

Andrew Lass, born in New York (1947), grew up in Prague and lives in Massachusetts (USA) where he is professor of anthropology at Mount Holyoke College. In the Fall of 1968 he joined the Prague surrealist group. Evicted from Czechoslovakia in 1973 under the communist's regime of "normalization" he is, since 1990, once again taking part in the group's collective projects. His texts are authored in both Czech and English. His poetry, drawings, essays and photographs appear in *Revue Analogon*, group shows and other periodicals. The poetry collection *Mandala* (written in 1968-69) first appeared together with the collection *Blind man's buff* in 1995. *The Lamentation of Isodora Ducasse* was published in *Analogon* (2000/29) while his second volume of poetry *Throat Cuts and Sound Paintings* appeared in 2012 (Doplňěk Press). Selections from his poetry have been included in the anthologies *Air Ticket into the Night* (2005), *Weles* (2011) and *The Best of Czech Poetry* (2011, 2013) as well as *What Will Be* (Amsterdam, 2014). His conversation with the poet Allen Ginsberg and the short story *Julius* were published in the *Massachusetts Review* (1998, 2003). Individual shows include *Prague Announcements* at Galerie Vyšehrad (2002) and in the gallery of the School of Humanities library of Masaryk University, Brno (2005) and, most recently, a collection of photographs with accompanying texts *On the Steep Shore of a Dream* at the Regional Museum in Olomouc (May, 2014).

The **photographs** date from the years 1990-2008. Initially, during my first visits to Prague, I was trying to capture the confrontation of my own transfiguring states of deep nostalgia with a reality where the only thing left of the previous era was its impact on decay, on the deepening fissures of plastered walls and refused memories. Self-serving anxiety in search of time lost soon led to the unveiling of accidental meetings and ironic tales, newly emerging texts, reflections and images, of the possible against the real. This frail halftime was to be gradually upturned by a beautifully whitewashed non-reality of tourism and the jolly jokers of global consumerism. The spirit of the place was trampled and the accidental photographs became another thin layer of my hauntingly woven archive while my interest in the chance meeting of fissures, pipes, walls and forgotten announcements was transported to other places and landscapes. All the photographs are taken on 35mm or 6x7cm film and developed and printed in my darkroom on fiber based paper. None of them are digitally or otherwise manipulated. The **Japanese ink paintings** are recent. Quick, unpremeditated gestures result in pseudo-calligraphy, animated texts and a bestiary. While my idea of surrealist mediation combines the practices of Zen brush mediation and psychic automatism here I tip my hat to the work of Franz Kafka, whose first published volume *Contemplation* (orig. *Betrachtung*, 1913) provided the title for this show.