

American Dream: 2 July 2009 – 4 October 2009

2009-06-17

The National Museum in Krakow – The Main Building, al. 3 Maja 1

An exhibition entitled 'American Dream' organized to mark the 90th anniversary of the establishment of formal diplomatic relations between Poland and the U.S. is to be held at the National Museum in Krakow July 2-October 4. It is designed as an artistic and educational event.

The authors of the project display diverse phenomena along with people and notions important to the generation of Poles who entered adulthood in the 1960s and 1970s while confronted with the reality of the Polish communist regime and its propaganda. Aspects of reality that entered into the common consciousness and which strongly influenced the outlook of Poles of this era will be illustrated in the exhibition American dream. Aldona Jawłowska's book *Drogi kontrukultury* (The Ways of Counterculture) of 1975, in which the author defined the credo of the generation, is the starting point of the show. The book refers to experiences in the field of culture, starting from the 1950s and the beat generation through the protest movements of the 1960s and 1970s until the transformations in the Eastern bloc in the 1980s. The philosophical, literary and cinematic ideas of the "road" start a chain of associations, which lead the public through the world of motion pictures, music, literature, poetry and visual arts. The show will be an artistic and multimedia experiment, with different types of installations, including projectors displaying documentaries, photography, and playing specially prepared soundtracks.

The core of the exhibition will be a collection belonging to the father of American photorealism – Louis K. Meisel – a collector from New York who in 1969 opened in So Ho a small gallery dedicated solely to promoting photorealism. Louis K. Meisel is one of the most prominent collectors and dealers of this movement, and his gallery is known around the world. He is also the author of numerous essential publications on the topic. The exhibition will present such prominent artists as Ralph Goings, Richard Estes, Robert Cottingham and Robert Bechtle – to name only a few – all of whom are top American photorealist artists. American p

Photorealism has never been presented in Poland before. Currently part of the Louis K. Meisel collection is being shown in the exhibition Picturing America. Photorealism in the 1970s, co-curated by Louis K. Meisel and on display at the Deutsche Guggenheim in Berlin. The Berlin show is recognized as the first and most comprehensive presentation of American photorealism in Europe. Presentation of this prominent collection at the National Museum in Krakow places the Museum among the leading museums in the world in presenting contemporary art of a highest order.

The show will be accompanied by two publications – a lexicon containing around 300 entries explaining the phenomena presented in the exhibition and an album on American photorealism. A rich sideline interdisciplinary education programme is also planned outside the Museum to tie in with the exhibition.

Other accompanying events include: Weegee – an exhibition of the famous American photojournalist, May – August, Design in the Kingdom Coca-Cola (working title), historical Coca-Cola posters from the Coca-Cola Museum in Atlanta, July – September, Graphic Art from the Collection of the Polish Museum of America, September – December, Andy Warhol, Eric Fischl, Philip Taaffe... – a presentation of contemporary American art within the framework of the exhibition First Step..., until December '09.

Exhibition organizers: The National Museum in Krakow, Consulate General of the United States in Krakow, The Jagiellonian University, Louis K. Meisel Gallery

Media partners: TVN 24, Polskie Radio, Radio Kraków, AMS, Gazeta Wyborcza, Polityka, Tygodnik Powszechny, Sztuka.pl, Art&Business, Polish Market, Miesięcznik Kraków, Onet.pl, Magiczny Kraków, Kurs na kurs, Krakow Post, Cracow-life.com, Galeria Kazimierz, Kijów.centrum