

Film and TV School of the Academy of Performing Arts in Prague
Department of Photography

Assessment of the Bachelor's Thesis

Author of thesis: Gabriela Benish-Kalná

Title of thesis: REGENERATIVE ART

Assessment of the primary advisor ✓

Assessment of the opponent ✕

Author of the assessment (first name, last name, workplace): Michal Šimůnek,
Department of Photography

Evaluation of the content and final form of the thesis (A/excellent – B/very good –
C/good – D/good with objections – E/satisfactory – F/unsatisfactory – not
recommended for defence)

Suitability of the selected objective and work approach.....A
Relative completeness of the literature used for the selected topic.....A
Ability to critically evaluate and use professional literature..... A
Logicality of the thesis structure, connection of its chapters.....A
Language and stylistic level of the thesis.....A
Compliance with citation norms (should the text repeatedly contain adopted passages
without citing the source, the work cannot be recommended for defence)A
Sufficient extent of image attachments, justifiability and suitability of attachments,
graphic layout.....A
Originality of the thesis, contribution to the development of the field of study.....A

Overall evaluation of the thesis..... A

Verbal evaluation of the thesis including questions that the candidate must address in
his/her thesis defence:

Gabriela Benish-Kalná's bachelor thesis is devoted to the challenges posed to art (of
course, not only to art) by the current situation of the Anthropocene. In the first
sentence of the thesis, Gabriela defines the methods of her approach, which are
system-thinking and the relational process approach. At the outset, it should be noted
that her work is a brilliant example of this approach to thinking about our
contemporary situation.

Deeply familiar with the current debates on and around the Anthropocene and with a
great deal of insight into contemporary environmental art, Gabriela's work calls for
decolonization and indigenization of the Anthropocene discourse. She's trying to do it
herself by drawing attention to colonial tendencies as part of an ontological turn in
Western thought, particularly by applying the interrelated concepts of the Ally to
Accomplish, the Holding of Space, Learning from Grassroots Movements, and
Ethical Relationality.

Gabriela's writing style and argumentation are outstanding. Gabriela has a gift for connecting ideas, concepts, and theories across different perspectives and schools of thought (Posthumanism, New Materialism, Postcolonialism, Ethical Relationality, environmental grassroots movements): see the excellent distinction between *art about the environment* and *environmental art*, or, for example, her initial application and final reformulation of Bechdel's test to the field of environmental art and theory.

Gabriela's work is a brilliantly written scholarly text of a conceptual nature, but one that does not lose touch with the empirical reality of our contemporary situation. The passages in which she critiques art projects that have gained a great deal of public acclaim in recent years are excellent: *Anthropocene: The Human Epoch* of Edward Burtynsky, *Critical Zones* of Bruno Latour or Susan Schuppli's *Material Witness*. She navigates the layered terrain of thinking about the Anthropocene confidently, working precisely with terms, concepts, and ideas and persuasively using many sources. Her final call for regenerative art thus stands on a very solid argumentative foundation.

From the position of the thesis supervisor, I would like to conclude by highlighting the independence with which Gabriela approached the writing of the thesis. I was happy to let Gabriela's enthusiasm reduce my role as thesis supervisor to that of a keen reader of her gradually emerging text.

I recommend the thesis for defense and grade it with an A.

Questions for the defence:

Conceptually, your call for regenerative art (that regenerates both discourse and the environment) is firmly grounded and consistent. Could you give some examples of art projects that fulfil your idea of regenerative art or at least come close to it?



Date: 3/6/2022

Signature: