

SYNTAX
GALLERY

FICTIONAL LANDSCAPES

November 9th –
December 15th

By using the theme of landscape, the artists transcend current geopolitical boundaries and address critical social motifs, making Fictional Landscapes a compelling exploration of unique visions in an ever-changing world. This exhibition is curated by a distinguished team including Nadine Khalil, Alisa Bagdonaite, and Serafima Kostrova, and is organised by women-led galleries.

Through a diverse range of media, including textile, video, painting, and performance, Fictional Landscapes explores how environments extend beyond physical terrains to embody mental and emotional spaces shaped by passing memory, identity, and migration. The artists negotiate their bodies and the spaces around them, delving into issues such as patriarchal violence and political reality, while also reimagining relationships between time, place, and power.

Olya Kroytor

(B. 1986, Moscow). Lives and works between Iceland and Austria. Kroytor is a contemporary artist whose work spans performance, installations, and visual art, with a focus on themes of identity, space, and freedom. Her installations often blend minimalist elements and audience interaction, prompting reflections on isolation and connection. Kroytor's art uniquely merges the universalism of the Russian avant-garde with personal and generational memories, creating a dialogue between the cultural and the intimate. Her paintings and wooden panels are marked by strong structural aesthetics, yet they resonate on an individual level with deeply personal narratives. Balancing contrasts like social and personal spheres, and strength with vulnerability, her performances explore the pursuit of inner equilibrium. Recognized for her impact, she was awarded the Kandinsky Prize in 2015, and her work is held in prominent collections including the National Gallery of Iceland, Musée Régional D'art Contemporain, Sérignan, France, and the New Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.



Sapientia Sat

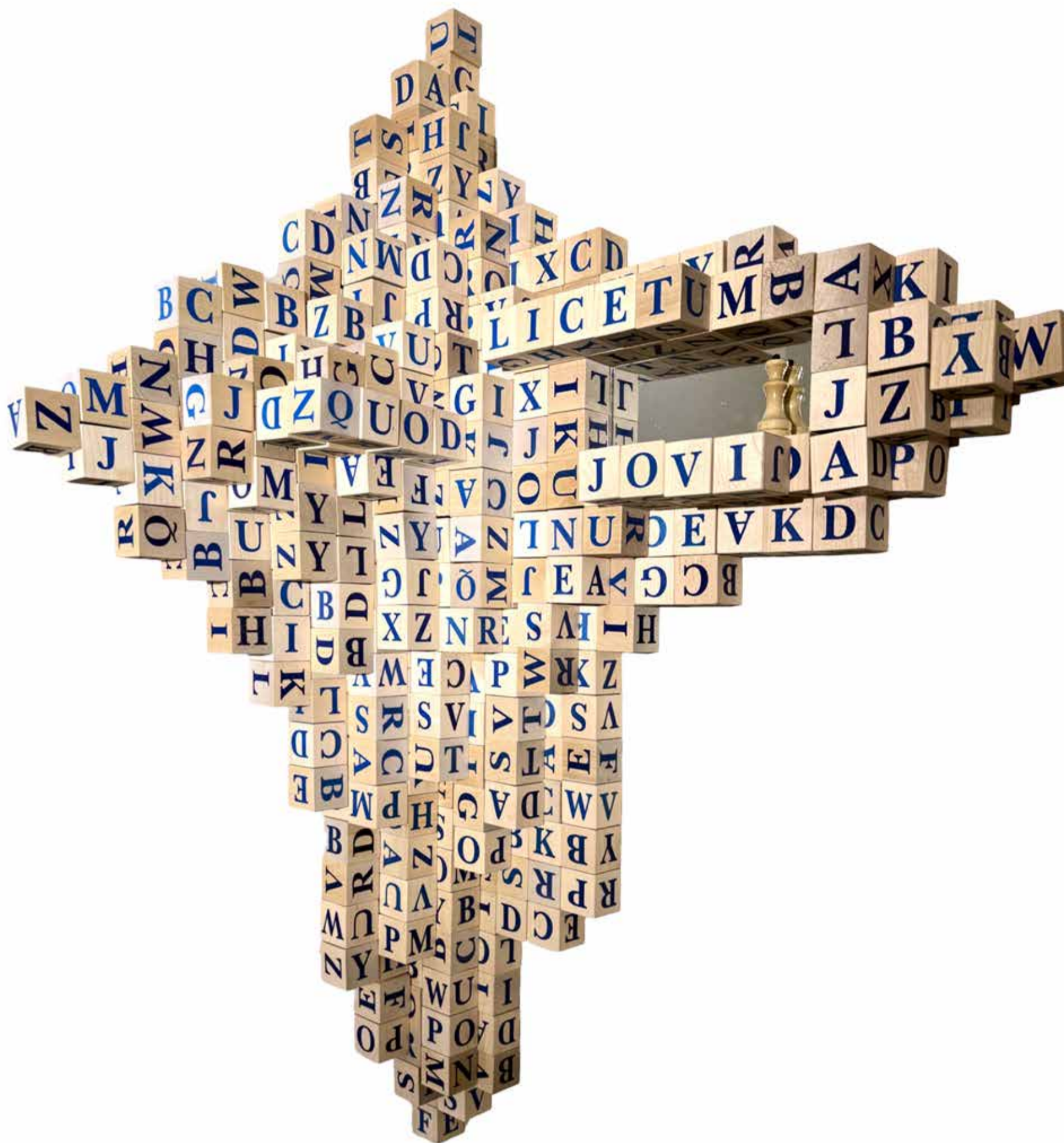
2024

Wood, acrylic, mixed media

119 x 79 x 16 cm

24 000 AED

Olya Kroytor's latest works emphasize the importance of context in contemporary art, retaining familiar forms but deepening in meaning. Her exploration of creation and disintegration takes on new layers, where subjects dissolve within complex layers, only to reassemble in subtle transformations. These shifts depict reality as something elusive—a carefully constructed puzzle drawn from overwhelming information flows, challenging our perceptions of what "reality" entails. Her minimalist works with cubes, once connected to avant-garde traditions and childhood memories, now reflect fragmented, unintelligible expressions of reality. As everyday life and global trauma blur, Kroytor's pieces show how horror and banality interweave, creating an environment both unsettling and familiar. She suggests possible strategies for coping with this "information apocalypse," offering viewers subtle moments of reflection and a quiet invitation to imagine beyond chaos.



Quod Licet Jovi

2024

Wood, acrylic, mixed media

101 x 47 x 43 cm

24 000 AED



Situation #50

2024

Acrylic, vintage newspapers collage on canvas

150 x 150 cm

60 000 AED



Situation #51

2024

Acrylic, vintage comics collage on canvas

D=100 cm

28 000 AED



Situation #52

2024

Acrylic, vintage comics collage on canvas

100 x 70 cm

28 000 AED



Situation #53

2024

Acrylic, vintage comics collage on canvas

100 x 70 cm

28 000 AED



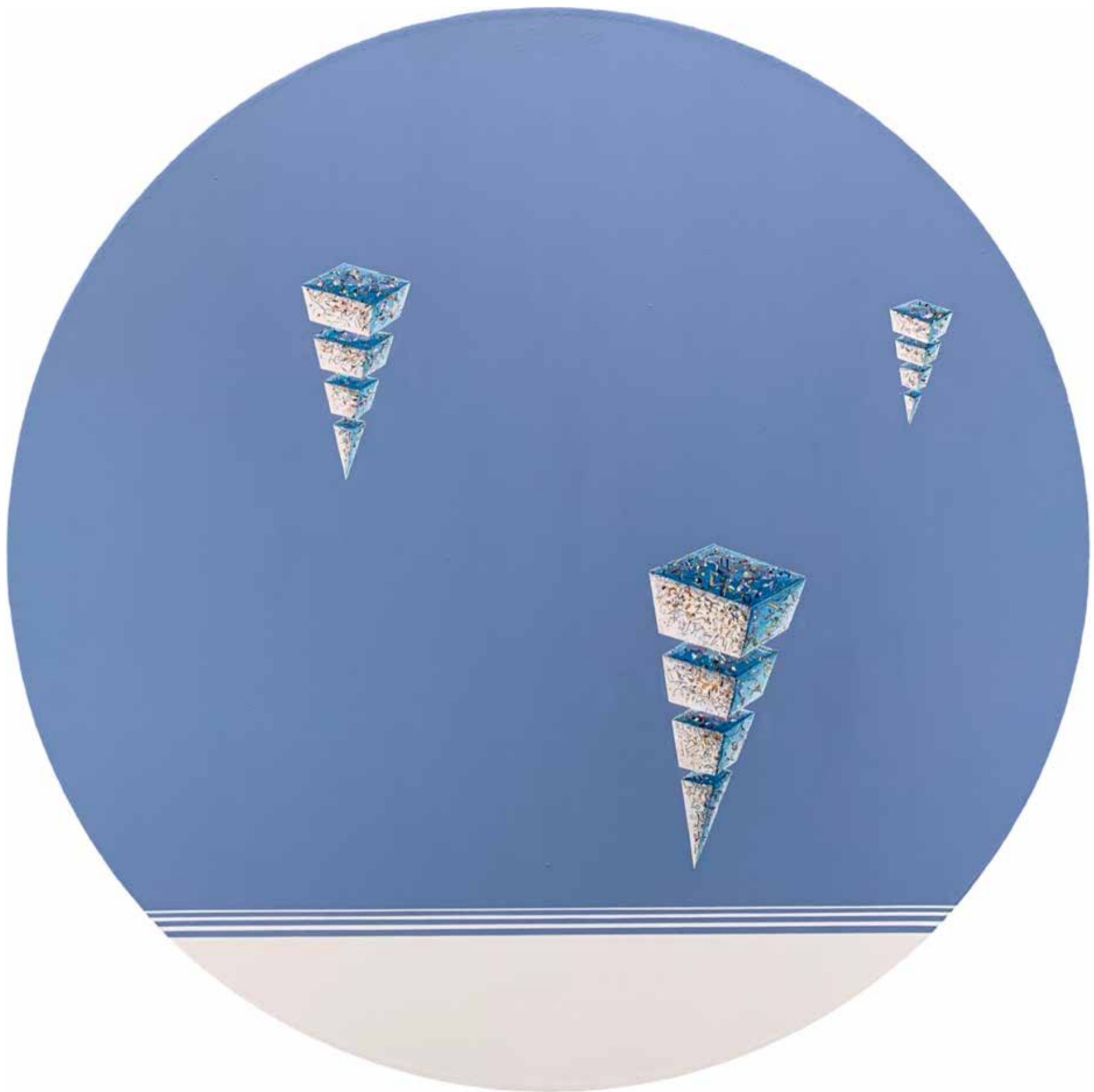
Situation #54

2024

Acrylic, vintage comics collage on canvas

100 x 70 cm

28 000 AED



Situation #55

2024

Acrylic, vintage comics collage on canvas

D=100 cm

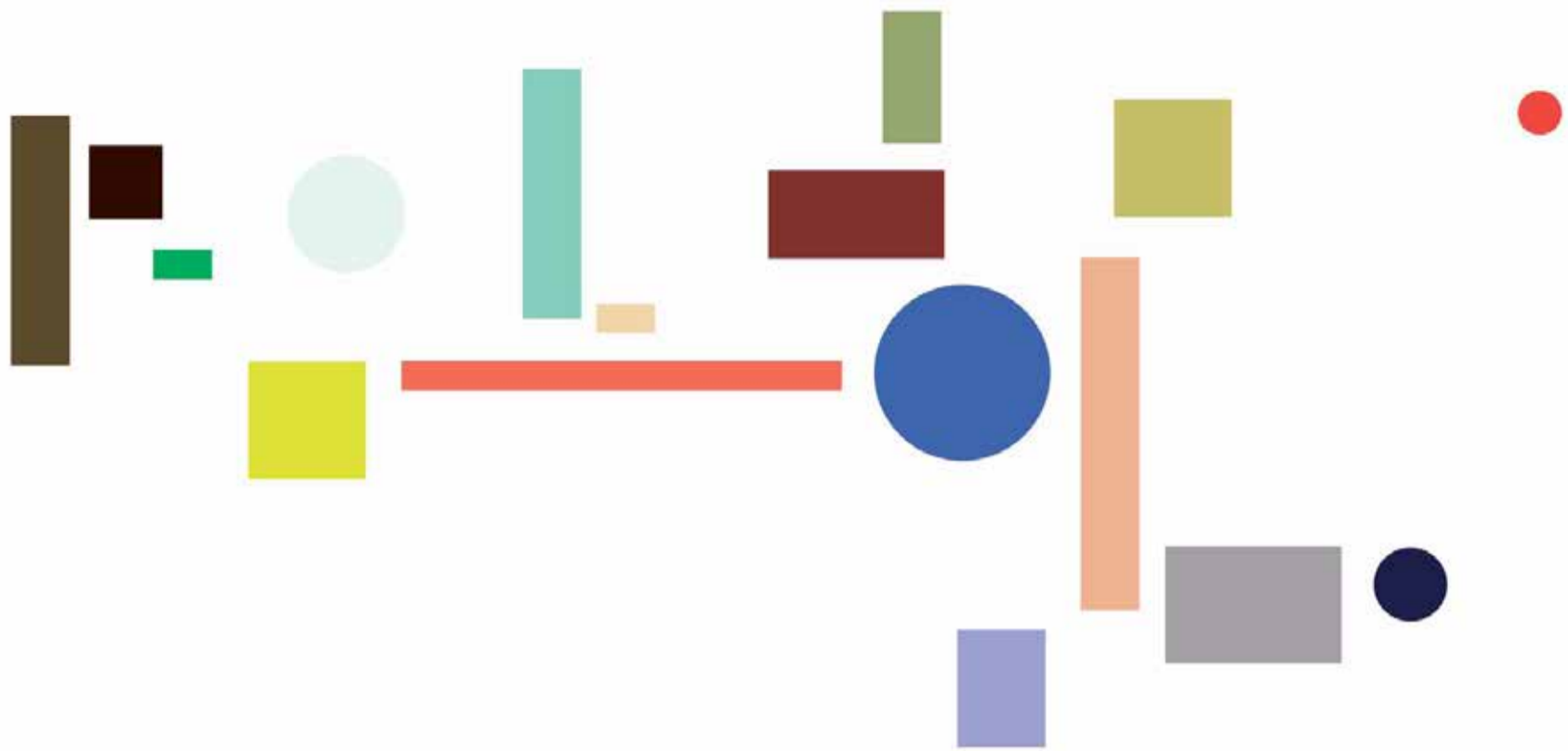
28 000 AED



Liudmila Konstantinova

(b. 1980, Moscow) Liudmila Konstantinova's work is a vivid exploration of contemporary existence through the lenses of both personal and collective memory, art history, and the fragile boundaries of reality. Educated in architecture and contemporary art, she avoids direct quotations from artistic movements, instead experimenting with forms like minimalism and pop art to probe the "vicious circle" of artifice and reality. Konstantinova's art holds a unique irony, often referencing the idealism and banality of the Soviet past and contemporary consumerist society, and incorporates a sense of "mimicry" by transforming everyday objects into abstract forms that play with viewers' perceptions.

In 2010 she became a member of the VGLAZ art group, and has been participating in Group exhibitions with VGLAZ as well as solo exhibitions. Konstantinova's works can be found in the collections of the State Tretyakov Gallery (Moscow), Saatchi Gallery (London) etc.



Paintings For Holes. The Palace

2024

Acrylic on canvas

Installation of 17 canvases, each named like a room (master bedroom, negotiations room, theatre etc)

300x550 cm

40 000 AED

1. Burgundy – théâtre, 60x30
2. Gray – negotiations room, 60x40
3. Blue – ice palace, d=60
4. Coral – first aid room, 150x10
5. Blue-black – deprivation room, d25
6. Bronze brown – hunter's hut, 85x20
7. Gray-yellow – children's area, 40x40
8. Bright yellow – casino, 40x40
9. Red – flag room, d15
10. Mother-of-Pearl – spa zone, d40
11. Vivid green – garage, 10x20
12. Nude – master bedroom, 120x20
13. Black square – hookah bar, 25x25
14. Light blue – aqua disco, 85x20
15. Olive – mud room, 45x20
16. Lilac – maid's room, 40x30
17. Flesh color – fur coats storage, 10x20

Liudmila Konstantinova's paintings raise questions about the assumed purpose and meaning of contemporary art. Paintings for Holes is an installation comprising 17 rectangular, monochromatic painted canvases of various sizes, hung on the gallery wall in an arrangement that at first look resembles a modernist grid. In fact, the colour block set up is reminiscent of a certain time in Soviet history – of Malevich's geometric compositions, of Russian constructivism – and of its influence on the graphic design of movements such as the Bauhaus and De Stijl.

The artist wanted "to make a series of paintings that could be useful for different people". Catering to the lowest common denominators of acceptability – and bypassing any sticky controversial subject matter or format issues – she made canvases in all shapes, sizes and painted them in clear flat colours so that everyone could find "their own"; but crucially, they're all essentially as blank as each other.

As their title implies, the paintings were also made with another specific purpose in mind: they can be used to hide any imperfections on a wall, like cracks, paint marks or dead mosquitos. They can be arranged as desired, like modular shelving or an occasional table. Konstantinova's proposal for art today is more utilitarian chic prop than revolutionary.

Lupe Nùñez-Fernández



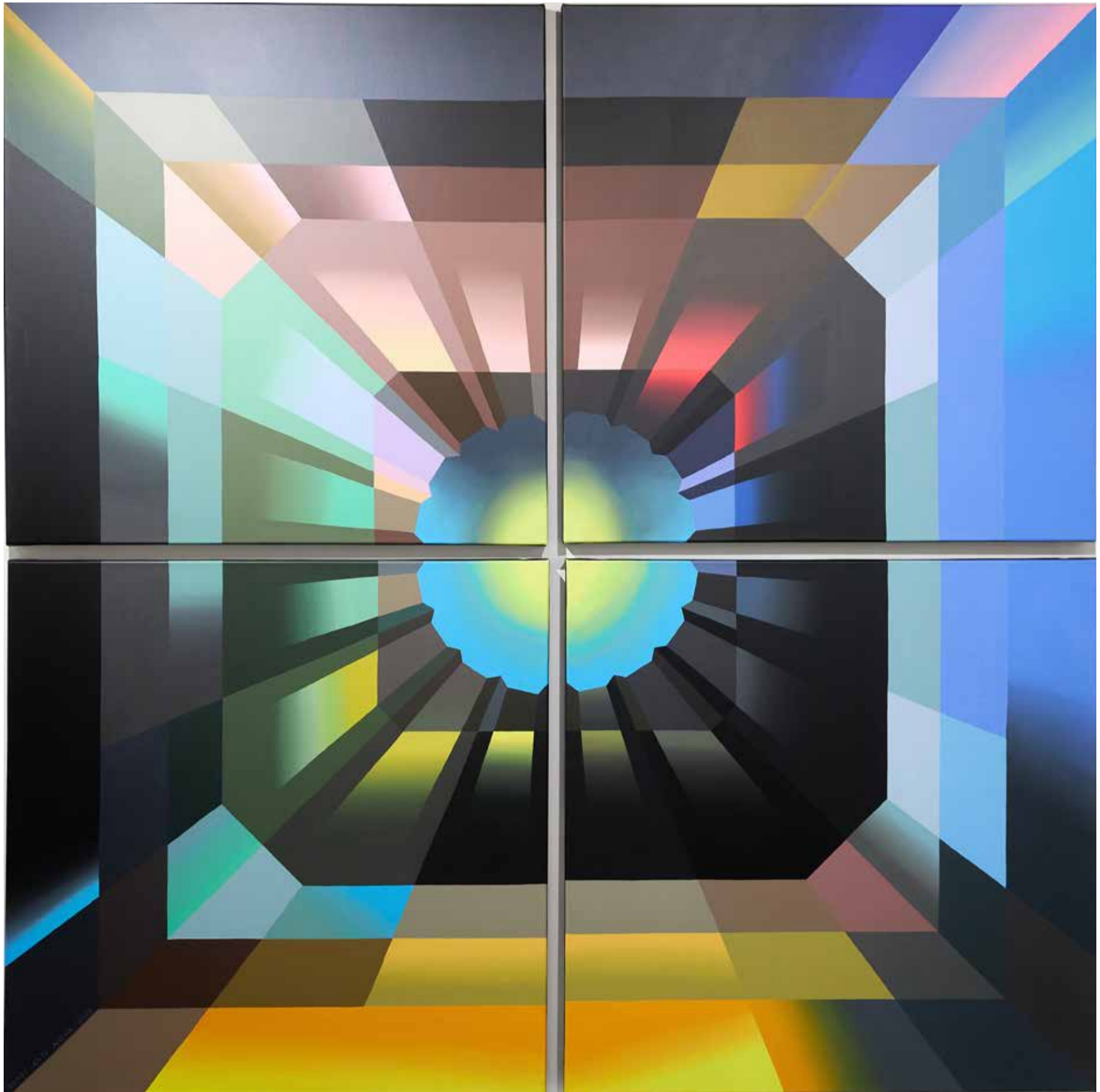
The Hole in the Head

2016

Acrylic on canvas

130 x 110 cm

32 000 AED



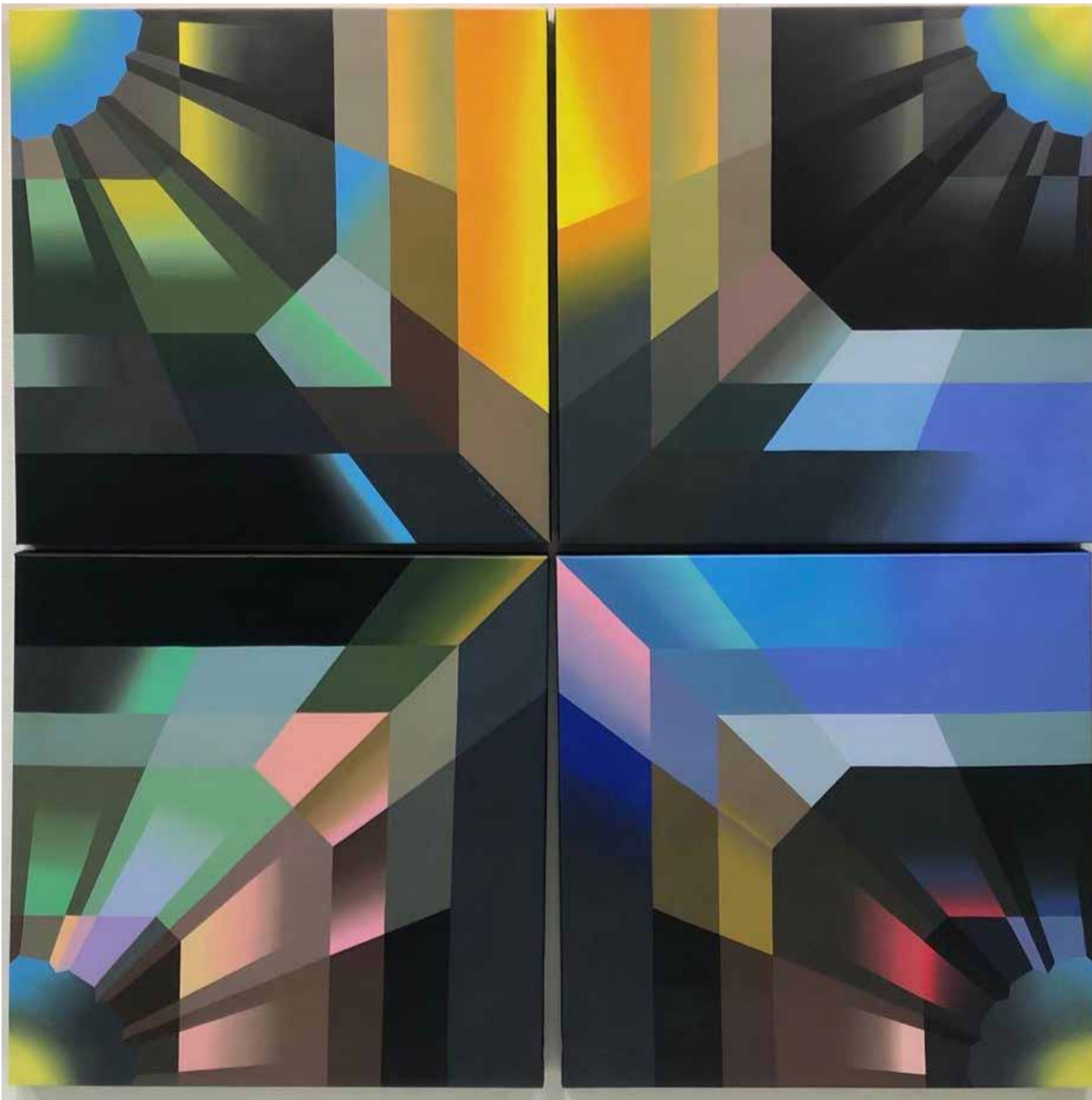
The Fire Opal,
2022

From the series "Press Any Button"
"Quadriptych"
160 x 160 cm (80 cm each part)
45 000 AED

“Press Any Button – you can do anything you want, it will change nothing. You can do as you please, you are free. You can do anything you want, nothing you do will make any difference. You can do anything you want, you are omnipotent. You can do anything you want, the world is still going to hell in a handbasket. You can do anything you want, love will conquer death or good will defeat evil, or the other way round. You can do anything you want.”

Liudmila Konstantinova

Created at the brink of a global crisis, this project aims to express, through abstraction and irony, an anticipation of the profound transformations society must face. While it incorporates a sharp satire on consumerist tastes and the modern audience’s fascination with the new, decorative, and beautiful, the work also offers a dynamic interaction. This composition, reminiscent of a gemstone, can be hung and adjusted in various ways, like a kaleidoscope, to continuously captivate its owner. Meanwhile, the rhythm and intense colors of the quadriptych evoke unsettling associations with nuclear explosions or destruction, hinting at the darker undercurrents beneath its vibrant exterior.



The Fire Opal. Alternative view

Anna Komarova

(b. 1997, Yekaterinburg, Russia). Her work explores the relationship between individuals and the environments they inhabit. She is fascinated by how visual, auditory, tactile, and spatial experiences shape our perceptions and interactions. Recurring themes in Anna's work include death and its significance in human life, memory, and the connections between people and nature. She's drawn to the tensions between opposites: life and death, the man-made and the natural, the forgotten and the familiar. Her installations seek to illuminate these collisions, inviting viewers to engage deeply with both the seen and the unseen aspects of their surroundings. Lives and works in Russia.



In the project I create the space of an artificial forest with artificial inhabitants – birds making non-birds sounds. Artificial birds that do not have faces act as a speaker for relaying rules issued by a human voice. The rules recited by the birds regulate movement within space, but they all contradict each other and do not lead to the end point, forcing the listener to walk in circles and fulfill absurd demands.

The rules sound out of place with a time delay, turning into white noise. The inapplicability of the rules to the space in which they sound, the inability to understand them, to hear them in the stream of many voices makes them inapplicable, space becomes a space of power, unable to influence it, to subdue it.

This zone is the antipode to the first part: the forest as a place that was initially wild and natural here becomes tame, turning into a territory of power and total control.

All trees represent "bird nests", on which the birds-speakers sit. Both the branches and the birds are made of ceramic and suspended, with wires and hangers running inside the branches.

The Forest of Singing Birds,

2024

Ceramics, speakers, electronics, audio, metal

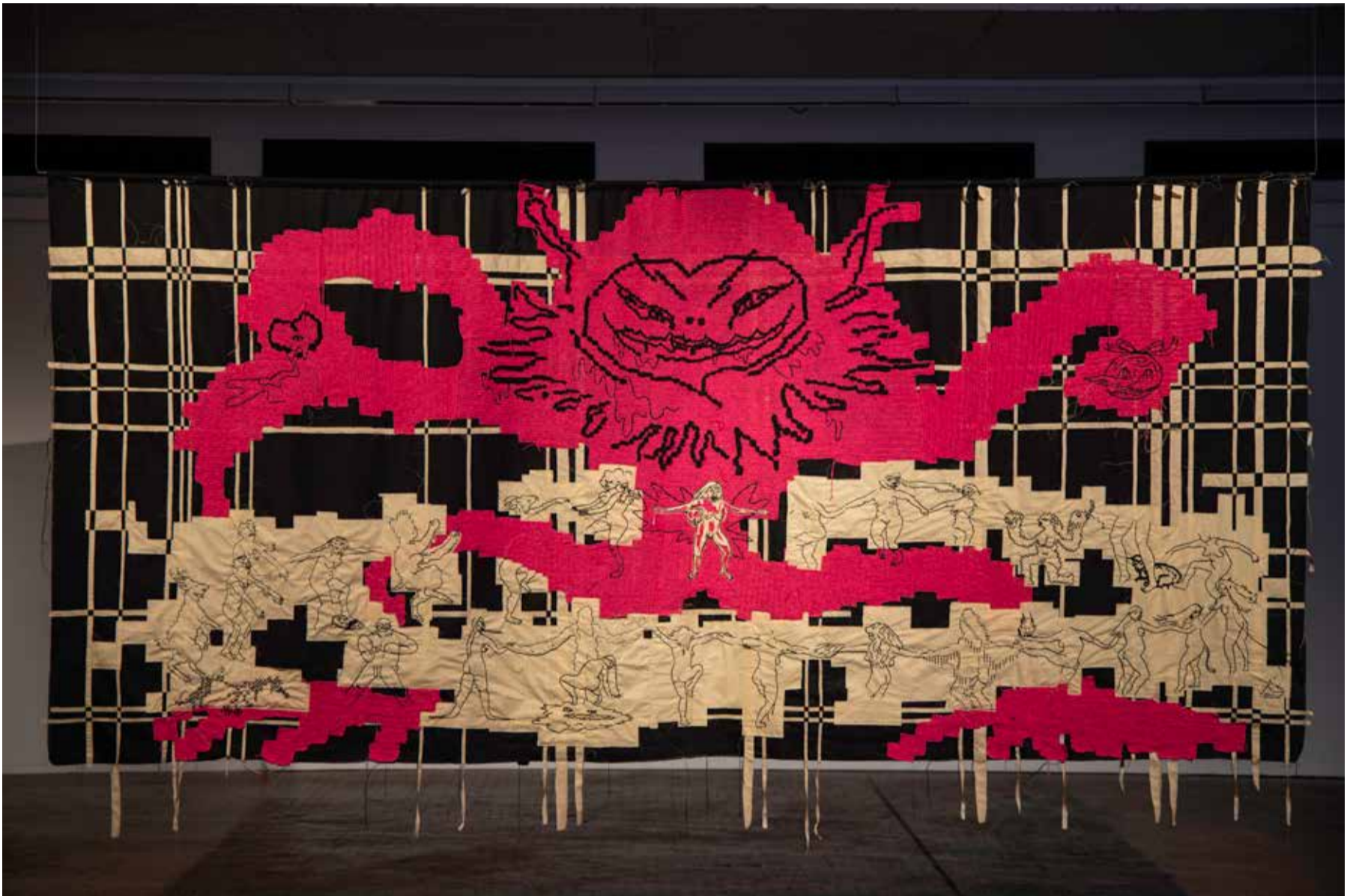
200 x 130 x 130 cm

24 000 AED



Vasilisa Palianina

(b. 1986, Minsk, Belarus). Lives and works in Berlin, Germany. Palianina works with the topics of sexual identity, gender, human and animal natures and Belarusian politics through mythology. She works across graphics, installation, and performance, applying experimental techniques. Since 2019 is member of the art group "Who Except Us" (duet with Andrey Anro). Since 2023 is member of the art collective "Shklatar" (with Andrey Anro and Aliaxandar Adamau)



The Mother of Flowers

2024

190 x 400 cm

120 000 AED

In August 2020, women dressed in white clothes with flowers in their hands took to the streets of Belarus to protest against the government's violence and lies. This event became a symbol of nonviolent resistance and was repeated weekly in different forms for the rest of the year. Thus, the flower became a symbol of confrontation.

The invocation of the cultural tradition of embroidery is a way for modern women to comment on the government agenda in Belarus today. Traditions that have inevitably disappeared from Belarusian culture include making homespun bedspreads and carpets, which practically died out with the gradual disappearance of the home loom. Still, the symbolism of weaving has been preserved. The artist and a group of women act as bearers of the cultural code who maintain this symbolism in their group embroidery ritual.



Where are the flowers?

2023

120 x 20 x 16 cm

Ceramics, beads

32 000 AED

The artwork was created as a reflection on immigration from Belarus due to strengthening of authoritarian regime and also as reflection on the war that followed in 2022. The artwork was presented in Berlin, Germany on open-studios in Künstlerhaus Bethanien, 2023, later exhibited in Berlin, Germany in a group exhibition "Sometimes I Hold Onto the Air", Galerie im Körnerpark, 2024



From the series "Swan Lake"

2024

Mixed media, watercolor on paper

30 x 42 cm

12 000 AED

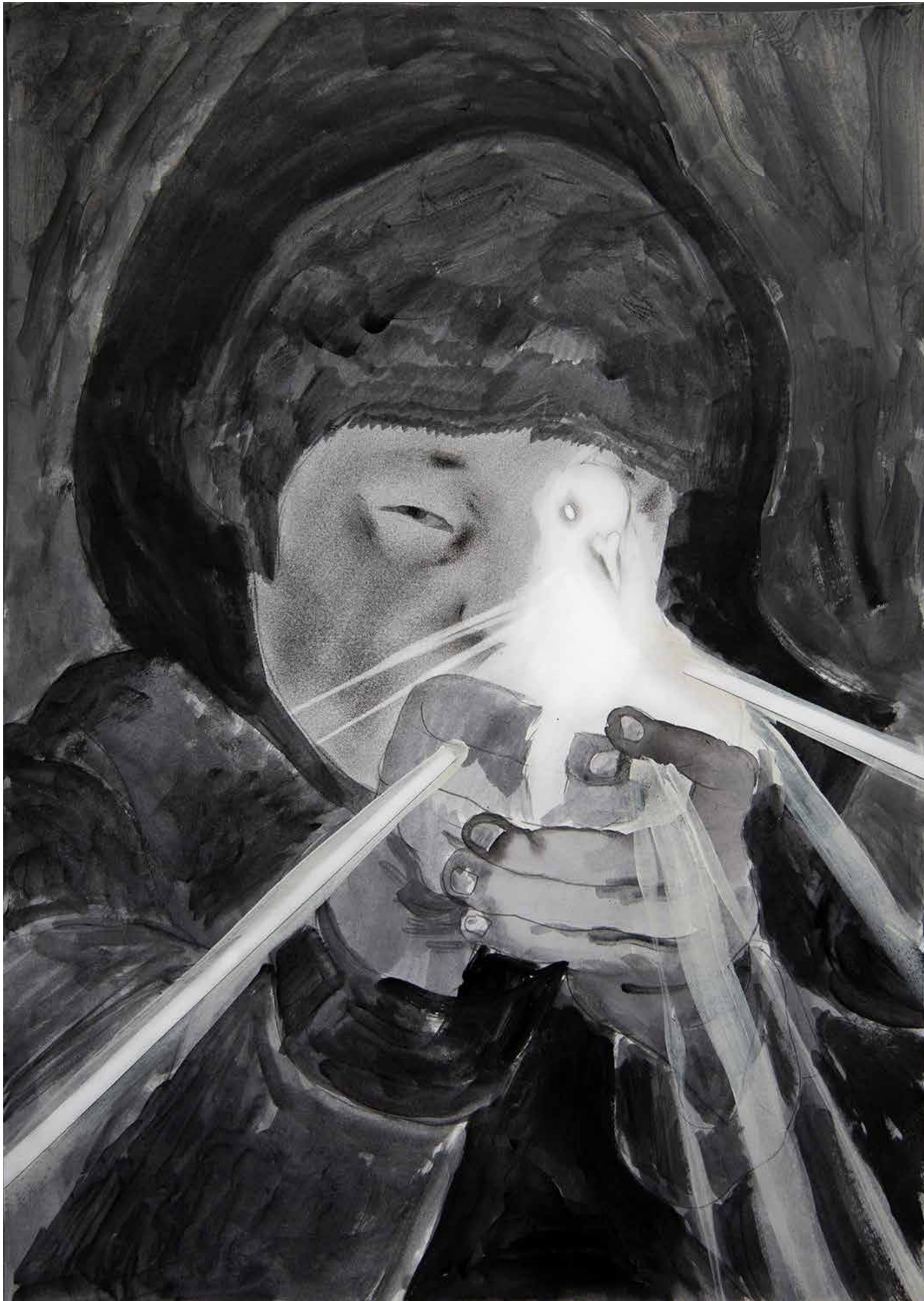
The August putsch is a political upheaval that took place in Moscow on August 19–21, 1991. Its goal was to overthrow the existing government and change the vector of the country's development, preventing the collapse of the Soviet Union. As a result the putsch was the actual reason for the further collapse of the USSR. During the putsch, the ballet "Swan Lake" was shown on all TV channels for 3 days.



From the series "Swan Lake"
2024
Mixed media, watercolor on paper
30 x 42 cm
10 000 AED



From the series "The Dove",
2023
Mixed media, watercolor on paper
42 x 30 cm
12 000 AED



From the series "The Dove"
2023
Mixed media, watercolor on paper
42 x 30 cm
14 000 AED



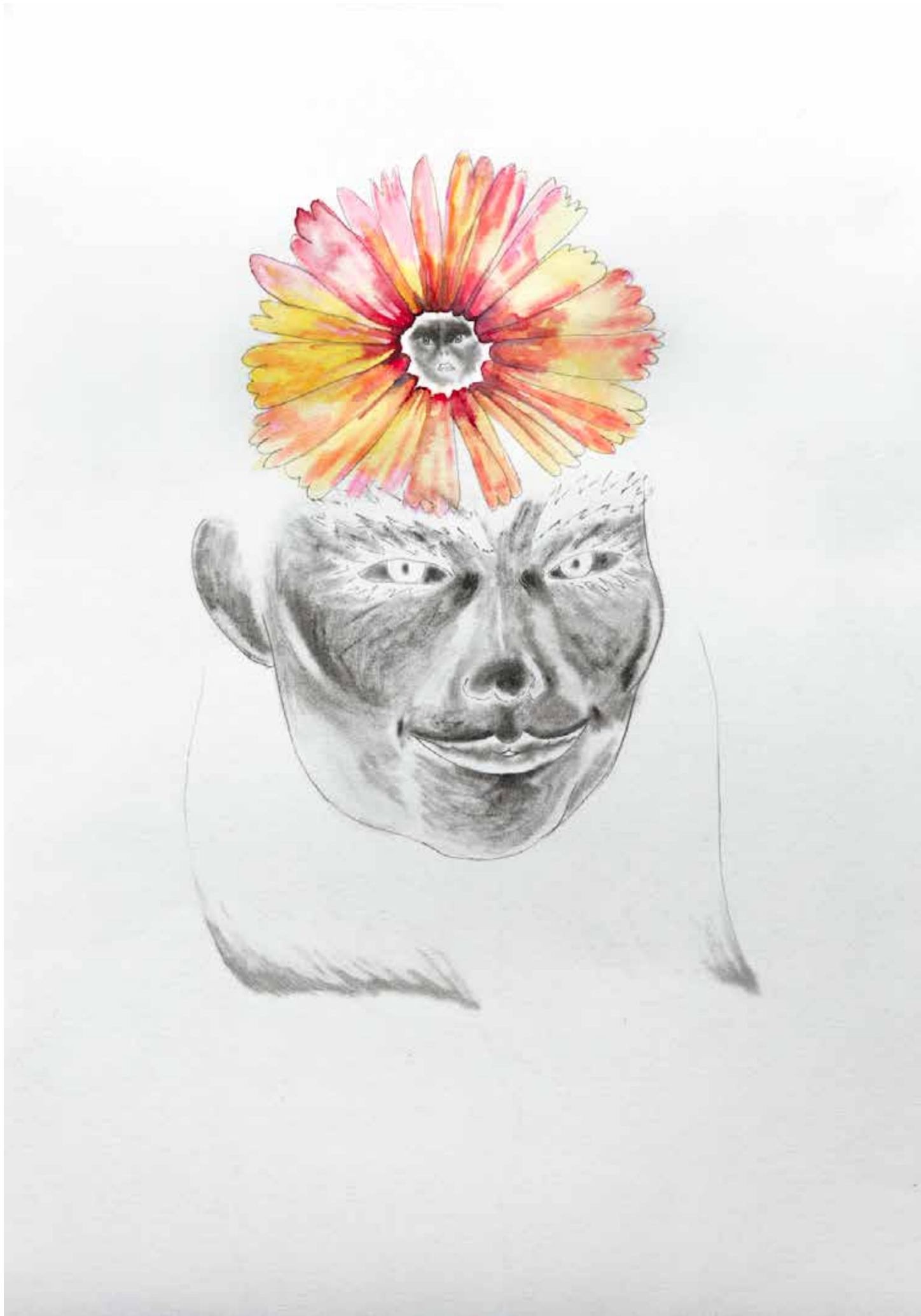
Firebird

2022

Mixed media, watercolor on paper

30 x 42 cm

14 000 AED



Power of Flower

2024

Mixed media, watercolor on paper

42 x 30 cm

8 000 AED

The artist continues to explore the connection between the human body and florality, which intertwine to create symbolism out of a new form. This process of metamorphosis refers back to the archaic layers of human consciousness, where it is closely linked to nature and animal instincts.



Power of Flower, 2024

Mixed media, watercolor on paper

30 x 42 cm

8 000 AED



Self portrait

2024

Mixed media, watercolor on paper

30 x 42 cm

10 000 AED



Two Heads

2024

Ceramics, fabric, mixed media

35 x 135 x 40 cm

24 000 AED

"Since childhood, grandmothers and mom treated the whole family with herbs. Mom brewed sweet licorice root for the throat. I breathed from a saucepan with chamomile steam, mother- and-stepmother or collecting other summer herbs through a homemade paper tube. They put a compress of rabbit fat in my ears. In the morning, they gave out a head of garlic to strengthen immunity. These sacrifices were observed annually for our weakened organisms. Once, inadvertently, I knocked over a pot of boiled broth, the skin on my stomach turned red and twisted into small curly pieces. I'm not sure if it actually looked like this, but my memory suggests this image. This time, the wellness ritual turned into a family trauma.

Probably, in order to start the course of magic, you need to give something away?"

Vasilisa Palianina



Since its establishment in 2019, Syntax Gallery's mission has been to promote post-Soviet contemporary art on a global scale. Across the span of three years, up to 2022, the gallery participated in international art fairs, supported its affiliated artists's international projects, and fostered collaborations with European museums and cultural institutions.

Syntax Gallery has always sought to challenge restrictions dictated by the authorities and to explore nomadism as a means to transcend boundaries of rules and regulations. Today, we recognize that 'home' becomes a mere memory, urging us not to cling to the past but to redefine our sense of place.

Embracing our role as contemporary nomads, we are committed to reimagining our presence by organizing exhibitions in pop-up spaces across the globe. This approach not only continues our legacy of supporting artists displaced for economic and political reasons but also redefines Syntax Gallery's engagement with art and culture in this new context.

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