KODL■■C■NTEMP■RARY

Josef Bolf

(b. 1971; Prague, Czechia)
Lives and works in Prague, Czechia

Josef Bolf (b. 1971) is a contemporary painter whose work moves between personal introspection and collective memory. In his paintings, he explores fragments of his own memories, dream events, and existential visions, which he often places in dialogue with references from the history of art. He draws inspiration from comic-book aesthetics as well as from principles of geometry, which in recent years have shaped the structure and rhythm of his compositions.

Bolf's work is characterized by a distinctive melancholic poetics, in which motifs of childhood, housing-estate landscapes, and solitary figures intertwine with more abstract layers of meaning. The artist never provides a definitive interpretation – his paintings remain open to individual readings, highlighting the subjective dimension of perception. His painterly signature is defined by a technique of scratching through layers of paint, creating the impression of a memory trace or a dream record. In recent years, he has shifted from the earlier use of oil pastels and ink to working with oil painting, in which he combines the sensitivity of gesture with carefully constructed composition.

Josef Bolf graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague, where he currently leads the studio Painting 3. His works are represented in major public and private collections, including the National Gallery Prague, the Prague City Gallery, and the Eileen S. Kaminsky Family Foundation.

EDUCATION:

1996 – 2002
Member of the group BJ (*Bezhlavý jezdec/Headless Rider*) - Josef Bolf, Ján Mančuška, Jan Šerých, Tomáš Vaněk

1990 – 1998
Academy of Fine Arts in Prague (Jiří Načeradský, Vladimír Kokolia, Vladimír Skrepl)

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

2026
Filosofie cestování časem, Petr Novotný Gallery, Prague, Czechia

2025
Dvojice, with Jana Vojnárová, Nadace Věry a Vladimíra Janouškových, Prague, Czechia
Krajina pod víčky, with Jana Vojnárová, Cifra Gallery, Doubice, Czechia
Future Past, curator Sandra Baborovská, Museum Kampa, Prague, Czechia
2024
Melancholy of the Outer Limits, Curator Otto M. Urban, DOX, Prague, Czechia

2023
Centering Prayer, with Filomena Borecká, Curator Martina Zátorská, Parat Kunstraum, Zürich, Switzerland

2022
Division by Zero, Curator Michal Stolárik, White and Weiss Gallery, Bratislava, Slovakia
Josef Bolf at Jurkovič House / Minority Report, Jurkovič House, Brno, Czechia
Sense of Dysphoria Morphing into Optimism, Prague House, Brussels, Belgium

2021
The Bastard Prompt, Curator Petr Vaňous, Galerie Dům, Broumov, Czechia

2020
Some (Not All) Futures, Curator Jiří Ptáček, Dům umění, České Budějovice, Czechia
The planet that didn't exist, Curator Jiří Ptáček, Galerie výtvarného umění, Ostrava, Czechia

2019
A Premonition of Shadow, Curator Otto M. Urban, National Gallery Prague, Prague, Czechia

2018
Things Behind the Sun, with Jakub Hošek, Galerie Petr Novotný, Prague, Czechia
All Cats Are Grey, Curator Petr Vaňous, Galerie Vyšehrad, Prague, Czechia
Strange Things, Berlínskej model, Prague, Czechia

2017
Disintergration, GAVU, Cheb, Czechia
Josef Bolf, Galerie Havelka, Prague, Czechia
Tiny Radius of Awareness, Galerie Václava Špály, Prague, Czechia

2016
Reality/Elsewhere, Galerie Dukan, Paris, France
Hors les murs, Czech Centre, Paris, France

2015
Heavy Planet, Curator Jiří Ptáček, Hunt Kastner, Prague, Czechia
Soft and Heavy, Trafo Gallery, Budapest, Hungary

2014
Forlorn Martyrs Pull a Mirror from the Abyss, Galerie Dukan, Leipzig, Germany
Cold Case, Galerie Uffo, Trutnov, CZ
Called Out in the Dark, Municipal Art Gallery, IX Visual Arts Biennale, Varna, Bulgaria

2013
Unconsciousness, Arcaute - Arte Contemporáneo, Beijing, China
Places to Forget, Arthobler Gallery, Zürich, Switzerland
Inventory before Disappearance, Egon Schiele Art centrum, Český Krumlov, Czechia

2012
Forlorn Martyrs Pull a Mirror from the Abyss, Dukan Hourdequin, Paris, France
Touch, with Tomáš Džadoň, Galerie Chodovská tvrz, Prague, Czechia

2011
Unsolved Cases, Galerie Kaple, Valašské Meziříčí, Czechia
Don't Look Now, Jiří Švestka Gallery, Berlin, Germany
Golden Days, Arcaute - Arte Contemporáneo, Beijing, China

2010
Personal Disposition, Hunt Kastner, Prague, Czechia
The Wolf, Ana Cristea Gallery, New York, United States
I Will Not See You Again, Galerie Na shledanou, Volyně, Czechia

2009
You Are Not You, You Are Me, curator Edith Jeřabková, GHMP, Staroměstská radnice, Prague, Czechia

2008
Just Give Me a Little More Time, Curator Lenka Vítková, Pavilion E, Olomouc, Czechia
You Look Like Me, Galerie města Blanska, Blansko, Czechia
We All Give in ..., Dům umění města Brna, Dům pánů z Kunštátu, Brno, Czechia
Great Expectations, ZAK Gallery, Berlin, Germany
Suspirium, Výstavní síň Sokolská, Ostrava, Czechia

2007
What if You Could Go Back in Time and Change All Those Hours of Pain and Darkness into Something Better?, Galerie Ad Astra, Kuřim, Czechia
Pink Eyes, Galerie Na bidýlku, Brno, Czechia

2006
My Empire of Dirt, Galerie Slavie, Náchod, Czechia
Soft and Pink, Hunt Kastner, Prague, Czechia
Death Is Not the End?, Curator Yvona Feranciová, Moravská galerie, Atrium, Brno, Czechia

2005
Double Feature Picture Show, with Jan Šerých, Galerie České pojišťovny, Prague, Czechia

2004

Dogs, Faces, Manatee, Městské museum a galerie v Hranicích na Moravě, Czechia
Josef Bolf, AM 180, Prague, Czechia

2003
Narapoia, Ouky Douky, Prague, Czechia

2002
Un Gatto nel Cervello, Galerie Na bidýlku, Brno, Czechia

1999
Delusa and Bingara, Galerie Die Aktualität des Schönen, Liberec, Czechia; Galerie Titanic, Muzeum hudby, Olomouc, Czechia
I Would Like to Collect the Pieces of Your Heart after It Has Been Broken by Someone, Galerie Černý Pavouk, Ostrava, Czechia

1998
Plastic Boy, Starter & Sorter Gallery, Prague, Czechia
Novos Bichos, Dům umění, České Budějovice, Czechia

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS:

2026
The Headless Horseman (and liberalism of the 1990s), curators Vít Havránek, Sandra Baborovská, GHMP, Prague, Czechia

2025
Z očí do očí, Museum Kampa, Prague, Czechia
Němá tvář, Curator Ivan Bergmann, Krajská galerie výtvarného umění, Zlín, Czechia
The Double, Curator Kristýna Jirátová, GHMP, Prague, Czechia

2024
KAFKAESQUE, Curators Otto M. Urban, Leoš Válka, Michaela Šilpochová, DOX, Prague, Czechia
Shadowland: Eastern European Artists of the Post-Communist Era, curator Livia Straus, New York, United States
Prolog: Pozdní sběr, Curators Emma Hanzlíková and Anežka Chalupová, 8smička, Humpolec, Czechia

2023
Alle Macht der Imagination!, Curator Jiří Fajt, Kunsthalle im Lipsiusbau, SKD, Dresden, Germany
Astigmatismus, curator Michal Stolárik, Galerie Pekelné sáně, Kroměříž, Czechia

2022
Radost, vášeň, posedlost!, Galerie Magnus Art, Prague, Czechia
Jdu prachu samotou s průhledy do zahrad, 8smička, Humpolec, Czechia
Vnitřní krajiny, Magnus Art Gallery, Prague, Czechia
Something Surreal: The Far Away Worlds of Yesterday and Tomorrow, curator Jane Neal, DSC Gallery, Prague, Czechia

2021
Vanitas, curator Otto M. Urban, DOX, Prague, Czechia
Vladimír Skrepl: Remixed & Reimagined, Curator Otto M. Urban, DOX, Prague, Czechia
Samota uprostřed davu: Charles Baudelaire a české umění, Curator Kristýna Jirátová, GASK, Kutná hora, Czechia

Great Expectations - The Child in Contemporary Czech Art, Curator Otto M. Urban, DOX, Prague, Czechia
No Art Today?, GHMP, Prague, Czechia

2020
Vojtěch Rada - Měkká aréna / Josef Bolf - Spannungsbogen / Daniel Vlček - Next Song, Galerie Františka Drtikola, Příbram, Czechia

2019
Inverse Romanticism, curator Petr Vaňous, Kunsthalle Bratislava, Bratislava, Slovakia

2018
Just Beneath Reality, Curator Matthew Price, Marina Gisich Gallery, St. Petersburg, Russia
Diamonds in the Rough, ArtMill, Hungary
SKIN: Josef Bolf, Martin Gerboc, Alexander Tinei, Curator Otto M. Urban, DSC Gallery, Prague, Czechia

2017
Paneland, Moravská galerie, Brno, Czechia
Summer Art Salon, Galerie Kodl, Prague, Czechia
Life Is Painful and Breeds Disappointment, Curator Otto M. Urban, Trafačka, Prague, Czechia

2016
Life Is Painful and Breeds Disappointment, Curator Otto M. Urban, Galerie města Plzně, Pilsen, Czechia
Apocalypse Me, curator Jan Zálešák, Galerie Emila Filly, Ústí nad Labem, Czechia

2015
The Mass Ornament, Glimpses from the Bible of Visuality, Nitrianska galeria, Nitra, Slovakia
Art from Heart, curator Miroslav Ambroz, Power Station of Art, Shanghai, China
Rezonance: Jiří Načeradaský, Josef Bolf, Jaromír Typlt, Curator Petr Vaňous, Galerie u Betlémské Kaple, Prague, Czechia

2014
Brilliant Crystal, *Bohumil Kubišta and Czech Art 1905-2013,* GVUO, Ostrava, Czechia
Banzai, Mistře! An hommage to Jiří Načeradský, Galerie města Blanska, Blansko, Czechia
VII New Zlin Salon, KGVU, Zlín, Czechia
The Beginning of the Century, curator Pavlína Morganová, GVUO, Ostrava, Czechia

2012
Open: Work from the Marek Contemporary Art Collection, Curators Marika Kupková and Ondřej *Chrobák*, Zámek Moravský Krumlov, Czechia
The Beginning of the Century, Curator Pavlína Morganová, Západočeská galerie, Pilsen, Czechia
The Islands of Resistance, Between the First and Second Modernity 1985-2012, Curators Jiří and Jana *Ševčíkovi and Edith Jeřabková*, Národní Galerie, Veletržní Palác, Prague, Czechia
Switch, Galerie Van De Weghe, Antwerp, Belgium
INTER-VIEW 2, Curator Barbora Gerzová, Nitrianska galeria, Nitra, Slovakia

2011
Les amis des mes amis sont mes amis, Hommage a Ján Mančuška, Galerie Jocelyn Wolff, Paris, France
Colorless Green Ideas Sleep Furiously, Galerie Dukan Hourdequin, Paris, France
Ein Tanz, Curators Daniel Pitín and Lioba Reddeker, HangART7, Salzburg, Austria

VI Nový zlínský salon, KGVU, Zlín, Czechia
Storage, Prague Quadriennale, Národní divadlo, Piazetta, Prague, Czechia
Surface, Depth, Space: Perspective Motives and Principals in Art, Curator Petr Ingerle, Moravská galerie, Brno, Czechia
Czech Painting from the 1990s Generation, Curator Richard Adam, Dům umění města Brna, Brno, Czechia

2010
Josef Bolf and Ivan Pinkava, Curator Petr Vaňous, Západočeská galerie, Pilsen, Czechia
And Don't Forget the Flowers, Curator Yvona Ferencová, Moravká galerie, Brno, Czechia
Decadence Now!, Curator Otto Urban, Rudolfinum, Prague, Czechia
After the Fall, Hudson Valley Center for Contemporary Art, Peekskill, New York, USA
Josef Bolf, Marcel Hueppauff, Jiří Petrbok, Vladimír Skrepl, Wannieck Gallery, Brno, Czechia
Absurdity? Grotesque? Irony?, Curator Jiří Machalický, Galerie NoD, Prague, Czechia
Planet of Eden, *The World of Tomorrow in Czechoslovakia Socialism*, Curator Tomáš Pospiszyl, Dům umění města Brna & DOX, Prague, Czechia
After Velvet, Curator Sandra Baborovská, GHMP, Dům u Zlatého prstenu, Prague, Czechia
Umheimlich, Curator Zuzana Štefková, Galerie Cypriana Majernika, Zichy Palace, Bratislava, Slovakia

2009
Fourteen S, Curator Milena Slavická, DOX, Prague, Czechia
Share Your Dreams, Young Art from the EU, Galerie Suppan Contemporary, Vienna, Austria
Undercurrents, Curator Petr Nedoma, Rudolfinum, Prague, Czechia
Transfer, Dům umění města Brna, Dům pánů z Kunštátu, Brno, Czechia

2008
It Hasn't Hurt For Hundreds of Years, Galerie města Blanska, Blansko, Czechia
New Acquisitions, GHMP, Staroměstská radnice, Prague, Czechia
Transfer, whiteBOX Gallery, Mnichov, Germany
Inverted Romantic, Bast'art Contemporary, Bratislava, Slovakia
Evokation vs. Fetisch, Galerie der Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig, Germany
6th Biennale of Young Art, kurátor Karel Císař, GHMP, Dům U Kameného zvonu, Prague Czechia
Resetting, New Ways to Reality, curator Petr Vaňous, GHMP, Městská knihovna, Prague, Czechia

2007
STILL: Another Exhibition of Painting, FUTURA, Prague, Czechia
The Most Curatorial Biennial of the Universe, APEXART, New York, United States
NeuEuropa, Ray Hughes Gallery, Sydney, Australia
Gross Domestic Product, curator Kryštof Kintera, GHMP, Městská knihovna, Prague; curator William Hollister, Mars Gallery, Moscow, Russia
Skull Hunters, Galerie U Bílého jednorotce, Klatovy, Czechia
Vitamin Painting, Bast'art Contemporary, Bratislava, Slovakia
Spleen & Ideal, Categorization of Ecstasy, Galerie Brno, Brno, CZ
Sovereign Art Foundation Award, Club Row at the Rochelle School, A Foundation, London, UK

2006
Acne:Contemporary Czech Painting from the Richard Adam Collection, Galerie Rudolfinum, Prague, Czechia
Blind Men Measure an Elephant, curators Luděk Rathouský and Marek Meduna, Galerie c2c, Prague, Czechia

2005
5th Biennale of Young Art, GHMP, Dům U Kamenného zvonu, Prague, Czechia

IV New Zlin Salon, Dům umění, Zlín, Czechia
Jindřich Chalupecký Award, Finalists 2005, GHMP, Městská knihovna, Prague, Czechia
1811197604122005, Plan B, Cluj, Romania

2004
Neutral, Motorenhalle, Projektzentrum für zeitgenössische Kunst, Dresden, Germany

2002
Hedonistic Abstraction, Moravská galerie, Atrium, Brno, Czechia
Blažo - Bolf - Jablońska - Pavlán, Display, Prague, Czechia

2001
Criss/Cross, Curator David Kulhánek, Pivovar Broumov, Broumov, Czechia
Magnetic Fields, Curator Jakub Hošek, Galerie Jelení, Prague, Czechia

2000
Headless Rider on the Rise, Galerie Jelení & Komunikační prostor Školská 28, Prague, Czechia
The End of the World?, Curator Milan Knížák, Národní galerie, Palác Kinských, Prague, Czechia
II Zlínský salon mladých, Státní galerie ve Zlíně, Zlín, Czechia

1999
Perplex, curators Jiří and Jana Ševčíkovi, Galerie Václava Špály, Prague, Czechia

1996
Headless Rider, Galerie AVU, Prague, Czechia

AWARDS:

2011
Artist of the year