



NO TITLE, For Blanka, her favorite picture, 1960-1965, Oil on wood



NO TITLE, The View from the Studio, around 1970, Oil on wood

EXHIBITION

# **JOSIP RESTEK**

## Impressions

**26. 06. - 28. 07. 2021**

The oeuvre of Josip Restek has been determined both by time frame and geographical area in which he was born, where he lived and worked. His art is a reflection of life experiences and impressions stemming from direct perception of nature, situations and objects. He records what he sees and experiences in a distinctive manner, creating a remarkable and recognizable visual statement. During the five decades of artistic creativity, he has realized an opus of accomplished visual output. It is characterized by outstanding individuality, which is difficult to place within the framework of visual production of his contemporaries. Although Restek created some interesting paintings, his main strength lies in experimenting with printmaking techniques.

The exhibition encompasses approximately twenty paintings and prints from the artist's family legacy, which gathers several hundred artworks, and it is only a small reminder of Restek's presence in the Croatian modern art. The selected works belong to different stages of the artist's life: paintings from the time of Restek's frequent travels to European cultural centers, works inspired by folklore, prints that reveal traces of innovations in this technique and depict the elements of alternative landscape. The paintings with motifs of the sea, created during the artist's stays on the coast, perhaps do not belong to his highest achievements, but they hold an important emotional place in his oeuvre.

In the artistic legacy of Josip Restek, figurative works from the 1950s spark particular interest. In terms of content, they are related to human figure, individual children's figures or groups of children depicted in play. In terms of form, though, these are compositions of



ROZETTE II  
1970  
Deep relief print

intense color, shapes reduced to basic elements, without insisting on detail or faithful imitation of motives. They appear a bit naïve, like an inarticulate children's drawing, similar to *art brute*... It is interesting to mention that these works were created in the times when Restek traveled a lot, visited exhibitions, stayed in Paris and met with the art production there, times when he socialized intensely with contemporaries, artists who introduced him to the art world of Paris. It is difficult to define the provenance of these works, but the topic is intriguing, all the more so because paintings and graphics inspired by folk and folklore traditions contain similar artistic solutions.

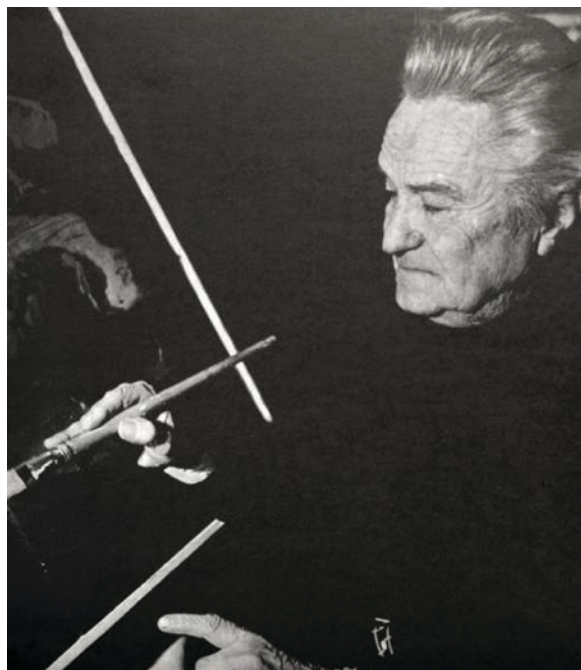
The artist's achievements in the techniques of gravure, intaglio and surface printing were repeatedly valorized and presented at retrospective and study exhibitions, thanks to which Restek was given a deserved place in the national graphic art. For this occasion, we selected several abstract motifs, as the examples of an alternative landscape inspired by individual shapes from nature or images of space.

A lesser-known aspect of Restek's art is the one that speaks of his work in the context of an island: these are coastal motifs that he documents in a more or less realistic manner. The environment rich in color and light, charged with a unique atmosphere and way of life, becomes a well of impressions. These impressions are depicted in all the variants of painted landscapes, and they reflect in various forms of the artist's visual solutions.

### **Vilma Bartolić**



NO TITLE  
(Happy play, son Ratko)  
1958  
Oil on canvas



**Josip Restek** (1915-1987) the renown Croatian academic painter whose exceptional work has brought him national and international recognition and numerous prestigious awards for graphic art, illustration, art restorations, sacral art painting, and education.

Regularly visiting pulsating European art centers, galleries, museums and directing artistic workshops and art conventions perfecting his skills in graphic techniques while developing his charismatic multi-media art print and original art expression.

In 1978 in his charming, now 112 years old wooden birth house in Volavje by Zagreb, he organized the Permanent Exhibition of Paintings and Prints of Josip Restek. Josip Restek died on May 13, 1987, in Zagreb, leaving behind over 2,300 cherished art pieces.

### **Impressum:**

Catalog publisher:  
Livingstone association

For the publisher:  
Denis Redić

Graphic Design:  
Astoria design studio  
Rijeka  
June 2021

Exhibition curator:  
Vilma Bartolić

### **Exhibition organisers:**

Livingstone association  
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Dr. Ivana Durinovic-Wolf,  
niece of Josip Restek, on  
behalf of the family

**[www.josiprestek.com](http://www.josiprestek.com)**

The exhibited paintings  
are part of the private  
family collection of  
Ivana Đurinović Wolf,  
Josip Restek's niece.