

5/10/23–9/2/24

Sow the weed,

Exhibition curator:  
Amálie Bulandrová

Artists/Exhibitors:

anto\_nie, Ciočia Czesia, Hana Drštičková,  
Anna Fiedlerová, Anna Hulačová, Enge Klinkáčková,  
Jan Matýsek, Mothers Artlovers, Prototyp (Nikola Brabcová,  
Karin Šrubařová), RFK, Natália Sýkorová, Miroslava Večeřová

Cooperation:

Kafkárna / Center for Art and Ecology  
UMPRUM, Tranzit.cz

Graphic design:

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Accompanying program:

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Implementation team:

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reap the whirlwind

Exhibition & accompanying  
program on the topic of ecofeminism



The metaphor of a plant that grows (even) against the will of the growers and planters – often in places where it conflicts with human preferences – unites artistic approaches that critically view the dominant position of man in relation to his surroundings. Whether it is the systemic oppression of nature, women, or other marginalized groups. Like weeds, the exhibited works figuratively debate what is and is not generally regarded as normal and desirable, and who gets to make this distinction. At the same time, weed can also be perceived positively thanks to its beneficial effects, which manifest themselves mainly synergistically, i.e. in combination with other plants – they're helpful, for example, against drying up. The emphasis on connection and care, collective inspection, and interspecies communication concerning nature is another common feature of the currently presented artistic approaches.

The exhibition title therefore combines two seemingly paradoxical activities, namely the active maintenance of weeds – an unproductive and traditionally undesirable plant – and the harvesting of gales, referring to the harnessing of strong, usually destructive winds. How do weeds and whirlwinds in particular relate to the ideas of ecofeminism?




*"The hybrid term ecofeminism arose from women's observation that patriarchal traditions objectify and exploit women's bodies on the grounds that 'women are closer to nature than men'. The first ecofeminists sought to challenge this cultural framework. Important examples of their political work are Rosemary Ruether's study of Christianity – *New Woman, New Earth* (1975) – and Carolyn Merchant's critique of the European Scientific Revolution – *The Death of Nature* (1980). Mari Mies' book *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale* (1986) introduced Marxist analysis into ecofeminist thought, and Vandana Shiva's book *Staying Alive* (1989) emphasized the economics of colonization."*

● *Humans are nature in the form of a body*  
Ariel Salleh in an interview with Marta Jandová

Just as it is not possible to clearly determine whether weeds are harmful or useful, the effort to avoid primary binary oppositions is also common to the ideas of ecofeminism. The goal is not to divide between man and woman, people and nature, natural and unnatural, etc., but to make connections. In this sense, the exhibition *Sow the weed, reap the whirlwind* examines the possibilities of ecofeminism through the multitude of its manifestations – it looks at them from different perspectives and through the lens of potential collaboration.

The second part of the exhibition's title, "reaping the whirlwind", reminds us, with its urgency, that there is something to









associated with the leadership of churches as institutions holding political power through various performative outputs. At the same time, they attempt to show that even in the church there are traditions supporting social, ecological, and inclusive politics. The appeal to the form of Christian communities as a place for all those who were interested in participating in them is directly related to the project that RFK prepared as part of the series New Parks of the Brno platform Terén. Specifically, it was a project called *RFK: The Last Supper*, taking place in the public space of Brno in 2020. RFK organized this program in a monumental inflatable pink church, temporarily built on Malinovské náměstí, and invited other people, groups, and collectives to join in. In addition to lectures, discussions, and workshops, the RFK collective also prepared its own performance – the Easter Last Supper of the Lord, which was, in their own view, “a joyful tidings of a new community that we are all creating together.”

Another part of the first floor are illustrations by **Hana Drštičková** for the web magazine *Druhá: směna*, more specifically for the June issue of *Roads and Crossroads of Neocolonialism*, the common theme of which was a critical examination of our relationship to the landscape. The different forms of landscapes also became the topic of Hana's research within the framework of her study of social anthropology, when she analyzed the terrain of internet aesthetics that thematized nature. The indicated research intention is also connected to the author's artistic work, presented for example as part of the exhibition pooling landscapes → common data island (2020). It was a project, a participatory challenge, based on the need to escape the climate crisis through an alternative digital landscape. “I no longer want to live in a landscape that reeks of environmental grief, among other things. I'm turning to hundreds of backed-up photos. I'm looking for ways to escape. AI and machine learning are both an option,” says the author (or her alter ego) in the annotation of the project, where she also explains that if she collects enough data, artificial intelligence will generate new landscapes that would not depend on the physical space of disappearing ecosystems. She takes a seemingly serious approach to the proposed “escape” through technology – she calls for the creation of a shared repository and the resulting non-physical collective landscape – but at the same time views this type of escapism critically. She does not perceive it as a real solution, but rather as a tool of temporary comfort and care in late-stage capitalism. Some of her other works also share this theme, for example, the diploma project at FaVU called (Non)Hobbies of (Non)People in (Non)Nature (or originally Small Packages). Here, the author followed up on the topic of subjectively experienced landscape and created a mosaic from various artistic media, reflecting “hobbies” related to nature and the landscape as a strategy for artistic creation in a time of permanent crises.

## In the garden of all shapes

*“I was interested in female artists whose work directly responded to the adverse environmental and social conditions of life on Earth with an effort to create positive change. They often worked at the local level in cooperation with local communities, residents, the non-profit sector, grass-roots organizations, and local councils, looking for adequate solutions for the given situation, but especially reassessing the importance of relationships, care, and emotions in public space. The ambiguity of what ecofeminist art actually is has been replaced by the relative clarity of*

*the values that, according to various artists and theorists, such art should be the bearer of: it is the meaning of relational processes, communication, deep empathic listening, understanding, and care, both in the creative connection of the artist or the connection of an artist with nature, as well as with a community that relates to this nature in some way.”* ● *What can ecofeminism do for us?*, Zuzana Jakalová

The second floor of the gallery indirectly implies the space of a public garden or park with its spatial design, whose precisely designed paths offer a view of the exhibited plants – or, in our case, different artistic approaches that combine the above-mentioned characteristics and that “grow” from a common undergrowth. Among them are, for example, the sculptures of **Anna Hulačová**, who has long been devoted to the relationship between man and nature, or rather man and landscape, in her work. In her objects, we often find motifs of mutation, which, according to the author's own words, are all around us. Anna often combines hybrid forms with local (folkloric) motifs and thus creates a contrast or a certain tension between oppositions of various kinds (local x global, utopia x dystopia, organic x digital, concrete x natural, human x nature, evolution x mutation...). Distant or primarily opposite positions intertwine in the author's objects and create new units, new realities within which man reconnects with nature (perhaps even in a drastic way). It is as if her sculptures thereby manifest that the landscape is an object of power. Denisa Václavová draws attention to the urgent, even activist tone of Anna Hulačová's work as part of the *Harvest and Survive* exhibition, which took place this summer at the *z2o Sara Zanin Gallery in Rome*. The curator emphasizes the theme of inevitable destruction and the gradual extinction of necessary organisms, which in Anna's work are equated with human responsibility for human action in the landscape. We present three sculptures from this exhibition in the Hranicář Gallery.

Another artist presented here is **Anna Fiedlerová**, who deals with the phenomenon of leaving in her artistic practice. She tends to process this primarily through painting as a search for her own identity, changing social roles and new environments in which she always needs to settle in again (e.g. the cycle *When I Grow Up*). Currently, and in the works presented in the exhibition based on Ana's diploma thesis *You are my all the best*, the theme of departure reflects the author's own coping with the absence of her loved ones. She views the process of aging, gradual withering, and passing away from the world as a metaphor for a well-kept garden. Caring for properly trimmed thujas seems to become a guide to insight into the complicated, moving but also power-unbalanced process of caring for one's slowly disappearing relatives. Who actually cares for whom and why?

In addition to painting, text/prose is an essential medium for Anna Fiedlerová. She composes shorter sections of apt comments on her highly stylized painted scenes, which also function as autonomous lyrical layers. In the exhibition installations themselves, she sometimes works with the text musically (i.e. she accompanies them with her own, newly composed songs), other times within the poetic titles of the works, or in the form of an author's diary, for example. In it, one can read the inner experiences of the characters from the stories, as well as the (sometimes ironic) glosses of the author's own role.

Another of the stylized garden beds islands provides space for the work of **Enge Klinkáčková**, who uses hair in her artistic expression. In her

work, this material thematizes the unequal human-animal relationship, as well as the general alienation of the human and natural world. Hair, on the one hand, connects the two entities – they are part of both humans and animals – on the other hand, they represent clear lines between the oppressed and the oppressors. Hair can be seen as a figurative border between the correct, “aesthetically clean” form of civilized (human) bodies and the hairy bodies of savages, which are not only allowed but even required to be tamed and subjugated. For Enge, hair represents matter with limited purposes and at the same time an instrument of power that creates a hierarchy even among the species themselves. Which animals have the right to a dignified life as individuals and which should be born only to be used by humans? Could hair play a role in this as something more appealing to people than, for example, bare skin? On what basis do we decide which animals are, supposedly, cute?

From the last islet grows a specific object of the sculptor **Natália Sýkorová**, whose main artistic interest is the adaptation of bodily experience to ongoing climate changes and the possibilities of individual and collective resistance. In the sculptural work *prototypes for weaning* presented at the exhibition, Natália focuses on the technological processes of objects – their ability to act (agency) and their internal dependencies as natural cultures. The installation conveys her experiences with a hospital, or hospital equipment – advanced technical equipment that transforms into speculative ideas on the topic of survival in a foreign environment. At the same time, her work seems pseudo-functional to human users, because they are intentionally absent in the author's scenarios. She conceives the device itself as a myth-making territory that is self-programming, self-alienating, and destabilizing.

## Connection, transformation, collaboration

*“Even texts written almost twenty years ago, such as Woman and Nature (1978) by philosopher Susan Griffin or The Death of Nature (1981) by historian Carolyn Merchant, called for a more thorough examination of how and why animals, nature, women, queer, and racialized persons, much like the body, emotions, and sexuality as concepts, are ascribed a feminized status. Their conclusion is not surprising: it is done to legitimize the oppression of these groups by male-dominated social structures and processes.”* ● *The link between animals and women: The symbolic limits of ecofeminism*, Magdaléna Michlová

On the last floor of the exhibition, we encounter four projects – art installations, whose authors work with their imagination in relation to a more-than-human world, or a normalized image of nature and bodies and the transformation process associated with it. They also intimate the spread of ecofeminist ideas to various other ecologies (queer ecology, hydrofeminism, etc.).

The installation unfolding on the entrance staircase was created by **Miroslava Večeřová**, who often relates to the theme of water in her work, or to the ocean and its coast near which she lives in Great Britain. Cliffs are also part of this environment, whose prehistoric sedimentary essence the author examines as a potentially magical place of (self) recovery, enabling the establishment

of connections with more-than-human entities. She is interested in relationships with animal species, plants, minerals, elements, or hitherto unknown entities, which she processes both artistically and as part of her training focused on therapy. It was minerals that became the starting point of the project *Our View is Mineral* (2023), consisting of a monumental textile, sculptural objects, and a video performance. Here, the author thematizes the relationship between the natural and human worlds through site-specific materials (i.e. sandstone, limestone, and sepia ink). She ponders about what happens under the water's surface or inside the rocks rising from the seabed, and how unknown (water) worlds can affect us and vice versa.

The theme of water is common to the other presented work, namely the multimedia installation by **Jan Matýska**. In his practice, he thematizes phenomena connected with identity and the current ecological disaster through his distinctly colorful and detailed aesthetics. He often approaches the topics he works with based on examining and discovering so-called other bodies. In his artistic practice, bodies are both the material and the author's subject; the protagonists of his videos often go through a certain type of transformation, within which the usual boundaries become difficult to recognize. Whether it is about gender boundaries, connected with sexuality human and non-human destiny, etc. But harmony is also essential for the author, even within civilization, which he tries to find through phenomena such as spirituality and (therapeutic) ritual. They offer ways of escape and subsequent reconnection or re-establishment of contact with nature (for example, in a state of altered consciousness). In the exhibition, the author's work is represented by a piece called *Leviathan's wet dream*, in which he deals with the theme of water in a wide range of connotations, while offering visual liquid intoxication, indirectly based on the ideas of hydrofeminism.

On the third floor of the exhibition, the artist and facilitator **anto\_nia** also presents her work with the project *Thraly\*i jsme spolu* (2021). At the primary level, it is a digital book “in which phenomena that we are used to perceiving separately are layered over each other, forming a symphony of voices.” Its basis was the author's knowledge of plants and thinking about their possible uses for the landscape and people. In the book itself, she updates the practice of herbalism with a queer ecological perspective, collecting various interviews in addition to texts and illustrations. The entire project thus functions as a chain of the author's associations, as well as a chronicle and a practical guide for working with herbs, woody plants, and mushrooms. In her work, anto\_nie focuses on different approaches to what can be considered an expression of care; part of her exhibition project is also a workshop, which will take place directly in the installation at the end of November.

Soil, as one of the most important aspects of life on Earth, is the main theme in the exhibition presented by the group **Prototyp** (Karin Šrubařová, Nikola Brabcová). Authors explore, map, and artistically process the land in various creative processes which often “spill over” from one project to another, and it is the process that becomes – in contrast to the final work – the main carrier of content. Specifically, their installation represents the *Soil, Clay, Earth* project, which was created in 2019 as a platform or laboratory for the collaboration of various creators with the overarching theme of soil and earth reflection. The collective consisting of Karel Kunc, Barbora Dayef, Tomáš Hrůza, Veronika

Čechmánková, Rona Jankovičová, John Hill, Nikola Brabcová and Karin Šrubařová met continuously and worked together in a common space on individual and collective artistic outputs. One of the common ones was, for example, a visual publication, mapping joint actions and the development of thinking on a set topic, a group performance in a gallery, or an online exhibition on the Artyčok platform. The mentioned outputs and activities are connected by the belief that the land is not easily available and it is necessary to find alternative ways of its use and restoration. As the authors state, “we want to show it [soil] as a living organism, commemorate it in concrete ways and thus try to change the paradigm by which it is understood in the contemporary world.”

## 2/ Hana Drštičková

Hana Drštičková (she/her) works interdisciplinary in the field of art and social sciences. She studied Intermedia at FaVU VUT and social anthropology at FSS MU and is currently studying for a doctorate at FSV UK. She is a member of the intersectional feminist collective Sdruženy. She collaborates with the web magazine Druhá: směna, which aims to present feminist perspectives on society, emphasizing social justice, post-colonialism, and the queer experience. It is the illustrations of this magazine's Roads and Crossroads of Neocolonialism series that represent Hana's work in the current exhibition.

## 3/ Mothers Artlovers

Mothers Artlovers represents an association of mothers active in the arts, which, at the instigation of the artists Darina Alster and Kateřina Olivová, began to meet and support each other at the end of 2016. As a support group, it brings together female artists, theorists, art historians, curators, and activists in Prague and Brno – in short, women who combine art and motherhood. However, the platform is open to all people; as the members of the collective themselves state, “we understand motherhood as a universal caring principle that is not exclusively linked to gender identity.” Their regular activities include group meetings, sharing of intended/planned projects or currently addressed topics and their joint development, critical reflection of the domestic institutional scene, discussions about support options, or organized childcare with a creative program. As an artistic collective Mothers Artlovers participated, for example, in the international exhibition *Biennale In the Matter of Art: Come Closer* (2020), realized the *Dinner Party* project in the České centrum Berlín (2023), created illustrations for *Kapitál* magazine (2021/5 theme: Family) and many others.

## 4/ CC

Ciocia Czesia was founded in 2020 as a sister branch of the already existing Ciocia Wienia and Ciocia Basia (Berlin). The goal of these non-profit organizations is to help Polish people who find themselves in a situation of unwanted pregnancy to have a legal abortion in the country in question – that is, where the process is still available. Ciocia Czesia is also a key actor in the field of distribution of reliable information about the possibilities of safe and legal abortion in the Czech Republic. It is not a formal (artistic) group, but an organization based on volunteer work. It was created in response to the events of autumn 2020, when it was decided in Poland, among other things, that termination of pregnancy (even for the reason of damage to the fetus) is unconstitutional. Although massive protests followed, which became widely known under the slogan *Strajk Kobiet (Women's Strike)*, nothing has changed in Poland since then, and access to safe and legal abortions is still denied to pregnant people there.

## 5/ Natália Sýkorová

Natália Sýkorová is an art researcher, sculptor, and performer currently completing her studies at Prague's UMRUM (Free Arts I studio). Her work generally focuses on assumptions and speculations as concepts, the meanings of which she examines through the reflection of specific spatial or performative actions. In her projects, Natália deals with so-called “sensory solidarity” in the context of various ecological conditions and tries to create new ways of sensitivity through them (e.g.

*Reraining*, 2022). Her main interest is the adaptation of bodily experience to ongoing climate changes and the possibilities of individual and collective resistance (e.g. *Sensory solidarity*, 2022).

## 6/ Anna Hulačová

Anna Hulačová, a sculptor and visual artist, has long been devoted to the relationship between man and nature in her work, or, to be more specific, between man and landscape. In her objects, we often find motifs of mutation which, according to the author's own words, is all around us. The artist lives in Klučov, a small village near Prague. She studied at the Intermedia Studio at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague under the direction of Jiří Přihoda. Her works have been exhibited in many prestigious foreign institutions, such as Centre Pompidou, Kunstvereniging Diepenheim, Baltic Triennale, Vilnius Center for Contemporary Art, Gherdeina Biennale, etc. Within the framework of the domestic scene, it was recently possible to visit, for example, Anna's exhibitions *Eating Planet* (House of Art of the City of Brno, 2021), *Jedlý, Krásný, Nezkrotný* (Hunt Kasner Gallery, Prague 2022), *Ěntomos: Hulačová – Keresztes – Janoušek* (Prague City Gallery, 2019) and many others.

## 7/ Anna Fiedler

In her artistic practice, Anna Fiedlerová focuses on the phenomenon of leaving. She tends to process this primarily through painting, as a search for her own identity, changing social roles and new environments in which she always needs to settle in again. Anna Fiedlerová studied painting at secondary school in Jihlava, continued at FaVU in Brno (studio of Vasil Artamonov), and subsequently completed her master's degree at UMRUM in Prague (studio of Dominik Lang). She also broadened her perception of painting during an internship at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague with Vladimír Kokolia. For several years now, she has been cooperating with ELPIDA, an educational and cultural space for active senior citizens, where she runs, for example, painting courses.

## 8/ Enge Klinkáčková

Enge Klinkáčková is studying a master's program at the Faculty of Art and Design of the UJEP in Ústí nad Labem, specifically in the object-space-action studio with Jiří Kovanda. In her work, she focuses on the relationship between man and animal, reacting to the alienation between them, which she observes and critically reflects. With objects made of hair, i.e. the material with which she primarily works, she thematizes the paradoxical situation of our current imagination concerning the more-than-human world. Instead of a distorted, romanticized idea of animality, it strives for rapprochement and a search for mutual care based on what we have in common.

## 9/ Jan Matýsek

In his artistic practice, Jan Matýsek thematizes phenomena connected with identity and the current ecological disaster. He often approaches the topics he works with based on examining and discovering so-called other bodies, which in Matýsek's artistic practice are both material and authorial subjects. Jan Matýsek studied scenography in Jana Preková's studio at JAMU in Brno. Subsequently, he continued at the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague, where he began his master's studies in the studio of Anna Daučíková and completed it under the guidance of Kateřina Olivová and Darina Alster.

His solo exhibitions include *Fuj Tajxl!! Strč prst skrz smrt* in the Prague gallery Kostka – MeetFactory (2022), *Fujtajxl!!!!* in Art Space NOV (2022) in Pardubice or, most recently, 220 bpm in Sopa Gallery in Košice.

## 10/ anto\_nie

anto\_nie is an artist and facilitator with roots in the activist environment. In her work, she finds different approaches to what can be considered a manifestation of care; she facilitates workshops based on the practice of Adrienne Maree Brown, focused on collective resilience and herbalism. She also works with 3D, game engines, immersive audio, and other ways to create non-physical community spaces. Part of anto\_nia's current exhibition project is also a workshop, which will take place under her leadership directly in the installation at the end of November.

## 11/ Prototyp

Prototyp represents a platform for artistic and curatorial collaboration, residential and pedagogical activities, or activism in the fields of contemporary art. It was founded in 2014 by visual artists and educators Karin Šrubařová and Nikola Brabcová, both graduates of the Academy of Fine Arts in Prague. Their joint, often interdisciplinary and process-oriented work includes various outputs – exhibitions (e.g. *Kofeny rostou dovnitř*, 2021, *Zlin Youth Salon 2021: Earth Underfoot*), online presentations (*Clay, Soil, Earth*, 2019), short events or publications (*Biotope Loučná*, 2023). At the same time, individual projects often combine the indicated outputs, build on each other, and thus formally emphasize joint creation and its procedural positions. The Prototyp space in Prague 2 offers sports, ecological, educational, and cultural programs thanks to its gallery, library, bicycle workshop, and outdoor terrace with a garden.

## 12/ Miroslava Večeřová

Miroslava Večeřová is a Czech artist working in Great Britain. She studied fine arts at Camberwell College of Arts in London and the University of Applied Arts in Prague. Since 2019, she has also completed various training in energy work and alternative healing, along with exercise and psychotherapy courses. In her artistic practice, she focuses on the processes affecting human identity and the psychological and physical state in relation to the environment in which she finds herself – both within the framework of socio – and geopolitical levels and environmental considerations – and offers various fictional forms of possible future ecologies. They are often related to the theme of water, or the ocean, its coast, and the massive rocks in St. Leonards on Sea, near which she lives. In her work, she also generally deals with the tension between the scientific and the so-called folk approach to the environment, including the phenomenon of energy and healing (e.g. *Glacier Sunset*, 2021).