

Radek Brousil

Selected Works

Can you still feel the butterflies?, 2020
short film, 15 min
(In progress)



The exhibition *Standing, Holding a Waterlily* carries on in the artist's activist approach to major serious subjects, tackling them in ways that tend to give up the programmatic canon of standard interpretations and terminologies, for the sake of a largely emotional and personal, perhaps even somewhat simplistic operational mode. The premise of confronting art with the looming environmental and human catastrophe has over the last few years become increasingly polarized, apart from which, however, it has likewise assumed the contours of a programme, notwithstanding the fact that, as ever, any tangible output has remained at least indeterminate. The straightforward, openminded and well-intentioned position – up to a point of self-abnegation with which Brousil has invariably treated complex, often virtually intractable problems – inevitably engenders vulnerability, a condition which a good deal of art production tends to conceal behind irony, theorizing, or formal ploys. However, it is simultaneously also a commentary on the embedded typology of the male artist, on that arrogant, self-centered confidence manifesting itself in an unwillingness to communicate anything in an open, explicit manner.

Standing, Holding a Waterlily projects a certain attitude encompassing respect, expectation, and uncertainty. In a sense, the exhibition is imbued with a spirit of escape into fantasy, albeit intertwined with a heroic element derived from the world of fairy-tales. The notion of a stroll, a hike among woodland pools, through a forest made up of embracing figures, entering a gate in a fence, brings back feelings of closeness, familiarity, intimacy. Here Brousil's ecological agenda assumes a personal dimension, the character of a face-to-face encounter, an emotional relationship, a dialogue. A conversation which is not far from a sense of quiet melancholy, an indefinite compassion which, however, may also come across as a functional alternative to a reason that has gone out of its joints, and a world that has lost the horizon.

Here, Brousil carries further his specific approach to photography, with extensions to the domains of object, sculpture, or textile fabric, adding new emphasis on tension between surface and volume, and between decoration and motif. The emotional, empathic element of his work is set in still greater relief by the ways in which recurrent, symbolic motifs evoking osmosis and compassion transform across the spectrum of individual media and methods of representation, invariably shifting away from their original contents. Whether what is concerned are natural or figural elements, there always prevails a sense of tension between the animate and inanimate. Beyond that, juxtapositions of different timelines, of worn out indie band t-shirts alongside attributes of Gothic or Renaissance art, artificial waterlilies, or folklore elements, brings out with even greater urgency associations with reminiscences of a world that may by now already exist only in dreams and yet happens to be all too close.

Standing, Holding a Waterlily, 2019
Installation view



Standing, Holding a Waterlily, 2019
Installation view



Standing, Holding a Waterlily, 2019
Installation view



Standing, Holding a Waterlily, 2019
Installation view





The Imagery of Cry on Demand, 2019
Installation view



The Imagery of Cry on Demand, 2019
Installation view



The Imagery of Cry on Demand, 2019
Installation view



“Whrrr Whrrr”

Karen Kraven & Radek Brousil
Gallery 1718, Ottawa, 2018

Text by Valentýna Janů

Can you hear that sound?

Or have you ever heard that sound?

Your great grandma probably did. And it's probably vibrating in someones fingers now. Somewhere on the other side, where the sun is still shining. Or it's not. When your next Friday party shirt is being made. She can hear it, that's for sure.

Whrrr.

Sorry.

Whrrr.

Pair of Levi's so old you can see the sky through. Family heritage. Blue and blue goes well together, right? Karen Kraven's work brings ubiquitous presence of jeans into objects made from devalued denim. To perform the labour of garment workers scissors are now in charge of an aesthetic erosion. The Singer still tries to hold the edges together. Last touch. Whrrr.

In numbers; it takes 15 pattern pieces to make one pair of jeans, up to 24 people can work on an individual pair from cutting to sewing to pressing and distressing as well as 3479 liters of water are used during a pair's life cycle.

Hey, sorrow, where are you?

Walkman. Volume up. A bit of tears and teenage fantasies. Twenty years later that sadness comes again, smoothly mixed with very last drops of water, all packed in immortal plastic bottle. Melancholic post-graffiti romance is imprinted into soothing hand-made ceramics and patchworks by Radek Brousil, who hopelessly tries to depict social-cultural-ecological conditions of today's world.

Cause I just want to be

Something more than the mud in your eyes

I want to be the clay in your hands

“Whrrr Whrrr” 2018
Karen Kraven & Radek Brousil
Installation view



“Whrrr Whrrr” 2018
Karen Kraven & Radek Brousil
Hey Sorrow Where Are You?, glazed ceramics



“Whrrr Whrrr” 2018
Karen Kraven & Radek Brousil
Hey Sorrow Where Are You?, sublimation print, textile patchwork



“Whrrr Whrrr” 2018
Karen Kraven & Radek Brousil
Hey Sorrow Where Are You?, sublimation print, glazed ceramics



“Whrrr Whrrr” 2018
Karen Kraven & Radek Brousil
Installation view



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“Whrrr Whrrr” 2018
Karen Kraven & Radek Brousil
Hey Sorrow Where Are You?, glazed ceramics



“Too proud to hope, too weak to climb”
Berlinskej Model, Prague, 2018

Curated by: Lumír Nykl

In fragile backdrops of clay-punk world, lies a character, whom others have forgotten. Misplaced and nondegradable, there is no doubt that the locals are not welcoming its kind, and yet others are about to come.

A figurative therapy for environmental vanity in an open support group, accompanied by fan collages of verses, riffs, and the most skinny fitted t-shirts of millennial emo guitar bands. A message stuck in a plastic bottle - bringing back to life the memories of painting on walls, fences, trains and all the effort to make an indelible imprint on its surroundings and to get stuck in it just as the heroine of our story in an environment that is alien to her.

“Too proud to hope, too weak to climb”, 2018
installation view



“Too proud to hope, too weak to climb”, 2018
installation view



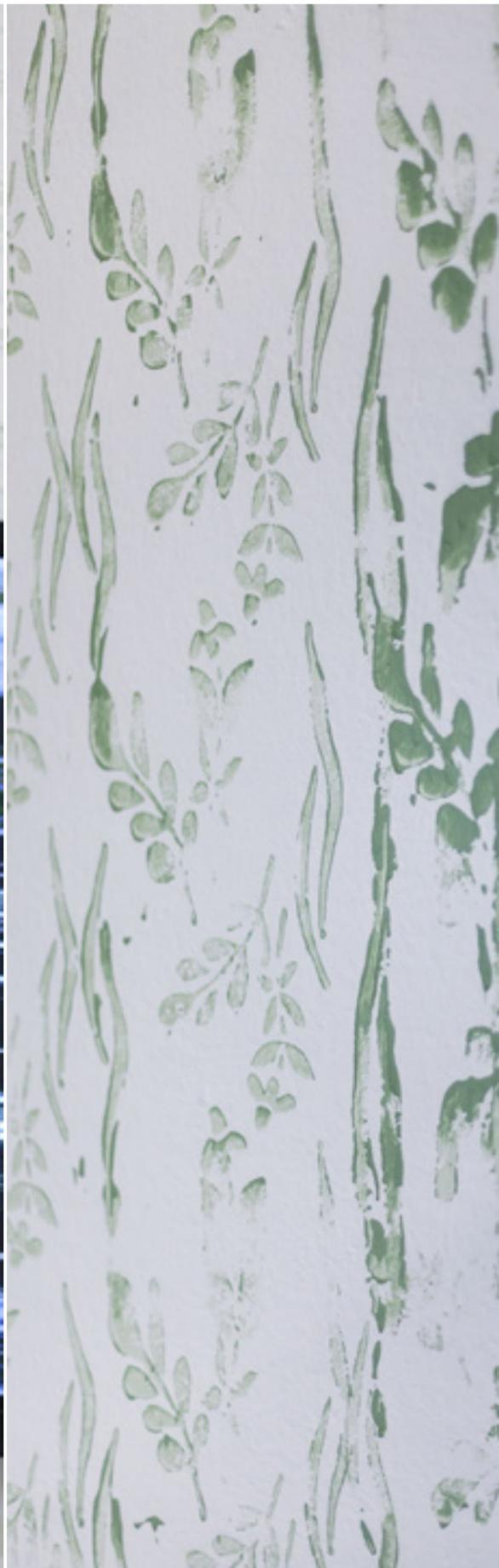
“Too proud to hope, too weak to climb”, 2018
installation view



“Too proud to hope, too weak to climb”, 2018
installation view



“Too proud to hope, too weak to climb”, 2018
installation view



“Too proud to hope, too weak to climb”, 2018
installation view



“Too proud to hope, too weak to climb”, 2018
installation view



“Too proud to hope, too weak to climb”, 2018
installation view



"Too proud to hope, too weak to climb", 2018
installation view



Stupid
Radek Brousil and Peter Puklus
Fait Gallery MEM, Brno, 2018

Curated by: Jan Zálešák

“It’s a man’s world,” James Brown sang fifty years ago, a world of strong men who give and take, and to which the ultimate sense is only given by a woman’s love. I realise that I inadvertently experienced the slow decline of this world as a boy and later as a teenager when watching TV series with David Hasselhoff. Detective Michael Knight, the hero of the Knight Rider series, became Mitch Buchannon, a Baywatch lifeguard chief, self-confident on the beach but a failure at home. The truth is that the images of the crisis of the western man flashing between the slow-motion takes of luscious female lifeguards seemed as unreal to me in the post-socialist universe of the 1990s as KITT the talking car.

When discussing the exhibition with Peter Puklus and Radek Brousil, we didn’t talk about these TV series. However, I’m sure they had watched them as well, at least occasionally, and found in them the pre-images of manhood that they were later forced to reassess and throw away, along with many other men who no longer feel part of the “man’s world”. I want to believe that this world is really steadily declining, yet its images, perpetuated on and on, still dominate the imagination of most people. With this exhibition centred around counter-hegemonic images of manhood Brousil and Puklus enter an imaginary battlefield. Raising questions about the nature of the modern man, which is the leitmotiv of the show, is general on the one hand, while on the other it is anchored in the personal experience of the artists.

They were both born in 1980, and their work is rooted in the photographic medium, without being bound by conventions of what a photograph is and what it should look like. They met in an artists’ residence centre in Banská Štiavnica, and a certain fascination with the similarity of their work – which at some moments had an air of them being each other’s creative double – has culminated in a joint exhibition in the Mem gallery. This, however, also brought to light distinct differences between the artists: while Radek Brousil seeks the most up-to-date language for his subjects, Peter Puklus has long focused on the fine-tuning of his own idiolect.

The exhibition entitled briefly Stupid can be viewed as a double introspection developed in a dialogue. Specific experience and standpoints, particular concerns, uncertainties and desires are transformed into symbolic contents that are generally valid and leave space for an empathetic identification. In a divided world in which listening to others seems more difficult than flying to the Moon, the understanding born of empathy appears the highest art.

Stupid 2018
installation view



Stupid 2018
installation view



Stupid 2018
installation view



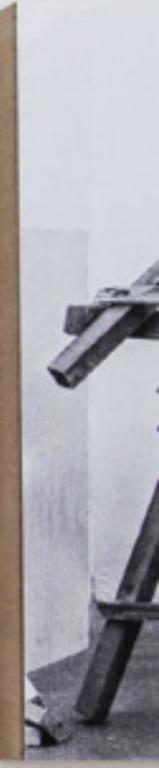
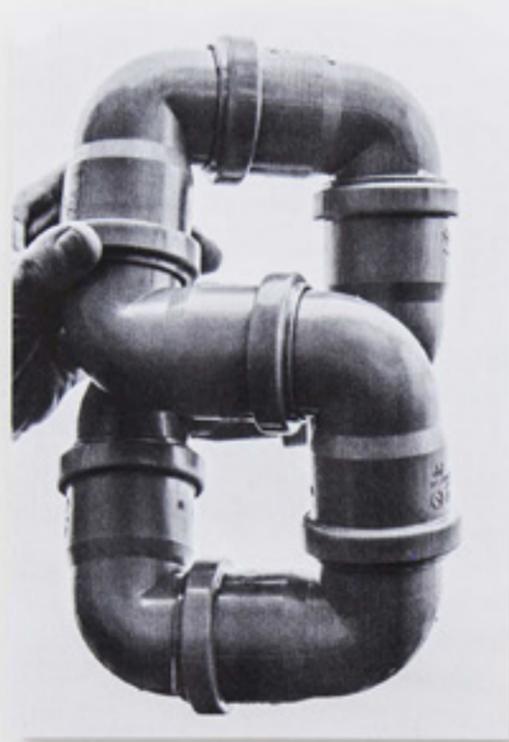
Stupid 2018
installation view



Stupid 2018
installation view



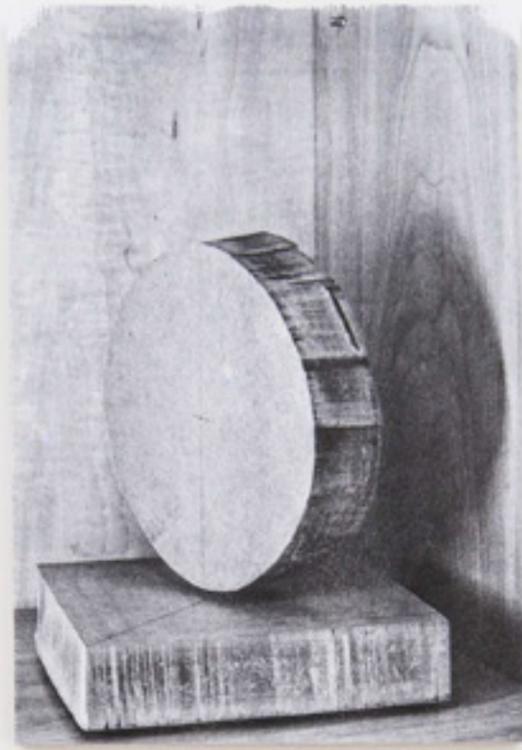
Stupid 2018
Risograph print on mdf board
27 x 39 cm



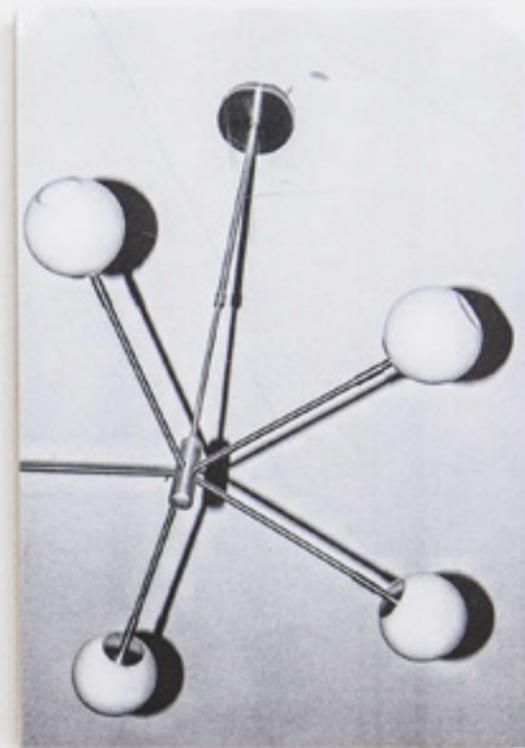
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27 x 39 cm



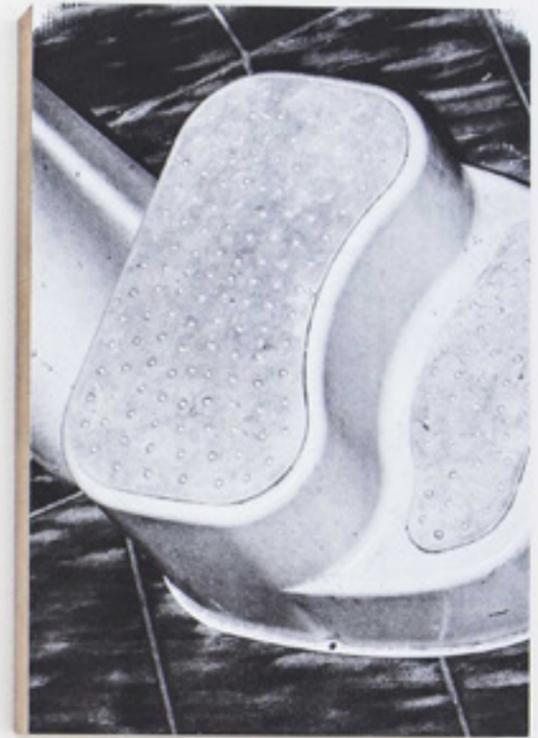
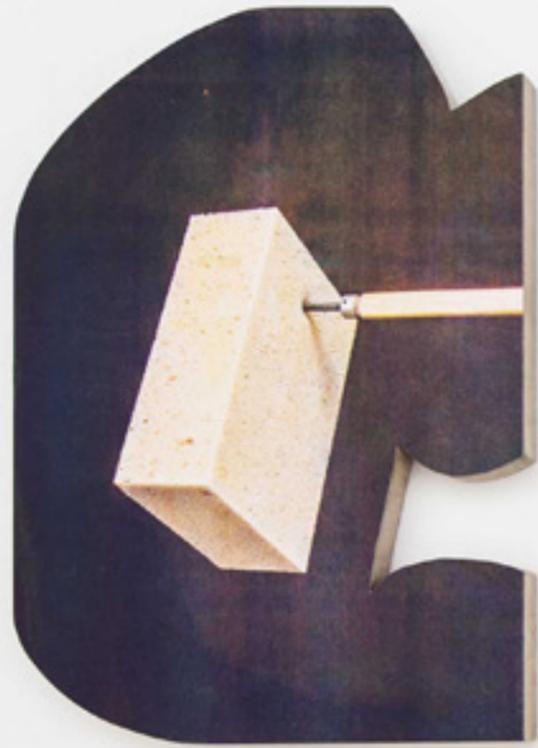
Stupid 2018
Risograph print on mdf board
27 x 39 cm



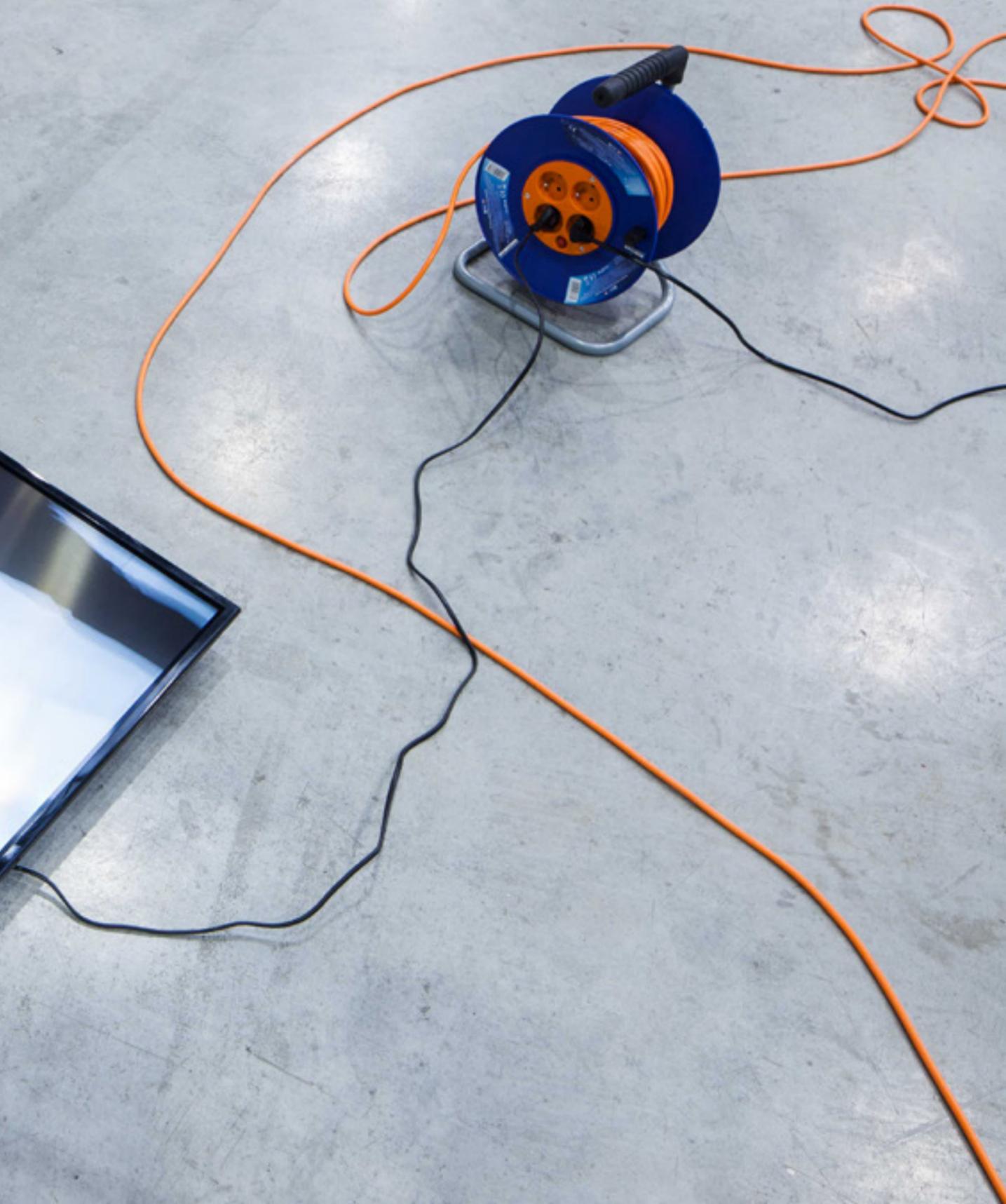
Stupid 2018
Risograph print on mdf board
27 x 39 cm



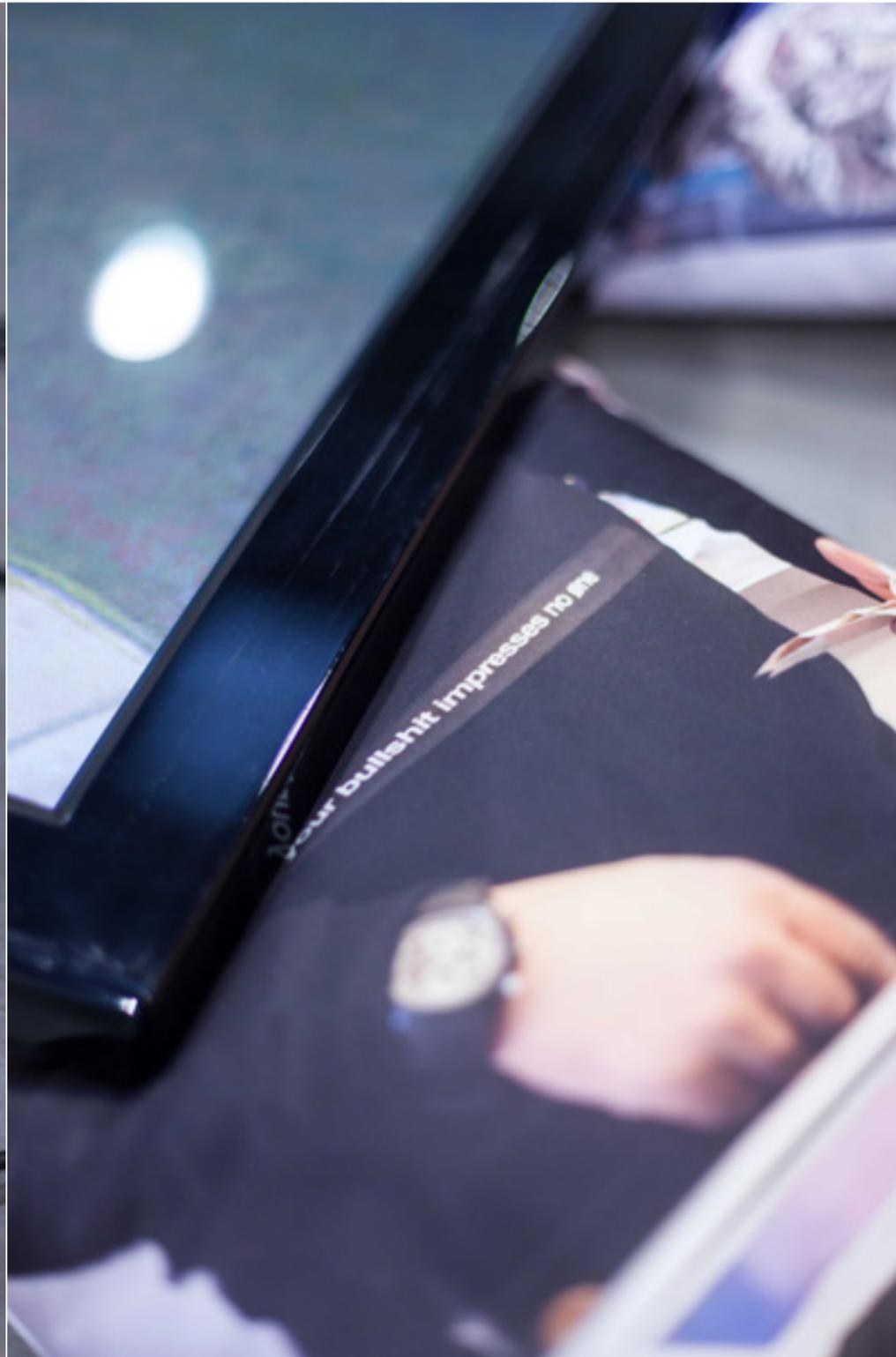
Stupid 2018
Risograph print on mdf board
27 x 39 cm



Stupid 2018
installation view



Stupid 2018
installation view



Cool Water

National Gallery of Prague, Trade Fair Palace, 2018

featuring Johan Grimonprez: everyday words disappear Poetry Passage#6 considers the economies of words and the insufficiency of semantics while investigating the politics of representation and the grammar of affect. Czech artist, Radek Brousil practices pictorial poetry of the unrepresentable and the invisible. Unveiling manipulation strategies, inherent within the technological apparatus of photographic medium, the artist points out the political and social implications of the image production which identify the agencies of power, contribute to the construction of otherness and consequently influence the viewer's perception. Brousil's most recent project, Red Naomi (2017) is based upon a paradox of a quasi neo-colonial exchange: composed of patchwork-like fabrics, produced by Czech textile company VEBA and aimed at African market, his installation is a hallucinatory fest of the visual politics which undermines the global dynamics and subverts the power relations. "This is the economy of a gesture: you buy a rose and present it to say I love you and beneath the gesture lies an industry that most probably starts in Kenya..." thus Red Naomi narrator ventures into the ethics of exchange (evoking racism, slavery, exploitation, abuse, poverty as well as ecology and environmental concerns) which in Poetry Passage#6 is set in a dialogue with the politics of love as elaborated by Michael Hardt, political philosopher and co-author of Empire, Multitude and Commonwealth, who in most recent video everyday words disappear by Belgian artist, Johan Grimonprez advocates a political system to be based on love, rather than on fear. "How can we transform a society that is increasingly defined by a permanent state of war and cultivated by an industry of fear?

How can we realize the paradigm shift necessary to move away from a reality that depends on the exploitation of people and the cult of privatising public resources?", these are the questions Hardt attempts to answer by referring to "the commons", by which he identifies not only to natural resources, but also to the languages we create and the relationships we conceive together. Godard's iconic Alphaville (1965) – a cinematic portrait of a dystopian city-state where all words and concepts relating to the idea of love and affection have been banned - serves Grimonprez as a powerful metaphor for an urgent need to reinvent our vocabulary of social communication and political discourse.

Radek Brousil (born 1980, Nitra, Slovakia, lives and works in Prague) graduated Academy of Architecture, Art and Design in Prague UMPRUM (Studio of Photography). He is a recipient of Oskar Čepan Art Award (Young Visual Artist Award) 2015. Brousil's most recent solo show is Red Naomi at 16 Nicholson Street in Glasgow.

curated by Adam Budak

Johan Grimonprez (born 1962, Belgium) is a multimedia artist and filmmaker who studied at the School of Visual Arts and attended the Whitney Museum Independent Study Program in New York City. His is most known for his films Dial H-I-S-T-O-R-Y, 1997 (an experimental documentary detailing the history of plane hijackings) and Double Take, 2009 (where Alfred Hitchcock is cast as a paranoid history professor, unwittingly caught up in a double take on the cold war period).

Cool Water 2018

Installation, various tapestries, photographs printed on textiles, textile objects



Cool Water 2018

Installation, various tapestries, photographs printed on textiles, textile objects



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Cool Water 2018

Installation, various tapestries, photographs printed on textiles, textile objects



Greenfashion
Nova Cvernovka, Bratislava, Slovakia, 2017

The exhibition in front of you is part of a planned trilogy, following a project called Red Naomi presented in autumn in Glasgow and preceding Cool Water at Fair Trade Palace in Prague. These three exhibitions are bound together by a critical inquiry that lies between ethics, economics and ecology. Brousil examines the culturally rooted tradition of giving flowers and how it links aspects of barter and desire on many contemporary levels – global, local and personal – through its symbolic, economic and environmental consequences.

However, Brousil's analysis is not sociological, rather, it works within a methodology of decontextualisation, where forms and symbols are taken out of their original content and, in their new forms, illuminate relationships of power.

In the first exhibition of the series, Brousil examined the reality of African production of roses delivered to Europe, the catastrophic environmental effects an industry with such a very high water consumption has on the local areas, but also the status of farm workers, the sexual abuse of female workers, the exposure of their bodies to pesticides, the history as well as a certain interchangeability of movements of people and commodities from Africa to the north of Europe, all this linked by the Red Naomi rose variety and an unlikely but fascinating anecdote about Naomi Campbell.

In Green Fashion, Brousil's assemblages continue to loosen up but intersect all the more for it. The title refers to another, very unlikely and unnatural variety of roses one with a green corolla. It also alludes to the "green fashion" itself – the contemporary tendency of eating healthy and only consuming "natural" things. This includes the preference for a natural, unembellished beauty, which can be reached thanks to a generous supply of natural but, of course, bottled water which is, in turn, the cause of another ecological catastrophe. As with the symbol of sensuality the flowers red petals, grown from slavery in a country that is turning into a desert, heavily impregnated by chemicals to preserve their "natural" beauty during the long journey and given dead, but fresh looking, with the same market-minded intention, expecting a return of this given sensuality here too Brousil plays with symbols on several levels. Water, the fundamental ingredient in the production of roses, becomes the promise of a beauty seen in advertisements, intentionally using erotic or even pornographic compositions, but it also becomes a symbol of this eroticism in general, the symbol of a wet desire. Another pornographic or even ejaculative moment is the reinterpretation of photo instructions for first aid eyewashing eyes, once again, are being presented as symbols of sensual beauty and are here affected, for instance, by pesticides. Yet another theme shows a sharp thorn almost touching a luring tongue, sticking out from an open mouth. The meaning is always ambiguous, to say the least the beautiful, technically perfect objects are

Curated by: Michal Novotny

full of contradiction that constantly emerges and somehow emphasises the 'bloody' background of red and green roses. The photographs are not digitals or on paper, but they take a form of three dimensional textile objects supplemented by fabrics of Czech production and design, but made primarily for the African market.

Their flowery motifs create a composition of a hung picture, but of one that is inflated, stuffed, accompanied by photos from fabric flowers and artificial nails. The "pillowness", this softness that almost encourages sacrifice, makes the economy of empathy and emotion even more problematic. In another display, one that was also shown in the Glasgow project, roses petrified in Vřídlo hot spring in Karlovy Vary once again deadened but preserved for eternity by water, the symbol of the life, but always fake as they are made of paper are covered by a transparent plastic foil which is reminiscent of covered dead bodies as well as referring to some sort of a membrane, a protective layer. Numerous internet versions of the English nursery rhyme "roses are red" are printed on the foil. The archaism of this rhyme, although disrupted by contemporary technological elements, suggests that emotions may never have been natural. Brousil's attitude is thus not only critically rejective, he also endeavours to find out how certain emotional contradictions like the feeling of being moved at the same time as knowing the feeling is fake could present a way out of the system the sole measurable quality of which is profit.

Greenfashion, 2017
installation view



Greenfashion, 2017
installation view



Greenfashion, 2017
installation view



Greenfashion, 2017
installation view



Greenfashion, 2017
installation view



Greenfashion, 2017
installation view



Greenfashion, 2017
installation view



Greenfashion, 2017
installation view



Red Naomi
16 Nicholson Street Gallery, Glasgow, 2017

Taking its title from the Red Naomi, one of the most popular roses exported from Kenya to Europe which is celebrated for its “high petal count, improved longevity and resistance to transport”, Radek Brousil’s exhibition deals with the symbolism and impact of our fondness for owers.

The exhibition opens with two patchwork-like fabric prints joining together textile designs from Czech textile company VEBA, which is aimed for the African market. On these textiles, Radek Brousil’s photographs taken inside the Glasgow Botanic Gardens and several studio reshoots of internet memes formally relating and unrelating to work safety educational illus- trations accentuate the encounters of the arti cial and natural world.

Stone roses produced in mineral streams of Karlovy Vary, a traditional Czech spa with highly mineralised water containing high levels of lithium, are lying covered with transparent PVC plastic sailing, somehow resembling the covering of corpses. The transparent surface is imprinted with story fragments about the model Naomi Campbell being given a pouch with “dirty looking” stones - blood diamonds. Finally the video shot in hyperrealistic de nition in Glasgow’s Kibble Palace resembles computer games’ rendering of a deserted dystopic sci through contrast and de nition, then unfolds into a night swimming pool scene with an actress wearing a comedy ower costume. The voiceover explains the conditions and impact of African rose production in a fragmented and genre switching style, oscillating between documentary, internet journalism and literature (the text by Francis Mckee). The story ends in a long shot of the actress’s uncertain expression.

curated by Michal Novotný

While the often problematic vertical import/export line between Europe and Africa is the matically present, the work also questions the role and capacity of photography in undermining but also establishing hierarchies in the logic of “competing images”. The dream like, often surreal mood of the exhibition decontextualising and ridiculing the original symbolism and imagery aims to emphasise the inherent political message by twisting it. In an era of overwhelming images, traditional mechanisms of content attitude expression may often feel pathetic and involuntarily ironical. As such, Brousil is trying to develop new ways of speaking with photography where different tools such as attractive formal stylisation, repetition of certain motives in different incarnations, and radical genre and style switches serve to replace the traditional punchline.

Red Naomi, 2017
installation view, 16 Nicholson Street Gallery, Glasgow



Red Naomi, 2017
various tapestries, photographs printed on textiles, czech company
veba's fabrics produced for african market, 197 × 140 cm



Red Naomi, 2017
various tapestries, photographs printed on textiles, czech company
veba's fabrics produced for african market, 197 × 140 cm



Red Naomi, 2017

Photography print on pvc mesh banner, plastic hose, 40×50 cm

Photography print on pvc mesh banner, plastic hose, 60×80 cm



Red Naomi, 2017
installation view, 16 Nicholson Street Gallery, Glasgow



Red Naomi, 2017

vinyl foil lettering on pvc plastic sailing, 100×120 cm

vinyl foil lettering on pvc plastic sailing, 100×120 cm

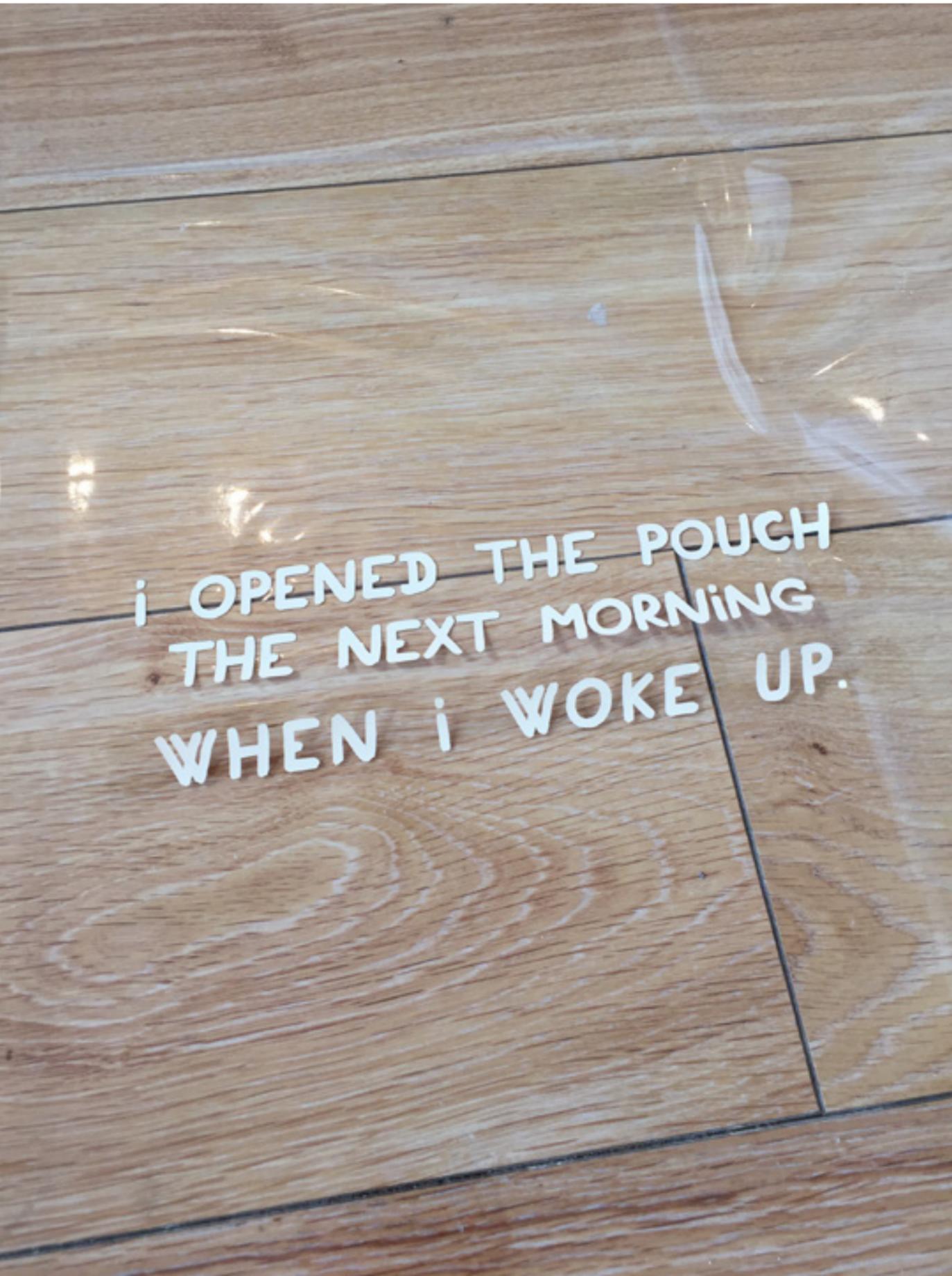


SHE SAID TWO MEN
KNOCKED AT HER
-DOOR LATE AT NIGHT.
THEY SAID "A GIFT FOR YOU"
AND THEN GAVE ME A POUCH.



WHEN THEY GAVE ME
THE POUCH I JUST
PUT IT CLOSE TO
MY BED AND WENT
BACK TO BED.

Red Naomi, 2017
vinyl foil lettering on pvc plastic sailing, 100×120 cm
stone crusted roses, pvc plastic sailing, 100×120 cm



Red Naomi, 2017
Photography print on pvc mesh banner, plastic hose, 60×80 cm



Red Naomi, 2017
video, 6 min, 16 Nicholson Street Gallery, Glasgow

Watch here
Password: Rose



Black and White in Photography Prague City Gallery, 2016

The exhibition **BLACK AND WHITE IN PHOTOGRAPHY** is the first institutional solo show of work by Radek Brousil. While it is anchored in the medium of classical photography, Brousil's output likewise sets up a polemic with the standard techniques of treatment of photographic image, focusing notably on problems related to photographic renditions of dark hues of the human skin, and the concomitant implicit presence of racism in photography. His treatment of this subject earned Radek Brousil last year's Oskár Čepan Award for his series entitled *The Ultimate Norm*. It was not until 1995 that Kodak started to produce film material fit to capture an individual person's dark skin hues.

Previously, therefore, there was for instance no way of making a single-shot portrait of a mixed-race couple without the image of one of the depicted persons being either over- or underexposed. Actually, the initial pressure for a more accurate representation of dark hues then came from the part of food and furniture industries. Today, however, problems still persist in achieving a faithful depiction of dark skin hues, a fact demonstrated by Brousil in his cross-shaped installation of 13 digital prints (Figure 5).

Exemplifying Radek Brousil's work in the medium of black-and-white photography is a series using motifs of plaster sculptural portraits of black Africans by František Vladimír Foit, a noted explorer and sculptor who travelled in Africa in 1931 and again in 1947, for field work enabling him to make plaster anthropological studies of local people. Brousil has now transposed Foit's "white sculptures" of black Africans to negative, thereby producing a series evoking the idiom of Josef Sudek.

Brousil's most recent works, shown for the first time in public at the Prague City Gallery, exemplify a crossover to the medium of sculptural object by their references to the Baroque statuary of Ferdinand Maxmilian Brokoff. They feature Brokoff's sculpted figures of Moors dating from 1710 – 1714, located along Prague's historic Royal Route, a communication passing by the Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace, to Charles Bridge (sculptural groups of St Ignatius of Loyola and St Francis Xavier) and beyond, to Nerudova Street (a pair of figures of Moors at the Morzin Palace). Here, the photographer's work converges with the historical context of the Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace whose Baroque-style reconstruction dates from the same period.

Incidentally, while the Moors shown here were indeed part of the heraldic symbolism adopted by the Bohemia-based Morzin family, whether Brokoff was actually able to work with live models is questionable, or rather drew on first-hand depictions issued by the missionary Jesuit order in Prague.

text by Sandra Baborovská

One section of the present show is thematically centered around the past history of Europe's oldest colonial power, Portugal. There, the bust of a young African boy by António Soares dos Reis is a real-life portrait originally executed in plaster and subsequently reproduced in bronze. As Walter Benjamin observed, "in principle, a work of art has always been reproducible." This portrait, *Cabeça de Negro* (1873), offers material evidence of the individuality of the portrayed person as well as of the material which once played the role of the more recent photographic medium, yet whose advantage over the latter was its threedimensional form. Brousil is concerned both with the medium's material properties, and with its specific variants dependent on the work's setting in different lighting arrangements and angles of view. In its turn, the canvas *O Preto Ciríaco* (1787), by Joaquim Leonardo da Rocha, is a portrait study of a youth whose skin is marked by loss of pigmentation, a condition known as vitiligo. One of its sufferers was the pop icon, Michael Jackson. The status of the archetypal black singer as an artist and musician is dealt with in this exhibition with the use of an audio recording of Michael Jackson's personal testimony, and a portrait of Frank Ocean photographed for his new album, *Blond*, by the fine-art photographer, Wolfgang Tillmans.

Another distinctive device of the artist's handwriting featured here is the use of the mirror in reproduction photography. Indeed, in this exhibition the phenomenon of reproduction proves to be Brousil's prime choice. While in the case of the sculptures he reproduces their present-time reality, with the paintings and photographs he delves into the depth of photographic image by means of a labyrinth of mirrors. **BLACK AND WHITE IN PHOTOGRAPHY** contemplates the manipulation of photographic image, as well as the phenomenon of otherness, in Czech society still today an issue engendering controversy of opinions. Radek Brousil communicates these social problems and taboos in a way overlapping the boundaries of the twodimensional medium of photographic image, into the domain of sculptural object.

Bluescreen for Brokoff (two figures of Moors at the Morzin Palace, Prague, sculptural groups of St Francis Xavier and St Francis of Loyola, all by F.M. Brokoff, various dimensions, direct print on forex, extruded polystyrene), installation view, 2016



Installation view, Prague City Gallery



Portrait of a Young Black African Boy (sculpture by António Soares dos Reis, Cabeça do Negro, 1873), 2016, colour print, 61 × 44 cm



Portrait of a Young Black African Boy (António Soares dos Reis, Cabeça do Negro, 1873), original plaster, bronze, Museu Nacional de Arte Contemporânea do Chiado, 2016, series of six colour prints, 27x40cm



Vitiligo, after Joaquim Leonardo da Rocha (Ciríaco, 1786, Museo Nacional de Etnología, Madrid / O Preto Ciríaco, 1787, Museu Bocage, Lisboa), 130 x 89cm, 2016



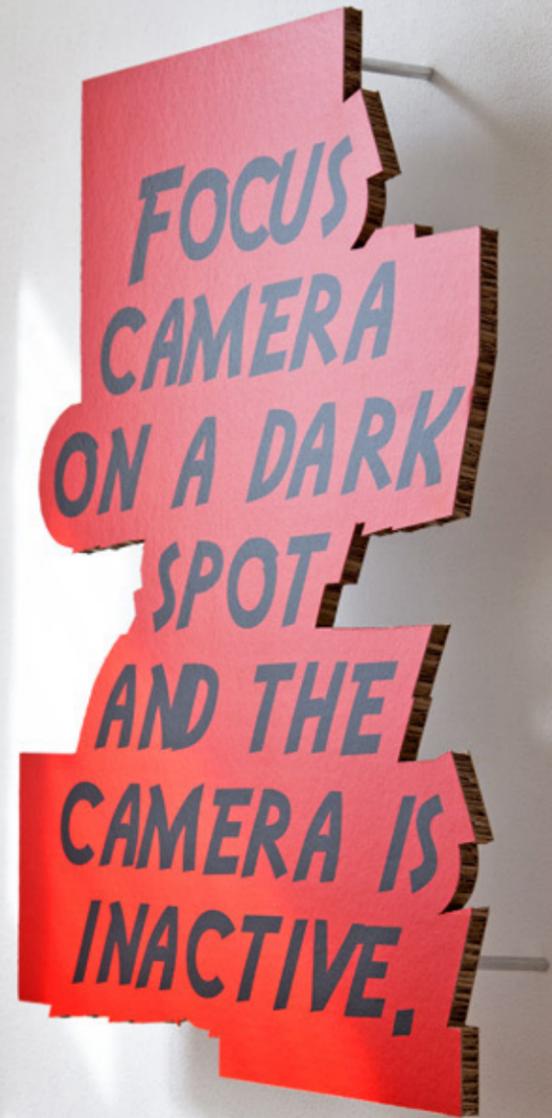
Sculptural group of St Ignatius of Loyola by F.M. Brokoff (National Museum collection), 2016, billboard paper print, 200 × 300 cm



Two small kneeling Moors by F. M. Brokoff (c. 1720), 2016, two colour prints, 45 × 60cm



“Focus camera on a dark spot and the camera is inactive”, direct print on cardboard, 60 × 84cm, 2016



FOCUS
CAMERA
ON A DARK
SPOT
AND THE
CAMERA IS
INACTIVE.

Import Export, 2016, African cotton fabric, 140 × 500 cm



Still Life with Plaster Head of Black African Man and Woman— original busts by F. V. Foit (1948), Prague, 8 × 10” negative, foil, glass, 31 × 41 cm, 2016

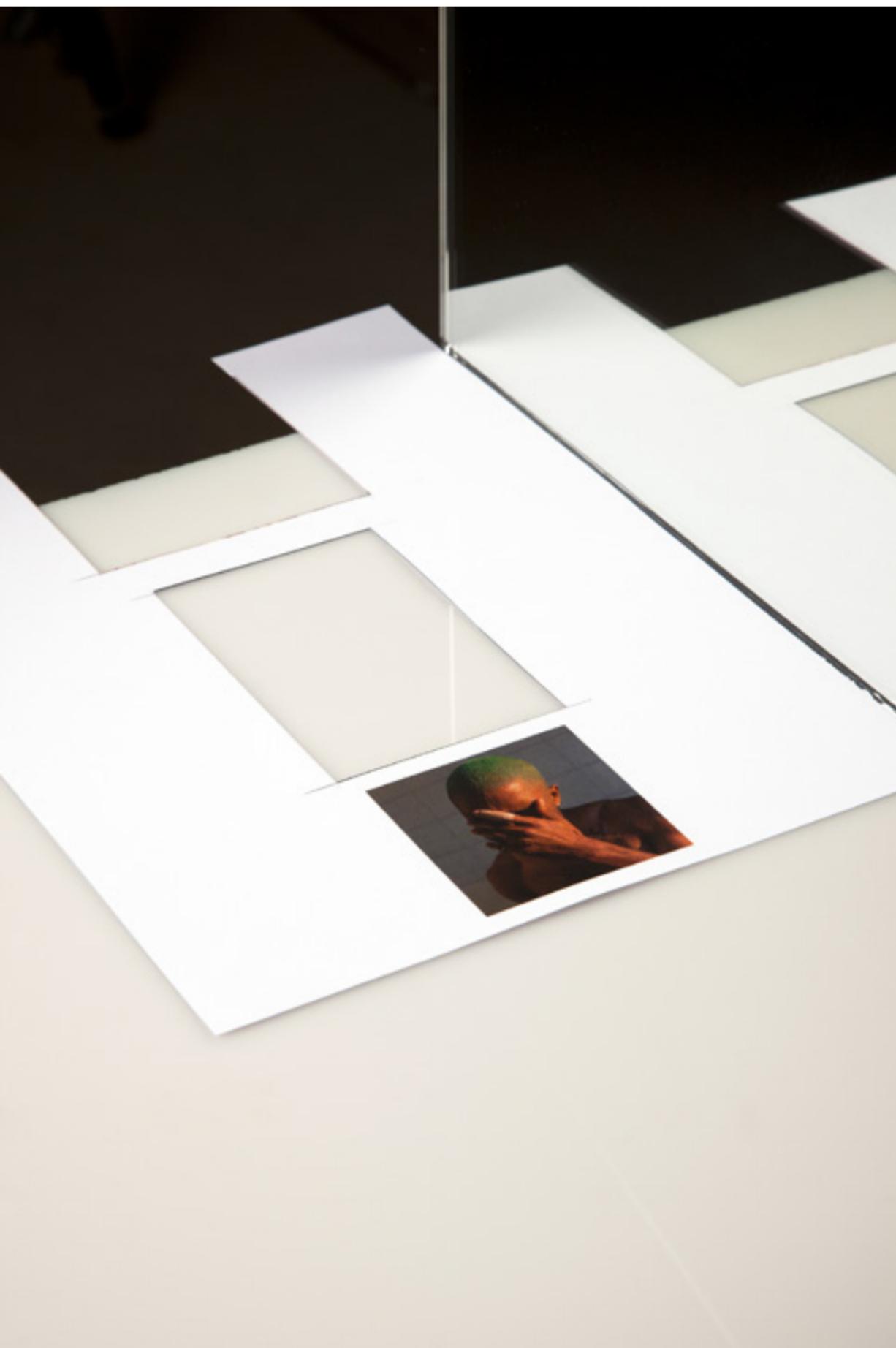


Michael Archangel, 2016, colour print, 30 × 45 cm

Travelogue (Societas Africana, Typis Universitatis Carolo Ferdinandae, 1675), 2016, colour print, 30 × 45 cm



Blonde Black, 2016, ink print, billboard paper, 84 × 118 cm



The Ultimate Norm, 2015

Oskar Čepan Award Finalists exhibition, Košice

cur. by Barnabas Bencsik

Radek Brousil is a professional photographer who earned his degree from different art academies in Prague and abroad. He is familiar with several photographic genre from the studio based object photography to the landscape pictures. But what is in the main focus of his photographer activity is the self-reflective analysis of the photographic process itself, the principles of the photographic representation and the techno-cultural context in which the whole photo-industry and the individual practices developed over the last decades. He is using a very sophisticated, clear and reduced visual language in his compositions connected this minimalist approach with a coherent artistic endeavor to reach technical perfection both in the shooting and the physical realization of the image no matter it's a simple print or more complex object.

text by Barnabás Bencsik

In this new series of photographs Brousil investigates a seemingly technical but in fact very political and universal issue about the improvement of color-photo technology: the white-skin bias nature of the technical apparatus which was developed by white-male engineers. The photo's color balance is determined by the concentrations of different chemicals in the film, so the tone calibration of the films for the analogue photo-technology even in the 80's was determined in favor to capture European type white skin tones and was not sensitive enough to visualize black skinned persons. The technical drawback remained unsolved even after the spread of digital technology, and only the strong demand from the industrial companies to advertise properly their different tone varied products, like chocolate and wood, forced the photo-industry to improve their research. This invisible technological racism and the visible appearance of this phenomenon of unequal treatment of human beings is scrutinized very thoughtfully by the artist in a clear and consistent manner through the complex group of his works.

The Ultimate Norm, installation view, 2015



Figure 5 installation, 13 digital c-prints mounted on wooden desk, 45 × 30 cm



Figure 2, UV print on glass, 40 × 30 cm



Wooden cuboid (4 varieties of woods)



Hands Clasped, 2015
FAIT Gallery, Brno

In accordance with the creative principles of the last years Radek Brousil bases his work on the set of photographic objects and photographs for the exhibition Hands Clasped on his own studio practice. In the past, for example, he put in front of the lens the technical equipment of his studio. By this he brought forward not only the existence of tools that in the background actually influence the design of photographic works, but at the same time he was dealing with them as with the “normal models”, and he used them for the still life, or for a figure or geometric abstraction.

text by Jiri Ptacek

At the Hands Clasped exhibition the aim and approach are a bit different. The pictures are inspired by studio photographs of liquid and elastic materials and a decision to abandon the traditional format and move the photographs to another dimension. From a semantic point of view, he has actually transferred himself from the photographs as images of reality to their autonomous features - especially the physical, material nature of enlargements. When we are ashamed to say that the photographs are images, without feeling the obligation to add that they are also physical objects, on the top of that objects scenically structuring the white gallery space, we actually personally experience their unusual hybridity. We can, of course, approach them as kind of transformers, that are always what we want them to be, but at the same time we must admit that by this we do not cover their ambiguity enough. But Brousil's aim is not to expose the inconsistency, but to make real the interleave of two realities of the photos in our minds. Perhaps, that's why we can - among the scenes in photographs, their formats, and installation - still recognise relationships. Brousil takes into account the dynamics of scenes and derives from them shape and spatial position of the artifacts. The key terms for him are flexibility and fixation, pressure and strain, and the catharsis and movement.

These key concepts can remind us of the intentions of the early avant-garde, not only in the field of photography - for example of futurism. Brousil's photography (and everything how he proceeds the photos) rather points towards the “outside world and society”, towards how we perceive photographs and how we think about them.

Digital C-prints each 54 x 36 cm, wooden box, 2015



Digital C-prints each 54 x 36 cm, wooden box, 2015



Digital C-prints each 54 x 36 cm, wooden box, 2015



Digital C-print 120 x 52 cm, wooden frame filled with PVC foam, crushed pvc pedestal



Radek Brousil

Born July 27, 1980 in Nitra, Slovak Republic, currently living in Prague, Czech republic

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STUDIES

2002–2003 Academy of Fine Arts in Prague – New Media studio
2006–2007 Concordia University Montreal – Photography
2008–2009 London College of Communication
2002–2009 Academy of Art, Architecture and Design in Prague,
Studio of Photography – MgA diploma

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

March 2002 Medicaments – painting and video installation, Addict Gallery - Brussels
March 2008 St-Francis Comes To Montreal – Parisian Laundry Gallery - Montreal, Canada
June 2009 Study Of A Young Man – Karlin studios - Prague, Czech rep.
August 2009 Image vs Reflection – 35m2 Gallery - Prague
September 2011 “Untitled 9 – Untitled 15” – Fotograf Gallery, Prague
January 2012 “Untitled 19 – Untitled 21” – Atelier Josef Sudek, Prague
July 2012 Variations – Ferdinand Baumann Gallery, Prague
September 2013 Studio Works – OPEN Gallery, Bratislava
January 2014 Studio Works – Fotograf Gallery, Praha
April 2014 Studio Works 2, curated by Jiri Ptacek, Plusminusnula gallery, Žilina
October 2015 Hands Clasped, FAIT Gallery Brno
March 2016 Black & White Photography, Jeleni Gallery, Prague
October 2016 Black & White in Photography, Prague City Gallery
September 2017 Red Naomi, curated by Michal Novotny, 16 Nicholson street, Glasgow
November 2017 Greenfashoin, curated by Michal Novotny, Nova Cvernovka, Bratislava
February 2018 Cool Water, Poetry Passage, curator Adam Budak, National Gallery Prague
February 2018 Stupid (Radek Brousil with Peter Puklus), curator Jan Zalesak, FAIT Gallery, Brno
June 2018 Too proud to hope, too weak to climb, Berlinskej Model, Prague
November 2018 Whrrr Whrrr, (Radek Brousil with Karen Kraven), Gallery 1718, Ottawa
May 2019 Standing, Holding a Waterlily, curated by Michal Novotny, NoD, Prague

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

September 2005 FOTO TYPO ZIVE - Langhans Gallery in Prague
May 2006 Sigmund Freud-LIFE IS BUT A DREAM-group exhibition at Prague’s City Hall
March 2007 PTV PRESENTS – Galerie Espace – Montreal, Canada
March 2007 GET A LIFE – group exhibition – Fonderie Darling – Montreal, Can.
April 2007 SOAP/SAVON – group exhibition – Art Mur gallery – Montreal, Can.
March 2008 The Essence – Manes gallery – Prague, CZ
May 2009 Month of Photography – Krakow, Poland
March 2011 Twist – Tuica/Tusovka – golden PARACHUTES, Berlin
April 2012 Coal and Steel – Candid Arts Trust Gallery, London
October 2012 Hidden River – DOX, Prague
May 2013 The Intimate Circle – Municipal Library, Prague
December 2013 Construction Works, w/Jan Pfeiffer – TIC Gallery, Brno
March 2014 9th International Biennial Of Photography And Visual Arts Liège
October 2014 SPOT, NTK Gallery Prague, curated by Milan Mikulastik
October 2014 Hands, TIC Gallery Brno, curated by Jiri Ptacek

April 2015 WYSINWYS – Soda Gallery, curated by Michal Stolarik
October 2015 Oskar Čepan Award Finalists exhibition, curated by Barnabas Bencsik, Košice
November 2015 ArtWorks Open, Barbican Arts Group Trust, London
July 2016 Photography Is Magic, curated by Charlotte Cotton, New York
July 2017 Medium: Figure, Prague City Gallery
December 2017 New Acquisitions from the Collections, Prague City Gallery
August 2018 Liquid Bodies, AQB, Budapest
December 2019 When the time swirls, when it turns into a black hole, Futura Gallery, Prague

AWARDS

Oskar Čepan Award Winner, Young Visual Artists Award 2015
Nominated for Foam Paul Huf Award 2015

RESIDENCIES

2009 Residencias artisticas at Clube Portugese de Artes e Ideias, Lisbon
2010 Internship at PMgalerie, Berlin
2011 Czech Centre Brussels, Belgium
2012 Banská St a nica Contemporary, Slovakia
2016 Youkobo Artspace Tokyo, Japan
2018 Darling Foundry, Montreal
2019 Delfina Foundation, London UK

BOOKS

2013 Asides, Artist book, published by Štokovec, Space for Culture

**www.brousil.
name**