



Radovan Čerevka: *Environment A* (fragment of a work from a series of 7 objects), 2020, artificial stone, sand, green neon lighting, various dimensions, photo: Vlado Eliáš

Radovan Čerevka: Building a Real Body Solo Exhibition at Kunsthalle LAB

Curator: Áron Fenyvesi

Duration: 12. 11. 2020 – 31. 1. 2021

Kunsthalle LAB, Nám. SNP 12, Bratislava

Voluntary fee

This solo project, specially created for the Kunsthalle LAB space, represents the work of the Košice artist Radovan Čerevka in its latest development. His current cycle creates a complex environment, thematically focused on the cult of the body. One may also interpret it as a dystopian posthuman vision, brought to realisation in an expansive installation with an inner coherence.

Čerevka, one of the most consistently developing Slovak artists of his generation, via the current exhibition perfects his artistic procedures and radically extends his means of expression. Presenting his works in a holistic, indivisible system, for the first time he experiments with a potent multi-sensory art. In the *Kunsthalle LAB* space, model-building (one of this artist's significant methods) spreads out over such a wide expanse that it creates a complex environment.

On the other hand, the artist is not merely exploring novel formal aspects of his work: he is also finding his way to a field of interest that is almost entirely new. This is the biochemical cultivation of the human body and the reinterpretation of our (occasionally absurd) presence, conceived rather as a ruin of the past. The omnipresent militarisation of our reality is a theme that Čerevka has engaged with from his earliest work. On this occasion, however, it appears as a non-referential fantasy with a whiff of sci-fi, based on instinctive examination and profound observation of reality.

"Sculptor par excellence, Radovan Čerevka has long been concerned with the critical perception of power and force. In past times his projects addressed themes of war conflicts. But in his new project Building a Real Body the aggression which the artist thematises has been sublimated: he has remoulded it into the cult of the body, of the powerful masculine body which in case of need is capable of physical fighting. The biochemical cultivation of the human body proceeds here, as in his preceding work, from the artist's characteristic hyperbolisation of the hoaxes, the conspiracies, which are so typical of today's post-factual age," says Lýdia Pribišová, curator at *Kunsthalle Bratislava*.

The artist's exhibition is a reflection on how corporality has become a fetish in the present day. That is one of the reasons why his sculptures appear in the role of cargo-cult totems and ritual artefacts. This miraculous logic is just as much present in our contemporary culture of the body as it is in archaic rituals. Čerevka has applied this strategy in his new project, via transformation of the body to a symbolic form.

Radovan Čerevka's environment is a timeless posthuman vision with purposefully combined messages: from the clear green light such as we find in modern night vision goggles for soldiers, to the ruins of seemingly archaic objects. The artist's identifiable artefacts are in a state of entropy and chemical dissolution, thus pointing to a consensual dark future of mankind. By an intuitive modification of existing elements of the contemporary world, Čerevka creates this vision of a potential, novel reality.



Radovan Čerevka: *Environment B* (fragment of a work from a series of 3 objects), 2020, various materials, variable dimensions, photo: Vlado Eliáš

RADOVAN ČEREVKA (*1980, Košice) studied in the *Studio of Free Creativity 3D* (professor Juraj Bartusz) at the *Faculty of Art* at the *Technical University in Košice*. In 2003 – 2004, he completed a two-semester study stay at the *Academy of Fine Arts in Prague*. In 2011, he successfully concluded an internal doctoral study at the *Department of Intermedia and Multimedia* at the *Academy of Fine Arts and Design in Bratislava*. Čerevka is a founding member (with Tomáš Makara and Peter Vrábel) of the Kassaboys artistic group. In the past, for a considerable time he focused on the theme of media manipulation of the images of war conflicts. Currently his work is in transformation, from an originally direct postconceptual criticism to a strategy of creating fictive visions of the future. He works in a broad spectrum of media, ranging from sculpture, drawing, installation and action, to environment. His works have appeared in many group exhibitions (*Stop Violence Against Women, Amnesty International*, Bratislava; *Man, Hero, Spirit, Machine*, Medium Gallery, Bratislava; *Network, Billboard Gallery Europe*, Bratislava, Košice; *East of Eden*, Karlin Studios, Prague; *Prague Biennale 4, Karlin Halls*, Prague; *Inconspicuous Medium*, Cyprián Majerník Gallery, Bratislava; *Zero Years, House of Arts*, Bratislava; *Middle East Europe, DOX – Centre for Contemporary Art*, Prague; *Take take take and?*, Biennale Bénin, Benin; *Blood*, Slovak National Gallery, Bratislava; *Private Nationalism*, Ostralle - Centre of Contemporary Art, Dresden; *Fear of the Unknown*, Kunsthalle Bratislava, Bratislava). He has presented his work at solo exhibitions, including for example *Beasty Models*, Trafó Gallery (2016) and *Power in the Museum* (2018 – 2019), *East Slovak Gallery*, Košice. In 2005, he was a finalist for the *Oskár Čepan Award*, which he won in 2013. Currently he is head of the *Studio of Free Creativity 3D*. He lives and works in Košice.

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