



**ROBERT FICO, DOCTOR OF JURIDICAL SCIENCE, PHD**

participating artist: **Dalibor Bača**

opening on Thursday January 13th at 6pm

exhibition duration: 13th January 2011 – 30th January 2011

curator: Dušan Zahoranský

The sculptor Dalibor Bača created a very provocative portrait of a prominent Slovak politician. Bača points out the devaluation of public space caused by ideology and poor taste. The Public Pedestal is a public-art project of an association that comments critically on public space being glutted with kitsch. The author made this controversial piece in August 2010 and agreed to reconstruct it for the Gallery Cube.

Dalibor Bača has created strong portrait of an important contemporary political icon. Robert Fico (SK), Viktor Orbán (HU), Ivan Langer (CZ), Stanislav Gross (CZ) or Julija Tymošenkova (UA) belongs to a younger generation of middle European political leaders. With a portion of populism and organizational skills they gain wide public support. They do play an important role among domestic politicians. Each of them defines and deforms nowadays politic in post-communist countries.

Robert Fico was on one side able to completely adopt left wing agenda so the conservative Slovakian communist party lost its power. In the nineties - during Vladimir Mečiar governance – Rober Fico was the only opposing Member of Parliament who has stayed present whole night at the notoriously known meeting of the Parliamentarians. From November 3rd – till morning 4<sup>th</sup> 1994 newly elected parliament has changed two secretaries, board of state run television and radio station, leaders of secrete agency and representatives of state run companies and many other regional leaders.

Rober Fico is on the other hand responsible for the escalation of tensions between Slovak Republic and Hungary (his cooperation with extreme nationalistic party). The last culturally unacceptable step of Robert Fico as prime minister was public erection of a Svatopluk's statue at the Bratislava's Castle in Slovakia. Sculpture with no artistic value was – without any public debate - created by totalitarian sculptor Jan Kulich. Dalibor Bača has prepared commentary of this situation for independent initiative „Verejný podstavec (Public Pedestal)“ . Group of young artist has rented an empty pedestal in front of the former “Workers palace” in Bratislava. Their aim was to invite artist to contribute art piece which would newly define role of artwork in public space. Representatives of building have got in to panic and have deinstaled secretly first art piece done by Dalibor Bača – figurative portrait of recent prime minister.

Apart from an ironical gesture – portrait of politician who is arrogantly using public art to promote anachronical ideology – Bača has created strong sculpture. Portrait is very well mastered. Expression, appropriate size of sculpture and artistic stylization shows marks of masterful art piece. Those autonomous qualities enabled us to present portrait in Gallery Cube Prague.



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In Czech context there are also many examples of a problematic public art decision. Arguable placement of Taras Ševčenko's statue in Prague Smichov district; amateurish sculpture competition for mayor Ulrich's portrait in Hradec Kralove; bizarre public fight of two sculptors involved in President Wodrow Willson monument for Prague.

Those conflicts reflect our disability to handle public space properly and democratically. After change of regime and fair restitution of stolen properties we do not know how to eliminate corruption and wrongdoing of environment insensitive developers and city municipal officers.

Does the artist refuse to get involved in contemporary public art? Do they prefer other carrier steps instead of slow and energy consumed monumental artwork?

Work of Dalibor Bača from my point of view articulates those questions very well. On one hand he has created unique art work which was refused by public space. Our second attempt to present this sharp figurative portrait in gallery context my help us to critically define roles which post-communist society expose young artists.

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Pro víc informací / For more enquiries:

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