

## The Notion of Normalcy Group Exhibition May 2022

Come take a peek in the wooden box into what is normal in the Vernissage of our next exhibition “The Notion of Normalcy”!

We seek to investigate both the positive and negative aspects of what people deem to be “normal” and how the fabrication of this concept can help or hurt us.

We ask ourselves:

- What can be achieved if we let go of the construct of “normal”?
- To what extent is normalcy something we should be trying to achieve or how do we need to let go of our aspirations for going “back to normal,” given what we have seen in the last two years?
- How can we take advantage of this changed perspective after turbulent times to redefine what is normal and change the trajectory of our future?
- Does the construct of “normalcy” inform us and help us understand where we stand in society in a healthy way? Or does it hold us back from greater potential?

Come meet our artists who creatively gave their perspective on what’s normal:

- Bela Balog
- V&R Belokovsky
- Aengus Cullinan
- O Yemi Tubi
- Tamara Berger

### Overview of Artworks

All the artists gave their thoughts on their works and their connection to the topic of normalcy. Read more below to find out more about the art pieces of our May 2022 exhibition!



Face  
Digital art  
2022

Being Human is normal. However, we try to deceive our environment with our communication, our actions, We tend to deceive ourselves as well. But the face never lies. The face is the mirror where our lives flutter as a film. Happiness, pain, grief and joy, all. I want to show my optimism with colors. Hope overwrites everything.



BELA BALOG  
Urban Hustle and Bustle  
Digital art  
2022

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V&R BELOKOVSKY  
WOODEN BOX  
Oak wood, door viewer  
2021

The simplicity of the wooden box allows many interpretations. It is hollow, on one side there is a peephole mounted facing inwards. You can not see if there is anything inside, because there is no light. In order to examine normalcy, we need to shed light into what's hidden in our daily "normal lives". It's an invitation for self-reflection in the reversal of the usual (normal) view of reality.



Tamara Berger  
Coca-cola Ceremony  
Oil and acrylic on canvas  
2022

This painting is a confrontation of traditional motifs from Japanese traditional art like mountains, geishas, the sun, and cherry blossoms with products that originate from the West, and are a part of a globalized consumeristic society (MC Donald's french fries, Nestlé's nest in the tree, Coca-Cola). The question of normality raises on many levels. For example, the idea of the beauty of nature in Japan is a cherry blossom motif, and in this painting, the cherry tree branch is shown with a Nestlé logo on it. This painting emphasizes, that trying to achieve what once was normal is a waste of time. The pandemic has shown that normality is something very questionable and much more fragile than it used to look like before. Two suns and a volcano eruption are signs of chaos, this way showing the opposite to our "normal"; yet, the definition of "normal" is, of course, dependent of one's perspective, attitude and living conditions and, going along with it, the society one lives in as a whole.



AENGUS CULLIAN  
Small Differences  
Gouache, Acrylic & Oil Paints  
on Linen  
2021

All cultures have norms and values that give the people a sense of normalcy. People who accept a culture as their own, identify a sense of normalcy within themselves because of their relationship to the culture. This painting illustrates people from two vastly different cultures who may or may not embody a sense of normalcy. A dominant culture can deprive peoples from minority cultures of a sense of normalcy. Some cultures define what normalcy is in rigorous terms and do not accept the normalcy of other cultures. The colonization of a people disintegrates their cultural norms and values, by applying systemic racism.

*"As Fanon and later writers such as Nandy have claimed, imperialism and colonialism brought complete disorder to colonized peoples, disconnecting them from their histories, their landscapes, their languages, their social relations and their own ways of thinking, feeling and interacting with the world."*

*Linda Tuhiwai Smith (a First Nations writer from New Zealand)*

What is the dominant culture in this painting is determined by the viewer. If you identify with a dominant European culture then your perception of normalcy will gravitate to the small boy with the mobile phone in his hand. If you're an indigenous Australian then your experience may be of yet another culture observing your culture from outside, a culture that is trying to categorize, and classify in terms of the "colonial civilization construct".



AENGUS CULLIAN  
Internal Migration  
Gouache, Acrylic & Oil Paints  
on Linen  
2021

The normalcy of this painting may hold a place in the hearts and minds of indigenous desert dwelling First Nations people of the country that is now known as Australia. This scene of gathering food and caring for children was normal for over 40,000 years. For the people of this ancient culture that has been decimated by colonization and continual persecution by a systemically racist construct, normalcy is unrecognizable for these people now, or so it seems, at least in the minds of those who identify with the dominant culture.

*“But they did not realize that I had never accepted the place that the colonists have reserved for us, that supposed place of unbelongingness.”*  
Chelsea Watego (a First Nations writer from Australia)



O YEMI TUBI  
Ukraine - The unfortunate Bride  
Oil on canvas  
2016

The West instigated by America enticed Ukraine with the potential benefits of membership of European Union, but Russia will not give up Ukraine to the West without a fight. This has led to the ongoing war in Ukraine which inspired me to do this painting “Ukraine-The Unfortunate Bride”

In line with the theme of this exhibition -NORMAL, the invasion of Putin and his war generals change the normal life of the people of Ukraine. It is used to be normal for the Ukrainian family to live peacefully under the same in their own home in their own country. Then Putin’s war forced the Ukrainian into their New Normal. Ukrainian’s new normal is for their men to stay back to fight the invaded Russian armies while their families are living as refugees in other countries. The normal beautiful cities in Ukraine have been reduced to piles of rubble.



O YEMI TUBI  
Trump's Cage  
Oil on canvas  
2019

*“Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, The wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”* Emma Lazarus (The Statue of Liberty-Ellis Island Foundation, Inc.)

The above statement is the welcoming message written under the Statue of Liberty for all the immigrants from all over the world that were seeking solace in the great land of liberty (USA) for all people. So it was a NORMAL practice for people across the world to move to America to chase “An American Dream.” However, in Trump’s America, this was replaced with bondage, imprisonment, and sorrow, which is the title of this painting - The Trump’s Cage.

America is a melting pot; majority of Americans beside the native of Americans were descendants of immigrants including Donald Trump. During the 4 years of Donald Trump’s government, the “American Dream” of many refugees turned to the “American Nightmare” when Trump’s government tore refugees’ families apart by forcing the refugees parents out of America and put their children in detention camps like prisons.

[Read more about our exhibition concept here!](#)