

Press release
7th September 2021

Signal Festival is back in a big way and experimenting. In addition to art installations, this year it will also present virtual installations in augmented reality.

The ninth edition of Signal Festival is back after two years. It will offer 4 festival routes, 15 installations in public space, 6 installations in augmented reality and a rich accompanying programme. The mobile app working with augmented reality is a complete novelty. Through their smartphones, viewers can see digital art objects and interactive installations in the streets of Karlín. One whole route called Signal AR is dedicated to this. It will complement the popular Karlín, Old Town and the new Holešovice route. One of the augmented reality installations was created by artist Jan Kaláb. Other prominent Czech names in this year's edition include artists Milena Dopitová, Jiří Černický and the design duo Vrtiška & Žák. Famous foreign studios will also be present. The main festival theme this year is Plan C. It is ecological, sustainable and, above all, able to adapt under any circumstances. The organisers, together with the artists, reflect on what people can do for planet Earth. But many of the works also respond to the pandemic experience. Increased safety and hygiene measures are an integral part of the festival. The Digital and Creative Culture Festival will take place from Thursday 14th October to Sunday 17th October 2021.

The year 2020 has changed everything. This year, the organisers are determined to host the Signal Festival whatever the circumstances. Therefore, they are coming up with a new project called Signal AR, which explores the possibilities of using contemporary technologies such as augmented reality to present art in public spaces. It was developed over a year together with the creative studio **BRAINZ IMMERSIVE**, **bicepsdigital** and four Czech artists - painter, sculptor and writer Jan Kaláb, author of futuristic visual concepts **AOKU**, visual artist Jan Hladil and visual designer Longiy.

"Signal AR is a completely new and innovative project. It's a kind of Signal to the pandemic. But this time we want to be ready. At the same time, we enjoy constantly pushing our boundaries and trying new things and new approaches. Art belongs on the streets at all times. Plus, it's also the first time ever that visitors can go to a festival in daylight and enjoy it without crowds, intimately, perhaps just by themselves during a quiet afternoon stroll. Signal AR is therefore absolutely safe in virtually any situation. No one in the Czech Republic has ever done anything like it. We ourselves are curious to hear feedback from visitors. Signal AR will be with us for months, so they can try it whenever they want, for example in November, at Christmas, in January. We will test the whole project for some time now and in the spring we will evaluate how to proceed," says **Martin Pošta**, the festival director.

Visitors will find the first AR route in Prague's Karlín district. Just download the new festival app, hit the streets and discover the works in augmented reality through your own smartphone. Nothing else is needed. No entrance fee, no opening hours, no obstacles. A virtual collection of artworks in a public space is such a Signal Festival in broad daylight. It will run from 8.00 am to 7.00 pm. It will be open from the end of September and will run for at least a year.

"The pilot edition of Signal AR brings together art, experimentation and innovative technology, elements that Signal Festival has always been close to. That's why we have collaborated on a number of projects in the past. Augmented reality is a playful, interactive medium whose possibilities we have now mined

to prepare an artistic invasion of digital holograms in urban space," adds **Robin Pultera**, founder of BRAINZ IMMERSIVE.

For the first time, visitors will also explore Holešovice. Among the most anticipated works of art is a monumental 3D projection by Spanish studio Onionlab, which will transform the familiar environment of the Industrial Palace at the Prague Exhibition Centre into a unique experience. There will also be the popular video mapping of the Church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius on Karlín Square. The German studio Weltraumgrafik is an interesting interpretation of this year's festival theme. Its projection is abstract and hypnotic. It responds to the world pandemic, but the creators see the disaster as a challenge and a new beginning.

One of the most prominent Czech artists is **Milena Dopitová**, a conceptual artist with a social focus, who will present the kinetic object *Jeff* at the Štvanice hydroelectric power station to draw attention to the impact of the unhealthy existence of modern society on the nature around us. **Jiří Černický**, a visual artist, creator of experimental and intermedia projects and head of the Painting Studio at the Prague UMPRUM, will prepare a mysterious and impressive projection of aquatic animals hidden in the depths of the ocean, which surprisingly manage to transform into the bearers of a clear ecological message. Visitors will find his installation *Archaic Topicalities* in the Karlín Barracks. The interactive, playful and energetically completely independent kinetic installation *Blooming of Light* was created for the festival by designers **Roman Vrtiška** and **Vladimír Žák**. Viewers can set the techno-meadow flowers in motion themselves in the area in front of the Main Point Karlín building.

Signal Festival persistently supports the youngest artists and author collectives. It has been behind the creation of more than seventy original installations created especially for the festival. This year, in cooperation with Pražská plynárenská, it announced the first annual **Neon Prize** for students of art colleges. Its winner will be presented in the main programme. Visitors will also see the artwork of **Kateřina Blahutová**, the winner of the open call **Signal Calling**, organised by the festival together with PrusaLab. The interactive installation *Living Forest* responds to the theme of deforestation of the natural landscape. The festival has also established a partnership with the **Time-Based Media** studio at the Faculty of Art and Design of Jan Evangelista Purkyně University in Ústí nad Labem. Its students will present their installations in the courtyard of Klementinum.

The accompanying programme will include a symposium on the sustainability of the cultural and artistic environment, an exhibition by artist Michal Škapa and the audiovisual performance Vektroskop at the Archa Theatre. During the four-day programme put together by David Vrbík, there will be performances by Soňa Koutová, Tomáš Krivošík, Beata Hlavenková, Ondřej Skala (JTNB), Stanislav Abrahám, Leoš Hort (HRTL) and others.

The organizers are also preparing strict security measures in cooperation with experts from Crowd Safety, which was responsible for preparing measures for the first wave of the epidemic for the Prague City Hall. It will be mandatory to wear respirators at indoor and outdoor installations, and the capacity of indoor spaces is limited due to the possibility of greater spacing between visitors. In addition, the programme at each location is conceived so that no one has to stay longer than 15 minutes.

This year, visitors will find the festival map in an app that will be available for download just before the festival starts. In addition to the full programme and all the necessary information, it will also offer one whole extra route - the virtual Signal AR. Most of the installations will be free of charge; tickets are only required for the 3 paid installations in the main programme, which are located in the Industrial Palace (3D projections), the Prague Planetarium and the Hauch Gallery.

Now you can buy a festival pass until 3rd October for 200 CZK, from 4th October until the opening of the festival for 250 CZK, and at the venue for 300 CZK. A new feature is the introduction of family admission.

A festival pass for a family, which includes 2 adults and up to 2 children, can now be bought for 550 CZK, from 4th October for 700 CZK and on site for 850 CZK. Tickets for the accompanying programme at the Archa Theatre are not included in the Signal Pass. However, pass holders get a 25% discount. Children aged 6 to 15 and seniors over 65 get a CZK 50 discount off the basic price. Children under 6 years of age and disabled persons are admitted free of charge. You can also buy a ticket for the 3D projection in the Industrial Palace for 100 CZK separately only on the spot. All those who purchased a ticket for Signal Festival 2020, which was not held due to government measures, can use it this year.

About Signal Festival:

Signal is a festival of digital and creative culture. It combines contemporary visual art, urban space and modern technologies. It has become the most visited cultural event in the Czech Republic. The programme is composed of renowned international and Czech artists from the fields of light design, visual and digital art, artificial intelligence and conceptual art. The festival likes to educate itself and its visitors. It combines the historical backdrop of beloved Prague with the latest technologies and contemporary social issues. Signal Festival is one of the largest producers of contemporary art in the country. It supports the youngest Czech artists and has been behind the creation of more than seventy original installations created especially for the festival. It organises accompanying programmes for children, professionals and students. It cooperates with a number of foreign festivals and cultural institutions.

The ninth edition of the festival will take place from 14th to 17th October 2021.
Every day from 7 pm to 12 pm

For more information visit www.signalfestival.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SignalFestival
Instagram: www.instagram.com/signalfestival/

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