

JIŘÍ PŘÍHODA / SCULPTURES

Prague City Gallery and the City of Prague Museum

Troja Château, U Trojského zámku 1, Prague 7

1 April – 30 October 2016

Tuesday – Sunday 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., Friday 1:00 – 6:00 p.m.

Exhibition Curator: Magdalena Juříková

The exhibition by Jiří Příhoda continues a series of sculptural projects launched last year by the exhibition by Václav Cigler. It was an unforgettable experience which left an indelible impression in our memory of unorthodox interventions in the unique complex of Troja Château and its immediate surroundings. We plan the following seasons in a similar vein, so we have chosen Jiří Příhoda because in the past he repeatedly proved his ability to handle the space available in an innovative and unprejudiced way. Although there are certain limitations given by the sovereign qualities of the Baroque monument, Jiří Příhoda has acted so creatively that the final number of his monumental sculptural-architectural works was rather overwhelming for the artist himself as well as those who helped him with their realization.

The exhibition features an almost uninterrupted train of his works from the 1980s to the present day, and so it qualifies as a retrospective by this artist, taking place within the framework of one of the largest and most complex projects in the year of his personal anniversary. For Jiří Příhoda, overcoming obstacles and tackling great challenges of his ever larger realization is second nature.

It can be surprising to learn that Jiří Příhoda in his youth moved in the environment of the forest, but his interventions in the natural environment at the time were already influenced by conceptual methods. In his events, reminiscent of a ritual, there appeared a circle and a triangle – rational geometric shapes – as a certain footing. The tension between the elements and the structural order subsequently continued to employ his imagination in various forms in the following years.

When Jiří Příhoda in *Event I* (1991–1992) suspended a ring with a diameter of almost four meters between two halls, he established one of the fundamental principles of his work. The obverse and reverse became equivalent entities, while the intentionally revealed inner structure and its singularly organic appearance became the definitive artwork. On top of that, it made an illusion of helical motion passing through the point of suspension. This illusive game was exciting and full of secrets just like Příhoda's early works, in which he intended to combine floating geometric shapes with atmospheric phenomena. His youthful fascination with the forces of nature gradually changed into bold, technically and mathematically inspired visions, and Jiří Příhoda's romanticism acquired inventive features (*Event II (Klein Bottle)*, 1991–1992).

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Příhoda's way of thinking is to some extent linked with the possibilities offered to him by new material. During his long-term scholarship stay in France, blue styrofoam allowed him to realize a work inspired by the life of whales. To a certain extent, their monumental body fragments seem rather authentic and technical. Here Příhoda again teeters on the edge of biological and industrial reality. In order to add yet another dimension to his work, he entitles it by the stark numbers of the frequencies and decibels measured by scientists while monitoring conversation between whales (20–78,000 Hz/0.2–188 Db, 1992–1993). Příhoda is never willing to point out the problems of civilization explicitly, so instead he leaves it to us to actively seek them or guess them under the splendid packaging of his works.

He has come with a different strategy in the case of gargoyles from New York's Chrysler Building, which he decided to realize in life size. He makes it possible for us to observe them closely, showing supreme craftsmanship in the wooden frame supporting a lead sheet. Despite the fact that he could not see these gargoyles with eagle heads in detail, he has reconstructed them from photographic documentation in libraries.

Jiří Příhoda systematically studies natural processes and exposes laws in them which a casual observer usually does not perceive. For example, he found out that sand dunes are not just randomly rippled terrain but that their sand is deposited according to a certain pattern determined by the action of wind, and he decided to simulate this natural phenomenon in his own way. By placing an exterior phenomenon into an exhibition space, he makes it an independent visual reality that does not necessarily mean just a transformation of the found element (*Desert Storm*, 1995)

In the last decade Jiří Příhoda has dealt with increasingly more monumental ideas, which in many ways touch upon the borders of architecture. At Troja Château he has used one of his last realizations in an entirely new context (*Helix*, 2015). Its potential of an observation tower whose top could be reached by ascending the ribbing of its inner structure has been now adjusted to the new conditions and made into a funnel with internal rotation, in which details of interior wall paintings of Troja Château can be observed like in a kaleidoscope.

The *m Pod* installation, created on another occasion, has also underwent some construction changes. It is an architecture with an inner spiral ending in front of a horizontal projection that presents a highly convincing imitation of the surface of Mars. In *m Pod*, two distinct and equally relevant lines of his creative pursuit come together: video and object upgraded beyond the scale of sculpture. Previously, he used these two aspects separately, although the share of architectural elements has always been quite substantial. Here they are an integral part of one idea, which represents another romantic idea of the artist – his yearning to take part in a future mission to the Red Planet.

In addition to transferred and semantically transformed works Jiří Příhoda has prepared several quite surprising intervention in the Baroque organism of Troja Château. Some of them could in the future revive the park by new features. It remains to be seen after the exhibition whether they will pass the test.

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Entrance Fee: CZK 120 full (adults) / CZK 60 reduced (students) / CZK 30 (senior citizens)

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ACCOMPANYING PROGRAM TO THE EXHIBITION

Guided tour with the Exhibition Curator Magdalena Juříková and with Jiří Příhoda:

Saturday, 21 May 2016, 3:00 p.m.

Weekend Art Workshops:

Saturday, 7 May 2016, 1:00 – 6:00 p.m. **Inside and Outside**

Saturday, 16 July 2016, 1:00 – 6:00 p.m. **From an Object to Site-Specific Installations**

Saturday, 3 September 2016, 1:00 – 6:00 p.m. **Spirals, Fractals and Monuments**

The aim of accompanying educational programs is to enable visitors to get to know the principles and inner motives of the artist's work through their own personal experience and artistic reflection on the exhibited artifacts. Together we will create designs of monumental buildings – imaginative visualizations of site-specific installations, potentially designated directly for Troja Château. These fictitious concepts of 3D objects in the form of drawings will be recorded in reproduction of photographs of the interior and exterior of the unique Baroque building.

We will make small models as well as large spatial compositions and installations, for which we will use appropriate and alternative materials (e.g., cardboard, foam, polystyrene, wires). An important starting point will be the architecture and visual effect of the work – the obverse and reverse of the object, its revealed structure and its connection to the surroundings. A prerequisite of the form will be primarily a spiral and a helix, often occurring in nature, evoking the process of development, flow of energy, tension, cycles and fractals, while these principles are also evident in the Baroque architecture. We will deal with the theme of the elements, constantly resonating in Jiří Příhoda's work. As an experiment we will apply a compositional frame" in the form of cut-out templates (e.g., with the theme of a spiral, circle, triangle), which will provide unconventional vistas and views into the surroundings, making the normal point of view special.

Workshops accompanying the exhibition by Jiří Příhoda will take place in the new eco-studio in the orangery of Troja Château.

Art Studio for Adults and Senior Citizens:

Sunday, 15 May 2016, 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. **Construction of Object I**

Sunday, 10 July 2016, 3:00 – 6:00 p.m. **Construction of Object II**

The art workshop will respond to the oeuvre of Jiří Příhoda presented at the exhibition. We will create objects such as small-scale architecture. We will focus on this aspect of the situation inside and outside. During the process of creating the object we will deal with the boundaries of abstraction, spatial plans which will develop based on our perception of space and inspiration drawn from the exhibition as well as the interior of Troja Château or its exterior, i.e., extensive park.

Weekend programs are part of the popular series "Creative Dialogues with Art" and are intended for children, families with children and other interested parties of all ages, including the elderly and disadvantaged. The arrival and departure is optional – i.e., whenever within the scheduled time.

Reservation by 4:00 p.m. on the day before the event (participation without reservation is possible)

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Interactive tours of the exhibition for all types of schools and other age and interest groups with the possibility of subsequent creative response in the form of their own work. We adapt the events in terms of time, theme and performance levels according to the specific requirements of each school.

Reservation required

Price: Children under 10, students of art schools, teachers – CZK 5; children over 10 years CZK 20

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