



# PĒTERIS CIEMĪTIS

*Born Perth, Australia 1959*

Graduated Western Australian Institute of Technology with BA (Urban & Regional Planning) 1980; Curtin University Grad.Dip. (Urban & Regional Planning) 1988; studied at Claremont School of Art 1989-1992. Commenced exhibiting in 1992, with solo, and various joint and group showings. Received numerous awards in Western Australia. Has been finalist in the Prospect Portrait Prize 2007 and the Archibald Prize 2007 and 2008. Paintings in various public and corporate collections in Australia, including the Cities of Swan and South Perth, Ballarat Grammar, and the Pilbara Development Corporation. Is also represented in Valmiera Gallery in Latvia. Resides in Perth.



The modernist idea of the “project of the self” in contemporary portraiture intrigues me. More than ever, we invent our outward identities through wilful creation. In portraiture, this is often represented by contextualising the subject; through their juxtaposition with metaphoric settings or objects.

Whilst this is certainly a valid idea, in my current work I attempt a different path; to represent identity unaided by context. I have become keenly interested in attempting to express a sense of being; a sense of our experience of the flux of thought, emotion and physicality. I attempt to do this within the process of improvisational mark-making overlain on a representational framework of facial display and gesture.

I typically employ the fluidity of watercolour and diluted acrylic, counterpointed with dry drawing media. I endeavour to render subjects in transparent and irresolute terms, erase and render again to build upon the idea of transience.

My visual influences derive from many traditions including Latvian watercolour, through Austrian Expressionism to Bacon’s abstracted figures. However, my greater inspirational wellspring at present is music. I am fascinated by the process of improvisation and the ability of musicians to disconnect their psyches from ‘self monitoring’ their performance and find “the zone”.

Mani intriģē modernistu ideja “izvirzīt sevi” mūsdienu portretūrā. Vairāk nekā jebkad, izgudrojam savas ārējās personības ar apzinātu jaunradi. Portretūrā tās bieži atveido radot kontekstu subjektam; tās izvietojot starp metaforiskiem aranžējumiem vai objektiem.

Arī ja ideja ir vērtīga, savā patreizējā darbā es meklēju citu ceļu: reprezentēt personību bez konteksta palīdzības. Man ļoti interesē attēlot subjekta būtību; izjust domu plūdumu, jūtas un fiziskumu. Darba procesā cenšos to panākt improvizācijas ceļā radot iezīmes, tās pārklājot sejas izteiksmju un žestu attēlojuma struktūru.

Visbiežāk lietoju plūstošas ūdenskrāsas un atšķaidītu akrila krāsu sastādījumā ar sauso zīmējumu. Nodarbodamies ar domu par pārņemību, cenšos subjektus attēlot kā transparentus un daudzveidīgus, tos dzēšot un par jaunu pārveidojot.

Vizuāli mani ietekmē daudzas tradīcijas, tajā skaitā latviešu ūdenskrāsu darbi un impulsi no austriešu ekspresionisma, līdz Beikona (Bacon) abstraktajām figūrām. Tomēr, mans lielākais iedvesmes avots ir mūzika. Mani saista mūziķu spējas improvizēt un atbrīvot psihi no izpildījuma pašparraudzības un atrast “zonu”.

*Grabowsky*  
*Grabovskis* 2008  
Mixed media on canvas  
Jaukta tehnika uz audekla  
122x181cm

Portrait image by  
Ross Swansborough