



Prague Quadrennial  
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Press release:

## Take to the streets with the Prague Quadrennial 2023!

**Prague, 28 March 2023** – Complementing the main location of the Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space, which will for the first time be the Holešovice Market, and two indoor venues, the Trade Fair Palace of the National Gallery Prague and the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of the Performing Arts in Prague, the festival **puts effort in utilising shared outdoor public spaces**, in order to fully capture all the contexts in which the art of performance is presented. Between 8 and 18 June, PQ will in total host **more than 30 public space performances**, primarily within the scope of the programme sections PQ Performance and PQ Studio Stage.

The art of performance speaks volumes in the open ground, where it accomplishes to stir up debates, present progressive artistic forms, ideas, opinions and critical thoughts to many layers of the society. While letting the public spaces of the open market inspire the main theme RARE, its real goal is to make art accessible to everyone. This aspect has become central to the PQ thought; the idea of taking performance out of the opulence of theatre buildings, into the real world, where the audience can take part and emerging artists are given a voice.

*“The program section PQ Performance has gathered more than 250 applications via its open call. The curatorial team selected 20 performances that will provoke rare and rich encounters while revealing the poetic and critical potentials of space,”* says **Carolina E. Santo, curator of PQ Performance**.

Audio-visual artist Pietro Marullo, whose work lies at the intersection of visual and performing art, will present an interdisciplinary performance **WRECK - List of Extinct Species**. A huge soft black plastic sculpture, inflated with air, moves through the space. This abstract object - a hunter - is swallowing and spitting out human beings. In this way it could be seen as an allegory of Leviathans or the ancient myths of deep-sea monsters. At the same time, it works as a metaphor for capitalism and the human condition within it. This performance will be produced in collaboration with festival Tanec Praha.

Coming from the Media Art and Technology Lab (MAD Lab) of the Cyprus University of Technology, Dr. Doros Polydorou, Maria Mitsi and Nasia Papavasiliou will bring the **participatory, immersive experience Victor X**. The performance is an attempt to discuss contemporary and current scientific experimentation, but also to provide a framework for examining the ethical dilemmas behind the actions. A semi-guided journey through different spaces and interactive points unfolds the narrative through environmental storytelling, inviting the audience to make choices that affect the final outcome.

**PQ Studio Stage**, co-organized by the students of the Theatre Faculty of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague, includes a series of outdoor performances as well. One noteworthy international

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collaboration, **A Chorus of Immortal Toxins**, is a site-specific mask ritual that takes a critical look at the impact of pollutants on our world. Situated along the banks of the Vltava river, a cult of post-apocalyptic disciples has come together to pay homage to five of the most toxic and disastrous materials in existence: chromium, asbestos, lead, kerosene, and formaldehyde. Through casting these pollutants as objects of worship, the performance subverts traditional religious narratives and reveals the destructive consequences of industrialised greed and everlasting productivity.

**Exhibition of Countries and Regions**, the historically most significant programme section of PQ, has for the most part relied on segmented static exhibits, competing for the prestigious Golden Triga Award. Interactivity and performativity in this section has begun mainly in a couple of PQ's last editions.

**Poland national exhibit** on PQ23 will invite visitors to leave the indoor hall of the exhibition, look around and enjoy ready-made scenography and found situations in an exploratory audio journey, with a mobile app Echoes as a guide. This conception takes into account the active participation of the viewer/listener, who co-curates their own walk through Prague, treating objects, situations and architecture as ready-made scenography, reusing elements already built and present and putting them in new contexts through an auditory experience.

*“By the name of the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic, it is my honour to say that PQ will once again welcome respected international guests, artists and professionals, as well as visitors from all over the world. I am delighted to see PQ expand into the public space with interesting artistic interventions accessible to everybody, addressing the general public with events not only in the Holešovice Market but also in the streets of Prague. I look forward to the Prague Quadrennial 2023 as one of the most interesting cultural events of the year,”* **says Martin Baxa, the Minister of Culture of the Czech Republic.**

**The full programme of the Prague Quadrennial** is about to be published in April. Upon publishing the programme, 1- and 3- day Festival Passes will go on sale. Until then, the 11-day Festival Pass will remain available for an early-bird price of 2 400 CZK and 1 400 CZK for students.

### **Prague Quadrennial of Performance Design and Space**

Since 1967, once every four years, PQ explores the artistic areas of scenography, performance design and space within all their aspects - from scenic art, costume, lighting and sound design, and performance space architecture to site-adaptive performance, applied scenography, augmented and virtual realities, technologies like Motion Capture and laser, or costume as a performance, within the scope of exhibits, installations, architectural concepts, workshops, performances and other live events. The core of the festival's idea is to present contemporary performance design as a self-sufficient art form, acting upon the human imagination through all the senses - sight, smell, hearing, touch and taste. PQ 2023 will host artists from around hundred countries in 300+ programme items, making it the most important event of its kind in the world.

*Performance design/scenography has evolved substantially and expanded far beyond established theatre conventions. Models, sketches of designs, and performance photographs still remain excellent resources that map the minds and open the door to the imagination of their creators. On the other hand, these formats capture only one part of the creative process and tell us little about the environment, circumstances, emotions, and overall atmosphere of the performance. The one way to present scenography in its genuine form, comprising all of its parts and including audience participation, is to experience it live, in performative settings and curatorial environments that create or recreate its operations.*

*The present-day practice of performance design/scenography is one of the most exciting art forms and creative domains – in the innovative, fresh and holistic ways of engaging their audiences, participants, and the public.*

In 2015 Prague Quadrennial received the EFFE award and was named one of the most innovative festivals in Europe.



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**Prague Quadrennial is initiated by the Ministry of Culture of the Czech Republic and organized by the Arts and Theatre Institute.**

**Financially supported by:** European Union – NextGenerationEU, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Capital City of Prague

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**In collaboration with:** the Holešovice Market, Art&Digital Lab - H40, Knack for Art?, Tanec Praha, Prague Exhibition Grounds, Jatka78

**PQ is part of** Active CITY(zens) project supported from the Creative Europe programme

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