

PRESS RELEASE

Landscape – UMPRUM Brings Environmental Themes to the London Design Festival

12 September – 31 December 2026

Czech Centre London, Bouda Gallery, 132 Palace Gardens Terrace, London, United Kingdom

Guided tours of the exhibition:

September 12, 2026, at 11:30 a.m.

September 13, 2026, at 2:00 p.m.

The Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague (UMPRUM) is once again taking part in the prestigious London Design Festival. As part of the 30th Made in Prague Festival, UMPRUM will present *Landscape*, an exhibition by its Studio of Ceramics and Porcelain, at the Czech Centre London's Bouda Gallery. Through their work, the emerging artists explore how human activity leaves its mark on the landscape and, conversely, how the landscape shapes human behaviour.

The exhibition was conceived by the studio's heads, Milan Pekař and Tereza Sluková. Its theme responds not only to the current environmental situation, but also to the developments of the 1990s—a pivotal decade for the Czech landscape and environmental thought. In the Czech Republic, the period is remembered as a time of profound transformation, including in attitudes towards ecology and environmental issues. Questions surrounding humanity's impact on the landscape—and nature's influence on human life—remain deeply relevant and are becoming increasingly urgent. This sense of concern, together with a desire for change and renewal, is also reflected in the thinking and work of the students of the Studio of Ceramics and Porcelain. The students collaborated on the project with Associate Professor Viktor Goliáš from the Institute of Geochemistry, Mineralogy and Mineral Resources at the Faculty of Science, Charles University. He provided consultations and specialist lectures on the formation and ecology of ceramic materials.

"The works on display explore two kinds of movement. The first is the withdrawal of human presence from the landscape and the ways in which nature gradually responds to its absence. This is followed by a second movement: the intensely materialised presence of humanity, often associated with the extraction and commodification of natural resources and with unequal relationships between humans and other organisms," explain studio head Tereza Sluková and curator Tereza Vernerová Volná, outlining the ideas and approaches developed by the students.

The first line of enquiry includes Noemi Šicková's project *Lúka*, which explores the meadow ecosystem's dependence on human activity, and Marie Boková's *Wound as a Technology of Remembrance*, which focuses on preserving heritage varieties of fruit trees from abandoned borderland areas.

The second approach, which responds to the impact of human activity, is represented by Kryštof Vícha's project *Seabed Elegy*. Through an artistic installation, the work opens a dialogue about the possible future of a particular mineral deposit and the price we are prepared to pay for a specific raw material. Similarly, in *Rukama v zemi* (Hands in the Soil), Barbora Kurková draws on a specific place and personal experience to examine memory within the mining landscape of northern Bohemia, as well as the processes through which it is preserved and lost. Roman Mareš

addresses the harmful effects of expanding and changing urban environments on city-dwelling wildlife by designing architectural elements that provide birds with suitable nesting sites. Veronika Maříková also focuses on the urban landscape. Her video installation *Kdo se bojí nesmí na kolo* (No Cycling for the Faint-Hearted) reflects on the hostility and power dynamics that shape movement through cities.

The projects presented by this new generation of artists invite visitors to consider how far thinking around ecology and environmental issues has evolved since the 1990s. As the participating artists did not experience that decade first-hand, they remain detached from its optimistic belief in humanity's ability to effectively resolve the problems of its own making. Instead, their sensitive reflections on the relationship between people and the landscape lead towards humility, difficult questions of responsibility, and the urgent need to redefine this relationship on more equitable terms.

The exhibition will remain on view at the Czech Centre London's Bouda Gallery after the London Design Festival, until the end of 2026.

Curators and Studio Heads: Milan Pekař, Tereza Sluková, and Tereza Vernerová Volná

Exhibitors: Marie Boková, Andrej Čikovský, Barbora Kurková, Roman Mareš, Veronika Maříková, Noemi Šicková, and Kryštof Vícha

Graphic Design: Veronika Maříková

Production: Michaela Kapláňková

About the Studio of Ceramics and Porcelain

Teaching in the studio is based on the three Cs: craft, concept and context. We believe that achieving a strong outcome requires not only connecting craftsmanship with concept, but also examining each work within its broader context. An awareness of context is essential to the creation of any new product or project. Students explore the vast potential of ceramics—one of humanity's oldest materials, whose many transformations have shaped the history of both fine and applied art. The studio encourages the use of ceramic materials across a wide range of historical and technological contexts. Students investigate every stage of the process, from the fluid state of clay to its transformation into a dense, impermeable body, with experimentation playing a central role throughout. The studio also emphasises ceramics' role at the intersection of art and design. Every idea calls for its own particular solution, and the creative process may therefore result in a product, an artefact or an installation.

Studio heads: Milan Pekař and Tereza Sluková

About UMPRUM:

The fundamental principle of the Academy of Arts, Architecture and Design in Prague (UMPRUM) is the individual approach to each student. The aim is to support talent and develop creative skills, while emphasising original independent thinking about society and nurturing a collective responsibility for our environment. Roughly 600 students across 28 studios are currently enrolled at the Academy of Arts, Architecture, and Design in Prague. The Academy opens its doors to the public twice a year with an exhibition of student work entitled "Artsemestr". Every year, the Academy organises more than 15 exhibition events, half of which take place abroad. The Prague UMPRUM ranked 76th in the QS World University Rankings for the best art schools, making it the highest-ranked institution among former post-communist countries.

More information: Mgr. Mgr. Kamila Stehlíková

University of Applied Arts in Prague / nám. Jana Palacha 80, 116 93 Prague 1, Czech Republic

Tel: 251 098 201 / mobile: 739 304 060 / kamila.stehlikova@umprum.cz / www.umprum.cz