



David Černý, *Entropa* (2009)

DAVID ČERNÝ - *ARTOCALYPSA* EXHIBITION TO OPEN IN VENICE

- Czech sculptor David Černý unveils his first solo exhibition in Venice, coinciding with the 61st Venice Biennale
- Running from 6th May to 6th November 2026 at Il Teatro dell'Arte (NuoveFondamenta), *Artocalypsa* surveys three decades of Černý's provocative practice.
- The exhibition will present works from across Černý's career, exploring the antiauthoritarian challenge inherent in his sculptural work, particularly in the depiction of weapons and military imagery.

Czech artist David Černý will present *Artocalypsa*, his first solo exhibition in Venice, from May 6 – November 6, coinciding with the 61st Venice Biennale.

The exhibition takes place at the historic former theatre Il Teatro dell'Arte (NuoveFondamenta) and spans three decades of Černý's interrogation of power and politics, his lampooning of authority, and society's enduring and problematic fascination with weapons and military iconography, a recurring theme in his work.

The exhibition revels in Černý's capacity to surprise, unsettle, and provoke, compelling audiences to confront uncomfortable political realities through irony and satire. A disruptive force in contemporary European sculpture, his subversive practice often blurs the boundaries between high-concept expression and biting social commentary.

His engagement with military iconography began in the early 1990s when, as an art student, he painted Prague's *Monument to Soviet Tank Crews*, (1945) bright pink, and placed a raised middle finger on its turret. The act established his reputation for bold, sometimes absurdist

public interventions.

Highlights include *Entropa*, shown here in a smaller edition of the original kinetic sculpture created for the Czech Republic's EU presidency in 2009. Although initially presented as a collaboration among artists from all of the 27 EU member states, Černý and three friends instead developed fictional artists and created images of exaggerated national stereotypes, from a representation of Denmark in Lego to Romania as Dracula's castle and a France on strike. When unveiled at the European Council, the work generated immediate controversy and became well-known as an international artistic hoax.

The early work *Guns*, (1993) examines the visual appeal of weapons. By enlarging handguns to monumental scale, Černý highlights the craftsmanship and design often used to sanitize the reality of their purpose. The sculpture is presented alongside new work, *Nuke Chair* (2025), a kinetic armchair made of hyper-realistic burnt skin, which appears to be breathing. Placed near a sculpture of an atomic mushroom cloud, it appears scorched by a nuclear explosion, contrasting domestic comforts with catastrophic destruction, a satirical nod to the ever-present threat of modern weaponry in contemporary life.

Works from Černý's *Inventors/Scientists* series (2013–2016) are also on view, including large-scale portraits in polymer assemblage of both Leonardo da Vinci, Wernher von Braun and Robert Oppenheimer. Famed for their inventions and scientific achievements, both contributed to the development of powerful weapons, from Leonardo's schematics for an armored tank and steam-powered cannons to Oppenheimer's creation of the atomic bomb. Černý invites viewers to reflect on the double-edged nature of innovation.

Artocalypsa will also feature a new video installation, featuring two opposing screens that display continuous looped video sequences. One screen features an ape beating the ground with a bone, - a symbol of the 'first weapon' directly referencing the opening scene of Stanley Kubrick's iconic film *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968). The second screen shows an aircraft carrier powering through the sea towards the viewer, representing the evolution of military technology into the 'largest weapon'.

In each of these artworks, familiar symbols and images are presented in unexpected ways. Through dark humour and exaggeration, audiences are asked to reflect on how violence and power are embedded into our everyday visual landscape.

David Černý said, *"Weapons have accompanied me throughout my life as a central and unavoidable phenomenon. They stand at the very summit of human technological achievement, yet they embody the most destructive dimension of our existence. In today's climate of political tension and collective anxiety, almost every global crisis carries within it the latent threat of armed conflict and violence. In my work, weapons are not merely objects, but mirrors reflecting power, fear, ambition, and the shifting state of humanity itself."*

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Download the press pack [here](#)

Press Preview: Tuesday 5th May 2026

Public opening: Wednesday 6th May 2026

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Il Teatro dell'Arte (NuoveFondamenta)

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Opening hours:

Tuesday - Sunday

11.00 to 13.30 and 14.00 to 17.30 - May to September 2026

10 to 13.30 and 14.00 to 16.30 - October to November 2026

NOTES TO EDITORS

About David Černý

Born in Prague in 1967 to a family of artists, David Černý studied at the Academy of Applied Arts in Prague between 1988 and 1996. In 1990, he received the Special Prize in the Biennale of Kortrijk, Belgium. One year later, he began his residential scholarship in Boswil after receiving a grant from the Swiss Government. In 1994, he moved to New York as an artist in residence at the PS1 gallery. Two years later, he completed the Whitney Independent Study Program. In 1996, he won another grant, this time from the Pollack-Krasner Foundation in the United States, and in 2000, he received the Czech Jindřich Chalupecký Award for being the country's most promising visual artist under the age of 35. In 2001, he founded Meetfactory, a non-profit international center for contemporary art. Most recently, in 2017, he started Black n' Arch, an architectural studio known for its innovative approaches to architecture and design. Besides his artwork, David Černý is also active in the fields of theatre and cinema, music, design, and architecture.

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