

Happy Birthday

Exhibiting artists ∨ Jaroslav Augusta, Karol Baron, Július Bártafay, Andrea Bartošová, Martin Benka, Robert Bielik, Peter Cvik, Jana Farmanová, ěv van Hettmer, Oto Hudec, Michal Jakabčic, Andrea Juneková, Martin Knut, Jan Kostaa, Patrik Kovačovský, Palo Macho, Igor Peter Meluzin, Alex Selmecci & Tomáš Kocka Jusko, Boris Sirka, Ivana Sláviková, Marián Straka, Peter Sulo, Ján Triaška, Eva Trizuljaková, Dominika Žáková

Curator ∨ Omar Mirza

Cooperating curators ∨ Petra Hanáková, Lenka Kukurová, Mira Sikorová Putišová, Alexandra Tamášová

Duration ∨ September 16 – November 27, 2022

Venue ∨ Representative Halls

Opening ∨ September 14, 2022, 6 pm

Statistically, the most children are born in September. Does also the largest number of artists and curators have birthdays in the ninth month? The intention of the initiator of the project, Omar Mirza, born in September, was to put together a selection of Slovak artists of the 20th and 21st centuries in cooperation with renowned Slovak curators, all born in September.

The guest curators approached this collaboration freely: Petra Hanáková helped with the selection of artworks, Lenka Kukurová created an exhibition within an exhibition with the theme of autumn spleen, Mira Sikorová Putišová lent an important work by Peter Meluzin from the collection of the Museum of Art in Žilina, of which she is the director, Alexandra Tamášová brought the idea of making horoscopes for the artists which you can find in the calendar accompanying the exhibition.

The visitors to the exhibition will see older works, but a few new pieces were created especially for this occasion. The artworks are either completely unrelated to the idea of the exhibition, or deal with various topics referring to birthday and September: celebration, surprise, self-presentation, personal mythology, beginning and end, zodiac, autumn, etc. Non-living artists are represented by selected works from the Nitra Gallery's collection.

The key criterion for the selection of the artists was to have a birthday in September. Is it enough for a full-fledged exhibition? Or is it just a (self-)ironic, (self-)subversive and (self-)centered (de)construct? What forms of presentation of contemporary art can we still think of? Based on what conditions do curators select artworks and their authors? And how to exhibit modernist classics next to contemporary artists?

The exhibition project teetering on the edge (of institutional criticism, subversive play or "a best of list") comes with a "catalog" in the form of a tear-off calendar designed by Marek Kianička (born in January). Every visitor who comes to the exhibition on their birthday will receive a free calendar as a gift. The opening of the exhibition will be a collective happening – a birthday party with a cake with hidden surprise. Who finds it can have a solo exhibition at the Nitra Gallery.

So, enough of engaged thematic exhibitions – long live art salons!