

## Shadow of the Forest

My PhD work includes thirteen paintings, ten made in oil technique on canvas and three tempera drawings on paper and a written work. The paintings are combined into five parts, three triptychs and two diptychs. They were made in the period from 2020 to 2022 at the Faculty of Painting of the Academy of Fine Arts in Katowice, my supervisor is Prof. Andrzej Tobis.

My PhD work includes thirteen paintings, ten painted with oil on canvas, and three with tempera on paper. Paintings formats are 200/150 cm and 150/120 cm. All of them are combined into triptychs and diptychs.

The title *Shadow of the Forest* refer to endless cycle of life and passing away. A shadow of death is already placed on every newborn being, tree or star. Very interesting for me is the scale that sharpens the contrast and shows a different point of view. Life locked into atoms is a reflection of the orbiting planets, the dust of the cosmos. Often human history comes to an end when rebel cells, invisible to the naked eye, begin to multiply faster than others. Then, all the stories about the past and the future no longer matter, the fight begins. So one of the main thread of my work is the struggle that takes place on different levels. Artur Schopenhauer wrote, that the most important experience of the will is the will to survive. He described the whole world as the constant war of all against all. This fight makes no sense and the sense cannot exist. Any sense of the world is only a delusion.

In most of my paintings I use only black color. Black and white are the complete opposite of each other and in my work, they symbolize life and death. Death is this special moment when there is so much of everything and suddenly, there is absolutely nothing left. The tiny fragment of time that passes into nothingness is like cutting yourself off with a knife, exactly at the moment of its absolute solstice. Over the centuries death was a gentle process. It was believed, that a person after death was still half alive during the gradually changes, until the body finally decomposed into the white bones. For me life ends with death, and what remains becomes only biological and chemical building substance. The law of conservation of mass leaves no illusions and no hope for eternity. However, as the halftones are fading away and my life is becoming sharper, all this becomes a more positive experience for me.

My personal experiences were also very important for me in choosing what I painted. I believe, that I can convey a universal message through my own life stories. . My series of paintings includes works about the death of my father and the recent death of my grandparents. I think, that each, who carries the memory of past ancestors, is becoming responsible for them. Their legacies ring heavy as unfulfilled dreams and heroic stories. All this becomes something like a fireball that remains in us, whether we like it or not. By painting my ancestors, I would like to save them, although I know, that it is not possible.

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