P I O T R S Z C Z U R

VISUAL ARTIST, PAINTER

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Born in Jasło, Poland, 1987. Graduated from School of Art in Krosno. Studied at the Jan Grodek State Vocational Academy in Sanok, 2010. Studied at Maria Curie Skłodowska University, Faculty of Arts, Lublin, 2010 – 2013. Diploma in painting under the guidance of prof. M. Drzewiński, Lublin, 2013. Lives and works in Cracow. His paintings can be found in private collections in Poland and abroad.

Solo exhibitions:

- *#paintingsamerica*, Gallery r_z / ORz ZPAP, Rzeszow 2019
- *Made in USA / 100 paintings*, Foundation 2 dimensions, Pharmacy of Art Gallery, Warsaw 2018
- *Made in USA*, Foundation 2 dimensions, BWA Sanok Gallery, Sanok 2018
- *Cases in the forest*, Contemporary Art Center SOLVAY, Cracow 2015
- *XIV*, SDA Gallery, Warsaw 2014

Group exhibitions:

- *In 24-Hours: Personal Terrain,* The Wall Space Gallery, Scotland, UK, 2020
- *Yosemite Renaissance 35,* Yosemite Museum Gallery, Yosemite National Park, California, USA 2020
- *The world upside down,* Art Meeting Tomaszowice 2019, Tomaszowice Manor 2019
- *Japan & Poland. Exhibition commemorating the 100th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations,* EMP Gallery, Tokyo 2019
- *Portraits of nature*, SDA Gallery, Sopot 2019
- *Starting point*, White Gallery CENTER, NCK, Cracow 2019
- *Between imagination and the mystery of form. In the circle of Prof. Białogłowicz's Studio,* BWA Krosno Gallery, Krosno 2019
- *In the circle of Prof. Białogłowicz's Studio, BWA Rzeszow Gallery, Rzeszow 2019*
- *Japan & Poland. Exhibition commemorating the 100th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations,* Information and Culture Department of the Embassy of Japan, Warsaw 2019
- *Between imagination and the mystery of form. In the circle of Prof. Białogłowicz's Studio,* Contemporary Art Center SOLVAY, Cracow 2018
- *In the circle of Prof. Białogłowicz's Studio*, Gallery of the Faculty of Art of the University of Rzeszow, Rzeszow 2018
- *Into the woods. Neoromantics towards nature*, Foundation 2 dimensions, Muranów Station, Warsaw 2017
- *Into the woods. Neoromantics towards nature*, Foundation 2 dimensions, BWA Sanok Gallery, Sanok 2017
- *Szczepkowski – Stabryła – Szczur*, Showroom Marchand, DESA Unicum, Warsaw 2013
- *Pass it on*, UMCS, Lublin 2013
- *No budget show 4*, MOCAK, Cracow 2012

ARTIST STATEMENT

I was seduced by the unparalleled beauty of the American landscape.

The direct inspiration for the series "Made in USA" was a trip to the United States, which I took in 2015, during which I traveled through the states of Nevada, California, Arizona and Utah.

From this trip, I brought back memories of national parks, small roadside bars and gas stations on historic Route 66, neon signs of motels, small towns and their small churches, canyons and impressive rock formations, a distant horizon, and, above all, the vastness of the monumental sky, shimmering each day and night with different colors.

In my latest paintings, I capture huge spaces of the American landscape in the canvas frame, I present America in compression and extract the essence from reality.
I care about feeling the atmosphere, space, air and temperature of a specific place.

The theme of the American landscape is very important to me. I feel a sense of belonging to these places. I paint them with longing while moving away from them. In the latest large canvases, the depicted sights are more and more distant. While painting, I experiment with the form of the artwork, I look for simple gestures, fortuity and color. Nature inspires me. For some time now I have started to perceive it more and more as a system of lines, shapes and vivid color combinations. I look from a distance, as my art slowly approaches abstraction.

Paintings from the American series can function simultaneously as an autonomous landscape, an independent representation of a specific place or a sign, a symbol of the United States as a whole.

I challenge the romantic, mythologized way of perceiving an artist in today's world. Creating art is a hard, everyday work that gives me both pleasure and satisfaction.

- Piotr Szczur

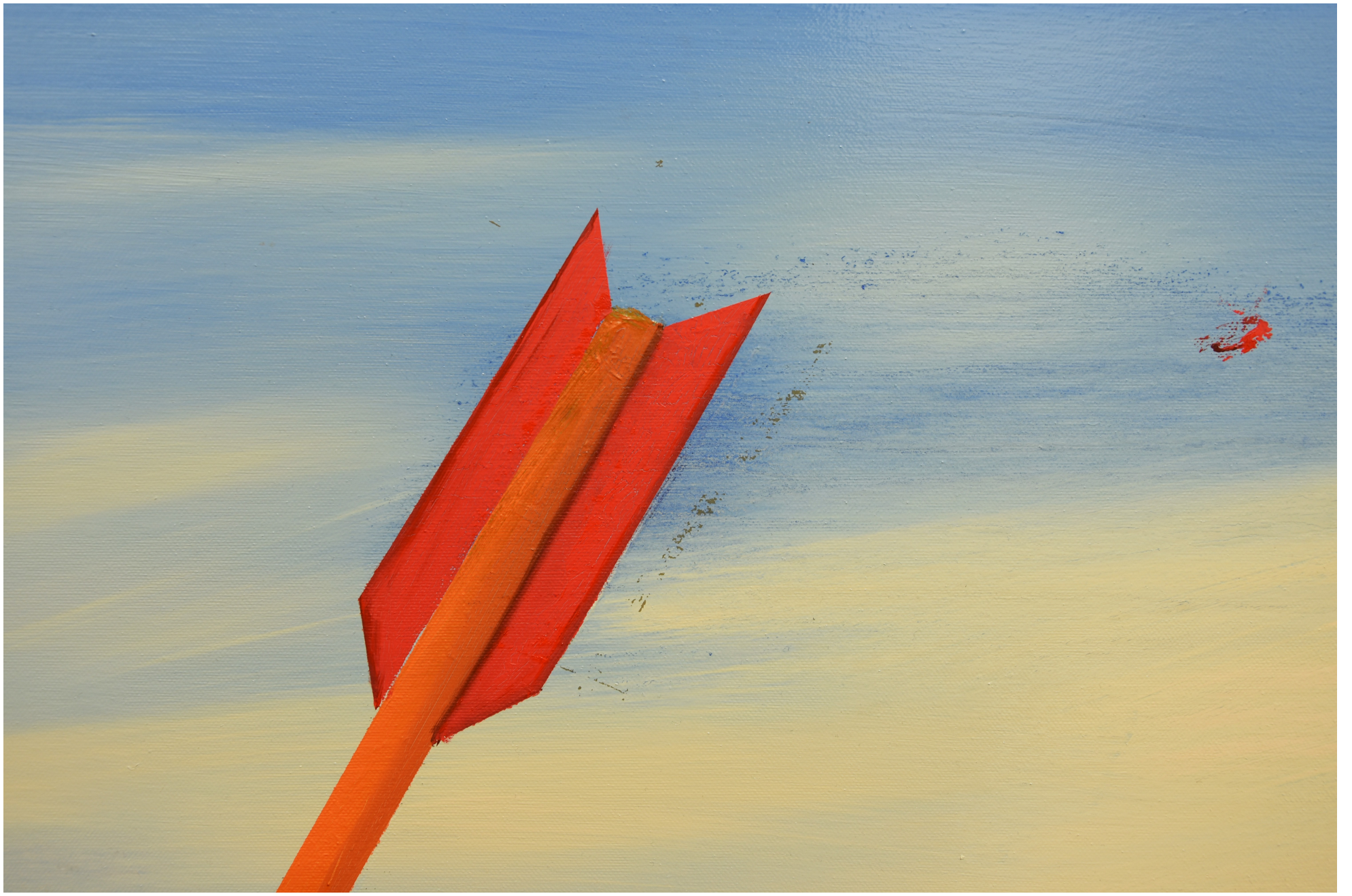
THE ROAD PAINTING

2019 - 2020

THE DEATH VALLEY I, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2020

THE ROAD PAINTING - The painting cycle of the artist Piotr Szczur, whose name refers to the iconic film genre - *Road Movie*. *The Road Painting* marks the next stage in the evolution of the artist's "American painting". In his latest paintings, the artist focuses on exploring the motive of the road and traveling - both in the literal and metaphorical sense. As in the movies, we are shown not only the road itself, but also small architecture and infrastructure, which inevitably appears around it. The most characteristic element of the composition, distinguishing the paintings from the series *The Road Painting* from the others, however, became the motif of the open, almost empty highway, which begins at the bottom of the canvas and runs deeper into the image, eventually disappearing on the horizon. Thanks to this, the artist's paintings acquire an open form - in fact, the road stretches far beyond the frame borders, and we can only see a small part of it. The viewer, positioned in the middle of the highway, becomes an involuntary participant in the artist's journey. In *The Road Painting* one can notice an increasingly clear departure from focusing on the subject of American landscape, in favor of shaping the form of the artwork. This cycle is a visual testimony of the artist's new formal experiments, his search for innovative, non-classical tools and inspirations, and the growing role of expressive color in his works.

BIG RED ARROWS, oil on canvas, 130 x 130 cm, 2019



DESERT HIGHWAY CALL BOX, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2019

FOLLOWING THE RIDERS, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2019

ROAD TO THE MONUMENT VALLEY, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2019

THE BIG WHITE CROSS, oil on canvas, 120 x 170 cm, 2019

THE HIGHWAY, oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm, 2019

#PAINTINGSAMERICA

2018 - 2019

A ROAD UNDER CLOUDS, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2019

HOLLYWOOD, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2019

When building worlds, Piotr Szczur uses sharp, vivid colors. In his compositions he combines – often on the basis of contrast – saturated reds, turquoises, yellows, and browns. The artist paints with glaze; he applies to the canvas subsequent, translucent layers of paint, thus obtaining the effect of the blurring of reality. On the other hand, he places in this simplified, semitransparent, and vibrantly colorful scenery detailed elements, signs, objects, and buildings that anchor the entire composition in the world of figuration, not allowing the images to drift completely towards abstract art. The reality of the artist's canvases is created based on the contrast between what is real and oneiric, material and fleeting. Thus, describing America becomes for Piotr Szczur a de facto starting point for extremely important, groundbreaking experiments and reflections on the form of the work, which, in an increasingly noticeable way, lead him to abstraction. It seems, however, that this is an instinctive process, though inevitable, and the artist himself surrenders to it, looking at the evolving form of the work from a certain distance.

- Marcin Krajewski

SURFER, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2019

CAR LIGHTS, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2019

A PINK GROUND, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2017 / 2019

UFO BAR, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2018

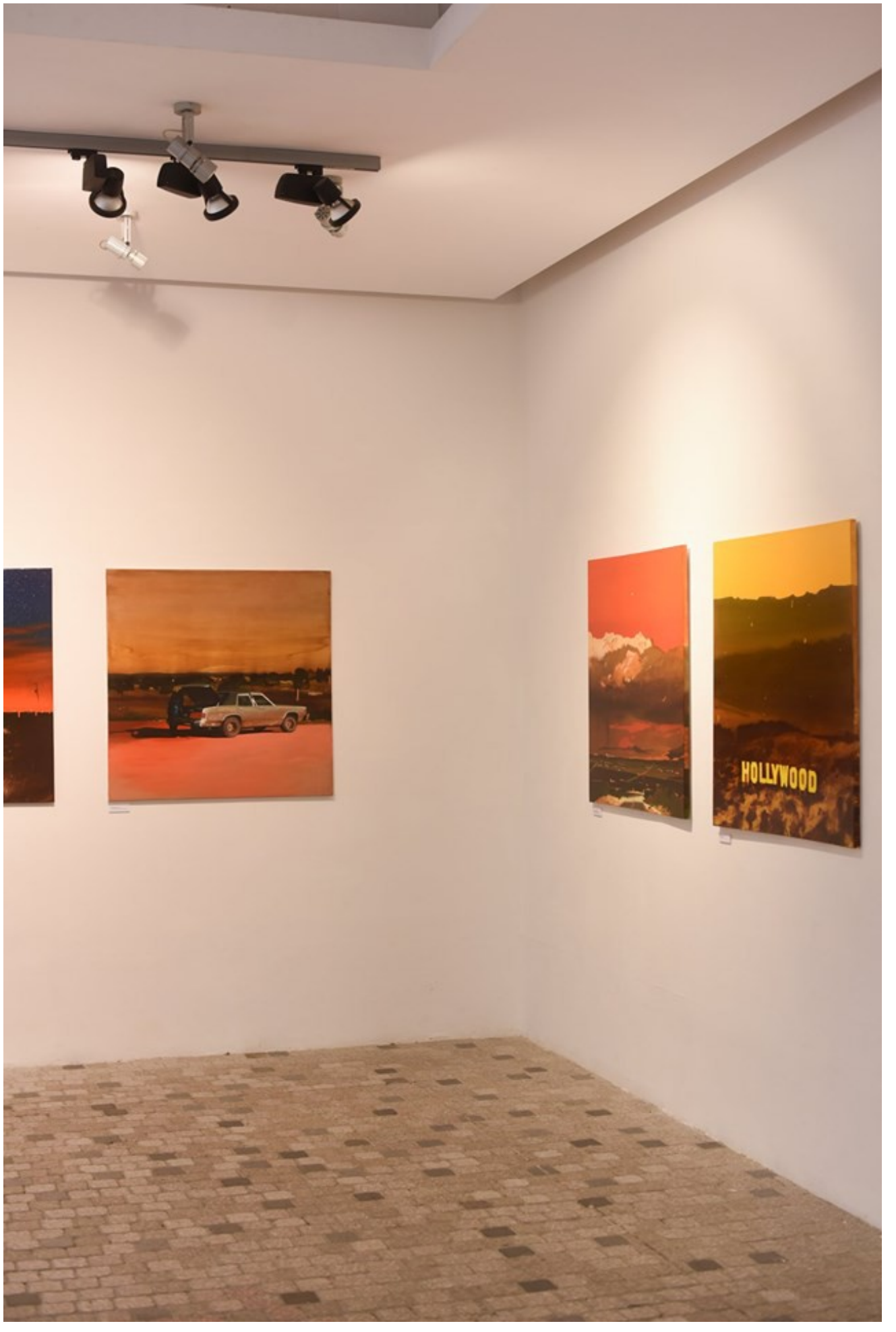
In the paintings from the American cycle by Piotr Szczur, the viewer can often only see isolated artifacts, short quotes from a broader context, cropped fragments of small and large United States structures: a billboard greeting travelers entering Utah, a single span of San Francisco's Golden Gate Bridge, cars whose silhouettes shine in the sun, or the famous inscription on the Hollywood hills. By means of a simple sign, a small section of the remembered reality, the artist presents the recipient with the very essence, a subjective summary of the cultural landscape of modern America that has developed especially from the beginning of the twentieth century. However, it should also be noted that, although Piotr Szczur shows the American landscape from the perspective of a tourist, in his paintings we find a deep understanding and personal relation to the places he visited. Despite moving away from realism and the fragmented way of framing reality, the artist is able to show the viewer a unique atmosphere: the characteristic climate of Arizona's red deserts, empty interstate highways, or the bustling beaches of the West Coast.

- Marcin Krajewski

WELCOME TO UTAH, oil on canvas, 100 x 100 cm, 2019

A RED SKY, oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm, 2018

#PAINTINGSAMERICA / SOLO SHOW / GALLERY R_Z / RZESZOW 2019


HOLLYWOOD

MADE IN USA

2015 - 2018

A HOUSE IN THE DESERT, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

2/100

Despite their small sizes, the paintings from the series "Made in USA" contain an extremely intriguing interpretive ambiguity. Almost every one of them can function simultaneously as an autonomous landscape, an independent representation of a specific place or sign, a symbol of the United States as a whole. At the same time, it should be remembered that they are also fragments of a great puzzle that, when gathered, show the magnitude and diversity of the natural and cultural landscape of modern America. Therefore the proper way of displaying images in the gallery space becomes crucial, as it reveals the true meaning of this series to us. The American paintings by Piotr Szczur are not only memorabilia, memories of a journey made. Only when suspended in one row do they begin to function as a kind of map, a testimony of the journey traveled – both in the physical and the spiritual senses. And although all the artworks from this series differ from each other just as the individual States of America do, the "Made in USA" series constitutes an extremely coherent whole. In Piotr Szczur's paintings we find consistent admiration for the majesty of the American sky, a sense of unrestricted freedom, romantic sensitivity with which the artist experiences and depicts the surrounding landscape, and, above all, a deep understanding and awareness of belonging to the place he still longs to miss.

- Marcin Krajewski

MALIBU, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

65/100

A RANCH AT THE FOOT OF A YELLOW MOUNTAIN, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

20/100

ROY'S
VACANCY
MOTEL
CAFE

PEOPLE IN BLACK STOPPING OFF, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

74/100

A BEACH, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

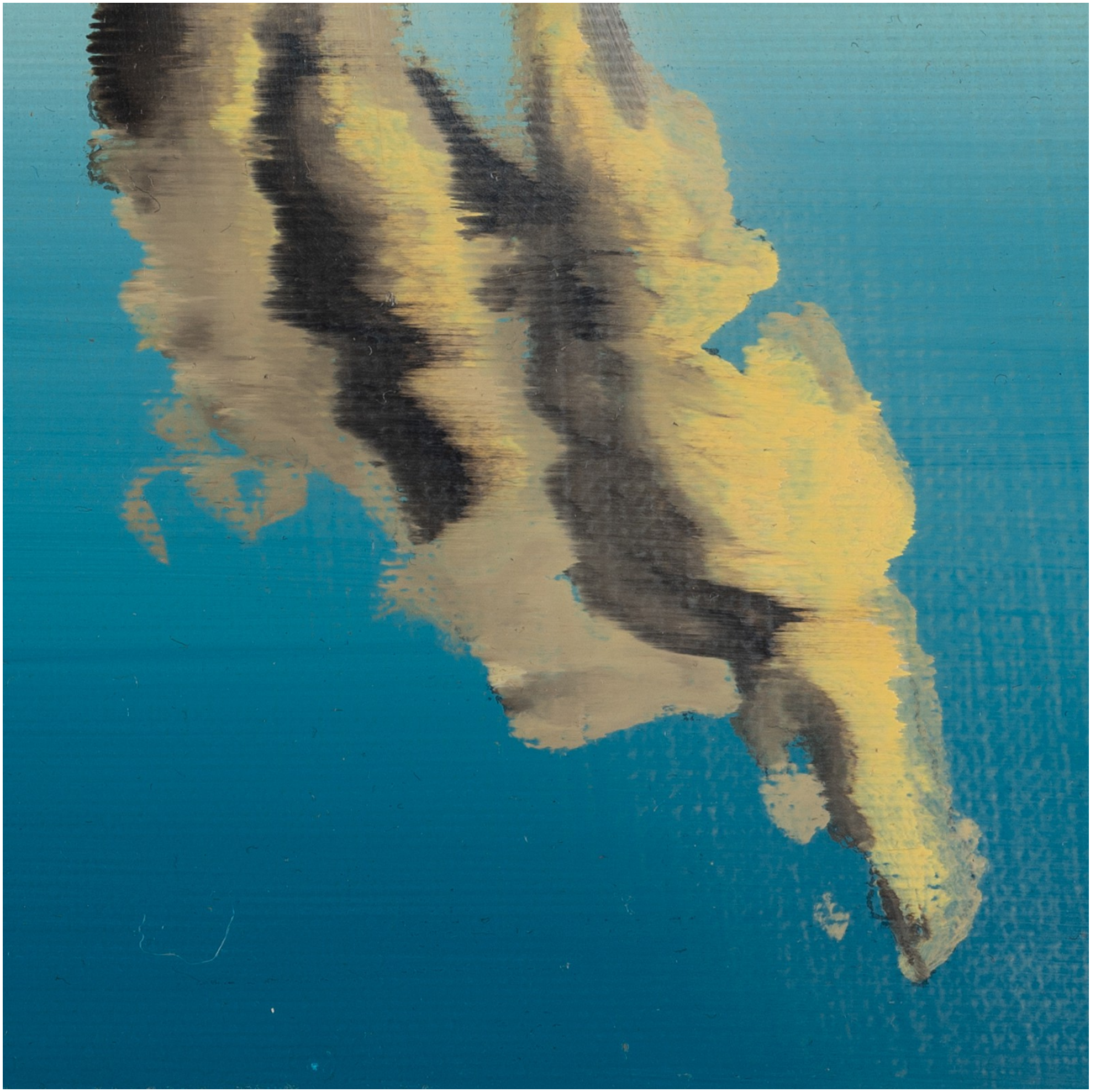
19/100

A NATIVE AMERICAN'S TERRITORY, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

25/100

Piotr Szczur represents actually existing fragments of the landscape, although, especially when we isolate the individual paintings from the context of the entire collection, one can see an increasingly clear departure from photorealism. The most important thing is the impression, the emotional perception of reality. The artist focuses on the form of the artwork, celebrates the medium, deliberately guides the brushstroke, and, at the same time, splashes color on selected fragments of the composition so as to allow the element of the controlled fortuity to come to life.

- Marcin Krajewski



A FACTORY IN PAGE, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

64/100

LAS VEGAS, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

12/100

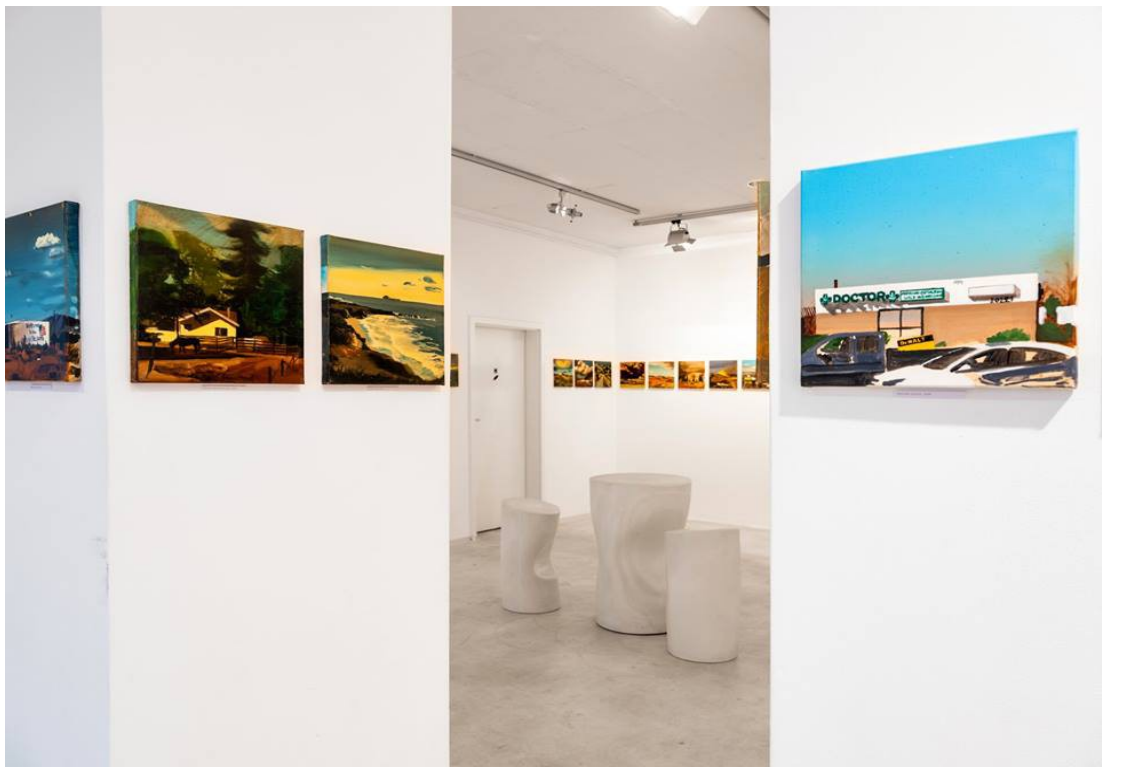
A TOURIST VILLAGE, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

75/100

A SUNRISE OVER A VALLEY, oil on canvas, 30 x 30 cm, 2016

14/100

MADE IN USA / 100 PAINTINGS / SOLO SHOW / PHARMACY OF ART GALLERY / WARSAW 2018


DOCTOR

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