecture. Through his school path, he deepens his understanding of visual arts and architecture while taking part in exhibitions, competitions, and personal creative projects.

Vincenzo views architecture as a primordial art form, that is a meeting point of all artistic disciplines. His work explores the dialogue between visual arts, design, and architecture, focusing on form perception, aesthetics, and linearity. Passionate about spreading architectural culture, he is committed to making this art more accessible and appreciated by a wider audience. During his formative years, Vincenzo Guarneri is already taking confident steps toward a promising future in the artistic and architectural fields.

Project Statement

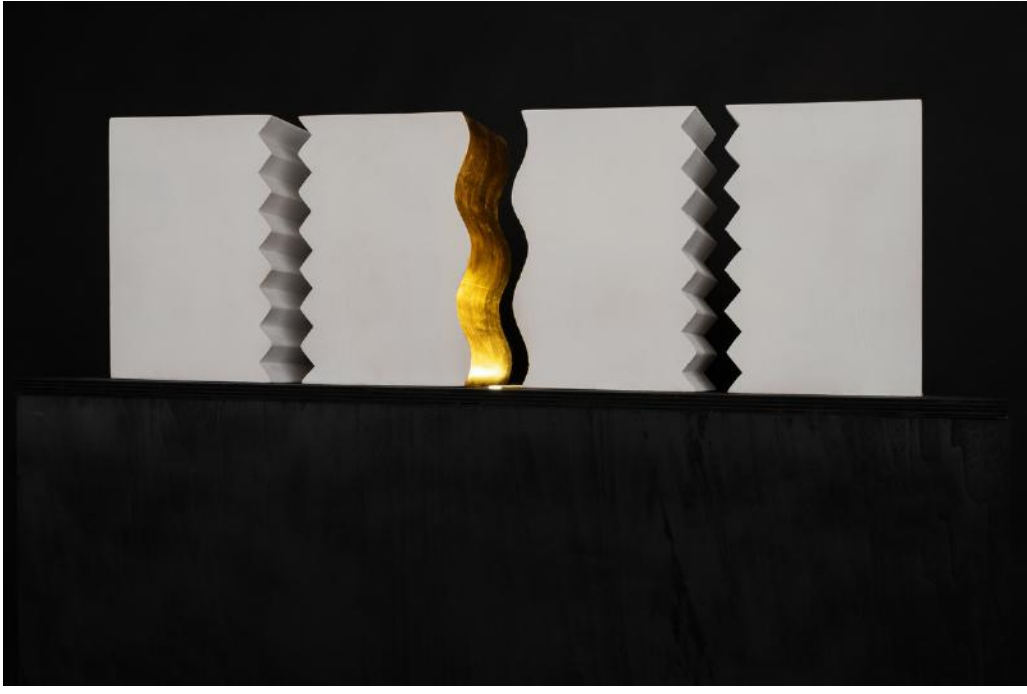
The minimalist work "Imperfetti Connessi" (Connected Imperfections) was born from the idea of developing primitive, linear, and minimalist forms guided by a strict sense of order, which in turn gives rise to elegance.

The project is inspired by the quote: "There is no a perfect person, only someone whose imperfections align with our own". This concept became the foundation for the stylistic, conceptual, and philosophical development of the sculpture. The work which is a symbol of the act of union is showed in the form of a sculpture, the two outer sections present broken, mismatched forms, evoking the idea of disconnection and failed alignment. In the two lateral sections we found broken, that symbolised the disunion with the other element. The focus is in the central part, composed by two surface that follow the same undulating line where it shows a sense of continuity, fluidity and sensuality. The focal point is emphasized by the luminous gilding of the internal walls, which adds a sense of preciousness to the simple and linear composition. It is here where the message of the piece is concentrated. The sculpture is finished in white, symbolizing purity. The surface is intentionally left with visible veins and imperfections, revealing the natural essence of the material: wood.

From the center, the conceptual heart of the work emerges, it expresses the value of a union that can only be achieved through humility, a virtue that allows each of us to recognize our own flaws and align them with those of others. In this recognition, we find stability and elevation within our relationships.

On a philosophical level, "Imperfetti Connessi" draws inspiration from Plato's myth of the androgynous being. According to the myth, every human once had a perfect counterpart from whom they were separated at the beginning of time. Ever since, we have been in constant search of that missing. This narrative is showed in the artwork, which also welcomes individual interpretation and personal experience, as long as the original concept remains intact.

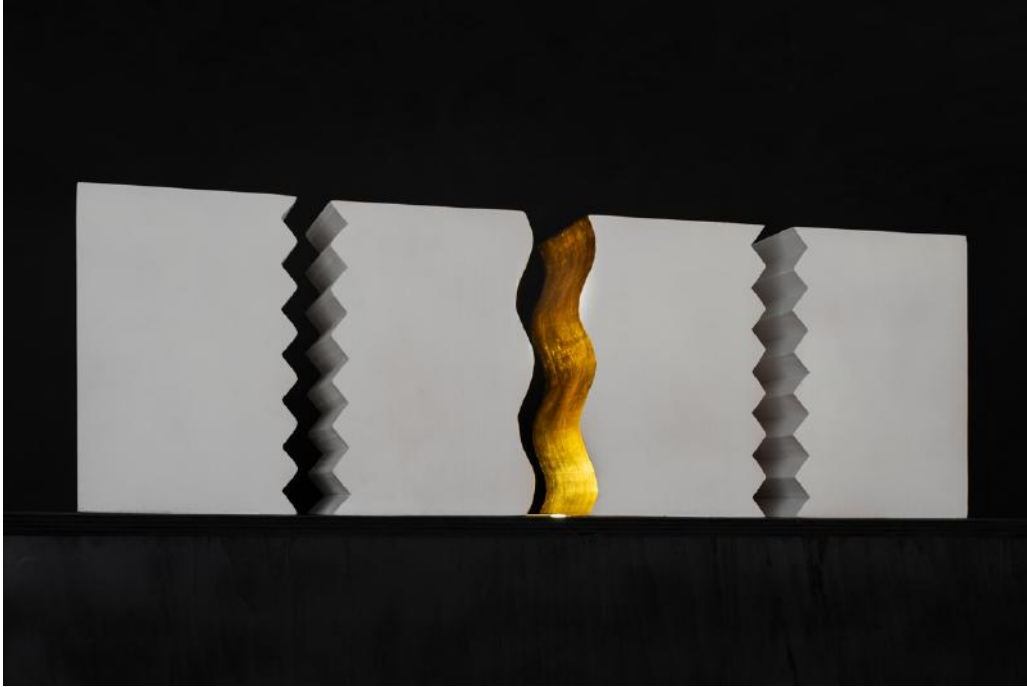
"Imperfetti Connessi" is a highly versatile work, applicable to fields such as architecture and design, which unites all artistic disciplines.



Vincenzo Guarneri | Imperfetti Connessi | 2025



Vincenzo Guarneri | Imperfetti Connessi | 2025



Vincenzo Guarneri | Imperfetti Connessi | 2025

Corinne Strazzieri



Your artistic journey began as a self-taught artist. What drew you to mosaic art, and what made you decide to explore it outside of academic traditions?

Yes, my path has indeed been that of a self-taught artist. I've always been very hands-on and taught myself all kinds of techniques (knitting, patchwork, embroidery, etc.). I discovered mosaic somewhat by chance, without trying to follow an academic path. What immediately fascinated me was the material, the gesture, the light that emerges from the fragments. There's something deeply human in this art: bringing together what is broken to restore unity and meaning.

I love the idea that beauty can arise from the fragment—that each piece, even if imperfect, carries a story and finds its place within a whole. Working independently has allowed me to explore freely, to cross mosaic with other fields, and to make it more contemporary, more instinctive.

Not having undergone traditional training has given me a precious freedom: to learn by experimenting, to listen to my intuition, and to let the material guide me. It is this living, sensory relationship with mosaic that continues to nourish my passion every day.

Your pieces seem to balance structure and emotion — how do you find harmony between geometry, texture, and spontaneity in your creative process?

The balance between structure and emotion is at the heart of my work. Structure is my anchor—a breathing space that allows me to build. But very quickly, the material takes over: I listen to it and let it carry me elsewhere.

Geometry draws me for its rigor, yet I like to unsettle it—step outside the frame, introduce an irregularity, an unexpected spark, an imbalance. That's where spontaneity enters and emotion emerges.

For me, harmony is born from this tension between control and letting go. Each piece is a meeting between the precision of the gesture and the freedom of feeling. What I seek is to make the material vibrate, to bring it to life, so that it speaks both to the eye and to the viewer's inner sensibility.

Many of your works feature circular and heart-shaped compositions. What symbolic meaning do these forms hold for you?

These forms recur in my work, almost instinctively. The circle and the heart are, for me, universal symbols: the circle evokes unity, continuous movement, life in perpetual transformation. It is soothing, almost meditative.

The heart speaks of emotion, connection, human warmth. It isn't a decorative motif, but a language. When I create a heart, I'm expressing a feeling, an energy, a breath. These forms often arise from an instinctive impulse, not a deliberate decision. They emerge when I'm in a state of listening, when the material speaks to me. I believe they reflect my need for connection, for balance, and perhaps also for gentleness in a world that sometimes lacks it.

There is a strong sense of movement and energy in your mosaics — what inspires this dynamic quality?



Corinne Strazzieri | Eclats De Joie | 2024



Movement is an integral part of my practice—and above all, of my temperament. I am always in motion, full of ideas and projects that carry me forward and help me grow. In my work, I perceive mosaic as a living material, in constant vibration. Each fragment participates in this flow. I'm not seeking to freeze an image, but to capture an energy, a breath.

The rhythm of the gesture and the way light moves between the tesserae create this impression of life. It's a language made of shards and silences, a way of telling a sensitive story in which each person can see what they wish, according to their mood and desire.

This dynamism also comes from my relationship with nature—its cycles and metamorphoses. To create is to be in connection with the living world around us. What I would like to convey is what animates me every day: that vitality, that joy of living that circulates through the material and the colors, like a luminous breath.

In your biography, you mention transforming everyday life into poetry. Could you share an example of a simple object or moment that inspired a piece?

Yes, I deeply love this idea of transforming the everyday into poetry. The most sincere emotions often arise from what seems insignificant. A detail, a light, a fragment of life can become the starting point for a work.

I'm thinking of a series inspired by objects kept in my studio, like a rusty tool that belonged to my father. Behind this ordinary object was the memory of a gesture, an emotion from childhood. From that trace I created a mosaic, seeking to capture the passage of time and the tenderness of memory. I even titled it "Fragments of Life."

Often, an object picked up on a walk—a shard of glass, the softness of a gesture—becomes raw material for creation. Mosaic art helps me reveal the hidden beauty in these simple moments, transforming the ordinary into a visual poem.

How do you see the role of light in your works, especially in the reflective materials you use?

Light is the guiding thread of all my work. It is not just a visual effect, but a living substance. When I compose, I think about how it will inhabit the piece, move through it, reflect, and change over the course of the day.

Mosaic has this magic: it captures, transforms, and diffuses light. Thanks to glass, mirrors, or metallic fragments, each work enters into dialogue with its environment. Nothing is ever fixed: a piece can seem gentle in the morning and vibrant at dusk.

Light connects the visible and the invisible; it breathes emotional energy into matter. When it catches on a tessera, I always feel as if it awakens its soul.

As a juror and mentor for other mosaic artists, what advice do you give to those who are just beginning to explore this art form?

I don't see myself as a mentor, but rather as a companion—especially in the art-therapy courses and workshops I lead. I tell them first and foremost to enjoy themselves, to listen to the material, and to stay curious. Mosaic is a unique language—one of slowness and precision, but also improvisation and freedom. Each fragment carries its own light, texture, and history. I encourage them to dare to step off the beaten path, to mix materials, to experiment. Contemporary mosaic is an endless field of exploration where color, light, volume, recycling, memory, and emotions intersect.

Finally, I remind them that it is a profoundly living art. It connects gesture to material, the past to the present. In this space of balance, true creative freedom is born—the kind that makes each person's joy and sensitivity resonate. And we all have a creative spirit, more or less hidden within us. I'm here to help bring it forth.



Konstantinos Katsamperis

Art student at the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki amateur illustrator.



Konstantinos Katsamperis | Unnoble Saviour | 2025



My name is **Tatyana Dayneko**, I am a photographer and visual artist. I have been working in photography for more than 15 years. I live in Krasnoyarsk. I am self-taught and began with various types of photography including family, wedding, and children's shoots. Over the course of my career, I have worked as a staff photographer and later became a studio director. I spent 3 years photographing for a children's modeling agency, then began collaborating with glossy magazines. For the past 6 years, I have been working with Stolnik magazine in Krasnoyarsk — shooting covers and major projects, as well as writing travel articles. I have extensive experience working as part of a team.

I studied at Eduard Kopysov's Institute of Visual Arts and I give lectures at the Krasnoyarsk Photo Club, which has been active for 10 years. I am also a mentor for photographers. Over the last year, I have been focusing more on creating art pieces using cyanotype on fabric, combined with bead and pearl embroidery in the traditional Russian technique "sazheniye po beli". My solo exhibition of cyanotypes is currently on display at the Krasnoyarsk Regional Library. Two of my photographic works are now being exhibited at PhotoARTEXPO in Saint Petersburg.

Project Statement

The project Silent Truth explores the connection between humans and nature — we exist as one whole. Nature penetrates us, and we are an inseparable part of each other. This unity is a truth understood without words. My preferred techniques are cyanotype and embroidery in the ancient Russian technique "sazheniye po beli", which is an essential part of Russian cultural heritage and my personal identity.

Dayneko Tata | The Silent Truth | 2025





— Interview

Nadja Elpida Murze

Your film 'Wanna Talk?' challenges traditional viewing by using QR codes in places like toilets and galleries. It invites audiences to experience cinema "in the wild." What sparked the idea of taking film out of the traditional screening space and into everyday environments?

Mischief.

The exact word that my co-director, Anastasia Shirmanova, used to describe this, and I couldn't agree more.

This year, I've been reading a book called "Film unseen, elements of a latent cinema", where the history of cinema is described as an iceberg.

An iceberg with a strong sense of hierarchy, where only 10-20% of films are produced and actually screened to a large audience.

It's manifested in bold statements like:

TOP 10 FILMS YOU MUST-WATCH BEFORE YOU DIE.

THIS DIRECTOR IS THE FATHER OF...

THIS DIRECTOR CREATED THE ULTIMATE...

But... What about the remaining 80-90% of films? Are they even films to begin with?

Well, they are certainly "under the sea". Dwindling under the "personality cult" of famous filmmakers with resources, and a very rigid idea of what a film should be to sell it. Something that does not help, is the carefully mass-produced identity of the so-called "cinophile". The one who watches every film of this very "niche" filmmaker called... [insert any name of a famous film director with a sense of style]...



Nadja Elpida Murze | Wanna Talk



In reading the book, I've learned to cultivate a new understanding of "what is film?"... which didn't involve conventional narratives or the cliché statement "your story hasn't been told".

This new understanding led to questions like: How can I create films differently? How can I consume them differently? How can I show them differently?

As in every genre, there comes a point, when there is a need for change.

A need to warm up these rigid structures of the iceberg.

A need to focus on the audience, instead of the creators.

A need for mischief.

For me, leaving the film "in the wild" for the viewer to stumble upon is the perfect act of mischief. It allows me to stray away from the consumerist nature of the film industry today.

Your work often engages with orientalism and linguistics. In what ways do these themes manifest visually or conceptually in "Wanna Talk?"

Before we go any further, I highly encourage the "reader" to transform into the "viewer" and watch the film for themselves. It's about 2 minutes long (or short, if you will) It WON'T take up much of your time, but it WILL allow you to shape your own image of these themes, without me forcing my interpretation.

Here, I will only reveal some of my favourite imaginations on the themes.

The rest is up to you.

The theme of linguistics is manifested through the soundtrack. Anastasia and I imitated all kinds of sounds to create a random assortment of audio-clues. By combining them with visuals, you get a lovely piece of poetry. These random, yet rhythmic sounds can remind you of the poetry created by the Dadaists, and other 20th century avant-garde movements.

Similarly, we are not trying to extinguish the meaning by not using pre-existing words. On the contrary, we are trying to find meaning. Meaning that is never self-contained.



We strip down the listener to pure intuition and emotion, instead of the usual rational self, which they use to watch films.

The theme of orientalism, on the other hand, is very prominent in a recurring symbol - the tile. This specific ornament is found in colonial houses around my island. It's a very complex and difficult symbol for me. A symbol that "exoticised" the island during the colonial era. But at the same time, it's a tile that appears both in the south, as well as the north: signifying an underlying union between communities that have been artificially driven apart.

The act of erasing, and reconstructing the tile shows this tension between culture and time.

The decision to exaggerate this symbol and move it into the streets is a way to reclaim the history and meaning behind them.

Your film talks about "streets, signs, doors, and walls" as storytellers. How do you turn these changing city traces into film language?

It was a process, when two very different (and very similar) forces collided.

My co-director, Anastasia Shirmanova, is a mixed-media collage artist exploring urban perception and the interplay between memory and physical space. I am a filmmaker that occasionally enjoys montage and film editing. During the production, we mostly followed Anastasia's process.

We walked.

We walked.

We walked.

Photographing. Noticing. Learning.

We talked.

We talked.

We talked.

Imagining stories. Seeing connections.

Something I had to learn through this process is to heavily rely on intuition of experimentation and chaos. You don't need a script. You need mistakes.

During postproduction, we relied on my skill of compiling moving images together. This was something unusual for Anastasia: to think in motion, instead of stillness of a canvas. While we were busy studying the streets, signs, doors and windows: we didn't notice how we had learned from each other's practices. Of course, editing and collage are inherently two different mediums, but you would be surprised how

beautifully they complement each other.

Looking at your journey — from the Larnaca Biennale to the Cyprus Film Festival - what kind of "new stories" do you hope your viewers will construct from the fragments you offer them?

I just finished an experimental script for my new film "Unfolding".

"Unfolding" is a tangled memory with a twist on the traditional genre of period dramas.

Set in 1890s colonial Cyprus, the story revolves around a peculiar encounter between a Cypriot seamstress, struggling through a prolonged drought, and a British spinster who has found a new sense of freedom... and the power to exert it over others.

Their relationship throughout the story balances on extremities. The audience is left wondering what exactly is their relationship. The scenes unravelling are non-linear, even fragmented, like our perception of the past, allowing for a more nuanced interpretation of the story.

I am already knee-deep in pre-production, and already thinking about new ways of screening a fragmented film. Recently, I saw "The Museum of Innocence", an installation accompanying a book by Orhan Pamuk. The room in the museum is filled with little cabinets of curiosities. Inside each cabinet is a different three-dimensional still life, which corresponds to a chapter in the book.

I think this cool idea could be easily translated onto scenes from a film. It fills me with excitement that audiences could "stitch" the film together in their heads.

In theory, it blows my mind, but, ask me in a year and I might be onto something different.



Sophie Ong

Self-taught artist Sophie Ong spent two decades working in fashion between Paris and New York before fully dedicating herself to art. Her travels, spiritual quest, and connection with nature nourish a body of work where the spiritual meets the material.

Project Statement

Her drawing Mouth Tree, noticed by Jennifer Flay (former director of FIAC), embodies this vision: a tree where the spiritual takes root in the material.



Nadezhda Egorycheva

A contemporary interior artist, entrepreneur, art therapist, mediator, and profiler.

Art has always been a part of my life, and a special attraction to beauty, aesthetics, and quality in all aspects of life has constantly led me to choose the path of growth and to refine its direction. As a result, I have developed a deep understanding of my own personality, my mission, and the inner manifestations of human nature and its many facets.

Through my experience and knowledge in helping people improve their quality of life, I have come to realize how important it is to foster emotional intelligence in society—but to do so through the beauty of objects and states, as I believe this is the most effective path. From this understanding, the choice of my future direction became both clear and deeply desired.

Artist Statement

Life without strong emotions and uplifting states is neither full, nor meaningful, nor truly engaging for anyone—especially for an artist. My work is about energy and the movement toward awakening emotions and feelings, spirituality, and aesthetics.





Nadezhda Egorycheva | I Touch You

Ivana Taglioni (born in Mendrisio, 1955). After studying business and working in this field, she qualified as an educator and worked part-time at a Foyer for twenty years. Since 2002, she has been involved in art circles, where she met Marisa Casellini (Swiss visual artist), who involved her in group projects. She then took a few art courses, but she is mainly self-taught, experimenting with different techniques, materials, and approaches to express herself on various themes related to current events, memory, and nature. Since 2002, she has regularly participated in group exhibitions in Ticino and Italy. Through the artist Tony Mazzocchin France (promoter and popularizer of mail art), she has participated in mail art exhibitions in Switzerland and France. She has proposed an artistic journey with users of the Foyer, a home for people with psychiatric problems, where she worked as an educator. She has collaborated with the Associazione Culturale Campi d'Arte Balerna TI-SWITZERLAND in organizing exhibitions.

Project Statement

The Floating Piers - 2016

Christo and his wife Jeanne-Claude were born on the same day, June 13, 1935. They were partners in life and art for fifty-one years, inseparable until her death in 2009. The Floating Piers project (a floating walkway that allows people to walk on water) was conceived in the 1970s: a multidisciplinary work that would take a long time to complete, encountering a thousand difficulties along the way, until in 2016 Lake Iseo in Italy proved to be the ideal location.

Nevertheless, there was no shortage of skeptics: "No one will ever walk just for the sake of walking," they said. Instead, the dream of walking on blue gold, like a sort of pilgrimage on a luminous path to nowhere, came true for a million two hundred thousand people.

The Floating Piers for me offers various points for interpretation and reflection:

- walking on water reminds us that even the seemingly impossible can become possible
- the location on the lake is synonymous with calm and reflection
- the orange-golden yellow color of the fabric covering the walkway evokes joy and preciousness
- its short duration (16 days) highlights the ephemeral nature of things, and ultimately of life itself, creating desire or regret.

Visitors could receive a 7x7 cm piece of the original fabric. A strip of fabric that could be considered a sort of modern-day relic or, as someone described it, a band-aid for the soul.

We were fortunate enough to enjoy this experience early on a Thursday morning, our first steps still illuminated by moonlight and enveloped in silence.

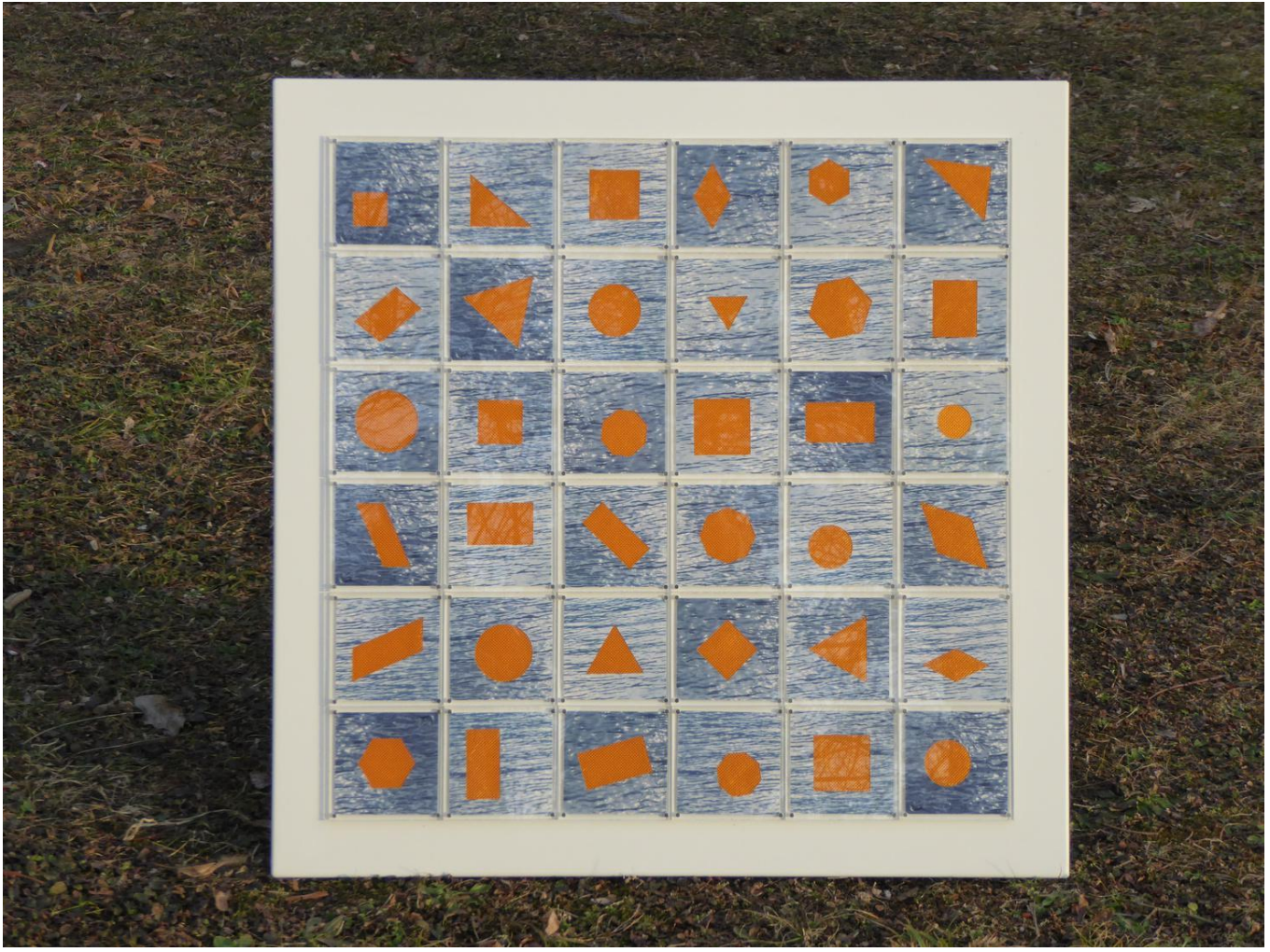
As the sun rose, many people slowly invaded the walkway and inhabited that special space: lightly, stimulated by the gentle movement created under their feet and intoxicated by the orange-gold color that surrounded them, they walked, paused, lay down, and dreamed.

Carrello Prezioso - Precious Cart - Shopping Cart - Cotton Threads - 2015

What for most of us is a container for consumer goods, for homeless people becomes the container for everything they own: in other words, it is their home.

Seeing some Canadian homeless people passing through the wealthy city center gave rise to the idea for this work, which is dedicated to all homeless people.

"Carrello prezioso"- "Precious cart" was presented at the "TRANSITI" event in Balerna- TI-CH in the form of a performance; it was then displayed in front of the Cooperativa Popolare store. Visitors can interact with the work by leaving household detergents or personal hygiene products, which are donated to CASA ASTRA MENDRISIO, House for homeless people, thus giving further meaning to this work.



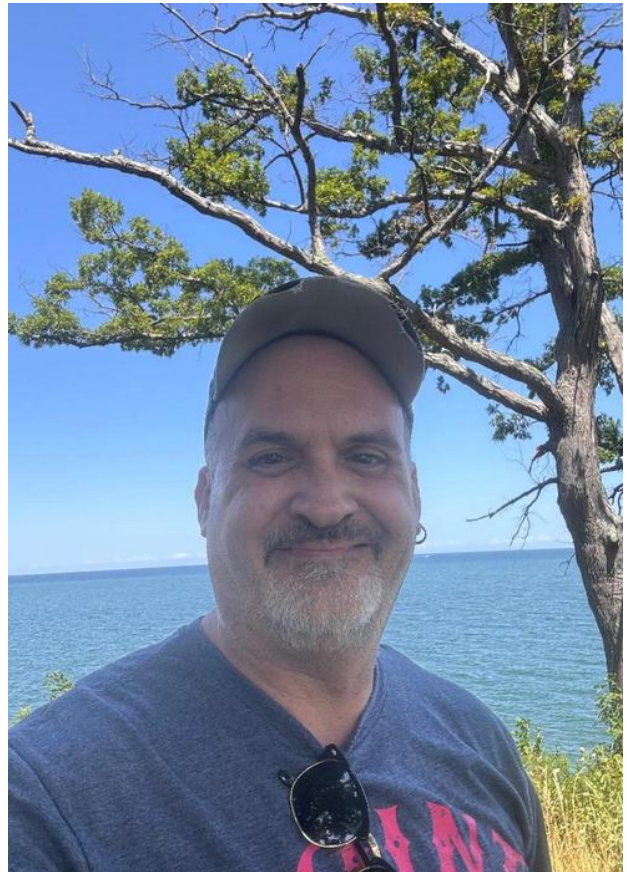
Ivana Taglioni | The Floating Piers | 2016



Ivana Taglioni | Precious cart | 2015

— Interview

Don Barnes



Your series *Concrete Noir* beautifully captures the tension between beauty and decay. What first drew you to explore this duality through black and white imagery?



Don Barnes | *Electric Rain*

I've always seen beauty and decay as two sides of the same thing. The older I get, the more I notice how cracks, stains, and shadows tell the truth about life. Black and white lets me strip everything down to emotion—no gloss, no distraction, just what's real.

You describe your work as a blend of street art and digital precision. How do you approach balancing spontaneity and control in your creative process?

I start loose—textures, graffiti, old walls, whatever feels alive—and then I bring in the digital part to shape it. It's like catching a moment before it fades and freezing it. I try not to overthink it. If it still feels raw when I'm done, I know it's right.

Cleveland and St. Louis both have strong urban identities. How have these cities influenced your visual language and themes?

Both cities have that grit—working class, worn edges, pride that doesn't need to be loud. I grew up around that. The weathered buildings, the neon signs still hanging on, people just getting through the day—that's all part of what I see and what I create. There's a quiet beauty in that kind of survival.

Texture plays a key role in your art—from wet concrete to glistening skin. How do you use



texture to express emotion?

Texture's what makes something feel real. Smooth surfaces don't tell stories. I like things that look touched, scarred, or lived in. When I add texture, I'm adding memory—it gives the piece weight, like it's been through something.

What does "beauty in the overlooked" mean to you in the context of contemporary urban life?

It means paying attention to what most people walk past. A cracked wall, a torn poster, a reflection in a puddle after the rain—those moments say more about life than any perfect picture. I think there's beauty in the imperfect because it feels honest.

The presence of rain and neon light in some of your pieces gives them a cinematic feel. Are you

inspired by film or photography in your compositions?

Definitely. I grew up on film noir, old movies, and photography that told stories through light and shadow. I see my work like movie stills—moments suspended in time, full of mood, with just enough mystery to make you wonder what happened before and after.

Concrete Noir seems deeply personal—almost like a visual diary of resilience. What message do you hope viewers take away from it?

That there's strength in being real. Life's not clean or easy, and neither is beauty. I want people to see that even in broken places, there's something worth holding onto. It's about finding light in what's worn down, not pretending it's not there.

My name is **Keeshaun Chee**, I am a Native American from the Navajo (Dine) Nation, I was born and raised in Shiprock New Mexico, I am a mixed media artist and graphic designer, and I have a bachelor's degree in communication design, right now I am pursuing to get my master's degree in graphic design.

Project Statement

My artwork shows that artworks can come in different ways and style in which I try to create something new, all of my works are done digitally and some practical. My Native American heritage inspires me of what I can create like making collages and mixed media art together and I want to inspire many of my people in the Native community and represent where I come, my goal is to make my family and my tribe proud by showing that I have this talent which is making creative art. I am trying to show my work around the world, it is really hard to showcase my work and not that many opportunities, hopefully somewhere I can show my work and my passion of what I love to do to the world that can recognize what I can create and to show my cultural side of work. to the people.



Yuke Xiao is a London-based fine art photographer and visual artist whose practice bridges Eastern and Western visual sensibilities. Her work explores how people emotionally, culturally, and physically inhabit space, often engaging with themes of identity, memory, and displacement. Through evocative visual storytelling and a refined sense of atmosphere, she creates images that feel both deeply personal and quietly resonant. Grounded in lived experience and guided by a distinctly female gaze, Yuke's visual language balances warmth with inner strength.

Project Statement

Photography Project: Dream of Tai Chi sword.

This project began with a sense of return. My grandmother once trained in Tai Chi sword but set it aside for decades of family caregiving. Now in her eighties, her body still carries the memory of those movements. I invited her to wear her old training clothes and move through the familiar rooms of our home. I photographed her not as a subject, but as a collaborator. These images trace strength, tenderness, and quiet resilience - a tribute to women whose love and life force sustain generations, and to the ways memory endures through the body.

Yuke Xiao | The Dream Of Tai Chi Sword | 2024





Yuke Xiao | The Dream Of Tai Chi Sword | 2024



Yuke Xiao | The Dream Of Tai Chi Sword | 2024

— Interview

Yan Huo



Your background in architecture clearly informs your artistic vision. How do spatial thinking and design principles translate into your approach to painting?



Yan Huo | Black | 2025

I have twelve years of art training, so I have been passionate about color from a very young age. Even in my free time, I enjoy exploring color and different visual expressions. A sense of space can appear on a flat surface—it can evolve into a two-dimensional composition or suggest three-dimensional depth. For me, different colors can serve as a medium to express the folding of space and the immovable, almost like a tangible form of spatial experience.

What first inspired you to explore color as a primary medium of expression, apart from architectural form?

I have always been very sensitive to color. In architecture, however, color is rarely the main focus—the discipline is largely functional. Painting, by contrast, allows me to use color as a vehicle for emotion. Through color, I can express the subjective, emotional aspects of experience that architecture doesn't always allow me to explore.

In your color paintings, there seems to be a flow reminiscent of light, space, and atmosphere. How do you perceive the relationship between architecture and color?

Yes, thank you for noticing. I have always been fascinated by the interplay of light and shadow,



both in architecture and in painting. The sense of space is one of the most compelling qualities in visual experience. Translating that spatial sensation onto a flat surface requires tremendous effort and practice, which is why I am particularly interested in exploring how to convey a three-dimensional feeling within a two-dimensional medium.

Could you describe your creative process when making these stream-of-consciousness color works? Do they begin with a plan or evolve intuitively?

I have struggled with this question for some time. Architecture often has very concrete forms, while human thought is inherently chaotic. In my painting, I try to return to a primordial starting point: forgetting my over ten years of art training, the outstanding works I have seen, and the influence of other artists. I try to imagine what a person might create in their most original, uninfluenced state. Many of these works are therefore created unconsciously, though they are often guided by shifts in mood and intuition.

How does your experience of living and working across different cultures—China, Europe, and the U.S.—shape your understanding of space and color?

Living and working across China, Europe, and the U.S. has deeply shaped the way I perceive space and color. Each place offers its own distinctive light, landscape, and architectural language, which in turn informs my sensitivity to spatial relationships and color dynamics. Experiencing such diverse environments allows me to weave together visual elements from different cultures into a cohesive artistic expression that reflects both memory and emotion.

What role do emotion and memory play in your compositions?

Emotion and memory are central to my work. I often draw from personal experiences, recollections of spaces, and fleeting moments to guide the flow of color and composition. Painting becomes a way to translate the intangible—feelings, atmospheres, and memories—into visual form, allowing each piece to carry both an emotional resonance and a spatial presence.

Are there particular artists, architects, or color theorists who have influenced your exploration of color and form?

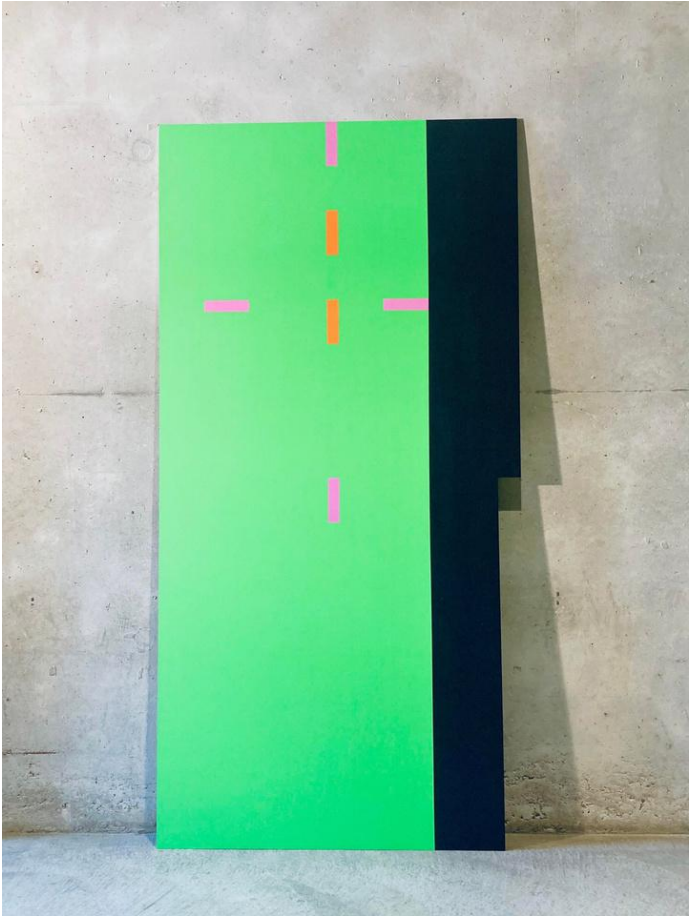
Yes. One artist who has had a profound influence on me is Caravaggio. I am deeply fascinated by his intense, almost violent spatial aesthetics—his rich, dramatic use of color and the overwhelming relationships between forms captivate me. Another master of space who greatly inspires me is Louis Kahn. His understanding and exploration of light and shadow, and the way he structures space, are truly extraordinary and have deeply informed my approach to both color and spatial composition.

Eduard Otto Baumann has been working in art, design, and architecture for more than 30 years. His journey began at the Zurich School of Art (HSfGZ, now ZHdK).





Eduard Otto Baumann | Performance, Kunsthaus Giarus — Anonymous Art Duo CM91



Eduard Otto Baumann | Target Green | 2025



Eduard Otto Baumann | Perform — Standing Up Makes the Hands Free — Artbox | 2020

Interview

Jerônimo de Moraes

What first drew you to the Piscinão de Ramos as a subject? Was there a particular moment or scene that inspired this series?

Piscinão has always been a kind of dream subject for me. The social and cultural energy there is incredibly rich — visually striking and full of life. Rio is a city of constant contrasts, and places like the Piscinão embody that tension in the most beautiful way. They're spaces where opposing forces — inequality and joy, precarity and pride — somehow coexist and create these cultural sanctuaries that feel deeply human.

A lot of what becomes popular culture in Brazil actually originates from places like this, which are



collective monuments of resistance, identity, and belonging for working-class communities.

I'm fascinated by that — it gives me butterflies, honestly — that mix of vitality, vulnerability, and connection.

And the timing felt right. After living away from Brazil for nearly twenty years, returning made me see Rio with new eyes. It made me want to reevaluate my relationship with the city — not through nostalgia, but through renewed attention and affection for what still endures there.

How did your own memories of Rio de Janeiro influence the way you approached photographing this “Riviera”?

Coming from Rio and knowing its culture so well really shaped the way I approached the “Riviera.” That familiarity gave me access to people in a very personal and genuine way. It wasn't about arriving as an outsider — it was about reconnecting with something I already understood deeply, and letting that shared background create trust and openness in front of the camera.

The project challenges the postcard image of Rio — how do you see the relationship between representation and inequality in your work?

This question really sits at the heart of my ongoing dialogue with Rio — especially as I return to make new work there. I've always been drawn to what I'd call secondary narratives — stories that exist just



outside the mainstream but deeply shape it. The term counterculture feels outdated; these communities aren't oppositional, they're simply mainstream-adjacent — vital, creative spaces that exist in parallel and often set the tone for the culture that eventually becomes widely consumed. My father's family came from very modest circumstances, and being around relatives who lived that reality gave me a grounding perspective — a kind of humility that stayed with me. So, in many ways, I feel a responsibility to use my work as a positive voice for those who live and create from the margins.

This theme is also very much aligned with the last twenty years of my life — as a Latin American from Brazil trying to find my place in New York. That experience of navigating between visibility and invisibility, privilege and otherness, constantly informs how I look at the world and the people I photograph.

Ultimately, the project — and my work in general — is about expanding representation beyond the postcard image, toward a more honest and inclusive reflection of the city and its people.

Your images have a powerful balance between people, color, and urban structure. How did you decide on the visual tone and rhythm of the series?

It's interesting because the visual tone of this project marks a real departure from much of my earlier work, where I've mostly relied on natural light. In Riviera Roquete Pinto, the use of flash became central — both aesthetically and processually.

Aesthetically, the flash creates a heightened, almost theatrical atmosphere. It turns the subjects into protagonists, pulling them forward from the

background and giving each scene a sense of immediacy and depth. It helps translate a three-dimensional reality into a two-dimensional image that still feels alive, emphasizing people and the small details that define their presence.

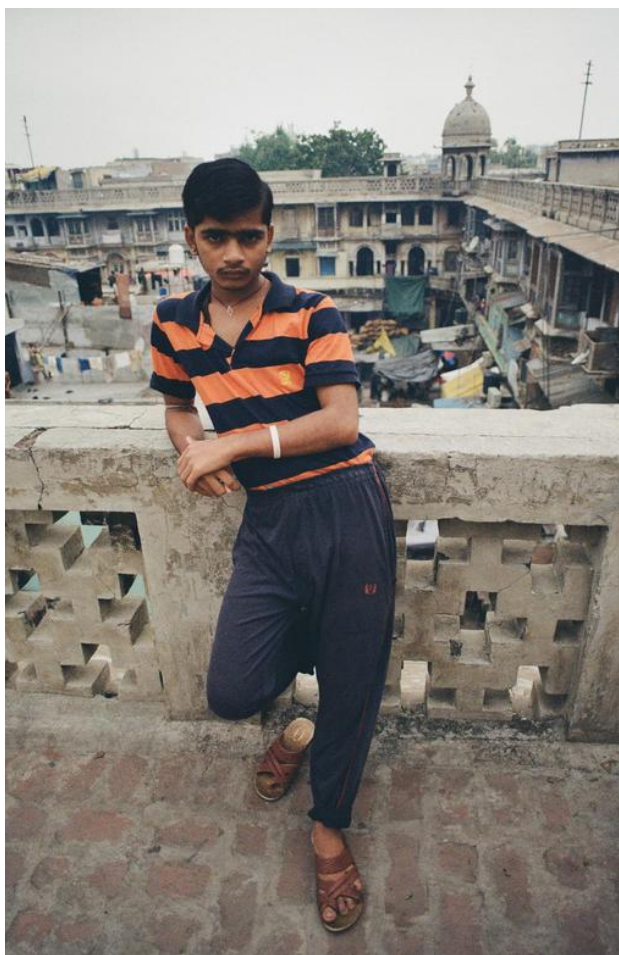
But the flash also works as a social tool. Flash photography has deep roots in celebrity and nightlife culture — when that light hits, people instinctively feel seen, important, celebrated. Using it in this context transforms a simple portrait session into a moment of acknowledgment and empowerment.

Can you tell us about your process on site — how do you interact with the community when photographing such personal environments?

I always like to work with a local producer, and this project was no different — in fact, I ended up hiring two people who were absolutely essential: Lucas Petitdemange and Jean Barreto.

I first connected with Lucas, whose task was to find someone truly local who could help navigate the social nuances of entering an area like the Piscinão, which is heavily shaped by community dynamics and informal power structures. That's how I met Jean — and honestly, this project wouldn't exist without him. He grew up there, his parents still live nearby, and he wrote a master's thesis on the very subject: "Entre o mar e o concreto: a invenção da Praia de Ramos — Lazer e balneabilidade nos





subúrbios cariocas (1940–2002).” Reading his research before shooting really helped me connect the historical and emotional layers of the place. On the day of the shoot, it was the three of us — Lucas handling logistics, and Jean and I walking around talking to people. Jean was also photographing, which made the whole thing feel less like a production and more like a collaboration. People were curious about what we were doing, and once we explained the project, they felt genuinely excited to represent the “Riviera” well. We took maybe four laps around the whole place, taking our time and meeting new people every round. Each lap was about two hours, and it was beautiful to see how some people started warming up to us by the third time they saw us. The beverage vendors kept offering us free drinks because we were out there working under the hot sun — it really showed the incredible sense of community that exists there. It’s amazing how, once people start sharing their stories, they open up to being photographed — the process becomes mutual. And yes, maybe a few caipirinhas helped with that too. But in the end, it’s about arriving with an open heart, a sense of

respect, and genuine curiosity about people’s lives.

You often work between documentary and fashion aesthetics — how did these two worlds meet in this project?

When I photograph people, I think the fashion aesthetic naturally finds its way in — it’s almost ingrained in how I see and compose an image. I started out as a photojournalist, so storytelling has always been central to my practice. But fashion taught me to pay attention to form, gesture, and presence — how visual language can shape perception.

Even though Riviera Roquete Pinto has a more documentary foundation, bringing a fashion sensibility to it helped elevate the subjects and highlight their individuality. The tension between these two worlds — fashion’s stylized precision and documentary’s raw honesty — creates a space where people can appear both real and radiant, grounded and iconic at the same time.

The project speaks about resistance and joy — what emotional reactions do you hope to evoke in the viewer?

I think photography has this incredible quality of inviting endless scrutiny — you can look at an image over and over and always discover something new. That’s why it’s so important to listen to people before you photograph them. When you have connection through a human story, your photograph instantly becomes a document of an interaction and I want people to just stand there and stare at every single detail and hopefully the longer they stare the more they feel their own humanity.

Ultimately, I hope that viewers sense the dignity, joy, and complexity of every single person portrayed and keep coming back to this reflection.





Karyna Kiraro

I am a Ukrainian artist currently living in Spain. Art has been with me since childhood - I graduated from art school and university, yet for a long time, I couldn't find myself within the established rules and "laws" of painting. I was never drawn to perfect form. I wanted to express a feeling, a touch, a breath.

For a while, I remained silent as an artist, not because I had nothing to say, but because I was searching for my own voice. Now I create freely without frames, without fear, without others' expectations. My works are born from what I live through - moments of stillness, pain, tenderness, and inspiration. It's my way of experiencing the world within and transforming it into something visible.

Project Statement

Kiraro is my way of speaking without words.

Everything I create is born from life - from sensations, observations, and moments of silence.

My works have no titles or explanations.

I don't want to speak for the viewer

what truly matters is what they feel while looking at them.

Meaning is never fixed.

It's born within each person - through their own breath, gaze, and experience.

Kiraro is a space that touches the deepest layers of feeling, where words are no longer needed.

I don't aim to show - I aim to awaken.

To reach those genuine emotions that live inside every human being quiet, honest, real.

Kiraro is an invitation to feel.

Without frames. Without explanations.

Just to be. Just to feel.

My project is a story of inner awakening

a reflection on how art becomes a bridge between chaos and harmony, between the past and the present.

Each piece is an imprint of emotion that cannot be expressed in words, but can be conveyed through color, texture, and movement.

I explore how visual forms can become a process of healing and acceptance.

For me, creativity is not merely about aesthetics

it's a way to touch the depth of human experience.

I want the viewer not only to see the work,
but to feel it - to find themselves within it:
calm, authentic, alive.



Elka Veselinova

I began painting later in life, following the loss of my husband—a turning point that led me to discover art as a path to healing and self-discovery. With no formal training, I am a self-taught artist, guided by emotion, intuition, and a profound connection to the world around me. Each brushstroke is an exploration of feeling and memory, a testament to the transformative power of creativity.

I live in the picturesque town of Vratsa, nestled in the foothills of the mountains in the North-west of Bulgaria. The natural beauty and tranquility of my surroundings deeply influence my work, inspiring me to capture both the seen and the felt in my paintings.

Since embracing painting, I have held a solo exhibition in Bulgaria and regularly participate in group exhibitions both in my home country and abroad. My work has been featured in numerous digital and physical exhibitions at the Golden Duck Gallery in Budapest, Hungary. I am honored that two of my paintings received third place awards at the Golden Time Talent International Art Contest, and I have also taken part in the Golden Time Talent art festival in London.

Through my art, I hope to share the sense of wonder, resilience, and gratitude that painting has brought into my life.

Artist Statement

My art is a journey through memory, imagination, and the natural world. Each painting is an invitation to pause and notice the beauty in both the ordinary and the extraordinary. I am inspired by the vivid colors of nature, the quiet poetry of everyday objects, and the dreamlike spaces that exist between reality and fantasy.

Through bold color choices and textured brushwork, I seek to capture the emotional resonance of a moment—a field of blue flowers shimmering with possibility, a jar of wildflowers glowing against a rainy window, or a winter cabin radiating warmth in a snowy night. My landscapes often blend observation with invention, creating places that feel both familiar and otherworldly.

Painting is my way of exploring connection: to place, to memory, and to the stories we carry within us. Whether I am depicting a mountain train, a monastery nestled in the forest, or a floating island in a surreal sky, I hope to evoke a sense of wonder and belonging. My work is rooted in gratitude for the world's beauty and a desire to share that sense of wonder with others.

Elka Veselinova | Vratsa Balkan – Melodia of Rails and Rocks | 2025





Elka Veselinova | A Symphony of Gold and Blue | 2025

Alina Strelkovskaia



Your artistic practice is described as research-driven. How do you usually begin a new project—do you start from texts, archival sources, or more intuitive impressions?

It always starts with a place, and my presence within it. What draws me in is narrative patterns, systems of signs and cultural codes that inhabit the space. My works aren't academic papers. They don't review, or validate, or conclude. They echo, unravel and, in the natural flow of post-humanism, distort. So it's important to distinguish artistic research from academic pursuit for objectivity. For me, the

world is text. The never-ending process of semiosis. And I am... just a responsive reader really. Sometimes, I do get lost in stories - told legends, history books or archival records, but those are surface phenomena. Points of intellectual curiosity. The art itself comes from below that layer, from an inner process that resists any fixed workflow.

You use the term “Deconstructed Tales” to describe your work. Could you explain how you approach deconstruction when working with myths and historical fragments?

Deconstructed Tales isn't a coined term. It's a name, and research method in poetic disguise. My background in the humanities made me attentive to systems: cultural, psychological, political. Myths and histories never emerge in a vacuum, they are intricate feedback loops of meaning. My process is a visual response to those systems. Not to events or stories per se, but to the way they organise perception. The denser the historical layering of a place, the more irresistible the impulse to respond.

Living and working in Heidelberg, how does the local cultural and historical context influence your creative process?



Alina Strelkovskaia | Deconstructed XI (Zwingenberg Castle) | 2025



Heidelberg is a tiny city with a formidable, nearly overwhelming historical layering. Move a stone, and you'll uncover a residue of old beliefs and codes of forgotten meanings. Living here is like working inside a deep archive. Drawing and painting here is like conversing with ghosts, Samuel Beckett-style - and, inevitably, with myself.

Your works often oscillate between the analytical and the visceral. How do you balance these two seemingly opposite approaches?

They aren't opposite, they are part and parcel of being human - mind and nerve. The balance happens through self-awareness and metacognition, through knowing when and why each speaks. Also, a dose of irony helps. And an unflinching honesty with oneself.

Many of your drawings and paintings suggest a dialogue with memory and trauma. What role do personal experiences play in shaping these themes?

No artist can approach these themes without touching the skin of their own experience. You need a perspective that bleeds - otherwise it's not art, it's commentary.

In your view, how can art help to preserve, reinterpret, or even challenge collective memory?

Art is narrative design at its most radical. Collective memory doesn't exist by itself. It's produced and mediated through public discourse, and art is one of the most powerful discursive engines the humanity has ever had. Every exhibition, every image, every social media post re-calibrates what a culture remembers or forgets.

What materials and techniques do you find most effective for capturing the "raw data" of a place?

Usually, just paper and pencil. I often draw outdoors, mostly in black and white, keeping colour and detail at bay. I'm interested in bare perception - the fracture of meaning when form distorts. That's the root of my Artifacts series. In Digressions (paintings), I move into gestural abstraction and assemblage - studio works that transmute those raw perceptual fragments into new matter. There's an echo of German Expressionism in all this, perhaps because it shares that same drive to externalise inner vibration. But 'effective technique'? Art isn't data science, it doesn't run on clean functions. Thankfully.



Carlo Borromeo

I am a third generation engineer. I am also a third generation hobby photographer.

Project Statement

I wish to one day make a meaningful impact in the world with what I create.





Irena Korbar Hočevar

I am 45 years old. My background is in graphic and fabric design — I attended college for both fields and hold two separate degrees. I have been painting for about a year and a half. Art has always been my passion, my first love, as I like to say. For a long time, it was locked away in a special place, but now it has come alive in me again. I truly love it.

I paint with texture because I enjoy creating structure on the surface of the canvas. Perhaps this comes from my design background, but I love to feel three-dimensional effects in my work — the contrast between smoothness and roughness. I like sanding plaster and then coating it with layers of color. For me, there are no rules in creativity — that's my personal motto for painting.

Artist Statement

I have been painting for about a year and a half. I hadn't painted or drawn since I was a teenager — life happened, with several difficult experiences along the way. So I left art behind and locked it away in a special place.

Later, while searching for happiness again, I tried many different things, but nothing worked. One day I asked myself: When was I truly happy? The answer came immediately — when I was drawing. That's how it started again, and through painting, I found my happiness once more.

My paintings are my therapy. They are inspired by my life events and emotions — anger, love, happiness, sadness, and joy — all projected onto the canvas. My goal is simply to paint what I love, without any rules or restrictions. I believe there are no rules in creativity — just paint!



Ashutosh Gupta

I am a writer/artist, marketer, and certified life coach dedicated to helping individuals lead more fulfilling lives. With a passion for unlocking potential and guiding self-discovery, I empower people to overcome barriers and realize their dreams.

My first book, *Equations of Being*, resonated with a niche audience, allowing me to connect with readers from diverse backgrounds and support them on their journeys.

In addition to writing/painting and coaching, I have a YouTube channel, 'Steps of an Owlet', which focuses on mindfulness, life skills, and philosophy for young minds.

Project Statement

I am reaching out to share one of my recent works, titled 'Last Days of Ego,' that explores the idea of dissolution, both of land and of self. The painting sits at the intersection of external erosion and internal transformation, reflecting the fragile boundary between identity and impermanence.

Through layers of texture and color, I wanted to capture that quiet tension between collapse and renewal, where the known begins to dissolve, giving way to something more fluid and whole.



Ashutosh Gupta | Last Days of Ego

Phyllis Tracy Malinow

Phyllis Tracy Malinow's artistry is a departure from tradition transcending time and space. There's mystery in her work reflecting and paying homage not only to the works of European masters Paul Gauguin, Vincent Van Gogh, Edgar Degas, Ferdinand Leger, Marc Chagall, Henri Rousseau, William Blake, Francis Bacon, German Expressionists Kathe Kollwitz, Max Beckmann but the Mexican muralists, David Alfaro Siqueiros and Jose Clemente Orozco as well. Through her unfettered imagination, inspired use of color and form, she tells stories that seem universal yet rooted in ancient past. They convey visual vitality and freshness as new as tomorrow.

Her artwork is unconventional, original, textural, an imaginative vision. She paints with texture whether on canvas, woodblock prints/paper or mixed media rice paper sculpture; all reflecting color, story content, form and expression as in her oil paintings on canvas. She has developed a technique of using art materials, i.e., chine colle (rice papers), pastels, caran d'ache, gouache and delicate materials, i.e., (pastels sealing them into her art when printing on paper from a woodblock.) Phyllis' art bent of oil painting drives a painterly expression to canvas, woodblock prints/paper, sculpture with a personal voice full of life. Colorful, visual language is fabric of her being as she creates a vivid visual world.

By invitation in 1993, Malinow exhibited her oil paintings in a one-woman show at the Poliforum Cultural Siqueiros in Mexico City. This institution was named in honor of Mexican artist, David Alfaro Siqueiros and was a perfect setting for Malinow's highly individual contribution to art. Her exhibition was well received by the art community and media leading to successful showings of her art in New York and internationally. Phyllis also participated in an exhibition of American Art through the Art in Embassies Program c/o the U.S. Department of State at the U.S. Ambassadorial Residence in Niamey, Niger, Africa for three years.

Many patrons have commented on Malinow's pulse of theatricality in her art, making it exciting, provocative, and yet aesthetically appealing even spiritual. This undoubtedly owes much to her background working in professional theatre years ago with the premium set and lighting designer of the time on some of American theatre's most critically acclaimed Broadway productions. Perhaps the greatest influence was her mentor, Anthony Palumbo. His guiding force was instrumental in bringing together the extraordinary elements of her innate talent, theatrical bent and commitment in telling metaphysical tales visually, making her work so compelling. Phyllis also credits her father, a W.P.A. artist, master paperhanger for imbuing her work with a connection when Americans pulled together during the Great Depression.

In sharing her thoughts, "It is extremely rewarding having my art exhibited in the United States and around the world, as I did in Mexico, Africa and Japan. I am impassioned to paint, create mixed media woodblock mono prints, works on paper and mixed media rice paper sculpture. Allegoric Expression is how life translates. Form, movement, color, story excite me as a visual artist. I reach out through Art, as a forum to communicate the human experience. Hopefully, my art will touch and stimulate the viewer."

"Paradise" by Phyllis Tracy Malinow photograph representing Gallery'35 group exhibition.

MURRAY HILL LIFE, 2020

"The work of Phyllis Tracy Malinow is vibrant, full of life and from her heart..."

Richard Pantell, 2001

"From her stunning reverence for textured color, Phyllis Tracy Malinow gives us a most thoughtful and

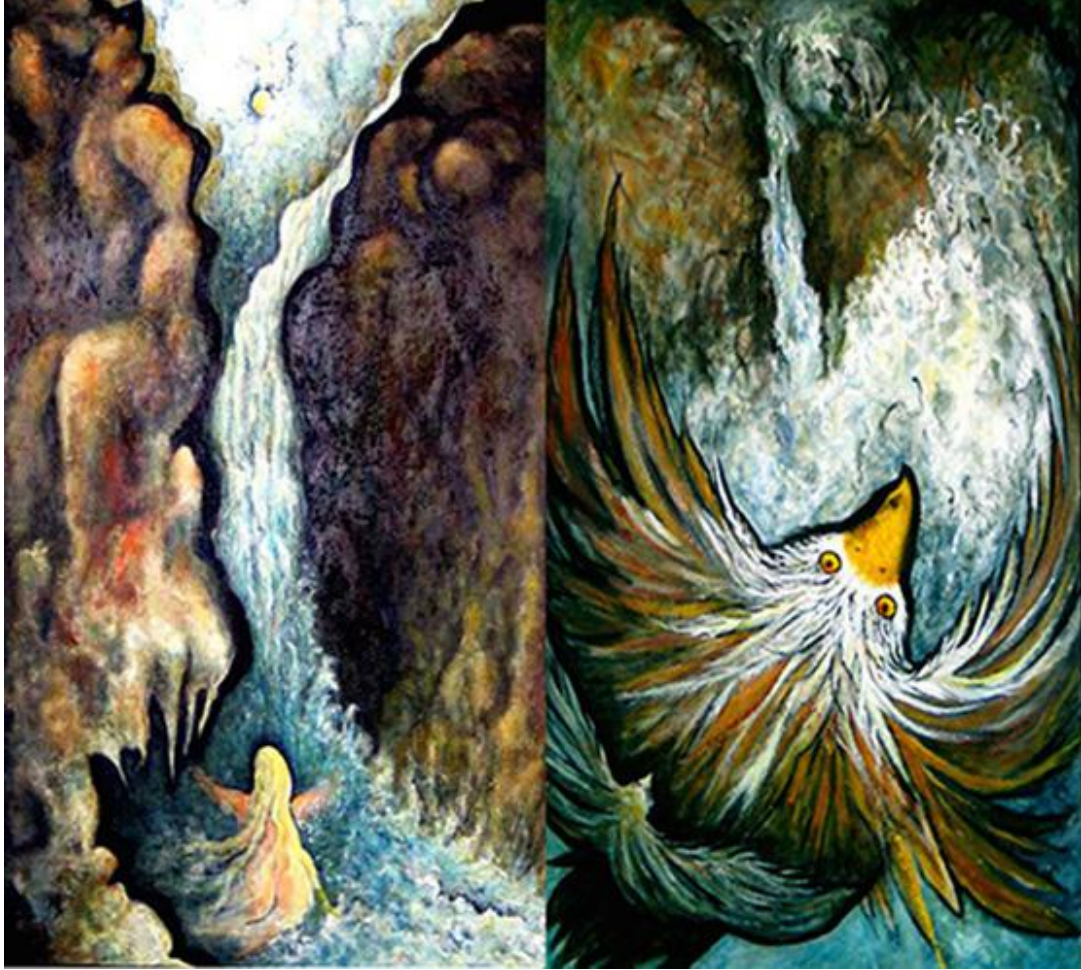
captivating poetry..." William Scharf, 1999

"Phyllis Tracy Malinow creates an unusual effect with an enormous smiling figure that dominates each large painting..." ARTSPEAK, 1992

"Phyllis Tracy Malinow's abstractions of large powerful, all enveloping symbols are mysterious." ARTSPEAK, 1991



Phyllis Tracy Malinow | Complexity of Being



Phyllis Tracy Malinow | Cascade Soaring (Diptych)

Lisa Salazar

A young artist named Lisa that is graduating college this December 2025 with arts and design trying to showcase her work.

Project Statement

This piece contains a cat names Jupiter and his owner Lisa. Jupiter has many health problems but when he's with Lisa everything feels with ease and full of joy. It's fully of happiness and joy that no one will never replace their bond.



Bowen Wu is a composer, sound designer, new instrument designer, and audiovisual artist based in Glasgow. His artistic practice spans sound art, film scoring, soundscape composition, experimental music, audiovisual composition, installation and live electronic performance.

Grounded in a reflection on and transcendence of the Eastern-Western dichotomy, Wu's creative research reinterprets and reconstructs the notion of Chineseness through an ecological lens. His work explores the generative relationships among art, environment, body, and technology, employing diverse media such as electronic sound, spatial installations, interactive instruments, and post-digital practices. Often data-driven, his compositions investigate how perceptual experience extends and transforms across media and material forms. Situated between reality, dream, and illusion, his works delve into the complexity of multidimensional existence, inviting audiences to re-engage with perception and spatial intuition.

Wu's works have received international recognition, including the MA/IN24 Awards, MUSICACOUSTICA–Hangzhou 2024 Competition, The 6th Danny Awards International Electronic Music Competition, IEMC 2024 International Electronic Music Competition, and the Bieffie Creative Musical Artists Special Prize, among others. His compositions have been presented at festivals and exhibitions across China, the UK, the US, Italy, Spain, Greece, France, South Korea, Thailand and Ecuador, including the New York City Electroacoustic Music Festival, Fringe Arts Bath, GLEAM Festival, ArteScienza 2024, KORA Festival, in律 Contemperament Music Festival, NOIS//E Nature Art Sound Festival, and IMAF 2025.

In addition, his works have been featured at academic conferences such as ICMC 2024, IEEE ICME 2025, GOSIM Hangzhou 2025, CCF China Computational Art Conference, and PdMaxCon 2025.

He holds a Master's degree in Composition for Screen from the University of Edinburgh and is currently pursuing a PhD in Electronic Music Composition at the University of Glasgow.

Project Statement

Sonibaux is a series of newly designed instruments that I have created, built, and performed with in my practice of sonic art, particularly within live performance contexts. Rather than referring to a single controller or instrument, the project constitutes an open system composed of various combinations of boxes and sensors of different sizes and shapes, designed to accommodate diverse performance and creative scenarios.

The Sonibaux series is highly extensible, supporting the ongoing evolution of experimental sound practices. Newly developed sensors can be integrated into the system to enrich performance possibilities and facilitate future technological or interactive integrations. Its design draws upon the organizational logic of electronic music live sets, while also referencing the flexibility of modular synthesizers—allowing different units to be freely combined as needed to support a wide range of performance settings.

Compared with conventional performance equipment, Sonibaux offers greater cost efficiency and flexibility, while remaining compatible with existing systems to expand the expressive scope of sonic art. Rather than a traditional instrument system, Sonibaux should be understood as a mediating platform for sonic art creation—providing diverse interfaces between the body and sound.



Bowen Wu | Sonibaux Flow | 2025



Contents

Interviews

Marcin Jucha	4	Esra Yesilli	54
SALY	8	Brittany Ellis	58
Stephanie Kilgast	12	Terrence Chambers	62
Dragan Marković Markus	18	Trupti Dave Wehner	66
Wei-Fang Chang	22	Corinne Strazzieri	72
Marid.K	26	Nadja Elpida Murze	78
Lucky Foster	30	Don Barnes	86
Timka Szoke	34	Yan Huo	92
Mane Yengibaryan	40	Jeronimo de Moraes	96
Cellographic	48	Alina Strelkovskaia	104

Featured artists

Francisco Ratti	6	Giorgio Lupano	68
Isabella Clark	10	Vincenzo Guarneri	70
Sarolta Bodo	14	Konstantinos Katsamperis	74
Ishika Guha	16	Tatyana Dayneko	76
Barbara Puto	20	Sophie Ong	80
ZequalsZ2plusC	24	Nadezhda Egorycheva	82
Alberto Millan Galindo	28	Ivana Taglioni	84
Sara Daher	32	Keeshaun Chee	88
Ivanna Stepanova	38	Yuke Xiao	90
Eugenia Babini	42	Eduard Otto Baumann	94
Raul Farias	44	Karyna Kiraro	100
Ivana Babic	46	Elka Veselinova	102
Qi Liu	50	Carlo Borromeo	106
Ojolo (Abel García Jiménez)	52	Irena Korbar Hočevan	108
Vojislava Jankovic	56	Ashutosh Gupta	110
Brittany Ellis	58	Phyllis Tracy Malinow	112
Ariel Williams	60	Lisa Salazar	114
Cecilia Turrubiates	64	Bowen Wu	116



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