

## DMITRIY GUSHCHIN'S ARTIST STATEMENT

My work explores how mythology, symbolism, and theatrical portraiture can be reimagined to reflect contemporary queer identity. Working primarily through staged photography and digital compositing, I construct large-scale narrative tableaux that function as modern allegories. Each image is conceived as a self-contained scene while also contributing to larger, evolving bodies of work.

My practice draws from a wide range of visual and cultural references, including classical painting, religious iconography, tarot archetypes, and fashion photography. I am particularly interested in how symbolic systems shape cultural ideas of power, beauty, gender, and morality. By reinterpreting these symbols through a queer lens, I seek to challenge inherited narratives and propose new visual mythologies rooted in resilience, transformation, and self-invention.

Performance and staging play a central role in my process. Figures are photographed in controlled studio environments and later placed within constructed spaces that merge physical and digital realities. Mechanical elements, celestial motifs, ritual objects, and theatrical props recur throughout the work, forming a symbolic language that connects personal experience with broader cultural memory. This hybrid process allows photography to function not as documentation, but as a tool for world-building.

Across my projects, I am interested in the tension between public identity and private experience. Some series focus on heroic and mythic imagery, presenting queer figures as monumental, sacred, and timeless. Others examine intimacy, confession, and vulnerability, exploring the quieter spaces where identity is negotiated and revealed. Together, these bodies of work form a visual mythology that reframes queer existence as complex, powerful, and enduring.

Through photography, I aim to create images that exist between past and future, reality and performance, personal narrative and collective memory.