

ROK PREDIN

Leap Year

5 November–4 December 2021

artKIT

Leap Year is a series of four images, each of which portrays the same Maribor block of flats yard in different seasons.

A view from above of the courtyards, balconies and windows observes residents who perform mundane tasks, inadvertently get caught up in allegorical installations or art-historical quotes, and display a human comedy of the recent past throughout the whole painting.

The images draw on the tradition of Bruegel's motifs of social life with a characteristic balance between sharpness of gaze, humour and warmth. You can also feel the echo of Canaletto's Venetian vista, this time shown through the prism of the modern urban landscape of our city.

Rok Predin tackled this in his own unique way, as a painter, illustrator, designer and especially as an artistic person who draws inspiration for his work from the art of »his world«. He chooses materials in accordance with the projects, has a comprehensive approach and gets acquainted with the space in which his works will reside, so that he can place them in harmony with the environment and the surroundings with a distinctive style.

For this reason, he decided that the works will be created digitally, printed on a bracket, placed under a round cut passe-partout and framed; the dimensions of each work being 105x105 centimetres. He also didn't opt for »classic techniques«. The here and now contemporary approach is essentially his compliment to Maribor and to the old Town Hall on the Main Square.

»Technology is just a tool. The computer is like a hammer that you can use to drive a nail and hang a picture or punch someone in the nose. It's up to you. The digital media is a young medium that is evolving so fast that we can't even keep up. However, we have reached an interesting paradox when 99 percent of digital production invests the majority of energy in making it look as analogous as possible. On the one hand, this is absurd, and on the other hand, we are talking about textures that our eye is obviously so used to that we have to constantly introduce them. Namely, when you draw, there are always those small deviations that contribute to the product breathing, that it is alive. The computer, however, will calculate and draw a straight line. This opens up a great number of conceptual problems that remain to be solved. Much like when the photography appeared. You had painters who made a living from portraits, and then came photographers who could capture a person more realistically, and the question arose: what then is the task of painters? Some said it is the end of painting, others said, no, this is the beginning of painting, now we are free.«

He adds that: »It is hard to describe something like when you visually recreate a house from your childhood, but only from memory, by highlighting things that seem important to you. You can repopulate your memory with characters, and that is my favourite part. This process is especially dear to me, maybe even more than the final product itself, because it allows me to be there again, running around our house, in a world that is idealized, embellished and, of course, a bit caricatured.«

BIOGRAPHY

Rok Predin is a visual artist and director of animated films, who graduated in 2004 from painting at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Ljubljana. Shortly afterwards, he began making short animated films and music videos and in 2009 moved to London where he joined the animation production house Trunk Animation. He has created a series of short animated films, commercials, music videos, TV commercials and stage screenings. In 2012, he created a series of projections for Queen Elizabeth, which were projected onto the façade of Buckingham Palace on the 60th anniversary of her reign. His short animated film *One of a Kind* received an Audience Award in 2014 in Stuttgart. His clients also include big names from the music industry like The Rolling Stones, Elton John, U2, Take That and Madness. He recently participated in the performance of an animated video for the legendary band The Beatles. He has directed commercials for Jaguar, Canon and Coca Cola, among others. He created a series of scenographies and video projections for the Slovene National Theatre Maribor and as a director, set designer and author of visual art collaborated with the Maribor Puppet Theatre. He lives and works in Maribor.

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artKIT, Glavni trg 14, Maribor

Opening hours: Monday to Friday from 4 to 8 p.m., Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.