

XIV YOUNG PAINTER PRIZE

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Allegory of the Plato's Cave

When creating the main artwork ("Allegory of the Plato's Cave") and the leading artworks my first goal was to identify the main characteristics of the time we are living, then to look for the problems that arise from them and ask whether they are new problems and how we deal with them. To answer those questions I use the historical perspective and old thinking systems. To put it bluntly - I compare, I use contrast. In the end, the artworks should give some insights or new interpretations, some unexpected turns and twists.

For example, one of the defining characteristics of this time is the flow of information. We always had the flow of information, but the times of the social networks create the overflow of information, the fast speed of information, the poor quality of information and fake information overall. Many problems arise from that. Most importantly, emotional well-being of a society. It creates a lot of stress, which can be seen in reality, as millions of unhappy people are living fake lives and making bad decisions. Psychological disorders, suicides, bad sleep, lack of purpose, political manipulations, failed relationships, low health, cancer, violence and so on and on.

Now as the characteristics and problems are clear, I like to put everything in contrast with the past ideas (religion, history, philosophy) and see what happens out of that collision.

"Allegory of the Plato's Cave" is one of the oldest and most known pieces of Western philosophy. Does it still mean anything when put into contemporary light? The painting of an allegory has a lot to do with tourism - a theme which I use as a symbol for contemporary society's idea of a purposeful life (going places, learning, seeing, experiencing, relaxing, resting, buying, taking pictures and being happy). One could call tourist a modern pilgrim. At the same time vacation time is the time when we are furthest away from our reality. There are a lot of illusionary and fake things in tourism. People do the same things, crowds go to the *colloseums*, *mona lisas* and the beaches, they buy the same cups and magnets that you put on the fridge and they get scammed by the same tourist traps. In the factual reality we go on vacation once or twice a year, but for me, in the context of my artworks, tourism is a symbol of the modern society all year round.

So I've got the idea for a painting about all the qualities of modern information flow and what world it creates by using tourism as a symbol. When I was thinking about the composition of the painting it popped to me that Dante was indeed a tourist and probably the most famous one. He, together with his guide Virgil, was a tourist in Hell, trying to see what the life really is and how should you live for it to be purposeful. One thing led to another and I took Eugene Delacroix painting with Dante as a base for my composition. Of course, it had to be a really big painting, because in the context of an exhibition, it should be a very touristy and flashy attraction so that the visitor would feel as in a pompous museum in Paris or in Rome.

When working on the painting I've got frustrated by the constant ads on *Youtube* which did not let me enjoy music, but rather than turning to *Spotify* I continued to use *Youtube* and I started to watch ads and started to analyse them. Turns out that adds are another great symbol to use in the painting which only emphasizes the original Plato's idea that everything is quite fake.

The figures in the painting are like cut outs, the lighting and the colours are not naturalistic and some of the shadows are missing. In the end, I do everything to make the form of the painting such as to get the conceptual idea or the feeling across to the viewer.

Other leading paintings can be put together with the main one as in a supporting role, in general they are made using the same contemporary contrasting tradition way.

Creative biography

EDUCATION:

2013-2017 – BA at Vilnius Art Academy, monumental art department

2018-2020 – MA at Vilnius Art Academy, site specific art department

2019 – Erasmus+ studies at University of Montenegro, Faculty of Fine Arts, Montenegro

OTHER:

2022 – Membership in association LATGA

2020 - Membership in Lithuanian Artists Association

MAIN EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS:

2022 - Exhibition "380 B.C." together with Martynas Pekarskas, VDA exhibition halls "Titanikas", Vilnius

2021 - Exhibition "Sanctity Translated", "8 akys ir ausys" gallery, Vilnius

2021 - Exhibition "THE DECAMERON", Smoke Factory (Dūmų Fabrikas), Vilnius

2021 - 17th International Vilnius painting triennial (UN)DETERMINED, Vilnius

2019 - Exhibition of a painting expedition "Painting the River", Routers Art Lab, Vilnius

2018 - Painting expedition "Painting the River" and exhibition in Kintai Arts artist residence, Kintai

2016 - International project "In the trails of Baltic refugees", Baltic Art Center, Visby, Gotland, Sweden