

PRESS RELEASE

Author, Exhibition Title:	Erika Szőke: <i>Magia Naturalis</i>
Venue:	Záhorie Gallery of Ján Mudroch in Senica, Sadová 619/3
Curator:	Klaudia Kosziba
Exhibition Opening:	October 4, 2024 (Friday) at 5:00 PM
Musical guest:	Michal Čas – accordion
Exhibition Duration:	October 4, 2024 (Friday) – November 17, 2024 (Sunday)

Magia Naturalis by Erika Szőke is an anthology of unique approaches to photography and video. It combines well-known photographic techniques, such as Kirlian photography, which is created using high voltage with the artist's experiments, anothotypes made using light-sensitive turmeric or prints created with soil, mushroom spores, and spirulina (blue-green algae). Szőke removes toxic substances and life-threatening materials from traditional photographic processes, and in her videos, she often employs the natural properties of materials and the inspiring abilities of single-celled organisms to express movement and change.

The sustainability of the world we know is elevated to the primary concern in her current artistic practice. Her vanishing images remind us that we can all understand, at least on an instinctive level, the signs embedded in our present lives.

Erika Szőke (born 1977, Šurany):

A Slovak photographer of Hungarian descent, she studied in the studio of Karol Baron at the Department of Fine Arts and Education at Constantine the Philosopher University in Nitra. Her works explore the relationship between humans, nature, and the environment, reflected in her ecological approaches and methods of creation, where she combines visual art with scientific discoveries and inventions. Through her works, she captures traces, imprints, and "fossils" of the past, as well as personal, familial, and historical memory. She portrays a kind of poetry of transience, aiming to capture the perceived moment and reflect on the nature of impermanence. Szőke focuses on the complex relationship between the original view of the world and its trace in the form of a photograph, between the appearance of analog and digital images, and the impression left in often contradictory materials. She tirelessly experiments with the technological possibilities of photography, often choosing her approach and apparatus based on the desired result, and frequently works against the will of the apparatus itself to achieve a change in atmosphere or a different associative quality.

She lives and works in Veľký Kýr and regularly exhibits in Slovakia and abroad.

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

2024 *Neživý život* (Lifeless Life) – with Klaudia Kosziba, At Home Gallery, Šamorín

2023 *Projekt -1* (Project -1), Ernest Zmeták Gallery, Nové Zámky

2023 *Laniakea*, Pálffy Manor, Malacky

2022 *IN VIVO*, City Gallery, Rimavská Sobota

2022 *Blednúca zem* (Fading Earth) – with Csilla Nagy, At Home Gallery, Šamorín

2021 *Aire Libre* (Open Air), Online Exhibition, Július Binder Gallery, Banská Štiavnica
2021 14th International Photography Festival, Levice
2020 *Speculum Mundi*, MEDIUM Gallery, Bratislava
2016 *Terítsd ki a lepedőt!* (Spread the Sheet!), Magma Contemporary Medium, Sfântu Gheorghe (RO)
2016 *Nastavte si hodiny!* (Set Your Clocks!), Slovak National Museum – Museum of Hungarian Culture in Slovakia, Bratislava
2014 *Metamorfóza* (Metamorphosis), Pál Art Gallery, Miercurea Ciuc (RO)
2011 *Fotosyntéza* (Photosynthesis), Contemporary Hungarian Gallery, Dunajská Streda

Selected Group Exhibitions:

2024 *Ostří vejce* (Sharp Egg), Blansko City Gallery
2023 *IN SITU*, Schemnitz Gallery, Banská Štiavnica
2022 Festival *Dom – Záhrada* (Home – Garden), Bratislava
2018 *Diversita* (Diversity), Centro Arte Lupier, Gardone Val Trompia (I)
2018 *REVITART*, Artcolony Cered Exhibition, Instituto Balassi – Hungarian Academy in Rome
2018 *Belső Narratívák* (Inner Narratives) – MAMÚ, Budapest
2017 *Inner Connections*, Kunst & Håndværk, Odense (DK)
2017 *Remember What We Forgot*, Vejle Art Society, Møllen (DK)
2017 *25 év Symposion* (25 Years of Symposion), Kunsthalle, Budapest
2017 Art Vienna – International Art Fair (Kun Kelemen Fine Arts, Bratislava)
2016 *4th Graphic Art Biennial of Szeklerland*, Sfântu Gheorghe (RO)
2015 *Apró dolgok Istene* (The God of Small Things), Latarka, Budapest

Awards:

2015 Award in the A/SYMMETRICAL photo competition, PH21 Gallery, Budapest
2014 Grand Prize at the 3rd Graphic Art Biennial of Szeklerland (RO)
2014 2nd place in the *Generations Together* photo competition, Mai Manó House, Budapest

Kludia Kosziba