

IGNÁC BIZMAYER

GALLERY

The Slovak National Museum
Ľudovít Štúr Museum in Modra



Kukučínova 15,
Modra

NATIONAL ARTIST IGNÁC BIZMAYER GALLERY



HISTORICAL BASTION AND WALLWORK

A tower of a circular floor plan takes its name „Red Tower“ from burnt red roofing. The building of the first half of the 17th century, after declaring Modra Free Royal Town, was built as the part of city walls. The tower served as a check bastion.

In 1994, Ignác Bizmayer Gallery was established in the bastion.



FIGURAL SCULPTURES

There is a strong link between ceramic figural sculpturing and the emergence of ceramic centres. Several centres engaged in ceramics production were established in Slovakia. The workshops in Stupava and Modra had become the legends in the development of ceramic sculpture.

National artists Ferdiš Kostka and Ignác Bizmayer, who pushed the boundaries of folk art to professional area, held key position in the history of the Slovak ceramic figural sculpturing. The Slovak Folk Majolica in Modra, which educated high-level figural masters, occupies a prominent place.



FERDIŠ KOSTKA (1878 – 1951)

He is considered to be the founder of ceramic figural sculpturing in Slovakia. He came from the family of well-known jug shapers Putza and Kostka from Stupava. Scenes from rural and urban life served as an inspiration for the work of Ferdiš Kostka. In his work, Ferdiš Kostka depicted life in traditional villages in Western Slovakia, mainly from the area of Stupava. He showed the environment and people he knew. In 1946 he became the first holder of the title National Artist.



MODRA POTTERY WORKSHOP

Modra pottery workshop occupies a prominent place in the process of setting up production focused on ceramic figural art. Several talented ceramists, who started to do sculpture art, grew up among producers. They made artistic designs manually as originals or models for mass production moulds. Figural art in Modra pottery workshop was coordinated by several artists who gave ceramists necessary technological and artistic guidance.

The rise of ceramic figural sculpturing occurred after 1945 with the new generation of ceramists. Particularly Ignác Bizmayer stood out among them. His work led to the emergence of a new line in the framework of Modra pottery workshop.

The work of other ceramists is linked to Modra workshop. In addition to the work of painters, jug shapers and retouchers, they pursued ceramic sculpture. **MICHAL ŠKARČÁK**, who is considered to be the oldest ceramist figuralist and the professional artist **IMRICH KÓŇA** (1917 – 1981) belonged to this group. Amongst other ceramists, **GUSTÁV ŠEBO** (1911 – 1982), **VILIAM PEŠKO** (1910 – 2004), **RICHARD HÓZ** (1918 – 1989), **JÁN SKLENÁR** (1924 – 2005), **RUDOLF BARČÍK** (1924 – 1985), **VINCENT LABAJ** (1924 – 1983), **FRANTIŠEK POLAKOVIČ** (1925 – 1992) and others focused specifically on sculpturing.







NATIONAL ARTIST *IGNÁC BIZMAYER* (1922 – 2019)



Ignác Bizmayer has a special position within modern Slovak art culture. He crossed the lines of cottage industry and entered the top league of the Slovak professional artists.



Ignác Bizmayer was born on April 20, 1922 in Košolna, the municipality with old Hutterite tradition which led to his future career. He learned a professional ceramic artist in ceramics production in Modra. His artistic talent, interest in making art work, as well as effort to participate in artistic direction of pottery workshop, are the reason behind the decision to make his own work of a ceramist figuralist. He created several works inspired by folk motifs for Slovak Folk Majolica. In the early 1950's, he exhibited sculptures in several art galleries in Prague and Bratislava, side by side with the well known Czechoslovak Creative Artists. The Czechoslovak art scene was interested in the creations of Ignác Bizmayer; these creations were the reason behind the decision to make his own work of ceramist figuralist. He created an original series of sculptures, compositions from the Slovak folk environment since the 1960's. For his creative work he has won several prestigious awards - the title of National Artist in 1982 and Pribina's Cross I. Instance for the considerable merits of fine art and figurative work in 2003.





IGNÁC BIZMAYER'S FIGURAL SCULPTURES

He had dedicated his active life to sculpturing. He found artistic expression by long-term study and collecting work and became a role model for next generations. The beginnings of his creative work are linked to sacral subjects. He shaped conservative and established themes as the Marian motives and figures of saints in his own way. He focused on his own themes and expressions, that became significant for his work through sculpturing traditional religious figures.



In the beginning, in addition to religious themes, folk paintings on glass resonated in his work. He also found the rich source of motifs in folklore tongue, traditions, decorative features, Slovak folk costumes, and agricultural and craft works depicted creatively in his own way.

A sense for detail plays a very important role in his work. Figural sculptures are sophisticated, we can see folds, embroidery, the details and looks of respective sculptures. Details shown in clay indicate excellent technical proficiency and perfect ethnographic knowledge.



Ignac Bizmayer's works authentically and realistically capture a specific idea emphasised with a colour effect and painting skills.

Several techniques can be detected in the Ignac Bizmayer's work. In addition to the sculptures inspired by specific craftsmen or salesmen, he made traditional painted ceramic plates, sculptured reliefs, dishes with the relief of people in the Slovak wedding and festive folk costumes.



Ignac Bizmayer's work is deeply impacted by the Slovak folk culture and belongs to the jewel of our fine art.



CONTEMPORARY ART SCENE

The period between the 1960s and 1980s might be called the period of a strong generation. The majority of figural sculptors grew up in the Slovak Folk Majolica workshops. They try to continue the tradition of western Slovak jug-shaping. In the early stages of the several sculptors' work, inspiration by the national artist Ignác Bizmayer is seen. As art evolves, so does an artist. This is also the case for presented ceramists. They made their own style characteristic for them and giving them the attribute „special“.

Professional artist **Alexander Walter** (1941), a master of the various genres, nature, folk art, playful themes and ideas is one of leading figures in art. The original author's work includes sculptural and ceramic compositions, monuments and memorials.



JOZEF FRANKO (1951) is a well-rounded ceramist, he proved competent in all spheres of ceramic production. He was active in the production of traditional folklore pottery, sculpturing and artistic tiling. Due to his style, his work was unique and unmistakable. Sacral scene was the major topic of his work, he does not not avoid traditional pottery, wine-growing, craft or bandit themes.



MARIÁN LIŠKA (1961) exceeded the limits of a folk artist, he is also a good painter and sculptor. His figural sculptures reflect thorough processing of individual parts and a sense for detail. He likes to show craftsmen and characters from his immediate surroundings.





Also **JÁN VIGLAŠ** (1958) deals with sculpturing. His work includes the production of traditional ceramics, tile stove products, painted images, and sculptures. The author is inspired by old craft and wine-growing themes.

JÁN PEČUK (1956) is well rooted among contemporary sculptors. His small sculptures, larger compositions and relief plates, wine-growing and village life themes prove author's knowledge and professional level.



WOMEN SCULPTORS

Women's journey into the world of ceramic was not easy. Stereotypes as to the importance and quality of female sculptors prevailed. Despite the decorative and gentle character, ceramic sculpturing was a male domain. Feminine elements in ceramic workshops was always present. Professional women sculptors established themselves in the 1920s. The end of the First World War has brought the freedom for women in art. Women figural artists entered the art world, became the important representatives of decorative art.



HELENA JOHNOVÁ (1884 – 1962), **MARIE VOŘECHOVÁ VEJVODOVÁ** (1889 – 1974), **JÚLIA KOVÁČIKOVÁ HOROVÁ** (1906 – 1978 and **DAGMAR ROSŮLKOVÁ** (1909 – 1998) became the first pioneers in the ceramic world.



After the Second World War women gained more autonomy and participation. The Slovak Folk Majolica hired several women to their workshops. Some of these women were figural sculptors.



The 1980s meant new opportunities for women figural sculpting. Within a strong generation several women figural artists focused specifically on sculpting.

MÁRIA HANÚSKOVÁ

(1964) was another representative of women's figural sculpting. Folk costumes in regional variations are her favourite sources of inspiration. Hanúsková brings characters from folk environment - brides, bridegrooms and winegrowers.



CERAMICS WITH THE ADJECTIVE „ROMA“

The personality of Roma artist **VIOLA PETRÁŠOVÁ-STOJKOVÁ** (1962 – 1995) is unique in terms of content. As a Roma woman, she reflected traditional Roma culture discovered through the history of her own family. Petrášová tried to capture Roma roots and origin, and the essence of the gypsy soul. A woman as the symbol of motherhood, love and family became the inexhaustible source of inspiration for Viola Petrášová-Stojková.



Her figural sculptures have become a national Roma treasure.

Iceland . NĚ
Liechtenstein
Norway grants



The project „Clay Day – Magic of Clay“ was supported by the grant from Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway in the amount of EUR 199,900.00 through the EEA Grants. The project is co-financed from the financial resources of the Slovak Republic national budget in the amount of EUR 29,985.00. The project aims at support to the capacities of cultural players and works with public.

Working together for a green, competitive, and inclusive Europe.

If you want to know more about programmes and projects financed by the EEA Grants in Slovakia, visit www.eeagrants.sk.



SNM – The Ludovít Štúr Museum in Modra
The Museum of the Slovak Ceramic Sculpture
Kukučínova 15, 900 01 Modra



Opening Times:

November – March: Tuesday – Friday 8.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.

April – October: Tuesday – Friday 8.30 a.m. – 4.00 p.m.,

Saturday 9.00 a.m.– 3.00 p.m.

Contacts:

Tel.: +421 33 647 29 44

www.snm.sk

Text: Agáta Petrakovičová Šikulová

Photography: Lucia Mandincová, Miroslav Slámka

Graphic design: Miroslav Slámka

ISBN: 978-80-8060-546-9