

400 ASA: DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHY

4 February – 3 May 2020

Prague City Gallery

House of Photography

Revoluční 5, Prague 1

Open every day except Monday, from 10 am to 6pm, Thursdays until 8pm

Curator: Josef Moucha

This new association of Czech photographers opted for the name 400 ASA in reference to the kind of film that is highly sensitive to light exposure. The exhibition *400 ASA: Documentary Photography* examines the lives of various social groups, taking a closer look on the habitats they create for themselves. The exhibits are complemented by projections of other works by each of the participating photographers, selected from just one segment of their concurrent work programs. Karel Cudlín (1960), Jan Dobrovský (1960), Alžběta Jungrová (1978), Antonín Kratochvíl (1947), Jan Mihaliček (1965) and Martin Wágner (1980) view the nature of today's world realistically, but each captures its mutability in his or her own way. As a guest, they have invited an Italian colleague and member of the famous Magnum Photos agency, the renowned photojournalist Paolo Pellegrin (1964), to exhibit with them.

Photography has been with us for 180 years and is mostly used as evidence, i.e., as a document. Most photographers continue to build on realism, so inspiration from reality has remained the most fruitful kind. This is despite many centrifugal trends, whether spontaneously invented or formed in a more complicated way. At the same time, however, the dynamics of Internet communication is increasing, so we are constantly flooded with an amalgam of images, texts and utterances. While many of their sources are of suspicious origin, the unanswerable question remains as to who is able to assess them when, and to what extent ... The ASA 400 association was established under these circumstances by the decision of photographers whose documentary images express an internal experience simultaneous to the external events captured. They strive for an emotionally and visually strong testimony about more layers of experience than is usual in common reportage. The manifesto of the seven photographers (including Tomki Němec who is not participating in this exhibition) ends with the following statement expressing their determination: "By coming together, we seek not only to promote our own work and establish the prestige of the 400 ASA association, but also to contribute to a rebirth of interest in documentary photography in general."

First of all, this concerns organizing exhibitions and establishing the 400 ASA Gallery, Prague's new home for documentary photography.

A year and a half ago, when the association started its activities, it was difficult to predict its potential. In addition to last year's exhibition *400 ASA: Photographs* at the Trade-Fair Palace of the National Gallery in Prague, focusing on the contemporary transformation of post-communist countries in the loosely-conceived area of Central and Eastern Europe, the 400 ASA association attracted attention through its online activities. Dobrovský's album *Families* started the 400 ASA book series, prepared in collaboration with the Paseka publishing house, the second volume of which was Wágner's *Siberia*. The same logo is also included on another publication by Dobrovský, *The Painted Bird*, a photographic essay on the film adaptation of Jerzy Kosiński's novel *The Painted Bird* by the director Václav Marhoul. Antonín Kratochvíl's memoirs *AK47*, compiled by Lenka Klicperová, also appeared under the "400 ASA" brand; this is a cross-section of the oeuvre of the photographer, whose retrospective, curated by Pavlína Vogelová, is to be held in the spring of 2020 at the Prague City Gallery's Stone Bell House.

Josef Moucha.

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Curator: Josef Moucha
Graphic and Architectural Design: Jan Šerých

Media partners: Art & Antiques, A2, ArtMap, Artiki, Český rozhlas Vltava, Expres FM, Flash Art, Literární noviny, protisedi.cz, Radio 1, XANTYPA

Admission: CZK 120 full price (adults) / CZK 60 reduced (students, OAPs)

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www.facebook.com/GHMP.cz
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ACCOMPANYING PROGRAMME

Guided tours

Thu 13. 2. 2020, 6 pm, Jan Mihaliček + Alžběta Jungrová
Wed 4. 3. 2020, 6 pm, Jan Dobrovský + Karel Cudlín
Sat 25. 4. 2020, 3 pm, Martin Wágner + Antonín Kratochvíl

Saturday creative workshops

Education Center, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace
Sat 7. 3. 2020, 1–6 pm, *Document Exposure I*
Sat 4. 4. 2020, 1–6 pm, *Document Exposure II*

Within interactive tours and art workshops we will draw inspiration from the work of the exhibiting photographers. We will deal with the concept of “400 ASA” and explain the film’s sensitivity to light, but we will also highlight the photographers’ sensitivity and perceptiveness as distinct factors of their originality. We will focus on photographic documentary realism and the possibilities of representing human existence and the diversity of life. In connection with the Internet’s visual oversaturation we will focus on developing the perception and sensitivity of participants to the image. We will sort and evaluate images based on our own visual experience as well as emotional and aesthetic preferences. Through collages, we will try to design a photographic exhibition. We will place individual reproductions of the exhibited photographs in the fictitious exhibition space, with each of the photographers represented by one selected photograph. Finally, we will compare the projects proposed in this way as regards their overall effect. As part of the workshop, using the classic analogue photography technique in the darkroom of the Education Center we will make enlargements of photographs taken from the 400 ASA exhibition.

Art workshops for adults and senior citizens

Reservation required
Thu 5. 3. 2020, 3–6 pm, *Photogram I*, Education Center, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace
Fri 6. 3. 2020, 3–6 pm, *Photogram II*, Education Center, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace
Sun 8. 3. 2020, 1–6 pm, *Photogram III*, Education Center, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace
Sun 5. 4. 2020, 1–6 pm, *Camera Obscura*, Prague city exteriors and Education Center, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace
Fri 17. 4. 2020, 1–4 pm, *Documentary Photography*, Prague city exteriors

Interactive photo workshops will be loosely connected to the creative work of leading Czech documentary photographers. The first series of workshops will focus on experimenting with photographic techniques. Workshop participants will work in a darkroom environment and learn the basics of creating a



Prague City Gallery is one of the most important galleries in the Czech Republic, which in its exhibition activity focuses in particular on modern and contemporary art. It collects, protects and professionally processes art collections of the City of Prague. Currently, the Prague City Gallery exhibits at seven venues: The Stone Bell House, Municipal Library – 2nd floor, Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace, The House of Photography, Villa Bilek, Troja Château and František Bilek’s House in Chýnov.

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photographic image, i.e. working with a cast shadow and exposing photographic paper to light. They will conceive of their work either on an artistic level with creative aspects, or purely as an informative record of the character of objects. At the following workshop, the participants will work with a wooden camera of their own making. Together, we will focus on the predecessor of the camera – camera obscura. We will explore the principles of photographic imaging by means of an optical device in the streets of Prague, where we will take photographs using the so-called pinhole camera. Subsequently, we will move to the photo studio of the Education Center, where we will work in the darkroom and develop our photographs. The final workshop will be organized as a joint walk focusing not only on Prague architecture and its diversity, but mainly on stories around us. We will approach the selected objects and situations both from the aesthetic point of view and in terms of photographic documentation. We will focus on the important role of subjective perception and on unusual points of view.

Interactive tours of the exhibition for all types of school and other age and interest groups with the possibility of practical follow-up creative work. We will make every effort to meet the specific requirements of every school in terms of date, theme and level of difficulty.

Reservation necessary

Fee: children up to 10, art-school students, lecturers – CZK 5; 10-years old and above – CZK 20

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In addition to the activities referred to above, there will be other educational activities aimed at other target groups, such as disadvantaged visitors or parents with children on parental leave.