



SERHIY SAVCHENKO. RESISTANCE AGAINST DEATH.

“Art is a form of resistance. And the principal subject matter of resistance is resistance against death”
Nicolas Bourriaud

Serhiy Savchenko’s series “Ruins and Reconstruction” created during a one-year period between 2018-2019 consists of 6 large scale diptychs each portraying the landscape of major world’s locations destroyed during World War II. The locations are Dresden, Coventry, Warsaw, Kyiv, Hiroshima and Gdansk. The series’ permanent location is in the Savchenko gallery in Gdansk, Poland.

The six diptychs named “Ruin and Reconstruction” were created as a part of the project “Cities in the Context of Civilizational Conflicts” that took place in 2018 in Berlin, Germany. Each piece consists of two adjacent panels sized 180X 120 cm. Each diptych’s overall size is 180 X 240cm.

Savchenko uses photographic reference to create realistic yet very abstract images of the global civilizational catastrophe on the macro level. Yet the works are filled with the emotions of Romanticism embodied in his meticulous study of ruins as individually beautiful particles of disintegrated communities. The artist claims that wars destroy and depersonify any kind of identity. Everything becomes blurred. The series is created in such a manner that each individual piece of every diptych can be combined with any other piece in the series, thus emphasizing the magnitude of similarity of sites after disintegration of their individual personal features.

Savchenko’s recognisable trademarks are his painterly technique and his personality as an artist. He employs gestural expressionist manner to apply paint and intuitive combination of colours to create a seemingly monochromatic images that by closer look reveal an astonishingly rich range of colour palette. Similar to Malevich’s famous Black Square, Savchenko’s blacks are quintessential combinations of almost all existing colours of the spectrum. The manner of painting is both innovative and controversial. He combines oil-based paints together with the antagonistic acrylic water-based paints to create cracks and flakes on his paintings thus portraying the physical effect of destruction and disintegration generated by conflicting media.

Savchenko’s personality as an artist can be distinguished by his ability to produce a detailed and realistic image working in a completely abstract manner. He seems to be able to see his subject matter from both global and detail perspective. All his works are reflection of this powerful combination of talent and skill.

Almost sublime, the paintings offer the views from the tall floor-to-ceiling glass windows of the modern skyscrapers down on urban landscapes as if they were archaeological sites designed for a study of the history of humanity. They also resemble the view from the future to the past where the viewer is located in a certain present moment in between the past and the future. Savchenko argues for the viewer’s participation in art. He removes himself from the scene leaving the room for study and reflexion. If art is a form of resistance against death, then Serhiy Savchenko’s art is definitely an important part of it.