

Exhibition Press Release

The Red Pill

A shaman's observations regarding end-of-the-world news reports

September 13 – October 16, 2024

Curator: Pavel Mrkus



Exhibiting artists: Lukáš Dřevjaný, Pavel Holeček, Pavel Korbička, Richard Loskot, Ivo Louda, Jan Poš, Petr Pufler, Michal Pustějovský, Tereza Severová, Jiří Suchánek, Karim Farakji

Trafo Gallery cordially invites you to the exhibition **The Red Pill**, which is an accompanying program of the Signal Festival. The selected artists are based on geometric and physical orders, constructivist tendencies in Czech art, perhaps best mapped by Josef Hlaváček's legendary exhibition *Poetry of Rationality*. Through highly precise technological apparatuses, mathematical algorithms, computer codes and mechanisms, they bring a pure poetic formula about the good nature of the world. The opening of the exhibition will take place on **Thursday 12 September** from 7 pm and a guided tour on **Wednesday 16 October** from 6 pm at the **Trafo Gallery**. During the Signal Festival on **October 10-13**, the exhibition will be accompanied by evening performances and will be open until 00:00. You can find more information at trafogallery.cz.

There is a key scene in the film *The Matrix* where Morpheus offers Neo the choice between a blue pill and a red pill. The blue represents conformity within an illusory system, while the red pill is a journey beyond the boundaries of safety, a path to knowledge and a challenge to adopt an active stance. Red signifies Neo's decision and conscious acceptance of the role of shaman, a mediator between worlds. The shaman's privilege of being able to see beyond the membrane of illusion, to form unexpected connections and to transcend physical laws is redeemed by struggle. All is done in the interest of saving the hope of a natural life. The overlap between so many aspects of the practice of shaman and artist is remarkable, and probably not accidental. When society is confronted daily with the urgency of negative reports of its gradual or well nigh irreversible end, it asks its shaman to save it or at least to offer hope and light. Artists who use light as a technique, meaning or symbol have a similar gift.

Jiří Suchánek creates kinetic light objects that make sound visible. Pavel Korbička uses light to record and mediate intangible movement. Karim Farakji uses light to define the idea of space. Ivo Louda works with the virtual light of model situations. Richard Loskot uses light as a tool for an awareness of illusion. In his new work *Nexus*, Michal Pustějovský directs light rays towards unity, synchronicity and security. Petr Pufler / *Světloňoš* explores light in the depths of stone, and Tereza Severová works with light as the bearer of an image, whose motive is mainly existential concern for the natural world.

The artists on show draw on geometric and physical laws and constructivist tendencies in Czech art, perhaps best mapped by Josef Hlaváček's legendary exhibition *Poetry of Rationality*. Through highly precise technological apparatuses, mathematical algorithms, computer codes and mechanisms, they give rise to a pure poetic formula regarding the good nature of the world.

Thanks to all partners who are supporting Trafo Gallery: Magistrát hlavního města Prahy, Canadian Medical, Skupina ČEZ, Signal Festival, Hospodářské noviny, Seznam.cz, Dopravní podnik hlavního města Prahy, Art District 7, Mondí Perigraphica, Radio Color, Radio 1, Wine4You a MOS Nápoje / Beverages s.r.o.

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Trafo Gallery, Hala 14, Pražská tržnice, Bubenské nábřeží 306/13, Prague 7, tram no. 1, 12, 14, 25, metro Vltavská (300m), open Tue–Sun 3–7pm, Fri, Sat 10am–19pm, www.trafogallery.cz, IG: trafo_gallery, FB: trafogalerie

LUKÁŠ DŘEVJANÝ

Lukáš Dřevjaný, alias oxoo, works with visual media from lighting design, videos to virtual reality. He combines them in live performances, theatre shows and his own installations. He uses light as a means to manipulate the senses and convey intense audiovisual experiences. He is a lighting designer and live video performer for events focused on progressive club electronic music, such as Lunchmeat Festival and Addict Rave. He co-founded Mlha.studio focused on working with new media and owns oxoo.digital. He also currently mentors technology at the Art&Digital Lab in Hall 40 at the Prague Market Hall.

PAVEL HOLEČEK

Pavel Holeček is an innovative artist whose passion for interweaving sound, light and kinetic elements in his sculptures and objects transcends the traditional boundaries of art. In recent years, he has devoted himself to work that masterfully integrates these elements into a cohesive form and immersive abstract artistic experience. His dynamic works invite viewers to explore all sensory stimuli. They are an object where all the individual elements of the work become one living organism.

PAVEL KORBIČKA

Pavel Korbička is concerned with considerations of space and the possibilities of its perception, while his main means of expression is light. He is interested in uncovering not only the hidden orders and meanings of specific places, but also inscribing completely new spaces into them, which creates synergy with them or, on the contrary, changes the perspective for their perception. Distortion of space disrupts symmetrical perception and becomes a source of psychophysical imbalance. Part of his reflections on space are also recordings of the dancer's movement reduced to the form of interrelated light lines, the shape of which is always an expression of specific spatial limitations.

RICHARD LOSKOT

In his work, Richard Loskot works mainly with new technologies, from which he generates discoveries in the field of visual art and creates innovative objects and installations. Can use technical potential to experiment with new possibilities and functions. Loskot is an artist with a strong sensitivity towards the architectural and social properties of the environment, which he draws attention to with unspectacular but aesthetically precise interventions, using the physical and optical properties of materials such as time or the reflection of light. No spectacularity and amazement, no history of technology and the principle of the rear-view mirror, but the heightened sensitivity of each of us.

IVO LOUDA

Ivo Louda graduated in architecture and fine arts at the Faculty of Arts and Architecture in Liberec, where he is currently continuing his doctoral studies, in which he deals with the issue of architectural modeling. He experiments with the theory and practice of a model that forms an imaginary interface between the real and virtual worlds. At the same time, his work often moves at the interface of architecture and free art, critically examining the traditional concept of the relationship between material and digital environments. In his experiments, he therefore often uses the interface between the two worlds, such as augmented or virtual reality, while the matrix for him is mostly objects with a fixed geometric order.

JAN POŠ

In his current work, Jan Poš deals with the relationship between real and virtual environments. explores their possibilities and blurs the boundaries between them. For this, he uses computer 3D programs in which he examines various simulations, which he further materializes in a real environment. In terms of formality, his works move on the edge of sculpture, object and installation. Poš studied at the Faculty of Art and Design of Jan Evangelista Purkyně University at the Department of Electronic Image in the progressive multimedia studio Time Based Media under the supervision of Daniel Hanzlík and Pavel Mrkus. In 2019, he completed an internship at the Kunstuniversität Linz in the Time Based media studio. He is currently studying in the Socha 2 studio under the guidance of Tomáš Hlavina at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague.

PETR PUFLER

Petr Pufler, who also goes by the stage name Světloňoš, is a renowned Czech lighting designer and artist who became famous for his innovative installations, where he combines elements of light with various materials. His work is characterized by an experimental approach to connecting technology with natural materials, often working with resin and stone to achieve unique visual effects and emotions. In *The Red Pill* exhibition, Pufler focuses on the dialogue between light, resin and stone. This project promises to immerse visitors in an atmosphere where natural and artificial elements merge, and where light not only illuminates, but also reveals and transforms the structure and essence of the materials used. Pufler's installations are not only visually impressive, but also thought-provoking about the connection between nature and technology, order and chaos, light and darkness.

MICHAL PUSTĚJOVSKÝ

In his artistic exploration, Michal Pustějovský traverse the realms of materiality and metaphysics, blending the tangible world with abstract concepts. Central to his work is a fascination with aluminum, a medium that not only embodies humanity's technological evolution but also serves as a canvas to interrogate the nuances of modernity. Through his spin etching technique, he delve into aluminum's paradoxical journey from precious rarity to a staple of aerospace and futuristic design, using this transformative narrative to mirror the shifting paradigms of our times. Simultaneously, his practice extends into the abstract realms of quantum theory and the probabilities of the virtual world. Here, he dissect and depict the fundamental building blocks of our spatiotemporal reality, creating sculptural installations that blend the precision of scientific experimentation with the fluidity of artistic expression. The underlying threads that weave through his diverse body of work are the principles of repetition, cyclicity, and minimalism. It is a journey through the layers of our existence, inviting viewers to a space where science and art converge, each piece a microcosm of the broader quest to understand and express the multifaceted nature of our universe.

TEREZA SEVEROVÁ

Tereza Severová can speak to the viewer through suggestive images. Her work often has the character of artistic research at the same time. At the same time, contemporary visuality comes into her sights. In her work, she tries to reveal its principles and mechanisms. Working with new media becomes her technical background as well as the subject of research. Through the analysis of film language, specifically the principles of post-production of moving and still images and with the help of her own tools, she traces the ways in which modern technologies are prescribed in our perception, in recent years especially in the way we perceive the contemporary landscape.

JIŘÍ SUCHÁNEK

Jiří Suchánek (1979) is sound and transmedia artist focused on creating permanent sound/light installations, objects and systems that are usually interactive and placed in a natural or public spaces (like a cave, astronomic observatory, bridge...). His artistic approach is synthetic. In his compositions he is connecting sound, light, sculptural objects, electronics + code with carefully chosen spaces. Through his work he explores relationship between nature, technology and durability of the electronic media in a wild climatic situations. Jiří Suchánek is usually searching for alternative situations and places for presentation of media art. The centre of his focus is sound that is expanded or articulated by other media and unexpected social situations. For installations he composes music and constructs hardware/software solutions.

KARIM FARAKJI

Karim Farakji deals in his work with new media and their impact on contemporary society. With his work, he tries to cross the boundaries between new technologies and everyday life, and thus strives for their connection, understanding. In addition, he is interested in the very scientific nature of the latest technologies, which has not yet been exhausted. This is reflected in the creative essence of the works, which constantly brings new visual possibilities. Karim Farakji has participated in many national and international exhibitions and competitions, in which he has won several important awards.