

## Giorgos Douatzis

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Who had the nerve to say  
that dreams don't live among us?  
Who said our spirit cannot  
roam the entire world?  
Who said transcendence of potential, the self  
is a small cause?  
Some will say so  
but I will be here  
crossing the world full of innocence  
an illiterate infant  
before the multitude of written words  
and words that are as yet unwritten  
unrepentant, hopeful, thirsty  
as a hunter of the impossible  
to make it possible

George Douatzis

*Giorgos Douatzis is one of our country's most important modern writers. Especially prolific, he has been active for over 50 years, passionately and devotedly producing an exceptional literary output and unmatched poetry.*

Plenty reviews of Giorgos Douatzis's poetic work can be found in the recent book by Stixis Publications, titled "Words Were Dripping Red," with the initiative and editing by George Rouskas. Additionally, critical reviews are included in the book "Critical Approaches (1976-2022) to the Poetic and Prose Works of Giorgos Douatzis," which comprises a total of ninety reviews by 47 literature critics and philologists, covering a span of forty-six years (1976-2022). According to all these eminent authors and critics, *Giorgos Douatzis' poetry is tumultuous, captivating, profound, and impressively rich in social significance.*

*The literary work of Giorgos Douatzis is not only possessed by an ability to inspire, but also provides deep insights into the human experience. His poetry has a particular rhythm, with lively and perceptible imagery and strong metaphors, offering a singular way of viewing the world around us. It encourages us to slow down, enjoy every word and phrase, reflect on the beauty and significance of even the simplest things in life. His poetry weaves cobwebs of thought and feeling, inviting readers to enter a different world and experience the wealth of human existence.*

In the process of creating a work, every artist follows their own unique approach, and the interaction between mind and soul is crucial in shaping their eventual artistic expression. As the artist delves deeper into the creative process, emotions diffuse into the work, imbuing it with a multitude of elements drawing upon experiences, memories or aspirations, and eventually breathing life into it.

Studying Giorgos Douatzis's work "Chronicles-Diary notes", by Kaktos, 2021, I was particularly intrigued by his views on the power and importance of creation and art.

So let us have a look at what the poet himself has written on the matter, through a collection of texts selected for this specific feature.

The paintings below are works by Giorgos Douatzis, who is also an exceptional self-taught painter. Ten of his most moving poems, in our opinion, can be found below the text.



### art and creation

Everyone of us is but a continuity, in life, in art, in creation. I, too, am but a ring in this chain, small and weak, holding my baton out to those ahead of me.

Works of art are a beacon of salvation not only to creators, but also to receivers. Art sheds light on the darkest corners of human nature, of life, places we wouldn't otherwise dare to venture in. Art is a blessing, strengthening the idea that we are not as lonely as we imagine.

The sense of freedom in the artist's enclosed world is magnificent. Moments of creation are a time of absolute freedom. The only opponent is the artist's self, and materials: White paper, canvas, clay, marble, unwritten sheets, calling for the breath of life, regardless of place and time.

There is nothing higher than creation.

*The path of creation is rough, long, and treacherous, that of destruction usually smooth and open, like a one-way road traversed by a humanity marked by the paranoia of gradual suicide, when reflective people go extinct, pushed to the margins of history, as if useless, by the small-minded. And art, a great gift.*

Those truly humble do not speak about their work. By speaking of it, they would be effectively announcing "I am here", when their work's voice – if there is a reason for its existence – is far more powerful. Humble silence bolsters the work's voice, makes it an immaculate cry-embrace of hope for people.

What sense of time can I talk about, when Beethoven and his sounds take me and lead me so far away? A taste of infinity. Even the sense of dissolved boundaries offers a wonderful feeling of freedom, if just for moments, exactly like transcendence, that other horizon-less reality. As if it were an incorporeal mattress, I lean on music, and it takes me to other, new places. In it, I find every magical thing born of the human mind, and I admire it boundlessly.

The herd instinct leads people towards common archetypes, a common lifestyle deemed "right" simply for being accepted by the majority. The thinker is a stranger to the herds, an outcast of his own choice, frowning at the things he observes around him, led to a completely personal kind of isolation. Building a personal "odd" system of values only intensifies his solitude. After all, he could never breathe freely inside the herd and its predominating imitatorism.

Art emerges as a savior in times of crisis. Perhaps it's just my own understanding, but I can see, amid the crisis we are going through, an orgiastic activity around us, in theater, music, painting. I have the impression there is proliferation in every form of art. This recent crisis has brought things forward from the souls of people, especially young ones, and this is a comforting beam of hope.

Every work, like every human being, is unique. Uniqueness, however, doesn't necessarily imply value. Quality is built gradually, not given freely. It requires discipline, labor, introspection, courage, and, most of all, love.

No-one can help a creator achieve their goal, such as the final form of a book or artwork. Only the artist, solely, exclusively them...

The way of art towards understanding the self, the world, people, is much broader and more pleasant, albeit tougher.



### refuge in art

Every art form satisfies needs in every human. A simplistic folk song is art. A solitary shepherd feels the need to play the flute, sings on his own, improvises. The common, "uncultivated" man, creates. Creating art is a need implicit in human substance, and this is why humans seek refuge in art when times are hard in life. Let us remember what happened during the military junta and democratic transition periods in Greece. An outburst of literature, music, Poetry. So much so, in fact, that many consider our own time poor in comparison.

*The most dramatic twists in history, whether individual or collective, had art as a co-stimulating or subsequent element. From revolutionary music, paintings, dances, statues, performances, to the great Poetry. After all, every art form is inherently subversive, revolutionary, anti-authoritarian.*

Culture, the only way out, is modified over time as to its means of expression, not its essence and content. In everyday life, we wear the appropriate masks, interact, live in the jungle of dog eat dog. But there comes a time when, talking with our great self at night, we realize there are feelings there, tears, love, emotion, pain, loss, every human thing. And then the only refuge left is in the products of culture, a book, a song, a play, a film.

Art offers a new side to reality. Until a new artwork comes to offer another new aspect, the previous one is already part of the existing reality, the new aspect of which will produce the next artwork, etc. And thus a constant peculiar record of the artist's effervescence, emotions, inner life, visions is propagated. If the artist didn't feel devoted to their art, perhaps they would have no excuse for existing. Then comes the need to share the work with other humans.



### creator

One aspect of joyous moments is contact with artworks of a high aesthetic caliber. I am overcome with a feeling of gratitude to their creators. In moments like these, I think it is every creator's obligation to share his work with his fellow people. And it is there that every single idea of the creator's vanity collapses, when he addresses others and reaches out his hand in sharing. But even if his motives were vain, it makes no difference to me, when I can enjoy, to the point of happiness, the outcome. This is why I loved every genuine creator of every form of art and writing who preferred to share their work. On the other hand, I falter, pondering the selfish nature of my thought, my voracity, and I am led in the exact opposite direction: That the creator isn't bound by any obligation to anyone. The work is exclusively his, and he retains every right to decide whether to share it or not, destroy it right after he completes it, or do with it as he sees fit. And it would surely be quite insolent of me to demand he share it with me. Here we can glimpse a stereotypical perception, which we ought to view with the appropriate skepticism.

If human works can uplift me with their aesthetic, what can I say about the importance of human beauty, when visible of course. In these moments, you eulogize human existence and the circumstances that led you to such discoveries. And if stimulation of the senses is added to aesthetic pleasure, then this meeting is truly boundless...

*It's a mistake to think that only those who produce artworks are creators. We ought to be grateful to all those who create, who pave the way for culture and make our lives easier with their inventions. Indeed, they often even our lives with their scientific and technological achievements.*