

KYPRIANOS  
DIMOSTHENOUS



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KYPRIANOS  
DIMOSTHENOUS

# BADLY SCRIPTED



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Badly scripted. Oil on canvas, 70 x 70 cm, 2019

It is a privilege for me to inaugurate this Gallery K exhibition of the talented artist Kyprianos Dimosthenous. It is my strong belief that state support for art, culture and creativity is of immense importance. In our modern society, art is a universal way for people to process their emotions and share their thoughts and feelings with the world. It connects human beings in ways that are not always possible in words or actions and often transcends geographical, national, cultural or religious boundaries.

Having just lived through a global pandemic that hindered the development and opportunities for many in the arts, we strive to emphatically assist artists after the difficult hiatus and loss they experienced. It is imperative that we ensure that any gift a young Cypriot artist has can be realised to the maximum of their potential.

Kyprianos Dimosthenous is the perfect example of one such artist who deserves to have a spotlight shone on him. He is a young artist of clear talent, displaying much potential. The body of work presented in this exhibition by Gallery K spans the last few years, over which time a significant level of artistic maturing can be seen developing. Kyprianos is explorative, curious and intellectual in his work. His skills by way of rendering, composition, psychological awareness and the use of light and dark, are clearly seen evolving in a short space of time.

Much of his work is politically charged holding an anti-war stance which sadly, is more relevant now than ever. His empathy is raw and striking and emits from the canvas. There is a great scope to his artistic knowledge which can be seen in his visual references and artistic awareness.

It is fitting that Gallery K should be the arts space to host such an exhibition. Gallery K has a long history of supporting emerging Greek and British artists, many of whom have gone on to have bright careers. Gallery K has always seen its support of emerging artists as its first duty as a relevant contemporary arts space. Gallery K is demonstrating once more, after 40 years since its founders first entered the art world, that it is still highly relevant, in its exhibiting the very first solo show of this highly promising young, Cypriot artist.

We need artists now more than ever, at a time when people need emotional and spiritual strength, guidance and motivation going forward facing current, severe global challenges. Artists are truth-tellers that help open our eyes and unite us, let us support them now so that they can play their role, which is so greatly needed in the present.

ANNITA DEMETRIOU

President of the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus

## BADLY SCRIPTED: TAKES ON THE ART OF KYPRIANOS DIMOSTHENOUS

Long, dark hair cascades over the bulky chest of the *Witness* and, just as the viewer might wilfully interpret the imperial-red clothing with the modest high neckline as a modern-looking male garment, the bare flesh that is slightly jutting out from where the draped sleeve spreads open below the shoulder, mischievously adds to the portrait a different spin.

Whatever the spin, the *Witness* grabs your eyes and won't let go.

Consider this: while it can be understood as the coexistence of masculine and feminine spirits in one person, the *Witness* has broader meaning encompassing different notions and much bolder markers of gender fluidity. Roll out the argument that this is a straightforward biological gender alignment in its most expansive sense, and you will find that it can be as easily defended as if it were a take on a solipsistic perspective revealing the *Witness's* tormented, ineliminable world of esoteric intricacies.

Whatever the interpretation, the passion of Kyprianos Dimosthenous, who is fresh out of university, is anchored in the human figure. He renders it in a diversity of roles and identities across approximately thirty canvasses that make up his first solo show, each with its own universe of forced transformations, obscure landscapes, electric colour, cloud patterns, and improbable images. The paintings graft together aspects of European surrealism, Greek mythology, comic book illustrations, expressionistic and realistic references, and also benefit from Kyprianos's avid pursuit of stage drama.

Magritte and Dali are clearly "present" along with influences from other greats of the surrealist movement. But, if the young artist were to ever meet Magritte he might have suggested that like distance, fluidity too may have the power to interspace an object from its intended purpose; maybe even repurpose it as does the giddily absurd *Badly Scripted*, which gives the show its name. The painting registers the surrealist state of mind, defining the ingenious fluidity and metamorphosing processes of the subconscious. *Badly Scripted* is an irregular tapestry of ruptured metamorphoses and surreal propositions; a game, in which a female figure can be realized by a hat and a pair of legs with bright red high heels adorning her feet. It is an improbable image; and yet, it is inexplicably rational in its exuberant vibrancy, which is captured by the artist just before becoming languid after an exhausting dance to the tunes of a vintage-looking Gramophone extending a hand to play the piano on a strolling, snake-like avenue of piano keys extending to infinity. Bobbing around them is a large open eye.

A collaboration between repurposed objects in the transformatory process is achieved in all the paintings of the surrealistic category. Here, the subconscious mind operates freely, creating visionary depictions that have the power to incite in the viewer the release of secret codes: a man can turn into a machine, and a machine can

turn into a woman; and she can grow connections with milk poured out from a bottle transforming the space around it. Trace it back to long-lost innocence and miraculously it all makes perfect sense.

The surrealist category also contains an improbable landscape. A painting depicting a tree of clouds with a dragon-teeth-looking trunk standing against a layer of dusty yellow, next to a sea of rolling red waves. *Landscape* is an example of the ultimate surrealist canvas: a deceptive painting that can't be elucidated with a precise explanation.

Another big category of the show contains paintings inspired by Greek mythology. In *Europa and the Bull*, Europa is sitting in tender surrender on the back of the swimming bull who is Zeus in disguise. In some myths, she is the mother of the legendary Minotaur, a symbol of male sexuality for many Surrealists. *Europa and the Bull* captures the strange connection between the bull and Europa as she holds out her hand to touch the creature's horns. Does the gesture reveal that she lays claim on male power? Does she intuitively know she will become male power? Though her intentions remain elusive her strengths can surprisingly be traced to the first recorded divinity in human history. The Sumerian goddess Inanna presided over sexuality and war respectively coded in gender culture as feminine and masculine, and she is quoted in a Sumerian hymn as reciting the line "When I sit in the alehouse, I am a woman, and I am an exuberant young man".

The show could not have been timelier in a century whose beginnings are marked by the rejection of cultural patterns and the inception of new manifestations of gender. The symptoms of this sharp disarray that scrambles communication between men and women become apparent in *Alex*, with its playful ambiguity and mischievousness as he raises a glass of milk for the health of the viewer.

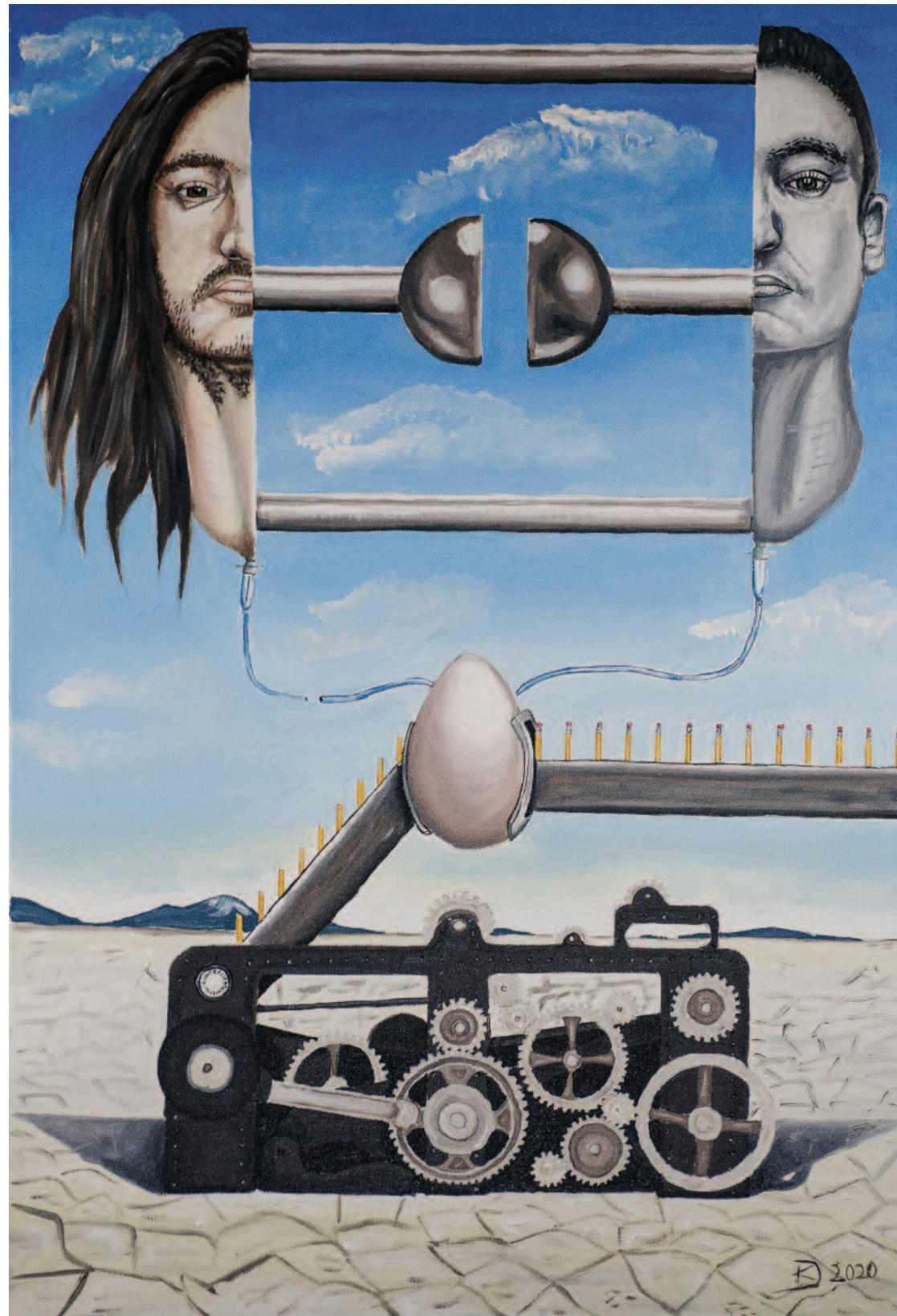
What is always interesting in art is that which you can't see: the secret codes, the arcane manifestations, the hidden views. *Out of the Window* creates a collaborative connection between the viewer and the female character peeping through the window with devotional concentration. The viewer may try to visualize his or her own views through her window, but this is a painting of questions, not answers. The more you look the more you wonder what is out there.

Through impressive conceptual proposals, unassuming images, and arcane manifestations this young generation artist is shaping a voice on the unfathomable through richly explored intellectual and visual narratives.

MARINA MANZHOSOFF STEFANIDES  
Art Editor



# Surrealism



Replica. Oil on canvas,  
90 x 59.5, 2020





Rose of a trigger  
Oil on canvas,  
60 x 90 cm, 2019



Driftwood beach  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 60 cm, 2019





Gold standard  
Oil on canvas  
50,5 x 61 cm, 2019



Argument. Oil on canvas, 50 x 100 cm, 2020





Communication. Oil on canvas, 60 x 90 cm, 2020



Bloodbath  
Oil on canvas  
89,5 x 59,5 cm, 2020







Viddy well  
Oil on canvas  
90 x 59,5 cm, 2019





Pearl. Oil on canvas, 40 x 60.5 cm, 2021



Duel. Oil on canvas, 70 x 50 cm, 2019





Vigilante. Oil on canvas, 120 x 80 cm, 2020



Landscape. Oil on canvas, 60,5 x 90 cm, 2022

## Storytelling



The witness. Oil on canvas, 80,5 x 60 cm, 2021





Woman looking  
at the mirror  
Oil on canvas  
80 x 60 cm, 2022





The letter  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 40 cm, 2021



Japanese ghost  
Oil on canvas  
80,5 x 60 cm, 2021



Bloody tears  
Oil on canvas  
61 x 45,5 cm, 2021



Girl with  
a japanese fan  
Oil on canvas  
70,5 x 50 cm, 2021



Dark bedroom  
Oil on canvas  
45,5 x 61 cm, 2022



Old woman. Oil on canvas, 40 x 60.5 cm, 2020



Time is running out  
Oil on canvas  
45 x 60 cm, 2022



News. Oil on canvas, 60 x 90 cm, 2022





Night. Oil on canvas, 50 x 70 cm, 2020

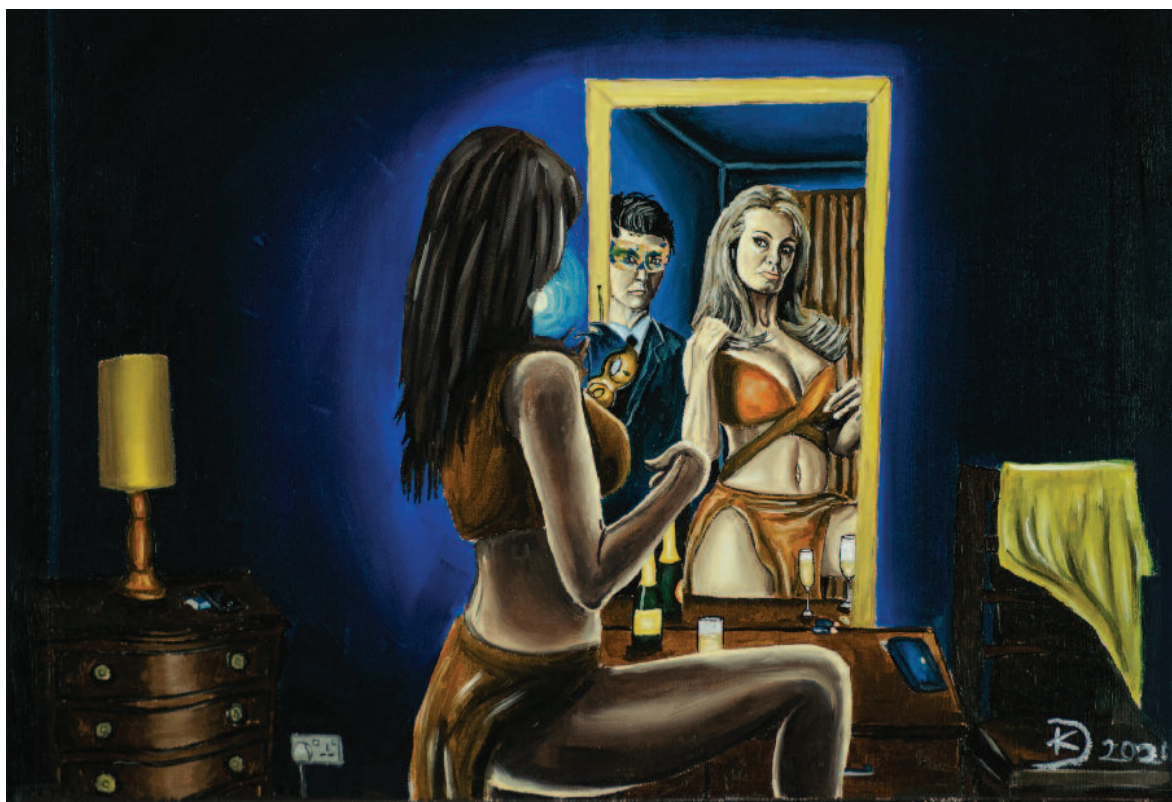


Windows. Oil on canvas, 50 x 70,5 cm, 2020





Noon. Oil on canvas, 80 x 100 cm, 2022



Couple going to a masquerade party. Oil on canvas, 40 x 60 cm, 2021





Woman at the door frame. Oil on canvas, 50 x 40 cm, 2020





Anxiety. Oil on canvas, 76 x 101,5 cm, 2022



Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde. Oil on canvas, 100 x 80 cm, 2022





Gothic 2. Oil on canvas, 100 x 80 cm, 2021



Long journey  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 90.5 cm  
2022



Two men  
Oil on canvas  
120 x 120 cm  
2021





Cemetery  
Oil on canvas  
61 x 91,5 cm, 2022



Man in the rain  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 60 cm, 2020







Isolation. Oil on canvas, 102 x 76 cm, 2022





Out of the window. Oil on canvas, 80 x 100 cm , 2022





Apocalypse, Oil on canvas, 90 x 60 cm, 2022

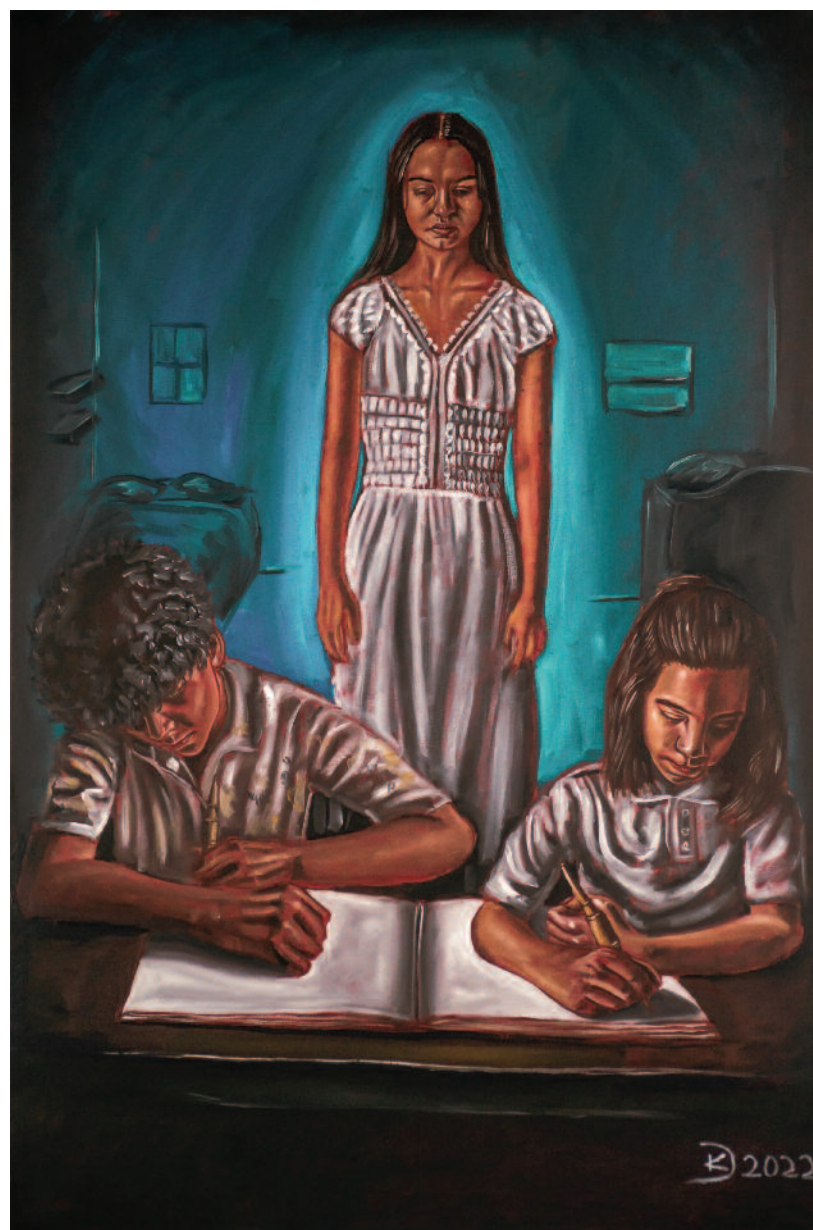


Stranger walking. Oil on canvas, 61 x 45,5 cm, 2021





Alex. Oil on canvas, 20 x 30 cm, 2019



Boy. Oil on canvas, 91 x 60 cm, 2022



Gothic I  
Oil on canvas  
100 x 80 cm, 2021





## Mythology



Tantalus. Oil on canvas, 61 x 45,5 cm, 2021



Lamia. Oil on canvas, 61 x 40 cm, 2021





Medusa  
Oil on canvas  
70 x 50 cm, 2021





Narcissist  
Oil on canvas  
40 x 60 cm, 2021



The fates  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 90 cm, 2022





**Hecate**  
Oil on canvas  
120 x 90 cm, 2022





Erysichthon. Oil on canvas, 40 x 60 cm, 2021



Arachne  
Oil on canvas  
90 x 120 cm, 2022



Arachne metamorphosis  
Oil on canvas  
60 x 90 cm, 2022





Icarus  
Oil on canvas  
122,5 x 91 cm, 2021







Europa and the bull. Oil on canvas, 80 x 100 cm, 2022





Pythia. Oil on canvas, 100 x 80 cm, 2021





Leda and the swan. Oil on canvas, 122 x 91 cm, 2021



# War

Firing squad  
Oil on canvas  
76 x 102 cm, 2022











Death of a soldier. Oil on canvas, 120 x 90 cm, 2021



Crying soldier. Oil on canvas, 80 x 60 cm, 2021





Casualties of war. Oil on canvas, 130 x 150 cm, 2021





Execution  
Oil on canvas  
100 x 140 cm, 2021



Disaster of war  
Oil on canvas  
130 x 175 cm, 2021





Story of a soldier. Oil on canvas, 130 x 175 cm, 2021





People sleeping on a rope. Oil on canvas, 91,5 x 121,5 cm, 2021





Pub in the afternoon. Oil on canvas, 120 x 150 cm, 2021





Essex raft. Oil on canvas, 130 x 175 cm, 2021



## BIOGRAPHY



Kyprianos Dimosthenous born in Nicosia in 1996, has many creative sides. He is an artist: a painter, and a sculptor, and has also dabbled in directing and cinematography. He graduated with a degree in Fine Arts from the University for the Creative Arts in Canterbury in 2019 and holds an MA (Distinction) in Theatre Arts from Middlesex University. He also has a Cinematography Certificate from London Film Academy.

### Artist Statement

When I first started painting, I experimented with surrealism. I was trying to create paintings using my subconscious and wanted to depict symbolism in human psychology. I wanted my work to be perceived in different ways according to the audience's psychology and views. I slowly transitioned to more emotional and cinematic/theatrical paintings. I incorporated many of the elements of surrealist paintings, such as the use of the subconscious and psychology, into the newer style of painting that I created. This style has elements of tenebrism, as well as impressionism. I want to portray emotions through the story that is slowly unfolding on the canvas as well as from the characters' body language and facial expressions. Some of those paintings explore my interpretation of stories from Greek mythology, but I have added my own twist. Another element that my work explores is the dark side

of humanity and war. All the paintings have a double narrative and symbolise contemporary subjects.

In my work, I explore many dark themes about human nature and duality, as well as many of my personal fears and anxieties.

One of the main subjects of my paintings is war and I show the cruelty, dehumanisation and especially the horror of it. I believe my interest in the dark element of war comes from my passion studying history, most of which unfortunately is about war and violence.

Another topic I explore is Greek Mythology, but the way I incorporate this into my work is by featuring Greek myths while exploring more contemporary issues or anxieties of modern society. But regardless of the subject, my work features the same or similar themes. I want my work to target people's emotions and provoke them to challenge many of their beliefs and life choices.

My inspiration for my art comes from many different artists and styles of art, not just painters. I read a lot of books, visit galleries and theatrical performances, watch a lot of films, and listen to music. Some painters have impacted me more than others, both on the visual side of my work as well as the symbolic side. They include Francisco Goya, Caravaggio, El Greco, Théodore Géricault, Leonardo da Vinci, Hieronymus Bosch, Vincent Van Gogh, Pablo Picasso, Frida Kahlo, Caspar David Friedrich, Edvard Munch, René Magritte, Mark Rothko, Edward Hopper, Salvador Dali, HR Giger and Johannes Vermeer. These painters, despite having different styles, have all influenced me emotionally, and thereby inspired my work.

Many of my paintings have a cinematic structure and view, resulting from my love for cinema and theatre. Some film directors played a big role in the themes I explore and the way I work. Some of them are Stanley Kubrick, Alfred Hitchcock and Sergio Leone. The characters in my paintings have very emotional expressions and body language, which is influenced by theatre. Music plays a large part towards my inspiration in the early stages of developing my ideas, especially classical and instrumental music. Some musicians that inspire me are Ludwig van Beethoven, Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart, Johann Sebastian Bach, Frédéric Chopin, Antonio Vivaldi, Ennio Morricone, Bernard Herrmann, Hans Zimmer and John Williams.

Philosophy and psychology play a huge part in my work and the way I think. Carl Jung is one of my biggest influences in life and art. I use many of his theories in my work, especially the idea of duality and his theory of the shadow and the subconscious. Many of my paintings, especially the war paintings are inspired by real-life events, as well as vintage war photography.







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