

KAREL SOUČEK

Price list.

OTA JANEČEK

3-24 july 1962

an exhibition of paintings by two czechoslovak artists

karel souček 1948-1962 ota janeček 1955-1960

KAREL SOUČEK^v

Man in my Pictures

The world around us constantly amazes me with its wealth of subject matter and infinite variety which demands just as great a richness in artistic expression. This can be found, for instance, in the works of Shakespeare, Cervantes, Whitman, Gogol, Tchekhov and Hasek who convince me of the everlasting truthfulness of their themes, of their penetrating knowledge of the psychology of the individual characters. Here I recognize people who live in our day and age, people who perform good deeds which are often interpreted to their disadvantage. They are people of flesh and blood, most frequently the author's closest friends, characters with human failings which are universally common to man irregardless of time and place.

The emotional impact of the works of the former authors is so great that it makes me feel as if I were an active participant. I seem to be walking through the landscape they describe, I see and feel its richness of colour, its harmony. Somehow it is all part of my inner being, the perfect rhythm of my heartbeat, where man becomes one with his surroundings. Even objects reflect the work of human hands. Every chapter, every verse is linked to form an inseparable whole. Their great love for mankind, arising from the very foundations of life, is the main reason that their works, expressing their ideas enhanced by the perfection of their art, achieved such heights of greatness. The key-note of a play, novel, or poem, is presented with true artistic feeling in such a way that it shines forth like a planet in the heavens. These are moments everlasting, a bottomless well of crystal-clear water, man as he is, stripped of all superfluous attributes, a far cry from an artificial allegorical character.

This makes me realize how the powerful force of everyday events enables me to see the many facets of life around me. Each single event, theme, has its own specific content and colouring. Everything is full of contrasts, light and shadow. Every theme taken from real life has a validity and existence of its own. If this is to be preserved in its full force and truthfulness I feel that I can work only when I am convinced of the necessity of doing so, when an experience in real life has stirred my creative imagination. In giving shape to my ideas I am concerned with showing things as they are, presenting man with a picture of his life painted with brush strokes and colour and transferring it into the realm of art.

I am convinced that it is not possible to treat every subject in the same manner and that it is just as out of the question to use one and the same tonality, that which should embrace the picture like a mother does her child, to create the requisite content. It is always my aim to participate somehow in the picture I am working on, to know the people I am painting from all angles, to talk with them, acquaint myself with their good and unfavourable traits, be able to feel with them in their time of sorrow and rejoice with them in their happiness, to become a direct and interested spectator. To be able to look inside a room from without and at the same time to view the outside from within. By interchanging the views I am able to verify the inner rhythm of the picture. All this prompts me to look at things from the point of view of an eagle as well as from that of an ant. It is a range which can be likened to that separating the song of a nightingale from the crowing of a rooster. In using colour I strive to make the picture convey the plasticity of the real life subject, to combine all parts of the picture in a harmonious atmosphere and at the same time to maintain balanced proportions. If I succeed in this then, reason and emotion attain an equilibrium.



Karel Souček No 16 Piccadilly 1961 $102\frac{5}{8}'' \times 60\frac{3}{4}''$

KAREL SOUČEK

painter and graphic artist, professor of the Fine Arts Academy in Prague. Born 26th September 1915 at Krocehlavy, lives in Kladno.

Studied at the Prague Fine Arts Academy under Prof. Willy Nowak, 1937-39.

Since 1938 has given one-man shows in Prague, Brno, and Kladno, as well as taking part in member exhibitions of various art societies and groups in Czechoslovakia.

High acclaim has been won by his murals for the Prague Castle, the Prague National Theatre, and the railway station in Pardubice.

Has provided the illustrations for a selection of stories by Edgar Allan Poe, the fables of Aesop, Victor Hugo's *Les Misérables*, and many others. Is also a successful stage designer.

In 1946 took part in an exhibition of drawings and graphic sheets organised by UNESCO in Switzerland, Britain, and in Paris. In the years 1959 and 1962 exhibited his paintings in Moscow. In 1960 took part in the Bienalle in Venice. Awarded silver medal at 1959 Bienalle in Sao Paulo, gold medal at World Exhibition in Brussels in 1958. National prize for his painting *The Town* shown at an exhibition sponsored by UNESCO in the Solomon R. Guggenheim museum in New York in 1961.

Visited France in 1946 and 1961, Germany and Switzerland in 1946, Holland in 1956, Belgium in 1958, Hungary and Rumania in 1957, the USSR in 1959 and 1961, Great Britain in 1961.

Is a member of the Czechoslovak Union of Artists and chairman of the *October* group of artists.



Karel Souček No 22
Blue passage 1961
41 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 41 $\frac{1}{8}$ "

oil paintings by karel souček 1948-1962

1	Town	300	1948	Oil	$64\frac{7}{8}" \times 39\frac{1}{2}"$
2	Hair-dressers Shop	200	1948	Oil	$28\frac{3}{4}" \times 37"$
3	Lovers (1)	200	1956	Oil	$39\frac{1}{2}" \times 40\frac{5}{8}"$
4	Lovers (2)	200	1956	Oil	$39\frac{1}{2}" \times 40\frac{5}{8}"$
5	Lovers (3)	200	1956	Oil	$39\frac{1}{2}" \times 40\frac{5}{8}"$
6	Lovers (4)	200	1956	Oil	$39\frac{1}{2}" \times 40\frac{5}{8}"$
7	Lovers (5)	200	1956	Oil	$39\frac{1}{2}" \times 40\frac{5}{8}"$
8	Lovers (6)	200	1956	Oil	$39\frac{1}{2}" \times 40\frac{5}{8}"$
9	Life in Town VIII	175	1958	Oil	$27\frac{1}{2}" \times 45"$
10	Life in Town	175	1958	Oil	$27\frac{1}{2}" \times 45"$
11	Red Passage	150	1959	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 35\frac{1}{2}"$
12	Passage	200	1959	Oil	$25\frac{5}{8}" \times 39\frac{1}{2}"$
13	People in Town III	160	1960	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 31\frac{1}{2}"$
14	Under an Umbrella	160	1960	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 31\frac{1}{2}"$
15	People in Town I	150	1960	Oil	$25\frac{1}{4}" \times 31\frac{1}{2}"$
16	Piccadilly	500	1961	Oil	$102\frac{5}{8}" \times 60\frac{3}{4}"$
17	People in Town II	160	1961	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 31\frac{1}{2}"$
18	People in Town IV	150	1961	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 31\frac{1}{2}"$
19	In the Passage	175	1961	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 35\frac{1}{2}"$
20	Mirrors	150	1961	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 35\frac{1}{2}"$
				tempera	
21	People in Town VI	160	1961	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 35\frac{1}{2}"$
22	Blue Passage	Sold	1961	Oil	$41\frac{1}{8}" \times 41\frac{1}{8}"$
23	Self-service Restaurant	100	1962	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 25\frac{1}{4}"$
24	Talk - Paris	300	1962	Oil	$59\frac{1}{4}" \times 43\frac{3}{8}"$
25	Paris	300	1962	Oil	$59\frac{1}{4}" \times 59\frac{1}{4}"$
26	Shop-window	175	1962	Oil	$39\frac{1}{2}" \times 41\frac{1}{8}"$
27	Women in the Street	100	1962	Oil	$23\frac{5}{8}" \times 19\frac{3}{4}"$

oil paintings by ota janeček 1955-1960

①	Village in Slovakia	Sold 175	1955	Oil	14 $\frac{1}{8}$ " × 21 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
2	Village	Sold	1955	Oil	29 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 23 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
3	View from the Atelier	Sold	1956	Oil	51 $\frac{1}{8}$ " × 38 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
4	Village	Sold	1956	Oil	39 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 31 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
⑤	Dead town	Reserved	1956	Oil	51 $\frac{1}{8}$ " × 38 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
6	Roofs in Old Prague	Sold	1956	Oil	19 $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 25 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
⑦	Tenement House	Tenement Reserved	1956	Oil	51 $\frac{1}{8}$ " × 38 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
⑧	Suburb	100	1957	Oil	9 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
⑨	Roofs	150	1957	Oil	13 $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 19 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
⑩	Suburb	190	1957	Oil	17 $\frac{1}{4}$ " × 20 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
⑪	Grass	125	1959	Oil	18 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
⑫	Grass	125	1959	Oil	18 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
⑬	Flora	125	1959	Oil	10 $\frac{5}{8}$ " × 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
14	Coq a minuit	Sold	1959	Oil	10 $\frac{5}{8}$ " × 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ "
⑮	Flower-composition	100	1959	Oil	18 $\frac{1}{8}$ " × 15"
16	Flowers and sun	Sold	1959	Oil	20 $\frac{7}{8}$ " × 24 $\frac{3}{8}$ "
* ⑰	Variation on folklore	Reserved	1959	Oil	18 $\frac{1}{8}$ " × 15" 140
⑱	Flower composition	125	1959	Oil	13 $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ "
19	Composition	Sold	1959	Oil	20" × 20"
20	Composition	Sold	1959	Oil	20" × 20"
⑳	Flower House	Reserved	1959	Oil	39 $\frac{1}{2}$ " × 31 $\frac{7}{8}$ "
22	Grass	Sold	1960	Oil	28 $\frac{3}{4}$ " × 39 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
23	Organisms	Sold	1960	Oil	38 $\frac{1}{8}$ " × 51 $\frac{1}{8}$ "
⑳	Flowers	125	1960	Oil	10 $\frac{5}{8}$ " × 13 $\frac{3}{4}$ "

125 desk - sold.
175 window

* Hold for five days

Name in order book ~~Monday~~

OTA JANEČEK^v

At the beginning of the fifties Ota Janecek painted the poetically modulated, optimistically materialistic 'Paradises' and 'Grasses', concrete visions of the inner core of the flowering meadow; in the years 1957–1959 he abstracts the motif of a single plant and studies it in new structural and spacial contexts. He abstracts from the concrete, the diversified and seeks the principles of construction, the order and the structural framework of the plant phenomenon. He returns again to the basically cubistic conception, he splits up and spreads the form into a plane so as to achieve the maximum of plastic effect and the final harmony of the external vegetational form, a form already greatly generalized and simplified.

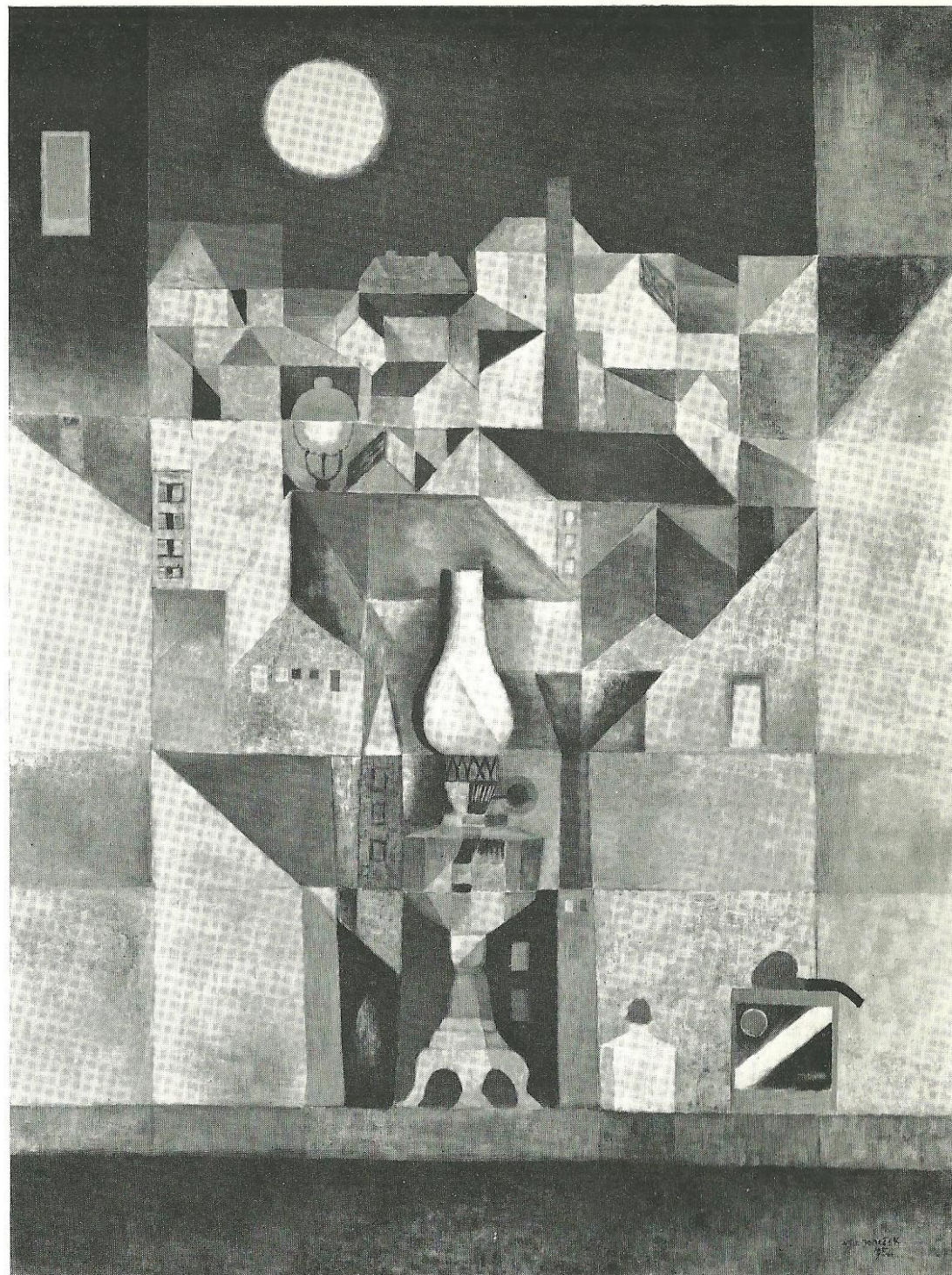
In the following stage, beginning with paintings from the year 1960, a change can be observed. Simplified, individualized plant shapes gradually disappear to be replaced by complicated creations of a different structure and purport on an intricate and condensed compositional framework. The first creations of this group still contain certain elements linking them to those of the previous stage: large sections of pulpy leaves are incorporated into an intricate pattern of smaller structural variations of herbaceous origin.

The basic feature of this change in Janecek's painting, a change which does not sever the continuity and logic of his preceding structural development, is a decisive shift in subject matter. From the realm of phenomena perceived by simple, unmediated sensory perception, from the surface of matter, Janecek turns to the inner shape and structure of matter the understanding of which, till now, has been the exclusive task of science. It is the natural reaction of an artist to the changed

picture of the world, to the newly uncovered aspects of reality by which science has expanded and enriched modern man's horizon. If we admit the noetic function of art, while keeping in mind its specificity and its divergence from scientific knowledge, then art can reflect the reality of the microcosm just as well as that of the macrocosm. It will naturally be a reflection subjectively modified, organized and shaped by the laws of art – not science. This sphere has a special attraction for an artist of such intensity of poetic imagination as is possessed by Ota Janecek. Underlying the entire series of 'Organisms', created in 1960 as the result of the ideational change already mentioned, is a simplifying, individualizing process in the compositional disposition, in the articulation of the pictorial plane as well as in the development of the form, which is analogous to the structural development of the subject of 'Grasses'. The composition of the later pictures in this series is dominated by simplified, large shapes, frequently bearing traces of previous forms. In contrast to the somewhat nervous and disquieting atmosphere of the first 'Organisms' the later pictures of the series are characterized by a certain degree of calm and a clearer rhythm of forms.

A change in outline and the absence of herbaceous elements characterize the latest of Janecek's works painted in 1961. In his 'Shapes', which so far mark the final stage of the basically analytical process of development, the artist's aim was to create a pictorial parallel of the fundamental changeless shapes of matter. The feature characteristic of entire groups as well as of individual shapes, which are not lacking in monumentality, is their plastic conception whether in sculpturally built constructions, reminiscent of Janecek's sculptures of 1946 as well as the designs for the latter, or in shapes rising relief like against the flat background suggesting the possibility of monumental realization in conjunction with architecture.

Alongside the process of crystallization of form a change in



Ota Janeček No 3 View from the Atelier 1956 51 $\frac{1}{8}$ " x 38 $\frac{1}{8}$ "

the colour component of the picture can be observed. Colour, whose modelling function in Janecek's paintings is constantly linked with its poetizing effect and its intensification of the emotional atmosphere of the picture, is integrated with the structural development, not only in its composition but also as regards the changes in the method of its treatment and the shaping of its surface. The compact, monodic and smooth colour surfaces of individual herbaceous forms gradually disintegrate and become polyphonized. Traces of this process culminating in Janecek's paintings of 1960-61 are already evident in some of his pictures dating from the year 1957. Each sharply outlined form is a harmony of several intermixing and overlapping colours. The resultant effect is the breaking up of the continuously flowing brush stroke into numerous minute dabs. The colour, no matter how granular or atomized, is laid on in thinner layers, it lacks the relief of a deep laid colour painting. This structural treatment of colour, aesthetically active in itself as the result of cultivated pictorial treatment, adequately expresses the bond linking the subject matter of the paintings with microscopic structures of matter.

Ota Janecek's paintings of recent years, displayed at this exhibition, reveal the remarkable maturing of his artistic expression. The originality and novelty of vision and formal expression have not obliterated the gains and virtues of the previous stages of development. An imposing plastic imagination and poetic force have been developed here in new transformations along with a mature and sovereign culture of pictorial presentation. This exhibition once again, and even more impressively, reveals the articulated originality of Janecek's art and its special, somewhat isolated position among contemporary Czechoslovak painters. The formal idiom of his pictures reveals in some of its aspects a link with the modern trend of abstract painting although on closer scrutiny Janecek's art cannot be placed without reserve in that rather differentiated

and not always well defined current. His paintings almost always have a concrete, factual basis, they do not sever their links with reality, no matter how loose the connection or how great the extent of the subjective modification of the reflection of this reality.

PETER HARTMANN



Ota Janeček No 23 Organisms 1960 38 $\frac{1}{8}$ " \times 51 $\frac{1}{8}$ "

OTA JANEČEK

born August 15, 1919, has already had 22 one-man shows. In addition he has taken part in numerous exhibitions in Czechoslovakia and abroad. Besides such exhibitions of Czechoslovak art as Art tchécoslovaque in Paris, Brussels, Lièges and Antwerp in 1946 and Czechoslovak Art in Moscow in 1953, these include Salon de Mai in Paris 1949. He has also exhibited drawings: Czechoslovak Drawings in Rio de Janeiro, Sao Paulo, Porto Alegre, Rio Grande, Bello Horizonte, and graphic art e.g. Czechoslovak Graphic Art in Vienna 1952, International Exhibition of Colour Wood-cuts in Copenhagen, Göteborg, Amsterdam, San Francisco, Washington, Canada, etc. and posters International Exhibition of Posters in Vienna 1948. He has illustrated 40 books and his work has been displayed at exhibitions of book illustrations abroad, Exhibition of Czechoslovak Book Illustrations at Peking 1957, Illustration of Children's Books, Swansea, Wales and many others. He has designed patterns for textiles. Exhibited in Prague and Brno 1948 and jewellery. He has contributed his artistic talents to the Czechoslovak film industry in such films as 'Wolves' Den', 'Awakening', etc. and has created several designs for Czechoslovak postage stamps.

His pictures are to be found in the National Gallery in Prague, in numerous district galleries, and in private collections abroad, George Weltner, New York; Eric Johnston, Washington; Peter H. Tunnard, London; Marc M. Spiegel, Paris; Rostockij, Moscow; Kim Taylor, Zurich; Eric Estorick, London; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.