



**D**aniel, perhaps the youngest practicing contemporary painter in Vienna today, modulates topics of appearance, perception and mass production through abstract compositions which try to reflect a youthful art practice. After successful collaborations around Vienna and a selection of carefully curated projects such as his pop-up exhibition at 21er Haus, Daniel is currently continuing his education at the fashion institute of Vienna and focusing on expanding his corpus. We sat down with the artist to discover the driving force behind his works.



Exhibition view – Daniel Moldoveanu, Susi Rogenhoger at 21er Pavillon; 21er Haus; 2016 ©Belvedere, Wien

**VANGARDIST: What inspires you most?**

**Daniel:** I love the idea of paintings installations in open and unconventional spaces. The extension of subject which gives the two dimensional works of art a more complex purpose and aesthetic role is something I find very exciting at the moment. Overlaying color combinations with white, challenging the viewer to look underneath and in between cracks of colors – discovering oriental patterns and floral motives is, in its own practice of making, a very meditational process which has been fueling my visual vocabulary for years.



Installation view: „Microcreative“, March 2017. Acrylic and correction pen on canvas. 120x80cm  
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**Why have you chosen to be an artist at such an early age and how did it happen?**

I don't think I ever chose to be an artist, it's just something that automatically happens to people when they start expressing themselves through art. I have however entered the art world at a very unorthodox age by going to art openings and sipping wine (laughs). I was always very ambitious to develop fast and paint a lot. I always asked other artists and curators, gallerists for their feedback on my work and what I can do better. I started reading a great deal about art history and artists. My first internship with Emanuel Layr gallery was also very eye opening and made me understand a great deal more about the contemporary art scene. Everyone who surrounded me was extremely helpful.



Photography by Paul Mitnik, Vienna 2017

**You are always travelling back and forth from the Middle East to here. Can you tell us what you think the important links are between our cultures? What inspires you to be there so often?**

The Middle East has become a very controversial place. Politically as well as ideologically, countries in that region face many challenges, now more than ever. So does the west currently, considering the political climate. There are enormous differences between the rich oil GCC countries and the ones who have been negatively affected by war and extremism for good dozens of years. I am very intrigued by the recent growth of populism and islamophobia in Western Europe triggered by the wave of refugees. The idea of raising more cultural awareness about the region by traveling there and then creating a hint of abstract orientalism in my paintings is my way of expressing how thankful I am to be blessed enough to have experienced the culture there and in transformation countries such as the United Arab Emirates. I like sharing my positive outlook on the region with anybody I communicate with and reminding people what great cultural treasures the region has.



*Round painting „yy“ – Palm Leaf Objective series  
December 2016. Acrylic, graffiti spray, acrylic spray and correction pen on round canvas. 70cm radius.*

**Why is the theme of “appearances” so important in your artistic practice?**

The theme of appearance and perception is a very flexible context because I can create works which tackle completely different subjects and meanings but all arise from the same question of „Is reality or perception more important? Where is the fine line between those two in our understanding of surroundings and visibility?“. In my personal outlook, reality is not something solid or straight. The second we think something is real, the second it seems real, then it becomes real to us. Imagine for example a fake product. As long as you don't know it's fake, for you that product is real and there is no part of your current mind arguing with that. So the product becomes solid reality in your perception and that's really all that counts. This philosophy can be shown and expressed in different branches such as visual illusion or even the psychological mechanics behind product packaging.

**Vanguardist: How is Vienna treating young talents?**

As we all know the education system in Austria is going through constant change. I am extremely grateful to go to such a wonderful nonconformist institution such as the fashion institute of Vienna. When it comes to the art world, I do have the feeling that conservatism is still the norm. Especially when it comes to young people like me, who choose not to take the obvious institutionalized route into the art scene. It is considered very tricky to show artists who are completely new and I think a lot of people choose not to take that risk. Maybe it will get better with time.



*Installation view; "Hellenism – in the search for water"  
June 2017. Acrylic, correction pen, marker on pigmented canvas. 60x90cm*

**Last question: What book are you currently reading?**

I am reading a book by renowned American Buddhist Pema Chödrön called „Comfortable with uncertainty“. It helps me get through my moving phase! (laughs)

**daniel  
moldoveanu**