





CLUB OF OPPORTUNITIES EP. 6 Ten Years Night, Venue: Mihelic's Gas Station, Ljubljana, Slovenia

Jakub Jansa

Jakub Jansa is an artist with a distinctive approach to combining film, installation, and performance. Through a nuanced and reflective sensibility, his work raises questions about the mechanisms of social structures and the ideologies shaping them.

His exhibition series with the umbrella title *Club of Opportunities* reflects dynamics of class issues and power hierarchies in a way that is poetic yet intellectually provocative. Work blends fiction, humor, and elements of the grotesque with contemporary leftist theories. He creates imaginative environments that expose the fragile and illusory nature of social systems we live in.



EDUCATION:

2011- 2016
MgA. (Master of Fine Arts)
Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design
in Prague (UMPRUM)
Program: Fine Arts, Studio of Supermedia

PEDAGOGICAL WORK

2021-present
Assistant Lecturer, Faculty of Fine Arts
(FaVU), Brno University of Technology
(VUT), Czech Republic
Co-leading the Performance Studio
together with artist Julie Béna

RESIDENCIES

2023: Residency Unlimited, New York, USA
2022: KULT XL Ateliers, Brussels, Belgium
2017: CEAAC, Strasbourg, France
2015: Five Eleven, New York, USA
2013: Watch Out, Engstligenalp, Basel,
Switzerland

LECTURES

2024: TRAF0, Szczecin, Poland
2024: CAMP, Prague, Czech Republic
2023: Academy of Fine Arts,
Prague, Czech Republic
2019: CCA, Tel Aviv, Israel
2018: Cooper Union, New York, USA
2017: Cooper Union, New York, USA
2017: FAMU, Prague, Czech Republic
2017: CAAC, Strasbourg, France
2013: Engstligenalp, Basel, Switzerland

In 2023 had an extensive solo exhibition at the Stone Bell House of the Prague City Gallery. He has also presented his work at Pioneer Works (2018) and Anthology Film Archives (2023) in New York, also created new site-specific works for the 34th Ljubljana Biennale of Graphic Arts (2021), HEK in Basel (2020), and the 6th Athens Biennale (2018).

CINEMATIC SCREENINGS

2023: Club of Opportunities series,
Anthology Film Archives, New York, US

2024: Club of Opportunities series
35th Liffe, Ljubljana international Film
festival, SLO

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

Garden of Problems
(1/3 *Thinking Through Film*)
Curator: Sandra Baborovská
GHMP House at the Stone Bell,
Prague, Czech Republic
November 8, 2023 – February 18, 2024

Shame to Pride
Curators: Lea Vene, Lovro Japundžić
Mocvara Gallery, Zagreb, Croatia
October 20 – 28, 2021

Club of Opportunities
Curatorial team: PAF
Pioneer Works, New York, United States
November 20, 2018

Britannica Bootcamp
Curator: Élodie Gallina
CAAC, Strasbourg, France
September 20 – October 28, 2018

Keeping in Line
Curator: Pavel Kubesa
NoD, Prague, Czech Republic
October 23 – November 26, 2018

My Name is Red Herring
Curator: Jiří Ptáček
Fotograf Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic
March 20 - April 14, 2018

Club of Opportunities: Bowling Bar
Curator: Jan Vitek
Hunt Kastner, Prague, Czech Republic
July 29, 2017

Ten Years Night
Curator: Dorian Batycka
Mihelic's Gas Station, Ljubljana, Slovenia
September 26 – October 29, 2019

Britannica Bootcamp
Curator: Élodie Gallina
CAAC, Strasbourg, France
September 20 – October 28, 2018

Matter of Sensitivity
Curator: Kamil Nábělek
Portheimka Museum,
Prague, Czech Republic
May 9 – November 29, 2020

Keeping in Line
Curator: Pavel Kubesa
NoD, Prague, Czech Republic
October 23 – November 26, 2018

My Name is Red Herring
Curator: Jiří Ptáček
Fotograf Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic
March 20 - April 14, 2018

April Showers Bring May Flowers
(feat. K. Juříková)
Curator: Lumír Nykl
GAMU, Prague, Czech Republic
March 14 - April 4, 2018

Engstligenalp, StartUp
Curator: Monika Čejková
GHMP, Prague, Czech Republic
March 7 – April 9, 2014



Opening Ceremony (10mins, 4K), Garden of Problems , GHMP House at the Stone Bell, photo Jan Kolský

AWARDS

2021: Jindřich Chalupecký Award

COMMISSIONED WORKS

2024: Steirischerherbst,
Pumpkineville (15mins, 4K)
a new short film and installation

2022: National Gallery in Prague,
Opening Ceremony (10mins, 4K)
a new short film and installation

2021: 34th Ljubljana Biennial,
It's so physical II
a multi-channel video installation

2021: Meet Factory Gallery,
It's so physical I
a multi-channel video installation

2021: CJCH Award,
Shame to Pride (20mins, 4K)
a new short film and installation

COLLECTIONS

National Gallery Prague – Collection of
Modern and Contemporary Art:

Acquisition 2023:
Opening Ceremony,
film, 10 min, 4K, (1/5)

Acquisition 2022:
Shame to Pride,
film, 20 min, 4K, (1/5)

Prague City Gallery Collection (GHMP):

Acquisition 2024:
April Showers Bring May Flowers,
film, 10 mins, 4K, (1/5)

Acquisition 2024: My
Name is Red Herring,
film, 6 mins, 4K, (1/5)

Acquisition 2024:
Britannica Bootcamp,
film 5 mins, 4K (1/5)

Havrlant Art Collection:

Acquisition 2018:
Spiritual Fitness ep.1-3
series of 3 films

Acquisition 2022:
Shame to Pride, film,
20 mins, 4K, (2/5)

Acquisition 2023:
Opening Ceremony,
film, 10'15", 4K, (2/5)

Acquisition 2023:
Opening Ceremony,
C-Print, 160×120cm (1/5)

Acquisition 2023:
Protest banners,
various dimensions, (1/1)

Museum of Literature, Prague:

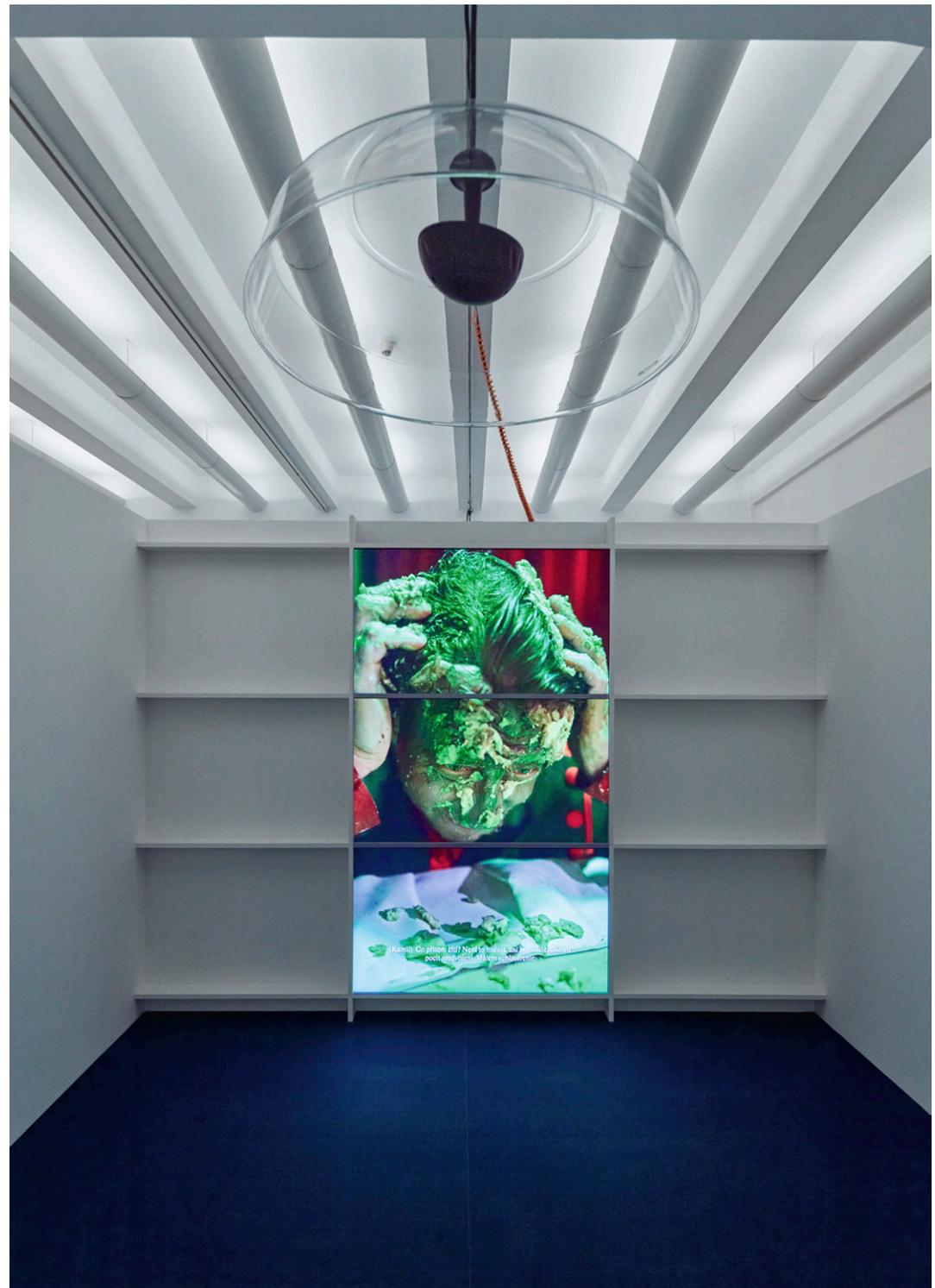
Acquisition 2023:
The Mácha,
film, 15 mins, 4K, (1/5)

Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague:

Acquisition 2023:
Art Life Con,
film, 15 mins, 4K, (1/5)

In 2021, he was awarded the Jindřich Chalupecký Award. In recent years, he has primarily focused on extensive commissioned works created at the invitation of various institutions, while also being represented in numerous gallery and museum collections. His work *Shame to Pride* is part of the new permanent exhibition at the National Gallery Prague. In 2022, he created a new comprehensive work for the exhibition *Flower Union*, which was organized by the National Gallery Prague on the occasion of the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The latest, ninth episode of *Club of Opportunities* was commissioned for the 57th steirischer herbst (2024) at the Neue Galerie Graz.

Shame to Pride in End of the Black-and-White Era 1939–2021:
Permanent Collection of the National Gallery Prague



GROUP EXHIBITIONS

Steirischer Herbst: Horror Patriae

Curators: Ekaterina Degot,
Pieter Vermeertel, David Riff
Neue Galerie Graz, Austria
September 19 – February 16, 2025

The 28th Biennial of Design (BIO28)

Curators: Alexandra Midal, Emma Pflieger
Museum of Architecture and Design (MAO),
Ljubljana, Slovenia
November 21, 2024 – April 6, 2025

Publiek Park

Curators: Jef Declercq, Anna Laganovska,
Koi Persyn, Adriëne van der Werf
Harmoniepark, Albertpark & Provincietuin,
Antwerp, Belgium
September 15 – October 1, 2023

End of the Black-and-White Era 1939–2021: Permanent Collection of the National Gallery Prague

Curators: Michal Novotný, Eva Skopalová,
Adéla Janíčková
National Gallery Prague, Czech Republic
May 1, 2023, – December 31, 2025

Flower Union

Curator: Michal Novotný
Council of the European Union,
Brussels, Belgium
12th July – 31st December 2022
National Gallery, Prague
10th February – 7th May 2023

34th Ljubljana Biennial

Curator: Tjaša Pogačar
Ljubljana, Slovenia
September 10 – November 21, 2021

Jindřich Chaloupecký Award Exhibition

Curator: Veronika Čechová
Moravian Gallery, Brno, Czech Republic
September 24, 2021 – February 27, 2022

Spiritualities

Curator: Tereza Jindrová
MeetFactory, Prague, Czech Republic
May 25 – August 16, 2020
2020: Sanpaku Eyes
Espai Tactel, Barcelona, Spain

2019: Avatars, Doppelgangers
HEK, Basel, Switzerland

2019: Stumbling Through the Uncanny
Valley
CCA, Tel Aviv, Israel

2019: Healing 2.0
MeetFactory, Prague, Czech Republic
May 25 – August 16, 2020

2019: Soft Objects – Real Feelings
House of Arts, Ústí nad Labem, Czech
Republic

2018: 6th Athens Biennale
Curatorial team: Stefanie Hessler, Kostis
Stafylakis, Poka-Yio
Athens, Greece

2018: Supernova
NTK Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic

2018: Healing
Czech Center, Berlin, Germany

2017: In a Landscape
House of Arts, Brno, Czech Republic

2016: Better Ideas for Life 1 & 2
Karlín Studios, Prague, Czech Republic /
Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel,
Switzerland

2016: Better Ideas for Life 2
Karlín Studios, Prague, Czech Republic
2016: In a Landscape
EA Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic

2016: Teseract
AMU Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic

2016: Name of the Project is Project Itself
CC, New York, United States

2016: It Looked Different in a Dream
Klementinum, Prague, Czech Republic

2015: How Not to Want Anything
4+4 Days, Prague, Czech Republic

2014: Coriander Tunnel
GHMP, Prague, Czech Republic

2013: The Shot Shrapnel Will Calm the
Observer
CCC, Beijing, China

2013: Industrial Revolution
VP1, Ostrava, Czech Republic

2013: Watch Out
Engstligenalp, Bern, Switzerland

2013: Conductor
Prague, Czech Republic

2013: Enter 6
NTK Gallery, Prague, Czech Republic

2012: Umprum 2012
DOX, Prague, Czech Republic

PUBLICATIONS

Jakub Jansa, Club of Opportunities:

The Garden of Problems

Texts by: Michal Novotný, Julie Béna, Kamil Nábělek, Noemi Purkrábková, Jozef Mrva Jr., Ernestyna Orłowska, Klára Vlasáková, Jan Bělíček

Publisher: UMPRUM

ISBN: 978-80-88308-55-3



Thinking Through Film

Editors: Jiří Anger, Sandra Baborovská

Texts by: Jiří Anger, Sandra Baborovská, Georges Didi-Huberman, Sergei Eisenstein, Noemi Purkrábková, Ondřej Vavrečka

Publisher: GHMP

ISBN: 978-80-7010-194-0

Mapping Moving Images: Media, Actors, and Places in the Czech Environment

Editors: Martin Mazanec, Sylva Poláková

Publisher: National Film Archive

ISBN: 978-80-7004-199-4

Supernova: Studio of Supermedia,

UMPRUM

Editor: David Kořínek

Publisher: UMPRUM

ISBN: 978-80-87989-79-1

Jakub Jansa, *Spiritual Fitness*

Texts by: Jakub Jansa, Alexander Campaz,

Petr Hák

<http://thespiritualfitness.com/>

Other Knowledge: Texts, Images,

Documents

Editors: Tereza Jindrová, Eva B. Riebová

ISBN: 978-80-906994-8-9

CATALOGUES

End of the Black-and-White Era 1939–2021:

Permanent Collection of the National

Gallery Prague

Curators: Michal Novotný, Eva Skopalová,

Adéla Janíčková

National Gallery Prague

ISBN: 978-80-7035-848-1



Publiek Park 2023

Texts by: J. Declercq, A. Laganovska, K.

Persyn & A. van der Werf

Location: Harmoniepark, Albertpark &

Provincietuin, Antwerp, Belgium

In addition to the presentations in the parks, artworks can be seen at TICK TACK, Moonstreet, Red Herring Salon, Annie Gentils Gallery, and LLS Paleis.

Participating artists: A. Ragno Capone, J.

Dehnen, N. Dockx, L. Duclaux, J. Jansa, M.

Emmanuelle Kazi, J. Kim, Metahaven, M.

Mu, Y. Park, P. Siri Renard, L. Schönweger,

H. Shikha, P. Wang & G. Woueté, and others.

The 34th Ljubljana Biennale of Graphic Arts:

Iskra Delta, 2021

Texts by: T. Pogačar, N. Šivavec

Participating artists: J. Akomfrah,

Astrosuka, BCAA system*, J. Citarella, S.

Denny, Himera, J. Holder, INSIDE JOB (U.

Lucińska & M. Knychaus), Interdependence

(H. Herndon & M. Dryhurst), J. Jansa, Z.

Keresztes, B. Keresztesi, P. Ketamine, Nimaš

Izbire*, K. Novitskova, OMSK Social Club,

Protektorama (aLifveForm, fed and cared

for by J. Raether), J. Rafman, Ž. Božičnik

Rebec, A. Selmeči & T. Kocka Jusko, P.

Supply, Umru, T. Vangelis, and others.

Uncanny Valley, CCA Tel Aviv

July 13 – September 7, 2019

Texts by: C. Tamir

Participating artists: C. Arcangel, A.

Domanović, C. Dror, A. Fluman, J. Jansa &

K. Juříková, O. Laric, A. Mersy, nabbteeri, K.

Novitskova, P. Hardware, E. Papamargariti,

R. Patir, H. Phillipson, S. Price, J. Rafman,

E. Salomon, M. Segal, T. Si-Qin, A. N.

Wilson, and others.

6th Athens Biennale

Texts by: S. Hessler, K. Stafylakis, Poka-Yio

Participating artists: M. Al Qadiri, K.

Arunanondchai & A. Gvojic, I. Bašić, T.

Chen, B. Condon, C. Daskopoulou, T.

Davis, D. Dean, J. P. Downer, E. Fornieles, J.

Holder, C. Höller, C. L. Hughes, A. Huizenga

(of Patriarchy), J. Hurwitz-Goodman & D.

Keller, J. Jansa, B. Magdy, E. & F. Mattes,

Metahaven, S. Moulton, O. Social Club, A.

Polska, J. P. Raether, J. Rafman, T. Shani, H.

Shin, A. Shvarts, M. Simnett, R. Trecartin,

T. Triantafyllidis, A. Uddenberg, L. Wy, L.

Yang, Y. B. Dancing Group, and others.

TEXTS (SELECTED)

Noemi Purkrábková:
KINESTHETIC FIELDS OF
CONTEMPORARY
AUDIOVISUAL ART (ENG)

[→ Read](#)

Michal Novotný:
THE DESIRE FOR STORIES
OF REASSURANCE
AND HOPE (ENG)

[→ Read](#)

Jan Bělíček:
WHEN CELERY DECIDES
TO BREAK THROUGH
THE GLASS CEILING (ENG)

[→ Read](#)

Jan Bělíček:
THE PROBLEM
WITH ROOTING (ENG)

[→ Read](#)

INTERVIEWS (SELECTED)

BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU
ENTER BRAINIACS!
Tjaša Pogačarand Jakub Jansa
for ETC.Magazine, Issue 2 (ENG)

[→ Read](#)

CRISIS OF THE
UPROOTED VEGGIE
Martina Poliačková and Jakub Jansa
for PW MAG (ENG)

[→ Read](#)

AT LEAST
THE DRIED-OUT SOIL
WILL GET LOOSENED UP A BIT
Marika Kupková, Katarína Hládeková
for Artalk (CZ)

[→ Read](#)

MEDIA (SELECTED)

e-flux
by Jörg Heiser
September 2024

[→ Read](#)

Mousse Magazine
Text by Brit Barton
November 2024

[→ Read](#)

Vogue CS
June 2024
Text by Veronika Pařízková

[→ Read](#)

Art Forum,
Text by Noemi Smolik
February 2019, Vol. 57, No. 6

[→ Read](#)

Mousse Magazine
Stumbling Through
the Uncanny Valley
September 2019

[→ Read](#)

e-flux
by Kimberly Bradley
December 2018

[→ Read](#)

e-flux
Iskra Delta
September 2021

[→ Read](#)

Quartal, Ghmp
Qartal 12.
December 2023
[→ Read](#)
Https://Www.ghmp.cz/Qartals/Qartal-12/

Fotograf Mag
July 2018

Text: Tina Poliačková
[→ Read](#)
Https://Fotografmagazine.cz/Issue/Ne-Prace/

Art Antique
Portfolio
June 2019
Text by Tina Poliačková
[→ Read](#)
Https://Www.artantiques.cz/Cerven-2019

Art Antique
Recenze
April 2018
Text: Martin Vrba
[→ Read](#)
Https://Www.artantiques.cz/Duben-2018

Art Viewer
Keeping In Line
[→ Read](#)
https://artviewer.org/jakub-jansa-at-nod-gallery/

Art Viewer
Britanica Bootcamp
[→ Read](#)
https://artviewer.org/jakub-jansa-at-ceaac/

O-fluxo
Britanica Bootcamp
[→ Read](#)
https://www.ofluxo.net/britanica-bootcamp-by-jakub-jansa-at-ceaac/

O-fluxo
The Garden of Problems
January 2024
[→ Read](#)
https://www.ofluxo.net/the-garden-of-problems-jakub-jansa-stone-bell-house-prague/

KubaParis
The Garden of Problems

January 2024
[→ Read](#)
https://kubaparis.com/submission/383635

KubaParis
Shame to Pride
September 2021
[→ Read](#)
https://kubaparis.com/archive/jakub-jansa-shame-to-pride-club-of-opportunities-ep-7

KubaParis
Publiek Park
September 2023
[→ Read](#)
https://kubaparis.com/submission/375925

Swarm Mag
Opening Ceremony
August 2022
[→ Read](#)
https://swarmmag.com/video/flower-union-opening-ceremony/

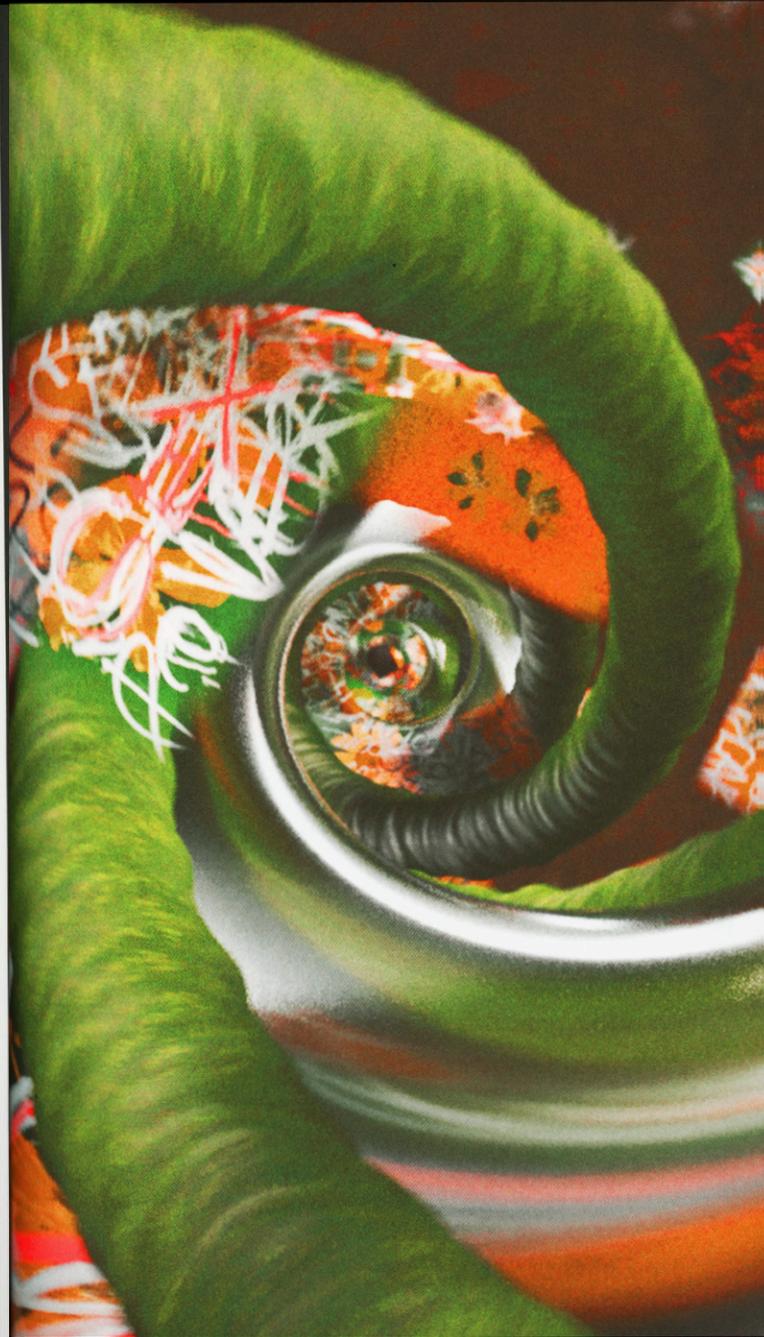
Swarm Mag
Club of Opportunities
May 2021
[→ Read](#)

PODCASTS (CZ)

CRO Plus
June 2024
https://plus.rozhlas.cz/sport-je-umely-svet-s-jasne-danymi-pravidly-umeni-je-naprosty-opak-rika-9177961
[→ Listen](#)

Aktuálně
December 2023
[→ Listen](#)

https://magazin.aktualne.cz/kultura/podcast-jakub-jansa-celer-avokado/r~a222c96699bd11ee82b7ac1f6b220ee8/



Club of Opportunities

By the author of *The Club of Ghouls and Other Friends*

Illustrated by

Jakub Jansa

Translated by

Michael Chabon

With an afterword by

Jakub Jansa

Welcome to the Club of Opportunities, a temporary new world in the middle of your brain. That's where your comfort zone hides.

Jakub Jansa

WHEN CELERY DECIDES TO BREAK THROUGH THE GLASS CEILING

“A visual artist, Jakub Jansa has been working on a rather unique art project for several years. Exactly according to the opening motto of his new book mapping the *Club of Opportunities*, he “settled into the comfort zone of his mind” and began to develop the fates of several fictional characters through his

Text by Jan Bělíček:

A visual artist, Jakub Jansa has been working on a rather unique art project for several years. Exactly according to the opening motto of his new book *Club of Opportunities*, he “settled into the comfort zone of his mind” and began to develop the fates of several fictional characters through his installations with the help of theorist Kamil Nábělek. At the very beginning there was allegedly a miniature budget for the new project, for which Jansa bought ten celery roots and called the theorist Kamil Nábělek to see if he knew how to use them creatively. The eccentric thinker Nábělek immediately began to develop a theory of celerist ontology and to talk about the hierarchies of vegesociety. At the very bottom of this hierarchy is the unattractive and neglected celery root. The admired and praised avocado works as its complete opposite. These are the two poles of the social hierarchy between which this whole art project moves. Why celery root and avocado?

Celery root is one of the most overlooked crops in Nábělka’s ontology. People often consume it only as an obligatory component of meals. It is an ingredient that is necessary in most dishes, but aesthetically it is almost

nonexistent for us. It doesn’t taste unique on its own, there is no special story built around it as an important superfood, and its appearance doesn’t promise anything fantastic either. We don’t usually think about the taste and aroma of celery root, even though its contribution to the final enjoyment of a meal is often irreplaceable. Its presentation in supermarket chains is very simple, and proper celery root is sold covered in layers of soil, which signifies its freshness but also clearly defines its place in the spatial hierarchy of the vegesociety.

Jansa’s long-term art project was created in 2017 and includes eight projects so far. The last episode of *Opening Ceremony* was part of the presentation of contemporary Czech art in Brussels during the Czech Presidency of the Council of the European Union. From November 2023, for the first time, it was possible to see all these episodes together in one place as part of *Thinking Through Film* exhibition at Prague’s GHMP, at Stone Bell House, where one entire floor was dedicated to Jansa. The exhibition was planned as a set of several video installations with performative elements, mixing an accomplished visual language with humour, contemporary leftist theory, and exploration of political strategies on social media, while

“At the very beginning, there was a minimal budget for a new project. Jansa used it to buy ten celery bulbs and called theorist Kamil Nábělek to see if he had any creative ideas on how to use them.

The eccentric thinker Nábělek immediately began developing the theory of celery ontology and discussing hierarchies within the VEGE-SOCIETY.”





CLUB OF OPPORTUNITIES Episode 7: Shame to Pride, BTS

also including comedy, absurdity, and playfulness. The installation also featured Kamil Nábělek, who casually explained to the audience which phase of the story they were in and which dynamics of the action they were observing.

Jansa's artistic project basically follows, over a long period of time, two main characters whose fates he gradually develops in each instalment of the project. One of them is the Seer - fortune teller, a kind-hearted and empathetic character who is going through an inner crisis and has paradoxically lost her ability to predict the future. For Jakub Jansa, this figure partly represents the crisis of liberalism and liberal democracy. The Seer used to be someone who had a natural place in society and could guess, relatively effortlessly, what the near future would bring. But now she is struggling and feels that she no longer understands the contemporary world.

The second important character is the Celerist, half human, half celery root, and a bit of an outsider to the vegesociety. The Celerist is a human who starts at the very bottom and we follow his inner development which in many ways follows the important social debates of the last few years. In the third episode, 2018's *My Name is Red Herring*, Celerist is suddenly an arrogant and somewhat comical alt-right influencer. In the video, which features aesthetics reminiscent of speeches by motivational coaches, Celerist advises the audience on how to crack down on leftist opponents. In this work, Jansa partly follows up his diploma thesis *Spiritual Fitness*, in which he worked on the phenomenon of motivational coaches and their rhetorical manipulations.

Celerist's far-right anger stems mainly from his social status. As people become more interested in him, his aspirations change.

Suddenly he craves admiration and fame. For the first time, he hesitantly begins to observe the higher, avocado class of beings in the vegesociety and wants to penetrate these higher levels. Back in 2018, in the fifth episode entitled *Keeping in Line*, Celerist confronts his own conscience. His conscience reminds him, subtly at first and then more insistently, that he is gradually losing his true identity and trying to be something he is definitely not. His interaction with his conscience is brisk, comic, and visually appealing, but at the same time contains a deeper message concerning issues of authenticity and social mobility.

For the wider public, the figure of Celerist became visible in 2021 when Jansa won the *Jindřich Chalupecký Award*. In the Pražák Palace of the Moravian Gallery in Brno. The video installation clearly showed that, for the first time, the artists had the financial and institutional support making it possible to bring their vision to formal perfection. The seventh episode, *Shame to Pride*, marks the provisional peak of the series and is the most accomplished visually and conceptually as well as in terms of acting, set design, design and camera, and lighting work.

At this exhibition, the audience encountered Celerist in his self-inquiring phase. Through hard work, he has finally managed to break into the upper echelons of society, but he feels out of place there. Pretentious avocados constantly let him know that he is not one of them, and he feels a whole range of social barriers that his celerist habitus is simply not up to. This episode perhaps most clearly picked up on some of the themes that are of key importance to contemporary art, namely questions of origin, social belonging, and the search for one's own identity and authenticity in a world that, while craving the effect of authenticity, is also constantly increasing a gap between fact and fiction, self-design, and pure lies.

“At the very bottom of this hierarchy sits the unappealing and often overlooked CELERY ROOT, while its complete opposite is the admired and celebrated AVOCADO.”

In the Celerist story, we find ourselves in a bizarre world where imagination permeates the well-known laws of contemporary society and where purely social issues intersect with the wilderness of vegetation. Jansa, assisted by Nábělek, sees the formation of hierarchies in the realm of fruit and vegetables, which in an absurd way copy the hierarchies we know from our social reality. He took a path radical in both aesthetic and thematic terms by deciding to anthropomorphize the issue. In many ways, this brilliant idea also brings with it very interesting aesthetic possibilities. Celerist, a celery root in human form, may fit in with the elite in the way he dresses and expresses himself, but his face shows the unpleasant roots that remind us of his being born from mud and dirt. Although he aspires to join the Club of the Highest Opportunities, his visual appearance immediately draws attention to the inappropriateness of these aspirations. In a grotesque and dramatically urgent way, he is reminiscent of the Italian writer Elena Ferrante's exclamation that it is unimportant whether one goes up or down the social ladder. Class origin will always manifest itself in extreme situations, just as a person suddenly blushes.

In addition, Jansa's opulent visual style also deals with the dilemmas facing today's society. He stresses the importance of the

search for sources of aggressive male energy, which mutates into increasingly radical political expressions and is driven forward by frustration and lack of appreciation. In the figure of the Wisewoman, he introduces into this game the wandering and groping of contemporary liberalism, which cannot confront these phenomena in any way and loses touch with reality and its own ideas about the future. He also reflects on how self stylization affects the formation of the identity of people today and observes how strongly the influence of social networks is imprinted on this process. Although his work appears to be an elaborate grotesquery about the rise and fall of a fictional character, it is in fact also a peculiar way of responding to disturbing tendencies in contemporary society. In each episode, he attempts to capture phenomena that escape other people's observation and experience of reality while offering his own subtle comments and suggestions on how to relate to these disturbing phenomena. His work, however, effectively envelops these aspects in a visually opulent and witty form which leaves the viewer a great deal of room for imagination and reveals an experience of the elusiveness and openness towards reality that simply cannot be separated from the experience of contemporary life.



“The series of films and installations *Club of Opportunities* functions as a kind of container, with its main characters—the CELERIAC, AVOCADO and the SEER—absorbing, depending on circumstances, the alter ego and deconstruction of their creator’s role, a critical institutional reflection on the precarious conditions of their own production, and a contemporary social satire on the general commercialization of storytelling. The episodic structure simultaneously delineates the problem Jakub Jansa has set for himself—allowing him to operate artistically, engage in creative acrobatics, succumb to self-destructive coercive tunnels, and thus explore and deconstruct himself while also attempting to escape something that, in the end, cannot be escaped through knowledge alone.”

—
Michal Novotný, “The Desire for Stories of Reassurance and Hope,”
The Garden of Problems, 6-14



CLUB OF OPPORTUNITIES Episode 7: Shame to Pride, BTS

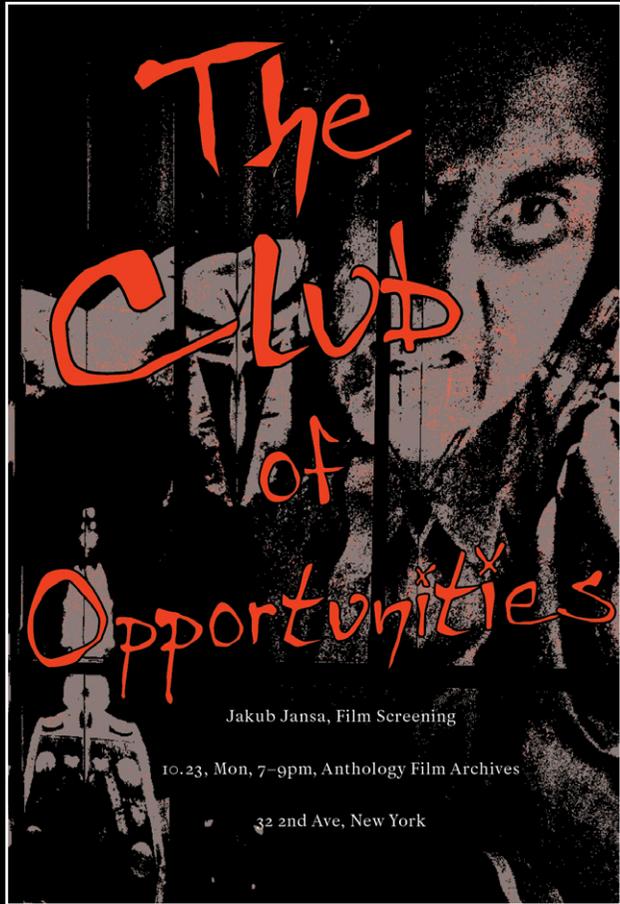
Selected Works

Cinematic Screenings
of Club of Opportunities series:
Anthology Film Archives, New York, US
and 35th Liffe, Ljubljana international
Film festival, SLO

Screening of Jakub Jansa's Nine-Part Film
Series at Anthology Film Archives in New York,
Accompanied by a Panel Discussion with
Curator Iris Hung.

The screening includes the episodes Celeriac
Ontology, April Showers Bring May Flowers,
My Name is Red Herring, Britannica Bootcamp,
Keeping in Line, Ten Years Night, Shame to Pride,
and Opening Ceremony. The total runtime of the
eight presented episodes is 53 minutes.

Anthology Film Archives is one of the most significant institutions dedicated to independent and experimental film, not only in New York but worldwide. Since its founding in 1970, it has served as a key center for avant-garde cinema, functioning not only as an archive but also as a platform for screening and studying films that defy mainstream narratives. It was established by filmmaker Jonas Mekas alongside other pioneers of independent film, such as Stan Brakhage, P. Adams Sitney, and Jerome Hill. Many key figures in visual art, including Andy Warhol and Bruce Conner, have presented their film works here. AFA fosters connections between film and other media, influencing not only film theory but also the gallery and museum presentation of moving images. Anthology Film Archives has become a model for film institutions worldwide, inspiring the creation of similar archives and experimental cinemas such as Light Cone in Paris and LUX in London.





Club of Opportunities serie at 35th Liffe, Ljubljana international Film festival, SLO



Curator Iris Hung, Kevin D'Angelo and Jakub Jansa at Anthology Film Archives

Club of Opportunities S1
Curatorial team: PAF
Pioneer Works,
New York, United States
November 20, 2018

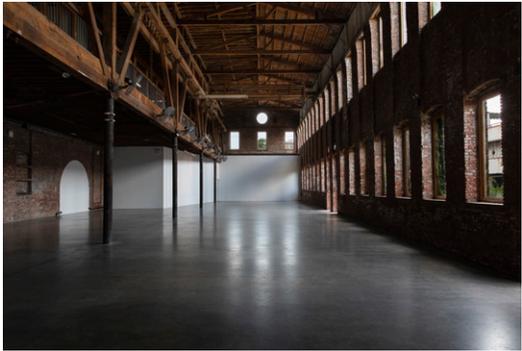
Jakub Jansa presented five episodes of his *Club of Opportunities* series at Pioneer Works through large-format projections, accompanied by a subtle live performance by philosopher Kamil Nábělek. Moving among the audience, Nábělek served fresh celery juice while narrating key moments of the story, creating an participatory experience. The installation was adapted to the specific spatial conditions of Pioneer Works—a former shipyard with a vast industrial space of approximately 2,800 m².

Pioneer Works (PW) is a nonprofit cultural center in Brooklyn's Red Hook, connecting contemporary art, science, music, and technology. It was founded in 2012 by artist Dustin Yellin with the vision of a "museum of process," inspired by the utopian ideas of Buckminster Fuller and experimental models such as Black Mountain College. Notable figures associated with PW include curator Alanna Heiss, musicians Justin Vernon and David Byrne, and designer Paola Antonelli.

PAF is a curatorial platform focused on film animation, visual arts, music, and moving images—ranging from avant-garde cinema to internet culture and the club scene. In addition to festivals in Olomouc, New York, Ostopovice, and Prague, it is engaged in exhibition, publishing, and performative activities. Among the artists who have presented their work within PAF are Jesse Kanda, Dean Blunt, Ryan Trecartin, and many others.



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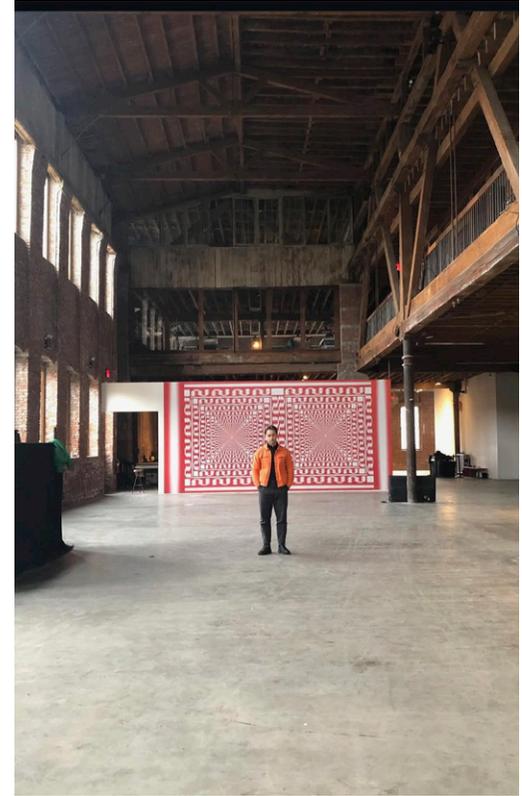


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The character of SEER (Oracle), who has no vision of the future anymore and feels anxious.



Club of Opportunities, Pioneer Works, New York, United States

Pumpkineville (15mins, 4K)
a new commissioned film
and installation

at

Steirischer Herbst: Horror Patriae
Curators: Ekaterina Degot,
Pieter Vermeir, David Riff
Neue Galerie Graz, Austria
September 19 – February 16, 2025

The short film Pumpkineville was created under professional filmmaking conditions with the contribution of a film crew. The film was shot on various locations, including a film studio utilizing a large-format LED wall, allowing for a real-time combination of realistic and digitally generated environments.

Pumpkinville, a short film (15mins, 4k) and installation commissioned by Steirischer Herbst 2024 follows Celerist, a noir detective trapped in a surreal world akin to The Truman Show, where a Styrian pumpkin—symbolizing Austria’s “green gold”—remains unaware of its artificial surroundings. Jakub Jansa crafts a satirical allegory of neoliberalism and nationalism, using human-vegetable beings to expose class hierarchies and ideological mechanisms of the Global North. Pumpkineville deconstructs the myths of tradition and identity as tools of political manipulation, revealing how false nostalgia and illusions of stability fuel contemporary nationalist ideologies.

Steirischer Herbst (SH) is an annual interdisciplinary contemporary art event that has served as a platform for innovative artistic projects since its founding in 1968 in Graz, Austria. SH is renowned for commissioning and premiering new works, often in collaboration with prominent artists. In the past, it has supported new productions by artists such as Hito Steyerl, John Baldessari. SH also premiered one of John Cage’s final works in 1992. In 2017, the festival presented a film adaptation of Elfriede Jelinek’s novel Die Kinder der Toten, directed by the Nature Theater of Oklahoma, which won the FIPRESCI Prize at Berlinale. This tradition continues in 2024, as SH has supported the creation of Pumpkineville, a new short film by Jakub Jansa, presented at the Horror Patriae exhibition in Neue Galerie Graz.



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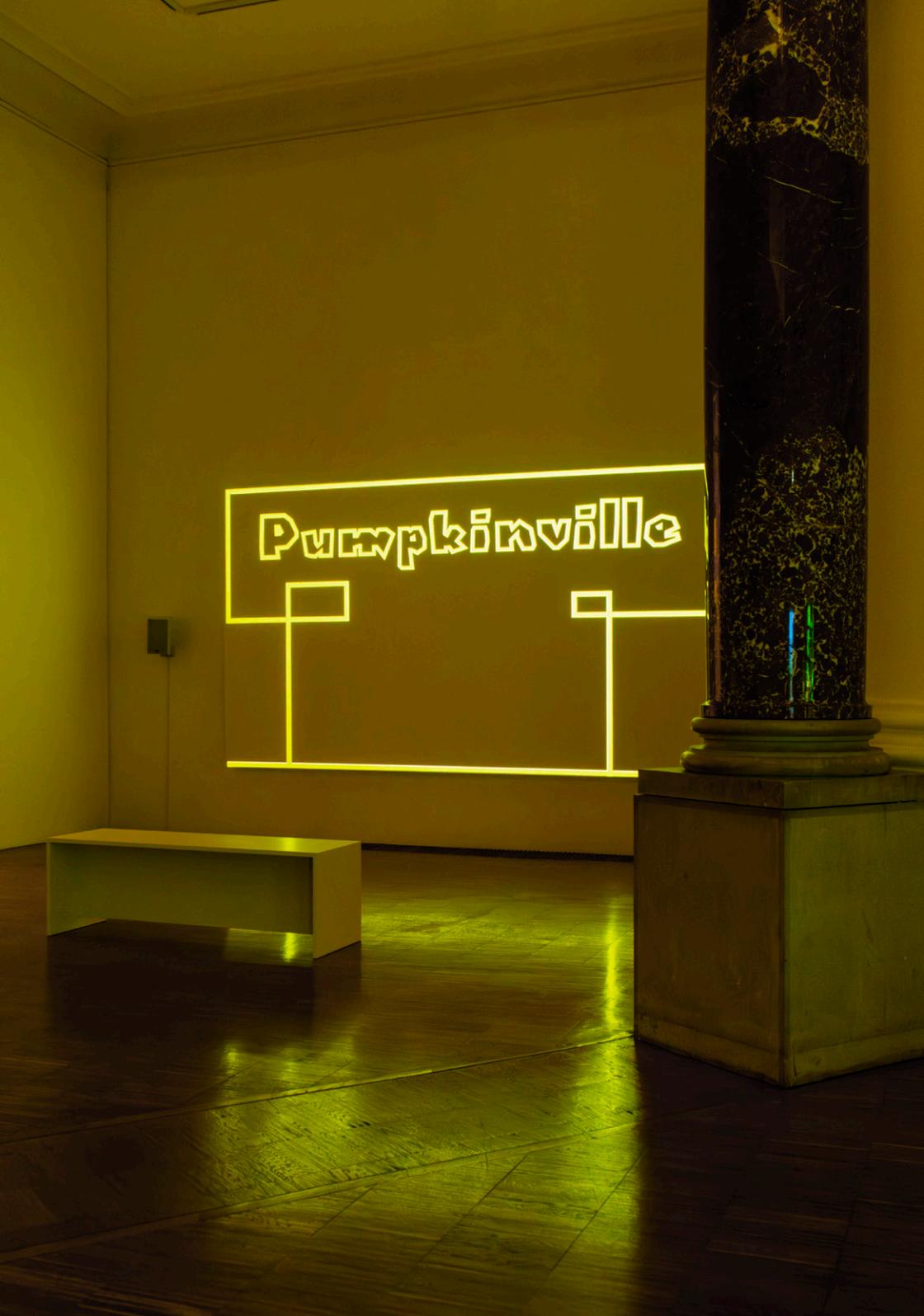
2



“In Jakub Jansa’s *Pumpkinville* (2024), part of the episodic *Club of Opportunities*, the slippage of identity through traditions is delusional and yet somehow deeply necessary, as human-vegetable hybrids philosophize and hierarchize one another in convoluted and conspiratorial takes. The central character, a Celeriac, is consumed by his rise and fall in status vis-à-vis the bourgeois Avocado—never mind that it’s technically a fruit. The hyperreal and otherworldly scenography, writing, and acting navigate the viewer through the existential dread that foregrounds *Horror Patriae*, albeit with lucid amusement.”

—
“Horror Patriae”: Steirischer Herbst '24, Graz
by Brit Barton for Mousse Magazine







[Click to watch:](#) Club of Opportunities – episode 9:
Pumpkineville (14 Mins, 4k)





Pumpkineville (14 mins, 4K), *Steirischer Herbst: Horror Patriae*, Neue Galerie Graz, Austria





Pumpkineville (14 mins, 4K), *Steirischer Herbst: Horror Patriae*, Neue Galerie Graz, Austria









The Garden of Problems
(1/3 Thinking Through Film)
Curator: Sandra Baborovská
GHMP House at the Stone Bell,
Prague, Czech Republic
November 8, 2023 – February 18, 2024

The exhibition The Garden of Problems presented a compilation of episodes from Club of Opportunities, spanning an entire floor of the historic House at the Stone Bell. It was one of three independent chapters of the curatorial concept Thinking Through Film.

The exhibition is a set of several video installations with performative elements, mixing an accomplished visual language with humour, contemporary leftist theory, and exploration of political strategies on social media, but also including comedy, absurdity, and playfulness.

Instead of “Netflixing,” viewers have to visit a gallery. The Club of Opportunities series thematizes social issues of our time and raises questions about authority and hierarchical relationships. Underprivileged entities turn into elites and vice versa, with new opportunities arising during this transformation. Each episode creates situations between reality and fiction, gradually revealing the story through video, objects, set design and acting performance.



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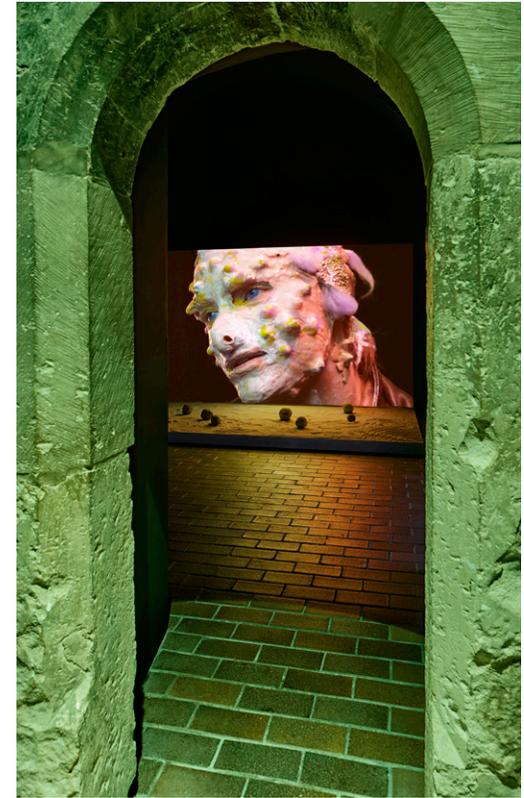


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GHMP House at the Stone Bell, Prague, Czech Republic

Jakub Jansa: The Garden of Problems
Club of Opportunities, 2017–present

Instead of “Netflixing,” viewers have to visit a gallery. The Club of Opportunities series thematizes social issues of our time and raises questions about authority and hierarchical relationships. Underprivileged entities turn into elites and vice versa, with new opportunities arising during this transformation. Each episode creates situations between reality and fiction, gradually revealing the story through video, objects, set design and acting performance.

1
Club of Opportunities: The Garden of Problems (intro)

2
Club of Opportunities – episode 2:
April Showers Bring May Flowers, 2018
(the episode presents “The Problem with Losing the Vision of the Future”)
video 4K, 16:9, 10’

We follow the character of the Seer (Oracle), who no longer has a vision of the future and feels anxious. We witness the Seer touching all celeriacs and giving them tattoos with socially beneficial functions. The form of a confessional interview is complemented by emotional, music-tinged interludes, as the Seer tattoos the celeriacs with the names of various positively perceived occupations or rather functions or destinies. A deconstruction of storytelling in relation to expected role choices and expected scenarios is at the core of the work.

Written and directed by: Jakub Jansa, Karolína Juříková
Performance: Ester Geislerová
Director of photography: Kryštof Hlůže
Sound: Kryštof Melka, Kryštof Hlůže
Sound design: Jakub Jansa
Voiceover: Jan Vondráček

3
Club of Opportunities – episode 3:
My Name Is Red Herring, 2018
(the episode presents “The Problem with Black Magic”)
video, 4K, 8’

The character of the Red Herring, a hybrid creature that is a cross between a human and a celeriac, is introduced. And now he’s challenging his origin – that is, he’s, revolting against the Seer. He discovers that mythology is mere narrative. By taking control of this narrative, he can steer it in a different direction. He leaves his safe place within the myth to enter the battlefield and fight on a political level. He finds his own individuality and becomes a dark-side influencer.

Written and directed by: Jakub Jansa
Performance: Patrik Petr
Director of photography: Kryštof Melka, Kryštof Hlůže
Sound recording: Anna Žihlová
Voiceover: Jan Vondráček

4
Club of Opportunities – episode 5:
Keeping in Line, 2018

Red Herring works in an avocado bar, where he compares himself to elites—the avocados. He wants to become part of the higher vegesociety. In the process, he must undergo an insulting battle with his inner self. He doubts himself and experiences an identity crisis.

Written and directed by: Jakub Jansa
Director of photography: Kryštof Hlůže
Performance: Patrik Petr, Jan Kostíha
Voiceover: Jan Vondráček

5
The Occult Table, 2023,
wood, mirror, UV print, laser engraving,
LED

6
Club of Opportunities – episode 7:

Shame to Pride, 2021
(the episode presents “The Rooting Problem”)
three-channel video, 20’

We observe the celerist in yet another surprising situation— he gains status in the vegesociety and is invited into avocado circles. However, he cannot internally relate to this new social class. At the same time, he has already made a break with the environment from which he emerged. He experiences an intense sense of rootlessness and can only be relieved by a social coming out. He finds a movement for uprooted vegetables.

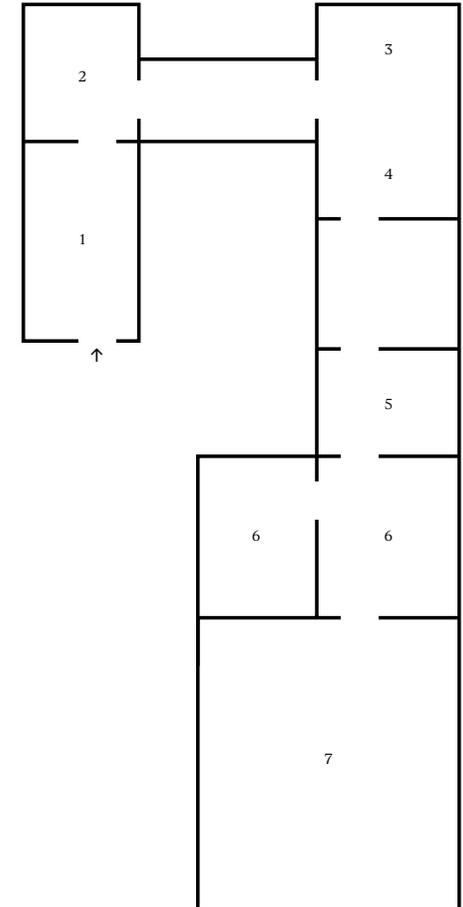
Written and directed by: Jakub Jansa
Dramaturgy: Jan Strejcovský
Director of photography: Kryštof Hlůže
Music: Oliver Torr
Voiceover: Jan Vondráček
Performance: Jan Kostíha, Soňa Beaumont, Ester Geislerová, Jakub Jansa
Costumes: Karolína Juříková, Daily Menu
Editor: Šimon Hájek, Jakub Jansa
FX, colorgrading: MagicLab, Vojtěch Štětka
Sound recording: Juras Karaka, Tomáš Jiříčka
Lights: Petr Cuker
Masks: Eliška Pitřáková
Make-up: Vendula Niklová
Screenprinting: Matěj Doležel
Runner: Maria Jančová
Special thanks: FaVU, UMPRUM, Autoklub ČR, Jindřich Chalupecký Award

7
Club of Opportunities – episode 8:
Opening Ceremony
(the episode presents
“The Problem with Art in Service”),
2022, video, 4K, 10’

The celerist is invited to speak at the Flower Union’s gala event as the hot vegetable of the season. The supernatural figure of the Seer, no longer able to predict the future, takes over the direction of the second part of the program, animating decorative flowers through a festive eco-sexual ritual. The Seer shows the plants that by putting pistils and calyces together, they can reach out to the public and change the course of things. Hopefully her ability to see into the

future will return.

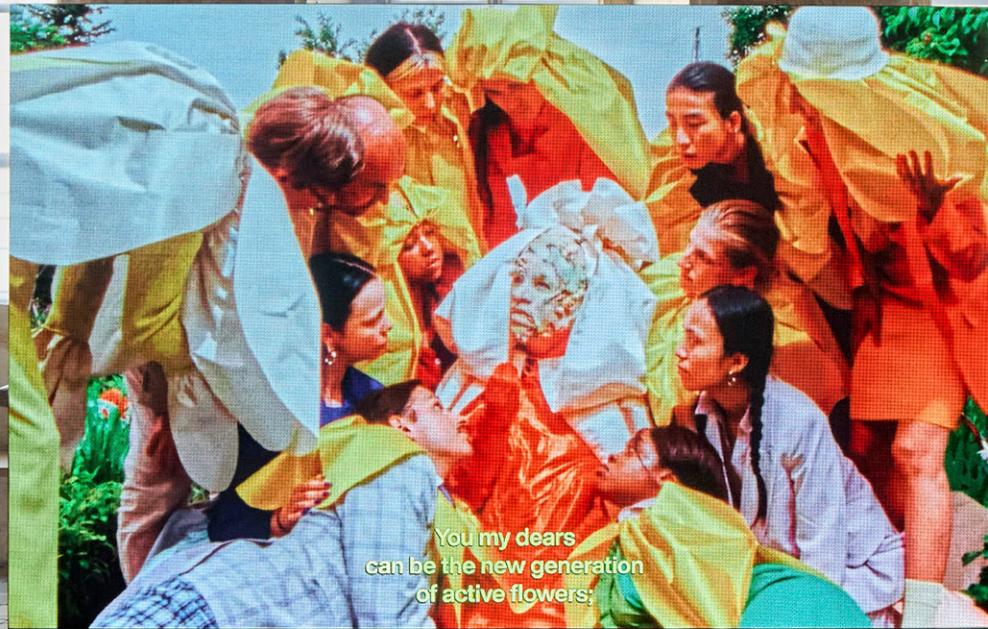
Concept and direction: Jakub Jansa
Script: Jakub Jansa, Dominik Dabrowski, Alice Krajčířová
DOP: Kryštof Hlůže
DOP assistant: Tomáš Merta
Music: Oliver Torr
Voiceover: Jan Vondráček
Performance: Jan Kostíha, Ester Geislerová, Kamil Nábělek, Trin Alt Vajd, Markéta VuTru, Dexton Kotorá, Katsuhiko Iwashita, Veronika Cechmáňková, Jakub Samek, Zai Xu, Linda Vondrová, Rokhaya Gueye, Anita Lubadika, Adéla Sobotková, Mary Nguyen, Linh Nguyen, Agáta Hrnčířová
Editing: Sebastian Kučkovský
Costumes: Overall Office (Karolína Juříková, Kristýna Nováková)
Photographer: Iryna Drahun
CGI: Matěj Martinec
Producer: Agáta Hrnčířová
Make-up: Majda Vavřková
Masks: Eliška Pitřáková
Sound designer: Nicolas Atcheson
Grading: Kryštof Melka
Lights: Tomáš Prajzler
Focus puller: Mihir Khulkarmi
Costume assistant: Františka Králíková
Cake: Rúst Cakes



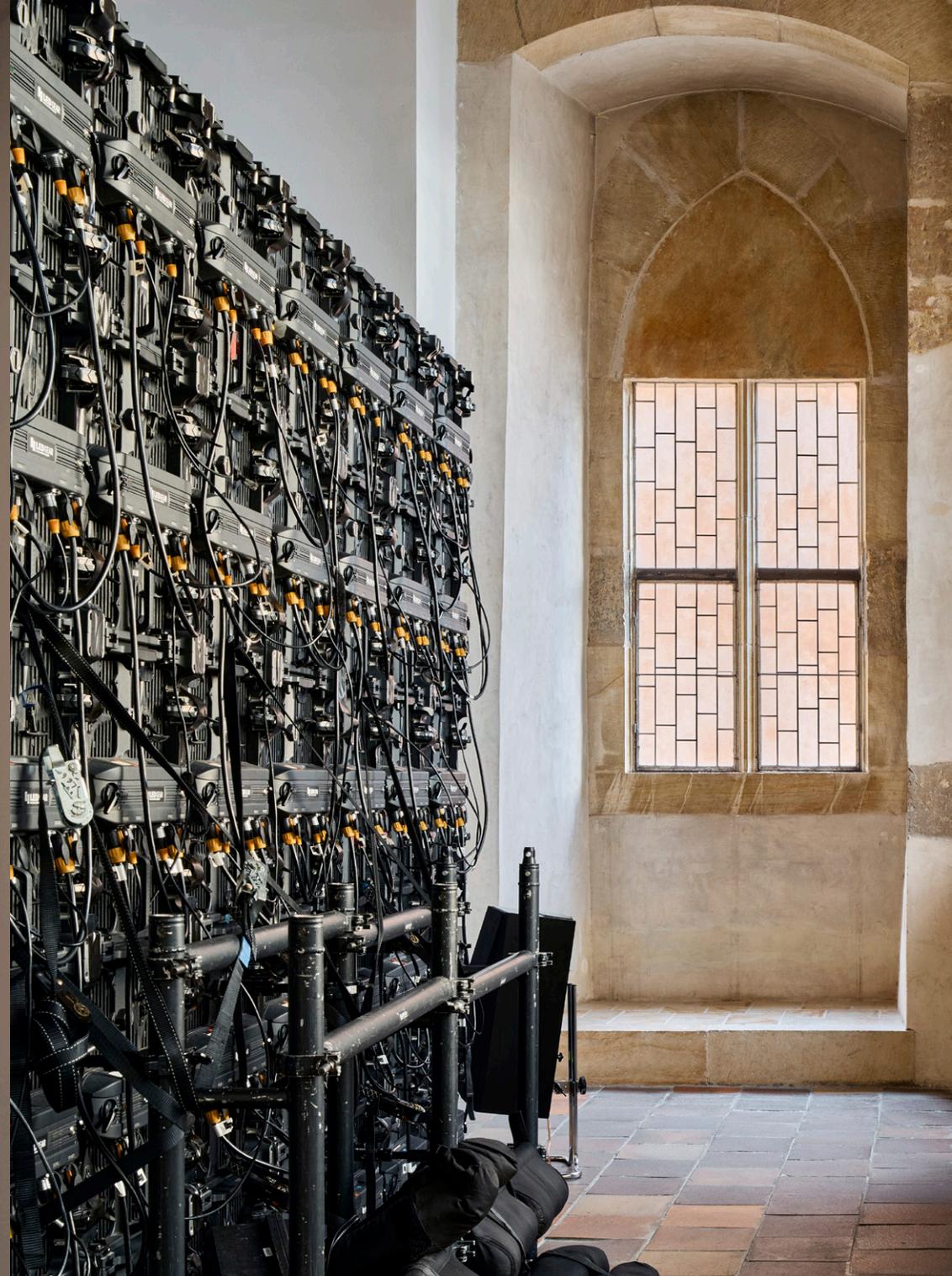


You my dears
can be the new generation
of active flowers;

[Click to watch:](#) Club of Opportunities – episode 8:
Opening Ceremony, 2022, video, 4K, 10’



Opening Ceremony (10mins, 4K), Garden of Problems , GHMP House at the Stone Bell



Opening Ceremony (10mins, 4K), Garden of Problems , GHMP House at the Stone Bell





Opening Ceremony (10mins, 4K), Garden of Problems , GHMP House at the Stone Bell



Opening Ceremony (10 mins, 4K), *Publiek Park*, Harmoniepark, Albertpark & Provincietuin, Antwerp, Belgium



You my dears
can be the new generation
of active flowers

Opening Ceremony (10 mins, 4K), Flower Union, National Gallery, Prague



Publiek Park, Harmoniepark, Albertpark & Provincietuin, Antwerp, Belgium



LISTEN TO
MY
BABY FLOWER

WILL

THE







LISTEN TO
MOMMY
BABY FLOWER



W



Opening Ceremony (10 mins, 4K), *Publiek Park*, Harmoniepark, Albertpark & Provincietuin, Antwerp, Belgium



Shame to Pride, Mocvara Gallery, Zagreb, Croatia







Shame to Pride, Moravian Gallery, Brno, Czech Republic



[Click to watch](#)

Shame to Pride (20 Mins, 4k)

A short film and installation commissioned
by Jindřich Chalupecký Award 2021



Shame to Pride, Garden of Problems , GHMP House at the Stone Bell

The Garden of Problems
book uncovers the themes addressed
in the *Club of Opportunities*



I shaved my rooties and disguised my face. I excelled thanks to that,
even if I knew it was a lie.



Anyway, they w



The book uncovers the themes addressed in the Club of Opportunities. Through the texts of the invited authors: Michal Novotný, Julie Béna, Kamil Nábělek, Noemi Purkrábková, Jozef Mrva, Ernestyna Orłowska, Klára Vlasáková, Jan Bělíček, we get to the bottom of multiple problems – with celeriac ontology, black magic, humour, losing vision of the future and especially with taking root.

Title: Club of Opportunities: The Garden of Problems
Book language: English-Czech edition
Author: Jakub Jansa
Designed by: Martin Groch, Robert Jansa, Petr Bosák,
Publisher: UMPRUM
ISBN: 978-80-88308-55-3
Binding: paperback
Number of pages: 276



The Problem With Taking Root

There's certainly no need to be fatalistic, but it's tough to put down roots in new soil. There are people and beings who go through life without ever thinking that they should go somewhere else. They don't aspire to new environments and possibilities because they have no problem with their position. They were born at the ideal time in the ideal place and they contrive to make full use of their privilege. Or perhaps they are so resigned and depleted by the daily struggle for life and decent conditions that they have neither the energy nor the time to climb higher. A person only strives for replanting (aka, social mobility – either up or down) from a sense of dissatisfaction with their assigned lot. We also see this in the story of the Celerist. He may be able to clearly and sophisticatedly recount the merits and strengths of his social class, but he never identifies with them enough to make peace with his roots. Instead, he aspires to infiltrate the crème de la crème of vegesociety – the avocados.

When speaking of avocados, I almost always remember my first-ever encounter with them. It was the first time I went on holiday with my parents beyond the borders of the post-communist Czech Republic. We went to Corsica with a tour operator – it's hard to say why there, exactly. We stayed in the northwestern port town of Calvi and saw a great many things for the first time in our lives. I remember how my younger brother gazed in fascination at an African man selling bracelets on the beach because he was





THE LONGING FOR STORIES OF ASSURANCE AND HOPE

“Accept all that pathetic and hard shit that you’re constantly trying to question with your consciously built skepticism,” says the character of the Seer in the second episode of *Club of Opportunities* (2018). “I now desire a story with a hint of assurance and hope.”

Text by Michal Novotný:

“Accept all that pathetic and hard shit that you’re constantly trying to question with your consciously built skepticism,” says the character of the Seer in the second episode of *Club of Opportunities* (2018). “I now desire a story with a hint of assurance and hope.” A series of films and installations, *Club of Opportunities*, together with its main characters, the Celerist and the Seer, serves as a kind of container. Depending on the given circumstances, it incorporates its creator’s alter ego and deconstructs his role, offering a critical, institutional reflection on the precarious conditions in which it was created and a timely social satire of the commercialisation of stories in general. At the same time, the structure of the episodes delineates the problem that Jakub Jansa has

set for himself and allows him to function artistically, perform creative gymnastics and sink into compulsive tunnels of self-destruction. Thus, he comes to know and deconstruct himself while evading something impossible to escape through knowledge alone.

Among other places, Jakub Jansa studied at the Supermedia Studio at the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague (UMPRUM). In the early 2010s, there was a belief, prevalent many times before, that technology would offer art a truer means of expression. One of Jansa’s student projects was a device that captured data from house plants in the apartments of deceased persons as a kind of “memorialising” media. Even then, Jakub realised that it is not so much the scientific quality of art that appeals to the

viewer as it is the artistic vision of science – i.e., the aura of the machine’s internal workings (which we don’t understand) and the price. In his graduation work, *Spiritual Fitness* (2016), he pivots from the position of a new-media genius to the topic of psychological manipulation by a sleazy genius. The character of the spiritually athletic guru, which Jansa himself depicts in the project, is a reaction to the rapid expansion of personal development at that time – instructions for achieving mental well-being and increasing performance. Like his later works, it contains ambiguous exaggeration, irony, humour, satire and pathos. The project is neither wholly sympathetic nor critical. The main character is both Jansa’s alter ego, oscillating between “playboy,” athlete and raconteur, and a comment on the stereotypical construction of these roles, all three of which are closely linked to the figure of the male artist. Part of the message, then, is the impossibility of breaking out of these roles, even if one is aware of them.

The exhibition *Look at This Fern* at the gallery *Berlínskej Model* (2017) witnessed the advent of root vegetables in Jansa’s work. An encounter with philosopher Kamil Nábělek, in which he forced Jansa to hypnotise a banal landscape painting for four hours, may also have been an influence. From idea to installation, the exhibition came to life in 24 hours with a budget of 400 Czech crowns, the majority of which Jansa spent on celeriac; the work is thus also something of an exercise in improvisation, the mobilisation of energy and freedom from the academic model of research-based art. Both the celeriac and Kamil Nábělek then appeared in the first episode of *Club of Opportunities*, a Fluxus-style performance held in an obscure bowling bar in Prague’s Žižkov district (2017). Here, over a pool table of celeriac, Nábělek gave a lecture on the ontology of this patriotic,

but maligned vegetable. The recorded voice eventually alerted visitors to the presence of paid performers who imitated their movements, and finally, Michal Šupák played a baroque interpretation of Rihanna’s hit *We Found Love* in a *Hopeless Place*. The dark spaces of the bar were complemented by sophisticated post-internet photogenic installations, featuring celeriac and many other details, which were perhaps already on site ahead of the installation itself.

The second, confessional episode, featuring the character of the Seer and an installation in *Gallery AMU* (2018), consists of a cradle-like object made of transparent, shiny, soft and plush materials with an iridescent gradient, against which the dirty organicity of the celeriac stands in total functional opposition. The confessional interview format is complemented by emotive cutaways set to music, in which the Seer tattoos the celeriac bulbs with the names of various well-regarded professions, or rather functions or fates, from class president to hall monitor. Once again, the deconstruction of storytelling in relation to expectations around roles and their affiliated scenarios is at the core of the work. Jansa was also inspired by the story of an Indian boy, who saved some of his classmates during an earthquake because, as he put it, he was class president. However, the mildly benevolent character of the Seer is also a tragicomic symbol of the breakdown of the rather kitschy post-Velvet Revolution truth-and-love values, which have been replaced by the calculating cynicism and subconscious marketing of social media.

In a logical sequence, the middle of the third episode, named after the rhetorical device for diverting attention – *Red Herring* – sees the suggestive sale of dark ideologies. This context sets the stage for the advent of the digital right and Trumpian politics.

Presented in the lower spaces of *Fotograf Gallery*, the video features a central, three-quarter shot of the *Celerist*, a celeriac-human hybrid, on a black background with his ears illuminated. The *Celerist* recites 10 theses to the spectator, which echo rightwing ideologue Ben Shapiro’s book, *How to Debate Leftists and Destroy Them: 11 Rules for Winning the Argument*. The performance is more or less convincing, with a few moments of alienation, but is disrupted at the end by 30 seconds of awkward farewells and embarrassing silence. On the gallery’s ground floor, the spectators encountered an installation ranging from minimalist sculptures to empty store shelving, accompanied by flashing white lights from LED panels, which underlined the apocalyptic dimension of the emptiness.

On the back sides of the shelves, chipboard panels had been affixed at various places, with the reverse (peeled) side facing the viewer, so that the marks left by the glue create facial-like features. In other marks or traces reminiscent of plans or diagrams, we can read the outlines of theses such as “Become a Centrepiece” or “Whoever Gets Angry First Loses.” The cynical readiness to offer up anything in exchange for attention and profit can also be read in the context of the contemporary art world. Following on from the previous episode, the *Celerist* takes an egotistical view of the power of narrative and tries to control it to his own advantage. Kamil Nábělek appeared randomly at the exhibition site, striking up conversations with visitors about the similarities between celeriac and the skull and their dark processes, again using an intentionally narrative format.