

Marcell Esterházy: On the Same Day

2013, video-loop

On the very same day in May, 1937 there were two photographs taken of two girls. One is called Erzsébet Horváth, a 17-year old Roma girl from Szentgotthárd, the other is the 9-year old Mónika Esterházy at the courtyard of the Esterházy castle in Majk. On the same day, they were approximately 160 km away from each other. They were not, they could not have been, connected. One is a day-labourer who belongs to the lowest strata of the society, the other just had her first communion and is the fourth child and the only daughter of Count Móric Esterházy. In 1944 the 24-year old Erzsébet Horváth was deported to Germany due to her Roma origin. In 1950 the 22-year old Mónika Esterházy was interned in Kistarcsa without trial and was the prisoner of the forced labour camp for three years. Erzsébet Horváth never returns from the German concentration camp. Mónika Esterházy lives in Vienna. She is 85 years old. They were not, they could not have been, connected. We are, we must be, connected.

Tibor Balogh: In Time

2013

The stamp can refer to the stigmatized life.

The stamp authorizes communication. It helps convey the message. We barely send or receive from each other letters. Only in personal or official matters. Perhaps these stamps, on the one hand, let the memory of the Roma Holocaust become incorporated into the official narrative, and on the other hand, open the channels of personal communication on the past.

The stamp, protected by a piece of glass and placed in a velvet jewelbox, is a relic of the Hungarian nation. The story that the stamp carries demands respect and honour. The understanding of this story leads to the regeneration of the nation. What is at issue here is whether what happened with Roma in the first half of the 20th century can become part of the Hungarian nation's identity. The stamp enters the Pantheon of national relics with this gesture in order to protect as well as bind Roma and non-Roma, every Hungarian citizen disregarding religious, linguistic or ethnic differences, in the name of equality for the sake of the peaceful existence of a community.

János Amigó Bogdán – Andrea Izsó: Screening

2013, Mixed technique (overhead projector, acrylic painting, light sensitive emulsion, glass)

We spent a considerable amount of time thinking about Erzsébet Horváth's face, body language, about her hand on her hip. Whether the latter suggests self-confidence or worry and whether she is angry or defensive. Interesting to see that the two sides of her face shows entirely different emotions.

This confusion is our starting point. We do not intend or dare to unfold what her "carefree" life was like, what her fate became or what kind of opportunities she had. We aim at revealing her character in various, schematic situations which, in this or that way, could have happened with her. Everything is very simply double-edged:

For us the long family, from where Erzsébet Horváth set out, is an invisible herd. The forest might evoke fear in us, for them it certainly means home and shelter. The rain could be sinister, but at the same time, benevolent, hiding their traces. She is humming on her way – sometimes it is clearly understandable, sometimes she does it only for herself, sometimes in love and sometimes with pain. She arrives to the village, the walls are closing behind her but she is still "free" to leave. Her humming is fading and then she is surrounded by strangers. She disappears at the moment the paper, her first real prison, is issued. Someone carefully cleans the projector and places back the ID. It is handled with care. So it is clear.

Why is something well-documented and well-organized, with hard work which is in fact doomed to death?

Klára Rudas: Almost Now

2013, voice installation

The Roma Holocaust is silent. Collective memory is nurtured by voice. This installation occupies the space of the gallery which space generates speech artificially. It projects ongoing speech to the future as past narrated.

Erzsébet Vojnich: Concentration Camp Hut

2007, 115 x 178 cm, oil, canvas

Jenő André Raatzsch: Re-evaluating Values

2013

Csaba Nemes: Untitled
2013

Three banners, untitled. The author suggests that no comment is necessary, the work speaks for itself. The first image portrays Erzsébet Horváth. The second is chosen from the author's family photo archive. As a result of the housing programme initiated in the 1950ies Roma became eligible for loans with low interest in order to buy "reduced-value" buildings in the outskirts of cities, settlements. This image represents a house of this kind. The family forms a triangle in front of the entrance – maybe the photographer asked them to, maybe they want to protect their home. The third banner was painted on the basis of a photo circulating in the media. It shows the ruins of the „yellow house” in Tatárszentgyörgy. It was once the home of Róbert and Robika before they got killed. The house which meant the possibility and hope for coexistence have turned to be the symbol of terror and fear. The pictures are revolting.

Erika Lakatos: Roma Icons
2013