

ENG

Filip Dvořák: Stories Written and Told

Every person has a story hidden **within** them. One that affected them, that influenced them profoundly, that **is personally special to them even if they do not know why**. Stories stand at the beginning of our lives, they are told to us from early childhood, **we listen to them at a time when we already do not even know what is being communicated to us**, and we only perceive the voice that conveys them to us. Since the stories have been handed down from generation to generation for many centuries, we could say that they stand at the beginning of humanity. They can relate to real events and personalities, they can be elaborate and contain endless metaphors and symbols, they can be short, **but also so long that a whole year would not be enough time to tell them in**. However, Filip Dvořák does not tell stories with his artworks, the viewer does not become a reader or a listener. In front of his paintings, we become our own narrator, because they have the ability to activate storytelling in each of us.

The exhibition *Stories Written and Told* combines works from several series (*Ex libris*, *Strž*, *Lesy*), whose common feature is capturing a fragment of the story. In the latest series, *Ex libris*, through small relief transparencies carved into wood with model-like precision, but within the scale of the image, the minimalistically clean surface of the monochrome canvas prevails. In the series *Strž* and *Lesy* the author depicts wild natural scenery, unintentionally raising questions about who is actually passing through it, where they are going and why. Dvořák masterfully works with the boundary of the said, the implied and the deliberately unspoken. Shards of ambiguous scenes of ancient heroic deeds, set in the romantic setting of a mysterious landscape, are revealed to us. It is this contrast, this thoughtful balancing of the literal and the concealed, that triggers the viewer's imagination. In his works, the artist works with visual codes (coat of arms, knight, clog), the combination of which points to society's current relationship to historical narratives and shifts in the use of historical epochs in contemporary pop culture. It invites us to consider how we relate – as individuals and as a society – to the great heroic stories and **whether or not what they tell us today is the same as what they told hundreds of years ago**.

Filip Dvořák (*1990) studied in the studio of Jiří Černický and Marek Meduna at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague, where he graduated in 2015. On one level, his works are characterized by complex references to historical epochs and styles, particularly Gothic, Baroque and Romantic, while exploring their contemporary cultural resonances and the balance between authenticity and irony. On the second level, **they repeatedly relate** to the theme of the search for truth, or one's just place on earth from the perspective of a solitary individual. A man small – physically, compared to the size of the world and big – in spirit. Dvořák's work is characterized by transcending the classical form of the image and expanding media morphology in combination with contemporary artificial materials, through which he explores the possibilities of relief in relation to the surface of the work. He **was** the recipient of the ESSL Art Award CEE 2015, the Critics' Prize for Young Painting 2018 and completed a studio painting internship at Glasgow School of Art in 2012.