

JAN KOVÁŘÍK: COLORBOND

12 May – 31 December 2020

Prague City Gallery

Troja Chateau

U Trojského zámku 1, Prague 7

Open daily except Monday from 10 am to 6 pm

Curator: Magdalena Juříková

At Troja Château, the Prague City Gallery opens a new exhibition by Jan Kovářík, another sculptural presentation with multiple missions. On the one hand, it's an interesting and even provocative clash of contemporary art and baroque setting of the suburban villa – a kind of experiment which involves historical interior and decorative garden. On the other, it's a challenge for the visitors that come here to see the château culture – it may be the first time for them to meet the contemporary artistic expression, which has changed a lot over the centuries since this architecture gem on the Vltava River bank was built.

Jan Kovářík graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts fifteen years ago. It's not quite usual for sculptors to have a studio completely full of artworks after such a short time. What can we see here at the château is but a tip of the iceberg, preceded by several years of searching and thinking at various crossroads. Nevertheless, he avoided dead-end lanes at these crossroads – every diversion and every step aside opened an important method, fully applicable later, or preserved as a potential initial point on some of the ways of his plastic imagination, which are plenty.

Nowadays, Kovářík's sculptures are referred to as organic abstract forms; however, they are based on geometric arrangements which change gradually, until the system of spatial elements is nicely rounded, and a new form is created that might at times remind the viewer of nature itself. Nature works a similar way, and not only in the sculptor's thoughts; its "products" consist of functional elements that, combined, complete their final form.

However, the author's work is so multifaceted now that it can't be described by this sole example. For example, Jan Kovářík likes to work with the accumulation of reverse, negative forms and shapes, and adds layers of soft and pliable materials that spread spontaneously, only to "turn to stone" in transparent layers of artificial resin, to become an enigmatic, genetically modified organism (*Deform*, 2019).

Other works are less dynamic and more playful (*Donats, of, Infantila* etc.), appealing to viewers through their forms and original color schemes. The impression of being surrounded by a newly discovered natural substance is strengthened by palpating surfaces of objects; from a distance, they seem monochromatic, yet a closer view reveals they consist of small colorful particles.

Jan Kovářík rarely reveals his intentions by using specific and appropriate names. He prefers allusive hints, so he uses technically-sounding abbreviations (*uf, of*), allowing for endless associations and free interpretations of his abstract works. Color is an important identifier for him. He changes his repeatedly, from a grey surface that resembles earthenware to shining

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shades of red, yellow or scarlet. It's one of the most consistent approaches to color in sculptural work, as the colors aren't illustrative at all in their relations to forms; instead, they become integral, conceptual parts of the objects. This important role of colors is also reflected in the metaphoric name of the exhibition, which allows for multiple meanings but in this case, it can be understood as "bond with the color".

Magdalena Juříková

Exhibition Curator: Magdalena Juříková
Graphic Design: Studio Anymade

Media partners: Art&Antiques, A2, ArtMap, Artiki, Český rozhlas Vltava, ExpresFM, Flash Art, Literární noviny, protisedi.cz, Radio 1, XANTYPA

Admission: 120 CZK full admission (adults) / 60 CZK reduced admission (students, senior citizens)

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PLANNED ACCOMPANYING PROGRAM (dates will be updated on the website

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Important notification: Due to the coronavirus crisis, the accompanying program schedule may be affected or changed. Please check our website www.ghmp.cz for updated information. The program may be subject to change.

Guided tours with Jan Kovářík and Magdalena Juříková

Saturday art workshops

Amorphous Structures – a workshop with Jan Kovářík, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château

Shapes of Nature, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château

In our art responses to the work of Jan Kovářík, we'll get inspired by the amorphous expression and biomorphic forms of the author's sculptures. Like him, we're going to use modern synthetic materials together with the traditional ones. Using the intuitive shaping, we will give new organic form to recyclable materials, softened by heat. Then we will add colors to these artworks, and decorative coatings that may resemble vibrating surfaces. We'll also take inspiration from natural fragments – shapes of seeds, berries, stones, shells, conches, mushrooms, twigs, etc. Using manually smoothed ceramic clay, we will create small objects – simplified reflections of the natural forms. These artworks may be completed with surface decorations and colorful structures, or they can be left in the original, clear form. Using the recycle-art technique, we will also use the potential of materials that aren't primarily used in art, such as drink cans, PET



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bottles or plastic wrappings. We'll also use the mounting foam that can resemble biological shapes and volumes, growth, the sprawling process, metamorphosis of matter, living creatures, unknown entities, artificial beings or products of scientific research. We will experiment with proportions, spatial arrangement, structure and composition.

Art workshops for adults and seniors

Plaster Objects I, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château
Plaster Objects II, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château
Ceramic Art I, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château
Ceramic Art II, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château
Ceramic Art III, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château
Ceramic Art IV, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château

The interactive workshops will reflect the art of the author, and his approach to the sculptural work. In the first series of workshops, we will focus on making tiny plaster objects. The participants will be able to try the embossment technique. The second series will focus on ceramic art as the connection of art and natural order. The most important tool will be your own hands. We will use various manual techniques such as smoothening, rolling, touching, leaving marks and structures, or making details by stroking, aligning, engraving and scratching. During the creative activities, we will also explain the stages of the whole process, such as modeling, drying and firing. We will take inspiration for our creative ideas from the surrounding greenery in the garden, and transform them into abstract forms.

Extraordinary events

workshop during the Open Garden Weekend, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château
workshop during the Creative Week (7 days, 7 objects, 7 exhibitions, 7 workshops, 7 topics), Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château
workshop during the Troja Grape Harvest, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château
Summer Public Art Workshops, Eco-studio of the Prague City Gallery in the orangery of Troja Château

Interactive tours for all types of schools and other groups of various ages, with possible creative activities following the tour. We can adapt the duration, topics and difficulty level to specific requirements of each school.

Reservation necessary

Admission fee: children under 10, students of art schools, teachers: CZK 5, general admission CZK 20.

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In addition to the aforementioned events, more educational activities will be organized, focusing on other target groups, such as disabled visitors or parents with children on parental leave.



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