



THE DARK SIDE OF PARADISE

Artist: **Andrej Kolenčík**
Curator: **Omar Mirza**

Opening: Thursday, 15 November 2018, 6pm
Duration: 16 November 2018 – 27 January 2019
Venue: The Bunker

„It will be a different kind of joy. It will be sorrow.“
– I. G., Former President of Slovakia

In his book *Artificial Paradises*, from 1860, Charles Baudelaire describes states caused by hashish, opium and wine and warns his readers against the destructive effects of the illusions of pleasure these drugs can cause. In Nitra Gallery's Bunker, in 2018, Andrej Kolenčík holds an exhibition titled *The Dark Side of Paradise* that responds to the reality we live in. He alerts us about all the mundane artificial paradises that enter our bloodstream either consciously or subconsciously as well as the dark side of our illusions of perfection, efficiency, desires and needs, the only correct answers and prototypes of beauty, shining from billboards and screens.

Right here, it's a Paradise on Earth. Or it could be. On the other, dark side of the world, people are suffering. Because, for instance, we want strawberries in the winter. We are lied to, disappointed, we lie to both others and ourselves. We always have time to waste time, just so we do not have to accomplish anything. Just complain. We have choice, though. Every coin has two sides – good and evil, beauty and ugliness, normalcy and deviancy. And yet we often choose the exact opposite of what we really want.

Andrej Kolenčík's first solo exhibition in Nitra presents his view of the world and the current social landscape. His point of view might seem unexpected, strange, distant, maybe even deviant. Nevertheless, it is authentic and honest. For the post-apocalyptic space of the Bunker, he created a multi-media environment, a paradise of underground pleasures, a "post-eden" setting for this post-factual age. Post-comics, post-graffiti, post-graphic post-design, post-art... all of this and much more and maybe even something completely different can be found in an organic web of still and motion pictures, objects, noises and clamor, on the walls, projected on screens, both in real and unreal space, in restored or refrained time.

“It's going to be a hell of a ride!”
– O.M., Curator

Andrej Kolenčík (1984, Bratislava), a.k.a the Admiral, is a filmmaker and graphic designer. He studied printmaking at Jozef Vydra's School of Applied Arts, animation at the Academy of Performing Arts and took fellowship at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design where he studied printmaking. He directs feature films, animated and documentary films, video clips and commercials. He also works with illustration and design. He is a co-founder of Fest Anča and was its program director for six years. In 2014, he was selected from among 4000 applicants for the Berlinale Talents event. His films received awards at both Slovak and international film festivals (e.g. Golden Egg at Emir Kusturica's Küstendorf Film Festival in Serbia; Sun in a Net Award for his short film *The Exhibition*). Since 2015, he has been working under his own brand and production company Admiral Films. He lives and works in Bratislava. His work can be found at www.kolencik.org.

Omar Mirza