

YOUNG PAINTER PRIZE 2021

Karl-Erik Talvet / EE

<https://www.facebook.com/karleriktalvetart>

PRESENTATION OF ARTWORK: **“COLORS OF GAO”**

This painting is based on my own experience, when I served as a soldier in Mali, in 2019. In contrast to my earlier paintings with which I tried to realistically depict the daily lives of deployed soldiers with a semi-realistic approach, I've painted this painting using palette knives, to give it a somehow “magical” atmosphere.



Colors of Gao. Oil on canvas. 120x150 cm. 2020

This painting depicts a group of innocent children wearing exotic and colorful clothing and trying to sell some kind of vegetables (roots or potatoes of some kind). Despite the pretty dirty and dusty environment, I was struck by the multitude of very vivid colors that were visible when I was patrolling the streets. This painting shows that whatever form of government or armed mob controls the countryside, it doesn't change anything for the civilian population that keeps struggling every day for its survival.

The figures in this painting are directly inspired by a group of local children that I was trying to communicate with (although they stayed pretty quiet) and which I filmed with my helmet-mounted GoPro camera.



Estonian NCO trying to communicate with local children

Creative biography

Karl-Erik Talvet was born in Paris and has also spent parts of his childhood in Switzerland and Belgium. He currently lives and works in Tallinn. He graduated from the Estonian Academy of Arts in 2018 with a Master's Degree in painting. He has also studied abroad at the Brera Art Academy in Milan (2016/1017) as part of the Erasmus program.

Talvet works mostly on painting and comics and has taken part of numerous exhibitions, and is a member of the Estonian Painters' Association and Estonian Comics Association.

A lot of Talvet's artwork is focused on the military subject, since he's been a member of the Estonian Defence League (*Kaitseliit*, equivalent of the Latvian *Zemessardze* and Lithuanian *Krašto apsaugos savanorių pajėgos*) since 2013 and has published a lot of his field drawings in Estonian military-related magazines.

In 2019 Talvet participated with the Estonian Defence Forces in a military operation in the Republic of Mali, where he served as a French - Estonian language translator. He used this exotic experience as a basis of his two following exhibitions "Paintings from Mali" and "Malian Pastarole", the latter of which was also shown at the Meno Parkas gallery in Kaunas in March 2021.

In 2021 Talvet took a course of art therapy via the Tallinn University with the goal of finding ways to help war veterans and other people in need to heal themselves through the use of art.