

## UP NOW

### 'After the Fall'

Hudson Valley Center for  
Contemporary Art  
**Peekskill, New York**  
**Through July**

For anyone seeking serious, urgent, and ambitious painting, a good place to start turns out to be Transylvania — via Peekskill on the Hudson. This exhibition focusing on post-Communist art in Central and Eastern Europe — especially from the less-exposed precincts of Romania, Croatia, Hungary, and the Czech Republic — brings together 18 artists, all male, and presents canvas after canvas of compelling painting.

Many of the works are so large that you could imagine walking into the spaces they depict. If anything characterizes the artists as a group, it is a sense of space and light that is clearly defined and carved out. It is perhaps a coincidence that a good many of the paintings are anchored somehow by the color red — whether in the two

red buckets in Atilla Szücs's *Repeated Experiment* (2010); or the cap of one of the men in *Three Friends* (2009) by Serban Savu; or the blood of errant children in Josef Bolf's *Gymnasium*, (2009).

Marius Bercea and Marin Majić play a bit with stereotypical folk ceremonies in scenic, mountainous landscapes. Bercea offers a country wedding procession in *After the rain* (2009). Majić's *Parade* (2010) features what appears to be an outdoor religious outing given a relaxed, contemporary dress. Daniel Pitin, currently the artist in residence at the center, has a surrealistic sense of buildings as stage sets or partially constructed places, with ghostlike figures in occupancy.

Animals often seem almost mythic here. In Alexander Tinei's giant, poignant *Europe* (2010), a bull and a woman, both marked with Tinei's signature blue rivulets of paint, look dolefully out at the viewer. In several of the artists' paintings, dogs are depicted — whether primitive wolflike creatures or tools of the state or police, it's often ambiguous.

One non-painter to keep an eye on is Goran Škofić, whose video, *Corpus* (2009), shows him repeatedly emerging from the sea and walking toward shore, holding tires, saws, brooms, and the like. It is a great metaphor about history and human debris. But it's the painting that are treats for the eyes.

— Cynthia Nadelman



Josef Bolf, *Gymnasium*. 2009, oil, wax, and ink on canvas, 69" x 102<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>".  
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