

ArtRio 2023. Radenko Milak

September 13 - 17

Radenko Milak, (Bosnia, 1980) is a multi-media artist (watercolor, oil, video) whose work is concerned with the formation and consolidation of historic memory. Born in the ex-Yugoslavia, Milak was exposed, since his early formative period, to the worldview created by propaganda from the East, as well as to the experimental film and art of the soviet and post-soviet periods. An acute sense of the power of the image, be it derived from documental or mass media sources, has been central to the development of his work.

This approach is materialized in thematic series of works, such as 'Dates' (365 watercolors, one per day), 'Endless Movie' and University of Disaster. In recent times, these have led to a shifting attention towards current global events, exemplified by works on spatial research, covid or urbanism, and design. One of his latest series, 'Neighbors', highlights the urban environment of high-density high-rise global cities, where paradoxically, many people live together in total isolation. As part of this series, the empty streets of cities like La Habana, Cuba, or the favelas of Rio de Janeiro, highlight an awareness of place and place-making, the human-built environment as material culture, the resourcefulness and creativity lying behind all humans, beyond economic or social classifications.



Radenko Milak. Brazilia. From the series Broken Time. Watercolor, 25 x 35 cm. 2023.

Proposal: a solo show of new work based on Milak's critique of modernism, politics, and esthetics. Contrasting views of Chandigarh, Le Corbusier's ideal capital for India, and Brasilia, Costa's monumental city, serve to underline how "... modernity has always represented the breaking with an order or an existing state of balance"¹ or, in other words, the strive to forge utopias also brought forth a paradoxical blend forces of cruelty and destruction, novelty, and historical erasure. It's about a mix of paradise, tropical modernity, and human endeavors.

[1] Lejeune Jean-Françoise, Cruelty and Utopia, CIVA, Brussels, 2003