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## PRESS RELEASE

<b>Artist, exhibition title:</b>	<b>Jakub Milčák: <i>On This Side of the Sky</i></b>
<b>Venue:</b>	Záhorie Gallery of Ján Mudroch in Senica, Sadová 619/3
<b>Curator:</b>	<b>Ľudovít Hološka</b>
<b>Opening:</b>	<b>April 10, 2026 (Friday) at 6:00 PM</b>
<b>Musical guest at the opening:</b>	<b>Milan Paľa – violin, Katarína Paľová – piano</b>
<b>Duration of the exhibition:</b>	April 10 (Friday) – May 24 (Sunday), 2026

For the spring months of 2026, the Záhorie Gallery, in close collaboration with Prof. Ľudovít Hološka, has prepared an exhibition of Jakub Milčák, a painter and graphic artist who completed a large part of his studies abroad. The poetic title of the exhibition corresponds to the character of his work, a cross-section of which is presented in the gallery.

“The Relaxed Gravity of the Present”

Jakub’s large-scale compositions present universes of organic, vegetal, and biological shapes and forms. They are expressed in a varied gestural idiom within a dramatic color scale, often softened by chiaroscuro tonal techniques. They evoke baroque, turbulent events of form and color found on the vaults of churches and the ceilings of palaces.

He continues to develop the theme through the use of different techniques (e.g., oil) and by articulating forms on a monochrome yet color-active field. In this way, the image gains a diversity of shapes that distinguish and expand the effects of its striking color palette. Pure, enclosed abstract forms with distinct, saturated colors multiply the semantic richness of individual compositions. The dynamic abundance of colors and forms carries a wide range of connotative meanings.

“...the content of every painting is interiority, an invisible life in itself, which cannot cease to be and which permanently endures in its own darkness.”<sup>1</sup>

The structures of the cosmos transition into structures of vegetation—leaves in the crowns of trees, deciduous and coniferous alike, grasses, flowers, weeds, herbs, reeds, terrains. Within this newly formed world of motifs, a human figure suddenly appears. As a hidden part of the natural world, it becomes a fairy-tale, mythical being, sometimes hybridized with the animal world of birds or insects.

This becomes most clearly defined in the painting *Trilogy*. The work is inspired by the prose of the same name by Jon Fosse—“a ballad-like story of the musician Asle and his companion Alida, two young lovers, a story of great themes: of love that demands fatal sacrifices, of fate that is both grace and curse and from which there is no escape, of death that takes our loved ones with definitive relentlessness...”<sup>2</sup>

In the painting, against the background of a dark sea and a gloomy sky through which starlight pierces the clouds, a pair walks forward. The linear construction of the composition contains a hidden tension.

It diagonally bursts from the lower right edge of the format toward the upper left corner. Around these diagonal lines, contour lines of the figures—their faces, clothing, and the objects they carry—coil and stretch. The internal dynamism of the arabesques recalls the swirling compositions of the abstract paintings with which the artist began.

(excerpt from a text by Ľ. Hološka)

[1] Michel, Henry: Seeing the Invisible: On Kandinsky. Minor, 2023.

[2] Milčák, Peter – Ormandík, Marek: How to Read an Image. Modrý Peter, 2017.

**Jakub Milčák** (\*June 1, 1989, Levoča) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava in the studio of Doc. Vojtech Kolenčík, at NSCAD University in Halifax, Canada (under Dan O'Neill), and completed his Master's degree in painting at Columbia University in New York (under Gregory Amenoff). His work is a dialogue between tradition and modern abstraction, where the boundaries between reality and dream continuously intertwine. His art is often perceived as a visual attempt to capture "the mystery and miracle of our existence." Every detail on canvas or paper represents a movement toward deeper understanding that transcends ordinary reality. Milčák refers to his drawings as "painterly drawings," as they are not merely preparatory studies but autonomous, physically demanding processes of layering. He works with biomorphic, psychedelic forms that fill the surface of the paper using luminous lines characteristic of the search for "that which light does not shape." The drawings also resemble microscopic views of cells, flows of energy, or dense vegetation seemingly growing directly from the paper. After completing his painting studies in New York, Jakub Milčák returned to Slovakia in 2020 and simultaneously returned to the tradition of painterly craft. He moves away from the abstract world toward the concrete. This marks a transition from his typical biomorphic abstraction to a more narrative and contemplative depiction of figure and landscape—an attempt to portray the unknowable and a longing for a momentary infinity.