

# **SPEKULA<sub>manifest</sub> - MATRIX - ALIENATED**

## **THOUGHT** / Matrika - Odtujena misel / Matrice programmata, pensiero alienato

### **Matrix - Alienated Thought**

*Matrix – The Alienated Thought* is the title of the seventh artistic manifestation Spekula. At a time when the specificity of media messages, carriers, and content generators intertwines with the thoughts of both narrower and broader groups of users, readers, and mediators, individual thought is increasingly exposed to algorithmic platforms of artificial intelligence — and thus to distorted truths. As a counterpoint to this generated reality and unreality, the exhibition titled *Matrix – The Alienated Thought* responds as a genuine and tangible experience of ideas and reflections by the artists **Andrej Savski**, **Zora Stančić**, **Črtomir Frelih**, and **Mojca Smerdu**. The presented works are undoubtedly a transfer of the invisible into the visible realm — ideas embodied in matter, reaching deeply and concretely into the real experience of perceiving the given contents, concepts, contexts, and the artworks themselves. In this way, the seventh edition of the manifesto delves into the transmission of messages, meanings, and new genesis of reality.

**Andrej Savski**, through concept, identity, and political engagement, presents himself in his independent authorial work as an exceptionally skilled and powerful visual rhetorician. In this case, through his own construction of imagery in the manner of painting, he reaches beyond the so-called still life or the re-painting of fragments of previously captured frames, as presupposed, for example, by Magritte or even the early Duchampian perceptions of intertwined images derived from already executed, extracted frames of earlier film-scene authors. These very acts are what gives meaning to the artist's work; they provide starting points for broader values while simultaneously freezing the artistic artifact within a newly constructed context—one that sublimely enriches value patterns.

Andrej Savski (born 1961) studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana. He is a founding member of the artistic collectives IRWIN and Neue Slowenische Kunst (NSK). As part of the IRWIN collective, Savski has exhibited in institutions and galleries such as the Reina Sofia in Madrid; the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven; the Museum of Contemporary Art in Moscow; the Moderna galerija in Ljubljana; the Lehmbruck Museum in Duisburg; the Galleria Civica di Modena; the House of World Cultures in Berlin; Tate Modern in London; the Museum of Modern Art in New York; the Center for Art and Media (ZKM) in Karlsruhe; the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris; the Taipei Biennial; and many others.

**Zora Stančić** defines the notion of the image and marks the imprint—the gaze through movement in an apparent video over archaic sculpture that opens into space. It builds and acts as a milestone in a graphic technique of distinctly imagined, experienced, and deeply felt forces and paradigms. The materials form a web of her thoughts, both reflection and assertion, on the essential determination of reality in exchange for an alienated truth—a message in the form of a stain, as a kind of transformation of shape, a form of universal perception. Cycles and sequences of interwoven works constitute the high emergence of artistic understanding and experience—in short, the creation of entities turned into the interlacing of the artist's visualizations.

Zora Stančić (born 1956) graphic artist and visual artist, graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Sarajevo (Prof. Dževad Hozo). She continued her studies in Paris, Vienna, the USA, and the Czech Republic. Her works are exhibited in the permanent collections of the Albertina in Vienna; the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain in Paris; the Moderna galerija in Ljubljana; the Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum in New Brunswick, New Jersey, USA; and many other venues and institutions. She is the recipient of the Ivana Kobilca Award for lifetime achievement.

**Črtomir Frelih** moves his strokes organically and vehemently, as the true masters once did in the early Renaissance, when Mantegna's works defined solutions and images of the questions of that era. The comparison of Frelih's work with that of a great master is an honor, reflecting the accomplished, analytical, organic, and fluid readability of his visual works. The artist presents planar, two-dimensional surfaces in monochromatic results that nonetheless define immense depth in the painterly treatment of material and motif, where they intertwine in the experience and spirit of graphic creations.

Črtomir Frelih (born 1960) graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana and completed a graphic specialization and a master's degree in art didactics. Awards include the Academy of Fine Arts Prešeren Award, the prize at the 14th Yugoslav Biennial of Graphics, the 18th Graphics Biennial in Varna, and the Purchase Prize of Moderna galerija (17th). Frelih has marked the Slovenian art scene as an excellent printmaker, draughtsman, and educator. He is a recipient of the 2025 Jakopič Award for outstanding achievements in the field of graphic art.

**Mojca Smerdu** senses, feels, intertwines, imagines, grasps, embraces, and conveys not only form but the genesis of sculptural creation—of shape itself. The cause, the motive, is self-evident on the level of existence and being. Existence—the concretization of the embodiment of something invisible and intangible—is what defines the artist. In this way, the concrete form functions not merely as an image but as a necessity for defining an idea, a clearly articulated visualization of deeper meanings. The monumentality of the works reflects the artist's challenge as an immeasurably powerful experience: the growth of matter that surrounds us, in the dialogue of two monolithic, structured forms, responding as magically present, timeless, divine. The images offered give meaning not only to a haptic experience but also convey an atmosphere infused with the breath of life.

Mojca Smerdu (born 1951) graduated in sculpture from the Academy of Fine Arts in Ljubljana and completed a sculptural specialization under Drago Tršar. Since 1976, she has prepared more than fifty national and international solo exhibitions and participated in numerous group exhibitions in Slovenia and abroad. She has been included in representative selections of Slovenian and Yugoslav art both domestically and internationally. In 2016, she received the Prešeren Fund Award.

artistic director, prof. dr. Tilen Žbona, University of Primorska

