

MORAVSKÁ GALERIE

The 28th International Biennial of Graphic Design Brno 2018 will be a collaboration between the Moravian Gallery and the OKOLO creative group

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The upcoming International Biennial of Graphic Design Brno will be organised by the Moravian Gallery in Brno in collaboration with the OKOLO group. The gallery and the collective have achieved a symbiosis regarding the direction of the next Biennial, which will aim to present the various trends that are emerging across the wide spectrum of graphic design in a comprehensible and educative form both for experts and the general public.

BRNO BIENNIAL 2018

10/5–26/8/2018

The Moravian Gallery in Brno addressed creative teams of experts from the ranks of graphic artists and art and design theorists regarding collaboration on the next Biennial. The gallery was presented with their concepts by Adam Štěch, Matěj Činčera and Jan Kloss from the OKOLO collective and the D.R.O.N. group comprised of Petr Babák, David Březina, Zuzana Kubíková and Lukáš Kijonka. The Biennial concept envisaged by D.R.O.N. tended towards presentation of the futurist vision of graphic design as seen through the eyes of the experts who are faced with this subject in their everyday practice. OKOLO opted for the educative way with the aim of interpreting graphic design using language accessible to the broader public. The selection jury comprising of Jan Press, director of the Moravian Gallery, Ondřej Chrobák, chief curator of the Moravian Gallery, Rostislav Koryčánek, curator of design and architecture, Silvie Šeborová, deputy director for external communication, and Miroslava Pluháčková, secretary of the Brno Biennial, convened on 1 February and selected the OKOLO collective. Jan Press, director of the Moravian Gallery in Brno and director of the Brno Biennial explains the gallery's approach to the International Biennial of Graphic Design in the following words:

“Starting with this step the Moravian Gallery will select a new curatorial team for each of the next editions of the Biennial, one whose concept will make accessible the graphic design topics in the context of the current trends. By alternating the curatorial approaches during the following years of the International Biennial of Graphic Design the gallery will ensure a plurality of ideas so that the discipline is presented from different points of view in the future. The OKOLO creative group takes the Biennial as a vehicle for popularising graphic design which corresponds with the exhibition concept of the Museum of Applied Arts.”

The 28th International Biennial of Graphic Design will take place in the period 10/5–26/8/2018 and as opposed to the previous years will be centred even more around the building of the Museum of

Applied Arts. Thanks to the concentration in a single place the showcase of contemporary graphic design will be more clearly organised. The new team of curators is planning to conceive the exhibition so that both the expert and somebody from outside can benefit from it. As the OKOLO collective elucidates:

“OKOLO looks at the curating of graphic design from a different perspective than previously. It aims to create an open and democratic platform presenting the whole breadth of the discipline with all the different creative approaches and characteristics of endeavours in graphic design. All of the selected projects should have in common a high professional standard and authenticity regardless of their function and purpose. An all-round view should introduce contemporary graphic design in its multiple forms and create something of a stimulating mosaic of different ideas and attitudes opening up discussion across the expert and general public. The curators take the main showcase as a sample of current graphic design through which they will observe recurring trends and different approaches to work which they will classify and present in a clearly organised exhibition of collections of works with different characteristics, nature of client, medium, functional solutions and purely visual forms. The individual sets should be comprehensibly commented on and set into the overall contemporary or historical context. The result will be educative visual instruction where professionals will find outstanding examples of various graphic forms and the public will obtain a comprehensive idea of the nature of work created by contemporary graphic designers.”

The centre point of the Biennial will be the traditional International Show; however with a different exhibit selection procedure to the last year (when competing proposals could be sent electronically). The Moravian Gallery will return to the original method of physical objects being sent to the competition. This will help revive the essential acquisitional activity of the gallery's collection of graphic design. Also, the Symposium should undergo a metamorphosis as, according to the curators, it should be more structured so as to create a dynamic flow of blocks of lectures of various lengths presented by top class designers from the world and local talent. Apart from the International Show and the Symposium the new curatorial concept will equally be impressed on the collateral exhibitions which should reflect the democratic scope of the main exhibition and present different approaches across the whole spectrum of contemporary graphic design from the alternative and conceptual streams to corporate, promotional and miscellaneous other graphic design.

The 28th Brno Biennial will also comprise exhibitions dedicated to two prominent figures of Czech graphic design: Aleš Najbrt, the founder of the Najbrt studio and author of a number of film and theatre posters, who was awarded a prize for his contribution to graphic design at the Brno Biennial in 2014, and František Štorm, type designer, graphic artist, typographer, musician, writer and teacher, who received the same prize in 2016.

The OKOLO creative group has dedicated its activities to design and its presentation, mainly through exhibitions and publications. From its inception in 2009 the group members have initiated a number of publications (e.g. *OKOLO Mollino*, *Radical Sitting* for the Depot Basel gallery in Switzerland, five issues of their own *OKOLO* magazine or, in the previous year, an exhibition catalogue for Rony Plesl and the voluminous publication entitled *European Design Stories: Reflection of Contemporary Design in European Countries*). The creative minds from the OKOLO group are also involved in conceptual exhibitions and installations in which they interconnect graphic design and the creation of spatial objects with sophisticated educational content. As curators they have recently left their mark on exhibitions such as *Collecting* for the Museum of Decorative Arts in Dresden (2014), a showcase of students of the

Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design called Manifesto at the Salone del Mobile in Milan (2016) or an exhibition held as part of the Zlín Design Week in April 2016. In an industrial space they staged an exhibition entitled Money: Form, Function, Investments, Savings, Value, Inspiration examining the relationship between finance and design/architecture. They also participated in the Unfolding Pavilion project presented at the Biennial of Architecture in Venice (2016) and became the only out-of-London contributors to the annual *Brompton Design District* book edited by the renowned curator Jane Withers. They staged exhibitions in London (Breathless in collaboration with the Dechem studio), Stockholm (Designgalleriet) and Sofia, where they presented an installation about the unique oeuvre of the architect Carlo Scarpa. Since 2012 Jan Kloss and Matěj Činčera have been collaborating in the corporate design of the designSUPERMARKET festival, where Adam Štěch has worked in the team of curators.

OKOLO is a co-author of the fresh Urban Expedition project publishing reports from visits to famous studios and workshops inaccessible to the general public and recording interviews with renowned designers, architects and artists. The project was loosely followed by the European Design Stories publication on which they have been working over the last two years together with Darina Zavadilová and the designSUPERMARKET festival. In collaboration with Scholastika they regularly invite world design luminaries to their gallery in Žižkov (Michael Anastassiades, Tomas Alonso, BIG-GAME, Sabine Marcelis, Lex Pott, Maarten de Ceulaer and Sebastian Herkner). The OKOLO members are also representatives of the Pedal Project which concentrates on the promotion of cycling.

The OKOLO creative group has received a Designblok award for an exceptional contribution (2010), and two years later a Czech Grand Design award in the Graphic Designer of the Year 2012 category. For the *OKOLO Mollino* book dedicated to the Italian architect, designer and photographer Carlo Mollino they were awarded one of the prizes for the Most Beautiful Czech Book in 2010 (TypoDesignClub Award). Their works can be found in the collections of the Museum of Applied Arts and have been published in respected magazines specializing in art and design: Wallpaper, Domus, Abitare, Surface, Dezeen, It's Nice That, Selectism, Form.

Matěj Činčera (b. 1988) is a graphic designer. He studied at the studio of Graphic Design and Visual Communication at the Academy of Art, Architecture and Design in Prague under Rostislav Vaněk and graduated under Petr Babák. While still a student he founded the OKOLO creative group. He received the Most Beautiful Czech Book 2010 award for the graphic design of the OKOLO Mollino book and came third in the prestigious Czech Grand Design 2011 competition in the Graphic Designer category. He teaches graphic design at Scholastika.

Jan Kloss (b. 1982) is a graduate from the studio of Graphic Design and Visual Communication at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague. His practice covers the whole scope of the discipline, from designing logotypes to corporate design, music media covers, graphic design of books and magazines, exhibition graphic design, packaging design, to comprehensive creative solutions including the basic concept. In addition to graphic design his activities involve music, photography, video and collaborations in cross-disciplinary creative projects. He has participated in many exhibitions and lectures at home and abroad (Belgrade Design Week, World Design Capital Helsinki, Romanian Design Week, Milan Design Week, etc.) and received several awards (European Design Awards, Czech Grand Design). He is the founder of the Pedal Project independent magazine and a member of the OKOLO creative group.

In co-operation with Jakub Korouš he initiated the emergence of the BOTAS 66 brand where he is the exclusive designer. He teaches graphic design at Scholastika.

Adam Štěch (b. 1986) has had a long-term interest in design, architecture and fashion and is one of the leading Czech theorists of design. He graduated in art history from Charles University. Since 2009 he has been an editor of the Dolce Vita lifestyle magazine. His articles are also published in the media abroad (Domus, Wallpaper, Form, Mark, Frame, Modernism, Cool Hunting and others). He has collaborated with companies and institutions such as Phillips de Pury, Casa Mollino, Gubi, Tolix, Verreum, Designblok, Dox, Bratislava Design Week and others. He is a co-founder of the OKOLO creative group and as part of its activities has worked on many publications and exhibition projects. Since 2013 he has been teaching design history at Scholastika (a private college of visual communication in Prague). In 2012 he was a member of the curatorial team of the 25th International Biennial of Graphic Design and several times an external member of the board of examiners at the final exams at the Academy of Art, Architecture and Design in Prague. He has his own programme on Radio 1 dedicated to design.

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