

# Jury report

Report of the session of the expert panel of judges held on 14–16 March and 21–23 March 2019 to assess the 47th ICEFA Lidice 2019

## MEMBERS OF THE PANEL OF 47TH ICEFA LIDICE 2019

### Chairman of the panel:

Josef Zedník – visual artist, Olešná (1st and 2nd rounds)

### Members of the panel:

Eva Bartošová – teacher at Art School Nové Město pod Smrkem and Domov Raspenava (1st round)

Milena Burgrová – graphic designer, Kladno (2nd round)

Martin Homola – photographer, Buštěhrad (1st and 2nd rounds)

Vladimír Hrebeňák – teacher at Art School Karlovy Vary (1st round)

Ivana Junková – headmistress of Art School Řevnice (1st and 2nd rounds)

Kateřina Krutská Vrbová – teacher at Art School Řevnice, film editor (1st and 2nd rounds)

Helena Lisá – teacher at M. Stibor Primary Art School Olomouc (1st round)

Romana Pavlíčková – headmistress of Art School Most, Moskevská (1st round)

Jitka Petřeková – author of educational programmes, lecturer and methodologist, Národní památkový ústav (1. kolo), National Heritage institute (1st round)

Jaroslava Spěváčková – teacher at Art School Plzeň, Jagellonská (2nd round)

Hana Stadlerová – lecturer, Department of Visual Art, PedF MU Brno (1st round)

Lenka Spoustová – teacher at Fr. Kmoch Art School Kolín (1st round)

Martina Sumcová – teacher at Art School Sedmíkráska Rožnov pod Radhoštěm (1st round)

Romana Štajerová – teacher at Art School Plzeň, Jagellonská (1st and 2nd rounds)

Pavel Rajdl – teacher emeritus at Art School Kolín, artist (2nd round)

Alena Zupková – teacher at Art School Háj ve Slezsku (1st and 2nd rounds)

Čeněk Hlavatý – headmaster at Art School Mšeno (1st and 2nd rounds)

Zuzana Hrubošová – headmistress at M. Stibor Art School Olomouc (2nd round)

### Foreign members:

Renata Mečkovskienė – teacher at Atr School Trakai, Lithuania (2nd round)

Ilze Rimicane – art director of Children's and Youth's Centre Daugmale, Riga, Latvia (2nd round)

Tomáš Krivý – teacher at Art School Považská Bystrica, Slovakia (1st round)

Henry and Iris Lau – the founders of the Gifted Artists Foundation, Hong Kong, China (2nd round)

Debrah Sickler-Voigt – art teacher, Middle Tennessee State University Murfreesboro, TN, U.S.A. (2nd round)

Vsevolod Romankov – art teacher, School 1188. Moscow, Russia (2nd round)

Ivan Stoyanov – artist, Nova Zagora, Bulgaria (2nd round)

William F. Doehring – teacher, International School of Prague (2nd round)

This year it has been 150 years since Mendeleev's periodic table, one of the pillars of modern chemistry, saw the light of day. Therefore, the theme, selected in cooperation with UNESCO, is something that pervades our lives, accompanying us wherever we go – from the soles of our shoes and the tarmac of our roads to the beauty of fireworks. The theme is CHEMISTRY, featuring the following sub-themes: Importance of fire for humankind, Alchemy and alchemists, Atom, Molecule, Compound, Famous discoveries, Chemistry in everyday life, Colours around us.

As against the previous year, the number of entries has dropped by half. We can only guess that it is due to the difficult, complicated theme and perplexity about how to deal with it. In spite of that, a lot of outstanding works of art inspired by chemistry came together in Lidice. Thus the panel of judges was given an opportunity to see a complete gallery of renowned chemists and discoverers, led by D. I. Mendeleev, M Curie-Sklodowska and A. Nobel, followed by a number of other prominent figures. Also represented were the periodic table of elements, individual elements and their reactions as well as side effects of such reactions, such as light, heat and blaze of colours. The panel was introduced to a number of chemical plants, labs and collections of laboratory glass. There are among the entries also such ones that deal with the dangerous aspects of chemistry. Also funny entries appeared, depicting our everyday life with chemistry at home and at school (cleaning and cleaning ladies, shampoos, soaps, showers, preparations for head lice and fleas, perfumes and decorative cosmetics, "funny" smocks etc.)

The panel of judges is gratified to say that the difference between primary (first-level) schools and art schools is fading away. It is obvious that, developing a wide range of visual themes, many primary schools are able to cope with the theme otherwise than just directly, which points to good pedagogical leadership. The direct approach (chemist – lab – test tubes – reactions) remains prevalent with foreign schools, nevertheless some instances occur of a deeper artistic insight into the problem.

A refreshing effect to the panel was brought about by entries in which non-traditional techniques had been used, employing chemical processes, such as painting with lemon juice, rust, vinegar and vegetal oils.

Although there are less entries, the panel of judges considers this year a successful one, maintaining the quality level of previous years. Admittedly, the category of spatial entries has shrunk significantly, however, the award-winning entries make an interesting and, in terms of material, varied set that will please the eye of visitors.

The theme of chemistry seems to have captured the attention of young photographers both in Czechia and abroad.

### **Overall statistics of the entries**

Number of entries in total: **15,336**

Number of participating / awarded countries: **70/65**

Number of participating / awarded organizations: **1,332/376**

Number of newly registered schools: **289**

**Out of the total of 15,336 entries from 70 countries 1,179 have been awarded prizes including 164 medals (110 individual medals, 5 medals for children's team work and 49 medals to schools for their collections).**

### **Assessment of foreign entries:**

The panel of judges states that the quality of entries has not deviated much from the standard of previous years. It is gratifying that also new countries have appeared that have not yet participated in ICEFA (Saudi Arabia). Although the theme of chemistry is not easy to approach, especially for foreign schools, surprisingly good collections have appeared. For instance, a very refined painting from Belarus (Detskaya Shkola Iskusstv Nesvizh, DSHI No.3 Maladik, Vitebsk) and a nice collection of oil pastel drawings with a strongly accented theme from Tsentralnaya Tvorchestva Detei i Molodozhi, Soligorsk. Romania sent in a beautiful collection of bacteria

(M'arta Children's Art Studio, Focsani), Turkey produced a pleasant collection of black-and-white portraits (Cetin Sen Bilim Ve Sanat Merkezi, Kayseri), Slovenia a prime-quality collection of prints (OŠ Sveti Jurij, Rogašovci, Matej Gider, OŠ Kuzma, OŠ Mirana Jarca, Črnomelj), Ukraine a striking collection of intaglio prints (Visual Art Center, Kryvyi Rih), Thailand a nice collection of works from Banlongtong School Nakhon Ratchasima. A traditionally strongly represented country is Russia, with watercolours out of the common run from GBOU School No. 1955, Moscow. What the panel found interesting is a remarkable collection of prints from Tsentr DetskogoTvorchestva, Birobidjan, beautifully themed sgraffiti from Dvoret's Detskogo Tvorchestva, Omsk and a collection of pastel drawings from Detskaia Studiia Izobrazitelnykh Iskusstv, Saratov. The panel also commends a good selection of prints from the Children's Art School, Kropotkin. From among Croatian entries, the attention of the panel was engaged by a collection of very good pastel details from Škola za Zaprimijenjenu Umjetnost, Rijeka. An outstanding item from Montenegro is a set of paintings and drawings by young children from Cetinje. It was a nice surprise for the panel to see entries that, although not able to stand international comparison, are of good quality in the long-term context of the given country (e.g. entries from Brazil, Switzerland and the UK).

From among Slovak entries, the attention of the panel was caught by the leisure-time club Výtvarný Ateliér Devín, Bratislava and an absolutely unique collection sent from the citizen's association Art Slničnice, Bratislava, which is imaginative, varied and carefully selected.

Standing out in quality from primary schools is PS Dunajská Lužná, perhaps due to the fact that it is connected with an art school.

Traditionally good-quality collections came from art schools, such as Ladislav Mednyánsky Art School, Spišská Belá 8, Ferko Špáni Art School, Žilina (nice prints and mixed media items), Art School Holíč (a collection of beautiful colour linocut prints), Ján Ciker Art School Banská Bystrica (a good drypoint collection).

### **Assessment of Czech entries:**

Czech schools have not shown any strong qualitative deviation from previous years either. From among primary schools, the most interesting collections are the following: a set of active prints from the Primary School Praha 1, Vodičkova and a nice drypoint collection from the Primary School Opava, Šrámkova. A big praise goes to a rich collection of monotypes, linocuts and photos from the TGM Primary School Opava, original paintings of fog and smog from the Fr. Hrubín Primary School Havířov and a cyanotype collection from the Primary School Sedmikráska, Rožnov pod Radhoštěm.

From among leisure-time clubs, the panel appreciated a drypoint collection by Dana Akritidisová's Club, Jeseník, photos from DDM Ulita, Prague 3, collections from the Studio Experiment, Olomouc and the Art Studio Vipart, České Budějovice (a fresh collection of tubes in linocut) and the Art Club Ratíškovice.

From among special schools, collections from Zběšičky, Protivín (beautiful prints) and from Raspenava (collections of subtle prints filled with love) stand out again. St Linhart Home in Chelčice pleased the eye of the panel with nice large-format paintings.

From among secondary schools, Gymnasium Krnov stands out with its good and balanced collection of prints.

Art schools are again the most strongly represented group. The panel especially commends a beautiful collection of mixed media from the Art School Háj ve Slezsku, a remarkable, inventive collection from the Art School Nové Město pod Smrkem, a collection of linocuts of polyethylene bags from the Art School Krnov, a collection of prints from the Art School Písek and a beautiful collection of mixed media from the Art School Holešov.

## **Spatial entries:**

The spatial entries are dominated by collections from Czech art schools. The panel was pleased namely by a beautiful collection of glass from the Art School Mšeno, a varied and expressive collection of ceramics from the Art School Most, Moskevská, a delicate collection of pyramids from the M. Stibor Art School, Olomouc and an inventive concept of the DNA helix from the Art School Háj ve Slezsku.

## **Photographs:**

This year, the best collection of photos from abroad came from two schools in Croatia – Privatna Umjetnička Gymnazija s Pravom Javnosti, Zagreb and OŠ Matije Petra Katančića, Valpovo, which sent in a first-rate collection of photos. Remarkable for the panel is the collection from Bilinguales Realgymnasium Komensky, Vienna, Austria and from GUO Logoyskaia Detskaia Shkola Isskustv, Belarus. A surprise for the panel was also the collection of photos from the UK, which, though not exactly first-class, stood out with its quality, considering the long-term quality standard in that country.

Nice photographs came from Slovakia, from the R.Tatár Private Art School, Banská Bystrica and I. W. Král' Art School, Považská Bystrica, which caught the attention of the panel with good and quite unusual photograms.

As to the Czech schools, the field of photography is dominated also by art schools. The panel appreciated a rarely presented, good collection of analogue photographs from Kolín while some of the entries from Mladá Boleslav pleased the panel with its inventiveness and technical quality. The photos from the Art School Prosek are appreciated for their experimental approach bordering with computer graphics. A really strong collection of photos, with an outstanding pedagogical guidance, came from the Art School Černošice.

## **Film:**

The category of film has been in the competition part of ICEFA Lidice for three years. Among the ways of visual expression, it belongs to more difficult ones, which are not taught at schools as standard. It involves individual or collective work that needs a technical base. These facts reflect in the final form of the story. As the film section has been included into a visual art competition, the stress has been put on the artistic approach, visuality and the choice of visual film technique. An integral part of the assessment is technical rigorousness of the process (the basic criteria, in a simplified form for children, are the same for each age category).

The quality standard of film entries is lower than last year, in terms of the formal, technical aspect as well as in terms of content and the visual side. The panel ascribes it to the difficulty of the theme. Out of 67 films in total only several are noticeable, unique in their story and the visual side and, at the same time, filmed authentically through the eye of the film-makers. Eleven films qualified for the second round. The panel awarded only four medals.

In many cases, the films are just records of a chemical experiment, an animation of one or two shots of a chemical experiments ("tricks") without much dramaturgical added value, idea and originality. In a wider scope of the seen and assessed films, they are just pictures put in motion, but lacking elements of animation and film language, there is no connection between the image and the sound, i.e. in many cases the sound just illustrates the moving image. There is little or no art in the visual part and the film story is poor. The theme of chemistry have been approached superficially, without any deeper meaning or message.

The panel appreciated animated actors' films, limited animation films, animated cartoons, puppet films and digital animations. The awarded films are predominantly of foreign origin – from Canada, Croatia, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia, Slovakia and Ukraine. As to Czechia, an award goes to the animated film from the Terezie Brzková Art School, Plzeň, which is a combination of an animated film and an actors' film. The school of animated film from Canada roused interest by a playful animation with plasticene, while combining editing with

computer animation. It is a funny educational story in which all procedures of film language have been adhered to, with the soundtrack, including sound effects, supporting the film.

Experimental films with additional thought content has been represented by Art School Ťřevnice. The documentary has been represented by Indonesia.

The recommendation of the panel is to approach and invite to participate in ICEFA specifically schools, classes and studios from Czechia and abroad that occupy themselves with filmmaking. Thus they will be able to inspire other pupils and teachers, showing them how to work with the film media correctly. Within the scope of educational activities, it is possible to prepare workshops for teachers on how to work with the film.

The panel appreciates the work of all who decided to grapple with the difficult theme of chemistry. Although the entries have been fewer, it is not reflected in the quality and artistic variety of the exhibition. We are gratified to say that contestants are more and more successful in dealing the given theme, the number of entries that relate to the theme just by their title are on the decrease. Sad to say, however, that there are still entries that do not respect the rules of the competition. There are still some entries in passe-partout, larger entries and older artists than allowed by the ICEFA constitution. And in spite of repeated warnings, the bad habit persists of not performing any responsible pre-selection by the teacher, probably in the hope that the more entries the better chance for success. However, the resulting collection will more likely be damaged by that. Such dilution of the collection with works of lesser quality decreases the appeal of the better ones.

## **Prize of the Panel of Judges**

This year, the Prize of the Panel of Judges for a foreign school – foreign contestant – was awarded to a totally unique collection from Slovakia, from the citizen's association Art Slněčnice, Bratislava. This inventive, varied and precisely selected collection has stand out markedly from other foreign participants. The international panel awarded the Prize of the Panel of Judges to the Czech Art School Holešov for its strongly artistically appealing collection. The school has presented itself with a brilliant collection of mixed media.

## **Conclusion**

Every year, the international panel of judges faces a difficult task. Which of the entries are the most interesting and should be put on display? It is beyond the powers and possibilities of the organizers to exhibit and award all incoming entries. We are convinced that the most powerful experiences occur in the very process of artistic creation in the schools of all types. What a joy derived from the works of art for the panel to share again this year! We are very gratified by the fact that in this period of time, full of modern technologies, children still want to draw, paint and model, seeking artistic materials to convey their message about what they see and how they feel about it. Being aware of how difficult the artistic assignment was, the panel appreciates all the artists who sent in their works. Our thanks goes to all who were thinking about the uneasy task while creating, who sent in their works, sharing their experience through their drawings, paintings, prints, photographs films and spatial objects. It is also due to your work that this exhibition will rank among the most interesting ones. The international panel of judges extends its thanks to all teachers, without whom the exhibition would be nowhere near so good. We believe that the creative process with children and young people was bringing joy also to them.

An important part has been played also by the international panel of judges, which is indispensable at such extraordinary international art exhibition. It is clearly seen that the differences in aesthetic perception in various countries, cultures and even continents are significant. To understand this fact and to assess the entries as fairly as possible, it is necessary to have input from artists and teachers from other countries.

Our final thanks go to the team of the Lidice Memorial, who worked under difficult conditions after the curator left. Even so they were able to create a remarkable team, comfortable and

peaceful environment and conditions that enabled us to manage such difficult task. Thank you very much! Our thanks go also to the new curator Lenka Zmeková. Her kind and empathetic approach, understanding, enthusiasm and responsibility has dispelled the initial concern about the continuity of ICEFA. Thanks also to you!