

Bobrikova & de Carmen

Living
in the beginning
of times

50.660940, 14.007270 / 12.19



4 december 2019 - 18 January 2020
Galerie Emila Filly

The Earth – Current way of living

The project deals with time as an entity through the survey of relationships connecting human beings with the environment in relation to the post-humanistic discourse and critical science studies. Art works deal with real life issues – air and water pollution, sustainability policy, nutrition issues, or new insights into plant and animal life to show conspicuously invisible views of our world. Also the process of gradual change, not only in nature.

The “Earth” exhibition explores the basic issues that influence particularly the environmental impact on humanity and our planet. The gallery becomes the metaphor of space where the new ideas, possibilities and experiences are born and artists can share them with their audience through their work. The gallery, as a space, becomes a free platform where the possibility of democratic expression can be shown, and through this situation it reflects the problems in society. Many thoughts could be based on a certain deprivation of something that we lack, about a certain way of missing that throws light on the problem. The gallery space turns into our country where we can share our personal and also collective problems. The holistic image of the Earth, however the quantum perception of different realities, is then referred to by Karen Barad. Each person can have their own specific perceptions of Earth.

The exhibition concretizes the socio-environmental crisis and locally faces the landscape that is boundlessly connected with Ústí nad Labem in the Czech Republic.

Tereza Záchová

Martinka Bobrikova & Oscar de Carmen

Living in the beginning of times

50.660940, 14.007270 / 12.19

This installation, entitled Living in the beginning of times 50.660940, 14.007270 / 12.19, referencing an a project by the same name, consists of three works: *The remain of the traces of an unmentionable time*, *PostIsotype and Photogeny of a contextualization for a new revolution* respectively. Here, the subtitle “50.660940, 14.007270 / 12.19” refers to the longitude and latitude of the space, Galerie Emila Filly in Ústí nad Labem in the Czech Republic, where the work was exhibited, followed by the month and year. Together the three works make up a single piece and was exhibited in a new site-specific context as part of a group exhibition curated by Tereza Záchová, entitled “The Earth - Current way of living”. The exhibition makes palpable for the viewer the socio-environmental crisis we all currently face and addresses locally the landscape that is boundlessly connected to Ústí nad Labem. The curator invited fourteen artists from different European countries to participate in the exhibition with the aim of creating dialogue around the environmental theme from across various European locales. In “The Earth”, the artworks explored basic issues that influence environmental change and the impact on humanity and our planet.

When Tereza Záchová invited us to participate in the exhibition, we decided to present *Living in the beginning of times* in another instantiation. The antecedents of this specific installation of this artwork have always been based on making visible the devastating footprint of human beings on the global processes of the planet from the first Industrial Revolution through the last fifty years. The installation also explores possible future scenarios to which this human intervention on the planet could lead. For example, from the era in which colonialism was fueled by fossil fuels through today we see the rapid deterioration currently affecting the state of Pachamama. The Earth has never previously known greater detriment created by another living being than the one denoted by the humans on the planet. We are currently observing how plastic takes over the seas, beaches, and rivers, while an industrial mantle of unknown materials envelops the earth's surface without being recycled. Simultaneously we witness soil poisoning by absorbing agricultural fertilizers, a scenario that similarly has an effect on our air population as well as air pollution and climate warming, etc.

The whole installation was located in a lateral corner of the large exhibition space. With the intention of continuing the process of development of the pieces, the work has always been shown as in flux, lacking a definite timeline for the possible future imaginary of the planet, demonstrating the uncertain past of humanity. Therefore, the installation returns, without altering its discourse, to showing the unpredictability of becoming on earth by jointly reshaping its past, its present, and its future. The installations have been created and modified taking into account the context of the space, both at the level of the hall and its location, just as in its two previous instantiations at Ibsenhuset (Skien) and Galleri Ram (Oslo).

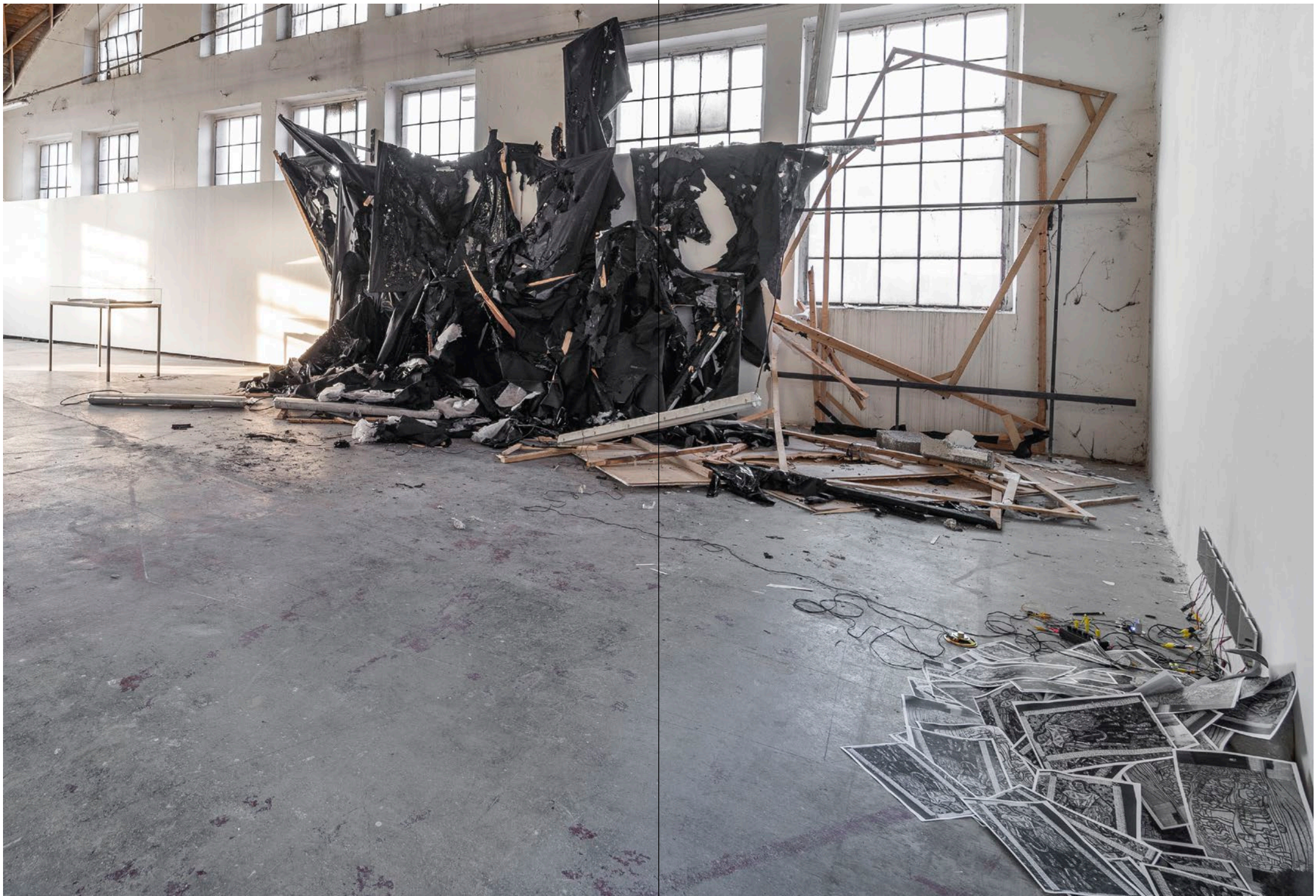
One of the installations, a part of this larger work, *The remain of the traces of an unmentionable time*, reviews the era of the industrial revolution and its disastrous consequences for the environment. This work has also been exhibited in Galleri Ram, however, it was first exhibited in Ibsenhuset as part of the ruins included in the work “*traces of an unmentionable time*”. Looking at the work, the viewer is situated in front of a horizontal showcase in which a “future museum” has been erected for the next century. The viewer is confronted with three objects that appear to have been extracted from an archaeological excavation. The objects are made of steel bars (rebars), and in each there is an inscription (human production, corporations, exploitation of natural resources) referencing the three dire pillars on which our current era is based. As if it were a terrifying prediction, the work intends to make the viewer imagine that in the future, our society must change. We are obliged to create new economic, political, and social model that acts with ecological and human sustainability.

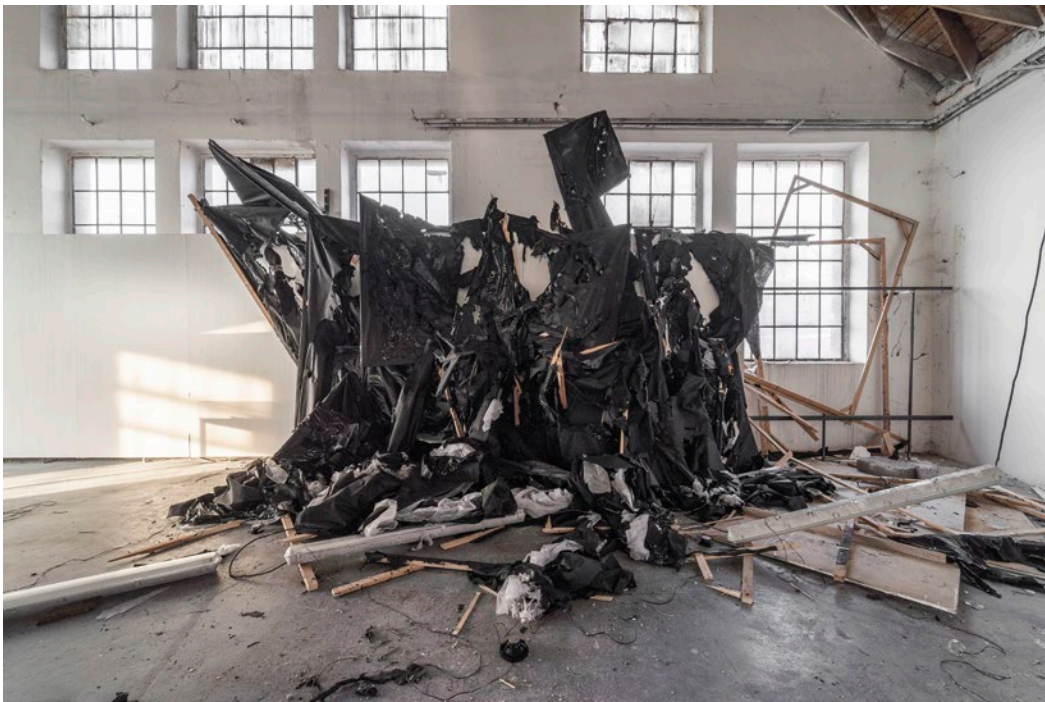
Another work included in this larger project, *PostIsotype*, was originally configured to transmit visuals and sounds through a digital synthesizer that captures images received by a video camera. This video camera captures the images in real time. In this exhibition the camera captures an image of black and white photocopies of the peasants obtained from mosaics of the city of Ústí nad Labem. In this exhibition at Galerie Emila Filly, the work acquired a new dimension in its graphic expression, further explained later, which helped to increase the works ideological slogan and message. Part of the challenge in the work has been developing the symbolic imaginary of the peasant through rethinking the iconic visualization of the peasant as a “(re-) emergence of a (post-) modernized (middle) peasant”. More specifically, we show, and try to recontextualize, the representative image of the peasants found in two mosaics in the public space of the city of Usti nad Labem. These two mosaics, by Miroslav Houra and Josef Menš

(respectively), depict idealized versions of the peasant figure that seem to have disappeared after the pre-industrial era. During this time the peasant, as a figure, was employed both as an emblem in communism and socialism or was completely industrialized by capitalism and transformed into the proletariat. This projects demystification of the peasants approximates the idea of our present time in the possible creation of a new future, where we should reconsider the wisdom embodied in our peasant ancestors before the age of the Anthropocene.

The final portion of the installation, *Photogeny of a contextualization for a new revolution* is located in the center of the installation. The proposal offers viewers the idea of being able to imagine a possible future arising from the gallery’s own ruins. In this piece we deconstructed part of Galerie Emila Filly as the part of the installation, using the material that existed there. Most of the plastic shades that the gallery used to cover the windows had been burned and stacked in rows. In using the gallery space, the non-structural wall of the gallery was destroyed, and the lightning unites were collapsed and suspended from the ceiling. This visualization of the waste in the room was complemented by a sound piece. A looping manifesto repeated the words: “renewal, freedom, change, equality...,” verbalized through a mechanic voice (robotic, sterile and metallic) and amplified by two speakers. The piece images a new aesthetic vision that provokes the viewer to imagine other future and past imaginaries in a present timeline. The work has adopted a completely different aesthetic at each of the three exhibition spaces, Ibsenhuset, Galleri Ram, and Galerie Emila Filly. However, in each manifestation of the project the devastating presence of the human footprint is made palpable. At the same time, the work always suggests a future beyond our own civilization, in which the Earth can undergo a new transformation, in search of a new normalcy that can survive the current age of human production.

Oscar de Carmen





Photogeny of a contextualization for a new revolution



The remain of the traces of an unmentionable time



Photogeny of a contextualization for a new revolution (detail)



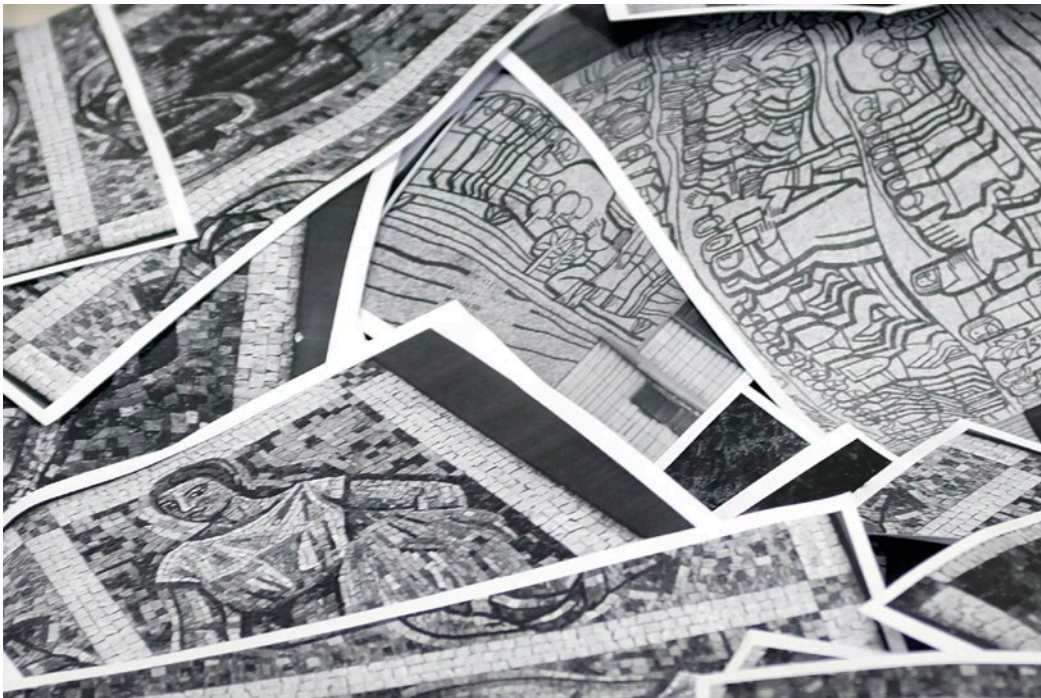
The remain of the traces of an unmentionable time (detail)



PostIsotype



PostIsotype (detail)



PostIsotype (detail)

We warmly thank and acknowledge all of our founders, contributors, collaborators, curator and the gallery that helped make the installation of this project possible. A special thanks is also owed to: Dany Josue Vigil Avilés, Eva Mráziková, Galerie Emila Filly, i-Portunus, Meetfactory, Piotr Sikora, Slovak Art Council, Stáňa Palečková, Tereza Záchová.

Authors & editors
Martinka Bobrikova & Oscar de Carmen

photo
Jirka Dvořák,
Martinka Bobrikova & Oscar de Carmen

text
Oscar de Carmen
language corrector and proof reader
MaryClaire Pappas

design **Aurélia Garová**
Edition of 200 copies

www.bobrikovadecarmen.org

Ústí nad Labem, 2020

Martinka Bobrikova & Oscar de Carmen have been working together as an artistic duo since 2005. They have participated in several residencies such as SaSa Art Project Phnom Penh, Jatiwangi Art Factory, AIR Krems, Sweet Home / Curators Network in Madrid, Arctic Art Institute in Arkhangelsk, Seoul Art Space_Geumcheon, HomeBase Saitama, KulturKontakt Austria, Nida art Colony or MeetFactory. Their works have been presented in venues and projects such as Tenthaus Oslo, 5th Odessa Biennale, Fotogalleriet, Agrikultura Triennial, Seoul Art Space Geumcheon, the Saitama Triennial, Akershus Kunstnersenter, Tranzit.sk, 2nd Tbilisi Triennial, Prague Quadrennial, Centre Contemporary Art in Singapore, Høstutstillingen, ANX/ Atelier Nord, Skånes Konstforening, City Gallery Bratislava; Karlin Studio, Rake, Museum of Contemporary Art Roskilde, KURANT; Singuhr-Berlin; Center of Contemporary Art- Tbilisi, Röda Sten, City Museum of Gothenburg, Space Gallery. Since 2012 they run Nomad AiR, a Nomadic artist-in-residence program focuses on the notion of hospitality and the social relations between “host” and “guest” and in 2017 they co- funded the project / residency program Future Utopia Community Key which is dedicated to the activities in the rural village of Uddebo and the area, within which they curate an annual anti-symposium IECES (International Encounters of Community and Environmental Sociology, New forms of contemplation for a new society). In late 2019, at the end of the decade, they founded "The Union", an organization with aim to bridge international diaspora of artist and art spaces in Oslo with those in South America, Africa and Asia.