

SORRY NO GAS

2017 Ongoing

1973 and gas lines are a new thing. We have a blue Oldsmobile Station Wagon with a white vinyl roof—unfortunately for us it's a Super Size Gas Guzzler. And you only get 5-10 gallons which, for that vehicle, gets maybe three trips to school and back, plus one grocery stop. Weird in that blue Oldsmobile we decide to take a family road trip through Yellowstone and end up in Spokane for the World's Fair. Present day Prague. On a residency curated by Cortney Lane Stell. And there's an extra room. Doing a piece called TRICIA NIXON: SUMMER OF 1973 which addresses the former President's daughter's uncanny penchant for both heat and coolness . . . The installation will take up two rooms, with the snake like "RING MY BELL" meandering through the suite of other rooms. Prague for two months checking out all the museums, the castle, the clocks, the bridge, the cemetery, the beer . . . What is everywhere and quite beautiful, is an Italian technique, a decorative practice that adorns the façades with historic or mythological scenes and graphic motifs . . . It's called Sgraffito and is like plaster batik with gray and white . . . Funny it seems to be everywhere in Prague, more than I remember in Italy . . . It's quite beautiful and very formal. Certainly not contemporary and beyond wall mural and decoration. Separately, at breakfast, there is this old poodle . . . Blind he wanders around crashing into potted flowers in an exquisite sgraffited courtyard. It is there, in the courtyard, that I recognize a second poodle, not a real one, but the portrait of the real one, rendered lovingly, in perpetuity, in the sgraffito . . . Live and unreal, these poodles spark the thought that the sgraffito, the technique, can be used to depict modern scenarios, not just historical motifs. What to do with this extra room . . . Something modern about the 70s gas crisis. It must be sgraffito.