



PRESS RELEASE

Exhibition title: neMOC
Artists: Peter Decheť, Roman Ďurček
Venue: Zahorie Gallery of Jan Mudroch in Senica, Sadová 619/3, 905 01 Senica
Curator: Filip Krutek
Opening: 17 February (Friday) 2023, 5.00 pm
Running: 17 February (Friday) – 2 April (Sunday) 2023

After the joint exhibition project entitled **MOCNÍ (POWERFUL)** from 2021, **Peter Decheť** and **Roman Ďurček** come up with a free continuation and reworking of the theme of power, governance and the investigation of the relationship of the representatives of power towards the rest of society. The title of the exhibition project **neMOC** (NoPOWER) held in the Zahorie Gallery of Jan Mudroch in Senica is related to the departure of the subject's development from the reflection of institutional power towards a personal statement. It focuses on the nature of individual power over oneself after the global crisis at the beginning of 2019 changed our daily experience.

It brought a new dimension to everyday life – an intensified feeling of one's own transience and uncertainty. There is something cathartic about the harbinger of the end. The vision of one's own end evokes in people a feeling of absolute humility and surrender. In the film *Melancholia* by Danish director Lars von Trier, the guests of the wedding party witness a phenomenon during which a planet (a space body) approaches the Earth and threatens its extinction. At this point, any social trappings are useless, no mask, game, or pose. The only thing that remains is the authentic core of a person, perhaps his pure essence – negative or positive. Perhaps it is just melancholy about life. It is a moment in which a human individual loses rational control over himself. He behaves impulsively, he no longer has absolute power over his actions and thoughts – all that remains is a fragmented mental record of his own integrity, a temporal map in which the individual layers permeate, while chronology or sequence no longer play their original role.

Peter Decheť (*Melancholia*, 2023) is also presented at the exhibition with the canvas of the same title. A fragment of the architectural motif of the panopticon as an ideal building intended for surveillance and control over a closed group of people is reduced to a fluid, almost illegible form. It is reminiscent of a space body captured at the moment of impact on the earth's surface. The fragment of the autocratic form of panopticon architecture destroys the standard concrete apartment block. Is it a statement about the fact that someone else's idea of what power should look like shatters our concept of a comfort zone in the warmth of a concrete apartment? Or just about that any form of directed power is pernicious?

Roman Ďurček's series of paintings contemplates the nature and loss of personal power in a different way. The focus is on a series of paintings called **Re-imagination** (2022). These are

“collaborations” between gallery visitors and the artist. The process artworks were created on the basis of various drawings, doodles and inscriptions of the participants, in which the artist impressed old rusty objects or used various types of pigment and oxidation. The resulting composition defines a separate mental map of preserved personal experiences and feelings as a direct, almost reportage reflection on the part of the participants (visitors invited to touch the canvas). This resulted in a dense visual record full of explicit, but also less legible references to pop culture (fragment of Pokémon), socio-political realities (Mochovce power plant), or just an intuitive record of emotions in the form of handprints or children’s drawings. In dialogue with stylised and heroicised figural compositions or references to classical art, which the artist added in post-production, the time-lapse drawings of the visitors function as an artistic language game without an explicit internal logic, in which it is not clear who sets the rules of the game – the artist or the participant?

This is not a show about power. This is an exhibition about the loss (search?) of individual power. The mutual dialogue between the two artists is not based on formal similarity, but rather on mutual contradiction. They both represent a different painting approach – Decheť works with the scale of architecture, which he transforms into a human scale by the figure of the bearer of government/power deprived of individual traits. He is in the position of a unified arrogant dwarf, his form becomes neutered and interchangeable through its own repetition, sublimated into an architectural scheme - just as the problems of an individual are generalised into the scheme of a society-wide problem. Ďurček, on the other hand, questions to what extent the artist has power over his own work and thoughts. To what extent do society’s expectations determine our own actions and whether it makes sense to fight for one’s own opinion. Isn’t it sometimes better to give up and lose your own opinion? Is there still an authentic individual opinion at all, or does the surrounding world shrink into a tangle of compromises and compilations of other people’s opinions? And isn’t this level of interpretation just a manifestation of the curator’s power over the visitors?

Peter Decheť (1979, Topoľčany) studied in the Open Studio with Rastislav Podoba at the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica. For his bachelor’s thesis, **Archilúzia** (Arch-illusion) he received the Dean’s Award. He finished his studies with a diploma project in 2020, in which he dealt with the theme of political power and its abuse. Since 2017, he has regularly exhibited at group exhibitions. His first solo exhibition was held at the Ján Koniarek Gallery in Trnava under the title *Powered by Power* (2021).

Roman Ďurček (1990, Zlate Moravce) lives and works in Male Vozokany. He graduated in free art, from the studios of painting at the Faculty of Fine Arts of the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica. He continued his doctoral studies, which he successfully completed in 2022 (tutors: Prof. Ľudovít Hološka and Assoc. Prof. Ján Triaška). He subjects painting to various experimental practices as to the material, pigments and foundations. The process became a significant phenomenon for the artist. He has participated in solo and group exhibitions in Slovakia and abroad from 2014 to the present. In 2018, he received the Martin Benka Award, became a three-time finalist of VÚB Painting of the Year in 2017, 2019, 2021 and a two-time finalist of the NOVUM Foundation Award 7th and 8th year.

Filip Krutek