

In autumn, Designblok will change into a (virgin) forest! The 24th edition of the Prague international design festival will take place in Gabriel Loci Monastery and the Museum of Decorative Arts and present news and international guests.

This year, the theme connecting the festival's individual parts is **FOREST**. Designblok will return to Gabriel Loci Monastery in Prague's Smíchov for the third time this October. After last year's success, the building of the Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague will become another festival venue. The 24th edition of the largest Czech design and fashion festival will take place from 5 to 9 October 2022.

*"The theme of this year's Designblok is **FOREST** (LES in Czech). Following the global theme Future in 2019, the focus on local production with the theme Passion in 2020, and Happiness in 2021, we chose a theme focusing on the use of natural materials, traditional Czech crafts, and environmental issues,"* says Jana Zielinski, Director of Designblok.

The festival will take place in autumn in two main exhibition venues - **Gabriel Loci** and the **Museum of Decorative Arts in Prague (UPM)**. Gabriel Loci will focus primarily on the presentation of contemporary international design news in the traditional Superstudio and Openstudio formats, i.e., international brands and manufacturers, on the one hand, designers and design studios on the other. The former convent will also host the next edition of the international exhibition **Diploma Selection**, the thematically conceived central space of **Designerie**, and the discussion stage for the side programme, lectures by designers, festival partners, and international guests. Erste Premier will be the general partner of Designblok for the eleventh year.

The Museum of Decorative Arts will serve, just as it did last year, as a conceptual exhibition space with its own theme, **VIRGIN FOREST** (PRALES in Czech). Two floors of the museum will be dedicated to designers and companies with Czech roots. VIRGIN FOREST as a breeding ground, an intricate complex of roots, sources, and ancient history will be reflected in the local focus of this venue. It will also include the second edition of the **Family Silver** exhibition, which will present Czech family producers. The Art House exhibition of collectible design, which visitors know from the Lapidarium at the Exhibition Grounds or from St Gabriel's Church last year, also moves to the UPM this year. The concept of this year's Art House is based on the intervention of contemporary glass in the UPM exhibition from the collection of Vojtěch Lanna, co-founder of the UPM and one of the major collectors of the 19th century. An entire floor of the museum will be dedicated to twenty-four Czech designers who emphasize the fusion of quality craftsmanship and contemporary design in their work, thus building on the rich Czech tradition.

Each year, the red thread of the festival, from the visual design and the form of Designerie to

the individual installations and the side programme, is a new theme that resonates with current events, and so is this year's theme of forest. *"Forest is the source of life. Thanks to plants we can breathe, and greenery is the most natural enhancer of our everyday environment. Forest is also a source of materials, a temple of rest, a paradise for mushroom pickers, a source of inspiration for artists and DIYers, a haunted and magical fairytale place. The forest is the home of Little Red Riding Hood and Hansel and Gretel, and it is inhabited by the Fox, fairies, goblins, trolls, and other creatures. The smell of the forest, wet earth, leaves, needles, meadow flowers are a reason to keep going. At Designblok, we will walk through the forest of Czech design, peek into the mysterious wells of knowledge of foreign stars, take a trail following the red, green, yellow or blue signposts, each according to his or her own abilities and tastes. We are looking forward to the enchanted forest of Designblok,"* summarises Jana Zielinski on behalf of Designblok.

Registration for the 24th edition of Designblok is open online for designers and companies from 24 February to 31 May 2022. Application forms and all other information can be found on the festival's website www.designblok.cz.

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