

Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Seoul
ART CORNER H Gallery
Society of Slovak Artists

Colour & Form

Ten Slovak Artists

OTO BACHORÍK | JURAJ ČUTEK | JÁN HLA VATÝ
SVETOZÁR ILAVSKÝ | MILAN LUKÁČ
IGOR MOSNÝ | IVAN PAVLE | ŠTEFAN POLÁK
PETER POLLÁG | ALEXEJ VOJTÁŠEK

ART CORNER H Gallery, 95 Eulji-ro, Jung-gu, Seoul
23rd August – 26th September 2023

The Exhibition is held on the Occasion
of the 30th Anniversary of the Establishment
of Diplomatic Relations between
the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Korea



ART CORNER H



Colour & Form

Dear esteemed readers, art enthusiasts, and friends of cultural diplomacy, It is with great pleasure and pride that I extend my warmest greetings to you all through the pages of this catalogue, commemorating the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Korea. This remarkable milestone not only celebrates the enduring bond between our nations but also highlights the profound connection between art and diplomatic relations.

Art has an extraordinary power to transcend borders, language barriers, and cultural differences. It has the ability to touch our hearts, provoke thought, and foster understanding. As an ambassador representing the bonds between our two nations, I am delighted to witness the unifying force of art and its significant role in strengthening diplomatic relations.

Over the past three decades, Slovakia and Korea have shared a remarkable journey of friendship, cooperation, and mutual respect. The establishment of diplomatic ties has paved the way for fruitful collaborations in various fields, including arts and culture. Today, we celebrate the remarkable achievements that have emerged from this enduring partnership.

The exhibition “Colour & Form. Ten Slovak Artists” serves as a vibrant reflection of the rich artistic heritage and contemporary creativity of Slovakia. This captivating showcase not only highlights the talent of Slovak artists but also provides an opportunity for cultural exchange, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of our respective artistic expressions.

As we immerse ourselves in the beauty and diversity of Slovak art, let us also acknowledge the profound significance of this milestone anniversary. Thirty years of diplomatic relations have laid the foundation for cultural dialogue and artistic collaborations, facilitating the exchange of ideas, values, and experiences between our nations.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to the artists, the curator, as well as the organisers and sponsors who have worked tirelessly to bring this exhibition to life. Your dedication and passion have ensured the success of this celebration, providing a platform to showcase the remarkable artistic talent that Slovakia possesses.

May this Slovak Art Exhibition serve as a stepping-stone for future collaborations between our nations, further enriching our bilateral ties and deepening the cultural exchange. Let us continue to harness the power of art as a medium to promote dialogue, bridge divides, and foster enduring relationships.

Thank you!
Sincerely,
JÁN KUDERJAVÝ
ambassador

Colour & Form

In 1987, the most distinguished Slovak sculptor Jozef Jankovič created a monumental, 9-metre-high granite sculpture Place at the Top for the Olympic Park in Seoul. At the same time, his sculpture Sebastian (1987, Granite and bronze) was included in the collection of the Korean National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art. We are delighted that this exhibition continues to present the artistic legacy of Slovakia.

The Colour & Form exhibition showcases the work of ten artists who arrived on the Slovak art scene in the 1980s and appeared especially at exhibitions of young artists. From the very beginning, their work showed surprising spontaneity and enormous vitality. The painters introduced a wide range of new subject matter, colour and exuberant structural or gestural painting, whereas the sculptors reflected a new understanding of the sculptural material. Their works offered a stark contrast between expressiveness and lyricism, poetry and drama, leaning towards the boundaries of the unknown and the mysterious. The search for new forms of artistic expression develop from the real shape to the boundaries of sign and archetype towards various positions of abstraction, and later Conceptual art came into the forefront of their ambition. Although further development in a more welcoming atmosphere of artistic freedom at the beginning of the 1990s continued in different directions, today, they belong to the prominent and successful representatives of their generation. They have had dozens of exhibitions in Slovakia and abroad, and their works are included in many public and private collections. Almost all of them are members of the Society of Slovak Artists and continue to produce works of art. Moreover, they are united by a close friendship and friendly rivalry.

The exhibition showcases a selection from a wide scope of individual artist programmes ranging from realistic to stylised and poetic-imaginative in addition to expressive-dramatic and abstract positions. Looking for new sources of inspiration, the artists draw on historical and literary stories, and respond to human, socially important current themes as well as to those associated with the complexity of the innermost feelings of contemporary people.

Slovak contemporary visual art is represented by a broad spectrum of dynamically developing personalities, artistic phenomena, styles, and individual achievements, but also generational tendencies and the artistic contribution of young people in particular. Without any exaggeration, however, we can say that the exhibiting artists, today in their 60s and 70s, played an important role in the process of the development of Slovak art from the constraints of the political doctrines of the past towards the current unrestricted artistic expression, and their work is still relevant and remarkable. We believe that the art of this generation, the vibrant colours of their paintings and authentic forms of their sculptures, but especially the powerful message of their works offering a variety of interpretations, will appeal to the Korean audience and introduce them to the cultural wealth and history of our distant country.

Thirty years since the establishment of the Slovak Republic and the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Slovak Republic and the Republic of Korea also mark the thirtieth anniversary of the foundation of the Society of Slovak Artists, which represents the work of its members.

On behalf of exhibiting artists and the Society of Slovak Artists, we thank the Art Corner H Gallery, the Embassy of the Slovak Republic in Seoul, and other interested parties for this exceptional opportunity. We wish all the viewers a rewarding artistic experience.

MÁRIA HORVÁTHOVÁ
curator

Svetozár Ilavský



11 November 1958 Bratislava

1979 – 1985 Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava

The artist lives in the small town of Cífer, where, thirty years ago, he rented the local cinema Maják and turned it into a monumental studio. Ilavský's work includes paintings, drawings, graphic prints, sculptures and art integrated into contemporary architecture, stage design and inter-media projects often interpreted by his own electroacoustic works.

Ilavský is one of the most prominent figures on the Slovak art scene. He has had numerous solo exhibitions and represented Slovakia at many major Slovak and European contemporary art exhibitions abroad. His paintings and sculptures are included in public and private collections in Europe and the United States. In 1985, he won the Martin Benka Prize, and in 2000 his works were exhibited in the Slovak National Pavilion at EXPO 2000 in Hannover and at EXPO 2015 in Milan.



Zoogony Lighthouse. 2002 – 2022. Acrylic, oil, canvas. 120 x 210 cm

Good Afternoon, Mr. Koloman Sokol. 2018. Polyester, acrylic, oil, charcoal, wood. 180 x 140 cm » Private Collection





An Attempt at a Self-portrait of a Slovak Freelance Artist. Zoogony Lighthouse
2015 – 2018. Wood, polyester, acrylic. 111 x 99 x 21 cm



PleoBaselitz (Cycle Pleonasm). 2022. Polyester, glass fibre, wood. 110 x 100 x 5 cm

Svetozár Ilavský is the most extraordinary artist of the generation that arrived on the Slovak art scene in the mid-1980s and adhered to the principles of postmodern art. His creative contribution to this development is characterised by powerful expressiveness, visual language stylised to the limit of sign, and inclination to abstraction. His paintings and assemblages feature bold colour and sweeping brushwork.

Ilavský is a versatile and extraordinarily creative artist. In his paintings, drawings, assemblages, sculptures, objects and inter-media projects, he exploits a wide spectrum of techniques and materials. They range from painting and sculptural processes through photography, computer and audio-visual projects to impressive complex concepts and series.

The artist's expressive, dynamic, monumental work abounds with symbols, appropriations, paraphrases and analogies, indicating through the analysis of his emotional world and large intellectual database the hidden context of human existence, and attempts to find the essence of fundamental principles and phenomena. Many of his works are perceived as a mysterious vision of the future.

To some extent, Svetozár Ilavský's work is determined by his musical ambition associated with the challenging projects with significant overlaps from painting and graphic prints and bold assemblages to sculptures and numerous inter-media interpretations.



The Birth of Mr. Hen. 2007. Hydronalium, bronze, textile. 95 x 175 x 60 cm

Milan Lukáč

Lukáč is a prolific artist. He has produced an incredible number of sculptures, paintings, drawings and graphic prints. Thanks to the universal language of his works, he attracts a huge audience because his works make a convincing statement about the state of the world in its infinite forms. Sometimes his work has a highly intellectual, even philosophical weight with a strong humane subtext; at other times, it interprets an incredibly fragile subject matter of personal relationships. It also provides a light-hearted view of the world of nature, its secrets, and metamorphoses. The artist's sculptures abound with serious stories or interpret light-hearted and humorous episodes. Initially, he created figures and portraits, later elevators and staircases with characteristic silhouettes of figures and tragic undertones of human drama, then fragile and vibrating vertical stelae on the theme of the Botanical Dream and bizarre monsters from his Bestiaries, from which it was only a step to a wide variety of impressive zoomorphic creations – fish, birds, owls, goat and wild boar heads captivated him for a long time. Here, he fully applied his creative principle, which he has developed for several years, combining bronze and welded iron with used, unnecessary, discarded, or found metal objects, tools, parts of various machines, or weights as a unique assemblage.

His sculptures are full of movement and dynamism; they move in the air in bold curves, floating, quivering, and undulating, levitating in space as if defying the laws of gravity. Real shapes make a smooth transition to abstract compositions, polished surfaces give way to robust mysterious structures, and meticulous details alternate with rough and corroded surfaces. Colour accents have a symbolic meaning. Some works are composed in the minimalistic spirit in a simplified form without any particulars; others enchant with a rich composition scheme and an almost baroque beauty of shapes, patina, colour, and material contrasts.



Gluttony. The cycle of the Seven Deadly Sins. 2022. Bronze. h. 35 cm

29 September 1962 Bojnice

1981 – 1987 Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava, studied with Professors Ján Kulich and Ladislav Snopek

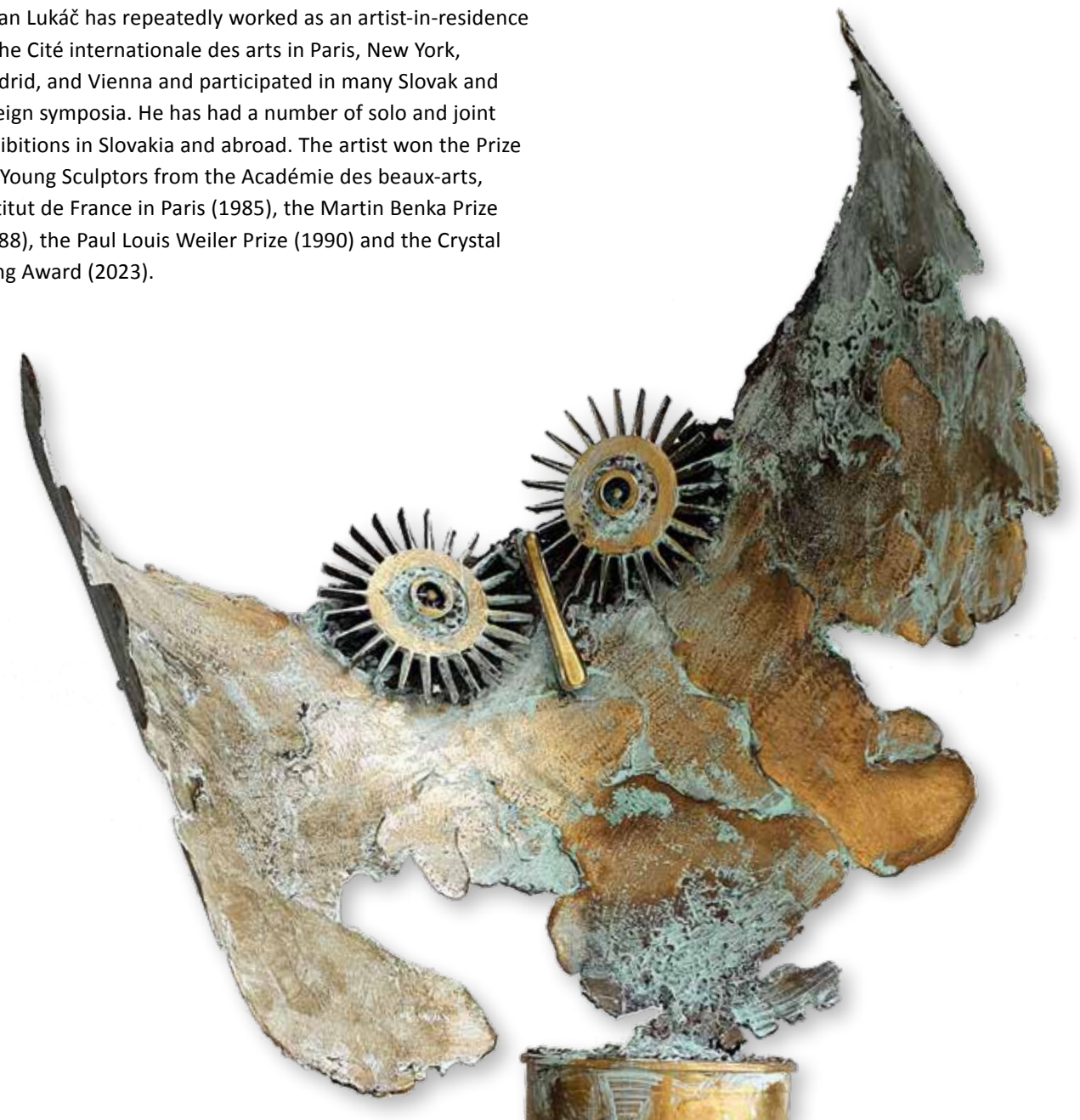
1985 – 1986 École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts in Paris, studied with Professor Jean Cardot

The artist lives in Bratislava and devotes himself to small and monumental sculptures, medals, drawings and paintings. He has produced many monumental works, monuments and memorials. His works are included in public and private art collections in Slovakia and abroad, and have been shown at numerous solo and joint exhibitions. At the same time, he has long been working as a university teacher as Associate Professor and Head of the Institute of Visual Arts and Multimedia at the Faculty of Architecture and Design of the Slovak University of Technology in Bratislava.

Milan Lukáč has repeatedly worked as an artist-in-residence in the Cité internationale des arts in Paris, New York, Madrid, and Vienna and participated in many Slovak and foreign symposia. He has had a number of solo and joint exhibitions in Slovakia and abroad. The artist won the Prize for Young Sculptors from the Académie des beaux-arts, Institut de France in Paris (1985), the Martin Benka Prize (1988), the Paul Louis Weiler Prize (1990) and the Crystal Wing Award (2023).



Milan Lukáč



Homage to Santos Dumont. 2022
Bronze and brass. 60 x 40 x 40 cm



Apocalyptic Rider. 2021. Bronze. h. 60 cm

The Queen. 2022. Bronze and brass. 99 x 55 x 30 cm »



Ján Hlavatý

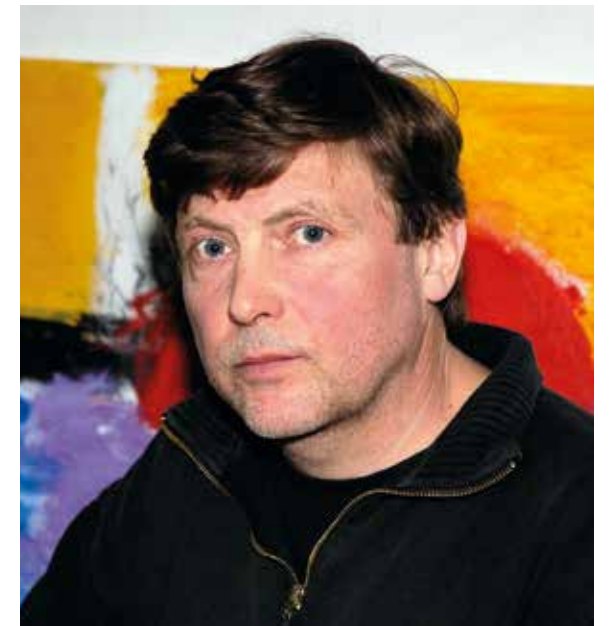
From the beginning, Ján Hlavatý has been associated with an unusually active and distinguished group of artists influenced by the wave of postmodern and partly trans-avant-garde art, contrasting with conventional artistic expression. Initially, he focused on figurative art, and his morphology and colour range were highly expressive, creating multifarious structures. He painted figures, faces, heads, and animal shapes reflecting immediacy and vitality. These simple, almost archetypal shapes gradually developed into more complex compositions in which the importance of colour as an essential medium, and the contrast between figuration and abstraction slowly increased.

Ján Hlavatý has ranked among the most prominent representatives of abstract painting in Slovakia in the last twenty years. His works are characterised by a burst of colour and a sweeping painterly gesture, the contrast between expressive and lyrical, intellectual and naive, but, above all, by his distinctive use of paint, which becomes the most important building element. The painter applies pigment in broad brushstrokes, in areas and spots, evoking the harmony or disharmony of musical chords. He brightens the dark scale full of mysticism with bright, almost neon tones, and includes elements that create the feeling of movement and dynamism. Hlavatý remains in positions of expressive abstraction but sporadically incorporates in his paintings calligraphic elements, letters, signs and symbols, in addition to outlines of figures and faces, indicating a return to the boundaries of the material world. It seems he again enhances his subject matter with figures, landscapes, and a wide range of personal stories and feelings.

8 August 1955 Zlaté Moravce

1975 – 1981 Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava,
studied with Professor Ján Želibský

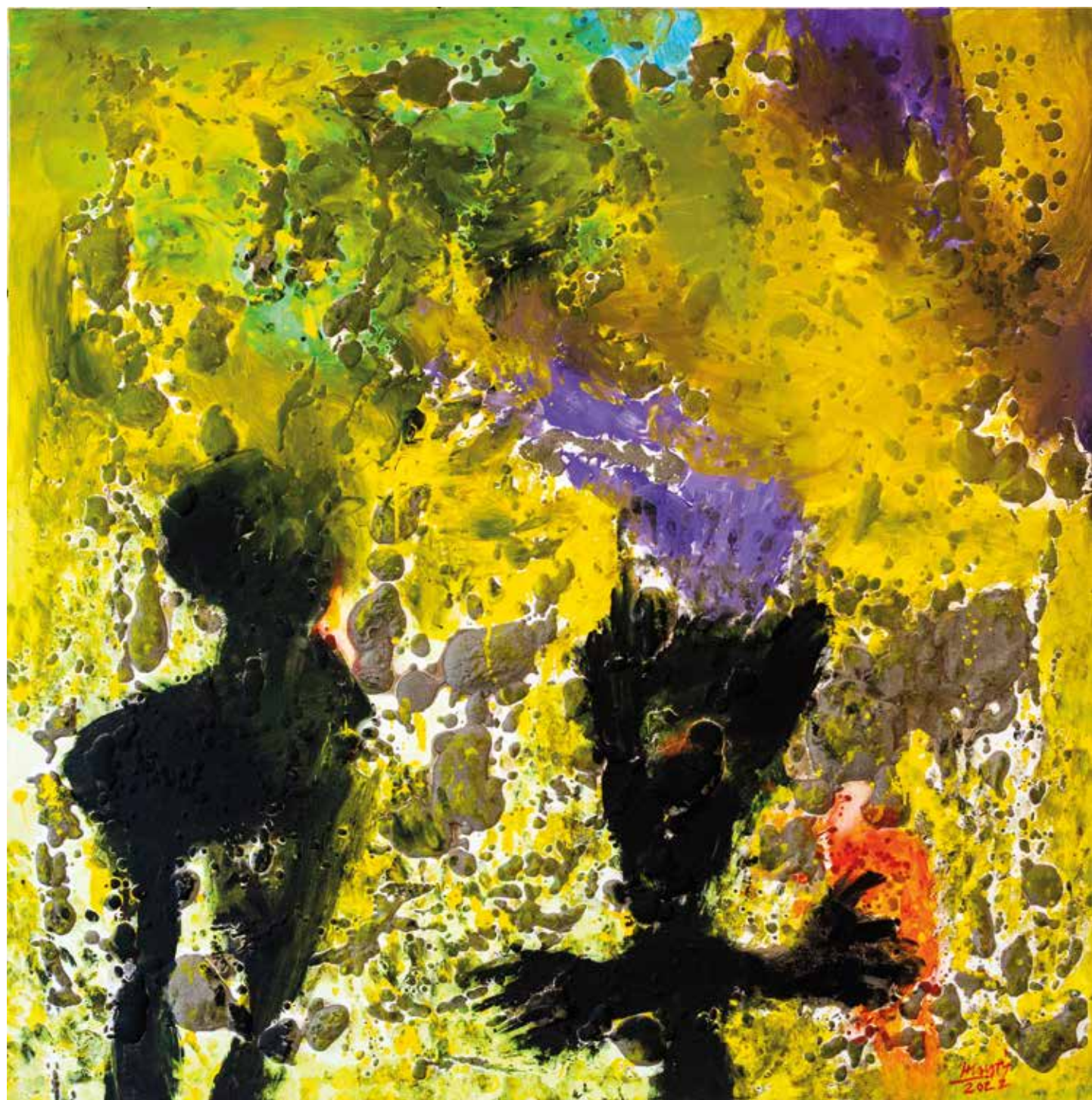
The artist lives in Bratislava and largely devotes himself to painting, drawing, and monumental works integrated into architectural projects decorated with mosaics and encaustic painting. He has had a number of solo and joint exhibitions and participated in many painting symposia in Slovakia and abroad. His paintings can be found in public and private collections.



Birch Trees. 2020. Acrylic on canvas. 90 x 120 cm



Searching for a Way out. 2016. Acrylic on canvas. 200 x 200 cm



A Couple. 2022. Acrylic and sand. 150 x 150 cm



Purple Field. 2017. Acrylic on canvas. 90 x 120 cm

Igor Mosný

The sculptor combines his unique skill and exceptional feeling for material with his talent, creativity, and extraordinary imagination in a natural and unobtrusive way. Imagination allows him to find inspiration in the past and present stories and endow the hurried ordinariness of our lives with poetry and the exciting mystery of ancient myths. It is not only the exceptional form of Mosný's sculptures but also a very emotional treatment of colour, patina, and polychromy, which is characteristic of his expression.

Igor Mosný avows simple shapes reduced to the limit of a universal symbol. At first glance, the mysterious language of symbols and surprising metaphors of his sculptural compositions, heads, and torsos of human and animal figures, masks, chapels, pendulums, and various magical objects is astonishing. Their archetypal simplicity, sign character, and suggestive colours conceal strong emotional expressiveness, which evokes an exciting feeling of déjà vu in the audience viewing the contrast between poetic and expressive, fragile and monumental.

The artist works in bronze, stone, wood, and ceramics. His work often combines sculptural materials with used, unnecessary, and discarded things. A special position of his work is represented by a series of impressive polychrome and patinated female heads and single works with emotional and effective sign symbolism, repeatedly revealing new meanings and metaphors. They encode the millennia of historical development from ancient Europe through mythology and Christianity to the present.

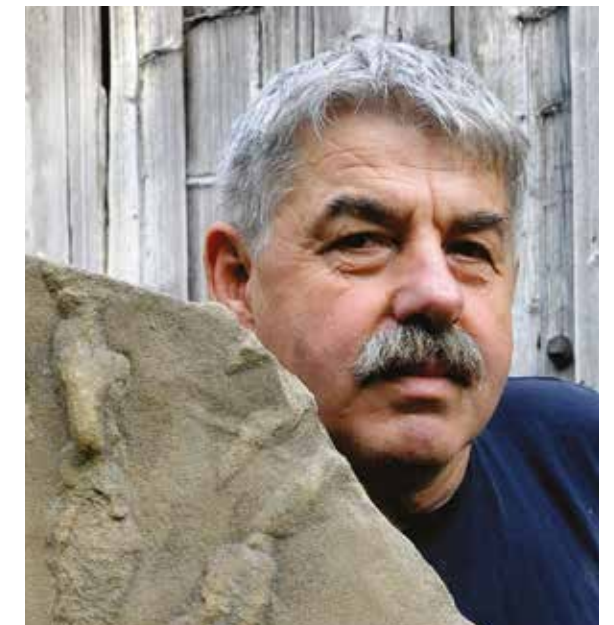


Loop. 2019. Mixed media on paper. 90 x 70 cm

9 January 1959 Trenčianske Teplice

1979 – 1985 Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava,
studied with Professors Ladislav Snopek,
Rudolf Pribiš, and Ján Kulich

The artist lives in Trenčín and devotes himself to small and monumental sculpture, ceramics, and drawing. He has exhibited at many solo and joint exhibitions in Slovakia and abroad. His sculptures and drawings can be found in many galleries and private collections, even outside Slovakia's borders, and his sculptural busts of prominent figures are displayed in public spaces in many cities.



Head. 2013. Polychromed wood and metal. 88 x 59 x 38 cm



Blinded by Power. 2021. Ceramics. h. 40 cm



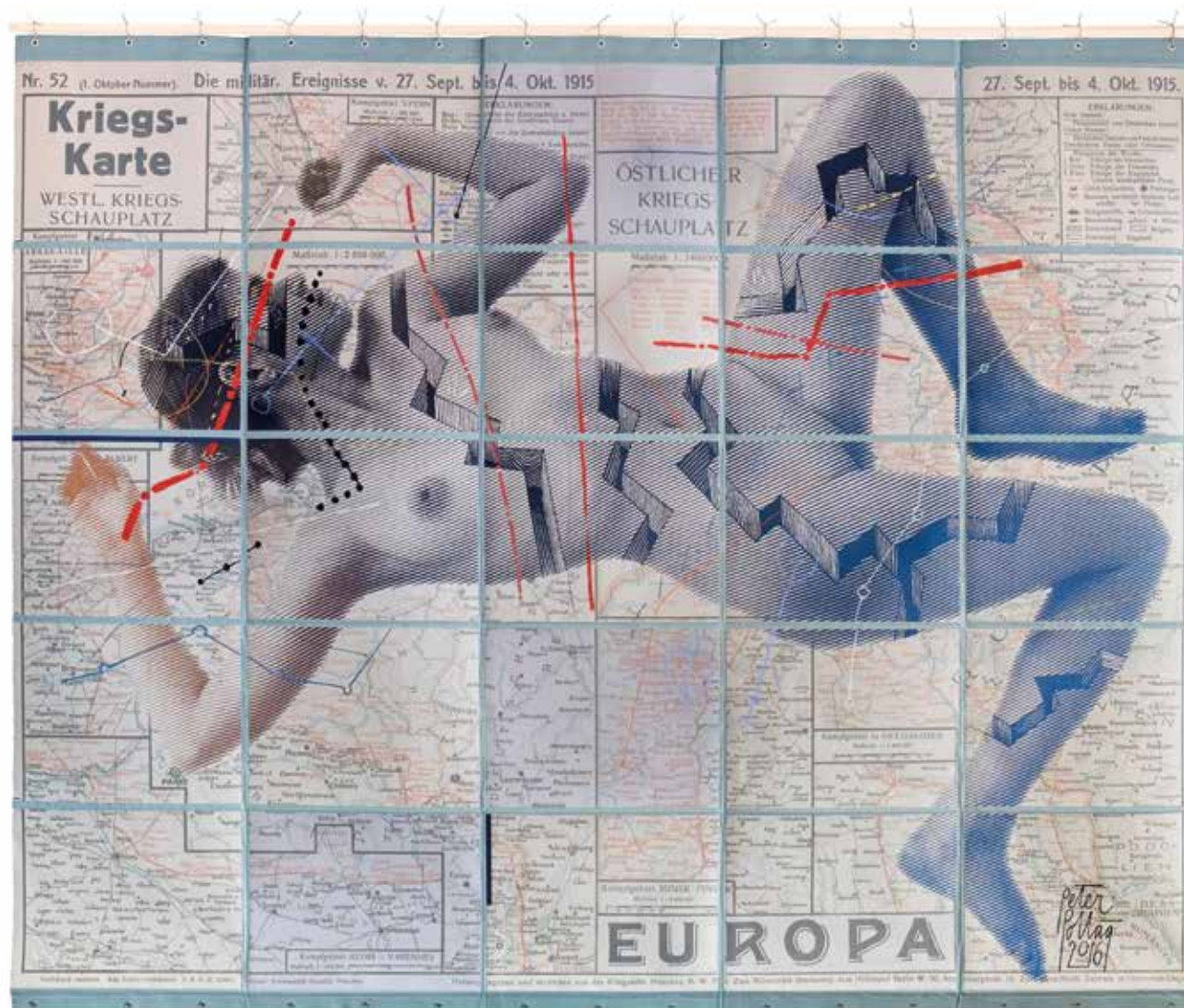
A Silenced Voice. 2021. Ceramics. h. 40 cm

« **Sorrow.** 2020. Polychromed wood and bronze. 87 x 53 x 30 cm

Peter Pollág

The artist is one of the most prominent figures of contemporary Slovak painting. He is an exceptional colourist who uses colour as a living substance and does not refrain from experimentation. He alternates different techniques, combines materials, and uses elaborate structures, relief painting, collage, and assemblage. Once, he surprises with a rich palette of bright red, orange, yellow and blue tones, at other times with a clear reduction of the scale almost to the limit of monochrome. He paints with a paintbrush, spatula and sticks, alternating fine fluid painting with relief layers of coloured pigments in which various elements and structures can be drawn, engraved, or impressed. Viewers particularly perceive eruptive colours, bold gestures, and simplified forms. However, a closer look reveals a distinct network of lines and coordinates that create the plot of his narratives and shape the skeletons of his figures. They are perceived in distinct, mostly black relief drawing as a negative impression in the coloured mass or fine hatching in the layers of colour paste.

Peter Pollág is not only an exceptional figurative artist but also a poet and a storyteller. He paints pictures that appeal to you, surprise you and, above all, make you pause and reflect. His paintings are brimming with life, they are expressive and imaginative, dynamic and mysterious. They depict myths, legends, heroic epics, and literary figures of European and world history, men and women, and more often, stories of today and urgent messages for the future. Peter Pollág interprets them with extraordinary conviction, making use of the unique power of metaphors and symbols, magic and poetic imagination, harsh expressiveness and intense drama. His stories are universal and timeless, yet focused, convincingly interpreting the fate of human civilisation.



Europa Domus Pacis. 2016. Mixed media on paper and canvas. 261 x 323 cm

19 February 1958 Levoča

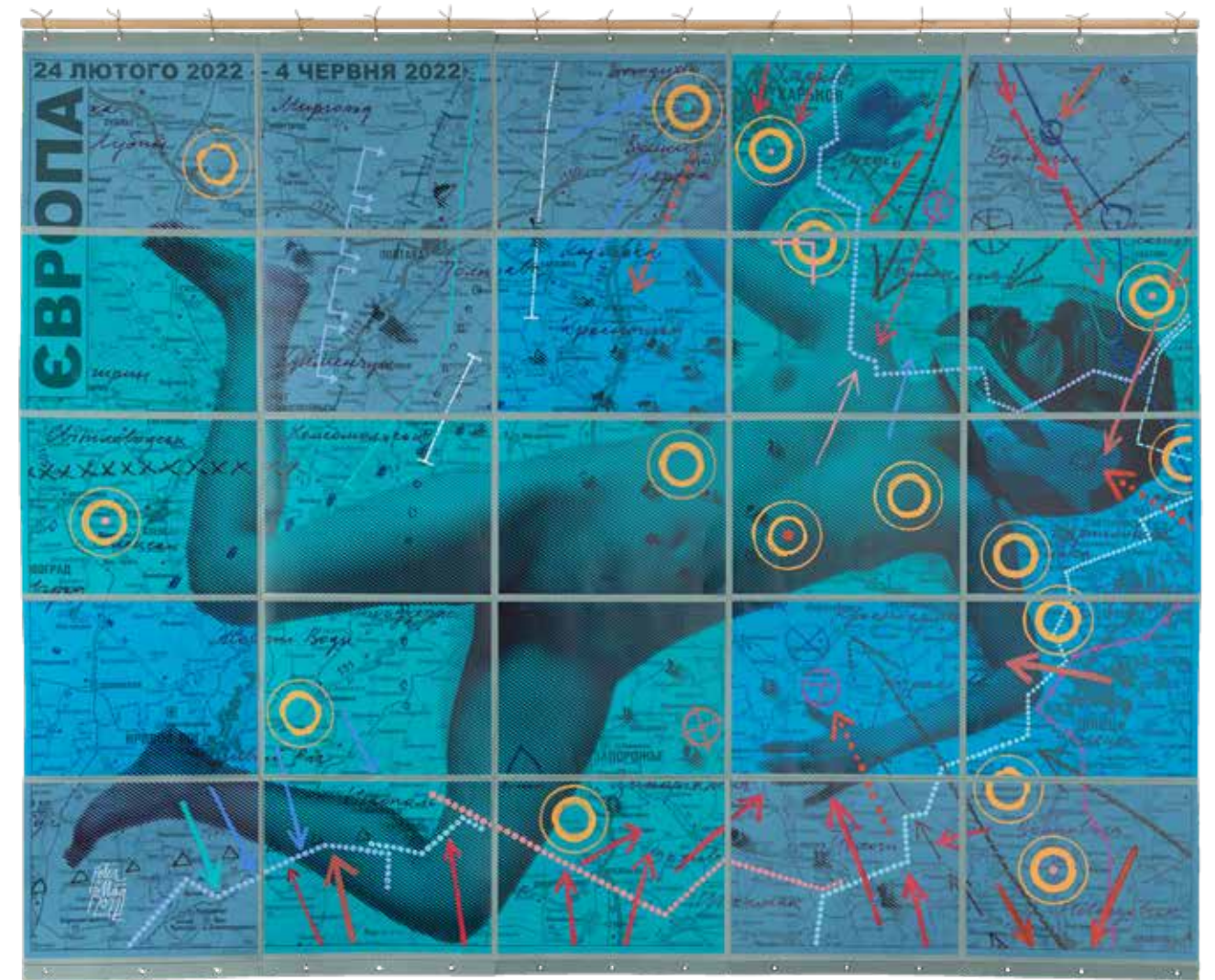
1977 – 1983 Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava, studied with Associate Professor František Stoklas

1980 – 1988 studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Perugia, Paris, Prague, and Madrid

Peter Pollág lives in Bratislava and devotes himself to painting, drawing, graphic art, illustration, stained glass, glass and stone mosaics, and recently to monumental sculptures. He has participated in numerous painting symposia and arts residencies in Europe and overseas. He has had dozens of solo and more than a hundred joint exhibitions in Slovakia, Europe, and beyond the borders of our continent. His works are included in public and private collections in many countries. He is a laureate of the Premio Alla Punta Assisi (1981), the Martin Benka Prize (1983), the Grand Prix “Corrida Piedestre Internationale” in Paris (1986), and received an Honourable Mention at the 8th International Painting Biennial in Košice (1986), the Crystal Wing Award (2008), the Prize of the Society of Slovak Artists (2022) and the Ľudovít Fulla Prize (2022).



Peter Pollág



Blue Map. 2022. Mixed media on paper and canvas. 260 x 322 cm



Setting Free the Princess. Diptych. 2007. Oil on canvas. 150 x 300 cm
Private Collection



Landing in an Unexplored Country. 2016
Acrylic and oil on canvas. 180 x 220 cm
Danubiana Meulensteen Art Museum Collection



Cycle Collar. Intoxicating Words. Poisonous Words. Sharp Words. 2022
Acrylic and oil. 100 x 120 cm

Ivan Pavle

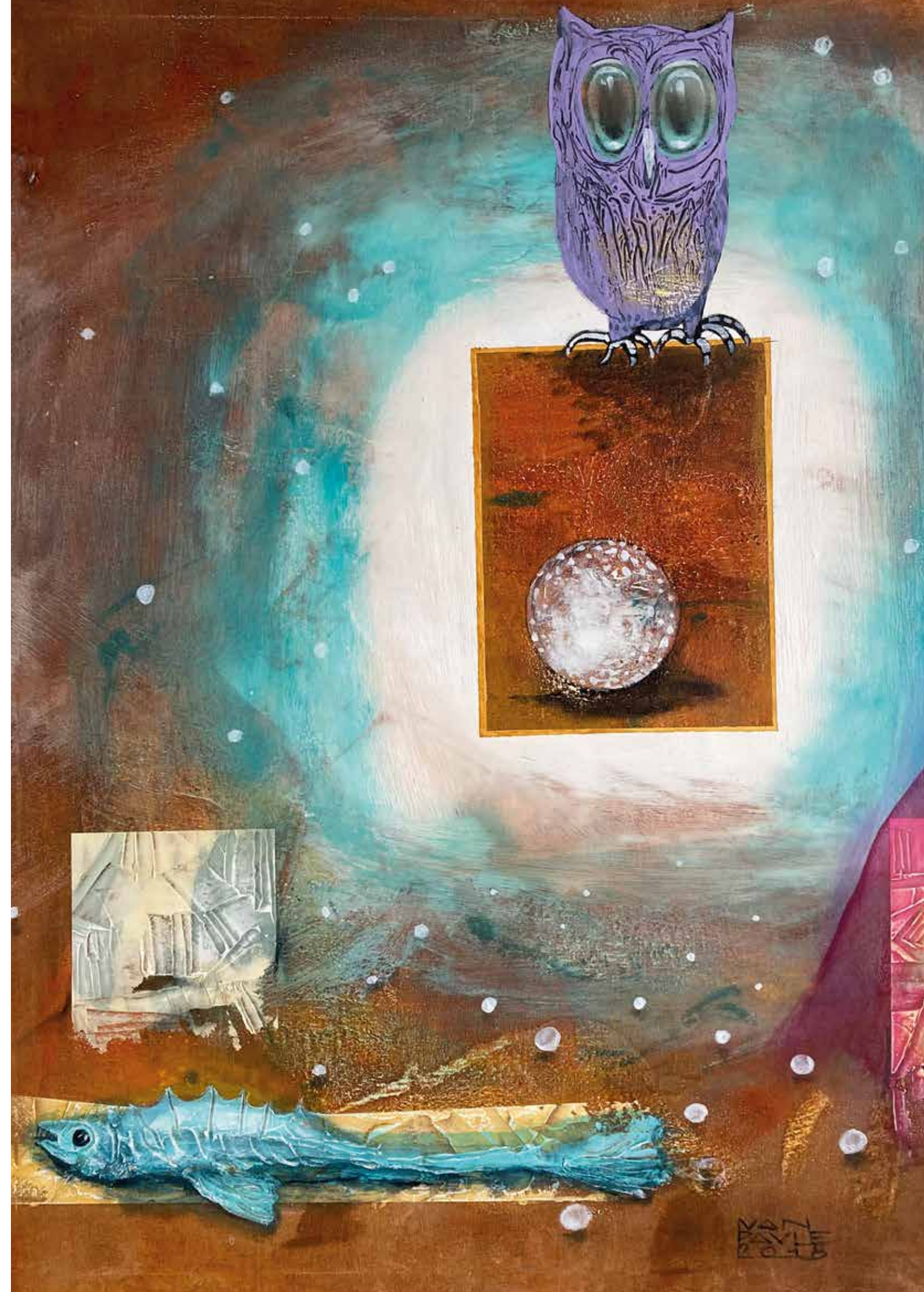
Ivan Pavle is one of the most successful artists of his generation. He paints on canvas, wood, and paper and works in oil, acrylic, and mixed media, constantly exploring new ways to interpret his ideas as convincingly as possible. He dares to cross the boundaries of historical periods and ancient cultures and freely works with their elements. His paintings are therefore convincing and full of exciting poetry and imagination. They display a surprising colour range, the contrast between light and deep shadow, alternate smooth and transparent glazes, as well as magical structures and patina. His paintings reveal the mysterious world of ancient civilisations and exotic countries, telling the stories that changed the course of history. However, working with the same passion, layer by layer, he exposes the essence of the human soul, searching for the truth about the unknown laws of life.

The artist paints landscapes, bizarre architecture, mysterious still lifes, animal figures – bulls, fish – but especially spectacular figural compositions. His paintings abound in metaphors, parables and references. However, he always returns to the motif characteristic of his entire work – the female and her endless body shapes. The woman is his muse and source of inspiration full of mystery and utter surprise. Nevertheless, Pavle does not only seek inspiration from the past but also admires and interprets today's dynamism. He feels at home in cosmopolitan New York, is attracted by the picturesque exotic underwater world of sunny Florida, but also by the vibrant atmosphere of Paris, and quite naturally by his home environment, family, friends and the loved ones.



"AHA". From the cycle EKO. 2018. Acrylic and oil on canvas. 80 x 100 cm

Hole in One... From the cycle EKO. 2018. Acrylic and oil on canvas. 100 x 80 cm »





8 March 1955 Galanta

1975 – 1981 Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava, studied in the Department of Monumental Painting with Associate Professors Desider Castiglione and Ivan Vychlopen

The artist lives in Bratislava and devotes himself to painting, drawing, sculpture and illustration. He worked as an artist-in-residence in the United States and France, where he won the Jury Prize at the 21st International Painting Symposium in Cagnes-sur-Mer in 1989. Pavle is a recipient of the Crystal Wing Award (2015).



Ivan Pavle



Along the Way. From the cycle EKO. 2018. Acrylic and oil on canvas. 100 x 80 cm

« Owner... From the cycle EKO. 2018. Acrylic and oil on canvas. 100 x 80 cm

Oto Bachorík

Initially, the sculptures of Oto Bachorík provided a startling contrast between expressive and lyrical, real and abstract, and his visual language often reached beyond the limits of the details of a simplified sign, almost an archetype. Pure abstracted forms and rounded lines of his monumentally conceived sculptures evoke a sense of mystery and the unknown. His work reflects his intellect. It depicts his inner emotional world, refers to literary sources and the wisdom of ancient myths, and through symbols and metaphors interprets messages about everyday life.

Bachorík primarily draws inspiration from nature and human beings and their mutual relationships. His bronze sculptures – magnificent human figures, heads, animals, birds, fish and marine animals, architecture, and mystical objects – are elegant and yet robust, lyrical and dramatic. They are full of strength and pure nostalgia. They burst with vitality, tension, exude peace and respond to answered questions.

The artist prefers traditional sculptural materials, particularly bronze. In spite of it, he undertook a heroic task as his own challenge – to subdue the ancient sculptural material – wood. In the course of two years, 2013 – 2014, he created a series of imposing, monumental wood sculptures – larger-than-life figures of women, men, and animals – that enchanted the audience with their simple shapes and austere and firm lines.

Oto Bachorík is a passionate traveller who has crisscrossed almost the entire world from Patagonia to remote Nordic fjords. In 2015, during a high-altitude hike, he had an accident in the Slovak mountains with almost fatal consequences, but despite the fact that it happened, he has returned to the art scene and continues to produce art. Today, he primarily creates bronze sculptures that follow his path to the perfect shape. Their expressive and dynamically impressive surface texture evokes the feeling of exciting journeys to the unknown along with a sense of peace and a return to the original essence of life.



Sitting. Wing. Walking. 2013 – 2014. Wood and acrylic. h. 180 – 260 cm



Transforming into a Butterfly. 2004. Bronze. 40 x 85 x 40 cm



Harbour. 2006. Bronze. h. 45 cm



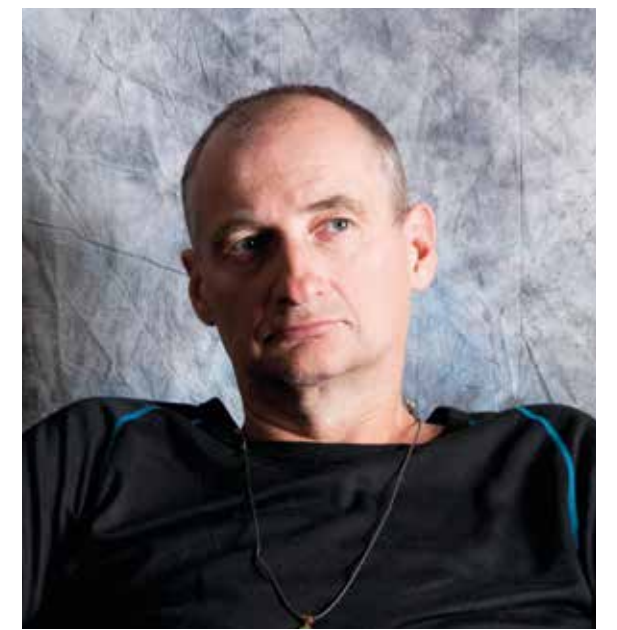
Reclining Figure (Balance). 2021. Bronze. 40 x 63 x 35 cm

26 March 1959 Bratislava

1974 – 1978 School of Applied Arts in Bratislava,
studied with Professor Ludwik Korkoš

1978 – 1984 Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava,
studied with Professor Ladislav Snopek

The artist currently lives in Devín, part of Bratislava. He devotes himself to small and monumental sculpture, drawing and painting. Oto Bachorík has been teaching for years and has initiated numerous sculpture symposia. He has shown his works at many exhibitions in Slovakia and abroad, and his indoor and outdoor sculptures can be found in numerous public and private art collections. In 2018, he was awarded the Society of Slovak Artists Prize, and in 2020 the Crystal Wing Award.



Animal. 2006. Bronze. 30 x 65 x 37 cm

Štefan Polák

Polák belongs to the generation of cultural “nomads” – those fortunate people who have long ceased to regard the borders of time, territory or style as insurmountable obstacles. He discovered fresh sources of inspiration that had previously faded into oblivion. It may be the reason why he has always perceived and painted what not everyone can see. Fleeting experiences from childhood, lines written by poets, literary stories, philosophical reflections, memories of landscape silhouettes, or the curve of the female breast are merely a few of countless impulses that inspired the stories encoded in his paintings in which distant past intertwines with the present, and metaphors, mysterious references and messages convey new meaning.

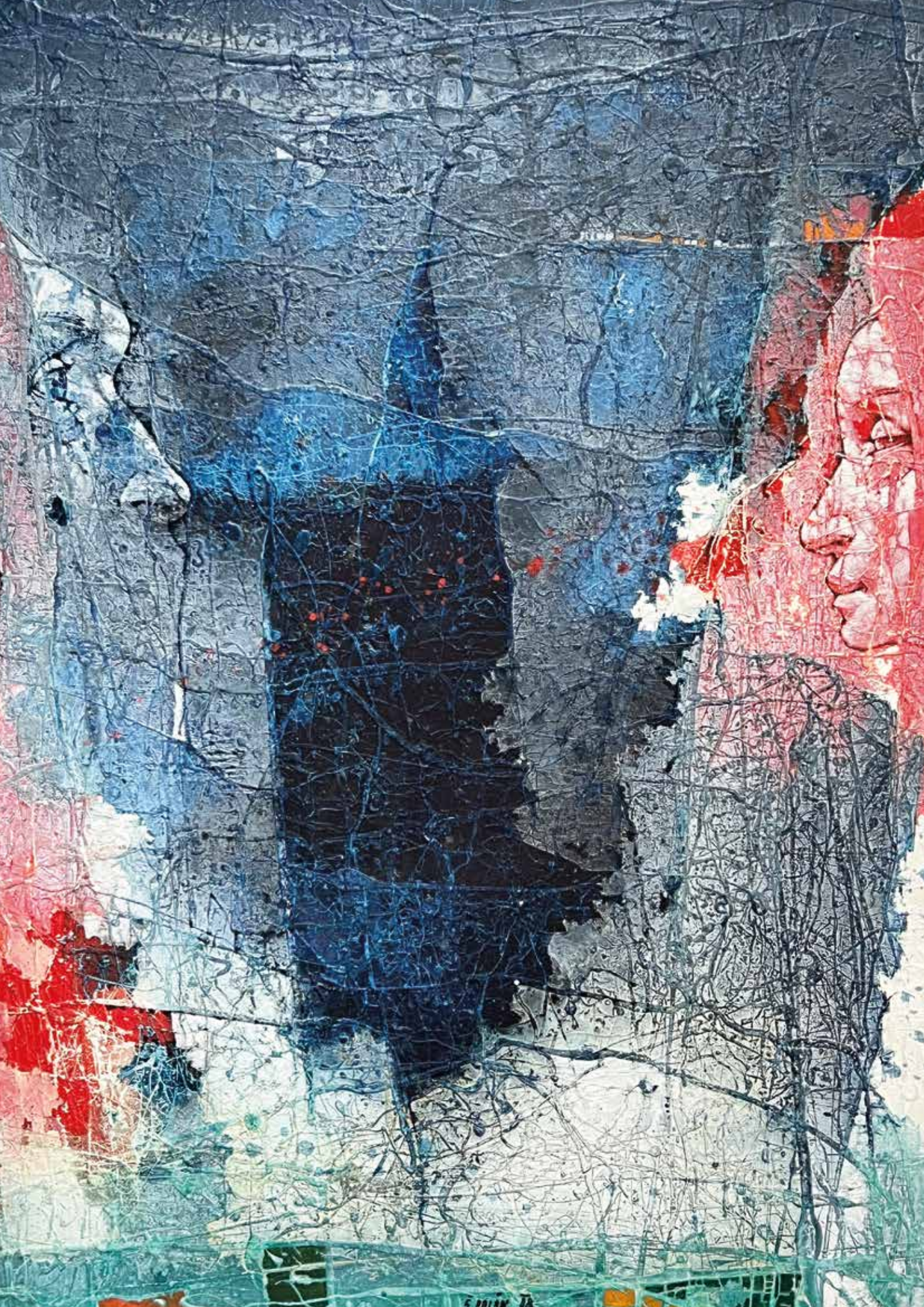
Štefan Polák is an intrinsic painter. His works are permeated with the principles of poetic imagination and magic realism, exhibiting elements of Art Informel and Lyrical Abstraction. He exclusively uses painterly means of expression, and most importantly, exploits the impressive power of colour. The colour structures or subtle glazes enhance the effect of compositions oscillating between the concrete and the abstract world. His stories are indicated rather than painted in continuous narratives, and, incredibly, many of his abstract paintings – their mysterious structures and colours – interpret meanings and references as intensively as those where a real shape or a concrete face is displayed. He focuses on long-forgotten data to relate human stories in which history overlaps with the present, the spirit of the place and time comes to life, and the reflection of our own experiences and feelings can be found.



Quiet Talk. 2013. Oil on canvas. 100 x 130 cm



The Frontiers of Knowledge. 2016. Oil on canvas. 130 x 100 cm »



18 December 1952 Partizánske-Bačovany

1971 – 1977 Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava,
studied with Professors Ladislav Čemický
and František Gajdoš

1982 École Nationale Supérieure des Arts
Décoratifs in Paris, studied with Professors
Zao Wou-ki and P. Grenier

1979 – 1986 lectured at the Academy of Fine Arts,
Department of Painting

The artist lives in Bratislava, and his studio is in Jánovce,
a village not far from the capital. In addition to easel
painting, he also produces works integrated into
contemporary architecture, using particularly the technique
of secco fresco, stone mosaic, and wood painting. In the
last decade, he has largely devoted himself to sculpture.
Polák has had dozens of solo exhibitions and participated
in many joint exhibitions in Slovakia and abroad. His works
have received several awards and are included in private
and public collections in Slovakia and Europe. In 1997,
1999 and 2000, he worked as an artist-in-residence
at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris. In 2017
he won the Society of Slovak Artists Prize.



Štefan Polák



John the Baptist. 2008. Oil on canvas. 100 x 130 cm

« **Sorry.** 2008. Oil on canvas. 130 x 100 cm

Juraj Čutek

28 February 1957 Žilina

1972 – 1976 School of Applied Arts in Bratislava, studied with Professor Ludwik Korkoš

1977 – 1983 Academy of Applied Arts in Prague, studied at the Department of Sculpture with Professors Josef Malejovský and Josef Svoboda

Juraj Čutek lives in Bratislava and is concerned with sculpture, drawing, and painting, works for architecture projects, and interior design. He has shown his works at countless solo and joint exhibitions in Slovakia and abroad, and his sculptures and designer objects can be found in many public and private collections beyond the borders of Slovakia. In recent years, he has participated in numerous sculpture symposia and initiated and led some. In 2017, his bust of the Slovak opera diva Lucia Popova was unveiled at the Vienna Opera, and in 2018 he won the Crystal Wing Award.



From a Crumbling Church...I Brought an Angel Here... 2020. Oak and metal. h. 70 cm

The sculptor dedicated his talent, creativity, and immense skill to wood, a superior natural material that inspired him with its suppleness, inner energy, vitality, and unique beauty. In an effort to interfere with its natural structure as little as possible, he sensitively and sensibly creates the lines and builds the volumes of his wood sculptures and inserts new elements in them. Most of his sculptures are made from bronze, brass, or iron fragments of various devices, musical instruments, and spare parts, or are simply found or gifted to him, or they are unnecessary and discarded small objects. They have their own history, memory or aura and captivate us with their incredible poetry and charm. Moreover, they surprise us with their surprisingly harsh beauty and expressiveness.

The contrast between the fluid lines of Čutek's sculptures and the bizarre shapes of bronze details, often complemented by bright multi-coloured acrylic paint applied to polished wood, enhances the metaphorical and symbolic accent of his works and lends them mystery and power. Čutek's figures, animals, fish, parachutes, cars and locomotives represent a unique world of fantasy, imagination, associations, and memories of intimately familiar stories and situations.

Juraj Čutek draws on history – from ancient times to the present, from literature and especially from non-fiction, from his childhood dreams and family stories that go back several generations. His studio contains an extensive gallery of famous personalities of science, technology, social life, sport and culture. He pays particular attention to the golden age of the first groundbreaking discoveries that changed the world. Slovak and international inventors, pilots, divers, sailors, but also famous figures parade before our very eyes as symbols of wit, courage, speed and endurance. However, Čutek also interprets his personal mythologies, stories he experienced or cherished with the same feeling. He is particularly fascinated by Jules Verne's underwater world, by alluring Sirens and charming angels, the world of music, but also the quiet and melancholic grotesque of the circus world of mimes and jesters that have appeared in his repertoire since the beginning.

« Salvage Our Oceans. 2022. Walnut and brass. 80 x 99 x 22 cm





Harald Ulrich Svedrup. 2018. Walnut, bronze. h. 70 cm

Ján Bahýľ, Slovak Inventor of the Helicopter. 2022. Walnut and brass. 70 x 95 x 35 cm »



Alexej Vojtášek

13 December 1952 Roudnice nad Labem
30 May 2023 Bratislava

1973 – 1980 Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava,
studied at the Department of Graphic Art
and Book Illustration with Professor
Albín Brunovský

1985 – 1990 lectured at the Academy of Fine Arts
1994 – 1995 lectured at the Department of Advertising
and Promotion at the Faculty of Education
of Comenius University in Bratislava

The artist lived in Bratislava, and in addition to easel painting,
he devoted himself to drawing, graphic art, book illustration,
spatial objects, and monumental paintings integrated into
contemporary architecture. He exhibited at many solo and
joint exhibitions, and his works can be found in private
and public collections in Slovakia and abroad. Vojtášek
participated in several international symposia. In 1985,
he won the 3rd prize at the International Drawing Triennial
in Nuremberg, and in 2023 he became the laureate
of the Crystal Wing Award for Lifetime Achievement.



Cirkumpunk. 2017
Mixed media on canvas. 100 x 100 cm



Conspiracy. I Know and Hear Everything. 2017
Mixed media on canvas. 160 x 140 cm

Resonance I. 2018. Mixed media on canvas. 160 x 120 cm »



The work of Alexej Vojtášek represents the poetic-imaginative line of Slovak painting. His paintings are vivid and colourful, expressive and dramatic. Meditation and appropriation, references to poetry, myths and legends, but especially symbolism and metaphor played an important role in his work. His torsos of human bodies, fragments of architecture and landscapes, astral elements, and geometric signs and symbols express messages that reach far beyond the fundamental meaning of the motifs and lead to a deeper examination of the essence of things and phenomena.

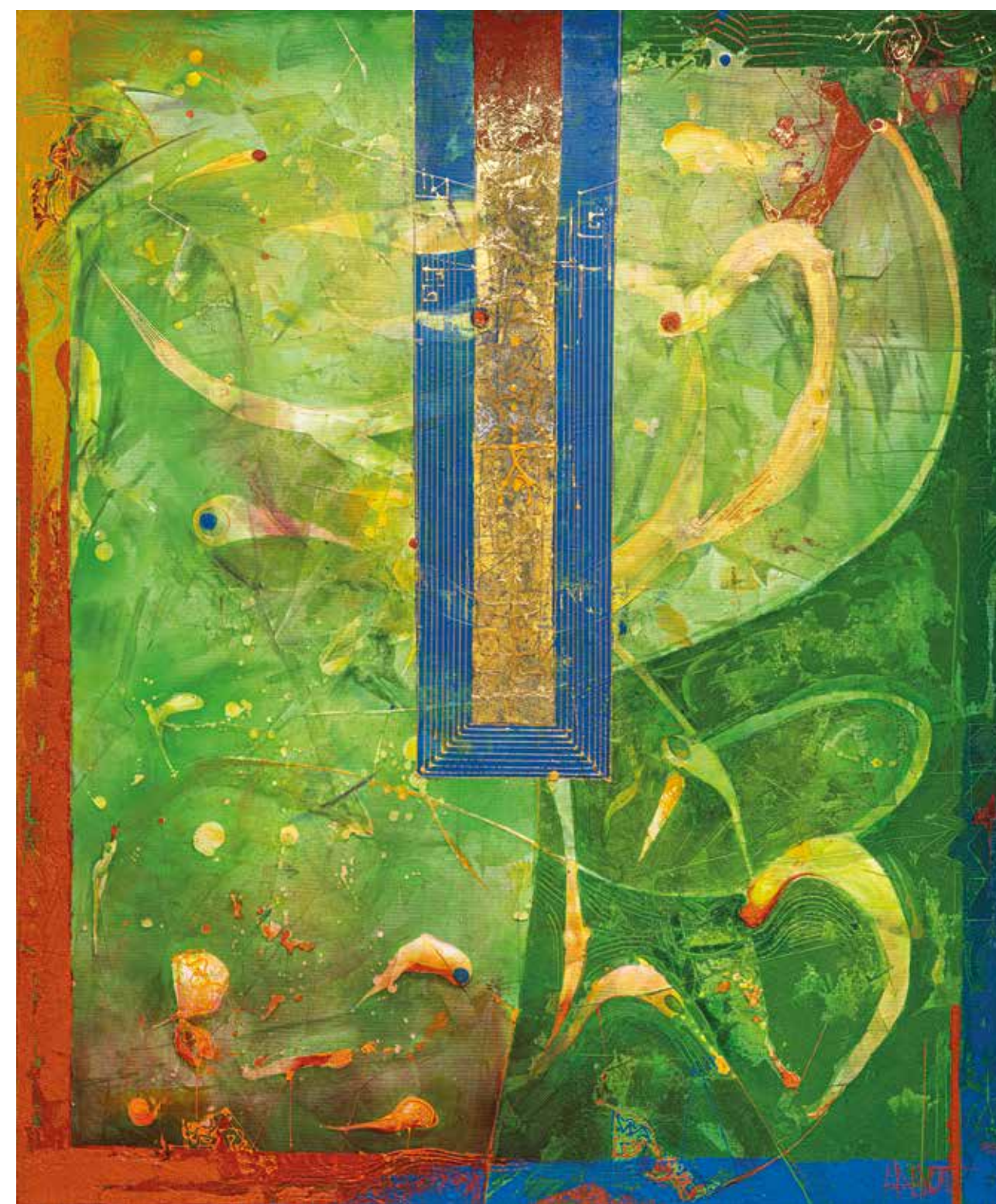
Vojtášek's paintings in acrylic capture the viewer's attention with balanced composition, stylised shapes but also with a wide variety of expression, ranging from rigorously abstract paintings through archetypal and simplified forms to imaginative figural compositions expressing the sensual joy of volumes and shapes and enchantment



Portal – Illusion. 2022. Mixed media on canvas. 120 x 100 cm

by the female body. Vojtášek's apparent hesitation on the border between abstract and objective lends his paintings a poignant atmosphere of the mysterious and the implicit.

However, the artist's style of painting is no less important. Colour penetrates structures, even relief layers in which bright blue, red and yellow tones dominate in a provocative contrast to dark and muted hues. The surprising smooth gradation of white and shades of gold colour enhances the mystical and festive sense of magical motifs. Contour drawing, a network of fine lines modelling the shapes, scratches in colour paint, and relief drawing elements are reminiscent of the artist's early works largely associated with graphic art and drawing.



Portal – Evolution. 2022. Mixed media on canvas. 120 x 100 cm



Mária Horváthová

18 January 1951 Modrý Kameň

- 1969 – 1974 Studied at the Faculty of Arts of Comenius University in Bratislava, Department of Art History
- 1974 – 1982 Curator of the Department of Drawing and Graphic Art, Slovak National Gallery in Bratislava
- 1982 – 1990 Director of Youth Gallery
- 1990 – 1993 Head of the Coordination Department, Slovak National Gallery in Bratislava
- 1994 – Secretary and Curator of the Society of Slovak Artists
- 1995 – 1997 Director of Mikuláš Galanda Foundation

She lives in Bratislava. Between 1974 and 2023, she curated more than three hundred exhibitions in Slovakia and abroad. She was the curator of the Slovak collection at the Venice Biennale (1997) and the curator and coordinator of large exhibition projects in Moscow, London, Paris, Munich, Madrid, Havana, Ottawa, Rome, Florence, Budapest, Berlin, Warsaw, Krakow, The Hague, and Tel Aviv. She is the author of many catalogues, professional studies, and several monographs.

Her art projects, exhibitions, and publishing activities received many awards, including the Martin Benka Prize in 1985, the Minister of Culture of the Slovak Republic Award in 1998, the M. T. Mitrovský Award in 2010, the Marián Város Award in 2013, and the Imro Weiner Kráľ Award in 2016.

In 1990, she founded and, for three decades, led the ARS TOUR agency, which focuses on preparing professional study tours in fine arts and architecture, and enabling many Slovak artists and architects to have direct contact with European art and culture. In 1996, as the director of the Mikuláš Galanda Foundation, together with colleagues from the Society of Slovak Artists, she founded and still manages the studio of Slovak artists in the Cité internationale des arts in Paris (exhibitions in 2000, 2005, 2011, 2016).

She is a member of the Arts Council, a juror of the Crystal Wing Award and the Ľudovít Fulla Prize, and the curator of the Carlton Savoy Art Gallery, Zámocká 22 Gallery, and Ružinov Gallery. In 1994, she became the secretary of the newly founded Society of Slovak Artists and still organises activities of this society as a curator of exhibitions and a programme manager.

Colour & Form

Ten Slovak Artists

Exhibition curator: Mária Horváthová

Text: Mária Horváthová

Translation: Beata Havelská

Copyediting: Lucia Bačová

Photographs: archives of artists

Graphic design: Jarmila Zdráhalová

Print: FO ART s. r. o., Bratislava

Published by: FO ART s. r. o., Bratislava for Society of Slovak Artists

ISBN 978-80-8209-037-9