

Jury report

Report of the session of the expert panel of judges held on 12-14 March 2020 to assess the 48th ICEFA Lidice 2020

MEMBERS OF THE PANEL OF THE 48TH ICEFA LIDICE 2020

Chairman of the Panel:

Josef Zedník – visual artist, Olešná

Members of the panel:

Jana Anděličová – teacher at Štítný and Marie Podvalová Art School, Prague

Eva Bartošová – teacher at Art School Nové Město pod Smrkem

Čeněk Hlavatý – headmaster at Art School Mšeno

Martin Homola – fine art photographer

Vladimír Hrebeňák – teacher at Art School Karlovy Vary

Ivana Junková – headmistress at Art School Řevnice

Hana Jurková – pedagogue

Kateřina Krutská Vrbová – teacher at Art School Řevnice, film editor

Helena Lisá – teacher at Art School Olomouc

Romana Pavlíčková – headmistress at Art School Most, Moskevská

Jaroslava Spěváčková – teacher at Art School Plzeň, Jagellonská

Martina Sumcová – teacher at Art School Sedmíkráska Rožnov pod Radhoštěm

Romana Štajerová – teacher at Art School Plzeň, Jagellonská

Dagmar Šubrtová – art director at ICEFA Lidice, artist, Kladno

Pavel Rajdl – visual artist, Kolín

Alena Zupková – teacher at Art School Háj ve Slezsku

The UN General Assembly declared 2020 International Year of Plant Health. Healthy plants are important for all life on Earth, for the proper work of eco-systems and for food safety. Pests and diseases damage plants, reduce availability of food and increase its production costs. Helping keeping the living environment, forests and biodiversity in good shape and withstanding climatic changes, healthy plants also support the fight against famine, poverty and malnutrition. Plants, big and small, belong to the landscape just as the landscape belongs to man from time immemorial. The 48th ICEFA Lidice features the theme LANDSCAPE with the following sub-themes: Life of Plant and Trees; Diversity and Forms of Landscapes; Landscape and Home; Landscape Affected by Human Activity; Spirit of Landscape – Its Mood, Fragrance, Sounds; Architecture and Landscape; Animals in the Landscape; and Horizons.

The theme, familiar and interesting to children and teachers alike, brought great artistic results. Compared to previous year, the number of entries has risen by a half. Artistic works by children and students offered the members of the panel a lot of experiences. In front of the panel of judges, a colourful and varied world opened of forests, fields, meadows, seas, cities, towns and villages, old and modern factories, urban and country-style architecture. It is clear that man as well as fauna and flora belongs to the landscape. Thus the panel peered into the forests full of life, deer, bear, hare, birds, fox etc. A wide variety of animals paraded in front of it. It is almost certain that the fox ranked with the most popular ones. The panel also saw landscapes devastated by human activity (felling trees, digging mines), by elemental catastrophe, such as fires in Australia, or by loss of water. The jurors also ascended to heights beyond the clouds and had a bird's eye view of landscapes. Even maps and plans were included.

It is pleasure to see many ordinary schools closing on art schools in terms of the quality of their entries and often even surpassing them in terms of their creativity. Art education and the artistic expression involved get better year by year and it is interesting to observe how the differences between various types of schools are fading away. Compared to last year, also the category of spatial entries was richly represented not only by Czech but also foreign participants. So it is clear that the award-winning entries will attract attention of visitors of this year's exhibition.

The theme of landscape appealed also to young photographers, so, the exhibition will feature some very good, inspirational photos.

Summary of entries

Number of entries in total: **22 216**

Number of participating / award-winning countries: **78/76**

Number of participating / award-winning organizations and individuals: **1617/406**

Number of newly registered schools: **433**

Out of the total of 22,216 entries from 78 countries 1,403 were awarded prizes including 214 medals (144 individual medals, 10 medals for children's team work and 60 medals to schools for their collections).

The assessment of this year's ICEFA took place under the difficult situation of the global Covid-19 pandemic. Notwithstanding the difficult circumstances, understandable stress and mental strain, the management of the Lidice Memorial led by Director Stehlík and Curator Doleželová provided, as usual, good environment and conditions for a smooth work of the panel. It was only thanks to them and their colleagues that the session of the panel could take place under such difficult circumstances.

Assessment of foreign entries

Having experienced previous ICEFAs, the panel is pleased to say that foreign collection mostly maintained the quality of previous years and some countries even showed such quality as against previous years that came as a surprise. Such countries include Austria represented by a good collection of photographs and the UK, which was also represented by photos and really interesting ones at that. It seems that this year's theme was very convenient for photographers although the differences in quality were considerable.

Collections of extraordinary quality came from traditionally good schools and countries. Among them Simply Art based in Hong Kong with sensitive and at the same time very impressive watercolours and drawings, Cuckoo Arts and Vkids Creative, also based in Hong Kong, with a nice collection of paintings by young children, Młodzieżowy Dom Kultury in Rybnik (studios Creatio and Gir-a) with well- rounded collection of black-and-white prints of good quality and the Children's Creative Art Centre and Gallery, Torun, with a playful colourful linocut, both based in Poland, Kekava Art School in Lithuania with a fresh, inventive collection of photographs, the Russia-based GBOU School No. 1955, Moscow, with exquisite, sensitive and professionally executed watercolours, the Visual Art Center, Krivyy Rih, Ukraine) with a

sublime collection of intaglio prints, Photostudio My, Centr NTTM, Sumy (also Ukraine) with an interesting collection of photos of details in nature. Similarly beautiful photo collections came from the Vilnius Mykolo Biržiškos Gymnasium and the Trakai Art School (Lithuania) and excellent prints from Debreceni Kazinczy F. Alt. Iskola és AML in Hungary. Also commendable are the Lourdes School of Mandaluyong in the Philippines, the Sachkhere's Art School nam. of Soso Tsereteli in Georgia, the Academic Lyceum of Fine Arts Igor Vieru, Kishinev (Moldova) the Narva Art School, Pelgulinna Gümnaasium, the Estonian Jewish Education Center and the Tallinn Art School from Estonia, Preschool Al-Mahaba wa Al-Salam, Iksal in Israel, OŠ Kuzma, OŠ Gustava Šiliha, Maribor a OŠ Sveti Jurij, Rogašovci with a lot of good prints in Slovenia. We are not able to name all of them individually, nevertheless, looking through these collections was very gratifying.

Very interesting entries came also from Slovakia. As last year, the attention of the panel was captured by pictures by hobby centres, such as art SLNEČNICE, o. z., Bratislava, with an excellent, well-selected collection, and the special school (Spojená škola, Špeciálna ZŠ) in Piešťany, which was represented by entries conveying a delicate, artistic message. The panel was pleased also with a nice collection of colour drawing of dogs from the special school in Komárno. From among Slovak art schools, the panel found interesting the sets of entries from the Ján Cikker art School, Banská Bystrica because of beautiful prints, mixed media and generally, the strength of the collection, from the Róbert Tatár Private Art School, Banská Bystrica through its excellent collection of photographs, from the Private Art School Gagarinova, Trenčín, due to the collection of prints and mixed media and from the Anton Cíger Art School Kežmarok with its interesting collection of linocuts and drypoint prints. An absolutely excellent collection came from the I. W. Kráľ Art School, Považská Bystrica, which stood out extremely with its quality from the context of foreign participants.

Assessment of Czech entries

Entries from Czech schools also maintained the quality level of previous years. From among nursery schools, the nursery school Kampanova, Hradec Králové, stood out, from among primary schools it was the school Nové město pod Smrkem and the school Vodičkova, Prague, the entries of which won awards. Commendable are also a unique collection of photos and drawings from the school Sedmikráska, o. p. s., Rožnov pod Radhoštěm, and an exquisite collection of prints from the T.G. Masaryk school, Opava. Very interesting entries came also from the 8th school Frýdek-Místek and the School and Nursery School Dolní Třebonín. From among secondary schools, the thing worth noticing is the set of entries from the Gymnasium Krnov, which presented a very good collection of prints, unusual at a secondary school.

The panel also found interesting some entries by the special school in Brno, Vídeňská, including a collection of drawings, and by the Centre of Social Services Horizont Protivín with a nice collection of prints.

From among hobby centres, the outstanding ones were Vipart, České Budějovice, and A1 School of Mgr. Dana Akritidisová, Jeseník. Also entries from the Czech Camper Union – Záskalák Liteň and the Child and Youth Centre Prague 2, Výtvarné dílny Vinohrady appealed to the panel.

As usual, the most of the interesting and good-quality entries came from art schools, which obviously results from their specific position in art education and their long-standing tradition. This year, the panel of judges found interesting especially the entries from Art School Mšeno (large scope of rendering of the given theme, unconventional materials, experimental prints, very good photos), Vladimír Ambros Art School, Prostějov, (again a varied collection including books, mixed media, batiks), Art School Prague 9, U Prosecké školy (very good collection of prints), Art School Prague 5, Štefánikova (good-quality work in computer graphics), Art School Nové Město pod Smrkem (beautiful prints and a nice use of chance), Art School Morava, Zlín (lovely collection of animals in small drypoints), F.X. Richter Art School Holešov, Art School Plzeň, Jagellonská, Art School Šternberk (a nice collection of prints), Art School Most, Moskevská,

Miloslav Stibor Art School Olomouc (a beautiful collection of prints), art School Ostrava-Poruba (a collection of delicate, sensitive prints), Štítný Art School, Prague 3, František Kmocho Art School, Kolín (a wide variety of entries in pastel, impasto and prints), Art School Jilemnice and Art School Krnov, Hlavní náměstí.

Spatial entries

What is good and encouraging news is that children and young people in all types of schools do not hesitate to use any material. So besides standard materials such as paper, clay, wood, plaster of Paris or metal and wire, the panel could appreciate also a number of objects from plastic and glass. The outstanding entries from 3D objects came from Czech schools. A varied collection, as usual, came from the Art School Mšeno, a newly introduced entry made using a 3D printer and a large collection from the Art School Strakonice and a well-made and sensitive ceramics from the Art School Most, Moskevská. Similarly excellent work were sent in by Art School Řevnice, M. Stibor Art School Olomouc, Art School Postoloprty, T. Brzková Art School Plzeň, Art School Prague 9, Ratibořická and Art School Dačice.

With primary schools not lagging behind, the exhibition is enlivened with interesting 3D objects from the Primary School Plzeň, Rodinná, Primary School Sedmíkráska, o. p. s., Rožnov pod Radhoštěm and Primary School Nové Město pod Smrkem. Similarly Primary School Prague 2, Na Smetance, Primary and Nursery School Lukavec and Duhový dům (Rainbow House) Ostrava will enrich the exhibition premises with their spatial entries.

Photos

This year's competition brought huge differences in quality of individual entries. On one hand, there were excellent collections (e.g. from the I. W. Král' Art School in Slovakia and from the Primary School Sedmíkráska, o. p. s. in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm), on the other hand, there were also collections that neither conveyed any message, nor were good in terms of technique. It is becoming apparent how important is the role of the teacher and how strongly their departure is felt in the work of the students. The schools usually strong in photography failed this year while new, promising ones emerged. This time the panel did not see such large number of interesting collections from Ukraine and Croatia as in previous years, however, it was pleased by an excellent, fresh, inventive and well-mastered collection from the Kekava Art School in Latvia, by a well-rounded collection from the Vilnius Mykolo Biržiškis Gymnasium in Lithuania and by interesting details of nature from Photostudio My, Centr NTTM in Ukraine. The panel was pleased with absolutely excellent photos from the Róbert Tatár Private Art School and a very rarely seen and beautiful collection of camera obscura images from the I. W. Král' Art School. Last but not least, the panel of judges very much appreciated photos coming from countries that had never sent in photo collections before; although not of top quality, they are definitely very interesting. Such countries include Myanmar, Austria and the UK.

From among Czech schools, the outstanding ones were the above mentioned Primary School Sedmíkráska, o. p. s. in Rožnov pod Radhoštěm and the Art School Mšeno.

Film

It is four years now since the film category has been included in the Lidice competition. As to the process itself, making a film is one of the more complicated disciplines and ways of artistic expression. Film techniques are not usually taught at schools. It is mainly team work, although sometimes it can be made by an individual, and needs specific technical equipment. These facts are reflected in the resulting form of short films that have been sent in to the competition. As the film section was included into a visual art competition, the stress has been put on the artistic approach, visuality and the choice of visual film technique. Certainly, the extent to which the content relates to the given theme, the outreach of the narrative on the given theme etc. are taken into account. An integral part of the assessment is the execution of the film both in terms of form and content (so-called film language and chosen artist's approach,

dramaturgical structure and maintaining the story line, choice of the soundtrack, editing structure, image composition, camerawork etc. – in the simplified child version. The criteria must be the same as for all other categories.)

Being low this year, the standard of the film entries found a new bottom in terms of formal technique, visual quality and content. The panel of judges is not able to identify the cause of such low quality of entries. The theme of this year's exhibition was convenient and multilayered, thus very inclusive.

Out of 77 entries in total only several were distinctive, interesting in terms of story and formal execution, met the requirement of originality and at the same time, they were shot authentically through the eyes of children, not teachers. Thirteen entries qualified for the second round. The panel awarded four medals and three honourable mentions, one of the honourable mentions was awarded to a school for visually impaired.

Often there was no digging deeper into the theme. It was only a series of shot in the landscape or a filmed collage of heterogeneous shots taken in the landscape.

Often the makers just animated one or two shots based on a vague story, only marginally connected with this year's theme. There was neither dramaturgical structure, nor an idea nor anything interesting in aesthetic terms. In a wider scope of seen and assessed films, they were just pictures put in motion, but lacking elements of animation and film language, there was no connection between the image composition and the soundtrack, i.e. in many cases, the sound only illustrated the moving image without any further relation to it.

There was little or no art in the visual part and the film story was poor or missing completely. The theme of the landscape was generally approached superficially, without any deeper meaning or message.

The panel appreciated animated films, using e.g. cutout animation, cartoon animation or pixillation, as well as actors' films and documentaries. Two award-winning entries were of Czech origin – as last year, from the Terezie Brzková Art School Plzeň. This year, the school made an impression on the panel with the footage called Záchránná akce (Rescue Operation); it showed well-done cutout animation, the story with environmental subtext was engagingly rendered in visual terms and its storyline was maintained throughout. The Bohuslava Martinů Art School Polička appealed to the panel with Plastový dotek (Plastic Touch); it was a pixillation i.e. an animation technique. The two foreign films – The Touch coming from the Vilniaus Mykolo Biržiškų Gymnasium in Lithuania had powerful poetics of film narrative and minimalist, simple rendering in combination with documentary narrative; Six Grateful Statues, coming from Children and Youth Cinema Center „Vesnyanka“ in Ukraine, was made almost to professional standards in terms of visual art and technique. Participating schools represented Indonesia, Mali, Croatia, Slovakia, Ukraine, Canada, Russia, India, North Macedonia, Turkey, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia.

In terms of visual art, none of the animated films was above standard. As last year, the documentary was represented by Indonesia. The recommendation of the panel is to approach and invite to participate in the Lidice art exhibition specifically schools, classes and studios that occupy themselves with filmmaking, both in Czechia and abroad. Thus they will be able to inspire other pupils and teachers, showing them how to work with the film media correctly and sensitively. Within the scope of educational activities, it is possible to prepare film workshops for teachers.

Prize of the Panel of Judges

This year, the Prize of the Panel of Judges for a foreign school was awarded to a totally unique collection from Slovakia from the I. W. Král' Art School Povážská Bystrica. The panel very much appreciated the wide scope of the collection, which includes so rarely seen techniques as cyanotype, computer graphics and camera obscura. The panel of judges awarded the Prize of the Panel of Judges to the Czech Art School Krnov for an inventive, well-selected and artistically engaging collection.

Summary

It is clear that the theme for this year's ICEFA was well chosen. What a number of joyful works created with zest, how much creativity, vitality and enthusiasm can be found and read in the pictures! It must be added that the number of irresponsibly compiled collections is decreasing and quality prevails. It is also gratifying that the number of the entries non-compliant with the rules for planar entries was very small. However, it should be stressed that it is also important to comply with the rules for spatial entries – not exceeding the allowed weight and dimensions, taking into account convenience in handling, i.e. not using unstable or fragile media.

As the space at the Lidice Gallery is limited, the panel of judges regularly needs to tackle the issue of which entries should be exhibited and awarded. We believe that the most joyful and emotional moments for children and young people are connected with the creative process itself. Also gratifying for the panel is knowing that pencils, brushes and colours as well as modelling materials can bring joy, cognition, satisfaction and absolute freedom to those engaged in the creative process. Our thanks go to all, children and teachers, for their creative and successful approach to the given theme and their presentation of their experiences through all techniques and materials the world of art offers.

So, we all have much to look forward to. See you at the 48th ICEFA exhibition!

Stanislava Doleželová, ICEFA Lidice Curator

Romana Štajerová, member of the 48th ICEFA Lidice Panel of Judges

Martin Homola, member of the 48th ICEFA Lidice Panel of Judges

Ivana Junková, member of the 48th ICEFA Lidice Panel of Judges

Kateřina Krutská Vrbová, member of the 48th ICEFA Lidice Panel of Judges