

Academy of Fine Arts in Krakow
Faculty of Painting

Title: Prisoner of Life - an artist involved in the dramaturgy of history

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PhD thesis summary

Doctoral dissertation: "Prisoner of life - an artist entangled in the dramaturgy of history", for some time took over my thoughts and completely changed my perception of the external and internal world, motivating me to search for morality.

In my dissertation, I focused on humans and what we used to call humanity, reducing my considerations to the analysis of the seven deadly sins in the context of Christian ethics. I have examined the nature and cause of sin.

My dissertation was built by those key words: evil, sin, prisoner, entanglement, history, dramaturgy, life, morality and artist. In my work, I prove the theory that we are all prisoners of life in its entirety - which I describe in my written work, on the other hand, that we are unable to avoid emotions that may be the source of iniquity - which is reflected in my paintings interpreting the issue of the seven deadly sins. I attempt to analyse the artist and his work in the context of his life, cognition and observation, social, political and religious involvement, as well as entanglement in the dramaturgy of history. In my written work, I mention and describe the post-war artists who with their attitude helped me prove the thesis and develop the topic of the work.

For many years my painting research has focused on issues related to human existence. This active exploration of the topic results from the internal need to deal with human weaknesses and imperfections.

The written work includes an introduction, two main chapters with sub-chapters, a summary, a bibliography and a list of illustrations.

The introduction summarises the most important ideas, theories, research, assumptions and purpose discussed in the article.

Chapter I.

In the first chapter, "Defined title", there are sections: "Prisoner", "Life", "Prisoner of life", "Artist entangled in the drama of history", in which I analyse the words contained in the title of the dissertation. In these considerations I refer to enslavement, freedom or its lack, free will, the subject of life, being and "bondage". I quote the thoughts and concepts of people of science, theoreticians and church fathers, I consider aspects of human life, its preferences, virtues and defects, and look for confirmation for the thesis about "imprisonment in life". The assumptions

were to confirm the validity of the theory that we are hostages to our own will, history, witness to events or our own vocations.

In the last of the subsections of the first chapter, I present the profiles of artists who are particularly important to me, due to many years of inspiration, and also important in the context of my work. In the second part of the title of the dissertation "An artist entangled in the drama of history", I strictly refer to the first part, emphasizing the strong and inextricable relationship between the artist - a prisoner of his art and a person involved in everyday matters, more or less important, personal, and those of global importance related to the current events of an artist or a story that touches him in a special way. I narrowed the scope of my research to analysing activities of selected artists of post-war art and a few contemporary ones. What they have in common, experience of war, the Holocaust and their reference to the reality marked by enslavement in the totalitarian system and affected by the "excess of freedom" of the democratic system. The key to choosing the artists was the message contained in their works and their fidelity to their ideals. I have analysed these artists' artwork, devoting more space to them, including: Andrzej Wróblewski, Jan Lebenstein, Francis Bacon, Jonasz Stern, and I discuss the works of Maria Jarema, Alina Szapocznikow, Magdalena Abakanowicz, Józef Szajna, Tadeusz Kantor, Władysław Hasior. I also briefly mentioned the activities of the "Wprost" group (Maciej Bieniasz, Zbysław Grzywacz, Leszek Sobocki and Jacek Waltoś).

Chapter II

Chapter II "Broken Human Nature in Pictures. Overview "consists of three subsections: "The Existence of Evil ", "Saligia - Corrupted Human Nature? ", "Seven Deadly Sins in Pictures ". The last one is devoted to the descriptions of my paintings, my main doctoral dissertation. Earlier, however, I describe evil and the reason for its existence in a philosophical and religious context, citing philosophers and theorists, including: Plotinus, St. Augustine, St. Tomasz, Immanuel Kant, Antoni Kępiński. In the subsection "Saligia - corrupt human nature?" I discuss human morality and ethics in terms of religion and faith, taking into account the dogmas of the church and Christian philosophy. At this point, for the first time, I indicated the direct inspiration and reason for the topic of the work. I presented the themes of cruelty and the subject of the moral fall of man described in Marek Łuszczyna's book "Mała zbrodnia. Polskie obozy koncentracyjne" (A little crime. Polish concentration camps).

In the subsection "The seven deadly sins in pictures", I present the paintings created as a part of my doctorate, depicting their development and describe the creative process itself. The comparative research of my paintings with the works of other artists based on or related to the subject of my work allows for a deeper understanding of its meaning and sense. I analysed each of the painted seven triptychs and individual paintings through: formal analysis, relativity, content and aesthetics, defining individual flaws: wrath, pride, sloth, greed, lust, gluttony, envy, which became the main source and perpetrator of cultural research.

The summary of the work includes final reflection on the meaning of creativity, our "imprisonment" in the context of the necessity to create, the role of the artist and his work relating to my point of view and my own creative path.

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