

Aami Times

CULTURAL NEWSPAPER BY AAMI CORPORATION



PAGE 06 //
The Story of Anima Collection

PAGE 12 //
The Symbolism of a Peacock in Art



Photo: BTC d.d.

AAMI General Partner // Mr. Damjan Kralj, BTC d.d.

Our AAMI team had a conversation with Chief Executive Officer at BTC d.d., Mr. Damjan Kralj about his views on implementing art & culture into business.

AAMI: What values do you see as key pillars for BTC's long-term success?

Mr. Kralj: BTC's almost 70 years of development are based on a tradition on which our success stories have been built through the values of vision, innovation and statehood. With them and with the help of a clear vision, we have successfully transformed into a modern global business company. I believe that our future successes will also be based on these values. Without them, there is no change, and there is no way to create breakthrough projects and shape a successful future. In addition, the success of our company and business growth also stems from the knowledge we have built in all the years of the company's operation, as

well as from our social responsibility and sustainable development. We believe that by caring for the environment in which we operate, we also care for a better future for us and future generations.

AAMI: How would you describe the role of art within the BTC concept?

Mr. Kralj: Art has always had a special place in BTC. Since our inception in 1954, the company has supported creativity in various fields, including music, theater, as well as fine arts, design, architecture and other types of cultural creation. Throughout our almost 70-year history, the company has established itself as a source of creative power and inspiration for the implementation of many projects. All of this lead to a modern and open company, which bases its development on innovation and responsibility towards the society and the environment in which we operate. Over the years, BTC City Ljubljana has also become synonymous with the city of culture and art.

The importance of culture in our work is certainly demonstrated by the many

projects, artists, cultural institutions, partner organizations and events that we support in this field. At the same time, our greatest contribution to cultural events is our own theater SiTi Teater BTC. Every year, with more than 300 domestic and foreign performances, it brightens the days of around 35,000 visitors. With its rich offer, excellent artists and diverse performances, it has become a cultural temple for all generations.

Our contribution to the recognition of domestic and foreign artists and the development of culture in Slovenia is also reflected through the collection of works of art. More than 400 timeless works of art have been collected in our collection, and we are always looking for opportunities to supplement it. Today, BTC City Ljubljana is a meeting place for creators, supporters and lovers of creativity, as well as an open-air art gallery.

AAMI: How do you comprehend art yourself?

Mr. Kralj: I recognize art as a source of inspiration and energy for both daily activities and breakthrough



Photo: BTC d.d.

successes. At the same time, I believe that art and culture create added value and make an important contribution to wider social development.

AAMI: How do you think the collaboration with AAMI Corporation has contributed to the development / role of BTC?

Mr. Kralj: For many years, BTC has been promoting artists and art in various ways and taking care of the development of culture in Slovenia. The goals of expanding the Slovenian and international cultural space and cultural awareness of people have united us with AAMI Corporation.

Together, we also share the belief that art is a global currency that, as a cultural heritage, accompanies and changes many generations. Through cooperation with AAMI Corporation, we discovered new opportunities for the promotion of artistic activity, for the presentation of art in public places and for the presentation and operation of all, both young and established, domestic and foreign artists.

With joint projects such as ART Expo Ljubljana, we have brought art closer to people, and works of art have gained a well-deserved timelessness and redundancy. At the same time, we consolidated BTC's position as a supporter of culture and artists. In addition to the joint work, our assumption that collaboration and success go

hand in hand in the cultural field was also confirmed.

AAMI: Did any collaboration with AAMI (exhibition, event, ...) particularly impress you?

Mr. Kralj: Certainly, the first ART Expo Ljubljana has a special place in our memory. We organized it together with the Institute Atelje Art Murn International in the fall of 2017 and it took place next to the Atlantis Water Park in BTC City Ljubljana. This largest art fair event gave a new dimension to Slovenia and BTC City Ljubljana. Namely, it included the presentation of 142 exhibitors from 15 countries, brought together all kinds of creative industry and art in one place and helped young artists to penetrate the market.

At the same time, it was a platform for the promotion of culture and the development and socializing of domestic and foreign artists, cultural organizations, lovers and supporters of culture.

In parallel with the event, the BTC Art Tour or artistic path among the 12 beautiful sculptures in BTC City Ljubljana came to life, where visitors can still get closer to art and experience our city of culture. The second ART Expo Ljubljana which took place in September 2019 at the Ljubljana Exhibition and Convention Centre and where BTC was also a general part-

ner, was a huge success with thousands of visitors, 350 exhibitors and 120 events (many of them located in BTC City Ljubljana).

AAMI: Is there any artwork inside BTC that is especially close to your heart?

Mr. Kralj: Close to my heart there are the many works of art we have at BTC. But if I had to choose, the sculpture of the Rhine Nymphs by Andrej Grabovec - Gaberi, comes to mind. This was set up in 2017 as part of the first ART Expo Ljubljana. It is an exceptional work of art, which was previously exhibited at the world exhibition at the prestigious Grand Palais Gallery in Paris, and later at the Mimara Gallery in Zagreb. In Paris, the artist received the Arthur Leduc's Award, which is awarded by French Association of Fine Artists for world achievements in the field of art.

I am glad that with the installation of such top works in the public areas of BTC City Ljubljana, we can bring art closer to our visitors, and at the same time with such projects we support and ensure the recognition of artworks by Slovenian artists.



Photo: Jan Tichý

About the Author /

Jan Tichý (1962) is a Czech painter who belongs to the generation which emerged in the 1980s. Primarily a painter, he also devotes much of his energy to drawing, and occasionally graphic art, glass art or pottery. He draws inspiration mainly from architecture, nature, and landscape.

Tichý studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague and the Royal Academy in Antwerp, Belgium. The author has participated in numerous exhibitions and received several awards (Prize of The International Association of Art Europe in 2014.)

www.jantichyartist.com

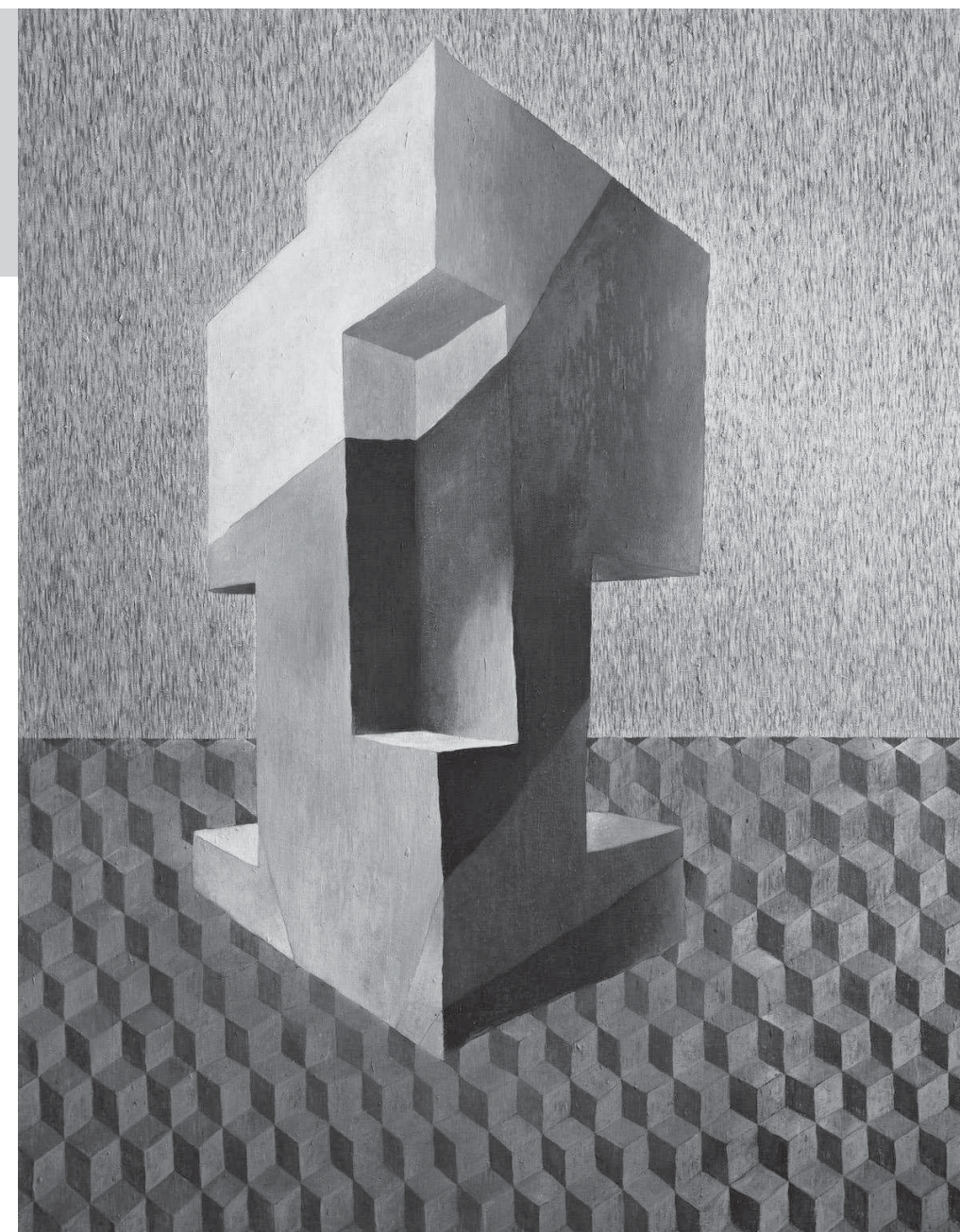


Photo: Jan Tichý

AAMI Prague // Architecture Painting, Architecture in Painting

I grew up in the family of an academic painter Karel Tichý. Karel graduated in 1958 at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague in the studio of Professor Vlastimil Rada, where he graduated with an honorary year of the Academy in 1958.

My father influenced me a lot and wanted me to become an architect rather than to continue the family tradition. Before my entrance exams for grammar school, my dad died suddenly - he was only 45 years old. After my admission to grammar school, I won an international art competition called "Children, Peace, and Art." I was 15 years old and took my success as a tribute to my dad.

At grammar school, I studied mathematics, descriptive geometry, and drawing in order to be accepted to the Faculty of Architecture after graduation. I took my preparation very seriously and, in the second year of secondary school, I also signed up for courses in drawing at the faculty. The professor who led the courses

advised me to go to the Academy of Fine Arts instead. In his opinion, studying architecture would be rather a waste of my talent. It was decided. After graduation from grammar school, I repeatedly took entrance exams at the Academy. I was not accepted until the third attempt. I graduated from this school in 1989 in the studio of docent Jiří Karmazín.

In any case, my close relationship with architecture, "the first lady of fine arts", accompanies me from my childhood to the present. In Kolín, where I studied at grammar school, there are many buildings by leading Czech architects: Franta, Kotěra, Fragner. Nevertheless, when I came to Prague and met Adolf Loos's buildings in person, I was amazed even though I already knew his work. Adolf Loos is a forerunner of individualistic modernism. He dealt with floor plans on the basis of function, and reduced the decorative and architectural elements to a minimum. His buildings consist of quite simple, mostly harmonious, materials. In my paintings, I base my art on a simple mass of a geometric whole, which is placed in a monochrome background. The composition of the image and the

location of the main motif are mathematically calculated.

Adolf Loos - a native of Brno, the son of a stonemason, is one of the greatest figures in architecture of the last century. He graduated from secondary school in Liberec and then continued his studies at the Technical University in Dresden, which he did not complete. In 1893 he left for the USA, where he stayed for three years, before settling again in Europe in Vienna. For several years he also lived in Paris. He died in 1933 in a sanatorium in Kalksburg near Vienna. Loos was an original architect and also had a fighting spirit. His theories and practices were openly directed against contemporary commercialism and habits.

At the beginning of his career, he relied on furnishing apartments and smaller shops. The thorough reconstruction of the Villa Karma in Clarens on the shores of Lake Geneva (1904-06), which is covered with a flat roof, is his first major work.

In 1910-1911, he built a large department store (and residential building) Goldman & Salatsch Building in Vi-

enna, which is today called the Looshaus. It is based on the knowledge that only the lowest floors of the building are in the viewing angle of the pedestrian, and that it is unnecessary to spend funds on the exterior design of the upper floors. The lower façade is lined with dark green marble, which contrasts with the austerity in the colour of the façade and the simplicity of the upper floors. For me, this is one of the artistic elements that I apply in the compositions of my paintings "Architecture", and I admit direct inspiration by this ingenious architect.

Loos's famous essay "Ornament and Crime", first given in a lecture in 1910, was published in 1913 and influenced other architects and designers. In 1912, Loos built the Scheu House, which is one of the first terrace buildings. The stepped outline of the side facades is very dynamic and inspiring for me. It becomes a stepping stone in the painting of my "Architectures". Its shape simplification, when placed in the surface of the painting, forms a basic shape, free from any decorative elements.

Loos's buildings are characterized by spatial concept, where common floor

plans were replaced by several spatial plans (I., II., III. etc.), just as when I create a spatial scheme of my paintings. In the facade, windows appear completely irregularly spaced.

Loos also dealt with interior design. In the 1930s, Loos designed a lightweight wooden building for the daughter of František Müller, which unfortunately remained only on paper. However, it became an inspiration for my painting of an armchair on a wooden board. I could not resist painting Loos's chair (I used an airbrush) that stands on a wooden building board.

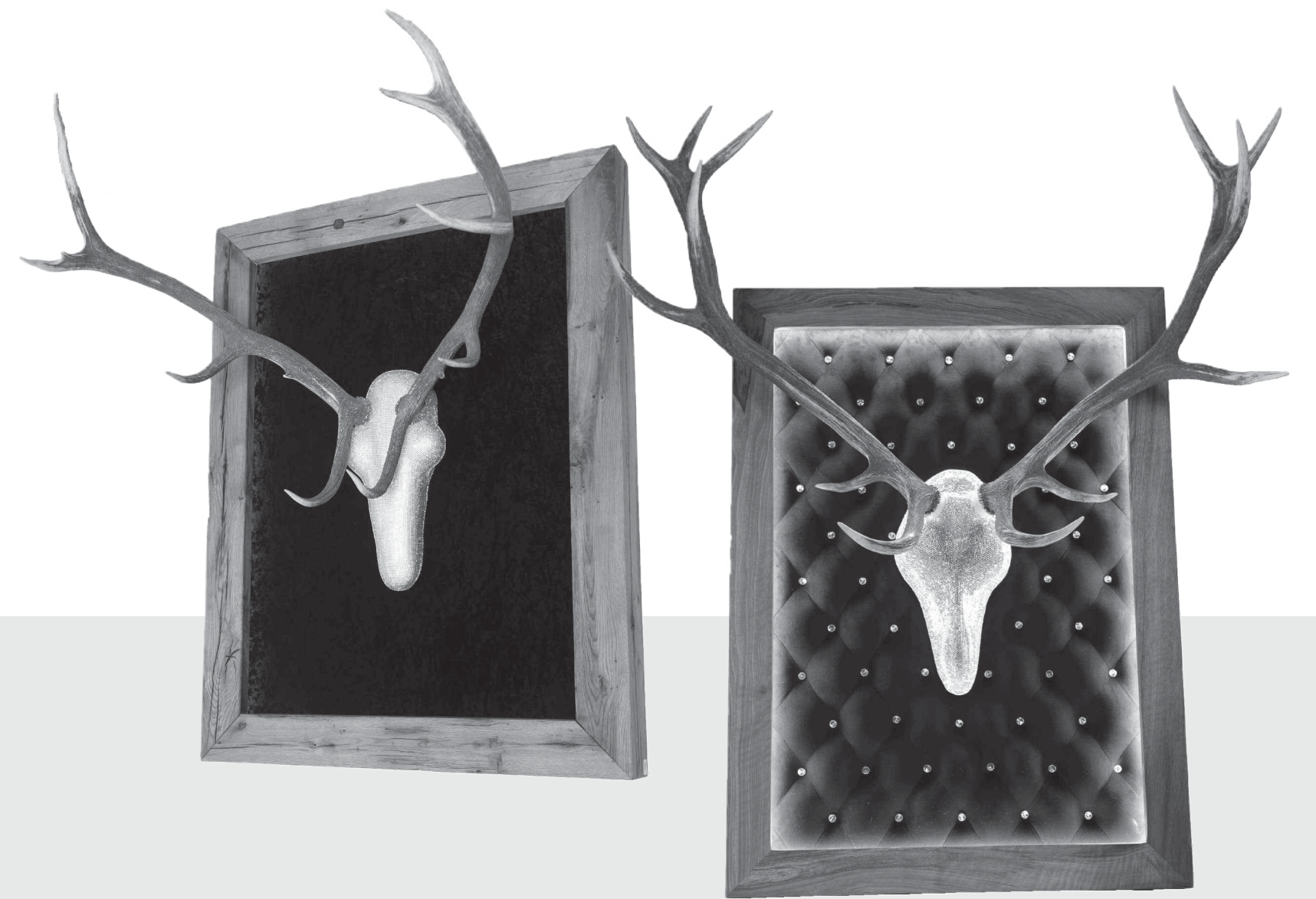
The object - painted armchair, is in direct contrast to the raw surface of the board. The title of this painting is "Tribute to A. L.". The wooden board was a building block for both Loos and me.

For my artistic work, the most important - in terms of location and significance - is one of Loos's late works from 1928, the villa of the builder František Müller. And also Villa Winternitz, which was built even later (1932).

These Prague villas are an endless inspiration for me: in the exterior, details, and in the originality of the interiors. What is important to me is its balanced rational austerity embedded in the urban landscape and its agglomeration. I admire the interplay of individual shapes without exaggerated ornamentation, in the consensus of the horizon and the vertical. I put all this into my paintings and drawings in various techniques (oil, acrylic, ink) and on various substrates (classic canvas, wood, paper).

Adolf Loos once said: "Only a very small part of architecture belongs to art: the tomb and the monument. Everything else that fulfils a function is to be excluded from the domain of art."

The tomb and the monument: these are the things Loos's work is for me.



AAMI Ljubljana // The Story of Anima Collection

“Anima Collection” is a relatively new brand founded in 2020 by Vasja and Gašper Zupančič (father and son). Our team had a pleasant conversation with Vasja, who is the main artist of the brand, meanwhile Gašper is in charge of marketing. We have had the pleasure of collaborating with the brand and presenting them at different markets – Prague, Budapest, Ljubljana and are looking forward to our upcoming projects in London and other parts of Europe.

AAMI: How come you decided to start the “Anima Collection” brand? What is the idea behind it? If we understand correctly, you are not an artist by profession?

Vasja: The birth and beginnings of the “Anima Collection” date back to the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic period, when we all had a somewhat longer period of mental balance, in which many people found their undiscovered abilities or talents. The idea of some sort of “recycling” or the return of the original splendour to such noble animals as deer and roe deer was born spontaneously, accidentally. During a skiing vacation we were staying in a hotel where they had deer antlers with a skull hanging on the wall of the restaurant, which was a horrifying experience for me as a passionate lover of animals, nature and all things beautiful. After a few days of thinking and discussing with my son, an “artistic vein” awoke in me, which I probably inherited from my uncle, who was a painter. I decided to give my seal to such a graceful animal as a deer, or in an artistic way try to achieve the desired - a new “birth”. After the first results or works of art, the name “Anima Collection” practically emerged on its own, and the team of my son’s friends, who are engaged in professional marketing, contributed a lot to

the final commercial image. I left marketing and related activities to my son, and I dedicate myself entirely to creating and developing artworks, although until recently I only took care of running a restaurant and family hotel, of which I have been a co-owner for the last 30 years.

AAMI: What is the purpose of your art? Which materials and techniques do you use?

Vasja: The red thread of the “Anima Collection” story is mainly the fact that we reuse or recycle the antlers which are often abandoned and forgotten, lying in dusty basements and attics, or in the woods. Also, only waste wood of oak, walnut or spruce is used for the natural look of the frame, which is only twice coated with oil and leaves its mark on the whole appearance of the artwork. Imitation of the skull is formed from a special mass that allows individual application of Swarovski crystals. Choosing the right background is a decision of current inspiration.

AAMI: How much time does it take to finish one artwork? Is each artwork unique?

Vasja: Yes, what is important is the fact that each work of art is indeed unique



- both in terms of the choice of materials and in terms of the production itself, which is exclusively handmade. Ideas or inspiration arise completely spontaneously, in different living environments and on different occasions, as the artwork itself is also suitable for countless locations (hotels, private accommodation, clubs, bars, restaurants, protocol facilities, etc.), which means that according to the intended location the artwork can be customized with size, materials, crystals,

background, etc. The time spent making an artwork is difficult to define as it depends on my mood, the size of the crystals, the choice of wood and more. Perseverance and willpower are especially important, as working with crystals is very time consuming and often exhausting for the eyes. The largest imitation of skull contains about 13,000 crystals, which took me almost four months of work.

AAMI: How would you describe a typical buyer of your artworks?

Vasja: Clients or customers of the “Anima Collection” are individuals as well as companies, architectural offices, organizations close to nature, grace, luxury, who like to stand out and want to achieve a higher level of extravagance with uniqueness.

AAMI: Where do you see your brand in the future? What message would you like to leave for our readers?

Vasja: “Anima Collection” is developing slowly, with ideas based on solid ground, so we do not give in to short-term trends and business proposals of individuals, as we want to create a brand that will be recognizable especially in an environment where real art, which is expressed in a unique manner, is valued and respected. In addition to our main slogan “Reborn as a work of art”, which illustrates the idea and design of the “Anima Collection”, we would also like to focus on our desire of the Anima team, namely “Back to the nature”, and this should apply to all areas.

www.anima-collection.com



Photo: Ana Guberina



Guberina, Ana. Universe - Multiverse. (2010)

About the Author /

Ana Saban Guberina, Master of Fine Arts (MFA), lives and works in Zagreb. She received her Master of Fine Arts degree from Arthouse, College of Visual Arts in Ljubljana .

For her artwork, she has received recognitions and has been awarded with Pasionska baština Award, Mimara Museum, Zagreb (2002) and Zagreb Full Colour 19 Award, Technical Museum Nikola Tesla, Zagreb (2019).

www.anaguberina.com

AAMI Zagreb // Art in the Time of Consumerism

Is it possible for an artist to retain a minimum of autonomy or is he or she forced to be entirely subject to demands of the market and media aesthetics?

Today, it is no longer “possible to define art, and what is still presented as art is no longer tending to motivate aesthetic experience in the sense of sacred traditional perceiving of the beautiful, sublime or inventive” (Michaud, 2004:74).

Art does not express great ideas or profound secrets any more, therefore it has come closer to the world of communication and fashion, as well as it introduces us to a world of aesthetic experience where syncretism and polytheism of beauty dominate. Art is not interesting to the masses who do not understand it and prefer to use products of popular commercial culture, and visitors of art exhibitions rather follow the ideal of beauty offered by the world of commercial consumption and are inclined to recognize works which require no cognitive effort whatsoever to be understood.

How to reconcile these facts and positions which were results of last century's art avant-garde struggle: that each and every artist primarily aims at becoming an original artistic personality, someone who builds their own and unique style, develops and

nurtures individuality, without having calculations about success and money, without hunting for exhibitions and fame?

Is the fact that all the artistic practices may belong to contemporary art in a certain given moment and in certain circumstances comforting or defeating? Here, great importance lies not only with the subject and artist, but also with the gallery, agent and advertising, spectator, critic, collector, organizer, and an institution that determines value (cf. Michaud, 2004:43).

In general, in order for something to be considered as an artwork it has to be the subject of interpretation – if interpretation is lost, it is merely an ordinary object again. American critic Tom Wolfe ironises the fact that at present time a good modern painting has to be accompanied by a convincing aesthetic theory, otherwise it would be worth nothing (cf. Wolfe, in Michaud, 2004:30).

The joy of creation

Although relativisation of the artistic message has occurred, which is in accordance with the loss of a serious dimension of art, my artistic practice aspires to recognizability of expression. It also shows determination and wish to continue to create paintings in which I insert my own understanding of the meaning of human existence. Joy and fulfilment caused by the very creative act cannot be lessened even by the cognition that I pursue a career that does not bring about money easily. At the very beginning my painting

artworks were pronouncedly colourist because largest portion of my exploration was focused on investigating colours and their capabilities and in terms of theme, they were related to the cycle of paintings “Summer on the Island”. These paintings were contemplated with colour: these were forms that resulted from colours. In these paintings, one can see a unique rhythm that motivates pulsing of atmosphere and southern light in each and every segment of a painting. Knowing visible world become means of cognition of transcendental reality, the one that is regulated by logical and meaningful principles. I made effort to bring my own perception of the island into the paintings: the feeling of warmth and being protected, of safety and salvation – all of which the island rouses inside me. I wanted to show the brightness of the Mediterranean and by means of visual artwork, I wanted to present the space of renewed togetherness with nature that could become a stronghold of a new spiritual order.

I aim at authenticity, not at conformist likeability

In the times of search for answers to numerous existential questions, some painters find refuge in theosophy, Buddhism, shamanism, etc. – I search for answers in Christian spirituality. Therefore in the paintings from the cycle “Coherence”, the influence of the works by Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, a French scientist and theologian, as well as the most recent scientific theories on the emergence and expansion of the

universe is visible. By means of Christian meditation practice and contemplation I enhance my consciousness and my sense of unity with the Source of our being, with what is the foundation for development of self-identity. Awareness of this presence is true safety for me. Consequently, it is inevitable that this occupies a significant place in my painting. Not lingering over literal interpretation of spiritual and sacral motifs, I try to find a very delicate balance in counterpointing themes from Christian spirituality like love, connectedness, contemplativeness. Although I am aware that we live in the times when all of the spiritual values that were peculiar for our culture until recently are revoked, I still aspire to be connected with other beings and connected with God.

With meditation and contemplation, we contribute to awareness and to strengthening of our friendly and caring relationship with all the beings and with the planet on which we live, in other words, with the totality in which we participate. Because of that, my paintings talk about all-present power of God's love which holds together the entire universe centred in Christ in the centre, a love that connects the entire reality, all dimensions and levels of existence, and is above all prejudices and barriers.

Already at the very beginning of exhibiting my paintings, a unique and powerful gestural quality was recognised and in my further development, I made efforts to unite spontaneity and kinetic succession which has led to an authentic

painting action, as well as to total liberation and creation of action painting artworks. Gesturality from that period is an authentic record of an artistic search for answers. Names of the paintings witnesses this period: “Coherence” – here I mean meaningful connectedness of beings in the universe and perfect harmony of physical laws and constants that enable emergence and development of life on Earth; “Is the Universe Christocentric”, “Heading Towards Omega”, “Sacrament of Eucharist”, “Adam and Eve”, “Silence”, “Meditation”...

“It has to be pointed out that Ana Guberina, as a skilful colourist, is primarily a painter of the God's, metaphysical world, or the light of dual nature: light as a wave and at the same time as a swarm of particles. Structures of the paintings are made of slight traces of kinetic gesturality; this is a kind of action painting, composed of of exhilaration and composure, of dispersedness and being focused, of instinct and intellect.” (...) (Letica, 2015:3).

AAMI Music // LUXIA, Fusing Design with Electronic Music

Špela Nemec, known as LUXIA, is a techno DJ and producer from Ljubljana, Slovenia. She has been involved with electronic music for over a decade and has performed at many well known events and festivals such as Kurzschluss, Stellar Beat, Pivo in cvetje, Lent festival, Trnfest etc. In 2017 she became the winner of the slovenian Burn Residency competition and in 2015 she launched her own musical organization 777music.

Luxia is known by her typical driving techno sets that include melancholic melodic sounds and heavier bassline beats fused together to perfection. Her fresh sound and energetic performance always leave a positive impression on the audience.

You've been active in electronic music for a while now. What brought you to the world of DJing?

Electronic music became my passion in my early teenage years. Over the upcoming decade, I attended many local and foreign events to get the knowledge about the industry, various styles and subgenres of electronic music that still inspire me in my music creation today. Over the years, my desire to experience what it is like to be behind the dj booth has grown and with it also my motivation to learn. Ever since I got involved with electronic music I felt that djing was something that I wanted to do professionally and after learning the basics I started slowly working on developing my own personal style for which my supporters know me today.

Why did you decide to start DJ-ing and what did your first years as a DJ look like?

When I've learned everything there was to know about mixing techniques and started to truly understand the art of djing, all I was missing was experience. It's one thing to succeed in delivering your sets as you've envisioned at home in the studio with perfect sounding or in front of a small group of friends, but it becomes a whole other level when you start to perform publicly at different kind

of venues with larger crowds. At the age of 21 I started performing mostly at smaller local places and private parties but back then I was more involved in genres like funky minimal and progressive electro, so it was a totally different sound from what you can hear in my sets today. My interest largely shifted to the techno genre and more underground oriented electronic music when I was doing some special b2b performances with my partner Lucky Left and that's when my journey on becoming a successful established artist actually started. After a year of playing at smaller venues I landed my first bigger gig at a festival in Ljubljana called Trnfest and then started to regularly perform at clubs, where I was gaining more practical knowledge and developing the feeling for the crowd. All these experiences, both positive and negative, have brought me to the point where I am today, gave me the confidence to be able to perform on larger stages and deliver my sets perfectly in any given conditions regarding live sound systems, acoustics and available equipment.

What events do you think of when you talk about your turning points?

One of my most memorable gigs was undoubtedly Pivo in cvetje festival in 2016, where I was booked to warm up the crowd but because of some technical difficulties the artist I was warming

up for that night couldn't go on and I was asked to extend my set until the main act. I will never forget the amazing energy of the largest crowd I played for until that night and the praises I got for my performance – since then I definitely got more recognition on the Slovenian electronic scene. But the turning point and one of the biggest achievements in my career was the Burn Residency competition in 2017. Winning the Slovenian mix-off meant a ticket to an international competition that took place in Ibiza. It was a dream and a unique opportunity for me to showcase my skills, passion and gain knowledge and make some international connections in the industry. Performing at the Hard Rock Hotel on the White Island and in front of judges including Pete Tong, Philipp Straub, Seth Troxler and Loco Dice was both a very inspiring and insightful experience. The praise of the judges who saw the uniqueness and potential in my style, technique, music selection and interaction with the crowd gave me the impetus and motivation to dive deeper into the field of production.

Some of my other significant performances were at Trnfest, where I also tried myself in the organizational field and hosted a series of events for a period of three years with 777music organization that I co-founded with Lucky Left, at Lent festival, Woodland, Stellar Beat festival, Kirchtag festival in Aus-

tria, Lazzareti club in Dubrovnik and most recent one was at Kurzschluss in Ljubljana.

How would you compare the scene of electronic music on the Slovenian market with the foreign market?

In comparison to the international scene I think we are definitely a bit oversaturated with artists due to our small market, so the competition gets really hard and in my opinion the overall standards of events are sometimes a bit lower than elsewhere where I've performed, which usually leads to lack of opportunities for some quality artists with true potential, they get easily overlooked and never get a real chance to establish themselves on our scene. Since I've started to perform quite a few clubs have closed and lots of organizers didn't manage to keep their businesses going, so one of the main problems is the lack of venues and also government support which still doesn't treat our field properly and doesn't show the cultural recognition it deserves compared to other European countries. But on the contrary you can find a various selection of artists and no matter how small the country we are, we have some of the best and most energetic audience that you can really connect to and it shows you the support you need.

You also work as a digital designer and your designs are often visually connected to electronic music. What are the properties or design features in the electronics market?

Graphic design in the music industry is as diverse as the industry itself. I think this is even more expressed in the field of electronic music because the genre itself usually defines the guidelines of the design. If we look at some of the main design characteristics in the techno genre, most common is the use of minimalism, geometric structures or patterns, modern surrealistic illustrations and simple futuristic typography. Design is also one of my biggest passions and I see that as an advantage, because electronic music definitely goes hand in hand with the visual aspect, since today it's almost as important as the musical part – you got to find a way to always stay interesting visually and attract the listener to actually visit your platforms. I designed the overall corporate visual identity for my brand Luxia myself – this way I can constantly develop the whole image of my brand in relation to my evolving style in musical creation. I also designed the brand image of 777music organization and the Technological event series that my partner and I have created. Their design is adjusted to the futuristic theme of technology with a

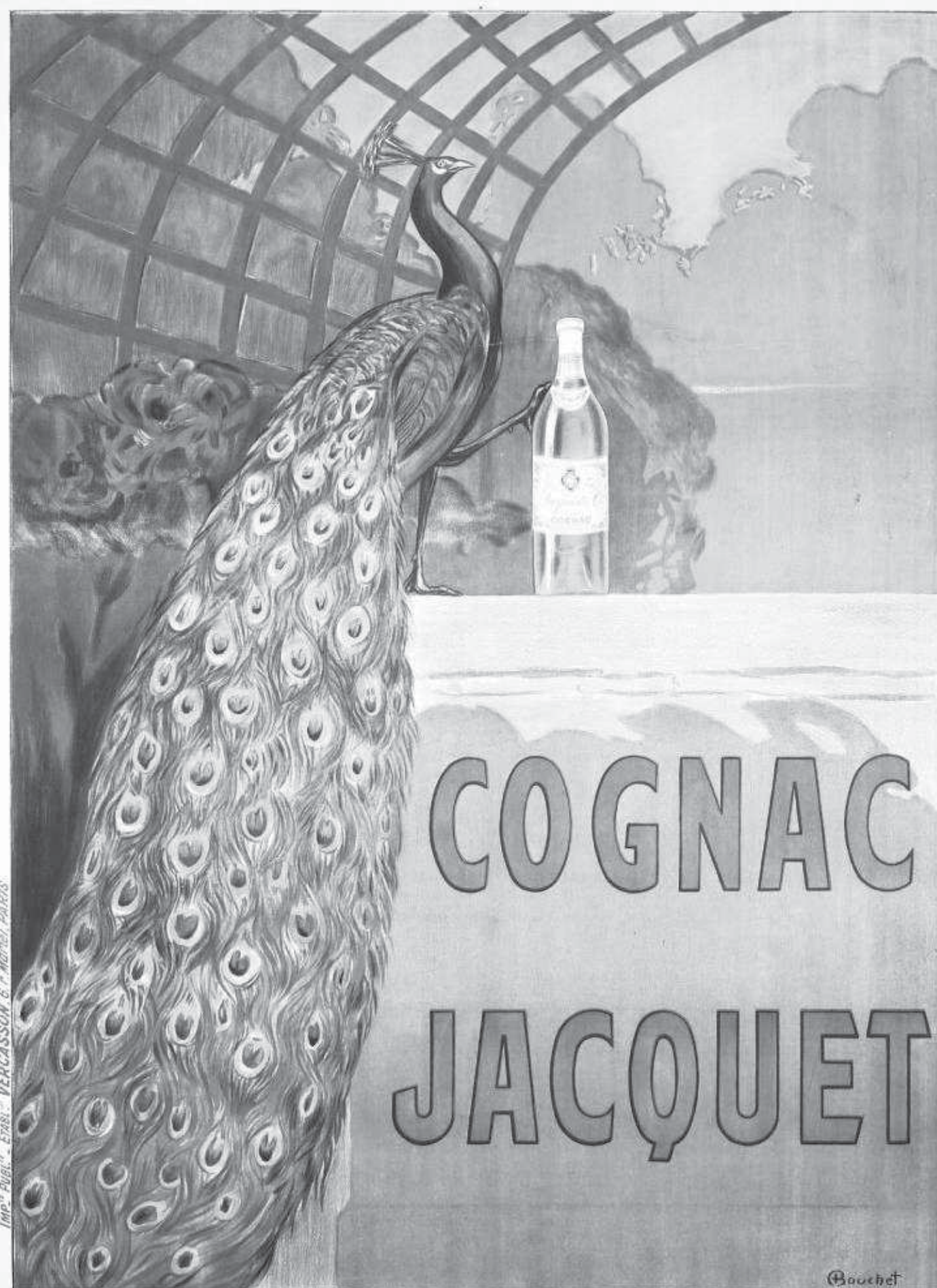
strong contrast between the darkness of the background and neon coloured typography – this way the designs really stood out and attracted the audience to find out more about our events.

How would you explain your music making, are there any criteria that make a good product?

Since I am a perfectionist, which isn't always necessarily a good thing in the field of production I take a lot of time to compose my tracks and really process every little detail, because I don't like to take short-cuts as some of the other artists on the scene. Usually upcoming producers are really pressured and in a hurry to release their tracks whether there is some quality to them or not. But when I dived deeper into musical production and sound engineering I knew it was a whole other branch than djing and realized there is so much to learn I would rather take all the time that I need in order to produce a quality EP, that I will look back on later in my career and be really proud of. When I compose my tracks I am very structured and I always try to create my signature sound that can be heard at my performances: it includes a special type of melancholic melodic segments or wet acidic synths fused with darker, heavier kicks and bass lines on which I add different drum sounds that in the end all together create a mystical but powerful driving track. In my opinion the audience's response is a large criterion of what defines a good track, of course if we look at it from a technical stand point it has to be well composed, arranged, mixed and mastered properly in the end.

If you could point out an artist in your profession who is especially close to your heart or. inspires you, who would it be?

There are many different artists who inspired me through my career, but that always changes in relation to my evolving style. Lately I get more inspiration from less known underground artists who are involved with similar styles than mine. If I would have to give you a well-known name I would say Amelie Lens – I'm always inspired by her energy that she brings to the stage, but musical wise I'm probably more influenced by artists like Charlotte De Witte, David Temessi and A.Paul. I am always looking for something special and fresh and searching for new music is still one of my favorite things about djing – I always imagine I'm looking for some sort of treasure so I spend hours and hours, trying to find the perfect tracks to fit to my own sets.



Bouchet, Camille. Cognac Jacquet. 1887. Lithograph. Printer: Vercasson, Paris.

AAMI Education // The Symbolism of a Peacock in Art

With their eye-grabbing appearance and signature strut, peacock have always been connected with a higher class, wealth and elegance. It could be for that reason, that we sometimes use the word »peacock« as an insult for someone, who we find snobbish and annoying.

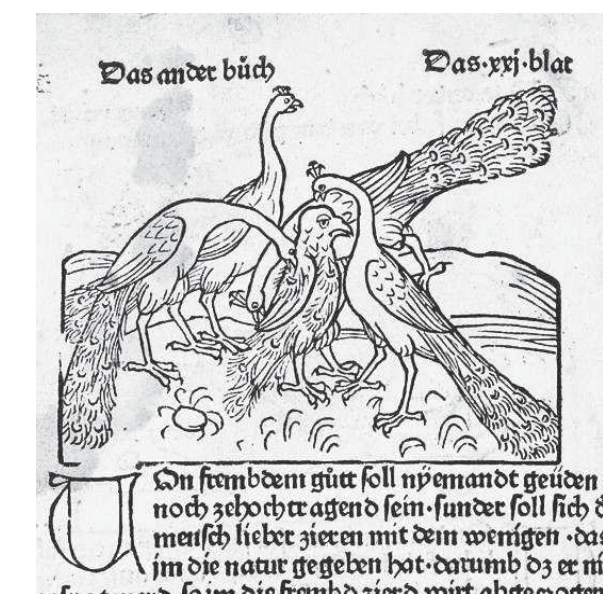
Peacocks have often been portrayed in artworks, especially in art decades, such as late antique, early Christian art, renaissance, etc. Although peacocks are a beautiful bird species, a peacock actually held a variety of meanings across different cultures and spiritual beliefs. Nowadays they symbolize glory, wealth, grace and pride. At various times the peacock served as a symbol for good and evil, resurrection, everlasting life, pride, vanity and even death.

We can trace the existence of peacocks back to biblical times, when, taken from his homeland in the Indus Valley in the Middle East, King Solomon imported the species around 950 BC (Jackson, 2006). From there on the birds spread to different countries. The peacock became the subject of stories, superstitions and art. Some say that the peacock is an earthly manifestation of a phoenix (also goes by the name Benu)*. In Ancient Egypt, the phoenix was connected to the gods Ra, Osiris and Horus, and seen as the bird of sun and resurrection.

»Benu not only typified the birth of the sun each morning, but in the earliest period of dynastic history it became the symbol of the resurrection of mankind.« (Murdock, 2009)

In Greek mythology the peacock was believed to be the special bird of Hera and was portrayed as the sacred bird in Hera's temple. It was said that a peacock have sprung from the blood of a hundred-eyed giant Argos Panoptes. After Argos's death Hera placed giant's eyes in the peacock's tail and so turned Argos into a peacock (Anđelković et al, 2010).

The peacock was subject in Greek fables as well. One of them is a fable created by Aesop (the storyteller who lived in ancient Greece around 620-560 BC); The Bird in Borrowed Feathers. The story has evolved through time and gone by various titles.



Zainer, Johannes. 'Von dem Rappen und Pfawen'. Wood-cut illustration. National Art Library Pressmark, London



Paelinck, Joseph. Juno. 1832. Oil on canvas. Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent.

A jay venturing into a yard where peacocks used to walk, found there a number of feathers which had fallen from the peacocks when they were molting. He tied them all to his tail and strutted down towards the peacocks. When he came near them they soon discovered the cheat, and striding up to him pecked at him and plucked away his borrowed plumes. So the jay could do no better than go back to the other jays, who had watched his behavior from a distance. But they were equally annoyed with him, and told him, "It is not only fine feathers that make fine birds." (Aesop, 1894)

In Antique Rome the peacock was bred from the second century BC and then became portrayed as Juno's sacred animal. In Roman religion, Juno was a



Dish with Peacock Design. 17th century. The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

goddess of Jupiter and represented vital force, vital energy and eternal youthfulness. In many ways Juno was similar to Hera from Greek mythology.

Peacocks in Roman art are usually associated with this goddess. On Imperial coins, Juno is often portrayed feeding her peacock, which is usually seen in frontal position with an open tail or in profile with downcast tail.

In Roman times, the peacock represented funerals, death and resurrection. They were seen as immortal because of their feathers, which kept their shine throughout the whole bird's life. Often, in the paintings, the bird was drawn with grapes and vines, which were attributes to Juno, and were as well symbolizing immortality. Peacock's tail was a symbol for the stars in the sky and so often connected to the idea of being eternal (Anđelković et al, 2010).

Early folktales portrayed peacock as being responsible for the fall of man in the garden of Eden. This might be because the peacocks are known to hunt serpents. The later is one of the oldest mythological symbols, usually representing Satan. The theme of the battle between the peacock and snake, representing the triumph of good over evil, was present in antiquity and continued later as well.

In the art of last antique and Early Christian art, peacock was often portrayed as symbolic, not just decorative. They were often combined with the tree of life in the Sacred garden. Tree of Life symbolizes the connection between heaven and

earth, death and resurrection, and sometimes suggests crucifixion (Anđelković et al, 2010).

Peacock motif was often used in early Christians catacombs, as an illustration of faith in Christ's eventual rising from the dead. It might be, that the bird's depictions were a warning about the afterlife (Kushwaha, Kumar, 2016).

»According to the Bestiaries, when the peacock awakes, it cries out in fear because it dreams that it has lost its beauty: so the Christian must fear to lose the good qualities with which God has endowed his soul.« (Collins, 2019)

In Early Byzantine art the peacock is as well represented in indoor mosaics and on-stone sculptures (in the temples). The bird started to represent not just eternal life, but holiness. Meanwhile, in the age of Renaissance art, the peacock represented the sin of Pride.

In Hinduism, the peacock is associated with Lakshmi goddess, who represents prosperity and wealth. It symbolises patience, benevolence and compassion. The Peacock occupies a sacred position in Hinduism and is so a subject in folklore, Sanskrit, literature and poetry.

Peacock has as well been associated with Lord Krishna, who wears its feather on his forehead. As well Indra, the god of thunder and war, was depicted as a peacock. South India connects the peacock to Lord Muruga. During the Gupta period (5th c. AD) peacocks were often depicted in art, architecture and even on

coins. It's not surprising that peacocks are India's national birds. They are often carved as reliefs on historic buildings, such as Bharhut Stupa, Sanchi stupa, etc. (Kushwaha, Kumar, 2016) Asian spirituality connects the bird with the goddess Kwan-yin. It holds attributes to compassion, good-will and a kind heart.

The peacock was often portrayed in Persian art. They were often seen in pairs of two and on each side of the Cosmic tree (Hom). They symbolized the duality of men. (Kang, 2013)

By then the peacock gained different meanings in folk beliefs and rites. Obtaining an amulet with peacock's plumage was a way of protection against evil eyes. (Anđelković et al, 2010). In 15th century it was believed that when a peacock cries, it foretells the death of someone in the family.

It was believed that the dancing peacock is an indication for rainy weather, as the bird outspreads its tail at the sight of clouds (Kushwaha, Kumar, 2016). Their cry was also believed to predict rain. while their presence inside the house might suggest unmarried ladies in the residence to end up unmarried. Some believed that the feathers in the theaters brought bad luck among the actors. Peacocks are (still) an important indicator species since their presence or absence in an area is a good indicator of the healthiness of the bionetwork. (Matthews, 2016)

Nowadays the peacock inspires artists of all kind; sculptors, interior designers, painters, poets, architects, etc.

Around 1876-77, one of the most aesthetic interiors, created by James McNeill Whistler and Thomas Jeckyll, was designed. Harmony in Blue and Gold: The Peacock Room is a most elegant paneled room, which is painted in a palette of blue and greens with over-glazing and metallic gold-leaf. All around the room (which was first meant to be a dining room for British shipping magnate) we can see images of a peacock or his feathers. There is a big painting of two fighting peacocks across a wall. It is said, that the peacocks represent the designer and the magnate. (Leggio, 2015)

In 2014, peacock inspired the design for Mumbai airport's new terminal. The architectural elements, such as the ceiling, the floor and the pillars, are said to be representing a dancing peacock (which is India's national bird). All together was designed by the Chicago-based architecture firm, Skidmore, Owings & Merrill. (Unveiled: peacock of a terminal, 2014)

Canadian design firm Uufie designed a minimalistic peacock inspired chair, constructed out of a single sheet of acrylic, which represents peacock's famous tail.

(Wiegmann, 2013) We can also find peacocks in book illustrations. One example is the different editions of Pride and prejudice, the famous story, written by Jane Austen. One of the most known is the "Peacock" edition of Pride and Prejudice, published in 1895. The illustration, made by Hugh Thomson, features a gilded peacock cover. Here the peacock is a symbol of pride, as the title tells us. (The Jane Austen Peacock: How the bird became an icon, 2016)

And we can find peacock symbolism in poems as well. In the poem below, the poet expresses his disappointment of the reality by depicting of Juno's peacock. »... Time's circulation is revealed clearly with the scream of Juno's peacock. When Juno's peacock makes its irrational cry, the darkness of the old world is revealed so clearly that the end of this world is unavoidable and the arising of the next new world is reasonable. ...« (Yang, 2015)

O what if gardens where the peacock strays With delicate feet upon old terraces, Or else all Juno from urn displays Before the indifferent garden deities; O what if levelled lawns and gravelled ways Where slipped Contemplation find his ease And Childhood a delight for every sense, But take our greatness with our violence? (Yeats, 2008, p.170)

In china, peacock inspired a variety of unique dances with mimic movements of the bird. The Peacock dance is their most famous performance. The story behind the dance tells us about the bird's humble beginnings, when it was yet not so beautiful, but was known for tameness and obedience. (Kang, 2013)

The peacock is still one of the most used pattern in fashion. Peacock inspired fashion actually came to Europe from Japan. Artists The peacock motif was very popular in design during the end of 19th century. During this period women often wore peacock inspired jewellery. Peacock became fashionable in fashion and interiors. As the Buffalo Tribune noted in 1905: "Hats, gowns, cloaks, jewellery, household decorations, are all being affected by the peacock fad." The same article recognized that "when the peacock comes into fashion it gets into every phase of it." (Cassidy, 2015)

The blue and green colourful feathers and a magnificent tail has ensured that the peacock became one of the most loved and adored bird spies. As a motif it was used in religion, myths, superstitions, poems and thought all of the art history. Peacocks still serve as inspiration for all kind of art around the world.

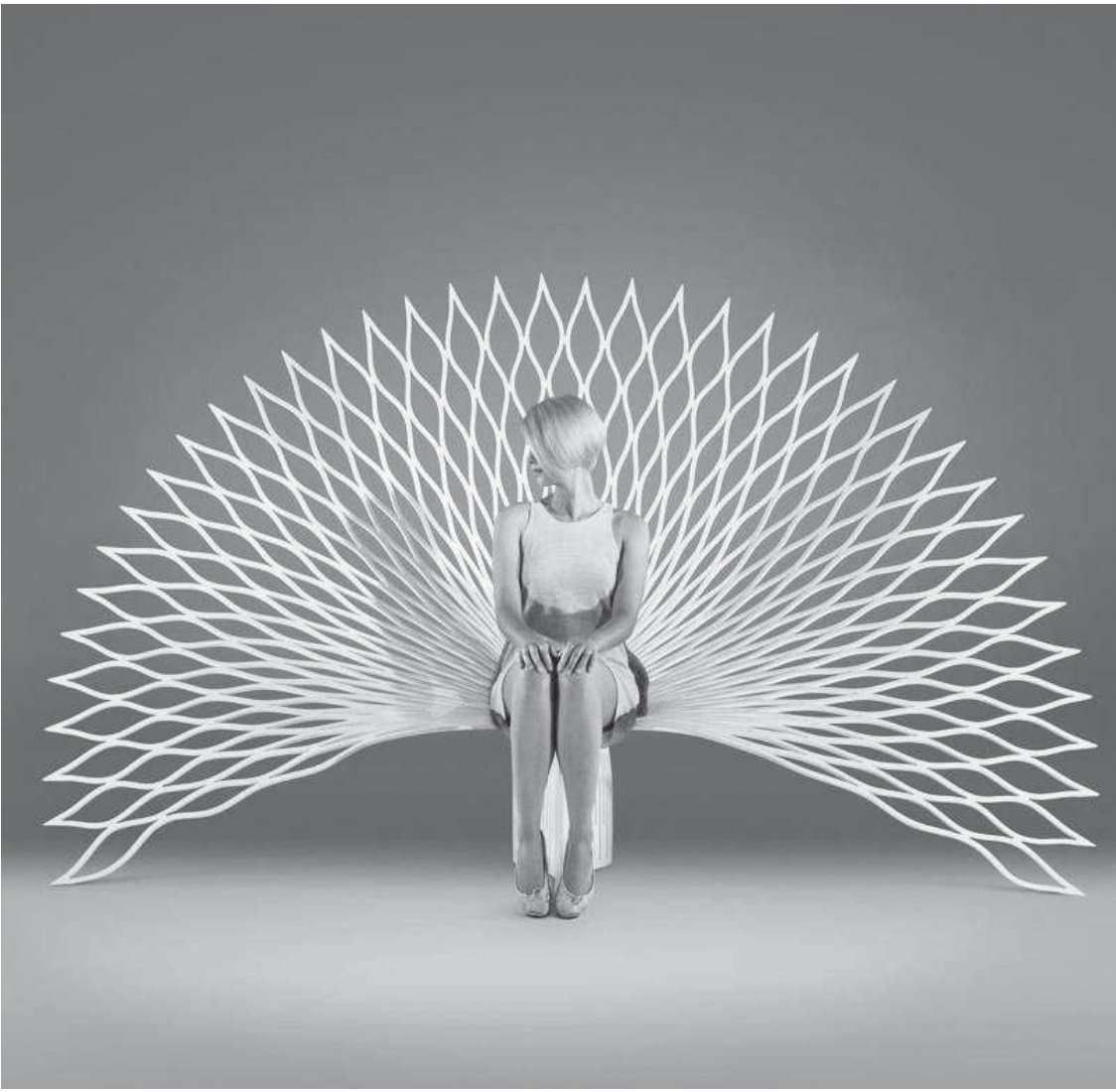
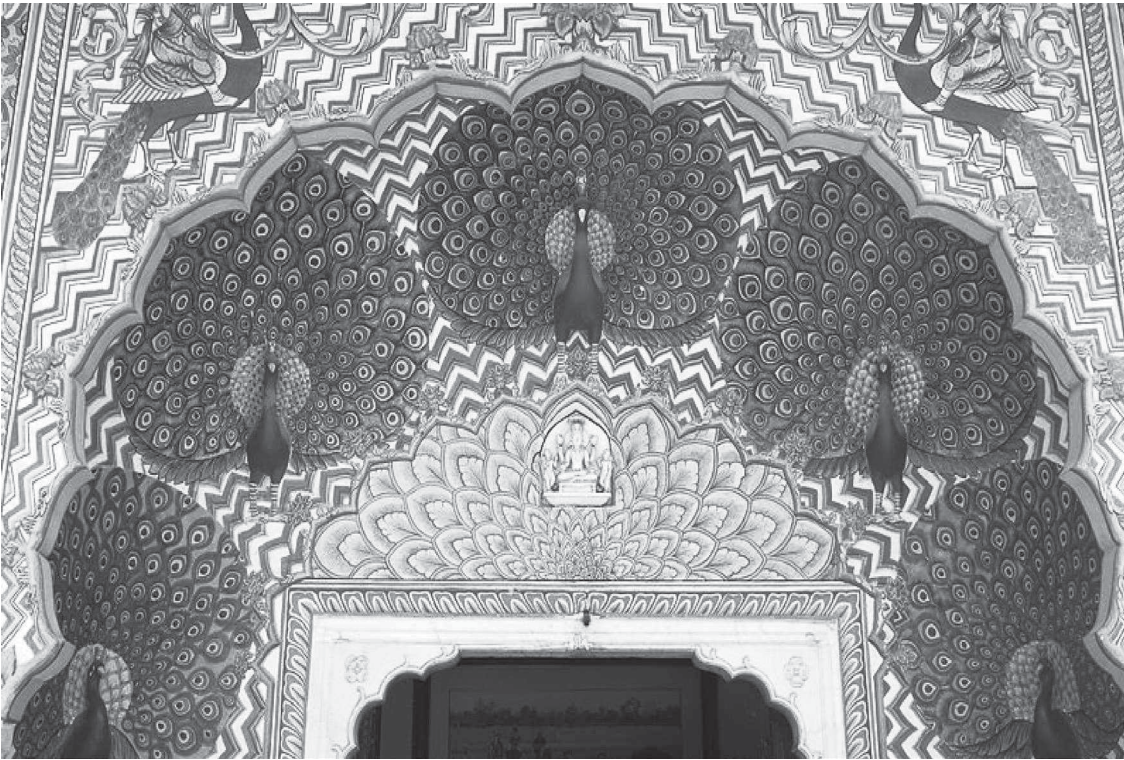


Photo: UUFIE. Chair peacock.



Peacock Gate at the Pitam Niwas Chowk, City Palace, Jaipur, India. Photo: Wikimedia Commons.

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Photo: Les Nouveaux Riches

About the Author /

Vethan Sautour is a French artist, based in Austria. She's exhibited her works in Italy, France, Dubai, Slovenia, UK and South Korea. Her art ranges from installations, to photography and sculptures. In her art, she explores the themes of death and memory, climate change, economic influence, etc.

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AAMI Dubai // Art as a Socio-Critical Messenger

In 2019, Sotheby's auctioned and sold Claude Monet's Meules for \$110,747,000 and Christie's New York sold Jeff Koons' Rabbit for \$91,075,000. On October 7th 2018, Sotheby's London sold Banksy's Girl with Balloon for \$1,370,000, only to be destroyed the same day by a secret shredder hidden into the painting by the artist. In November 2017, a Saudi Prince bought Leonardo Da Vinci's Salvator Mundi for the record-breaking amount of \$450,000,000. Due to premiere at the Louvre Abu Dhabi Museum, it mysteriously disappeared. This is such stuff that the art world is made on to misquote Shakespeare.

Moving away from the image of the artist-artisan to the artist-inventor during the Renaissance, from the craftsman to the spiritually invested creator, enabled artists to individually express themselves and acquire an ennobled status, which persists to this day in popular opinion. But is this still really the case or have both representational ideas melted into one indistinct notion in the 1990s? If acquiring the godly status of a creator was a great stride for artists during the Italian Renaissance, in the course of the 20th century numerous artists shifted to considering themselves not only as creators, but also as entrepreneurs. This can probably be attributed to the influence of capitalism on the art market, but also due to the kind of art which revolutionized the 1950s and continues to do so in the 21st century. Among others, Pop art stands out - which consisted in using imagery derived from popular culture. A fun, clever, decorative kind of art, which initiated a change in art history, managed to attract buyers from different backgrounds and still heavily influences today's contemporary art scene. Nevertheless, it is with the Young British Artists and Charles Saatchi in the 1990s that the art market was destined to take a new turn, appealing to the mass through scandal, extravagance and speculation. Amongst to the YBAs, Damien Hirst showed the world how much of an intelligent businessman and artist he was and opened the door, alongside Tracey Emin and Jeff Koons, to a new kind of approach. As time passed, the trend started to move away from handmade art to switch to industrially made art, wherein the artist would not be working in his studio on his own anymore, but with an

entire crew helping him or her create the artistic concept he or she had envisioned - the contemporary Chinese artist Zhang Huan and Swiss artist Urs Fischer come to mind. With time, perfect, industrially made art began to be perceived as more valuable, than handmade art characterized by the visible, individual touch of the artist.

Giving art a definition has never been an easy task, it has however grown to become even harder due to the increasing importance of speculation in the art market. Art became first and foremost an investment and started attracting buyers from all walks of life to auction houses, when only a few decades ago, the only ones who used to cross their thresholds were professionals of the art world. If one looks at the contemporary art scene, putting aside the lack of retrospect, is it actually possible to predict, who will be an integral part of art history and which artworks' artistic value will endure? Conceptual art, which occupies the best seats of the art world theatre, is a source of divide, as it is only understood by an elite, educated to sense the meaning of these concepts, whereas the mass often despises it and doesn't find any interest in this type of art due to a lack of comprehension. Isn't this however contradictory as art is supposed to be a means to communicate an idea to others? Is it better for an artist to be revered or liked by the mass, yet not respected by the elite, or should it rather be the other way round? Is it even possible to have the best of both worlds?

Art has long been considered to be the vehicle of a message - through the rep-

resentation of biblical scenes in the form of paintings or of stained glass in churches for those who could not read, but also to be the witness of its era and a way to remembered the past - through portraits or depictions of historical events. Nevertheless, if there is one definition that can be given to art and to which most people would agree, is that art is the need an artist or a patron feels to communicate an idea. Going by this principle, art has the potential to help mentalities progress and to challenge the beholder, especially in the age of conceptual art, wherein the aim is to have the observer appreciate the meaning of the art piece - the appearance often being a complex, witty expression of a concept. If one looks at the different artistic trends in some parts of the world, such as Asia or the Middle East, artists tend to address socio-political issues. By having a closer look at art history, one might say that where there are socio-political conflicts, artists will be wanting to give their take on the matter. May it be painters, poets, writers, etc., artists have always been the voice of the people in difficult times, which often led dictators to try to silence them. Hence, what can be very surprising in the Western world is the tendency to create meta-art, a kind of art which focuses on itself and strives to define itself, instead of defining the concrete events of the world surrounding it. The question one might ask is why when one has the chance of having a powerful voice, it does not choose to use it, as the world lacks not in difficult topics that need to be addressed and discussed.

I chose to take this stance and to define art as being political, in order to address

themes and issues our world is facing. In one of the first series I created, "He for She", named after the homonymous UN movement made famous by Emma Watson, I represent using the medium of oil, women across continents and express the different challenges they are facing and compare their positions in society. In my series of modified photographs, I address the universal topic of death and memory through pixelization. These symbolize the fading of memory encountered by those who remain after someone's passing, as despite the invention of photography and videography, losing the scent, the presence and the essence of the deceased is still a reality. To communicate concepts and ideas, I also chose to work with videography. In one of my favourite projects, a video named "Religion", I selected a few friends, representative of different cultures and religions to express their feelings and thoughts regarding the effect of religion on this world and their beliefs. I asked them: Do you think religion causes wars? What do you think of religious institutions? If you ever meet God, what would you tell him? Some of the people I interviewed I filmed alone and some in front of the other participants, which led to different kinds of reactions and levels of depth in their answers. Death and religion can often be taboo in the Occident. Asking someone during a dinner party if they believe in the afterlife can create a sense of unease. However in this video, the viewer has the pleasure of observe unfiltered thoughts and emotions.

In one of my latest series "Medici", I express the aforementioned topic corresponding to today's art market, by

replicating Renaissance paintings representing the Medici and their entourage, in a serigraphic style. The objective was to take an undisputed movement in art history, to show by contrast how hard it is to define the somewhat chaotic contemporary art scene we are presented with, and that in producing meta-art, we are going in circles and are constantly recycling similar ideas. I chose to recycle these Renaissance portraits by using Indian ink and acrylic, thus hand making them, but giving them a serigraphic look to symbolize the need for contemporary art to be industrially made to catch the attention of the art market.

At present, I am working on new art series tackling socio-political topics, such as the issue of climate change whether it be worldwide or in my home country, through the art of sculpture and photography, but also furthering the representation of death and the question of our mortality and how it influences every inch of our life and the decisions we make, through the medium of videography.

I strongly believe that art is made to convey messages and to make people think, not unlike traditional Japanese art, nihonga, wherein the artist would always leave an empty space, in order for the beholder to use the artwork as a mirror of his soul to contemplate.

AAMI Education // The Stages of Artistic Development



Photo: Katja Basić

As children we develop our ability to walk and talk and in the same way we develop our artistic skills.

As young children we use art to learn, to observe, express our emotions and imagination, and fine our motor skills and coordination. By making symbols and using them together on the paper we develop our sense of organization and structure. Through this all our mentality grows and we start connecting ourselves to our environment. Every person develops differently and in his own time, but nevertheless there seem to be some stages of artistic development all people experience.

The stages of artistic development have been studied by many: Viktor Lowenfeld, Marianne Kerlavage, and Judy Burton serving as leaders in the field. Although the theories vary a bit (mostly they differ in the number of stages), they do have some common grounds.

By Dr. Lowenfeld, there are five defined stages of artistic development, which can be witnessed in children artworks. Each of these stages refers to a combination of visual characteristics found in the art work of children. The stages occur in a sequential order. During the stages the art process develops from simple scribbles to the starting point of critical thinking about art. Let's see more about art development stages below.

Scribble Stage (2-4 years old)

Children at the age of 2-4 are engaged in the physical activity of drawing. The stage is mainly about the enjoyment

of physical activity, making marks and leaving a trail of dots, lines and markings on the drawing surface. They are making art without connecting the marks with representation during most of the stage. Children at this age are not concern about the appearance of the marks they make, as long as there are marks to be left. Children scribble because it gives them a chance to move their arms freely. During this period their scribbles develops from random scribbling to controlled scribbling. Towards the end of the stage they may already give the marks names.

Preschematic Stage (4-7 years old)

Children from the age of 4 up to the age of 7 are starting to make connections between the shapes that they draw and the physical world that surrounds them. The second stage is entered when the child produces his first representative symbols for objects in his environment. They describe the shapes, made out of circles, squares and lines, as people or objects. The objects are floating on the surface and the paper may be turned many times while drawing. Later, the symbols may be organized horizontally. The motive they draw is normally representing something that is physically present in the child's life parents, pets, etc. "Tadpole Figure People" are drawn with a very large head on a small body with extended arms. It is in this stage that a child first makes the connection to communicating through their drawings.

The Schematic Stage (7-9 years old)

Children who are 7-9 years old are clearly assigning shapes to objects that they are attempting to communicate. They start to implement defined order in their art and often create a schema for creating drawings. For example, a house will be drawn the same way in many drawings.

Examples of such schema are the lollipop tree, the stiff scarecrow-type drawings of people, or a series of houses which are all drawn the same. The main characteristics of this stage are the repetition of symbols for familiar objects, and the use of the baseline. There is a clear separation of the sky and the ground in the drawings at this stage, in which often the sky is a strip of blue at the top of the paper and the ground is a strip of green at the bottom.

Because of that, there are no more objects floating in space in the drawing. Instead children mostly place the drawn objects on the ground. Objects of importance are often drawn larger than objects of lesser importance.

The Dawning Realism (9-11 years old)

At the of 9 and 11 years old, the children are beginning to become more critical of their own work and are beginning to produce artworks that are starting to meet adult standards. A structured order to drawing objects is no longer sufficient. Although the schema is still used to create drawings, it's becoming more complex than it was in the earlier stages. While previously they mostly place all the objects in a linear line, the child is now starting to use overlapping and a sense of spatial relationships. For instance, a picture may include a natural looking ground plane with trees of diminishing size going off into the distance. Much attention is given to details, sex roles, and clothing differences.

The Pseudo-Naturalistic Stage (11-13 years old)

The stage is entered when the child is producing art work in the manner of adult artists. At the age of 10-13, the use of value and light becomes more apparent in child's drawings. Considerable control over the medium, content, and organization is evident. The figures become natural in appearance, or are intentionally stylized. At this stage, children are starting to use linear and aerial perspective, object are drawn by diminishing their size. It is at this stage that the child becomes critical and self-conscious about their ability to produce realistic artwork.

At the end of the last stage, children start to gain a level of self-criticism. They start to see art as something they are either successful at or they are not. At this time some of them decide to stop drawing, as they don't see them as being good enough at it.

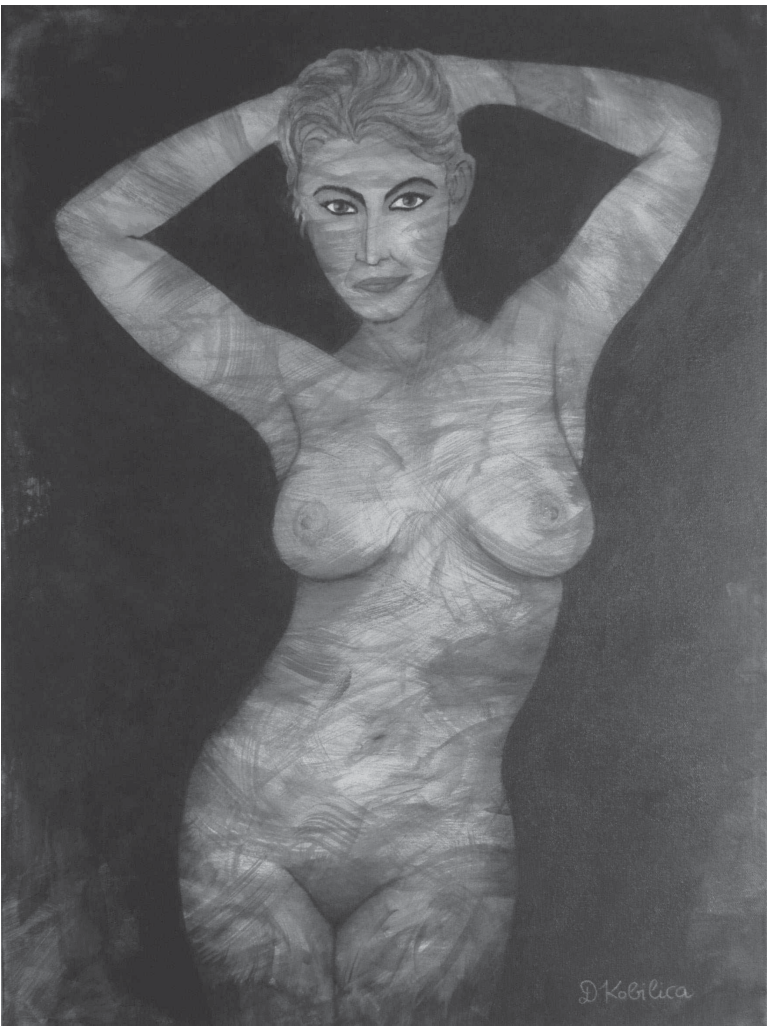
Others, however, decide to continue working on their artistic skills and continue to develop their art further. This period is perhaps most critical to development of an artist.

As children mature in age and gain more art experiences, they learn how to use art principles to visually communicate thoughts and feelings. Through this their work becomes more and more sophisticated.

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Artist // Dejan Kobilica

Dejan Kobilica was born in 1967 in Ljubljana, Slovenia. He is interested in different spheres of art. From music, photography, graphic design to painting, which has recently fascinated and completely addicted him. He creates mainly in two techniques, namely oil on canvas and acrylic or mixed media with different textures.

Instagram / @dejankobilica



Artist // Barbka Špruk

Barbka Špruk is a Slovenian artist born in 1981. She lives and paints in Ljubljana. Her mission in life is to help people in need with counselling and lectures all over Slovenia. At the same time she loves to work and be creative with children. Since she can remember, she was enthusiastic about drawing and painting, she enjoyed art and was always looking forward to visiting exhibitions. Currently, she is especially enchanted by the Baroque style, which she admires in architecture, painting and other arts. Barbka likes painting with Rotring pen and ink because she is inspired by the fact that this method was used decades ago. Her first exhibition was in the 8th grade of elementary school, followed by at least ten solo and group exhibitions at international art colonies. Her paintings are reflections of what she feels in her heart and soul.

www.barbkaspruk.si

Artists // Panarok Art

Monika and Robert Podpečan are a married couple who creates art together. they believe that the fine arts were written down for them, since painting has been involved in their families for at least three generations.

The couple paints certain works together and because their styles are so different, their joint artworks are really something special. Their artworks are also known for colorfulness and positive motifs. They find inspiration mostly in nature. With their landscapes, they try to promote their country Slovenia in the world. Their artworks have been exhibited in USA, France, Croatia, Czech Republic and India.

www.panarok.com



Artist // Igor Nemec

"I painted realism, impressionism and lastly cubism in which I found an opportunity to combine the image of realism, the notion of impressionism and the story of cubism in my own way." - *Igor Nemec about his work*

Facebook / Igor Nemec Paintings



Photo: Hurwitz, Ruthann. Modern Kintsugi style repair on hand painted pottery bowl. Retrieved from: Wikimedia Commons.

AAMI Tokyo // Kintsugi; The Golden Repair of the Broken

A technique of fixing broken pottery with precious metals is nowadays gaining popularity in the world of design worldwide.

Kintsugi (*Kintukuroi*) has been present in the Japanese art of pottery for centuries.

The art of fixing broken bowls started around 15th century in Japan, when a Japanese shogun Ashikaga Yoshimasa cracked one of his favourite tea bowls. He then sent it to China for them to repair it and as he got it back, he noticed, that they mended it with unsightly metal staples. From that moment on, the craftsmen started to search for a technique of fixing broken pottery, which would be more eye-appealing. They discovered Kintsugi.

Kintsugi became more common in Japan in about 17th century. It actually became so popular, that some actually bought tea bowls for them to break and then

repair them. Kintsugi is a way of repairing broken pottery pieces back together, but instead of hiding the flaws, actually emphasizing them with the use of gold. Once the process is complete, the previously broken pottery becomes one-of-a-kind.

The cracks are seamed back together with lacquer resin and powdered gold, silver, or platinum. Because of the path the cracks make, the seams are uneven, branched out and sometimes therefore remind of shapes that we can see in nature.

3 predominant styles of Kintsugi are known: crack, piece method and joint-call. The techniques and finishing styles vary, but in every one of them they use gold, silver or platinum-dusted epoxy to fix the fractures.

The technique is said to be connected to the Japanese philosophy of wabi-sabi: seeing beauty in the flawed or imperfect. The words »Mottainai« (the feeling of regret when something is wasted) and

»Mushin« (the need to accept change) are also strongly tied to the Kintsugi concept of art.

The Kintsugi method became world widely known because of the lesson behind the art: through mended cracks the object becomes more beautiful than it was before it was broken.

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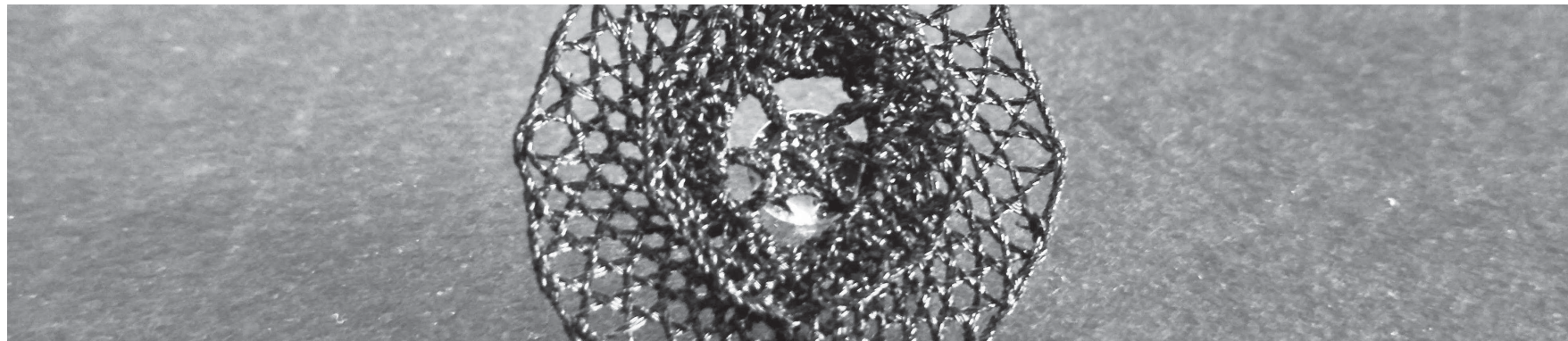
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Artist // Blanka Blinx Križ

The artist Blanka Blinx Križ is presenting her latest collection created with a new technique: The collection of 6 abstract acrylic paintings on canvas are painted with handmade brushes made from the material collected in natural habitat in the time of autumn. Therefore, her new collection of paintings and drawings began with a wish and energy to gain a deeper connection with nature itself. Lately, she has been exhibiting in Athens ("Athens Open exhibition"), Luxemburg ("Luxemburg Art Prize"), Barcelona ("Artbox Project") and London ("EWAL - Hope Art Exhibition").



Instagram / Blanka Blinx Art



AAMI Craft // The Art and Craft of Bobbin Lace

Idrija lace is a type of hand-bobbin lace, which can be described as ribbon lace, which is characterized by a wider or narrower ribbon that winds over the entire surface of the pattern. White linen or cotton thread is most often used to make it. (Batista, 2010)

Lace today is more than just a textile product. From the hands of various artists, various versions of lace have developed, and with it the growing importance of the art of lace for the cultural heritage of Slovenia.

Lace evolved from a variety of older forms of weaving, knotting, and embroidery.

The various forms of lace techniques came to us all the way from Asia. In Europe, the use of lace began somewhere in the age of Antique, but mostly in the Middle Ages. Around the 16th century forms of sewn and bobbin lace emerged. Initially, knotted lace developed, and soon after crocheted and knitted forms appeared.

The bobbing technique developed over the years and after, in the 19th century, they also began to machine-make lace products. Globally,

lace became famous mainly during the 20th century.

Various techniques include sewn, bobbin, knotted, crocheted and knitted lace. The difference between the techniques is visible mostly in the way the thread is used. For instance; while several pairs of threads are used at the same time to make bobbin lace, sewn lace is built with a single thread.

Bobbin lace making is made by crossing and twisting thread would on wooden sticks (known as bobbins). The process follows a specific pattern. First the lace-makers attach a drawing on paper to a cylinder pillow, which is set on a wooden base or in a basket. The bobbin lace products are made in bands or in finished shapes.

Idrija women started making lace products during the 17th century. In the 19th century, Idrija lace got its characteristic shape and became an established way of bobbin lace.

In most museum collections of the 19th-20th century, the lace appears on clothing, furniture and other objects.

With the 20th century, bobbin-making spread to other areas of Slovenia. After some ups and downs of the lace-making culture, Idrija lace slowly became a constant in galleries and museums.

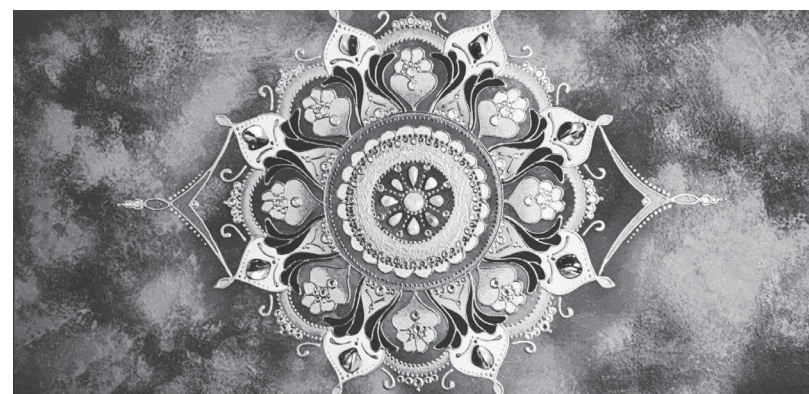
Around 120 bobbin lace making societies, sections and groups can be found in Slovenia these days. Lace-crafting is mostly attributed to women as the bobbin skills are passed from one family generation to another.

The Idrija Lace Festival is an already well-known event that acts as a great promoter of lace culture. Every year, it presents lace exhibitions, as well as various workshops, lectures, competitions, fairs, etc.

In the past, lace was mainly a way of decorating textiles and residential products. Over time, the art of making lace has been established as part of Slovenia's cultural heritage, while at the same time breaking into the modern market of innovation with new approaches and creative products.

Literature & Sources:

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Artist // Marjanca Vergan

www.mandala4you.com

Marjanca Vergan is a Slovenian designer of mandalas, graphic designer and a professional astrologist. About herself and her work she says: »Each and every one of the mandalas is unique and has undergone an initiating ritual that initiates them to serve your highest wellbeing. It will bring me great joy if my mandalas delight you in a thousand and one ways, and that way I will be able to help you draw and attract luck and happiness into your lives, in the same way the mandalas have helped me.«



AAMI Music // Blaž Podobnik, Encounter through Music in “Čonce Music Centre”

Blaž Podobnik is a mentor at “Čonce Music Centre”, where he teaches piano lessons.

As the most profound musical experience in his life, Blaž would mention an experience of musicking in a group of more than a hundred adolescents on a youth-camp years ago, where all the participants were enthusiastically singing his song (“camp anthem”), with simple polyphonic voice-leading, while Blaž was accompanying this mega-choir on a guitar.

These experiences later led Blaž to research social contexts of listening to classical music for his master's thesis in a Music Pedagogy Department and to experiment with inclusion of audience-singing in his own musical performances (as duo Vitraž). And finally, these experiences led to establishing “Čonce Music Centre” (Glasbena hiša Čonce), in which their pedagogy is based on a belief, that performing music needs not be reserved only for few, top specialised musicians, but can be an integral part of life of a common man.

„In order to be able to enjoy the enormous power of music one needs not master an instrument or music theory to perfection, but to also earn skills as musical improvisation, cooperation in a music band, ability to relax, performer's attitude and communication, and so on. One does not need to be a dedicated or trained singer in order to sing. One, though, nowadays often needs to be reminded of how little it takes to make a step towards a meaningful musical experience.”

You talk a lot about bringing people together through music. What type of music, in your opinion, seems to work well as such medium?

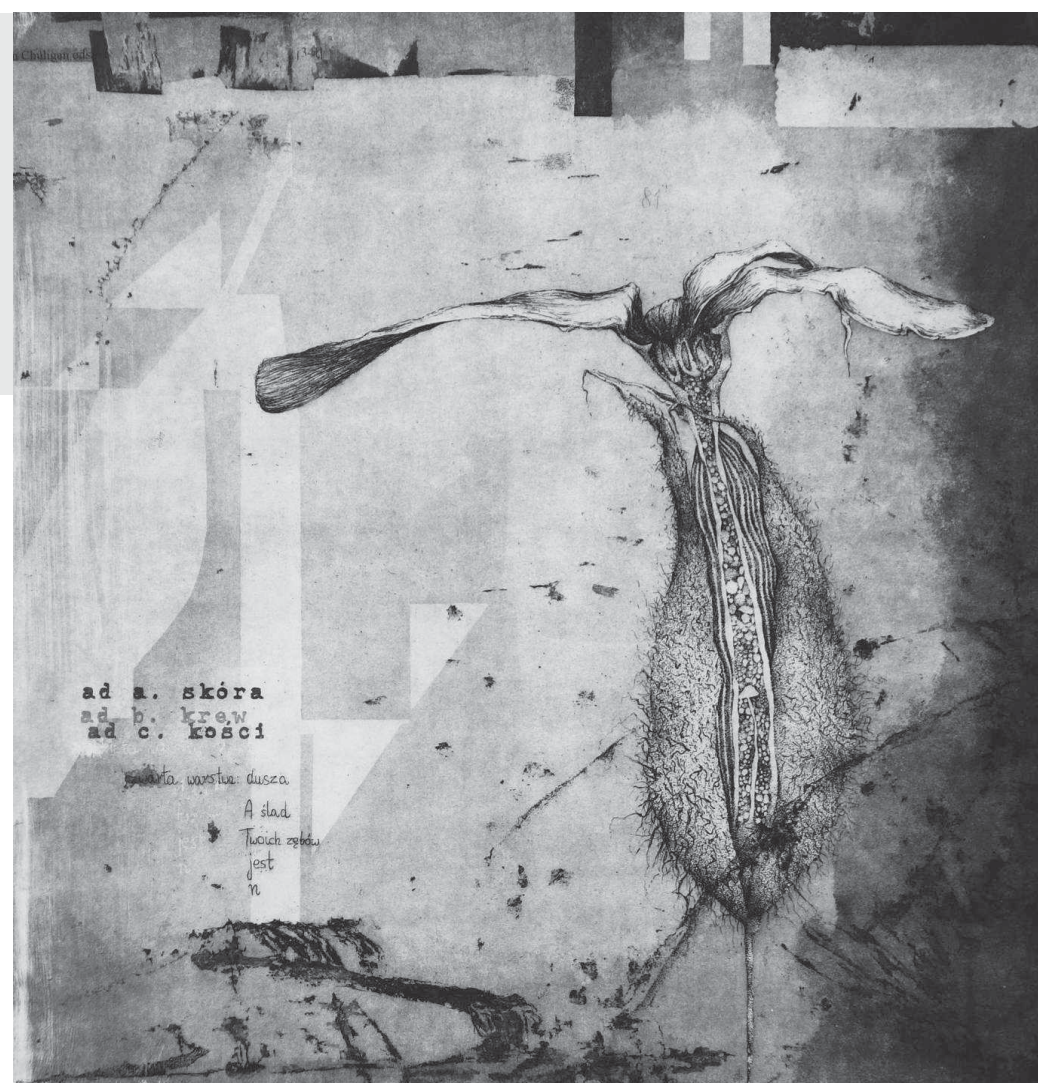
“Good type of music” is something that corresponds to the function that the individual wants at that moment. In this case, I remember the song Okna na Stežaj (by Vlado Kreslin). It is a song that can be sung in a group, it is relatively undemanding and it is also fresh in terms of content. By this I mean, it is not intimate and confessional - and therefore it brings us together, opens our hearts and make us feel joy. It is a type of music that unites people in terms of content, form and character.

What is your approach to teaching music in Čonce Music Centre?

Our programs try to be as pedagogically thoughtful as possible. However, they still go from simple to more structured. We want to provide education, which is based on some minimally needed theoretical content, but is at the same time related to a concrete musical example. I believe that when musical examples are as close as possible to students, they are a part of their lives, and therefore the students have a greater motivation to learn.

Many people at a certain stage of learning a musical instrument decide not to be active in music anymore. What do you see as the obstacle that causes such decision?

I don't think too much theory is needed for an individual to be musically active in their own lives, but educational institutions and schools place a lot of emphasis on the theory. But I think that this way a person becomes oversaturated with information and therefore his enthusiasm eventually starts to fade. Our anthem says “Little steps are real heroes, because they find their way to the heart.”



Klepadlo, Joanna. *The deepest*. (2016). Etching and aquatint.

AAMI Warsaw // An Artist's Footprint

It doesn't matter if we paint, clean, travel or work in an office — we always make footprint in our natural environment.

We might blame industry and political decision-makers for poisoning our planet on a large scale, but our small decisions are crucial to make gradual changes. Being a fine artist includes both intellectual effort and production and, like every other form of production, it should be done in a sustainable way. Focusing only on artistic goals and ambitions, without considering the impact of artistic production on the environment, is a selfish mistake.

Hunger, drought, global warming, an overwhelming amount of plastic, overproduction, overexploitation, overpopulation, so many problems to solve in the world — what am I doing here? Spending hours closed in a room, filling a piece of paper with shades of grey, immersing myself in an endless process of etching a piece of metal with acid, staying in some abstract world while the real one needs my attention. And, most of all, producing

stuff, while the world is filled up with stuff, there are islands of stuff floating on the ocean. I would rather reduce than produce, so why be an artist?

So, I stopped for a while. But after some time I realized that I still felt compelled by plants, damaged walls, old windows, scratched pots and Pans, burned pancakes, the texture of a leaf of cabbage, the old eggplant, the young eggplant, the avocado seed, and thousands of other things, to photograph them and use them as inspirations for producing artwork. In addition, I simply started to miss the process of creating. The knowledge and experience that I gain every day is always followed by reflection which starts to boil over if I don't express it on a regular basis. So, I had to come back to the drawing board.

But I shouldn't forget about the world's problems, and following eco-friendly procedures in artistic activity is a way to build a bridge between art-making and sustainability. Besides examples of environment art or art using recycled materials as media, art-making is not really an eco-friendly process. When I think about my own professional medium, which is intaglio printmaking, sustainability is the

last word that comes to my mind. The traditional technology of printmaking that I was taught includes using a number of toxic chemicals, and for this reason demands special studio conditions. As a result, printmakers often struggle to afford expensive studios with proper ventilation systems. The harmful influence of traditional printmaking methods on artists' health is extensively described and I would prefer to use less toxic techniques. Fortunately, contemporary printmakers have found some alternatives to the toxic technology, and these are used in some centers in countries such as Denmark, Finland, the UK and the US.

In order to protect our health and the environment, we should always know about the chemical properties of our materials. For example, all paints are made of pigments and binders (resins), and both pigments and binders can affect our health and the environment. The pigments are made of many different chemical substances and compounds, such as cadmium sulfide, cobalt, titanium dioxide and iron oxides. Many of them are highly toxic — for example, cadmium causes cancer and birth defects. In oil painting, the binder is a highly refined vegetable oil which does not release any chemi-

cals into the air in the process of drying. However, mixing oil paints with solvents containing petroleum distillate will make their harmful ingredients evaporate into your studio. This usually results in dizziness, drowsiness and headache and can be especially harmful for people who already suffer from skin disorders or chronic respiratory problems. For this reason, many artists choose acrylic paints, which don't produce any fumes. The acrylic resin is an acrylic polymer emulsion — in other words, a kind of plastic. While it is relatively safe for the human respiratory tract, it is not safe for aquatic organisms. If we pour the rinse water down drains, wash our painting aprons or remove paint from brushes under the faucet, then tiny particles of plastic are eventually carried to the sea. Furthermore, they still contain toxic pigments, so we definitely should clean up wisely.

There are environment friendly ways of dealing with the waste from the art-making process. A lot of information on this subject is available on art suppliers' websites. For example, when talking about acrylic rinse water, the main idea is to separate the paint from the water. This can be done by evaporation, which can be faster if you keep the container of rinse water close to the radiator or in the sun. You can make it even better by using a metal baking tray as a container, so the surface of the container would be bigger. Otherwise, you can use hydrated lime and aluminium sulfate to precipitate paint solids from rinse water. The detailed instructions can be easily found online and the necessary supplies are commonly available. There are also many other examples of environmentally friendly practice in the working space, such as reusing solvents (for example in oil painting), the proper disposal of toxic materials (which demands learning about both your materials and your local recycling requirements) and limiting the waste of paint (for example by refrigerating paint or using a covered palette to store paint between painting sessions).

Education combined with the sense of responsibility are essential to adjust our everyday habits to the needs of the contemporary world. And in a world where rapid development causes a growing number of environmental issues, we need to apply sustainable practice in all aspects of life. It is extremely important to include environmental knowledge and practice in art education at every level. Educational institutions are information authorities and, especially in the case of primary and secondary education, they have a strong influence on people's ethical values. If more universities would teach about the less toxic printmaking methods, it would be easier for young printmakers to arrange safe studios for themselves. Also, if we internalise proper waste disposal procedures as art students, it becomes a natural and obvious

About the Author:

Joanna Klepadlo is a Polish artist with a degree in printmaking. Her main forms are drawing, print/making and painting. Her most preferred motifs are nature and plants.

www.artpassiflora.eu



Klepadlo, Joanna. *Growth disorders*. (2016). Etching and aquatint.

part of the creating process. Many of us, including me, feel bad because we did things wrong during many years of artistic practice without knowing it. Those of us who feel a sense of responsibility, and who are curious, patient, and active, are likely to find better information online and apply new working practice. However, a big part of our community will remain unaware, passive or sceptical due to faulty education.

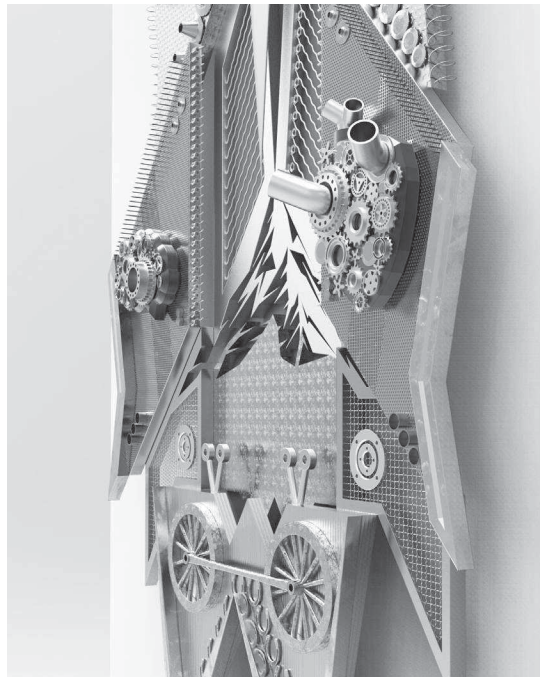
Every profession leaves a footprint, and art-making can even leave a very remarkable footprint if we don't do it carefully. A profession is a role in society, and it should help society to function better. So, if you want your art to make the world a better place, you shouldn't think only about what you create, but also about how you do it. And even if you don't think that your art can change anything, it is your responsibility to produce in a sustainable way.

AAMI Project // Making Dream Monuments

The MDM Company has been active in the area of stainless steel and aluminium products and services for over 40 years.

The long-established tradition of maintaining flexibility, quality and a high standard of services is permeated with numerous references gained in co-operation with partners from Slovenia and abroad. MDM is a reputable partner to companies from the metal, food, processing, automotive, chemical and pharmaceutical industries.

The installation "Making Dream Monuments" is not only a monument to the events that marked the development of the company MDM throughout history, but also focuses on current operations and predicts the bright future and development of the company.



Render: AAMI Corporation

The artwork, designed by Miha Murn, a versatile artist and owner of AAMI Corporation, consists of 7 main parts. The art installation, made by professionals from the company MDM, measures more than 9 m in height and more than 3 m in width. The seven parts of the installation consist of a relief about 50 cm deep. The installation is made of different materials - steel, aluminum and iron, which were processed by various processes such as laser cutting, bending, welding, gluing, painting and other.

Photo: 4SEEN - Official Video Production of AAMI Corporation

AAMI Project // Art Goes Beauty by dm Slovenia

In the "Art Goes Beauty" campaign by dm, we put art at the forefront and drew inspiration from it.

We connected art with beauty and looked for answers to the question "What makes us beautiful?" We invited local artists in 11 countries, including Slovenia, to interpret the theme in their personal style, and create works of art that will adorn the facades of dm stores.

The participating artist of the project in Slovenia, Miha Murn, created digital graphics for dm. He drew inspiration from people who inspire others, and at the same time presented his vision of the concept of beauty in his artworks.



Photo: Gregor Murn, Mega-Graf d.o.o.

AAMI Times // About the Chief Editor

Miha Murn / Michael Gregorjev Murn is a hyper-creative artist and businessman born in Ljubljana in 1994. He is involved in painting, drawing, graphic art, photography, poetry, writing, visual communications, sculpting and other sorts of art. His art covers everything from abstraction to the critique of modern society, taboos, kitsch, bohemian lifestyle all the way to the style of ancient civilisations. His life mission is to change the world in the area of connecting culture with other industries. For the past year, he has been dedicating his attention to his AAMI Corporation vision 2050, which involves the construction of a cultural city, two arts & business skyscrapers and the action of systematisation of culture in over 150 countries of the world.

We can find over 4.500 artworks in his opus – everything from abstract graphics and paintings, drawings, sculptures, to poetry books, philosophical essays, photographs and other pieces. He has had over 40 individual exhibitions and has participated in over 100 collective ones. So far, he has published 5 books and has taken part in many international exhibitions with his creations. His artworks can be found all the way from China, France, United Kingdom, Canada, Turkey, Italy to Austria, Brazil, Russia, Denmark and United Arab Emirates.

His works of art are owned by several presidents, mayors, ambassadors, honorary consuls and international company chairmen of board. His creativity is being supported for several years now by Mr. Jože Mermal, Chairman of the Board of the company BTC d.d. Miha Murn is also a businessman – he is the President of AAMI Corporation, a group of seven entities, which are involved in connecting business with art and culture, organisation of cultural events and exhibitions in Slovenia and worldwide, promotion of artists and filling up empty spaces with cultural content.



Miha Murn has been successfully running the company Institute Atelje Art Murn International (AAMI) for years and is also the Art director of company Mega-Graf Ltd. Alongside that, he is the Responsible leader of ART Expo Ljubljana, Chief editor of AAMI Times newspaper and the President of AAMI Foundation. He is the founder and president of private business Botticelli club and of public cultural Salvador club, which include more than 400 members combined.

Additionally, Miha Murn is a lecturer of history thematic, business processes, motivational themes, and the developer of new brand concepts on an international scale. He is a member of over 30 associations, organisations and business clubs, which function towards welfare of social security, charity, business networking and international diplomatic relations. Among others, he is the board advisor at The India Advantage Summit, member of Global Chamber of Business Leaders, Cultural Attache of Kazakh-Slovenian Business Club, President of International Relations Diplomacy Council at YES, and an active member of several other organisations. In 2021, he has been appointed as President of Rotary Club Ljubljana International and as a Knight of Carantanian Order of Saint George.

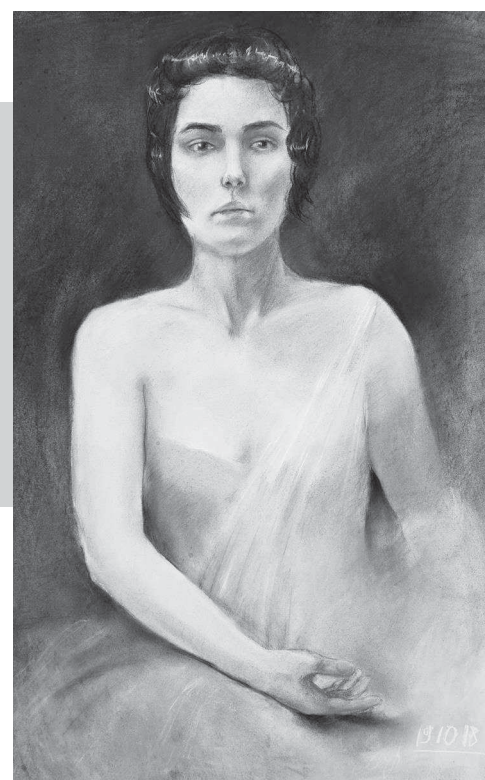


Artist // Domen Logar
www.domenlogzyart.com



Artist // Alenka Ana Štante Facebook / Alenka Stante

Alenka Ana Štante is a Slovenian artist, living in Ljubljana. She finished Arthouse, school of painting in Ljubljana. She is emotional, creative and full of ideas. Her inspiration is mostly nature. She describes herself as an intuitive painter. Alenka uses strong, clear colours and likes to paint with acrylic and oil technique in ex-tempore. So far, she has had several exhibitions in Slovenia and picks up her creative ideas from her travels.



Artist // Dunja Sinyavskaya www.dunya-art.si

Dunya Sinyavskaya is a young artist who specializes in painting portraits and human figures. From 2006 to 2011 she was attending art school, and in 2013 she started attending a painting atelier in Ljubljana, where she still creates under the mentorship of acad. painter Sladjana Mitrović and acad. painter Nuša Lapajne. After graduating from the Diocesan Classical Gymnasium in Ljubljana, she started studying architecture at University of Ljubljana and continued painting in atelier. In her work, Dunya explores the inner world of human - in each person she detects unique facial features that reveal the character of the individual, and realistically depicts the emotions that the person experienced at the time of drawing process. Dunya creates in different techniques: pastels, charcoal, pencil, watercolor, acrylic, oil.



Artist // Igor Kotnik www.1-igor-kotnik.pixels.com

Igor Kotnik lives and creates in his studio in Brezovica near Ljubljana. In 1979, he graduated from the School of Design in Ljubljana. His motifs are from a variety of both nature and abstraction with dry pastels on paper or acrylics and oils on canvas. At the age of 9, he presented his early collection at a group exhibition of young artists in the Modern Gallery of Ljubljana. In 1984, he held his first solo exhibition at the M-tourist gallery in Ljubljana. His works are also in private collections in Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia, Italy, Germany, Sweden and the Netherlands.

Photo: Brdo Estate

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AAMI Exhibition // Yugoslavia Collection

Opening of new art collection by Miha Murn / Michael Gregorjev Murn in BTC City Ljubljana

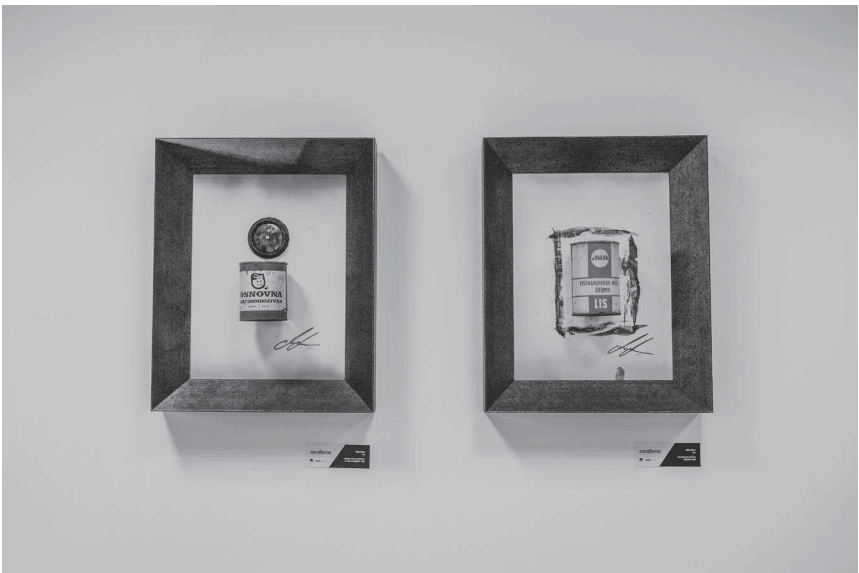


Photo: Katja Čemažar, AAMI Corporation



No.0000764 / Guilty Fish from Wuhan - Digital Graphic Artwork by Michael Gregorjev Murn
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