

Mikēlis Fišers

Apocalyptology and Blamescaping

KiBela / MMC KIBLA

18 October–9 November 2019

Mikēlis Fišers, born 1970 in Riga, is exceptionally skilled in his original, multidimensional and technically accomplished approach. He lives and works in Latvia. Since the beginning of the 1990s he has been exhibiting widely, both in solo and group exhibitions, and has also worked as a set designer since 2004. He participated twice in the Venice Biennial: in 2015 as part of a group exhibition of Latvian contemporary art, entitled *Ornamentalism*, and in 2017 as a representative of Latvia with a solo exhibition *What Can Go Wrong*. In his works, he employs a broad range of media, uses various materials, which he arranges into complex installations (which is in fact what his exhibitions are); conceives and constructs theater set designs, creates video works, sculptures and objects; and, above all, he draws, paints and creates woodcuts. His series of woodcuts are particularly appealing, his monumental paintings compelling, the set up inspired by his experience in theater stage design works. For Mikēlis Fišers, every art show is a stage.

In his canvases we see him portray symbolic, seeming-but-real, invented surrealist figures, transformed into fairy-tale creatures of today, (who may be) phantasmagoric harbingers of the future – whatever that may be. Joining together mythical, historical, religious, scientific and artistic references in his paintings, woodcuts, drawings and sculptures, creates an ambiance, a complete spatial installation, a sanctuary, a place of refuge for survival, while merging of normality with conditions seems like an opportunity for primacy, for fundamentality, for animality and for spirituality. The setting in which his art is placed, comes alive not only as a scenography, but as a temple of intuition, a mausoleum of imagination, into which we are invited to take a stroll, to confront the artist's works and feel them.

Recognizing familiar symbols in Fišers' iconography establishes a link to symbolists such as Finnish painter *Hugo Gerhard Simberg* (24 June 1873–12 July 1917); his depictions of motifs conjure up images of The Vienna School of Fantastic Realism; and we are captivated by elements of abstract expressionism, such as those portrayed by Chilean painter *Roberto Sebastián Antonio Matta Echaurren* (11 November 1911–23 November 2002). What is our present, and where is our future going to be? Or are they both the same. identical. Everything still revolves according to the universal order. Everything moves. And balance is nothing but an unattainable, idealized image of the world, the environment, the universe, and ourselves. But that's the beauty of it.

The magic of existence is both in its beginning as in its end. The point is in the continuance, indefinite and at the same time limited. Individual, anarchistic, chaotic, but also orderly, systematic, organized. Structures in Fišers' planar perspective sink into the wood and become threedimensional forms (woodcuts); strokes of oil paints rise above the canvas like landscapes from a dream, emerging on foreign planets and conjuring up a representation of the present that looks like the future (paintings). If Mikēlis Fišers' works are a form of storytelling, then these are stories which pass into epos in his large formats, and are joined together to form a kind of epistolary novel in his smaller works, a sort of a serial made up of individual stories.

Combined with his sculpture works, which he often creates out of objets trouvés and ready-mades, and his graphics, based on remnants of ancient peoples (frottages from Pre-Incan stone artefacts), the spatial installation touches upon the realistic imaginativeness of Hieronymus Bosch and the "re-used art" of Josphe Beuys. The omnipresence of Mikēlis Fišers leads us into a kind of comprehensive and unique art scene, which is characterized by multiplex and multiplicative expression. The artist's work is genuinely multimedia, with videos as a reminiscence of documented existence and efforts, with commitment and chips of the apocalyptic 1908s, with his neon warning sign, which recaps in a few words, almost like a graffiti, the message of art in real space, and with his fluid LED display, showing his Beckett-style surrealistic text.

— Peter Tomaž Dobrila

• The Evil Message or the Last Sermon of Stringy Meatwinger •

In spite of efforts by Trian the Great to calm down and regain control over the meta-situation, the performance of the Imitators was increasing with each passing moment. Materialization of Holey Moon's frightening twin was now unstoppable.

Total despair overwhelmed Flatheads. For eons they had followed and observed the Laws and Teachings of Stringy Meatwinger. But now the obtuse Flatheads had to witness the consequences of Trian's fateful negligence... their nostrils already sensing pungent stench emanating from a burning Orbital Lighting Egg that had fallen into Trian's lap. Flatheads finally realized they will not be destined to experience the promised eternal bowing in misty wetlands of the Paradise.

"Oh, I overdid again," Trian thought chaotically. Is this really the end of it all? Of Skeiners' hexagonal duckings? Of newly built and elegant deworming hangars? Of clacking howls of Fish People during layered sunsets... and himself, the almighty Trian, the Materializator of Ameliorated Worlds.

Wayward Rare-earth Retflesh, whose swelling, budding and blossoming had been eagerly awaited by whole of Sweater's habitat, was stunned feeling the imminent calamity, purpling insecurely.

And now, Fish People did what Ancient Scrolls of The Elders of Fish People commanded: "On the day when another frightening moon will emerge, You shall climb the highest tree; Then you will let go and fly, with divinely beautiful thoughts, into the Blackest Hole. There, a new Antiworld will await you in its dark radiance."

Above and below it all, senseless prayers and teachings of Stringy Meatwinger loudly echoed in complex structures of the Skeiners, like a lonely goat's song in a mountain cave.

— Miķelis Fišers

Web:

<http://fisers.lv/en/artist/news>

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KiBela, space for art / MMC KIBLA, Maribor

Text by Peter Tomaž Dobrila (translated by Helena Fošnjar)

Opening on Friday, 18 October 2019, at 7 p. m.

The exhibition will be showing until 9 November 2019.

MMC KIBLA / Prostor za umetnost KiBela, Ulica kneza Koclja 9, Maribor

Odperto od ponedeljka do petka, od 9. do 22. ure, v soboto od 16. do 22. ure.