



Karl-Kristjan Nagel
Unknown Revolution

City Gallery
26 June -19 July 2015

The independence demonstrated by Karl-Kristjan Nagel (born 1977, graduated the Academy of Arts in painting in 1999) on the local art scene is conspicuous for his complete, extraordinary and wilful social sensitivity. He does not dive into much-discussed social criticism with a careful analytical approach, but constantly keeps his feelers ready to react on a wavelength that inevitably resonates with the spirit of the times, that flings his self-expression into several mediums and moves from psychedelic agitation to spiritual redemption. Nagel's audacity in biting off pieces of life as a global phenomenon, by dealing with the often unpleasant topics that are hushed up and do not touch us directly; his intrepidity in the face of ending up on the wrong side is everything but conservative.

Constant and rapid reactions to ever increasing ideologies and pockets of conflict rupture one's existence as a citizen in favour of one's existence as a person and do not leave much room for refining the artistic result. Yet the artist's talent and training keeps the raw aesthetics of his work in a coherent form, his hand does not rise toward total destruction and the sensitivity expands beyond pain to beauty.

The body of his work also includes photos, film and paintings employing three-dimensional effects; at the beginning of the 00s he exhibited video works alongside the latter, creating excellent and precise audio backgrounds for them.

Karl Nagel characterises the *Unknown Revolution* exhibition as follows:

Three large-format paintings with multiple part are at display, the personal interpretation of which, based on the author's position, are the following:

The first work, called Memorial to the Unknown Revolution attempts to demonstrate the differences between the consensually agreed interpretation of historical events and those based on a free spirit.

The second work, called Unwanted Land deals with the difficult decisions facing people – in this case, dying and going to war. This is dedicated to all socially sensitive souls, who having gone through an intellectual crisis, have decided to follow higher ideals and have often taken a path related to the most primitive struggle.

The third painting Leaving Sun, which can be read in a positive context, depicts the departure of human-faced light from the earthy sphere that is left in darkness.

The video installation on exhibit, with the title Three Phases of Reality is divided into three video works: “Art as the First Phase of Formality”, “War and Nothing but War” and “The Real Deal”. The first is an attempt to revive the metaphysical bond with the art logic inherent of my earlier creative periods; the second demonstrates the contemporary blood celebration via hours of documentary images assembled from public media. The third, as a therapy video, lays claim to introducing a more general and good-faith method of reconciliation.

Designed to complement the previous work, the fourth independent video, which is relayed through several TV monitors located on the floor, represents a pure youthful joy of living that stands apart from all the aforementioned serial and sequential thoughts.

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