

Press Release

Katarína Poliačiková | Stephen Shore

Curator: Jiří Švestka

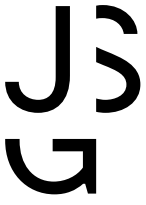
Jiri Svestka Gallery, Janáčkovo nábřeží 5, 150 00 Prague 5

November 16, 2017 – January 20, 2018

From the 16th November 2017, Jiri Svestka Gallery presents exhibition Katarína Poliačiková | Stephen Shore in the gallery's new premises in the center of Prague. The double show features young Slovakian artist Katarína Poliačiková and legendary American photographer Stephen Shore in visual and conceptual dialogue, uncovering less obvious connections between the two artists. The exhibition follows the new format of Jiri Svestka Gallery aimed at introducing artists from the Central-European region in the international art context and revealing intergenerational linkages. At the same time, it's a great opportunity to see a part of Stephen Shore's well-known series of road-trip images Uncommon Places.

Working with randomness and commonplace, and in the same intensity with beauty and aesthetic interpretation of surrounding world, Poliacikova and Shore are both very sophisticated at balancing these two components. Providing us with concentrated visual pleasure, their artistic vision never veers towards aesthetization of the reality in sense of its idealization. Their sight captures and compulsively recurs to the visually unpleasant and banal, inevitably affecting each of us every day. The Shore's photographs selected for the exhibition have already become iconic. While focusing on details, including images of bleak areas, Stephen Shore provides a compact overall image of America in the 1970s. Whereas, Katarína Poliačiková is achieving to express her message about human condition rather by telling stories and using insights into a highly private space. The major role in Katarína Poliačiková's works is given to conceptual redefinition of pre-existing objects and images from everyday life. "The latest work by Katarína Poliačiková, whether it be photographs or objects, as if were picking the remarkable details from Shore's universe and giving them a new life," says curator of the exhibition Jiří Švestka. "Sometimes it is on the image level, sometimes on the formal level, but there's always some kind of defamiliarizing perspective. Poliačiková is one of the most interesting Slovak artists of the new, post-Roman Ondak generation."

Katarína Poliačiková (*1982) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava with thesis *The Time after Photography*, has had more than a dozen solo exhibits in Prague, Bratislava, Berlin, New York, Lisbon and other cities, and participated in several international residencies. She uses various media in her work: installation, video and object. Recently, she's focusing mainly on photography, exploring it in a wide range of forms, whether they are randomly found pictures, NASA snapshots or photograms. Katarína Poliačiková is more and more interested in the negative space of photography – time between shots, in the invisible and cut-out – in everything that physically and mentally exceeds the boundaries of the image. The crucial creative moment for her is altering the found and her own rediscovered material, in the



form of photographs, objects, but also stories and situations. Katarina Poliačiková's natural position as an artist is the observation of everyday life and its nuances.

Stephen Shore (* 1947) is a photographer of ordinary America. His work have had an exceptional impact on development of photography. Shore spent the 1970s criss-crossing the continent to assemble his two best known bodies of work American Surfaces and Uncommon Places. Pioneering the two most important photographic idioms: the diaristic snapshot (later taken up by such artists as Nan Goldin and Wolfgang Tillmans) and the monumentalized landscape (as practiced by such photographers as Thomas Struth and Andreas Gursky), focused on the minutiae of modern life and unveiled the beauty to be found in banality. Stephen Shore was one of the first photographers to work in colour, capturing and partially defining the typically American colours: sky blues, mustard yellows and avocado greens. His work can be linked to Walker Evans, who in the 1930s documented America as seen by the driver.

Less well known are Shore's earlier works. While still in highschool, he undertook a three-years project shooting Andy Warhol, Velvet Underground and other personalities in the legendary studio, The Factory. Soon afterward, inspired by the intellectually fertile 1960s New York art scene, Shore produced a body of conceptual work fully engaged with the revolutionary ideas shaking the foundations of contemporary art. Since the 1970s, Shore has continued to expand his repertoire, moving effortlessly between black and white and colour, landscape and portraiture, large format and small. He has proven himself to be one the most important contemporary photographers. In words of another New York photographer, Joel Sternfeld: „What may ultimately be at stake in his pictures is the pure condition of sight itself.“

Since mid-November this year, a large retrospective of Stephen Shore will be held at the New York Museum of Modern Art (MoMA).

Katarina Poliačiková | Stephen Shore exhibition runs through the 20th January 2018. The opening reception takes place the 15th November 2017 from 6pm. The gallery will be closed from the 24th December 2017 until the 2nd January 2018. Jiri Svestka Gallery is operated by the Fine Arts of Central Europe s.r.o.