

## CREATIVE PRACTICE RESEARCH CONFERENCE – ABSTRACT OF INSTALLATION

### Sculpture as Mediator

Petra Vlachynska, Veronika Kastlova

Our mediator is art in public spaces and we focus on the objects and sculptures located in the cities in the Czech Republic.

It will soon be now twenty five years since there was a change of the political system in the Czech Republic. This change has gradually influenced among others also the city development, urban planning including public spaces in our cities and also art in public spaces.

During last years the effort to cultivate public space could be seen in our country. Many squares, historical centers and other public spaces have been reconstructed and revitalized and therefore they are now more comfortable and pleasant for their users and their everyday life. The aim is to share these spaces and enrich them for well being of whole society. How should we change our mind and start to see the public spaces as our space of freedom and responsibility?

Nowadays there are already many theatre festivals and site-specific performances and the other culture projects for the public spaces in Prague. This is the way of improvement how to share spaces in our cities. Beside these mentioned examples of art in public spaces which could be considered as ephemeral art, there is also quite a big part of the other kind of art, which could be considered as permanent art, e. g. sculptures and the other objects. Ephemeral art e. g. festivals, site-specific, happening and the other performances is more popular than permanent art. This kind of art improves the public spaces and makes them more pleasant but just for a while. Permanent art as the sculptures, monuments and the other objects improves the public spaces forever and this is the main difference between both mentioned kinds of art.

Permanent art in public space in our country, which had been created before the change of the political system, are of course influenced by ideological stigma of that former political system. During last twenty years before the velvet revolution there had been 400 art objects created in public spaces in Prague. According to a law valid at that time 4% of the budget for each public project had to be invested in public permanent art. During the same period after the velvet revolution there were only 60 art objects installed in Prague. This is of course a significant decrease. More than this fact however a question how and why permanent art is included in public spaces today and how these art projects are considered by people facing it every day is important. Do people like it or do they ignore it?

There has been sever outstanding art projects realized in Prague after velvet revolution, e. g. Time Machine known as “Pendulum” or “Metronome”. The babies climbing on Zizkov’s tower are also very popular. There are also some projects with ambivalent contribution to public spaces. Their location often decided by municipal authorities without consultation with experts was not always suitable. We would like to concentrate especially on this type of objects. It is our intention also to reveal the stories of their origin and getting know their watchers. How these objects are felt and accepted by people living around?

## CREATIVE PRACTICE RESEARCH CONFERENCE – DESCRIPTION OF INSTALLATION

### Sculpture as Mediator

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- 1) **Video** (10-20 minutes) – as the best tool for monitoring actions in public spaces in the city

Structure of the video

- i. *Introduction* – contemporary state of art in public space in the city
  - ii. *Sculptures and objects in public spaces in Prague*
  - iii. *Notice Phase* – short introduction of selected sculptures and objects as mediators, justification of this selection
  - iv. *Observing Phase* – observation of the mediators and monitoring activities in their surrounding, e. g. actions and reactions of present people
  - v. *Approaching Phase* – participation in the action itself, entering into public spaces and rolling sculptures and objects and reactions of the watchers
  - vi. *Interview Phase* – making interviews with present people about the present sculptures and objects
  - vii. *Conclusions*
- 2) **Exhibition** of about 15 photographs selected sculptures and objects in public space in Prague (presented in video).

Both parts – video and exhibition – amended by explanatory text will be installed and integrated into one object which will itself become a sculpture – our mediator.

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## EXAMPLES OF SELECTED SCULPTURES



Cloak of Conscience  
Author: Anna Chromy  
Year of installation: 2003  
Material: bronze

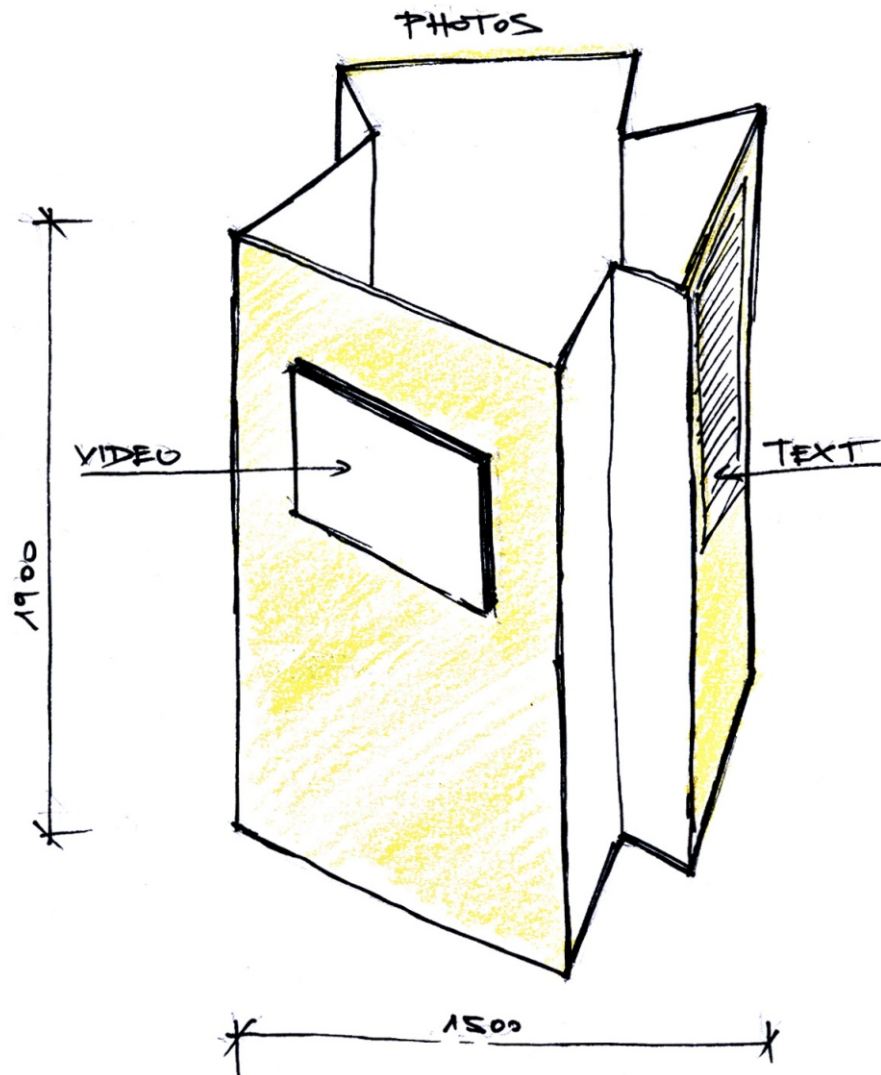
The successful sculptress Anna Chromy was born in Czech Republic. In 1968 she emigrated to Italy. This sculpture was a gift for the city of Prague. It is installed in the historical centre by the Stavovsky theatre.



Monument of Milada Horáková  
Author: Jan Bartoš, Ctibor Havleka, Milan Knobloch  
Year of installation: 2009  
Material: bronze, stone

Milada Horáková was executed in 1950 in a designed trial. She is a symbol of democratic principles, moral strength and resistance to the communist regime. Monument surprisingly uses the language of socialist realism.

## CONCEPT OF INSTALATION



We propose to present our project through the artistic object.

Three sides display three mediums - video, photos and text.

Video is essential part. It reveals the social atmosphere, actions and thinking as the reaction on the sculptures and objects in public spaces.

There are the photos of our mediators, selected sculptures and objects.

Text is describing background and methods of the project.