



P R E S S R E L E A S E

Author, exhibition title: Alexander Salontay: Delivery II
Venue: Zahorie Gallery of Jan Mudroch in Senica
Curator: Filip Krutek
Opening: 26.3. (Fri) 2021
Duration of the exhibition: 26.3. (Fri) 2021 – 23.5. (Sun) 2021

The exhibition entitled Delivery, originally shown at the Jan Koniarek Gallery in Trnava and restaged at the Zahorie Gallery of Jan Mudroch in Senica, joins our ambition to present the comprehensive, still not entirely documented and assessed work of the painter and graphic artist Alexander Salontay. Although he appeared on the art scene in the 1960s, his almost endemic artistic expression, ranging from graphic art, through Pop art, and the principles of “Bad” Painting to interventions of the paint roller pattern and lime plaster, has not been widely known.

The core of the artist’s work, and also the selection from his oeuvre focuses on his most creative period from the end of the 1960s to the 1980s. His early work is characterised by multiplicative prints, logotypes and monotypes in smaller sizes. In another graphic form, he explores the themes drawn from the daily press, reducing them to geometric shapes (Paris, 1968), and creates compositions with stamps, later used in his paintings. The next creative period is defined by his interest in social issues. The artist often composed anonymous figures taken from magazines and newspapers and rendered in specific modules, thus creating a kind of critical social iconography (Contradictions within Us, 1970) or, on the contrary, narrative schemes alternating fragments of new figuration with abstract forms (Nine Stories, 1971). A large group of works shows his interest in Pop art and its reinterpretation in the local context. His oversized photographs and newspaper clippings create archetypal scenes of domestic pop stars – Marta Kubišová with Václav Neckář (Singers, 1968) and the iconic actress and sex symbol of the 1960s Olga Schoberová (Delivery, 1972). Another stage in the development of his painting is represented by a series of paintings with landscape motifs, facades of rural houses, fragments of architecture and gardens. Shabby walls of village houses returned to his work as a surviving form of his childhood, constantly painted with paint rollers displaying an almost canonical motif. As to the form, they almost reproduce the walls of a rural house with lime painting featuring authentic texture and fineness of structure (Neighbour, 1973). The last thematic area in painting includes compositions more austere in form and expression from the first half of the 1980s. They display simple forms, which the artist understood as substituting forms of criticism of the former regime or records of the poetry of everyday banality rendered in an almost reportage way. Salontay devoted himself to creating suggestive “rural landscapes” ranging from comprehensible scenes featuring the human figure to their intuitively abstracted versions. One part of the exhibition is

devoted to this stage, complemented by the musical compilation ZAOBRAZ, composed by his son Daniel Salontay on the motifs of his father's lyrical landscapes.

Alexander Salontay (1 April 1937, Trhovište) studied descriptive geometry and arts education at the Faculty of Education in Bratislava from 1955 to 1959 (Assoc. Prof. E. Lehotský, Assoc. Prof R. Hornák). From 1960 to 1965 he worked at the Pedagogical Institute in Trnava and from 1965 to 1986 he taught drawing and graphic art at the Faculty of Education of Comenius University in Trnava. In 1981, he defended his doctoral thesis on the Communication of Artistic Expression in Children's Drawing. From 1995 to 1996 he taught at the Faculty of Education of Matej Bel University in Banská Bystrica. In 1967 he was registered for the Slovak Arts Council, in 1972 became a candidate for the Slovak Union of Visual Art and in 1980 became its full member. Since 1996, the artist has lived at Zvončín.

Filip Krutek