
PRESS RELEASE

A selection from the recent paintings of one of the leading colourists and figurative painters on the Slovak art scene.

Artist, exhibition title: Milan Rašla: Mirror in the Mirror
Venue: Záhorie Gallery of Ján Mudroch in Senica, Sadová 619/3
Curator: Božena Juríčková
Exhibition Opening: **Friday, 17 July 2026, 5:00 p.m.**
Duration of the exhibition: 17 July (Friday) – 23 August 2026 (Sunday)

The current exhibition of Milan Rašla at the Ján Mudroch Záhorie Gallery in Senica reaffirms his position as a distinguished figurative painter, colourist, and alchemist of painting. It reflects another stage in the lifelong artistic programme that he formulated remarkably early, upon entering the Slovak art scene in the early 1970s. For more than half a century, the central focus of his work has remained a sustained effort to expand both the formal and conceptual possibilities of painting. The principal external impulse behind this artistic strategy was the influence of the dominant aesthetic currents of twentieth-century European and Euro-American art, particularly New Figuration and Pop Art, as well as Dadaism and Surrealism.

The exhibition presents a carefully selected body of work consisting primarily of the artist's most recent and previously unexhibited paintings. These works occupy a thematic realm of compelling, intellectually conceived inspirations drawn from a broad spectrum of artistic disciplines, especially music, theatre, and literature. They are not only a natural extension of Rašla's long-standing pedagogical career but also an expression of his lifelong affinity for other artistic muses. The phenomenon of reinterpretation also plays an increasingly important role. One example is the triptych *Spiegel im Spiegel* (Mirror in the Mirror), conceived as a visual response to the spiritual composition of the same title by the Estonian composer Arvo Pärt. The exhibition as a whole takes its title from this series while simultaneously serving as an allegory for its broader symbolic meanings. Including several three-dimensional objects, the exhibition traces and further develops the defining characteristics of Rašla's artistic language: energetic painterly gesture; occasional figurative anchoring oriented towards narrative fragments and episodic storytelling; introspection and emotional intervention; metaphorical layering of meaning; and the emotional scanning of content through a universal yet deeply personal symbolism populated by an array of individual signs, abbreviations, references, codes, and diverse material structures. Although the conceptual sophistication of these works continues to engage with narrative aspects of visual expression, compared to the artist's earlier production they employ a substantially greater degree of abstraction, both in their motifs and in their imaginative visual poetics, approaching the threshold of objectlessness. Contemplative elements assume a more active role, intensifying the intimate engagement and lyrical tone of the work. In this latest chapter of Rašla's oeuvre, pictorial projection is determined more by the essence of feeling than by the narrative of a story.

A distinctive aspect of Rašla's work lies in his technical and technological approach to artistic creation. His exceptionally broad creative range encompasses an extensive spectrum of forms, from intimate-scale paintings to monumental works based on both classical and multilayered structural painting, assemblage, collage, *décollage*, *frottage*, *montage*, three-dimensional painted objects, and installation. At the beginning of the new millennium, Rašla introduced the principle of recycling into his artistic practice. Through a process of self-citation and reinterpretation, he revisits, verifies, and renews the themes, meanings, forms, materials, and conceptual foundations of his earlier paintings without destroying the original works. While the painterly gesture—expressed through form, line, contour, and above all the stain or colour field—remains the fundamental component of his visual language, it increasingly enters into dialogue with innovative and boldly experimental working methods rooted in artistic alchemy and the use of personally significant *objets trouvés*. The unifying element that synthesises these diverse impulses into a coherent and authentic whole is undoubtedly Rašla's distinctly non-illusionistic treatment of colour and the uniquely "Rašla-like" restraint of his chromatic language. Colour remains articulated across the picture surface primarily within a network of emotional and logical-symbolic relationships.

With the works presented at the Ján Mudroch Záhorie Gallery, also marking an important milestone in his life and career, Milan Rašla once again demonstrates the continuing openness of his autonomous artistic vision and the unique, effortless, and richly multidimensional visual and semantic language of his paintings.

Božena Juríčková

Milan Rašla was born in Bratislava in 1946. Between 1960 and 1964 he studied at the Secondary School of Applied Arts in Bratislava. He continued his education from 1964 to 1970 at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava, where he studied landscape and figurative painting in the studio of Professor Ján Želibský. Since 1972 he has worked as a university lecturer, first at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design and, from 1987 to the present, as Associate Professor at the Department of Scenography at the Academy of Performing Arts in Bratislava. During his academic career he served as Vice-Rector and, from 2011 to 2015, as Rector of the Academy. Between 1988 and 1998 he was a member of the independent artists' group *Modré hrušky* (Blue Pears). In the second half of the 1970s he also became actively involved in the Záhorie region, providing methodological and professional guidance in the field of non-professional visual arts in the Senica area. Since 1969 he has exhibited extensively in Slovakia and abroad. To date, he has held 36 solo exhibitions and participated in more than 75 group exhibitions. His works are represented in both public and private collections in Slovakia and internationally. Rašla's artistic practice focuses primarily on easel painting and painted objects. He has also completed numerous artistic commissions for the interiors and exteriors of public buildings. He lives and works in Bratislava.