



Katarina Burin, *Planter for Creeping Time, July or August, probably 1978*, 2019
Cement, Thyme plants, plexiglass, masonite, digital image. Courtesy of the artist.

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General Information:

Providence College Galleries
—Hunt-Cavanagh Gallery
at Hunt-Cavanagh Hall,
—Reilly Gallery at the
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KATARINA BURIN: IRRATIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Reilly Gallery, Smith Center for the Arts

January 15 – March 14, 2020

Artist Talk and Public Opening Reception:

January 15, 2020, 5 – 7pm

Providence College Galleries (PC—G) continues its Beyond Bauhaus program, a more than yearlong series of exhibitions, publications and commissioned installations featuring contemporary artists whose studio practices register with the history and concerns of Bauhaus (1919-1933), the German art school so influential on modern art, architecture, craft, design and education. Opening on January 15, 2020, PC—G presents the next Beyond Bauhaus installment: *Irrational Attachments*, a solo exhibition by Cambridge and New York artist Katarina Burin

Burin has long been intrigued by the visual language of architecture and design. Her artistic practice consistently mines the legacies of objects and buildings revered and rejected by many publics. Using a variety of sources and techniques—from sculpture and spatial interventions to historical fiction conveyed with mixed media visual art and text—she explores the ways modernism has profoundly influenced the built environment, especially that which is in or connected to Central and Western Europe. For several years, Burin created multi-component projects centered around the fictional character she created called Petra Andrejová-Molnár, a Czechoslovakian architect working in Europe between World War I and World War II. While continuing to explore similar content and form, Burin's recent work eschews the fictional to instead present objects and imagery as talismans for more discreet narratives, especially those inspired by personal biography and collective memory.

Featuring entirely new work, *Irrational Attachments* includes models, assemblages and sculptural objects informed by public spaces found throughout cities and towns in the Soviet Union. Scattered across the gallery floor, concrete fragments make up almost monumental tableaux. Large-scale simulacra depict natural terrain meeting man-made surfaces. Tiny bits of greenery peek out to show signs of life in an otherwise abandoned scene. Referencing architectural and design histories, photographic documentation and her own childhood memories, Burin accumulates these elements into a total artwork reminiscent of plazas common in former Eastern Bloc countries. In the 1980s Czechoslovakia of the artist's youth, such sites would have functioned as designed locations for leisure and communal life. Purported to instill activity in citizenry, unburdening people of irrational attachments to personal spaces and objects, these plazas, like Burin's artwork-as-plaza in the gallery, consisted of an architecture of vacation mal-adapted to signify a false sense of freedom. With this, *Irrational Attachments* also represents the once, future and misappropriated ideological and aesthetic goals of early and mid-twentieth century artists and architects, including a wide-ranging roster from early modernists, like those at the Bauhaus, to late modernists working from behind the Iron Curtain. Hindsight imbues Burin's plaza with failure—the likes of it couldn't possibly address the contradictions of modernity and political doctrine.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Katarina Burin was born in Bratislava, Slovakia, and currently lives and works in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and New York City. She has recently exhibited in institutional solo and group shows at Usdan Gallery at Bennington College, Vermont; The Drawing Center, New York; Fitchburg Museum Of Art, Massachusetts; Neubauer Collegium for Culture and Society at University of Chicago; Kunstverein Langenhagen, Germany; Aspen Art Museum, Colorado; and Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, among others. She is a former Radcliffe Institute Fellow and recipient of the James and Audrey Foster prize from ICA Boston. She has been an artist-in-residence at MuseumsQuartier Vienna, Skowhegan, Yaddo, and MacDowell Colony. Burin holds a Master of Fine Arts from Yale University and Bachelor of Fine Arts from University of Georgia. She is faculty in the Department of Art, Film, and Visual Studies at Harvard University.

***Katarina Burin: Irrational Attachments* is organized by Jamilee Lacy, PC–G Director & Chief Curator. Support for the exhibition and publication as part of the Beyond Bauhaus series is generously provided by The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts and Providence College's School of Arts & Sciences and Department of Art & Art History.**