



START UP VII

JIŘÍ HÖLZEL / „UGBADQ“

City Gallery Prague

Collredo-Mansfeld Palace, ground floor – Start Up

30. 11. 2017–21. 1. 2018, Tue–Sun 10am–6pm

Curator: Jitka Hlaváčková



[#StartUp](#) The exhibition by Ústí-based multimedia artist Jiří Hölzel opens the gallery's seventh Start Up series of exhibitions by young artists. The aim of the subsequent five exhibitions is to provide an introspective look at the difficult position of the newly emerging generation, whose lives increasingly play out within the immaterial reality of social media, which is becoming a dominant tool for communication and social interaction.

[#"UGBADQ"](#) The art of Jiří Hölzel is rooted in virtual reality, into which we are increasingly willing to transpose more and more of our social activities. Hölzel explores the mechanisms of this transfer, the associated deformations within the new media, and those deformations that, during the reverse process, emerge within our material reality and in our physical lives. In *UGABDQ*, Hölzel's goal is to present the impacts of the deformative influence of social media (and all virtual media in general), in particular on the youngest generations of users.

With the advent of new technologies, we naturally begin to encounter situations that require a knowledge of certain codes and mechanisms without which we would be completely disoriented. The exhibition's title is a reference to one typical mechanism that the internet generation internalized long ago (Use Google Before Asking Dumb Questions).

[#manipulation](#) A related subject that is also present in all of Jiří Hölzel's artistic creations is the manipulation of art as an image of certain societal processes that latently influence our behavior through various forms of power structures. In his graduation thesis, he writes: "I have always been fascinated by how impossible it is to reveal, recognize, and decode a poorly functioning system if you have no possibility of comparison. By how easy it is to submit to this manipulation, to accept it, and thus to engage in this power game and observe strange rules that, as child, you cannot do anything about." Hölzel also describes the basic mechanisms that have a manipulative and addictive effect on social media users since they keep them in a constant state of stress that they might be missing out on something: "gamification" (game-like elements), "ranking" ("liking" and other systems of evaluation) and "non-stop notification" (immediately notifying users of new information, events, or posts).

#glitch In *UGBADQ*, the medium (technology) is the phenomenon of “glitches” – errors and imperfections in the virtual image. In this situation, the glitch results spontaneously as a side product of the imperfect rendering of three-dimensional data while creating a 3D model of the gallery using an image on a mobile phone app. The 3D model of the gallery’s interior is located within the virtual environment of Google Maps. Hölzel transfers these glitches (i.e., computational errors) back into the physical reality of the gallery. Translated into the real environment, these errors, smudges, architectural imperfections, or twisted fluorescent lights represent a kind of leakage of this virtual deformation into the real world.

#petricek The exhibition is accompanied by philosopher Miroslav Petříček’s text on the existence of the artist as a kind of “error in the program.”

#bio Jiří Hölzel graduated this year from the Faculty of Art and Design at Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem, where he studied interactive media with Pavel Kopřiva. He lives and works in Ústí nad Labem.

Jitka Hlaváčková

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