



**Pisica Pătrată / The Square Cat, one of the most well-known Romanian street artists, to open first solo show in Switzerland, at Estopia Art Gallery in Lugano**

**Estopia Art Gallery Lugano** is delighted to invite you on **Thursday, June 9, from 6.00 PM**, at the opening of the exhibition *Headies*, by **Alexandru Ciubotariu**, a.k.a. *Pisica Pătrată / The Square Cat*, one of Romania's most acclaimed street artists.

For his first solo in Switzerland, after the last two years of the pandemic, the artist decided to move the street inside the gallery and set free a series of oversized, unsettling characters – that, according to their author, have been kept silent for too long – who will occupy the gallery space with their explosive inner content.

For over 15 years now, The Square Cat's characters, with their distorted expressions and steeled eyes, have perfectly reshaped the imperfect angles of urban architecture, showing a distressingly bittersweet grin with their too many teeth – a familiar view on the streets not only of Bucharest, but of many other cities of Romania. But what happens when such characters increase to abnormous dimensions and migrate from the street into the gallery?

“I decided to remove the superfluous elements of my drawings and focus only on the expression, on the feeling transposed directly in the facial expression. What pushed me towards this approach is the distortion of communication that we experience today, I mean the interaction through emoticons. Instead of describing how we feel, we prefer to send an emoticon, which seems appropriate to render that feeling. I have chosen to express such states abnormally without the filter of the communication code with which we have become too accustomed today. In the defined spatial context of the gallery, it seems to me that I can communicate with viewers through these headies, which represent me one hundred percent. There are moments and expressions of some feelings that I experienced deeply and that I chose to share further, continuing the communication without my direct involvement. A part of me can go further without me”.

**Alexandru Ciubotariu, a.k.a. Pisica Pătrată** was born in 1979 in Călărași, Romania. He lives and works in Bucharest. He graduated in Graphic Arts from the George Enescu National University of Arts in Iași. Since 2017 he is a member of the Romanian Union of Artists. The Square Cat, the character that made him famous as an urban artist, can be encountered in the most unexpected places in Bucharest and in many other Romanian cities, on walls, meshes, in bookstores and other public spaces. The Square Cat became a protagonist of the first street art

book in Romania, published by Vellant in 2009. He participated in over 100 exhibitions in Romania and abroad, he is the founder of the Comic Strip Museum, in partnership with the National History Museum of Romania and published his works in over 90 magazines in Romania, Belgium, Slovenia, Poland, Croatia, Czech Republic, Greece and Serbia. He illustrated over 20 children's books and in 2021 he curated and participated with a live drawing at the exhibition *155 Years of Comic Strips in Romania, 1860 – 2015*, at the National History Museum. He illustrated over 50 comic books and his works appeared in over 10 street art albums. He is a recipient of over 35 awards at art competitions, festivals and comic book salons.

**Curator: Claudio Scorretti**

*Headies / Căpățâni*

**Alexandru Ciubotariu a.k.a Pisica Pătrată**

**June 9 – 25, 2022**

**Estopia Art Gallery, Lugano**

**Corso Elvezia 9/a, 6900, Lugano**

**Opening: Thursday, June 9, from 6.00 to 9.00 PM**

**Visiting hours: from Wednesday to Saturday, from 2.00 to 6.00 PM**

**On the other weekdays: by appointment only**

**[www.estopiaartgallery.com](http://www.estopiaartgallery.com)**

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