

Exhibition Title: Earth, Wind and Fire

Artist: Otto Szabo – Robotto

Curator: Péter Bencze

Venue: Longtermhandstand, Budapest

Duration: 30 October – 30 November 2024

Photo: Áron Weber

Tags: @_robotto_ @longtermhandstand @everybodyneedsart

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Text: Péter Bencze

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Otto Szabo – Robotto's first solo exhibition at Longtermhandstand marks a new chapter in his evolving artistic practice. Here, Robotto presents a series of kinetic sculptures and video installations that blend his matured technical skill with bold thematic exploration. Through transformed ventilators—reimagined as totemic screens—Robotto loops imagery of tornados, natural disasters, and environmental chaos, each surreal twist peppered with Temu advertisements. These juxtapositions probe the tension between nature and consumer culture, examining how each consumes the other in unexpected ways. In the main room, Robotto showcases *The Freelancer's Dream*, a sound-sensitive sculptural installation that serves as the essence of his years at the Zurich University of the Arts. Created during a period of intense personal growth—amidst moving abroad, the COVID-19 pandemic, adapting to a new community, and the birth of his daughter—the work encapsulates Robotto's exploration of identity, connection, and transformation. Involving the viewer as an integral part of the installation, the work responds to applause, activating a mechanism that eventually leads to destruction. At its core is a handmade porcelain vase, a fragile foundation upon which the sculpture is built. "It represents appreciation," Robotto explains, "but ultimately, it leads to destruction." Each break in the porcelain signals the fulfillment of a cycle, as the sculpture adapts around the form and symbolism of this handcrafted object, giving it a spirit imbued with both beauty and impermanence. Drawing on influences from kinetic art pioneers like Jean Tinguely and Viktor Lois, Robotto merges traditional techniques with new technologies, including 3D printing and moving-image projection, to craft a layered, immersive experience. His work reflects a constant curiosity and an evolving perspective on the interplay between technology, humanity, and the natural world, inviting viewers into his uniquely constructed universe of both wonder and critical reflection.

Péter Bencze