



Denisa Slavkovská: Midnight correspondence

We enter a world of silence and motion, where every object, every line of the interior, and every trace of colour hints at an event that unfolded in a mysterious rhythm, seemingly within the private sphere of invisible stories. The paintings before you are like frozen moments—glimpses of a world where absurdity permeates the everyday, and humour shakes hands with irony and surrealism.

The artist constructs the scene from rooms, familiar objects, and furniture, where unexpectedly, each thing lives its own quiet life, far from our rational logic. Every painting resembles a still life, yet it is far from an ordinary study of space. Inspiration drawn from the works of Jean Hélion and Henri Matisse, particularly his *Red Room*, is evident in the composition, colours, and structure, where the ordinary becomes the backdrop for the extraordinary. Here, the paintings transform into crime scenes—witnesses to moments we cannot reconstruct or fully grasp but whose presence and force resonate like whispered stories with endings waiting to be unraveled.

The influence and presence of a world beyond ordinary logic are felt in the writings of Leonora Carrington and her dark, ironic, and fantastical tales, such as those in *Skeleton Holiday*. Similarly, each painting here radiates mystery, as though it has witnessed a story that unfolded shortly before our arrival, the echoes of which still linger in the room. Hyperbole and absurdity take center stage, yet an ironic attention to detail reminds us of the fleeting nature of our everyday experiences and observations.

This style is combined with bold colors and stylization reminiscent of animated shows from the 2000s, particularly those aired on Cartoon Network. At first glance, the paintings appear cheerful, almost childlike, thanks to vibrant colours and simple yet striking shapes. However, beneath this playful surface lie deeper, darker layers—much like in some animated series of the time, where moments of tension and unease emerge from under the playful veneer. Although the paintings lack the presence of specific characters or silhouettes, their “invisible” traces leave a restless, mysterious atmosphere in the space, one that can feel almost traumatic. It’s as if something happened just moments before—something unseen yet present.

The exhibition is titled *Midnight Correspondence*—a name that alludes to moments of evening inspiration and nocturnal brainstorming, when bold ideas and grand ambitions flow freely through the mind, only to transform into more modest prospects by the light of morning. This

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process is tied to the shadows we imagine, as night alters our perception of our surroundings and casts them in a different light than the day. This phenomenon reflects the artist's practice, where the lofty aspirations and fleeting ideas of her nocturnal dreaming often meet the reality of daily creation.

The exhibition ends with one of those enigmatic, pivotal moments—an installation representing a crime scene. The unsaid mystery invites the viewer to unlock their imagination and reminds us that the true answer lies more in our own stories and personal interpretations than in a tangible, definitive truth. Through this exhibition, we encounter interiors that are not mere backgrounds but rather protagonists in their own right. We become detectives in the space of the paintings, in situations where something eludes us, yet we feel that somewhere, there is an answer.

- Curator: Dominika Bernatková
- Venue: GJK, Towers of the Synagogue – Center for Contemporary Art
- Duration: December 19th, 2024 – January 26th, 2025
- Sound Component: Ondrej Lülei and Mário Tupý
- Light Installation: Filip Tupý
- Visual Communication: CUBE studio Ltd.