

VALENTÝNA JANŮ: IS YOUR BLUE THE SAME AS MINE?

18 July – 16 September 2018

Prague City Gallery / Start Up

Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace, ground floor

Karlova 2, Prague 1

Open daily except Monday from 10 am to 6 pm

Curator: Jitka Hlaváčková

„She is a very nice girl. She loves to sleep late and to have flowers on her table. She loves the taste of pepper and is afraid of being alone. She decided to buy ultraviolet shoes yesterday. She didn't know why, but she felt a huge need to have them...“

The art of Valentýna Janů (*1994) could be included in an imagined interdisciplinary anthology of short ontological essays of the new generation. Her conceptual projects explore what things are like and how they appear, as well as how – in this age of social networks – we are capable of communicating with one another about them. Janů's main medium is photography, which she studied at FAMU in Prague. After graduating from FAMU, she went on to study intermedia at the Academy of Fine Arts, school of D. Zahoranský and P. Sceranková, where she is a student today. She thus applies the concept of reflecting on the relationship between reality and the image of reality – a characteristic quality of photography – to other artistic areas by naturally composing installations consisting of original objects, photographs, videos, sound, or text.

In this work, created for the intimate interior of the former stables at the Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace, the viewer sees a girl moving on a screen according to a predetermined choreography. At the same time, we hear an original monologue spoken in a suggestive girl's voice. The young girl on the screen is almost provocatively natural; she seems innocent, alive, and attractive. When she disappears from view for a moment, the viewer will most likely yearn for her to return.

In her exhibition commentary, Valentýna Janů assigns her flighty heroine the role of “a girl who keeps the visitor company.” A less immediately apparent but more literal interpretation of this statement might tell us not only that the girl on the screen blesses us by her presence, but also that she keeps us company in the sense of being a metaphor for society. Despite the fact that our society is aging, the concept of *woman* as a symbol for life is in many ways replaced by the *young girl*. Is the creature on the screen a *girl* or a *young woman*? Her chaotic behavior and the parallel story about decisions, loneliness, and love offer a clear answer.

“Is your blue the same as mine?” the girl asks. Can two pairs of eyes see the same color? Our realities are growing apart, and we each live our lives in our own private dimension. The rhythms of our lives, our emotional expectations, our political beliefs, and our view of ourselves all follow mutually non-intersecting trajectories, an infinite number of which fill the universe. Is there any chance at all of our trajectories connecting? Each person possesses a different visual apparatus, a unique structure of synapses with a different way of processing information, and above all a different cultural foundation and thus different experiences for defining colors... According to some studies, today's generation of twentysomethings is

most afraid of the possibility that they might not find a partner

(https://www.vice.com/en_uk/article/nnyk37/what-vice-readers-fear-the-most-hannah-ewens-love-loneliness)...

Jitka Hlaváčková

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