

Erik Šille: error

(press release)

Kunsthalle Bratislava presents a solo exhibition of Erik Šille – one of the leading representatives of the boom of Slovak painting after 2000. The opening of the exhibition, which will take place on Thursday 13 July from 18:00 to 20:00 on the first floor of the building, will also include an introduction of the new monographic catalogue of the author. The exhibition entitled *Error* curated by Laco Teren will last until October 29, 2017.

Erik Šille (*1978, Rožňava) raised attention already during his studies at the studio of Professor Ivan Csudai at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava, when a strong “acrylic generation” of painters emerged. Although Šille belongs to its prominent representatives, he continually cultivates, develops and enriches his highly distinctive style with new elements and characters. Possibly the most characteristic feature of Šille's work is his sophisticated symbolism that utilizes the form, charm, and ambiguity of the animated world and comic characters.

The author layers protagonists and graphic abbreviations (the symbols of objects and activities) in the complex painting elements on a monochrome background, blending the images, elements, and aesthetics of Eastern and Western culture. He feels free to quote the symbolic and formal richness of the images of the European cultural context and combines *The Barque of Dante*, Böcklin and South Park in the paintings *Last Boating* (2009) or *Hello History* (2010). By mixing art history with pop-culture, he creates new contemporary pseudo-motifs and hybrid fairytales; his paintings seem like landscapes, portraits, and still lifes transplanted from an unknown artificial land behind the computer.

Since KHB is dedicated to living art, its creative reception, and experimentation, it gave birth to an unconventional exhibition model; its aim was not to create a classic monograph museum exhibition, but to offer the audience something more. That is why Laco Teren, who is not only a 1980s painter, but also a “connoisseur”, has become the curator of the show. The resulting exhibition will be an autonomous work presenting paintings, objects, and drawings (Šille), but also the “painter's perspective” or an opinion (Teren), as well as their communication. Thus, a conventional monograph has turned into an experiment – a contemporary *gesamtkunstwerk*.

“What ties the paintings of Erik Šille together for me is the moment when the protagonists, the number of whom has increased over the years, want to win our favor. And they're doing it in such a

charming and smart way that we simply cannot resist. They tell us the most grim and nightmarish stories in the form of bedtime tales that wake up instead of promoting a sound sleep. Šille awakens the long-lulled dreams of the past and the future to accompany us through the night to the new day, over and over, until the end of time. [...] When you're looking at them, dream with all of your strength, but keep your eyes and your heart wide open [...],” states Teren in the accompanying text.

The opening of the exhibition will also include an introduction of the monographic catalogue entitled *Šťastie je na dosah*/Fortune Is Within Reach, which maps and evaluates the work of Erik Šille. The publication offers an essay of art historian Beata Jablonská, an interview of philosopher Noro Lacko with the author, as well as a comprehensive selection of Erik's work. The catalogue is published by Krokus Gallery in cooperation with the Slovart publishing house. The band *Modré Hory* will take care of the accompanying program.

Those who appreciate art have had the chance to see the works of Erik Šille at many national and international addresses (including Kro Art Gallery in Vienna, Youkobo Art Space in Tokyo, or ODD Gallery in Bali, Indonesia). Šille won the Igor Kalný Award in 2006, VÚB Painting of the Year Award in 2009, as well as the Tatra banka Foundation Art Award (Young Artist) in 2010. His works are part of the collections of the Slovak National Gallery, the European Parliament, VÚB Foundation, etc.

error

Erik Šille

Curator: Laco Teren

Opening: July 13th, 2017 from 6 until 8 p. m.

Duration: July 14th – October 29th, 2017

Exhibition space: Kunsthalle Bratislava, Námestie SNP 12, Bratislava