

Hay, Straw, Dump

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Short ↔ version



The exhibition *Hay, Straw, Dump*, prepared by the Jindřich Chalupecký Society, pays tribute to leading Czech artist Zorka Ságlová, who despite the harsh restrictions of the socialist regime developed an extraordinarily progressive and experimental artistic oeuvre from the mid-sixties onward. At the same time, the exhibition is an attempt at a reinterpretation of Ságlová's legacy as an impetus for reflection on our relationship with nature through the works of contemporary artists.

The starting point for this project is Ságlová's iconic work *Hay — Straw*, which she created in 1969 directly in the space of the Václav Špála Gallery. Ságlová brought bales of straw and alfalfa as well as piles of still drying hay into the basement of the gallery. She and her friends then regularly went to turn the hay, and they encouraged the audience to do the same and also to rearrange the bales in the next room as they pleased. Ságlová thus declared both work and play to be art. By bringing elements of nature and everyday life into the gallery space, Ságlová connected herself in a specific way to international art trends of the time, such as land art, environmental art, or action art.

The materials from the fields and meadows and the action of tossing associated with them were a simple expression of the personal experience of the artist, who came from a family of farmers and thus had a close relationship with the land and agricultural activities. Her uncle resisted collectivisation, meaning the seizure of the family farm by the state, for many decades. It is this aspect of the environmental reading of *Hay — Straw* that interested us, for collectivisation had far-reaching consequences for the local landscape in terms of ecological devastation and social impacts. At the same time, today we face other very urgent challenges that lead (or should lead) us to rethink our stance toward nature as a passive resource for our livelihoods. Thus, our aim with the current exhibition is to try to view Ságlova's project from a contemporary perspective.

In 1972 theorist Luboš Hlaváček described Ságlová's installation critically as a "hay dump". We've decided to truly create the impression of a dump in one part of the gallery with an installation by Polish artist Diana Lelonek, who combines scrap and rubbish with the fertile soil created by composting Prague's organic waste. We are emphasising the theme of the dump in the exhibition above all because the different kinds of waste resulting from human activities comprise one of the main factors currently transforming our environment, often beyond recognition. At the same time, the treatment and disposal of waste in different parts of the world is a manifestation of social, economic, and political inequalities on a global scale.

The artists in the exhibition *Hay, Straw, Dump* deal with themes such as reciprocity and solidarity between different animal species, considerate and sustainable relationships, and coexistence or post-humanism, a philosophical movement that strives to depose man from his imaginary pedestal at the centre of all events and thought. They urge, among other things, the adoption of a perspective that understands the transitory nature of human civilisation and the human species, whose existence will not be eternal, whereas our planet and nature in general will undoubtedly survive us.

0



Zorka Ságlová & Jan SágI

- Jan SágI, photodocumentation of the installation *Hay — Straw* by Zorka Ságlová, photo canvas, 110 × 110 cm, 1969
- Zorka Ságlová, *Action Drawing*, drawing, 74 × 104 cm, 1992
- Jan SágI, *Zorka Paints Rabbit*, photograph, 180 × 55 cm, 1992

Archive:

- Original of the curatorial text by Jiří Padrta accompanying the exhibition *Somewhere Something*
- Marie Naša Kráslová, *Oldřich Opt* — Jiří Kolář, Svobodné slovo, 1969
- Article by Vladimír Burda accompanying the exhibition *Somewhere Something*, *Výtvarná práce*, 8—9, s. 6, 1969

1



Anna Hulačová

- *Engine with Irises*, concrete, metal, ceramics, 82 × 117 × 72 cm, 2023

In many of her works, Anna Hulačová deals with the consequences of the so-called collectivisation of agriculture, meaning the process by which private farmers were stripped of their land and incorporated into collective farms. In addition to leading to the ecological devastation of the landscape, collectivisation also had far-reaching psychological and social consequences. It was associated with an uprooting, a loss of our erstwhile contact with the land, the earth. Anna Hulačová's new sculpture in the exhibition *Hay, Straw, Dump* depicts a tractor engine with irises growing through it. Here, the iris is an imaginary celebration of nature, which triumphs over the human desire to transform and exploit it for its own purposes.

2



Ruta Putramentaite

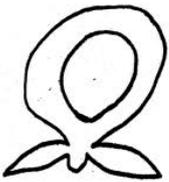
- *My Dear Little Worms*, text, performance, installation of soil-hummus, 2023
- *here all is distance there it was breath* installation, garbage, paper mache, soil, sugar, bioplastic, wood, bones, 200 × 70 × 70 cm, 120 × 50 × 30 cm, 2022 — Special thanks: Dominik Lang and Kateřina Vídenová

In her works, Ruta Putramentaite relates to the theme of environmental crisis and ways of dealing with it. She reflects on these topics from her own position as a human/woman/artist but also tries to

imagine a non-human perspective of the world. For the exhibition *Hay, Straw, Dump* she wrote a short story entitled *My Dear Little Worms*, in which she suggests a future where the existence of man is gradually coming to an end and with it also the careless exploitation of natural resources, other beings, and ultimately even people themselves. The inspiration for the work comes from the artist's cohabitation with her own earthworms, which she keeps in her home vermicomposter. The exhibition also presents two sculptures that the artist has transformed from human rubbish into fictitious objects from the future.

3

Martin Hurych



- *The Pit*, sound installation, wood, 225 × 200 × 50 cm, 2023
Special thanks: the artist's granny

Martin Hurych creates artworks combining elements of sound art and architecture, often inspired by the character of specific locations. His work is marked by a warm humour but also a critical view, particularly toward the cultural and economic gaps between regions. The project *The Pit* was created in collaboration with the artist's grandmother, and it includes a recording of her reading her own diary, which is an endless list of garden chores, buildings on the farm that need fixing, or events in the village. The work reveals the burden of the routine activities and loneliness that are part of life in the countryside, and not only for elderly women.

4

Tadeáš Polák



- *The Rodent Revolt: An Autonomous Community of Rats Prepares To Strike a Deadly Blow To Human Civilization*, a short story, ink and acrylic paints drawings, graphic design: Hynek Trojánek, 2020/2023

Tadeáš Polák's science fiction story *The rodent revolt* is set in the near future. The protagonist, writer Kilgore Trout, joins a community of rats who are organising a rebellion against humanity in order to save the planet. Trout gradually becomes part of their grand plan and sets out on a mission that could perhaps bring humanity one last chance. Polák's works are characterised by his absurd but amiable humour, which is underpinned by a sophisticated use of language. He often focuses on environmental issues, and in this work as well he invites us to reflect on human activity in relation to nature. Visitors to the exhibition will be able to add their own illustrations to *The Rodent Revolt* — because, as Trout says, "Imagination is the best cook."

5



Ines Doujak

- *Land Grabs*, series of posters, 120 × 69 cm, 2018/2023
- *Ghost Populations*, collage, 100 × 130 cm, 2021

In her installations, sculptures, collages, and photographs, Austrian artist Ines Doujak often seeks the roots of today's toxic, unequal, and diseased world. At the Václav Špála Gallery, she exhibits a selection of posters from a large series entitled *Land Grabs*. They quote texts from different historical periods and parts of the world dealing with land grabs and the displacement of indigenous peoples. The series is complemented by a collage highlighting the global spread of diseases and pathogens, to which colonisation and globalisation have contributed significantly.

6



Jumana Manna

- *Wild Relatives*, 2K video, 64 mins, 2018

Jumana Manna is a Palestinian artist and filmmaker based in Berlin. Her work focuses on manifestations of power, especially in relation to the land and soil, with a great sensitivity to the history of the specific places she explores in her works. Her film *Wild Relatives* tells the story of seeds that have been transported from the safety of a seed bank above the Arctic Circle to a newly established science station in Lebanon. The seeds' journey from the far north to the south and their planting in Lebanon, a task carried out primarily by migrant women, reveals the way the lives of humans and plants intertwine across different corners of the Earth.

7



Tamara Moyzes & Shlomi Yaffe

- *LACTISM: Mycoremediation*, living fungal sculpture, drawing of mycelium on paper, surveillance system, 2023 — The work was created in collaboration with artist Jakub Rajnoch. Partners: Kampus Hybernská, Kavárna Hlína, Farma Hlína

The project *LACTISM* focuses on the issue of environmental injustice that occurs (not only) in our region of Central Europe and is connected to social exclusion policies, in particular those that push both Roma inhabitants and municipal waste to the edges of society. The authors

of the project draw on research from 2022, which maps polluted Roma-populated villages in Slovakia and documents the toxic effects this displacement practice has on the local ecosystem and social ties. Unfortunately, this situation is still overlooked by majority society, and therefore in the exhibition *Hay, Straw, Dump* the artist duo will at least symbolically remedy this injustice — they have embedded live fungus into the exhibited texts and objects, which will slowly “devour” the installation, figuratively combatting inequality and ethnic exclusion.

8

Hanna-Maria Hammari



- *Domestication of the Infinite*, installation, found glass objects, LED-lights, dimensions variable, 2022
- *Warm Worm Warm Wurm*, installation, ash wood, wood stain, acrylic color, wax, canvas, dimensions variable, 2022
- *Untitled (Egg)*, glazed ceramic, latex, dimensions variable, 2019



Hanna-Maria Hammari is a Finnish artist based in Frankfurt, Germany, whose artistic practice centres around the topic of the body and its boundaries,

both in humans and non-human animals. The exhibition *Hay, Straw, Dump* features several works by the artist: the installation *Domestication of the Infinite*, situated on the underground level of the gallery, evokes a landscape or cityscape consisting of stacked glass objects of various original purposes, collected by the artist mainly at flea markets. Radiating an eerie green light, not unlike the toxic glow of uranium, the work brings up the topic of the fluctuation of value within human production. The landfill-like environment on the first floor of the gallery inhabits a sculpture reminiscent of an almost comically oversized earthworm. Other mysterious life forms seem to be waiting to hatch from latex-clad “eggs” sculptures embodying the unpredictability of the unknown, reminding us that new life can also initially appear ugly or even frightening.

9

Diana Lelonek



- *Storks, a Sacred Bird*, video, 10 mins, 2022
- *Dump*, site-specific installation, 2023

Polish artist Diana Lelonek devotes her artistic practice to the exploration of the relationships between humans and other species. She is interested in the ways living nature adapts to human-induced change. In her video *Storks, a Sacred Bird*, featured in the *Hay, Straw, Dump* exhibition, we see

storks fight with seagulls and search for food in the largest open landfill in Latvia, near Riga. In the Baltics the birds are considered a symbol of happiness, nowadays, however, the noble birds prefer to live in an undignified environment that provides them with a constant, year-round supply of “nutrients” in the form of human waste. Another important part of the exhibition is the site-specific environment of the *dump* created on the first floor of the gallery where the artist piled up composted soil supplemented with dried leaves, wood, and found objects and materials from Czech and Polish junkyards.



Věra Kotlárová- -Chovancová

- *For You*, acrylic on canvas, mixed technique, 240 × 320 cm, 2006 — The work is on loan from the collection of the Eva and Petr Zeman Foundation.

In Věra Kotlárová-Chovancová’s textile painting, we see the figure of a girl in front of a giant gingerbread heart. A kind of dark landscape surrounds them, filled with strange objects, carnival trinkets, but also bizarre creatures depicted in desperate situations. However, the girl in the centre of the painting offers us a way to transform this dismal “dump of life”. According to the artist, life itself is hidden in the box beneath the girl’s feet, and it is up to us to take the key. This almost fairy-tale-like scene could be seen as a chapter in the never-ending story of human joys and anxieties that runs through all of the artist’s works.



Michal Kindernay

- *Witnesses of Sound #1 — #14*, sound objects, dimensions variable, 2022

Michal Kindernay has long focused on ecological issues in his works, which consist primarily of audiovisual installations combining the tools of art, technology, and science. The works exhibited by Kindernay show us another way of understanding the words *dump* and *pollution*. The artist turns our attention toward the earth’s seas and oceans, which, in addition to serving as mankind’s largest dumping ground, also have to contend with noise pollution. Unfortunately, there is virtually no place in the world’s oceans where the man-made sounds emitted by cargo ships and military sonar are undetectable, and this enormous amount of noise pollution poses a huge problem

for undersea life. And it is precisely this phenomenon of the sonic contamination of our oceans and rivers that Kindernay captures with his sound objects, which have been fished out of the water and now reproduce the sounds that they recorded under the surface of, for example, the North Sea or the Mediterranean.

12

Dagmar Šubrtová



- From the series *Secret Fire*, thermal images, 21 × 29,7 cm, 2007
- *New Wilderness*, photographs, 21 × 29,7 cm, 2006—2013

Dagmar Šubrtová's photos in the exhibition are a selection from an extensive series that the artist captured during her night-time expeditions to the heaps of the defunct mines Mayrau, Ronna, and Schoeller, near the town of Kladno. As the location of one of the country's major coal deposits, Kladno was affected by mining in every way. The heaps, meaning piles of waste materials left over after mining, would not exist if not for the devastating activities of man. However, these "no-man's-lands" have over time, due to their limited accessibility, become host to a surprisingly rich diversity of plants, animal species, and geological findings.

13

Marie Tučková



- *Alder*, audio, 2:09 mins, 2023
- *Wet Scores for Listening*, audio, 4:20 min, 2022 —
The work was recorded and improvised together with Mariana Hradilková.

Visual artist Marie Tučková is represented in the exhibition by two musical compositions that arose as free improvisations inspired by the movement of water. The lullaby *Alder* is a reaction to a several-hour meditative listening session by the Vltava River in Prague's Braník neighbourhood, while the composition *Wet Scores for Listening*, which is a two-voiced improvisation by Marie Tučková and Mariana Hradilková, was recorded in an underground sewer in a former wastewater treatment plant in the Bubeneč district of Prague. In her work, Tučková deliberately makes use of polyphony — a musical form composed of two or more voices, none of which is the leading voice. Tučková uses this kind of musical composition as a symbol of communication, of mutual listening and creation between each other as well as between people and nature.

14



Justyna Górowska & Ewelina Jarosz

- *Cyber wedding to the brine shrimp*, video, 12:03 mins, 2021 — The work was created in cooperation with Annie Sprinkle and Beth Stephens, commissioned by the Polish Cultural Institute New York.
- *Baby shrimp*, 3D print, Biodegradable PLA, variable dimensions, 2022

“Save the brine shrimp! Free the sea monkeys! We fell in love with brine shrimp because they are a fascinating element of the depleting biodiversity of the Great Salt Lake, although due to their survival capabilities they will most likely outlive humans. Artist-brides, Ewelina Jarosz and Justyna Górowska married the brine shrimp at the Great Salt Lake on the 14th of September 2021. This special art project is the response to the shrinking lake, which dropped to its lowest levels in recorded history during the past year. The brine shrimp is one of the oldest and most precious inhabitants of the lake and a crucial link in a food chain that feeds fish and millions of migratory birds.

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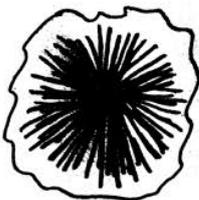


David Vojtuš

- *RECYFIX®HICAP®F1000*, linocut, drainage channel, 100 × 50 × 15 cm, 2023
- *Untitled* (intervention to the installation *Dump* by Diana Lelonek), linocut, 112 × 67 cm, 2023
- *Untitled* (intervention to the installation *Dump* by Diana Lelonek), linocut, 120 × 67 cm, 2023

David Vojtuš works with all manner of plastics and industrial materials, from whose forms emerge spatial drawings. Although abstract, they evoke landscapes and natural or physical phenomena. In the exhibition *Hay, Straw, Dump*, Vojtuš presents new works — linocuts incorporated into a “dump” as well as into section of a drainage pipe.

16



Jakub Tajovský

- *Still Figure*, shellac, UV pyrography on a beech board, 90 × 110 cm, 2020
- *Still Figure II*, shellac, UV pyrography on a beech board, 90 × 110 cm, 2020

Jakub Tajovský deliberately avoids traditional painting techniques in his practice, instead working with what nature and technology can create. In a series of paintings entitled

Still Figure, he reacts to the structure of wood, its substance, and the lines created by nature, which he complements with his own drawings. However, he does not do this with his own hand but rather with the help of “artificial intelligence” tools, here specifically using so-called UV pyrography. The result is a joint work by three diverse actors — nature, man, and technology.

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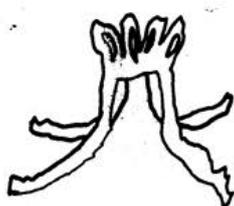


Nikola Brabcová

▪ *Jara*, video, 12 min, installation, natural materials, variable dimensions, 2021/2023

Artist Nikola Brabcová has a longstanding interest in the land and agriculture, and she explores environmentally friendly ways of creating art. She mainly uses natural materials, including homemade bioplastic or scraps and recycled household waste, especially from the kitchen. Her installations are thus often largely recyclable or can naturally decompose (through composting). In her video *Jara*, Brabcová depicts an ordinary walk through her mother-in-law’s garden, where the grandmother explains to her grandson where food comes from, the role of insects and weeds, how composting works, and so on. The aim of the video is to reflect on types of agriculture and cultivation that are driven by a love of nature, not industrialised attempts to exploit natural resources. The work also emphasises wisdom and experience passed down from generation to generation.

18



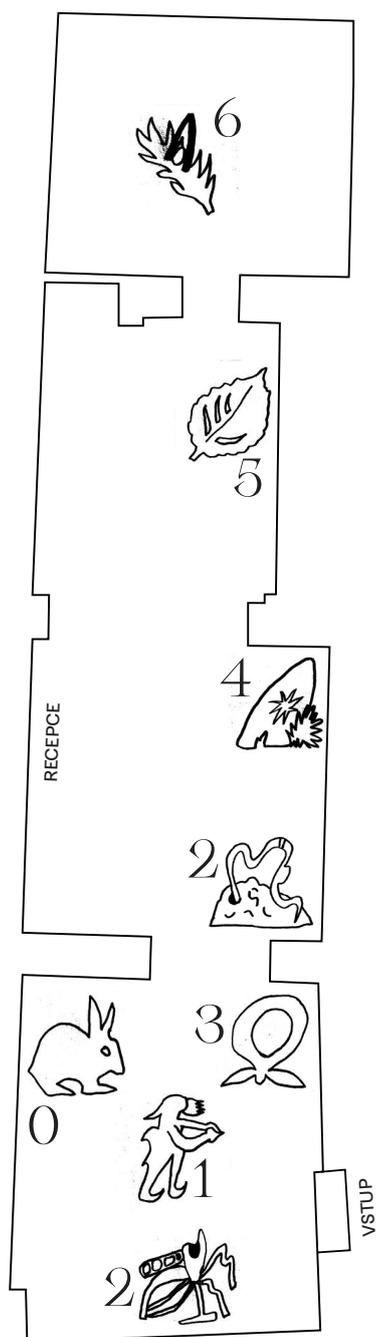
Petra Janda

▪ *Regina*, straw from ecological agriculture, recycled metal construction, variable dimensions, 2022 — The work was finalized during a collective performance with Darina Alster, Veronika Šrek Bromová, Natálie Košková, Tomáš Samek, Zuzana Štefková, Tereza Vydrová and Petra Janda.

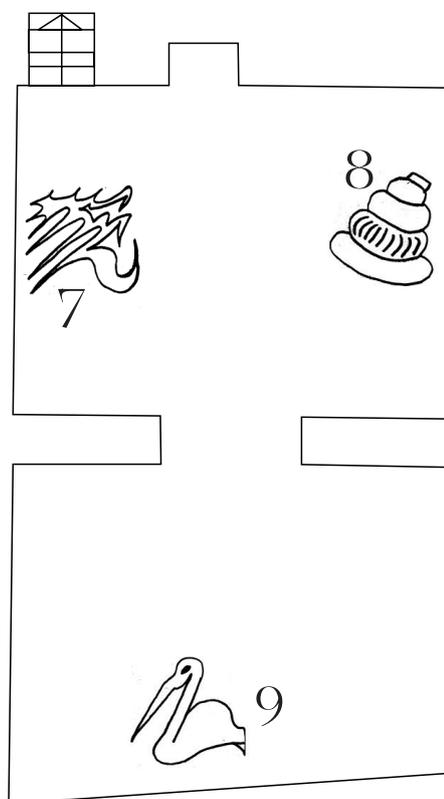
In her works, Petra Janda makes use of temporary materials such as different types of paper, clay, straw, or other natural substances. Thus, they become a sculpture for a certain amount of time but can easily return to the cycle of life, creation, development, and decay/decomposition. In the exhibition *Hay, Straw, Dump*, she presents a work entitled *Regina*. This sculpture growing out of a “dump” represents the imaginary triumph of the feminine principle (which exists in all of us), of consideration and the hope that in today’s half-degraded world it is not too late to begin spinning a better future.

- 0 Zorka Ságlová, Jan Sági
- 1 Anna Hulačová
- 2 Ruta Putramentaite
- 3 Martin Hurych
- 4 Tadeáš Polák
- 5 Ines Doujak
- 6 Jumana Manna
- 7 Tamara Moyzes & Shlomi Yaffe
- 8 Hanna-Maria Hammari
- 9 Diana Lelonek

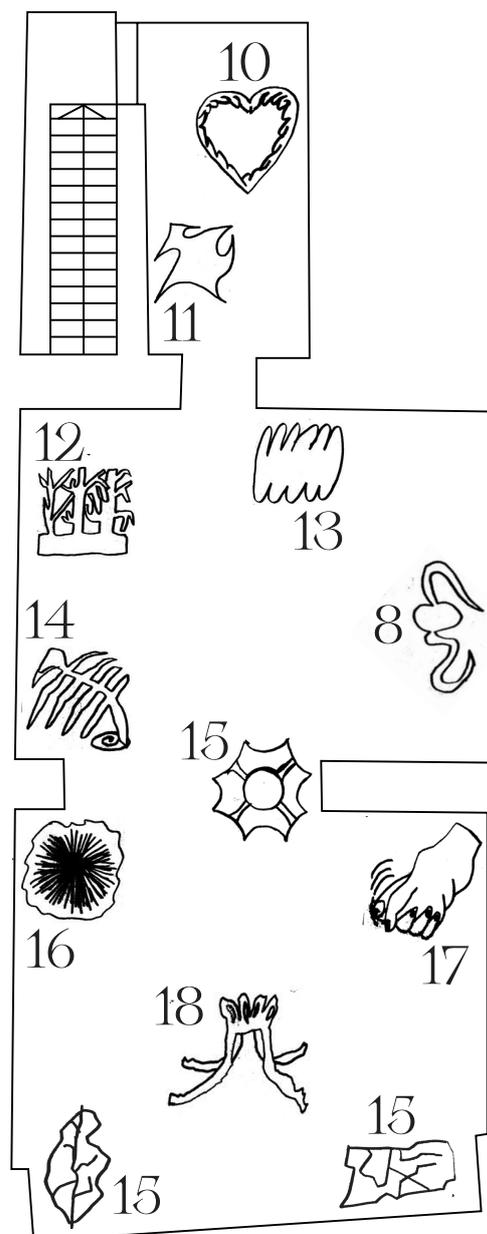
- 10 Věra Kotlárová-
-Chovancová
- 11 Michal Kindernay
- 12 Dagmar Šubrtová
- 13 Marie Tučková
- 14 Justyna Górowska
& Ewelina Jarosz
- 15 David Vojtuš
- 16 Jakub Tajovský
- 17 Nikola Brabcová
- 18 Petra Janda



ground floor



underground



1st floor

Exhibiting artists:

Nikola Brabcová, Ines Doujak, Justyna Górowska & Ewelina Jarosz, Hanna-Maria Hammari, Anna Hulačová, Martin Hurych, Petra Janda, Michal Kindernay, Věra Kotlářová-Chovancová, Diana Lelonek, Jumana Manna, Tamara Moyzes & Shlomi Yaffe, Tadeáš Polák, Ruta Putramentaite, Jan SágI, Zorka Ságlová, Dagmar Šubrtová, Jakub Tajovský, Marie Tučková, David Vojtuš

Curators:

The JCHS curatorial collective
(Barbora Ciprová, Veronika Čechová,
Tereza Jindrová, Karina Kottová)

Exhibition environment:

Diana Lelonek

Production:

Ondřej Houšťava, Zuzana Šrámková

Public programs:

Nikola Ludlová in collaboration
with the JCHS collective

Production of public programs:

Sára Davidová

Graphic design:

Tereza Haspeklová & Petr Kněžek

Translation:

Lamija Čehajić, Viktor Heumann, Brian D. Vondrak



The exhibition is part of the program line of Jindřich Chalupický Society called *The World of Jindřich Chalupický*. The exhibition is part of the international project *Islands of Kinship: A Collective Manual for Sustainable and Inclusive Art Institutions*, co-funded by the European Union, Czech Ministry of Culture and the City of Prague.

