

SPARKS OF HERITAGE: OYBEK ISLAMOV IN DIALOGUE WITH JOAN MIRÓ

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Annotation. Oybek Islamov's *The Eternal Stage* is not merely a mural but a theatre of civilization rendered in paint. With academic precision and monumental scale, the work orchestrates a dialogue between Uzbekistan's cultural lineage and the classical canon of Europe. Figures of Socrates, Homer, and Shakespeare appear alongside echoes of Raphael, while national motifs anchor the composition in local identity. The result is a stage where antiquity, Renaissance, and modern Uzbek culture converge, transforming architecture into narrative space. In this synthesis, Islamov reaffirms mural painting as both cultural memory and philosophical inquiry — a work that asserts its place within the continuum of world art.

Keywords: Oybek Islamov. . Joan Miró. Extraordinary ability, Monumental painting, Original contribution of major significance, National recognition, International recognition, Artistic excellence, Cultural heritage, Public commission, State competition winner, Leading role, Critical capacity, Academic foundation, Scholarly contribution, Published work, Expert in monumental art, Renowned artist, Prestigious project, Influence on national identity, Architectural imagination, Innovative cultural vision.

Painting as Energy

“For me, a painting must give off sparks. It must dazzle like the beauty of a woman or a poem.” Joan Miró's words echo across the twentieth century, capturing the essence of painting as something alive, unruly, and electric. Few artists in Central Asia embody this principle today as vividly as **Oybek Islamov**, a monumental painter whose works stand at the intersection of tradition, architecture, and modern sensibility.



Pic.1. Woman and Birds in the Night. Joan Miró. Pic.2. Tranquility. Oybek Islamov

Like Miró, Islamov believes that painting must vibrate — with rhythm, with emotion, with something that resists stillness. Yet where Miró's sparks floated through abstract constellations and subconscious forms, Islamov's ignite on the grand walls of national institutions, carrying the pulse of Uzbekistan's cultural memory.

Miró and Islamov: Two Paths to Freedom

Joan Miró was a rebel against academic order. His surreal, childlike forms challenged bourgeois convention, celebrating the irrational and the spontaneous. Islamov, by contrast, has embraced academic mastery — anatomy, composition, and scale — only to reimagine it within monumental public works. Both artists resist complacency, but through opposite strategies: Miró through escape into dream, Islamov through **discipline transformed into expression**.

The viewer senses this difference immediately. Miró's canvases, playful and floating, whisper in the language of subconscious freedom. Islamov's murals, monumental and architectural, speak in the voice of collective memory. Yet both leave sparks — irreducible moments of awe that jolt the viewer into recognition.



Pic.3. In the world of memory. Oybek Islamov. Pic.4. Mirage (Aral sea) Oybek Islamov

Biography of a Monumentalist

Born in Tashkent into a family of intellect and design — a mathematician father and architect mother — Islamov was immersed early in a world of precision and vision. At just seventeen, he won first place in a national competition (2003), securing admission to the **National Institute of Fine Art and Design named after Kamoliddin Behzod**.

There he distinguished himself as a painter of remarkable promise. He graduated with top honors, received the **Alisher Navoi State Prize**, and earned a scholarship for graduate study. His

original contributions of major significance were already evident in his student work, which demonstrated confidence at large scale and a sensitivity to the rhythm of space.

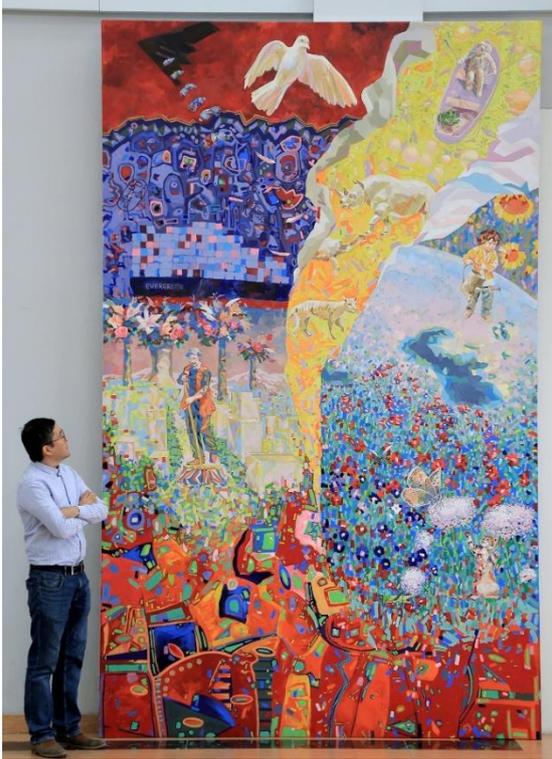
From 2010 to 2014 he served as an assistant at the Institute, before seeking international experience. In Dubai, he joined **AKA International** as an interior designer, serving in a **leading and critical capacity** on hospitality projects. His professional journey extended to Germany and London, where he gained **exceptional experience** working across architectural cultures. Meetings with global figures such as Tom Wright, architect of the Burj Al Arab, expanded his sense of how painting, architecture, and identity intersect.

Returning to Uzbekistan, Islamov worked with **Discover Invest** as architect before rejoining his alma mater as lecturer. In this role he not only teaches but also serves as a **judge of others in the same field**, evaluating student work and promoting new talent. His publication *Academic Drawing: A Study Guide for Students* further marks his contributions to **scholarly discourse in the discipline**.

Monumental Works and Cultural Identity

It is in his monumental works, however, that Islamov's art achieves its fullest resonance. In 2023, he was commissioned to create a large-scale mural for the **Legislative Chamber of Uzbekistan**, a project that affirmed his role as a leading national artist. The following year, he contributed to the **Center for Islamic Civilization**, a landmark cultural institution that integrates heritage with modern identity. These works exemplify his philosophy: painting not as ornament, but as cultural architecture — visual sparks that embody a nation's story.

Here the comparison with Miró becomes especially telling. Miró's canvases were unbound by geography, symbols floating free of context. Islamov's murals are inseparable from their cultural setting, deliberately embedding ornament, history, and sacred motifs. Miró sought universality through abstraction; Islamov achieves universality through rootedness. In both cases, the result is a visual language that transcends the moment — sparks that travel across time.



Picture 5. The inevitability of human life. Oybek Islamov

International Recognition

In 2024, Islamov's works were exhibited at **Art Expo New York**, introducing his art to a global audience. For critics and curators, this appearance positioned him not as a regional painter but as an **expert of international significance in his discipline**. Like Miró, whose art was first celebrated abroad before gaining recognition at home, Islamov's participation in international exhibitions confirms his place within a wider dialogue of contemporary art.

Sparks That Endure

What unites Miró and Islamov is not style, but conviction: a refusal to let painting fall silent. For Miró, sparks came from the subconscious and the playful; for Islamov, they come from heritage and monumental form. Miró dazzled with the poetry of dreams, Islamov dazzles with the poetry of identity.

In both cases, the viewer is left with something irreducible — a spark, dazzling, unforgettable.

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