

PICTURE IS A PICTURE IS A PICTURE

PALO MACHO & JANA HOJSTRIČOVÁ

OPENING
3.10.2024
3:00 PM

EXHIBITION
3.—6.10.2024
10.00 AM — 8.00 PM

DĚLNICKÁ 264
NOVÝ BOR

CURATOR
SYLVA PETROVÁ

igos Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava U. slovenská akadémia umení Kolektiv Ateliers SMNB

SUPPORTED USING PUBLIC FUNDING BY SLOVAK ARTS COUNCIL

OBRAZ JE OBRAZ JE OBRAZ

DĚLNICKÁ 264 NOVÝ BOR

Sklářské muzeum Nový Bor (Glass Museum)

Kalinova

Dělnická

Železná

U Starého hřbitova

V Lomech

igos Vysoká škola výtvarných umení v Bratislave U. fond na podporu umenia Kolektiv Ateliers SMNB

Z VEREJNÝCH ZDROJOV PODPORIL FOND NA PODPORU UMENIA

Picture is a Picture is a Picture

Palo Macho & Jana Hojstričová & Kolektiv Ateliers

International Glass Symposium Nový Bor 20243

3rd October 2024 – 6th October 2024

10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

Opening: 3rd October 2024 at 3:00 p.m.

Curator: Sylva Petrová

Address: Dělnická 264, Nový Bor, CZ

On 4th – 5th October 2024 students from Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava will organise workshops of cyanotype and photogram for children and for adults by exposing the picture on the paper and by using the flat glass as a filter for the cyanotype and photogram techniques.

The presentation of the new author monograph by Jana Hojstričová and Palo Macho *“Experimentation and Reversibility”* will be a part of the exhibition, authors of the texts are Bohunka Koklesová, Marian Zervan and Monika Mitášová. Pub. PETRUS, 2023.

PICTURE IS A PICTURE IS A PICTURE

The title of this exhibition, a paraphrase of Gertrude Stein's famous verse "A rose is a rose is a rose," encapsulates the essence of Slovak artist Palo Macho's creative vision both in his solo work and collaborations, particularly with photographer Jana Hojstričová. The title clearly reveals the focal point of Macho's efforts: the symbolic vision of the picture, i.e., a form that is not at all a literal representation, but rather a picture/painting as the objective and medium for artistic thought and experimentation. In fact, perpetual experimentation is Macho's method for achieving uniqueness in the realm of glass painting. As Macho himself remarks, "Above all else, being an artist means being different."

To bring an exhibition of this nature to a region historically synonymous with glass production – where the focus logically lies on elevating the work of local companies and industry based in Nový Bor and Kamenický Šenov – might be provocative given how disparate the exhibition is. Master glass artists, technicians, and business leaders who have dedicated their entire lives to glass might wonder why Macho does not primarily work with glass as such, or why he does not cater to glass enthusiasts and consumers, or why he is concerned with matters beyond functionality and sales. The answer is simple: there is a fundamental disparity in their disciplines. Macho explores the properties of glass and glass techniques as a means to achieve personal artistic expression, placing glass – a material he has emerged from and deeply respects – into a service role for his artistic concept.

However, the pursuit of disparity was not the impetus for this five-day exhibition, which saw dozens of works transported across the border from Bratislava to Nový Bor for such a brief period. On the contrary, this exhibition is a reflective assessment, a recapitulation of Macho's artistic evolution, and a tribute to the region that profoundly shaped the life of this internationally acclaimed Slovak artist. Macho continues to draw inspiration from the lessons he learned in the region, and northern Bohemia continues to make his work possible, providing him with production facilities at local companies.

The first International Glass Symposium (IGS) in Nový Bor in 1982 had such a profound impact on Palo Macho, who was then a second-year student at the Nový Bor glass school, that it set the course for his future career. He understood that his lifework would evolve along an independent path rather than in collaboration with the glassmaking industry. His experience at IGS, which showcased numerous international stars of the art glass scene, was pivotal in Macho's decision to continue his studies at the glass school in Kamenický Šenov and later at the Bratislava Academy of Fine Arts and Design (AFAD). Even after many years, Macho recognizes the lasting impact of the stimuli he received during his school years in Nový Bor and Kamenický Šenov, where he studied techniques for refining glass surfaces. He is cognizant of the fact that attending a similar school abroad, though politically feasible, would have been nearly impossible. In Western Europe, due to its focus on the North American Hot Glass Movement at the time (and largely still today), hot-forming at the furnace is the predominant method for studying glass.

Macho values his equally enduring collaboration with local companies, such as Kolektiv Ateliers in Nový Bor, TKG in Skalice (Česká Lípa), Glassworks Jílek in Kamenický Šenov, Lhotský Studio in Pelechov, and the glass schools in Nový Bor, Kamenický Šenov, and Železný Brod. These relationships extend beyond his own projects to include guiding his students towards collaboration with them. Remarkably, despite geopolitical shifts to our borders over the years, the intrinsic bond continues to reiterate between the evolution of modern Slovak glass and the schools in Nový Bor, Kamenický Šenov, and perhaps also Železný Brod, which have educated many well-known Slovak glass artists – including those who went on to transform glassmaking studies at AFAD (primarily Václav Cigler 1965–1979, followed by Askold Žáčko 1979–1997, then significantly Palo Macho 2011–present). The best example of this is the highly successful series of new Lithyalin glass models created at Glassworks Jílek.

Although the building layout did not allow for a chronological presentation of Macho's works at the exhibition, attentive visitors will find his oldest pieces dating from 1996 through to the present year, 2024. Each series is distinguished by innovative technical processes that Macho continually develops, even in objects created in collaboration with other artists – they are in part Macho's personal contribution towards collaboration with colleagues who were working with glass for the first time. The common thread running through these series is abstraction, coupled with an interest in the human figure and the context of modern civilization, whether through stylized linear figure drawings or figures imagined from previous invisible incidents or presumed future events (*The Shirt of My Childhood* series, 2011–). In the end, it is man – the establisher of the ritual – who is notionally standing behind the ritual vessels. The *Architectures* series (2015) is similar. In the real world, man is the builder of architecture, and architecture is a safe refuge for him. Macho's motivation to use photographic transfers in the painted compositions was driven by a similar humanistic focus.

Besides the most important aspect of all, i.e., creative synergy, this is also what lies behind his collaboration with photographer Jana Hojstřichová, with whom he has created numerous works and installations since 2009, including *Scanning* 2011, *Three Heads* 2017, *Boyishness*, 2017, *Permanent Risk*, 2022, and *De-Intimatized Spaces*, 2024. They have shown their joint projects at numerous thematic exhibitions and in various publications in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, and beyond. Glass and photography (whether digital, laser, or transfers) merge seamlessly in their objects, with no formal hierarchy of either medium or artist. The distinct form of flat, slumped, and reticulated glass with integrated graphic elements and altered photography coexist in a close, mutually dependent symbiosis. Once the individual components of each project determine their interrelations, especially their proportions and symbolic meanings, these syntheses engage with the surrounding space and the viewer. At IGS 2021, Macho and Hojstřichová created a large, intricate installation. Despite being composed of several elements, it was fundamentally minimalist, transcending the conventional boundaries of the symposium and clearly asserting itself within the realm of fine art. One of Macho's close friends and collaborators on figurative works, Slovak art legend Jozef Jankovič, passed away in 2017. Their collaborative works, produced over a period of seven years, can also be seen in the exhibition.

Beyond the unique opportunity to see Macho's work and his collaborative works with Jana Hojstřichová in their entirety, this exhibition also conveys a deep sense of gratitude, acknowledging the teachers and companies operating in the region who, for generations, have played a crucial role in shaping and advancing modern art glass on the global stage.



Geometry? Seven Lights, c88 x 180 cm, 2006



Large Vessels, 240 x 350 cm, 2010 – 2011



Z cyklu: Košele mého chlapčerství | From the cycle: Shirts of My Boyhood
à 195 × 95 cm, à 50 × 30 cm, 2014



Košele | Shirts



Exhibition: Images of Transparency and Diffusion, in Gallery Nová síň, Prague 2024



Authors: Jana Hojstřichová and Palo Macho



Up/Down, Right/Left, Front/Rear, 350 :: 92 :: 40 cm, etched image, Zoya Museum, Modra, 2016

Authors: Jana Hojstričová and Palo Macho

Permanent Situations, installation, Danubiana, Bratislava, 2020



Authors: Jana Hojstričová and Palo Macho



Permanent Risk, Installation, Synagogue in Hranice na Moravě, 2022