

PRESS RELEASE

 **F2 PRAG**

**Student exhibition of the Studio of Photography II UMPRUM
September 21st - September 26th, 2020**
**Opening: Monday, September 21st at 6:00 p.m.**

**Haus der Statistik,  Otto-Braun-Straße 70-72, 10178 Berlin**

***Commercial photography as art? The Photography II Studio of The Academy of Arts, Architecture, and Design in Prague (UMPRUM) will for the first time present their exhibition “F2 PRAG” abroad.***

"Certain myths and established norms are constantly repeated are projected onto commercial photography. We would like to break this conventionality. The time has come for commercial photography to reach the level of fine art ", says the curator and head of the studio Václav Jirásek about the upcoming exhibition in Berlin. In 2018 Jirásek together with Štěpánka Stein founded the Studio of Photography II as a laboratory searching for a symbiosis between art and commercial photography and the sovereign work of the individual. Students of the two-year-old studio present themselves abroad for the first time and show how photography, which borders on the edge of applied art, can function as stand-alone pieces in a gallery setting.

The studio supports a new generation of talent that pushes commercial photography to the boundaries of fine art. F2, as the studio is abbreviated, has opposed classic commercial photography from the very beginning and tries to find new ways to make the work unrestricted but at the same time meet the requirements of a commission. *"I want our students to blur borders and come up with new ideas*," says Václav Jirásek. Václav Jirásek and Štěpánka Stein, represent the best of Czech photographers. They have many years of experience in the field of advertising and commercial photography, and they photograph for a number of prestigious contracts. Students are therefore able to obtain direct contact with professional experience and current visual trends. In addition to free creative projects, students also work on commissioned projects outside of school - for example, fashion photography with renowned magazines and designer collaboration.

The semester is accompanied by classic topics and short-term assignments in which students can experiment with their ideas. The exhibition presents the best works created since the initiation of the studio. Last semester, students worked on their individual perspectives of the quarantine and the coronavirus crisis. At the end of the academic year, everyone had to create their own magazine using their photographs. The works of Ondřej Kubeš, Matěj Racek, and Agnes Willow thus represent reactions to recent events. Each student reacting differently in a tessellated form of a diary to the experiences of the previous months.

Students also responded to last year's given topics, in their work reacting to the subject “1980s and freedom ”. They loosely tied together their work with the celebrations of 30 years since the Velvet Revolution. Here, too, it was not an exact depiction of facts, but rather an elaboration of essential themes related to the current state of freedom and the recent past. From this assignment, Adriána Ingeli presents two films that deal with the topic of waste in the time of the Anthropocene. She asks to what extent does individual freedom possess significance, provided that the environment endures an overly excessive sacrifice. On the contrary, Johana Kovářová conceives freedom in her installation as a balance between the spiritual and the physical.

In addition to the assigned topics, students also present their independent work during the show. The exhibition at Haus der Statistik not only works with photography but also appearing will be video and spatial installation pieces.

**Exhibiting students:** Jakub Delibalta, Lukáš Hlavín, Alžběta Chrudimská, Adriána Ingeli, Anna Khmeleva, Johana Kovářová, Ondřej Kubeš, Iurii Ladutko, Samuel Petráš, Miriam Pružnicová, Matěj Racek, Markéta Slaná, Kateřina Sýsová, Viktorie Macánová, Justina Urbanová, Agnes Willow, Adéla Zlámalová, Barbora Žentelová

**Curators of the exhibition:** Václav Jirásek, Kateřina Sýsová

**Exhibition production:** Václav Jirásek, Štěpánka Stein

**Exhibition graphics:** Jakub Novotný

**About the Studio of Photography II**
The Photography II Studio specialises in applied art photography. Dedicated to nurturing a new generation of talent with a desire to innovate in the visual world, the studio promotes interdisciplinary and intergenerational discussion. It also provides a platform for exploring how the worlds of art, design, and fashion communicate through imagery.
Studio Heads: Václav Jirásek, Štěpánka Stein

**About the Academy of Arts, Architecture & Design in Prague (UMPRUM)**The Academy of Arts, Architecture & Design in Prague was founded in 1885. Throughout its existence it has ranked among the best educational institutions in the country. It boasts a number of successful graduates who have gone on to become respected professionals, garnering acclaim beyond the Czech Republic. The school is divided into the departments of architecture, design, fine arts, applied arts, graphic and theory and history of art. Each department is divided into studios according to their specialist area. The studios are all led by leading figures of the Czech art scene. Twice a year the school opens to the public for a presentation of student work, entitled “Artsemestr”. Each year the school organises over 15 exhibitions, half of which are shown abroad. Prague UMPRUM, as one of the only schools of former post-communist countries, is featured in the index of prestigious European and world art schools. In the worldwide QS World University Rankings UMPRUM ranked among the 50-100 most prestigious art schools in the world.

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