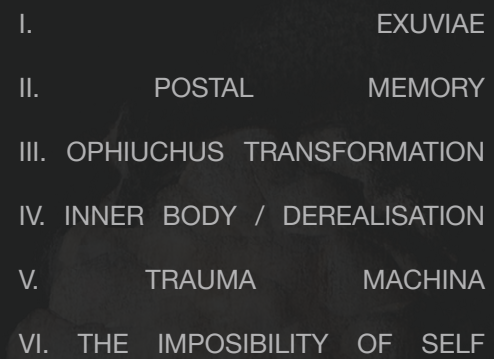


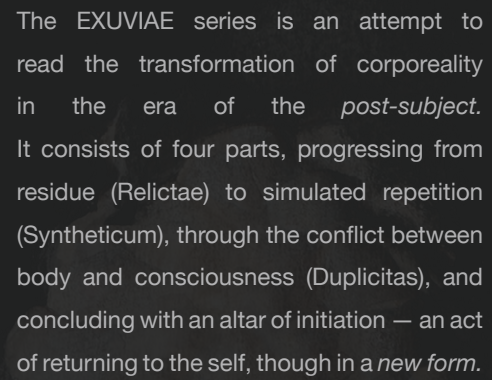
Yulia
Holub



- 
- I. EXUVIAE
 - II. POSTAL MEMORY
 - III. OPHIUCHUS TRANSFORMATION
 - IV. INNER BODY / DEREALISATION
 - V. TRAUMA MACHINA
 - VI. THE IMPOSIBILITY OF SELF

I. EXUVIAE

The EXUVIAE series is an attempt to read the transformation of corporeality in the era of the *post-subject*. It consists of four parts, progressing from residue (Relictae) to simulated repetition (Syntheticum), through the conflict between body and consciousness (Duplicitas), and concluding with an altar of initiation — an act of returning to the self, though in a *new form*.



EXUVIAE: Relictae 2025

(Latin: “abandoned,” “left behind,” “relics”)

Series of watercolors, 25 × 35 cm, watercolor, watercolor pencils on paper. Framed with open glass mounts.

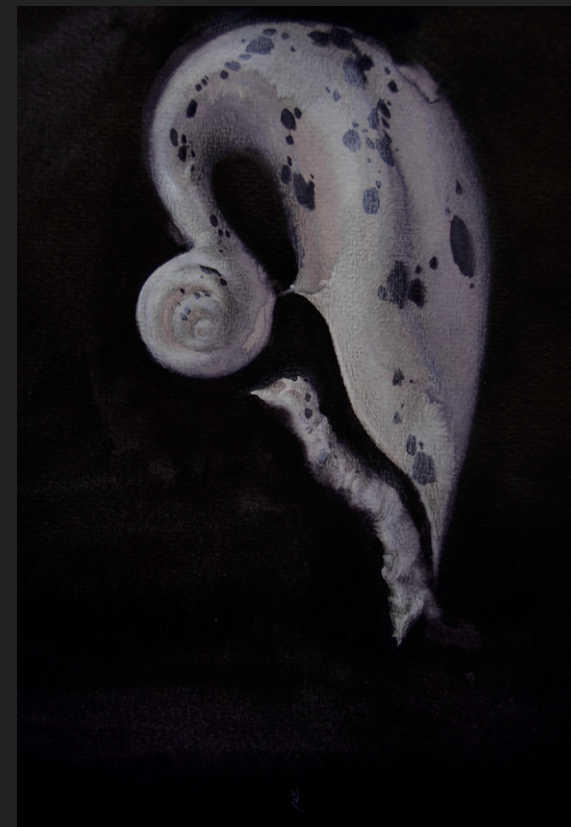
The gesture begins with eighteen shell-forms, each titled in Latin: *Spina*, *Foramen*, *Umbra*, *Vortex*, *Fractus*, and others.



I. *Spina*, 2025



II. *Foramen*, 2025



III. *Umbra*, Private collection 2025

They read as an archaeology of sensation — each shape a trace of an emotional or bodily event.

Shells appear as relics: remnants of physical experience that solidified into form.

They are portraits of absence — of contacts, touches, disappearances. Minimal in shape, but carrying everything that remains when no one is left.

EXUVIAE: Relictae 2025

(Latin: “abandoned,” “left behind,” “relics”)

Series of watercolors, 25 × 35 cm, watercolor, watercolor pencils on paper. Framed with open glass mounts.

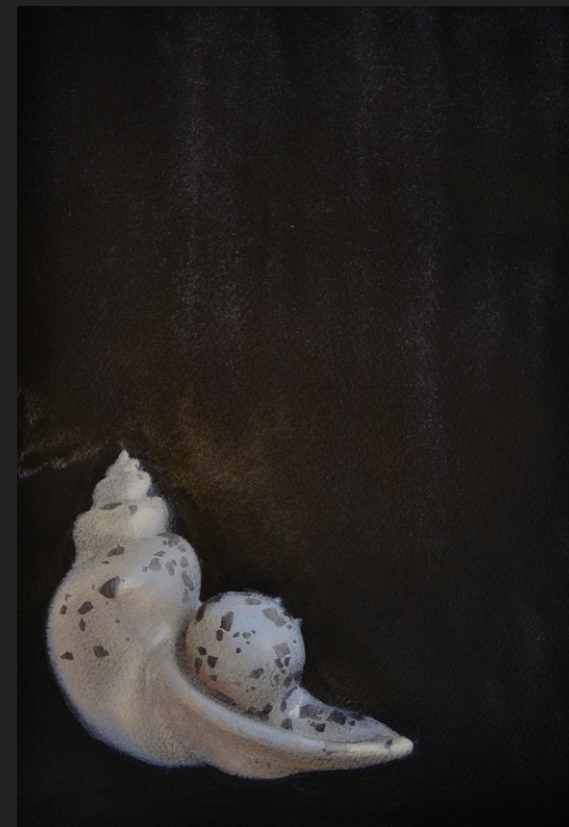
The gesture begins with eighteen shell-forms, each titled in Latin: *Spina*, *Foramen*, *Umbra*, *Vortex*, *Fractus*, and others.



IV. Auris, 2025



V. Vortex, Private collection 2025



VI. Nidus, 2025

They read as an archaeology of sensation — each shape a trace of an emotional or bodily event.

Shells appear as relics: remnants of physical experience that solidified into form.

They are portraits of absence — of contacts, touches, disappearances. Minimal in shape, but carrying everything that remains when no one is left.

EXUVIAE: Relictae 2025

(Latin: “abandoned,” “left behind,” “relics”)

Series of watercolors, 25 × 35 cm, watercolor, watercolor pencils on paper. Framed with open glass mounts.

The gesture begins with eighteen shell-forms, each titled in Latin: *Spina*, *Foramen*, *Umbra*, *Vortex*, *Fractus*, and others.



VII. *Torsio* 2025



X. *Ruina* 2025



IX. *Geminae*, 2025

They read as an archaeology of sensation — each shape a trace of an emotional or bodily event.

Shells appear as relics: remnants of physical experience that solidified into form.

They are portraits of absence — of contacts, touches, disappearances. Minimal in shape, but carrying everything that remains when no one is left.

EXUVIAE: Duplicitas 2025

(Latin: "two in one")

125 × 130 cm and 30 × 40 cm
Acrylic, oil, canvas

This diptych continues the series as an image of antagonistic division: *consciousness evolved faster than the body itself.*

In the larger canvas, the figure remains trapped in prehistoric biology — the body is symbolic, the head dissolves into a mirrored projection. The smaller one holds a psychic fragment, where the mind already functions as an algorithm.

Together they represent a rupture: the physical shell responds with primal instincts, while consciousness produces abstract concepts, digital strategies, artificial intelligence.

This conflict leads to dissociation — and its shadow reveals itself as *a refusal of self, and of reality.*



EXUVIAE: Syntheticum, 2025

(Latin: "synthetic,"
meaning *simulacrum*)

Sculpture, 120 × 50 × 60
cm, polystyrene, rough
and fine plaster, bitumen,
lacquer, automotive paint

A corporeal paradox: a
leftover of the subject in the
age of technological being.
Its aggressively glossy,
almost extraterrestrial surface
contrasts with organic forms,
resembling a shell that has
lost its biological substance.
It is a husk — a container
emptied of flesh, holding only
the memory of what once was.



EXUVIAE: Initiatio, 2025

(Latin: *"initiation"* — a rite of passage, symbolic death and rebirth of the subject)

Installation: 20 × 30 cm

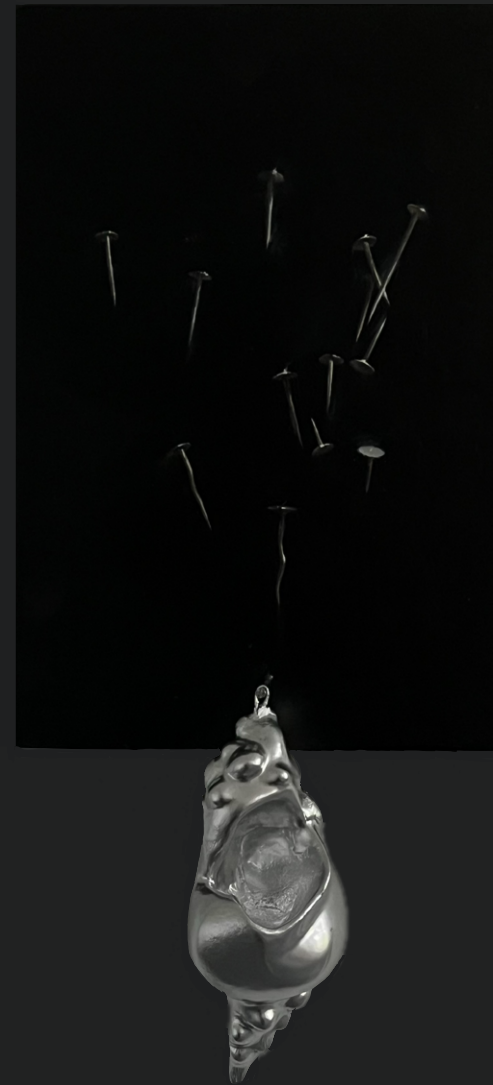
Icon board, gesso, oil, ceramic clay, nail, chrome

In traditional religion, an altar serves to worship an external deity. In this object, the sacred turns inward — the altar is dedicated to the self. It is a form of honoring personal will, not through faith, but through internal work with traumatic experience.

The nails are placed in the structure of the Tree of Sefirot, marking points of pain that have crystallized into dignity — not as a moral value, but as a formed capacity for self-sustaining being. At the center lies a shell — not a leftover of flesh, but a sign of transformation, a new form born after initiation.

On both sides of the object are inscriptions: — *Je me ferai moi-même avec ce qu'on a fait de moi* (J.-P. Sartre): "I will make myself out of what others have made of me" — *Solve et Coagula* — the alchemical formula of dissolution and reassembly (individuation).

The object demands not symbolic reverence, but physical inclination. This act becomes part of the ritual. The viewer does not observe — they enter the space of initiation.



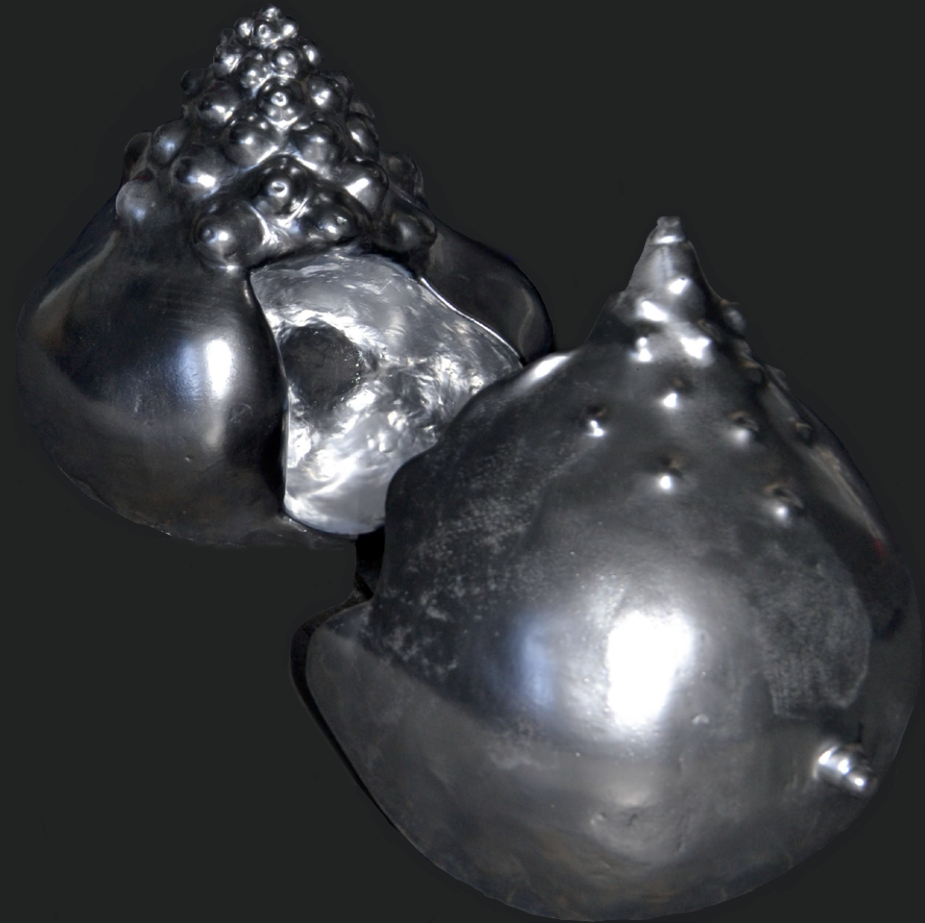
EXUVIAE: Gemini, 2025

(Latin: «*twins*» — reflects both the physical doubling of the objects and the psycho-symbolic mirroring at the core of the series)

Sculpture, 30 × 30 × 25 cm each
polystyrene, base and
finish putty, lacquer, chrome

These sculptures complete the series as a summarizing gesture — an embodiment of its core desire. They are the only paired objects: formally similar, subtly different, and inseparable in function. Together, they symbolize the *impossibility of completeness* and the *longing for psychic wholeness*.

They are fetish-objects in the Lacanian sense — not instruments, but condensations of a *lack*. Smooth and sealed, ambiguous in their function, they seem to yearn for unity not through purpose, but through presence. These bodies are not vessels, not shells, not beings.



II. POSTAL MEMORY

*«Three stages of PTSD,
sealed in flesh and paper»*

This series was born in exile — during my time in Finland as a refugee. The envelopes used as surfaces were found at a flea market. They are carriers of time, fragments of other people's stories, broken-off letters that never arrived.

Memory I: Illusion, 2024

Drawing, 16 × 12 cm
Vintage envelope (country
of origin — Finland),
watercolor pencils

Private collection, Ukraine, 2025

The illusion that nothing
terrible happened.
The psyche protects itself.
The body seems calm, but
beneath it — trembling.



Memory II: Constriction, 2024

Drawing, 16.5 × 11.5 cm
 Vintage envelope (country
 of origin — Finland),
 watercolor pencil

Private collection, Ukraine, 2025

Awareness floods in.
 You curl into an embryo,
 fold inward to avoid falling
 apart. Everything becomes
 physical — painfully real.



Memory III: Imprint, 2024

Drawing, 15.5 × 10 cm
 Vintage envelope (country
 of origin — Finland),
 watercolor pencils

Private collection, Ukraine, 2025

The horror solidifies.
 It becomes a stone — but a
 stone can be carried. It is not
 just a weight — it is a form.
From it, new life can be built.



Memory IV: Memory Reliquary 2024

Sculpture, 70 × 50 × 20 cm
Cardboard, *papier-mâché*, rough
plaster, acrylic, pigment, lacquer

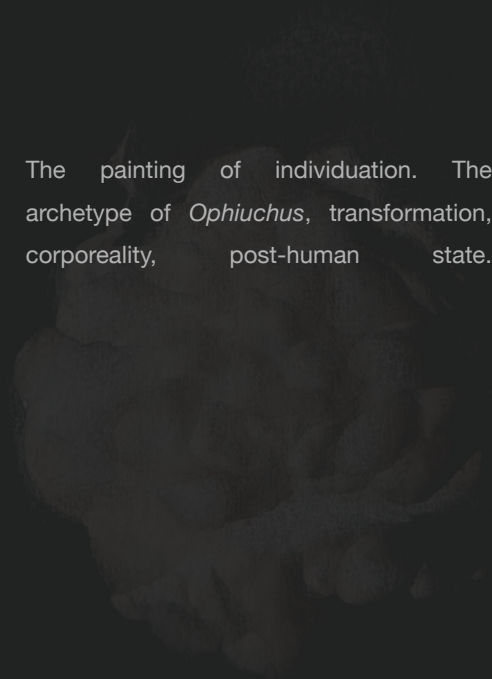
The sculptural object completes
the series as a spatial
continuation of the narrative. It is
not a pedestal — it is a *reliquary*: a
place where memory takes form.

The shell is not a remnant of flesh,
but a sacralized transformation.
The envelope becomes skin
— *a surface that remembers*.
Memory is no longer a
burden, but an instrument.
It breathes in — and breathes out.



III. THE OPHIUCHUS TRANSFORMATION

The painting of individuation. The archetype of *Ophiuchus*, transformation, corporeality, post-human state.



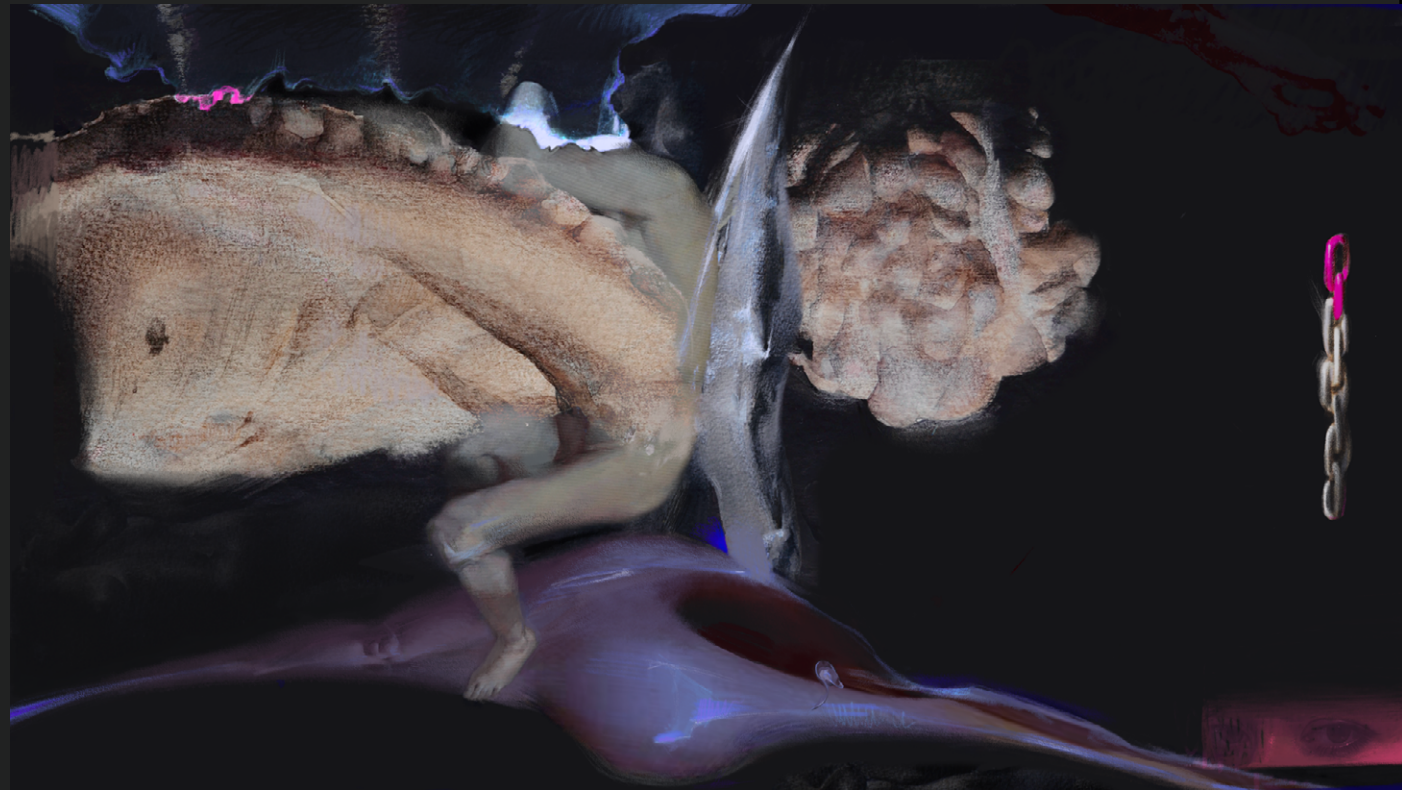
III. THE OPHIUCHUS TRANSFORMATION 2024

(Diploma Series, work in progress) 2024
180 × 320 cm, acrylic, oil on canvas

This painting is a map of individuation. Not a portrait or a myth, but a process — *a journey* through fragmentation and transformation.

Ophiuchus is not a symbol of astrology or mythology, but a state of in-betweenness — balancing chaos and knowledge.

The unstable body here reflects the process of becoming, not perfection. Layers of the unconscious, rejected archetypes, and the emergence of a new identity: not a hero, but *a living map of becoming whole*.



Final concept sketch. Digital collage, 2024

III. THE OPHIUCHUS TRANSFORMATION 2024

(Diploma Series, work in progress) 2024
180 × 320 cm, acrylic, oil on canvas

This painting is a map of individuation. Not a portrait or a myth, but a process — a *journey* through fragmentation and transformation.

Ophiuchus is not a symbol of astrology or mythology, but a state of in-betweenness — balancing chaos and knowledge.

The unstable body here reflects the process of becoming, not perfection. Layers of the unconscious, rejected archetypes, and the emergence of a new identity: not a hero, but a *living map of becoming whole*.



Installation view, Diploma Exhibition, NAFAA, 2024. Painting with additional ceramic objects.

IV. INNER BODY / DEREALISATION

This series explores psychic fragmentation — when the body becomes the only reliable source of reality, yet also its *illusion*. As the boundary between inner and outer dissolves, the body begins to dream and consciousness melts beneath the skin. These works embody not emotions, but *states*. The body appears as a container of experience: memory, pain, defense, instability.

IV. INNER BODY / DEREALISATION 2024

This is a series about estrangement
that leads to integration.
About fear that purifies.
About a body that *doesn't lie* — even
when consciousness disappears.

THE UNION, 2024

Painting 24 × 32 cm, paper,
watercolor, watercolor pencils

Private collection, USA, 2024

A state of unity that
remains elusive, yet necessary.
I painted this piece while thinking of my
sister: here, two figures intertwine, almost
merge, but do not dissolve into one another.
They are like a double dream, where
closeness both heals and aches.
Their contact is an attempt to sense
the boundaries of one's own existence,
to see oneself through the Other.

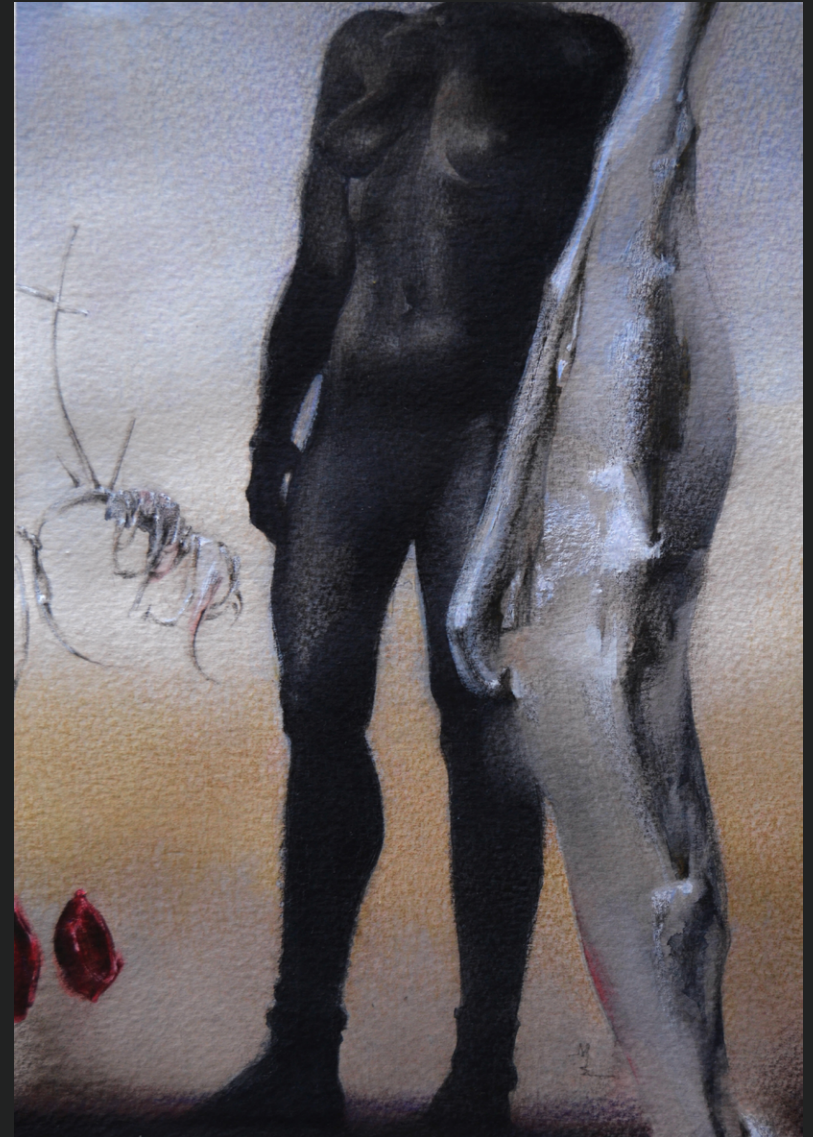


IV. INNER BODY / DEREALISATION 2024

Heavy Metal Lover, 2024

Painting 16 × 24 cm, paper,
watercolor, watercolor pencils.

The body as the last bastion of reality — and at the same time, its illusion. This piece is a portrait of corporeal isolation, where alienation is not an emotion but a state. The dark figure appears burned from within, yet it endures, survives. The blackened surface is not about death, but rather evidence that the body — distorted and separate — is able to hold the memory of itself.



IV. INNER BODY / DEREALISATION 2024

DUALITY, 2024

Painting, 24 × 24 cm, watercolor
and watercolor pencil on paper

Private collection, UK, 2025

A double, a shadow, a duplication
as a survival mechanism.



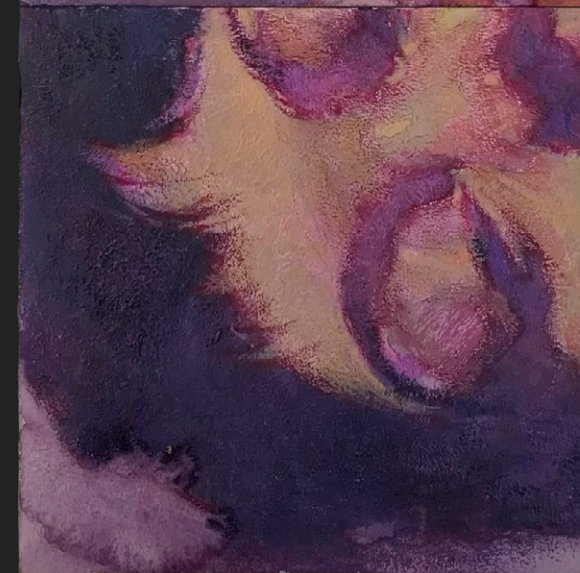
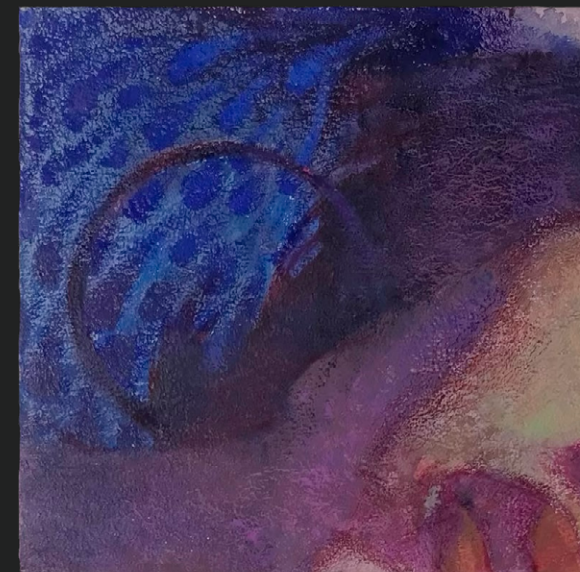
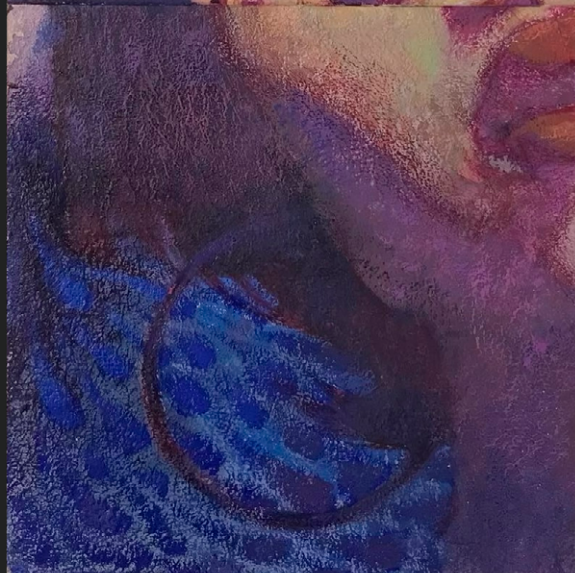
IV. INNER BODY / DEREALISATION 2024

RADIANCE, 2022

Fragments 10 × 20 cm, composed of primed cardboard panels 10 × 10 cm. Watercolor, tempera, watercolor pencil.

Private collection (France), 2024.

This work is an experiment in the plasticity of both image and personality. The fragments of the diptych can be rearranged into new compositions, creating ever-changing versions of the whole. Each part becomes autonomous, yet remains inseparable from the larger structure. It is a metaphor for self-reflection: just as in life, the components of our character can shift, interact, and find new positions — it is this dynamic interplay that generates wholeness.



IV. INNER BODY / DEREALISATION 2024

TURRITOPSIS NUTRICULA, 2024

Drawing, 30 × 42 cm, watercolor pencil

Private collection, Finland, 2024

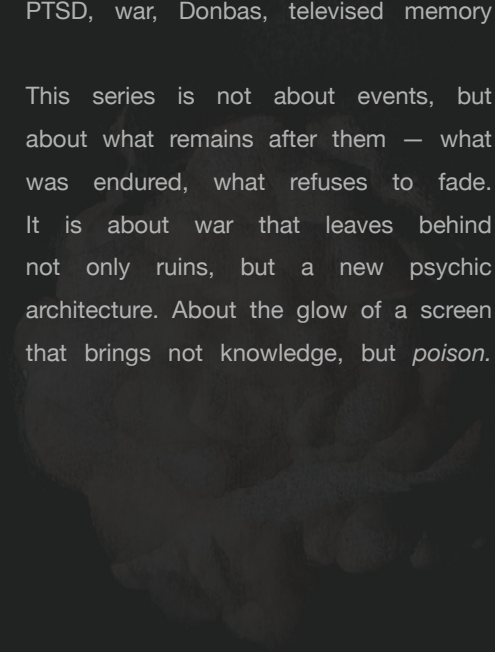
A body that never dies, but returns —
to be born again, differently each time.



V. TRAUMA MACHINA

PTSD, war, Donbas, televised memory

This series is not about events, but about what remains after them — what was endured, what refuses to fade. It is about war that leaves behind not only ruins, but a new psychic architecture. About the glow of a screen that brings not knowledge, but *poison*.



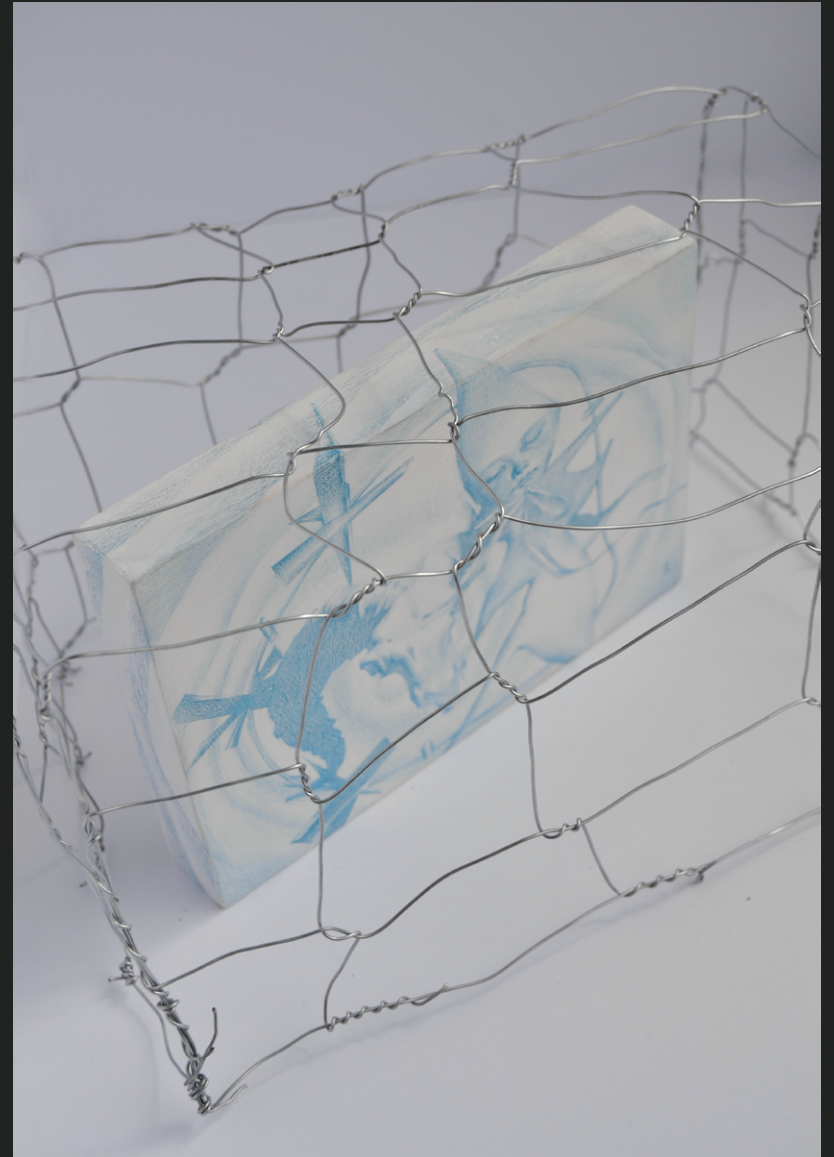
ABOUT INNER CHILD DURING THE WAR,
2024

Installation,
Drawing on icon board, 10 × 15 cm, gesso,
watercolor pencil, steel wire cage, 13 × 21 cm

A bodily image of a child locked in a
cage, hidden inside their own skin.
Vulnerability embedded in rigid material.



Detail



Installation view

PFM-1, 2024

Object

Panasonic television set, hand-crocheted wool doily

In 2014, when russian troops entered Donetsk and seized the broadcast tower, our home antenna stopped receiving Ukrainian channels. Only russian ones remained. That's how the *zombification* began — slow, quiet, especially noticeable among the elderly.

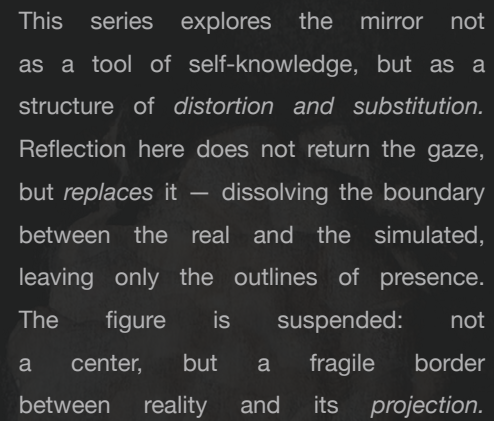
This work is a revolt against that. On the old TV screen filled with static lies a crocheted doily — a symbol of domestic warmth, also infected. Embroidered into it is “404” — the error code that appears when trying to access an unavailable site.

Today, it has become a symbol of the blocked russian media: a delayed realization that information warfare *kills no less* than physical warfare.



VI. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF SELF

This series explores the mirror not as a tool of self-knowledge, but as a structure of *distortion and substitution*. Reflection here does not return the gaze, but *replaces* it — dissolving the boundary between the real and the simulated, leaving only the outlines of presence. The figure is suspended: not a center, but a fragile border between reality and its *projection*.



VI. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF SELF
2025, work in process

In contemporary consciousness, the mirror ceases to function as reflection — it simulates *truth*, offering the desired in place of the real.

Here, the body is no longer a central presence but appears half-dissolved, fading at the edge between the visible and the *simulated*. The surrounding space destabilizes the subject, leaving only outlines where identity used to be.

The flame in this series is not enlightenment, but the edge between self and copy. Self-knowledge becomes impossible without refusing the naive belief in an “*authentic I*”.

The mirror is not a site of contact, but of projection — reality dissolves into wishful thinking, and the image ceases to be a response, becoming a *substitution*.



The Story of the Image That Waited but No One Chose It (first gesture), 2025

VI. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF SELF
2025, work in process

In contemporary consciousness, the mirror ceases to function as reflection — it simulates *truth*, offering the desired in place of the real.

Here, the body is no longer a central presence but appears half-dissolved, fading at the edge between the visible and the *simulated*. The surrounding space destabilizes the subject, leaving only outlines where identity used to be.

The flame in this series is not enlightenment, but the edge between self and copy. Self-knowledge becomes impossible without refusing the naive belief in an “*authentic I*”.

The mirror is not a site of contact, but of projection — reality dissolves into wishful thinking, and the image ceases to be a response, becoming a *substitution*.



The Image That Invented Itself (watercolor version), 2025

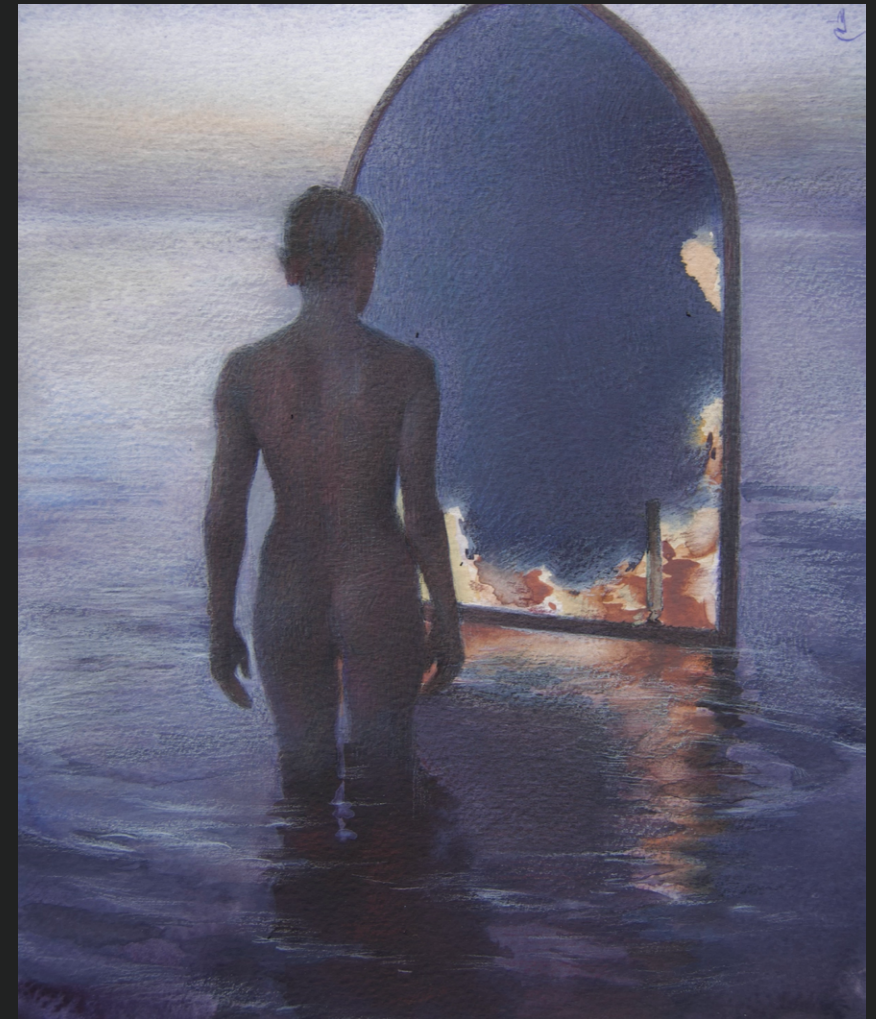
VI. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF SELF
2025, work in process

In contemporary consciousness, the mirror ceases to function as reflection — it simulates *truth*, offering the desired in place of the real.

Here, the body is no longer a central presence but appears half-dissolved, fading at the edge between the visible and the *simulated*. The surrounding space destabilizes the subject, leaving only outlines where identity used to be.

The flame in this series is not enlightenment, but the edge between self and copy. Self-knowledge becomes impossible without refusing the naive belief in an “*authentic I*”.

The mirror is not a site of contact, but of projection — reality dissolves into wishful thinking, and the image ceases to be a response, becoming a *substitution*.



The Mirror That Didn't Know Whom to Reflect (initial form), 2025

TRACE

I do not believe in return.
Everything that matters happens here,
in the body, in the material — as a trace.
I work with what remains after
experience: fragments, tremors,
memory impressed in tissue.
My practice rejects wholeness,
illusion, and escape. I choose
presence, even in dissolution.
Art is not a search for meaning, but a
response to what the body already knows.
Each work is a mark — a
record of *impact*, not argument.
The trace is all that is left.

CONTACTS

YULIIA HOLUB
Email: mysterious.easel@gmail.com
Instagram: [@mysterious_easel](https://www.instagram.com/mysterious_easel)
Location: Kyiv

Open for collaborations,
exhibitions, and commissions.