

Invention, imagination, interpretation: Collective activity in the contemporary Czech and Slovak surrealist group

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Abstract

The contemporary Czech and Slovak surrealist group, tracing its roots to the historical group in Prague since 1934, has since the late 1940s privileged collective activity as a response to the obligations of clandestinity. From the 1970s onwards, games and collective experiments became a key focus for the group, supported by the theoretical writings of Vratislav Effenberger, in which analogical thought and an affirmation of the pleasure principle could be affirmed and explored. Since 1989, the possibilities of exhibitions and publications have given the current group a broad public platform, albeit one that still awaits wider recognition.

The notion of *contemporary* collective surrealist activities, either in the guise of continuations of historical groups or in new formations, is something of a problem for historians of surrealism, and for a variety of reasons academics and curators working in the field have been almost entirely unable or unwilling to acknowledge their presence – or are even, one suspects, simply unaware of them.¹ The contemporary Czech and Slovak surrealist group might well prove to be the first to break this pattern, for against all the odds it has not just survived from its roots in the original Prague-based group of 1934, it has somehow thrived, and at the time of writing arguably boasts a larger membership, broader public platform and more ambitious intellectual agenda than at any time in its seventy-year history.

What follows below might be considered a kind of introduction to this current group, but as well as being far from comprehensive it will focus on a partial and mainly factual perspective rather than trying to place events and ideas into a rigorous sequence or context. Its more specific aim, moreover, is to suggest the range of collective activity in the Czech and Slovak group since the 1970s. Although this approach will thus ignore a fascinating and diverse range of individual work made by group members, it is collaborative activity that remains a distinctive guarantor of surrealist action in today's international movement, that made possible a cohesion of purpose and thought under hostile circumstances for the Czechs and Slovaks, and indeed that reflects the current group's own explicit priority and preference for joint rather than personal experience.²

It is worth outlining the historical background to the current group's position, since both the group and its members (with the notable exception of film-maker and artist Jan Švankmajer) are likely



to be unfamiliar to most readers and remain largely undocumented outside the Czech and Slovak Republics. Caught, like most of those involved in progressive creative practice in Central and Eastern Europe, between the rise and overthrow of fascism and the installation of Stalinist socialism, the Czech surrealist group of the 1940s lost many of its key members through death or emigration, and all of its means of public action. Though the formation of other groups close to surrealism in spirit – the Ra group and Group 42 – indicated that it was still considered an attractive intellectual current among younger artists, photographers and writers, it was not until the end of the 1940s that Karel Teige, the pre-war group's major theorist, managed to gather a small band around him and resume meaningful collective activity. This surrealist group, however, would be obliged to maintain an almost entirely clandestine existence for the majority of the next four decades, with few opportunities for public outlets for its work. Teige in particular, as a leading thinker of the 1930s Left, was relentlessly hounded by the post-war regime until his death in 1951 (and the spectre of the trial and execution the previous year of Závěš Kalandra, who had been close to Teige's pre-war circle, posted a reminder of just what a serious gamble surrealism in Stalinist Czechoslovakia might represent).

Under first Teige and then Vratislav Effenberger, the group's principal activities consisted of cycles of questionnaires and the hand-made, single copy 'publications' *The Signs of Zodiac* (10 issues, 1951) and *Object* (5 issues, 1953-62). By the 1960s, now referring to themselves under the deliberately blank title 'System UDS,' and profiting from the very gradual relaxation of censorship over the course of the decade, the group were able to risk an exhibition entitled *Symbols of Monstrosity* at the Gallery D in Prague in 1966. Two years later the thaw had turned into the liberalisation of the 'Prague Spring,' and renewed contact with Parisian surrealists resulted in the major international exhibition *The Pleasure Principle*, organised by the French group, which toured to Prague, Brno and Bratislava. From the meetings between the two groups came the joint statement *The Platform of Prague*, a detailed manifesto that was to lay a cornerstone for the Czech group's intellectual position over the following decade (even as for the Parisians it would mark one of the final significant collective acts before their group's fragmentation in 1969). *The Platform of Prague* focused amongst other subjects on a critique of the monopoly of language under repressive systems in East and West alike, and set out surrealism's key strategy as the liberation of words and signs. It attempted to redefine the notion of surrealism as a 'minority' current of thought in which radical ideas could be found in a nascent state, proposed an intention to rethink revolutionary theory from top to bottom, and insisted on



the privileging of shared thought, most particularly through games.³ Any optimism in the *Platform*, of course, proved short lived, and in August 1968 the entry of Warsaw Pact forces into Czechoslovakia heralded the beginning of a new period of censorship and repression, effectively committing the surrealists to a further two decades of underground existence.

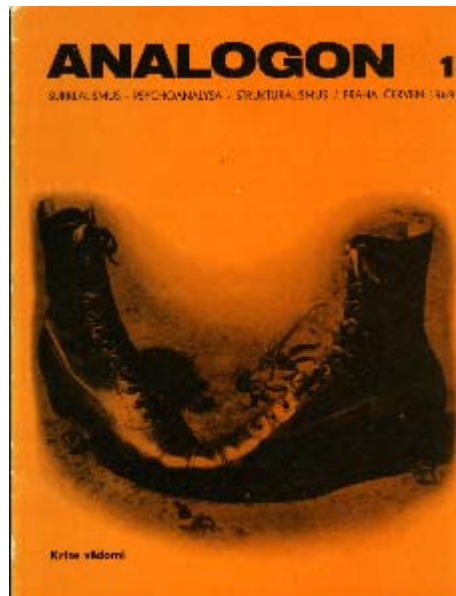


Fig. 1: *Analogon*, no. 1, Prague 1969.

This fresh setback did not overcome the group's resolve, however, and the following year (a period in which the new clampdowns on cultural activity did not always take immediate effect) saw two significant events: the publication of the first (and, for the moment, last) issue of the journal *Analogon*, and the collective statement *The Possible Against the Current*, in which the group reaffirmed their commitment to surrealism's potential to challenge and resolve the opposition between real and imagined situations:

Surrealism acts on the evolution of the possible, going beyond the rationalisation of 'objective reality' which is the domain of the majority ... It is not a question of emotional harmony, but of a conflict between the possible and the impossible, in which the impossible sets the reality of life in motion.⁴

Once again, collective life and its privileged channel, games, were stressed as a key hope for the survival of surrealist activity; for the Prague group these would become vital ways to sustain momentum in what seem to have been the particularly grim and demoralising conditions of the 1970s. Through the course of the 1970s and 1980s, as we shall see, private collective activity – and a small number of samizdat public forums – were the bedrock of the group's identity and practice. All but



invisible to the outside world, group members continued to develop critical and imaginative positions, outlined for example in *The Platform of Prague 20 Years On* of 1987, which signalled the theme of the phenomenology of the imagination as a major focus. And then, against all expectation, the relatively swift popular movement leading to the 'Velvet Revolution' of 1989 suddenly opened possibilities for the next decade. The group, knowing how soon such chances could evaporate, were quick to seize opportunities for a public forum, with exhibitions in Paris and Czechoslovakia in 1990-91, followed by others in Hungary and Germany the following year, succeeded by many subsequent exhibitions and publications ever since. In September 1990, as if by magic, issue 2 of *Analogon* appeared, almost exactly as it had been promised on the back cover of the first issue twenty years earlier. Around this period, two Moravian surrealist groups had formed in Brno and Šternberk, later together forming the surrealist Circle AIV; eventually, and in the face of the divisions instituted everywhere else in former Czechoslovakia, increasing collaboration between them and the Czech group led to the formal constitution of the Czech and Slovak surrealist Group, which continues a busy programme of private and public activity to this day.

Collective activity is, of course, a consistent and distinctive feature of surrealism. To a far greater extent than for the modernist avant-garde with which in any case it can be only partially compared, group experiences such as games, experiments, enquiries, collaborations and joint public platforms like publications and exhibitions have been the *sine qua non* for the elaboration of a surrealist thought and culture, in a real sense authenticating, guaranteeing and moulding their very possibility. As has already been suggested, the specific situation of the Czech and Slovak surrealist groups has presented a very particular case of this demand, as its participants in the 1950s and 1960s for example clearly recognised. The *Platform of Prague* specifically addressed this issue:

As regards the sharing of thought, which remains one of our specific preoccupations, the liveliest impetus will be given, in Surrealism, to game playing and experimental activities. We place all of our intellectual hopes in both of them. Animating the life of groups, exalting friendship by integrating it with spiritual exchanges, they establish in each spirit a state of intersubjectivity where the facts of the present and individual history resound in a consonant way.⁵

During the sombre years of the 1970s, characterised by Effenberger as an era of profound pessimism and of the 'existential persecution' of his friends that was completely unfavourable to the freedom of



group expression, clandestine collective experiences remained a bulwark in the face of the hostile world at large in which, he suggested, 'humanity, in its essence, found itself confined in an ever more violent way to a few easily manipulable channels.'⁶ In these circumstances, then, sustaining common practices such as games and experiments represented a way of overcoming depression through free play, and potentially of countering the difficulties of gathering individuals regularly in the same location (since they might be played over protracted distances and periods).

Games, the *Platform of Prague* had affirmed, represented for the group 'a collective expression of the pleasure principle,' and in hindsight the current group has seen the period that followed its elaboration as characterised essentially by a focus on interpretative play. Typical of the interplay of serious enquiry and pleasurable imaginative freedom, for instance, was the game devised by Jan Švankmajer *Bonjour Monsieur Gauguin* in 1973. Its participants (in order of play Martin Stejskal, Eva Švankmajerová, Effenberger, Andrew Laas and Švankmajer) were invited one at a time to reinterpret in visual form the enigmatic Gauguin painting of the game's title using both a reproduction of the work itself and (except for Stejskal), what the previous player had produced. To supplement the results, in which the recognisable formal elements of the painting were swiftly lost in the course of play and supplanted by paintings and collages in which subjective, analogical echoes of its ideas and figures were rehearsed instead, participants provided a brief written description and analysis of their response. A concluding text by Effenberger drew together the themes and readings to offer a more solid, critical counterpoint to the game's evanescent pleasures. The game, he suggested, turned out to have concentrated on the gender and power relations in Gauguin's work, marking a passage in a chain of interpretations from enigma to madness, desolation and catastrophe.⁷ The results might well be read as a light-hearted way of provoking joint experience, but they also offer a means of encountering and thinking through an artwork that is quite unlike our usual analytical models, either in art history or from the perspective of artists' reinterpretations. In a sense, the game generates new understandings that might be tentative and temporary, but which also situate the artwork and its meanings back where they belong, at the centre of inter-subjective experience.

Collective interpretative games such as this continued to be played throughout the next decades, their results often only sporadically and partially visible to outside observers. The catalogue of the 1983 exhibition *Sféra Snu (The Domain of Dreams)*, for instance, contained a tantalising selection of 'illustrated dreams' in which participants had been invited to provide a visual (usually



collage-based) image and brief interpretative text. Švankmajer was again the game's originator, with the intention of discovering potential harmony within a variety of unrelated dreams by the eleven participants, beginning from an interpretation of one of his own dreams. Again, a relatively simple structure and premise resulted in complex levels of interpretation and analogical thought.⁸ The following year, as part of the group's investigations into humour, the game *One Ear Inside* began from a cartoon of the same name in a state-run magazine. With only the title as guide, participants made images in which objective humour might be sought among correspondences between responses, and maps of 'trans-mental' communication sketched out.⁹



Fig. 2: Jan Švankmajer, *The Restorer*, collective tactile game: initial found image, 1975. mixed media, 1975.



Fig. 3: Jan Švankmajer, *The Restorer*, tactile game: tactile object,

Perhaps the fullest account of a surrealist game in the public domain is devoted to yet another of Švankmajer's proposals, *The Restorer* of 1975. Švankmajer's personal interest in tactile experiments led him to develop a complex game in which participants were invited to respond to an image through touch and interpretation alone. The intricate account, documentation and critical reading of this game represented an attempt to draw on analogical and complementary knowledge in support of Švankmajer's ongoing enquiry into tactilism.¹⁰ The game's source was a found photograph of a bearded art restorer (bearing an uncanny resemblance to Švankmajer himself) apparently working on a church mural and caught in the act of carefully positioning a syringe to the neck of a partially destroyed depiction of Christ. From this image, Švankmajer created a tactile assemblage in which objects replaced elements of the scene (the bust of Christ, for instance, represented by an old shoe with fur for hair and beard, pierced by a corkscrew to suggest the syringe). Textures as well as shapes



evoked aspects of the image, with Švankmajer already conscious of the potential psychoanalytical interpretations of its latent erotic aggression. This construction was then concealed in a black bag. With both hands in this sack, the game's participants were asked first to draw up a list of the objects and describe their initial sensations; next players brought together these tactile impressions so that associations and analogies might be combined into an imaginary ensemble; finally they were shown ten photographs and asked to identify which one of them the hidden object represented. The game had a number of explicit aims: could touch trigger associative thought and stimulate the imagination; could the imaginary relationships in the tactile object constitute a coherent mental configuration; could subjective tactile perception lead to objectification; does touch, when used in isolation, modify an aesthetic stimulus; how do visual representations affect tactile ones, and is synaesthesia in evidence? The results, documented painstakingly, suggested that the sense of touch has good claim to being 'objective' and reliable, but that the imaginative stage of the game produced a wide variety of responses that nevertheless themselves tended to echo the sublimated themes of gender, eroticism and power. Players, Švankmajer noted, tended to 'live out' their perceptions as actions or narratives in their accounts, pointing to the way that, where visual perception grasps a whole before its parts, haptic interpretations must 'read' the object, moving experience away from the image and towards memory and text. Of the participants, however, only Martin Stejskal was able to provide a 'correct' identification of the source image, offering a near-identical interpretation to Švankmajer's initial formulation. The dualism between subject and object, the latter concluded, could indeed be overcome through tactilism, even if only in special cases rather than as a general principle.

Such games, then, stressed not only ludic pleasure and imaginative *élan*, but also the crucial role of interpretation as a creative and active principle in itself. More specifically, Effenberger, who devoted a number of texts to this problem, would argue that from the early 1970s the aim of interpretative games among his friends was to lead 'towards a knowledge of the sources of creation and the imaginative process.'¹¹ Surrealist games, he argued, offered a way to tread a delicate path between positivist and dialectical thought, combining the principles of identity and analogy to arrive at a systematic knowledge through play (rather than the reverse, as is usually the case). A game's function, then, was 'to ascertain in what way, under which conditions, functions and values, did the imaginative associations of the various participants agree with each other, and to what extent they could give rise to common inspiration.'¹² What was at stake in the cycle of games played within the



Czech group from the 1970s onwards, according to Effenberger's 1970 text 'The Objectivity of Active Interpretation', was the elaboration of a 'potential objectivity' that might develop a complex and multivalent universal system to challenge the paucity of our one-dimensional 'true' objectivity, using the latter's scientific methods where appropriate but working dialectically to expose novel approaches and values.¹³ This formulation of interpretation as generator and arbiter of new systems of knowledge, and its role as a conducting rod between the individual, the group and the creative act, would remain a key component of the Czech and Slovak group's methodology.¹⁴



Fig. 4: Czech Surrealist Group, *Collective Box for an Anthology of Eroticism* (detail), collective object, mixed media, early 1980s.

Alongside interpretative games, a distinct but clearly related activity in the group has followed the path of collective experimentation, often involving the collaborative creation of a single object or image. *The Collective Box for an Anthology of Eroticism*, for example, made in the early 1980s, was an attempt to materialise ideas about a variety of sexual practices with the use of objects. Each participant was assigned a specific proclivity from a list of ten (homosexuality, masochism, voyeurism, fetishism and so on) – sometimes, it would seem, using this as an attempt to grasp the implications of an attraction they themselves did not share. The result of this collaboration was a complex item of 'sexual furniture,' a kind of narrow painted sideboard with opening doors, drawers and panels, comparable in height and proportions to a human body topped with a coiffed head.¹⁵ Contained on and within its sections were objects and images, following chains of associations and analogies from each



player. Thus Effenberger, conceptualising necrophilia, strewed a drawer with sand (the 'dead landscape' of a desert) on which lay a pale comb with its handle in the shape of a woman's body, a teddy bear's glass eyes and a miniature tree. As usual, explanatory texts and interpretations accompanied the results.

An earlier collective object from the mid 1970s, *Karel Teige's Box*, had used a similar method to pay homage to the former leader of the group. Players each selected a specific aspect of Teige's personality (for instance love, hate, childhood, superego, friendship, death), and produced collages and assemblages reflecting instinctive responses to these themes. These were combined together into a single, complex structure on an ornate stand, suggesting a fabulous pulpit adorned with fetishes. Once again, explanatory texts were provided by each participant, as well as a more poetic and imaginative introduction by Švankmajer ('the black cloth designates the well of the unconscious, a cauldron in which meat is being cooked in a sauce of annihilation, a church falling to ruin, a sublime niche ...'), but in this case interpretation was seen as less important than the free play of pleasure, undirected, free from rules and exempt from recuperation. The central compartment around which the upper elements were organised, bearing a fragmented photographic portrait of Teige, acted as a kind of reliquary for portfolios of the group's documentation of interpretative phenomena since 1970.¹⁶ Like the *Anthology of Eroticism*, even as it drew on pleasurable and even comical processes, this experiment also critically examined aspects of the dialectic of the subjective and the objective, the individual and the collective. An Effenberger text from around the same period, *On Ludic Expression*, had stressed play's ability to reconcile the personal and the social, stating that:

Internal, instinctive life on the one hand and objective life, the sections of life where the reality principle prevails on the other, can only be composed together in and through games. They will only succeed in doing this with the help of the new dimensions offered by the role of play within the psychosocial structure, a role which will be applied to it far less as a result of speculative reflection than through the overwhelming certainty of the reversibility between the serious and the futile, and from their common and intertwined evolution.¹⁷

For Effenberger, the 'seriousness of play' gave it a revolutionary dynamic pitting liberty against necessity, so that a strand of ludic thought might be seen running from games to the sometimes violent 'game of life' enacted, for example, on the streets of Prague and Paris in the spring of 1968.¹⁸





Fig. 5: Installation view, *Invention, Imagination, Interpretation: A Retrospective Exhibition of the Group of Czech and Slovak Surrealists*, Glynn Vivian Gallery, Swansea 1998. (Photo: Bill Howe).

These games and experiments were to remain for the most part confidential to the group, with the exception of very occasional opportunities for their publication in overseas journals. It was only from the early 1980s that the group felt able to offer a more open display of their investigations on home soil, in the form of two proposed exhibitions (a small show at the Galerie Phasme in Geneva having been held in 1981). In common with exhibitions organised by the Parisian group, these were constructed around clear thematic concerns, based in part on collaborative games, enquiries and debates that effectively took precedence over specific individual works by members. In this way, the exoteric could effectively emerge from the esoteric, the public from the private – the former usually presenting a heavily edited version of the latter – and this curatorial strategy laying stress on the collective face of the Czech and Slovak group continues to this day (with the organisation of solo exhibitions usually also drawing on practical support from group members). The first of these projects, *The Domain of Dreams*, was elaborated around an anthology on dreams edited by Albert Marenčin. The exhibition, installed in May 1983 in the provincial town of Sovinec (since an exhibition in Prague would have attracted immediate state intervention), never took place since it was raided by the authorities on the day of the private view, permitting the organisers only a matter of hours to clear the gallery. The catalogue nevertheless suggests the scope and ambition of the exhibition's aims, with essays on subjects such as hypnagogic states, dream semiotics, dream and fear, as well as dream accounts, also including of course a range of visual responses to the theme.¹⁹ The following year the project *Proměny humoru (Metamorphoses of Humour)* was also first conceived as an exhibition, but this time only resulted in an anthology.²⁰ Since the fall of the communist regime in 1989, however, the group has proved increasingly capable of mounting large and ambitious international exhibitions, inevitably travelling en masse to install and supervise all aspects of them, even if the media and a wider public (ironically familiar only with historical rather than contemporary surrealism) have not always been aware of the results.²¹





Fig. 6: *Analogon*, no. 40, Prague 2004.

For different reasons, the group's other public platform also displays the same characteristics of tremendous ambition and impressive results whilst reaching only limited audiences. The group's journal, *Analogon*, is in its fortieth issue at the time of writing, with up to four thematic issues produced a year since 1990 (recent numbers have dealt with subjects such as language, mystification, the senses, and lies and manipulation). Large in format and with an impressive range of contributions (for the most part texts, though each issue also contains illustrations and portfolios of reproductions), its masthead of 'Surrealism – psychology – anthropology – complementary sciences' shows the group's interest in a broader remit, but the core of its focus is the present and historical activities of the Czech and Slovak group, and translations of key surrealist and critical texts from other languages. Just as with the better-known French surrealist journals, trenchant critical positions on contemporary domestic and international culture and current affairs are to be found alongside artistic and literary production. *Analogon* remains little known, however, above all because publications in Czech are inevitably unlikely to attract a wide overseas audience, and foreign distribution has proved sporadic at best, in



general confined to members and friends of other contemporary surrealist groups in Europe.²²

Projects such as these present the public face of the group which nevertheless reserves the most vital part of its life for private collective experience (even if exhibitions and publications can sometimes provide an organising framework around which internal debate can be structured). The group's day-to-day schedule appears lively and organic, with enough confidence in its critical and self-critical positions to have done without any clear 'leader' figures since the death of Effenberger in 1986, and the outside visitor is struck by the group's dynamism, close ties of friendship and tremendous organisational vigour. While individual members can boast significant and fascinating bodies of practice, the group also remains faithful to Effenberger's dictum that 'creative individuality is only thrown into relief with reference to collectivity.'²³ Play and collective life continue to animate contemporary surrealism, defining and prolonging its enquiry. As the group suggested in 1987, surrealist activity might best be qualified as the most complex and serious of games:

What attracts us to Surrealism, by the effect of enigmatic attraction, is the simplest thing in the world, quite simply this essential curiosity to know that we find in games a sort of permanent game which has no end, enlarges the mental field in the monist sense of the term, and renews Surrealist collectivity according to co-ordinates that are as traditional as they are new, finding at the same time an exact and revelatory substance which radiates from the dialectical singularity defined by Breton. It is for this reason that Surrealism will always be so difficult to grasp.²⁴

¹ One particularly blatant example of this tendency must suffice: the catalogue essay by Mary Jane Jacob entitled 'Chicago: "The City of surrealism"' presents a thorough account of relationships between surrealism and Chicago's public, collectors and institutions, yet fails even to mention the singular fact that a fully-formed and highly active surrealist group had been present in the city since 1966. See Jacob in Terry Ann R. Neff (ed.), *In The Mind's Eye: Dada and surrealism*, Chicago: Museum of Contemporary Art 1985.

² English language material on the contemporary Czech and Slovak group – and indeed on post-war Czech surrealism - has until recently been scant. More easily accessible sources include Krzysztof Fijałkowski and Michael Richardson, 'Years of long days: Surrealism in Czechoslovakia,' *Third Text* 36, Autumn 1996, 15-28 and the collective catalogue *Invention, Imagination, Interpretation: A Retrospective Exhibition of the Group of Czech and Slovak Surrealists*, Glynn Vivian Art Gallery, Swansea 1998. English translations of documentation on the period of the 1950s and 1960s can be found in the 'Anthology of Czech and Slovak Surrealism' appearing as appendices in the group's journal *Analogon* 37, 38/39 and 40, 2003-2004; the group's enquiry *The Position of the Stick* (1965-66), specifically addressing the problem of collective activity, can be found in the appendix to issue 40, Spring 2004, iii-vii.



³ An edited version of *The Platform of Prague* can be found in translation in Richardson and Fijałkowski (eds), *Surrealism Against the Current: Tracts and Declarations*, London 2001), 58-66.

⁴ *Surrealism Against the Current*, 68-70. The statement was a robust response to Vincent Bounoure's questionnaire *Rien ou quoi? (Nothing or what?)* on the possibility of continued group action launched in the wake of the Parisian group's apparent termination that year.

⁵ *Surrealism Against the Current*, 65-66.

⁶ Vratislav Effenberger, 'Les jeux d'interprétation (1971-1974)', *Le La*, 12, October 1980, n.p.

⁷ Texts and images for the game are reproduced most fully in Effenberger, 'Les jeux d'interprétation'.

⁸ 'Ilustrovaný sen', in the collective catalogue *Sféra snu*, [no place of publication] 1983.

⁹ 'Surrealistická experimentace: Jedním uchem dovnitř', in the collective catalogue *Proměny humoru (Metamorphoses of humour)*, [place of publication given as Geneva], 1984.

¹⁰ Jan Švankmajer, 'Le Restaurateur: Expérience collective d'interprétation tactile', *Surréalisme* 1., Paris 1977, 74-79. This text is only a part of the complete account, and a fuller version is found in Czech in Švankmajer, *Hmat a imaginace: Tactilni experimentace 1974-1983*, Prague 1994 (samizdat edition 1983).

¹¹ Effenberger, 'Les jeux d'interprétation.'

¹² Effenberger, 'Les jeux d'interprétation.'

¹³ Effenberger. 'L'Objectivité de l'interprétation active' (1970), *Le La*, 12, October 1980, n.p.

¹⁴ See for example the 1998 collective statement in the catalogue *Invention, Imagination, Interpretation*, 3: 'We view interpretation entirely as a creative activity: the author and the viewer are both interpreters or, to be more precise, from a Surrealist point of view both of the roles are interchangeable, for the quintessence of Surrealist activity is neither creative work or its consumption but *communication*.'

¹⁵ Images and selected texts are reproduced in *Dungannon*, 4 (special issue *Surrealism as a Collective Adventure / Surrealist Group in Czechoslovakia*), Örkelljunga, Sweden,, no date or pagination.

¹⁶ 'La Boîte de Karel Teige', *Surréalisme*, 2, Paris 1977), 40-42.

¹⁷ Effenberger, 'Sur l'expression ludique', in Vincent Bounoure (ed.), *La Civilisation surréaliste*, Paris 1976, 207.

¹⁸ Effenberger, 'Le Sérieux des jeux', *Bulletin de liaison surréaliste*, 4, December 1971, 1-6, reprint Paris 1977.

¹⁹ *Sféra snu*. As a coda to these events, the exhibition was recreated by the group in Sovinec in 2001, with *Analogon* (32) acting as its catalogue and forum for debate.

²⁰ *Proměny humoru*.

²¹ Thus the very impressive exhibition *Invention, Imagination, Interpretation*, held simultaneously in three venues in Swansea, Wales in 1998, appears to have received no coverage at all from the national and specialist press in Britain, and as it seems attended predominantly by a local public and a relatively small number of individuals in direct contact with contemporary international surrealist activity.



²² Three other public forums exist for the contemporary group: the group's website (*The Group of Czech and Slovak Surrealists*, <http://home.ti.cz/~surreal>); its gallery in Prague, *Gambra*, which houses a small but lively display of artworks and books for sale to the public (whose access details are made available on the website); and a number of theatre-based events televised in the Czech Republic, enabling the group to pursue interests in performance and cabaret.

²³ Effenberger, 'L'Individu et le groupe', in Bounoure, *Civilisation surréaliste*, 223.

²⁴ 'The Platform of Prague Twenty Years On' (1987), in Richardson and Fijałkowski, *Surrealism Against the Current*, 91-92.

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