

The Contemporary Art Modern Project presents: *Inside Katika Looking Out*

The medium of crochet art takes the spotlight within the framework of the exhibition with the raw texture of yarn serving as a representation for messy, yet strong and vibrant feelings and emotions, which both compose and distort a person's identity in the act of communication. *Inside Katika Looking Out* presents a contemplation of confusing emotions boiling inside and looking for a way out during the global COVID-19 pandemic. The exhibition also explores another aspect of the pandemic felt by many that being the need for meaningful communication with one another.

Dividing itself into two apparently disconnected segments the exhibition comes together through emojis and crochet portraits. Katika understanding limits in physical contact, and our reliance on modern technologies to convey our thoughts, employs emojis, a huge part of communication for several years, to represent a way of conveying strong, complicated feelings and emotions by simple, universally recognizable symbols. Reminiscent of pictograms, which many people used for writing thousands of years ago, and existing in the virtual world of modern technologies, emojis seem to be both ancient and unquestionably modern in their communicative purpose. They also represent raw emotional responses to the outside world and serve as symbols of childlike honesty, as implied by the piece of a child with an emoji in their hands. The child is still very much a tabula rasa, open and ready to learn about the world and ways to behave in it, and their emotions are the key to their successful introduction to society.

Katika's primary focus is on human emotions amidst the widely spread practice of self-isolation which, while undoubtedly necessary, can also be extremely paranoia-inducing. This paranoid aspect of the pieces presented in the exhibition is conveyed in the presentation of a series of portraits, mounted on canvases with the "wrong" sides facing the audience. Instead of displaying to the audience the likenesses which these portraits capture, Katika chooses to show what is going on underneath the smooth facades of these faces, usually suppressed and buried in the back of one's mind. Being an onlooker during the pandemic, she projects her own insecurities, fears, and invasive thoughts onto her models and guessing what the minds of people confined to their homes might be like. Looking closer at themselves and their loved ones with whom they share the living space, people both come to a better understanding of their psyche's inner workings and lose sight of their identities in relation to the rest of the world. There are no distractions keeping them from studying their own messy minds clouded with worry.

All pieces are made of yarn hand-spun and dyed by Katika during her personal journey towards better understanding and command of the medium she is working with. It is her love confession to both yarn itself and the imperfect psyche of human beings – creatures filled with fear, insecurities, and beautiful, honest emotions at the same time.