***Crysatalized***

title: *Crysatallized*

form: contemporary group exhibition[[1]](#footnote-1) of new artworks of the students of UJEP - FUD

venue: House of Arts, Ústí nad Labem

dates: 24th October – 6th December, 2018

curators: 1st year students of the MA in Curatorial studies,

instructed by Janos Szoboszlai, associate professor, UJEP – FUD

framework: The exhibition *Crystallized* is part of the *Topography of a Mo(num)ent* - An exhibition project of the UJEP-FUD held on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of its foundation

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**curatorial concept:**

The **keywords** of the Crystallized exhibition are articulated by the call of the *Topography of a Mo(num)ent* project: **celebrating this place**, searching for **stories connected to its past and present**, putting emphasis on our **responsibility towards the society** surrounding us, and showing **sensitivity** towards the location.

The curatorial team of the *Crystallized* exhibition is launching a call for the the students of UJEP – FUD in order to ask them to create **new artworks**.

This generation of artists were born in democratic societies, and did not experience directly deep societal crisis. **However, we think that democracy and the democratic societies are in crisis nowadays.** In 2018 we witness the decline of public trust, the distrust in democratic institutions. The political, economical and cultural system of traditional liberal democracies are being radically transformed – not only in cases of post-soviet countries but also in Western Europe and in the US. Centralisation, illibelarism, alt-right, putinism and erdoganism are the current ideological and political frameworks, and in every cases these ideologies integrate neo-nationalisms and xenophobia as well. Traditional human values as good will, solidarity, altruism, serving the community are not consensual values of the everyday life.

We are looking for artworks **which reflect on, comment or even criticise** this overall experience. How do artists see and interpret the possibilities of values as solidarity, good will, altruism, or, tolerancy in our mikro- and makro societies, cultures and subcultures? What are the basic values this generation stands for? How can an individuum take and perform **responsibility towards the society and the communities** and their **future**?

As a reference and strong source of inspiration **we propose to connect our present crisis to the crisis of 1968**. 2018 is the year also of the 50th anniversary of the „Prague Spring”, the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia. **Ústi nad Labem** and her people took part and an active role in resistance. In August 1968, the Czechoslovak Radio of Ústí nad Labem played a major role, which remained in the broadcast of the longest of all regional studios of Czechoslovak Radio.

We consider those people heroes, who *crystallized* the values they stood for under a heavy pressure. They believed in freedom, freedom of speech, democracy and anti-totalitarianism. Some of them protested, some started the fight, some even sacrifized their lives in order to take responsibility towards their society. Obviuosly, the crisis of democracy in 2018 does not equal to the crisis of 1968, but **today under a political pressure one has to define her/his position** in relations to the societal transformation. One has to define her/his relation to communities, cultures and sub-cultures, ideologies and believes. The proposed project uses a poetic term to name this state of the individual: as intellectual and emotional *crystallization* of values, mertits and beliefs. As the call of the Topography of a Mo(num)ent project articulate, „we ask a question whether there are "heroes" among us who we respect for what they do for us and everyone around us”.

Therefore the curatorial team **looks for artworks** which describe, interprets, reflects on, comments, or even criticize the position of the individuum acting within the given political and cultural context. The intention, rhetoric, form, and medium of artworks could be very different, based on the notion, concept and strategy of the artists. Since the main topic of the exhibition represents a wide spectrum of aspects (individuality, positive view, responsibility, changing mind, etc.), the curatorial team understands that **the exhibition** will be obviously **heterogenious in terms of artistic intention, rhetoric, form, and medium**.

The development of the concept of the new artworks and the process of realization will be supervised and advised by professors and tutors of the UJEP-FUD.

These activities will be part of the studio works during this semester.

At the end of the semester a jury (containing the professors and tutors and the curatorial team) will make the selection for the exhibition.

The infrastructure of the UJEP-FUD is available for the creation, and the project is financed by the budget of *Topography of a Mo(num)ent* project. The communication of the project is a part of the PR activity of the *Topography of a Mo(num)ent* project also.

After the decision on artworks the curatorial team which collaborates closely with the staff of the House of Arts is responsible for the logistic, installation, and the organization of related public events of the exhibition (vernissage, artist talks, educational programmes, lectures, and documentation).

1. „Exhibitions are, therefore, contemporary forms of rhetoric, complex expressions of persuasion, whose strategies aim to produce a prescribed set of values and social relations for their audiences. As such exhibitions are subjective political tools, as well as being modern ritual settings, which uphold identities (artistic, national, sub-cultural, ‘international’, gender-or-racespecific, avant-garde, regional, global etc.); they are to be understood as institutional ‘utterances’ within a larger culture industry.” (O’Neill, Paul, ‘The Curatorial Turn: From Practice to Discourse’, in Rugg, J and Sedgewick,M. (2011) Issues of Curating in Contemporary Art and Performance. Bristol: Intellect Books (p.13- 28) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)