

THE MUSEUM OF A CITY THAT HAS MISSED ITS OWN HISTORY

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Turiecgallery
in Martin

THE MUSEUM OF A CITY THAT HAS MISSED ITS OWN HISTORY

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“Archeology excavated the Great Moravian Empire for us, revealed us our homeland, which was once declared by the historiography, unfriendly to a small nation, to be a border forest, into which the Slovak people, our ancestors, only wandered, infiltrated. Archeology unearthed the ages, rehabilitated legends, myths, sacred texts, the eternity of cultures. Ethnology has discovered primitive cultures that preserve a state of humanity that we would otherwise have only guessed about.

We understand each other only in context. The broader these connections are, the deeper we understand each other, the more our self-confidence, especially the self-confidence of small nations, is self-assured, more armed, the more understanding and tolerant it is, truly more humane. And in these expanding contexts, we also understand the appearances that we did not see, did not want to see, or we denied them, referring them to the realm of superstitions, fables, illusions. Culture is the memory.

A search, finding out the starting point, or an artificial or fictitious way out. But a way out, albeit artificial, necessary so that one, a denaturalized creature with consciousness or conscience, does not go mad. I repeat: We understand each other only in context. In culture, one creates, maintains, revives his memory, his super-personal memory, the memory of human cognition.”

Dominik Tatarka, 1969

When the artist Fred Wilson intervened in the permanent exhibition at the Maryland Museum in the USA in 1992, he changed the framework of viewing the museum as a neutral or objective environment by simply rearranging the collection objects. At that time, he placed silverware from the 19th century and iron shackles of slaves under a glass display case with the inscription Metal Work 1973-1980. Two histories of two different objects from different parts of the museum come together again to start telling one story of one household.

The exhibition THE MUSEUM OF A CITY THAT HAS MISSED ITS OWN HISTORY presents the theme of the museum as a phenomenon associated with collecting, cataloging and exhibiting. The central motif draws primarily from the genius loci of the city of Martin, contained in a number of collection funds and exhibitions of diverse focus on its territory. This also opens a topic exploring the effect of the museum from the opposite side: as a system of selection of what did not get into the museum, what did not become part of the exhibition or what did not manage to become a museum.

Space is also given to inconspicuous topics that often disappear under the layer of great histories, folklore myths or personality cults. They become part of new fictitious museum exhibitions in the gallery environment, benefiting not only from local archives but also from stories, at first glance, banal things that surround us on a daily basis. We do not understand a museum in the middle of a gallery space as the fulfillment of the intentions of ethnographic, anthropological, or art-historical research. It is primarily about the use and reflection of museum and gallery strategies by authors who create new environments and interpretations for individual artifacts. The traditional division of the roles of the curator and the artist becomes unclear in the case of the creation of the museum as a medium, and placing the picture on the wall is as important a gesture as the artist's gesture on the artwork.

The exhibition of author's concepts in the form of extended museum exhibits, free islands, independent exhibition spaces also naturally plays with the magic of mystification, a moment of surprise or humor. The exhibition works with speculative versions of museums in order to explore the effects contained in the architecture of the museum itself: glass, diorama, showcase or plinth. It talks about their influence, power or spectacular significance.

Adam Galko