

Accompanying programme:

Wednesday, 9 September 2026, at 19:00.

A guided tour of the exhibition with the curator and artist



Občina Škofja Loka



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA KULTURO

Exhibition Colophon:

Andrej Tarfila: Genius Loci

22 July – 27 September 2026

Ivan Grohar Gallery

Škofja Loka Museum

Represented by: Saša Nabergoj

Curator: Miha Colner

Design: Žan Kobal

Proofreading: Ana Kodelja

English translation: Mateja Žuraj

Technical team: Vida Grah, Boris Krajnc, Tilen Orešnik

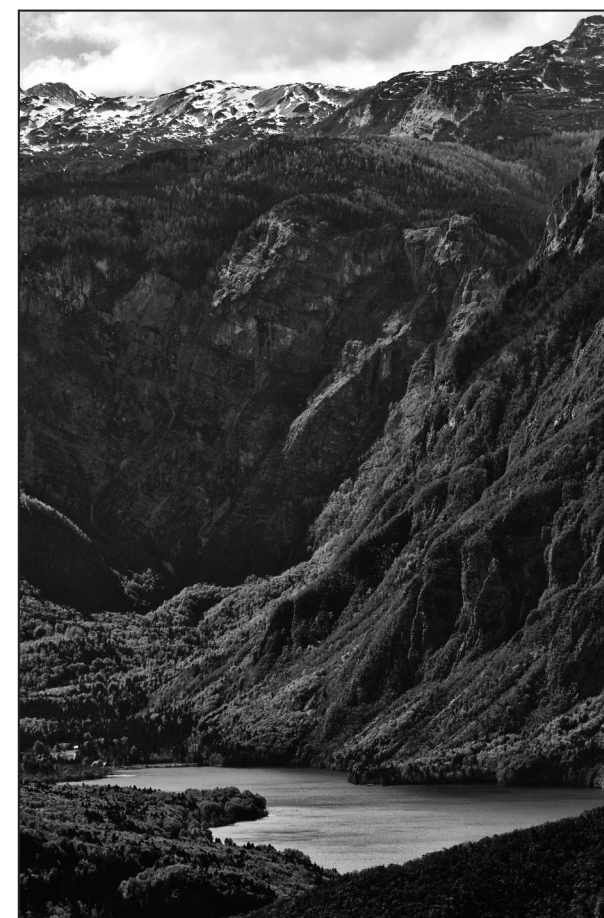
Gallery attendant: Katarina Čirič

22. 7.–27. 9. 2026

Ivan Grohar Gallery

ANDREJ TARFILA:

GENIUS LOCI



Curator: Miha Colner

Entrance free

Over the past two centuries, photography has come to be regarded as the medium that has most profoundly shaped the visual culture of the modern era, while also becoming one of the cornerstones of so-called mass culture. Furthermore, photography has a profound influence on the social and personal representation of reality, ideals and aspirations. However, ever since its inception, it has inevitably been susceptible to both visual and content manipulation. As photography is a frozen fragment of a past reality, shaped by the choice of subject and ascribed context, it is often very difficult to define and interpret it accurately. From a technical point of view, it is indeed a reflection of reality and, provided it has been neither manipulated nor generated, serves as a credible document. When it comes to interpreting the meaning of an image, however, the information provided about the context of how it has been made can determine every aspect of its reading: where, when and why it was taken, and what it depicts.

First and foremost a professional photographer, Andrej Tarfila is well aware of photography's potential in this regard. In this role, he documents a wide range of situations, events and spaces, often stylising and tailoring them to make them as visually appealing as possible. A photographer's work often involves presenting selected subjects in the best possible light: portraying people as more attractive than they really are, and making events and spaces appear grand and desirable. Photography can serve a wide variety of functions, and through entirely technical means, such as the choice of composition, any image can be adapted to suit its intended purpose.

Tarfila specialises in a diverse range of genres, from sports and tourism photography to documentary, landscape and drone photography, all of which reflect

a strictly professional aspect of his work. Despite consistently proving his ability to produce a technically and formally flawless photograph at any given moment, his purely personal art photography practice often focuses on somewhat different visual and conceptual challenges. This exhibition features a selection of Tarfila's photographs taken in various situations and contexts over the past ten years. Some of them are by-products of his professional work, while many others stem from his obsessive documentation of his immediate surroundings.

During the conversations held in the process of preparation for the exhibition, the photographer revealed that, beyond his professional practice, he often photographs the world around him in an attempt to depict it the way he would like it to be, yet reality often falls short of his ideals. Although he is fascinated by landscapes and special effects of light, his images also reveal a reflection of a far harsher and unembellished reality. In a way, Tarfila's art photography often moves between a romanticised and idealised depiction of landscapes and the intrusion of reality into his photographic works, resulting in a distinctive form of documentary naturalism.

On the one hand, drawing on the tradition of Romantic painting and photography, Tarfila devotes himself to depicting monumental landscapes, where the untamed world of nature is presented as mighty and expansive in contrast to the insignificance and smallness of human beings. Photographs of mist-covered landscapes around Železniki, Škofja Loka and Ljubljana, as well as images of mountains and small human figures dwarfed by the vastness of natural formations, suggest reflections on the transience of human existence within the vortex of a long geological history and on the relativity of worldly issues in

relation to cosmic structures and phenomena. Although human beings have positioned themselves at the centre of all earthly existence and declared themselves masters of the world and the universe, forces and structures far more powerful than humankind and its civilisations continue to emerge within the Earth's ecosystem. In an age marked by (self-)awareness of climate change, Tarfila's landscape photographs can be viewed as symbols of the disrupted balance between humans and nature, as well as images of the ineffable might of earthly and cosmic elements.

On the other hand, Tarfila uses his signature documentary style to capture all kinds of events and occurrences unfolding in his immediate surroundings. The photographs showcased in this section of the exhibition are either starkly direct or almost metaphysical and magical. In the absence of an explicitly provided context, the selected works can shift from being viewed as precise documents toward being universal metaphors of sociopolitical reality, here and now. In an increasingly individualistic world, these images can bear witness to the society of the spectacle, the ideology of competitiveness, environmental disruptions and natural phenomena. Through their gloomy and dramatic atmosphere, some of them can reflect the spirit of an age in which the future is perceived by most people as deeply pessimistic, dark and catastrophic. These atmospheric effects can present the artist's understanding, perception and view of contemporary society in a highly ambiguous light.

All of this contributes to the exceptional diversity of Tarfila's work, which is based on a distinctive documentary approach without the artist's deliberate intention to create photographic series or exhibitions. He never stages his photographs, manipulates them in post-production, or assigns them meanings in a

deliberately tendentious way. His photography captures fragments of the world around him, offering glimpses of the way he views his own immediate surroundings. In fact, almost all the featured photographs were taken relatively close to where Tarfila lives and works, in an environment he knows better than any other.

Andrej Tarfila is a professional photographer working across various fields and genres, including documentary, landscape, sports, concert, tourism, travel and drone photography. His art photography focuses on landscape and documentary photographs, making him, in his own distinctive way, a chronicler of his place and time. As a freelance photographer, he works with various international press agencies, mass media outlets and institutions, such as those involved in tourism promotion for the Slovenian Tourist Board and Ljubljana Tourism (Visit Ljubljana). In 2016, he received one of the coveted Sony World Photography Awards, as well as numerous other awards at various competitions, including the Slovenian Press Photo, Moscow International Photo Awards and Tokyo International Photo Awards. He lives and works in Selca near Železniki.