6. The Great Astronaut

Přemysl Arátor on ***The Great Astronaut*** (1954)

“The Great Astronaut is half man, half robot – or at least a partially armored man in the midst of space, defined by black stars on a gold background. In this painting, one can find a connection to the monumental realism of contemporary Mexican painting. Not long before, an exhibition of it had been held in Prague, and when its theorist, the writer Rodríguez, opened the show, Brázda’s heart leapt at each repeated ‘il realismo, ’captivated by a profound sense of resonance with this simple need. Aztec art was another close and enduring point of reference.

And so the figure stands firmly astride in the heart of the universe. He stretches his hands toward it, extending his power and his will to boldly penetrate it. He measures himself against its inhuman, infinite dimension and meaning; he renounces the possibility of attaining it, accepting his human limitations. He is at once powerful and powerless.”