



PRESS RELEASE

KUNSTHALLE PRAHA TO OPEN THE FIRST LARGE-SCALE EXHIBITION OF THE ROMANIAN ART SCENE: ALL 150 WORKS COME FROM THE COLLECTION OF THE PROMINENT PHILANTHROPIST OVIDIU ȘANDOR

PRAGUE (1 June 2023) – On Friday, June 9, 2023, Kunsthalle Praha will open the second exhibition in the *Ways of Collecting* series. The title of the exhibition, *Lost in the Moment That Follows*, comes from a quote by the founder of surrealism, André Breton, and reflects on the relationship between the past, the present, and the future. The exhibition at Kunsthalle Praha will be the Czech Republic's first extensive presentation of the Romanian art scene, from modernism to the present. All exhibited works come from the diverse collection of Romanian collector and philanthropist Ovidiu Șandor, founder of the Art Encounters biennale of contemporary art in Timișoara and holder of the French title of the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters. A significant portion of his collection will be on display at Kunsthalle Praha until Monday, September 11, 2023.

LOST IN THE MOMENT THAT FOLLOWS ***Ways of Collecting: The Ovidiu Șandor Collection***

June 9—September 11, 2023

Kunsthalle Praha (Gallery 3)

Curator: **Tevž Logar**

Exhibition series concept: **Christelle Havranek**

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- The Ovidiu Șandor Collection focuses on Romanian art, tracing in particular the artistic practices, movements, and ideas that offer meaningful reflections on our common recent history. The exhibition features nearly 150 works by 79 artists, structured by the exhibition curator Tevž Logar into five chapters exploring several topical themes

in contemporary art: identity, nature, space, the body, and memory. The exhibition will present various types of artistic media, from painting and drawing to installation and sculpture to photography and video.

- Șandor's collection has a relatively broad historical scope, spanning from the early twentieth century to the present. The interwar avant-garde is exemplified especially by works by Constantin Brâncuși, Victor Brauner, and Brassai, while the postwar avant-garde is represented by the works of, among others, André Cadere and Ana Lupaș, and contemporary post-revolutionary art by the works of Mircea Cantor, Ciprian Mureșan, and Ioana Nemeș. These prominent names from the Romanian art scene are complemented by equally well-known figures of international art, including Jean David, Marcel Duchamp, and Max Ernst.

- The title of the exhibition comes directly from a quote by the famous French writer André Breton, the founder and main theorist of surrealism, an artistic movement that is strongly represented in Ovidiu Șandor's collection. Curator Tevž Logar explains the exhibition's title: *"The original quote by Breton concerns time—the relationship between the past, the present, and the future. It is also very closely related to the exhibited artworks from Ovidiu Șandor's collection, especially in the sense that this exhibition is not only a retrospective but also a dialogue with the present."* Breton's original quote reads: *"The important thing is that man is lost in time, in the moment that immediately precedes him—which only attests, by reflection, to the fact that he is lost in the moment that follows."*

- The exhibition is a continuation of the series *Ways of Collecting*, which was first presented to the public at Kunsthalle Praha with the exhibition *Midnight of Art: Karel Babiček's Collection* (July 1–September 30, 2022). Christelle Havranek, chief curator and creator of the series concept, adds: *"With this exhibition series, we are highlighting the activity of collecting, which—although often ignored—is an integral part of the artistic ecosystem. In the Czech Republic especially, where for many years art collections were accessible to the public only through state institutions, the role of private collectors remains somewhat of a mystery. Who collects what, and why? What is the relationship between art and collecting? And are*

artists themselves collectors? Our series aims to offer answers to all these questions and many others.”

- The exhibition catalogue contains a wealth of images and information, including Logar’s curatorial text, an interview he conducted directly with collector Ovidiu Şandor, and an essay by the renowned art historian Bernard Blistène, who was director of the Centre Pompidou in Paris from 2013 to 2021.

- As per tradition, the exhibition at Kunsthalle Praha will include a diverse special program, the first highlight of which will be a discussion on Friday, June 9 at 17:00 entitled *The Collection as a Dialogue*, in which collector Ovidiu Şandor and contemporary Romanian artists Ciprian Mureşan and Alex Mirutziu will discuss the phenomenon of collecting. The discussion will be moderated by the exhibition curator, Tevž Logar.

About Ovidiu Şandor

He is the founder and current chairman of the Art Encounters Foundation, which is responsible for the contemporary art biennale of the same name in the city of Timişoara in western Romania. He is also an art collector, an active player in the field of culture and education, and, in his own words, an active citizen. He is on the board of the Conservation Carpathia Foundation, an NGO dedicated to preserving the virgin forests in Romania’s Făgăraş Mountains, with the goal of turning the area into the largest nature park in Europe.

“For my art collection, it is not only recent history and contemporary events that are crucial but also the history of the twentieth century. Particularly from the perspective of an Eastern European country, where schools presented us with a very abridged version of history, art is one of the ways to rediscover the history of our own country and our broader cultural identity,” comments Şandor, highlighting one of the key aspects of building his art collection.

According to the exhibition’s curator, **Tevž Logar**, in the regional context of southeastern Europe, Şandor’s collection is an exemplary case wherein the actions of a particular collector have a positive impact on improving conditions for the entire local art ecosystem—and not “merely” through the purchasing of works by Romanian artists but also through the long-term program of the aforementioned **Art Encounters Foundation**, which functions as an open

platform for contemporary art, connecting Timișoara with other international art spaces.

“When people hear the word collecting, they immediately imagine that it’s something that requires a lot of money. But it actually requires a lot of time. It doesn’t even occur to anyone how much time collecting takes. So, I think time is a very important part of collecting,” says Șandor, who started out as a collector of rare Romanian maps. In December 2022 the French government named him a title of the Knight of the Order of Arts and Letters (Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres) for his significant contributions to culture.

The Collection as a Living Organism

How is **the Ovidiu Șandor Collection** structured, and what new things does it bring? According to curator Tevž Logar, the collection rests on a trio of historical pillars that contest each other. The first pillar is represented by **the historical avant-garde**, which is further developed by the works of the postwar **Romanian neo-avant-garde (i.e., postwar art until the end of the 1980s)**. The third pillar is the art that began to emerge after **the Romanian Revolution** of December 1989, which, given its course and number of victims, ranks among the most violent of the anti-communist upheavals that took place in the late 1980s in Central and Eastern Europe.

“This third pillar is in some sense the most complex of the three, in part because it was at this time that the collection began to provide direct support to the generation of artists who began their artistic creation after the revolution. During their personal and professional development, artists of this generation witnessed the total transformation of the social and political panorama, and this was directly expressed in the formation of their own positions as artists,” writes Tevž Logar in the exhibition catalogue.

According to Logar, visitors should think of the presented collection not as a burial ground for objects but rather as a living organism. The collection is constantly expanding with new acquisitions that often reveal the similarities between the conceptual and formal interests of contemporary artists and those of their predecessors.

It was for this reason as well that the curator approached three contemporary Romanian artists to enter a dialogue with the existing collection, add new impulses and layers, responding to the specific spaces of Kunsthalle Praha and the context of the Prague exhibition. This initiative resulted in the creation of, for example, a new drawing entitled *Peace* by **Dan Perjovschi**, whom local

audiences may know from his drawings on the walls inside the National Technical Library. Visitors will also be able to see a sculpture by **Ciprian Mureșan** entitled *Echoes*, which contains a built-in camera obscura, or the performance *Intervention Is Enough Evidence. Finally.* by **Alex Mirutziu**.

Visitors can get lost in the Ovidiu Șandor Collection until 11 September, 2023. Kunsthalle Praha's exhibition program for this year will then culminate in October, when the gallery will reverberate with an immersive audiovisual project by the art collective Lunchmeat, while in the lower two floors preparations will begin for a major exhibition by the world-famous artistic duo Elmgreen & Dragset. For more information, visit <https://www.kunsthallepraha.org/>.

ENDS

Exhibiting artists

Dragoș Alexandrescu, George Apostu, Hans Arp, Aurel Baranga, Ion Bârlădeanu, Ioana Bătrânu, Marius Bercea, Horia Bernea, Ștefan Bertalan, Brassai, Constantin Brâncuși, Geta Brătescu, Victor Brauner, Michele Bressan, André Breton, Filip Brunea-Fox, André Cadere, Ion Călugăru, Mircea Cantor, Andrei Chintilă, Victor Ciato, Radu Comșa, Lena Constante-Brauner, Roman Cotoșman, Sandu Darie, Jean David, Marcel Duchamp, Max Ernst, Harun Farocki, Constantin Flondor, Adrian Ghenie, Bogdan Gîrbovan, Ion Grigorescu, Octav Grigorescu, Jacques Hérold, Marcel Iancu, Pavel Ilie, Jean Isidore Isou, Wassily Kandinsky, Matei Lăzărescu, Gherasim Luca, Ana Lupaș, Pierre Mabile, Victor Man, Henri Matisse, Max Hermann Maxy, Hortensia Mi Kafchin, Joan Miró, Alex Mirutziu, Florin Mitroi, Ciprian Mureșan, Vlad Nancă, Gellu Naum, Paul Neagu, Ioana Nemeș, Constantin Nisipeanu, Mihai Olos, Miklós Onucsán, Sașa Pană, Andrei Pandele, Christian Paraschiv, Paul Păun, Jules Perahim, Dan Perjovschi, Pusha Petrov, Mihai Plătică, Lea Rasovszky, Robert Rius, Eugen Roșca, Șerban Savu, Decebal Scriba, Arthur Segal, Hedda Sterne, Yves Tanguy, Doru Tulcan, Tristan Tzara, Andrei Ujică, Andra Ursuța, Ilarie Voronca

Artists invited to create new works for the exhibition

Alex Mirutziu, Ciprian Mureșan, Dan Perjovschi

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**Kunsthalle
Praha**

NOTES TO EDITORS

Kunsthalle Praha is a new venue for art in the centre of Prague and the most visited single-location art institution in the Czech capital. As a non-governmental and non-profit platform for connecting the Czech and international art scenes, it was founded by The Pudil Family Foundation of Pavlína and Petr Pudil. Kunsthalle Praha was created through the conversion of the Zenger Transformer Station from the 1930s, which now offers a modern gallery environment for short-term art exhibitions, innovative educational programmes, and cultural events. Kunsthalle's primary mission is to contribute to a deeper understanding of the Czech and international art of the 20th and 21st centuries, while making it more accessible space for the most diverse audience possible. It has its own art collection focusing on modern, post-war, and contemporary art. Kunsthalle Praha officially opened to the public on 22 February 2022 and more than 130,000 visitors have already walked through its doors ever since. Recent exhibitions include the large-scale multimedia exhibition *Kinetismus: 100 Years of Electricity in Art* (22/2–29/8 2022) guest curated by Peter Weibel; Gregor Hildebrandt's largest exhibition and retrospective to date: *A Blink of an Eye and the Years are Behind Us* (29/9 2022–13/2 2023), hosted by the institution's chief curator Christelle Havranek and the current thematic exhibition *Bohemia: History of an Idea 1950–2000*, guest-curated by Russell Ferguson. Over an area of 5,687 m² the premises feature three large gallery spaces, an industrial-style bistro, a design shop, and a café with a historical terrace overlooking Petřín and Prague Castle.

Tevož Logar is an independent curator, editor, and author who collaborates with various art galleries, institutions, collections, and publishers. He has curated or co-curated a number of group and solo exhibitions and cooperated with institutions such as: the Venice Biennale (pavilions of Slovenia, North Macedonia, and Kosovo); Muzeum Sztuki in Łódź; Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo in Torino; the Ljubljana Biennial of Graphic Arts; the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Rijeka; James Gallery in New York; Cooper Gallery in Dundee; American University of Beirut; CAC Genève in Geneva; Kontakt Collection in Vienna, and many others. In 2023 he was appointed chairman of the NLB Group Art Council. From 2009 to 2014 he was the artistic director of the Škuc Gallery in Ljubljana. He is a co-founder of the Ulay Foundation in Amsterdam, where he now sits as a member of its advisory board. He lives in Rijeka, Croatia.

Ovidiu Şandor is the president of the Art Encounters Foundation, the initiator of the Art Encounters Biennial of Contemporary Art in Timișoara, an art collector, and an engaged citizen with a prolific career as a real estate developer. He graduated from the Polytechnic University of Timișoara in 1995 and earned a doctorate in computer science at the KTH Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm in 2010. He rose to prominence as an entrepreneur with the development of the real estate project City Business Centre Timișoara, an endeavor that garnered international recognition with a series of awards and nominations for architecture and energy efficiency. Şandor was also the Romanian commissioner of the europalia cultural event that took place in 2019 in various cities in Belgium. Since 2013 he has served on the Eastern European Acquisitions Committee at the Tate Modern and more recently on a similar committee at the Centre Pompidou. In addition to his involvement in culture, Şandor is active in education and started a foundation that established and runs the British International School of Timișoara, where more than 500 students have already enrolled. He is also a member of the board of the Conservation Carpathia Foundation, an NGO dedicated to preserving the virgin forests in the Făgăraș Mountains in Romania, with the goal of turning the area into the largest nature park in Europe. Şandor was named a Chevalier of the Ordre des Arts et des Lettres in December 2022 by the government of France for his cultural contributions.