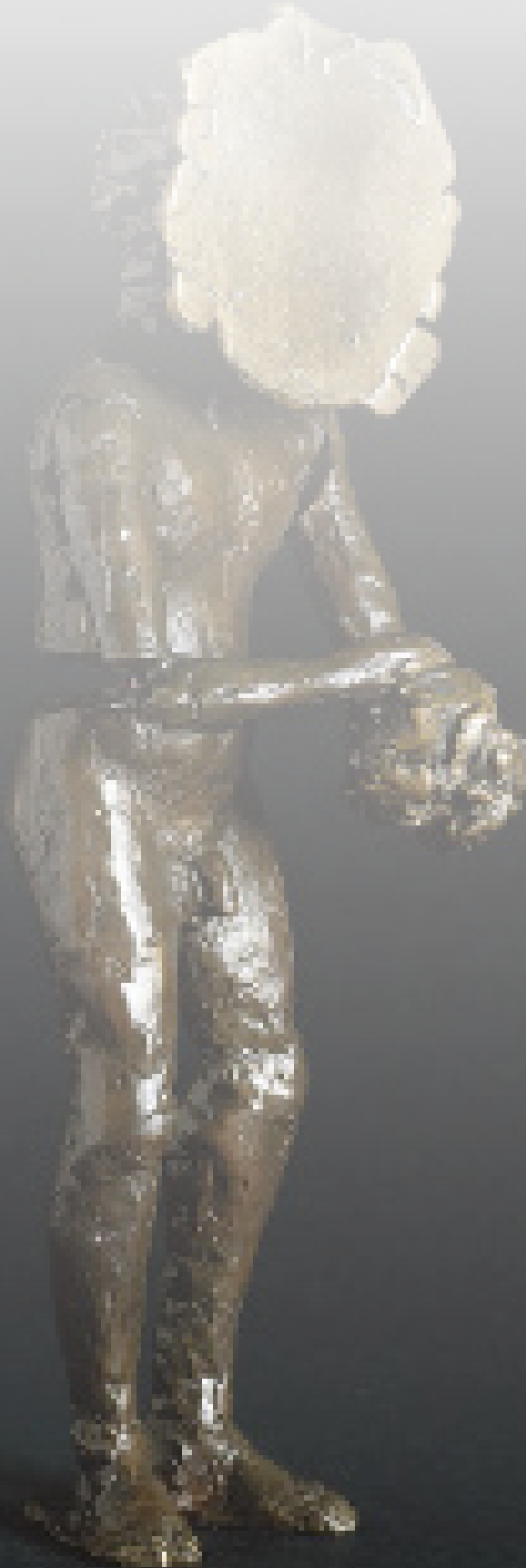


START JOURNAL

ISSUE THREE

08-13 OCTOBER 2024
TOWN HALL BY BOTTACCIO





Sanctus, sculpture in bronze, photo by Avi Amsalem, courtesy of Dan Reisner

Welcome to the third issue of *START JOURNAL*, a new publication that introduces the participating artists at StART KX – providing insight into the creative mind via in-depth profiles. With its finger on the pulse of the ever-changing landscape of contemporary art, *START JOURNAL* celebrates a panoply of unique artistic talent and announces the relocation of StART to Town Hall by Bottaccio in London's Kings Cross, a stone's throw from the iconic creative technology hub Kings Cross, St Pancras (now known simply as KX).

Since our very first show in 2014, StART has helped to springboard the careers of emerging artists from around the globe, celebrating its 10th anniversary at Saatchi Gallery, London in October 2023. Now, one decade on from its inception, StART has relocated in a move that heralds a visionary new future. The first edition of StART KX in its new home promises to be an uplifting experience that celebrates art and creativity in transition, allowing visitors to get to know what is behind the conceptual drive of the exhibitors, and how their work relates to the overarching themes of the zeitgeist on a personal and political level.

Among these pages, you will meet the likes of London-based Korean artist Siena Park, who incorporates myriad cultural influences to create a vivacious fusion of traditional Asian painting, Mannerism and Pop Art, which blends Buddhism and Taoism with Western motifs and ideologies; the award-winning Dutch painter Barbara Hoogweegen, who creates haunting and nostalgic works that explore psyche, identity, nostalgia and solitude; Spanish artist Fausto Grossi who tells us why he has devoted his entire life to bringing colour to a world that can all-too-often seem pedestrian and grey; ex-military Israeli sculptor Dan Reisner, who takes us on a journey into a creative process that often begins by excavating profound realms of pain, and delineating the unresolved that lies in between the inner and outer spaces of the psyche; surreal queen Regina Kim who employs art to challenge societal issues, brilliantly deconstructing notions of diversity in her collaged landscapes; the excellent Aria Gallery, who tell us why they are on a mission to bring cutting-edge Italian art to the world stage; rising London star Ru Knox, whose canvases invite the viewer into a fugue of figurative abstraction;

and the King's Foundation, who are making sure the traditional arts stay relevant to the modern age. And, of course, much more besides. But perhaps our mission is best explained by one of our founders:

"The globally connected world we live in today opens up many new possibilities for art, and the more connected artists are with a global network, the more they are drawn to a world of unlimited creative options. Over the past 10 years of StART, our endeavour has been to explore that vast and exponential interconnectivity, and offer a platform to international artists working across myriad disciplines and mediums. In selecting this year's exhibits for our new home in King's Cross, our objective has been to showcase the intricate variability of modern day artistic discourse, and further our commitment to bring contemporary art to the widest possible audience, creating brand new communities of art lovers."

– Serenella Ciliciterra

Issue Three: Healing The Trauma

START JOURNAL



ARS GRATIA ARTIS

ARIA GALLERY ON FORWARDING MODERN ANTIQUITY

The celebrated Aria Gallery is a cultural project based in Florence that promotes Italian artists on the world stage. The selection of talent is determined by curator Elio D'Anna, whose eye effortlessly blends the modern and classical, and the gallery is led by Antonio Budetta, who shares its unique vision below.

How would you describe the ethos of Aria Gallery?

The ethos of Aria Art Gallery is deeply rooted in the vision and principles of our founder, Elio D'Anna, an

entrepreneur, author, and cultural pioneer. His philosophy emphasizes the power of dream and the belief in art as a transformative force, which inspires everything we do at the gallery. Elio's leadership and cultural foundation shape the gallery's mission to bridge past and present, tradition and innovation.

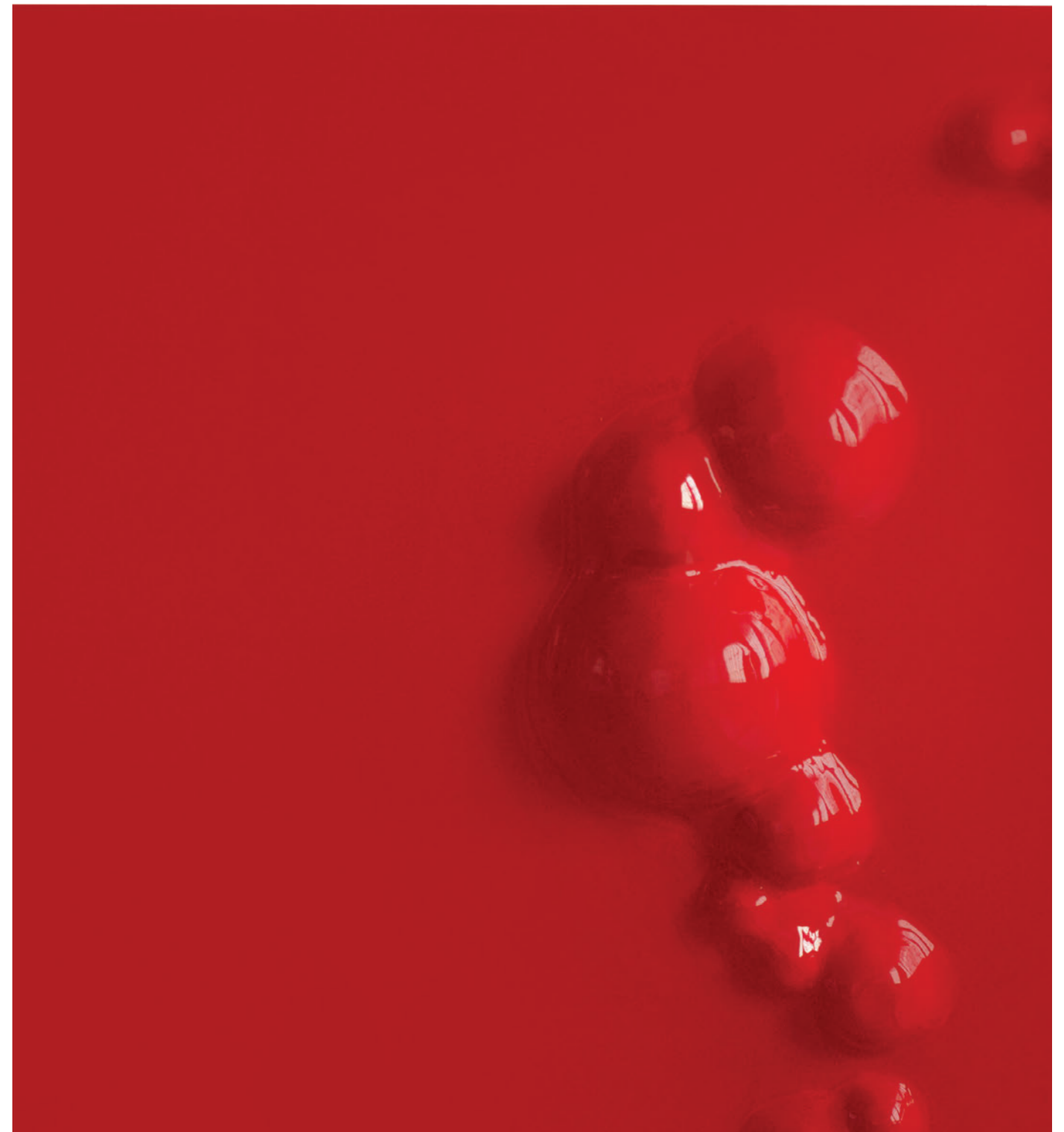
Talk us through your curatorial process at the gallery...

At Aria Art Gallery, our curatorial process is driven by a blend of artistic integrity, innovation, and align-

ment with the philosophical vision of our founder, Elio D'Anna. When considering an artist, we look for work that goes beyond surface-level beauty and has a profound emotional or intellectual impact. We value originality, technical skill, and the ability to convey a timeless message that resonates across different cultures and periods. We also focus on the artist's potential with a unique personal narrative – whether it's through the materials, themes, or techniques – and works that reflect their creative evolution, and can inspire others. Each artist we choose



Maneade (detail), Milija Čpajak, 2024. Courtesy of Aria Art Gallery



Cellular, Beatrice Gallori, 2017. Courtesy of Aria Art Gallery

embodies the spirit of exploration and transformation that defines Aria Art Gallery.

Tell us a little about the artists you are exhibiting in King's Cross ...

We are showcasing the works of artists Milija Čpajak and Beatrice Gallori both of whom intricately explore the beauty and complexity of natural elements in their art. We will exhibit also the paintings of the young artist Veljko Vučković. Beatrice Gallori, initially pursued a career in fashion and design after studying at Polimoda. However, she shifted her focus to become a self-taught artist, developing a unique style characterized by monochromatic and volumetric works

that study movement through time lapses. Her recent research delves into cellular movement, offering viewers a deeper insight into life and society. By presenting these dynamic elements, Beatrice encourages contemplation and connection with the viewer's own experiences. Milija Čpajak was born in Pietrasanta and raised in Belgrade, His work presents a fascinating interplay between living and non-living elements, effectively capturing ephemeral moments and inviting contemplation on the nature of existence. Milija's meticulous approach blends organic and artificial forms, creating visual landscapes that reflect a deep dialogue between imagination and nature. His pieces serve as 'snapshots' that immortalise fleeting moments.

Why do you think creative expression is so important to our species?

Creative expression is vital because it allows individuals to connect with deeper emotions, thoughts, and experiences that might otherwise be difficult to articulate. It's a way for both artists and viewers to explore the complexities of the human condition, break boundaries, and see the world through new perspectives. At Aria Art Gallery, we believe that art has the unique ability to transcend language and cultural barriers, offering moments of introspection and inspiration.

Find out more about Aria Gallery here: ariaartgallery.com



Murendowong, 2021, acrylic on canvas, courtesy of Siena Park

NIGHT VISION

Siena Park takes us on a psychedelic journey that transcends cultural boundaries

The London-based Korean artist Siena Park incorporates myriad cultural influences to create a vivacious fusion of traditional Asian painting, Mannerism and Pop art. Her hypnotic day-glo landscapes, in particular, seem to contain a strangely interconnected dream logic that blends Buddhism and Taoism with Western motifs and ideologies. As such, they present a unique dialect between Eastern and Western cultures, in which many worlds merge in a virtual realm. Here, she tells START JOURNAL why she is devoted to fostering profound connection.

You work has been called Pop Art. How would you describe yourself as an artist?

I would describe myself as a blend of cultures and experiences. Growing up in a small village in Korea gave me a deep sense of tradition and connection to nature, while living in diverse places like China, HongKong, Dubai, and London expanded my perspective, exposing me to a rich variety of artistic expressions and cultural influences. Each place has left an imprint on my work, helping me weave together themes of identity, globalisation, and the intersections of tradition and modernity. My art is a dialogue between these worlds, where I explore both the personal and the universal through vibrant visual languages.

How would you define Pop Art?

Pop Art, to me, is more than just the use of popular culture imagery; it's a way of challenging traditional art boundaries by embracing the everyday, the commercial, and the mass-produced. It reflects socie-

ty's consumption, technology, and media culture, while also playing with irony and accessibility. Pop Art invites the viewer to find beauty or meaning in what might be dismissed as ordinary or superficial, and through that, it questions how we value and experience art.

How would you say your childhood shaped you as an artist?

As a child, I found solace in creating – whether it was through drawing or working with my hands, it became my way of expressing thoughts and emotions that I couldn't always voice. The colours and textures of everyday life, from the vibrant seasons to the intricacies of Korean customs, left an indelible mark on my imagination. Art became my refuge during moments of struggle, especially later on, through motherhood and the challenges of my divorce. It was through those painful experiences that I began to pour more of myself into my work, recognising that creation had the power to heal and transform. However, moving around the world gave me a broader perspective on life. In global cities, I connected with diverse cultures, and it was this blend of my traditional Korean roots with the modern, fast-paced life of these metropolises that further fueled my passion. Art became a bridge between my past and the present; my struggles and my successes.

Talk us through your creative process. How do you approach a blank canvas?

When I approach a blank canvas, I see it as a moment of possibility – a space where my experiences, thoughts, and emotions

can come together. My creative process is both intuitive and reflective, shaped by the many places I've lived, and the cultural influences I've absorbed. I usually start by reflecting on a particular feeling, memory, or concept that has been lingering in my mind. It could be something as subtle as the texture of light in a specific city, or a broader theme like identity and displacement, which has been a constant in my life. Living in different countries has heightened my sensitivity to the contrasts and harmonies between cultures, and I try to channel that into my work. Once I have a direction, I sketch or make rough drafts, allowing myself to experiment freely with shapes, colours, or forms. This is a more instinctual part of the process, where I let my subconscious play a role, often blending elements of tradition with modern, global motifs. The actual painting process is a mixture of structure and flow. I often revisit traditional Korean techniques, like using hanji paper textures, but layer them with more modern materials, or abstract forms influenced by the urban landscapes of Dubai or London. Each brushstroke feels like a conversation between where I've come from and where I've been. There's a back-and-forth rhythm between planning and improvisation. I build and destroy, pushing the limits of the canvas until the balance feels right. By the time the piece starts to take shape, I see it as more than just an artwork – it becomes a snapshot of my evolving journey.

Is your art practice therapeutic?

Yes, my art practice is deeply therapeutic. It's a space where I can process the complexities of my life, art allows me to



SIENA P



Above: Landscape, acrylic on canvas, courtesy of Siena Park.
 Previous spread Heaven Lake, 2022, acrylic on canvas, courtesy of Siena Park

express the complexities of my life and the emotions that come with those transitions. Creating helps me make sense of the contrasts between tradition and modernity, rootedness and displacement, and the various layers of identity I've accumulated.

How does your Asian heritage play out in your work?

My Asian heritage is a core part of my work, both consciously and subconsciously. Growing up in Korea, I was surrounded by traditional aesthetics, rituals, and a deep connection to nature, all of which have left a lasting impression on my artistic sensibility. This sense of heritage influences the way I use materials, colours, and even space in my compositions. For instance, I often incorporate traditional Korean art techniques, like the subtle use of brushstrokes or the layering of textures reminiscent of hanji paper. The simplicity and mindfulness found in traditional Asian art – where balance, emptiness, and harmony are key – often guide my approach to composition. I like to think of my pieces as a meeting point between past and present, where cultural memory and modern life intersect. In a way, my art serves as a bridge between my Korean roots and the wider world I've encountered. It's a way for me to honour where I come from while also exploring how that heritage transforms as I move through different cultural landscapes. This duality of being both connected to my origins and shaped by global experiences is what makes my work personal, yet universally relatable.

What draws you to create such wildly psychedelic landscapes?

I'm drawn to creating psychedelic landscapes because they offer a space where reality, memory, and imagination can blend freely. These landscapes allow me to explore the surreal and dreamlike qualities of the different worlds I've lived in, where the boundaries between cultures, experiences, and emotions often feel fluid and overlapping. Psychedelic art, with its vibrant colors and distorted forms, reflects this sense of dislocation and transformation, mirroring my own journey through diverse environments – from the quiet rural scenes of my childhood to the bustling, futuristic cities I've inhabited. For me, these landscapes are a way of visualising inner states of mind – moments of reflection, displacement, or even wonder. The surreal nature of the work invites viewers to step into a world where

the familiar becomes strange, and the strange becomes familiar. I want people to feel immersed in an alternate reality, where they can temporarily lose their bearings and allow their imaginations to take over.

What do you hope a viewer will take from immersion in your world?

Hopefully, a sense of exploration and introspection. I want them to question their own perceptions of reality and identity, and to find connections between my personal journey and their own. In the same way that my landscapes blur the lines between different worlds, I hope to evoke a sense of unity between the personal and the universal. Ideally, viewers will walk away feeling like they've glimpsed something both otherworldly and deeply human – a space where they can reflect on their own sense of place, self, and belonging.

Would you say that creative expression is vital to you?

Yes. It's how I navigate and make sense of the world. Having lived in so many different places, I've often found myself in situations where language or cultural norms felt unfamiliar, and art became my most reliable form of communication – a way to express what words couldn't capture. It gives me the freedom to explore my identity, to process emotions, and to connect with both the external world and my inner self. Art allows me to reflect on the contrasts and complexities of my life. Whether it's the influence of my Korean heritage or the dynamic energy of places like Dubai and London, creative expression lets me synthesise these experiences and create something new and meaningful. It's a way for me to process not only personal feelings but also the broader questions of belonging, culture, and transformation. Without creative expression, I would feel disconnected from these parts of myself. It's not just about making art; it's about giving form to thoughts and emotions that might otherwise remain fragmented. In this way, creativity becomes a kind of healing and self-discovery. It fulfills my need to connect with others and offers a space for reflection, growth, and exploration. For me, it's not just a choice but a necessity.

Which artist or artists most inspire you and why?

The artists who most inspire me are Chun Kyung-ja, Frida Kahlo, and Salvador Dalí, each for different rea-

sons, but I feel a deep connection to their work because of the way they merge personal experience, emotional depth, and surrealism. If I had to focus on one, Chun Kyung-ja has always resonated with me on a profound level. Like me, she was born in Korea, and her art reflects a powerful synthesis of Korean identity, femininity, and the exploration of inner worlds. Her ability to blend vivid colors with deeply personal, almost dreamlike imagery is something I admire. There's a certain raw emotionality in her work – often depicting women and nature in vibrant, almost psychedelic forms – that I connect with both as a woman and as someone who has experienced the tension between tradition and modernity. Chun's exploration of pain, beauty, and resilience speaks to my own journey of self-discovery, as I navigate between different cultural landscapes. What inspires me most is how she uses her art to tell her own story, unapologetically. She wasn't afraid to depict suffering, solitude, and her innermost thoughts, even when it defied societal expectations. That authenticity drives me in my own work, pushing me to express my personal experiences, no matter how difficult or complex. Her bold use of colour and form, combined with emotional vulnerability, influences the way I make art, particularly in creating surreal landscapes that echo inner states of mind.

What do you personally believe to be the purpose of art?

Art has the power to transcend boundaries, whether they are cultural, linguistic, or emotional, and it can evoke a deep, often subconscious response in people. It allows us to explore and confront our innermost thoughts, feelings, and experiences, and it invites others into that exploration, creating connections across time and space. Art, at its core, is a form of storytelling, whether personal or universal. It can challenge norms, express hidden truths, and provoke dialogue. But it can also offer solace and understanding, reflecting the complexities of human existence in ways that bring clarity or catharsis. Art is not just about creating something beautiful, but about forging bonds through shared human emotions, experiences, and dreams. When people engage with my work on that level, I feel like the purpose of art – to connect, heal, and communicate – has been deeply fulfilled.

Find out more about the artist here: sienapark.art

SACRED GEOMETRY

FAUSTO GROSSI ON THE ART OF DEEP OBSERVATION

The Spanish artist Fausto Grossi studied sculpture with the infamous Nicola Carrino at the Academy of Fine Arts of Frosinone, and has devoted his entire life to art-making, as he believes it is a creative act that brings colour to a world that can all-too-often seem pedestrian and grey. Here, he shares an insight into his most profound creations to date.

What would you say first attracted you to the life of the artist?

I describe myself as a passionate and intuitive person. I have dedicated my

to art since I was a very little child. This makes me feel alive and useful to others. What attracts me as to the life of an artist is the possibility of being able to live life intensely.

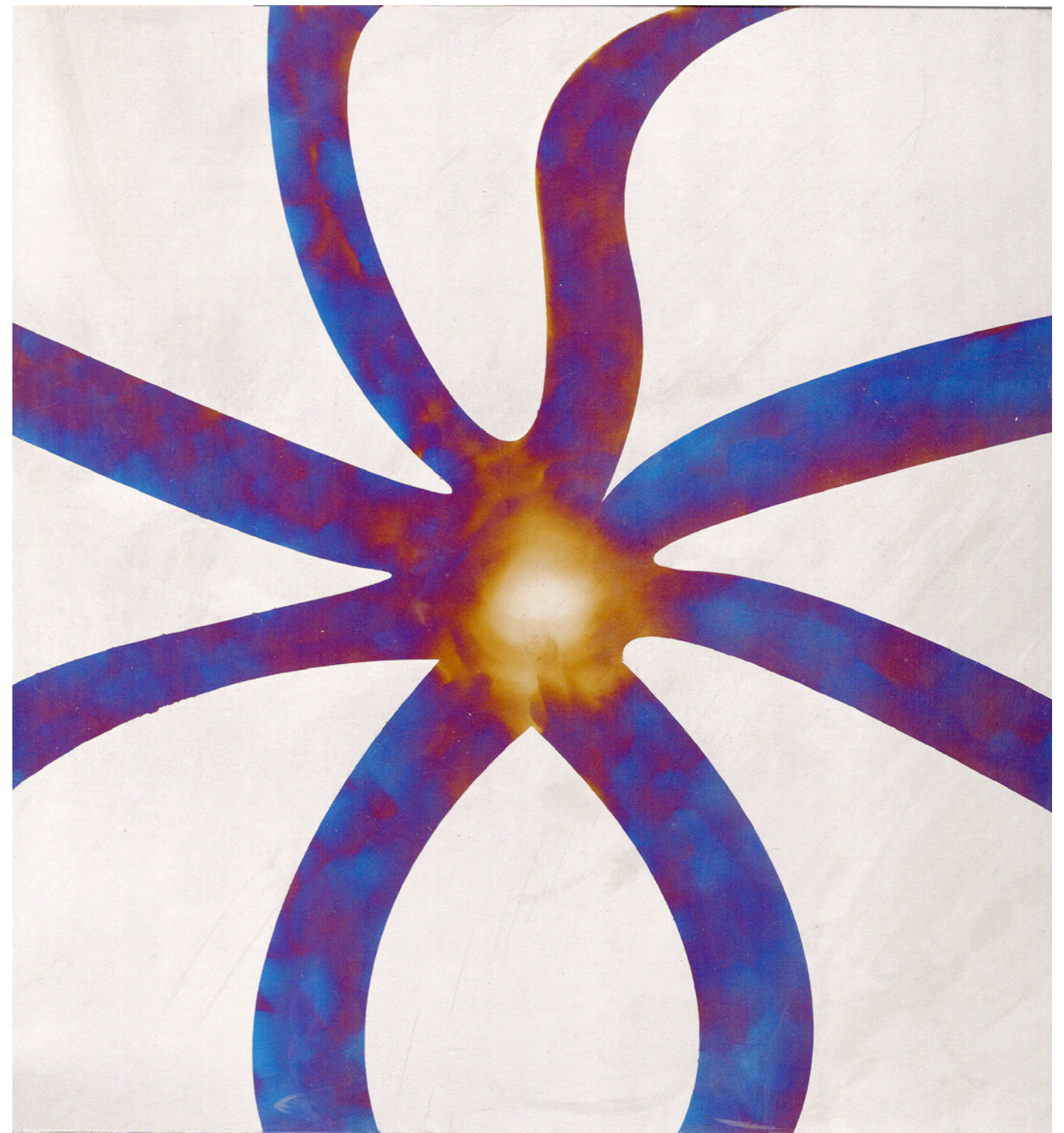
Where do you think your creative drive comes from?

As a child, I was very curious about everything around me and wanted to understand it, and in some way decipher it. To do so, I exploited every resource at my disposal. Every exploration was an adventure, and each required a specific tool. As

I grew up, I realised that artists, after all, performed completely human functions. So, I said to myself, I too can be an artist.

How do you approach a new work?

My creative process always begins with deep observation. I reflect, meditate and speculate on what I observe and feel. I explore the multiple possibilities that emerge from this observation and feeling. Starting from this observed reality, I imagine new realities. I tend to look for means, tools and opportunities that



facilitate a transformation. It is truly a way of approaching reality, but also of reinventing it, through interaction with what surrounds me. Now, I would not know how to live in any other way. More than a spectator, I think of the artist as an interlocutor with whom to establish an exchange of ideas.

Do you think your art has political intentions?

I would say that my art has ethical intentions. I am trying to identify a purpose for art, but I have not found it yet. I believe that art is generosity. I am interested in artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Marcel Duchamp because they have given rise to reflection on the relationship between art

and science. I am inspired by movements such as Futurism, Dadaism, and the Bauhaus school, for the same reason.

Tell us about the works you have on display at START KX this year ...

The work exhibited represents the evolution of a project presented for the first time at the Bilbao Arte Foundation. As then, the work is based on the creation of square modules in anodized titanium, each divided into three equal parts on each side. Although conceived as an autonomous entity, each module has an internal structure that gives it the ability to function as a combinatorial element. When combined with

other modules with the same characteristics, it gives rise to infinite combinations. Designed as a modular component with combinatorial properties, the module is intended to be used as an architectural finishing element.

What is the ultimate purpose of art for you?

The purpose lies in its attempt to approach beauty, even if this approximation is never definitive. It is precisely in this continuous attempt that the essence of art manifests itself, where the dialogue between the artist, the work and the public is an open and dynamic process.

Find out more about the artist online.



County Kerry' 2023, oil on primed wood box panel, courtesy of Barbara Hoogweegen

SWEET EMOTION

Barbara Hoogweegen discusses the meditative process at the heart of her practice

The award-winning Dutch painter Barbara Hoogweegen creates haunting and nostalgic works in oil on canvas, board, book covers and aluminium. The nuance in her abstract figurative style is matched with an almost classical approach to landscape, and she employs both forms to communicate themes around the human psyche, identity, nostalgia and solitude. There is a hauntological aspect at work also, in that she often works from found imagery, and thus engages the viewer with the slippage between the felt and photographic. Here, she tells START JOURNAL why the pleasure of painting is all about engaging in a process of discovery.

What would you say most inspires you as a painter?

As an abstract figurative and landscape oil painter, I am inspired to communicate themes around the human psyche using the figure and the landscape. The message is often sensual – how it feels to surrender to nature, enjoy a tranquil swim at sunset, lose yourself in a book on The Underground, or experience the glorious feeling of sunshine on your face.

How does your Dutch heritage play out in your work?

I left Amsterdam as a child, so aside from enjoying my Dutch, surname, which, on some level, attaches my work to the fantastic history of Dutch art, I don't feel it plays much of a role. My time in Trinidad however was very influential. My mother was very close to painter, dancer and musician Boscoe Holder, who was my first major influence. (He and his brother Geoffrey were recently given a retrospective at Victoria Miro gallery). I used to spend hours watching Holder paint. He took his work everywhere with him, and often set up a table on the beach we went to most weekends. When people ask me about my colour palette I explain it originated from

a combination of Holder's palette and the vibrant Trinidadian scenery.

Do you paint your figures from life, or from found imagery?

I sometimes work from life, but mainly I paint from my own photographs, film stills and found images, thereby engaging with the slippage between the felt and the photographic. Regarding portraiture, I use the face not so much to portray a particular person or their likeness but as a vehicle to convey a narrative, a sensation, or an impression. I am drawn to using the face in my work as it is such an effective tool to convey an infinite variety of worlds, through emotion, gesture and posture. The face also provides me with a resource of colours, shapes and expressions to play with and dilute. I often hope to pull out and exaggerate the particular emotion in the subject I am painting from, and to quote Alex Katz with each painting, 'I hope to pack an emotional punch.' After formulating an idea for the subject of my work and what I hope to communicate, I either take photographs or search for images on the internet to use as source material.

Do you think the internet is an invaluable tool for artists?

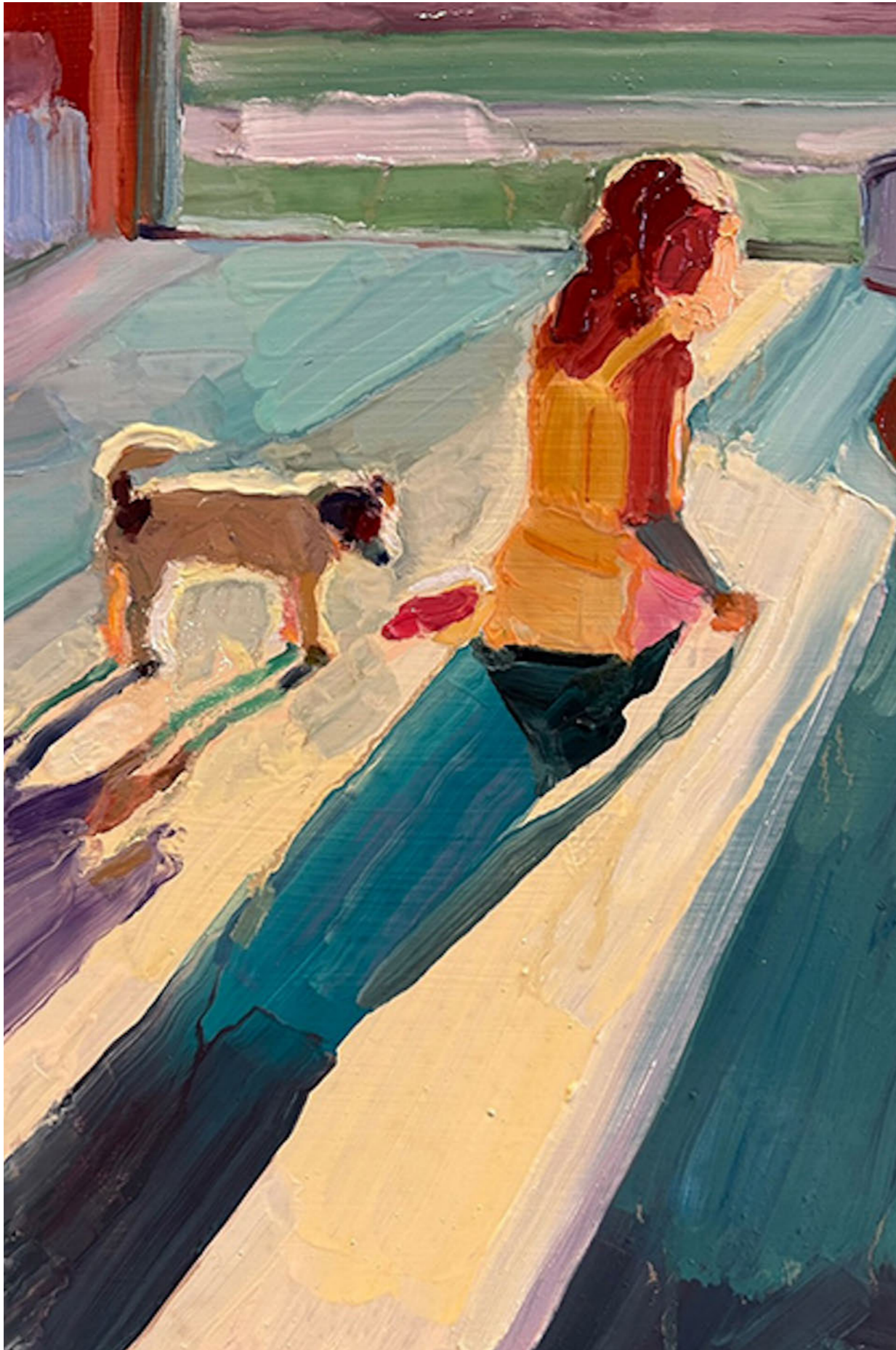
The experience of looking for an image on the internet most closely replicates searching for a recognisable face in the crowd. I am able to choose from a vast array of images of people in my search for the most suitable. The searching process on the internet can be fast: my mind is rapidly computing and registering hundreds of faces/images until it rests on one that is suitable. I wait until I recognise an image that strikes me on an emotional level and for my desire to be ignited. I look for facial expression, gestures and postures that would best enable what critic Alan Roughton describes with regards to the power of the 'detail' in poetry. Roughton describes how: 'It is in

the concrete and vivid detail that poems live and through which they convey emotions and make their ideas vivid.' Painter Eric Fischl describes how: '[...] gestures trigger memory and associations [...] I use them as doorways or entrances to events that will evoke similar feelings and associations in the viewer.' He also describes why photography as a source material is so useful. He said, 'There is something you get from a photograph that you can't get any other way, awkwardness. The photo cuts time so thinly that you get gestures you don't normally notice For me, the photo is a view into the soul of a character because so much of the arrested motion is unselfconscious What I like about the photograph is its degree of realistic depiction.' Once I find the image containing the gesture that triggers the relevant feeling relevant to the subject matter, it becomes the source material from which I create an image of the imaginary. I aim to keep the image in potential: in other words, to distill the descriptive and create a bare minimal structure for the viewer to dress with their own similar experience.

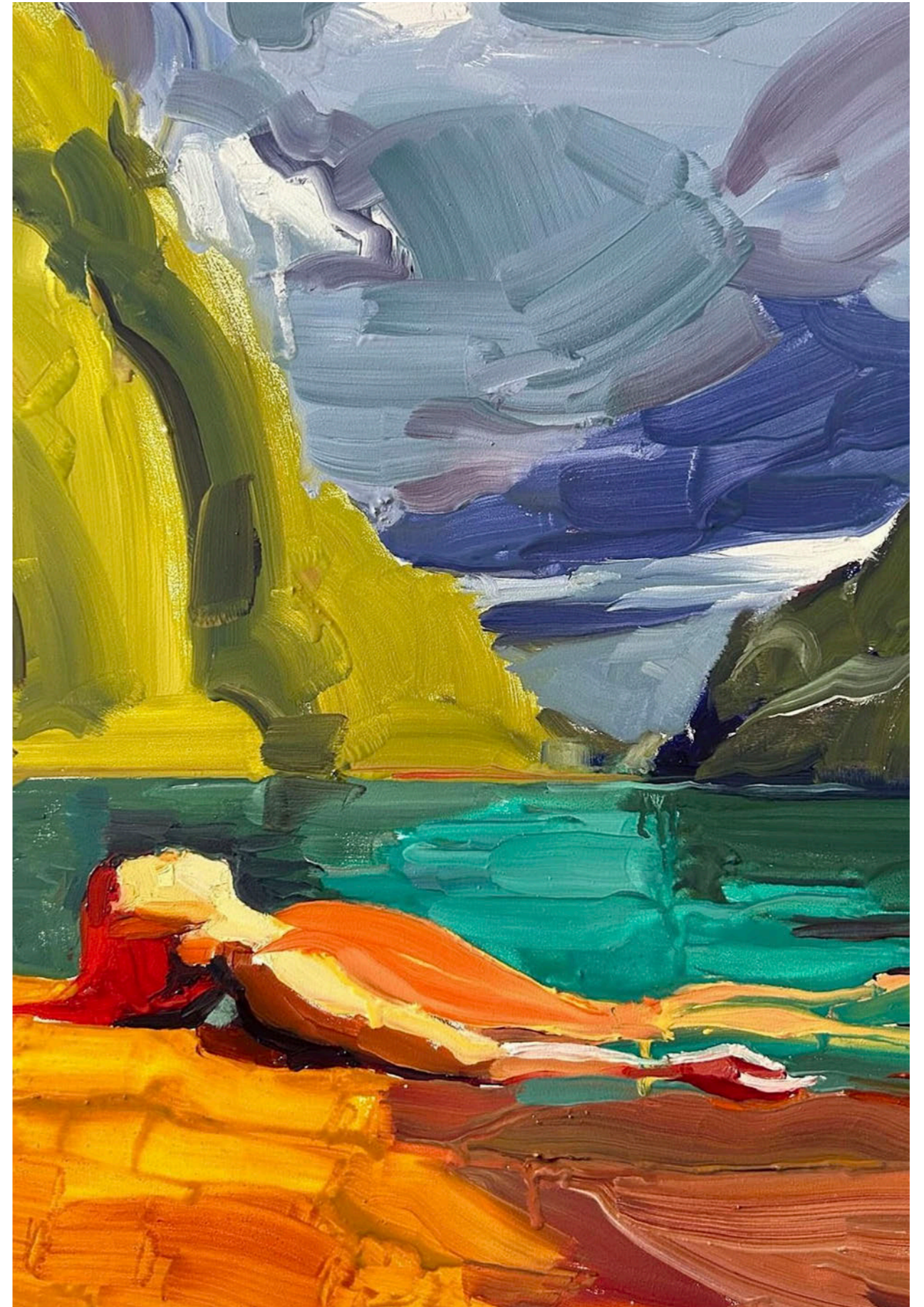
What is the intention that drives you?

An intention that applies to all my work is to deliver an emotional and retinal punch to the viewer. As Katz described: "I wanted to make a painting you could hang up in Times Square. I wanted it to have muscle and aggression". The photograph is therefore merely a starting point. Richter explained how a picture transforms when he paints from a photograph: "Something new creeps in, whether I want it to or not. Something that even I don't really grasp". What does my work mean to me? Given strict instructions from one of my first tutors to be willing to "burn everything I make", I was lucky to appreciate that the real pleasure in painting is in the process.

Find out more about the artist here: bhoogweegen.com



Shadow, 2023, oil on primed wood box panel, courtesy of Barbara Hoogwegen



Surrender, 2024, oil on board, courtesy of Barbara Hoogwegen



HEALING THE TRAUMA

Dan Reisner on how a career in the military
led him to sculpt a better future

Dan Reisner is an Israeli sculptor and multi-disciplinary artist whose creative process often begins by excavating profound realms of pain, and delineating the unresolved that lies in between the inner and outer spaces of the psyche. The ex-combat medic's 'Idols of the Sun' series consists of dozens of small bronze sculptures that refer to Reisner's continual efforts to process and interpret the post-traumatic stress disorder he suffered following his time serving in the army, while his public sculptures are visually striking and space-conscious – adding personality to the carefully chosen environments he places them in. In this interview with START JOURNAL, he takes us on a personal journey into his process, and explains why art is the ultimate healer of division.

What first drew you to the path of the artist?

Art has always been an intrinsic part of who I am – I was born into it. From a very young age, I felt a deep connection to an inner space, a place where I could explore and express emotions, thoughts, and experiences. I found that through art, I could bring this inner world into the outer one. As a child, nature was my first studio; the wadi near my home offered everything I needed – wood, clay, charcoal – and I spent countless hours creating. Even then, art wasn't just a pastime; it was a necessity. I felt an unspoken calling to channel my inner life into forms and images.

How did PTSD lead you to art as a tool for self-healing?

While art was always present in my life, the true depth of its healing power became apparent when I was confronted with PTSD. After serving as a combat medic, the trauma of war left an indelible mark on my mind and body. For years, I managed to balance the constant undercurrent of tension and unrest, but when my PTSD surfaced in 2000, it overwhelmed me. The experience felt like being engulfed by a wave

I hadn't seen coming, and for a time, I felt lost in it. In the midst of that overwhelming state, I realised that if I didn't take control of my healing, no one else could. I began to see my trauma not just as something to survive, but as something to create from. The images and feelings that plagued me could be transformed into tangible forms – into sculptures that allowed me to externalise the pain, fear, and chaos I was experiencing internally.

That sounds like a very profound shift in perception ...

Yes. This shift in perception was the beginning of my recovery. I started casting these insights, these personal reckonings, into bronze, and from that process emerged a series of self-portraits. Each piece represented a step in my healing, a release from the burden of trauma. In creating these works, I wasn't just healing myself; I was contributing to the collective understanding of trauma, recovery, and the potential for transformation. Art became my tool for survival, self-expression, and ultimately, self-healing.

Do you believe art helps us tap into collective truth and commonality of experience?

Yes. I believe in a collective consciousness, much in the way Carl Jung described it – a shared reservoir of experience, emotion, and symbolism that transcends the individual. As an artist, I have often felt that I am not creating in isolation, but rather tapping into something greater, something universal. The forms and images that come to me often feel as though they've existed long before me, as if I am merely a conduit for their expression. Art, to me, is a way of accessing and articulating this collective truth. No matter how personal or specific an artist's work might seem, it often resonates on a broader level, touching something fundamental within others. This is why art, in all its forms, transcends cultural and temporal boundaries. It com-

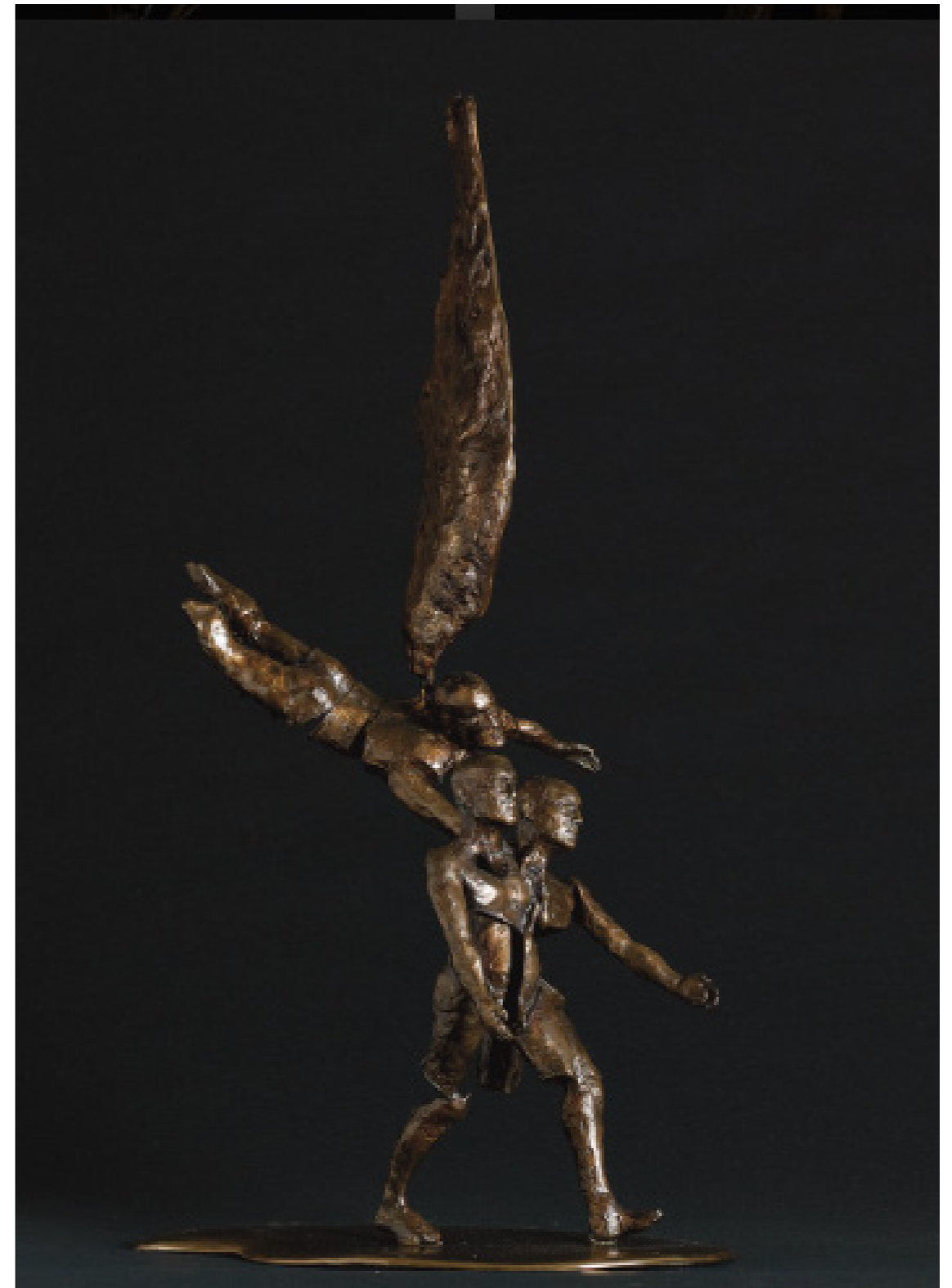
municates the inexpressible, those universal human experiences – pain, joy, love, loss – that connect us all, regardless of our individual histories. In that sense, art is not just a form of self-expression; it is a form of shared experience. It offers a mirror to both the artist and the viewer, reflecting back elements of the human condition that we all carry within us, often unconsciously. When someone engages deeply with a work of art, they may find parts of themselves within it, parts they didn't even know existed. This is where art becomes therapy – not just for the individual creating it, but for the species as a whole.

Do you believe the process of making art acts as a catalyst for personal transformation?

The process of making art allows for a deep internal release, a transformation of inner turmoil or joy into something tangible, something that can be shared with the world. Similarly, experiencing art can have a healing effect, offering moments of reflection, catharsis, and connection. It creates a space where the boundaries between self and other dissolve, and where we, as individuals, can experience our place within the broader collective. Art, in this way, becomes a tool for healing – not just personal healing, but healing on a societal or even global scale. It can reveal truths that words fail to capture, and it offers a form of therapy for our species, helping us to process our collective experiences, both the traumas and the triumphs, and find meaning in them.

Why were you drawn specifically to figurative sculpture, and who are your greatest influences in that artistic medium?

Figurative sculpture has always felt like my most natural language. The human form is universal, yet profoundly personal – it carries the tension between the inner self and the external world. Working with the figure allows me to express emotions that words can never fully capture.



Explosion, sculpture in bronze, photo by Avi Amsalem, courtesy of Dan Reisner



Mirroring, sculpture in bronze, photo by Avi Amsalem, courtesy of Dan Reisner

As an artist, I see myself as part of a long tradition, continuing the lineage of sculptors from ancient Greece and Rome, through the Renaissance, and into modern times. I feel a deep connection to these historical works and their creators, who have left behind expressions that still resonate today. Archaeology, in particular, inspires me. There's something profound in standing before a piece that has survived the passage of thousands of years, carrying with it the intention and spirit of the artist. I've travelled far just to witness these works in person, to experience them firsthand.

What do you feel when you encounter a work that connects with you?

When I encounter a work of art that deeply moves me, it's because it resonates with a certain inner place I am experiencing at that moment. There's a connection between the artist's expression and my own inner landscape, as if their idea mirrors an inner feeling I am processing. I take that connection and, in a sense, bring it back out into the world through my own lens. It becomes a personal reflection, reinterpreted through my own emotional and artistic filter. In that way, there's something similar to the role of an actor – I embody the emotion or idea, but present it through my own 'portrait.' The original inspiration becomes transformed by my experience and re-presented as my own work. Some of my most unforgettable encounters with art have been moments of deep personal connection, like standing before Brâncuși's Endless Column in a small town in southern Romania or in front of the Charioteer of Delphi. In those moments, I was overcome by the profound simplicity and depth of these works, their ability to communicate across time and culture. There are no words for the feeling of being in their presence; it's something that is absorbed physically, almost spiritually. I have a deep admiration for ancient artists like Thutmose, who sculpted the iconic bust of Nefertiti. His understanding

of not just form but of the universe itself, as expressed through his work, continues to inspire me. To think that his creation was found some 3,000 years after it was made, and still speaks so powerfully, is awe-inspiring. His work, like that of many others from across history, reflects an artistic consciousness that I aspire to tap into through my own practice.

How about more modern influences?

Modern influences like Giacometti, Brâncuși, and Rodin have also shaped my path. Giacometti's figures capture the fragility of existence, while Brâncuși's approach to reducing form to its essence speaks to my desire to convey meaning with simplicity. Rodin's emotional depth, his ability to bring the complexity of the human condition to life, is something I've always admired. Ultimately, my art takes me into the depths of my personal experiences, but it also connects to something much larger – the universal aspects of human existence. By sculpting the figure, I'm able to confront and externalize inner conflicts, moments of healing, and transformation. It is a journey inward that also contributes to the collective experience of humanity, continuing the dialogue that has been ongoing for millennia.

What do you hope a viewer will take from the experience of your artwork?

When someone encounters my work, I want it to resonate with them on a personal and emotional level. I don't aim to impose a specific message or feeling, but rather to create an open space for reflection, where the viewer can connect with their own experiences and emotions. I see my sculptures as mirrors – reflecting something internal back to the viewer, allowing them to find their own meaning in the forms and figures. A deeply moving story that illustrates this comes from a good friend of mine. She came to my studio one day and told me she 'needed' to buy my sculpture Uplifting. I was curious about her choice of words, so

I asked why she said 'needed,' and what was happening in her life that made the sculpture such an urgent desire. She shared the sad news that she and her husband were going through a divorce, and she hoped that the sculpture might inspire him to uplift himself through their difficult time. Some time later, she told me that although they had divorced, every time she passed by the sculpture, it gave her a sense of relief, as if it offered her a small moment of solace in the midst of her pain. I was touched to hear this. A year or two after that, she shared with me that she had become a couple therapist. She arranged her therapy space so that Uplifting was behind her, where she could see it while she worked with couples, using it as a reminder of the idea of uplifting in her practice. Then, the last time we met, she told me she had made a change – she placed the sculpture next to her so that the couples could see it during their sessions. She explained that at some point with each couple, they would stop and talk about the sculpture and what it represented. That, to me, is the greatest achievement and the true reason to create. It's not just about producing an object, but about making something that can inspire, guide, or bring comfort to someone else. Art, for me, is about creating moments like that – moments of connection, reflection, and sometimes healing. My own sculptures often emerge from personal struggles and the process of finding balance within myself. If my work can provide someone with a sense of release or offer them a moment of clarity, then it has fulfilled its purpose. I also hope my work reminds viewers of our shared human experience, of the connections we all share – our common joys, struggles, and growth. Art has the power to make us feel less alone, and if my sculptures can offer even a small sense of that connection, then I feel they have truly done their job. Art serves as a bridge to deeper understanding.

Find out more about the artist here: danreisner.com

EDITOR'S SELECT

Our editor tells us why art is our greatest signpost to the poetic nature of being

In putting together START JOURNAL, I have had the pleasure to get to know some wonderfully creative people, hear their stories and discover how creativity helped them find purpose, joy and meaning in their lives. And among the pages of the three issues so far produced, there has been a veritable smorgasbord of talent. With that in mind, my selection of personal favourites is in no way a reflection of a hierarchy. Art is subjective, and the selection of images over the coming pages is simply a selection of the works that speak directly to me. I am

sure as you go through the three issues of START JOURNAL that have so far been produced you will also find works that connect deeply with you – sometimes for personal reasons that you can delineate, and often for reasons that are far more intangible, being driven by what Barbara Hoogweegen describes in these pages as an emotional punch. At its best, art makes us consider our place in the world, and indeed, our temporal nature. It asks us to confront morality without fear and consider love without boundaries – it touches us, reminds us that we are not alone in the

universe, and tells us that there is more to life than consumerist pursuit, capitalist gain and the vagaries of power dynamics. In fact, art is our greatest signpost to the truly poetic nature of being. It is something that affirms our shared humanity, and our resilience to overcome some of life's most potent struggles. Over the coming pages are a selection of the works I have most enjoyed encountering in the creation of START JOURNAL, I very much hope they speak to you also.

Ars Gratia Artis



Shell, sculpture in bronze, photo by Avi Amsalem, courtesy of Dan Reisner



Wheel of Life, 2021 (in collaboration with Roman Handt). Courtesy of Justin Dingwall



Unmasked. Oil and acrylic on canvas, courtesy of Nandita Chaudhuri



Cherry Coke Throat, 2023, oil on linen, courtesy of Jamie Gallagher



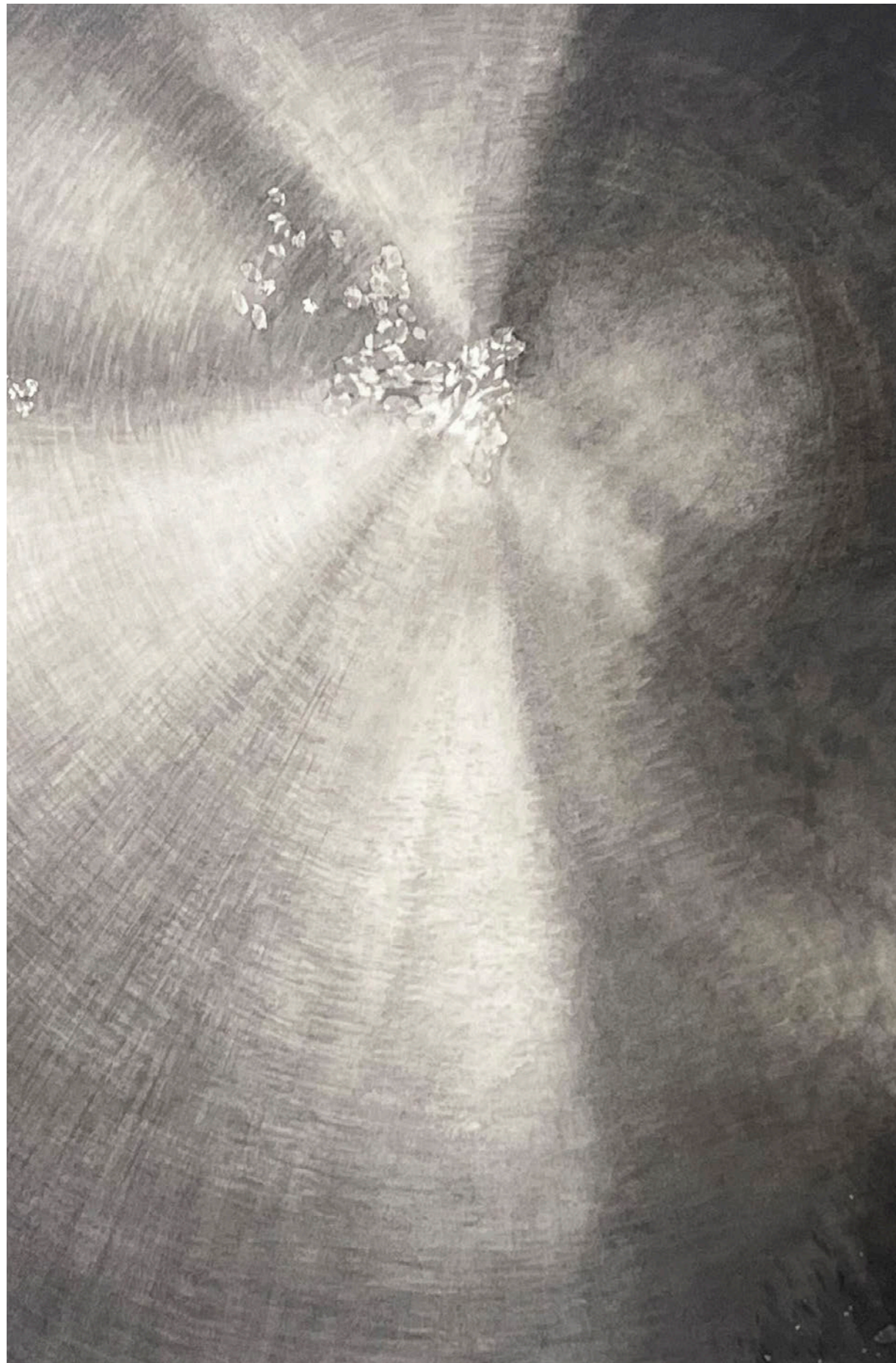
Ancient of Days, 2021, C-Type Print, courtesy of Rita Nowak



Crystalline Form II, courtesy of Wells Tempest



Addiction, 2018, digital silver gelatin print, courtesy of David Aimone



Smoke In The Forest, 2024, Amazon rainforest charcoal ink on paper.
Courtesy of Piers Secunda

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ORPHEUS DESCENDS

THE PAINTER RU KNOX ON CAPTURING ALTERED STATES

Ru Knox is a classically trained British artist based in London. After qualifying in architectural interior design, the rising star spent nearly a decade training and teaching academic drawing and oil painting with Charles H. Cecil in Italy. Here, he takes us on a journey into his extraordinary inner universe.

How would you describe yourself as an artist?

I'm a visual artist working in mixed media, focusing on abstract and semi-figurative painting. Though

classically trained as a portrait painter, I found traditional approaches too limiting, leading me to adopt a more experimental and expressive style. This transition has enabled me to explore a balance between structure and spontaneity, embracing unpredictability while remaining connected to themes of human experience and emotion.

What are you drawn to as an artist?

I'm attracted to the unusual, the unexpected, and the extraordinary – anything that transcends the every-

day. It might be an experience that alters my perspective or a material that helps convey a particular idea. Whether it's something I can't quite understand or something deeply moving, I'm always drawn to what feels unfamiliar or transformative. I've always felt the need to create. As a child, drawing became my main form of expression, and I realised early on that getting ideas out – whatever the medium – was cathartic and necessary for me. It was a way to process the world. My best work is shaped by a range of emotional states, evolving as I go.



Caprice, oil on canvas, 2023. Courtesy of Ru Knox



Ascending, oil on canvas, 2023. Courtesy of Ru Knox

Talk us through your creative process. How do you approach a blank canvas?

I don't follow a fixed method; I approach each painting differently to avoid formulaic results. This keeps the process fresh, and often, mistakes lead the work in unexpected and more interesting directions. I don't feel like I'm truly creating when I have a clear image of the final piece – that's why I moved away from classical portraiture. The predictability of that process became tedious. Relinquishing control to the materials and embracing accidents makes the journey more of an adventure. Music frequently guides me, and I feel my best work is shaped by a range of emotional states, evolving as I go. I won't hear political commentary in something like Beethoven's 'Moonlight Sonata'. Though interpretations

may vary, the essence of such works transcends political contexts.

Is Beethoven an artist that particularly inspires you as an artist?

I mention Beethoven because music is probably my biggest influence; it aligns closely with what I aim to achieve in my paintings. With music, you can feel everything without needing to articulate why or what it represents. The figurative elements in my work might symbolise vocals, while the absence of a clear narrative mirrors the lack of lyrics. I experience mild synaesthesia, where sound and visuals are intertwined, and I hope others can sense that connection too. I aspire to create a bridge between the senses, and painting music feels like a natural way to explore that.

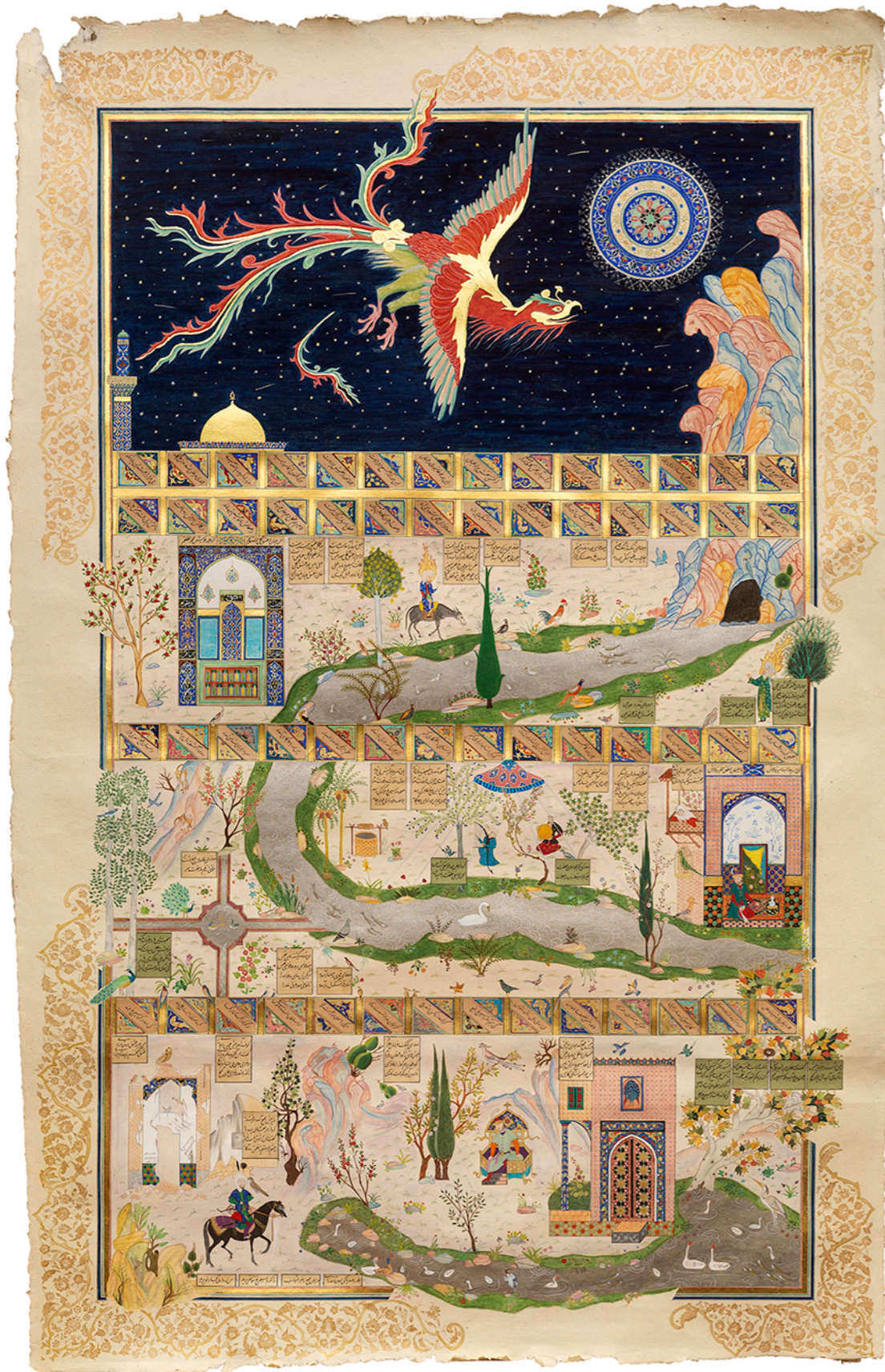
Can you tell us about the works you have on display at the show?

In this show, I'm exploring hypnagogic and hypnopompic states – the moments between wakefulness and sleep where reality and dreams intersect. The semi-figurative elements represent tangible aspects of reality, while the abstract elements reflect the dreamlike imagination. Though I guide the narrative more than in previous work, I still leave enough space for the viewer's thoughts and interpretations to flow. My aim is to evoke a sense of wonder, inviting exploration of the boundary between reality and the inner world.

Find out more about the artist here: ruknox.com

NATIONAL TREASURES

LISA DE LONG ON THE SACRED MISSION OF THE KING'S FOUNDATION



Farkhonde, courtesy of The King's Foundation

The King's Foundation is an educational charity that focuses on creating communities where people, places, and the planet can coexist in harmony. The foundation's work is inspired by King Charles III's philosophy of harmony, which is based on the idea that understanding the balance between humans and nature can create a more sustainable future. The King's Foundation School of Traditional Arts understand tradition as continual harmonious renewal, and teaches traditional arts in order that they evolve and endure. Here, director Lisa DeLong provides insight into its unique mission.

What first drew you to The King's Foundation and how would you describe the purpose of the school?

The King's Foundation School of Traditional Arts is unique and wonderful. It brings together students from many different cultures, diverse backgrounds, various faiths, all in pursuit of understanding those principles which are universal to the human experience. The works on display have been produced by alumni of the Masters and PhD programmes, and include contributions by alumni from the last two decades. Some of our students were previously chemists, doctors, sign painters, calligraphers, illuminators, and so forth. This eclectic experience brings a dynamism to the studio community. The course tutors are all practicing artists as well, so classroom instruction is enhanced by the

understanding that the tutors not only talk the talk, but walk the walk.

How did you go about choosing what to exhibit at the show?

The works have been selected to showcase a broad range of skills. The curatorial team wanted to show not only a cross-section of the diverse work produced by alumni who have studied at the School of Traditional Arts, but also sought to celebrate the love of beauty which unifies these very different approaches. Each artist is striving to communicate their understanding of that which is sacred.

What do you hope a viewer will take away from the exhibition?

We hope that a viewer will be intrigued by the beauty of the works on display, and perhaps enough to want to create something beautiful themselves. Traditional art is not a stale reproduction of dead forms; it is a vibrant, living body of work far greater than the contributions of any one individual. Let us become a community of creators, not merely passive consumers.

What does the school consider to be the purpose of art?

For the School of Traditional Arts, we view art as inspirational in the highest sense, drawing our attention to that which is sacred and essential. It is fundamentally

alchemical, as it has the potential to transform both artist and the viewer/experiencer, bringing together head, hand, and heart in harmony.

What do you consider to be the greatest achievement of The King's Foundation?

Over the past three-plus decades, our alumni have been actively sharing what they were introduced to at the School with others, and going on to develop their work to a very high standard. Many of the core staff were once students at the School and now help develop and shape educational opportunities for the next generations of students in the UK and internationally. Others have established successful solo careers. Still others teach for the Open Programme which extends the core education of the School to the public through short courses and lectures both in person and online. We are particularly proud of the Outreach Programme, which brings our ethos to local communities around the world. We currently have satellite centres in Cairo, Egypt; Baku, Azerbaijan; Suzhou, China; AlUla, Saudi Arabia; Jeddah, Saudi Arabia; and we have just launched our newest centre in Doha, Qatar. At each of these locations we see a rising generation of young people rooted in their local tradition, and passionate about its practice as a living, relevant, contemporary art.

Find out more here:
kings-foundation.org



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WONDERLAND

Regina Kim invites you to step inside
a universe of multiple perspectives

The inimitable Regina Kim is a South Korean visual artist whose multi-disciplinary practice spans collage, illustration, and moving image. Her vibrant work aims to transcend visual boundaries, creating an intense and surreal visual smorgasbord that blends countless references in order to challenge societal and cultural divisions. By embracing a sense of boundless imagination, she hopes to convey new human ideals through art, and present imagined worlds that reflect the complexity of the human experience, while also providing sanctuary for reverie.

Why are you drawn to work in the medium of collage, and what do you love about the surreal?

I have been working as a visual artist for four years, primarily focusing on collage, illustration, and media art, with collage being the starting point of my practice. I balance both art projects and commissioned work, and, since my work is digital based, it's easier for me to collaborate with various brands, musicians, and also to host my own exhibitions. The main theme I'm currently working with is 'Beyond Borders'. During my time studying Fine Art at Kingston University, I became fascinated by the concept of diversity and started to notice the many walls and boundaries that exist around us. I found collage to be an ideal medium to express these boundaries and limitations, so I began to develop my practice around it. As I explored collage, I researched the works of many artists and realised how closely related collage is to surrealism. Artists like Salvador Dalí, René Magritte, Pablo Picasso, David Hockney, and Hannah Höch have greatly influenced

my perspective, giving me the freedom to see beyond the ordinary. I am captivated by the world beyond reality and aim to create surreal spaces and worlds. I don't seek to escape reality entirely, though – I draw upon real-life emotions and issues to create imagined worlds that reflect the complexity of the human experience.

Do you think it is important to champion diversity in art?

In today's world, the theme of diversity is incredibly important. Everything around us – race, culture, art, science – is interconnected and shows a rich blend of diversity. Art is a powerful medium that can capture a range of voices and deliver strong messages. I believe that art is an infinite language, one that allows all of us to see and feel beyond words. It is essential for art to reflect diversity, as it gives us a chance to represent the time we live in. I also believe it is part of an artist's role to convey social and political messages through their work.

Would you say that you always knew you would be an artist?

I studied Law and Clothing and Textiles in Korea, so I never imagined I would become an artist. Initially, I came to London to study English, and while doing so, I was looking for schools to study fashion. However, I found that fashion design had too many restrictions when it came to expressing full creativity. Working in a fashion company would require me to consider the company's style and profitability, which didn't align with the kind of creative work I wanted to pursue. It was during a visit to Tate Modern that I had what felt like

a 'eureka' moment. Seeing artists who used such a wide range of materials to tell their own stories made me realise that I don't have to be a skilled painter to become an artist. It was also the first time I truly understood contemporary art. After returning to Korea, I spent about four months preparing my portfolio and applied for the Fine Art Pre-Master's course at Kingston University. I chose the Pre-Master's course because I wanted to see if I genuinely had the talent to pursue art. My time at Kingston was an excellent starting point and gave me the confidence to embark on more creative projects. Now, I am continuing my journey, searching for new 'eureka' moments while studying for my master's at the Royal College of Art

Talk us through your creative process when making a new work ... Where does your process take you internally?

I place great importance on the research process for all of my works. Having studied art in the UK, I learned that research is a crucial part of the creative process. Therefore, before I start creating, I engage in brainstorming, mind mapping, artist and artwork research, moodboards, colour tone research, and composition research. Rather than just creating something that looks beautiful or aesthetically pleasing, I prefer to give each image and composition a grounded, meaningful basis. My images always carry more than one meaning, encouraging the audience to interpret them in multiple ways.

Find out more about the artist and her collage work here:
reginagraphic.com





The Infinite World, 2023, courtesy of Regina Kim



Cruella, 2024, courtesy of Regina Kim

IT'S A FAMILY AFFAIR

INDIAN ARTIST MADHU DAS ON THE PRISON OF IDENTITY

The Arts Family Foundation is a non-profit initiative based out of London with a support network from across the globe. This October, they proudly present Indian-based artist, Madhu Das at Start KX, exhibiting his body of work: 'Landscape of Confronted Abstraction'. Developed over a period of ten years from 2012 to 2023, it is the culmination of the artist's on-going research into the body and how it interacts with different environments, space, objects and sculptural elements. This series of photo-performative, site-specific interventions deal with social and political issues that are often concealed by our physical and psychological proximity to landscape. Das adapts aspects of material culture and uses methods from Anthropology and allegorical fiction as a conceptual tool, exploring linguistic devices and imagery with a sense of irony and paradox. The work in the series, 'Landscape of confronted abstraction' draws on 'L'oeuvre de memoire' a concept developed by the French historian Pierre Nora. The work explores how we are connected to space and reveals the true purpose behind each environment. For example, in the work with thorns, the artist surrounds himself with the thorn bushes found in the nearby countryside. Thorns were used by the local farmers, instead of barbed wires, as a way to divide the land. A security guard would watch over the land from the confines of his security building, now disused, and in which the artist now stands. These physical demarcations are compared to the divisions that we place on ourselves and the boundaries that we impose on our surroundings as well as in our minds. Ultimately, the work asks us to consider a profound question: do we often create our own boundaries in this life, removing our bodies from any sense of locality or purpose?

Find out more here: [theartsfamilylondon](https://theartsfamilylondon.com)



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FUTURE DAYS

The acclaimed curator Huang Yi on creating our first ever digital art experience

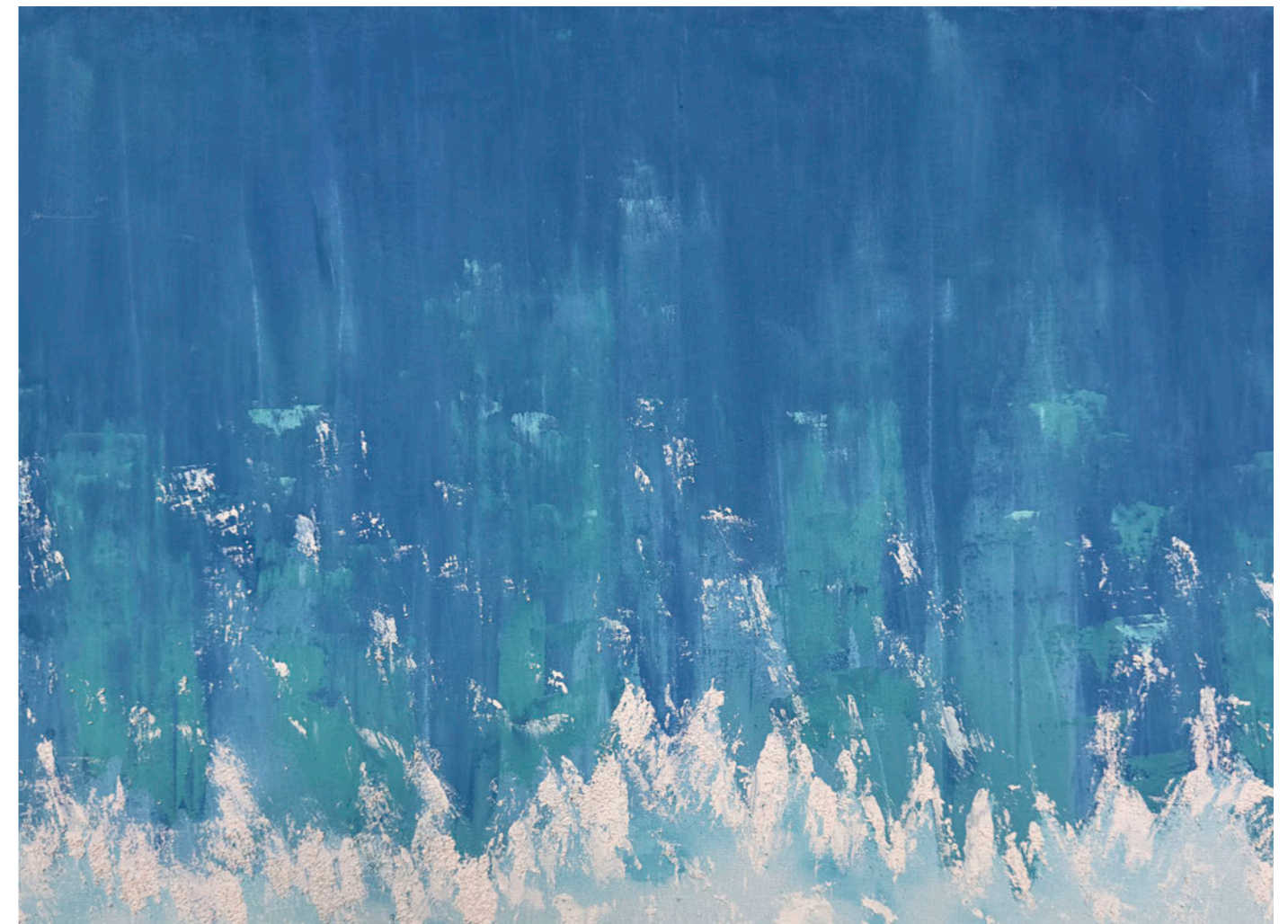
This year, we introduce StART DIGITAL at StART KX and we are truly excited to take our first steps to embrace the growing demand for digital and generative art across the globe. We will be showcasing eight emerging international artists from around the world, under the curatorial stewardship of Mr Huang Yi, Advisory Council member of the 19th Arte Laguna Prize, chief curator of the 14th Gwangju Biennale, Korea, and academic curator of the 9th Shanghai Youth Art Fair. Below he shares his vision for what will be an important element of StART KX going forwards, and will no doubt herald a new dawn in contemporary art.

"Through the exhibition, we hope to stimulate the public's attention and reflection on digital art and encourage the audience to think about how the fusion of technology and art is shaping our culture, society, and political ecology. The curatorial con-

cept focuses on the evolution and innovation of digital art in different historical contexts. Through these works, we hope that the audience will appreciate that digital art is not only a product of technology, but also an important medium to reflect on and intervene in social reality. By the time of the Second World War, which corresponds to Benjamin's era, the relationship between art and technology had begun to reveal challenges to traditional art forms. In today's era of digital intelligence, such challenges and integration are even more profound and complex. The works in the exhibition will reveal how digital art promotes social change, expresses cultural identity, and challenges existing political power structures in the context of globalisation, prompting viewers to consider the future direction and potential of art forms in the digital age. Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) is a German philosopher who has

substantial contribution to the philosophy of aesthetics, art, and technology. His essay 'The Work of Art in the Age of Its Technical Reproducibility' has extensive influence on photography and film. He is a Marxist and sees technology ('technik'), such as the use of a camera, as a Marxist concept fundamental to Marxist historical development. He believes the development of technology is the motor of history as it empowers forces of production. Benjamin also explores the relationship between nature and humanity via art, as he sees the primary social function of art, especially film, to be rehearsing the interplay between nature and humanity. Film is particularly powerful as it unfolds 'all the forms of perception', which in itself is a form of revolution. I am excited to be able to bring such a collection of artists together for this special moment.

Huang Yi, independent curator



WILD VISIONS

Yasemin Akturk on painting the unseen world

Yasemin Akturk, originally from Turkey and now based in Berlin, merges her diverse background in computer science with a profound passion for contemporary art. Through deeply expressive brushstrokes and vibrant textures, she creates works that often explode upon the canvas, offering a universal language of art that resonates with audiences around the world.

What are you drawn to as an artist?

I see myself as an artist who seeks to capture the beauty and complexity of both the visible and invisible world. My work blends realism and abstraction, balancing precision with freedom. I'm drawn to exploring human emotions, nature's subtleties, and our connections to the world around us. Inspired by nature, music, life's moments, and travel, I aim to reveal something unique in each piece, offering viewers a fresh perspective and a deeper connection.

Do you think all art is inherently political?

For me, art is primarily a personal expression. I don't create with a specific political or social agenda, but rather to convey my beliefs, ideas, joyful moments, and my worldview. Everyone's inspiration comes from different sources, and for some, it's social or political issues, which is valid. My inspiration, however, comes from nature, music, love, travel, and human interactions. As for diversity, I believe it fosters creativity. I've experimented with various mediums – starting with gouache, and expanding into oil, acrylic, sand, marble dust, and more. While diversity isn't a necessity in art, it certainly opens doors to new creative possibilities.

What for you is ultimately the purpose of art?

For me, art is a form of communication – an absolute necessity. I create primarily for myself,

driven by inspiration and the urge to bring my ideas to life. I don't create with a specific political or social agenda, but rather to convey my beliefs, ideas, joyful moments, and my worldview. Everyone's inspiration comes from different sources, and for some, it's social or political issues, which is valid. My inspiration, however, comes from nature, music, love, travel, and human interactions. When an idea strikes, I feel an intense need to translate it into something tangible before the inspiration fades. Each time, I strive to capture the image in my mind, making it beautiful and unique. I was initially surprised by people's reactions to my art. I never intended to show it publicly, but as my paintings filled the walls of my apartment, everyone who saw them was impressed. The encouragement pushed me to share my work with the world.

Find out more about the artist here: yaseminakturkart.com



Clockwise (from left to right): Cosmos, Velvet Ocean, Joy, courtesy of Yasemin Akturk

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