

Željko Jančić Zec

fine art

ŽELJKO JANČIĆ ZEC

Visual, performing and media artist. Born in 1969, Rijeka (HR). He has been educated at the Amsterdamse Hogeschool voor de Kunsten, Netherlands.

He creates art in order to explore such issues as daily life, the human condition and the complexity of existence.

As a multimedia artist, he has performed and exhibited in Europe and America. He is a member of UPUH Croatia (Croatian Dancers Association) and of IG Freie Theaterarbeit (Austrian Association of Independent Theatre) and IG Bildende Kunst (Austrian Association of Independent Visual Arts). He founded the art association PART OF ART in Vienna and was Co-President of World Art Games (WAG) Austria. As a choreographer and director, he teaches dance, physical theater and drama.

Jančić began to express artistically at the begin of 1990s. He has achieved numerous solo and group exhibitions on miscellaneous topics as: Visions of creation, Underwater world, Santasiya, Companions, Dialog, Behind closed eyes, Freedom, Human and nature, Out of frame, People, ...

All works signifying the approach to finally reveal a new reality, one, evolving from his artistic autonomy. Graphic elements, the cleanness in expression, emphatic circulating lines, excessive and meddlesome pure colors are constitutive elements of his compositions. Free from traditionalism or trends of contemporary art, he feverishly announces his world of fine art and varying forms of expression. Following the example of their models, important representatives of the avantgarde, including primarily Dubuffet and Digger, and Miró and Klee, Jančić combines figurative elements with fluid visions.

Jančić's painting are powerful and evocative, full of expression vital and creative energy, the author establishes a successful dialogue with the visual experience of the great teachers of color, without falling into the trap of imitating, creating his own authentic artistic expression undoubted value. Numerous of his works are in public and private property.

By working on performances he developed his photographic and cinematographic perspective. Since early 2000, photography and video had been an essential and constant part of his artistic activities. He has produced several photo series: Piedina, Treno terreno, Showroom, The ghost has no home, Urban leisure, Blind through life, Cult of Diva, Goli Otok – The Bare Island / Vision in the shadow, Memories,...

This work opens him the possibility, to play with both, various cinematic techniques, expression and performing. He has produced a number of short experimental films that have been successfully shown at international film festivals: Waterish, The Second Man, Comeback, Blind through life, Embodiment.

He won an award for the film Waterish at the Choreographic Captures International Competition 2008 Joint Adventures festival and for the film The Second Man at the 41st KRAF Festival in Rijeka.

STATEMENT

My paintings can be viewed at the level of appearances, and then enjoy a purely aesthetic experience. However, that is not my goal, to stay on the surface. With my paintings, I invite you to take an active part in my work.

They are mirrors. The more intensely the observer is recognized, the more violent his reaction will be. Awakened emotions are drawn into a whirlpool, but which is not the goal of getting lost in it.

The goal is to find oneself again, after peeking deep into one's interior and facing all its distortions. I am not someone who judges, and I am aware of my weaknesses, I understand others. Only someone who has experienced a lot himself can be aware of all possible deviations. Look, says one of the pictures, your eyes are bulging and you have blood on your hands. Is that a big enough price, then he asks, to live in abundance?

By beheading my characters, I shift the center of gravity in a person, from the head, to the body. The center of the human body is the heart. The ego that has mastered the mind is responsible for all human deviations, for the inhuman. My beheaded characters did not lose their head, they just found the focus of their existence from an ego- fueled mind, found in the chest area and uncompromisingly began a heart-guided life.

Human characters are often depicted as children's drawings. There is no coincidence in that. With the lines of children's drawings with an abundance of bright colors, I unequivocally show how much the child is present in myself.

That's not the end of the story. The interaction between the observer and my images, passing through several layers, in one of the highest, leads to the evocation of the inner child that is in each of us. The vortex of emotions into which the observers are drawn, and which swirls in them, opens living wounds, creating sharp pain through confrontation. Only the bravest will endure to the end and be forced to remember who they really are, what they were like until the system forced them to integrate, and at the same time they assimilated, forgetting who they are, forgetting that they were once authentic beings, full of joy in life.

Those less brave will give up, unable to bear that amount of pain because it is easier to go through life „with your eyes closed“, as I called one of my opuses.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS AND PERFORMANCES

2022. Kunsthalle Trier, Germany
St. Chatherine's Church, Island Rab, Croatia
Fonticus Gallery, Grožnjan, Croatia
2021. Quarentena Art Gallery, Chile
2020. Museo CAM, Napoli, Italia
MMSU Museum of Modern and Contemporary, Rijeka, Croatia
Galeria Nina Menocal, Mexiko City, Mexiko
2019. Austiran Cultural Forum Mexico, Vienna, Austria
Gallery lichtraum eins by Paul Siblik, Vienna, Austria
2018. THE ROOM Contemporary Art Space, Venice, Italia Austrian Horticultural Museum, Vienna, Austria
2017. Austrian Cultural Forum, Zagreb, Croatia
2016. Chashama Gallery, New York, USA
2015. Musee du Louvre - Paris, France
SCOPE Art Miami - Miami Beach, USA 2014. Palais Porcia, Vienna, Austria
2013. Museum of the Americas, Florida, USA
The Croatian Museum of Tourism, Opatija, Croatia
MMSU Museum of Modern and Contemporary, Rijeka, Croatia City Museum of Rijeka, Croatia
City Museum of Umaga, Croatia
2nd International Izmir Art Biennial, Izmir, Turkey
2012. Museo della Civiltà Romana, Rome, Italia
Palais Kabelwerk ARTspace kA_12, Vienna, Austria
UNO City, Vienna, Austria
2011. Kunstmuseum Bonn, Gemany
2010. Cronosfera festival, Torino, Italia
Cultural & Educational Centre – Vortex, Skopje, North Macedonia
ADA project space, Rotterdam, Netherland
2009. Museums Quartier Vienna, Austria
Antimatter Film Festival, Victoria BC, Canada
WUK Werkstätten- und Kulturhaus, Vienna, Austria
P'Silo Festival Images Contre Nature, Marseille, France
Centre for Contemporary Art, Gdansk, Poland
KINO ŠIŠKA, Ljubljana, Slovenia
2008. Joint Adventures, München, Germany
2003. dietheater Künstlerhaus, Vienna, Austria
2001. Het Veem Theater, Amsterdam, Netherland
1999. Dock11, Berlin, Germany

FINE ARTS

since 2020. LEBENSWELT 2020
since 2020. THE DREAM IS REALITY, DREAM WITH YOUR EYES OPEN
since 2018. PEOPLE
since 2017. OUT OF FRAME
since 2016. HUMAN AND NATURE
since 2015. FREEDOM
since 2011. BEHIND CLOSED EYES
since 2011. DIALOG
since 2006. COMPANIONS
since 2000. SANTASIJA
since 1999. UNDERWATER WORLD
since 1994. VISION OF CREATION

MEDIA / FILM / VIDEO / PHOTOGRAPHY

As producer, writer, performer and photographer.

2016. GET AWAY FROM YOUR LIMITS experimental short film
2014. MEMORIES artistic photography
2014/2015. PERFORATION artistic photography
2013. GOLI OTOK – THE BARE ISLAND / VISION IN THE SHADOW artistic photography
2012. KULT DIVE / CULT OF DIVA artistic photography
EMBODIMENT experimental short film
2011. BLIND THROUGH THE LIFE artistic photography and experimental short film
2010. GOLI OTOK experimental short film (work in progress)
2009. PIEDINA artistic photography
SHOWROOM artistic photography
URBAN LEISURE artistic photography
THE GHOST HAS NO HOME artistic photography
TRENO TERRENO artistic photography
COMEBACK experimental short film
2008. THE SECOND MAN experimental short film
2007. WATERISH experimental short film

AWARDS

2009. THE SECOND MAN – 41nd KRAF Liburnija-film, Rijeka
2008. WATERISH – Intern. Choreografic Captures Competition 2008 JOINT ADVENTURES, München

CATALOGUES / PUBLICATIONS

2019. Into the labyrinth, Exhibition catalogue, Native Gallery, Banjole, Croatia
2018. Human and Nature, Exhibition catalogue, Austrian Horticultural Museum, Vienna, Austria
5 video works, Exhibiton dépliant, Gallery Greta, Zagreb, Croatia
Out of frame, Exhibiton dépliant, Gallery Atelier Part of Art, Vienna, Austri
2016. Blind through life, The Beauty of Humanity Collection Book page 90, SCOPE Art Show Miami, USA
Memories, Exhibiton dépliant, Erste Club, Rijeka, Croatia
Freedom, Exhibition catalogue, Gallery Spazio Città UniCredit, Udine, Italy

2015. Freedom – Dialog – Companions, Exhibition dépliant, Castello di Udine, Udine, Italy
Glow in the dark, The Art Photography Collection Book page 186, Exposure Award, Musée du Louvre, Paris, F
2014. Blind through life, Exhibition dépliant, GK Rab, Island Rab, Croatia
Dialog, WAG Palais Porcia Exhibition catalogue page 11, WAG Austria, Vienna, Austria
Companions, Calendar 2014 by Željko Jančić Zec, Vienna, Austria
Cult of diva, Calendar 2014 by Željko Jančić Zec, Vienna, Austria
2013. Behind closed eyes, Exhibition catalogue, The Croatian Museum of Tourism, Opatija, Croatia
The Bare Island / Vision in the shadow, Exhibition catalogue, Tourist board of Lopar, Croatia
Cult of Diva, Exhibition dépliant, PPMHP Rijeka, Rijeka, Croatia
Blind through life, Catalogue of the Izmir Biennial, 2nd International Izmir Art Biennial, Izmir, Turkey
Companions, WAG Croatia 2013 Exhibition catalogue page 384-385, WAG Croatia, Zagreb, Croatia
5 video works, Programme booklet, MMSU Mali salon, Rijeka, Croatia
Dialog, Exhibition catalogue, Gallery Atelier Part of Art, Vienna, Austria
Blind through life, Exhibition dépliant, City Museum of Rijeka, Rijeka, Croatia
2012. Behind closed eyes, Exhibition catalogue, Museo della Civiltà Romana, Rome, Italy
Companions, Calendar 2012 by Željko Jančić Zec
2011. Companions, Exhibition catalogue, Gallery lichtraum eins by Paul Siblik, Vienna, Austria
The Second Man and Waterish, Video in Progress 3: Fields of the Performative Catalogue, KOLEKTIVA art group, Ljubljana, SL
Companions, Exhibition catalogue, Austrian Cultural Forum, Zagreb, Croatia
2010. Companions, Exhibition catalogue, Palais Kabelwerk ARTspace KA_12, Vienna, Austria
Piedina, Exhibition dépliant, The Gallery Studio 18, Vienna, Austria
2009. Piedina, Exhibition dépliant, City Museum of Rijeka, Rijeka, Croatia
Povratak / Comeback, Programme booklet, Gallery Kortil, Rijeka, Croatia
Companions, Exhibition catalogue, Gallery Knežev dvor, Island Rab, Croatia
Waterish, Antimatter Film Festival Programm Guide page 9, Antimatter [Media Art] Victoria, BC, Canada
2008. Santasija, Exhibition catalogue, UNO City, Vienna, Austria
2007. Mixed Media, Exhibition catalogue Vision of creation, Gallery OK MMC Palach, Rijeka, Croatia

MONOGRAPHS

2015. Memories catalogue, Željko Jančić Zec, Rab, Croatia
2012. Companions catalogue, Željko Jančić Zec, Vienna, Austria
2007. Graphics catalogue, Željko Jančić Zec, Vienna, Austria

PEOPLE



No name 2022,
mixed media on cardboard, 69 x 50 cm



No name, 2020
mixed media on canvas, 100 x 80 cm



No name 2020,
mixed media on paper, 58 x 37 cm / 58 x 37 cm



Here I am 2019,
mixed media on plywood, 88 x 75 cm

PEOPLE

"I don't see that there is much to be gained from being the highest form of life." Ogden Nash

The face is the basic mark of identity. The face speaks about our inner state or wears the desired grimace. It is a part of the body that is uniquely personal. A part of the body that marks us as an individual. Throughout the history of the form, man is the most cultivated artistic motif, whether it is visualized by depictions of the body or attention is focused on the head. In our case, the author directs attention to the face. Željko Jančić Zec presents a collection of works with the theme of portraits. Even at first glance, it is clear that the works offer glimpses of psychological states.

In front of us is a series of painted surfaces with a strong rhythm and playful color made by a combination of techniques, painting and drawing methods. The artist most often uses acrylic. However, in addition to smears of color, he often defines shapes with pencil strokes, graphite, pastels, colored pencils, felt-tip pens. Sometimes he uses spray paint, charcoal. Formats are filled with interventions, so we often have to find and separate forms ourselves. Nevertheless, recognition of motifs, variations of face shape is offered in all works. They are immersed in conglomerates of gestural art interventions. In some places there is a written record that is spontaneous, without striving for expression. The artist allows playful forms to emerge from the format, not always respecting the rules of perspective. Some are characterized by geometric formations, and some by freehand shaping. In the works, we can read the stylistic characteristics of graffiti or street painting, illustrations, posters, comics. The line appears as an independent fact, a carrier of form or as a filling. The author mixes plans and conditions them with meaning. He does not respect consistency, but combines a spot, a line or a drawing as the moment dictates to him. The frequency changes from work to work and within the frame of each work. The incorporated parts form systems that become ideograms.

The artist begins to question the world starting from the face. He needs a motive as a starting point, as a battlefield. He markets vulnerable/wounded figures. Visualizations talk about sharp moments. We read moods, impressions, flashes of consciousness. The author seems to want to warn us that our lives are determined by social conventions and conformity. We look back to science, but it disappoints: official science provided the main mechanisms of social divisions and control, and offered pills to calm down. The individual is not interested in capital, politics or religion. It is the herd that is being manipulated that matters. It is only in modern times that situations are recognized in which the previous view of the world is inadequate. Postmodernism questions established assumptions. Old theories and paradigms of family, education, religion, etc. must be rebuilt in a new light. Physicists and philosophers redefine reality with fractals, bosons, and strings. In our perception, the universe no longer functions as a machine according to Newton, but as energy fields that manifest at different frequencies. Man is thus no longer a chemical reaction, but an energy charge.

In history, we had the disenfranchisement of some categories of inhabitants of the Blue Planet. However, during the course called the development of civilization, human self-awareness rose to the level of knowledge about the independence of personality. Many generations fought for it. However, ghettoizations and oppression are constantly repeated; work - often aggressive - on the dependence of man on another man. In art, the Russian avant-garde has long since used the anti-futurist slogan: "The future is behind us" (Larionov-Gončarova) in order to question and deny the concept of progress, contemporary dynamism and the ideology of the *newat* any cost. This position defines artists, for example Bulgakov and Zamyatin, whose art "sees further", until our days. As early as 1920, Jevgenij Zamjatin wrote a novel entitled *MI*, in which he satirizes the system of controlled society. Today we realize, but too slowly and not bravely enough, that nothing has changed, it has even gotten worse. The circle closes and we become part of the same impersonality that the writer writes about. Today, in the so-called to the capitalist system, violent and overrated as the most ideal, we recognize ourselves as impersonal consumers of the imposed order of productivity and mass media values.

The relationship with the observer is a special item of this project. The impression caused by a review of the works, although we can see the drama, is mostly benign. An artist, like a child, does not represent malice, envy or any similar quality. The most obvious is amazement, sometimes a hint of astonishment, shock. The problem of perception of reality throughout history was solved in many ways, which were always determined by people who somehow gained power. From pharaohs, kings, popes, businessmen, there would always be a process of imposing an attitude, by grace or by force. Our civilization, politics and all its religions contain a marked hostility towards personality, body and natural functions. There is hypocrisy present, which dictates that everyone actually laughs, but in such a way that no one sees. We are witnessing the introduction of storks into family trees. Public announcement of any difference is attacked: from physical confrontation to treacherous isolation. Intolerance is initiated from political pulpits and altars. The "advertising flu", declared by directive and stopped by decree in the same way, is a fresh example of an attempt to train ordinary people. Now a war is unconvincingly proclaimed with an enemy that does not fit into the Western technocratic interest frameworks. This series of art works raises the question: can and should censorship of information condition ways of experiencing the environment?

PEOPLE

The artist perceives the motifs in a sensitive way, regardless of whether he saw them or felt them internally. The way of expressiveness of the artistic record is repeated in the works. It is as if the artist repeatedly takes the same model and, experiencing it differently, intervenes in a new way. With his imagination, he creates an album similar to a diary entry. The artist signs the meaning with the strokes and the use of colors, trying to create a particular work. Gesture judges the form by not allowing construction without traces of action in addition to the visible meanings of the medium of color. The highlight of the exhibition is the author's immersion. Depicting the essential, human condition, using illusionistic painting techniques, is not an easy task. These faces are not shown in a relaxed posing atmosphere. The author directs his effort towards the presentation of their significant psychological moment.

The loneliness of the individual is emphasized and interpreted through a series, a collection. Jančić lowers representations of faces that thus become non-same. But within a particular format, the faces remain isolated. The author suspects that loneliness remains the only constant that accompanies us. Sometimes we call loneliness a personality, but in the end we still remain alone. By this orientation, we move the experience of the works towards an intuitive reading. Because reality is a subjective experience, and the search for knowledge implies constant interpretation and reinterpretation. Such a way of thinking reveals the nomadic tendencies of doubt because honest questioning must always bring about change. Or, to confirm some decision which, however, is always temporary. The artist provocatively offers faces, grimaces of possible ways of fitting into the ordinary for the sake of easier survival, but which bear effort.

The artist maintains a balance between content and spontaneity of performance. These scenes are freed from heroic, ideal, aristocratic or monumental connotations. Social and memory reflections are raised here to the level of a sign. Before us is a collection of states. A collection of emotional situations. The author uses the usual social interaction between the artist and the observer, the exhibition, for a silent confession, and at the same time for a confrontation. Jančić asks for engagement from the observer: he asks for the deciphering of energy. He offers it on the border between cynicism and child's play. His characters are not happy, they are not calm, they are questioning, they are engaged in a personal plan that touches us as well. The author relies on the sincerity of the observer and his power of perception. This is where the drama of these works is loudest. Because not everyone is the same: the world is not objectively real. Reality is subjectively determined, and the search for knowledge is exposed to constant interpretation and reinterpretation. These works are a kind of purgatory close to the nomadic scale of valuing the givenness of life. From a theatrical point of view, Željko presents scenes in the moments of the plot, before the climax, and far from the denouement. Because this is not a portrait exhibition. This is a kaleidoscope of conditions.

Art Curator
Eugen Borkobsky

<https://akademija-art.hr/2022/04/26/zeljko-jancic-zec-kaleidoskop-stanja/>

Željko Jančić Zec has been present on the Croatian and international (mainly European) art scene for thirty-odd years, in the field of visual and performing arts. On this occasion, Rab will have a chance to see a cycle of paintings titled simply People, created from 2018 to 2022. These are portraits and self-portraits that have evolved over time from an initial intimate reflection on human existence to a reaction to the challenges and threats that humanity faces today. He executes them combining different art, drawing and painting techniques, using acrylic, pencil, charcoal, pastel, spray, felt tip pen. Combining a line and contrast colouring, he creates a condensed representation of a human face with accented, wide-open eyes, in which we recognise fear, uncertainty, anxiety, death. Schematic drawings of a face as a singular motif that dominates the close-up frame, with just a little background, attract attention and direct the gaze, drawing it suggestively into the visual field of the painting. The thought of the human unity of the world, continuously running through his work, takes on opposite, negative connotations here: in front of us, we see ghastly grimaces, grinning masks with enormous, wide-open eyes and bared teeth. He would say that he almost anticipated the threat to humanity posed by the coronavirus pandemic, which occurred shortly after he created the first series of these works and which then absorbed him topic-wise, among other things, in the rest of the cycle. In addition to bringing disease and death, it aggravated the global crisis of spirituality and humanity, and was followed by other fast-growing troubles and dangers, raising the ultimate question of the limit of our survival. This will – and not only in terms of the form – bring to mind the famous American artist Jean-Michel Basquiat and his evoking of the multi-ethnic culture and symbolism of the African and Aztec art (by inserting, like Basquiat did, fragments of a handwritten text into the painting) or even the early representatives of art brut.

Although he has tried his hand at different forms of media art, Željko Jančić Zec has until now mostly dedicated himself to Humans, as he would roughly say, as an artistic act of showing hope and connection throughout the planet.

Art Curator
Sabrina Žigo



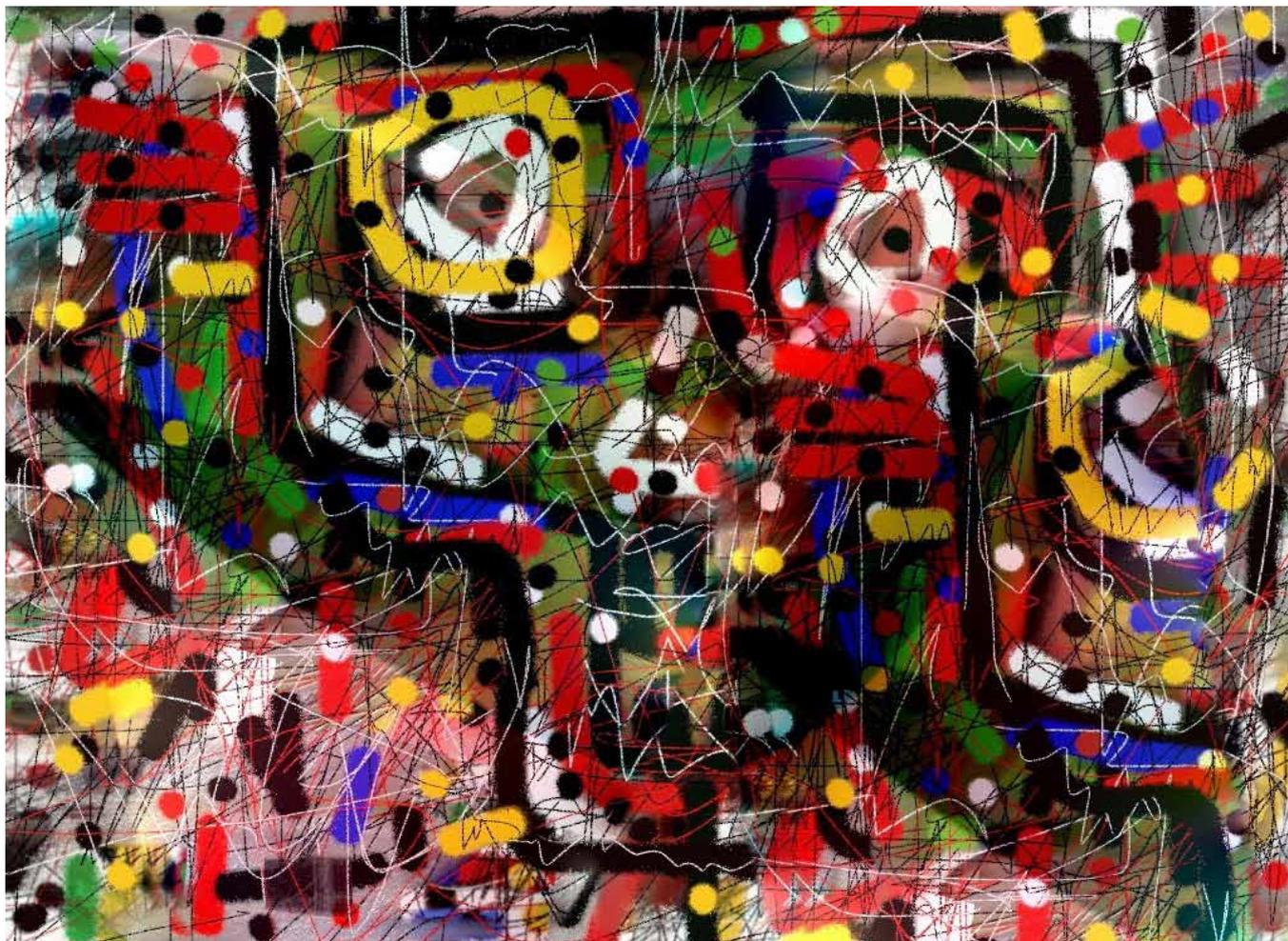
No name 2020, mixed media on cardboard, 150 x 108 cm



No name 2020, mixed media on cardboard, 150 x 108 cm

Under globalization, absolute capitalism and the digitalisation of communication, the lack of a world in common has led to the extensive feeling that entropy is expanding, vision is blurring, and private meaning is obstructing any possible path of escape from the current crisis of relationality, debt, automation, mental illness, and environmental desolation.

THE DREAM IS REALITY, DREAM WITH YOUR EYES OPEN



No name

2020, digital art, 70 x 100 cm

THE DREAM IS REALITY, DREAM WITH YOUR EYES OPEN

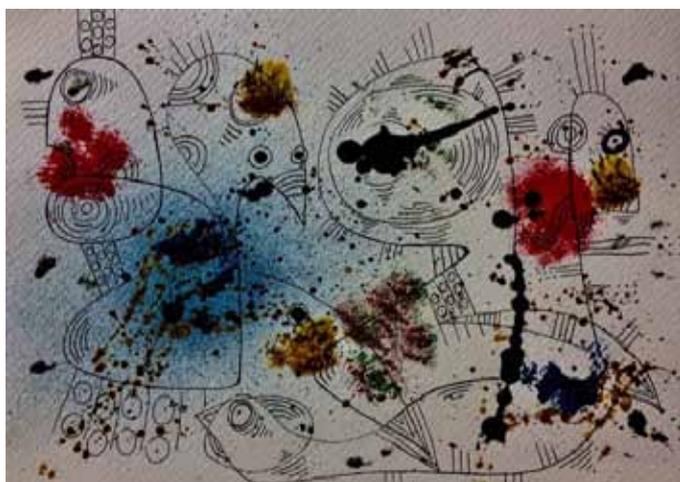


No name
2020, digital art, 70 x 100 cm

All men dream, but not equally. Those who dream by night in the dusty recesses of their minds, wake in the day to find that it was vanity: but the dreams of the day are dangerous mean, for they may act on their dreams with open eyes, to make them possible.

Thomas Edward Lawrence

INTO THE LABYRINTH



No name
2019, mixed media on paper, 21 x 29,70 cm

INTO THE LABYRINTH

Željko Jančić Zec as contemporary artist belongs to the new age determined by globalization, progress of the polarization between rich and poor, yearning for the higher meaning, discovering of new dimensions and release from the conventions of the descending civilization. His knowledge and experience come from the turbulent backgrounds and surroundings into which he was emerged as eclectic in thoughts, constructivist in the action and expressionist in the emotion. He was educated in High school of arts in Amsterdam, the city full of different nations and cultures that was an ideal platform for new artistic experiments. He worked as a photographer, a performer and a dancer looking for the new forms of artistic expression of the movement.

He also filmed experimental films trying to enrich his experience in order to express all those complex feelings and adventures through his art. Some of those experiences are presented at this exhibition. Although, due to contemporary artistic trends, there is strong and radical artistic individualization, on Željko's paintings one could find some traces and influences of the classical artistic examples by P. Klee, W. Kandinsky, W. Baumeister, J. Miró and some other abstract expressionists.

His art is represented by multiple time-space layers, ontologically based and developed in the area between artistic and non-artistic, identified with the action of artistic choice. The cycle presented at this exhibition refers to his very beginnings, his early paintings, questioning – incubating and revitalising, his own style from the past. His paintings represent for him direct picture of spontaneous emotions, the act of introspection and psychogram of the actual feeling. They are made of many cross-weaved lines, stains and spots, archetype and zoomorphic symbols with white spaces among them. Those white spaces are places of light and the field of artist's creative potential yet to be materialised. They provoke the special tension for the spectator bringing almost a new religion to the painting. Paintings are released from the perspective and all other kinds of space determination. There are no relations between up and down, left or right, ahead or in the back, because the painting is freed from the static composition of the spectator's focus. His visions float through the painting giving it the surrealistic impression. The author gave us the flat abstract scene with dancing reflection of his mind. He isn't interested in the form or any replica of the reality nor the aesthetics, but only in his emotions and spirit.

The artist uses quick and expressive drawing as well as smudged splashes and strokes of colour to depict abstract spaces evoking the ancient seas, the plasma from which the world was born. The atmosphere of serenity in the paintings is accomplished due to the use of simple, complement colours and expressive drawing which sometimes could remind the spectator of a bird, a fish or a humanoid. That floating collection of signs is like a letter no one could read, but only feel. It makes us curious to explore and explain that instinct of the memory of time and the secret of our beginning. Looking at Jančić's paintings we join him while dancing on the thin line joining the reality and the imaginary world with the sensitive zone of abstract vision of inner worlds. That meeting point contains huge energy and excitement. His paintings vibrate in the undetermined signs of the space and in the ideograms of collective conscience of anciently written things that couldn't be named any more. The author provokes new subjectivity that is to be developed from the white places, from the point zero of the existence towards the beholder and his ideas of the world. Jančić demands mental interaction with us in order to become the creators of his reality together with him. Jančić has strongly developed instinct for the action of the drawing, for the expression of the colour and for the metaphysics of white interspaces. Those are the qualities that place him among the most perspective abstract painters of the middle generation of the middle Europe. Željko Jančić Zec is promising author due to his essential need for artistic perfecting, exploring and experiment.

Art historian and ethnologist
Kristina Tamara Franić

OUT OF FRAME



New York 2028

2017, assemblages on canvas (wood panels), 85,50 x 84 x 2 cm

OUT OF FRAME

Željko Jančić Zec installations are spatial-temporal layers, ontologically funded, creatively crafted between the artistic and non-artistic space which is identified with the act of choosing. He incubates his own art. He transforms it into mental-emotional cocktails indicative of trends in the performing arts. His installations are layered. The first layer represents the formative incubation period leading to creativity. The second layer is the maturing period in which the category of time plays an important role, and the third layer is the escape from the frame, or the process of „destroying“ old works of art that serve as a trigger for a new installation (cycles of digital photography).

This exhibition presents 10 installations, of which there are five installations made of wooden cubes of the right shape, of different sizes, partially painted with acrylic colors in the process of impulsively and energetically applying complementary colors. Interwoven cubes create a spatial installation of diametrically opposed silhouettes, a dynamic composition that is in a strident interaction with the space between at the gallery.

Installations have a tendency of seemingly occupying physical rather than temporal or spatial dimensions, which „capture“ the invisible energy of a newly constructed space between. I would call this act of intuitive production of a space between an instinct for quantum reality. The remaining five works are digital installations because the artist used the old photographs, which he took in 2011 during his stay in New York. He reviewed the photographs again in 2016, when he made a selection and thereby created a new concept and work of art. He took those old photographs which depict the architecture of New York or just parts of it and digitally overlapped them, sliced them, distorted their motifs to the edge of recognizability, filtered them and made a collage, so that he could paint and draw the final image by hand or on the computer and create a new reality by adding a personal, final, emotional-mental mark of the present. That is the end of a long process of creating or designing a work of art with a new, twisted unusual approach.

In these works, neither aesthetics nor gesture are important, but rather the concept and social content, or conveying an idea that leads visitors to reflection and introspection. With this cycle of work, Željko raises the question of ideology and social intervention. Being out of the frame is the primeval instinct of many creative individuals who are struggling to keep up with the gravity of strictly defined social norms.

Being out of the frame means being creative and creating a different world, but that is a painful path for every sensitive human being. For many, social frames serve as a life vest because they limit, determine and create an illusion that we have everything under control, and more importantly, they give a false sense of security. At the same time, they force routine and predictability and kill eros and the mind.

In socially acquired conformism, they slowly transform us into molecules of desire for apparent happiness until we develop diabetes, and the minuscule anomaly caused by interaction with an unknown type of particle throws us into depression and diminishes the visual field of already obscure vision. We live in invisible cages of time, space, and emancipated emotions. These dimensions are the basic building material of Željko's art.

He puts all his artistic vision, thought and idea into the space between and time between in order to give himself enough time to mature, conceptualize, and form a new work of art, and to construct new, distorted perceptive spaces that provoke and force the visitor to reflection and introspection, learning and moving the boundaries within oneself and the world. And this is exactly what processes of global consciousness need!

It is difficult to recognize your own limited perception, but Željko warns us of exactly that handicap. Being inside the frame means being in your own comfort zone. But life's adventure starts outside that zone. Do you want cotton candy or responsibility, routine or life-long learning, illusion or freedom of understanding? In this exhibition, the artist wants to show us and offers exactly the latter, the good aspect, in the name of a better emerging world. That's how it should be. „Élan vital“.

Art historian and ethnologist
Kristina Tamara Franić

HUMAN AND NATURE



The infinity of nature
2016/2017, mixed media on canvas, 145 x 170 cm

HUMAN AND NATURE

Nature has been one of the most important sources of inspiration since the beginning of art history. Human is nature – grows out of it – man needs nature to survive, and returns in the end back to nature. Life would be impossible without nature, art would be impossible without nature. Art is born from a characteristic activity of the human being, and its manifestations are as diverse as nature.

With his works of art the Croatian-Viennese artist Željko Jančić Zec joins a group of artists who address the topics of man and nature, to make his personal statement: is nature a place of longing or resource? Željko Jančić Zec's work is diverse and profound.

Cheerful and thoughtful – always seeking and finding the field of tension. His paintings captivate through expressive colors and the motion of the application of paint, his topics repeatedly show communities of people – companions, friends, family, human and nature.

In a tangle of organic and inorganic brushstrokes, layers of paint and drops, which sweep through the screen in Pollock's manner and grow and proliferate in jungle like wildness over the painting ground, the attentive viewer may encounter silhouettes.

The seeming figures, the human contours are visible in different accuracy from picture to picture – the definable outlines seem to escape and are absorbed by the green background.

In each of these pictures a fresh glance could meet a corresponding mood: lightheartedness, cheerfulness, gloom, fear, anger or despair.

This relation to reality – the interaction of human and nature – distinguishes Zec's work from pure illusion and releases it from the sole purpose of entertainment. To convey messages the artist rather seeks a direct way of communicating with the attendant.

Mag. Alexandra M. Löff

F R E E D O M



Liberty leading the people
2015, mixed media on plywood, 50 x 90 cm

Zeljko Jančić Zec an artist from Rijeka, he was educated in Amsterdam Hogeschool voor de Kunsten, and today he lives and works between his hometown and Vienna. Initially a performative artist, after various expressive developmental stages, as well as research of materials, begins by transposing the relationship between the world of the stage and of visual art. Zec presents signs to the viewer by offering a space of interpretation and exchange; by reducing „reality” to an „mirror” and „reflects” as a vision of our thoughts. Creating illustrative works, in which the theme of man primarily dominates, he deals with one of the primary and universal motives of life - freedom. His style is characterized by pronounced colorism and static-monumental compositions. Through compact voluminosity, accumulated geometric forms, he unites his experiences and sends messages related to the problems of existence for which he became famous not only through out Europe but also across the ocean. In order to construct objects that encourage reflection and analysis, he uses abstract forms and a combined technique, thus creating dynamic, powerful works, different experiences and understandings of the plasticity of volume depending on the intensity of light and surfaces. Using primordial drawings of mythical-symbolic meanings combined with globally popular titles and songs, Zec revealed to us what it means for him to be free.

Mag. Ania Skrobonja

DIALOG



In a manner of speaking
2011/2012, mixed media on plywood, 91,50 x 143,80 cm

Dialog is the continuation of my series of paintings Companions. Today, dialogue is used in classrooms, community centers, corporations, federal agencies, and other settings to enable people, usually in small groups, to share their perspectives and experiences about difficult issues. It is used to help people resolve long-standing conflicts and to build deeper understanding of contentious issues. Dialogue is not about judging, weighing, or making decisions, but about understanding and learning. Dialogue dispels stereotypes, builds trust, and enables people to be open to perspectives that are very different from their own.

BEHIND CLOSED EYES



You dream
2011/2012, oil on canvas, 160 x 210 cm

BEHIND CLOSED EYES



Keepers of water
2011/2012, oil on canvas, 150 x 180 cm

BEHIND CLOSED EYES

The latest series of works by Željko Jančić Zec from the period 2011/2012, includes 8 oil on canvas paintings in which we can interpret the elements present in earlier works (grip figurativeness, accentuated colorism, graphics). This opus leads to detachment of colors and propagates cold atmosphere and graphism that is less pronounced, although present. At times approaching abstraction, which in this case is a direct result of mental distancing from the object and a free form that can not tolerate figuration limits.

Jančić is an artist of its own distinct style who obviously enjoys this painting game, while not renouncing full figuration, which, in his work turns into an almost surrealist „hallucination“, an infantile playground of irrational associations.

Images have moments of spontaneity and joy, arising from the eye that is unspoiled, and at the same time sophisticated in exploitation of forms and colors.

Perspective and depth are abolished, the space is two-dimensional, and the third dimension can be read as one that is mental, not visual. Background is often dark blue, abstract, in which characters float or dissolve, becoming scattered or assembled like a puzzle. They live an independent life, rarely communicating with each other or with the observer. It is a silent world of characters who look like people who do not speak the outside world and are witnesses emerging from the artist's mind, from his inner, perhaps even unconscious being in search of warmth, past time, childhood.

Prof. Tatjana Rukavina

The author of these paintings who, from a world behind closed eyes, transformed and materialized such a world in front of our eyes is Željko Jančić Zec. On the one hand, he has been practicing the methodical media / idiomatic / stylistic „duality“ of the personal conception of executive and video works, whilst, on the other hand, painting a production that has been moving in the specific idiom of the „painting“ for around twenty years. Are there any poetic interfaces and analogies, any correspondence within the same artistic personality, within such practices, „language games“ and a world that refers to the common transcendental basis, beyond this drastic differentiation with regard to the parallel lives and works of art of a Painter/ Performer / Video – artist?

In fact, even the paintings are full of his interest for interior dynamics, life, „co-existence“ of shapes, figures, signs no matter how different from the supposedly real natural, that is, the social world whose shapes, traces and scenes can be, more or less, clearly recognized in performances and video achievements. Figures and signs that partly remind us of / refer to the „outside world“ which are at the same time stylistically transformed in such a way as to play, in a lined and colored pictorial field, an almost arbitrary and autonomous game freed from all shackles of norms and conventions no matter whether they refer to reality or reality painting that would commit to a faithful description of the world shell and to the retelling of the notorious and understandable „theatrum mundi“, the so called civil reality.

This kind of freed figuration, free selection of colors, uninhibited behavior and fluid transfusion of signs according to personal mysterious impulses could be in the interior, intimate, a completely subjective collusion with the author's obsessive scrutiny of his personal existential „ancient origins“ and the desire, impulse, behavior and freedom / lack of freedom of movement, that is, the habitus of an individual struggling, against the tyranny of imposed conventions and constructions with regard to nature / man / society, with regard to physical and social laws and limits of the auto poetical experience? A medium of modernist and post-modernist unrestrained painting, which gives Željko Jančić Zec the chance to express, incarnate and develop this crazy need for freedom by pictorial means that which is usually in the „real world“ the one IN FRONT OF our open eyes where difficulty, weight, the force of gravity and inertia rule.

Acting as a painter, Jančić bonds, according to his intuitive selection and tendency, Secession, Klee, Matisse, Miró, biomorphic, „organic“ – abstract and similar elements of free treatment of plastic signs and amoeba-shaped and flexible figurations in „infant“ or „neo-barbaric“ expression, largely in a two-dimensional, flat painting field, with Hundertwasser cheerful and playful experiences of architecture, scenography and composition of warm, pastel, graceful tones.

BEHIND CLOSED EYES

Moreover, with clearly defined and harmonized coloured plots, a delicately outlined and separated drawing: with the only „black” element on each painting, barely visible as in a subtle cartographer and topographer of certain layout, „registration” of rational imaginative territory – from which the structuring and writing of the whole „story” and its unknown heroes and scenes begins. By introducing colours with elaborate valeric and tonal quality, which subtly differentiate the infinitesimal varieties of optical and emotional content and tension. By doing so, the artist carefully avoids any possible interpretation of lyrical events, possible dramaturgy of what happens at the same time on extremely simplified and transparent, although mysterious coded scenes with flickering, moving shapes, which are constantly in the flux of curved boundaries. The dynamic circulation of lines and curves on single paintings forms symbolic kinetic gadgets such as a bicycle, a car, a solar disk that accent their origin. Just like Heraclitu’s or even Nietzsche’s Zarathustra’s Child that is the „wheel that spins itself ...” Fluid biomorphic – anthropomorphic creatures, unusual like something newly discovered or, from unconscious ancient nature / ancient psyche wild creatures from other planets, in their quiet world which live their own individual life, rarely communicating between themselves or even with the observer – noted Tatjana Rukavina (T.R., 2012).

Maybe this methodical „autism” of amoeba like – anthropoid shaping calls the observer to contemplate some primordial, inarticulate language that makes the natural, spontaneous and inasmuch „free” a priori of each social communication moulded and determined by conventions? It is possible that the Painter – Performer – Video-artist feels, hints the need to dedicate his attention exactly to this, at first sight, an inarticulate pictorial alphabet / language – exactly like Slava Raškaj, Juan Miró, Robert Wilson („Einstein on the beach”)... Or at least the „baubolog”, maieutic of Sloterdijk’s book „Come to the world, get into language”?

Is it that Jančić Zec – the Painter who dedicates his attention to other means by the set of the same or analogue questions „simultaneously” to his role as Executive and Video-Artist? A „receiver” and pedagogue he also tries to evoke and stimulate the development of the, firstly inarticulate, intuition in his pupils. It could be that parallels touch each other at some point. Behind closed eyes, imaginary maps open, clips of spacious territories through which the silent travel, but at the same time, couples in love, companions, those fantastical creatures, secretly bonded in the unreachable, but cheerful, innocent conspiracy of silence. And what map could be more picturesque than that territory of „reality” - as for the hero of Houellebecq’s novel „The Map and the Territory”. Jančić’s recent painting cycles „Companions” and „Behind closed eyes” (combined technique and oil on canvas; 2011 – 2012) were presented last spring in Rome with approximately twenty paintings exhibited (Museo della Civiltà Romana) as part of the presentation of the country („Croatian mosaic”).

Art curator
Branko Cerovac

COMPANIONS



Delight in presenting
2010, mixed media on cardboard, 80 x 100 cm

COMPANIONS



Le Bal
2009, mixed media on cardboard, 34,50 x 48 cm

COMPANIONS

Željko Jančić Zec presents Companions, a cycle of his work which revolves around creatures of light, beings not afraid of color or shadows. The figures, framed against splotches of a bright bold background seem to be moving, dancing, and whispering. Each painting contains its own universe, a mosaic grasped by time (ancient, contemporary and future) and space, an intermingling of different worlds and different styles. These creatures are brothers who don't always get along, their colors clash, but they stand together, they share the same destiny. The air they breathe, the world in which they vegetate touches not just one of them, but affects them all. If they were to leave the canvas, their cheerful demeanor might turn sour and melt. They are compact, but not firm in form.

A wind can blow in the shade of their bones, but the heart and pulse of these beings is thick with expression - grotesque profiles without a definite physiognomy or character, contemporary people caught in the daze of a screaming world. Like Munich's scream these figures scratch our eyes, demanding attention, showing us pain and channeling our emotions.

Željko Jančić Zec shatters the fine line between what is insignificant and momentous. He believes in coincidences, tolerates the influence of fate and searches for existential omens. Somewhere between primitive art, impressionism and a the rainbow after a rainy day, he smear the paint think on the pulse of beings so similar to one and other, yet each an individual pose, an individual shape, an individual life. We are looking here at blurred people with the contours of everyday life, flat on the surface, but on the inside, spewing sparks of a neurotic world, a world of cheerful alienation and bright isolation. Like ghost ships, without a compass or destination they cannot defend themselves against loneliness and the absurdity of living. Coded, they neither see each other or feel each other in others. Typical clones, like in comics, through their poses or stance reflect the lasting ephemerality and the diversity of their fragile similarity...

The titles speak for themselves: Streetheroes, Partytime, Starcatchers, Warriors, Red planet hunters, Blue planet hunters, Welcome home, The backside of Mars, Postcard from Mars, Orangeman, Waiting for the rain, ... A considerable number of arguments, even many, to be able to say in conclusion: This is the beginning of the end or the end of the beginning of a (lightless) world.

Zvonko Penović

My vision of friends and people around me inspired this series of paintings. Groups have always fascinated me. The dynamics of a group and the way they belong together hold others under their influence and often restrain individuality.

The individual that wants to break out, go beyond the frame. I have painted these Companions up close, giving them a chance to reach the edge, an opportunity to break out at any second. These Companions remind me of people in certain situations, be it dancers moving as one, or warriors fighting for the collective goal, or just children in a playground, each with their own movements, but part of something, belonging to a group, nevertheless. All groups are similar, they have a compactness and usually center around a leader, react to a leader, are lead to different direction as one.

Many of my figures then want to get out of the frame, they are not happy with where I put them, but they are close enough so that with a little courage, they can jump out and fight for their individuality. There is optimism not only their bright colors. They are playful, funny, sad, lost, imprisoned, intertwined, but still attractive somehow. It is easy to get in, but hard to get out.

And maybe the final message is about knowing how to remain inside a group, but as an individual, how to be part of the crowd and still your own person.

Željko Jančić Zec

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