

XIV YOUNG PAINTER PRIZE

Andris Kaļiņins / LV

www.kalinins.lv

During visits to prominent museums dedicated to art like the Louvre, the Vienna Art History Museum or the Mauritshuis in The Hague, this young painter was particularly intrigued by the impressive spaces dedicated to paintings. These spaces, like sanctuaries to the paint and the act of painting, left a permanent impression on Kaļiņins and it inspired the work made for a solo exhibition, "Andris Kaļiņins' Oil Painting" at Jūrmala Museum. At the core of this exhibition was a painting that refers to the Flemish painter, Anthony van Dyck's paintings.

Andris Kaļiņins' oil painting is the embodiment of its own materiality. In English, the terms color and paint clearly distinguish between meanings covered summarily by the word "krasa" in Latvian. Kaļiņins method is to allow the paint to lead in specifics of transparency, thickness, gloss, lightfastness and it's name. The painting's appearance is reduced to a level where the narration is left to the characteristics of the paint. He therefore avoids interpretation, leaving that up to the size of the canvas and how they are placed in the space.

Oil paint was the central theme for the Jurmala Museum exhibition. The paintings are clear depictions of the oil paint, with the pigment expressed in text and color. By labeling what the content of the painting is, literally within the paintings frame, Kaļiņins extends the art object into a museum object. Seemingly abstract, the paintings actually provide an exact literal description of what is in front of the viewer. Furthermore, on deeper inspection, the precise label identifies the context of the pigment in a wider historical sense. He imagines, with some whimsy, that this approach could be considered a form of documentary painting following minimal, conceptual and reductive painting traditions. The pure qualities of the painting's materials and the actions of the artist are in balance. The addition of illogically placed museum barriers is a light hearted allusion to the traditional approaches of academic art exhibitions.

Kaļiņins considers the painting, "Van Dyck Brown" as a contemporary portrait of the Flemish academic painter Anthony van Dyck (1599-1641). Van Dyck was a well known portrait painter who revolutionized the genre. The painting is made up of three individual pieces of fabric stitched together and reframed after painting. The stitching is a reference to a method Kaļiņins noticed in Anthony van Dyck's paintings which are often made of more than one piece of fabric. It was not uncommon practice in the 17th century to stitch fabric together as a practical solution and Kaļiņins uses it as a visual theme in this

contemporary painting. The rectangle is a reference to van Dyck's large, dark, vertical (portrait view) paintings. The particular brown pigment used in painting the prominent rectangle, artist's signature and date are named after van Dyck and in that sense, the painting also becomes a portrait of the pigment.



exhibition view

creative biography

Painter and scenographer Andris Kaļinins (1994) studied at the Latvian College of Culture and the Art Academy of Latvia in the scenography department, he supplemented his knowledge at the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna (Akademie der Bildenden Künste Wien) under prof. Anna Viebrock. Last summer he had his first solo exhibition of his oil paintings at Jurmala Museum, "Kaļinins' Oil Painting." Previously he has participated in several group shows including at Arsenāls, the Kalnciema Quarter Gallery, the Cēsis Beer Brewery and the R. Wagners house in Riga. As a scenographer and costume designer, he has created performances at the Valmiera Theater, the Latvian National Theater and the Dailes Theater, as well as in independent theater projects.

Andris Kalinins' background and education as a scenographer has greatly influenced his approach as a visual artist. For work in theater, he generally avoids mirroring real life situations on the stage. Kalinins is not interested in mimicking life, he would rather create functional spaces which, although inspired by reality, deform it and serve the story. He applies similar approaches as a visual artist when working on paintings and installations. His solution for making art that does not mimic life is to make the materials of the painting - oil and canvas - the main characters and theme of the paintings themselves.

In 2019 he painted the words "word," "black on white," and "Arial Bold" - in the Arial Bold font with black paint on white canvas and named the series Hyper-realism. The "word" names itself, it is as real as the fact that it is not just a painted word, but the word itself. Soon after this series, Kalinins' interest in oil color evolved as he appreciated how this is factually all that is on the painting. Technically speaking, it is the only thing we see on the canvas. Simultaneously he began seeing the poetry of the names of paints' pigments. For example, the word combination of the paint color "Lamp Black" is an oxymoron and might give the spectator a concrete associations. The paintings became a vehicle for Andris Kalinins as an artist to speak by simply letting the oil paints be what they are on the canvas.