

Anna Hulačová
Pheromones and Gentlemen

23 June – 2 September, 2023

Pedro Cera is pleased to present the second exhibition of Anna Hulačová at the gallery.

The motive of the domestic appliance has played an important part in the artist's practice. While in her earlier works, we have seen the domestic appliance connected exclusively to themes of gender and labor stereotypes, in *Pheromones and Gentleman*, technology finds its way into Hulačová's practice through the increasing technologization and automatization of daily life, offering a greater complexity of reading. Surpassing the household and instead encompassing multiple spans of existence, Hulačová's new group of works scrutinizes the impact of our increasing dependence on technology while simultaneously looking at how this dependence further corrupts our relationship with nature and its ecosystems. Challenging traditional ideas of human exceptionalism and emphasizing the interconnectedness of all beings and organisms, the exhibition brings together a new group of works, which explore themes of hybridization and hierarchy as experienced through contemporaneity

The subject of technology is represented here by a sizeable iron, one of the central objects of the exhibition. Despite being a domestic device, the disturbing scale of the object, its conductive materiality, and its streamlined shape resonate speed and automatization. Connected to what appears to be an electric cable, the conductor of electric power grows into a wild orchid, a plant, which as a result of its resistance, has, through time, adapted to various ecological niches, surviving in some of the most distinct types of climates. Known for its intricate relationship with its environment and pollinators, the forest orchid, releases chemicals that mimic the scent of pheromones to attract specific pollinators. The visit of a pollinator to the flower, can thus be perceived as an act of nutrition, but at the same time as an act, the incentives of which are also sexual. The overlaying of the two drives here points further to the interconnectedness and increasing hybridization of worlds considered as other and to the natural aspects of such phenomena, may these be worlds separating species or human-classified categories.

While on the one hand, hybridization in Hulačová's works is depicted as an inclusive utopia based on inter-species and social cohesion, a dystopic perspective shapes an important part of the exhibition's narrative, leading to an ongoing negotiation between the two. Plants growing out of electric cables, sheets of fabric emerging from the branches of trees, or estranged kitchen appliances nested inside of a wild bush, all highlight the blurring boundaries between the natural and the technology-driven, while suggestive, at the same time, of the growing artificiality typical for the present. Using the language of modernity, depicted by a group of gentlemen appropriated from a 1930s scenario, or by the artist's reductive approach to form and use of industrial materials as principal

components in her work, echoing formal characteristics of modernistic sculpture, Pheromones and Gentleman introduce us to a time placed somewhere between the past and a fantasy future. Bringing together components familiar to the eye, this imaginary landscape creates an uncanny feeling of an apocalyptic future, a consequence of a power struggle between entities, result of blind faith, and an outcome of an antagonism between concepts and forms.

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Anna Hulačová has exhibited her work at the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; Kunstvereniging Diepenheim, Netherlands; Baltic Triennial, Contemporary Art Centre in Vilnius; Prague City Gallery; Colloredo-Mansfeld Palace, Prague; Biennale Gherdeina, Ortisei, Italy; National Gallery, Trade Fair Palace, Prague; K11 MUSEA, Hong Kong; MO.CO. Montpellier Contemporaine, France; West Bohemian Gallery, Pilsen, Czechia; East Slovak Regional Gallery, Košice, Slovakia; CEAAC, Strasbourg, France, and Casino Luxembourg, Luxembourg, among others.