

Pod Kriváňom Below Kriváň

This new exhibition is a major contribution to the discourse on the issue of critically engaged contemporary painting and its role in society within the Central European context. In his latest project, Ján Triaška resumes his activist approach to art and explores the shifting values of civic society. Presented as part of the Profiles cycle of exhibitions.

Ján Triaška has long been interested in the use of critical approaches to the socio-cultural scene, and his work presents a visual manifesto on issues of national identity, cultural continuity and our moral attitudes. He applies postmodern narrative approaches in which allusions to historical figurative paintings collide with contemporary iconographies of pop culture. In his most recent work, the artist has turned his attention to large-format paintings on the theme of the mountains of Slovakia, in particular the central motif of the peak of Kriváň. This iconic mountain is understood not only as a geographic point but also as a symbol of national identity, freedom and historical memory. Triaška rejects the traditional tenets of landscape painting and chooses to adapt the genre into a form of visual commentary on contemporary social themes. His paintings are filled with references to destruction and transformation which can be read as a metaphor for the threatened values, instability and fragility of the modern world. His apocalyptic landscapes are an unsettling statement on shifting social paradigms, raising questions about the nature of the new certainties of our current turbulent world. The depictions of the mountain scenes are fragmented and replete with layers of postmodern colour, in which the motif of Kriváň emerges as an element which can be freely manipulated, reconstituted and transformed at will. The resultant totemic architecture teeters on the edges of stability and collapse, appearing as a kind of Lego model on the global playground of the world. Who are these powers who toy with our fates? Does our "sovereignty" free us from our historical and moral chains or leave us stranded on our own (desert) islands? When will we finally accept the urgent need to act and stand up unequivocally against evil? The artist urges us to take an active stance before our current narratives become our own epitaphs.

Katarína Balúnová,
exhibition curator

profily profiles

Ján Triaška (1977) was born in Novi Sad, Serbia. From 1996 to 1999 he studied under Prof. Jovan Rakidžić at the Department of Painting of the Academy of Art in Novi Sad. From 1999 to 2003 he continued his master's studies under Prof. Ján Berger at the Department of Painting at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava, where he later completed his doctoral studies in 2007. In 2000 he was granted a UNESCO Bursary for Artists for a residency at Centre d'Art i Natura in Spain. He was a finalist in the Foundation VÚB Painting of the Year Award in 2008, and he was involved in the Czech and Slovak Pavilion at the Venice Biennale of Architecture in 2012. His work has been the subject of solo exhibitions in Slovakia, Serbia, the Czech Republic, Germany and Turkey and has also featured in group exhibitions throughout Europe. He has taken part in symposia in Slovenia, Hungary, Bosnia and Herzegovina and North Macedonia. He has been teaching at the Faculty of Fine Art of the Academy of Art in Banská Bystrica since 2014; in 2017 he became head of the Department of Painting, and he also leads the Academy's STARTUP Studio of Painting.

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O výstave

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