

12 Slovak medalists at the international exhibition of contemporary art medals FIDEM Florence 2023

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Since 1989, Slovak Art Medal Society has been the organizational base of medals' creation artists. It began with sixty members from all generations, a large majority students of Rudolf Pribiš (1913 – 1984), the head of relief studio at Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava. Loosening of the canon and mutual permeability of sculptural genres led to a decline of interest in the classical medal. New manifestations and transformations went from striking and casting to assemblage, chamber object, which shifted medal, plaque and object to a decorative meaning. Current generation consists mostly of older medalists. The future of Slovak medal creation, which has proved its longevity since antiquity and provides creators with unlimited variability of artistic self-representation, depends on renewing the interest of the youngest generation.

Portrait medal does not currently have a priority, but, as demonstrated by **Peter Bukovský**, a remarkable personality can always inspire a creation, in a realistic fashion enriched by own interpretation.

Patrik Kovačovský uses non-classical methods to attack contemporary reality with irony. His "pseudo-self-portrait" is a mounted modeled profile, "rolled" over by a machine part.

Alexander Vika continuously creates portraits and evocations of architecture in rhythmic compositions. The reverse of his portrait of the bishop of the Secret Church, later Cardinal J. CH. Korec, depicts the Old Slavonic center of Christianization, residential castle of Nitra bishops.

Significant group is inspired by dreams, fairy tales, fables, mythology and a more idyllic life. They convert dramatic current events into distant past, populating fantasy images with fictional beings or bizarre attributes.

Rozália Darázsová has presented this line with par excellence plastic outputs.

Mária Poldaufová embodies lifelong practice in the creative studio of Kremnica Mint. Disciplined language of the coin design and order medals is balanced by free creation, fairy tale, myth, imagination. She has a feeling for form exaggeration, even theatrical expressiveness.

Branislav Rónai has worked at Kremnica Mint for over twelve years. His free work has thematic variability, compositional lightness, richness of modeling handwriting.

Throughout her life, **Gabriela Gáspárová-Illéšová** has been characterized by the will to capture inner experience of both personal and wider community. Figurative code does not require anatomical likeness. Subjects of her plaques and medals burst with inspiration, reflected in inventive compositions, unexpected twists in spatial plans of the plaques, or a sudden departure into free space. Themes include fleeting moments of life's harmonies and result in strained existential anxieties of the individual and wider community.

Ivan Řehák is universal, creating harmony between the content message and a specific styling procedure. He ranges from a classical approach, loosening of the canon to a form experiment. Intellectual analysis leads him to formally new solutions – as illustrated in the medal in memory of the romanticism master of fairy-tale ballads, Janko Král'.

A significant group of medalists has an unorthodox relationship with materials. Among them, **Vladimír Durbák** retains most ties to classical sculptural processes. He developed sign language of relief composition into an expanding grid, focused his sensibility on critical comments of current war conflicts.

Alojz Drahoš develops differentiated and well-thought-out program and became the protagonist of plaques cast in glass, using its transparency and light qualities.

Eva Harmadyová has intimate technological knowledge of easier-to-melt metals. She transformed jeweler's experience into cast plaques, inventive object-assemblages and sophisticated patination procedures.

Ján Korkoš is a unique synthesizer of forged, milled, assembled and colored decorative objects with interestingly enriched panorama of contemporary Slovak medal production.

BUKOVSKÝ PETER (B.1949)



FRANTIŠEK TICHÝ
Ø 150 mm
2021
bronze
cast

DARÁZSOVÁ ROZÁLIA (B.1948)



FULL MOON
Ø 100 mm
2022
bronze
cast

DRAHOŠ ALOJZ (B.1954)

The optical crystal medal is part of the *Ecological Threats* collection reflecting the theme of threats to nature and our entire planet. We can observe negative phenomena around us, however, we do not see them as an immediate threat to existence and do little to reduce and stop them, thereby gambling lives of future generations.



BEGINNING OF DESINTEGRATION I

Ø 140 mm
2022
glass
cast

DURBÁK VLADIMÍR (B.1953)

Area-space composition in bronze with a green patina. The theme is the front line of defense. With it, the author expresses his personal anti-war attitude towards the current events in Ukraine and their possibly dangerous escalation into a world conflict!



WAR I

45x150x145 mm
2023
bronze
cast

GÁSPÁROVÁ-ILLÉŠOVÁ GABRIELA (B.1952)

The imperative need (or must?) to escape from the destructive chaos within oneself, everywhere...



ESCAPE 023

145x150 mm
2023
bronze
cast

HARMADYOVÁ EVA (B.1962)

Defense or attack?

The porcupine quill used in the medal symbolizes defense. The deepening of misunderstandings and egoistic ambitions often leads to aggression and attacks.

Conflicts could be avoided by being humble, maintaining reverence and respect for all living beings on our common planet. The beginning is in each of us.



**DEFENCE
OR ATTACK?**
40x60x140 mm
2023
tin, porcupine quill
cast

KORKOŠ JÁN (B.1944)

A commemorative medal for Slovak National Theatre on a polished bronze base in an abstract recycled steel ring. Main motif is a linden leaf - a tree long considered a symbol of ancient Slavs. Linden was attributed magical power and used to make musical instruments - here represented by lyre as a symbol of music, dance, theater.



**SLOVAK
NATIONAL
THEATRE
COMMEMORATIVE
MEDAL**
Ø145 mm
2022
minted tombac, steel, bronze
fabricated

KOVAČOVSKÝ PATRIK (B.1970)



**OMNIS - PSEUDO
SELF PORTRAIT**
Ø150 mm
2023
plated beech wood,
citrus leaves,
glass and emerald crystals
fabricated

POLDAUFOVÁ MÁRIA (B.1951)



PANDORA
Ø137 mm
2022
bronze
cast

ŘEHÁK IVAN (B.1954)



JANKO KRÁL
Ø34 mm
2022
silver
struck

RONAI BRANISLAV (B.1985)



BATTLE OF SALAMIS
Ø40 mm
2022
silver patinated
struck

VIKA ALEXANDER (B.1933)



**CARDINAL
J. KOREC
CHRIST THE LIGHT
OF THE WORLD
(ARCHBISHOPRIC
OF NITRA)**

10x140x140 mm

2023

bronze

cast



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