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KVĚTA PACOVSKÁ RUN TILL THE END

2 October 2019 – 1 March 2020

Prague City Gallery

Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace

Karlova 2, Prague 1

Open every day except Monday, from 10 am to 6 pm

Curator: Hana Larvová

Four years ago, in November 2015, the Prague City Gallery held a retrospective exhibition featuring the work of Květa Pacovská at the City Library. The exhibition concept focused on the artist's most important conceptual works – images, sculpture objects, drawings, installations and experimental artist's books – and thus had no room for her early work from the 1960s and 1970s. These prints and small sculptures form an extraordinarily cohesive collection that already displays the artistic principles Květa Pacovská followed throughout her career, developing them further especially through color in her later work. This set of black-and-white drypoint etchings, highly consistent in its clearly defined content and visual delicacy, has only been exhibited once, in the Hollar building in Prague alongside metal objects and illustrations in 1971. Her later interest in other forms of art, especially "closed" concepts such as book objects, meant that this chapter in her early work has been neglected and remains nearly unknown to the public today. That is why we decided to dedicate a separate exhibition at the Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace to this important part of her work.

Květa Pacovská's experimental conceptual work covers a wide spectrum of artistic forms. They draw inspiration from the early 20th century international avant-garde work of Kurt Schwitters, Paul Klee, Kazimir Malevič and other key figures in art history. Květa Pacovská takes highly inventive artistic processes and transforms those forms into a new visual experience connected through an interest in space. Pacovská defines the space with lines and colors in a primarily geometric style. This output includes early prints, starting with drypoint etchings, which the artist worked on intensively in the late 1960s, and later large-format lithographs and screen prints, which continue to appear in her work to the present day.

At this exhibition we present engravings Květa Pacovská made early in her career, from 1964–1971, and sculpture projects from the 1970s. The collection of engravings shows close links both thematic and formal. All similar in format, their color space is shaped by a wide range of tones of grey, which create a framework for the outline of the image. As in her other work, she also based the concept of these prints on her own idiosyncratic philosophy of playing with letters and numbers. Later on letters and numbers, in combination with colors, became a basic component of her artist's books, which loom large in her experimental work, drawing directly on her independent work, which today is an integral part of the international art scene.

The foundation of Květa Pacovská's artistic expression, including printmaking, has always been drawing, specifically the act of drawing. "I draw, I draw everything, I draw with anything on anything," as she characterized her fascination with the spontaneity of lines in the early 1950s. She approached engraving with a burin on a printmaking matrix in the same way as she approached lines drawn on paper or a brushstroke on canvas, emphasizing the stroke that gives the print its style. In these prints Pacovská's primary interest lies in the formal compositional principle of adding and subtracting, layering, blending, overlapping, repeating, dividing, etc. She then adapts the motifs engraved directly into the prints – a letter, number, or symbol – or combines them with a collage of images or text pasted directly onto the completed print. The priority here is not the visual appearance, but the layer of hidden meaning, creating space for the artist's originality and creativity of thought. Tiny, more or less legible lines and fragments of images fill the image area of the prints, making reference to memories or current experiences. A question, instruction, thought or statement – their distinctive mode of communication evokes an endless stream of associations. The order of the images forms a mosaic of seemingly ordinary events experienced at a particular moment in time and space, an hour, day, week or a lifetime. This Dadaesque principle of the banality of the ordinary situation, which Květa Pacovská wields with mild hyperbole, creates an effective poetic for the prints as a contemplation and meditation on matters of everyday life and daily rituals. Lapidary themes take on more serious meaning and open the way for the viewer's imagination to draw the viewer in and offer the opportunity to "read" them. Some give instructions: *Lie down in the grass; Make lines and curves on the sky that can't be erased; It is five minutes after seven o'clock*; while others open up an



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imaginary dialogue with the viewer: *What do you write with? Where will you go?* Still others comment on a situation: *We built four walls, We would like to go. Once we build the middle...*, or return to various experiences, such as the print *Space for 11 pirouettes*, which draws on memories of ballet classes under prima ballerina Elizaveta Nikolska. Some prints make reference to days of the week, or to a certain time and action. Take for example the artist's original text *Game for white (Space limited by time)* from 1968-1970, which assigns each day of the week a certain activity, essentially a commentary on the sequence of artistic processes. In the late 1960s Květa Pacovská also began her first small sculpture objects, first made of sheet-metal and later of wood and paper, which she conceived as three-dimensional drawings. Their emphasis on an open concept allowed ongoing formal variation. These sculpture objects later led to a series of large conceptual three-dimensional installations that the artist still works on today. She makes them out of minimalist objects made of thin sheets of steel, in geometric formation vertical, horizontal, diagonal and circle, calling them "flat" sculptures. Another important part of her early work were her three-dimensional drawings, which she composed of basic geometric elements. In addition to her work with paper, she also often made them with subtle lines from wires, sometimes connecting them with strings, adding a refined sense of playfulness and constant change, which to varying degrees are hallmarks of her experimental work to this day.

Hana Larvová

Květa Pacovská

Born July 28, 1928 in Prague.

Graduated in 1951 from the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague (Prof. Emil Filla).

Her books have been published in Czech, Slovak, German, English, Japanese, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Danish, Finnish, Dutch, Korean and Chinese.

In 1992-1993 she acted as guest professor at Hochschule der Künste in Berlin.

In 1995-1997 she worked on a garden project at the Chihiro Art Museum Azumino in Japan.

In 1999 she received an honorary degree as Honorary Doctor of Design at Kingston University in the United Kingdom.

She lives in Prague.

Curator: Hana Larvová

Graphic design: Ondřej Grygar

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

Tickets: CZK 60 full price (adult) / CZK 30 reduced (students, senior citizens)

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ACCOMPANYING PROGRAM

Guided tours with curator Hana Larvová and exhibiting artist Květa Pacovská

5. 11. 2019 at 5:00 pm

25. 2. 2020 at 5:00 pm

Saturday art workshops

Saturday 2. 11. 2019, 1:00–6:00 pm, Layering and Blending, Educational Center at the Colloredo-Mansfeldský Palace

Saturday 7. 12. 2019, 1:00–6:00 pm, 3D Drawing, Educational Center at the Colloredo-Mansfeldský Palace

We will look at two areas in the artistic responses to the Květa Pacovská exhibition: drawing and engraving, and objects and three-dimensional work. We will draw inspiration from the subtlety and processuality of drawing. We will also be creating matrices by layering various structures and etching lines, similar to drypoint etching. Participants will be able to take home not only the resulting prints and variations thereof, but the matrices themselves as worthwhile artefacts of the workshop. We will try out various tones of grey and experiment with letters, symbols, signs and combinations of the above. In the context of three-dimensional drawing we will attempt to create a 3D drawing using a variety of methods and materials.

Art studio for adults and seniors (Education Center at the Colloredo-Mansfeldský Palace)

Friday 11. 10. 2019, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Bookbinding I

Sunday 13. 10. 2019, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Bookbinding II

Thursday 17. 10. 2019, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Bookbinding III

Sunday 20. 10. 2019, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Bookbinding IV

Friday 25. 10. 2019, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Experimental Printmaking Techniques I

Sunday 27. 10. 2019, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Experimental Printmaking Techniques II

Thursday 16. 1. 2020, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Color, Line and Shape I

Friday 17. 1. 2020, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Color, Line and Shape II

Thursday 23. 1. 2020, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Paper and Book I

Friday 24. 1. 2020, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Paper and Book II

Sunday 26. 1. 2020, 3:00 – 6:00 pm, Paper and Book III

During these interactive art workshops we will focus on the artist's approaches (the principle of geometry, minimalism, refined visual variability and use of typical colors – white, black, green and red), which we will put to use in our work with paper and color. We will also examine a wide range of bookbinding methods and try out traditional bookbinding techniques such as sewn binding and Japanese bookbinding. We will also experiment with book shapes, transforming them into works of architecture, sculpture or painting. Paper will act as a medium for a variety of processes (cutting, perforating, collage). Later workshops focused on unconventional printmaking techniques will touch on artistic elements such as line, surface, contrast and drawing. We will create our own original prints using simple tools and combined techniques. The final cycle of workshops will focus on making toned paper using spirit stains. As we make art we will look for new possibilities and ways of using alcohol-based paint for bookbinding as well as exploring various tools.

Interactive exhibition tours for all types of schools and other age and interest groups with the option of creative responses in the form of making art afterwards. We can adapt the event to suit the needs of each school as to time, topic and difficulty level.

Price: CZK 5 for children 10 and under, art school students, teachers; CZK 20 for those over 10

Contact details: Lucie Haškovcová, lucie.haskovcova@ghmp.cz, 606 612 987, 608 216 418

In addition to those described above, the gallery will also hold other educational activities aimed at other groups, such as disadvantaged visitors or people on parental leave with young children.

Contact details:

E-mail: educace@ghmp.cz

Education Center, Colloredo-Mansfeldský palác

Karlova 2, Praha 1



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