



**PROJECT A4**  
**MIHAEL FRANČIĆ, *ENNUI***

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For the sixth year in a row, the Art Gallery brings together artists from four Croatian academies and students from the Department of Art History in the collaborative *Project A4* on a national level. The goals of the project are education for professional life and the connecting of students of academies and art history departments. Through the project, graduate students gain experience working on artworks and curating exhibitions. *Project A4* is a continuation of the *Fast Forward Project / Tuesdays in the Gallery*, where Split students, encouraged by their mentors, collaborated in creating exhibitions. At this year's fifth edition of *Project A4*, the cycle of psychological self-portraits, named *Ennui*, won. The artworks are signed by Mihael Frančić, a student at the Academy of Arts in Split, and the accompanying text and curatorial work by a student of the Department of Art History at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Split, the author of this review.



Cycle of artworks "Ennui", digital sketches (source: Mihael Frančić, July 19, 2022)

The French noun in the title, *ennui*, is translated in Croatian as *boredom*, *listlessness* and *dissatisfaction resulting from a lack of excitement in life*. The mentioned descriptions become the inspiration for the theme of Frančić's new cycle. The artist creates a cycle of eight psychological self-portraits, showing his inner states of depression, lethargy, anxiety and trauma. Frančić's three smaller works (90 x 60 cm) are connected by the word "without". The artworks *Without Voice*, *Without Personality* and *Without Future* are almost headless self-portraits of the artist. On the other hand, larger self-portraits (150 x 100 cm) are titled with everyday nouns such as *Hunger*, *Sedimentation*, *Perception*, *Relationships* and *Deformation*. The titles of the artworks symbolise the difficulties the author faces in everyday life. With his artworks, the author tells a story of a personal theme, and, by carefully choosing colours, he announces, in advance, the difficulty he will portray on a particular canvas. "What will happen if I step out of my comfort zone? Am I ready to risk the previous habits, beliefs and thoughts I live by?" – these are just some of the questions that the artist tries to answer for himself, but which questions are central for every individual and the social community as such.



*Opening of the exhibition in the premises of the Split Art Gallery  
(source: Art Gallery, November 15, 2022)*



*Opening of the exhibition in the Split Art Gallery  
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With the opening of the *Ennui* exhibition in the Art Gallery on November 15, 2022 at 8 p.m., a joint journey began, in which the winners of this year's edition of *Project A4* will be able to exhibit artworks on the Croatian art scene during the next year. In January, the exhibition moves to the Kortil Gallery in Rijeka, then to the Šira Gallery in Zagreb in spring, and finally to the Waldinger Gallery in Osijek in autumn.



*"Ennui" exhibition in the premises of the Split Art Gallery  
(source: Art Gallery, November 15, 2022)*

*Project A4* offers the possibility of entering the world of curators and artists in the big cities of the Republic of Croatia. Similar projects and organizations are an excellent platform for young artists and future curators who will gain, even before their professional employment, experience working with artworks, galleries, museums, management and the public. A special experience was being guests on Radio Split in the *Radio Gallery* show, where we talked about the project itself, working together on an artwork and on the opening of the exhibition. During the application for *Project A4*, as well as in the later exhibition part, students are mentored by professors, who complement young minds and ideas with their experience.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank professor Dalibor Prančević from the Department of Art History of the Faculty of Huma-



nities and Social Sciences in Split, who, with his suggestions, gave the final form of the accompanying text of the exhibition. I would also like to thank the professors of the Academy of Arts in Split, Nela Ružić and Viktor Popović, the director of the Split Art Gallery, Jasminka Babić, the curator of the exhibition, Ana Čukušić, and the hardworking employees of the Art Gallery, who were our technical support.



*Artist Mihael Frančić and curator Blaženka Miše at the Split Art Gallery at the opening of the "Ennui" exhibition (source: Art Gallery, November 15, 2022)*