

Karel Havlíček

Born 1907, Berlin; died 1988, Kadaň, Czechoslovakia.

Born into a family of artists, Karel Havlíček studied law and became a lawyer - a career he did not like. He spent most of his life in Kadan, in northwestern Bohemia. He married and had three children. Havlíček worked for the Czechoslovakian government during World War II. The situation became emotionally and morally impossible for him, so he resigned, a political decision that marked him the rest of his life. He began drawing at this time as a way of exorcising his emotional and spiritual conflicts. Working only at night, he followed a ritual reminiscent of automatic practices. His drew without premeditation, spontaneously, as if overtaken by spiritualist production. After 1948, he was forced to leave his job in a ceramics factory where he painted dishes, and he became a laborer. In 1948, the Czech art critic Karel Teige, a major figure in the Czechoslovak avant-garde, became interested in him and planned to organize an exhibition of his drawings, a project crushed by the political authorities. This was a profound disappointment to Havlíček. He died before knowing the freedom that came about with the Velvet Revolution in 1989.

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2012

Outsider Art / Gigantomachy, Outsider Art: Collection of Pavel Konecny, Karel Havlicek, Museum Montanelli, Prague, CR

1998

Stiftung Wilhelm Lehbruck Museum – Duisburg, Germany

1991

Stiftung Wilhelm Lehbruck Museum – Duisburg, Germany

1985

Museum Ludwig – Cologne, Germany

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2023

Escaping Reality: Art Brut from Czechia, The Czech Center, New York, NY
We Are Birds, Outsider Art Fair, New York, NY

2017

Graphite Vision, Schick Art Gallery, Saratoga Springs, NY
Immortal Menagerie, Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York, NY

2016

Maverick, Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York, NY

Outsider Art Fair, NY represented by Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York

2015

dRAW, Intuit: The Center for Intuitive and Outsider Art, Chicago, IL

Outsider Art Fair Paris, represented by Cavin-Morris Gallery, Paris, France

Rhizome: New Growth at Cavin-Morris Gallery, Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York

In Dreams Begin Responsibilities: 30 Years at Cavin-Morris, Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York

Outsider Art Fair, NY represented by Cavin-Morris Gallery, New York

2002

L'Art Brut Tchèque, Halle Saint Pierre – Paris, France

L'art Brut in the Czech Lands – Exhibition of Marginal Authors, Stone Bell House – Prague, Czech Republic

Czech Surrealism 1929-1953, National Gallery – Prague, Czech Republic

PUBLICATIONS

2014

Art Brut Collection abcd, Flammarion, Paris, 2014. Catalog published at the occasion of the exhibition Art Brut, collection abcd/Bruno Decharme, at La Maison Rouge, Paris

2006

art brut collection abcd, 2006, Les Editions, ed. Barbara Safarova and Terezie Temankova

2002

L'art brut tchèque, Publisher: Halle Saint Pierre – 2 rue Ronsard – Paris, France, Author: Lusardy Martine – Paris, France