

By charcoal, paintbrush, scalpel... **Collection of drawings from the Olomouc Museum of Art**

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Olomouc Museum of Modern Art, Denisova 47

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Following the exhibitions *Browsing* (2009), which presented the collection of book culture and artists books, *This time do not sit down* (2011), which featured the collection of applied arts, and *Civilized Illusions* (2012), which was dedicated to the collection of photographs, the Olomouc Museum of Art now presents another part of the long-term project which is this time dedicated to the collection of drawings.

The fourth exhibition from our collections maps out the changes in the art of drawing from the old masters (presented only in the accompanying publication due to the sensitivity of the exhibits) almost up to the present. Since the Museums collecting activity has long focused on modern art, most of the presented works date back to the 20th century. Besides works from the last quarter of the 19th century, (J. E. Mařák, V. Hynais, M. Pirner, L. Marold and others), visitors also have the opportunity to familiarize themselves, in an intimate way, with all basic trends which influenced the development of art in the first half of the 20th century: from symbolism (J. Preisler, F. Bílek), via art nouveau (A. Mucha, V. Preissig), expressionism (W. Wessel, J. Ebertz, R. Seewald), cubism (E. Filla, O. Gutfreund, B. Kubišta), Civilism (F. Muzika, K. Lhoták, V. Fuka), to abstract discharges (F. Foltýn, A. Hošek) and to the surrealist journey into subconsciousness (F. Janoušek, J. Štýrský, A. Wachsmann, Toyen).

In the second half of the presented century the drawing medium gradually became a final artistic discipline, equal to painting and sculpture. The development, which started with lyrical and gestural abstraction (A. Lenica, L. Padrtová) and continued with art informel (A. Málek, J. Koblasa, A. Veselý and others), is then followed by the remarkable experiments of the 1960s (letterism – E. Ovčáček, J. Steklík, B. Kolářová; visual poetry – J. Kolář, L. Novák, B. Grögerová; neo-constructivism – J. Kubíček, V. Mirvald; new figuration – J. Balcar, K. Nepraš and others), upcoming conceptual trends (M. Knížák, K. Adamus, J. H. Kocmann, J. Valoch), and the ensuing postmodernism (V. Pivovarov, J. David, S. Diviš, J. Kovanda, J. Knap and others), up to examples of contemporary post-conceptual

drawings (V. Chalánková, Z. Kolečková, J. Staněk and others). As an "opposition" to the new trends, there are a number of existential works (Z. Beran, P. Nešleha, V. Bláha, J. Sozanský, M. Rittstein and others) by artists dealing with the theme of nature (I. Ouhel, O. Karlíková, D. Mrázková, M. Ranný and others), as well as works by extraordinary solitaires (A. Diviš, J. Zrzavý, Z. Sekal, E. Kmentová, A. Šimotová, K. Malich and others) which are hard to classify.

The demanding selection of individual works from the collection of drawings, which includes over 16,000 items, is aimed at presenting the best works of the collection as well as works which best characterized the selected artists in terms of their artistic gains. Last but not least, the selection aimed to be exciting not only in terms of style and opinions, but also in terms of the process. In addition to the traditional pen and ink, charcoal, pencil, red chalk, and brush drawings, we can also see works created by a scalpel, typescript, even a bubble blower, childrens ink stamps, and a lipstick.

The exhibition Flower Blooms and Other Worlds is a nice counterpart to this so far largest exhibition of drawings in the modern history of the Museum. Looking back at the still debated development of modern art, which also took place in the art of drawing, one would arrive at the conclusion that drawing is still alive and irreplaceable, even in the digital age.

The exhibition is accompanied by a large Czech and English publication which, in its fourteen chapters, monitors the traces the given period has left in the collection, in a more or less chronological order. The book opens with the text by prof. Pavel Zatloukal who managed the collection for a long time during the uneasy period of normalization and, after 1990, defined the basic directions of specific acquisition activity. It is followed by studies on the collection of old masters drawings (Martina Miláčková), drawings from the 20th century up to the present (Ivo Binder, Ladislav Daněk), and on a separate set of mediumistic and outsider art drawings (Anežka Šimková). Similar to the exhibition, the book primarily deals with 20th century art. Besides the collection of outsider art, which is the largest public collection of mediumistic and outsider art in our country, its main specifics are smaller and larger sets which present the second generation of German expressionists around the publisher Josef Florian, sculptural drawings, utopian projects, visual poetry, graphical sheet music, Moravian concept and, last but not least, postmodern and postconceptual works. Moreover, attention is also paid to our smaller yet important collection of works from the circle of the Moscow underground of the 1960s, Slovak drawings of the 1970s and 1980s, and the phenomenon of the so-called Olomouc drawing. The publication also includes image material which presents a proportional and well-balanced selection of almost 350 of the most important exhibits from the collection.

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