**PRESS  RELEASE**

**Exhibition title:** Koža, Women & Other Stories // The Final Chapter **Authors:** Deanna Pizzitelli **Venue:** Jan Koniarek Gallery - Synagogue - Centre of Contemporary Art Halenárska 2, Trnava **Curator:** Patrik Krajčovič **Opening:** 12 September 2022 (Mon) at 18:00 **Duration:** 12. 9. 2022 (Mon) – 30. 10. 2020 (Sun)

Deanna Pizzitelli (Toronto, 1987) is a Canadian photographer who first moved to Bratislava in 2015. She received her bachelor's degree at the Toronto Metropolitan University (Canada) and her master's of fine arts degree at the University Of Arizona (USA). She has exhibited widely across Canada, the United States and Europe, and has presented her work in Bratislava's Flatgallery (2021) and in Beastro (2015, 2018). In 2018, Pizzitelli was awarded the Scotiabank New Generation Photography Award. Her series KOŽA, WOMEN & OTHER STORIES is one of ten award-winning projects of the 2020 Louis Roederer Discovery Award of the Rencontres d'Arles festival (France). Pizzitelli is represented by Stephen Bulger Gallery (Canada) and her work is included in the collections of the Archive of Modern Conflict (UK) and the Center for Creative Photography (USA). She has participated in residencies in Canada, Sweden, Portugal, Germany, Finland and Iceland.

**Koža, Women & Other Stories // The Final Chapter (2015 – 2022)**

KOŽA, WOMEN & OTHER STORIES // The Final Chapter is at first glance a disparate mosaic of various recorded images, in which the artist uses analogue techniques, combining various printing methods and photographic genres. Her work presents classic analogue methods of photography and printmaking, although from today's perspective, the work appears largely experimental. Deanna works with cyanotype, silver printing, serigraphy, letterpress and monotype, but she also experiments with defective photographs from Polaroid, later enlarged into irregular and fragmented shapes.

Her photographs celebrate the act of travel and collect various subjective stories quite sensitively. The work is therefore an individual document that primarily reflects her inner and very intimate experience of the present, rather than an objective capture of ongoing events. The series moves between the fields of documentary photography, intimate portraits and staged imagery. The title of the series—also the name of the exhibition—reflects the narrative, emotional and visual foundation of the exhibited works, so that we can follow three thematic circuits that communicate with one other, even transfer into one another, and create an eclectic unit. The best key to understanding the exhibition is to imagine a visit to an antique shop. The objects in this place are removed from their original context: they come from different eras, different social and geographical settings; they were created by different authors and serve different functions. But together, they maintain a sense of aesthetic integrity. Based on a similar principle, we can perceive an exhibition wherein neon boxes also appear, in addition to photos. We find this aesthetic eclecticism in the confrontation of different media and genres. We move thematically between the intimacy of a domestic, rural environment and the distance of a cold, urban or industrial environment (referenced in the neon).

The Slovak part of the name—koža (skin)—refers to Slovakia and at the same time depicts a tribute to the country, where the author began photographing the series. Skin, however, has another meaning. It is a human cover or a shell, something in which the emotional part of a person is contained. The skin reflects all of our inner emotional states, just as the surface of a light-sensitive material reflects a captured reality and is a fundamental carrier of different meanings. The woman is a motif that appears in the author's previous work. Women (both known and unknown) repeatedly appear in this series as well. They are a medium through which she can talk about the inner behaviours and states of mind of a person—changing and diverse emotional rhythms. The series also includes photographs that cannot be precisely thematically anchored. Over several years of documenting her life as she has lived it, she has created a collection without a clear framework of meaning. It is a group of works whose narrative is open to wide levels of interpretation. "Other Stories" comes to the audience as an emotional riddle, rather than a clearly readable story with a coherent ending.

In addition to classic 2D photography, the exhibition offers the spatial-light objects mentioned above: neon boxes with minimalistic poetic texts that act as a lyrical expression of the author's work. The task of these objects is to explain what has been expressed visually through words. Light also plays an important role, because the photographic medium is inherently linked to light. The light falls on the photographed objects, so that it is then reflected and exposed on the light-sensitive material (currently, the digital sensor). According to Roland Barthes: "The photograph is literally an emanation of the referent. From a real body, which was there, proceed radiations which ultimately touch me, who am here; the duration of the transmission is insignificant; the photograph of the missing being, as Sontag says, will touch me like the delayed rays of a star" (Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography, p. 80). In this case, the light is the creator of the image, or, in our case, it works with the photograph as a mediator of the past and of the stories that the author and others have captured. This exhibition is the end of a seven-year process of creating this photographic and lyrical series.