

**EXHIBITION:**  
**VAHAGN HAMALBASHYAN**  
**GLOBALISED**

**18 October – 3 November 2017**

**Exhibition Opening: Wednesday 18 October 2017 / 7:30pm**

**Exhibition Times: 10am-1pm Monday – Friday, and by appointment.**

**PHAROS CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART, NICOSIA**



**The Pharos Arts Foundation is pleased to present Vahagn Hamalbashyan's solo exhibition *Globalised*. Born in 1983, in an artistic family in Armenia, Vahagn is a graduate of the State Academy of Fine Arts in Yerevan and has already held three solo exhibitions and participated in numerous group exhibitions. *Globalised* is his first solo exhibition in Cyprus, and it will be on show from 18 October until 3 November 2017 at The Pharos Centre for Contemporary Art in Nicosia.**

Vahagn Hamalbashyan is inspired by things that weigh on his mind, whether it's his diabetic grandmother or international affairs. He considers himself as much a citizen of the world as of Armenia, and his art gives him agency to take part in an international dialogue. Locally, he finds himself caught in the middle of the formation of a new Iron Curtain. He staunchly opposes Armenia's return to the Soviet Union's difficult realities rather than its romanticized verisimilitude for several reasons: the large amount of corruption in all sectors of the government, the lack of allocated resources for the general public, and the downtrodden mentality of life in general. Vahagn uses a brush, acrylic paint, and canvas as his main instruments. He also takes advantage of a printmaker, pencils, charcoal, watercolor, spray cans, stencils, and Armenian wine. "When it comes to communicating emotionally with the world, I don't hold back," he says. One of his works in progress embodies the complacent attitude towards disaster on the horizon. It depicts a nuclear explosion over a beach where heads levitate and lick ice cream. In another work, *The Visit of Big Brother*, a Russian aircraft carrier dominates a lake, specifically Lake Sevan, while nude people are relaxing and looking at the aircraft but do nothing about the lurking danger. It's not only the contemplation of problems which dominates Vahagn's artistic investment; he also believes in the value of human life and how its beauties radiate the surrounding environment. He points out how the nude people in his painting imparts elation to the scene.

Vahagn supports free expression and believes that not only does each human being deserve a space to exist and work, but also every living thing. Water, for instance, plays a significant role in the everyday, and thus water must have a voice; Vahagn gives water a voice when he paints its blue, its portion competing with the other objects in the painting. Still, as Vahagn wants freedom of thought and social ideas, he's against cultural movements which completely sacrifice culturally important monuments to build new structures. This, he thinks, is a disservice to the past, no matter how uplifting or traumatizing, because this is a type of vandalism – legal or illegal. Vahagn Hamalbashyan hopes that people will continue to re-envision a new world with progressive development but this utopia will be inclusive of already working cultural values.

## **ABOUT VAHAGN HAMALBASHYAN**

Vahagn Hamalbashyan was born in 1983, in an artistic family in Armenia. In 1988, he entered the National Center of Aesthetics, Fine Arts and Decorative Art Studio in Yerevan, and continued his studies at the State Academy of Fine Arts in Yerevan, from where he graduated in 2005. Vahagn has held solo exhibitions at the Armenian Center for Contemporary Experimental Art, at the Bureaucrat Art Center in Yerevan, and at the Corridor Gallery in Leeds, UK. He has participated in numerous group exhibitions, including, *25 Years After* at the Armenian Center for Contemporary Experimental Art (2017), *Land of Vitality* at the H. Galentz Museum (2016), *Never Again* at the 19th Annual Festival of Alternative Art (2015), *Step Between Transforming and Forming* at the Artists Union in Yerevan (2014), *Taking Time* at the Vilnius Academy of Arts in Lithuania (2012), 5th Tbilisi International Contemporary Art Exhibition Artisterium in Tbilisi, Georgia (2012) and International Biennale in Gyumri (2012, 2004, 2002, 2000). He has been resident artist at the Nida Art Colony in Lithuania (2012), Leeds University School of Design (2012), Lempa Art School in Cyprus (2011) and as part of the Art Territory Project in Vilnius. Since 2010, he has been a board member of the AKOS Cultural NGO. He still lives and works in Yerevan and his disciplines are drawing and painting.

## **PHAROS CENTRE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART**

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