

Part of the Theme cycle of exhibitions, this new show presents a series of works by 16 graduates of the Departments of Painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica. The works feature a wide range of approaches, including introspective fragments of the human body, the concept of the landscape as a mental scenario, and socio-critical or poetic-constructivist narratives. The exhibition stands as a reflection of authentic perspectives, new impulses and contemporary expressions of Slovak painting.

The "New Questions" posed in this exhibition are not a goal, but a starting point. They have emerged through the process of painting itself – not as a thematic or interpretative framework but as a result of decisions, searches, mishaps and experiments relating to the medium of the image. They are also a testament to the sheer variety of ways in which we can think about the image – as a tool, a statement, a space, a medium or a memory. The title of the exhibition does not evoke a unifying theme but instead creates an open-ended framework, a meeting place for a wide range of artistic strategies and creative voices. The one aspect that connects these works, however, is a shared effort to understand painting from within – not as a fixed tradition but as a space for constant re-evaluation, questioning and exploration.

Painting here is less a result and more an open-ended process which plays out in materials, gestures, layers and structures, but also in silence. Each of the featured artists takes a different approach – some explore its borders in the given moment, others its physicality, psychological depths or capacity for non-literal expression. The works which emerge from these processes need not stand as statements but rather as proposals for how questions can be posed through the act of painting. Each of the artists finds themselves at a different point in their work. Some base their paintings on their observations and modelling of the world, others develop their own gestural traces, experimenting with the layering, combination or deconstruction of their structures. Compositions can be intuitive, analytical, narrative or even abstract. Some paintings have evolved from experience with drawing, others from visual archives, the digital environment or from performative gestures. Subtle organic structures are the focus of some of the paintings – gently modelled forms which form a balance between the corporal and the abstract. Other works depict the silence and the sublime found in landscapes, drawing the contrast with the vulnerability of the body. Other works return to the figurative form with a distinctive emotional charge, displaying an almost comic-like masked identity. The resonant theme here is that of the human body as a site of vulnerability – restrained, overgrown, hidden beneath layers of symbolic thorns, clothing or movements. We can also perceive references to intimate relationships, female experience, touch, anxiety and the desire for greater closeness. In several cases, the painting intrudes upon the exhibition space, entering into a dialogue with texts, objects and installations.

Occupying a crucial place in the exhibition are works of art which combine painting with archival and documentation activities or political contexts. In other examples, painting is used to address contemporary social conflicts – symbols, signs and layered visual references touch upon the themes of war, the flight of refugees, loss and expropriation. Within these approaches, painting casts off the role of a static medium, emerging instead as a vibrant means of thinking and expression that can be simultaneously personal, ambiguous, fragile and critical. This diversity does not develop as a result of stylistic plurality but as an expression of various creative strategies. The approach to the canvas, the material of the paint itself, surface and space all bear witness – often subtle, sometimes uncompromising. Works emerge which focus on issues of form, visual memory or the possibility of manifesting inner experiences through non-descriptive means.

Painting is understood here as a process, but rather than being fixed it is accepting of a degree of ambivalence. Given this, the concept of "new questions" is not a thematic assignment but a natural consequence of the act of painting itself – a means by which each artist can consider the environment of their work. It is an invitation to enter a world in which the image is not yet a finished result but instead remains in motion – an open and unending state which is not afraid to pose the decisive question: "What else can a painting be?"

Jana Čepa,
exhibition curator



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NOVÉ

OTÁZKY



Absolventi
Katedry maľby

NEW

Graduates of the
Department of Painting

QUESTIONS

Graduates from the masters
study program:

Zuzana Dolinay
Monika Hurajová
Nikola Hľadajová
Ivana Lachová
Jakub Mlynarčík
Alexandra Pradidová
Adéla Škorcová

Graduates from the bachelors
study program:

Adam Baník
Karolína Černušková
Matúš Gejdoš
Anastasiia Kovalova
Michaela Lengyelová
Jessica Mozgová
Zuzana Skybjaková
Kristína Šimkaničová
Nikolas Žilovec

Curators: Jana Čepa & Dominika Kováčiková

Academic guarantor: Ján Triáška

Production: Lenka Kráľová, Mária Šabľová – GUS

Graphic design: Ivana Babejová – GUS

Translation: Gavin Cowper

Production: Gallery of Spiš Artist – a cultural facility of the Košice Self-governing Region in association with the Faculty of Fine Arts at the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica



About exhibition

téma
theme