

Alexei Gordin

b. 1989, EE

alexeigordin.weebly.com

Over the last few years my art practice was mainly concentrated on a wider understanding of what "art practice" is in the contemporary world and how it relates to a personality compelled to balance between the will to create and the will of stable surviving, forced to interact with the art market, and market-based relations, frequently denied by many as something distracting from genuine urges.

In my works, I sum up some existential questions inspired by everyday life and transform them into fiction, opening up a wide picture of possible occurrences, never taking place in reality, but visualizing and objectifying fears and displeasures connected to personal life; considering interaction with society, market, working environment.

One of my main interest is a phenomenon of career, which idea itself, looks arguable in the context of art. But its meaning in the contemporary world is so strong and deeply rooted, that it is hard to imagine any sphere of activity without measuring it through understanding of career. Even if we consider the concept of art as something liberating from its beginning, then artist career, nevertheless, has been something clearly constructed and adopted during the ages, forcing artists fit in particular frames. Nobody likes to be categorized, but as much we learn from institutional open calls, there are clear categories of acceptance, including segmentation on "emerging", "mid-career" and "established" artist and availability of relevant education.

In his essay "*A few words about the artist freedom*", Russian conceptualist Vadim Zakharov, who had also been representing Russia in Venice biennale 2015 claims that "Contemporary culture offers millions of possibilities for the realization of talent. It seems that everything needed for the expression of ones free, creative personality is available. But only on the condition that you travel on a well established path: first you have to be invited by a gallery, then by critic, a curator(...), a collector, a director of museum, then there is a possibility of a large international show(...)". In the given essay, Zakharov ponder on the idea of artists freedom as something elusive, present as a wide spread impression, but impossible to reach it practically. "Fundamentally missing from this system is the most important thing: the active role of the artist. The artist has become the plaything of the functionaries of the system."

On the given painting, despite its name, person of artist is not quite alone. The situation is driven to absurd, where artist, probably left alone with his thoughts, fights the solitude, drinking wine with his paintings. His speech is concerning his reality, reminding the painful confession of what he is. The whole idea about career is concentrated on the moving to the top of any field you are dealing with, and it is always the social phenomenon, impossible to achieve without interaction with a certain system. The "lonely artist" on the painting, can symbolize both voluntary abrogation of career staying

outside the hustle, and forced impossibility of reaching the career success. Staying in the "middle", clearly opposed to the "going up", which is a typical allegory for success, creates some kind of vacuum, unnatural state for the ambitious human mind. However, Aristotle equates the so called "middle" to the main virtues in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. "Excess is a misdemeanor, and lack [also] is not praised, while the middle is commendable and correct(...)virtue, therefore, is some possession of the middle". Truly, typical career is somehow a fluky chasing of vague values. Thus, the "middle" and the "freedom" are extremely clearly stated dogmas in the context of human ethics. But to think realistically, both of them are quite unable to reach, due to the huge amount of possible occurrences, resulted by well established frames of whatever spheres of human activity.

Education:

2014 - 2016, Academy of Fine Arts, Helsinki, MFA.

2008-2011, Estonian Art Academy, painting, BA.

1996-2008, Pärnu Russian Gymnasium

Personal exhibitions:

Upcoming: Art is not just Fun anymore. Tartu Artists House Gallery, Tartu, 2017

Forever not ready. Draakoni gallery, Tallinn, 2015

Art and Capitalism. Free Art Space, Helsinki. 2015

Artist collecting bottles. Y Gallery, Tartu. 2014

March 1989 - August 2014. Tallinn City Gallery, Tallinn, 2014

Between the past and the cosmos. Aatrium gallery. Tallinn. 2013

No Money To Rent a Gallery. Telliskivi Art Center, Black hall. Tallinn. 2013

No More Hope For Lovely Creatures. Kultuurikatel garden, Tallinn 2012.

Art Is So Gay. Parikaste house, Tallinn. 2011

Correction Work. Pärnu city gallery. Pärnu. 2011.

Image of Duality. (with A. Kulpin) Aatrium Gallery, Tallinn. 2010.

Group exhibitions:

Upcoming:

Silta. Curator V. Halmettoja, Virkka gallery, Helsinki, 2017

Perform or not. Polymer culture factory, Tallinn, 2017.

Nobody told me I am east European child. Curator S. Preiman, Tallinn Art Hall, 2017

EXTENSION.EE. Curator E. Pärn, Triumph gallery, Moscow, 2016

Bedroom paintings. Kopli gallery, Tallinn. 2016

Young painter prize. TSEKH Gallery, Vilnius, 2016.

Haava. Exhibition of Seppo Fränti collection, Lapinlahden sairaala, Helsinki, 2016

Systems3. Exhibition Laboratory, Helsinki, 2016

Refleksioonid: sissevaade/väljavaade, Vol. 2. Curator E.Pärn. Narva Kolledz, Narva, 2016

Art Laboratory @ Flow Festival. Curator: S. Lehtinen, Helsinki, 2016

Kilometer of sculpture art festival. Curator: A. Virtanen. Rakvere, Estonia 2016

Kuvan Kevät. Project room gallery. Curator: S. Lehtinen, Helsinki 2016

Systems2. Free Art Space, Helsinki, 2016

Techniques of delusion. KuvaTila gallery, Helsinki. 2016

Art Laboratory @ Flow Festival. Curator: J. Räsänen. Helsinki, 2015

Stochfors Art Fair. Abandoned watermill in Pyhtää, Finland, 2015
Musta ruudu metamorfoosid: Malevitsi tõlgendused Eesti kunstis. Curator: E.Taidre. KUMU, Tallinn 2015.
Frozen Species against the wall. Curator: G. Biagini. Eskus performance center. Helsinki 2015 What is Surface? Project space gallery, Helsinki 2015
Refleksioonid: sissevaade/väljavaade. Curator E.Pärn. Tallinn Russian museum, Tallinn 2015
Playground, Polymer culture factory, Tallinn 2014
Eesti kunstiskeenede arheoloogia ja tulevik. KUMU art museum. Curator R.Artel. 2012
Pärnu Kunsti Ülevaatenäitus. Pärnu city gallery 2012
Lost in Transition. Estonian Museum of Contemporary Art. Curator R. Artel. Tallinn. 2011.
Kas kunstil on sugu? Nooruse Gallery. Curator K. Kivirand. Tartu. 2011.
Proekt Loop. KUMU art museum/Pärnu Museum of contemporary art. 2010.
Eesti Kunstnikke Aastaliidu Maalinäitus. SooSoo Gallery. Tallinn. 2009.
Kriis. Rotermann Center Atrium. Tallinn. 2008.
Eesti Loodusfoto Aastanäitus. City hall. Tallinn. 2008.
Eesti Loodusfoto Aastanäitus. City hall. Tallinn. 2007.
Pärnu Foto. PärnuCity gallery. Pärnu. 2007.

Performance:

Painting against the painting against the wall. Helsinki Theatre Academy, 2015
Frozen Species project. Series of different performances with a group of 15 artists. Curated by G. Biagini. Helsinki 2015
Elephant of Troy. With E. Jakubov. Kultuuritolm Festival, Tallinn 2014
Kunsnik ja Kerjus. With E. Jakubov. Viru Center subway. Tallinn. 2008
My Journey ends Here. With E. Jakubov. San Marco, Venice. 2011

Awards:

Estonian Nature Photo 2008. 2 place.
Pärnu Portrait photo. 2007. 1 place.

Residency:

Young Artists Association Studio(FKSE), Budapest, Hungary, 2017

Publicat ons:

Alexei Gordin ja nõukogude-järgse kunstniku seiklused kapitalistlikus maailmas. Elnara Taidre, Vikerkaar magazine, 01.07.17

Tõejärgse ajastu tõejärgne kunst. Tanel Rander. Sirp, 17.03.2017

Romantiline Ida – Euroopa Lääne moodi. Eva – Erle Lilleaed, Postimees, 21.03.17

Взгляд извне на современное искусство Эстонию. Александра Орлова, Плуг. 12.01.17

Teise pilk aitab ennast leida. Aleksandra Orlova(translated from russian by Reet Varblane). Sirp, 16.12.16

Kuvataideakatemia Kuvan kevät -näyttely yllätti kriitikot. Timo Valjakka ja Harri Mäcklin, Helsinki Sanomat, 14.05.2016

Ritsch, ratsch in I konstnärskapet. Synnove Rabb, Hufvudstadsbladet, 14.05.16

Autahvel: kõige kõvemad kunstinäitused 2015. Mari Kartau, Kultuur.err.ee. 24.12.15

Naljaga pooleks. Märkmeid Alexei Gordinile. Andreas Trossek, Ajakiri Kunst. 4/2015

Из Худооакадемии на Flow festival. Anna Ruohonen, Это-Финляндия. 30.09.15

Kas kunstnik on tähtsam kui pudelikorjaja? Kaarel Kressa, Eesti Päevaleht 12.08.14

Noor kunstnik teostab end pudeleid korjates. Asso Puidet, Pärnu Postimees. August 2013

Üleminekuga kaduma või üle läinud? Andri Ksenofontov, Sirp, 12.08.11

Works in collections:

Seppo Fränti collection, Helsinki

Tartu Art Museum, Tartu

Päivi & Paavo Lipponen Foundation, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki

Private collections in Estonia and Europe