Urban Plan(t)

Lenka L. Lukačovičová & Ľudmila H. Machová

KOŠICKÝ SAMOSPRÁVNY KRAJ

GALÉRIA UMELCOV SPIŠA

Presented here for the first time, this exhibition showcases the work of two artists who share an abiding interest in the peripheries of the urban environment and the spontaneous forms of life which thrive there. Paintings, photographs and objects composed from found and recycled materials form a collective environment in which the natural and the artificial, the planned and the unplanned, intertwine. Presented as part of the Couples cycle of exhibitions.

The guiding spirit of the exhibition is the concept of terrain vague, a term which denotes the ambiguous spaces whose place and function within the urban structure defy any clear definition. Nonetheless, these places should not be dismissed as empty, unproductive plots; they are in fact dynamic environments in which the traces of human activity converge with spontaneous natural processes and the regenerative power of plant life. Colonizing and synanthropic plants operate here as active agents of transformation, casting doubt on the idea of the city as a carefully nurtured system. These lifeforms stand as symbols of ecological resilience and the ability of life to adapt to conditions imposed by human activities.

Ľudmila Hubová Machová explores the intersections between natural and artificial environments through paintings and spatial artworks in which organic elements are contrasted with industrial fragments. Her works often feature found objects and waste materials, and she uses these media to reveal portraits of urban society. **Lenka Lindák Lukačovičová** formulates photographic maps of the peripheries of Bratislava and other places through which she passes. Her installations reflect on the ongoing transitions of the urban environment, its everyday existence and the layers of memory which it bears.

Both artists explore fragments, traces and transformation as a means of reading and interpreting the urban landscape, applying a shared sensitivity to otherwise overlooked changes and happenings which play out beyond the view of the mainstream. They are drawn to the idea of places which lack any clearly defined function, spaces in which the city reveals itself as an unrestrained and constantly evolving organism. Spaces such as these offer unparalleled insights into the type of society which is capable of both creating these spaces and then promptly forgetting about their existence. The artists avoid any unequivocal criticisms, nor do they propose any simple solutions, aiming instead to draw our attention to urban "blank spaces" – territories which, although they go largely unnoticed, are in fact fully-fledged participants in the urban ecosystem; in doing so, they demonstrate the capacity of the living world to exert its own modes of existence beyond the planned and regulated structure of the city.

Mgr. art. Katarína Balúnová, ArtD.
exhibition curator

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Mgr. art. Lenka Lindák Lukačovičová, ArtD. (*1987, Trnava) is a visual artist whose photographic and intermedia work focuses on mapping out the urban terrain within the wider context of social, cultural and economic processes. Her photographic work has gradually evolved towards installations and experimentation with recycled images, appropriations and the exploration of the shifting role of the artist. After her undergraduate studies at the Department of Photography and New Media of the Academy of Fine Art and Design in Bratislava between 2010 and 2014, she completed her doctoral studies under Prof. Ľubomír Stacho at the same institution in 2018. In 2013 she undertook a study residency with Ana Torfs at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels, Belgium. From 2007 to 2012 she studied at the Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra, and in 2009 she participated in a residency at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb, Croatia. She has exhibited her work both in Slovakia and abroad, and she is also exploring the potential for exhibiting work in public spaces. Her work was recognised at the 2021 Different Worlds Awards for Central and Eastern European contemporary photography, and in 2022 she became a laureate of the Novum Foundation Awards. Her Lonely Planet (Trnávka) portfolio was also awarded a special prize in the Anthropology and Territories category at the Urbanautica Institute Awards in 2024. The following year saw the publication of her book Lonely Planet Trnávka and she was named Photographer of the Year in 2025. She is currently head of the Protoateliér at the Department of Photography and New Media of the Academy of Fine Art and Design in Bratislava. She lives and works in Bratislava.
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Mgr. art. Ľudmila Hubová Machová (*1990, Bratislava) explores the man-made landscape, more specifically its peripheries and the places which have broken free of human control. She has long been involved in mapping the spread of synanthropic and invasive plants in the urban environment and studying their ability to adapt to the conditions created by human activities. She works in painting, objects, photography, video, sound art and intermedia installations; in her art, traditional media are combined with found objects, waste materials and organic elements, thereby creating hybrid situations which straddle the borders between the animate and the inanimate, the natural and the synthetic. During her time at the Academy of Fine Art and Design in Bratislava between 2011 and 2017, she studied at the Studio of Painting under Doc. Klaudia Kosziba and at the Ateliér +- XXI under Prof. Daniel Fischer. In this period, she undertook a study residency at the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Porto in Portugal, followed in 2024 and 2026 by two residencies at the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris. In 2017 and 2018 she was a finalist in the Painting category at the VÚB Foundation Awards. Her work has been exhibited both in Slovakia and abroad, most prominently at Synanthrope II. (2026) at the Cité Internationale des Arts, Overlooked Territory (2025) and Archivist of Hybrids (2023) at the Medium Gallery and Antinomický vzťah [Antinomic Relationship] (2020) at the Peter Michal Bohúň Gallery in Liptov. She lives and works in Bratislava.
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