

The body of works by Zura Gulishvili combines the motives of symbolism, Orthodox Christian iconography and surrealism in abstractive spaces. These spaces indicate meditation on the state of nowhere or everywhere reflecting dynamics of the artist's consciousness. Naturally, these different topics, with their controversy, come from the personal experience of the artist and his biography; he realizes that cultural borders are just conventional givens, and at some moments different cultural modes meet each other, building absolutely different hybrids through elements which were being impossible to imagine together before.

The period of forming Zura Gulishvili as an artist coincides with the complex time of transitional crisis experienced by the ex-Soviet countries. The end of the Communist regime produced the new cultural tension, where beside the rehabilitation process of Orthodox Christian religion, which was forbidden by atheist ideology, it became possible to get information about contemporary Western artistic tendencies and experiments which were previously inaccessible. The information surplus dramatically stressed ongoing cultural processes: artists started to rethink the historical way of iconography, and on the other hand, they were interested in liberal values of the contemporary art world, in the new conditions of 'open borders,' and all of this created a new reality.

The new reality in the art by Zura Gulishvili reflects archetypes of Georgian culture in combination with visual thinking of contemporary art. His transcendental landscapes refer to the conditional territory, where existential themes are connected with different cultural codes such as ritual symbolism, spiritual mood and artistic inspirations.

Dr. Khatuna Khabuliani
art critic, curator