



PRESS RELEASE

Author, Exhibition Title:	Magdaléna Masárová / Jakub Cmarko: The Presence of the Absent
Venue:	Záhorie Gallery of Ján Mudroch in Senica, Sadová 619/3
Curator:	Božena Juríčková
Exhibition Opening:	May 10th (Friday) 2024 at 17:00
Musical guest at the vernissage:	Adam Dodok – trumpet
Exhibition Duration:	May 10th (Friday) – July 28th (Sunday) 2024

Painter Magda Masárová and sculptor Jakub Cmarko have translated their related artistic conceptual bonds into a premiere exhibition project, which documents the thematic focus of their work on the reflection of broadly dimensioned relational connections. On a platform of an authentic, intermedially treated visual space, both young authors critically address the polarization of interpersonal bridges of communication but also seek affiliations or newly differentiated meanings deep within the boundless, multilayered spectrum of various connections from within the material and immaterial worlds, from the comfortable and taboo zones of life, from the state of being and non-being, and the ties between the essential spiritual and physiological nature of man, from the context of both history and the present.

The exhibition is partially conceptualized into four semantically and formally interconnected domains, in which artifacts and narrative strands are concentrated in the central key theme. They suggest connections between the visual or sensory stimulus and its logical, abstract transformation or perception. It is based on a subjective, philosophically generated strategy, where phenomena of the present and the absent coexist in relationships simultaneously, inseparably, and ambivalently. The authors together demonstrate their ideological intention through several media outputs, primarily in installation, 3D objects, and painting.

The extensive spatial site-specific installation Labyrinth by Jakub Cmarko uniquely addresses the universal question of the relationship between man and the environment. A system of vertical iron (roxor) rods, densely grouped like a maze, suggests, or represents the barrier of a non-existent solid wall. The barrier – wall is present and at the same time absent. In the background, in associative layering, the work can also be read as a reflection on overcoming invisible obstacles in achieving goals. Another, in this case, joint installation "Corpus", points to the natural bipolar dimension of our existence and explores the suggestion of the relationship between the human body and the spiritual identity of man, confronting, in the author's terminology, the "material body" versus the dematerialized "living body." Plaster casts in the performative process of creation copy the physical silhouette of the figure or its fragment, specifically a person within various physiognomic and generational compositions, including the self-identification of the authors themselves. However, they remain as a kind of shell without corporeality, without immediate human physical substance, and of course, they do not reflect the natural spiritual aspects of human beings, their unique personality profile. The plaster box here serves as a specific reference to the real existence of an individual person and their (absent) unique spiritual integrity.

"Horror Vacui" presents a collection of expressive figurative paintings and drawings by Magdaléna Masárová, which relativize the relationship between emptiness and content in the artwork. The artist's "emptiness", externally visually absent space or incomplete shape formulation, the unfinished picture (absence) is replaced and supplemented by abstract logical thought. However, the viewer's perception of the work intentionally may not be identical to the author's idea. The fourth domain within the project, dealing with present absence, focuses on a selection from the numerous sets of small-scale reliefs. They are created on a base of plaster imprints of the original, authentic structural "drawing" in clay, mechanically taken from various objets trouvés and historically, architecturally, or naturally interesting locations with a unique genius loci, destroyed by ages, forces of nature, and man. They represent testimonies of various (absent) times, which, through personal joint authorial reinterpretation, co-create a multilayered presence.

Božena Juríčková

Magdaléna Masárová, MA, was born in 1993 in Skalica. From 2014 to 2020, she studied at the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica in the Studio of Classical Painting Disciplines under Prof. Ľudovít Hološka. She participated in several workshops, internships, and projects. She has had several solo exhibitions in Skalica, Lišov, and Banská Bystrica, and participated in several group exhibitions. She is a member of the Center for Independent Visual Arts UM, N.P.O. She is engaged in painting, installation, performance, organizational, and curatorial work. She lives and works in Banská Bystrica.

Jakub Cmarko, MA, was born in 1990 in Bojnice. From 2010 to 2016, he studied at the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica in the Studio of Free Sculptural Expression under Assoc. Prof. Peter Gáspár. He participated in several internships and workshops. He has had several solo exhibitions in Skalica, Prievidza, and Banská Bystrica, and participated in several group exhibitions at home and abroad. He is a member of the Center for Independent Visual Arts UM, N.P.O. Since 2016, he has been working as a lecturer and technician at the Department of Sculpture and Spatial Creation at the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica. He is engaged in free sculptural creation, installations, curatorial activities; he organizes workshops on metal casting at the Academy of Arts in Banská Bystrica. He lives in Banská Bystrica.