

**DOMINIK VUKOVIĆ**  
**PUTOVANJE ZLATNE PLOČE**

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Galerija Forum, 9. 4. - 30. 4. 2021.





vanjsim koricama / On the inside covers:  
 m, 2020., tempera i akril na papiru, 28 x 17 cm (detail) /  
 n, 2020., tempera and acrylic on paper, 28 x 17 cm (detail)

## PUTOVANJE ZLATNE PLOČE

*Feda Gavrilović*

Sjećam se da sam tada, 1998. godine, išao u osnovnu školu kada su do nas (na Zemlji) došle vijesti kako je NASA-ina svemirska sonda Voyager 1 postala od čovjeka stvoren objekt najdalje otisnut od našeg matičnog planeta. Možete zamisliti kako je to djelovalo na moju dječaku imaginaciju koja se tada intenzivno hranila popularnoznanstvenim časopisima, dječjim enciklopedijama i televizijskim dokumentarcima, podjednako se fascinirajući teorijama zavjera, astronomijom, paleontologijom i poviješću. Svemirski program Voyager lansiranjem dviju letjelica (Voyager 1 i Voyager 2) godine 1977. ugrabio je jedinstvenu priliku za slanje ispitivačke sprave toliko daleko. Specifičan raspored vanjskih planeta Sunčeva sustava u tom trenutku (raspored koji se ponavlja jednom u 176 godina) omogućio je znanstvenicima da koriste njihova gravitacijska polja kako bi odbacili ove sonde do takvih daljina. A misija je u sebi imala i romantičnu notu. Ponajviše zaslugom astronoma Carla Sagana, popularizatora znanosti i istraživača mogućnosti izvanzemaljskog života, svaka je od sonde sa sobom nosila zlatnu gramofonsku ploču. Na svakoj od njih snimljena je jednaka lepeza zemaljskih iskustava (širok raspon glazbe, zvukovi prirode, pozdravi Zemljana na različitim jezicima i elektronski upisane slike), a trebale bi služiti kao poruka mogućoj izvanzemaljskoj civilizaciji koja bi na neku od sonde naišla. Iako je put dvaju Voyagera dugoročan i računa se u desecima tisuća godina, nada u moguću kontakt s nekom izvanzemaljskom inteligencijom ono je glavno što je taj projekt populariziralo u javnosti. O

njemu se često govorilo u medijima, objavljivale su se fotografije koje su sonde snimale, a njihov je put inspirirao brojne znanstvenofantastične filmove i pripovijetke.<sup>1</sup>

Slike i zvuci na Voyagerovoj zlatnoj ploči simpatična su i sažeta suma ljudskog znanja i iskustva, upravo poput dječje enciklopedije. Zato nije iznenađujuće da se u novom ciklusu slika Voyagerom bavi Dominik Vuković, vješt ilustrator rođen u Zagrebu 1990. Ilustracija i jest pojednostavljen prikaz koji u sebi sadrži sukus neke istine, odnosno koji osvjetljuje neki pojam, situaciju ili odnos. Dominik se tim izrazom počeo baviti još tijekom studiranja na zagrebačkoj Akademiji likovnih umjetnosti, u klasi Svjetlana Junakovića, a otkada je diplomirao, 2015., surađivao je kao ilustrator na brojnim knjigama i slikovnicama (neke od njih su *Dugog putovanja cilj* Michaela Endea, u izdanju Malih Zvona, 2019.; i *San ljetne noći* Zorana Ferića, u izdanju V.B.Z.-a, iste godine).

Ovdje izložene slike na platnu pokazuju tijela Sunčeva sustava – njegovu zvijezdu i osam planeta uz Pluton (kojemu je 2006. ukinut status planeta jer nije gravitacijski dominantan u svojoj orbiti koja se presijeca s

<sup>1</sup> Ne mogu odoljeti a da ne istaknem dva takva filma. Prvi je *Star Trek The Motion Picture* iz 1979. s likovima iz popularne televizijske serije. U dugometražnoj avanturi oni se suočavaju s fiktivnom sondom iz 20. stoljeća koja je dio programa *Voyager* (i nosi broj 6). Sonda se vraća u Sunčev sustav kao svjestan stroj sa željom za stjecanjem znanja i potencijalom za evoluciju, koju nastavlja spajanjem sa čovjekom. Drugi je film *Ad Astra* iz 2019. (naslov mu dolazi od latinske poslovice „Per aspera ad astra“, to jest „preko trnja do zvijezda“, čiji je zapis u Morseovu kodu jedan od sadržaja Voyagerove zlatne ploče) u kojem depresivni astronaut traga za svojim ocem, te ga pronalazi kako živi osamljen na postaji u vanjskom dijelu Sunčeva sustava, otudivši se od svoje obitelji i od ljudi općenito, u očajničkom i bezuspješnom pokušaju da uspostavi kontakt s bilo kakvom izvanzemaljskom civilizacijom. Zanimljiva je promjena perspektive: 1979. se očekivalo da će do kraja stoljeća program *Voyager* poslati barem šest sondi koje će opsluživati ljudsku znatiželju, a 2019. ljudski su prioriteti, čini se, uzemljeniji, te se sugerira kako se istinski izazovi, kojih se vrijedi ozbiljno prihvatiti, nalaze u gradnji kvalitetnih međuljudskih odnosa. Pravi povijesni trijumf Nietzscheova uzvika: „Zaklinjem vas, braćo moja, ostanite vjerni zemlji!“

orbitom puno većeg Neptuna). Uz svemirska tijela Dominik Vuković daje nam i svoju interpretaciju zlatne gramofonske ploče s porukom izvanzemalcima koju nose Voyageri, kao i tablice s jednim sličnim, nešto ranijim pozdravom koji su ponijele sa sobom letjelice Pioneer 10, 1972. godine i Pioneer 11, 1973. godine (ta je poruka bila ideja novinara koji je pratio vijesti iz astronomije Erica Burgesa, a ostvarili su je spomenuti Carl Sagan, njegov kolega Francis Drake i Saganova supruga Linda Salzman, koja je poruku nacrtala).

Planeti i Sunce na Vukovićevim platnima isijavaju gustom slikarskom materijom, hipnotički privlače gledatelja i draže mu maštu mogućnošću bijega u daleke svjetove, kojima vladaju neobični i ponekada nama nepoznati fizikalni zakoni i čudnovate energije. Slikarsko je ostvarenje možda idealan prijenosnik tih energija. Radijacija boje u određenom omjeru koja komunicira s gledateljem na iracionalnoj razini slična je i samoj astronomskoj znanosti, gdje se složena znanstvena istraživanja spajaju s ljudskom fantazijom i željom za produbljivanjem zamislivoga.

„When the stars are right“, napisao je H. P. Lovecraft, opisujući prizivanje okrutnih kozmičkih bogova, čiji su pojmovi o prostoru međugalaktički i čija svijest o vremenu milijarde godina broji kao sekunde, kojima su ljudski životi i čovjekova spoznajna moć neopisivo beznačajni. „When the planets are right“, rekli su NASA-ini znanstvenici, računajući najbolje putanje za letjelice Voyager, kojima su željeli proširiti granice svoga znanja o svemiru, te protegnuti ljudsku ruku u taj golemi prostor, u nadi da će dodirnuti drugu, prijateljsku egzistenciju, s kojom će podijeliti iskustva i spoznaje. Tamo gdje se sijeku te dvije orbite – ona koja ocrtava našu svemirsku osamljenost i svijest o vlastitoj beznačajnosti i ona kojom se kreću naše optimistične nade u mogućnost širenja spoznaje stvarnosti i u srdačni kontakt – točka je idealnih uvjeta za bujanje duha. Upravo tamo smjestio se minijaturni planet, malen poput onih iz *Maloga princa*, na kojemu za štafelajem, usamljen i visok, stoji Dominik Vuković i šalje poruke u svemir.



*Sunce*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 200 x 200 cm /  
*The Sun*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 200 x 200 cm



*Merkur*,  
 2021., ulje na  
 konopljinom platnu,  
 12 x 12 cm /  
*Mercury*,  
 2021, oil on  
 hemp canvas,  
 12 x 12 cm



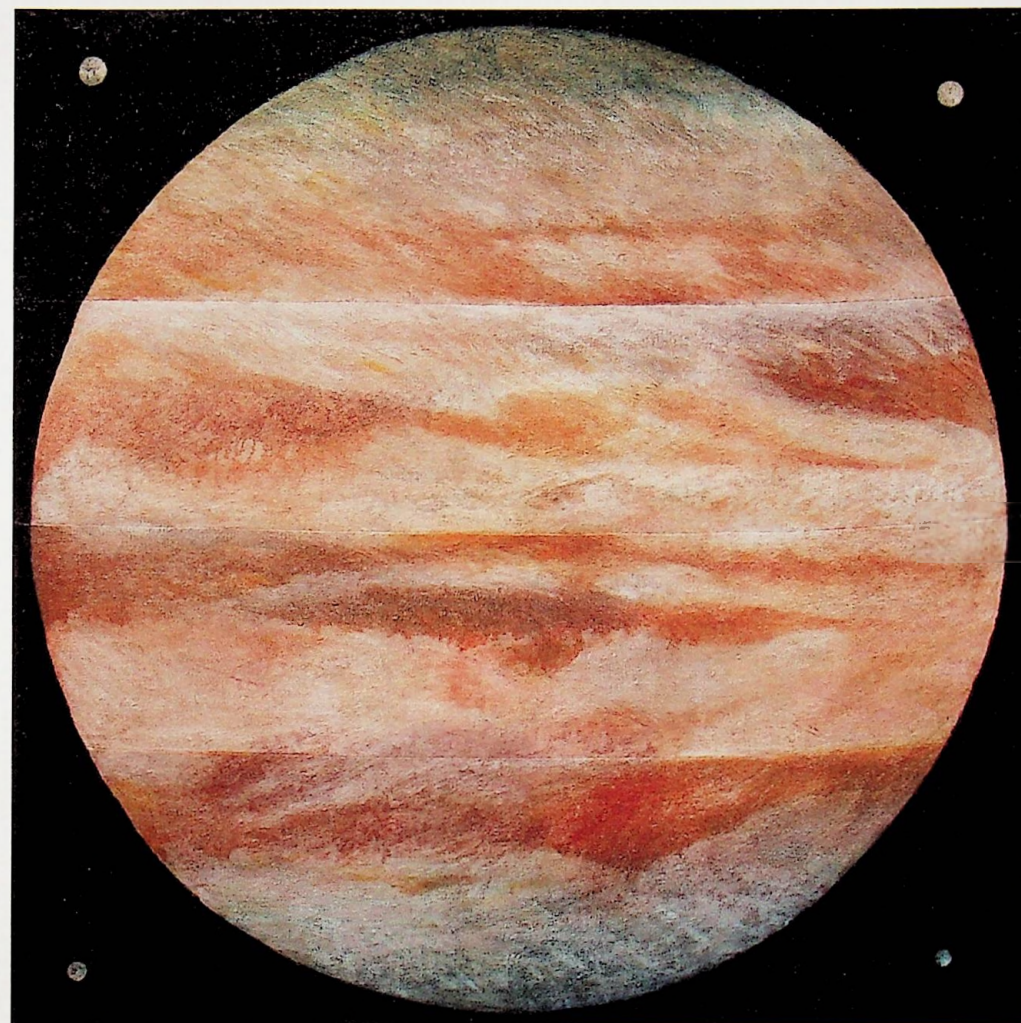
*Venera*,  
 2021., ulje na  
 konopljinom  
 platnu,  
 22 x 22 cm /  
*Venus*,  
 2021, oil on  
 hemp canvas,  
 22 x 22 cm



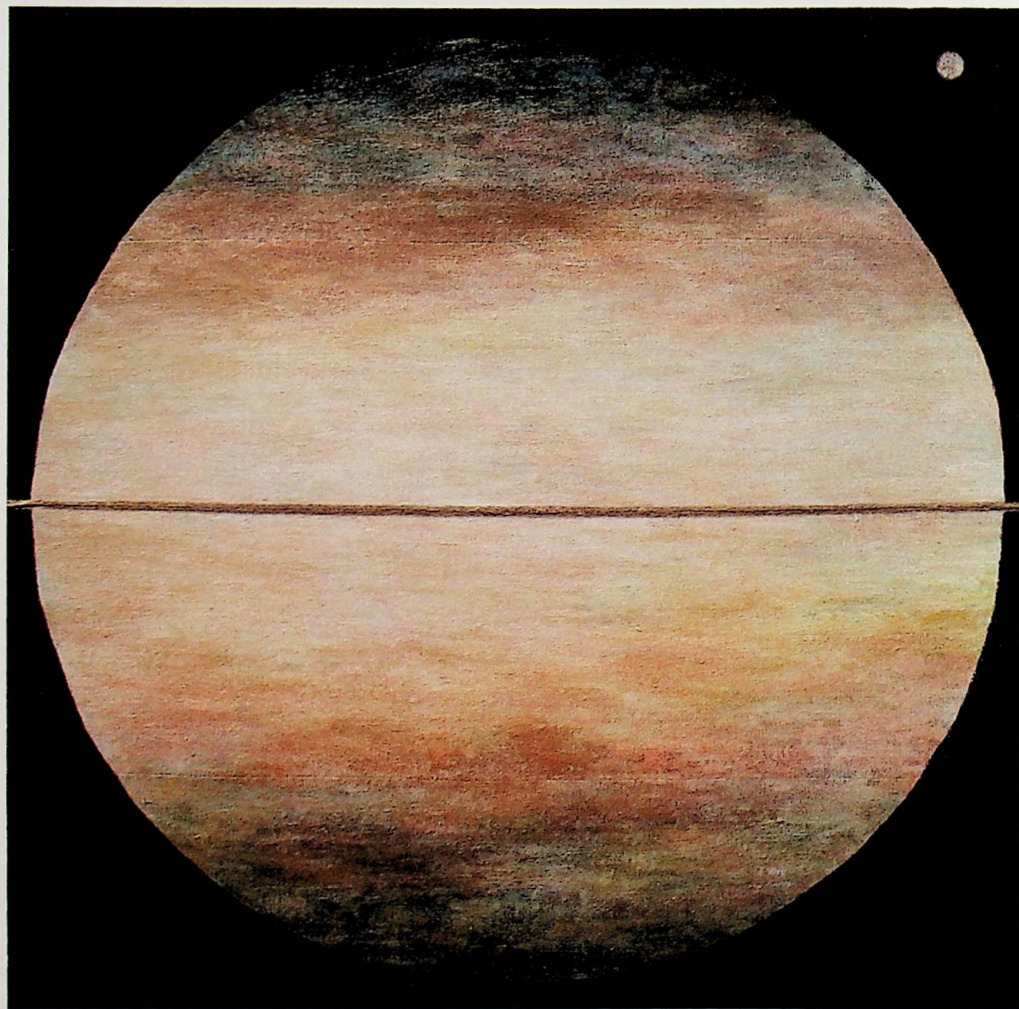
*Zemlja,*  
2021., ulje na  
konopljinom  
platnu,  
23 x 23 cm /  
*Earth,*  
2021, oil on  
hemp canvas,  
23 x 23 cm



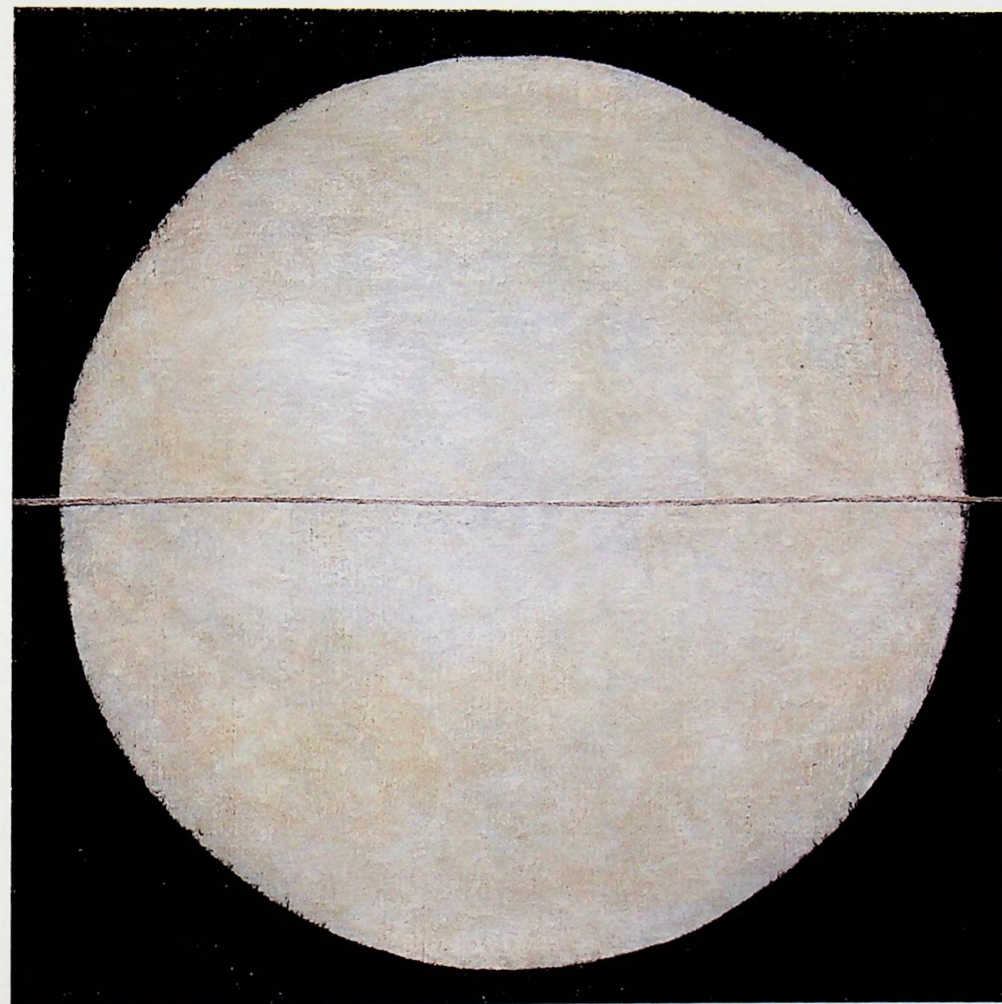
*Mars,*  
2021., ulje na  
konopljinom platnu,  
15 x 15 cm /  
*Mars,*  
2021, oil on  
hemp canvas,  
15 x 15 cm



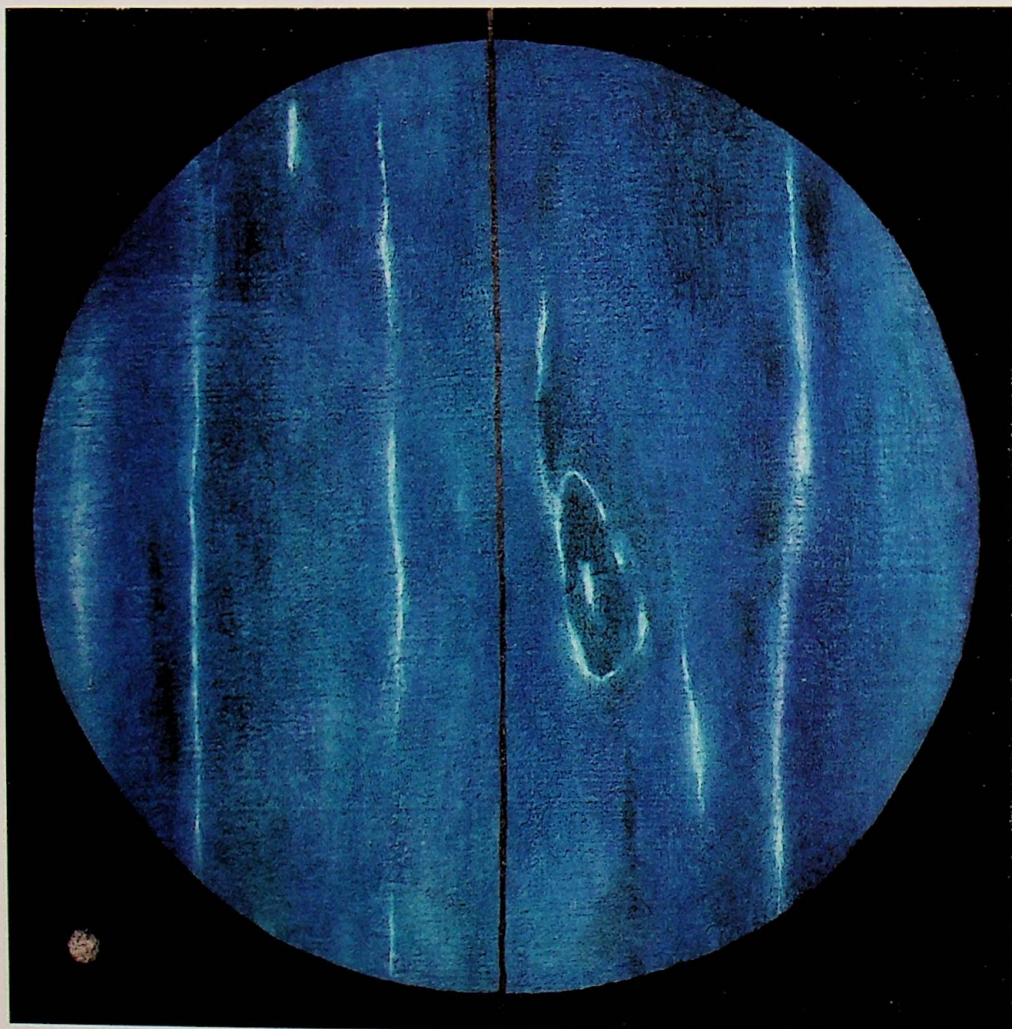
*Jupiter,* 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 200 x 200 cm /  
*Jupiter,* 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 200 x 200 cm



*Saturn*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 163 x 163 cm /  
*Saturn*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 163 x 163cm

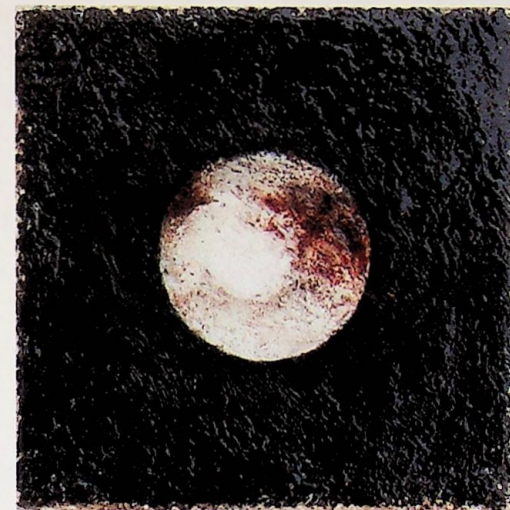


*Uran*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 73 x 73 cm /  
*Uranus*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 73 x 73 cm

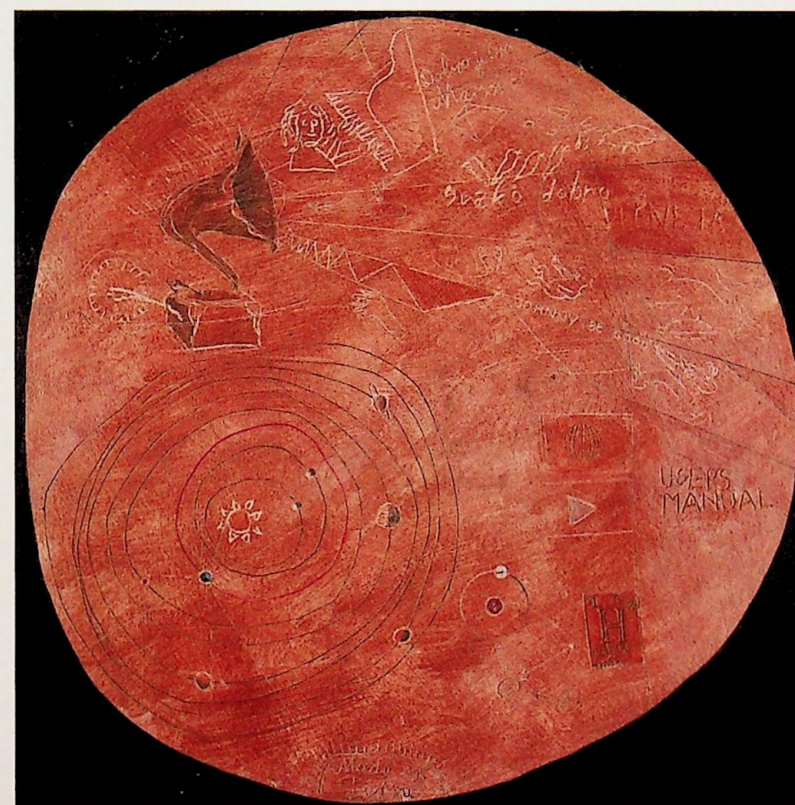


*Neptun*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 75 x 75 cm /  
*Neptune*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 75 x 75 cm

*Pluton*,  
 2021., ulje na  
 konopljinom platnu,  
 9 x 9 cm /  
*Pluto*,  
 2021, oil on  
 hemp canvas,  
 9 x 9 cm



*User manual*,  
 2020., tempera i  
 akril na papiru,  
 30 x 30 cm /  
*User Manual*,  
 2020, tempera and  
 acrylic on paper,  
 30 x 30 cm





Zlatna ploča, 2020., tempera i akril na papiru, 30 x 30 cm /  
The Golden Record, 2020, tempera and acrylic on paper, 30 x 30 cm

## THE VOYAGE OF THE GOLDEN RECORD

*Feda Gavrilović*

I remember that back then, in 1998, I was attending elementary school when news reached us (on Earth) that NASA's space probe Voyager 1 became the most distant man-made object launched from our home planet. You can imagine the impact that had on my boyish imagination which at that time was intensively fueled by popular science magazines, children's encyclopedias and television documentaries, equally fascinated by conspiracy theories, astronomy, paleontology, and history. By launching two spacecraft (Voyager 1 and Voyager 2) in 1977, the space program *Voyager* grabbed a unique opportunity to send scientific instruments so far. The specific alignment of the Solar systems' outer planets at that moment (the alignment which repeats once every 176 years) allowed scientists to use their gravitational fields to flung the probes to such distances. And the mission also had a romantic side to it. Primarily thanks to the astronomer Carl Sagan, popularizer of science and explorer of the possibilities of extraterrestrial life, each of the probes carried a golden record. Each of them contained an equal array of earthly experiences (a wide range of music, sounds of nature, Earthlings' greetings in various languages and electronically encoded images), and were supposed to serve as a message to a possible extraterrestrial civilization which would find one of the probes. Although the journey of the two Voyagers is long-term and is calculated in tens of thousands of years, the hope of possible contact with an extraterrestrial civilization is what made this project popular in public. It was often mentioned in the media, photographs taken by the probes were published, and their journey inspired numerous SF

films and short stories.<sup>1</sup>

The images and sounds on Voyager's golden record are a cute and concise sum of human knowledge and experience, just like a children's encyclopedia. It is therefore not surprising that Voyager is the topic of the new series of paintings by Dominik Vuković, a skilled illustrator born in Zagreb in 1990. Illustration is a simplified depiction which contains the essence of a truth, i.e. which casts light on a notion, situation or relationship. Dominik started working in that medium while studying at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb, in Svjetlan Junaković's class, and since graduating in 2015, he has worked as an illustrator on numerous books and picture books (some of them are *Einer langen Reise Ziel* by Michael Ende, published by Mala Zvona in 2019; or *San ljetne noći* by Zoran Ferić, published by V.B.Z. in the same year).

Paintings exhibited here show the bodies of the Solar system - its star and the seven planets plus Pluto (which lost its planet status in 2006 since it is not gravitationally dominant in its orbit which intersects with the orbit of the much larger Neptune). Beside space bodies, Dominik Vuković also gives us his

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<sup>1</sup> I cannot help but mention two such films. The first is *Star Trek The Motion Picture* from 1979 with characters from the popular television series. In this feature-length adventure, they face a fictitious 20th century probe which is part of the *Voyager* program (and carries the number 6). The probe returns to the Solar system as a sentient machine with the wish to gain knowledge and potential for evolution, which it continues by merging with a human. The second is the 2019 film *Ad Astra* (the title comes from the Latin proverb "Per aspera ad astra", i.e. "through hardships to the stars", whose inscription in Morse code can also be found on Voyager's golden record), in which a depressive astronaut searches for his father and finds him living alone on a station in the Solar system's outer part, having alienated from his family and people in general in a desperate and futile attempt to establish contact with any extraterrestrial civilization. The change of perspective is interesting: in 1979, it was expected that, by the end of the century, the *Voyager* program would send at least six probes to serve human curiosity, and in 2019, human priorities seem more grounded, and it is suggested that the true challenges, which are worth seriously taking on, are found in building quality interpersonal relationships. The true historical triumph of Nietzsche's cry: "I beseech you, my brothers, remain faithful to the earth!".

interpretation of the golden record containing the message for aliens carried by Voyagers, as well as the plaque containing a similar, somewhat earlier greeting carried by probes Pioneer 10 in 1972 and Pioneer 11 in 1973 (that message was the idea of a journalist who followed Eric Burgess' news from astronomy, and was created by aforementioned Carl Sagan, his colleague Francis Drake and Sagan's wife, Linda Salzman, who drew the message).

The planets and Sun on Vuković's canvases radiate with thick painting matter, hypnotically draw the viewer and tickle the imagination with the possibility of escaping into distant worlds, where unusual and sometimes physical laws unknown to us and strange energies rule. Paintings might be the ideal medium to convey those energies. The radiation of color in a certain ratio which communicates with the viewer on an irrational level is similar to the science of astronomy itself, where complex scientific research is joined with human fantasy and the desire to deepen the imaginable.

"When the stars are right", wrote H.P. Lovecraft when describing the invocation of cruel cosmic gods, whose notions of space are intergalactic and whose time awareness counts billions of years as seconds, to whom human life and man's cognitive power are indescribably meaningless. "When the planets are right", NASA's scientists said, when calculating the best trajectories for the Voyager probes, which they wanted to use to further the limits of their own knowledge of space, and to extend man's hand into that huge space, in hopes of touching another, friendly existence, whom it will share experiences and discoveries with. Where those two orbits intersect - that which reflects our cosmic solitariness and awareness of our own insignificance, and that on which our optimistic hopes in the possibility of expanding our knowledge of reality and in the friendly contact travels - is the point of ideal conditions for the spirit to flourish. It is there that a miniature planet, as tiny as those in *The Little Prince*, on which a lonely and tall Dominik Vuković stands in front of an easel and sends messages into space.

*Sunce*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 200 x 200 cm / *The Sun*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 200 x 200 cm

*Merkur*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 12 x 12 cm / *Mercury*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 12 x 12 cm

*Venera*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 22 x 22 cm / *Venus*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 22 x 22 cm

*Zemlja*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 23 x 23 cm / *Earth*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 23 x 23 cm

*Mars*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 15 x 15 cm / *Mars*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 15 x 15 cm

*Jupiter*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 200 x 200 cm / *Jupiter*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 200 x 200 cm

*Saturn*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 163 x 163 cm / *Saturn*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 163 x 163 cm

*Uran*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 73 x 73 cm / *Uranus*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 73 x 73 cm

*Neptun*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 75 x 75 cm / *Neptune*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 75 x 75 cm

*Pluton*, 2021., ulje na konopljinom platnu, 9 x 9 cm / *Pluto*, 2021, oil on hemp canvas, 9 x 9 cm

*Zlatna ploča*, 2020., tempera i akril na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *The Golden Record*, 2020, tempera and acrylic on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*User manual*, 2020., tempera i akril na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *User Manual*, 2020, tempera and acrylic on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*Dijagram*, 2020., tempera i akril na papiru, 28 x 17 cm / *Diagram*, 2020, tempera and acrylic on paper, 28 x 17 cm

*Sunce*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *The Sun*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*Merkur*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *Mercury*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*Venera*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *Venus*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*Zemlja*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *Earth*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*Mars*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *Mars*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*Jupiter*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *Jupiter*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

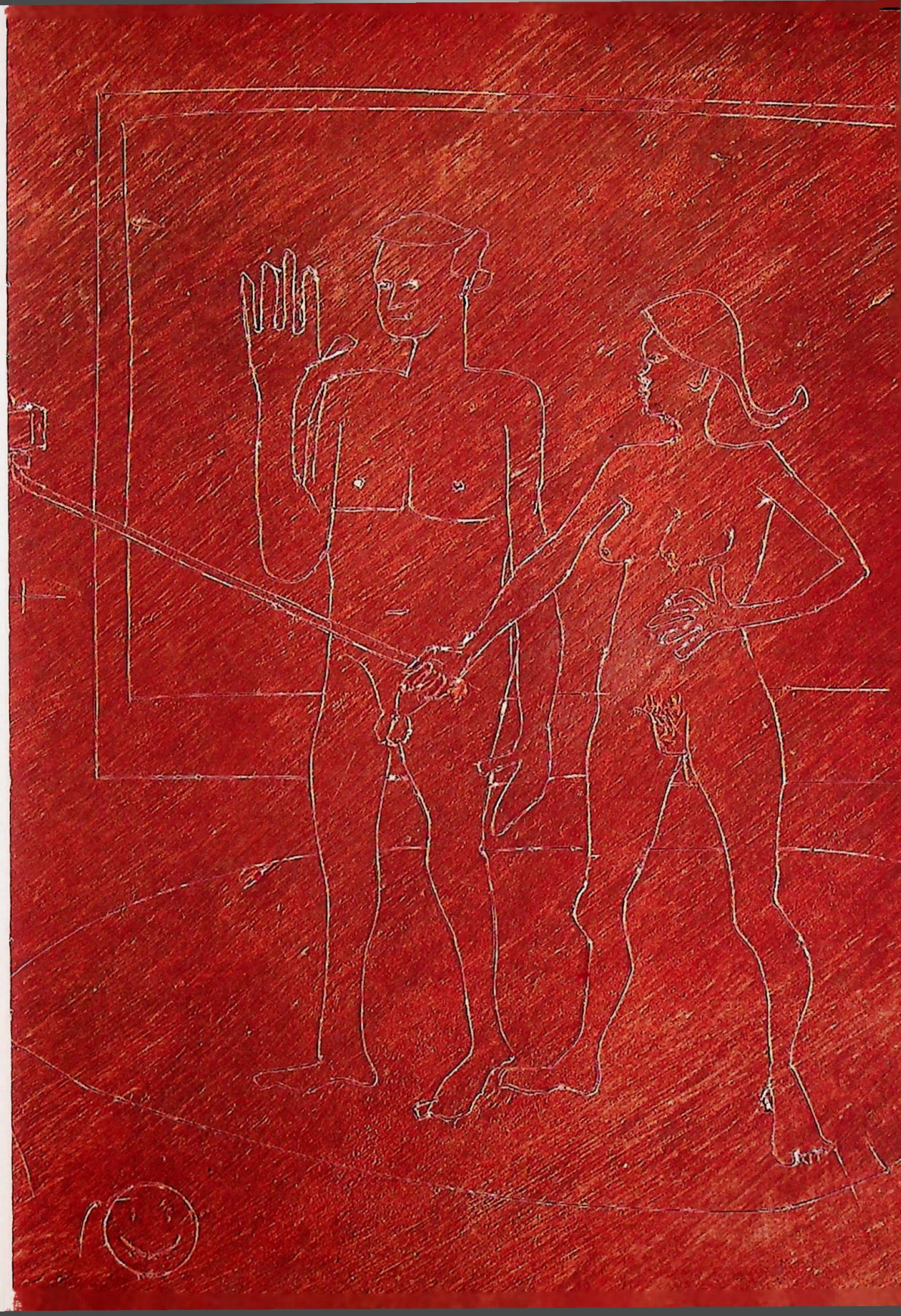
*Saturn*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *Saturn*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*Uran*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *Uranus*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

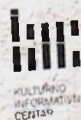
*Neptun*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *Neptune*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*Pluton*, 2020., ulje na papiru, 30 x 30 cm / *Pluto*, 2020, oil on paper, 30 x 30 cm

*Pluton*, triptih, 2020., tempera i akril na papiru, svaka 15 x 15 cm / *Pluto*, triptych, 2020, tempera and acrylic on paper, three paintings, each 15 x 15 cm



DOMINIK VUKOVIĆ



PUTOVANJE ZLATNE PLOČE / Galerija Forum  
THE VOYAGE OF THE GOLDEN RECORD / Forum Gallery

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