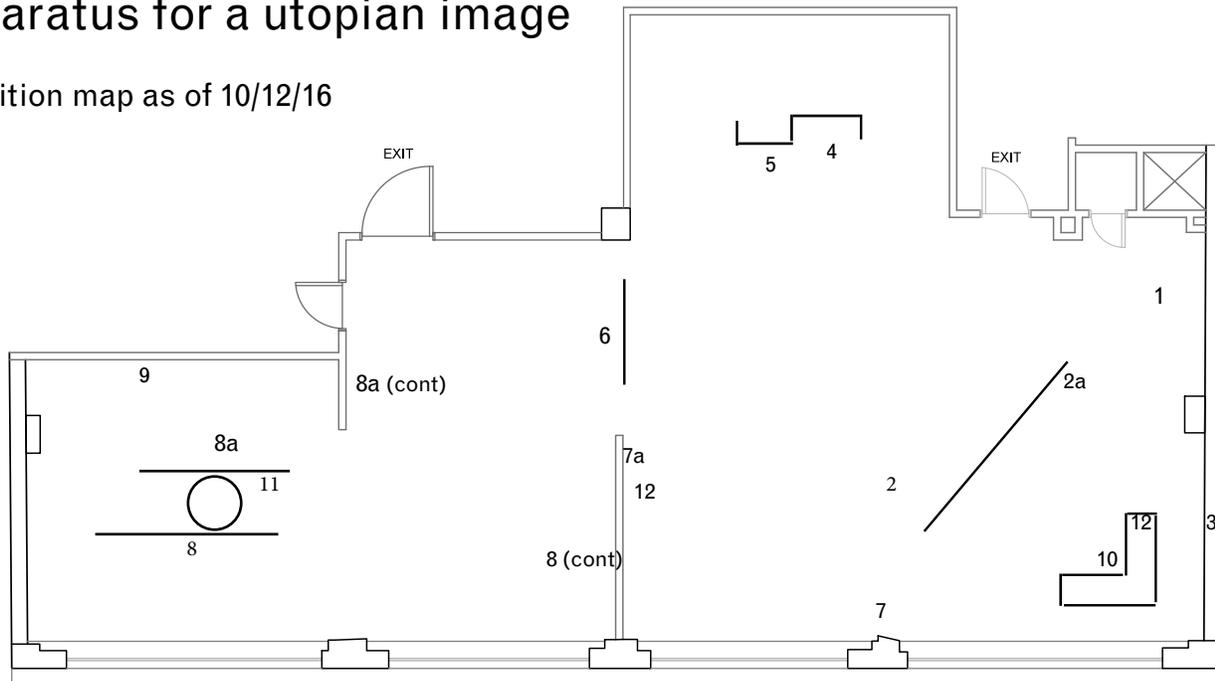


apparatus for a utopian image

exhibition map as of 10/12/16



1. **Alena Kotzmannová**, *Untitled*, 2006. Black and white photographs on RC paper. [rolling pedestals]
2. **Matej Al-Ali**, *Material Interest*, 2016. HD Video, 6:45 min. [on monitor suspended in balance lever]
- 2 (a) **Keren Benbenisty**, *Notes on Black*, 2016. Slide projection. Eighty 35mm slides hand-made with plastic translucent sheets and eraser residue.
3. **Tomáš Moravec**, *Reconnaissance Flight*, 2012. Video. [monitor mounted to wall]
4. **Magda Stanová**, *Stage Fright* from the series *In the shadow of photography*, 2016. Pigment ink on paper. [on shelves in built structure]
5. **Jiří Thýn**, selection of works from *Consciousness as a... II*, works in progress, black and white photograph on baryta paper. [on steel wall in built structure]
6. **Barbora Kleinhamplová**, *Sometimes They Feel Almost Happy*, 2015. Video. [projection on rotating screen, wall text]
- 6 (a) **Kara Hearn**, *Sometimes They Almost*, 2016. HD video, 4:09 min. [projection on rotating screen]
7. **Tomáš Svoboda**, *Imagine Psycho*, 2008. Video. [suspended in steel support]
- 7 (a) **Freya Powell**, *Apparatus (for a new document)*, 2016. Large format archival inkjet print, participatory forms online and printed, unlimited edition book. [shelf with printed forms]
8. **Markéta Othová**, *Untitled*, 2016. Color photographs. [wooden wall with embedded Lazy Susan didactic label display, and white wall to the right]
- 8 (a) **Elisabeth Smolarz**, *Untitled*, 2016. Color photographs and transparencies.
9. **Václav Magid**, *Autonomy*, 2015. Video, found footage from the film *13 Assassins* (2010), 4:20 min. [projection]
10. Scanning station for *The Atlas Book Project*, **Endless Editions**. [see table]
11. **Reanimation Library & Andrew Beccone**, image extracted from the workshop, *What am I Seeing?* [interior of wooden wall]
12. **Tyler Coburn**, *Monocles*, 2016. Magnifying monocles, Dimensions variable. [dispersed throughout the space to aid in magnification]

More artwork to come by NYC-based artists David Court, Sean Fader, Zebadiah Keneally, and Dannielle Tegeder; followed with responses by Czech artists Matej Al-Ali, Barbora Kleinhamplová, Alena Kotzmannová, Václav Magid, Tomáš Moravec, Magda Stanová, Tomáš Svoboda, and Jiří Thýn.

We conceived of this exhibition as a curatorial project with the structure and form of an artwork. As practicing artists temporarily in the position of curators, we have decided to articulate our intention not merely by a text or a concept, but by the spatial design of the installation – an apparatus for a utopian image.

Creating, sharing and spreading images has become the most common means of communication since the 1990s. With the arrival of social media, the image has also become the most widespread means of confirming one's existence. Almost everything is documented and recorded, mostly in several versions. The role of the image as a tool of understanding the world has changed. Nowadays, it is rather necessary to understand the image in order to understand the world. We consider the search for an apparatus for the interpretation of existing images to be one of the crucial tasks of early 21st century art. The challenge of seeking out and creating such an apparatus has been a major motivation behind the concept of this collective exhibition. We have called this creative approach a "META-SPECTIVE."

Our goal is to initiate a creative dialogue about the possibility of developing an apparatus that will help us really see and understand the images that surround us. We want to hold this dialogue on several levels. The first is through the curatorial concept, articulated in the architectonic installation of artworks by Czech artists. Through this, we introduce the specific aspects of working with the image in a Czech environment to New York audiences, challenging local participating artists and viewers to consider how and why the Czech approach to the image may differ (even in the slightest nuances) and see what revelations may come from these observations.

Through a special architectonic concept for the installation of the artwork, we initiate a play that intends to blur the hierarchy between an artistic gesture and the viewers' response, leading to another dialogue, taking place between the exhibited artifacts, participating artists, and the audience. At the same time, we hope this becomes a platform for networking and exchange of ideas between Czech artists and artists from the New York art community. The open, fluid architectonic design offers different scenarios that enable the participating artists and visitors to become responsive and actively engaged, calling up their own ideas and images.

The initial artworks from nine Czech artists were selected according to the clue of a "fragmentary image" – an ability to attract attention by their allusive but not fully expressed meaning. This constitutes the starting point of the exhibition. Next, in collaboration with EFA's curatorial team, we invited nine New York based artists to respond to this initial gesture. The selection of the local artists involved a long, dynamic process where we spun around the idea of creating mental "couples." The result shows evidence of a nearness or a resonance on various levels between the groupings of artists - not as "one to one" model, but rather as a principle within the larger whole.

The local artists will introduce their contributions, in stages, after the opening of the exhibition. While the architecture of the show presents a framework and a certain key for their intervention, it remains open and without any predetermined plan until each of the artists react and change the status quo. We expect these responses to bring new themes and to shift the original meaning of the artworks. The new context will again be commented on by Czech artists who will be present towards the end of the exhibition.

Another level of dialogue will be realized with the viewers who are invited to physically intervene in the structure of the exhibition with various points of entry within the specific platform. We imagine that the visitors will create a sort of an open mental map that will reveal new contexts and show unexpected shifts in perception. At the same time, the architectonic structure represents a script that gives the interaction (between visitor and artwork, or artist and artwork) a suggested direction.

We allude to Aby Warburg's *Mnemosyne Atlas*, an idea of a visual atlas organizing human imagination in meaningful, mutually interconnected units. This monumental, utopian plan could never be fully realized, however, the persistence with which we surround ourselves with images, filling them with hope that they will give meaning and legitimacy to our world, proves the importance of the role of images, or a certain form of a visual atlas, in our lives. Understanding the meaning of images with which we surround ourselves and with which others surround themselves brings a better understanding of each other. We hope that the prepared scenarios for participation will show the viewers how contexts and relationships influence the meanings and messages of individual images. Rather than devising a 15th theme for Warburg's unfinished atlas, we would like to awaken the Warburgs among the visitors.

Pavla Sceranková and Dušan Zahoranský, with Tereza Jindrová

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