

Olena Kayinska

Instagram Website Artist Statement & Biography

Trauma separates a person from their body, takes away the feeling of safety, the possibility to feel and set their boundaries, and communicate with society. Trauma remains with a person forever. Even when the trauma is healed, a scar remains, which is perceptible, hurts, speaks. After the trauma, a person remains incomplete, isolated from the environment, transparent. And a person shuts down all emotions in an attempt to somehow put themselves together.



Olena Kayinska Silent People 2022 acrylic on canvas 750 x 950 mm

Silent People

Silent people have got into an argument, and now they are sitting over empty plates in silence. They have a lot on their minds, and they feel sore, but they have nothing to say to each other. There is a lot of pain and mutual resentment inside, but silent people cannot speak it out. They cannot articulate what they feel, and their mouths are covered with growth. The pain is frozen down in their eyes, like ice. Only when they look into the mirror, they see their reflections as the sea of blood. The mirror is overfilled with that blood, and it falls in drops into the dish.

My Wedding Bouquet

How a woman who is not married, might feel in society? The reasons may be numerous: the relationship failed, she refused to give herself up to a man who could harm her, she was afraid of being weaker because she didn't want a knife in her back, she was living a full life. The reasons are unimportant, but her feelings are immensely important, when people ask her one more time: "So what, you never got married? Are you with somebody? Such rotten luck, you, this incredible woman going to waste before my very eyes." The ribs symbolize the emptiness in the chest when you want to love, but you have no one to give your love to. And the flowers sprout to the sky right from that emptiness. The closed coffer represents this marriage and happiness, and the key to this chest also exists somewhere.



Olena Kayinska My Wedding Bouquet 2021 950 x 750 mm



Olena Kayinska Forgetting Room 2022 acrylic on canvas 1850 x 820 mm

Forgetting Room

In the forgetting room there is a shelf with glass bottles that contain what we will need to relive and transform in ourselves after victory. In the first container, the snake that eats itself, destroys itself and dies - Russia. Next is Ukraine, which protects its children with its wings, raises and nurtures them. Embroidered pillows that grandmothers in the villages put on their beds are a symbol of our disturbed sleep due to night air alarms. A fish that swims down and sinks deeper to the bottom is a symbol of lost hope and our fear that our future is being taken away from us. Legs from which blood drips into a bowl. A house where blood comes from the chimney instead of smoke - our destroyed homes. Candles are innocently killed peaceful people, a symbol of prayer for the souls of martyrs. A window from which blood drips and rays of light come out - the souls of Ukrainian soldiers who are gone. From above everything is watched by the eye in a ring of wrathful fire, and from below - a burning transforming fire.

Simple Life

The necessity to service everyday responsibilities, solve tasks and problems, the routine of life. Life is moving at a frenetic pace, and we don't have time to simply stand and look at the sky, to breathe, to move, to enjoy, to live. The quantity of tasks overwhelms us, making lists, adding tasks to calendars it all fosters paranoid thoughts. You have to choose what you need, and not what you want. Over time we forget how to want. We live according to the list of tasks. And when there are too many tasks and they appear from everywhere, I will throw them all away, climb onto a cloud, turn my back on everything and take a nap. And let it all go down in flames, and I will lay on a soft cloud, which will cover everything with a tender and gentle snow.



Olena Kayinska Simple Life 2021 acrylic on canvas 1000 x 1600 mm

Floating Population

The war made these people uproot and go on a journey. While escaping from disaster, the people abandoned their houses, barns full of grain, yards with flowers, and took themselves to new places. Navigating roadblocks along the way. The people carried their children, elderly parents, cats, and dogs, and the rest they left for the enemy looting. The people possessed houses and homes, and now they have nothing but what they can carry.



Olena Kayinska Floating Population 2021 acrylic on canvas 600 x 800 mm



Olena Kayinska Ganmushpia acrylic on canvas

Ganmushpia

Ganmushpia is a non-existent word, which came from the abyss of prolonged insomnia. When you undergo increasing fatigue, fear, and anxiety for many hard months, you just want to go to bed, get under your blanket, and fall asleep. You want a dream that would bring you into the waters of forgetfulness. But you cannot fall asleep. There is no sleep. Your control is so strong, that it doesn't let your body sleep.

On these hard nights, the thought about something complicated and the memories about unresolved situations gather in masses in your head. A bunch of thoughts is illogical and unstructured, like the buildings of the castle, which pile one on another, which are ready to fall from the craggy rock every minute.

Two tremendous snakes try getting inside of the castle, destroy it, eat everything inside, bring darkness and fear. They are the two snakes of the panic attack – the fear of death and the fear to let control go.

The Feet of Saint Parthenios

The whole body of Saint Parthenios, coated and booted, is kept in the Church of Holy Jesus Heart in Zhovka, Ukraine. This early Christian martyr and thaumaturgus, who is originally from Armenia, was tortured to death in Rome in 250 A.D. During his lifetime in Rome, it was ordered to mercilessly torture all Christians. When the court directed to burn the Saint in the fire, the fire didn't take him.

Saint Parthenios had a gift for accomplishing miracles including healing of the sick. This painting was devoted to him and symbolizes the miracle when the fire refused to touch the bare feet of the Saint. Another sense, conveyed in the painting, is the burning pomegranates, which symbolize engulfed in pain hearts of people, who ask Saint Parthenios for healing.



Olena Kayinska The Feet of Saint Parthenios 2020 acrylic on canvas 500 x 700 mm



Olena Kayinska Children Bury the Beetle 2020 acrylic on canvas 1000 x 1400 mm

Children Bury the Beetle

When something terrible and irreversible happens in life, like death or trauma, it's desperately hard to outlive it. Big dolor gets easier when you can carefully translate it into restrained grief. The feeling of dolor eats and destroys a person from inside, and the feeling of grief consolidates and strengthens. Grief is an adult feeling.

The death of the beetle represents the manifestation of the fact, that something has happened, but it's not that scary as it may seem at first. Children, playing, buried the beetle in the pile of the fallen leaves, and then they forgot about it. The death of the beetle is not a terrible event, which evokes dolor. The death of the beetle is just a little sad. Dolor can be outlived. And the spring is on its way. The seeds of the hills near the house, where the children live, have started to germinate.



Olena Kayinska The Feet of Saint Parthenios 2020 acrylic on canvas 500 x 700 mm

Cemetery of Sleep

Silently burying in the grave in the garden with the fallen leaves, the woman buries something very important for her. Something, which she inherited from her mother, and her mother. The woman is filled with sorrow and lonesome. Her house is also filled with sorrow because something very precious has been taken out.

Something, which is placed in the center of a table, when the dearest guests arrive. Something beautiful, important, delicious, expensive, heavy, precious. While burying this, the woman doesn't realize that she is angry with the man who hurt her. With everybody who tore her apart. She doesn't know how to express and get along with her anger and is doing this the way she can – she is burying in the grave her sexuality and vitality, at the same time losing the possibility to have healthy sleep cycles.