



PRESS RELEASE

SOLO SHOW JAN VALIK

VERGE

8 MARCH – 27 JUNE 2020

Husk Gallery is delighted to present 'Verge', the first Belgian exhibition by Jan Valik in its gallery space in Rivoli Brussels. The solo show by the Slovak artist features painted landscapes at the boundary between the abstract and the concrete.

'Verge' is a solo exhibition featuring a recent series of landscapes by Slovak painter Jan Valik (°1987, Bratislava). His artworks emerge from a space among 'absorbed' landscape, recollections, sense and memory. Paintings on the verge of imagination echo sources of inspiration that bridge the principles of Eastern and Western landscape painting evoked by calligraphic spontaneity along with careful construction of pictorial space. Valik searches for the unlimited within the limits of the canvas.

Prof. dr. em. Willy Vande Walle (KU Leuven) describes his landscapes in the exhibition catalogue as follows: *"His works are not abstract canvases, nor are they topographical landscapes or mirrors of his inner self. (...) Valik is fascinated by landscapes, but he's certainly uninterested in making a pale imitation of them. Are landscapes recognisable in Valik's paintings? Maybe, in the context of a personal interpretation, but not strictly necessary. He imposes nothing on the viewer, he doesn't expect the viewer to be able to read his soul, his thoughts. The danger with personal interpretations is that they sometimes have the audacity to become anecdotal and people start to 'compare' his paintings. These could be paintings by Turner or by Li Tang, Shi Tao or another Chinese painter. For Valik, however, what matters is the border area where the real and the imaginary intersect. We cannot deny his paintings their autonomy."*

The relationship of the viewer with Valik's landscapes is both complex and nuanced. Recollections of real and painted landscapes merge. For the viewer, the perception of each painting is like a mapless journey or a visual immersion that also encourages analytical reflections. Valik's canvases, both individually and together as a whole, provide a way of discovering another space where near and far coexist, as well as a glimpse into his artistic process. Every layer of paint is applied with great care, so the paintings are testimonials of the process-orientated nature of his work. In other words, they aren't yet completely finished, but still in a process of becoming.

Jan Valik (°1987, Bratislava) has a deep connection with the Far East. Over the past three years, he has participated in several residences in Japan and China. These experiences have deepened his research and perspective in his approach to painting. Valik is interested in the painterly genesis of space where reality and imagination interact. He is inspired by Western and Oriental art, as well as natural landscapes. Through the interaction between the concrete and the abstract, the artist invites the viewer to reflect on his landscapes.

Short CV

Jan Valik (°1987, Bratislava, Slovakia) is an emerging international artist who currently lives and works in Brussels and Bratislava. He is a graduate of the *Academy of Fine Arts* in Prague, won the third place in the VUB Painting Competition (2016) and was the finalist of the EXIT Award in Usti nad Labem (2011). His solo exhibitions were held for example at the Cici Gallery (Bratislava, Slovakia, 2019), Chisou Gallery (Komono, Japan, 2018), at ABC Gallery (Bratislava, Slovakia, 2017), Niche Gallery (Tokyo, Japan, 2017), Art Space NOV (Pardubice, 2016), Maumau Gallery (Istanbul, Turkey, 2015). Valik has participated in Artist-in-residence programs notably at BankART Studio (Yokohama, Japan, 2016), Mark Rothko Art Center (Daugavpils, Latvia, 2017), Banska Stanica Contemporary (Banska Stiavnica, Slovakia, 2018) and Shanjian Contemporary Art Space (Beijing, China, 2019). His work was exhibited in solo exhibitions in Czech Republic, Slovakia, Japan and China; as well as in group exhibitions in Japan, Czech Republic, Slovakia, China, Latvia, France, Germany and Ireland.

Opening Sunday 8 March 2020 from 3 to 7 pm

Prolongation exhibition Due to the spread of the Covid-19 virus, the gallery had to close shortly after the opening in March until 11 May 2020. *The exhibition is extended until 27 June 2020.*

Opening hours

Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 1 to 6 pm, and by appointment.

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