

Senses

Gregor Hildebrandt, Václav Jirásek, Jana Kasalová, Petr Nikl, Jan Švankmajer, Ján Šicko, Vladimír Véla, Ahmet Yiğider

Curator and author of the project: Tomáš Zapletal Cermak

Texts by: Miroslav Petříček and Mark Gisbourne

Organiser: gallery Cermak Eisenkraft_, cermakeisenkraft.com

Place: gallery Cermak Eisenkraft_, Národní 9 (2nd floor of Topič House), Prague 1

Opening hours: Mon-Fri 11:00-18:00 (July, August and weekends by prior arrangement)

Dates: from 19 June to 12 September 2024

Vernissage opening: 18 June 2024 at 18:30 h.

Cermak Eisenkraft_ Gallery presents an exhibition on the 2nd floor of the Topič House at Národní třída 9, entitled *Senses* – Gregor Hildebrandt, Václav Jirásek, Jana Kasalová, Petr Nikl, Jan Švankmajer, Ján Šicko, Vladimír Véla, Ahmet Yiğider.

Under the curatorial direction of Tomáš Zapletal, the project will offer the viewing public works by Czech and foreign, young and established artists who express themselves through various media and whose work crosses the boundaries of individual fields and disciplines.

The aim of the exhibition is to awaken our 'sixth sense'. These diverse works, ranging from sculptures, art objects, drawings, paintings, videos and interactive installations created specifically for the Cermak Eisenkraft gallery space, each speak to all five human senses in their own language. The paintings captivate the eye, the sculptures cry out to be touched, the rhythm of the drum machine invigorates... The barrier between art and the viewer falls away. Through exploration and personal experience, the visitor enters into a dialogue with the artist, whereby each work becomes a transforming dynamic organism and acquires new life. The visitor is thus not a mere passive observer, but an active co-creator of the entire exhibition.

The exhibition is an invitation to a stimulating and playful sensory journey that traverses the boundary beyond the visible and tangible, reaching closer to oneself, and thus awakens the 'sixth sense' of intuition and perception of the world we live in. Our senses will never again be taken for granted.

Admission to the Cermak Eisenkraft_ gallery is free for the duration of the exhibition.

Print quality photos on request at office@cermakeisenkraft.com

Keywords: exhibition, Cermak Eisenkraft_ gallery, Prague, June, September, contemporary art, painting, sculpture, art object, installation, senses, touch, hearing, sight, smell, taste, intuition, interaction

Gregor Hildebrandt (* 1974, Bad Homburg vor der Höhe) is a German contemporary artist. He has been living and working in Berlin since 1998. From 1995-1999 he studied at the Kunsthochschule Mainz at



Johannes Gutenberg University Mainz under Friedemann Hahn, then from 1999-2002 at the Universität der Künste Berlin in the class of Dieter Hacker. In 2003 he received a scholarship at the German Study Centre in Venice. In 2004 he was nominated for the GASAG art prize, in 2005-2006 he received a postgraduate scholarship from the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) in Vienna, and since 2015 he has been professor of

painting and printmaking at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich. Hildebrandt's materials of choice are analogue media such as audio and video tapes including their cases and gramophone records. From these materials he creates collages, murals, photographic works and installations. Hildebrandt began to consider incorporating sound into his work during his studies at the University of the Arts in Berlin. In 2000, he developed his signature magnetic tape-covered canvases, which gradually took on architectural scale and proportions. *Hirnholzparkett* (2015), a large-scale installation exhibited at Leipzig's G2 Kunsthalle in 2021, featured 35,000 audio cassette tapes on spools the size of gramophone records, layered on the floor and encased in epoxy resin. In the artist's work, the tape performs an important function as an artistic medium, allowing the artist to add an additional 'unseen' dimension to his paintings. This play with perception is an essential feature of his work; the image is completed in the mind of the viewer. His works are represented in many private and public collections (Musée National d'Art Moderne Centre Pompidou, Paris, Sammlung zeitgenössischer Kunst des Bundes, Germany, Sammlung Philara, Düsseldorf, Fundación Hortensia Herrero, Valencia and others).

Václav Jirásek (* 1965, Karviná) is a Czech photographer. He graduated in applied graphics from the Secondary School of Applied Arts in Brno (1980-1984) under Dalibor Chatrný and in painting from the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague (1984-1990) in the studio of Jiří Načeradský. He is an autodidact in photography. In 1989-1993, he was a founding member of the art group Bratrstvo, a peculiar treatment of the legacy of European Romanticism, medieval art, totalitarian propaganda and the iconography of 1980s British popular music. He exclusively used large format cameras and the subsequent direct contact of the negative with barite photographic paper. In his free work, Václav Jirásek works mostly with photography without thematic definition. The common



denominator of his works is his interest in mystery, mask, irony, new documentary, decadence and recycling of art. His most important projects include the documentation of the ossuary in Kutná Hora, *Memento mori* (1995, together with Ivan Pinkava and Robert V. Novák), a documentation tracing the fall of the Czech and Moravian heavy industry *Industria* (2006), in which he followed up his earlier series *Wannieck factory - farewell to the industrial age* (1994-1996), as well as the more recent series *Kerberos*, *Cars*, *Houses or Sleepers*, presented at the 2015 solo exhibition *The World according to Ironym Kool* at the House of Arts in Brno. Since 2003, the artist has been working on the as yet unfinished documentation of Mikuláš flying in Wallachia, or the "smelting" activities of the Peerless Cooperative of

the Holy Nurture in Kuřivody Castle, where he captures the transformations of UPSYCH 316a in space and time. He has received several awards and his works are represented in many private and public collections (Musée National d'Art Moderne Centre Pompidou, Paris, Museum of Decorative Arts, Prague, Moravian Gallery, Brno).

Jana Kasalová (* 1974, Turnov) is a Czech visual artist. She works with drawing, painting, video art and photography. She lives and works in Prague. She studied at the painting studio of Jiří Načeradský at the



Faculty of Fine Arts of the Brno University of Technology. In 2000 she received a Spanish State Scholarship and a scholarship from the Dagmar and Václav Havel Foundation VIZE 97 and in 2010 she completed postgraduate studies in Fine Arts and Art Therapy at the Universidad Castilla-La Mancha in Cuenca and the Universidad Complutense in Madrid. Jana Kasalová's work can be divided into three broad categories according to the different types of media: work on paper, work on

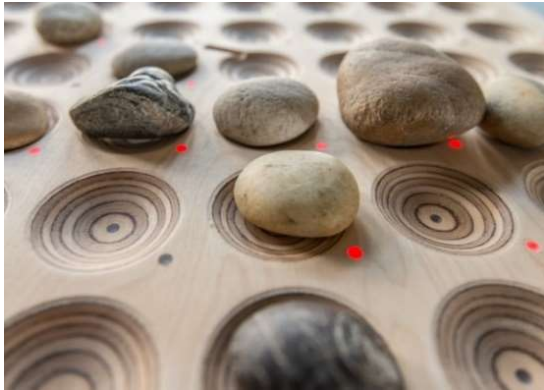
canvas and work using new media. These formally defined areas partly reflect her own thematic delimitation: the first two forms are used by the artist mainly to process contents related to memory circumscribed by the horizon of time and space (maps or landscapes in cartographic form) and human corporeality (works created using breast milk). Photographs and videos are largely concerned with the duality of man and animal, culture and nature. The exhibition will feature drawings from the Terra Mirabilis (2021-2023) and Connections (2023) series, which were created by combining medial and automatic drawing while meditating and exploring the space that the artist sees with her eyes closed. Jana Kasalova is particularly interested in the memory of the soul, which is not born and therefore does not die, as well as in exploring the third eye, which the artist depicts as Parisian blue, the color assigned in Eastern teachings to the sixth chakra. Purple, the color assigned to the seventh crown chakra located at the top of the head, also appears in their drawings. It is associated with spiritual connection, unity and higher consciousness. It connects us to the spiritual world and cosmic energy. She is represented in public and private collections in Europe and the USA, but especially in Italy and Spain.

Petr Nikl (*1960, Zlín) is a Czech painter, musician, photographer and theatre artist. He studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague in the studio of professors Arnošt Paderlík and Jiří Ptáček. He was a member of the now defunct artistic group Tvrdohlaví. In 1995 he received the Jindřich Chaloupecký Award. Initially, he focused more on painting, graphic art and drawing. He authored the artistic concept of playful interactive exhibitions Hnízda her (Rudolfinum, 2000), Krajina fantazie a hudby (Czech pavilion at EXPO 2005 in Aichi, Japan), Orbis Pictus and Labyrint světa. Together with Jiří Wald and other artists, he has for several years been conveying a new perspective on contemporary art in the Czech Republic and abroad. He says: "We want people to get rid of the prejudice that art is a kind of meaningless appendix created by an exclusive sect of artists for themselves." His vision is not to create a museum of interactive art, but an ever-evolving studio where art serves as a universal language that leads to the fulfilment of yearnings for creativity, sensory perception and



spontaneity. He is involved in visual and theatrical performances and has published several original storybooks. His book *Záhádky* (Mysteries) won the Magnesia Litera award in 2008 in the categories 'book of the year' and 'book for children and young people'. His work is represented in the collections of the National Gallery in Prague, GHMP, Moravian Gallery in Brno and other public and private collections.

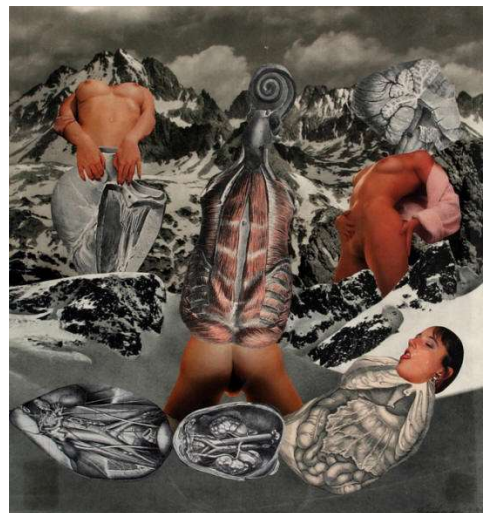
Ján Šicko (* 1977) is a Slovak visual artist. He explores different dimensions of perception of reality and the possibilities of realizing the essence of art. Through his precise processing of paintings enriched with



experimental elements he creates a strong emotional charge in combination with the motifs used. Ján Šicko researches and works in the field of visual communication and new media. In addition to his professional work in the field of graphic design and new media, he also runs the MediaLab* at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bratislava - a laboratory focused on exploring the liminal positions of graphic design. His free work ranges from animation, through VJing, to interactive installations and computer games. He holds several awards. In 2009 he founded DevKid. He is the

creator of custom software that generates real-time graphical output based on various parameters, called Dots. The influence of opposing forces affects the trajectory of the dots, which attract but also repel each other, trying to move in unison but reaching their individual positions in space. The action of the forces is based on the user's inputs. He has collaborated with the Slovak National Gallery, the Slovak National Museum, the Slovak Design Centre, the Slovak National Theatre and many other institutions. He has received several awards, including the Europe's Best in Multimedia: Europrix 2002 – Quality seal.

Jan Švankmajer (*1934, Prague) is a Czech film director, animator, writer, playwright and artist. He works with drawing and free graphics, collage, ceramics, tactile objects and assemblages. He is a leading representative of late Czech surrealism and a distinctive celebrity on the Czech and international art scene. He graduated from VŠUP, the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague and continued his studies at the puppetry department of the DAMU, the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, majoring in directing and scenography. In the early 1960s, he worked with infomercials, which later became an important part of the visual design of his animated films. He entered the film field in the 1960s, during the Czech New Wave, and made his first film, *The Last Trick of Mr Schwarcewalde and Mr Edgar* (1964). He gained international attention in 1983 with the screening of his films from the 1960s at the FIFA International Film Festival. In 1988 he made his first feature film, *Something of Alice*, which was a worldwide success. He has since made several long films, most recently *Insect* (2018). He became a member of the Surrealist group in Czechoslovakia. His surrealist work is strongly influenced by dreams, childhood and obsessions of various kinds. His desire to touch materials led him to the sensory perception of art, especially touch. This personal fascination manifests itself in his experiments exploring the possibilities of aesthetic perception of haptic art and is



also strongly reflected in his tactile to fetishistic art objects. He presented the outcomes of his experiments in his book, *Touch and Imagination*. According to Švankmajer, the sense of touch functions as a facilitator of communication between the work and the subject. He has been the recipient of many international honours, including the 2018 Raymond Roussel Medal for Lifetime Achievement in Film, in Barcelona. Jan Švankmajer's work can be found in Tate Modern in London and in a number of public and private collections in the Czech Republic and abroad.

Vladimír Věla (* 1980 Turnov) is a Czech painter. He studied at the Pedagogical Faculty of the University of West Bohemia in Pilsen (1998-1999), the Higher Vocational School at the Secondary School of Arts and Crafts in Jablonec nad Nisou (1999-2000), the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague in the Studio of Classical Painting of professor Zdeněk Beran (2000-2003) and in the Studio of Intermedia Art under professor Milan Knížák (2003-2006). He lives and works alternately in Prague and Turnov. He is a two-time finalist of the NG 333 award. Vladimír Věla's work is inextricably linked to the fantasy landscape of the Bohemian Paradise region and to memories of his native home in Turnov, filled with banal but mysterious objects. His first work with the theme of landscape and natural elements reflects sacred themes and shape itself becomes the central motif. His use of colour forms the foundation of his work. The intrinsic power of the motif is enhanced by the simplicity of expression, the monumentality of details, which the artist composes into new positions of meaning. Věla's work defies stylistic classification; he is fascinated by the process of capturing the subconscious 'feeling-substances' of experience, in which quest he is aided by a refined and distinctive painting technique. He seeks harmonious consonances on the receptive-aesthetic level of the work, as he believes that the actual expression of the artwork should resonate with how it speaks to the recipient. Vladimír Věla's work can be found in a number of public and private collections in the Czech Republic and abroad.



Ahmed Yiğider (*1984, Artvin) is a Turkish sculptor and interdisciplinary artist. He studied at the Industrial Engineering Department of Yildiz Technical University and graduated from the Design



Department of the Faculty of Architecture of Istanbul Technical University. He is a visiting lecturer at the Faculty of Architecture, Bilgi University. He also manages creative processes in a company producing fragrances to enrich industrial consumer products and food flavours. Scents are very much present in Yiğider's daily life. He is the author of the interdisciplinary projects *Baksı Scent* (2016, Baksı Museum) and *Intellect* (2021, Art Gallery, Moscow).

In his artistic work he is interested in 'living organisms' in nature. His preferred sculptural materials are aromatic woods, with which he can establish a strong sensory connection. On the other hand, he focuses on the social behaviour of certain biological species, working on experiments using molecular analysis techniques. Between the studio and the laboratory, his challenge is to push the boundaries of creative conceptual thinking and formal freedom within his sensory projects and sculptures. He is represented in important collections all over the world.

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On the occasion of the exhibition, a publication will be published in Czech-English with the texts by philosopher Miroslav Petříček, art historian Mark Gisbourne and interviews with the showcased artists by gallerist, curator and author of the project Tomáš Zapletal Cermak.

Miroslav Petříček (* 1951, Prague) is a Czech philosopher, aesthetician and translator, professor at the Faculty of Arts, Charles University. He focuses on the philosophy of art, the overlap between philosophy, film, literature and art, and contemporary (postmodern) French philosophy. After graduation, he was unable to study at university for political reasons. In 1971-1977 he attended Jan Patočka's at-home seminars. After the Velvet Revolution in 1990 he received his Master's degree at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. He received his doctorate in 1998 and his professorship five years later. In 1990-1992, he worked at the Jan Patočka Archive of the Centre for Theoretical Studies of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and Charles University in Prague and lectured at the Faculty of Arts of Charles University. In 1992-1995 he worked at the Central European University in Prague and at the same time began lecturing at the Academy of Fine Arts. Since 2001 he has been working with the Centre of Audiovisual Studies at FAMU and in 2007 he was appointed Professor of Film, Television and Photographic Arts and New Media - Theory of Film and Multimedia Production. During his academic career he became a member of the Scientific Council of Charles University and its Faculty of Arts, as well as a member of the Artistic Council of FAMU, DAMU and AMU, and the Council of the Institute of Philosophy. He has been successfully cooperating with Cermak Eisenkraft_ Gallery for several years.

Mark Gisbourne (* 1948, Stratford-upon-Avon) is one of Europe's most internationally renowned and respected curators and art historians. British-born, educated in Rome and currently based in Berlin, he is a truly global figure with extensive knowledge and life achievements within various spheres of the art world. Between 1987-2013 he was a visiting professor at 17 universities in the UK, the US and Germany e.g. tutoring at the Courtauld Institute of Art; lecturer of the Master's programme at the Slade School of Art in London; as well as postgraduate Senior Lecturer in Post-war and Contemporary Art, at Sotheby's Institute. He was former President of the British Art Critics Association (AICA) from 1994–1997, and an International Vice-President who co-organized the World Congress of Art Critics at the Tate Modern, London, at its opening in 2000. Mark Gisbourne has curated numerous exhibitions worldwide and written a dozen books and more than 250 catalogue essays on 20th and 21st century art, published in over 20 languages. He is a contributor to many cultural periodicals and is a close associate of the BBC in London. His profound knowledge and distinctive vision have asserted his lasting stature. Mark Gisbourne has been working regularly with Cermak Eisenkraft Gallery since 2014.

Links

cermakeisenkraft.com
[instagram.com/cermak_eisenkraft](https://www.instagram.com/cermak_eisenkraft)

About the gallery

Cermak Eisenkraft Gallery_ was established in 2014 with the ambition to become a major player in the field of trade in post-war and contemporary Czech and international art. The founders, Tomáš Zapletal and David Železný, who had previously been active on the Czech art market independently, set as their main goal the creation of a trustworthy, reputable institution of international importance, which, thanks

Cermak Eisenkraft

to the highest standards of its work, contributes to the cultivation of the art market in the Czech Republic. The gallery is affiliated with the CE Foundation, which has been supporting contemporary Czech and international artists in their activities for many years. The fund has supported the following artists: Magdalena Jetelová, Milan Kunc, Vladimír Škoda, Jiří Černický, Šimon Brejcha, Martin Velíšek, František Matoušek, Pavel Baňka and others. It has also been a long-term supporter of *Fotograf* magazine, helping to create the highest-quality media about Czech photography in the Czech Republic. Currently, the Cermak Eisenkraft_ gallery employs an exhibition space on the 2nd floor of the Topič House, Národní 9, Prague 1.

About the exhibition space

After several years of operating in Dlouhá Street and later in the Smetana House on Smetana Embankment in Prague, the Cermak Eisenkraft_ gallery moved in the spring of 2021 to the renovated premises of the listed Topič House, where it offers the public exhibition space in sensitively restored exhibition halls on the second floor. The genius loci of this place provides visitors with an unforgettable cultural experience. The Topič Art Nouveau house has influenced many destinies and has continued to shape Czech society for over 125 years. Originally an Empire apartment house, it was built in 1894 as an exhibition hall and shop for Topič's publishing house on Ferdinandova, now Národní třída boulevard. An exhibition of graphic arts in 1896 featured sixty European graphic artists, including Toulouse-Lautrec, Rops, Marold and Mucha.



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