

time

**JIŘÍ VALOCH**

Jiří Valoch  
**ordinary words**

*I would like to sincerely thank Jana Písaříková,  
Ondřej Chrobák and Zbyněk Baladrán.*  
Nadine Gandy

Gandy gallery  
Exhibition: May 26 – July 28, 2022



In the Slovak as well as the Czech context, **Jiří Valoch** is mainly discussed concerning his curatorial and publishing activities. Abroad, he is perceived primarily as an author of visual poetry and conceptual works. His work developed from the mid-1960s onwards not in isolation beyond the borders of totalitarian Czechoslovakia, but instead in the context of following international developments.

JIRÍ VALOCH maintained extensive correspondence with artists from all over the world. His work thus transcended the geopolitical borders of the time. He drew on the influences of Italian visual poetry, referred to the canon of Western conceptual thinking, and was in contact with the authors from the Fluxus movement. He created his authentic handwriting, in which, with the help of typescript or a combination of written and visual communication, there is a minimalist fusion of two seemingly incompatible elements: lyrical feeling and rational concept.

The meaning of its title was extremely important for the creation of this exhibition: ordinary words. It is a reflection on what we can and cannot accept as common, ordinary or normal, and not only in the context of working with the structure of language, with which Valoch's work is primarily connected. It points to the importance of social openness in the ability to incorporate otherness into one's life. As an artist, curator and collector, Jiří Valoch has always pushed the boundaries of the norms of art. His work and his curatorial activities, which in the last 10 years are finally beginning to form a respected canon of Czech-Slovak art, were not considered by many to be art at all at the time of their inception. The openness to otherness is also important here in terms of the fact that Jiří Valoch is not only an artist with whom I collaborate as a curator, but also a man who, despite the conventions, became part of my family after his illness made it impossible for him to live independently. The Bratislava exhibition at Gandy Gallery is the first comprehensive show of his work in Slovakia.

Jiří Valoch entered the scene of visual art in the mid-1960s when he began to create his op-art-inspired poems. In 1969, he regarded his experiments with the pure structure of grapheme as exhausted, and under the influence of linguistically oriented conceptual art, he returned to the meaning of words. In connection with the medium of drawing, he developed his interest in so-called non-verbal semantics, whereby he explores how the meaning of the word itself changes through simple drawing or colour intervention.

Jiří Valoch's work is about the experience of radical presence. The empty space around the words, formed by the white page of the paper, plays an important role. This is because it creates an environment that helps to remove the word from its original context, which in itself becomes a strong sensual perception.

The photographic works that constitute the bulk of the exhibition were all created in a short period between 1969 and 1975 and were published collectively in the monograph *Poesia Visiva*<sup>1</sup>, published in Rome by Beniamino Carucci in 1975. In the series *Observing the landscape* (1974), he combines landscape motifs, such as a piece of forest floor, a stump, or a pile of wood, with non-objective concepts, always with an aspect of mere possibility. These so-called photo texts are followed by photographic documentation of minimalist actions in nature. An important and, from the point of view of Valoch's work, a crucial part of the exhibition are his photographic sequences *Haiku I, II, III* - triads of photographs, recorded while walking throughout the day, keeping the order in which they were taken.

Also associated with walking in the landscape is a series of photographic works referred to as studies or identifications; these are sequences capturing virtually identical elements, such as treetops along a road, drifting clouds in the sky, high tension wires, and various road surfaces. In their form, they both refer to conceptual photography and reflect the inspiration of scientific visualisation. Most of Jiří Valoch's photographic works were created in the landscape natural area of the Moravian Karst, during the period when he was involved in archaeological excavations led by his father, the famous Czech archaeologist Karel Valoch.

**Jana Písaříková**  
curator and theoretician of Czech and Moravian art at the Moravian Gallery in Brno

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<sup>1</sup> The foreword to this book was written by the architect and theoretician Aldo Rossi, and by Jan Pavlík, who was in fact Jiří Valoch himself, disguised by the pseudonym of his grandfather.



1



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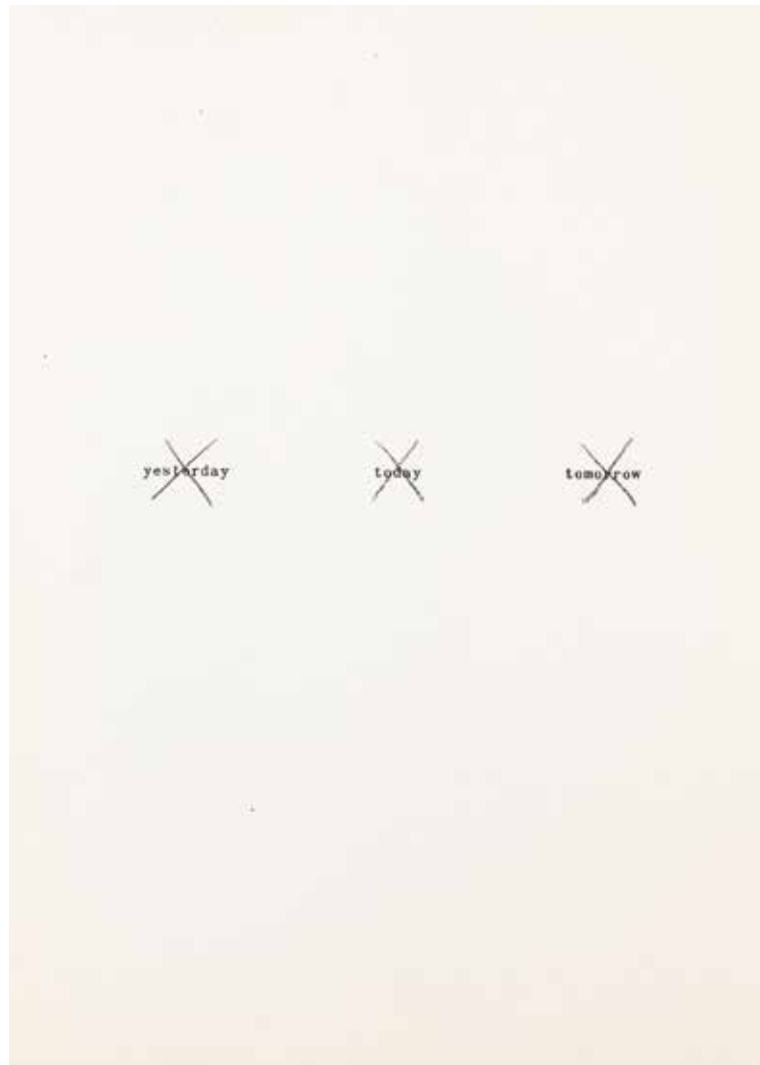
3



4



**Without words, 1986**  
typewritten text on  
handmade paper,  
29 x 21 cm, signed



**Yesterday, Today,  
Tomorrow, undated**  
xerox, pencil on paper,  
undated, 29 x 21 cm,  
signed



**Time, undated**  
propisot and pencil  
on paper, 29 x 21 cm,  
signed



**Still, 1990**  
typewritten text on  
handmade paper,  
29 x 21 cm, signed



**Observing the Landscape I., 1974**

6x, b-w photography, 24,4 x 24,4 cm each,  
exhibiting copies, 1974/2022, signed  
published in Jiří Valoch's first monography,  
poesia visiva, Roma, 1974



**Observing the Landscape II., 1974,**

5x, b-w photography, 24,4 x 24,4 cm each,  
exhibiting copies, 1974/2022, signed  
published in Jiří Valoch's first monography,  
poesia visiva, Roma, 1974





From the series  
**Observing the  
Landscape I., 1974,**  
b-w photography,  
24,4 x 24,4 cm each,  
exhibiting copy,  
1974/2022, signed



From the series  
**Observing the  
Landscape II., 1974,**  
b-w photography,  
24,4 x 24,4 cm each,  
exhibiting copy,  
1974/2022, signed





10

11

12

13

14

Art is negative, undated  
pencil on paper,  
21 x 29,5 cm, signed

art is negative



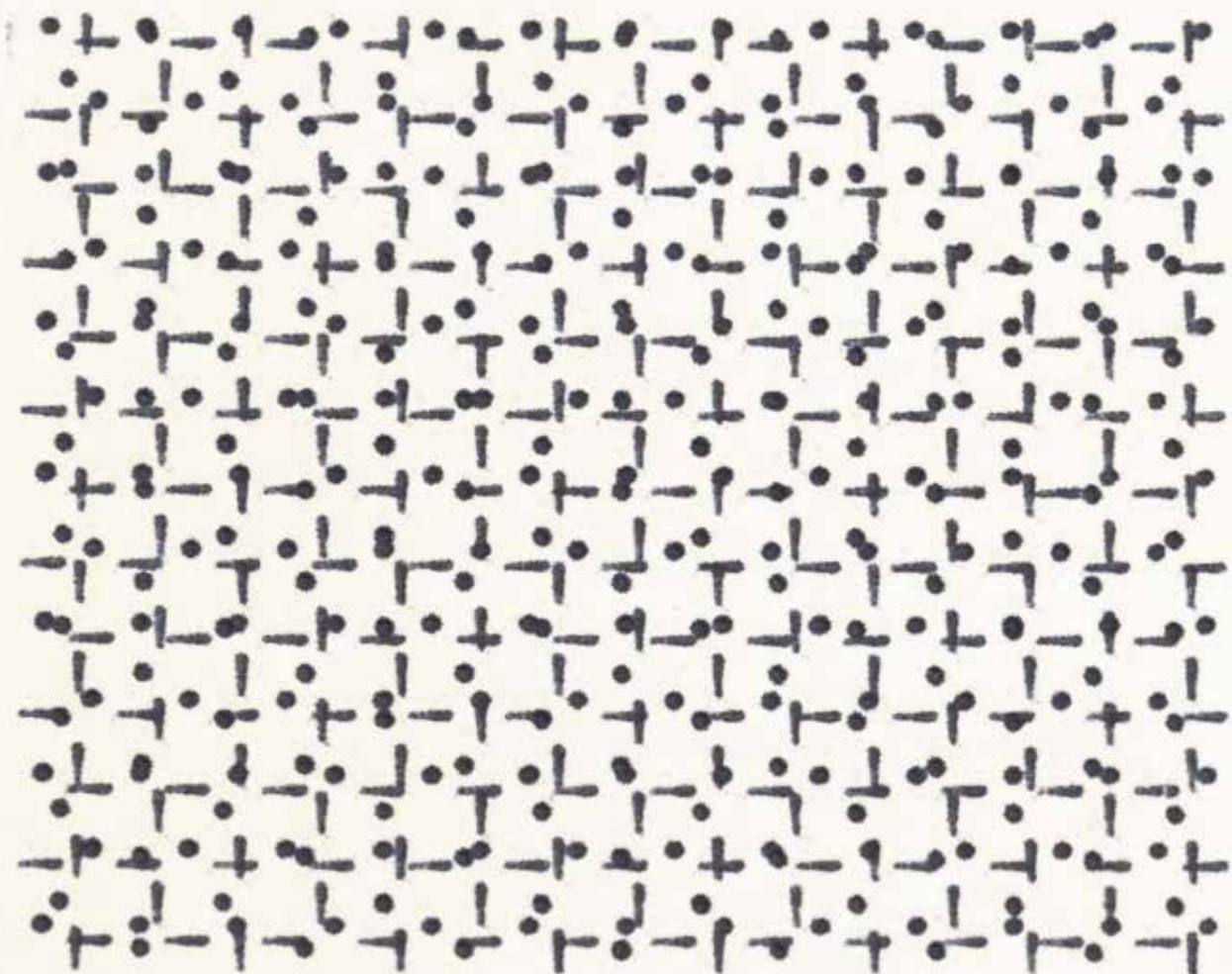


**Love, (from stones series), 1972 – 1974**  
b-w vintage  
photography,  
17 x 11,5 cm, signed



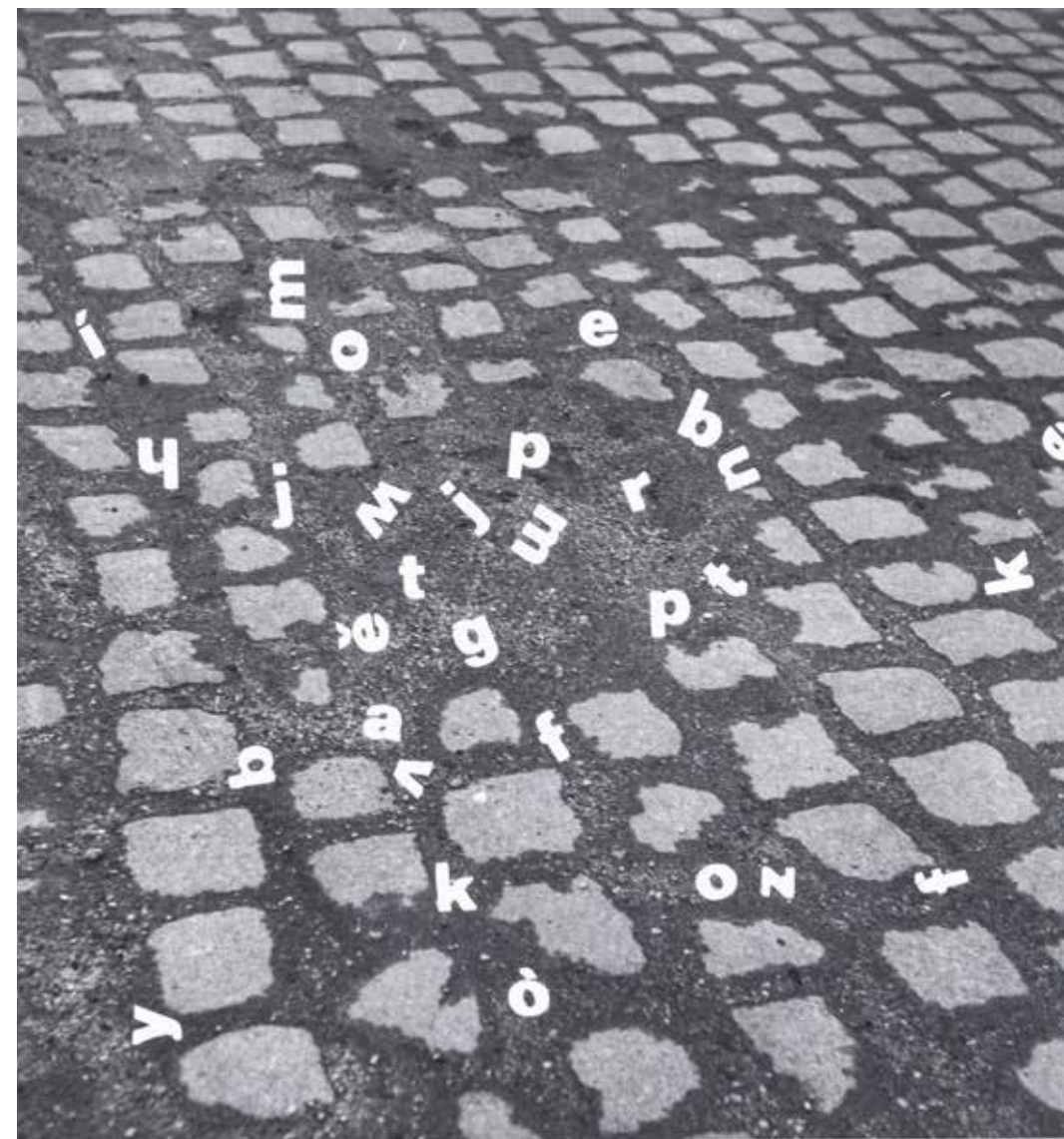
**Dream, 1974,**  
b-w vintage  
photography,  
18x13 cm, unsigned,  
published in Jiří  
Valoch's first monog-  
raphy, poesia visiva,  
Roma, 1974





← **Structure 1, 1969**  
ink on paper,  
10,5 x 10,5 cm, signed

→ **Orientated text, 1969**  
b-w vintage photography,  
13 x 19 cm, signed





memory

memory

memory

**Memory, 1986,**  
typewritten text  
and pencil on  
handmade paper,  
14,5 x 10,5 cm, signed



**Paměť, 1973**  
b-w photograph,  
18 x 17,9 cm,  
(exhibiting copy)  
1973/2022, signed



**Ticho, 1973**  
b-w photograph,  
18 x 17,9 cm,  
(exhibiting copy)  
1973/2022, signed



Installation view

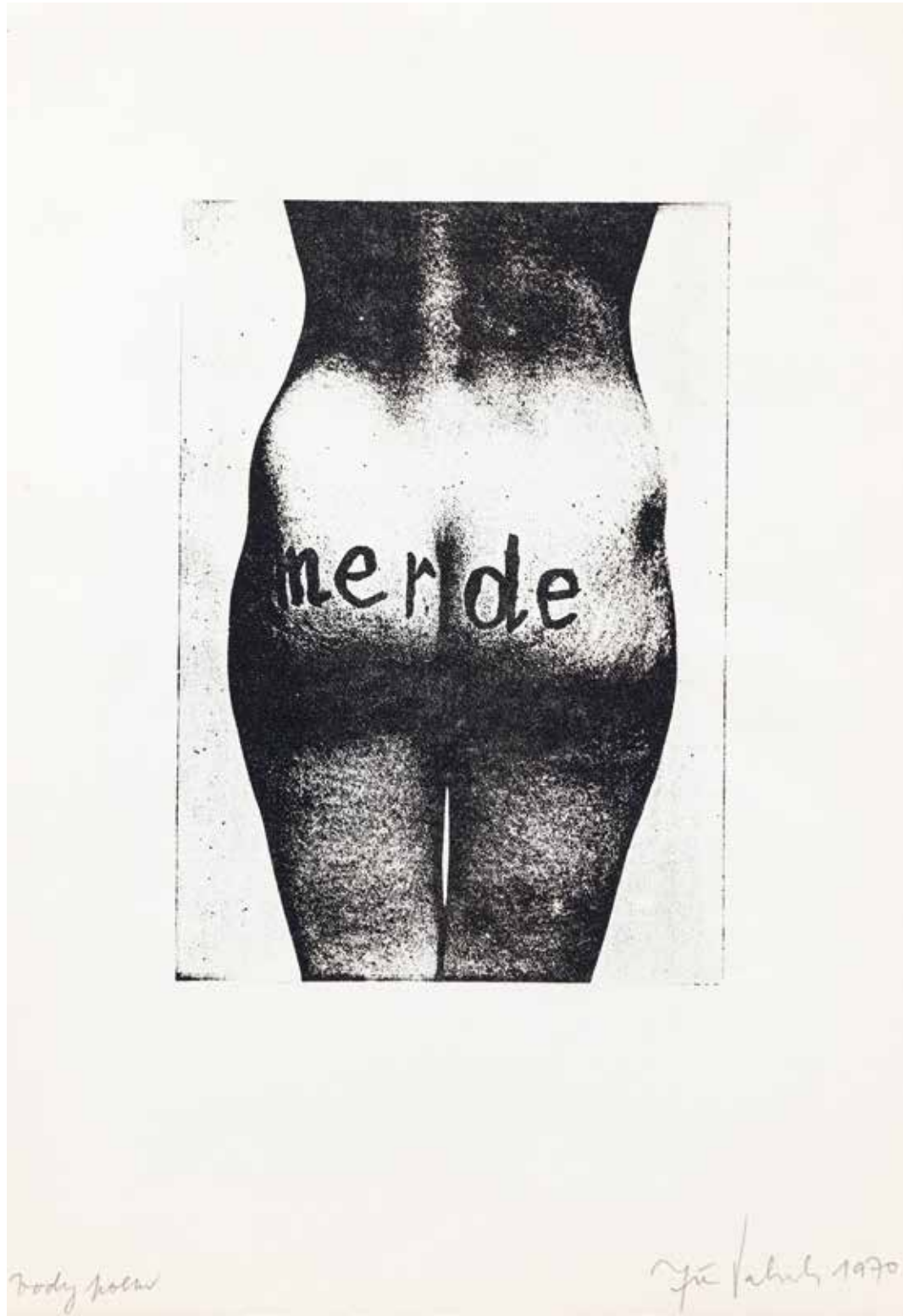


**Here, 1999**  
typewritten text on  
handmade paper,  
29 x 21 cm, signed

**There, 1999**  
typewritten text on  
handmade paper,  
29 x 21 cm, signed

**Days gone, 1972**  
typewritten text  
on paper,  
29,5 x 21 cm, signed

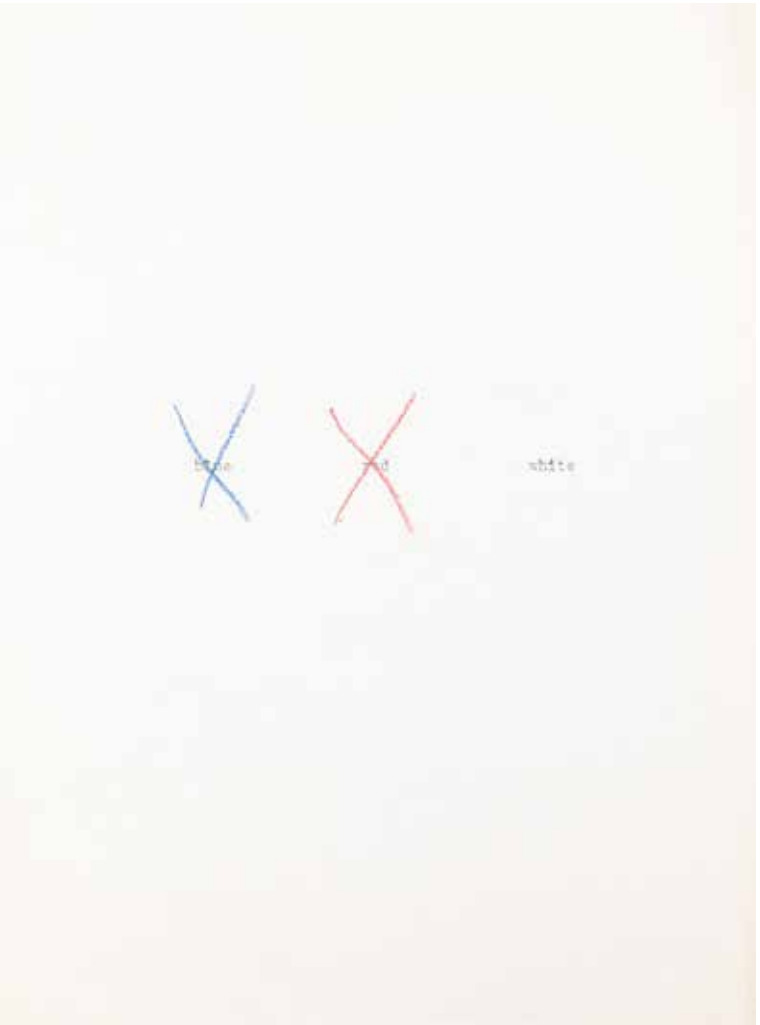
**Stars, 1992**  
typewritten text on  
handmade paper,  
29 x 21 cm, signed



**Body poem (Merde), 1970**  
xerox, 29 x 21 cm,  
29,5 x 21 cm, signed



**Silence, 1975**  
typewritten text  
on paper,  
29,5 x 21 cm, signed



**Colours 16 (blue, red, white), 1973**  
typewritten text and  
pencil on paper,  
29,5 x 21 cm, signed



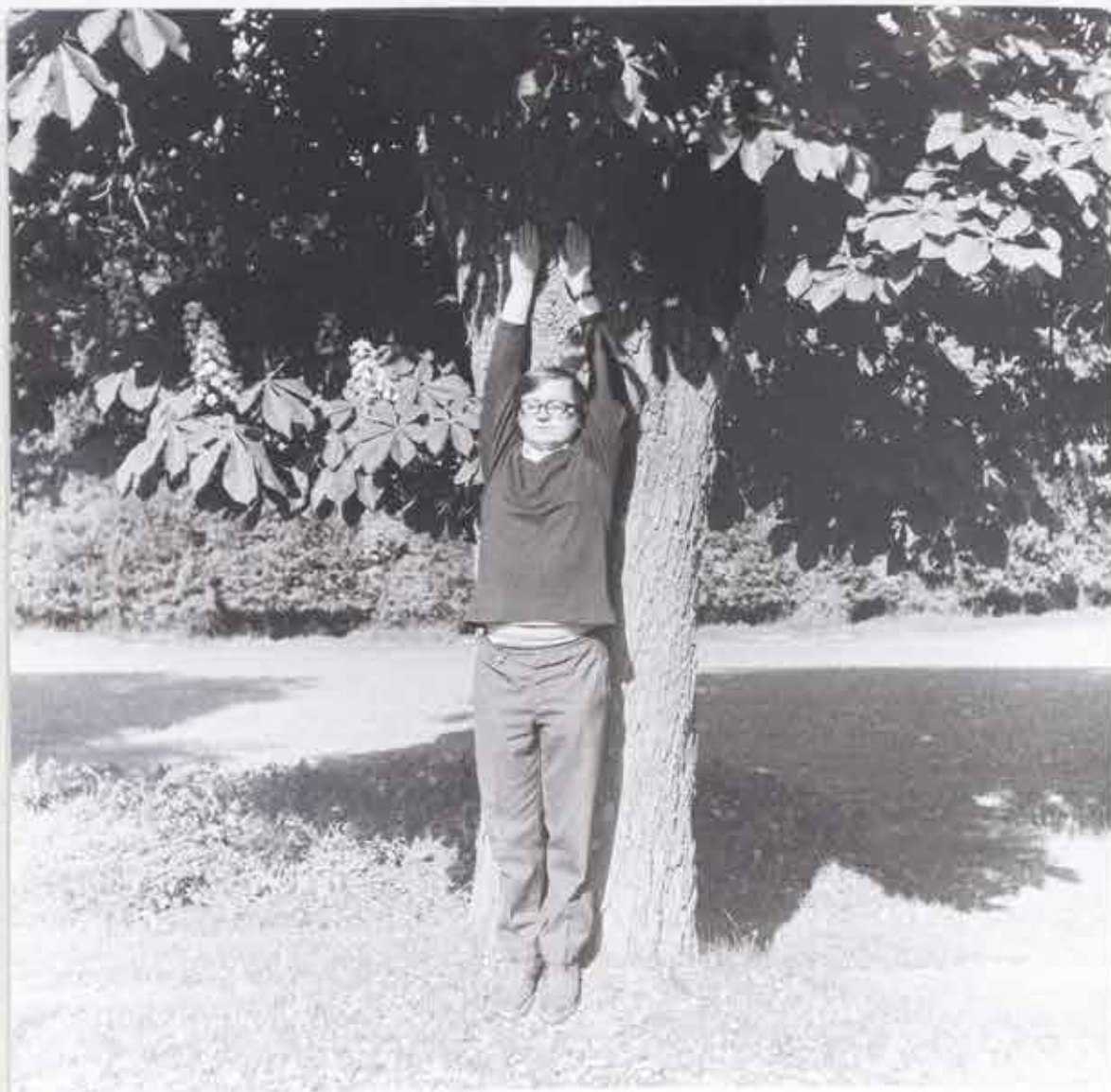


**Haiku I, 1974,**  
3 x b-w vintage  
photographies,  
23,6 x 23,5 cm each,  
unsigned,  
published in Jiří  
Valoch's first monog-  
raphy, poesia visiva,  
Roma, 1974



**Haiku II, 1974,**  
3 x b-w vintage  
photographies,  
23,6 x 23,5 cm each,  
unsigned,  
published in Jiří  
Valoch's first monog-  
raphy, poesia visiva,  
Roma, 1974

**Horizontálně /  
vertikálně, 1971**  
2 x b-w vintage  
photography,  
23,8 x 18,1 cm each,  
signed







**JIŘÍ VALOCH** (\*1946, Brno, Czechoslovakia) Is a poet and creator of visual and conceptual poetry, photographic poetry and photographic concepts, minimalist happenings and interventions in the environment, artis's books, and text installations. Since 1966 he has also worked as an art critic and curator. In 1974 he published his first monography, Poesia Visiva (Beniamino Carruci publisher, Roma). He studied German and Czech literature and Aesthetics at the College of Philosophy of Masaryk University in Brno (1965 – 1970) From 1972 to 2001 he worked as a curator at the House of art in Brno, preparing exhibitions of Czech artists (V. Boštík, Milan Knížák, Vladimír Boudník, J. Kolář, B. Kolářová, A. Šimotová, L. Novák), after 1990 also international artists (R. P. Lahnse, G. Graser, R. Mielsam, R. Barry). Starting in the early 1970s he was involved in organising unofficial exhibitions across Czechoslovakia.

In 2015 he donated his collection and archive to the Moravian Gallery in Brno. Last two year he has been living in small village Ludíkov in the Moravian Carst.

**Jiří Valoch is pronouncing his poem, 2015/1974**  
6x b-w photography, multipl, 20,8 x 14,5 cm each, signed

**Jiří Valoch**  
**сп.иом А.г.е.и.р.ио**

Gandy gallery  
Sienkiewiczova 4  
Bratislava  
Slovak republic

May 26 – July 28, 2022

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and Gandy gallery

[www.gandy-gallery.com](http://www.gandy-gallery.com)

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