

Angels and Architecture

Imre Makovecz 90

Let me begin by quoting the master, Imre Makovecz: “The consecrated world of plants, especially trees, has always inspired me to let their “word” be heard inside the walls of my buildings. The vitality of its dynamics, its flexibility, tied to a place yet resistant to storms, ...its “song” is the fairy-adviser of my architecture. Yes, I say fairy for I have missed them who have left this earthly space, and would like to bring them closer to us” wrote Makovecz and continued like this: “The eyes looking out from the “poplars” embracing the church towers give shape to the soul that has made the trees its home. The chiming of the bells issues from these window-eyes... The concave spine and ribs of the nave conjure up the interior of the chest, the lungs and the heart, the place of breathing, of the soul, the place from which the soul begins its journey before the offering is made” – end of quote.

First, let me express my personal respect for Imre Makovecz, who was born 90 years ago. Thanks to his uplifting *ars poetica* and work, I had the opportunity to learn architectural approach and worldview from him for over four decades. In addition to studying with him, I could also follow his challenging career through joint exhibitions. He confronted the political power and its cultural mainstream that prevailed in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, that sought to eliminate Hungarian identity and the Hungarian village, with impressive courage, intellect, and energy. It is an honour that we at the Kunsthalle can now host the *Angels and Architecture* exhibition.

We often hear the international slogan that more and more people understand: “*Think globally, act locally*”. Meanwhile, our living conditions on Earth are deteriorating. Yet the environment-conscious approach, way of thinking and faith embodied in Makovecz’s architecture certainly provide an example that is valid worldwide.

In the past decades, Imre Makovecz’s agenda of rescuing Hungarian living architecture and folk art from the past and adapting it for current times has been hugely successful in promoting the values of locality against the destruction of souls and the environment in a global world rushing towards its demise.

Curator Jonathan Glancey and Pál Makovecz, the Chairman of the *Makovecz Foundation* created an immersive exhibition that uses inclusion as a constructive tool and relies on the contemplating participation of visitors. This approach perfectly completes the evocation of the late Master’s creative concept described as *angelic architecture*. Let us pay tribute now, together with our visitors, to the architect Imre Makovecz, forever honorary president of the Hungarian Academy of Arts, on the 90th anniversary of his birth.

Many thanks to Jonathan, Pál and their fellow creators, including Kunsthalle specialists Júlia Szerdahelyi and István Steffanits for their contribution.

Thank you for your attention.

György Szegő
Artistic Director