



PRESS RELEASE

PAVEL BRÁZDA IS HERE!

CZECH ARTIST PAVEL BRÁZDA'S FIRST EXHIBITION IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

The Library of Birmingham is pleased to announce an exhibition by Pavel Brázda, one of the leading contemporary artists from the Czech Republic with a career spanning more than seven decades. This is the artist's first exhibition in the UK and will present a selection from his open-ended "Human Comedy" cycle.

Brázda is an inveterate observer of his life and the lives of others. His "Human Comedy" cycle is a parable in images – a testament to the world we live in, to human joys and predicaments. In the series, good and evil get equal treatment. The primary theme is the age-old discord between masculinity and femininity. It symbolically reflects the inner self – the anima and animus archetypes of Jung's model or Freud's ego, id and superego. Brázda notes: "This series is structured into individual chapters, each with a beginning and end. It all begins with birth and youth. Then it spans across a range of erotic themes to more dramatic and existential topics – such as old age or death." Although autobiographical, the parables are universal. The artist deals with intimate themes from his own life, yet with a detached perspective.

In the 1940s, Brázda invented his own art movement, called "Hominism", which he defined as 'art about people and for people'. He explains: "It was important to me that a larger group of people be engaged with art, unlike with modern art, which often ends up in the possession of a few wealthy collectors." He adds: "My wish was that art could be widely distributed in the form of replicas which would be accesible to anyone." Now almost 91, he is finally fulfilling his idea of making his art available to a broader public by working on a computer to produce digital prints.

Despite the originality and pioneering nature of his art, Brázda was unrecognised for most of his life. Being neglected by the official art scene during the Communist era for political reasons had one huge advantage: absolute creative freedom and independence. He and his wife and fellow artist, Věra Nováková, finally had their first official exhibition in 1992, after the Velvet Revolution. The discovery of his large body of distinctive works became a sensation. In 2006, to mark his 80th birthday, the National Gallery in Prague prepared a large retrospective of his works, and in 2010 his paintings were included in the gallery's permanent exhibition.

Although he and his wife always worked outside of the mainstream, Brázda's works often anticipated upcoming trends on the global art scene, including pop art, magic realism and art informel. In the late 1980s, Brázda's position as an outsider naturally bonded him with young underground artists, who appreciated his originality – something that was slowly disappearing with the incoming wave of postmodern art.

In 2006, at the age of 80, Brázda started using a computer to produce his works. Since then, he has been consistently working on the extensive "Human Comedy" series, an excerpt of which is the foundation for the exhibition at Library of Birmingham. Despite the artist's advanced age, his work is remarkably current and today, the opus includes more than 330 paintings.





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- Venue: Centenary Square, Broad Street, Birmingham B1 2ND
www.libraryofbirmingham.com
- Location: Level 3
- Opening : Thursday 1 June 2017, 4pm
- Dates: 1 June 2017 - 1 July 2017
- Exhibition organised by: Embassy of the Czech Republic, London
Birmingham City Council
Ikon Gallery, Birmingham
- Curators: Miroslav Ambroz
Jonathan Watkins
- Opening hours: Monday and Tuesday 11am – 7pm,
Wednesday to Saturday 11am to 5pm
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