



Guidelines for the Main Exhibition of the International Print Triennial 2021 in Krakow

Dissonant Futures

The 20th century and the first decade of the 21st century were marked by positively defined futurism.

The most of the artistic trends of the Great Avant-garde focused in their manifests what the future may bring and how we can modify the shape of it through various activities and artistic projects.

Although, the heirs of the first vanguard artists approached the future more cautiously, they still were full of hope, seeing in the future the time, in which mankind would deal with most cultural problems globally and would create a world of equality and security.

The development of digital culture since the 1980s has resulted in the narrative of the "new millennium" whose arrival was eagerly expected. The Cold War, which ended at the end of the 20th century, prompted the American political scientist Francis Fukuyama to say that: *the endpoint of mankind's ideological evolution and the universalization of Western liberal democracy as the final form of human government.*

At the same time, the world was facing events for which it was not sufficiently prepared.

Ethnic and religious wars, the development of hybrid terrorism, the attack on the World Trade Center and the Paris attacks of November 2015; the withdrawal of Great Britain from the European Union; an outbreak of various social unrest, which symbols were among others protests of "yellow vests", the #MeeToo campaign, or the "Black Lives Matter" movement; an uncontrolled and at the same time commonly used system of algorithms operating on social networks, which is an imperceptible but effective way to control human choices, both on the micro and macro scale; Anthropocene announced by Paul Crutzen and Eugen Stoermer – indicating the epoch in which the geological agency of man, directly influen-

cing the processes taking place on Earth, reached not only an unprecedented scale but established man as the main geological force of the planet; finally, the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic at the end of 2019 – these are only some of the events that contributed to the decline of futurological optimism.

Currently it is difficult to find these ones, who would like to describe the closest future, not to mention dreaming up far-reaching visions.

The Doomsday Clock, which has relentlessly ticked the end of humanity since 1947, has acquired a terrifying twin brother in the form of a New York digital metronome – a clock that "The New York Times" described as one that: *until now has shown the time, and now it indicates the remaining time*, so it counts the time that we can still use to take action to prevent the irreversible effects of global warming.

In other words, in front of our eyes successive structures and pillars of democracy are disintegrating, social and racial inequalities are re-exposed, the lack of any reflection on the future of us and our planet is exposed, which would cover a period longer than one term of governance. While revealing the operation of a tool, the mechanisms which we cannot comprehensively understand or control. All this has been further aggravated by the attack of an unknown virus, which turns out to be cleverer than the team of scientists. And at the same time, almost from the beginning, it fits into various conspiracy narratives.

Can we in this situation find bravery in ourselves to talk about the future, create a project, which more than just by names can deal at least half of the time horizon?

Do we have in ourselves this bravery that we see in thousands of young people who right now are just getting out on the streets to speak on climate change?

Can we at the same time transform our being into digital reality in such a way that we can control it, and not in a way that it forms our preferences and makes decisions on behalf of us?

If yes, what kind of future or maybe futures can we see in the times, in which more or less smokescreen is coming down?

Will Artists take another step, the one that was supporting the Great Avant-garde? Will they try to describe the present and/or draw up with bravery plans of the micro/macro future?

The newest edition of the International Print Triennial in Krakow asks questions to participants about the dissonant futures that are arising. What are they and what they could be? Are they sentenced to exclude one another? Is it possible to see in contradiction of potential scenarios a hope for the common future?

We also ask about the way of future perception. We desire to see diverse perspectives of their description that are geographically, culturally, historically determined. Although, we all live in a global village which consists of local farms that have their own history, own narratives, and ways to face up the challenges of the presence, as well as own frameworks' conceptions, in which we can design the future.

Among questions that we encouraged the Participants to ask, there are some about the role of visual arts, and first of all the graphics and their derivatives in the contemporary world.

Graphic Artists used as their tool a print, which is the most democratic medium of mass communication of mankind's work, and thanks the digital revolution only increased the possibilities of its influence.

How and about what would You as an Artist like to talk with your Viewers? What graphic arts can offer both Artists and Audience? A reflection, even a temporary escape, a warning, or maybe a hint for the future.

In the opinion of the Organisers, the Main Exhibition of the international print competition should be a strong voice of these, who use the most democratic and the most socially sensitive artistic medium.

What will be our future then? What is our present?

We hope that the Main Exhibition of the International Print Triennial 2021 in Krakow will provide the Audience with many images encouraging reflections, inspiring answers, and maybe even some stimulus to brave thinking about future projects that can possibly be our rescue for all of us.