

Art connects

Author of the article: Marta Kotar,
translated by: dr. Jernej Kotar

In an earlier issue of the local newspaper 'Krajevne novice', we reported that at the end of August, an exhibition by a renown German artist Axel Becker opened in the gallery of Bogenšperk Castle. We have taken the opportunity to build contacts we believe will lead to a lasting collaboration. Mr. Becker gladly responded to our invitation for an interview, for which we thank him heartily.

Mr. Axel, thank you very much for your kind response to my invitation. Some of us had the opportunity to meet you at the exhibition opening, but not all had the same opportunity. Can you briefly introduce yourself to our readers?

My name is Axel Becker and I was born on December 15, 1965 in Frankfurt am Main.



Axel Becker

When and how did you get into the arts? Where do the first influences on your art and artistic creations come from? Surely a part of those are still following you to this day. Can you point out some?

From my early childhood, I began to work in art and make handicrafts from a variety of materials, including zinc, wood and ceramics. In doing so, I was fascinated by the possibility of endless creation, which in fact characterized me throughout my life. I developed my personal style mostly with three-dimensional paintings in a minimalist style. In doing so, I want to set an effective contrast to a world overloaded with a variety of information. The purpose of the painting is to direct the viewer to small, easily remembered objects that direct their view to individual works of art. My art is an effective counter to today's oversaturation with information. It is simple and quite clear. It must give the observer the necessary focus on essence.

As we said in the introduction, your 3D exhibition is currently displayed in Bogenšperk. Can you briefly present it to us?

The 3D exhibition at Bogenšperk Castle shows different periods of my artistic creation. The beginning depicts my early creation period, representing paintings from *Time for Wine* and featuring a variety of three-dimensional clocks made in the form of a bottle opener and carries the message "Spare time to have good wine." This is followed by a period of sculptures shaped in zinc that also show different three-dimensional elements from metal. The artwork contains metal light reflections but is also interactive for the audience. The last period goes in the direction of the sculptures from the painting. My work with prof. Josip Diminić in 2008 had a great influence here.



Time for Wine

I have a question for you that I believe many would ask. Can you tell us, what is your secret to creating and what is your biggest challenge? I think the biggest secrets of every artist are their own inspiration and the ideas that pop up in their head. Incidentally, art starts in the mind of the artist. And the source of inspiration is every artist's greatest asset. Then comes his ability of transformation. The biggest challenge this year is organizing international exhibitions that require a lot of work. My wife, who has taken over the entire management and organization, is actively helping me, as well as my brother-in-law and my sister-in-law, who help me with the exhibitions. Otherwise such a versatile undertaking would not be feasible. Creating art for people is certainly a big challenge. The numerous art lovers and audiences attending exhibitions are very important to me. I want to convey joy with art. That is certainly one of the biggest challenges. **There have certainly been many great moments and significant milestones in your rich career. What has marked you the most on your creative journey?**

The most memorable moment in my career



Useless Money



Tree

was the collaboration with prof. Josip Diminić, one of the greatest legends and a fantastic teacher. The deepest memory of him still binds me strongly - working with him is a great inspiration for me now, as it had been in the past. I was very pleased that he visited my exhibition at the Labin City Museum.

As an established artist, you already have extensive experience and knowledge. What advice would you give to young artists?

Yes, I have advice for young artists. To keep away from the prevailing trends and develop their own unique, irreplaceable style and not let anyone distract them from it. It is also good to find a good mentor who is always available for good advice and can provide useful feedback. If you are working with fellow artists, it is important that you work together, work for each other, not against each other.

At the end of our interview let me ask you: what are your plans for the future?

My plans for the future foresee further international and domestic development of my art. I will also allow myself the necessary freedom to develop other ideas in peace and to create new artwork. It is my heart's desire to organize an exhibition in honour of prof. Josip Diminić, who was my great, if not the greatest inspiration in my development in the field of sculpture. I want to thank the excellent team gathered around Mr. Peter Avbelj who made the exhibition possible in Bogenšperk.

Mr. Axel, thank you for a pleasant conversation. I wish you much happiness, satisfaction and success in your personal life as well as on your artistic journey. I hope that we will continue to cooperate in the future.