

Constructions and stories

The focus of the exhibition 'confrontation of the couple Běla and Jiří Kolář' is to denote on the base of rather few, but extraordinary and mostly till now unknown works the reversible inspiring creative clima, thanks to which the personalities of both artists cross Czech art scene and enter with a big power into the international context of the post war conceptual art. While poet and artist Jiří Kolář became well internationally recognized even in the 1960's, the exceptional contribution of Běla Kolářová was not discovered sooner than in the last years. The exhibition will show assemblages, interpreted objects, drawings, photographs and collages from 1950's till 1980's. It will emphasize experimental process and technologies, but it will show, that the self-evident component of their work was the intellectual level, intimacy and sovereign artistic quality of the work.

Exhibited artists:

Běla Kolářová (1923 – 2010)

Jiří Kolář (1914 – 2002)

From the end of 1940's, Jiří Kolář used reproductions from old journals for his collages in a form of regular grid confronting „high and low“ pictures, serious and absurd stories. Innovative works close to the later Paolozzi's diary mark the wave of works whose during the 1960's in the span from narrative tendencies of pop art to constructive principles of minimalism changed the western art scene. In his later collages, created obsessively from the end of 1950's, Kolář built his system based on serial permutations and rhythmic units, close to Glass's and Reich's composition's structure, and connected it – similarly to them – with a strong ethical story cast in a cultural history. While for Jiří the creativity represents a dialogue with the variety of forms of the world, for Běla, it was done as a tension of artistic expression and extremely intimate feeling.

During 1961–1964, she was working in a dark room on experimental photographic series without camera with the use of small *artificial négatifs* and on the *drawings with light* related with the record of movement. Similarly to Kolář she was fascinated by the dirty zone between the order of regular structure and record of a deeply personally world's percipience; she inserted strong notes about a conflict of women's and men's world into the minimalist structure of *pattern*. Both artists honoured the sources of modern culture, Baudelaire became the key figure and common theme for them. They were inspired by the dada movement, and had a natural deep social feeling. Běla found – similarly to French Nouveaux réalistes – specific inspiration in insignificant rubbish of everyday life, using their metaphorical function in numerous fascinating assemblages (from 1964). She belongs to the pioneers of women's art.

Marie Klimešová

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Born in Prague in 1952, lives and works in Prague

Marie Klimešová is a university teacher, free curator, and member of the Czech section of AICA – Association Internationale des Critiques d'Art, which she chaired from 2005 to 2007. She was a curator at the National Gallery Prague (1997–2002) and at the City Gallery Prague (1987–1997). Her main exhibitions include Years in Days: Czech Art 1945–1957, City Gallery Prague, 2010; Běla Kolářová, Museum of Art Olomouc, 2006; Jiří Kolář, Musée des Beaux Arts Dijon, 2002; Jitka and Květa Válová, National Gallery Prague, 2000; and Focal Points of Revival: Czech Art 1956–1963, City Gallery Prague, 1994..

