

Pasi Lampela, author & director

Impressions on Mika Vesalahti's *Hell God's Machine*, a series of paintings

The intestines of the paintings spread all over the canvas as if a landslide brawn was drowning the human civilization. From the midst of the outpouring gust we can perceive structures, then ruins, movement of large animals, and – eventually – human figures as ghosts or souvenirs from lost worlds.

The pulp extruding to the surface of the paintings inflames disgust, vertigo, and a sensation of drowning in way not unfamiliar from the images of plastic waste swirling about the oceans or the archeology of refuse dumps.

But also, other emotions are awoken: that of liberation, of final victory. Something closed deep inside, something forbidden is released.

Nature floods the dead structures of civilization under its own culture – the organic consumes the inorganic.

Guts are being torn apart, sewers open, the levels of psyche burst through each other. Shit fountains out for us to scent the rotten only a few meters away from the artistic images, deep down in our lungs.

Whereas Francis Bacon mutilated the people of his portraits into unrecognizable with his paintbrush, Vesalahti's work shows us the entire world as disfigured by wars and natural catastrophes.

An overfed Western individual saturated by consumption and juvenile narcissism has transcended all his natural limits and become a self-indulgent all-dissipating monster that explodes into piles of fat.

From within the flesh, the intestines, the excrement, the blood and the vomit gleam certain reminiscences of life as we used to know our being: its possibilities now forever lost.

So wake up to the alarm bell: our self-written history is ending, human being is losing his own game.

Enormous masses of materials are on the move on the canvas relentlessly. They bubble and sigh ready and willing to erupt and cover the cruelty and incapacity of us privileged humans to live with our brains too large and our hearts too fearful.

The works of Mika Vesalahti significantly distinguish themselves from the contemporary art that expresses itself by hanging a supermarket plastic bag on the gallery wall, alongside other artistically and societally insignificant forms of expression. This is the self-deceptive societal form of plenty of contemporary art: projecting criticism via banal acts into pretentious artefacts.

Vesalahti separates himself with his paintings meaningfully from the mainstream socially aware contemporary art: he is simultaneously human and inhuman. His paintings and other images realize the process of personal liberation, recognition of the darker side of oneself, the return of the rejected...

But at the same time Vesalahti's paintings grow beyond known dimensions towards ancient times, to apocalypse, to oblivion. They remind us of where we now are, despite the fact that we are not yet courageous enough to admit it, Vesalahti's paintings reach the very reality we hope for and are afraid of.

We could still have time to save ourselves.