

Zgodovinski atrij

Osrednji atrij

Stekleni atrij

Desni atrij

## Tomaž Berčič: Wordsmiths

People love stories. Our innate love of storytelling accompanies us throughout our lives – from the moments when, crawling around on all fours, we listen to tales of knights and dragons, our mouths agape, to the time when a literary work draws us in and slowly, line by line, reveals a world of inconceivable dimensions. Few people are able to create these worlds on paper and share them with all those eager to enter them.

Tomaž Berčič (1968) is one of the people who are drawn to literature. He says he was often interested in who was behind it all. Who are the people who masterfully place words side by side and create content that warmly invites disclosure? To find out, he embarked on a multi-year project, entering into dialogue with contemporary Slovenian writers, thinkers, and storytellers.

The author's dialogue with writers yields a wealth of photographs that bring the people behind the names on the covers to life in portraits, showing them as flesh-and-blood individuals. For once, the focus is not on the literary works of those depicted, their oeuvre placed in the background, with only their names hinting at their mission. This is what puts the viewer and the subject on equal footing. The decision to place them in a space where they feel comfortable and safe lifts the veil off their intimacy. The informality of the environment allows the viewer to glimpse a piece of their life wisdom and experience—something that a photograph taken in a studio setting would find difficult to capture. Before us are ordinary people who share the same desires, streets, and world as we do, their creative genius implied only in the invitation to be photographed. There is a sense of familiarity and trust, and the closeness and authenticity established encourage the viewer to follow suit, to enter into a dialogue with the masters who have left their mark on the Slovenian cultural landscape and listen to the stories written at the moment of portraiture.

The author chose a fundamentally iconographic motif—the portrait—to capture the writers' unique characters. This is the essence of portraiture itself: not only to recognise a unique individual, but to immortalise them in timelessness; to extract them from everyday life and bring them to light, which is ultimately what the word 'portrait' means according to its Latin origin.

The author's decision to display black-and-white photographs lends a special (ageless) quality to the exhibition. The absence of any colour contrasts underpins the author's intention to remove unnecessary visual distractions that would divert the viewer's gaze from the core motif of each work. In carefully considered compositions and well-thought-out contrasts between light and shadow, light and dark, the subject's face shines fervidly and glows solely with its own presence. The portraits highlight muscles, wrinkles, facial expressions, and even the gaze, however fleeting, revealing a piece of the writer's personality. Humour, mischief, thoughtfulness, contemplation—all of this is an integral part of the whole behind the celebrated mastery of words.

The exhibition could be deemed a photo archive of collective memory and the Slovenian literary canon. However, this would be doing it a great injustice. Much more than a personal chronicle of the author's encounters and shared experiences, it is a quiet visual tribute to the work of all those portrayed, highlighting their creativity. Like a piece of literature, the exhibition draws us in and unveils slightly different literary worlds—landscapes of the writers' personalities. In this way, it tells us stories from behind the covers, stories that are hidden but very much alive.

*Anže Slana*

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**Tomaž Berčič** (Ljubljana, 1968) is a graphic designer and artistic director at the Art Design studio. He has engaged in photography for more than four decades, the last 25 years professionally and artistically. His work focuses on portraits of common, often marginalised individuals, as well as on abandoned and degraded spaces. Berčič has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions and showcased his work in Slovenian and foreign media outlets. He is the president of the Kamnik Photography Club and a tutor in workshops and regional projects.

Guided tour of the exhibition with the artist: Thursday, 9 April 2026, 5 pm

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## Tomaž Berčič: Mojstri besede

Ljudje imamo radi zgodbe. Prirojena ljubezen do pripovedovanja o najrazličnejših dogodkih nas spremlja vse življenje – od trenutkov, ko po kobacanju po vseh štirih z odprtimi usti poslušamo pripovedi o vitezhih in zmajih, do takrat, ko nas literarno delo posrka vase in se pred nami počasi, vrstico za vrstico razodeva svet neslutnih razsežnosti. Redki so tisti, ki so te svetove zmožni preliti na papir in jih deliti z vsemi tistimi, ki z veseljem posežejo po njih.

Tudi Tomaž Berčič (1968) je eden tistih, ki jih literatura pritegne. Kot pravi sam, ga je pogosto zanimalo, kdo je ta, ki stoji za vsem. Kdo je ta, ki je besede mojstrsko postavil drugo ob drugo ter ustvaril vsebino, ki toplo vabi k razkritju? Prav zato se je lotil večletnega projekta, pri katerem je stopil v dialog s sodobnimi slovenskimi književniki, misleci, razgrinjalci zgodb.

Dialoškost avtorja z literati rezultira v kopici fotografij, ki gledalcem portretno razkrijejo imena s platnic in nam jih predstavijo kot osebe iz mesa in krvi. Niso pomembne besedne umetnine upodobljenec; njihov opus je postavljen v ozadje, na njihovo poslanstvo opozarjajo zgolj imena. Prav to izenači položaj gledalca in portretiranca. Odločitev, da so postavljeni v prostor, kjer se počutijo udobno in varno, odstira tančico z njihove intimne. Neformalnost okolja, v katero so postavljeni, omogoči, da gledalec uzre delček življenjske modrosti, izkušenj – nekaj, kar bi fotografija, posneta v popolnosti studia, težko zabeležila. Pred nami so sleherniki, ki si z nami delijo enake želje, ulice, svet, njihov ustvarjalni genij pa se izraža le v povabilu k fotografiranju. Čutiti je domačnost in zaupanje; vzpostavljeni bližina in avtentičnost pa medse povabita tudi samega gledalca, da še sam stopi v dialog z zaznamovalci slovenskega kulturnega prostora ter tako prisluhne pripovedi, ki je nastala v trenutku portretiranja.

Avtor se je odločil za temeljni ikonografski motiv – portret – in v njem ujel edinstveni značaj literatov. Prav to pa je srž samega portretiranja – ne le prepoznati edinstvenega posameznika, temveč ga ovekovečiti v brezčasnosti; ga izvleči iz vsakdanjika ter ga razkriti, kar pa navsezadnje beseda portret po svojem latinskem izvoru tudi pomeni.

Posebno (nadčasovno) noto razstavi doda avtorjeva odločitev o predstavitvi črno-belih fotografij. Odsotnost vsakršnih barvnih kontrastov utemeljuje avtorjev namen po odstranitvi nepotrebnih vizualnih motilcev, ki bi gledalčev pogled umaknili od jedrnega motiva posameznega dela. V skrbno pretehtanih kompozicijah in z dobro zamišljenimi kontrasti med svetlobo in senco, svetlim in temnim obraz upodobljenca vehementno zasije in sveti zgolj z lastno prezenco. Potreti poudarjajo mišice, gube, mimiko, tudi sam pogled, četudi bežen, s čimer se nam odstira košček literatove osebe. Hudomušnost, nagajivost, zamišljenost, kontemplacija – vse to je sestavni del celote, iz katere izhaja mojstrstvo besed.

Razstava bi lahko učinkovala kot fototeka kolektivnega spomina in slovenskega literarnega kanona. Vendar bi ji s tem naredili veliko krivico. Je precej več kot osebna kronika avtorjevih srečevanj in deljenja izkušenj. Gre za tih vizualen poklon delu vseh portretirancev, ki podkrepí upodobljeno ustvarjalnost. Tako kot literarno delo nas tudi razstava posrka in odstira nekoliko drugačne literarne svetove, svetove same literatove pokrajine osebnosti. Tako nam pripoveduje zgodbo izza platnic, ki je sicer skrita, vendar še kako prisotna.

Anže Slana

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**Tomaž Berčič** (1968, Ljubljana) je grafični oblikovalec in umetniški vodja v agenciji Art design. S fotografijo se ukvarja več kot štiri desetletja, zadnjih 25 let profesionalno in umetniško. V središču njegovega dela so predvsem portreti vsakdanjih in pogosto marginaliziranih posameznikov ter zapuščeni in degradirani prostori. Razstavljal je na samostojnih in skupinskih razstavah ter svoja dela objavljaj v slovenskih in tujih medijih. Je predsednik Fotografskega kluba Kamnik ter aktiven mentor na delavnicah in v regionalnih projektih.

Voden ogled razstave z avtorjem: četrtek, 9. april 2026, ob 17. uri



Mestna občina  
Ljubljana

