

OBJECTive: A Brief Report on a Meeting of Objects

Kunsthalle Bratislava brings the year 2018 to a climax with an extensive exhibition, mapping the current state of 3D thinking on the Czech and Slovak visual art scenes. Vladimír Beskid's curatorial project is presented on the centenary of the foundation of the 1st Czechoslovak Republic, and thus it celebrates a tradition, over one hundred years old, of objective art as a new medium. The opening will be held on Thursday, November 29, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The principal aim of the exhibition project entitled *OBJECTive*, which Kunsthalle Bratislava is presenting in premiere, is to support the contemporary form of the object (including installations) as a distinctive form of thinking in space and a non-figurative language of forms, shapes, and their significant contexts. The exhibition concentrates on the generation of artists who entered upon the visual art scene after the change of regime (i.e. post-1989) and today figure also in the wider Central European context. These artists were mostly born in the 1960s and 70s – to be precise, between 1966 (Černický, Ondak, Vaněk) and 1980 (Lang, Sceranková).

The exhibition gives preference to postconceptual approaches and critically, ironically, or humorously reflects on the contemporary world. In this regard it features the use of non-classical sculptural materials, found and cast-off objects, and an aesthetic of “post-socialist” recycling.

Conceptually the *OBJECTive* project is articulated into several thematic wholes, focusing directly on the presentation of the object as a medium. The poetics of materials, and bastard environments, in absurd encounters: that is what the exhibition is about. Installation is reminiscent of the disorderly system of a scrapyard, an abandoned bazaar, or some weird collection from the past. Everyday found objects are placed in new relationships and connections. At the same time, there is a certain kind of resistance here to bombastic and spectacular installations. Furthermore, the

exhibition pursues an open field of exploration with a preference for cheap materials from the former Czechoslovakia, the tower-block culture of bareness and aluminium rods, and a certain quantum of “ost-algie”, transferred to the present day. Representing a special chapter are the objects and installations which caricature the domestic room atmosphere, interior, and folding furniture, and the aesthetic of home craftsmen and handymen in the DIY style. At the beginning and end of the exhibition there are special guests: two artists of renown, a generation older and more experienced, Jiří Kovanda and Peter Rónai. They have not, however, been admitted to the exhibition’s “hall of fame” but remain outside the gates to this world, in the entrance hall, under the Kunsthalle stairs.

This laboratory environment of singular and scattered objects manages overall to reflect both the contemporary global world and the “crossing” of cultures in the politico-social system or in public (media-related) space. Using a series of objects, the exhibition thus puts forward its own objective of setting and snapshotting the world. So then, not just a special “clash of materials” from high and low culture, but also “a clash of cultures and galaxies” in the Sunday living-room.

Vladimír Beskid (*1962) is a Slovak historian of art, curator and cultural manager. He is a graduate of the Philosophical Faculty of Comenius University in Bratislava (1985). Vladimír Beskid is engaged in research and presentation of modern and contemporary art of the 20th and 21st centuries, in a broad Central European context. In recent times he has focused on the development of Slovak (post)conceptual art (exhibitions include: *Soft Codes*, Museum of the Contemporary, Wrocław, 2015; *Reversed*, Museum of Contemporary Art, Nový Sad, 2016; *Probe I*, GHMP Prague, 2018). He lives and works in Trnava, Bratislava and Košice.

Complementary Programmes with the *OBJECTive* Exhibition

A rich complementary and educational programme will be part of the exhibition. We have prepared guided tours by the artists and curator, and lectures and discussions with Czech and Slovak theoreticians, aimed at making contact with sculptors' thinking and the contemporary form of the object. Educational programmes and workshops for various target groups of children, students and adults present the theme of the object, offering a historical excursion to the history of the readymade and space-and-motion activities. Kunsthalle Bratislava is issuing its regular *Guide to the Exhibition* (working material not only for children): part of this is a comic devoted to Marcel Duchamp's *Bicycle Wheel* (1913).

OBJECTive

Artists exhibiting: Jiří Černický (CZ), Viktor Frešo (SK), Krištof Kintera (CZ), Dominik Lang (CZ), Marek Kvetan (SK), Denisa Lehocká (SK), Roman Ondak (SK), Pavla Sceranková (SK/CZ), Tomáš Vaněk (CZ)

Guests: Peter Rónai (SK), Jiří Kovanda (CZ)

Curator: Vladimír Beskid

Opening: Thursday, November 29, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at KHB, first floor

Duration: November 30, 2018 – February 24, 2019

Venue: KHB, first floor