



Press release

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Painting exhibition

FREEDOM AND RANDOMNESS:

Limits of the Visible

21.02.2026 – 29.03.2026

Jekabpils History Museum (Jēkabpils Vēstures muzejs)
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ABOUT THE EXHIBITION. Painting Manifesto.

A work of art is the result of the artist's struggle with his own thoughts and materials (e.g., canvas and paint). That struggle exists even when the viewer is overwhelmed by the initial impression that the work has come into the world with a single, light, and elegant wave of the hand. This aspect of struggle shows that painting is not only a gift to the viewer, but also a way of knowing oneself (the creator) and marking one's being.

Abstract art is not just a formal game; it expresses the artist's sensibility in a generalised way, freeing the viewer from the obligation to experience the world through the clear identification of recognisable images and the colours of reality¹. According to Gilles Deleuze, it can be said that in painting, "as in the meditation of waking consciousness, thoughts break out and reveal the essential desires of the meditating person"². That is why I am not concerned with the dictates of images of reality, but with the intuitive judgement of a changing reality. This is why painting differs from science: science

¹ Władysław Strzemiński suggests this assumption; see Strzemiński, W. (1958). *Teoria widzenia*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 86; en. Strzemiński, W. (1958). *The Theory of Seeing*. Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 86.

² Deleuze's idea is paraphrased by A. Gudauskas; see Gudauskas, A. (2019). *Filosofinė kino filmų prigimtis. Andrejaus Tarkovskio kinematografija* [Mokomoji metodinė priemonė]. Vilnius: Vilniaus universiteto leidykla, 34; en. Gudauskas, A. (2019). *The Philosophical Nature of Cinema. Andrei Tarkovsky's Cinematography* [Teaching Methodology]. Vilnius: Vilnius University Press, 34).



knows nature through measurement, whereas art draws on intuition and feelings that cannot be measured³. Art becomes a “mediator of the ineffable”⁴.

New provocations and tensions in our reflections on the world arise from intuitive creativity. The work transmits the creator’s tensions to the viewer, who, usually drowning in the routine of everyday life, thinks of reality as an elementary (undiscussable) given. But, according to Maurice Merleau-Ponty, a work of art gives intuitive access to the objects and systems of the world⁵; it exposes the very life of reality, like the nerve of a stung tooth. This is also reflected in the painter Jackson Pollock’s idea that abstract painting is about mechanical reality (what is done and how it is done; what we can learn from dismantling reality, if not breaking it without pity)⁶. Thus, without our awareness or preparation, the painting revises the reality around it by asking fundamental questions.

Freedom and chance are the companions of abstract painting. According to Herbert Read, these two components push back the limits of the artist’s imagination and force the viewer to reconsider a finite, fixed horizon of visibility⁷. In painting, freedom and chance are linked to the dynamics of composition and the unusual combination of colours, where the striking flickering of forms (like a sign of movement) not only depicts the instability of time, but also opens up new horizons of perception and interpretation that do not necessarily coincide with the author’s original intention⁸. Perhaps that is why I prefer abstract painting to figurative representations of the world. Here, brushstroke and colour are central rather than the object/subject’s form and construction, and the familiar, easily predictable narrative.

The paint on my canvases is applied with a clumsy and unruly brush. As each brushstroke points in a different direction, giving the impression that it has a life of its own, the whole painting looks like an

³ Anzenbacher, A. (1992). *Filosofijos įvadas*. Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulis, 23 (Iš vokiečių kalbos vertė Algirdas Degutis, Donata Macevičienė, Traidenis Raudeliūnas, Tomas Sodeika, Arūnas Sverdiolas, Gediminas Žukas); en. Anzenbacher, A. (1992). *Introduction to Philosophy*. Vilnius: Katalikų pasaulis, 23 (Translated from German by Algirdas Degutis, Donata Macevičienė, Traidenis Raudeliūnas, Tomas Sodeika, Arūnas Sverdiolas, Gediminas Žukas).

⁴ Gombrich, E. H. (2000). *Dailė ir iliuzija: Vaizdavimo psichologijos studija*. Vilnius: Alma Littera, 67 (iš anglų kalbos vertė Rasa Antanavičiūtė); en.

Gombrich, E. H. (2000). *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*. Vilnius: Alma Littera, 67 (translated from English by Rasa Antanavičiūtė).

⁵ See Merleau-Ponty, M. (2005). *La Phénoménologie de la Perception*. Paris: Gallimard.

⁶ See. Harrison, Ch., Wood, P. (Ed.). (2002). *Art in Theory 1900-2000: an Anthology of Changing Ideas*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing

⁷ See Read, H. (1952). *The Philosophy of Modern Art*. London: Faber and Faber.

⁸ The idea of movement and departure from the author's original idea is suggested by the composition in Wölfflin, H. (1915). *Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe*. München; Summers, D. (2009). Heinrich Wölfflin's 'Kunstgeschichtliche Grundbegriffe', 1915; *The Burlington Magazine*, 151 (1276), 476-479.



unruly (anti)system. Here, disobedience opens up shifting landscapes through which the viewer can wander, constantly changing the trajectory of his or her thoughts and the angle of his or her gaze. The painting becomes an open question: how far can the viewer restrain his or her imagination, and how far can it wander in the endless distances shaped by the painting?

The unruly brush, the changing and heterogeneous composition—this is my artistic style, born not only from the desire to experiment and speak about reality differently, but also from the search for a unique artistic language. I create my own system of written signs in my paintings; I develop it, and I try to uncover primordial writing, which Jacques Derrida also called *archi-writing*⁹. All this is reminiscent of the artist's utopian dream—an unattainable ideal: to penetrate authentic artistic language, to understand it fully, and to speak through a perfect work. Each picture (as well as each pattern) refers indirectly and/or fragmentarily to the beginning of the picture somewhere¹⁰.

In my experimental media work, I develop my artistic language through an exploration of technology. By combining different digital tools, I unexpectedly find compelling (re)visual solutions. This creative strategy can be described as hybridisation, which Wolfgang Iser explains as a combination of puzzling expressions and techniques¹¹. The pursuit of the unexpected thus determines the entire authorial landscape of interdisciplinary media.

In the case of a series of paintings, as in the exhibition of the works, everything happens organically, like an orchestra playing a piece of music: at a particular moment, the sound of the string instruments becomes more pronounced, followed by the keyboards, and then the rhythm of the percussion intensifies before receding into the background. As in music, I am interested in the sound of both the individual work and the collection as a whole. That is, the painting system represents a change in which, as one accent is emphasised, others add richness or recede into the background. Through rhythm, the paintings proclaim a world in motion, not suspended; they shape the possibility of experiencing drama, not peaceful slumber.

⁹ Derrida, J. (2006). *Apie Gramatologiją*. Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 166 (iš prancūzų kalbos vertė Nijolė Keršytė); en. Derrida, J. (2006). *On Grammatology*. Vilnius: Baltos lankos, 166 (translated from French by Nijolė Keršytė).

¹⁰ Venckus, R. (2014). *Jacques Derrida dekonstrukcijos taikymas videomeno tyrimui*. Vilniaus: Vilniaus dailės akademija, 21; en. Venckus, R. (2014). *The Application of Jacques Derrida's Deconstruction to Video Art Research*. Vilnius: Vilnius Academy of Arts, 21.

¹¹ Associations about change are inspired by Iser, W. (2002). *Mūsų postmodernioji modernybė*. Vilnius: Alma Littera, 75 (iš vokiečių kalbos vertė Alfonsas Tekorius); en. Iser, W. (2002). *Our Postmodern Modernity*. Vilnius: Alma Littera, 75 (Translated from German by Alfonsas Tekorius).



ABOUT THE ARTIST. Media artist and art critic Prof. Dr. Remigijus Venckus is a prominent figure in the field, known for his interdisciplinary approach to art creation, his role in curating exhibitions, his commitment to education through teaching and visiting universities in Lithuania and abroad, and his contributions to contemporary art and media culture through his written work. The artist's *modus operandi* is characterised by a combination of experimental photography and computer graphics, as well as acrylic painting and collage. The thematic focus of the artist's oeuvre encompasses memory, time, individual experience, and interpretations of the body. The individual in question has accumulated 22 years of professional experience in the academic sector. He has held 10 solo exhibitions abroad and 85 in Lithuania; he has participated in 51 international and 41 local art events/exhibitions. His works are held in art museums and private collections in Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and Germany. He has authored 440 critical essays (articles) on art, culture, and media issues. He has curated 26 international and 13 national art events, festivals, and exhibitions.

Note: All works are available for purchase. For more information, visit shop.venckus.eu. To purchase, please get in touch with the author by email (remigijus@venckus.eu). This exhibition is not supported by any Lithuanian institutions, foundations, private individuals, businesses, or other organisations. It is organised on the initiative of the author and the museum.

A WORD FROM THE EXHIBITION CURATOR. Rimigijus Venckus is a renowned figure in Lithuanian cultural life, serving as an art critic and curator. His research is focused on the intricacies of Lithuanian art. His gaze encompasses issues of interdisciplinarity in video art, photography, painting, and graphic art. Venckus has been sharing his accumulated experience with his students for more than two decades.

Since 2023, Venckus has been venturing into the creative field of painting. It is evident that throughout his extensive career as a photographer, the artist has demonstrated a consistent, unified artistic expression. In the domain of painting, however, the author's identity becomes a distinct entity. He engages in experimentation and seeks new means of expression. R. Venckus is amenable to discourse on the subject of evolving cultural and social realities. The artist's personal life experiences and transformations are uniquely reflected in his canvases.



Despite painting's historical emphasis on colour, Venckus' oeuvre exhibits a diverse array of painting techniques that defy conventional expectations. The artist frequently draws on field painting. The artist's painting style is characterised by precision and brevity in its means of expression. The works of the aforementioned artist have been described as intriguing. Initially, the viewer is met with canvases that feature large, evenly painted fields of colour. Upon closer inspection, the viewer's eye is drawn to the subtle yet eloquent contrasting graphic details of the work, which at first appear insignificant.

In the analysis of R. Venckus' canvases, the term 'colour field' is employed deliberately. His paintings frequently resemble magical maps, exuding a sense of familiarity that suggests they are reflections of urban structures reinterpreted by the artist. The interplay of colour fields and the emotive intensity of the painting direct the observer's attention to the minute, often graphic components of the composition. It is posited that these elements reflect the artist's expression and intrigue the viewer, encouraging them to search for the original motif. The construction of paintings provides viewers with a multi-layered, intellectual, and aesthetic experience.

R. Venckus' recent paintings indicate a shift in the artist's approach, marked by a departure from the rigid, intellectually rigorous harmony of colour fields. Instead, the artist invites the viewer to explore motifs informed by nature's malleability. These are not conventional or predictable. Despite their apparent adherence to the principles of Art Nouveau, the works are significantly influenced by the actual landscape, a factor the author adeptly navigates.

It is evident that, on occasion, R. Venckus' ideas no longer align with established interpretations of colour experiences. The paintings are characterised by an overabundance of graphic elements, suggesting that graphic expression is not an alien concept for the author. A significant proportion of the canvases challenge the conventional perception of painting, drawing viewers into new and intriguing graphic layers. The artistic creations pose the question of whether painting itself is prepared for the present era of transformation, a period in which machine learning (artificial intelligence) poses a threat to its very existence. The author's work does not necessarily respond to profound, existential interpretations of the fate of colour play, nor does the author's newly discovered expression necessarily provide answers about what painting should be or what transformations await it. However, one thing is clear – the works truly draw us into unexpected experiences of visual reality.



The exhibition is new, refreshing, fresh, somewhat unexpected, intellectual, aesthetic, and truly interesting. It invites the viewer to experience something impressive.

Prof. Dr. Rimantas Plungė (Vytautas Magnus University).