Gorki, Monkman, midJourney & ChatGPT

In his influential book *Painting and Experience in Fifteenth-Century Italy*, Michael Baxandall explores how this specific scene of The Annunciation serves as a lens through which to understand broader themes of Renaissance art, including perspective, naturalism, and the relationship between the viewer and the artwork. As someone who grew up with an Annunciation and a Last Supper in the living room, these two compositions form important parts of western visual culture and iconology, in addition to images of Mary as *theotokos* in the Eastern visual cultures for people like Gorky.

I have been working on both the prompts and the images for the past several days but here is my Annunciation from Arshile Gorky and Kent Monkman. It took many iteration of both text prompting in my language model and many iteration in midJourney. I won't bore you with the details but I wanted to blend the style with the symbology or the language that the artist used in their work. The colouring is all from the text to image application.

In the Gorky I was going for his later bio-organic style and it was the lines and shapes in the top that reminds me of the Dove and the verticality of the "rays of grace" that are found in the western iconography in addition to that wonderful dark triangle that reminds one of the room in the background, another symbol in the western tradition meaning her purity of spirit.

The colours were pure Gorki, greys but with his vibrant use of colour, drawing inspiration from Byzantine mosaics and Armenian manuscripts, which imbue his abstract works with a rich, emotional depth and a connection to his cultural heritage. So many surprises, like the shapes that could be shadows? Wow!

The Monkman was more difficult but it was the AI image application that was the problem, it always wanted to put the annunciation characters front and centre as it normally does, unlike how Monkman puts characters as much smaller in the overall landscapes. I was amazed at how this image portrays the angel Gabriel as an energetic force of nature (I didn't prompt that), moving away from the colonialist tendency to anthropomorphize religious figures (again, I didn't prompt this).

I also love how the flowers worked themselves into the foreground and I couldn't get the right background no matter what I did. It kept on giving me Lord of the Rings mountains ?

Source: