

Analysis of the New Art Movement: Abstract-Figurative Metarealism

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Abstract

This article formulates the characteristics of a new movement in modern art based on the analysis of my paintings and the art reviews written by art curators and art historians.

The movement is called Abstract-Figurative Metarealism due to its characteristics. Abstract-Figurative Metarealism is a modern direction in art, the main idea of which is to express superconsciousness, the superphysical nature of things within the framework of painting. Using creative strategies to visualize the invisible and stage the supernatural in the painting, an Abstract-Figurative Metarealist attempts, at the scientific level, to distinguish the “real” from spiritual, mythical, and imaginary phenomena and develops methods for understanding the nature of these phenomena based on understanding one’s essence, self-awareness.

Abstract-figurative Metarealism covers reality in the entire range of its actual and possible transformations freeing images through abstraction transgressing the borders of the figurative art. Abstract-Figurative Metarealist creates compositions as a result of explorations of superconscious imagery.

Keywords: new art, paintings, abstract-figurative metarealism, expression of superphysical nature, research into superconscious imagery.

The aim of this article is to formulate the characteristics of a new movement in modern art and make the observation and exploration of this movement based on the analysis of my paintings and the art reviews written by art curators and art historians.

The movement that is analyzed here can be called **Abstract-Figurative Metarealism** due to its characteristics.

For more clarity, abstract and figurative art is defined and the conclusion on what is called **abstract-figurative** is provided; subsequently, the characteristics of the new art movement **Abstract-Figurative Metarealism** are formulated.

Abstract art consists of expressing what the artist wants to say without showing any form that we can associate with or recognize in the real world. David Kakabadzé writes in the materials for the paper on modern painting in *Spektri* #1,1990, p.6 (as cited by Ketevan Kintsurashvili, 2018, p. 111) that “The more distant a work is from a direct imitation of nature, the more artistic it is.” Abstract art is about not showing full human forms, animals, or objects. Paradoxically, in abstract art, the abstract elements, such as “form, colour, line, tone, and texture,” recreate “the world of nature and our human civilization”. (The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 2007, Volume 1; pg. 41) From Pablo Picasso’s perspective “There is no abstract art. You must always start with something. Afterward you can remove all traces of reality” (Pablo Picasso, 1939, pg. 16).

In “The Diary of a Genius” Salvador Dali expresses his opinion on how it can be applied in painting: “... l’art des abstraits – de ceux qui ne croient à rien et par conséquent ne peignent rien- servirait de piédestal glorieux à un Salvador Dali ... (the art of the abstractionists- of those, who believe in nothing and, therefore, depict ‘nothing’ - would serve as a glorious pedestal for Salvador Dali... “(Salvador Dali, 1980, pg. 37). These artists’ perspectives enable us to get the insight of the context of

the historical perspective of how different movements such as cubism and surrealism evolved and the importance of the abstract and figurative expression in the art movement development in modern art.

Figurative art represents things to identify and relate to directly, regardless of whether they resemble real objects or not. It is unnecessary to follow restricted rules since things do not have to be realistic. Things like a blue forest, people with wings, a two-headed dog, a girl dressed as an octopus, or the reflection of an angel in a mirror are different from what we know about reality, but we can still say that these are people, a dog, and a reflection, so that it is still figurative art. This nuance is one of the aspects of the Abstract-Figurative Metarealism.

In the review On Art By Gayané Manasyan: About Ways of Seeing by an Art Critic and Curator Dr. Khatuna Khabuliani the paintings are described as “almost abstract” (Khabuliani, 2023). I believe it can be called **an abstract-figurative image**.

Abstract-figurative art is a mélange of abstract and figurative art: it enables us to find forms in abstract fine art that are not as noticeable but express feelings to connect with.

From the perspective of art history, Metarealism (from the Greek meta μετά – between, beyond and realis - real) evolved from the work of early XX-th century artists who considered that art could explore existence beyond human consciousness. According to Encyclopedia Britannica, Italian artist and writer Giorgio de Chirico (1888–1978) founded Pittura Metafisica (Metaphysical Art), a movement combining art with philosophy. (The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 2007, Volume 8, pg.62) From their works we can see that metaphysical artists were known for painting faceless figures, mystical illumination, dream-like perspectives.

According to Encyclopedia Britannica, the elements of mystery in de Chirico's Paintings dwindled after 1919, when he became interested in the technical methods of the Italian classical tradition. (The New Encyclopedia Britannica, 2007, Volume 3; pg. 928). Despite this fact, in the 1920s and 1930's the movement influenced the surrealists and magic realists. Half a century later, artists began using the shortened term "Metarealism" or "Meta-Realism" to refer to the mysterious art with a spiritual, supernatural, or futuristic aura. (Craven, 2019).

Metaphysics in the traditional sense relates to our understanding of existence and - the nature of physical and mental being- reality. However, de Chirico's idea of Metaphysical art was inspired by Nietzsche's philosophical ideas. Therefore, the role of the artist was to portray the anarchic or even irrational reality of the world based on Nietzsche's perspective who saw the mystery of life originating from everyday objects. [7] De Chirico's work is more the depiction of the enigmatic, phenomenal, the cryptic, rather than the exploration of the perceptible or natural aspects of objects.

Dr. Tamar Belashvili writes: “Despite the external, as if specific hints, which are mainly manifested in the titles of the works, she (Gayané) never paints a reality borrowed from mundane life.” (T.Belashvili, 2024, pg. 45). Abstract-Figurative Metarealism is interested in observing the perceptible or natural aspects of objects noticing the unnoticeable things about them that transgress the mundane reality. It strives to create relatability through the abstraction and other visual elements that it involves.

Abstract-Figurative Metarealism preserves the features of metaphysical art that captures the mysterious in life. It is less about specific content, more about creating mood. I believe the introduction of the abstract depth in my artworks removed the narrative from the metarealism providing this style with more flexibility and freedom.

Abstract-Figurative Metarealist must be interested in exploring deep emotional reservoirs within us.

The authenticity of the various layers of reality can be identified with the realism of the perceived reality, which creates the illusion of many “realities” connected by the continuity of transformations and changes of state.

A **metareal image** is a way of interconnecting multiple realities formed through individual perception, which creates the authenticity of the image as a statement of the growing unity of multiple realities.

In metarealistic paintings, by combining realistic and "other realities", a new authentic reality is born. This reality affects and inspires us to compare all realities and associate them with each other.

Abstract-Figurative Metarealism partially rejects plot and narrative, since they make realistic representation superficial. There is no pure retelling of the narrative through figurative painting. This is facilitated by the abstract principle, and its presence in the composition, the main feature of which is that real figures are wholly or partially subject to abstraction, where form is minimized and line, dynamics of movement, and color dominate. It can be called the space between our concepts, the connection with the Almighty, the mystery of Alchemy, more scientifically - the deep cognitive process that determines the choice of the reality depicted on the canvas.

Abstract-Figurative Metarealism is a modern direction in art, the main idea of which is to express superconsciousness, the superphysical nature of things within the framework of painting.

Abstract-Figurative Metarealism shows the state of objects or characters in a universal moment of time, the duration of which may vary depending on the compositional and plastic characteristics. The Art Historian Tamar Belashvili writes in **The Bamboo Forest Gayané Manasyan Solo Exhibition Art Catalogue**:

"Gayané tends to be more abstract in her compositions, although individual shapes there play the role of crucial markers. Here, the border between the real, the perceived, the rational and the irrational is so fragile and transitional that it may even give the viewer a feeling of a unified metaphysical drama. The layer of self-awareness is the only thing that remains unchanged in all these works" (T.Belashvili, pg. 45).

Abstract-figurative Metarealism offers a refutation of the concept there is no place 'nowhere' and no time 'never'. There is no epochality here in the sense of the time and its visible signs (style, dresses, tablewear...) and the absence of this is in itself epoch-making: a time continuum, in simple words, this is a world in which everything that exists and everything that happened is located and happened somewhere and once is absent and is identified with eternity. According to the art historian Tamar Belashvili "The mysterious, vision-like artistic reality of her (Gayané's) works takes the viewer to that rare unity of place, time and space, which can be considered a prerequisite for the philosophical discourse of the content interpretation" (T.Belashvili, 2024,pg. 45).

There is a reality open to the vision of a person, a reality open to the vision of a child, a reality open to the vision of artificial intelligence, a reality open to the vision of a fish, a reality open to the vision of a bird, a reality open to the vision of an insect, a reality open to the vision of a ruler, a reality open to the vision of a believer, a reality open to the vision of an artist, and even reality folded into the physical formula $E = mc^2$.

The abstract-figurative metareal image is a way of interconnecting all these realities, affirming their growing unity. Sometimes easily recognizable images create a scene of an alternative reality, enhancing the manifestation of the sacred and supernatural, a "familiar" alien world or spiritual dimensions, **meta-real windows** are visualized.

Painting possesses a greater degree of science than we might initially realize and artist's task becomes to explore the universe through the techniques that the means of expression provides us with.

The appropriate formulation of the characteristics of **Abstract-Figurative Metarealism** can make it stand out as a distinctive movement among other movements.

1. Here the features of **Abstract-Figurative Metarealism** is based on the analysis of the distinctive features of this movement. The artist who uses these principles can be called an Abstract-Figurative Metarealist.

2. The Abstract-Figurative Metarealist is interested in the superconscious – a higher level of awareness that perceives multiple dimensions and creates a sacred, otherworldly aura.

3. Abstract-Figurative Metarealist depicts one's vision of possible realities and their unity.

4. Abstract-Figurative Metarealism cannot be seen completely as a window into the unconscious - a region where logic gives way to irrationality and illogic entirely; rather it is transgressing beyond and above consciousness.

5. The spontaneity of the expression of the image is present in a large dose in Abstract-Figurative Metarealism: it is the stage after the meditative analytical one, the layer of the realistic image, the moment when abstraction within it is created.

6. In Abstract-Figurative Metarealism, the main guideline is to capture the atmosphere of the unity of many realities and not dreams on canvas. Abstract-Figurative Metarealism is not concerned with the distortion of reality through dreams, but with the study of an alternative reality, multiple realities.

7. The main task here is the liberation of the Self, suppressed by this reality, through contact with the superconscious. Such art is intended to give a person the opportunity to master not only one's inner Self, about which one knows nothing, but also to study it at the level of higher consciousness.

8. It is worth noting that when the artist is in the creative process, the episodes dreamed here are not interesting until the mind analyzes this subconscious connecting it with something perceptible and easy to understand in everyday life.

In other words, Abstract-Figurative Metarealism is not a dreamy dream - it is otherworldly, mysterious, supernatural, futuristic, avant-garde, prophetic. The title of the painting, recognized as "specific hints" by Dr. Belashvili (Tamar Belashvili et al., is no less important - it is partly the final element in completing the picture: the relationship between word and image. Using creative strategies to visualize the invisible and stage the supernatural in the painting, an Abstract-Figurative Metarealist attempts, at the scientific level, to distinguish the "real" from spiritual, mythical, and imaginary phenomena and develops methods for understanding the nature of these phenomena based on understanding one's essence, self-awareness.

This painting can be identified with scientific research on canvas thanks to complex and analytical thinking and a meditative-transcendental state. Through multiple concretizations of images and their spontaneous generalizations, the reality of a cosmological nature is manifested; where the observer at the same moment in time, regardless of the place and direction of observation, detects the same picture, **the universal truth**.

Thus, Abstract-Figurative Metarealism produces a corresponding abstract form for a wide audience - humanity. Based on a more abstract musical sound, more easily perceived concrete objects appear, which we can call objective reality. A direct study of what is subjectively perceived by the artist and, on the other hand, for the viewer, who perceives this subjectivity objectively, the image is given specific and subjective content, the bearer of which is the viewer himself.

Tamar Belashvili in her review for my solo exhibition the Bamboo Forest writes: "The desire to access the unseen, the mysterious, is very strong in Gayané's artworks. This applies with equal force to both man and the world in general - the world around her and her inner world" (T.Belashvili, 2024, pg. 45).

The manifestation of the unexpected and previously unseen, but at the same time familiar, is present in the artworks and is revealed to the viewers in such a way that they do not need to have specific knowledge, although those who have it, the perception of the paintings will also change in terms of the scale of perception of a certain reality. There is the presence of the duality of existential concepts, such as birth-death; earthly-heavenly, spiritual; stagnation – renewal, progress; love-hate; good-evil; human-divine. In Abstract-Figurative Metarealism, the factor of cooperation between the

subconscious and the supernatural partially prevails over the rational, which creates previously uncreated abstract images; however, it is not completely irrational and ultimately analysis leads to harmonizing concrete images in abstraction. The state of creation in abstract-figurative metarealism takes place continuously: This analysis is continuous even when the painting is not yet started on the canvas: it is the creative search of metaphysical meaning of superconscious, state of consciousness based on true ideas, on an understanding and realization of universal truth with the metamorphosis of the image and creation of the artistic realities.

There is nowhere to escape from the oppressive reality except to run back into childhood, but already consciously to another reality. My Bamboo Forest series and all the compositions are entirely dedicated to this mission.

All these characterizes Abstract-Figurative Metarealism as a different direction from other movements.

Abstract-figurative Metarealism covers reality in the entire range of its actual and possible transformations freeing images through abstraction transgressing the borders of the figurative art. **Abstract-Figurative Metarealist** creates compositions as a result of **explorations of superconscious imagery**.

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ახალი ხელოვნების მიმდინარეობის ანალიზი: აბსტრაქტულ-ფიგურატიული მეტარეალიზმი

გაიანე მინასიანი

რეზიუმე

სტატია აანალიზებს ახალი ხელოვნების მიმდინარეობას, ჩემი ფერწერული ტილოებისა და ნამუშევრების სერიებს არტ კურატორების და ხელოვნების ისტორიკოსების პროფესიონალური განხილვების საფუძველზე და აცალიბებს იმ თვისებებს რაც ამ მიმდინარეობას სხვა მიმდინარეობებისგან განასხვავებს.

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