

INTRODUCTION

Maříž, a small village in South Bohemia which borders with Austria, was once a place where Czechs and Germans lived side by side. Like many other settlements nestled in the Sudetenland, it experienced a turbulent course of events over the past century.

After the Velvet Revolution, a group of artists from Prague settled in nearby Slavonice, establishing their 'Summer School of Spiritual Experiment and Art in Practice'.



Over the following 11 years, the project continued to take place in Slavonice, attracting many Czech and foreign artists, including David Vávra, Aleš Najbrt, Jaroslav Róna, and Karel Babuljak, just to name a few.



Students came from all around the world to spend ten days joining in in a variety of fine art workshops based on scenery and costumes. From then on, Slavonice and neighbouring Maříž became a hotspot for international creatives which is how our own Czech-German relation started to grow.



28 years since the inception of the original Summer School in Slavonice, a new chapter has been turned, this time in Maříž. With the overwhelming support of former professors and artists, the 'Summer School Mayres', much like the original edition, saw twenty students gather from all over the world for ten days of spiritual experiment and art in practice.

NOW



THE ORIGIN OF THE SUMMER SCHOOL MAŘIŽ

MARTIN CEPLECHA



Educated as a metalsmith at the Academy of Applied Arts in Prague, Martin is a sculptor and the last permanent resident of Maříž, where he also has his studio in the former school. He was a part of Summer School as a lector since 1992.

“Formally, we called the Summer School a “Spiritual Experiment” where people should learn how to express, also nonverbally - through their work, movement or anything. And so whenever one gets into it, it might change their values completely, at least that’s how I’ve always seen it.

It all took place in Slavonice, in the old barn behind Besídka - now there is the hotel instead. The students just used what was around. All kinds of garbage, from which they did kind of plastic collages. For instance, somebody made a dog out of a bag, with car lights as eyes. But yeah, we had some plaster, wire and a few other basic materials and the students were just working with what there was. The first year, there were even some busts of Stalin and Lenin and the students were transforming them. Sometimes we were doing a day of totalitarianism for those that didn’t know it - morning exercise, terrible food, punishment. We took it all with humour though. [...] Those ten years blended in my head into one long Summer School.”



ZUZANA KRAJŠČOVIČOVÁ



Zuzana studied, as a textile artist, at the Academy of Applied Arts in Prague, where she met Kryštof Trubáček, one of the co-founders of the former Summer School. He introduced Zuzana to the ceramics and the Summer School in Slavonice. In 1994, she moved there permanently and besides the ceramics she practiced her textile work.

It was a great place for her. “The Summer School, it was all together, the place - Slavonice, it was the relationship with my colleagues and friends, and making a new relationship with the people who live here. It was an interesting community, the place where I can stay throughout the year and do my work. It all played together, I was not thinking so much about it at the time.”

She grew up a business - creating craft pieces for normal people. The time was right for her new ideas. She always focused on simple pieces for use, and that goes back to her studies in Arts and Crafts. Slowly she established a group of people who were working for her. It was working well and the people were hungry for this. It was the same with ceramics; it was colourful, different and the people can do it on their own so they can see if they have some artistic potential.

GISELA
PROKOP-MACZKY



Gisela is a practiced painter now based on the shores of the Balaton Lake in Hungary. Previously, she was a resident in the Wiede-Fabrik art district in Munich, and in 1995 she came across the former Summer School as a participant with the then new-born Nicolas.

“The people who started the first summer school, started everything. They actually started a new era in Czech art, but in the 80’s already, not only in the 90s. It was around the Sklep theatre. It was a big theatre community and during communist times, they were an underground theatre group. We had a lot of funny evenings which developed like a theatre play, but without a director. It was very much like nobody cared. Sometimes, some of the people from the theatre wore costumes to show up in a funny way and make it more like a happening and that was funny, but nobody was forced into this. Sometimes the flame jumped over to somebody who just showed up suddenly and he was so fond of it that he took part. We had a lot of people coming from abroad. From the Netherlands, Belgium, Switzerland, France and they stayed here, they bought houses because everybody felt like they were accepted as they are. It makes you very satisfied and easy going.”

“When I joined the workshop, we went into the woods and I found a piece of the iron curtain, I still have it. It’s a memory of those times, and it was very close to that time. Everybody had connections to this middle-eastern part of Europe, we knew the border and the feeling of separation. I liked it very much to be in such a forgotten place. It was between the borders and nearly all houses were empty because people didn’t want to live here as they would have had to tell the police and move on to Slavonice because it was right at the border.”



GABINA FÁROVÁ

Gabina has been immersed in the European photographic tradition from an early age. Throughout her career, Gabina has worked alongside many prominent names, such as Jan Saudek, Tono Stano and Helmut Newton. Today, she is a practicing fine art photographer in Prague, mostly focussed on portraiture and nudes, however she is not afraid to experiment with her practice, often incorporating a surrealist touch to the human form.

Growing up, Gabina spent a considerable amount of time with her family at their cabin near Slavonice, in the small village of Klášter. Gabina’s mother, Anna Fárová, was a highly regarded art historian who contributed immensely to the art scene in Europe during the later part of the twentieth century. In the 90’s, she partook in the art community in Slavonice where she, together with Roman Koucký, renovated a beautiful house on the upper square. Also during this time, she would often appear as a “wise consultant” at the former Summer School. Gabina admits that she is a ‘Prager’ through and through, however, Klášter acts as her getaway from the often overwhelming city, taking every opportunity to find her solitude in the South Bohemian woods. When hearing of the revival of Summer School project, Gabina was quick to offer her experienced eye to the photography workshop.



PETER CORETH



Peter Coreth is an Austrian art collector and founder of the 'Museum Humanum' which is situated in the small town of Fratres, just across the Czech-Austrian border.

He worked for many years as an editor of foreign affairs in Salzburg until he decided to go to London, a true melting pot of cultures. After London, Munich became the city where he oriented himself and discovered his passion for art. During these formative years, he felt the ever-increasing urge for a museum with a transcultural comparison of archetypal themes and motifs, or as he describes it, "an atlas of gestures and meanings". Whilst in Munich, the Münchner Völkerkundemuseum encouraged Peter to pursue his individual idea of a museum that brings together the different cultural worldviews.

In 1992, Peter found an old farm in Fratres which would swiftly become home for the artifacts he had been collecting for a number of decades. Today, the collection at 'Museum Humanum' continues to grow, serving as a truly honest cultural bridge and anthropological asset. Peter allows past and present to intermingle, completely discarding a culturally split curation for his museum, instead opting to draw a bow that reflects the similarities of the individual epochs, religions, cultural phases and myths.

"I want to guide the viewer through the similarities and synergies. Worldviews transform to others and motives are not discarded. They are defined and changed differently. Connection of form and meaning. No form is random. No style falls from the sky; All an expression of worldviews. When one thing changes, the shape changes."



JAN BOHÁČ



One of the founders of Keramika Maříž as well as the former Summer School and a part of theatre Sklep, Honza is restoring the renaissance building of Besídka since 1991 into a restaurant and hotel that has sheltered the community of incoming artists ever since.

"It takes me back to where it used to be. It is really unbelievable how similar it is to the former Summer School. "Summer School of Spiritual Experiment in Theory and Practice" is simply a nonsense that nobody understands, not even us back then. It was meant to sound very noble, but without any one clear meaning, and that allowed for the freedom of creativity. It's about giving a bunch of young people a space and freedom to work, interact and communicate.

We simply wanted to have some fun. It all comes from the atmosphere in the Sklep theatre. It was quite punk, and we just took everything with humour, without any higher ambitions. Just whenever we saw that it made sense and that people were actually learning something, we started to do it a bit more professional, but to be honest, the first year was the most fun.

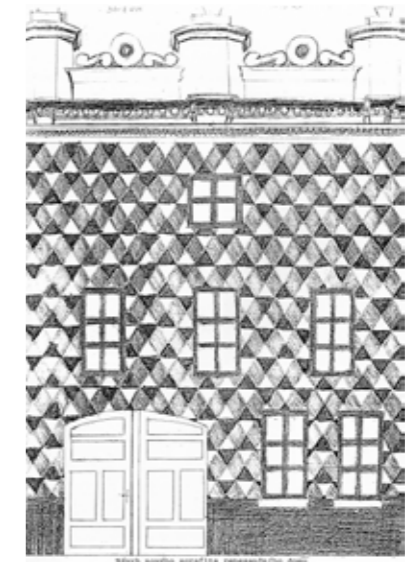
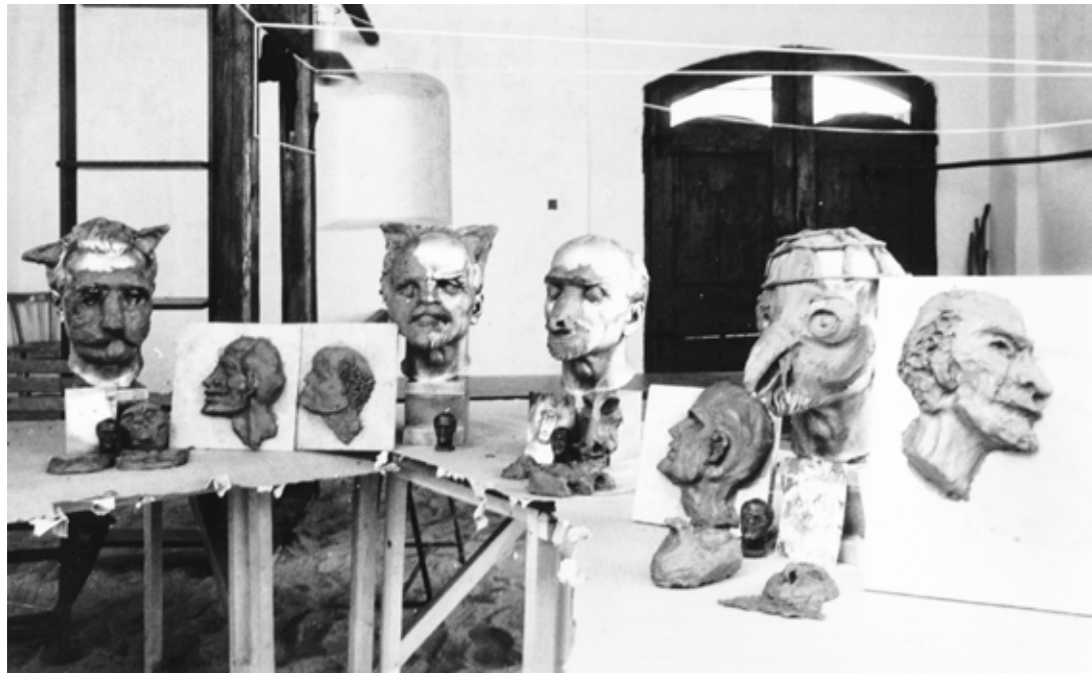
The main difference is that back then in the 90's you could easily distinguish Czechs from foreigners, in the way that the Czech students, and also lecturers were a bit cautious, not so free. But, whenever I look at the students that came this year, I don't see the difference at all. I don't know where they all came from - Germany, Canada, Slovakia or Romania? They all look and act the same now, they are all just young people that came from one world, not only Europe but one world."



ARCHIVAL MATERIAL



SUMMER SCHOOL 1991 -





LECTURE ON:
SYMBOLIC FORMS IN ART

Based on her research on symbolic forms in prehistoric, “primitive“ and modern art, the art historian and painter Gisela Prokop-Maczky described a wide spectrum of possible roots of elementary forms.

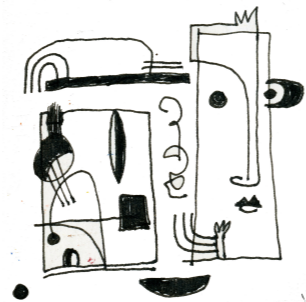
Why did some of these basic forms become cultural symbols appearing in different times at many places all over the world? Are we aware of this aesthetic heritage of mankind and are these symbols still alive?

Gisela Prokop-Maczky explained symbolic forms in prehistoric cave paintings, in neolithic rock carvings and tribal rituals. As well as she illustrated the origin of symbols in everybody’s individual life by drawing “basic scribbles“ in childhood. The inherent “basic appeal“ predestinates some of them in becoming cultural “symbols“ like mandalas, spirals etc.

In showing comparable images of different cultures and artists, Gisela Prokop-Maczky figured out the big influence of these ancient testimonies of symbolic forms on the development of Modern Art in the beginning of the 20th century, when artists had the aesthetic desire for reduced absolut forms.

Explaining art theories about the archetypes and universal symbols as well as spiritual and unconscious methods of creating symbols, humans were considered rather being an “animal symbolicum“ than rational depending to their need of symbols for communication.

In creating paintings, drawings, masks, ritual performances, sounds, scenography and mythic storytelling the participants of the workshop found out their own individual symbolic alphabet.



PAINTING
WORKSHOP
with Gisela Prokop-Maczky
Nima Emami & Ana Pireva



NATURAL PIGMENTS

Kassler Brown from organic pigments of brown coal

English Red from mixed red soils, artificially burned, natural pigments: Eisenoxid, Calciumcarbonat

Terra di Siena, dark burned from natural burned brown, italian soil pigments

Terra di Siena, nature/brownish from natural soil pigments

Umbra nature from natural brown soil pigments

Umbra burned/brownish from natural brown soil pigments

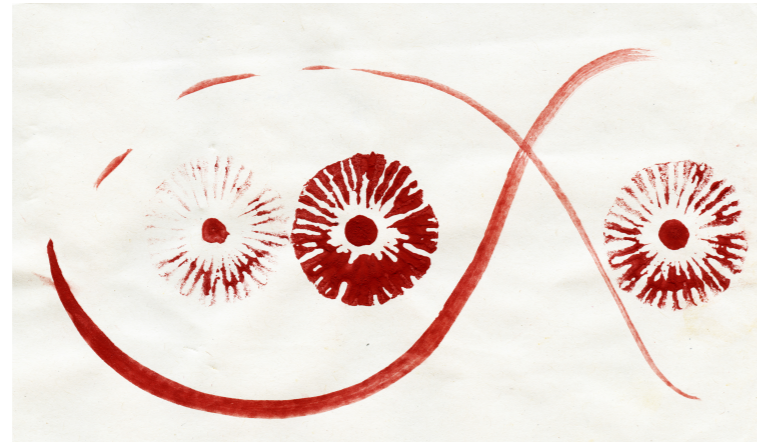
Red Soil from Lovas from natural red soil pigments, found in a so-called „earth colours ditch“, from a pre- historic paint mine in Lovas on the north shore of Lake Balaton, Hungary



mixing paint from glue and natural pigments



A body on a page -
Integration
foreground, background,
composition.



Light and shadow
- the main points in the process of
painting



creating a personal symbol



A line as the starting point of
every painting or drawing



Nude painting with
Nima Emami and Ana Pireva



calligraphy exercise

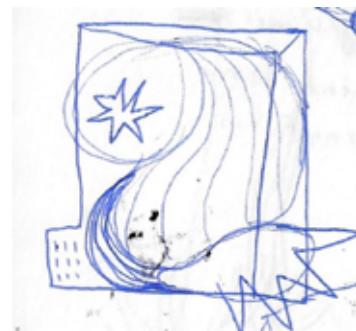
calligraphy as a tool able to examine how
much energy and power lies within the line
of a paintbrush - as the signature of each
individual's energy .





TEXTILE WORKSHOP

with Zuzana Krajčovičová



The workshop was designed with a focus on using materials in alternative ways. Participants worked with various collected materials and then went through a series of exercises to help develop the visual language of communication, as well as to inspire further creation through the different uses of material.



Alesya Yakubouskaya & Františka Malasková



textile stamps





1 MINUTE IMPROVISATION



TRANSFORMATION EXERCISE



'1 minute improvisation', was about searching for new possibilities with a single object, such as textile, or rope. With extremely limited time, there was no time to plan or think it through, making the instant process of creation its focus



Both exercises focussed on the process of creation as an act of improvisation, rather than the final outcome. It was about trying new possibilities, overcoming fears of working with material, and surprising oneself.



'Transformation', was a 10 minute exercise where pairs were given a limited number of materials (three textiles and one rope), in order to completely transform their partner into something else.



✦

constant contact with material
 special haptic experience
 immediate creation of shapes

✦



CERAMIC WORKSHOP
 with Romana Krejčí and Julian Boháč



Maříž is known for the traditional handcraft of ceramics and its pottery since Jan Boháč founded Keramika Maříž in 1991 - in the same house where the workshop took place now. The workshop provided a basic understanding of the whole process of ceramics - from clay to the final product. First it was worked with clay under supervision of Romana Krejčí, who has been working in the field for more than 20 years. The task was to create a bowl, which then was burned in the oven. Afterwards they could be painted and then got burned again.

✦





Martin's sculpture garden

aside the practical use of materials, the workshop was meant to find a way of combining all mediums in to one.



SCULPTURE WORKSHOP

with Martin Ceplecha



collect and gather natural objects

- climb a ladder

- form the structure

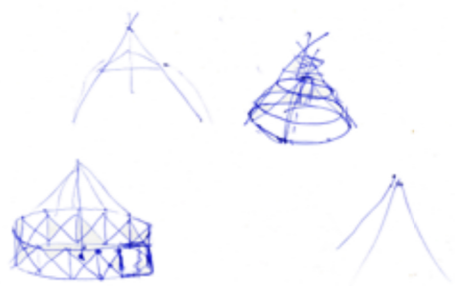
- let it grow



with Jan Vagaday and Nicolas Prokop

as an installative group exercise

COLLECTIVE ASSEMBLAGE





✱

PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP

with Gábina Fárová
Lukas Maar & Jack Laing Aiken



✱



✱

PANORAMAS

one-on-one workshop, where the participant directed the scene, with the assistance of a teacher. By using an alternative aspect ratio, which people are not used to seeing in, the students really had to consider how they would fill the frame, and the relation between elements within the frame.



✱



CYANOTYPES

Inspired by the visual story-telling mechanisms of tribes or cultures who do not have written language, this workshop focussed on the 19th century photo-process of cyanotype printing. Each person prepared some textiles to make them light sensitive, and then arranged objects which communicated their characters backstory before leaving the arrangements in the sun to get exposed.



COMPOSITION EXERCISE

composing a scene by re-arranging objects in an individually chosen location and discussing these scenes to start understanding how different people see.

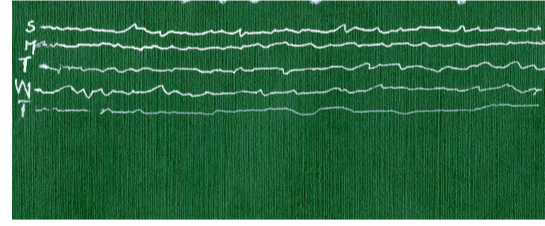
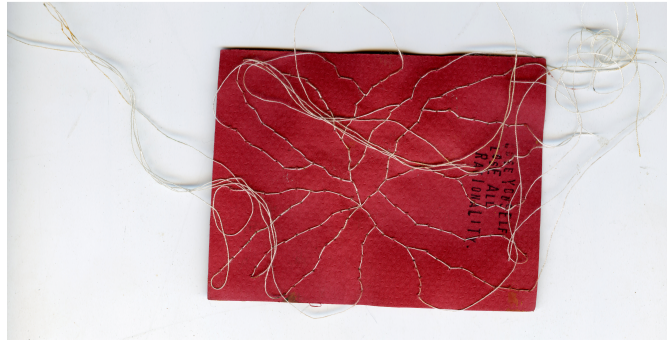


go somewhere alone and leave a trace of nature somewhere in your book



PROCESS

create a page & leave it somewhere to be found.



trace your inspiration here

draw a line which reflects your energy right now - repeat every day



Scott's sculpture in process
depiction of an angel



Laureen's sculpture



lose yourself,

lose all rationality

the 'notebooks' were given to all participants with the idea of documenting the process of creation and instant thoughts, first associations. filled with tasks and questions, including a thought process and capturing the instant thought and first associations, as a support to find one's own archetype.

sense the empty air's volume. insert yourself into space.

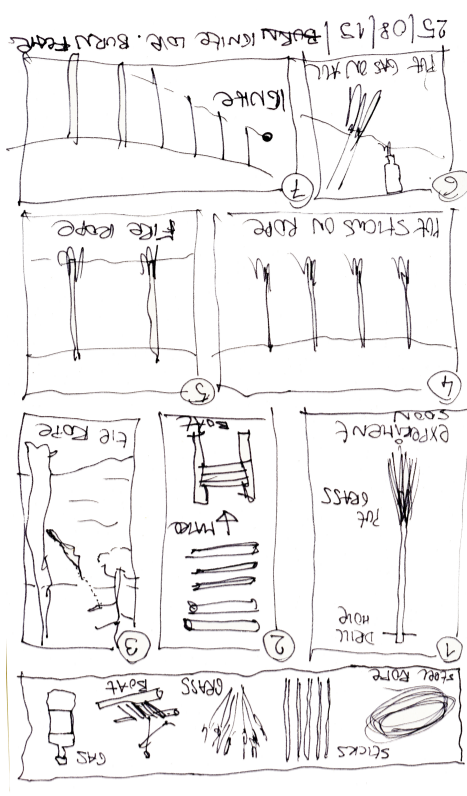
think of a parallel world - what of yourself would you take with you?



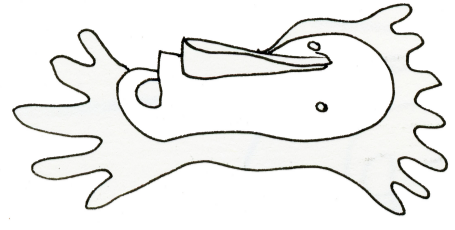
a dream - what stays. an imagination. a color, emotion.

do you feel absurdity confronting you sometimes?

without any logic, remember a situation asking reality.

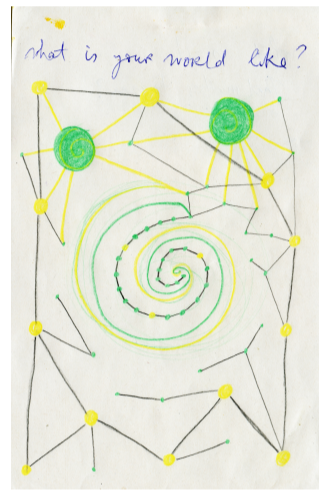


NOTEBOOKS



Maringotka, the village's petanque club and local meeting spot in Mariz turned into the communal centre for dining and evening conversations.

MARINGOTKA



Led by the experienced artists from the former collective, along with a broader team of young creatives, everyone lived and worked alongside one another for ten days, dropping off one's own identity and cultural background as an experiential experiment of a temporary tribe. Induced by the collectively created scenario and the gradual chipping away of day-to-day life, everyone was able to indulge in the neo-tribal experience, isolating the human component of themselves as individuals, coming closer to a common 'culture'.

chief cook Ondra

COMMUNAL LIVING

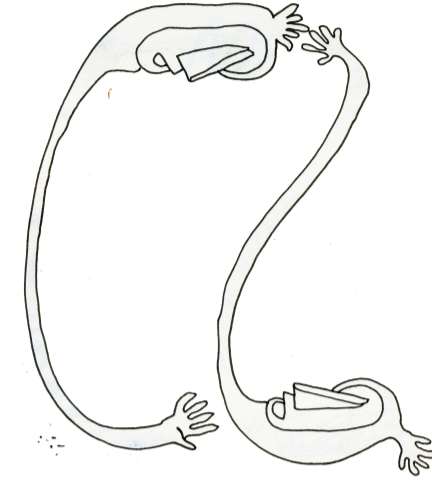


FRATRES



EXPEDITIONS

The program's content varied from screening archive material from the 90's, to lectures in the evening, and excursions to nearby towns which hold particularly strong historical ties.



a walk across the boarder to the Austrian town of Fratres ending in a to visit Peter Corath's Museum Humanum.

SLAVONICE



dinner in Besidka
the origin of the summer school



welcoming ritual

EVENING PROGRAM



lecture on life with Dr. Juan Brown



performative lecture on archetypes & tribalism



with Philip



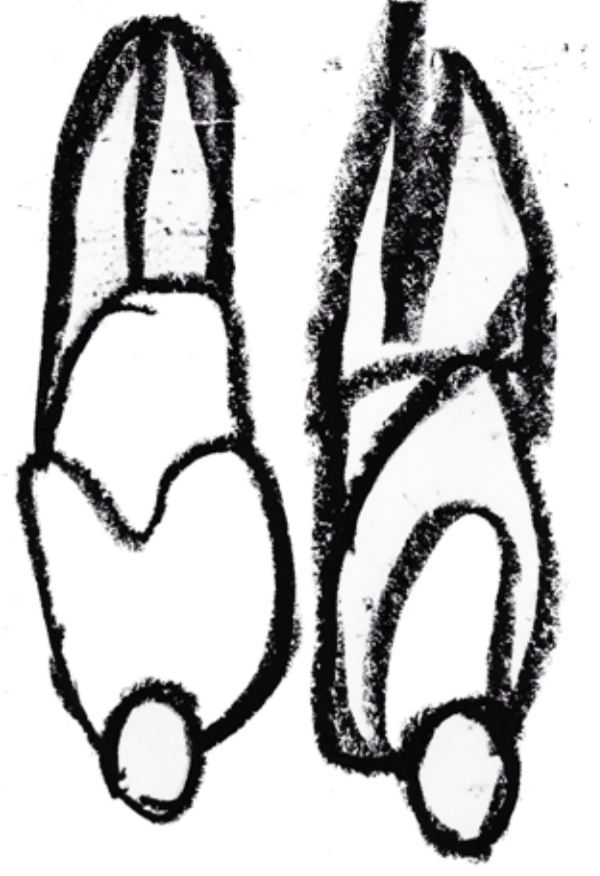
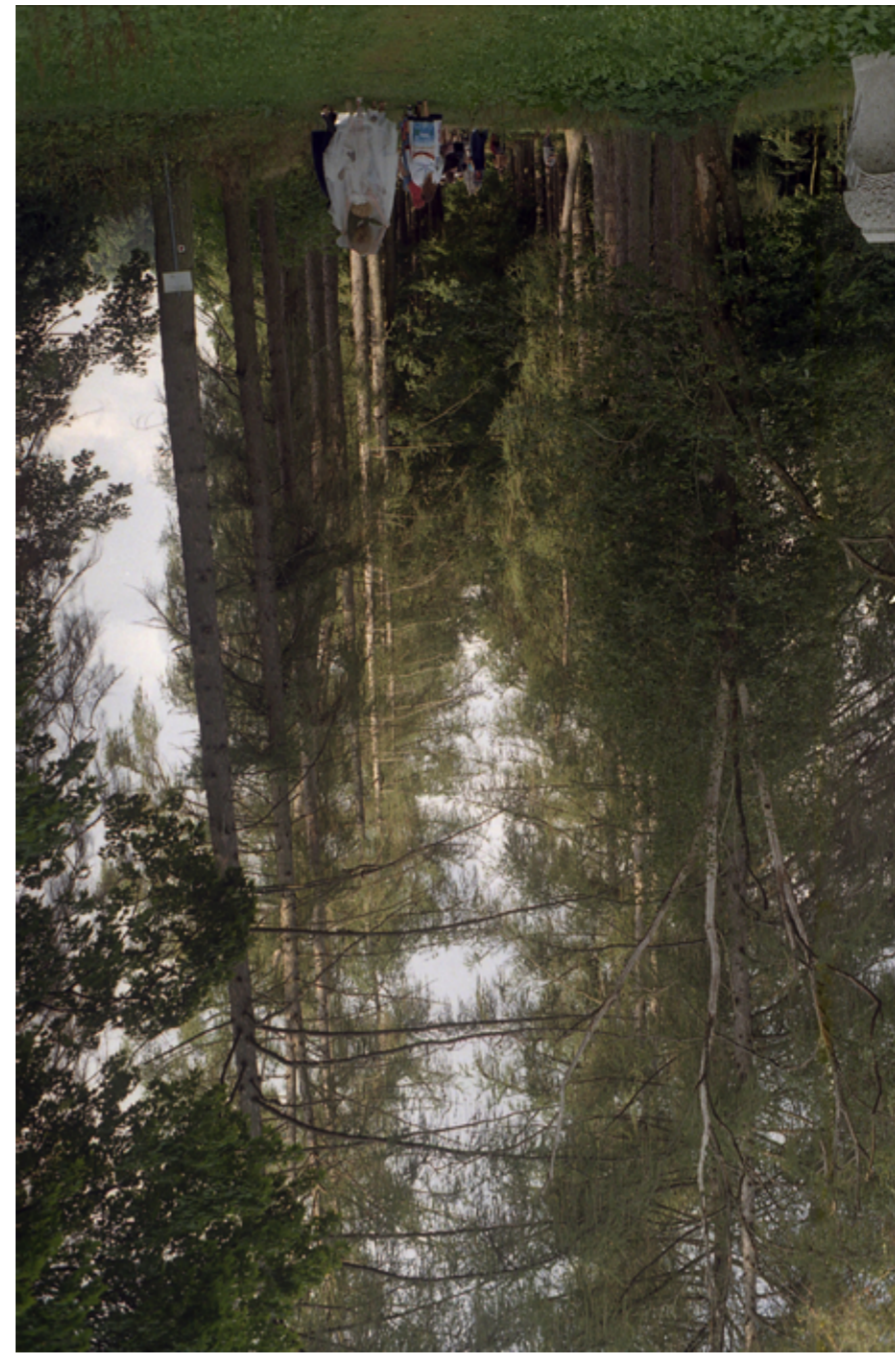
Meditative performances to begin the ceremonial walk starting after the exhibition in the barn



Michelle
Justus



1



Costumed creatures walking towards the old ruin



Tono's plaster sculpture directing the audience down the passageway



all gathered walking through the Alley

Ivica circling the pit, telling the people of their impending doom
'We don't have much time'





Freya

They enable us to switch status and simply offer a space for our human confusion



An alley of masks confronts us with our emotion.

2

Through they pass, onto her platform, where she sings and paints your face to complete the cycle.



Dwelling beneath the bridge is a someone who gives you the choice to enter her dark tunnel, immersed in sound.



Ester



From the other side of the lake



the pair marry themselves with the help of an onlooking priest,

Hannah, Gabi, Františka



whilst looking at themselves in the mirror.



a in a display of self-indigen ce

a shaman appears on a boat, lighting up the lake with fire on this new moon's night.
Simon





an object far away becomes more clear by moving towards it

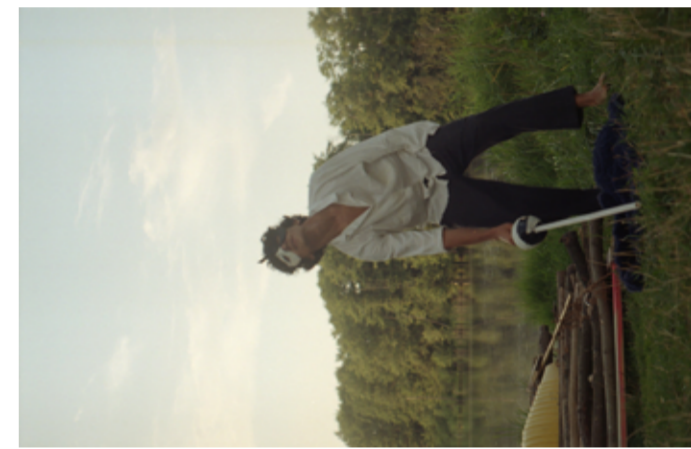
the process of observing something that catches your eye

N a v i d & N i m a



„Brother, let us set out and explore the world.

We'll have a chat while we're at it. jallah!



Playing with the changing imaginations of the object during this way

3

The all seeing eye turns its glance back on the creatures of the tribe



Ana „Observation“



Laureen's performative installation of her character



sculpture of water-filled rubber gloves dangling from an onlooking mask



Catalina

Swinging between the two contrary poles of life - between rationality and emotion -

4

she runs up the hill, towards the end.

Her laugh breaks out, continuing as she runs up the hill, towards the end.

To bi



an otherworldly encounter with a birch's child visiting a traumatized spirit



The child sits on her minimalistic paintmistic

Isabel, 'I see, I see, I see, what you don't see'

Deep within the forest, a sprawling mycelium system binds the crowd together into her collective neural network



Richard, Filip & Julian asking everyone to be silent and not speak a word

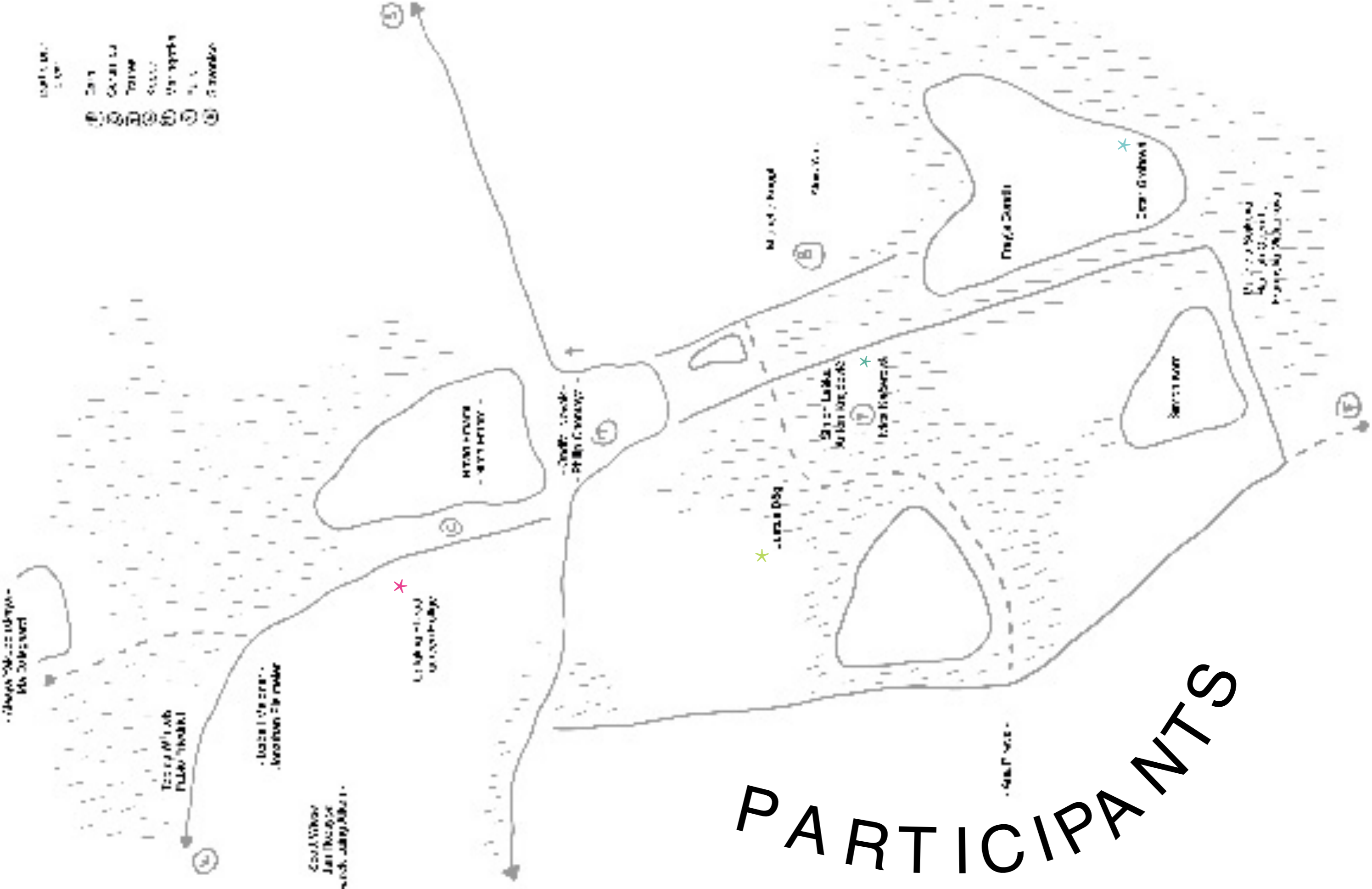
the gatekeepers riddle guards the unexplored land



I d a



MAŘIŽ & SURROUNDINGS



PARTICIPANTS

INDEX



INITIATIVE
Nicolas Prokop, Jan Vagaday, Lukas Maar, Julian Boháč

NOTEBOOKS
Jack Laing Aiken, Oliver Herédi & Isabell Alexandra Meldner

PAINTING
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SCULPTURE
Martin Ceplecha with Jan Vagaday & Nicolas Prokop*

CERAMICS
with Romana Krejčí & Julian Boháč

TEXTILE
Zuzana Krajčovičová with Alesya Yakubouskaya & Františka Malasková*

WORKSHOPS

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SUPPORTED BY

kulturbrücke
FRATRES



CEREMONIAL WALK

THROUGH MAŘIŽ

