

Artists 4 Peace

Artists 4 Peace (A4P) is a global collective presenting works focused on peace and sustainable living.

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Trauma is an influence, exceeding the compensatory powers of a body. As the result of this influence, something gets broken, gets torn, disappears, or changes its form.

Trauma is freezing. It immobilizes, paralyzes, fragments the world. After the trauma remain only the wreckages of a person's familiar world.

Trauma separates a person from their body, takes away the feeling of safety, the possibility to feel and set their boundaries, communicate with the society on the rights of its valid part. Trauma remains with a person forever. Even when the trauma is healed, a scar remains after it, 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.

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The trauma, which is timely cured and mourned over, can be healed faster. It's terrifying to mourn over the trauma – this means to reveal your vulnerability. This other side of a person is being carefully camouflaged and hidden in the everyday battle. This side has remained from deep childhood, but it didn't turn into a rudiment. This side has come deeper, into another dimension, into the space of the unconscious, behind the line.

Trauma is closely linked with shame. Survivors feel that they are responsible for the terrible things that happened to them. They feel unworthy of care and attention. They feel themselves like a disgusting mess. To overcome your shame, you need to pay a heavy price – to tell your secret. Every secret wants to be told. Dead bodies do not want to rest in their graves until their stories are told.

Prenarrative about the trauma is the first step to healing. One needs to rethink the trauma to feel the present and pave the way into the future. Trauma carries a conflict in itself. A person wants to protest against the trauma and put it on a back burner, and, at the same time, to speak about it and release it. To speak about the unspoken. To do this, one needs to feel safe. Trust to mourn over. The only healthy way to deal with trauma is to reach out and hold each other. Then, calmed and strengthened, we can walk out into the world. But first, we need to be able to grasp a catastrophic event and shape it into a coherent story, one that makes sense out of chaos, and regain control over our world.

People do not choose to get traumatized. Trauma enters a person's life by itself, leaving only one choice – to live over, to overcome, to mourn over, and to narrate about. There are several

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overcome, to mourn over, and to narrate about. There are several

types of trauma. Traumas of the body, traumas of the psyche, traumas of a family, and traumas of society. Children dwell on the past of their parents to fully understand what they've been through. Children don't let themselves be happy until they take over the pain of their parents. Trauma will never be fully cured. Recovery will never be complete. Losses and scars will remain forever. The spiral of panic and insecurity will come back over and over again. Trauma's echoes are too loud. People, who outlived and cured their trauma resemble the plates, glued with gold.

The project "Trauma" will consist of 25 big-format paintings (acrylic on canvas), each of them accompanied by descriptive narratives. The paintings will be speaking about the various types of traumas (lockdown and lack of communication trauma, loss trauma, neglect trauma, depression trauma, physical trauma, immobilization trauma, etc.), and the ways to overcome and overlive these traumas. The paintings will be symbolic, archetypical, and easy to perceive. They will evoke associations, generate feelings, convey the states we all live in today.

Some of the paintings for the project are finished, some of them are in progress, and some of them are planned.

acrylic on canvas

About the Artist

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acrylic on canvas

About the Artist

I am Olena Kayinska, an artist based in Lviv, Ukraine. I work with naïve or pure art techniques, paired together with deep philosophical and psychological senses. My fields of research are finding of inner peace, post-trauma recovery, human inborn kindness, and love as the driving force of Universe. My paintings-dreams take the observers inside, to the subconscious, to the core. Trying to find the inner self, the observer wanders through the imaginary world, fantastic forests, filled with symbolic images and archetypical symbols, inhabited with mysterious creatures, each of which provides a guide to the final destination – our heart. My aim is to make people happier. My paintings show the endlessness of obvious and unobvious relationships in this world with the help of mysterious storylines with the metaphysical sense. Being the guide between the worlds, I mix reality and magic in a genuine meditative form of my witchcraft. Direct ascetism of the flat surfaces, completeness, and persuasiveness of the compositions, seamless statics, graphical coding of the deep sense into the schematic images, order, and rhythm of the paintings focus the observer's attention on what is underneath. I participated in 45+ exhibitions, contemporary art festivals and art residencies, and exhibited 3 personal projects. My paintings are kept in museum funds and private collections in Ukraine, Germany, United States, and Turkey. More about my practice here - <https://en.olenakayinska.com/>

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1. **Children bury the beetle**, 100x140, 2020

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.

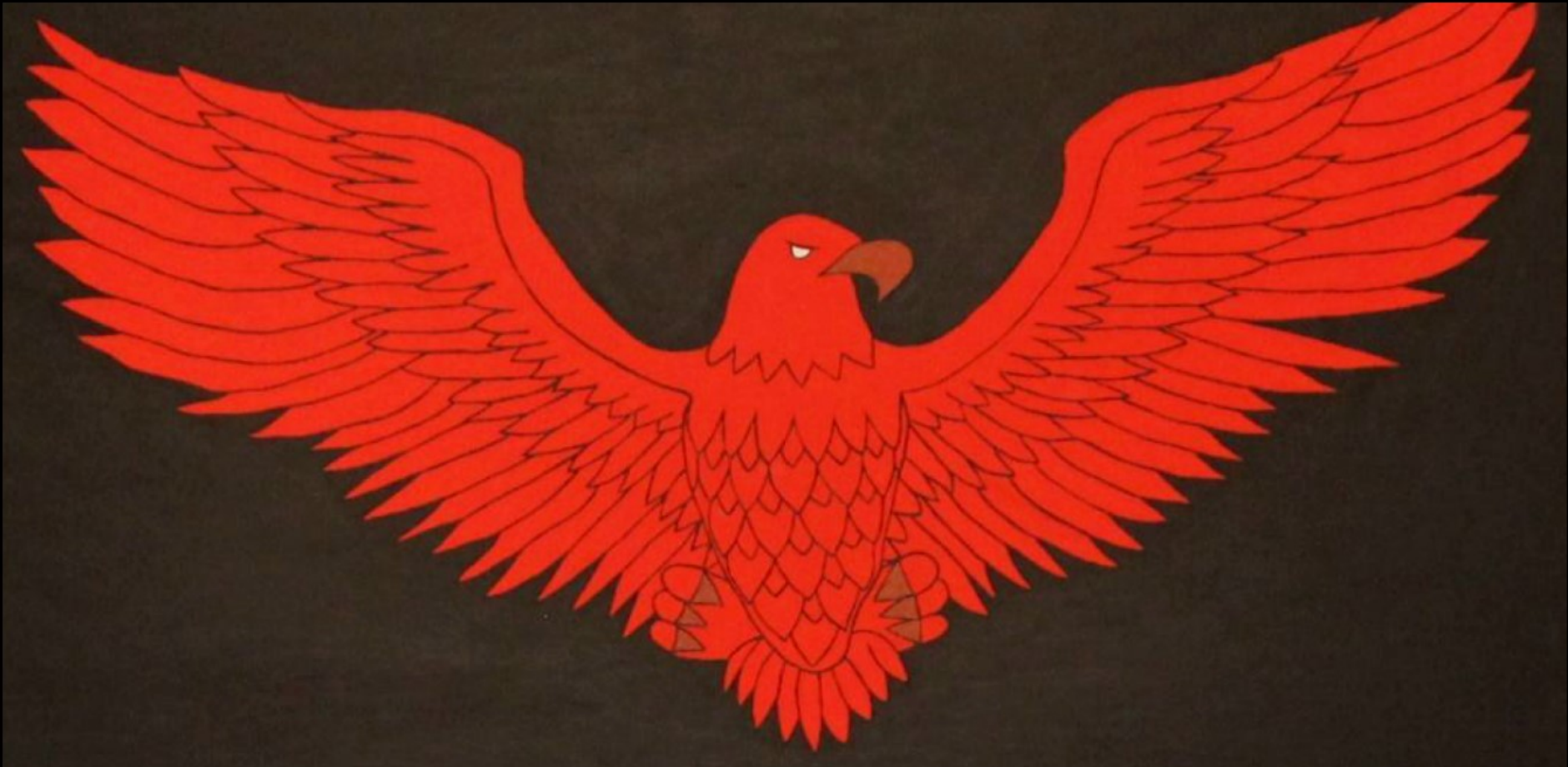
The death of the beetle represents the manifestation of the fact, that something has happened, but it's not that scary as it may seem at first. Children, playing, buried the beetle in the pile of the fallen leaves, and then they forgot about it. The death of the beetle is not a terrible event, which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

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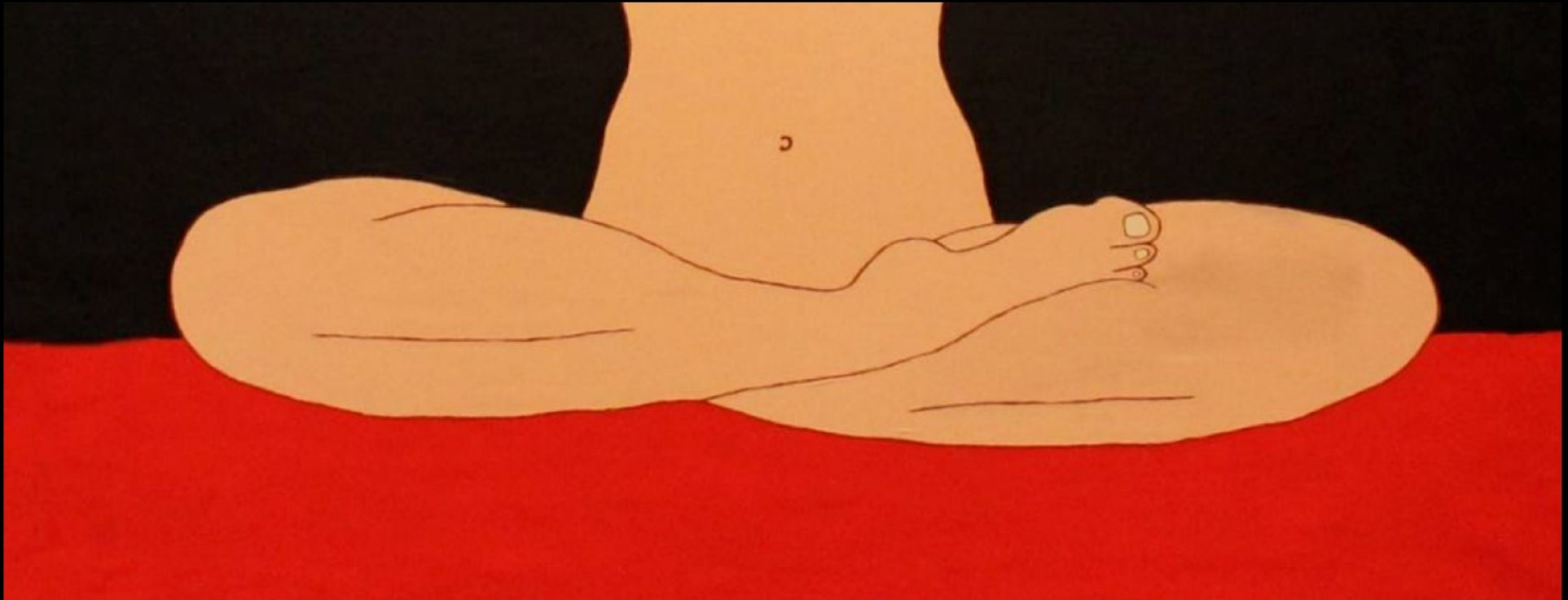
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2. **Nomad**, 85x120, 2018

Now I'd better stay quiet and let the silence separate the truth from the lie.

The person in the painting is confused. She is naked, and everybody around sees her state. The person shields her face with her hands to hide her state from others. At the same time the eagle – the will and the spirit – breaks out of the person and helps her overcome obstacles and her state.

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The Trauma Project

By Olena Kayinska



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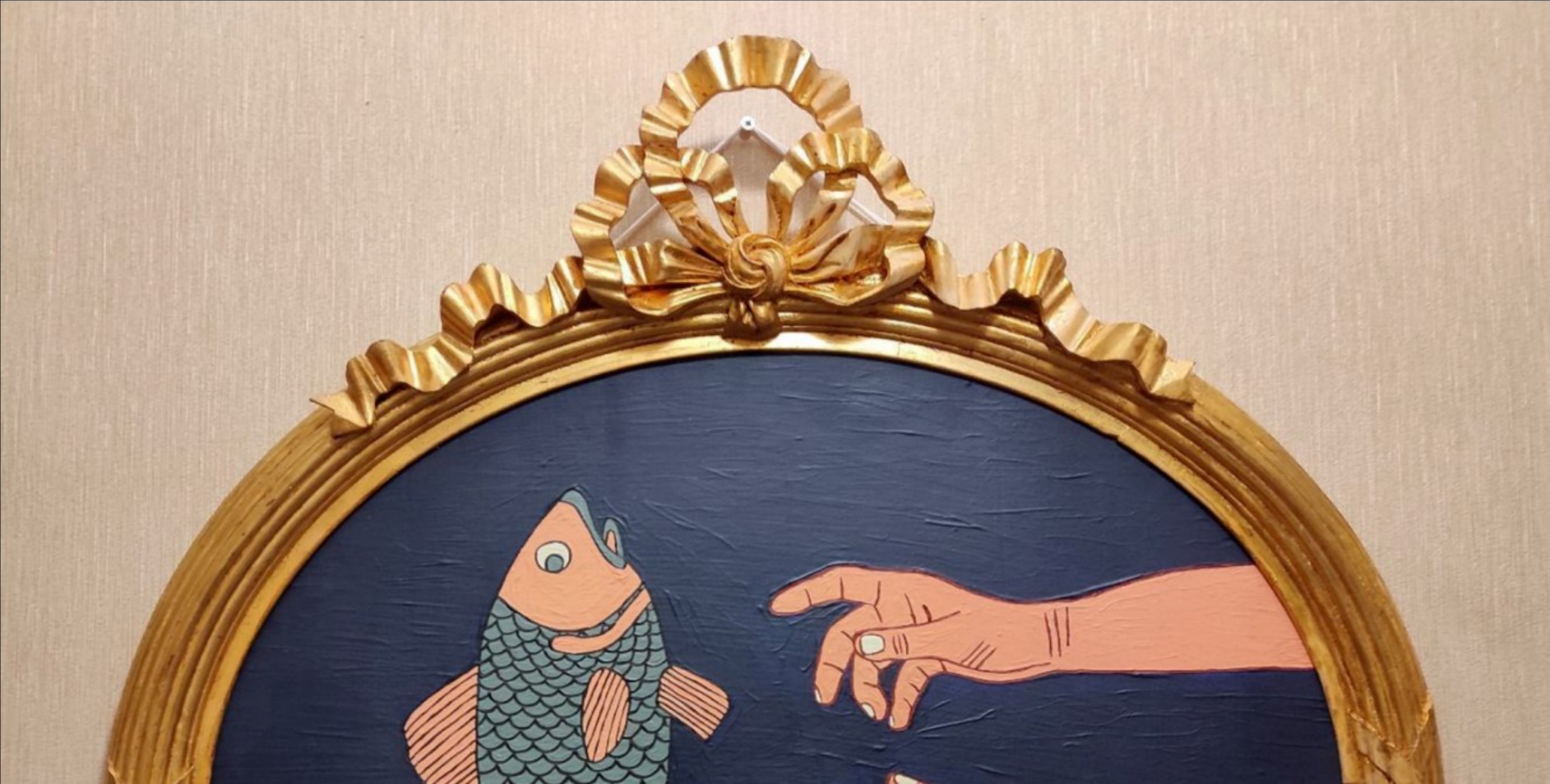
3. **Seagulls have cried a sea**, 75x85, 2019

Seagull is a symbol of a woman who has lost her beloved one. Seagulls sat on the branch of mistletoe and started mourning. They were mourning and mourning and cried a whole sea. Mistletoe symbolizes revival and renewal. After the gloomy days always come light.

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4. **I forgive myself**, 57x48, 2020

The person tries to hug the fish, and the fish is cold, eely, and slips through the hands. It's unpleasant to hug a fish. You wouldn't want to do this. Heaven knows, why it's necessary.

The person needs to forgive themselves for the things, which happened with them. For the misfortunes, which followed one another. For the people, who abandoned them. Forgive themselves for everything. But forgiving yourself is similar to trying to hug a fish. And the fish slips through the hands.

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5. **Too rapid maturation**, 60x40, 2020

The glass ball is hanging above the turbulent seawater. There are feathers inside of the ball. The painting conveys fragility and instability of the psyche of a child, who due to some circumstances needs to become more adult than many adults around them. These people feel a longing for the lost childhood for the rest of their lives. They try to find their childhood, and they will never be able to achieve this. They will never be children again, and they will never be fully grown-up adults.

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6. **Happy body. Victim**, diptych, 1 of 2, 70x50, 2021

In today's society, women's victimhood and complete self-sacrifice are particularly valued. The woman who is dedicating herself wholeheartedly to others, who doesn't argue, who doesn't get angry, who doesn't change an established order, who accepts everything with the obedience of a sheep what the world tells her to do, is offered encouragement. White innocent sheep is eyeless because she doesn't see where she is, who is she, and what happens. She is carrying with pride the golden wings of victimhood, placed on her by people. She is proud of her achievement, as she went a long way of suffering, she stood a great deal of humiliation, she took care of a lot of people, she deserves the praises and glorification. And a crown.

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7. **Happy body, Fraud syndrome**, diptych, 2 of 2, 70x50, 2021

All the beauties and pleasures of this world are around me. Everything is sparkling, glittering, and spouting with joy and delight. Everybody scoops from this source without looking back and a single ounce of remorse. They've secured the right for it.

However, there is a hole with buried bones underneath me, and I have to sit motionless to cover the bones with myself. No matter how white I make my feathers, I can become only a hen, and never a swan. No matter how beautifully I fit myself into the interior of the palace, I cannot move out of my location, because everybody would immediately find out about my secret and kick me out with disgrace.

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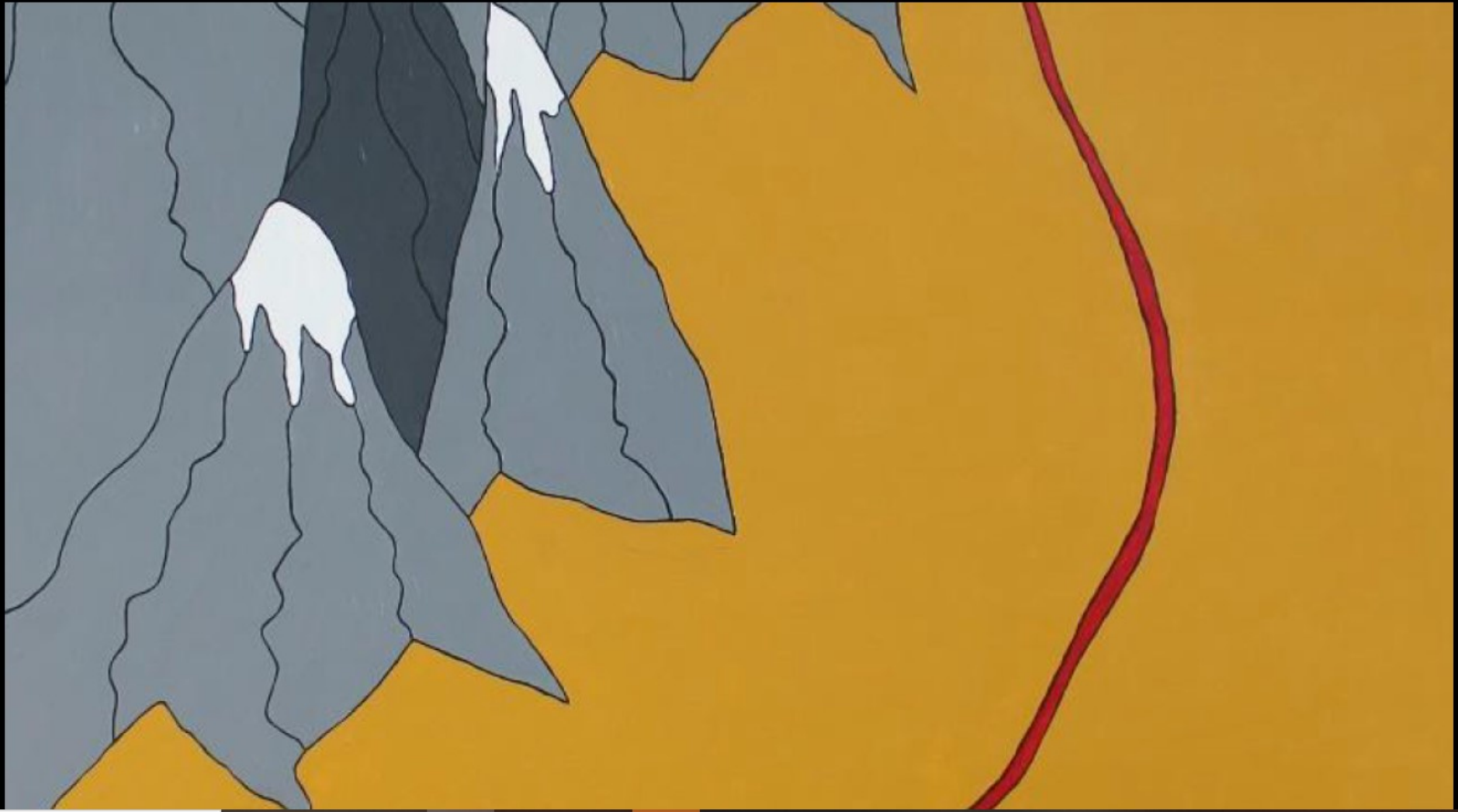


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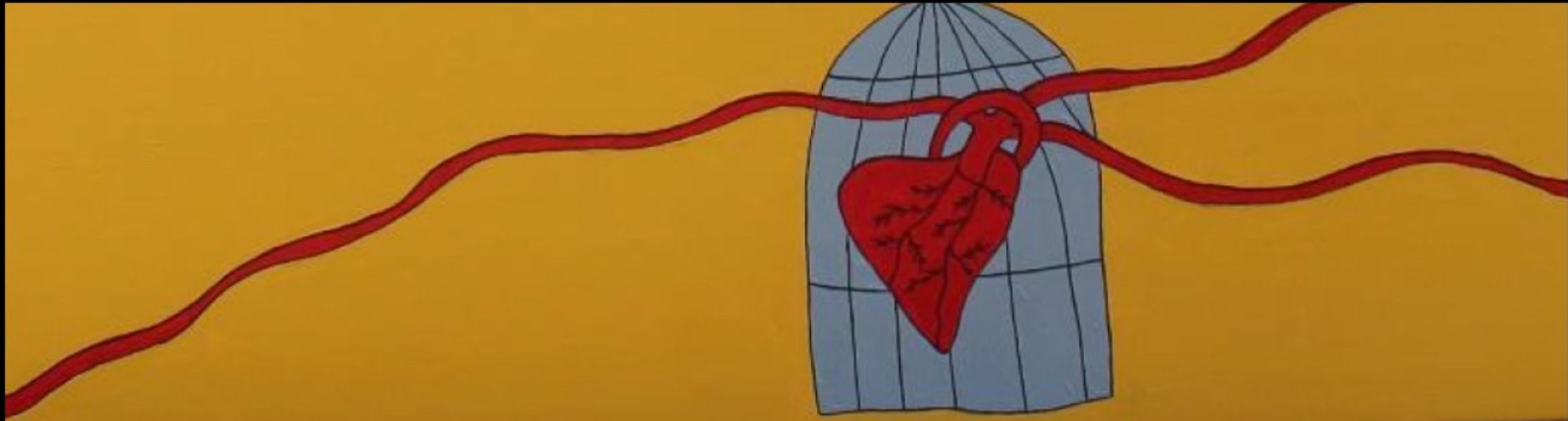
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8. **Hot sand**, 200x120, 2021

People are massive rocks, I am loose sand. They maintain their shape, I can become of any shape.

People are strong, I am weak. They stand as a monolith, I crumble into tiny particles of sand, which are impossible to get together.

People stand all together, I am alone. I ensphere them.

People are cold, I am warm. You can get warm with me, you can bury yourself in me and have a rest.

I've constantly wanted to become a rock, but I will never become. I am sand.

I want to be with rocks, but I will always be sidewise.

My structure is completely different.

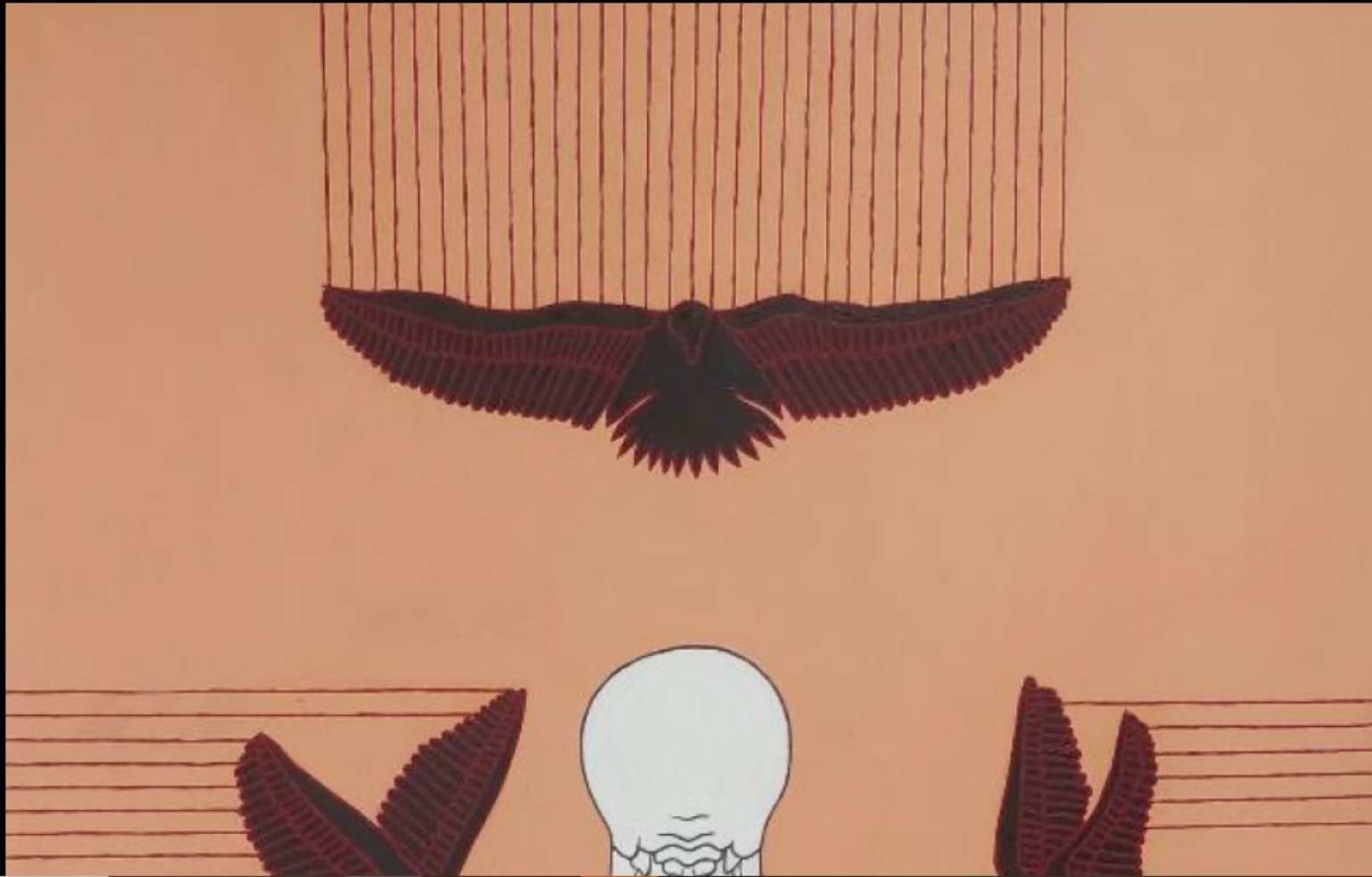
Upon understanding this difference, I listen with my ear, how deeply inside of the thickness of my sand my heart is beating. In my warmth.

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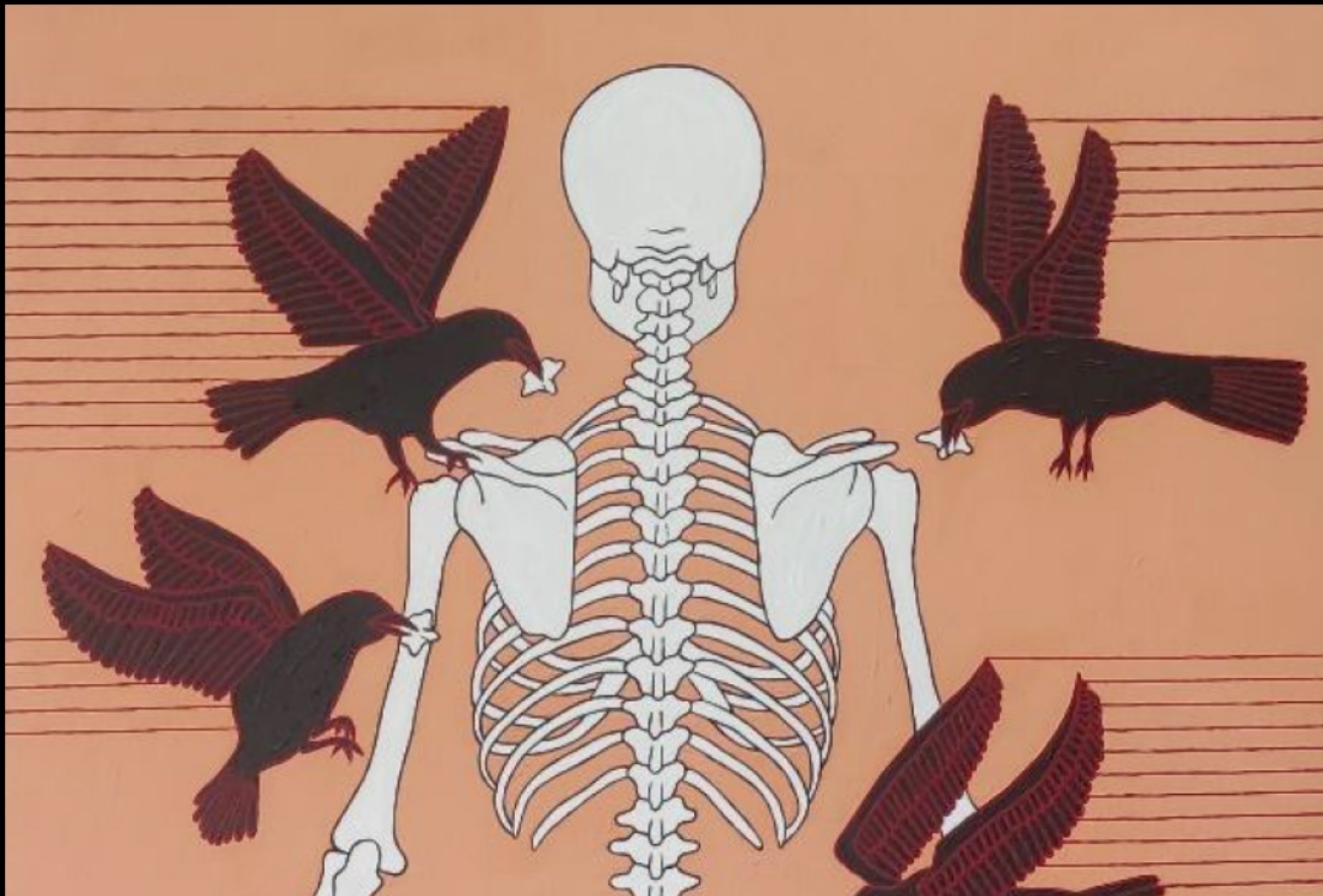
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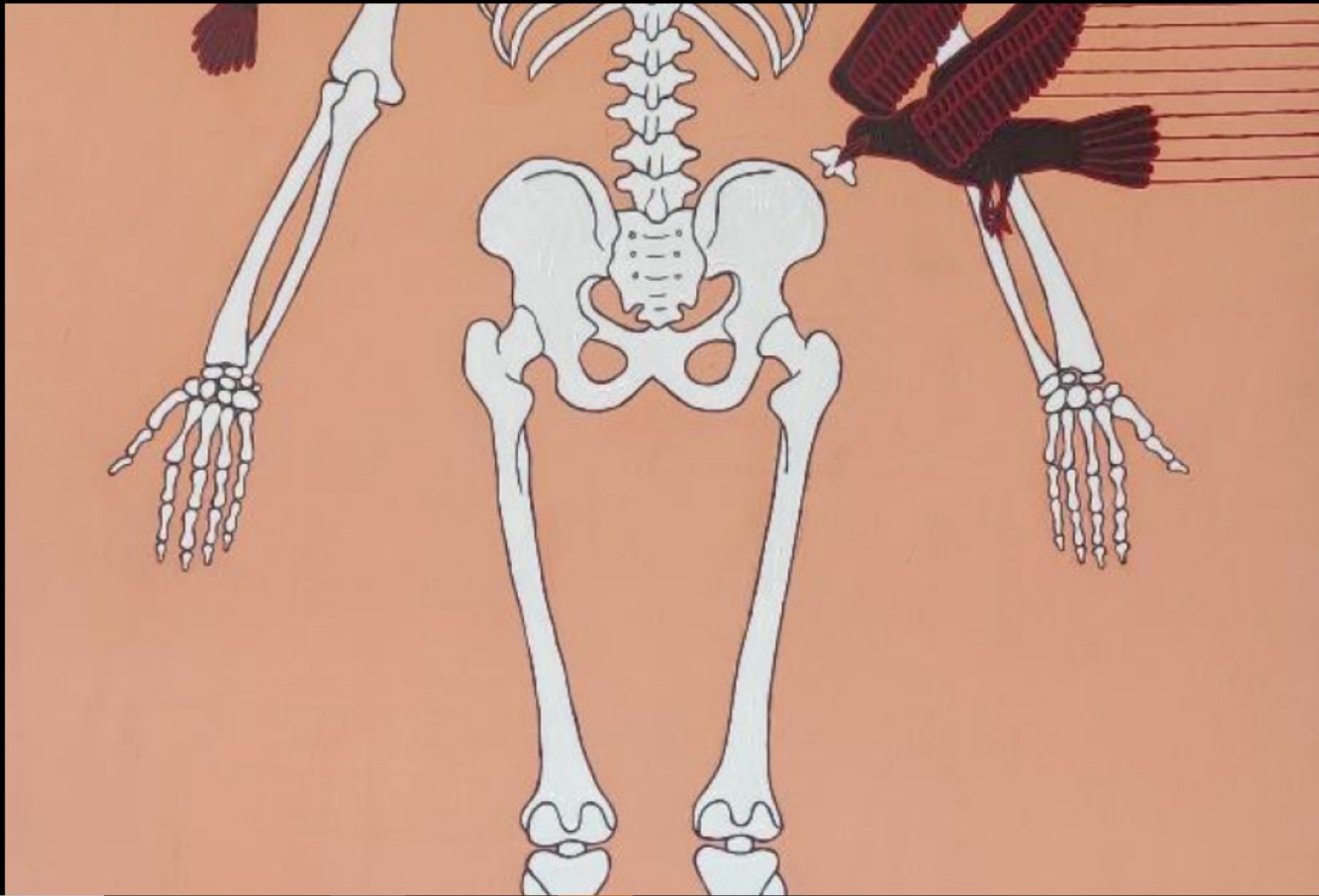
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9. Blessed is who came, who left, and who stayed, 185x82, 2021

There are people, who come very close to us, touch the most painful places, approach us with all their tenderness and love. You feel you can lean on them, show yourself as you are without any fear, and they are here. With you.

These people form our spine bone and stem, supporting us and giving their loving presence.

And then they go away, explaining nothing, or exploding with anger and frustration. As if the black crows came flying and took the spondyls out of the spine bone. It's desperately hard to forget about these people even over time. Invisible strands continue pulling you to these people through time and space. But they are no longer over here. They're gone. It's time to grow new spine bone, your own, and become genuine support to yourself.

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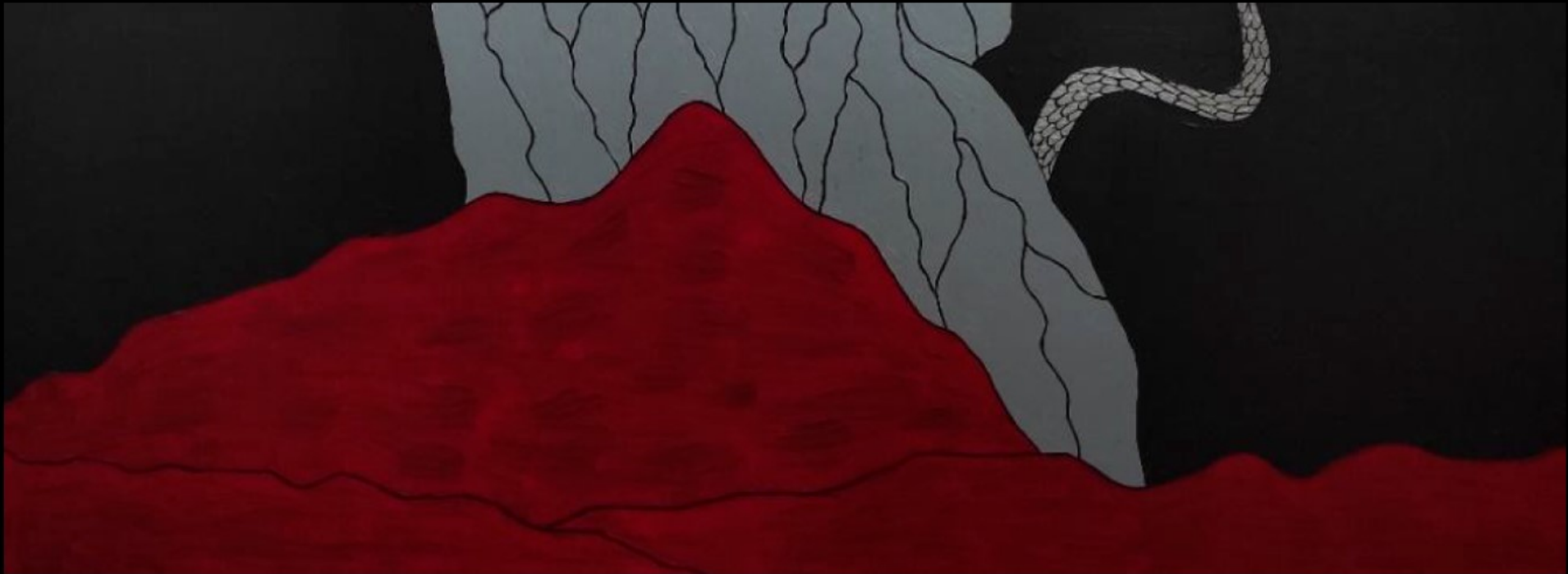
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10. **Ganmushpia**, 175x135, 2021

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 cranky 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 the control go.

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11. The feet of Saint Parthenios, 50x70, 2020

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, but the fire didn't take him.

Saint Parthenios had a gift for accomplishing wonders and healings of the sick. This painting is 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.

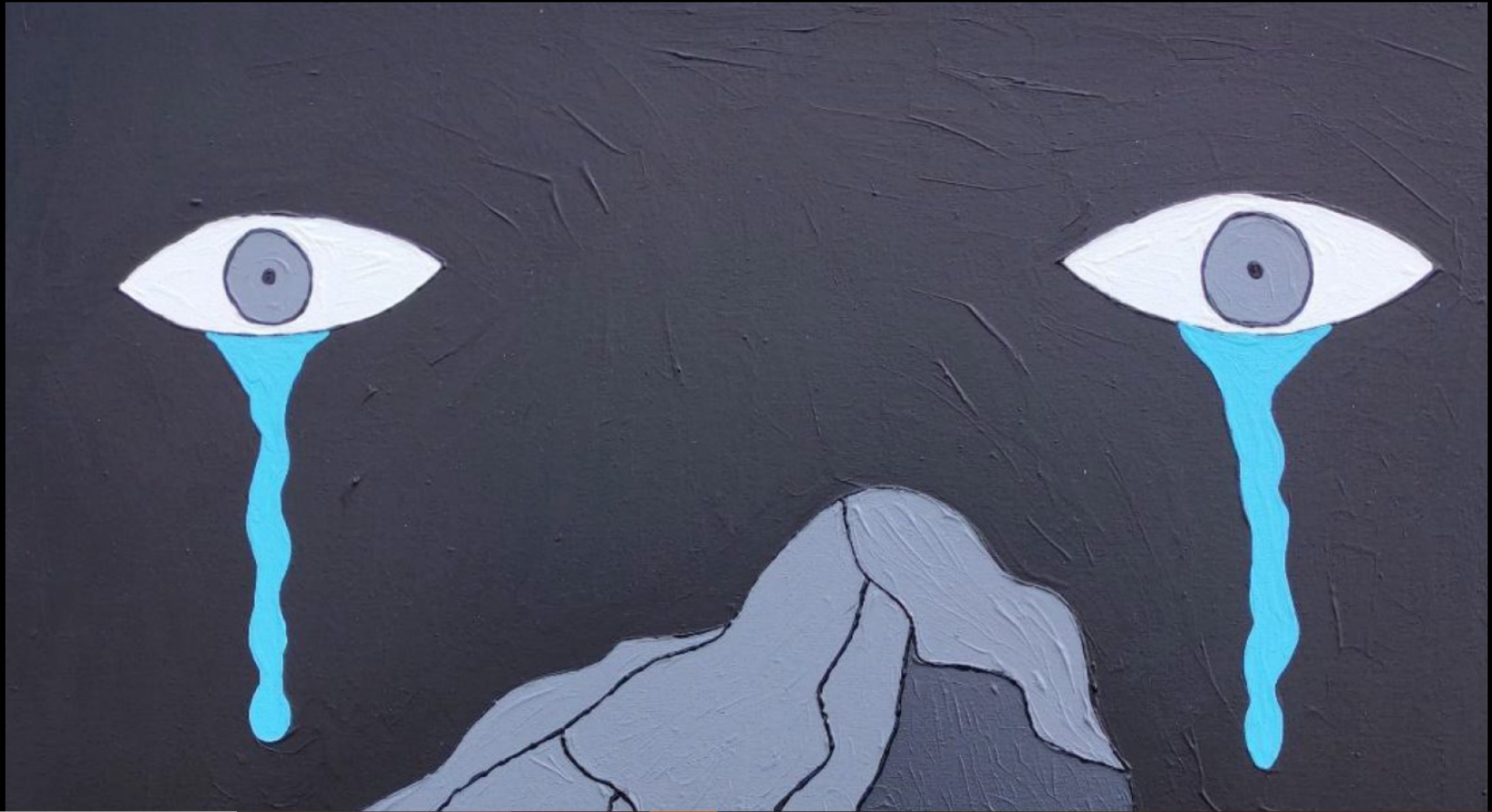
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12. **Innocence in me**, 80x60, 2020

The painting conveys the feeling when a person is unfairly offended. Somebody has crossed their borders, betrayed their basic trust, said something to them, which shouldn't be said.

This should have never been said and done. The person didn't expect this from a friend, but it happened. Yes.

And the person turned into a stone. Immovable, solid, hard, rooted. The stone, which stands on the dry cracked ground. Only eyes cry in the sky.

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13. Sometimes I wake up in the middle of the night from the sound of somebody crying, and then I realize, that I'm crying myself, 111x98, 2021

When a woman sleeps alone in a bed for a long time, the bed becomes colder. Waiting for somebody to share the bed with her, the woman is stockstill. She calms down, directs herself inwards, diminishes, becomes shallow. As if her bed and all her world are slowly buried in snow.

It's so good to sleep under the lumps of snow. It's so warm and cozy there, only you wouldn't want to go out.

But there is something, that can lay under the snow for the whole winter, sleep silently, and then upspring. These are walnuts. While the snow is sifting down on the solitary bed in the night forest, alive walnuts start to sprout out.

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14. **Cemetery of sleep**, 95x160, 2021

Silently whelming 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 – from 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.

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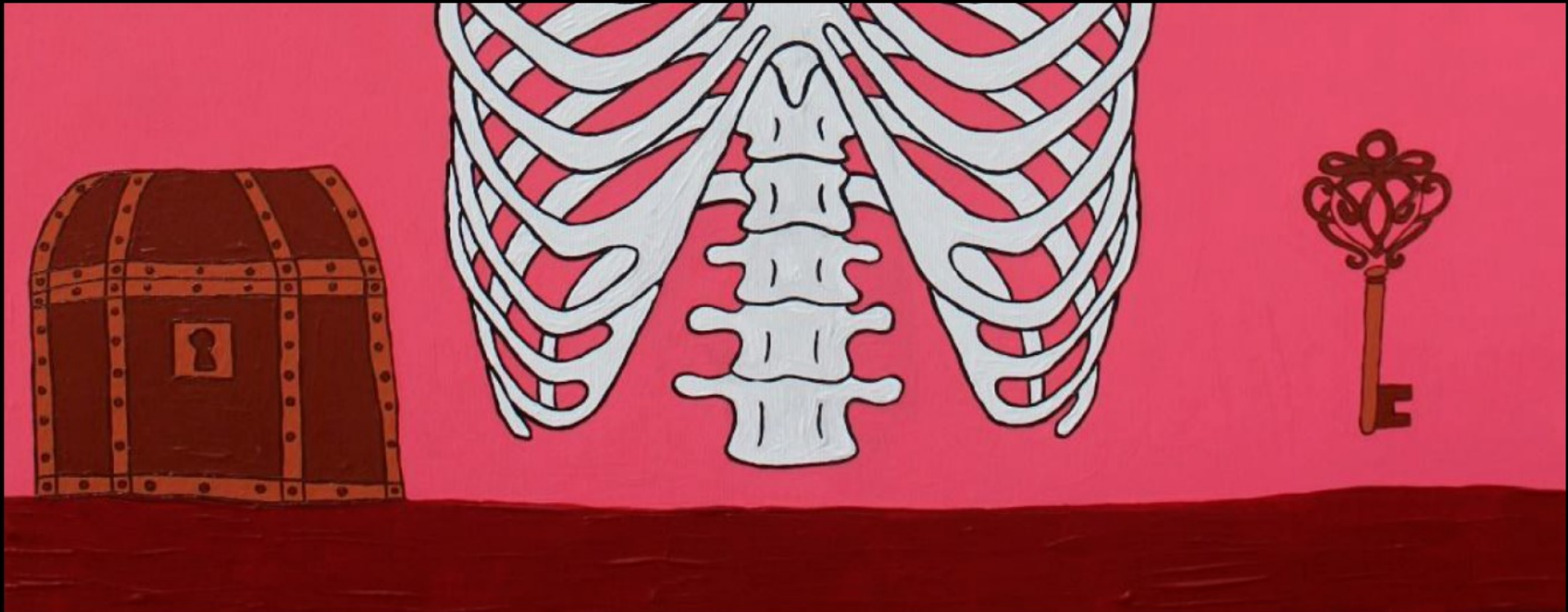
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15. My wedding bouquet, 95x75, 2021

How a woman who didn't get married, might feel herself 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 the 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.

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16. **Simple life**, 100x160, 2021

The necessity to service everyday responsibilities, solve tasks and problems, routine for the maintenance of life, adhesiveness of the things-to-do state exhaust at last. Life is exposed to a frenetic pace, and we don't have time to simply stand and look at the sky, to breath, to move, to enjoy, to live. A massive quantity of tasks covers and dissolves you, making lists

in your calendar, providing 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 slow snow.

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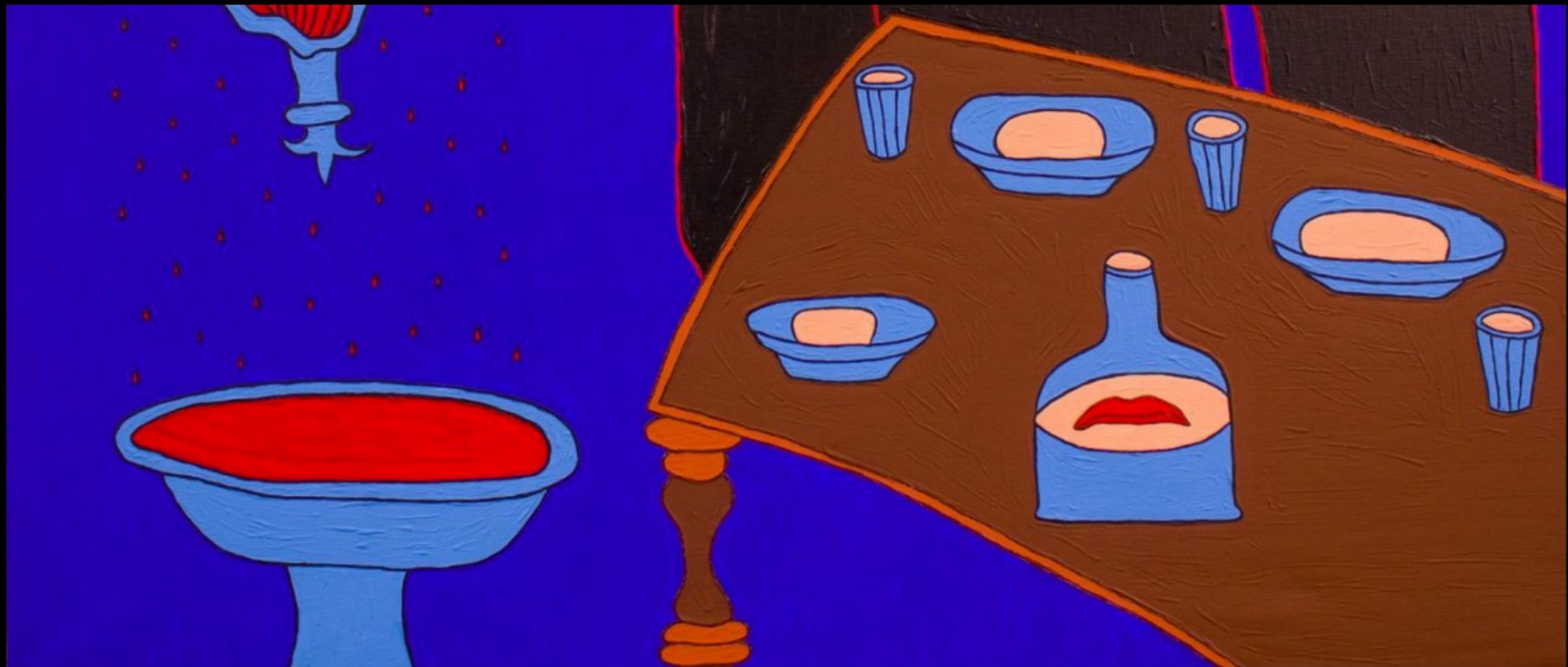


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17. **Silent people**, 75x95, 2022

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.