

## VA322 Reflection on Paintings

This 4' x 3' canvas painting as shown above is a piece of abstract expressionism acrylic-based painting completed in early April 2020. I mainly used pouring materials and normal acrylics to make multiple layers, while applying some golden spray as embellishments. The name of this artwork is "COSMOS" because I am really into the charming harmony and chaos of the universe, as this wonderful sense of "contradiction and unity" occurs since Big Bang. Everything is developing within this natural law. This is true of my stream-of-consciousness. Thousands of thoughts and ideas always happen to me at the same time. When I let this go, each one of them twinkles on its own while they coexist and resonate vibrantly in my head. When I was painting this piece, my brain was just as active as the magnificent space.

I first poured and dripped acrylics onto the unprimed canvas. Before it was completely dry, I used sticks to draw patterns with the thick pigment mess. Then I used my styled brushwork with raw pigments directly squeezed from the tubes onto the canvas to paint the margins and the four canvas sides. I call them "mixed colour chunks". I also applied this typical brushwork to paint circles, spots, lines chains and other irregular shapes. Then the "COSMOS" seems to be inlaid in an indefinable special zone, namely, the plane of my mind, showing this cosmos is the cosmos of my intuition, my psyche and my life.

The special style that I used to do the "COSMOS" was actually practiced, experimented and applied in my previous paintings. The style actually derived from the genre of abstract expressionism, which means the painter expresses the emotions through abstract shapes and various colors. My former painting series "One" just laid a foundation of the unique style. This series includes three relevant pieces and was finished in late February 2020. Number 1 of the "One" series consists of a dark, gloomy, sticky and cold-tone background with a stand-alone flame in the heart of the background. The brushwork of piece number one directly refers to the distinctive style that I mainly used to paint the "COSMOS" with high consciousness. Number 2 is a total mass of colour chaos on a 24x24 canvas, with a blob of titanium white right in the centre of the square. As for Number 3, I used gesso to prime the canvas first and made a little 3-dimensional embossment on it. Referenced by watercolour painting and Chinese ink-wash painting, I dripped, splashed and poured diluted

acrylic paints onto the primed canvas. Then I painted abstract mountains in black and embellished the “water” part with colourful dots as well as the “mountain part” with colourful lines, which would help to enhance the layering and levels of the image. All of the three pieces are of abstract expressionism, and I thus learned from the process and realized that I could create a large-scaled piece using the same genre with confidence. I have cultivated a passion for researching and experimenting with abstract expressionism, and I would like to be an abstract expressionism artist. I will definitely keep exploring my style and keep painting this way.

Because the “COSMOS” was created during the COVID-19 pandemic period, within the social context of this worldwide disaster, I was also influenced and inspired by the coronavirus. Some of those round shapes also refer to the virus. As I wrote above, the universe is so magical and incredible that I have found there is some mysterious relevance between the macro cosmos and the microcosmos. Watching my painting, whether it reminds you of stars or coronavirus, its stable existence is already there. Even sometimes bad things can be converted to good things, vice versa. One common sense is bacteria and viruses have a symbiosis with animals. This means we human beings will not live long without them. The result all depends on how we regard them and how we deal with this relationship. Just like how I deal with my stream-of-consciousness, as long as we take the initiative, we will eventually find its new balance to let everything be back to the splendid “unified opposition”—the infinitely gorgeous COSMOS. This is just how I got the painting of COSMOS done.

Moreover, as a contemporary artist, I have the responsibility to enrich my artworks with profound meanings. Since art is the essence of human civilization, when an artwork is able to record and reflect on a certain social issue, it will have its historical meanings. COVID19 pandemic is also a great opportunity for me to miniature the social influences during this special period within my painting project the “COSMOS”, in which I was merely thinking about depicting my personal sentimental expressions originally. Now the “COSMOS” has multiple layers of meanings, many years later, the viewers would recall an unforgettable public health incident that happened worldwide and influenced deeply in every aspect of life. If the “COSMOS” is someday displayed in the gallery, I would add a subtitle “A Memorial of COVID19” to it. This experience keeps reminding me to rethink the real goal of

creating art. I shall always take the obligation of a real artist, as part of the entire world, to actually consider social problems, environmental problems, psychological problems et al.