

Jaroslav Pelikán - Jana Tichá
Ten square metres

The third run of the International painting symposium Large Format (10 Square Metres) was held between 11th July-29th July, 1994 in the town of Valtice.

There were 12 participating artists: Miroslav Adámek, Jaroslav Hovadík (Czech Republic / Germany), Eliška Jakubičková, Hans Jodl (Austria), Luboš Janota (Czech Republic / Sweden), Heikki Marilla (Finland), Jan Pospíšil, Ivo Sedláček, Vladimíra Sedláková, Svatopluk Slovenčík, Jan Tichý a Anna Vančátová.

On the final day of the symposium the horse riding hall of Valtice castle was housing an exhibition where the artists presented results of their art work.

This was also an opportunity to interview Mr. Jaroslav Pelikán, an art history teacher at the Secondary School of Applied Art in the town of Uherské Hradiště. He and Mr. Jan Pospíšil, the headmaster of the school, have organized the whole event.

How did the idea to organize such a symposium cross your mind and why the town of Valtice?

The Valtice castle has been housing various symposia since 1998. First they were sculptors meetings, where artificial stone was used, later on two painting symposia but with no special topic, the aim was to discover the landscape and let the artists be inspired with it.

The idea of large format belongs to Jan Pospíšil. When he first saw the horse riding hall in the castle he realized it had been just the place he was looking for. The length is 76 metres, width 18 metres, there is a very pleasant climate inside, even when there are tropical heats outside, simply an ideal place for his intention for a symposium.

At first, we were rather worried, as the open space does not give much privacy and artists have to work side by side. But the space also offers a possibility to communicate for those who feel like that. On the other hand, each painter can fall back to his working area and work without being disturbed.

I would say that they are in a mutual soft touch.

Valtice castle and the horse riding hall seem to be a very inspiring place. How does it influence those artists who come to work here?

The milieu itself is a strong element, that's for sure, but at the same time it is calm and quiet and enables artists to concentrate.

Some artist come with designs prepared in advance, others try to work ad hoc. The artists usually create not only a large format painting but a number of sketches and drawings. It is a rare opportunity to be given a chance to paint large format pictures, artists' studios are usually not to large enough to enable necessary distance.

I can imagine how many artists want to come. How do you choose the participants?

When choosing, we try to use general art opinions and not to enforce our personal preferences. This year there have been 12 painters. Some of them applied because they had read our advertisement in newspaper, some of them were invited by organizers. But we could not satisfy all who had wished to come. 12 artists is an ideal number for the space we have for them.

How would you evaluate this year comparing it to the former ones?

This year has been typical for extremely broad range of ideas and a generation gap. While the first two years were attended mostly by middle age artists, (e.g. Jiří Kornatovský, Vladimír Kokolia) this time it has been artists of several generations, those in their thirties as well as those in their sixties. It had an impact on intellectual discussions. This year they have been painting on canvas, while before it was a plywood board used as a support.

The final exhibition in the horse riding hall lasts only two days. Are you thinking about further presentation of the results?

The exhibition is so short because we have no money to pay the security and running the event. Pictures will be transported to Uherské Hradiště and stored in the Secondary School of Applied Art just like before.

We are planning a presentation of this year's run in the foyer of the municipal theatre in the town of Zlín. It will be opened 22nd September. We are also planning an exhibition which would cover the output of the last three years. At present we are looking for some installation space in the city of Brno, or possibly Prague, that is in a cultural centre where more public is expected to come.

We would also like to find a sponsor to publish a repertory catalogue of all three runs of the symposium. For the time being, we publish an annual poster with reproductions of all paintings and a brief summary. It is funded by the Association of Visual Artists and Theoreticians of South-Eastern Moravia, Czech Art Fund and Zlín firm PIN.

What would be your message to those who would like to take part in the next year's symposium?

They are more than welcome to join us. They can start sending their portfolios to the following address:
Jan Pospíšil, SUPŠ, Všešrdova 267, 686 53 Uherské Hradiště.

Interviewer: Jana Tichá.

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